

**AMENDED Cone Ranch Environmental Advisory Panel
Recap of Meeting on August 24, 2009
9:00 – 11:00 AM
Tampa Port Authority Board Room**

Environmental Advisory Panel Members

Heidi McCree, Chair
Rosanne Clementi, Vice Chair
Hugh Gramling
Vivienne Handy

Pamela Jo Hatley
Dr. Felix T. Haynes*
Denise Layne

Technical Resource Group

Mark Adams*
Jack Berlin
Will Bissett
Steven Blaschka
Hank Ennis*
Susan Fernandez
Pete Fowler
Lucia Garsys*
Paula Harvey

Ed Helvenston, Sr.
Mike Kelly
Renee Lee *
Mike Merrill
Richard Miller *
Jim Roberts
John Sheahen
Tim Simon
Bob Stetler*

Edith Stewart
Eric Sutton*
Paul Vanderploog*
Andrew Zodrow
Mark Barcelo*

* Not in attendance
** Late Arrival

Heidi McCree, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:07 AM. Mr. Gramling moved and Ms. Clementi seconded the motion to approve the amended Recap of the August 14, 2009 meeting.

The proposed calendar of meetings for October and November was discussed and members disclosed those meeting dates which conflicted with their schedules. Staff was directed to poll members on some revised dates.

Andrew Zodrow, EPC, provided basic information about mitigation banks; i.e. mitigation banks are where the private sector comes to offset wetland impacts. EPC does not permit mitigation banks, but supports their use. SWFWMD is the state permitting agency for mitigation which can only be invoked after permitting review. The Rule does not allow for use of mitigation to fully offset the destruction of wetlands. EPC does monitor mitigation banks. Mitigation is never released from monitoring until it is 100% successful.

Clark Hull, Environmental Resource Permitting Director for SWFWMD, informed the Panel that statewide there are 50 mitigation banks. FDEP lists them on their website, but the permitting is done by Water Management Districts. In some of the smaller WMD, FDEP is delegated the permitting responsibility. There are 7 mitigation banks within SWFWMD jurisdiction. There are none within the Hillsborough River basin. State and federal permits are required for mitigation banks. The UMAM determines the mitigation credits. Multiuse mitigation banks are becoming popular, combining wetlands, wildlife, and carbon sequestration, for example. No credit stacking/bundling is permitted – mitigation can only be sold once even if there is a double

benefit. A ROMA is established by a government to offset its need for mitigation; i.e. its own road construction. These banks are limited in scope.

Kristin Bennett, Tetra Tech, presented on the Loxahatchee mitigation bank which is located at the border of Palm Beach and Broward counties in the limits of the historic Everglades. The project is one of two public/private partnerships currently in place, this project was begun in 1996 in the SFWMD and consists of 1254 acres. Success will be measured by the achievement of goals. There is a long term management fund and regulatory responsibility that comes with the sale of credits. The District will ultimately assume responsibility of the bank. Benefits of the partnership – the banker assumes the risk and the public receives ecologically restored land and long term preservation. A “credit” works out to a 1:1 (credit:acre) ratio. The amount of credits necessary to offset permitted impacts depends upon the analysis of the functional loss created by the permitted impacts. This functional analysis is known as the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM).

The Panel asked numerous questions of the presenters and of the Technical Resource Group as well as the FCEG. The Panel concurred that they would like the WRS staff to provide a report which provided an overlay of the ELAPP, FCEG, possible mitigation areas and other information.

Seven members of the public provided comments to the Panel. Ms. Belcher’s comments were beyond the three minutes so the Panel asked that they be posted to the website.

Denise Layne moved “to retain Cone Ranch in county ownership with a plan to conserve, protect, and restore the land.” Mr. Gramling amended the motion to say “recommend to the BOCC”. Ms. Clementi seconded the motion. Panel members discussed the motion with some indicating they believed it was premature and that more information should be gathered in order to make solid recommendations to the BOCC. Ms. Clementi called the question. Her motion passed. On the primary motion the vote was Layne, Handy, Clementi for the motion and Gramling, McCree, and Hatley against the motion which failed on a tie vote.

The meeting adjourned at 11:53 AM.