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Joint Press Release, October 8, 1990

Michael Woodward

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TO: Curtis Bullock, UNF Vice-President, Admin. & Planning
FROM: Michael Woodward, President, Sawmill Slough
DATE: 8 October 1990
SUBJECT: Joint press release

In keeping with our discussion yesterday, I have prepared a draft of what I believe to be a fair and factually accurate summary of the outcome of yesterday's negotiations. That draft accompanies this cover memo.

Please let me know if this is acceptable to you or, if not, what changes you would like to propose.

If this information is to be released only to the Spinnaker, any additional interpretive comments intended for quote attribution can be separately and individually delivered to the Spinnaker. If wider distribution is intended, each party should make his comments available as part of a package accompanying the joint press release. Please advise me of your intentions in this matter.

My home phone number is [REDACTED]. You may reach me at my place of employment by calling [REDACTED]. You may also fax materials to me there; the fax number is [REDACTED].

Sawmill Slough is very pleased with the outcome of our first face-to-face negotiations with the Herbert administration. Although it appears that we still have a big fight ahead of us on the loop and eastern connector issue, we feel that with this agreement we have already achieved a significant victory for our campus environment and for the entire UNF community. We have established that the values and priorities of our students and faculty cannot be ignored.

We have long believed the widening of the existing campus roadway to be the least environmentally harmful aspect of the current road plan--and the part of the plan that makes the most sense as a quick and economical means of meeting UNF's legitimate traffic needs. The additional environmental safeguards that we are requiring the administration to implement should make the construction of additional traffic lanes on UNF Drive even more beneficial.

We also believe that a second entrance to the campus is needed. However, we do NOT believe that the second phase of current road plan, with its closed loop and its eastern connector to a planned off-campus development park, is the best way to go about getting all of us on and off campus safely and conveniently. And of course the destruction of the wetlands and wildlife habitat adjoining our campus nature trails continues to be unacceptable to us.

We also believe that public records should be just that--public--and that no groups or individuals should be punished or intimidated for attempting to exercise their legal rights to view such documents. As always, are willing to negotiate ways to deal with UNF's traffic needs and environmental concerns, but the civil rights of UNF students are not negotiable.

Statement from:

Michael Woodward, President, Sawmill Slough Conservation Club

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On Sunday, October 7, the University of North Florida administration and UNF-based Sawmill Slough Conservation Club held a meeting to discuss possibilities for settlement of the ongoing dispute concerning UNF's road construction plans. UNF president Adam Herbert and vice-president for administration and planning Curtis Bullock met with Sawmill Slough president Michael Woodward, executive vice-president Richard Eckler, and vice-president for campus relations Denise Hok. The meeting, which took place at the offices of Bremer Medical, Inc., was moderated by Linda Bremer of the Duval Audubon Society.

As a result of this meeting, Sawmill Slough agreed to drop its opposition to the widening of the existing portion of UNF Drive and to withdraw its legal appeal of the permit authorizing that road widening construction. In return, the UNF administration agreed to take specified additional measures to ensure that the environmental impact of the road widening activity on wildlife and wildlife habitat is minimized and strictly confined to the construction area; implementation of these measures is to be monitored by Sawmill Slough. The administration further agreed to enter into good faith negotiations regarding subsequent phases of the road construction planned for the UNF campus. These discussions will include consideration of alternative road designs and configurations.

As a result of this agreement, an administrative hearing that had been scheduled for October 9 and 10 was cancelled.

This agreement, however, settled only those aspects of the dispute directly related and confined to the widening of the existing roadway. Even though future discussions are called for in the agreement, the issue of the loop road and eastern connector still remains unresolved. The UNF administration holds that the planned road configuration is the best possible alternative from both a traffic and an environmental perspective, while Sawmill Slough deems the road plan environmentally and logistically unacceptable. UNF did not agree to withdraw its applications for the loop and eastern connector permits, nor did Sawmill Slough agree to discontinue its opposition to the granting of those permits.

The dispute concerning Sawmill Slough's request for access to public records held in the custody of the UNF administration was not addressed in the agreement.