

ITEM 10:

Vote on whether to amend the Apalachicola River Florida Forever Project Boundary to add seven parcels totaling approximately 424 acres in Calhoun County with a tax assessed market value of \$244,382.

LOCATION:

Calhoun County

DSL STAFF REMARKS:

The Flanders Farm amendment proposed by Conservation Florida adds seven parcels in Calhoun County totaling approximately 424 acres to the Apalachicola River Florida Forever project. The property is owned by Flanders Farms, LLC. The seven parcels have a combined tax assessed value of \$244,382. The property is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition.

The western half of the property is dominated by unimproved pasture and pine plantation. The eastern portion of the property is comprised of bottomland forest and floodplain swamp associated with the floodplain of the Apalachicola River as well as a small blackwater stream known as Woods Branch. The Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) reports one record of a rare species on site – southern elktoe (*Alasmidonta triangulate*). However, the property provides potential habitat for the Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*) and its protection would benefit the numerous rare species of mussels, fishes, and turtles are known from the adjacent Apalachicola River. Conservation of the property would also protect nearly three miles of scenic viewshed along the Apalachicola River Blueway State Paddling Trail. The property is Priority 2 in the Florida Ecological Greenways Network.

The proposal meets the criteria to be submitted as a boundary amendment. The parcels total less than 1,000 acres, have a tax assessed value of less than \$2 million, and are less than 10% of the size of the overall project to which it is being added. The proposal area should be designated as essential.

Project History:

The Apalachicola River project in Calhoun, Gadsden, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty counties was approved on the CARL list in 1991. The Apalachicola River project is designed to protect the water quality of the river, preserve the productive and unique habitat of Apalachicola Bay, and provide the public with scenic outdoor-recreation opportunities from Torreya State Park south to Wewahitchka and the Dead Lakes. The high plateaus, steep bluffs and deep ravines of the northern Apalachicola River valley are some of the most significant natural features of the southeastern Coastal Plain and the region is home to many rare, and endemic plants and animals, such as the endangered and nearly extinct Florida Torreya tree.

The Apalachicola River project includes over 57,142 acres with 48,860 acres remaining and is ranked number one in the Critical Natural Lands category on the 2023 Florida Forever Priority List. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2021) is \$49,670,352.

FNAI Review:

According to FNAI, 100% of the site contributes to Ecological Greenways, 99% of the site contributes to Natural Floodplain Function, and 96% of site contributes to Surface Water

Protection. The site also contributes significantly to FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities (85%) and Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (82%).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Vote on the proposed boundary amendment.

ARC RECOMMENDATION:

Project	DHR	FFS	Lynetta Griner	FWC	Bill Palmer	Elva Peppers	DEP	Selected
Apalachicola River: Flanders Farm								



To: Sine Murray, DEP/OES
 From: Dale R. Jackson, FNAI
 Date: May 3, 2023
 Subject: Proposed Boundary Modification to Florida Forever BOT Project:
 Apalachicola River (Flanders Farms)

The major goals of the Apalachicola River Florida Forever Project (ARFFP) are to protect the water quality of the river and Apalachicola Bay as well as the unique diversity of natural communities and species that occur along the upper and middle river. The proposed 449.85-acre (per application; 424 GIS acres) addition, situated 2.5 miles northwest of Estifanulga and on the river's western bank in Calhoun County, is intended to support these goals. The property is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition.

The site is a single, horizontally oriented tract of land that runs from County Road 69 on the west to the Apalachicola River on the east. On the south it is contiguous with the northern border of the 2,122-acre Corbin-Tucker Conservation Easement (CTCE; held by the state of Florida). The small 24-acre Hazel and Herselle Wilderness Preserve (HHWP; Bay County Conservancy, Inc.) nestles into the northwestern corner of the site. Unacquired portions of ARFFP lie directly across the river from the site, as well as immediately south of CTCE and 0.5 mile north of the site.

