



# Big Cypress

National Preserve  
Florida

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## Comment Period Extended for Backcountry Access Plan Scoping

**Date:** December 23, 2013

**Contact:** [Bob DeGross](#), 239-695-1107

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Superintendent Pedro Ramos announced that Big Cypress National Preserve has extended the public scoping period for a backcountry access plan and environmental impact statement (EIS) being prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The comment period will be extended until February 28th, 2014 in response to a request from the public for additional time to review and comment on the scoping newsletter.

The purpose of the plan will be to provide off-road vehicle (ORV) secondary trails, non-motorized trails, and a camping management approach that protects the Preserve's natural and cultural resources while providing for public enjoyment. The plan will also establish a permanent route for the Florida National Scenic Trail and other hiking opportunities.

The primary purpose of this plan will be to further clarify the Preserve's management approach as it relates to secondary ORV trails, camping, and other backcountry opportunities. The plan will be developed in accordance with the Preserve's enabling legislation, NPS policy, and all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

A scoping newsletter providing further details on the plan is available at - <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=49334>.

A scoping period during which the public, agencies, and other interested parties are invited to provide written input regarding backcountry access into the Preserve and the scope, issues, and alternatives to be addressed in the plan and the environmental process opened on 11/19/2013 and will extend until 2/28/2014.

Following the completion of the scoping process, the NPS will begin developing draft alternatives for the backcountry access plan and EIS; this stage will likely begin in the spring of 2014. There will be opportunities to comment during the development of alternatives as well as during subsequent stages of the planning effort. Notifications will be sent out accordingly.

We welcome your initial written comments during the scoping period of this project. Please submit your comments online at - <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=49334> or mail to Superintendent, Big Cypress National Preserve, 33100 Tamiami Trail East, Ochopee, FL 34141-1000.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

## Did You Know?



*Before Gerald Ford, the 38th President of the United States designated Big Cypress as the country's first national preserve, in 1974, he worked as a National Park Ranger at Yellowstone National Park, in 1936. He was the only US President to have worked for the National Park Service.*

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