

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

Meeting Date: Wed., November 14, 2007

Division: BOCC

Bulk Item: Yes  No

Department: Mayor Di Gennaro, District 4

Staff Contact Person: Tamara Lundstrom  
(305 289-6000)

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**AGENDA ITEM WORDING:** Approval of Resolution supporting the State Florida Forever Program and a successor State land conservation program for the future.

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**ITEM BACKGROUND:** The Florida Forever Program was created under Governor Bush in 2000 as a 10 year program, to end in 2010. It replaced the Preservation 2000 Program under Governor Martinez for the years 1990 – 2000. The CARL (Conservation and Recreational Lands) program, from 1980 – 1990, was the initial land conservation program by the State of Florida in this progression.

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**PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOCC ACTION:**

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**CONTRACT/AGREEMENT CHANGES:**

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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**TOTAL COST:** \_\_\_\_\_

**BUDGETED:** Yes  No

**COST TO COUNTY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SOURCE OF FUNDS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**REVENUE PRODUCING:** Yes  No  **AMOUNT PER MONTH** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year** \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVED BY:** County Atty  OMB/Purchasing \_\_\_\_\_ Risk Management \_\_\_\_\_

**DOCUMENTATION:** Included  Not Required \_\_\_\_\_

**DISPOSITION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**AGENDA ITEM #** \_\_\_\_\_

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**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.**

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**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 \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2007.

Mayor DiGennaro \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Pro Tem Spehar \_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner McCoy \_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner Neugent \_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner Murphy \_\_\_\_\_

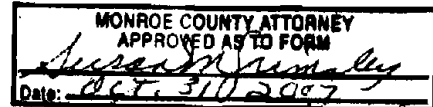
(SEAL)

Attest: DANNY L. KOLHAGE, Clerk

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Mario DiGennaro



THE  
TRUST  
for  
PUBLIC  
LAND



NOV - 5 2007

October 30, 2007

Honorable Mario Di Gennaro, Mayor  
Monroe County Board of County Commissioners  
Florida Keys Marathon Airport  
9400 Overseas Highway, Suite 210  
Marathon, FL 33050

Dear Mayor Di Gennaro:

The Trust for Public Land respectfully requests that the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners consider approval of formal resolution in support to the reauthorization and expansion of the State's outstanding Florida Forever Program.

TPL makes this request on behalf of the Florida Forever Coalition, including the following steering committee member organizations: Audubon of Florida, Defenders of Wildlife, Florida Recreation and Park Association, Florida Wildlife Federation, 1,000 Friends of Florida, The Nature Conservancy, and TPL.

The Coalition is working with state and local public officials, private citizens, businesses, and others to increase Florida Forever funding. At present, the Program expends an amount of State funds that is insufficient to meet the many, diverse land conservation needs across Florida.

We ask that the County Commission pass a resolution that cites the past land conservation achievements made possible by Florida Forever, endorses long-term reauthorization of Florida Forever, and supports increased Florida Forever funding. The resolution might also cite conservation projects in the Florida Keys that have benefited from Florida Forever.

Finally, we ask that, when approved, the resolution be provided by the Commission to all members of the local legislative delegation and to the news media.

Please call with questions: 850-443-4968.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

ANDREW H. McLeod  
Associate State Director

*The Trust for Public Land - Florida State Office*

**308 North Monroe Street - Tallahassee, Florida - 850-222-7911**