

# Chapter 27: Park Designations and International Relationships

The significance of Everglades National Park has been recognized at the national and international levels through a number of formal designations. In addition, the park is involved in two formal binational partnerships, with the Bahamas National Trust and Brazil's Pantanal National Park.

## National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmark Listings

As of this writing, the properties within Everglades National Park in the following table have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The second through the eighth sites and districts in the table are nominated under the historic contexts and registration requirements contained in a multiple property documentation

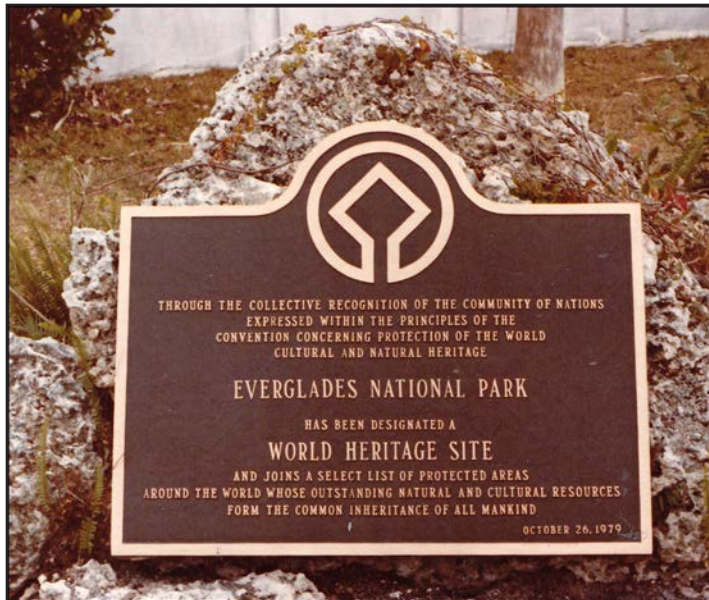


Figure 27-1. World Heritage plaque as first mounted, 1982

form, “Archeological Resources of Everglades National Park,” accepted November 5, 1996. As mentioned above in chapter 17, as of this writing, a contractor is preparing National Register documentation for Mission 66 era park resources. In May 2005, the Mud Lake Site was recognized as a National Historic Landmark. The eligibility of the Ten Thousand Islands as a National Historic Landmark is under consideration within the NPS.<sup>1146</sup>

1146 Melissa Memory, personal communication, June 26, 2013.

Name	Type	Date	Description
Turner River	Site	Dec. 14, 1978	A large site with 30 mounds; probably occupied from 200 BCE to AD 800.
Anhinga Trail	Site	Nov. 5, 1996	A low-lying site with artifacts from ~ AD 1400-1500.
Bear Lake Mounds	District	Nov. 5, 1996	Three sites from the Glades tradition.
Cane Patch	Site	Nov. 5, 1996	A black earth midden occupied from ~ AD 500 to 1400.
Monroe Lake	District	Nov. 5, 1996	Two earth middens from the Glades tradition.
Rookery Mound	Site	Nov. 5, 1996	An earth midden occupied from ~ AD 750 to 1700.
Shark River Slough	District	Nov. 5, 1996	Some 62 midden areas dating from ~ AD 1000 to 1947.
Ten Thousand Islands	District	Nov. 5, 1996	Some 70 prehistoric and historic sites on islands of this chain.
Nike Missile Site HM-69	District	July 27, 2004	A U.S. Army anti-aircraft missile installation with 22 contributing resources.
Mud Lake Canal	Site	Sep. 20, 2006	A 3.9-mile-long aboriginal transportation canal dating to at least AD 1200 to 1400.

## International Biosphere Reserve

Everglades National Park and Dry Tortugas National Park were designated an International Biosphere Reserve on October 26, 1976. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established the International Man and the Biosphere (MAB) program in 1971. The program was an outgrowth of the U.N.'s 1968 Conference on the Conservation and Rational Use of the Biosphere and was formally endorsed by U.N. member states at 1972's Conference on the Environment (sometimes called the first "Earth Summit"). The MAB program is an intergovernmental scientific endeavor that supplies the basis for improved relationships between people and their environments across the globe. The program emphasizes regional cooperation and has several subprograms focused on ecosystem types: mountains; drylands; tropical forests; urban systems; wetlands; and marine, island, and coastal ecosystems. An International Coordinating Council (ICC) defines the agenda for the MAB program. Under the 1995 Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and prior protocols, the ICC designates outstanding terrestrial and coastal marine ecosystems as biosphere reserves. More than just protected areas, the reserves are conceived as laboratories for activities and programs that promote biodiversity

and sustainable development. At this writing, the MAB program has recognized 580 biosphere reserves in 114 countries.<sup>1147</sup>

