

Synopsis

Shell Key Preserve Advisory Group Public Meeting

August 29, 2007 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

- . “Damage” to SKP is due to a few people, but effects are still great.
- . Conserve wildlife, offer family opportunities, less parties.
- . SKP is one of the last refuges in the area, and the current plan is not compatible for long-term conservation.
- . Law enforcement cannot go away.
- . No dogs. No alcohol. Clear signage is needed.
- . SKP is a preserve, let’s keep it that way.
- . SKP public safety is important and it’s a financial investment, all of which is protected by LIMA – we must keep this unit.
- . Documentation of “claims” in plan is not well documented.
- . SKP is “dead” during the week.
- . People are being forced to smaller and smaller areas for recreation.
- . Not sure alcohol is an issue at SKP.
- . The County only collected data on 4 different holidays. Is that good?
Does this present a clear picture of public use?
- . Leash law and other laws already on the books should be enforced.
- . Dogs on boats and in the water do not harm SKP.
- . Dogs are part of the family.
- . SKP is for the birds and animals, not humans.
- . Leaving the family dog home will not deter visitors to SKP.
- . The rest of Pinellas County beaches are already developed.
- . Compromise is needed. It works elsewhere.
- . “Good” boaters are being penalized because of the few “bad” ones.
- . This plan is the first step in closing SKP to people entirely.
- . Taking alcohol away is not right.
- . Boaters and conservationists are not mutually exclusive.
- . Dogs on leashes are still a problem for A. oystercatchers.
- . Visitors “abuse” SKP.
- . Clearwater Audubon supports the new SKP plan.

- . Our environment and wildlife were here first. We must take care of them.
- . “Balance” between public use and resource mgmt – the “experiment” has failed.
- . Booze is a good “lubricant” that promotes bad behavior – including human waste.
- . No dogs.
- . This plan is anti-public use - it’s only for the environment. The County shouldn’t manage to the “extreme.”
- . We will lose the opportunity to teach our children basic values if we regulate camping at SKP.
- . The family dog needs exercise and open space too.
- . Responsible citizens clean up after their dogs.
- . Boaters, dogs, and humans are already restricted to a small part of the island. Why restrict more?
- . How can alcohol be prohibited on the island when it’s legal on a boat?
- . Alcohol is allowed in the Grand Canyon National Park – why not at SKP?
- . SKP is an undeveloped natural area in the State’s most densely populated county. This is very rare.
- . We don’t allow alcohol on our roads or in our schools, why should we have it at SKP?
- . SKP is a big ashtray – cigarette butts galore.
- . “Good” visitors should be proactive and police other “bad” visitors.
- . SKP is disgusting – human and dog waste, broken glass, trash – was embarrassed – we now take visitors out of the county.
- . Management plan must comply with the lease agreement.
- . Raccoons love bird eggs – so why pick on the dogs?
- . Birds chase birds too – so why pick on the dogs?
- . Volunteers aren’t the only ones who clean up SKP. Others do it too.
- . Law enforcement offices cop an attitude. They ignore dogs off leash. Only interested in ticketing alcohol related offenses.
- . Why do we need more laws when the current ones are not enforced?

- . Why curb alcohol when only a few people per week have been arrested?
- . Shouldn't there be port-a-jons on SKP if camping is allowed?
- . Natural predators and weather is enough of a challenge for the natural residents of SKP w/o adding effects from people.
- . Education, especially with children, is really needed for long-term preservation of SKP.
- . Moral issue not being addressed tonight – long distance migrant birds find less and less shelter each year – this threatens their existence.
- . “Good” dogs – those on leashes – also cause birds to fly off.
Disturbance by dogs is 100%. People disturb the birds much less.
- . Carrying capacity – is probably exceeded on holidays.
- . Preserves ≠ Parks. Preserves are more protected than parks.
- . Beach goers generally support shorebirds, but lack knowledge about how our actions negatively affect birds.
- . The State did not lease SKP to the County for parties.
- . Party atmosphere has also driven away responsible boaters and families.
- . Permitted campers need to carry out their waste.
- . The new plan would make SKP a family place again.
- . Development on Colony Island will probably negatively affect SKP more than keeping with the current plan.
- . “Bad” element is only out there 30 days or so each year. It's a shame that they ruin it for all of us.
- . New plan fails to find the “middle ground” – it is too extreme.
- . SKP is the only place left where boaters can pull their boat up on the beach.
- . Why can't we enforce public intoxication more?
- . The Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary supports the new plan.
- . We don't take the family to SKP on weekends because it's too rowdy. We only go during the week.
- . SKP cleanups – we never have enough bags to clean up the beer bottles.

- If we let the last natural areas go, then we've lost something valuable.
- If alcohol was controlled, the officers could focus on protecting the wildlife.
- I'm conflicted – SKP mgt plan calls for conservation, yet the Colony Isle development promotes the opposite. Seems like an exercise in futility.
- Video provided by PCSO about SKP is negatively biased.
- People should be working together, not against one another. Many of these issues are bigger than SKP.
- The new plan is grounded in solid science.
- Misconception – early on, birds didn't nest there. Over time SKP will change. Will the birds remain?
- I'm concerned with the trend of closing islands in the Tampa Bay area to people. SKP is just another closure.
- My family and I travel 100 miles to the south in order to have family dog on the beach.
- Humans, dogs and beer are a part of nature. Been around for centuries.
- I'm paying more taxes, yet I seem to have less rights.
- This new plan is too extreme – you will always have a few bad boaters. This plan will not “fix” the few bad seeds.
- I must be blind – I've not seen these “bad” things on SKP.
- New rules are overkill.
- Police presence will continue in the absence of the LIMA unit – other departments already respond to SKP.
- Boaters are not being “squeezed” out – only alcohol.
- No more “Shell Key Shuffle” where people step into the water to drink alcohol with the new plan. This behavior is not appropriate for families.
- We can give SKP back to the State – however, they may close it to people permanently.