



Environmentally Sensitive Lands Oversight Committee
Conservation Charlotte is a program of Charlotte County Government

March 16, 2026

Community Services/Centennial Park
Large Administration Conference Room
1120 Centennial Boulevard
Port Charlotte, FL 33953

Members Present: Linda Cotherman
Christina Gonzales
Stephen Kalaf
Shaun O'Rourke – Chair

County Staff: Tina Powell
Jamie Scudera
Jamie Boies
Jason Thompson
Kalvin Bernard
Cal Keene
Morgan Cook

Call to Order / Roll Call:

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair Shaun O'Rourke. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from the September 25, 2025, meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved as submitted.

Old Business:

Conservation Charlotte Renewal 2026 – Mrs. Powell let us know that the Trust For Public Land is doing some work on behalf of the County, including outreach and research. They will present it to the Board once it's complete for additional direction.

New Business:

New Members welcome – The committee welcomed new members including Linda Cotherman and Christina Gonzalez, and our current members re-introduce themselves.

Attendance Policy – The attendance policy for the ESLOC committee was reviewed and copies of the policy were given to all members.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair – Linda Cotherman made a motion to appoint Shaun O’Rourke as Chair. Christina Gonzales seconded the motion. Motion passed. Linda Cotherman made a motion to appoint Stephen Kalaf as Vice Chair. Christina Gonzales seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Sunshine Law review and acknowledgement – The committee watched the Sunshine Law video provided by the Attorney’s Office and then signed their acknowledgement forms.

County-Wide Scrub Jay Survey – Ms. Scudera provided information on the County-Wide Scrub Jay survey conducted by IVA. They visited 1,901 points within the county, did almost 10,000 total site visits with 25 field technicians, and recorded a total of 254 positive confirmations in scrub-jay identified areas. Discussion on the data and future population ensued.

Site Nomination Presentations – The committee reviewed presentations of sites that were nominated via Conservation Charlotte and then assessed by the County. The sites presented include file numbers: 2025-01, 2025-03, 2026-24, 2026-25, and 2026-27. Packets were handed out to members and guests that included definition of rankings via the Ordinance, as well as nomination tracking sheets. Mrs. Powell reminded members that there is approximately 7 million dollars for acquisition. Members of the public were present and discussed some of the nominated sites.

Staff Reports:

Land Management – Mr. Thompson stated Land Management has partnered with state and local fire departments to implement burns in the near future. LM has been conducting exotic-invasive workdays at Cedar Point in conjunction with CHEC. Mr. Thompson continues to provide updates on the work LM has been doing. Linda Cotherman requested a copy of the Thorton Key management plan.

HCP – Ms. Scudera provided charts on the Scrub Jay HCP and has asked Real Estate Services to reach out to property owners of environmentally sensitive lands next to property the County already owns for potential acquisition.

Coastal – Ms. Scudera reported on the final numbers on sea turtles for the year and handed out data for committee review. She also reported that there has been challenge in getting a monitor for Little Gasparilla Island.

Managers Comments – Mrs. Powell reports that the department has been busy with site nominations and the renewal process for Conservation Charlotte.

Member Comments – Linda Cotherman expressed excitement to be on the committee. She also requested a key map on future presentations.

Christina Gonzales expressed excitement and gratitude to be on the committee.

Shaun O'Rourke requested adding Citizen Input as an agenda item for future meetings. He also discussed filling the last vacancy of ESLOC, of which we need an environmental expert.

Stephen Kalaf inquired into changing the time of our meetings. We will discuss it at the next meeting.

Suggested topics for new business:

-Potentially changing the ESLOC meeting time

Advisory Board Open Discussion:

Shaun O'Rourke made a motion to adjourn. Stephen Kalaf seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.

Submitted by: Cal Keene
Community Services Department