

David Dell  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Southeast Region, Ecological Services  
1875 Century Boulevard  
Atlanta GA 30345

RECEIVED ADMINES

APR 04 2017

BY: 

Ashleigh Blackford  
South Florida Ecological Services Office  
1339 20th Street  
Vero Beach FL 32960

From: Paul Anthony, Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition

Re: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan  
Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223  
Document Number: 2017-05767

Greetings,

I am begging you to not approve this revised RAM development plan of the Coral Reef Commons or AT LEAST demand a hearing to be heard by court. I was born and still reside in this area. My son and I used to enjoy nature runs and walks near and on this property. We were always under the assumption that the subject land was already protected by the county or neighboring Zoo. Later to shockingly find out that the University of Miami actually owned this land and sold it to the clutches of RAM development. How can I justify proper conservation and "the RIGHT thing to do" to my son when he is witnessing another natural and furthermore endangered forest land be paved over and destroyed? My stomach turns just pondering this. To make matters worse the traffic in the area is already beyond unbearable. This or any other large scale development in this area would turn the already slug moving traffic similar into literally a standing parking lot.

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE execute your powers to protect this endangered forest, endangered plants and animal species that reside there. Moreover, please produce an everlasting example of proper conservation and stewardship to our youth by "doing the RIGHT THING" by instilling a natural park.

I along with our VP Cully Waggoner have read the original Ram Developments Habitat Conservation Plan for Coral Reef Commons and it is 504 pages of nonsense prepared in May 2015 by Johnson Engineering of Fort Myers, Florida. I have also read the 172 page Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan which was revised by Johnson Engineering in February 2017. While a lot of it is the same, one major difference is almost 51 acres Off Site Mitigation that was not part of the original plan and only appears to have been thrown in to make Ram look better to environmentalists.

In the revised HCP, Ram Development refuses to acknowledge most of the more than a dozen endangered, threatened or rare animal and plant species on the site and that call the Richmond Pine Rocklands home. The 2,100 acre Richmond Pine Rocklands are a "Life Boat Habitat" and

the ONLY place in the World that they can live. The HCP minimizes the impact and breaks it down to only 8 animal species and of those 8, only, one, the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly has according to the HCP been documented on the CRC Property.

By comparison the original HCP listed 20 different "potential" animal species. It also noted that the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly was found on the property multiple times. However, the fact that a Fairchild Tropical Gardens person inadvertently posted a picture of it on Ram property might be why they had to acknowledge it exists there.

So, what happened to the other 12 species in the revised HCP? Unlike humans, animals and plants do not see property lines, and do not know that fences divide them. The Florida Bonneted Bat and the Butterflies fly and the Crown Rim Rock and the Eastern Indigo snakes slither all over and the plants they require grow all over the Richmond Pine Rocklands, including the Coral Reef Commons site.

The HCP refuses to recognize that the site was a toxic nuclear waste site, a Superfund Site, when the University of Miami did nuclear radiation experiments on primates and buried the exposed primate carcasses in trenches on the site and were fined by the Army Corps of Engineers as part of the cleanup. The word Radioactive does not appear anywhere in either the original or revised HCP.

While it acknowledges that Coral Reef Commons is 86 acres of mixed use development and 52 acres of conservation land it fails to note that only 88 acres of the 138 total acres has already been acquired by Ram Development that the rest of it remains in the hands of the University of Miami. UM has said privately to the Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition they intend to uphold the rest of their contract and sell Ram most of the remaining land that they were given for free by the Federal Government but they have yet to set a Sell Date for Phase 2 and 3 of the deal.

Ram Development down plays the total destruction of 86 plus acres of the last 2% of remaining original Pine Rockland in Miami-Dade County. For a Walmart Super Center with additional retail and restaurant space along with upwards of 900 residential apartments They are requesting a "Take Permit" to validate their reasons for causing the extinction of several Federal and State endangered and threaten species. They minimize the impact of the species that they reluctantly had to include in the HCP that were found on the site while outright ignoring others that have been documented on the site in the past.

Nor does the HPC acknowledge that Pine Rocklands themselves are a globally imperiled and endangered habitat and that they can ONLY be found in South Florida, some parts of the Caribbean and Cuba. "The Miami Rock Ridge" is a ridge of zoolitic limestone the stretched from North Miami south to Florida City and the Everglades has been over developed because it was high ground. The threat of development continues not only with Coral Reef Commons, but Miami Wilds, a Universal Studios style theme / water park from 20th Century Fox and Sony.

I openly question why the Fish and Wildlife Service would even issue an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) to Ram Development to kill Endangered Species that FWS IS SUPPOSED TO BE PROTECTING IN THE FIRST PLACE! FWS historically has worked honorably and diligently

to get these species on the Endangered Species List and to save them in the first place. To allow any Developer to cause the imminent extinction of any species because they want to put up another Walmart is beyond me. There are several other viable, non-Pine Rocklands, non-environmentally sensitive sites without endangered and threatened species living on it around Miami-Dade County that could be used if we really did need another Walmart.

I feel that I am uniquely qualified to comment on this HCP, not only because I am Vice President of the Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition, but that I am and have been on the Richmond Pine Rocklands nearly every weekend for the last three years. I volunteer at the Gold Coast Railroad Museum, less than 1,000 feet away from the southern border of the Coral Reef Commons property. I started volunteering at the Gold Coast to be able to keep an eye on my beloved Pine Rocklands, now I'm the Trainmaster and Yardmaster and I run the trains.

I want to make it clear to FWS, that I represent MYSELF in this matter. Not the Gold Coast Railroad Museum and not even the Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition, but simply myself. When I moved to the Deerwood area in 1990 I knew that most of the land around Metro Zoo was protected and in Local, State or Federal ownership. I never imagined that a Walmart would be put up right next to the Zoo Miami Main Entrance or a mega theme / water park would be put on the land either. I want to keep it that way and I expect FWS to do it.

There are so many valid reason for FWS to deny this HCP and deny Ram Development to build Coral Reef Commons regardless of plan, here is a Top 5.

- 1). Causing the extinction of one or more animal or plant species that require the Richmond Pine Rockland Habitat to survive.
- 2). Causing the continued destruction of original Pine Rockland and the Miami Rock Ridge.
- 3). Increased traffic on Coral Reef Drive, SW 152 Street, which currently handles 60,000 cars per day and with a Walmart and a Theme Park next to Zoo Miami, will easily add 30,000 more cars daily on a road than CANNOT be physically expanded or modified to handle it. It is the only street into or out of the area that currently is overburdened and there is no way to fix it.
- 4). Loss of Property Values for thousands of homeowners living in the Deerwood, Bonita Lakes, Three Lakes, and Richmond West areas.
- 5). Loss of Quality of Life for all citizens of Miami-Dade County. We have become a concrete jungle, we tear down the old but the new we put up is not always good. We desperately need more green space, to put it simply we need the trees. Losing even more trees and greenspace, especially Pine Rocklands is NOT a viable option.

While there are many reasons for FWC to deny the HCP and deny Coral Reef Commons to be built, there is only one reason to approve it. The ONE and ONLY reason to approve the HCP is the allow Peter Cummings and Ram Realty to make an obscene amount of money while destroying our unique South Florida Pine Rocklands ecosystem and causing Endangered and Threatened animal and plant species to become extinct.

I am counting on Fish and Wildlife Service to do the right thing, please do not let me and the rest of the citizens and endangered species of Miami-Dade County down.

Best Regards,

*P. Paul Anthony*

Paul Anthony



Ms. Ashleigh Blackford  
US Fish and Wildlife Service  
South Florida Ecological Services  
1339 20th St.  
Vero Beach, FL 39260

Miami, March 29, 2017

Dear Ms. Blackford:

About a year ago, you were kind enough to return my call and to discuss at length some of the issues surrounding the proposals to commercially develop parts of the Richmond pine rocklands tract surrounding Miami's MetroZoo. These issues have reemerged with the submission of RAM Realty's Draft Habitat Conservation Plan dated February 2017 for an area which it calls Coral Reef Commons.

The Draft Habitat Conservation Plan recently submitted by RAM Realty of Palm Beach is part of a fragmented piecemeal process which favors the development for private gain of property which even in its sadly neglected current state benefits the broader population of South Miami. This approval process allows incremental approvals of individual projects - even megaprojects like this RAM's and its sister project FOX's Miami Wilds and the many other developments occurring in the same general area - to be obtained without ever stepping back and answering the question: does this project (and related projects) improve the quality of life of the population of the County, of the people who live around the MetroZoo area and who currently enjoy the use of SW 152<sup>nd</sup> St, SW 137<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the Florida Turnpike from SW 152<sup>nd</sup> St. and to the south? Were those affected by this project and similar projects consulted, their answer would be a resounding "No."

To call this private encroachment on the greenspace around the Zoo a "Commons" is an affront to John R. Commons the father of institutional economics and to anyone who has studied the "Tragedy of the Commons." RAM's private commercial development if allowed will destroy the last significant intact green space in South Miami which already is a "commons". RAM's proposal is in fact the enclosure of a public commons for private gain. The parking lot opposite the Zoo did serve as a commons, a meeting point for the exchange of ideas where the Miami Pine Rockland Coalition held one of its first meetings to bring together people who want this habitat preserved. Walmart and the other corporations planning to take over the area around the zoo for themselves would never allow their parking lot, much less mall installations to be used for the exchange of ideas. This project and Miami Wilds together will destroy the last respite users of SW 152 Street have to the blight of excess commercial and residential development of South Miami.

For several minutes, drivers on SW 152<sup>nd</sup> Street get to rest their eyes on the greenery of a forest of sorts and to escape for a moment from the traffic jams and visual pollution which RAM, Odebrecht (contractor for Miami Wilds) and other developers plan to bring to South Miami. The HCP makes a big point that business exposure to SW 152<sup>nd</sup> Street is essential to project profitability. However, from the point of view of users of that artery it is essential that no business be established since to do so would impede their view of nature. This point is

underlined by view of the amount of time that drivers can will be stuck in traffic jams on a street which is fast becoming another Kendall Drive, jokingly know as Miami's longest parking lot. Of all the piecemeal studies done, the traffic study was perhaps the weakest in failing to measure traffic flows properly at the time the study was done, to factor in nickel-and-dime development which has slowed flows since that study was done. It also failed to take into account the impact cars entering and exiting businesses located along the road way would have in slowing traffic flow and increasing travel times.

The entire Richmond Pine Rockland tract surrounding Miami's MetroZoo despite diverse ownership is a single unit from the point of view of the wildlife and plants which do not know boundaries and property lines and take advantage of whatever habitat is available which is adapted to their needs. My direct knowledge of the property is limited to what can be seen from the road and parking lots around the zoo and from the train tour. I would have traipsed the property from end-to-end as is my standard practice when asked to appraised a proposed project. Unfortunately, the property is posted to keep out anyone who might carry out an independent analysis of the land on which the RAM project is proposed to be built and to anyone who might be qualified to determine not simply what species are there now but which ones might potentially return if steps were taken to undo the years of neglect by the University of Miami. Under the supervision of appropriate scientists, habitat change fueled by years of fire-suppression could be reversed through selective logging and removal of detritus and accumulated organic matter and the reintroduction of periodic fire to return the area around the Zoo to its former status as a pine rockland.

More than two years have elapsed since RAM's consultants did a survey of some of the species which might be found on the area slated for development. A broader survey of the whole area around the Zoo is needed and it should be conducted by scientists who do not have a stake in the outcome of the survey. To atone for its neglect of its properties and the tax breaks it has received over the years when the property was designated as "agricultural," the University of Miami could provide the funding and a good part of the expertise needed for such an independent survey. Some of the species show dramatic changes measured in several hundred percent from one-year to the next; thus, scientists need more than one year to do their work. Independent experts should be given the same time that RAM's consultants had available to do this work (approximately 3 years). They should be given access to both the RAM and the Miami Wilds areas and all areas that the University of Miami owns. State and Federal owners of other segments of the Richmond tract should also be asked for permission to carry out a complete inventory first so that we will know what exactly it is that is being proposed for permanent destruction and then estimate the costs of destroying what we have, what it would cost to get back the habitats which have been degraded, and to estimate the costs and any conceivable benefits might be derived from their destruction, which is what the HCP proposes.

#### Economic and Financial Damage to the Community:

This megaproject and the associated Miami Wilds project together with nickel-and-dime development in the area around the tract (housing complexes, new businesses, etc) and in other areas south and west affect many thousands of people who use the main arteries: the Florida Turnpike, SW 117<sup>th</sup> Ave, SW 152<sup>nd</sup> St, SW 184<sup>th</sup> St. and SW 137<sup>th</sup> Ave. These projects plus

increase vehicular traffic associated with the county's slow recovery from the Great Recession that started in 2007. Small developments have already increased commute times on these streets and avenues. And yet, the only people notified concerning RAM's project were limited to 1,625 residents within half a mile of the project. This appalling secrecy allowed a project which will hurt hundreds of thousands of people and proceed without giving each of them adequate notice of the damage it would do. My commute from my residence near Quail Roost to my office near the Tamiami Airport area has already increased by two minutes each way even before these mega projects even start. Most affected will be those people living on SW 152<sup>nd</sup> Street or using that street on daily commutes or when attempting to do business with the numerous small businesses located in the plazas off it. SW 152<sup>nd</sup> Street is not wide enough to handle current traffic and backups on the Florida Turnpike at the 152<sup>nd</sup> Street exit are already daily, large and dangerous. Residents of the communities on the north side of 152<sup>nd</sup> Street and which have only one exit, onto 152<sup>nd</sup> Street, will be bottled up in their communities; increased travel times will affect property values. Since the benefit from this development will go to RAM whereas external costs will be imposed on all road users for miles around, RAM should be required to compensate each person affected for the cost of increased travel time and other costs imposed by this development. Local realtors should be surveyed and estimates made of impacts on property values of homes on 152<sup>nd</sup> Street and on those farther south or west whose property values are affected by longer commutes attributable to increased traffic generated by these two megaprojects and by the nickel-and-dime development in the area.

There is additional damage done by the increased traffic and congestion whose external cost needs to be evaluated and paid for by RAM to those affected by it. The emissions from automobile and engines of other vehicles will increase pollution, particularly because motors of these vehicles will be operating inefficiently at slow speeds or stopped completely due to gridlock. A new traffic study needs to be done using appropriate techniques (unlike the previous study which used axle counts) to estimate what these costs are in terms of higher levels of pollutants and higher levels of pulmonary diseases due to increased emissions. Because trade winds are generally from the southwest, residents on the north side of SW152nd St. will be the most severely affected but all road users will be affected and have a right to be compensated by RAM and other developers.

The proposed RAM development would directly affect existing businesses in the area surrounding the project through direct competition. Its sister megaproject Miami Wilds and the continuing nickel-and-dime development in neighboring areas would exacerbate congestion and increase travel times, making it harder for customers to get to these local businesses. Walmarts and similar big box stores have a negative impact on existing local businesses by providing everything and competing not just with individual businesses but collectively with nearly all types of businesses. The additional retail space made available in the RAM project would continue the tendency of putting new businesses in competition with existing businesses to the point that neither the new businesses nor the existing businesses are able to operate as going concerns.

Interested stakeholders: The HCP list of interested stakeholders shows no meetings by RAM with the principal coalition opposed to this project: the Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition.

## Section 2: Environmental Setting

The Richmond tract is the largest remaining area of pine rocklands outside of the Everglades (Long Pine, whose environmental characteristics are significantly different). It needs to be considered in its entirety and the analysis of the CRC area and off-site mitigation offset is partial, incomplete and unhelpful. If species that are currently found or which could return to the tract if remedial action were taken, are to continue to exist in Miami-Dade, the Richmond tract needs to be preserved and protected as a unit. Preservation actions need to address the entirety of the tract and partial analysis such as that presented in the HCP does not do this. The analysis of what is in the HCP can fairly be described as perfunctory: for species which vary wildly from year-to-year in their populations, some of which require fire to appear at all, a one or two year evaluation period is totally inadequate. That fact that the only experts having access to carry out such a survey are consultants hired by RAM makes any finding they come up with subject to question. Peer review requires that research be replicable by other independent researchers. This has not been allowed either by RAM or by the University of Miami, itself a research institution.

It is not possible to put an economic value on a species, although there is good reason to believe that all species have some value. Institutions like the Fish and Wildlife Service have pointed out the value of some species without quantifying what exactly the economic value of an individual species could be.<sup>1</sup> Since the Richmond Pine Rocklands habitat is unique, it is not impossible that the cure for some of the diseases which affect South Florida or other parts of the United States could be found in the poorly studied habitat soon to be paved over for a parking lot for Walmart.

The progression of pine rockland habitats to climax hardwood forests has occurred in the Richmond tract due to years of fire suppression and neglect. In the CRC area, much of the fire suppression was the responsibility of the University of Miami, which has benefitted financially from the sale of a property on which it had paid negligible tax until land was rezoned and converted to commercial use. RAM's HCP classifies land in the CRC property as Developed Lands (**33.3** acres, of which 16.5 are sodded and 4.0 are monkey cages); some of this might be susceptible to reconversion to pine rocklands. The category "Disturbed Upland" accounts for **20.9** acres includes 10.1 described as exotic hardwood and 9.0 historically marl prairie plus 1.8 of scraped area dominated by turf species. Pinerock lands in various states of deterioration are reported to cover **80.0** acres. Rockland hammocks are reported to cover **4.0** acres. The total area is given as **137.9** acres. No analysis is presented of what it would take to reconvert any of these areas to pine rocklands as they were before fire suppression occurred. Fortunately, the FWS has: it has shown what it takes to recover habitat for the deltoid spurge (which is covered in the HCP page 32) of the HCP. FWS prescribes **fire at 3-7 year intervals**, preceded by the removal of excess combustible material to keeps fire temperatures low.<sup>2</sup>

HCP Survey Methodology: Survey work took place mostly in September and October 2014 with some visits in October and one each in November 2014 and January 2015. So survey work was limited to a single year and specifically to the fall-winter months of that year. It seems likely that research at other times of the year might have turned up species that are prevalent in other months. Also, no multi-year research was conducted which would also give a better idea of what

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fws.gov/nativeamerican/pdf/why-save-endangered-species.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.fws.gov/verobeach/MSRPPDFs/Deltoid.PDF>

species are present on the property. No reports are available for the Miami Wilds or other parts of the Richmond tract.

Acoustic surveys were done for bats.

Findings on the species addressed in the HCP:

#### Eastern Indigo Snake

Continuous compact areas are needed to provide habitat for this snake. Fire is a needed tool for maintaining the open habitat needed by this threatened species. The snake was not found on the CRC property but is reported in the mitigation area.

