

Resolution No. _____**RESOLUTION OF THE CONSERVATION COLLIER ENVIRONMENTAL LANDS ACQUISITION PROGRAM COMMITTEE SUPPORTING ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR FLORIDA FOREVER AND THE CREATION OF A SUCCESSOR PROGRAM.**

Upon motion by Committee member _____ and seconded by Committee member ____, the following resolution was adopted by a vote of ___ to ___ .

WHEREAS, the Florida Forever program and its predecessor Preservation 2000 program have immeasurably contributed to environmental health, quality of life, recreation, and sustainability in Florida for this and future generations, and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever has acquired over one million acres throughout Florida since 2000 and allocates \$300 million annually to purchase and restore environmentally sensitive and outdoor recreation lands through numerous successful partnerships with cities, counties, state agencies, water managements districts, nonprofit organizations, private landowners, and others in achieving its conservation purposes, and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever produces benefits that include clean air and water; healthy fisheries and wildlife habitat; enhanced water supply protection; and protection of open spaces including greenways, recreational and park lands, forests, and water bodies, and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever, through the Florida Communities Trust, has assisted Florida's cities and counties in protecting their cultural and historical resources and provided recreational outdoor experiences in both urban and rural settings, and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever has helped to save many of Florida's beaches, rivers, bays, forests, coral reefs and estuaries that provide the foundation for Florida's \$3 billion tourism industry that attracts more than 80 million visitors each year, and

WHEREAS, thirty Florida local governments have enacted land acquisition financing programs in the past decades, and these conservation programs serve to leverage Florida Forever funding and increase the impact of State land conservation funding, and

WHEREAS, research by the Florida Forever Coalition has found that well in excess of \$10 billion in State funding is currently needed to purchase wildlife and wilderness areas, parks and open space for our state's ecological sustainability and increasing human population, and

WHEREAS, a 2005 public opinion survey conducted by the Florida Forever Coalition found that 78% of Florida's voters approve of the Florida Forever program, and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever has protected several ecologically important natural areas within Collier County including Belle Meade and lands within the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CONSERVATION COLLIER ENVIRONMENTAL LANDS ACQUISITION PROGRAM COMMITTEE, COLLIER COUNTY, FLORIDA, AT ITS REGULAR MEETING ASSEMBLED THIS ___ DAY OF MARCH, 2007:

- 1) That the Committee supports increases in the current spending allowance and future funding allocated to Florida Forever.
- 2) That the Committee declares its support to the State of Florida Legislature for the creation and funding of a successor program to the Florida Forever program.
- 3) That the Chairman is authorized to send letters to the legislative delegation relaying this resolution and advocating additional funding for Florida Forever, as well as the creation and funding of a successor program to Florida Forever.
- 4) That this resolution shall be effective upon adoption.