

## Meeting Notes

### Task 2.8

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Subject:	River of Grass Greenway (ROGG) – Steering Committee Review #1
Project:	60272285
Date:	November 15, 2012
Time:	1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Location:	Big Cypress National Preserve Oasis Visitor Center – Second Floor Conference Room

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**Purpose:**

A Steering Committee (SC) review meeting #1 for the River of Grass Greenway (ROGG) Feasibility Study and Master Plan was held to review the results and findings from the kick-off workshop and tour, comparables review, and best practices and lessons learned. Attendees provided updates on projects and activities in the vicinity of the ROGG corridor with potential to affect the feasibility study and reviewed and provided feedback on a presentation on comparable projects.

## Presentation:

- Meeting started at 1:00 p.m. with a roll call of attending SC members
- Bob DeGross from Big Cypress National Preserve (BICY) provided an update on oil exploration in BICY
  - Lampl Herbert Consultants, Inc., has initiated an Environmental Assessment (EA) for changes to the overhead power lines serving the BreitBurn oil extraction facilities at Raccoon Point
  - Project consists of extending and upgrading the capacity of overhead electrical lines along the south side of U.S.41/Tamiami Trail and 11 Mile road to the Raccoon Point facilities from the transfer station at SR-29 to replace trucked-in diesel to run the generators at the oil rigs
  - This would require moving existing power lines from the north side of U.S 41 to the south side within the 30' setback into the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) right-of-way (ROW). It is anticipated this move would assist in addressing maintenance issues with the lines occurring on the north side of the canal. It is anticipated that the new power lines would be strung between concrete poles with small pads accessible from Off-road Vehicles (ORVs) for maintenance
  - The EA consultants would like to interact with the ROGG project, including a potential presentation to the SC. They have just begun their agency scoping for the EA
  - ROGG SC expressed interest in seeing the cost differences for an underground alternative vs. the current proposed above-ground overhead lines
  - Renee Rau from Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve (FAKA) asked if the power poles would affect the ability to have a potential scenic highway designation on U.S. 41. Bob DeGross (BICY) answered it would have no affect because the poles are an existing feature. The scenic road designation has been removed for the U.S. 41 corridor within Collier County
- Renee Rau (FAKA) provided an update on the development of the visitor center for the park
  - The visitor center is still anticipated to occur north of U.S. 41 in the Big Cypress Bend
  - The current plan consists of a 70 space parking lot, interpretive center, loop trail, and connection to the existing boardwalk. The site plan requires a sidewalk/multi-use pathway, which could be connected to the ROGG, although a crossing of U.S. 41 would need to be evaluated to accommodate that connection
  - The site would use utilize portions of the existing old Tamiami Trail road bed for locating the facilities

- The project design engineering review identified using the old Tamiami Trail road bed removal as part of the mitigation for the project. Additional mitigation sites (5) were identified as well in case the road bed removal was not viable
- ROGG use of the old Tamiami Trail road bed would be considered in the final planning process for the potential mitigation evaluation and connections to the site plan trail. Renee would pass along ROGG design evaluations to Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) about potential uses of the old Tamiami Trail for ROGG
- A computer-aided design (CAD) file has been prepared with the site design for the Visitor Center. Renee indicated that could be available for the ROGG study
- Nick Kuhn (AECOM) provided an update from the ROGG West PD&E study. The study has preliminarily identified “fatal flaws” in using the north side of the road for ROGG
- Jerry Krenz from South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) provided an update on the Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP) plan affecting ROGG.
  - CEPP includes several alternatives to address water movement within the 16.5 mile long area west of the Miccosukee Resort and Gaming casino
    - This includes the Blue Shanty and other possible alternatives involving changes to the L-29 levee in the locations near the bridges proposed (or being built) for Tamiami Trail. Options include removal of the entire levee; using box culverts through the levee; removing portions of the levee; and using the L-29 canal to spread water flow. These alternatives would require levee modifications to alter water flow patterns. What to do with the fill on the sides of the canal from the original excavation of the canal is a big question?



*Jerry Krenz explaining the Blue Shanty concept*

- Fred Herling from Everglades National Park mentioned a 2.6 mile long bridge is planned to go in west of the current bridge being built. It would extend past

