

ITEM 12:

Vote on whether to amend the Myakka Ranchlands Florida Forever Project boundary to add one parcel totaling approximately 576 acres in Manatee County with a prorated tax assessed value of \$842,913.

LOCATION:

Manatee County

DSL STAFF REMARKS:

The J Bar C Ranch West amendment proposed by the National Wildlife Refuge Association and Common Ground Ecology, adds 576 acres of a 1,572-acre parcel in Manatee County to the Myakka Ranchlands Florida Forever Project. The property has a prorated tax assessed value of \$842,913.

The property located to the east of Myakka River State Park is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition. The landowner has been contacted and is a willing seller. The J Bar C Ranch West property would reinforce the conservation corridor between the Myakka and Peace Rivers. The property contains remnant pine flatwoods and improved pasture that may serve to link foraging and breeding habitat for wide-ranging species such as the Florida black bear and the eastern indigo snake. The property is within FEGN Priority 3. Approximately 996 acres of the J Bar C Ranch was previously added to the Myakka Ranchlands Project via boundary amendment in 2021.

The proposal meets the Florida Forever 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 proposed for addition.

Project History:

The Myakka Ranchlands project in DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota counties was approved by the Acquisition and Restoration Council in 2007. The project aims to protect a landscape-size area in the Myakka River and Charlotte Harbor watershed by creating system of conservation areas in southwest Florida. The project will provide habitat for rare wildlife species, protect critical wetlands, and provide enhanced watershed and water quality protection.

The Myakka Ranchlands project includes over 47,414 acres with 30,573 acres remaining and is ranked fifth 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 \$152,903,490.

FNAI Review:

According to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI), 100% of the J Bar C Ranch West property contributes to Surface Water Protection, and Aquifer Recharge. The site also contributes to Natural Floodplain Function (99%), Ecological Greenways (97%), Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (76%), and FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities (69%).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Vote on the proposed boundary amendment.

ARC RECOMMENDATION:

Project	DHR	FFS	Lynetta Griner	FWC	Bill Palmer	Elva Peppers	DEP	Selected
Myakka Ranchlands: J Bar C Ranch West								



To: Deborah Burr, DEP/OES
From: Dale R. Jackson, FNAI
Date: November 10, 2021
Subject: Proposed boundary modification (addition) to Florida Forever BOT Project:
Myakka Ranchlands – J Bar C Ranch West, Manatee County

The major goal of the Myakka Ranchlands Florida Forever (FF) Project is to help build a landscape size protection area of more than 50,000 acres by adding to the existing 121,000 acres of conservation land already protecting the Myakka River and Charlotte Harbor Estuary. It would protect populations of rare plants and animals as well as state waters and functional wetlands.

The proposed addition includes 576 acres (per proposal; 622 GIS acres) in an irregularly shaped tract in southeastern-most Manatee County bordering Sarasota County on the south and lying just west of DeSoto County. The ranch partly surrounds citrus groves that are excluded from the proposal, which consists of northern and southern tracts joined by a very narrow (0.01 mile) strip of land on the western side of the groves. The proposal abuts the eastern portion of J Bar C Ranch that was added earlier in 2021 to the Florida Forever project, while other tracts of the project lie 1.1 miles to the southeast and 1.4 miles to the northwest. The nearest conservation lands are Myakka Prairie Conservation Easements, Myakkahatchee Creek Conservation Easement, Myakka River State Park, and Candy Bar Ranch Agricultural and Conservation Easement, all within 2.5 miles, but several others are within 5 miles. The property is proposed for less-than-fee-simple protection offered by a willing seller.

This is a low-relief site (mostly 35–45 feet elevation) that originally supported a mosaic of wetlands (many ephemeral) and probably mesic/wet flatwoods within a large slough system. Wetlands have been disturbed and partly drained by a series of ditches/canals and possibly pumping from wells, as well as potentially degraded by use by cattle; nonetheless, some retain characteristics of depression and basin marshes and wet prairies. Much (200+ acres per proposal) of the “uplands” has been converted to improved pasture. Within these pastures are second-growth disturbed woodlands (successional hardwood forest) and scattered trees that include mixed hardwoods, cabbage palm, and slash pine. Pastures in the southern tract appear to have been plowed or mowed, possibly for agriculture, as rows are clearly visible in aerial photography. A homesite with agricultural outbuildings lies in the southeastern corner of the southern tract.

