



Environmentally Sensitive Lands Oversight Committee

Conservation Charlotte is a program of Charlotte County Government

June 16, 2025

Community Services/Centennial Park
Large Administration Conference Room
1120 Centennial Boulevard
Port Charlotte, FL 33953

Members Present: Derek Miller
Stephen Kalaf
Shaun O'Rourke – Chair
Cody Oleckna

County Staff: Tina Powell
Jason Thompson
Jamie Scudera
Jamie Boies
Gianna Maida

Call to Order / Roll Call:

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair Shaun O'Rourke. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from the December 16, 2024, meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved as submitted.

New Business:

Potential renewal of Conservation Charlotte - Outreach ideas 2026 - There is potential for the Board to renew Conservation Charlotte for 2026. Ms. Powell led a discussion for outreach ideas, resources, and modern ways of distributing news. Legal will advise us on our advertisement options. We're hoping to use the renewal as an opportunity to expand the criteria to include more than just environmentally sensitive lands.

Review site nomination process – surplus funds - We have surplus funds for site acquisition. Any member of the public can nominate a site for purchase. Once nominated, staff will create a summary work plan for the advisory committee review. Recommendations for acquisition will then be submitted to the Board. We haven't yet received a timeline from Fiscal on when the funds will be available to solicit nominations.

Reschedule next meeting – Staff will not be available - Due to unavailability of staff, we will reschedule the next meeting for September 25, 2025, at 3 p.m.

Staff Reports:

Land Management – Mr. Thompson stated that his team has been following Scrub Jays, and some nests have produced fledglings. Heavy downpours prevented surveying the first week of June, so last week was their first 5-day survey for the East, West, and acquisition parcels of Prairie Creek. Mr. Thompson introduced intern Gianna Maida, who has shown initiative and interest in land management and administration.

HCP – Ms. Scudera updated our parcels map to reflect this year's acquisitions which include 577 acres. 140 of those acres were existing conservation easements, and 44 acres being CEs dedicated to the County.

Coastal – Ms. Scudera reported that as of June 13 we had 482 sea turtle nests on our beaches, including 474 Loggerheads and 8 Greens. Shorebird numbers include:

American Oystercatcher: 3 chicks

Black Skimmers: 34 nests, 60 chicks

Least Terns: 238 nests, 35 chicks

Wilson's Plover: 3 chicks

Managers Comments – Ms. Powell provided updates on Community Service's environmental CMPs. The Littoral Shell construction at Oyster Creek is still in permitting. The canoe/kayak launch at Prairie Creek Preserve is still in USACE permitting. The observation platform and boardwalk expansion at Ollie's Pond construction will begin in a couple weeks. The Cedar Point playground was replaced and the project is complete. The boardwalk repairs at both Ann & Chuck Dever and Oyster Creek have been on hold due to FEMA, however, as we are far enough into the FEMA process the Board has allowed use of our CMP funds for putting the projects to bid.

Suggested topics for new business:

-Conservation Charlotte renewal process

-Next year's meeting dates

Advisory Board Open Discussion:

The meeting adjourned at 3:54 p.m.

Submitted by: Cal Keene
Community Services Department