



P.O. Box 35, Everglades City, FL, 34139

website: www.orchidswamp.org

31 October 2017

Dear Friends of the Fakahatchee,

The Park and your Board is really grateful for your past generous response to our annual appeals. This has allowed us to provide much needed material and equipment to fulfil our mission of preserving and maintaining the Fakahatchee's unique ecosystem.

Over the past few years we have provided the extra funds so the Park Biologist could upgrade to an eco-friendly hybrid Ford Explorer, and purchased an FOF pick-up truck, a tram for our tour programs, an ATC, 2 UTVs, and a wood chipper. In addition the park has all manner of equipment from road graders, tractors, grass cutters and some very large trailers.

We have now reached the stage where we need to provide covered storage for this donated equipment and the Park Service's other vehicles to protect them from the elements, which will in turn reduce annual maintenance costs, much of which is funded by FOF as part of our direct park support budget.

This year we are therefore proposing a major annual appeal project to build an approximate 6,720 square foot (70 x 96 ft) open-sided pole barn in the vehicle park area for this purpose. This may seem large, but with just the equipment the park and FOF has now, 70% of its capacity would be filled. Our estimate of \$50,000 for this is a bigger ask than we have ever made before, but the pole barn is the top of our Park Manager's wish list, and will have benefits for years to come.

Because this year's target is higher than usual we are also going to seek matching funds, but we need to raise at least half from our membership. Between this and your continued generosity I am confident that we can make this happen.

One thought is that at this time of year some of you with IRAs may be planning to take required 2017 distributions. A tax efficient way of charitable giving can be to allocate and transfer a portion of this distribution directly to a qualified charity of your choice such as FOF. This is known as a Qualified Charitable Distribution or QCD. Based on your specific tax situation you may find this affords you a tax savings while fulfilling your charitable giving goals. Of course you should talk with your tax advisor to see how this can be a win-win for both you and FOF.

In any case, any donation large or small to help us meet this important need would be most welcome.

You are an amazing group. On behalf of the resource that we all cherish, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Patrick Higgins
President

The Friends of Fakahatchee, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit Citizen Support Organization providing financial and volunteer support to preserve the unique ecological and cultural heritage of Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park and to educate the public about its importance.



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2017 ANNUAL FUND APPEAL

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone Number _____

I understand that any monies over the amount required to complete the project will be re-directed to benefit the needs of Direct Park support.

Note: this donation cannot be applied to your membership.

Please mail this form with CHECK PAYABLE TO FRIENDS OF FAKAHATCHEE and mail to: FOF

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