#### Rimrock crowned snake

Not found in the survey nor on the mitigation site.

#### Gopher tortoise

Not found in the CRC site survey although the FWS thinks that it should exist on the Richmond tract. Burrowing conditions may not be adequate for this snake which digs deep burrows (which are then colonize by other species).

#### Florida Leafwing Butterfly

Not found in the CRC site survey, do perhaps to a predominance of habitat not appropriate to the butterfly as a result of fire suppression, but do exist 20 miles west in the Everglades National Park.

#### Miami Tiger Beetle

No Miami tiger beetles were found on the CRC site but have been observed on 4 sites in the Richmond tract (and one nearby but unidentified place). The new species is considered to be endangered.

#### White-Crowned Pigeon

This species is identified as threatened by the State of Florida. Not found on the CRC site nor the mitigation area.

#### Tiny polygala

This species is found in the CRC site and the Incidental Take Permit, if issued, will include protection for the largest area found (100 plants). It has not been observed in the Off-site mitigation area. It requires fire or storm (such as Hurricane Andrew) to open area for it to colonize. Much of the CRC site is too overgrown in its current form, to support this plant.

#### Deltoid Spurge

It has been found within the CRC site and the mitigation area. Most plants are scheduled to be protected based on the project design. It requires a 3-7 year fire regime and mechanical removal of shrub canopy according to the HCP.

#### Crenulate Lead-plant

Not found in the CRC site nor expected in the mitigation area, though it exists in Pinecrest 5 miles away and its range extends from Coral Gables to Kendall. It requires burning and partial shade. An experimental population has been established in the Richmond tract.

#### Florida Brickell Bush

Not found in the CRC site nor the mitigation area, though it has been found in other parts of the Richmond Rocklands. Current habitat is overgrown and not suitable in its present state for this bush.

#### Garber's Spurge

Listed as threatened, over 1 million plants exist and it was not found in the CRC site nor in the mitigation area.

#### Small's Milkpea

It has not been documented in the CRC site nor the mitigation area. It has however been reported in the Richmond area but the report could not be verified.

#### Sand Flax

This species has not been documented in the CRC site nor the mitigation area but has been found in nearby pine rocklands in the Richmond area. It requires periodic fire to maintain its habitat.

#### Carter's Small-Flowered Flax

Not found in the CRC site nor the mitigation area due to fire suppression. Populations do occur in an area less than 5 miles from the CRC site.

#### Blodgett's Silver Bush

Not found within the CRC Property and Off-site Mitigation Area, due to fire suppression and the invasive plants which cover most of the area.

#### Florida Prairie Clover

Not found within the CRC Property and Off-site Mitigation Area, due to fire suppression and the invasive plants which cover most of the area. Populations do occur in an area less than 5 miles from the CRC site.

#### Florida Pineland Crabgrass

Not found within the CRC Property and Off-site Mitigation Area. The last reported occurrence in the Richmond area was in 1997, extirpated due to historical hydrologic alterations and fire suppression.

#### Everglades Bully

It is found in 11 sites in the Richmond area but was not found within the CRC Property and Off-site Mitigation Area.

#### Florida Bristle Fern

Not found within the CRC nor reported in the Richmond area.

Clamshell Orchid

Not found within the CRC nor reported in the Richmond area.

Summary: A limited number of species was examined. Most of them are not found either in the CRC site or the mitigation area which have been extremely degraded from their original state which was mostly pine rocklands, due to fire suppression and neglect. Areas that were built over or otherwise taken from their original land use were not restored to prior conditions upon sale of the property to RAM. Fire-suppression allowed detritus and organic material to build up and encouraged the transition from native pine rockland species to invasive non-native species, requiring remedial manual clearing and soil restoration before fire could again carry out its role to keep the understory reasonably clear and open to support the growth of species typical of pine rockland habitats. The fact that some species are found on other pine rocklands within a few miles of the Richmond Pine Rockland tract indicates was habitat restored, many of these species would return either on their own or with outside support.

### **Alternatives:**

The HCP provides a number of alternatives which is the strategy preferred by the World Bank in costing and determining benefits from development projects.<sup>3</sup> However, as is often the case in such analysis, alternatives generally are chosen before any economic analysis is done and what analysis is carried out focuses on alternatives of interest to those proposing the projects.

Alternatives often do not include those which make the most sense from the standpoint of the larger society. The alternative most favorable to the needs of the people of South Miami and South Florida for greenspace and for a quality of life that does not require them to spend inordinate amounts of time in their cars stalled in traffic jams: preservation and restoration with no development. None of the alternatives are costed nor are the financial benefits for the developer valued and shown in the report. External costs to society are ignored, and as are benefits (in any) to the affected populations.

The alternatives proposed are:

4.1.1 No action (Do nothing)

4.1.2 Redevelopment Only - No Restoration

4.1.3 Maximum build-out

4.1.4 County-approved Zoning 2013

4.1.5 County Approved Zoning/Stepping Stones and Southern Corridor

4.1.6 Reduced Commercial/Increased Preserve

The missing alternative which should be numbered 4.1.0 since it should be the first alternative considered: No development for the entire Richmond Tract; Restoration of Neglected Habitat.

4.1.0. No commercial development on Entire Tract; Restoration of Neglected Habitat.

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<sup>3</sup> Cost-Benefit Analysis in World Bank Projects, Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) World Bank, Doc. No. 62470, Washington, DC 2010, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/2561/624700PUB0Cost00Box0361484B0PUBLIC0.pdf?sequence=1>

Besides being the only intact green space in South Miami, much of the tract can be restored to pine rocklands habitat by doing what should have been during the years of neglect: removing exotic species and hardwood physically, removing excess organic material, introducing a systematic regime of controlled fire every 2-4 years<sup>4</sup> (more frequent perhaps in initial years while rebuilding the habitat) and reintroduction of species found in similar pine rocklands habitats which do not reappear spontaneously, elimination of the RAM residential/commercial development project and the Miami Wilds water-theme park. The University of Miami was given stewardship over this federal land in part because of its expertise and commitment to management of the environment. It failed to maintain this legacy and through a combination of neglect and suppression of fire, assured the degradation of pine rockland habitat. Miami-Dade should capture some of the windfall from the tax advantages conferred on the University of Miami from the sale of the current property forming the basis of the CRC and any remaining properties, earmarking proceeds for use in restoration of this habitat.

#### 4.1.1. Do nothing.

This alternative is a strawman: no one at this point in time proposes allowing degradation to continue. Point 1 of the section on feasibility is in essence that the project should make RAM immensely wealthy and that conserving part of the habitat is the price of making this single goal possible. Point 2 notes that the goals of the investors to make a fortune at the expense of the citizens of Miami would not be realized if some development does not go ahead. Any investments which RAM and others have made are sunken costs which economists learn to ignore and were made in order to promote a project which is detrimental to the interest of the county and its citizens and which has gotten as far as it has, by a non-transparent process based on inaccurate and tendentious information. This argument is of no value in analyzing the economic merits of the proposed alternative. The management covenant would be vacated, allowing the county to put in place a better management plan designed to preserve the entire Richmond tract for the benefits of the citizens and their progeny. Point 4 is incorrect (do no restoration or even maintenance), since the public now understands how the resource of inestimable value has been allowed to degrade in order to justify private appropriation and use while making promises which cannot be kept to preserve a small part of the area covered by the HCP.

#### 4.1.2 Redevelopment Only

This option would allow development only on 25 acres (parking lots and blimp field) which are so seriously disturbed as to be prohibitively expensive to return to their former status. It is actually the best option that includes any development at all because such development is limited to area that is already disturbed beyond recovery. It also preserves the view of drivers and passers by of nature (even if initially this is nature of a degraded sort) from SW 152<sup>nd</sup> St; they are thus rewarded with a view of nature instead of the visual assault of another few minutes of urban sprawl. That this alternative is less profitable to RAM and its investors is again of no concern for economists who look to the good of the society as a whole which would be largely preserved. The additional traffic would continue to be a problem but would be far less than under the alternatives which follow. The absence of an “anchor” (bigbox) store should be perceived as an

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<sup>4</sup> University of Florida – IFAS, [http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/hot\\_topics/environment/fire\\_habitat.shtml](http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/hot_topics/environment/fire_habitat.shtml)

advantage from the point of view of the public and the county, for reasons which will be discussed below.

An aware citizenry is not going to permit development which ignores habitat restoration and which impacts negatively on their quality of life.

#### 4.1.3 Maximum build-out

This “alternative” is not relevant because it would never meet environmental objections.

#### 4.1.4. County Approved Zoning in 2013

This “alternative” is not relevant because it would never meet environmental objections.

#### 4.1.5 County Approved Zoning/Stepping Stones and Southern Corridor

This alternative adds 2.2 acres of “stepping stones”: tiny islands of habitat separated by roadways carrying an estimated 10,000 speeding cars a day across the corridor. Anyone who has ridden on rural roads in Miami-Dade knows how roads act as slaughterhouses for wildlife of all kinds particularly when habitat exists on both sides of the road, particularly for slow-moving insects and snakes which take a long time to cross wide swaths of asphalt.

#### 4.1.6 Reduced Commercial/Increased Preserve

The HCP lists this as the preferred alternative because it meets the private financial criteria of return on RAM’s investment, increases stepping stones to 3.9 acres, on-site preserves to 52.3 acres and includes a 50.1 acre off-site mitigation area.

#### Assumptions underlying the HCP

The underlying assumption of all these alternatives is what the World Bank calls EGAP = Everything Goes as Planned.<sup>5</sup> Anyone who has lived in South Florida knows that almost nothing goes as planned, with cost over-runs and delays on public project, including those managed by Miami Wilds contractor Odebrecht. World Bank cautions its staff in doing economic analysis to assign probabilities to outcomes and to conduct analysis on the value of each outcome weighted by the probability of its occurrence, with the expected value for the project being the sum of the value of individual outcomes weighted by the likelihood of their occurrence.<sup>6</sup> The Bank calls for maximum likelihood estimates rather than the rosy “best case” scenarios, such as those presented in documents such as RAM’s draft HCP.

The Richmond tract should be analyzed holistically and not on a piecemeal basis. The question to be answered is this one: Do we, the people of south Florida, want our remaining green space preserved, restored and put to use for us? Or do we want to allow what little remains to be chipped away piecemeal, by a RAM for its project of residences for the wealthy buyers and another Walmart here, by a Fox for a water park misnomered “Miami Wilds” there, and nickel-

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<sup>5</sup> WB, Cost-Benefit..., p. 20.

<sup>6</sup> WB, Cost-Benefit..., p. 16.

and-dime development everywhere, chipping away at our quality of life as people and as habitat for the creatures with whom we should share the limited space of south Florida. A holistic approach would weigh the probability of an occurrence by its value to society.

For example, if Miami Wilds phase I and phase II were built, a total of 2,750 low-wage jobs are promised; whether or not they would materialize is another issue. But economists love to make assumptions, so let's assume that Phase I materializes and produces half the combined phase I and phase II jobs (1,375 jobs). These jobs won't pay much more than \$12 per hour, or \$25,000 per worker per year. Thus, the total wage bill would be \$34.4 million per year, with struggling workers competing for expensive housing and trying to pay student loans. If the project lasted 10 years, the local economy would be \$344 million richer. But let's suppose instead and as the World Bank does for its projects, that this water park takes a dive and closes after only 5 years in operation. Workers would be left stranded; Miami would be left high and dry, with a derelict waterpark like so many others all over Florida.<sup>7</sup> This outcome has a high probability of occurrence since it will take visitors them an hour to get off the Turnpike and into the park and the same to get back on it at the end of the day. Meanwhile, the green space paved over for the park will be gone forever and with it the habitat for the species which proper management would have encouraged to stay and which proper restoration would have brought back from near extinction.

RAM's project entails similar risks. Forgetting about Amazon and eBay which are already taking customers away brick-and-mortar stores, there are already more bigbox stores in south Florida than the economy can support. Furthermore, a new megamall, the biggest in the United States, is slated for development in northwestern Miami-Dade county. Approved by the same process which allowed the RAM and Miami Wilds project to get as far as they have gotten, the NW Miami-Dade supermall will be built by the same people who developed the Mall of the Americas; the difference is that this supermall will not be developed in the middle of the boondocks but in already heavily populated and developed Miami-Dade. Other bigbox stores exist within an easy drive of the MetroZoo area: Walmart on South Dixie Highway and SW 211<sup>th</sup> St. and another on Kendall Drive and 158<sup>th</sup> Ave. Sears Southland store South Dixie Highway and SW 112<sup>th</sup> Ave. may close leaving another anchor store empty. Without an anchor to bring in "traffic" into the mall, other retailers in the complex would probably also fail, with a devastating impact on the tax-base and leaving behind a derelict development for which the community has permanently sacrificed its greenspace, wildlife and quality of life for the false promise of economic prosperity. Many communities are faced with this plight but few are asked to sacrifice what those of south Miami are being asked to give up, an irreplaceable habitat which has almost disappeared through overdevelopment and careless stewardship.

Periodic controlled fires are essential to restoring and then preserving resurrected pine rockland habitats. Fire in the middle of a residential/commercial development will be difficult to start and to maintain. Florida is below the national average for asthma but nonetheless, 6.6% of adults and 8.3% of children currently have asthma in Florida.<sup>8</sup> Even some economists suffer from asthma,

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.businessinsider.com/photos-of-the-abandoned-disney-river-country-water-park-2016-8>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_defunct\\_amusement\\_parks#United\\_States\\_of\\_America](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_defunct_amusement_parks#United_States_of_America)

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/stateprofiles/asthma\\_in\\_fl.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/asthma/stateprofiles/asthma_in_fl.pdf)

and so do some lawyers. Is it conceivable that in a residential complex full of expensive units sold to well-connected, wealthy people, there will not be a single smart lawyer? Or that business like Walmart and LA Fitness won't have lawyers of their own? Each prescribed burn will be object of a lawsuit. If any development is permitted, fire as the necessary tool to restore and preserve pine rockland habitats will not be available. Each prescribed burn will be the subject of a lawsuit, and, if they are allowed at all, fires will occur if and when lawsuits is settled and not at the time of the year called for by scientific management of the habitat.

Annex 10 on economic analysis is very superficial, designating MSA (minor statistical area 6.2) as the primary market for the Walmart-anchored business and saying that MSAs 6.1 and 7.2 would also form part of its secondary market areas. The report does not provide so much as a map to show where the primary and secondary statistical areas referred to as primary and secondary markets are located. Nevertheless annex 10 argues that there won't be enough acres of retail space available in the statistical areas (6.1, 6.2 and 7.2) on aggregate without providing figures to differentiate between the primary and secondary markets. It notes that space is adequate out to the 2020 planning horizon but argues that this fact should be ignored.) It talks about construction jobs which based on construction wage averages for Miami-Dade construction workers, would bring each worker \$62,000; the numbers may be correct perhaps but the workers won't be from Miami-Dade. RAM Realty is based in Palm Beach and can be expected to bring in its own crew; most construction workers will not be from Miami-Dade county. Furthermore, most construction workers in Miami-Dade are already fully employed in the growing economy. Annex 10 also talks about permanent retail jobs, but when you work through the numbers, the wage rate used is \$12 per hours, not exactly a living wage in what is becoming an expensive part of the country for workers to live in. It also notes that Perrine and Richmond Heights (majority black areas) are nearby and presumably would provide much of the workforce for retailers; this statement is not corroborated by past experience. Retail is a language-intensive business and requires a bilingual workforce to sell to a clientele which includes a high proportion of Spanish-language speakers; most blacks do not speak Spanish and will not be hired. The inclusion of this statement is another example of false promises made by the HCP in an attempt to convince the population of neighboring areas that they would benefit from this project.

Economic analysis should focus on the external costs which the RAM and its sister Miami Wilds project impose on the population in terms of longer average commute times, the loss of greenspace, the slower travel times and increased congestion on SW 152<sup>nd</sup> St and on alternate arteries and on north-south arteries near the project. Proponents of these projects should reimburse those of us who are affected for our additional fuel costs, additional insurance premiums from more and worse accidents, for additional commuting time, the lower property values of our homes, and lost time with family and friends and for the inability to get to the mom-and-pop businesses we now patronize because we can get to them in a reasonable time. The RAM and associated project will make road congestion worse and impede access to these business and other day-to-day activities in the area around the Zoo while trapping shoppers in their malls. The visual pollution of having to look at more ugly businesses instead of trees along the south side of SW 152<sup>nd</sup> St, and the irreparable loss of pine rockland habitat and species which will be lost as a result of these unwanted developments should also be compensated. Miami-Dade County has a responsibility to its citizens to improve their quality of life and not to make it

worse through greenspace depletion, species extinction and more urban sprawl in order to bring greater returns to the University of Miami and to a few investors not based in Miami-Dade county.

## **Conclusion**

The Habitat Conservation Plan which was three years in the making cannot be independently corroborated and cannot even be fact-checked in the 60 days allowed for comment. The comment period should be extended to 90 days. However, public hearings on the proposal for the RAM site and more broadly on the fate of how the entire Richmond pine rocklands tract surrounding MetroZoo and to allow FWS to provide guidance to the public and to the County on how it should be restored and conserved.

The FWS should allow independent scientists the same amount of time that the developers had (3 years). These independent researchers should have unfettered access to all properties that make up the Richmond tract and should be able to carry out their work during whatever months that they deem most appropriate.

Part of what needs to be done is to undo on some significant area what has been wrought by years of neglect. The University of Miami is one of the world renowned research institutions in research and learning on the environment. Its reputation is on the line. The University was given the stewardship over significant areas of federal land which at the time, if not pristine, was much closer to what a pine rocklands is understood to be than what is there today. It failed to take care of what it was freely given and ex post did not merit the trust that the Federal Government put in it. Even back when the University of Miami received this land, its scientists knew that periodic fire was an integral part of the maintenance of a pine rocklands ecosystem. The UM accepted that the stewardship and took advantage of the classification of the land as agricultural, paying negligible taxes until harvesting its windfall with the sale of the land to RAM Realty for development. If this land had been in the middle of the Redlands Agricultural Area and UM had let noxious weeds overrun the area, neighboring farmers would have been up in arms.

