

Conservation Collier
Annual Report

CONSERVATION COLLIER



For
*Present and
Future Generations*

www.colliergov.net/conservationcollier

May 2015



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I. Executive Summary

In accordance with the Conservation Collier Ordinance, as amended (2007-65, Section 12.6), there will be an annual meeting to update the Board of County Commissioners (Board) and public on the Conservation Collier Program. The following annual report is intended to serve as the update to the Board and public.

The Conservation Collier Program is responsible for implementing the mandate of the electorate of Collier County as provided by public referendum votes in November, 2002, and again in November, 2006 confirming that mandate, to levy a 0.25 mill ad valorem property tax for a period not to exceed 10 years for acquisition, protection, restoration, and management of environmentally sensitive lands in Collier County for the benefit of present and future generations.

Conservation Collier has now implemented its mandate for 12 years. In March 2013, at the ten year mark, the ad valorem tax levy ceased. During this time 4,060 acres meeting program criteria were acquired in 19 different locations for a cost of approximately \$103.9 million. A total of \$47,332,251 was bonded for use in property acquisition, via bonds in 2004 and 2008, with both bonds now retired. Since the time the levy ceased, an additional 16.45 acres have been added to the inventory from donations and good deals for a current total of 467.29 acres. Two approved multi-parcel projects, Winchester Head (aka North Golden Gate Estates (NGGE) Unit 65) and Red Maple Swamp (aka NGGE Unit 53) are active in accepting donations. The Land Development Code off-site vegetation retention provision (LDC 3.05.07, H.1.f. iii. b.) provides the criteria and process for donations. These donations require that all existing invasive exotic plants are removed and a cash management endowment is provided based on 25% of the cost of acquired similar parcels. All approvals to accept or acquire parcels within the multi-parcel projects have been conceptually provided if criteria are met, with final acceptance of parcels required by the Board. The board has also accepted 3 straight-up donations on behalf of Conservation Collier which are not connected with the LDC offsite vegetation protection option.

A nine (9) member citizen’s advisory committee named the Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee (CCLAAC) was appointed in early 2003 to make recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners on land purchases and program policies. During 2014 and in early 2015, two amendments to the Conservation Collier Ordinance (2007-65, as amended) were approved by the Board which affected members of this committee. Section 8.6.d. of Ordinance 2007-65 provides sunset criteria for the CCLAAC. Staff believed these criteria were met; however, the Board of County Commissioners and members felt continued citizen involvement was important. Instead of sun-setting the Committee, the Board chose to maintain the CCLAAC and change the focus of the Committee from land acquisition to land management and programs. Following that, due to low Committee membership, amendment 2015-16 reduced the CCLAAC membership from nine members to seven during

periods when active acquisition is not taking place. This reduction in membership allows the CCLAAC to continue to meet. Members now meet quarterly.

Of the 19 acquired Conservation Collier properties, fifteen (15) have approved Final Management Plans (FMP) and four (4) have approved Interim Management Plans (IMP). Twelve (12) Conservation Collier preserves are currently open or opening shortly for public use in categories 1 through 4 with signs, trails and benches installed. The cost for management of all preserves for FY 2014 totaled \$347,143. This funding accomplished management actions on acquired preserve properties as described in approved land management plans and as prioritized by the CCLAAC and approved by the Board of County Commissioners at their 6/14/11 regular meeting (Item 10G), and again on 10/23/13 (Item 16D4). Management activities for FY 2015 are expected to cost approx. \$563,220 and include ongoing maintenance for most preserves, with major expenditures at Pepper Ranch Preserve to complete initial exotic removals and at Rivers Road Preserve for development of trails and firebreaks and initial exotic removals. Grants were also received to fund a portion of this work. Many of the established preserves will see reductions in cost this year as initial management and public access work has been completed. Public activities at preserves in 2014 included adult and youth hunts, a festival, guided hikes and geocaching. Activities planned for 2015 include geocaching, a festival, educational days with area college students, and volunteer-led hikes on selected seasonal weekends.

Conservation Collier was recently recognized by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) as they evaluated the Parks and Recreation Department for Accreditation. The Accreditation team noted in the final report that they were very impressed with Conservation Collier and the quality and amount of work accomplished with only three dedicated full time staff. Collier County Parks and Recreation Department is one of only 136 accredited park and recreation agencies in the United States and one of only 24 in Florida. The Collier County Parks and Recreation recently achieved re-accreditation, meeting the extremely high National Recreation and Park Association standards for excellence.

Conservation Collier preserves have been categorized to identify what public uses are currently available (approved as part of the Annual Report, 10/23/12 16D4). The following table describes these categories and identifies corresponding preserves.

Table 1. Preserve Category Matrix

| Preserves | | Category 1 | Category 2 | Category 3 | Category 4 | Category 5 |
|-----------|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|---|
| | | Primary Use Preserves: easily accessible with public amenities and parking | Intermediate Use Preserves: few to no amenities, limited parking, primitive trail system | Neighborhood Preserve: no onsite parking or amenities other than benches, trails and picnic tables | Seasonal Use Preserves: may have parking and trails but will be closed during seasonal rainfall months | Resource Protection/Restoration Preserves: currently no public access due to lack of physical or legal access or where there are unsafe conditions for public |
| 1 | Alligator Flag | | | | X | |
| 2 | Camp Keais | | | | | X |
| 3 | Caracara Prairie | | | X | | |
| 4 | Cocohatchee Creek | | X | | | |
| 5 | Freedom Park | X | | | | |
| 6 | Gordon River Greenway | X | | | | |
| 7 | Logan Woods | | | X | | |
| 8 | McIlvane Marsh | | | | | X |
| 9 | Nancy Payton | | X | | | |
| 10 | Otter Mound | | X | | | |
| 11 | Panther Walk | | | | X | |
| 12 | Pepper Ranch | X-currently seasonal, off season by appt. | | | | |
| 13 | Railhead Scrub | | X- no access at present | | | |
| 14 | Red Maple Swamp | | | | | X |
| 15 | Redroot | | X | | | |
| 16 | Rivers Road | | X opening 2015 | | | |
| 17 | Shell Island | | | | | X |
| 18 | Wet Woods | | | | | X |
| 19 | Winchester Head | | | | | X |

Finally, Citizens of Collier County have expended significant amounts of dollars to meet conservation objectives. As with any endeavor of this magnitude, one must ask, what value does this add to our community? Beyond the simple desire to protect Collier’s natural resources and wildlife for future citizens as a subjective value, there is the ever-present question of what are the objective benefits. This question has been challenging to answer as it concerns measuring things not typically measured, including the community service benefits natural lands provide and the economic value of tourism and nature-based recreation. In an effort to look at this question as it relates to Conservation Collier Lands, staff and the CCLAAC recommended developing an estimate of the ecosystem services provided to County residents by Conservation Collier lands. The resulting study (Exhibit B), performed in early 2014 by James Beaver II, Principal Planner for the SW Florida Regional Planning Council, calculated the ecosystem values for the ecologically rich Conservation Collier lands at \$144,988,312.22 per year. Looking at the onetime acquisition cost of \$104.2 million and the average annual maintenance cost projected

from FY14 through FY25 of \$300,000/year, that contribution can be seen as extremely significant, not only to quality of life, but to area economics as well. Consider that although all natural lands help to provide those values, the acquisition and maintenance of natural lands protects that value in perpetuity.

Please accept this report on the activities of Conservation Collier during calendar year 2014.

2. CCLAAC –Members, Summary of meetings and Actions for 2014

The primary purpose of the CCLAAC, as defined by the Conservation Collier Ordinance, has been to assist the Board in establishing an Active Properties Acquisition List with qualified purchase recommendations consistent with the goals of Conservation Collier. During 2014, the CCLAAC held Six (6) CCLAAC meetings. As the Program transitioned from acquisition into management, an amendment was made to the Conservation Collier ordinance (2014-18) to redirect the scope of the CCLAAC to land management and programs and to reduce monthly meetings to a quarterly schedule. In late 2014, enough members had resigned due to conflicts, or because their terms ended, that the Committee was left without a quorum. As a result, the Conservation Collier ordinance was amended again in early 2015 (2015-16) to reduce the number of members on the CCLAAC from 9 to 7 during non-acquisition phases, which also reduced requirements for a quorum from 5 to 4. Currently, there are 4 active members and a quorum is achievable. Membership of the CCLAAC is intended to be comprised of broad and balanced representation of the interests of Collier County citizens, including:

- Environmental, land management, and conservation interests
- Agricultural and business interests
- Educational interests
- General civic and citizen interests throughout the county.

Members serving in 2014 and their backgrounds and areas of expertise are:

- William Poteet, Jr. – Chairman - Active. (Business Interest) Re-appointed for a fifth term in March 2014, Mr. Poteet is a local Realtor and business owner who has been a member of the CCLAAC since its inception in March 2003. He has served as Chairman of the CCLAAC since August 2005 with unanimous re-election as Chair each year. He also served as a member of the Outreach Subcommittee and as Chairman of the Ordinance, Policy and Rules Subcommittee during active acquisition. Mr. Poteet is an outstanding leader, assisting with the development of many Program policies. He was recognized as an Outstanding Advisory Committee Member of the month in March 2007.



- Clarence Tears, Jr. - Active (Environmental and Conservation Interest) Re-appointed to a second term in February 2013, Mr. Tears had been the Director of the Big Cypress Basin /South Florida Water Management District since October 1996, until he retired in early 2014. He was responsible for the management of water resources for the public's health, safety, and welfare in Collier and northwest Monroe Counties with experience spanning more than 24 years. Mr. Tears has served in numerous positions of community leadership including graduate of Leadership Florida, Chairman of Leadership Collier Class of 2001, Chairman Lake Trafford Restoration Task Force, and appointment to the

Immokalee Area Master Plan Committee and 951 Horizon Study. He is an active member of the US Air Force Reserves with more than 24 years of service.

- Anthony Pires, Jr. – Not Currently Serving (Business Interest) Mr. Pires served 3 terms on the CCLAAC. His appointment was completed in February 2014, and he did not reapply. Mr. Pires is a long-time local land use attorney bringing extensive experience in public and private land use and planning projects to the CCLAAC. Mr. Pires has served on numerous County Advisory Committees over the past two decades. In February 2011, Mr. Pires was recognized as an Outstanding Advisory Committee Member.

- Jeremy Sterk – Not Currently Serving (Environmental and Conservation Interest) Re-appointed to a second term in March, 2012, Mr. Sterk is a biologist with extensive local experience in permitting, species surveying and project management. His environmental knowledge and permitting experience have been invaluable in review of proposed land management plans. He is also an accomplished photographer with a keen eye for wildlife whose photographs have enhanced Program reports. Mr. Sterk changed employers in 2014 and developed a conflict. He resigned in October 2014.

- Lauren Gibson – Not Currently Serving (Environmental and Conservation Interest) Mrs. Gibson is a biologist and computer scientist who served 2 terms with CCLAAC, resigning due to work obligations in July 2014. She was a staff biologist for Turrell, Hall and Associates, Inc., Marine and Environmental Consulting, where she performed wildlife and vegetation surveys, preserve monitoring, environmental resource permitting and coordinated with various agencies on company projects.

- Tracey Dewrell – (Business Interest) Appointed in September 2011, Mr. Dewrell is a real estate and general litigation attorney and the managing partner in Dewrell and Sacks, LLP. Mr. Dewrell has been a member of the Florida Bar since 1998 and is also admitted to practice in GA, where he is a registered arbitrator. He is the author of the Federal Bar Review of Florida (1998-2008) and the Georgia Foreclosure Investors Report, a statewide publication of mortgage foreclosures with investment analysis maintaining over 1800 monthly subscribers. He is also chairman and CEO of U.S. Title Insurance Corp, a national provider of title insurance and escrow services. Mr. Dewrell has experience in land appraisal, a strong interest in conservation and land management. Mr. Dewrell's term expired in Feb 2015. He has reapplied and was reappointed in 2015.

- John Hamilton Burton II - Active (Agriculture and Business Interest) Re-appointed in February 2013, Mr. Burton is currently a Broker Associate with Premiere Plus Realty in Naples. He is a Native Floridian, and has been a local resident for over 30 years. His background is in commercial and residential real estate as well as the landscape nursery industry. His skills include areas like contract negotiations, construction and appraisals. He studied Agricultural Economics at the University of Florida, Warrington College of Business and is active in the Naples Area Board of Realtors.

- Todd Allen – Not Currently Serving (General Civic and Citizen Interest) Appointed in March 2012, Todd B. Allen is a Real Estate Litigation, Condo and HOA Law, and Bankruptcy attorney practicing locally since 2009. Before joining a local law firm, Mr. Allen represented homeowners facing foreclosure and bankruptcy in Collier and Lee Counties. As a result of his work, Mr. Allen has been featured in the national media with articles in Fortune Magazine, USA Today, Housing Wire, Time Magazine, and the Huffington Post, to name a few and has appeared on MSNBC and Fox News to discuss his work. Mr. Allen ran for political office in 2014, and retired from CCLAAC due to the conflict.

