

**HERNANDO COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS COMMITTEE
(ESLC)**

AGENDA

Wednesday
February 9, 2005
(Meeting 2)

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Location: Hernando County Board of County Commissioner's Conference Room (4th Floor), which is located in the Hernando County Government Center/Administration Building, 20 N. Main Street, Brooksville, FL 34601

1. Meeting called to order
2. Election of Officers
3. Project Ranking
 - Review and status of existing and shortlisted acquisition projects
 - Public comment on project ranking
 - Assign project rankings
4. Land management issues
5. Future funding options for ESL program
6. General public comment
7. Approval of minutes from November 15, 2004 and January 13, 2005
8. Committee member issues
9. Adjournment

January 24, 2005

MEMORANDUM

PD-47

TO: Environmentally Sensitive Lands Committee

VIA: Lawrence Jennings, Director
Growth and Development Services

FROM: Dawn Velsor, Lead Environmental Planner
Hernando County Planning Department

SUBJECT: Discussion Items for the **Wednesday, February 9, 2005** ESLC Meeting

Planning staff has scheduled a meeting of the ESLC for **Wednesday, February 9, 2005, at 5:00 PM in the Hernando County Board of County Commissioner's Conference Room (4th Floor)**. The primary focus of this meeting is to rank current and shortlisted projects, discuss land management and future ESL funding options. **A quorum must be present for this meeting.**

Project Ranking

During the ESLC meeting on November 15, 2004, two new ESL projects were shortlisted. The next phase of the acquisition process is for the ESLC to recommend a project ranking order of all current projects to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). The following are the active projects to be considered for ranking:

Withlacoochee State Forest Connector (Currently ranked project)

Peck Sink Floodplain (Shortlisted project)

Little Withlacoochee Riverine Corridor (Shortlisted project)

The following projects are currently listed as inactive:

Horse Lake Hammock

Aripeka Coastal Greenway

Levy Property

These projects will not be considered for ranking unless and until conditions change (i.e., the property owner becomes a willing seller).

Staff has attached Conceptual Management Plans (CMPs) for the newly shortlisted projects. Staff amended the boundary of the Little Withlacoochee Riverine Corridor based on the ESLC's recommendations.

After discussing the projects the ESLC will assign numerical scores to the project ranking criteria for each active project. Staff will then tally these scores and rank the projects based on their totals. This recommended ranking will be forwarded to the BCC for discussion and approval.

Land Management Issues

During the January 13th meeting, the ESLC asked that land management issues be discussed at the February 9th meeting. Staff has attached a brief description of recent land management activities and is prepared to discuss successes as well as issues which continue to need attention on the two County-managed ESL Preserves. Staff welcomes any input on ways in which the Preserves can be managed more effectively.

Future ESL Funding

The ESLC has requested that the possibility of raising the current level of ESL funding be addressed during the February 9th meeting. The Trust for Public Land (TPL) produced a report in 2002 (attached) which detailed the County government land acquisition programs in the state to that point. There have been several more successful referenda in the two years since. The TPL report contains a useful table which displays information about Florida’s environmental lands programs. It also includes a discussion of common traits of successful environmental lands programs. Hernando was not surveyed for this report but Staff has since contacted TPL requesting inclusion in any future surveys. Staff would like to discuss the merits of other Counties’ approaches to funding environmental lands programs.

Since Hernando is not listed in the TPL table, Numbers to keep in mind when thinking about possible funding scenarios are:

- Total Hernando County Real Taxable Property Valuation:	2004	2001 (for comparison to TPL table)
	\$6,342,745,657	\$4,741,311,198
- 2004 ESL Funding (.1 Mil Ad Valorem)	\$634,275	\$474,311
- Average Yearly Percent Increase in Hernando County Real Taxable Property Value for the Last 10 Years (1995-2004):		6.77%/Year
- 2004 Millage Breakdown:	County:	8.42 (Includes current 0.1 Mil ESL Levy)
	School Board:	9.37
	SWFWMD:	0.42 + Basin Millage (0.24-0.27 Mil)
- Amount one cent of sales tax raised in 2001:		\$10,391,392

Schedule and Focus of Next Meeting

Staff requests the ESLC schedule a meeting to discuss the fiscal year 2005/06 budget. This should include a discussion of site security officer accommodations (improving existing house vs. mobile home site) at Cypress Lakes Preserve.

JLH

- pc: ESLC members
- Mikel Renner
- Gulf Coast Conservancy
- Adrian Kilby
- Dixie Lee Bait Shop
- Nancy Sutherland
- Terry Bickel, Pro-Land Realty
- Ron Miller

- Attachments: Conceptual Management Plans
- Project Ranking Criteria
- Land Management Update
- Florida’s County Land Conservation Programs (2002)*