



Corridor Management Entity (CME) Meeting  
September 14, 2015 @ 4:00 p.m.  
Lake of the Hills Community Clubhouse  
47 East Starr Avenue, Lake Wales, FL 33898



Babson Park \* Dundee \* Frostproof \* Haines City \* Highland Park \* Hillcrest Heights \* Lake Hamilton \* Lake of the Hills \* Lake Wales \* Polk County

## **MEETING AGENDA**

1. **Welcome Members and Visitors - Ms. Mimi Reid-Hardman, CME Chair**
2. **Approval of Minutes**  
*Minutes of Quarterly meeting June 8, 2015 Action is required. (Attachment)*
3. **2015 Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor Management Plan Major Update**  
*The State Scenic Highway Office requests we approve the minor corrections within the document per the recommended changes submitted on June 5, 2015. Action is required. (Attachment)*
4. **Board Appointments**  
*Discussion and election of Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor Management Entity Officers and At-Large Board Members pursuant to the CME's Bylaws. Action is required. (Attachment)*
5. **2015 Action Plan Priorities**  
*The CME will be asked to adopt the 2015 priorities. Action is required. (Attachment)*
6. **Treasurer's Report – Mr. Ed Esteve, CME Treasurer**
7. **Other Communications and Reports**
  - Next Board Meeting:
    - December 14, 2015
    - 4:00p.m.
    - Lake of the Hills Community Clubhouse  
47 East Starr Avenue, Lake Wales
  - 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale:
    - November 7, 2015
8. **Adjournment**



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June 8, 2015 @ 4:00 p.m.  
Lake of the Hills Community Clubhouse  
47 East Starr Avenue, Lake Wales, FL 33898



Babson Park \* Dundee \* Frostproof \* Haines City \* Highland Park \* Hillcrest Heights \* Lake Hamilton \* Lake of the Hills \* Lake Wales \* Polk County

**MEETING MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Doug Leonard, Lake Hamilton  
Martin Sullivan, Frostproof  
Steven Glenn, Dundee  
Ed Esteve, Treasurer, Lake of the Hills  
Clint Eliason, Haines City  
Eugene Fultz, Lake Wales  
Mimi Reed-Hardman, Present, Lake Wales

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Curtis Knowles, Polk TPO

- 1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 4:03 by Ed Esteve, Treasurer, who declared a quorum, and invited those present to introduce themselves.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** Doug moved approval of the minutes of December 8, 2014 and March 9, 2015. Seconded by Eugene. Motion carried.
- 3. 2014 Ridge Scenic Highway Annual Report:** Curtis led the discussion around the proposed Report. Doug moved approval of the 2014 Ridge Scenic Highway Annual Report. Seconded by Martin. Motion carried.
- 4. 2015 Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor Management Plan Major Update:** Curtis led the discussion around the proposed CMP update including the comments provided by the State Scenic Highway office. Steven moved approval of the 2015 Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor Management Plan Major Update to include making changes per the comments provided by the State. Seconded by Eugene. Motion carried.
- 5. Establish 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale 2015 Committee:** The group discussed many options for this year's event to include the possibility of mile post signs, teaming up with churches, \$10 for each area/table at the designated sites along the corridor. The group agreed to have the Committee work out the details of the event. Steven volunteered Nancy Hicks with the Dundee Chamber of Commerce and Clint volunteered for Haines City to help with this year's event on November 7, 2015. Martin moved approval to establish the committee. Seconded by Ed. Motion carried.
- 6. Board Appointments:** The group discussed the need to fill the vacancies; however, did not appoint members to these vacancies. This item will remain on the next agenda.
- 7. 2015 Action Plan Priorities:** The group did not have time to vote and discuss these priorities and this item will be on the next agenda.
- 8. Ridge Scenic Highway's Facebook Activity Report:** Curtis reviewed the activity on Facebook with the discussion of Item 4 on the agenda.
- 9. Treasurer's Report:** Ed discussed the proposed budget. Doug moved approval of the budget. Seconded by Eugene. Motioned carried.
- 10. Other Communications and Reports:** The next Board meeting will be on September 14, 2015 at 4:00p.m. in the Lake of the Hills Community Clubhouse at 47 East Starr Avenue, Lake Wales.
- 11. Adjournment:** The meeting concluded at 5:35p.m.

# **The Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor Management Entity**



## **2015 Corridor Management Plan Five Year Update**

**September 2015**

## **Corridor Vision**

Encourage the creation, enhancement, and preservation of the unique historical, agricultural, visual, archeological, recreational, environmental, and tourism features of SR 17, The Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor.



**Figure 1: SR 17 in Babson Park**

## **Corridor Mission**

Provide the region a premier destination to experience the scenic treasures of the Lake Wales Ridge, its communities and enhance the economic vitality of the region.

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# PREAMBLE

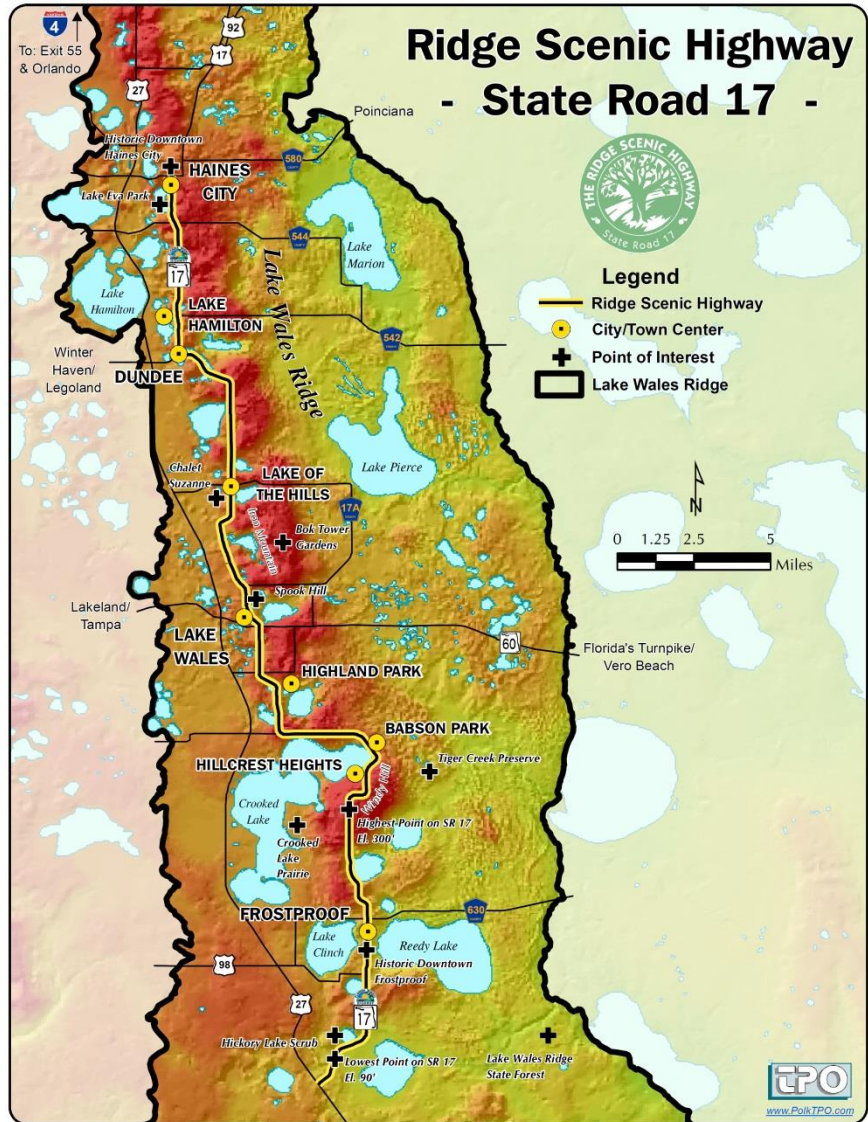
SR 17, The Ridge Scenic Highway contains a wide variety of natural, scenic, historical, cultural, and recreational resources of regional and national significance along the Lake Wales Ridge. The corridor is rich in archeological sites, cultural enclaves, tourist destinations, historic commercial and residential districts (some listed on the National Historic Register), farming, communities, national landmarks, conservation lands, migratory bird preserves, and green spaces. Its rolling hills and valleys, pristine waters, and high sandy ridge have promoted healthy living and scenic vistas for past generations.

# INTRODUCTION

The original Corridor Management Plan (CMP) was adopted in February 2005 followed by an update in April 2010. The Corridor Management Plan outlines the Vision, policies and a plan by which to maintain, preserve, protect, and enhance the intrinsic resources located along the scenic highway. This will be the second update to the original plan.

February 2005, The Ridge Scenic Highway was designated a Florida Scenic Highway. Upon designation about two thirds of the land surrounding The Ridge Scenic Highway was in Polk County's jurisdiction; however, today most of the land is within municipal jurisdictions.

Since the designation several changes have occurred within the corridor boundaries affecting the highway and the CMP. Polk County planning staff worked with partners



**Figure 2: Elevation Map of the Ridge Scenic Highway**

including the Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor Management Entity to develop the Southeast Selected Area Plan (SAP). The SAP extends from Lake Wales south to Frostproof. The purpose of the SAP is to develop a vision and supporting plan for the future recognizing and protecting existing community resources while establishing a framework for quality growth in an area. A portion of the Ridge Scenic Highway is located within the SAP and includes specific development standards. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is in the process of completing a new study for a

road in Polk County called Central Polk Parkway. This new six lane roadway will traverse SR 17, The Ridge Scenic Highway between Lake Wales and Dundee. FDOT will have community meetings to discuss the roadway later in 2015. The roadway is partially funded in the Eagle Lake area of the County. The other sections are currently going through design. FDOT also completed a Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan for the corridor in 2009. This plan is used by the local governments and FDOT to place sidewalks and trails along the highway. Since the plan was completed several projects have been implemented in Frostproof, Lake Wales and Haines City.

## CORRIDOR CONDITIONS

The Ridge Scenic Highway contains an abundance of archeological, historic, cultural, recreational, natural, and scenic resources. The intrinsic resources found along the Ridge Scenic Highway, as a whole, teach residents and guests of the unique and irreplaceable ecology and culture found along the Lake Wales Ridge.

### Archeological Resources

The archeological site located along SR 17 Scenic Highway in the City of Frostproof has remained unchanged. The city continues to own and maintain the site once used as a pre-Seminole Indian burial mound by the Calusa Indians.

### Historic Resources

The Ridge Scenic Highway serves communities with long and rich histories.

### Historic Districts

The six historic district boundaries located along the Ridge Scenic Highway have remained unchanged.

*Downtown Haines City Commercial District* – The district has a historic preservation board that reviews any changes to the downtown buildings and open spaces. The City of Haines City constructed a new city hall and library at the intersections of Main Street, North 6<sup>th</sup> Street and North 7<sup>th</sup> Street in downtown. As part of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan, an urban bike trail system is proposed. The intent of this system is to tie several approved projects into a comprehensive system of trails that will eventually interconnect with Haines City and ultimately reach out to other communities.

Hinson Avenue, Ingraham Avenue, Fourth Street, and Seventh Street are the rough boundaries of the Downtown Haines City Commercial District. Constructed between 1913 and 1937, the Downtown Haines City Commercial District is the historic commercial area of downtown. It

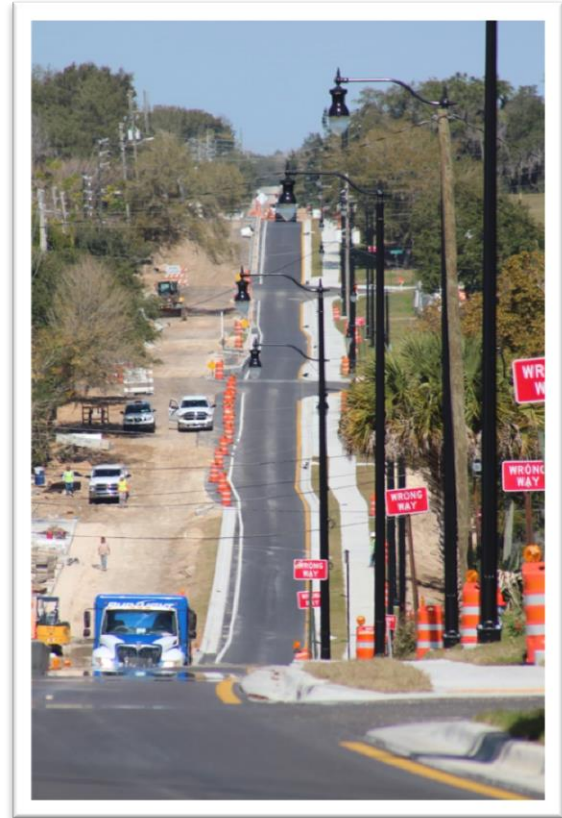


Figure 3: SR 17 Reconstruction based on FDOT Bike/Ped Plan in Haines City



contains 25 buildings, 20 of historical interest. The architectural styles represented include Masonry Vernacular, Mediterranean Revival, and other Revival styles. The Downtown Haines City Commercial District was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1994.

Chalet Suzanne – August 4, 2014, the Hinshaw family closed the Historic Chalet Suzanne Inn and Restaurant. February 27 and 28, 2015 the Chalet Suzanne will be auctioned off. While we are not certain of the outcome of the auction, the Chalet Suzanne Historic District will remain. April 2010 till August 2014, the Chalet Suzanne airstrip was mostly used during Lakeland’s Sun ‘n Fun event. The Chalet Suzanne hosted an annual informal barbeque to thank all of the flyers that come in for the Sun ‘n Fun event. The Chalet also hosted many visitors and patrons of the restaurant and inn.

In 1931, Bertha Hinshaw and her family began entertaining weary travelers in their home a short distance from what was then US Highway 27 and today is known as SR 17. What started as a small country inn has slowly grown over the years (and generations) into a little village reminiscent of old Europe, including a restaurant, 30-guestroom inn, shops, airstrip, soup cannery, gardens, museum, family cemetery, citrus groves and vineyard, many of which have celebrated national and international acclaim. Chalet Suzanne is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and their homegrown gourmet soups and sauces have been served in many famous places, including the surface of the moon!

Mountain Lake Estates Historic District – There has been a few permitted houses within the community over the last five years.

Constructed in the early 1920s as a winter community for wealthy northerners, the Mountain Lake Estates Historic District contains 101 buildings, 65 of historical interest. The Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Massachusetts, designed the community. The Mountain Lake Estates Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1993. It contains two properties that are also listed by the National Register of Historic Places – El Retiro and the Colony House.

North Avenue Historic District – No change within the district over the last five years.

The North Avenue Historic District extends across nine acres and contains 12 contributing structures. It is located in the City of Lake Wales, north of the Lake Wales Historic Residential District, south of G Street and Winston Avenue is the eastern boundary. The prevalent architecture is frame vernacular.

Lake Wales Historic Residential District – No change within the district within the district over the last five years.

The Seaboard Airline railroad grade, CSX railroad tracks, East Polk Avenue, and South and North Lake Shore Boulevards are the boundaries of the Lake Wales Historic Residential District. It contains 206 contributing historic buildings. The Lake Wales Historic Residential District was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1997.

Lake Wales Commercial Historic District – The district has a historic preservation board that reviews any changes to the downtown buildings and open spaces. The district was refreshed with major streetscape improvements completed at the end of 2011. Funded by a Community Development Block Grant, the \$330,000 project included decorative pavers, sidewalk repairs, new

crosswalks and curb ramps, and extensive shade trees and plantings along Park, Stuart and Central Avenues between SR 17 – The Ridge Scenic Highway and First Street.

SR 17, Central Avenue, Market Street, and Orange Avenue are the rough borders of the Lake Wales Commercial Historic District. It was originally constructed between 1913 and 1928, the earliest phase of development of the City of Lake Wales. It contains 21 buildings, 16 of historical interest. The Lake Wales Commercial Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1990.

