



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 26-00302

Agenda Date: 4/28/2026

Agenda Item Name:

Addition of Land Conservation Projects to the Alachua County Forever Active Acquisition List - Environmentally Significant Lands and Agricultural Easement Categories

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 (ACF) 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 22-66, and by the Agricultural Land Conservation Board (ALCB) as outlined in Resolution 2025-99.

1. Lake Santa Fe – Truman Timber LLC (Full Price List) – Environmentally Significant Lands Category
2. Lizzie Robinson – Batey (Full Price List) – Agricultural Easement Category

Addition of these projects 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.

Recommended Action:

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

1. Lake Santa Fe – Truman Timber LLC (Full Price List) – Environmentally Significant Lands Category
2. Lizzie Robinson – Batey (Full Price List) – Agricultural Easement Category

Prior Board Motions:

None

Fiscal Note:

Lake Santa Fe – Truman Timber LLC (Fee Simple - Environmentally Significant Lands Category) - Cost Estimates:

Alachua County Property Appraiser (ACPA) Property Value: \$3,093,744*

Estimated county cost for acquisition due diligence, and 10-year stewardship: \$3,365,798

The current annual property tax revenue of all the project parcels is: \$12,766.36 (total).

Lizzie Robinson – Batey Farm (Agricultural Conservation Easement) - Cost Estimates:

Alachua County Property Appraiser (ACPA) Property Value: \$1,591,915*

Estimated county cost for acquisition due diligence, and 10-year stewardship: \$1,682,515

The current annual property tax revenue of all the project parcels is: \$3,789.88 (total).

*Easements are valued as a portion of the independently appraised property value based on the property rights sold and property rights retained in the easement deed.

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

Additional information can be found in the attached Exhibits 5 and 6

Strategic Guide:

Environment and Conservation

Background:

Lake Santa Fe – Truman Timber LLC: In February 2026, the subject property was nominated to the Alachua County Forever Program (ACF) for consideration as a fee simple environmentally significant land acquisition. On March 26, 2026, the Land Conservation Board (LCB) placed the Truman Timber LLC property in the Priority Pool. The property, owned by Truman Timber LLC, is approximately 1,150-acres, and is located in the northeastern part of the county, southwest of Lake Santa Fe, between US HWY 301 and County Rd. 1469. The total project includes 11 parcels (listed in the table in Exhibit 1). It does not currently connect to any existing conservation lands, but it is within the Florida Wildlife Corridor Boundary, the Lake Santa Fe Florida Forever project, and its size still makes it significant for landscape-wide connectivity efforts.

The property is primarily pine plantation with wetlands scattered throughout, and approximately 1.8 miles of Lochloosa Creek running through the property. Based on stand-data provided by the landowner, the stands currently range in age from trees planted within the last year, to over 70-year-old trees surrounding the wetlands and along the creek. The majority of the planted pines on-site are less than 15 years in age. Native understory vegetation ranged in density and diversity across the site. Infrastructure on-site primarily consisted of hunt stands and feeders, and there was a hunt camp area near the marsh/ pond on the northwest side of the property south of SR 26. Aside from the hunt camp, the site was relatively clean of human debris. Staff observed turkey, bobwhite quail, and a variety of other small birds during the site visit.

Additional information can be found in the attached evaluation. (Exhibits 1 and 2)

Lizzie Robinson – Batey: In November 2025, the subject property was nominated to the Alachua County Forever Program (ACF) for consideration as an agricultural conservation easement acquisition. On March 04, 2026, the Agricultural Land Conservation Board (ALCB) placed it in the Priority Pool for consideration for agricultural program strategy funding. The Batey property is in southwestern Alachua County, south of Archer. It is one parcel (05243-002-000), approximately 245 acres. The project is not with a strategic ecosystem or ACF Project Area, but it is adjacent to parcels that are within the Lizzie Robinson ACF Project Area. It does not currently connect to any existing conservation lands, but it is within 1.5 miles of Goethe State Forest. The property is within the Florida Ecological Greenways Network's (FEGN's) Priority 4 corridor, and within the Alachua County Forever "Southern Corridor", a ACF program priority to develop a connection between Barr Hammock Preserve, Watermelon Pond Preserve, and Goethe State Forest.

The Batey farm is managed with a strong emphasis on environmental stewardship, agricultural productivity, and long-term conservation. The management plan includes rotational use of the land—alternating several years of bahia grass with periods of tillage—to maintain soil health and flexibility for different agricultural uses. Water and nutrient management are guided by efficient irrigation systems, moisture sensors, and soil testing. Overall, the farm’s grass-based system allows adaptability across grazing, hay, seed, and row crop production while prioritizing best management practices. In the recent past, the farm has been leased to local farmers who have grown fruit and vegetables (primarily watermelons). The landowners are currently leasing to a farmer who is in the process of enrolling in the FDACS BMP program.

Additional information can be found in the attached desktop evaluation. (Exhibits 3 and 4)

General:

The staff recommendation is based on the addition of this property to the Priority Pool by the Agricultural Land Conservation Board as outlined in Resolution 22-66. 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.”