# Environmentally Endangered Lands ProgramSelection and Management Committee Meeting

## August 20, 2021 Meeting Minutes

## Attendance

### SELECTION AND MANAGEMENT (SMC) MEMBERS

Tamy Dabu, Kim Zarillo, Doug Sphar (Recreation and Education Advisory Committee), Mac McLouth (Tourism Development Council Representative), Oli Johnson, Jennifer Thompson, Jim Burney and Lisa Toland (Zoom).

### ENVIRONMENTALLY ENDANGERED LANDS (EEL) PROGRAM STAFF

Mike Knight, David DeMeyer, Evan Hall, Damien Keene (Zoom), Ray Mojica (Zoom), Jenny Warner (Zoom), Alexandra Schilling (Zoom) and Amy Rivera (Zoom)

### GUESTS

Monty Montgomery (Procedures Committee)

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

## Meeting Minutes

### CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Tamy called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

## MINUTES

The SMC June 25, 2021, meeting minutes were presented for approval.

### MOTION 1

**Mac McLouth moved to approve the minutes as presented.**

**Oli Johnson seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

The Joint SMC/PC June 25, 2021, meeting minutes were presented for approval.

### MOTION 2

**Mac McLouth moved to approve the minutes as presented.**

**Doug Sphar seconded this motion.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

Mike Knight provided an update on Program staffing and mentioned Zach Taylor and Nick Eder accepted full-time positions in the South Region. Mike added there are openings for Naturalist positions and stated it is hard to keep these part-time positions filled.

Mike highlighted the Treasure Coin Hunt program and noted 4 of 9 coins have been found at Pine Island and stated the next hide location will be at Cruickshank Sanctuary. He encouraged the Committee to visit the Treasure Coin Hunt page.

Mike mentioned the straight non-mitigation donation in Grant/Valkaria that was submitted to the Board of County Commission (Board) is on hold to allow the Program time to gather tax information to ensure the Program does not incur unexpected tax expenses. Mike explained these parcels are worth very little and donors are reluctant to incur expenses to donate land. Mike noted these expenses are reimbursed per the agreement if landowner goes through with the donation. Mac asked what the adjacent property is? Mike responded they are undeveloped 1.25 acre lots. Jim Burney asked where the money for reimbursement comes from. Mike responded money comes from the Program budget and in particular residual bond resources. Mac asked if the Program owns any adjacent land. Mike responded, the Program has many adjacent parcels almost all donations have at least one connection to Program land. Mac asked if the State will provide funds for management. Mike responded the State will not provide funds, but will handle the acquisition directly per the agreement and the Program will manage the land. Mac mentioned the cost for owners to develop roads to access the land. Mike agreed access is expensive.

Oli asked if the State conducts prescribed burns in this area. Mike responded the only burning was joint burning between the Florida Forest Service and the Program for wildfire mitigation within very specific parameters. Mac asked how the cost of maintenance is determined. Mike responded it is very difficult to determine the cost of maintenance because there are many factors such as condition and habitat. Mac asked if the Program is encouraging donations. Mike stated we have an open dialogue with local environmental consultants who work with builders; however, the Program is not soliciting donations from private owners at this time. Lisa asked if the Program has sent letters soliciting donations. Mike responded the Program sent letters to purchase land back when The Nature Conservancy was the County’s land acquisition contractor.

### COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORT

Doug mentioned the absence of an in-person quorum at Recreation Education Advisory Committee (REAC) meetings and suggested a hard-hitting memo to encourage participation. Tamy suggested stressing a quorum is needed to the members when a vote is needed. Mike responded we will work on that.

Oli asked how the Program is doing on the Radencic property. Mike stated Radencic has not historically been a willing seller.

### AGENDA ITEM 1

**Colonial Crossing Donation**

Mike provided an overview of the Colonial Crossing Donation and mentioned the prospective donor’s revised offer to provide $32,000 in management funds at closing; however, the donor wants to include the dry retention area in the revised donation request.

Lisa inquired about the Program’s liability on the retention pond to ensure we understand the requirements. Jim recommends reviewing the agreement with Publix. Jim asked if there is a precedent for owning dry retention areas. Mike is unsure, but agreed this needs to be reviewed. Tamy suggested speaking with the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) regarding the dry retention because this dry retention area may be useful to Brevard County in terms of storm water. She suggested obtaining a memorandum of understanding with Publix and CVS regarding this issue. Mac stated how valuable dry retention areas are to purify water as population and development increase. Jennifer stated there are several examples of multi-agency agreements for dry retention area. Mike asked if there are any that are County owned. Jennifer, responded yes in the Suntree/Viera area. She believes Publix will be responsible for maintenance of the dry retention area; however, the Program has to be mindful of the outfall.

