

Scenic Watch



Covering
October
2020
News

"NFL Kicks Off Super Bowl LV Community Greening Program"



Photo: in Patch - Super Bowl volunteers create sand dunes at Picnic Island Park

"Each year, a symbolic Super Bowl 'Golden Shovel' is passed from one Super Bowl host community to the next. The National Football League, Tampa Bay Super Bowl LV Host Committee, Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful, Tampa Bay Parks and Recreation, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, NFL partner Verizon and Force Blue special operations veterans joined forces for this iconic moment, which is the kickoff for numerous Super Bowl LV community greening projects.



Fun Things to Do in Florida

Our normal coverage of events will resume when the statewide list becomes available. In the meantime there are some ideas from Orlando Sentinel below.

[For ideas please visit the](#)

Back-to-back Super Bowls in Florida allow for a unique passing of the 'Golden Shovel' from Miami to Tampa Bay. The final Super Bowl LIV community greening project in Miami included a sand dune restoration at Crandon Park and the handing over of the 'Golden Shovel' to a Force Blue diver who transported it to from Miami to Tampa - emerging from the water with shovel in hand for a unique Florida 'Golden Shovel' presentation to the Tampa Bay Super Bowl LV Host Committee.

In advance of the 'Golden Shovel' presentation, Tampa Parks and Recreation built sand dunes at Picnic Island to help prevent erosion and protect against storm damage. Volunteers and Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful planted those sand dunes with 900 plants including sea oats, dune sunflowers, railroad vine, muhly grass and cordgrass to help prevent erosion. Volunteers worked in small groups and followed safety protocols as a precaution against COVID19...

Other planned community greening projects include a large mangrove restoration project at Picnic Island, a beautification project to create a pollinator garden at Veterans Memorial Park, a large tree planting at the Boys & Girls Club in Wimauma, creation of a vegetable garden and community compost project at the Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful Environmental Education Center at Reed Park, native plantings and cleanups at Lowry Park and at McKay Bay Nature Park, and one of the most innovative Super Bowl environmental projects, the continued restoration of a Florida coral reef."

-- Dana Gordon, Patch

[Read entire article](#)

Windfarm Siting: "Not In My Backyard: A Challenge To Decarbonization That Can Be

[Orlando Times Travel Calendar here](#)



Overcome"



Photo: Newsday via Getty Images - View of wind turbines off Block Island, Rhode Island in 2017

"Building large energy projects is hard business. Among the greatest challenges renewable power plant developers face is the question of where to build a new facility. This process, known as 'siting,' is much more complicated than finding land with strong wind speeds or solar irradiation. A tangled web of interrelated factors such as access to electric transmission, conflicts over competing land use, and environmental degradation must be navigated through multiple federal, state, and local regulatory permitting processes. It is exceedingly rare for a major project to sail through the siting process smoothly...

Fully decarbonizing the U.S. economy is a massive task. A recent study found that to reach 90% clean energy by 2035, the United States would need to build approximately 75 gigawatts of new solar, wind and storage capacity a year for the next 15 years. According to the study's companion memorandum, renewable growth at this scale would require approximately 5,100 square miles of land for ground-mounted solar and 58,000 square miles for wind power plants. That's a huge amount of land: most of the State of Connecticut for solar generation and the entire State of Illinois for wind—with still a larger geographic footprint for energy storage and other enabling technologies.

Of course, there are ways to moderate such a

massive need for land, as solar and wind generation can co-exist with other productive uses of land. Solar generation can be built on top of existing infrastructure. For example, rooftop solar and parking lot solar canopies can certainly offset some utility scale solar development on undisturbed land. Similarly, agricultural use, such as cattle grazing, can occur between wind turbines. To the extent the nation seeks to secure a decarbonized economy, multi-use strategies will be necessary. However, a huge amount of land will still need to be devoted to renewable generation.

That fact will likely lead to more siting challenges. 'Solar and wind generation require at least 10 times as much land per unit of power produced compared to coal or natural gas-fired power plants,' a recent Brookings Institution report points out. 'Most people say that they are in favor of renewable energy, in the abstract. But we are beginning to see a backlash against the land use implications of renewable energy in the United States, especially in wealthy, politically-active communities.' While the political winds are currently tilting us towards a cleaner energy future, it seems inevitable there will be many conflicts over siting new renewable plants, even with streamlined permitting..."

-- David Cherney, Forbes

[Read entire article](#)

"Walton County OKs local funding for Inlet Beach pedestrian underpass."



Photo: Northwest Florida Daily News

"Walton County commissioners took another step this week toward making a pedestrian underpass at U.S. Highway 98 and County Road 30-A a reality.

In a unanimous Tuesday vote, commissioners authorized Chairman Bill Chapman to sign documents conveying \$1.25 million in county funding for its share of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)-led project. The project has an estimated price tag of \$6 million, including landscaping, sidewalk installation and other work.

Providing the county portion of the funding for the project is a prerequisite for construction to begin on the pedestrian underpass, for which design work began in 2018.

The project is being installed to improve both pedestrian and vehicular safety in the area. Currently, people living or vacationing on the south side of U.S. Highway 98 at County Road 30A in Inlet Beach must cross the busy four-lane U.S. 98 to get to shops and restaurants on the north side of the highway... Under the agreement, Walton County is responsible for lighting, landscaping and painting of the underpass, with FDOT being responsible for maintenance of the structure itself...

According to Commissioner George Anderson, in whose district part of the project is located, the local arts community has expressed interest in being

involved with decoratively painting the underpass..."