3. Program Lands Acquisition Status

As of January 26, 2011 Board meeting (Agenda Item 10B), Conservation Collier has not been conducting active acquisition or ranking cycles. However, at the same time that the Board

suspended future ranking cycles, the opportunity to approach the Board with “very good deals” was provided. Additionally, the Collier County Land Development Code (LDC) section 3.05.07, H.1.f. iii. a. and b., provides the opportunity for developers’ offsite native vegetation retention requirements to be met by monetary payment or by land donation to Conservation Collier (among other qualified entities). This section will identify what good deals, land donations and monetary donations were received by Conservation Collier during 2014.

Table(s) 2. Good Deals, Land Donations and Monetary Donations

Good Deals: The following “very Good Deals” were accepted by the Board during 2014.

| Owner | Acreage | Location | Cost | Assessed Value | Board Approved/Item Number | Date Closed |
|----------------|---------|------------------------|---------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Triplett-Kania | 10 | McIlvane Marsh Project | \$3,120 | \$25,000 | 1/24/12 16E4 | 2/15/14 |

Land Donations: The following donations were accepted by the Board or in process between late 2013 and early 2015:

| Owner | Acres | Location | Endowment Provided | Assessed Value | Board Approved /Item Number | Date Closed |
|----------------------|-------|---|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Tuscany* Pointe | 5 | Panther Walk Preserve/ Horsepen Strand | \$16,683 | \$22,500 | 9/24/13 16D1 | 1/2/14 |
| Stebbins** | 1.14 | Panther Walk Preserve/ Horsepen Strand | \$0 | \$2,622 | 5/27/14 16D1 | 5/7/14 |
| Breeze at Calusa* | 1.14 | Winchester Head | \$4,020 | \$5,814 | 11/18/2014 16E10 | 12/3/14 |
| Willett | 2.02 | McIlvane Marsh Project | \$0 | \$5,050 | pending | |
| Total | | | \$20,703 | \$35,986 | | |

*Donations through the LDC section 3.05.07, H.1.f. iii. b.

**Occasionally, a property may be a straight-up donation to Conservation Collier and it will not involve removing exotics or providing management funding.

Monetary Donations: the following monetary donations were accepted by the Board during 2014.

| Owner | Donation Amount | Board Approved/Item Number | Date Received | Earmark |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Landings at Bear's Paw* | \$103,255 | 12/10/13 17D | 6/11/14 | Purchase of CDC parcel |
| Walgreens* | \$32,332.54 | 6/10/14 17B | 9/24/14 | none |
| Total | \$135,587.54 | | | |

*Donations through the LDC section 3.05.07, H.1.f. iii. a.

4. Program Land Management Status

Properties are presented alphabetically. All photos and maps shown were created and taken by Program staff unless otherwise indicated. Preserves area categorized for public use in the following manner:

Category 1 – Primary Use Preserve; easily accessible with public amenities and parking.

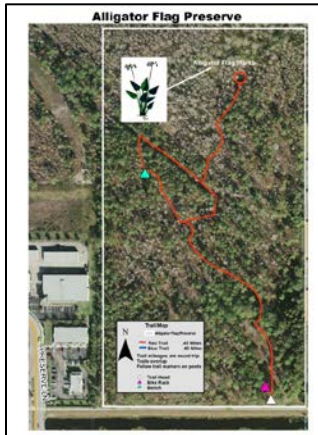
Category 2 – Intermediate Use Preserve; few to no amenities, limited parking, primitive trails.

Category 3 – Neighborhood Preserve; no onsite parking or amenities other than benches, trails and picnic table.

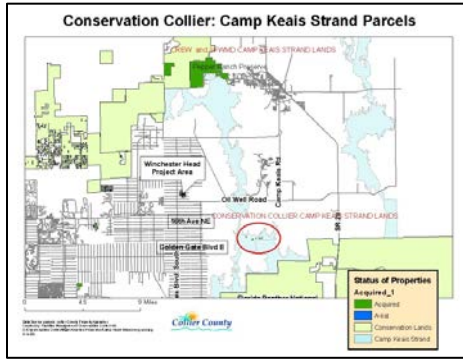
Category 4 – Seasonal Use Preserve; may have parking and trails but will be closed during seasonal rainfall months.

Category 5 – Resource Protection/Restoration Preserve; currently no public access due to lack of physical or legal access or where there are unsafe conditions for the public.

Alligator Flag – 7875 Immokalee Road, North Naples. This 18.46 acre preserve is located on the north side of Immokalee Road across from Gulf Coast High school. It was acquired in July 2006 at a cost of \$4,960,000. It is open to foot traffic between dawn and dusk during dry season. This is a Category 4 preserve. The preserve floods in the summer and there is no dedicated parking and no restroom, but it does have an approximately 1 mile long established trail system and resting bench. It is classified as a category 4 seasonal-use preserve, i.e. may have parking and trails but will be closed during seasonal rainfall months. Visitation at this preserve is mostly from surrounding residents and from the nearby schools. The preserve manager is working to engage the nearby high and middle schools for environmental study at the preserve.



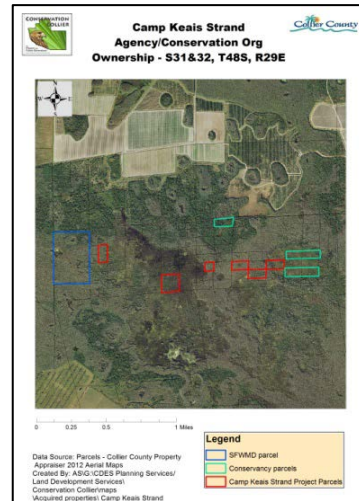
This preserve is representative of several of the typical habitat types in Collier County, including seasonally flooded cypress-pine-cabbage palm, cypress wetlands and pine flatwoods. Seventy-eight species of plants have been identified growing on the preserve, including 4 species protected by the State of Florida (3 bromeliads and 1 fern). Many species of wildlife have been recorded on the preserve, including wetland dependent and migratory bird species, black bear, deer, raccoon, snakes. The preserve is also suitable for foraging by the state and federally endangered wood stork, and is home to the state threatened Big Cypress fox squirrel. This preserve provides outfall to the Immokalee Road canal for an identified flow way connecting with the adjacent 160-acre Olde Cypress PUD preserve, to larger preserve areas coming to the north, and the 60,000 acre Corkscrew Marsh Complex to the northeast.



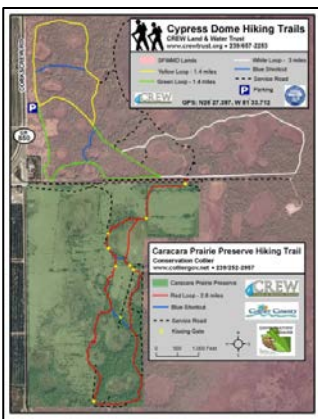
Camp Keais Strand Parcels - The Camp Keais Strand project constitutes 6 parcels totaling 32.5 acres within the Flowway Stewardship area of the Rural Lands Stewardship Area, south of Oil Well Road and east of Desoto Boulevard in Sections 31 and 32, Township 48 South, Range 29 East, which is a linear wetland feature known as the Camp Keais Strand. Three of the parcels are contiguous and three are non-contiguous. The parcels were acquired between December 2008 and June 2009 for \$2,500 per acre. Because there is no legal access established to the properties and physical access to this

area is dangerous and difficult, staff has not visited the properties other than to view them from above by airplane. To the best of staff knowledge, the parcels are comprised of cypress forest, freshwater marsh and mesic pine flatwood vegetation communities.

Most of the land in the vicinity is owned by large agribusiness in section sized parcels; however, within the two Sections where these are located, the parcels have been subdivided into 1-80 acre parcels and are owned by private individuals and agencies. The Conservancy of SW Florida and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) also own parcels within this area. During 2013, the SFWMD underwent an assessment of its fee-owned land holdings to be considered for surplus. The summary of the comments and recommendations were that their holdings may be good candidates for exchange with Collier County. Conservation Collier considered options for exchange but was unable to find anything suitable. An Interim Management Plan (IMP) was approved by the Board on 5/27/14, Agenda Item 16D6. The Conservation Collier Financial Plan does not provide for management of these parcels. The approved plan will be reviewed every 2 years for changes in conditions, and is in effect a monitoring plan until current conditions change. This is a Category 5 preserve.



Caracara Prairie – 2320 Corkscrew Road. This preserve is located in the unincorporated northeast area of Collier County at the east end of Corkscrew Rd at the Lee/Collier County boundary. This 367.7-acre preserve was acquired in December 2007 for \$5,032,000. It was acquired in partnership with the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem (CREW) Trust, who contributed \$300,000 toward the purchase price and is surrounded on 3 sides by CREW lands. This preserve is open to the public year-round from dawn to dusk for hiking and wildlife viewing. A three mile trail system connects with adjoining CREW Cypress Dome trails and parking, located approximately 1 mile north. Visitation at this preserve is moderate during dry season – approx 30 people a week- but low during the wet season. This is a Category 3 preserve.



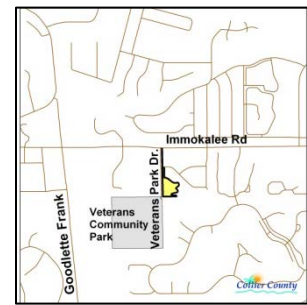
The preserve contains three distinct native vegetation communities, prairie, depressional marsh wetlands and mesic pine flatwoods. The pastures provide habitat for native Florida wildlife species including the federally endangered Florida panther, state threatened Florida sandhill crane and the federally endangered crested caracara. This preserve is within Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) priority panther habitat.

The preserve has been included in the surrounding FWC Wildlife Environmental Area (WEA), a designation that permits recreational hunting. FWC oversees hunting in this area. In addition, this preserve is a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Panther Mitigation Bank. All of the Panther Habitat Unit credits (PHUs) generated here were sold to the Solid Waste Department in 2014 for use as mitigation for the County Resource Recovery Park. This preserve currently has a cattle lease which is planned to be phased out over time. Eagle Scouts have provided hiking gates, tables and resting benches.

Cocohatchee Creek– 1880 Veterans Park Drive, North Naples.



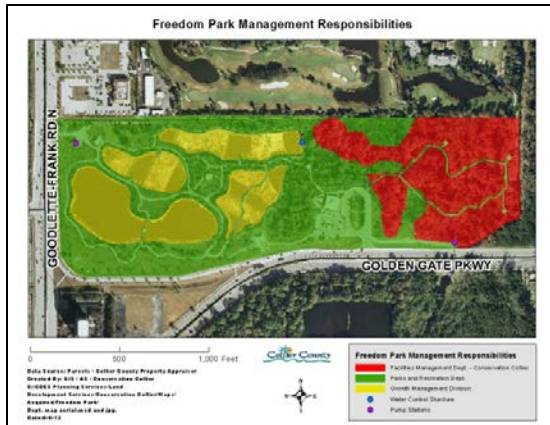
This 3.64-acre preserve is located along Veteran’s Park Drive just outside the entrance to Veteran’s Community Park off Immokalee Road in North Naples. It is a Category 2 preserve. Parking is located at Veteran’s Community Park, a short walk from the preserve. Restroom and handicapped parking facilities are also available at Veteran’s Park. A shell trail winds approximately 700 feet through the preserve to a picnic area under the oaks along Cocohatchee creek. The portion of the trail leading to the picnic area is handicapped accessible. Trash and recycle receptacles are provided. Visitation is approximately a dozen people a day. Two Eagle Scout projects have been developed here. The first is a seating area and the second is a viewing platform next to the creek.



This preserve contains one of the priority plant communities targeted in the Conservation Collier ordinance: riverine oak. Remnant patches of upland scrub (another program priority) pine flatwoods and cabbage palm forest make up the remainder of the upland habitats. A portion of Cocohatchee creek is included within preserve boundaries. This small freshwater creek separates the preserve from the neighboring residential development and contains wetlands used by foraging wading birds. The preserve buffers and protects this creek, which flows north to the County’s only Outstanding Florida Water. The preserve is also home to several gopher tortoises, a state species of special concern.



