

**ITEM 8:**

Vote on whether to amend the Florida's First Magnitude Springs Florida Forever Project Boundary to add five parcels totaling approximately 486 acres in Levy County with a tax assessed market value of \$1,745,229.

**LOCATION:**

Levy County

**DSL STAFF REMARKS:**

The Manatee Springs Addition amendment, proposed by the Alachua Conservation Trust, adds five parcels in Levy County, totaling approximately 486 acres to the Florida's First Magnitude Springs Florida Forever project. The property consists of three parcels owned by the Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) and two parcels owned by the North America Land Co. (NALC). The five parcels have a combined tax assessed value of \$1,745,229.

The five parcels are adjacent to Manatee Springs State Park (MSSP) and within the Optimum Boundary included in the 2018 MSSP Unit Management Plan. All landowners have been contacted and are willing sellers. If acquired, the Division of Recreation and Parks has confirmed the parcels would be managed as part of MSSP. The parcels lie above approximately 2.5 miles of the Manatee Springs Cave System. These properties would provide critical protection for groundwater resources that supply Manatee Springs and would strengthen landscape connectivity to Fowlers Bluff Conservation Area within the Lower Suwanee National Wildlife Refuge and a series of conservation easements to the south managed by the Suwanee River Water Management District. The properties are within Priority 1 of the Florida Ecological Greenways Network.

The proposal meets the criteria to be submitted as a boundary amendment. The parcels total less than 1,000 acres, have a tax assessed value of less than \$2 million, and are less than 10% of the size of the overall project to which it is being added. The proposal area should be designated as essential.

*Project History:*

The Florida's First Magnitude Springs project, spanning across 17 counties, was added to the CARL Priority List in 1990. The project stretches from Walton County in the northwestern panhandle to Lake County in central Florida. The Florida's First Magnitude Springs project contains springs, rare plants and animals, and some of the best remaining scrub habitat along Florida's west coast. The project is designed to preserve land around springs and karst windows to protect these unique geological features and the Floridian Aquifer from commercial, residential and agricultural runoff, clearcutting and mining, and unsupervised recreation.

The Florida's First Magnitude Springs project includes over 16,965 acres with 6,040 acres remaining. The tax assessed value for this project's remaining acres to be acquired is \$282,989,305 (per property appraiser information from 2019). The Florida's First Magnitude Springs project is ranked number one in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category on the 2022 Florida Forever Priority List.

*FNAI Review:*

According to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI), 100% of the Manatee Springs Addition properties contribute to FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities, Ecological Greenways, and Aquifer Recharge. The properties also provide a significant contribution to Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (98%) and Surface Water Protection (97%).

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Vote on the proposed boundary amendment.

**ARC RECOMMENDATION:**

<b>Project</b>	<b>DHR</b>	<b>FFS</b>	<b>Lynetta Griner</b>	<b>FWC</b>	<b>Bill Palmer</b>	<b>Elva Peppers</b>	<b>DEP</b>	<b>Selected</b>
Florida's First Magnitude Springs: Manatee Springs Addition								



To: Sine Murray, DEP/OES  
From: Dan Hipes, FNAI  
Date: February 17, 2022  
Subject: Proposed boundary modification to Florida's First Magnitude Springs Florida Forever BOT Project – Manatee Springs Addition

The primary goal of the Florida First Magnitude Springs Florida Forever Project is to protect Florida's largest (first order) artesian springs and the Floridan Aquifer that supplies them with water. These springs provide not only clean fresh water but also abundant opportunities for recreation, as well as protection for rare animals endemic to these systems such as cave crayfish. Currently, the project includes 22 sites in 17 counties, mostly in the panhandle and northern peninsula.

The proposed addition to the Florida First Magnitude Springs Florida Forever Project encompasses 493 acres adjacent to the southern boundary of Manatee Springs State Park. The proposed property would create a larger connection to Fowlers Bluff Conservation Area and partially fills a gap between the park and a series of conservation easements south of the park owned by Suwannee River Water Management District.

