

# Nurturing a Productive Friends Partnership

National Friends Conference

February 2009

# Objectives

- Identify different types and levels of partnerships
- Identify traits of successful partnerships and failed partnerships
- History behind the FWS-Friends Partnership
- Identify roles of the Refuge Manager and Friends Board
- Identify ingredients for finding common ground
- Discuss how to Weather the Storms
- Review and update guidelines for establishing partnerships

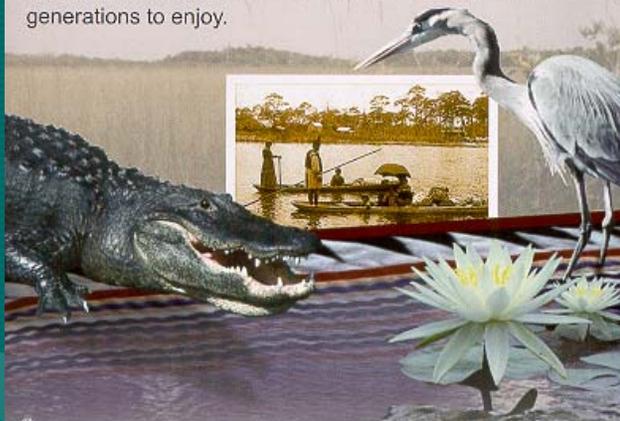


Prairie Lakes Unit

# Everglades Trail

During your Everglades adventures, you will find many other interesting sites to explore along the way, including cultural attractions and museums. Several natural history and cultural heritage trails intersect with the Everglades Trail. These include the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail (LOST), Big Water Heritage Trail, Gulf Coast Heritage Trail and the Great Florida Birding Trail.

Your support for conservation of this region is important to ensure that this international treasure survives for future generations to enjoy.



WILDERNESS GRAPHICS, INC.

The Nature Conservancy

OFFICE OF U.S. SENATOR Bob Graham

The Everglades Trail is a project initiated by Wilderness Graphics, Inc. and The Nature Conservancy. The Trail was introduced by U.S. Senator Bob Graham and created with the support of the Friends of Loxahatchee Refuge and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Office of Greenways and Trails, Florida Department of Transportation, and South Florida Water Management District, with the assistance of Visit Florida.



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# Take the Everglades Trail

A driving trail to 20 great places

**EXPLORE** wild places.

**ENJOY** the nature and culture of the Kissimmee, Okeechobee and Big Cypress watershed.

Experience the subtle beauty of the Everglades.