Freedom Park – 1515 Golden Gate Parkway, Naples. This 12.5-acre preserve is part of the



larger Freedom Park (50 acres total), formerly called the Gordon River Water Quality Park. In 2008, after the County had acquired Freedom Park in 2004 under a Florida Communities Trust (FCT) Grant, the eastern 12.5 acres were transferred to the Conservation Collier Program for \$56,300. Freedom Park is associated with the Gordon River Greenway Corridor, a 2-mile ecological trail corridor centrally located within the Naples-Collier County urban area. Freedom Park is a category 1 preserve, indicating that it is a primary use preserve, easily accessible and with public amenities and

parking. One overall Land Management Plan was developed and approved by the Board and FCT for management of both Freedom Park and the Gordon River Greenway Park. The Freedom Park preserve portion is located on the eastern side of the park and encompasses the natural wetlands onsite. Responsibilities for this park are shared between the Parks and Recreation Department, Stormwater Department and Conservation Collier, as shown on the map. Conservation Collier benefits by the presence of onsite restrooms and parking maintained by Parks and Recreation. The Conservation Collier portion has a boardwalk on it that is also maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department. This preserve is well used by the public, though no solid numbers are available at this time.



The habitat on the Freedom Park Preserve portion is freshwater tidal swamp with a small hammock containing a mix of wetland hardwood tree species and cabbage palms. Numerous wetland dependant bird species utilize the wetlands and listed wildlife observed includes Big Cypress fox squirrels, West Indian manatees, tricolored herons, little blue herons and snowy egrets.

Gordon River Greenway – 1596 Golden Gate Parkway, Naples. The 117.6-acre Gordon



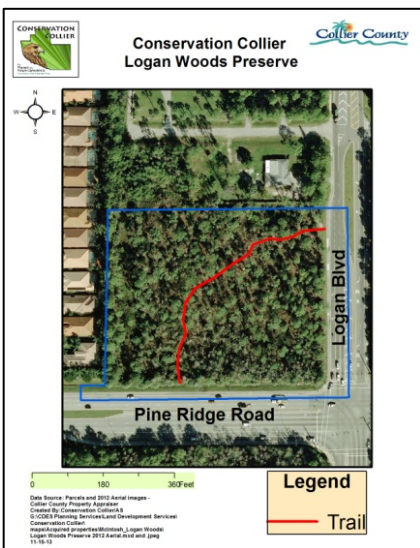
River Greenway Park is a signature property and partnership project including Conservation Collier, Parks and Recreation, SW Florida Land Preservation Trust, Conservancy of Southwest Florida, Naples Zoo, Naples Municipal Airport and City of Naples. Conservation Collier’s portion is 41.6 acres at the south side of the Park. Joining with Parks and Recreation as one seamless project has enabled Conservation Collier to maintain the preserve qualities of the property, yet provide access via a paved trail and boardwalk, and access to parking, restrooms and other amenities that are not typically found on conservation lands. It is a category 1 preserve, indicating it is a primary use preserve, easily accessible with public amenities and parking. There are over 2 miles of boardwalks and trails on the entire project with a third of a mile on the

Conservation Collier portion. The preserve property was acquired in April 2006 for a cost of \$2,085,900. The development of trails, boardwalks and construction added \$1,755,496 for a total project cost of \$3,841,396. The Park was opened to the public in November 2014 and is extremely popular with residents and visitors. No hard numbers on visitation have been developed but staff is developing a means to capture visitation information.

Habitats seen from the trail on the Conservation Collier preserve portion include the Gordon River, wetland hardwoods, scrub and mangrove forest. The preserve is home to many species of native and protected wildlife including numerous species of wading birds, migrating bird species, alligators, gopher tortoises, Big Cypress fox squirrel and manatees. A 17-acre gopher tortoise preserve lies within the overall park, with a portion of that inside Conservation Collier's portion. The preserve contains wetland mitigation areas where, after exotics are removed, staff will monitor native plant recruitment and potentially add supplemental plantings. One Eagle Scout has already contacted staff to do plantings in upland areas where exotics were removed, but for the most part, natural recruitment is expected to occur there. Numerous listed plant species have been observed within the preserve area and are being routinely monitored. Initial archeological surveys discovered an historic spoil pile on Conservation Collier lands but it did not qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Collection of artifacts or disturbance of archeological or historical sites is prohibited. Interpretive signage for the Conservation Collier portion is planned but not developed at this time.



Logan Woods – 831 Logan Blvd, Naples. Logan Woods is a 5.69-acre preserve located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Logan Blvd. and Pine Ridge Road, about one mile east of I-75 at the Pine Ridge Road exit. It was purchased in October 2005 for \$711,983. The total acquired area is 7.49 acres. The Transportation Department partnered with Conservation Collier to acquire 1.8 acres of the total for future road Right Of Way both along Pine Ridge Road and Logan Blvd. Until this portion is needed for road expansion, it will be managed as preserve land. Logan Woods Preserve is a category 3 preserve, indicating it is a neighborhood preserve with no onsite parking or amenities other than a trail, bench or

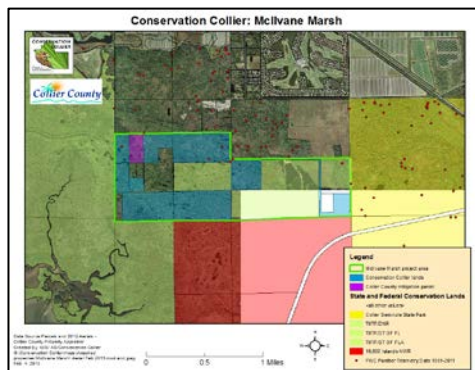


onsite parking or amenities other than a trail, bench or

table. There is an approximately 700-foot mulched trail, bike rack, picnic table, bench, trash and recycle receptacles at the preserve. The preserve is used regularly by neighbors. During December 2014, 50 visits were recorded at the preserve, many of those visits were the same people using the preserve daily.

This preserves was acquired primarily as green space. The surrounding residential community strongly supported its acquisition and made that support known to the Conservation Collier Committee and Commissioners. Their support was a critical factor in the decision to purchase this preserve. The vegetation community present one typical in Collier County – Cypress-pine-cabbage palm. It was severely infested with melaleuca and Brazilian pepper prior to acquisition. The extensive exotic removal was funded by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Invasive Plant Management. The University of Florida also removed melaleuca on a neighboring property to avoid reinfestation using their TAME Melaleuca Project. The primary goal for this preserve is to keep it clean and safe and to maintain the trail and picnic area for use by visitors.

McIlvane Marsh- No address assigned. This preserve is generally located northeast of Marco



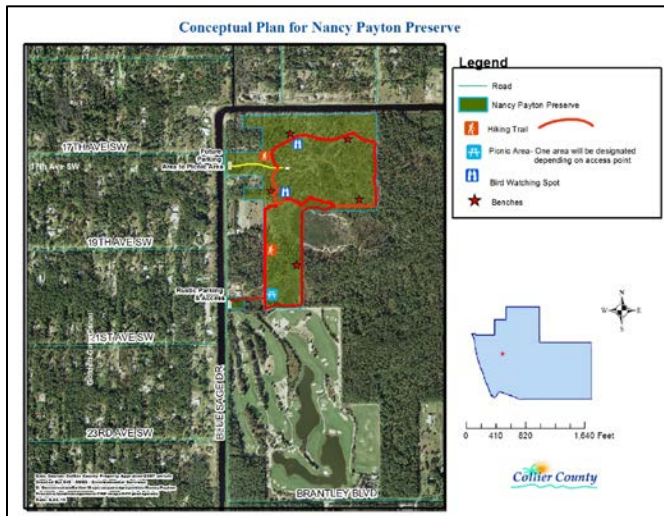
Island and southwest of the intersection of U.S. 41 (Tamiami Trail) and County Road 92 (San Marco Road). The McIlvane Marsh is an 800-acre mangrove salt marsh with unpaved gated access from Curcie Road off CR 92. Conservation Collier owns 9 parcels totaling 371 acres in a mosaic pattern with the State of Florida (329 acres), Collier County Transportation Department (20 acres) and private owners (80 acres). It was acquired between May 2007 and June 2009 for a cost of \$2,802,900, with an additional 10-acre donation coming in January 2012.

This property is a category 5 preserve, a resource protection/restoration area where there is currently no public access. It has an approved Interim Management Plan with key objectives to protect the native habitat onsite.

McIlvane Marsh is a tidally influenced wetland consisting primarily of open marsh and mangrove wetlands with small upland island areas on its northern and eastern edges. Approximately 15-acres of pine flatwoods uplands exist on the north side of the marsh and 6 acres of cleared uplands exist on the eastern edge of the marsh. Also on the eastern side of the marsh, in what were historically uplands, state mitigation lands contain a 51-acre borrow-pit lake created as a result of limestone fill mining. Monitoring of the site shall consist of a walk-through by staff at semi-annual intervals. Any treatment and retreatment of exotic vegetation is dependent on the planned management activities of adjacent agency lands. Prior to any land management activities, photo monitoring points will also be established at strategic locations within the project area to monitor vegetation communities. Wildlife surveys shall be developed and coordinated with surrounding conservation agencies to determine monitoring plan goals, techniques and parameters.



Nancy Payton – 1540 Blue Sage Drive, located east of Golden Gate City, taking White Blvd to 23rd St SW, turning south and then traveling west on Brantley Blvd. to Blue Sage Drive. This 71-acre preserve was acquired in sections between September 2005 and April 2010 for a total cost of \$2,507,250. It is a Category 2, Intermediate Use preserve with limited parking, a primitive trail system with benches and tables scattered throughout, courtesy of a local Eagle Scout. In December 2006, it was officially renamed the “Nancy Payton Preserve” by the Board of County Commissioners. Nancy Payton currently works for the Florida Wildlife Federation and has been very active in the



preservation of this Collier County Belle Meade Area.

Management of this preserve balances resource restoration and protection with natural resource-based recreational and educational use while providing listed species protection and maintenance of the site free of invasive, exotic plant and animal species. This preserve is covered under a US Fish and Wildlife Service “Safe Harbor Agreement” to implement management actions that will provide a net conservation benefit to the Red Cockaded woodpecker (Federal-E). The preserve opened to the public in May 2015, however, access issues remain. Blue Sage Drive is an unpaved easement road that is in very poor condition. Staff is researching options including participating in an MSTU with residents who live along the easement access. The public can access this site and educational tours for summer camps and birding groups have been conducted at the site. A nature trail, benches, picnic tables and educational interpretive signs have been provided for visitors, with contributions by Eagle Scouts.



Otter Mound – 1831 Addison Court, Marco Island. Otter Mound Preserve is a 2.46-acre urban preserve located in southwestern Collier County in a residential area of Marco Island. The bulk of the preserve was acquired in July 2004 for \$1,347,500, and the remainder was acquired in June 2007 for \$886,500. The entire preserve site is a Calusa shell mound (c. 700 A.D.-1200 A.D.) that contains artifacts of both archaeological and historical significance. Access to the preserve is from Osceola Court and



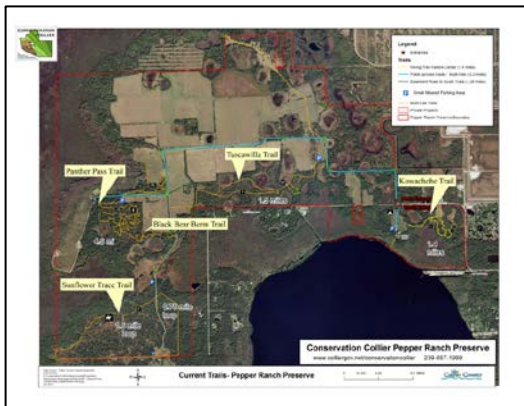
Addison Court - with 4-space public parking available including handicapped space at the entrance. It is a category 2 preserve.

Otter Mound Preserve was purchased because it contains tropical hardwood hammock habitat, a priority habitat designated by the Conservation Collier Ordinance (2007-65, as amended, Section 10.1.a.). In addition, the preserve contains the following features that make it an important archaeological and historical site: undisturbed Calusa shell mounds, a historic pioneer structure (outhouse), and shell terracing that runs along the northern and western sections of the property. Currently, there is a question of whether the terracing might have been originally built by the Calusa and rebuilt in modern historical times by 20th century resident Earnest Otter, or built by Mr. Otter alone. The location of the preserve in the urban area provides an opportunity for citizens, visitors, and school-age children to view this habitat type and some Island history without traveling far.

Otter Mound Preserve is well used by Marco Island residents and visitors. According to brochure use, at least 30 people a week visit, excluding numerous local bike tours, neighbors who routinely walk the preserve and students and other local groups who gather for educational programs given by staff. The City of Marco Island partners with Conservation Collier to maintain the Right of Way in front of the preserve.



Pepper Ranch – 6315 Pepper Road, Immokalee. Pepper Ranch Preserve, located west of the town of Immokalee and north of Lake Trafford, is the largest of the Conservation Collier Preserves at 2,512 acres. It was acquired in February 2009 for \$32,525,080. The perception continues to exist that Conservation Collier paid too much for the property, although it was actually some of the least expensive land (per acre) that was acquired by the program at \$12,948 per acre – on par with lots acquired in North Golden Gate Estates.



