

## Environmental Lands Management and Acquisition Advisory Committee

### Supplemental Information

#### HISTORY

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- **1992,1993 - Environmental Lands Management and Acquisition Advisory Committee and Ordinance Established**
  - Purpose: To identify and evaluate land for acquisition, passive recreation, and management (R 92-149, Section 2(A))
  - Establish County-wide inventory (R 92-149, Section 2(B)2.)
  - Devise a method to rank environmental lands to facilitate decisions for acquisition and protection (R 92-149, Section 2(B)3.)
  - Create 11-member advisory committee (ELMAC) with specific backgrounds (R 93-55, Section 4(A))
  
- **2002 Important Natural Resource Lands (INRL) Project - GIS model identified lands with highest overall ranking.**
  - Phase I - Screened for highest natural resource value using ELMAC criteria:
    - Rarity of species or habitat
    - Connectiveness
    - Ecological quality
    - Importance to water resources
  - Phase II - Further prioritized lands in consideration of additional benefits:
    - Parcel size
    - Improved and Overall Parcel Value
    - Imminence of Development
    - Conservation Interest (funding sources)
  
- **2003 – Update to Environmental Lands Management and Acquisition Ordinance**
  - **Added** “At-large” members for total **15 members** (Ord. 03-62, Sect. 5.D.1.a.-j.).
  - **Established selection criteria** for acquisition (rarity, quality, connectivity, water resources) (Ord. 03-62, Sect. 4.H.).
  - **Established general purpose** of ELMAC “*to advise the board on matters related to environmental land acquisition and management, and passive recreational planning and programming for acquired lands. This article shall apply to lands previously acquired by the county that are explicitly designated as governed by this article by the board and to lands and property interests acquired after the adoption of this article whether from funds designated by the board or funds approved by voter referendum. This*

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*committee will provide a forum for multiple interests and user groups to express their wishes for management of county-owned lands and passive recreational facilities.” (Ord. 03-62, Sect. 5.B.1.)*

- **Established procedures for acquisitions (Ord. 03-62, Sect. 7.A.1-9):**
  - Site Nominations – citizens, public organizations, private conservation organizations, consultants
  - Eligibility - staff reviews and reports lands that meet criteria to ELMAC
  - Prioritization - ELMAC establishes priority list of sites that meet criteria (by grouping, not # ranking)
  - Willing Seller - staff introduces program and determines if owner is willing participant, updates list
  - Work Plan - pre-acquisition activities for sites on priority list developed by staff
  - Approval - work plans adopted by ELMAC go to BOCC for approval, modification, or rejection
  - Implementation - due diligence, contractual negotiation
  - Contract - approval by BOCC
  - Evaluation - update priority list annually
  
- **2006 – Conservation Easements for Agricultural Lands considerations added**
  - **Established Criteria** (Ord. 06-26 Sect. 3(a)1-6):
    - Quality - prime, unique, locally important, or state-wide important, other
    - Economic Viability -on site infrastructure, proximity to off-site infrastructure, adequate size
    - Compatibility – surrounding land use
    - Degree of Development Pressure - proximity to urban service boundary, zoning, residential development
    - Proximity - to other protected lands and corridors
    - Additional Benefits - wildlife habitat, air, water and scenic qualities, historic & cultural features
  - Provided for monitoring and maintenance of agricultural conservation easements (Ord. 06-26 Sect. 3(b)1)
  - Provided for annual reporting of agricultural conservation easements to BOCC (Ord. 06-26 Sect. 3(b)3)
  - Report findings and recommendations at least annually to the BOCC (Ord. 03-62, Sect. 5.C.4)

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- **2005 - 2009 – BOCC implemented an environmental millage to fund \$4million/yr. for conservation acquisition**
  
- **2009 - Tree Advisory Board added to ELMAC's role**
  - Purpose: To develop a tree management program on County-owned lands (Ord. 09-67 Sec. 2(b)(3)a-d)
    - Promote awareness of tree canopy through education
    - Review grant requirements and prepare proposals to fund tree management programs
    - Coordinate observance of Arbor Day
    - Keep Manatee Beautiful seat replaced one At-Large committee member seat (Ord. 09-67 Sec. 3(d)(1)j-k)

Manatee County has conducted ongoing conservation plantings since 1988 and has been a part of the Tree City/County USA Program since 2009. A thriving urban forest offers many advantages to communities. Here are just a few benefits identified by the Arbor Day Foundation:

- Trees absorb the sounds of traffic in urban areas by 40%
  - Neighborhoods with trees are 7 to 9 degrees cooler than those without.
  - Trees reduce energy costs up to 25% by shading buildings and protecting them from winter winds.
  - Homes with trees have higher property values.
  - Green space plays a major role in improving mental and physical health.
  - Trees absorbs carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, mitigating the effects of climate change.
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- **2021 – ELMAC Appointed to implement Conservation and Parks Projects Referendum**
    - Resolution 21-182 approved by BOCC appointed ELMAC to implement the Conservation and Parks Projects Referendum and establishing a BOCC liaison to ELMAC
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- **January 2022 – ELMAC Ordinance Update**
    - Establish willing seller prior to review by ELMAC
    - Modify at-large seats so there is one ELMAC member for each County district, expanding membership to 18, not including BOCC liaison