

APPENDIX C
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



CONSULTANTS OF SARASOTA, LLC

JUNE 16, 2014

REVISED JULY 21, 2014

**LAKE PARK ESTATES
LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN
(aka RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN)**

Ownership:

The applicant has (will have) full ownership of the subject parcels. At the appropriate time a HOA will assume responsibility.

Resource Management Plan Goals:

The overall goal of the “Resource Management Plan” is to manage the natural resources in an environmentally responsible fashion and in perpetuity, so as to assure the continued preservation of the environmental values and functions of the native habitats being preserved within the project area.

NON-NATIVE HABITATS

The non-native habitats within the subject parcel which are proposed as “open space areas” and not proposed to be otherwise altered, will be maintained in their current state as improved pasture, or other existing agricultural uses such as cattle range, and/or sod farm. Other potential agricultural activities such as community gardens, etc. would be submitted to the County for review and approval prior to any site alterations.

NATIVE HABITATS

The native habitats being preserved/managed within this project comprising portions of the proposed “Open Space” conservation/preservation areas consist of pine flatwoods, mixed hardwood forests and freshwater wetland habitats. The environmental values and functions of those habitats (as defined in the Sarasota Comprehensive Plan) which are to be maintained are briefly described below.

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Wetland Habitat Values/Functions:

Water Quality: Wetlands, especially marshes and swamps, are well known for their ability to filter and improve the quality of water flowing through them. Nutrients and sediments in the floodwaters are captured by the wetlands, which then flow downstream in a cleaner, less turbid state.

Flood Storage: Rainwater can also be trapped and stored in wetlands

Habitat: Wintering birds, particularly waterfowl, utilize marsh and swamp habitat heavily. Bobcats, deer, otters, turkeys, hawks, owls, and ospreys also utilize this habitat throughout the year. The “listed” sandhill crane and wood stork depend on wetlands for feeding and nesting. Isolated wetlands function as watering holes in an upland landscape, serving the habitat needs of both upland and wetland species. An important habitat attribute is the seasonal drying of isolated wetlands, which concentrates fish and invertebrates in central pools. Wading birds, particularly wood storks, and white ibis depend upon this concentrated food source for their successful reproduction. Many amphibians and reptiles are adapted to survive in isolated wetlands. Florida sandhill cranes build their nests in mounds of marsh plants in the center of isolated wetlands, thus securing their eggs from predators with watery barriers or moles. Herons, particularly night herons, utilize heads as rookery sites.

Water Tables: On a flat landscape with seasonal rain and drought, wetlands may seep water collected during the rainy season back to the surficial aquifer during times of drought.

Mixed Hardwood Forests aka Shady Hammock Values/Function:

Hammocks are dynamic systems responding to a variable environment. There are hydric, mesic, and xeric hammocks.

Microclimate: The hammock canopy creates its own microclimate. The cooler, moister, shadier conditions within hammocks are not only attractive to people, but are also essential for some plant species. People utilize hammocks both for temporary recreational use and for more permanent residential use. Wildlife often rest in hammocks and use them as shelter from the elements. The low sunlight condition and litter of palm fronds and oak leaves make the hammock floor a difficult place for many plants to survive. But on the trees, vines and epiphytes are abundant. Without the hammock microclimate, the overhead world of butterfly orchids, shoestring ferns, and bromeliads would face a difficult struggle for survival under the Florida sun.

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Habitat: Oak buds, acorns, cabbage palm berries and other small fruits and nuts provide food for many animals, including song birds, turkeys, squirrels, and deer. The hammock also provides shelter for animals and in some cases (particularly along waterways) serve as travel corridors for wide ranging species like the bobcat and the eastern indigo snake.

Transition: Hammocks contribute a great deal of diversity to the landscape, occurring as they frequently do in patches or wetland hugging stands. Hammocks are common along many of the major streams, sloughs and other wetlands, where they increase the number of habitats and enhance water quality.

Pine Flatwood Habitat Value and Functions:

Agricultural. Many cattle raising operations in Sarasota County appear to rely upon native range. Pine prairies can be costly to remove and replace with improved pasture. Many ranchers believe in a balance of native range and improved pasture because native range is well adapted to drought and requires little maintenance.

Habitat. Game species (e.g., deer, quail, and rabbit) are commonly found in the pine prairies. In addition, a number of relatively rare species are found in this habitat, including the burrowing owl, the Audubon's crested caracara, and the red cockaded woodpecker (although no red cockaded woodpeckers are known to occur in Sarasota). Gopher tortoises, gopher frogs, and Sherman's fox squirrel, all species of special concern, is known to utilize pine prairies in Sarasota County. The bald eagle "frequently" nests below the canopy of mature slash pines.

