

ITEM 10:

Vote on whether to amend the Flagler County Blueway Florida Forever project to add one parcel totaling ± 153.03 acres in Flagler County with a tax assessed market value of \$4,399,421.

LOCATION:

Flagler County

DSL STAFF REMARKS:

The Bulow Creek Floodplain amendment proposed by Flagler County adds one parcel in Flagler County totaling ± 153.03 acres to the Flagler County Blueway Florida Forever Project. The property consists of one parcel owned by Veranda Bay Investments, LLC. The landowner has been contacted and is a willing seller. The parcel has a combined tax assessed value of \$4,399,921 and is proposed for fee-simple acquisition. If acquired, the property would be managed by Flagler County as an addition to Bulow Creek Headwaters Regional Park.

The proposed addition is in eastern Flagler County, 1.5 miles inland of the Atlantic Ocean and west of Smith Creek (Intracoastal Waterway). The proposal is approximately 0.75 miles from the Flagler County Blueway Florida Forever Project. The proposal is adjacent to the recently acquired Bulow Creek Headwaters Regional Park (BCHRP) managed by Flagler County and is 1.5 miles north Bulow Plantation Ruins Historic State Park and Bulow Creek State Park. The property is within the headwaters of Bulow Creek, which drains to the Halifax River and eventually the Atlantic Ocean. The site is mostly forested, with what is likely a mix of floodplain swamp/hydric hammock and former wet/mesic flatwoods. According to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI), there is evidence of planted pines from ongoing forestry and a potential area of remnant scrub. The proposal includes no structures or facilities other than an unimproved road. According to the application, there are several opportunities for resource-based recreation on the property: including paved and unpaved trails, boardwalks, birding, and wildlife observation areas. If acquired, the property would contribute to the surface water protection of Bulow Creek and increase recreational opportunities for the public.

The proposal meets the criteria to be submitted as a boundary amendment. The parcel has a tax assessed value of less than \$5 million. The proposal area should be designated as essential.

Project History:

The Flagler County Blueway Florida Forever Project in Flagler County was added to the Priority List in 2003. The Project will increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity through the preservation of natural ecological communities that provide wildlife habitat for rare species such as the Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*) and gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*).

The Flagler County Blueway Florida Forever Project includes 4,260 acres with 2,834 acres remaining and is ranked number 27 in the Partnerships & Regional Incentives category on the 2026 ARC Recommended Florida Forever Priority List. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2024) is \$347,364,049.

FNAI Review:

According to FNAI, the entire site is within a region that classifies the Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*) as frequent. There are no additional records of rare species on site, although additional biological survey efforts may yield some.

