

ITEM 4:

Status report on Land Management Reviews completed by the Division of State Lands from October to December 2021.

DSL STAFF REMARKS:

During the 2021-22 Fiscal Year, the Office of Environmental Services scheduled on-site reviews of 31 managed conservation lands. The following eight land management reviews were completed by regional review teams as established in Chapter 259.036, Florida Statutes. The reports are provided for the council's information. The October 2022 annual report of land management reviews will be compiled from these reports, presented to the council for acceptance, and submitted to the Board of Trustees.

The results of each review are compiled and returned to the managing agencies for their responses to recommendations and checklist findings. The report summaries are provided below. Complete reports are provided as backup to this item.

Land Management Review of Lake Wales Ridge State Forest (Polk County):

On October 19, 2021, the review team found Lake Wales Ridge State Forest (26,579 acres) is being managed for purposes compatible with conservation, preservation, or recreation, and that the management practices are in compliance with the management plan. The team commended the Florida Forest Service (FFS) for maintaining a dedicated plant biologist position for the forest. The team also commended the staff on their ability to protect the threatened resources on the property while keeping the forest in production. The team recommended FFS implement monitoring the effects of mechanical treatment, clearcutting and thinning, and the impacts to wildlife, vegetation and threatened and endangered plants, particularly in sandhill and scrub communities.

Land Management Review of Lake Kissimmee State Park (Polk County):

On October 20, 2021, the review team found Lake Kissimmee State Park (5,893 acres) is being managed for purposes compatible with conservation, preservation, or recreation, and that the management practices are in compliance with the management plan. The team commended the Florida Park Service (FPS) for their outstanding cultural and interpretive program, and for carefully assessing fire conditions to prioritize long-term quality of natural communities. The team recommended staff to include mesic flatwoods and scrubby flatwoods into prescribed burn rotation and in maintenance condition.

Land Management Review of Allen David Broussard Catfish Creek Preserve State Park (Polk County):

On October 22, 2021, the review team found Allen David Broussard Catfish Creek Preserve State Park (8,157 acres) is being managed for purposes compatible with conservation, preservation, or recreation, and that the management practices are in compliance with the management plan. The team commended staff for the improvements to the public access (secured parking and restroom facilities) and the staff housing at the park. The team also commended the staff for the careful application of prescribed fire during the extended drought period.

Land Management Review of Atlantic Ridge Preserve State Park (Martin County):

On November 2, 2021, the review team found Atlantic Ridge Preserve State Park (4,886 acres) is being managed for purposes compatible with conservation, preservation, or recreation, and that the management practices are in compliance with the management plan. The team commended the staff for accomplishing prescribed burn goals considering the surrounding smoke management issues. The team also commended the staff for control of non-native plants given the surrounding communities and private natural areas. The team recommended park staff conduct biological surveys to determine and document current populations of listed flora and fauna.

Land Management Review of Jonathan Dickinson State Park (Martin and Palm Beach counties):

On November 3, 2021, the review team found Jonathan Dickinson State Park (10,442 acres) is being managed for purposes compatible with conservation, preservation, or recreation, and that the management practices are in compliance with the management plan. The team commended the staff for their outstanding listed species monitoring and management program. The team also commended the staff on their public education and interpretation and providing the Kimball Education Center and Trapper Nelson site to welcome the public. The team recommended that staff use inert granite rocks or other materials that will not leach calcareous materials into the naturally occurring acid soils on the ancient sand dunes.

Land Management Review of St. Lucie Inlet Preserve State Park (Martin County):

On November 5, 2021, the review team found St. Lucie Inlet Preserve State Park (4,835 acres) is being managed for purposes compatible with conservation, preservation, or recreation, and that the management practices are in compliance with the management plan. The team commended staff for their exotic/invasive treatment program at the park. The team also commended the staff for their monitoring of sea turtle nests to minimize predation. The team recommended additional funding to implement a long-term restoration project for the spoil areas.

Land Management Review of Blackwater River State Forest (Okaloosa and Santa Rosa counties):

On December 8, 2021, the review team found Blackwater River State Forest (210,463 acres) is being managed for purposes compatible with conservation, preservation, or recreation, and that the management practices are in compliance with the management plan. The team commended the FFS on their significant accomplishment in red-cockaded woodpecker and Florida bog frog recovery efforts. The team also commended the FFS for their prescribed fire, invasive species control and forest restoration actions that have either kept the natural communities in, or moved them toward, maintenance condition.

Land Management Review of Deer Lake State Park (Walton County):

On December 10, 2021, the review team found Deer Lake State Park (2,009 acres) is being managed for purposes compatible with conservation, preservation, or recreation, and that the management practices are in compliance with the management plan. The team commended staff for the effective use of prescribed fire under exceptionally challenging circumstances. The team also commended staff for partnering with outside agencies to meet their silvicultural goals, recognizing the difficulty of developing interest for timber harvesting in small areas. The team recommended staff continue to pursue funding to maintain the wetland restoration efforts, and leverage the work to further achieve conservation goals, such as the reintroduction of flatwoods

salamander. The team also recommended staff work with Walton County planning department to notify the public of scheduled prescribed burns.

DSL STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

None

ARC RECOMMENDATION:

None