Since its acquisition, staff has been working to remove trash and exotic plant species, document wildlife and plants, and develop trails, programs, and public amenities. Pepper Ranch is a Category 1 preserve which is seasonally open, but can be accessed by groups off-season by appointment. Currently there are approximately 10 miles of trails for use by hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders. The ranch has an active cattle lease, primarily to maintain pasture areas and for security purposes. A limited hunt program provides opportunities for young hunters to learn the skill and for County residents to hunt hog, a pest animal that damages habitat with its rooting, and some deer and turkey, if population surveys allow. In 2015, small boardwalk and covered overlook was built that provides a beautiful view of Lake Trafford, fences were added to increase visitor safety along the lake edge.



There is an active oil operation on the western side in 2 quarter sections (330 acres) where there are two operating and one non-operating well. The producing wells pull approximately 100 barrels of oil daily. While most of the oil, gas and mineral rights on the preserve are owned by Collier County, 2 quarter-sections (330 acres) on the west side have had the rights severed and are owned by a private entity and leased to an operator - Hendry Energy Services. The oil company maintains the lime rock ranch road.

In 2014, program staff submitted an application for a Conservation Bank to US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), with the intention of banking and selling Panther Habitat Units to County Departments needing panther mitigation credits. No response has been received at this time from USFWS. Staff is also working with the Lake Trafford Management Team, a multi-agency group seeking to address water quality issues in Lake Trafford.



The preserve boasts 10 distinct types of natural plant communities, including forests, hammocks, flatwoods, prairies, marshes, swamps, strands and sloughs. Four hundred and fifteen (415) plant species have been recorded at the preserve. Fifty-two (52) bird species have been documented including ten (10) listed species including Audubon's crested caracara, bald eagle, Florida sandhill crane, limpkin, roseate spoonbill, and woodstork.



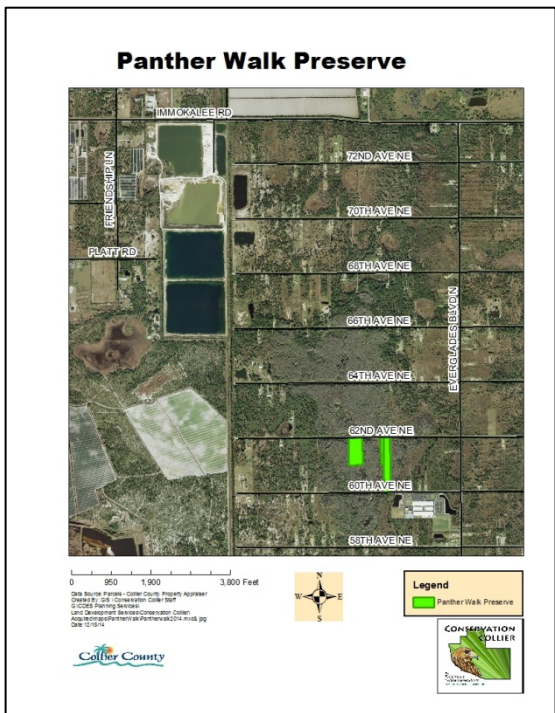
One of the major reasons to protect habitat is to protect the species that use it. The entire area of the ranch is included within the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission-designated Primary Panther Habitat. Panthers have been seen and recorded on wildlife cameras at the preserve. Other wildlife on the ranch

includes Florida black bears, bobcats, big cypress fox squirrels, coyotes, deer, wild hogs, alligators, and snakes.



Staff is putting together a volunteer-led hike program for the 2016 season. Five Master naturalists are in training now to provide the hikes at no charge to the visiting public. Practice Hikes with staff of local conservation agencies are ongoing this season. A Sunflower festival is held in October to show off the incredible fields of blooming Southeastern sunflowers that cover the ranch for 2 weeks in early October each year. Last year, the festival drew over 300 people, many from the Immokalee area who had not known about the preserve before.

Panther Walk – 2845 60th Ave NE, Golden Gate Estates. The preserve is located west of



Everglades Blvd., north of Oil Well Road, and extends between 60th Ave and 62nd Ave NE –in North Golden Gate Estates in S31 T 47 R28. This preserve consists of 10.69 acres acquired between 2007 and 2014, with 5.00 acres of that a donation accepted under the Land Development Code off-site vegetation retention provision (LDC 3.05.07, H.1.f. iii. b.) and another 1.14-acres accepted as a straight donation. The cost for the purchased portions of the preserve (4.54 acres) was \$40,930. In 2009, the adjacent Estates Elementary School held a preserve naming contest and the winning name of “Panther Walk Preserve” was chosen by a student and was approved by the Board. This is a Category 4, seasonal use preserve. A seasonally accessible trail allows visitors to cross the property between 60th and 62nd Aves NE.

Native plant communities within the preserve include high quality cypress wetlands, which are

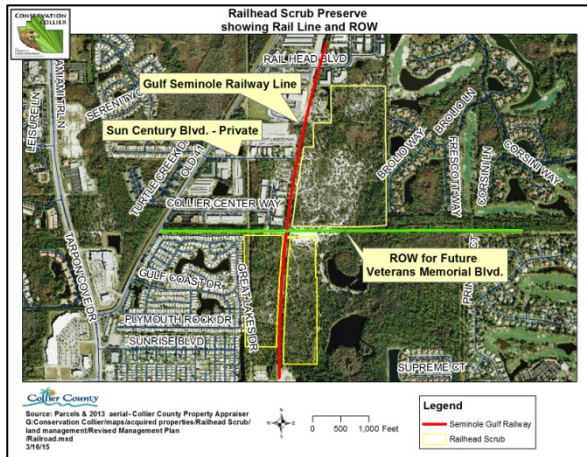
part of a larger wetland slough system known as Horsepen Strand. To date, 64 plant species have been recorded on the preserve. Conservation Collier staff conducted floristic inventories in 2006, 2007 and June 2010. Two listed plant species have been documented and the preserve contains habitat used by listed species including Florida sandhill cranes, wood storks, Florida panthers and mangrove fox squirrels.

In addition to its Estates zoning, this parcel is subject to the Golden Gate Area Master Plan, which has as Objective 1.3 to protect and preserve valuable natural resources. Also, as part of the Watershed Management Plan, County staff is conceptually considering projects to enhance flows of surface water through the Horsepen Strand and also to make this a “sending “ area in a TDR and/or Watershed Mitigation Program.



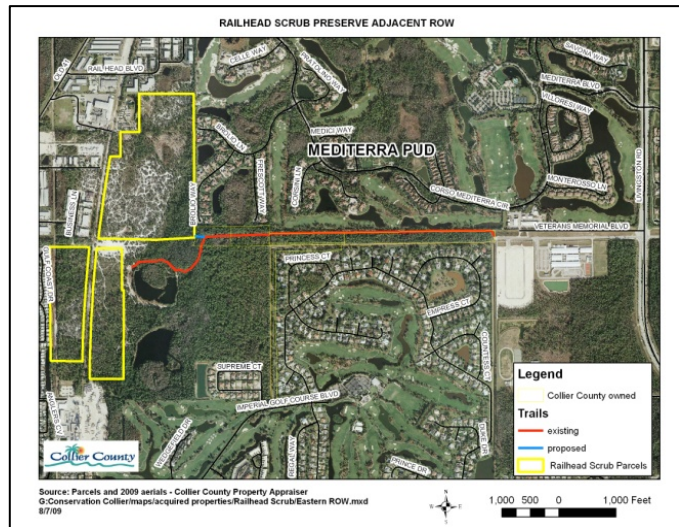
Railhead Scrub – No address assigned.

Railhead Scrub preserve is an approximately 135-acre natural area located in the northwest corner of Collier county, south of the Railhead Industrial Park and east of Old US 41. One of the first large program purchases, eighty acres of the preserve were acquired in July 2004 for \$21,967,050. The remaining 55 acres were acquired in June 2007 for \$10,650,000. The preserve contains approximately 117 acres of upland habitat primarily pine flatwoods and xeric oak scrub/scrubby



flatwoods, and 18 acres of wetland habitat including cypress and hydric pine flatwoods. Xeric oak scrub is the second-most preferred habitat type identified in the Conservation Collier Ordinance (2007-65, as amended, Section 10.1.a.). This is some of the last undeveloped xeric oak scrub in Collier County, including less than 200 acres protected in Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and another 78 acres protected by the Hamilton Harbor PUD. The previous owners of the parcel had plans to develop it into an industrial park before it was acquired.

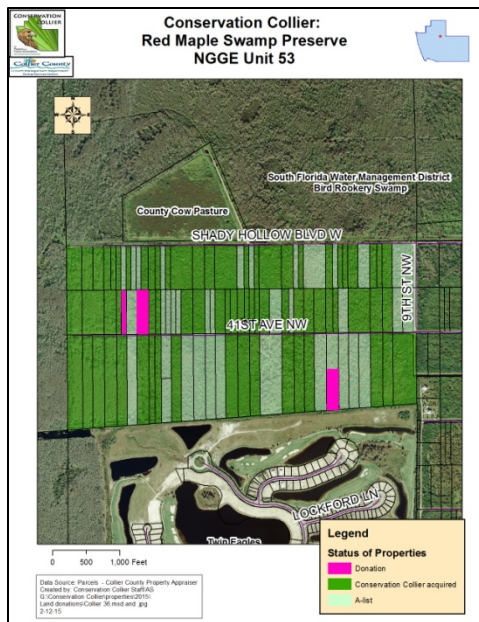
Public Access to this site has been problematic. When the first part of this preserve was acquired, in 2004, the County Transportation Department has acquired Right of Way (ROW) and had planned to develop a County road along the south side of preserve – called Veterans Memorial Blvd. When the second portion of the preserve was acquired in 2007, the ROW bisected the north and south sides of the preserve. Veterans Memorial Blvd. was the planned access point for parking and preserve access; however, after the 2004 acquisition, Veterans Memorial Blvd. was delayed, first to the County’s 2017 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and then to the 2035 LRTP. Staff attempted to create a small parking area off the east side of Veterans’ Memorial Blvd. and utilize an existing 1 mile trail westward along the ROW for hikers to access the preserve, but persons trespassing with ATVs along the ROW to get to interior recreational areas damaged the gate and make the trail too dangerous for hikers. The preserve is considered to be a Category 2 which is not accessible at present.



Along the western side of the northern portion and bisecting the southern side down the center, there is a railroad owned by CSX Railroad and leased to Seminole Gulf Railway (see first Railhead map shown). This rail line presents an obstacle to public access from the west. In order for the public to cross it, the County would be required to bring the crossing up to federal railroad crossing standard, including grade elevation changes and installation of a railroad crossing signal, and to lease the crossing with annual fees, both of which are cost prohibitive. As a result, this preserve is not currently open to the public, but is accessible to groups by appointment. There is no parking area. Those visiting park along Sun Century Blvd. at the pleasure of local businesses, as this is a private road.



Red Maple Swamp – No address assigned. This preserve is one of two formally designated multi-parcel projects. This type of project has proved challenging for the program. Challenges include higher prices for smaller lots, fluctuating values over multiple years of buying, unwilling sellers within the project boundary, and lack of assurance that in-holding parcels can be acquired in the future - a particular challenge of the willing-seller environment. The project covers the entirety of North Golden Gate Estates Unit 53, located north of the Twin Eagles PUD and west of the County Fairgrounds. Between 2004 and 2011, approx 200 acres out of a total of 305 (66%) were acquired. In the map, acquired parcels are shown as dark green. This presently is a Category 5 preserve.



