

**Everglades National Park
Organization of Organisms**



Background Guide

Letter from the Secretary-General and Director General

Hello delegates, advisors, parents, and teachers,

On behalf of us, your Secretary-General Isabella Balbi Masso and Director-General Alexandria Cerini, and all of our Secretariat, we would like to welcome you all to the 37th iteration of the Florida International Model United Nations Conference! This upcoming FIMUN will continue to be held at Florida International University's beautiful Modesto A. Maidique Campus from March 14th to 16th, 2025.

This year we have selected the theme of "Diplomacy in a Divided World," where delegates will be prompted to show diplomacy during challenging and engaging scenarios in a wide variety of General Assembly, Specialized, and Crisis Committees. Both of us originate from opposite sides of the ocean and have seen the division of the world, especially in our modern day. We are strong believers that every person, even young students, have the ability to show diplomacy and change the world. Being able to act with diplomacy in cases of adversity, disadvantage, and injustice is a skill that every person should learn and harness to make the world a better place, not just for themselves but for everyone.

We are working hard to provide every delegate with a committee that they will love, and an unforgettable experience where they will make new friends, learn new skills, and discover the amazing world of Model UN! This year we will be hosting 15 committees each one focusing on a different current, historical, or fantasy issue, with an amazing staff who are prepared to make this FIMUN the best one yet!

We are incredibly honored and excited to welcome you all to our amazing campus and conference this March, and cannot wait to see each and every one of you succeed!

See you soon,

Isabella Balbi Masso and Alexandria Cerini
ibalb007@fiu.edu and aceri008@fiu.edu
Secretary-General and Director-General
Florida International Model United Nations 37

Letter from the Under-Secretary General

Dear Delegates,

My name is Carlos Ricaurte, and I have the privilege of being your Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Specialized Committees on this iteration of FIU Model UN's High School Conference, FIMUN 37. I am a Senior currently double majoring in Political Science and International Relations, with a certificate in Latin American Studies. Last year I had the opportunity of being your Committee Director for FIMUN 36's UNSC Committee focused on the 1961 Congo Crisis, through which I learned the deep value and importance that FIMUN represents for you all and our team here at FIU.

I was born and raised in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, and I came here to the United States as an International Student in Spring 2022. Ever since I joined the FIU Model UN Team the year after that, in Spring 2023, I haven't regretted it one bit, knowing the immense value it has brought to me as a speaker, researcher, and person. A value that, with the amazing and creative work brought on to you by this year's Secretariat, CDs, Staffers, and many others, I know will see itself greatly reflected onto you all. Within our SPEC Committees, we once again ascertain FIMUN's commitment to having fun and learning about critical, real-world issues through constructive and entertaining debate. Everything from discussing matters of technology and development within our Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and UN Office of Legal Affairs (UNOLA) to a stroll into the world of competitive Football with FIFA, this year's committees have it all. We take a deep dive into the historical struggles of Latin Americans through the Sao Paulo Forum, the similar struggles of native fauna within the Everglades via our Council of Critters, and how we report on all these things happening, through our intrepid UN Correspondents Association, or Press Corps.

As we move ever closer toward FIMUN 37, I am excited to see your creativity, leadership, and debate released onto these committees. We as the FIMUN Secretariat remain committed to this, ensuring you get to enjoy yourselves within a framework of mutual respect, diplomacy, and cultural awareness. In the end, you are representing real people with real, systemic struggles after all. Remember that through any challenges you might face, Secretariat and your CDs are here to help. Should you have any questions, doubts, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your Committee Directors, Chairs, or me, your USG.

¡Buena suerte!

Carlos Ricaurte
crica017@fiu.edu

Under-Secretary-General for Specialized Committees
Florida International Model United Nations 37

Letter from the Director

Greetings delegates, and welcome to the world's first Council of Critters! My name is Aidan Papke and I am a second year student at Florida International University majoring in International Relations and pursuing certificates in International Logistics, Agroecology, and Asian Studies with career aspirations of working in international development, particularly in the realm of sustainable development. My MUN journey began in 2020, when I founded Oakleaf High School's Model UN club. I ran the organization until I graduated, which was easily the highlight of my high school experience. On FIU's team, I have gotten the opportunity to travel to plenty of awesome places such as Orlando and Chicago, and have made my truest friends. FIMUN specialized committees have a special place in my heart, as my first ever MUN committee was a FIMUN Spec, so I couldn't be more excited to be directing this one with you bright, young delegates.

