



Jason Flom

Summer Report

A million acres of land hang in the balance

Restoring critical funds to Florida Forever

From the Everglades and Green Swamp to our spectacular springs and rivers, Florida's natural areas and unique environment enhance our quality of life. They provide critical wildlife habitat, countless opportunities for outdoor adventures, and keep our drinking water supplies clean and plentiful.

But for the last three years, state leaders have let key critical preservation programs, including Florida Forever, run dry, leaving more than a million acres of open spaces, from wetlands to beautiful beaches, vulnerable to development.

Luckily, we have the chance at the ballot box to protect critical lands by voting for initiatives and leaders committed to funding Florida Forever—which will protect the million acres of critical natural areas that now hang in the balance.

“If enough of us come together and stand up for Florida’s open spaces, we can convince our legislators to fund Florida Forever,” said Aliko Moncrief, Director of Environment Florida. “We can’t allow them to leave critical ecosystems—from important wildlife corridors and wetlands in the Everglades to buffer zones around Wakulla and other Florida springs—vulnerable to development and pollution.”

Legislature dragging feet

The longer Florida Forever lacks funds, the more acres we’ll lose to encroaching development. Unfortunately, Florida legislators



Sheri Armstrong, Shutterstock

▲ J.N. Ding Darling Wildlife Refuge, Sanibel Island.

have slashed preservation funds by more than 95 percent since 2009.

So our staff have been knocking on doors across the state to educate Floridians about the natural areas at stake. We’re also educating local officials and shining a spotlight in the media on the need to protect thousands of acres of Florida’s conservation lands and watersheds.

“We need Floridians from all walks of life to help us protect treasured landscapes from the Keys to the Panhandle,” said Moncrief. “By voting, contacting your leaders, signing petitions and spreading the word, you can help fund our premier conservation program”



Florida Fish and Wildlife, Creative Commons

more online

◀ *Unprotected areas around Wakulla Springs provide habitat for the Florida Black Bear.*

Visit our website, and urge your leaders to get serious about protecting our open spaces.

www.EnvironmentFlorida.org

To our members

It's finally summer, and that means college students and other members of the Environment Florida team will soon be knocking on your doors, wearing our signature blue T-shirts.

After all, our first goal is to bring the voice of the average Floridian to bear in the decisions that impact the state's air, water and open spaces. And the more time we spend talking with you, the more effective we are.

This summer, our canvassers will gather thousands of signatures in support of funding our state's premier conservation program: Florida Forever. We're laying the groundwork to convince state legislators to set aside a third of revenues from real estate transactions to conserving and restoring the natural areas that make Florida a great place to live.

With your support, I believe we can make the difference for our open spaces.

Sincerely,

Alike Moncrief
State Director



How do you want to be remembered?

You can be remembered as someone who cared enough to keep up the fight for a cleaner, greener, healthier future by making a bequest to Environment Florida or the Environment Florida Research & Policy Center.

For information, call: 1-800-841-7299, or email PlannedGiving@EnvironmentFlorida.org.

Recent action

How to build a better, greener Florida

Florida families could save \$590 every year on their electricity bills by 2030 if the government invests in the energy efficiency of our buildings today, according to a new report by Environment Florida. Saving energy in our buildings would also help Florida's fight against global warming, reducing global warming pollution from buildings by 35 percent—the equivalent of taking 12.6 million cars off the road or shutting down 15 coal-fired power plants.

"It's time to build better," said Environment Florida Director Alike Moncrief. "Bold efficiency measures for buildings can cut energy use in our homes and businesses by more than a quarter by 2030, reducing pollution and saving consumers money."

Our report, "Building a Better America: Reducing Pollution and Saving Money with Efficiency," analyzes the benefits Florida and other states would see if we committed to dramatically improving the energy efficiency of new and existing buildings. Visit envfl.org/buildingbetter to download and read the report.

Better Buildings Challenge

In December, the Obama administration announced the Better Buildings Challenge, which includes 60 chief executives, mayors, university presidents and labor leaders. The leaders have committed to invest nearly \$2 billion of private capital into energy-efficiency projects to upgrade the performance of office, industrial, municipal, hospital, university, community college and school buildings.

The administration also announced a \$2 billion commitment to energy upgrades of federal buildings using long-term energy savings to pay for up-front costs.

"Today's high-efficiency homes and buildings prove that we have the technology and skills to drastically improve the efficiency of our buildings while simultaneously improving their comfort and affordability," said Alike Moncrief, Environment Florida director.



University of Central Florida

▲ Green roofs, like this one at the University of Central Florida, could help Floridians save energy. You can view the report, "Building Better," online at www.envfl.org/buildingbetter.



