CONSERVANCY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Protecting Southwest Florida’s unique natural environment and quality of life...now and forever.

SOCIAL LINK:
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Aerial Support by Lighthawk
RLSA Program Today
Why now?

Current credits pending/approved = 37 Rivergrass Villages

The RLSA is already 37/45th the way to 45,000 acre cap.

Source: Board of County Commissioners Executive Summary for Rivergrass Village SRA 12/10/2019 states that "6198.08 stewardship credits are being utilized by the designation of the Rivergrass Village Stewardship Receiving Area." Total credits approved/pending from Collier County Staff as of 3/1/19 = 226,406. Thus, 226,404 / 6,198 = 36.53 village the size of Rivergrass (assuming open space is the same).
What will Collier County tell other landowners, not part of HCP, who wish to build a town or village?
RLSA Adoption Benefits

- Established a Long Range Plan to Incentivize the Objectives:
  - Preserve Natural Resources
  - Protect Agriculture
  - Improve the Pattern of Growth
  - Develop a regional transportation system

“The RLSA achieved something many thought impossible. It created an ongoing working relationship among environmentalists, landowners, community advocates and representatives.”

Nancy Payton
Florida Wildlife Federation

RLSA Voluntary Program
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RLSA Today
Benefits

RLSA Plan has realized:
• 55,000 acres preserved at no cost to the public
• 5,000 Acre Town of Ave Maria
  • Ave Maria University
  • Arthrex manufacturing expansion
Since RLS Adoption in 2002:

- Approximately 180,000 acres of privately owned land has been rezoned – land owners have voluntarily limited the baseline rights enjoyed before adoption.
- No land has been subdivided into 5-acre rural sprawl.
- Total conservation land has grown to 50,000 acres (from 16,000 acres in 2002) that are permanently preserved, protected and managed at no cost to Collier County taxpayers – land that is valued at more than $500,000,000.

Source: Slide from Eastern Collier Property Owners presentation at 3-28-19 RLSA Workshop.
Conservation Collier
4,054 Acres
$103,898,698 Acquisition Cost
$25,711 per acre
TEV annually: $144,988,312
(as estimated by J. Beever, SWFRPC, July 2014)

Collier County RLSA
53,569 Acres
No Acquisition Cost
$0 per acre
TEV: >$1 B

Lee County Conservation 2020
28,978 Acres
$349,863,323 Acquisition Cost
$12,073 per acre

TEV is Total Ecosystem Service Value, a calculation of the economic benefits provided by native habitats:
- Purification of air and water
- Detoxification and decomposition of wastes
- Pollination of crops and natural vegetation
- Cycling and movement of nutrients
- Moderation of weather extremes and their impacts
- Provision of aesthetic beauty and intellectual stimulation that lift the human spirit

Source: Slide from Eastern Collier Property Owners presentation at 1-25-18 RLSA Workshop.
Myth:
50,000+ acres of SSAs have been placed in conservation.
Reality: Only **1%** of SSAs are in Conservation.
1\% of SSAs have had land use layers removed to Conservation layer

Source: Collier County Rural Lands Stewardship Area Overlay Restudy White Paper, May 21, 2019, p. 15-16/89.
Reality: 99% of SSAs remain in Agriculture

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Myth: Restoration is occurring in RLSA
Reality: Only 0.8% acres of SSAs have been restored

Mac Stone photo: Aerial Support by Lighthawk
0.8% of all SSAs have been restored (428 acres)

\[
\frac{428}{50,430} = 0.8\%
\]
Why is almost no restoration taking place?

**Answer:** Restoration work is not required to earn restoration credits
LDC 4.08.06.C5.j(2):
A map depicting the land being designated as SSA, with the lands to be dedicated for restoration, but which the applicant makes no commitment to undertake restoration, identified as Restoration I ("R I"); and the lands dedicated for restoration and for which the applicant has committed to carry out the restoration identified as Restoration II ("R II");
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RLSA Goal:
“Goal: To address the long-term needs of residents and property owners within the Immokalee Area Study boundary of the Collier County Rural and Agricultural Area Assessment by protecting agricultural activities, preventing the premature conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses, directing incompatible uses away from wetlands and upland habitat, enabling the conversion of rural land to other uses in appropriate locations, discouraging urban sprawl, and encouraging development that implements creative land use planning techniques.”
Are habitat areas being protected?

If approved, Primary Zone habitat destroyed:

Rivergrass Village: 739 acres
Longwater Village: 991 acres
Bellmar Village: 999 acres
Hyde Park – 0 acres

Source: Florida Panther Focus Area Data Set
Credit: South Florida Ecological Services Office, US Fish and Wildlife Service
RLSA Future Benefits

- Protection of 134,000 acres
- Flowways areas
- (Camp Keais Strand and Okaloalcoochee Slough)
- Habitat areas
- Agriculture areas
- Additional panther corridors
- 45,000 acres of towns and villages
- Diversification of eastern Collier County economy
Panther corridors will be severely fragmented, narrowed, and shortened as a result of HCP development.” – Frakes (2018)

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Map of 200 mile $billion road network proposed by few RLSA landowners.

