

EVERGLADES TIMELINE



8000 B.C.: Giants sheets of ice melt over porous limestone floors. Cypress swamps and hardwood forests appear. The Everglades began forming.

1800-1830: Upon the state's purchase from the Spaniards, Creeks and Seminoles are forced to move into South Florida by Florida Governor Andrew Jackson. Later, the Indian Removal Act drives most out.

1850-1860: First assaults on the Everglades—Swamp Land Act. The Swamp Land Act results in destructive wetland drainage. Florida sells Everglades land at extremely low prices to recover from Civil War Debt. Florida gives Philadelphia millionaire Hamilton Disston land in exchange for draining it. By 1896 his company drains 50,000 acres.

1906-1910: Everglades Drainage District begins Florida's drainage canal system by dredging the North New River Canal and the Caloosahatchee River. Forests are logged during the Florida real estate boom.

1947: Everglades National Park established.

1948-1963: The Army Corps of Engineers designs a water control system isolating the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA). A system of canals and levies divides the central region of the Everglades into three Water Conservation Areas. By the completion of the straightening efforts in 1970, the Corps effectively transforms the Kissimmee River into a 300-foot wide canal, running half its original length.

1979: Storm water is pumped into conservation areas from the Everglades Agricultural Area causing the explosive spread of cattails, a sign of agricultural pollution, including phosphorus used in farming.

1994: The Everglades Forever Act is approved, calling for the cleanup of agricultural pollution.

2000-2003: Congress approves \$7.87 billion for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

Today: Governor Charlie Crist announces a massive 187,000 acre land purchase, twice the size of Orlando, from U.S. Sugar Corporation. This agricultural land will be used for Everglades restoration and according to scientists will have the benefit of protecting the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries from damaging freshwater releases while providing a clean water supply to sustain fragile wetlands during droughts. It will also allow the State of Florida to expand the manmade marshes that clean up water flowing into Lake Okeechobee and into the Everglades.