

Jan. 10, 2020: Dear Commissioner, I understand Florida Wildlife Care had offered to work with the County in making use of 50 acres for a rehab center and more.
For many years my wife has been a rehabber and I a supporter.
Recently the location they had was forced to close creating a gap in native wildlife rehabbing and a place for our county rehab needs to be taken care of.
Please look at this option for the property. It is an opportunity to make good use of the property and help in native wildlife care.
I offer my time and support should you need someone to help you in a decision or short term transition to making this work.
Bob Barnas
352-538-7355
Sent from my iPhone

Jan. 8, 2020: I'd like to encourage the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners to keep Camp McConnell as part of our public parks and wild spaces. This property could be enjoyed by all the county residents and potentially could bring in revenue as a site for programs, retreats, concerts, fairs and events.
Sincerely,
Eve D. Ackerman

Jan. 7, 2020: Good morning,
I'm writing today to voice my support of the Camp Florida proposal.
It is an amazing opportunity to keep the Camp McConnell property in the hands of the county.
I have fond memories of going there (I think in Middle School) and would love to take my own children there.
I'm always looking for new adventures and beautiful places to take my toddler and this would be a great addition to our nature and water destinations.
Thank you for your time and service.
Best,
Sarah Houder

Jan. 7, 2020: Dear Commissioners,
Wishing you a great year in 2020 for you and your families, I am also contacting you re: this Camp McConnell Property.
Recently I was made aware that you will discuss this property and its use at a meeting in January.
As a mother, a citizen, and a Sierra Club member and organizer of the ICO (Inspiring Connections Outdoors) a Sierra Club program that promotes taking children outdoors to hike, camp, kayak, and just experience "being" in nature, I am requesting that you consider the use of this property for all children in Alachua County.
It is a suggestion, I do not have the know how to propose a plan that includes management and financial sides of this property.

However there are many organizations in this town of Gainesville, and in Alachua county that could provide a partnership, with staff and some funding to provide a safe space where kids could go on outings on that property.

From the photos I have seen, it is beautiful...

You have the power to decide who and how it can be managed. Maybe a partnership between the City of Gainesville, community children services, and several churches could be created.

Thank you for considering some options that will give children a real sense of being in nature to play, explore, play games, swim, learn social skills and enjoy life (they so need that).

Respectfully,

Maryvonne Devensky

352-871-1606

Jan. 5, 2020: Please make every endeavor to **keep** Camp McConnell in ownership of Alachua County. The property is a treasure which has much potential for our residents.

Mary Louise Weber

7205 NW 47th Ct.

32606

352-373-6362

Jan. 5, 2020: I heartily endorse Marihelen Wheeler's editorial about Camp McConnell in this morning's G'ville Sun. Alachua Co. should not squander this precious wild space in the name of profit.

I believe that the citizens of NCF who value our planet and recognize our increasingly precarious situation should seize this new decade to develop innovative new ways to educate children about the importance of the web of life of which we are a part.

Camp McConnell should become a new center for education to teach young people about the interdependent relationship humans have with the natural world. Our community is full of brilliant educators, and Camp McConnell is the perfect space for fun and interactive educational opportunities so that we will begin to raise a new generation of informed and committed people prepared to love and do their part to protect planet earth.

Barbara Woodmansee

Jan. 5, 2020: I have been here long enough to remember when Camp Crystal was almost sold off to private developers, and was retained or acquired by our School Board only because one woman rallied the citizenry and they convinced the School Board not to let the camp go.

Now Marihelen Wheeler is leading the fight to save Camp McConnell for our county, and I fervently hope you fellow Commissioners will support her.

It would be a tragedy to lose this marvelous facility, as it would have been to lose Camp Crystal so many years ago.

Margaret Boonstra

352-375-1715
2407 SW 50th Blvd.
Gainesville, FL 32608

Jan. 2, 2020: I strongly support Alachua County keeping the ownership of Camp McConnell!
The investment and value of this property will only increase and will benefit thousands of citizens throughout our community and beyond.

