

OCTOBER 12, 1974

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed H. R. 10088--Big Cypress National Preserve, Florida--which establishes the Big Cypress National Preserve in Florida and authorizes appropriations of not more than \$116,000,000 and \$900,000 for land acquisition and development, respectively.

H. R. 10088 will establish the Big Cypress National Preserve in Florida comprising about 570,000 acres to be administered by the Secretary of the Interior as a unit of the National Park System. The Secretary will be authorized to acquire lands and waters by donation, purchase or exchange although State or other public lands could be acquired only by donation. The enrolled bill expresses the "intent of the Congress that the Secretary should substantially complete the acquisition" within six years of enactment and within one year of enactment requires the Secretary to submit to Congress a detailed acquisition program covering the subsequent five years.

The Secretary will be prohibited in most cases from acquiring improved property or oil and gas rights without the consent of the owner. In this regard, owners of improved property could reserve a right of use and occupancy, but in doing so would be deemed to have waived their rights for relocation benefits. The Secretary will be allowed to issue regulations designed to maintain the ecological integrity of the preserve including those pertaining to the control of mineral exploration and extraction, road construction, the use of motorized vehicles, grazing, and agriculture.

Hunting, fishing, and trapping will generally be allowed within the preserve in accordance with applicable Federal and State laws. With respect to the Miccosukee and Seminole Indians, the bill will: (1) continue their rights to usual and customary use and occupancy of the area; and (2) give them a right of first refusal on any concession contract in the preserve. Within five years of enactment, the Secretary will be required to report to the President his recommendations as to the suitability of any area within the preserve for preservation as wilderness.

H. R. 10088 will authorize appropriations of not more than \$116,000,000 and \$900,000 for land acquisition and development, respectively. However, no Federal funds could be appropriated until Florida transfers to the United States (1) all lands within the preserve it owns or acquires and (2) all lands or any remaining money associated with its agreement to acquire \$40,000,000 worth of lands within the preserve.

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