

# Experts Gather in Miami to Discuss the Role of Parks in Building Climate Resilient Communities

(January 15, 2019)

*Three-day event organized by the National Recreation and Park Association and Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces*

**Ashburn, Va. (Jan. 15, 2019)** — Park leaders from across the country will gather in Miami, Florida, Jan. 16–18, 2019, to discuss the increasing role park and recreation agencies play in developing climate-resilient communities. Organized by the [National Recreation and Park Association \(NRPA\)](#) in collaboration with [Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces](#), the three-day [NRPA Innovation Lab](#), titled [Resilient Parks](#), will explore how communities nationwide can maximize the value of parks and open spaces for resilience. This event is sponsored by [Greenfields Outdoor Fitness](#).

“We know parks build healthy, vibrant and resilient communities,” said Barbara Tulipane, CAE, NRPA president and CEO. “That’s why we’re thrilled to host this event in Miami-Dade County where attendees can see firsthand the benefits of using parks and open spaces to improve resiliency and help protect communities from the effects of climate change.”

Using Miami-Dade County, one of the most at-risk coastal areas in the world, as both setting and example, attendees will interact with a panel of funders, policy experts and thought leaders, and through site visits, see how Miami is working to maximize the resilience value of parks and open spaces.

“We’re very excited to welcome NRPA back to Miami for the 2019 Resilient Parks Innovation Lab,” said Maria Nardi, director, Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces. “Parks play a leadership role in addressing social, environmental and economic impacts of climate adaptation. We look forward to an exchange of ideas, strategies and best practices to ensure the resilience of our communities here in Miami-Dade County, and in park agencies across the country.”

Event speakers include Carl E. Lewis, Ph.D., director, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden; Amy Chester, managing director, Rebuild By Design; Kokei Otsi, project manager, Van Alen Institute; Jason Hellendrung, vice president, Tetra Tech; Jordan Wildish, research analyst, Earth Economics; Jannek Cederberg, Cummins | Cederberg Coastal and Marine Engineering; Elizabeth Wheaton, director of environment and sustainability, City of Miami Beach; John Rebar, director of parks and recreation, City of Miami Beach; Brian Haus, Ph.D., chair and professor, department of ocean sciences, University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine and

Atmospheric Science and director, SUSTAIN Laboratory; Na'Taki Osborne Jelks, chair, West Atlanta Watershed Alliance and assistant professor, Spelman College; James F. Murley, chief resilience officer, Miami-Dade County; Tom O'Hara, project editor, *The Invading Sea*; and Sonia Succar Rodriguez, cities program manager, Florida, The Nature Conservancy.

A copy of the agenda is available [here](#).

Use #NRPAInnovation to join the discussion on Twitter.

**To learn more about NRPA, visit [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org).**

**To learn more about Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces, visit [www.miamidade.gov/parks/home.asp](http://www.miamidade.gov/parks/home.asp).**

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### **About the National Recreation and Park Association**

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that all Americans have access to parks and recreation for health, conservation and social equity. Through its network of 60,000 recreation and park professionals and advocates, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org). For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit [www.parksandrecreation.org](http://www.parksandrecreation.org).