

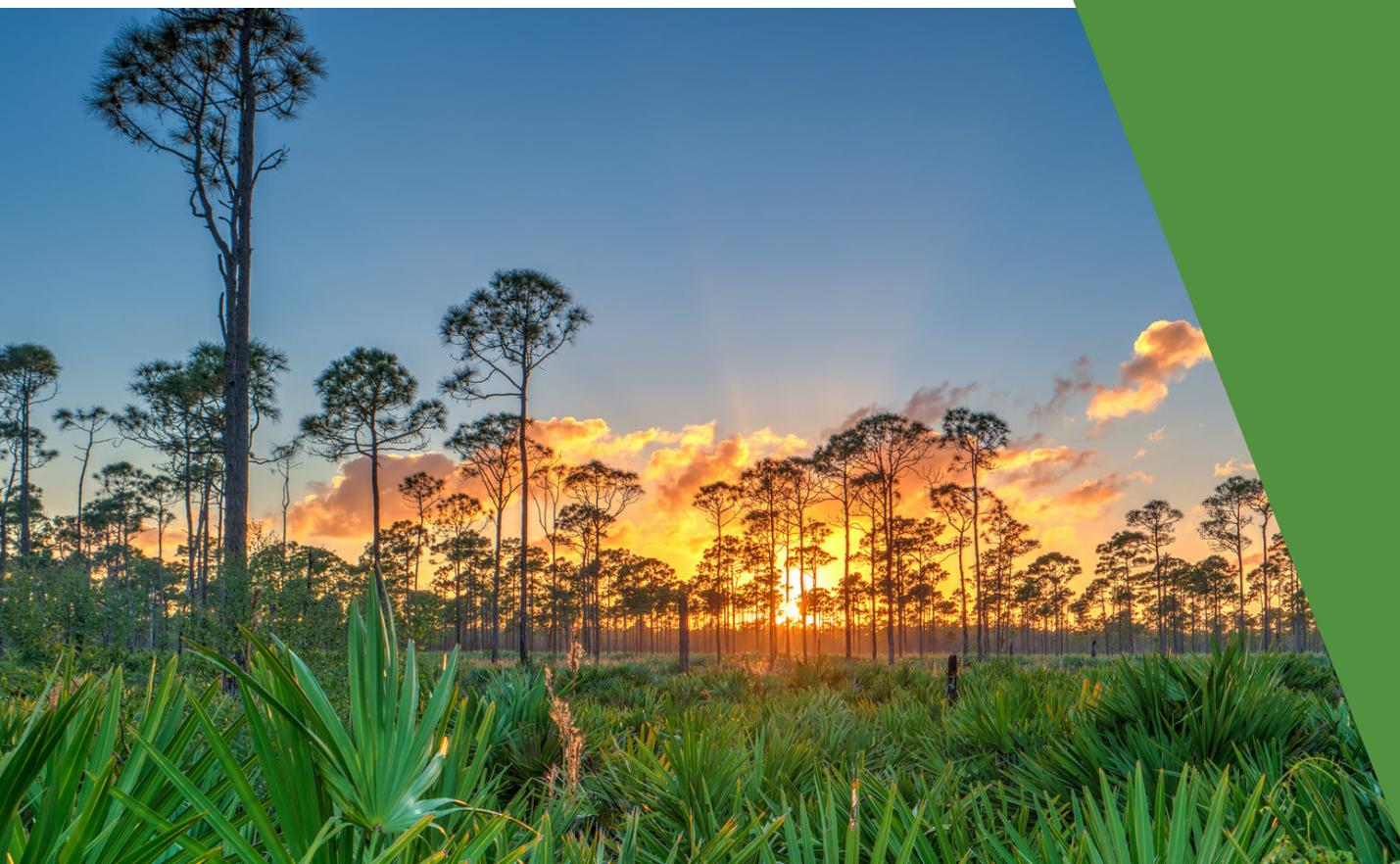
FLORIDA STATE PARKS FOUNDATION

PRESERVE.
PROTECT.
EDUCATE.
ADVOCATE.



FLORIDA STATE PARKS
FOUNDATION

30 YEARS



OUR MISSION

The Friends of Florida State Parks was founded in 1993 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. In 2018, we changed our name to [Florida State Parks Foundation](#). Our mission is to support the entire Florida State Park System of 175 parks and trails through programs and projects that:

- **preserve** and **protect** state parks
- **educate** visitors and decision-makers about the value of state parks
- **advocate** for engagement with state parks by providing financial support to supplement state funding

OUR BOARD

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THE STORY OF FORT MOSE

More than 300 years ago, courageous Africans escaped from enslavement in British colonies. They fled southward on foot to Spanish St. Augustine, crossing swamps and dense tropical forests. Along the way, they sought assistance from Natives, thus creating the first 'underground railroad'.

