



**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA
AGENDA ITEM**

**Assistant County Administrator /
Department of General Services**

Date: July 6, 2017
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: Conservation Lands Program Update

This informational item has been prepared to provide the Commission and the general public with an overview of the current and projected activities for the Conservation Lands Program. It is our goal to improve communication of upcoming work efforts by updating the progress of various projects.

Conservation Lands/Parks staff in cooperation with the Environmental Planning Division of the Community Development Department continues to develop a strategic approach to advancing public access improvements and land management projects within each of the conservation areas. This approach places special emphasis on conservation area management plans that have a commitment to Florida Communities Trust (FCT) to fulfill specific obligations.

Below is a summary of current work efforts. Staff has also provided summaries of encumbered funds, grant application efforts, and long-range projections for anticipated allocations for various conservation areas.

Highlights of Conservation Lands Work Efforts/Projects

Ansin Riverfront CA:

- In order to complete the public access trail network for the site, the management plan required installation of at least one crossing of the tributary to the St. Sebastian River. Permitting of the boardwalk included the following in-house services: delineation of jurisdictional wetlands (by Conservation and GIS staff); site review and approval of wetland boundaries with the St. John's River Water Management District (SJRWMD) & U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) staff (completed by Conservation staff); preparation of permit application and follow up response to data requests (by Conservation and GIS staff). The cost for completing this work using outside consulting services would range between \$3,500 to \$5,000.
- The BOCC has been briefed (via an informational item) on the background, purpose, and funding of the boardwalk, and staff is proceeding with developing a RFP for construction. Completion of this project by November of 2017 would comply with the county's annual FCT

reporting obligations. The anticipated cost of the project is approximately \$15,000, which will be funded through the CIE Conservation Lands allocation.

Captain Forster Hammock Preserve (CFHP):

- FWC approved funding for treating exotics on the Conservation Area in the next treatment cycle. Staff has requested \$50,000 (no County match) and a pre-bid meeting was conducted on June 28, 2017, by FWC to receive bids. The project will be awarded to the lowest bidder and treatment is expected to begin Fall/Winter 2017.
- Part of the DHR Grant mentioned under the Jones' Pier Conservation Area includes additional educational signage proposed for CFHP.
- Staff has completed extensive removal of debris and exotic species from the northern boundary of the site, and along the beach (with the assistance of the FEMA crews). The final clean-up will be completed this month.

Hallstrom Farmstead:

- Work Order #5 for engineering services for MBV was approved. The work order will provide for the development of site plans for Hallstrom Farmstead, Jones' Pier and the Kroegel Homestead. Staff is coordinating with MBV in the development of this plan. Survey work is underway.
- Completed extensive debris clean-up around the buildings east of Old Dixie Highway in preparation for submitting grant applications to restore these buildings.
- Staff is monitoring a Division of Historical Resources Special Categories grant opportunity projected for June 2018 to provide funding for restoring the buildings east of Old Dixie Highway. Staff met on-site with County Building department staff to solicit their input on potential work needed and projected costs, and will be using this information to develop the grant application. This grant application would be submitted in June 2018 following Board approval and provided the state funding cycle is similar to 2017.
- A Work Order was issued to install the fence abutting the Hallstrom House. The fenceline needs to be cleared prior to installation, and we are coordinating with a contractor to complete this work. PO was issued for the fence and will be installed as soon as the fenceline has been cleared.

Harmony Oaks Conservation Area:

- In order to complete the public access facilities and trail network for this site in a manner consistent with the approved management plan, there are four elements proposed to be constructed: (1) creation of parking facilities at the trailhead; (2) a boardwalk traversing wetlands to complete the public access trail from the proposed parking area to the Lagoon, and (3) construction of two overlooks for public viewing of wetlands and the Lagoon. Upon completion of this project, permitting of these facilities will have included the following in-house services: delineation of jurisdictional wetlands (by Conservation and GIS staff); site review and approval of wetland boundaries with the St. John's River Water Management District (SJRWMD) & U.S.

Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) staff (completed by Conservation staff); preparation of permit application and follow up response to data requests (by Conservation and GIS staff). As these facilities will traverse existing wetlands, there will be additional coordination with permitting agencies to address specific criteria. Therefore, the cost for completing this work using outside consulting services would range between \$5,500 to \$8,000.