Under the supervision of its own scientists and in concert with independent scientists and following guidance provided by the FWS, the University of Miami should be required to immediately pick a significant compact area (say 25 acres) and restore it at its own expense. This restoration should be carried out with the agreement and under the supervision of the FWS which should be properly compensated, in this age of proposed federal budget cuts, for its efforts. This restoration would include the manual removal of non-native plant, cutting and removal hardwoods not found in pine rockland and removal of excess organic material and controlled burns and to restore this block to as a block as a witness to what is truly being lost as a result of the conversion from the pine rocklands habitat that it constituted at the time that the UM's stewardship started to the mess that it is in now and which is described in RAM's HCP. Annual monitoring at appropriate times of the year by UM and other scientists will confirm if the restoration is bringing back species not found at the time that the HCP survey was done but which could be expected to be found in a pine rocklands such as that of the Richmond tract. After three years, the FWS will have a better idea of what species this habitat will support. At that time, FWS and the community and the county should revisit the question of whether or not

the entire Richmond tract should be carved up piecemeal with projects like RAM's and FOX's into commercial and residential development of which Miami already has a surfeit or restored and preserved for use in perpetuity by the community, including not just people but also the other species with whom we share the land of south Florida.

I'll be looking forward to learning your decision on restoring and conserving the habitat of the Richmond pine rocklands.

With kind regards,

*Joseph F. Dorsey, Jr.*

Dr. Jeff Dorsey



cc:

David Dell  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Atlanta Regional Office, Ecological Services  
1875 Century Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30345  
David\_dell@fws.gov

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: 59 Days to comment - Save the PineRocklands  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:46:26 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 7:07 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: 59 Days to comment - Save the PineRocklands  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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**From:** **PalsAroundtheWorld** <[starrtalk@gmail.com](mailto:starrtalk@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Fri, Mar 24, 2017 at 5:30 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: 59 Days to comment - Save the PineRocklands  
**To:** [david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov), [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)

Please allow for a hearing to protect the endangered species at risk if this project passes. As an alumni of the University of Miami and as the initiator of my own petition when the Miami herald first reported this story capturing 10,000 signatures - and over 100,000 collectively by the Pinerockland Coalition team along with many concerned citizens and growing - I am doing my part and forwarding this letter in the hopes that we can have a fair hearing to salvage what's left of the Pine Rocklands and stop this horrible project from passing. Thank you

Warmest Regards,

Leslye Jacobs  
Executive Director  
Pals Around the World

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition <[info@miamipinerocklandscoalition.org](mailto:info@miamipinerocklandscoalition.org)>

**Date:** March 24, 2017 at 3:54:06 PM EDT

**To:** <[starrtalk@gmail.com](mailto:starrtalk@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** 59 Days to comment - Save the PineRocklands

**Reply-To:** Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition <[info@miamipinerocklandscoalition.org](mailto:info@miamipinerocklandscoalition.org)>

Dear Friends:

The clock is ticking and we now have 59 days to let the Feds know what WE think about this horrible project.

We can make a difference if we choose to.

"Save it, Don't Pave It!"

Please consider printing this out and sending it as a letter and email.

Send via Email and Certified Mail Return Receipt

---

March 24, 2017

David Dell

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Atlanta Regional Office,

1875 Century Blvd.

Atlanta, GA 30345

[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)

Ashleigh Blackford  
South Florida Ecological Services  
1339 20th Street  
Vero Beach, FL 32960

[Ashleigh\\_Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh_Blackford@fws.gov)

Re: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

As a concerned Florida Resident I respectfully request a public hearing on the above-referenced proposed incidental take permit and environmental assessment on the commercial mixed-use development locally known as Coral Reef Commons.

We request that this public hearing take place during the comment period and in a location and timeframe that ensures members of the public will be able to meaningfully participate.

As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing.

Perennially rare communities, such as the pine rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area.

Pine rockland is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction.

This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered species, including those at issue in this permit application.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) review of the Coral Reef Commons application requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Administrative Procedure Act.

The Service's Habitat Conservation Planning and Incidental Take Permit Processing Handbook (2016) (hereinafter, Handbook), a policy document intended to inform how the Service processes Endangered Species Act Section 10 incidental take permits, describes public hearings as: [a] common method for soliciting stakeholder input on agency actions. Hearings provide all or selected participants an opportunity to present their opinions on an issue, usually in a formal manner in an allotted amount of time . . . . The information is recorded and becomes part of the public record. Laws and agency regulations often mandate public hearings.

Likewise, the Handbook describes public meetings as:

[f]orums in which our staff can present information to interested stakeholders.

Many public meetings . . . are designed to encourage discussion and feedback. Public meetings can be very effective and useful for conveying information, educating the interested public, and identifying interested parties.

This guidance echoes the requirements of NEPA, which at every turn emphasize the importance of public participation.

The Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA state that "[a]ccurate scientific analysis, expert agency comments, and public scrutiny are essential to implementing NEPA." 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1.

Indeed, CEQ regulations require that the Service hold a public hearing or meeting "whenever appropriate," taking into account factors such as "substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action or substantial interest in holding the hearing." 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6(c)(1).

I have a long standing interest in the protection of Pine Rocklands and their endangered and threatened species.

I have also have carefully followed years of additional requests for more Pine Rockland Protection.

For example, in 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity, South Florida Wildlands Association, Tropical Audubon Society, Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition petitioned the Service to list the Miami tiger beetle, one of the species impacted by the incidental take permit, as endangered.

Additionally, as the result of a settlement agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the Service in 2011, the Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013 ; listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly and Florida leafwing butterfly in 2014 ; and listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Carter's small-flowered flax and Florida brickell-

bush in 2015. All are species that would be negatively impact by Coral Reef Commons.

I understand there have been more than 14,000 letters to the developer of Coral Reef Commons asking it to protect listed species and not move forward with the project.

Many concerned residents appear to oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.

It is evident that a substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action and a substantial interest in holding the hearing exist.

We hope you will grant the public the opportunity to more fully discuss the impacts of Coral Reef Commons on federal and state endangered and threatened species through a public hearing. I look forward to your reply.

In addition, I'd also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the FWS.

Sincerely,



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You are a member of the Pine Rocklands Coalition.

**Our mailing address is:**

Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition  
555 Northeast 34th Street.

Miami Beach, FL 33137

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You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)



**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Addressed to David Dell and Ashleigh Blackford  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:51:43 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Reuben Molinares** <[reuben.molinares@gmail.com](mailto:reuben.molinares@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Sun, Apr 2, 2017 at 12:30 PM  
**Subject:** Addressed to David Dell and Ashleigh Blackford  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

Hello,

I am writing this email concerning the pine rockland property owned by Ram Realty. I am opposed to their most recent plan to develop a shopping center.

With only 2% of pine rockland remaining, I find it sad to know it can dwindle to complete extinction in my lifetime with ongoing situations such as this.

I was born & raised in Miami, and I remember exploring pine rockland as part of my childhood. It is one of the few staple of nature that is almost exclusive to our region. It is a sense of pride and connection to us who have lived here all our life. And now, a faceless development company that is not from our area is coming to put the final nails in the coffin of our soon to be extinct land.

I ask that you please consider this email, and the countless messages from the local community. If things continue this path, there will be no more pine rockland, and I would hope that you would understand and not want this to have occurred under your watch. Please do what you can with all of your power to make a stand and preserve the little we have left of our pine rockland.

I thank you for your time.

Reuben Molinares

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Comments and concerns. Coral Reef Commons  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:56:35 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Jason Biondi** <[jbiondi@ecsgllc.com](mailto:jbiondi@ecsgllc.com)>  
**Date:** Thu, Mar 23, 2017 at 10:24 AM  
**Subject:** Comments and concerns. Coral Reef Commons  
**To:** "[cre\\_hep@fws.gov](mailto:cre_hep@fws.gov)" <[cre\\_hep@fws.gov](mailto:cre_hep@fws.gov)>

I oppose the development of the small remaining amount of Pine Rocklands in South Miami, it should be protected, not developed!

We demand a full, local public hearing so our voices of opposition can be heard loud and clear. The proposed "preferred alternative development" is inconceivable when you think of the endangered species that depend on this diminishing habitat. This project does not avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to eight threatened, endangered, and at-risk species in Miami-Dade county!

How do you plan to allow construction for a 137-acre residential and commercial property on the habitat of the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly, Florida leafwing butterfly, Fl bonneted bat, eastern indigo snake, rim rock crowned snake, gopher tortoise, Miami tiger beetle and white-crowned pigeon and expect them to survive? Please provide an honest answer.

We will persist in stopping this project.

This type of sprawl is inappropriate.

Jason Biondi

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Comments for Coral Reef Commons HCP and EA - Save it, Don't pave it!  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:56:26 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** <[sanna@mbgarden.org](mailto:sanna@mbgarden.org)>  
**Date:** Thu, Mar 23, 2017 at 10:16 AM  
**Subject:** Comments for Coral Reef Commons HCP and EA - Save it, Don't pave it!  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

Good morning,

I oppose the development of the small remaining amount of Pine Rocklands in South Miami, it should be protected, not developed!

We demand a full, local public hearing so our voices of opposition can be heard loud and clear. The proposed "preferred alternative development" is inconceivable when you think of the endangered species that depend on this diminishing habitat. This project **does not** avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to eight threatened, endangered, and at-risk species in Miami-Dade county!

How do you plan to allow construction for a 137-acre residential and commercial property on the habitat of the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly, Florida leafwing butterfly, Fl bonneted bat, eastern indigo snake, rim rock crowned snake, gopher tortoise, Miami tiger beetle and white-crowned pigeon and expect them to survive? Please provide an honest answer.

We will persist in stopping this project.

Sanna O'Sullivan

Garden Guru



**Miami Beach Botanical Garden**

2000 Convention Center Drive

Miami Beach FL, 33139



[www.mbgarden.org](http://www.mbgarden.org)



Virus-free. [www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons development  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:52:49 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 7:17 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons development  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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**From:** **Martha S Bryan** <[marthas\\_bryan@bellsouth.net](mailto:marthas_bryan@bellsouth.net)>  
**Date:** Sat, Mar 25, 2017 at 9:32 AM  
**Subject:** Coral Reef Commons development  
**To:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)

Dear David,

Please reconsider developing Coral Reef Commons in south Miami for the following reasons:

Most importantly there are endangered species, plants and Pinelands at risk. Also, this zip code 33186 is the second most populous in Miami Dade County, with an estimated population of 70,000 according to [miamidadematters.org](http://miamidadematters.org). The traffic is currently congested as there are only two major streets running west to east, SW 152 St, and SW 182 (184) St due to the Zoo, The Coast Guard and other undeveloped property which is supposed to be protected. Adding a shopping development and

apartment building on 152 St would OVERWHELM this already  
overburdened traffic area.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this problem.

Martha S Bryan, retired RN, PhD

  
[marthas\\_bryan@bellsouth.net](mailto:marthas_bryan@bellsouth.net)

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:50:49 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Rodney Peterson** <[outlook\\_EF34E61CAA35BF22@outlook.com](mailto:outlook_EF34E61CAA35BF22@outlook.com)>  
**Date:** Fri, Mar 31, 2017 at 1:47 PM  
**Subject:** Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan  
**To:** "[cre\\_hep@fws.gov](mailto:cre_hep@fws.gov)" <[cre\\_hep@fws.gov](mailto:cre_hep@fws.gov)>

"We continue to have concerns just because this is such a rare habitat," says Jackie Lopez, the Florida director of the Center for Biological Diversity. "It supports a lot of species that don't really exist anywhere else."

"To allow any developer to cause the imminent extinction of any species because they want to put up another Walmart is beyond me," C. Waggoner wrote.

Florida is reaching the "tipping point" when it comes to population, and development. All another Walmart will do is drain even more money from the state – to say nothing about destroying local business efforts.

V/R

Rodney D. Peterson, Ph D

Florida Resident

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan - Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223 - Document Number: 2017-05767  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:50:34 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Thu, Mar 30, 2017 at 3:45 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan - Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223 - Document Number: 2017-05767  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

David Dell  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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**From:** **Paul Anthony** <[PAULANTHONY@bayviewloanservicing.com](mailto:PAULANTHONY@bayviewloanservicing.com)>  
**Date:** Thu, Mar 30, 2017 at 3:40 PM  
**Subject:** Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan - Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223 - Document Number: 2017-05767  
**To:** "[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)" <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>, "[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)" <[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)>  
**Cc:** "[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)" <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

David Dell  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Southeast Region, Ecological Services  
1875 Century Boulevard  
Atlanta GA 30345

Ashleigh Blackford  
South Florida Ecological Services Office  
1339 20th Street  
Vero Beach FL 32960

From: Paul Anthony, Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition

Re: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan  
Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223  
Document Number: 2017-05767

Greetings,

I am begging you to not approve this revised RAM development plan of the Coral Reef Commons or AT LEAST demand a hearing to be heard by court. I was born and still reside in this area. My son and I used to enjoy nature runs and walks near and on this property. We were always under the assumption that the subject land was already protected by the county or neighboring Zoo. Later to shockingly find out that the University of Miami actually owned this land and sold it to the clutches of RAM development. How can I justify proper conservation and "the RIGHT thing to do" to my son when he is witnessing another natural and furthermore endangered forest land be paved over and destroyed? My stomach turns just pondering this. To make matters worse the traffic in the area is already beyond unbearable. This or any other large scale development in this area would turn the already slug moving traffic similar into literally a standing parking lot.

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE execute your powers to protect this endangered forest, endangered plants and animal species that reside there. Moreover, please produce an everlasting example of proper conservation and stewardship to our youth by "doing the RIGHT THING" by instilling a natural park.

I along with our VP Cully Waggoner have read the original Ram Developments Habitat Conservation Plan for Coral Reef Commons and it is 504 pages of nonsense prepared in May 2015 by Johnson Engineering of Fort Myers, Florida. I have also read the 172 page Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan which was revised by Johnson Engineering in February 2017. While a lot of it is the same, one major difference is almost 51 acres Off Site Mitigation that was not part of the original plan and only appears to have been thrown in to make Ram look better to environmentalists.

In the revised HCP, Ram Development refuses to acknowledge most of the more than a dozen endangered, threatened or rare animal and plant species on the site and that call the Richmond Pine Rocklands home. The 2,100 acre Richmond Pine Rocklands are a "Life Boat Habitat" and the ONLY place in the World that they can live. The HCP minimizes the impact and breaks it down to only 8 animal species and of those 8, only, one, the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly has according to the HCP been documented on the CRC Property.

By comparison the original HCP listed 20 different "potential" animal species. It also noted that the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly was found on the property multiple times. However, the fact that a Fairchild Tropical Gardens person inadvertently posted a picture of it on Ram property might be why they had to acknowledge it exists there.

So, what happened to the other 12 species in the revised HCP? Unlike humans, animals and plants do not see property lines, and do not know that fences divide them. The Florida Bonneted Bat and the Butterflies fly and the Crown Rim Rock and the Eastern Indigo snakes slither all over and the plants they require grow all over the Richmond Pine Rocklands, including the Coral Reef Commons site.

The HCP refuses to recognize that the site was a toxic nuclear waste site, a Superfund Site, when the University of Miami did nuclear radiation experiments on primates and buried the exposed primate carcasses in trenches on the site and were fined by the Army Corps of Engineers as part of the cleanup. The word Radioactive does not appear anywhere in either the original or revised HCP.

While it acknowledges that Coral Reef Commons is 86 acres of mixed use development and 52 acres of conservation land it fails to note that only 88 acres of the 138 total acres has already been acquired by Ram Development that the rest of it remains in the hands of the University of Miami. UM has said privately to the Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition they intend to uphold the rest of their contract and sell Ram most of the remaining land that they were given for free by the Federal Government but they have yet to set a Sell Date for Phase 2 and 3 of the deal.

Ram Development down plays the total destruction of 86 plus acres of the last 2% of remaining original Pine Rockland in Miami-Dade County. For a Walmart Super Center with additional retail and restaurant space along with upwards of 900 residential apartments They are requesting a "Take Permit" to validate their reasons for causing the extinction of several Federal and State endangered and threaten species. They minimize the impact of the species that they reluctantly had to include in the HCP that were found on the site while outright ignoring others that have been documented on the site in the past.

Nor does the HPC acknowledge that Pine Rocklands themselves are a globally imperiled and endangered habitat and that they can ONLY be found in South Florida, some parts of the Caribbean and Cuba. "The Miami Rock Ridge" is a ridge of zoolitic limestone the stretched from North Miami south to Florida City and the Everglades has been over developed because it was high ground. The threat of development continues not only with Coral Reef Commons, but Miami Wilds, a Universal Studios style theme / water park from 20th Century Fox and Sony.

I openly question why the Fish and Wildlife Service would even issue an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) to Ram Development to kill Endangered Species that FWS IS SUPPOSED TO BE PROTECTING IN THE FIRST PLACE! FWS historically has worked honorably and diligently to get these species on the Endangered Species List and to save them in the first place. To allow any Developer to cause the imminent extinction of any species because they want to put up another Walmart is beyond me. There are several other viable, non-Pine Rocklands, non-environmentally sensitive sites without endangered and threatened species living on it around Miami-Dade County that could be used if we really did need another Walmart.

I feel that I am uniquely qualified to comment on this HCP, not only because I am Vice President of the Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition, but that I am and have been on the Richmond Pine Rocklands nearly every weekend for the last three years. I volunteer at the Gold Coast Railroad Museum, less than 1,000 feet away from the southern border of the Coral

Reef Commons property. I started volunteering at the Gold Coast to be able to keep an eye on my beloved Pine Rocklands, now I'm the Trainmaster and Yardmaster and I run the trains.

I want to make it clear to FWS, that I represent MYSELF in this matter. Not the Gold Coast Railroad Museum and not even the Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition, but simply myself. When I moved to the Deerwood area in 1990 I knew that most of the land around Metro Zoo was protected and in Local, State or Federal ownership. I never imagined that a Walmart would be put up right next to the Zoo Miami Main Entrance or a mega theme / water park would be put on the land either. I want to keep it that way and I expect FWS to do it.

There are so many valid reason for FWS to deny this HCP and deny Ram Development to build Coral Reef Commons regardless of plan, here is a Top 5.

- 1). Causing the extinction of one or more animal or plant species that require the Richmond Pine Rockland Habitat to survive.
- 2). Causing the continued destruction of original Pine Rockland and the Miami Rock Ridge.
- 3). Increased traffic on Coral Reef Drive, SW 152 Street, which currently handles 60,000 cars per day and with a Walmart and a Theme Park next to Zoo Miami, will easily add 30,000 more cars daily on a road than CANNOT be physically expanded or modified to handle it. It is the only street into or out of the area that currently is overburdened and there is no way to fix it.
- 4). Loss of Property Values for thousands of homeowners living in the Deerwood, Bonita Lakes, Three Lakes, and Richmond West areas.
- 5). Loss of Quality of Life for all citizens of Miami-Dade County. We have become a concrete jungle, we tear down the old but the new we put up is not always good. We desperately need more green space, to put it simply we need the trees. Losing even more trees and greenspace, especially Pine Rocklands is NOT a viable option.

