

More wonderful news coming from the Groundwork Jacksonville folks who are hard at work restoring ecology around the city while creating more neighborhood connectivity, green space, recreation opportunities and interest in downtown. The group has been awarded two grants from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for [the restoration of Hogans and McCoys Creeks totaling more than \\$5.7 Million](#).

The grants are part of \$265 million in funding from the federal government for 38 transformational habitat restoration and coastal resilience projects this year helping protect coastal communities and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change and make significant strides in the recovery of threatened and endangered species.

Groundwork Jacksonville continues putting as many points on the board for conservation in Jacksonville as anyone.

LINK: <https://www.groundworkjacksonville.org/gwjax-awarded-more-than-5-7-million-for-creek/>

An update on a story from last week. How lawn “care” giant TruGreen snuck a pro-fertilizer measure into the state budget with [ZERO public notice or debate](#).

Fertilizer is made from phosphorus. Heavy applications of fertilizer result in some of that phosphorus running off into streams, rivers and lakes when it rains. Too much phosphorus in water causes the blue green algae blooms which poison water, killing plant life and fish, starving manatees.

LINK: <https://floridaphoenix.com/2023/05/11/floridas-fertilizer-addiction-leads-to-ban-on-sales-bans-roads-that-glow/>

If you’d like to send the governor an email asking him to veto this sneaky fertilizer business, you can do so here: <https://waterkeepersflorida.good.do/stopthefertilizerpreemption/FertilizerPreemption/>

The other worst conservation measures coming out of this session of the legislature, as mentioned last week, are the pro-sprawl/bad growth bill attempting to financially intimidate residents and local organizations from challenging developer-driven adjustments to municipal comprehensive plans and the “radioactive roads” measure, again pushed by the villains in the phosphorus mining industry. They are running out of room to store their toxic waste so they want to experiment using it to build roads.

Send a note to the governor asking him to veto the bad growth bill:
https://waterkeepersflorida.good.do/Development_Bills/SB540_Rules-2/

... and to shoot down “radioactive roads:”
<https://waterkeepersflorida.good.do/saynotoradioactiveroads/HB1191-SB1258-VETO/>

Seeing as how phosphorus is at the center of many of these items, here again is a link to my “Welcome to Florida” podcast episode all about phosphorus, it’s mining in Florida, and the damage it does – and benefits – to the planet: <https://www.stitcher.com/show/welcome-to-florida/episode/episode-147-phosphate-phosphorus-and-toxic-blue-green-algae-301871628>

The leaseholder of the Amelia River Golf Course wants to level [36-acres of forest to build a solar power farm](#) on the land. This is a story playing out across the nation forcing conservation groups to make tough

decisions about whether to support more clean energy infrastructure or support the natural areas those solar and wind projects often occupy.

Solar and wind energy production require a lot of space – land – and oftentimes the easiest and cheapest land available to build the farms on is also valuable habitat.

This doesn't have to be a clean energy vs. habitat conversation question if people are willing to be creative. There are hundreds of acres of rooftops, parking lots, abandoned lots and developed areas across Amelia Island suitable for solar generation if the interested parties are willing to work together... which, they generally aren't.

The city commission votes on the matter Tuesday. Show up if you feel strongly one way or the other.

LINK: <https://fernandinaobserver.com/city-news/solar-farm-proposed-on-airport-land/>

The Wild Amelia Fest is back May 19th through the 21st and members of the local Ixia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society will be leading a native plant walk and staffing an outreach booth at the event.

On Friday, May 19, from 9:00 am to 11:00 am join local naturalist & Ixia Chapter Vice President Betsy Harris for an easy hike around Egans Creek Greenway highlighting the native flora occurring along the way.

Participants should wear comfortable walking shoes, apply sun protection and bring a full water bottle. Bug spray is recommended.

Meet at the trailhead at the back of the Residence Inn parking lot. South Egans Creek, 2301 Sadler Rd, Fernandina Beach 32034. Parking is available for hikers.

RSVP is required. Email betsyaharris@gmail.com to register. The walk is limited to a maximum of 20 participants.