

Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program (5230)

# J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge Study

**PUBLIC MEETING #5 SUMMARY**  
Prepared on behalf of the project Steering Committee

This is a summary of comments collected at the fifth Public Meeting for the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge Study on April 13, 2011. However, all comments received through the life of this project will be considered when modifying project recommendations.

#### PREVALENT THEME

The prevalent theme at the Public Meeting was that there should be no **Circulator Elements outside of the Refuge**. Circulator Elements include both a proposed **Resort Circulator** and an **Island Environmental Institution Circulator**, neither of which are supported by meeting attendees.

There does, however, appear to be support for the existing **Refuge Circulator**. Several people thought the existing service should be maintained, while others thought the service could be enhanced through increased accommodations such as bicycling and parking management. Comments collected include keeping the Refuge Circulator, specifically, to the boundaries of the refuge, to operate it with frequent headways and make boarding and alighting very simple with a "hop-on, hop-off" approach. Twenty comments support this element while nine do not.

#### SUPPORT FOR OTHER PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the existing Refuge Circulator, another 13 of the 16 elements discussed at the meeting garnered public support.

- **Surface Treatments: Wildlife Drive Resurfacing and Restriping** - Through the opinion survey, 30 people indicated support for Wildlife Drive Resurfacing and Restriping, while only three people indicated they did not support this study element.
- **Trails: Indigo Trail, Shell Mound Trail, Wulfert Keys Trail, and Bailey Tract Trail Improvements and a New Trail Connecting Tarpon Bay Explorers to Sanibel Shared-Use Path** – A common theme heard at the Public Meeting was that the public strongly supports the trail surface treatments for Indigo Trail, Shell Mound Trail, Wulfert Trail, and Bailey Tract Trail. For example, in the survey, 35 people indicated support for Indigo Trail Surface Treatment, while only three people indicated they did not support this study element. A proposed new trail also showed clear support. Twenty-four people indicated support of the New Trail Connecting Tarpon Bay Explorers to Sanibel Shared-Use Path, while seven did not.
- **Wayfinding: Bailey Tract Trail (Wayfinding to Sanibel Shared-Use Path), Commodore Creek Canoe Trail Wayfinding Improvements and Canoe Launch Improvements, Enhanced Refuge Wayfinding Plan:** Again, all of the identified wayfinding elements are supported by the public. Together, the three wayfinding elements garner the support of 74 of survey respondents, while 14 respondents do not support these recommendations. Some supportive written comments include concern about the design and placement of the wayfinding components. However, many simply indicate wayfinding is needed.

- Bicycle Rentals at Refuge - This element received overwhelming support, especially as a trial program to rent bicycles at a reasonable rate and only on the Refuge. Only three comments do not support this element, while 29 do.
- Parking – The recommendation to expand the Refuge parking options is supported by 20 people and not supported by seven.
- Wildlife Crossings – Most comments, 18 out of 29, support the Wildlife Crossings element as a good idea.
- Existing Pedestrian Crossings Safety Improvements – Pedestrian safety improvement were also perceived as a good idea by survey respondents; while a few comments question the necessity of such improvements, 19 support increased safety for pedestrians as a good idea.

#### OTHER THEMES

In addition to the 16 study recommendations identified for discussion, a number of meeting participants brought up additional topics that can help refine the refuge-only alternative.

- Wildlife Drive Operations: Participants commented on Wildlife Drive operations in two main themes: Ten comments suggested restricting or eliminating car traffic, while seven comments suggested reducing the days of vehicle access. Many comments made the connection between reducing air pollution and restricting vehicular access along Wildlife Drive.

Other recommendations that arose previously removed from consideration:

- Island Circulator: Nine written comments expressed suggestions for expanding the circulator around the island.
- Two-way Bicycle Access on Wildlife Drive: Additionally, ten comments addressed a desire for two-way bicycle access on Wildlife Drive.
- Entire Study: Ten comments clearly asked that the study area remain within the Refuge; this was incorporated in revisions to study recommendations following Public Meeting #4 in January 2011.

#### SUBMITTED COMMENTS

Comments were submitted either as written or verbal comments. Written comments include open-ended comment cards distributed at the meeting, an opinion survey distributed at the meeting, and written comments provided after the meeting via email or other methods. Verbal comments were collected at the meeting. Please read on for more details on both written and verbal comments.

