

ITEM 16:

Vote on whether to amend the Myakka Ranchlands Florida Forever Project Boundary to add three parcels totaling approximately 748 acres in DeSoto and Manatee counties with a tax assessed value of \$1,314,040.

LOCATION:

DeSoto and Manatee counties

DSL STAFF REMARKS:

The Flint Ranch amendment proposed by the Florida Conservation Group, adds three parcels totaling 748 acres in DeSoto and Manatee counties to the Myakka Ranchlands Florida Forever project. The property has a tax assessed value of \$1,314,040. The landowners have been contacted and are willing sellers. The project is proposed as a less-than-fee acquisition and land management responsibilities would remain with the landowners.

The Flint Ranch property is located east of Myakka River State Park and would reinforce the conservation corridor between the Myakka and Peace Rivers and benefit the water quality of Charlotte Harbor. The property contains successional forest, wetlands and improved pasture that could contribute to a protected landscape corridor for wide ranging species such as the eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon couperi*) and Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*) and provide foraging habitat for the imperiled wood stork (*Mycteria americana*) and crested caracara (*Caracara cheriway*). The property is in proximity to multiple conservation lands managed or monitored by local, state, and private non-profit entities and is identified as Priority 3 within the Florida Greenways Ecological Network.

Boundary Amendment Criteria:

The proposal meets the Florida Forever 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 they are being proposed for addition. The proposal area should be designated as essential.

Project History:

The Myakka Ranchlands project in DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota counties was approved in 2007. The project aims to protect a landscape-size area in the Myakka River and Charlotte Harbor watershed by creating system of conservation areas in southwest Florida. The project will provide habitat for rare wildlife species, protect critical wetlands, and provide enhanced watershed and water quality protection.

The Myakka Ranchlands project currently identifies over 49,030 acres for acquisition with 30,677 acres remaining to be acquired. The project is ranked fourth in the Less-than-Fee category on the 2022 Florida Forever Priority List. The tax assessed value of the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2020) is \$165,807,659.

FNAI Remarks:

According to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory Florida Forever Measures Evaluation, the proposed parcels contribute substantially to FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities (100%), Ecological Greenways (100%), Surface Water Protection (99%), Aquifer Recharge (100%), and

Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (60%).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Vote on the proposed boundary amendment.

ARC RECOMMENDATION:

Project	DHR	FFS	Lynetta Griner	DEP	FWC	Bill Palmer	Elva Peppers	Selected
Myakka Ranchlands: Flint Ranch								



To: Sine Murray, DEP/OES
From: Dale R. Jackson, FNAI
Date: October 31, 2022
Subject: Proposed boundary modification (addition) to Florida Forever BOT Project:
Myakka Ranchlands – Flint Ranch, Manatee and DeSoto counties

The major goal of the Myakka Ranchlands Florida Forever (MRFF) Project is to help build a landscape size protection area of more than 50,000 acres by adding to the existing 121,000 acres of conservation land already protecting the Myakka River and Charlotte Harbor Estuary. It would protect populations of rare plants and animals as well as state waters and functional wetlands. Flint Ranch is proposed as a less-than-fee-simple addition to the project

Flint Ranch includes two roughly equal-sized and rectangular tracts totaling 748 acres in southeastern-most Manatee County and adjacent western DeSoto County. The tracts touch at their corners, with each bordering the same tract of MRFF (J Bar C Ranch). An additional tract of MRFF lies within a mile to the south and includes a portion protected as Candy Bar Ranch Agricultural and Conservation Easement.

Per the application, the proposal lies within the Big Slough basin of the lower Myakka watershed (draining to Charlotte Harbor); the Big Slough canal and associated ditches now drain portions of the property. Natural non-wetland vegetation would have been comprised mostly of mesic/wet flatwoods prior to clearing for pastures, with water table depth of ca. 30 cm (per application). The application notes current coverage of 375 acres of improved pasture, 133 acres of mixed wetland hardwoods, 105 acres of marshes, 55 acres of mixed hardwood-coniferous forest, 53 acres of cypress, and 9 acres of wet prairie, with several categories of disturbed landcover accounting for 19 acres; this is consistent with recent aerial imagery.