Kim asked if a first and second majority vote will be needed at this time. Mike stated he thinks one vote would be fine; however, the Committee may choose to have a first and second majority vote. Lisa stated this previous Committee decided to accept this donation because of connectivity and expressed her concern this donation was not presented to the Board. Mike referenced the procedure in the Land Acquisition Manual and that staff’s role is to ensure the procedures are followed.

### MOTION 3

**Kim motioned a first majority vote to accept the revised Colonial Crossing donation because this property meets the criteria of the Environmentally Endangered Lands Program of protection of rich biological diversity of Brevard County and this extends its ecosystem, helps in linkage, and additionally assists in additional stormwater retention subject to legal review of the dry retention area.**

**Jennifer seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### MOTION 4

**Kim motioned a second majority vote because this property meets the criteria of the Environmentally Endangered Lands Program of protection of rich biological diversity of Brevard County and this extends its ecosystem, helps in linkage, and additionally assists in additional stormwater retention subject to legal review of the dry retention area.**

**Mac seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### AGENDA ITEM 2

**Central Region Land Management Report**

David DeMeyer provided an update on Capron Ridge Sanctuary, Cruickshank Scrub Sanctuary, and 1000 Islands Conservation Area located in the Central Region. This presentation included management accomplishments, public access, species highlights, and the overall status of these sanctuaries. David responded to questions throughout this presentation.

Mac asked if Capron Ridge is used for retention. Kim mentioned scrub naturally serves this purpose. Mike agreed scrub habitat acts a water recharge for natural retention. Mac asked if there are homeless in Capron. David responded not at this location. Lisa asked if the jays have been monitored at Capron. David responded the jays are still there and do not appear to be affected by traffic or houses; however, he has not banded jays recently at Capron.

Mac asked how Cruickshank Scrub Sanctuary was acquired. David responded it was purchased. Kim stated she hopes the Program is utilizing Dr. Paul Schmalzer as a scientific resource. Mike responded we’ve been in contact with Paul and he has agreed to continue to review management plans. Kim responded, wonderful. Mac asked if the Program loses gopher tortoises during a burn. Evan responded he had never seen a gopher tortoise during a burn. Mac inquired if the Program moved the scrub-jays to Cruickshank. David responded the jays moved there from the South. Mike concurred. Doug asked about illegal dumping in the parking lot and the discussion to expand the parking lot. Mike responded the vegetation has been cleared and there is less dumping; however, the parking lot will not be expanded at this time.

Mac stated the 1000 Island Conservation Area is a nice property which is important to the Indian Rivera Lagoon (IRL) and he is glad the Program is working with Cocoa Beach. David responded the Program has a great working relationship with Cocoa Beach. Doug asked about the optimal management boundary. David responded the optimal boundary shows the land is State and leased by Cocoa Beach.

Lisa asked for clarification on the description of the geology. David stated the geology changed over time and can be listed as historical if the Committee prefers. Lisa noted the classification system utilized is the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) 2010 and asked if the Program should use the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation (FWC) Land Classification System 2018 since it includes more categories. David asked if Lisa would please provide this source and he will conduct a ground truth. Kim suggested keeping the historical information, referencing the data as historical, rewording the disturbance, and retaining the FNAI classification because there is a legal requirement to use FNAI. Lisa agrees since there is a requirement. Mac stated there may be TDC monies available for the IRL. Mike stated we can look into these funds and asked Mac to email the list of approved projects. Mac will provide a list of approved projects and the amount funded. This presentation is available upon request.

### AGENDA ITEM 3

**Proposed Lands Review**

Mike provided a historical overview of the lands acquired by the Program and the lands that were identified by the SMC for future acquisition in 2004. Mike shared the EEL Viewer Map that identifies lands that have been developed, changed hands, or may no longer be beneficial to the Program. He provided a preliminary property ranking spreadsheet for discussion and input in an effort to prepare for a more formal committee review of which lands should remain on the list. Mike asked for questions.

Kim suggested adding the generic boundary of the Florida Forever project proposals by name such as coastal scrub or Indian River Lagoon Blueway to the map for context. Mike responded we should be able to do that. Tamy asked for clarification on the scoring for species value. Mike responded the logic is high, medium, or low. Tamy asked if it is a cumulative total of species. Mike stated the Program does not have specific species data; but, more of a broad description of the habitat. Tamy stated criteria needs to be clearly stated for consistent scoring. Mike stated he will develop a description of the criteria. Lisa asked if there is a trickle-down effect of removing parcels from this list. Mike stated he is not aware of this type of requirement locally. He added this list is a guidance tool. Lisa likes it as a guidance document and ranking tool. Mike mentioned this list does not include willing seller information.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

None

### NEXT MEETING

Friday, September 17, 2021 from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

### ADJORNED

### MOTION 5

**Jennifer motioned to adjourn the meeting.**

**Doug seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### ACTION ITEMS

1. SMC Field Trip to Cruickshank