

July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007

Superintendent Dan Kimball  
Everglades National Park  
40001 State Road 9336  
Homestead, FL 33034-6733

Dear Mr. Kimball:

The Key Largo Fishing Guides Association (KLFGA) has worked closely with Everglades National Park since its creation over 8 years ago. Our guides realize the importance of ENP not only as their livelihood but as a national treasure. Over the years, we have spearheaded a yearly clean-up of the heavily used Boggies, Shell Creek and Trout Creek areas in Northeast Florida Bay. We have also participated in the building and deployment of markers and signage in the same areas. Hopefully, we can continue to help protect the Park through pro-active measures such as these and in whatever other capacities might arise.

It is our recommendation that Alternative E (created by Jim Trice and Jack Curlett's group) be adopted as the new General Management Plan. We feel that Alternative E provides a solid foundation for management through education instead of closures. This plan also seems to be the most financially feasible while also creating an additional revenue stream to fund other projects through the boater education permit. The permit should cost from \$50-100 which would cover the administrative cost and offset the loss of revenue from the Park's porous Eastern boundary. We realize the challenges of implementing a required boater education program but the internet offers a low cost means that provides world-wide access for all visitors. There might be very small groups of short term visitors that could be inconvenienced, but additional services such as tour boats and educational programs could be implemented at the Florida Bay division. This would allow *safe* access for anyone who does not have time to complete the course. We also feel that the proposed "Management by Water Depth" in the areas of less than 3" surrounding Flamingo would be effective and enforceable in this heavily traveled area.

The only aspect of Alternative E that we do not agree with is the opening of Joe Bay and Little Madeira Bay to "paddlers only". We feel that these areas should be similar to the "No Combustible" zones on the oceanside of Key Largo (Airport Flat, Largo Sound, Garden Cove, etc.). These areas allow boats with engines on the transom but prohibit their use; only allowing paddling, push poling and trolling motors. These are ALL low impact propulsion methods while preserving the quiet backcountry experience for visitors of all ages and physical abilities. By only allowing paddling into Joe and Little Madeira Bays most groups of users will be excluded from experiencing the only backcountry zones close to Key Largo/Tavernier.

Once again, we recognize the importance of preserving the resources and wildlife inhabitants of Everglades National Park. But, we also feel that the park is only a benefit to users if it is realistically accessible and open for boaters of all types and physical abilities. The KLFGA is willing to continue helping in any capacity necessary to maintain and improve ENP. We are fortunate to have ENP in our backyard and would like to assist in preserving it for generations to come. After all, the Park is our "office" which allows us to provide visitors with an experience above and beyond fishing.

Sincerely,

Capt. Lain Goodwin, President  
Capt. Tony DelosSantos, Vice President  
Capt. J.C. Redman, Treasurer

