



Week Five, April 7, 2006
 By David Gluckman

Week five is over and we've passed the half-way mark. Time sure passes fast when you're having fun?!? This was another somewhat rudderless week where things happened and things didn't, all without a lot of steering or direction. The most contentious issues of the week revolved around hunting for the first time in 15 or 20 years.

In the late 70's, there were lots of battles between the newly emerging and strengthening non-hunting oriented conservation groups and the traditional hunting lobby. Florida Wildlife Federation was a major participant and helped both assess the problems and broker the deals that settled them. It was a time when environmentalists and some conservationists weren't totally sure of the value of hunting in our rapidly urbanizing state. After a lot of dialogue, both sides of the issue began to understand the values expressed by the other and a good working relationship has generally existed since that time. I learned a great deal being part of many of those discussions, first on behalf of Sierra and Audubon and then for the Federation.

There have been differing opinions over specific parcels of land, but the fundamental principal that hunting was a valid and important activity was accepted. The support of the hunting community for the state land buying programs has been critical to its success. The same goes for the acceptance of the purchase of hunting lands by The Nature Conservancy other organizations.

This session, two bills that I have described previously called the "no net loss of hunting lands" (SB 430/HB 265) and "allowing guns into national forests" (H 1029/ S1546) have raised substantial issues with both Senators and a number of environmental organizations.

The first bill involves potentially opening up parks to hunting, which has been banned by rule for over 40 years, as part of the no net loss bill. Although proponents apparently do not intend to open parks to hunting, the wording of the bill leaves this question open to debate. An amendment was proposed in the House State Resources Council to make sure this wouldn't happen, but the amendment was not adopted. This bill was also on the Senate Environmental Protection committee agenda this week and time ran out before it was heard.

The second bill requires DEP to repeal an administrative rule that's on the books prohibiting the carrying of permitted concealed weapons. The fate of this bill is uncertain.

No real movement on the North Florida wetlands permitting bills (ERP) (H 7163, S 1602).

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's penalties bills (S 2202, H 471) moved another step closer to passage though an attempt to make the bills the same in both houses screwed things up temporarily.

The formation of the Department of Interior with its Commissioner as a cabinet level officer (H 7129; S 2680) is probably dead, though no one knows.

The Keys Area of Critical State Concern (ACSC) bill by Sen. Bennett SB 2098/HB 1299 passed the Senate Environmental Protection committee with little trouble after the various interests from the Keys agreed on a compromise that allows the next Governor and Cabinet to make the decision to remove the ACSC designation by 2009 rather than 2007 as was proposed in the original bill. This compromise will hold for both bills and I would expect it to pass.

Restrictions on sewage discharges from gambling boats (H 313/S 732) had hearings in both houses and created a lot of opposition from the cruise industry. This one seems to be in trouble though the main sponsor, Rep. Bob Allen, is pushing it hard.

The substation siting bill (S 980) is still sitting around waiting around for the local governments to get more comfortable with it. We made our deals early and no longer find any negative environmental issues in the bill.

The Governor's energy bill (S 888) moved a little further this week. This is the bill that caused me to decide not to lobby after this year. It contains much of the same nice words and no actions we would expect from an oil dependent world. This would be a great place to rant and rave but I'll save you that and won't write any more about this.

THERE WILL BE NO REPORT NEXT WEEK. THE SENATE TAKES OFF ALL WEEK AND THE HOUSE ONLY MEETS ON MONDAY AND TUESDAY. I WILL BE MOLDING AND PAINTING.

Check out the location of your favorite on line.

HOUSE AND SENATE BILLS 2006

H 23 – Bicycle Safety – Altman - Jordan; S 188 -King
H 189 – Naming Bob Martinez center - DEP - Allen; S 162 - Fasano
H 257 – Save Our Everglades Trust – Mealar; S 150 - Sanders
H 265 – Hunting lands replacement – Brown; S 430 - Argenziano
H 261 – Florida Incentive Based Permitting – Stansel; S 2510 - Haridopolos
H 313 – Discharges from gambling boats – Allen; S 732 -Haridopolos
H 341– Citrus Hernando waterways council Dean; S 496 – Argenziano
H 431 – Substation siting - Littlefield; S 980 – Alexander
H 471 – FWC penalties – Troutman; S 2202 - Baker
HM 509 – Oil drilling memorial to Congress – Seiler; S 406 - Jones
HM 539 – Memorial to Congress on Indian River Lagoon Restoration - Harrell
H 559 – WMD election of board members – Brummer; S 2148 - Fasano
H 683 – DRI rule revisions – Traviesa; S 1020 - Bennett
H 693 – Florida Springs Protection Act – Stansel; S 2538 Argenziano
H 705 – Surplus state lands - Littlefield; S 1512 – Fasano
H 733 – Airboat regulations – Dean; S 1958 - Aronberg
H 749 – Septic Tanks – growth management – Bowen; S 1874 – Argenziano
H 889 – Fran Reich Aquatic Preserve – Machek
H 1015 – Agricultural enclaves – Pickens; S 1880 Argenziano
H 905 - Transportation Concurrency Management – Goodlette; S 1862 - Saunders
H 1023 – FRDAP funding-boundless playgrounds; S 1892 - Margolis
H 1029 – Firearms in State Parks - Baxley; S1546 - Posey
H 1155 – Contaminated drycleaning accident – Evers; S 2174 – Peaden
H 1249 – Apalachicola River restoration – Kendrick; S 1208 – Lawson
H 1259 – Transmission siting act revisions – Coley; S 2164 – Aronberg
H 1299 – Florida Keys ACSC removal – Sorensen; S 2098 - Bennett
H 1343 – Advanced funding for Florida Forever – COE wetlands delegation – Williams; S 2544– Dockery
H 1347 – Babcock Ranch purchase - Williams; S 1226 – Dockery; S 2102 – Babcock Ranch management – Bennett
H 1345 – Saltwater fisheries – Crabs-Lobsters – Littlefield; S 2490 - Argenziano
H 1431 – Impact fees - Cretul; S 1196 – Constantine
H 1459 – Reptiles – Poppell; S 990 - Posey
H 1471 – Energy diversity act – Attikinson; S 2494 – Baker
H 1485 – House Growth Management; S 1858 – Growth Management Glitch bill – Committee on Community Affairs
H 7129 – Department of Interior – HEP; S 2680 - Posey
H 7131 – Brownfields/Redevelopment – House EP Committee; S 1092 – Constantine
H 7133 – DEP – Litter and debris – hurricanes – HEP Committee; S 1528 – Committee on Environmental Protection
H 7163 – North Florida ERP – HEP; S 1602 – Lawson