(87 miles of new roads /111 miles of widened roads)
10 X increase in traffic

71,160 to 799,418 daily vehicle trips

Approx. 200,000 vehicles would be added.

Will traffic stay in RLSA?

How will much traffic increase on certain roads?

23.5 times more traffic on CR850 (Corkscrew Rd)

7.9 more traffic on CR 846 (Immokalee Rd)

“As noted above, the HCP does not include the existing roadway network, and avoidance and minimization of environmental impacts resulting from improvements to the transportation network are the responsibility of FDOT and the MPO, together with State and Federal environmental regulatory agencies.”
Panther mitigation costs?

$83,680 per lane mile within PCA

(200 mile road network)

Source: Cost per lane mile from 2040 LRTP - Collier MPO Financial Resources Technical Memorandum, p. 2-5
What would the added maintenance costs be on 200 miles of new and expanded roads?
Are future transportation revenue sources secure next 50 years?

- The county relies on transportation impact fees (TIF) and fuel taxes to pay for expansion of the road network.

- **HB207**: Means that Collier County can no longer collect 33% of Transportation Impact Fee before issuance of building permit.

- Fuel Tax declines: “It was assumed that fuel tax per capita revenue levels will decrease by approximately 1.5% annually through 2040.” (Collier MPO)

- Changing Trends: Electric vehicles, fuel-efficient cars, ride sharing, people work from home, drones for delivery, etc.

Source: Collier MPO Financial Resources Technical Memorandum, p. 3-6
How will SLR impact existing roads & infrastructure?

Source: NOAA Sea level rise viewer accessed 1/13/20 – Scenario shows an intermediate high scenario of inundation above mean high water (MHHW), which “represents the elevation of the normal daily excursion of the tide where the land is normally inundated.” Blue – hydrologically connected areas / Green – low-lying areas that are hydrologically unconnected but may flood.
Adaptation of Coastal Urban and Natural Ecosystems (ACUNE)

- Identifies areas of high vulnerability
- Including effects of SLR on urban landscapes and infrastructure, including existing roads
What Do the Experts Say about the road network?

“The increased traffic volume, which would result from implementation of this HCP, poses a grave risk not only to the panther, but to most of the other Covered Species” – Reed Noss (2018)

Without the proposed Villages is there a need for Big Cypress Parkway?

Source: Collier County MPO 2040 LRTP Amendment Adoption Report, p. 10 (Cost of 3 segments total $110,854,883)
Without the proposed Villages is there a need for Big Cypress Parkway?
Is there a need for another interchange for emergencies and a hurricane evacuation route to I-75?

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Florida Statute: 252.42
Government equipment, services, and facilities: “In the event of any emergency, the division may make available any equipment, services, or facilities owned or organized by the state or its political subdivisions for use in the affected area upon request of the duly constituted authority of the area or upon the request of any recognized and accredited relief agency through such duly constituted authority.”
## Benefits realized

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RLSA Policy 4.7.2: “Villages are primarily residential communities with a diversity of housing types and mix of uses appropriate to the scale and character of the particular village.”

Collier County

50% SF to 45% MF

Source: 11-19-19 Staff Consistency Review Memo for Rivergrass Village, p. 6 (other 5% is for mobile homes)
How do the housing ratios of the proposed villages compare to the county average?

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<th>Village</th>
<th>Single family to multi-family</th>
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<td>Rivergrass</td>
<td>90% sf to 10% mf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Longwater</td>
<td>90% sf - 10% mf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellmar</td>
<td>90% sf to 10% mf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hyde Park</td>
<td>83% sf to 17% mf</td>
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Solutions to tip scale back to equilibrium
What is the solution?

1. Move development out of primary habitat.

2. Major recalibration of credits

41,000 acres Ag saved
6,000 acres wetlands saved
OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **“Conservation”:** Use term only when taken down to conservation layer or call it “agricultural preservation.”

2. **R-1 credits:** Get rid of R-1s – they increase development, but provide no environmental benefit.
   - R-2 credits awarded only after restoration is complete and successful.

3. **Road Network:** First, evaluate costs of vulnerable infrastructure/roads to SLR, next 50 years
   - Then, evaluate need for network w/o HCP development; ensure taxpayers are not paying for a large road network at the desire of a few landowners.
   - Roads determined a public need must be part of LRTP process.

4. **Overinflated Credits:** Hold off on approving any SSAs until max credits are calculated and true development potential is understood (What happens to non-HCP lands?).

5. **Housing Ratio:** Require projects meet County average ratio and include minimum number of affordable housing units.

6. **Water Resources:** Collier County should hire a consultant to determine impacts to water quality and water resources from a 45,000-acre development footprint.

7. **Economic Analysis:** Collier County should hire a consultant to determine net costs to taxpayers based on ECPO’s 45,000-acre development proposal at 1 to 4 du per acre.
Aerial Support by Lighthawk