

Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative

P.O. Box 787

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Ladies and Gentlemen:

Founded in 1954 the Jupiter Island Garden Club (JIGC) is a volunteer nonprofit organization comprised of 100 members who passionately devote their energies and expertise to promote greater understanding of the interdependence of horticulture, environmental protection, and community improvement.

The Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative was first brought to my attention by JIGC members who were involved with the project from its inception. I asked our Horticulture and Civic chairmen to become educated on the initiative and to report back to our group as a whole. Both women returned with passionate opinions that it was a project that our club should be involved with.

The Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative envisions a protected ecological corridor that will connect the sources of the Loxahatchee River and St. Lucie River and form a preserve for plant and wildlife, connecting a land mass of nearly 70,000 acres. In order to permanently restore historical waterflows and protect existing natural lands in an ecological corridor for native endangered plants and wildlife between two state parks. These are the headwaters of both the Loxahatchee River, and the South Fork of the St. Lucie River. And thanks to a visionary group of conservationists in Hobe Sound –Jupiter Island Garden Club members among them – a critical parcel of 138 acres is about to be saved from rampant development. The property, which fronts Bridge Road for two miles, sits between the Atlantic Ridge Preserve State Park to the north, and Jonathan Dickinson State Park to the south.

The group sprang into action to bring this 138-acre parcel and others into conservation as part of establishing a Green Corridor running on the eastern side of Lake Okeechobee (one exists on the western side). The acquisition of the 138 acres is Phase 1 of a multi-phase, long-range plan to create the Green Corridor, which would run south all the way to the Everglades and north of Lake Okeechobee. The goal of Phase 1 is to permanently restore historical water flows, and protect natural lands in this ecological corridor for native plants and wildlife. Development of home sites would interrupt surface and subsurface hydrologic flow and animal movement between the state parks. Additionally, water flow would be impeded to the already endangered Indian River Lagoon system, known to be the most biologically diverse estuary in the country.

We wish to express our endorsement of the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative and our appreciation for their efforts to protect these unique lands that we are blessed to live next to.

Jennifer Banks

President of the Jupiter Island Garden Club