

June 28, 2019

Mayor Mark D. Bogen
Broward County Governmental Center
115 South Andrews Ave.
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

Dear Mayor Mark D. Bogen,

Broward is the first Florida county to face a local extinction crisis. It is not surprising. Natural habitat here is scarce, only 3% of the land remains for nature. Much more surprising is the fact that 72% of Broward's native species live within our densely populated cities (details in the article).

In other words, our rich indigenous biodiversity now lives within the nearly 400 small preserves and county natural parks scattered throughout urban Broward. Each property has different habitats holding the last of our rare wildflowers and supporting endangered wildlife. These last natural areas are one of Broward's greatest scientific and educational assets.

Twelve acres on two important parcels of natural land owned by the City of Fort Lauderdale and managed by the FXE Airport Board are being leased for destruction as an Executive Airpark (having nothing to do with the stadium proposal). It was a mistake in 2013 that Broward County Environmental Protection and Growth Management Department granted permission to cut down hundreds of old-growth trees on four city-owned parcels. Now, today, the County and the City, again, fail to save the last two natural parcels slated for destruction.

Most counties are trying to buy last remaining natural areas, but here in Broward these two natural parcels already owned by Fort Lauderdale are being destroyed and developed. As the public learns of this, they are outraged, as we are. Three parcels were largely destroyed in 2013. We are trying now to save the last two, Lot 20/21 and Parcel 12/12A (flyfxe.com/business/available-real-estate).

We ask the County Commission to recommend to its departments and to the City of Fort Lauderdale to work together to protect these two natural area parcels.

We have, of course, written and appeared before the Fort Lauderdale City Commission and pleaded with Commissioner Heather Moraitis (of District 1 where the Executive Airport is located), but she rests her decision with Broward County's 2013 environmental decisions. She will not save these two natural area parcels.

It's not too late to put a hold on the lease of Executive Airpark Lot 20/21 and Parcel 12/12A, so that a new and proper scientific assessment of habitat scarcity and rare species can document the true environmental value of these two properties. With that evidence and a little political will, the County and City can make a better decision.

Regards,

Richard Brownscombe
President, Broward Chapter
Florida Native Plant Society
954-661-6289

cc:
Broward County Commissioners
Fort Lauderdale Mayor Dean Trantalis
Fort Lauderdale City Commissioners
Executive Airport Board