

Lake Okeechobee Regional Initiative (LORI)

Presented September 16, 2010



COLLINS CENTER
FOR PUBLIC POLICY

LORI: Glades, Hendry and Palm Beach counties

Lake Okeechobee Regional Initiative is a convening of elected officials and other stakeholders around the southern rim of Lake O to re-imagine their economy in light of the potential that exists there!



Established a regional framework

Examples:

- Developed a marketing plan for the Lake Okeechobee region.
- Ensuring an important transportation link — a bus route between Clewiston and Belle Glade continues in operation.
- Spurred the Florida Department of Transportation to put a high priority on improving the intersection of S.R. 80 and U.S. Hwy. 27.
- Partnered with the Florida Heartland Rural Economic Development Initiative (FHREDI) to reinforce work performed by Florida Rural Area Construction Coop (FRACC) —utilizing existing federal funds to assist business development.
- Procured and distributed maps showing infrastructure, land and water resources, public facilities, tourism attractions and employment centers to regional leaders.
- Convened growth opportunity discussions in the tri-cities of Pahokee, Belle Glade and South Bay.

Identified key regional work groups

Progress:

- Established regional committees: broadband, continuing education, health and public safety, planning and infrastructure, agriculture and tourism that work effectively across county borders.
- The tourism and branding committee established “Lake Okeechobee — Gateway to the Everglades” as the brand for the southern shores.
- The three counties worked together to produce a regional marketing program including a tourism brochure, video and Web site.
- Introduced information lead and economic development data mining concepts to the region.
- A partnership between the Collins Center and Social Compact was established to explore issues of census undercount and data dissemination.
- Linked workforce training initiatives to projects facilitated by Florida Rural Area Construction Consortium (FRACC).
- Web site under construction to market and brand the region.

Economic diversification plans

- **Phase 1:** Engender civic pride and regional cooperation — “Doable Deeds.”
 - Transportation initiative for the widening of S.R. 80.
 - Support FRACC on economic development infrastructure and technical assistance.
 - Establish an urban garden in Belle Glade building civic pride in the region.
 - Build and equip public/private partnerships.
- **Phase 2:** Build regional brand and supporting infrastructure.
 - Web site(s), quasi regional economic development committee with groups formed to discuss and support economic diversification.
- **Phase 3:** Synergies in Alternative Energies /Agriculture/ Environmental Restoration.
- **Phase 4:** Leverage legislative strategies to the region’s concerns.
 - In anticipation of continued tight budgets, attaching to FHREDI and other existing rural initiatives increases the opportunity for support.
 - Concurrent engagement in workforce and educational issues.

Community education and outreach

What is a “Localvore”? Or How You Can Prosper in the New World of Food

A presentation and dialogue with the
Division of Marketing and Development
Florida Department of Agriculture

- The latest research on consumer tastes and trends
- How the state is involved in ag marketing
- How you can leverage state resources, including international assistance
- Examples of brand awareness, entry into giant food retailers such as Costco, Wal-Mart and Publix

Tuesday, Sept. 21

9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Everglades Research and Education Center
3200 East Palm Beach Road, Belle Glade

This event co-sponsored by the Western Palm Beach County Farm Bureau, the Hendry Glades County Farm Bureau and the Lake Okeechobee Regional Initiative of the Collins Center for Public Policy

