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Forest Service Reduces Silver Glen Springs Boating Area With New Barrier

For years, boating regulations at the popular Silver Glen Springs recreation site often has left recreational users and government overseers at odds. The springs, located off Lake George north of Astor, is again a hot spot of discontent after the US Forest Service moved a mooring line that has resulted in more difficult navigation.

The Forest Service has not responded to requests to comment concerning the mooring line, which has been moved further away from

the springs boil and out into the run. The line is now at the Lake and Marion County line, at such a location that prevents a larger boat from being able to reach a needed turnaround point near the spring boil.

"It started with the old ranger (Rick Lint)," said Raymond Hottinger, an Astor resident who commented on the situation Tuesday. "He wanted to get rid of the boats at Silver Glen. They way they've got it, big boats can't turn around anymore."

Hottinger said he has been told the line, in place for about six weeks, has been moved to make more room for manatees looking for a warm water shelter during the winter, and that it will be removed in March. However, he believes it is really just the latest move to eventually close the springs to boating traffic.

"I remember going to Blue Springs in a boat. It took two or three years after they

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Silver Glen ... cont'd

started regulating it for that to be closed," he said in reference to the popular Volusia County springs known for attracting hundreds of manatees during the winter months.

Hottinger, a veteran of boating in the Glen, said he doubts any efforts to bring manatees to the springs will be successful, if for no other reason that the large mammals need a certain depth of water to navigate, and right now the water level in the run is very low.

"I've never seen

it this low. A manatee would have a hard time getting over the sand bar the way the water is now."