



## Reaching Out to Latin America



Last week Paddle Florida staff along with the [Florida Society for Ethical Ecotourism](#) presented information to representatives of Venezuela, Bolivia, Columbia, Mexico, Chile and Panama. The meeting at the University of Central Florida's [Rosen School of Hospitality Management](#) was titled Environmental Engagement and the Economy, set up by the [World Affairs Council of Central Florida](#), the local implementer of the U.S. State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program. Sergio Alvarez, assistant professor at the School, presented about sustainable global tourism in general, and how climate change is impacting Florida in particular. Alan Fyall, Associate Dean, welcomed the group to UCF and echoed some of the remarks for Prof. Alvarez. Janice Hindson from the Florida Society for Ethical Ecotourism was next to present about the need for consistent standards for outfitters and purveyors of eco-tourism in Florida, and Paddle Florida presented about how they have been working to create awareness about water conservation, wildlife preservation, restoration of springs and protection of waterways in Florida, and how our mission and paddling trips across the state have expanded over the past 12 years. Heather van Dyk, project manager at WACCF, said that "the meeting and presentations to our Latin American neighbors was in keeping with their mission to promote global understanding and connectedness".



## 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 Springs 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 Looe Key.  
*Register by: January 1*

### Wild, Wonderful Withlacoochee

**February 13-16, 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 13-15, 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: Florida Bama 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 26*

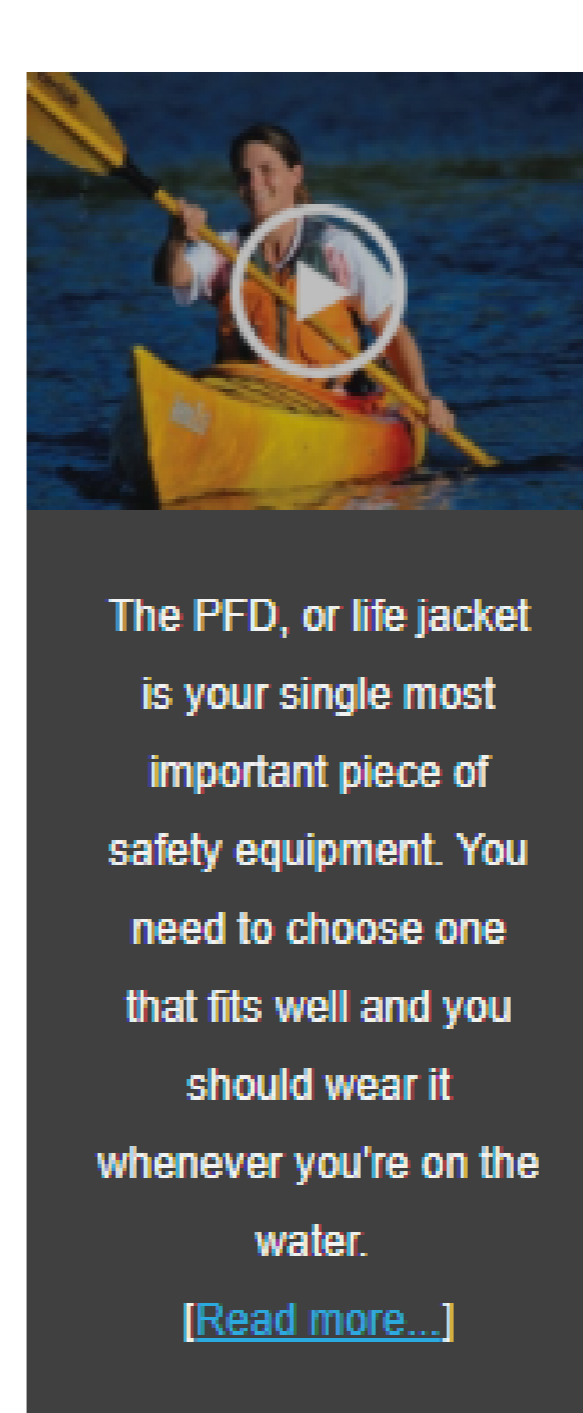
### Earth Day Celebration: Springtime on the Ochlockonee

