

Association for Bayou Conservation, Inc.

P.O. Box 264
Shalimar, Florida 32579

Newsletter Number 1
15 July 2005

WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE? This action sheet is produced by the newly formed Association for Bayou Conservation, Inc., a local *not-for-profit* organization of concerned citizens founded to protect and preserve natural and historic resources of, in, and around our local bayous and bay.

IMMEDIATE CONCERN: The Air Force is in the process of planning for new housing by a private developer for Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field. The Air Force has many alternatives available to achieve its goals. However, Air Force planners are promoting the alternative most damaging to our natural and historic resources. Your help is needed right now to help prevent an irreversible ecological disaster.

OUR IMMEDIATE GOAL: **Be assured, this organization supports quality, affordable housing for our military families.** Our intention is to educate the community about the anticipated adverse impacts to our local environment which will result from the "Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field Military Family Housing Demolition, Construction, Renovation, and Leasing (DCR&L) Program," as proposed in a draft of the Environmental Impact Statement issued for the project. Many alternatives are being reviewed by the Air Force. We have an opportunity to help them plan it the right way.

Our goals are to help the Air Force understand the value of our historic resources and ecosystem to our community, encourage the Air Force to choose one of their Alternatives that ***preserves*** our natural resources, and help to ensure the construction of the proposed housing in an environmentally sensitive manner, all while preserving our area's resources for future generations. The Air Force's current preferred Alternative ***does not meet that criteria***, and is based on inconsistent, incorrect, and seriously flawed information as provided in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. There are other, viable ways to achieve the USAF's desired end state. The Association needs your help to influence the USAF to explore all the alternatives!

WHY SHOULD YOU BE INVOLVED? Unless we voice our concerns ***now*** and take action ***immediately*** to change the preferred housing locations, the undeveloped ecosystem, historic resources and natural resources habitat at the head (north end) of Garnier's Bayou will be forever lost. The Air Force's "Preferred Alternative" under consideration will allow private developers to clear cut hundreds of acres of the wooded areas along Poquito and Garnier Bayous and construct up to six housing units per acre, as well as an unspecified new boat dock area on Garnier's Bayou. There are options which allow new housing for the military families which do NOT involve destroying by development our pristine ecosystems. Your voice and support are needed now; time is of the essence, and we need you to get involved today!

PROJECT OVERVIEW: For an excellent DCR&L project overview, please visit <http://www.jllpsc.com/>. In short, the proposed development will:

1. Demolish 2,228 units at Eglin AFB and Poquito Housing Area and construct 1,504 new units by 31 December 2014.
2. Demolish 366 units at Hurlburt Field and construct 511 units in the Garnier/Poquito Bayou areas by 31 December 2014.
3. Re-convey 5 historic units at Georgia Avenue back to the Government.
4. **Demolish 4 historic units at Camp Pinchot Historic Site** (planned as of 28 Jun 2005)
5. Meet the total requirement of 2,155 housing units. And when completed, the development ***as planned today***, will result in destruction of the natural habitat of countless species, many protected by law, and potentially destroy Garnier's Bayou ecosystem that feeds and helps sustain life in Choctawhatchee Bay.

WHERE IS THIS GOING TO HAPPEN? The Air Force is currently considering 6 Alternatives, pending final approval of the *already-completed* Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Its' current preferred

Alternative location for this housing is **Alternative 5**: Develop 220 acres at Camp Pinchot (demolish all existing buildings) and another 960 acres on Eglin's Main Base. Final EIS expected 24 September 2005.

HOW CAN YOU HELP? Get yourself and your neighborhood residents involved! Contact any or all of the elected names below and let them know you don't want to lose a national treasure. Become a member of the Association for Bayou Conservation and contact members for more information and how you can help and get involved today! **It is time for ACTION, not APATHY.**

1. Contact Representative Jeff Miller, Senator Martinez, Sen. Nelson, State Sen. Clary, Representative Ray Sansom, or any of our County Commissioners and let your voice be heard! To date our elected officials have offered little or no *public* comments.
2. Call your friends, your neighbors, copy this newsletter, get it out by e-mail and give it to folks at work, in your neighborhood and have them get *involved*. This is a *fast* moving project, and once started, will not slow down!
3. Perhaps most important, sign up and join the Association for Bayou Conservation and pledge your moral and financial support for a worthy and noble civic cause. We have retained an outstanding national environmental law firm to help guide our efforts with the USAF. We need **serious financial** support for the Association to be effective and keep the effort meaningful and focused. Your support and trust will not be misguided.
4. Volunteer your time to help raise the needed funds and execute our initiatives; just say YES on the form below. Give your donation to one of our volunteers today. (**NOTE:** The association is incorporated as a not for profit organization in the state of Florida. We are proceeding to secure IRS tax-exempt status but have not obtained such status at this time. We will let you know when it is approved.) Or, send your check and pledge form to Association for Bayou Conservation, P.O. Box 264, Shalimar, Florida 32579.
5. Contact the following members of the Association for Bayou Conservation for more information:

Cloyce Darnell, cloyce@darnell.coxatwork.com 850.609.0048, John Jannazo, 863.1167, Jannazo@aol.com
Bill Walter, waw247@cox.net, 862.2832, Barbara Smith, jonesmd3@cox.net, 862.5100
Jim Bailey, jbailey79@cox.net, 609.1199, Neil Arnott, seadog6@nwfl.net, 862.3408

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION and PLEDGE FORM

Name(s): _____ **Yes, I want to help!** _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email Address: _____

Donation: \$50 \$100 \$200 \$500 \$1,000 \$2,000 \$5,000 Other _____ Date: _____

Association Voting Membership Level: \$100 Verified by: _____