

**Big Cypress National Preserve
ORV Advisory Committee Meeting
August 28, 2013**

Minutes

The Big Cypress National Preserve (BICY) ORV Advisory Committee (ORVAC) held their regularly scheduled meeting on August 28, 2013, at the Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center, Ochopee, Florida. The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Pedro Ramos, BICY Superintendent.

Committee Members Present: Franklin Adams, David Denham, John Adornato, Barbara Jean Powell, Brad Cornell, Dennis Wilson, Chuck Hampton, Wayne Jenkins, Karl Greer, Laurie Macdonald, Manley Fuller. **Not Present:** Win Everham, Jenny Richards, Jorge Gutierrez, Robin Barnes. **BICY Staff Present:** Pedro Ramos, Damon Doumlele, David Hamm, Bob DeGross, Steve Schulze, Susan Rossi, Renee Mackenzie, David Fireman, Jared Barber, Ron Clark, Don Hargrove, Ryan Stubblebine, Valerie Clark, Leslie Wells.

Approximately 14 members of the public were present.

The meeting was facilitated by Delia Clark.

Mr. Ramos opened the meeting by welcoming the attendees and thanking the committee members for their service, the public for taking the time to attend, and BICY staff for putting the meeting together. After leading the Pledge of Allegiance, he turned the meeting over to Ms. Clark, who went over the agenda. She explained that this was a committee meeting and that members of the public were present as observers. There would be several public comment periods to provide opportunity for the public to speak on agenda items. She noted that the meeting was being videotaped.

Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the May 29, 2013, meeting were approved as presented.

Superintendent's Report. Mr. Ramos welcomed Chuck Collins, Regional Director for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Mr. Ramos announced that Jorge Gutierrez and Robin Barnes could not be present and noted that this would have been Ms. Barnes' last meeting, as her term was expiring. Mr. Ramos stated that the Preserve had temporarily closed 42% of the mileage of secondary trails pending a NEPA review in connection with preparation of a Backcountry Management Plan. The plan will also address camping and will define a permanent location for the Florida National Scenic Trail and other hiking trails. Public scoping meetings will probably be held in the fall. Because of staff involvement in the planning effort, Mr. Ramos announced that the November ORVAC meeting would be postponed until March or April. There will be two meetings next year instead of the usual four. Mr. Ramos announced that five access points are under development: two at I-75 mile marker 63, which will be completed by the end of 2014, and three at Paces Dike, Skillet North, and Monroe Station, which will be completed in October. The Hunting Management Plan will also be completed in October. In response to a question, Mr. Ramos stated that he did not expect the Addition to be open to ORVs

in 2015, but that the Preserve would start interacting with the ORVAC that year with respect to the ORV trail system. Hunting in the Addition may occur in the 2014-15 hunting season.

Vehicle Specifications. Mr. Adams gave a report from the Vehicle Specifications Subcommittee. The ORVAC was referred to the subcommittee's recommendations (attachment). Beginning with the subcommittee's recommended vehicle class descriptions on pages 13-15, the committee took the following actions:

Class A: Recommended as presented

Class B: Recommended as presented but modify the 12-inch rear tire width requirement to grandfather previously permitted vehicles with narrower tires; added that this class includes vehicles that do not fall into the other classes

Class C: Recommended as presented

Class D: Recommended as presented

Class E: Recommended as presented

The subcommittee suggestions on page 12 were discussed, and the committee took the following actions:

Suggestion No. 1: Recommended as presented; language to be modified by the NPS as appropriate to be in accordance with state and federal regulations

Suggestion No. 2: Deferred

Suggestion No. 3: Recommended as presented

Suggestion No. 4: No action but noted for the minutes

Public Comment—Vehicle Specifications. Shannon Larsen said that all vehicles make noise and impact regardless of the tire type. Chains do cause impact and damage. She hoped that the 60-day closure would forever remain in effect and would like to see the closure spaced out over the seasons.

Bobby C. Billie (Council of the Original Miccosukee Simanolee Nation Aboriginal Peoples) said that swamp buggies cause impacts. Not only the 9-inch tires, but the number of vehicles must be considered. The tourist industry is moving in to make money. All the present enjoyment will not be here anymore. God's creation needs to be saved, not attacked.

