

Message

**From:** Governor's Press Office [Governor'sPressOffice@eog.myflorida.com]  
**Sent:** 11/14/2017 6:45:05 PM  
**Subject:** FYI: Gov. Scott's Securing Florida's Future Budget Includes Historic Investment to Protect Florida's Environment

**FYI... From the Florida Department of Environmental Protection...**

**From:** Florida Department of Environmental Protection [mailto:FloridaDEP@public.govdelivery.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 14, 2017 1:04 PM  
**To:** Engel, Lauren <Lauren.Engel@dep.state.fl.us>  
**Subject:** Gov. Scott's Securing Florida's Future Budget Includes Historic Investment to Protect Florida's Environment

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Nov. 14, 2017**

**CONTACT: DEP Press Office, 850.245.2112, DEPNews@dep.state.fl.us**

## **Gov. Scott's Securing Florida's Future Budget Includes Historic Investment to Protect Florida's Environment**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – Governor Rick Scott's Securing Florida's Future budget recommends more than \$1.7 billion to protect and enhance Florida's environment - a more than \$220 million increase over the current year. The Securing Florida's budget builds on the key investments made by Governor Scott in Florida's environment over the past seven years, including Everglades restoration, springs protection, beach and shoreline restoration and renourishment, and the management and enhancement of some of Florida's most prized natural treasures, including Florida State Parks.

Governor Scott said, "Florida's beautiful outdoors enhance our communities and attract billions of visitors each year. From our white sandy beaches to our sparkling springs and world-renowned state park system, Florida's outstanding natural treasures are vital to our economy and are what makes Florida the most beautiful state in the nation. These investments are especially important for restoring our world-class beaches following the impacts of Hurricane Irma. As Governor, I've invested record funding into environmental protection, and I'm proud to propose \$1.7 billion to protect and preserve Florida's environment for future generations."

Florida Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Noah Valenstein said, "Florida is home to some of the most beautiful natural resources in the world, and Governor Scott has shown a true commitment to protecting them over the past seven years. I commend Governor Scott for continuing to make the protection of these resources a priority with his budget proposal. The Securing Florida's budget will allow DEP to continue to make real progress safeguarding our environment through partnerships and projects."

Governor Scott's 2018-19 budget recommendations include:

**\$355 million for Everglades restoration** – Surpassing last year's historic investment of \$225 million, Governor Scott is recommending a record investment of \$355 million for Everglades restoration. This funding will support projects that are vital to improving water quality and increasing water storage throughout the iconic Everglades ecosystem. This includes \$105 million for the C-43 Reservoir, which will provide 55 billion gallons of water storage when complete, as well as \$4 million for land acquisitions for key Everglades restoration projects moving forward.

This also includes \$50 million to expedite repairs to the federal Herbert Hoover Dike, which is vital to protecting communities surrounding Lake Okeechobee, as well as the natural and water resources within the greater Everglades ecosystem. Last year, Governor Scott championed \$50 million in funding to kick-start critical repairs to the Dike, which was the first time Florida has invested state funding into this critical federal project.

**Record \$100 million for beach restoration and renourishment** – Governor Scott is recommending a record \$100 million investment in beach restoration – the highest ever level of funding for beach restoration. This includes \$50 million for statewide beach renourishment, beach and dune restoration among other coastal restoration projects, and \$50 million toward the state's share of beach restoration to repair damages resulting from Hurricane Irma.

The budget also includes \$3.6 million for the Florida Resilient Coastline Initiative for additional coral reef protection, and will allow DEP to assist local governments with sea level rise planning and coastal resilience projects.

**Record \$55 million for springs restoration and protection projects** – Continuing his legacy of making historic investments in the restoration and protection of Florida's springs, Governor Scott's is recommending a record \$55 million for springs restoration. This funding will be used to fund projects vital to improving water quality and protecting water supply. Since 2011, Florida has invested records amounts into springs protections which has funded more than 140 projects to protect Florida's springs.

**Record \$50 million for Florida State Parks** – On top of Florida State Parks operating budget, Governor Scott is proposing \$50 million for facility improvements for Florida's award-winning state park system, which welcomed 32 million visitors last year. Governor Scott is also proposing an additional \$4 million to improve ADA accessibility, making parks more accessible to all visitors, and \$750,000 to partner with organizations to further the success of the Florida State Park System.

In 2013, under the Governor's leadership, Florida's State Park System won its third national Gold Medal for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management – no other state has won twice. This record investment demonstrates the Governor's commitment to continuing to improve and protect Florida's parks, greenways and trails for future generations of enjoyment, while also helping Florida win an unprecedented fourth Gold Medal.