While there are many reasons for FWC to deny the HCP and deny Coral Reef Commons to be built, there is only one reason to approve it. The ONE and ONLY reason to approve the HCP is the allow Peter Cummings and Ram Realty to make an obscene amount of money while destroying our unique South Florida Pine Rocklands ecosystem and causing Endangered and Threatened animal and plant species to become extinct.

I am counting on Fish and Wildlife Service to do the right thing, please do not let me and the rest of the citizens and endangered species of Miami-Dade County down.

Best Regards,

Paul Anthony

Associate Portfolio Manager

Bayview Loan Servicing, LLC

NMLS ID: 9061

4425 Ponce De Leon, Suite 400

Coral Gables, FL 33146

tf: [REDACTED] (direct)

p: [REDACTED] (direct)

f: [REDACTED]

[paulanthony@bayviewloanservicing.com](mailto:paulanthony@bayviewloanservicing.com)

Equal Housing Lender

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**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223 Document Number: 2017-05767  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:47:09 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 7:18 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223 Document Number: 2017-05767  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

David Dell  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

**NOTE: All email correspondence and attachments received from or sent to me are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be disclosed to third parties.**

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**From:** **r\_paul\_anthony** <[r\\_paul\\_anthony@yahoo.com](mailto:r_paul_anthony@yahoo.com)>  
**Date:** Sat, Mar 25, 2017 at 9:43 AM  
**Subject:** Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223 Document Number: 2017-05767  
**To:** [david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)  
**Cc:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov), [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

Greetings FWS friends,

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Respectfully,

Paul Anthony

Sent from my T-MobileG LTE Device

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:45:50 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Cully Waggoner** <[cullywaggoner@gmail.com](mailto:cullywaggoner@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Fri, Mar 24, 2017 at 1:21 AM  
**Subject:** Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan  
**To:** [david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov), Ashleigh Blackford FWS <[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)>, [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

**To:** Mr. David Dell, Regional HCP Coordinator, Atlanta  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov).

**CC:** Ashleigh Blackford, Supervisory Wildlife Biologist, South Florida Ecological Services  
[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

**From:** Cully Waggoner, Vice President of the Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition



**Re:** Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan  
Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223  
Document Number: 2017-05767

Dear Sir(s)

I have read the original Ram Developments Habitat Conservation Plan for Coral Reef Commons and it is 504 pages of nonsense prepared in May 2015 by Johnson Engineering of Fort Myers, Florida. I have also read the 172 page Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan which was revised by Johnson Engineering in February 2017. While a lot of it is the same, one major difference is almost 51 acres Off Site Mitigation that was not part

of the original plan and only appears to have been thrown in to make Ram look better to environmentalists.

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By comparison the original HCP listed 20 different “potential” animal species. It also noted that the Bartram’s scrub-hairstreak butterfly was found on the property multiple times. However, the fact that a Fairchild Tropical Gardens person inadvertently posted a picture of it on Ram property might be why they had to acknowledge it exists there.

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Pine Rockland Habitat to survive.

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3). Increased traffic on Coral Reef Drive, SW 152 Street, which currently handles 60,000 cars per day and with a Walmart and a Theme Park next to ZooMiami, will easily add 30,000 more cars daily on a road than CANNOT be physically expanded or modified to handle it. It is the only street into or out of the area that currently is overburdened and there is no way to fix it.

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5). Loss of Quality of Life for all citizens of Miami-Dade County. We have become a concrete jungle, we tear down the old but the new we put up is not always good. We desperately need more green space, to put it simply we need the trees. Losing even more trees and greenspace, especially Pine Rocklands is NOT a viable option.

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I am counting on Fish and Wildlife Service to do the right thing, please do not let me and the rest of the citizens and endangered species of Miami-Dade County down.

Regards,

--

***Cully Waggoner***

Vice President, Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition

**Personal:**

Cell: [REDACTED]  
Home: [REDACTED]

E-Mail: [cullywaggoner@gmail.com](mailto:cullywaggoner@gmail.com);

MSN IM: [cullywaggoner@hotmail.com](mailto:cullywaggoner@hotmail.com);

Facebook:   <http://www.facebook.com/cully.waggoner>

Twitter:   <http://twitter.com/CullyWaggoner>

LinkedIn:   <http://www.linkedin.com/in/cullywaggoner>

Instagram:   <http://instagram.com/cullywaggoner>

Skype: cully.waggoner

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223  
Document Number: 2017-05767  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:51:25 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Eduardo de Aragon** <[Cofresi@bellsouth.net](mailto:Cofresi@bellsouth.net)>  
**Date:** Sun, Apr 2, 2017 at 10:06 AM  
**Subject:** Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223 Document Number: 2017-05767  
**To:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov), [Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov)  
**Cc:** [CRC\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:CRC_hcp@fws.gov)

The entire Richmond Pine Rockland tract surrounding Miami's MetroZoo despite diverse ownership is a single unit from the point of view of the wildlife and plants which do not know boundaries and property lines and take advantage of whatever habitat is available which is adapted to their needs. My direct knowledge of the property is limited to what can be seen from the road and parking lots around the zoo and from the train tour. I would have traipsed the property from end-to-end as is my standard practice when asked to appraised a proposed project. Unfortunately, the property is posted to keep out anyone who might carry out an independent analysis of the land on which the RAM project is proposed to be built and to anyone who might be qualified to determine not simply what species are there now but which ones might potentially return if steps were taken to undo the years of neglect by the University of Miami. Under the supervision of appropriate scientists, habitat change fueled by years of fire-suppression could be reversed through selective logging and removal of detritus and accumulated organic matter and the reintroduction of periodic fire to return the area around the Zoo to its former status as a pine rockland.

More than two years have elapsed since RAM's consultants did a survey of some of the species which might be found on the area slated for development. A broader survey of the whole area around the Zoo is needed and it should be conducted by scientists who do not have a stake in the outcome of the survey. To atone for its neglect of its properties and the tax breaks it has received over the years when the property was designated as "agricultural," the University of Miami could provide the funding and a good part of the expertise needed for such an independent survey. Some of the species show dramatic changes measured in several hundred percent from one-year to the next; thus, scientists need more than one year to do their work. Independent experts should be given the same time that RAM's consultants had available to do this work (approximately 3 years). They should be given access to both the RAM and the Miami Wilds areas and all areas that the University of Miami owns. State and Federal owners of other segments of the Richmond tract should also be asked for permission to carry out a complete inventory first so that we will know what exactly it is that is being proposed for permanent destruction and then estimate the costs of destroying what we have, what it would cost to get back the habitats which have been degraded, and to estimate the costs and any conceivable benefits might be derived from their destruction, which is what the HCP proposes.

The HCP list of interested stakeholders shows no meetings by RAM with the principal coalition opposed to this project: the Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition.

[Eduardo de Aragon](#)

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Eddie

"love all, trust a few, do wrong to none" (Shakespeare)



*Sent via Email and Certified Mail Return Receipt*

March 24, 2017

David Dell  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Atlanta Regional Office, Ecological Services  
1875 Century Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30345  
[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)

Ashleigh Blackford  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
South Florida Ecological Services  
1339 20th St.  
Vero Beach, FL 32960  
[Ashleigh\\_Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh_Blackford@fws.gov)

**Re: Request for Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, *Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL***

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

The Center for Biological Diversity, Tropical Audubon Society, South Florida Wildlands Association, North American Butterfly Association, Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition, and The Institute for Regional Conservation, and our thousands of members in south Florida, respectfully request a public hearing on the above-referenced proposed incidental take permit and environmental assessment on the commercial mixed-use development locally known as Coral Reef Commons. We request that this public hearing take place during the comment period and in a location and timeframe that ensures members of the public will be able to meaningfully participate.

As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing.<sup>1</sup> Perennially rare communities, such as the pine rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area.<sup>2</sup> Pine rockland is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction.<sup>3</sup> This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered species, including those at issue in this permit application.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kautz, R.S. and J.A. Cox, *Habitats for Biodiversity Conservation in Florida*, Conservation Biology, Feb. 2001, at 55, 56.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Bergh, C. and J. Wisby, *Fire History of Lower Keys Pine Rocklands*, The Nature Conservancy, Florida Keys Initiative, May 1996 at 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) review of the Coral Reef Commons application requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Administrative Procedure Act. The Service's *Habitat Conservation Planning and Incidental Take Permit Processing Handbook* (2016) (hereinafter, Handbook), a policy document intended to inform how the Service processes Endangered Species Act Section 10 incidental take permits, describes public hearings as:

[a] common method for soliciting stakeholder input on agency actions. Hearings provide all or selected participants an opportunity to present their opinions on an issue, usually in a formal manner in an allotted amount of time . . . . The information is recorded and becomes part of the public record. Laws and agency regulations often mandate public hearings.

Likewise, the Handbook describes public meetings as:

[f]orums in which our staff can present information to interested stakeholders. Many public meetings . . . are designed to encourage discussion and feedback. Public meetings can be very effective and useful for conveying information, educating the interested public, and identifying interested parties.

This guidance echoes the requirements of NEPA, which at every turn emphasize the importance of public participation. The Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA state that "[a]ccurate scientific analysis, expert agency comments, and public scrutiny are essential to implementing NEPA." 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1. Indeed, CEQ regulations require that the Service hold a public hearing or meeting "whenever appropriate," taking into account factors such as "substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action or substantial interest in holding the hearing." 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6(c)(1).

Here, the undersigned conservation organizations have demonstrated a longstanding interest in the protection of pine rocklands and their species. For example, in 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity, South Florida Wildlands Association, Tropical Audubon Society, and Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association petitioned the Service to list the Miami tiger beetle, one of the species impacted by the incidental take permit, as endangered.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, as the result of a settlement agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the Service in 2011, the Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013<sup>6</sup>; listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly and Florida leafwing butterfly in 2014<sup>7</sup>; and listed as endangered and designated critical

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<sup>5</sup>[https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/species/invertebrates/Miami\\_tiger\\_beetle/pdfs/2014\\_12\\_11\\_Miami\\_tiger\\_beetle\\_emergency\\_petition.pdf](https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/species/invertebrates/Miami_tiger_beetle/pdfs/2014_12_11_Miami_tiger_beetle_emergency_petition.pdf). The Center for Biological Diversity also generated over 580 letters to the Service and over 4,200 letters to the Miami Board of County Commissioners in favor of listing the Miami tiger beetle and against authorizing Coral Reef Commons.

<sup>6</sup>[https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press\\_releases/2013/florida-bonneted-bat-10-01-2013.html](https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2013/florida-bonneted-bat-10-01-2013.html). The Center for Biological Diversity continues to advocate for critical habitat and other protections for the Florida bonneted bat. [http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/species/mammals/Florida\\_bonneted\\_bat/pdfs/-Florida-bonneted-bat-comments\\_12-03-2012.pdf](http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/species/mammals/Florida_bonneted_bat/pdfs/-Florida-bonneted-bat-comments_12-03-2012.pdf); [https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press\\_releases/2016/big-cypress-07-27-2016.html](https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2016/big-cypress-07-27-2016.html).

<sup>7</sup>[https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press\\_releases/2014/florida-butterflies-08-11-2014.html](https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2014/florida-butterflies-08-11-2014.html).

**Re: Request for Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, *Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL***

habitat for the Carter's small-flowered flax and Florida brickell-bush in 2015.<sup>8</sup> All are species that would be negatively impact by Coral Reef Commons.

Finally, the Center for Biological Diversity has generated more than 14,000 letters to the developer of Coral Reef Commons asking it to protect listed species and not move forward with the project.<sup>9</sup> Beyond our own advocacy, the public at large also appears to oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.<sup>10</sup>

It is evident that a substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action *and* a substantial interest in holding the hearing exist.

We hope you will grant the public the opportunity to more fully discuss the impacts of Coral Reef Commons on federal and state endangered and threatened species through a public hearing. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Jaelyn Lopez  
Florida director  
Center for Biological Diversity  
PO Box 2155



Cc:  
Al Sunshine, [macpro5933@gmail.com](mailto:macpro5933@gmail.com)  
Erin Clancy, [conservation@tropicalaudubon.org](mailto:conservation@tropicalaudubon.org)  
Sandy Koi, [sandykoi2009@gmail.com](mailto:sandykoi2009@gmail.com)  
Dennis Olle, [dennisolle@me.com](mailto:dennisolle@me.com)  
Matthew Schwartz, [southfloridawild@yahoo.com](mailto:southfloridawild@yahoo.com)

---

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press\\_releases/2015/south-florida-flowers-08-14-2015.html](https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2015/south-florida-flowers-08-14-2015.html).

<sup>9</sup> [http://action.biologicaldiversity.org/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action\\_KEY=16224](http://action.biologicaldiversity.org/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=16224).

<sup>10</sup> Trevor Bach, *Miami Tiger Beetle Could Be Next Endangered Species, Throwing Wrench Into Development Plans* (Jan. 8 2016), <http://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/miami-tiger-beetle-could-be-next-endangered-species-throwing-wrench-into-development-plans-8162366>; Jim W. Harper, *The Butterfly Effect* (Sept. 2014), [http://www.biscaynetimes.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1881](http://www.biscaynetimes.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1881); Trevor Bach, *Protestors to "Shame" UM over Walmart Development on Endangered Rockland* (Feb. 27, 2015), <http://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/protestors-to-shame-um-over-walmart-development-on-endangered-rocklands-6534841>.

**Re: Request for Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL**

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons HCP and EA - SW 152nd St project - Miami Dade County - FI  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:52:36 PM

---

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Rafael S. Quesada** <[quesad\\_r@bellsouth.net](mailto:quesad_r@bellsouth.net)>  
**Date:** Mon, Apr 3, 2017 at 11:13 AM  
**Subject:** Coral Reef Commons HCP and EA - SW 152nd St project - Miami Dade County - FI  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

I live in this area and use SW 152<sup>nd</sup> St daily passing in front of the area that is marked for development, next to the Metrozoo. Back in 1995 it took me 8 minutes in the middle of rush hours to reach the Turnpike ramp from my home in Country Walk, that was when SW 152<sup>nd</sup> was a 2 lane road, now SW 152<sup>nd</sup> street is a 6 lanes road total and to drive that distance in rush hours takes me 30 minutes in a good day, the bottlenecks are incredible.

With the construction of a shopping center – Walmart – Target or whatever you are planning plus additional retail area we will be jammed in the Country Walk area with traffic that will duplicate or triplicate the actual volume; what are Miami Dade County planners thinking on ? did they ever drive in this area ? this is pure insanity.

Sincerely

Rafael Quesada

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



[REDACTED] email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.

[www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons HCP and EA  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:51:54 PM

---

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Darlene Melcon** <[dmelcon@gmail.com](mailto:dmelcon@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Sun, Apr 2, 2017 at 2:08 PM  
**Subject:** Coral Reef Commons HCP and EA  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

PLEASE do NOT ruin what little wild places we have left.....some of it is found nowhere else and would have nowhere to go. Plus we do NOT need more traffic on SW 152 ST! It is horrible as it is. Do not allow this to happen!

Thank you,  
Darlene Melcon



**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons HCP and EA  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:56:42 PM

---

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **john meizoso** <[meiz17@yahoo.com](mailto:meiz17@yahoo.com)>  
**Date:** Thu, Mar 23, 2017 at 5:34 PM  
**Subject:** Coral Reef Commons HCP and EA  
**To:** "[cre\\_hep@fws.gov](mailto:cre_hep@fws.gov)" <[cre\\_hep@fws.gov](mailto:cre_hep@fws.gov)>

Good afternoon

I hope all is well. I would like to share my displeasure and disgust in the RAM/UM Project titled Coral Reef Commons. This habitat is home to an endangered wildlife and ecosystem that is quickly disappearing in South Florida. This draft or preferred alternative is not going to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts, to maintain the covered species, as well as protection and management of off-site restoration lands. There are no off-site lands available for restoration for the land and species that will be eradicated and put into extinction if this project is approved.

As a resident in the area, I would like to request that public meetings are held once again and notification of the immediately surrounding areas be notified of the meeting. This issue has not been discussed in over three years and many residents believe that this project was unapproved.

Thank you for your time

John Meizoso

  
[meiz17@YAHOO.COM](mailto:meiz17@YAHOO.COM)

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons Project  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:48:22 PM

---

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, Mar 28, 2017 at 6:59 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons Project  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Lynn Kupkee** <[lynnkupkee@gmail.com](mailto:lynnkupkee@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 10:12 PM  
**Subject:** Coral Reef Commons Project  
**To:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)

David Dell  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Atlanta Regional Office,  
1875 Century Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30345  
[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)

Ashleigh Blackford  
South Florida Ecological Services  
1339 20th Street  
Vero Beach, FL 32960  
[Ashleigh\\_Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh_Blackford@fws.gov)

Re: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day

## Public Comment Request.

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

As a concerned Florida Resident I respectfully request a public hearing on the above-referenced proposed incidental take permit and environmental assessment on the commercial mixed-use development locally known as Coral Reef Commons. We request that this public hearing take place during the comment period and in a location and timeframe that ensures members of the public will be able to meaningfully participate.

As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing. Perennially rare communities, such as the pine rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area. Pine rockland is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction. This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered species, including those at issue in this permit application.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) review of the Coral Reef Commons application requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Administrative Procedure Act. The Service's Habitat Conservation Planning and Incidental Take Permit Processing Handbook (2016) (hereinafter, Handbook), a policy document intended to inform how the Service processes Endangered Species Act Section 10 incidental take permits, describes public hearings as:

[a] common method for soliciting stakeholder input on agency actions. Hearings provide all or selected participants an opportunity to present their opinions on an issue, usually in a formal manner in an allotted amount of time . . . . The information is recorded and becomes part of the public record. Laws and agency regulations often mandate public hearings.

Likewise, the Handbook describes public meetings as:

[f]orums in which our staff can present information to interested stakeholders. Many public meetings . . . are designed to encourage discussion and feedback. Public meetings can be very effective and useful for conveying information, educating the interested public, and identifying interested parties.

This guidance echoes the requirements of NEPA, which at every turn emphasize the importance of public participation. The Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA state that "[a]ccurate scientific analysis, expert agency comments, and public scrutiny are essential to implementing NEPA." 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1. Indeed, CEQ regulations require that the Service hold a public hearing or meeting "whenever appropriate," taking into account factors such as "substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action or substantial interest in holding the hearing." 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6(c)(1).

