EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING MULTI-PARCEL / MULTI-OWNER PROJECTS

OBJECTIVE: To gain approval for a strategy for management of multi-parcel / multi-owner acquisition projects in order to keep administrative costs to a minimum and to reduce acquisition time.

CONSIDERATION: Conservation Collier currently has two acquisition project proposals for which there are multiple parcels and owners. These include Golden Gate Estates (NGGE) Unit 53 and Winchester Head. For NGGE Unit 53 the overall project boundary encompasses all 104 parcels in the unit, undeveloped at this time. Three parcels are already owned by public entities, so there are a total of 101 target properties. Staff mailed interest letters to all parcel owners and received positive interest for 10 non-contiguous parcels totaling approx. 21 acres. At this time, staff would like to mail another round of interest letters to those property owners within the inner boundary depicted on Map 1, calling this the “core“ area, to see if a contiguous area can be assembled before attempting to purchase other lands within the overall project boundary.

For the Winchester Head project, still in initial proposal stage, staff has attached a proposed boundary map (Map 2). The overall boundary was developed using LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) technology, soil maps, aerial photographs and public input in order to identify those properties that are predominantly depressional wetlands and which remain undeveloped. The “core” boundary was developed by focusing on the deeper areas of the wetland. Table 1 summarizes the projected costs for each project, however, the estimates for land costs in Winchester Head are likely low.

Costs are increased due to duplicate due diligence and transaction costs for multiple owners selling over time. These costs are fixed, and must be taken into consideration in the decision to develop a project. A potential strategy for cost saving is to move as quickly as possible to an offer and contract after an owner within an identified project area makes application to the program. In the first Conservation Collier property evaluation cycle, staff spent approximately 4–5 days (32–40 hours) on each property/project. Review of each property/project therefore, cost the program approximately $1,000 in administrative staff costs.

PROGRAM IMPACT: Multi-parcel / multi-owner projects, while presenting opportunities to put together parcels to acquire larger areas, also involve risks. One risk is that costs will escalate over time. In a willing seller program, where purchase offers are tied to appraised values, this will continue to be a risk. Another risk is the potential of ending up, over time, with scattered non-contiguous parcels that must be maintained and which are not yielding the intended conservation value. The Conservation Collier ordinance does not allow re-selling of parcels except to further conservation goals, so this risk should be managed as much as possible. One strategy to reduce this risk is to identify a core group of parcels within the project boundary and focus on acquisition of a minimum amount of contiguous acreage before moving ahead with other parcels in the project.

When the NGGE Unit 53 project was proposed, these costs and risks were not identified. A strategy to reduce this risk in NGGE Unit 53 is to draw a core boundary around those parcels that have already been approved for purchase and focus on acquisitions within that boundary until a contiguous block of parcels can be assembled. Then staff focus can turn to properties outside the core area but within the overall
project boundary, until the entire project is completed, or substantially completed. If a core cannot be acquired, the decision can be made at a later time to abandon this project.

Similarly, for the Winchester Head nomination, this strategy can be used to focus initial interest letter mailings to owners within a core area first. Once an owner response can be evaluated, the CCLAAC can determine whether to recommend proceeding with both the core area and later a larger project in this area. If a core area proves to be viable for purchase, this can be ranked as one project on the Active Acquisition List (AAL).

When the Board of County Commissioners reviews recommendations for the AAL, they can be presented with the project and acquisition strategy, approving first the core and then the remainder of parcels later, as two separate parts of the project. After approval of the core part of the project, when applications within this area are received, those parcels can then be forwarded directly to Real Estate Services for appraisal and offers.

**RECOMMENDATION:**
In order to minimize the identified risks and optimize the cost effectiveness of pursuing multi-parcel projects, staff recommends the following approach to multi-parcel projects:

1. For multi parcel / multi owner projects, outline a strategy for acquiring the project, starting with core lands first, and identifying both the core properties and the overall project boundary.
2. Base the characteristics, scoring matrix and Initial Criteria Scoring Report on these two areas, rather than individual parcels. After determining viability through positive response to interest letters, base the first ISCR on the core area and then later, the second ISCR on the remaining parcels within the overall project.
3. For the CCLAAC to review the attached maps for Winchester Head and for NGGE Unit 53 showing both core and project boundaries and adopt or revise these boundaries for use for Winchester Head and NGGE Unit 53 with the above multi-parcel / multi-owner project strategy.

Staff recommends that the CCLAAC consider these recommendations and adopt these procedures for pursuing multi-parcel / multi-owner projects.
Table 1. Projected Costs for the NGGE Unit 53 and Winchester Head Multi-parcel Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>No. of Lots</th>
<th>Cost @ $7,000 per acre</th>
<th>Appraisal @ $5,000</th>
<th>Real Est. Svc. @ $8,400</th>
<th>Phase I @ $2,500</th>
<th>Recording @ $15</th>
<th>Title Comm. &amp; Ins. @ $425</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGGE Unit 53</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>840,000</td>
<td>260,000</td>
<td>873,600</td>
<td>260,000</td>
<td>1,560</td>
<td>46,800</td>
<td>$2,541,960</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>($20,196 per acre)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winchester Head</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>989,660</td>
<td>570,000</td>
<td>957,600</td>
<td>285,000</td>
<td>1,710</td>
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<td>($21,183 per acre)</td>
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Map 1. Golden Gate Estates Unit 53 showing project and core area boundaries
Map 2. Winchester Head showing project and core area boundaries

Proposed Project Boundary – 140 acres

Proposed Core Area – 60 acres