

Here's an exciting project being envisioned on a massive scale with a local connection. Conservation groups along several states on the East coast stretching from North Carolina to northeast Florida are working through a plan [to conserve one million acres of salt marsh](#) nearly the size of Grand Canyon National Park. The North Florida Land Trust is involved in the project and quoted in the story.

LINK: https://www.publicnewsservice.org/2022-08-08/environment/multi-state-conservation-plan-to-protect-salt-marshes/a80190-1?utm_campaign=2022-08-25+SFN&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Pew&subscriberkey=00Q7V00001hmH4vUAE

While not as big in scale or strictly focused on coastal resiliency, a plan for parks or development or some combination of both along the St. John's River through downtown Jacksonville continues to move forward. A massive "activation plan" following more than a year of research and public comment was [released by the Jesse Ball duPont Fund](#).

Whether this project ends up favoring green space, access for all, native plants and shade trees or concrete and wealthy developers remains to be seen.

LINK: <https://www.dupontfund.org/activation-plan>

Disturbing news from the recent round of elections in Nassau County where a slate of ultra-pro development county commissioners were elected by wide margins, at least in part thanks to major campaign contributions from land developer Raydient, the company who brought Nassau County the enormous Wildlight development just off the interstate. Raydient is a subsidiary of the timer company Rayonier.

Firmly in the pockets of developers, political insiders in Nassau County expect this group of county commissioners to overturn the previous commission's opposition to construction of a series of high-rise condo towers on 50-acres of undeveloped land adjacent to the Amelia Island State Park on the south end of Amelia Island.

The Duval Audubon Society has released its [schedule of in-person events and activities](#) for fall/winter 2022/2023.

LINK: <http://www.duvalaudubon.org/index.php/activities/calendar-of-events/month.calendar/2022/08/27/->

[The magic of mangroves](#). Like seagrasses and salt marshes, mangroves are coastal wetlands that serve as nursery and feeding grounds for a broad range of species, storm buffers for communities, and highly efficient carbon sinks. They are, however, some of the most threatened ecosystems on Earth. Experts estimate that half of the world's mangroves have been lost in the past 50 years because of habitat destruction, coastal development, and pollution.

In Florida, due to climate change, mangroves are actually creeping north into territory they previously weren't found and crowding out native plant species. They're success is becoming a nuisance.

LINK: https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2022/07/26/6-reasons-for-restoring-and-protecting-mangroves?utm_campaign=2022-08-25+SFN&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Pew&subscriberkey=00Q7V00001hmH4vUAE

California will [ban the sale of gas-powered cars](#) starting in 2035. The state recently passed a similar measure for gas-powered lawnmowers.

Significant in its own right, the influence will likely be felt nationally as the scale of California's economy and consumer base alone typically encourages companies to follow whatever they do there nation-wide as it's too expensive and inefficient to produce separate sets of products meeting California's higher environmental standards and their previous products which don't. In this way, California does truly lead the nation – drag the nation along – in conservation.

LINK: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/08/25/california-bans-the-sale-of-new-gas-powered-cars-by-2035.html>

In drought-stricken Colorado, [one county will save 1.5 million gallons of water annually](#) by replacing Kentucky Bluegrass with Native Colorado prairie grass. How much grass is being converted to experience this enormous savings? 3 acres.

Read that again and imagine implementing similar programs at scale nationwide.

LINK: <https://www.9news.com/article/news/state/colorado-climate/native-grass-saving-water-arapahoe-county/73-6cbc49e8-ded2-4ca1-aa88-16c5960507f8>

Our water supply in Florida is being exhausted by overuse as a result of overdevelopment – thirsty turfgrass lawns being a major culprit. The state will eventually have to face this crisis and the interests of developers will finally take a back seat to residents when rivers run dry and drinking water is imperiled. That will happen. Projects like this one in Colorado and greater adoption of native plants, trees and grasses could avoid this catastrophe. Unfortunately, our state's leadership is focused on banning books and terrorizing gay kids.

Enjoy this helpful "[beginners guide to butterfly watching](#)."

LINK: <https://blog.nature.org/science/2022/08/15/a-beginners-guide-to-butterfly-watching/>

On the latest episode of my "Welcome to Florida" podcast, we discussed flamingos and the research being done to combat the popular and [long-held myth that they are not native to the state](#).

LINK: <https://www.stitcher.com/show/welcome-to-florida/episode/episode-114-flamingos-206033626>