



**Internal Audit Committee
of
Brevard County, Florida**

Internal Audit Review of

**Environmentally Endangered Land Program
(EEL Program)**

**Prepared By:
Internal Auditors of Brevard County
December 7, 2004**

Table of Contents

Transmittal Letter	1
Background	2-3
Objectives and Approach	4-5
Issues and Recommended Actions	6-16

December 7, 2004

The Audit Committee of
Brevard County, Florida
Viera, Florida 32940-6699

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 125.01(1)(s), Florida Statutes, and the approved 2003/2004 internal audit plan, we hereby submit our internal audit report covering EEL's Program. We will be presenting this report to the Audit committee at the next scheduled meeting on April 22, 2005.

Our report is organized in the following sections:

Background	This provides an overview of EEL Program.
Objectives and Approach	The internal audit objectives and focus are expanded upon in this section as well as a review of the various phases of our approach.
Issues and Recommended Actions	This section gives a description of the issues as well as the impact and recommended actions.

We would like to thank the Parks and Recreation Department and all those involved in assisting the Internal Auditors regarding this report on the EEL Program.

Respectfully Submitted,

INTERNAL AUDITORS

Background

Background

Overview

The EEL (Environmentally Endangered Lands) Program was formed in 1990 subsequent to Brevard County's citizen vote to tax themselves for the purchase of environmentally endangered lands. The County was authorized to issue bonds up to \$55 million to support the costs of acquiring, protecting and maintaining these lands.

During the November 2004 election, Brevard County citizens voted to extend the purchasing power of the EEL Program by approving the Land and Water Areas Bond Referendum, which will provide up to \$60 million of additional funding over the next 20 years.

The EEL Program is dedicated to protecting and maintaining environmentally endangered lands. The EEL Program is managed and assisted by Brevard County's Parks and Recreation Department. The Program's objective is to conserve the natural resources of Brevard County while providing educational and recreational facilities.

Staffing

Key personnel from Parks and Recreation involved in the operations of the EEL Program are as follows:

Name	Title
Charles Nelson	Director of Parks and Recreation
Mike Knight	Interim Program Manager
Larry Wojciechowski	Parks and Recreation Finance Manager

Land Acquisition

The EEL Program's main purpose is to acquire land which is deemed to be environmentally in danger. Through the efforts of this program, approximately 18,000 acres of land has been preserved. Most of the land acquired by the Program was purchased in conjunction with funding from the State of Florida. The EEL Program also works with other conservation programs to purchase land. Some of the agencies EEL partners with include St. John's River Water Management District and the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. Partnering with other agencies leaves the Program more available funding to purchase additional land.

The Selection and Management Committee (SMC) is responsible for initially identifying which parcels should be targeted by the EEL Program for purchase. The SMC is made up of local Brevard County scientists appointed by the Board of County Commissioners (The Board). Identification of land by the SMC is determined based on the scientific criteria used to conserve particular habitats and species. A list of SMC's "target properties" is presented to the Board for approval before any action is taken for purchase.

The EEL Program has contracted with the Nature Conservancy (TNC), since the program's inception, to perform land acquisition services for the Program. TNC is responsible for identifying the land owner and negotiating with the land owner on a selling price, never to exceed the appraised value. TNC normally discusses with the land owner his willingness to sell the property prior to the presentation to the Board of the "target properties" list.

Upon approval of the "target list" appraisal requests are sent out to various Florida State Certified Appraisers. Three responses to the appraisals are required, two being acceptances. The two lowest bidders are awarded the appraisal. The highest appraisal is then used as the maximum amount permissible for purchase of the targeted land.

Background (continued)

Land Management

It is the primary responsibility of EEL Program staff to manage lands acquired by the EEL Program. In addition, the EEL Program is required to manage certain other properties purchased by the State, as defined in the County's Management Lease Agreements with the State. The County has developed a Sanctuary Management Manual to guide EEL Program staff and to define the County's overall objectives with respect to land management.

There are four large management areas within Brevard County; North, Central, South and South Beach. Each region is assigned one land manager who is responsible for implementing the Program's objectives specific to each region.

Education Centers

An objective of the EEL Program is to open four public education centers, one located in each of the four regions. Currently the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary is the only Center open.

