



Legislation Text

File #: 20-0857, **Version:** 1

Agenda Item Name:

Request Approval to Restore Western Shoreline Except for Up to 300' for Public Access in an Area that has been Historically Clear on George's Pond for Cuscowilla Recreation Opportunities

Presenter:

Jason Maurer, 352-213-4796

Description:

Request Approval to Restore Western Shoreline Except for Up to 300' for Public Access in an Area that has been Historically Clear on George's Pond for Cuscowilla Recreation Opportunities

Recommended Action:

Approve Management Plan to Restore Western Shoreline Except for Up to 300' for Public Access in an Area that has been Historically Clear on George's Pond for Cuscowilla Recreation Opportunities.

Make Legislative Finding that Permitting this Use will further the natural values and functions of the lake and lake buffer by allowing all but up to 300 feet of previously impacted buffer of the lake to restore and revegetate naturally. To help further this restoration effort, the County may periodically remove invasive non-native vegetation along the buffer in the lake or plant native vegetation along the buffer.

Prior Board Motions:

N/A

Fiscal Consideration:

Existing staff will use existing equipment and new equipment that has been approved for purchase in FY21. There are no additional expenses related to this addition, occasional mowing and there is sufficient budget in FY21 for this to occur.

Background:

Parks and Open Space is requesting approval to control exotic (non-native invasive) vegetative and maintain up to 300' of herbaceous vegetation on the Cuscowilla shoreline of George's Pond to allow recreational opportunities such as canoeing, kayaking and fishing. Sec. 406.50 of our Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) permits Alachua County Environmental Protection to authorize up to 50', therefore, Commission approval is necessary under Section 406.06 (c), activities authorized by County approved management plan, to allow additional impacts to the lake for such a public purpose.

Historically and under previous ownership, 300 feet of Cuscowilla shoreline was maintained and used for recreational purposes. There are no trees and the majority of the herbaceous vegetation in this area consists of exotic (non-native) invasive vegetation. Staff is requesting to re-establish and

maintain this area in the public interest for canoeing, kayaking and fishing.

The management strategy and plan is to mow up to 300' shoreline on a regular basis during the summer months and as needed during the rest of the year and control aquatic vegetation on the lake so that patrons can safely access and recreate on the lake. No regulated trees will be removed and no areas that were not historically maintained for this purpose will be impacted. Because of the historic impacts and the extensive non-native vegetation in this area that is going to be controlled as part of this plan, no mitigation is necessary. However, staff is already intending to plant additional trees and vegetation at the park to increase tree canopy cover and re-vegetate some areas that have been cleared of vegetation. Parks and Open Space staff will work closely with Environmental Protection staff on this project to limit impacts to the lake and other regulated natural resources.