### National Register of Historic Places, Historic Sites, and Structures

According to the State Historic Preservation Office, there are 27 National Registered historic places, sites and structures located within a mile of the Ridge Scenic Highway. These sites are shown in the below table.

Name	National Register Reference Number	Address	City	Date of Construction	Architectural Style	Notes
St. Mark's Episcopal Church	94000159	102 N. 9th St.	Haines City	1890	Steeply pitched cross-gable roof	Oldest standing structure in Haines City. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on March 7, 1994.
Landmark Baptist College and Christian Bookstore (Polk Hotel)	94000151	800--810 Hinson Ave.	Haines City	1926	Italian Renaissance Revival	First skyscraper built in Haines City and still one of the largest buildings Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on March 17, 1994.
Downtown Haines City Commercial District	94000150	Roughly bounded by Hinson and Ingraham Aves and 4 <sup>th</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> Sts	Haines City			The district contains 20 historic buildings. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on March 7, 1994.
Old Central Grammar School	94000160	801 Ledwith Ave.	Haines City	1925	Mission Revival	The first modern educational facility erected in Haines City; presently used as a cultural arts center. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on March 17, 1994.

<b>Name</b>	<b>National Register Reference Number</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Date of Construction</b>	<b>Architectural Style</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Old Haines City National Guard Armory	94000158	226 S. 6th St.	Haines City	1932	Colonial Revival	The only historic facility in the community that is related to the state militia and U.S. National Guard. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on March 2, 1994.
Old Dundee ACL Railroad Depot (a.k.a. Margaret Kampsen Historic Dundee Depot Museum)	01000739	103 Main St.	Dundee	1911		Currently serves as a museum. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on July 30, 2001.
Lake of the Hills Community Club	00000265	41 E. Starr Ave.	Lake Wales	1929		Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on March 24, 2000.
Mountain Lake Colony House (a.k.a. Mountain Lake Club House)	91000113	E of FL 17, on N shore of Mountain Lake	Lake Wales	1916	Mediterranean	Designed by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and Charles R. Wait; in its day one of Central Florida's most fashionable resort hotels. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on February 22, 1991.
Mountain Lake Estates Historic District	93000871	SR 17 North of Lake Wales	Lake Wales	1920's First Developed		The district contains 65 historic buildings, including two previously listed on the National Register: El Retiro Estate (today renamed "Pinewood" and part of the landmark Bok Tower Gardens) and Mountain Lake Colony House. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on August 26, 1993.
Bok Mountain Lake Sanctuary and Singing Tower (a.k.a. Bok Tower Gardens)	72000350	1151 Tower Boulevard	Lake Wales	1927-1929		Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on August 21, 1972.

<b>Name</b>	<b>National Register Reference Number</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Date of Construction</b>	<b>Architectural Style</b>	<b>Notes</b>
El Retiro (a.k.a. Pinewood Estate)	8500333		Lake Wales	1930-1932	Mediterranean Revival	Home of C. Austin Buck. Now part of Bok Tower Gardens. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on December 12, 1985.
Roosevelt School	01000306	115 East St. N	Lake Wales			Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on March 29, 2001.
C. L. Johnson House	89001481	315 E. Sessoms Ave.	Lake Wales			Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on September 21, 1989.
G. V. Tillman House	90001276	301 E. Sessoms Ave.	Lake Wales			Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on August 31, 1990.
Dixie Walesbilt Hotel	90001273	115 N. First St.	Lake Wales	1926	Vernacular masonry	One of the few historic skyscrapers in Florida. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on August 31, 1990.
Lake Wales City Hall	90001274	152 E. Central Ave.	Lake Wales	1928	Masonry Vernacular with Mediterranean Revival elements	The first building in the town to serve a local government function
North Avenue Historic District	01001086	100 Block of North Ave	Lake Wales			Contains 12 historic buildings. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on October 12, 2001.
Lake Wales Historic Residential District	97000858	Roughly bounded by Seaboard Airline RR grade, CSX RR tracks, E. Polk Ave, South and North Lake Shore Blvds	Lake Wales			The district contains 206 historic buildings. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on August 8, 1997.
Lake Wales Commercial Historic District	90000732	Roughly bounded by Scenic Hwy, Central Ave, Market St, and Orange Ave	Lake Wales	Designated on May 10, 1990	N/A	Contains 16 historic buildings

<b>Name</b>	<b>National Register Reference Number</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Date of Construction</b>	<b>Architectural Style</b>	<b>Notes</b>
First Baptist Church	90001275	338 E. Central Ave.	Lake Wales	1923	Classical Revival	Considered an excellent example of its style. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on August 31, 1990.
Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Depot	90001277	325 S. Scenic Hwy.	Lake Wales	1928	Mediterranean Revival	Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on August 31, 1990.
B. K. Bullard House	90001272	644 S. Lakeshore Blvd.	Lake Wales			Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on August 31, 1990.
Church of the Holy Spirit	90001271	1099 Hesperides Rd.	Lake Wales	1927	Spanish Mission	Currently serves as the Lake Wales Culture Center. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on August 31, 1990.
Casa De Josefina	75000567	2 mi. SE of Lake Wales off U.S. 27	Lake Wales	1923	Florida Boom	Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on June 10, 1975.
Chalet Suzanne	90001085	3800 Chalet Suzanne Dr.	Lake Wales	1931		Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on July 24, 1990.
Babson Park Woman's Club	97001229	1300 N. Scenic Hwy	Babson Park		Mediterranean Revival	Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on October 17, 1997.
Old Frostproof High School (Current City Hall)	97001420	111 W. First St.	Frostproof		Mediterranean Revival	Renovated to serve as City Hall. Added to the US National Register of Historic Places on November 13, 1997.

According to the State Historic Preservation Office there are fourteen possible historic sites listed in our current 2010 Plan that need to be removed due to no longer being a possible historic site, those include:

<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Year Built</b>	<b>Style</b>	<b>Structure Use</b>
10 N 10 <sup>th</sup> Street	10 N 10 <sup>th</sup> Street	1920c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
303 E Central Avenue	303 E Central Avenue	1920c	Bungalow	Residence
325 E Johnson Avenue	325 E Johnson Avenue	1920c	Bungalow	Residence

333 E Johnson Avenue	333 E Johnson Avenue	1930c	Shingle	Residence
342 E Tillman Avenue	342 E Tillman Avenue	1928c	Mediterranean Revival	Residence
408 E Bullard Avenue	408 E Bullard Avenue	1928c	Mediterranean Revival	Residence
427 E Bullard Avenue	427 E Bullard Avenue	1928c	Bungalow	Residence
428 E Bullard Avenue	428 E Bullard Avenue	1928c	Bungalow	Residence
432 E Bullard Avenue	432 E Bullard Avenue	1928c	Mediterranean Revival	Residence
438 E Polk Avenue	438 E Polk Avenue	1925c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
502 E Polk Avenue	502 E Polk Avenue	1925c	Bungalow	Residence
Alexander, B H House	314 E Central Avenue	1919	Bungalow	Residence
Boyle Auto Supply	122 E Crystal Avenue	1928c	Mission	Retail Establishment
Tillman, G V House	301 E Sessoms Avenue	1916	Georgian Revival	Residence

In the last five years, 22 new possible historic sites are listed with the State Historic Preservation Office, those include:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Year Built</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Classification</b>
1735 SR 17	1735 SR 17	1957c	Masonry Vernacular	Residence
1911 SR 17	1911 SR 17	1939c	Craftsman	Residence
212 E Johnson Avenue	212 E Johnson Avenue	1928c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
220 E Orange Avenue	220 E Orange Avenue	1947	Masonry Vernacular	Unknown
227 E Polk Avenue	227 E Polk Avenue	1924c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
233 E Bullard Avenue	233 E Bullard Avenue	1928c	Masonry Vernacular	Residence
237 E Polk Avenue	237 E Polk Avenue	1920c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
237 S 3rd Street	237 S 3rd Street	1920c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
302 E Polk Avenue	302 E Polk Avenue	1928c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
302 Harding Avenue	302 Harding Avenue	1930c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
303 E Polk Avenue	303 E Polk Avenue	1924c	Bungalow	Residence
305 Harding Avenue	305 Harding Avenue	1930c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
306 E Polk Avenue	306 E Polk Avenue	1920c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
332 C Street	332 C Street	1920c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
334 1/2 C Street	334 1/2 C Street	1920c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
334 C Street	334 C Street	1920c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
456 D Street	456 D Street	1930c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
500 Grace Avenue	500 Grace Avenue	1932c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
608 6th Street	608 6th Street	1930c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
900 Grace Avenue	900 Grace Avenue	1950c	Frame Vernacular	Residence
Ramon Theatre	15 E Wall Street	1925	Mediterranean Revival	Theater
Smith Printing	137 E Sessoms Avenue	1920c	Frame Vernacular	Commercial

## History Museums

*Margaret Kampsen Historic Depot* – The train station, a 66-by-26 feet building built primarily of Florida pine and cypress, was started on November 2, 1911, and completed just after the first of the next year. The train station now turned into a museum is open to the public for viewing local artifacts throughout the week. The museum was dedicated on November 18, 2001. The museum includes historical artifacts and documented information to preserve the past for future generations.



Figure 4: Lake Wales Depot Museum

*Lake Wales Depot Museum* – Since opening in 1976, the Depot Museum has evolved into a resource center for the collection, conservation, exhibition, and study of materials pertaining to the history of Lake Wales, Florida. Patrons traveling down the highway can stop in to see the history of the Ridge Scenic Highway designation through a display in the museum.

*Frostproof Historical Museum and Library* – The building that is home to the Frostproof Historical Museum was built in 1922. It was the site of the first public library in town. After the Latt Maxcy Memorial Library was established in 1978, the Frostproof Historical Society began to use the building for the museum. Inside the museum, visitors can find historical artifacts that are important to the city’s history. There are also photographs, maps, newspapers, books and other records in the genealogical section. Those who enjoy learning about the founding families can listen to and view audio and video tapes of some of the families. There also are books on the founding families as well.

## Cultural Resources

*Churches* – There are many churches along the corridor that serves as gathering places and is the foundation for civic life in many communities.

*Government Facilities* – SR 17 has many government buildings located along the highway. In November 2012, Haines City opened a new City Hall and Library in Downtown. In August

**4th Annual** Join us Saturday, November 5  
**8 AM - 2 PM**

Travel State Road 17, the beautiful Ridge Scenic Highway and visit us at nine great locations:

**Haines City:**  
St. Ann Catholic Church, 1265 Robinson Drive

**Dundee:**  
\*Community Center, 603 E. Main Street  
Jeanette Raines, 863.419.3114, [jraines@tarrabovr.com](mailto:jraines@tarrabovr.com)

**Lake of the Hills:**  
Community Clubhouse, 47 East Starr Avenue (Off of S.R. 17)  
Edward Esteve, 863.676.8015, [eedesteve@tarrabovr.com](mailto:eedesteve@tarrabovr.com)

**Lake Wales:**  
\*CSX Trailhead Center, 450 N. Scenic Highway  
Tina Richmond, 863.676.1721, [tasrnet@hotmail.com](mailto:tasrnet@hotmail.com)

Lake Wales Care Center, 201 N. Scenic Highway

Lake Wales Association of Realtors, 318 N. Scenic Highway

**Babson Park:**  
\*Across from Webber Int'l University, 1050 N. Scenic Highway  
Susan Welborn, 863.638.7308, [susan@lakehill.com](mailto:susan@lakehill.com)

Ridge Audubon Center, 200 N. Crooked Lake Drive

**Frostproof:**  
\*Downtown, E. Wall Street at SR 17  
Diane Biehl, 863.605.4564, [websterbiehl@verizon.net](mailto:websterbiehl@verizon.net)

39-Mile Yard Sale T-Shirts for sale \$10.00 each; sold at all locations  
**\*Rent Your Space for \$10.00 at selected locations.**

Collectables, Antiques and Treasures

**Fundraiser Event - Donations Welcome**  
Sponsored by: The Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor Management Entity, Inc.

[www.ridgescenichighway.com](http://www.ridgescenichighway.com)  
Find us on Facebook – "The Ridge Scenic Highway"

**Edward Jones INVESTMENTS**

Logos: Florida Scenic Highway, Bok Tower Gardens, Florida's Natural, Lake of the Hills, Lake Wales, Care Center, and others.

Figure 5: 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale 2011 Flyer

2012, the City of Lake Hamilton opened their new water treatment plant. November 2011, the Town of Dundee opened a new City Hall and Library in the Town Center. The improved facilities are an enhancement to the community.

*Festivals and Events* – The Ridge Scenic Highway corridor is the host of many festivals and events that are held throughout the year and are listed below. The 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale is the only event hosted by the CME.

- Whole Corridor:
  1. Annual 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale. The CME began this event in 2008. The goal is to provide local awareness of the Ridge Scenic Highway as a resource for promoting Economic Tourism in the small unique towns and larger city centers. The event has been widely attended and visitors had a lot of compliments on how well it was organized and the scenic views along the highway. This event serves as the fundraiser for the next year’s event and completion of administrative items such as, the website and incorporation fees.
- Haines City:
  1. Christmas Parade. This event is held annually and attracts visitors from the area to see the great floats and Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus.
  2. Glitter Glisten and Snow. Lake Eva Park gets transformed into a winter wonderland including snow and local entertainment.
  3. Thunder on the Ridge (Annual July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration). The Thunder on the Ridge event boasts the largest fireworks display in Polk County, plus local and national entertainment.
  4. Ribs on the Ridge. This is an annual event and draws visitors from the area.
  5. IRONMAN 70.3 Florida. This is an annual event and is a regional IRONMAN TriClub Championship race, attracting clubs from all over the state with its podium ceremony, pre-race barbecue, and tent city celebration. IRONKIDS race takes place the day before the main event. IRONMAN 70.3 Florida is also a Regional IRONMAN TriClub Championship race. The event is a popular early-season race, whether you’re a first-timer or a seasoned pro getting your legs ready for the year ahead. Expect a beach start, glassy freshwater lake swim, moderately hilly bike course past orange groves and through downtown, and an energetic three-loop run. The swim course, in particular, receives rave reviews from athletes.



Figure 6: IRONMAN 70.3 Florida Bike Course

- Dundee:
  1. Christmas Parade. This event is held annually and attracts visitors from the area.



2. July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration. The celebration is held on Lake Marie annually. Patrons traveling along SR 17, The Ridge Scenic Highway can pull off the road and enjoy the fireworks show.
  3. Fall Festival. This highly attended event includes a costume contest, pie eating contest and line dancing.
- Lake of the Hills:
    1. Old Fashioned Ice Cream Social. This event continues to draw people from the region and serves as a fund raiser for the Community Clubhouse. This event has occurred annually since 1965. Members and friends of the Lake of the Hills Garden Club dress in red and white vintage costumes and serve homemade cakes, pies, and ice cream. Proceeds from the event benefit further restoration work on the grounds and clubhouse.
    2. Gourmet Grilled Chicken Dinner. This event is held annually and serves as a fund raiser for the Community Clubhouse.
  - Lake Wales:
    1. Pioneer Days. This annual event continues to attract approximately 15,000 visitors from the region. This event honors the founding fathers of Lake Wales. Activities include Pioneer Hour, which opens with the ringing of Tillman Bell and follows with the announcement of the Pioneer of the Year.
    2. Lake Wales Arts Festival. First held in 1972, this annual event features the tradition of celebrating and exhibiting quality works of art by fine artists and artisans with up to 100 artists competing for more than \$30,000 in awards. Presented by the Lake Wales Art Council, the diversity of the critically acclaimed two-day Festival attracts thousands of art lovers each year who purchase original, one-of-a-kind works of art.
    3. Orange Blossom BBQ Revue. A BBQ competition sponsored by the Lake Wales Rotary was held Dec 5-6, 2014 in Lake Wailes Park, with the next one scheduled for Dec 4th -5th, 2015.
    4. Make it Magical Holiday Event. An annual event in downtown Lake Wales, takes place the first Friday night in December.
    5. Jewel of the Ridge Jazz Festival. The event takes place for its 2nd year on April 11th in Lake Wailes Park.
    6. Car Show. The show is held monthly on the 4th Saturday of every month from 4-8pm.
    7. Farmers Market. Held in Downtown Lake Wales on the 2nd & 4th Saturday from 9am – 2pm.
    8. Wine Walk. Held three times a year hosted by the Women's Business Connection in conjunction with the Monthly Car Show on the 4th Saturday of the month.
    9. International Carillon Festival. Bok Tower Gardens continue to host this event annually. The festival features one of the world's greatest carillons, the Singing Tower. With performances by world renowned carillonners, enjoy a renaissance of this most unique musical instrument through debut performances of new compositions and music performed throughout the 500-year history of the carillon.

