



**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA  
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**Department of General Services  
Parks & Recreation**

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**Date:** December 5, 2022

**To:** Honorable Board of County Commissioners

**Thru:** Jason E. Brown, County Administrator  
Michael C. Zito, Interim County Administrator  
Beth Powell, Parks and Recreation Director

**From:** Wendy Swindell, Conservation Lands Manager

**Subject:** Ansin Riverfront Conservation Area Proposed FPL Easement

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**BACKGROUND**

The Ansin Riverfront Conservation Area, located at the northeast corner of CR 510 and CR 512, was acquired under the County Environmental Lands Program with cost-share funds from the Florida Communities Trust (FCT). The site is within the St. Sebastian River Greenway (per County Resolution 2006-039), and is adjacent to the Sebastian Canoe Launch Park and the St. Sebastian River Preserve State Park.

Purchased by Indian River County in 2005, the acquisition achieved three inter-related goals. The primary conservation goal was to augment the buffer for water quality protection and wildlife corridors in the watershed of the St. Sebastian River and the State Aquatic Preserve. The acquisition also serves to provide a pedestrian connection and greenway between CR 512, the Trans-Florida Central Railroad grade to the existing County canoe launch park, and the 23,000-acre St. Sebastian River Preserve State Park. Conservation of this site also achieved a goal of protecting the South Prong of the St. Sebastian River from runoff from any future development.

Public access improvements to the conservation area were completed in 2018, and include pedestrian trails, a wetland overlook, and an informational kiosk. Parking for this conservation area is provided at the nearby Sebastian Canoe Launch Park. A firebreak and boundary fence were installed in 2021.

**DESCRIPTION AND CONDITIONS:**

The County was contacted by Bowman Consulting, the consultant representing Florida Power and Light (FPL), for the purpose of obtaining authorizations for a proposed 100ft<sup>2</sup> easement to be used by FPL. The easement is part of the Storm Secure Underground Program which is designed to increase electric reliability and reduce power outages by strengthening the overall grid. FPL will be removing all of the overhead equipment in this area and replacing it with brand-new underground conduit, equipment, and cabling.

Because this property was acquired with cost-share funds, staff reached out to FCT to ensure that the required process for completion of this type of project was followed. FCT worked with Bowman Consulting to complete the required documentation. A small fee (\$58.00) will be paid by FPL to FCT to reimburse the purchase cost for the portion of the property where the easement will be located. FCT has requested that the County sign the easement document based on "Exhibit A," which is the sketch and legal description associated with the proposed FPL easement. Copies of the easement document and the legal description (Exhibit A) have been attached.

Working with Bowman Consulting, County Conservation staff reviewed proposed locations and suggested an area near an existing Bellsouth substation/easement located southeast of the intersection of Water Vliet Avenue and Canoe Launch Cove. In its new location and after review by County and FCT staff, it has been determined that the benefits of providing

improved reliability of the power service to this area outweigh any minimal impact to the conservation area, and should not interfere with the long-term management of the property.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff respectfully requests that the Board approve the Easement and authorize the Chairman to sign the FPL Underground Easement (Business), which will provide FPL authorization for use of the 100ft<sup>2</sup> easement area within the Ansin Riverfront Conservation Area.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- FPL Underground Easement (Business)
- Exhibit A – Sketch and Description for the FPL Easement proposed for the Ansin Riverfront Conservation Area

**APPROVED AGENDA ITEM FOR DECEMBER 13, 2022**