



EVERGLADES *Action!*

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE EVERGLADES FOUNDATION

JULY 2008

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Blockbuster Land Acquisition Propels Restoration Forward

Purchase of U.S. Sugar Hailed as "Historic Opportunity"

For several decades environmental advocates and Everglades champions have been arguing the need for large tracts of undeveloped land south of Lake Okeechobee for water storage and treatment. Although restoration of both Lake Okeechobee and the *River of Grass* would benefit from the use of a portion of the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA), over the years this never seemed a viable option.

On June 24, Florida Governor Charlie Crist made the dream a reality by announcing a state plan to purchase 187,000 acres of agricultural land from U.S. Sugar Corporation.

The role of the Everglades Foundation was instrumental in this dramatic development. It was the Everglades Foundation's science that quantified the need and justified the acquisition. It was the vision and dedication of the Board of Directors, through their discussions with lawmakers and state officials, their committed leadership and their consistent financial support to our partner organizations, that was the catalyst for the historic development.

Everglades Foundation scientists say this has the dual benefit of protecting the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries from damaging freshwater releases while

providing an enormous supply of clean water, the lifeblood of the Everglades, to sustain those fragile wetlands during droughts. Moreover, it will allow the District to expand the man-made marshes that clean up water flowing into the Everglades. *(continued on page 2)*



Florida Governor Charlie Crist, Vice Chair of the South Florida Water Management District, Shannon Estenoz, and U.S. Sugar President Robert Buker announce the largest conservation purchase in state history in Western Palm Beach County.



Everglades Foundation's Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) Partners

- 1000 FRIENDS OF FLORIDA * AUDUBON * AUDUBON OF FLORIDA * BONEFISH & TARPON UNLIMITED
 CLEAN WATER ACTION * COLLIER COUNTY AUDUBON SOCIETY * CONSERVANCY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA
 DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE * EVERGLADES COALITION * EVERGLADES LAW CENTER
 EVERGLADES TRUST * FLORIDA OCEANOGRAPHIC SOCIETY * FLORIDA WILDLIFE FEDERATION
 NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION * NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION
 NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL * RIVERS COALITION * SANIBEL-CAPTIVA CONSERVATION FOUNDATION
 SIERRA CLUB * TROPICAL AUDUBON SOCIETY * WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

(continued from cover)

“Location, Location, Location!”

The acquired land is between Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades—ideal for clean up of polluted water sent to the Everglades and for delivering adequate water supplies to the Everglades in the most efficient manner possible. This location is also key since rural agricultural real estate is less costly than other alternative areas north of Lake Okeechobee. This will lower the cost of restoration and water supply projects. Most important, this is the one place in south Florida where large, undeveloped tracts of land still exist, making design simpler and construction and operation less costly. This allows economies of scale not possible elsewhere.

Twice the size of Orlando, the 187,000 acres of agricultural land has the potential to provide about 1 million acre-feet of new water storage. This would be equivalent to approximately 325,000 trillion gallons, which could cover the state of Rhode Island with water one foot deep.

What Happens Next?

