



# EVERGLADES *Action!*

*Everglades Action!* is our quarterly newsletter providing articles of interest to Foundation stakeholders about restoration developments, water management issues and other ecosystem activities associated with America's Everglades ~ **Summer 2009**

## Also in this issue...

- ✓ Fire, the Everglades Ecosystem and You
- ✓ Interns Gain Experience and Provide Support for Foundation Programs
- ✓ Everglades Foundation Celebrates Earth Month With Aveda/The Salon People
- ✓ Accomplished Wetland Ecologist Joins the Everglades Foundation
- ✓ Everglades Foundation Welcomes New Board and Advisory Committee Members

## Growth Management in Florida Suffers a Setback

**T**he Everglades Foundation and several like-minded environmental organizations took a stand against the passage of growth management legislation that recently moved through the Florida legislature. The bill, known as Senate Bill 360, effectively loosens Florida's development regulations by re-defining an "urban area" as any community with 1,000 residents or less per square mile.

In these newly defined urban areas, developers no longer will have to show that adequate roads exist to serve their projects. Large proposals no longer will have to meet rigorous Development of Regional Impact standards. This bill weakens growth management regulations and has the potential to impact the larger Everglades ecosystem and estuarine environments of South Florida.

The Everglades Foundation supports efforts by the Florida legislature to encourage sound, well-planned growth in Florida, but urged Governor Charlie Crist to carefully reconsider and veto this piece of legislation that could lead to further unchecked sprawl. The system encourages sprawl by making it cheaper to build in less populated areas.

"There are so many opportunities to accommodate additional housing opportunities in the true urban core of many Florida communities," said Kirk Fordham, CEO, Everglades Foundation. "The passage of this bill creates a loophole to bypass regulations that protect Florida residents and the environment from haphazard development policies."



U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar, gets up close and personal with an unwelcome Everglades visitor, a Burmese python. Salazar visited Everglades National Park on a recent trip to South Florida to learn more about the challenges of Everglades restoration and pledge government support to protect the ecosystem.



### Everglades Foundation's Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) Partners

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# Fire, the Everglades Ecosystem and You

**E**arth, Wind, Fire and ...Water. These are the four classical elements of nature whose collective forces have shaped and continue to define the character of the Everglades ecosystem for hundreds of years. Over the spring, fire leapt to the marquee position of forces impacting the Everglades ecosystem when news stories from around the world captured images of the smoldering Big Cypress National Preserve and the shutdown of Interstate 75 due to raging brush fires.

Fire is often a prominent byproduct in an environment where it is documented, on average, that each square mile of South Florida experiences about two dozen lightning bolt strikes per year.

A battalion of firefighters battled the Big Cypress inferno using air tankers, helicopters and small fire engines specially equipped with large tires and other features to penetrate the wilderness.

Fire scorched about 47 square miles of Big Cypress National Preserve. The Big Cypress is a fire-dependent ecosystem that needs to burn in order to generate new growth. Left unchecked, the undergrowth grows thicker and thicker and chokes off nutrients destined for pine and cypress trees. In addition, the undergrowth becomes impenetrable to wildlife and acts as a fire accelerant that endangers larger trees because undergrowth fires start on the ground and work their way up.

Such is the fragility and complexity of the Everglades ecosystem. The very element that has the power to destroy — can also generate new life. Animals, including birds and deer, have adapted to an environment that showcases thunder, lightning and fire to benefit from burn cycles.

Soaring above an expanding fire line, hawks and eagles as well as other smaller avian predators, use their superior eyesight to

hone in on scattering prey. In the weeks that followed the burn, deer feasted on the healthy green shoots that sprouted up from the ash-laden, nutrient-rich soil. The deer in turn become prey for the endangered Florida panther.

One important fire concern is the status of the preserve's hardwood hammocks — high, dry areas of oak, maple, slash pine and gumbo limbo that provide an important habitat in otherwise swampy South Florida. While some survive, others die and the danger is that these habitats would revert to a monotonous landscape of cabbage palms, reducing the diversity of the preserve's habitats.