- Staff is working with GIS to produce the maps necessary to make application to SJRWMD.

Indian River Lagoon Greenway:

- Staff has applied for FWC funding (\$10,000 has been allocated by FWC– no County match) to treat exotics on this conservation area. Staff received notification that this funding will be provided, and a pre-bid meeting was held on June 28, 2017 by FWC (bids are all processed through FWC). Once the purchase order has been issued, the FWC selected contractor will begin work which is expected to begin Fall/Winter 2017.

Jones ' Pier Conservation Area:

- Work Order #5 for engineering services for MBV was approved. The work order will provide for the development of site plans for Hallstrom Farmstead, Jones' Pier and the Kroegel Homestead. Staff is coordinating with MBV in the development of this plan. Survey work is underway.
- Staff completed the wetland delineation for the site, and received approval of this delineation from the Water Management District (WMD). Staff is working with GIS to provide the coordinates for the wetland boundaries as part of the site planning process
- With Commissioner Solari's input, staff has created a walking trail that is now part of the rotation for mowing and maintenance.
- Staff has installed water level monitoring wells to evaluate the groundwater conditions as part of the site planning process. This data is collected monthly.
- Staff applied for a Department of Historical Resources (DI-IR) Small Matching Grant to restore the Fruit Stand along Jungle Trail, and to create educational signage for conservation areas and other strategic locations to promote the County's conservation efforts. The grant was submitted on April 28th and the amount requested for the grant was \$55,100 (the County's portion included \$17,050 in cash & \$10,050 in in-kind services). This project works to meet the objectives outlined in the Board Approved Management Plan and requirements under the Florida Committees Trust grant agreement.
- Staff submitted an IRLNEP grant application to receive funds to assist in development of a restoration plan for wetlands on-site. As part of the Master Plan, there will be impacts to jurisdictional wetlands that will have to be off-set, therefore, the grant will be used to help partially fund the design of a wetland restoration plan for the site that will be required by the WMD. (Project ranked 12/17 – not funded per 6/13/17 email.)

Commissioner Adams (the designated liaison for IRLNEP) was briefed on the application prior to the presentation to the IRLNEP selection committee.

Kroegel Homestead:

- Work Order #5 for engineering services for MBV was approved. The work order will provide for the development of site plans for Hallstrom Farmstead, Jones' Pier and the Kroegel Homestead. Staff is coordinating with MBV in the development of this plan. Survey has been completed.
- Site visit with the Traffic Engineering Department (Kim Graham) and Attorney's Office (Bill Debraal) was conducted to determine issues related to public access and easement issues.
- DHR Large Categories grant application being submitted June 15, 2017, to provide funding for restoring the buildings east of AIA. The maximum amount funded through these grants is \$500,000. Proposed project cost is \$141,000 with a County cash match of \$52,000 and in-kind match of \$18,500. Staff met on-site with County Building department staff to solicit their input on potential work needed and projected costs. This project works to meet the objectives outlined in the Board Approved Management Plan and requirements under the Florida Committees Trust grant agreement.

North Sebastian Conservation Area:

- Staff has applied for FWC funding (\$75,000 has been allocated by FWC— no County match) to treat exotics on this conservation area. Staff received notification that this funding will be provided, and a pre-bid meeting was held on June 28, 2017, (bids are all processed through FWC). Once the purchase order has been issued, the FWC selected contractor will begin work which is expected to begin Fall/Winter 2017.
- Staff continues to work with the Florida Forest Service to provide habitat management and wildfire reduction measures throughout the site. Currently, staff is coordinating with Forestry on 4 units that will be prescribed burned. In addition, fire breaks will be refreshed and mowed as needed. Budgeted other contractual funds may be utilized to accomplish these tasks. Some firelines also serve as trails and work doubles as trail maintenance.

Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area:

- Staff prepared an HMGP Grant Application for creation of a large firebreak along the northern boundary of the conservation area. This grant application was submitted on June 9, 2017. Approval for grant application approved on consent agenda June 6, 2017.

Oyster Bar Marsh

- On April 4, 2017, the Board of County Commissioners approved a partnership agreement with the Indian River Land Trust (IRLT) to develop public access improvements at the Oyster Bar Marsh Conservation Area and on adjacent IRLT-owned land on the south barrier island.
- As authorized by the Board on May 16, 2017, county staff has submitted a Waterways Assistance Program (WAP) grant application to FIND for cost-share funding for the project for FY 2017-18. The FIND grant application is for 50% (\$140,850) of the total estimated construction costs (\$281,700). The County's match is to come from Optional Sales Tax and Land Acquisition Bond proceeds. The IRLT has committed to contributing up to \$100,000 for project design and permitting.

