

ITEM 2:

Consider the February 11, 2022, meeting and the March 2022 regional hearing summaries.

DSL STAFF REMARKS:

None

DSL STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the meeting summary.

ARC RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE

APPROVE WITH MODIFICATIONS: _____

DEFER

WITHDRAW

NOT APPROVE

OTHER: _____

Acquisition and Restoration Council Meeting Summary

Council Meeting: February 11, 2022

Time: 9 a.m.

Location: Department of Environmental Protection
Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building
Conference Room 137
3900 Commonwealth Blvd
Tallahassee, FL 32399

And via Webinar

Members in Attendance:

Mr. Josh Goodwin, DHR for Dr. Parsons
Mr. Erin Albury, FFS via Webinar
Ms. Lynetta Griner, Citizen Member
Dr. Thomas Eason, FWC
Dr. Bill Palmer, Citizen Member
Ms. Elva Peppers, Citizen Member
Ms. Mara Gambineri, ARC Chair, DEP

ARC Staff Director: Ms. Shauna Allen, DEP

Item 1: Call to Order at 9 a.m.

DEP Deputy Secretary for Land and Recreation, Mara Gambineri, called the meeting to order with a new gavel and block commemorating 20 years of Florida Forever, and asked Dr. Palmer to lead the pledge of allegiance. Dr. Eason shared an announcement that there will be a Landscape Conservation Panel at the upcoming March FWC meeting. Panelists include Callie DeHaven, Jennifer Goff, Jon Oetting, Jim Strickland, Jason Lauritsen and Greg Knecht. Ms. Griner announced the upcoming film screening for the Florida Wildlife Corridor, next Wednesday at the Capitol Courtyard followed by a panel discussion lead by DEP Secretary Shawn Hamilton.

Chair Gambineri asked ARC Staff Director, Shauna Allen, to conduct the roll call. The quorum was established with seven members in attendance. Ms. Allen called the Program Administrator for the Office of Environmental Services, Ms. Deborah Burr, to introduce Frank Price, Director of the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI). Ms. Allen introduced Hannah Turbiville, Program Assistant on the Office of Environmental Services and announced acquisition closings for December-January with 14,500 acres acquired at a cost of \$39.7 million dollars. Ms. Allen also provided housekeeping instructions and information for public comments.

Item 2: Consider the December 9-10, 2021, meeting summaries.

DSL Staff Recommendation: Approve the meeting summaries.

Discussion: None.

ARC Action: Ms. Griner made the motion to approve the summaries with Ms. Peppers seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

FLORIDA FOREVER

Item 3: Adopt the FY 2022-23 Division of State Lands Annual Florida Forever Work Plan for presentation to the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund.

DSL Staff Recommendation: Adopt the annual work plan.

Discussion: None.

ARC Action: Dr. Palmer made the motion to approve the work plan with Mr. Albury seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

Item 4: Consider a request to remove 0.28 acres from the boundary of the Florida Keys Ecosystem Florida Forever Project.

DSL Staff Recommendation: Vote to approve the owner-requested deletion.

Discussion: None.

ARC Action: Dr. Eason made the motion to approve the removal with Ms. Griner seconding. ARC members voted unanimously by seven members to approve the removal.

Item 5: Consider requests to remove approximately 16.38 acres from the boundary of the Bombing Range Ridge Florida Forever Project.

DSL Staff Recommendation: Vote to approve the owner-requested deletion.

Discussion: Dr. Eason commented for both items, this is a willing seller program and he respects the wishes of the owners. Ms. Peppers asked about the background on this request. Ms. Allen stated that the homeowner's association decided they didn't want to participate in the program. Ms. Sine Murray added these were small lots and from the FNAI evaluation many of the properties are impacted from development. There were no further comments.

ARC Action: Dr. Eason made the motion to approve the removal with Dr. Palmer seconding. ARC members voted unanimously by seven members to approve the removal.

LAND ADMINISTRATION

Item 6: Consider whether an approximately 2.63-acre easement for private ingress and egress with utilities within Catfish Creek State Park is consistent with the Board of Trustees' Incompatible Use Policy.

DSL Staff Recommendation: Approve the easement.

Discussion: Mr. Brad Richardson, Bureau of Real Estate Services, presented the Quinn Family request for a 2.63-acre private ingress/access easement within the Allen David Broussard Catfish Creek State Park. The proposed easement along an existing dirt road will serve a mixed residential and agricultural property limited to a maximum of four single family residences. There is an occurrence of the federally endangered Britton's bear grass that will be flagged to prevent impacts. There were no further comments.