The most recent appraisals for both projects were performed in October-November 2009. In those appraisals, property values in both multi-parcel projects fell significantly from a September 2008 appraisal; in WH from \$16,375 per acre in 2008 to \$10,000 per acre in 2009 and in NGGE Unit 53 from \$15,842 per acre in 2008 to \$7,500 per acre in 2009. No recent appraisals have been performed, but Property Appraiser's Office taxable values are currently approximately \$3,200 per acre. If additional funds are identified to resume purchasing within the multi-parcel projects, new appraisals will be obtained before making offers. Otherwise, bargain sales and donations will be the only avenues for acquisition in these projects. Currently, Conservation Collier is processing 3 donations accepted by the Board under the Land Development Code off-site vegetation retention provision (LDC 3.05.07, H.1.f. iii. b.) (shown in pink). If funds can be identified for additional purchases it will benefit the program by consolidating the acquired areas and making it feasible for comprehensive management to begin. Within NGGE Unit 53, a 53-acre contiguous area has been acquired and initial exotic removals were completed in FY 13, with exotic maintenance ongoing. If no additional funds for acquisition are identified over time, Conservation Collier will

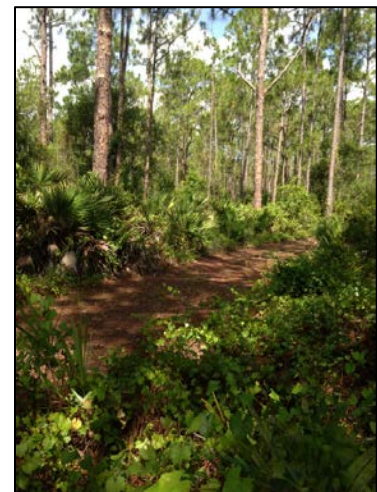
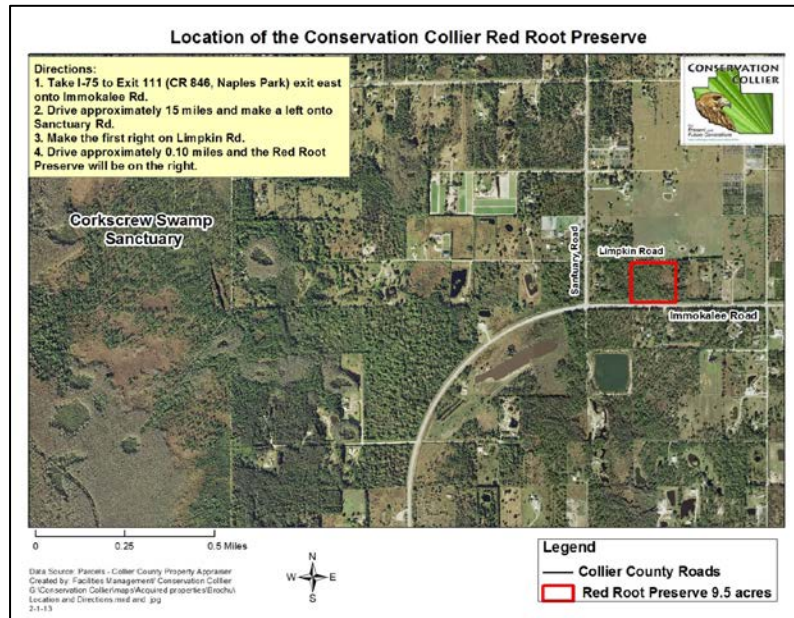
pursue trading parcels with owners within the project boundaries to consolidate its holdings. Trading parcels within approved multi-parcel projects is permitted under the Conservation Collier ordinance, 2002-63, as amended, Section 14.7.



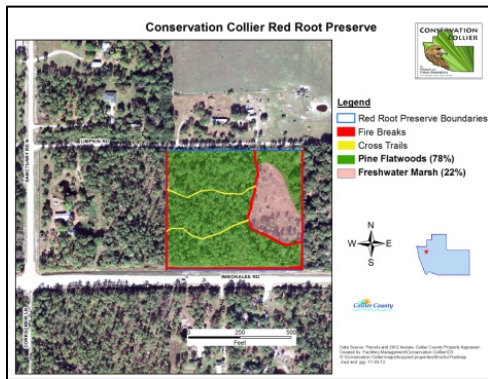
There is no current public access; however, the area is easily accessible via 41st Ave NW and Shady Hollow Blvd. West. The parking lot and trail access for SFWMD's Bird Rookery Swamp and its 12 miles of hiking trails is located along Shady Hollow Blvd. West. Once enough parcels are acquired to allow for comprehensive management, staff will evaluate creating trails that can be linked up with Bird Rookery Swamp trails.

Redroot – 1330 Limpkin Road, Big Corkscrew Island Community. This 9.26- acre preserve

was acquired in June 2006 for \$440,000. The parcel is located along Immokalee Road just east of the turn off on Sanctuary Road to get to Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary. The access for the parcel is along Limpkin Road, which is the first right



turn off Sanctuary Road. The entire cost of the parcel was \$460,000. The Public Utilities Department partnered with Conservation Collier for \$20,000 to acquire a 15,000 square foot (150' X 100') at the northwest corner for a future well site. When the well site is constructed, visitors will be able to use a small parking area which will be placed on the well site. Currently, parking for visitors is along Limpkin Road. There is a little over half a mile of trails on the property, which are often used by horseback riders. It is a Category 2

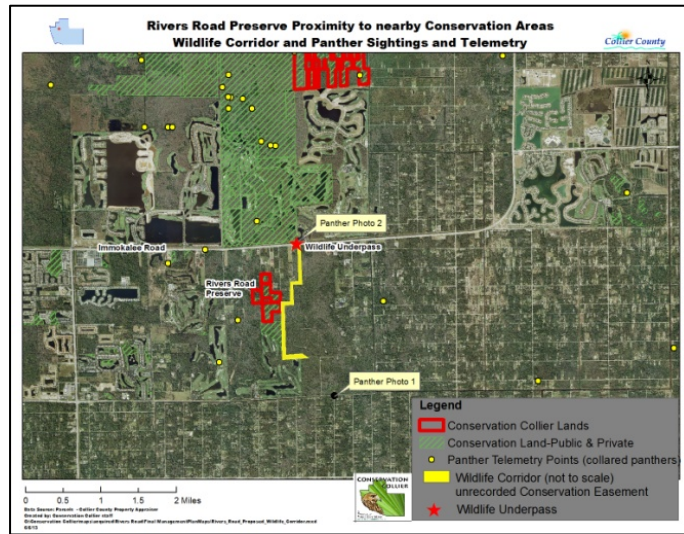


preserve. This preserve was primarily acquired to establish a conservation presence along Immokalee Road in the developing urban fringe. The parcel met 4 out of the 6 screening criteria. There are two types of vegetation communities existing there: pine flat wood and freshwater marsh. The parcel lies within FWC priority 2 panther habitat. Some of the adjacent properties are cleared and developed but there still exists an intact ecological link with Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary.

This habitat requires prescribed fire, and staff has burned it once in 2011.

Rivers Road – No address assigned at this time.

Rivers Road Preserve is a 76.74-acre preserve acquired between 2008 and 2010 for a total cost of \$5,128,300. It is located south of Immokalee Road, between and accessible by private roads, Rivers and Moulder Roads, 2.5 miles east of Collier Blvd. (CR 951) in S30 T48 R27. It is a Category 2 preserve.



The 9 parcels were offered together by 6 different owners. The project met 5 out of 6 Initial Screening Criteria. There are 9 different plant communities which include several listed plant species. Wetlands exist onsite and provide habitat for wetland dependent plants and

wildlife. The preservation of these properties forms a contiguous conservation area of approximately 379 acres, including Olde Cypress PUD Conservation area, and is also connected to a wildlife corridor that utilizes an underpass under Immokalee Road to connect with the 60,000 acres of Conservation lands including the Bird Rookery Swamp and the Corkscrew Marsh complex.



This preserve is one of the later ones to come online as it was acquired over a period of several years. Grant funds from FWC contributed to the initial exotic removal, completed in early 2015. Fire lines and trails have been put in and an Eagle Scout recently completed a picnic area and benches along the trail. A small parking area was established and staff is close to formally opening the preserve for public use.

Shell Island – No address assigned. This 83.18-acre preserve was acquired in 2006 for a cost



of \$4,750,000 from a private developer. His price was \$4,875,000 and Conservation Collier was unable to pay that as it was above appraised value. The Conservancy of Southwest Florida contributed the remaining \$125,000 to be recognized as a donation from Fiddlers Creek, a Gulf Bay Community. The purchase price was higher than expected due to a 1989 Settlement Agreement between Collier County and the owner (OR BK 1488 PG 777) which the owner believed guaranteed him between 3 and 4 units per acre.

This parcel fulfilled program qualifications by satisfying all applicable screening criteria. It is an example of one of the unique and endangered plant communities listed as preferred by the Conservation Collier Ordinance (tidal freshwater marsh). The nearly pristine marsh habitat is considered an outstanding aesthetic feature. This parcel provides habitat for wetland

dependent species, water quality enhancement for the adjacent Rookery Bay, an Outstanding Florida Water, and will provide on-site attenuation of floodwaters. Listed plant and wildlife species have been observed on the property. Wildlife includes wood stork (Federal Endangered (E)), white ibis (State-SSC), snowy egret (State- Species of Special Concern (SSC)), tricolored heron (State-SSC), little blue heron (State-SSC), and American alligator (Federally threatened due to similarity of appearance to crocodiles). A number of listed plant species were also observed on the property, including leather fern (Federal E) and several listed Tillandsia (Bromeliad) species. Restoration potential is high, as the only major restoration project would be to remove the old roadbed crossing the property.



Legal and physical access exists from C.R. 951 on the east boundary, and from Shell Island Road. There is no vehicle access from C.R. 951, but there is access via Shell Island Road, which cuts diagonally across the southeast corner of the property. Shell Island Road is a part of this

parcel but also provides access to state and Conservancy-owned lands to the west and is also used by the public to access Rookery Bay for fishing at the end of Shell Island Road. Collier County has entered a cooperative agreement with the state to fill and grade the road on at least one known occasion, in 2003. This parcel is directly adjoining the Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (RBNERR) and will serve to buffer and protect it from the effects of development on neighboring properties. As the parcel is almost entirely wetlands, except for the approximately 4 acres of old raised road bed (CR 22). This parcel is maintained as a Category 5 preserve but has been offered to area universities as a “wetland lab,” for student research.

Wet Woods – 12815 Tamiami Trail N, Naples. The preserve is a 26.77-acre natural area located within the urban boundary of Collier County in the northwest corner, immediately west of U.S. Highway 41 and south of Wiggins Pass Road in S16 T48 R25. It was named Wet Woods Preserve by local school children in November 2006. The preserve contains various native plant communities including pine flatwoods, mangrove forests, and both saltwater and freshwater wetlands, with about 58% being wetlands and 42% uplands. To date, 132 plant species have been recorded at the preserve. Of these, 110 (83%) were native and 22 (17%) were exotic. Exotic species have been treated and now make up less than 5% of the vegetation.



Initial exotic treatments were funded (\$57,000) by the DEP Bureau of Invasive

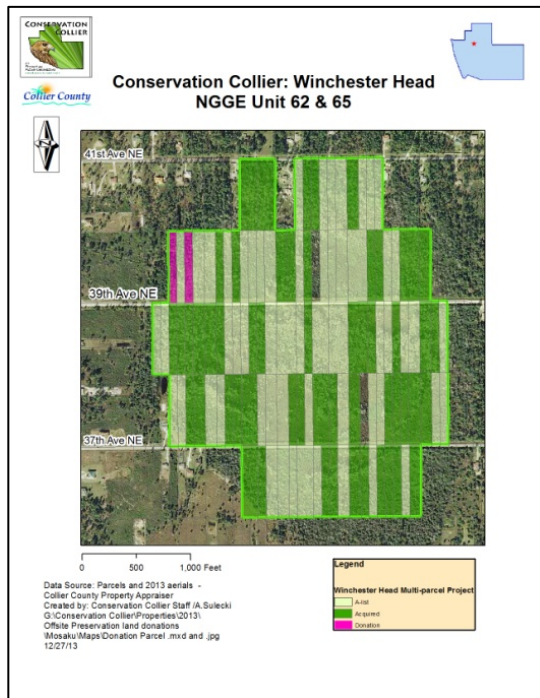


Plant Management in 2007. Seven listed plant species have been recorded at the preserve.

Forty-four bird species, including many protected by the State of Florida and the Federal government, have been recorded on the property. A bald eagle nest that regularly fledges young is located in the flatwoods portion.

Currently, there is no sanctioned public use of the site. The closest public road to the property is US Hwy 41 (Tamiami Trail North). A drainage ditch running north and south is located on the eastern edge of the property and separates the preserve from US Hwy 41. This ditch makes the preserve virtually inaccessible at this time from US 41. This preserve is maintained as a Category 5 preserve until public access can be established.

Winchester Head – No address assigned. This preserve is one of two formally designated



multi-parcel projects. This type of project has proved challenging for the program. Challenges include higher prices for smaller lots, fluctuating values over multiple years of buying, unwilling sellers within the project boundary, and lack of assurance that in-holding parcels can be acquired in the future - a particular challenge of the willing-seller environment. The project covers a portion of NGGE Units 62 and 65. Between 2004 and 2014, approx 79 acres out of a total of 158.67 (50%) were acquired. In the map, acquired parcels are shown as dark green. This presently is a Category 5 preserve.