Table: Summary of Comments Received at Public Meeting #5 by Order of Frequency		
Description	Public Comment	Frequency
Existing Refuge Circulator	Maintain existing service	25
	Existing service is inefficient	17
	Keep Circulator inside Refuge	24
	<b>Total comments</b>	<b>66</b>
Resort Circulator	Remove from Recommendations	50
Bicycle Rentals at Refuge	Support bicycle rentals at Refuge	36
Environmental Institution Circulator	Remove from Recommendations	36
Wildlife Drive Restriping & Resurfacing	Support of Resurfacing & Restriping	34
Shell Mound Trail	Support for surface treatment	32
Indigo Trail	Support for surface treatment	31
Bailey Tract Trail	Support for surface treatment	30
Wulfert Keys Trail	Support for surface treatment	29
Commodore Creek Canoe Trail	Support for wayfinding & canoe launch improvements	28
Bailey Tract Trail	Support for wayfinding to Sanibel Shared-Use Path	26
Parking	Support parking improvements at the Refuge/Former Island Water Site	25
New Trail	Support for connecting Tarpon Bay Explorers to Sanibel Shared-Use Path	24
Wildlife Drive Operations	Restrict or eliminate car traffic	10
	Reduce days of vehicle access	7
	<b>Total comments</b>	<b>17</b>
Bicycle Access on Wildlife Drive	Two-way access	10
Entire Study	Keep Study within the Refuge	10
Island Circulator	Various suggestions for Circulator expansion around the island	9

**ATTACHMENT 1: TALLIED SURVEY FROM PUBLIC MEETING #5 (APRIL 13, 2011)**

**Please give us your comments regarding the Project Recommendation**

**For more details on the recommendation, please ask a project team member or refer to the display boards or handout you received upon arrival.**

*Drop your written comments into the comment box here tonight, mail them to the address on the back of this form or email to [kcella@cella.cc](mailto:kcella@cella.cc).*

*Comments will become part of the public record. Thank you for taking time to participate in this public information meeting.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Project Recommendation Element	Yes	No	Not sure
1. Wildlife Drive Resurfacing & Restriping	30	3	1
2. Indigo Trail: Surface Treatment (Additional Crushed Shell Fill)	31	3	2
3. Shell Mound Trail: Surface Treatment (Additional Crushed Shell Fill)	32	3	1
4. Wulfert Keys Trail: Surface Treatment (Additional Crushed Shell Fill)	29	4	3
5. Bailey Tract Trail: Surface Treatment (Additional Crushed Shell Fill)	30	5	1
6. Bailey Tract Trail: Wayfinding to Sanibel Shared-Use Path	26	5	4
7. New Trail Connecting Tarpon Bay Explorers to Sanibel Shared-Use Path	24	7	3
8. Commodore Creek Canoe Trail Wayfinding & Canoe Launch Improvements	28	3	4
9. Inner Refuge Circulator Route	20	9	6
10. Island Environmental Institution Circulator	2	33	0
11. Expanded Refuge Parking Options	20	7	6
12. Bicycle Rentals at Refuge	29	3	1
13. Resort Circulator	0	35	0
14. Enhanced Refuge Wayfinding Plan	20	6	5
15. Wildlife Crossings	18	4	7
16. Existing Pedestrian Crossings Safety Improvements	19	8	5

## 1. Wildlife Drive Resurfacing & Restriping

Yes (30)

- Support it, but why not just pave a bike path along left shoulder 6-8 ft.
- Paramount-wish it could happen sooner.
- Needs to be done ASAP-before any increased bike rentals at Refuge.
- Good idea.
- Re pave as planned 2013.
- Maintenance.
- Needed.
- Needed badly. Please do.
- Why bother re striping? Otherwise good.
- Ok, maybe just a bike path.

No (3)

- Not necessary.
- Why? This could make bicycling harder.
- Fine as is.

Not sure (1)

## 2. Indigo Trail: Surface Treatment

Yes (31)

- Good idea.
- Needs to be more bicycle friendly.

No (3)

- Not needed.

Not sure (2)

## 3. Shell Mound Trail: Surface Treatment

Yes (32)

- Good idea.

