



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 20-0797, **Version:** 1

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**Agenda Item Name:**

Addition of certain land conservation projects to the Alachua County Forever Active Acquisition List.

**Presenter:**

Charlie Houder / (352) 264-6804

**Description:**

Request the Board of County Commissioners approve the addition of Kanapaha Prairie - Lane, Lake Santa Fe - Butler and Santa Fe River - Waldo Tree Farm land conservation projects to the Alachua County Forever Active Acquisition List (Full Price List).

Addition of these projects to the Active Acquisition List authorizes staff to: obtain title work and appraisals, negotiate price and terms with the owner, and execute an option contract.

The execution of any option will be brought back to the Board for consideration.

**Recommended Action:**

1. Approve the addition of Kanapaha Prairie - Lane property on the Active Acquisition List as a Conservation Easement. (Full Price List)
2. Approve the addition of Lake Santa Fe - Butler property on the Active Acquisition List as a Fee Simple Acquisition. (Full Price List)
3. Approve the addition of Santa Fe River - Waldo Tree Farm property on the Active Acquisition List as a Fee Simple Acquisition. (Full Price List)

**Prior Board Motions:**

N/A

**Fiscal Consideration:**

Pre-Contract Acquisition Cost Estimates: \$31,650

Due Diligence - Operation: 021.41.4160.537.31.00 - 6184160

**Background:**

As with all of our conservation lands, if accepted as an acquisition, this property will go through the vetting process for the Registry of Protected Places.

On March 23, 2020, Mary Rockwood Lane and Timothy Lane nominated their property to the Alachua County Forever Program. On July 23, 2020, the Land Conservation Board placed the 126.6-acre

Kanapaha Prairie - Lane property on the Priority Pool as a conservation easement. The Lane property consists of five parcels (07397-004-006, 07354-022-000, 07354-001-000, 07354-004-001 and 07398-016-000). These parcels encompass a portion of the hydrological connection between Barr Hammock Levy Prairie and Kanapaha Prairie that ultimately leads to Pierson Sink. The Lane parcels are also adjacent to the County's Kanapaha Prairie - Frederick and Spalding Conservation Easement and the Conservation Fund (Kanapaha Prairie Crane and Wildlife Refuge) property within the Kanapaha Prairie basin.

The Lane property supports a diverse mix of ecosystems including basin marsh, wet prairie, mesic hammock, upland hardwood forest, depression swamp, depression marsh and basin marsh. The site also has some rough and improved pasture. Non-native plant species found on the property were in low densities. Some of the natural communities have been altered through cattle grazing, mowing or ditching, but due to its location, the property offers an important connection of conservation lands, good wildlife habitat and buffers surface waters. Imperiled wildlife documented on the property include Whooping cranes, Florida Sandhill crane, Tricolored heron, Little Blue heron, Southeastern American kestrel, Florida black bear and gopher tortoise. (Exhibit 1)

On August 9, 2020, Arthur and Doris Butler nominated their property to the Alachua County Forever Program. On August 27, 2020, the Land Conservation Board placed the 1.01-acre Lake Santa Fe - Butler property on the Priority Pool for fee simple acquisition.

The Butler property consists of one parcel (16993-002-000). The land locked property is located between the Lake Santa Fe - Padgett property that is under contract with the County and the Santa Fe Swamp Conservation Area. If the landowner requested access to the property, the road would need to be developed through the Padgett property since it is the only upland connection. Since the property owner would like to sell to the County, it is prudent to acquire this 1.01-acre parcel and include it in the management of the 315-acre Padgett Tract. The Butler parcel supports mesic flatwoods natural community in good condition and, ~28% of the parcel is included in the Outstanding Florida Waters boundary. As requested by the LCB, staff will discuss the potential for donation of the Butler parcel with the landowner. (Exhibit 2)

On July 7, 2020, Alfred Canal nominated the property to the Alachua County Forever Program. On August 27, 2020, the Land Conservation Board placed the 198-acre Santa Fe River - Waldo Tree Farm, LLC property on the Priority Pool for fee simple acquisition.

The Waldo Tree Farm property is comprised of one parcel (16914-000-000). The property is located in northeastern Alachua County. More specifically, the tract is northeast of Waldo and along the western boundary of the Santa Fe Swamp Conservation Area managed by the Suwannee River Water Management District. The northern portion of the property is connected to the wetland systems that make up the headwaters and origin of the Santa Fe River, and approximately 25% of the land is included within the Outstanding Florida Waters of the Santa Fe River System. In addition, approximately 45% of the property lies within the Santa Fe River Strategic Ecosystem designation. This northern portion of the property is an important buffer for the headwaters of the Santa Fe River. The property has a CSX railroad line that cuts through a portion of the eastern side of the property. The natural communities found on the property include floodplain swamp, blackwater stream, dome swamp, mesic flatwoods and wet flatwoods. The wetland communities are predominantly in excellent ecological condition and the flatwoods are utilized for silvicultural activities. In late 2019/early 2020, the planted pine trees were clear-cut in the portion of the flatwoods on the west side of the railroad line. The understory vegetation within the pine plantation/flatwoods is in good condition. Non-native plant species found within the property were in very low densities, although numerous pockets of exotics were found along the railroad corridor. (Exhibit 3)

Comp Plan Reference:

Policy 6.0 Land Conservation Program within the Conservation and Open Space Element, states “Establish and maintain a land conservation program for the purchase, preservation, and management of natural areas and open space to complement the regulatory approaches identified in other section of this element.”