



## Friends of Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve, Inc Environmental Protection Scholarship Award

The Fakahatchee Strand is approximately 20 miles long and 3 to 5 miles wide. It is the main drainage slough of the southwestern Big Cypress Swamp; the largest and most unusual of the strands. The cypress & mixed hardwood swamp is a unique feature.

The natural values of the Fakahatchee are arguably greater than those of any other comparably-sized area in Florida. It contains the largest stand of royal palms and the largest concentration and variety of orchids in North America, as well as other species of plants that are extremely rare. The wildlife of the Strand is equally rare. Endangered or threatened species include Florida Panther, Black Bear, Everglades Mink, Wood Stork and Bald Eagle.

The Friends of Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve was founded to help maintain and protect this natural legacy. The Friends organization is a Florida not-for-profit 501(c)3 corporation that relies on membership fees and private donations to pursue activities on behalf of the Preserve. As a Citizens' Support Organization, the Friends work closely with the Division of Recreation and Parks in order to provide interpretive materials used by Park staff when making presentations, obtain scientific equipment to support research in the Strand, distribute Preserve information to the general public and local community, and solicit financial support for the preservation of the Strand. The Friends of Fakahatchee also support the "swamp walks" that give a lucky few visitors a rare first hand experience of one of the few remaining parks that is maintained in its wild and natural state.

It is the intention of the Friends of Fakahatchee to also provide a continuing legacy of support and conservation to the Strand by offering a \$2,000 scholarship and a one year family membership to a Collier County High School student who shows an understanding and commitment to the delicate environment of SW Florida. The financial aspect of the scholarship will be awarded in the fall of the Junior year of the student's college career after the student has begun the upper graduate coursework in Natural Resource Management, Environmental Studies, Marine Biology, or related major.

### **Qualifications**

1. Be a Senior at a Collier County High School
2. Have a GPA of at least 3.0
3. Have completed 40 hours of documented volunteer service to the environmental community ie: Friends of Fakahatchee cleanup days, Rookery Bay Volunteer, Collier Conservancy Volunteer, Collier County Beach Cleanup Days, etc.
4. Maintain at least a 3.0 GPA while at College or University (a sealed transcript will be required in order to release scholarship funds).

### **Application Deadline**

Your application must be postmarked no later than April 1

### **Application Procedures**

Neatly Complete (print or type) the Scholarship Application, enclose 3 letters of recommendation from teachers, employers, or volunteer coordinators, a sealed copy of your high school transcript, and mail to:

Friends of Fakahatchee Strand

State Preserve, Inc.

P. O. Box 35

Attn: Susan O'Farrell email: [seaandfree@live.com](mailto:seaandfree@live.com)

Everglades City, FL, 34139

website: [www.FriendsOfFakahatchee.org](http://www.FriendsOfFakahatchee.org)

\*Please feel free to photocopy the application or access it on our website. You will receive a phone call acknowledging receipt of your application, if you do not receive a phone call within 2 weeks please email for confirmation.

### **Selection Process**

Each application will be screened by the Friends of Fakahatchee Environment Protection Scholarship Award Committee, which will make the final decision regarding the selection of the recipient. The recipient of the Environment Protection Scholarship will be announced in May and the scholarship will be awarded in the first semester of the students Junior year at College or University.



Friends of Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve, Inc.  
Environmental Protection Scholarship Award

Scholarship Application \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(last) (first) (m)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(city) (state) (zip)

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of College or University: \_\_\_\_\_

Planned Field of Study: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Admission: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe honors, awards, or special recognition that you have received while in high school:

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe activities and employment engaged in while in high school (you may attach resume):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please choose three of the following essay questions and answer each in at least 500 words:

1. Critical Conservation Issues. Identify what you believe to be the most important conservation issues facing SW Florida during the next 10 years and how will they impact future resource management practices.
2. Personal Statement. Identify your future goals and how this scholarship will help you achieve them.
3. Knowledge. Describe the importance a swamp or strand plays in the ecosystem of not only SW Florida, but the entire state of Florida.
4. Activism. Describe what led you to your interest in conservation and give examples of your volunteer work and what it meant to you, what you learned, what made you want to volunteer more.

