



## Agenda Item Summary

---

**File #: 25-00583**

**Agenda Date: 8/12/2025**

---

### **Agenda Item Name:**

### **Addition of Land Conservation Projects to the Alachua County Forever Active Acquisition List**

### **Presenter:**

Emily Uhlmann, Senior Planner – Environmental Protection Dept., (352) 275-2050

### **Description:**

Staff requests the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) approve the addition of the following land conservation projects to the Alachua County Forever Active Acquisition List. The staff recommendation is based on the addition of these properties to the Priority Pool by the Land Conservation Board (LCB) as outlined in Resolution 22-066.

1. Paynes Prairie Additions – Woodbine Community Association (Full Price List)
2. Lake Forest Creek – Centro Espirita Beneficente Uniao Do Vegetal Authorized Distribution of Florida Inc. (Full Price List)\*
3. Watermelon Pond – Wang Sandra O Life Estate (Full Price List)

Addition of this project to the Active Acquisition List, authorizes staff to: obtain title work and appraisals, negotiate price and terms with the owners, and execute purchase or option contracts. Any purchase contract or option will be brought back to the Board for consideration.

\*May be referenced as “Centro Espirita”

### **Recommended Action:**

Approve the addition of the following properties on the Active Acquisition List

1. Paynes Prairie Additions – Woodbine Community Association (Full Price List)
2. Lake Forest Creek – Centro Espirita Beneficente Uniao Do Vegetal Authorized Distribution of Florida Inc. (Full Price List)
3. Watermelon Pond – Wang Sandra O Life Estate (Full Price List)

### **Prior Board Motions:**

None

### **Fiscal Note:**

### **Paynes Prairie Additions – Woodbine Community Association (Conservation Easement - Donation) - Cost Estimates:**

Total estimated cost for acquisition and 10-year stewardship: \$70,500

The current annual property tax revenue of all the project parcels is: \$647.45

Purchase and maintenance would be funded from the Wild Spaces Public Places surtax.

*Additional details can be found in Exhibits 7 and 8.*

**Lake Forest Creek – Centro Espirita Beneficente Uniao Do Vegetal Authorized Distribution of Florida Inc (Fee Simple) - Cost Estimates:**

Total estimated cost for acquisition and 10-year stewardship: \$68,380

The current annual property tax revenue of all the project parcels is: \$149.53

Purchase and maintenance would be funded from the Wild Spaces Public Places surtax.

*Additional details can be found in Exhibits 7 and 8.*

**Watermelon Pond – Wang Sandra O Life Estate (Fee Simple) - Cost Estimates:**

Total estimated cost for acquisition and 10-year stewardship: \$615,046

The current annual property tax revenue of all the project parcels is: \$3,394.16

Purchase and maintenance would be funded from the Wild Spaces Public Places surtax.

*Additional details can be found in Exhibits 7 and 8.*

**Strategic Guide:**

Environment

**Background:**

Paynes Prairie Additions – Woodbine Community Association: On May 5, 2025, the Woodbine property was nominated to the Alachua County Forever Program (ACF) for consideration as a conservation easement donation. The project includes two parcels (Alachua County Property Appraiser Tax Parcel Numbers 16223-006-000 and 16223-012-000) under a single ownership. On June 26, 2025, the Land Conservation Board (LCB) placed the approximately 59-acre property in the Priority Pool.

The Woodbine Community Association property is located on SE 27th street in the Kincade loop area of Southeast Gainesville. Gentle variations in the soil and topography create a mosaic of ecosystems on the property, nearly all are in good condition, some in excellent condition. The natural communities on site include xeric hammock, upland mixed woodland, mesic hammock, upland hardwood forest, bottomland forest, sinkhole pond, blackwater stream, and basin swamp. Human alteration appears to be minimal, and both the uplands and wetlands contain a diverse mixture of native species. The property is being maintained communally for conservation purposes, and the landowners want to consider donating a conservation easement to ensure the property's protection long-term.

*Additional information can be found in the attached site evaluation. (Exhibits 1-2)*

Lake Forest Creek – Centro Espirita: On May 13, 2025, the Centro Espirita property was nominated to the Alachua County Forever Program (ACF) by the realtor representing the landowner for consideration as a fee simple acquisition. The project includes one parcel (Alachua County Property Appraiser Tax Parcel Number 18003-000-000) under a single ownership. On June 26, 2025, the Land Conservation Board (LCB) placed the approximately 7.94-acre property in the Priority Pool.

The parcel is located south-east of Gainesville near the south-western side of Newnan's Lake. It has 0.1 miles of road frontage on State Road 20/Hawthorne Road. It shares a boundary with Alachua County's Pithlachocco Preserve. The property is entirely wooded, and approximately 66% of it is covered by a floodplain swamp and within the 100-year floodplain. Acreage at or below 67.5 ft in elevation is anticipated to be sovereign submerged lands associated with Newnans Lake, which is a

majority of the floodplain based on available GIS data. A survey would be needed to determine the full extent of sovereign lands. Most of the uplands appear to have been cleared at some time in the 1930's based on aerial imagery from 1937. This parcel was nominated along with adjacent previously evaluated parcels 18001-000-000 (Daemer) and 1800-000-000 (Reeb). The realtor is representing all three landowners, and has been trying to market the properties as a group.

*Additional information can be found in the attached site evaluation. (Exhibits 3-4)*

Watermelon Pond – Wang Sandra O Life Estate: On June 20, 2025, the Wang property was nominated to the Alachua County Forever Program (ACF) for consideration as a fee simple acquisition. The project includes two parcels (Alachua County Property Appraiser Tax Parcel Numbers 02699-000-000 and 02701-003-000) under a single ownership. On June 26, 2025, the Land Conservation Board (LCB) placed the approximately 54-acre property in the Priority Pool.

The property is in southwestern Alachua County, south of Newberry, west of Archer, and a quarter mile east of the Gilchrist County boundary. Historic aerial imagery dating back to 1938 indicates that the property has been cleared for agricultural use since at least the 1950's. There is one single family home onsite and at least one pole barn. Conversations with the realtor and landowner indicate willingness to potentially carve the homesite out of the acquisition, should it move forward with the County. This project would be an addition to a multi-property project that the ACF program is working on in the Watermelon Pond area. The current project consists of four separate parcels totaling approximately 138.82 acres. If acquired, the Wang parcel would increase the project acreage and would also expand a physical connection to Goethe State Forest to the south.

*Additional information can be found in the attached site evaluation. (Exhibits 5-6)*

#### General:

The staff recommendation is based on the addition of these properties to the Priority Pool by the Land Conservation Board as outlined in Resolution 22-066. As with all Alachua County conservation lands, those accepted as fee-simple acquisitions will go through the vetting process for the Registry of Protected Places.

#### 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."