

Karen Gustin, Superintendent of Big Cypress National Preserve will provide an update on the ongoing effort to develop a general management plan for the Addition. The Addition consists of approximately 147,000 acres that were added to the Preserve by the Addition Act of 1988. Since that time the National Park Service has been acquiring lands, with the majority of the lands being transferred to federal ownership through the Florida – Arizona Land Exchange that was completed with the Collier family in 1996. The National Park Service prepared and presented to the public a range of preliminary alternatives in 2005. The public provided input to these alternatives. Since this time it became clear that some stakeholders wanted to see the additional detail in the plan concerning motorized access and that other stakeholders want to the NPS to complete a wilderness study of these lands as required by the Addition Act. Based on this input, the NPS has expanded the scope of the general management plan to include a wilderness study and an off-road vehicle management plan. For the past year, the NPS has been conducting additional analysis of the area to address these new components of the plan as well as seeking additional public input. The NPS has been working on developing another set of preliminary alternatives. A newsletter and series of public workshops presenting to the public the new alternatives for this combined planning effort will be occurring in the Spring of 2007.