Cheryl Poe

Jan. 2, 2020: I am writing in response to the editorial by Ms. Wheeler in the Gainesville Sun regarding possible uses of Camp McConnell.

I have a particular interest in the swimming facilities at this location because the children of Micanopy and the surrounding areas do not have easy access to swimming facilities. It is my strong belief that every child in Florida deserves and opportunity to learn life saving swimming basics. I have been in talks with the Willie Mae Stokes Community Center to find ways to volunteer the use of my private swimming pool for community swim lessons to address this need. However, a private pool is not suitable or sustainable for the long run and Camp McConnell offers a much better long term resource for these kids in southern Alachua County.

I will be contacting the Willie Mae Stokes Community Center to see if we can submit a letter for the January 14th meeting. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Vogel
Micanopy, FL

Dec. 31, 2019: I have had the Camp McConnell experience. An organization for whom I work used to hold annual conferences there. I just don't see how this is going to be a wise purchase for the county. The place should really be bombed. There is not a usable building on the premises except maybe the office trailer. The entire place is moldy. That's a lot of money for some land and a trailer. The road leading in would have to be paved. Even if you paved it, I'm not sure a bus could make it down that road to gather tailgaters.

It's remote and too far from Gainesville. Most folks who already live in areas like the one at McConnell don't need to use space in a community garden. No one is going to drive from Gainesville to garden. I can see using the space for a wildlife refuge of some sort but that's about it.

This feels like a bad decision. Maybe if there was a decision of how it would be used before a vote, I could support it. As it stands today, I wouldn't touch that property if you gave it to me.

Sincerely-
Janet Akerson

Oct. 7, 2019: I am writing in support of keeping Camp McConnell as a public property and to be actively used for children in our community. Capital improvement funds through children's trust could be used to make repairs. I would be willing to help write the grant.

The property could be income-generating, if run properly, and still provide a service to the community. A community board could be appointed to sort through the best way to make it financially viable.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sunshine Moss, M.Ed.
Doctoral Candidate
Special Education, School Psychology,
& Early Childhood Studies
University of Florida

Oct. 7, 2019: Please consider keeping this beautiful facility as an Alachua county park or a place used by locals.

Thank you,
Kathy Paterson

Sep. 10, 2019: As a resident of Alachua County, I would like to add my support for keeping the land where Camp McConnell used to operate. I think that the county needs to continue to try to preserve natural areas, especially that can be used as a public place. The property could be used in a similar fashion to Camp Crystal - educating area children about Florida's fragile ecosystem and giving them a chance to experience being truly outdoors (which many may never have opportunity to do)

I ask that the county please NOT Sell the property.

Kind regards,
Bruce Nodine
4932 SW 91 Way
Gainesville, FL 32608
bruce@nodine.net
352-283-0566

Sept. 10, 2019: Dear Commissioners

As you meet today on this important item, please step away from the contract with the Miami agency and move forward with the local group that would like to buy the camp. This is a rare opportunity for a beautiful piece of property abounding with opportunity for the citizens of our county. I wrote to you several weeks ago, but I understand that there has not been a lot of public input. I can tell you that people I have spoken with share my view. I regret if you have not heard from them. Wisdom would guide you to keep the camp local to keep the charm in Alachua, keep the natural resources for our citizens and create local jobs by local people.

Thank you,
Janice Garry
925 NW 14th Ave, Gainesville, FL 32601
Stripes indicating rise in Florida temperature from 1895 - 2018.
Make Climate Change a priority in the election conversation.

Sep. 9, 2019: To whom it may concern,
Please keep camp McConnell!!

A plan could be developed to make it self sustainable. I think this could be done in a short amount of time. This place is a jewel and there are so many ways our larger community could benefit from keeping it available to the public.