Everglades National Park was one of 20 U.S. sites proposed as biosphere reserves at a UNESCO-sponsored Man and the Biosphere conference held in Washington, D.C., in September 1974. (See chapter 24 for the 1982 ceremony celebrating the park's status as a biosphere reserve and world heritage site.)<sup>1148</sup>

## World Heritage Site

Everglades National Park was designated a World Heritage Site on October 26, 1979, under the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of the United Nations (figure 27-1, World Heritage plaque). UNESCO drew up the convention in November 1972 in order to create "an effective system of collective protection of the cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value." The convention established a World Heritage Committee, responsible for maintaining a List of World Heritage Sites and arranging for mutual assistance among nations in protecting sites of world importance. The committee was to have 21 members, with membership rotating among participating nations. The convention established procedures for participating nations to nominate sites to the World Heritage List. No site was to be placed on the list without the consent of the host nation. The convention went into effect in 1976, after 20 nations had ratified it. The United States was among the first states to ratify the convention. The enrollment of Everglades National Park as a World Heritage Site came at the third session of the World Heritage Committee, convened in Cairo and Luxor, Egypt, in October 1979.<sup>1149</sup>

The World Heritage Committee (WHC) meets annually to consider additions to the World Heritage List and other matters. Under Article 11 of the convention, the WHC maintains a List of World Heritage in Danger. Site threatened by "serious and specific dangers," such as the threat of disappearance or damage through development, war, or natural disaster, are candidates for the List of World Heritage in Danger. At its 17<sup>th</sup> session, convened in Cartagena, Columbia, in December 1993, the WHC placed Everglades National Park on the List of World Heritage in Danger. Park Superintendent Richard Ring presented a report at this session, noting that since the park had been listed in 1979 it had continued to be threatened by hydrological changes, surrounding development, and water pollution. He added that 1992's Hurricane Andrew

1147 UNESCO, Biosphere Reserves Network, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/convention>.

1148 "U.S. Aiding Study on Environment," *New York Times*, Sep. 18, 1974.

1149 UNESCO, Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext>; Report of the WHC 3d Session, Oct. 22-26, 1979, <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/1979/cc-79-conf003-13e-pdf>.

had caused considerable damage. Although measures were being taken to restore the Everglades ecosystem, the outcome of these efforts was considered uncertain, and the U.S. delegation asked that the park be added to the endangered list. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) concurred in this assessment, and Everglades National Park went on the endangered list.<sup>1150</sup>

Everglades National Park remained on the List of World Heritage in Danger until June 2007. At the 31<sup>st</sup> session of the WHC, convened in Christchurch, New Zealand, the U.S. delegation requested that the park be removed from the endangered list. This request was made by the co-leader of the U.S. delegation, Todd D. Willens, deputy assistant secretary for fish, wildlife, and parks in the Department of the Interior. Willens took this step on his own initiative; he later testified that he had not been directed to do so by his superiors in the department. He did confer with Louise V. Oliver, U.S. ambassador to UNESCO, who was the delegation's other co-leader. It was later revealed that Oliver, as the State Department representative, was chiefly concerned with any WHC decisions that had foreign policy implications. Because Everglades National Park was a site under the jurisdiction of the DOI, she deferred to Willens on the question of delisting the park. Several WHC members spoke in favor of the change in designation and none spoke in opposition. In announcing its decision, the WHC applauded the United States for the progress it had made in "rehabilitating" the Everglades, citing that progress as the reason for removing the park from the endangered list.<sup>1151</sup>

The removal of Everglades National Park from the endangered list provoked considerable controversy. Jonathan Ullman, the Sierra Club's Everglades field representative, told a reporter that the Everglades was more threatened than ever. The editorial page of the *Orlando Sentinel* asked: "Exactly what world is the U.N. living in?" Florida Senator Bill Nelson branded the move political and called for Willens to resign. He believed that Willens had ignored an NPS recommendation that the park remain on the endangered list; this was denied by the George W. Bush administration. Senator Nelson thought that the move reflected the administration's lack of commitment to Everglades restoration and convened a Senate hearing in September 2007. Under questioning, Willens claimed that the decision was made by the WHC, but acknowledged that the committee almost always followed the wishes of the host nation. He stated that the U.S. government's report that he brought with him to the meeting did

1150 UNESCO, Report of the WHC 17<sup>th</sup> Session, Dec. 11-16, 1993, 20-21, <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/1993/whc-93-conf002-14e.pdf>.

