

that this technicality be given some study by checking the law under which the state of Florida acquired these lands. Mr. Elliot stated that in some cases oil might not be considered a part of the fee when lands were conveyed. It was his opinion that nothing might be gained immediately by the possession of such knowledge, but he thought it might be good information to have in reserve.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the above discussions we believe that four courses are open with regard to our future program. These are as follows:

1. We can withhold any further action with regard to the establishment of the park until the present enthusiasm has subsided, in the hope that oil will not be found within the park boundary and that natural resources will be protected in the meantime by the state and by private agencies.

2. We can follow the Governor's suggestion to accept limited key areas, although the acquisition of these key areas would be restricted for the present to those owned by the state. Consideration in this case should be given to the fact that wildlife rookeries and feeding grounds are very transient and depend upon the instincts of the birds and the availability of food supplies which depend on water conditions.

3. We can propose to the state that the area be established in units as we discussed with the Director and outlined on the small map prepared the night of December 31. After the discussion with Mr. Carl Hawkins, it appears that no lands would be conveyed, either surface rights or mineral rights until the oil problem is solved. By this same token we doubt if the state of Florida would be willing to convey any sizable area because of the same reason of increased land values which now prevail. However, the program might be worth trying if the future oil probabilities would not be too great a hazard.

4. The Federal Government and the state could work out a program of protective custody over the entire area whereby the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service would act jointly on a program which would protect important natural resources against destruction. In order to be effective, such a program would have to apply both to state and private lands and would undoubtedly require additional state and federal legislation. As far as Federal agencies are concerned, the responsibility between the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service could be carried out somewhat in reverse to that which now applies to National Park Service areas.

According to a broad appraisal of the situation as it now exists the following conditions seem to dictate that we consider the most important problem of protection first and the problem of land acquisition later. Technically, the responsibility for acquisition and for interim protection is held by the state of Florida. The National Park Service or the Federal Government is not legally responsible for protection,