Baseline Environmental Assessment of Open Space:

Mixed Hardwood Forest Habitats:

The upland Mixed Hardwood Forest habitat areas are to be maintained in a native state with less than 10% coverage of nuisance vegetative species. These habitat areas have recently been inspected by ECO staff (2013) and found to exhibit only slight degrees (less than 15%) of nuisance vegetation comprised largely of brazilian pepper which has established itself on the fringe of the native habitat areas in areas of past land disturbances (agricultural). The

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overall shrub layer vegetation in many of these upland habitats exhibits limited saw palmetto and wax myrtles, with some areas of nuisance vine coverage. The Hammock areas are dominated by live oaks with clusters of cabbage palms. The understory ranges from sparse to pockets of dense palmetto, and scattered wax myrtles. The fringes of these upland habitats exhibit pockets of dense brazilian pepper.

Wetlands: The wetlands within the project area are proposed to be preserved or enhanced via nuisance species removal. These wetland habitats will be maintained with less than 10% coverage by nuisance/exotic vegetation. Each of the wetland areas was inspected by ECO staff in 2013 for the presence of nuisance or exotic vegetative species. All of the wetland systems exhibit varying degrees of nuisance vegetative species; many however are severally degraded due to nuisance species coverage. The coverage and species composition vary annually as well as seasonally. Prior to FSP approval for each phase, the wetlands within that phase will be inspected for nuisance or exotic vegetation and a remediation plan compiled and submitted to the County for review.

Action Plan:

The applicant proposes to stake and flag all preservation areas within each phase of the project area to assure no incidental impacts to the preserved habitats will occur. Habitat maintenance activities will occur during the initial construction of the project phase areas. Photographs of each management activity area will be provided in the required "Annual Monitoring Report" to be provided through a five (5) year period and every three (3) years thereafter. Follow-up maintenance activities will occur each year, as needed following the initial activities. A revised/updated Land Management Plan will be submitted to the County at the conclusion of the tenth year following the initial maintenance activities.

Areas of upland Mixed Hardwood Forest and Pine Flatwood Habitat: Within the acres of preserved native upland forest, the nuisance vegetative species (brazilian pepper and excessive vine coverage) will be cut and removed by hand. Site inspections to date have revealed only clusters or isolated areas of

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nuisance vegetation within the bounds of the upland habitats themselves, but areas of significant coverage were observed on the outer fringes.

Nuisance/exotic vegetation will be cut and removed (by hand) from these areas.

Areas of Wetlands: Approximately 157 acres of wetlands located within the project are proposed to be preserved or enhanced via nuisance species removal. Each of the wetland areas has been inspected by ECO staff for the presence of nuisance or exotic vegetative species. Each wetland within each phase of the project will be inspected for nuisance/exotic vegetation prior to initiating construction within that phase. Any wetland exhibiting greater than 10% coverage of non-desirable vegetative species will be addressed in a maintenance activity plan relative to that phase which will include herbiciding, cutting and removing of the vegetation as needed in order to maintain the required coverage of native vegetation. All work proposed within wetland systems will be performed in the least intrusive manor capable of providing the desired enhanced environmental values and functions of the wetland system. Where practical, only manual methods will be utilize; while in areas requiring more intensive work, the smallest and least intrusive machinery will be utilized. All proposed activities will be submitted to the County for review prior to implementing the activity.

Compatibility:

The proposed habitat maintenance activities are compatible with the goals of the County's Environmental Lands Master Land Management Plan.

Assurance of connectivity in perpetuity of native habitats:

The proposed habitat maintenance activities, coupled with the proposed conservation easements, assure the perpetual connectivity of the native habitats comprising the project area.

Monitoring reports:

As stated above, annual monitoring reports consisting of descriptions of each of the each of the preservation/conservation area tracts and any maintenance activities which have occurred, estimates of percent coverage by nuisance

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species, and color site photographs will be submitted to the County for review. Any areas identified as needing additional maintenance for nuisance species removal or natural vegetation thinning will undergo the needed maintenance activities.

“Fortuitous Finds Policy”:

The entire project area has been reviewed for Fortuitous Finds and is consistent with the Sarasota County Fortuitous Finds Policy as stated in Article #3 Chapter 66, Section 66-81 of the Sarasota County Code and the Historic Preservation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

GREENWAY HABITAT AREAS

The same types of native and non-native habitats described above, comprise the areas of the proposed Greenway (including the Greenway expansion area).

The native habitats within the Greenway designated areas are all contiguous to each other while incorporating small areas of non-native habitats (pasture agricultural lands) as well. These areas, when combined provide a formidable wildlife corridor through the western portions of the project and adjacent lands.

The “expanded Greenway” area provides approximately 20.15 acres of additional herbaceous wetland and wetland buffer to the existing contiguous native habitats of the Greenway system, and approximately 3 acres of existing pasture lands.

The native habitats comprising the Greenway areas will be maintained and/or enhanced as described in the above “Action Plan” and will be incorporated into the above habitat monitoring program.

The areas of non-native lands (i.e. pasture agricultural lands) within the Greenway system will be allowed to undergo natural recruitment, while being managed to keep nuisance vegetation at less than 10% coverage.