

Economic Values of Springs in Florida State Parks

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Florida State Parks have

- 32 first or second magnitude springs
- they occur in 20 different state parks
- 17 state parks are named for their springs



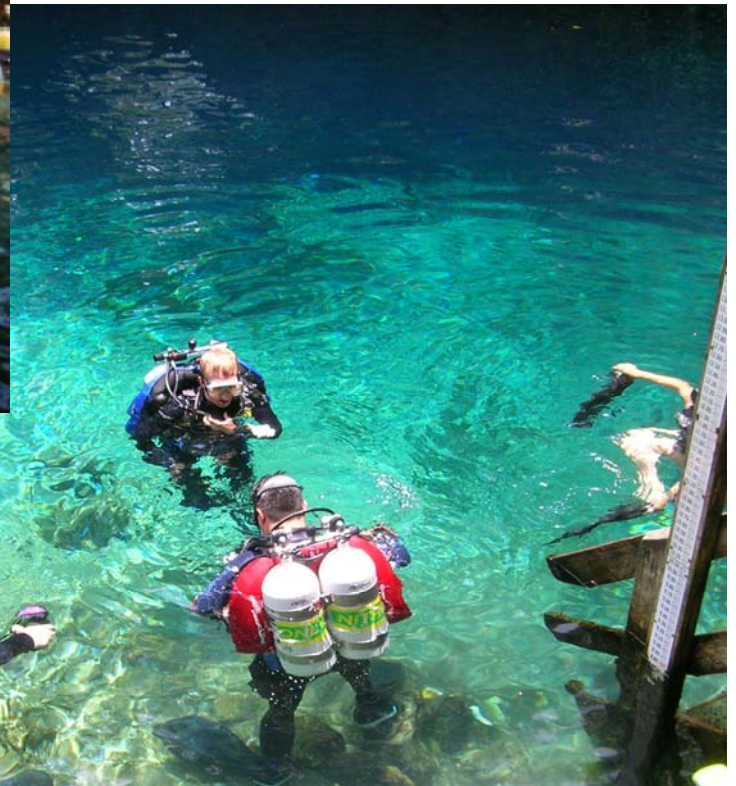
Some were developed earlier as private tourist attractions (e.g., Homosassa, DeLeon, Rainbow, Silver, Weeki Wachee, Wakulla). The Florida Park Service has typically retained or scaled back infrastructure and recreational use.



The Florida Park Service has eliminated boating, residences, and other structures from the spring runs to restore more natural values (e.g., Volusia Blue, Manatee, Wekiwa)



A couple of state park springs have focused recreational uses (e.g., Ichetucknee, Peacock)



Some are still little more than traditional swimming holes [e.g., Madison Blue, Lafayette Blue, Fanning, Troy, Ponce de Leon (Holmes Co.)]



Several (especially the 2nd magnitude springs) have no infrastructure or recreational use at all (e.g., Santa Fe Rise, some Ichetucknee springs, Little Fanning, Sally Ward (Wakulla), Salt Spring, Suwanacoochee Spring)



State Park Revenue and Attendance FY 09-10

PARK	FTEs	REVENUE	REVENUE PER FTE	ATTENDANCE
Homosassa Springs	28	\$2,945,893	\$105,210	300,071
Weeki Wachee Springs	15	\$2,301,474	\$153,432	147,145
Wakulla Springs	37	\$2,260,336	\$61,927	177,119
Blue Spring	13	\$1,172,100	\$90,162	540,084
Rainbow Springs	12	\$867,884	\$72,324	213,780
Ichetucknee Springs	9	\$750,826	\$83,425	184,151
Wekiwa Springs	16	\$737,045	\$46,065	264,003
De Leon Springs	8	\$494,590	\$61,824	233,658
Manatee Springs	13	\$391,559	\$30,120	149,659
Fanning Springs	1	\$226,149	\$226,149	304,646
Lafayette Blue Springs	2	\$120,315	\$60,158	34,893
Madison Blue Springs	1	\$47,326	\$47,326	49,131
Peacock Springs	1	\$46,642	\$46,642	16,369
Ponce de Leon	2	\$43,346	\$21,673	47,141
Troy Springs	1	\$23,761	\$23,761	11,601

