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September 9, 2011

Draft Land Protection Plan for the Proposed Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service ("Service") this week released a draft Land Protection Plan (the "Plan Document") for the proposed Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge ("NWR"). The Service also released the attached map that generally indicates areas which it will consider for fee, or less-than-fee, acquisition for the NWR. The Plan Document itself contains specific property appraiser parcel identification numbers for parcels it will consider, as well as priority rankings for each property listed. The priorities, discussed and explained in the Plan Document, are the criteria by which acquisition decisions will be made. The Plan Document is available at the project website: <http://www.fws.gov/southeast/evergladesheadwaters/>.

If you have property listed in the Plan Document as being considered by the Service, or nearby, you should familiarize yourself with the project and its implications. A public comment period runs through October 24, 2011, and two public meetings are scheduled. The Service has released the attached flyer with information about the meetings and the comment period.

Dean Mead's Agribusiness Industry Team continues to monitor developments on the NWR project. If you have questions regarding the Plan Document, please contact Team Member Dennis Corrick in our Fort Pierce office at dcorrick@deanmead.com.

Public Hearings

We value your input. We have scheduled two Saturday public hearings to allow interested individuals sufficient opportunity to submit verbal comments.

1 - 5 pm on Saturday, September 24, 2011
South Florida Community College Theatre
for the Performing Arts
600 W. College Drive
Avon Park, FL 33825

1 - 5 pm on Saturday, October 1, 2011
Osceola Heritage Park
The Exhibition Building-Hall A
1901 Chief Osceola Trail
Kissimmee, FL 34744

The schedule is the same on both days. From 1-2 pm, there will be an Open House in which the Service will provide specific information and answer questions. The formal Public Hearing will start at 2 pm, during which speakers will be able to express their views on the proposal.

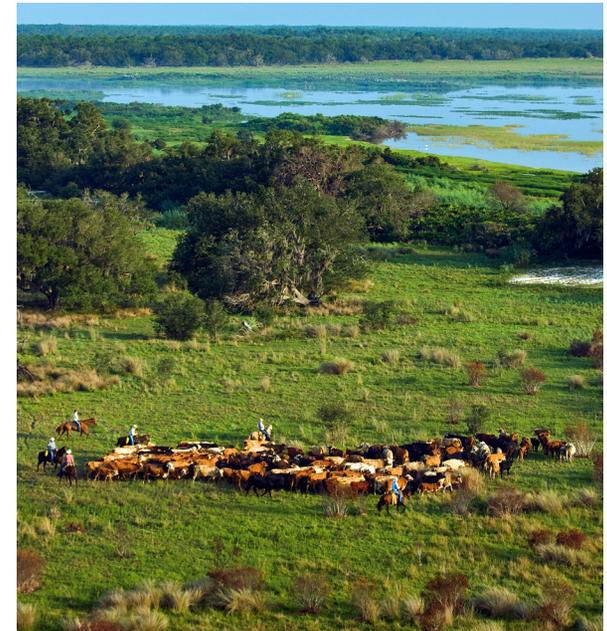
Anyone who needs reasonable accommodations in order to attend and participate in the public hearings should contact Cheri Ehrhardt at 321/861 2368 or cheri_ehrhardt@fws.gov as soon as possible. In order to allow sufficient time to process requests, please contact us for assistance no later than one week before the hearing.

Everglades Headwaters Proposal
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 26883
Titusville, FL 32781-2688



*Proposed Everglades Headwaters
National Wildlife Refuge and
Conservation Area*

Public Hearings and Comment Period



*All photos credit
Carlton Ward, Jr. /CarltonWard.com*

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is pleased to announce the availability of the Draft Land Protection Plan and Draft Environmental Assessment for public review and comment for the proposed establishment of the Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area.

The Proposal

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing a 100,000-acre Conservation Area and a 50,000-acre National Wildlife Refuge in the Kissimmee River Basin to connect existing conservation lands; create wildlife corridors; protect rare species; protect water quality, quantity, and storage; and provide opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation, while also supporting working ranches.

This is a voluntary program. The Service would work with willing landowners to purchase partial interest (e.g. conservation easements) in up to 100,000 acres for the proposed Conservation Area. Additionally, the Service would work with willing landowners to purchase up to 50,000 acres to create the proposed Refuge.

Landowners would be under no obligation to sell their property or interest in their property to the Service.

For more information, and to view a map of the locations identified by the Service for the proposed Refuge and Conservation Area, please go to www.fws.gov/southeast/evergladesheadwaters.



Submitting Comments

Verbal and written comments may be submitted at the public hearings.

You do not need to attend a public hearing to share your views with us. Written comments may also be submitted by:

- Email to EvergladesHeadwatersProposal@fws.gov
- Fax to 321/861 1276
- Mail to
Everglades Headwaters Proposal
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 2683
Titusville, FL 32781-2683

Please include your name and address in any comments submitted. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Deadline for Comments

Comments must be received by **October 24, 2011** to be considered in development of a final proposal.

Special Presentations

Time permitting, the Service will also consider requests from organizations for informational presentations during the public review and comment period. The Service would be able to share information and details about the proposed refuge and conservation area, but would be unable to accept verbal public comments at these meetings. However, written comments could be submitted to the Service representative. To request an informational presentation about the proposal, please contact cheri_ehrhardt@fws.gov or 321/861 2368.

Information, Questions and Documents

View information and the Draft Land Protection Plan and the Draft Environmental Assessment online at: <http://www.fws.gov/southeast/evergladesheadwaters>

Email questions or requests for paper or CD copies of the documents to: EvergladesHeadwatersProposal@fws.gov

Refer questions to: 321/861 2368

Request paper or CD copies of the documents by calling: 321/861 0667



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge *Alternative C - Planning Unit - Overview*