The Manatee County (southern) tract is a low-relief site that has been largely converted to improved pasture. A few isolated wetlands lie within the pasture. Somewhat lower-relief, wetter sites within the tract still support trees, particularly in the eastern and western portions of the tract. A basin marsh surrounded by a ring of trees and/or shrubs lies in the southwestern part of the tract. Part of a second basin marsh occurs in the east but extends offsite. The tract is surrounded mostly by lands dedicated to agriculture and ranching.

The DeSoto (northern) tract is split between a basin marsh/swamp system occupying most of the northern portion, and improved pasture in the southern section. Included within the latter are several isolated wetlands, one of which is surrounded by what appears to be mesic/wet flatwoods,

although this community was not identified by the state-wide remote analysis. The site is generally low-relief and largely bordered by agricultural lands.

The FNAI database contains no records of rare species on site, although this may partly reflect the lack of specific biotic surveys. The application notes observations of several species on nearby properties (e.g., eastern indigo snake, crested caracara, Florida sandhill crane, wood stork, bald eagle, Florida burrowing owl, Florida black bear).

The Florida Forever Measures Evaluation (FFME) at the end of this memo is based on the Florida Forever Conservation Needs Assessment developed by FNAI. The data used in that analysis represent a standardized, statewide perspective of natural community distributions based primarily on data from the Cooperative Land Cover Map. Nearly the entire proposed addition contributes to protection of priority 3 Ecological Greenways, priority 3, 4, and 5 Surface Water Protection, and priority 2 through 6 (mostly 4 and 5) Aquifer Recharge, with substantial contribution (40-53% of site) to Natural Floodplain Function, Functional Wetlands, and Sustainable Forestry (Priority 5 based solely on potential pinelands). See below for additional details.

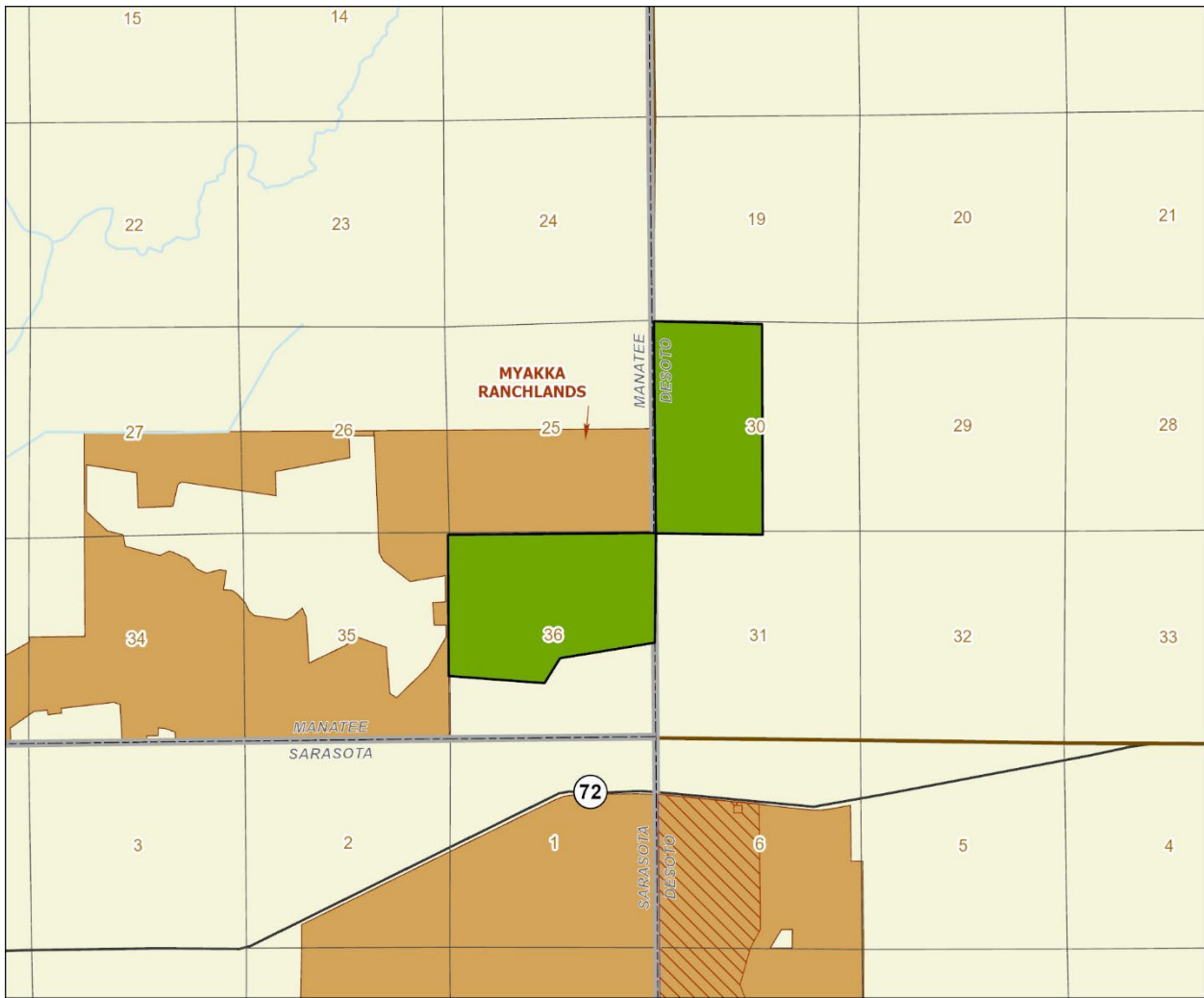
Myakka Ranchlands (Flint Ranch): Florida Forever Measure Evaluation 20221027

