

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COLLIER COUNTY
RURAL LANDS STEWARDSHIP AREA REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Ave Maria, Florida, July 1, 2008

LET IT BE REMEMBERED, that the Collier County Rural Lands Stewardship Area Review Committee in and for the County of Collier, having conducted Business herein, met on this date at 9:00 A.M. in REGULAR SESSION at the Ave Maria University Academic Building 07 Conference Room 5, 5050 Ave Maria Boulevard, Ave Maria, Florida, with the following members present:

CHAIRMAN: Ron Hamel
VICE CHAIRMAN: Floyd Crews
Tammie Nemecek
David Farmer
Gary Eidson
David Wolfley
Bill McDaniel
Fred Thomas, Jr.
Tom Jones

ALSO PRESENT: Thomas Greenwood, AICP, Principal Planner, Comprehensive Planning Department
Michael J. DeRuntz, Principal Planner, Comprehensive Planning Department
Mac Hatcher, Senior Environmental Specialist, Engineering and Environment Services Department
Laura Roys, Senior Environmental Specialist, Engineering and Environment Services Department
Approximately 25 members of the public

- I. Call Meeting to Order**
The meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM by Chairman Hamel.
- II. Roll Call**
Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established. Nine members were present
- III. Approval of Agenda**
Mr. McDaniel moved to approve the agenda as presented, Second by Mr. Farmer.
Voice Vote - Unanimously Approved 9-0.

IV. Approval of Minutes: June 17, 2008

Mr. Eidson stated that the minutes did not properly reflect what he stated under Item 5B which was the question of whether development determines road planning or development or vice versa. *Mr. Greenwood* stated that he would review the recording and amend the minutes appropriately.

Mrs. Roys stated that in her comments on Item VI. Old Business, RLSAO Plan – Policy 1.2, the minutes should read: “that it was true that each development requires providing the most current environmental data available for the analysis.”

Mr. Eidson moved to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2008 committee meeting, as amended, Second by *Mr. Thomas*. **Voice Vote - Unanimously Approved 9-0.**

V. Presentations

1. Proposed Florida Panther Mitigation Program and Effects Upon the Collier County Rural Land Stewardship Area Program.

Ms. Payton, Florida Wildlife Federation, introduction the proposed Florida Panther Mitigation Program. She stated that this proposed program was developed through the collaboration of the following organizations and landowners: Audubon of Florida, Collier County Audubon Society, Defenders of Wildlife, Florida Wildlife Federation, Alico Land Development Corporation, Barron Collier Partnership, Collier Enterprises, Consolidated Citrus LP, English brothers, Half Circle L Ranch Partnership, Pacific Tomato Growers Ltd., and Sunniland Family Limited Partnership. She added that the goal was to try to develop an environmentally and economically balanced program, through an incentive-based land use program. The proposed program would secure a contiguous range of panther habitat connecting the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge and Big Cypress National Preserve through Camp Keais strand and the Okaloocoochee Slough with Corkscrew Marsh and adjacent lands in the region. She stated that the proposed Florida Panther Mitigation Program includes both suggested adjustments to the innovative Collier RLSA program and additional components

Ms. Laurie Macdonald, Defenders of Wildlife stated that, from her experience, she has seen a fragmentation problem on the Scientific Technical Review Committee that will be evaluating the data behind the proposed objectives of the plan. The Scientific Technical Review Committee will be comprised of 6 respected biologists and scientists with expertise pertaining to the Florida Panther. She stated that the Scientific Technical Review Committee’s purpose is to evaluate whether the proposed program will contribute to the overall protection, management and recovery of the Florida Panther. The Scientific Technical Review Committee is expected to complete its study within six months.

Mr. Tom Jones, Barron Collier Partnership stated that, if consensus can be reached at the end of the review process, the Eastern Lands Property Owners and Conservation Organizations will enter into a binding agreement and hopefully receive a recommendation of approval from the RLSA 5-Year Review Committee, Environmental Advisory Council, and the Collier County Planning Commission for the adoption of portions of the plan into the RLSA Overlay, the Growth Management Plan, and the Land Development Code by the Board of County Commissioners. He stated that components

of the plan consist of funding, additional mitigation, north and south panther corridors, agricultural preservation, and other RLSA Components. The Funding component proposes to include: \$75.00 per Panther Habitat Unit (PHU) required by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. For a project on the scale of Ave Maria, which generated 45,000 PHUs, \$3,375,000.00 would have been generated. A Transfer Fee is also proposed for development within the RLSA. The amount of the fee is proposed at this time to be \$250.00. These proposed funding sources would be used for added mitigation actions (revegetation, habitat enhancement, panther crossings, etc.) An estimated \$150,000,000.00 could be generated by 2050, which would be administered by the Wildlife Foundation of Florida, an independent nonprofit tax exempt entity. The Additional Mitigation component included requirements of an additional 25% mitigation for development impact to primary panther habitat. The North and South Panther Corridors included restoration credits to create, enhance and restore a northern corridor, which would run east-west across State Roads 82 and 29 north of Immokalee and connecting Camp Keais Strand and Okalaocoochee Slough, and a southern corridor, which would run north-south from Oil Well Road (County Road. 858) to State Road 29 and connecting Florida Panther National Wildlife Protection Area to the Okalaocoochee Slough. The Agricultural Preservation component consisted of creating agriculture preservation credits within the Rural Land Stewardship Area, with the goal of assuring agricultural lands can be protected for future generations and reduce development pressures within the Big Cypress Area of Critical State Concern (ACSC).

