

May 13, 2013

To: Collier County Local Rule Review Committee and
Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission staff

From: Marcia Cravens, Florida Master Naturalist for Coastal Systems, founder of Friends of Clam Bay, past president of Mangrove Action Group, past Interim Chair of Sierra Club Calusa Group, past chairperson of Environmental Confederation of SWF, member of Paradise Coast Paddlers Club, resident of Pelican Bay in Collier County

Subject: My initial statements to recommend adding an Idle Speed No Wake Manatee Protection Zone (ISNW MPZ) over the entire Clam Bay Natural Resources Protection Area (NRPA) in the Clam Pass/Bay System- which includes all of Clam Pass; Inner, Upper, Outer Clam Bays; and the creeks that connect those back bays to Clam Pass.

I respectfully request and recommend that ISNW MPZ be recommended to the FWC Commission for their final determination on updates to the Florida Manatee Management Plan and Florida Manatee Protection Zone Maps, for the Collier County's coastal waterbodies portion of them.

I enjoy the Clam Pass - Clam Bay NRPA for its natural resources that include several features of manatee habitat, those being, mangroves shorelines, seagrass areas, and freshwater inputs.

I enjoy seeing the wildlife in this area and my enjoyment of the wildlife in Clam Pass and its interior waterbodies is ruined when motorized watercraft operate at higher than idle speed that creates wakes; reduces seagrass recruitment, growth and abundance; loosens mangrove tree roots; and risks propeller injury to manatee or other marine life.

Others have cited passages of the Florida Statutes with the Florida Sanctuary Act and the portion of Florida Administrative Code that addresses this issue so in my initial statements, I will not also cite them. However, I do want to state that it is clear that not only are there provisions in Florida Environmental Laws for the adoption of boating speed restrictions for the purpose of manatee protection, Florida Environmental Law also provides for adoption of boating speed restrictions for the purpose of protecting manatee habitat, such as seagrass (not excluding other manatee habitat such as mangroves vegetated waterbodies and waterbodies with freshwater inputs).

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my comments on this important issue.

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