KEY VISTA MANAGEMENT PLAN

Lease 3898



PASCO COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION, AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT By Cristina Cordon Revised 11/23/21

General Information

Common name of the property: Key Vista Nature Park

Lease number: 3898

Acres: 102.86

Name of agency that is managing the property: Pasco County Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Department

Executive Summary

Key Vista Nature Park is located on the southwestern side of Pasco County on Baillie's Bluff Road (See Exhibit A). The park was acquired by the State of Florida through the Conservation and Recreational Lands (CARL) Program. The primary purpose for seeking public acquisition of the Key Vista property was to remove the property from private development and to provide recreational opportunities for the public. This parcel was subsequently leased to Pasco County to operate and maintain as a recreation area for the use and benefit of the general public. A 50-year lease agreement (#3898) was approved on 1/11/1991 authorizing such uses. Management of the project site is consistent with s. 253.034 and the County upholds the understanding of providing public access and passive outdoor recreational opportunities to residents and to control exotic and invasive species inhabiting the park.

The park is adjacent to Anclote Gulf Park and is within a ten-mile radius of Anclote River Park, Eagle Point Park, Anclote Key State Park, Pasco Palms Preserve, and Robert K. Rees Memorial Park, to name a few (See Exhibit B). The legal description for the property can be found on Exhibit C. The site consists of approximately 1,600 linear feet of waterfront along the Gulf of Mexico and 2,200 linear feet along Rocky Creek and Sleepy Lagoon. The park is comprised of four natural plant communities including Freshwater Marsh, Bays and Estuaries, Wetland Forested Mixed and Hardwood Conifer Mixed.

The park is frequently visited and enjoyed by the public. The park is used for multiple purposes including conservation of the natural resources, to provide resource-based recreation and water access opportunities. There are multiple amenities at the park including picnic tables, hiking trails, an observation tower, boardwalk, and restroom facilities. Fishing access to the Gulf and Rocky Creek are available as well as a primitive kayak/canoe boat launch along Rocky Creek. This property is unique due to the bluffs that are encountered along the Gulf of Mexico and its maximum elevation of 18.9 feet.

Prior to acquisition in 1991, the park site was vacant. The initial plan for the property was to develop it into homesites. The property was purchased by the state under the CARL program and then leased to Pasco County in 1991 for a 50 year term. Pasco County has developed the site and built multiple amenities for the public to use. Unauthorized use of the property in the past mainly consisted of unlawful dumping of trash and excavations on the site for archeological relics. These activities have largely ceased since Pasco County developed the park for public use. Future plans are to continue to use the established amenities and to maintain the park and natural areas in their current state.

The Pasco County Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Department desires to continue to provide outdoor recreational opportunities to the public at the Key Vista Nature Park. Pasco County will continue to operate the park in a manner to ensure that the natural resources are protected and made available to the public for natural resource based recreational activities.

Improvements/ Amenities

Key Vista Nature Park offers resource-based outdoor recreation. The parks recreational facilities are depicted on Exhibit A. They include a one-way road to the only entrance of the park, a shell/paved parking lot, a restroom facility with one stall for men's and one stall for women's, an observation tower at the west side of the park along the shore which provides scenic vistas overlooking Anclote Key State Park, a dog watering station and drinking fountain adjacent to the restroom, bus/ RV parking spots, informational signage including one that meets FCT requirements, a boardwalk connecting to Anclote Gulf Park to the south, picnic tables and multiple benches. Trails have been established in the park and are frequently used by park visitors. The park is considered part of the Great Florida Birding and Wildlife trails by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. There are no agency-specific statue requirements or legislative/executive directives that constrain the use of the park and there are also no reservations or encumbrances on the park.

Recent improvements since the last management plan approval consists of repairs to the observation tower and boardwalk connecting to Anclote Gulf Park as well as relocating the maintenance shed, removal of the old, dilapidated compost restroom, replacement of the entrance sign and the construction of the Coastal Anclote Trail by Pasco County Project Management Department. In addition, on October 1st, 2017, the \$2.00 parking fee that was voted on back in 2010 was removed. The Pasco County Board of County Commissioners voted to revoke the fee for parking including Key Vista Nature Park. This \$2.00 fee was the only fee collected for the park and generated revenue.