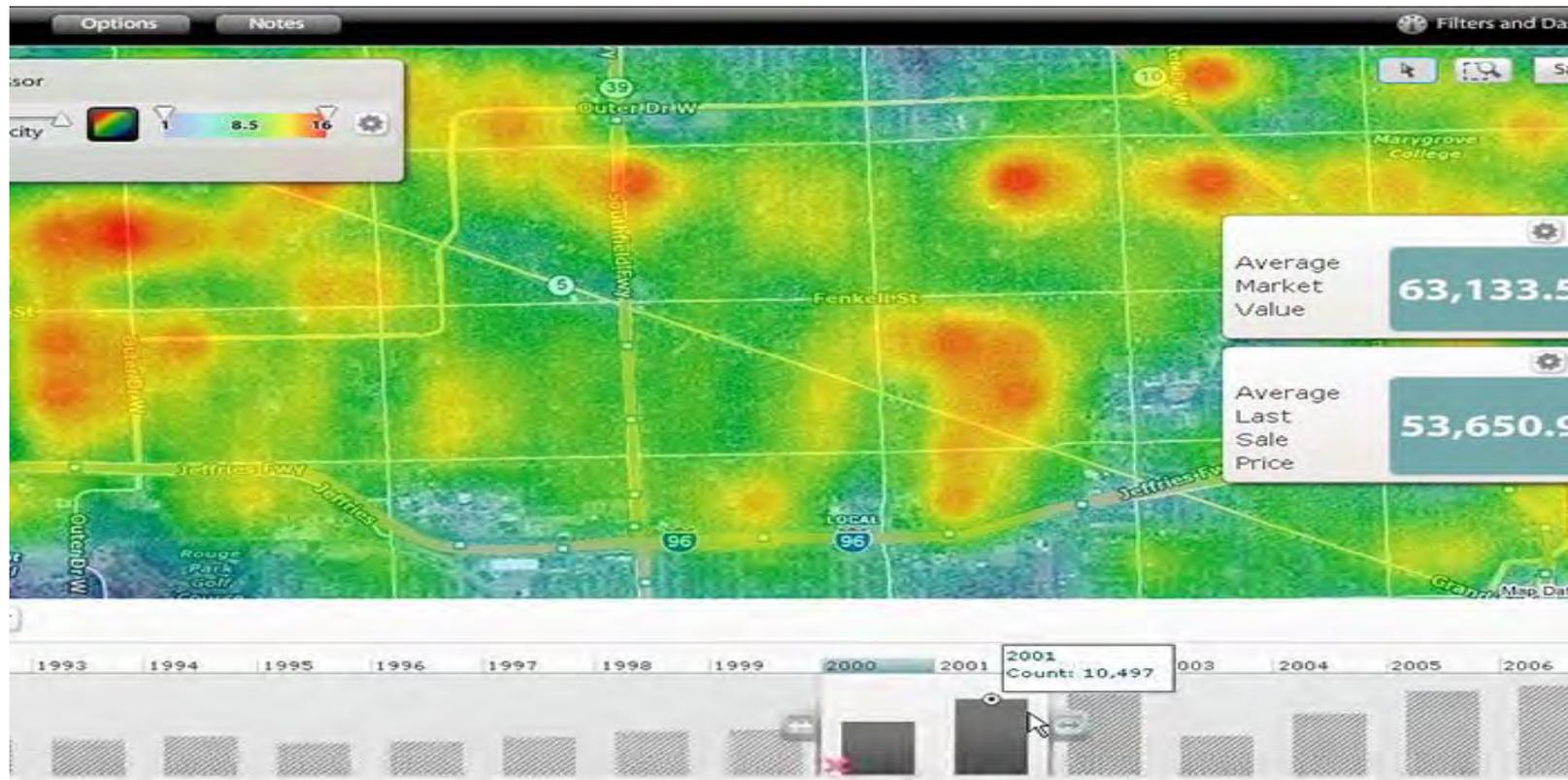
Open to all interested members of the grower community and their supporters

Urban gardens coming to Belle Glade this fall



Roots in the City:
Overtown

Understanding Social Compact



Facilitating public and private investment in underserved communities by quantifying market characteristics of low and middle-income neighborhoods by addressing such issues as census undercounts, foreclosures and undocumented purchasing potential.

