



Continuous monthly issues since June 2009!

Trip Spotlight: Suwannee River Wilderness Trail

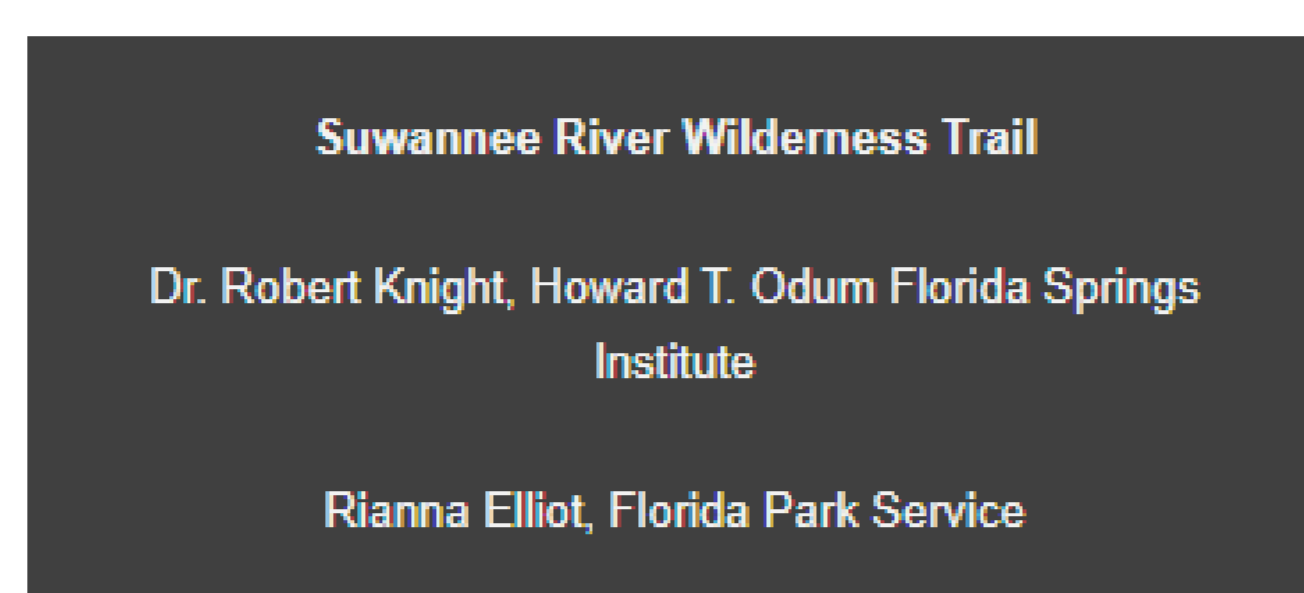


As the temperatures begin to fall (we hope), we are excited about our 12th annual Fall Paddle Florida on the Suwannee River Wilderness Trail. Join us for this epic adventure, October 18 - 23, as we paddle 65 miles from Madison Blue Springs to the town of Branford, passing many of Florida's iconic springs along the way. Our evening programs will include presentations from the Florida Springs Institute, the Suwannee River Water Management District, the Florida Park Service and on our final night, Paddle Florida favorite, Grant Peoples will help us celebrate the occasion with a show at Adams Tract River Camp before we finish this five-day expedition the next day in Branford. We encourage our regular participants and new paddlers to sign up before the deadline on October 4th.

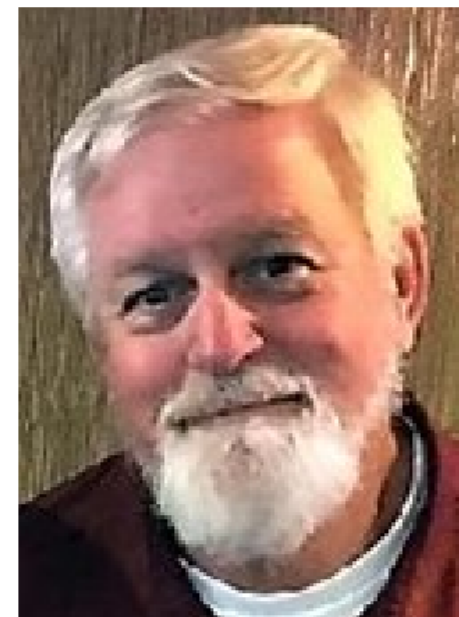


View a video of highlights from Paddle Florida's Suwannee River Wilderness Trail trip