10. Mardi Gras. This annual event has bloomed into a major social and tourist event, drawing thousands of visitors from across Florida and beyond. The event includes pageantry, parades, exotic floats, outrageous costumes, masked crowds, carnival royalty, high-stepping and strutters moving to



**Figure 7: 2015 Lake Wales Mardi Gras Parade**

the rhythms of Dixieland Jazz. The Lake Wales Mardi Gras was created in memory of Vinton Davis, owner and operator of Vinton's New Orleans Restaurant along with his wife in 1984.

11. July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration. This event is held annually at the Lake Wailes Park. The event includes food vendors, fun activities all day, and the day ends with a blast of fireworks in the evening.
  12. Concert Outdoors. Polk State College JD Alexander Center (Old City Hall) hosts concerts outdoors on the steps the 1st 2 Wednesdays of the month from 12:30-1:45pm
- Babson Park:
    1. Oktoberfest. This is an annual event held in October. This event aligns with Webber International University's alumni weekend. The event takes place along Crooked Lake and includes a menu featuring a "German style" hot dog and sausage bar including grilled bratwurst and kielbasa, sauerkraut, German spätzel with sauerkraut, tossed salad, Oktoberfest potato salad, German style green beans, and assorted desserts and beverages, and more.
    2. Scenic 17 Triathlon (Babson Park to Frostproof). This annual event is held at Webber International University. The triathlon includes a ¼ mile swim in Crooked Lake (one of the largest freshwater lakes in Florida), a 15 mile bike ride along Scenic Highway and surrounding roads and concludes with a 3.1 mile run along Scenic Highway and surrounding roads. Due to the growth increase with this event, in 2011, the Youth Sprint Challenge Triathlon was established. In 2014, the event grew by adding an adult duathlon, which includes a 2k run and the 15 mile bike ride.
    3. Babson Park Audubon Center. From its founding in 1961, Ridge Audubon has launched numerous community projects to further its mission. In the early days, volunteer educators visited schools with wild animals or birds for students to see up close. Guided nature walks near school campuses were given. Students from back then are now adults, who say visits from volunteers had a profound impact on their understanding and appreciation of wildlife and conservation. In 1964, when the sanctuary was obtained through the generosity of Roger Babson, student groups were invited to take guided walks on the Babson Park Nature Center's own trail where many rare animal and plant species unique to the Lake Wales Ridge are protected. Eventually, a museum full of specimens, artifacts and educational displays was created. A library and a bookstore were added to serve the needs of budding naturalists, young and old. Through the

champion efforts of our members and loyal community supporters, the trail, bookstore and museum continue to be open to the public. Volunteers still visit schools and other sites when invited, notably for Earth Day displays, guided trail walks, fossil digs and nature talks. The Nature Center is where all of our potlucks, programs and meetings take place. It is usually where we meet for field trips. October through April a potluck dinner is followed by an educational presentation on wildlife, conservation, birds and nature topics of a wide variety.

- Frostproof:

1. Christmas Parade. This event is held annually and attracts visitors from the area.
2. Festival of the Trees. This event is held annually at the historic Ramon Theater. There are many displays of lighted Christmas trees, each decorated in different themes and colors accompanied by holiday music.
3. Murder Mystery Dinner. This event is held at the historic Ramon Theater.
4. O’Hara’s Orange Blossom Festival. This event is held annually to include antique car show, vendors, live music, and carnival rides.
5. Winter Music Series. This event is held annually at the historic Ramon Theater.
6. Talent Show Extravaganza. This event is held annually by the Rotary Club.



Figure 8: 2012 Festival of Trees

*Museums, Theaters, Clubs, Colleges, and Community Centers* – Museums, theaters, and community centers help to educate residents and guests of the history and culture of the community, allow residents to share their talents and experiences and help create a shared sense of community.

- Haines City:

1. Landmark Baptist College. Landmark Baptist College was founded in 1980 and is housed in the Polk Hotel, a building listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
2. Haines City Community Theatre. In 2014, the theatre moved to their new location the old library in Haines City, just a few blocks from the old location, at 303 Ledwith Ave. (in front of the Lake Eva Complex). On average, the theatre has about 150 season-ticket holders and averages around 400 audience members for each production.
3. Community Center. In 2009, the community center received a renovation and expansion. The center is home to programming of youth and adult activities and athletics. The center also has office spaces and a new workout facility.

- Dundee:

1. Community Center. The center is located at 603 Main Street and hosts activities, shows, and public meetings.
2. Chamber of Commerce. The chamber, located at 310 East Main Street, promotes meeting people, helping to create a climate where business can flourish, create good

community relations and have a vital advertising opportunity for the Dundee and surrounding area.

- Lake of the Hills:
  1. Lake of the Hills Community Clubhouse. The Clubhouse, located at 41 East Starr Avenue celebrated their centennial in January 2014.

- Lake Wales:

1. The Museum at Chalet Suzanne. The museum closed with the closing of the Chalet Suzanne.
2. Bok Tower Gardens. Bok Tower Gardens has offered some of Florida's most remarkable experiences to more than 23 million visitors since 1929. Through its historic landscape gardens, unique Singing Tower carillon and magnificent 1930s Mediterranean-style mansion, the Gardens offer unparalleled opportunities for artistic, cultural, personal and spiritual enrichment.



**Figure 9: Lake Wales Little Theatre**

3. Little Theatre. The theatre, located at 411 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, has been providing high-quality, live entertainment to Lake Wales and East Polk County since 1978. Our offerings include recent hits and old favorites, and we frequently offer new plays never before produced. Our intimate 140-seat theater ensures that everyone has a great view of the action! The goal of Lake Wales Little Theatre, Inc. is to provide high quality theatrical entertainment and a creative outlet for the many interested and talented people in our area. More specifically, the purpose of our theater is to provide cultural education and enjoyment for the citizens of Lake Wales and surrounding areas by producing, presenting, and viewing live theater activities. Participation in theater activities on stage, backstage and in the audience is open to all interested individuals
4. Art Center. In 2011 the Lake Wales Art Center was acquired by Polk State College. After nearly \$2 million in renovations to refurbish stained glass windows, upgraded signage, a reinforced rotunda and renovated restrooms the Center was reopened in March 2013. The Polk State Lake Wales Arts Center brings together visual and performing arts, offering Central Florida the best of both. The Lake Wales Arts Council maintains the Center, arranging classes, concerts, and exhibitions that rotate throughout the year. The Center has extensive gallery space, and visitors are always welcome to enjoy the Center's most recent display. The Polk State Lake Wales Arts Center offers many free and fun events throughout the year.



**Figure 10: Lake Wales Art Center**

5. Museum and Cultural Center. The Lake Wales Museum and Cultural Center is popularly known as The Depot Museum. Since opening in 1976, the Depot has evolved into a resource center for the collection, conservation, exhibition, and study of materials pertaining to the history of Lake Wales, Florida. It strives to serve as the means by which historic record of Lake Wales may be preserved and shared with the citizens of the community.
- Highland Park:
    1. Highland Park Club. I.A. Yarnellk, a partner of Harold F. Fairchild, formed the Highland Park Club in the early 1920's. Membership was restricted to those who purchased a 10-acre grove with a right to purchase a building lot. The "Colony" was marketed towards well-to-do northerners who wanted to winter in Florida. The Highland Park Club continued as a private club until 1994, when the club dispersed and sold the property. The building was known as the LeKarica Restaurant and Inn. After the 2004 Hurricane Season, the building was heavily damaged and closed.
  - Babson Park:
    1. Webber International University. The University is a private, non-profit, co-educational university of business. The university offers associate and bachelor degrees in business with ten different majors to its approximately 550 students. Webber also awards Master of Business Administration degrees with options in Accounting, management, Marketing, and Sport Management. In December 2014, the Webber International University History Center opened housing the historical artifacts of the university.
    2. Babson Park Women's Club. The Club was founded in 1923 to further the development of highest ideals in the community. The organization continues to be active in the community.
  - Frostproof:
    1. Art League and Gallery. The Art league and Gallery was founded by local artists and is committed to continue promotion of education of visual arts in our community. Proceeds from commissions on art sales, donations and memberships help life enriching community outreach programs possible. Programs such as free art education to adults with physical or mental challenges, as well as, free after school classes for children. Our large studio classroom affords the space to create and teach multi-media art and lectures. Our gallery area features a variety of media: fine art paintings in water-color, oils, acrylics and also photography and drawing. The gallery also includes applied arts, decorative painting, jewelry, quilts, and found object sculptures. The exhibits rotate every sixty days to give all members opportunity to exhibit around the five annual art shows.
    2. Chamber of Commerce. The Frostproof Area Chamber of Commerce is an economic development organization working on business retention and expansion



**Figure 11: Babson Park Women's Club**

efforts within the Frostproof Area. The Chamber is also responsible to promote Frostproof to businesses and individuals that might have an interest in relocating or visiting. We produce a relocation guide and other promotional materials that are widely distributed. The Chamber also organizes events and festivals to generate revenue for the businesses in Frostproof.

3. Depot. The first railroad to reach Frostproof arrived in 1912 and the depot was built that year. Clarence Dempsey was the Atlantic Coast Line depot agent from 1912 until 1919. Luncheons and meetings are held in the back of the facility.
4. Historical Museum and Library. The Historical Museum is located at 210 Scenic Highway. The building, erected in 1922, originally served as the first public library in Frostproof. The Museum houses historical artifacts, photographs, maps, newspapers, books, records, audio, and video-taped interviews, genealogy, and history of many of the founding families of Frostproof. The Museum and Library provide tours for youth groups and school classes.

*Recreational Resources* – Parks, trails, and recreational complexes are located along the length of the Ridge Scenic Highway, providing access to parks and natural acres, active recreation areas, and gathering opportunities.

- Haines City:

1. Railroad Park. Located on the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Main Street in downtown. The park is home to the weekly Farmers Market. The Gazebo is available for reservation.
2. Lake Eva Park. The Park, located at 555 Ledwith Avenue, includes a 30,000 square foot banquet hall, six-lane competition pool, kids water play area including a 20 foot slide, a maintenance facility, a restored armory building with offices, expanded community center, walking trail, 12 pavilions, great lawn, four tennis courts, and two basketball/volleyball courts. The Park is the home of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration “Thunder on the Ridge.”

- Lake Hamilton:

1. Park in Lake Hamilton. Located across from the town hall, this park contains a baseball field and a children’s playground.

- Dundee:

1. Merrill Street Park. Located at 301 East Merrill Avenue, the Park includes basketball courts with two goals, two swings, playground equipment for toddlers and older children, two three-wall racquetball courts.
2. Lake Marie Park. Located at 604 Lake Marie Boulevard, the park is the location of many celebrations for the Town of Dundee and its visitors. It includes picnic shelter with tables, restrooms, playground equipment, boat ramp, picnic



Figure 12: Lake Marie Park

locations, and the 1.8 mile pedestrian and bike trail that circles Lake Marie.

3. Lake Menzie Park. Located at 1 Lake Menzie, the park includes an exercise trail, fishing pier, and playground.
  4. Johnson Park. Located at 800 Edmund Avenue, this an open park of .6 acres.
  5. Henderson Park. Located at 413 Martin Luther King Street, the park includes basketball courts with two goals, swings, playground equipment and picnic shelter with tables.
  6. East Central Park. The park is a Polk County facility. The athletic park contains a fitness trail, baseball fields, concession stands, and a press box building.
- **Lake Wales:**
    1. Hardman Recreational and Cultural Complex. The 1920 Primary School serves as a Boys and Girls Club. The City of Lake Wales has restored the 1920 agricultural facility that is now used as the Trail Head Center and the meeting location of the Ridge Scenic Highway CME.
    2. Lake Wailes Park. The park includes half mile hike/bike trail, fishing pier, boat ramp, basketball court, soccer practice area, and picnic area. The park provides scenic views of Lake Wailes.
    3. Crystal Lake Park. The park includes new playground systems, play park, 5 tennis courts (lighted for evening play), 24 shuffleboard courts, 2 racquetball courts, picnic pavilion, and parking area.
    4. 9<sup>th</sup> Street Dog Park. This dog park has a separate small and big dog area, drinking water, shade trees, benches, and two picnic tables on each side for people to sit down in the shade.
    5. Kiwanis Park. The park includes a playground for children of all abilities, 2 pavilions, baseball fields, soccer field and skate park.
  - **Babson Park:**
    1. Demonstration Garden Park. The park is used by the Babson Park Community Church and Babson Park Elementary School as a demonstration park on the types of local plants and trees to plant along the Lake Wales Ridge.
    2. Welling Park. The park is on Lake Easy and includes a boat launch, dock, improved parking and common area.
  - **Hillcrest Heights:**
    1. Carson Park. The park presents information on stormwater management and includes covered picnic facilities are available.
    2. Crooked Lake Park. Located at the southern end of Catherine Avenue in Hillcrest Heights, the pier provides views to the water and access to swim in the lake. Access to the pier is by permission only. The gate is locked at all times.
  - **Frostproof:**
    1. Friendship Park. Friendship Park was established in 1976 by the Frostproof Woman's Club. It features open green space and a picnic pavilion. The Frostproof Chamber of Commerce offices are in the old train depot on the east side of the park



Figure 13: Welling Park's Boat Ramp and Dock

grounds, complete with a train caboose. Friendship Park is also known locally as Wall Street Park.

2. Frostproof Sports Complex. The sports complex contains softball, baseball, soccer fields and tennis courts. Restroom facilities and full concession stands are available.
3. Glades Fewox Park. The Park is a neighborhood park located between SR 17 and Lake Reedy. The park includes such amenities as a walking area and a play area.
4. Henderson Field. Located across from Reedy Lake on Lake Avenue, this facility contains baseball fields and concession stands.
5. Lake Reedy Park. Located on Lake Reedy Drive, this park contains two restrooms, one shelter, five tables, open play area, fishing, boat ramp, and canoe access.
6. Lake Clinch Park. Located at the terminus of West 1<sup>st</sup> Street, the park provides swimming facilities on Lake Clinch.
7. Lake Clinch Public Boat Dock. The dock is located along S. Clinch Lake Boulevard, near Lauterbach Street.
8. Lake Livingston Boat Ramp. Located on the west edge of Lake Livingston, boaters may access it from SR 17 along Livingston Lake Road.
9. Recreation Trails. There are a number of existing recreational trails along the Ridge Scenic Highway identified on the Polk County Trails map created by the Polk TPO:
  - Haines City Trail – runs along the existing rail bed and SR 17 from downtown to CR 544
  - Barbara B. Pederson Wildlife Preserve includes trails, located south of Dundee
  - Trail in Pine Ridge Nature Preserve
  - Lake Wailes Trail, which follows the southern and eastern shore of Lake Wailes
  - Lake Wales Trailway (Rails to Trails)
  - Trails within Bok Tower Gardens
  - Trails located in Tiger Creek Preserve
  - Trails in Crooked Lake Prairie
  - Trails in Lake Wales Ridge State Forest
  - Trail located in Hickory Lake Scrub
10. Water Access. Anglers have labeled Polk County the “Bass Capital of the World.” Crooked Lake, an Outstanding Florida Water, provides opportunity for good bass and bluegill fishing. Peace River offers largemouth bass, bluegill and redear sunfish.



