



## Cover Memorandum/Staff Report

**File #:** 23-967

**Agenda Date:** 9/18/2023

**Item #:** 6.H.

**TO:** Mayor and Commissioners  
**FROM:** Samuel Metott, Director, Parks and Recreation  
**THROUGH:** Terrence R. Moore, ICMA-CM  
**DATE:** September 18, 2023

APPROVAL TO INSTALL POCKET REFUGES AT SPADY CULTURAL HERITAGE MUSEUM, DELRAY SWIM AND TENNIS CLUB, LAKE VIEW PARK, OLD SCHOOL SQUARE PARK, ORCHARD VIEW PARK, AND PINE GROVE PARK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ASSOCIATION AND THE US FISH AND WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION.

### **Recommended Action:**

Motion to approve the installation of pocket refuges at six (6) park location throughout the City of Delray Beach and to allow the City Manager to choose an alternate location(s) if the following are unavailable or locations deemed unsuitable:

Spady Cultural Heritage Museum 170 NW 5th Avenue  
Delray Swim and Tennis Club 2350 Jaeger Drive  
Lake View Park 1100 Lake Drive  
Old School Square Park 95 NE 1st Avenue  
Orchard View Park 4060 Old Germantown Road  
Pine Grove Park 1041 SW 7th Avenue

The National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will provide up to \$5,500.00 for plants, signage, and tools and the City of Delray Beach (City) will provide the locations and the purchase of mulch not to exceed \$3,000.00.

### **Background:**

Pocket Refuges are areas in the urban landscape that serve as a refuge for native wildlife and an oasis for people to escape. They can serve as areas of solitude for meditation, or for gatherings and celebration, and as places to disconnect from the bustle of city life while reconnecting with our environment. For many urban residents, Pocket Refuges are a wonderful place to develop an appreciation and connection to nature. They provide native wildlife with the necessary elements of survival such as food, water, and shelter. As native habitats become increasingly scarce, it's important to ensure that wildlife can find these necessities. Establishing pockets of native habitat within a growing urbanized landscape helps ease the pressure many native species experience.

The proposed pocket refuges will be funded by the USFWS and NWRA with a budget of \$5,500. Included are native plants and trees, with some decorative features and signage designating the space as a native habitat and describing the importance of human connection to nature. NWRA and the City will codesign the Pocket Refuges and coordinate with USFWS and local organizations to publicize the project and organize a public installation and planning event. In addition to providing a

public space for the enjoyment of nature and contributing to native habitat restoration, the Pocket Refuge planting will be an excellent opportunity for community engagement and participation in civic life. The proposed implementation will take place after approval on September 18, 2023 and will continue over the course of a few years or until all six (6) locations are planted.

The desired outcome of this project is to increase access to outdoor space to the community, provide critical habitat for native species, increase native flora and fauna awareness and engage Delray citizens in a project that will have lasting benefits to the community. It will also reduce maintenance costs. Short mown grass areas require weekly or bi-weekly mowing, weed treatments, and watering. Once established, native wildflower plantings decrease the mowing frequency, treatments, and reduce water usage, lowering costs and maintenance needs.

The City will provide the purchase of mulch in the not to exceed amount of \$3,000 and provide the six (6) locations for pocket refuges in City parks.

**City Attorney Review:**

Does not require legal review

**Funding Source/Financial Impact:**

001-72-738-572-52.41; Operating Supplies; Gardening Supplies

**Timing of Request:**

Not time sensitive