Paddle Florida Program Update



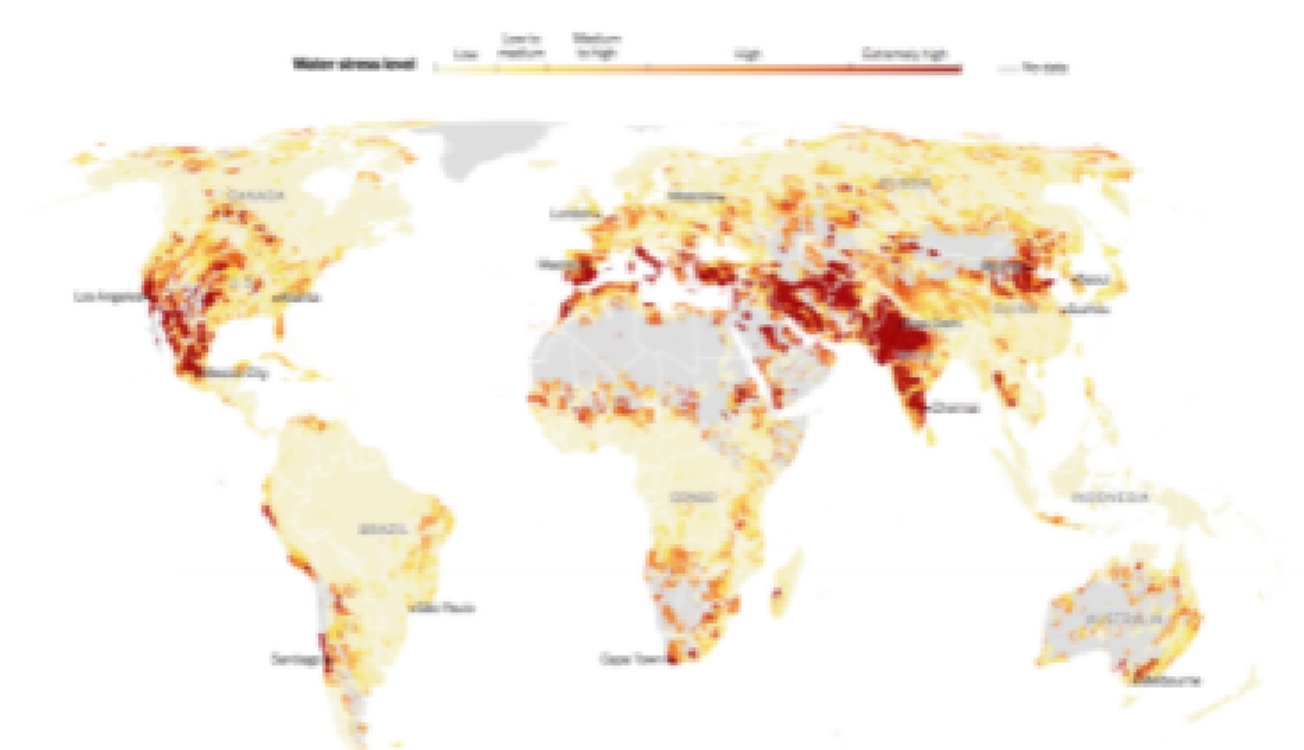
In Memoriam



Last month, we lost one of our Paddle Florida family, Fred Borg has been a fixture on over 15 trips over the past ten years. Fred was a rare breed: a true intellectual with whom we spent many days and nights on the water and around the campfire, where he would tell jokes and endless stories about his time in the Army, his subsequent career as an addictions counselor and his endless adventures paddling in far flung locales all over the continent. We will miss the thoughtful musings and kind-hearted nature of this witty, urbane and unforgettable character. He is gone way too soon, aged 68.

A Quarter of Humanity Faces Looming Water Crisis

By Somini Sengupta and Weiyi Cai, The New York Times



Countries that are home to one-fourth of Earth's population face an increasingly urgent risk: The prospect of running out of water.