**Figure 14: Barbara B. Pederson Trail**

*Attractions* – The Ridge Scenic Highway is home to some of the oldest, original tourist attractions in Florida. The Scenic Highway provides an educational, entertaining, and unique day trip or weekend family trip for vacationers.



- Historic Districts and Structures. The many districts and structures along the corridor continue to provide antique shopping, boutiques, dining, education, and entertainment for the visitors and residents along the corridor.
- Chalet Suzanne Soup Cannery. August 4, 2014, the Hinshaw family closed the Historic Chalet Suzanne Inn and Restaurant.
- Bok Tower Gardens. Bok Tower Gardens has offered some of Florida’s most remarkable experiences to more than 23 million visitors since 1929. Through its historic landscape gardens, unique Singing Tower carillon and magnificent 1930s Mediterranean-style mansion, the Gardens offer unparalleled opportunities for artistic, cultural, personal and spiritual enrichment.
- Spook Hill. The legend of Spook Hill has entertained locals and tourists alike for generations. It is said that the tribal chief, Cufcowellax, battled a huge bull alligator that was harassing his tribe. The chief fought the gator for a moon and was victorious over the gator. The battle created a small lake near the large lake in which the battle had taken place. When the chief died, he was buried on the shore of the little lake, Ticowa. The legend was passed on through the generations. Later, citrus riders noticed that their horses labored while riding downhill towards the lake. They named the location Spook Hill. Years later, the road was paved and residents found that their cars would roll uphill by themselves.
- Packing Plants. The Ridge Scenic Highway is home to some of Florida’s largest citrus cooperatives and plants. Founded in 1924, the Dundee Citrus Growers Association (CGA) today has 325 growers whose groves produce 6.7 million 1-3/5 bushel boxes of fruit. Lake Wales CGA and Winter Haven CGA joined the Dundee CGA fresh fruit family in 1999. In 2000, Dundee



**Figure 15: Dundee Citrus CGA Plant**

- purchased Fruit Pack International (formerly Lykes Pasco) packinghouse. The Dundee CGA and its three packinghouses finished the 2000-2001 as the largest volume packing company in the state. The Dundee CGA is recognized as one of the most quality-minded progressive cooperatives in the state. Six local citrus growers founded the Haines City CGA as an agricultural cooperative by in 1909, and today it has 174 growers whose groves produce 2.8 million boxes of fruit annually. The packinghouse is still located at its original 7.5 acres in downtown Haines City, Florida. Haines City CGA is the second oldest citrus cooperative in Florida and the fifth largest packing operation in the state (out of 75 commercial packers).
- Great Florida Birding Trail. The Great Florida Birding Trail (GFBT) is a collection of sites throughout Florida selected for their excellent bird watching or bird education opportunities. Three sites included in the East Section Guide are located along the Ridge Scenic Highway: Historic Bok Sanctuary, Lake Wailes, and the Ridge Audubon Nature Center. Birdwatchers can spot birds such as kestrels, nighthawks, pileater woodpeckers, and loggerhead shrikes at Historic Bok Sanctuary. Waders, anhingas, sandhill cranes, and wintering duck species can be seen around Lake Wailes. Birds like eastern towhees, white-eyed vireos, ground doves, and nighthawks can be spotted at the Ridge Audubon Center.

- Murals. The murals found in the Lake Wales Historic District and City of Frostproof capture the character and history of these towns. The “Crown Jewel of the Ridge” depicts one of the main business streets in downtown Lake Wales as it stood in 1931. The mural painted on One Scenic Central Building portrays the turpentine works and the Atlantic Coastline Railroad. The “Root of the Community” mural, located on the curved area of the Sullivan Real Estate office on North Scenic Highway in Frostproof, portrays the citrus industry in the Frostproof area.
- Alpacas de los Altos Planos. This attraction is home to an Alpaca Ranch. Alpacas produce one of the world’s finest and most luxurious natural fibers. Visitors can visit this unique attraction by driving approximately one quarter mile south of Chalet Suzanne Road and look to the right for the Alpacas de los Altos Planos sign.

*Natural Resources* – The preservation of the Lake Wales Ridge’s unique habitats is being undertaken through the collaborative efforts of private and public groups, including federal, state, and local government agencies, non-profit organizations, research groups, and citizen activists. Many of the natural or conservation sites are maintained throughout the year for enjoyment of the public. Natural or conservation sites open to the public located within the viewshed are detailed below.

- Village of Highland Park. The Village being designated a bird and wildlife sanctuary.
- Bok Tower Gardens Pine Ridge Nature Preserve Trail and Endangered Plant Nursery. The Bok Tower Gardens is a member of the Center for Plant Conservation, a national organization headquartered in the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis. The Historic Bok Tower Gardens have a Rare and Endangered Plant Species program with a nursery where such plants are grown. The Bok Tower Gardens also participates in the National Seed Storage Laboratory Collections in Fort Collins. The Pine Ridge Nature Preserve is a Longleaf Pine/Turkey Oak ecosystem. The site allows researchers and visitors to learn more about the sandhill ecosystem. The preserve is home to six listed plant species, including wide-leaf warea (*Warea amplexifolia*) and two endangered species such as the Indigo Snake and Gopher Tortoise.
- Ridge Audubon Nature Trail. The Ridge Audubon Nature Trail contains two habitats, the sandhill and scrub communities and the oak dome habitat. The one-fourth mile trail with trail signs and self-guided tour maps allows travelers to learn about the plants and animals that inhabit these habitats.
- Crooked Lake Sandhill. Crooked Lake Sandhill is owned and operated by the Polk County Board of County Commissioners through the Natural Resources Division, Environmental Lands Program. The 25-acre site made up of longleaf pines is home to a number of rare



**Figure 16: Crooked Lake**

species. The site includes old growth canopy, with some trees approximately 200 years old. The site includes a 0.8-mile self-guided trail.

- Crooked Lake. Crooked Lake, the second largest lake in Polk County, is designated an Outstanding Florida Water by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. An Outstanding Florida Water is a water designated worthy of special protection because of its natural attributes. This special designation is intended to protect existing good water quality.
- Crooked Lake Prairie. Crooked Lake Prairie protects over 2 miles of Crooked Lake's shoreline. Upland resources include 130 acres of scrub on the Lake Wales Ridge. A series of adjoining trails offer 1.3- to 3.6-mile walks through scrub and scrubby flatwood communities, pine forests, and marsh habitat.
- The Peace Creek Canal System. The Peace Creek Canal system was dredged more than 50 years ago to regulate water levels in a broad area from Dundee to Bartow. It serves as a major contributing source to the Peace River, which begins at the confluence of the Peace Creek Canal system and Saddle Creek. The canal system and its surroundings provide limited habitat for a variety of wildlife species, including foraging habitat for wading birds such as the state-listed Florida sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis pratensis*), white ibis (*Eudocimus albus*), and little blue heron (*Egretta caerulea*).
- Tiger Creek Preserve. Named after the pristine blackwater stream that forms the spine of this sanctuary, the preserve encompasses over 4,800 acres. The preserve includes most of Tiger Creek, its surrounding hardwood swamps, hammocks, oak scrub, pine flatwoods, sandhill, and longleaf pine/wiregrass habitat. Rare animals, such as skinks, gopher tortoises, the Florida mouse, indigo snakes, and gopher frogs, and plants, such as the scrub plum, pygmy fringe tree, and Carter's mustard live in the preserve. The Nature Conservancy owns and manages Tiger Creek Preserve. The Nature Conservancy conducts rare species monitoring, prescribed burning, and hydrological monitoring at the preserve to maintain and improve habitat for rare species. It recently opened the Tiger Creek Center to educate the community about living safely in Florida's flammable landscape.
- Hickory Lake Scrub. This 57-acre preserve, owned and managed by Polk County, contains ancient scrub, lakeshore and a small stream, cutthroat seep and oak hammock. Wildlife that may be observed includes gopher tortoises, Florida scrub lizards, and wading birds.
- Lake Wales Ridge State Forest. The Lake Wales Ridge State Forest consists of two separate tracts, the Arbuckle Tract and the Walk in the Water Tract, both purchased under the Florida's Conservation and Recreation Lands Program. The Walk in the Water Tract is located 2 miles east of Frostproof on County Road 630. The Arbuckle Tract is located 5 miles south of Frostproof on Lake Arbuckle Road. The Lake Wales Ridge State Forest provides a habitat for 24 plants and 19 animals currently having federal or state status as threatened or endangered. This list includes the scrub jay and the sand skink. Rare and endangered plants include the pygmy fringe tree, scrub plum, Carter's mustard, scrub-blazing star, and bear grass.



**Figure 17: Lake Wales Ridge State Forest**

- Lake Kissimmee State Park. The 5,930-acre park is named for Lake Kissimmee, the third largest lake in the state. The park offers outstanding fishing, bird watching, picnicking, camping, boating, and hiking on 13 miles of beautiful trails and is home to a number of rare and endangered species.
- Grassy Lake-Stuart Preserve. The 185 acre preserve was purchased by the state for \$2.1 million in 2003 to protect eight rare species of plants and one rare animal species. It is located the southeast corner of US 27 and Mountain Lake Cutoff Road with a bit of land on the west side of US 27. It is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission as part of its network of preserves along the Lake Wales Ridge.
- Ridge Audubon Center. The Center sits on three and a half acres of rare longleaf sandhill plant community on the Lake Wales Ridge.

*Scenic Resources* – The Ridge Scenic Highway winds along the Lake Wales Ridge through historic communities, agricultural fields, and natural landscapes. The Ridge Scenic Highway offers ever-changing views. Each curve in the road, change in elevation and change in adjacent uses creates a new visual experience for the traveler. These scenic resources are maintained throughout the year. Photos of the view types are located on the website and Facebook.

- View Types. Each location along the Ridge Scenic Highway provides a unique view that introduces the traveler to one or more intrinsic resource. There are four types of views found along the highway:
  - Historic Community Center – In these areas, the Ridge Scenic Highway travels through historic communities, providing views of historic structures, governmental buildings, cultural facilities, recreational facilities, and public art. There have been many changes to each community and will be outlined in The Funding section on page 30. While the historic centers have not changed, the municipal boundaries have changed significantly throughout the corridor.
  - Rural Residential – These areas are located near the entrance to the towns or villages, near crossroads, or along lakes adjacent to the corridor, these areas contain low to moderate density homes whose front door is SR 17 and have changed as the development has occurred along the corridor.
  - Citrus Agriculture – In these areas, tall lush groves line the Ridge Scenic highway. In several areas, the citrus groves are being replaced with Peach Orchards.
  - Cattle Grazing – These areas provide views of cattle and grazing lands, usually terminated by tall pines.

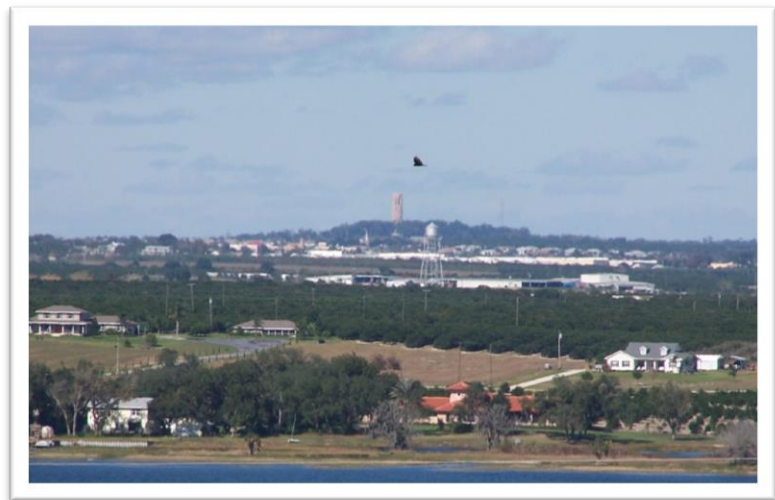


**Figure 18: Peach Orchards**

Scenic Vistas. There are several locations along the Ridge Scenic Highway particularly memorable, where the roadway bends along a large lake or hilltop, providing unhindered views of the water and hills beyond. These locations capture the landscapes or significant intrinsic resources along the corridor. Not much has changed in the six vistas listed in the current CMP. The Scenic Highway

Focus Group discussed where the viewsheds, beautification projects, and pull off locations are located along the corridor. These locations are mapped on the County’s “The SR 17 Ridge Scenic Highway Resource Protection Overlay Map” located within the Comprehensive Plan.

- Lake Hamilton
  - Lake Gordon Pull Off - From the viewpoint within a park in the Town of Lake Hamilton, the traveler can view relatively close views of Lake Gordon and the hill and water tower behind it.
  - Lake Crystal Vista
- Dundee
  - Lake Marie Beautification
  - Lake Marie Pull Off - Just south of Downtown Dundee, the road travels along the west bank of Lake Marie. Travelers in this area can see open views of the lake, homes, and the hills beyond. Two pull-off locations are possible – a southbound pull-off west of Lake Marie and a northbound pull-off south of Lake Marie.
  - Polk County Welcome Center
  - South Dundee Vista
- Lake of the Hills
  - Bok Tower Vista at Chalet Suzanne Road - There are several locations along the corridor where Bok Tower can be spotted rising above the citrus fields. Perhaps the best view is from a southbound pull-off that is just south of Waverly Road and north of Lake of the Hills.
  - Bok Tower Pull Off
  - Bok Tower Vista south of Lake Starr
- Lake Wales
  - Lake Wales Conservation Viewshed
  - Lake Wales Beautification
  - Trail Head Center
  - Lake Wales Mural Vista
- Highland Park
  - Bok Tower Vista around Lake Easy and Blue Lake
  - Crooked Lake Pull Off
- Babson Park
  - Two Crooked Lake Vistas around Hollister Road
  - Crooked Lake Pull Off around Hollister Road
- Frostproof
  - North and South Lake Moody Vista - The road takes a sharp turn south and exposes a view along the corridor opens up to hills, rural residential development, citrus agriculture, and the winding roadway ahead. A scenic pull-off that is located at the highest point in the area provides striking views of much of the region.
  - Frostproof Mural Vista



**Figure 19: Views of Bok Tower from Crooked Lake**

- Frostproof Pull Off at Reed Lake
- Lake Livingston Vista at Hickory Lake
- Lake Livingston existing pull off
- Lake Livingston Vista just north of the railroad tracks

## **CORRIDOR VISION**

The CME’s vision as approved in 2005 was long and included a future perspective, while looking back at the group’s accomplishments up to that point. The new vision of the CME is short and powerful. The CME decided it would be best to include a mission statement to go with the vision of the corridor.

### **Corridor Vision**

Encourage the creation, enhancement, and preservation of the unique historical, agricultural, visual, archeological, recreational, environmental, and tourism features of SR 17, The Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor.

### **Corridor Mission**

Provide the region a premier destination to experience the scenic treasures of the Lake Wales Ridge, its communities and enhance the economic vitality of the region.

### **Concept Plan**

The concept plan is a visual representation of the corridor vision and a summary of the first action plan for the corridor. This document can be found on the Ridge Scenic Highway’s website at [www.ridgescenichighway.com](http://www.ridgescenichighway.com). As part of developing the Concept Plan, the Ridge Scenic Highway created the logo, which has been trademarked and is used on brochures, agendas, news releases, signs, banners and events.

