



Gatorland Establishes Gatorland Global Conservation Program To Protect, Conserve and Educate

ORLANDO, Florida – Gatorland, “The Alligator Capital of the World™,” has been the leader in alligator safety, education and research since 1949. In 2017, the park established its conservation arm, **Gatorland Global**, to protect and preserve alligators in Florida and alligators and crocodiles across the world.

With a mission *To Protect, Conserve and Educate*, Gatorland Global projects are working successfully to protect and conserve wild populations of American alligators, American crocodiles, Cuban crocodiles and even Australian Saltwater and Freshwater crocodiles, while educating hundreds of thousands of people on these amazing animals through Gatorland’s social media platforms. Specific programs are designed to protect alligators and crocodiles in Florida, while providing dedicated resources to support conservation research of critically endangered crocodiles across the globe. The final leg of the mission is to educate people on the importance of alligators and crocodiles to various ecosystems, to respect their power and beauty, and how to safely live with them in Florida and in communities around the world.

As the human population continues to grow in Florida, contact with large alligators is becoming more frequent. The state of Florida, through the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, permits nuisance trappers to catch and remove large alligators from areas where they are coming into close proximity of human activities. The trappers make their living by euthanizing the alligators they catch and selling their meat and hides.

“Gatorland Global is working with local trappers in the Central Florida area, and offering to pay the trappers to catch the alligators alive and bring them to Gatorland. These giant alligators are then allowed to live out the remainder of their lives in one of Gatorland’s two huge lakes,” explained Mark McHugh, President and CEO of Gatorland. “There are over two dozen big alligators swimming in our lakes that Gatorland has saved.”

According to McHugh, Gatorland Global is also working with researchers in South Florida and Jamaica to study the movement patterns of the American Crocodiles. The American Crocodile is classified as a threatened species in its native habitats, which include South Florida and Jamaica. An exciting project that is still in the development stages that Gatorland Global is sponsoring is to attach GPS tracking devices to an adult male and female crocodile.

These tracking devices will enable researchers, and the public, to track the movements of these crocodiles on a website app. Very little is known about the range and movements of adult crocodiles, and this groundbreaking research is the first step to understanding these shy creatures.

“Gatorland Global has also established a strong relationship with a team of researchers studying the critically endangered Cuban Crocodile in their dwindling habitat called Zapata Swamp in south Cuba,” added McHugh. We are working with the Criadero de Cocodrilos breeding facility. Here, Gatorland Global is assisting and helping fund their work to breed Cuban Crocodiles and release them back into the swamp to help re-establish the population. Gatorland Global sends several of our crocodile specialists to the breeding facility several times a year to assist and deliver supplies. We are fortunate to have nine of these incredible crocodiles at Gatorland.

Gatorland is a 110-acre theme park combining Old Florida charm with exciting experiences, exhibits, and entertainment. Originally opened as a roadside attraction in 1949, the park celebrated its 70th Anniversary in 2019. Today, it provides affordably-priced family fun featuring thousands of alligators and crocodiles, breeding marsh with observation tower, free-flight aviary, nature walk, petting zoo, educational wildlife programs, award-winning gift shop, Florida's best train ride, Gator Gully Splash Park, on-site restaurant and one-of-a-kind shows including Gator Jumparoo, Alligators-Legends of the Swamp, and Up-close Encounters. Popular adventure experiences inside the park include the Screamin' Gator Zipline and Stompin' Gator Off-Road Adventure.

For more Gatorland information, visit us online at www.gatorland.com, or call 800-393-JAWS.

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