

**ENVIRONMENTALLY ENDANGERED LANDS (EEL) PROGRAM
SELECTION & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (SMC)
June 22, 2005
Attendance List**

SELECTION & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dave Breininger
Ron Hight
Ross Hinkle
Randy Parkinson
Paul Schmalzer
Kim Zarillo

EEL PROGRAM STAFF

Laura Clark
Mike Knight
D. Scott Taylor

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Keith Fountain, Director of Protection

GUESTS

Ernie Brown, Director, Brevard County Natural Resources Management Office
Mike Di Christopher, citizen
Gail Hoffman, Brevard County Natural Resources Management Office
Laurilee Thompson, Dixie Crossroads, TDC

**ENVIRONMENTALLY ENDANGERED LANDS PROGRAM
SELECTION AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**June 22, 2005
Meeting Minutes**

CALL TO ORDER:

Ross Hinkle called the meeting to order at 1:08 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ross asked if New Business Item #2 could be moved ahead on the agenda. No one expressed concern with a change in the order of the agenda. The Chairman dispensed with the order of the agenda.

MINUTES:

No minutes were presented for approval.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW:

The Administrative Summary was reviewed.

TNC REPORT:

Keith Fountain from The Nature Conservancy provided a review of the Acquisition and Reimbursement activities for the last month.

OLD BUSINESS:

Bowman Property – Pine Island Road

In a previous meeting, the SMC reviewed a north Merritt Island property that had been submitted by the owner for acquisition consideration. The SMC declined the property based on lack of conservation value, and asked staff to consider whether or not the location could be used as an EEL Office.

Staff subsequently re-visited the property. Staff provided a presentation that included pictures of the landscape and buildings, and recommended that due to the physical location of the property, it would not be suitable for the EEL administration office.

The SMC discussed the information.

MOTION TWO

Paul Schmalzer moved to decline from further consideration, the Bowman property for use as an EEL Program office location based on the report provided by staff.

Randy seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Pine Island Conservation Area: Storm-water project update

Mike provided overview information on the history of the Pine Island Conservation Area. In 1996, The Pine Island Conservation Area (PICA) was a joint purchase between the St. Johns River Water Management District and the EEL Program to create a natural buffer for the Indian River Lagoon, and to assist with flood control in North Merritt Island. As part of the flood control, Brevard County Stormwater Utility Department is in the 100% design phase of a storm-water control project on two borrow lakes at the site.

Scott Taylor, Land Manager for the EEL Program's Central Region provided information on a recent survey done by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWCC) on the two borrow lakes in the PICA. The study, which was done at no charge to the EEL Program, showed a valuable fish resource in both lakes.

Randy Parkinson spoke of the importance of protecting the natural resource that had developed on the property.

Mike stated that the Stormwater Utility Department expressed their willingness to work with the EEL Program in the grading of the lake shore, to help create shallow areas that would provide vegetated zones to remove nutrients.

Ron Hight provided information on portable aerators that might be used to boost dissolved oxygen levels.

Ross said that part of the plan for all EEL properties is to evaluate the use and management of the site to determine if there are adverse impacts, and to recommend management changes if needed.

Staff will continue to work on the management plan for the site, and coordinate with the Stormwater Utility Department as work begins to progress on the stormwater ponds.

Pine Island Conservation Area: Marsh Restoration

Restoration efforts on the marsh area have restarted after working through issues related to hurricane damage and possible impacts that the equipment used in the restoration might have on Pine Island Road.

Pine Island Conservation Area: Sams House Update

Scott told the group that the Sams House area in PICA contained part of a burial mound that has been registered by the State of Florida. In an effort to protect the mound, TNC will contact the owners of the adjacent property, who own a portion of the mound, to see if they might be willing sellers.

Archie Carr Property Reimbursement Status

In 2001, at the request of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the EEL Program purchased 218 feet of ocean front property within the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge, with the understanding that FWS would reimburse EEL when funds became available.

The FWS received funding in November 2004 and is ready to reimburse the EEL Program the agreed purchase price to purchase the property.

The SMC discussed the possible options.

June 22, 2005

Page 2 of 4

Approved September 16, 2005

Ron abstained from the vote due to his association with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

MOTION ONE

Paul moved that the EEL Program accept reimbursement for the original purchase price for the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge Property.

Randy seconded the motion

The motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

North Brevard Development and Mitigation – Laurilee Thompson

Laurilee Thompson thanked the Committee for allowing her to speak regarding her concerns about the impacts that new development, planned for the north part of the county, would have on the Indian River Lagoon. It was agreed that a workshop should be planned to discuss these issues.

Ms. Thompson also asked if it might be possible to create a mitigation bank in the north Brevard area.

Additional information will be provided.

Lake Poinsett Wetland Mitigation

Mike Knight introduced Mike Di Christopher, citizen, and Ernie Brown, Director of the Brevard County Natural Resources Management Office. Mike asked the SMC to consider whether or not they would be interested having the EEL Program receive mitigation donations from a potential Regional Offsite Mitigation Area (ROMA). The EEL Program would need to accept long-term management responsibilities of the donated parcels.

Ernie explained there is interest in establishing one or more Regional Offsite Mitigation Areas (ROMAs) within the County, as there is a growing need for mitigation areas for single-family homes. It is hoped that a ROMA might be established in each of the four watersheds. The ROMAs would each be established by contract between the County and DEP. Single-family homes requiring mitigation land would purchase land within an established mitigation bank. The site under consideration at this meeting is owned by Mr. Di Christopher. The owner of the mitigation bank would then convey the land and title to the EEL Program for long-term management.

Mike Di Christopher provided information on his 58 acres of land near Lake Poinsett in Cocoa so the SMC could consider whether the EEL Program should accept donations from this potential mitigation bank.

Benefits to the EEL Program were identified:

- Acquisition of environmentally endangered land without cost to the Program.
- The land is adjacent to other conservation lands owned by SJRWMD.
- Watershed areas could be compared to lands targeted for acquisition to provide the greatest conservation benefit.

June 22, 2005

Page 3 of 4

Approved September 16, 2005

The SMC agreed with the idea conceptually. Clarification was provided that the following information would need to be obtained before further consideration of accepting the properties as donations could be made:

- Does the land meet criteria for acquisition by the EEL Program?
- What are the details of the contract?
- Would a per acre management fee be appropriate?
- How does fire management fit into the plan?

A site visit will be scheduled to the Di Christopher's property in the near future.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be held July 29, 2005.

ADJOURNED:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.

SUMMARY OF MEETING MOTIONS:

- Motion to accept the reimbursement from FWS for the original purchase price for the Archie Carr Property.
- Motion to decline from further consideration, the Bowman's property for use as an EEL Program office site.