Future improvements are being planned to stabilize the south shoreline of Rocky Creek with living shoreline elements. Funding for this project will be provided by the General Obligations Bond Fund voted into effect in 2018 by Pasco County Voters. Additional funding to dredge portions of the Rocky Creek are being provided by the RESTORE fund which resulted from the BP Oil Spill. The purpose of the dredge is to improve flushing water into the Sleepy lagoon area adjacent to Rocky Creek. Improvements are planned to take place in late 2022 through 2023. This project timeline is being driven primarily via the permitting processes required to accomplish the project.

Natural Communities

Key Vista Nature Park is comprised of multiple plant communities. These consist of Freshwater Marsh, Bays and Estuaries, Wetland Forested Mixed and Hardwood Conifer Mixed. These can be located on Exhibit D.

Freshwater Marshes are wetlands communities that are characterized by herbaceous plant species that occur on sites where surface water is present for extended periods during the growing season but is absent by the end of the growing season in most years. Freshwater marshes tend to be open expanses of grasses, sedges, rushes and other types of herbaceous plants. Freshwater marshes occur on flat, low lying areas subject to prolonged seasonal flooding and occasional fire. They are found adjacent to slow-moving streams, along edges of lakes or ponds, or in tidally influenced freshwater areas. Common species included cattail, sawgrass, arrowhead, reed, bulrush and maidencane. Approximately 8 acres of the park is comprised of Freshwater Marshes.

Bays and Estuaries are found in coastal areas and have a hydrologic connection to coastal waters. They are defined as inlets or arms of the sea that extend into the land. The tone of water will depend on turbidity, wave energy, and sediment load. They typically show evidence of tidal fluctuation and associated plant communities.

They may have man-made structures to control flow, wave action, and channel. Approximately 5.5 acres of the park is comprised of Bays and Estuaries.

Wetland Forested Mixed is a category that includes mixed wetlands forest communities in which neither hardwoods nor conifers achieve a 66 percent dominance of the crown canopy composition. Mixed wetland forests occur on a wide variety of soil moisture conditions, from permanently wet to seasonally or infrequently wet. A combination of hardwoods and evergreen conifers can occur in nearly all the foregoing forested wetlands communities, including cypress, bay swamps, hardwood swamps, hammocks and depressions, floodplains and bottomlands. The tree species assemblages range from cypress/gum/maple to pine/cabbage palm/bay, reflecting this range in conditions. Approximately 19 acres of the park is comprised of Wetland Forested Mixed.

Hardwood Conifer Mixed can be found along the upper terraces of flood plains, around wetland basins and on upland areas adjacent to streams or waterways or surrounding wetland depressions. Species typical of these areas included oaks, magnolia, slash pine, loblolly pine, sand pine, cabbage palm, cedar and a variety of understory vegetation such as wax myrtle and willow (not hydric). Approximately 65 acres of the park is comprised of Hardwood conifer mixed.

Pasco County Parks Recreation and Natural Resources conducted a Gopher Tortoise Survey at Key Vista Nature Park to assess the population of tortoises at the park. Based on the population numbers, it was decided that conducting habitat restoration for the Gopher Tortoise needed to occur. In 2019 and 2020, funding assistance was received from the Gopher Tortoise Habitat Management Assistance Program for Gopher Tortoise habitat restoration. A contractor was hired to roller chop, mulch and shred approximately 19 acres of hardwood/coniferous mixed forest in order to restore it. The contractor mulched all understory and midstory fuels including overgrown vines and storm blown down dead material. In addition, a prescribed burn is planned in 2022 for the areas that where roller chopped to continue to reduce fuel loads and optimize grass vegetation growth for the tortoises.

Hydrologic Features

Hydrological features unique to the park consist of freshwater marshes. These are considered unique due to the lack of other freshwater sources of water in the area. Additionally, the presence of a narrow tidal creek leading to a large lagoon bordering

the park on the north side makes this a valuable resource. The park site has not been designated as an Outstanding Florida Water resources.