## **CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT ENTITY (CME) ORGANIZATION**

The Ridge Scenic Highway CME, Inc. was incorporated in June 2008 and The Ridge Scenic Highway logo was trademarked in 2009. Each year the CME Board chooses a list of priorities to focus on throughout the year. The Board meets quarterly and the meetings are rotated among locations along the corridor. The CME Board consists of 18 representatives including the following:

Polk County	Unincorporated Babson Park
Polk TPO	Unincorporated Lake of the Hills
City Frostproof	At-Large Agriculture
Town of Hillcrest Heights	At-Large Tourism
Village of Highland Park	At-Large Cultural
City of Lake Wales	At-Large Historic
Town of Dundee	At-Large Commercial/Developer
Town of Lake Hamilton	At-Large Environmental
City of Haines City	At-Large Education

# GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLAN

The goals, objectives, strategies and action plan (GOSAP) items continue to be a priority of the CME and the future of the Ridge Scenic Highway. The previous Plans included GOSAPs in different section and were confusing to those who read the documents. In an effort to condense and simplify the GOSAPs in the different areas, the CME merged and changed a few of the objectives, strategies and action items. Many of the changes were to consolidate and remove duplicates while other changes were to broaden the item and not be as specific to allow flexibility with completion of the items. To see the strike-out and underline version of the changes visit the website meeting packet for June 8, 2015 to download a copy. Appendix A includes the details for each GOSAPs in an easy to ready table.



## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Over the last five years, the CME has maintained an active membership, held many board and committee meetings along the corridor, participated in many events, held our own events throughout the corridor. The community participation is based on good local support of the Scenic Highway.

From 2010 to 2015, the CME has held a Board meeting quarterly. On the average, ten people are in attendance to the Board meetings and eight people for the Committee meetings. The last five years

the CME Board and Committee has met over 72 hours to carry out the Ridge Scenic Highway's goals. The Board and Committee meetings are held at a variety of locations along the corridor to encourage local participation in the meetings. Each year the board establishes priorities for the next year. These priorities help to accomplish the items within the Action Plan. The CME has a great relationship with the local newspapers.

Community participation has occurred along the corridor throughout each year. Many events hosted by a municipality, private agency, or the CME are annual events. A list of the events found throughout the corridor is detailed in the Cultural Resources section on page 13. The success of these events can be found in the Measuring Success section on page 33.

## **LOCAL SUPPORT**

*The News Chief, The Ledger, Sun Newspapers, and The Lake Wales News* have provided good coverage of our meetings, events, and happenings along the corridor. The news articles have maintained communication between the CME and the community as well as provide insight in the views of local residents. The news articles and attendance to events provide evidence of strong local support for the scenic highway designation. See Appendix B for a few newspaper articles.

## **CORRIDOR STORY**

The story remains the same and will not require an update, to view the complete story visit [www.ridgescenichighway.com](http://www.ridgescenichighway.com).

## **EVALUATION OF PROTECTION TECHNIQUES**

The protection and preservation of the corridor's intrinsic resources are critical to designation and the long-term viability of the scenic corridor. The base for protection and preservation are the numerous existing local, state, and federal regulations that apply to road, building, and natural areas along the corridor. In addition, public and private agreements and acquisition activities supplement the goals and intentions of existing regulations. These agreements and acquisition activities are with the local, state and federal government agencies. An example can be found in the Funding section under Green Horizon Land Trust.

In 2009, The FDOT completed the Ridge Scenic Highway Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan. The primary focus of the master plan is to identify missing links in the existing bicycle/pedestrian pathways that connect the numerous towns, communities, and major attractors along the Lake Wales Ridge. The plan also provides recommended improvements along with associated costs to eliminate these gaps in connectivity. Listed below in the funding section are sidewalk and trail projects implemented from the Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan.

## **FUNDING**

The 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale event provides on the average \$1,000 a year (by table rentals and sponsorship) to the CME budget. This money is used for website hosting, domain registration, incorporation fees, future yard sale events and yard sale t-shirt design and purchase.

Over the last five years, the local jurisdictions, FDOT, and private investments have received and spent approximately \$31,492,962 along the corridor.



Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT): The FDOT has completed several road projects and are proposing changes along the corridor. The projects are listed below:

Resurfacing Projects:

- Dundee Area
  - From east of 6th Street to East of 4th Street
    - Construction 2011 - \$166,174
- Lake Wales Area
  - South of Ray Martin Road to South of Mountain Lake Cutoff Road. This project includes sidewalks, bicycle lanes, improved crosswalks, drainage, signage, mast arms for traffic lights, and access drives to businesses will be improved.
    - Construction 2011/12 - 14/15 - \$5,234,271
- Lake of the Hills Area
  - North of Starr Avenue to North of SR 540. This project includes sidewalk and bicycle lane construction.
    - Construction 2011/12 - \$1,552,984
- Babson Park/Highland Park Area
  - From East Cook Road to Townsend Road
    - Construction 2011 - \$1,911,035

Intersection Projects:

- Lake Wales Area
  - Mountain Lake Cutoff Road at SR 17
    - Construction 2011/12 - \$1,488,983

Drainage Improvements:

- Lake Wales Area
  - Seminole Avenue to Osceola Avenue
    - Construction 2011/12 – 2014/15 - \$669,521

Transit Improvements:

- Hillcrest Heights to Frostproof Areas
  - CR 630 to Webber International University
    - Construction 2012/13 - \$25,571

Sidewalk Improvements:

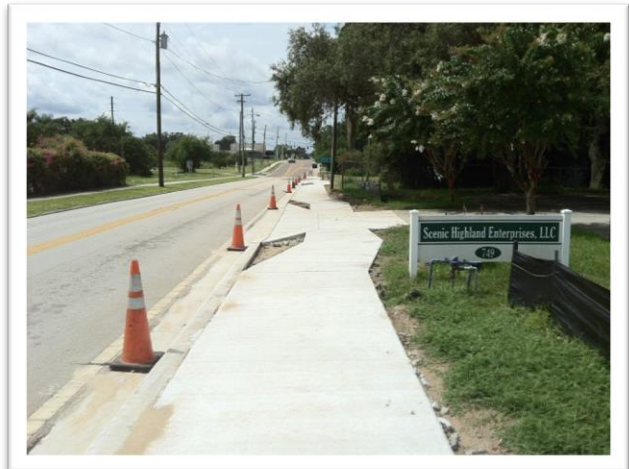
- Frostproof Area
  - From F Street to I Street
    - Construction 2012/13 - \$260,000

Streetscaping

- Haines City Area
  - 6<sup>th</sup> Street from Hinson Avenue to Wood Avenue
    - Construction 2014/15 - \$1,600,000

Multi-Use Trails

- Haines City Area



**Figure 20: Implementing the Bike/Ped Plan - Frostproof Sidewalks**

- Haines City Trail from Downtown and SR 17
  - Construction 2013/14 - \$817,000

Reconstruction

- Haines City Area
  - From SR 544 to US 17/92
    - Construction 2012/13 – 2015 - \$11,272,873. The project will include a complete reconstruction of SR 17, five landscaped medians, lighting, 8-foot wide sidewalk on the west side of the street, and a 5-foot wide sidewalk on the east side of the street. Some of the improvements were derived from the Scenic Highway Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan developed by the Florida Department of Transportation.

Dundee:

- In 2009, Dundee’s Main Street, also a section of SR 17, The Ride Scenic Highway, will soon become a more picturesque, tree-lined road as it passes through the center of town. The Town received a \$18,750 non-matching grant from the Florida Department of Forestry program, “Florida Forest Health Improvement Initiative.” Approximately 50 trees will be planted in 2010-2011. While the grant does not include irrigation, a Dundee based business, MaxiJet, is donating supplies for the irrigation of the trees.
- In 2011, the Town Center was constructed and opened. The Town Center includes most town departments, including Code Enforcement, Finance, Utility Billing, Building, Parks and Recreation. It also includes administrative offices for the town manager and town clerk as well as Council Chambers. The cost for this project as well as the library that was constructed in 2009 is estimated at \$1.3 million.

Green Horizon Land Trust:

- In 2010, Green Horizon Trust and the Dundee Town Commission, came together to open the Barbara B. Pedersen Wildlife Preserve along Lake Annie. The 40 acre tract of land, valued at \$1.5 million was donated by the Pederson Family to the Green Horizon Land Trust. Dundee agreed to donate two picnic tables and two benches for the preserve entrance which will be known as the Town of Dundee Doorway to the Ridge, and to provide regular trail maintenance. The Preserve features more than a mile of cleared hiking trails, picnic areas, educational signs and an abundance of beautiful Florida Landscape. The land has 35 acres of longleaf pine forest and 476 feet along the shores of Lake Annie. The property also contains a 5-acre citrus grove that Green Horizon plans to remove and replace



**Figure 21: Dundee's Main Street Renovations**

with longleaf pines. The site is home to many endangered plants and a variety of animals, including the occasional bald eagle and deer. Even though the property was donated in January 2010, the project was able to get off the ground only earlier this year thanks to a \$12,000 grant from the Elizabeth Ordway Dunn Foundation. Green Horizon began the Barbara B. Pedersen Capital Campaign to raise the rest of the \$21,000 it needs. To date, private donors have contributed another \$7,000 bringing the total to \$19,000. Keep up with their progress by checking out the Green Horizon Land Trust web site, at [greenhorizonfl.homestead.com](http://greenhorizonfl.homestead.com).

#### Lake Wales:

- In 2011, the Lake Wales Downtown Historic District was refreshed with major streetscape improvements. These improvements were funded by a Community Development Block Grant. The \$330,000 project included decorative pavers, sidewalk repairs, new crosswalks and curb ramps, and extensive shade trees and plantings along Park, Stuart and Central Avenue between SR 17 – The Ridge Scenic Highway and First Street.

#### Lake Hamilton:

- In 2011, a new water treatment plant replaced an outdated treatment plant from the 1950's and the water tower dating to the 1920's. The new plant includes a 400,000 gallon storage tank, two new wells, advanced hydrogen sulfide removal system, an indoor high service pumping room, security cameras, and other technologies to produce high quality water. The new plant is located on North Church Street. The project was funded by a \$2.4 million loan and \$923,800 grant from the US Department of Agriculture and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection funded 65 percent of the \$836,000 hydrogen sulfide removal system. The Town of Lake Hamilton funded \$240,000.

## **CORRIDOR PROMOTION AND MEASURING SUCCESS**

Over the last 5 years, the Scenic Highway has been the topic of discussion in the local newspapers. The coverage includes meeting recaps, text changes to the land development and comprehensive plans of Polk County, selected areas of study, 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale, historical sites, opening of parks, and road improvements. See Appendix B for some of the newspaper articles. Scenic 17 Sprint Triathlon in Babson Park has embraced the official logo of the Scenic Highway. Each year the event uses the Scenic Highway logo as their event logo.

The CME puts on one event each year which is the 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale. This event began in 2008, with an estimated 100 attendees along the corridor. In 2014, an estimated 5,000 people attended the event. The event is a great way to gain visitors to the corridor, educate them about the Scenic Highway, as well as brings a large amount of business to the local businesses along the corridor. Many of the local business will have sidewalk sales on this day to attract people to their business. The CME post information about the event on their website, Facebook, local newspaper articles and hand out flyers at local events to name a few. The Scenic 17 Sprint Triathlon has been a growing event. Webber International University



**Figure 22: 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale Sign**

with Alta Vista Sports puts on the event each year. The first event was in 2008 with 42 competitors. In 2014, there were over 100 competitors. In 2011, the event expanded to include a youth sprint challenge triathlon. In 2014, there were 36 youth competitors. Many of the competitors have commented on the scenic beauty of the corridor and the how challenging it is to do the run and ride portion of the course.

In June 2011, The Ridge Scenic Highway CME released a website ([www.ridgescenichighway.com](http://www.ridgescenichighway.com)). The website includes videos, pictures, annual reports, meeting documents, event calendar, members of the CME Board, and several pages about the Scenic Highway and its surrounding beauty. Upon designation the FDOT created a corridor video showcasing the many features and attractions along the highway. This video has been played on the Polk County Government Television, is located on the Polk TPO's YouTube account, and the Scenic Highway's Facebook page.

The CME tracked the FDOT's SR 17 traffic count volumes each year. These volumes indicate the vehicle usage of the Scenic Highway. The volumes are looked at for possible high traffic areas where the CME can suggest additional road improvements to allow a safe passage for all users. As can be seen in the table below, the volumes have varied along the corridor over the years. The highest volumes are located from Polk Avenue through to Waverly Road and then again in Haines City from SR 544 to US 17/92. Within the last five years, SR 17 has been resurfaced to include bike lanes and sidewalks as well as intersection improvements. From the 2010 Corridor Management Plan update, most of the traffic counts have decreased. This could be due to the completion of the widening of US 27 to six lanes.

There have been a tremendous amount of investments made along the corridor for preservation, protection, and enhancement of properties. The details are outlined in the Funding section on page 30.

<b>SR 17 - FDOT Traffic Count Locations</b>	<b>2009 AADT</b>	<b>2010 AADT</b>	<b>2011 AADT</b>	<b>2012 AADT</b>	<b>2013 AADT</b>	<b>Average Volume</b>
0064 SW of Livingston Lake Rd	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,500	2,500	2,680
5038 S of CR 630 (Frostproof)	6,500	6,000	6,000	6,100	6,000	6,120
5039 N of CR 630 (Frostproof)	3,800	3,500	3,500	2,900	3,500	3,440
0122 NW of Libby Rd (Babson Park)	5,700	6,200	6,200	6,000	5,600	5,940
0018 S of Bellview Drive (Lake Wales)	3,600	4,000	4,000	3,900	3,900	3,880
5122 SE of Polk Ave. (Lake Wales)	4,600	4,400	4,400	3,900	3,700	4,200
5123 NW of Polk Ave. (Lake Wales)	7,400	7,200	7,200	8,400	7,600	7,560
5124 N of Central Ave (Lake Wales)	9,600	9,500	9,500	8,500	7,700	8,960
0047 S of Mtn. Lake Cut-Off	11,400	11,000	11,000	10,500	10,400	10,860
5212 S of Chalet Suzanne Rd	7,600	7,200	7,200	6,500	6,400	6,980
0048 S of Waverly Road	6,000	5,800	5,800	5,200	5,500	5,660
0071 N of Waverly Road	6,100	5,900	5,900	5,400	5,800	5,820
0092 NW of Lk Mabel Lp Rd (Dundee)	5,600	4,700	4,700	5,000	4,900	4,980
5030 E of Center Street (Dundee)	6,400	6,200	6,200	6,300	6,100	6,240
5031 N of Main Street (Dundee)	8,300	7,700	7,700	7,100	7,100	7,580
0046 S of SR 544 (Haines City)	5,900	5,900	5,900	5,900	5,900	5,900
5049 N of SR 544 (Haines City)	10,600	10,400	10,400	8,400	8,400	9,640
0039 S of US 17/92 (Haines City)	11,300	11,100	11,100	10,000	10,000	10,700

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RELATIONSHIP

Over the last five years, Polk County adopted basic regulations/policies in the Comprehensive Plans and Land Development Codes.

Since the 2010 update, Polk County adopted the SR 17, The Ridge Scenic Highway as a Resource Protection overlay in the Future Land Use Map Series. The overlay applies to parcels and proposed ++development abutting the SR 17 Ridge Scenic Highway. The County continues to work with the local jurisdictions along the corridor, private agencies, and the Ridge Scenic Highway CME, to discuss the viewsheds, beautification projects, pull off locations, and development regulations along the corridor. The County and City’s Comprehensive Plans and Land Development Codes/Regulations have been revised to incorporate the Ridge Scenic Highway and development regulations along the corridor.

## PARTNERSHIP

The CME works closely with the local governments, organizations, agencies in implementing the action plan items. Below you will find a list of organizations and agencies the CME has worked with since the designation of the Scenic Highway.