The most recent appraisals for both multi-parcel projects were performed in October-November 2009. In those appraisals, property values in both multi-parcel projects fell significantly from a September 2008 appraisal; in WH from \$16,375 per acre in 2008 to \$10,000 per acre in 2009 and in NGGE Unit 53 from \$15,842 per acre in 2008 to \$7,500 per acre in

2009. No recent appraisals have been performed, but Property Appraiser’s Office taxable values are currently approximately \$5,100 per acre. If additional funds are identified to resume purchasing within the multi-parcel projects, new appraisals will be obtained before making offers. Otherwise, bargain sales and donations will be the only avenues for acquisition in these projects. Conservation Collier has acquired two 1.14-acres lots as donations under the Land Development Code off-site vegetation retention provision (LDC 3.05.07, H.1.f. iii. (b.) in this area (shown in pink on the map). If funds can be identified for additional purchases it will benefit the program by consolidating the acquired areas and making it feasible for comprehensive management to begin. Exotic maintenance is being done on donation parcels to maintain the clean condition they were donated in. If no additional funds for acquisition are identified over time, Conservation Collier will pursue trading parcels with owners within the project boundaries to consolidate its holdings. Trading parcels within approved multi-parcel projects is permitted under the Conservation Collier ordinance, 2002-63, as amended, Section 14.7.



There is no current public access; however, the area is easily accessible via 2 paved County roads, 37th and 39th Ave NE; however, the area is only accessible during dry season. Once enough parcels are acquired, staff will begin comprehensive management. At present, staff is monitoring the area and addressing significant exotic and maintenance issues as they arise.

5. Program Financial Status

Conservation Collier has spent approximately \$103.9 million on properties since 2003, acquiring and managing 4,067 acres in 19 locations throughout Collier County. Acquisition and management funds were generated from an ad valorem property tax of up to .25 mil, or \$25 for each \$100,000 in taxable property value for property owners in Collier County. Additional income was derived from investment and banking interest, grants and the sale of Panther Habitat Units (PHUs) to the Solid Waster Department in 2014. Levy authorization expired in March 2013. At the end of FY 14 the combined Conservation Collier funds cash balance was \$35,857,320. Table 3 summarizes cash sources and uses.

Table 3. Cash Sources & Uses 2003-2014

| Cash Sources/Revenue | | Amount |
|-------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Tax Levy | | 152,454,183 |
| Interest Earnings | | 6,020,643 |
| Cash from PHU Sales | | 600,000 |
| Cash from Ops & Other Sources | | 503,863 |
| | | |
| Total Sources/Revenue | | 159,578,689 |

| Cash Uses/Expenditures | | Amount |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Land Acquisition | | 103,900,000 |
| Capital Improvements | | 1,808,297 |
| Operational Costs | | 5,334,027 |
| Land Management Costs | | 3,200,000 |
| Net Financing Costs | | 6,636,189 |
| Net Tax Collection Costs | | 2,842,857 |
| | | |
| Total Uses/Expenditures | | 123,721,370 |
| | | |
| Cash September 30, 2014 | | 35,857,320 |

As taxes were collected, 15% of the net levy went into the Land Management Trust Fund (174) and 85% went into the Land Acquisition Trust Fund (172). On May 25, 2010 (Agenda item 16.E.2), the Board of County Commissioners authorized a transfer of up to an additional \$10.3 million, above the ordinance mandated 15% of ad valorem taxes, from the “Land Acquisition Fund” to the “Land Management Fund” during FY2011 – FY2013 to ensure land management funding in perpetuity. On April 12, 2011 (Agenda Item 10F) the Board authorized early repayment of Bond Series 2008. Bond Series 2004 and 2008 were retired in FY 2013. Some monies are maintained in the Land Acquisition Fund (172) to allow for transaction costs of

donations or minor bargain purchases. The Land Maintenance Trust Fund (174) is now the primary Conservation Collier fund. Personnel costs as well as regular operating costs come from Fund (174) and the majority of Conservation Collier fund reserves are maintained in this fund.

During 2014, due to very low interest rates of less than half a percent, staff and Board members addressed concerns regarding maintaining sufficient balances in the program funds to manage the program into perpetuity. A Ten-Year Financial Plan was developed, using very conservative interest rate projections, which focused on reducing and containing expenditures, establishing a combined Conservation Collier program minimum fund balance of \$32,000,000, and establishing a three-year financial planning window to ensure adopted budgets and spending practices remain consistent with long range financial targets. During FY14, staff held costs to those discussed and actually spent less than projected, due to wet weather interference. The following report shows Conservation Collier expenditures during FY14 with the Adopted Budget amount reflecting the approved ten-year plan amounts. Table 4 is a summary of Conservation Collier Fund Activity during FY14.

Table 4 – Summary of Conservation Collier Fund Activity for FY14

| Conservation Collier | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Budget to Actual Comparison | | | | | |
| Fund / Comm Item | Adopted Budget | Amended Budget | Commitment | Actual | % Enc/Act |
| 172 CONSERVATION COLLIER LAND ACQUISITION FUND | | | | | |
| Transfers - Constitutionals | 90,500 | 90,500 | | 88,334 | 98% |
| Transfers | 4,826,300 | 4,826,300 | | 4,500,000 | 93% |
| RESERVES | 21,600 | 21,600 | | | 0% |
| 172 Total Expenses | 4,938,400 | 4,938,400 | - | 4,588,334 | 93% |
| 311100 CURRENT AD VALOREM TAXES | | | | - | |
| 311200 DELINQUENT AD VALOREM TAXES | | | | - | |
| 366900 CONTRIBUTIONS PRIVATE SOURCE | | | | 103,307 | N/A |
| 361180 INVESTMENT INTEREST | | | | 6,470 | N/A |
| 369400 PRIOR YEAR REVENUE | | | | 2,072 | N/A |
| 489200 CARRY FORWARD GENERAL | 4,938,400 | 4,938,400 | | 5,018,400 | 102% |
| 172 Total Revenue | 4,938,400 | 4,938,400 | - | 5,130,249 | 104% |
| 174 CONSERV COLLIER MAINTENANCE FUND | | | | | |
| PERSONAL SERVICE | 351,000 | 353,558 | | 349,888 | 99% |
| OPERATING EXPENSE - Smaller preserves and program operating | 289,400 | 299,301 | | 155,114 | 52% |
| Gordon River Greenway | 38,000 | 34,000 | | 12 | 0% |
| Nancy Payton Preserve | 79,000 | 79,000 | | 26,220 | 33% |
| Pepper Ranch Preserve | 546,600 | 546,600 | 44,644 | 229,751 | 42% |
| Railhead Preserve | 16,200 | 20,200 | | 20,003 | 99% |
| Rivers Road Preserve | 310,500 | 310,500 | | 81,695 | 26% |
| Red Maple Swamp | 53,000 | 53,000 | | 6,300 | 12% |
| TRANSFERS to 179 | 95,500 | 95,500 | | 95,500 | 100% |
| TRANSFERS to 674 | 244,600 | 1,827,400 | | 1,827,400 | 100% |
| TRANSFERS to 710 | - | 15,000 | | - | 0% |
| RESERVES | 30,980,000 | 29,982,200 | | | 0% |
| 174 Total Expenses | 33,003,800 | 33,616,259 | 44,644 | 2,791,884 | 78% |
| 311100 CURRENT AD VALOREM TAXES | | | | 1,295 | N/A |
| 311200 DELINQUENT AD VALOREM TAXES | | | | 29,476 | N/A |
| 347911 FACILITY RENTALS TAXABLE | | | | 720 | N/A |
| 361180 INVESTMENT INTEREST | 187,100 | 187,100 | | 161,154 | 86% |
| 362180 LEASE LAND | 2,200 | 2,200 | | 24,442 | 1111% |
| 366900 CONTRIBUTIONS PRIVATE SOURCE | | | | 48,964 | N/A |
| 369130 INSURANCE REFUNDS | | | | 1,106 | N/A |
| 369300 REIMBURSEMENT FOR PRIOR & CURR YR EXP | | | | 21,256 | N/A |
| 369620 MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE | 3,000 | 3,000 | | 2,775 | 93% |
| 481272 TRANSFER FROM FUND 272 CONSERVATION COLLIER 2009 B | | | | | N/A |
| 481172 TRANSFER FROM 172 | 4,826,300 | 4,826,300 | | 4,500,000 | 93% |
| 481273 TRANSFER FROM 273 CONSERVATION COLLIER 2010 BOND | 34,900 | 34,900 | | 34,900 | 100% |
| 481474 TRANSFER FROM 474 SOLID WASTE CAPITAL | | 600,000 | | 600,000 | 100% |
| 481704 TRANSFER FROM 704 ADMIN SERVICES GRANTS | 400 | 400 | | 334 | 83% |
| 489200 CARRY FORWARD GENERAL | 27,959,500 | 27,959,500 | | 29,819,200 | 107% |
| 489201 CARRY FORWARD OF ENCUMB AMT BY ADC CODE | | 12,459 | | - | 0% |
| 489900 NEGATIVE 5% ESTIMATED REVENUES | (9,600) | (9,600) | | - | 0% |
| 174 Total Revenue | 33,003,800 | 33,616,259 | | 35,245,621 | 105% |
| 179 CONSERVATION COLLIER PROJECT FUND | | | | | |
| CAPITAL OUTLAY | 95,500 | 2,187,748 | 196,565 | 1,689,416 | 77% |
| 179 Total Expenses | 95,500 | 2,187,748 | 196,565 | 1,689,416 | 86% |
| 361180 INVESTMENT INTEREST | | | | 10,028 | N/A |
| 369620 MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE | | | | 36,400 | N/A |
| 481174 TRANSFER FROM CONSERV COLLIER 174 | 95,500 | 95,500 | | 95,500 | 100% |
| 489200 CARRY FORWARD GENERAL | | | | 2,181,300 | N/A |
| 489201 CARRY FORWARD OF ENCUMB AMT BY ADC CODE | | 2,092,248 | | | 0% |
| 179 Total Revenue | 95,500 | 2,187,748 | - | 2,323,228 | 106% |

Table 4. Continued

| Conservation Collier | | | | | |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Budget to Actual Comparison | | | | | |
| Fund / Comm Item | Adopted Budget | Amended Budget | Commitment | Actual | % Enc/Act |
| 674 CARACARA PRAIRIE PRESERVE FUND | | | | | |
| OPERATING EXPENSE | 100,100 | 100,100 | | 79,607 | 80% |
| RESERVES | 1,737,200 | 1,737,200 | | | 0% |
| 674 Total Expenses | 1,837,300 | 1,837,300 | - | 79,607 | 80% |
| 361170 FIFTH THIRD O/N INTEREST | | | | | |
| 361180 INVESTMENT INTEREST | 10,400 | 10,400 | | 934 | 9% |
| 481174 TRANSFER FROM CONSERV COLLIER 174 | 244,600 | 1,827,400 | | 1,827,400 | 100% |
| 489200 CARRY FORWARD GENERAL | 1,582,800 | | | - | N/A |
| 489900 NEGATIVE 5% ESTIMATED REVENUES | (500) | (500) | | | 0% |
| 674 Total Revenue | 1,837,300 | 1,837,300 | - | 1,828,334 | 100% |
| 272 CONSERVATION COLLIER GO BOND SERIES 200 | | | | | |
| TRANSFERS | 76,000 | 76,000 | | 45,424 | 60% |
| 272 Total Expenses | 76,000 | 76,000 | - | 45,424 | 60% |
| 311100 CURRENT AD VALOREM TAXES | - | | | 815 | N/A |
| 311200 DELINQUENT AD VALOREM TAXES | - | | | 32,988 | N/A |
| 361180 INVESTMENT INTEREST | - | | | 462 | N/A |
| 489200 CARRY FORWARD GENERAL | 76,000 | 76,000 | | 119,200 | 157% |
| 272 Total Revenue | 76,000 | 76,000 | - | 153,465 | 202% |
| 273 CONSERV COLLIER 2008 BOND | | | | | |
| TRANSFERS | 34,900 | 34,900 | | 34,900 | 100% |
| 273 Total Expenses | 34,900 | 34,900 | - | 34,900 | 100% |
| 361180 INVESTMENT INTEREST | | | | 167 | N/A |
| 489200 CARRY FORWARD GENERAL | 34,900 | 34,900 | | 71,600 | 205% |
| 273 Total Revenue | 34,900 | 34,900 | - | 71,767 | 206% |
| Gross Sources/Revenue | 39,985,900 | 42,690,607 | - | 44,752,664 | 105% |
| Less: Carry Forward | (34,591,600) | (35,113,507) | - | (37,209,700) | 106% |
| Less: Interfund Transfers | (5,201,300) | (6,784,100) | - | (6,457,800) | 95% |
| Net Sources/Revenue | 193,000 | 793,000 | - | 1,085,164 | 137% |
| Gross Uses/Expenditures Including Reserves & Trans | 39,985,900 | 42,690,607 | 241,209 | 9,229,564 | 22% |
| Less: Reserves | (32,738,800) | (31,741,000) | - | - | 0% |
| Less: Interfund Transfers | (5,201,300) | (6,784,100) | - | (6,457,800) | 95% |
| Net Uses/Expenditures | 2,045,800 | 4,165,507 | 241,209 | 2,771,764 | 72% |

6. Conservation Collier Programs, Events, and Community/Educational Outreach

Pepper Ranch Hunt Program

A total of 8 hunts were conducted at Pepper Ranch Preserve during the 2013-2014 hunting season: 4 public hog hunts, 1 youth hog hunt, 1 public deer hunt, 1 spring turkey public hunt, and 1 spring turkey youth hunt.