Prior to last school year, I had never been to, or frankly, cared much about, the Everglades. But, I took a class called Ecology of South Florida, in which we took field trips to Everglades National Park. I was stunned at how beautiful and biodiverse it was, and even more appalled to learn that it is under incredible threat from a multitude of different angles. In my research for this class, it became clear to me that typical conservation solutions were not enough to save these historic wetlands, which is what spawned the idea for this committee. I figured, if humans can't get the job done, maybe it is time to think out of the box- why not animals? The Everglades are extremely important for South Florida, as they provide water for about 1/3 Floridians and contain numerous endangered animals and ecosystems, so it should be a priority of all that live here to protect them. It is my goal in hosting this committee that you all come to share the passion that I have for this awe-inspiring park by putting yourself in the shoes, or paws, of those that are impacted the most by the challenges it faces- the animals.

As a chair, I will primarily be judging delegates on their creativity, leadership, and speaking ability. I also love to see that delegates are well researched on the topic and their positions. I won't judge anything technical such as paper formatting, knowledge of parliamentary procedure, etc too harshly, as this will likely be many delegates' first time competing, and this committee is designed to be fun more than anything else.

I look forward to meeting all of you and seeing the interesting solutions you bring to the table for this unprecedented debate!

Aidan Papke
apapk001@fiu.edu
Everglades National Park Organization of Organisms Director
Florida International Model United Nations 37

Letter from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

Greetings to you all, and welcome to the 37th Florida International Model United Nations High School Conference! My name is Justin Jean-Baptiste, a junior here at FIU. I have experience in speech and debate in high school and decided to join the Model United Nations team here at FIU as soon as I heard about it. I started this January and already got the opportunity to compete in my first semester. While living here in Miami I got the chance to travel to the Everglades while taking an ecology class on the subject which spurred my love for it. I will serve as the committee chair this year. I am looking forward to meeting you and hearing your ideas for preserving the Everglades in the Council of Critters committee!

Preparation and knowledge are truly the keys to success in this committee, however, success will not be attained without help and cooperation from other critters of the Everglades!

It is important to remember that FIMUN encourages each delegate to demonstrate honesty throughout the conference. Cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated and may result in disqualification. Please remember to treat your fellow delegates, chairs, and staff with respect and courtesy!

If you have any questions, please reach out to me. Remember to be confident in yourself and cooperate with others, have fun! Look forward to seeing your work and research come to life. Good luck and paws up!

Kindest regards,

Justin Jean-Baptiste
jjean317@fiu.edu
Everglades National Park Organization of Organisms Chair
Florida International Model United Nations 37

Sensitivity Statement

FIMUN 37 has a zero tolerance policy on racism, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia, and transphobia. If delegates are found to be engaging in any such actions or rhetoric are open to disqualification from awards.

We ask all delegates to be conscious of the histories and context of their countries or characters for their committees. Many of our committees focus on the stories and topics relating to historically oppressed and marginalized communities and regions. While these committees are simulations, the histories behind them are real, and disrespect towards the histories and existences of people represented in our committees will not be tolerated.

On our website, we have an anonymous report form if delegates encounter such actions. While we hope to avoid the need for such, this form will be checked regularly by our Secretariat to ensure that all delegates at FIMUN 37 can enjoy their weekend comfortably.

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that our university is located on the ancestral homelands of sovereign Native nations, including the Tequesta, the Calusa, and today, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida. We pay our respects to the traditional custodians, the Elders past and present, by fully recognizing Indigenous sovereignty as well as the historical and contemporary relationship between Indigenous peoples and their traditional homelands. It is within our responsibility as an academic institution to uphold knowledge about the history of our institution with the original stewards of this land that we live, learn, and work on. We encourage our delegates to read and learn about ways to support our local Indigenous communities in their efforts to preserve Seminole and Miccosukee land and water rights, cultural practices, and the conservation of the environment.

Consistent with our University's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, FIU is working towards creating an academic environment that is inclusive of Indigenous students, faculty, and staff who have often been rendered invisible due to structural discriminatory practices. At FIU, we hold ourselves accountable to serving local, regional and worldwide Indigenous communities through academic policy-oriented research, education, partnerships, community service, as well as enrollment initiatives to overcome the effects of Indigenous exclusion and erasure in our own academic institution. It is our hope that acknowledging the land helps us to better understand that harm has been done and address the legacies of violence in our communities in order to create a pathway to true healing

Rules of Procedure

Motions

Motion to Open/Resume Debate

Opens the floor for debate. Delegates may now begin to provide further motions.