The Everglades Foundation understands that the very fire that scorches acres upon acres of Everglades habitat year after year is a valued teaching tool to the organization as well. It provides the most graphic illustration to underscore the importance of proper water management. "The Everglades ecosystem needs adequate water supply to balance the impacts of catastrophic fire events," says Dr. Mark Kraus, Everglades Foundation, COO. "The Everglades is supposed to burn in the dry season. What becomes a problem is when the burns become too frequent, extensive or prolonged. This usually indicates that the system is too dry and that's when having the ability to manage water flow to parts of the Everglades ecosystem to provide sufficient relief during the dry season can be the best solution."

The Foundation's scientific research on water storage and water flow and the beneficial outcomes associated with providing areas of the Everglades ecosystem with water at critical times drives home an important message: without adequate water supply, the Everglades ecosystem cannot sustain itself during times of drought and flood as well as accommodate the needs of a growing human population.



Everglades Foundation CEO, Kirk Fordham (left), was introduced to documentary filmmaker Ken Burns recently at a public television event promoted by WPBT Channel 2 and the Everglades Foundation. Burns was in Miami to provide commentary at an advanced screening of his new series on National Parks which airs this fall and prominently features Everglades National Park.

## Interns Gain Experience and Provide Support for Foundation Programs

**F**oundation science department intern **Yirgalem Chebud** is a graduate student in the Environmental and Geosciences Department at Florida International University. He is assisting the Foundation with water-quality modeling in the Lower Kissimmee Basin area. Specifically, Yirgalem is estimating phosphorous and nitrate discharges from the different land uses of the Lake Okeechobee watershed. The results will be used to aid the Foundation's efforts in influencing policy to minimize the pollution of Lake Okeechobee and subsequent downstream wetlands.

**Natalia Ulloa** is a senior majoring in environmental studies with a specialization in international issues at Florida International University. During her summer internship with the Foundation, Natalia is working under the direction of Dr. Rosanna Rivero. She is providing support to a geographic information system (GIS) project through the office of Senator Bill Nelson and the Library of Congress.

Intern **Valentin Nechita**, an environmental studies major at Florida International University, will be assisting the Foundation with its policy work. He will be working on a white paper on Tamiami Trail and its impact on Everglades restoration. The report addresses water flow, water quality, tree islands and tribal lands surrounding Tamiami Trail.

During her summer internship, **Maria Navarro**, a junior at the University of Florida majoring in advertising with a minor in English, is assisting with the Foundation's communications functions.



# Everglades Foundation Celebrates Earth Month With Aveda/The Salon People

**Do you recall how you celebrated Earth Day?** Aveda/The Salon People, — together with the Everglades Foundation, an Earth Month partner organization — hosted a “Clean Water” Earth Month walkathon that raised about \$50,000 for Everglades Foundation programs. Aveda participated with other organizations around the world to promote clean water causes and attempt to raise a record-breaking \$3 million as it celebrated 30 years of caring for the Earth.



Everglades Foundation representatives joined Aveda salon employees and clients in Miami Beach, Tallahassee, Sarasota and Fort Lauderdale in an attempt to raise funds and awareness of global water issues as part of an effort that combined more than 75 Earth Month walks — all occurring at the same time, on the same day — around the nation and globally. Each walk began at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, April 22 (Earth Day) at a prominent metropolitan location.

“Access to clean water is a universal cause that everyone can support. If you live in South Florida, restoration of the Everglades is essential to protect clean water sources,” said Kirk Fordham, CEO, Everglades Foundation. “We encouraged as many people as possible to help Aveda and its extensive salon network with this effort. Funds raised from this initiative will go to support the scientific programming and advocacy that the Everglades Foundation needs to advance ecosystem restoration and ensure that the millions of people who live and visit this area continue to have access to sustainable water resources for generations to come.”

Aveda has celebrated Earth Day since the company’s founding in 1978 and pioneered Earth Month in 1999. Aveda has raised more than \$11 million for environmental causes to date through its annual Earth Month campaigns.



The Everglades Foundation recently escorted more than a dozen national and international journalists on a day-long tour to Everglades National Park as part of 2009 International POW WOW, the largest and most important travel trade show in the world.

