

WHAT IS GREEN? FLORIDA REVISITED

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Florida is the 4th largest US state. While a part of the US, Florida has many unique aspects. This paper will discuss the regional aspects of sustainability in Florida. How do recent economic changes, political changes, and population changes impact Florida's sustainability long term? Will challenges of hurricanes, housing (affordability, foreclosures), Space Shuttle termination, materially change Florida's outlook? Population growth has been integral to Florida's culture since WW2. However, for the first time 4/08 to 4/09 Florida actually had a decline in population. Will population growth return? Will plans for "smart growth" materialize or fade away in the face of higher (than the US average) unemployment and foreclosure rates? Indeed, how does the recent global recession change the view of Florida's citizens about changes necessary to enhance/achieve sustainability?

Keywords: sustainability, culture, Florida, challenges

Introduction

This paper is in the context of discussions of regional sustainability, in particular, challenges to sustainability.

Among the most widely used definitions of sustainability is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED 1987, p. 24, no. 27). Sustainability is grounded in science and deals with resources, technology and business but it is also grounded in consciousness and deals with morality, aesthetics and religion. Its tripartite-values – Environment, Equity, Economics – are a continuous circle, one of continuous feedback (Marx, 2009).

Culture is "the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions and other products of human work and thought considered with respect to a particular subject or group". The cultural dimensions of sustainable development include cultural heritage and historic patterns of activities. Sustainable development includes sustainable technologies, sustainable economics and sustainable government. Clearly, culture is the context. Culture determines what we value. Yet what we value is itself in constant change (Marx, 2009).

In this discussion of challenges to sustainability, I want to again use Florida as an example (Nelson, 2011). Florida is larger than all but 10 European countries in population and all but 14 in land area. It is only a bit smaller than Romania in population and land area. Florida has its own uniqueness in environment, economics, politics and culture.

The 5th International Sustainability Forum in Budapest focused on forecasting and on the importance of an adequate range of forecast scenarios (Banse, Grunwald, Hronszky, & Nelson, 2011, p. 279). Thus it is reasonable to begin by describing Florida and to try to put it into perspective.

Growth of Florida

The State of Florida is the fourth largest state of the United States in population (2010), with 18.8 million residents, behind California (37.3 million), Texas (25.1 million), and New York (19.4 million) (*Florida Quick Facts*, n.d.). The population growth of Florida 1950-2005 is nearly a factor of seven. Projected growth from 2000 to 2010, official census years, was 25% (actual 17.6%). The population projection for 2060 is 36 million. The Florida economy (GDP) is \$729 billion (2005) (\$673 billion, 2010) and is expected to grow to \$3.7 trillion in 2036 ("Florida & Metro Forecast," 2007). As a result of this growth Florida has elaborate planning processes, both official and unofficial. Each county, the next smaller governmental division to a state, has a "Comprehensive Plan." Actions by county government must be consistent with its comprehensive plan. Growth in population impacts multiple areas of life: transportation, schools, housing, shopping, jobs, recreation, to name but six. Public processes must anticipate needs and plan for necessary future infrastructure. *Florida has had a culture of growth.*

The population of Florida is diverse and different from the U.S. as a whole (see Table 1) (*Florida Quick Facts*, n.d.). It is older, has a higher black population, a higher foreign born population, a higher percentage of languages other than English spoken at home, yet a lower Asian population and lower median household income.

Table 1
Florida 2010

Population	18,801,301	
	FL	U. S.
Under 18	21.3%	(24.0)
65 and Over	17.3%	(13.0)
White Persons	75.0%	(72.4)
Black Persons	16.0%	(12.6)
Asian Persons	2.4%	(4.8)
Native American	0.5%	(1.1)
Mixed (2 or more)	2.5%	(2.9)
Foreign Born	19.2%	(12.7)
Language ≠ English	26.67%	(20.1)
B. S. Degree	25.7%	(27.9)
Home Ownership	69.7%	(66.6)
Persons/Household	2.53	(2.59)
Median Household Income	\$47,661	(\$51,914)
Persons Below Poverty	13.8%	(13.8)

Note. Florida Quick Facts Retrieved from <http://quickfacts.census.gov>

GDP by industry (Figure 1) (Glassman, 2012) shows a higher participation by real estate and construction industries and a lower participation by manufacturing and mining versus the U.S. as a whole.

