Friends,

We just wrapped up another year of strong growth for Friends of the Everglades and we’re excited to share with you our successes in this year’s annual report. This is the result of a lot of hard work from our board, partners, and staff but all of this was made possible by you – our supporters!

Nowhere was Friends’ impact more evident than on the policy front. After years of being a leader on the development of the new Lake Okeechobee manual, we saw a much improved plan come down to the finish line. We continued our advocacy for green harvesting with the production of a mini-docuseries showing the damaging impact of sugarcane burning. On growth issues we were able to help keep commercial aviation out of the Homestead Air Reserve Base with a four-year moratorium and we worked with the revitalized Hold the Line coalition to advocate against the concerning South Dade Logistics & Technology District proposal.

In 2022, we were able to turn a corner on our legislative accountability work, not just reporting on the state session but getting ahead of bills as they progressed. Our reporting and advocacy helped kill two bad environmental bills, and we hope we can continue to count on you in our grassroots campaigns to reach lawmakers this year.

We look forward to continuing to grow our impact in 2023, keeping in front of policy issues and adding to our capacity in science and in our education outreach with the Young Friends of the Everglades program.

We are hugely grateful for your continued support and for making our mission possible.

Sincerely,

PHIL KUSHLAN
BOARD PRESIDENT

The miracle of light pours over the green and brown expanse of saw grass and of water, shining and slow moving below, the grass and water that is the meaning and the central fact of the Everglades of Florida. It is a river of grass.

— Marjory Stoneman Douglas
DOUBLING DOWN ON A LEGACY OF IMPACT

Marjory Stoneman Douglas reshaped the world’s perception of the Everglades in 1947, when she published the groundbreaking book *The Everglades: River of Grass*. It’s hard to think of three words in the English language that have more dramatically influenced the understanding of an ecosystem. Those words continue to guide our work for true restoration.

Friends of the Everglades remains committed to restoring the missing link between Lake Okeechobee and the southern Everglades so sufficient volumes of clean water can flow south, all the way to Florida Bay. Marjory was not one to blindly cheer half-measures during her decades of advocacy. Friends of the Everglades is proud to carry on that tradition today, working to ensure the effectiveness of massive, expensive engineering projects that are underway in the name of Everglades restoration.

Accountability is at the heart of our work across the ecosystem — from defensive legal action to halt dangerous developments to legislative watchdog efforts in Tallahassee and stopping sugarcane burning in the Glades.

Water quality and the interconnected nature of the Greater Everglades ecosystem loom large for us. Marjory saw the connection and the need for thoughtful preservation long before many others did. She trusted that Friends of the Everglades would carry on the work that she dedicated much of her life to. With your support, we have.

We know there’s more work to do. Another toxic-algae summer looms. Florida’s profiteers and polluters are whittling away at our state’s natural spaces and environmental protections. We’re committed to finding lasting solutions for this one-of-a-kind ecosystem and across Florida.

Our goals:

- Compel government agencies to comply with existing environmental laws, and resist any efforts to weaken such laws.
- Encourage politicians to recognize the long consequences of their actions.
- Spread awareness of the importance of the Everglades to the South Florida ecosystem.

The mission of Friends of the Everglades is to preserve, protect, and restore the only Everglades in the world.
Friends of the Everglades gained significant momentum in 2022. With your support, we:

Successfully advocated for a new Lake Okeechobee management plan that, for the first time, considers the damaging effects of toxic-algae blooms and recognizes the need to send more clean water south to the Everglades. The new Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual (LOSOM) represents overdue progress for the northern estuaries and southern Everglades.

Helped kill environmentally damaging bills in Tallahassee, including:

- A seagrass “mitigation” bill that would have made it easier for developers to destroy seagrass. In light of Florida’s historic manatee die-off, caused largely by starvation, this bill was among the most dangerous of the 2022 session.
- Senate Bill 2508, which would have protected outdated water-supply rules that benefit the sugarcane industry over the Everglades and northern estuaries, and posed a hazard to fragile wetlands throughout the state.

Pushed for an end to the unjust practice of sugarcane burning, which disproportionately harms the Glades region south of Lake Okeechobee. Pre-harvest sugarcane burning leaves communities vulnerable to air pollution, health risks and economic stress. Our mini-docuseries, The Last Burn Season, featured community members who experience personal hardship from sugarcane burning. We also pushed for a repeal of the so-called Right to Farm bill, which Tallahassee lawmakers passed and Gov. DeSantis signed in 2021, granting Big Sugar sweeping protections from lawsuits related to burning.

Advocated to hold the line in south Miami-Dade. Our work with the Hold the Line coalition forced a reduction in the size of the South Dade Logistics & Technology District — a proposal to bring dense industrial development to hundreds of flood-prone acres of farmland in Homestead. Eight Miami-Dade County Commissioners neglected to vote in the best interests of the Everglades and Biscayne Bay. Now, we’re supporting a legal challenge, with hopes that the courts will succeed where the County Commission failed.