Landcover within the proposed addition is primarily cutover former hardwood forest and scrubby flatwoods that has most recently been used for timber production. Approximately 8 acres remains mapped as scrubby flatwoods in the Florida Cooperative Landcover Map. The proposed addition also includes approximately 74 acres of upland hardwood forest (a natural community that is under-represented on Florida conservation lands), and 7 acres of floodplain swamp present along a small drainage feeding the Suwannee River.

The FNAI database contains no records of rare species on site; however, Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*, G5T4/S4, N, N), is considered by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to be occasional regionally.

The Florida Forever Measures Evaluation (FFME) following this memo is based on the Florida Forever Conservation Needs Assessment developed by FNAI. The data used in this analysis represent a standardized, statewide perspective of natural community distributions based primarily on data from the Cooperative Land Cover Map. All of the proposed addition contributes to Ecological Greenways (Priority 1), FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities (Priority 5), and Aquifer Recharge (mostly Priority 1). Nearly all the site contributes to Surface Water Protection (Priorities 3-6) and Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (Priorities 2 and 3). See additional resources in the table below.

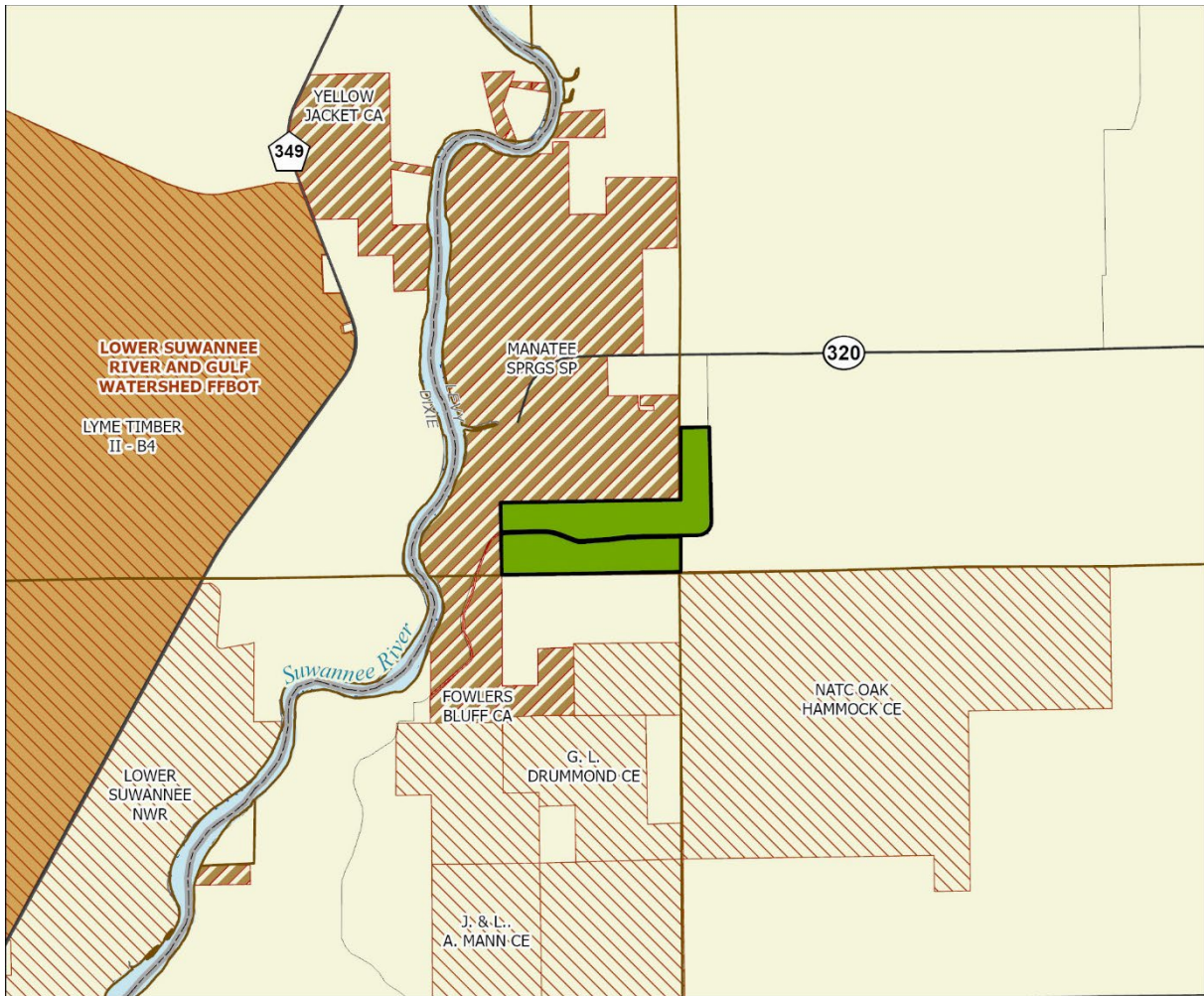
**Florida's First Magnitude Springs (Manatee Springs Addition): Florida Forever Measure Evaluation 20220215**

