

ITEM 3:

Status report on Land Management Reviews completed by the Division of State Lands from July to December 2022.

DSL STAFF REMARKS:

During the 2022-23 Fiscal Year, the Office of Environmental Services scheduled on-site reviews of 36 managed conservation lands. Due to the impacts from Hurricane Ian, the review of three sites in the impacted area were postponed, and one was rescheduled for the Spring of 2023. Additionally, two sites that were postponed due to COVID-19 were added to the schedule. The following 18 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 2023 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 Terra Ceia Preserve State Park (Manatee County):

On July 19, 2022, the review team found Terra Ceia Preserve State Park (1,948 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) staff for developing a greenhouse for growing ground cover species to use for ground cover restoration project. The team also commended the staff on their feral hog removal efforts. It's been a dramatic change in the past few years from both a water quality and a land management standpoint.

Land Management Review of South Fork State Park (Manatee County):

On July 20, 2022, the review team found South Fork State Park (1,129 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 recommended park staff discuss with DEP/DRP management the need for specific funding, staff and equipment for SFSP, or possibly turning over management to adjacent agencies for better management and access. The team also recommended park staff provide educational outreach and other interpretation of this park.

Land Management Review of Anclote Key Preserve State Park (Pasco and Pinellas counties):

On July 22, 2022, the review team found Anclote Key Preserve State Park (12,177 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 management and staff for effective use of volunteer programs and community involvement and partnerships for management of this site. The team recommended staff apply prescribed fire on the area as soon as possible, including using partnerships for management of this site.

Land Management Review of Fort Clinch State Park (Nassau County):

On August 2, 2022, the review team found Fort Clinch State Park (2,178 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 FPS for ongoing efforts of obtaining funding for the restoration of Ft. Clinch and other improvement projects. The team also commended the park staff for working closely with the US Army Corp of Engineers and US Navy to facilitate renourishment of the park's shoreline to protect the historic fort structure.

Land Management Review of Pumpkin Hill Creek Preserve State Park (Duval County):

On August 3, 2022, the review team found Pumpkin Hill Creek Preserve State Park (3,967 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 its intuitive use of prescribed fire in conjunction with mechanical stand improvement to maintain or improve upon the natural communities.

Land Management Review of Cary State Forest (Duval and Nassau counties):

On August 5, 2022, the review team found Cary State Forest (13,385 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 Florida Forest Service (FFS) staff for expanding recreational opportunities on both the Cary and Thomas Creek tract. The team recommended the parking area on Thomas Road be closed due to low usage and damage to natural resources.

Land Management Review of San Felasco Hammock Preserve State Park (Alachua County):

On August 23, 2022, the review team found San Felasco Hammock Preserve State Park (7,358 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 use of mechanical activities for stand improvement/hardwood reduction to improve groundcover and prescription burning opportunities. The team also commended the park staff for successful use of FWC Invasive Plant Treatment funding and internal funding to control invasive plants. The team recommended harvesting of non-site-specific pine species in upland pines and upland mixed woodlands to promote longleaf restoration, reduce potential beetle infestation and reach FNAI desired future conditions, where appropriate.

Land Management Review of River Rise Preserve State Park / Oleno State Park (Alachua and Columbia counties):

On August 24, 2022, the review team found River Rise Preserve State Park / Oleno State Park (4,482 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 FPS for the work to acquire a number of important inholdings that are ecologically and culturally significant to the Santa Fe River basin. The team also commended staff on their work with researchers and the water management district to continue their understanding and protection of the Santa Fe River and hydrology on the two state parks. The team recommended improving return intervals in pyrogenic community types.

Land Management Review of Ichetucknee Springs State Park (Columbia, Lafayette, and Suwannee counties):

On August 26, 2022, the review team found Ichetucknee Springs State Park (2,518 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 alterations to access to improve the visitor experience at the north end of the park, while also enhancing the ecological benefit of the vegetation. The team also commended the staff for their proactive approach to submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) preservation via recreation management & SAV restoration by the way of pilot studies, monitoring, and collaboration with other agencies. The team recommended staff apply prescription burning of sandhill communities to optimize seedling regeneration and when necessary, utilize supplemental planting in order to increase longleaf pine trees per acre to better meet standards of FNAI desired future condition.