<u>Wildlife</u>

Key Vista Nature Park features a large variety of wildlife. The park is a popular destination for bird watching, fishing and observing Gopher Tortoises. There are no fish or wildlife resources (both game and non-game) at the park. Bird species that have been documented at the park consist of White Ibis, Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Red-winged Blackbird, Belted Kingfisher, Brown Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Laughing Gull, Little Blue Heron, Great Horned Owl and Bald Eagle to name a few. Other species documented consist of Nine-banded Armadillo, Marsh Rabbit, Gopher Tortoise, Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake, Florida Water Snake, Eastern Gray Squirrel and Atlantic Sand Fiddler Crab.

A Bald Eagles nest can be found on the southern portion of the park. Staff work together to ensure that disturbances to the nest are minimized. No activities are planned within the allowed distances as described by federal guidelines of the nest. The nest has been monitored by the Eagle Watch Program.

Exotic Invasive Species

Few exotic invasive species have been documented at Key Vista Nature Park. They primarily consist of Brazilian Pepper, Cogon grass and Rosary Pea. A survey of the invasive species was conducted in 2020 as well as herbicide treatment. Team members will continue to monitor the population of exotic invasive species and treat them. If population size increases to more than 10% of the property, a private contractor will be hired to treat the infestations.

Cultural Historical Features

The area just north of the park has local historical significance. Called Bailey's Bluff, the cove below the bluff was formerly the home of the Florida sponge history until the late 1880's. A historical marker just north of the park was placed in 1981 commemorating the prior history. On the site there are 2 recorded archeological sites (8PA00216 and 8PA00439). This site consists of prehistoric lithic scatter. Prior to

acquisition excavation for historic artifacts was a problem. Since acquisition, this issue has dramatically stopped and rarely occurs.

Key Vista Nature Park has no buildings greater than 50 years of age. There are scattered prehistoric lithic remains on the site, but no defined sites associated with them. Signs are posted to remind visitors that removal of any artifact is prohibited. Routine patrol is conducted by the staff. In addition, several birding groups frequent the area and the high traffic use of the park is assumed to help deter the removal of any artifact found in the park. Signs are posted that inform users of the park that these types of activities are prohibited.

<u>Soils</u>

There are five types of soils that can be found at Key Vista Nature Park, they are depicted in Exhibit F. They consist of Anclote fine sand, Astatula fine sand, EauGallie fine sand, Paola fine sand, Sellers mucky loamy fine sand.

Anclote fine sand is found in the south-central part of the property and comprises slightly less than 1 acre. It is the least abundant of the soil types. Nearly level, poorly draining soil is on the low ridges in the flatwoods. Slopes are smooth to slightly concave and range from 0 to 2 percent. The surface layer is fine black sand about 7 inches thick; the subsurface layer is fine gray, light gray and white sand about 15 inches thick. They are underlain by soft limestone and scattered fragments of hard limestone. The water table is within a depth of 10 inches for 1 to 4 months and within a depth of 40 inches for more than 6 months. Permeability is moderate to moderately rapid in the subsoil and rapid in the other layers.

Astatula fine sand: Comprising approximately 42 acres of the site. 0 to 5% slope is found predominantly in the north central and eastern areas, the highest elevations on the property. This type of soil is nearly level to slightly sloping, excessively drained soil (mainly in sand hills). The areas are irregular in shape. Slopes are smooth to concave. The surface layer is dark grayish brown fine sand approximately 6 inches thick; to a depth of 29 inches, is a layer of fine brown sand. The water table is below the depth of 72 inches. Permeability is very rapid throughout the soil.

EauGallie fine sand is found on the south western boundary and comprises approximately 33 acres of the property. This nearly level, very poorly draining soil is

in depressions along the drainageways and low areas surrounding some inland bodies of water. Individual areas range from somewhat oblong to nearly circular. Slopes are commonly concave and smooth. The surface layer is fine black and very gray sand about 14 inches thick; the surface layer is fine sand which extends to a depth of more than 80 inches. The water table is near or above the surface during the wet seasons and more than 20 inches during the dry seasons. Permeability is rapid throughout. Internal drainage is impeded by the high water table.

Paola fine sand comprises 9 acres primarily along the northern part of the site along Sleepy Lagoon. This is excessively drained, nearly level to sloping soil in sand hill areas. Individual areas are irregular in shape. Slopes are smooth to concave. The surface layer is gray fine sand about 3 inches thick; subsurface layer of white fine sand at about 26 inches of depth. The water table is below a depth of 72 inches. Permeability is very rapid throughout.