Not all survived. Those who reached St. Augustine were granted asylum by the Spanish government. It was a unique offer—freedom, in exchange for conversion to Catholicism and, for men, a term of military service.

The first freedom seekers arrived in 1687 and by 1738, more than 100 freedom seekers had achieved asylum. In that year, a fortified town named Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose was constructed on St. Augustine's northernmost border. Fort Mose became the site of the first free black community in what is now the United States.

Over the years, the Fort Mose site was swallowed by marsh, and the important legacy of its community was largely forgotten. Late in the twentieth century, a highly dedicated team of archaeologists, historians, government leaders and committed citizens helped restore Fort Mose to its rightful place of honor. Today, Fort Mose is recognized as a significant local, national and international historic landmark.



Conceptual rendering of the 1738 fort.

FORT MOSE PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

In February of 2022, the Florida State Parks Foundation was awarded a \$933,000 grant through the Florida Department of State's Florida African-American Cultural & Historical Grant Opportunity. This grant required a \$250,000 match, which came from the generous partners below. The Foundation is currently seeking additional partnerships to help cover further costs of the fort.

The fort groundbreaking is anticipated to take place during fall 2023, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in spring of 2024.

DONOR LEVELS

\$25,000 -
\$49,999

- The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida
- Florida Blue
- Northrop Grumman

\$50,000 -
\$99,999

- St. Augustine Amphitheater
- St. Johns County
- Fort Mose Historical Society
- Lastinger Family Foundation

\$100,000+

- Jacksonville Jaguars
- Florida Park Service
- Florida's Department of State's FL African-American Cultural & Historical Grant

DONOR RECOGNITION OPPORTUNITIES

Florida State Parks Foundation partners are recognized through various platforms, including an in-person park presentation opportunity, a press release to our statewide press list, a feature on our blog and newsletter which is distributed to our email list of 240,000, and posts to the Foundation's social media accounts announcing the partnership. The Foundation's social media engagement includes 44,000 Facebook impressions per month, 100,000 Instagram impressions per month, and 6,000 Twitter impressions per month.

If you are interested in a partnership, please contact Foundation CEO, Julia Woodward, at julia@floridastateparksfoundation.org.

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS



44,000



100,000



6,000

FORT MOSE RECOGNITION

The long list of local, national, and international honors includes:

- Site of Memory, UNESCO Slave Route Project
- Designation: National Historic Landmark
- Designation: National Register for Historic Places
- 2020 Herschel E. Shepard Award for Historic Preservation, St. Augustine Historical Society
- Distinguished site on the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor and Florida African American History Trail



Fort Mose Historical Society re-enactors



Fort Mose historical map



Follow this QR code for more information

REBUILDING FORT MOSE

The Florida State Parks Foundation is working in coordination with the Florida Park Service to reconstruct the 1738 Fort Mose on the land of the Fort Mose Historic State Park where no fort currently exists. In keeping with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Standards for Reconstruction, the plans for this representation "...will be based on the accurate duplication of historic features and elements substantiated by documentary or physical evidence." In addition to construction of the fort, the fort will be outfitted with interpretation so that park visitors will understand the historical significance of the story of Fort Mose.

COMMUNITY IMPACT



This project will impact the local economy while also educating visitors on the significance of the important legacy Fort Mose holds as the first legally-sanctioned free African settlement in what would become the United States. With only a museum and no standing fort present, Fort Mose Historic State Park saw 102,038 visitors in 2022. The park's economic impact reached \$12,161,340 and it supported 170 local jobs.

The completion of the reconstructed fort is sure to draw in even larger crowds, including school field trips and summer camp groups interested in experiencing an exciting battle reenactment.

Live volunteer actors will present audiences with an opportunity to follow the dangerous freedom-seeking journey escaping slaves took to reach Fort Mose in 1738. Groups can overhear the conversations of people met along the way – some wanting to help the Freedom Seeker, others hoping to return the slave to owners in the English colonies to the north. They will meet Governor Montiano and hear his reasons for establishing this important settlement, and learn how Fort Mose and its militia played a critical role in turning the tide of the 1740 British siege on St. Augustine.

Visiting a historic fort will be an enriching educational experience for both children and adults. Please help sponsor this important historical project today!