

The Florida legislature is back in session, always a dangerous omen for the state's wildlife and natural areas. Countless recent and historic examples of the legislature's disinterest in protecting the state's environment can be found, but perhaps none is better than how it has ignored overwhelming public sentiment and flat out stole money from the Amendment 1 budget which was supposed to purchase conservation land. [And they got away with it.](#)

LINK: <https://floridaphoenix.com/2022/01/13/florida-legislators-get-away-with-their-amendment-1-heist-for-now/>

Here's a look at the [major actions being considered](#) related to the environment and conservation this session.

LINK: <https://www.everglades.org/friends-of-the-everglades-2022-legislative-preview/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=790559ce-5a94-4b73-8188-ae9aa8947860>

The "hot button" topic figures to be solar energy and [a proposed change to net metering](#), discouraging rooftop solar in favor of the state's continued addition to fossil fuel energy provide by the huge utility companies. Florida Conservation Voters calls these bills "the biggest attack on solar power in our lifetime"

Net metering explained: https://fcvoters.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/FCV_Net_Metering_Fact_v3.pdf?emci=ef493d6b-0770-ec11-94f6-c896650d923c&emdi=1b2e50a4-9370-ec11-94f6-c896650d923c&ceid=1269880

Florida's net metering standards were established in 2008, allowing residential and commercial customers with rooftop panels to sell their excess energy generation back to the utility at the full retail electrical rate on their monthly bill. SB 1024 would drastically reduce the reimbursement from a retail to wholesale rate and grandfather existing customers for only 10 years.

Installing rooftop solar is a substantial expense, and for those who take it on, a favorable rate for the energy they sell back to the grid is part of the calculation of whether they can afford to make the switch to solar. By lowering this rate to wholesale, it will take individuals longer to recover their costs – making it more expensive for homeowners to go solar, if they do at all.

[Click here](#) to tell your local representatives to oppose these anti-clean energy bills.

LINK: <https://secure.everyaction.com/nak-mVzF6EWyjCzCDQ1KOQ2>

A good review of [the top environmental stories](#) around Florida from 2021.

LINK: <https://www.floridatoday.com/story/sports/fishing-boating/2021/12/26/2021-florida-fishing-sharks-everglades-pythons-manatees-goliath-grouper-ed-killer-top-stories/6345056001/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=790559ce-5a94-4b73-8188-ae9aa8947860>

We could all use some good news and here's some from [North Florida Land Trust](#).

LINK: <https://www.nflt.org/2022/01/12/north-florida-land-trust-has-acquired-a-parcel-of-land-for-conservation-from-the-weyerhaeuser-corporation/>

The Florida Native Plant Society works every day to preserve the native species of flora in our state. But in the case of the Florida Torreya, a functionally extinct tree, they're trying to save whatever is left. [This episode of the "Wait Five Minutes" podcast](#) – well worth your time – examines the efforts to rescue this tree.

LINK: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/saving-a-florida-tree/id1418794444?i=1000544051470>