



MINUTES – June 18, 2024

ENVIRONMENTAL LAND ACQUISITION PANEL (ELAP)

Minutes of the
Environmental Land Acquisition Panel
Indian River County Administration Complex,
Building B, Conference Room B1-501
1800 27th Street, Vero Beach, FL
5:30 PM Tuesday, June 18, 2024

9 members/7 for quorum

1. Call to Order

Chair Peter O'Bryan called the June 18, 2024, meeting of the Environmental Land Acquisition Panel (ELAP) to order at 5:31 PM.

A full recording of this meeting is available in the office of the Board of County Commissioners.

2. Roll Call

Members Present:

Sammy McGee	District 1 Appointee
Janice Broda	District 2 Appointee
Daniel Bott	District 3 Appointee
Peter O'Bryan	District 4 Appointee
James Connaughton	District 5 Appointee
Jeff Beal	Natural Resources Representative
John Orcutt	Real Estate or Finance Representative
Roland DeBlois	Planning or Engineering Representative

Members Absent:

Heather Stapleton	Natural Resources Representative
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Staff Present:

Joseph Earman	Commissioner, BCC Liaison
Wendy Swindell	Conservation Lands Manager
Beth Powell	Director, Parks, Recreation & Conservation
Andy Sobczak	Planning & Development Services Director
Susan Prado	Deputy County Attorney
Maura Stokes	BCC Recording Secretary

Minimum Quorum requirements were met.

3. Approval of Minutes:

- a. Minutes of April 16, 2024 – Regular Meeting:

ON MOTION made by James Connaughton and SECONDED by John Orcutt, the Environmental Lands Acquisition Panel approved the Minutes of the April 16, 2024, meeting as presented.

The motion PASSED unanimously.

4. Parcel Application(s) Review – Minimum Criteria Qualification

Any parcel submitted for consideration by the ELAP must first meet at least one of the following minimum criteria conditions to be considered for further review by the ELAP:

- A) The property supports at least 5 acres of one or more native vegetative community types.*
- B) The property supports less than 5 acres of native vegetative community but is part of a larger contiguous tract of native vegetative communities (over 5 acres in size).*
- C) The property supports listed rare and imperiled species (flora or fauna), regardless of parcel size.*
- D) The property has altered ecosystems with reasonable potential for restoration, and the property is within a designated corridor, greenway or blueway, regardless of property size.*

Prequalification of Submitted Property Applications:

Wendy Swindell provided the panel with an updated spreadsheet of parcel nominations which is attached hereto and incorporated herein as “Schedule A”. May nominations include 11 through 31. June nominations include 32 through 36.

The Panel was satisfied with the staff’s evaluation of the minimum criteria on items 11 through 31 and will not need further in-depth review within the ELAP portal. One property did not meet the minimum criteria to be considered.

ON MOTION made by Janice Broda and SECONDED by Samantha McGee, the Environmental Lands Acquisition Panel approved REMOVING Nomination #12, Ocean Chateau Property from further consideration. This parcel does not meet the minimum criteria required to proceed.

The motion PASSED unanimously.

Wendy Swindell reviewed the five June parcel nominations numbers 32 through 36 with the panel.

ON MOTION made by Daniel Bott and SECONDED by Janice Broda, the Environmental Lands Acquisition Panel approved moving forward with the acquisition process for parcel nomination numbers 11, and 13 through 36. Parcel nomination 12 was previously excluded.

Discussion: The approval of moving forward includes parcels that meet the minimum criteria as well as the parcels marked "TBD".

The motion PASSED unanimously.

Chair Peter O'Bryan inquired if the Bond funds would include parcels that are considered parking lots. Susan Prado, Deputy County Attorney, will review the wording in the bond and bring back a more definitive answer at the next meeting.

5. Discussion Items:

a. *Environmental Land Property Summary Outline*

Wendy Swindell distributed and discussed the Environmental Land Bond Property Summary Outline which is attached hereto and incorporated herein as "Schedule B".

Wendy indicated that there are seven parcels nominated by an owner or agent that meet the minimum criteria. There is currently a work order pending the Administrator's signature, for the approved contractor to do the environmental evaluations. Wendy reviewed the proposed outline with the Panel. The Panel suggested the following modifications:

7a Add: Potential and extent

8. Add: Presence of heavy metals and hazardous materials for Ag properties

The Panel suggested incorporating historical aerials, overlay districts, zoning, and future land use.

b. *Bond Consultant Update:*

Wendy Swindell provided a draft letter to homeowners informing them of their property's nomination. The Panel made several recommendations including putting the Indian River County logo being more prominent. Suggested changes in wording were discussed in detail. Wendy advised that the final draft will be brought back to the panel for approval.

c. *Comments from the Chair*

Resolution 2024-029 was formerly approved and included a lowering of the quorum requirement from seven to six. Chair O'Bryan requested that the August meeting be moved up one week to the second Tuesday, August 13, 2024.

d. *Comments from the Commissioner*

Commissioner Earman mentioned that the first half of the bond is out. The three-year time clock is now ticking. Interest has been capped at five percent.