The FNAI database contains no records of rare species on site, although some (e.g., lowland loosestrife, gopher tortoise, eastern indigo snake, crested caracara, Florida sandhill crane, Florida burrowing owl, Florida black bear) that have been documented in the past regionally may use such lands (the applicant notes past bear sightings). Focused field surveys may document some of these on site.

The Florida Forever Measures Evaluation (FFME) following this memo 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. The proposed addition contributes substantially (by percent of site, not necessarily total acreage) to protection of Ecological Greenways, Surface Water Protection, Aquifer Recharge, and Natural Floodplain Protection. Functional Wetlands comprise 37% (229 acres) of the site, albeit not without disturbance.

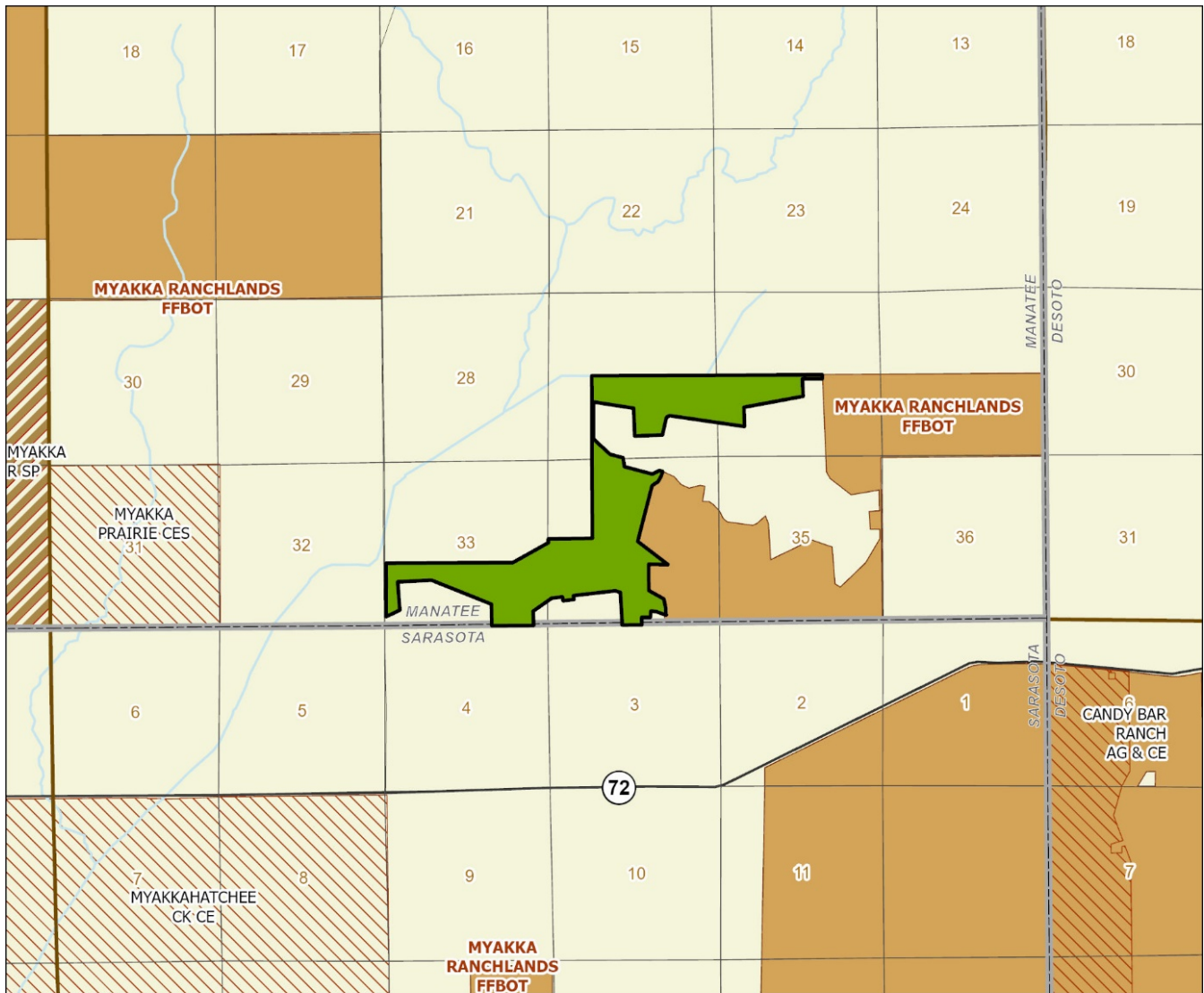
Myakka Ranchlands (J Bar C Ranch): Florida Forever Measure Evaluation 20211101

