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## NATURIST ACTION COMMITTEE ACTION ALERT

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<http://www.naturistaction.org>

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DATE: March 31, 2019

SUBJECT: BLIND CREEK'S CLOTHING-OPTIONAL BEACH THREATENED BY STATE ACTIONS IN TALLAHASSEE

TO: All naturists and other concerned citizens

Attention naturists:

This is an Action Alert and Appeal from the Naturist Action Committee (NAC). In coordination with the local naturist activists of Treasure Coast Naturists (TCN), NAC is asking you to please donate to save Hutchinson Island's Blind Creek Beach:

### **BRIEF DISCUSSION**

Rumors have been circulating the clothing optional section of Blind Creek Beach is in trouble. This St. Lucie County haven for naturists has openly thrived since 2014. Sheriff deputies tolerantly patrol and Treasure Coast Naturists (TCN) board members regularly consult with County Commissioners and staff. So what is really happening and why is the nude beach imperiled? The following will summarize conditions that are compelling a political fight in Florida's State capital. Your help in the form of legal defense donations is needed to fund this battle.

The first unnoticed salvo occurred as far back as three years ago when the State of Florida, through its Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), sent a complaint to St. Lucie County. DEP objected to St. Lucie County government tolerating a nude beach on what it sees as State-owned land.

### **Background History on the Dispute at Blind Creek Beach**

About 15 years ago, St Lucie County established Blind Creek Beach County Park as an isolated Hutchinson Island preserve located immediately north of the St Lucie Nuclear Power Plant.

Before the county park's official startup, this same section of isolated shoreline was host to a long tradition of nude sunbathing and swimming. Begun as far back as the 1970s, the free beach attracted naturists from around North America. Skinny dippers encountered a pristine piece of coastline that was relatively free of arrests or harassment.

### **The Opening in 2014**

In 2014, frank discussions between local naturist advocates, the St Lucie County Sheriff's Office, and the St Lucie County Attorney led to the recognition that this isolated stretch of beach and its tradition of family-oriented skinny dipping – did not run afoul of the state's anti-nudity statute (SS - 800.03). As long as lewd behavior did not occur, County deputies would quietly patrol the beach just like any other. And so a grand social experiment began where local government tolerated and even cooperated with a naturist not-for-profit, the Treasure Coast Naturists (TCN), in managing Blind Creek Beach. TCN patrols the shore, protects the sensitive dunes from human intrusion, funds and provides portable bathrooms to beachgoers, manages the parking lot, organizes beach clean-ups and town hall meetings, and operates a website ([www.treasurecoastnaturists.org](http://www.treasurecoastnaturists.org)) that educates the uninitiated about the freer norms occurring at this county park.

### **The Economic Argument for Naturist Beaches**

The economic rewards from Blind Creek Beach are impressive. The number of tourists flocking to St Lucie County has significantly increased. Many are attracted to the Blind Creek Beach experiment, so much so that it is now the most visited beach in the county. A range of 500-1000 naturists show up on weekends. Hotel occupancy is up. Restaurants have been filled by a new niche of family tourists. Behind the scenes both the business community and county government administrators have witnessed the unexpected. Home to one of only three successfully established nude beaches in the State, St Lucie County has found itself in an economic sweet spot.

Since its inception in 2014, Blind Creek Beach has been successfully branded worldwide as a tropical, isolated, and unspoiled paradise for naturists. Tourists now come from Europe, the Caribbean, and South America to experience it for themselves, fill up nearby hotel rooms, and enjoy the many local restaurants. It's understandably difficult for St Lucie County to ignore this abundant new source of tourist dollars.

### **The Threat to Blind Creek Beach**

Meanwhile in Tallahassee, DEP has repeatedly voiced objections to nude use on their land. DEP claims that since over 95 percent of Blind Creek Beach County Park's leased tracts are actually owned by DEP (and the State of Florida), the department insists that it has standing to object. As part of its purpose, DEP plays a primary role in administering and protecting the state's wild lands. Among others, these include the state park system, state wildlife refuges, and state preserves. What DEP overlooks is that it already has TCN as a committed environmental partner in helping to manage the county park.

For the past three years, DEP has repeatedly written threatening letters to St Lucie County's government administrators. They continue to demand that the naturist use be shutdown or moved away from Blind Creek Beach. The response from St Lucie County has been largely silent. With the backing of business leaders and others, the county has chosen to let the grand experiment continue and thrive.

