

Tentatively Selected Plan

Prepared by:

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501c3 NonProfit

# WESTERN EVERGLADES RESTORATION PROJECT

**BERGERON**  
EVERGLADES FOUNDATION

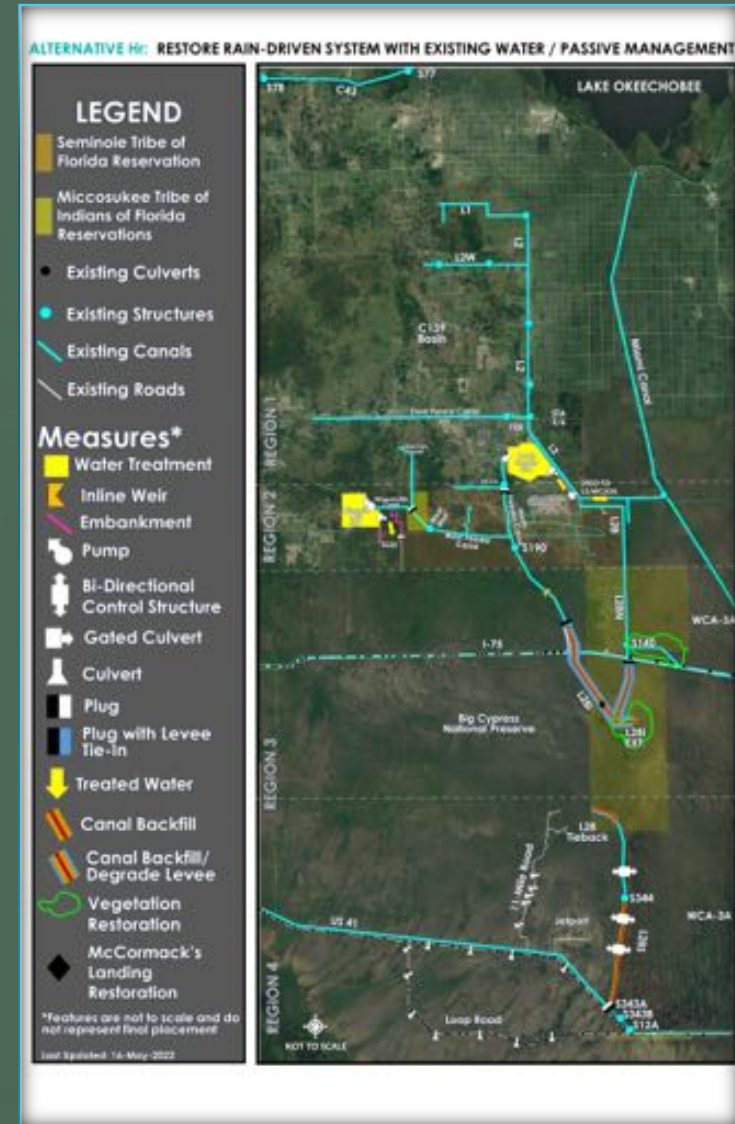
# About:

- The Bergeron Everglades Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation and restoration of the Florida Everglades. It was founded by Floridian and Gladesman “Alligator” Ron Bergeron, who has spent his life exploring, living and working in the natural wonders of South Florida. The mission of the foundation is to educate the public through visual imagery with the hope that people will fall in love with the Everglades and its wildlife, and learn to respect and preserve it for future generations. The foundation also seeks to encourage wise policy decisions related to the South Florida environment.



# What is WERP?

- The Western Everglades Restoration Plan (WERP) seeks to use a series of active and passive water management features and water quality features, and make alterations to existing canals and levees. The goals of the project are to improve the quantity, quality, timing and distribution of water in the Western Everglades in the effort to re-establish ecological connectivity, reduce the severity and frequency of wildfires, and restore low nutrient conditions.





# Background

- The Western Everglades - Big Cypress landscape is an extremely diversified habitat with 50% uplands (pine islands & oak heads) and 50% wetlands
- The area is **not** the “river of grass” as most assume
- It is a **rain driven system.**



