

Minutes of meeting of Natural Area Advisory Committee: 12 October 2001

Friday, 3:00 to 4:10pm, Room 1014 Entomology/Nematology Building and NATL.
Members present were Mark Clark, Shane Hill, Carol Stiles, and Tom Walker (chair).

1 NATL academic pavilion

Those present discussed the advantages and disadvantages of two pavilions manufactured by Litchfield Industries: the Model 1427 wood pavilion and the Model 8324 all-steel pavilion. Walker noted that Litchfield engineers did not confirm that the powder coat finish on the steel pavilion would last significantly longer than the black enamel, although they did say it was less likely to chip. He also noted that Martin Uman, a UF expert on lightning protection, had told him that the steel pavilion offered better protection from lightning than the wood one. Mark Clark noted that problems with CCA treated pine were perceptual rather than research based.

Those present agreed that either pavilion would be suitable but voted unanimously to recommend the all-steel pavilion. Advantages of the all-steel pavilion are that its initial and maintenance costs are lower, it is more resistant to wind damage, and it offers better protection from lightning. According to information provided by Buford Davis, the cost of the Litchfield Model 8324 should be ca. \$11,000, if the concrete pad and installation are bid locally. A Litchfield dealer based in Morrow, Georgia, provided a written quote of \$12,411 for a completed Model 8324 shelter, with black enamel finish, on a 22 x 26 foot concrete pad.

3. Tables for academic pavilion

Those present discussed specifications for tables for the pavilion. The Committee agreed that the tables should have attached benches and that the frames should be hot-dipped galvanized steel tubing 2-3/8 inches OD (for example, the Model XT/G-6UP table by Thomas Mfg., Cherokee, Iowa).

Ken Osfield, of UF Facilities Planning, had noted that if the tables were intended to seat 36 persons, two positions would need to be wheelchair accessible. The Committee agreed to meet this requirement by having four standard 6-ft. tables and two that had a wheelchair position at one end. The wheelchair station consists of a 2 foot extension of the top of the table, but not the benches. Such a table still seats six persons on its benches.

All present preferred that the table tops and benches be untreated pine rather than recycled plastic or plastic-coated steel mesh. The FOB price of the six tables planned for the pavilion, from Thomas Mfg. Co., is \$1318. Freight charges might be as much as \$450. If the table frames were bought from Thomas Mfg and pine boards bought locally, ca. \$400 could be saved.

3. Revisions of NAAC operating policies

Those present gave unanimous initial approval to the revisions in NAAC operating policies that were initially approved on 19 April 2001. They also gave initial approval to the

revisions that were proposed in an e-mail on 9 October 2001. The new policies, as tentatively approved, are attached. For the most recently proposed revisions to take effect they must be approved again at the next NAAC meeting.

4. Web description of uses authorized for the restricted area

All present approved the wording that was circulated to the Committee by e-mail on 8 October 2001 and posted at <http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/rules>.

5. Signs

Those present agreed on this text for signs to be placed beneath the signs used to tell the public not to enter NATL's restricted area: "Rules for using this area are at <http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/rules>." Three small signs with this text will be bought at an estimated total cost of \$60.

Those present approved the use of \$160 in Committee funds to purchase signs to replace four missing signs and one that was severely damaged.

6. Revisions of kiosk information

Seven of the eight revised items for the north side of the kiosk were approved as posted at <http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/kiosk>. [The committee was notified of the posting by an 8 Oct 2001 e-mail.] The item entitled "Student Volunteers Needed" was revised on the basis of suggestions by Susan Jacobson and Mark Clark. The new version will be posted in place of the old, and a link will be established from the public part of <http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/> to the kiosk information.

7. Mowing

Those present viewed the mowed areas east of SEEP and in the vicinity of the kiosk. They agreed that the area east of SEEP should be kept in "meadow" condition by infrequent bush-hog mowing, whereas the assembly area in the vicinity of the kiosk should be kept in "lawn" condition by more frequent, closer mowing. Mark Clark suggested that a close-mowed trail around the east edge of SEEP might be appropriate to facilitate foot traffic between the assembly area at the kiosk and the park-like area north of SEEP (=Natural Area Park).

Walker will see if IFAS Facility Operations will take responsibility for cutting weeds from under the board fence along Natural Area Drive and if PPD will accept responsibility for cutting weeds from under the board fence behind the Phillips Center.

8. Site of pavilion and size of concrete pad

Those present viewed the proposed site of the pavilion and approved it. Two trees on the site must be removed: a multi-stemmed wax myrtle with two stems that are 5-inch DBH (diameter breast high) and an 8-inch DBH loblolly pine that is, at its base, 10 inches from a 10-inch DBH loblolly pine.

The desirability of a concrete pad larger than the 22x26 ft. pad required for the Model 8324 was discussed. The group concluded that an addition may have merit but did not recommend that it be part of the current project.

[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, 12 Oct 2001, and [date] 2002.

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).
- Establish and circulate agenda prior to each meeting.
- See that minutes are kept, submitted, approved, and put on the web.
- Keep the Advisory Committee archives.
- Oversee spending of NAAC incidental funds, with majority approval of NAAC required for any expenditure exceeding \$100
- Keep the Physical Plant Division informed of NATL's maintenance needs
- 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 kiosk and web site are kept current.
- Report on NATL issues to the Lakes, Vegetation & Landscaping 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.