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.

*(once we know that we will use these graphs and what our color scheme will be, I will make them look pretty, add house icons, adjust font size, etc)*



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

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**Reporting notes:**

**Already contacted for interview:**

At the UF Sustainability office:

Matthew Wood, Director - Emailed questions and request to meet, no reply yet

Liz Storn , Program Coordinator- Emailed questions and request to meet, no reply yet

**Working on getting in touch with for an interview:**

Family from Puerto Rico that moved here after Hurricane Maria - Working with video storytelling student Brie on this: she has a lead on someone in Orlando

Long-time Florida family from panhandle affected by Hurricane Michael - No leads yet

**Ideas for other possible interviewees (not yet contacted):**

Exec at "**Florida the Future is Here**" campaign advertising Florida as a great place for new businesses: floridathefutureishere.com/assets

Someone with the **Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau** (based on their advertisement of Florida as a "next generation tourism destination")

Someone with **sunny.org** about their advertisement of the glamorous Florida lifestyle (page 115 in Florida Trends)

Someone at the new **Nova Southeastern University**, that is recruiting an expanded education workforce

Someone associated with the billion-dollar **marine industry or marina in Fort Lauderdale** (page 96 in Florida Trends)

Someone working in a "Salty job" in the **marine development sector** (Miami-Dade county?) to get view into these careers people are being recruited to Florida to fill (page 97) in Florida Trends

Someone who came to Florida in response to **advertisements about tech jobs, tropical lifestyle** (page 101 in Florida Trends)