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May 4, 2016

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Collier County Local Rule Review Committee

Dear Sir/Madam:

As a member of the Mangrove Action Group, an environmental organization founded twenty years ago to monitor and preserve the 570 acre mangrove estuary known as Clam Bay, I wish to clarify comments submitted regarding the manatees.

The Seagate community was started in the 1950's although most of the private homes and all of the high rises were built after the Clean Water Act of the 1970's was enacted into law. Since that time their boating rights have been protected as they existed when developed. When the county constructed a boardwalk across Outer Clam Bay twenty years ago, a draw bridge was installed to protect those rights even though it has not been opened in the past nineteen years. However, the Act prevented further destruction of the mangroves using the dredge and fill method.

The Coast Guard never approved red/green lateral aids to navigation. The signs that were approved and required were canoe trail markers used to locate the channel so users do not travel outside of the channel in order to protect the natural vegetation. Lateral navigation signs do not require you to remain in the channel.

Because the natural flow of the estuary waters had been disrupted with development north and south of Clam Bay, it has become necessary to periodically dredge the pass when the mangroves are threatened. The dredging is never for navigation which is not permitted. Coincidentally the pass is currently being dredged and the workmen have sighted manatees while working. They are there.

Sincerely,

Theodore J. Raia, Jr.