Collins Center partners to create a new identity

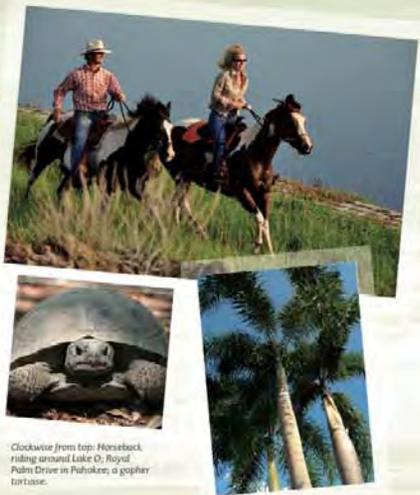


Overall goals & objectives

- Develop region as a rural tourism destination
- Increase tourism and hotel revenue
- Drive new economic development
- Create brand awareness of Lake O
- Increase attendance at attractions, festivals and events
- Grow target audience engagement with region
- Drive traffic to Web site



Telling the story: print



Clockwise from top: Horseback riding around Lake O, Royal Palm Drive in Pahokee, a gopher tortoise.

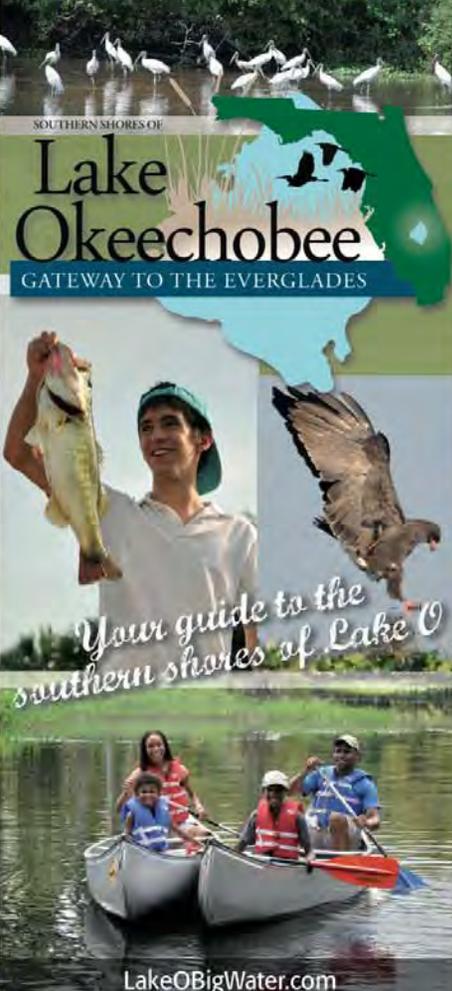


DIRECTIONS TO LAKE OKEECHOBEE
 From Fort Myers and the west coast take S.R. 80 east to U.S. 27.
 From West Palm Beach take S.R. 98 west.
 From Orlando take I-4 to U.S. 27 south.
 From Miami take U.S. 27 north.

FOR ACCOMMODATIONS, DINING AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION VISIT:
www.bellegladechamber.com
www.citylabelle.com
www.clewiston.org
www.clewiston-fl.gov
www.clewistonmuseum.org
www.labellechamber.com
www.lakeokeechobeeoutpost.com
www.myglades.com
www.pahokee.com
www.palmbeachfl.com
www.seminoletribe.com
www.southbaycity.com
www.torryisland.com
www.visitglades.com
www.visithendrycounty.com

This brochure has been funded by the Collins Center for Public Policy; visit collinscenter.org.

LakeOBigWater.com



SOUTHERN SHORES OF
Lake Okeechobee
 GATEWAY TO THE EVERGLADES

Your guide to the southern shores of Lake O

LakeOBigWater.com



Welcome

The southern shores of Lake Okeechobee encompasses the counties of Hendry, Glades and Palm Beach counties. These areas are united in history as part of the great era of agriculture, citrus, cattle and sugar cane environmentally, and united by their proximity to the shores of the second largest natural freshwater lake in the nation and the Everglades.

HENDRY
 Established May 11, 1923, as Florida's 63rd county, Hendry County offers something for everyone: nature and wildlife, culture and history, sporting and fishing, and heaps of old-time charm. Named after Capt. Francis A. Hendry, one of its first settlers, Hendry's major cities are Clewiston and LaBelle.

