



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 20-1049, **Version:** 2

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**Agenda Item Name:**

BoCC Letter of Support for the nomination of the Dudley Farm State Park as a National Historic Landmark (NHL)

**Presenter:**

Kathleen W. Pagan, Senior Planner GM; 352-374-5249

**Description:**

The Florida DEP Division of Recreation and Parks has nominated the Dudley Farm State Park to be designated a National Historic Landmark. A letter of support will indicate County agreement with State efforts for this national recognition.

**Recommended Action:**

Approve the letter of support and ask Chair to sign today in order to meet deadline

**Prior Board Motions:**

NA

**Fiscal Consideration:**

NA

**Background:**

The Dudley Farm State Park, owned by the State, is currently listed on the National Register (since 2002). The Florida Department of Environmental Protection Division of Parks and Recreation initiated the nomination for NHL, and is working with a professional consultant (Dr. Evelyn Causey) to document the significance of the property. The designation as a National Historic Landmark will provide additional preservation benefits, including more national exposure as a tourism destination and the site conditions will be included in a National Park Service annual report to Congress. Additional information is available in the "Federal Effects of Designation" attachment that was downloaded from the NPS website.

Dudley Farm was officially nominated as a National Historic Landmark at the November 5, 2020, meeting of the NHL Committee. If approved this will be the second NHL designation for Alachua County, the first being the NHL designation of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park (including the house and grove) several years ago. The Executive Summary of the NHL Committee is attached.

The meeting record includes the National Historic Landmarks Committee Comments:

- It was suggested that the Period of Significance should begin earlier so as to include the first generation of Dudleys to acquire and use the land to farm. The original use was as a plantation with

enslaved labor that transitioned into an owner-operated farm that used hired labor.

- It was noted that there were lynchings in this area during the period of significance and that the Dudley family involvement or awareness of these violent events and racial tensions should be discussed.
- There were identified questions regarding the boundary and building construction methods which will be addressed in the revised nomination

**National Historic Landmarks Committee Recommendation:**

The Committee recommends that the National Park System Advisory Board recommend to the Secretary of the Interior the designation of the Dudley Farm in Newberry, Alachua County, Florida, as a National Historic Landmark, with any additions and corrections as noted by the Committee being made prior to the nomination being forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior for action.

The final decision in this process, that local and State supporters have worked several years to complete, is made by the Secretary of the Interior following a recommendation by the National Park System Advisory Board. An Advisory Board meeting is scheduled on December 10, 2020, as noted in this announcement in the Federal Register. Planning staff of the City of Newberry were notified by County Historical Commission staff about this process, since one of the parcels included in the State Park is within City limits and Newberry is a Certified Local Government.

Newberry Mayor Marlowe signed a support letter on Nov. 23 (as reported in Alachua County Today Nov. 26 issue), since for this process it is advisable to show community support. County staff also shared documents on the Newberry lynching history with the State DEP Historic Preservationist.

It should be noted this matter was introduced at the Alachua County Historical Commission meeting in July, the first held virtually during the pandemic. However there was only brief discussion and no formal action. The final minutes of this meeting note:

***B. Letter of Support NHL Nomination Dudley Farm State Park- POSTPONED***

*Staff Kathleen Pagan reported she spoke by phone with NPS Staff (Patty Henry) and the review of Dudley Farm State Park application is anticipated early 2021. Due to Covid the September NPS meeting will be held via zoom and the agenda has 13 items previously submitted (shown in link above). NPS staff had to limit the items so Dudley will occur at the next meeting, and NPS is particularly interested in the agricultural history. NPS will send meeting information.*

The entire July 2020 ACHC minutes were included as "Notation for Record" at the BoCC meeting on Oct. 27, 2020.

In fact a second Fall NPS meeting occurred to review National Historic Landmark nominations but due to no formal notice from NPS, ACHC staff received the nomination information very late (from a local historian assisting the State Park CSO). Therefore the draft letter was reviewed only by the ACHC Chair who voiced general agreement with the information in the letter. ACHC Chair Karen Kirkman noted page 8 of the Myrtle Dudley oral history which documents a deputy was shot who was Myrtle Dudley's mother's brother George Wynne. This event preceded the lynching mob and the murder of innocent victims. (This document is in the UF archives online).

While this is a horrific and violent history the State Park site can perhaps be part of Alachua County efforts to educate the public for Truth and Reconciliation. Staff has shared the 'Newberry Lynching of 1916' State Historic Marker documentation with DEP staff working on this nomination.