



FROGG

Friends of the River of Grass Greenway



FROGG

Volume VI Issue 2

website: www.evergladesROGG.org

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Winter 2021



Bicycling in SW Florida

by Patty Huff

Cycling in Southwest Florida has been great. However, because we have not seen a decline in the number of positive cases of Covid-19, we decided not to resume our monthly guided group tours at this time. If things change over the upcoming months, we will send out a notice about our scheduled rides. In the meantime, please come with your family/close friends to enjoy great cycling in our area.

My husband and I continue to ride every week day and take longer trips on the weekends. So much to see and do here, especially since the weather has cooled off.

Dayna Fendrick, a FROGG Board member, continues to ride through the Everglades area on the weekends with her husband Andrew and sister Tara and her husband Jerry.

Read more about our cycling adventures on pages 3 and 4 in this issue.

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2021

A new year, a new opportunity for improving safety on our roads!

Looking back on 2020, we were able to accomplish many of our goals, and we plan to continue throughout 2021:

- 1) Before Covid-19, FROGG sponsored three bike rides, introducing cyclists to various areas of the Everglades.
- 2) We continued our discussions with the FDOT and the various agencies to improve bicycle conditions along the Tamiami Trail (see page 2).
- 3) We started a dialog with the national and state parks/preserves in south Florida about creating an off-road route from Naples to Homestead.
- 4) FROGG has been a resource for cyclists planning bike trips across south Florida on SR29 and on US41.
- 5) We have supported local, regional, state, and national organizations in promoting multi-use trails and finding safe routes through Florida for long distance cyclists.

Please contact us if you would like more information about cycling in south Florida or how you can help in our efforts.

Have a safe and wonderful new year! My personal goal is to ride more miles this year. To keep track, I've joined the **Love to Ride Challenge!** Love to Ride challenges individuals and workplaces to compete against others across the state to earn the most points by riding and encouraging others to do the same. It doesn't matter if you ride every day. Everyone is invited to take part and help get more people on bikes (www.lovetoride.net). Why participate?

Participating in the Love to Ride challenge is a great way to motivate yourself and others to ride a bike more often. As an individual, for your workplace, and for our planet, riding helps to...

- make us happier and healthier
- more energetic and productive
- ...and it's fun!

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.

Along the Tamiami Trail

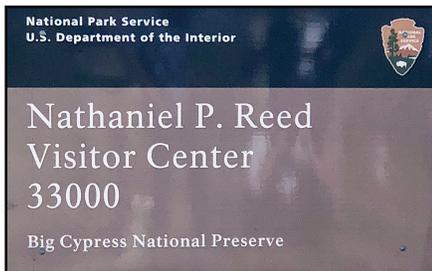
West Tamiami Trail

RPMs Update

Our efforts to have the Raised Pavement Markers (RPMs) removed along the Tamiami Trail from CR92 to Port of the Islands continues. The FDOT recently stated that “the project regarding the narrow bridges treatment is moving forward and the funds have been added to the contract.” They will give us an update in the future for the construction timeline. Stay tuned ...

Central Tamiami Trail

Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center renamed the Nathaniel P. Reed Visitor Center



In November family and friends of Nathaniel Reed were invited to an event to rename the Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center. Among the dignitaries speaking were Secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Noah Valenstein, U.S. Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt, Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation Kevin Thibault, Everglades National Park Superintendent Pedro Ramos, Big Cypress Superintendent Tom Forsyth, Environmentalist and “Guardian of the Everglades” Franklin

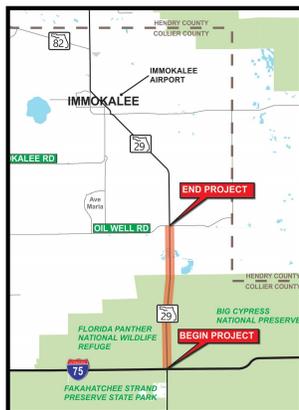
Adams among others. Reed, who passed away in July 2018, was Assistant Secretary of Fish, Wildlife and Parks at the U.S. Department of the Interior from 1971 to 1977 at which time he co-wrote the 1973 Endangered Species Act. He was also an environmental advisor to six Florida governors.

East Tamiami Trail

Tamiami Trail Next Steps

The Tamiami Trail Next Steps will include installing six short span bridges; in addition the nine culverts will be replaced to allow more water to flow. As FROGG reported earlier in 2020, the National Park Service is planning for a 12’ shoulder on both sides of the road; however, only 5’ feet of shoulder will be paved. For more information, visit website <https://www.nps.gov/articles/tamiami-trail-next-steps.htm>.

