FLORIDA FOREVER RESOLUTION

The Osceola County Board of County Commissioners unanimously passed a resolution at their January 22nd, 2007 Board meeting supporting the continued funding of the State of Florida’s “Florida Forever Program”. Florida Forever is the premier land preservation and community park program, preserving over one million acres since 1990.

The program is scheduled to sunset in 2010, however, land preservation needs continue to be a priority with Florida’s citizens as growth and urban sprawl threaten wildlife habitat, water resources our agricultural industry along with Florida’s long term sustainable future.

The Florida Forever Program through Florida Communities Trust has provided Osceola County acquisition funding for over 2,800 acres of natural and environmentally sensitive lands including Lake Lizzie Nature Preserve, Shingle Creek Nature Preserve, Split Oak Nature Preserve, Makinson Island Nature Preserve and Paradise Island.

For additional information on this program, the resolution and County Parks & Preserves, please contact the Osceola County Parks & Recreation Department at 407-343-7173.

SHINGLE CREEK PRESERVE CONTINUES TO GROW!

A “group effort” truly describes the Shingle Creek Preserve Regional Park & Acquisition project. The group includes the Osceola County’s Environmental Lands Conservation Program; City of Kissimmee; South FL Water Management District; FL Communities Trust along with assistance from the Trust for Public Lands (TPL).

The goal of the group is to create a 33-mile recreational trail along Shingle Creek Preserve, which extends from Orange County to Lake Tohopekaliga in Kissimmee.

The newest purchases are the “Ruba Tract”, a 16.14 acres parcel along Shingle Creek Preserve, located on the corner of US Hwy 192 & Yates Rd in Kissimmee and the Randy Yates Property 5.782 acres located on the west side of the Creek off of Yates Road.

Both of these properties play a key role in development of the Shingle Creek Preserve, which will ultimately offer natural land and waterway corridor to the public for historical and cultural preservation and passive recreation, like hiking, fishing, canoeing and kayaking.
Osceola County Board of County Commissioners has created the Lakes Management Advisory Committee (LMAC), an advisory committee organized to provide the citizens of Osceola County with representation to the Board of County Commissioners about various issues concerning the county's lakes, ponds, and riverine systems.

The first meeting will be Thursday, April 12, 2007 at 5:30 p.m. in room # 4727 of the Osceola County Administration Building, located at 1 Courthouse Square in Kissimmee. All meetings will be on the 2nd Thursday of each month and the public is encouraged to attend. For more information, contact Kimberly Lawrence, Lakes Management Specialist, at 407-343-2600.

Schedule of events: The first lake clean up volunteer opportunity will be at 8:00 am on April 21st for East Lake, Boggy Creek, Ajay, C-31 Canal and Runnymede. Watch the newspapers for a lake clean up in May for the Alligator Chain of Lakes. For more details or schedule your own clean up event call 407-343-6599.

"Paddling on Shingle Creek"

Back in 1970 a Wisconsin's Senator, Gaylord Nelson thought it would be good to set aside a day, April 22 to sit down & seriously discuss environmental problems. Here we are 37 years later doing more than just discussing, we are actively working towards “Keeping Osceola Beautiful!”

“Keeping Osceola Beautiful” will include an organized celebration of Earth Day on April 21st. The fun begins at 8:00 a.m. when everyone will break into teams tackling such activities as planting trees at various County Parks or conducting land & lake litter clean ups. At 11:30 a.m. all volunteers will gather to stroll through educational displays celebrating Earth Day and volunteers are invited to share lunch.

For individual and group volunteer sign-up, booth opportunities and general event information contact the Osceola County Parks & Recreation Department at 407-343-7173 or visit Osceola.org.
Florida Trail Association Annual Conference

■ Who: The Florida Trail Association’s Annual Conference
■ What: Open to the public. Attendees will learn about hiking and other outdoor activities and conservation.
■ When & Where: 2 PM Friday, March 16 through noon, Sunday, March 18 at the Florida Elks Youth Camp, Umatilla, FL
■ Why: Two days of workshops, demonstrations, seminars, speakers, field trips, and other activities. Featured speakers will be Mike DeWitt, Tampa Tribune journalist, who is currently hiking the entire National Scenic Trail; Fran Mainella, recently retired Director of the National Park Service; outdoor authors Johnny Molloy, and Sue & Rich Freeeman; and filmmaker Robert Seidler
■ How: Contact: FTA office, 1-877-HIKE-FLA, or see the FTA web site www.florida trail.org for more information.

Step Up, Osceola Event

■ Who: The Step Up, Osceola, apart of the Step Up, Florida-On Our Way to Healthy Living, is partnering with the Festival of Rhythm and Blues.
■ When & Where: February 25, 2007, 11:00 am – 5:00 pm at the Kissimmee Lakefront Park in Downtown Kissimmee
■ Why: The “Step Up, Florida-On Our Way to Healthy Living” is a statewide promotional campaign issued by the Florida Department of Health, which promotes physical activity and healthy lifestyles for Floridians of all abilities. Visit www.stepupflorida.org for more details.
■ How: To register, for both individual and company participation, please contact Candice Roberson by Feb 16, 2007 at 407-343-2076 or e-mail to Candice_roberson@doh.state.fl.us.