<b>Agency/Organization</b>	<b>Project</b>
7 Local Jurisdictions and Central Florida Planning Council	Coordination of board and committee meetings
	Letters of support for grant applications
	Text changes to their Comprehensive Plans
	Text changes to their Land Development Codes
	Assistance with events
	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Alico Incorporated	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Alta Vista Sports	Scenic 17 Sprint Triathlon (2010-2015)
Babson Park Beautification Group	Babson Park Demonstration Garden Park
Babson Park Visioning Group	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Ben Hill Griffin Incorporated	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Chalet Suzanne	Host meetings
	Assist with events
	Scenic Highway Focus Group
4 Chambers of Commerce (Haines City, Dundee, Lake Wales, Frostproof)	Distribution of Ridge Scenic Highway brochure
	39 Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale
	Beautification projects
	Assistance with events
Envisors	Scenic Highway Focus Group
First Industrial	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Florida Department of Transportation	Scenic Highway Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan
	Ridge Scenic Highway Brochure
	Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor Video

Hardin Construction	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Hunt Brothers Incorporated	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Koala Signs	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Lake of the Hills Community	Host meetings
	Assist with events
Lake Wales Depot Museum	Information hub for the Ridge Scenic Highway
Lake Wales News	Scenic Highway Focus Group
2 Main Streets (Haines City and Lake Wales)	Distribution of Ridge Scenic Highway brochure
	39 Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale
My Florida Realtors	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Peace River Packing Company	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Planning Associates	Mapping out sidewalks along the corridor
	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Polk County Farm Bureau	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Polk Transit Authority	Benches and bus stop improvements along the corridor
Polk Transportation Planning Organization	Technical Assistance
Raley Groves	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Ridge Audubon Center	Host Meetings
Story Grove Service Incorporated	Scenic Highway Focus Group
U.S. Department of Agriculture	Scenic Highway Focus Group
UC Development	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Visit Florida	Posting events on their site
Water Properties	Scenic Highway Focus Group
Webber International University	Scenic 17 Sprint Triathlon (2010-2015)
Wilson Miller	Scenic Highway Focus Group

## PROBLEM AREAS

Over the last five years membership has varied with very active members to inactive members. At this time the CME is having a hard time maintaining the At-Large positions to the CME. These positions are important to reach out to certain sectors of the private and public businesses/groups along the ridge. The CME continues to seek out individuals so they can attend the meetings and events. Upon designation the CME had a large interested group of individuals, over the years those interested working with the CME has dwindled. This has been due to the individuals moving from the area and even their priorities have changed.

While there has been a lot of money spent/collected/invested in the corridor as indicated in the Funding Section, the CME has had a hard time finding grants that do not require a local match. Like many of the jurisdictions along the corridor, the CME does not have money to put towards a matching a grant for possible enhancements along the corridor (i.e. pull off areas at scenic vistas).

## **ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

Since designation of the corridor, several action items listed in the 2010 Corridor Management Plan have been completed, require revision to make them more effective, are new, and continue to be an action that the CME would like to pursue. Below is a status summary of the exiting action items from the 2010 Corridor Management Plan update. Appendix A includes the 2015 Corridor Management Plan new action item list.

### **Short Term Action Items**

#### **Bylaws**

The bylaws were revised in September 2013. The changes are to define a quorum as a not less than five regular and/or at large members. Alternates shall not be considered as part of the quorum unless their jurisdictions' representative is absent.

#### **America's Byway Designation**

The CME has not applied for the America's Byway designation with the US Department of Transportation.

#### ***Action Item: Inclusion of Ridge Scenic Highway in Local Government Comprehensive Plans.***

The County has completed text for the Scenic Highway Overlay District into the Comprehensive Plans.

#### ***Action Item: Revised and Updated Corridor Management Plan***

Throughout 2014, the CME brainstormed to come up with the updated CMP.

#### **Education/Awareness/Community Participation**

#### ***Action Item: Proactive Speakers Bureau***

The CME has not given a presentation to the local groups and jurisdictions due to limited staff and staff's time available to be at these meetings. They have participated in the County's Focus Group for the designation of the Scenic Highway Overlay District in the Polk County Comprehensive Plan.

#### ***Action Item: Website, Video, Handouts, Brochures, Visitor's Guide, Press Releases***

The CME created their website in 2011. FDOT created a video of the corridor in 2005 and this video is used on the Facebook page, website and the Polk TPO's YouTube Channel. A brochure was created about the history and provided points of interest along the corridor. The CME has worked with the local media to issue press releases about meetings and events along the corridor.

#### **Environmental/Land Use**

#### ***Action Item: Agricultural and Ecological Content for Website***

The CME includes basic information about the environment and land use along the corridor on its website.

#### ***Action Item: Encourage Innovative Incentives that Support Alternative Family Farming Businesses***

The CME has not had the opportunity to encourage incentives for alternative family farming business within the last five years, due to a vacancy with the At Large Membership vacancy.

***Action Item: Encourage Innovative Methods that Promote Conservation***

While the CME has not had the direct opportunity to encourage innovative methods that promote conservation, they have supported local governments and private land owners in efforts to conserve property or develop land development regulations.

***Action Item: Encourage Innovative Methods that Protect the Cattle and Citrus Industries***

The CME has not had the opportunity to encourage innovative methods that protect the cattle and citrus industries within the last five years, due to a vacancy with the At Large Membership vacancy.

***Action Item: Close Coordination with Local Governments***

The CME has worked with each of the local governments along the corridor in order to develop regulations and policies in Comprehensive Plans and Land Development Codes. The CME has also participated with each of the County's Selected Area Studies and the Scenic Highway Focus Group. The local governments also participate with the annual 39 Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale event.

***Action Item: Environmentally Sensitive Lands Surrounding Lake Livingston Listed with Polk County Environmental Lands Program***

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

***Action Item: Executed Conservation Easements***

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

***Action Item: Land Development Regulations that Preserve SR 17 Buffers and Viewsheds***

The CME has worked with the County's Scenic Highway Focus Group to develop basic policies in the County's Comprehensive Plan to identify the viewsheds. The CME continues to work with the County's Scenic Highway Focus Group to develop policies and regulations to support buffers and viewsheds along the highway.

**Fundraising/Grants**

***Action Item: Funding for Local Events***

The CME has sought out funding for one event each year, the 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale. The CME rents out tables/spaces for patrons at different locations throughout the corridor. Additional information on this event can be found in the Cultural Resources section.

***Action Item: Tax-Exempt Status from IRS***

The CME has begun the application process to submit the application for tax-exempt status; however, currently does not have the money for the application fee.

**Historian**

The CME split the role of the Historic At Large Member, by creating a northern and southern corridor person. Lake Wales serves as the middle location of the split.

**Membership**

***Action Item: Mailing List of CME Members***

The CME maintains an active list of members and potential members to mail materials to as well as an email list.



***Action Item: Scenic Highway P.O. Box***

Currently the CME uses the Lake Wales Depot as the mailing address due to the lack of mail the organization gets throughout the year.

***Action Item: Successful Annual Meeting***

The CME has a very successful annual meeting along with the other meetings held throughout the year.

**Nominating**

***Action Item: Prominent Board Members within the Tourism, Cultural; Historic, Commercial/Developers, and Environmental Fields***

The CME is always seeking out personnel to fill these At-Large members.

***Action Item: Prominent Local Agricultural Landowners and Producers as Active CME Members and Board Members.***

The CME is always seeking out personnel to fill these At-Large members.

**Projects**

***Action Item: Promote Non-Motorized Modes of Travel***

FDOT created a Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan for the corridor. This plan was developed with the CME and the local governments along the corridor.

***Action Item: Bicycle Facilities and Appropriate Design between Mountain Lake Cutoff Road and North of Sixth Street***

Although the construction of these facilities has not occurred in the last five years, the FDOT has created a Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan for the corridor. As opportunity occurs, the FDOT is incorporating the details of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan.

***Action Item: Bicycle Facilities and Appropriate Design between US 27 and Webber International University***

The FDOT has created a Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan for the corridor that supports the sidewalks that was installed in Babson Park and provides guidance for the remaining corridor. As opportunity occurs, the FDOT is incorporating the details of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan.

***Action Item: Haines City to Lake Wales Trail***

Haines City developed a master plan for their downtown, which included a trail. The City has the trail currently under construction in 2015. For the remainder down to the Lake Wales Trail, the FDOT has created a Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan for the corridor. As opportunity occurs, the FDOT is incorporating the details of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan.

***Action Item: Corridorwide Yard Sale***

The CME held their first corridor yard sale in 2008 and has continued the event annual since. The event has grown in size annually.

***Action Item: Support Efforts for New Park on Lake Easy***

Polk County Board of County Commissioners developed a park, Welling Park on Lake Easy.

***Action Item: Haines City Downtown Master Plan that Supports the Scenic Highway***

Over the last five years Haines City has made many changes to their downtown that supports the Scenic Highway. They moved their City Hall and Library to downtown, as well as began the trail to connect Haines City southward to the other communities along SR 17, the Ridge Scenic Highway.

***Action Item: North Lake Wales Selected Area Plan that Preserves Vistas of Bok Tower***

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

***Action Item: Ridge Scenic Highway Adopt-a-Highway***

While the CME has not addressed this item in the last five years, many organizations have participated in cleaning the highway.

***Action Item: Scenic Pull-Off Areas***

These areas have not been constructed in the last five years; however, have been identified in the Polk County's Comprehensive Plan.

***Action Item: Successful Scenic Highway Event***

The CME hosts an annual 39-Mile Scenic Highway event.

**Publicity**

***Action Item: Distribution of Scenic Highway Printed Materials to Travel Agents and Travelers***

The local Chambers of Commerce and main street offices have the brochure about the Scenic Highway as well displays and distributes the flyer for the 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale.

***Action Item: Gateway Markers on SR 17 in Haines City south of US 17/92, on Chalet Suzanne Road at SR 17, and on SR 17 North of US 27***

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

***Action Item: Ridge Scenic Highway Interpretive Center***

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

***Action Item: Scenic Highway Event Plan and Schedule***

The CME has an annual calendar that is created and lists the events along the corridor.

***Action Item: Supply of "The Ridge Scenic Highway" T-Shirts***

The CME created and sales a T-Shirt for the 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale event.

***Action Item: Wayfinding Design Template***

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

***Action Item: Widely Recognized Coordinating Calendar***

Currently there is not one calendar that is the host to all events along the corridor. The CME uses Facebook and their website to coordinate calendars and share event information.

**Telephone**

***Action Item: Action Alert Notification System***

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

## **Long Term Action Items**

### **Initiation of Master Plan/Main Street Program in Dundee**

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

### **Initiation of Master Plan in Frostproof**

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

### **Initiation of Master Plan in Lake Wales**

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

### **Initiation of Master Plan in Lake Hamilton**

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

### **Update of Master Plan for Webber International University**

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

### **Revision of Polk County Greenways Master Plan**

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

### **Update of Polk TPO's Long Range Transportation Plan**

The TPO is currently updating their Long Range Transportation Plan and will continue to support the SR 17 Scenic Highway's Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan and Mission/Vision Statement.

### **Update of Chalet Suzanne Master Plan**

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

### **Update of Bok Tower Gardens Master Plan**

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

### **Update of Southwest Florida Water Management District Plan**

The CME has not addressed this item in the last five years.

**APPENDIX A  
GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, ACTION ITEMS, AND  
PLAN OF ACTION**

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTION ITEMS	PLAN OF ACTION
<b>INCREASE COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION</b>	Work closely with local governments, entities, and communities to coordinate and maximize our efforts	Review existing projects and participate in future planning with community leaders to synthesize mutual goals	Inclusion of Ridge Scenic Highway in State and Local Government Plans	Review existing Polk County and local government Comprehensive and Master Plans to ensure scenic highway is appropriately included in all planning, zoning, and infrastructure decisions and policies. Attend meetings and coordinate directly with local officials.
	Receive input from local governments and community partners	Update the Corridor Management Plan every five years to allow for revisions of the document	Revise and Update Corridor Management Plan and annual reports	Coordinate with local governments and community partners with presentations, discussions, CME Board meetings, and social media

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTION ITEMS	PLAN OF ACTION
<b>INCREASE RESOURCE PROTECTION, MAINTENANCE, PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT</b>	Support and expand methods for resource protection	Support and expand existing conservation efforts.	Encourage Innovative Methods that promote Conservation	Review current local and regional conservation regulations. Research and review best practices. Brainstorm new approaches to providing incentives and requiring developers to preserve environmentally sensitive lands. Tailor approaches to local resources and growth patterns. Suggest policy changes to local and regional government officials.
		Support and expand existing recreational efforts.	Promote non-motorized modes of travel	Encourage local governments to endorse and pursue the implementation of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan created by the Florida Department of Transportation. Closely coordinate with Polk County on its Greenways Master Planning process. Coordinate with Polk County Planning Department, Polk County Parks Department, and Polk TPO to encourage inclusion of trails/sidewalks/bike lanes in plans.
		Sponsor an adopt-a-highway and other litter control programs along SR 17.	Ridge Scenic Highway Adopt-A-Highway	Contact FDOT's Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator in Tallahassee at 1-800-BAN-LITT(er) or 1-800-226-5488. Adopt a minimum of 2 miles along the corridor. Organize volunteers. Schedule and advertise minimum of 4 annual litter cleanups. Encourage other community partners and local governments to adopt portions of the highway.
	Continue to encourage and coordinate the acquisition and management environmentally sensitive lands	Develop innovative ways to protect environmentally sensitive lands.	Encourage Innovative Methods that promote Conservation	Review current local and regional conservation regulations. Research and review best practices. Brainstorm new approaches to providing incentives and requiring developers to preserve environmentally sensitive lands. Tailor approaches to local resources and growth patterns. Suggest policy changes to local and regional government officials.
	Preserve scenic views from SR 17	Coordinate the purchase of land development rights within key viewsheds.	Executed Conservation Easements	The Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem is a Group A Project of Florida Forever. Contact local landowners and promote the benefits of conservation easements. Interview landowners to determine interest in conservation easements. Connect interested landowners with land trusts and Polk County Environmental Lands Program.
		Encourage local governments to provide incentives for clustering to preserve key viewsheds and ensure lighting, signage, landscaping and hardscaping reflect the historic character of the corridor.	Land Development Regulations that Preserve SR 17 Buffers and Viewsheds	Coordinate with local government representatives and stress the importance of SR 17 buffers and clustering throughout the rural areas of the corridor. Proactively contact land developers and describe the kinds of buffers and clustering that the community supports. Support development projects that include buffers and clustering.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTION ITEMS	PLAN OF ACTION
<b>INCREASE TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY</b>	Monitor and identify unsafe travel conditions and high crash locations for all modes of transportation along SR 17	Coordinate with the FDOT, Polk TPO and local governments in identifying unsafe conditions and high crash locations along SR 17.	Promote safety and multi-modal enhancements along SR 17 consistent with the corridor vision and action plan.	Encourage local governments to pursue transportation enhancement funding from the FDOT for trail and multi-modal projects on SR 17 that are consistent with the vision and action plan.
	Promote non-motorized modes of travel	Encourage local governments and the Florida Department of Transportation to provide safe and convenient multi-use facilities along and parallel to SR 17 where feasible (e.g. bicycling, hiking, and equestrian).	Promote Non-Motorized Modes of Travel	Encourage local governments to endorse and pursue the implementation of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan created by the Florida Department of Transportation. Closely coordinate with Polk County on its Greenways Master Planning process. Coordinate with Polk County Planning Department, Polk County Parks Department, and the Polk TPO, to encourage inclusion of trails/sidewalks/bike lanes in plans.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTION ITEMS	PLAN OF ACTION	
<b>INCREASE EDUCATION AND PUBLICIZE CORRIDOR STORY</b>	Educate residents and decision makers about the Ridge Scenic Highway Vision, Goals, Strategies, and Action Plan.	Develop materials to guide the traveler along the corridor, including local culture and ecological information	Create and maintain a Website, Video, Handouts, Brochures, Visitor's Guide, Press Release, social media page	Create subcommittee as needed to research and draft content for products. Contact local partners to produce products. Arrange to have video play on Polk County TV and other media outlets. Distribution of Scenic Highway printed materials to community partners and local governments.	
		Present and promote our information, programs, and materials to non-profit, business, and community groups.	Create a Speakers Bureau, email lists, share content on all media options (Social Media, TV, Radio, etc). Invite community partners to board and community meetings.	Create multiple presentations in PowerPoint or other options about the Corridor Story, groups of intrinsic resources, and the Corridor Vision and Goals. Recruit and train speakers for clear enthusiastic and consistent delivery. Contact local community groups and ask that they invite the CME to present.	
	Tell the Corridor Story to inform and educate travelers about the multiple assets along the corridor.		Develop a way finding program.	Wayfinding Design Template	Revise the wayfinding ideas contained in the Section 1's Concept Plan into a design template. Promote the design template to local Main Street programs and Community Redevelopment Agencies.
			Locate, establish, and staff an Interpretive/Multi-language Center for the corridor.	Ridge Scenic Highway Interpretive Center	Locate and negotiate an agreement with one or several cultural institutions that can host an interpretive center. Stock center with scenic highway materials. Coordinate staffing schedule of volunteers.
			Work with local governments, property owners and developers to create pull-off areas. Develop interpretive signs at pull-off and other locations along the corridor.	Scenic Pull-Offs Areas	Reconsider the feasibility of the scenic overlook locations pinpointed in Scenic Resources subsection of Section 8: Designation Criteria. Reconsider the design of the overlooks contained in the Concept Plan. Coordinate with Polk County TPO and FDOT to issue permits and schedule funding.
			Encourage local governments and the Florida Department of Transportation to design and construct gateways for the corridor.	Gateway Markers on SR 17 in Haines City south of 17/92, on Chalet Suzanne Road at SR 17, and on SR 17 north of US 27	Review preliminary designs contained in the Concept Plan. Work with local engineers/designers for final design. Coordinate with local governments and FDOT on placement of gateways.
			Sponsor events to establish a wide advertisement base.	Scenic Highway Event Schedule	Brainstorm within CME on type of scenic highway event that would coordinate and support other local events. Seek support of event idea from local institutions, museums, and governments. Schedule event date and location that is supportive of other events. Advertise heavily within the community for participation. Advertise regionally for event.
			Promote tourism through cooperative efforts with groups such as AAA, Visit Florida, Polk County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Keep Florida Beautiful	Distribution of Scenic Highway Printed Materials and t-shirts and other materials to Travel Agents and Travelers	Make contact with tourism and tour groups. Secure permission to provide and stock scenic highway printed materials and recruit local museums, history centers, and retailers to display and sell t-shirts or other materials.



