



WELCOME!

To the Acquisition of Florida Power and Light Company Lands in the East Everglades Expansion Area EIS Public Scoping Meeting

Because of your interest in **Everglades National Park**, we are asking for your input on the proposed **Acquisition of FPL Lands in the East Everglades Expansion Area**. Please look around at the displays and help us develop this project. You can use multiple ways to comment tonight, or any time during the 30-day comment period, which officially ends on July 10, 2011.

Public Meeting Agenda

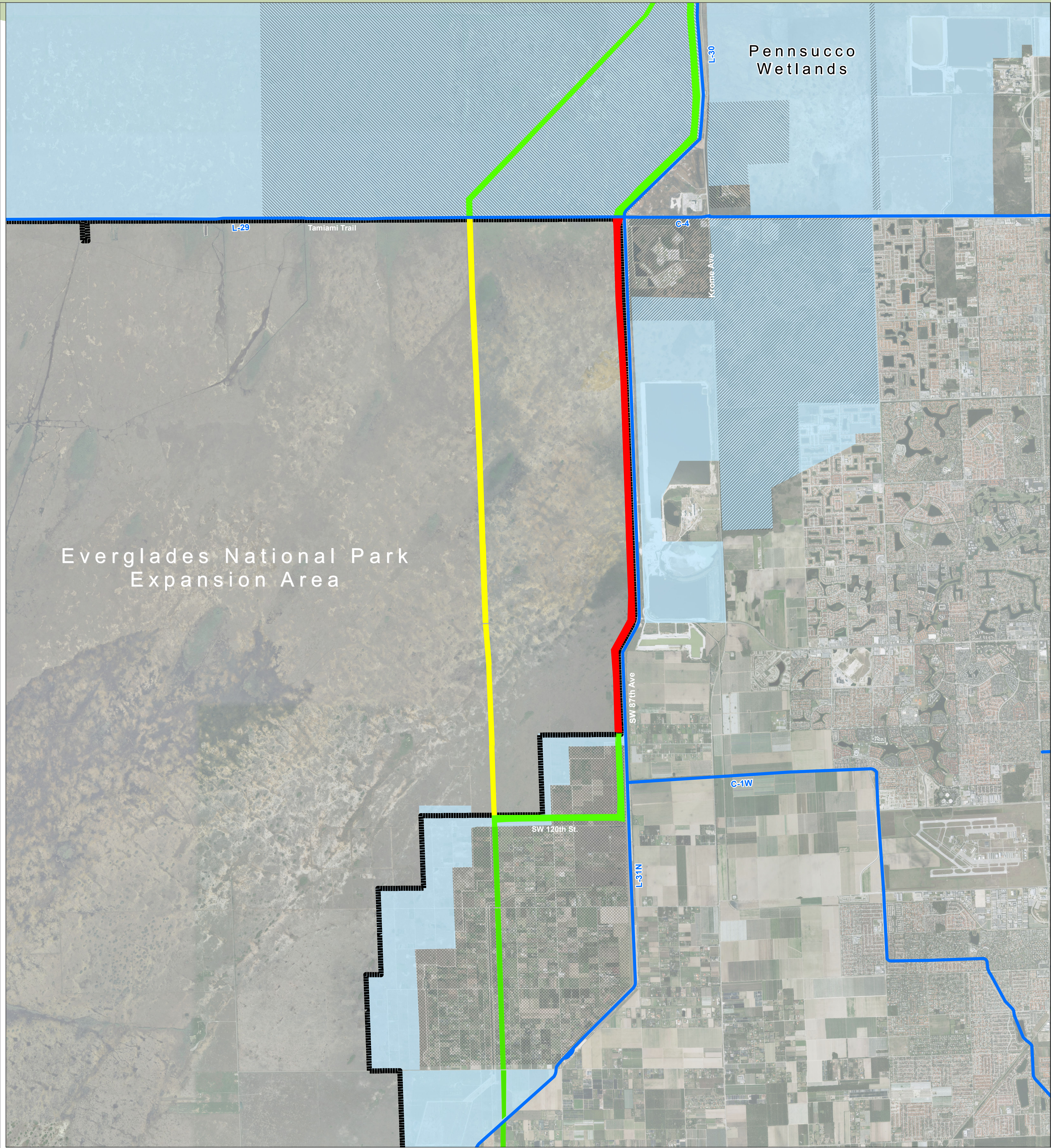
Public Scoping Meeting - 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm



- 1** Open House
- 2** Presentation
- 3** Questions and Answers
- 4** Open House



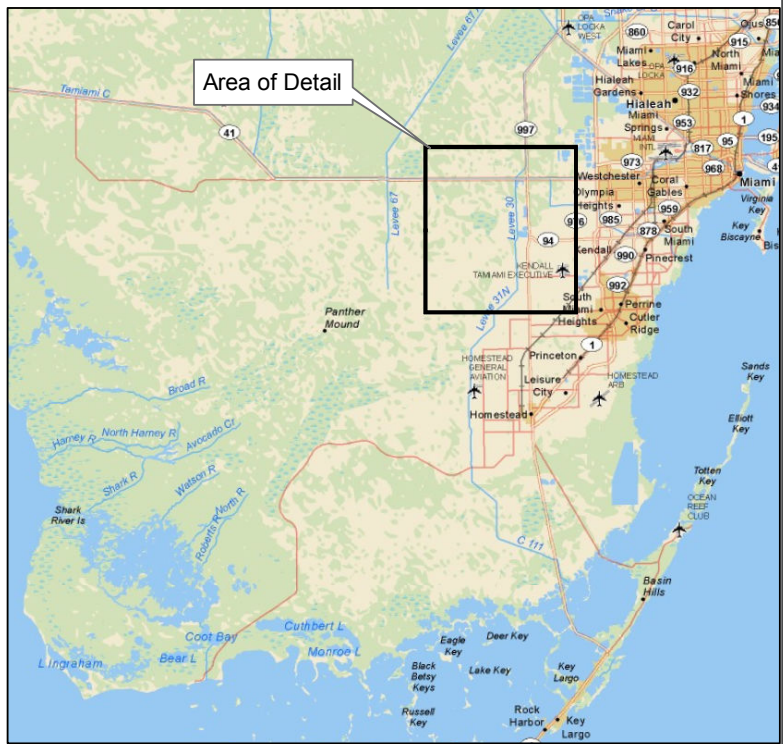
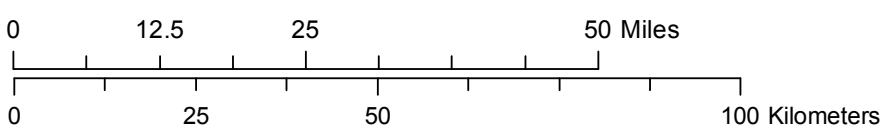
Project Area



Legend

- Right of Way**

 - Outside Expansion Area (FPLC owned)
 - Inside Expansion Area (FPLC owned)
 - Potential for Exchange
- Everglades National Park Boundary
 - Canals (Southern Florida Water Management District)
 - Hydrologic Restoration Area under CERP
 - Areas Managed by FNAI
 - East Coast Buffer
 - 8.5 Square-Mile Area





Purpose & Need

The proposed federal action that will be evaluated in this EIS is the NPS acquisition of the existing FPL lands within the park.

Purpose and Need for Taking Action

- The purpose of the proposed action is to facilitate hydrologic and ecologic restoration of the Park and Everglades ecosystem.
- The proposed action is needed:
 - » to support the goals of restoring the Northeast Shark River Slough and fulfilling the purposes of the Modified Water Deliveries Project and the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.
 - » to eliminate uncertainty regarding future use of lands within the authorized boundary of Everglades National Park, as defined in the Expansion Act.





