# Environmentally Endangered Lands Program Selection and Management Committee Meeting

## June 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes

## Attendance

### SELECTION AND MANAGEMENT (SMC) MEMBERS

Tamy Dabu, Oli Johnson, Doug Sphar (Recreation and Education Advisory Committee), Jim Burney, Liz Becker, Lisa Toland, and Mark Bush (Zoom)

### ENVIRONMENTALLY ENDANGERED LANDS (EEL) PROGRAM STAFF

Mike Knight, David DeMeyer, Steve McGuffey (Zoom), and Brad Manley (Zoom)

### GUESTS

Rachel King (Zoom) and Heather

Protecting and Preserving Biological Diversity  
Through Responsible Stewardship of Brevard County’s Natural Resources

## Meeting Minutes

### CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Tamy Dabu called the meeting to order. She noted there is not a quorum at this time.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

None

## MINUTES

The SMC May 14, 2021 minutes were presented for approval. The SMC May 14, 2021 were approved as revised. Doug Sphar asked to recognize Mac McLouth as the Tourism Development Council representative.

### MOTION 1

**James Burney moved to approve the SMC May 14, 2021 minutes as revised.**

**Doug Sphar seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

Mike provided an update on the status of the Program management plan. Doug Sphar suggested adding not applicable (N/A) to Step 15 of the Management Plan Tracking Sheet if the property is not owned by the State. Tamy Dabu suggested color coding properties based on ownership. Mike stated he will make this revision.

Mike mentioned the Program is in the process of filling several vacancies including the South Region Land Management Specialist, South Region Land Management Technician, North Region Naturalist, and Central Region Naturalist. Jim Burney asked about the number of candidates for these positions. Mike responded the Program is receiving fewer applications; however, the candidates seem to be more qualified. Oli asked if Brad Manley is in charge of the South Region. Mike responded Brad is in his same role and Steve McGuffey is the Land Management Superintendent for the South Region.

Mike provided a copy of the revised 30-Year Report to each of the meeting attendees. He added it was reviewed by the Parks Director and is now with upper management for final review. Doug asked if there is an ADA version. Mike stated there is a Section 508 ADA compliant report; however, it looks very different from this report. Mike pointed out and explained the revisions suggested by the Director on pages 22 and 23. Doug commented the report is clearer with these revisions. Oli mentioned the verbiage in the 1990 and 2004 referenda ‘up to’ regarding funding and asked if it could be a specific dollar amount. Mike stated this language is built in for flexibility. Jim asked about the Section 508 ADA requirements such as font and color. Mike explained before we can email a document we have to ask if the document needs to be Section 508 ADA compliant. Additionally, if documents are posted on the web page there are guidelines for font, color, and the document must be legible by a screen reader. Mike added we are going to do our best to create Section 508 ADA compliant management plans as long as it does not prolong the process significantly to get management plans updated.

### COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS

Doug Sphar inquired about the next REAC meeting. Brad Manley stated the next scheduled rotation is August 2021.

Tamy Dabu noted Kim Zarillo and Mac McLouth are not present. There are not any other committee reports.

### AGENDA ITEM 1

**FIND Conservation Easement Transfer**

Mike provided historical information on the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) Exchange and an overview of the proposed conservation easement transfer. Staff is seeking SMC approval to proceed with the transfer. Mike stated there is not a quorum and asked if there are any questions.

Oli asked if this area will be fenced. Mike responded there will be a fence. He added FIND is working with the Program to build an equestrian/bike trail across this site most likely on the southern boundary as well as an educational experience to explain FIND’s mission.

Doug asked if the fence would impact wildlife connectivity. Mike stated the Program is working with FIND on a Gopher Tortoise Recipient Site and the assumption is the fence will be a six-foot chain-link fence. He added deer are able to jump this type of fence. Oli asked about dewatering. Mike stated the material will be pumped in, dewatered, and according to the permit the water that goes back out must be as clean or cleaner. Tamy explained the dredge process at dredge material management areas. Doug asked if anything outside of the red boundary can be used for trails. Mike confirmed. He added there have been some discussion with FIND and the Program to come to an agreement to manage the remnant areas outside the basin project. Jim Burney asked if FIND has a plan to maintain exotics in their footprint. Mike stated this has not been discussed, the Program has a good relationship with FIND and he feels they will be open to discuss exotics.

### MOTION 2

**Doug Sphar motioned to approve the FIND Conservation Easement Transfer.**

**Oli Johnson seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### AGENDA ITEM 2

**Hog Point Cove Sanctuary Site Visit Report**

Mike used Google Earth to illustrate the sanctuary including the house repaired by Career Source because of hurricane damage, the reconstructed dock that was destroyed by the hurricane, and pepper tree removal. Ray Mojica, South Beach Region Land Management Superintendent, and Jake Zehnder with the Brevard Zoo provided a tour of the project site and discussed the current status of the oyster reef and shoreline plantings. They also provided details about the recent clam seeding project that is underway at the same location. Ray also provided a tour of the newly restored field station and provided a drone mapping demonstration for participants. Doug asked how many agencies are involved in this project. Mike responded primarily the Brevard Zoo and the Save our Indian River Lagoon Program funds the project. He added the University of Central Florida monitors the project and the Florida Institute of Technology is involved with the facility.

