

**SEMINOLE COUNTY
PARKS & PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
NATURAL LANDS SUBCOMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING March 18, 2015**

ATTENDANCE:

Members:

Tom Boyko
Barbara Whittier
David Williamson

Staff:

Jim Duby

Guests:

None

LOCATION:

Geneva Wilderness Area
3485 N. County Road 426, Geneva, FL

TIME:

8:00 a.m.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00a.m. at the Geneva Wilderness Area, Flatwoods Pavilion. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

Natural Land Project Updates – Jim Duby gave a brief update on each of the three projects as follows.

Lake Harney – Staff has received a quote from Miller Legg on an alternative design for the observation tower using helical or screw piles to support the footers. Staff has requested an engineer's estimate of cost for the materials and installation prior to making a decision to go with this alternate.

Black Bear – The contractors are working on the last 3 (of 12) boardwalks and should be complete in approximately 2-3 weeks. The canoe mooring dock is complete and the shelter is complete minus the final metal roof panels. They will have some clean up and finishing work to complete on site prior to leaving this location. Staff is working on new signage and will be upgrading the parking area fencing prior to reopening this site. No official re-opening date has been set.

Geneva Wilderness Area – The pavilion is about 90% complete with plumbing fixtures, door handles/hardware and final grading and sodding left to be completed. Jim Duby explained to the group that this facility will be used for educational programming as well as be available for rental.

Youth Conservation Center Update – Jim Duby explained there is not much news on this other than that the Natural Lands program is proceeding with a partnership with FWC to acquire programming supplies. The nature center recently acquired approximately 200 fishing poles/reels through an FWC program known as "Fish Florida".

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NEW BUSINESS:

Site visit to Little Big Econ State Forest scrub restoration project – Jim Duby escorted the group to land owned and managed by the Florida Forest Service (FFS) as part of the Little Big Econ State Forest. FFS had recently completed a “fuel wood” sale as part of a scrub habitat restoration. Jim explained the natural regeneration of this habitat would normally occur through an extreme stand replacing fire. This would naturally happen approximately every 30-60 years under extreme fire conditions and could not be accomplished, for safety reasons, at this location via a prescribed burn. He explained that the alternative is to mechanically treat or harvest some of the vegetation, followed by a burn to reduce the fuel bed. This in effect mimics an extreme fire event and the habitat regenerates itself and becomes more diverse supporting a greater variety of plant and animal species.

The group then proceeded down the Flagler Trail to the Econlockhatchee River and then returned to the Nature center to close the meeting.

The group decided to continue to meet monthly. If there were no current topics for discussion the group agreed to conduct site visits to continue to learn more about the Natural Lands properties and the program.

Meeting adjourned at app. 10:40 a.m.

The next meeting will be held on **April 22, 2015 at the Chuluota Wilderness Area** at 8:00 a.m. address: 3895 Curryville Rd. Chuluota, FL 32765