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Southwest Region
Quarterly Report – October/November/December 2012
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Highlight of the Quarter

During this quarter, local government assistance was provided to both the City of Fort Myers and Lee County. The SWRC has assisted the City of Fort Myers in their new regional library which is being constructed atop the location of part of the original Seminole War and Civil War era forts that were located in the current downtown area without undertaking archaeological investigations. The SWRC brought this to the attention of the City's Historic Preservation Commission and requested archaeological investigations in the southern part of the project area prior to the construction of a parking lot in that area. In tandem with this request, a plea for more protection of archaeological resources under the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance was made. Support for both of these issues was provided by the City of Fort Myers' Historic Preservation Commission. Subsequently, assistance to the City was extended by the SWRC through the development of a recommended archaeological investigative approach and the completion of two FMSF forms by this office on behalf of DHR and the City of Fort Myers to better officially represent the archaeological resources present in the downtown area. **The City of Fort Myers is currently following through with professional archaeological investigations at the southern end of the new library project area. The SWRC also spearheaded the high resolution scanning (by FGCU Special Collections staff) of an early survey map of the City of Fort Myers to be used as a base map in understanding the precise location of the early forts in this area.**

Assistance to Lee County was provided in the form of providing archaeological information to the Conservation 20/20 Program which purchases properties for conservation purposes. During this time period, the program (after multiple meetings) reached the review stage where they decided whether or not to recommend purchase of a natural sinkhole (only one known in Lee County and similar to nearby Little Salt Spring and Warm Mineral Springs) located in Lehigh Acres and known as Lehigh Spring. While the Conservation 20/20 program recommended that the sinkhole not be purchased, enough community interest was raised so that **the Lee County Board of County Commissioners is currently investigating the purchase of the sinkhole property which likely contains early and rare archaeological deposits.**

Progress on Work Plan Objectives

- Partnership in outreach: creation, development and execution of “Minute Mysteries” program with the Collier County Museum -- ongoing.
- Partnership in outreach: furthered discussions with Charlotte County Historical Center and scheduled 2 CRPT workshops for January 2013.
- Partnership in outreach: ArchaeoCart delivery to Collier County Museum for Pilot Project and Future Feedback.
- Partnership in outreach: Two waterscreening workshops for the public held in tandem with the Seminole Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO).
- Mound Key Paddle Event from Lovers Key to Mound Key with interpretive tour for the public.
- Partnership in outreach: Boy Scout Merit Badge preparations underway in collaboration with the Randell Research Center scheduled for February 2013.
- Partnership in outreach: FPAN intern creation and development of interpretive panels for the Clewiston Museum to interpret archaeological artifacts – ongoing.
- Partnership in outreach: Development of a commemoration event with the Lee County Black History Society to recognize the Federal Colored Troops stationed in Fort Myers. This event is to be held during Black History Month 2013.
- Strategic Planning: Meetings with Jeff Moates regarding local government assistance.



FGCU student participants in a December 5th Waterscreening Workshop delivered by the Seminole THPO and supported by the SWRC.

NOTE: At the end of October, Program Assistant Jessica Mendes left the SWRC for another position. We are working to hire a new Program Assistant which we hope to have in place by the end of February.