Objectives

Objectives for Land Acquisition

- Ensure consistency with the 1989 Everglades National Park Protection and Expansion Act and the 1991 Land Protection Plan for the East Everglades Addition;
 - » increase the level of protection of the natural values of the Park and enhance and restore ecological values, natural hydrologic conditions, and public enjoyment by adding the area commonly known as the Northeast Shark River Slough and the East Everglades to Everglades National Park (16 USC 410r-5);
 - » assure that the Park is managed to maintain the natural abundance, diversity, and ecological integrity of native plants and animals, as well as the behavior of native animals, as part of its ecosystem (16 USC 410r 5).
- Ensure consistency with Congressional intent of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 such that the Secretary consider the land exchange, with conditions and after appropriate environmental review of the impacts of the exchange.
- Support and facilitate implementation of the Modified Water Deliveries Project, the proposed Tamiami Trail Next Steps Project, and the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, all of which restore water quantity and flow to Everglades National Park, which is an important objective as it relates to long-term preservation of park habitat.
- Support the timely acquisition of existing FPL property within the Expansion Area.



Enabling Legislation, Purpose, and Significance

Enabling Legislation

On May 30, 1934, Congress passed an act authorizing a park to be acquired through public and private donations. Everglades National Park was to be "...wilderness where no development...or plan for the entertainment of visitors shall be undertaken which would interfere with the preservation of the unique flora and fauna of the essential primitive natural conditions now prevailing in the area." In 1947, Everglades National Park was established, and today totals 1,509,000 acres.

Park Purpose

Everglades National Park is a public park for the benefit and enjoyment of the people. It is set apart as a permanent wilderness preserving essential primitive conditions, including the natural abundance, diversity, behavior, and ecological integrity of the unique flora and fauna.

Park Significance

The following resources and features contribute to the park's significance:

- Everglades National Park is a unique subtropical wetland that is the hydrological connection between central Florida's freshwater ecosystem and the marine systems of Florida Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. It is the only place in the United States jointly designated as an International Biosphere Reserve, a World Heritage Site, and a Wetland of International Importance.
- Everglades National Park comprises the largest subtropical wilderness in North America. The park contains vast habitats, including freshwater marshes, tropical hardwoods, pine rockland, extensive Mangrove estuaries, and sea grasses that support a diverse mixture of tropical and temperate plants and animals.



Enabling Legislation, Purpose, and Significance

- Everglades National Park serves as a sanctuary for the protection of more than 20 federal and 70 state-listed threatened and endangered species, as well as numerous species of special concern. Many of these species face tremendous pressure from natural forces and human influences while trying to survive in the limited geographic area of the South Florida Ecosystem.
- Everglades National Park provides important foraging and breeding habitat for more than 400 species of birds (including homeland to world-renowned wading bird populations), and functions as a primary corridor and refuge for migratory and wintering wildlife populations.
- Everglades National Park includes archeological and historical resources spanning approximately 5,600 years of human history revealing adaptation to and exploitation of its unique environment.
- Everglades National Park preserves natural and cultural resources associated with the homeland of American Indians of Florida (including the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, and the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma).
- Everglades National Park preserves the remnants of a nationally significant hydrologic resource that sustains south Florida's human population and serves as a global experiment in restoration.
- Everglades National Park provides the public with the opportunity to experience the Everglades wilderness for recreation, reflection, and solitude in proximity to a major metropolitan sector.