SR29 Widening Project



The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District One is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study for improvements to State Road (SR) 29 in Collier County. The project limits extend a distance of approximately 10 miles along SR 29 from I-75 to Oil Well Road. The proposed roadway improvement consists of providing safety and operational improvements as well as increasing capacity on SR 29 by evaluating the widening of the existing two-lane undivided segment of SR 29 to four lanes. In response to requests for information regarding bicycling facilities, FDOT commented “Through this segment of SR 29, we are in the very preliminary stages of concept development. At this time, we are planning to include a 7-ft paved shoulder to accommodate bicyclists, but due to the environmental sensitivities of the public lands on both sides of the road through most of the

project limits, we are not considering a shared-use path.” For more information or questions or comments, contact: Jennifer Marshall, P.E. (863) 519-2239 Jennifer.Marshall@dot.state.fl.us or visit <http://swflroads.com/sr29/pde/>.

FROGG Board Members:

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

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Wildlife in Southwest Florida

by Dayna Fendrick

Hi all, we had a great bike ride in Bear Island this morning - Andrew, Tara & Jerry & I - We spotted a panther! ahead in the road, on the Hardrock Trail a couple of miles beyond the Pink Jeep campground. He was just walking along towards us, then saw us & turned around and trotted around the curve. When we came around the curve, we saw him again, and he darted across the road into the woods.



Then saw a smallish bear - not a cub - crossing the road ahead of us on the Harold Strand Trail, as we were heading east towards the big pile of rocks. On the way back west on the same trail, a MUCH bigger bear ran across the road not even 50 feet in front of us! That got the heart pounding! This is the same stretch we saw

a bear last year so we were on the lookout.

On the way back on Hardrock Trail just west of Gator Head camp, an otter ran across the road right in front of us - he was cute!

Then we saw another panther, on Bear Island Grade Trail, about a mile west of the Pink Jeep camp - again just walking along and eased into the woods when he saw us.

Also saw a couple of rabbits and several gators & lots of birds. The water was high in the area, so I think the wildlife is using the high & dry roads. Really enjoyed the morning!



Wildlife in the Suburbs

by Patty Huff

In late November my husband and I decided to take a bike tour around the neighborhoods at Port of the Islands, a community along the Tamiami Trail, between Marco Island and Everglades City (see www.poi resort.com for more information).

We cycled for 10 miles in and out of every cul-de-sac observing the homes and condos with their manicured lawns. We biked on both sides of the main hotel and across the street. The roads were quiet this time of year; then suddenly my husband noticed a black bear feasting on acorns next to one of the houses.

The bear was ambivalent to our presence as we stopped and took photos. Other cyclists told us that there are several bears who hang out around this area. Fun!



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Cycling Ave Maria to Immokalee

by Patty Huff

To celebrate our 75th birthdays and 36 years of marriage, my husband and I decided to cycle from Ave Maria to Immokalee in Collier County, 25 miles east of Naples.

Ave Maria (<https://www.avemaria.com>) was established in 2007, envisioned by the founder of Dominos, Tom Monaghan, who invested \$250 million in the new town and its university. Located on former tomato fields, Ave Maria is now the fastest growing community in southwest Florida with shops, restaurants, grocery, gas station and recreational facilities.

Starting in the center of town we cycled to Camp Keis Road (two lanes, no shoulders), then north to Immokalee Road (very busy but with shoulders). We rode passed the Seminole Casino, then across SR29 and right on Roberts Ave to the Immokalee Pioneer Museum at Roberts Ranch where we visited the exhibits and explored the old homestead situated on 15 acres (<https://colliermuseums.com/locations/immokalee-pioneer-museum-at-roberts-ranch>). It's always fun to discover historical sites close to home!



We continued south to cycle around the Immokalee Regional Airport and returned to SR29 to bike south to Oil Well Road and back to Ave Maria. A nice day of cycling 40 miles around south Florida!

FROGG T-Shirts

Long-sleeve bright green t-shirts are available for \$25 for FROGG members (free with \$100 or more donation) and \$35 for non-members).

Front:
FROGG
*Friends of the River of
Grass Greenway*



Back:
Across
the Everglades For All

This is a good time to renew your membership!
Annual membership levels:

Individual	\$25	Family	\$35
Business	\$50	Donor	\$100
Partner	\$250	Sponsor	\$500
Life Member		\$1000	

Please send check payable to FROGG
and mail to P.O. Box 5031,
Everglades City, FL 34139

or pay online with paypal at:
www.evergladesROGG.org/memberships/

Please call 239-719-0020 or email
snookcity@gmail.com if you have any questions
about your membership or t-shirts!



Join the Florida Bicycle Association (FBA)

*“Our Vision is for bicycling to be
safe, accepted and encouraged in
Florida.”*

<https://floridabicycle.org>

“It’s not a race; it’s a journey – enjoy the ride”.

Author Unknown

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