Motion to Open Speakers List

Opens the Speakers List, wherein delegates can deliver speeches without a set topic.

Motion for a Moderated Caucus

Opens a set speakers list for debate on a specified topic. Total time and speaking time must be specified within the motion.

Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus

Opens time for unregulated working time for delegates to work within their blocs on working papers/draft resolutions/directives.

Motion for a Round Robin

Opens a Round Robin, where every delegate in the room delivers a speech for a set time without a designated topic. Will start from the delegate that motioned and will either go clockwise or counterclockwise at delegate's discretion.

Motion for a Gentlemen's Unmoderated/Consultation of the Whole

Similar rules as to a normal Unmoderated Caucus, however all delegates must remain in their seats.

Motion to Introduce Working Papers/Draft Resolutions/Directives

Opens the floor to begin formal procedure on papers. Order of address if not specified will default to order in which each paper was introduced.

Authors Panel

Generally motioned for alongside the introduction of Working Papers/Draft Resolutions. Involves a Reading Period for Delegates to read papers, an Introduction where a panel of Delegates present the paper, and a Question and Answer portion, where sponsors of the paper are asked questions by fellow delegates about the paper.

Motions for For and Against Speeches

Opens a short speakers list where (generally speaking) 2 delegates are called to speak for and against a given working paper/draft resolution/directive.

Motions to Enter Voting Procedure and Voting Methods

Goes alongside a motion to end debate when in General Assembly and certain Specialized Agencies. Delegates will vote on papers on the floor. If no voting method is specified, committee will default to placard vote.

Placard vote operates the same way as votes for procedural matters. Delegates raise their placards to vote For, Against, or to Abstain if they stated they were Present.

Roll Call vote will have the chair call Roll Call once more, and when delegates are called they will state whether they vote For, Against, or if they Abstain.

Votes by Acclimation involves calling for general consensus, where the paper will pass unless anyone votes Against. Then placard vote is in order.

Points

Point of Inquiry

General question regarding committee or the conference

Point of Order

Question or correction regarding parliamentary procedures

Point of Personal Privilege

Personal request unrelated to committee. (e.g temperature in the room or seating issue)

Notes on Parliamentary Procedure:

This Specialized Committee will contain elements from both General Assembly and Crisis Committees, but the format is fluid and adaptable based on the wants of the delegates and flow of debate. Papers will be written in a directive style, meaning clauses should be short and to the point and written in a style somewhere between academic and casual. That said, directive cycles will last longer than in a traditional crisis committee, requiring multiple unmoderated caucuses per-cycle, as this committee is quite large and solutions, collaborators, and priorities are meant to be well thought out. Directives should pertain to the most recent crisis update given. Some crisis updates will be preplanned, and some will be based off of the previous directives that passed or failed. There will be NO CRISIS NOTES in this committee.

As delegates, you will be assigned a certain creature that calls Everglades National Park its home, and you will speak for the entirety of your species in the park. The powers of your position are limited to the abilities of the animal you represent, but any position can make RECOMMENDATIONS for the whole committee. Since this committee takes place as an open forum amongst animals in the wetlands, enforceable rules cannot be pushed in directives without first establishing proper and realistic enforcement mechanisms.

Committee Expectations

Delegates are allowed and expected to push boundaries and be creative, as this committee is quite fantastical. All positions are expected to be flexible with the other positions that they work with. There are some complicated dynamics at play here, as we have predators, prey, scavengers, and invasive species all in the room, but you must remember that you all are working towards the same common goal: to save the Everglades. So, attempt to work out any potential barriers to interspecies delegating. Disrespect towards other species on the basis of species status or any other reason will absolutely not be tolerated.

In terms of research, delegates are expected to do independent research on the Everglades (especially Everglades National Park), their species, as well as the relationship between the Everglades and their species. It is highly important that delegates have a high level of understanding of their species's niche. This includes information on unique abilities, their place on the food chain, their status (invasive, native, endangered, protected, etc), and particular threats they face in south Florida.

