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Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County luncheon presenter provides overview of Adams Ranch Stewardship Program

Port St. Lucie, Florida – On June 7th, nearly one hundred members and guests of the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County gathered at Indian River Community College’s Schreiber Conference Center for their monthly luncheon to learn more about the Adams Ranch Stewardship project.

Senator Ken Pruitt (R-District 28, Port St. Lucie) provided a legislative update and introduced Ernie Cox, an attorney with Gunster Yoakley, who presented an overview of the Adams Ranch Stewardship project. The pilot project is currently being reviewed by St. Lucie County through a series of public hearings and workshops.

Speaking to a packed house, Senator Pruitt commended Family Lands Remembered, the company that is facilitating the development of the Stewardship Project, for “thinking outside the box” in terms of how the region is going to grow. “This program meets the test for preserving the environment, protecting agriculture, and helping support our local economy.”

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The Stewardship Program is designed around "sending" and "receiving" areas, where the "sending" location's attributes are assessed and assigned values, and certain uses are removed from the site through the creation of transferable rural stewardship credits. These stewardship credits are then applied to the "receiving" area, in this case a citrus grove northeast of the Adams Ranch.

A key point during the presentation emphasized that the program is voluntary, so landowners choose whether or not to be involved. In addition, Cox explained that private ownership and management of environmentally valuable areas many times results in better stewardship of natural lands than when those same lands are in public ownership. "Government simply doesn't have enough financial resources to purchase and properly manage all such lands," explained Cox. "People take care of the things that they own. Who better to care for the land than the private landowner?" he added.

For more information about the Adams Ranch Stewardship Project visit the website www.familylandsremembered.com or call the Adams Ranch at 772-461-6321.

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