Preliminary Alternatives

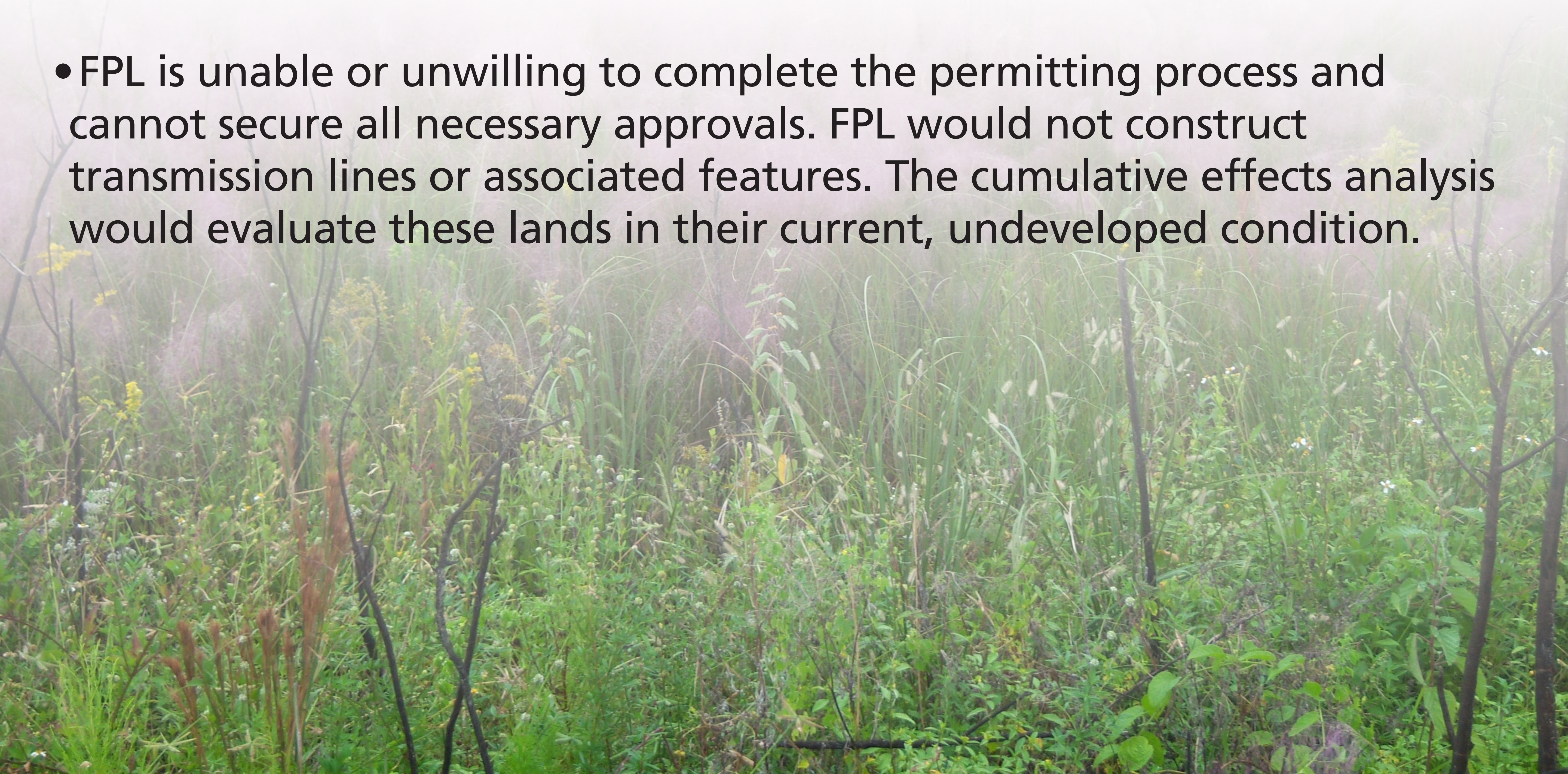
Preliminary Alternatives

The EIS will evaluate the possible effects on the human and natural environment of the potential exchange of lands authorized in the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009 and other reasonable alternatives. At this time, the alternatives being considered for analysis include:

Alternative 1: No Action

Under the no action alternative, the NPS would assume no land acquisition or exchange, and no change in the status of the FPL property. This alternative could result in two possible scenarios:

- FPL is able to complete the permitting process and secure all necessary approvals to construct three transmission lines and related features on their lands. The cumulative effects analysis would evaluate the effects of transmission lines and related features on FPL's existing lands.
- FPL is unable or unwilling to complete the permitting process and cannot secure all necessary approvals. FPL would not construct transmission lines or associated features. The cumulative effects analysis would evaluate these lands in their current, undeveloped condition.