ARC Action: Ms. Peppers made the motion to approve the easement request with Ms. Griner seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

Item 7: Consider whether an approximately 25.245 acre proposed transmission line on a portion of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and Board of Trustees owned conservation land within the Fred C. Babcock/Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area is consistent with the Board of Trustees' Linear Facilities Policy.

DSL Staff Recommendation: Approve the easement.

Discussion: Mr. Tim Canavan, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, presented the FPL easement request to expand the range of electrical service along Vermont Road in Charlotte County. The easement runs along the northern boundary of the property, that was acquired through Pittman-Robertson Funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, CARL, P2000 and Florida Forever. The FWC is fee owner for 25 acres with the additional 0.25 owned by the Board of Trustees. The compensation will include a net positive benefit to acquire replacement lands within Babcock/Webb.

Dr. Eason commended the staff for securing the commitment of 1.5 times the value in replacement lands. There were no further comments.

ARC Action: Dr. Palmer made the motion to approve the easement request with Ms. Peppers seconding. Dr. Eason recused himself from the vote stating the Commission has approved their portion of the easement. ARC approved the item.

MANAGEMENT PLANS

Item 8: Consider an amendment to the T. H. Stone Memorial St. Joseph Peninsula State Park Management Plan (Lease No. 3533).

DSL Staff Recommendation: Approve the amendment.

Discussion: Mr. Daniel Alsentzer, Division of Recreation and Parks, presented the post-hurricane redevelopment plan for the T. H. Stone Memorial St. Joseph Peninsula State Park. He stated the plan builds on three years of careful study, consensus building, public engagement and design work. As a result of the devastation caused by the 2018 Hurricane Michael, day use and overnight facilities were redesigned to reduce vulnerability to future storms. Mr. Alsentzer focused his presentation on the most prominent public areas noting the redevelopment projects are extensive across the park. The most developed and heavily used day use area is Eagle Harbor Marina which provides vehicle and trailer parking. It will be redesigned to create new parking and realign vehicle and pedestrian circulation to improve safety along with a new concession building. The Gulf Breeze Campground will be converted to a beach access day use area providing parking, restrooms and covered pavilions. An added benefit of converting the area to day use will reduce impacts to sea turtle nesting. The proposed Bayview Campground will relocate overnight camping into an already disturbed and fragmented scrubby flatwoods area on St. Joseph Bay just south of the Bayview day use area. The campground will include 19 campsites, footbath, bath house and other amenities. The canopy at Shady Pines Campground was destroyed during the hurricane along with damage to the facilities. The proposed changes will redevelop the campground within established wetland buffers and reduce the total number of campsites by 13.

Chair Gambineri commented the plan amendment was a labor of love for the staff and a conscientious effort to increase resiliency in the park for the future. Ms. Allen shared written correspondence from Ms. Marilyn Fever of Quincy, Florida commending the staff for the quality of the report and recommending that ARC recognize the staff. There were no further comments.

ARC Action: Dr. Palmer made the motion to approve the management plan amendment with Ms. Griner seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

Item 9: Consider the Orange Hammock Wildlife Management Area Management Plan (Lease No. 4850).

DSL Staff Recommendation: Approve the management plan.

Discussion: Ms. Dylan Haase, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, presented the Orange Hammock Wildlife Management Area Management Plan. The 5,776-acre property located on the southeast border of Sarasota County and DeSoto County increases regional landscape connectivity in the area. Established as a critical protection area in 1998, the property was added to the Myakka Ranchlands Florida Forever project in 2014. The BOT acquired the property in May 2020 and leased it to FWC as lead manager in January 2021. The purpose for the acquisition was to provide wildlife corridors connecting significant landscape scale habitat, floodplain and reservoir protection and compatible outdoor recreation opportunities. Significant habitat types include mesic flatwoods, mesic hammock, depression marsh, and dry prairie. The staff has recorded four imperiled species and there are no recorded cultural sites. Recreational uses for the area include hunting, fishing, bicycling and hiking with 5 miles of roads and a proposed 10 miles of trails. Carrying capacity is estimated to be 201 visitors per day. Resource

management objectives include prescribed fire, habitat restoration and improvement, monitor and treat invasive species, coordinate with FFS on a timber assessment, conduct a hydrological assessment, and coordinate with DHR on a cultural resource survey. Additional proposed development includes a vault toilet and equipment storage facilities. Ms. Haase also mentioned the lead biologist Hunter Folmar was available to answer questions following her presentation. There were no further comments.

