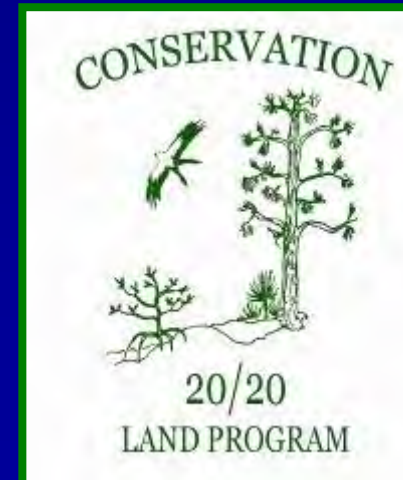


Conservation 20/20 Program and the Estero Bay Watershed

Cathy Olson

Lee County Department of Parks and Recreation

Conservation 20/20 Program



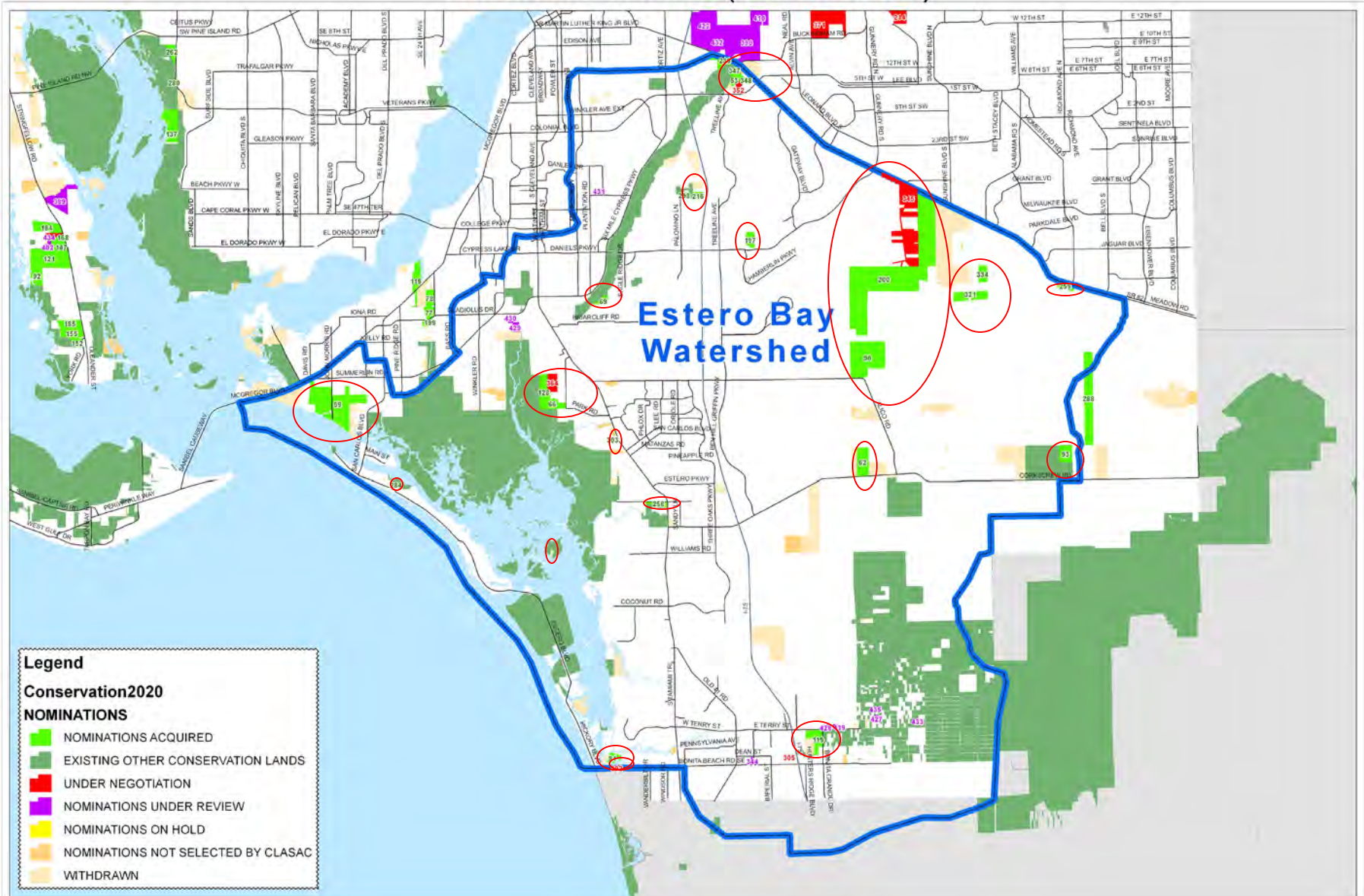
What is C20/20?

