

Honorable Farris Bryant
Governor of Florida

GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE
ON
RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Trustees, Internal Improvement Fund
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Mrs. Margie McCollum
Secretary to the Committee

February 2, 1962

Honorable Farris Bryant
Governor of the State of Florida
Capitol Building
Tallahassee, Florida

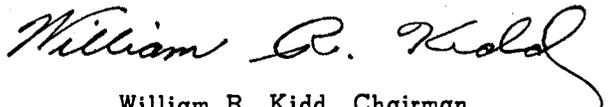
Dear Governor Bryant:

Pursuant to your instructions your Committee on Recreational Development has prepared an "Interim Report" which is transmitted herewith. Much of the data collected and the studies made have been withheld from the report since it was not deemed necessary to prepare a voluminous document but rather to condense our report into a recommended course of action.

Time and space do not permit us to acknowledge all of the agencies, both public and private, which have so generously assisted the Committee from time to time. Suffice to say, they have made a material contribution to this report.

We are appreciative of the thousands of man hours which the field personnel of the various conservation agencies have contributed in making field surveys and in inventorying lands. Many of these people have worked overtime, without compensation, in an effort to provide us with the required data. Their enthusiasm and devotion to duty have served to encourage your Committee to redouble its efforts to produce a program which will meet the demands of an ever changing Florida.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William R. Kidd". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name of the signatory.

William R. Kidd, Chairman
Recreational Development Committee

FOREWORD

Management of Florida's natural resources is a function and responsibility of government. There is among the people of Florida a growing awareness of the urgent need for a revaluation of our conservation effort. To fulfill this mandate from the people, Governor Bryant last April appointed a committee of active agency and departmental directors to study the problem of maximum utilization of State owned lands. In his instructions to the Committee the Governor requested that he be furnished an interim report from the Committee by the end of 1961.

It must be emphasized that this report is initial in nature and that the Committee's job is far from completed. Good land management requires constant restudy in order to adapt plans to meet current requirements.

Florida's rapidly expanding population and industrial development place a severe burden on the planner. What was an appropriate solution to yesterday's problem no longer serves and new techniques are required to meet the ever changing and increasing demands of Floridians and visitors for more and better outdoor recreational facilities.

Florida has been fortunate in securing for its conservation agencies technicians and administrators of skill and high quality and has on hand individuals whose abilities well qualify them to plan for the future needs in the conservation field. This Committee believes that the interest of the Chief Executive in the conservation and recreation needs of the State will permit the laying of the necessary foundations today for a well planned Recreational Development Program in the years ahead.

Although the planning can be accomplished now, a program of this magnitude cannot be implemented in a few short years. Succeeding generations must be made aware that the heritage of the great outdoors should be protected and preserved.

HISTORY

The history of Florida's resource management practices can be broken down into three general periods: Prior to 1900; 1901 to 1960; and, 1961.

Prior to 1900

Florida's first experience in resource management was acquired in the disposition of the lands granted to the State by the Federal Government. Jurisdiction over these lands was granted by the Legislature to the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund, composed of the Governor, Attorney General, Comptroller, Treasurer and Commissioner of Agriculture.

Inexact surveys, faulty deeds and an inability to conduct personal inspections because of the largely uninhabited nature of the land resulted at one time in the sale or pledging by the Trustees of more lands than were owned by the State. On other occasions lands were sold for script which was issued by the purchaser with no collateral other than the land itself. The days of the Carpetbagger Trusteeship were hardly conducive to good business practice, let alone conservation.

However, our predecessors could not conceive of the needs which have arisen. Florida's natural resources per capita were so great that in some instances they were a nuisance. Forests were wantonly burned to clear land for

agriculture. Drainage canals were constructed which wasted water to the sea with no thought as to the consequences. The little corrective legislation that was enacted to preserve and protect natural resources was so poorly implemented as to be virtually worthless. Fortunately for posterity much of the natural wealth which was wasted is replaceable, although sometimes at great expense.

1901 - 1960

At the turn of the century the dangers inherent in the wasting of resources and poor land management practices became apparent. Slowly at first and more rapidly in later years, active and progressive steps were taken to correct past mistakes. Agencies were created for specific purposes. All of these organizations were characterized by narrow lines of authority.