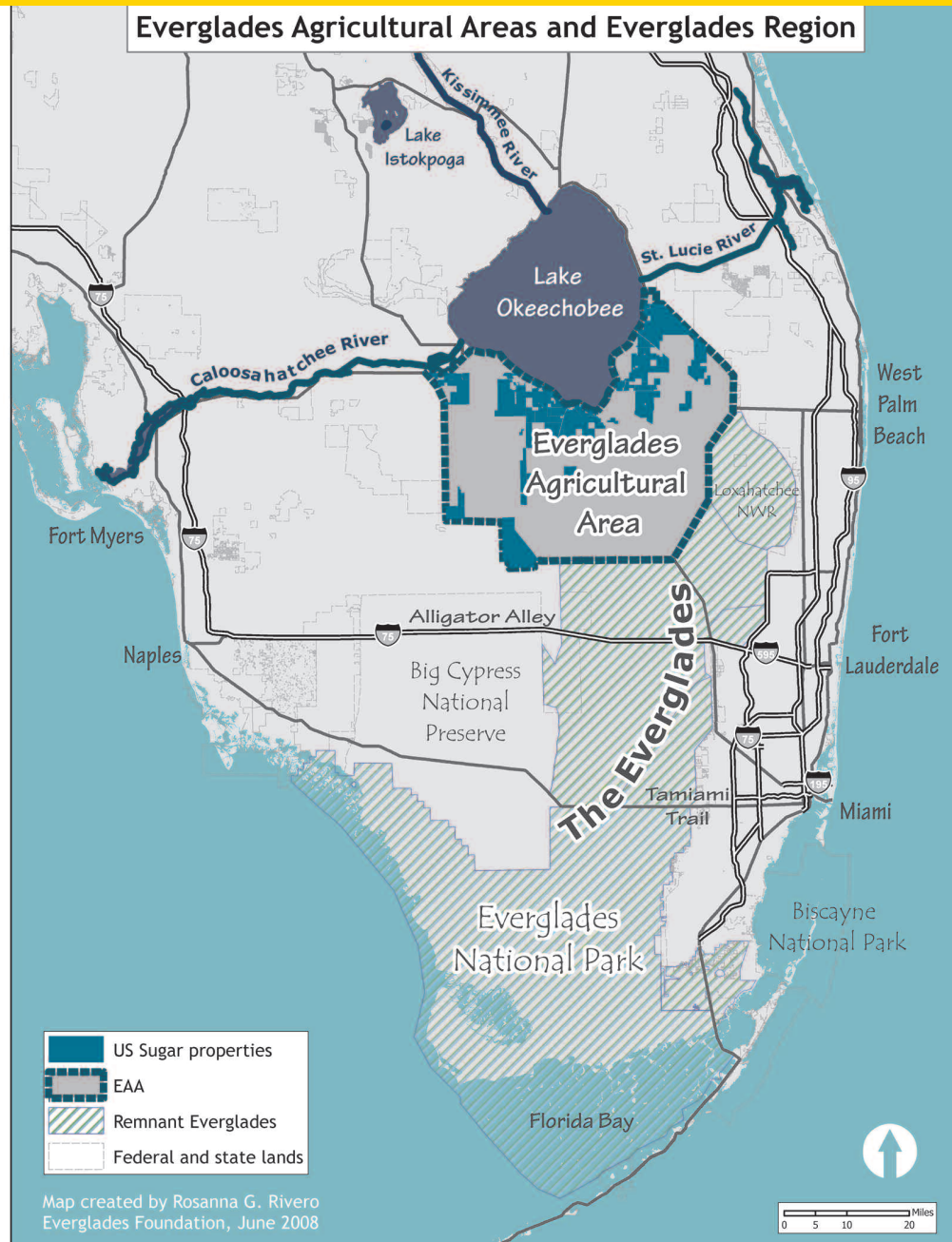
On Monday, June 30, the South Florida Water Management District Governing Board unanimously voted to begin formal and detailed talks with U.S. Sugar, and to budget money for the necessary appraisals and environmental assessments of the land. Although the initial terms were negotiated through the governor's office, the acquisition process will be managed by the state water district.

New Presidential Administration

The responsibility for America's Everglades does not rest solely with Florida. The federal government must do its part and recommit to the 50/50 cost sharing agreement outlined in the Water Resources Development Act of 2000. The next President must bring the leadership, initiative, and federal dollars to keep progress moving forward. Only with a strong federal-state partnership can we truly hope to restore America's Everglades.

Tamiami Trail

The road that historically linked Tampa to Miami (“Ta-Miami”) serves as a dam, blocking the movement of water south into Everglades National Park and Florida Bay. For decades federal and state agencies have debated options for removing the artificial barrier to water flow by elevating U.S. 41—even though restoration projects south of Lake



Okeechobee will not function if that water hits a wall in Miami-Dade County at the Tamiami Trail.

The Everglades, Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie Estuaries, and freshwater flows to Florida Bay cannot be saved without restoring at least a portion of the slow-moving broad, shallow sheet of water that was dammed and ditched by the Central & Southern Florida Flood Control Project into a series of reservoirs. Nearly all of the basic processes of the Everglades, such as nutrient cycling, wetting and drying patterns, fire, soil formation, and vegetative patterns are dependent on flowing water.