Lyle McCandless (Big Cypress Sportsmen's Alliance, Big Cypress Stakeholders Group) wanted and received confirmation that 2-wheel and 4-wheel-drive swamp buggies would be allowed. He said that 12-inch tires would have less impact and be more stable than 9-inch tires. He strongly believed that the ORV driver's license requirement and the frequency of vehicle re-inspection need to be changed.

Charles Barley said that chains impact roads and parking lots but not the Preserve. The only thing that matters is what is rolling on the ground. We don't need any more regulations. He did not think that animals are as concerned with noise as we think they are.

John Stephens said that a letter in connection with a lawsuit instructed the NPS not to pay attention to the ORVAC and that all of the committee members had been labeled as pro-ORV and pro-trails. He thanked the committee for trying to be balanced. He asked the committee to implement the plan and noted that they were trying to do that.

Vehicle Specifications—Concluding Discussion. Subcommittee recommendations and suggestions were reviewed, and Ms. Clark agreed to write up and email a formal recommendation for the committee's review.

ORV Permit Fee. Mr. Fireman gave a presentation on the Federal Lands Recreation Act. Public Law 108-447 gives the NPS authority to collect fees, such as for ORV permits and camping. Starting October 1, the NPS will collect fees at all the frontcountry campgrounds and at Bear Island Campground. Campers will also have to make reservations by phone or online. All ORV permit fees collected remain at Big Cypress and help defray the costs of the ORV program; camping fees go back into the camping program. The total annual cost for running the ORV program is just under \$1 million. Last year the Preserve sold about 1,600 permits, generating about \$80,000 in revenue.

Mr. Ramos clarified that the NPS would like to hear from the committee what a reasonable cost of the ORV permit should be.

Mr. Adams stressed that the NPS should look at ways to save money, e.g., idle construction equipment. Mr. Fuller recommended a user survey to include an assessment of the degree of visitor satisfaction.

Public Comment—ORV Permit Fee. Charles Barley wanted to make sure that the fees reported for maintenance of ORV trails did not include maintenance of non-ORV-related facilities.

Lyle McCandless reminded those in attendance that he and others had conducted an ORV count during the 2008-09 hunting season. The average count during the 11-week period was 122 ORVs per week or one ORV per 4,565 acres. He was interested in knowing how the 2,000 annual permit limit was established. The higher ORV permit fee is a win-win for the NPS and a lose-lose for ORV users in that it will generate more revenue for the NPS and discourage people from using ORVs.

Jules Mazzarantani noted that the trails are increasingly being used by hikers and bikers and asked that the fee burden not be placed solely on ORV users. He asked that the NPS keep in mind that recreational expenses are the discretionary expenses of every family. He asked that a

multi-vehicle discount be considered and noted that people who come from places such as Fort Lauderdale and Miami to use the trails incur additional expenses such as fuel and trailer tags.

Bobby C. Billie said that the committee was protecting “papers” and not nature. He does not want 4-wheel or 2-wheel drive vehicles, only two-legged walking into the woods.

Shannon Larsen said that the ORV permit fee definitely needs to be raised. She was concerned with the \$400,000 cost of stabilizing the trails. She believed that having a gated parking area only for ORV users was discriminatory.

Operator Permit Orientation and Access Point Kiosks. Mr. DeGross went over the education required for people coming into the Preserve. For first-time ORV users in the Preserve, education begins on the Preserve website, which has a number pages relating to trails and obtaining permits. After obtaining information from the web, the user must come in for orientation training. Prior to the meeting, Mr. DeGross had sent the Education and Public Use Subcommittee mock-ups of proposed displays at the backcountry kiosks for review. There are two types of kiosks, one at the general access sites and one at the wildlife check stations, and Mr. DeGross reviewed the types of information displayed at each. The ORV operator orientation is being revised from the current PowerPoint presentation available at the Oasis ORV permit office to an interactive, web-based program which the user can access either from the permit office or at home. After answering questions at the end of the process, the user is allowed to fill out the form that provides information for issuance of an operator’s permit.

Mr. Stubblebine gave an explanation of the interactive program, which was modeled after a similar program for boaters in Florida Bay. He would like to see the program go live by the end of the year, if possible. Mr. DeGross asked if committee members would volunteer to review the program and make suggestions for improvement.

