

**Conservation Collier North Golden Gate Estates
Unit 53
Interim Management Plan**

Prepared By:
Collier County Environmental Services Department
2800 North Horseshoe Drive
Naples, FL 34104

December 2004

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1.0 Purpose and Scope of the Interim Management Plan

Nine scattered North Golden Gate Estates (NGGE) properties within Unit 53, a total of 14.88 acres, have been purchased by Collier County through funds from the Conservation Collier program as of December 2004. Two more properties are under contract (4.93 acres) and the County has options on two additional ones (4.93 acres). Collier County will continue to pursue the acquisition of additional parcels within Unit 53. All properties will be managed only for conservation, protection and enhancement of natural resources and for public outdoor recreation that will be compatible with the conservation, protection and enhancement of the site and its surrounding lands. Public use of the site will not be practical until more contiguous properties within Unit 53 can be acquired.

This interim management plan is intended to identify the key management priorities and issues within the site and give direction for management for the next two years. This document is meant to be the precursor to a final management plan, which will provide more specific aspects of site management.

Key Interim Management Objectives

1. Protect and manage the native habitat on site
2. Explore opportunities for grant funding and partnerships

Action Plan

- 1a. Treat and manage old world climbing fern and Air Potato (when observed) within acquired parcels.
- 2a. Seek opportunities for DEP Florida Bureau of Invasive Plant Management grant funding for old world climbing fern removal and management
- 2b. Seek opportunities with South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW) Trust for partnership management assistance.

2.0 Management Authority and Responsibilities

The Collier County Environmental Services Department will be solely responsible for managing the NGGE Unit 53 parcels, but will seek to obtain grants and partnerships for management activities.

3.0 Interim Site Plan

3.1 Location and Site Description

NGGE Unit 53 is located north of Immokalee Road and west of Wilson Boulevard in Section 8 Township 48 Range 27 within Collier County, Florida. It is comprised of wetland hardwood forests. Approximately 11.6 acres of 305-acre unit are currently owned by Collier County. NGGE Unit 53 is located within the Golden Gate Estates

boundary of Collier County. Additional parcels will be purchased as they become available.

3.2 Signage

Signs denoting parcels as Conservation Land will be installed as contiguous parcels of 20 acres or more are acquired.

3.3 Easements, Concessions or Leases

There are sixty-foot (60') platted Right of Way easements dedicated for public right of way, including utilities, along 41st Ave. NE and Shady Hollow Blvd. No other easements, concessions or leases currently exist within the site. In the future, well easements may be proposed for locations along both of these roadways with pipelines to be located in existing easements. The Conservation Collier Ordinance (2002-63) prohibits use, infrastructure or improvements inconsistent with the purposes of the program or not provided by an approved management plan. The location of well easements may be included in a future management plan after hydrologic studies currently being performed indicate specific site needs. There are no other easements, concessions or leases proposed for the future, unless they further conservation objectives, such as a conservation easement.

3.4 Structures

No structures are present on the site at this time. No structures, except potentially municipal well structures if approved by amendment of this plan and approval by the Board of County Commissioners, will be erected within the time span of this interim management plan.

3.5 Surrounding and Adjacent Land Uses

NGGE Unit 53 is adjacent to CREW lands to the west and is separated from CREW lands to the north by undeveloped agriculturally zoned land and a small Collier County-owned mitigation parcel. To the east, Unit 53 is bordered by Estates zoned property that is mostly undeveloped, and to the south are fallow agricultural fields, now part of the Twin Eagles Phase II Development.

4.0 Interim Management Objectives

4.1 Natural Resource Protection

Existing Vegetation:

The following identifies what native plants were observed: red maple (*Acer rubrum*), cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), willow (*Salix* spp.), bay (*Persea* spp.), cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*) and dahoon holly (*Ilex cassine*). Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*), air potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*) and old world climbing fern (*Lygodium microphyllum*) were also observed on some of the parcels.

Unique Natural Features:

Unit 53 is an excellent example of a wetland hardwood forest community and contains many mature red maples in areas outside of those historically farmed. Even farmed areas show significant red maple re-growth.