The eastern half of the site comprises bottomland (hardwood) forest along the river. Along the western (inland) edge of this, and identified as Ammonia River Sand Slough, is a band of cypress (floodplain swamp). Much of the western portion of the site has been cleared. Some remains cleared as pasture, and some (159 acres [35%] per application) is in pine plantation of at least two ages; portions may also retain disturbed mesic flatwoods/upland pine. The USGS topographic map shows a small stream (Woods Branch) flowing southward through the western end of the property, eventually reaching Joe Davis Lake partially within CTCE. The map also depicts Woods Landing within the site along the river, as well as an area of old dredge spoil, mostly vegetated, to its north. The application notes a small home site and barn structure near CR-69 just south of HHWP. Unpaved roads, including SE Wood Cemetery Road, penetrate the site.

The Florida Forever Measures Evaluation (FFME) following this memo identifies only one record of rare species on site – southern elktoe (*Alasmidonta triangulata*; G1/S1, UR, N). However, numerous rare species of mussels, fishes, and turtles are known from the adjacent Apalachicola River and would likewise benefit from its protection. These include four turtles (alligator snapping turtle [*Macrochelys temminckii*], spiny softshell [*Apalone spinifera*], Barbour's map turtle [*Graptemys barbouri*], and river cooter [*Pseudemys concinna concinna*]), at least one fish (Alabama shad [*Alosa alabamiae*]), and three additional mussels (sculptured pigtoe [*Quadrula infucata*], Apalachicola floater [*Anodonta heardi*], and brother spike [*Elliptio fraterna*]). The Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*) is considered to be common regionally by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission so might wander onto the property.

The FFME is based on the Florida Forever Conservation Needs Assessment developed by FNAI. The data used in that analysis represent a standardized, statewide perspective of natural community distributions based primarily on data from the Cooperative Land Cover Map. Nearly the entire proposed addition contributes to Surface Water Protection, Ecological Greenways, and Natural Floodplain Function. Functional wetlands comprise 65% of the proposal.

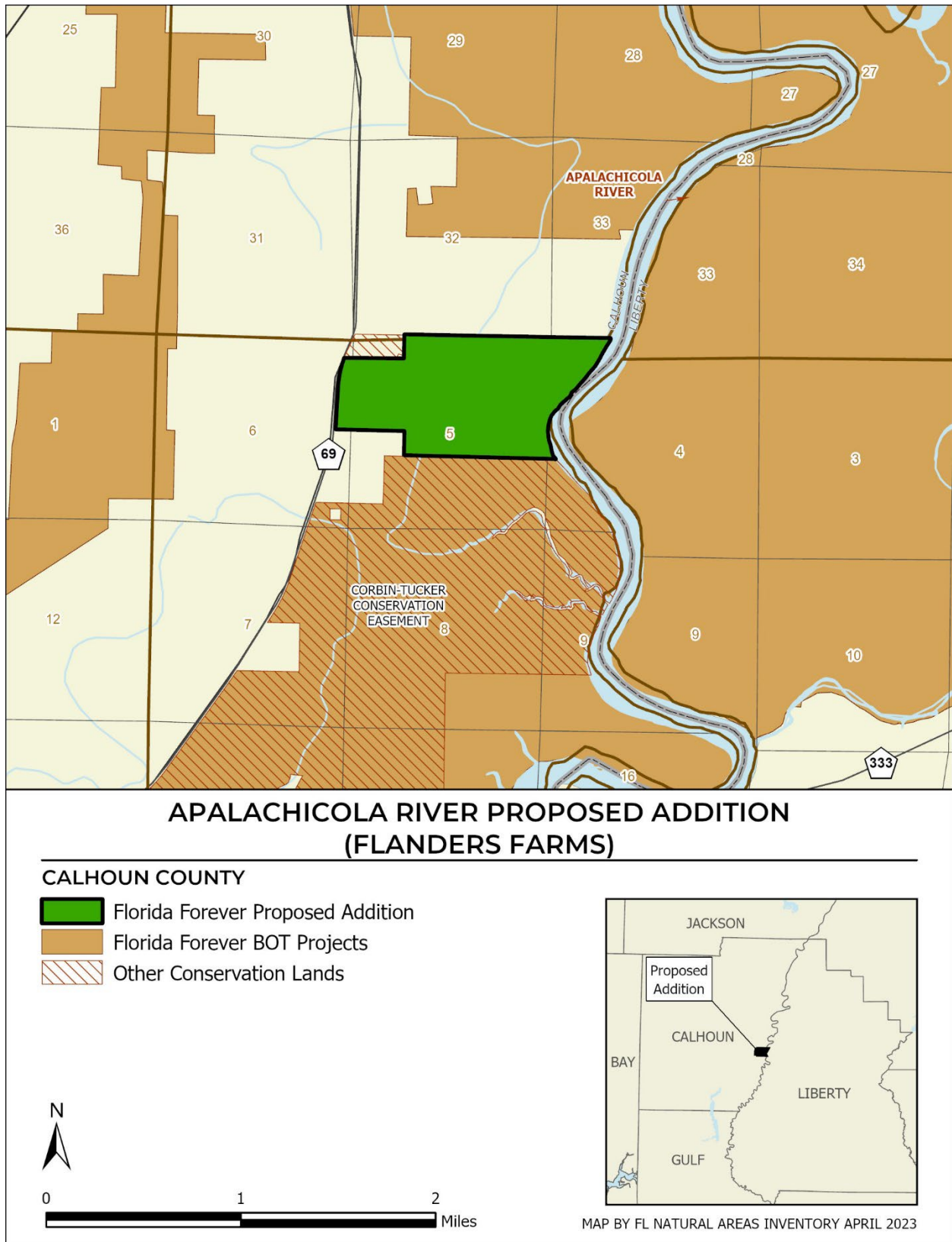
Apalachicola River (Flanders Farms): Florida Forever Measures Evaluation 20230425

