

# FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION



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August 24, 2004

The Honorable John Albion, Chairman  
Lee County Commission  
Post Office Box 398  
Fort Myers, FL 33902-0398

Subject: Lee County Manatee Protection  
Plan

Dear Chairman Albion:

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) received on August 2, 2004, the Lee County Manatee Protection Plan (MPP) adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on June 29, 2004. The FWC approves the county MPP and will begin implementing its recommendations at the state level. We would like to express our thanks to Lee County's Natural Resources staff for their efforts in working with us through this process. In particular we would like to recognize Mr. Steve Boutelle and Mr. Justin McBride whose hard work made completion of this project possible.

As you know, MPPs have several components but one of the more challenging parts to develop is the boat facility-siting portion. We believe that your plan provides a logical way to evaluate manatee data and other relevant information to reach outcomes appropriate for all locations in the county. The boat facility siting works in conjunction with manatee protection speed zones and is expected to address long-term impacts to manatees from future docking facilities. As you know, some of the manatee protection speed zones may change from those that were in place when the MPP was developed. Because the existing zones were considered in the development of the MPP, a review of the boat facility-siting recommendations may be needed depending on possible speed zone changes.

We conducted our review of your MPP with staff from the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS). I understand that the FWS has also reviewed the plan and will provide you with a separate letter of concurrence. Regarding the DCA comments, we believe many of their issues were addressed as the plan was revised over the past months; however, there are still some outstanding issues that may need to be addressed when the boat facility-siting component is incorporated into your Comprehensive Plan. We have discussed this with your staff and are available to assist in this effort if requested.

The Honorable John Albion, Chairman

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Again we commend Lee County on finalizing the Manatee Protection Plan and look forward to working with you in the future. Please do not hesitate to call Mr. Kipp Frohlich at (850) 922-4330 if you have any questions or if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Kenneth D. Haddad  
Executive Director

kdh/mpd

cc: Ms. Colleen Castille, DEP-Tallahassee  
Ms. Lucy Blair, DEP-Fort Myers  
Mr. Jay Slack, USFWS  
Mr. Ken Metcalf, DCA  
Ms. Judith Vallee, Save the Manatee Club  
Mr. Ken Stead, Marine Industries Association-Fort Myers  
Mr. Steve Boutelle

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