General Public Comment. Shannon Larsen questioned the need to fill over ten acres of wetlands in the Addition for ORV trail stabilization. She was also against the overhead power lines to be installed along US 41 and Eleven Mile Road, as well as the River of Grass Greenway.

Bobby C. Billie said he was there to collect information to challenge people who are destroying his culture, way of life, and God’s creation. His people own five million acres in Florida, and what others are doing on the land is illegal. His people are almost at the point of requiring payment for damage to the land.

Bill Clark said that in regard to camping and permit fees, it was not the right time to raise fees when businesses are struggling financially. All that will happen is that locals will be aggravated.

Lyle McCandless said that the ORVAC should develop its own agenda for the good of the public in general, not just to help the NPS. The 60-day ORV closure is unnecessary. He said that he and others were left out of the loop in determining which secondary trails should be closed. He said that during at least two ORVAC meetings Mr. Ramos stated that the committee could take up the issues of 60-day and nightly closures.

Committee Open Discussion, Wrap-up, and Proposals for Agenda for Next Meeting.

Discussion ensued over issues, such as changes to the 60-day or nightly closures, that would require additional NEPA review, versus other issues that maybe can be changed without such a review. Mr. Adornato expressed concern that the proposed Backcountry Management Plan may be an opportunity to make significant changes to the ORV Management Plan. Mr. Ramos responded that the Backcountry Management Plan will focus on secondary ORV trails, hiking, and camping; it will not be a broad, open-ended planning effort.

Ms. Powell reminded the committee to review a letter recently submitted by Eric Kimmel and referred to a letter from Steve DeLine describing acts of vandalism by people removing signs. She suggested that perhaps landowners in the Little Deer area could work with the NPS to replace the signs.

The meeting adjourned at 8 pm.

Big Cypress National Preserve
Off-road Vehicle Advisory Committee
Vehicle Specifications Subcommittee

Summary of the Meeting

August 3, 2013

Meeting attendees: NPS staff: David Fireman, Rob Leonard; Subcommittee members: Franklin Adams, Brad Cornell, Lyle McCandless, Dennis Wilson, Bill Clark, Chuck Hampton, Karl Greer, Wayne Jenkins, Barbara Jean Powell. Members absent: Frank Denninger , Charles Barley and David Denham.

Call to order: Franklin Adams, Chairperson, called the ORVAC Vehicle Specifications Subcommittee to order at 10 AM, and asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of gladesman, retired Marine and Big Cypress camp owner Jack Kavanaugh who recently passed away.

Chronic Wasting Disease: Subcommittee members briefly discussed the issue of chronic wasting disease, which is always fatal to deer and other cervids. The disease is currently present in several other states, but not Florida. In an attempt to prevent it from entering the state, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission has proposed a rule to ban the importation of deer from outside Florida. Sportsmen and other conservationists enthusiastically support the rule.

Night and 60-day closures: Mr. Adams advised attendees that requests for lifting the 10 PM to 5 AM curfew and the 60-day closure were not included in the agenda of today's meeting. Although the items had strong support at the May 17, 2013

subcommittee meeting, it would be more appropriate for these items to be addressed by the full ORVAC.

Driver's license requirement: Mr. Clark raised the issue of BICY requiring ORV operators to have a driver's license. This is not a requirement for backcountry ORV operation under Florida law, and it prevents families from participating. Mr. Fireman observed that any change in license requirement must include appropriate adult supervision for youth operators. The subcommittee agreed, and observed that Florida law addresses the issue. Ms. Powell made a motion for the subcommittee to ask ORVAC to task the Education Subcommittee with reviewing the driver's license issue.

Five-year re-inspection: Mr. McCandless reminded attendees that at the May 17, 2013 subcommittee meeting there was consensus for recommending that the Preserve amend its re-inspection requirement. He observed that vehicles rarely undergo significant alterations after the first registration to merit the agency expense and operator inconvenience of the current 3-year inspection rotation.

