

**TITLE:** Modify Existing Manatee Protection Measures in Kings Bay, Citrus County, Florida

**FINDINGS OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

For the reasons briefly presented below and based on an evaluation of the information contained in the supporting references enumerated below, I have determined that

*Designating a manatee refuge in Kings Bay, Citrus County, Florida to prevent the take of one or more Florida manatees (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*), under Alternative F in the accompanying Environmental Assessment*

is not a major Federal action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will, accordingly, not be prepared.

Reasons:

1. The Intra Service Section 7 informal consultation prepared for this action has concluded that preferred alternative is "not likely to adversely affect" federally-listed species. Implementation of the preferred alternative will result in the prevention of take of one or more manatee, including take in the forms of death, injury, and harassment. Therefore, on the basis of adverse effects to listed species, the preparation of an EIS is not warranted.
2. Under the preferred alternative of designating a manatee refuge in Kings Bay, there will be insignificant impacts to the biological environment within the action area, including vegetation and other wildlife species (page 46 of the Environmental Assessment).
3. Under the preferred alternative of designating a manatee refuge in Kings Bay, there will be insignificant impacts to the human environment, such as human safety, socioeconomic conditions, and recreation and public access (pages 39-46 of the Environmental Assessment).
4. The majority of the comments received from the public on the draft Environmental Assessment and proposed rule expressed support for or opposition to the proposed manatee refuge without any substantive data or information provided for Service consideration. Those expressing support generally either supported the rule as proposed, with some minor modifications and suggestions or expressed concerns it was not extensive enough. Those expressing opposition cited a broad range of concerns. In some cases those in opposition generally supported most of the winter aspects of the rule but not the year-round watercraft restrictions. The final Environmental Assessment incorporates edits,

clarifications, and modifications based on comments received through public and peer review, as relevant and appropriate.

Supporting References:

1. Environmental Assessment
2. Biological Opinion (Intra Service Section 7)



Regional Director, FWS, Region 4

DEC 16 2011

Date

Distribution:  
Wash. DC (OEC)  
North Florida ESO