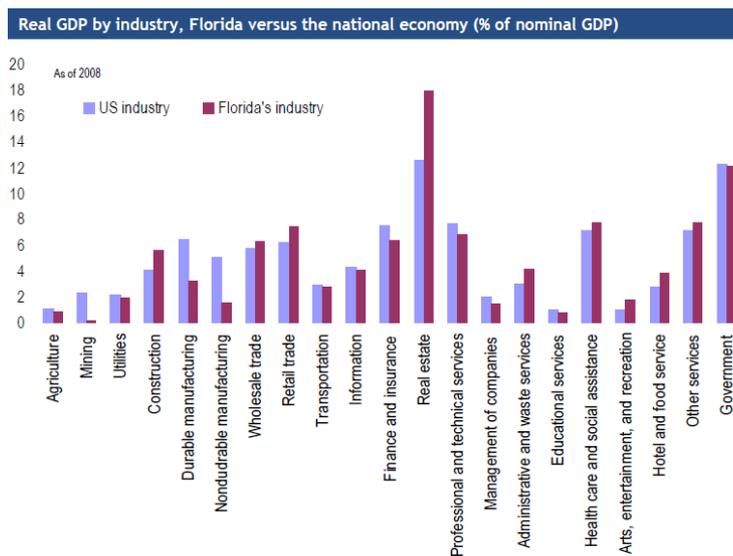


Figure 1. Florida's Economy adapted from Glassman (2012).

Note: Real GDP by industry, Florida versus the national economy (% of nominal GDP) as of 2008.

State growth of over 20% in ten years is not the norm in the United States or in Europe. Hungary, our partner in this Forum, has a population of 10 million in an area of 35919 sq. mi. (93030 sq. km.) (versus 65758 sq. mi. (170313 sq. km.) for Florida). Thus Florida and Hungary have similar populations per unit area (107 people/sq. km.). However, the population of Hungary has declined. At the end of World War II the population of Hungary was 9.2 million. The population of Hungary peaked in 1981 at 10.7 million and is 10.0 million today, with a projected population of 9.0 million in 2050. By 2050 it is projected that the 65 and over population in Hungary will go from 16.9 to 30.3%, that the 0-19 population will decline from 20.4 to 16.8% and the working age population (20-65) will decline from 63.7 to 53.9% (*Hungarian Central Statistical Office*, n.d.). Today the 65 and over population in Hungary and Florida are similar (16.9% versus 17.3%).

Planned (Smart) Growth

As noted above, some projections have Florida's population reaching 36 million by 2060. Assuming current development patterns, roughly 7 million acres (2.8 million hectares) will be converted from rural to urban of Florida's 38.3 million acres (15.5 million hectares). This would include 2.7 million acres (1.1 million hectares) of existing agricultural lands and 2.7 million acres (1.1 million hectares) of native/wildlife habitat. Urban development would go from 6 million acres (2.4 million hectares) to 13 million acres (5.3 million hectares). Counties like my own, Brevard, would be built out before the end of that period. The I-75 and I-4 corridors (interstate highways) would be fully developed. Thus the pressure is for more sustainable development (FoF, 2006). There have been multiple study efforts. One such effort is MyRegion.org. The MyRegion.org effort spent \$1 million over 18 months in 2006-2007 to develop a shared 50 year vision for the seven counties (86 municipalities) of east central Florida. The work involved numerous public, private, and civic organizations, and some 20000 individuals through meetings and questionnaires. The author attended meetings and submitted a questionnaire.

Central Florida's population was 400,000 in 1950, 1.6 million in 1980, and 3.8 million in 2010. It is projected that Central Florida will grow to 5.1 million in 2030. The region's population is diverse, representing a broad mix of cultures, races, ethnicities, and ages. The region created one million new jobs between 1980 and 2005. The economy blends traditional strengths in agriculture, tourism, space, and defense with emerging industries related to aerospace, photonics, and life sciences. The income brought into the region has nearly tripled, from \$37 billion in 1980 to \$107 billion (in 2005 dollars) in 2005 (MyRegion, 2007b).

