

ITEM 7:

Vote on whether to amend the Little River Conservation Area Florida Forever project boundary to add one property totaling approximately 208 acres in Gadsden County with a prorated tax assessed market value of \$445,047.

LOCATION:

Gadsden County

DSL STAFF REMARKS:

The Little River Conservation Area amendment proposed by Keith Fountain, adds a 208-acre portion of an 825-acre parcel in Gadsden County to the Little River Conservation Area Florida Forever project. The property has a prorated tax assessed market value of \$445,047.

The property adjacent to the Little River Conservation Area is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition. The landowner, Backhoe Boys LLC, has been contacted and is a willing seller. The property located along the north side of Highway 90 is adjacent to the southwest corner of the current Little River Conservation Area boundary. The project is located within the Tallahassee Red Hills region and contains planted pine with some native understory, mixed hardwood coniferous swamps and mixed wetland hardwood habitat. The property is currently managed by limited thinning of the timber stands and regular prescribed fire.

The proposal meets the Florida Forever criteria to be submitted as a boundary amendment. The parcel is less than 1,000 acres, has a tax assessed value of less than \$2 million, and is less than 10% of the size of the overall project to which it is being proposed for addition. The proposal area should be designated as essential.

Project History:

The Little River Conservation Area project in Gadsden County was approved by the Acquisition and Restoration Council in 2004. The project aims to protect the Little River watershed, conserve habitat for wildlife and game species, protect quality forest land, and provide support for sustainable forestry and longleaf pine restoration within a rapidly urbanizing region of the state.

The Little River Conservation Area project includes over 2,085 acres and is ranked 29 in the Less-than-Fee category on the 2021 Florida Forever Priority List. The tax assessed value of the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2019) is \$5,689,604.

FNAI Review:

According to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI), 100% of the site contributes to Ecological Greenways, Surface Water Protection, and Aquifer Recharge. The site also contributes to Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (57%) and Sustainable Forestry (65%).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Vote on the proposed boundary amendment.

ARC RECOMMENDATION:

| Project | DHR | FFS | Lynetta Griner | FWC | Bill Palmer | Elva Peppers | DEP | Selected |
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| Little River Conservation Area: Little River Conservation Area Amendment | | | | | | | | |