

GREAT NEWS: 565 acres in the Tiger Island-Little Tiger Island Florida Forever Project (Nassau Co.), conserving some of Northeast Florida's best remaining coastal habitat. This was one of [several high-profile conservation land acquisitions and easement announcements](#) made by the state recently under the Florida Forever Program.

LINK: [https://fl.audubon.org/news/recent-land-acquisitions-and-easements-are-investments-floridas-future?ms=fl-eng-email-ea-newsletter-engagement \(fl\) statewide news - january 2023 - cloned&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement \(fl\) statewide news - january 2023 - cloned](https://fl.audubon.org/news/recent-land-acquisitions-and-easements-are-investments-floridas-future?ms=fl-eng-email-ea-newsletter-engagement%20(f)%20statewide%20news%20-%20january%202023%20-%20cloned&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement%20(f)%20statewide%20news%20-%20january%202023%20-%20cloned)

What does it take for conservationists to defeat developers in Florida? In Union, Bradford and Alachua counties it took seven years of exhausting effort, countless county commission meetings, emails and phone calls, but [community activists prevailed](#) and plans to convert 7,500 acres of rangeland there into phosphate mining have been scrapped.

LINK: <https://floridaphoenix.com/2023/01/26/this-time-in-florida-the-davids-beat-goliath-in-an-environmental-battle/>

Community organizing, turning out in big numbers at meetings and making yourself a pain in the neck to city and county commissioners, zoning officials, development boards, that's the only proven way to slow development in Florida. Doing so didn't help conservations in Nassau County dissuade commissioners from approving an RV park on Amelia Island last week, however, pressure from citizens did force the Jacksonville City Council to [delay voting on a proposed rezoning](#) to allow for a housing development in the Cedar Point nature preserve.

LINK: <https://www.jacksonville.com/story/news/environment/2023/01/26/jacksonville-city-council-stalls-vote-on-allowing-subdivision-by-park/69840645007/>

Community activism is the only thing preventing the north bank of the St. John's River through downtown Jacksonville from being given over to commercial development. [Riverfront Parks Now](#), of which Ixia is a member, will be co-hosting a public visioning session with the Jacksonville Downtown Investment Authority, Parks and Rec department, Build Up Downtown and the Jessie Ball duPont Fund. Make your voice known for parks, greenspace, trees, native plants, shade, resiliency, living shorelines and access for all at a meeting February 8th from 5 to 8 PM at the Jacksonville Main Public Library Multipurpose Room located at 303 North Laura Street in Downtown Jacksonville.

LINK: <https://www.riverfrontparksnow.org/>

Federal regulators denied a petition from conservation groups to compel the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to enforce stricter vessel speed rules for [the protection of North Atlantic right whales](#). Slowing down boats would save whales, the federal government has decided that's too great an imposition on shipping interests in a stark reminder of what matters to this country and what doesn't.

LINK: <https://floridapolitics.com/archives/583128-noaa-denies-petition-to-enforce-emergency-right-whale-protections/>

The Environmental Protection Agency has yet to recover from [a mass exodus of employees](#) and loss of funding during the anti-science, anti-environment Trump Administration.

LINK: https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/23/climate/environmental-protection-agency-epa-funding.html?campaign_id=9&emc=edit_nn_20230124&instance_id=83516&nl=the-morning®i_id=94622599&segment_id=123350&te=1&user_id=22c72b5cf0663c6784557ed8747380db

And in South Florida, sure to put a smile on your face, an update on an item we've been following for the past year in the conservation newsletter. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) dealt a decisive blow to Miami-Dade County's plans to sprawl into the Everglades last week. After a Commission vote last month to move the Urban Development Boundary line for a 383-acre industrial development, Audubon Florida reviewed the process and discovered that the Commission had missed an important detail: their DEO extension had expired. Audubon elevated it to the agency and the DEO agreed – the Commission must now start over due to the technicality.