



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Everglades and  
Dry Tortugas  
National Parks

40001 State Road 9336  
Homestead, FL 33034-6733

305 242-7700 phone  
305 242-7711 fax

---

## Everglades National Park News Release

**Release Date: February 21, 2012**

**Contacts:** *General Park Information 305-242-7700*

*Project Manager – Fred Herling 305-242-7704*

*Media Contact – Linda Friar 305-242-7714*

### **Park Hosts Public Workshops on the Snake Bight Pole and Troll Zone March 5 and 8**

*Homestead Florida:* National Park Superintendent Dan Kimball announced today that the park will host two public workshops to provide an update and gather public input on their experiences over the past year using the Snake Bight Pole and Troll Zone in Florida Bay, established in January 2011. In addition to the workshops, the public is encouraged to provide additional input through the end of March 2012 on the National Park Service Planning website. The Park hopes that information gathered at the workshops and through the website may better inform future planning efforts.

Currently, the 9400 acre Snake Bight Pole and Troll Zone, allows use of internal combustion motors only in Tin Can or Snake Bight channels (where on-plane transit is permitted), and in the Jimmy's Lake idle speed-no wake area. Within all other areas of the pole and troll zone, boats may only be propelled by push poles, paddles, or electric trolling motors. This protective management measure should help prevent new seagrass scars in that area of the bay that can take several years to recover and negatively impact the ecosystem of Florida Bay.

The workshops come just over one year after the implementation of the largest pole and troll zone in Florida. "This protective management measure was put in place to help prevent new seagrass scars in that area of the bay that can take several years to recover and negatively impact the ecosystem of Florida Bay," said Superintendent Kimball. Located just a short distance from Flamingo, the Snake Bight Pole and Troll Zone was developed through a true partnership between the public and the park. "We're fully committed to continuing this partnership through these workshops and other discussions with the public on what we've learned over the past year and gather any recommendations to improve this pole and troll zone," Kimball said.

**Workshops will be held from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.:**

**Monday, March 5, 2012** at the John D. Campbell Agricultural Center, 18710 SW 288th Street in Homestead, and

**Thursday March 8, 2012** Murray Nelson (Monroe County) Government Center at 102050 Overseas Highway in Key Largo

The meeting agenda is organized as follows:

**5:30 - 6:30:** Informal discussions between staff and the public

**6:30 - 7:00:** Brief presentations on the pole and troll zone including updates on resource monitoring, visitor experience, education, and enforcement efforts; future monitoring and management activities

**7:00 - 8:00:** Question & Answer period with discussion and public comments

"The Snake Bight Pole and Troll Zone was established, with overwhelming public support, to enhance protection of Snake Bight's sensitive aquatic vegetation and wilderness resources, improve the quality of flats fishing, improve paddling and wildlife viewing opportunities, and expand education on proper shallow water boating techniques," said Kimball. "The park views the upcoming workshops and comment period as a great way to check in with the many people that enjoy the bay and want increased protection for this important resource and continuing the partnership to develop strategies to reverse prop scar damage found in the very shallow Snake Bight area".

To learn more about the Snake Bight Pole and Troll Zone and the upcoming workshops, view or download maps and other information, and provide comments (through March 31, 2012) directly on the National Park Service Planning website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?parkID=374&projectId=28305> or through the project link on the park's website: <http://www.nps.gov/ever/poleandtroll.htm>.

The park received financial support for the project from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Coastal Restoration grant program and donations from the Herman Lucerne Foundation, the Flamingo Friendly Tournament, and the South Florida National Parks Trust.

-NPS-