It was during this period that most of the major conservation groups emerged. The Forest Service was created in 1928 and by 1961 the wasteful burning on 85% of the forest lands had been reduced to a fraction of 1% annually. Out of the Forest Service grew the present Board of Parks and Historic Memorials. Early efforts to discover and catalog mineral resources were undertaken by the Geological Survey. Flood control and water management became synonymous. The Agricultural Extension Service and the Agricultural Experiment Stations promoted improved land use practices. By 1943 sportsmen's groups had succeeded in obtaining for the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission constitutional status. The State Board of Health began to exercise some control over lake and stream pollution. The Salt Water Fisheries came under the jurisdiction of the Board of Conservation as did the new Department of Water Resources.

Thus the natural resources slowly came under the man-

agement of various agencies which were charged with solving particular problems and operating in given areas.

In 1953 Hubert Marshall and Robert J. Young of the University of Florida had this to say about Florida's conservation effort:

Florida's administrative structure for resources conservation shows a total lack of integration. Fully 14 separate and independent agencies exercise some jurisdiction over the state's natural resources. In maintaining this kind of administrative organization, Florida has failed to heed the experience of a majority of the states which have adopted consolidated departments of conservation after many years of experimentation with unsatisfactory method of trying to manage their natural resources with a large number of separate and semi-autonomous agencies.

* * * * *

That Florida's governors have evidenced little interest in conservation matters is indicated by the infrequent references to natural resources, other than climate, in their speeches and by the absence of work in this field by the State Improvement Commission, chaired by the Governor. Further evidence is the fact that only one Governor in recent years has seen fit to appoint and support a commission for the study of resource programs and policies, and then only in a single field.

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The operating resource agencies of the State, being largely independent of each other and of the Governor, have naturally evolved no formal mechanism for the solution of inter-agency problems. Nor have they been able to generate that strength in unity which might have made the state more conscious of the problems and

needs of effective resource management. Only the fact that able and conscientious men have guided the operating agencies has enabled the state to make the real progress which has characterized the last few years.

1961

The Governor's Committee on Recreational Development early in its studies came to the conclusion that good resource management must be predicated on the **Multiple Inter-relationship Concept**. Nature is a unity. We cannot separate the fish from the water nor the trees from the soil. Bureaucratic definition of various phases of natural phenomenon which breaks down into a neat pattern of departments and agencies fails because it does not provide for analysis of the problem in its entirety. We believe this Committee has, to a large measure, overcome this deficiency. In the Committee's evaluation of public lands all aspects of the problem are subjected to study by the best qualified experts available and the final recommendation incorporates every phase of conservation.

In 1961 the Legislature, with the blessing of the Cabinet which comprises the Board, enacted measures to reorganize the State Board of Conservation. The effect was to streamline the operations of the divisions of the Board through the consolidation of the Geological Survey, Salt Water Fisheries, Division of Waterways, Department of Water Resources and the various canal authorities and water management districts under a single administrative structure with provision for a clear chain of command and effective coordination between divisions.

For more than a hundred years the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund have served as sales agents for the sovereign lands of Florida. By virtue of the abundance of land first existing in the State and the interest of developers, the approach of the Trustees and their staff has been of concern with the wise sale of State lands rather than acquisition of additional lands for Florida citizens. Early in 1961, in recognition of the needs of a growing Florida and out of awareness of the millions now being spent by highly developed states to reclaim recreational lands, the Trustees at the recommendation of the Governor adopted a new policy of land acquisition and initiated action on a land management program. All sales of State-owned lands are now carefully reviewed by the Governor's Committee before a sale is made. If the lands sought by private owners are of value for present or future public usage, they are withheld from sale and, in most cases, dedicated for public purposes.

The State Road Department has also taken cognizance of its responsibilities in the field of land management. The Department, by Board action, will no longer release the riparian rights to lands which it owns without approval by the Trustees. The Department owns hundreds of miles of rights of way which are riparian in nature and which offer tremendous opportunities for public access to the lakes, streams, the ocean and the Gulf. These properties will play a major role in plans to provide for Florida's future recreational requirements.