EPA moves to cut carbon pollution from power plants

On March 27, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposed limits on carbon pollution from new power plants. If passed, they will be the first nationwide limits on the largest single source of the carbon pollution that fuels global warming.

As scientists, doctors and other experts have been warning us for years, cutting carbon pollution is critical because global warming will bring everything from dirtier air and more deadly heat waves, to more devastating floods and extreme weather.

In the Path of the Storm

In the weeks before the EPA's historic announcement, Environment Florida's national federation, Environment America, released a report documenting why action to cut carbon pollution and tackle global warming is needed. The report, "In the Path of the Storm," found that four out of five Americans live in areas that have been hit by at least one recent weather-related disaster, and documented the latest science warning that global warming could lead to certain extreme weather events becoming even more common in the future.

Our federation also launched an interactive online map, available at www.EnvironmentAmerica.org, where citizens can see state-by-state and even county-by-county records of which weather-related disasters hit when, and then take action in support of EPA carbon pollution limits. The report and map received extensive press attention, including stories in The Washington Post and USA Today.

The real battle began after the EPA's announcement, as utilities, coal companies and other corporate polluters began spending millions to convince the Obama administration to weaken or abandon the standards altogether.

Scare tactics

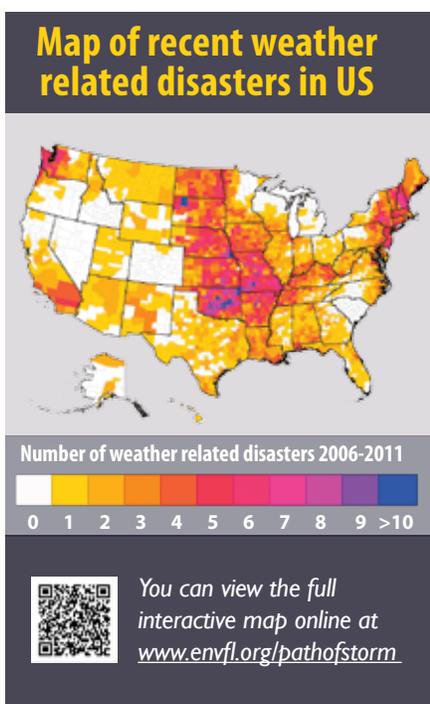
Through paid ads and armies of lobbyists within Congress, the polluters are

trying to scare the American public and the Obama administration into thinking that we can't afford to adopt these commonsense standards.

We know that we can't afford to not adopt carbon pollution standards for power plants, so Environment America and our allies launched an unprecedented push to educate and mobilize citizens in support of the standards in Pennsylvania and Ohio—two states that we knew would be in the spotlight this election year.

Our on-the-ground organizers are gathering tens of thousands of public comments in support of the standards, holding press events to help raise the profile of the issue, and reaching out to public health groups and local environmental groups to demonstrate broad support.

If all goes well, the EPA is expected to finalize these carbon pollution standards for new power plants by the end of 2012, and begin developing standards for existing coal-fired power plants in the near future.



Paul Clark, Creative Commons

On the verge of a clean water victory

When you ask Floridians their favorite parts of Florida, many will point to our many waters, from our world-famous beaches to Tampa Bay and Wakulla Springs. These destinations draw Florida residents and tourists by the millions every year, and they're a cherished part of our natural heritage.

But despite their popularity, for many years our waterways were not nearly as protected as they should have been. Thanks to two polluter-driven Supreme Court decisions in the last decade, many of our streams, including some that feed into cherished waterways, may not have been protected by the Clean Water Act.

Environment Florida, along with sister groups across the country, played a critical role in getting the administration to act—from talking to more than half a million people about the issue last year to gathering 88,000 public comments in support of the proposed guidelines to mobilizing more than 500 local elected officials, farmers, and recreational businesses in the early part of this year.

Just last month the administration announced that it is in the last stage before officially finalizing these protections. Once they are final, this will be the biggest victory for our waterways in the last decade. This is a victory we should all celebrate.

