

From: Richard@brownscombe.net
Subject: Protected Natural Land Protections
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Dear Dr. Jurado,

I would like to know what approvals were given to the City of Fort Lauderdale regarding development of the River Oaks Stormwater Preserve, a Broward County "Protected Natural Land" site.

1. I am interested in obtaining a copy or link to the conservation agreement (easement?) that protects this site. If there are other natural land protections afforded this site, I would appreciate knowing what they are.
2. I am interested in approvals or guidance the County provided to the City of Fort Lauderdale that would impinge historical plant and wildlife species living on or using the site (such as migratory species) or any rare habitat on that site. Does the County require an inventory of native plant and wildlife species, and if not, how would protection of rare, Threatened, and Endangered species and rare habitats be possible? What guidance and requirements regarding conservation protection is given to both County employees and the non-county managing authorities of Broward's 322 "Protected Natural Lands" sites? Anything that the County uses to achieve protection for these Protected Natural Lands would be relevant and of interest to us.
3. What other projects on Protected Natural Land sites are currently approved for work that could impinge historical plant and wildlife species living on or using the site or any rare habitat on the site. Which of the 322 Protected Natural Land sites have approvals in process (not yet approved)? I understand that the Panther Arena Mitigation Area, a Protected Natural Land site "managed by Broward County" is not managed by Broward Parks Environmental Program. What other county-managed Protected Natural Land sites also lack active management by the County?

I am aware of the use of bulldozers in natural land restoration such as Bill Baggs State Park, Miramar Pinelands, and Westlake Park. When such work, or any significant work, is proposed, a survey of historical plant and wildlife species living on or using the site (such as migratory species) and any rare habitat on that site must be conducted. There are only a handful of conservation contractors capable of recognizing historical plants and another handful capable of recognizing historical wildlife species and understanding habitat, but they are available and at a cost not greater than incompetent contractors. Please ask if the County needs help to create a list of them.

No government can "protect" natural lands without knowing what is on them. Isn't that prima facie evidence of gross negligence in the government's role of protection? In spite of this language, it isn't only the laws and the Florida Constitution regarding conservation, but the moral breach of the public's trust in its government to do the job of conservation that fails the public. The electorate in Broward voted 84.3% in favor of water and land conservation Amendment 1. This is a public mandate for Broward County to protect the people's 322 Protected Natural Lands. Is the County willing or reluctant to do this protection? The next act of a bulldozer on any of the 322 Protected Natural Land sites will make that case.

We expect to see the plant and wildlife surveys and a thoughtful conservation protection plan prior to site restoration. We expect to see restoration, not development or park development, on these last remaining historically natural sites. Protecting "Protected" sites is the only way to save Broward's plant and wildlife diversity.
["Saving Nature in Broward: Our Legacy for the Future"](#) or ["Nature in Broward: The Silent Crisis of Local Rare Species Extinction"](#)

By the way, we learned since publishing these articles that 102 natural land sites and 6,800 acres of natural land were removed from protection by Broward County since 2011. We are conducting that research now and will publish it when we have the facts.

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