Another significant improvement which has almost escaped public notice was the passage of enabling legislation which authorized the flood control and water management districts to expend funds for recreational purposes. The

Central and Southern Florida Flood Control District exercises control over hundreds of thousands of acres of lands which alone exceed Lake Okeechobee in total acreage. These areas are quite close to large metropolitan areas and offer these people a guaranteed ownership of public lands which, when fully developed, will provide excellent facilities for hunting, fishing, boating, camping, bird sanctuaries and all other aspects of a well managed program.

This Committee believes that a new era has begun for resource management in Florida. The cumulative efforts of all conservation oriented agencies are beginning to provide dividends which have exceeded all expectations.

WHAT THE COMMITTEE HAS DONE TO DATE

State Lands Important

It became apparent early in our studies that State owned lands should be inventoried. Land is the basic ingredient in recreational planning and without accurate data it is difficult, if not impossible, to prepare programs which offer fiscal justification. All State owned uplands were inventoried, indexed and appraised in terms of potential public use. The condensed results of this study are shown in Appendix I of this report. Each parcel of land has been field checked and a data sheet prepared and filed in the Land Office.

The Trustees presently own 333,078 acres of land and the Board of Education 81,936 for a combined total of 415,014 acres. The land values were estimated by the field personnel to have a total value of some \$48,619,000. The property is in 652 parcels and is unevenly distributed over forty-two counties.

Federal Lands Considered

In order to complete the public ownership picture the Committee also inventoried those federally owned lands which were on the Bureau of Land Management lists. The Committee found that many of these lands had an immediate use for public purposes and recommended to the Trustees that certain of these lands be purchased immediately. Nearly 500 acres, with an estimated value in excess of \$200,000, are in the process of being purchased by the State for just over \$1,000. The Park Service and the Development Commission are now preparing developmental plans for these sites and it is anticipated that most of the lands will be converted to public areas in the foreseeable future.

County Efforts Need Coordination

A review of county planning and land management programs indicated that recreational areas were being developed on a haphazard basis in many counties, and that others lacked the necessary staff to develop a comprehensive program. The Committee initiated pilot studies to give guide lines to interested counties and to assure compatibility between State and local programs.

While assistance to counties in planning certainly is worthwhile in terms of benefits to the public, it does have a diversionary effect on our own much needed program. Our main effort and responsibility is to the State and county aid should be limited to assistance in acquisition of State and Federally owned lands for public purposes and the coordination of effort. We cannot afford to dilute our resources at a time when State Planning should be our primary objective.

Mined Out Areas Can BE Converted to Public Use

Preliminary discussions have been held with the phosphate industry and a field trip made to the phosphate producing areas. The possibilities of initiating a sound reclamation program having mutual value to industry and the community are most promising. This will require a long range plan which can, if properly implemented, resolve several serious problems now plaguing the phosphate areas. The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has just recently renovated certain mined out areas under a joint program with the phosphate industry to provide additional fishing and outdoor recreational facilities. The Forest Service has also indicated a great deal of interest in reforestation. The Committee feels that this is a fruitful area for continued research and study. We are also attempting to coordinate city and county planning into our evaluation of the problem.

Suwannee Valley Potential

The possibilities inherent in the Suwannee River Basin have been the subject of much study and investigation by the Committee. The Suwannee River Authority was recently enlarged to include twelve counties and this will enable that body to analyze its problems on a regional basis. The Committee proposes to prepare a preliminary plan of development for the Authority within the next few months.

DOES FLORIDA HAVE A RECREATIONAL PROBLEM?

Since its inception the Committee has sought to determine the scope and nature of Florida's recreational resources so as to best chart the course of its future actions.

We have found a problem exists which must be solved by this or some other agency. We believe that as constituted this Committee can prepare for Florida a plan comparable with those other states are now expending huge sums to create.

The problem of providing for an expanding population the recreational outlets to assure a continuation of the appeal our outdoors offers residents and visitors alike is reflected in these facts:

Attendance at State Parks amounted to 513,000 visitations in the fiscal year 1950-51. By 1960-61 this had increased to 3,647,000 or slightly better than a seven-fold increase. It does not require much vision to see that, if this rate of increase should continue, existing facilities will be greatly overloaded before another ten years have passed.

