



INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA
AGENDA ITEM
Assistant County Administrator /
Department of General Services

Date: September 6, 2018
To: The Honorable Board of County Commissioners
Thru: Jason E. Brown, County Administrator
Thru: Michael C. Zito, Assistant County Administrator
From: Beth Powell, Conservation Lands Manager
Subject: Notice of Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Award (Hurricane Matthew) for Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area

DESCRIPTIONS AND CONDITIONS:

On June 6, 2017, the Board of County Commissioners approved staff's recommendation to apply for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (Hurricane Matthew) for Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area. The purpose of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) is to assist communities in implementing hazard mitigation measures following a major federal disaster declaration. The HMGP program is a federally funded program that is allocated and distributed by the State.

HMGP is a cost-reimbursement grant program and will fund up to 75% for eligible projects. The 25% match may be a combination of cash and in-kind sources. Hazard mitigation is any action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from natural hazards. Indian River County is an eligible applicant as it has a FEMA-approved local mitigation plan and has a formally adopted Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) (Resolution No. 2010-059 adopted on July 13, 2010, and revised Resolution No. 2015-078 adopted July 7, 2015).

Indian River County's LMS Working Group members revised the prioritization list in April 2017 after Florida Division of Emergency Management review and compiled a list of 12 county-wide projects which included Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area Wildfire Protection (ranked #1).

THE PROJECT:

Purchased in 1995, Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area (ORCA) is one of Indian River County's oldest and most actively used conservation areas. The 298-acre conservation area is adjacent to Forest Park Subdivision and South Vero Square Shopping Center. Homes in the Forest Park Subdivision are located approximately 12-20' from the boundary of the conservation area, which is generally dense with exotics including Australian Pines and Brazilian Pepper. The vegetation is only 10-15' from many of the homes' rooflines. Access for staff to maintain the boundary is extremely limited, and must be accessed through private homeowner's property. Through this HMGP grant project, staff proposes to create an initial 100-150' firebreak between the conservation area and the homes that abut the conservation area. This will initially provide a clear zone for staff to access the property for follow-up management and maintenance of the

vegetation and will provide necessary fire protection in the event of a wildfire. As management continues, the firebreak will be maintained at a width of approximately 20-30' to provide access as needed for management and emergency services. Through this process, staff will also address encroachment issues and reestablish the conservation area boundary consistent with other county managed lands, including establishing boundary signs and fencing where necessary.

Throughout the grant process, staff has completed the state review requirements including historical and environmental approvals for the project. In addition, there were public advertisements of the project on the County's website and review of public comment through letters and emails. Staff received 19 responses for public input, 18 of which were positive and 1 that was requesting project clarification.

On July 12, 2018, staff was notified that the project was approved and the County would receive the Federal Funding Agreement for execution. On August 29, 2018, the County received the Federally-Funded Subaward & Grant Agreement – Agreement Number H0110; Project Number 4283-40-R for consideration and approval from the Florida Division of Emergency Management, Bureau of Mitigation.

FUNDING:

A potential funding source identified for the project is the Native Upland Mitigation Fund (12721037-033490). This funding source was presented at the June 6, 2018 Board of County Commissioners meeting. The County match under this grant is \$16,250 and the FEMA funding is \$48,750.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends authorizing the Chairman to execute the grant award contract and to direct Budget Office to authorize \$16,250.00 for the project from the Native Upland Mitigation Fund; and, authorize the Chairman to execute the Grant Agreement and necessary forms attached to the grant contract, as required.

ATTACHMENT:

1. Federally-Funded Subaward & Grant Agreement – Agreement Number H0110;
Project Number 4283-40-R
2. Grant Form

APPROVED AGENDA ITEM FOR SEPTEMBER 18, 2018