To find out more about the significance of the extraordinary efforts underway to change the dynamic of Everglades restoration, visit our website at: www.evergladesfoundation.org

Interns Expand Restoration Efforts

Scientists from the Everglades Foundation and Audubon of Florida's Research Center in Tavernier started the summer in Florida Bay seeing first hand the harmful algae bloom spreading throughout the bay, abuse from motor boats on sensitive sea grass beds, and the result of sediments and turbidity from freshwater channels flowing from the southern Everglades.

Foundation Science Department intern **Roberto Koeneke** is a graduate student in the University of Miami's Marine Affairs and Policy Master's Program. During his summer internship at the Foundation, Roberto is assisting in developing the Foundation's position on the Everglades National Park General Management Plan (GMP)/ Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This is a planning process to update the General Management Plan that will guide the operation of the national park for the next 20 years. Roberto will focus on addressing critical issues involving the management of Florida Bay, such as propeller scarring of seagrass.

Heather Gimbel will be starting her second year at the University of Miami School of Law after her summer internship with the Foundation. Heather is researching and compiling background data and policy information on environmental organizations that will be used to improve the Foundation's grant-making programming, expand communications with partner organizations, and enhance our education and outreach opportunities.



Everglades Foundation Intern Roberto Koeneke (left) with Audubon of Florida's Research Coordinator Peter Frezza and Everglades Science Coordinator Megan Tinsley in Florida Bay.



Everglades Foundation Intern Heather Gimbel.



Chamber Recognizes Foundation *McPherson Given Circle of Excellence Award*

Everglades Foundation Vice President **Peg McPherson** was one of seven outstanding women selected to receive the 2008 Circle of Excellence Award by the Greater Ft. Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday, June 19th including Lorraine Thomas, local philanthropist and founder of *Wendy's*. Others receiving this special recognition were Genia Ellis, Citizens Volunteer Group Ft. Lauderdale; Dr. Phyllis Simon, BECON; Marcia Barry-Smith, BankAtlantic; Gaye Stewart-Loudis, CLIA; and Nadine Egan Floyd, The Media Lab.

From education and community service to business and the environment, the seven women honored were recognized for their significant impact on our community. The awards luncheon also provided four scholarships to very deserving young women in Broward County.

Everglades Foundation

Makes an *IMPACT*

The Donors Forum of South Florida honored The Everglades Foundation on April 30th with a 2008 **IMPACT AWARD** for the community benefits generated by the Foundation's thoughtful and effective grant funding.

IMPACT AWARDS honor private and public funders active in South Florida whose grants and support have made a positive impact to the community. Award winners are recognized for their focus on the importance of effective grant making in South Florida; and to highlight successful initiatives for potential replication and expansion by funders.

Ten other Foundations including the Health Foundation of South Florida and the John S. and James L. Knight and Wachovia Foundations were judged in the \$500,000 funding category. The distinguished panel of judges included representatives and staff from JPMorgan Chase, Jane's Trust, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, and the National Center for Family Philanthropy.



Stanley Boynton Joins Foundation Staff

In July, **Stanley Boynton** joined the Everglades Foundation as the new Vice President for Development. Boynton was formerly the President and CEO of the Guadalupe Center of Immokalee and is a native of Naples, Florida. "We're very thankful to have a development officer of Stan's caliber join the Foundation," said Foundation CEO Kirk Fordham. "He will execute a development plan that will enable our science team to provide the best research and technical advise to government agencies who are charged with completing Everglades Restoration projects."

Boynton is already planning to make the Fourth Annual *ForEverglades Benefit* on Friday, February 13, 2009 the most successful event to date, and will be meeting with donors and future donors throughout the state. A life-long environmentalist, Boynton's family was actively involved in creating the Conservancy of Southwest Florida. He has served on the board of Collier County Audubon Society and is supportive of Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary.

The Everglades Foundation is dedicated to ensuring a restored Everglades by creating relevant and creative solutions to complex restoration issues without burdening taxpayers

www.evergladesfoundation.org

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