

AgTEC Project's plan is approved by Department of Community Affairs

Jennifer Whiting, a member of the Treasure Coast community. This story is neither endorsed by nor affiliated with this site.

Originally published 10:43 a.m., October 13, 2010

Updated 10:43 a.m., October 13, 2010

PALM CITY — On Oct. 6, the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) notified Martin County that the Comprehensive Plan Amendment submitted by King Ranch on August 10, 2010 for their Sunrise Groves property was in compliance.



On Aug. 10, a landmark vote was made by the Martin County Board of County Commissioners that further positions Florida's Research Coast as a preferred area for employers interested in locating their businesses to the Sunshine State.

King Ranch, a private diversified agribusiness, and its subsidiary Consolidated Citrus LP (CCLP), the largest citrus grower in Florida, has spent the last year refining its plan for their 1,750-acre citrus grove in Palm City, Florida which had become 100% impacted by citrus greening and had harvested its last crop this summer.

"We are thrilled the Commissioners voted to adopt the changes to our land use for our property and that DCA found our plan to be in compliance," said Mitch Hutchcraft, Vice President of Real Estate Development for King Ranch/CCLP. "These changes will enable us to move forward with our effort to create a campus-like environment where bio-tech firms, energy-related companies, research and development institutions and others can thrive while we continue our agricultural operations and the pursuit of alternative energy crops."

Known as the I-95 Agriculture & Targeted Employment Center or AgTEC, the property's prime location, synergy of adjacent uses and existing infrastructure, coupled with King

Ranch's international connections, will aid in the pursuit of targeted employers to diversify the local economy.

North of the property is the bio-tech corridor that has been years in the making in Port St Lucie including Torrey Pines Institute for Molecular Studies, Burnham Institute for Medical Research and the Vaccine & Gene Therapy Institute. To the south in Palm Beach County lies the Scripps Research Institute and Max Planck Florida Institute.

“Our approach to this planning process has always been to inform and engage the public and be as transparent as possible. We believe that our conversations with the community and our willingness to make adjustments to the plan ultimately resulted in a vision for the property that will provide many benefits to the community,” added Hutchcraft. “AgTEC is proof positive that there is a way to create a location for economic diversification while also offering environmental restoration and preservation, water quality improvements and other services and opportunities for public access and enjoyment of the land. These things are not mutually exclusive.” For more information about AgTEC visit www.AgTECtreasurecoast.com.

King Ranch, Inc. is a private, diversified agribusiness company and one of the largest family-owned landowners in the United States. The company's 830,000-acres King Ranch in Texas is also the largest ranch in the country. The pristine nature of the Texas Ranch looks essentially the same as it did 100 years ago because of the family's strong environmental stewardship ethic and use of best practices for land management. King Ranch is also the primary owner of Consolidated Citrus LP (CCLP) - the largest citrus grower in Florida with holdings in more than seven counties. CCLP is also the largest private landowner in Martin County where their AgTEC plan was recently adopted.

The Company's other operations include innovations in cattle and horse breeding, mineral development, and the production of a number of agricultural commodities including cotton, sugar cane, sod, pecans, sweet corn, green beans, specialty lettuce and other vegetables. King Ranch is also active in the publishing, retail and eco-tourism industries. For more information about King Ranch, go to <http://www.kingranch.com>.

This story is contributed by a member of the Treasure Coast community and is neither endorsed by nor affiliated with this site.