

Indian River Drive Project

Press Release

www.IndianRiverkeeper.org/press

Date: January 10, 2005

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Indian Riverkeeper Sues to Stop Shoreline Destruction

Ft. Lauderdale, Fl. - Indian Riverkeeper filed suit in federal court today to challenge the Indian River Drive Project in St. Lucie County. The suit was filed because the project was developed without consideration of the impacts upon the sensitive environment of the Indian River Lagoon.

The National Environmental Policy Act requires that such projects should be funded only after a thorough analysis of impacts and alternatives. The decision to forever alter the function and natural beauty of the shoreline of the Indian River Lagoon was made with insufficient information. The Federal Highway Administration, Florida Department of Transportation and St. Lucie County have failed to comply with the requirements of federal law.

"Federal law requires that this kind of project is studied enough to make sure it is done right." said Kevin Stinnette, the Indian Riverkeeper. "We want the road to last, but it has to be repaired in a way that won't hurt the Indian River Lagoon."

Indian Riverkeeper is seeking an immediate injunction to halt work until an Environmental Impact Statement is completed as required by law.

"The categorical exemption from federal requirements assumed by the Federal Highway Administration is inappropriate for the measures being taken to stabilize the roadway." said Attorney Robert Hartsell. "They are classifying heavy maintenance as something much more urgent."

Distinguished Marine Biologist R. Grant Gilmore, Jr., Ph.D., (Senior Scientist, Estuarine, Coastal and Ocean Science, Inc. (ECOS)) has said of the project, "If the western shore of the Indian River Lagoon between Jensen Beach and Fort Pierce is reduced to a eutrophic anoxic sulfurous dead zone, devoid of support communities for shrimp, crab and fishery species, this could lead to a major reduction in regional fisheries which contributes significantly to regional economies. Real estate value may also be impacted if the gases emitted by anoxic west shore organic materials are blown downwind (prevailing easterlies and southeasterlies) over these properties."

For more information on the project and the suit please [visit the Indian Riverkeeper web site](http://www.IndianRiverkeeper.org).

The mission of the Indian Riverkeeper is to protect and restore the waters of North America's most diverse estuary, the Indian River Lagoon, its tributaries, fisheries and habitats through advocacy, enforcement and citizen action