GIS ACRES = 748

MEASURES	Resource Acres ²	% of project
B1: Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	112	15%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	339	45%
Total Acres	452	60%
B2: FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	58	8%
Priority 4	54	7%
Priority 5	266	36%
Priority 6	367	49%
Total Acres	745	100%
B3: Ecological Greenways		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	747	100%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Total Acres	747	100%
B4: Under-represented Natural Communities		
Upland Glade (G1)	0	0%
Pine Rockland (G1)	0	0%
Scrub and Scrubby Flatwoods (G2)	0	0%
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)	0	0%
Total Acres	0	0%
B6: Occurrences of FNAI Tracked Species		
G1	0	
G2	0	
G3	0	
G4	0	
G5	0	
Total	0	
C4: Natural Floodplain Function		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	38	5%
Priority 3	92	12%
Priority 4	125	17%
Priority 5	100	13%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	356	48%

MEASURES (continued)	Resource Acres ²	% of project
C5: Surface Water Protection		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	463	62%
Priority 4	205	27%
Priority 5	76	10%
Priority 6	0	0%
Priority 7	0	0%
Total Acres	744	99%
C7: Fragile Coastal Resources		
Fragile Coastal Uplands	0	0%
Imperiled Coastal Lakes	0	0%
Coastal Wetlands	0	0%
Total Acres	0	0%
C8: Functional Wetlands		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	40	5%
Priority 3	107	14%
Priority 4	107	14%
Priority 5	46	6%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	300	40%
D3: Aquifer Recharge		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	21	3%
Priority 3	38	5%
Priority 4	386	52%
Priority 5	204	27%
Priority 6	100	13%
Total Acres	748	100%
E2: Recreational Trails (miles) <small>(prioritized trail opportunities from Office of Greenways and Trails & Univ. Florida)</small>		
Land Trail Priorities	0.0	
Land Trail Opportunities	0.0	
Total Miles	0.0	
F2: Arch. & Historical Sites (number) 0 sites		
G1: Sustainable Forestry		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	4	< 1%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5 - Potential Pinelands	395	53%
Total Acres	399	53%
G3: Forestland for Recharge 0 0%		

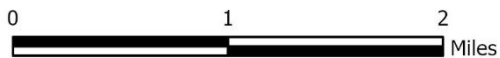
*Acres of each resource in the project and percentage of project represented by each resource are listed except where noted. This analysis converts site boundary into pixels, which causes slight differences from GIS acres; this effect is most noticeable on small sites.



