# Environmentally Endangered Lands Program

# Recreation and Education Advisory Committee

January 10, 2019 Meeting Minutes
Approved June 20, 2019

## *Attendance*

### Recreation and Education Advisory Committee Members

* Bob Champaigne
* Karen McArthur
* Rachel Sadoff
* Doug Sphar
* Suzanne Valencia

### Environmentally Endangered Lands Program Staff

* Ron Chicone
* Laura Clark
* David DeMeyer
* Brad Manley
* Chris O’Hara

### Guests

* Rick Follet, Procedures Committee
* Paul Schmalzer, Selection and Management Committee

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

## *Meeting Minutes*

### CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Doug Sphar, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. He expressed his concerns regarding the ability to maintain quorums at some meetings and noted that a new attendance policy was in place.

It was noted that committee members Alec Buchness and Steve Henderson were not in attendance, but there was a quorum. There are currently 3 openings on the Recreation and Education Advisory Committee.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

### MINUTES

**February 8, 2018 minutes**The February 8, 2018 draft minutes were presented for approval. Paul Schmalzer noted on page 3, 10th bullet, references to $45 million and $50 million should have a space between the number and the word million.

**MOTION ONE**
**Murray Hann moved to approve the February 8, 2018 minutes, as corrected.
Suzanne Valencia seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.**

**November 10, 2018 minutes**The November 10, 2018 draft minutes were presented for approval. Paul Schmalzer noted that the document was missing the usual title and date information at the top of the first page. Clarification was provided that staff is still learning to work within the Americans With Disabilities (ADA) requirements, and the information would be added back into the minutes.

**MOTION TWO
Murray Hann moved to approve the minutes as corrected.
Karen McArthur seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.**

### ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

Brad Manley provided information on trails at the Grant Flatwoods Sanctuary. It was noted that there is significant hog damage in this area. Murray Hann noted his feeling that trail work at this sanctuary has been a multi-year effort with exceptional results.

### AGENDA ITEMS

**Crane Creek Sanctuary Public Access Plan**Chris O’Hara, South Region Land Management Superintendent, gave a presentation regarding the Crane Creek Sanctuary Public Access Plan. A copy of the presentation can be obtained by calling the Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program Office at 321-255-4466.

The Crane Creek sanctuary is comprised of 22 acres near downtown Melbourne along Crane Creek. The property was acquired in 1999 from the Batchelor family. There is no land based public access, but the sanctuary does have a 0.6-mile loop trail accessible through a kayak launch within the site.

**Public Access Plan History**Public Stakeholders Meeting October 20, 2007.

* The Recreation and Education Advisory Committee (REAC) voted to submit the Public Access Plan to the Selection and Management Committee (SMC) on November 8, 2007.
* Interim management plan approved by SMC June 7, 2008.
* Process did not move forward for a period of time.
* Public Stakeholders Meeting March 29, 2018.

A figure 8 trail was originally planned for this location, but this has been changed to a 0.6-mile loop hiking trail which will be accessible only from the kayak launch. No land-based access points are planned for this location. There are two local public boat ramps, each about 3 miles away at Front Street and Riverview Park. No picnic tables are planned for this location.

**MOTION THREE
Suzanne Valencia moved to support the Crane Creek Public Access Plan as it was presented by staff.
Karen McArthur seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.**

**Pine Island Conservation Area Public Access Plan**Ron Chicone, Land Management Specialist for the Central Region, gave a presentation on the proposed Public Access Plan for the Pine Island Conservation Area (PICA). A copy of this presentation is available upon request by calling the EEL Program Office (321) 255-4466.

The original management plan for this sanctuary included multiple trails. Changes suggested for the management plan update include the following:

**Service Trail**Addition of a new authorized vehicle service trail along the eastern border of the sanctuary in order to provide quick staff access from the Sams House Management and Education Center area to the PICA area by staff when doing land management, or in the event of an emergency. This trail will also establish an eastern boundary for the sanctuary as it is anticipated the private property to the east will be developed soon.

