

RESOLUTION 09-04-19

A RESOLUTION OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL OF ISLAMORADA, VILLAGE OF ISLANDS, FLORIDA, URGING THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE E, VERSION 2.5 FOR INCLUSION IN THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL OF THIS RESOLUTION TO THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, Everglades National Park is a public park for the benefit and enjoyment of the people and was set apart as a permanent wilderness, preserving essential primitive conditions including natural abundance, diversity, behavior and ecological integrity of the unique flora and fauna; and

WHEREAS, a six step process to develop a new 15-20 year General Management Plan ("GMP") for Everglades National Park was kicked off in January 2003; and

WHEREAS, the main function of the GMP is to clearly define the park's purpose and management direction and provide a foundation to guide and coordinate all subsequent planning and management; and

WHEREAS, following submittal of four preliminary alternatives, Alternatives A, B, C and D, by the National Park Service (the "NPS") in May 2007, a fifth alternative, Alternative E was presented for NPS consideration by a group concerned citizens of the Florida Keys; and

WHEREAS, Alternative E supported boater education, improved channel marking and responsible access to the back country flats for both motorized and non-motorized vessels to provide outstanding resource protection and improve visitor experiences without significantly restricting access to educated and responsible park visitors; and

WHEREAS, the NPS has recently published revised alternatives, Alternatives 1, 2, 3 and 4, some of which include recommendations provided in Alternative E; and

WHEREAS, Alternative E, Version 2.5 has been drafted by the "Everglades for the Educated" group to provide important recommendations that, if included in the NPS Alternative 3, could dramatically improve resource protection in the Everglades National Park while maintaining solid public access for recreational fishing, paddling and bird watching; and

CERTIFIED COPY OF ORIGINAL

Beverly Raddatz
BEVERLY RADDATZ, VILLAGE CLERK

WHEREAS, the Islamorada Village Council supports the recommendations contained in Alternative E, Version 2.5 "Everglades for the Educated" for inclusion in the GMP for Everglades National Park.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE VILLAGE COUNCIL OF ISLAMORADA, VILLAGE OF ISLANDS, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Recitals. The above recitals are true and correct and are incorporated herein by this reference.

Section 2. Proposed Plan. The Village Council of Islamorada, Village of Islands urges the National Park Service to consider the locally prepared recommendations of Alternative E, Version 2.5, attached as Exhibit 1, for inclusion in the General Management Plan for Everglades National Park.

Section 3. Transmittal. A copy of this resolution accompanied by a copy of Alternative E, Version 2.5 recommendations shall be provided to the National Park Service.

Section 4. Effective Date. This resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

Motion to adopt by Councilman Boerner, seconded by Councilwoman Zima Borski,

FINAL VOTE AT ADOPTION

VILLAGE COUNCIL OF ISLAMORADA, VILLAGE OF ISLANDS

Mayor Don Achenberg	YES
Vice Mayor Michael Reckwerdt	YES
Councilman Dave Boerner	YES
Councilwoman Jill Zima Borski	YES
Councilwoman Cathi Hill	YES

PASSED AND ADOPTED ON THIS 23rd DAY OF APRIL, 2009.

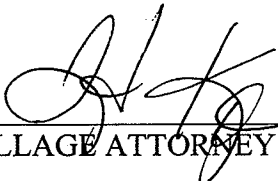
APR 23 2009 10:00 AM
VILLAGE OF ISLAMORADA


DON ACHENBERG, MAYOR

ATTEST:


VILLAGE CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY
FOR THE USE AND BENEFIT OF ISLAMORADA,
VILLAGE OF ISLANDS ONLY


VILLAGE ATTORNEY



Alternative E, Everglades for the Educated, Version 2.5 Executive Summary

Background

Aggregately, the individuals of our committee have spent over 200 years providing park stewardship and experiencing the park as users. In addition between us we spend all or part of approximately 300 days a year fishing waters of the Everglades National Park.

We were initially drawn together as concerned individuals with a common bond when the initial Preliminary Alternatives B and C were released. That common bond consisted firstly of a burning desire to see the park service create management options that would protect one of our nation's most precious natural resources. And secondly we shared a fierce need to maintain full boating and fishing access to the vast waters of the park.

After all the main stated purpose of the park opens with the line; "Everglades National Park is a public park for the benefit and enjoyment of the people." We believe these two objectives are unequivocally compatible and mutually obtainable.

Current Status

We feel the revised Preliminary Alternatives 2 and 3 as presented by the Everglades National Park are in many ways an improvement over the original Alternatives B and C. The revised alternatives are backed by more science and indicate the public was heard regarding educating park users and confirming that pole/troll zones could be a valid management tool.

On the other hand, they fall dismally short of assuring that access to educated anglers will not be grossly prohibited. The charts and language regarding access in the revised alternatives seem confusing and inconsistent at best. The key issue is access and access does not clearly exist in Alternatives 2 through 4 as written or charted. We need clarity and we deserve clarity!

Realistically, Everglades National Parks vast waters can only be accessed by using motorboats. Without unequivocal and on-going access for the public using motorboats the governments pledged benefits and enjoyment are in effect confiscated.

If implemented as currently written, the effects of Alternative 3 and certainly Alternative 4 would be devastating to our local economy. It would increase unemployment; hinder tourism from Homestead through Marathon and on up to Everglades City.

The rights of recreational anglers and the fragile trust in the National Park Service and Everglades National Park would be broken forever.

Recommendations

Having said all of that, we are cautiously hopeful that the new Alternative 3 can serve as a foundation for a meaningful final draft alternative. But, it can serve as a foundation only with very substantial modifications.

- 1) Mandatory education needs to be thorough and comprehensive.
- 2) Alternative 3 must vastly improve its explanation and assurance of access to and in pole/troll zones. Motorboats should be allowed to operate in all waters 2' or deeper thereby providing access and still protecting the crown of the flats. We also recommend that the pole/troll zones be phased in over several years, allowing Adaptive Management to improve the success of future pole/troll zones through education and public acclimation.
- 3) We suggest starting a pilot pole/troll area with reasonable access corridors through waters 2' or deeper in Snake Bight north of Tin Can Channel as soon as possible.
- 4) We offer that channels officially marked and maintained by the Everglades National Park Service should use markers as small as practical in order to provide essential navigational aids, yet preserve the natural beauty of the park. These markers need to be placed farther out from channel mouths and damaged areas should be treated with bird stake technology.... Private funding has been available for several years.
- 5) After decades of unnecessary closure, we recommend Joe and Little Madeira Bay be reopened to the public, as pole/troll zones with only catch and release fishing allowed.

These recommendations come, from untold hours of dialog by the Alternative E team who actively gathered council, input and overwhelming support from many diverse user groups.

We feel strongly that our recommendations will dramatically improve resource and especially seagrass protection while providing solid access for bird watching, paddling and recreational fishing experiences.

The Alternative E, Everglades for the Educated Committee

Capt. Tad Burke, Charles Causey, Jack Curlett, Capt. Mike Ehlers, Diane Harbaugh, Sandy Moret and Jim Trice

**For more information or to make public comment directly to the
National Park Service - go to www.alternativee.com**