



June 16, 2021

RE: Calusa Golf Course Development

**To whom it may concern.**

Tropical Audubon Society's mission is: *"To conserve and restore South Florida ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitats."* Our mission is increasingly relevant as development has relentlessly marched on, destroying the native landscape and increasing pressures on the remaining wildlife that struggles to survive in South Florida.

Recently, on the former Calusa Golf Course, an uncommon Tricolored Heron was photographed nesting at the rookery on that property. This species is designated as a "threatened" species by the State of Florida.



Tropical Audubon agrees with the Division of Environmental Resources Management's position with respect to this property of March 12, 2021; and requests that all County departments overseeing the development of this land, stand in support of the very clear and strong statements contained in the CDMP Conservation Element. In this regard, Objective CON-9, set forth (in part) below, focuses on preserving wildlife habitat, specifically addresses the unique and critical importance of rookeries and nesting sites used by State threatened species.

- CON-9B: All nesting, roosting and feeding habitats used by federal or State designated endangered or threatened species, shall be protected and buffered from surrounding development or activities and further degradation or destruction of such habitat shall not be authorized.
- CON-9C: Rookeries and nesting sites used by federal or State designated endangered or threatened species shall not be moved or destroyed.
- CON-9E: Conservation of upland wildlife habitats shall be taken into consideration during development evaluation and permitting processes.

The Calusa property is home to various species of wildlife some of which are considered “threatened” or “endangered.” Those species have called the golf course home for decades. As this development proceeds, we ask that all parties act to minimize the impact on wildlife, and accordingly the numbers of homes that are built on that site.