

'Biggest ever' environmental plan moves forward to save Everglades

Florida's Everglades are enormous—covering more than 5,000 square miles of territory and providing a wetland habitat for hundreds of exotic plants and animals.

The Everglades are even bigger as a symbol of the struggle between preserving the environment and developing land for houses, farms and businesses.

For many years, development won.

Now the biggest environmental project in history will try to correct the damage that has pushed 68 species of plants and animals in the area to the edge of extinction.

Preservation of the Everglades took a giant step forward in December 2000 when a bill to spend \$7.8 billion to restore the area's water supply was signed into law by President Bill Clinton.

After years of discussion, the plan won approval with wide support from Democrats and Republicans alike, including Florida Governor Jeb Bush, brother of President George W. Bush.

It will take 30 years to complete.

Go with the Flow

Say the word "Everglades," and most people think "swamp."

But the famous wetland in South Florida is actually a giant river of water, moving in a shallow sheet through miles of sawgrass to the ocean and Florida Bay.

This slow-moving water gave the Everglades the nickname "River of Grass."

It also made the area a laboratory of what to do—and not do—when dealing with the environment.

As big as the Everglades are today, they are only about half the size they were 100 years ago. The reason is a decision by federal and state leaders more than 50 years ago to drain water from the area to create dry land for building cities, homes, businesses and farms.

A system of canals and pumping stations was built to pump water into the ocean. Levees—walls of dirt—were built to keep the water from flowing into developed areas.

The system made development possible in South Florida. But it almost killed the Everglades.



Scientists would closely monitor results of a plan to restore water to Florida's Everglades.

Use the Newspaper

1. The \$7.8 billion plan to restore the Everglades seeks to un-do some of the things humans have done to develop the area of Southern Florida. Is that a good use of government money? Or should government concentrate on preserving things that have not yet been spoiled? Discuss the issue as a class. Take a vote at the end.
2. Nature and the environment often make news. Look through the newspaper today or for several days and find a story about nature. Write a sentence stating what environmental issue is making news. If there is a problem, write a second sentence offering a possible solution.
3. Habitat is the area that supports a living thing. Find a photo in the paper that shows an outdoor scene. Draw a "web of life" that shows the different living things that share such a habitat.
4. Pretend you are the editor of the Everglades Inquirer newspaper. Make a list of five ideas for stories you would publish about the new restoration plan. Write a reason for each story idea. Then design a front page arranging your stories in order of importance or interest.

History lesson

The Everglades canal system took a huge amount of water out of the area's ecosystem—1.7 BILLION gallons of fresh water every day. As a result, some parts of the Everglades dried up. Grasses died out, or were killed by wildfires. Far fewer wading birds nested in the area and some of the wildlife, like the rare Florida panther, all but disappeared.

The Everglades restoration plan will create new reservoirs to bring water back where it is needed by both wildlife and people, rather than pump it away as before.

One reason for the popularity of this Everglades plan in Congress and Florida is that both environmental and business groups favor the new reservoirs.

Like all expensive plans, however, this one "is not without risk" that it will not be worth the money, says U.S. Senator Robert Smith, who guided the proposal through the U.S. Senate. "... But if we do nothing," Smith warned, "we lose the Everglades."

Deep shipwreck discovery offers unexpected look at ancient Greece

In all of history, one of the most famous travel adventures has been the story the poet Homer told in his Greek classic, *The Odyssey*.

This incredible tale, in which the hero Odysseus sailed far and wide to battle foes like the Cyclops, has inspired great works by other writers and artists for centuries.

It even provided the plot line for the popular George Clooney movie, *Brother Where Art Thou?*

In all this time, one question about Homer's story has especially bothered scholars who study the ancient Greeks: Was Homer's tale totally made up—or did it have some basis in fact?

The discovery of an old shipwreck in the Mediterranean Sea shows that Homer may not have exaggerated the sailing skills of the ancient Greeks, as many scholars have suggested he did.

Scholars have long believed that the Greeks were timid sailors who would not have left the sight of land. But the wreck's location, far out in the eastern Mediterranean, shows they could well have traveled for days and days out of sight of the shore, as in Homer's story.

The discovery, announced in the magazine *Archaeology*, could cause people to rethink the way the Greeks lived, traded and traveled.

And it's a pretty good story itself.

Accidental Find

The discovery of the shipwreck, about 200 miles southwest of the island of Cyprus, was a complete accident. It came in 1999 when the Nauticos Corporation was sent out on a mission to find a submarine lost long ago by Israel's navy.

The Nauticos search ship dropped a robot with a camera over the side and sent it down nearly 2 miles into the frigid Mediterranean water.

Its strobe lights didn't immediately find the sub—but instead lit up thousands of jugs, unbroken, on the sea floor.

As it panned the scene, the robot camera revealed anchors, metalwork and other signs of a shipwreck.

The searchers were disappointed at first—because they hadn't found the submarine. But soon they grew excited that they had stumbled on something even better.

What next?

The jugs, made of clay, probably were used to carry wine. Experts who have looked at pictures of them say they are definitely Greek and probably about 2,300 years old.

This shipwreck is the deepest ever found. Evidence of other wrecks nearby has added to the excitement. If the others are from different time periods, it would indicate the area may have been a regular open-water trade route of ancient people.

Studying ancient shipwrecks, relics or cities is very important for historians and archaeologists. When they see first hand how ancient peoples lived and worked, they get a better understanding of how humans developed and advanced through history.

The discovery of underwater sites is especially exciting because water can preserve artifacts like jugs for thousands of years unbroken.

In the Greek wreck alone, there were 2,000-3,000 jugs, still intact. They may provide important new pieces of the puzzle of human history.

Ancient jugs were found in the shipwreck. (Nauticos Co. Photo)



The ancient ship is believed to have looked like this. (Kyrenia Ship Project Photo)

Thousands of ancient jugs were discovered by Nauticos Corp. deep in the Mediterranean Sea.

Use the Newspaper

1. Plans and achievements of the Nauticos Corporation can be studied on the firm's website, www.nauticos.com. As a class, discuss how the Internet can help further understanding of events in the news. What other websites might explain more about ancient Greece, shipwrecks and the poet Homer?
2. What would future historians think if they uncovered our world underwater? Using the newspaper, make a list of things they would find in your neighborhood or city. Rank

- them in order of importance to a future scientist. Then think of an item used today that would be hard for future explorers to understand.
3. Archaeology is a science that studies ancient civilizations. Find a story in the newspaper of another branch of science making news today. Write a sentence stating what the science studies. Then write a headline describing the new piece of news. Write a supporting subhead explaining whom the news will affect most.