- ***Enchanted Forest Sanctuary (North Region)*** - Located in the North Region, the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary was purchased for its unique geology and high biological diversity. This center is located on a 393 acre parcel of land in Titusville.
- ***Pine Island Conservation Area (Central Area)*** – The largest of the four centers being 879 acres and adjoining the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, the Pine Island Conservation Area is jointly owned by the County and by the St. John's River Water Management District.
- ***Malabar Scrub Sanctuary (South Area)*** – Malabar Scrub Sanctuary spreading out over 395 acre lands in the south area is a haven for the Florida scrub-jay, gopher tortoise and eastern indigo snake.
- ***Barrier Island Ecosystem Center (South Beaches)*** - The Barrier Island Ecosystem Center was property donated by the Richard King Mellon Foundation. The facility provides educational opportunities with its preserved barrier island habitats.

Outdoor Recreation

The EEL Program provides for recreation to the public with its twelve sites. The sites offer various amenities including hiking trails, boardwalks, informational kiosks, and guided tours.

Objectives and Approach

Objectives and Approach

Objectives

The internal audit for the EEL Program includes the following:

<input type="checkbox"/> Determine that controls are in place to ensure compliance with applicable Florida Statutes and the applicable Board of County Commissioners' policies, procedures, resolutions, ordinances and agreements.
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine the EEL Program has an effective system of controls in place that operate as designed to monitor contract performance.
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine the EEL Program maintains effective controls over County assets.
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine records and documentation for the various projects are sufficient to establish an audit trail for all transactions involving disbursements.
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine invoices are processed and paid in accordance with County policies.
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify and assess the effectiveness of accounting and administrative controls over timekeeping and payroll related processing.
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine the EEL Program system of internal accounting and administrative controls operates as designed and provides accurate timely information while at the same time is an efficient and effective operation.

Approach

Our audit approach consisted of four phases:

Understanding and Documentation of Process

During phase one, we held an entrance conference with Charles Nelson, Director, Don Lusk, Assistant County Manager, Larry Wojiechowski, Finance Manager, and Mike Knight, Interim Program Manager, to discuss the scope and objectives of the audit work, obtain preliminary data, and establish working arrangements. We then met with other employees of the EEL Program and documented their roles in the process.

Population and Sample Determination

We judgmentally selected a sample of land acquisitions completed during the period from September 30, 2002 through September 30, 2004. We also selected samples of employee time entry sheets, various program expenditures, and written employee evaluations.

Objectives and Approach (continued)

Detailed Testing

The purpose of this phase was development of applicable tests based on our understanding of the EEL Program. Our procedures included observation and inquiry, walk-throughs, and testing of individual transactions. Our testing included, but was not limited to, testing:

- Land acquisitions
- Program expenditures
- Time entry
- County's compliance with State Management Lease Agreements
- County's compliance with the Conservancy contract
- Conservancy's compliance with the Conservancy contract
- Documentation
- Bid procedures
- Purchase order approval

Reporting

During this phase, we summarized our findings related to the EEL Program, based on our detailed testing, into a report format.

Issues and Recommended Actions

Issue # 1	Insurance Coverage – The Nature Conservancy Contract
	<p>The EEL Program has certain unique insurance coverage requirements, based on contracts with various third parties. In particular, we noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ According to section 6.01 of the County’s contract with The Nature Conservancy, the Conservancy is required to maintain certain insurance coverage at specified limits. Policies are required to cover both the Conservancy and the County. Required coverage includes general and professional liability, automobile, and workers’ compensation insurance. The Conservancy is required to furnish to the County certificates of insurance as proof of coverage. ❑ According to section 13 of each of the County’s Management Lease Agreements with the State, the County is required to maintain certain insurance coverage at specified limits. Policies are required to cover both the County and the State. Required coverage includes fire, extended risk and general liability insurance. The County is required to furnish to the State certificates of insurance as proof of coverage on an annual basis. <p>During fieldwork, neither EEL Program management nor the Risk Management Department was able to provide updated certificates of insurance on either of the contracts mentioned above.</p> <p>With respect to the County’s contract with the Conservancy, there was no evidence of effective procedures in place to monitor the Conservancy’s compliance with its requirements. EEL Program employees had on-hand only one certificate of insurance, which expired July 1, 2003.</p> <p>With respect to the County’s Management Lease Agreements with the State, there was no evidence of effective procedures in place to monitor the County’s compliance with its requirement to provide the State with annual certificates of insurance. The specific insurance requirements were not included in the Purchasing Department’s contract database, managed by the contracts division.</p> <p>Impact</p> <p>Without adequate monitoring of the Conservancy’s compliance, the County cannot be assured the Conservancy has adequate insurance coverage. Ultimately, the County may be unnecessarily liable for claims made against the Conservancy, while acting on behalf of the County.</p> <p>The County is not in compliance with its Management Lease Agreements with the State.</p>

