

*Sharyn Richardson discusses working against the Florida Panther telemetry program*

Interviewer: Let's go back, a little bit, because I think this plane might interfere a good recording of what you were saying. You said there seems to be always something coming up, just when you see the light at the end of the tunnel. Could you go through that again?

Richardson: Well there's... okay, there's always something. For instance, we were working on possibly doing as much as we could about the panther, about... we were very upset about the telemetry program, and we had sort of launched a letter writing campaign to different...well to the Governor, to Colonel Brantley of the Game and Fish Commission, really asking was it necessary to have a telemetry program because we knew of two panthers that had died as a result of the process of being tagged or fitted with radio collars for the program had killed, actually killed, two panthers and we were really upset about that. I mean there's so few. There's like nineteen now. So, we were in the process of writing all this, writing all these letters, and all of a sudden, Senator Neil, from Bradenton, introduced a panther bill into the legislature or into...during the legislative session, and so all of a sudden here we had something totally new and this was actually just prior to the start of the legislative session. And he was talking about the possibility of introducing a bill and so all of a sudden we have this new person, Senator Neil, that we have never been in contact with before, that I know of, since I've been here, and here, all of a sudden, we have this new correspondent. He was sending all of his ideas about the points to put in the bill, and all of a sudden, somebody up there decided that they were going to put a moratorium on the telemetry program. First they said it was because of the weather, because of the heat and it was too hot for the animals to be chased all over the place and then tranquilized and then they decided to put the moratorium on it, until January. Well, now this new bill has come along and I think it...well basically it moves the jurisdiction of panther control out of just the Game and Fish Commission's hands, into the panther committee's hands which what they do now with the telemetry program I'm not really sure, but we think that there's the possibility they might just completely disband with the telemetry program. So it's just you know like one thing leads to another. There's always something.