

**ITEM 2:**

Consider the February 14, 2020 meeting and May 20, 2020 public hearing summaries.

**DSL STAFF REMARKS:**

None

**DSL STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve the meeting summaries.

**ARC RECOMMENDATION:**

- APPROVE
- APPROVE WITH MODIFICATIONS: \_\_\_\_\_
- DEFER
- WITHDRAW
- NOT APPROVE
- OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

## Acquisition and Restoration Council Meeting Summary

**Council Meeting:** February 14, 2020

**Time:** 9:00 a.m.

**Location:** Department of Environmental Protection  
Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building  
Conference Room 137 (formerly known as A&B)  
3900 Commonwealth Blvd  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

**Conference Line:** 1-888-585-9008; Participant Code: 469-038-506

---

### MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Jim Karels, FFS  
Ms. Lynetta Griner, Citizen Member  
Dr. Thomas Eason, FWC  
Dr. Bill Palmer, Citizen Member  
Ms. Elva Peppers, Citizen Member  
Mr. Shawn Hamilton, ARC Chair, DEP

ARC Staff Director: Ms. Shauna Allen, DEP

### Item 1: Call to Order at 9:00 a.m.

DEP Interim Deputy Secretary for Land and Recreation Shawn Hamilton called the meeting to order. He also announced that Barbara Goodman left DEP in January to resume her retirement and shared her farewell message. Mr. Jim Karels led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Hamilton then asked Mr. Karels to join him as ARC recognized his 12 years of service on the council and 35-year career with the Florida Forest Service. Other ARC members expressed their appreciation for Mr. Karels statesmanship, collaborative leadership, innovative forest management strategies, support for operation outdoor freedom, national expertise and advocacy for fire management and serving as a role model in building relationships to achieve common goals.

Mr. Karels thanked the council and announced that the commissioner began the leadership transition with incoming Director Erin Albury and Assistant Director Johnny Sabo.

Ms. Allen announced that a quorum was present and provided housekeeping announcements for the public and callers on the conference line. There were 3 callers in attendance.

### Item 2: Consider the December 12-13, 2019 public hearing and meeting summaries.

**DSL Staff Recommendation:** Approve the meeting summaries.

**Discussion:** None.

**ARC Action:** Mr. Karels made the motion to approve the December 2019 meeting summaries with Ms. Griner seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

#### **ARC STAFF REPORTS**

**Item 3:** Items approved by the Division of State Lands via the online negative response process since the December 2019 ARC meeting.

**DSL Staff Remarks:** Ms. Allen stated that one item was submitted and approved via the Negative Response Process; a request by the Florida Forest Service to amend the Goethe State Forest management plan to construct an Operation Outdoor Freedom Hunt Camp.

**Discussion:** None.

**ARC Action:** No action required.

**Item 4:** Quarterly status report on Land Management Reviews completed by the Division of State Lands from July to December 2019.

**DSL Staff Remarks:** Ms. Allen stated that the quarterly status report was provided to the ARC for information.

**Discussion:** None.

**ARC Action:** No action required.

#### **FLORIDA FOREVER**

**Item 5:** Adopt the FY 2020-2021 Division of State Lands Annual Florida Forever Work Plan for presentation to the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund.

**DSL Staff Remarks:** Ms. Allen stated that pursuant to section 259.105(17), F.S., the Work Plan is required to be adopted by ARC and presented to the Board of Trustees on an annual basis. The priority list includes over two million acres with an estimated value of over \$8 billion. DSL plans to submit to the Board an annual work plan for the 2020 Florida Forever priority list in May 2020.

**Discussion:** Ms. Griner asked about the budget item litigation settlement set-aside that has been in the budget since 2004. Ms. Callie DeHaven, State Lands Director, responded that we are monitoring the case continually and that the funds will be held until the case is settled.

**ARC Action:** Dr. Eason made the motion to approve the work plan with Ms. Peppers seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

**Item 6:** Consider a request to delete 1.07 acres from the boundary of the Florida Keys Ecosystem Florida Forever Project as requested by the landowner.