**Little Inlet Trail**The existing Saltmarsh Trail ends with an overlook located in an area which has been inundated with white mangroves and will be closed. The new trail will extend a portion of the Saltmarsh Trail to an overlook bordering the lagoon.

**Public Toilet**Permanent building containing 2 to 4 single toilets with American’s with Disability Act (ADA) accessibility.

* Vault-style (non-septic system) with no running water, or with septic, running water and electric.
* Will limit human waste in natural areas.
* Offer convenience for kayakers, hikers and anglers.
* Installation of this structure should coincide with caretaker residence for additional security and vandalism prevention.
* Exact location to be determined.

**Caretaker Residence**

* Improved security at Pine Island entrance and any associated future facilities.
* Facilitate access to toilets and gates with potential to offer more flexible hours.
* Exact location to be determined.

**Additional Possible Change**Access of johnboat to the chain of natural marsh ponds needs to be determined.

**Discussion ensued the following was noted.**

* This site was purchased in partnership with the Saint Johns River Water Management District. They will receive a copy of the revised management plan for review once it is almost complete.
* It was noted that adding restrooms at the Malabar Trail Head made it much more visitor friendly.
* Multiple options for restroom facilities were researched.
* The lagoon is already in trouble and adding a system for waste water and septic this close to the shoreline will have negative impacts.
* Costs for installation and annual maintenance should be part of the consideration of whether or not restrooms and/or caretaker facilities are appropriate at this location. Those costs are not yet available.
* Responsibility for maintenance of the restrooms will fall on staff.
* Adding restrooms at PICA might generate requests for additional restroom facilities at other EEL Program sanctuaries. PICA is unique within the EEL sanctuary network as it is the only Category I site where a significant portion of the conservation area is distant to the management and education center. The Sams House is considered the management and education center for PICA.
* Finances for the EEL Program are not in good shape at this time.
* Duck hunting, which was once allowed at PICA, has been discontinued. Duck hunting is allowed at the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge.
* A request from a vendor to run air boats was received a few years ago. Language regarding access to lakes within PICA needs to be clarified.

**MOTION FOUR
Murray Hann moved to support the PICA Public Access Plan, as presented by staff.
Suzanne Valencia seconded the motion.
The motion carried with Bob Champaigne voting in opposition.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Paul Schmalzer, Selection and Management Committee (SMC) member, noted that on the previous Tuesday, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) had considered the reappointments of seven of the eight current SMC members. It was noted that since the beginning of the SMC’s existence in 1990, any committee member who had expressed a desire to continue to serve has been reappointed. Paul noted that the BOCC had retained the three most junior members of the Committee and that David Breininger, Kim Zarillo, Randy Thompson, Laurilee Thompson, and he were not reappointed.

Paul also explained that during the BOCC meeting, discussion occurred regarding the BOCC’s desire to change the qualifications of SMC members. SMC membership criteria is currently established within the EEL Program’s Land Acquisition Manual (LAM), and as approved by previous Board, any change to the LAM requires the approval of both the Selection and Management Committee and the Procedures Committee. It was noted that the BOCC can waive their own policy, if they choose to do so. It has been determined that the SMC members who were not reappointed can continue to serve on the committee until they are either reappointed or replaced. There is a process for advertising for new SMC members in the LAM, but it is unknown at this time if the BOCC plans to follow it. This item is scheduled for additional discussion at the January 22nd BOCC meeting.

### NEXT MEETING

To be determined.

### ADJOURNED

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.

### SUMMARY OF MEETING MOTIONS

1. Motion to approve the February 8, 2018 draft minutes, as corrected.
2. Motion to approve the November 10, 2018 draft minutes, as corrected.
3. Motion to support the Crane Creek Public Access Plan as presented by staff.
4. Motion to support the Pine Island Conservation Area Public Access plan, as it was presented by staff.