Sellers mucky fine sand comprises approximately 19 acres of the site primarily in the center of the property. This nearly level, very poorly draining soil is in depressions. Slopes are generally concave and less than 2%. Typically, a layer of black muck about 2 inches thick is on the surface; the surface mineral layer is black, mucky loamy fine sand in the upper 9 inches; black fine sand in the next 11 inches; and very gray fine sand in the lower 4 inches. This type of soil is ponded during the wet seasons for 3 to 6 months and the water table is within a depth of about 10 inches for 6 to 12 months. Permeability is rapid throughout however the internal drainage is impeded by a shallow water table.

There are no known mineral resources, such as oil, gas and phosphates.

Aquatic Preserve

In 2020, the Florida Legislature designated the Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve (NCAP) as Florida's 42nd aquatic preserve and the state's first new aquatic preserve in 32 years. The preserve encompasses 800 square miles of coastal waters, including 625 miles of shoreline, along Citrus, Hernando and Pasco Counties. NCAP is the second-largest aquatic preserve in Florida and it is adjacent to Key Vista Nature Park.

The aquatic preserve protects a contiguous seagrass meadow and the largest springfed seagrass habitat in the world. It also includes mangrove islands, saltmarsh, sponge beds, marine springs, oyster reefs, and limestone hardbottom habitats. The NCAP protects nearly 400,000 acres of seagrass which support valuable working waterfront industries, including fisheries, seafood production, and ecotourism. Kayaking, boating, fishing, and scalloping are popular recreation opportunities with in the NCAP.

Management Activities

The Pasco County Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Department is the sole entity responsible for the management of Key Vista Nature Park. The department coordinates with state agencies such as the Florida Forest Service and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for natural resource management. Internally, we also coordinate with other Pasco County departments such as Fire Rescue, Animal Services and Code Compliance.

The department has been focusing on ongoing management needs consisting of continued removal of exotic invasive plant species as they occur in upland and shoreline areas, restoring habitat for the Gopher Tortoise and addressing erosion concerns that are present along Rocky Creek. A project to place rip rap along the Rocky Creek shoreline to stabilize the bank has been proposed. This project is in the planning stage only. Other management needs center around routine maintenance and upkeep at the park.

Management Goals

| | Core Objectives | Measure | Timeframe | Expenses and Manpower Budget |
|---|---|--|--------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | Habitat restoration and improvement Description | | | |
| | Prescribe burn 10 acres per year | acres burned per year | 3 to 5 years | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | Maintain 40 acres per year within target fire return interval. | acres within fire return interval target | yearly | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | Conduct habitat/natural community improvement on 40 acres | acres with restoration underway | yearly | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | Conduct habitat/natural community restoration activities on 40 acres. | acres restored | yearly | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | Conduct timber harvest for the purposes of habitat restoration on N/A acres | acres harvested | N/A | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |

| 2 | | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|----------|----------------------------|--|
| | Public Access and recreational opportunities Description | | | | |
| | Maintain public access and recreational opportunities to allow for a recreational carrying capacity of 600 visitors per day | 600 visitor opportunities/day | Yearly | Expense \$ Personnel \$ | |
| | Develop additional public access and recreational opportunities to allow for a carrying capacity of visitors/day | visitor opportunities/day | Yearly | Expense \$ Personnel \$ | |
| | Continue to provide 5 interpretive/education programs | 3 interpretive/education programs | Yearly | Expense \$ Personnel \$ | |
| | Develop 2 new interpretive/education programs | 2 interpretive/education programs | Yearly | Expense \$ Personnel \$ | |
| 3 | Hydrological Preservation | and Restoration Description | | | |
| | Conduct or obtain a site assessment/study to identify potential hydrology restoratio needs | n Assessment conducted? y/n | in 2 yrs | Expense \$ Personnel \$ | |

