

## Jupiter Lighthouse Bill Clears Hurdle

Mahoney's Bill would give Lighthouse Federal Designation that would increase funding and tourism

(February 13, 2008)

(Washington, D.C.) - Congressman Tim Mahoney (FL-16) reported today that the House Natural Resources Committee has released H.R. 1922, the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area Act of 2007, out of committee. HR 1922 designates the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse and the surrounding 126 acres as an "Outstanding Natural Area" (ONA). Congressman Mahoney introduced legislation on April 18, 2007.

"The people of Jupiter want to thank Chairman Rahall and Sub-Committee Chairman Grijalva for their support and leadership on getting H.R. 1922 passed and reported out of the House Natural Resources Committee," said Congressman Mahoney. The Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse is more than a beacon of light that guides mariners to safety; it is a monument to Florida's history and a symbol of our community."

"The Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area Act is an example of what local governments working together can achieve. I am honored to join with Senator Nelson, Commissioner Marcus, Mayor Golonka and many others on getting this important national designation to one of our nation's most treasured landmarks," said Mahoney.

H.R. 1922, will now be scheduled to go to the floor of the House of Representatives for a vote on final passage which is expected. The Senate version of the bill was reported out of Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on January 30, 2008.

ONA is a congressional designation that was established to protect federal lands. The designation has been used for conservation sites of approximately 100 acres in size that include a lighthouse. Jupiter Inlet would be only the second ONA in the nation. The first is at Yaquina Head in Oregon.

The ONA designation would:

- Provide long-term protection to a site of cultural and biological resources in a highly urbanized part of Florida.
- Promote tourism.
- Create an eastern/Atlantic counterpart to Yaquina Head on the Oregon coast.
- Elevate the visibility of the local community and help it compete for environmental grants.

The Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse has both environmental and historical significance for Florida. The lighthouse is located where the Loxahatchee River and the Indian River Lagoon meet. It is the home to endangered species of plants and animals and other natural communities that are quickly vanishing from south Florida.

The area surrounding the lighthouse was first used by Native Americans over 4,000 years ago. In the 17th Century, Europeans first made contact with the area. Both the lighthouse and the associated Oil House are nationally recognized historical structures.

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