



## Everglades National Park Under Attack: Power Lines Threaten Wetland Habitat!

America's Everglades is a globally unique ecosystem, an important driver for Florida's economy, and a national treasure that must be protected for future generations.

Everglades National Park has long been impacted by pollution, over-development, and lack of necessary freshwater flows to sustain viable habitat for wading birds and other native species. Congress passed the Everglades Expansion Act (EEA) in 1989 to assert our nation's commitment to acquiring lands necessary for ecosystem restoration. The EEA expanded park boundaries by over 100,000 acres, including 320 acres owned by the private utility Florida Power & Light (FPL). Now 25 years later, NPS is exercising its right to acquire and manage these 320 acres of critical restoration lands to improve water flow in the southern Everglades.



*Rendering of power line placement in Everglades National Park. Photo: NPS*

FPL is seeking a land exchange with the National Park Service that would grant the utility ownership over 260 acres of wetlands in the eastern portion of Everglades National Park in exchange for the 320 acres it currently owns in the western Everglades Expansion Area. The eastern land would be used for the construction of 150-foot-tall high-voltage power lines connecting the Turkey Point Nuclear Power Plant next to Biscayne National Park to urban users in Miami-Dade County.

FPL doesn't need the lands in the park because there is a viable power line corridor that exists wholly outside park boundaries. NPCA proposed that transmission corridor through the power line siting process that currently awaits a decision by the Florida Governor and Cabinet. However, FPL refused to support that corridor and continues to advocate for its "preferred corridor" as the more convenient and less expensive option, requiring the Park Service to consider a land swap instead of outright purchase.

At the urging of NPCA and after significant public outcry in 2009, the National Park Service agreed to conduct an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to assess management alternatives for acquisition of the land and subsequent development of power lines on FPL's preferred corridor in park boundaries.

The Draft EIS was released in February 2014 and confirmed what NPCA and our supporters had known all along: **construction of power lines in Everglades National Park would cause "major adverse impacts" to wetlands, soil quality, vegetation, wildlife including the endangered wood stork and snail kite, visitor experience, and recreational resources.**

*For more information, contact:*

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The National Park Service risks setting a dangerous precedent that America's national parks are "open for business" to private utilities if it gives in to FPL's demand for land exchange and power line construction. These unique and valuable places deserve to be protected – not offered up for development. **NPCA supports the full acquisition of FPL land within Everglades National Park and continues to oppose the construction of high-voltage power lines in the park!**