

## **Collier County All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Proposed Park Site Feedback and**

### **Comments Obtained From Attendees**

***(These comments in no way reflect the view of Collier County Government)***

#### **Obtained during the All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Park Site Public Information Meeting**

##### **Staff Notes and Comments From Attendees - September 28, 2011**

1. During the meeting it was stated that the initiative to find a site is now in the County's hands not South Florida Water Management District as it was prior. An agreement was reached and \$3 million was given to the county by South Florida Water Management District (SWFMD) to use towards an ATV Park.
2. South Florida Water Management District is not trying to locate a property for use any longer. They will, however, be involved in any future permitting.
3. Dade County and Collier County attempted to provide an ATV Park at the Jetport but this was not successful due to environmental issues.
4. Instead of the proposed 640 acres, riders are now stating that anywhere from 640-1200 acres is a much better snap shot at what is needed in order to run the ATV Park effectively without over capacity issues.
5. Staff mentioned that they could possibly look into doing a phased approach and start with 600-700 acres and then expand, if able. This depends on land availability.
6. Collier County has over one million acres and a great amount of that is owned by South Florida Water Management District. ATV riders want to approach them for more land, primarily watershed lands.
7. East Bonita – There is an area that is currently being used already by ATV's. South Florida Water Management District owns it.
8. Future Meetings – ID maps for clarity of availability and South Florida Water Management District lands. Big Cypress Basin?
9. Focus on a particular area of the County that holds most promise? Don't look at areas and land that has no chance at being selected.
10. Make sure to get permitting agencies buy-in when planning.
11. Check Watershed Management Plans when planning and looking for land.
12. 74% of the riders want the ATV Park located in Collier County.
13. 25% of the riders would be okay if the ATV Park was in a neighboring County.
14. When looking for a site we have to also be aware of decibel levels around development areas?
15. These areas were mentioned as possible areas of interest by attendees and staff: Wilson/Benfield Roadway, East 951, Sable Palm Road (good point is it is close to a hospital), 6 L's Farm, SWFMD lands, Pepper Ranch (just a percent of the acreage), Property off 82, Lake Trafford site (problem is arsenic was found there), North I-75 West of the Everglades and Southern part of the Northern Golden Gate Estates next to the test track, North and South Belle Meade (cheaper lands). Pepper Ranch was quickly opposed to as a possible site after it was mentioned.
16. Riders do not want a trail to a dump site developed.

17. Bi-directional trail system suggested.
18. Develop an integrated park and trail system into acreage.
19. Leased Lands?
20. Combo of Lands?
21. Do we want a Public or Private Partnership?
22. What about state/federal agencies – advocacy efforts.
23. Establish economic impact data from establishing site.
24. Economic Development also from ATV riders visiting the area, pro-shops, ATV maintenance repair, etc.
25. Budget Fixed – Funds for operating.
26. Long term lease from large land owners and charge fees to offset operating costs.
27. Could use rural fringe sending lands as an option for landowners selling their Transfer of Development Rights (TDR's).
28. T. Mark Schmidt ACT – Grant Title Funds possible available?
29. Does the County have future capital/expansion in the budget?
30. \$3 million has to stay in ATV project – Enterprise Fund.
31. South Florida ATV Riding club could seek federal/state grant funds.
32. What about using Tourist Development Council (TDC) funds? Staff said probably not an option/ would be difficult to use for this project.
33. Positive things about an ATV Park: Good way to keep kids busy, families can enjoy this activity together.
34. Register and the ATV Park users with safety certificates for riding. This can be done onsite by the concessionaire.
35. Prepare for overcapacity when developing a management plan if the park is not large enough.
36. Continued public involvement for planning.
37. Maybe set up an ATV advisory committee?
38. Will this ATV site be for only ATV's or will there be a separate area for swamp buggies, dirt bikes, Jeeps, etc? If so they all need to be segregated.
39. The attendees do not want the ATV Park over regulated – keep the fun in the mud!
40. Questions from the public: What will the age limits be? What types of vehicles will be allowed to use the ATV Park? Only ATV's or swamp buggies, jeeps, motor cross/dirt bikes, etc? Will be have a park and a trail system? Staff said these are all questions we will be reviewing and looking into in the future.
41. Riders suggested Ocala National Forest has a trail system versus an open site – well managed site. They also have camping and we could use them for best ATV operating practices.
42. West Virginia – 3500 miles of trails (State and County Collaboration).
43. Friends of the ATV Park could help with construction and maintenance.
44. Want a website developed as soon as possible to communicate and show progress.
45. Move forward and set a date for completion. Staff reiterated that an appropriate property location needs to be found before a completion date can be set.
46. Staff will go back to the Board of County Commissioners sometime in Spring/Winter of 2012 with an update.