**DSL Staff Recommendation:** Vote on the request.

**Discussion:** None.

**ARC Action:** Ms. Griner made the motion to approve the boundary amendment with Dr. Eason seconding. ARC members voted unanimously by six-yes votes to approve the boundary amendment.

**Item 7:** Consider requests to remove approximately 0.94 acres from the boundary of the Bombing Range Ridge Florida Forever Project as requested by the landowners.

**DSL Staff Recommendation:** Vote on the request.

**Discussion:** None.

**ARC Action:** Dr. Eason made the motion to approve the boundary amendment with Ms. Griner seconding. ARC members voted unanimously by six-yes votes to approve the boundary amendment.

#### LAND ADMINISTRATION

**Item 8:** Consider whether an approximately 29.99-acre public transportation easement to the State of Florida Department of Transportation for the Withlacoochee State Forest is consistent with the Board of Trustees' Linear Facilities Policy.

**DSL Staff Recommendation:** Approve the request.

**Discussion:** Mr. Scott Woolam, Division of State Lands, stated that staff is in support of the request and that it meets the linear facilities policy. FDOT has worked well with the Florida Forest Service and the Department of State has also weighed in. He introduced Ms. Casey Lyon, FDOT Environmental Permit Supervisor from District 5 to present the item.

Ms. Lyon stated that the project corridor spans Hernando, Sumpter and Lake Counties, although only Hernando and Sumpter County sections affecting the Withlacoochee State Forest will be discussed. The State Road 50 Corridor study was completed in 2016 followed by the PD&E study in 2019. The typical roadway section in Hernando county has a 200-foot easement so no additional lands are required to accommodate the proposed widening of State Route 50 from 2-4 lanes. However, in Sumpter County, the typical roadway section is only 80-100 feet wide requiring an additional 100-120 feet to accommodate the proposed widening. The proposed improvements include a shared use path connecting with the Van Fleet Trail, new pedestrian underpass for the Florida Trail, wildlife permeability structures, minimum of 45 acres in replacement lands and an additional payment of .5 times the market value of the easement interest for in-kind services to the Friends of the Forest Service.

Dr. Palmer asked if the acreage provided would be in the same forest. Mr. Woolam stated that the goal is to keep it in the same managed area. Mr. Karels stated that they have worked closely with State Lands to look for properties that are the most valuable and make a difference in management. Ms. Lyon stated that they worked from a list provided by the FFS and must find

willing sellers. Dr. Eason stated that the process also included coordination with other agencies. He added that FWC staff is on board and appreciates the partnership with FDOT to identify good alternatives.

Ms. Pepper stated she would like to see what the state is getting for the habitat being impacted. Mr. Woolam responded that there is a concern about the influence of sharing the properties being considered on the sellers.

**ARC Action:** Ms. Griner made the motion to approve the proposed easement with Dr. Palmer seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

## MANAGEMENT PLANS

**Item 9:** Consider the Plank Road State Forest Management Plan (Lease No. 4806).

**DSL Staff Recommendation:** Approve the management plan.

**Discussion:** Mr. Vitor Aguiar from the Florida Forest Service provided an overview of the forest acquired in 2017. Plank Road State Forest consists of 9,043 acres in Leon and Jefferson Counties. The name refers to the historic Plank Road constructed in the mid-1800s. The area provides water quality protection for St. Marks River. It is managed under the multiple use concept and includes 11 natural communities containing significant wetlands. The FFS is conducting a forest-wide inventory and plans to complete a 5-year silvicultural management plan. They manage 41 miles of service roads creating public use opportunities for hiking, biking and access to the St. Marks River. Other opportunities include hunting and operation outdoor freedom.

Mr. Karels commented that this is a great example of the agencies working together to establish boundaries for management and collaboration.

