

Biden administration announces more than \$1 billion for Everglades restoration

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A historic increase in Everglades funding was announced Wednesday by the Biden administration, with a plan to spend an unprecedented \$1.1 billion to restore South Florida's famous wilderness.

"The Administration is making the largest single investment in the Everglades in U.S. history," the White House said in a statement

Wednesday. "The iconic American landscape provides drinking water supply for over 8 million Floridians, supports the state's \$90 billion tourism economy, and is home to dozens of endangered or threatened species."

The funding will go through the Army Corps of Engineers as part of the administration's package of infrastructure spending that's intended to shore up roads, bridges, ports and other public assets.

The restoration of the Everglades involves dozens of projects intended to restore, or at least mimic, the natural flow of clean water through the sawgrass, tree islands and wet prairies west of metro South Florida. About half of the 40-mile wide, 100-mile long region has been lost to farms and urban development. Much of the rest suffers from insufficient clean water, thanks to diversions through canals, and in some areas, from too much water.

The restoration plan calls for removing levees, filling in canals, storing [fresh water](#) and other projects that will allow the Everglades to thrive and improve habitat for wading birds, alligators, panthers and other wildlife.

"Through President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Army Corps will invest \$1.1 billion to restore, protect, and preserve the South Florida ecosystem and increase its resilience to the impacts of climate change," the White House said. "These funds will support improvements to the Everglades by capturing and storing excess surface water runoff, reducing excess water releases to water conservation areas, and minimizing seepage losses during dry periods."

The consequences of the human impact on the Everglades show up across South Florida in countless ways, from toxic algae blooms to wildfires to vastly diminished flocks of wading birds. Approved in 2000,

the Everglades restoration plan has ballooned in cost and fallen years behind schedule. The state and [federal governments](#) are splitting the cost of the restoration work.

"The Everglades is the lifeblood of South Florida, and this historic funding commitment by the Biden administration will ensure we can much more aggressively move to restore and protect the natural sheet flow of [water](#) that is the largest environmental restoration project in American history," said U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Weston, co-chair of the House Everglades Caucus.

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