ARC Action: Mr. Albury made the motion to approve the management plan with Dr. Palmer seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

Item 10: Consider a Management Plan for St. Joseph Bay Aquatic Preserve.

DSL Staff Recommendation: Approve the management plan.

Discussion: Mr. Jon Brucker, Office of Resiliency and Coastal Protection, Central Panhandle Aquatic Preserves presented the St. Joseph Bay Aquatic Preserve management plan update. The plan was last updated in 2008. Mr. Brucker stated the Central Panhandle Aquatic Preserves includes a combined area of 174,000 acres in Franklin, Gulf and Bay counties headquartered at the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve. St. Joseph Bay encompasses 55,000 acres in Gulf County and is mostly surrounded by managed lands. Characterized by extensive salt marsh with clear sea water, white sands and lush seagrass, the bay provides the opportunity for ecosystem science, resource management, education, outreach, and public use. The management plan focuses on three main issues around water quality (monitoring and coordination with partners), seagrass habitat protection (mitigating impacts from prop scarring and sea urchin grazing) and sustainable public use (tourism, environmental messaging and debris management).

Dr. Palmer asked how successful the seagrass restoration was. Mr. Brucker noted they were one year into placing sediment tubes to fill in the prop scars to sediment grade and placing seagrass bags. With 80% of sites surveyed, progress is promising, although sea urchins are having an impact on the new growth. Dr. Palmer asked if there will be a recreational harvest of sea urchins. Mr. Brucker responded you can take five urchins per day and hopefully they will have roe in them. This is one of the most frequently asked questions at public events. So far, they have relocated over 30,000 urchins which is only a drop in the bucket. There were no further comments.

ARC Action: Dr. Eason made the motion to approve the management plan with Ms. Griner seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

Item 11: Consider a 10-year update to the Jupiter Ridge Natural Area Management Plan (Lease No. 4004).

DSL Staff Recommendation: Approve the management plan.

Discussion: Ms. Allison Spall, Palm-Beach County, presented the Jupiter Ridge Natural Area

management plan update. This will be the third 10-year update to the management plan. Ms. Spall stated the 269-acre property is in the northeast portion of Palm Beach County, in the Town of Jupiter. Acquisition began in 1992 and the property was later sold for CARL funds. The purpose for acquisition was to preserve natural resources, public recreation, and research. Ms. Spall noted portions of disturbed scrubby flatwoods have transitioned to coastal strand swamp and mangrove swamp, while portions of scrubby flatwoods have transitioned to mesic flatwoods and scrub. Open water is now estuarine unconsolidated substrate due to staff recommendation (based on FNAI definitions). There are nine listed animals on the property. Public use facilities include one main parking lot and two pedestrian access points. One new trail has been added, and the public restroom was removed due to vandalism. There were no further comments.

ARC Action: Dr. Eason made the motion to approve the management plan update with Ms. Griner seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

Item 12: Consider a 10-year update to the Chipola River Greenway Management Plan (Lease No. 3577).

DSL Staff Recommendation: Approve the management plan.

Discussion: Ms. Kay Dennis, City of Marianna, presented the Chipola River Greenway management plan update. Ms. Dennis stated the property is located on the west bank of the Chipola River. The greenway consists of 12 parcels and three parks: Hinson Conservation and Recreation Area, Gateway Overlook, and Butler Recreation Area. Combined, the parks total 300 acres and cover 19 miles of river frontage. Hinson Conservation and Recreation Area, the largest park, offers paddling, biking, equestrian activities, swimming, fishing, and cave exploration. A few years ago, the Florida Trail Association established four miles of trails. Gateway Overlook, the smallest park, is located on US 90. The property was a previously mined limestone area that sits on a cave. Funding was obtained through the FDOT Transportation Alternative Program to create a non-motorized boat ramp and overlook of the Chipola River. Butler Recreation Area, the northernmost park, is a very wet area that holds water. It is the least developed of the three parks. There is a large drainage basin that empties into the park. To mitigate impacts and prevent debris from flowing into the river, the city has applied for grant funding. The properties were purchased between 1998-2005. The purpose for acquisition was to provide public access and passive recreation, protect sensitive habitats, and encourage ecotourism. The greenway is in close proximity to 13 state- and county-owned managed lands. In 2018, Hurricane Michael's 150 mph winds damaged canopy within the recreation areas as well as access to the parks. Progress has been made to clear trails and reopen, and bollards were placed to protect sensitive areas. Student volunteers have helped to replace picnic tables, the canoe launch, and fencing. Jackson county spent \$75,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funds for improvements to the park.

