



**Introducing  
The "Friends of Billy's Creek"  
501 (c) 3 Non-Profit Organization.  
IRS # 26-1266523**

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Billy's Creek is a freshwater tributary to the Caloosahatchee River, meeting that mighty waterway immediately north of the twin bridge spans connecting Fort Myers to Pine Island and Cape Coral (Florida). Billy's Creek is an authentic urban waterway that meanders through the City of Fort Myers, Florida. Fort Myers is legendary for attracting boaters, fishermen, and water enthusiasts and Billy's Creek is ideally located *inside* Fort Myers for their and others use.

While there are certainly other tributaries along the 63 mile Caloosahatchee River (the River stretches from Lake Ochachobee to the Gulf of Mexico and is part of the ICW), no other waterway can lay claim to the multitude of unique assets presented by Billy's Creek. Taken together, the assets below are why the Friends of Billy's Creek exist.

- Billy's Creek is a mangrove arched waterway, potentially unique in all of Florida as it actually penetrates an American city. Billy's Creek follows a course through the City of Fort Myers, offering boating and water access opportunities to segments of the population that are often marginalized from the boating scene. Billy's Creek is viewed and enjoyed by a wide segment of society, from wealthy riverside dwellers, to tourists visiting Fort Myers, to disadvantaged children who play along its banks near the creek's furthest reaches.
- Billy's Creek, partly from the volunteer efforts of Friends of Billy's Creek, is today a beautiful stream that is lined with mangrove along the lower reaches of brackish water, transitioning to freshwater in the upper reaches with palm, and live oak trees throughout. It is able to be navigated and it is ideal for kayaking, family picnics, fishing, and small boat exploration.
- Friends of Billy's Creek, by initiating a number of high-profile community clean-ups as well as historical and ecological tours, have evolved the waterway to a popular destination for local residents as well as water enthusiasts who visit Fort Myers each year.
- Friends of Billy's Creek understand the importance and value of educating the public, policy makers, and regulatory officials about their mission. This comfort with using public awareness tools has resulted in a \$500,000 State of Florida Appropriation for continued dredging and repair of Billy's Creek.
- Even beyond the local value of what is now a beautiful, peaceful waterway, Billy's Creek stands as a high-profile example of what can be accomplished by dedicated volunteers with good leadership. The successes of FOB are now respected by our community, the media, and by policymakers from Fort Myers to Tallahassee to Washington D.C.

**Friends of Billy Creek (FOB)** is an all-volunteer organization of dedicated stakeholders who recognize Billy's Creek as a precious and unique waterway. Friends of Billy's Creek are a dedicated and savvy group of professionals, retirees, and young people who regularly volunteer to clean debris, discarded monofilament, and dead vegetation from the waterway. The creek's head waters are fed from the surface water management systems of an industrial park and then meanders through low income and occasional blighted neighborhood winding up at a confluence with the Caloosahatchee River in a high-rent waterside section.

**The primary activity** of Friends of Billy's Creek is to protect the integrity of Billy's Creek and its watershed, through education and promotion of its responsible use and enjoyment **by all of the people**. This activity is accomplished through well-publicized community events, ecological tours, watercraft demonstrations, the creation and placement of thoughtful articles and air broadcasts, special water outings benefiting low-income children as well as the general population, participation in local and state water policy meetings, and, of course, regular clean-up excursions along the waterway.