▲ Wakulla Springs State Park

310 N. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(850) 224-5944

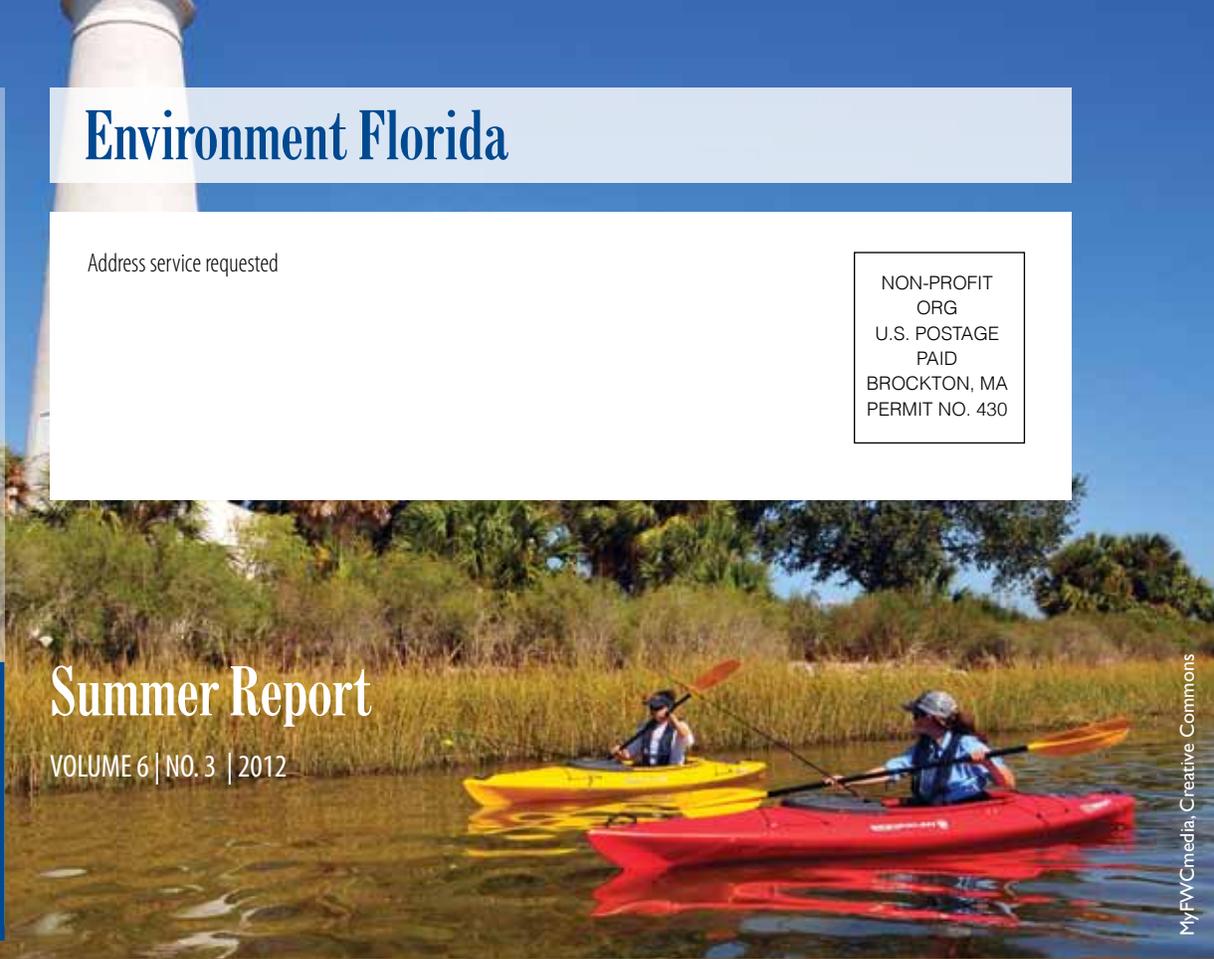
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Environment Florida

Our mission

We all want clean air, clean water and open spaces. But it takes independent research and tough-minded advocacy to win concrete results for our environment, especially when powerful interests stand in the way of environmental progress.

That's the idea behind Environment Florida. We focus exclusively on protecting Florida's air, water and open spaces. We speak out and take action at the local, state and national levels to improve the quality of our environment and our lives.

Opposition to bill worsening oil addiction

This February, House Republicans introduced a major transportation reauthorization bill, which cuts all funding for bike and pedestrian safety and cripples environmental review for transportation projects.

It also includes proposals to open areas off Florida's coasts—as well as the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge—to drilling, and to open landscapes in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming to oil shale extraction. On top of this, Speaker of the House John Boehner has said that he would attach approval of the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline to this bill if it were not otherwise immediately approved.

“Transportation is responsible for one-third of our global warming pollution and two-thirds of our dangerous dependence on oil, but it doesn't have to be this way” said Aliki Moncrief, director of Environment Florida. “We should invest in clean, efficient travel choices such as public transit that will move our nation away from oil and toward a brighter, healthier future.”



Rudy Umans, Shutterstock

A new bill could plunge us deeper into oil addiction and open Florida's world-famous coastline to offshore drilling.

Read more online at:
www.EnvironmentFlorida.org