

PALM BEACH VESSEL TRAFFIC STUDY CONSENSUS GROUP
TOWN OF JUPITER COMMUNITY CENTER
200 MILITARY TRAIL – ROOMS A AND B
JUPITER, FL
MAY 5, 2009 – 4:30 P – 5:30 P

The workshop was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Captain Carol Keyser.

Members of the FWC Boating and Waterway staff in attendance: Major Paul Ouellette, Captain Carol Keyser, Ms. Tara Alford, Mr. Luke Davis, FWC - GHQ, Tallahassee; Mr. Bill Sargent, FWC - St. Petersburg.

Local FWC Law Enforcement in attendance: Captain Dave Schaeffer, Lieutenant Chuck Russo, FWC - West Palm Beach. Other attendees included: Mr. Roger Anderson, PBS&J.

Consensus Group members in attendance: Mr. Gene Folden, Ms. Val Kattel, Dr. Ted Schiff, Mr. Gerald Ward, Mr. Leonard Rubin. Not attending was: Ms. Amy Tolderund, Mr. Bill Taylor, Ms. Jena Bradley, and Mr. Mark Tamblyn.

The questions and comments below were provided by the group.

Major Ouellette spoke to the group and thanked them for coming. He talked about the work and effort put into the product by all participants. He explained agency authority and responsibilities: to address vessel collision risk, public safety risk, and maritime property endangerment.

He reiterated our inability to regulate the ICW or any other body of water for riparian property protection.

Mr. Henry Nesmith – He wanted to know the difference between the consensus group and the actual workshop. FWC responded that they want to get a broad overview from people who live and work along the ICW, in order to provide us with a realistic approach as to what we're doing and why we are here. This group represents a good cross-section of residents in the area, and so it assists FWC with achieving that goal.

Mr. Gerald Ward – He had questions from the last meeting on citations and boating accident data. Either expand the range or confirm its correctness. Captain Keyser advised that FWC reservists collected data on vessels in the ICW. FWC currently is reviewing the data and hope to have this information available online in the near future.

Major Ouellette explained that some types of citations and accidents are not relevant to the criteria used to implement boating restricted areas for safety.

Mr. Ward wanted to know when the draft rule was placed online (May 5, 2009, while in route to Palm Beach County). He also wanted to know if we'd be providing a schedule for rulemaking tonight; FWC staff responded by advising we thought

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that was a little premature since the language was just provided via the internet and was to be reviewed at the workshops tonight and tomorrow.

Mr. Ward went on to state that he forwarded the draft language to other individuals and had spoken to other folks about the draft language, who felt the language was somewhat premature.

Gerald addressed several unresolved questions which were raised at the last consensus meeting: the Indiantown Bridge (proposed boat ramp), the matrix and the two focus areas (located between Donald Ross Bridge and the end of Lake Worth Creek). He questioned where we were on these issues, staff explained that we were still in the review process and the purpose of the meeting was to review the proposed rule.

Mr. Gene Folden – Boca Raton – While six (6) citations were referenced in the vessel traffic study, the Boca Raton marine unit wrote 1,183 citations during the period of the study.

He also mentioned that we would be hearing from folks around the Boca Raton area relative to the focus area highlighted in the vessel traffic study for Highland Beach. FWC staff advised this area was not being proposed as a regulatory zone, but was only a focus area in the study.

He also mentioned regulation of vessels over 35' in the area between Spanish River Bridge and the north end of Lake Wyman, so the area could continue to be used as a 'water sports' area.

Staff pointed out the area from Spanish River Bridge south is currently regulated as a manatee protection area as: 50' slow speed buffer (year round) excluding ICW channel; as well as a 30MPH (June 1 – Sept. 30) and 25MPH (Oct. – April) zone. This zone extends south to the north end of Lake Wyman. In addition, the 'boat ramp' at Spanish River Park is for canoes/kayaks only.

Mr. John Sprague – Marine Industries – He had several points on the proposal, which were; objection to idle speed no wake in all locations with substantial currents as he calls it navigational hazards; he also wanted to know if we could tell him the area and distance under current regulation and the area and distance under non-regulation (to include boating and manatee zones); he wanted full simplification of boating safety and manatee zones on the maps so stakeholders can see the full breadth of regulation of the ICW; he also pointed out the proposed idle speed no wake zone on the west side of Peanut Island be removed and left as currently regulated at slow speed, also pointing out that marinas on the east side of Peanut Island (Singer Island) have only slow speed regulation.

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Dr. Ted Schiff – He requested that we ‘redo’ the survey (conducted by the reservists) in the Bert Winter focus area (Donald Ross Bridge to Mouth of Lake Worth) because he felt the weather was not good for boating on the days they were present. He would be good with only one other day of review, a good boating day.

He and his neighbors still believe this area (Donald Ross to mouth of Lake Worth) needs to be Idle Speed No Wake. He also referenced his disappointment in their inability to have the matrix at this meeting, stating many folks had specifically been requested to attend for the matrix portion.

Mr. Leonard Rubin – He was happy to see that FWC had reviewed the area, and believes that while we are not “all the way there”, he is happy to see that a Slow Speed zone is being considered for the area between Donald Ross bridge to the mouth of Lake Worth Creek.

The consensus group adjourned at 5:45 p.m.