



CENTRAL FL REGIONAL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE – MEETING NOTES
Audubon Center for Birds of Prey, Maitland
Sunday, April 15, 2018

Attendees:

Audubon Florida: Charles Lee, Paula Wehr

Halifax River: David Hartgrove

Highlands Audubon:

Lake:

Kissimmee Valley:

Oklawaha Valley: Linda & Jim Kochanowski

Orange: Deborah Green, Mike Jones

Ridge:

Seminole: Phyllis Hall

Southeast Volusia:

West Volusia: Steve Kintner

Meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Funding for conservation 2018 budget:

Charles Lee gave a breakdown from the approved budget of \$100.8 million for the programs that comprise Florida Forever, including:

- \$77 million for environmentally endangered lands (lake state parks, wildlife management areas and state forests)
- \$5.8 million for Rural and Family lands easements
- \$10 million for Florida Communities Trust
- \$2 million for Working Waterfronts
- \$6 million for FL Recreation Development Assistance Program and children's park amenities

He expects re-opening of the land acquisition program. Attached is a copy of the 2018 ARC-approved list which will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval in May. We want to encourage purchase of the Lenholt and Conlin/Lake X properties as both are high priority for CFL RCC. We can do this by reminding FL DEP of the importance of these 2 properties via letters from the chapter as well as from individuals. Send to:

Callie DeHaven, Director
Division of State Land Contacts
3900 Commonwealth Blvd MS 100
Tallahassee, FL 32399
850-245-2025
callie.dehaven@florida.dep.gov
callie.dehaven@dep.state.fl.us

Noah Valenstein, Secretary
Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Blvd MS 49
Tallahassee, FL 32399
850-245-2118
noah.valenstein@florida.dep.gov
noah.valenstein@dep.state.fl.us

Talking points:

The Lenholt property is the critical missing link in the Wekiva –Ocala corridor where nearly \$100 million has already been spent to purchase property. This final purchase will complete the corridor. A continued dialog with the family may persuade the owner (whose asking price is high) to rethink his position. Scott Taylor, AF Board member has an ongoing relationship with the owner.

Remind DEP that the original intent of the late owner of the Conlin/Lake X property was to put every acre into conservation easement for perpetuity but litigation by family members took money from the trust. The will states that if the balance of the trust falls below a predetermined amount, the land must be sold and proceeds given to pre-named charities. DEP needs to act quickly while the trust is still in effect.

Properties within the CFL RCC which are on the **Rural & Family Lands** list are:

- Christmas Creek – 300 acres in Orange Co.
- Deep Creek Reserve (not Deep Creek Preserve in New Smyrna Beach) – Volusia Co
- Four Star Timber – Volusia Co

Recommendations:

Send letters and email in support of these properties to

John Browne

Land Programs Administrator

Florida Forest Service

3125 Conner Blvd

Tallahassee, FL 32399-1650

John.Browne@FreshFromFlorida.com

Assumption of 404 permitting by FL DEP

In March Gov. Scott signed HB 7043/SB1402, State assumption of Federal Section 404 Dredge and Fill Permitting, giving Florida DEP authority to approve permits under the Federal The Clean Water Act. The Army Corps of Engineers retains permitting over navigable and adjacent waters. The issue will be which waters are considered navigable. AF supports the Corp retaining the broadest possible interpretation of navigable; i.e.: not just open water but contiguous wetlands. Public comment on this issue can be emailed to Navigability_Determination@usace.army.mil. Details and background about navigable waters within the State of Florida are found at : <http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/Public-Notices/Article/1468709/navigability-determination/>

Chapter Activities

OAS/Seminole: The final **SR 408 Eastern Extension** PD&E public hearing will be held on April 26, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at East River High School, 650 East River Falcons Way, Orlando, FL 32833. The hearing will begin as an open house at 5:30 p.m. with a formal presentation at 6:30 p.m. and followed by a public comment period.

All of the Kickoff Public Meeting exhibits and more can be found on the study webpage at: <https://www.cfxway.com/agency-information/plans-studies/project-studies/sr-408-extension-pde/>. Public comments are still being accepted via email to 408study@CFXway.com.

The RCC recommends that public comments should focus on:

1. The proposed route impacts Orange County green spaces, conservation easements, and has a new cross over the Econlockhatchee River.
2. The original concept studied went along the highway 50 corridor and avoided these conservation impacts.
3. Urge CFX to continue conversations with DOT and delay any approval/decision until 2019 to allow time for discussions with DOT and any changes that occur in January 2019. There was a good co-location plan in place; we shouldn't let jurisdictional differences rule.

The CFX Board will vote on May 10 at 9 a.m. at the CFX offices at 4974 ORL Tower Road, Orlando 32807. RCC and Chapter member participation will be appreciated.

Re: Lake Apopka Nature Center, there is a newly-elected mayor in Apopka who is concerned about liability (potential arsenic in the ground) with the wildlife drive and nature center. SJWMD has previously approved plans for the building. The RCC recommends continuing our relationship with the new mayor and commission and ongoing education and advocacy. We are promoting sustainable ecotourism.

OVAS: Oklawaha Valley AS will reinstate the Wings & Wildflowers Festival on October 13. Although the actual event (booths, demonstrations, vendors) will be only one day, field trips will take place on Fri, Sat and Sunday. They now have a ten-person Board and are actively recruiting a Conservation Chair.

HRA: A proposal for a large marina at the Port Orange Bridge was not approved in 2009 but has been resurrected following approval of the new dredge-and-fill permitting law. The adjacent spoil island was designated a Critical wildlife Area in December 2017 and the water is definitely navigable which bodes well for denial of a permit.

A pair of ospreys built a nest in a new location at Jackie Robinson Field in Daytona Beach. Fireworks after a game last weekend showered the nest with debris. A chapter member and David Hartgrove contacted Tortugas management, and with publicity from the *DB News-Journal*, the team relocated the launch area to spare the nest. A happy ending for all.

WVAS: The chapter found areas of concern over septic tank and fertilizer run-off in the BMAP and contacted DEP. Secretary Valenstein met with Steve Kintner, Clay Henderson, Dykes Everett, Save the Manatee Club and others to discuss the problems. DEP will update the plans for 14 springs and will seek review from meeting attendees prior to submission on July 1.