# Public Meeting

# Proposed Conceptual Public Access Plan Summary for Sykes Creek Management Area Plan

## Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands Program

## May 7, 2019 – 6:00 PM

## Sams House at Pine Island

**6195 North Tropical Trail**

**Merritt Island, Florida 32953**

### PRESENTATION

**Public Access Plan Approval Process and Opportunities for Public Comment**

* The purpose of this meeting is to present the Proposed Public Access plan for the Sykes Creek Management area to the Public.
* This is the first of many opportunities where the public has a chance to comment on the plan.
* The comments gathered here will be incorporated into the Public Access Plan. From there, it will be reviewed by the Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program’s Recreation and Education Advisory Committee (REAC).
* Upon “support” of this Management Plan from the REAC, this Public Access plan will be incorporated into the draft Sanctuary Management Plan and presented to the Brevard County EEL Program’s Selection and Management Committee for “approval”.
* All Committee Meetings are advertised and open to the public.

**EEL Program Mission Statement**

* Protect and preserve biological diversity through responsible stewardship of Brevard County’s natural resources.

**EEL Program Vision Statement**

* Acquire, protect and maintain environmentally endangered lands guided by scientific principles of conservation and the best available practices for resource stewardship and ecosystem management.
* Protect the rich biological diversity of Brevard County for future generations.
* Provide passive recreation and environmental education opportunities to Brevard’s citizens and visitors without detracting from the primary conservation goals of the Program.
* Encourage active citizen participation and community involvement.

**A Valuable Public Asset**

* EEL Program Sanctuaries protect nearly 27,000 acres of wildlife habitat.
* There are over 60 miles of trails and boardwalks.
* Many first-class public amenities and facilities.

**Serving the Greater Good**

* Improved quality of life.
* Increased property values.
* Good physical and mental health.
* Fun and quality family time.
* Ambassador for natural resources.
* Learning and education opportunities.

**Brevard County EEL Program Regions and Managed Acres**

* Central Region
  + 3,530 acres – Region Total
  + 1,227 acres – Ulumay Wildlife Sanctuary
  + 99 acres – Johnson Property
  + 880 acres – Pine Island Conservation Area
  + 338 acres – Thousand Island Conservation Area
  + 168 acres – Hellen and Allen Cruickshank Sanctuary
  + 21 acres – Capron Ridge Sanctuary
* North Region – 5,226 acres
* South Region – 9,323 acres
* South Beaches Region – 387 acres

**Some of the Protected Species within Sykes Creek Management Area Boundaries**

**Gopher Tortoise** (*Gopherus Polyphemus)*

Listed by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWCC) as “Threatened”. Found mainly in the southeastern portion of the Kabboord Wildlife Sanctuary.

**Bald Eagle** (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus)*

Protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, along with the State Bald Eagle Rule. No known nests but are known to nest in the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge.

**Gopher Mouse** (*podomys floridanus)*

Delisted by FWCC but included in their Imperiled Species Management Plan. Endemic to central Florida. Uses gopher tortoise burrows.

**Eastern Indigo Snake** (*Drymarchon coras couperi)*

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) status “Threatened”. Habitat includes pine flatwoods, hammocks and tortoise burrows. Known to occur on Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge.

**Level of Use, One of Three Categories**

**Pine Island Conservation Area is defined by the Sanctuary Management Manual as a Category One site.**  Chosen for accessibility. Extensive public access. Follows American’s with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Guidelines. Includes Education Programs and Centers.

**Johnson, Ulumay, and Kabboord Sanctuaries are Category Two Sites.** Intermediate use. ADA access where feasible and appropriate. Minimal capital investment. Limited facilities (open shelters, kiosks, trail signs, etcetera.

**Proposed Conceptual Public Access Plan Summary**

There are no proposed changes to:

* Existing kayak or hiking trails at the Ulumay Wildlife Sanctuary.
* The public access for the Johnson Property of the Kabboord Wildlife Sanctuary due to the close proximity of Kings Park on Hall Road, run by Brevard County Parks and Recreation.
* Current sanctuary regulations.

There are proposed upgrades to:

* The existing kayak landings at the Ulumay Wildlife Sanctuary.

There are no proposed additions to any of the three Sanctuaries within the Sykes Creek Management Plan Area.

**Questions, Comments, Copies or Recommendations**

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**EEL Program**

[**https://www.brevardfl.gov/EELProgram/Home**](https://www.brevardfl.gov/EELProgram/Home)