Direct Economic Impact FY 09-10

PARK	ATTENDANCE	VISITOR EXPENDITURES IN LOCAL AREA	TOTAL DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT	JOBS
Blue Spring (9 th of 160)	540,084	\$18,824,087	\$19,628,539	393
Homosassa Springs	300,071	\$10,458,674	\$13,172,644	263
Fanning Springs	304,646	\$10,618,131	\$10,787,338	216
Wekiwa Springs	264,003	\$9,201,560	\$10,367,503	207
Wakulla Springs	177,119	\$6,173,305	\$9,292,608	186
De Leon Springs	233,658	\$8,143,915	\$8,698,580	174
Weeki Wachee Springs	147,145	\$5,128,591	\$8,579,046	172
Rainbow Springs	213,780	\$7,451,088	\$8,399,346	168
Ichetucknee Springs	184,151	\$6,418,398	\$7,042,823	141
Manatee Springs	149,659	\$5,216,214	\$5,601,303	112
Madison Blue Spring	49,131	\$1,712,411	\$1,787,482	36
Ponce de Leon Springs	47,141	\$1,643,052	\$1,761,491	35
Lafayette Blue Springs	34,893	\$1,216,160	\$1,706,573	34
Peacock Springs	16,369	\$570,525	\$642,795	13
Troy Spring	11,601	\$404,341	\$465,026	9

Bonn and Bell 2003

- Studied 4 springs – Ichetucknee, Wakulla, Homosassa, Volusia Blue
- Interviewed 400 visitors at each spring
- An average of 70% of visitors were from out-of-area (90% Ichetucknee; 64% Homosassa, Blue)

Blue Spring - Bonn 2003 vs 2008

- Questioned 400 visitors with the same questions for Blue Spring MFR Action Plan
- Added new questions on activities and attitudes
- Goal was to document change as discharge diminished.

Blue Spring - Bonn 2003 vs 2008

Please rate the importance of Florida State Park springs, lakes, and rivers to your quality of life: 1 (very unimportant) to 7 (very important)

2003 – 5.6

2008 - 5.4

Blue Spring - Bonn 2003 vs 2008

Is this your first visit?

2003 - 38.9%

2008 - 50.8%

Will you come back to Blue Spring in the near future?

2003 - 35.6%

2008 - 65.3%

Blue Spring - Bonn 2003 vs 2008

Main purpose of visit?

Winter visitors answered “manatees”

2003 – 53.0% 2008 – 64.9 %

Summer visitors answered
“swimming”, “canoeing”, or
“kayaking”

2008 - 42%

Blue Spring - Bonn 2003 vs 2008

Activities participated in (2008 only):

1. Watching manatees – 92.9%
2. Sightseeing, sunbathing, picnicking, strolling, birding, nature study, photography – 80.8%
3. Swimming, bathing, floating, snorkeling, etc. – 32.6%
4. Canoeing, kayaking – 12.8%

Blue Spring - Bonn 2003 vs 2008

Visited before 2003? (Asked because we wanted to compare “then vs now”)

Yes – 27.0%

No – 71.3%

Few visitors will know springs “the way they were”!

Blue Spring - Bonn 2003 vs 2008

- Do you believe it is in the public interest to reduce spring flow in state parks to meet public water supply need? “No”

2003 – 82.4%

2008 – 75.3%

Blue Spring - Bonn 2003 vs 2008

Blue Spring flow may decline in the future because of increased well pumping.

What percentage of flow could be lost before you considered it to constitute significant harm to:

1. Aesthetics of the park - 10.3%
2. Swimming or diving experience – 10.4%
3. Positive experience visiting the park – 11.9%

Blue Spring - Bonn 2003 vs 2008

If you knew the alternative water supply source (other than groundwater) could be developed so as to not reduce spring flows in state parks, would you be willing to pay more for them on your monthly water bill?

