Land Development Code
Section 804 Critical Linkages
BACKGROUND

• August 2000 Settlement Agreement required modifications to the Comprehensive Plan.

• Pasco County initiated a study to evaluate establishment of wildlife corridors.

• In 2002, a wildlife study commissioned by Pasco County was completed.

• Study recommended protection through acquisition, regulation, and partnerships.
BACKGROUND

• Recommendations supported a regional approach to natural resource protection which included critical linkages, ecological planning units, improved wetland and listed species protection, land acquisition, and partnerships with other agencies.

• Study resulted in County amendment to Comprehensive Plan adopting a countywide conservation strategy.
BACKGROUND

Since BCC acceptance of the Habitat Study in March 2002, many of these recommendations have been implemented:

• Development of a regional conservation strategy as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.
• BCC appointed an Environmental Task Force to assist with the formation the Environmental Lands Acquisition and Management Program.
• ELAMP was created in 2005.
BACKGROUND

• Improved wetland and listed species rules adopted in 2007 focusing on regional wetland resources and species protection
• Increased coordination with state and federal agencies on various wetland mitigation initiatives
• Acquisition of approximately 3,300 acres of environmentally sensitive lands
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
GOAL CON 1: REGIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY

*Protect, conserve, enhance, and manage* the natural land and water resources of Pasco County through a regional conservation strategy that protects the most significant natural resources of the County through a combination of standards for specified critical linkages, land acquisition, land use strategies, managing and preserving public lands, land use policies, wetlands, and water resources.
CRITICAL LINKAGES

• Habitat Study identified seven critical linkages between tracts of publicly owned parcels.

• Linkages connect core conservation areas.

• Width varies from 550’ to 2,200 depending on: distance between tracts connecting public lands; extent of alteration of natural linkages; and nature of riparian corridor.

• Total linkage acreage is approximately 7,000 acres.
LINKAGES AND THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE

• In 2008 staff prepared a draft Critical Linkage ordinance and presented workshops across the County.

• Various elements and incentives were incorporated in the draft ordinance, addressing stakeholder property rights and concerns.

• Examples include: Density Transfer, Linkage Boundary Modification and Compensation in Lieu of Density Transfer

• Critical Linkage ordinance adoption was postponed in 2008
TODAY

• Comprehensive Plan Policy CON 1.2.2 that outlines development standards currently requires that the LDC be amended by 2010 to adopt implementation measures.

• ELAMP has actively been purchasing areas identified in Study (in accordance with ELASC and BCC process) - investment to date approximately $17M

• The 2\textsuperscript{nd} Penny for Pasco approved an additional 10 years of funding for ELAMP
TODAY

• Recent Urban Land Institute (ULI) report recommended the continued conservation and natural resources protection efforts

• Cost of areas identified in the Study for acquisition exceed projected revenues.

• A reasonable and practical regulatory component is necessary to achieve County’s conservation strategy goals.
DRAFT ORDINANCE KEY POINTS

• Achieves County’s conservation strategy through protection of identified critical linkages
• Applicability is triggered by increase in density
• Incentives:
  ❑ Density Transfer
  ❑ Linkage Boundary Modifications
  ❑ Compensation in lieu of Density Transfer
Density Transfer

Allows density transfer from land inside the Critical Linkage [sending area] to land onsite or offsite outside of the Critical Linkage [receiving area].
Linkage Boundary Modifications

Movement must maintain **width**, ecological **function** and **connectivity** to publicly owned parcels; no negative impact to adjacent owners.
Linkage Boundary Modifications

• May be reduced because some areas are highly disturbed along edge of linkage
• May be reduced because land within linkage receives score below 25 using site selection scoring in Guidelines
Compensation in Lieu of Density Transfer

• Unutilized transferable density within a linkage may be eligible for compensation by the County.

• Compensation will be based on the average of (2) appraisals of land within the linkage.
SCHEDULE

- Public Presentations (May/June)
- Local Planning Agency Hearing (early July)
- Comp Plan Map Amendment (July)
- Two Board Public Hearings (late August)
Purpose

• Protecting, Conserving and Managing the County Natural Resources are major goals of the County’s Strategic Plan and Business Plan.

• The habitat Study recommended protection of linkages through acquisition, partnerships and regulation.

• A significant investment to date has been made.

• Having no current regulatory component concerning Critical Linkages threatens the chances of achieving the County’s conservation objectives.

• 76% of Pasco electors supported Water and Land Amendment

• Linkages are built-in amenities (ie. trails, open space, etc.) for existing and future residents.
Purpose

• Conservation areas increase property values.

• The Urban Land Institute report recommended an increase in natural resource and open space protection.

• Environmental Stewardship is a necessary element of strategic development.

• The draft Parks Master Plan incorporates critical linkages as Greenways and Blueways.

• Supports numerous ecosystem services such as clean air, clean water, flood protection, erosion control, carbon sequestration, jobs and recreational opportunities.
Florida 2060
A Population Distribution Scenario for the State of Florida

A research project prepared for
1000 Friends of Florida

By the
GeoPlan Center
At the University of Florida

Paul D. Zwick
Margaret H. Carr

August 15, 2006
QUESTIONS?