**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:

Choose the right life jacket for kayaking



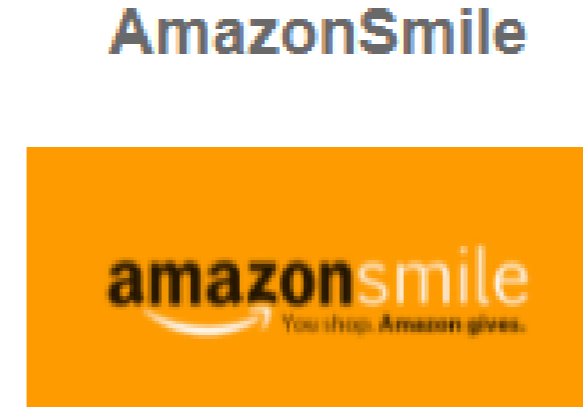
## Like us on Facebook

27,000+ fans and counting!



Reconnect with paddling friends and make new ones on Paddle Florida's [Facebook page](#). Our daily feeds provide updates on the news impacting Florida's waterways and wildlife as well as our upcoming trips. Send us your favorite photo depicting paddling in Florida and it might be selected as our "Picture of the Day".

## Support Paddle Florida with AmazonSmile



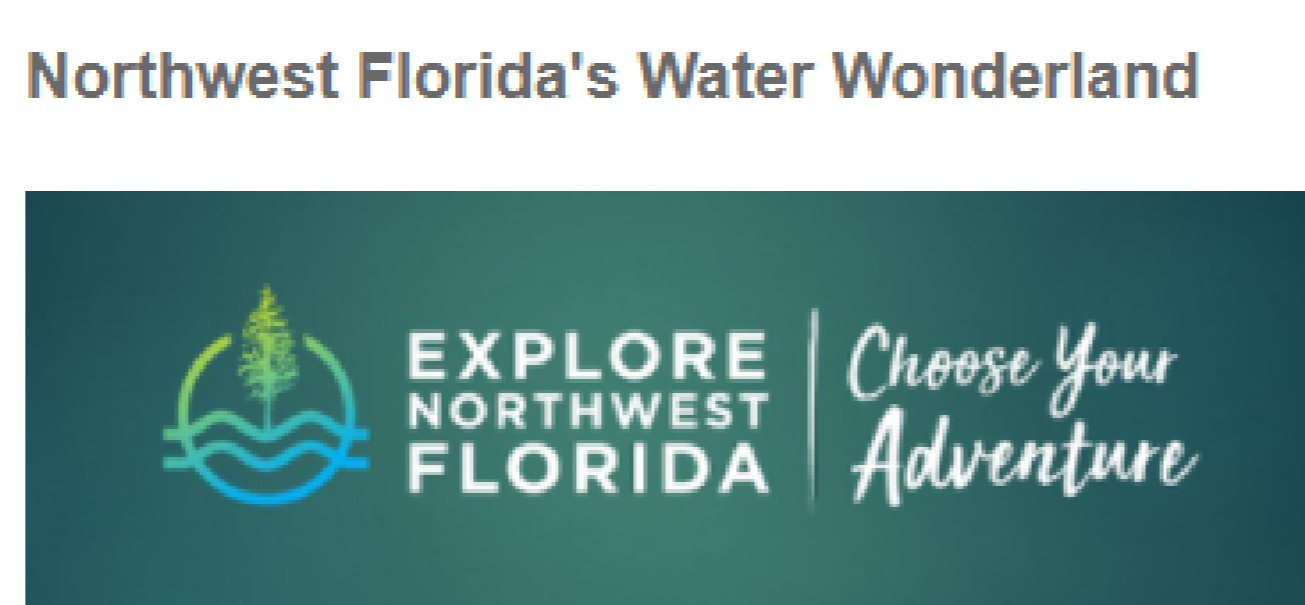
As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Paddle Florida is dedicated to promoting water conservation, wildlife preservation, springs restoration, and waterways protection across Florida. You can help us meet our water conservation missions by (1) joining us on one or more paddling adventures scheduled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

If you're an Amazon shopper, you can sign up for AmazonSmile at [this link](#) and confirm your desire to support us. Amazon will then donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to Paddle Florida.



