

14910  
1-7-44  
Drury  
H-1-7-44  
B.H.J.  
Hawley  
Dr. Russell

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

SOUTHEASTERN NATIONAL MONUMENTS

St. Augustine, Florida

January 5, 1944



MEMORANDUM for the Director.

The following is a chronological report on conferences held between December 30 and January 1 inclusive on Everglades National Park problems. Our recollection of the various meetings is given in chronological order, and is followed by a summary and recommendations which appear as logical conclusions.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30:

Mr. Abrahams and I met Director Drury at the Antilla Hotel, Coral Gables about 2 p.m. After a brief review of the Everglades park situation, we agreed to meet again as soon as plans of Governor Holland and Congressman Peterson could be determined.

Governor Holland and Congressman Peterson notified Director Drury and I to meet them at the El Commodoro Hotel at 7 p.m. at the Governor's suite for dinner. After dinner the Governor, Congressman Peterson and the Director discussed the problem of establishing the national park in face of extensive oil operations. The Governor's proposal was to set aside fee simple, without the reservation of mineral rights, several key areas of several thousand acres in order to establish protection for the bird rookeries, feeding grounds and other important biological features. The Director and I brought out the fact that rookeries and feeding grounds move around considerably from year to year according to the instincts of the birds and existing water conditions in the Everglades. The Governor proposed to establish some form of time limit on exploration and drilling for oil in the remaining area and the Director pointed out that the Fish and Wildlife Service might take over custody of the areas subject to oil exploration and drilling. Congressman Peterson was of the opinion that procedure along this line might be advantageous as it would be a start on actual park establishment. He believed that the proper thing to do was to "get your foot in the door". The opinion was expressed by Governor Holland and Congressman Peterson that protection by the National Park Service might be provided without the conveyance of lands, on a basis similar to the cooperative administration established at certain historic sites. The Director was of the opinion that this legislation covered only historic sites and did not cover natural areas, but agreed to check the legislation to see if such a program is possible.

The point was raised by the Director, in connection with the Governor's proposal to set up a number of small key areas, that the exploration and drilling for oil in surrounding lands might destroy wildlife values in the key areas and there was a possibility that the Federal