No (3)

Not sure (1)

- Expensive.

## 4. Wulfert Keys Trail: Surface Treatment

Yes (29)

- Good idea.

No (4)

- Will damage Shell Mound Trail.

Not sure (3)

- I have not used it.

## 5. Bailey Tract Trail: Surface Treatment

No (5)

- Fine as is.

Yes (30)

- Good idea.

Not sure (1)

#### 6. Bailey Tract Trail: Wayfinding to Sanibel Shared-Use Path

Yes (26)

- Not sure of configuration but sounds like good idea.
- If unobtrusive.
- Needed.
- Good idea.

No (5)

Not Sure (4)

- What does this mean? Signs? Directions show to get there.
- Need more info.

#### 7. New Trail Connecting Tarpon Bay Explorers to Sanibel Shared-Use Path

Yes (24)

- Good idea.

No (7)

- Fine as is using road. (2)
- Intrusive into a wilderness area. Run along existing road.

Not sure (3)

- Where would it be? But necessary?
- Meaning what? The shared path connects with road to TBE/safer.
- Need more info.
- Could be expensive.

#### 8. Commodore Creek Canoe Trail Way finding Improvements and Canoe Improvements

Yes (28)

- Good idea.

No (3)

- Not necessary.

Not sure (4)

- Not enough knowledge.
- New? Where? Why? Yes, trail was poorly marked.

#### 9. Inner Refuge Circulator Route

Yes (20)

- A hop on-hop off system.
- Use only in Refuge not on San Cap Road.
- Circulator in Refuge only. Greener vehicles ok.
- Only after first reducing auto pressure on Refuge if needed.
- Yes, only gas powered vehicles (natural and/or propane).
- If cars are also allowed.

No (9)

- Need and effectiveness not demonstrated.
- Seems to work as is.
- Totally wasteful. An absurd idea.
- Does not sound like it will reduce traffic. Why would people use it?
- Too busy, would bother the wildlife more.
- No proof of existing or potential problem.

Not sure (6)

- Will there be a charge to riders? Will visitors choose bus over cuts? Why? Cost?
- Has possibilities and risks.

10. Island Environmental Institution Circulator

Yes (2)

- Fine, but only from the parking lot.

No (33)

- Oppose, environmental institutions don't have enough parking.
- Bad idea. I am opposed.
- What is value? This may increase traffic.
- Do Shell Museum, SCCF, CROW want to be a part of it?
- Large photograph crowd wants flexibility to stop and stay-not a trolley ride?
- No! Does not help reduce pressure on the Refuge.
- Probably will not be used. Potential imposition on Sanibel.
- Not necessary. Institutions don't want to give up their own parking spaces.
- Not a good idea.
- Need and effectiveness not demonstrated.
- Tourists want freedom and flexibility, not mandated stop and go.

11. Expanded Refuge Parking Options

Yes (20)

- If foot print is not expanded.
- Within Ding Refuge only.
- Good idea.
- If needed.
- If at water property-not additional parking lots.

No (7)

- Not needed.
- Would mean more cars.

Not sure (6)

- Is this needed?
- Need more info.
- Not sure-where?

12. Bicycle Rentals at Refuge

Yes (29)

- Good idea.
- Yes, at a very reasonable rate, ex. 0.50 cents/hour single speed bikes.
- Worth a try.
- This is fine.
- For use at Refuge only.
- Try on trial basis.

No (3)

- Would compete with Billy's/Finnimore's unfairly.
- No, would mean more visitors.

Not sure (1)

### 13. Resort Circulator

Yes (0)

No (35)

- Not needed.
- Bad idea. Keep circulators in Refuge.
- Will resort visitors choose the bus?
- Not necessary.
- Not a well thought-out idea.
- No! Does not help reduce pressure on the Refuge.
- Need and effectiveness not demonstrated.
- Probably will not be used.
- No way! What is a resort list on Sanibel?
- A very bad idea!
- Forget circulator.
- Will these have significant impact on the Refuge environment?
- An imposition on Sanibel.

### 14. Enhanced Refuge Way finding Plan

Yes (20)

- Good idea
- If unobtrusive.
- Directions.