Dr. Eason thanked folks for working with FWC on bat species in the caves. There were no further comments.

ARC Action: Ms. Peppers made the motion to approve the management plan update with Mr. Goodwin seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

Item 13: Consider a 10-year update to the Caladesi Island State Park Management Plan (Lease No. 3203).

DSL Staff Recommendation: Approve the management plan.

Discussion: Mr. Tyler Maldonado, Division of Recreation and Parks, presented the Caladesi Island management plan update. Mr. Maldonado stated interpretive themes are used to help guide interpretation at the parks. Caladesi is a relatively undisturbed barrier island that served as a family homestead for 40 years. Annual attendance is typical of other parks. The island has one vehicular access point at Honeymoon Island. The park totals 2,420 acres; of that acreage, 12% are uplands, 70% are submerged, and 15% are mangroves. Annual resource management objectives include prescribed fire on 53-132 acres, an invasive species target of eight acres, and monitoring of 13 imperiled species and three cultural resources. Existing development consists of a boat marina, 107 sites for overnight boat camping, a paddling trail, and concession area. Proposed developments are mainly support facilities and improvements to existing facilities. A new bathhouse is needed for the boat marina as well as additional staff housing. There were no further comments.

ARC Action: Ms. Griner made the motion to approve the management plan update with Dr. Eason seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

Item 14: Consider a 10-year update to the Honeymoon Island State Park Management Plan (Lease No. 3203).

DSL Staff Recommendation: Approve the management plan update.

Discussion: Mr. Tyler Maldonado, Division of Recreation and Parks, presented the Honeymoon Island State Park management plan. Mr. Maldonado stated Honeymoon Island and Caladesi Island were once one island known as Hog Island, which was split in the early 1900's due to a hurricane. The interpretive themes are similar to those of Caladesi Island. However, Honeymoon Island has more development and higher visitation. Annual attendance exceeds one million visitors per year, making it the most attended state park unit in the system. Honeymoon Island has a total of 2,824 acres; of that acreage, 81% are submerged lands, 12% are uplands, and 5% are mangroves. There are 10 natural communities and two altered land covers. Annual resource management objectives include prescribed fire on 25-63 acres, an invasive species target of eight acres, and monitoring of 12 imperiled species and two cultural resources. Existing infrastructure includes an entrance station, ferry launch to Caladesi Island, visitor center, and over 2,000 parking spaces. Some proposed developments include a new toll booth, automated entrance lane, visitor center parking, and kayak launch. Structures will be relocated from the shoreline over time and the north beach parking area will be redeveloped to alleviate erosion issues. There were no further comments.

ARC Action: Dr. Palmer made the motion to approve the management plan update with Mr.

Albury seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

Item 15: Consider a 10-year update to the Four Creeks State Forest Management Plan (Lease Nos. 4507 and 4844).

DSL Staff Recommendation: Approve the management plan update.

Discussion: Ms. Kirsten Brannon, Florida Forest Service, presented the update to the Four Creeks State Forest Management Plan. Ms. Brannon stated the forest is located in Nassau county and is approximately 13,658 acres. The forest was named after the four creeks that cross it: Alligator Creek, Thomas Creek, Boggy Creek, and Plummer Creek, which join to form the headwaters of the Nassau River. Callahan lies to the north and the west of the property, Yulee to the east, and Jacksonville to the south. The property was acquired in 2005 with SJRWMD and Florida Forever funding. It lies near city of Jacksonville and National Park Service properties. Four Creeks State Forest is an SFI certified forest under SFIs Forest Management Standard with conservation objectives. Activities include updating the silvicultural plan, annual inventory, and geodatabases. Recreational opportunities involve hiking, fishing, canoeing, and kayaking. As the population grows, opportunities will be expanded as needed. The park is a FWC Wildlife Management Area known as Four Creeks Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The Five-Year Prescribed Burn Plan is updated annually. Since 2011/2012, 10,653 acres have been managed using prescribed fire. Four Creeks has coordinated with FWC to monitor 13 listed species and manage non-native species such as Chinese tallow and Cogongrass. The property has one recorded archaeological site and seven staff trained as Archaeological Resource Monitors. Hydrological activities include following best management practices. Current facilities include one trailhead, 2.5 miles of trails, 43 miles of roads, three boat/canoe/kayak launches, and six parking areas. There were no further comments.