Kept commercial aviation out of Homestead Air Reserve Base. For more than two years, we’ve been working to block a proposal from Miami-Dade County to enter an agreement with the U.S. Air Force to allow non-military aviation at Homestead Air Reserve Base (HARB). In November, the Miami-Dade County Commission voted to stop negotiations for the joint-use agreement at HARB, and in December, Congress passed a four-year moratorium on non-military aviation at the base, which sits between Biscayne National Park and Everglades National Park.

Evaluated action taken on the state’s Blue-Green Algae Task Force recommendations. Working with allies including Waterkeepers Florida, we determined only 12.5% of the task force’s science-based solutions had been enacted. We continue to push for the remainder of the recommendations to be adopted by state policymakers, to avoid another dangerous toxic-algae crisis.

Created the Maggy Hurchalla Opportunity Fund to continue the late Maggy Hurchalla’s vision focused on ensuring that sensible growth policies prevail — with the goal of preserving the Everglades and ensuring clean water for all Floridians. The fund will support legal work and advocacy to protect the wetlands and green spaces that Maggy protected during her lifetime.

Delivered our Young Friends of the Everglades program to more classrooms, bringing our Everglades Learning Exploration Kit to fourth- and fifth-graders across South Florida, and north to the Treasure Coast. The kits include four professionally illustrated, Florida standards-based lessons about the Everglades and Marjory Stoneman Douglas, as well as classroom sets of books and other activities.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER

Dear Friends,

Two driving forces have shaped Friends of the Everglades’ work since our founding in 1969: accountability and impact.

It’s a tradition we’re proud to advance with your support, and 2022 was a stand-out year in that regard.

At every level of government — local, state and federal — we drew upon scientific and legal expertise to protect the Greater Everglades from threats, and to hold policymakers accountable for decisions that impact our green spaces and waterways.

In Miami-Dade County, we successfully halted a concerning proposal to bring private air traffic to Homestead Air Reserve Base, not far from the fragile waters of Biscayne National Park.

We also forced a reduction in size of the massive South Dade industrial complex proposed for land that is needed for Everglades restoration. Friends of the Everglades supported a veto of the project by Mayor Daniella Levine Cava — and when commissioners overrode that veto, we helped fund a legal challenge.

In Tallahassee, when damaging environmental legislation emerged (as it does every year), we sounded the alarms, explained what was at stake, and worked to kill two of the worst bills — with help from allies like you.

And at the federal level, Friends launched a strategy to reform the sugar program in the federal Farm Bill, which perpetuates Big Sugar’s pollution of the Everglades. We assembled allies and put a spotlight on the injustice of sugarcane burning to make a case to Congress ahead of the 2023 Farm Bill.

Our founder, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, refused to greenwash politicians or blindly cheer on half-measures. In 1993, she famously demanded Gov. Lawton Chiles remove her from the Everglades Forever Act; she thought it benefitted wealthy sugarcane growers more than the Everglades. She was right.

Seventy-five years after Marjory’s book The Everglades: River of Grass was published, we are growing our impact. We secured significant new grants in 2022, allowing us to elevate our Legislative Accountability work and expand the Young Friends of the Everglades program.

It’s clear there’s an appetite for science-driven, fair-minded solutions for the Everglades. Thank you for empowering that work. It’s making a tangible difference.

For the Everglades,

Eve Samples
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
The Last Burn Season

Sugarcane burning leaves communities vulnerable to air pollution, health risks and economic stress. It’s time to forge a meaningful path to a long overdue solution. Over the course of five months, our mini-docuseries featured community members who shared their personal experiences living in the shadow of sugarcane burning. As long as the smoke continues to rise over the Glades, Friends of the Everglades will continue to call for the Last Burn Season.

2022 By the Numbers

10 livestream Clean Water Conversations hosted

30,000 Viewers engaged in Clean Water Conversations

8,863 supporters sent action alerts via 7 targeted actions to state and federal leaders on Everglades issues

10 Everglades Learning Exploration Kits for elementary classrooms in South Florida

6 videos created chronicling the injustice of sugarcane burning in The Last Burn season mini documentary series

75 years since the founding of Everglades National Park and publication of the book The Everglades: River of Grass

A Continued Legacy

IN 2022, WE EXPANDED the reach of our Marjory’s Circle program, adding new members dedicated to preserving the legacy of our founder, Marjory Stoneman Douglas. Members were celebrated with two special events: our second annual Marjory Stoneman Douglas Legacy Luncheon in Coconut Grove; and a “Wild Observations” walking tour through six sites hidden along Everglades National Park trails, guided by conservation artist Deborah Mitchell.

At the Legacy Luncheon, we were honored to present Theodora Long — Executive Director of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Biscayne Nature Center — with the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Defender of the Everglades award for her longstanding commitment to environmental education and encouragement of greater citizen participation in the protection of our natural environment.

Friends presented the Outstanding Scientific Achievement in Everglades Restoration award at the luncheon to Dr. Thomas Van Lent. No person has brought more scientific advancements in Everglades restoration science than Dr. Van Lent.

Members of Marjory’s Circle contribute $100 per month or $1,200 annually to help sustain the legacy of environmental hero, celebrated author, and Friends of the Everglades founder, Marjory Stoneman Douglas. This support ensures a continued role in preserving the future of our River of Grass and its connected waterways. To join, visit www.everglades.org/marjorys-circle.