GLADES
 Named after the Florida Everglades, Glades County was established in 1921. Water is one of Glades' big draws, since it borders the western side of Lake Okeechobee and hosts the Caloosahatchee River, the main outlet to the Gulf of Mexico. There is an abundance of natural resources and outdoor activities here, including boating, fishing, wildlife, golf, walking and bicycling. The major city and county seat is Moore Haven. Also, in Northeast Glades County is the Brighton Seminole Indian Reservation.

Front cover top to bottom: flock of birds, bass, small kite, canoeing on Fisheating Creek.

Outside panels of brochure

Distributed through Visit Florida

Nature & Environment

Fresh water, unspoiled environment, abundant wildlife: Many of the compelling reasons to visit the area south of Lake Okeechobee fall into these categories. "Lake O" is the second largest freshwater lake in the U.S. – it is 33 miles long by 30 miles wide – and there is much to do along its shores. But that is not all. Places like the Caloosahatchee River, Torry Island, and the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation offer a world of adventure, fun and scenic pleasures.

AIRBOAT RIDES Big "O" Guide Service H

A Scenic Eco-Tour on Lake Okeechobee. See alligators, manatees, pelicans, birds and more.
Roland & Mary Ann Martin's Manana & Resort
520 E. Del Monte Ave., Clewiston
800-741-3141 • www.bigofishing.com

Billie Swamp Safari BC

Take a swamp buggy or airboat Everglades Eco-Tour at Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation, featuring 2,200 untamed acres.
30000 Gator Trail Trail, Clewiston
800-GO-SAFARI • www.seminoletribe.com/safari

Eagle Nest Airboat Tours PB

Two-hour guided tours of Lake Okeechobee, an interesting and entertaining trip exploring the plants, birds, and animals that live in and around the lake.
3300 West Lake Road, Belle Glade • 561-261-3655

BIRDING Audubon Society of the Everglades PB

Enjoy field trips, activities and more.
6301 Summit Blvd., West Palm Beach
561-588-6908 • www.auduboneverglades.org



Exhilarating airboat ride over the water, alligator



Left: Hiking the LOST trail. Below, a brilliantly colored kingfisher.

Everglades Agricultural Areas PB

Agricultural fields and Lake Okeechobee shallows in and around Belle Glade host wading birds and migrating shorebirds.
561-686-8800 • www.sfwmd.gov/sta

STA 1E PB

This vast wetland site offers a public access point for hiking, bank fishing, bicycling, bird-watching and nature photography.
Access from S.R. 801 U.S. 441, open sunrise to sunset. Fri - Mon
800-432-3045 • www.sfwmd.gov/recreation

STA 1W PB

Bird-watchers may spot great blue herons, ducks, roseate spoonbills, white pelicans and wood storks from a three-mile levee trail and gazebos overlooking the wetlands. Other activities include hiking, cycling and photography.
Access from C.R. 880, open sunrise to sunset Fri - Mon
800-212-3045 • www.sfwmd.gov/recreation

STA 5 Bird-Watching Tours H

In partnership with Hendry-Glades Audubon, the South Florida Water Management District offers escorted birding tours, as the South Florida Birding Trail. STA 5 is ranked one of the best bird watching areas in the country.
LaBelle • 863-674-0655 • www.hendrygladesaudubon.org

BY FOOT, BIKE OR HOOF Clewiston Walking/Biking Tour H

Four self-guided trails all start from the Clewiston Inn and meander through the residential areas of Clewiston.
108 Royal Palm Ave., Clewiston • 863-983-7979

Dinner Island Ranch WMA H

Large acreage and mix of wetlands and uplands create outstanding wildlife viewing. Part of the Great Florida Birding Trail offers fishing, hiking, cycling, camping, hunting, horseback riding and scenic driving.
20 miles southwest of Clewiston off C.R. 833
<http://myfw.com/recreation/WMASites/DinnerIslandRanch/index.htm>

