



## **PRESS RELEASE – For Immediate Release**

### **PRESCRIBED BURN PLANNED FOR THE WABASSO SCRUB CONSERVATION AREA - LOCATED NORTH OF COUNTY ROAD 510 & WEST OF 58<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE**

#### **BURNED SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY 2018**

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FL – Indian River County is working with the Florida Forest Service, Okeechobee District, to conduct a prescribed fire on the Wabasso Scrub Conservation Area (WSCA) during the month of February 2018. The prescribed fire is being conducted in an effort to reduce wildfire threat and to create a defensible space for site access for vehicles. The burn is scheduled to occur on approximately 25 acres in the north section of the conservation area near West Wabasso Park and Park Place Subdivision.

The 111-acre conservation area was purchased in 1995 for the protection and management of the natural resources within its boundaries. The WSCA is comprised of 53-acres of Sand Pine/Scrub Oak and Scrubby Flatwoods communities, 15-acres of Wet Prairies, 41-acres of Pine Flatwoods, and approximately 2-acres of other lands. Populations of Florida Scrub Jays and Gopher Tortoises, both listed species, have been studied on the site since 2000. Fire is an important tool for land managers in restoring and maintaining scrub, flatwoods and other native habitats, and is a key element of land management for Florida scrub-jays. Prescribed fire mimics natural wildfire regimes, but does so under a written prescription by certified personnel. The prescription includes important safety considerations such as wind direction, temperature, humidity and fuel load, as well as appropriate staff and equipment to protect adjacent properties. Firelines or firebreaks are installed in select locations prior to the burn and wind direction is utilized to burn the habitat in the manner prescribed under the burn authorization.

The conservation area will be closed to the public during this time (signs will be posted while the fire is being conducted). For questions please contact Beth Powell or Melissa Yunas. Contact information is presented below.

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