

**ENVIRONMENTALLY ENDANGERED LANDS (EEL) PROGRAM  
SELECTION & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (SMC)  
ATTENDANCE LIST  
December 10, 2002**

***SELECTION & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS***

Mark Bush  
Ron Hight  
Ross Hinkle  
Paul Schmalzer  
Kim Zarillo

***EEL PROGRAM STAFF***

Anne Birch  
Laura Clark

***THE NATURE CONSERVANCY***

Angela Klug  
Lori Thoms

***GUESTS***

Tom Jenkins, County Manager  
Jane Peltz, Citizen  
Truman Scarborough, Jr., Commissioner District I  
Michael Skapuraz, Citizen

**ENVIRONMENTALLY ENDANGERED LANDS PROGRAM  
SELECTION AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
December 10, 2002**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Ross Hinkle called the meeting to order at 1:07 PM and asked that everyone introduce themselves.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Truman Scarborough and Tom Jenkins, Sales Tax**

Truman Scarborough, Jr., District I Commissioner and Tom Jenkins, County Manager, provided information on a possible sales tax referendum that may be presented to voters in a special election this spring. Truman encouraged the Selection and Management Committee (SMC) to consider the referendum as a possible source of funding for land acquisition by the EEL Program. Clarification was provided that it would be appropriate for the SMC to approach the Board with a request that the EEL Program be included in the referendum and that support for the campaign needed to be generated without the expenditure of County funds. Tom stated that if the County Commission votes to hold the referendum, it would be within the purview of the SMC to identify financial needs and request that the EEL Program be included in the referendum. Tom provided clarification that expenditure of funds from this referendum would be limited to capital expenses. Ross and Anne both mentioned the need for funding for management, especially long-term funds because there is not a source for this funding once the ad valorem stops being collected in 2011. Truman replied that the EEL Program may want to consider additional funding at the time the ad valorem sunsets. Further discussion of this topic will be scheduled for later this meeting and at the next meeting.

**Brevard Hardwoods**

Jim and Linda Nobel presented information on the Brevard Hardwoods property. This property is approximately 2.4 acres on Marie Street in the Town of Malabar and includes an historic building that has recently been upgraded. The building may be appropriate to use as the Management and Education Center at the Malabar Scrub Sanctuary. The SMC decided to conduct a site visit. The next SMC meeting will be held on Monday, January 13, 2003 at Brevard Hardwoods.

**Additional Public Comment – Rockledge Flagler Property**

Jane Peltz, citizen, asked if the EEL Program would consider conserving a portion of the Flagler property in Rockledge. It is her understanding the land is under contract and scheduled for development as an industrial site. Angela Klug stated that she has contacted the Flagler Corporation and they will be providing her with information on the buyer in the near future. TNC will contact the new owners to determine if they would be willing sellers. Michael Skapuraz, citizen, asked if the property was of value as conservation land. Members of the SMC clarified the land was acknowledged as valuable for conservation during the original purchase attempt.

**MINUTES:**

The September 9, and October 7, 2002 minutes are pending approval.

Ross asked for comments on the September minutes.

**MOTION ONE:**

Paul Schmalzer moved to approve the September 9, 2002 minutes.

Ron Hight seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Ross asked for comments on the October 7, 2002 minutes.

**MOTION TWO:**

Paul moved to approve the October 7, 2002 minutes.

Ron seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

***ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW:***

The Administrative Review was discussed. It was noted that the EEL Program has received approximately 55 acres of land in the South Beach area as a donation from the Richard King Mellon Foundation. This land has a tax-assessed value of just under \$5 million. It was also noted that the Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem (BCSE) and the North Indian River Lagoon - Blueways projects were moved into Group A at the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) meeting in Tallahassee on December 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.

***THE NATURE CONSERVANCY:***

Angela Klug presented the revised Acquisition and Reimbursement Summary. The SMC voiced their pleasure in the new format. Ross asked if an additional category of "in network sanctuaries" could be added to include lands that have been purchased and reimbursed (if applicable) in order to show a more complete picture of total land acquisition. Anne stated that information could be included in future reports. Ron asked if information could also be provided on the location of properties acquired and proposed for acquisition. Angela will provide overview maps in the future to use as a reference during meetings.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**1. The Viera Co., Plantation Pointe property update**

Angela distributed a map of the 12.7-acre Viera Company property directly south of Barnes Boulevard in Rockledge and confirmed that an offer has been made to the Viera Company for purchase of this parcel. The Viera Conservation Development District (CDD) has declined to waive the annual assessment fee associated with the property. The City of Rockledge has offered acquisition funding assistance in the past and TNC will approach the City to determine if they would be willing to fund the CDD payment. Another option may be a donation by Hugh Evans. Members of the SMC voiced their support for purchase of the 12.7 acre parcel and indicated there would not be a strong need to acquire the previously discussed two rows of lots along the east side of the Plantation Point development parcel if the 12.7 acre parcel were acquired. The two rows of lots have not yet been appraised since obtaining the appraisal was contingent upon conservation of the 100' strip immediately east of the two rows and west of the Viera Company property. This has not yet occurred.