# Accomplished Wetland Ecologist Joins the Everglades Foundation



**Stephen E. Davis III**, Ph.D., has joined the Everglades Foundation as a wetland ecologist. Davis is distinguished in his field and was most recently an associate professor in the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences

at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, where his research focused on wetland ecosystem development and response to fluctuations in climate and hydrology.

In his role at the Everglades Foundation, Davis will continue his extensive body of research in the Everglades and Florida Bay that dates back more than a decade. Over that period of time, he has investigated the complex role mangrove wetlands play in affecting nutrient and carbon exchange between the Everglades and Florida Bay. He has also focused on the impact of storms and seasonal variations in freshwater flows on water quality in the estuaries.

Davis will also expand more recent work on the influence of sea-level rise and saltwater intrusion on Everglades soils.

Davis, a native of Ohio, received his bachelor’s degree in biology and environmental science from Georgetown College in Georgetown, Ky. He then went on to Morehead State University in Morehead, Ky., where he was awarded his master’s degree in biological and environmental sciences. He attained his doctorate of philosophy in Miami, Fla., from the Department of Biological Sciences at Florida International University.

Davis has won several awards – both as a student and an instructor. He has been a reviewer for multiple professional journals and funding agencies, served on a number of state and federal panels related to wetland and aquatic ecosystem health, consulted for different wetland restoration and mitigation efforts, and lectured extensively on the subject of wetlands ecology and management. He has also served as a mentor to numerous graduate and undergraduate students throughout his career.

# Everglades Foundation Welcomes New Board and Advisory Committee Members



**Joseph Zachary Duke III**, president of Jacksonville-based Off Road Holdings, is an industrial designer and entrepreneur whose business life has involved various manufacturing activities as well as a partnership in an advertising agency. He is a third-generation Floridian and resides with his wife, Jennifer, in Ponte Vedra Beach and Hobe Sound, Fla., as well as Oldwick, New Jersey. Duke and his wife, who maintain a family farm in New Jersey as well as Florida timberland, have been deeply involved in environmental issues for many years.



**Robert F. "Tadd" Carr III**, a resident of Jupiter Island, Fla., and Chicago, was most recently the senior managing director of Chicago-based Fiduciary Management Associates, an investment firm he founded in 1980. Carr sold the company to United Asset Management, then bought it back and sold it to his employees. He began his professional career in financial services with Northern Trust. Carr was the president of the Consumer Division and led the Consumer Product Division for Abbott Labs, the global, broad-based health care company that features products ranging from nutritional supplements and laboratory diagnostics to medical devices and pharmaceutical therapies. He is a member of five foundation boards including the Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago, where he is the co-chair of the investment committee. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Babson College. Carr and his wife, Barbara, have six children and 11 grandchildren.



**Barbara Carr**, co-chair of the Everglades Foundation's Advisory Committee, has extensive leadership experience with non-profit organizations. She led the Lincoln Park Zoological Society and was also president of the Chicago Botanic Garden for more than a decade. Carr currently serves on numerous boards including Lake Forest College, the Chicago Botanic Garden and the Garden Conservancy. The Carrs are residents of Jupiter Island, Fla., and Chicago.



**John P. Keller** is chairman of the Keller Group, Inc., a privately held corporation specializing in iron and steel. Keller has a diverse corporate background and has worked in industries ranging from automotive to publishing. He supports Rush Medical Center, the Museum of Science and Industry, The Economic Club of Chicago and the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. Keller received his bachelor's degree from Yale University and his M.B.A. from Harvard Business School. He is a resident of Hobe Sound, Fla., and Chicago.



**Judy Keller** is co-chair of Everglades Foundation Advisory Committee and has considerable experience in effectively organizing and spurring committees into action in the non-profit sector. She is a board member of the Lincoln Park Zoological Society; former Chair of the Women's Board, the Art Institute of Chicago; governing member, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and former president, Kenilworth Garden Club, Chapter of Garden Clubs of America.



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 Stephen E. Davis, III, Ph.D., Wetland Ecologist

The Everglades Foundation is dedicated to ensuring a restored Everglades by creating relevant and creative solutions to complex restoration issues.

[www.evergladesfoundation.org](http://www.evergladesfoundation.org)



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