Fisheating Creek Outpost G

Offers camping, paddling, hiking and eco-adventures along one of the most pristine creeks in Florida.
7535 U.S. Hwy. 27 N., Palmdale
863-679-3099
www.fisheatingcreekoutpost.com

BC: Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation
H: Hendry County
G: Glades County
PB: Palm Beach County
♿: Handicapped Accessible

Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail (LOST) G, H, PB

Get LOST along 110 miles of hiking trail that encircles "Lake O" – the second largest freshwater lake in the contiguous United States. Designated as part of the Florida National Scenic Trail In 1995, more than half of the trail is paved, and the remainder consists of a two-track gravel roadway on top of the 35-foot-high Herbert Hoover Dike. There are numerous locations for access by hikers and bikers, as well as equestrians.
863-983-6800 • www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/state/lokestrail

Okealoocoochee Slough State Forest H

Encompassing nearly 35,000 acres mostly in Hendry County, the slough extends northward to the Caloosahatchee River and southward about 50 miles into Big Cypress Swamp. There are 39 miles of trails open for wildlife viewing, hiking, non-motorized biking, and horseback riding. It is also designated as part of the Great Florida Birding Trail and hosts the annual Big "O" Birding Festival in March.
Accessed along C.R. 832, marked by self-service pay stations
863-612-0776 • www.fl-dof.com/state_forests/okaloocoochee.html

Spirit of the Wild WMA H

This is an excellent area to view wildlife year-round. This area is part of the Great Florida Birding Trail and offers fishing, hiking, biking, horseback riding and scenic driving.
12 miles south of LaBelle, on C.R. 832 • 850-488-4076
<http://myfw.com/recreation/WMASites/SpiritoftheWild/index.htm>

Torry Island PB

This getaway spot offers boating, fishing, bird watching, nature trails, camping and more — located on the southeast shore of Lake Okeechobee.
Southeast S.R. 717, Belle Glade
561-996-6122 • www.torryisland.com

DRIVING TOUR Big Water Heritage Trail G, H, PB

Officially opened in May 2003, Big Water Heritage Trail is a regional driving tour on state, county and city streets that links historical, cultural, natural, recreational and educational points of interest in five Florida counties including Hendry, Glades and Palm Beach.
Clewiston Chamber of Commerce
863-983-7676 • <http://tinyurl.com/23bqphm>

HUNTING Chappy's Outfitters G

A complete outfitters for boat fishing on Lake Okeechobee, or wild boar, whitetail deer or Osceola turkey hunting with the method of your choice: stand, swamp buggy or dog hunt.
11698 E. S.R. 78, Moore Haven
800-358-5541 • www.okeechobee-hunting-fishing.com

Silver Lake Preserve H

This pristine 1,876 acre tract offers a customized hunting program with some of the best year-round native wildlife (alligators, quail, wild hog and Osceola turkey) opportunities in south Florida. The Silver Lake Lodge, built in the early 1900s, can accommodate ten guests and offers satellite TV and Internet access, private bedrooms with bath and a bonfire for socializing.
2980 Silver Lake Road N.W., LaBelle
863-441-1364 • www.silverlakepreserve.com

STARGAZING Stargazing G, H, PB

Starry, starry nights. You don't need a telescope to stargaze around Lake O, just good weather. Walk out on the dike and you'll see thousand of stars.

Festivals & Events

FEBRUARY Hendry County Fair and Livestock Show, Clewiston

Celebrating agriculture, plus livestock, exhibits, pageants, shows and more. 863-983-3282
www.hendrycounty.com

Swamp Cabbage Festival, LaBelle

Parade, rodeo, food, arts & crafts, Miss Swamp Cabbage Festival, armadillo races and fun for all ages.
www.swampcabbagefestival.org

MARCH Chalo Nitka Festival and Rodeo, Moore Haven

Chalo Nitka (which means "The Day of the Big Bass") is held the first weekend in March.
www.chalonitkafestivalandrodeo.com

