



FROGG



Friends of the River of Grass Greenway

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website: www.evergladesROGG.org

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Summer 2019

BROCHURES AVAILABLE

“Everglades City Florida State Trail Town”

After Everglades City was designated a Florida State Trail Town, a new brochure was created and is now available in the card rack in the lobby of Everglades City Hall and around town. It highlights the opportunities for eco-tourists in our community.

“Welcome to Historic Everglades City, FL”

A Visitor Information Brochure has been developed listing all the businesses and services available in Everglades City. This guide is for anyone visiting the area seeking lodging, restaurants, and services, etc.

“Hiking, Cycling and Paddling the Everglades”

This brochure includes information about the various opportunities and amenities along the Tamiami Trail, including information about safety on the Trail and links to the various state and national parks in the area.

For more information, email
info@evergladesrogg.org

Everglades City New Dolphin Bike Rack



Trail Town Committee Members
Patty Huff, Dayna Fendrick and Kathy Brock



New Bike Repair Station in the Park

New Bike Racks distributed to Businesses



*Read more about the progress of the Trail Town initiatives in
Everglades City on page 3.*

FROGG is committed to establishing the safe use by the general public of US41 across the Everglades between Naples and Miami, focusing on safety and environmental education and stewardship for those hiking, walking, and cycling through south Florida and the Everglades.

Cycling the Tamiami Trail

When hiking or bicycling along the Tamiami Trail, safety is of the utmost importance. The corridor between Naples to Miami can be challenging with many narrow bridges, but it is also very interesting for those who wish to experience the Everglades at a slow pace. The 3.5-mile section beginning at the intersection of US41 / CR951 in East Naples has bike lanes, a sidewalk, and a 10-foot shared-use pathway. For the next 2 miles (from Greenway Road to 6L Farm Road) you will need to cycle on the paved shoulder. A separated pathway is planned for the future when this section is widened to four lanes. Meanwhile, take caution while hiking or biking. From 6L Farm Road to Collier Seminole State Park at CR92 there is a 2.3-mile separated pedestrian/bicycling pathway which provides a link to the Park's 3.5 mile off-road trail along marsh, hammock and pine flat wood.

Between CR92 and just west of Port of the Islands Resort, the shoulders have RPMs (Raised Pavement Markers). These markings were placed there by FDOT as a safety measure to notify motorists of the upcoming narrow bridges. FDOT is reviewing the possibility of removing the RPMs on US41 East from SR92 to Port of the Islands to increase safety for cyclists. This would be a tremendous improvement for cyclists who frequently ride this route. However, they can be dangerous for cyclists so take caution in this area, especially at the narrow bridges.

The 11-mile section between Port of the Islands Resort and Everglades City (SR/CR29) was re-surfaced in 2016 by FDOT and included white striping with the audible/ vibratory markings along the edge of the shoulder and painted with durable paint instead of the "slippery" thermoplastic. Again, take caution at the narrow bridges.

Everglades City was designated a Florida Trail Town by the Office of Greenways & Trails in January 2019. A Trail Town is a vibrant destination where recreational users can venture off the trail to enjoy the services and unique heritage of the community. Chokoloskee is just a few miles south of Everglades City. Both offer many amenities (hotels, restaurants, grocery store, supplies, etc.) for those paddling, biking and hiking throughout the Everglades area. It is well worth a stop to visit or stay for a few days. For more information, visit website www.swflgo.com.

The Everglades City to Shark Valley section is beautiful with many vistas, more birds and alligators. The road shoulder is in better condition; however, there are RPMs in the shoulders just west of the Miccosukee Indian Village so be cautious.

Between Shark Valley and Krome Avenue there are three bridges with 10-foot wide shoulders with a good view of the Everglades. When you reach Krome and heading south to the Keys, there is an 8.5 mile separated pathway alongside Krome Avenue. Construction work to widen Krome continues south to Homestead. Visit our website www.evergladesrogg.org for updates on road improvements along the Tamiami Trail.

New Funding for Everglades Restoration

In June the U.S. Department of Transportation announced it will give Florida \$60 million for the work needed to complete the Tamiami Trail Next Steps Phase II in restoring the Everglades; this will be added to \$40 million kicked in by the Florida Legislature. This final Tamiami Trail Next Steps project will work in combination with the Central Everglades Planning Project to enhance the connectivity and sheetflow between the marshes north and south of the Tamiami Trail. The money will be used to finish elevating the remaining 6.5 miles of roadway between two bridges built during Phase I and, in addition, six sets of concrete culverts will be installed. Cyclists should continue to be aware of construction activity in the eastern section of US41 as this project moves forward.

FROGG Board Members:

Dayna Fendrick (Naples) Patty Huff (Everglades City) Scott Shook (Marco Island) Oscar Rattenborg (Ft. Myers)

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Bike Rides through the Everglades

If you are interested in joining us for any of our **FREE guided** rides, FROGG will once again be offering tours during the upcoming season, beginning in October. We will be riding just for the fun of exploring the Everglades area. Since these are self-supported rides, bring your own snacks, etc. We'll meet at 9:00 am and plan to have lunch together either during or after each ride.

