



Florida's Eden

PORTRAY · PRESERVE · PROSPER

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MEDIA RELEASE

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One Region/One Book project announced for 30 North Florida counties

Florida's Eden, a non-profit devoted to building a model sustainable environment and economy in 30 North Florida counties, has chosen *Mirage: Florida and the Vanishing Water of the Eastern U.S.* for a One Region/One Book project.

The communitywide read of *Mirage* is the first step in the Florida's Eden Water Awareness Campaign, designed to build citizen knowledge and dialogue on the most important natural resource – and most valuable economic asset – in our region.

“Pressure on North Florida's water supply is building from all sides, as Atlanta taps the Apalachicola River to the west and Central Florida looks to pipe the St. Johns to the east,” says Annie Pais, Florida's Eden director. “We can become a model for water conservation, but only if we work together as a region and build civic and political muscle to insist on a more sustainable water future.”

Mirage was this year's Gold medal winner for best nonfiction in the Florida Book Awards. Publisher's Weekly called it “vital reading for citizens and policymakers as global concerns over water scarcity grow.”

Book clubs, libraries, schools, civic groups, churches and individuals are invited to read *Mirage*, download discussion questions, and meet the author, Cynthia Barnett, at a series of events around the region. Florida's Eden also is sponsoring a water-themed speaker's bureau; a recognition program for businesses that adopt water-conservation measures; K-12 curricula and other projects.

Marion County is the first area local government to adopt *Mirage* for a countywide read. “Our limited water resources are a subject of great concern for all Floridians, and Marion County citizens in particular,” says Marion County Commissioner Barbara Fitos. “We must be thoughtful, intentional and responsible in our use and care of these resources. Reading *Mirage* together as a community will give us a common ground and vocabulary to move our county conversations forward.”

Other partners include Santa Fe College, which has chosen *Mirage* for a campus-wide read and is highlighting water sustainability this year with projects including a springs art exhibit and river clean-up for students.

The One Region/One Book project kicks off Friday Sept. 19th at 7 p.m. in the Santa Fe College Gallery. Barnett will be signing *Mirage* at the public opening and reception for Portray, Preserve, Prosper: The Florida's Eden Heritage Springs Region.

Other upcoming events include:

- Liquid Muse: Paintings of the St. Johns River Region. Thomas Center reception and gallery talk by Mallory O'Connor and Gary Monroe, Oct. 2nd 5 to 7 p.m.

- The Art and Science of Water: Framing the Issues and Finding Solutions. Santa Fe College panels with artists, policy makers, scientists and authors; gallery reception for Portray, Preserve Prosper follows from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Oct. 3rd.

- Where's the Water? Barnett reading and lecture, Alachua County downtown library, Oct. 7, 7 p.m.

To learn more about the Florida's Eden Water Awareness Campaign, download discussion questions, request a speaker, or find additional events and information, go to www.FloridasEden.org

Want to get involved? Call Annie Pais at 352-377-0777.

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