

St. Johns River Issues Update
Jacksonville Waterways Commission
January 13, 2016

Deep Dredge

DEP is expected to release the Notice of Intent to Issue the dredging permits on Tuesday, January 19. Opponents have 14 days to file a challenge.

CFWI fails the public and jeopardizes Florida's future.

CFWI threatens natural resources and irresponsibly drive unbridled and unsustainable growth. The inherent flaws in the process, plans and justification must be corrected. The St Johns River and Florida waterways must be fully protected **by removing surface water withdrawal projects for the CFWI Plans and truly prioritizing water conservation.**

Northeast Florida's elected officials are opposed to the CFWI's proposal to siphon millions of gallons of water from the St. Johns River.

The official position of the consolidated City of Jacksonville, as stated in City Council Resolution 2014-37-A, is that we are opposed to surface water withdrawals from the upper and middle basins of the St. Johns River at this time and under these circumstances. - Mayor Lenny Curry, City of Jacksonville/Duval County

Unfortunately, this opposition has fallen on deaf ears. CFWI was approved by three Water Management Districts and will be codified in HB 7005 and SB 552.

SJRWMD Offered Resolution

SJRWMD held a workshop to review a "token" resolution to recognize NE Florida's concerns. There was strong opposition from all parties. We all have been asked to offer language.

We will submit language from the JWC/COJ/Duval Delegation Resolution.

Dangerous State Water Policy

The current version of the 2016 water bills, SB 552 and HB 7005, will further threaten the health of the St. Johns. The bills, undermined by loopholes, rely primarily on tools that have failed to clean up Florida's waters for decades.

St. Johns Riverkeeper, along with 106 undersigned organizations and businesses, strongly request your help to amend the legislation to ensure conservation, long-term

protection of our springs, rivers, estuaries and aquifers, and rapid restoration of the state's despoiled waterways.

Amendments are needed to address our significant concerns which include:

- The failure to establish water conservation as a priority. Instead, **the bills prioritize alternative water supply including more than 160 million gallons a day of fresh water from the St. Johns River.**
- The absence of deadlines to restore water quality in already impaired waters.
- Delayed targets for achieving Minimum Flows & Minimum Levels (MFMLs) and TMDLs (20 to 32 years) allow the ongoing degradation of Florida's waters to continue.
- The diminished autonomy of Water Management Districts in water use and planning decisions. **As water decisions are more centralized, North Florida will lose critical fresh water to Central Florida.**
- Private interests would receive the benefit of public funds spent with no assurance of cost-effectiveness. **For example, the Central Florida Water Initiative plans include harmful St. Johns River water withdrawal projects that total nearly \$1.8 billion, to be paid for with tax dollars and implemented and operated by private companies; this represents a massive transfer of public money to private pockets.**
- The significant threat posed by calling for reductions in "damaging discharges to tide" without defining or distinguishing between "damaging" discharges, for example those from Lake Okeechobee into the St. Lucie estuary, and those discharges to tide that are critical to maintaining the delicate fresh/salt water balance in other Florida estuaries and fisheries. **All discharges of freshwater to tide are not created equal. That fresh/salt water balance is critical to the health of the St. Johns Estuary.**
- The authorization given to Water Management Districts for the inter-basin transfer of water and to make water-allocation decisions beyond their jurisdictional boundaries, for example, **could allow water withdrawn from the St. Johns River to be piped to Southwest Florida Water Management District consumptive users without public involvement from the citizens who will be negatively impacted in downstream counties.**
- The completely unnecessary changes to urban fertilizer regulation standards that could severely diminish the ability of a local government to adequately address sources of pollution-laden stormwater runoff.

St. Johns River Caucus

- Meeting Wednesday, January 20 at 8 a.m., Tallahassee
- Senator Bean and Representative Ray – Legislation Designating the St. Johns the Official River of Florida

Save the St. Johns River Tour – March 22- April 3, 2016

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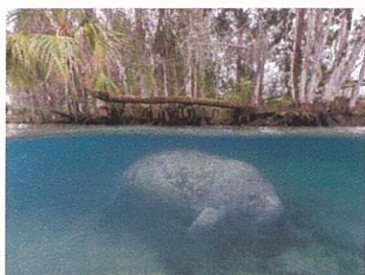
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Wildlife officials want to remove manatees from 'endangered' list

By Associated Press Thu, Jan 7, 2016 @ 4:28 pm



AP file photo In this Jan. 23, 2015 photo provided by Carlton Ward Jr. a West Indian manatee swims in the Three Sisters Springs in the Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge near the Gulf of Mexico, Fla.

MIAMI — The population of Florida's iconic manatees has recovered enough that the species no longer meets the definition of "endangered" under the Endangered Species Act, federal wildlife officials said Thursday.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have proposed relisting the slow-moving, speed bump-shaped marine mammals as a

"threatened" species, which would not change any current protections for manatees.

"Based on the best available scientific information, we believe the manatee is no longer in danger of extinction," Michael Oetker, deputy regional director for the wildlife service, said at a news conference at the Miami Seaquarium, which has rescued, rehabilitated and released manatees back into the wild for decades.

A Florida business group and the conservative Pacific Legal Foundation petitioned the government in 2012 to reclassify the manatee, citing a 2007 federal review that recommended listing the species as threatened because the population is recovering.

They argued that if the federal government followed its own rules, the reclassification should have been automatic.

"It's taken eight years and two lawsuits to get the government to follow up on its own experts' recommendation to reclassify the manatee," Christina Martin, a Pacific Legal Foundation attorney, wrote in an email. The foundation has represented a group of recreational boaters, tour operators, dive shops and hotels on the Crystal River, which is warmed by natural springs and is a favorite winter congregating spot for manatees.

