



**Cypress Chapter of the IWLA (CCIWLA)
APPROVED MINUTES
December 17, 2025
ZOOM**

Call to Order: 7:00 PM

Approval of Draft Minutes

Draft minutes from the September 17, 2025 meeting were reviewed.

Motion to approve by Tom Oates; seconded by Marshall Jones.

Vote: All approved.

President's Items

Marshall Jones- spoke in support of Mike's work on the Deer Project and outreach.

He would like some assistance to get SD cards and set up rest of tree island sites while there is still enough water. Mike E has been discussing things similar to the Deer Program with potential funders about bears in the Everglades. This will be discussed at future meetings.

Executive Director's Report

Mike Elfenbein

Mike presented highlights of his work since the September meeting in powerpoint, archived on the website, including the following updates:

- **Tampa Theatre – Voices of the Corridor:** Three films highlighted.
- **L-28 WERP Construction:** Ongoing project coming to completion, although he does have some concern regarding mining to obtain the material.
- **Palm Beach International Wildlife Delegation:** Participation noted.
- **Lake Toho Site Visit:** Aquaculture project to remove tussock and excess vegetation.
- **DC Senate Stewardship Caucus:** Announcement emphasized that “Conservation is nonpartisan.”

- **Lake Istokpoga Site Visit:** Meeting with the Seminole Tribe; interest expressed in a project on the Brighton Reservation.
- **FWC Commission Meeting (Clewiston):** Bear hunt approved and began the previous weekend.

Deer Project (October–Present):

- Lisa Priddy and Heather Clecker’s ranch provided the highest number of deer captured.
- Bear were attracted to the corn bait and subsequently deterred deer from entering traps.
- **Garcia Farms Deer Translocation (November 8):** First translocation event; many lessons learned.
 - Two mortalities occurred among the smallest Does due to capture myopathy.
- **November 18 – Washington, DC:** Continued discussions regarding mineral rights.
- **Brahma Island Meeting:** Planning for a public television docuseries, *A Land Remembered*, with emphasis on accurate representation of the Miccosukee Tribe.
- **November 24–December 15:** Additional deer translocation days scheduled.
- **Publication Outreach:** Mike contacted a publisher regarding a potential book on the Deer Project, with proceeds supporting Cypress IWLA.
- **Tracking Technology Updates:**
 - GI satellite ear tags are performing well; the company is exploring donating them, freeing funds for other needs.
 - Deer #22 became the first buck fitted with a GPS ear tag and returned approximately 40 miles to its capture location.
 - Marcel and tribal scientists anticipate publishing significant findings from the data.
- **Additional Updates:**
 - Two does are currently moving toward Florida Bay.
 - Marcel and Craig will provide quarterly raw data updates and an annual summary.

- **Fundraising and Outreach:**

- \$16,500 grossed to date.
- Fact sheet completed; tumblers, certificates, and challenge coins are ready.

- **Permitting:** Permit valid through January 31.

- Thirty-nine deer have been relocated so far.
- Deer are utilizing the full Everglades landscape.
- Approximately 80% of does are expected to be pregnant with one or two fawns.

- **Lake Kissimmee Grant:**

- FDACS awarded \$6.8 million; Cypress IWLA will serve as administrator and guide project decisions.
- Farm Bureau to receive \$50,000; Cypress IWLA Chapter to receive \$100,000 for education and outreach.
- Two additional grant applications remain pending.

- **Acknowledgments:** Mike expressed sincere appreciation to the entire team.

- **Media:** A video produced by Cabela's and IOTR will air on the Discovery Channel. The date will be provided when it is done.

- **2025 Annual Report** - will need to be updated with Deer translocation project

Financial Report

Tom Oates

- Account review conducted for January 1–December 1.
- Tom requested Nora email the financial report to the Board.
- He will continue processing invoices related to the Deer Project.

Board Comments

- **Betty** was selected as a recipient of the Rockefeller Foundation Indigenous Women Program and awarded \$100,000 for a project of her choosing.
- She proposed allocating funds to support the Deer Project and submitted the budget today.
- Current work focuses on cultural and traditional components of the project.
- Funding priorities include GPS collars (\$1,800 each), veterinary costs, and habitat restoration.
 - Collars provide hourly location pings, while ear tags transmit less frequently.
- Brett is resigning from the Board due to too much to do with Angler Action Foundation and not enough time.

Second week in January may work for Betty and her staff to help Marshall with the Tree Islands project in 3B.

January event- Marshall suggested that Bette decide in early January about the Poker run/fundraiser for clean-up alternative based on water levels.

1. Public comment none
2. Adjourn

Next meeting **Tuesday** February 17th 6:45 gathering
Call to order at 7:00 PM

Name	Position	In attendance?
Marshall Jones	President	YES
Mike Elfenbein	Executive Director	YES
Tom Oates	Treasurer and Secretary and Board Member	YES
Betty Osceola	Vice-President and Board Member	YES
Brett Fitzgerald	Projects Chair and Board Member	YES

Jesse Lee	Chair shooting sports and Board Member	YES
Heather Cleckler	Board Member	YES
Diamond Bergeron	Board Member	YES
Nora Demers	Director of Science and Outreach and recording secretary	YES