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Roads Through the Everglades: The Building of the Ingraham Highway, the Tamiami Trail and Conners Highway, 1914-1931

Bruce D. Epperson

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In 1915, the road system in south Florida had changed little since before the Civil War. Travelling from Miami to Ft. Myers meant going through Orlando, 250 miles north of Miami. Within 15 years, three highways were dredged and blasted through the Everglades: Ingraham Highway from Homestead, 25 miles south of Miami, to Flamingo on the tip of the peninsula; Tamiami Trail from Miami to Tampa; and Conners Highway from West Palm Beach to Okeechobee City.
In 1916, Florida's road commission spent $967. In 1928 it spent $6.8 million. Tamiami Trail, originally projected to cost $500,000, eventually required $11 million. These roads were made possible by the 1920s Florida land boom, the advent of gasoline and diesel-powered equipment to replace animal and steam-powered implements, and the creation of a highway funding system based on fuel taxes. This book tells the story of the finance and technology of the first modern highways in the South.

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