

Research: For 13 years the Florida Ranches Calendar has presented breathtaking Florida landscapes by award-winning nature photographer Carlton Ward Jr. and has received kudos for educating an increasingly urban population about the heritage and continuing importance of ranching in this state. For 2018, with programs for conservation easement an increasingly essential component of ensuring the protection of Florida's natural resources, the calendar's publishers were encouraged by environmental advocacy groups to feature ranches whose landowners are currently seeking conservation easements through the Florida Department of Agriculture's Rural & Family Lands Protection Program and the Florida Forever program. The calendar would then be able to augment its past role as a teaching tool for the public to better understand this iconic way of life and, further, become a government relations tool that ranchers and conservation groups could use in educating their legislators. The focus on increasing awareness of conservation easement programs required that ranchers who had not traditionally been a part of the project be persuaded to become calendar sponsors and share their best practices. Because the issue is so important, the calendar's publishers decided to provide the calendars at no cost to advocacy groups to use in their efforts to education leaders at the federal, state and local level instead of selling calendars to the public, as had traditionally been done.

Objectives: 1) Enlist at least six new participating ranches that have demonstrated their commitment to conservation easement and agricultural stewardship through their participation in the Florida Department of Agriculture's Rural & Family Lands Protection Program and the Florida Forever program.; 2) increase the number of calendar sponsors by four in order to cover the costs of production and allow for distribution of the calendar to advocacy groups and their key constituents at no cost; provide sufficient copies to the Florida Cattleman's Association for its members to use in lobbying efforts prior to the 2018 Florida Legislative Session.

Implementation: Working with renowned nature photographer Carlton Ward Jr., the Firefly Group developed a list of prospective ranches for featured photography and sponsorship. A severe drought followed by the destructive winds of Hurricane Irma and the extensive flooding in the storm's aftermath made photography difficult during the calendar's key production phase. Additionally, ranchers were hurt financially by these

natural events. Even though they were concentrating on recovery during this period, they nevertheless responded to the invitation to participate in the calendar. They expressed their understanding of the vital importance of conservation and the need to educate legislators and other stakeholders about maintaining natural and agricultural lands for future generations. The publisher worked with Carlton Ward and the Florida Conservation Group to identify ranches that meet the conservation criteria. Each ranch was approached, and the twelve who agreed to participate were interviewed about current efforts to conserve ranch land. Their interviews were used to develop the captions for each month's photos. During production, an icon of the conservation movement, rancher Alto "Bud" Adams Jr., died. The calendar's producers immediately revised the text to include a Dedication to Bud Adams and some of his own photographs and quotes exploring Old Florida and his philosophy on how to preserve it.

Evaluation: Six new ranches became sponsors of the 2018 calendar, and four new organizations including the Seminole Tribe of Florida joined them as sponsors in supporting publication. Sponsorships therefore fully met the budget for printing, photography, design work and writing. According to the Florida Cattleman's Association, its members personally delivered calendars to every Florida House (40) and Senate office (120) during January and February 2018 as part of its legislative outreach and they intended to continue delivering copies to local legislators and business groups. Surprisingly, members of the public who knew of the calendar from past years began contacting The Firefly Group and asking to buy copies of the few remaining calendars, increasing the profit margin and the educational reach. More than 2,500 copies of the 2018 calendar were either sold or distributed.

Budget: Expenses: printing, \$5,000; photography, \$5,000; staff time for design and writing, approximately 100 hours at \$50 to \$150 an hour. Income: \$27,400 from sponsorships and an additional \$3,682.60 in individual sales.