



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

***Everglades and  
Dry Tortugas  
National Parks***

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## Everglades News Release

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

### ***For Immediate Release***

Date: December 11, 2013

General Park Information: 305-242-7700

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## **Chekika Day Use Area Closed Indefinitely**

HOMESTEAD, Florida – Due to current budget realities, Everglades National Park will not be reopening the Chekika Day Use Area as previously announced, and it will remain closed indefinitely. This popular part of Everglades National Park is located in the northeast part of the park, off Krome Avenue at the west end of SW 168th Street in Miami. Chekika was previously only open seasonally (December 1 to April 30, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) due to a tendency to flood during the wet season. Though park facilities are closed, 237<sup>th</sup> Avenue and SW 168<sup>th</sup> Street in the park will remain open for visitor use (bird watching and wildlife viewing).

According to Everglades National Park Superintendent Dan Kimball, "We wish we did not have to close the Chekika Day Use Area, and we know a lot of people will be disappointed, but we had to make some difficult decisions regarding park operations. The realities of the current budget situation do not allow us to operate as we have in the past. We do not have sufficient funding to operate and maintain all of our buildings, grounds, and facilities, and Chekika was selected for closure based on highest resource priorities and service to the most visitors. We hope the situation changes and we will be able to return Chekika to its former operating schedule. The rest of the East Everglades section of Everglades National Park remains open for visitation. It is a wonderful area to fish, walk, bike and view wildlife. Rangers will continue to patrol the area and be available for visitor questions."

Chekika offered a quiet day of relaxation in the Everglades, with picnicking opportunities and a short hiking trail through the hammock. It was also a good staging location for bicycle rides along the paved roads and canal banks in the East Everglades section of the park. There were no concessions, though bathrooms were available. Barbecues were provided and chickee huts were available on a first come, first served basis.

Chekika was added to Everglades National Park in 1991, as part of the Everglades Expansion Act of 1989. Prior to that, before becoming Chekika State Recreation Area in 1970, the area was a private resort called Grossman Hammock Mineral Springs, famed for a bubbling mineral spring that some believed had healing powers.

**WHAT:** Everglades National Park's Chekika Day Use Area Closed Indefinitely

**WHEN:** Chekika will not reopen as previously announced

**WHERE:** Chekika Day Use Area, 24200 SW 168th Street. Miami, FL 33187

This and other park releases are available at [www.nps.gov/ever/parknews/newsreleases](http://www.nps.gov/ever/parknews/newsreleases).

More information on Everglades National Park can be found on the park website at <http://www.nps.gov/ever>

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Everglades National Park - America's Everglades - was designated as a *World Heritage Site* in 1979, an *International Biosphere Reserve* in 1976, a *Wetland of International Importance* in 1987, & a *Specially Protected Area under the Cartagena Convention* in 2012.

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*About the National Park Service: More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 401 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities.*

*Learn more at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).*