Round Island South Conservation Area:

- To be consistent with the management plan for the site and facilitate public access, staff is proposing to install a boardwalk at the southern end of the existing trail to provide access for wetland and wildlife viewing. Additionally, staff is proposing installation of an additional floating kayak launch to alleviate congestion at the existing launch to the north. A site review with the SJRWMD identified that only the boardwalk will likely require issuance of a construction permit. Upon completion of the project, permitting of this boardwalk will have included the following in-house services: delineation of jurisdictional wetlands (by Conservation and GIS staff); site review and approval of wetland boundaries with the St. John's River Water Management District (SJRWMD) & U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) staff (completed by Conservation staff); preparation of permit application and follow up response to data requests (by Conservation and GIS staff). As this boardwalk will traverse existing wetlands, there will be additional coordination with permitting agencies to address specific criteria. Therefore, the cost for completing this work using outside consulting services would range between \$4,000 to \$6,000.
- Staff is working with GIS to produce the maps necessary to make application to SJRWMD.

Sebastian Scrub Conservation Area:

- Contractor will be hired to refresh trails under other contractual services.

South Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area:

- In order to complete the public access trail network for this site in a manner consistent with the approved management plan, there are two small crossings that have been proposed. A site review with the SJRWMD identified that only one of the crossings will require a permit for construction. Upon completion of the project, permitting of this boardwalk will have included the following in-house services: delineation of jurisdictional wetlands (by Conservation and GIS staff); site review and approval of wetland boundaries with the St. John's River Water Management District (SJRWMD) & U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) staff (completed by Conservation staff); preparation of permit application and follow up response to data requests (by Conservation and GIS staff). As this boardwalk will traverse existing wetlands, there will be additional coordination with permitting agencies to address specific criteria. Therefore, the cost for completing this work using outside consulting services would range between \$4,500 to \$6,500.
- Staff is working with GIS to produce the maps necessary to make application to SJRWMD.

Wabasso Scrub Conservation Area:

- Staff has been coordinating with FDOT & their contractors to assist in permitting issues associated with the CR 510 widening project. The widening also affects the South Prong Slough Conservation Area and staff is working to coordinate with FCT on their approval.
- Staff continues to work with the Florida Forest Service to provide habitat management and wildfire reduction measures throughout the site. Currently, staff is coordinating with Forestry on 2 units that will be prescribed burned. In addition, fire breaks will be refreshed and mowed as needed. Budgeted other contractual funds may be utilized to accomplish these tasks. Firelines also serve as trails and work doubles as trail maintenance.

In addition to the efforts from the Conservation Lands Program, Environmental Planning has been working on funding and improvements to the Archie Smith Fish House which is included for reference in this informational item.

Archie Smith Fish House

- The County has received a 50% cost-share grant from the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) for phased dock and ice house restoration at the Archie Smith Fish House. As approved by the County Commission in December 2015, the FIND grant award is \$100,000, with a County match of \$100,000 using Florida Boating Improvement Funds. The restoration work has been designed and construction bid documents have been advertised, with a bid opening on June 30, 2017. One bid was received and is currently under review. Community Development Department is coordinating the efforts on this project.

In addition to the above described information, there are three tables for quick reference:

Table 1. Summary of Conservation Lands Program Projects with Encumbered Funds

Table 2. Summary of Conservation Lands Program Projected Allocations

Table 3. Summary of Conservation Lands Program Grant Applications

Table 1. Summary of Conservation Lands Program Projects with Encumbered Funds

Project	Task	Encumbered Funds	County Reference	Funding Source
Ansin Riverfront CA	Permit application fee	\$250.00	Check	14514639-066390
Hallstrom Farmstead	Install perimeter fence	\$8,215.00	PO #7686500	14514639-066390
Hallstrom Farmstead	Complete site plan	\$14,800.00	WO #5	31521072-066390
Hallstrom Farmstead	Fenceline clearing	\$2,000.00	PO #77675-00	00421072-033490
Jones' Pier CA	Complete site plan	\$28,250.00	WO #5	31521072-066390
Kroegel Homestead	Complete site plan	\$22,800.00	WO #5	31521072-066390
NSCA Addition	Trail establishment	\$3,000.00	PO #77330-00	12721037-033490
NSCA	Mowing at NSCA (in conjunction with FWC Grant) – John Brown & Sons – project complete	\$7,300.00 (reimbursement by FWC has been received)	PO #77329-03	00421072-003490
NSCA	Silt fence installation at NSCA (in conjunction with FWC Grant) – C&C Silt Fence Co. – project complete	\$4,552.80 (3,500.00 reimbursement by FWC has been received – balance not utilized)	PO #774017-00	00421072-003490
Sebastian Harbor	Firebreak/trail mowing	\$1,000.00	PO #77675-00	00421072-033490

Table 2. Summary of Conservation Lands Program Projected Allocations

Project	Work Item	Estimated Cost	Possible Matching Funding	County Funding Source	Current Status	Projected Timeframe
Ansin Riverfront CA	Boardwalk construction	\$25,000.00	None	CIE Con Lands	Working on RFP/Purchasing	November 2017
Captain Forster Hammock Preserve	Cottage restoration	\$25,000.00	DHR	CIE Con Lands	Staff seeking opportunities for funding.	2019
Hallstrom Farmstead	Construction of parking and public access facilities	\$150,000.00	None	CIE Con Lands	Regular meetings with MBV to discuss progress.	2018
Hallstrom Farmstead	Renovation of buildings	\$100,000.00	DHR	CIE Con Lands		2019-2020
Harmony Oaks CA	Boardwalk construction	\$35,000.00	None	CIE Con Lands	GIS working on site drawings necessary for in-house permitting.	2018
Jones' Pier CA	Construction of pond & wetland enhancements	\$75,000.00	IRLNEP/ SJRWMD	CIE Con Lands	Meeting with SJRWMD for permitting and funding guidance.	2019
Jones' Pier CA	Construction of parking and public access facilities	\$150,000	FRDAP	CIE Con Lands	Regular meetings with MBV to discuss progress.	2019
Kroegel Homestead	Construction of parking and public access facilities	\$100,000.00	None	CIE Con lands	Regular meetings with MBV to discuss progress.	2018
Kroegel Homestead	Renovation of buildings	\$150,000.00	DHR	CIE Con Lands	Grant submitted to DHR – notice by June 2018.	2019-2020
SORCA	Boardwalk construction	\$20,000.00	None	CIE Con Lands	GIS working on site drawings necessary for in-house permitting.	2018
Round Island South CA	Boardwalk construction	\$25,000.00	None	CIE Con Lands	GIS working on site drawings necessary for in-house permitting.	2018

Table 3. Summary of Conservation Lands Program Grant Applications

Project	Grantor Application Date	Description of Grant Project	Board Approval – Permission to Apply / Board Approval	Total Project Amount	Grant Funding	County Match	% Match	County Funding Source (*budgeted)	Status	Administrator Letter of Approval Necessary
Ansin Tract Conservation Area	FWC ⁴ September 2016	Provide for habitat improvement for Gopher Tortoises through prescribed burning, roller-chopping and exotics treatment and installation of silt fence to become a waif recipient site.	Upcoming Informational Item	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0	0%	N/A	Submitted/ Not Funded – will resubmit 9/2017	No
Archie Smith Fish House	FIND April 2015	Phased restoration of dock and ice house.	Consent Item – Agreement December 2015	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	50%	Boating Improvement Fund	Submitted/ Funded	No
Captain Forster Hammock Preserve	FWC ³ May 2017	Provide for the treatment of invasive exotics.	Upcoming Informational Item	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0	0%	N/A	Submitted/ Funded	No
Countywide Wildfire Mitigation	HMGP June 2017	Provide wildfire protection in the form of mechanical treatment, installation of firebreaks and fire management plans.	Consent Item June 6, 2017 Approved	\$150,000	\$112,500	\$20,000 cash \$17,500 in-kind	25%	TBD No – Hurricane Recovery ¹	Submitted/ In Review	Yes Received
Hallstrom Farmstead	DHR Large Category June 2018	Rehabilitation and repurposing of historical barns/structures for the purposes of historic preservation, public access and environmental education. An FCT requirement in the approved management plan 8/2002.	Upcoming Informational Item	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	CIE Con Lands*	Not Submitted	Yes
Indian River Lagoon Greenway	FWC ³ May 2017	Provide for the treatment of invasive exotics.	Upcoming Informational Item	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0	0%	N/A	Submitted/ Funded	No
Jones' Pier CA	DHR Small Matching April 2017	Provide for the re-building of the Historic Jones Fruit Stand and educational signage along Jungle Trail.	Informational Item April 19, 2017	\$55,500	\$28,000	\$18,500 cash \$9,500 in-kind	50%	CIE Con Lands*	Submitted/ In Review	Yes Received

