



Park Employee for a Day Geocache #5



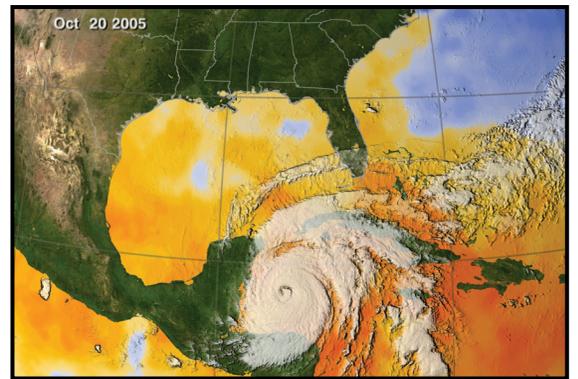
Who You Are

As the Superintendent of Everglades National Park, your uniform actually involves wearing many hats. You oversee all aspects of park operations—including facilities, law enforcement, visitor services, administration, and park planning. Though you work alongside a team of park professionals, YOU are ultimately responsible for resolving complex, difficult issues—like this last one set in the coastal visitor area of Flamingo...

The Issue

You find yourself standing atop the ruins of the old Flamingo Lodge. Prior to 2005, the lodge afforded weary travellers both traditional rooms and small, rustic cabins. Over decades, the lodge found favor with throngs of repeat winter visitors, as well as local, year-round anglers.

In 2005, Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma both passed in close proximity to Flamingo in a span of only two months. Storm surge was significant, and damage to area facilities was extensive. Not long after the water receded, it became evident that the Flamingo Lodge was a total loss.



Hurricane Wilma was one of two storms to devastate Flamingo in 2005. Image courtesy of NASA

The Hard Decision

Many park visitors would like to see overnight lodging return to Flamingo. But rebuilding in this area requires some additional thought.

The waters of Florida Bay before you are on the rise. Over the past century, instrument records reveal that sea level has risen over 10 inches. And over the coming century, an additional rise of between 8 to 24 inches is likely.

As ocean temperatures continue to warm and coastal waters continue to rise, the potential for damage from storm surge also increases. As Superintendent, YOU must decide whether to invest significant taxpayer dollars in a storm-prone area on the edge of a rising sea. Are there other strategies that could balance the wants of visitors with the realities of climate change in mind? Think carefully! Whatever action you take at Flamingo is likely to set a precedent for other coastal parks across the nation.



Rising sea level means a potential for storm surge far greater than that observed during Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma. NPS Photos

When you log your find, be sure to tell us:

How would YOU solve the management dilemma at Flamingo?



And then, if you're curious... here's how the park is currently addressing this issue!