**ARC Action:** Mr. Karels made the motion to approve the management plan with Ms. Griner seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

**Item 10:** Consider the Ruth B. Kirby Gilchrist Blue Springs State Park Management Plan (Lease No. 4814).

**DSL Staff Recommendation:** Approve the management plan.

**Discussion:** Ms. Sine Murray from the Division of Recreation and Parks provided an overview of the park acquired in 2017 as the 175<sup>th</sup> state park. Attending on the phone was Park Manager George Paxton and District 2 Bureau Chief Cliff Maxwell. The 402-acre park in Gilchrist County contains 10 natural communities including 70 acres in the floodplain of the Santa Fe River and two second magnitude springs, Gilchrist Blue and Naked Springs. The park also has over 270 acres of sandhill habitat and 2 archaeological sites recorded in 1966 representing the Paleoindian period (appx 10,000 to 15,000 years ago). Proposed management will focus on rehabilitation and mitigation for recreation impacts to the spring bowl, redesigning day use areas and consolidating and reducing camping facilities to manage recreation impacts. The park will

monitor site specific resource indicators and thresholds to manage recreation impacts and implement management strategies to address negative impacts.

Ms. Peppers commented that in full transparency, she was working on the biological inventories for the park and looking forward to more field work.

**ARC Action:** Mr. Karels made the motion to approve the management plan with Dr. Eason seconding. ARC approved the item unanimously.

#### **CLOSING COMMENTS**

**ARC Announcements:** Dr. Eason recognized new OES Program Administrator Deborah Burr formerly with FWC. Ms. Allen announced changes to the ARC webpage designed to make it easier to find information for persons wishing to participate in the review process for ARC items. The page also includes a link to subscribe to the ARC mailing list.

Mr. Karels made the motion to adjourn with Ms. Peppers seconding. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 9:56 a.m.

## Summary of the May 20, 2020 Acquisition and Restoration Council Public Hearing

**Date:** May 20, 2020

**Location:** GoToWebinar

**Time:** 3:30 PM

### ATTENDANCE:

Shauna Allen, DEP, ARC Staff Director  
Deborah Burr, DEP, Division of State Lands (DSL)  
Lynetta Griner, ARC Member  
Tyler Maldonado, DEP, Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP)  
Keith Singleton, DEP, DSL  
Joel Albritton, DEP, DRP  
Merrill Emfinger, DEP, DSL  
Cat Ingram, DACS, Florida Forest Service (FFS)  
Julia R. Nowlin  
Lance Jacobsen, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)  
Joy Klein, Miami-Dade County  
Annette Detzel, FWC  
Melissa Hill  
Erica Hernandez  
Emily Bohnstengel, DEP, Office of Cabinet Affairs (OCA)  
Diane Goldberg  
Peter Kleinhenz  
Deena Woodward  
Earl Pearson, DEP, Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection (ORCP)  
Hilary Swain, Archbold Biological Station  
Simone James, DEP, DSL  
Bruce Ritchie  
Keith Fountain  
Gladys Delgadillo, Conservancy of Southwest Florida (CSF)  
Kent Wimmer, Defenders of Wildlife  
Nathan Pasco, Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI)  
Carole Tebay  
Larame Ferry, FWC  
Megan Seward  
Carolin Ciarlariello, DEP, Office of General Counsel (OGC)  
Lee Killinger  
Jen Lomberk

### **OPENING REMARKS**

Ms. Allen opened the hearing with an orientation to the webinar. Ms. Deborah Burr chaired the meeting on behalf of DEP. Ms. Burr announced that ARC Member Lynetta Griner was attending the hearing and noted that there were several managing agency personnel in attendance as well. Ms. Burr outlined the ARC Florida Forever selection and ranking process and the four new proposals being considered for Cycle 2. She then asked Ms. Allen to call for public comment.

### **PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Ms. Gladys Delgadillo (Conservancy of Southwest Florida) spoke in support of the Amtel Farms proposal and the opportunity to strengthen the connections between adjacent managed areas for the Florida black bear and panther recovery.

Dr. Hillary Swain (Archbold Biological Station) spoke in favor of Buck Island Ranch and the international importance of the site for research on a working ranch and the complex of adjacent conservation lands.

Mr. Kent Wimmer (Defenders of Wildlife) spoke in favor of all four proposals in meeting the goals of the Florida Ecological Greenways Network and expanding panther habitat: particularly with the southern three proposals.

There was no further comment. Ms. Burr adjourned the meeting at 4:00pm.