In its final report, "How Shall We Grow", August 2007, My Region.org elucidated six regional growth principles (MyRegion, 2007b):

1. Preserve open space, recreational areas, farmland, water resources, and regionally significant natural areas.
2. Provide a variety of transportation choices.
3. Foster distinct, attractive, and safe places to live.
4. Encourage a diverse, globally competitive economy.
5. Create a range of obtainable housing opportunities and choices.
6. Build communities with educational, health care, and cultural amenities.

The preferred alternative is a different approach to growth, in which the region preserves its most precious environmental and agricultural lands, focuses development in urban centers, and connects those centers with transportation corridors that provide more choices for how people travel, a more European lifestyle. Indeed, one would have a higher urban density with its associated services. Implementation requires some 86 municipalities and 7 counties to work together, to develop a regional “greenprint”, to develop regional transportation corridors, to unleash creativity of developers and others, and to measure progress, inspect and improve over the 45 year timeframe. The report “How Shall We Grow” was followed by a much more detailed “Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy”, September, 2007 (MyRegion, 2007a). But all of the above is predicated on a consistent pattern of growth, which provides the economic underpinning for development. Similar studies exist for other regions of Florida and for the state as a whole, with similar results (“Charting the Course,” 2006; Thorner, 2007). But how valid is the forecast for continued growth?

Issues Challenging Growth

There have been multiple challenges to growth: hurricanes in 2004, the housing bubble/foreclosure crisis and the resulting global recession, home affordability, traditional low wages in Florida, as well as the termination of the NASA Space Shuttle program in 2011.

In 2004 four hurricanes hit Florida (Charlie, Francis, Jeanne, Ivan) covering most of the state. Statewide damage totaled \$24 billion. In my county, Brevard County, alone, damage was \$1 billion. While damage is largely repaired, the four hurricanes of 2004 and Wilma in Florida and Katrina in Mississippi and Louisiana in 2005 raised hurricane awareness in other parts of the country. There are certainly Florida people who said that they did not wish to go through a hurricane experience again. For Francis and Jeanne I evacuated to St. Petersburg on the other side of the state. While I experienced little damage, on return the city was a “war zone” with National Guardsmen, with machine guns, in the streets directing traffic. One follow on result of the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons was that some major insurance companies dropped thousands of Florida

customers for homeowners insurance. Many homeowners had to scramble for alternatives or use the State as the insurer of last resort. In the absence of insurance mortgages become due. Even those who did not need to find a new carrier saw their coverage increase in cost two- or three-fold. Fear of hurricanes and cost of hurricanes is the first issue.

The second issue involves the subprime mortgage financial crisis after the collapse of the United States housing bubble. The origin of the subprime financial crisis was the sharp rise in foreclosures in the subprime mortgage market that began in the United States in 2006 and became a global financial crisis in July 2007. Rising interest rates increased the monthly payments on newly-popular adjustable rate mortgages. Many sub-prime mortgages were in fact “balloon” mortgages, whose payments were fixed for two years and then rise sharply to a higher variable rate (in some cases double). This coupled with property value declines (50% in some markets) as the US housing market bubble collapsed, left homeowners unable to meet their financial obligations and lenders without a means to recoup their losses, since the property was now worth less than the mortgage alone. This resulted in a credit crunch threatening the solvency of marginal private banks and other financial institutions. This led to declines in stock markets worldwide, several hedge funds becoming worthless, coordinated national bank interventions, contraction of retail profits, bankruptcy of several mortgage lenders and finally in September 2008 the global financial collapse.

Subprime lending is a general term that refers to the practice of making loans to borrowers who do not fully qualify for market interest rates because of problems with their credit history or the ability to prove that they have enough income to support the monthly payment on the loan for which they are applying. Down payments may be less. Subprime loans or mortgages are risky for both creditors and debtors because of the combination of high interest, bad credit history, and murky financial situations often associated with subprime applicants. Subprime debt was then repackaged into wider debt offerings called collateralized debt obligations, which were resold on the global market.¹ Since the mortgage was not to be held by the initial lender there was less scrutiny of the applicant, and simply more financial institution pressure to sign-up applicants for mortgages.

