

Only one story this week and it's an all hands on deck request to help protect our state parks. Last week, an assault on Florida's state parks was announced by Gov. Ron DeSantis' Florida Department of Environmental Protection. "Protection."

The radical proposal would open these beloved natural spaces to devastating "recreational amenities" including golf courses and hotels.

At least nine state parks are at risk of dangerous development including Anastasia State Park in St. Augustine. The scheme would bring a hotel with up to 350 rooms, a disc golf course, and pickleball courts, all located in the park's maritime hammock.

State officials know how shady and unpopular this proposal is. The deal was introduced with less than a week before FDEP is hosting public meetings on the proposed threat to natural land and sensitive habitats. This was done to prevent environmental groups from having time to rally support against it. Meetings are scheduled for only an hour, which won't be close to enough time to allow for meaningful public comment.

[Click here to see the full list of impacted parks.](#)

FDEP is hosting one public hearing in each of the affected areas on Tuesday, August 27, from 3-4 p.m. For Anastasia State Park, the hearing is at First Coast Technical College - The Character Counts Conference Center, Building C – 2980, Collins Ave St. Augustine, FL, 32084.

TAKE ACTION

[Send an email to Gov. DeSantis and other state leaders.](#)

Make plans to attend [one of the meetings](#) on Tuesday, August 27

[Call the Governor's office](#) to express your disdain for this terrible initiative. Tell him Florida's state parks are no place for golf courses and giant "lodges" – the outdoorsy euphemism FDEP is using for the state park hotels it is proposing [\(850\) 717-9337](tel:8507179337)

LIST OF IMPACTED PARKS: <https://www.everglades.org/save-floridas-state-parks/?emci=767a853d-ee5f-ef11-991a-6045bddbfc4b&emdi=c71ab196-f85f-ef11-991a-6045bddbfc4b&ceid=550594>

EMAIL LAWMAKERS: <https://www.everglades.org/send-state-lawmakers-message-save-floridas-state-parks/?emci=767a853d-ee5f-ef11-991a-6045bddbfc4b&emdi=c71ab196-f85f-ef11-991a-6045bddbfc4b&ceid=550594>

MEETING LOCATIONS: <https://floridawildlifefederation.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Public-Meetings-8.27.24-DEP-2.pdf?emci=767a853d-ee5f-ef11-991a-6045bddbfc4b&emdi=c71ab196-f85f-ef11-991a-6045bddbfc4b&ceid=550594>

Why is FDEP doing this? Florida's state government from the governor's mansion on down is now controlled by radical right-wingers. The right wing of the political spectrum has developed an antagonistic, adversarial relationship to nature and the environment. They see no value in natural areas, open space, green space, beyond an ability to squeeze profit out of it.

This is a trial balloon. If Florida's Republican appointed state officials can jam through develop within protected state parks – the crown jewels of Florida nature – then the sky's the limit for other preserved and protected natural areas to be taken out of protection and placed into development. This is a trend being seen across the state, but attempting it in state parks is particularly audacious.

This effort is a [repeat of a failed attempt by Rick Scott](#) as governor to privatize the state parks.

LINK: <https://floridaphoenix.com/2024/08/22/desantis-wants-to-build-golf-courses-and-hotels-in-floridas-state-parks/>