



**Friends of Fakahatchee, Inc. Concession Agreement DEP No. CA-0518**

**SAFETY PLAN**

The Friends of Fakahatchee, Inc. (FOF) both as the park's CSO and the park's Concessionaire is committed to the safety of all park visitors, our employees, volunteers and all guests taken into the park by our permitted sub-contractor tour operators and their staff. FOF will achieve this commitment by providing a safe and friendly environment with safety training, certifications and procedures where appropriate for our employees and volunteers, as well as the availability of up-to-date safety equipment. A Safety Plan and best practices is required from all FOF Concessionaire's permitted sub-contractor operators.

**First and foremost, FOF expects its employees and volunteers at all times to:**

- Observe all FOF and Park Safety rules,
- Promptly report unsafe acts and conditions, and if possible promptly rectify any unsafe conditions,
- Report all accidents immediately,
- Be vigilant and proactive at all times in fulfilling the spirit of this policy.
- Come forward with any suggestions towards improving safety, which will be given prompt and careful consideration.

Communications with Fakahatchee's Park Manager and staff is vital to fulfill the above goal. Our safety procedures will mirror those in the Park Protection Plan for Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park revised April 2019 and any subsequent updates, and FOF will assist park staff in the implementation of that plan.

**Security** Currently FOF in its role as Concessionaire has no physical premises or property in the park.

**Traffic Control**

1. Friends of Fakahatchee(FOF), the Concessions Manager and employees will be trained for assistance in traffic control plan as established by Park Management for Park daily activities, FOF or Concession events.

2. The Park Manager, Assistant Park Manager or the Rangers Station will advise the Concessions Manager by cell phone or land line that assistance is needed in traffic control.
3. The Concessions Manager, FOF employees and volunteers working in the park will be informed by the Park Manager of any planned prescribed burns in the proximity of FOF's or its sub-contracted operators who may require a change in operations or use areas.

### **First Aid**

1. All guides taking guests into the park must be first aid/CPR trained and certified.
2. The Accessibility and Inclusion Liaison, Concession Manager and employees and any FOF Volunteers or Board Members directly associated with the concession operation must take the Departments on-line ADA training. All must comply within 60 days of notification. Updated ADA training also must be taken.
3. If a visitor or employee needs first aid, first assess the individual and if immediate medical care is needed call 911 giving a description of the situation and the exact location. Once contact to EMS is made, radio or call via cell phone or land line Park Management and advise them on the situation.
4. Always remain calm.
5. Always ask either the individual or someone with them if they have any existing medical conditions and any allergic reactions.
6. The Concessions Manager and employees will have access to a well-stocked First Aid kit

### **Bites:**

1. Assess the individual and determine if the individual needs immediate medical care. If immediate medical care is needed call 911 and advise them of the individual's condition.
2. Ask either the individual or someone with them if they have any existing medical conditions and any allergic reactions.
3. Contact the Park Manager or Assistant Park Manager and advise them on the individual via radio, cell phone or land line phone.
4. If possible, have the individual identify the source of the bite. (Insect, reptile, mammal or alligator.) If possible also find out the location (animal) and inform the Park Manager or Assistant Park Manager.
5. Follow the instructions from Park Management.

**Accidents:**

1. Assess the individual and determine if the individual needs immediate medical care. If immediate medical care is needed call 911 and advise them on the individual. When in doubt dial 911.
2. Contact the Park Manager or Assistant Park Manager and advise them on the individual's status via radio, cell phone or land line phone.
3. Identify the cause, any contributing factors and location of the accident.
4. Correct cause immediately if possible.
5. Contact Park Management and inform them of the situation.
6. Mirror the Park Protection Plan

**Water Related Activities:**

Currently, FOF as a CSO does not conduct any water related activities except for swamp-walks. However, FOF as a Concessionaire recruits paddling (kayak/canoe) tour operators to provide approved paddling activities at the East River, other areas may from time to time be authorized by the Park Manager. The following shall apply to all water related activities:

1. Objective

To provide a safe environment for water activities.

2. Water Activities

Boating, fishing and paddling. No swimming is allowed in any portion of the Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park and such prohibition is posted by the park.