I have a longstanding interest in the protection of Pine Rocklands and their endangered and threatened species. I have also have carefully followed years of additional requests for more Pine Rockland Protection.

For example, in 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity, South Florida Wildlands Association, Tropical Audubon Society, Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition petitioned the Service to list the Miami tiger beetle, one of the species impacted by the incidental take permit, as endangered. Additionally, as the result of a settlement agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the Service in 2011, the Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013 ; listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly and Florida leafwing butterfly in 2014 ; and listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for

the Carter's small-flowered flax and Florida brickell-bush in 2015. All are species that would be negatively impact by Coral Reef Commons.

I understand there have been more than 14,000 letters to the developer of Coral Reef Commons asking it to protect listed species and not move forward with the project. Many concerned residents appear to oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.

It is evident that a substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action and a substantial interest in holding the hearing exist.

We hope you will grant the public the opportunity to more fully discuss the impacts of Coral Reef Commons on federal and state endangered and threatened species through a public hearing. I look forward to your reply.

In addition, I'd also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the FWS.

Sincerely,

---

**Lynn Kupkee**

**Sabal Chase Animal Clinic**

**10710 SW 113th Pl**

**Miami, FL 33176**



[www.sabalchaseanimalclinic.com](http://www.sabalchaseanimalclinic.com)

**Connect with us:**



**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:50:42 PM

---

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Ellen S.** <[boodog301@bellsouth.net](mailto:boodog301@bellsouth.net)>  
**Date:** Fri, Mar 31, 2017 at 7:58 AM  
**Subject:** Coral Reef Commons  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

Urge you to protect this remnant endangered habitat.

Once destroyed it is irreplaceable.

Ellen Siegel  
Sent from my iPhone. Please excuse any typos!

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:56:50 PM

---

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Julio Ortega** <[jcortega.bt@gmail.com](mailto:jcortega.bt@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Thu, Mar 23, 2017 at 5:46 PM  
**Subject:** Coral Reef Commons  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

To whom it may concern

I am hereby requesting as many of us are, a hearing regarding the proposed construction at the coral reef Commons which holds Pine Rocklands, an endangered habitats that holds many species that are only seen in areas such as the site where the proposed buildings will be - the Coral Reef Commons. Please keep me informed of any meetings or any plans, or notices regarding the fragile ecosystem that lies within the Coral Reef Commons and their current owner's plans.

Cordially, Julio C Ortega

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: CRC-HCP Comment FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:47:00 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 7:15 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: CRC-HCP Comment FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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**From:** **Al Sunshine Gmail** <[macpro5933@gmail.com](mailto:macpro5933@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Fri, Mar 24, 2017 at 2:47 PM  
**Subject:** CRC-HCP Comment FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223  
**To:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov), Ashleigh Blackford <[Ashleigh\\_Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh_Blackford@fws.gov)>, "[bill@billnelson.senate.gov](mailto:bill@billnelson.senate.gov)" <[bill@billnelson.senate.gov](mailto:bill@billnelson.senate.gov)>, [marco@marcorubio.senate.gov](mailto:marco@marcorubio.senate.gov), "[carlos@carloscurbelo.com](mailto:carlos@carloscurbelo.com)" <[carlos@carloscurbelo.com](mailto:carlos@carloscurbelo.com)>

March 24, 2017

**David Dell**  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Atlanta Regional Office,  
1875 Century Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30345

Ashleigh Blackford  
South Florida Ecological Services  
1339 20th Street  
Vero Beach, FL 32960

**Re: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.**

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

As a President of the Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition with more than 1000 members, I respectfully request a public hearing on the above-referenced proposed incidental take permit and environmental assessment on the commercial mixed-use development locally known as Coral Reef Commons.

We request that this public hearing take place during the comment period and in a location and timeframe that ensures members of the public will be able to meaningfully participate.

As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing.

Perennially rare communities, such as the pine rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area.

Pine rockland is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction.

This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered species, including those at issue in this permit application.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) review of the Coral Reef Commons application requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Administrative Procedure Act.

The Service's Habitat Conservation Planning and Incidental Take Permit Processing Handbook (2016) (hereinafter, Handbook), a policy document intended to inform how the Service processes Endangered Species Act Section 10 incidental take permits, describes public hearings as: [a] common method for soliciting stakeholder input on agency actions. Hearings provide all or selected participants an opportunity to present their opinions on an issue, usually in a formal manner in an allotted amount of time . . . . The information is recorded and becomes part of the public record. Laws and agency regulations often mandate public hearings.

Likewise, the Handbook describes public meetings as: "Forums in which our staff can present information to interested stakeholders. Many public meetings . . . are designed to encourage discussion and feedback. Public meetings can be very effective and useful for conveying information, educating the interested public, and identifying interested parties."

This guidance echoes the requirements of NEPA, which at every turn emphasize the importance of public participation.

The Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA state that "[a]ccurate scientific analysis, expert agency comments, and public scrutiny are essential to implementing NEPA." 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1.

Indeed, CEQ regulations require that the Service hold a public hearing or meeting "whenever appropriate," taking into account factors such as "substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action or substantial interest in holding the hearing." 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6(c)(1).

I have a long standing interest in the protection of Pine Rocklands and their endangered and threatened species.

I have also have carefully followed years of additional requests for more Pine Rockland Protection.

For example, in 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity, South Florida Wildlands Association, Tropical Audubon Society, Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition petitioned the Service to list the Miami tiger beetle, one of the species impacted by the incidental take permit, as endangered.

Additionally, as the result of a settlement agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the Service in 2011, the Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013 ; listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly and Florida leafwing butterfly in 2014 ; and listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Carter's small-flowered flax and Florida brickell-bush in 2015. All are species that would be negatively impact by Coral Reef Commons.

I understand there have been more than 14,000 letters to the developer of Coral Reef Commons asking it to protect listed species and not move forward with the project.

Many concerned residents appear to oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.

It is evident that a substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action and a substantial interest in holding the hearing exist.

We hope you will grant the public the opportunity to more fully discuss the impacts of Coral Reef Commons on federal and state endangered and threatened species through a public hearing. I look forward to your reply.

In addition, I'd also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the FWS.

Sincerely,

Al Sunshine  
President  
Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition  
Florida Non-Profit, 501(C) 3



**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Dade county Pine Rocklands  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:46:00 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **treevibesmike** <[treevibesmike@gmail.com](mailto:treevibesmike@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Fri, Mar 24, 2017 at 11:03 AM  
**Subject:** Dade county Pine Rocklands  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

To whom it may concern,

I am a Miami-Dade county citizen, and I feel it is of the Utmost Importance to preserve the Richmond Pine Rocklands from development for all generations. The sale by the University of Miami to Ram Realty to build a Wal-Mart, I find completely unreasonable and shameful.. These lands need to be protected period.

Sincerely,  
Michael E. Whitney

Sent from my Sprint Samsung Galaxy S7.

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: documents requested for [FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223]; [FXES11140400000-178-FF04E00000]  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:48:00 PM

---

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 8:54 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: documents requested for [FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223]; [FXES11140400000-178-FF04E00000]  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

David Dell  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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**From:** **Jacki Lopez** <[jlopez@biologicaldiversity.org](mailto:jlopez@biologicaldiversity.org)>  
**Date:** Wed, Mar 22, 2017 at 11:05 AM  
**Subject:** documents requested for [FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223]; [FXES11140400000-178-FF04E00000]  
**To:** [david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov), [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)

Hello Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

Please send me electronic copies or links to electronic copies to the draft Habitat Conservation Plan, Incidental Take Permit, and Environmental Assessment for the above referenced project (AKA Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL).

Thank you

---

Jaclyn Lopez | Florida Director, Staff Attorney

Center for Biological Diversity | [www.biologicaldiversity.org](http://www.biologicaldiversity.org)  
PO Box 2155 | St. Petersburg FL 33731

cell [REDACTED] | [jlopez@biologicaldiversity.org](mailto:jlopez@biologicaldiversity.org)

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: documents requested for [FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223]; [FXES11140400000-178-FF04E00000]  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:48:12 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **CRC\_HCP, FW4** <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Fri, Apr 7, 2017 at 2:47 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: documents requested for [FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223]; [FXES11140400000-178-FF04E00000]  
**To:** Ashleigh Blackford <[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)>

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 8:54 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: documents requested for [FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223]; [FXES11140400000-178-FF04E00000]  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

David Dell  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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**From:** **Jacki Lopez** <[jlopez@biologicaldiversity.org](mailto:jlopez@biologicaldiversity.org)>  
**Date:** Wed, Mar 22, 2017 at 11:05 AM  
**Subject:** documents requested for [FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223]; [FXES11140400000-178-FF04E00000]  
**To:** [david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov), [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)

Hello Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

Please send me electronic copies or links to electronic copies to the draft Habitat Conservation

Plan, Incidental Take Permit, and Environmental Assessment for the above referenced project (AKA Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL).

Thank you

---

Jaclyn Lopez | Florida Director, Staff Attorney

Center for Biological Diversity | [www.biologicaldiversity.org](http://www.biologicaldiversity.org)  
PO Box 2155 | St. Petersburg FL 33731

cell [REDACTED] | [jlopez@biologicaldiversity.org](mailto:jlopez@biologicaldiversity.org)

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: Correction of Error in Comment on the RAM Realty "Habitat Conservation Plan" (HCP) submitted February 2017  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:53:04 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Ashleigh Blackford** <[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Mon, Apr 3, 2017 at 8:37 AM  
**Subject:** FW: Correction of Error in Comment on the RAM Realty "Habitat Conservation Plan" (HCP) submitted February 2017  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

---

**From:** Jeff Dorsey [mailto:[jeffdorsey@yaho.com](mailto:jeffdorsey@yaho.com)]  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 01, 2017 9:08 AM  
**To:** Ashleigh Blackford  
**Cc:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)  
**Subject:** Re: Correction of Error in Comment on the RAM Realty "Habitat Conservation Plan" (HCP) submitted February 2017

Dear Ms. Blackford:

I found the following error in the comment I sent you a few days ago, which is corrected here.

With kind regards,

"introducing a systematic regime of controlled fire every 2-4 years [CORRECTION, should be: 3-7 years]

(UF-IFAS, [http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/hot\\_topics/environment/fire\\_habitat.shtml](http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/hot_topics/environment/fire_habitat.shtml))"

Dr. Jeff Dorsey

Agriculture, Business, Credit and Development LLC

14317 SW 142nd Ave

Miami, FL 33186-6714 USA

Cell [REDACTED]

+ [REDACTED] 6775 in Mali

[www.jeffdorsey.com](http://www.jeffdorsey.com)

Skype jeffdorseymia

---

**From:** Jeff Dorsey <[jeffdorseymia@yahoo.com](mailto:jeffdorseymia@yahoo.com)>

**To:** Ashleigh Blackford <[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)>

**Cc:** "David dell@fws.gov" <[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 29, 2017 7:04 PM

**Subject:** Comment on the RAM Realty "Habitat Conservation Plan" (HCP) submitted February 2017

Dear Ms. Blackford:

My comments on this document are attached.

With input from the public and independent scientists, I'm sure that it will be possible to come up with a plan which really does conserve the Richmond pine rocklands that will then be acceptable to the FWS.

With kind regards,

Dr. Jeff Dorsey

Agriculture, Business, Credit and Development LLC

14317 SW 142nd Ave

Miami, FL 33186-6714 USA

Cell [REDACTED] March 2017

+ [REDACTED] 6775 in Mali April 2017

[www.jeffdorsey.com](http://www.jeffdorsey.com)

Skype jeffdorsey mia

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: Miami Rocklands  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:54:28 PM

---

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Ashleigh Blackford** <[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, Apr 4, 2017 at 2:13 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Miami Rocklands  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

**From:** Darlene Melcon [mailto:[dmelcon@gmail.com](mailto:dmelcon@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 03, 2017 12:11 PM  
**To:** [Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov)  
**Subject:** Miami Rocklands

PLEASE do not allow some of the last remnants of wild South Florida to be given over to developers.

This is re FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL

Even if saving this pristine wild habitat is not enough reason, we who live in the area do not need more traffic on the already over-crowded and horrendous SW 152 St or Coral Reef Dr, as it is known by both.

Miami-Dade County is already over-built; every major road and highway is lined with shops and malls.....and any photo of this area will showcase the huge high rises we have everywhere. There are spaces available on said roads where more buildings would just be accepted.

Please do not allow this to happen.

Sincerely,

Darlene Melcon

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: No Walmart on 152 street  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:49:51 PM

---

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Ashleigh Blackford** <[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Thu, Mar 30, 2017 at 8:26 AM  
**Subject:** FW: No Walmart on 152 street  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Robert Valido Prestige Marine [mailto:[prestigediver@gmail.com](mailto:prestigediver@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 29, 2017 6:30 PM  
**To:** [Ashleigh\\_Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh_Blackford@fws.gov)  
**Subject:** No Walmart on 152 street

Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

As a concerned Florida Resident I respectfully request a public hearing on the above-referenced proposed incidental take permit and environmental assessment on the commercial mixed-use development locally known as Coral Reef Commons. We request that this public hearing take place during the comment period and in a location and timeframe that ensures members of the public will be able to meaningfully participate.

As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing. Perennially rare communities, such as the pine rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area. Pine rockland is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction. This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered species, including those at issue in this permit application.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) review of the Coral Reef Commons application requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Administrative Procedure Act. The Service's Habitat Conservation Planning and Incidental Take Permit Processing Handbook (2016) (hereinafter, Handbook), a policy document intended to inform how the Service processes Endangered Species Act Section 10 incidental take permits, describes public hearings as:

[a] common method for soliciting stakeholder input on agency actions.

Hearings provide all or selected participants an opportunity to present their opinions on an issue, usually in a formal manner in an allotted amount

of time . . . . The information is recorded and becomes part of the public record. Laws and agency regulations often mandate public hearings.

Likewise, the Handbook describes public meetings as:

[f]orums in which our staff can present information to interested stakeholders. Many public meetings . . . are designed to encourage discussion and feedback. Public meetings can be very effective and useful for conveying information, educating the interested public, and identifying interested parties.

This guidance echoes the requirements of NEPA, which at every turn emphasize the importance of public participation. The Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA state that "[a]ccurate scientific analysis, expert agency comments, and public scrutiny are essential to implementing NEPA." 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1. Indeed, CEQ regulations require that the Service hold a public hearing or meeting "whenever appropriate," taking into account factors such as "substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action or substantial interest in holding the hearing." 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6(c)(1).

I have a longstanding interest in the protection of Pine Rocklands and their endangered and threatened species. I have also carefully followed years of additional requests for more Pine Rockland Protection.

For example, in 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity, South Florida Wildlands Association, Tropical Audubon Society, Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition petitioned the Service to list the Miami tiger beetle, one of the species impacted by the incidental take permit, as endangered. Additionally, as the result of a settlement agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the Service in 2011, the Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013 ; listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly and Florida leafwing butterfly in 2014 ; and listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Carter's small-flowered flax and Florida brickell-bush in 2015. All are species that would be negatively impacted by Coral Reef Commons.

I understand there have been more than 14,000 letters to the developer of Coral Reef Commons asking it to protect listed species and not move forward with the project. Many concerned residents appear to oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.

It is evident that a substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action and a substantial interest in holding the hearing exist.

We hope you will grant the public the opportunity to more fully discuss the impacts of Coral Reef Commons on federal and state endangered and threatened species through a public hearing. I look forward to your reply.

In addition, I'd also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the FWS.

Sincerely,

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: Preserve the Richmond Pine Rockland Habitat  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:54:20 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Ashleigh Blackford** <[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, Apr 4, 2017 at 2:10 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Preserve the Richmond Pine Rockland Habitat  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

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**From:** Maria Gonzalez [mailto:[mariaguard88-politics@yahoo.com](mailto:mariaguard88-politics@yahoo.com)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 04, 2017 12:43 PM  
**To:** [dell@fws.gov](mailto:dell@fws.gov); [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**Subject:** Preserve the Richmond Pine Rockland Habitat

Dear David Dell and Ashleigh Blackford:

I am sending you this email to request a public hearing be held on the preservation of the Richmond Pine Rockland Habitat, the property scheduled to be developed into a Walmart and 900 apartments.

This will be a loss for all Miami-Dade County residents. We cannot continue to give away our green spaces to a concrete jungle. We desperately need the trees and more green spaces for the nourishment of our souls. This will also increase traffic and these roads cannot handle this amount of traffic. Streets are already over saturated. This development will also compromise the existence of wild animals. We cannot continue to push them into extinction.

It is up to us to properly manage and hold off developers that only have profits in mind. You must stand up for the citizens of this county and state.

Thank you for listening to my plea.

Sincerely,

Maria Gonzalez

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:54:37 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Ashleigh Blackford** <[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, Apr 4, 2017 at 2:13 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Ty Shlackman [mailto:[d018019c@juno.com](mailto:d018019c@juno.com)]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 03, 2017 11:40 AM  
**To:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov); [Ashleigh\\_Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh_Blackford@fws.gov)  
**Subject:** Re: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment

April 3, 2017

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

As a concerned Florida Resident I respectfully request a public hearing on the above-referenced proposed incidental take permit and environmental assessment on the commercial mixed-use development locally known as Coral Reef Commons.

We request that this public hearing take place during the comment period and in a location and timeframe that ensures members of the public will be able to meaningfully participate.

As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing.

Perennially rare communities, such as the pine rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area.

Pine rockland is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction.

This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered species, including those at issue in this permit application.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) review of the Coral Reef Commons application requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Administrative Procedure Act.

The Service's Habitat Conservation Planning and Incidental Take Permit Processing Handbook (2016) (hereinafter, Handbook), a policy document intended to inform how the Service processes Endangered Species Act Section 10 incidental take permits, describes public hearings as: [a] common method for soliciting stakeholder input on agency actions. Hearings provide all or selected participants an opportunity to present their opinions on an issue, usually in a formal manner in an allotted amount of time . . . . The information is recorded and becomes part of the public record. Laws and agency regulations often mandate public hearings.

Likewise, the Handbook describes public meetings as:

[f]orums in which our staff can present information to interested stakeholders.

Many public meetings . . . are designed to encourage discussion and feedback. Public meetings can be very effective and useful for conveying information, educating the interested public, and identifying interested parties.

This guidance echoes the requirements of NEPA, which at every turn emphasize the importance of public participation.

The Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA state that "[a]ccurate scientific analysis, expert agency comments, and public scrutiny are essential to implementing NEPA." 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1.

