

DRAFT

10/00

APPENDIX A

PRE-APPROVED PROJECTS

- **Reforestation and Revegetation in the Wildlife Area.** Consistent with Plan objectives 2, 8 and 13. Specifically listed as Plan Environmental Project ENV7. Includes planting and maintaining native vegetation and the hydrologic processes that support it.
- **Monitoring Plant and Animal Communities and Water Quality.** Consistent with Plan objectives 2, 3, 4, and 9. Part of Plan Environmental Projects ENV1 and ENV7. Develop baseline knowledge of plant and animal communities where needed. Quantify results of management programs. Purchase equipment and services for vegetation mapping and wildlife surveys.
- **Developing Public Access Facilities to Mitigate Environmental Impacts of Current Public Use of the Wildlife Area.** Consistent with Plan objectives 5, 6, and 10. Certain current recreational uses are having a negative environmental impact on the lakes. For example, the current boating access causes paddlers to continually disturb basking Western painted turtles, a state-listed sensitive species. It also directs boat traffic to Bybee Lake, which the Plan states should be less accessible and managed as more of a preserve than Smith Lake.
- **Planning Future Management of Wildlife Area (Revision of the Plan).** Consistent with the Plan goal and all objectives. It has been more than ten years since the original Plan was adopted. The Plan is now outdated and the Management Committee needs to revise the Plan to reflect the changing conditions and additional experience and knowledge gained in managing the Wildlife Area over the last ten years.

Project list for IGA

The IGA could simply reference the goals and objectives of the Natural Resources Management Plan for Smith and Bybee Lakes (pages 9-10) as the criteria that proposed projects must meet. If additional descriptions are needed for the IGA, the following list could be modified for that purpose. This list follows the objectives in the management plan and includes examples high-priority items taken directly from the management plan that have not been implemented, however, the list is not inclusive and should not preclude other projects.

I strongly recommend that we have the flexibility to use these funds on multiple projects and to leverage additional funding with them. We should not have a required timeline for spending the funds, either; there is merit in leaving the contribution in the trust fund and using the interest to fund ongoing operations and maintenance. There should be a clear record of funds expended so it will be easy to determine when the \$285,000 has been spent.

1. Water control structure replacement (objectives 1, 2, and 3). This is essential for controlling the water level in the lakes (objective 1), successful restoration of floodplain habitat (objective 2) and is explicitly listed as a project in the plan (project ENV2, page 27). This also addresses water quality issues (objective 3), since many water quality problems are traced to the existing water control structure & water level management.
2. Habitat restoration (objectives 2, 8 and 13; project ENV7 on page 28). Includes planting and maintaining native vegetation and the hydrologic processes that support it, as well as manipulating water levels to control invasive species. Work can be done by wildlife area manager, via contract with public or private entities, and by researchers developing effective restoration techniques on the site.
3. Monitoring plant and animal communities and water quality (objective 4). Some parts are in place, e.g., bird counts, water quality monitoring. Other current work is developing our baseline knowledge (Western painted turtle project). Funds are needed for equipment and services for vegetation mapping and wildlife surveys. The wildlife area manager will perform much of this work, but contracted services will be needed on occasion.
4. Recreational facility plan (objectives 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9). The Metro Council approved the plan in December 1999. Funds are needed to proceed with implementation of plans for the north side of the wildlife area and to develop plans for the rest of the area. Funds could also be spent on the portion of the 40-Mile Loop trail that passes through the wildlife area. Many potential development projects listed in the management plan need to be revisited because of developments on surrounding land and improved knowledge of the area itself (e.g., the site originally identified for recreational facilities is not feasible because it floods).
5. Educational kiosks and interpretive displays (objectives 8 and 9). The trust fund currently provides 0.5 FTE for educational programs. Improved facilities such as kiosks and interpretive displays would assist the educational program.
6. Planning future management of wildlife area and ensuring funds are available for it (objectives 10, 11, 12 and 13). Funding needs for operations and maintenance of the wildlife area will soon exceed annual interest earned on the trust fund, particularly as capital improvements are completed and additional lands are brought into active management in the wildlife area (e.g., landfill site). Improved facilities will require additional resources for O&M. We may seek outside expertise to explore ways to improve earnings on the trust fund and/or seek additional funds.
7. Other projects that arise that meet objectives of the NRMP.