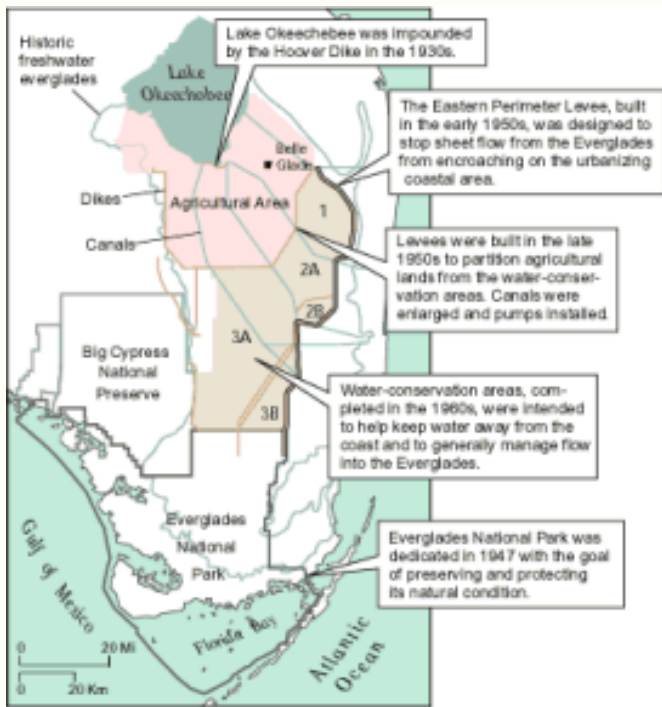
What are the Everglades?

The Florida Everglades are one of the most unique ecosystems on this planet, spanning more than 2 million acres and housing numerous endemic species and diverse ecosystems, some of which can only be found in south Florida. Dubbed the “River of Grass,” the Everglades mostly consist of sawgrass marshes, which are fed by Lake Okeechobee’s overflow during the wet season. This subtropical wetland ecosystem is vitally important for Florida’s ecology and its human population, as it provides water for over 8 million residents (FIU Institute of Environment, 2021). It’s more than 1 million annual visitors additionally drive multiple tribal economies and inspire people from all generations to care for their environment (NPS, 2023).

Everglades is a broad term used to describe the entirety of Lake Okeechobee’s floodplain, encompassing the Everglades Agricultural Area, which is a swath of land south of Lake Okeechobee where a majority of Florida’s agricultural activities take place, the Water Conservation Area, where a great deal of water is extracted for drinking and municipal use, down to Big Cypress National Preserve and Everglades



National Park, where the rivers empty out into Florida Bay. However, the ecosystem is by and large most famous for Everglades National Park, which is one of the United States’ most visited national parks, existing as a refuge for numerous endangered species, many of which are seldom found outside of the park’s borders (USGS, date unknown). The national park designation for the Everglades became official in 1947, when landscape architect Ernest F. Coe and members of his association amassed enough funding and convinced congress to found the park (NPS, 2020).



This national park distinction is vital for its floristic and faunistic residents, as it means no corporation can develop the land within the park's boundaries and that its ecosystems and trails are constantly being tended to by qualified professionals. This is especially important in a region like south Florida, where large cities and suburban sprawl constantly threaten the local environment, often favoring commercial excellence over ecological prosperity. Despite the park staff's best efforts however, residuals from the ever-increasing population of Miami and the rest of south Florida continue to pose a great threat to these wetlands.



Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan

The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan is the largest ongoing restoration project in the world currently. Collaborated on by Florida governors, policymakers, stakeholders, and civilians since 2000, it is a crowning achievement of the state and country. The CERP aims to restore natural water-flow patterns, recharge the aquifer, improve salinity balance, increase fire management efforts, and anything else that can ensure the Everglades can persist in an age of rapid south Florida land development and worsening climate shifts. Leading project actors, including the South Florida Water Management District, U.S Army Corps of Engineers, Audubon Florida, and more, are tasked with monitoring conditions and drafting solutions, yet, each year, the state of the Everglades seems to worsen with new canals, residential and commercial districts, and other irresponsible uses of the historic wetland pop up constantly (Audubon Florida, 2023). However, the project has done its fair share of good- most notably the Taylor Slough Improvement Project, which diverted a great deal of freshwater southward to Florida Bay, where salinity imbalances were reaching detrimental levels (NWF, 2023).