After a discussion the subcommittee reached consensus to offer the following recommendation:

REQUEST ORVAC TO TASK THE AGENDA SUBCOMMITTEE TO INCLUDE ON THE NEXT MEETING AGENDA A REVIEW OF THE 10PM TO 5 AM CURFEW, THE 60-DAY CLOSURE, DRIVER'S LICENSE REQUIREMENT, AND THE VEHICLE REINSPECTION ISSUE.

Backcountry Access Plan: Mr. Fireman announced the NPS is developing a Backcountry Access Plan. The agency expects to start holding public scoping meetings this fall. It will take approximately two years to complete the planning process. The plan will give

guidance for the overall use of the trail system in the Preserve, and will clarify issues such as the definition of “destinations” as relates to secondary trails. The agency expects the clarifications to better assist ORVAC in making its recommendations.

Mr. Clark asked how closely the BICY trail program will align with other units of the national park system. Mr. Fireman responded that the Preserve has adopted the principles of Tread Lightly, however, BICY is unique in that its trail management is closer to a unit of a national forest than a national park. Another distinction is the Preserve’s trails are intended for multiple uses, although they are currently under-utilized by hikers. He added that the NPS is working to get a park-system wide policy in place.

Mr. Adams expressed a need to expand access into Bear Island from Hwy. 29 as a convenience to the public. Mr. Fireman indicated this will be addressed in the fall, and observed that the action would increase use of Bear Island, which could lead to a different type of recreational use which is expected to be addressed in the upcoming Backcountry Access Plan.

Subcommittee members discussed the issue of overall backcountry access. Mr. McCandless asserted that the designated trail system has been implemented arbitrarily with no science to justify the excessive limitations. He said he feels it is the job of the Preserve to evaluate the trails to determine an unacceptable impact threshold, rather than implementing solutions prior to a need for them. He asserted that backcountry access and use has plummeted dramatically since the Preserve was created, due to unnecessary regulation.

Mr. Fireman acknowledged that there are designated ORV trails that are not being used, and praised the Preserve superintendent for advocating for this planning process to clarify and provide acceptable uses.

Proposed camping fees: Mr. Fireman reported that BICY will be implementing a \$10 per night camping fee this fall at the Pink Jeep, Gator Head, and Main/Bear Island campgrounds in the Bear Island Unit.

All front country campground fees will be aligned with private campgrounds in the area, so as not to unfairly compete with private businesses.

Mr. Fireman said the action was a budget issue, and the Preserve is mandated to do cost recovery, adding that 100% of the fees will be put into the Preserve's campground operations. Reservations are expected to be available online so that campers will be assured a site when they arrive. Mr. Fireman acknowledged that there will be a "learning curve" during implementation.

Mr. Jenkins asked if the Preserve has considered re-opening Bear Island to backcountry primitive camping. Mr. Fireman said he does not anticipate that happening. Mr. Clark expressed concern that the camping fee will discourage campers who have long camped in Bear Island from returning.

Proposed ORV permit fee increase: Mr. Fireman reported that ORV permit fees also fall under the fee recovery mandate. ORVAC will receive a presentation on this issue at its August meeting.

Mr. Wilson questioned the policy of constructing yellow brick roads which the user group didn't want, and then charging the user group for them. Mr. McCandless agreed that "armored trails" are not what the user group desires.

Ms. Powell expressed the opinion that uses specifically mandated by congress, such as traditional recreational activities in place prior to the enabling legislation, should be provided largely through general

revenue, and that uses disallowed by congress, yet permitted none-the-less, should fall under the user pay policy.

Subcommittee guidelines: Mr. Fireman reminded attendees that only the full ORVAC can make recommendations to the NPS. It is the subcommittee's task to develop suggestions for the full ORVAC to consider in developing its recommendations.

Discussion of ORV specifications:

Mr. Fireman distributed copies of draft ORV specifications he compiled based upon discussions at the May 17 subcommittee meeting. He emphasized that the NPS had not made any decisions, and explained that he drew up the draft only to facilitate continued discussion.

ATVs/Class C ORVs: Mr. Adams reminded the subcommittee that ORVAC has received considerable public input voicing concern about social and resource issues associated with the operation of two-wheel drive ATVs designed primarily for high speed, mudding, and other uses inappropriate in a national preserve. At the May 17, 2013 subcommittee meeting, preliminary language was drafted to recommend the prohibition of two-wheel drive ATVs, with the exception of the old three-wheeled ATCs, which are grandfathered because there are so few still in use.

