

	<p align="center">National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior</p>	<p align="center">Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks</p>	<p align="center">40001 State Road 9336 Homestead, Florida 33034</p> <p align="center">305-242-7700 phone 305-242-7711 fax</p>

Everglades National Park News Release

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

June 28, 2011 - For Immediate Release

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UPDATE - Park Scoping Period Extended to July 25 for Acquisition of Florida Power and Light Lands Environmental Impact Statement For Immediate Release

June 28, 2011

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UPDATE: Public Scoping Comment Period Extended to July 25th for Acquisition of Florida Power and Light Company Lands Environmental Impact Statement

Superintendent Dan Kimball announced that Everglades National Park has extended the public scoping comment period for the Acquisition of Florida Power and Light Company (FPL) Lands Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The comment period will continue through July 25th, 2011 in response to requests from agencies and the public for additional time to review and comment on the scoping newsletter.

The National Park Service (NPS) is initiating the EIS to evaluate options and potential impacts for acquiring lands owned by FPL within the East Everglades Expansion Area (Expansion Area) of Everglades National Park. This will include the potential exchange of lands authorized in the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 and other reasonable alternatives. The NPS decision at the conclusion of this process is whether to exchange NPS lands for FPL's lands within the Park boundary or to acquire FPL's lands by purchase, eminent domain, or by other means to be identified in the EIS. The purpose of scoping is to solicit public input on the issues, concerns or alternatives regarding the potential land acquisition or exchange to be addressed in the EIS.

Background: The Everglades National Park Protection and Expansion Act of 1989 expanded the Park boundaries to "increase the level of protection of the outstanding natural values of the Park" and "to enhance and restore the ecological values, natural hydrologic conditions and public enjoyment of the area." The Expansion Act, and other legislation, authorized the NPS and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to acquire lands within the Expansion Area and to modify the Central and Southern Florida Project to restore natural hydrological conditions in the Park. To date, the park has expanded by 109,600 acres in the Expansion Area.

FPL owns about 320 acres within the Expansion Area. Because the FPL property is currently undeveloped and is needed for restoration of the Everglades ecosystem, the NPS is seeking to acquire the FPL property, manage it as part of the Park, and maintain it in its undeveloped condition. FPL is currently seeking state and federal permits to construct three major transmission lines on its existing property in the Park or on the proposed exchange corridor within the Park.

The NPS began an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed FPL land acquisition in June 2009. During evaluation of impacts likely to result from transmission line construction and operation following a land exchange and issuance of required permits, the potential for significant impacts on Park resources was identified. In light of these concerns, the NPS has initiated this EIS process to more fully examine the potential impacts of land acquisition alternatives.

Newsletter: A newsletter with detailed project information can be viewed or downloaded from the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) site <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ever>

Once on the site, click “Open for Comment” to access the scoping newsletter.

A paper copy of the newsletter may be requested by calling the park at 305-242-7700. If prompted by voice mail, press “2” at 1st prompt and “1” at 2nd prompt to leave mailing information. Please state that you are requesting the newsletter for the Acquisition of Florida Power and Light Lands / Environmental Impact Statement Project.

How to Comment: Comments can be submitted directly on the NPS PEPC website or mailed to: National Park Service, Denver Service Center – Planning Division, Attn: FPL Project Planning Team, P.O. Box 25287, Denver, CO 80225-0287

Public comments submitted during scoping for the EA in 2009 will be carried forward to this project and considered as part of scoping for this EIS. Anyone who commented on the EA is welcome to provide new, additional comments during the current public comment period.

The public comment period ends July 25, 2011.

For more information or questions about the Acquisition of FPL Lands EIS or the scoping process, contact Brien Culhane, Chief, Planning and Compliance at 305-242-7717 or by e-mail at brien_culhane@nps.gov; or Fred Herling, Park Planner at 305-242-7704 or by e-mail at fred_Herling@nps.gov.

-NPS-

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