

Conserving Florida's Environment & Natural Resources

Conserving Florida's environment and natural resources has remained a key focus since Governor DeSantis took office, because a resilient environment is inseparable from a resilient economy. The Focus on Florida's Future Budget continues Florida's record support of Everglades restoration projects, invests in Florida's conservation lands, restores our waterways and funds infrastructure projects to improve water quality and safeguard Florida's water supply.

Prioritizing Florida's Everglades and Water Quality

During his first term in Office, Governor DeSantis called for **\$2.5 billion** to be invested over four years for the protection of water resources. The Governor surpassed that goal by securing over **\$3.3 billion** during his first term.

Last year, Governor DeSantis reinforced his commitment to prioritizing Florida's waterways in his second term by calling for an historic **\$3.5 billion** investment for Everglades restoration and protection of our water resources. The Focus on Florida's Future Budget includes more than **\$1.1 billion** for this initiative, bringing the total investment during the Governor's two years of the second term to **\$2.8 billion**, well on track to meet the **\$3.5 billion** goal.

Investing in Florida's Everglades

The Focus on Florida's Future Budget includes more than **\$745 million** for Everglades restoration projects, including:

- **\$550 million** for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).
- **\$64 million** for the EAA Reservoir to continue this critical project to reduce harmful discharges and help send more clean water south of the Everglades.
- **\$50 million** for specific project components designed to achieve the greatest reductions in harmful discharges to the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie Estuaries as identified in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan Lake Okeechobee Watershed Restoration Project Draft Integrated Project Implementation Report and Environmental Impact Statement dated August 2020.
- **\$81.5 million** for the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program.

Defending Florida's Everglades from Invasive Species

Governor DeSantis has prioritized efforts to remove the invasive Burmese python from the Everglades. The Focus on Florida's Future Budget includes more than **\$3 million** to remove pythons from the Everglades.

Protecting Florida's Water Quality, Quantity and Supply

The Focus on Florida's Future Budget also includes **\$330 million** for targeted water quality improvements to achieve significant, meaningful and measurable nutrient reductions in key waterbodies across the state and to implement the recommendations of the Blue-Green Algae Task Force. This includes:

- **\$135 million** for the expanded Water Quality Improvement Grant Program for projects to construct, upgrade or expand wastewater facilities, including septic to

sewer conversions, stormwater management projects, and agricultural nutrient reduction projects.

- **\$100 million** for the Indian River Lagoon (IRL) Protection Program for priority water quality projects, as called for in Executive Order 23-06.
- **\$50 million** to accelerate projects to meet nutrient reduction goals, called Total Maximum Daily Loads.
- **\$20 million** for critical infrastructure including wastewater and stormwater projects to address water quality and coral reef restoration in Biscayne Bay.
- **\$25 million** for water quality improvements in the Caloosahatchee River watershed.

The Focus on Florida's Future Budget includes **\$50 million** to restore Florida's world-renowned springs. This funding may also be used for land acquisition to protect springsheds and is crucial to supporting homeowners and local communities as they work with the state to achieve septic and nutrient reduction requirements.

The Focus on Florida's Future Budget includes more than **\$55 million** to improve water quality and combat the impacts of harmful algal blooms, including blue-green algae and red tide, including:

- **\$10 million** for innovative technologies to aid in the prevention, cleanup and mitigation of harmful algal blooms.
- **\$10.8 million** to increase water quality monitoring, support the Blue-Green Algae Task Force, and maintain the water quality public information portal.
- **\$20 million** for harmful algal blooms mitigation to implement water quality treatment technologies in Lake Okeechobee.
- **\$10 million** to assist county governments with their responses to emergency conditions associated with harmful algal blooms and red tide events.
- **\$4.7 million** in funding for continued support of research activities conducted by the Center for Red Tide Research.

The Focus on Florida's Future Budget includes **\$80 million** for the Alternative Water Supply Grant Program to help communities plan for and implement vital conservation, reuse and other alternative water supply projects. DEP will continue to engage local governments, industry, universities and water management districts to identify and research all viable alternative water supply sources and is working to provide an assessment of funding needs critical to supporting Florida's growing economy.