Western Everglades



River of Grass

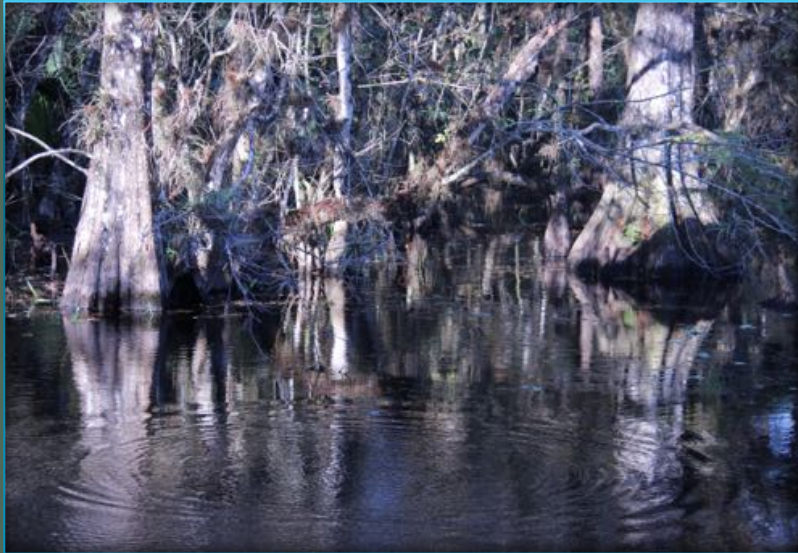
# The Problem



- Our concern with WERP is **specifically** the location of the Wingate Mill STA.
- The Wingate Mill STA is located in a **pristine natural environment**.







# Water Quality & Quantity

- The cleanest water in the Everglades is in Big Cypress Preserve
- Introducing foreign water into a rain driven system will destroy the natural habitat.
- The water quantity & quality is not compatible with the landscape.
- The Wingate Mill STA will **destroy natural habitat** necessary for native wildlife including the Florida Panther, which is one of the most endangered species on the planet





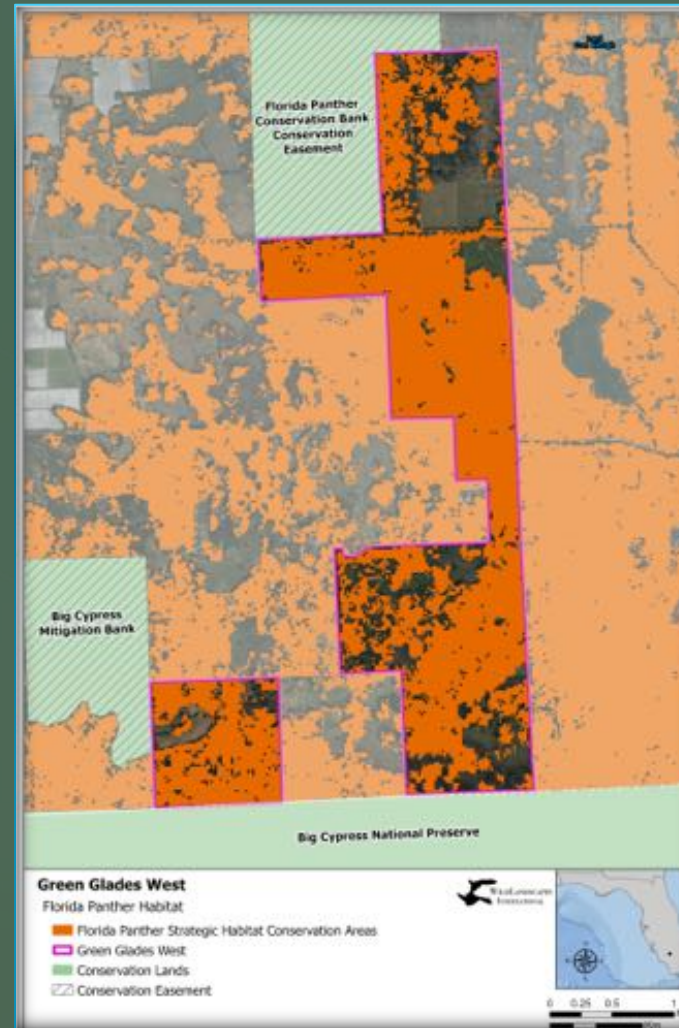


- We have documented multiple endangered Florida Panthers inside the proposed STA as well as century-old Cypress Trees.
- An STA should **never** be built in a natural environment.
- We should **NOT BE DESTROYING WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO SAVE!!!**





