

# FLORIDA WILDLIFE CORRIDOR EXPEDITION



## PUBLIC OPPORTUNITY

### Join the Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition Team and Florida DEP Water Experts to Discuss Florida's Water Quality

*Swim or paddle with the team as they explore the pristine waters of Blue Spring State Park*

**Orange City, FL** – On March 29, photographer Carlton Ward Jr., biologist Joe Guthrie, conservationist Mallory Lykes Dimmitt and filmmaker Elam Stoltzfus will spend day 73 of their expedition paddling and snorkeling in Blue Spring State Park. The explorers are hiking, biking and paddling the 1,000-mile journey to raise awareness for the Florida Wildlife Corridor [[www.FloridaWildlifeCorridor.com](http://www.FloridaWildlifeCorridor.com)] – a visionary project to connect natural lands and waters throughout Florida into South Georgia.

Participants will have the opportunity to hear from Drew Bartlett, Director of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Environmental Assessment and Restoration, and Deborah Shelley, manager of DEP's Wekiva River Aquatic Preserve on the importance of and DEP's efforts to improve Florida's water quality. Water experts from across the region will be in attendance as well. Following remarks and lunch, participants can join the expedition team for a day on the water.

Blue Spring is one of Florida's most-visited state parks. Its first-magnitude spring is the largest on the St. Johns River, discharging more than 165 million gallons of water daily into the river. And the park itself literally overflows with diversity, serving as the habitat for at least 15 threatened or endangered plants and animals. Most notably, Blue Spring is the winter refuge for approximately 200 West Indian manatees, but it is also home to the Florida scrub jay, gopher tortoise, black bear, and one of only two known locations for the Okeechobee gourd.

**When:** Thursday, March 29, 2012  
11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Where:** Blue Spring State Park  
2100 W. French Ave, Orange City, FL

**What:** Community members are invited to join the Team for paddling or snorkeling on March 29; listen to local and statewide water experts from the Department of Environmental Protection and other organizations; eat lunch with the Team (*bring-your-own lunch or limited selection available at the Park*); hike the area with a Park Ranger to learn about the flora, fauna and habitats of the area.

**For more information, contact:** Blue Springs State Park  
(386) 775-1599, <http://www.floridastateparks.org/bluespring/>