

Village of Tequesta
Environmental Advisory
Committee
345 Tequesta Drive
Tequesta, FL 33469

September 10, 2021

Village Council
Village of Tequesta
345 Tequesta Drive
Tequesta, FL 33469

Re: Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative Request for Letter of Endorsement

Dear Honorable Village Council Members:

At your regular monthly meeting in July 2021, the Village Council requested that the request received from Ms. Geraldine Dube for a letter of endorsement on the work of the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative be delegated to the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) for us to provide you with a recommendation on the request. We first considered the same at the EAC meeting in August, but the EAC thought it best to hear directly from Ms. Dube before making a recommendation on the request for a letter of endorsement and subsequently requested she attend the EAC meeting in September, which she agreed to do.

What we learned in the interim or from Ms. Dube was:

- 1) The Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative has raised over \$3M and as a result will close on its first purchase of land for the Initiative in October of this year to accomplish Phase 1 resulting in 138 acres for conservation.
- 2) The lands constituting the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative is in essence on the “wish list” of the South Florida Water Management District, but currently their focus is on more pressing Everglades Restoration matters and issues related to Lake Okeechobee, such as toxic algae.
- 3) The Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative group is seeking direct legislative funding via the Florida Forever Program by working with the Martin County Legislative Delegation.
- 4) An estimated 50% of the fresh waters within the headwaters area in question will flow to the Loxahatchee River via Kitching Creek.

The EAC deliberations at its monthly meeting on September 8, pertaining to the request for a letter of endorsement for the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative resulted in a unanimous vote to recommend to the Village Council that a formal Letter of Endorsement be provided to the group as soon as possible. You may recall that Ms. Dube provided a suggested Letter of Endorsement,

which appears on the next page as a reference only, but feel free to construct your own letter of endorsement should you concur with the EAC recommendation.

In addition to the recommendation for the Village Council to issue a letter of endorsement, the EAC also recommends that in the event the Village Council may find it to be useful in making a decision in this regard, that the Village Council avail itself of an offer by Greg Braun to provide you with a presentation on the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative. This may prove to be enlightening for you as Mr. Braun is a registered Ecologist and a Certified Environmental Professional. Mr. Braun is the owner of Sustainable Ecosystems International. You can see Mr. Braun speaking on the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative and flora and fauna found therein in the YouTube video link below:

<https://youtu.be/mWW0K2Oa--4>

Should you have any questions or concerns in regard to the recommendations of the EAC in this regard, please feel free to call on me or any member of the EAC.

Sincerely,

Thomas G. Bradford

Thomas G. Bradford
Chair, EAC

Cc: EAC Members
Geraldine Dube
Greg Braun
Jeremey Allen, Village Manager
Lori McWilliams, Village Clerk/PIO
MaryAnn Grieser, Deputy Village Clerk
Matthew Hammond, Director of Utilities

Suggested Letter of Endorsement by Ms. Geraldine Dube

"We are pleased to provide this letter of support for the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters conservation initiative. The acquisition and transfer of privately-owned properties into conservation ownership and management will conserve native plant communities and protect the ecological corridor between the Atlantic Ridge Preserve State Park and Jonathan Dickinson State Park. These conservation lands are currently bisected by Bridge Road and are vulnerable to further impacts as a result of development pressure from surrounding areas. The mosaic of low pine flatwoods, depression marshes, wet prairies, mixed upland forests, cypress domes and ruderal communities within the project provide habitat for a high diversity of plant and animal life, including a number of plant species that are designated by the State of Florida as Endangered, Threatened or Commercially Exploited. Additionally, these areas serve as hydrologic feeder areas for the South Fork of the St. Lucie River and through Kitching Creek to the Loxahatchee River, Florida's first designated Wild and Scenic River. Bringing privately-owned lands into conservation management will allow hydrologic restoration to take place and encourage the removal of invasive pest plants, two activities that will benefit native plant and animal communities."