With the rapid rise in home values in Florida, as homes sold, they took on the new value for property tax purposes. However, Florida has a “Save Our Homes” constitutional amendment which limits increases of assessed valuations of existing “Homestead” property to 3% per year. Thus a substantial tax differential resulted between owner occupied existing homes and recently sold homes,

¹ Subprime Mortgage Financial Crisis Retrieved from
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subprime_mortgage_crisis.

perhaps sited next to each other. With rising property values, this doubling of property taxes plus the doubling to tripling in insurance premiums resulted in Florida homes no longer being affordable. Florida property which had been below the national average for some 15 years had by 2007 become 40% higher than the national average. Florida home affordability (price, mortgages, taxes, and insurance) is a second issue along with mortgage availability (Vittner, 2007).

In November 2011, of 50 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) in the United States with the highest FHA delinquent mortgages, the largest number (16) were in Florida ("FHA," 2012). New Jersey was next with 8, Ohio with 5, and Michigan with 4. The two MSA's with the highest delinquency (90 days or greater) were in Florida with delinquency rates of 21%. The median sales price for existing homes in Florida also dropped from over \$250,000 in the August 2005 to August 2007 period to \$139,000 currently (The Florida Legislature, 2012).

Housing is clearly related to other markets. In 2006 16 percent of new car purchases in Florida were made with home equity loans versus only 7% nationally. Families relied on cash from mortgage refinancing in an up market coupled with low interest rates to finance major purchases. In spring 2006 9 of 20 metropolitan areas that saw the sharpest home price appreciation in the US were in Florida. Now consumer confidence in Florida has dropped markedly, especially willingness to buy expensive items. The consumer confidence index was 77 in November 2007 versus 93 in 2006 (Ash, 2007; Cotterell, 2007; Goodnough, 2007). By April 2011, it had dropped to 68 ("Consumer Confidence," 2010) with a recovery to 73 in April 2012 (Clinton, 2012) and 77 in August 2012. In the 24 years of data prior to 2008, two-thirds of those years were above 90 and only two were below 80 (1991 and 1992 during a recession) ("Consumer Confidence," 2012).

Schools

For the fall of 2006 the Florida Department of Education (DOE) had forecast a 48,853 (51,000 average 1989-2004) increase in the school population (K-12). It turned out to be only 477. There are 2.64 million students in Florida schools. The 2006-2007 actual was the largest anomaly in DOE student projections in 20 years (Dukes, 2007; Florida Department of Education, 2011). Twenty-nine of 67 counties showed declines in enrollment, including 8 of the 10 largest school districts. The top ten school districts declined 19,000 students. Similar results occurred for the 2007-2008 school year; from Fall 2005 to Fall 2009 the top 10 school districts lost almost 40,000 students (Table 2). The top 5 school districts in Florida are 5 of the 15 largest school districts in the United States, with enrollments exceeding 175,000 each. In the period Fall 2009 to Fall 2011 those

10 districts recovered 27,000 students, but were still 13,000 below Fall 2005 levels.

Table 2

Annual Enrollment Change in Florida

Distinct	05 Fall	09 Fall	Δ 05 to 09	11 Fall	Δ 09 to 11
Miami-Dade (4 th Largest in US)	362,033	345,766	-16,267	350,227	+4,461
Broward	271,470	256,175	-15,295	258,454	+2,279
Hillsborough	193,669	193,239	-430	197,001	+3,762
Orange (12 th Largest in US)	175,307	173,021	-2,286	179,989	+6,968
Palm Beach	174,911	173,025	-1,886	176,901	+3,876
Duval	126,535	122,649	-3,886	125,464	+2,815
Pinellas	112,127	105,176	-6,951	103,705	-1,471
Polk	89,483	94,577	+5,094	96,034	+1,457
Brevard	75,160	72,402	-2,758	71,786	-616
Lee	75,579	80,470	+4,891	83,896	+3,426
			-39,774		+26,957

Note. Annual Enrollment Change for Florida's ten most Populous Districts; State Aid \$7,300. Data obtained from Dukes 2007; Florida Department of Education 2010, 2011.