From India to Iran to Botswana, 17 countries around the world are currently under extremely high water stress, meaning they are using almost all the water they have, according to new World Resources Institute data published Tuesday.

Many are arid countries to begin with, some are squandering what water they have. Several are relying too heavily on groundwater, which instead they should be replenishing and saving for times of drought.

In those countries are several big, thirsty cities that have faced acute shortages recently, including São Paulo, Brazil; Chennai, India; and Cape Town, which in 2018 narrowly beat what it called Day Zero — the day when all its dams would be dry. [Read more...]

Not one more drop. By Dr. Robert Knight. Executive Director, Howard T. Odum Florida Springs Institute.

A spring without flow is a stagnant (synonyms: still, motionless, immobile, inert, lifeless, dead, standing, slack, static, stationary, etc.) sinkhole. It is not completely dead but looks and stinks like it is dead. For all intents and purposes, a non-flowing spring has none of the qualities that make Florida's springs so inspiring, sacred and alive.

It is not in the public's best interest to dry up any of Florida's artesian springs. Healthy springs support a vast and abundant assemblage of charismatic and endangered wildlife, nourish our many rivers and lakes during droughts, and are the sought-after playground for tens of millions of visitors each year.

Springs are essential for our local ecology and economy. Our governmental agencies responsible for protecting Florida's environmental and economic prosperity would be reckless and irresponsible to allow our priceless springs to stop flowing. [Read more...]

Climate Change and Retirement

By Tony Kendzior



Retirement for many is a 25 - 30 year trek into the future. And climate change is going to influence how those years are lived by most of us.

Here in Florida, we have 8,436 miles of shoreline. By 2050, experts tell us to expect 3 - 4 feet higher sea levels along the southeast coast. What will happen to people living there as storms appear with 10 - 15 foot storm surges and their lives get uprooted?

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) says the following: In the United States, counties directly on the shoreline constitute less than 10% of the total land area (not including Alaska and Hawaii). However, these same counties account for 40% of the total population of the US. The population density of shoreline counties is over six times greater than inland counties and growing. In the 40 years from 1970 to 2010, these same counties grew by almost 40%, to which you can add another 8% by 2020.

Some 660 million people, about 11% of the world's 7.6 billion people, live in areas less than 33 feet above sea level. It doesn't require a degree in oceanography to know seas pose a major risk to coastal populations, economies, infrastructure, and ecosystems around the world. [Read more...]

Florida Flora & Fauna Spotlight

Beloved, tiny FL Key deer would lose protection under new Trump administration recommendation. By Julie Hauserman, Florida Phoenix

