

Mahoney, Klein Deliver on Promise to Designate Jupiter Lighthouse as National Treasure

(May 9, 2008)

(Jupiter, FL) - Congressman Tim Mahoney (FL-16) and Congressman Ron Klein (FL-22) visited the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse today to announce that the President signed the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 into law this week. This omnibus legislation includes the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area Act of 2007 (JILONA), which grants federal protection to the Jupiter Lighthouse.

"When I was first elected, I said we were going to get Jupiter Lighthouse designated as an 'Outstanding Natural Area,' and today, we delivered. This is the second lighthouse in America to receive this historic designation and the first on the East Coast," said Congressman Mahoney. "But the real heroes today are the volunteers and supporters who kept this effort at the forefront and I want to thank them for all of their hard work making this happen."

"At long last, we have given the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse the special designation it deserves," Congressman Klein said. "This designation will preserve the natural and cultural significance of this area for future generations, and will reaffirm that Florida's history is an important part of our American history."

JILONA would designate the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse and the surrounding 126 acres as an "Outstanding Natural Area" (ONA). ONA is a congressional designation that was established to protect federal lands. The designation has been used by the Bureau of Land Management for conservation sites of approximately 100 acres in size that include a lighthouse. Jupiter Inlet would be 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, and 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.