

C O P Y

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
Bureau of American Ethnology
Washington, D. C.

December 14, 1932

Dear Sir:

I am much interested in the proposed Everglades National Park. Having spent a good proportion of most of my winters for the past ten years in the region, I feel sure that its unique interest and charm is sufficient to justify its being set aside for the public.

My own work, being anthropological in nature, has been confined to a limited amount of ethnological work with the Seminole Indians, who are probably the most colorful of all of the Eastern Indians living to-day, and a fairly considerable amount of work on the archeology of the Ten Thousand Island region. It is in this area where we had an extensive primitive population subsisting largely from the fish and shellfish along the Gulf Coast that the secret of the early tribes who inhabited southern Florida lies locked in their shell heaps and village sites. The very interesting finds years ago of beautiful objects of carved wood discovered by Mr. Frank Cushing when working for this Bureau give promise of the possibility of more such finds being made in the muck deposits in the vicinity of the coastal settlements.

This is one of the few regions in the entire southeastern United States where conditions prevail in which perishable articles such as wood and textiles may be preserved by the constantly moist muck deposits. Inasmuch as the art of the region was largely executed in wood, it is here that we must look if we hope to find more examples. Excepting for the work of Mr. Cushing, Clarence B. Moore, Dr. Hrdlicka and myself, this section of the state has been entirely unexplored by archeologists. Groups of mounds such as those on Turner River should be of considerable interest to visitors to the proposed Park, although in my opinion it does not need the archeological interest to justify its being added to the national park system.

Very truly yours

(Signed) M. W. Stirling

Chief

Mr. Ernest F. Coe, Chairman
Everglades National Park Association
Cosmos Club
Washington, D. C.

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