GIS ACRES = 493

MEASURES	Resource Acres <sup>2</sup>	% of project
<b>B1: Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	366	74%
Priority 3	111	23%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	7	1%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>B2: FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	1	< 1%
Priority 5	491	100%
Priority 6	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>B3: Ecological Greenways</b>		
Priority 1	491	100%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>B4: Under-represented Natural Communities</b>		
Upland Glade (G1)	0	0%
Pine Rockland (G1)	0	0%
Scrub and Scrubby Flatwoods (G2)	8	2%
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)	74	15%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>B6: Occurrences of FNAI Tracked Species</b>		
G1	0	
G2	0	
G3	0	
G4	1	
G5	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>C4: Natural Floodplain Function</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	7	1%
Priority 3	44	9%
Priority 4	3	< 1%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>11%</b>

MEASURES (continued)	Resource Acres <sup>2</sup>	% of project
<b>C5: Surface Water Protection</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	172	35%
Priority 4	48	10%
Priority 5	137	28%
Priority 6	122	25%
Priority 7	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>97%</b>
<b>C7: Fragile Coastal Resources</b>		
Fragile Coastal Uplands	0	0%
Imperiled Coastal Lakes	0	0%
Coastal Wetlands	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>C8: Functional Wetlands</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	9	2%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>D3: Aquifer Recharge</b>		
Priority 1	420	85%
Priority 2	44	9%
Priority 3	29	6%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>E2: Recreational Trails (miles)</b> <small>(prioritized trail opportunities from Office of Greenways and Trails &amp; Univ. Florida)</small>		
Land Trail Priorities	0.0	
Land Trail Opportunities	0.0	
<b>Total Miles</b>	<b>0.0</b>	
<b>F2: Arch. &amp; Historical Sites (number)</b> 0 sites		
<b>G1: Sustainable Forestry</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	108	22%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5 - Potential Pinelands	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>G3: Forestland for Recharge</b> 108 22%		

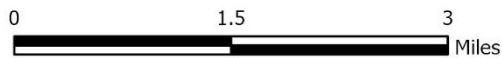
<sup>2</sup>Acres of each resource in the project and percentage of project represented by each resource are listed except where noted. This analysis converts site boundary into pixels, which causes slight differences from GIS acres; this effect is most noticeable on small sites.