Afro Arts Festival, Belle Glade

Held every March, the Festival offers food, crafts, arts, and music from the many cultures that make up the "Glades Region."
www.bellegladechamber.com

APRIL The Clewiston Sugar Festival

Country music, arts & crafts, farming, beauty pageant, dessert contest and more. Held the second and third weekends in April.
www.clewiston.org



APRIL Big "O" Birding Festival, Clewiston

Held the last weekend of March or the first of April in Clewiston.
www.bigobirdingfestival.com

Black Gold Jubilee Festival, Belle Glade

The end of the harvest festival, held every April, shows off Belle Glade's agricultural roots and organic "black gold" soil. Food, entertainment, fireworks, and more.
www.painbeachill.com

MAY Brown Sugar Festival

Held in Harlem, just southwest of Clewiston, featuring arts & crafts, music, games, exhibits and food.
863-902-3372

OCTOBER Kids Fall Festival, Clewiston

Featuring games, food and a pumpkin carving contest.
863-983-1492 • 863-983-7979

NOVEMBER Grassy Waters Festival

Falooke means "Grassy Waters" and every November the Festival celebrates the city's rich history.
www.evergladesplan.org

Big O Hike

Celebrated Thanksgiving week every year, the Big O hike challenges hikers to walk around all of Lake Okeechobee.
<http://fox.floridatrail.org/big0>

DECEMBER Christmas on the Caloosahatchee, Moore Haven

Come enjoy the lights at City Park and their reflection on the water. Arts and crafts, music, Santa and more.
www.visitglades.com

Alligator wrestling at the Chalo Nitka festival.

Inside panels of brochure

Culture & Landmarks, Fishing & Sporting

Inside of brochure

Culture & Landmarks

The area that encompasses the western Lake shore contains of historic, scenic and other South Florida locations, history and educational landmarks.

As-Tell-Florida Museum **BC**
The old brick building is a landmark of the historic downtown area. It was built in 1908 and is now a museum. [www.as-tell.com](#)

Belle-Seigneurie House **BC**
Built in 1848, this historic home is a fine example of the architecture of the time. [www.belle-seigneurie.com](#)

Capitol History Museum **BC**
The Florida State Capitol building is a landmark of the state. [www.floridastateline.com](#)

Clowden Museum **BC**
The Clowden family home is a landmark of the area. [www.clowdenmuseum.com](#)

Dolly Lund Cultural Arts Center **BC**
The Dolly Lund Cultural Arts Center is a landmark of the area. [www.dollylund.com](#)

Joe Linder **BC**
The Joe Linder home is a landmark of the area. [www.joelinder.com](#)

Port Bernard Bridge **BC**
The Port Bernard Bridge is a landmark of the area. [www.portbernard.com](#)

Sebastian **BC**
The Sebastian area is a landmark of the area. [www.sebastian.com](#)

Lawrence E. Will Museum **BC**
The Lawrence E. Will Museum is a landmark of the area. [www.lawrencewill.com](#)

LaBelle Heritage Museum **BC**
The LaBelle Heritage Museum is a landmark of the area. [www.labelle.com](#)

Ortona Indian Mound Park **BC**
The Ortona Indian Mound Park is a landmark of the area. [www.ortonapark.com](#)

Sugarland Trave **BC**
The Sugarland Trave is a landmark of the area. [www.sugarland.com](#)

The Lost Cypress **BC**
The Lost Cypress is a landmark of the area. [www.lostcypress.com](#)

Fishing & Sporting

Don't forget to get up before the sun is up for the day. Lake Okeechobee has fishing in conventional season. Go for it! Lake Okeechobee has fishing in conventional season. Go for it! Lake Okeechobee has fishing in conventional season. Go for it!

