Peak Florida

by Joan Meiners

When you arrive in the United States via the Orlando International terminal serving flights from South and Central America, you are greeted by large images lining the hallway between the tarmac and Customs that pay tribute to iconic Florida species: the American alligator; Blue Herons; the Oak tree; Saw Palmettos; the West Indian Manatee; Hyacinth; Oranges; the Bald Eagle. Florida has a state insect (the Zebra Butterfly), a state shell (the Horse Conch), and a state tree (the Sabal Palm). But often it behaves as if only one species matters: humans.

Recent data from the UF Bureau of Economic and Business Research suggest that Florida is currently growing by 919 people every day. The state advertises itself as a booming business hub and the epicenter of the hip beach lifestyle.

In 2008, Miami was a major player in the nation-wide housing crisis. *Building permits issued in the years following show*  But in 2018, development is back in a big way. Development has not slowed (*check this, add details*),

Meanwhile, the sea level creeps slowly up the beach, claiming more real estate for itself every year, and continuous urbanized habitat threatens water quality, drainage from storms, a wildlife migration. How will the state cope with this influx of one species, while protecting the others it holds dear?

*More details on 919 statistic, where these people are coming from and why they are coming to Florida. Present some of my own analyses, statistics. Talk about map.*

*Overview of environmental problems/challenges related to this increased growth and development (Wildlife story, sea level rise story).*

*Profile of families who have had to relocate due to environmental disasters.*

*State rights of developers vs. rights of communities to manage growth, ensure ability to maintain water and air quality (phosphate story).*

*Interviews with developers, people pushing business growth, etc. (see interviewee ideas below)*

*Foreshadow other stories about how Florida is dealing with development (Deseret, Fish Island)*

*End by alluding to some solutions to foreshadow solutions story.*



**Caption:** The number of housing permits issued in each of Florida's ten most populous counties shows the trend of development growth, crash, and growth between 1990 and 2017.

Data from Enterprise Florida (https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/data-center/).

Details at https://github.com/beecycles/Peak-Florida-EJUF.



**Caption:** The number of housing permits issued statewide in Florida shows the trend of development growth, crash, and growth between 1990 and 2017.

Data from Enterprise Florida (https://www.enterpriseflorida.com/data-center/).

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Interviewee ideas:

advertising Florida as a great place for new businesses: floridathefutureishere.com/assets

"next generation tourism destination": Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau (page 114)

Lifestyle advertisement: sunny.org (page 115)

Education expansion and workforce recruitment: new Nova Southeastern University (page 86)

Billion-dollar marine industry marina in Fort Lauderdale: (page 96)

"Salty jobs" marine careers recruitment for marine development: (page 97)

Tech jobs, tropical lifestyle: (page 101)

Sustainability person at UF:

Matthew Wood (emailed 11/17)