

Big Cypress National Preserve—Restoration of 50 Mile Bend

Collier County, Florida



from top: Bald eagle at Fifty Mile Bend after restoration; Project site during restoration

At over 700,000 acres, the Big Cypress Preserve is home to a mixture of both tropical and temperate plant communities. As such, the Preserve contains important habitat for a number of unique species, including the endangered Florida Panther. In order to protect and enhance this valuable ecosystem,

The removal of thousands of cubic yards of fill material allows a native South Florida marsh ecosystem to move forward on the road to recovery.

the National Park Service (NPS) is actively restoring sites within the Preserve that bear the scars of previous land use and wetland filling.

In support of this effort, Biohabitats Inc. was selected by the NPS to undertake the hydrologic restoration of a 13.5 acre former campground. Responsible for all permitting, earthmoving, stone crushing, and final grading, Biohabitats excavated and processed approximately 23,000 cubic yards of fill material at the project location. Strong attention was paid to obtaining final site elevations that would provide a hydrologic

connection with the adjoining marsh while also supporting the establishment of native flora.

Operating with tight time constraints and within a challenging environment, Biohabitats was able to bring creative solutions to the table that enabled this wetland restoration to be completed ahead of schedule. Of particular gratification to project participants was the use of this site for bald eagle feeding shortly after completion.

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