

NOKOMIS CENTER REVITALIZATION

Project: POCONO TRAIL ENVIRONMENTAL LANDS (ENV-1)

Project Type: County and Community

Project and Background Description:

Nominate environmentally sensitive lands on Pocono Trail east of U.S. 41 to the County’s Environmentally Sensitive Lands Protection Program.

The Pocono Trail environmental lands site has significant native habitats on four contiguous parcels (8.4 acres ±) adjacent to Shakett Creek. The Pocono Trail site contains mangrove swamps, mesic hammocks, and scrubby flatwoods. These habitats are somewhat disturbed, but restorable. These are some of the few remaining native habitats in the Nokomis Center. The site has significant cultural resources and was the site of the historic Pollyanna Inn, which was demolished in the 1970s. The four parcels that contain the site are for sale and may be subject to development pressures, especially after the County installs water and sewer lines on U.S. 41 before the road is widened beginning in 2003.

If the property is not purchased for preservation and is subsequently developed, any new development would be reviewed consistent with the Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan, Apoxsee, “Principles for Evaluating Development Proposals in Native Habitats.” The Principles require new development to preserve environmentally sensitive lands, including wetlands, swamps, dry scrubs, scrubby flatwoods, and certain coastal habitats such as coastal hammocks, and to maintain both canopy and understory vegetation. Any land altering activity conducted on the property will require review and approval by County Historic Resources.

Preliminary Cost Estimates: To be determined through ESLPP.

Potential Funding Source(s):

Environmentally Sensitive Lands Protection Program (ESLPP), Florida Communities Trust, Conservation and Recreational Lands Program (CARL)

Implementation Time Frame: Short to long term, one to ten years.

Responsible Parties:

County Environmentally Sensitive Lands Oversight Committee (ESLOC), Environmental Services Natural Resources Protection

Steps Required to Implement:

- Contact owners for permission to access property.
- Prepare and submit an application to the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Protection Program (ESLPP).
- Natural Resources Protection staff conducts site visit and prepares staff report to the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Oversight Committee (ESLOC).
- ESLOC submits a recommendation to BCC.
- Establish funding.
- Seek additional funding from state and federal environmental protection and recreational lands programs.
- Prepare offer and contract negotiations for purchase.

Issues Requiring Further Analysis/Action:

1. Seek community based funding partners.