Obtained after the All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Park Site Public Information Meeting  
(Comment Sheets) - September 28, 2011

1. Both sending lands sections at North and South Belle Mead should be on the map of possible ATV sites. The sending lands are the cheapest possible sites. The ATV Park will remain natural so this helps preserve the natural setting of Belle Mead. To get the best deal property owners should reserve the TDRS; this would be like the Pepper Ranch transaction. There are several different ATV "wants" the need to disturbed land where jumps, mud pits and obstacles can be built. Not a lot of acres, but big impact if you look at rock quarries. The other want is for natural areas and long trails; this will cover a lot of acres, but will have minimal impact. Possible arrangement with SFWMD or State Forest for trail use of public land.
2. Is there any plan to consider other Off Road Vehicles (ORV)? Specifically street legal and trail only vehicles?
3. I am a volunteer for an advisory committee. This needs to be put on a fast track as the people are tired of waiting on broken promises. A land lease is probably the most affordable and the most feasible answer to acquire the property. This can be an increase in revenue for the local economy, i.e. tourism, fuel, food and ATV repair. Are we acquiring interest on the \$3 million dollars we received? Petition the state for money and permits to help expedite this project. Create a county/resident advisory board for this project.

Obtained through email on - September 29, 2011

1. I don't know if you had the ATV meeting last night, but I guess the turnout was pretty good. Did you see they want 1,000 acres now and trail leading to small parks over one big park. After reading that, I told the paper I was reading at the moment to kiss my rubber duck! Having the enjoyment of going to a park and listening to all of those motors zipping around? But don't get me wrong, we have four motorcycles and a four wheeler. We enjoy it, but there's a time and a place for everything. Take Care.
2. Comments: In regards to the meeting I recently attended, this is my comment sheet. I felt that a lot of good points were brought up as well as some not so good. These are my opinions about the ideas I heard. I like the idea of long term lease from a large land holder such as the Collier family. I believe this option would maximize the amount of property we can obtain. This could also be used in partnership with using some properties already owned by the county, which brings me to my next point. I think it would be better to spread the park over a bunch of different properties inter-connected by a trail system. This would provide a more diverse riding opportunity such as the transition between mud pits, sand dunes, motor cross track, and wooded trails as everybody has different taste in the type of riding they do. We should still allow intermingling of vehicles in certain areas. This would be a great benefit because for example in my case I drive a swamp buggy, but my son rides a 4-wheeler. This would allow families and friends to ride together no matter what type of vehicle they drive, while also allowing safe areas for families and friends to ride in designated areas without worrying about getting run over by a larger vehicle. This is how some of the other parks deal with this situation and it seems to work well. I also feel the sale of permits and camp site fees would pay for the lease, maintenance and improvements.  
I feel that another good idea would be to have volunteers to build and maintain the facilities. Maybe include some kind of tax break for any equipment use or materials donated. I would be glad to volunteer my services as an equipment operator and limited construction worker. Another good

thing would be to include full hook up as well as primitive camp sites on a pay per use, maybe put these near some lakes or canals where fishing would be available. I heard one guy mention a lot of restrictions on vehicles. I think this would be a bad idea because these are after all off road vehicles, some with a lot of power and a little noisy. However, I think we can have areas near residents to have noise restrictions and maybe locate the mud pits, motor cross tracks in more secluded areas with vehicle trailer parking areas nearby. On another subject when the website is developed, maybe list all of the politicians that have anything to do with this project, state, local or federal and whether they are for us or oppose us so we can be informed at election time. This may be better done by a group, club or coalition formed by the users but facilitated and organized in cooperation with the county government. It would also be advantageous for all parties involved to run this as a public/private venture. This would limit the county liability and responsibility and allow users to run it the way we see fit and safe. As you know when the government is involved in things, they tend to get over regulated and that makes it impossible to get anything done. In closing I feel this park would generate a lot of revenue for the area in and around the park and in these economic times we need nothing more than to generate revenue and create jobs. I would like to volunteer for any future planning committees or meetings providing they don't conflict with my work schedule. I would also like to offer the use of my buggy for any site visits or surveys which may need to be done. I also have access to a couple of more buggies, four wheelers and side by sides if needed.

