

Hey there Vivienne.

I was just reading the Creative Loafing stuff about Cone Ranch and after going to the county's website to look at all the documents there, I saw your name on the advisory panel. AND since I have your email address and not Heidi McCree's, I decided it was much easier to contact you.

Of course I have been out-of-the-game of restoration for years now and I am sure everyone is fully aware of this, but I needed to vent. Not that what I have to say is even a particular big issue about Cone. Maybe more like a little, but important detail. No matter what becomes of Cone Ranch, we did spend a nice chunk of change on a 400 + acre restoration there in 1999/2000. And the money was federal [EPA's 319(h) Clean Water Act program dollars], not just state and local. Hillsborough County is therefore on the perpetual hook for the preservation and management of that acreage according to its contract with FDEP and EPA. I have no idea how much latitude the contracts allow the county with selling off ownership. And as I said, I am sure all of those involved remember that tie to the feds and are taking it into consideration with the machinations currently going on. Just felt the need to make sure someone was reminded that a few of us spent a lot of time and energy trying to restore a bunch of hydrology that was screwed up by Tiger Ditch and the county signed on as protector.

If you have Heidi's email, I'd love to ask her whether this has come up in discussion.  
Thanks.

TTFN,  
Stormy

The referenced restoration project was presumably completed through a grant to FDEP from the USEPA.

In 1996, FDEP contracted the County (via FDEP Contract #WM612) to rework ditch systems on Cone Ranch that primarily drained a 400-acre marsh into (and adversely affected) Blackwater Creek. The contract required the County to complete the work not later than 42 months from the effective date of the agreement (4/4/96) and to maintain all such structural improvements for a period of not less than 5 years. Since the County's obligations under the agreement expired in 2004, I did not include it in the 6/19/09 "Factors Affecting the Use and Disposal of Cone Ranch" which is published on the Cone Ranch documents page of the County's website.  
Jim Roberts, WRS