

## Current Initiatives

### Indian River Lagoon Greenway

Plans continue on the Lagoon Greenway project to develop a greenway along the Indian River Lagoon to IRLT's 66-acre property south of the 17th Street bridge. Being coordinated with the Indian River County Mosquito Control District, Indian River County Environmental Lands Program and local citizens, the greenway will offer public walking, jogging and biking access.

### Land Mapping

With generous assistance from Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. and CivaTerra, IRLT has launched a proactive initiative to update and enhance mapping of properties with environmental significance throughout Indian River County. The resulting maps will enable IRLT to more accurately assess and prioritize conservation projects as they arise.

## Recent Accomplishments

### South Prong Preserve Management Plan

A formal management plan designed by IRLT for the South Prong Preserve, part of the St. Sebastian River Greenway project, was accepted by CLAC (Conservation Lands Advisory Committee) in 2008. This plan provides a model for further expansion into other protected lands along the St. Sebastian River Greenway, opening up miles of hiking trails through native habitat for public recreation. The preserve incorporates a variety of habitats in a 38-acre parcel adjacent to the Sebastian Creek.

### Rural & Family Lands Act Submissions

The Indian River Land Trust assisted two Indian River County agricultural land owners to develop applications to the *Rural & Family Lands Protection Program*. The program is focused on acquiring development rights using permanent conservation easements from qualified and willing agricultural land owners. After its establishment in 2001, this program was first funded in 2008 from a portion of Florida Forever funds. The program will protect agricultural lands in the path of potential development so that Florida will continue to maintain a viable agricultural sector, while providing a rural landscape and open spaces.

## 2009

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2008  
REPORT  
TO MEMBERS

## 2009 President's Message

2009 promises to be a year of progress for the initiatives of the Indian River Land Trust. While it is true these are tough times it is also true these are times that offer unique possibilities as development slows and land values drop. The Indian River Land Trust will seize every possible opportunity to identify and protect sensitive lands.

The Indian River Land Trust is constantly looking for and evaluating potential projects. Our focus is on environmentally sensitive lands: the Indian River Lagoon, agricultural lands, and open spaces. No matter the project, we consider the level of urgency each conservation project carries with it as we prioritize.

This year the Indian River Lagoon will be our highest priority. Our Lagoon Greenway initiative is moving forward, and additional opportunities that merit our attention and action abound along the Lagoon.

With federal, state, and local funding decreasing, stagnating, or disappearing, private funding will be even more critical to protect our unique and fragile treasure. In these challenging times the Indian River Land Trust needs increased support more than ever. I encourage you to be an ambassador in the community, to engage as many people as possible in our mission.

Together we need to reach out to educate, to engage, and to generate enthusiasm. IRLT continues proudly to lead the way in protecting the lands, the waters and the wildlife of Indian River County. The future of our quality of life depends upon the success of our efforts.

Thank you for your continued support.



Stephanie M. Smith

## 2008 Summary of Financial Condition

<b>Total Operating Revenue:</b>	\$408,754
<b>Total Operating Expenses:</b>	\$449,912
<b>Net Income:</b>	<b>\$(41,158)</b>
<b>Total Current Assets:</b>	\$576,567
<b>Total Fixed Assets:</b>	\$237,451
<b>Total Assets:</b>	<b>\$814,018</b>
<b>Total Liabilities:</b>	<b>\$ 4,197</b>
<b>Total Equity:</b>	<b>\$809,821</b>
<b>Membership as of 12/31/08:</b>	592
<b>Total Membership Income 2008:</b>	\$216,435

*Audited financial statements for fiscal year ending December 31, 2008 will be available upon request.*

## Indian River Land Trust Staff

**Ken Grudens**

*Executive Director*

**Ralph Monticello**

*Land Protection Manager*

**Ginny Blossom**

*Director, Marketing and Philanthropy*

**Dana McDougall**

*Administrative Assistant*

**Lois Fay**

*Database Analyst*

## Issues of Interest

### Amendment #4 Passes

Last November, the Florida Conservation Land Amendment #4 was approved by 68.4% of voters in the state. This constitutional amendment, which needed a 60% margin to pass, will provide property tax exemptions for land placed in perpetual conservation easements beginning in 2010. It also requires the State Legislature to draft a law to allow land that is being used for conservation to be taxed according to its conservation use. By making it easier for private landowners to set aside their land for conservation, Amendment 4 will complement the Indian River Land Trust's work in preserving and protecting our county's natural places.



### Florida Forever Reauthorized

In 2008, the Florida Legislature reauthorized funding of the Florida Forever program, allowing state conservation programs to access important financial resources even in these difficult economic times. Thanks to Governor Charlie Crist, those funds were protected during recent state budget cuts. Florida Forever began in 1999 as a ten-year land acquisition program that allowed the issuance of up to \$3 billion in bonds for land acquisition, water resource projects, and the preservation and restoration of greenways. The reauthorization extends the program through 2019 and provides \$300 million annually for the purchase of conservation lands.