Subsequent to that meeting, it was learned that many of the newer ATVs on the market have features that give the operator the option of running in either two-wheel drive or four-wheel drive. Therefore, it became necessary to revisit the draft language to make sure the dual function ATVs were not unnecessarily prohibited. A solution was offered to change the requirement to read "four-wheel drive capable (except three-wheelers)".

Ms. Powell reminded the subcommittee that at least two handicapped individuals spoke to ORVAC at its last meeting, expressing concern about the proposed ban of two-wheel drive ATVs. The speakers had explained that due to their physical limitations, the lighter-weight two-wheel drives are the only ATVs they are capable of operating in the backcountry. Ms. Powell emphasized she could not support the proposed ban without assurances that exceptions would be made for genuinely disabled individuals.

Mr. Fireman observed that the ORV plan does not address access for individuals with special needs. Wounded Warriors returning from deployment would fall within this category.

Mr. Jenkins asserted the need to establish written guidelines for handicapped operator exemptions in order to provide staff a tool for fair and consistent regulation, and to prevent exploitation by able-bodied applicants. After a discussion the subcommittee reached consensus to offer the following recommendation:

REQUEST ORVAC TO RECOMMEND THAT THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE BE INCLUDED IN THE ATV/CLASS C CATEGORY RELATED TO THE PROPOSED 4-WHEEL DRIVE CAPABLE REQUIREMENT: “EXCEPTIONS FOR THE DISABLED ARE POSSIBLE ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS CONSISTENT WITH FEDERAL STATUTES.”

Sound abatement: The subcommittee discussed the draft language pertaining to sound abatement which stipulates: *“Muffler works and noise must not exceed 60-decibels at 50-feet.”* (CFR 2.12)

It was the consensus of the subcommittee that banning the go-fast two-wheel drive ATVs, coupled with the requirement for a working muffler, will adequately address sound issues.

Educational component: Mr. Wilson suggested having check station operators ask ATV operators to “exercise restraint” during certain hours. Subcommittee members discussed the concept and observed that restraint must be exercised at all times, which should be addressed through enforceable regulations and a good education component associated with the permitting process.

Mr. Fireman indicated that Preserve staff is working to create online curriculum for operator permitting.

Ms. Powell expressed the opinion that the Appropriate and Inappropriate Use Statement (recommended by ORVAC and adopted by the Preserve) should be included in the permit education program, as well as the actual permit signed by the applicant. Mr. McCandless agreed the Statement should be an integral part of the education program.

Airboats/Class A vehicles:

Subcommittee members discussed the draft airboat specifications. Ms. Powell observed that nowhere else in Florida, or other states that she is aware of, imposes size limits on airboats, and she questioned the need in the Preserve. A subcommittee member remarked that the benefit of a size limit would be to prevent large commercial ride boats, non-traditional to Zone 4 of the Stairsteps Unit, from being introduced.

Ms. Powell observed that the current specifications are not clear as to where on the airboat hull the width should be measured. After consulting with a manufacturer of the style of airboats traditional to the Preserve she suggested clarifying language consistent with industry standards. The word brake in the recommendation below refers to the seam at which the curved edge of the bottom of the airboat joins with the vertical sides of the airboat.

REQUEST ORVAC TO RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE PERTAINING TO AIRBOAT WIDTH: “Width 8-foot maximum, measured horizontally across the transom at the brake”.

Swampbuggies/Off-Highway Vehicles/Class B: Mr. Adams asked the subcommittee to consider recommending the use of reasonable-sized chains (inch to inch-and-a-half links) on slick tires since the Preserve has indicated it is open to the concept of two-wheel drive swampbuggies on the designated trail system.

Mr. Hampton said that with a designated trail system operators encounter few ruts. His buggy is equipped with smooth implement tires with grooves carved in them, which he runs in two-wheel drive much of the time because the loose rocks on the yellow brick roads tear up the vehicle’s ring and pinion gears when he runs in 4-wheel drive. He asserted that the size of traction devices Mr. Adams is requesting leaves less impact than some treaded tires, and the devices are generally only used seasonally.

