

Removal of old Tamiami Trail roadbed opens new doors for Everglades revival

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Governor Ron DeSantis announces the completion of the old Tamiami Trail roadbed removal in the Florida Everglades. The historic roadbed acted as a dam and prevented sheet flow of water from the central Everglades into Everglades National Park. BY [AL DIAZ](#)

The Tamiami Trail was hailed as an engineering milestone when it opened nearly a century ago, a thin ribbon of rocky fill and asphalt connecting Florida’s two coasts.

Over the decades, it also became an environmental disaster — literally a roadblock to the historic natural flow of the Everglades, leaving water too deep to the north and sending too little to Everglades National Park and Florida Bay to the south.

On Tuesday, April 12, 2022, South Florida water managers celebrated the final removal of sections of the old Trail, the culmination of a years-long project that earlier had erected a series of bridges designed to increase the flow of the Shark River Slough, the major fresh water artery for the southern Everglades. Removing six miles of old roadbed was a key last piece of the effort.

“Alligator” Ron Bergeron, a water management board member and longtime Everglades conservationist, said the entire Everglades ecosystem will benefit from opening up the Trail. The announcement, attended by Gov. Ron DeSantis, comes as the state is also seeking to divert more

water south from Lake Okeechobee to reduce the cycle of devastating blue-green algae blooms from periodic releases of polluted water to the Caloosahatchee River on the southwest coast and the St. Lucie on the southeast coast.

“The journey of water is the life of South Florida,” Bergeron said.

DeSantis said the removal of the barriers will help move water south and noted that the project was completed six months ahead of schedule.



Governor Ron DeSantis announces the completion of the old Tamiami Trail roadbed removal in the Florida Everglades on Tuesday, August 3, 2021. The historic roadbed acted as a dam and prevented sheet flow of water from the central Everglades into Everglades National Park. Al Diaz adiaz@miamiherald.com

“Since day one, my administration has been focused on expediting key Everglades restoration and water quality projects to protect Florida’s natural resources for future generations, and I’m proud of our record-setting progress,” he said.

Eric Eikenberg, president and CEO of The Everglades Foundation, said the road being removed is the original one built in the early 1920s.

“To have a 100-year problem be solved by a generation that’s committed to restoration, that’s why it’s so optimistic and significant,” he said.

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<https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/environment/article253200838.html#storylink=cpy>