Florida Master Naturalist Freshwater Uplands Training

■ Who: The University of Florida IFAS Extension is offering this 40-hour environmental educational opportunity for Florida Master Naturalist Freshwater Uplands Training.
■ When & Where: April 18, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, Ext. Services - Osceola Heritage Park
■ Why: This 6-day educational program is designed to educate attendees about Florida’s natural environment.
■ How: Contact Eleanor Foerste at 321-697-3000 or efoe@osceola.org to inquire about registering.
TRAIL TIP
• Take a small plastic bag with you. Use it to sit on or hold litter you pick up along the trail.
• Always take drinking water with you and tell someone else where you will be using trails.
- Eleanor Foerste

EVENT WATCH
Keep your eyes open for the Alligator Chain of Lakes Clean up. The date is set for May 5th, and the areas will include Alligator Lake, Center, Coon, Trout, and Lizzie. For details please check out the ALCHA website at www.alcha.org or contact Mark Daniel at mdaniel@totalpcs.net or contact Mark Daniel at mdaniel@totalpcs.net or call 407-908-6611.

COMING IN MAY ISSUE
• First “Feet”ured Trail including map
• Update on Shingle Creek to the Master Plan
• Land Conservation Advisory Board’s role

CONTRIBUTORS
Kp Clements
Pete Durnell
Eleanor Foerste
Debbie Geer
Kimberly Lawrence
Randy Mathews
Cheryl McQuiston
Bob Mindick
Julia Recker
Candice Roberson

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY
20 Greenways & Trails Meeting - Extension Serives @ OHP, 10:30 AM, 407-846-4181
25 Step Up Osceola, Part of Step Up, Florida-On Our Way to Healthy Living! Kissimmee Lakefront Park, in Dowtown Kissimmee, 11:00am - 5:00pm, Candice Roberson, 407-343-2076, candiceroberson@doh.state.fl.us. Visit stepupflorida.org for more details.
26 Woods Walk - The Woods Walk is offered through the U of F Extension Services. Makinson Island, 8:30am meet at Kissimmee Lakefront Park Boat Ramp, Cindy at 321-697-3000 or crut@osceola.org. Registration is Required, Open to the Public.

Tues & Thurs SCPP Evening Run/Walk - St. Cloud Pavement Pounders has over 50 members. O’Doherty’s Irish Pub downtown St. Cloud. Mike Snyder @ 407-791-3296 or mcitation525@aol.com. For more details visit StCloudPavementPounders.com.

MARCH
6 LCAB Advisory Board Meetings - Land Conservation Advisory Board, Admin Building, 1 Court House Sq, 4th Floor, Conf #4727, 5:30 PM, 407-962-1311, Open to the Public.
7 Woods Walk - The Woods Walk is offered through the U of F Extension Services. Lake Lizzie North Loop, 8:30am at Tractor Supply or North Entrance at 9am Registration is Required. Call Cindy at 321-697-3000 or crut@osceola.org. Open to the Public.
13 Woods Walk - The Woods Walk is offered through the U of F Extension Services. Three Lakes Wildlife Mang Area, 8:30am at Tractor Supply or 9am at Entrance off Canoe Creek Road. Registration is Required. Call Cindy at 321-697-3000 or crut@osceola.org. Open to the Public.
16-18 FL Trail Assoc Annual Conference - Two-Days of activities including featured speakers, field trips and demonstrations, FL Ellis Youth Camp, Umatilla, FL, 2 pm Fri - Noon Sun, FTA Office at 1-877-HIKE-FLA or visit floridatrail.org.
20 Greenways & Trails Meeting - Extension Serives @ OHP, 10:30 AM, 407-846-4181.

Tues & Thurs SCPP Evening Run/Walk - St. Cloud Pavement Pounders. O’Doherty’s Irish Pub downtown St. Cloud, 6:15 Run and 6:30 Walk, Mike Snyder @ 407-791-3296 or mcitation525@aol.com. For more details visit StCloudPavementPounders.com.

APRIL
3 LCAB Advisory Board Meetings - Land Conservation Advisory Board, Admin Building, 1 Court House Sq, 4th Floor, Conf #4727, 5:30 PM, 407-962-1311, Open to the Public.
12 Lakes Management Advisory Committee (LMAC) - Osc. Co. Admin Building Rm #4727, 5:30 PM, Kimberly Lawrence, 407-343-2600, All meetings are the 2nd Thurs. of each month & open to the public.
17 Greenways & Trails Meeting - Extension Serives @ OHP, 10:30 AM, 407-846-4181.
18 FL Master Naturalist Freshwater Uplands Training Day 1 - Continued Education offered through the U of F Extension Services, @ OHP, 8:30 - 4:30pm, Eleanor Foerste at 321-697-3000 or efoe@osceola.org, Visit http://masternaturalist.org for more details. Class meets April 18, 25 May 2, 9, 16 & 23, and registration fee applies.

21 Earth Day - Various Volunteer Opportunities, E. Lake, Boggy Creek, Ajay, C-31 Canal, Runnymede, 8:00:00 AM - Noon, Osceola County Parks & Rec at 407-343-7173, For more details visit Osceola.org.

MAY
1 LCAB Advisory Board Meetings - Land Conservation Advisory Board, Admin Building, 1 Court House Sq, 4th Floor, Conf #4727, 5:30 PM, 407-962-1311, Open to the Public.
5 March of Dimes Walk America - Fund Raiser for the March of Dimes with a three mile walk, Kissimmee Lakefront Park, 7am. Jenni Ishman 407-599-5077 ext. 38 or e-mail jishman@marchofdimes.com. Registration at 7am, Walk begins at 8am.
10 Lakes Management Advisory Committee (LMAC) - Osc. Co. Admin Building Rm #4727, 5:30 PM, Kimberly Lawrence, 407-343-2600, All meetings are the 2nd Thurs. of each month & open to the public.
15 Greenways & Trails Meeting - Extension Serives @ OHP, 10:30 AM, 407-846-4181.

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