

(S.S.)

From: Ventry, Rita <Rita.Ventry@FloridaDEP.gov>
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 9:05 AM
To: Courtney Barker
Cc: Wood, Rebecca; Reeves, Linda
Subject: Satellite **Management** Plan - Oceanfront Wildlife & Habitat Preservation Park (98-044-P8A & 99-044-P9A)
Attachments: SVR_SR_MP_Checklist_2022.3.10.docx; Modified_LMP_Final2022_2022.3.8.docx

Good Morning Courtney – As a follow-up to our phone conversation this morning, I have attached a copy of FCT's checklist we use to review a **Management Plan** or **Modified Management Plan**. I have also attached a copy of my changes on the first page or two of your submitted **modified Management Plan**. As I explained, I only started reviewing the plan and noticed that the whole plan was rewritten. At this time before any additional review can be completed, FCT is requesting the City to complete a detailed list of the items which was taken out of the original **Management Plan** and why. Also, if additional items are added please submit this please include. As a reminder, this **Management Plan** should only address the facilities on the FCT site and how it is going to be managed along with all other requirements of your **FCT Grant Award Agreement**.

As discussed, since we have received public interest in any modification to your **Management Plan** and any changes may be controversial, staff does not have the authority to approve the **Management Plan** without taking it to our Governing Board for approval. Please have the requested additional information on or before April 1, so staff has enough time to review and allow for any additional request if needed, prior to the April 20 Board meeting.

Thanks in advance,

Rita Ventry



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Peromyscus." I am abundantly familiar with the area and know that the habitat at Hightower is consistent with that of P. p. niveiventris, but I gave little credence to the observation at the time. About two years later Mr. Owen happened to be working with us on the beach mouse project in Indian River County. After having a good look at the first beach mouse captured that day Mr. Owen was convinced that what he had seen at Hightower was the same species.

It would be quite an extraordinary circumstance if there is a small, isolated group of beach mice at Hightower Beach. We have not been able to confirm or negate Mr. Owen's observation (by live trapping) because the land is in private hands. I can, however, attest to Richard Owen's training and ability as a zoologist and I believe that such an occurrence must be considered a distinct possibility.

While the presence or absence of beach mice at Hightower may be problematic, its importance as a marine turtle nesting beach is well documented. My students and I have been conducting nest surveys daily from 15 May through 31 August in the central Brevard area continuously since 1989. The attached table and graph show clearly that both loggerhead turtles (a Threatened Species) and green turtles (an Endangered Species) nest in numbers at Hightower that exceed those of the surrounding area. The term "CBSA" is the acronym for our Central Brevard Study Area and refers to the area from the eastern terminus of SR 404 (Pineda Causeway) to the southern boundary of the town of Melbourne Beach. Inspection of the table and graph will show that loggerhead and green turtle nesting in the half kilometer immediately south of the steps at Hightower Beach Park exceeded that in the surrounding area in eight of the nine years since the inception of the surveys.

It is true that the densities of nests of both species are not as great as those at the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge, located south of Melbourne Beach, but it should be remembered that the Carr Refuge is the most densely nested loggerhead beach in the Western Hemisphere. The numbers of nests of both species of turtles allow one to rank Hightower Beach with all but the very best nesting beaches in this country. It is worth pointing out that the green turtle is an especially wary, easily frightened species. It requires dark, undisturbed stretches of beach such as that which now exists at Hightower. The data on the attached graph show clearly that green turtles have been seeking out that stretch of beach for years and it is clear that its acquisition and the preservation of its natural attributes would make a significant contribution to the recovery of both species.

Post-It Fax Note	Date	7671
To JOHN PERCUS	From L.M. FARRHART	
Co/Dept.	Co.	UCLF
Phone # 407-773-7075	Phone # 823-2970	
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10 April 1998

To Whom It May Concern
City of Satellite Beach

I am writing to comment on the status and possible status of several Threatened and Endangered Species at the Hightower Beach property now being considered for purchase under the Florida Communities Trust program.

I have been collaborating with personnel of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for about three years in an effort to understand the status of the Southeastern Beach Mouse (*Peromyscus polionotus niveiventris*) in Brevard and Indian River County. Our efforts have shown that this Endangered Species is extirpated from excellent habitat in south Brevard County and is "hanging on tenuously" in habitat that is rapidly disappearing (due to excessive erosion) in northern Indian River County. It is doubtful that any remain south of Indian River County although historically they occurred at least as far south as Broward Co. The species is still doing well on the lands of the Kennedy Space Center and Cape Canaveral Air Force Station but it has been assumed that it is extirpated from all of Brevard County south of Port Canaveral.