Members

Lucie Alessio
Dr. Heidi Allespach
Mary Adams
Spencer Bartram
Cheryl Belles
Cristina Boeri
Marilyn Brooks
Adolphus Busch
Susan Cameron
Thomas Cole
Cam Collins
David Comstock
Vicki Conrad
Marvin and Lee Cook
Mary Culhane
Karla Darcai
Mary Esala
Scott Evaul
Alan Farago
Christopher Findlater
Patricia Forkan
The Jane Garnett and David Booth Charitable Fund
Teresa Garcia
Merle and Barry Ginsburg
Allyn Golub
Gary Graham
Billy Hinners
Lise Hirsch
Teresa Holmes
Gretchen Hurchalla
Marianne Ireland
Jackie Jack
Sebastian Jano
Richard Keeney
Lella Kight
Diane Balogh Kimes
Kim Kovel
John Kozak
James Kushlan
Philip Kushlan
Katrina Lawne
Maureen Lerner
Sarah Fell Lewin
Vicky Linville
Susan Lloyd
Elliott Mackle
Nicole Mader
David Marshall
Karen Marshburn
Wade Mayberry
James McDermott
Rising McDowell
Cynthia MIDwinter
Teresa Moore
Ty Nelson
Ann Nichols
Linda Penniman
Lisa Peterfreund
Leslie Kemp Poole
Dave Preston
David Preston
Jill Preston
Katharine Preston
Jill Reiter
Valerie Ricordi
Page Rogers
Kerry Ross
Steven Rowe
Thomas Rubio
Sharesheet Senior
Camila Quaresma-Sharp
Katy and Fred Sherman
Ranen Siegel
Martha Singletary
Don & Jeanett Slesnick
Robert Stein
Elynn Stevenson
Steven Swann
Sandra Thurkew
Joe Traba
Richard Trott
Elizabeth Kay Gibson Trust
Peter Upton
Mildy Vavada
Constance Washburn
Carol Waxler
David and Susan Welch
Terrell M. Wertz
Blair Wickstrom
Carrie Williams
Beverly Young

*Italics denote Founding Members

MEMBERS

Lisa Peterfreund
Leslie Kemp Poole
Dave Preston
David Preston
Jill Preston
Katharine Preston
Jill Reiter
Valerie Ricordi
Page Rogers
Kerry Ross
Steven Rowe
Thomas Rubio
Sharesheet Senior
Camila Quaresma-Sharp
Katy and Fred Sherman
Ranen Siegel
Martha Singletary
Don & Jeanett Slesnick
Robert Stein
Elynn Stevenson
Steven Swann
Sandra Thurkew
Joe Traba
Richard Trott
Elizabeth Kay Gibson Trust
Peter Upton
Mildy Vavada
Constance Washburn
Carol Waxler
David and Susan Welch
Terrell M. Wertz
Blair Wickstrom
Carrie Williams
Beverly Young

“I joined Marjory’s Circle because after doing a lot of research, I felt that they are the best group and best advocate for defending and promoting our Everglades. They’re our hope for the future.”

— Marjory’s Circle member

David Marshall

Theodora Long, Rex, Houston Cypress, Everglades Samples at the second annual Marjory Stoneman Douglas Legacy Luncheon.

The Last Burn Season

Glades residents speak out at the Stop the Burn rally on Saturday, Oct. 1, 2022, at Nancy Graham Centennial Square Park in front of the Florida Crystals headquarters.
Friends of the Everglades sponsored the Artists in Residence in the Everglades debut of “Passages”, an immersive installation created by artist Cornelius Tulloch (center) at ARIE’s Art + Environment Summit in December in Wynwood.

F.O.E STAFF
Eve Samples
Executive Director
Gil Smart
Policy Director
Allie Hartmann
Communications Director
Diane Kimes
Senior Development Director
Kymberly Hurchalla
Development Coordinator
Naomi Nixon
Senior Philanthropic Advisor
Leah Voss
Multimedia Producer
Miki Blumenthal
Office Manager/Bookkeeper

Champions Spotlight
These organizations provided game-changing support to Friends of the Everglades in 2022.

Everglades Protection Alliance
Linville Family Foundation
The Fine and Greenwald Foundation
Ruskoski Family Charitable Giving Fund
Barbra Streisand Foundation
The Sexton Family Foundation

3727 SE OCEAN BLVD.
SUITE 200, STUART
FL 34996
(305) 669-0858
info@everglades.org

Friends of the Everglades

F O E S P O N S O R S

These organizations provided game-changing support to Friends of the Everglades in 2022.

Everglades Protection Alliance
Linville Family Foundation
The Fine and Greenwald Foundation
Ruskoski Family Charitable Giving Fund
Barbra Streisand Foundation
The Sexton Family Foundation

Photos by Multimedia Producer Leah Voss

Graphic design donated by Florida Sportsman

Printing donated by Southeastern Printing
Friends of the Everglades partnered with Hulu on an animated video and public art initiative honoring Marjory Stoneman Douglas, with a monument opening in 2023 at Peacock Park in Miami.

Visit everglades.org to support!