

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Caption

### **‘Ding’ Darling to air free preview of PBS’ *The Swamp* Everglades film**

In partnership with WGCU Public Television, the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge will host a free Jan. 7 sneak preview airing of *The Swamp*, a new national PBS documentary. It will debut as AMERICAN EXPERIENCE programming starting Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2019 on WGCU. The “Ding” Darling showing starts at 5 p.m. in the Visitor & Education Center Auditorium at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island.

Based in part on the book *The Swamp: The Everglades, Florida, and the Politics of Paradise* by Michael Grunwald, the documentary tells the dramatic story of humanity’s attempts to conquer the Florida Everglades, one of nature’s most mysterious and unique ecosystems.

Explored through the lives of colorful and resolute characters -- from hucksters to politicians to unlikely activists -- *The Swamp* chronicles the repeated efforts to transform what was once identified as a vast and useless wasteland into an agricultural and urban paradise, ultimately leading to a passionate campaign to preserve America’s greatest wetland.

As Florida copes today with the disastrous aftermath of man’s abuse of the Everglades, *The Swamp* is a timely documentary of the perils of changing the course of nature for profit.

“*The Swamp* tells an epic tale of man’s never-ending attempt to control nature,” says AMERICAN EXPERIENCE executive producer Mark Samels. “The story of the repeated efforts to tame the Everglades -- and the often deadly results of those attempts -- is a particularly cautionary tale in these days of increasingly violent natural disasters.”

Following a 30-minute preview of the two-hour documentary, attendees will have the opportunity to hear comments from senior “Ding” Darling biologist Jeremy Conrad and Dr. Serge Thomas, Aquatic Ecologist

and Associate Professor of Environmental Studies at Florida Gulf Coast University, moderated by WGCU Public Media's news director Julie Glenn.

“We are happy to partner with WGCU on a project that reinforces the importance of preservation and water quality in our part of Florida,” said DDWS executive director Birgie Miller. “Part of our mission is to support the conservation efforts at the Refuge including land acquisition on Sanibel Island, which will benefit overall water quality by stemming more development.”

The Refuge Nature Store will also remain open for the after-hours event. Profits from the store support wildlife, education, and research at the refuge. Noshes and beverages will be available by donation. Seating for the free showing is limited to 100 people on a first-come, first-seated basis.

For more information, call 239-472-1100 ext. 4.

#### ABOUT DDWS

As a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, DDWS works to support J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge’s mission of conservation, wildlife and habitat protection, research, and public education through charitable donations and Refuge Nature Shop profits.

To support DDWS and the refuge with a tax-deductible gift, visit [dingdarlingsociety.org](http://dingdarlingsociety.org) or contact Birgie Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4 or [director@dingdarlingsociety.org](mailto:director@dingdarlingsociety.org).

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