3. Activity Areas

Harmon lakes (located in Copeland), Green Heron Lake in the boardwalk expansion area, the East River, the Faka-Union River (at bridge 58 on US 41). The 1-75 borrow lakes (located off 1-75 at Exit 80 and Jones Grade Road). FOF will not issue permits for any operations at borrow lakes.

4. Potential Hazards

Falling into a lake, pond or the river, drowning, snake bite and alligator attacks.

5. Public and Property Water Protection Programs

Weekend and non-routine patrols are conducted at borrow lakes locations by Park Staff.

East River is patrolled by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Marine Patrol, FWC, Park Staff.

FOF may assist Park Staff in this task upon request when practicable.

### **Paddling Emergency Procedures**

Currently there are no canoe and kayak rental facilities within in the park. Canoes and kayaks are brought into the park for launching either by FOF's permitted paddling tour operators or by private paddlers.

FOF requires permitted paddling operators to staff their facilities until every canoe or kayak and their occupants have returned to the launching point. In addition, the manager or representatives of all permitted paddling operators must be readily contactable during their season should emergencies arise, they will provide FOF and the Park Manager emergency contact numbers.

The staff of permitted paddling operators will provide safety instruction, including but not limited to information on expected weather, potential hazards, basic paddling skills and capsizing drills to all their guests prior to their departure. They will supply all paddlers with approved PFD's which will include a signaling device. The permitted paddling operators' instruction will also cover appropriate behavior in wildlife encounters and will ensure that their guides and guests never feed the alligators. Permitted paddling operators' guides will carry appropriate first aid kits, cell phones in waterproof cases and a map of the river to quickly identify their location in case of an emergency. Launching and pull-out will be at the East River Canoe site unless other arrangements are supported with a written approval from the Park Manager.

Any serious incidents will be reported to FOF Concession Manager and the Park Manager. Incidents requiring the transportation of personnel by EMS (Emergency Medical Services) to a local medical facility must be reported to the Park Manager and FOF Concession Manager by email in addition to verbal or in-person reports.

**Notwithstanding the above, medical emergencies require a call to 911, prepare to provide all relevant information to the 911 dispatcher.**

### **Other Eco-tour Categories**

Permitted eco-tour operators who will provide the public various specialized tours within the park's boundaries, in areas approved by the Park Manager, such as hiking, cycling tours, swamp walks, boardwalk tours will also be required to have a Safety Plan.

### **Swamp Walks**

All swamp walks given to the general public, unless led by Park Staff or equivalent, should be surveyed to assess for ease of access, interest and safety (including availability of a cell phone signal) as well as obstacles, water depth etc. Guides will be responsible for making an assessment on the day of the tour and adjust for changes in conditions (rain overnight, wildlife, hazards) that may warrant modifying the route. Park Staff must be notified in advance of proposed swamp walk locations and the day-of field plan must be posted in the park's administrative office.

Swamp-walk and hiking guides must have a pack containing the following (at a minimum): Compass, whistle, water, First-Aid kit, cell phone, bug spray, WD-40 (for fire ants), knife, Poison Ivy wipes or lotion. Additionally, for extended walks the Guide should carry toilet paper (or biodegradable wet wipes), sunblock, park map and GPS.

Guides will brief guests on potential hazards.

### **Lost or Unattended Individual**

1. It is the utmost importance that a detailed description and last known location of the individual is obtained, and Park Management is notified as soon as the information becomes available.  
Contact Park Manager, Assistant Park Manager or Rangers Station via radio, cell phone or land line.
2. FOF's employees and volunteers will be trained to assist in the recovery of a lost individual, unattended child or a person of need.
3. FOF's employees and volunteers will follow the instructions from the Park Manager or the Assistant Park Manager
4. Mirror the Park Protection Plan.
5. Each guide or tour operator must account for all the guests they brought into the park before leaving the park.

