



South Florida Audubon Society

Annual report to the Regional Conservation Council

September 28, 2009

In as much as the South Florida area has become regionalized, Broward County Audubon Society has changed its name to South Florida Audubon Society to reflect the regionalization and to encourage participation from people throughout South Florida, both in SFAS and in the Audubon groups in their individual areas.

In an effort to establish a county-wide wildlife policy for Broward County, SFAS is asking County and State environmental groups to be represented in a “Wildlife Policy Coalition” to study legal ramifications of the policy itself and ways to implement such a policy.

In the policy, a clause stipulates that the unofficial UDB line that runs the US 27, I-75 and Sawgrass Expressway corridors be adopted as the official UDB of Broward County. Although most of the area bounded by these corridors is aquatic, there have been attempts to build beyond this line. One such attempt, The Everglades Corporate Park in the City of Sunrise, was deterred earlier in the year, largely through the efforts of SFAS and a conscientious City of Sunrise commissioner.

Another attempt to build in one of the few remaining hardwood hammocks in Broward County at the Cocomar Plaza in Coconut Creek was blocked through the efforts of SFAS in cooperation with other environmental groups and a citizen’s group made up of residents of the surrounding area. This would have nearly eradicated the hammock with a less than 1:1 mitigation area.

SFAS has reached an agreement in principle with Port Everglades officials regarding the release of the 8.7 acres of the conservation easement that currently protects a mangrove swamp within the confines of the Port, in exchange for a 2:1 mitigation area and a new conservation easement over the expanded area, that is to be deeded to FDEP and to a

third party such as AOF or the Nature Conservancy. The idea is to keep the Port administration from piecemeal development of the protected area in perpetuity.

SFAS has held several events including “Water Matters Day”, “Give Thanks for the Environment Day”, and several middle school outings in cooperation with “Project Perch”, which was founded and is being very competently managed by SFAS general member Kelly Heffernan, who began the project as a census taking endeavor.

Project Perch is dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of Florida Burrowing Owl habitat found on Broward County school grounds, city and county parks, playgrounds and sports complexes and the goal has been to preserve and improve the habitat of the Florida Burrowing Owl and to educate the students in the stewardship of the owl habitat in concurrence with the guidelines of the FWC.

Educational materials have been provided at all gatherings, for adults as well as students, regarding the work of SFAS in the fields of advocacy espoused by AOF and National Audubon.

SFAS has three sitting board members and one former board member on the Broward County Climate Change Task Force “Greenhouse Gas Reduction Sub-committee”, which is chaired by SFAS President Doug Young; the input from SFAS has been met with favor and acceptance. Recommendations to this point have been geared toward development and utilization of mass transit through a Regional Transit Authority separate from the Commissions of Broward, Palm Beach and Miami – Dade Counties, single stream recycling, eco-friendly building and increased urban forestry.

Public Service Announcements are appearing on television to educate the public as to the benefits of mass transit at the recommendation of the GHGR sub-committee and more will be appearing regarding the establishment of a dedicated source of funding for the RTA.

The fight against runway expansion at FLL is ongoing, but currently, very little is happening, pending the lawsuit the Cities of Dania Beach and Hollywood have filed against the FAA.

SFAS is proud to be affiliated with the Everglades Coalition as the effort to protect what is left of the Everglades and to restore what is restorable continues. The more voices speaking about the salvation of the Everglades, the better our chances of being heard.

In the accomplishments of the SFAS, I am exhilarated most by the protection of the mangrove stand at Port Everglades. The reduction in mangroves worldwide for aquatic farming and palm oil plantations is contributing to salt water intrusion of the world’s aquifers and to the pollution of the world’s waterways, through the loss of the natural filtering capability of mangroves, as well as the loss of storm protection they provide. Rather than destroying mangroves, we should be planting more wherever possible.

Everyone wants clean air, clean water and green space, but it takes independent research and tough-minded advocacy to win concrete results for our environment, especially when powerful interests stand in the way of environmental needs. SFAS focuses intently on protecting Florida's air, water and open space. We continue to speak out and take action at the local, state and national levels to improve the quality of our environment and our lives.

Grant Campbell

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Grant Campbell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "G".

South Florida Audubon Society
Director of Wildlife Policy
Conservation Chair