

RESOLUTION NO. 91-56

A RESOLUTION OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY SUPPORTING A PETITION TO THE GOVERNOR AND CABINET OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA SIGNED BY OVER 1,000 CITIZENS OF NORTHWEST AND SOUTHWEST COMMUNITIES OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY REQUESTING DENIAL OF ANY FURTHER SUBMERGED LAND LEASE PROPOSALS ALONG THE EASTERN SHORELINE OF THE ST. JOHNS RIVER IN ST. JOHNS COUNTY .

WHEREAS, the eastern shoreline of the St. Johns River contains a substantial distribution of submerged aquatic vegetation beginning at Durbin-Julington Creeks and increasing upriver southward to areas of Fruit Cove, Switzerland, Hallowes Cove, Orangedale, Palmo Cove, Colee Cove, Florence Cove, Picolata, and Tocoï;

WHEREAS, the protection and enhancement of wetlands, submerged land vegetation, freshwater, riverine, and estuarine habitats and their related biota are all vitally needed for wildlife and endangered wildlife; and for the reproduction and life history of marine aquatic life;

WHEREAS, this area of the St. Johns estuary has been designated critical habitat for the endangered Florida manatees seen regularly in Durbin-Julington Creeks, Cunningham Creek, Hallowes Cove, and upriver south to Tocoï, where they feed, rest, cavort, and give birth;

WHEREAS, this area of the river includes a unique area much of which is reminiscent of the St. Johns River prior to residential development of the region, and residential retainment or state acquisition could ultimately preserve the aesthetic and historical characteristics of the region;

WHEREAS, the eastern shoreline of the St. Johns River in St. Johns County is bordered by the state-designated, historical William Bartram Scenic Highway (named after the noted botanist, William Bartram, who canoed the entire shoreline, camped and wrote his notes, not only on the beautiful banks of Switzerland, but also at Fort Picolata);

WHEREAS, conservation and preservation of this resourceful habitat is urgently needed through denial of submerged land lease of the state to such entities such as marinas, public and private (see Dr. Carole DeMort's Deposition dated May 1, 1990), public boat ramps on river grass beds, multiple family marinas, food processing plants, boat repair, and fuel service on the river;

WHEREAS, there are at present ten marinas in a 28-mile area from Julington Creek to Tocoï (five offering fuel service, three offering boat repair), a major ship repair facility at Green Cove Springs, and Green Cove Springs Marina having 700-boat-slip potential;

WHEREAS, rapid growth, five developments of regional impact (two approved and three proposed), a Department of Environmental Regulation permit for an 84-slip transient marina within one mile of Hallowes Cove, and the proposed DOT southern loop beltway threaten critical habitat for 32 species of fin fish and shell fish and the survival of their ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, the State Comprehensive Plan does not protect these areas until 1993, and this proposed aquatic preserve is not now before the legislature.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, this 12 day of March, 1991, the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, request the following:

The Governor and Cabinet sitting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund declare the aforementioned river and creek systems shown on attached document as critical habitat for natural and historical resources, so as to preserve the many ecosystems of this area for present and future generations and further request the Governor and Cabinet sitting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund to deny all submerged land lease proposals along the eastern shoreline of the St. Johns River in St. Johns County.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA this 12th day of March, 1991.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By:

  
ITS CHAIRMAN

ATTEST: CARL "BUD" MARKEL, CLERK

By:

  
Deputy Clerk

