



Brevard County Board of County Commissioners

2725 Judge Fran Jamieson
Way
Viera, FL 32940

Legislation Text

File #: 3255, **Version:** 1

Subject:

Mooring Field Development (District 2)

Fiscal Impact:

FY 22-23 - Up to \$250,000 in Grant Revenue

FY 23-24 - Remainder of Grant Funding

Dept/Office:

Natural Resources Management Department

Requested Action:

Permission for staff to pursue development of a regional mooring field in District 2, including site design and engineering, seeking regional public and private partnerships, exploration of management options, seeking additional project funding, authority for the County Manager or designee to execute resulting grant/funding contracts, including those in excess of \$100,000, and authorizing associated budget change requests.

Summary Explanation and Background:

At the request of the District 2 Commission Office, the Natural Resources Management Department, Boating & Waterways Program, seeks to explore the feasibility of a regional mooring field in District 2, proximate to Highway 520 and the Griffis Landing at Blue Crab Cove and Cocoa Village waterfront areas. Work will include development of design, engineering, project partnerships, a management plan, and grant funding options.

Currently there are at least 14 managed mooring fields in operation in the State of Florida. The management of Brevard County's waterways through the implementation of managed mooring fields has been a topic of political and community discussion for many years. Previous related Board actions include approving the community driven Brevard County Maritime Management Master Plan (2012) and recognizing the County initiated, University of Florida/Sea Grant project, a Mooring Field Siting Analysis for Brevard County (2011).

Even with recent legislative updates to Florida's boating laws, current regulations allow boaters to anchor at any destination they choose. These destinations are often without amenities such as pump out stations, restrooms, solid waste disposal, dinghy docks, dry dock or repair services, and convenience stores. The establishment of a managed mooring field along the Highway 520 - Cocoa/Merritt Island corridor will reduce the need for random anchoring and supply beneficial amenities to boaters. An increase in amenities to transient boaters will allow for more extended stays, increasing economic benefits to nearby businesses.

A properly managed mooring field must provide amenities such as a pump out station and restroom

facilities. Boaters will have access to a convenient and affordable means of wastewater disposal. Proper, efficient wastewater disposal facilities will have a positive impact on water quality in the Indian River Lagoon. Under current conditions, boaters that choose to spend extended periods of time on the water are forced to seek out these facilities, which can be great distances apart.

The problems associated with unregulated, long-term anchoring and the on-water storage of vessels include: accumulation of vessels in inappropriate locations, improper maintenance and the tendency to become derelict, sanitation and pollution issues, damage to benthic communities (seagrass), environmental and infrastructure related shoreside damage, dangers to navigational safety, obstruction of access to ingress and egress, and aesthetic nuisances.

Many waterfront homeowners have expressed concerns over unrestricted anchoring within view of their properties. A managed mooring field would reduce the conflict between homeowners and transient boaters. Management actions will ensure waterway access for all citizens while encouraging stewardship and promoting safe and courteous boating through education. Expansion of recreational and commercial infrastructure will promote economic development that strengthens Brevard County's prosperous water-based economy.

Staff requests authorization to pursue the development of a regional mooring field in District 2 including; permission to coordinate and develop agreements, as appropriate, with the Brevard County Parks Department, the City of Cocoa and the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency; exploration of management options including the development of private partnerships for long-term management; and, the authority to apply for applicable grants including but not limited to those from the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission and Florida Inland Navigation District, and authorization for the County Manager or designee to execute any grant applications and funding agreements awarded for the project. All related agreements, grants and contract documents will be reviewed by the County Attorney's Office, Risk Management, and Purchasing Department, as required, prior to execution.

Clerk to the Board Instructions:

None