“Yes” 2003 – 79.5% 2008 – 73.5%

Blue Spring - Bonn 2003 vs 2008

If “yes”, would the amount you are willing to increase your water bill be considered to be:

	2003	2008
1. None	18.2%	14.2%
2. Minimal	15.4%	41.4%
3. Moderate	54.5%	33.6%
4. Substantial	12.0%	10.1%

Blue Spring - Bonn 2003 vs 2008

- If you knew that alternative water supplies (other than groundwater) could be developed so as to not lower the flow of a park spring, would you support your local government in the development of alternative water sources? “Yes”

2003 – 97%

2008 – 86.5%

Visitor Satisfaction Survey 2006

Overall park experience (10 to 1 scale):

All parks (25) - 10 (53.8%); 10-8 (89.6%)

Homosassa - 10 (59.1%); 10-8 (90.4%)

Manatee - 10 (39.9%); 10-8 (83.3%)

Wakulla - 10 (54.9%); 10-8 (91.5%)

Wekiwa - 10 (52.3%); 10-8 (88.9%)

Visitor Satisfaction Survey 2006

- Thoroughly enjoyed my visit (5 to 1 scale)

All parks (25) - 5 (77.1%); 5-4 (95.4%)

Homosassa - 5 (80.8%); 5-4 (96.6%)

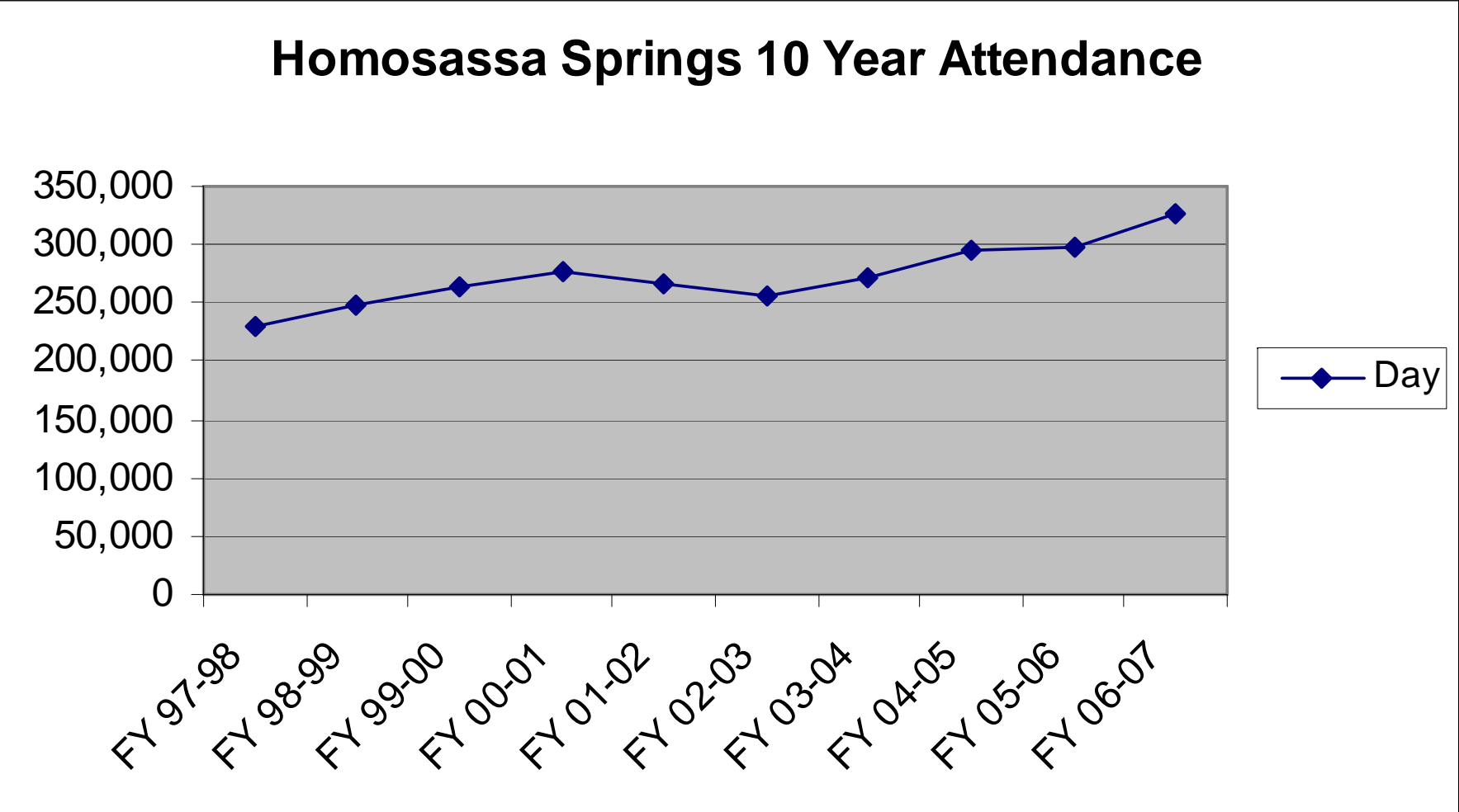
Manatee - 5 (63.6%); 5-4 (95.0%)