Indeed, CEQ regulations require that the Service hold a public hearing or meeting "whenever appropriate," taking into account factors such as "substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action or substantial interest in holding the hearing." 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6(c)(1).

I have a long standing interest in the protection of Pine Rocklands and their endangered and threatened species.

I have also have carefully followed years of additional requests for more Pine Rockland Protection.

For example, in 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity, South Florida Wildlands Association, Tropical Audubon Society, Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition petitioned the Service to list the Miami tiger beetle, one of the species

impacted by the incidental take permit, as endangered.

Additionally, as the result of a settlement agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the Service in 2011, the Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013 ; listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly and Florida leafwing butterfly in 2014 ; and listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Carter's small-flowered flax and Florida brickell-bush in 2015. All are species that would be negatively impact by Coral Reef Commons.

I understand there have been more than 14,000 letters to the developer of Coral Reef Commons asking it to protect listed species and not move forward with the project.

Many concerned residents appear to oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.

It is evident that a substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action and a substantial interest in holding the hearing exist.

We hope you will grant the public the opportunity to more fully discuss the impacts of Coral Reef Commons on federal and state endangered and threatened species through a public hearing. I look forward to your reply.

In addition, I'd also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the FWS.

Sincerely,

Ty Shlackman

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comme  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:55:04 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Ashleigh Blackford** <[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Thu, Apr 6, 2017 at 1:21 PM  
**Subject:** FW: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comme  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

**From:** Darlene Melcon [mailto:[dmelcon@gmail.com](mailto:dmelcon@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 06, 2017 12:20 PM  
**To:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov); [Ashleigh\\_Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh_Blackford@fws.gov)  
**Subject:** Re: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comme

Re: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

As a concerned Florida Resident I respectfully request a public hearing on the above-referenced proposed incidental take permit and environmental assessment on the commercial mixed-use development locally known as Coral Reef Commons.

We request that this public hearing take place during the comment period and in a location and timeframe that ensures members of the public will be able to

meaningfully participate.

As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing.

Perennially rare communities, such as the pine rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area.

Pine rockland is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction.

This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered species, including those at issue in this permit application.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) review of the Coral Reef Commons application requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Administrative Procedure Act.

The Service's Habitat Conservation Planning and Incidental Take Permit Processing Handbook (2016) (hereinafter, Handbook), a policy document intended to inform how the Service processes Endangered Species Act Section 10 incidental take permits, describes public hearings as: [a] common method for soliciting stakeholder input on agency actions. Hearings provide all or selected participants an opportunity to present their opinions on an issue, usually in a formal manner in an allotted amount of time . . . . The information is recorded and becomes part of the public record. Laws and agency regulations often mandate public hearings.

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I have a long standing interest in the protection of Pine Rocklands and their endangered and threatened species.

I have also have carefully followed years of additional requests for more Pine Rockland Protection.

For example, in 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity, South Florida Wildlands Association, Tropical Audubon Society, Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition petitioned the Service to list the Miami tiger beetle, one of the species impacted by the incidental take permit, as endangered.

Additionally, as the result of a settlement agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the Service in 2011, the Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013 ; listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly and Florida leafwing butterfly in 2014 ; and listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Carter's small-flowered flax and Florida brickell-bush in 2015. All are species that would be negatively impact by Coral Reef Commons.

I understand there have been more than 14,000 letters to the developer of Coral Reef Commons asking it to protect listed species and not move forward with the project.

Many concerned residents appear to oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.

It is evident that a substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action and a substantial interest in holding the hearing exist.

We hope you will grant the public the opportunity to more fully discuss the impacts of Coral Reef Commons on federal and state endangered and threatened species through a public hearing. I look forward to your reply.

In addition, I'd also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the FWS.

Sincerely,

Darlene Melcon

A thick black horizontal bar used to redact the signature of Darlene Melcon.



**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Fwd: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223 Document Number: 2017-05767  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:55:15 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Fri, Apr 7, 2017 at 7:43 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Fwd: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223 Document Number: 2017-05767  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
**Southeast Region**  
**HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator**  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

**NOTE: All email correspondence and attachments received from or sent to me are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be disclosed to third parties.**

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **r\_paul\_anthony** <[r\\_paul\\_anthony@yahoo.com](mailto:r_paul_anthony@yahoo.com)>  
**Date:** Tue, Apr 4, 2017 at 9:46 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223 Document Number: 2017-05767  
**To:** [david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)  
**Cc:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov), [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

----- Original message -----

**From:** **r\_paul\_anthony** <[r\\_paul\\_anthony@yahoo.com](mailto:r_paul_anthony@yahoo.com)>  
**Date:** 03/25/2017 9:43 AM (GMT-05:00)  
**To:** [david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)  
**Cc:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov), [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)  
**Subject:** Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223 Document Number: 2017-05767

Greetings FWS friends,

I am begging you to not approve this revised RAM development plan of the Coral Reef

Commons. I was born and still reside in this area. My son and I used to enjoy nature runs and walks near and on this property. We were always under the assumption that the subject land was already protected by the county or neighboring Zoo. Later to shockingly find out that the University of Miami actually owned this land and sold it to the clutches of RAM development.

How can I justify proper conservation and "the RIGHT thing to do" to my son when he is witnessing another natural and futhermore endangered forest land be paved over and destroyed? My stomach turns just pondering this. To make matters worse the traffic in the area is already beyond unbareable. This or any other large scale development in this area would turn the already slug moving traffic similar into literally a standing parking lot.

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE execute your powers to protect this endangered forest, endangered plants and animal species that reside there. Moreover, please produce an everlasting example of proper conservation and stewardship to our youth by "doing the RIGHT THING" by instilling a natural park.

Respectfully,

R Paul Anthony

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Sent from my T-MobileG LTE Device

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: In opposition of the Walmart Development scheduled to start on Pinerockland  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:51:35 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Danielle Bender** <[daniellenicolebender@gmail.com](mailto:daniellenicolebender@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Sun, Apr 2, 2017 at 11:38 AM  
**Subject:** In opposition of the Walmart Development scheduled to start on Pinerockland  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

To whom It May Concern,

I am writing in complete opposition of the proposed Walmart Development scheduled to take place on Pinerockland Habitats in Miami, FL, specifically at 127th avenue and 152nd Street.

Miami residents do not need, nor do we want another development. The lands should not be altered in any way. As citizens of this beautiful landscape, so much has already been destroyed at the hands of developers. Please stand with us against this horrific proposal.

Cheers,

Danielle Bender



**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Miami Pine Rocklands - Coral Reef Commons  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:53:47 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, Apr 4, 2017 at 6:58 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Miami Pine Rocklands - Coral Reef Commons  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

**NOTE: All email correspondence and attachments received from or sent to me are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be disclosed to third parties.**

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Jennifer Patti** <[jenpatti@hotmail.com](mailto:jenpatti@hotmail.com)>  
**Date:** Sun, Apr 2, 2017 at 10:05 PM  
**Subject:** Miami Pine Rocklands - Coral Reef Commons  
**To:** "[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)" <[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)>, "[Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov)" <[Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov)>

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

As a concerned Florida Resident I respectfully request a public hearing on the above-referenced proposed incidental take permit and environmental assessment on the commercial mixed-use development locally known as Coral Reef Commons. We request that this public hearing take place during the comment period and in a location and timeframe that ensures members of the public will be able to meaningfully participate.

As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing. Perennially rare communities, such as the pine rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area. Pine rockland is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction. This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered species, including those at issue in this permit application.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) review of the Coral Reef Commons application requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Administrative Procedure Act. The Service's Habitat Conservation Planning and Incidental Take Permit Processing Handbook (2016) (hereinafter, Handbook), a policy document intended to inform how the Service processes Endangered Species Act Section 10 incidental take permits, describes public hearings as:

[a] common method for soliciting stakeholder input on agency actions. Hearings provide all or selected participants an opportunity to present their opinions on an issue, usually in a formal manner in an allotted amount of time . . . . The information is recorded and becomes part of the public record. Laws and agency regulations often mandate public hearings.

Likewise, the Handbook describes public meetings as:

[f]orums in which our staff can present information to interested stakeholders. Many public meetings . . . are designed to encourage discussion and feedback. Public meetings can be very effective and useful for conveying information, educating the interested public, and identifying interested parties.

This guidance echoes the requirements of NEPA, which at every turn emphasize the importance of public participation. The Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA state that "[a]ccurate scientific analysis, expert agency comments, and public scrutiny are essential to implementing NEPA." 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1. Indeed, CEQ regulations require that the Service hold a public hearing or meeting "whenever appropriate," taking into account factors such as "substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action or substantial interest in holding the hearing." 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6(c)(1).

I have a longstanding interest in the protection of Pine Rocklands and their endangered and threatened species. I have also have carefully followed years of additional requests for more Pine Rockland Protection. For example, in 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity, South Florida Wildlands Association, Tropical Audubon Society, Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition petitioned the Service to list the Miami tiger beetle, one of the species impacted by the incidental take permit, as endangered. Additionally, as the result of a settlement agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the Service in 2011, the Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013 ; listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly and Florida leafwing butterfly in 2014 ; and listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Carter's small-flowered flax and Florida brickell-bush in 2015. All are species that would be negatively impact by Coral Reef Commons.

I understand there have been more than 14,000 letters to the developer of Coral Reef Commons asking it to protect listed species and not move forward with the project. Many concerned residents appear to oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.

It is evident that a substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action and a substantial interest in holding the hearing exist.

We hope you will grant the public the opportunity to more fully discuss the impacts of Coral Reef Commons on federal and state endangered and threatened species through a public

hearing. I look forward to your reply.

In addition, I would also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the FWS.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Meizoso

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Miami Rocklands  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:54:08 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----  
**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, Apr 4, 2017 at 7:11 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Miami Rocklands  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

**NOTE: All email correspondence and attachments received from or sent to me are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be disclosed to third parties.**

----- Forwarded message -----  
**From:** **Darlene Melcon** <[dmelcon@gmail.com](mailto:dmelcon@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Mon, Apr 3, 2017 at 12:09 PM  
**Subject:** Miami Rocklands  
**To:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)

Sir: PLEASE do not allow some of the last remnants of wild South Florida to be given over to developers.

This is re FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL

Even if saving this pristine wild habitat is not enough reason, we who live in the area do not need more traffic on the already overcrowded and horrendous SW 152 St or Coral Reef Dr, as it is known by both.

Miami-Dade County is already over-built; every major road and highway is lined with shops and malls.....and any photo of this area will showcase the huge high rises we have everywhere. There are spaces available on said roads where more buildings would just be accepted.

Please do not allow this to happen.

Sincerely,  
Darlene Melcon



**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: No Walmart on 152st  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:49:15 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----  
**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Thu, Mar 30, 2017 at 7:00 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: No Walmart on 152st  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
**Southeast Region**  
**HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator**  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

**NOTE: All email correspondence and attachments received from or sent to me are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be disclosed to third parties.**

----- Forwarded message -----  
**From:** **Robert Valido Prestige Marine** <[prestigediver@gmail.com](mailto:prestigediver@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Wed, Mar 29, 2017 at 6:29 PM  
**Subject:** No Walmart on 152st  
**To:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)

Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

As a concerned Florida Resident I respectfully request a public hearing on the above-referenced proposed incidental take permit and environmental assessment on the commercial mixed-use development locally known as Coral Reef Commons. We request that this public hearing take place during the comment period and in a location and timeframe that ensures members of the public will be able to meaningfully participate.

As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing. Perennially rare communities, such as the pine rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area. Pine rockland is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction. This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered

species, including those at issue in this permit application.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) review of the Coral Reef Commons application requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Administrative Procedure Act. The Service's Habitat Conservation Planning and Incidental Take Permit Processing Handbook (2016) (hereinafter, Handbook), a policy document intended to inform how the Service processes Endangered Species Act Section 10 incidental take permits, describes public hearings as:

[a] common method for soliciting stakeholder input on agency actions. Hearings provide all or selected participants an opportunity to present their opinions on an issue, usually in a formal manner in an allotted amount of time . . . . The information is recorded and becomes part of the public record. Laws and agency regulations often mandate public hearings.

Likewise, the Handbook describes public meetings as:

[f]orums in which our staff can present information to interested stakeholders. Many public meetings . . . are designed to encourage discussion and feedback. Public meetings can be very effective and useful for conveying information, educating the interested public, and identifying interested parties.

This guidance echoes the requirements of NEPA, which at every turn emphasize the importance of public participation. The Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA state that "[a]ccurate scientific analysis, expert agency comments, and public scrutiny are essential to implementing NEPA." 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1. Indeed, CEQ regulations require that the Service hold a public hearing or meeting "whenever appropriate," taking into account factors such as "substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action or substantial interest in holding the hearing." 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6(c)(1).

I have a longstanding interest in the protection of Pine Rocklands and their endangered and threatened species. I have also have carefully followed years of additional requests for more Pine Rockland Protection.

For example, in 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity, South Florida Wildlands Association, Tropical Audubon Society, Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition petitioned the Service to list the Miami tiger beetle, one of the species impacted by the incidental take permit, as endangered. Additionally, as the result of a settlement agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the Service in 2011, the Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013 ; listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly and Florida leafwing butterfly in 2014 ; and listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Carter's small-flowered flax and Florida brickell-bush in 2015. All are species that would be negatively impact by Coral Reef Commons.

I understand there have been more than 14,000 letters to the developer of Coral Reef Commons asking it to protect listed species and not move forward with the project. Many concerned residents appear to oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.

It is evident that a substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action and a substantial interest in holding the hearing exist.

We hope you will grant the public the opportunity to more fully discuss the impacts of Coral Reef Commons on federal and state endangered and threatened species through a public hearing. I look forward to your reply.

In addition, I'd also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the FWS.

Sincerely,

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Oppose the building of Walmart and Townhomes for Coral Reef Commons  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:48:56 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Nikki Traylor-Knowles** <[ntk1717@gmail.com](mailto:ntk1717@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Wed, Mar 29, 2017 at 12:28 PM  
**Subject:** Oppose the building of Walmart and Townhomes for Coral Reef Commons  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to oppose the building of a Walmart and 900 townhouses at the sight surrounding ZooMiami. That area which is habitat for **Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly**, **Florida leafwing butterfly**, **Florida bonneted bat**, **eastern indigo snake**, **rim rock crowned snake**, **gopher tortoise**, **Miami tiger beetle** and **white-crowned pigeon**. These species are incredibly valuable and this area should be made into a nature reserve rather than townhouse development. Florida possesses so many amazing natural resources and this area needs to be preserved. Please do not allow this horrible development to take place.

Thank you,

**Nikki Traylor-Knowles**

--

**Nikki Traylor-Knowles, Ph.D.**

\*\*\*\*\*

Assistant Professor  
Department of Marine Biology and Ecology  
Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science  
University of Miami  
4600 Rickenbacker Causeway  
Miami, FL 33149

Email: [ntraylorknowles@rsmas.miami.edu](mailto:ntraylorknowles@rsmas.miami.edu)

Phone: [REDACTED]

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Pine Rockland Development  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:51:13 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Julie F** <[juliefliegenspan@yahoo.com](mailto:juliefliegenspan@yahoo.com)>  
**Date:** Sat, Apr 1, 2017 at 11:14 PM  
**Subject:** Pine Rockland Development  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

To Whom it May Concern,

I'm writing to express my deep concern that a Walmart is already planning to be built on the scarce amount of nature we have left in Miami. This violates animals habitats, some of which are endangered and nature benefits all residents of miami. There are plenty of other places a large corporation like Walmart could develop on. As a resident of Miami, a taxpayer, and a lifetime Florida native I am against this we need to protect the natural habitats we have.

Sincerely,  
Julie Fliegenspan

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Pine Rockland habitat Walmart  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:51:04 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dana Hoffman** <[amerrickangirl@gmail.com](mailto:amerrickangirl@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Sat, Apr 1, 2017 at 5:45 AM  
**Subject:** Pine Rockland habitat Walmart  
**To:** "[cre\\_hep@fws.gov](mailto:cre_hep@fws.gov)" <[cre\\_hep@fws.gov](mailto:cre_hep@fws.gov)>

To whom it may concern:

Please say no to the development being proposed. Our Wverglades and other wild areas are vastly more valuable then yet another soulless strip mall.

Once those natural areas are gone, they're gone for good. We cannot let that happen in pursuit of money.

Thank you.

Dana Hoffman  
1951 Atlantic Shores Blvd  
Unit 25  
Hallandale Beach, FL 33009  


**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Pine Rocklands and Potential Developments  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:52:27 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Evan Morrison** <[eloumorrison1@gmail.com](mailto:eloumorrison1@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Sun, Apr 2, 2017 at 8:17 PM  
**Subject:** Pine Rocklands and Potential Developments  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

To whom it may concern,

The Pine Rocklands is a nearly extinct habitat, and if we choose to destroy what little we have left in Miami, we will not be getting it back. This land should not be used for development, especially of a company as notorious and unhealthy for our community as Wal-Mart. There have been many protests of this rash and destructive development, speaking to the will of the people to save this icon of the Florida environment. Please deny requests to damage and develop on the habitat on this property.

Thanks for your time,  
Evan Morrison  
University of Miami

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Pine Rocklands  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:56:05 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Carole Reddish** <[reddis251@aol.com](mailto:reddis251@aol.com)>  
**Date:** Thu, Mar 23, 2017 at 7:34 AM  
**Subject:** Pine Rocklands  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

The commercial development of this property will destroy endangered species. Coral Reef Drive is already so congested it takes 15 minutes to drive 1 mile, not during rush hour. We will be worse prisoners in our homes. We don't need a Walmart in our community. The restaurants in this area are not filled with customers. Why need more restaurants? Or more cars to turn 152 St into a more congested parking lot?

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Please do not allow any development of our remaining Pine Rocklands  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:54:55 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dylann Turffs** <[dylannturffs@gmail.com](mailto:dylannturffs@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Thu, Apr 6, 2017 at 11:07 AM  
**Subject:** Please do not allow any development of our remaining Pine Rocklands  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

Please do not allow any development of our remaining Pine Rocklands. This is an issue on which too much compromise has already been made. There are just 2% remaining and it is disturbing that allowing that to drop any further is even being considered.

Miami, despite existing between the Florida Reef and the Everglades, is overlooked as a place of any value in the eyes of people who appreciate nature, and part of that is because of actions like this. Because we as a community don't bother to protect it, and because when we do, when we speak out, we are ignored. The wallets of developers and corporations from afar are appreciated far more than the voices of locals who would be affected by this.

