CORRIDOR AT A CROSSROADS

With 1,000 new residents moving to Florida every day, development and transportation infrastructure are consuming natural and agricultural lands at a rate of 20 acres per hour. Roads like Interstate 4, while vital to the movement of people, create hard barriers to the movement of wildlife and water.

The remaining wild areas between Tampa and Orlando are quickly becoming isolated. Only three potential natural connection points remain linking the Everglades Headwaters south of I-4 to the Green Swamp north of I-4. As the two most extensive wetlands in the state, they provide freshwater flow to nearly 15 million Floridians.

The mission of the 2018 Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition is to navigate and document one chokepoint of the Corridor that can possibly still be saved. By exploring this narrow, but critical, connection we will issue a call to action for additional conservation to protect and restore this remaining wild thread within a growing urban interface.

A TREK INSPIRED BY WILDLIFE -TO PROTECT WILDLIFE

Inspired by the travels of iconic wildlife like the Florida black bear and Florida panther, the 2018 Expedition will traverse the once fully-wild headwaters region to find refuge in the Green Swamp - an ecological cornerstone in the heart of the peninsula.

The same passionate team that has twice trekked 1,000 miles, bringing attention to the statewide Florida Wildlife Corridor, embarks on a 3rd Expedition in April 2018. This one-week journey will explore the tenuous connections between natural areas in the Corridor, squeezed between the sprawling urban environs of Central Florida.
A CHECK-UP ON THE HEART OF THE CORRIDOR
This central Florida region may be the greatest risk to survival of the Corridor, a crossroads in the center of the peninsula with an already weak connection. Re-visiting this nexus is a strategic check-up on the health of the ecological “heart” to ensure the flow of wildlife and water to all parts of the Corridor.

A CRITICAL FRESHWATER RESOURCE
As the headwaters for the five central Florida rivers, this area supplies flow to residents in all directions throughout the state, connecting to Tampa Bay, the Nature Coast, Jacksonville and Miami.

The Greater Green Swamp provides the headwaters four major rivers – the Hillsborough, Withlacoochee, Peace and Ocklawaha, crucial to 3 million residents in the greater Tampa Bay area and a million more in greater Ft. Myers and Charlotte Harbor. The Ocklawaha feeds the St Johns River and populations in central and eastern Florida, from Ocala to Jacksonville.

Via the Everglades Headwaters at the edge of Orlando, the Greater Green Swamp also connects to the Greater Everglades – the largest watershed in Florida that serves as a freshwater source for more than 8 million residents.

LEVERAGING CITIZEN SCIENCE FOR ACTION
The Expedition will inform ways to enhance or restore connectivity for wildlife and water supply. Using data from daily ecological wildlife and water surveys, the team will strive to identify local biological hotspots and suggest ways that others can help monitor the health of the Corridor in years to come.

FOLLOW ALONG
Track the Expedition with daily updates through blogs and social media posting, in-depth coverage in regional media outlets, and a short film following the journey. Products will help mobilize an engaged audience to become strong supporters for connecting and protecting the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

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SUPPORT US ON THE JOURNEY!
Your generous donation will support this urgently-needed check on the health of the Corridor.

Without improved connectivity and safe wildlife passages, these fragile threads of natural habitat for wildlife across I-4 may be lost forever.

Please help us elevate these issues to inspire the necessary conservation before it’s too late. The future of wildlife and water supply depends on keeping the Corridor connected!

Donate online at: floridawildlifecorridor.org/support/expedition/