

RESOLUTION NO. 482-2007

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA, SUPPORTING THE STATE FLORIDA FOREVER PROGRAM AND A SUCCESSOR STATE LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM FOR THE FUTURE.

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

WHEREAS, Florida Forever and Preservation 2000 have allocated \$300 million annually since 1990 to purchase environmentally sensitive and other lands, and have done so through numerous successful partnerships with counties, cities, state agencies, water managements districts, nonprofit organizations, private landowners, and others in achieving its conservation purposes, and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever has acquired over one million acres of Florida's most special and important places since 2000, 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 70 million visitors each year, and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever, through the Department of Environmental Protection, Water Management Districts, and other programs, produces benefits that include clean air and water; healthy fisheries and wildlife habitat; improved water supply protection; and protected open spaces including greenway corridors, park lands, forests, and water bodies, and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever, through Florida Communities Trust, has assisted Florida's cities and counties in protecting their cultural and historical resources, meeting the challenges of growth management, directing development away from coastal high hazard areas and floodplains; fostering a healthier lifestyle for Floridians; and providing recreational outdoor experiences in both urban and rural settings, and

WHEREAS, the other components of Florida Forever that undertake diverse land conservation activities that benefit all Floridians are the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Programs (FRDAP), Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC), Division of Forestry of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Greenways and Trails, and Florida State Parks Inholdings and Additions Program, and

WHEREAS, 50 Florida local governments have enacted their own local government land acquisition programs in recent years, and these conservation finance programs serve to leverage Florida Forever funding and increase the positive impact of State land conservation funding, and

WHEREAS, the current funding for the Florida Forever program is insufficient to achieve the wide range of land conservation objectives identified in the Florida Forever Act, and

WHEREAS, the effectiveness of Florida Forever's annual funding has diminished dramatically because of both escalating land prices and the impacts of inflation since 1998; and,

WHEREAS, because land values have decreased slightly in the past year, after having more than doubled between 2000 and 2006, Florida Forever has a rare opportunity at present to take advantage of the current market for land conservation and for the betterment of all Floridians, and

WHEREAS, research by the Florida Forever Coalition has found that over \$20 billion is currently needed to purchase parks and recreational facilities, wildlife and wilderness areas, and open space for our state's increasing population, and

WHEREAS, public opinion surveys regularly demonstrate that 70% or more of Floridians approve of the land protection benefits of the Florida Forever program, and

WHEREAS, the many important places in Monroe County whose purchase and permanent protection have been achieved from Florida Forever include Plantation Tropical Preserve, Green Turtle Hammock, Marathon Waterfront Park, Key West Tropical Forest and Botanical Garden, portions of the Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail, and numerous natural areas from Key Largo to Big Coppitt Key within the North Key Largo Hammocks, Florida Keys Ecosystem, and Coupon Bight/Key Deer projects; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA, THAT:

1. The Board supports an increase in the funding allocated to Florida Forever through a combination of accelerated use of existing Florida Forever bond authority and action by the State Legislature.
2. The Board supports the creation and funding of a successor program to the Florida Forever program that provides substantially increased long-term funding for Florida Forever's land conservation purposes.
3. The Clerk is requested to forward copies of this resolution to the County's legislative delegation.

4. This resolution shall be effective upon adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of Monroe County, Florida, at a meeting of said Board held on the 14th day of November 2007.

Mayor McCoy	<u>Yes</u>
Mayor Pro Tem DiGennaro	<u>Yes</u>
Commissioner Spehar	<u>Yes</u>
Commissioner Neugent	<u>Yes</u>
Commissioner Murphy	<u>Yes</u>

(SEAL)

Attest: DANNY L. KOLHAGE, Clerk

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: Sabel C. DeSantis
Deputy Clerk

By: [Signature]
Mayor Mario DiGennaro



FILED FOR RECORD
2007 DEC -7 AM 11:51
DANNY L. KOLHAGE
CLERK, CR. CL.
MONROE COUNTY, FLA.