Wakulla - 5 (79.2%); 5-4 (95.7%)

Wekiwa - 5 (75.5%); 5-4 (95.1%)

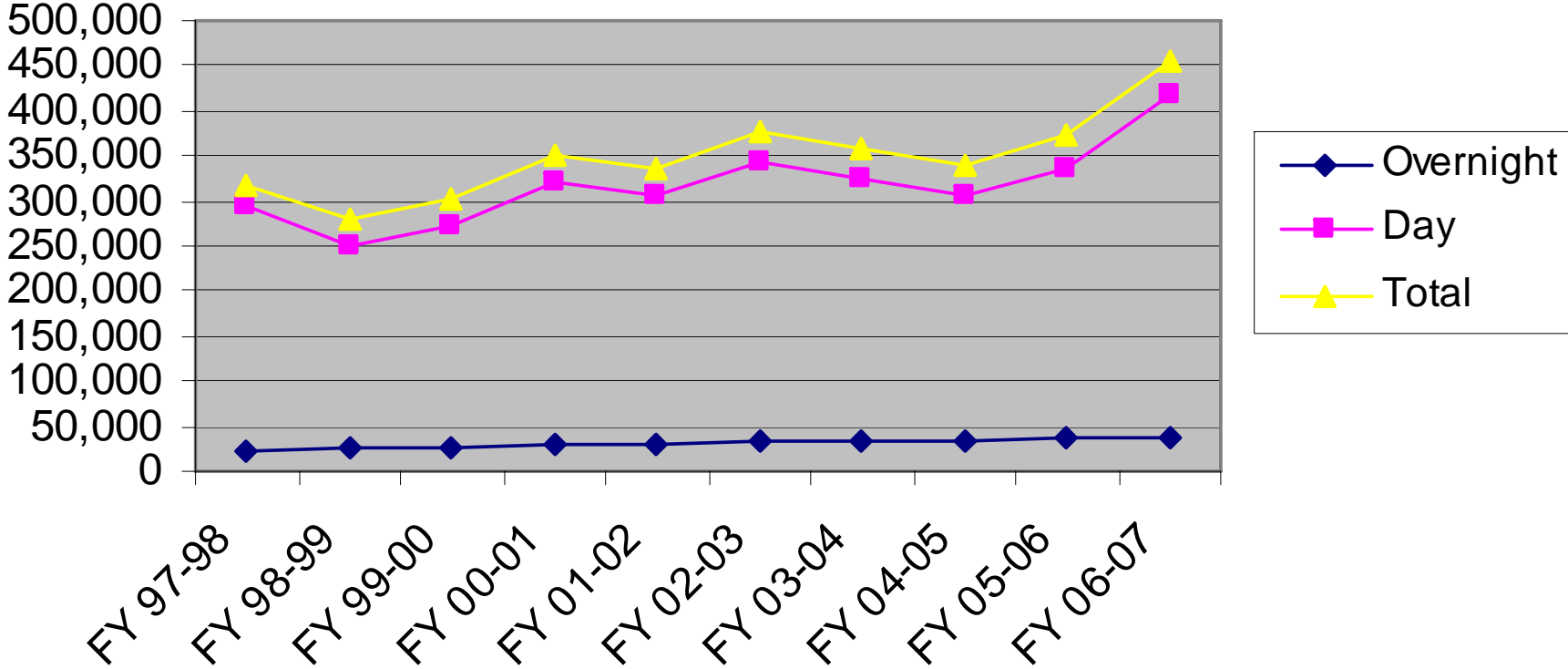
Homosassa

Homosassa Springs 10 Year Attendance



