

2011 USCRTE/RRC - Florida, Field Trip Descriptions

Please read carefully:

Some field trips may be weather dependent. Some may require payment for lunch (approx \$10 or under). Some equipment rental may not be included, although sponsorships may supplement some of these costs. Charter bus transportation will be provided. All buses will leave promptly at the times scheduled below. If you are accepted to participate in a requested field trip, you will receive a confirmation within one to two weeks prior to the event.

1. Dagny Johnson Key Largo Hammock Botanical State Park/John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park (Location: Key Largo, Florida Keys)

Description of Trip:

The first stop on this field trip will be the Visitor Center at John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park which includes a 30,000 gallon aquarium as the focal point and five smaller aquariums. These smaller aquariums house several colonies of *Acropora cervicornis* that were collected after they were damaged from boat groundings events and successfully rehabilitated. Not only are they thriving in the aquariums but fragments of these individuals have been used for outplanting at several coral reef restoration sites.

From there travel to Key Largo Hammock and tour a long-term wetland restoration project at the former Carysfort Yacht Club. This site was completely scarified and after state acquisition, upland and wetland restoration was initiated. The wetland restoration includes filling in a boat basin, back basins, restoring the original contour of the shoreline, and mangrove planting. Most of the shoreline restoration is near completion with the focus on the back basins.

The last part of the field trip will be a walk through an old survey trail in the hardwood hammock at the north end of the park. There are several significant aspects of the acquisition of this park; the Port Bougainville section was a major environmental success story protecting not only a portion of the largest West Indian hardwood hammock in the Keys, but also several endangered species; and the protection of all of the land that is part of the park lends to the protection of the nearshore seagrass communities and the coral reefs offshore.

Maximum Participants: 15

Length: Full day (9 hours)

Depart hotel	0800
Arrive Pennekamp Park	0945
Tour Visitor Center/aquarium	1000 - 1030
Arrive at Key Largo Hammock (Restoration site)	1050 - 1150
Lunch at Park	1200 - 1245
Arrive at Hammock site	1315
Depart for Hotel	1500
Arrive Hotel	1700

Trip-Specific Concerns:

Close-toed shoes, long sleeve shirts and pants recommended
Chance for presence of mosquitoes

2. **Biscayne National Park & Coastal Marine Spatial Planning** (Location: Homestead, Florida)

Description of Trip:

Biscayne National Park is one of the largest marine parks in the National Park system, with over 5000 patch reefs, extensive seagrass beds, the longest protected stretch of coastal mangrove forest on the eastern seaboard, and near-pristine hardwood hammock forests on its many islands. The park has been undergoing a planning process for its General Management Plan since 2001. The park is proposing many zones, including a no-take marine reserve zone focused on visitor experience, non-combustion engine use zones, slow speed zones, and sensitive resource zones.

This trip will include a boat trip, an opportunity to snorkel a coral reef, lunch on Boca Chita Key (an island with a nature trail and historic buildings including an ornamental lighthouse), and briefings on the park's resources and what data sets were considered when proposing the size, shape, and location of the proposed marine reserve zone.

Maximum Participants: 40

Length: Full day (9+ hours) (NOTE: assumes hotel in downtown Miami; if Broward, add 1.5 hrs)

Depart hotel	0800 (board boat)	0800 (board bus)
Arrive Biscayne National Park	n/a	0900
Planning & resource briefing	on trip	0915
Snorkel OR board boat	1000 (snorkel)	1000 (board boat)/11 am snorkel
Lunch on Boca Chita Key	1200	1300
Tour of Boca Chita/Lighthouse	1300	1400
Depart Boca Chita	1430	1530
Arrive at hotel OR park HQ	1600 (hotel)	1630 (board bus 1700, arrive 1800)

Trip-Specific Concerns:

Bathing suit, towel, sunblock, hat, and long-sleeved shirt recommended.
Chance for presence of mosquitoes.
Snorkel gear provided by concession boat

3. **Everglades National Park Tour** (Location: Homestead, Florida)

Description of Trip:

Trip participants will enjoy a day-long guided tour of Everglades National Park – one of the crown jewels of the American national park system. Protecting the only subtropical wilderness in the continental United States, the park affords unparalleled opportunities for viewing the unique assemblage of flora and fauna that thrives in the mild south Florida climate. Participants will walk through a variety of different ecosystems as they wind their way through the famed River of Grass in search of alligators, birds, manatees, crocodiles, and other wildlife that have become synonymous with the Everglades landscape. During the excursion, participants will also enjoy a guided boat cruise through the park's expansive mangrove wilderness. Participants will learn about the role the park plays in the local hydrology, how current restoration efforts aim to revitalize the area, and what is at stake with a changing climate and rising seas.