The Habitats: Pine Rockland

Pine rocklands are an open canopied ecosystem where slash pines and various brush plants take root in exposed limestone. These ecosystems are pyrogenic and pyrophilic, meaning they need occasional fires to persist. Some notable flora and fauna of the pine rocklands are the Dade County slash pine (*Pinus elliottii* var. *densa*), and the Florida bonneted bat (*Eumops floridanus*). When European explorers first saw Florida from their ships, it was referred to as a “Sea of Pine,” due to the incredibly high density of pine rockland ecosystems. Today, less than 6% of pine rocklands still stand, making it one of the most endangered ecosystems in the country. Everglades National Park is home to numerous pine rocklands, and many of its most popular hiking trails run right through them (NPS, 2021).



Tropical Hardwood Hammock

Tropical hardwood hammocks often arise when natural and man-made factors prevent pine rocklands from maintaining their characteristic traits, especially when a burn has not occurred for over a decade. This ecosystem is characterized by its closed canopy and tropical hardwood tree species such as the gumbo limbo (*Bursera simaruba*), which cause the hammock's distinctive humidity. Tropical hardwood hammocks are found in small pockets in nearly all other Everglades National Park ecosystems, but also exist in large independent swaths (NPS, 2021).

Mangrove

Mangroves in Everglades National Park are most famous for the salt tolerant mangrove trees that thrive in the tidal tip of the park. These trees act as biological filters, and serve as nesting sites for countless wading birds. They are extremely important for the Everglades in the face of climate change, as they protect the interior from hurricane storm surge.



In the warm season, the Florida manatee (*Eumops floridanus*) is a common resident. Everglades National Park contains the largest continuous stretch of protected mangrove habitat in the western Hemisphere (NPS, 2021).



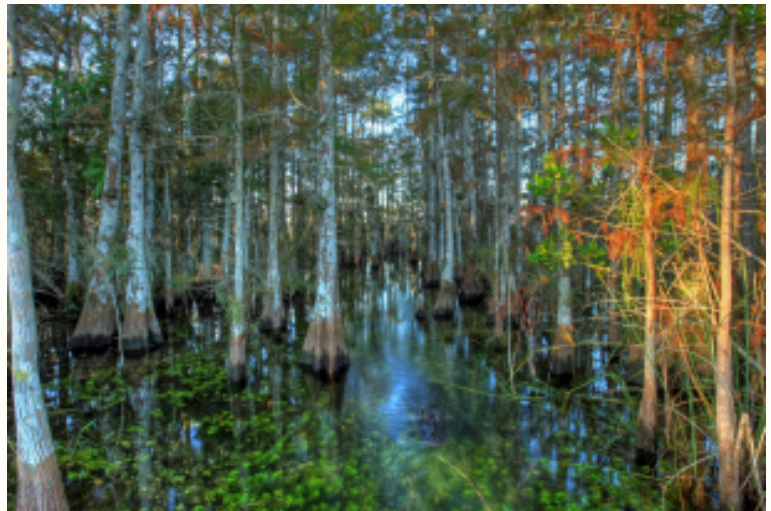
Cypress Domes

Cypress domes are prevalent throughout much of the southeast, and consist of behemoth cypress trees in a partially flooded environment. In cypress domes, the tallest trees usually appear in the center of the habitat, and trees tend to be younger and younger the farther away from the original tree, creating a dome like appearance in the solution hole.

The mighty bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) provides a great deal for its cohabitants- seeds for wading birds and fish, habitat for small mammals such as raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), and protection of the soil, which is a benefit for the whole park. The bald cypress is one of the most prevalent trees in all of Everglades National Park, making cypress domes a distinct characteristic (NPS, 2021).

Marine/Estuarine

Florida Bay is where the “River of Grass” empties itself into the sea, making for an interesting estuarine environment. It is home to an abundance of submerged vegetation, mostly turtle grass (*Thalassia testudinum*) and shoal grass (*Halodule wrightii*), which provide nutrients and habitat for a wide variety of crustaceans, fish, and herbivorous large animals. There are additionally hard-bottomed portions consisting of sponges and mollusks. The estuary of Everglades National Park is a popular spot for legal sport fishing (NPS, 2021).



Freshwater Slough



Freshwater sloughs are slow moving marshy rivers in low-lying areas, usually surrounded by grasses. Everglades National Park's most distinct habitat is the freshwater slough, which is where most wading birds, American alligators (*Alligator mississippiensis*) spend their time throughout the year. Freshwater sloughs are incredibly ecologically diverse, supporting an array of

crustaceans, turtles, and fish below the water. The Shark River Slough in Everglades National Park 35 miles and is the Everglades' most visited site. A special type of hike called a slough slog invites the most daring of tourists to trudge through shallow water and mud towards destinations such as alligator holes (NPS, 2021).