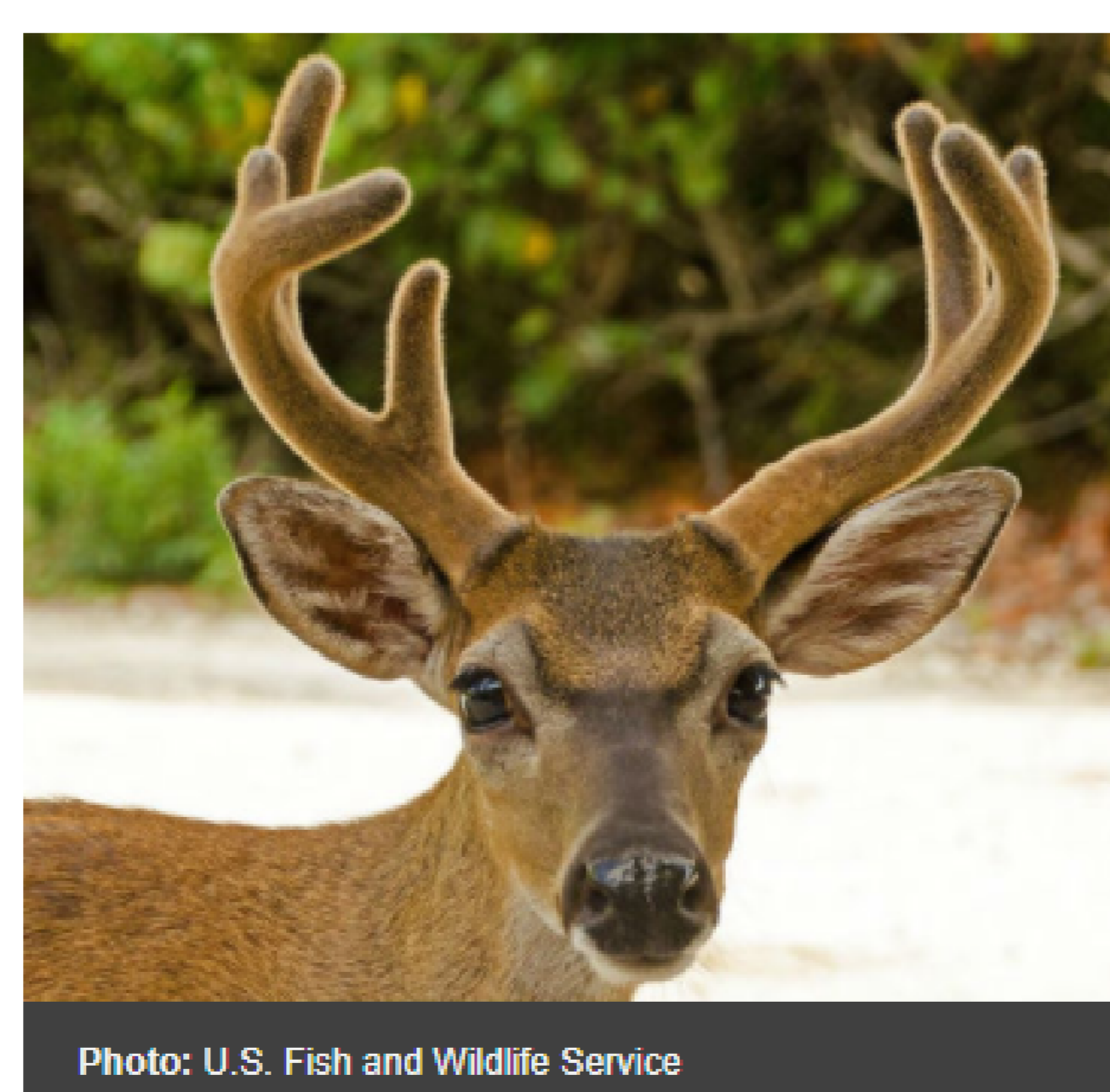


Photo: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The Trump administration is recommending that one of Florida's most iconic wild creatures — the diminutive Key deer which roam in the state's southern-most islands — lose protection under the Endangered Species Act.

The deer — which number 1,000 or less — occur nowhere else on Earth. They have been listed as endangered since 1967. The National Key Deer Refuge on Big Pine Key was established in 1957 to protect the animals that some called "toy deer."

The recommendation to strip the deer of protection under the Endangered Species Act is part of a three-year "work plan" from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It's the first step in a longer bureaucratic process, which will involve public meetings (the first on August 22 in Marathon) and official notice in the Federal Register.

News about the possible stripping of protections for the Key deer comes the same week that Interior Secretary David Bernhardt announced sweeping changes to the entire Endangered Species Act which will weaken protections for thousands of imperiled creatures. Those changes are likely headed for a court battle. [Read more...]



Inspiring. Meaningful. Adventure.

2019-20 Season

Suwannee River Wilderness Trail October 18-23, 2019 Celebrate Florida's version of autumn on its most famous river. The trip spans 65 miles of the scenic Suwannee and a portion of the (northern) Withlacoochee, from Madison Blue Spring to Branford. This section features dozens of clear blue springs perfect for swimming and snorkeling. Register by: October 4

Flagler Coastal Wildlife Festival November 1-3, 2019 Paddle with dolphins, meet rescued sea turtles, and float by historic forts as you immerse yourself in the rich cultural history and natural beauty of Florida's northeast coast. Register by: October 18

Wekiva/St. John's River Ramble December 5-8, 2019 Join us for a paddle down the iconic Rock Springs Run, back to Wekiva Springs State Park, and on to Wilson's Landing in Seminole County as we camp in rustic cabins for the first two nights and at Wilson's Landing on the way to the finish at Blue Spring State Park in Volusia County. At a total of less than 30 miles, this trip is perfect for beginners to paddle camping. Register by: November 21

