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Managing fish and wildlife resources for their long-term well-being and the benefit of people.

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MyFWC.com

November 25, 2009

Mr. Bradley Arnold
Sumter County Administrator
910 N. Main Street
Bushnell, FL 33513



Dear Mr. Arnold:

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission proposes to conduct an aquatic habitat enhancement project on Lake Okahumpka during winter/spring 2010. A project scope of work is attached for reference.

Please accept this letter as our request to use Okahumpka Park and boat ramp (Parcel G16=046) as a temporary staging and ingress/egress area for heavy equipment, contractor vehicles, and other associated equipment in conjunction with the Lake Okahumpka Habitat Enhancement project. The Commission would establish ingress/egress routes and staging areas in such a manner so as to cause minimal disturbance to trees and existing vegetation within Okahumpka Park. As the project is designed there should be only a temporary conflict with public access to the lake. The boat ramp would remain open except for equipment mobilization and demobilization at the beginning and end of the project. Following the habitat enhancement project, the Commission, or its contractor, shall restore upland park property to the condition existing at the commencement of the project in any areas where soil has been disturbed due to the use of heavy equipment in operations performed by the Commission, or its contractor.

We have made preliminary contact with Gary Kuhl (Public Works) during initial development of this project. Please advise if there are other issues that should be addressed. If you should have any questions regarding this project you may contact me at (352) 357-2398 or (352) 516-0122.

Sincerely,

Bruce V. Jagers
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Aquatic Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Sub-Section
601 W. Woodward Ave.
Eustis, FL 32726

cc: David Douglas
Bill Coleman
Marty Hale
Bret Kolterman
Gary Kuhl
Brad Cornelius

Copy To
Commrs _____
Co Atty _____
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Other _____
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Lake Okahumpka Habitat Enhancement Project

Scope of Work

Lake Okahumpka is a 670-acre natural water body located approximately 2.5 miles east of Wildwood in Sumter County, Florida. Lake Okahumpka is a shallow and eutrophic water body and has a long history of extensive aquatic plant growth including hydrilla growth and tussock formation. Tussocks are dense accumulations of aquatic plant material which eventually can support growth of woody shrubs and even trees which is the case in Lake Okahumpka. Lake water underneath extensive tussocks typically is poor in dissolved oxygen and does not support quality fisheries or wading bird populations. Lake Okahumpka has approximately 100 acres of dense tussocks that have developed over the past 30 to 50 years. Lake Okahumpka has been managed primarily for waterfowl over the last 30 years but also has a history of producing quality fisheries and still supports a moderately good fishery.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) propose to remove 15 acres of dense tussocks adjacent to the Sumter County Public Park and Boat Ramp on the northwest side of the lake. This site was selected because there is a firm substrate underneath the tussock material. The purpose of removing this tussock material is to set back aquatic plant succession to enhance the establishment of lower growing herbaceous vegetation. Such herbaceous vegetation will enhance wading bird and fish populations as well as increase overall habitat diversity in Lake Okahumpka.

Project specifications:

The 15-acre tussock removal area contains both aquatic and woody vegetation and associated organic materials (muck). This tussock area is extremely dense and contains four feet of muck in some spots. Preliminary volume estimates for the 15-acre tussock removal area include approximately 60,000 cubic yards of organic material (average of 2.5 feet of material) and approximately 60,000 cubic yards of plant material (average of 2.5 feet of material). Total amount of tussock material to be removed is then approximately 120,000 cubic yards. These estimates should be independently verified by the contractor before submitting a bid on the project.

Tussock material is to be removed by an excavator (e.g. track hoe) on a barge or similar equipment but must first be approved by the FWC project manager. Cookie cutters or other similar mechanical shredding equipment may not be used for this project. A small or medium size mechanical harvester will be required to pick up material that floats away from the track hoe. A silt barrier is also required to prevent material from drifting to other parts of the lake and to prevent excess turbidity outside of the tussock removal area.

Tussock material removed is to be transported over water to the southwest side of the lake (0.8 miles) to a designated offload site on private property. The tussock material will then be loaded onto off road dump trucks and transported to designated upland disposal sites on adjacent private property (Sumter

County parcels G21-001 and G16-009). At the disposal sites tussock material will be unloaded and then mounded into tall stacks to aid in drying/composting the material. Large woody material (greater than six inches diameter) will be separated from the harvested material and placed onto a designated "burn pile". Therefore track hoes will be needed to manage the material at the off load site as well as the disposal sites.

The contractor has a period of 90 working days to complete this work (approximately February through mid-May 2010). The contractor may not work at night but may work on weekend days. FWC will obtain the necessary permits for the project and permission for ingress/egress and parking of equipment at the work sites. Lake Okahumpka contains fluridone-resistant hydrilla. Hydrilla must be cleaned off all equipment and the equipment then inspected by the FWC project manager before leaving any work site to avoid transporting this resistant hydrilla to other regions of the state.

Any deviations from these project specifications must be approved by the FWC project manager.

The following figure graphically depicts the works sites and transportation routes for the Lake Okahumpka Habitat Enhancement Project.



Tussock Removal Area

Public Ramp

Secondary Disposal

Lake Transportation Route

Primary Disposal

Ground Transportation Route

Heritage Blvd

NE 45th Blvd

Florida's Turnpike

91

Co Rd 144A

E Co Rd 44

Co Rd 171

Co Rd 169

Co Rd 167

Co Rd 143

Co Rd 165

Co Rd 163

Co Rd 161

Co Rd 159

Co Rd 157

Co Rd 155

Co Rd 148

Co Rd 150

Seminole Path

Big Oak Ln

Bobcat Trail

Co Rd 143

Lazy Ln

Grove Trail

Grove Ct

Quail Run

S Bobwhite Rd

Robi Rd

Co Rd 151

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28°49'28.40" N 82°00'27.28" W elev 56 ft

Imagery Date: Mar 4, 2008

Eye alt 8803 ft

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