1151 UNESCO, Report of the WHC 31<sup>st</sup> Session, June 23-July 2, 2007, <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2007/whc07-31com-24e.pdf>; UNESCO press release, June 24, 2007, in *The Everglades: Protecting Natural Treasures Through International Organizations*, Hearing before the Subcommittee on International Operations and Organizations, Democracy and Human Relations, U.S. Senate, 110<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> Sess., Sep. 19, 2007, [www.gpo/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-110shrg44134/pdf/CHRG-110shrg44134/pdf](http://www.gpo/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-110shrg44134/pdf/CHRG-110shrg44134.pdf); DOI fact sheet, "Background on World Heritage Convention, US participation, DOI leadership," 2008, EVER 22965.

indeed call for Everglades to be retained on the endangered list. It was entirely his decision to change “retain” to “remove” in that report. At the Senate hearing, a State Department representative testified that State was altering its procedures in the wake of what happened at the Christchurch meeting. In future, the State Department representative at WHC meetings would not agree to material changes to a draft report without consulting with superiors in Washington. Following the hearings, Senator Nelson wrote SOI Dirk Kempthorne complaining of the administration’s action in removing the Everglades from the endangered list. The secretary responded by defending the action, stating that the major purpose of including Everglades on the list had been to draw attention to the urgency of the problems there. The administration believed that purpose had been accomplished and there was therefore no reason to retain endangered status.<sup>1152</sup>

In March 2009, Senator Nelson asked President Obama’s SOI, Ken Salazar, to place Everglades National Park back on the endangered list. At the request of the U.S., the WHC, meeting in Brasilia, Brazil, in July 2010 restored Everglades National Park to the List of World Heritage in Danger.<sup>1153</sup>

## **Wetland of International Importance**

The U.S. became a member of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance in 1986. An international conference held in Ramsar, Iran, in January and February 1971 developed the convention (which is often referred to as the Ramsar Convention). The convention went into effect in 1975 after seven nations had ratified it. Signatories to the convention committed themselves to the conservation of wetlands and waterfowl through the establishment and maintenance of wetland nature reserves. Member countries nominate wetlands considered to be internationally significant for their ecology, botany, zoology, limnology, or hydrology to a List of Wetlands of International Importance. A Conference of Contracting Parties meets every three years; among its responsibilities is approving nominations to the List of Wetlands of International Importance. A Ramsar Secretariat, headquartered in Gland, Switzerland, is the convention’s administrative body. The secretariat maintains the list

1152 “Everglades National Park Removed from Danger List,” *Orlando Sentinel*, June 27, 2007; “Removing Everglades from List Riles Nelson,” *Orlando Sentinel*, Aug. 5, 2007; Senate hearing, *The Everglades: Protecting Natural Treasures*, 4-6, 19.

1153 “Salazar Applauds World Heritage Committee’s Decision to Return Everglades National Park to Danger List,” DOI press release, July 30, 2010.



and coordinates activities under the convention. As of this writing, the convention has 160 contracting parties and the list contains 2,000 wetlands.<sup>1154</sup>

Everglades National Park was approved as a Wetland of International Importance (Ramsar No. 374; Wetland International Site No. 4US005) on June 4, 1987. This action was taken by the third Conference of Cooperating Parties, meeting in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. The park was nominated under Ramsar criteria 1 through 4:

1. As containing “a representative, rare, or unique example of a natural or near-natural wetland type.
2. As containing endangered species.
3. As supporting “populations of plant and/or animal species important for maintaining the biological diversity of a particular biogeographic region.”
4. As supporting species “at a critical stage in their life cycles.”<sup>1155</sup>

## Cartagena Convention

In 2012, Everglades National Park received designation under the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, also known as the Cartagena Convention. The convention was adopted in Cartagena, Columbia, on March 23, 1983, and went into effect October 11, 1986. Under the convention, member states are committed to the goal of better protecting the marine environment and reducing harmful impacts to it. To date, 25 nations have ratified the convention.<sup>1156</sup>

## Bahamas National Trust

The Bahamas National Trust was founded by an act of the Bahamian Parliament in 1959 as a membership organization with the mission of building and managing a system of national parks in the Bahamas. Its broad goal is to foster the permanent preservation of significant natural and historic sites in that nation. Everglades National Park Superintendent Dan Beard was a founding member of the trust. The trust’s organic act provided for a council of expert outside advisors, including several representatives from the United States, all of whom are full voting members of the

<sup>1154</sup> Convention of Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, as Amended, Ramsar Convention website, [http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-texts-convention-on/main/ramsar/1-31-38%5E20671\\_4000\\_0](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-texts-convention-on/main/ramsar/1-31-38%5E20671_4000_0).