Other Proposed RLSA Components:

- Hamlets will be eliminated as a form of SRA,
- Towns shall not exceed 5,000 acres,
- Outside the ACSC, Villages shall not exceed 1,500 acres. Within the ACSC, the current standards shall apply to Villages.
- Compact Rural Development (CRD) shall include as a permitted use eco-tourism lodging, recreational hunting and fishing enterprises, and family homesteads for the Rural Landowners,
- A concept is being discussed which would create a mechanism to ensure that when a landowner establishes an SSA, a "conditional easement" is placed on the subject property until such time as all permits are in hand for the SRA to which the credits from the SSA will be applied and providing no action is taken prior to permitting that diminishes the resource values on the SSA; at which point the easement becomes permanent.

The estimated maximum SRA development foot print would be 45,000 acres [versus approximately 30,000 acres under the current credit system] of the total 195,000 acre area of the RLSA. Mr. Jones stated that the property owners have been working with the County Transportation Planning Department for the potential roadway improvements within the RLSA, and the following projects were discussed:

- The State Road 82/29 road around Immokalee
- An Immokalee Road extension east to SR 29
- An north and south extension of Little League Road from SR 82 to Immokalee Road (CR 858)

Comments from the Committee

Mr. Eidson stated that the benefits of this proposed Florida Panther Protection Plan goes beyond just the panthers, but will be a benefit to the entire eco-system. He questioned if the plan would reflect what the human impact would be. **Mr. Jones** stated that that would be looked at and the data and analysis would be provided. At this time he stated that the maximum development impact would be approximately 45,000 acres with a residential density of 2-3 dwelling units per acre (90,000 – 135,000 dwelling units) with 2.38 persons per dwelling unit that equates to approximately 214,200 – 321,300 persons. He further stated that the proposed adjustments are believed to provide the needed steps to make the RLSA sustainable.

Mr. Thomas stated that people are concerned if there will be enough potable water to support any new growth in this area. He stated that the developments will have to be designed with a deep well system using reverse osmosis.

Mr. Eidson stated that the property owners with small acreage totals need to be addressed. He is very supportive of the concept of creating a program to preserve agricultural land.

Ms. Nemecek suggested that the transfer fees and other fees be fixed to a standard inflation rate index. **Mr. Jones** agreed.

Mr. Farmer questioned if the science would be completed within the time frame of the completion of the RLSA 5-Year Review. **Mr. Jones** stated that he would hope that it would, and that the RLSA 5-Year Review Committee would have time to make a recommendation for the BCC.

Mr. Wolfley stated that he was in agreement of eliminating the “Hamlet” development standards.

Mr. Hamel called for a 10 minute meeting recess at 10:40 AM.

Mr. Hamel “Called the Meeting to Order” at 10:50 AM.

Mr. Farmer stated that a lot of materials have been presented to the Committee, and that he would recommend that these materials include a summary and that a sufficient number of copies be available to the public.

Mr. Hamel stated that copies of the 1000 Friends of Florida letter and the letter from DCA to Mr. Reese are available on the table. **Mr. Greenwood** stated that Mrs. Jenkins had copies of the letter to him from Mr. Varnadoe.

Comments from the Floor

Mr. McElwaine, Conservancy of South West Florida, reminded the Committee is tasked to review the existing plan’s policy. He stated that although he had not had time to review the various points in the handout that was presented today, he was concerned that there would be a greater development footprint impact than is being suggested. He stated that he hopes that the Committee fully assess the impact to all of Collier County by these proposals. He urged caution.

Mr. Thomas responded that there is a need to preserve people and suggested that the Committee consider allowing for the increase in density in SRAs.

Mr. Jackalone, Sierra Club, stated that the Sierra Club was not a part of the planning process of the proposed Florida Panther Protection Plan. The Sierra Club agrees with DCA that increasing the development area is not acceptable, and the impacts from transportation have not been addressed. He stated that the Collier RLSA Plan is of national importance. It is a model that is being looked at by other counties in Florida as well. He suggested that the National Academy of Science review the proposed Florida Panther Protection Plan.

Mrs. Hushon, EAC Member, stated that the Committee should require the Panther Study to include an expanded sample to include interviews with property owners and farm workers, and the uses of additional night sensory cameras to determine to the best of their ability where the balance of the other 2/3 of the Florida Panther population is located. She also suggested that the persons involved in developing the proposed FPPP work together with the Habitat Conservation Planning Committee. She also stated that she questioned increasing density in development in the RLSA.

Mr. Hamel, asked the Committee as to their wishes in regards to the proposed FPPP?

Mr. Thomas made a motion that the staff incorporate the items raised by the materials presented in the proposed FPPP into the appropriate Policies within the RLSA working draft plan, Mrs. Nemecek seconded the motion. Voice Vote - Unanimously Approved 9-0. Mr. Hamel directed staff to contact the County Attorney to get direction on how to cut off materials received from the public, so that the Committee can move forward with completing their task in the time frame that they have to work with.

VI. Old Business

None

VII. New Business

None

VII. Public Comments

None

IX. Next Meeting

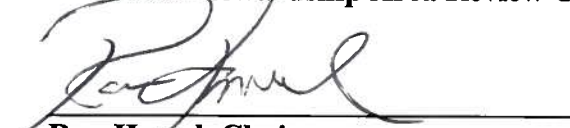
Mr. Hamel stated that the next meeting will be held on July 15, 2008, at CDES, Room 609/610 at 2800 North Horseshoe Drive, Naples, from 9:00 A.M. – 12 Noon.

X. Adjournment

Mr. Farmer moved to adjourn the meeting, Second by *Mr. Thomas*. Voice Vote - Unanimously Approved 9-0. Adjournment 12:00PM.

July 1, 2008

Rural Lands Stewardship Area Review Committee



Ron Hamel, Chairman

These minutes approved by the Committee on 7-15-08,
as presented ✓ or as amended _____.