## Your ad can appear here!

Do you provide a paddling oriented product or service? Consider placing an ad in our monthly newsletter. You can reach over 6,550 (and growing) monthly subscribers for \$75/month, or get two months free by promoting your product or business over 12 months for \$750! Contact Bill Richards at (352) 377-8342 or [bill@paddleflorida.org](mailto:bill@paddleflorida.org) for details.



Explore Northwest Florida is a team of Northwest Florida counties that have joined together to promote regional tourism, stretching from the Apalachicola River and Bay estuary system in the east to the coastal sand dunes and Choctawhatchee River in the west. In between you'll find pristine warm gulf waters and crystal clear cool-water natural springs spotted throughout, as well as rivers, lakes, creeks and streams that provide a deep blue-green beauty to bestow.

Our water wonderland provides both fresh and salty palates to satisfy any paddler's appetite. Choose Your Adventure - kayak or canoe down a lazy river scenic blueway where the only sound you will hear is the intriguing songs of wildlife in the midst, jump on a paddle board as you cascade over the salty waves, be amazed as you skim over the pristine waters of the largest concentration of springs in the southeast, or challenge your skill as you venture out to secluded whitewater rapids.

Northwest Florida's water wonderland, a paddler's paradise awaits [www.explorenwflorida.com](http://www.explorenwflorida.com).

### Paddle Florida Program Update

- Edwin McCook from the Suwannee River Water Management District  
Suwannee River Wilderness Trail
- "Adventures of Anabelle Lyn" at Ochlockonee River State Park  
Springtime on the Ochlockonee
- Earth Day Remarks from FDEP Secretary Noah Valenstein at Bald Point State Park  
Springtime on the Ochlockonee

## Paddle Boarders Help Clean Up Biscayne National's Mangroves

By Amanda Rosa, *The Miami Herald*



Photo: Matt Johnson, National Park Service

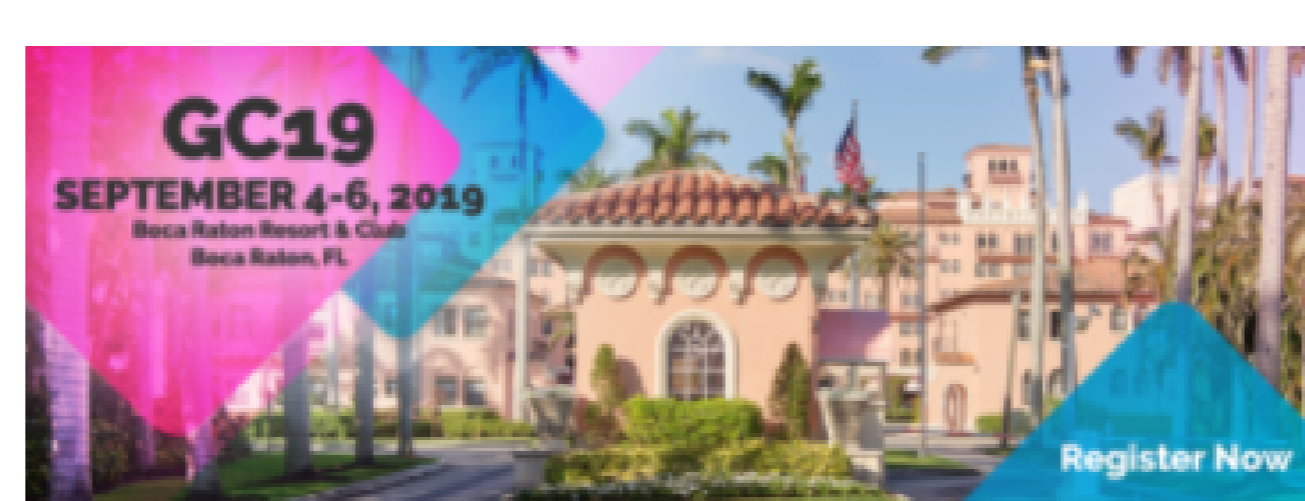
The mangroves at Biscayne National Park are home to everything from baby fish to crabs — and, unfortunately, an awful lot of trash. Now, a small fleet of volunteers on paddleboards are trying to clean things up.