Project	Grantor Application Date	Description of Grant Project	Board Approval – Permission to Apply / Board Approval	Total Project Amount	Grant Funding	County Match	% Match	County Funding Source (*budgeted)	Status	Administrator Letter of Approval Necessary
Jones’ Pier CA	IRLC June 2017	Provide design services for a stormwater treatment area/wetland restoration and enhancement as part of the overall site plan for public access improvements.	Upcoming Informational Item	\$24,400	\$11,750	\$5,750 cash \$6,900 in-kind	52%	CIE Con Lands*	Submitted/ Not Funded 6/2017	Yes Received
Jones’ Pier CA	HMGP June 2017	Elevate main house above base flood elevation.	Informational Item June 20, 2017	\$69,356	\$52,017	\$17,339	25%	LAAC Bond	Submitted/ In Review	Yes Received
Kroegel Homestead	DHR Large Category June 2017	Rehabilitation and repurposing of historical barns/structures for the purposes of historic preservation, public access and environmental education. An FCT requirement in the approved management plan 10/2004.	Upcoming Informational Item	\$141,000	\$70,600	\$52,000 Cash \$18,500 in-kind	50%	CIE Con Lands*	Submitted/ In Review	Yes Received
North Sebastian Conservation Area	FWC ³ May 2017	Provide for the treatment of invasive exotics.	Upcoming Informational Item	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$0	0%	N/A	Submitted/ Funded	No
	FWC ⁴ September 2016	Provide for habitat improvement for Gopher Tortoises through prescribed burning, roller-chopping and exotics treatment to become an Incidental Take Recipient Site. Also provided for installation of silt fence for relocation enclosure.	Consent Item November 16, 2016	\$14,000 (\$11,880 actual)	\$14,000 (\$11,880 actual)	\$0	0%	N/A	Submitted/ Funded/ Reimbursement Received	No
Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area	FWC ³ (Project complete 2017)	Provide for the treatment of invasive exotics.	Upcoming Informational Item	\$67,000	\$67,000	\$0	0%	N/A	Submitted/ Completed	No
	HMGP May 2017	Provide for wildfire protection to adjacent neighbors (Forest Park Subdivision).	Consent Item June 6, 2017 Approved	\$65,000	\$48,750	\$16,250	25%	TBD No – Hurricane Recovery ¹	Submitted/ In Review	Yes Received

Project	Grantor Application Date	Description of Grant Project	Board Approval – Permission to Apply / Board Approval	Total Project Amount	Grant Funding	County Match	% Match	County Funding Source (*budgeted)	Status	Administrator Letter of Approval Necessary
Oyster Bar Marsh	FIND/IRLT April 2017 - IRLT	Provide for public access improvements to the conservation area.	Consent Item – May 16, 2017	\$381,700	\$100,000 (IRLT) \$140,850 (FIND)	\$140,850	37%	Optional Sales Tax and LAAC Bond	Submitted/ In Review	No
Wabasso Scrub Conservation Area	FWC ⁴ September 2016	Provide for habitat improvement for Gopher Tortoises through prescribed burning, roller-chopping and exotics treatment.	Upcoming Informational Item	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0	0%	N/A	Submitted/ Not Funded – will resubmit 9/2017	No
TOTAL APPLIED:				\$1,332,956	\$910,467	\$370,689 Cash \$52,400 In-kind				
TOTAL RECEIVED:					\$313,880	\$0				

¹Funding may be provided through Upland Mitigation Account.

²Funding may be provided through a combination of Florida Forest Service services and Upland Mitigation Account.

³Funding is provided through a purchase order from FWC. No cash transaction between County/FWC.

⁴Funding is provided through a purchase order from FWC to Indian River County.