<i>Issue # 1</i>	<i>Insurance Coverage – The Nature Conservancy Contract (continued)</i>
	<p data-bbox="544 323 881 359"><i>Recommended Action</i></p> <p data-bbox="544 394 1372 485">We recommend development of written procedures to annually monitor compliance with the insurance requirements for all contracts entered into by the EEL Program.</p> <p data-bbox="544 516 1372 606">Procedures should include creation of a checklist to be completed annually. The checklist should be reviewed by the Program Manager and retained with a copy of the certificate of insurance.</p>
	<i>Management Response and Action Plan</i>
Response	EEL Staff confirmed that the insurance coverages had never lapsed, and current certificates have been provided to the State by EEL and to EEL from the Nature Conservancy. EEL Staff will maintain a database that provides overview information for each contract. This database will include fields for things that need to be tracked during the course of the ongoing contract that are not typically tracked by the County contract’s administration process.
Time Frame	The required procedures will be implemented by May 31, 2005.
Person Responsible	EEL Program Manager

Issue # 2	<i>Monitoring of The Nature Conservancy Contract</i>
	<p>Under the County’s contract with The Nature Conservancy, the Conservancy provides certain services related to land acquisition and negotiations of land sales.</p> <p>For its services, the Conservancy earns a set contract fee, paid in equal quarterly installments by the County. Section 1.04 of the contract states that the Conservancy is required to provide a quarterly accounting of the contract fee (expenses actually incurred by the Conservancy versus contract fee paid by the County). We analyzed this accounting over the past four years, from January 1, 2001 to September 30, 2004, noting the following results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ During 2001, actual expenses incurred by the Conservancy exceeded fees paid by the County by \$1,341. ❑ During 2002, fees paid by the County exceeded actual expenses incurred by the Conservancy by \$42,119. ❑ During 2003, fees paid by the County exceeded actual expenses incurred by the Conservancy by \$2,243. ❑ During 2004 (through first three quarters), fees paid by the County exceeded actual expenses incurred by the Conservancy by \$64,352. <p>In summary, from January 1, 2001 to September 30, 2004 the County paid \$686,677 for actual services of \$579,304, representing an effective overpayment of \$107,373. While a copy of the Conservancy’s accounting of the contract fee is attached to each quarterly invoice to the County, no one within the EEL Program was aware of the above trend. Further, no one in management monitors this information on a quarterly or annual basis.</p> <p>In addition, section 2.02 of the contract states that the County is to perform quarterly written evaluations of the Conservancy regarding progress evaluation and overall contributions to EEL Program objectives. Our test work indicated that no quarterly evaluations have been performed since December 31, 2003.</p> <p><i>Impact</i></p> <p>From January 1, 2001 through September 30, 2004, it appears the County has paid more than the actual costs incurred for services rendered by The Nature Conservancy. Further, there is no evidence that management is monitoring the cost benefit relationship of the County’s contract with the Conservancy.</p> <p>The County is not in compliance with section 2.02 of its contract with the Conservancy, which requires the County perform quarterly written evaluations of the Conservancy’s performance.</p> <p><i>Recommended Action</i></p> <p>We recommend the County develop procedures to monitor the cost benefit relationship of its contract with the Conservancy. Ultimately, the County should perform a detailed analysis of the current contract fee based on the current and anticipated future needs of the County.</p>