After a month of weekly trips, the cleanup crews already have pulled 767 pounds of plastic, rope, fishing twine and other marine debris out of the water.

Biscayne National Park Institute, a Florida National Parks Association entity that provides educational programs and boat tours, takes volunteers around beaches, sea turtle nests and along mangrove shorelines every Tuesday and last Saturday of the month from 9 a.m. to about noon.

So far, the volunteer response has been strong and most of the Tuesday trips are booked for about two months out, said Frank Castillo, a Biscayne National Park Institute naturalist and first mate. A boat carrying paddle boats, buckets and life jackets can only take up to 12 people on the cleanup trip, and spots fill fast. [\[Read more...\]](#)

## Register NOW for the 2019 Florida Governor's Conference on Tourism



Hosted annually by VISIT FLORIDA, the Florida Governor's Conference on Tourism is the premier educational conference for the Florida tourism industry. This year's event will take place September 4-6, 2019 at the Boca Raton Resort & Club.

With a conference registration, you gain access to exclusive content, educational sessions, networking functions and the GC19 Marketplace. Explore the latest trends and opportunities for the tourism industry alongside representatives from destinations, attractions, hotels, resorts, educational institutions, travel brands, advertising agencies, media outlets and more. With a wide array of valuable session topics, GC19 is sure elevate your business to the next level as you accelerate your professional and personal development. Register now to secure your spot. Learn more [here](#).

### Springs and Civic Duty

By Dr. Robert Knight

*Executive Director,  
Howard T. Odum Florida Springs Institute*

A small group of private citizens gave their all last month for Rainbow Springs. Faced with a state-sanctioned plan to add additional harm to this beloved but impaired natural resource, five individuals penned their names to a legal petition challenging the state's policy.

They are the few and the brave who fought for the many. Following a week when America celebrates patriots who sacrificed their lives to fight tyranny, we all should thank the Rainbow Five for their heroic actions.

Rainbow Springs currently has the highest average flow of any spring system in Florida and probably in the United States. While this distinction is noteworthy, it does not compensate for the fact that long-term average flows at Rainbow have already declined by about 20%, due largely to regional groundwater pumping.

Science shows that significant harm to the environmental health of Rainbow Springs is evident with just a 5% decline in flow. In other words, the health and aesthetics of Rainbow Springs are already impaired due to permitted wells extracting several times the acceptable quantity of groundwater. [\[Read more...\]](#)

## Florida Flora & Fauna Spotlight

Florida manatee deaths could reach record high  
By Craig Pittman, *Tampa Bay Times*