| | Restore natural hydrologic condition and functions on site | 3 acres for which hydrologic restoration is underway (planning, grant writing, earth moving, etc.) | 2 years | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
|---|--|---|------------|----------------------------|
| | | acres for which natural hydrologic conditions and function are restored | 2 years | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | | | | |
| 4 | Sustainable forest manager | nent Description | | |
| | | Silviculture management plan complete? y/n acres treated | N/A | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | forest stands, roads & other | Complete GIS database and reinventory all attributes every 3-5 years or as needed. | N/A | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | | acres of forest inventoried annually | 3- 5 years | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |

| 5 | Exotic and invasive Specie | s Maintenance and Control Des | <u>cription</u> | |
|---|--|--|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Annually treat 1 acre of FLEPPC Category I and Category II invasive exotic plant species. | 1 acres treated | | Expense \$100 Personnel \$500.00 |
| | Implement control measures on exotic and nuisance animal species | nuisance and exotic species for which control measures are implemented | N/A | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | | | | |
| | Capital Facilities and Infras | structure Description- Restroon | ns, Observation To | wer, Parking lot, Boardwalk |
| | To maintain 4 facilities, 0 miles of roads, and 1 mile of trails existing on site (as applicable) | 4 facilities, 0 miles of roads, and 1 mile of trails existing on site | Yearly | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | To construct 0 facilities. 0 miles of roads, and 0 miles of trails (as applicable) | facilities, miles roads, miles trails constructed | N/A | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | To improve or repair 0 facilities. 0 miles of roads, and 0 miles of trails existing on site (as applicable) | 2 facilities, 0 miles roads, 1 mile trails improved or repaired | 2-5 years | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |

| 7 | | | | |
|---|--|--|---------|----------------------------|
| | Cultural and Historical Res | ources Description | | |
| | | | | |
| | Ensure all known sites are recorded in the FL Division of Historical Resources Master Site file | 2 recorded sites | | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | Monitor 2 recorded sites and send updates to DHR Master Site file as needed | of sites monitored | 3 years | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | Bring of recorded sites/cultural resources into good condition | of sites in good condition | N/A | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| _ | | | | |
| 8 | Imperiled Species Habitat Maintenance, Enhancement, Restoration, or Population Restoration Description Gopher tortoises and Bald Eagles are present on site. Site management conducted will ensure these areas are not disturbed in accordance with accepted and defined guidelines. | | | |
| | species occurrence | Baseline imperiled species occurrence inventory list complete - NO | 2 years | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | | imperiled species for which monitoring protocols are developed | N/A | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
| | Implement monitoring protocols for imperiled species | species for which monitoring is ongoing | N/A | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |

| [If applicable, provide additional measurable objective(s) for new or ongoing species-specific management activities for each of the priority species such as population augmentation, translocations, nest box projects, etc.] | Examples: Project-specific quantity, of nestboxes, # of individuals introduced or translocated, etc. | | Expense \$ Personnel \$ |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|
|--|---|--|----------------------------|

| Activity | Yearly Estimated Cost | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--|
| | Priority Cost | Other Management Cost | Cost Effective Methods | |
| Resource Management | \$1,000.00 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| Administration | \$2,200 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| <u>Support</u> | \$4,800 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| Capital Improvements | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| Recreation Visitor Services | \$300 | \$0 | \$0 | |
| Law Enforcement Activities | \$860.00 | \$0 | \$0 | |