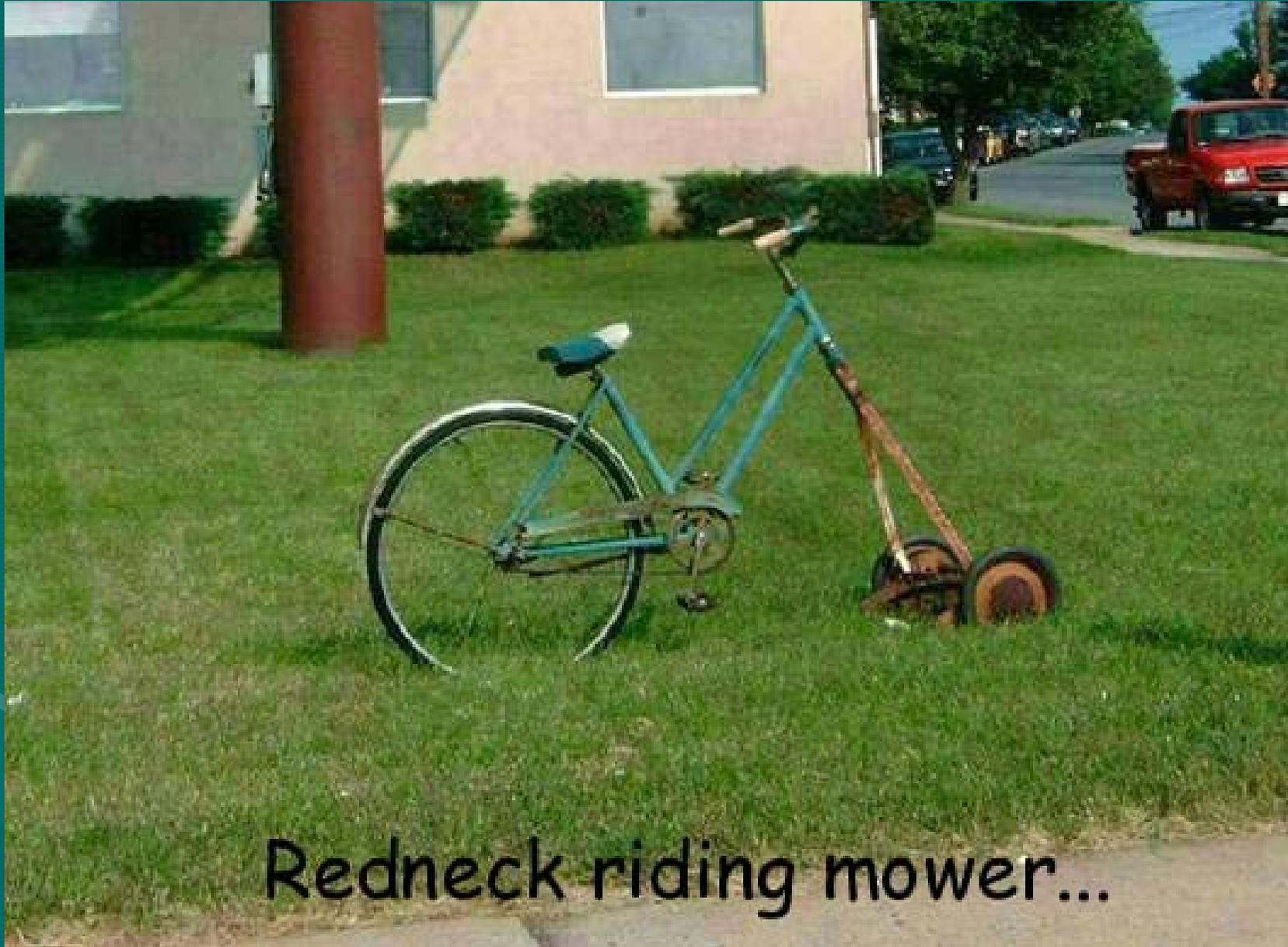
Discover reasons to **RESTORE** this international treasure.



[www.evergladestail.com](http://www.evergladestail.com)







Redneck riding mower...

# Five Levels of Partnership

Supporting



Acting together



Deciding together



Consultation



Information



Partnership

# Successful Partnership

- Agreement that a partnership is necessary.
- Respect and trust between different interests.
- The leadership of a respected individual or individuals.
- Commitment of key interests developed through a clear and open process.
- The development of a shared vision of what might be achieved.

# Successful Partnerships

- Time to build the partnership.
- Shared mandates or agendas.
- The development of compatible ways of working, and flexibility.
- Good communication, perhaps aided by a facilitator.
- Collaborative decision-making, with a commitment to achieving consensus.
- Effective organizational management.



*Discussing Water Rights. A Western Pastime*

# Failed Partnership

- A history of conflict among key interests.
- One partner manipulates or dominates.
- Lack of clear purpose.
- Unrealistic goals.
- Differences of philosophy and ways of working.
- Lack of communication.

# Failed Partnership

Unequal and unacceptable balance of power and control.

- Key interests missing from the partnership.
- Hidden agendas.
- Financial and time commitments outweigh the potential benefits

# History

- 1937 DOI Appropriations Act recognizes legal status of cooperating associations
- 1980s – Associations begin to form
- 1994 – first training session for support groups
- 1996 – Friends Initiative started with support of NFWF, NWRA, and NAS
- 1997 – 114 Friends Groups across the country

# History

- 1997 Refuge System Improvement Act
  - Organic legislation that provided the mission of the NWRS: The mission of the System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans
  - “this conservation mission has been facilitated by providing Americans opportunities to participate”

# History

- NWRS Volunteer Partnership Enhancement Act of 1998
  - Further strengthened refuge partnerships by streamlining the requirements for establishing community organizations.
  - Friends groups able to provide financial and technical support
  - Serve as liaisons between refuge and local community
  - For the purpose of promoting public awareness of the resources of the NWRS and public participation in the conservation of those resources

# Refuge-Friends Partnership

- What are the roles of the refuge manager, staff, and Friends Board?



# **Duty of Care-**

**Responsibility to make informed, good faith decisions so as to act in the best interests of the organization.**



# **Duty of Loyalty-**

**Responsibility to act with undivided allegiance to the organization's mission.**