Coastal Lowlands

This habitat exists as a transition between the mud flats extending out of Florida Bay and the dry hardwood hammocks and pinelands. Coastal lowlands are the second most prone in the Everglades to storm surge, generally giving them some degree of salinity. This environment is perfect for tropical shrubbery and succulents. At times, flood dominates the plain, and at others, the lowlands remain completely dry for weeks or even months at a time (NPS, 2021).



Freshwater Marl Prairie



Marl prairies are made up of a special type of substrate called periphyton, which is an unsettlingly squishy mixture of detritus, algae, and bacteria. This unique ecosystem is home to a wide variety of vegetation and animals, as the marl acts as a wonderful source of nutrition for the organisms in the water. Marl prairies are always found bordering freshwater sloughs, but are distinct from them due to their relatively shorter hydroperiod.

Everglades National Park contains multiple famous walking trails along marl prairies.

Key Issues: Climate Change

Climate change presents a number of unique challenges for Everglades National Park, especially on the front of global warming. Rising temperatures mean devastation for many aquatic grasses, as has already been the case just south of the National Park in the Florida Keys, where seagrass die-off has been correlated to increased temperatures. A reduction in seagrass availability means a reduction in the primary food source for countless distinct species of Everglades National Park, including but not limited to the Florida manatee (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*) and green sea turtle (*Carretta carretta*). Many species that rely on seagrasses are already endangered, utilizing Everglades National Park as their refuge, but warming waters and diminishing food supply may force these beautiful creatures to migrate north, where their protection is considerably less guaranteed (Florida Audubon, 2023).



Global warming has an effect on every aquatic and terrestrial species within the park’s boundaries. With glacial melt comes sea level rise, and with sea level rise comes flooding. Flooding will reduce the available habitat for numerous land animals and increase the salinity in freshwater habitats. Heightened temperatures and subsequent extended hydroperiods also create problems on their own, as they force animals to expend more energy and may lead to migration to unprotected areas. This has already proven to be the case with the Florida panther (*Puma concolor coryi*), whose numbers in south Florida (many of which likely originally lived in Everglades National Park) have decreased to less than 100, many struck by cars while attempting to journey elsewhere (Criffield et al, 2018).



While much of the Everglades are fire adapted, increased frequency of fires brought about by temperature shifts could spell disaster for certain habitats. Most habitats, such as the pine rocklands, require fire every 6-10 years, which allows young plants to build up their resilience and the floor to accumulate litter. But, abnormally dry ground coupled with hotter seasons present a challenge to this schedule, which could threaten almost all of the habitats within Everglades National Park (NPS, 2015).



Invasive Species

Invasive species are plants and animals that are not naturally occurring in their environment and actively cause damage to ecological balance and/or human quality of life. Invasive species have long been a problem in south Florida due to the Port of Miami's status as the largest point of entry for exotic pets in the entire Western Hemisphere. Unfit exotic pet owners have been known to release these creatures into the wild when they no longer wish to provide them with the necessary care, manufacturing an absolute ecological disaster in the Everglades (UF IFAS, 2021).

The most famous case of invasive species in the Everglades is that of the Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*), which began to make its way into south Florida wetlands after Hurricane Andrew in 1992, whose damages presumably allowed some snakes to escape their Miami enclosures. This coupled with owner releases allowed for the creation of a breeding population, which is easily sustained due to the similarities of the Everglades to their natural environment. Today, it is estimated that there are several hundred thousand Burmese pythons in south Florida, which have zero natural predators and are constantly consuming the primary food sources of keystone species such as the American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*), American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*), and the red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*). Their presence in the park has directly caused harm to bird, mammal, and reptile populations of all shapes and sizes. Invasive plant species can be equally as detrimental to Everglades National Park in some cases (FFWCC, date unknown).

The melaleuca tree (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*) was and continues to be a particularly nasty case, as they grow in incredibly dense stands, displacing local species quickly and violently. A single tree can produce up to 20 million seeds per year, each of which could remain viable for 10 years (FFWCC, date unknown). The Brazilian peppertree is also a terror for native organisms, as it grows tall quickly, producing a large canopy that shades out native shrubbery and smaller tree species. It has also been known to disturb the habitats of the gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*) (FDACS, date unknown).



