

SAMPLE

LWCF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT- PASSIVE

SECTION 1

1. This 12 acre site in west Orange County is to be developed as a trailhead on the West Orange Trail. Proposed uses are a segment of paved recreational trail, restrooms, parking, playground, and picnic areas, all planned to be developed in the first phase. There are no plans to expand the site beyond the 12 acres proposed.

The site is centrally located along the proposed 18 miles of the West Orange Trail. It is bounded on the east by West Crown Point Road and on the south by Crown Point Cross Road. The site is about 1 mile west of Ocoee. There are no existing improvements on the property.

2. Upon acquisition of the property, Orange County will proceed with site planning and design, advertisement for bids, award of bids and construction. Construction will be within the required three years.
3. The benefits of the project are; provision of a trailhead in an area identified as needing one for the West Orange Trail; trail completion through an area with corridor problems (if this site is not acquired, the trail is forced to share West Crown Point Road); and recreational link between municipalities.
4. As stated, the site will be developed and operated cooperatively with the City of Winter Garden's proposed adjacent 8-acre park.

SECTION II

1. Land Use

The site is currently an open space with tree canopy. Adjacent land sue to the north is Crown Point Springs, a residential subdivision. To the west is Glenview Estates Subdivision. Across the roads to the south and east are agricultural open spaces.

The probable future land use for this site, if not developed for recreation, is single-family residential.

2. Topography

The site is relatively flat, with a drainage ditch crossing the site. See attached topographic map.

3. Fish and Wildlife

A detailed study has not been performed for the site, but endangered species have not been encountered during several site visits. Attached is a report by Florida Natural Areas inventory (FNAI) of species likely to be found in similar habitats of Orange County.

Residential development would likely drive most animals from the site. The proposed recreational development would retain a greater percentage of existing habitat.

4. Vegetation

The predominant vegetation on the site is mature laurel and live oaks, with cabbage palms and sweetgums also present. Scrub palmetto is present in the understory. Bahia grass has been introduced into the site from adjacent parcels. Endangered species have not been identified. Please refer to the FNAI report for further information.

5. Geology and Soil

The Soil Conservation Service Soil Survey of Orange County identifies Immokalee Fine Sand, Pomello Fine Sand, and Smyrna Fine Sand on the site. All three are flat, poorly drained sands but are typical of the area and can be built upon with design consideration. Mucky soils are not indicated on the site.

6. Mineral Resources

There are no mineral resources on the site, with the possible exception of sand.

7. Air and Water Quality

Air quality is generally good in this area. There are no nearby industrial areas, and automotive traffic in the area is not of high volume. There are no bodies of water on the site.

8. Noise

Surrounding land uses are single-family residential and agricultural, and the two adjacent roads are unpaved, low-volume roads. Therefore, noise levels are quite low.

9. Water Resources/Hydrology

Drinking water is typically obtained in the region from deep aquifer wells.

Other than the drainage ditch, the site is not in a flood plain. If acquired, a wetlands determination will be performed to see if the ditch is a jurisdictional wetland.

10. Historic/Archaeological/Cultural Resources

As outlined in the attached letter, no resources of this nature are found on the site.

11. Transportation Access

Access is currently by the two adjacent unpaved roads, West Crown Point Road and Crown Point Cross Road. Preliminarily, we plan to provide our entrance from Crown Point Cross Road. Volume of traffic is not expected to be dramatically increased.

12. Socio-economic Characteristics

As stated, recent middle-income single-family residential development has occurred to the north and west. This trend is expected to continue in the area.

SECTION III

1. Land Use

Recreational development is compatible with the residential development going on in the area. Walk-in pedestrian gates are planned and all development will be inwardly oriented and buffered from adjacent homes. Health or safety problems are not expected to be generated by this project.

2. Topography

The site topography is suitable for recreational development. The terrain is flat, so the majority of earthwork required will be to ensure positive drainage.

3. Fish and Wildlife

An on-site inventory will take place before work commences to identify endangered species if any. Because it will be developed as a resource-based park, displacement of animals should be kept to a minimum.

4. Vegetation

Some clearing will be needed, but we intend to go to great lengths to preserve as much tree canopy and understory as possible. A tree survey will be conducted prior to design. Endangered species will be identified in the study mentioned above.

New landscaping, predominantly with native plants, will be installed to add buffering and fill in canopy as needed.

5. Geology and Soils

Stormwater retention will be designed for the types of fine sand encountered. Additionally, silt fences to control erosion are required around construction sites in this area.

6. Mineral Resources

Impact on mineral resources is minimal, the site being essentially sand and typical of the region.

7. Air and Water Quality

Tree canopy and understory will be preserved to the extent possible, helping to preserve both air and water quality. All stormwater runoff is required to be retained on site for settling to remove pollutants.

8. Noise

Traffic will increase along neighboring roads, but not to the extent at which it should greatly increase noise levels. Designated speeds are low on the roads and will be kept to 15 to 20 miles per hour within the park.

9. Water Resources / Hydrology

There are no navigable water bodies on the site.

The site development will protect aquifer recharge areas to a much greater extent than possible residential development.

10. Historic / Archaeological / Cultural Resources

None identified on site.

11. Transportation

The project will increase traffic on local roads, but the roads are currently unpaved, low volume roads. Long-range plans to pave the roads would more than accommodate increased traffic.

12. Socio-economic Characteristics

Adjacent residential areas are middle-income; a quarter-mile or so south is a low-income neighborhood. The constriction of the park should help to stabilize and improve real estate values through preservation of open space. Additionally, residential growth is projected throughout the immediate area, and a community park will be needed in the near future to serve the growing population.

The site is not expected to compete in any way with private enterprise in the area.

SECTION IV

Orange County Parks & Recreation feels that development of the park is the most beneficial use of the site. It will help to spread out the access points to the West Orange Trail, provide access to a regional recreation feature while meeting neighborhood and community needs for nearby recreation, and enable the County to help preserve open space along the trail.