### **Wildfire**

1. Quick Communication with Park Management is high priority.
2. If a wildfire is first reported by a Park visitor, find out as much information of the location, severity and the direction of the wildfire and notify Park Management or Rangers Station via radio, cell phone or land line.
3. If the evacuation of any area is ordered by Park Management, evacuate all Park visitors in a swift and orderly manner following the planned route and report completion of the evacuation to the Park Manager. Follow all instructions from the Park Manager or the Assistant Park Manager.
4. Mirror the Park Protection Plan and assist in evacuation and traffic control as instructed by Park Management.

### **Hurricane, Tornado & Severe Weather Evacuation**

1. The safety of the Park visitors is of the utmost importance at all times.
2. FOF's employees and volunteers will monitor conditions and be alert to changes in weather through radio and cell phone weather apps and under the direction of Park Management will take appropriate action to alert permitted operators and/ or shelter visitors when conditions demand.

3. A weather radio and radio communication with Park Management and the Rangers Station will aid in keeping the Concessions employees informed if the situation arises.
4. If the evacuation of any area or facility is ordered by the Park Manager or his representative FOF employees and volunteers will assist Park staff in conducting swift and orderly evacuation.
5. At all times FOF 's employees and volunteers will follow the instructions of the Park Manager or his representative.
6. Mirror the Park Protection Plan and assist in evacuation and traffic control as instructed by Park Management.

### **Theft**

1. If any theft is detected or reported FOF's employees and volunteers will notify the Park Manager or the Assistant Park Manager as soon as possible via radio, cell phone or land line.
2. FOF's employees and volunteers will obtain as much information as possible to aid in the unfortunate situation.
3. If the theft is from a Park visitor, obtain as much information as possible to report to the Park Manager or Assistant Park Manager.
4. As always, mirror the Park Protection Plan as advised by the Park Manager or the Assistant Park Manager.

### **Administrative**

Permitted sub-contractor tour operators shall require all their guests to complete and sign liability waivers in accordance with their sub-contractor agreement, for paddling tours, bicycle tours, swamp-walks and hikes and for any vehicular tours for which visitors disembarks from their transport within the park.

FOF employees and volunteers involved in directly managing the Concession operation shall be subject to both a Sexual predator and offender check and a Public Entity Crime check, the results of which will be kept on file, the same will be required of all FOF Concession sub-contractors.

FOF employees, volunteers directly involved in managing the FOF Concession operation and volunteers involved in the FOF CSO Interpretive Tours Program will be required to read this Safety Plan and sign an acknowledgment form (page 9) to confirm they have read and understand FOF's Concession Safety Plan.

**Emergency Phone Number List**

<b><u>Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park</u></b>				
<b><u>239-695-4593</u></b>				
NAME	POSITION	WORK CELL	PERSONAL CELL	ALTERNATE #
Steve Houseknecht	Park Manager	239-253-6376	954-673-4178	
Mike Owen	Park Biologist	239-253-6375	239-821-3594	239-695-2886(office)
Steven Bass	Park Services Specialist	239-253-6374	407-209-5469	
Mike Duey	Park Services Specialist	239-253-6372	239-682-6978	
Guy DiGiovanni	Park Ranger	239-253-6371	813-777-5252	
Nichole Ellison	OPS Administrative assistant	Office: 239-695-4593	239-269-5490	

**Law Enforcement**

	FL Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)	863-648-3200	
	FWC Law Enforcement Dispatch	305-470-6863	
	Ochopee Fire Department	911	239-695-4114
	DEP Environmental Crimes Hotline	877-272-8335	
	Collier County Sheriff's Office	911	239-252-9300
	Everglades Sheriff's Office	911	239-695-2301

FOF Concessionaire Safety Plan

Ochopee Fire Department	911	
Fire	239-695-4114	
Paramedics	239-695-2902	
Physicians Regional Hospital Pine Ridge	239-348-4000	
Physicians Regional Hospital Collier Blvd	239-354-6000	
Naples Community Hospital	239-436-5000	

**FOF Concession Operations**

FOF Concession Manager	239-695-1023

## **Friends of Fakahatchee (FOF) Concession Safety Plan Acknowledgment**

I have read and understand the FOF Concession Safety Plan.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am a Volunteer involved in the FOF CSO Interpretive Tour Program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am a volunteer directly involved with the FOF Concession operation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am a FOF CSO Employee.

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_