- several of the current air boat operations. A trail on the bridge is not currently in the plans, but would be helpful for ROGG; adding bike/ped facilities to a road bridge could add as much as 10% to the cost of the bridge.
- Modifications to the levee would affect potential recreation use. Access to Tigertail Camp area needs to be maintained either through maintaining the levee or providing a bridge. The bridge or levee could be available for ROGG use. Removal of the levee, especially the entire length, would require significant fill removal cost requirements.
  - Jerry noted connections north along other levees to Holiday Park in Broward County (approximately 15 miles) could be used for loop trails and alternative day-long experiences.
  - SFWMD would like a parking area and boat ramp at the L-67/L-29 canal intersections (near the ValuJet memorial) as noted in plans for the area
  - SFWMD levees typically are at least 12-14 feet wide and surfaced with gravel. Gravel has been used as SFWMD has found regular asphalt surfacing can be compromised by heavy equipment that uses the levee for levee and canal maintenance. Asphalt surfaces also alter surface drainage patterns and lead to potential erosion issues that would need to be addressed. Changes to the slopes on the levee can require changes to the width and size of the levee. This levee width can accommodate trails. The surface of the levee top needs to consider long-term maintenance needs, including equipment available to conduct the maintenance.
  - Joe Webb from Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces mentioned alternative equipment / surface (with more fines) can be effective such as porous asphalt mix that adds a significant amount of air space or voids to the gravel and petroleum binders that make up asphalt paving
- Nick Kuhn (AECOM) provided an update on the project, including an update on the working session schedule of the events and a review of Principles, Mission Statement, and Vision Statement



*Nick Kuhn providing update*

- The SC asked questions about the ROGG termination points. Miami-Dade County sees the ROGG concept/connections extending to Biscayne Bay via other projects like the Biscayne-Everglades Greenway and Krome Trail. Spurs to Holiday Park were acknowledged as a potentially beneficial connection to Broward county greenways. Connections to Marco Island on the west side would also be good
- Edits to the vision statement were discussed. General comments were targeted toward addressing connectivity and removing references to safety in the vision statement. The SC worked on a revised vision statement reference
- Joe Webb (Miami-Dade Parks) suggested remove “Enhanced Access” . Change “Provides” to “Promotes”. Change “Between” to “Connecting”
- A discussion regarding themes of the Vision Statement identified the following:
  - Add Connectivity
  - Multi-modal/alternative transportation
  - Mobility
  - Remove safety- it is a given and not a theme
  - Cultural
  - Experience
  - Design criteria
- Modify and show:
  - Education
  - Transportation
  - Stewardship
  - Cultural
  - Recreation
- Final Vision Statement as agreed by SC will be as follows:
 

*‘The River of Grass Greenway is a non-motorized transportation and recreation corridor across the Everglades connecting Naples and Miami that promotes enhanced opportunities for education and stewardship of the environmental and cultural assets of this unique area.’*
- Nick Kuhn (AECOM) introduced the MindMixer public engagement site for the ROGG Feasibility Study and Master Plan.
  - The soft launch for the application was November 15, 2012
  - The public launch for the application will occur January 22, 2013
  - Additional materials will be added in January before the Planning Area Work Sessions meetings.
  - Suggestions from the SC included
    - Update the maps shown on the site to better identify parks and cultural resources in the area
    - Add hyperlinks to park websites
    - Potentially provide a hyperlink to the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida website

- Nick Kuhn (AECOM) presented information about comparable projects to the ROGG. SC provided comments and questions for the presentation, including:
  - Who built the Coeur d'Alene's trail? Answer – Idaho Department of Transportation (IDDOT)
  - FDOT has updated their criteria for width of trails to be in line with AASHTO minimum requirements
    - 10'-14' width is acceptable depending on expected use
    - 12' minimum width for FDOT is no longer required
    - Design guidance for the width of shared-use paths is that paths should range from 10-15 feet in width depending on factors including the volume and mix of expected use
    - Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Florida Greenbook standards now call for 15 foot wide bike / ped trails or 10 foot wide bike trails if there is an adjacent pedestrian facility
  - Add more international examples and aspirational examples that motivate or achieve something great and goals for scale
  - Includes trails that are planned / designed to educate users and include such items as a Quick Response (QR) code on wayfinding signs for smart phones to get instant information and drive traffic to a specific website, other signs, bird watching, cultural resource interpretation, CERP
  - The Operations and Maintenance (O&M) for the trail needs to be addressed as part of the feasibility study considering the multiple jurisdictions involved
  - Show / identify hierarchy of trail comparables and trailhead types
  - Examples of paved levees and how management of the levees was addressed with the paved surfaces should be included in the comparable projects presentation
  - Buffalo Bayou in Houston should be evaluated as a comparable project.
  - Review stormwater treatment within the comparable projects to address water quality through primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment and education components
  - Confirm wording of descriptions for each comparable project, avoid using 'Parameters' or broad characteristic element

## Action Items:

- Bob DeGross (BICY) to contact Lampl Herbert Consultants for schedule and proposed elements of the power line EA and provide to Mark Heinicke (MDPROS)
- Renee Rau (FAKA) to provide Visitor Center site design and associated mitigation site CAD files to Mark Heinicke (MDPROS) for incorporation into the ROGG base maps
- Jerry Krenz to provide boat ramp/parking concepts from SFWMD for the L-29/L-67/ValuJet Flight 592 memorial location to Mark Heinicke (MDPROS)
- AECOM to update vision statement to address comments from the SC