No (6)

Not sure (5)

- What is this?
- "Way finding Plan" what does this mean?
- Up to the rangers.

### 15. Wildlife Crossings

Yes (18)

- Good idea.

No (4)

- They have the whole Refuge.
- Not necessary.
- This is over the top!
- Unpredictable-implication is that you can be casual in other places.

Not sure (7)

- Need to know science on this.
- What is this?
- Leave this to the Refuge staff.

### 16. Existing Pedestrian Crossing Safety Improvements

Yes (19)

- Good idea.
- If documented to be necessary.

No (8)

- Unnecessary.
- Necessary? I don't know of any crosswalks.
- Personal responsibility.

Not sure (5)

- What is this?
- Whatever??

#### General Comments from Project Recommendation Elements tally sheet

- All improvements to be decided by Ding Darling.
- Keep Lee Tran off Island.
- Just re-pave Tarpon Bay Road.
- Close Wildlife Drive to private vehicles more often (3)
  - To reduce auto traffic in Refuge close it to cars another day a week.
  - Close Wildlife Drive to private cars more than just one day per week, but retain car access 2-3 days per week in addition to trams, bikers, and hikers. Most visitors are here on weekly basis, so they can choose a day in that week to drive their car through the Refuge.
  - Eliminate car traffic in Refuge.
- Bicycle improvements
  - Just enhance biking - , harden and flatten the road, enhance shortcut back to allow for easier biking.
  - Just enhance biking.
  - Allow two-way biking (4)
    - Provide two way bike traffic.
    - Two way bike lane.
    - Just allow two way bike traffic.
    - allow (biking) turn arounds

ATTACHMENT 2: WRITTEN AND VERBAL COMMENTS RECEIVED AT THE MEETING  
AND UP TO 14 DAYS FOLLOWING

Green=Written comments received at the workshop and 14 days following  
Blue=Verbal comments received at the workshop

## Circulator

### Refuge Circulator

#### **Pro Refuge Circulator (5 comments support)**

- *I like the tram availability for non bikers, drivers who have extreme interest in seeing wildlife, as well as those who just like to drive through it.*
- *There may be some value during the peak season to offer an in-refuge circulator route which follows the current route of the Tram Tours that originate at the parking lot. Incentives for people to use the bus would be less driving and stopping and cars idling on the Drive.*
- *The inner refuge circulator combined with bicycle rentals, bicycle carriers, and expanded Refuge parking has potential value. The potential cost and Refuge disruption are its major drawbacks. We believe that dispersing the visitors into groups of two, three or four per vehicle rather than ten to fifteen per vehicle with stops to pick up and drop off guests and bicycles causes less total impact on the wildlife.*
- *People could pay for the tram tour as is currently provided.*

#### **Against Refuge Circulator (4 comments against)**

- *If someone has the choice to use a car why wouldn't they?*
- *Or will it work... be heavily subsidized? Limit before tax dollars go in to this.*
- *It is too expensive to put the same four people on a bus*
- *If you reduce the number of people that the circulator can take I will be on san-cap road longer*

### Resort Circulator

#### **Against Resort circulator (15 comments against)**

- *Across Gulf Drive from the beach resorts are always private homes. There's no way you can avoid circulators on residential streets. Finally, no circulators and no buses on Sanibel.*
- *Please eliminate the resort circulator and the institution circulator. These circulators would only exacerbate overcrowding of the beaches (by people using the resort stops to access beaches) and the parking at the institutions such as SCCF, CROW, and the Shell Museum.*

- *Given the Mr. Tritiak's comments that the Refuge is not at risk and that operational practices will not change (ex. access for vehicles, price, ...), then the resort circulator is unnecessary and unlikely to be used sufficiently because if the cost creates inconvenience compared to personal vehicles \$5.*
- *In your survey of Refuge visitors did you ask respondents who came from lodging whether they were returning to lodging? They are the only ones who could use circulator. People who are on the way off the island after visiting the Refuge must use their cars, as most visitors who are on their way onto the island via the Refuge.*
- *The resort circulator is the least worthwhile.*
- *Note: Sanibel only has a few real resorts. Many condo complexes have significant number of Sanibel residents.*
- *There are too many unanswered questions about the resort circulator. Have them before calling for discussion.*
- *No circulator to condos or resorts.*
- *I'm very skeptical about the feasibility of a circulator involving resorts. The number of potential problems is huge. Which resort? How selected? Charges to the resorts? To the riders? Travel to and parking at those selected resorts? (From other non-selected resorts).*
- *How do you know what resorts should be included?*
- *Most people don't stay at "resorts"*
- *What about resorts? No data.*
- *It will impact residential areas.*
- *Impact on beach capacity because resorts cannot police well.*
- *How are you going to chose them? Not fair.*