Fishing licenses also present another good index of demand for future outdoor recreational needs. In the last twenty years the sale of licenses has increased from 37,848 to 546,906 or approximately fourteen times in twenty years. Projecting these figures over a twenty year span to 1980 would indicate that Florida could expect millions of licensed fishermen by that time. It should also be pointed out that this does not include the cane pole fishermen who probably equal or exceed in number the licensed fishermen.

The sale of hunting licenses increased from 93,000 in 1950 to 161,000 in 1958, an increase of 73 per cent. Even more significant is the fact that during this same period the utilization of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission's Wildlife Management Areas has risen from 4,700 to 32,500 which amounts to an increase of 593 per cent. This clearly

emphasizes the demand for public hunting facilities.

The Florida Development Commission in its report *A Review of Florida Beach Resources* has this to say about our beach resources:

“Of the 1016.36 miles of usable sand beach on the Florida Coast, only 309.62 miles, or less than one third, is still publicly owned. Over one third of this amount (114.5 miles) is owned by the federal government, approximately 52 miles of which is *not* open to public use. Thus it is that only 257 miles or 25% of Florida’s sand beach is still in accessible public ownership. Significantly, only 23.7 miles of this amount lies within State Parks.”

This same pattern has been repeated in every phase of outdoor activity. Our indigenous bird population may virtually disappear unless adequate sanctuaries are provided. More and more lands which have provided the habitat for these creatures are being lost to development.

Boating is rapidly becoming a major industry in Florida. More and better access ramps will be needed. This also introduces the demand for areas for skiing, swimming and other aqua sports.

Governor Nelson of Wisconsin had this to say in his evaluation of the problem:

“We do not need any more long-term research studies. We and our communities and our resources have been analyzed to death, at least lulled into inactivity. It seems to me imperative that we proceed immediately to implement resource planning and development policies in our states, and to work directly with those departments of the federal government whose policies in the resource field impinge so directly upon the states.”

Another illustration of future demand is National Park system attendance which is increasing at a rate eight to nine times greater than the population increase. This simply means that as our increasing affluence permits more leisure time we are spending more time outdoors.

Indications are that Florida will experience a population increase of around 44% during the next ten years. This alone dictates that Florida must plan to double its present facilities.

The pressure of industrial and urban growth is already pressing hard against Florida's existing natural resources and this trend can be expected to continue over the next ten to twenty years. Unless active steps are taken to alleviate the problem and plan for the future, Florida can be expected to lose much of her attractiveness to residents and tourists alike.

WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT THE PROBLEM?

A complete and comprehensive answer to Florida's needs cannot be given on the basis of the limited time the Committee has had available to attack the problem. To properly further the progress already made, the Committee recommends authorization to proceed on the following phases of an overall program:

- 1. Analyze population trends on a regional basis.** The demands of our citizens for recreational outlets have exceeded definition by political boundaries now existing in Florida. An evaluation of present needs and any planning for future action must consider regional needs and facilities rather than those of a single county or community.

2. Translate regional population projections into a comprehensive plan for Florida. With information on the needs now current and those anticipated in hand the Committee should embark on a comprehensive plan based on the **Multiple Interrelationship Concept** discussed elsewhere in this report. For example, it might be anticipated that State Forests would be considered for hunting, fishing, camping, nature parks and bird sanctuaries, all in a fashion compatible with their primary purpose. Similar use-planning is now underway in the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control District, which has shown through its cooperative efforts with the planning section of the Florida Development Commission that such efforts can have highly beneficial results.

3. Prepare a Resource Development Program and Schedule. Scatter-gun development of natural resources is neither good business nor good conservation practice. A priority schedule of what segments of the comprehensive plan should be undertaken will enable this and succeeding administrations to meet future needs in the light of changing conditions.

4. Prepare a suggested plan for financing the program. Budgeting is an essential governmental function. The Committee believes that it could be most helpful in this regard since many sources of revenue and many financing methods have already been explored.