**MYAKKA RANCHLANDS
PROPOSED ADDITION (FLINT RANCH)**

MANATEE AND DESOTO COUNTIES

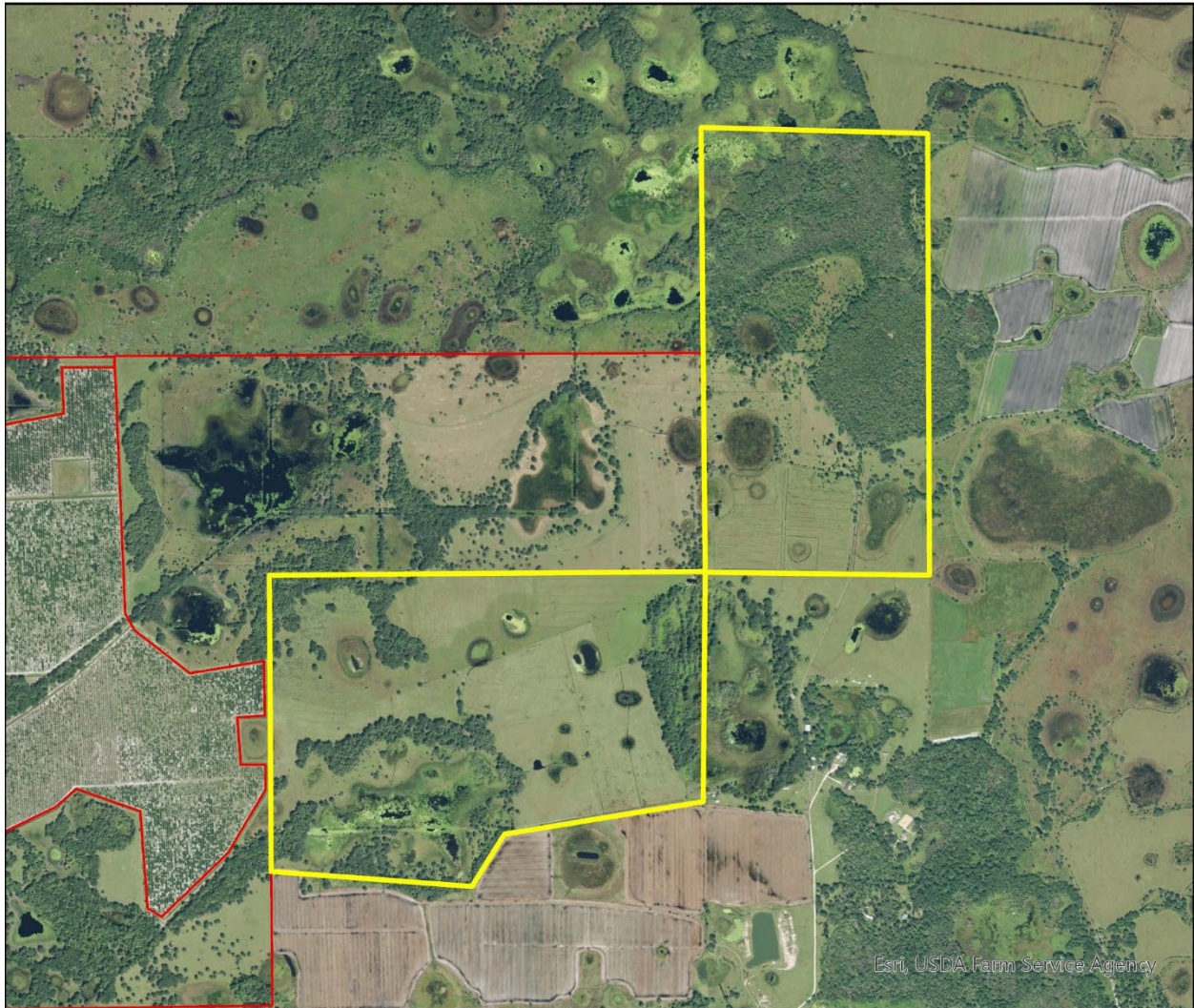
- Proposed Addition
- Florida Forever BOT Projects
- Other Conservation Lands



MAP BY FL NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY OCTOBER 2022

Myakka Ranchlands Proposed Addition (Flint Ranch)

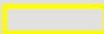
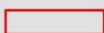
FLORIDA FOREVER BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROJECT PROPOSED ADDITION AS OF OCTOBER 2022



Map Produced by: FL Natural Areas Inventory, N. Pasco, October 2022

Background: USA NAIP Imagery Resolution = 1.0 meter



	Florida Forever Proposed Addition
	Florida Forever BOT Projects