<b>GOALS</b>	<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PLAN OF ACTION</b>
<b>PURSUE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND ECOTOURISM</b>	Protect the commercial base of agriculture.	Work with local governments, agricultural industry and community partners to encourage the sustainability of agricultural uses along the corridor.	Encourage Local Agriculture Landowners and Producers as Active CME Members and Board Members	Brainstorm with partners on possible visible and vocal supporters of scenic highway. Make contact, explain CME efforts, and recruit partners. Make presentations to local agriculture associates.
			Encourage innovated methods that protect agriculture	Review current local and regional agriculture protections. Research and review best practices. Brainstorm new approaches to protecting and supporting agricultural industry. Tailor approaches to local farmer and grower needs. Suggest policy changes to local and regional government officials.
		Promote incentives for local farming businesses.	Encourage Innovative Incentives that Support local Farming Business	Review current local and regional agriculture protections and farming economics. Research and review best practices. Brainstorm new approaches to protecting and supporting local farms. Tailor approaches to local farmer needs. Suggest policy changes to local and regional government officials.
	Encourage nature-based and heritage-based tourism.	Promote, support or host historical and cultural events.	Scenic Highway Event Schedule	Brainstorm within CME on type of scenic highway event that would coordinate and support other local events. Seek support of event idea from local institutions, museums, and governments. Schedule event date and location that is supportive of other events. Advertise heavily within the community for participation. Advertise regionally for event.
				Work with tourism and tour groups, such as AAA, Visit Florida, Polk County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Keep Florida Beautiful, Ridge Audubon, etc.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTION ITEMS	PLAN OF ACTION
<p><b>PROVIDE ADEQUATE ADMINISTRATION</b></p>	<p>Maintain a Corridor Management Entity</p>	<p>Form non-profit organization with 501(c)3 status.</p>	<p>Tax-Exempt Status from IRS</p>	<p>To apply for recognition by the IRS of exempt status as an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Code, use Package 1023 (Application for Recognition of Exemption). The application must be complete and accompanied by the appropriate user fee. For more information, see Publication 557 (Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization). See Application Process for a step-by-step review of what an organization needs to know and to do in order to apply for recognition by the IRS of tax-exempt status.</p>
		<p>Address and complete necessary operational functions and tasks such as establishing and maintaining mailing lists, CME logo, etc.</p>	<p>Mailing List of CME Members</p>	<p>Research and create the names and contact information for interest and membership groups – potential partners in government, business, nonprofits; potential funding sources; newspaper contacts; tourism and tour groups; agriculture industry supporters. Compile contact information divided into categories – regular contact, special contact, press, Agriculture.</p>
		<p>Establish representation for CME from incorporated communities, unincorporated communities, the County, and five At-Large positions (Agriculture, Tourism, Cultural, Historic, Commercial/ Developers, Environmental, and Education).</p>	<p>Promote Board Membership within the Tourism, Cultural/Historic, Commercial, Developers, Environmental fields, and education</p>	<p>Brainstorm within the CME, local governments, and local community groups for board members commitment to the scenic highway. Brainstorm with partners on possible visible and vocal supporters of scenic highway. Make contact, explain CME efforts, and recruit partners. Make presentations to local agriculture associates.</p>
		<p>Convene quarterly meetings, as specified in the CME Bylaws.</p>	<p>Successful Quarterly Meetings</p>	<p>Execute Quarterly Meetings with varying topics.</p>

**APPENDIX B  
NEWSPAPER ARTICLES**

## Preserving the View

# New Rules Would Keep Growth From Spoiling Scenic Highway

By [Tom Palmer](#)

THE LEDGER

Published: Sunday, February 19, 2012 at 12:40 a.m.

BARTOW | Scenic Highway winds for 39 miles through hills and valleys, past lakes, forests and citrus and a number of communities along the Lake Wales Ridge between Haines City and Frostproof.

But increasing growth has arrived along more stretches of the once-rural corridor, potentially threatening the scenic vistas and small-town atmosphere that has dominated the landscape for decades.



PAUL CRATE | LEDGER MEDIA GROUP  
Susan Welborn, a resident of Babson Park, walks along a section of Scenic Highway between Babson Park and Frostproof overlooking Lake Moody.

Now, after nearly a decade of discussion, Polk County commissioners are poised to vote Tuesday on a new set of development regulations that will encourage people behind the inevitable development wave coming to the area to preserve as much of Scenic Highway's character as possible.

But Polk officials can't accomplish this alone.

Annexations during the past decade have placed most of the corridor under the control of Haines City, Lake Wales, Frostproof or Dundee.

Those decisions by those cities will be as important as anything county officials decide.

### AN IDEA IS BORN

Johanna Buscher recalls the discussion at the Lake of the Hills Garden Club in 2002.

Developers encouraged by Lake Wales' annexations and a coming real estate boom were talking of bulldozing the citrus groves surrounding this quiet residential area around Starr Lake and Lake Mabel, not far from the historic Chalet Suzanne Restaurant and Country Inn.

Buscher and her neighbors wanted to do something to preserve their community, but they weren't sure what to do.

Meanwhile, Susan Wellborn and her neighbors in Babson Park were having similar misgivings as Lake Wales expanded from the north and Frostproof from the south.

They worried those annexations and the planned development that accompanied them threatened to overwhelm their quiet residential community and Crooked Lake, one of the few lakes in Florida that has earned the Outstanding Florida Water designation.

Babson Park residents had the same questions as Lake of the Hills residents.

They looked to county planners for advice.

Two ideas emerged.



PAUL CRATE | LEDGER MEDIA GROUP  
Johanna Buscher, a resident of Lake of the Hills

One was getting the Florida Department of Transportation to designate the Ridge Scenic Highway as a Florida Scenic Highway. That was approved in February 2005.

That was fairly noncontroversial because it had no regulatory strings attached to it.

The other part of their effort was quite controversial, and that's why it has taken a decade to work things out. It involved reworking Polk County's growth plan and development regulations to set up a system to keep new development from overwhelming the corridor.

But when county planners convened a public meeting in Lake Wales in early 2006 to get public reaction to the proposal, the reaction was not what they expected.

That meeting drew an angry crowd of politically powerful citrus growers and developers who had not participated in the earlier discussions.

They also had not been given the opportunity to rework the plan's wording behind the scenes before its first public hearing.

They demanded county commissioners scrap it.

Commissioners complied.

After the controversy cooled, county officials formed a committee composed of all of the interest groups along the corridor so they could start over on the growth plan change via the formation of a focus group.

Jack Brandon, a Lake Wales lawyer who represented the major landowners, said that approach worked better because everyone was finally involved.

"I think it was one of the most outstanding examples of planning at the local level," he said.

Tom Wodrich, a county planner assigned to work with the citizen group, said some of the grass-roots representatives appeared disappointed that some aspects of the plan, such as making preservation a voluntary incentive program instead of a required one.

"Nevertheless, the plan did put a value on conservation," Wodrich said.

Lake of the Hills' Buscher confirmed that.

"It lacked any enforcement," she said. "It was just guidelines."

Some key features of the Scenic Highway plan and regulations include:

Development restrictions that require landscaping buffers made up of a variety of native trees and shrubs to preserve the natural feel of the corridor.

Restrictions on lighting and signs to reduce visual blight.

Development setbacks from the highway to avoid creating a "tunnel effect."

Prohibitions on intense commercial and industrial land uses, such as junk yards, power plants, car washes or car or mobile home sales lots.

Brandon said the process was frustrating after state planners challenged the initial plan change because they said it didn't protect the area well enough.

State planners issued a report in August 2009 that called the plan "premature" and said it contributed to urban sprawl.

County officials tried to negotiate a settlement but finally repealed the initial plan and restarted the process in hopes of running into fewer problems with the new administration in Tallahassee following the 2010 election, Brandon said.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

The key question that remains is whether the new rules will help.

Buscher and Wellborn said they're optimistic.

"We did not get everything we hoped for, but we're heartened the County Commission is moving ahead with it," Buscher said.

Wellborn agreed.

"I think it's the best achievable plan we could make at this time," she said, explaining the plan is the result of work by a diverse focus group from all of the interest groups along the corridor.

Wellborn said she hopes city officials embrace the idea.

What cities do is important because of the reversal that has occurred.

When the Scenic Highway protection plan was first discussed, 70 percent of the corridor was in unincorporated Polk County, and 30 percent was inside cities.

Now it's the other way around.

Any comprehensive plan for the corridor will involve coordination with city officials, Wodrich said.

He said he's working with city planners to come up with a shared vision. However, he said there are examples along the corridor of recent development that doesn't fit the vision.

That includes a housing development on Lake Mabel and an industrial warehouse development in Frostproof. In both cases, their appearance is visually jarring.

"Those give us examples of what development would look like if we don't implement the plan," Wodrich said.

Brandon said he has volunteered to meet with city officials to explain the county's plan and persuade them to adopt growth plan changes that will complement it.

"It isn't going to be very effective unless the municipalities buy into it," he said.

Brandon, one of Polk's most active land-use lawyers, said now's a good time to start while there's a lull in development pressure so that a good plan will be in place to provide incentives.

City planners along the corridor say they're working to coordinate with the county's plan, but that's not always practical in the more urban areas.

Mark Bennett, Haines City's planning manager, said the city's development regulations include setbacks and visual buffering, especially around the city's main business park, located on a hilltop near Scenic Highway and County Road 544.

"Obviously an urban environment is different from a rural environment," he said, but he said Haines City's plan is intended to be compatible with Polk County's planning efforts.

Margaret Swanson, Lake Wales' planning director, said the city has setbacks for some development and is planning to plant trees, particularly in industrial areas, to make the corridor more attractive.

But Swanson said other opportunities are presenting themselves.

A resurfacing project planned by the Florida Department of Transportation in 2013 from Mountain Lake Cutoff Road to Ray Martin Road will bring with it 7,000 feet of new sidewalk and better defined driveways, which will improve the appearance of the section through much of Lake Wales and make it more walkable.

She said Lake Wales already has established designs for roadside lighting and signs, though she said there has been some resistance to banning internally lighted signs.

Officials in Frostproof haven't discussed the Scenic Highway plan in detail yet, said Jennifer Codo-Salisbury, a planner from the Central Florida Regional Planning Council, which contracts with the city to offer advice on land-use planning.

"There has not been a dialogue," she said. "They will be looking at it in late spring and early summer."

Babson Park's Wellborn said that's why continued monitoring is important.

"I hope the focus group will exercise some oversight and get involved," she said.

Wellborn said the important part of the plan is that it does contain the elements of a vision.

"We put guidelines in place so it won't be a hodgepodge," she said. "It will affect landowners in a positive way because it will increase the value of their land."

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Wellborn and Buscher said one of the most successful promotions is the 39-mile Yard Sale that was started in 2007 to attract visitors on the first November of every year.

Scenic Highway supporters have also launched their own website at <http://www.ridgescenichighway.com/> that contains a map, historic information, photos and other information about the corridor they love and hope to preserve.

[ Tom Palmer can be reached at [tom.palmer@theledger.com](mailto:tom.palmer@theledger.com) or 863-802-7535. Read more views on the environment at <http://environment.blogs.theledger.com> and more views on county government at <http://county.blogs.theledger.com/>. ]

# THE REPORTER

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2012 | WWW.FOURCORNERSFLA.COM 25 CENTS

## A DECADE OF EFFORT



MICHAEL WILSON | LEDGER MEDIA GROUP

THE POLK COUNTY COMMISSION has approved new rules that should help keep the landscape along Scenic Highway looking scenic. But success will depend also on the cities and towns along the road from Haines City to Frostproof.

## Scenic Save

### County Commission OKs New Rules For Corridor

By TOM PALMER | LEDGER MEDIA GROUP

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[ PLEASE SEE SCENIC, R9 ]

ILL BLOCHER | REPORTER EDITOR | BILL.BLOCHER@NEWSCHIEF.COM | 863.401.6973 | WWW.FOURCORNERSFLA.COM



## Scenic

[ CONTINUED FROM R1 ]

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SCENIC HIGHWAY RUNS THROUGH rolling hills surrounded by citrus groves through most of its course from Haines City in the north to Frostproof in the south of Polk County.

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Scenic Highway supporters have also launched their own website at <http://www.ridge-scenichighway.com> that contains a map, historic information, photos and other information about the corridor they love and hope to preserve.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

## "Eliminate Numbness, Tingling, And Sharp Pain"

Relief By Using the SAME Treatment Proven Effective With 85% Of Sufferers

Numbness, tingling, and pain is an extremely annoying problem.

It may come and go...interrupts your sleep...and even makes your arm or legs feel weak at times. Maybe you've even been to other doctors and they claim all the tests indicate you should feel fine.

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# polk news

## IMAGES OF POLK SCENIC HIGHWAY

PHOTO ESSAY BY RICK RUNION | THE LEDGER



State Road 17, also known as Scenic Highway, runs north and south on the Lake Wales ridge in eastern Polk County. The road connects most of the county's eastern towns, from Frostproof to Davenport.

It crosses over the highest hills in the county through orange groves and past motels where tourists stayed years ago on their way to and from South Florida.

The two-lane road between Frostproof and Lake Wales is exceptionally beautiful. The highway swings past lakes, groves, public schools and Webber International University in Babson Park.

People looking for a great Sunday drive can try Scenic Highway and stop to buy fresh fruit and vegetables or boiled peanuts at one of the roadside stands.

Roll down the windows and enjoy the cooler weather while cruising the curves and rolling hills of eastern Polk.

— Rick Runion



## [ 'It Got Another Chance' ]

# Audubon Center for Birds of Prey Releases 450th Bald Eagle into Wild

By [Tom Palmer](#)

THE LEDGER

Published: Friday, June 1, 2012 at 12:22 a.m.

