

RESOLUTION NO. 2011 - 86

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A POLICY AND FEE SCHEDULE TO GOVERN THE OPERATION OF THE CARACARA PRAIRIE PRESERVE GOPHER TORTOISE RECIPIENT SITE.**

WHEREAS, on June 23, 2009 (Agenda Item 16E9), the Board of County Commissioners of Collier County, Florida authorized the Caracara Prairie Preserve, formerly known as the Starnes Property, to become a Gopher Tortoise Recipient Site; and


WHEREAS, the need exists to establish a policy and fee schedule to govern the operation of the Caracara Prairie Preserve Gopher Tortoise Recipient Site.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF COLLIER COUNTY, FLORIDA, that the attached Policy and Fee Schedule be and hereby are declared to be the Policy and Fee Schedule which shall henceforth govern the administration and operation of the Caracara Prairie Preserve Gopher Tortoise Recipient Site.

PASSED AND DULY ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of Collier County, Florida, this 10<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2011.

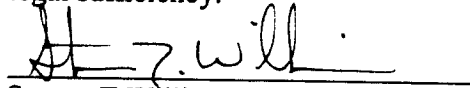
ATTEST:  
DWIGHT E. BROCK, CLERK

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
COLLIER COUNTY, FLORIDA

  
~~Attest as to Chairman's signature on 11~~

By: Fred W. Coyle 5/10/11  
FRED W. COYLE, CHAIRMAN

Approved as to form and legal sufficiency:

  
Steven T Williams  
Assistant County Attorney *STW 4/10/11 CC*

## **Caracara Prairie Preserve Short-term Protected Gopher Tortoise Recipient Site Policy**

Prepared By:  
Collier County: Facilities Management Department  
Conservation Collier Program  
3335 Tamiami Trail, Suite 101  
Naples, FL 34112

May 2011

The following is a descriptive policy regarding the Caracara Prairie Preserve Short-term Protected Gopher Tortoise Recipient Site (Recipient Site). This policy and the associated Caracara Prairie Preserve Recipient Site Fee Schedule will be reviewed annually by County staff.

1. The Recipient Site shall be permitted, managed and monitored according to the most current Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) gopher tortoise permitting guidelines for Short-term Protected Recipient Sites [http://myfwc.com/docs/LicensesPermits/PW\\_GopherTortoisePermitGuidelines.pdf](http://myfwc.com/docs/LicensesPermits/PW_GopherTortoisePermitGuidelines.pdf) and FWC Gopher Tortoise Management Plan.
2. The Recipient Site shall only accept gopher tortoises being relocated from development projects occurring within Collier County (Donor Sites).
3. Gopher tortoises from both public agency Donor Sites (such as but not limited to: Collier County government projects, Florida Department of Transportation projects, Collier County School Board projects, charter school projects) and private entity Donor Sites shall be accepted at the Recipient Site; however, tortoises accepted from private entity Donor Sites shall not comprise more than 75% of the total number of gopher tortoises relocated to the Recipient Site.
4. Conservation Collier staff shall maintain a ledger tallying gopher tortoise vacancies at the Recipient Site.
5. Upon an inquiry from a possible Donor Site, Conservation Collier staff shall review the ledger and coordinate with the Growth Management Division. If the estimated number of tortoises anticipated from the Donor Site is acceptable, staff shall send a Reservation Letter to the Donor Site – see Reservation Letter Template attached.