### Island Circulator

#### **Island Circulator Support - outside of Refuge (9 comments support)**

- *I assume the buses would be mainly on the Gulf Drives picking up people to go to Ding Darling and I think that is a splendid idea.*
- *How about a private partnership with some of the resorts and restaurants to get employees on and off the island to a remote parking facility and/or connection with Lee Tran and Ft. Myers beach circulator. Further, why not transit for anyone to get on and off the island without polluting, clogging the causeway and Sanibel roads?*
- *We think a better alternative would be to offer trams that stopped at various resorts and locations along Periwinkle Way to move tourists to Ding Darling.*
- *I think it should be pursued as an option.*

- *I would love to see a circulator a step further, to have a regular circulator from the lighthouse to tarpon bay explorers, with stops well planned along the way for the least impact but the most use. Perhaps an alternate set of trips to west and middle gulf drives maybe even just a few scheduled times a day to flush out the resorts without using the cars. At a reasonable cost or no cost, to make leaving the car parked is a great idea that is worth it.*
- *The solution to environmental and traffic issues on Sanibel is a usable system of scheduled transit that is low or no cost.*
- *Island traffic could be mitigated if Lee Transit were to run trolleys to the Causeway Island closest to Sanibel with stops between. Then visitors would not feel, since a toll was paid, they might as well hit the Sanibel beaches.*
- *I understand the Refuge now has access to sufficient parking in the water treatment facility. Trolleys could run from there.*
- *As a car non-owner, I personally would like to see Lee Transit trolleys to the Island and along Periwinkle (never on East, Middle or West Gulf) up to Captiva. That would allow me to get anywhere in Lee and (with a four mile gap) Collier counties via bike and bus. But that will not happen in my age 70 lifetime.*

**Against circulators on Sanibel outside of Refuge (24 comments against)**

- *The circulators are still questionable. Even ten to fifteen passenger vehicles present potential problems. All three possibilities are likely to be intrusive to the Refuge, the wildlife and Sanibel itself. All three represent potential diversion of much needed Refuge funds. It is likely to be an expense without value or use. The island environmental institution circulator is unlikely to draw many guests away from their cars.*
- *We have no evidence to support the demand for a circulator vs. private autos. Therefore, any plan to bring any mass vehicles on to the island is fraught with more potential problems than it will possibly serve.*
- *There didn't seem to be anyone at the workshop who was in favor of circulator buses. I know that I don't want them.*
- *Very much opposed to the Lee County plan to use buses to bring tourists to Ding Darling.*
- *I am sure that running these buses around Sanibel, green or not, is a terribly misguided and unacceptable non-starter from an aesthetic and practical point of view.*
- *Why would anyone want to bring any kind of mass transportation to a nature island...no matter what the size of the vehicle, it will bring pollution and wear and tear on an already fragile ecology...get a horse and buggy if you want to bring people out to the park...get a lot of horses and buggies...much more fun and less impact. Why would you even consider it? I am baffled.*
- *We do not want this solution to be implemented. Please no buses.*

- *Busses have their own set of problems including expense and they are not the perfect solution.*
- *No buses on Sanibel, please!*
- *We do not feel that running buses on our roads will help the congestion problem during the high season.*
- *I cannot see how running buses on Sanibel would help alleviate the traffic on Periwinkle Way or Gulf Drive.*
- *No circulators on Sanibel.*
- *I think that Sarbanes Transit is wasting time and money attempting to change most of the Sanibel citizens' minds and decisions concerning using circulators.*
- *The tour companies would organize trips to Sanibel not only to visit the wildlife refuge, but to allow visitors to window-shop at the mall, wander up and down Periwinkle Way and not do the business community much good. The busses would cause worse traffic problems than Sanibel now has. I recommend that the Council study this carefully before approving such a proposal.*
- *I am strongly opposed to having buses on Sanibel Island.*
- *We do not want little buses scooting around Sanibel, picking up people and taking them through the Refuge.*
- **Keep circulator in Refuge (8)**
  - *No circulator outside Refuge.*
  - *Restrict circulator to the Refuge.*
  - *No buses outside of "Refuge."*
  - *A circulator route outside of the Refuge is not a good idea.*
  - *Solve the Refuge's problems within the scope of what you are supposed to be looking at - transit in parks.*
  - *Keep the bus in the refuge.*
  - *Use the tram in the Refuge only.*
  - *Do not have any circulators (aka buses) outside of the Refuge as part of your planning.*