A total of 1 male deer, 2 male hogs and 7 male turkeys were harvested during the 2013-2014 hunting season.

In 2013, 79 Collier County residents applied for public hunts at Pepper Ranch. In 2014, 54 Collier County residents applied for public hunts at the ranch.

Ninety-two applications were received for the 2014-15 season. Three youth hunts and six public hunts were scheduled for the 2014-2015 hunting season.

Caracara Prairie Preserve Hunt Program

Caracara Prairie Preserve has been established as part the Corkscrew Marsh Unit of the CREW Wildlife Environmental Area (WEA). This allows for Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission regulated public hunting for hog and spring turkey to occur within Caracara Prairie Preserve. The majority of turkeys harvested from the CREW WEA last season were harvested from Caracara Prairie Preserve.

Pepper Ranch Guided Hike Program – During late 2015, staff recruited a small group of volunteers, mostly Master Naturalists and experienced hikers from the Alligator Amblers chapter of the Florida Trail Association to lead hikes on Pepper Ranch Preserve trails for the general public at no charge. These volunteers have been trained on the trails, trained as volunteers in the Parks and Recreation System and received safety training. This season, the group focused on providing scheduled hikes for area conservation organizations, their staff and volunteers. This provided many others who routinely interact with eco-tourists the opportunity to know about Pepper Ranch Preserve and direct them there as another opportunity to view wildlife and native habitat. Next year the program will go live and offer a limited number of free guided hikes to the public!

Pepper Ranch Florida Sunflower Festival – The 2014 Sunflower Festival, an event hosted by Conservation Collier and the Parks and Recreation Department on October 5th, was a huge success, drawing over 300 people to visit and view the ranch and its fabulous displays of native Florida sunflowers – the Southeastern sunflower – *Helianthus agrestis*. Activities at the event included hay rides, guided hikes, narrated van tours of the Preserve, food vendor, music, a bear program for children, and an arts and crafts table. The event drew in many people from the Immokalee community who had not visited the preserve before. Because of the confusion of people expecting the large sunflowers, the name was recently changed to the Florida Sunflower Festival.

Social Media

Face book – Conservation Collier maintains a Face book Page titled “Conservation Collier Program.” Since its inception in 2011, the Conservation Collier Page has been rated as a 5-star page and has 317 total page likes.

Website – Conservation Collier maintains a website within the Collier County website at www.Colliergov.net/ConservationCollier. Visitors can find information about preserves, their locations, what amenities are located there, contact information for staff, and what kind of experience preserves open to the public offer. Land Management Plans, all meeting agendas, agenda item backup, and meeting minutes are also provided.

7. Mitigation Programs

Conservation Collier has followed 2007 Board direction (6/26/07, Agenda Item 10A) in pursuing both wetland and Panther Habitat Unit (PHU) mitigation credit for those properties where the opportunity exists.

Caracara Prairie Preserve – Collier County’s Solid Waste Department will use all 2,272.72 PHU credits available at Caracara Prairie Preserve to mitigate for development of the Collier Resource Recovery Park. The Conservation Collier Program received a total of \$1,301,600 in revenue over FY14 and FY15 for the PHU credits. This revenue is estimated to fund 25% of routine management costs and 100% of costs associated with US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) PHU mitigation requirements.

Pepper Ranch Preserve – Staff submitted a Pepper Ranch Preserve Panther Habitat Conservation Bank Prospectus to USFWS on July 23, 2014. A Panther Habitat Conservation Bank would allow multiple County projects to be mitigated through the preservation and enhancement of Pepper Ranch Preserve. In the prospectus, 8,678.72 PHU credits were identified; however, USFWS will make the final credit determination after reviewing the prospectus. Prior to submittal, staff was alerted by USFWS that public uses identified within the prospectus would be carefully scrutinized. For this reason, staff included a comprehensive summary of all current and proposed public access plans. The review process could take up to one to two years. Additionally, the Board may ultimately be asked to determine whether certain public uses or additional PHU credits are the priority.

Caracara Prairie Preserve –FWC Gopher Tortoise Recipient Site (For Short-Term Protected or Unprotected Sites). Caracara Prairie Preserve was approved as an FWC Short-term Gopher Tortoise Recipient Site on April 15, 2011. Pursuant to the recipient site permit, up to 44 tortoises can be relocated to Caracara Prairie Preserve. To cover the cost of permitting and management of the recipient site, Conservation Collier currently charges \$2,000 + \$905 per tortoise for tortoises relocated from public projects and \$2,000 + \$1,320 per tortoise for tortoises relocated from private projects. To date, no tortoises have been relocated to Caracara Prairie Preserve. Staff plans to review the gopher tortoise fee policy and compare Caracara Prairie Preserve’s fees to other Florida gopher tortoise recipient site fees. Reducing the price of

relocation, thus encouraging developers to utilize the Caracara Prairie Preserve Recipient Site, could allow the program to at least recoup initial permitting costs.

8. Partners

Conservation Collier is pleased to have developed acquisition funding, land management, research, project development, and other related program partnerships with a multitude of agencies and organizations. These agencies and the nature of their partnerships are listed alphabetically below:

Audubon of Collier County – Community and Advisory Committee Support

Boy Scouts of America – 12 Eagle Scout projects have been completed or are in the process on Conservation Collier Preserves

City of Marco Island – Management partnership – Otter Mound Preserve

City of Naples – Gordon River Greenway partner

Collier County Parks and Recreation Department – Freedom Park and Gordon River Greenway Park management partnership –Management Plan approved through Florida Communities Trust (FCT) Grant Program in place - Cocohatchee Creek Preserve – management assistance.

Collier County Solid Waste Department – Caracara Prairie Preserve - panther mitigation credit (PHUs) for Resource Recovery Park.

Collier County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) – Labor for preserve projects under the Weekender Workers Program

Conservancy of Southwest Florida – Community and Advisory Committee Support

Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Trust (CREW) – Caracara Prairie Preserve - acquisition and education programs; Land donation in Red Maple Swamp

Florida Division of Forestry – Prescribed fire within urban preserves

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) - Exotic Removal funding (Conservation Collier staff coordinates the regional working group that distributes exotic removal funding in south Florida) – Wet Woods, Logan Woods, Railhead Scrub, Shell Island, Rivers Road, and Pepper Ranch Preserves; Pepper Ranch Preserve Youth Hunt partnership.

Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) – Research - Caracara Prairie Preserve, Lake Trafford Management Team, Volunteers

Florida Southwestern State College (FSW) – Student Field Trips, Volunteers

Florida Wildlife Federation – Community and Advisory Committee support

Naples Airport Authority – Gordon River Greenway partner

Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (Rookery Bay NERR) – Pursuing management partnership for Shell Island Preserve and McIlvane Marsh management activities.

South Florida Water Management District – Caracara Prairie Preserve – property management, wildlife monitoring, Lake Trafford Management Team

Southwest Florida Land Preservation Trust – Gordon River Greenway partner

University of Florida (UF) – Logan Woods Preserve-exotic removal, Lake Trafford Management Team

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – Exotics removal grants under the Partners Program and Coastal Program for Otter Mound, Shell Island, Railhead Scrub, Rivers Road, Pepper Ranch and McIlvane Marsh.

9. Grants

Conservation Collier has actively pursued grants for both acquisition and management purposes. Currently, there have been no awards for land acquisition, but many for management, primarily for the removal of invasive, exotic species but also for needed equipment and plant community restoration. Exotics removal grants have come from state and federal government agencies, including U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Partners Program), the State of Florida through the Invasive Plant Species Management Council, and the University of Florida. The table below shows the amount of grant funds obtained and Conservation Collier management funds expended for each preserve through FY14.

| Preserve | Year Acquired | Acquisition Price | Gross Management Funds expended | Grant Funds Acquired | Net Management Funds expended |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Alligator Flag | 2006 | \$4,950,000 | \$57,457 | \$0 | \$57,457 |
| Camp Keais | 2008-2009 | \$81,250 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Caracara Prairie | 2007 | \$5,032,000 | \$554,045 | \$0 | \$554,045 |
| Cocohatchee Creek | 2004 | \$476,200 | \$94,051 | \$0 | \$94,051 |
| Freedom Park | 2008 | \$56,300 | \$36,210 | \$0 | \$36,210 |
| Greenway Preserve | 2006 | \$2,085,900 | \$266,925 | \$0 | \$266,925 |
| Redroot | 2006 | \$440,000 | \$24,633 | \$0 | \$24,633 |
| Logan Woods | 2005 | \$711,983 | \$82,352 | \$34,400 | \$47,952 |
| McIlvane Marsh | 2007 | \$2,804,791 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Nancy Payton | 2005 | \$2,507,2500 | \$205,360 | \$14,950 | \$190,410 |
| Otter Mound | 2004 | \$2,234,000 | \$219,159 | \$13,900 | \$205,259 |
| Panther Walk | 2007 | \$93,130 | \$6,647 | \$0 | \$6,647 |
| Pepper Ranch | 2009 | \$32,525,080 | \$1,493,376 | \$245,900 | \$1247476 |
| Railhead Scrub | 2004-2014 | \$32,617,050 | \$464,907 | \$153,100 | \$311,807 |
| Red Maple Swamp | 2004-2010 | \$3,778,150 | \$12,755 | \$0 | \$12,755 |
| Rivers Road | 2008-2010 | \$5,128,300 | \$91,339 | \$30,000 | \$76,339 |
| Shell Island | 2005 | \$4,750,000 | \$91,745 | \$84,350 | \$7395 |
| Wet Woods | 2005 | \$2,160,000 | \$111,640 | \$57,700 | \$53,940 |
| Winchester Head | 2004-2010 | \$1,480,085 | \$2,985 | \$0 | \$2,985 |
| Total | | \$103,911,469 | \$3,815,586 | 634,300 | \$3,196,286 |

9. Volunteers

During 2014, Conservation Collier was the grateful recipient of 1,340.5 volunteer hours. If this time is multiplied by the minimum wage (for 2014 - \$7.93/hr), that amounts to a savings to the program of \$10,630. Volunteer tasks accomplished include:

- Exotic plant treatment,
- Preserve monitoring and maintenance,
- Trail creation and maintenance,
- Hike leadership,
- Mountain bike trail construction and maintenance,
- FWC Youth Hunt guides,
- Wildlife surveys,
- Vegetation plantings,
- Vegetation management

The above does not include 7 Eagle Scout projects where total hours worked are not collected. The service of volunteers for Conservation Collier is governed by Collier County and Parks and Recreation Volunteer Policies.

10. 2015 Objectives

1. Continue to accept donation properties under the Land Development Code Offsite Preservation Option.
2. Continue to develop public access for acquired properties as directed by the Board of County Commissioners and approved in the updated 2014 Conservation Collier Amenity Work Plan.
3. Continue to implement land management practices at all preserves as outlined in each Board-approved Land Management Plan.
4. Continue to implement the Collier County Hunt Program at the Pepper Ranch Preserve.
5. Secure grant funding wherever possible.
6. Look for any and all ways to reduce expenditures without sacrificing quality of land management and public access amenities.
7. Continue to pursue mitigation opportunities on acquired lands.
8. Continue to evaluate potential for sale/trade or donation of lands where it would benefit the Program.
9. Follow the Board-approved Financial Plan.