6. Conservation Collier staff shall verify with FWC that the Donor Site has received the appropriate relocation permit prior to performing any relocation.
7. An FWC authorized gopher tortoise agent employed by Collier County (Collier County Agent) shall be responsible for the transport of all relocated tortoises from the Donor Site to the Recipient Site.
8. The Collier County Agent reserves the right to deny transport of any unhealthy Donor Site tortoises to the Recipient Site.
9. Once at the Recipient Site, relocated tortoises shall be marked by the Collier County Agent.
10. Donor sites shall be required to pay a \$2,000 Gopher Tortoise Relocation Fee to Collier County for each project requiring tortoises to be relocated to the Recipient Site, regardless of the number of tortoises to be relocated. See the attached Caracara Prairie Preserve Recipient Site Fee Schedule.
11. Donor sites shall be required to pay a Gopher Tortoise Receiving Fee (separate from the Gopher Tortoise Relocation Fee) to Collier County for each tortoise relocated to the Recipient Site. See the attached Caracara Prairie Preserve Recipient Site Fee Schedule.
12. Donor sites shall be required to pay a Mitigation Contribution (separate from the Gopher Tortoise Receiving Fee and the Gopher Tortoise Relocation Fee) to FWC for tortoises relocated to the Recipient Site. See the attached Caracara Prairie Preserve Recipient Site Fee Schedule.
13. After relocations are complete, Conservation Collier staff shall monitor and maintain gopher tortoise fencing according to the most recent FWC guidelines and gopher tortoise management plan.

## **Caracara Prairie Preserve Recipient Site Fee Schedule**

### **Relocation Fee (Paid to Collier County):**

\$2,000 per private or public project

This fee includes:

1. Pick up of tortoise (s) at the Donor Site;
2. Transport to Recipient Site inside the cabin of the transport vehicle;
3. Marking of tortoise (s) per FWC methodology;
4. Collection of all required morphometric data;
5. Soft release of tortoise (s);
6. Submittal of morphometrics report to the recipient site and the client; and
7. Monitoring of tortoise (s) in soft release enclosure for six months.

### **Receiving Fee (Paid to Collier County):**

*This fee is on a "per excavated adult tortoise" (carapace length greater than or equal to 5") basis and is all inclusive. There will be no Receiving Fee for sub-adult gopher tortoises (carapace length less than 5").*

Private Projects\* - \$ 1,320 per tortoise

Public Projects\*\* - \$905 per tortoise

\*Private Project fee includes:

1. Exotic plant control
2. Fire-break mowing and fuel reduction
3. Temporary fencing
4. Recipient Site permitting and monitoring fees

\*\*Public Project fee includes:

1. Temporary fencing
2. Recipient Site permitting and monitoring fees

### **FWC Mitigation Contribution (Paid to FWC):**

\$200 for the first group of 10 burrows (up to five gopher tortoises) plus \$3,000 for each additional tortoise.

**Reservation Letter Template**

DATE

ADDRESSEE NAME  
ADDRESS

RE: Off-Site Relocation for PROJECT NAME Collier County, Florida  
PROJECT #

Dear ADDRESSEE:

The purpose of this letter is to demonstrate Collier County's commitment to the acceptance of gopher tortoises (*Gopherus polyphemus*) from the above-mentioned project site. In an effort to perpetually protect a regionally significant parcel of land occupied by both the state listed gopher tortoise and other federally listed species, we have identified and protected portions of Caracara Prairie Preserve in Collier County. Collier County secured permits for the Caracara Prairie Preserve Short-Term Protected Gopher Tortoise Recipient Site comprised of 90 acres of Collier County's +/- 367.7 acre property known as Caracara Prairie Preserve. The Collier County Board of County Commissioners owns the preserve and the Conservation Collier Program is responsible for management/permit compliance associated with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Recipient Site Permit # GTSR-11-00003.

It is Collier County's understanding that the population targeted for relocation to Caracara Prairie Preserve at this time is approximately XXXX (X) tortoises. According to our ledger, we have capacity for XXXX tortoises remaining within the recipient site. The Relocation Fee will be \$2,000 and the Receiving Fee per adult tortoise will be \$XXXX.

As a registered gopher tortoise agent, I accept tortoises on site at Caracara Prairie Preserve on Collier County's behalf. Please coordinate and schedule all gopher tortoise relocations with me at 239-252-2957.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.  
Sincerely,

Melissa Hennig, Principal Environmental Specialist

Conservation Collier Program