



February 24, 2017

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*managing fish and wildlife
resources for their long-term
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of people.*

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The Honorable Howard Wiggs, Mayor
City of Lakeland
228 S. Massachusetts Avenue
Lakeland, Florida 33801

**RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE CITY LAKELAND'S
SE7EN WETLANDS PARK**

Dear Mayor Wiggs,

I understand the City of Lakeland wishes to enhance their existing wastewater wetland treatment system by improving habitat and adding the necessary infrastructure to allow for public access to the property. FWC recognizes wetlands as a vital component of Florida's ecosystem and supports endeavors to enhance non-productive wildlife systems through reconstruction and maintaining productive wildlife systems as you are proposing.

Opening the wastewater wetland to the public through the creation of Se7en Wetlands park will provide unique opportunities for wildlife viewing in central Florida, while habitat improvements will enhance its function of supporting an abundance of birds and other wildlife. Allowing public access to this wetland system will offer the City of Lakeland the opportunity to further public education on the importance of habitat restoration and conservation, leading to sustainable spaces for the plant and animal species that call Florida home. We support the City of Lakeland's efforts to reconstruct the existing wastewater wetland treatment system in order to create a functioning wetland system while offering public education and outreach to Florida's wildlife and unique ecosystems.

Sincerely,

Thomas D. Graef
Regional Director