Because of the lower than expected growth some school districts delayed or cancelled building projects. State aid (\$19 billion) is distributed to school districts on the basis of the number of students (FTE), about \$7000 per student (Chambliss, 2007; Rushing, 2007). Thus, for a school district to lose 1000 students means a loss in revenue of \$7 million. The result is loss of teachers and other staff. Education constitutes approximately 34% of the overall Florida state budget (\$70 billion). The piece of good news is that it is easier to find teachers to meet the state mandated class size limits. Overall Florida needs to fill 17,000-20,000 teacher positions each year. In Fall 2011 Florida employed 168,135 teachers plus 21,795 instructional personnel (guidance counselors, librarians, etc.) out of a total full time staff of 318,209 (Florida Department of Education, 2007, 2012). If one had been watching carefully, the 2005-2006 school year actually showed the lowest growth since the 1984-1985 school year (Florida Department of Education, 2006). School year 2005-2006 also showed the largest enrollment decline October to February in a decade (Florida Department of Education, 2006). Thus overall school enrollment stalled in Florida, meaning that population growth for the young family segment of the population had stalled.

Economy

Indeed estimates of population growth for Florida showed a 57,000 loss for April 1, 2008 – April 1, 2009. This was the first annual loss of population for Florida since WWII: Estimates for April 1, 2009 – April 1, 2010 showed a gain of 23,000 to 18,773,000 (actual 18,801,350), so the 2000-2010 decade growth was 17.6% not 25% as forecast as late as 2005 (Harrington, 2010).

Such discussion does not consider foreign immigrants. South Florida (Arthur, 2007) growth is largely due to foreign immigrants, some 400,000 between April 2000 and July 2006. While domestic migration was negative since mid-2005. It is said that one-quarter of Florida's population growth since 2000 is due to foreign immigrants.²

Loss of population growth also means loss of jobs. Between the fall of 2007 and the fall of 2009, Florida lost 800,000 jobs and unemployment rose from 4 to over 12% ("Consumer Confidence," 2010), remaining at 11% in 2011, and nearly 9% today.

Figures 2 and 3 show GDP change by quarter and employment growth by quarter. Florida had higher economic growth than the United States from 1990 to 2007. It suffered less from the 1991 and 2002 recessions than the U.S. as a whole. But Florida was in recession earlier and longer in the current recession cycle. Employment growth follows the same pattern. Unemployment had a higher peak than the United States as a whole at 12% (Glassman, 2012).

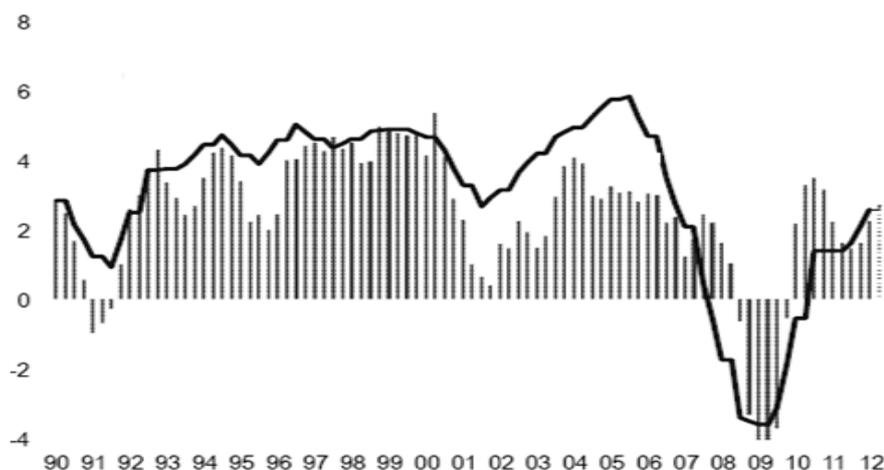


Figure 2. Economic Growth – Florida Versus U. S. (Florida – Solid Line)

Note. Real GDP (% change from four quarters earlier, thin lines or altered shading are forecasts). Data obtained from Glassman (2012).