GIS ACRES = 424

MEASURES	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
B1: Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	33	8%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	315	74%
Total Acres	349	82%
B2: FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities		
Priority 1	358	85%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	1	< 1%
Total Acres	359	85%
B3: Ecological Greenways		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	424	100%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Total Acres	424	100%
B4: Under-represented Natural Communities		
Upland Glade (G1)	0	0%
Pine Rockland (G1)	0	0%
Scrub and Scrubby Flatwoods (G2)	0	0%
Rockland Hammock (G2)	0	0%
Dry Prairie (G2)	0	0%
Seepage Slope (G2)	0	0%
Sandhill (G3)	0	0%
Sandhill Upland Lake (G3)	0	0%
Upland Pine (G3)	0	0%
Mesic/Wet Flatwoods (G4)	0	0%
Upland Hardwood Forest (G5)	0	0%
Total Acres	0	0%
B6: Occurrences of FNAI Tracked Species		
G1	1	
G2	0	
G3	0	
G4	0	
G5	0	
Total	1	
C4: Natural Floodplain Function		
Priority 1	209	49%
Priority 2	122	29%
Priority 3	50	12%
Priority 4	39	9%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	420	99%

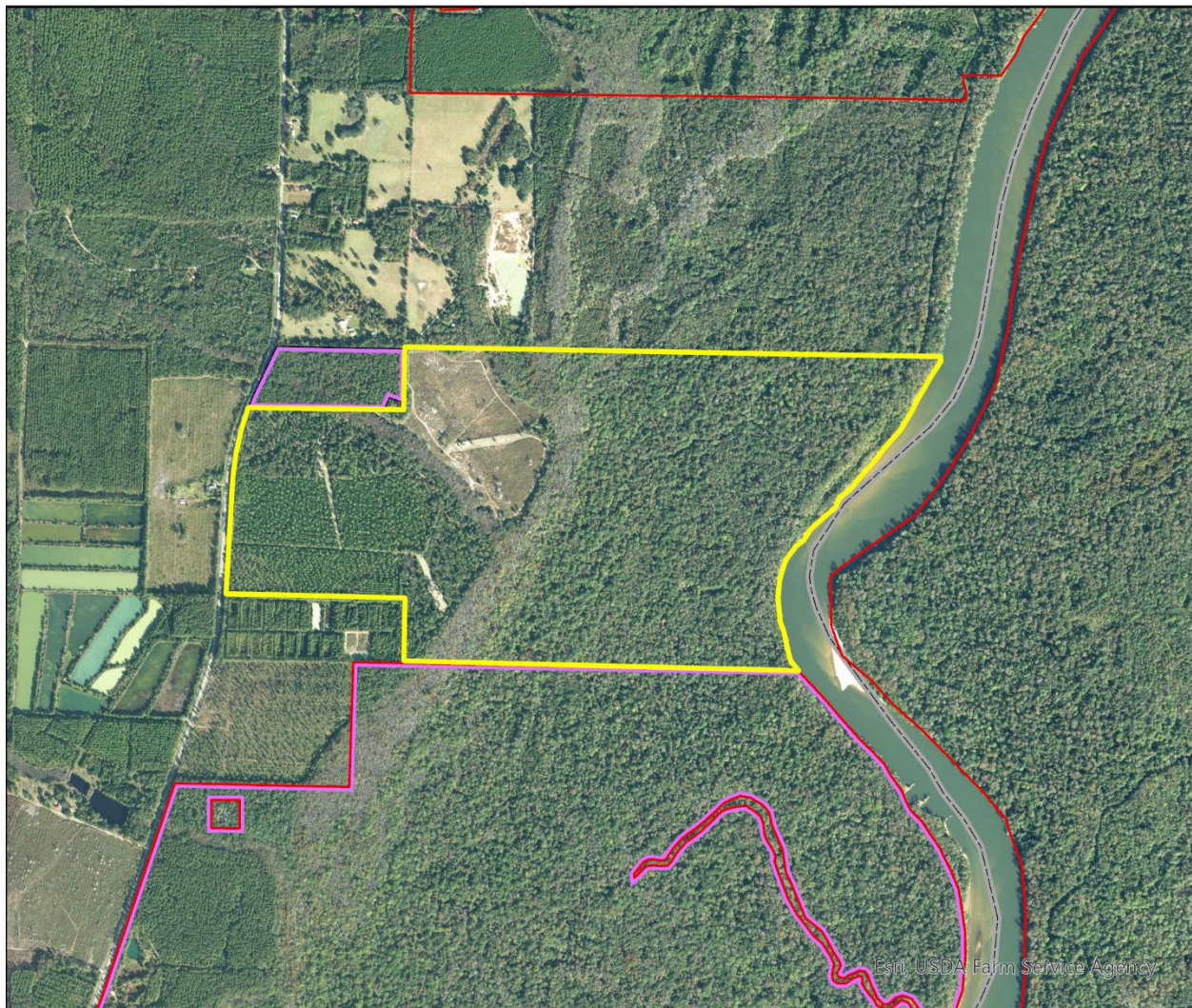
MEASURES (continued)	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
C5: Surface Water Protection		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	145	34%
Priority 3	229	54%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	32	8%
Priority 6	0	0%
Priority 7	0	0%
Total Acres	406	96%
C7: Fragile Coastal Resources		