October 13

Shark Valley

November 10

Port of the Islands

December 8

**Everglades City /
Chokoloskee**

January 12

**Janes Scenic Drive
in the Fakahatchee**

February 9

Loop Road in Big Cypress

March 8

**Bear Island
in the Big Cypress**

More information will be provided in the Fall Newsletter. If you are interested, please email info@evergladesrogg.org or call (239) 695-2397

EVERGLADES CITY TRAIL TOWN UPDATE

Exciting things are happening in Everglades City since our Trail Town presentation on April 27 which was well attended by City, County and State representatives. Many of the goals of the Trail Town Committee have been accomplished as well as other initiatives by the City.



- A “Dolphin” Bike Rack and a Bike Repair Station have recently been installed at McLeod Community Park (**donated by the Friends of the River of Grass Greenway**).
- Map of the city with a list of businesses to be located at the community park has been drafted and will be installed before season.
- New updated map at the kiosk approaching Everglades City has been drafted and will replace the old signage.
- New solar street lights (90) have been approved by the City Council and will replace the old historic lights that were destroyed by Hurricane Irma.
- Businesses have upgraded their entry area with landscaping and/or potted plants and 8 new bike racks have been distributed to various hotels, restaurants, and other establishments around town.
- The old Glades Realty Building has been sold and new owners will be opening a Café in the fall.
- The Trail Town Committee invited Blue Zones of Southwest Florida to come to Everglades City to speak at a City Council meeting and with the owner of one of our restaurants.
- New street signs and speed limit signs were installed throughout town with 15 mph approaching the school, 25 mph in all residential areas and downtown Everglades City, and 40 mph on the main road coming into town CR29/Collier Blvd
- The Everglades City Bicycle / Pedestrian Committee is in the process of identifying locations and preparing the application for an Everglades City project to be reviewed by the City Council for the “MPO Call for Projects”.
- In June the National Park Service awarded a 1-year temporary concessions contract to Guest Services, Inc. to provide interpretive boat tours and equipment rentals at Everglades National Park's entrance in Everglades City. Daily boat tours will begin July 1. Other services will be provided during the upcoming winter season.

Come Visit Everglades City and enjoy our park during National Parks & Recreation Month (July) !!

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BLUE ZONES PROJECT

What if you knew that you could add 12 healthy and happy years to your life? The Blue Zones Project® may be your answer! The concept of Blue Zones® grew out of National Geographic research that identified the places around the world where people were living the longest. Blue circles were drawn on a map to identify these locations and thus the term “Blue Zones” was coined. Building on this research, Dan Buettner, co-founder of Blue Zones Project, wanted to see if new communities could become “Blue Zones” by adopting the same healthy best practices that the original Blue Zones locations incorporated as part of their culture. These healthy best practices are known as the Power 9® and are easy for anyone to follow.

In fact, we can control 70 percent of the factors that influence our health. It’s just going to take us “helping our neighbors” to lead the way. This can be done through small, meaningful changes to our environment in which we live, work and play. The Blue Zones Project nudges people toward a healthier, longer, and better life. It is dedicated to creating healthy communities across the United States and was introduced to Southwest Florida in 2015.

What can we do? Encourage positive changes in our own community centered around the Power 9®, the shared lifestyle habits of the original Blue Zone areas:

1. **MOVE NATURALLY:** We can get more physical activity naturally if we live in walkable communities and grow gardens.
2. **KNOW YOUR PURPOSE:** Knowing your sense of purpose is worth up to seven years of extra life expectancy.
3. **DOWN SHIFT:** Stress leads to chronic inflammation, associated with every major age-related disease. To reverse this, find time to meditate, pray, or participate in any activity that is calming to you.
4. **80% RULE:** It takes your stomach 20 minutes to tell your brain it is full, causing most people to accidentally overeat; so stop eating when you feel 80% full.
5. **PLANT SLANT:** Eat mostly a plant-based diet that is heavy on beans, nuts, greens, and grains.
6. **WINE @ FIVE:** If you have a healthy relationship to alcohol, one to two glasses of wine daily could help add years to your life, especially when consumed with a healthy diet.
7. **FAMILY FIRST:** Centenarians in the Blue Zones put their families first. This means keeping aging parents and grandparents nearby or in the home; committing to a life partner (which can add up to 3 years of life expectancy) and investing in your children with time and love.
8. **BELONG:** Recommit, reconnect, or explore a new faith-based community. No matter what your faith, studies found that people who show up to their faith community four times a month live an extra 4-14 years.
9. **RIGHT TRIBE:** Your friends have a long-term impact on your well-being. Expanding your social circle to include healthy-minded, supportive people might be the most powerful thing you can do to add years to your life.

Life expectancy of an American born today averages 78.2 years. But this year, more than 70,000 Americans have reached their 100th birthday. Whether you’re trying to make it to your 100s, or you just want to live your best life as long as possible, your life expectancy could increase by 10-12 years by adopting a Blue Zones lifestyle. So what are you waiting for?!

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