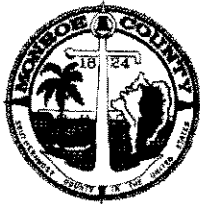


# County of Monroe


Growth Management Division  
2798 Overseas Highway  
Suite 410  
Marathon, Florida 33050  
Voice: 305.289. 2500  
FAX: 305.289. 2536



Board of County Commissioners  
Mayor Dixie Spehar, District 1  
Mayor Pro Tem Charles "Sonny" McCoy, District 3  
George Neugent, District 2  
David Rice, District 4  
Murray E. Nelson, District 5

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Timothy J. McGarry, AICP   
Director of Growth Management

DATE: November 10, 2005

SUBJECT: **Workshop for Review of Proposed Boundary Delineation Criteria and Special Protection Area Maps**

### Overview

On Tuesday, 2:30 p.m., November 15, 2005, in Key Largo, the Board of County Commissioners will hold a special workshop meeting with Growth Management staff to review and discuss proposed boundary delineation criteria and Special Protection Area maps. The Board will not be taking any formal action on the proposed criteria and maps, but will have the opportunity to obtain input from the staff on the preparation of these materials and to provide guidance to the staff on preparation of the final draft criteria on delineation of the SPA boundaries and the final draft maps of the Special Protection Area. The final draft Special Protection Area maps and overlay ordinance will need to be considered at least at one public hearing before adoption.

Unfortunately, Secretary Cohen will not be able to attend the meeting, but he has asked that the County go forward with the meeting. I have requested that if at all possible Jim Quinn or Rebecca Jetton be present at the meeting. If unable to attend, they indicated that they would be available by telephone.

### Special Protection Areas

Consistent with the "Action Plan" approved by the Board of County Commissioners to memorialize the understanding reached with DCA Secretary Cohen concerning improving habitat protection, the Board of County Commissioners adopted ordinances on September 22, 2005, amending the Comprehensive Plan to implement the Goal 105/Tier System including the provisions for establishment of Special Protection Areas within Tier III designated areas.

The Special Protection Areas are intended to delineate those parcels or lots located partially or wholly within a tropical hardwood hammock or pineland (referred hereafter as “upland native habitat”) patch of one or more acres in size. The agreement with DCA Secretary Cohen specifies that roads, other than U.S. Highway 1, will not constitute a break in contiguity of these upland native habitat areas.

Lots or parcels will receive a ROGO allocation scoring of +20 points, rather than +30 points, if any portion of a upland native habitat patch is cleared within a patch of one acre or greater in area within a designated Special Protection Area. Even if a lot or parcel is located within a Special Protection Area, if no portion of the upland native habitat is cleared, the application will receive +30 points under ROGO.

### **Process for Delineation of Special Protection Areas**

The process for delineation of the Special Protection Areas (SPA) by the staff was as follows:

1. A series of working survey maps with grids were generated from the County’s Geographical Information System that overlaid parcel, 2004 aerial photographs and environmental (ADID maps) data layers.
2. A team of two biologists went into the field and did a lot by lot survey of unincorporated Monroe County within proposed Tier III areas, conducting on site inspections as appropriate, to update the existing habitat data by identifying newly cleared and developed properties; extent of hammock and other native upland habitat; upland habitat with 40 percent or more of invasive species; and wetlands. In some cases specific GPS input data were taken to define the extent of the upland habitat, where deemed appropriate by survey team.
3. The survey maps with the biologists’ field notes and GPS information was inputted into the County’s GIS and the existing data layers edited by GIS staff.
4. Any vacant lots or parcels receiving a ROGO allocation or with an issued building permit as of September 28, 2005, were identified and added as a data layer for the final maps.
5. The staff prepared a specific set of criteria to be followed in the delineation of the specific boundaries, including more specific criteria regarding “connectivity” of hammock that incorporated the need identified by both Secretary Cohen and Board of County Commissioners for flexible and rational delineation of the SPA boundaries that makes sense from both scientific and practical standpoints (see Attachment).
6. The staff completed an initial identification of potential SPAs in the Lower Keys, sharing the draft delineation criteria and SPA maps with DCA staff, who were in

general accord with the staff's work. Several minor revisions were made to the draft delineation criteria based on this identification process and discussions with DCA staff.

7. The staff completed an initial identification of potential SPAs in the Upper Keys based on the revised criteria and procedures followed in the Lower Keys.
8. The SPA maps for both the Lower and Upper Keys were finalized after the team of biologists completed follow-up fields surveys where needed. [A series of maps depicting the proposed Special Protection Areas are enclosed with this report. These maps were sent to DCA.]

### **Guidance from the Board**

The staff will brief the Board on the criteria and the proposed Special Protection Area Maps. Although the Board is not being asked to take any formal action on either the criteria or maps at this time, the staff is seeking input from the Board on any changes needed to be made or issues to be further investigated prior to the preparation of the final criteria and maps.

The staff will prepare the final draft criteria for delineation of the boundaries of the SPAs and the final draft SPA maps based on guidance provided by the Board. The criteria and maps will be incorporated into appropriate ordinance form, which will also require a revision to the draft Tier Map to include SPAs. The draft ordinance and revised Tier Map will still need to go through a public hearing and adoption process along with the other proposed ordinances to implement the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan amendments enacted for the Goal 105/Tier System.

Attachment – Proposed Criteria for Delineation of Special Protection Area Boundaries  
Enclosure - Proposed Special Protection Area Maps

ATTACHMENT

**PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR  
DELINEATION OF SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA BOUNDARIES**

1. The following conditions shall constitute a break in the hammock for purposes of calculating the one-acre minimum size for hammocks in the designation of SPA boundaries:
  - a. U.S. Highway 1;
  - b. Property lines of developed lots or vacant lots with a ROGO allocation award or an issued building permit, as of September 28, 2005, located within a Land Use District that allows only one dwelling unit per lot;
  - c. Roads other than U.S. Highway 1, where the hammock on both sides of the intervening road results in 50 feet or less of mutually adjacent hammock frontage if the roadway were not present and the two separated hammock patches could be directly joined together at an angle perpendicular to the intervening roadway;
  - d. Canals and open water; and
  - e. Hammocks with invasive coverage of 40 percent or greater.
2. A lot or combination of lots totaling 10,000 square feet or less in area across an intervening road and surrounded on at least three sides by a developed lot shall not be considered part of a one-acre hammock.
3. The following conditions shall not constitute a break in hammock for purposes of calculating the one-acre minimum for hammocks in the designation of SPA boundaries:
  - a. Property lines of developed parcels of 10,000 square feet or more in size located within a Land Use District that allows more than one dwelling unit or non-residential development.
  - b. Roads other than U.S. Highway 1, where the hammock on both sides of the intervening road results in 51 feet or more of mutually adjacent hammock frontage, if the roadway were not present and the two separated hammock patches could be directly joined together at an angle perpendicular to the intervening roadway.
4. Special Protection Area boundaries shall follow property lines wherever possible, except where a parcel line or a distinct geographical feature, such as a canal or roadway, may be more appropriate.