We do not want this Walmart. We do not want the low paying jobs it will bring, we do not want the traffic and congestion, and we do not want the urban sprawl that it will help worsen. We know urban sprawl is bad for us, for our communities, for our health.

We do want these Pine Rocklands. We know time in nature, the air cleaning affects of trees, even the mere presence of trees is good for us physically and mentally. We want this habitat of tremendous biodiversity, of wildlife and plants unique to Miami. This is far too special and too rare to allow to be developed. We have compromised so much already and we are no better for it. In fact, we are worse. Saving a tiny chunk and allowing the rest to be developed will do nothing to mitigate the impact.

Please consider the importance of this ecosystem and the voice of the people who will be affected by this.

Thank you,  
Dylann Turffs

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Please don't develop globally imperiled Pine Rocklands in Miami  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:56:18 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Sanna O'Sullivan** <[sannairja@gmail.com](mailto:sannairja@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Thu, Mar 23, 2017 at 8:46 AM  
**Subject:** Please don't develop globally imperiled Pine Rocklands in Miami  
**To:** "[cre\\_hep@fws.gov](mailto:cre_hep@fws.gov)" <[cre\\_hep@fws.gov](mailto:cre_hep@fws.gov)>

Hello! I strongly OPPOSE the further development of our globally imperiled Pine Rocklands in Miami. The remaining fragments of this ecosystem are so incredible special and necessary for the wildlife that depends on it.

Just because Miami was born out of this upland environment with mostly all the Miami Dade slash pine logged, doesn't mean we should continue to obliterate it! It is essential these plants and animals have habitat to survive off.

I'm begging you to consider to services these ecosystems brings to the community and world. Money is NOT as important. The children and people of the present and future need these very small remaining fragments of Pine Rocklands to know what was before and what is natural. What is truly important.

Sincerely,  
Miami native  
Sanna O'Sullivan

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Please No !  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:52:01 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Paula Baxter** <[pwaj@aol.com](mailto:pwaj@aol.com)>  
**Date:** Sun, Apr 2, 2017 at 2:55 PM  
**Subject:** Please No !  
**To:** [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

Do not allow further development in the Coral Reef area ! The traffic now is horrendous and our natural spaces are dwindling. We need nature !

Paula Baxter

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: PUBLIC COMMENT ON FEDERAL REGISTER THIS BUDILING SHOULD NOT BE PERMITTED - FLA IS SINKING  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:47:52 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 8:32 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: PUBLIC COMMENT ON FEDERAL REGISTER THIS BUDILING SHOULD NOT BE PERMITTED - FLA IS SINKING  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
**Southeast Region**  
**HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator**  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

**NOTE: All email correspondence and attachments received from or sent to me are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be disclosed to third parties.**

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Jean Public** <[jeanpublic1@yahoo.com](mailto:jeanpublic1@yahoo.com)>  
**Date:** Thu, Mar 23, 2017 at 3:14 PM  
**Subject:** Re: PUBLIC COMMENT ON FEDERAL REGISTER THIS BUDILING SHOULD NOT BE PERMITTED - FLA IS SINKING  
**To:** "[DAVID\\_DELL@FWS.GOV](mailto:DAVID_DELL@FWS.GOV)" <[DAVID\\_DELL@fws.gov](mailto:DAVID_DELL@fws.gov)>, "[VICEPRESIDENT@WHITEHOUSE.GOV](mailto:VICEPRESIDENT@WHITEHOUSE.GOV)" <[VICEPRESIDENT@whitehouse.gov](mailto:VICEPRESIDENT@whitehouse.gov)>, "[CONTACT@THEDODO.COM](mailto:CONTACT@THEDODO.COM)" <[CONTACT@thedodo.com](mailto:CONTACT@thedodo.com)>, "[SCOOP@HUFFINGTONPOST.COM](mailto:SCOOP@HUFFINGTONPOST.COM)" <[SCOOP@huffingtonpost.com](mailto:SCOOP@huffingtonpost.com)>, "[YOURVIEWS@APP.COM](mailto:YOURVIEWS@APP.COM)" <[YOURVIEWS@app.com](mailto:YOURVIEWS@app.com)>  
**Cc:** "[LETTERS@NYTIMES.COM](mailto:LETTERS@NYTIMES.COM)" <[LETTERS@nytimes.com](mailto:LETTERS@nytimes.com)>, "[HUMANELINES@HSUS.ORG](mailto:HUMANELINES@HSUS.ORG)" <[HUMANELINES@hsus.org](mailto:HUMANELINES@hsus.org)>, "[INFO@PETA.ORG](mailto:INFO@PETA.ORG)" <[INFO@peta.org](mailto:INFO@peta.org)>, "[INFO@IDAUSA.ORG](mailto:INFO@IDAUSA.ORG)" <[INFO@idausa.org](mailto:INFO@idausa.org)>, "[INFO@PEWTRUSTS.ORG](mailto:INFO@PEWTRUSTS.ORG)" <[INFO@pewtrusts.org](mailto:INFO@pewtrusts.org)>, "[INFORMATION@SIERRACLUB.ORG](mailto:INFORMATION@SIERRACLUB.ORG)" <[INFORMATION@sierraclub.org](mailto:INFORMATION@sierraclub.org)>, "[INFO@PEER.ORG](mailto:INFO@PEER.ORG)" <[INFO@peer.org](mailto:INFO@peer.org)>

**THIS PROPOSAL SHOULD BE DENIED COMPLETELY. ALL OF FLIRIDA IS SINKING SO ALLOWING THIS ENDLES BUILDING MAKES NO SENSE AT ALL. IN ADDITION THE SITE IS LOADED WITH HUNDREDS OF ENDANGERED ANIMALS THAT RELY ON THIS LAND FOR THEIR HOME. THAT SHOULD BE RESPECTED. THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO REASON TO ALLOW A PROFITEER TO COME IN THERE AND DESTROY ALL THOSE LANDS FOR LIFE IN AMERICA. THE**

BUTTERFLIES ARE ALL VANISHING FROM EARTH, THE BATS, THE MANY MANY PLANTS THAT WERE LISTED. THEY CANNOT EXIST ON JUST PART OF THEIR FORMER LAND. IF THEY COULD THEY WOULD HAVE ALL CLUSTERED THERE BEFORE. THIS PLAN TAKES AWAY THE LAND THEY NEED TO LIVE ON. THIS PLAN SHOULD BE TOTALLY AND COMPLETELY REJECTED AS HARMFUL TO ALL LIFE IN AMERICA. THIS COMMENT IS FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD. PLEASE RECEIPT. JEAN PUBLIEE [JEANPUBLIC1@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JEANPUBLIC1@GMAIL.COM), PLEASE RESPOND BY EMAIL. THANK YOU.

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[Federal Register Volume 82, Number 55 (Thursday, March 23, 2017)]  
[Notices]  
[Pages 14908-14910]  
From the Federal Register Online via the Government Publishing Office [[www.gpo.gov](http://www.gpo.gov)]  
[FR Doc No: 2017-05767]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223]; [FXES11140400000-178-FF04E00000]

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments.

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SUMMARY: Under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act),

[[Page 14909]]

we, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, announce the receipt and availability of a proposed habitat conservation plan and accompanying documents related to an application from four applicants for a permit associated with construction of the Coral Reef Commons mixed-use development (project) in Miami-Dade County, Florida. If issued,

the permit would authorize take of three federally listed species, one Federal candidate, and two State-listed species, incidental to project development, occupation, and use. We invite the public to comment on these documents.

DATES: To ensure consideration, please send your written comments by May 22, 2017.

ADDRESSES: Obtaining Documents: Documents are available for public inspection by appointment during regular business hours at either of the following locations:

Atlanta Regional Office, Ecological Services, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1875 Century Boulevard, Atlanta, GA 30345.

South Florida Ecological Services Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1339 20th Street, Vero Beach, FL 32960.

Submitting Comments: Submit comments by one of the following methods. Please reference TE15009C-0 in all comments. For additional guidance, please see Public Comments under SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.

U.S. mail: You may mail comments to the Fish and Wildlife Service's Atlanta Regional Office.

Hand-delivery: You may hand-deliver comments to the Atlanta or the Vero Beach Office.

Email: You may email comments to [david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov). Please include your name and return address in your email message. If you do not receive a confirmation from us that we have received your email message, contact us directly at either telephone number in FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. David Dell, Coordinator, Atlanta (see ADDRESSES), telephone: [REDACTED] or

Ashleigh Blackford, Supervisory Wildlife Biologist, at the South Florida Ecological Services Office (see ADDRESSES), telephone: 772-469-4246. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), please call the Federal Relay Service at [REDACTED]

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act), we, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, announce the receipt and availability of a proposed habitat conservation plan (HCP), accompanying incidental take permit (ITP) application, and environmental assessment (EA) related to an application from Coral Reef Retail LLC, Coral Reef Residential Phase I LLC, Ramdev LLC, and

the University of Miami (applicants) for a permit associated with construction of the Coral Reef Commons mixed-use development (project) in Miami-Dade County, Florida. We invite the public to comment on these documents.

The applicants' proposed HCP describes the mitigation and minimization measures proposed to address the impacts to the covered species. Per the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.; NEPA), the EA analyzes the take of the covered species and the environment. The applicants request a 30-year ITP under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

### Covered Species

The covered species are the following:

Federally listed as endangered: Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly (*Strymon acis bartrami*), Florida leafwing butterfly (*Anaea troglodyta floridalis*), Florida bonneted bat (*Eumops floridanus*), and Miami tiger beetle (*Cicindela scabrosa floridana*).

Federally listed as threatened: Eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais cooperi*).

Federal candidate: Gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*).

State-listed: Rim rock crowned snake (*Tantilla oolitica*) and white-crowned pigeon (*Patagioenas leucocephala*).

Because the project would likely have adverse effects on several plant species, the HCP includes conservation measures for the following plant species:

Federally listed as endangered: Tiny polygala (*Polygala smallii*), deltoid spurge (*Chamaesyce deltoidea*), crenulate lead-plant (*Amorpha crenulata*), Florida brickell bush (*Brickelia mosieri*), Small's milkpea (*Galactia smallii*), and Carter's small-flowered flax (*Linum carteri* var. *carteri*).

Federally listed as threatened: Garber's spurge (*Chamaesyce garberi*).

Federal candidates: Sand flax (*Linum arenicola*), Blodgett's silver bush (*Argythamnia blodgettii*), Florida prairie clover (*Dalea carthagenensis* var. *floridana*), Florida pineland crabgrass (*Digitaria pauciflora*), Everglades bully (*Sideroxylon reclinatum* ssp. *austrofloridense*), and Florida bristle fern (*Trichomanes punctatum* ssp. *floridanum*).

State-listed: Clamshell orchid (*Encyclia cochleata* var. *triandra*).

The EA assesses the likely environmental impacts associated with the project, including the environmental consequences of the no-action and the proposed action alternatives. The proposed action alternative is issuance of the ITP and implementation of the HCP as submitted by the applicants. The HCP area is comprised of a 137.9-acre tract, of which 86.49 acres are proposed for development, in addition to a separate 50.96-acre tract proposed for off-site mitigation. These tracts lie in an area known as the Richmond Pine Rocklands. Construction of the project would impact 86.49 acres of pine rockland habitat and would take covered species that occupy the area.

#### Habitat Conservation Plan

The minimization and mitigation measures proposed in the HCP include the setting aside and maintenance of 51.41 acres of conservation areas within the 137.9-acre tract, supplemented by 3.88 acres of intermediate conservation ``stepping stones'' to provide for movement of covered species among the conservation areas. In addition to the conservation areas, the 50.96-acre tract would serve as off-site mitigation and be protected and maintained as habitat for the covered species. The conservation and off-site mitigation areas would be managed by prescribed fire, other vegetation control measures, and removal of exotic invasive species. The areas also would be protected, as appropriate, by association covenants, deed restrictions, and/or conservation easements.

#### Public Comments

We specifically request information, views, and opinions from the public on our proposed Federal action, including identification of any other aspects of or impacts to the human environment not already identified in the EA prepared pursuant to the NEPA regulations at 40 CFR 1506.6. Further, we specifically solicit information regarding the adequacy of the HCP per 50 CFR parts 13 and 17.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment--including your personal identifying information--may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying

information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

[[Page 14910]]

#### Covered Area

The covered species historically occurred in the Richmond pine rockland habitats. Portions of the HCP covered area consist of pine rockland habitat that is either currently occupied by the covered species or suitable for restoration as habitat for the species.

#### Next Steps

We will evaluate the ITP application, including the HCP, and any comments we receive to determine whether the application meets the requirements of section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Act. We will also evaluate whether a section 10(a)(1)(B) ITP should be issued, as well as conduct an intra-Service consultation pursuant to section 7 of the Act. We will use the results of this consultation and the above findings in our final analysis to determine whether to issue the ITP. If we determine that the requirements are met, we will issue the ITP for incidental take of the covered species.

#### Authority

We provide this notice under section 10 of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) and NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.6).

Dated: March 3, 2017.  
Mike Oetker,  
Acting Regional Director.  
[FR Doc. 2017-05767 Filed 3-22-17; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 4333-15-P

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:53:59 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, Apr 4, 2017 at 7:07 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
**Southeast Region**  
**HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator**  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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**From:** **Ty Shlackman** <[d018019c@juno.com](mailto:d018019c@juno.com)>  
**Date:** Mon, Apr 3, 2017 at 11:40 AM  
**Subject:** Re: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request  
**To:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov), [Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov)

April 3, 2017

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

As a concerned Florida Resident I respectfully request a public hearing on the above-referenced proposed incidental take permit and environmental assessment on the commercial mixed-use development locally known as Coral Reef Commons.

We request that this public hearing take place during the comment period and in a location and

timeframe that ensures members of the public will be able to meaningfully participate.

As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing.

Perennially rare communities, such as the pine rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area.

Pine rockland is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction.

This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered species, including those at issue in this permit application.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) review of the Coral Reef Commons application requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Administrative Procedure Act.

The Service's Habitat Conservation Planning and Incidental Take Permit Processing Handbook (2016) (hereinafter, Handbook), a policy document intended to inform how the Service processes Endangered Species Act Section 10 incidental take permits, describes public hearings as: [a] common method for soliciting stakeholder input on agency actions. Hearings provide all or selected participants an opportunity to present their opinions on an issue, usually in a formal manner in an allotted amount of time . . . . The information is recorded and becomes part of the public record. Laws and agency regulations often mandate public hearings.

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Indeed, CEQ regulations require that the Service hold a public hearing or meeting "whenever appropriate," taking into account factors such as "substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action or substantial interest in holding the hearing." 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6(c)(1).

I have a long standing interest in the protection of Pine Rocklands and their endangered and threatened species.

I have also have carefully followed years of additional requests for more Pine Rockland Protection.

For example, in 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity, South Florida Wildlands Association, Tropical Audubon Society, Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition petitioned the Service to list the Miami tiger beetle, one of the species impacted by the incidental take permit, as endangered.

Additionally, as the result of a settlement agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the Service in 2011, the Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013 ; listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly and Florida leafwing butterfly in 2014 ; and listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Carter's small-flowered flax and Florida brickell-bush in 2015. All are species that would be negatively impact by Coral Reef Commons.

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Many concerned residents appear to oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.

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We hope you will grant the public the opportunity to more fully discuss the impacts of Coral Reef Commons on federal and state endangered and threatened species through a public hearing. I look forward to your reply.

In addition, I'd also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the FWS.

Sincerely,

Ty Shlackman

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:46:49 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 7:12 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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**From:** **Carolina V.** <[carolinavalladares21@gmail.com](mailto:carolinavalladares21@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Sat, Mar 25, 2017 at 12:30 AM  
**Subject:** Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223  
**To:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov), [Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov)

Re: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

As a concerned Florida Resident I respectfully request a public hearing on the above-referenced proposed incidental take permit and environmental assessment on the commercial mixed-use development locally known as Coral Reef Commons. We request that this public hearing take place during the comment period and in a location and timeframe that ensures members of the public will be able to meaningfully participate.

As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing. Perennially rare communities, such as the pine rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area. Pine rockland

is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction. This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered species, including those at issue in this permit application.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) review of the Coral Reef Commons application requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Administrative Procedure Act. The Service's Habitat Conservation Planning and Incidental Take Permit Processing Handbook (2016) (hereinafter, Handbook), a policy document intended to inform how the Service processes Endangered Species Act Section 10 incidental take permits, describes public hearings as:

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This guidance echoes the requirements of NEPA, which at every turn emphasize the importance of public participation. The Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA state that "[a]ccurate scientific analysis, expert agency comments, and public scrutiny are essential to implementing NEPA." 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1. Indeed, CEQ regulations require that the Service hold a public hearing or meeting "whenever appropriate," taking into account factors such as "substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action or substantial interest in holding the hearing." 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6(c)(1).

I have a longstanding interest in the protection of Pine Rocklands and their endangered and threatened species. I have also have carefully followed years of additional requests for more Pine Rockland Protection.

For example, in 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity, South Florida Wildlands Association, Tropical Audubon Society, Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition petitioned the Service to list the Miami tiger beetle, one of the species impacted by the incidental take permit, as endangered. Additionally, as the result of a settlement agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the Service in 2011, the Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013 ; listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly and Florida leafwing butterfly in 2014 ; and listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Carter's small-flowered flax and Florida brickell-bush in 2015. All are species that would be negatively impact by Coral Reef Commons.

I understand there have been more than 14,000 letters to the developer of Coral Reef Commons asking it to protect listed species and not move forward with the project. Many concerned residents appear to oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.

It is evident that a substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action and a substantial interest in holding the hearing exist.

We hope you will grant the public the opportunity to more fully discuss the impacts of Coral Reef Commons on federal and state endangered and threatened species through a public hearing. I look forward to your reply.

In addition, I'd also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the FWS.

Sincerely,

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:46:36 PM

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**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 7:09 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
**Southeast Region**  
**HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator**  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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**From:** **SabalChase Vet** <[sabalchasevet@gmail.com](mailto:sabalchasevet@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Fri, Mar 24, 2017 at 8:28 PM  
**Subject:** Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.  
**To:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)

March 24, 2017

**David Dell**  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Atlanta Regional Office,  
1875 Century Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30345

[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)

**Re: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.**

Dear Mr. Dell,

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Sincerely,

Ian Bruce Kupkee DVM

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:55:24 PM

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**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Thu, Apr 6, 2017 at 12:29 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
**Southeast Region**  
**HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator**  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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**From:** **Darlene Melcon** <[dmelcon@gmail.com](mailto:dmelcon@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Thu, Apr 6, 2017 at 12:19 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.  
**To:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov), [Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov)

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Sincerely,

Darlene Melcon

████████████████████  
████████████████████

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:49:06 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Thu, Mar 30, 2017 at 6:59 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Cully Waggoner** <[cullywaggoner@gmail.com](mailto:cullywaggoner@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Wed, Mar 29, 2017 at 6:03 PM  
**Subject:** Request for Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223  
**To:** [david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov), Ashleigh Blackford FWS <[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)>, [crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)

March 28, 2017

David Dell  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Atlanta Regional Office, Ecological Services  
1875 Century Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30345  
[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)

Ashleigh Blackford

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

South Florida Ecological Services

1339 20th St.