GIS ACRES = 622

MEASURES	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
B1: Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	147	24%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	325	52%
Total Acres	471	76%
B2: FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	13	2%
Priority 5	413	66%
Priority 6	3	< 1%
Total Acres	429	69%
B3: Ecological Greenways		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	605	97%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Total Acres	605	97%
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)	5	< 1%
Upland Hardwood Forest (G5)	0	0%
Total Acres	5	< 1%
B6: Occurrences of FNAI Tracked Species		
G1	0	
G2	0	
G3	0	
G4	0	
G5	0	
Total	0	
C4: Natural Floodplain Function		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	11	2%
Priority 3	313	50%
Priority 4	182	29%
Priority 5	111	18%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	618	99%

MEASURES (continued)	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
C5: Surface Water Protection		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	615	99%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	5	< 1%
Priority 6	0	0%
Priority 7	0	0%
Total Acres	620	100%
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	0	0%
Priority 2	10	2%
Priority 3	174	28%
Priority 4	26	4%
Priority 5	20	3%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	229	37%
D3: Aquifer Recharge		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	545	88%
Priority 5	77	12%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	622	100%
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	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	5	< 1%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5 - Potential Pinelands	229	37%
Total Acres	235	38%
G3: Forestland for Recharge		
	0	0%

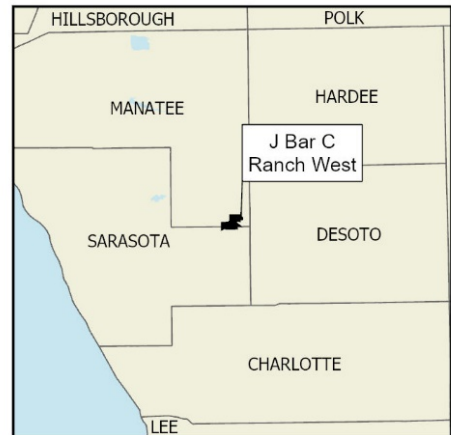
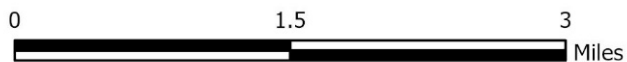
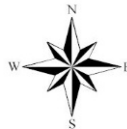
^aAcres of each resource in the project and percentage of project represented by each resource are listed except where noted. This analysis converts site boundary into pixels, which causes slight differences from GIS acres; this effect is most noticeable on small sites.



MYAKKA RANGLANDS PROPOSED ADDITION (J BAR C RANCH WEST)