### Institutional Circulator

- *Speaking of trolleys and circulators, the fear is that circulators to and from resorts would become a de facto mass transit system, with beach dump ability. But circulators to and from only the Refuge, SCCF and the Shell Museum might be acceptable.*
- *Credibility - other extensions, there are other institutions. If you are doing it for the refuge, then you need to do it for all or just keep in the Refuge.*

### **Against Institutional Circulator (3 comments against)**

- *Please eliminate the institution circulator.*
- *Circulator that goes to other institutions. Why would people go to other places?*

- *Why would you put the stakeholders on the site if they haven't approved? They don't have enough parking.*

## **Study Issues**

### **Against the Project (2 comments against)**

- *Don't change what isn't broken. I believe Lee Tran and the county government in general would like to make any changes they could make to the island. Historically, this has been true.*
- *I'm opposed to circulator project. . This project as presented is overkill. Too much! We don't need it. Leave it alone.*

### **Keep Study in Refuge (10 comments support)**

- *Do what you want inside the Refuge, that's a federal decision, but do nothing outside the federal jurisdiction.*
- *Deal with and within the Refuge only!*
- *Do not encumber the rest of Sanibel. Overwhelming majority is opposed to your words, so drop it and focus on the Refuge.*
- *Use all these ideas in the Refuge only.*
- *The original purpose of this very expensive, very lengthy study was to determine how to reduce vehicular congestion on wildlife drive in order to protect wildlife and their habitat. That should remain the only purpose of this study.*
- *Keep the ATPPL project entirely on refuge land. Keep buses off the streets of Sanibel.*
- *If the problem is in the Refuge, then we need to deal with the Refuge. Leave the other pieces out.*
- *Citizens of Sanibel love the Refuge. They want the Refuge to stay.*
- *Most of the things you suggest to do within the Sanctuary people are for.*
- *Refuge is first, people are second*

## **Suggestions**

### **General Refuge suggestions**

- *Provide Restroom facilities at two different locations within the Refuge.*
  - *Your first step should be to determine what level of auto traffic begins to make a difference in how the wildlife and flora in the refuge are tolerating human interference.*
  - *Electric golf carts should be made available to keepers.*
  - *There seems to be enough road width for the current number of visitors in the current modes of transportation.*
- Museums find it appropriate to have cafeterias or restaurants on site. It would be great if the Visitor's Center did the same.*

### **Repaving (4 comments support)**

- *I think the paving is a bad idea- cars drive faster and more cars will go there if paved. Look at other national parks. Pave just the bike path.*
- *The improved surface has virtually eliminated the dust, the recurrent road erosion, and the need for weekly bulldozer impact on the wildlife. Keep up the good work on Wildlife Drive.*
- *Re-pave road, refurbish trails.*
- *I would like to see a good surface bike path*
- *Harden and flatten the road.*

### Minimize vehicles in Refuge

#### **Restrict or eliminate car traffic (10 comments support)**

- *No circulator so limit traffic in Ding to protect birds.*
- *Restrict visitors and vehicles to Refuge.*
- *Why don't you eliminate cars from going through the Refuge one more day a week?*
- *Allow cars on Wildlife Drive by advance permit only. This would accommodate the handicapped and others needful of private transportation. Others could walk, bicycle or take a free trolley.*
- *Why won't you just limit cars in refuge?*
- *Why aren't you taking advantage of what other institutions have learned? Time tickets and govern the amount of vehicles going through during season. Or get on the tram.*
- *Take all cars off Wildlife Drive and just use trams there.*
- *Refuge should limit cars in Refuge. Only a certain number a day.*
- *Just bicycles*
- *Why would anyone use this circulator when they can use their car? Limit automobiles.*

