



INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA
AGENDA ITEM
Department of General Services /
Parks & Recreation

Date: May 9, 2023
To: The Honorable Board of County Commissioners
Through: John Titkanich, County Administrator
Michael C. Zito, Assistant County Administrator
Beth Powell, Director Parks and Recreation/Acting General Services Director
From: Wendy Swindell, Conservation Lands Manager
Subject: Request for Execution of the Grant Form “Notice of Site Dedication and Limitation of Use” to Accompany Close-out Documents for the Hallstrom Farmstead Conservation Area FDEP Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant (LWCF Project No. 12-00695).

BACKGROUND:

Indian River County acquired the 93-acre Hallstrom Farmstead Conservation Area (HFCA) in 2002 with funding assistance from Florida Communities Trust. The conservation area is located on Old Dixie Highway, approximately 1 mile south of Oslo Road, in southern Indian River County. This site includes the remaining privately-owned lands associated with the historic Hallstrom Farmstead, and adjacent natural areas of sand pine scrub, maritime hammock, scrubby flatwoods and bottomland forest. The adjacent historic house is owned and operated by the Indian River County Historical Society, and is open to the public. This Hallstrom house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The HFCA also includes several barns and out-buildings on the east side of Old Dixie Highway that will require significant renovation for incorporation into the educational programming planned for the site. This conservation area contains several protected species, including the northernmost known protected location for Lakela’s mint (*Dicerandra immaculata*), a federally endangered plant, known only to occur in northern St. Lucie and southern Indian River Counties.

The design and permitting for the project (with the exception of detailed boardwalk design) was completed in 2021. The County received permits to construct public access amenities including: (1) two picnic pavilions; (2) parking lot; (3) restroom (4) nature trails; (5) a boardwalk with scenic overlook; and (6) kiosks, seating and educational displays. These amenities will be accessible for visitors of all ability levels via the construction of sidewalks and other ADA features.

In 2018 County staff applied to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for a \$148,500 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant. The grant application was intended to provide funding towards the construction of the parking area, pavilions, trails, boardwalk and educational signage. The construction of the restroom was not eligible for funding based on LWCF criteria.

The County match for the LWCF grant is \$148,500. The grant was awarded and accepted by the Board of County Commissioners on February 5, 2019. The expiration date for the grant is May 31, 2023.

The design and construction of the boardwalk was bid independently of the other elements of the project. The boardwalk project was awarded to Underwater Engineering Services, Inc. at the January 11, 2022 Board of County Commissioners meeting in the amount of \$118,928. Construction of the boardwalk was completed in August 2022.

Construction of the balance of the project was bid on October 30, 2021. The bid was awarded at the March 15, 2022 Board of County Commissioners meeting to JoBear Contracting in the amount of \$912,614.90. Construction of the parking area was initiated in September 2022, and is anticipated to be completed in late June 2023. The remaining construction in progress is the restroom building.

The improvements that are associated with the LWCF grant have been completed, and staff is in the process of preparing documents to close-out the LWCF grant, and request reimbursement of the \$148,500. As part of the grant close-out process a notarized copy of the form titled "Notice of Site Dedication and Limitation of Use" must be provided. A copy of this form has been attached to this Agenda Item.

FUNDING:

There is no additional funding required for this item.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff respectfully recommends that the Chairman execute the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Land and Water Conservation Fund Form "Notice of Site Dedication and Limitation of Use," to be included in the documents provided to request grant reimbursement for LWCF Project No. 12-00695, for the improvements to the Hallstrom Farmstead Conservation Area.

APPROVED AGENDA ITEM FOR MAY 16, 2023