

Urban sprawl in Jacksonville will soon consume [another 1,000 acres near the airport](#). On undeveloped former pine plantation land at the intersection of Pecan Park Road and I-95, 1,650 single-family homes, 275 apartment units, 1.6 million square feet of industrial space, and 87,725 square feet of retail will all be going in where trees now are, or have been.

The Jacksonville City Council unanimously approved – Democrat and Republican alike – rezoning the area to allow for the mega development.

LINK: <https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/realestate/former-bacardi-owned-land-to-become-1-000-acre-housing-retail-project-in-jacksonville/ar-AA1J90wx?ocid=winp2fptaskbarhover&cvid=a1d05709ced1452aeb4c2edb6200b581&ei=14>

How is [human waste from Miami](#) ending up in the St. Johns River?

Long story short, Miami doesn't have enough water treatment facilities to handle all of its sewage, so it exports tons of that sewage to other areas around the state. It often ends up on agriculture fields as fertilizer, seeping through the soil and poisoning nearby lakes and rivers.

As more and more places ban Miami outsourcing its poop to their communities, fewer and fewer places are left that receive it. One of those remaining places feeds into the St. Johns.

LINK: https://www.yahoo.com/news/report-miami-area-sewage-sludge-090648140.html?guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly9mbG9yaWRhcGhvZW5peC5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAEsUjuGnbkybHznMvrMrIfKFi8dRSvSUGiXx_1KyuNzooZSL4T8Wxz-PZ5NYt1-IU6QKAysoFCHEyMgsW_njPM4SVLNRxHRk149OKYwZHKHce-eW1kpDBLuv9l-ozOxwac9ZoimDOEUlehc646twpPtYQ-912eKyHaqLKZel1Efx&guccounter=2

No one in Miami or at the state level seems to be all that concerned about the problem, or how [the practice is ballooning costs](#) to clean up the river.

LINK: <https://floridaphoenix.com/2025/07/24/toxic-sludge-is-tainting-floridas-longest-river-with-no-solution-in-sight/>

The latest effort to curb invasive python numbers in the Everglades: [robot rabbits](#).

LINK: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2025/07/16/robot-bunnies-florida-everglade-pythons/8524600007/>

Interesting to note, later on in this story, it mentions the state's program of paying 100 bounty hunters to capture and kill the snakes beginning in 2017 as the "most effective

management strategy in the history of the issue.” If that’s the case, then why not hire 100 more?

The land area these snakes have expanded into is enormous. 100 people can’t possibly cover it. If controlling the python population and protecting the Everglades is a state priority, why not hire 500 bounty hunters? Why not 1,000?

Money?

The state has plenty of money. It’s already [blown past \\$250 million](#) building a detention facility for immigrants in the Everglades.

LINK: <https://jasongarcia.substack.com/p/the-tab-for-floridas-immigrant-prison>

The warden there [makes \\$125 an hour](#), or \$260,000 a year before overtime.

LINK: <https://www.wftv.com/news/local/new-records-reveal-how-much-florida-is-paying-private-company-staff-alligator-alcatraz/635JC2UKNJGTLFMCJCJX5E5RFI/>

The state has hired a team of lawyers [each charging \\$875 per hour](#) to defend the prison against lawsuits. Lawyers from that same law firm, charging the same rate, are defending the state attorney general from a contempt of court charge.

LINK: <https://jasongarcia.substack.com/p/the-tallahassee-swamp-tries-cover>

The public will likely never know how much is being spent on the Everglades immigrant black hole as the state has recently undertaken efforts to [hide those details](#).

LINK: <https://reason.com/2025/07/22/alligator-alcatraz-contracts-disappeared-from-a-florida-state-database/>

What is the state hiding and why?

Florida has plenty of money to pay more python bounty hunters, to eradicate invasive species, to buy conservation land, to complete the Florida Wildlife Corridor, to build nature-based resilient shorelines, it just doesn’t want to. It’s a matter of politics, not priorities.

“Wetland mitigation banks” sound about as exciting as warmed up oatmeal, but they’re a conservation backstop against rampant development in Florida. When a developer wants to build in an area classified as a wetland, the developer is typically allowed to do so by purchasing land in a “wetland mitigation bank” nearby as an offset.

[A new state law bastardizes the intention](#) and marginalizes the already marginal conservation benefits of wetland mitigation banks by allow developers to “bank” land

outside of the watershed area they're destroying. Previously, for example, a developer had to "bank" wetlands in Miami to move ahead with a wetland development project in Miami; that's no longer the case.

Developers run Florida.

LINK: <https://www.wuft.org/environment/2025-07-14/protecting-wild-florida>

The Big Waters Land Trust teamed up with Manatee County to plant 47,000 longleaf pine trees at Duette Preserve. This planting marks a major step forward in restoring one of Florida's most threatened and ecologically valuable ecosystems.

Longleaf pine forests once covered millions of acres across the Southeast. By reintroducing longleaf pine to Duette Preserve, the organization is helping to rebuild critical wildlife habitat for species like the gopher tortoise, red-cockaded woodpecker, and indigo snake — many of which are threatened or endangered. These trees also improve air and water quality, enhance carbon storage, and make the landscape more resilient to wildfires and hurricanes.

Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation, Arbor Day Foundation, Kissimmee Valley Forester, and Florida Forest Service helped on the project.

Another chance to lobby the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to add the Ghost Orchid to the Endangered Species Act. [Easy to fill out email form.](#)

LINK:

https://act.biologicaldiversity.org/apJ1gpqfRUa48GKwGTXfkw2?sourceid=1010293&utm_source=action&utm_medium=email&contactdata=CIM1o7eMfejd5+Ti5%2fBuzXrUVqzGFknzyVTfJZNgh92mxowOiQOMtiRiJZ5kmzeFlSpH3uaCQ41HhvKOZW%2fwyQlgU8+3HWzJhkIFVt6Wjv2IVQBcQK7S8jVZQwFwBEuQejYti7pF4UENpM441O3l02b74LNpxXbktb5tn2WPPCnSSSx1TI8cOwUxTslqLxldi2L%2fNKY%2fUylyuT7ODHQP3s4FZEjAh+uEmk8YlBEJv%2fb3zBacVZeP3G1OO0nJi0r3ICchgKDMBvvm2g6B8uZg%3d%3d&emci=3f6c43e9-815e-f011-8dc9-6045bdfe8e9c&emdi=6db555de-fd63-f011-8dc9-6045bdfe8e9c&ceid=1955550

Disease has mostly left the Florida citrus industry dead. Orchards are being bulldozed for development. Some of those dead citrus trees, however, [are being turned into biochar](#), a useful, non-toxic product for amending soil and carbon sequestration.

LINK: <https://www.theinvadingsea.com/2025/07/16/biochar-citrus-groves-florida-soil-restoration-carbon-storage-climate-mitigation-nutrient-pollution/>

My monthly reminder about the ecological devastation being wrought by artificial intelligence and [the massive “data centers”](#) required to house the computers necessary to perform all the computations required by AI.

Even with advances in clean energy and clean energy production on the rise, data centers are sucking up so much power, placing a completely new demand on power grids nationwide, dirty power plants are being forced to remain in operation longer than anticipated to meet the need, and the costs to produce all that electricity for Microsoft and Amazon and Elon Musk’s AI computers are being passed on to consumers.

LINK: <https://floridaphoenix.com/2025/07/19/repub/ai-data-centers-are-using-more-power-regular-customers-are-footing-the-bill/>

Meta, parent company of Facebook and Instagram, has plans to build a pair of data centers – [one in Ohio and one in Louisiana](#) – comparable in size to Manhattan. You read that correctly. Meta’s comic book villain CEO Mark Zuckerberg is calling the projects “Promethius” and “Hyperion.”

I think “Dystopian” and “Apocalyptic” would be more appropriate.

Two will become four, four, eight, and before you know it, dozens – hundreds? – of city-sized computer warehouses devouring energy (and water to cool those computers) will be spread across America... purple mountains majesty.

LINK: <https://www.techspot.com/news/108673-meta-invest-over-60b-ai-data-centers-starting.html>

But hey, all that extra energy demand [is good for Big Oil](#), so the Trump regime loves it! A previous Conservation Newsletter detailed how establishing preeminence in artificial intelligence is one of two key priorities for the regime.

LINK: https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2025/07/fossil-fuel-polluters-lifeline-ai-data-centers-power-demand-donald-trump-pittsburgh-summit/?utm_source=mj-newsletters&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=daily-newsletter-07-18-2025

Speaking of the federal government, the Environmental “Protection” Agency is eliminating [its department of research and development](#). Firing scientists. The office has long provided the scientific underpinnings for the EPA’s mission to protect the environment and human health.

“Its destruction will devastate public health in our country,” a union representative for federal government employees said.

“The obliteration of ORD will have generational impacts on Americans’ health and safety,” a representative from California said.

“Reducing its workforce under the guise of cost savings is both misleading and dangerous,” Jennifer Orme-Zavaleta, former EPA principal deputy assistant administrator for science, said in a statement. “[This does not save taxpayers money](#); it simply shifts costs to hospitals, families and communities left to bear the health and economic consequences of increased pollution and weakened oversight.”

LINK: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/jul/19/trump-epa-layoffs-research-development>

LINK: <https://www.cbsnews.com/colorado/news/epa-shutters-its-scientific-research-arm-hundreds-of-scientists-expected-to-be-impacted/?intcid=CNM-00-10abd1h>

All part of the administration’s “[war on science](#).” War on knowledge.

Attack science. Discredit science. Defund science. Do the same to journalism and the media. Do the same to public education. Do the same to higher education. Invent phrases like “fake news.” Deny truth. Deny climate. Ban books. Promote conspiracies. Promote faith over facts. That’s the game plan.

Create a society where science and education and intellect and reason and logic are replaced by ignorance and obedience and fear. You can make ignorant, obedient and scared people believe and do anything.

LINK: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/jul/19/rfk-jr-science-research-cuts>