

BRIAN J. MAST
21st DISTRICT, FLORIDA

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0918

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August 23, 2024

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
Governor,
The State of Florida
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399

The Honorable Alissa Lotane
Director
Florida Division of Historical Resources
500 South Bronough Street, M.S. 4
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Mara Gambineri,
Chair
Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC)
3900 Commonwealth Blvd., MS 100
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Lynetta Usher Griner
Vice Chair
Griner Usher Land & Timber, Inc.
P.O. Box 1819
Chiefland, FL 32644

The Honorable Shawn Hamilton
Secretary
Department of Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Blvd., M.S. 144
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Bill Palmer, Ph.D., President
Tall Timbers Research Station & Land
Conservancy
13093 Henry Beadel Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32312

The Honorable George Warthen,
Chief Conservation Officer
Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
620 South Meridian Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Elva Peppers
President
Florida Environmental and Land Services,
Inc.
221-4 Delta Court
Tallahassee, FL 32303

The Honorable Rick Dolan,
Director
Florida Fire Service
3125 Conner Boulevard, Room 228
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor DeSantis and members of the ARC,

The communities around Jonathan Dickinson State Park are owed a public comment meeting in good faith with members of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC). It is the ARC that will actually vote on whether golf courses and hotels will be built in our park and the public deserves the ability to make their voice heard.

Currently, FDEP is proposing to hold an hour-long public comment period between 3 pm and 4 pm on Tuesday, August 27, 2024. This is absolutely ridiculous, especially as not one of the seven voting ARC members will be in attendance to engage with the public. We believe every voting

member of ARC must attend a public comment meeting before taking any action regarding the proposal.

It is also imperative that FDEP give the citizens of Palm Beach and Martin counties every opportunity to have their voices heard on the topic. An hour-long meeting on a weekday afternoon when most people are at work will not suffice. Instead, the communities of Martin and Palm Beach counties are prepared to offer ARC and FDEP venues that can accommodate significantly more people.

It is the expectation of the community, and the government officials signed onto this letter that all comments are heard, and questions be answered. We propose one meeting in Stuart and one in Jupiter, both for as long as it takes to hear all concerns.

Each community is free to organize the time and location of the meeting, but we believe that credibility is also being taken from this process by conducting this public comment in August when many citizens of our community are absent. We therefore encourage you to postpone any public comment or vote to move forward with the project until after Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,



Brian Mast
U.S. Representative



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Rick Scott
U.S. Senator



Gayle Herrell
Florida Senator



John Snyder
Florida Representative



Toby Overdorf
Florida Representative



Doug Smith
Martin County
Commissioner



Stacey Hetherington
Martin County
Commissioner



Harold Jenkins
Martin County
Commissioner



Sarah Heard
Martin County
Commissioner



Ward Ciampi
Martin County
Commissioner



Don Donaldson
Martin County
County
Administrator



Maria Sachs
Palm Beach County
Mayor



Maria Marino
Palm Beach County
Vice Mayor



Michael Barnett
Palm Beach County
Commissioner