Preliminary Alternatives

Alternative 2: Land Exchange with Conditional Requirements

The NPS would acquire FPL lands within the park and convey park property on the eastern boundary (along the L-31N canal) to FPL, including a 90-foot wide and 6.5 mile long perpetual easement for exotic vegetation management. The NPS would develop conditions for management of the corridor to help protect park resources. The park boundary would be adjusted to the west. This alternative would remove 260 acres from the park, and could result in two possible scenarios:

- FPL is able to complete the permitting process and secure all approvals necessary to construct three transmission lines and related features. The cumulative effects analysis would evaluate the effects of transmission lines and related features permitted and approved on the exchange lands.
- FPL is unable or unwilling to complete the permitting process, and cannot secure all necessary approvals. FPL would not construct transmission lines or associated features. The cumulative effects analysis would evaluate these lands in their current, undeveloped condition.

Alternative 3: Acquisition

FPL property would be acquired by direct purchase or, as a last resort, by condemnation by the NPS. There would be no construction of transmission lines or related features in the Expansion Area.



Issues

Several physical, natural, socioeconomic, operational, and other resources could be affected by the acquisition of FPL's lands, and the possible construction of major transmission lines on FPL's West Preferred or West Secondary corridors.

- Both the existing FPL-owned corridor and the proposed exchange lands are important for accommodating ecosystem restoration flows into Northeast Shark River Slough resulting from installation of the new 1-mile bridge on Tamiami Trail.
- Both the existing FPL-owned corridor and the proposed exchange lands are in close proximity to nesting colonies of the federally endangered wood stork, important habitat for the endangered Everglades snail kite and a variety of wading birds.
- Implementation of the land exchange would remove nearly 260 acres of high-quality wetlands from NPS protection, and construction of tower pads and access roads would disturb over 100 acres of wetlands.
- Visitor experiences and aesthetic resources could be adversely affected by transmission lines. The Expansion Area is the area of the Park closest to metropolitan Miami, with about 300,000 annual visits. Large transmission lines would affect recreational opportunities, views and generate noise audible above natural sounds.
- Portions of the Expansion Area are eligible and being considered for protection as designated wilderness. Wilderness provides visitor opportunities where human impacts are minimal, views are unobstructed, and where natural processes dominate. The effects of constructing and maintaining transmission lines adjacent to potential wilderness must be considered.



NEPA Timeline

Step	Planning Activity	Dates	Public/Agency Involvement Opportunities
1	Scoping: Identify planning issues and input on the alternatives	Public Comment Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend Public Scoping meeting; submit comments via PEPC or by mail
2	Prepare Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)	Summer 2011 through Early 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agency and Tribal Consultations
3	Publish and distribute Draft EIS	Early 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review/Comment on Draft EIS• Attend Public Meeting; submit comments via PEPC or by mail
4	Federal Decision Document	Autumn 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review NPS Decision



Your Voice Matters

Options for Public Comment



1

Complete the Comment Form and leave it with us before you go or return the pre-addressed form by mail.



2

Give oral comments to project team members at the comment stations during the open-house portions of the meeting.



3

Give oral comments to a court reporter, either privately any time during the meeting or in public during the period set for public comment.



4

Write comments online at the Project Website at:
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ever>



5

Mail Written Comments to:
National Park Service Denver Service Center – Planning Division
Attn: FPL Project Planning Team
P.O. Box 25287
12795 West Alameda Parkway
Denver, CO 80225-0287

PLEASE NOTE: Comments will not be accepted by fax, email, or in any other way than those specified above.

*Please submit all comments
by July 10, 2011*