Thank you,
Mariah Rollins

Sep. 9, 2019: As a resident of Alachua County, I would like to add my support for keeping the land where Camp McConnell used to operate. I think that the county needs to continue to try to preserve natural areas, especially that can be used as a public place. The property could be used in a similar fashion to Camp Crystal - educating area children about Florida's fragile ecosystem and giving them a chance to experience being truly outdoors (which many may never have opportunity to do)

I ask that the county please NOT Sell the property.

Kind regards,
Ellen Nodine
4932 SW 91 Way
Gainesville, FL 32608

Sep. 9, 2019: Dear Commissioners,
Please keep this natural treasure for our residents and families of the future!
Camp McConnell could be used to support local organizations, retreats, etc. I have been an Alachua County resident since 1976 and LOVE Camp McConnell.
Thank you for caring about the people of this community!

Sincerely,
Wes Lindberg
846 NW 31st Ave
32609

Sep. 9, 2019: Hello Commissioners

I am writing to support the county keeping Camp McConnell for public use. The camp provides a unique space and opportunity to support Alachua County Youth. The Children's Trust could be engaged in addition to other organizations to provide support for and manage the camp. The camp could be rented to organizations for retreats and generate revenue to cover the cost of the space and beyond. The possibilities are endless and there are many motivated and engaged people and organizations are willing to support this effort.

We have phenomenal retreat programs to support children, adults, peace building, professional development, personal growth; however, the cost of rental space limits the degree to which these programs are accessible to local people, particularly those who need it most. This incredible piece of property is a jewel and could be leveraged to make programs affordable to regular people.

It seems the potential sale of the land had spread awareness and ignited a fire in the community. Could a committee of community leaders be put in place to develop a structure and process for management and affordable local use?

Thank you for your consideration!

Sunshine Moss, M.Ed.
Doctoral Candidate
Special Education, School Psychology,
& Early Childhood Studies
University of Florida
(352) 219-7447

sun@ufl.edu

Sep. 8, 2019: Dear Commissioners,

As someone that has called Alachua County home for 58 years, I am encouraging you to keep Camp McConnell as a public amenity. Please do not sell it. There is so much history, so much beauty and so much potential in this place that I can't see that selling it makes much sense at all. Many counties operate campgrounds and parks, and I don't see why Alachua County couldn't consider this if nothing else.

Mary C. Alford, PE

FL License # 68187

Principal, The Sustainable Design Group

Candidate for Alachua County Commission District 1

352.339.3899 (office)

352.317.4480 (cell)

Sep. 8, 2019: I respectfully request that you vote to keep Camp McConnell so that our community might benefit from this beautiful property. Perhaps we could apply for grants to enhance it for specific use.

This property is a valuable asset and should be utilized to better our lives.

Thank you!

Nancy Ryan

9989 NW 21st Ave

Gainesville, FL 32606

Sep. 8, 2019: I am an Alachua County resident. I live in Micanopy and I have 3 children, 2 in public school and one who will be when he is of age.

Please vote to keep this property a public property instead of selling it to a private party. This will be an asset to county residents, especially our youth, for years to come.

Thank you,

Alan Dandorf

101 NE Weaver Run

Micanopy, FL 32667

Sep. 8, 2019: I am an Alachua County resident. I live in Micanopy and I have 3 children, 2 in public school and one who will be when he is of age.

Please vote to keep this property a public property instead of selling it to a private party. This will be an asset to county residents, especially our youth, for years to come.

Thank you,

Cassandra Capobianco

101 NE Weaver Run

Micanopy, FL 32667

Sep. 8, 2019: Hello Alachua County Commissioners!

I'm writing today to request that Alachua county please keep Camp McConnell as a public land/park/resource, instead of selling it to a private bidder.

I understand that there are costs associated with keeping it and would like to encourage you to reach out to our community for help in covering some of these costs. One big event or workshop or retreat could do it! There are so many possibilities for this land - please don't give it up! Our youth need as many places to go as possible - just imagine the programs that could be run from there! Maybe even an outdoor education school? The possibilities are endless!

I would be happy to help in any way I am able - please feel free to email or call me with any further questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Cassandra Tucci

cassandralatucci@gmail.com

617-596-2357