#### **Raise fee for personal vehicles (5 comments support)**

- *Why not charge more for a car (maybe \$10.00) and use that extra money to lower the cost of the tram?*
- *Charge much more for cars - low price for internal circulator.*
- *Increase fee to Refuge*
- *Raise costs per person per car, not one price per car regardless of passengers in the car. Taxpayers' dollars are going to be cut in support of national parks so do this.*
- *Since cars impact the Drive to a higher degree, fees should be raised (doubled) for cars going through the Ding Darling, to the extent that it makes using the tram more or equally cost effective for people.*

#### **Reduce days of vehicle access (7 comments support, 1 comment against)**

- *How about closing the Refuge during high season on Tuesdays and Fridays, and publicizing this clearly in print ads and on the Web site?*

- *Limit cars per day with x number of tickets available each day. People get access to buying tickets in advance by phone or Internet.*
- *Make tram affordable then eliminate all other automobiles motoring through the Refuge.*
- *Reduce days of access.*
- *Or, how about closing the Refuge to automobile traffic on certain days of the week? There would be a tram available for those unable to bike through the refuge.*
- *Blaming of cars isn't 100% true. If it is, close the drive more, we can use bicycles.*
- *Why don't you eliminate cars from going through the Refuge one more day a week?*
- *I urge you in the strongest language possible to please not close the Refuge to private vehicles on any more days.*

#### **Against eliminating private vehicles**

- *I want to be able to take my family, my guests through the refuge at my leisure and not be stuck on a bus.*

#### **Data regarding issues in Refuge (8 comments)**

- *Decide at each level what will be done. For example, at the first level maybe it is just another closed day. At next level have to make a reservation for one of a limited number of passes. At next level some more draconian steps all the way to where people can only pass through on bus (electric) and eventually the Refuge is closed to everyone if it gets too bad.*
- *No proof of existing or potential problem.*
- *Where is the data that there will be a problem with cars?*
- *What is the safe number of cars to enter Wildlife Drive on any day? Then make adjustments to car traffic based on that information. In the end the protection of the wildlife should be the primary concern.*
- *Truly evaluate the environmental impact of car traffic to determine when the number of cars should be limited.*
- *What is the data showing that there are issues on Wildlife Drive?*
- *How much danger is the Refuge in of losing the wildlife? If there is a significant risk, than we need to limit, raise prices, etc.*
- *Define the problem then how the solution will mitigate the problem.*

#### **Existing Tram improvements**

##### **Increase frequency/route (4 comments support)**

- *There should be a "tram" every five minutes, during peak hours, then every ten minutes till closing. This schedule may only be appropriate for the busy four or five months basically from December through April.*
- *"Trams" should also return the same way so as not to venture on to San-Cap Road.*

- *"Tram" schedules should always be posted at each stop so that the visitors can plan ahead. The schedule indicates which direction the "Tram" is going.*
- *Solve circulator problem by allowing them to turn around in Refuge.*

#### **Lower cost**

- *The cost of the "tram" should be no more than \$1.50 to \$2.00 per person. Children under 12 free.*

#### **Tram pass suggestion**

- *Allow gas powered (propane and/natural gas) "trams" to discharge passengers at designated stops and issue them an all day pass so that they can get off one "tram" and at their leisure board another-for as many times as they wish.*
- *Make tram so you can hop-on, hop-off.*
- *"Tram" passes should be valid all day and allow the visitor(s) to go back to the Visitor's Center to "rest" or obtain additional information, then hop on another "tram."*

#### **Vehicle Improvements (3 comments support)**

- *Replace the current tram with new technology.*
- *I have been wishing for a circulator, especially one with bike racks, for a long time, especially if you can catch it at the west end of the Ding Darling trail.*
- *I feel the big diesel buses are not good for Sanibel streets due to size, weight and over kill for a problem that could be solved with smaller trolley size transport currently on the island.*

