

## **Myakka River Management Coordinating Council Meeting, January 9, 2009**

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### **Biologist's Report**

#### **River Inspection Highlights**

**September 29, 30-** USGS Park gage read 4.5 feet.

- Water levels lower than previous month and portaging was only required at Downs Dam
- Much of the paragrass in Myakka River State Park had been defoliated from an unknown cause
- A dead pig was observed in the river just north of Border Road.
- 11 Black-crowned Night Herons, 0 Tricolored Heron, 1 Anhinga, 1 Cattle Egrets, 0 Wood Storks, 1 Snowy Egrets, and 4 Great Egrets were observed on the mangrove rookery island.

**October 20, 22** - USGS Park gage read 4.5 feet.

- Several Great Egrets were observed perched on the mangrove rookery island.
- Climbing aster was in bloom and abundant.
- A flock of 15 White Pelicans was observed soaring high in the sky between the rookery and the county line.

**November 24, 25** - USGS Park gage read 2.5 feet

- Three white tailed deer were seen at Lower Lake
- A Cooper's hawk was seen at Lower Lake
- Portaging was required at Downs' Dam, the rapids, and around the "island" about halfway between Down's Dam and Border Rd
- No birds were seen roosting on the rookery island.
- A manatee was observed just north of the Charlotte County Line.
- A dead 4-6' alligator was observed on the river bank at Jelks Preserve. No foul play is suspected in the death.
- There was a minor blockage about 2 miles south of Lower Lake that consisted of a floating mat of water hyacinth and water lettuce

**December 19, 22** - USGS Park gage read 2.1 feet

- Water levels lower than previous month, portaging required at Downs' Dam, the rapids, and around the "island" about halfway between Down's Dam and Border Rd.
- Many wading birds and shore birds were observed in the Lower Lake due to the low water
- An otter was sighted between Downs' Dam and Border Road
- One manatee was observed south of the I-75 bridge
- Another blockage from a fallen tree observed after Downs' Dam and before the rapids

#### **Permit Program (62D-15, F.A.C.)**

None since last council meeting

#### **Incidents (62D-15, F.A.C.)**

The majority of the new incidents/violations (under the River Rule, 62D-15, F.A.C.) since the last Council meeting consisted of cutting of native vegetation without a permit.

**Future Projects**

- Presentation at Harbor Cove 1-26-09 and Rambler's Rest 2-17-09
- Exotic Plant Removal Days at Snook Haven and Rambler's Rest
- Myakka Wild and Scenic River brochure
- Herbicide training for Rambler's Rest staff

**Other Activities**

- Venice Comprehensive Plan amendment