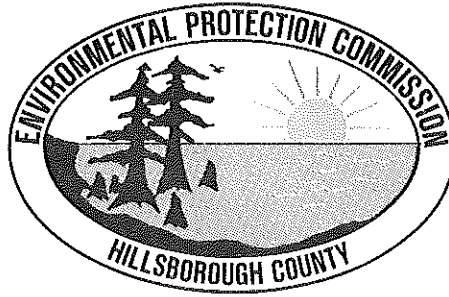


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Legal 627-2602 Wetlands 627-2630
Water 627-2670 ERM 627-2650
Air 627-2660 Lab 272-5157


Executive Director
Richard D. Garrity, Ph.D.

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL: StewartE@HillsboroughCounty.ORG

November 13, 2009

Cone Ranch Environmental Advisory Panel
c/o Edith Stewart
Public Affairs Administrator
26th Floor, County Center
601 East Kennedy Blvd.
Tampa, Florida 33602

**SUBJECT: Cone Ranch future preservation / restoration plan
EPC Executive Director and staff proposed recommendation**



Dear Ms. Stewart:

I wanted to take this opportunity to offer suggestions regarding the future preservation and restoration of Cone Ranch. EPC staff believes that Cone Ranch could be effectively preserved and restored through transferring the management and control of the property to the Hillsborough County Environmental Lands Acquisition and Protection Program (ELAPP). ELAPP would be able to effectively preserve this parcel and potentially recoup for Hillsborough County much of the financial costs associated with clearing title issues. These costs can be recovered, at least in part, by conducting restoration activities on Cone Ranch for use as mitigation credits that would be sold to third parties. Using Cone Ranch as a publicly owned mitigation bank would allow for the area to be preserved and for the ecology of the area to be restored. This can be accomplished while also providing the County a significant revenue stream to offset its costs.

The EPC staff believes that mitigation banking is a viable option for protecting a large ecologically important area such as Cone Ranch. Mitigation banking, as stated in Section 373.4136(1), F.S., is "best accomplished through restoration of ecological communities that were historically present" on the property. This makes Cone Ranch a particularly good candidate for mitigation banking with significant credit potential. This mitigation banking option should satisfy most concerns related to the final preservation and restoration of Cone Ranch. ELAPP is an excellent entity to conduct long-term, environmentally sound management of the property, while also providing the residents and visitors of Hillsborough County with passive public recreational use.

www.epchc.org
E-Mail: epcinfo@epchc.org

AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION - EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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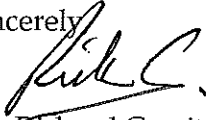
Cone Ranch Environmental Advisory Panel

November 13, 2009

Page 2

Please do not hesitate to contact our EPC staff Andrew Zodrow at (813) 627-2600, ext. 1055 or Bob Stetler, at ext. 1088 in the event you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely



Dr. Richard Garrity
EPC Executive Director
Environmental Protection Commission
of Hillsborough County

cc: Andrew Zodrow, EPC Legal Department
Bob Stetler, EPC Wetlands and Watershed Management Div., Dir.