Mr. McCandless remarked that a few old timers have buggies with slick 1200 x 15 airplane tires, as well as the historical two-wheeled buggy technology. He feels reasonable-sized chains should be permitted on these vehicles, whether they are two-wheel or four-wheel drive. After further discussion the following recommendation was reached by consensus:

REQUEST ORVAC TO RECOMMEND TIRE TRACTION DEVICES WITH A MAXIMUM 1.5-INCH LINK ON SMOOTH TIRES.

Tire size: Mr. McCandless urged the subcommittee to consider recommending that the minimum tire width on swampbuggies be

increased from 9-inches to 12-inches. Mr. Adams and Mr. Greer, and Mr. Clark agreed, indicating they have never seen buggies with tires narrower than 12-inches. Mr. Clark also agreed, saying he feels the larger tires would leave less impact on the secondary trails. An observation was made that two-wheel drive buggies often have more narrow tires on the front than on the rear.

Mr. Jenkins said he doesn't see a problem with allowing 9-inch tires on the designated trail system, and worried that increasing the minimum width would prevent some people from being able to access the woods.

Mr. Hampton said he knows of several vehicles that meet the legal criteria for swampbuggies that are small enough to be transported in the back of a pickup truck. Twelve-inch tires are generally too large for these vehicles. Ms. Powell indicated that as a youth she drove one such vehicle, and expressed concern that the subcommittee appeared to be preparing to make a recommendation without sufficient data on the number of these small buggies registered in the Preserve today, the size of their tires, or the impacts they leave.

Mr. Clark observed that current regulations permit street-legal vehicles to operate in Bear Island, yet they are generally heavier than swampbuggies and have 9-inch tires. Mr. Fireman responded that street-legal vehicles are permitted in Bear Island because the trail system is largely comprised of graded roads. Mr. Greer observed that most off-road trucks have 12-inch minimum tires.

A motion was made and approved without consensus (Ms. Powell casting the minority vote) for the subcommittee to make the following recommendation:

REQUEST ORVAC TO RECOMMEND THAT THE TIRE WIDTH FOR SWAMPBUGGIES BE AMENDED TO REQUIRE TIRES TO BE A MINIMUM OF 9-INCHES ON THE FRONT AND A MINIMUM OF 12-INCHES ON THE REAR, IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE IMPACTS.

Swampbuggy weight: Mr. Adams reminded the subcommittee that a member of the public, Mr. Frank Denninger, wrote to ORVAC opposing imposing a weight limit on swampbuggies.

Mr. Hampton observed that it is hard to place a weight limit on vehicles that will have varying weight added in the ordinary use, such as passengers, supplies, tools, coolers, etc.

Mr. Fireman advised the subcommittee that current federal regulations hold the owner responsible if a vehicle causes damage. He suggested the subcommittee consider language as follows: “Weight is not in excess to cause damage to primary trails road surface.”

Mr. Cornell suggested expanding the language to encompass, “weight and design”.

Mr. Fireman amended his suggested language as follows: “Weight and design is not configured so as to cause excessive damage to the primary trails.” Subcommittee members questioned how the definition of “excessive damage” would be determined.

After more back-and-forth, consensus was reached to break for lunch. Returning refreshed, the subcommittee took up the weight issue again.

Mr. Clark suggested considering imposing pounds per square inch (psi) requirements on swampbuggies.

Ms. Powell observed that the concept of psi limits was extensively evaluated during the ORV Plan development, and was determined by both the ORV community and the NPS to be impractical for

myriad reasons, including: varying vehicle weight according to passengers and cargo, the wide variety of tire specifications for which the agency would have to constantly update and maintain manufacture's data, different methods of calculating psi, and staff having to bear the burden of the exhaustive training that would be required to undergo to keep up with it all.

Mr. McCandless asked if anybody has ever tried to register a vehicle that appears "excessive". Subcommittee members responded with a few examples, but added it that it occurs rarely and is self-limiting because if the design isn't appropriate for the conditions, the owner recognizes it right away and doesn't come back.

A motion was made for the subcommittee not to support the proposed weight/configuration statement. Mr. Cornell asserted that there is a need for guidance as to expectations for equipment function. He suggested that it be flexible enough to leave it open to law enforcement discretion. Subcommittee members unanimously agreed with the concept of Mr. Cornell's statement, but felt the language under discussion would not achieve the intended goal. Consensus was reached to strike the amended language in the working draft that pertains to vehicle weight and configuration.