-- Jim Thompson, Northwest Florida Daily News

[Read entire article](#)

"Historic hotel moved through streets of South Florida city"



Photo: AP

"A historic hotel and boarding house had to be parked overnight on a South Florida street during a move because of delays with its relocation.

Traffic had to be blocked off overnight Sunday on a street in West Palm Beach, and some light posts were temporarily removed to accommodate the relocation of the almost-century-old The Edgewater.

The 4,900-square-foot hotel was moved about 1.5 miles to a historic district of West Palm Beach after a new owner of the property decided its former location would be the site of a new parking [lot].

The Edgewater will be used as a bed-and-breakfast inn in its new location.

-- Triblive.com, Associated Press

[Read entire article](#)

Florida fall: Activities to enjoy with cooler weather



Photo: Patrick Connolly, Orlando Sentinel

" ...Though Florida doesn't experience the usual signs of fall that northerners look for – changing leaves, frigid nights and jackets worn by chilly commuters – there are cooler temperatures approaching for the Sunshine State...

Now, Floridians are beginning to come out of their air-conditioned abodes to garden, go for an evening stroll or move their exercise routine outdoors.

Here are suggestions for ways to take advantage of the milder weather...

Take a hike

Several state parks, including Wekiwa Springs, Blue Spring and Hontoon Island, offer scenic trails for recreationists of all skill levels. Seminole County offers up local gems such as Black Bear Wilderness Area and Little Big Econ State Forest. Urban escapes include Lake Baldwin Park, Little Econ Greenway, Bill Frederick Park at Turkey Lake and Mead Botanical Gardens.

Visit floridahikes.com for more ideas and resources.

Go for a paddle

While it might soon feel a little too cool for a swim in Central Florida's many springs, the crystal-clear waterways offer great paddling opportunities – not to mention the countless options on lakes, rivers, lagoons and coastal shores. Take out the canoe, kayak or paddleboard for a trip down Juniper Springs, the Econlockhatchee River, Wekiva River, Rainbow River, Rock Springs Run or Winter Park Chain of Lakes. Florida's East Coast also offers paddles in the Mosquito Lagoon and Indian River Lagoon near Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge...

Have an outdoor picnic

Step one: Find that perfect, 76-degree day to spend some time outdoors.

Step two: Pack your favorite sandwich, cheese, fruits, veggies and non-perishable dessert to have a pleasant outdoor picnic.

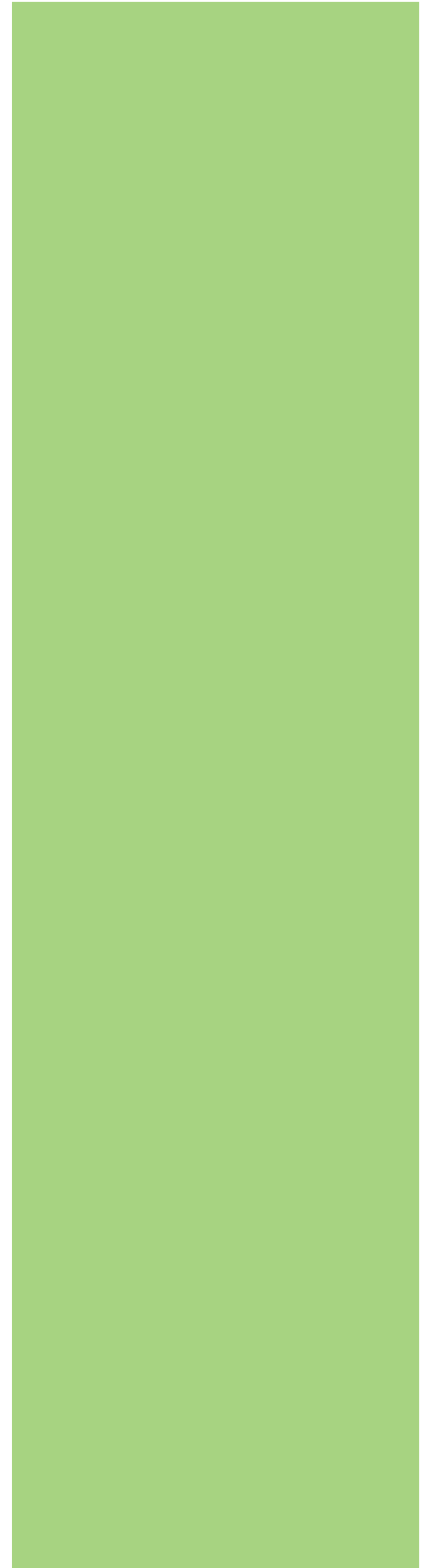
Central Florida has some splendid snacking spots, including Mead Botanical Garden, Bill Frederick Park, Lake Eola Park and Lake Ivanhoe Park.

Bring out the bike

Many Floridians, tired of being stuck inside, have dusted off their bikes and gotten out on the trails amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Bike shops have been slammed and low on inventory as the demand for cycling surges.

Central Florida has miles and miles of paved trails to explore, including on the Seminole Wekiva Trail, Cady Way Trail, Little Econ Greenway, West Orange Trail and Cross Seminole Trail. For some mountain biking action close to Orlando, head to Lake Druid Park, Markham Woods, the Mount Dora Trail, Soldier's Creek or Snow Hill.

See manatees



Florida's ever-so-slightly-cooler fall temperatures serve as a sign of an annual happening right around the corner: manatee season. Central Florida manatee hotspots include Blue Spring State Park, Haulover Canal in Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, Three Sisters Springs in Crystal River and Homosassa Springs... "

-- Patrick Connolly, Orlando Sentinel

[Read entire article for additional activity, photos and more!](#)

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