

Minutes of meeting of Natural Area Advisory Committee: 19 April 2001

Thursday, 1:30 to 2:45 pm, Room 1014 Entomology/Nematology Building. Members present were Mark Clark, Alison Fox, Don Graetz, Marilyn Roberts, Clay Scherer, Carol Stiles, and Tom Walker (admin. asst.). Also present was Michael Bond (Ethnoecology Society).

1. Proposed changes in NAAC operating policies

The Committee gave unanimous initial approval to the revisions in NAAC operating policies proposed in the e-mails of 13 and 16 April 2001. The new policies, as tentatively approved, are attached. To take effect they must be approved again at the next NAAC meeting.

2. Long-term management plan

A map and an acreage summary of the Committee's long-term management plan were handed out. The approximate areas of the principal ecosystems are old-field succession, 6 acres (in five plots); upland pine, 15 acres (12 to be restored, 3 to remain unburned); hammock, 18 acres; SEEP, 3 acres; and other (kiosk area, Natural Area Park, 34th Street berm, mowed trails), 4 acres.

3. Preliminary proposal by Ethnoecology Society for a project in successional plots and SEEP

Michael Bond, President of the Ethnoecology Society, described in general terms how his group wished to use portions of NATL for their activities. He proposed as a project for this summer a soil and vegetation survey of Plot B and SEEP. He volunteered to keep NAAC apprised of the Society's plans for NATL and is aware that the Committee's prior approval is required for any activity that might have lasting effects or interfere with others using NATL.

4. Mowing plan

UF's Physical Plant Division has accepted responsibility for routine mowing in NATL. The Committee approved these objectives: (1) Keep the principal trails clear of weeds, so that classes can use them easily. (2) Keep the area around the kiosk a good place for classes to assemble. (3) Keep the area between the fence along Natural Area Drive and the retention pond (SEEP) clear of tall plants to allow passersby on Natural Area Drive to have a good view of SEEP.

Tom Walker has already shown two PPD supervisors the trails and other areas to be mowed. They were told that a single pass with a bushhog mower about every two or three weeks should be sufficient to maintain the trails. Where mower operators might stray beyond the desired limits, PVC stakes with blue flag tape will help keep the mowers in bounds. Committee members are encouraged to monitor the mowing, especially during the first month or so, and to report any problems to Tom Walker, who will try to get PPD to correct its procedures.

5. Priorities for requests of funds for NATL infrastructure

The Committee voted unanimously to make a pavilion for classes its highest priority for adding to NATL infrastructure. The pavilion would be near the kiosk and accommodate up to 30 students. Prior to seeking funds for the pavilion, NAAC must make sure it is included in the master plan for the Cultural Complex. Because a similar pavilion is planned for the area behind Powell Hall, where groups of K-12 students assemble for docent-led excursions into NATL, some of the planning for pavilion construction might be done under the contract for the CC master plan. Tom Walker will promote this with the architect, and Marilyn Roberts will promote it with the Florida Museum of Natural History.

6. Financial report

Tom Walker presented an accounting of the expenditures from NAAC funds since the 11 April 2000 accounting. Two items, pre-approved by the Committee, exceeded \$100: the SEEP minimal boardwalk (\$193.30) and the corral fence along NATL's boundary with the Phillips Center (\$1552.00). Total expenditures were \$2158.68, leaving a balance of \$260.16. That will be boosted to \$1,260.16 by a recent grant from the Provost.

7. Full-color SEEP brochure

The Committee approved printing at least 300 full-color copies of a SEEP brochure. The final text of the brochure will be determined by Mark Clark in conjunction with Susan Jacobson and others who wish to help. The Committee approved spending up to \$322.09 for the brochures but directed Mark to investigate other funding sources with a possible increase in the number of copies printed.

8. NAAC membership

Deb DiPietro, Florida Museum of Natural History, and Michael Bond, Ethnoecology Society, were approved as new members. Clay Scherer, an active student member and frequent NATL volunteer since 1995, resigned (for reasons of graduation). A replacement member from the Entomology and Nematology Student Organization will be sought..

9. Election of chair for 2001-2002

The Committee elected Tom Walker as its chair for 2001-2002.

[Proposed] Natural Area Advisory Committee (NAAC) Operating Policies

The following operating policies were adopted by the Committee on 8 Dec 1995 and revised on 1 Apr 1999 and [date, fall 2001].

Mission

Develop and help implement a plan to restore and maintain a variety of ecosystems in the University of Florida Natural Area and Teaching Laboratory (NATL) while maximizing the use of the area for teaching.

Meetings

At least two each year, including one in Fall Semester and one in Spring Semester.

Meetings are open to all who are interested. Anyone who wishes to be notified of meetings will be put on the NAAC e-mail list.

Membership

The NAAC will consist of at least one faculty member from each department or other unit making significant use of NATL, the Chair of the Lakes, Vegetation and Landscape Committee, and one or more student members representing organizations interested in NATL.

Annually, at a Spring Semester meeting, NAAC membership will be discussed and plans made to insure that it remains representative. Anyone interested in becoming a member can become one if approved by a majority of NAAC members.

Chair

Annually, at a Spring Semester meeting, a chair will be elected from the NAAC membership.

Duties of the chair:

- See that these policies are followed (or changed).
- Call meetings (on own initiative or at request of two or more members).
- Oversee spending of NAAC incidental funds, with majority approval of NAAC required for any expenditure exceeding \$100
- Establish and circulate agenda prior to each meeting.
- See that minutes are kept, submitted, approved, and put on WWW.
- Keep the Advisory Committee archives.
- Prepare an Annual Report and send it to chairs of departments that are using NATL and to other administrators that should be kept informed.
- See that NATL's web site stays current, including Management Plans and Annual Reports.
- Report on NATL issues to the Lakes, Vegetation & Landscape Committee each Fall Semester.

The chair may appoint an administrative assistant to help with these duties.

Changes in committee operating policies or long-term management plans

Changes will be proposed in writing, sent to members prior to a meeting, discussed at that meeting, and acted upon no sooner than the next meeting.