### AGENDA ITEM 3

**Sykes Creek and Pine Island Management Plans Overview**

Mike introduced the Central Region Land Management Superintendent, David DeMeyer, and said David would provide an overview of the sites. Mike stated the management plans were redistributed because there were some questions and to provide an opportunity for the new SMC to review the management plans.

David discussed the progress made on the Pine Island, Thousand Islands, Sykes Creek, and Cruickshank Management Plans. He provided an overview of the Pine Island Conservation Area including location, size, characteristics, trails, maintenance, and the recent prescribed fire. Oli asked if there is an exit for kayaks at the north end of the canal. Mike responded there is a portage with and exit and an entrance near the old hunting camp. Jim Burney asked about the parking area by the kayak launch. Mike responded the parking area is still there and the Program is considering building a more substantial launch at the end of Pine Island Road in conjunction with a restoration that would connect the launch to the next canal. Mike stated there is a problem with the parking area being damaged by all-terrain vehicles and this parking lot may be removed once the new kayak launch is built. Jim asked about creating a no motor zone in the Rinker canal. Mike responded the Program explored creating a no motor zone at the deep portion at the very end of the canal where manatees hang out, and we encountered all kinds of challenges. He stated, staff discontinued this initiative. David added information about mitigation. He stated the Program met with Natural Resources and the mitigant six or seven months ago regarding Sams Creek historical location and he expects to have more information to share in the next four or five months. He added mitigation takes several years, but added it is nice that people are interested. Doug had some comments on pages 17 regarding the map and 47 regarding feral hogs included in the management plan. Mike asked Doug to please email those comments.

David reviewed the Sykes Creek Management area properties including Johnson, Kabbord, and Ulumay. He highlighted the minor changes to these sanctuaries. Mike added the Program has been waiting for all of these changes to occur so the changes can be incorporated into one plan. Doug asked about kayak access. Mike stated the Program has interest in building a kayak launch off of Hall Road. The challenge is crossing this high-speed road safely.

Doug asked about the pump house. Mike stated the pump house is being rebuilt. Doug asked about pepper trees. David stated Career Source has been helping staff with pepper tree removal with great results. Oli asked if the Program is utilizing spraying. David responded the small pepper trees can be pulled and the large ones are cut. Jim asked if the pepper trees qualify for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Service support. Dave responded the Program has had a lot of success using Invasive Plant Management funding; however, Staff was not successful obtaining funding for this particular site last year. He added Staff are working to remove the pepper trees in sections. Jim asked if restoration modeling is done in house and is it a line item in the budget. Mike responded the Program does not do it in house and it is generally not a line item in the budget. David mentioned some areas are managed by Mosquito Control and further progress in these areas would require collaboration. Mike added many Mosquito Control does not support filling in ditches because they are useful for mosquito control. Doug inquired about the water level. Mike stated the water level is controlled by Mosquito Control.

Tamy mentioned there is now an in-person quorum and asked if there is a motion to approve the minutes and the FIND Conservation Easement Transfer.

### AGENDA ITEM 4

**Recurring Meeting Date Discussion**

Tamy mentioned changing the recurring monthly meeting date to the third Friday of each month to reduce scheduling conflicts during the holiday season. Oli asked if the time would remain at 9:30 AM. Tamy responded, the group is in favor of meeting at 9:30. Doug asked about the number of holidays that fall on Friday. Mike responded there are very few. Doug stated he is fine with changing the meeting date. Tamy asked if there is a motion to move the meeting date.

### MOTION 3

**Oli Johnson moved to move the date of the SMC monthly meeting from the fourth Friday to the third Friday.**

**Liz Becker seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Mark Bush, SMC member, mentioned federal funding to purchase corridors with stimulus money. He asked if the EEL Program can move forward with trying to obtain some of these funds? Mike responded he is not sure. Mark Bush asked the best path forward to try to obtain this Federal Funding. Mike responded the Indian River Lagoon Program identifies sites and determines if EEL can partner on these; however, there has to be a level of support from upper management. Mark Bush added he is going to look into Blueway funding. Mark asked about using these funds in the mega parcel area to reduce inholdings. Mike stated this would be an important goal to work towards. Lisa Toland asked if the SMC can move forward with trying to obtain this funding. Mike stated it is within the policy for the SMC to ask. Mike does not know the mechanics of the Federal Funding and suggested meeting with Virginia Barker and Mark Bush to discuss the details of this opportunity. Lisa would like to discuss the Blueway funding opportunity. Oli asked if this can be placed on the next meeting. Doug added if there are funding opportunities, the Program should go for it. Lisa Toland volunteered to have a conversation regarding stimulus funds for acquisition. It was mentioned it is time for the SMC/PC Annual Joint Meeting to begin. Tamy asked if there is a motion to adjourn the meeting.

### NEXT MEETING

July 16, 2021 at 9:30 AM

### ADJORNED

**SMC meeting adjourned at 10:54 AM**

**Liz motioned to adjourn the meeting.**

**The second was not discernable from the recording.**

**Motion carried.**

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Add N/A to Step 15 of the Management Plan tracking sheet if the land is not owned by the State. Color code properties based on County or State ownership.

2. Schedule a meeting with Virginia Barker, Duane, and perhaps Mark Bush to discuss obtaining Federal Funds for acquisition.