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# Environmentally Endangered Lands Program Selection and Management Committee and Procedures Committee Joint Meeting

## June 19, 2020 **Minutes**

## Attendance

### SELECTION AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (SMC) MEMBERS

* Elizabeth Becker
* Tamy Dabu
* Tammy Foster
* Oli Johnson
* Paul Schmalzer
* Lisa Toland
* Kim Zarillo

### PROCEDURES COMMITTEE (PC)

* Linda Behret
* Rick Follet
* Bo Platt
* Diane Stees
* Kim Zarillo

### ENVIRONMENTALLY ENDANGERED LANDS (EEL) PROGRAM STAFF

* Mike Knight
* Steve McGuffey
* Ray Mojica
* David DeMeyer
* Jenny Warner
* Damien Keene

### GUESTS

* Vince Lamb
* Al Vazquez – CloseWaters, LLC
* Suzanne Valencia
* Peter Cranis – Space Coast Office of Tourism
* *Protecting and Preserving Biological Diversity  
  Through Responsible Stewardship of Brevard County’s Natural Resources*

## Meeting Minutes

### CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Linda Behret, Procedures Committee Chairman, called the meeting to order at 3:07 PM.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

### MINUTES

August 23, 2019, SMC / PC Joint Minutes - Approved with minor revision to page 3 (removal of duplicate reference to 2-year terms).

**MOTION 1**

**Paul Schmalzer moved to approve the August 23, 2019, SMC/PC as corrected.**

**Tammy Foster seconded.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

November, 14, 2019, PC Minutes – Approved with change to guest list to include Paul Schmalzer.

**MOTION 2**

**Bo Platt moved to approve the November 14, 2019, PC Minutes as corrected.**

**Kim Zarillo seconded.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### AGENDA ITEM 1

**Committee Overview**

Mike Knight provided an overview of the Program’s advisory committee structure, responsibilities, County Commission responsibilities, and purpose of today’s joint committee meeting.

### AGENDA ITEM 2

**EEL Economic Benefit Analysis Presentation**

Al Vasquez with CloseWaters, LLC provided a presentation on the results of the Economic Benefit Analysis for the EEL Program.

Committee member input:

It was recommended that references to recreation be defined as “passive recreation”.

A question was raised as to how the results may or may not have factored in the potential impacts from Covid19. Al Vasquez responded this is a good point, but no one knows how the pandemic will affect tourism revenue.

It was pointed out that not all living shorelines are created equal and some EEL managed shorelines may or may not be similar to those cited in the Save Our Lagoon Plan with regards to nutrient abatement.

Kim Zarillo asked the dollar amount utilized to calculate the value of volunteer labor. Al Vasquez responded the hourly value from the Florida Association of Nonprofits is $24.69.

Vince Lamb asked if there were any similar studies done in other parts of Florida. Al clarified he was unable to locate any using similar methodologies.

Peter Cranis asked if the analysis was attempting to quantify the EEL Program in the sense that if the program did not exist these are dollars that would be lost. Al confirmed this was indeed the focus. Peter requested the opportunity to review the data and work with CloseWaters, LLC to fine tune the findings where needed to ensure it is accurate and can be supported by the tourism office. Al will get the data to Peter and coordinate as needed.

Additional questions from committee members related to the potential value of mitigation land donations and the potential value of air quality protection. Mike clarified the primary constraint with the scope of this project was budgetary.

### AGENDA ITEM 3

**Fiscal Year 2018 / 2019 Annual Overview**

Mike Knight provided an overview of program accomplishments for fiscal year 2018-2019. The presentation included a financial overview of operational expenses during this timeframe.

Committee member discussion included:

Paul Schmalzer summarized the history and current status of EEL millage collections and pointed out that over $41.6 million in revenue that could have been collected for the program was never collected. Paul also clarified that the program has used up all of its funding reserves.

Vince Lamb provided a summary of the recent discussion and consideration by the County Commission of a ballot issue for EEL in 2020. Currently there is no support for placing an EEL funding initiative on the ballot in 2020 and he believes the next logical opportunity will be in 2022.

Vince said he believes efforts to assess commissioner support will need to begin sometime in 2021 in order to have enough time to begin a public petition process which will be needed if there is not enough support from the County Commission.

Lisa Toland asked for clarification on how EEL committee members should be advocating for future funding for program operations. Mike Knight stated the upcoming 30-Year Anniversary Report, which will be distributed soon for review by the EEL committees will create an opportunity for committee input to the County Commission. Mike also clarified that committee input and advocation of ongoing program funding is well within the roles of each committee.

Paul Schmalzer added that the continuation of land acquisition efforts is very important to support the nature sanctuary network into the future.

Lisa Toland said she believes we need to be prepared for discussions with the County Commission about potential alternate funding sources. Paul stated that options have been explored over the years, but there will always be a need for a stable source of operational funding.

Tamy Dabu asked what would happen if the funding just runs out. Mike stated that the program will need to be prepared to show the potential impacts of management resources going away.

Lisa Toland pointed out the value to citizens of open space and conservation lands particularly during the pandemic and that visitation at parks in general has increased significantly during this time period.

### AGENDA ITEM 4

**Nomination / Appointment of PC Member to SMC**

Kim Zarillo, who currently sits on both the SMC and PC, indicated she may need to resign due to other commitments. Staff will work on trying to recruit new PC and Recreation Education and Advisory Committee (REAC) members for SMC consideration. This item was tabled for a future meeting.

### COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS

Kim Zarillo informed everyone about a graduate student named Kara Driscoll who is surveying several EEL sites for Florida Faerie Milkweed (*Asclepias feayi*). Sites with historic documentation include North Buck Lake, Malabar Scrub, Valkaria Scrub, Micco Scrub and Wickham Park.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

### NEXT MEETING

Staff will poll the committee for a future meeting date.

### ADJOURNED

The meeting was adjourned at 5:29 PM.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Staff will coordinate with Al with CloseWaters, LLC and Peter Cranis with the Space Coast Office of Tourism to fine tune the tourism data presented in the Economic Benefit Analysis.
2. Staff will compile a list of alternate funding options that have been considered in the past for further committee discussion and input.
3. Staff will work on recruiting new committee members for PC and REAC.