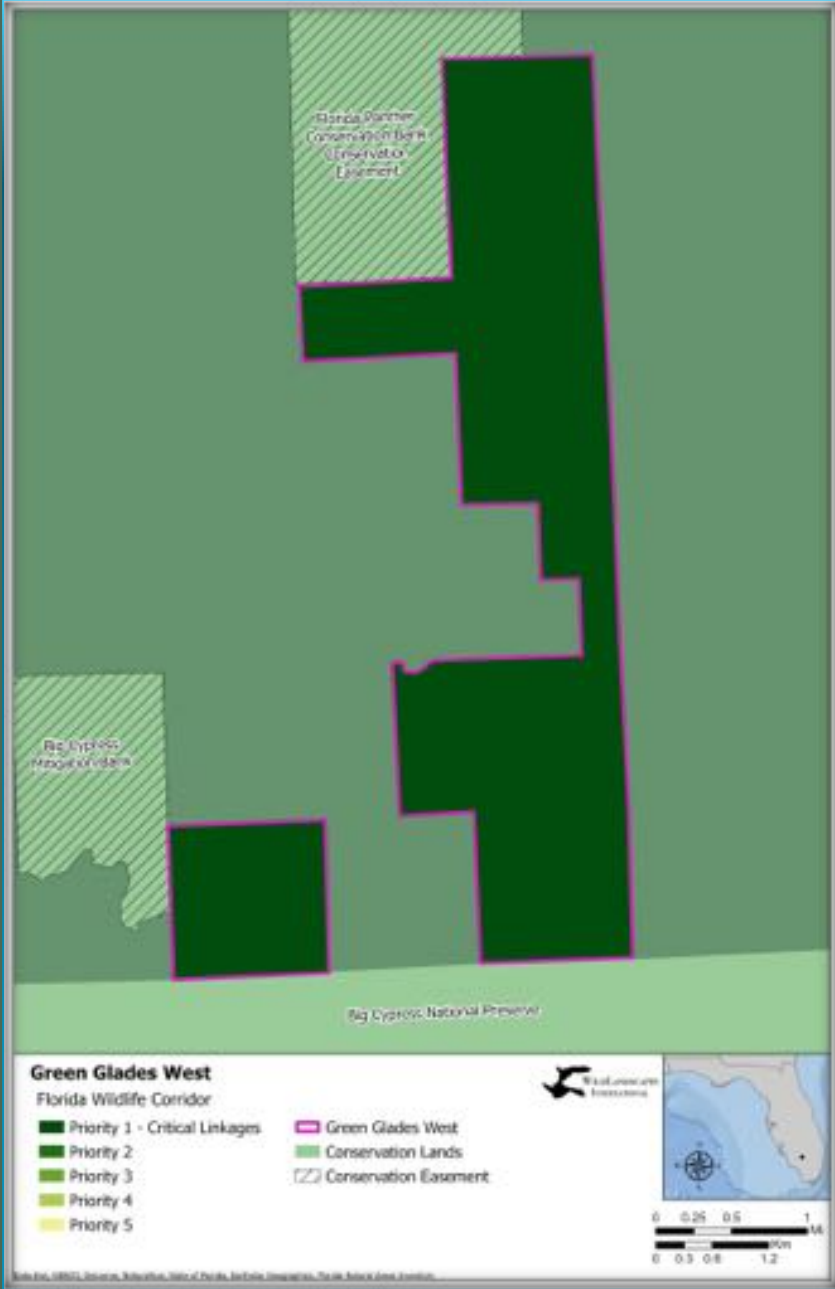
# Florida Panther Habitat



- The proposed Wingate Mill STA Area is located within the Florida Wildlife Corridor and has been graded **Priority 1** Florida Panther Habitat.



- Destruction of pristine habitat in the Florida Wildlife Corridor & primary panther habitat should **never** be allowed.
- **Century-old cypress would be destroyed** in the name of restoration.
- This STA is a radical departure from everything we have been working on for the last 22 years of Everglades Restoration



- We believe the area does not need to be rehydrated.
- We have documented that we reach the high- water mark on century old cypress trees 9 out of every 10 years in October (end of the rainy season).
- We believe **controlled burning** is the solution to reduce the severity and frequency of wildfires.





# In Closing



- Everglades Restoration is a balancing act.
- As we move forward together, WERP **must balance 5 Stakeholders:**
  - 1. The Environment
  - 2. The Seminole Indians
  - 3. The Miccosukee Indians
  - 4. Private Property Owners
  - 5. The Big Cypress Preserve
- We must **not destroy what we are trying to save**
- WERP is important to move forward with the exception of:
  - Building an STA in a natural environment
  - Introducing foreign water into rain driven system



## For more Information:

- Read our [letter](#) to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- Watch our [video](#).
- Follow Bergeron Everglades Foundation & Alligator Ron Bergeron on Facebook & Instagram
- Visit [www.BergeronEvergladesFoundation.org](http://www.BergeronEvergladesFoundation.org)

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