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*Approved February 24, 2003*

## **2. East Central Florida Regional Conservation Workshop: Follow-up**

Anne asked the SMC their preference for the presentation of the information received during the recent Conservation Workshop, what the next steps the workshop process should include, and possible time frame for the next meeting.

It was determined that the next workshop should focus on biological mapping information such as:

- Presentation of information on the parcel level
- Existing conservation lands
- Areas that are presently planned for acquisition
- Model species and their requirements for viable populations
- Planned roads
- Planned development
- Ideal conservation corridors
- Preferred acquisition sites
- Identification of willing or unwilling sellers
- Alternate scenarios for conservation corridors

It was suggested that a possible first step could be for the modelers and scientists to get together and provide a map showing existing conservation lands and an indication of areas that would be most desirable for acquisition in order to sustain viable populations of identified focal species. The map could be then be reviewed for willingness of sellers and revised to consider alternative acquisition scenarios. A suggestion was offered that the process be implemented on a localized area. Then, once the process was worked out, it could be used as a model for the region. The EEL Program is not in a position to oversee the entire process for the five county region, but it was felt that moving forward with these next steps would provide a good foundation of information on connectivity and conservation corridors. The agencies within the region could then use the information to develop a conservation plan for their area that complements the region's conservation goals. It was noted that that acquisition efforts would need to be carried out by the individual agencies, but that another organization, such as The Nature Conservancy or Florida Natural Areas Inventory might be interested in managing the project.

Communication with landowners who are not interested in selling at this time was suggested as it was hoped that education of the importance that these lands have to the overall conservation effort might influence the owners to consider compatible uses for their land.

SMC members indicated their preference that all workshop information be presented in as simple a format as possible. The next meeting will be held during the month of February.

### **SMC REPORTS:**

None

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **1. Discussion of Tax Referendum**

Members of the SMC expressed their pleasure with the comments by Mr. Jenkins and Commissioner Scarborough related to the strong support they indicated the EEL Program receives from the public. Anne provided clarification that the letter the SMC had prepared for the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) regarding possible extension of the Beach and Riverfront referendum had not been sent because staff was waiting for further clarification regarding the sales tax.

It was determined that identification of financial need should be established as a priority task for the SMC. Large expenditures were identified as:

- \$2 million dollars each for the education and management centers at Cruickshank and Malabar. This amount was determined based on the SMC's opinion that a reduced level of service at the Malabar and Cruickshank sites would not be desirable in comparison to what is provided at the Enchanted Forest and planned for the Barrier Island Ecosystem Center.
- 22,000 acres of land in approved CARL project boundaries with a tax-assessed value of \$65 million dollars
- lands outside project boundaries required for connectivity
- management costs for existing lands

Anne expressed concern regarding the need to establish continued funding for long term management expenses. Members of the Committee stated their feeling that Commissioner Scarborough and Mr. Jenkins indicated that this concern would best be addressed in the future. The SMC expressed concerned about funding the operations and long term management needs of the EEL Program and the source of funds in the future. The County will have to make a decision about whether it comes from general fund or some other source. Ross asked about the possibility of establishing a trust fund using the excess ad valorem collected. Anne indicated there were not sufficient funds to establish a trust fund under the existing referendum.

It was determined that the SMC felt that an amount of \$100 million dollars over 20 years could be easily justified to continue to meet the goals of the program. Staff will start to compile a list of projects and anticipated costs for presentation to the SMC.

Further discussion of this topic will be held at the next meeting.

### **NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, January 13, 2003 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM at Brevard Hardwoods, Malabar.

### **ADJOURNED:**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.

### **SUMMARY OF MEETING MOTIONS:**

- Motion to approve the September 9, 2002 minutes.  
Motion carried unanimously.

- Motion to approve the October 7, 2002 minutes.  
Motion carried unanimously.

***ACTION ITEMS:***

- Consideration of a request to the Board that EEL Program funding be included in a possible sales tax referendum will be scheduled for the next meeting.
- The Acquisition and Reimbursement Summary will be further revised to include a section that will provide total “in network” sanctuaries information. TNC will provide property location maps at meetings.
- Staff will compile a list of projects and anticipated costs to present to the SMC for their review as they discuss additional funding needs.