

Oleta River Corridor



"If there is magic on the planet, it is contained in Water."

- Loren Eiseley

Coastal Wetlands

Coastal, or saltwater, wetlands consist of salt marshes and mangrove swamps. These habitats fuel both terrestrial and aquatic food chains. Wetlands contribute to water quality by removing excess nutrients and pollutants that originated in the uplands before they reach the estuary. Wetlands also offer important habitat for a wide variety of organisms that rely on the area as a nursery ground, and provide protection against coastal erosion.

The Oleta River Corridor

Historically, the native Tequestas paddled their dugouts down the river through pristine hammocks and through dense mangroves to reach the productive fishing grounds of Biscayne Bay. Today, the Oleta River flows through Miami-Dade's Greynolds Park complex and the State's Oleta River Recreation Area. This exceptional resource contrasts sharply with the high density residential neighborhoods and business districts that abut the parks. It is the only water course in the county that has not been completely dredged or otherwise altered.

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In 1993, four properties along the Oleta River were identified for acquisition by EEL. No site was pristine: their importance was their connection to the river and nearby parklands. A restaurant and a condominium are now located on two of these sites: two are now in the public domain.

On one site, the owners of a 30 acre inholding in Oleta River State Recreation Area planned to build a high-rise condominium on their property. The property became entangled in a bankruptcy and in the savings and loan misfortunes of the mid '90's. Only then was the State, in partnership with the EEL program, able to acquire the parcel and maintain the watery wilderness within the State Recreation Area.

A smaller three acre riverfront site adjacent to East Greynolds Park was also acquired by EEL with a matching grant from the State's Florida Communities Trust. To restore the site to more natural conditions, invasive exotic Australian pine trees have been removed and elevations modified. The site now functions as a self-maintaining mangrove wetland, teeming with fish and wading birds.