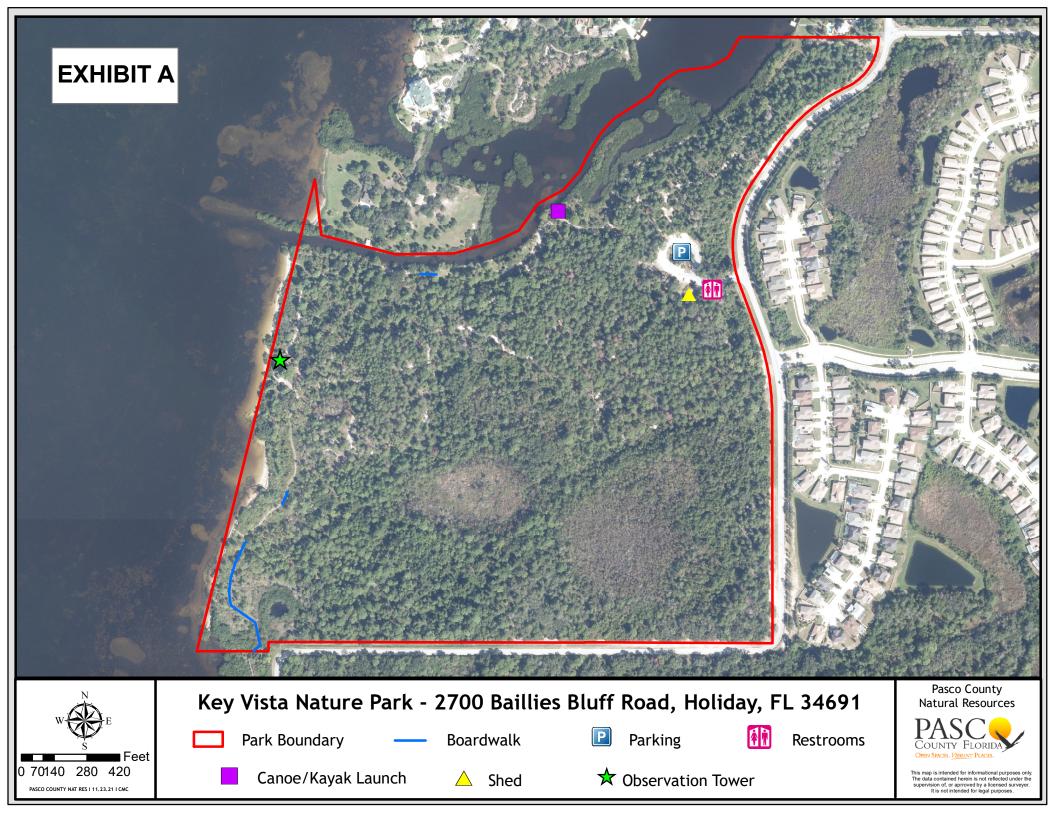
Use of this property and its resources, as stated in this plan, complies with the requirements set forth in the rules for State Lands Management Plans.