² Immigrant impact: Florida Retrieved from <http://www.fairus.org>.

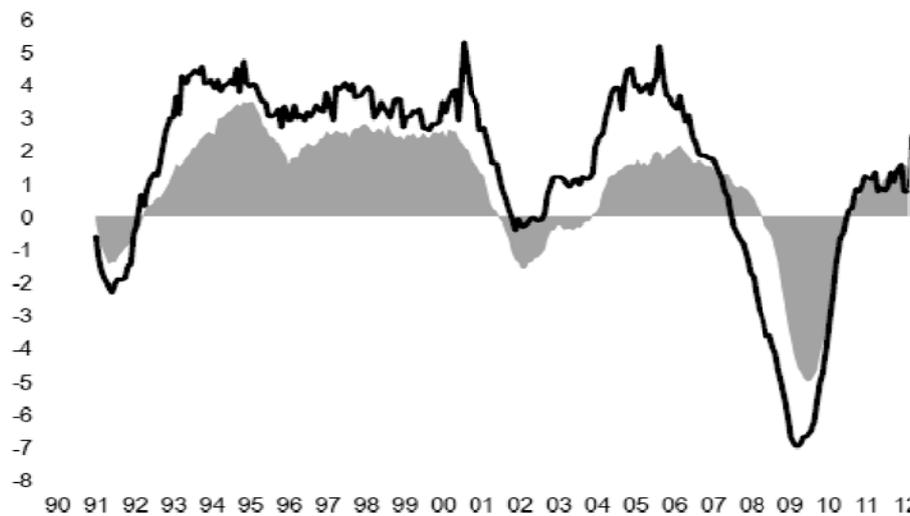


Figure 3. Employment Growth - Florida Versus U. S. (Florida – Solid Line). Data obtained from Glassman (2012).

Note. Employment (percent change from 12 months earlier). Updated through February 2012.

Culture of Growth?

For decades Florida had a pattern of extensive growth. It can be argued that that growth was based upon sunshine/beaches, low cost housing, low taxes, low living expenses, and ample jobs (low wage). Housing, taxes, insurance, living expenses are now higher than states such as Texas, Tennessee, and North Carolina. Salaries have not changed to reflect living expenses. The hurricanes served as a reminder of dangers and of quality of life issues. Little (no) polling is done to determine the attitudes of people in other parts of the US toward moving to Florida. Yet, the scenario of no growth is not on the planners list of options. Will sunshine and beaches be a sufficient magnet for growth in the absence of low costs and with low wages in the future? How long will the present situation last? Will growth of over 200,000 people per year begin in 2013 or 2014 as forecast by planners? Or is there a no growth scenario which in fact will last for years (Harrington, 2010). However, the US Census Bureau estimated that Florida grew by 256,000 residents from April 2010 to July 2011 (“Florida has 3rd Largest,” 2011).

South Florida is one of five metro areas losing residents in the 25-34-year-old demographic group along with New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago due to lack of career opportunities (Acosta, 2011). Current mobility of Americans has dropped sharply. Only 11.6% (35 million) of the population changed residence

from 2010 to 2011, the lowest since statistics began in 1945. In the mid -1980's more than 20% were moving each year. Reasons are the recession and the mortgage/housing situation discussed above. Seniors (55 and over) who fueled the move to the Sunbelt either can't sell their homes or can't afford to retire. The preferred retirement destination is now the Carolinas (North Carolina and South Carolina) (El Nasser & Overberg, 2011).

Survey Results

If Florida has had a culture, economics and politics based on growth, how has the stalled growth and the deep global recession of 2008-2009 changed attitudes towards the environment and towards sustainability.

Voters were asked in a Quinnipiac Poll (of 1169 Florida voters completed May 3, 2012) whether they were satisfied with the way things were going in the nation today. Some 45% indicated they were very dissatisfied, 26% somewhat dissatisfied, versus 24% somewhat satisfied and 5% very satisfied (Quinnipiac, 2012).