### **The Discovery of Trouble in March 2019**

In March 2019 TCN wrote a letter to a long-time Tallahassee naturist advocate and lobbyist. TCN asked his firm to investigate several key questions: Is Blind Creek Beach's naturist status actually in jeopardy? If true, how and why is it threatened? Last, who is at the heart of the objection?

### **Subsequent research in Tallahassee Uncovers a Real Threat**

The lobbyist discovered the State of Florida (through DEP) was getting ready to take immediate additional actions to compel St Lucie County to close down all nude use of Blink Creek Beach. Since learning of this, TCN has committed to uncovering the answers and prevail in this dispute. The naturists refuse to back down or leave this beach. To win, TCN has officially hired the Florida lobbying firm of Maury Management Group. This company has a long successful record of representing both South Florida Free Beaches (SFFB) and Florida Naturists Association since 1994 and the American Association for Nude Recreation (AANR) in Tallahassee. Their normal purview is to watchdog and identify potentially harmful bills or legislation. But with TCN's recent hiring of Maury Management, a far more intensive, assertive, and expensive work plan has been set in motion.

For it to be won, it will take more naturist donations.

### **WHAT IS NAC DOING?**

The Naturist Action Committee and the Naturist Education Foundation continue to support and work closely together with the leaders of Treasure Coast Naturists.

Both NAC and NEF have provided and will continue to provide various in-kind resources to the challenge (including providing advice, assisting in posting alerts on websites and sending alerts to mailing lists, etc...)

NAC and NEF have provided \$10,000 for the initial payment to the firm hired by TCN.

### **What Can You Do? Donate to the Cause.**

NAC is asking you to partner with us in this crucial time and take the following specific action.

Donate so that you and other naturists may continue to visit Blind Creek Beach.

### **Help Save Blind Creek Beach.**

Here's how you can help stop the threat and protect Blind Creek Beach for continued naturist use.

Please donate to

**THE NATURIST ACTION COMMITTEE,  
THE NATURIST EDUCATION FOUNDATION (tax deductible), or  
TCN's Legal Defense Fund.**

Make your check payable to: NAC, NEF, or TCN.

You may indicate that your donation is for the Blind Creek Beach Legal Defense Fund.

Mail to:

**NATURIST ACTION COMMITTEE**

**PO Box 132**

**OSHKOSH WI 54903**

or

**NATURIST EDUCATION FOUNDATION (tax deductible)**

**PO Box 132**

**OSHKOSH WI 54903**

or

**Treasure Coast Naturists**  
**PO Box 882281**  
**Port Saint Lucie, FL 34988**

Questions? Contact:

Bill Schroer, NAC/NEF Chair 269-986-2322

Richard Mason, NAC/NEF Board Member at 305-283-3633

Treasure Coast Naturists at 772-800-5841

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Naturist Action Committee board member Richard Mason is working diligently with Treasure Coast Naturists.

You can find additional information on the NAC website [www.naturistaction.org](http://www.naturistaction.org) (click on ALERTS)

In addition, local information is available on the web site of TCN: [treasurecoastnaturists.org](http://treasurecoastnaturists.org).

### **PLEASE HELP NAC CONTINUE HELPING NATURISTS!**

After nearly three decades, the Naturist Action Committee continues to work hard for YOU.

The Naturist Action Committee is a nonprofit volunteer adjunct to The Naturist Society. As the oldest, most successful and most respected organization in North America devoted exclusively to the advancement and protection of the rights of naturists, NAC has always been the credible voice for naturists. NAC is a volunteer, nonprofit organization committed to vigorous activism on behalf of the responsible clothing-optional use of public lands. It has no membership roster and receives no dues money. NAC relies **completely** on the generous voluntary donations of concerned naturists ... like YOU.

The dedicated and well-funded opponents of nudity can outspend NAC on almost any issue, but NAC has shown a tremendous ability for getting a much bigger bang for your donated buck. The essential response to the threat at Blind Creek Beach has already become very expensive. Won't you please send a generous donation to NAC? Please consider what it's worth to you for NAC to continue its important work, and then donate generously.

Thank you for choosing once again to make a difference.

Naturally,  
Richard Mason,  
Board Member for Florida  
Naturist Action Committee

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