Possible Listed Species:

Wild coco (*Elophia alta*) **FDA threatened**, royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*) **FDA commercially exploited** and white ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) **FFWCC species of special concern** have been observed within the unit. Listed orchid species, wood storks (*Mycteria Americana*) and snail kites (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) could potentially be found on the property.

4.2 Site Security

Staff has been advised that ATV riders use the unit, apparently accessing it by 41st and 43rd Avenues NW and trails cut through some properties. Staff will determine if the County owns properties where ATV use is occurring, and if so, these will be posted with "No Unauthorized Vehicles" signs and arrangements will be made for law enforcement to occasionally visit and monitor activities. Because Collier County currently owns 9 of the parcels, only some of which are contiguous, fencing will not be addressed until a larger percentage of the parcels in the unit can be acquired.

4.3 Exotic Vegetation Removal and Maintenance Plan

Invasive exotic plant species observed include: Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*), air potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*) and old world climbing fern (*Lygodium microphyllum*).

Until more properties are acquired, the Collier County Environmental Services Department will actively manage only old world climbing fern, as this species is extremely invasive. Air Potato, while also invasive, has been observed only in the eastern portion of Unit 53 where no properties are currently owned. Staff will monitor for Air Potato on acquired properties and if present, make arrangements to remove it. As more contiguous properties are acquired, all observed invasive exotic vegetation will be treated and managed.

Environmental Services' staff will field locate property lines and direct contractors to County owned parcels within Unit 53. Staff will seek DEP Florida Bureau of Invasive Plant Management Lygodium Strike Team grant funding for old world climbing fern removal and management. All located old world climbing fern within the County parcels will be treated during the dry season.

4.4 Cultural, Historical and Archeological Resource Protection

NGGE Unit 53 is not within an area of historical and archaeological probability, and no historical or archaeological sites appear to be present in the property. The County will notify the Division of Historical Resources immediately if evidence is found to suggest any archaeological or historic resources are present at the NGGE Unit 53 site. If such properties are identified on-site, staff shall cordon off the area, and a professional survey and assessment shall be instituted. The archaeologist shall prepare a report outlining results of the assessments and issue recommendations to County staff about management of any sites discovered, per provisions of the Land Development Code Section 2.2.25. This report shall be sent to the Division of Historical Resources. The County shall cooperate fully with direction from the Division of Historical Resources on the protection and management of archaeological and historical resources. The management of these resources will comply with the provisions of Chapter 267, Florida Statutes, specifically Sections 267.061 2 (a) and (b).

The collection of artifacts or the disturbance of archaeological and historic sites within NGGE Unit 53 will be prohibited unless prior authorization has been obtained from the Collier County Board of County Commissioners and the Department of State, Division of Historical Resources.

4.5 Public Access

Public access will not be addressed until a larger percentage of contiguous parcels within NGGE Unit 53 can be acquired. When the final management plan is developed, efforts will be made to include hunting as a public use through coordination with the hunting program existing in adjoining CREW lands and under authority of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

4.6 Site Monitoring Plan

Monitoring of the site shall consist of old world climbing fern monitoring and re-treatment. The Environmental Services Department shall be responsible for this treatment with tasks contracted out as deemed necessary. The site will be monitored for old world climbing fern re-growth semi-annually for two years following initial treatment. After two years, the fern will be monitored on a yearly basis.

4.7 Partnerships

SFWMD staff has indicated that they are open to the potential for expanding the CREW project boundaries around NGGE Unit 53, or portions thereof, and there may be opportunity for management assistance once a larger area of contiguous parcels is acquired.