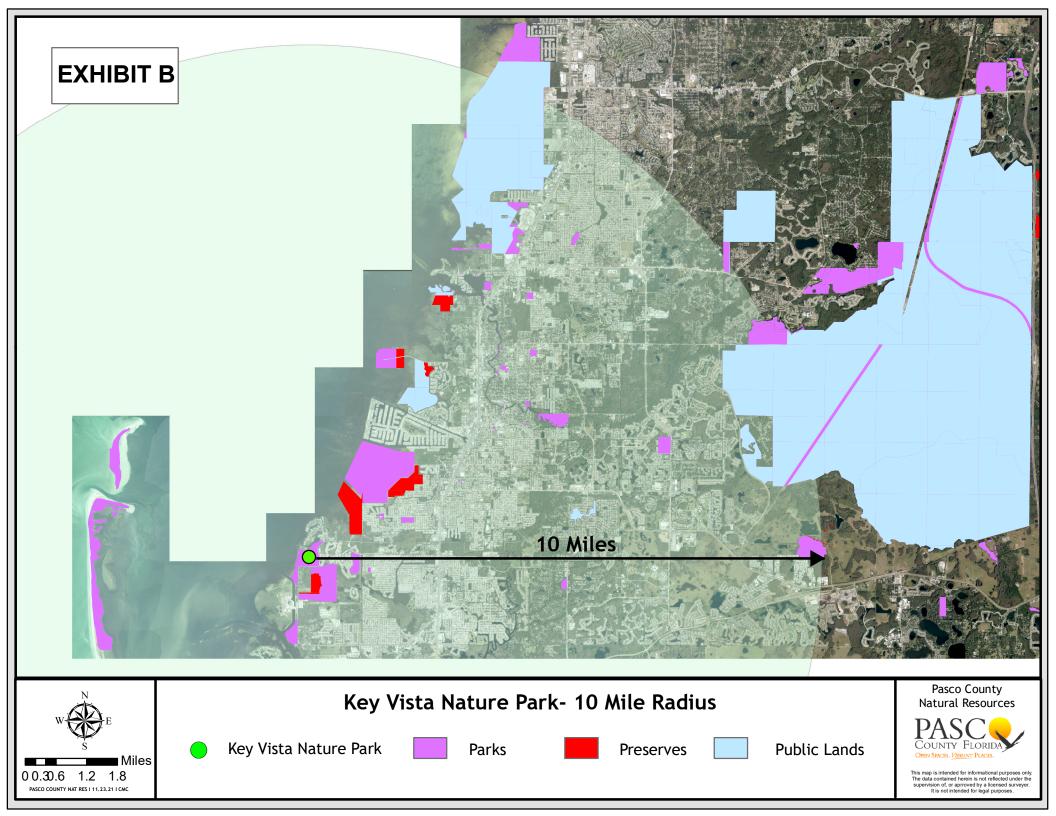
Contact Person and Address

Alicia Szilagyi Parks Superintendent- Passive Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Department 4111 Land O'Lakes Blvd, Suite 202 Land O'Lakes, FL 34639-4402 (727) 514-0649 Email: Aszilagyi@pascocountyfl.net

Please send this form to:

Division of State Lands D.E.P. M.S. 140 3900 Commonwealth Blvd. Tallahassee Fl. 32399-3000 850-245-4562





PARCEL 1

The Northwest 1/4 of the Northwest 1/4 of Section 26; AND Tracts 29, 30 and 31 of the TAMPA-TARPON SPRINGS LAND COMPANY SUBDIVISION of said Section 26, as shown on the Plat recorded in Plat Book 1 at Pages 68, 69 and 70 of the public records of Pasco County, Florida; AND ALSO Government Lot 1 of Section 27, all being in Township 26 South, Range 15 East, Pasco County, Florida; LESS that portion of the above described parcel lying Easterly of the Westerly right-of-way line of Pine View Drive as described in Official Records Book 87, Page 246 of the public records of Pasco County, Florida; ALSO LESS the E. F. Swartsel parcel as described in Official Records Book 191, Pages 36 and 37 of the public records of Pasco County, Florida; ALSO LESS the Dr. Alfred O. Bonati parcel as described in Official Records Book 1538, Pages 1687 and 1688 of the public records of Pasco County, Florida; ALSO LESS the South 666 2/3 feet of said Government Lot 1; ALSO LESS the South 666 2/3 feet of said Tracts 30 and 31; ALSO LESS the East 294.62 feet of the Northwest 1/4 of the Northwest 1/4 of said Section 26: the South line of said Tracts 30 and 31 being the same as the South line of the Northwest 1/4 of said Section 26; ALSO the West line of said Tracts 29 and 30 being the same as the West line of the Northwest 1/4 of said Section 26.

PARCEL 2

The West 152.53 feet of the East 294.62 feet of the Northwest 1/4 of the Northwest 1/4 of Section 26, Township 26 South, Range 15 East, Pasco County, Florida; LESS that portion of the above described parcel lying Easterly of the Westerly right-of-way line of Pine View Drive as described in Official Records Book 87, Page 246 of the public records of Pasco County, Florida.

PARCEL 3

The South 666 2/3 feet of Government Lot 1 of Section 27, Township 26 South, Range 15 East, Pasco County, Florida. AND the South 666 2/3 feet of Tracts 30 and 31 of the TAMPA-TARPON SPRINGS LAND COMPANY SUBDIVISION of Section 26, Township 26 South, Range 15 East, as shown on the Plat recorded in Plat Book 1 at Pages 68, 69 and 70 of the public records of Pasco County, Florida; LESS that portion of the above described parcel lying Easterly of the Westerly right-of-way line of Pine View Drive as described in Official Records Book 87, Page 246 of the public records of Pasco County, Florida; ALSO LESS right-of-way for Bailey's Bluff Road as described in Official Records Book 1340, Pages 678, 679 and 680 of the public records of Pasco County, Florida; the South line of said Tracts 30 and 31 being the same as the South line of the Northwest 1/4 of said Section 26; ALSO the West line of said Tract 30 being the same as the West line of the Northwest 1/4 of Section 26.

PARCEL 4

1.14-11-1

The East 143.09 feet of the Northwest 1/4 of the Northwest 1/4 of Section 26, Township 26 South, Range 15 East, Pasco County, Florida; LESS that portion of the above described parcel lying Easterly of the Westerly rightof-way line of Pine View Drive as described in Official Records Book 87, Page 246 of the public records of Pasco County, Florida.

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