

Statement pertaining to Resolution 5 on the City Commissioners Agenda 7/5/2017.

*Calling for Staff Recommendations for the establishing of Youth Recreational and Park Facilities on property adjacent to the Key West International Airport:

The environmental impact on the proposed area of development will have repercussions for the sensitive wildlife habitat of Little Hamaca preserve. Negative aspects of a sports complex development would include:

- Increased vehicular and foot traffic through the preserve area.
- Elevated noise levels throughout the immediate natural surroundings.
- Erection of large sports field lighting will affect wildlife areas at night.
- Chemical sod treatment and parking area runoff will impact water quality to mangroves.
- Increased levels of discarded refuse in area will end up in natural surrounding areas.

Little Hamaca and the surrounding salt marsh are one of the island's last havens for protected native birds and wildlife. Some of the species affected would include white-crowned pigeons, osprey, wading birds, migratory raptors, bats and horseshoe crabs. The preserve is one of the few places on the island where visitors and hikers can experience a cross section of habitat within an accessible walking area. Preventing the negative impacts of development on the surrounding mangroves and overall habitat should be considered a matter of priority in order to conserve one of the last vestiges of undisturbed land in Key West.

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