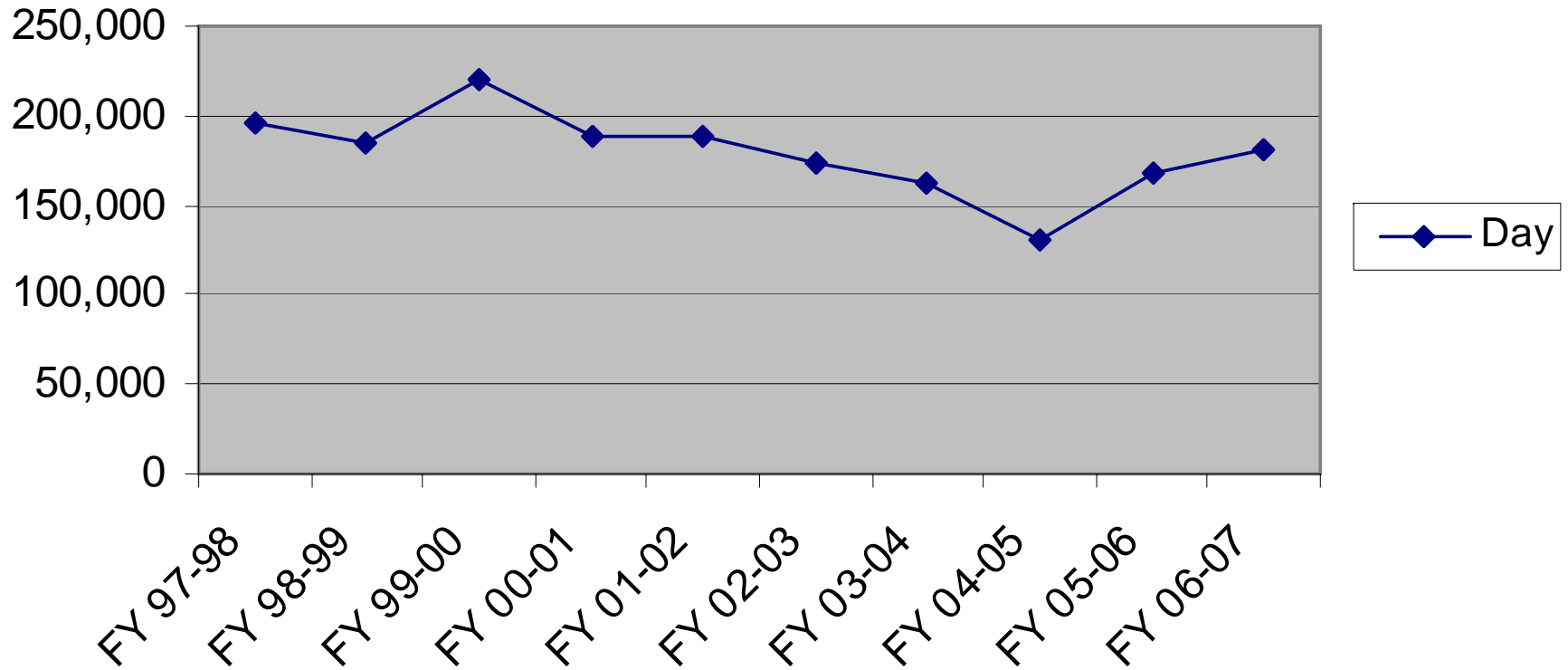
Volusia Blue

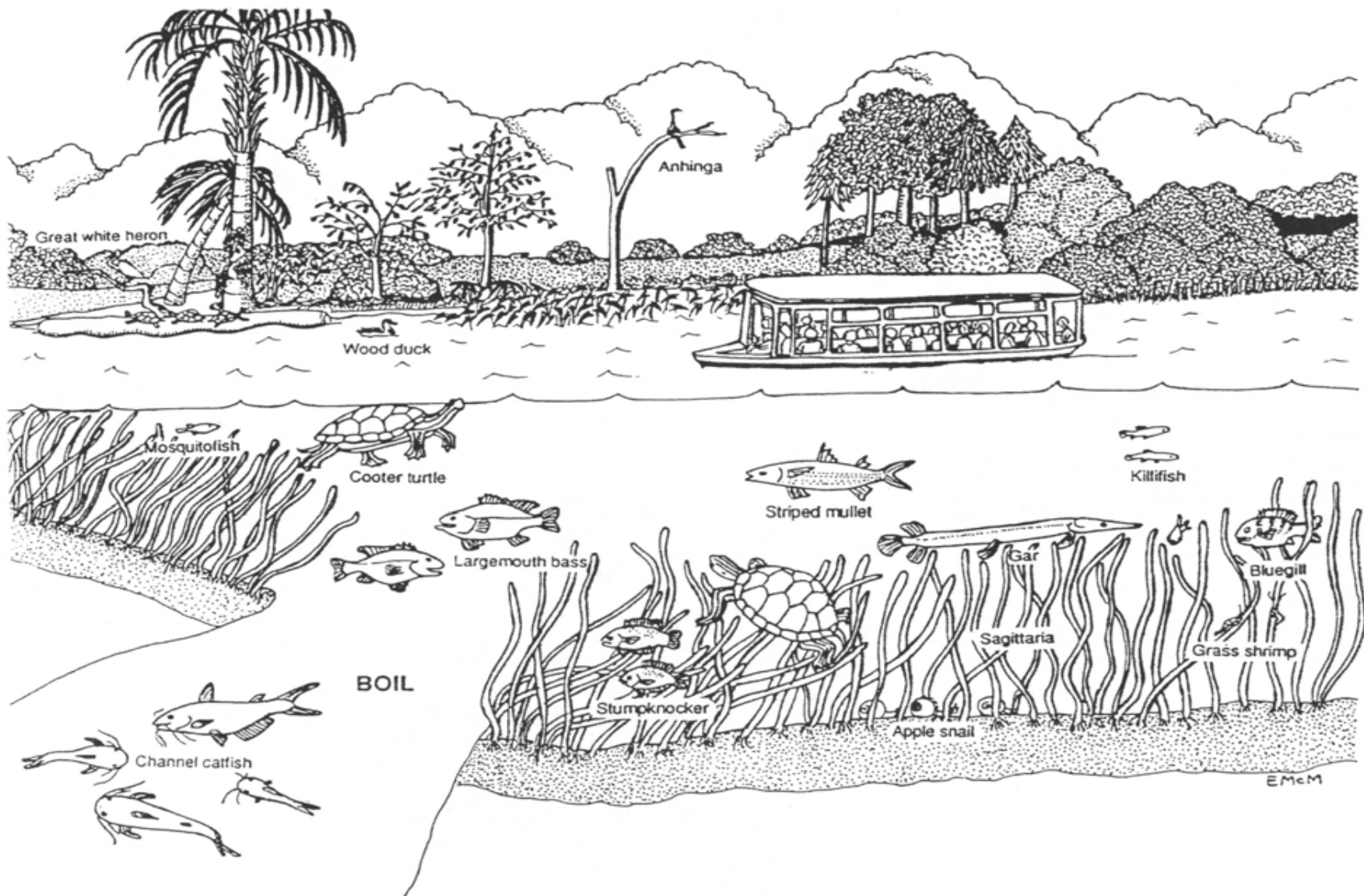
Blue Spring 10 Year Attendance



Ichetucknee

Ichetucknee Springs 10 Year Attendance





Elizabeth A. McMahan's representation of Silver Springs at the time of H.T. Odum's 1957 landmark study (from Odum *et al.*, *Environment and Society in Florida*, 1998).



• Kimberly Eisele