Issue # 2	Monitoring of The Nature Conservancy Contract (continued)
	<p>Recommended Action-continued</p> <p>We recommend the County comply with section 2.02 of its contract with the Conservancy, which requires the County perform quarterly written evaluations of the Conservancy's performance.</p>
	Management Response and Action Plan
Response	<p>The Nature Conservancy entered into a fixed fee agreement based on a good faith estimate as to the overall costs associated with the service they would provide to the County. The documented Conservancy's expenses were 96.4% of Contract income from Contract commencement in 1993 through its termination December 7, 2004.</p> <p>Please note that staff is aware that The Nature Conservancy has provided acquisition services that were not billed. For example, during the acquisition of the Mullett Creek Islands between July and October of 2000, TNC incurred over \$10,000 in expenses on behalf of the County that was not charged to the contract. Additional expenses were incurred when TNC assisted in the acquisition of the Inlet Groves Indian River Lagoon Blueways site. As a result of their participation, the Department was able to secure a 62 acre site for the South Beaches Community Park.</p> <p>This payment process contained in this contract will be reviewed with the County Attorney's office and appropriate modifications incorporated into the contract(s) to be approved by the Board for future acquisition services. In addition, Staff will seek a County Attorney's review of the previous agreement with the Nature Conservancy to determine how the differential discovered as part of this audit is to be addressed. <u>Staff has provided written notification to the Nature Conservancy of this finding.</u></p> <p>Due to the recent departure of the Program Manager, the Interim Program Manager was not initially aware of the procedure related to quarterly evaluations of the Nature Conservancy contract. All quarterly evaluations had been completed up until the time that the previous Program Manager resigned.</p>
Time Frame	The required procedures will be implemented by June 30, 2005
Person Responsible	EEL Program Manager

Issue # 3	<i>Sanctuary Management Manual</i>
	<p>The EEL Program maintains a Sanctuary Management Manual (SMM), which provides general guidelines as to how program lands are to be managed. The SMM was originally developed by the Selection and Management Committee (SMC), and was last updated in 1997. The SMM has been bound and distributed to appropriate EEL Program employees, and is also posted online to provide public access. We reviewed the SMM, noting the following inconsistencies between the SMM and actual practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Section 4.3.5 of the SMM indicates the County will establish a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to serve as a liaison between the EEL Program, local communities and County citizens. Members of the CAC are to be appointed by the Board of County Commissioners. As of November 2004 a CAC had not been established. ❑ Appendix A-1 of the SMM outlines the “EEL Program Conservation Principles and Directives.” Principle 10 indicates that management will develop and present to the Board of County Commissioners a long-term financial plan. The plan shall be designed to allow the EEL Program to be economically self-sufficient, and shall decrease the future need for increased taxes above and beyond the 1990 EEL Referendum. As of November 2004 management has not developed a long-term financial plan as described above. <p><i>Impact</i></p> <p>The County has not established a Citizen Advisory Committee and is therefore out of compliance with the SMM. Such noncompliance indicates the link between the SMC and the public, as intended in the SMM, is not present.</p> <p>The County has not developed a long-term financial plan and is therefore not in compliance with the SMM. Such noncompliance could result in the EEL Program not being able to become self-sufficient, as intended in the SMM.</p> <p><i>Recommended Action</i></p> <p>We recommend that management either establish a Citizen Advisory Committee, as described in the SMM, or remove the requirement from the SMM.</p> <p>We recommend that management either develop and present to the Board of County Commissioners a long-term financial plan, as described in the SMM, or remove the requirement from the SMM.</p>
	<i>Management Response and Action Plan</i>
Response	<p>Staff had initiated plans to restructure the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) prior to the audit. Amendment of the manual and establishment of the CAC had been on hold pending the outcome of the EEL referendum. Since the audit fieldwork, the Board of County Commissioners has approved (March 8, 2005) by resolution #05-053, a committee now called the EEL Recreation and Education Advisory Committee. The Commissioners are currently completing appointments to this committee.</p>

<i>Issue # 3</i>	<i>Sanctuary Management Manual (continued)</i>
	<i>Management Response and Action Plan-continued</i>
	In November 2004 voters approved an EEL referendum that will provide acquisition and management funds through the year 2025. The EEL policy manuals will be revised to reflect the 2004 referendum and modifications to the Citizen Advisory Committee
Time Frame	The required procedures will be implemented by October 30, 2005
Person Responsible	EEL Program Manager