<sup>1155</sup> Ramsar Secretariat, *Handbook 17: Designating Ramsar Sites*, <http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/lib/hbk4-17.pdf>.

<sup>1156</sup> Caribbean Environment Programme, <http://www.cep.unep.org/cartagena-convention>; NPS, *Everglades National Park State of Conservation* (Homestead, Fla.: NPS, 2013), 2, <http://www.nps.gov/ever/naturescience/upload/2013-EVER-State-of-Conservation-Report-Final-Deliverable-to-OIA.pdf>.

council. One of these was stipulated to be a representative of the NPS. Throughout the years, the Everglades superintendent, or sometimes the superintendent of another South Florida NPS unit, has served on the trust's council. The council meets once or twice a year, usually in Nassau, Bahamas (figure 27-2, mangroves at Inagua National Park, Bahamas).<sup>1157</sup>

In 1995, the NPS and the Bahamas National Trust acted to give a more formal status to their cooperative relationship via a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The MOU specified cooperation in “research, conservation, and management of natural and cultural resources and in planning, development, and management of protected heritage sites.” The term of the original agreement was five years; it has been regularly renewed and remains in effect at this writing. Individual projects are accomplished by annexes to the MOU. Projects handled in this fashion have included a natural history survey and park feasibility study for the Cay Sal Banks, an examination of the natural system impacts of Brazilian pepper, fire management, and NPS assistance in the development of general management plans for Bahamian national parks. The



**Figure 27-2. Mangroves at Inagua National Park, Bahamas**

<sup>1157</sup> Bahamas National Trust website, [http://www.bnt.bs/\\_m1714/Historical-Overview](http://www.bnt.bs/_m1714/Historical-Overview); Ring interview.

transfer of surplus equipment from Everglades National Park to the Bahamian national parks has also been accomplished via the MOU.<sup>1158</sup>

### Relationship with Pantanal National Park in Brazil

In October 1997, Everglades National Park became a partner park with Pantanal National Park (Parque Nacional do Pantanal Matogrossense) in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul in Brazil (figure 27-3, Pantanal National Park). Often described as the world's largest contiguous wetland, the Pantanal embraces more than 75,000 square miles, mostly in Brazil, with smaller portions in Bolivia and Paraguay. A variety of ecosystems are found in the Pantanal, including seasonally inundated grasslands, swamps, and lagoons. The region supports a rich and diverse biota. In September 1981, Brazil made a national park of 520 square miles of the Pantanal lying between two rivers, the Baía de São Marcos and the Gurupi. Like Everglades National Park, Pantanal Na-



**Figure 27-3. A scene in Pantanal National Park**

tional Park has been designated a World Heritage Site, a Wetland of International Importance, and an International Biosphere Reserve. It was evident that the many similarities between the two ecosystem complexes meant that managers would benefit from sharing ideas and practices related to resource conservation and park administration. The Everglades-Pantanal Initiative held its first international workshop July 13-16, 1011, at

Everglades and on the campuses of Florida Atlantic University and Florida International University. Among the topics discussed were cooperation among institutions, the direction and organization of the initiative, and collaboration on grant proposals for research and education.<sup>1159</sup>

<sup>1158</sup> MOU between NPS/DOI and Bahamas National Trust, Apr. 7, 1995; Annex I to MOU, June 13, 1996; Annex II to MOU, Jan. 17, 1997; Annex III to MOU, Aug. 5, 1997; Annex IV to MOU, Nov. 16, 1998; NPS Dir. Stanton Glenn Bannister, President, Bahamas National Trust, Mar. 30, 2000, EVER 22965.

<sup>1159</sup> Partner Parks Declaration between the Everglades National Park and the Pantanal National Park, Oct. 14, 1997, EVER 22965; Website of Scott Markwith, Florida Atlantic University professor, <http://markwith.freehomepage.com>.