

City of Sanibel

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS: In 2016, the Gopher Tortoise Council adopted April 10th as Gopher Tortoise Day in Florida to increase awareness and appreciation for this protected species. The gopher tortoise is considered a keystone species and is an important indicator of ecosystem health; and

WHEREAS: Sanibel Island sustains a sizeable population of gopher tortoises, which inhabit conservation lands, residential neighborhoods, and commercial properties; and

WHEREAS: Gopher tortoise burrows are home to more than 350 species. Unfortunately, due to problems such as habitat loss, disease, and poaching, gopher tortoise populations have declined and the gopher tortoise is listed as threatened species and is protected by the state of Florida; and

WHEREAS: Due to the upland habitat requirements of the gopher tortoise and potential conflicts with human development activities, gopher tortoises and their habitats on Sanibel have been afforded additional protections; and

WHEREAS: In accordance with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Gopher Tortoise Management Plan guidelines, the City requires that all Development Permit applications include the identification and location of wildlife habitats of gopher tortoises; a plan to preserve gopher tortoise habitat or to mitigate for unavoidable impacts; verification that gopher tortoises have been protected on the site or have been removed from the proposed area of construction by a State authorized handler according to a plan approved by the City and State; and

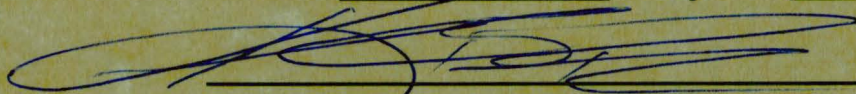
WHEREAS: You can show your appreciation and help gopher tortoises by planting their favorite native vegetation to feed on and keep a watchful eye for gopher tortoises while driving and walking around Sanibel Island.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kevin Ruane, Mayor of the City of Sanibel, Lee County Florida, on behalf of the members of the City Council and the citizens of Sanibel, do hereby declare April 10, 2019, as Gopher Tortoise Day on Sanibel Island, and urge all citizens to celebrate the Gopher Tortoise and to help protect a keystone species of this Island.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Sanibel to be affixed hereto.

Done at City Hall

this 2nd day of April, 2019



Kevin Ruane

Mayor