It is possible, however, that there is an isolated colony of Southeastern Beach Mice at the Hightower Beach property, in Satellite Beach. This statement is based on the observation of Mr. Richard Owen, a well-trained, knowledgeable vertebrate zoologist who has been employed recently by the Florida Museum of Natural History. While conducting inventories of marine turtle nests at dusk on the beach just south of Hightower Beach County Park in August of 1994, Mr. Owen observed a small *Peromyscus* near the edge of the dune. He was quite sure that it was not *Peromyscus gossypinus*, a larger, darker and more ubiquitous member of the Cricetinae rodent group. He reported that the animal he saw appeared to be a "small, light-colored

Marine Turtle Nesting at Hightower Beach and the Central Brevard Study Area.

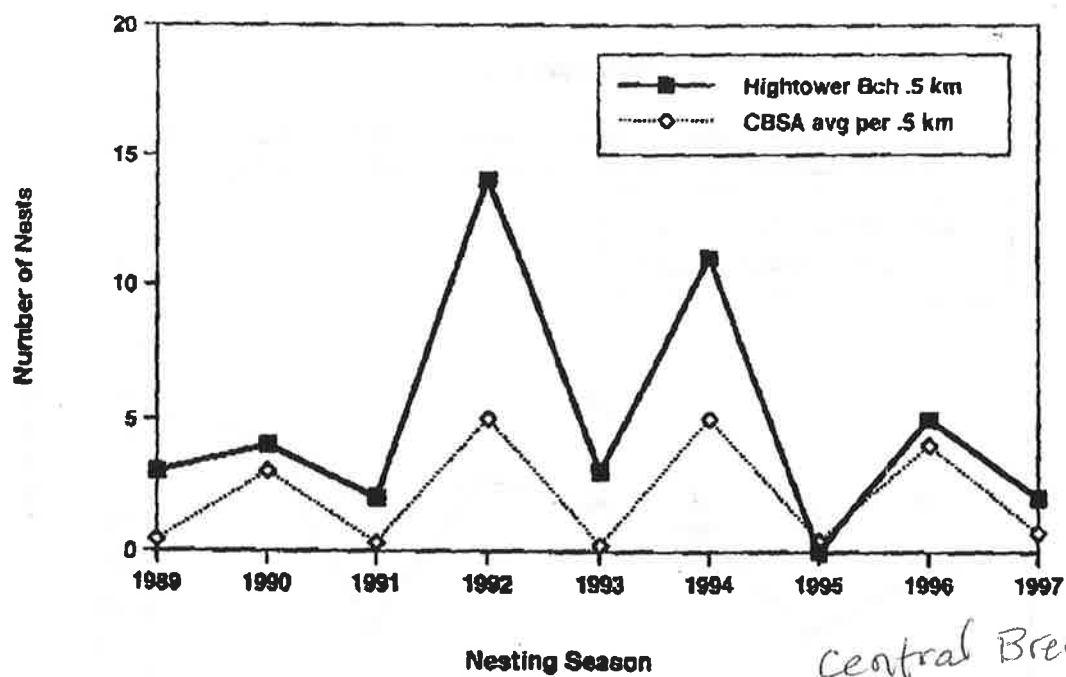
Nesting Season	Loggerhead		Green Turtle	
	Number of Nests at Hightower Bch .5 km	Average per .5 km in CBSA	Number of Nests at Hightower Bch .5 km	Average per .5 km/CBSA
1989	111	95	3	0.4
1990	121	135	4	3
1991	208	156	2	0.3
1992	139	138	14	5
1993	152	104	3	0.2
1994	163	148	11	5
1995	209	155	0	0.4
1996	181	147	5	4
1997	167	119	2	0.7
9 yr average	161	133	5	2

Cordially,

J. M. Ehrhart

L. M. Ehrhart

Professor

Green Turtle Nesting at Hightower Beach and the Central Brevard Study Area.

central Brevard
Study area

Loggerhead Nesting at Hightower Beach and the Central Brevard Study Area.

