

FOF Concessionaire Safety  
Plan Revised 20 Sept 2019



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

**SAFETY PLAN GUIDE**

The Friends of Fakahatchee Inc. (FOF) both as the Citizen Support Organization (CSO) and the Concessionaire in the Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park is committed to the safety of all park visitors, our employees and volunteers.

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.

**FOF requires all FOF Subcontractors to follow the FOF and Park Protection Plan and submit their own comprehensive Safety Plan to FOF.**

**First and foremost, FOF expects its employees, volunteers and Subcontractors 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 Management and park staff is vital to fulfill the above goal.

**This Safety Plan Guide serves as a companion to the Park Protection Plan revised April 2019 and any subsequent updates, FOF will collaborate with park staff in the implementation of that plan.**

## **SAFETY & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

### **Objective**

To provide a safe environment for FOF employees, volunteers and visitors in the Park.

### **Park Security**

Currently FOF in its role as Concessionaire and its subcontractors have no physical premises or property in the park.

### **First Aid**

1. All guides conducting tours in the park must be First Aid/CPR trained and certified.
2. When First Aid is required, first assess the individual and if immediate medical care is needed call 911 and follow their instructions.
3. Once contact to EMS is made, phone park Management or park staff, inform them on the situation and follow their instructions.
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 Concession Manager, FOF employees and volunteers will have access to a well- stocked First Aid kit.
7. Subcontractors will have their own First Aid kit.

### **Accidents:**

1. Assess the individual and if necessary provide first aid, if the individual needs immediate urgent care call 911 and follow their instruction
2. Phone Park Management or park staff to inform them of the situation and follow their instructions
3. If possible rectify the cause of the accident

**Bites**

1. Assess the individual and determine if the individual needs immediate medical care. If immediate medical care is needed call 911 to inform them of the individual's condition and follow their instructions.
2. Ask either the individual or someone with them if they have any existing medical conditions and any allergic reactions.
3. Phone park Management or park staff to inform them on the situation and follow their instructions.
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 park Management or park staff.

**Lost individual:**

1. It is the utmost importance that a detailed description of last known location of the individual be obtained and to phone park Management or park staff with the information and follow their instructions for the recovery of the lost individual.
2. Guides conducting tours in the park must account for all their guests before leaving the tour site.

**Wildfire or Prescribe burns:**

1. Quick communication with park Management is high priority
2. When a wildfire is reported by a visitor find out as much information as possible, phone park Management or park staff with the information and follow their instructions.
3. When an evacuation is ordered by park Management follow the instruction to evacuate all park visitors in a swift orderly manner following the planned route and report completion of the evacuation to park Management.
4. The Concession Manager will be informed by park Management of any planned prescribe burn in the proximity of FOF or its Subcontractors who may require a change in operations or use area.

**Hurricane, Tornado & Severe Weather Evacuation**

1. The safety of the Park visitors is of the utmost importance at all times.
2. The Concession Manager, FOF employees and volunteers will monitor conditions and be alert to changes in weather through radio and cell phone weather apps and take appropriate action to alert Subcontractors and/or shelter visitors when conditions demand.
3. And assist park staff in the event an evacuation is necessary.

**Traffic Control**

1. The Concessions Manager, FOF employees and volunteers will be trained for assistance in traffic control as established by park Management for FOF or Subcontractors events.
2. Park Management and staff will advise the Concession Manager by phone when assistance is needed in traffic control.

**Theft**

1. If any theft is detected or reported the Concession Manager, FOF employees and volunteers will obtain as much information as possible to aid in the incident and phone park Management or park staff to inform them of the situation and follow their instructions.

## **GUIDED TOURS SAFETY PROCEDURES**

### **Activities & Liability**

Paddling, swamp walks and hikes. (Swimming is prohibited in the Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park and such prohibition is posted by the park).

All guests are required to complete and sign liability waivers, for all tours conducted in the Park including any vehicular tours for which visitors disembarks from their vehicle to be transported within the park.

Prior to a tour Guides will brief guests on potential hazards.

All guests must be accounted for at the end of a tour before the guide leaves the Park.

### **Activities area**

Harmon lake (located in Copeland), the East River paddle trail, the Faka-Union River (at bridge 58 on US 41), the Big Cypress Bend Boardwalk. The 1-75 borrow lakes (located off 1-75 at Exit 80 and Jones Grade Road), however FOF does not issue permits for tours at borrow lakes.