Issue # 4	Land Acquisition Procedures
	<p>One of the EEL Program’s primary functions is to purchase land. The County is responsible to perform certain portions of the land acquisition process, such as land identification, land appraisal, etc. The County has contracted with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to perform other portions of the land acquisition process, such as certain due diligence activities, contract negotiations, etc.</p> <p>We developed an understanding of the County’s process through discussions with management and TNC representatives, and review of the Land Acquisition Manual (LAM) and the TNC contract. Section 2.03 of the TNC contract indicates the County is responsible for managing the appraisal process, including establishment of appraisal assumptions, solicitation of bids, confirmation of bid acceptance, and appraisal review. As indicated by EEL Program management, TNC typically provides the County with a list of 5 or 6 appraisers to be sent a bid request letter.</p> <p>We selected 10 purchases completed in the last two years for testing purposes, and noted the following three exceptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> In one instance, TNC solicited appraisal bids (on the County’s behalf). Letters were written on TNC letterhead, which gives the appearance that TNC is at times responsible for managing the appraisal process instead of the County. <input type="checkbox"/> Related to another purchase, EEL Program management was unable to produce a copy of one of the two winning appraisal bids. Accordingly, we were unable to verify that the appraisal was awarded to the two lowest bidders. <input type="checkbox"/> Finally, one of the two winning bidders for the purchase of land from the National Heritage Foundation submitted their faxed bid on the July 5, 2001 deadline. However, the faxed bid did not include an actual dollar amount. Only the hard-copy (delivered the following day) included the dollar amount. <p>We also noted the LAM provides only vague guidance as to land acquisition procedures, focusing more on the intentions of the program rather than detailed procedures. The TNC contract provides primarily an indication of the responsible party for each activity, rather than detailed procedures.</p> <p>Impact</p> <p>Without detailed procedures, critical steps could be overlooked in the land acquisition process. Without detailed procedures, turnover of key personnel could result in disruption of operations, and non-compliance with County policies.</p> <p>TNC and County responsibilities should be clearly defined in the proceedings to alleviate any potential conflicts of interest.</p>

Issue # 4	Land Acquisition Procedures (continued)
	<p>Recommended Action</p> <p>We recommend that EEL Program management develop detailed land acquisition procedures. Specifically, procedures should indicate changes in responsibilities depending on whether or not State funds are anticipated. The procedures should also clearly state that the County is to maintain complete control of the appraisal process – in fact and appearance – whenever County property taxes may be used to purchase land. In particular, the County should be responsible to identify prospective State certified appraisers. These procedures, once adopted, will also assist with training new employees.</p> <p>We recommend development of a standard ‘bid tabulation sheet’ to be completed by an EEL Program employee during every appraisal bid process. The tabulation sheet should be reviewed and signed of by the Program Manager and retained in the purchase file.</p>
	Management Response and Action Plan
Response	<p>As discussed as part of the audit process, TNC was merely performing the administrative task of forwarding the County’s solicitation to the appropriate appraisers. In an effort to prevent this from occurring in the future, staff will identify a procedure that ensures all appraisal bid requests, and notices to proceed are distributed on County EEL Letterhead.</p> <p>Staff was unable to locate a copy of the missing appraisal bid from the appraiser's office. Staff is developing a land acquisition database that will be tied to the hard-copy files, which will provide an additional opportunity for file reconciliation.</p> <p>Due to the significant number of acquisition processes to be followed, the department will be requesting a Land Acquisition Coordinator position be approved. In addition, staff will be developing a land acquisition procedural manual to document specific procedures that are not covered in the EEL Land Acquisition Manual. This new manual will be included in the training for new employees.</p>
Time Frame	The required procedures will be implemented by October 30, 2005.
Person Responsible	EEL Program Manager

Issue # 5	Land Management
	<p>The County has a spreadsheet currently maintained by EEL Program management to track the status of all properties managed under the EEL Program. However, the spreadsheet has not been updated for activity since the Program Manager left. We also noted the spreadsheet does not identify properties by their tax ID number, does not track due diligence costs by acquisition, does not include A-list properties obtained by the State and managed by the County, includes incomplete or missing data, and does not track the status of required Management Plans, all of which would allow for more effective tracking.</p> <p>Appendix A-1 of the SMM outlines the “EEL Program Conservation Principles and Directives.” Principle 10 indicates that management will develop and present to the Board of County Commissioners an Interim Management Plan within 90 days and a Management Plan within one year of the acquisition of a management unit or sanctuary site.</p> <p>In addition, the County manages numerous properties under two Management Lease Agreements with the State. For each of these properties, management is also required to submit a Management Plan to the Division of State Lands, in accordance with subsection 18-2.021(4) of the Florida Administrative Code.</p> <p>Our test work indicated that management does not typically develop interim management plans. In addition, numerous properties do not have a completed and approved Management Plan, in accordance with the above requirements. Due to the lack of a comprehensive property tracking tool, it was not feasible to develop a complete listing of properties not in compliance. However, we noted the following properties lacked a required Management Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Continental Acreage (acquired November 2001) <input type="checkbox"/> TiCo Scrub/TiCo Spaceport (acquired April 1994) <input type="checkbox"/> Washburn Cove (acquired October 1997) <p>Impact</p> <p>A more comprehensive tracking system would benefit the EEL Program.</p> <p>Management is currently out of compliance with its SMM, its Management Lease Agreements with the State, and subsection 18-2.021(4) of the Florida Administrative Code.</p> <p>Recommended Action</p> <p>We recommend management update and reorganize its property tracking tool, so that the information is both timely and useful. Specifically, the current tracking tool should be reorganized by either current or intended sanctuary site. Information to be tracked should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Each purchase, transfer or donation identified by the tax ID number. <input type="checkbox"/> In addition to the contract price, each listing should include due diligence costs related to the acquisition, if any. <input type="checkbox"/> An indication as to whether the State or County maintains title, and the related Management Lease Agreement, if any.