Florida Keys Challenge January 15-22, 2020 Paddle the azure coastal waters of the Middle Florida Keys, including the length of the famed 7-Mile Bridge, explore mangrove tunnels, and watch sea turtle surface beside your kayak, and enjoy a snorkeling trip out to Lone Key. Register by: January 1

Wild, Wonderful Withlacoochee February 13-18, 2020 Beginning at Lake Panasoffkee, paddlers will thread their way through hardwood swamps and tannic streams on a 60-mile journey to the Gulf of Mexico. The adventure includes a side trip to the colorful Rainbow River and its world class first magnitude spring. Register by: February 1

Choctawhatchee Challenge March 13-19, 2020 Get away from it all into the heart of the Panhandle as we paddle 86 miles of the mighty Choctawhatchee. This is a journey into Wild Florida where wildlife far outnumber humans, and paddlers can stumble upon spectacular springs. Register by: February 28

Suwannee River Paddling Festival April 3-5, 2020 With camping atop the bluff overlooking two beautiful rivers, our season-capping festival takes place at Suwannee River State Park near Live Oak. The weekend will offer supported 8-12 mile paddling options on both the Suwannee and Withlacoochee Rivers, a concert featuring Paddle Florida's favorite musicians, and educational presentations from regional waterway experts. Register by: March 20

Earth Day Celebration: FloriBama Expedition on the Perdido River April 11-16, 2020 Paddling the Florida/Alabama border, enjoy beach camping along a cozy meandering river to the more open waters of Perdido Bay as we explore the most diverse set of ecosystems of the season. Register by: March 28

Earth Day Celebration: Springtime on the Ochlockonee April 18-22, 2020 From wild Tupelo honey to fresh Gulf oysters, experience the Panhandle's Ochlockonee River which winds through state and national forest lands on 76 miles of Florida's most remote wilderness river trail. Register by: April 2

Note: Many of these trips have historically sold out before the registration deadline, so to ensure you have a spot, please register early.

How To: Paddle a Tandem Kayak



Tandem kayaks, or doubles, are a great way for two people to get out on the water together. Watch or read on to learn more about tandem kayaks and how to practice paddling, navigating, and turning a tandem kayak! [Read more...]

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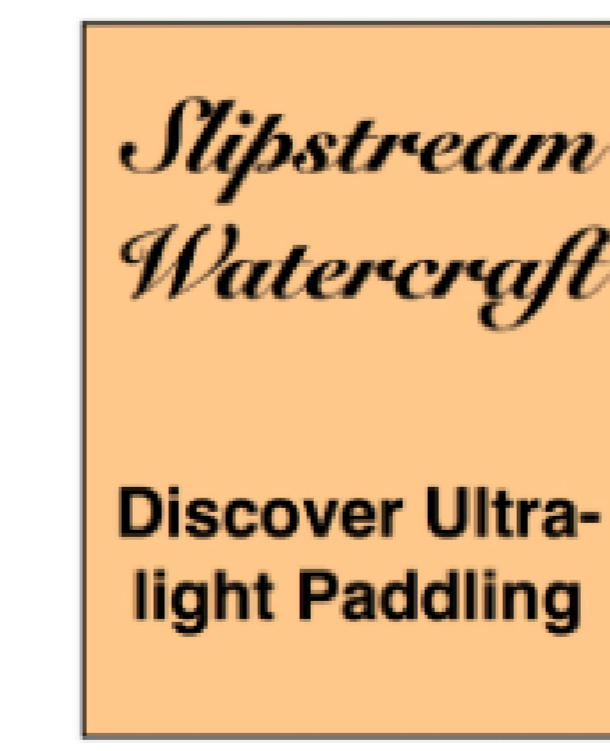
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As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Paddle Florida is dedicated to promoting water conservation, wildlife preservation, springs restoration, and waterways protection across Florida. You can help us meet our water conservation missions by (1) joining us on one or more paddling adventures scheduled annually on Florida's wild and scenic rivers and coastlines, or (2) donating to Paddle Florida via our secure PayPal connection or through AmazonSmile.

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