

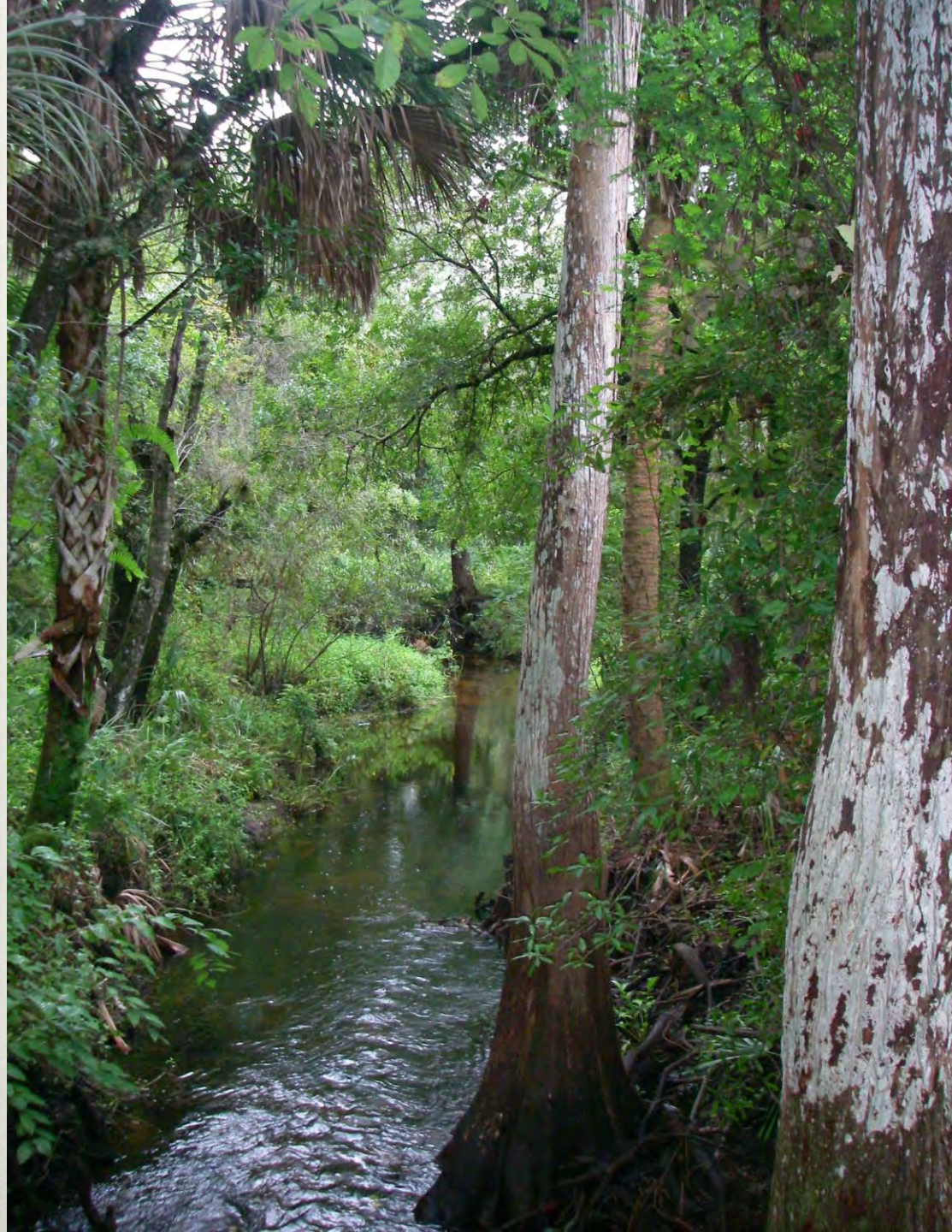


# River Oaks Preserve

Barbara Saxton Co Chair FOROP

Debi Osborne Conservation Foundation of The Gulf Coast

# Friends of River Oaks Preserve





CASCADES  
AT  
ESTERO

ROOKERY  
POINT

10 AC

East Broadway

VILLAGES AT COUNTRY CREEK



**Natural Beauty**



Reduce surface flood water run-off

Increase property values

Provide shade & reduce ambient temperature

Provide sense of place & community

Provide habitats for wildlife

Lower levels of noise & dust

Encourage walking

Reduce stress

Produce oxygen & reduce carbon dioxide

House and horses once graced the property



# USGS Monitoring Station

The current owner has given access to the USGS (United States Geological Survey) agency for monitoring the river level and flow rate of the North Branch of the Estero River. The site has a monitoring station installed in the river edge which monitors the various important data sets concerning the river. This gauge has been installed since 1987.



**The USGS, in conjunction with Lee County Natural Resources, has determined this site of critical importance in gauging the water level and flow of this section of the tributary Estero river.** At this point of the river, the width and banks of the river are in its natural and original state without ever being modified or excavated.

# The Naples Daily News



Flooding in Estero devastated neighborhoods, leaving major roadways impassable and neighborhoods swamped. **The Village Council is now looking into making sure that never happens again.**



“We took **great liberties** with governmental authorities just to get it done,” **Sarkozy said**. “I’m glad we did, in retrospect, because I think it saved a lot of our neighborhoods from significant impact of flooding.”

“Maybe it’s time to think about slowing down the development, at least until we get our **storm water master plan in place**,” **Levitan said**.



IRMA

Record setting Rain Event (8/25 – 8/28/2017") and less that 3 weeks later.....



# Studies Show Creating Parks Helps Fight Crime

There are plenty of reasons to like green spaces

- 1.They create connectivity for the community
- 2.They catch storm water runoff
- 3.They improve health
- 4.And now a new body of evidence is coming into focus on how urban nature affects crime

## ***Jane Jacobs' notion of "eyes on the street":***

Well-kept community plots encourage more people to spend time outside in those spaces, leading to a greater degree of informal surveillance of the area and deterring crime.

Research gives cities reasons to reassess policies about cleaning and greening vacant lots, developing parks, or catching storm water in green installations. Beyond the ecological and aesthetic benefits, ***these investments create a safer environment for the people who live nearby.***

A nicer gate could border the west end of the Village land surrounded by existing neighborhoods with Conservation signage that states the Preserve is monitored by Friends of River Oaks.



# Acquiring the Preserve

- ❖ Negotiations with Landowner
  - ❖ Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast, a regional land conservancy, taking lead
  - ❖ Landowner is a willing seller
- ❖ Secure Appraisals, determine purchase price
- ❖ Find Public and Private funds



# Managing the Preserve: A Public-Private Partnership

- ❖ Owned by the Village of Estero
  - ❖ Village's first community-wide natural area preserve
- ❖ Conservation Foundation will hold perpetual conservation easement
  - ❖ Ensures the land remains a preserve, Forever
- ❖ Community Support for management
- ❖ Community Use

# In Summary...

**River Oaks Preserve** should be just the beginning of the Village's *vision* for additional green space and future flood control. Benefits of this parcel include:

- ❖ ***Affordable*** initial acquisition for Estero's green space and preserve inventory. Creates good momentum for future park support and community involvement.
- ❖ Readiness: Could be finished in the near term with help of stewardship and community resources .i.e. FOROP.
- ❖ Utilizes land already owned by the Village in ways that benefits neighbors by helping to reduce current unsavory activities and potential future development by commercial or agriculture i.e. farm.
- ❖ Potential solution for water runoff for surrounding neighborhoods.
- ❖ Highest and best use of this land vs. residential development.