APPENDIX 17

Shell Key Preserve Brochure
Shell Key Preserve is managed by Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources under a plan developed with the community to protect the natural resources while providing recreational use. Help us protect the preserve's barrier and mangrove islands, seagrass beds, sand bars and mudflats by remembering that we are the visitors to this extraordinary place.

**General Rules**
- Visitors to the island must be aware of how each part of the preserve is used. The preserve includes the water surrounding the island. Signs are posted. Stay clear of unauthorized areas.
- All flora and fauna are protected.
- Shells with live animals must be returned to the water.
- All trash must be removed.
- Fireworks are prohibited within the preserve.
- Group permits are required for groups larger than 50.

**Fishing**
- Adhere to all state and federal fishing regulations.

**Alcohol**
- Alcohol is prohibited within Shell Key Preserve.

**Pets**
- Pets are prohibited within Shell Key Preserve.

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**Primitive Camping**
- Camping by permit is allowed in the southern "Public Use Area" only. Call (727) 552-1862 or visit www.pinellascounty.org/parks.
- Campfires and open fires are permitted October 1 through April 30. Fires must be extinguished and the site cleaned before you leave.
- No restroom facilities available; campers are required to bring, use and remove portable toilets.

**Hiking**
- Hiking is allowed on Shell Key except in the "Bird Preservation Area," which is clearly posted.
- The "Beach Closed Area" within the "Bird Preservation Area" extends to the waterline. Please do not walk on the beach in this area.
- Two walk-throughs, which allow access from the east side of Shell Key to the gulf side, are clearly marked.

**Boating**
- Respect the designated "Aquatic Use Zones" and obey all signs.
- Do not block navigational routes in the shallow areas, especially in the "No Anchoring Area" on the north end.
- Do not enter the "No Entry Zone" located on the east side of Shell Key Preserve.
Shell Key Preserve

The most extraordinary feature of the preserve is Shell Key itself, an undeveloped barrier island. This type of ecosystem is rare in Florida and is critical to the survival of a number of wildlife species that depend on coastal systems. Some of the same natural features that attract wildlife to Shell Key also attract thousands of human visitors annually.

Bird Preservation Area

A protected 110-acre “Bird Preservation Area” has been set aside as a sanctuary for nesting, migrating and wintering birds. This area extends into shallow waters in some portions of the preserve, so please obey the signs. Access within the “Bird Preservation Area” is prohibited without prior authorization.

Thousands of protected migrating and wintering shore and seabirds use the preserve during the fall, winter and spring months. Nesting species that enjoy special protection by the state include the American Oystercatcher, Least Tern and Black Skimmer. All bird species benefit when humans do not disturb them. Please remember that we are visitors to an area they call home.

Group Permits

Visiting groups of 50 or more require a permit. For information or to obtain a group permit, email pubpkerq@pinellascounty.org.

Report Abuse

Federal, state and county laws and ordinances are enforced. To report abuse or misuse, call the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office at (727) 582-6200.

Volunteers

Volunteers assist county staff with coastal cleanups, educational programs and research surveys. If you wish to volunteer, email pubpkerq@pinellascounty.org.

For additional information, please see www.pinellascounty.org/parks

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