### **Potential Hazards**

Falling into a lake, pond or river, drowning, snake and insect bites, alligator attacks, exposure to poison ivy.

### **PADDLING**

**Canoes and kayaks are brought into the park for launching either by FOF Subcontractors or by private paddlers. Currently there are no canoe and kayak rental services within in the park.**

**Subcontractors launch and pull-out at the East River Canoe site unless other locations are approved by the Park Manager.**

**FOF requires subcontractors** to staff their facilities until every canoe or kayak and their occupants have returned to the launching point. Subcontractor managers or representatives must be readily contactable and provide FOF and the Park Manager emergency contact numbers.

Subcontractors staff 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 (whistle). Subcontractors instruction will also cover appropriate behavior in wildlife encounters and will ensure that their guides and guests never feed the alligators.

Subcontractors 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.

Any serious incidents will be reported to the FOF Concession Manager and the Park Manager. Incidents requiring the transportation of individual(s) by EMS (Emergency Medical Services) to a medical facility must be reported to the Park Manager and the 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.

### **SWAMP WALKS - HIKES & WALKS**

Guides conduct swamp walks, hikes and walks at locations approved by the park Manager, locations 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.

Prior to a swamp walk guides are responsible for making an assessment in conditions (rain overnight, wildlife, hazards) that may warrant modifying the route. Park Management 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 Guides should carry toilet paper (or biodegradable wet wipes), sunblock, park map and GPS.

### **CYCLING**

Cycling tours are conducted on Janes Scenic Drive and trails approved by the park Manager. In addition to observing the FOF and Park Safety Plan guides follow the Florida Statute 316.2065 Bicycle Regulations.

316.2065 Bicycle regulations. —

- (1) Every person propelling a vehicle by human power has all of the rights and all of the duties applicable to the driver of any other vehicle under this chapter, except as to special regulations in this chapter, and except as to provisions of this chapter which by their nature can have no application.
- (2) A person operating a bicycle may not ride other than upon or astride a permanent and regular seat attached thereto.
- (3)(a) A bicycle may not be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which it is designed or equipped, except that an adult rider may carry a child securely attached to his or her person in a backpack or sling.

(b) Except as provided in paragraph (a), a bicycle rider must carry any passenger who is a child under 4 years of age, or who weighs 40 pounds or less, in a seat or carrier that is designed to carry a child of that age or size and that secures and protects the child from the moving parts of the bicycle.

(c) A bicycle rider may not allow a passenger to remain in a child seat or carrier on a bicycle when the rider is not in immediate control of the bicycle.

(d) A bicycle rider or passenger who is under 16 years of age must wear a bicycle helmet that is properly fitted and is fastened securely upon the passenger's head by a strap and that meets the federal safety standard for bicycle helmets, final rule, 16 C.F.R. part 1203. A helmet purchased before October 1, 2012, which meets the standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI Z90.4 Bicycle Helmet Standards), the standards of the Snell Memorial Foundation (1984 Standard for Protective Headgear for Use in Bicycling), or any other nationally recognized standards for bicycle helmets adopted by the department may continue to be worn by a bicycle rider or passenger until January 1, 2016. As used in this subsection, the term "passenger" includes a child who is riding in a trailer or semitrailer attached to a bicycle.

### **TRAM TOUR**

- Prior to a tour, the tram and vehicle pulling the tram are inspected for safe operation.
- Inspection includes but is not limited to brakes, properly inflated tires, working lights, fuel gauge, secured hitch and safety chains.
- Equipment should include at a minimum tire changing tools, jumper cables, fire extinguisher.
- The tram must be ADA accessible.

### **Food & Beverage Service- Special Events- Self Service Vending Machine-WIFI service for the public**

The FOF as a Concessionaire does not currently provide these service.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE**

The Concession Manager, FOF employees and volunteers guiding visitors on FOF Interpretive Tours will be required to read this Safety Plan and sign an acknowledgment form to confirm they have read and understand FOF's Concession Safety Plan.

**EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS**

<b><u>Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State</u></b> <b><u>Park 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
	Ochopee Fire Dept	239-695-4114	
	Paramedics	239-695-2902	
	Physicians Regional Hospital Pine Ridge	239-348-4000	
	Physicians Regional Hospital Collier Blvd	239-436-5000	
	Naples Community Hospital	239-436-5000	

FOF Concession Manager	239-695-1023