11. Exhibits

Exhibit A. 2014 Map of Conservation Collier Program Lands

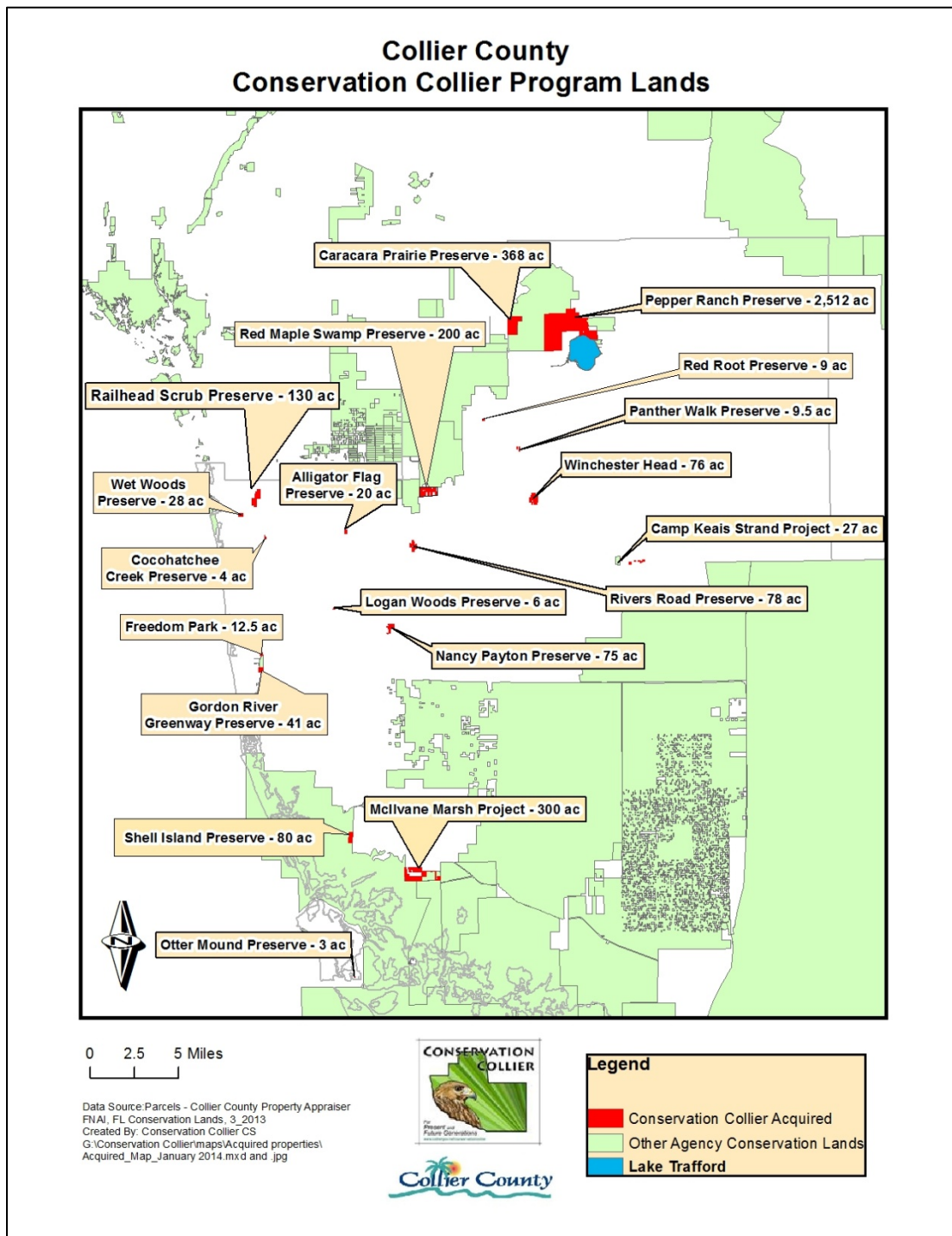


Exhibit B – Beever, 2014. Estimate of the Ecosystem Services of Existing Conservation Collier Lands in Collier County, Florida. (attached separately).

Exhibit C – Conservation Collier Program Public Amenity Work Plan and Preserve Category Matrix

Introduction:

In 2011, the Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee (CCLAAC) categorized each preserve based upon its existing and proposed public access amenities. The resulting “Conservation Collier Preserve Public Amenity Matrix” identifies all public amenities - existing and proposed - at all 19 Conservation Collier Preserves, and categorizes each preserve into 1 of 5 categories. Additionally, the CCLAAC created a “Conservation Collier Public Amenity Priority List”. This identified not only the public amenities recommended at each preserve, but also the priority in which these public amenities should be constructed. In 2013, after considering the current financial status of the Program, some planned amenities have been postponed or reduced. This update provides a proposed revised Work Plan for 2014. This plan may be revised annually, or as needed.

With the exception Gordon River Greenway Preserve and Pepper Ranch Preserve, which receive high volumes of public visitation, the improvements proposed at each preserve represent the minimum amenities necessary to provide safe and economically feasible public access.

Background:

As mandated by Collier County Ordinance 2007-65, 15% of ad valorem taxes received through the Conservation Collier Program were placed into a “Land Management Fund” annually since FY 2003. This 15% transfer stopped in FY 2013, when the levy ceased. The “Land Management Fund” is separate and distinct from the Conservation Collier “Land Acquisition Fund” and is intended to generate enough interest annually so that only the interest will be used to fund recurring annual management activities at all Conservation Collier preserves in perpetuity. With interest rates at a low point, a reassessment of planned expenses was required to conserve principal in the Land Management Fund.

Concern about long term Program finances began in 2009, when data gathered on management costs, coupled with revenue forecasts and future interest rate projections, suggested that there would be insufficient funds in the “Land Management Fund” to complete all Board approved land management activities and potential public access improvements. CCLAAC budget workshops were held to discuss long term maintenance funding for Conservation Collier preserves during the July 13, 2009 and September 14, 2009 CCLAAC meetings. As a result of these workshops, on May 25, 2010, Agenda Item 16E2, the Board of County Commissioners authorized a transfer of up to an additional \$10.3 million, above the ordinance mandated 15% of ad valorem taxes, from the “Land Acquisition Fund” to the “Land Management Fund” during FY2011 – FY2013 to ensure land management funding in perpetuity.

In November 2010, the Collier County Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recommended that projected future interest rates be revised downward. These revisions severely impacted the projected “Land Management Fund” balance. Because of this situation and in order to ensure sufficient management funds in perpetuity, on January 25, 2011, Agenda Item 10B, the Board:

directed the County Manager, or his designee, to prepare a Public Amenity Master Plan for all Conservation Collier preserves, suspend all Conservation Collier acquisitions until a Master Plan was approved by the Board, and approved the Conservation Collier Cycle 8 Active Acquisition List for purchase when funds are available. The 2012 Public Amenity Work Plan was the Board requested Master Plan drafted by Conservation Collier staff based upon recommendations by the CCLAAC. It was approved on October 23, 2012, Agenda Item 16D4.

During 2014, interest rates stabilized under a half percent, and the Public Amenity Work Plan was further revised. This 2014 Public Amenity Work Plan represents the most current status of this plan.

Preserve Categories:

Conservation Collier Ordinance 2007-65 defines natural resource-based recreation as, “all forms of uses which are consistent with the goals of this program and are compatible with the specific parcel. Such uses shall include but not be limited to hiking, nature photography, bird watching, kayaking, canoeing, swimming, hunting and fishing.”

To date, the Conservation Collier Program manages 19 separate preserves throughout the County, nine of which are officially open to the public. See Exhibit A. Recreational opportunities offered at these open preserves are compatible and appropriate to their location, hydrology and plant communities. Additionally, the natural resource-based recreational opportunities coincide with the approved Land Management Plans of these preserves. The “Conservation Collier Preserve Public Amenity Matrix” (Exhibit A) identifies all public amenities, existing and proposed, at all 19 Conservation Collier Preserves, and categorizes each preserve into 1 of 5 categories. Category descriptions are provided below. Regardless of category, preserves may be closed to the general public when deemed appropriate by staff (i.e., conducting a prescribed burn, after storm events, debris removal, levels of unusually high water, days when hunting is permitted, etc.).

Category 1 – Primary Use Preserve

- Easily accessible and enough space to construct parking on or near the parcel and other amenities such as restrooms may be available on or near the preserve.
- ADA accessibility (parking and trails) will be provided.
- May have a daily staff presence (as appropriate) and staff is available to conduct interpretive tours of the preserve by request.
- Occasional field trips and/or educational programs may be provided.
- Natural resource-based recreational opportunities offered will correspond with the preserve’s approved Land Management Plan.
- Marked trails and interpretive materials will be available on-site.
- Capital improvements, such as boardwalks, canoe/kayak, launches, overlooks, picnic benches, and bike racks will be provided for visitors where feasible.
- Will be open to the public during daytime hours, unless special arrangements are made.

Category 2 - Intermediate Use Preserve

- Has space to provide limited parking on or near the parcel without degrading the hydrology and plant communities and may be conducive to providing a primitive trail system. In such cases, an unimproved trailhead may be provided.
- Additional natural resource-based recreational opportunities may be offered where feasible and will correspond with the preserve's approved Land Management Plan.
- Restrooms may be provided on or near the site where feasible.
- Will not have a daily staff presence but staff will be available to conduct interpretive tours of the preserve by request.
- Interpretive signs, brochures, picnic tables and bike racks may be present.
- Will be open to the public during daytime hours, unless special arrangements are made.

Category 3 - Neighborhood (Limited Use) Preserve

- Intended to be a "neighborhood" preserve. There is no space available for parking for either ecological, access, or safety reasons. Members of the public who would like to visit may have to walk or bike a distance from public parking areas.
- No restroom facilities will be available.
- Primitive trails will be provided.
- Interpretive signs, brochures, picnic tables and bike racks may be present.
- Additional natural resource-based recreational opportunities may be offered where feasible and will correspond with the preserve's approved Land Management Plan.
- Staff will be present for periodic site inspections and at other times as necessary for the proper management of the preserve.
- Staff will be available to conduct interpretive tours of the preserve by request.
- Will be open to the public during daytime hours.

Category 4 - Seasonal Use Preserve

- Parking may be available for the public on or near the site.
- Seasonal (usually winter months), marked, primitive trails will be available during appropriate times of the year.
- Restroom facilities may be available.
- Interpretive signs, brochures, bike racks may be present.
- Additional natural resource-based recreational opportunities may be offered where feasible and will correspond with the preserve's approved Land Management Plan.
- Staff will be present for periodic site inspections and at other times as necessary for the proper management of the preserve.

- Staff will be available to conduct interpretive tours of the preserve by request.
- Will be open to the public seasonally and only during daytime hours. The public is advised to check with Conservation Collier staff or on the Conservation Collier website for up-to-date information.

Category 5 - Resource Protection/Restoration Use Preserve

- Provide no public access. Public access may not be feasible due to the lack of physical and legal access or where the land stewardship activities could create unsafe conditions for the public.
- No restrooms or marked trails will be offered.
- Staff will be present for periodic site inspections and at other times as necessary for the proper management of the preserve.

Exhibit A - Conservation Collier Preserve Public Amenity Matrix - 2014

| PRESERVE NAME | Category | Visitor Center | Staffed | Restroom | ADA parking | Non-ADA parking | ADA Trails | Non-ADA trails | Boardwalk | Garbage Cans | Picnic Tables | Interpretive Signage | Interpretive Kiosk | Camping | Hunting | Bench | Level of difficulty to provide access if not open |
|---------------------------|----------|----------------|---------|----------|-------------|-----------------|------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------|---------|-------|---|
| FREEDOM PARK | 1 | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | X | | | | X | N/A |
| GORDON RIVER GREENWAY | 1 | N | | N | P | P | P | | P | | P | P | | | | P | In Progress |
| PEPPER RANCH | 1 | X | X | X | X | X | | X | P | X | X | X | | X | X | X | N/A |
| OTTER MOUND | 2 | | | | X | X | X | | | X | | X | | | | X | N/A |
| RIVERS ROAD | 2 | | | | P | P | | | | | P | P | | | | P | MEDIUM |
| RAILHEAD | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | HIGH |
| NANCY PAYTON | 2 | | | | P | P | X | | | | X | X | | | | X | HIGH |
| COCOHATCHEE CREEK | 2 | | N | N | N | N | X | | | X | X | | | | | X | N/A |
| REDROOT | 3 | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | N/A |
| LOGAN WOODS | 3 | | | | | | | X | | X | X | | | | | X | N/A |
| CARACARA PRAIRIE PRESERVE | 3 | | | | | N | | | | | | | | | X | | N/A |
| ALLIGATOR FLAG | 4 | | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | N/A |
| PANTHER WALK | 4 | | | | | X | | X | | | | | | | | | N/A |
| WET WOODS | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | HIGH |
| MCILVANE MARSH | 5 | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RED MAPLE SWAMP | 5 | | | | | N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WINCHESTER HEAD | 5 | | | | | P | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SHELL ISLAND | 5 | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CAMP KEAIS STRAND | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

SHADING = PRESERVE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

X = EXISTING

P = PROPOSED

N = NEARBY

Preserve Public Amenity Priorities

As a result of reevaluations of expenditures in 2014, the Public Amenity Priority List was revised to reflect proposed expense reductions. This list will guide staff to complete the preserve amenities in the order of Board directed priority.

| Priority | Preserve | Amenities | Estimated Cost | Estimated year of construction |
|----------|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | Gordon River Greenway | ADA boardwalk, ADA trails, Pedestrian bridge | \$2,717,600 revised downward to \$1,822,867 (under-run of \$894,733) | Completed |
| 2 | Pepper Ranch - LAKE PLATFORM project | ADA boardwalk and observation platform overlooking Lake Trafford, restoring original elevation to pastures at campground | \$116,000 | Completed |
| 3 | Rivers Road | Parking, Primitive trails | \$11,000 | Underway, Expected completion: October 2015 |
| 4 | Wet Woods | Primitive Trails | \$10,200 | FY 2016 |