Maximum Participants: 35

Length: Full day (10 hours)

Depart hotel	0800
Arrive at Ernest Coe VC	0945
Travel to Pahayokee	1015-1030
Tour Pahayokee	1030-1100
Travel to Flamingo	1100-1130
Lunch at Buttonwood Cafe	1130-1215
Backcountry Cruise	1230-1400
Depart Flamingo	1400
Travel to Royal Palm VC	1400-1430
Tour the Anhinga Trail	1430-1545
Ernest Coe VC (Optional)	1545-1600
Return Trip to Hotel	1600-1800

Trip-Specific Concerns:

Trip itinerary subject to change due to variable park conditions and activities.
 All participants should be prepared for sun, heat, rain, and/or biting insects.
 All participants are asked to bring a refillable water bottle for their use during the trip.
 Trip involves walks of up to ½ mile in duration, and all trails to be visited are accessible.
 Participants are scheduled to return to the hotel by approximately 6:00 p.m.
 Trip is subject to cancellation due to bad weather.

4. Coral Reef Restoration Interaction with Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) (Location: Tavernier, Florida Keys)

Description of Trip:

This field trip will provide an up close and personal look at a thriving coral reef nursery, as well as a restoration site with out-plantings from the nursery. Participants have the option of SCUBA diving or snorkeling on the Coral Restoration Foundation (CRF) nursery (<http://www.coralrestoration.org>), within the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS). The divers will be accompanied by Stephanie Roach and Kevin Gaines. The second dive/snorkel of the trip will be on the restoration site of the M/V Wellwood, which ran aground within the Molasses Reef Sanctuary Preservation Area in 1984. Participants will be able to see the real world interaction with CMSP; from straight-forward marine zoning demarcation and shared zone usage currently employed in the FKNMS (established in 1990) to discussions of future rezoning efforts based on new information.

Maximum Participants: 32

Length: Full day (9 hours)

Depart hotel	0800
Arrive dive shop	1000
Boat departs dock	1030
Boat returns dock	1430
Return hotel	1700

Trip-Specific Concerns:

Trip is subject to cancellation due to bad weather
 Snorkelers' visibility may be hampered by poor water column visibility
 SCUBA certification is required for divers
 SCUBA gear will be required for divers (available to rent from dive shop)

5. **Mainland Southeast Florida Coral (*Acropora cervicornis*) Nursery Project** (Location: Ft Lauderdale, Florida)

Description of Trip:

This half-day field trip will provide an up close and personal look at unique stands of the threatened coral, *Acropora cervicornis* (staghorn) and a nursery for this species (2 dives). Participants have the option of SCUBA diving or snorkeling on the sites located offshore the mainland southeast Florida coast. The divers will be accompanied by scientists from the National Coral Reef Institute and Broward County Natural Resources Planning and Management Division. These sites are located very close to shore and a short boat ride from the marina of departure.

Maximum Participants: 30

Length: Half day (5.5 hours)

Depart hotel	0745
Arrive dive shop	0830
Boat departs dock	0900
Boat returns dock	1230
Return hotel	1315

Trip-Specific Concerns:

Trip is subject to cancellation due to bad weather
Snorkelers' visibility may be hampered by poor water column visibility
SCUBA certification is required for divers
SCUBA gear will be required for divers (available to rent from dive shop)

6. **Coral Reef Management Interaction with Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP)** (Location: John Pennekamp State Park, Key Largo, Florida Keys)

Description of Trip:

This field trip will provide an up close and personal look at some of Florida's healthiest coral reef habitats at America's first undersea park. Participants have the option viewing via glass-bottom boat or snorkeling in John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park (established in 1963). Participants will be able to see the real world interaction with CMSP; from straight-forward marine zoning demarcation and shared zone usage currently employed in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (established in 1990) in conjunction with Pennekamp Park to discussions of future rezoning efforts based on new information.

Maximum Participants: 36

Length: Full day (8 hours)

Depart hotel	0800
Arrive dive shop	1000
Boat departs dock	1030
Boat returns dock	1430
Return hotel	1700

Trip-Specific Concerns:

Trip is subject to cancellation due to bad weather
Snorkelers' visibility may be hampered by poor water column visibility

Snorkel gear will be required (available to rent from dive shop)