Prioritizing Florida's State Parks

Florida's State Parks have won the National Gold Medal a record four times for having the best state park system in the nation. The Focus on Florida's Future Budget dedicates **\$50 million** to infrastructure improvements and resource management with the goal of maintaining this high standard.

Protecting Florida's Conservation Lands and Waterways

The Focus on Florida's Future Budget includes **more than \$125 million** to protect Florida's conservation lands and waterways to ensure Florida's prized properties are accessible for future generations of Florida families. Project highlights include:

- **\$100 million** for the Florida Forever Program, the state's blueprint for conserving Florida's natural and recreation lands, including those located within the Florida Wildlife Corridor.
- **\$15 million** for the Florida Communities Trust, to acquire community-based parks, open space and greenways that further outdoor recreation and natural resource protection needs.
- **\$10 million** for the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP), which provides competitive recreational grants to local governments for the acquisition and/or development of land for public outdoor recreation.

Protecting Florida's Domestic Food Security & Family Farms

In addition to funding Florida Forever, the Focus on Florida's Future Budget makes funding for Florida's working agricultural lands and family farms permanent by providing an annual appropriation of **\$100 million** to the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program.

Investing in Florida's Coastlines

In Fiscal Year 2021-22, Governor DeSantis championed the passage of the Resilient Florida Grant Program which enhances our efforts to protect our inland waterways, coastlines, shores, and coral reefs, which serve as invaluable natural defenses against storm surge and flooding. Since its creation, the Resilient Florida Grant Program has provided more than **\$1.6 billion** in resiliency funding.

The Focus on Florida's Future Budget invests over **\$157 million** for resiliency, including **\$100 million** for implementation of statewide resilience projects and **\$57 million** for resiliency planning and coral reef protection.

Protecting Florida's 1,300 miles of coastline is important for our economy and quality of life. Florida's coastline is also an invaluable defense against hurricanes. The Focus on Florida's Future Budget includes **\$50 million** in beach renourishment funding to continue addressing Florida's critically eroded shorelines.

Florida's Coral Reef Restoration and Recovery Initiative

Included within **\$22.8 million** for coral reef protection and restoration is **\$11.3 million** to continue Florida's Coral Reef Restoration and Recovery Initiative, established in Executive Order 23-06, to restore 25 percent of Florida's Coral Reef by 2050. Florida's Coral Reef will be restocked with hardy populations of native corals and other keystone species to re-establish and strengthen natural reproduction, dispersal, and recruitment patterns. Florida's Coral Reef Restoration and Recovery Initiative will significantly enhance flood protection in Southeast Florida and strengthen coastal economies.

Investing in Florida's Citrus Industry

In order to preserve Florida's iconic citrus industry, the Focus on Florida's Future Budget includes more than **\$20 million** for citrus research and the Citrus Health Response Program. This includes **\$5 million** for research and additional advertising by the Department of Citrus including new varieties research and to help increase the production of trees and advance technologies that produce a resistance to citrus greening.

Combatting Wildfires

In addition to providing **\$4 million** to support the replanting of trees and timber impacted by hurricanes and natural disasters, the Focus on Florida's Future Budget includes over **\$30 million** to effectively combatting wildfires:

- **\$12.4 million** for wildfire suppression equipment;
- **\$11.9 million** for road and bridge maintenance to allow for better access for land management and wildfire suppression activities; and
- **\$5.9 million** for additional Wildfire Protection and State Forest operations.

Mitigating and Restoring Contaminated Sites

The Focus on Florida's Future Budget includes **\$211 million** for the cleanup of contaminated sites with a focus on promoting redevelopment of these areas once cleanup has been completed. Cleanup and redevelopment of these sites will ensure Florida's new businesses and growing communities can continue to grow. Specific investments include:

- **\$200 million** for Petroleum Tanks Cleanup;
- **\$7 million** for Dry Cleaning Solvent Contaminated Site Cleanup; and
- **\$4 million** for Hazardous Waste Contaminated Site Cleanup.