

AGENDA
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & CONSUMER SERVICES
APRIL 28, 2009
Substitute Page

Item 1 Minutes

Submittal of the Minutes from the March 10, 2009 Cabinet Meeting.

(See Attachment 1, Pages 1-2)

RECOMMEND APPROVAL

Substitute Item 2 Rural & Family Lands Protection Program Prioritized Acquisition List

REQUEST: Consideration of the recommended 2008/2009 Rural & Family Lands Protection Program Prioritized Acquisition List.

COUNTY: Statewide

APPLICANT: Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry

STAFF REMARKS:

This is the initial Prioritized Acquisition List for the Rural & Family Lands Protection Program, developed pursuant to ss. 259.105(3)(i) and 570.71(10) and Rule 5I-7. The purpose of the program is to acquire perpetual easements that ensure the land will be preserved in agricultural use and provide protection of natural resources.

The application cycle for the program was open from November to December 19, 2008. The Department received 35 eligible project applications.

As set forth in Rule 5I-7, the Department formed Technical Review Teams to evaluate each project. The teams were composed of staff from the Florida Natural Areas Inventory, Department of Environmental Protection/Division of State Lands, Department of Community Affairs, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the geographically applicable water management district, as well as staff from several divisions within the Department, including the Division of Animal Industry, Division of Forestry and the Office of Agricultural Water Policy. The technical review teams examined each project to assess the project's merits and its contributions to the goals and objectives of the program. In addition, Department staff performed a site visit of each property. Department staff utilized reports from the Technical Review Team members to complete a Project Evaluation Report for each project.

On March 27, 2009, the Selection Committee for the Rural & Family Lands Protection Program held a public hearing to review the project evaluation reports and receive public testimony about the projects. At the conclusion of the public hearing, the Selection Committee voted to approve a project list ranked in priority order. The Selection Committee chose a tiered system, with those projects in Tier I being designated as the highest acquisition priority.

**Board of Trustees
 Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services
 Agenda - April 28, 2009
 Substitute Page Two**

Substitute Item 2, cont.

On April 3, 2009, the Department presented the recommended project list to the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) for its review pursuant to statute. Jim Karels, Division of Forestry Director, informed ARC members and attendees of the success of the program’s procedures, process and public meeting. The Rural & Family Lands Protection Program was submitted to ARC as an information item.

The Department is now submitting the recommended project list to the Board of Trustees for its consideration. Pursuant to s. 259.04, F.S., the Board of Trustees “shall approve, in whole or in part, the list of projects in the order of priority in which such projects are presented.”

Recommended Project Priority List

Tier 1 Projects	Tier 2 Projects	Tier 3 Projects
Adams Ranch	Design Timber II	Bucket Creek Preserve
Rafter T Ranch	Buddy Hiers Farm	Crooked Creek Ranch
Tiger Lake Ranch	Scarborough and Sons Ranch (Highlands Cty)	Four Star Timber Inc.
Williamson Cattle Company	S & P Timber Properties	Russakis Ranch I
Evans Ranch	Taylor Ranch	Russakis Ranch II
Hastings Farm/Smith Family Farm	Cherokee Ranch	Russakis Ranch III
Walpole Ranch	Hardin Farm	Scarborough & Sons Ranch (DeSoto Cty)
Jahreis Family Ranch	Hartzog Farm	Circle Pine Farm
K-Rocker	Ox Creek Ranch	Lily of the Valley Farms
Moxon Family Ranch	A. Roy Hogan Groves	Macaulay Farm
Moye Ranch & Farm	Corona Cattle Company	Talley Farm
	Old Town Creek	Zinn Farm

RECOMMEND APPROVAL