LAKELAND | Lynda White brought a young bald eagle back to Polk County on Thursday and let it fly freely again.

It wasn't just any eagle, though.

It was the 450th bald eagle that had been brought to Audubon Center for Birds of Prey and released. It was also White's final release.

White, coordinator of Audubon of Florida's EagleWatch since 1998, retires this week after personally releasing about 250 of those eagles.

Her successor is Matt Smith, an Audubon volunteer and licensed falconer who accompanied her Thursday.

The fledgling, a bird about 5 months old with the speckled white and dark brown plumage and black bill of an immature eagle, was hooded before the release to keep it calm.

About 20 people, many of them EagleWatch volunteers from Polk, Pinellas, Hillsborough and Pasco counties, waited in a pasture at Sanlan RV Park near Banana Lake for the bird to fly.

After it was released, the bird flew a short distance and landed in another part of the pasture, presumably trying to get its bearings in unfamiliar surroundings.

The bird was rescued April 3 near its nest on Willowbrook Golf Course in Winter Haven by Lake Region Audubon President Reinier Munguia and transported to the center.

EagleWatch volunteer Natalie Alexich, who was monitoring the nest where the young eagle was born, said she alerted Munguia when she saw the eagle on the ground.

"I wanted to be there from start to finish," she said, adding this is the first eagle release she has witnessed.

White said the young eagle was suffering from avian pox, a viral infection spread by mosquitoes that causes skin lesions.

Now that it has recovered, White said it should be raising young eagles of its own five years from now.

"It got another chance," she said. "It's a great thing that we do."



MICHAEL WILSON | LEDGER PHOTOS  
Audubon of Florida EagleWatch  
Coordinator Lynda White releases a 5-month-old immature bald eagle at Sanlan RV Park in Lakeland on Thursday.

## Highway to Get New Surface and an Upgrade

By [Mary Hurst](#)

THE REPORTER

Published: Thursday, March 24, 2011 at 11:04 a.m.

**HAINES CITY |** The City Commission has voted to approve a Florida Department of Transportation plan to reconstruct and resurface State Road 17 (Scenic Highway) from County Road 544 to U.S. 17/92 (Hinson Avenue) in Haines City.

The alternative chosen will include complete reconstruction of that portion of road and will include a bike path on the east side and sidewalks on the west side, with a medians to allow landscaping and beautification of the roadway.

The city will have to pay for any upgrade of street lighting and will have to maintain the medians.

FDOT hopes to begin the project in September or October. Construction will take about a year.

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## Bok Gardens Nature Trail Opens Onto Pine Land Preserve

By *Greg Parlier*  
Ledger Media Group Correspondent  
Published: Saturday, March 2, 2013 at 4:01 a.m.

LAKE WALES | Nestled among citrus and pine, a new preserve trail at Bok Tower Gardens provides a portal to a landscape rich in serene nature.

The 1.5-mile trail winds through part of 260 acres of open lands surrounding Bok Tower Gardens preserved by the Green Horizon Land Trust.

"The open agriculture and pine lands around Bok Tower Gardens are important to preserving the historic design and beauty of the garden laid out by Fredrick Law Olmsted Jr.," David Price, president of Bok Tower Gardens, said during the trail's dedication ceremony Friday.



Price

The Florida Community Trust awarded a \$2.5 million grant to the Green Horizon Land Trust, an environmental preservation organization focused on the Lake Wales Ridge and surrounding areas, to preserve the land as "vistas critically important to the historic design of the Gardens."

"If you look out from the gardens, some of the beauty of the landscape is the open groves and fields," Price said. "The other thing is we have a lot of wildlife, and the open land is a wildlife corridor. If you have homes and fences and dogs and cats it would impact the wildlife."

During the development boom of the early 2000s, there was a movement to alter the covenant signed by owners of the land surrounding Bok Tower Gardens to potentially open up some of the land for development.

That's when the Gardens began looking in to ownership as a way to preserve the scenic vistas its visitors had enjoyed for decades, Price said.

The Green Horizon Land Trust stepped in to buy the land, and partnered with Bok Tower Gardens to maintain the land.

In the agreement, Bok Tower will restore 156 of the 260 acres of former agricultural land to longleaf pine forest. Some of the preserve will remain in citrus production, and the rest of the land is in its native natural state.

Two picnic shelters are on the preserve, one at the trail head near the entrance to the Gardens and the other at Lake Wales High School overlooking the Preserve and Bok Tower, where faculty can conduct classes in a unique outdoor setting.

Ten signs along the trail, which ends at Bok Tower Gardens' visitors center, tell about the natural history of the preserve and the Lake Wales Ridge.

The Florida Wildflower Foundation provided a \$3,000 grant to the project for the planting of thousands of native wildflowers along the trail, and Mosaic Corporation provided the rock trail, rich in fossils from its phosphate mines.

Additionally, 71 volunteers from the Ridge Rangers, a group focused on helping

restore and support the Lake Wales Ridge ecosystem, Boy Scouts and other community members spent six days and 370 hours planting more than 13,000 wildflowers and native grasses on a 1-acre area surrounding the Preserve's picnic shelter and trailhead.

"Without the support of these dedicated volunteers, it would have been difficult to complete such a large task," said Bok land steward Katrina Noland. "Not only were these volunteers able to make a lasting impact on the environment, they also received a firsthand education and experienced the nature of this threatened ecosystem."

CSX, the Vaughn-Jordan Foundation, the Florida Wildflower Advisory Council, Polk County Parks and Natural Resources, the City of Lake Wales and the Lake Wales Chamber of Commerce also contributed to the project.

Hikers may encounter numerous species of wildlife, including foxes, bobcats, gopher tortoises, birds and raptors that make these open lands their home. Some of the wildlife that lived in the Gardens has moved back into the Preserve, their native habitat, since Bok began restoring the pine forest.

"Probably the biggest impact is the feeling and the mood, the ambiance of the place," Price said.

The public can access the trail as part of the admission price to Bok Tower Gardens and part of the ticket price will go to maintenance and restoration of the Preserve.

# Town Helps Green Horizon Trust, Pedersen Family Open Doorway to the Ridge

By CLIFFORD PARODY  
LEDGER CORRESPONDENT  
Published: Tuesday, July 24, 2012 at 9:29 p.m.

DUNDEE | The town's Doorway to the Ridge may be open by October.

That is the goal of the Green Horizon Trust and the Pedersen family who donated the 40 acres of nearly pristine land two years ago.

The nonprofit conservation agency has raised \$19,000 of the \$21,000 it needs to open what will be called the Barbara B. Pedersen Wildlife Preserve.

To help with the project, Rachelle Selser, who is executive director of the Lake Wales-based private trust, went before the Dundee Town Commission on June 26.

Selser asked the town to donate two picnic tables and two benches for the preserve's entrance, which will be known as the Town of Dundee Doorway to the Ridge, and to provide regular trail maintenance, which consists of backpack herbicide control and routine weed eating.

Because of all the work that already has gone into developing the preserve, the commission agreed.

"I think the park will not only be beneficial for our residents, but could also draw visitors from surrounding counties," said Dundee Town Manager Andy Stuart.

When it is complete, the preserve will feature more than a mile of cleared hiking trails, picnic areas, educational signs, and an abundance of beautiful Florida landscape.

Green Horizon and the Pedersen family are making plans to have a grand opening that will include a Friend of the Parks Foundation Trek Ten Trails hike and a geocache at Pedersen Preserve this winter.

The seeds for the project were planted by 84-year-old Jim Pedersen seven years ago. He is a retired citrus grower, cattle rancher, real estate broker and firearms dealer with a bachelor's degree in ecology.

He has lived on the land his entire life.

## ON LAKE ANNIE

The 40-acre tract, valued at \$1.5 million, has been in the Pedersen family since 1940. The land has 35 acres of longleaf pine forest and 476 feet along the shores of Lake Annie.

The site is home to many endangered plants and a variety of animals, including the occasional bald eagle and deer.

"I've lived on the property since 1941," Jim Pedersen said recently. "As a child, I grew up here. I love the wilderness."

He and his family decided to donate the tract on the Lake Wales Ridge, which runs alongside Scenic Highway within the south city limits of Dundee.



PAUL CRATE | LEDGER MEDIA GROUP  
JIM PEDERSEN and his daughter, Lisa Pedersen of Lake Wales, walk along his gravel driveway that is adjacent to the 40-acre tract of pine forest land along Lake Annie that he has donated to the Green Horizon Land Trust.

"I was looking for something to do with the property and it wasn't big enough for the Nature Conservancy, but Green Horizon was interested so we got together with them," Pedersen said.

"I couldn't see houses being built on the land, so we decided to give it to Green Horizon so it could stay how it is forever," he said.

His daughter, Lisa Pedersen, who owns The Gallery & Frame Shop in Lake Wales, supports the decision to donate the land.

"This is one of the last strips of the original longleaf pine in the area," she said. "We want it to remain in its natural state so people can see what Florida used to look like before the developers came through."

Jim Pedersen is proud of the fact that the preserve will be named after his mother, Barbara.

"My folks, especially my mother, were always interested in wildlife," Pedersen said, "and she kept this place pristine."

Although the property has been meticulously maintained by the Pedersen family for more than 40 years, Green Horizon President Alex Wheeler said some restoration is needed.

## LONGLEAF PINES

During August and September 2004, Hurricanes Charley, Frances, and Jeanne ripped through the region in rapid succession. The preserve lost many of its longleaf pine trees, opening the area for more exotic, invasive species.

The property also contains a 5-acre citrus grove that Green Horizon plans to remove and replace with longleaf pines.

"The challenge for Green Horizon is to seek contributions to remove these offending species, restore areas with longleaf pine, and open the preserve for passive recreation and environmental education," Wheeler said.

Even though the property was donated in January 2010, the project was able to get off the ground only earlier this year thanks to a \$12,000 grant from the Elizabeth Ordway Dunn Foundation.

Green Horizon began the Barbara B. Pedersen Capital Campaign to raise the rest of the \$21,000 it needs.

To date, private donors have contributed another \$7,000 bringing the total to \$19,000.

Keep up with their progress by checking out the Green Horizon Land Trust web site, at [greenhorizonfl.homestead.com](http://greenhorizonfl.homestead.com).

# Paving the Way: Road Reconstruction Project Enters Next Phase

## State Road 17 in Haines City

By [Daniel Figueroa IV](#)  
LEDGER MEDIA GROUP

Published: Thursday, October 23, 2014 at 1:14 a.m.

HAINES CITY | The State Road 17 South 10th Street Reconstruction project is on schedule and entering its next phase, said Janet Cook, the project's public information officer.

Monday saw structural asphalt begin to be poured on a 4,000-foot section of the northbound lane of SR 17 at State Road 544 and moving north. The paving is scheduled to be completed by today, and motorists will have access to the newly paved road in the coming weeks, Cook said.

The \$7.93 million project to reconstruct a section of South 10th Street between SR 544 and U.S. 17/92 began in November 2013 and is expected to be completed by summer 2015. It was initially a road resurfacing project, but city officials and Prince Contracting, the company handling construction of the road, decided it would be more cost-effective to reconstruct the entire 1.5 miles of roadway, Cook said.

The project includes replacing water and sewer pipes under the road, widening each of the two travel lanes to 11 feet, and includes the addition of a 14-foot section for a median and turn lane.

"The pipes were asbestos-covered and older infrastructure," Cook said.

"The city knew at some point it was going to have to be replaced. It didn't make sense to go back and replace the utilities."

The project also includes the addition of one 8-foot and one 5-foot section of sidewalk on either side of the road. A 3-foot section has been reserved for the 5-foot portion of sidewalk for the addition of streetlights.

Cook also said she has seen a generally favorable response to the project, especially with regard to the new sidewalks that will open when the construction is complete.

"I know some of the people on the east side who already have sidewalk and they can see more of the finished project," Cook said.

"They seem very happy."

However, not all are pleased with the project. St. Ann Catholic Church on Robinson Road, just off 10th Street, has lost some of its parishioners, said Michelle Wieber, a secretary for the church,



PAUL CRATE | LEDGER MEDIA GROUP  
Paving has begun just north of State Road 544 in the northbound lane of the State Road 17 road improvement project that runs from SR 544 to Hinson Avenue in Haines City. The project is expected to be completed in the summer of 2015.

"We've lost a lot of parishioners who don't like having to be rerouted. They tried it out for a little bit," Wieber said. "It's a two-year project, and I doubt if it will get finished on time. We'll have to cross our fingers and hope for the best."

Cook said the project is "right on schedule" both timewise and financially despite some delays for weather.

Those delays, she said, were built into the initial projection.

"We've had a lot of rain. That impacts how well they can move along," Cook said.

"But it appears that they are about half done."

While Wieber expressed concerns over whether such an extensive project would be worth it, Cook remained hopeful that everyone will see its value upon completion.

"Travelers, drivers and residents will have a much more improved facility; more pedestrian friendly and smooth," Cook said.

"It'll be a very nice project."

Daniel Figueroa IV can be reached at [daniel.figueroa@newschief.com](mailto:daniel.figueroa@newschief.com) or 863-401-6981.

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# 2015 Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor Management Entity Board



Jurisdiction	Member	Alternate	CME Officer
Dundee	Comm. Steve Glenn	Vacant	
Frostproof	Martin Sullivan	Martha Neher	*Secretary (Vacant)
Haines City	Clint Eliason	Gordon J. Broadhead	
Unincorporated Babson Park	Vacant	Vacant	*Vice-President (Vacant)
Unincorporated Lake of the Hills	Edward Esteve*	Johanna Buscher	*Treasurer
Lake Wales	Mimi Reid-Hardman*	Vacant	*President
Highland Park	Vacant	Vacant	
Hillcrest Heights	Vacant	Town Clerk Larry Blackwelder	
Lake Hamilton	Doug Lenard	Mayor Marlene Wagner	
Polk County (BoCC)	Vacant	Vacant	
Polk Transportation Planning Organization	Mayor Eugene Fultz	Vacant	
At-Large	Member	Co-Member	
Agriculture	Vacant	Vacant	
Tourism	Vacant	Vacant	
Cultural	Vacant	Vacant	
Historical	Johnny Powell (North)	Vacant (South Corridor)	Lake Wales is mid-point
Commercial/Developer	Vacant	Vacant	
Environmental	Vacant	Vacant	
Educational	Vacant	Vacant	





## The Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor Management Entity 2015 Action Plan Priorities



Babson Park \* Dundee \* Frostproof \* Haines City \* Highland Park \* Hillcrest Heights \* Lake Hamilton \* Lake of the Hills \* Lake Wales \* Polk County

### **Organization:**

- Develop a list of Priorities to be adopted at the first meeting of the year
- Develop Active Committees to help implement Action Plan Priorities
- Prepare and submit an Annual Report to the FDOT
- Maintain Active membership
- Tax Exempt Status
- Seek grants or other funding for events/flyers/videos

### **Education/Awareness/Community Participation:**

- Develop a Corridor Brochure/video
- Facebook Engagement (<https://www.facebook.com/TheRidgeScenicHighway>)
- Media Coverage/Press Releases
- Website Enhancement (<http://www.ridgescenichighway.com>)
- Enhance Member and Public Participation
- Public Events: trail, bike, triathlon, yard sale, other
- Update/Enhance the RSH Brochure and distribute to Chambers of Commerce, Libraries, Rail Depots/Museums, Outpost 27, etc.
- Work with travel agencies to promote The Ridge Scenic Highway

### **Scenic Highway Enhancement/Protection:**

- Support local government efforts for Comprehensive Plan/Land Development Regulations
- Encourage and support local partner grants that are consistent with the CME's Mission and Vision
- Encourage and support protection/Enhancement of key resources of the Scenic Highway (Prominent View Points, Windy Hill, Lake Wales Trail & Trailhead Interpretive Center, Historic Downtowns)
- Participate in Keep Polk County Beautiful and Adopt-A-Highway