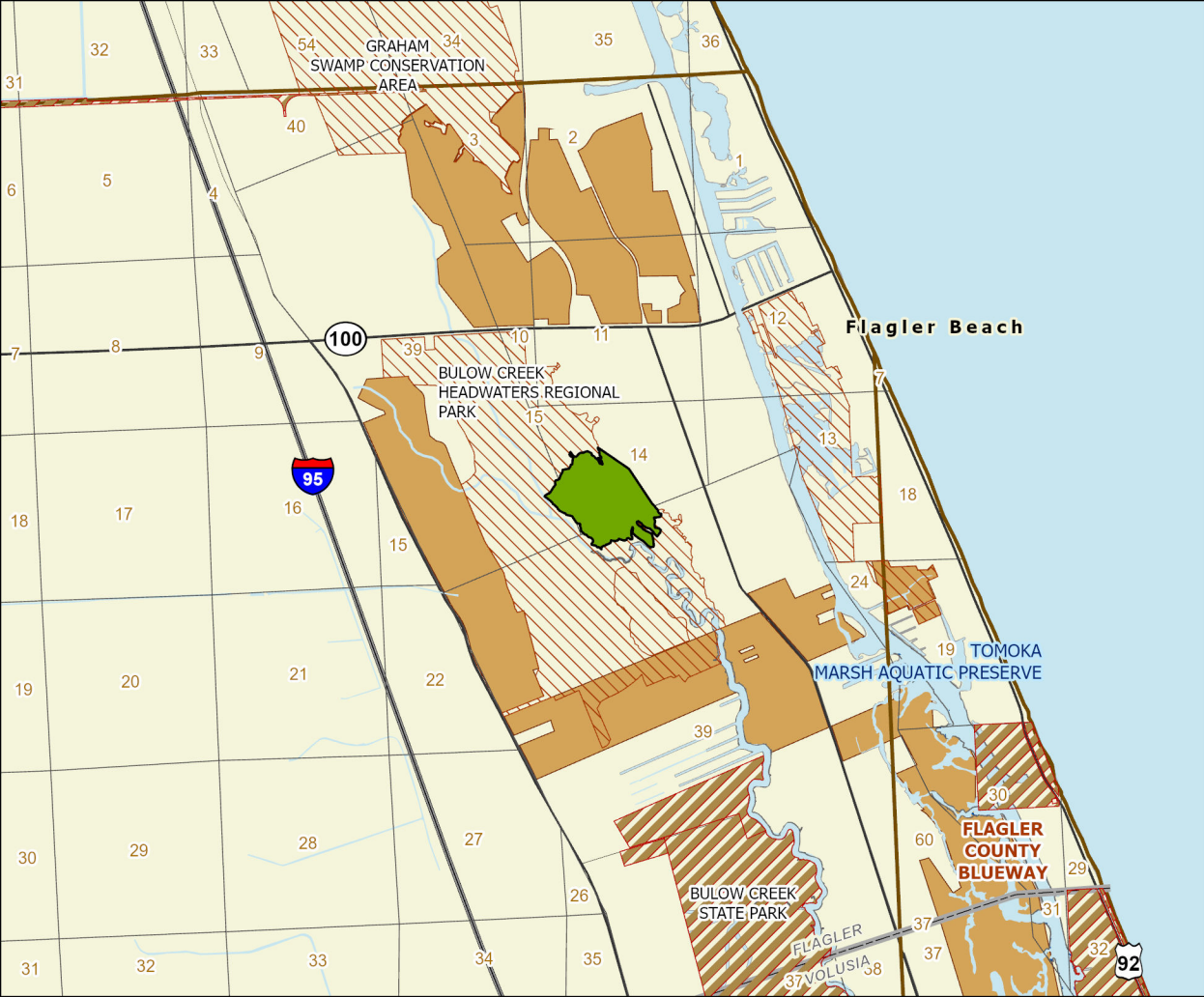
One hundred percent of the site contributes to Ecological Greenways (priority 5), Surface Water Protection (mainly priority 1), and Aquifer Recharge (mainly priority 4). Ninety-five percent contributes to Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (mainly priority 3). Ninety-two percent contributes to Natural Floodplain Function (mainly priority 2).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Vote on the proposed boundary amendment.






ARC RECOMMENDATION:

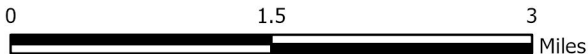
	Watts	DHR	FFS	Griner	DEP	FWC	Palmer	Peppers	Gamblin	Select
Project										
Flagler County Blueway: Bulow Creek Floodplain										