Obtained through email on - October 10, 2011

1. RE: No ATV's on Conservation Lands

Dear Commissioners: Recent conversations and news articles among members of the public and county employees about the use of All Terrain Vehicles (ATV's) on Conservation Collier lands has created major concerns with the Conservation Committee. I have been instructed by the Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Committee to inform the Collier County Commission of our strong opposition to the use of Conservation lands for ATV or other similar vehicle use. The Ordinance, Policy, and Rules Subcommittee of Conservation Collier explored and vetted this issue many months ago. Our conclusion was ATV's are an inappropriate use for Conservation Collier properties. I will outline the issues created by such an action, an action that in the likelihood would destroy the native habitats which the Citizens of Collier County elected to fund for the preservation of these lands. Simply, an All-Terrain-Vehicle (ATCV) park is an inappropriate use within Pepper Ranch preserve or within any Conservation Collier Program Preserve. The enabling ordinance of the Conservation Collier Program states that "Conservation Collier is therefore hereby established to acquire, preserve, restore and maintain vital and significant threatened natural lands, forests, upland and wetland communities located in Collier County, for the benefit of present and future generations." The Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Advisory Committee (CCLAAC) deems the use of ATV's within any Conservation Collier Program Preserves as contrary to this basic objective of the Program. The enabling ordinance further states that it is the purpose and intent of Conservation Collier "to manage acquired environmentally sensitive lands with the primary objectives of maintaining and preserving their natural resource values, and providing appropriate natural resource-based recreational and educational opportunities, by employing management techniques that are most appropriate for each native community so that our natural heritage may be preserved and appreciated by and for present and future generations" and "to have the acquired sites

available, with minimal risk to the environmental integrity of the site, to educate Collier County's subtropical ecosystems and natural communities." It is the opinion of the CCLAAC that ATV use is not an "appropriate natural resource-based recreational opportunity" and would not result in "minimal risk to the environmental integrity of the site." Section 6.2 of the Preserve Use Ordinance under consideration for adoption by the Collier County Board of County Commissioners (Board) today (Agenda Item 17D) states that "Management Plans govern which activities are allowable in each preserve." On page 55 of the Pepper Ranch Preserve Final Management Plan (approved by the Board on June 28, 2011 – Agenda Item 16E6) off road vehicle use within the preserve is identified as an inconsistent use. Additionally, the future use of Pepper Ranch Preserve as a wetland mitigation bank and panther habitat conservation bank would be put in jeopardy if an ATV park were proposed within or adjacent to the property. The ability to garner mitigation credits from Pepper Ranch Preserve was a driving force behind its acquisition in February 2009. Last but not least, the cost to supervise and police conservation lands from inappropriate use of ATV's would be very costly, especially if you had to police an areas the size of Pepper Ranch. It only takes an ATV rider seconds to destroy what nature has taken years to accomplish. ATV's just by their very nature are destructive to the natural resources of a property. There use on Conservation Collier Properties would create a management nightmare. The end result despite our most valiant efforts to keep riders complying with preserve rules would be the destruction of native habitat. Our committee believes there is an appropriate venue for ATV's in Collier County, but it is not on Conservation Collier properties. There is too much of a disconnect between the passive uses within Collier Conservation lands and the intensive use of ATV's. There are other properties far more appropriate for ATV use. Some of these properties are currently for sale at some very good process and would satisfy the needs for an ATV facility. The bottom line is "Should the Collier County Commissioner decide to move forward to develop a facility for ATV's, our recommendation is that it should be associated with a Park, not a Preserve." We ask you give staff direction to take any consideration of using Conservation Collier lands for ATV purpose off the table for now and forever.

#### All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Website Feedback and Comments

1. 11/2/11 We need some where real soon to ride, other counties are having places to ride we need one.
2. 11/6/11 Park is needed for recreational purposes as well as economical (i.e., Crooms ATV in Brooksville).
3. 11/15/11 I think it is a very sad situation that this has been going on since 2002. SWFWMD should have been held accountable to their promises that were made to the citizens of Collier County in a reasonable amount of time. Or made to return the land that was given to them. My family and I have been waiting to be able to enjoy riding in our own county without worry of being thrown out or given a ticket for riding illegally. Sadly I don't think my daughter will ever be able to ride legally in this county. There is too much red tape and too many government agencies to get approval from. We all know that no matter what site location is selected that there will always be some type of problem with us riding there, either wetlands, panthers, bears, woodpeckers etc. How do all these other riding parks in other counties and states get approvals for their sites? I am truly not sure that Collier County even wants this here. We continue to have to drive to other counties and states to ride and spend our money and help improve their economies. Thank you.