5.0 Exhibits

EXHIBIT 1: Location Map

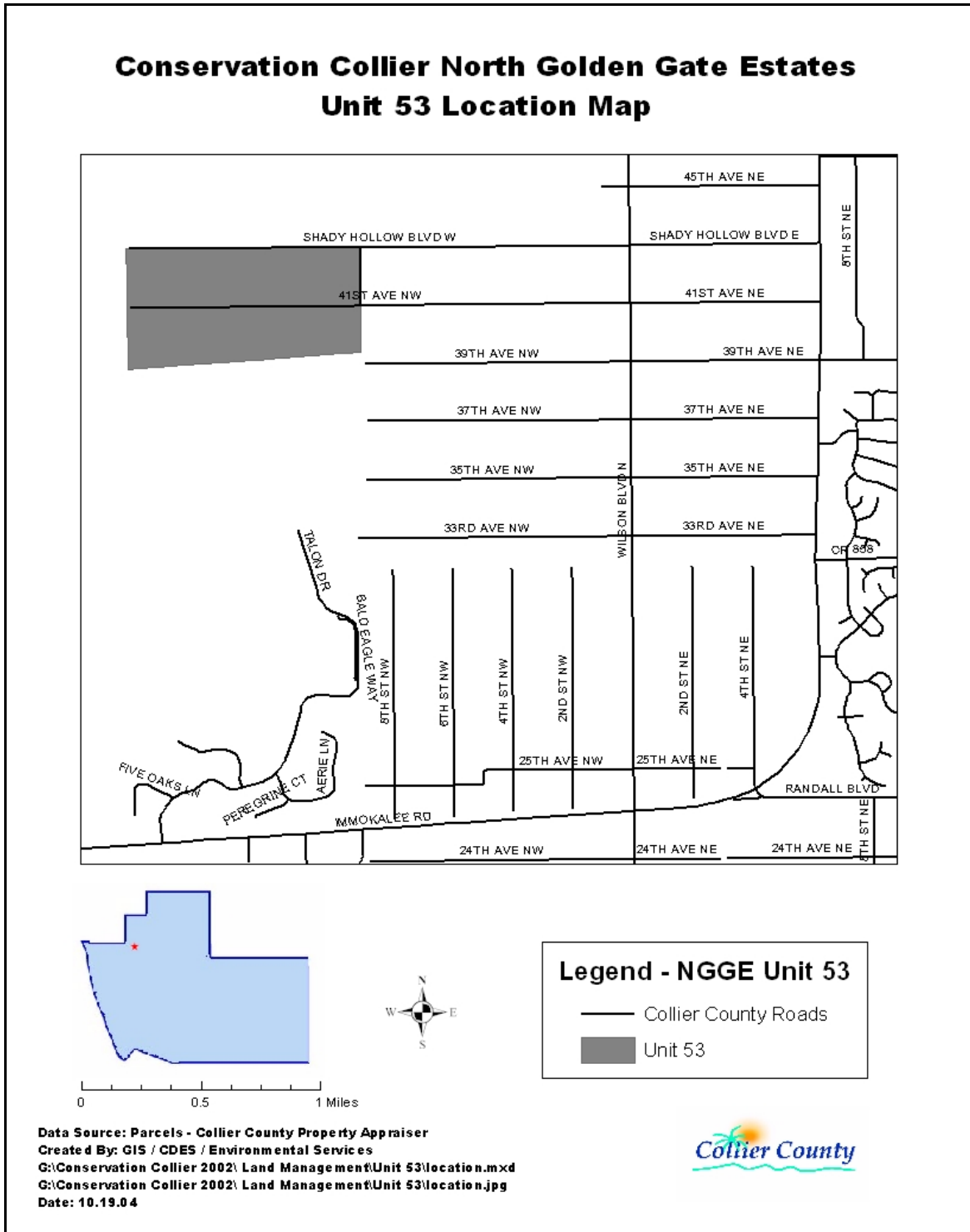


EXHIBIT 2: Aerial Map

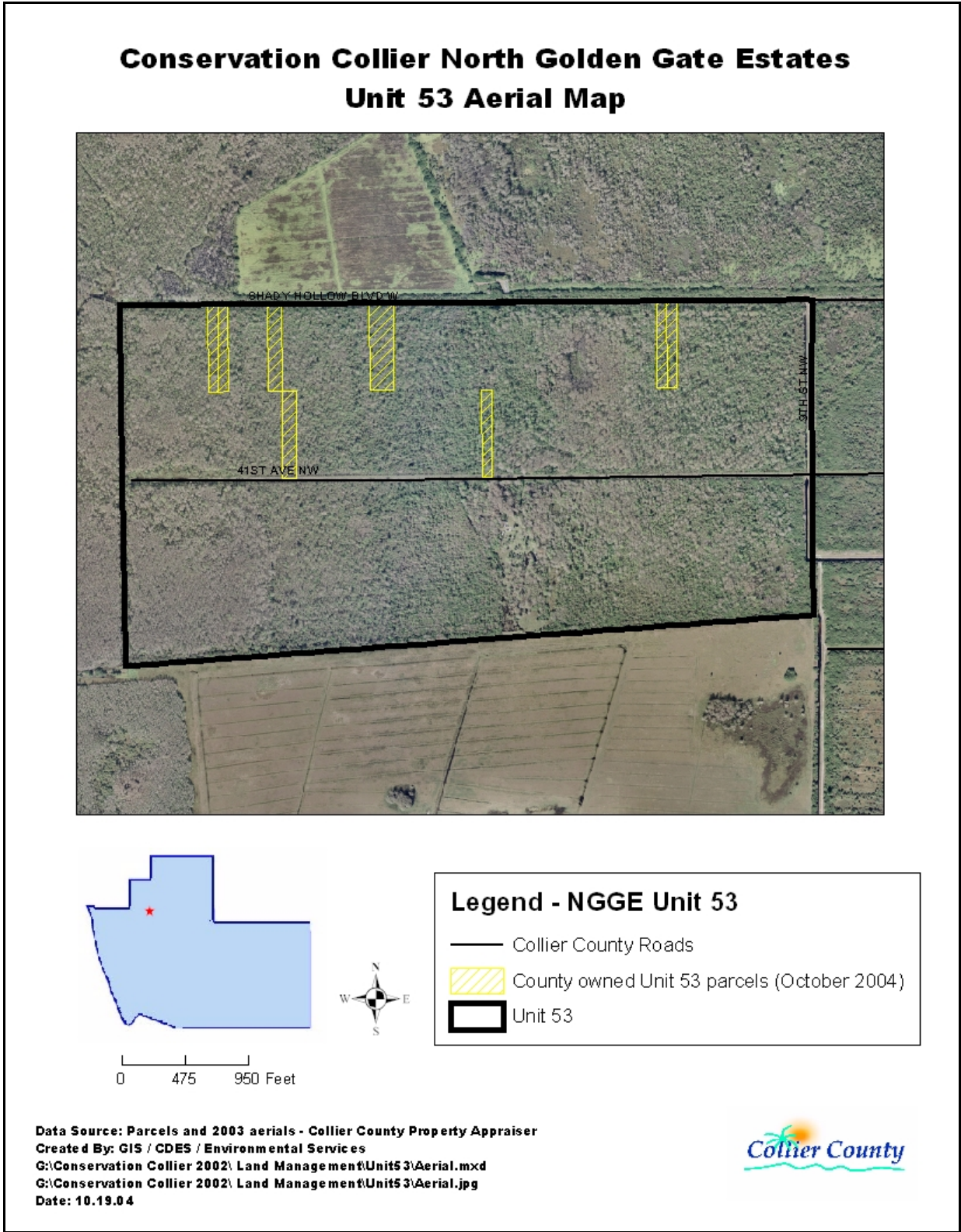


EXHIBIT 3: Estimated Cost Table

Management Element	Initial Cost	Annual Recurring Costs	Comments
Exotics Control	\$1,740 - \$6,960	\$1,160 - \$5,220	Initial cost range from \$150 - \$600/ acre if no help can be obtained from Bureau of Invasive Plant Management "Lygodium Strike Team."
"No Unauthorized Vehicles" signs	\$150		2 (20" X 28") signs and posts
Total	\$1,890 - \$7,110	\$1,160 - \$5,220	