Fragile Coastal Uplands	0	0%
Imperiled Coastal Lakes	0	0%
Coastal Wetlands	0	0%
Total Acres	0	0%
C8: Functional Wetlands		
Priority 1	209	49%
Priority 2	65	15%
Priority 3	2	< 1%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	277	65%
D3: Aquifer Recharge		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	92	22%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	92	22%
E2: Recreational Trails (miles)		
(prioritized trail opportunities from Office of Greenways and Trails & Univ. Florida)		
Land Trail Priorities	0.0	
Land Trail Opportunities	0.0	
Total Miles	0.0	
F2: Arch. & Historical Sites (number)		
	0 sites	
G1: Sustainable Forestry		
Priority 1	41	10%
Priority 2	45	11%
Priority 3	4	1%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5 - Potential Pinelands	0	0%
Total Acres	91	22%
G3: Forestland for Recharge		
	0	0%

^aAcres of each resource in the project and percentage of project represented by each resource are listed except where noted. This analysis converts site boundary into pixels, which causes slight differences from GIS acres; this effect is most noticeable on small sites.



Apalachicola River Proposed Addition (Flanders Farm)

FLORIDA FOREVER BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROJECT PROPOSED ADDITION AS OF APRIL 2023



Map Produced by: FL Natural Areas Inventory, N. Pasco, April 2023

Background: USA NAIP Imagery Resolution = 1.0 meter



-  Florida Forever Proposed Addition
-  Florida Forever BOT Projects
-  Existing Private Conservation Lands

