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FLORIDA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Resolution Adopted by the Executive Board, Florida Chapter--
The Wildlife Society, Inc. October 8, 1981.

Given the nation's need for hydrocarbon resources, the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society is keenly aware of the need to explore for oil in South Florida. However, the Chapter is equally aware of the need to protect the last surviving Florida panthers and other endangered species in this area. Realizing the legislative history of the Big Cypress National Preserve and the fact that the oil companies have been very cooperative and made a sincere effort to minimize environmental damage in the past, the Chapter does not oppose oil exploration and production as the needs of endangered species and other resources for which the Preserve was established to protect are met. Severe modifications may have to be made regarding oil exploration as more biological information is collected on the Florida panther. At the present time, however, the Chapter must oppose the improvement and extension of Eleven Mile Road because of unauthorized recreational vehicle traffic. Access to Eleven Mile Road must be strictly controlled and limited to the minimal amount of traffic necessary for the oil exploration, as was agreed to by Exxon, NPS, the Big Cypress Advisory Committee, and the Corps of Engineers when the road was built. We further urge that alternative methods of access be investigated.

ATTEST


Frank Montalbano III