4. 11/15/11 From what I can see. The area known as the tram is going to be the easiest land to permit and to get thought DEP. It is land that is used know for off roading and is petty set up with a tram line cut though it from old rail road so it can be made into emergency access. Would only need to find best way in and out of main entrance. Land is located off 10th Ave on Golden Gate Blvd and also can be entered from 28th Ave South on Everglades. 2nd choice could be Wonderland Est.
5. 11/15/11 As a board of director for the largest off road racing Organization (Florida Trail Riders) in the USA. I hope the park isn't going to be just for Quads & not for motorcycles. In Collier Count we have quite a few Motorcycle & Quad members.
6. 11/16/11 What is the time frame for picking a site?
7. 11/17/11 I attended the meeting and wanted to leave feedback on a few things. My family has swamp buggies, 4 wheel drives, UTV's and ATV's. We ride as a family and all together. It would be a shame to make different riding areas for different vehicles. Naples residents should be able to ride for free or purchase an annual pass for a minimal fee. I think there should be areas for riding, camping and cooking and maybe an area for concerts to bring more people out. Of course, everyone would pay a weekend pass rate for concert weekends to help cover the cost and bring in some good family time and fun. It would need to remain simple and fun for everyone! Putting buildings or restrooms is not really necessary as it takes the reality out of being in the woods! Maybe an area with a couple of port o potties would work, but this is to be such a place as "bad luck prairie". They should have never closed that area. Too many city like structures or clearings would not make it fun. People like to make their own trails and find their own camping area and have a good time. Campers, RV's and such should not be allowed. I really want to see a park and soon. I would gladly volunteer all of my spare time to help build this park or put up fencing around the perimeter of the area when it is found. This could happen with several volunteers who want to see this happen. I am sure that there are also people willing to donate materials for this park as well. Please keep me informed and updated on events, progress and needed volunteers for this park. The perfect spot would be on Sabal Palm road or that area. Too many people have said to me that they will not drive to Immokalee to go to a park there. Thank you for your time and updates.
8. 11/25/11 This is wonderful,, we need this very badly,, it is a great way to enjoy family and friends in a southern Florida environment ,, very important for young children to have a positive outlet they can get a grip on ,,literally ,, thank you.
9. 11/26/11 Please add me to your email list for updates. I hope a decision will be made sooner than the end of 2012! The money is there, so I hope the "powers that be" will move quickly for those of us anxious to get out and ride!
10. 11/29/11 Individual did not leave any comments only gave their name, address, phone number and email address.
11. 12/5/11 Collier County should take notice of Crooms ATV/Motorcycle area located in Brooksville, Florida. Annual fees are I believe \$60 per vehicle. There are riding areas for both ATV's and Motocross/Dirt bikes. The park also has camping amenities, trail systems and mud pits. The park is located behind a Hampton Inn off of exit 301(I-75). Enthusiasts from all over the country travel to ride there. Crooms caters to all skill level riders and is large enough to minimize any congestion of traffic. In short it's pretty much a Meca for motosports. I'm sure an area like this will bring some form of economic boost and entertainment to Collier and surrounding counties.

