



**FRIENDS
OF THE
WEKIVA
RIVER,
INC.**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Come be a Part of a New Management Program being Launched to
Help Protect the Wekiva Wild & Scenic River!**

APOPKA –The Wekiva River System Advisory Management Committee, with representatives from the Cities of Apopka and Longwood; Lake, Seminole and Orange Counties, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, The Nature Conservancy, Florida Audubon, St. Johns River Water Management District, the Friends of the Wekiva River, Inc., and the National Park Service are requesting your attendance at the upcoming Wekiva Wild & Scenic River Community Workshop. Attendees will decide on a final logo design for the River which will be part of a new branding and identity program being created for environmental stewardship and protection of the beautiful Wekiva River!

This Community Workshop and participant selection of the future Logo Design for the River will be held on Wednesday, September 26, 2007 from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Youth Camp Meeting Hall, Wekiwa Springs State Park. The Park is located at 1800 Wekiwa Circle in Apopka, Florida. Light refreshments will be served.

A primary purpose of this Community Workshop will be to present an early draft of the Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive Management Plan.

The elements of the plan will include:

- An inventory of current conditions related to the outstanding values of the Wekiva River
- Draft goals, strategies and objectives for the Comprehensive Management Plan;
- Key issues that affect the management of the River.

This is an opportunity for the public to learn about the issues affecting the Wekiva River System and to have input into the Wild and Scenic River Management Plan for the continued protection and preservation of the River. All public comments will be evaluated for incorporation into the final Management Plan that will be unveiled to the community in Spring of 2008 as part of a 40th Anniversary Celebration Event of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Act. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 created a legacy of protected rivers, the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System protects the natural and cultural values and free-flowing condition of some of the nation's most precious rivers, including the Wekiva which was designated by Congress in 2000.

A local champion for the River, former Congressman Bill McCollum now Florida's Attorney General, was the sponsor of two former bills which were passed by Congress leading to this important Wekiva Wild and Scenic River designation. "I am extremely pleased that these efforts are being made to save a remarkably beautiful natural resource," said Attorney General McCollum. "The Wekiva River is truly a Florida treasure that should be carefully protected."

The Wekiva River, the springs from the river and the surrounding river basin, are true natural treasures to all who live and visit Central Florida. In addition to the Wild and Scenic River status, the Wekiva River has been designated as an Outstanding Florida Water (OFW), a State Canoe Trail, and a state protected Aquatic Preserve.

The Community Workshop will begin with a presentation overview by Pandion Systems, Inc., a Gainesville consulting firm creating the management plan. This will be followed by breakout groups and public input led by representatives from Pandion and the Wekiva River System Advisory Management Committee. Any member of the public may file a written statement regarding development of the management plan. The statement should be addressed to the Wekiva River System Advisory Management Committee, National Park Service, 665 South Orange Ave., Suite 8, Sarasota, FL 34236.

For further information on the development of the Comprehensive Management Plan for the Wekiva River, visit www.friendsofwekiva.org. For further information about the Wekiva Wild & Scenic River, visit <http://www.rivers.gov/wsr-wekiva.html> or contact Ms. Jaime Doubek-Racine, at (941) 330-8047 or Jaime_Doubek-Racine@nps.gov