If these four steps are approved, this Committee proposes to present a comprehensive plan in time for evaluation by the Executive Branch so that recommendations requiring legislative action can be formulated and presented to the 1963 Session of the Florida Legislature.

Florida has a rich natural heritage. Its citizens deserve no less than the assurance that the right to use the great outdoors will be preserved.

APPENDIX I

TABULATION OF PUBLIC LANDS OWNED BY THE
TRUSTEES OF THE INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT FUND
AND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, AS OF

October 3, 1961

COUNTY	TRUSTEES I. I. FUND	BOARD OF EDUCATION
	Acres	Acres
Alachua	323.32	none
Bradford	80.00	none
Brevard	67.70	859.65
Broward	991.62	8,960.00
Citrus	3,278.51	963.45
Clay	none	401.00
Collier	2,652.01	13,292.55
Columbia	92.37	18.20
Dade	140,518.02	28,640.00
De Soto	1,267.41	none
Dixie	330.89	642.50
Duval	1,822.41	821.05
Flagler	none	370.11
Glades	187.35	none
Hardee	40.00	none
Hendry	480.00	640.00
Hernando	46.66	none
Highlands	1,726.53	640.00
Holmes	none	160.08
Indian River	503.46	19.72
Jefferson	80.06	none
Lake	1,232.43	316.80
Lee	2,443.09	396.08
Levy	3,785.16	1,236.91
Martin	none	1,171.31
Monroe	30,327.16	1,929.16

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Nassau	406.65	729.13
Okaloosa	none	80.00
Orange	399.12	none
Osceola	495.00	361.12
Okeechobee	49.87	none
Palm Beach	129,324.97	16,988.98
Pasco	40.14	none
Pinellas	230.12	none
Polk	552.87	40.47
Putnam	72.23	none
St. Johns	3,527.78	none
St. Lucie	none	639.76
Santa Rosa	80.08	none
Seminole	2,340.00	none
Taylor	79.25	none
Union	432.22	none
Volusia	1,753.36	1,041.98
Walton	183.47	795.47
Washington	280.35	274.63

Totals	333,078.54	81,936.43
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Combined Total (T.I.I. Fund & Bd. of Ed.).....415,014.97

Note: Above figures exclude acreage of subdivision lots in certain counties as exact size of lots is not available. Not included are those Parks & Historic Memorials already dedicated for public purposes.

STATE OWNED PUBLIC LANDS

COUNTY	NUMBER OF TRACTS	TOTAL ESTIMATED VALUE *
Alachua	5	\$ 25,400.00
Bradford	2	3,000.00
Brevard	5	105,430.00
Broward	24	1,164,066.00
Citrus	25	353,635.00
Clay	2	12,000.00
Collier	39	1,020,800.00
Columbia	2	2,200.00
Dade	92	28,182,650.00
De Soto	9	15,950.00
Dixie	3	65,700.00
Duval	15	170,475.00
Flagler	2	20,000.00
Glades	4	13,950.00
Hardee	1	4,000.00
Hendry	2	96,000.00
Hernando	1	2,300.00
Highlands	17	130,450.00
Holmes	2	17,400.00
Indian River	3	203,100.00
Jefferson	1	4,800.00
Lee	25	448,350.00
Manatee	7	5,500.00
Martin	4	116,900.00
Nassau	6	270,700.00
Okaloosa	2	4,000.00
Okeechobee	17	35,025.00
Pasco	1	4,000.00
Pinellas	5	18,500.00
Polk	7	59,300.00
Lake	8	73,425.00
Monroe	35	89,350.00

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Palm Beach	232	14,596,200.00
St. Johns	14	338,308.00
St. Lucie	1	63,900.00
Santa Rosa	2	1,500.00
Seminole	5	232,000.00
Taylor	1	4,000.00
Union	6	17,725.00
Volusia	5	68,000.00
Walton	5	539,000.00
Washington	8	19,690.00
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Total		\$ 48,618,679.00

* Note: No estimates of value were made by professional or accredited appraisers. All are based on estimates made by field employees of State Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and on file in State Land Office September 13, 1961.