ARC Action: Dr. Palmer made the motion to approve the management plan update with Ms. Griner seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

Item 16: Consider a 10-year update to the Pine Log State Forest Management Plan (Lease No. 3688).

DSL Staff Recommendation: Approve the management plan update.

Discussion: Mr. Mike Klassen, Florida Forest Service, presented the Pine Log State Forest management plan. Mr. Klassen stated the forest was originally acquired in 1936, which makes it the first and oldest state forest. The property is located south of Ebro and north of Panama City Beach. An additional 620 acres were recently acquired. The property is 8,036 acres. The Choctawhatchee WMA can be found to the northwest of the property. Sustainable forestry management will involve updating and implementing the silvicultural plan and developing plans for the new tract. Recreational opportunities include hiking, biking, hunting (on the WMA), and RV/primitive camping. Current recreational opportunities will be maintained, and additional opportunities will be evaluated on the newly acquired tract. The state forest is an FWC WMA known as Pine Log WMA. Prescribed fire is on a three-year rotation to improve wildlife habitat.

Since 2011/2012, 20,728 acres have been burned. Hurricane Michael did affect the rotation, however, they are now back on track. There are a total of 26 listed species, and five invasive species such as Chinese tallow and Cogongrass. There are three archaeological sites and one archaeological resource identified. One staff member is a trained Archaeological Resource Monitor, and four additional staff are being trained. Water resources on the property include one sandhill pond, three natural cypress lakes, and three streams: Pine Log Creek, Little Crooked Creek, and Ditch Branch. The Choctawhatchee River is located northwest of the property. Planned hydrological activities include rehabilitating fire lines and roads and conducting site assessments. The plan details continued maintenance of three trailheads, four primitive campsites, and 25 miles of trails. Since its implementation, Reserve America has doubled visitor use in the area. There were no further comments.

ARC Action: Dr. Eason made the motion to approve the management plan update with Ms. Griner seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

CLOSING COMMENTS

ARC Announcements: Chair Gambineri announced the next ARC meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2022, at 9 a.m. and the FCT meeting will be on February 16, 2022, at 10 a.m. in Tallahassee. The Florida Forever applicant webinar will be held on March 30, 2022, at 2 p.m.

Public Testimony: Lynn McGonagill, Allen Broussard Conservancy and member of the Broussard family, commented on the Allan David Broussard Catfish Creek Preserve. Ms. McGonagill stated her family contributed funds towards the acquisition and were not notified about the easement allowing four homes to be built, which would impede the prescribed burns needed for those habitats. There were no further comments.

Dr. Eason made the motion to adjourn with Mr. Albury seconding. ARC unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

Summary of the March 1, 2022 Acquisition and Restoration Council Regional Public Hearing

Date: March 1, 2022
Location: Elsa Kimbell Environmental Education and Research Center
Jonathan Dickinson State Park
16450 S.E. Federal Highway
Hobe Sound, FL 33455
Time: 6-7 p.m. EST

In Attendance:

Shauna Allen, DEP, ARC Staff Director
Deborah Burr, DEP, Division of State Lands (DSL)

There was no public comment.

Summary of the March 2, 2022 Acquisition and Restoration Council Regional Public Hearing

Date: March 2, 2022
Location: Recreation Hall
Highlands Hammock State Park
5931 Hammock Road
Sebring, FL 33872
Time: 6-7 p.m. EST

In Attendance:

Shauna Allen, DEP, ARC Staff Director
Deborah Burr, DEP, Division of State Lands (DSL)

There was no public comment.

Summary of the March 8, 2022 Acquisition and Restoration Council Regional Public Hearing

Date: March 8, 2022
Location: Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park
11016 Lillian Saunders Drive
U.S. Highway 41
White Springs, FL 32096
Time: 6-7 p.m. EST

In Attendance:

Deborah Burr, DEP, Division of State Lands (DSL)

There was no public comment.