

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

ADDRESS ONLY
THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

January 15, 1944.

MEMORANDUM for the Secretary.

My recent conference with Governor Holland of Florida, regarding which I reported to you briefly on January 4, made it clear that, in view of the present oil expectations, it will be necessary for us to revise our approach if we are to accomplish substantial preservation of wildlife and other values in the Everglades. For this reason, I am attaching for your consideration a map of the Everglades National Park Project showing suggested acquisition priorities, together with a draft of a proposed amendment to the Everglades Act.

The present Everglades Act requires that all of the land within the designated boundaries must be conveyed to the Federal Government before the park can be established. This has proved to be too stringent a requirement and was one of the reasons for the long delay. Now that there is some prospect of oil, it makes the accomplishment impossible without some modification of our requirements.

I suggest that we amend the act to authorize placing a minimum area under the National Park Service for protection purposes as was done in the case of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, with a provision that the park itself may not be established or developed until a major portion of the remainder of the authorized area is vested in the Government for park purposes. The suggested minimum area is shown as Unit #1 on the attached map. Acquisition Units #1 to #5, inclusive, comprise roughly that portion of the authorized project that would be required before the park could be established. The proposed bill makes no reference to the Units shown on the map. It merely establishes the minimum area at 200,000 acres. Exact boundaries would have to be worked out in negotiations with the State of Florida.

Governor Holland has urged that we accept State lands for the park, subject to reservations of oil, gas, and mineral rights. I told him that this would defeat our objectives in establishing a national park. You confirmed this position when I discussed it with you recently. The Governor has indicated that he will approve conveyance of certain "key areas" free from all reservations, but these would not be of sufficient size or importance to justify designating them a "national park".