Issue # 5	<i>Land Management (continued)</i>
	<p><i>Recommended Action-continued</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ The date by which a Management Plan should be developed and the current status. Status data should consider whether there is a draft, whether the draft has been approved by the Board, whether the draft has been approved by the State, if applicable, and whether or not property is either in or out of compliance. <p>We recommend that management develop Management Plans for all properties, as required by the above policies and regulation. With respect to Interim Management Plans, management should consider the need to develop a policy to address compliance with the policy. Possible solutions may include full compliance with the current policy, removal of the current requirement from the SMM, or development of a generic interim plan to apply to all properties.</p>
	<i>Management Response and Action Plan</i>
Response	<p><u>Land Acquisition Tracking</u></p> <p>The tracking of property acquisition should not be confused with management of properties. Although some information (i.e. parcel ID) is not referenced in the acquisition tracking spreadsheet, this information is contained in the files. The acquisition tracking spreadsheet was not intended to be a comprehensive resource for information about acquired lands. It was only designed to provide basic reference information for the tracking of such things as the number of acres being acquired, date of acquisition, ecological significance, location and purchase price.</p> <p>The EEL Program does recognize the value of expanding the spreadsheet to include additional information, and its potential use as a single resource for property information beyond acquisition. Staff is currently working with the County's Information Systems Department to develop a comprehensive database for this purpose.</p> <p>Although the spreadsheet did not contain some recent acquisition activity since the resignation of the previous Program Manager, all information was contained in the files.</p> <p><u>Management Plans:</u></p> <p>The development of management plans depends largely on the acquisition boundaries of the property for which the plan is written. Delays in the submittal of management plans, is a result of incomplete acquisition efforts. Typically the management plan is not developed until the majority of acquisition for the intended management area is completed. In addition, the approval process required for each management plan is best left until acquisition winds down so as to minimize the number of amendments and approvals that are required as new parcels or activities are added to the plan.</p>

Issue # 5	Land Management (continued)
	Management Response and Action Plan-continued
	<p><u>Management Plans-continued:</u></p> <p>Each plan and any amendments must be reviewed, revised and approved by each of the following parties: EEL staff, EEL advisory committees (REAC and SMC), Board of County Commissioners, and the Division of State Lands. Although the State lease agreements do stipulate that the managing entity will submit the management plan within one year, State staff recognize the complexities of the approval process and allow flexibility for the submittal of plans. Staff is working diligently to bring all appropriate plans through the approval process. Staff will also discuss with the Division of State Lands the possibility of temporary management plan waivers and or interim management plans for small properties until further acquisitions are completed to provide a manageable boundary.</p> <p>Due to the significant number of acquisition processes to be followed, the department will be requesting a Land Acquisition Coordinator position be approved. The development of interim management plans within 90 days of acquisition is not realistic, and as EEL policy manuals are revised, this reference will be removed or revised. Current EEL procedural manuals identify both County and State requirements the EEL Program must follow for submittal of management plans. These requirements do not accurately reflect the County approval process prior to submittal of plans to the State. Staff will request the EEL Selection and Management Committee to consider additional revisions to the Sanctuary Management Manual to include general land management strategies and practices consistent with State guidelines. These revisions would allow the manual to serve as a standard interim management plan until acquisitions are nearly complete.</p>
Time Frame	The required procedures will be implemented by October 30, 2005.
Person Responsible	EEL Program Manager