**\$50 million for Florida Forever** – Governor Scott is proposing \$50 million for Florida Forever for the acquisition of rare and sensitive lands, including greenways and trails. By making strategic acquisitions, Governor Scott is working to ensure these prized properties are preserved and protected for future generations. Governor Scott's Securing Florida's Future budget includes more than \$172 million for land acquisition and management.

#### WHAT THEY ARE SAYING

**Eric Eikenberg, CEO of the Everglades Foundation**, said, "Governor Scott's environmental budget recommendation includes significant funding for America's Everglades. This includes expediting key features of the Central Everglades Plan and getting to work on storage south of Lake Okeechobee. We thank the Governor for this bold Everglades budget and we look forward to working with Senate and House members to make it happen."

**Deborah Flack, president of the Florida Shore & Beach Preservation Association,** said, "Governor Scott's commitment to healthy beaches continues, fully recognizing their economic importance to Florida. \$50 million for the traditional statewide program reflects an appreciation for the outstanding performance of existing beach management projects following Hurricane Irma in protecting upland structures and reducing coastal flooding. They worked outstandingly, and we are going to need them again. The additional funding for storm damage recovery for our beaches and dunes demonstrates the Governor's recognition that critically-eroded beaches not part of any existing solution must be brought into the statewide program. Our coastal communities and local government partners are most appreciative of the Governor's budgetary commitment to sustaining Florida's beaches."

**Temperince Morgan, executive director of The Nature Conservancy in Florida,** said, "Governor Scott's proposed budget will support critical restoration and protection projects for some of Florida's most precious resources, including springs and our award-winning state parks."

**Paula Russo, president of Friends of Florida State Parks,** said, "We're pleased that the Governor's budget includes a historic investment in Florida's nationally-recognized state park system. Florida State Parks are beloved by residents and visitors alike, and Governor Scott's budget ensures these resources will be preserved and available for generations to come."

**Duane De Freese, Ph.D., executive director of the IRL Council & Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program,** said, "This is a historic commitment by Governor Scott to Everglades restoration, water infrastructure projects, and surface water quality improvements for Florida. All are essential to restore the health of the Indian River Lagoon."

**David C. Jones, president of Florida Disabled Outdoors Association,** said, "We commend the Governor for his continued support of accessibility improvements in our state parks so that more individuals will be able to enjoy their beauty and recreational opportunities."

**South Florida Water Management District Governing Board Chairman Dan O'Keefe** said, "Governor Scott's proposal for a record \$355 million for Everglades restoration in next year's environmental budget clearly demonstrates his commitment to completing projects that will provide immediate benefits for South Florida's ecosystems. This infusion of funding would enable the South Florida Water Management District to make significant progress on providing needed clean water for the Everglades while protecting this region's vital coastal estuaries."

**Brian Armstrong, executive director of the Southwest Florida Water Management District,** said, "We applaud the Governor's commitment to Florida's springs. This vital funding will allow our springs experts to continue working to protect these important natural systems within our District."

**Dr. Ann Shortelle, executive director of the St. John River Water Management District,** said, "It's this type of commitment and leadership by Gov. Scott that allows us to continue working to protect and restore our vital natural resources in Florida. An investment of \$55 million in Florida's springs and \$50 million in Florida Forever sends a clear message that the environment is a priority for this administration."

**Hugh Thomas, executive director of the Suwannee River Water Management District,** said, "The Suwannee River Valley is a treasure trove of springs, wild and scenic rivers, and pristine shorelines that we work diligently to protect. Governor Scott's paramount investment in Florida's natural resources is a powerful promise to the current residents and future generations of our spectacular state."

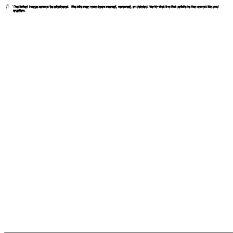
**Brett Cyphers, executive director of the Northwest Florida Water Management District,** said, "We are grateful for the continued vision and leadership shown by Governor Scott. The environmental resources of this region are our hallmark. This continued support for the

protection and restoration of our springs, beaches and our award-winning state parks will ensure the health and well-being of our residents, economy and environment.”

**About the Florida Department of Environmental Protection**

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection is the state's principal environmental agency, created to protect, conserve and manage Florida's environment and natural resources. The department enforces federal and state environmental laws, protects Florida's air and water quality, cleans up pollution, regulates solid waste management, promotes pollution prevention and acquires environmentally sensitive lands for preservation. The agency also maintains a statewide system of parks, trails and aquatic preserves. Visit the department's website at [www.dep.state.fl.us](http://www.dep.state.fl.us).

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