MANATEE COUNTY

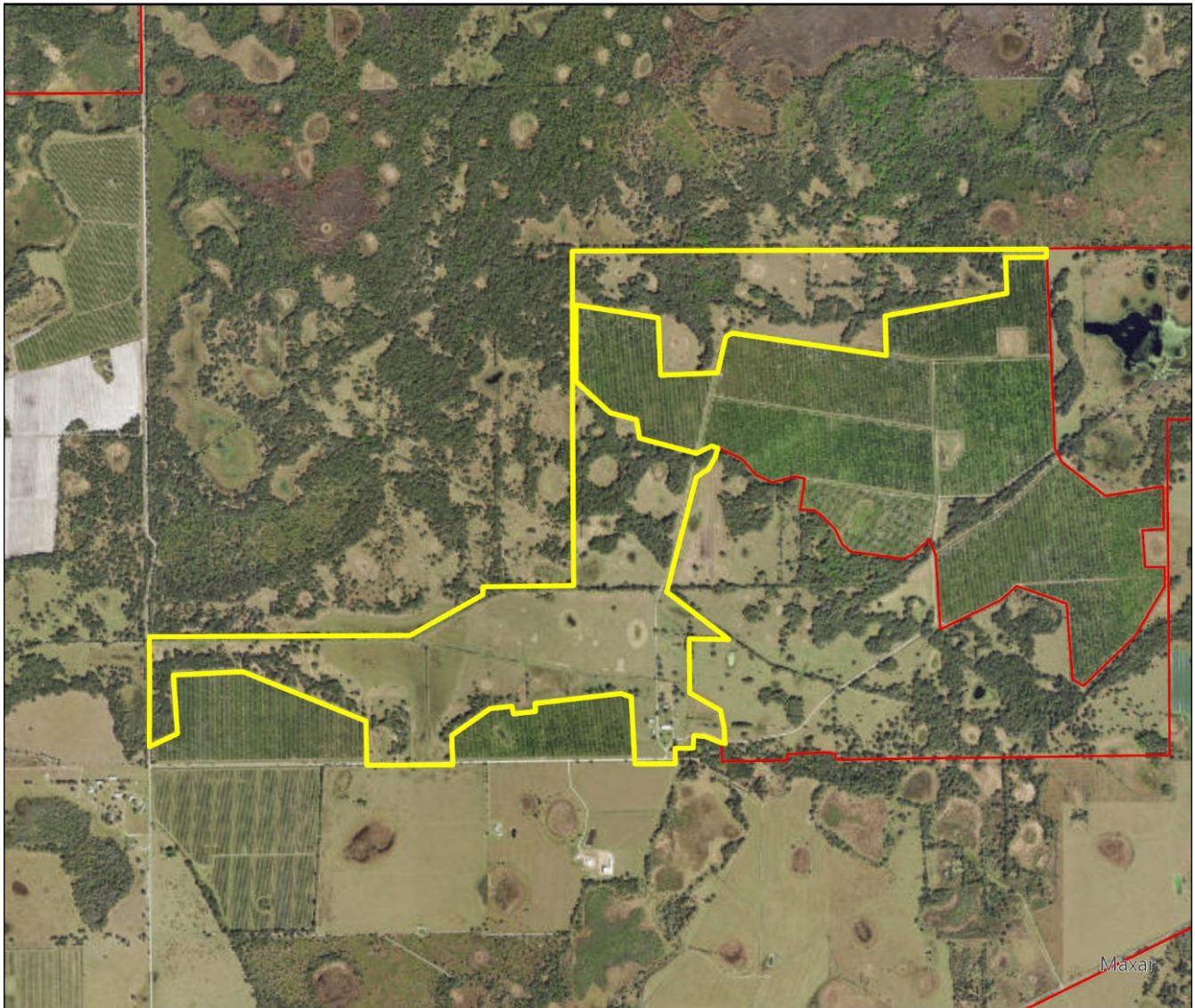
- Proposed Florida Forever BOT Project Addition
- Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



NOVEMBER 2021

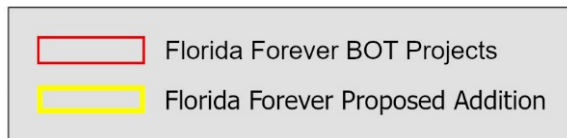
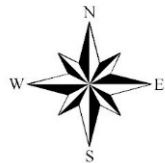
Myakka Ranchlands Proposed Addition

FLORIDA FOREVER BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROJECT PROPOSED ADDITION AS OF OCTOBER 2021



Map Produced by: N. Pasco, November 2021

Background: World Imagery Resolution = 0.3 meter



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