6. Public Comment: None.

7. Next Meeting: The next meeting of ELAP will be held July 16, 2024

8. Adjournment: Chair Peter O'Bryan adjourned the meeting at 6:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Maura Stokes

A copy of the full meeting recording is kept on file in the office of the Board of County Commissioners.

Schedule A

Environmental Bond Parcel Nomination Summary							
Nomination Number	Project Name	Acres	# of Parcels	Dormant Natural Communities	Minimum Criteria Determination ¹	Application Verification ²	Comments
1	Louisiana Ave Property	4.55	6	Mixed hardwood/low intensity urban	Y	Staff	5/7/2024 Environmental survey conducted by staff
2	Jungle Trail Island Club Manor Property	19.36	1	Shrubs and brushland	Y	Staff	Met at least 1 minimum criteria per ELAP
3	Jungle Trail Fischer Property	3.65	1	Freshwater wetlands	Y	Staff	Met at least 1 minimum criteria per ELAP
4	Kelly Rd Property 2	190.43	9	Pine flatwoods	Y	Staff	Met at least 1 minimum criteria per ELAP
8	Fallstone ROED Property	3,406.75	9	Xeric Scrub, Scrubby Flatwoods, Freshwater Forested Wetlands,	Y	Consultant	Met at least 1 minimum criteria per ELAP
9	Roseland Scrub Property	16.43	1	Scrub/Xeric Hammock	Y	Consultant	Met at least 1 minimum criteria per ELAP
10	River Preserve Property	30.28	2	Salt marsh, mixed hardwoods	Y	Staff	Met at least 1 minimum criteria per ELAP
11	Jungle Trail Skisom Property	0.5	1	Existing residence	Y	Staff	Parcel is contiguous with the IRL
12	Ocean Chateau Property	0.3	1	High density urban	N	NA	Parcel does not meet minimum criteria
13	Jungle Trail Windsor Property	47.27	2	Coastal strand, mixed hardwoods, oceanfront, cleared land	Y	Consultant	Adjacent to PINWR Buffer (County owned)
14	Padgett Branch Easement 2 Property	1,094	1	Pine flatwoods, basin swamp, freshwater marsh	Y	Consultant	Within Florida Wildlife Corridor
15	Hale Grove Property	18.57	2	Mixed wetland hardwoods and abandoned citrus	Y	Consultant	>5 acres of native vegetative communities
16	Hale Grove Storefront Property	4.9	3	Prior parking area	TBD	Consultant	>5 acres of native vegetative communities
17	93rd Lane Riverfront Property	4.4	1	Mangrove swamp and man-made ponds	Y	Consultant	Hale Grove Property parcel that it contiguous with IRL
18	Durance Place Property	13.08	2	Mixed hardwoods and freshwater forested wetlands	Y	Consultant	>5 acres of native vegetative communities
19	Riverside Village Property	1.23	1	Disturbed upland hardwood forest	TBD	Consultant	Continuity of native vegetation from adjacent parcels is unknown
20	Durance Corner Property	1.37	1	Freshwater forested wetlands	TBD	Consultant	Continuity of native vegetation from adjacent parcels is unknown
21	Hernandez Trail Property	38.8	2	Disturbed mixed hardwoods and abandoned citrus	Y	Consultant	>5 acres of native vegetative communities
22	Winter Beach 69th St Property	59.45	9	abandoned citrus	TBD	Consultant	Parcel is >5 acres, however evaluation of native vegetation communities needs to be assessed
23	Winter Beach Bluecher Property	3.59	1	Mangrove	Y	TBD	<5 acres, however is part of larger tract of native vegetative communities
24	Winter Beach 73rd St Property	35.68	2	hardwood upland	Y	Consultant	Parcel is contiguous with IRL
25	Foster Rd Property	15.58	1	Scrub and mixed hardwoods	Y	Consultant	>5 acres of native vegetative communities
26	Bridge Tender Site Addition	3.84	2	Estuarine wetlands	Y	Staff	Adjacent to IRL and County owned property
27	Hobart Scrub Property	155.53	5	Degraded sandpine scrub	Y	Consultant	>5 acres of native vegetative communities; gopher tortoise burrows visible from road
28	Osprey Estates Property	12.72	3	Estuarine wetlands	Y	TBD	Adjacent to private conservation land to the south
29	Beachside Lane Property	6.26	1	Estuarine wetlands	Y	Staff	Adjacent to Oyster Bar Marsh Conservation Area
30	Indian River Shores Point Property	1.08	1	Estuarine wetlands	Y	Staff	<5 acres, however adjacent to Lost Tree Conservation Area and the IRL
31	Covey Ranch Easement	390.26	1	Pasture, freshwater forested wetlands, wet flatwoods	Y	Consultant	Within Florida Wildlife Corridor
32	LGH Ranch Easement	1,328.57	5	Pasture, freshwater forested wetlands, wet flatwoods, hydric hammocks	Y	Consultant	Within Florida Wildlife Corridor
33	Kanner Farms West Property	228.82	1	Pasture, freshwater forested wetlands, mixed scrub-shrub wetland	Y	Consultant	Within Florida Wildlife Corridor
34	66th Ave Pasture Property	48.57	1	Sod farm	TBD	TBD	>5 acres but native vegetation and impacted wildlife needs to be assessed
35	Sebastian Riverview Property	5.39	3	Urban open land, estuarine wetlands, shrub and brushland	Y	TBD	>5 acres and adjacent to IRL
36	Bent Pine Golf Club Property	93.65	2	Urban open pine, dry flatwoods	Y	Consultant	>5 acres of native vegetation, potential scrub-jay habitat