In *Table 3*, one finds the issues of most interest to voters in 2009 and 2007.³ The change in economic fortunes between 2007 and 2009 clearly changed voter's perceptions. Improving the economy/creating jobs/reducing unemployment went from 6% in 2007 to 29% in 2009.

Table 3

What One Issue do You View as the Most Important to the State of Florida?

	2009	2007
ECONOMIC	58	51
Improve Economy	15	6
Create Jobs/Reduce Unemployment	14	6
Reduce Property Taxes	9	10
Cut Wasteful Government Spending	8	5
Hold Line on State Taxes	6	18
Lower Cost of Home Insurance	6	12
SOCIAL	31	29
Improve Education	15	12
Fight Illegal Immigration	8	-
Health Care Afford-Access	8	11

³AIF Poll: Floridians Concerned About Energy Issues Retrieved from <http://aif.com/polling/2007/070808energypoll.htm>.

AIF Statewide Survey Retrieved from http://aif.com/state_survey.shtm

Results of AIF Energy Poll Retrieved from http://aif.com/state_survey.shtm.

	2009	2007
Protect the Environment	1	6
RESTORE HONESTY/INTEGRITY TO GOVERNMENT	3	-
CONTROL GROWTH/DEVELOPMENT	2	6
FIGHT CRIME & DRUGS	2	9
NOT ANSWERED	4	6

Note. See Footnote 3.

An issue of more voter interest in 2009 versus 2007 was cutting wasteful spending. Of less voter interest was holding the line on taxes, cost of home insurance, affordability/access to health care, controlling growth, and (of most interest for this paper) protecting the environment, which went from 6% to only 1%.

Of voters in 2009, 90% felt that Florida was in a recession (66%) or depression (24%); 67% thought that it would take 2-5 years for recovery. Interestingly “if the governor and state legislature had to cut spending” the two top areas chosen from 7 identified for cuts were purchasing land for conservation (33%) and Everglades’s restoration (16%).

In 2009 voters identified the most important environmental issue facing Florida. Almost 40% who answered the survey (Figure 4) identified water shortages or water pollution (32.5% did not know or answer the survey). Only 4.1% of voters who expressed an opinion picked global warming as the most important issue. While Everglades restoration was identified above for budget cuts, it was also the third most important environmental issue identified by voters.