Illegal and Irresponsible Human Activities

One of the Everglades' biggest lifelines is human intervention through conservation efforts like controlled burns, invasive species removals, and water quality assurances. However, humans also play a huge role in the destruction of Everglades ecosystems and the worsening of species endangerment by constantly developing land around the Everglades, illegally hunting protected species within the park's boundaries, and improperly interacting with the environment. One particularly horribly offending industry is agriculture. Unsafe fertilizers and pesticides as well as biological waste from concentrated animal feeding operations tend to run off from farms in the Everglades Agricultural Area into the national park.

This promotes the development of algae blooms in aquatic habitats, which shades out submerged vegetation and reduces oxygen levels available for native fish. While there are caps on the agriculture industry's use of fertilizers and pesticides, as well as regulations for waste disposal, they are presently not enough to prevent the considerable levels of nutrient pollution present in the park (CBD, 2024).

Littering also continues to plague the national park, which receives millions of tourists each year, many of whom lack the respect or education needed to responsibly interact with the Everglades. Plastics make their way into bodies of water, often confusing marine and riverine life who mistake them for food and choke to death.



A more minor threat persisting is illegal fishing. Everglades National Park maintains strict rules about which species are allowed to be harvested and kept, as well as the particular locations fishing activities can take place. However, sport fishermen have been known to make their way into the park after hours, damaging certain habitats by taking more than allowed and disrupting the natural happenings of below water life.

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The Council of Critters

The Council of Critters is an organization created by the Everglades and for the Everglades. It is composed of one representative for each of the most important species within the national park. Each animal represents all of the members of its species in the park and offers up their unique abilities, proposing ideas to help sustain the Everglades. In this body, each species is offered the same voting power, regardless of population size or native status.

The Council was established in July of 2025, when record temperatures paired with runoff from a brand new concentrated animal feeding operation in Everglades City spawned an unprecedented ecological disaster in Everglades National Park. The critters knew that they had to work together, putting aside their differences, if they wanted to continue to thrive. There are considerable tensions between invasive species and native species within the body, but they have thus far not halted negotiations.

The goal of this body is to draft binding natural laws to protect and preserve Everglades National Park, defending against the nasty effects of climate change and human activity, as well as balancing out the catastrophic impacts of invasive species. New challenges are sure to present themselves to the Council throughout the weekend, as nature is incredibly unpredictable in these unprecedented times.

Positions (alphabetical scientific names):

1. (*Agkistrodon piscivorus conanti*) Florida cottonmouth
2. (*Alligator mississippiensis*) American alligator
3. (*Anhinga anhinga*) Anhinga
4. (*Anolis carolinensis*) Green anole
5. (*Apalone ferox*) Florida softshell turtle
6. (*Archilochus colubris*) Ruby-throated hummingbird
7. (*Ardea herodias*) Great blue heron
8. (*Bubo virginianus*) Great horned owl
9. (*Buteo lineatus*) Red shouldered hawk
10. (*Callinectes sapidus*) Blue Crab
11. (*Carretta carretta*) Green turtle
12. (*Cathartes aura*) Turkey vulture
13. (*Crocodylus acutus*) American crocodile
14. (*Crotalus adamanteus*) Eastern diamondback rattlesnake
15. (*Dasypus novemcinctus*) Nine banded Armadillo
16. (*Didelphis virginiana*) North American Opossum
17. (*Eumops floridanus*) Florida bonneted bat
18. (*Gopherus polyphemus*) Gopher tortoise
19. (*Hyla cinerea*) Green tree frog
20. (*Hypostomus plecostomus*) Armored catfish
21. (*Lepisosteus platyrhincus*) Florida gar
22. (*Lepomis macrochirus*) Bluegill
23. (*Megalops atlanticus*) Atlantic Tarpon
24. (*Mustela vison*) Everglades mink
25. (*Mycteria americana*) Wood stork
26. (*Norops sagrei*) Brown anole
27. (*Odocoileus virginianus*) White tailed deer
28. (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) Double-Crested Cormorant
29. (*Platalea ajaja*) Roseate spoonbill
30. (*Procyon lotor*) Raccoon
31. (*Pseudobranchius axanthus belli*) Everglades Dwarf Siren
32. (*Puma concolor coryi*) Florida panther
33. (*Python bivittatus*) Burmese python
34. (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) Everglades Snail Kite
35. (*Sus scrofa*) Wild Hog
36. (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*) Florida manatee
37. (*Ursus americanus floridanus*) Florida Black bear

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