



# Pinellas County

## Staff Report

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### **Subject:**

Agreement with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office for law enforcement services by Environmental Lands Unit Deputies.

### **Recommended Action:**

Approval of the contract with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) for law enforcement services by the Environmental Lands Unit.

- Contract provides for two assigned Environmental Land Unit (ELU) deputies to patrol County preserves and parks at a cost of \$308,990 per fiscal year including personnel, vehicle, operating and training expenses.
- Contract costs are included in the Sheriff's Office's Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 annual budget appropriation.
- ELU deputies are critical to deter poaching of wildlife and cultural artifacts from county environmental lands and assist park rangers upon reports of suspicious activities.
- Partnership with the PCSO has existed since FY01.

### **Strategic Plan:**

Practice Superior Environmental Stewardship

3.2 Preserve and manage environmental lands, beaches, parks and historical assets

### **Summary:**

The proposed contract provides law enforcement services at environmentally sensitive lands, preserves and waterways, including but not limited to Brooker Creek and Weedon Island Preserves, and the waters in and around Fort De Soto Park and Shell Key Island, which encompass over 15,940 acres. The contract period is October 1, 2021 through October 1, 2022 unless extended, terminated or modified by both parties

### **Background Information:**

Since fiscal year (FY) 2001, the first year of the Environmental Lands Unit contract with the County, PCSO deputies have provided excellent security at the preserves, have shown sincere interest and have helped build community support. They have greatly diminished the trespassing, illegal dumping and poaching activity on County park and preserve properties and work very effectively with Parks and Conservation Resources (PCR) staff.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

This contract is an annual expenditure of \$308,990 (a decrease of 0.14% from FY21) and includes Utilities funding of \$78,218.67 to secure their department's portion of the Brooker Creek Preserve. This expenditure is not part of the Parks and Conservation Resources (PCR) budget but is included in the yearly appropriations to the Pinellas County Sheriff Office (PCSO) as part of the budget

process. This contract is consistent with the FY22 Proposed Budget for PCR, PCSO, and Utilities.

**Staff Member Responsible:**

Paul Cozzie, Director, Parks and Conservation Resources

**Partners:**

Pinellas County Sheriff's Office

Pinellas County Utilities

**Attachments:**

FY22 Contract for Law Enforcement Services Environmental Lands Unit

Pinellas County Environmental Lands Unit Cost for Law Enforcement Service Worksheet - FY22