12. 12/6/11 I am a Florida native and have lived in Collier County since 1959. Let me tell you some of the things that have been taken away from the Collier County citizens. At one time you could drive on the beaches in Collier County, no more. At one time you could ride your horses on the beach in Collier County, no more. You used to be able to take your dog to the beach, no more. And we used to have a place to ride our ATV/dirt bikes in land south of the Alley, no more. All this is from past and current county commissioners and the poor decision making they made for the general public. The current commissioners should have never let the south blocks go until they had a firm agreement with South Florida Water Management District. Promises were never kept. Threats were never utilized. And now we have a \$3 million settlement from SWFWM, which I consider "shut the hell up" money, to make a problem that they created go away. The park proposed is 640 acres which translates into 1 square mile of riding area. That is totally insufficient. I have talked with people at the County and the most riders allowed on the land at one time will be 30-35. I am sure this is due to the County covering themselves insurance wise. The squeaky wheel tree huggers have been given an inch but taken a mile to conserve wildlife. As I said, I am a Florida native and I am all for Florida wildlife, but in all the years of living in Florida I have never seen a panther. In all the years of people riding in the south blocks I've never heard of anyone being attacked or running over a black bear, bobcat or a Florida panther. So where is the concern for the wildlife when for 30-40 years we have been co-existing together? Why can't we make a large area south of I-75 a riding park, like the one in Brooksville, Florida called Croom, which runs along I-75 in Central Florida. You would charge people a daily or annual fee to ride and the park would be run by the State of Florida. The atv's/dirt bikes would have to be registered and inspected and display a compliance sticker for safety. Between the riders on the East and West coast of Florida, the fees would more than support the staff and any vehicles needed to operate. This would not put a burden on the taxpayers of Florida. One square mile is not enough! There is more than enough land for us to have a large area to ride on. People making these decisions have obviously never ridden with their friends for 2 or 3 hours and returned to their trucks and trailers tired and exhausted, but able to look back at the great time they have had. A large park would benefit families and their children, would give teenagers places to ride and give them something to do. In comparison, one square mile of riding would be similar to canoeing down your favorite river for that one mile only to have to get out, turn around and canoe the same mile river again because you were not able to go any further. How boring would that be...VERY! Please stop focusing on the 640 acres of land and start focusing on the bigger picture. Look for a larger, bigger, more productive place for atv/dirt bikes to ride. Sincerely
13. 1/3/12 This would be awesome! We have four wheelers with no place to ride! We love the outdoors and riding. We moved here from Kansas where we had plenty of places to ride. Here we feel locked in with no place to ride. This is very needed and we would greatly appreciate it. Please keep me informed of future meetings. This would be a great addition to all that beautiful Collier County has to offer. Thanks so much for your consideration. Sincerely
14. 2/8/12 My sister and her family just moved to Everglade City FL . PLEASE build a multi use park for atvs, 4x4s and motor cycles. We will bring our motors down from Tennessee and spend our vacation dollars playing on your trails. thanks Roy Stroud
15. 3/2/12 - Laurie, as a resident of the LWR and someone who occasionally works at KPPSP, your images are really wonderful. I especially like you interpretation of the LWR and your turkey oak shots as well as your frosty morning shots from KPPSP very nice February 11, 2011 12:32 pm

16. 3/26/12 All we want is the largest piece of land possibly 1000 acres would be great. 75% dry year round 25% wet in summer, at least 10-15% wet in winter. No need to plan a trail, we will make our own trail system and mud holes like we always have. No need for restrooms or snack bar or anything else, the closest gas stations will get a new economy boost. I think that some kind of year round permit is ok maybe like \$20-40 per person for Collier residents, that would cover some kind of garbage collection system, someone to check permits and some sort of boundary fence. We all have different tastes (trucks, buggies, atvs, dirt bikes)we all want to ride without getting in trouble for trespassing, fear of losing a place to ride, being too loud or having to spend \$200 in fuel to drive out of town for the weekend. We just want to play in the mud and ride.
17. 3/29/12 Nice comment 1,000 acres for 2 million. How many acres were given up for 3 million! My question is the real reasons we cannot ride the south blocks and bad luck prairie? Flood it, level it, fill all the canals, and just let us ride it. Turn it into a state riding park charge a yearly sticker fee, there is no reason we can't be out there besides the trails we leave don't look pretty from your private planes. For whatever reasons water manager has the property now so flood it just let us ride it we will build bigger and also would be great place for air boating, think about it.
18. 3/29/12 Stop dragging your feet it's been long time for Collier County to step up or I think the people of Collier County should sue the county for giving our land away to the state and then selling it for 3 million its worth more to me than that it's a life time of family spending time in the woods now what do you think all the kids today stay in trouble nowhere for them to go and play and spend time with family just saying come on man.
19. 3/29/12 On a side note of the county selling 50k + of land to water management for 3 mil and no responsibility anymore is in my mind the real reason, fresh water rights the county is getting from the aquifers. Pumping fresh natural purified water from there is way cheaper than the water they are pumping now from the Estates. I'm not 100% sure that is true it's just what a little birdie told me. So if its true no wonder they did it with a nice little cover up of restoring the natural sheet flow, but what about 75 and 41 wouldn't that put them under water? O that's right covert diverting And channeling, that's real natural! Also if you wanted natural sheet flow again before people were around wouldn't you have to bulldoze all those wonderful developments , not to mention after the prairie and blocks were closed they put condos in, amazing (41 down isle Capri ) right where we rode. All these woods and nowhere to ride, it's so sad the prairie was the perfect place to ride and Zoned off by 41 and the t-canal and you even had a parking lot lol. Sounds like a perfect state riding park. So now to ride you have to go north , north isn't that why we have nowhere to ride but plenty of private developments , just wait the blocks will have a nice gate to go through after you cross the 75 bridge but not for wilderness but for another rich private development that the bird watchers can enjoy.