Vero Beach, FL 32960

[Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov)

**Re:** Request for Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

As a concerned Florida Resident I respectfully request a public hearing on the above-referenced proposed incidental take permit and environmental assessment on the commercial mixed-use development locally known as Coral Reef Commons. We request that this public hearing take place during the comment period and in a location and timeframe that ensures members of the public will be able to meaningfully participate.

As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing. Perennially rare communities, such as the pine rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area. Pine rockland is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction. This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered species, including those at issue in this permit application.

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[a] common method for soliciting stakeholder input on agency actions. Hearings provide all or selected participants an opportunity to present their opinions on an issue, usually in a formal manner in an allotted amount of time . . . . The information is recorded and becomes part of the public record. Laws and agency regulations often mandate public hearings.

Likewise, the Handbook describes public meetings as:

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I have a longstanding interest in the protection of Pine Rocklands and their endangered and threatened species. I have also have carefully followed years of additional requests for more Pine Rockland Protection.

For example, in 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity, South Florida Wildlands Association, Tropical Audubon Society, Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition petitioned the Service to list the Miami tiger beetle, one of the species impacted by the incidental take permit, as endangered. Additionally, as the result of a settlement agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the Service in 2011, the Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013; listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly and Florida leafwing butterfly in 2014; and listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Carter's small-flowered flax and Florida brickell-bush in 2015. All are species that would be negatively impact by Coral Reef Commons.

I understand there have been more than 14,000 letters to the developer of Coral Reef Commons asking it to protect listed species and not move forward with the project. Many concerned residents appear to oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.

It is evident that a substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action and a substantial interest in holding the hearing exist.

We hope you will grant the public the opportunity to more fully discuss the impacts of Coral Reef Commons on federal and state endangered and threatened species through a public hearing. I look forward to your reply.

In addition, I'd also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the the FWS.

Sincerely,

--

***Cully Waggoner***

Vice President, Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition

**Personal:**

Cell: [REDACTED]

Home: [REDACTED]

E-Mail: [cullywaggoner@gmail.com](mailto:cullywaggoner@gmail.com);

MSN IM: [cullywaggoner@hotmail.com](mailto:cullywaggoner@hotmail.com);

Facebook: [REDACTED] <http://www.facebook.com/cully.waggoner>

Twitter: [REDACTED] <http://twitter.com/CullyWaggoner>

LinkedIn: [REDACTED] <http://www.linkedin.com/in/cullywaggoner>

Instagram: [REDACTED] <http://instagram.com/cullywaggoner>

Skype: cully.waggoner

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Rocklands  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:48:35 PM

---

----- Forwarded message -----  
**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, Mar 28, 2017 at 12:37 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Rocklands  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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----- Forwarded message -----  
**From:** **Stephanie Brovold** <[sjbrovold@yahoo.com](mailto:sjbrovold@yahoo.com)>  
**Date:** Tue, Mar 28, 2017 at 11:43 AM  
**Subject:** Rocklands  
**To:** "[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)" <[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)>

David Dell

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Atlanta Regional Office,  
1875 Century Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30345

[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)

Ashleigh Blackford  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service U.S. Ecological Services South Florida Ecological Services  
1339 20th St.  
Vero Beach, FL 32960

[Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov)

Here's a copy of a recent letter you can print out or email to demand the Public's Voice be heard on this critical environmental issue:

Sent via Email and Certified Mail Return Receipt

March 24, 2017

Re: Request for Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

As a concerned Florida Resident I respectfully request a public hearing on the above-referenced proposed incidental take permit and environmental assessment on the commercial mixed-use development locally known as Coral Reef Commons. We request that this public hearing take place during the comment period and in a location and timeframe that ensures members of the public will be able to meaningfully participate.

As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing.[3] Perennially rare communities, such as the pine rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area.[4] Pine rockland is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction.[5] This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered species, including those at issue in this permit application.[6]

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I understand there have been more than 14,000 letters to the developer of Coral Reef Commons asking it to protect listed species and not move forward with the project.[11] Many concerned residents appear to oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.[12]

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In addition, I'd also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the the FWS.

Sincerely,

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Rocklands  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:48:47 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **CRC\_HCP, FW4** <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Fri, Apr 7, 2017 at 2:48 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Rocklands  
**To:** Ashleigh Blackford <[ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)>

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, Mar 28, 2017 at 12:37 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Rocklands  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
**Southeast Region**  
**HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator**  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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**From:** **Stephanie Brovold** <[sjbrovold@yahoo.com](mailto:sjbrovold@yahoo.com)>  
**Date:** Tue, Mar 28, 2017 at 11:43 AM  
**Subject:** Rocklands  
**To:** "[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)" <[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)>

David Dell

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Atlanta Regional Office,  
1875 Century Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30345

[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)

Ashleigh Blackford  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service U.S. Ecological Services South Florida Ecological Services

1339 20th St.  
Vero Beach, FL 32960

[Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov)

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Sent via Email and Certified Mail Return Receipt

March 24, 2017

Re: Request for Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Incidental Take Permit Application and Environmental Assessment for Commercial Mixed-Use Development; Miami-Dade County, FL and 90 Day Public Comment Request.

Dear Mr. Dell and Ms. Blackford,

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In addition, I'd also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the the FWS.

Sincerely,

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Subject: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223 Document Number: 2017-05767  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:52:19 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Fernando de Aragon** <[fdearagon8@gmail.com](mailto:fdearagon8@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Sun, Apr 2, 2017 at 6:56 PM  
**Subject:** Subject: Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan Agency/Docket Number: FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223 Document Number: 2017-05767  
**To:** [Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford@fws.gov), [CRC\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:CRC_hcp@fws.gov), [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)

**Amazing that in 2017 the public still needs to write FWS to explain why is it important to preserve some of the last vestiges of pinelands in Dade County and keep it from turning into yet another Walmart and dime a dozen shops and restaurants.**

One reason to preserve the area is to protect the gene pool for these threatened plants.

Fernando de Aragon  
Ithaca, NY

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: URGENT  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:47:41 PM

---

----- Forwarded message -----  
**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 7:25 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: URGENT  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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----- Forwarded message -----  
**From:** **Dawn Gmail Acct** <[ddrmdance@gmail.com](mailto:ddrmdance@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 5:24 AM  
**Subject:** URGENT  
**To:** [David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov), [Ashleigh\\_Blackford@fws.gov](mailto:Ashleigh_Blackford@fws.gov)

March 24, 2017  
David Dell  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Atlanta Regional Office,  
1875 Century Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30345

Ashleigh Blackford  
South Florida Ecological Services  
1339 20th Street  
Vero Beach, FL 32960

Re: Request for Local Public Hearing on FWS-R4-ES-2016-N223, Endangered and

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Sincerely,

Dawn martinez

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Wal-Mart  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:55:34 PM

---

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Rachel Zimmerman** <[rz134@nova.edu](mailto:rz134@nova.edu)>  
**Date:** Fri, Apr 7, 2017 at 8:20 AM  
**Subject:** Wal-Mart  
**To:** "[cre\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:cre_hcp@fws.gov)" <[cre\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:cre_hcp@fws.gov)>

Don't do it

**From:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)  
**To:** [Ashleigh Blackford](mailto:Ashleigh.Blackford)  
**Subject:** Fwd:  
**Date:** Friday, April 07, 2017 2:47:31 PM

---

----- Forwarded message -----  
**From:** **Dell, David** <[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)>  
**Date:** Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 7:25 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd:  
**To:** FW4 CRC\_HCP <[crc\\_hcp@fws.gov](mailto:crc_hcp@fws.gov)>

**David Dell**  
Southeast Region  
HCP and Safe Harbors Coordinator  
404/ [REDACTED]  
fax: 7081  
[david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)

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----- Forwarded message -----  
**From:** **sebas mor** <[sebasmor305@gmail.com](mailto:sebasmor305@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Sun, Mar 26, 2017 at 12:10 PM  
**Subject:**  
**To:** [david\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:david_dell@fws.gov)  
**Cc:** [ashleigh\\_blackford@fws.gov](mailto:ashleigh_blackford@fws.gov)

Sent from my iPhone

Hello FWS

I was informed that you guys were going to build a Walmart near my home, and I am very furious to hear that because you guys aren't just building a Walmart that will cause a massive amount of traffic, but your also going to build it in the pine rock land forest where im sure you know that it has endangered animals and endangered plants,I am asking on behalf of everybody that lives around there to not build it, I go to school in the morning and theirs a lot of traffic as it is already,and if theirs more,the number of crashes around there will increase, wich is not good as you may know. Money helps us live well, but plants and trees are essential to live.



March 24, 2017

David Dell  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Atlanta Regional Office,  
1875 Century Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30345  
[David\\_dell@fws.gov](mailto:David_dell@fws.gov)



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As you are aware, native habitats in Florida are rapidly disappearing.

Perennially rare communities, such as the Pine Rocklands that would be impacted by Coral Reef Commons, are among the native habitats in Florida that have been drastically reduced in area.

Pine Rockland is a globally endangered plant community with more than 98 percent decline in its pre-settlement area due to significant ecological degradation, conversion to other land uses, and outright destruction.

This important community provides vital habitat for many endangered species, including those at issue in this permit application.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) review of the Coral Reef Commons application requires compliance with the Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Administrative Procedure Act.

The Service's Habitat Conservation Planning and Incidental Take Permit Processing Handbook (2016) (hereinafter, Handbook), a policy document intended to inform how the Service processes Endangered Species Act Section 10 incidental take permits, describes public hearings as: [a] common method for soliciting stakeholder input on agency actions. Hearings provide all or selected participants an opportunity to present their opinions on an issue, usually in a formal manner in an allotted amount of time . . . . The information is recorded and becomes part of the public record. Laws and agency regulations often mandate public hearings.

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*[f]forums in which our staff can present information to interested stakeholders.*

*Many public meetings . . . are designed to encourage discussion and feedback. Public meetings can be very effective and useful for conveying information, educating the interested public, and identifying interested parties.*

This guidance echoes the requirements of NEPA, which at every turn emphasize the importance of public participation.

The Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA state that "[a]ccurate scientific analysis, expert agency comments, and public scrutiny are essential to implementing NEPA." 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1.

Indeed, CEQ regulations require that the Service hold a public hearing or meeting "whenever appropriate," taking into account factors such as "substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action or substantial interest in holding the hearing." 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6(c)(1).

I have a long standing interest in the protection of Pine Rocklands and their endangered and threatened species.

I have also have carefully followed years of additional requests for more Pine Rockland Protection.

For example, in 2014, the Center for Biological Diversity, South Florida Wildlands Association, Tropical Audubon Society, Miami Blue Chapter of the North American Butterfly Association and Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition petitioned the Service to list the Miami tiger beetle, one of the species impacted by the incidental take permit, as endangered.

Additionally, as the result of a settlement agreement reached between the Center for Biological Diversity and the Service in 2011, the Service listed the Florida bonneted bat as endangered in 2013 ; listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Bartram's Scrub-Hairstreak Butterfly and Florida Leafwing Butterfly in 2014 ; and listed as endangered and designated critical habitat for the Carter's Small-Flowered Flax and Florida Brickell-Bush in 2015. All are species that would be negatively impact by Coral Reef Commons.

I understand there have been more than 14,000 letters to the developer of Coral Reef Commons asking it to protect listed species and not move forward with the project.

Many concerned residents oppose the project and would benefit from the opportunity to attend a public hearing on the application.

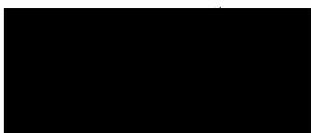
It is evident that a substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action and a substantial interest in holding the hearing exist.

We hope you will grant the public the opportunity to more fully discuss the impacts of Coral Reef Commons on federal and state endangered and threatened species through a public hearing. I look forward to your reply.

In addition, I'd also like to request the Public Comment Period be extended to 90 days to allow the Public to carefully examine the proposed Coral Reef Commons HCP in light of the more than 3 years the applicants have had to develop it jointly with the FWS.

Sincerely,

Ian Bruce Kupkee DVM



March 25, 2017

David Dell  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Atlanta Regional Office,  
1875 Century Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30345

RECEIVED ADMIN ES  
MAR 29 2017  
BY: SM

Ashleigh Blackford  
South Florida Ecological Services  
1339 20th Street  
Vero Beach, FL 32960

Dear Sir and Madam:

I have read the original Ram Developments Habitat Conservation Plan for Coral Reef Commons and it is 504 pages of nonsense prepared in May 2015 by Johnson Engineering of Fort Myers, Florida. I have also read the 172 page Coral Reef Commons Draft Habitat Conservation Plan which was revised by Johnson Engineering in February 2017. While a lot of it is the same, one major difference is almost 51 acres Off Site Mitigation that was not part of the original plan and only appears to have been thrown in to make Ram look better to environmentalists.

In the revised HCP, Ram Development refuses to acknowledge most of the more than a dozen endangered, threatened or rare animal and plant species on the site and that call the Richmond Pine Rocklands home. The 2,100 acre Richmond Pine Rocklands are a "Life Boat Habitat" and the ONLY place in the World that they can live. The HCP minimizes the impact and breaks it down to only 8 animal species and of those 8, only, one, the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly has according to the HCP been documented on the CRC Property.

By comparison the original HCP listed 20 different "potential" animal species. It also noted that the Bartram's scrub-hairstreak butterfly was found on the property multiple times. However, the fact that a Fairchild Tropical Gardens person inadvertently posted a picture of it on Ram property might be why they had to acknowledge it exists there.

So, what happened to the other 12 species in the revised HCP? Unlike humans, animals and plants do not see property lines, and do not know that fences divide them. The Florida Bonneted Bat and the Butterflies fly and the Crown Rim Rock and the Eastern Indigo snakes slither all over and the plants they require grow all over the Richmond Pine Rocklands, including the Coral Reef Commons site.

The HCP refuses to recognize that the site was a toxic nuclear waste site, a Superfund Site, when the University of Miami did nuclear radiation experiments on

primates and buried the exposed primate carcasses in trenches on the site and were fined by the Army Corps of Engineers as part of the cleanup. The word Radioactive does not appear anywhere in either the original or revised HCP.

While it acknowledges that Coral Reef Commons is 86 acres of mixed use development and 52 acres of conservation land it fails to note that only 88 acres of the 138 total acres has already been acquired by Ram Development, that the rest of it remains in the hands of the University of Miami. UM has said privately to the Miami Pine Rocklands Coalition they intend to uphold the rest of their contract and sell Ram most of the remaining land that they were given for free by the Federal Government but they have yet to set a Sell Date for Phase 2 and 3 of the deal.

Ram Development down plays the total destruction of 86 plus acres of the last 2% of remaining original Pine Rockland in Miami-Dade County. For a Walmart Super Center with additional retail and restaurant space along with upwards of 900 residential apartments They are requesting a "Take Permit" to validate their reasons for causing the extinction of several Federal and State endangered and threaten species. They minimize the impact of the species that they reluctantly had to include in the HCP that were found on the site while outright ignoring others that have been documented on the site in the past.

Nor does the HPC acknowledge that Pine Rocklands themselves are a globally imperiled and endangered habitat and that they can ONLY be found in South Florida, some parts of the Caribbean and Cuba. "The Miami Rock Ridge" is a ridge of oolitic limestone the stretched from North Miami south to Florida City and the Everglades has been over developed because it was high ground. The threat of development continues not only with Coral Reef Commons, but Miami Wilds, a Universal Studios style theme / water park from 20th Century Fox and Sony.

I openly question why the Fish and Wildlife Service would even issue an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) to Ram Development to kill Endangered Species that FWS IS SUPPOSED TO BE PROTECTING IN THE FIRST PLACE! FWS historically has worked honorably and diligently to get these species on the Endangered Species List and to save them in the first place. To allow any Developer to cause the imminent extinction of any species because they want to put up another Walmart is beyond me. There are several other viable, non-Pine Rocklands, non-environmentally sensitive sites without endangered and threatened species living on it around Miami-Dade County that could be used if we really did need another Walmart.

There are so many valid reason for FWS to deny this HCP and deny Ram Development to build Coral Reef Commons regardless of plan, here is a Top 5.

1) Causing the extinction of one or more animal or plant species that require the Richmond Pine Rockland Habitat to survive.

2) Causing the continued destruction of original Pine Rockland and the Miami Rock Ridge.

3) Increased traffic on Coral Reef Drive, SW 152 Street, which currently handles 60,000 cars per day and with a Walmart and a Theme Park next to ZooMiami, will easily add 30,000 more cars daily on a road than CANNOT be physically expanded or modified to handle it. It is the only street into or out of the area that currently is overburdened and there is no way to fix it.

4) Loss of Property Values for thousands of homeowners living in the Deerwood, Bonita Lakes, Three Lakes, and Richmond West areas.

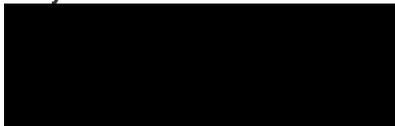
5) Loss of Quality of Life for all citizens of Miami-Dade County. We have become a concrete jungle, we tear down the old but the new we put up is not always good. We desperately need more green space, to put it simply we need the trees. Losing even more trees and greenspace, especially Pine Rocklands is NOT a viable option. While there are many reasons for FWC to deny the HCP and deny Coral Reef Commons to be built, there is only one reason to approve it. The ONE and ONLY reason to approve the HCP is the allow Peter Cummings and Ram Realty to make an obscene amount of money while destroying our unique South Florida Pine Rocklands ecosystem and causing Endangered and Threatened animal and plant species to become extinct.

I am counting on Fish and Wildlife Service to do the right thing, please do not let me and the rest of the citizens and endangered species of Miami-Dade County down.

Regards,



John A. Meizoso



RECEIVED ADMIN ES

MAR 29 2017

BY: [Signature]

March 25, 2017

David Dell  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Atlanta Regional Office,  
1875 Century Blvd.  
Atlanta, GA 30345

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