#### **Tram narration improvements (4 comments support)**

- *I have been told by visitors to the Refuge that the narrative provided by the trolley guide is extremely disruptive to wildlife and visitors who are trying to enjoy the quiet, the wilderness, the solitude that should be a component of the experience. Perhaps some car phone solution.*
- *The "loud speaker" system on the "trams" should be of a level that does not annoy hikers nor/and bikers.*
- *People could rent guided tour players in several languages as is done in art museums.*
- *Those trams need many more speakers as the few speakers require loud volume an unpleasant experience for non-tram people and critters.*

#### **Parking improvements (5 comments support)**

- *Restrict the number of cars and park them at the old Island Water Association site.*

- *Perhaps parking facilities to accommodate this change can be increased, but even if parking becomes an issue, if the trams are fully loaded there are no parking spots available, drive-through would be an available option for visitors.*
- *The project should focus on Ding Darling-increase on-site parking*
- *Provide more refuge parking.*
- *Improve parking site*

## Bicycles

- *The only way to reduce cars in the Refuge is to make it more bicycle friendly.*
- *Summary from Nathan Caldwell, FWS had a list who had good bicycle connections. Why is ding darling not on list of bike study?*

### **Two-way bike access (10 comments support)**

- *My final suggestion is that a two-way bike path be installed.*
- *Allow all bicycles to travel in each direction, allowing them to leave Ding Darling by way of the entrance gate. Some bikers may not feel comfortable to make the entire loop and then have to bicycle for an additional four more miles on San-Cap Road to return to the Visitor's Center. Traveling San-Cap Road on the east side bicycle path (which is never in the shade) is usually very hot and not everyone's preference.*
- *Make bike paths in both directions.*
- *I would like to see the means to enjoy the Refuge without the need to drive (by bike) all the way through the Refuge before returning on San-Cap Road.*
- *Make it easier to bike and return.*
- *I believe that the purpose of Ding Darling is to allow people to enjoy the wildlife. By allowing bikers and pedestrians to double-back, it would allow them to enjoy all the different birds -twice.*
- *Two-way traffic for bikes is worth considering.*
- *Start simple. Just enhance biking and allow turn around.*
- *Enhance shortcut back to allow easier biking.*
- *Help bikers by allowing them to turn around on Wildlife Drive*

### **Bike Rental (7 comments support)**

- *Bike rental is good.*
- *Rent bikes at \$.50 per hour to a maximum of \$3/day and \$9 per family.*
- *Provide only single speed bikes.*
- *Concentrate on bikes or perhaps use segways.*
- *Could be a fund raising opportunity.*
- *Bike rentals at the Refuge are a good idea as it would increase the number of people able to bike through the Refuge.*
- *Make bikes available*

## Questions

- *What do you think Ding Darling would say? I believe he would find a better traffic control system than this.*
- *Vision statement?*
- *Mission statement?*
- *Funding obligation for Sanibel?*
- *Outsourcing of transportation vehicles?*
- *How will you get people out of cars? Pipe dream.*
- *No answer to how will relieve congestion?*
- *What about handicapped people who don't ride bicycle and use wheelchairs or walkers?*
- *What about photographers with lenses and equipment?*
- *How will the circulators honor the parks department senior passes?*
- *Will the new (2013) paving be "smoother for bicycle" be as water permeable as current surface?*
- *What is the value proportion that will cause people to choose to use circulator?*
- *How on earth does the kind of year-round, large-scale municipal bus system that is being contemplated fit in? If that is the only false-choice, I'd rather hide-out as much as I can during tourist-season than have buses on the island.*
- *Will it include any stops on Captiva?*
- *Who said this was the locally preferred alternative?*
- *Where was money spent?*
- *Who chose the steering committee?*
- *Do you have a flavor of how we feel now?*

## General Comments

- *85% of your proposal is fine*
- *We don't want messing with our City with your stupid busses. We have bicycles.*
- *Thank you for eliminating the circulators, why not the resort and environmental?*
- *Your language is a impediment to you*
- *Circulator is what people don't want to hear*
- *Do a pilot project February 2013*
- *Sanibel plan says that mass transit would only work to eliminate congestion if you restrict cars.*
- *Sanibel should be left alone.*
- *We want to make sure that your plan isn't to do something while we are gone.*
- *Sanibel is not Disneyland*
- *I left the meeting without any understanding of what the "draft locally preferred alternative" is.*