



As discussed last November and December during the emergency Kings Bay Manatee Refuge rule process, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is now proposing a final rule to broaden federal manatee protections in Citrus County by designating all of Kings Bay, located in Crystal River, Florida, as a year-round, permanent manatee refuge where certain waterborne activities would be regulated to prevent the take of one or more manatees.

## Why is this being proposed?

The existing network of Federal manatee protection measures in Kings Bay is too small to provide the protection needed for the increasing number of manatees using this area.

Factors considered included the listed items.

- The number of manatees using Kings Bay has increased.
- Human use of Kings Bay has increased with increasing population, increasing types of uses, and increasing numbers of watercraft.
- Manatee mortalities within Kings Bay have significantly increased in the past ten years.
- Concerns over take in the form of manatee harassment during winter viewing activities.
- A manatee refuge designation offers more management flexibility than the more restrictive manatee sanctuary designation.

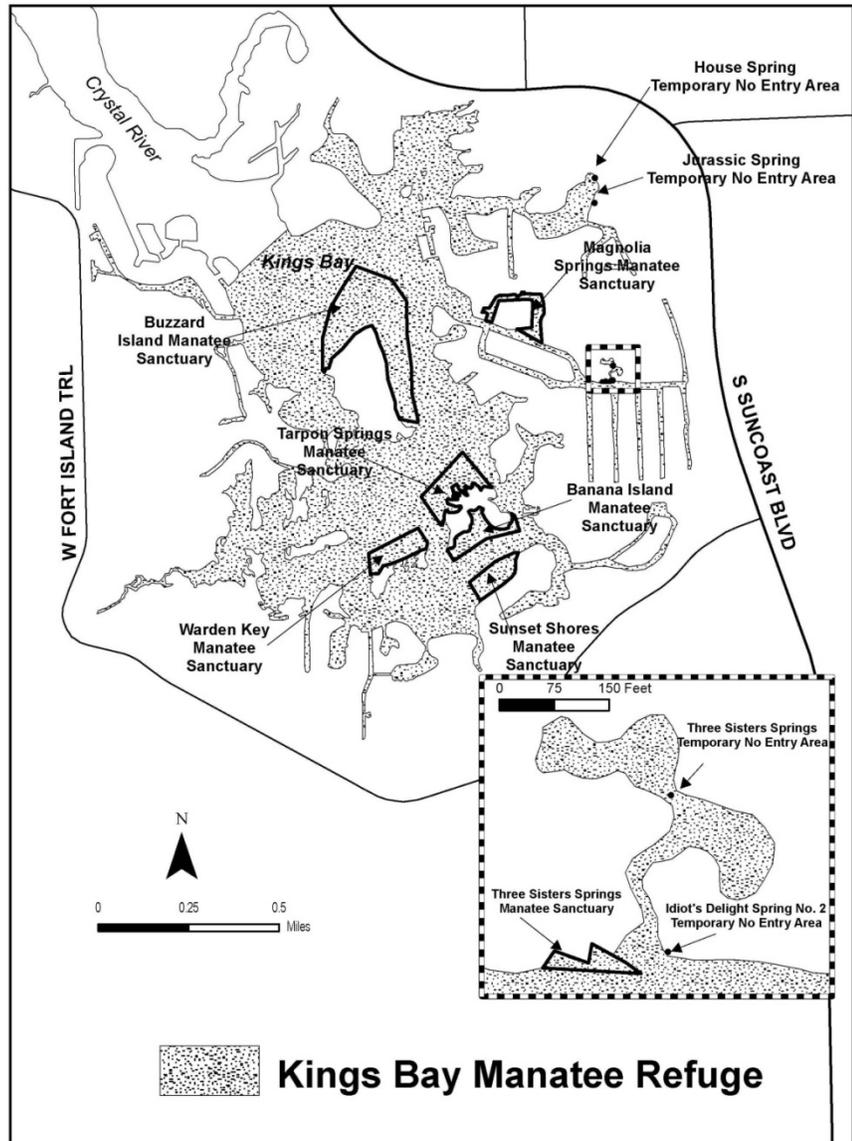
## What will a Kings Bay Manatee Refuge mean for users of these waterways?

Designation of this area as a manatee refuge would not restrict access to waterways. However, users would have to avoid designated sanctuaries and "no-entry" areas and follow specific restrictions within the manatee refuge as posted and/or permitted.

Public and private waterfront property owners and their designees would retain riparian access to their properties and can maintain property and waterways when his/her property adjoins or is located in the proposed Kings Bay Manatee Refuge.

This manatee refuge designation would include restrictions on waterborne activities outside of the sanctuaries within Kings Bay to help minimize harassment and take of manatees.

The proposed manatee refuge overlaps previous seasonal manatee sanctuaries (areas where all waterborne activities are prohibited) and allows for the establishment of additional "no-entry" areas with boundaries posted to better reflect manatee use during the winter. This would ensure that the protection areas are of a size and duration adequate to meet the varying needs of manatees using the sites.



## For More Information:

To view more information about this rule making process for the proposed Kings Bay Manatee Refuge, including the proposed rule, the Federal Register notice, Frequently Asked Questions, and a press release, please visit:

<http://www.fws.gov/northflorida>

# Informational Open House and Formal Public Hearing: Kings Bay Manatee Refuge

To facilitate public understanding of the proposed manatee refuge designation in Kings Bay, to discuss the process of formally establishing the manatee refuge, and to provide a forum for the submission of comments on the proposal, the Service has scheduled an Informational Open House, followed by a Formal Public Hearing on July 7, 2011 at:

College of Central Florida  
Citrus Campus  
Central Florida Conference Center  
3800 S. Lecanto Hwy  
Lecanto, FL 34461-9026

## Informational Open House:

**July 7, 2011**  
**Thursday, 5:30-6:30 pm**

The Informational Open House offers an opportunity to hear information and ask questions about the proposed manatee refuge rule.

## Formal Public Hearing

**July 7, 2011**  
**Thursday, 7:00-9:00 pm**

Following the Informational Open House, a Formal Public Hearing provides an opportunity for those interested to verbally express their comments on the proposed manatee refuge rule.

US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
NORTH FLORIDA ECOLOGICAL SERVICES OFFICE  
7915 BAYMEADOWS WAY, SUITE 200  
JACKSONVILLE, FL 32256

## Submission of Comments on the Proposed Rule: Kings Bay Manatee Refuge

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service invites interested parties to attend the upcoming Informational Open House and Formal Public Hearing.

### Verbal Comments:

Verbal comments may be submitted during the Formal Public Hearing.

### Written Comments:

You may submit written comments on the proposed rule and Environmental Assessment by one of the listed methods.

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments to Docket No. [FWS-R4-ES-2010-0079].
- **U.S. Mail or Hand-delivery:** Public Comments Processing, Attn: Docket No. [FWS-R4-ES-2010-0079]; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042-PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.
- **Public Hearing:** You may also submit written comments at the public hearing.

Comments must be received within 60 days, on or before **August 22, 2011**. The Service is not able to accept email or faxes on the proposal.