BOATINGS & FISH CAMPS
Andy Singer Marina **BC**
Andy Singer Marina is a landmark of the area. [www.andy-singer.com](#)

Lake Okeechobee Outpost **BC**
Lake Okeechobee Outpost is a landmark of the area. [www.lakeokeechobee.com](#)

Miami Tavern City Dock **BC**
Miami Tavern City Dock is a landmark of the area. [www.miamitavern.com](#)

Shoalwater Marina **BC**
Shoalwater Marina is a landmark of the area. [www.shoalwater.com](#)

Seaside Marina Center **BC**
Seaside Marina Center is a landmark of the area. [www.seaside.com](#)

Seaside at Mary Ann Martin's Marina & Resort **BC**
Seaside at Mary Ann Martin's Marina & Resort is a landmark of the area. [www.seaside.com](#)

Slime Fish Camp **BC**
Slime Fish Camp is a landmark of the area. [www.slimefish.com](#)

The Okeechobee RV Resort & Marina **BC**
The Okeechobee RV Resort & Marina is a landmark of the area. [www.okeechobee.com](#)

Tony's Boat Camp **BC**
Tony's Boat Camp is a landmark of the area. [www.tonys.com](#)

Yacht Club **BC**
The Yacht Club is a landmark of the area. [www.yachtclub.com](#)

GOLF

Sugar Cane Golf Club **BC**
The Sugar Cane Golf Club is a landmark of the area. [www.sugarcane.com](#)

MOORESPORTS

Seaside County Motorsports Park **BC**
Seaside County Motorsports Park is a landmark of the area. [www.seaside.com](#)

SEASIDE

Seaside Yacht Services Park **BC**
Seaside Yacht Services Park is a landmark of the area. [www.seaside.com](#)

RODPO

Ford Smith Rods Area **BC**
Ford Smith Rods Area is a landmark of the area. [www.fordsmith.com](#)

Glade County Youth Livestock Area **BC**
Glade County Youth Livestock Area is a landmark of the area. [www.glade.com](#)

SEASIDE COUNTY FAIR & LIVESTOCK SHOW AREA

Seaside County Fair & Livestock Show Area **BC**
Seaside County Fair & Livestock Show Area is a landmark of the area. [www.seaside.com](#)

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Telling the story: Web

Site under construction:
www.LakeOBigWater.com

SOUTHERN SHORES OF
Lake Okeechobee
GATEWAY TO THE EVERGLADES

Search...

HOME DINING LANDMARKS NATURE NEWS PLACES TO STAY SPORTING VISITOR CENTER EVENTS

CONTACT

NEWS

LORI plays role in landing Okeechobee retail complex

Outdoor World Village is coming to Lake Okeechobee. The Florida Rural Area Construction Cooperative (FRACC), an organization supported in part by the Golis Center's Lake Okeechobee Regional Initiative (LORI), announced this project would be in Okeechobee County, on the north end of the massive lake. The development will have 625,000 square feet of retail space, lodging and outdoor recreation. Its construction is expected to generate as many as 2,000 jobs. Outdoor World Village is part of LORI's "Double Deeds" – positive actions, large and small, to bring economic and social opportunities to the lake's southern region. Learn more about LORI's role here, and read a news account here.

Fisheating Creek Outpost

7555 NW US Highway 27
Moore Haven, FL 33471
(863) 675-6999
www.fisheatingcreekoutpost.com/

Offers camping, paddling, hiking and eco-adventures along one of the most pristine creeks in Florida.

DIRECTIONS TO LAKE OKEECHOBEE

From Ft. Myers and the West Coast, take SR 80 east to US 27.
From West Palm Beach, take SR 98 west.
From Orlando, take I-4 to US 27 south.
From Miami, take US 27 north.

CONNECT WITH US

AccuWeather.com
Clewiston, FL
Hourly Info | 15 Days | Videos
89°F Partly sunny
RealFeel®: 105°F
Winds: E at 7 mph

Your Extended Forecast

Today	Tomorrow
81°F-74°F Mainly clear, a storm late	81°F-74°F A thunderstorm in the evening
Wednesday	Thursday
83°F-77°F Partly cloudy, breezy and warm	80°F-76°F Clear

Radar | Features

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Questions?
Thank you

Phil Bacon

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