FLAGLER COUNTY BLUEWAY FLORIDA FOREVER PROJECT BULOW CREEK FLOODPLAIN BOUNDARY AMENDMENT

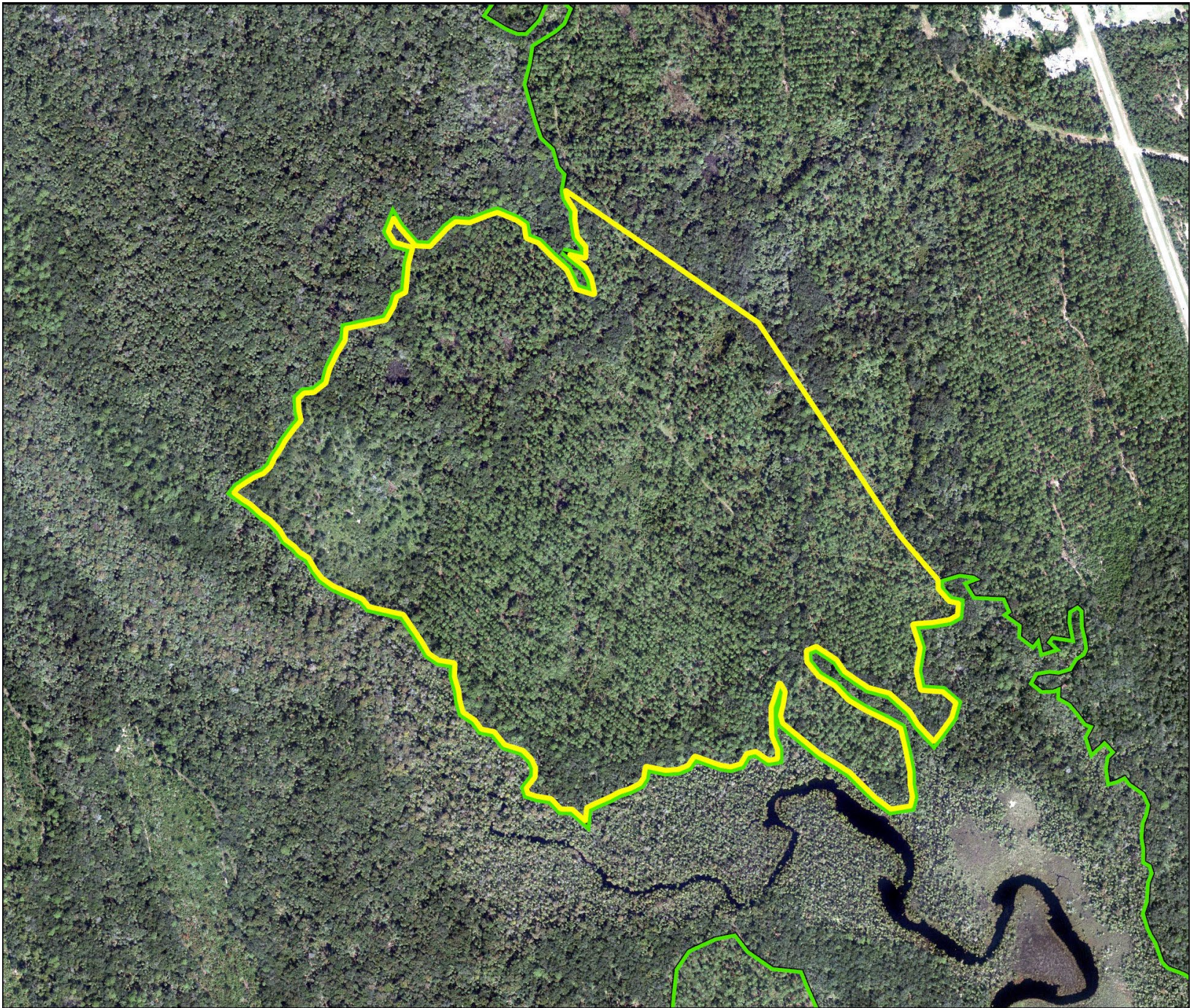
FLAGLER COUNTY

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



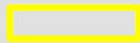

FLAGLER COUNTY BLUEWAY FLORIDA FOREVER PROJECT BULOW CREEK FLOODPLAIN BOUNDARY AMENDMENT

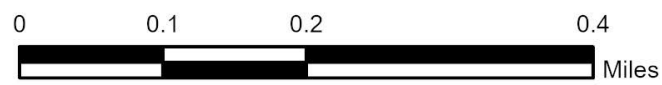
FLORIDA FOREVER BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROJECT PROPOSED ADDITION AS OF DECEMBER 2025



Map Produced by: FL Natural Areas Inventory, N. Pasco, December 2025 Background: FDOT 2023 Aerial Imagery Resolution = 0.076 meter



	Florida Forever Proposed Addition
	Existing Local Conservation Lands



Flagler County Blueway (Bulow Creek Floodplain) : Florida Forever Measures Evaluation 20251215