**FLORIDA'S FIRST MAGNITUDE SPRINGS  
PROPOSED ADDITION (MANATEE SPRINGS ADDITION)**

**LEVY COUNTY**

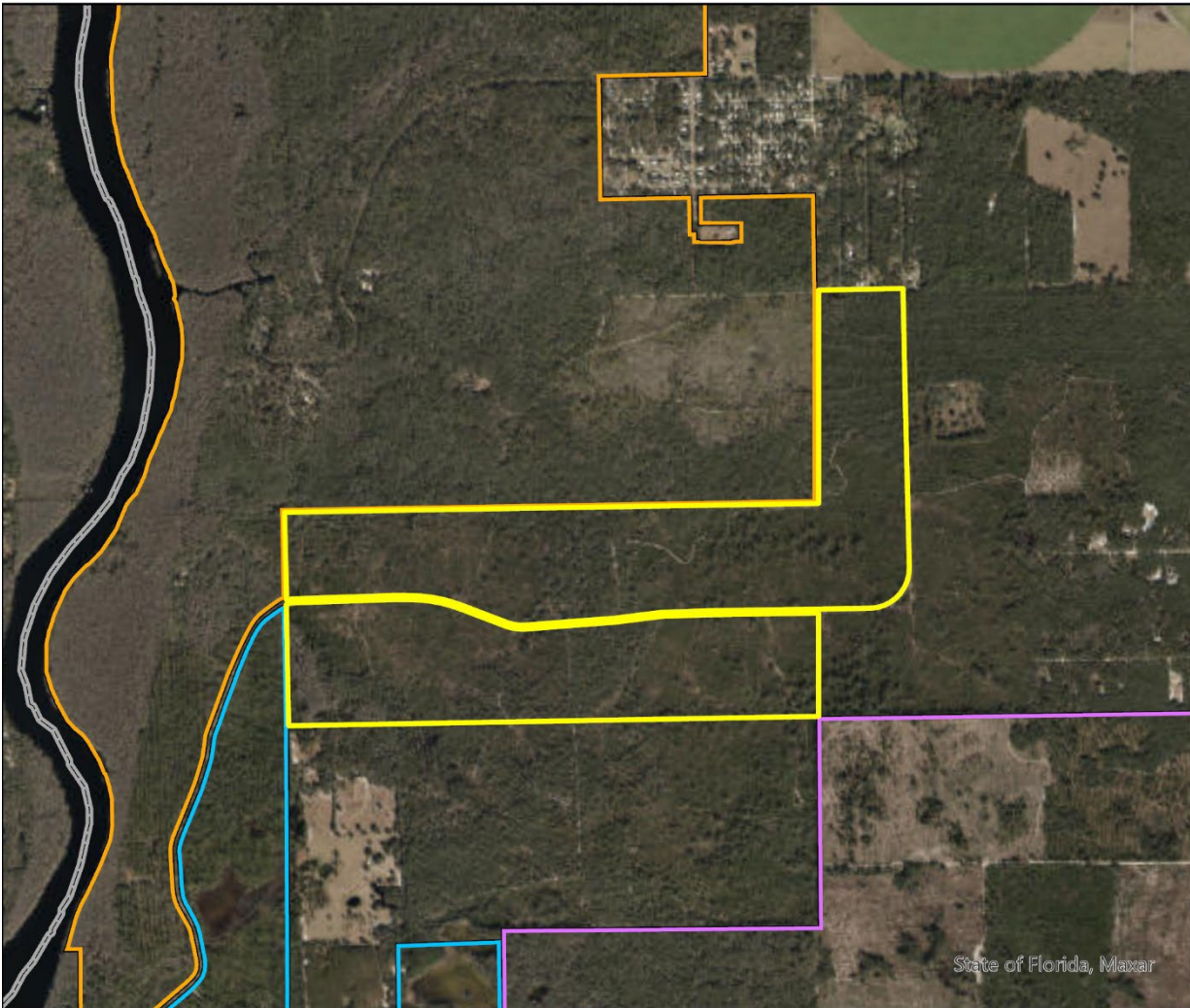
-  Proposed Florida Forever BOT Project Addition
-  Florida Forever BOT Projects
-  State Owned Lands
-  Other Conservation Lands
-  State Aquatic Preserve



FEBRUARY 2022

## Florida's First Magnitude Springs Proposed Addition (Manatee Springs Addition)

FLORIDA FOREVER BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROJECT PROPOSED ADDITION AS OF FEBRUARY 2022



Map Produced by: N. Pasco, February 2022

Background: World Imagery Resolution = 0.3 meter



1018 Thomasville Road  
Suite 200-C  
Tallahassee, Florida 32303  
850-224-8207  
fax 850-681-9364  
www.fnai.org