An "endangered" listing means the species is in imminent risk of extinction, while "threatened" means they could become endangered in the foreseeable future — an improvement wildlife officials likened to moving manatees from intensive care into a rehabilitation facility.

The proposed reclassification reflects state, local and federal collaborations that have increased the abundance and health of manatees, said Emie Marks, regional director for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Florida's manatee population has grown from several hundred in 1967 to more than 6,000 counted last year in an annual statewide survey.

Wildlife and manatee advocates say the proposal to relist manatees as a threatened species ignores ongoing threats to their survival.

St. Johns, Florida

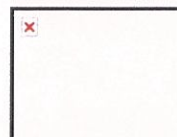
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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOU



2 killed and 2 injured in St. Johns County crash



One Spark founder and CEO Elton Rivas resigns



Gene Frenette: Final grades for 2015 Jaguars



1 dead, 1 in life-threatening condition after fiery crash on Jacksonville's Westside

Also known as "sea cows," manatees are primarily found in Florida though their range extends to Puerto Rico and other parts of the Caribbean. Their biggest threats in the U.S. are boats, cold water, toxic algae blooms and discarded fishing debris. Elsewhere in the West Indian manatee's Caribbean range, the animals face significant habitat loss.

In spite of successful conservation efforts, the manatee population suffered "catastrophic" losses from prolonged cold snaps and toxic red tide blooms from 2010 through 2013, said Save the Manatees Club Executive Director Pat Rose.

The wildlife service "should not move forward with downlisting without a proven, viable plan for further reducing boat strike mortality and for preserving vital warm water habitat," said Jaclyn Lopez, Florida director at the Center for Biological Diversity.

The public will have 90 days to comment on the proposal that will be published Friday in the federal register, and the wildlife service could take a year to adopt the proposed relisting or explain why it won't.

A public hearing on the proposal is scheduled Feb. 20 in Orlando.

Free lecture offered on 'The Complex Wildlife Trade'
Nov 11, 2015

State wildlife officers investigate possibly shot seabirds
Dec 02, 2015

Winter break camps in Jacksonville focus on wildlife education for children
Dec 14, 2015



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RECOMMENDED FOR YOU



Group sues feds to kick manatees off endangered list



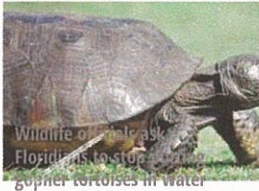
Manatees meet their mate



Manatee speed zone enforcement begins this weekend



Group sues feds to kick manatees off endangered list



Wildlife officials ask Floridians to stop feeding gopher tortoises in water



Manatee Critical Care Center

JUST IN

90-year-old driver dies after Saturday collision with speeding SUV in Jacksonville

10:51am

Ebron waives right to speedy trial in Lonzie Barton neglect case; trial postponed

10:25am

One Spark founder and CEO Elton Rivas resigns

8:49am

Ownership rules addressed in historic areas

6:29am

Tornado strikes town near Fort Myers

5:17am

St. Johns woman found dead in Italy apartment

5:16am



PREV

Shad Khan one of 10 richest owners in American professional sports

NEXT



Rare dime worth more than a million up for auction in Tampa

PRlink PAID PRESS RELEASES

WG Pitts Announces David Christine, AIA, LEED AP as Principal/Vice President of Archi

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Proposed 2016 FIND Grant Projects

Project	Council District	Suggested By	Project Type	Scope	FIND Cost	COJ Cost*	Total Estimated Cost	FIND Grant Phase 1**
Northshore Kayak Launch	8	Current Project	Construction (Phase 2)	build accessible shoreline kayak launch	\$68,972	\$83,903	\$152,875	\$26,044
Charles Reese Fishing Pier	10	Current Project	Construction (Phase 2)	build 100' long fishing pier and convert old ramp into kayak launch	\$138,735	\$168,771	\$307,506	\$40,393
Half Moon Island Park & Boat Ramp Phase 2A	2	Current Project	Construction (Phase 2)	build boat ramp, entrance, parking, & shoreline revetment	\$924,199	\$1,124,287	\$2,048,486	\$64,910
Southbank Riverwalk Floating Dock	5	Public	Design (Phase 1)	design/permit 120' long floating dock near Chart House	\$75,000	\$91,237	\$166,237	NA
Totals					\$1,206,906	\$1,468,198	\$2,675,104	\$131,347

Funding Break Down	
Anticipated Total 2016 FIND Dollars	\$1,400,000
Anticipated Atantic Beach Ask	\$250,000
Anticipated Available FIND Dollars	\$1,150,000
Anticipated City Match	\$1,525,104***
Anticipated Total Cost	\$2,675,104

* COJ costs includes 12% for PW internal management fees and 0.75% for art in public places - FIND will not match these costs

** Amount of previously awarded grant dollars which will be lost if project construction is not pursued

*** Total cost to the City - the total cost of the four listed projects exceeds the anticipated available FIND grant dollars by \$56,906

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Potential Alternative FIND Projects

Project	Type	Estimated Cost
Alimacani Bulkhead	Design	\$120,000
Exchange Club Island Pavilions	Construction	\$172,000
Wayne B. Stevens Lighting	Design/Construction	\$200,000
Arlington Lions Club Boat Ramp Lighting	Design/Construction	\$138,000
Metro Marina Dredge	Design	\$200,000
Harborview Boat Ramp Dredge	Design	\$180,000
Bert Maxwell Boat Ramp Dredge	Design	\$180,000
Oak Harbor Boat Ramp Dredge	Design	\$150,000
Goodby's Creek Boat Ramp Dredge	Design	\$180,000
School Board Property Kayak Launch*	Design	\$120,000

* requires approval from the School Board or current land owner at time project is approved