GIS ACRES = 153

MEASURES	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
B1: Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	109	71%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	38	25%
Total Acres	147	95%
B2: FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	0	0%
B3: Ecological Greenways		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	153	100%
Total Acres	153	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	0	
G2	0	
G3	0	
G4	1	
G5	0	
Total	1	
C4: Natural Floodplain Function		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	62	40%
Priority 3	53	35%
Priority 4	27	18%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	142	92%

MEASURES (continued)	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
C5: Surface Water Protection		
Priority 1	121	79%
Priority 2	2	2%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	30	20%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Priority 7	0	0%
Total Acres	153	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	40	26%
Priority 3	9	6%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	49	32%
D3: Aquifer Recharge		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	115	75%
Priority 5	12	8%
Priority 6	26	17%
Total Acres	153	100%
E2: Recreational Trails (miles)		
<small>(prioritized trail opportunities from Office of Greenways and Trails & Univ. Florida)</small>		
Land Trail Priorities	0.0	
Land Trail Opportunities	0.0	
Total Miles	0.0	
F2: Arch. & Historical Sites (number)		
	0	0 sites
G1: Sustainable Forestry		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	1	< 1%
Priority 5	97	63%
Total Acres	97	63%
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.



To: Sine Murray, DEP/OES
From: Dale R. Jackson, Ph.D., FNAI
Date: January 5, 2026
Subject: Proposed Boundary Modification to Florida Forever BOT Project: Flagler County Blueway– Bulow Creek Floodplain (Flagler County)

The major goals of the Flagler County Blueway Florida Forever Project are to increase protection of Florida's biodiversity through the preservation of natural ecological communities that provide wildlife habitat for rare species such as the Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*) and gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*), and to provide valuable urban open space and opportunities for public resource-based recreation in a rapidly growing area of the state. The ca. 153.0-acre Bulow Creek Floodplain property is proposed as an addition to the project. The property is proposed for fee simple acquisition, to be managed by Flagler County.

The proposal lies in eastern Flagler County near the Atlantic Coast and just north of the Volusia County line. The site is 1.5 miles inland of the ocean and west of Smith Creek (Intracoastal Waterway) and CR-201. It is disjunct from but within 0.75 mile of the existing Flagler County Blueway project on the north, west, and south. The tract is contiguous on its north, south, and west with the recently acquired Bulow Creek Headwaters Regional Park (BCHRP). Betty Steflik Memorial Preserve is on the opposite side of Smith Creek. Flagler County Bulow Gopher Tortoise Longterm Recipient Site, now included within BCHRP, is only 0.15 mile to the south.

The proposal lies along Graham Swamp and the headwaters of Bulow Creek, which drains to the Halifax River and eventually the Atlantic Ocean. Most of the low-lying site is below the 10-foot contour. Nonetheless, it is mostly forested, possibly a mix of floodplain swamp/hydric hammock and former wet/mesic flatwoods, with evidence of ongoing forestry (planted pines) covering most of the property. A small area in the site's western point has a lower density of trees, and aerial photographs show of what appears to be white sands, possibly indicative of remnant scrub. The property supports no structures or facilities other than an unimproved road.

The entire site is within a general region in which the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission considers the Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*; G5T4/S4, N, N) to be Frequent. The Florida Natural Areas Inventory contains no other records of rare species on site. Additional biological survey efforts may yield some, although many of those listed in the application are not expected.

Most of the property (90–100%) contributes to Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (priorities 3 and 5), Ecological Greenways (priority 5), Surface Water Protection (mostly priorities 1 and 4), Aquifer Recharge (priorities 4–6), and Natural Floodplain Function (priorities 2–4). Nearly two thirds supports Sustainable Forestry (priority 5), and one third Functional Wetlands (priorities 2 and 3).

Florida Natural Areas Inventory – 1018 Thomasville Road Suite 200-C – Tallahassee, FL 32303 – 850-224-8207 – www.fnai.org
Florida Resources and Environmental Analysis Center – Institute of Science and Public Affairs
The Florida State University