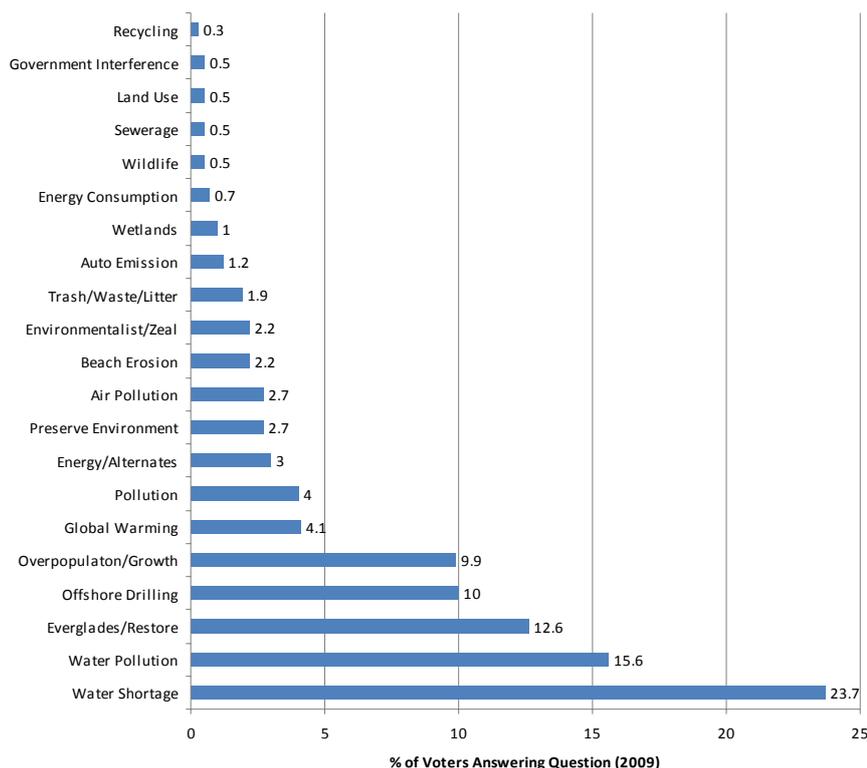


Figure 4. “What Would You Say Is the Most Important Environmental Issue Facing Florida Right Now?”
 Note. See Footnote 3

In 2009, voters felt that reducing reliance on foreign sources of energy was more important (65.8%) than addressing global warming (11.7%); 11% of voters identified both and 7.5% expressed no answer. When asked what they would be willing to pay each year in higher gasoline prices, higher electricity prices, or higher heating bills to deal with global warming, 47.5% did not answer the question and 32.8% answered \$100 or less. Only 3% indicated willingness to pay \$500-\$1000/year and 6.7% over \$1000/year.

Overall, as noted in a 2007 poll, when thinking about the environment, 85% of voters think of themselves as pro-environment (28% consider themselves active participants in the environmental movement who make significant lifestyle changes to conserve natural resources, and 57% care about the environment and do the best they can without necessarily changing their lifestyle to do things like conserve and recycle). Another 10% of voters think of themselves as someone who cares about the environment, but won’t necessarily go out of their way to help the environment. Only 3% say they don’t care much about the environment.

By 2010, the continuing global recession showed a further impact. A national *Gallup Poll* (March 4-7, 2010) of 1014 American adults showed environmental concerns at the lowest level in 10 years (Gallup, 2010). A Rasmussen poll reported April 7, 2010, only 17% of adults believe most Americans would be willing to make major cutbacks in their lifestyle in order to help save the environment, versus 65% “not the case” and 18% not sure. 51% of adults believe major life style cutbacks *are* necessary in order to help the environment, while 32% disagree, with 16% undecided. Only 17% of Americans say it is at least somewhat likely that the next car they buy will be all-electric. By a 55% to 32% margin, most voters continue to believe that finding new sources of energy is more important than reducing the amount of energy Americans consume (Report, 2010).

In a March 8-11, 2012 poll by Gallup, when asked which statement do you agree with most – “Protection of the environment should be given priority, even at the risk of curbing economic growth”, *or* “Economic growth should be given priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent” (See *Table 4*). In 2012 the spread between environment and economic growth had grown to 8 points (Jacobe, 2012). A similar spread occurs versus environmental protection and energy production, 44% versus 47% in 2012 as opposed to 52% versus 40% in 2002 (Jones, 2010, 2012).

Table 4
Level of Environmental Concern

	3/8-11/2012	3/19-21/2010	6/26-29/2008	3/7-10/2005	4/3-9/2000
Environment	41	45	49	52	67
Economic Growth	49	51	44	37	28
Both Equally	6	3	6	6	2
No Opinion	4	1	1	4	3

Note. Based on Jacobe (2012)

Referring back to Table 3, one can see clearly that economic climates change voter priorities. Of importance in this discussion, protecting the environment is clearly not the top voter priority, although voters consider themselves to be highly pro-environment. While voters are perhaps willing to make some lifestyle changes, they are not willing to endure substantial cost increases for energy and are even willing to tee-up purchases of conservation lands and Everglades restoration for Florida state budget cuts if cuts are needed.

Sustainability Dilemma

The dilemma for Sustainability is clear; Sustainability is for the long term. Sustainability requires sustained political agreement and will. It requires long term economics. Acceptable, sustainable, technologies are not enough. There are political cycles. Sustainability must have sufficient support to survive changes in the leadership political party. Sustainability must be able to survive economic cycles. What we value is determined by culture. Cultural change in the direction of sustainable development is required. Will it happen? How can it be encouraged to happen? The case study of Florida shows that moving toward sustainability is exceedingly difficult.

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