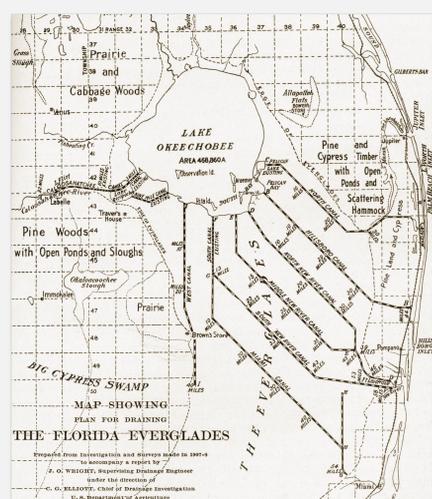


THE STATE STEPS IN



1900-1912

Massive drainage efforts by wealthy entrepreneurs come to an end as the 20th century begins. The government is now conducting water management efforts to balance commercial development with the general welfare. Florida's population is about 530,000 as farming and development expand. Native Americans now make up less than one-tenth of Florida's overall population. U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909), a rugged outdoor enthusiast, leads the way for conservation to sweep the nation.



1908 plan for draining the Florida Everglades

1901

The Audubon Society is formed.

The demand for flamboyant women's hats is driving plumed birds in the Everglades to extinction. Attempting to curb the plumage trade, the Audubon Society hires game wardens to protect the avian population; two wardens are murdered in the line of duty.



Fashionable hats of the day almost drive the birds of the Everglades to extinction



Postcard of houseboat on the Miami River, circa 1904

1902

The Federal Rivers and Harbors Act improves navigation.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers surveys the Kissimmee-Okeechobee-Caloosahatchee water system and recommends navigational improvements. Congress authorizes a federal navigation project to create and maintain a 109-mile channel on the Kissimmee River — three feet deep by 30 feet wide — from the town of Kissimmee to Fort Basinger.



A group of gentlemen visit the Everglades, circa 1902

1904

Napoleon Bonaparte Broward is elected governor.

His campaign platform is that the people should reclaim their state from special interests. Once elected, he promises to create an "Empire of the Everglades" by wringing every last drop of water out of the "pestilence-ridden swamp."



Former Governor William Sherman Jennings and Governor Napoleon Bonaparte Broward on Everglades drainage project tour, circa 1906



Postcard of Flagler's Hotel Royal Palm in Miami, circa 1901

1905

The Everglades Drainage District is created by the state.

The legislature authorizes a \$250,000 tax-supported plan to create a 7,150-square-mile Everglades Drainage District with authority to levy taxes to finance construction of drainage works. Construction of the Miami, North New River and South New River canals begins. Approximately 225 miles of canals are dug over the next seven years. Partial drainage of the Everglades attracts farm settlement, and soon farmers are shipping tomatoes, beans and other crops north by steamboat.



The Everglades Drainage District touts the sale of drained land for farming

1912

Henry Flagler completes his railroad to Key West.

Almost immediately, tourists begin to move into southern Florida and settle in growing towns like West Palm Beach and Miami, where Flagler has built hotels. There are setbacks along the way. A 1906 hurricane sweeps the Keys and batters Miami. Hundreds of East Coast Railway workers lose their lives.

1901

1902

1904

1905

1912