

September 29, 2009

At its meeting on August 14, 2009, the Board of Directors of The Future of Hunting in Florida, Inc., voted unanimously to support public access and hunting in the Big Cypress National Preserve Addition, that includes a designated trail system that will allow traditional enjoyment of these lands by the public. Board members expressed concern that the wilderness designation and primitive backcountry management zones as proposed in the draft General Management Plan alternatives would not allow public access through motorized vehicles, thereby eliminating use of the lands for hunting. "Opening" 85,000 acres of the Big Cypress National Preserve Addition to the public for hunting is inconsequential unless the public has meaningful access to the land. Such access for hunting would allow for proper game management and provide enjoyment to thousands of federal taxpayers, who also happen to enjoy hunting.

As Chairman of the Board, I represent the National Wild Turkey Federation. Other members of the Board represent United Waterfowlers of Florida, the Florida Bowhunter's Council, Allied Sportsmen's Association of Florida, Masters Foxhounds Association of America, The Everglades Coordinating Council, Delta Waterfowl Federation, the Florida Wildlife Federation. Altogether, we represent thousands of Floridians who want to increase access and opportunities for citizens and visitors to hunt on public land in Florida. We strongly urge the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service to remove the proposed wilderness designation and primitive backcountry management zones that would essentially preclude public access for traditional recreational purposes, and adopt a designated trail system within the Addition that will allow for enjoyment of these lands by the public.

William E.C. Marvin
Chairman of the Board
The Future of Hunting in Florida, Inc.