

RESOLUTION NO. 2007- 109

A RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA, SUPPORTING ADDITIONAL STATE FUNDING FOR THE FLORIDA FOREVER PROGRAM AND THE CREATION OF A SUCCESSOR PROGRAM.

RECITAL

WHEREAS, the Florida Forever program and its predecessor Preservation 2000 program have immeasurably contributed to environmental health, quality of life, recreation, and sustainability in Florida for this and future generations; and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever has acquired over one million acres throughout Florida since 2000 and allocates \$300 million annually to purchase and restore environmentally sensitive and outdoor recreation lands, and has done so through numerous successful partnerships with cities, counties, state agencies, water management districts, nonprofit organizations, private landowners, and others in achieving its conservation purposes; and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever, through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Water Management Districts, Division of Forestry and others, produces benefits that include clear air and water; healthy fisheries and wildlife habitat; improved water supply protection; and protected open spaces including greenway corridors, recreational and park lands, forest, and water bodies; and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever, through the Florida Communities Trust, has assisted Florida's cities and counties in protecting their cultural and historical resources, meeting the challenges of growth management, and providing recreational outdoor experiences in both urban and rural settings; and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever has helped to save many of Florida's beaches, rivers, bays, forests, coral reefs and estuaries that provide the foundation for our \$3 billion tourism industry that attracts more than 80 million visitors each year; and

WHEREAS, Thirty Florida local governments have enacted land acquisition financing programs in the past decades, and these conservation programs serve to leverage Florida Forever funding and increase the impact of State land conservation funding; and

WHEREAS, Florida is experiencing rapid population growth, with approximately 1,100 new residents every day and Floridians demand a high quality of life that includes clean water and air, green open space, access to water and recreational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever and other land conservation programs must compete in Florida's market of surging land and housing prices; and

WHEREAS, the effectiveness of Florida Forever is minimized because of escalating land prices and the impacts of inflation; and

WHEREAS, the funding for the Florida Forever program will sunset in 2010 and may be substantially exhausted prior to that date; and

WHEREAS, research by the Florida Forever Coalition has found well in excess of \$10 billion in State funding is currently needed to purchase wildlife and wilderness areas, parks and open space for our state's ecological sustainability and increasing human population; and

WHEREAS, research by the Florida Forever Coalition has also found additional billions of dollars in local funding is necessary in order that cities and counties can protect additional wilderness areas, parks, recreation areas and open space, in ways fully complementary with those of the State; and

WHEREAS, a 2005 public opinion survey conducted by members of the Florida Forever Coalition found 78% of Florida's voters approve of the Florida Forever program; and

WHEREAS, the benefits of Florida Forever have included funding for several St. Johns County Projects including the Marshes of Matanzas, Lambert and Warner parcels, and West Augustine Regional Pond; and

WHEREAS, Preservation 2000 and Florida Forever have been essential to the longevity and success of the LAMP Program by providing nearly \$14 million in FCT funding towards properties preserved through this program; and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever has funded and provided \$50,687,605.70 in St. Johns County since 2001, in support of land conservation, parks, recreation areas, open space, and environmental protection for St. Johns County, these County projects are attached hereto on Exhibit "A", incorporated by reference and made a part hereof.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, as follows:

Section 1. The above Recitals are incorporated by reference into the body of this Resolution and such Recitals are adopted as findings of fact.

Section 2. That the Board supports an increase in the funding allocated to Florida Forever.

Section 3. That the Board declares its support to the State of Florida Legislature for the creation and funding of a successor program to the Florida Forever program.

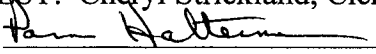
Section 4. That the Chairman is authorized to send letters to the legislative delegation relaying this resolution and advocating additional funding for Florida Forever, as well as the creation and funding of a successor program to Florida Forever.

Section 5. That this resolution shall be effective upon adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, this 17th day of April, 2007.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: 
Ben Rich, Chairman

ATTEST: Cheryl Strickland, Clerk
By: 
Deputy Clerk

RENDITION DATE 4/20/07

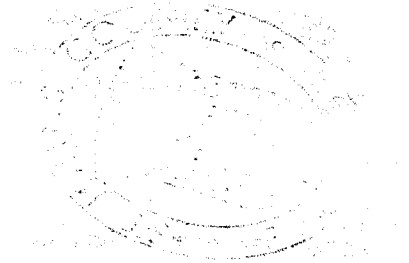


EXHIBIT "A"

**PROJECTS FUNDED AND AWARDED BY FLORIDA FOREVER SINCE 2000 IN
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA**

1.) Faver Dykes/Twelve Mile Swamp Exchange - Division of State Lands

Seller- Sylvan West Partnership, Ltd
Closed Acres- 226.15
Closed Price- \$809,000.00

Northeast Florida Blueway

Seller- Gonzales/Corral
Closed Acres- 20
Closed Price- \$385,594.25

Seller- Greenberg, Michael John
Closed Acres- 54.60
Closed Price- \$146,000.00

Seller- Larson, Dwayne and Maria
Closed Acres- 14.20
Closed Price- \$58,000.00

Seller- Rayonier Timberlands Operating Company
Closed Acres- 8,465
Closed Price- \$29,934,356.00

Seller- Sodanno
Closed Acres- 11.40
Closed Price- \$285,000.00

St. Johns River Blueway

Seller- Lambert, William and Lucille
Closed Acres- 731.30
Closed Price- \$2,000,000.00

Seller-Warner
Closed Acres- 230.08
Closed Price- \$1,112,640.00

**2.) West Augustine Regional Stormwater Pond - St. Johns River Water Management
District**

Seller- Wilson
Closed Acres- 42
Grant Award- \$975,000.00

3.) County Parks - Florida Communities Trust

Beluthahatchee Park

Closed Acres- 1.97

Grant Award- \$306,620.35

Canopy Shores

Closed Acres- 33

Grant Award- \$6,600,000.00

Fort Mose Historic Park

Closed Acres- 8

Grant Award- \$1,059,251.00

Nease Beachfront Park

Closed Acres- 4

Grant Award- \$911,028.75

Vaill Point Park

Closed Acres- 23

Grant Award- \$1,942,615.35

Vilano Beach Oceanfront Park

Closed Acres- 7

Grant Award- \$4,162,500.00