Ms. Powell made a motion, approved by consensus, to offer the following recommendation as an alternative:

REQUEST ORVAC TO RECOMMEND THAT VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE AS TO OPERATION EXPECTATIONS: *"Vehicle operation must be consistent with the Preserve's Appropriate and Inappropriate Use Statement, so as to assure resource and infrastructure sustainability."*

Vehicle permit cap: Mr. McCandless observed that a few years ago he participated in a peak use survey of tow-vehicles parked at each of the Preserve's access sites. Over an eleven week span volunteers determined that all access sites combined averaged 122 ORVs accessing the 600,000 acre preserve on peak use days. He said this data led him to conclude that the total number of annual permits issued is irrelevant; it's the number of actual vehicles in use at any given time that matters.

**BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE OFF-ROAD VEHICLE
COMMITTEE VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE**

SUGGESTIONS TO FULL COMMITTEE

AUGUST 3, 2013

1. Request ORVAC to recommend that the following language be included in the ATV/Class C category related to the proposed 4-wheel drive capable requirement:
“Exceptions for the disabled are possible on a case-by-case basis, consistent with federal statutes.
2. Request ORVAC to recommend that the following language be included in the Class B: Swampbuggies category: *‘Smooth tires are permitted to be equipped with tire traction devices having a maximum of 1.5-inch links.*
3. Request ORVAC to recommend that vehicle specifications for all classes of vehicles include the following guidance as to operation expectations:

“Vehicle operation must be consistent with the Preserve’s Appropriate and Inappropriate Use Statement, so as to assure resource and infrastructure sustainability.”

4. Request ORVAC to task its Agenda Subcommittee to include on the next ORVAC agenda a review of the:
- 10pm to 5 am curfew
 - 60-day closure
 - Driver’s license requirement
 - Frequency of vehicle re-inspection

CLASS A VEHICLES: AIRBOATS

Working white aft light to be seen 360-degrees

Hull length 14’ maximum, excluding grass rake

Width 8’ maximum, measured horizontally at the brake.

Must have an automotive-style factory muffler, per Florida Statute 327.391

Minimum of 6-inch FL numbers displayed on each side of the bow OR minimum 6” FL numbers displayed on each side of the rudders.

Orange safety flag 10” x 12” or larger flown at least 10-feet above the lowest part of the vessel and visible from any direction.

Fire extinguisher

Personal flotation devices (Life Jackets)

Port and starboard lights (Coast Guard requirement)

Hull identification number

CLASS B VEHICLES: SWAMPBUGGY

Tire width minimum of 9-inches on front, and 12-inches on rear of all buggies

Width 8-feet maximum

Working white headlight(s)

Working red tail light

Working muffler, engine sound not to exceed 60 decibels at 50-feet (36 CFR 2.12)

Vehicles are unclassifiable under vehicle categories A, C, D, or E

CLASS C VEHICLES: All-TERRAIN VEHICLES

Front tires 7-inch minimum

Rear tires 9-inch minimum

Working white headlight

Working red tail light

VIN number and title

Working muffler, engine sound not to exceed 60 decibels at 50-feet (36 CFR 2.12)

Four-wheel drive capable

CLASS D VEHICLES: STREET LEGAL 4 x 4

All tires 9-inch minimum

Working white headlights

Working red tail lights

Four-wheel drive capable

Working muffler, engine sound not to exceed 60 decibels at 50-feet
(36 CFR 2.12)

Current registration, insurance and VIN number

CLASS E VEHICLES: UTILITY TERRAIN VEHICLE (UTV)/SIDE-BY-SIDE (moved from Class B Swamp Buggies to new Class E).

All tires minimum 9-inches

Working white headlight(s)

Working red tail light

Width 8-foot maximum

Working muffler, engine sound not to exceed 60 decibels at 50-feet (
(36 CFR 2.12)

VIN number and title

Four-wheel drive capable

**Meeting discussions, summary and recommendations recorded
by Barbara Jean Powell on behalf of the ORVAC Vehicle
Specifications Subcommittee**

DRAFT