- Lee County's current environmentally sensitive land acquisition and stewardship program
- Other earlier County initiated programs include Six Mile Cypress Slough and Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW)

Lee County Conservation 20/20

- 18,859 acres
- 34 preserves
- 84 acquisitions
- 0.19 acres – 5620 acres in size

Estero Bay Watershed Conservation 2020 (June of 2008)



Legend

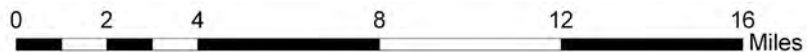
Conservation2020

NOMINATIONS

- NOMINATIONS ACQUIRED
- EXISTING OTHER CONSERVATION LANDS
- UNDER NEGOTIATION
- NOMINATIONS UNDER REVIEW
- NOMINATIONS ON HOLD
- NOMINATIONS NOT SELECTED BY CLASAC
- WITHDRAWN



This map is not a survey.
This map is for informational purposes only.
Lee County Parks & Recreation GIS
Created by: dcaiver@leegov.com
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C20/20 preserves in the Estero Bay Watershed

- **Currently: 4601 acres**
12 preserves
- **Negotiations: 645 acres**
6 preserves (all but one is
an addition to existing
conservation land)

Problems with Land Acquisition

- Lack of Connectivity
- Land owners unrealistic about price
- Competition for limited funding

How are C20/20 lands used?

- Natural areas
- Water recharge and storage
- Resource based recreation



Hydrologic improvements

- Estero Marsh: filter marsh creation
- Pine Lake Preserve: ditch plugging
- Mullock Creek: NIS plant removal and replanting to improve water quality
- Koreshan: FDOT pond site

Hydrologic restoration – Pasture restoration

- Imperial Marsh Preserve

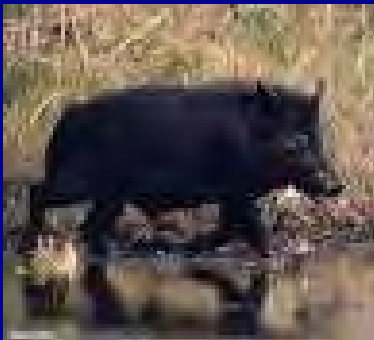


Hydrological Problems

- Funding for design and permitting
- Funding for restoration
- Urban areas

Non-indigenous invasive species (NIS) plants and animals

- Brazilian pepper, melaleuca, Australian pine, climbing fern, air potato etc.
- Feral hogs, feral cats, iguanas, Nile monitor lizards, pythons etc.



Why control NIS plants?

- Natural plant community function
- Native wildlife species
- Alterations to natural fire regimes
- Alteration of hydrological processes

Which method is the best?



NIS Plant Problems

- Vast number of species and coverage
- Priority of granting agencies may not mesh with what you have
- Grant funding for maintenance projects

NIS animals control

- Prioritize



NIS Animals

- Lack of funding (hogs, Nile monitors)
- Public perception
- Rules for hiring trappers too stringent for adequate competition

Boundary Control

- Dumping (junk, vegetative debris, animal waste)
- Fence cutting
- Motorized vehicles
- Palmetto berry harvest
- Poaching

Stewardship Activities – Prescribed Fire



Problems with Prescribed Fire

- Public perception: destroying the forest
- Smoke and ash
- Not enough days to burn

Nature-based Recreation

- Birding/ wildlife observation
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Canoe/kayak
- Photography



Problems with User Groups

- Competing interests
- Use may not be what is best for the land
- Balance positive public use with the natural areas

Problems: General public

- Why conserve and manage land?
- Difficulty conveying land stewardship tasks (fire, NIS removal, pine tree thinning, dead trees)
- Difficulty explaining to user groups that their “green” activity can’t be done in every situation

Ways to help with general problems

- Encourage more public ownership
- Provide more public use
- Encourage volunteers
- Public outreach and advertising
- Encourage research

How is this all funded?

- C20/20 fund is used to match grants and fund small projects
- SFWMD, CHNEP, USFWS, DEP, LWCF, RTP, state appropriations...
- Mitigation for public projects: LDOT, cities etc.
- Lee County projects: NRD, LCDOT
- Trustee labor

Partnerships

- Within the department
- Within the County government
- With other local governments
- With state and federal agencies
- With local non profits
- With user groups

Lee County Parks and Recreation

Conservation 20/20 program

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Fort Myers, FL 33916

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