1 Refer to comment section for staff determination regarding minimum criteria

2 Collection of additional data for use in completing application documentation

Schedule B



ENVIRONMENTAL LAND BOND PROPERTY SUMMARY OUTLINE

The purpose of the Property Summary will be to provide the ELAP with sufficient information to allow members to rank nominated parcels that have (1) met the minimum review criteria and (2) received documentation from the property owner that the nominated area may be included for consideration for purchase (i.e. "Willing Seller"). A Property Summary shall be completed for each parcel to be ranked by the ELAP. The Property Summary initially will be generated as a compilation of database information (aka a "desktop" survey); however, additional field survey may be required for specific nominated properties.

The following format will be used to generate the Property Summary. All items in the format must be addressed; those items not relevant to a particular nomination shall be noted as "N/A" with a brief description of the lack of applicability.

1. Site Overview

- a. Location (General Description & Location map)
- b. Size
- c. Current Zoning

2. Description of Vegetative Communities

- a. Overall listing of land uses with a brief description of typical species for this area. A Land Use Map should be included in this section.
- b. Summary table identifying the approximate acreage of native uplands, jurisdictional wetlands, surface waters, and disturbed lands. Disturbed lands may include developed areas, cleared lands for agriculture/silviculture/mining or other uses, or lands previously cleared and in transition.
- c. Connection of native vegetative communities to off-site lands.

3. Description of Wildlife Use

Description of the potential for protected species to use the site based on database information that is available through USFWS, FWC, or FNAI. This information can be presented in a table format for ease of review. The table should note the status for each species described (i.e. Endangered, Threatened, Candidate for Listing, etc.). Maps may be included, as applicable.

4. Summary of Wetlands

- a. Table with Wetlands summarized including general size, connection to other wetlands/surface waters (especially to OFW's or wetlands in conservation)
- b. Summary if there are notable alterations to hydrology, especially if the alterations extend off-site, based on a review of aerial imagery or other sources.
- c. Maps such as NRCS soils mapping, National Wetland Inventory mapping, and USGS topographic mapping may be included, as applicable.

5. Water Resource Potential

- a. Description of areas that may qualify as aquifer recharge locations. Database information on soils or recharge areas may be included to identify specific areas, as applicable.

- b. Potential use of wetlands for improving water quality leaving the site
- c. Potential use of wetlands for attenuation to control discharge (timing and volume)

6. Proximity to Identified Corridors and Greenways

Use available database information to provide a general overview. Maps may be included as applicable.

7. Restoration & Land Management Considerations

- a. Potential for restoration or creation of habitat
- b. General discussion of the extent of restoration required to address invasive species or significant land alterations.
- c. Types of land management that are suitable for the site, and the ease of implementation for each, as applicable.

8. Other Considerations

This section is where any other considerations not outlined above should be identified to complete the application for a particular nominated project. Generally, this section would describe any site conditions that may require additional investigation prior to a nomination being considered for ranking. Examples may include a concern for buried waste, or encumbrances such as the presence of easements not noted in the application materials.