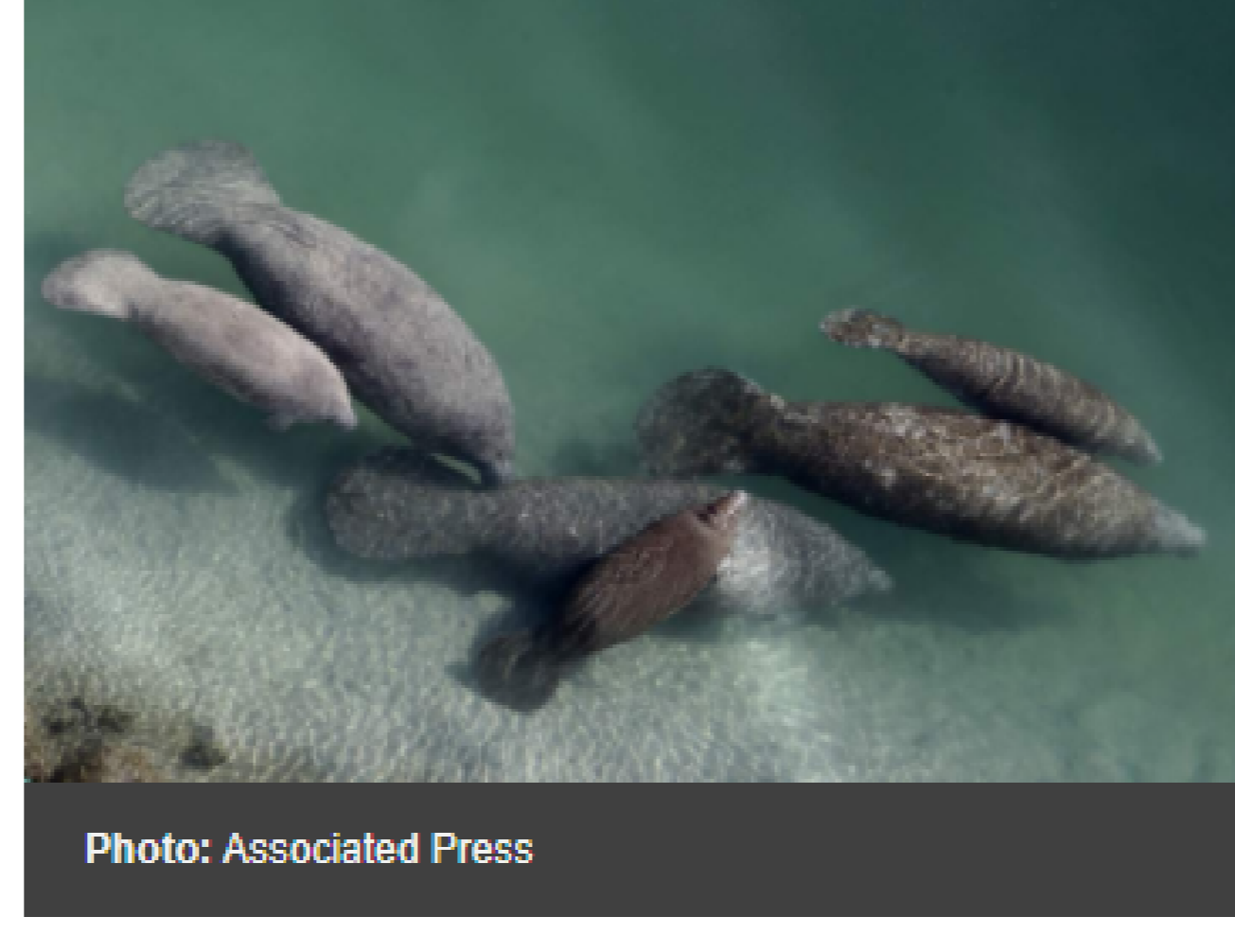


Photo: Associated Press

Speeding boaters have killed so many manatees this year that Florida is likely to soon break the record for boat-related manatee deaths — a record that was set just last year.

As of July 9, boaters had fatally clobbered 89 manatees, according to records kept by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. That's just 33 short of the record for a full year, and with more than five months left to go. In this same time period last year, the number hit by boats was just 65.

"This is really an unprecedented number," Martine de Wit said Monday. She oversees the state's Marine Mammal Pathology Laboratory in St. Petersburg, where every dead manatee is examined by experts searching for a cause of death.

Look for the record to be broken before summer ends. [\[Read more...\]](#)