Land Management Review of L. Kirk Edwards Wildlife and Environmental Area (Leon County):

On September 12, 2022, the review team found L. Kirk Edwards Wildlife and Environmental Area (1,782 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 Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) for continuing to implement the prescribed fire program towards habitat and maintenance restoration. The team also commended FWC for their native groundwaver restoration work.

Land Management Review of Indian Lake State Forest (Marion County):

On September 13, 2022, the review team found Indian Lake State Forest (4,466 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 FFS for their prescribed burning program in the sandhill communities.

Land Management Review of Charles H. Bronson State Forest (Orange and Seminole counties):

On September 15, 2022, the review team found Charles H. Bronson State Forest (11,603 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 for their efforts improve hydrology on the area thru cooperative restoration projects like the Turkey Creek historic flowway project. The team also commended the FFS for continued efforts to keep prescribed fire on the flatwoods on the area. The team recommended FFS establish permanent photopoints for monitoring management effects over time.

Land Management Review of Tarkiln Bayou Preserve State Park (Escambia County):

On October 4, 2022, the review team found Tarkiln Bayou Preserve State Park (4,470 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 on measures taken to protect and improve white-topped pitcher plants as well as other listed species. The team also commended staff for limiting visitor impacts to the landscape while still providing opportunities that are well utilized. The team recommended consideration of stocking levels within mesic, sandhill and wet flatwoods for future harvesting to improve/maintain forest health and meet FNAI community standards.

Land Management Review of Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve (Franklin County):

On October 6, 2022, the review team found Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve (234,715 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 management/monitoring of imperiled species and habitats; particularly for continuously seeking innovative ways to restore/maintain shorebird habitat. The team also commended the staff for educational and outreach effort, from Estuaries Day, work with school children, to community classes, workshops for Land Managers, etc. Outstanding work in this area. The team recommended the need for a more quantitative approach to assessing status of fire-maintained upland communities.

Land Management Review of Big Shoals State Park (Columbia and Hamilton counties):

On October 26, 2022, the review team found Big Shoals State Park (1,681 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 FPS staff for the exceptional public recreational opportunities at the park. The team also commended the park and district staff for the improved access and hydrological improvement by the installation of low water crossings. The team recommended further mechanical reduction of hardwood encroachment in understory to promote prescribed burning.

Land Management Review of Big Shoals State Forest (Hamilton County):

On October 27, 2022, the review team found Big Shoals State Forest (1,673 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 FFS for continuing to use a variety of techniques to reduce offsite hardwoods in upland habitats. The team also commended FFS for the high frequency of prescribed fire on the forest portion of the property. The team recommended FFS collaborate with DRP on the maintenance needs of the Woodpecker Recreational Trail.

Land Management Review of Withlacoochee State Forest (Hernando and Sumter counties):

On December 14, 2022, the review team found Withlacoochee State Forest (159,310 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 red-cockaded woodpecker habitat management. The team also commended the FFS for initiating geospatial data collection on rare and invasive plants.

Land Management Review of Lake Louisa State Park (Lake County):

On December 15, 2022, the review team found Lake Louisa State Park (4,408 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 FPS for providing a wide array of recreational opportunities and lodging options that balance well with protection of Lake Louisa State Park's natural and cultural resources. The team also commended staff for utilizing a variety of resources, i.e., Park Service staff and equipment, volunteers and non-governmental organization collaborations, to conduct extensive natural community restoration across former agricultural areas at Lake Louisa State Park. The team recommended FPS continues to pursue funding and partnership opportunities in support of hydrologic assessment, restoration and enhancement activities, especially reducing the impacts of historic agricultural drainage and irrigation features on wetland natural communities, at Lake Louisa State Park.

DSL STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

None

ARC RECOMMENDATION:

None