

**RESOLUTION NO. 2008- 70**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF NASSAU COUNTY, FLORIDA, SUPPORTING THE CREATION AND FUNDING BY THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE OF A SUCCESSOR PROGRAM TO THE FLORIDA FOREVER LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM AND URGING THE COUNTY LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION TO VIGOROUSLY SUPPORT THE CREATION AND INCREASED FUNDING OF SUCH A SUCCESSOR PROGRAM; DIRECTING THE CLERK TO FORWARD COPIES OF THIS RESOLUTION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE FLORIDA SENATE, THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, GOVERNOR CHARLIE CRIST, AND THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**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 600,000 acres throughout Florida since 2000 and allocates \$300 million annually to purchase environmentally sensitive and other lands, and has done so through numerous successful partnerships with cities, counties, state agencies, water management districts, nonprofit organizations, private landowners, and others in achieving its conservation purposes; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida Forever, through its partnerships with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Water Management Districts, and others, produces benefits that include clean air and water; healthy fisheries and wildlife habitat; improved water supply protection; and protected open spaces including greenway corridors, 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, meeting the challenges of growth management, directing development away from coastal high hazard areas and floodplains; fostering a healthier lifestyle for Floridians; and providing 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 our \$3 billion tourism industry that attract more than 70 million visitors each year; and

**WHEREAS**, more than 50 Florida local governments have enacted land acquisition financing programs in the past decades, and conservation finance programs serve to leverage Florida Forever funding and increase the impact of State land conservation funding; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida is experiencing rapid population growth, with approximately 1,100 new residents every day; and Floridians demand a high quality of life that includes green space, access to water, pastoral settings and recreational opportunities; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida Forever and other land conservation programs must compete in a land and housing market that has escalated dramatically in recent years; and

**WHEREAS**, the effectiveness of Florida Forever has diminished because of escalating land prices and the impacts of inflation; and

**WHEREAS**, virtually all of the funding for the Florida forever program through the Fiscal Year 2009-10 is already obligated to or anticipated for planned land purchases, having virtually no funding for new conservation projects for two years; and

**WHEREAS**, research by the Florida Forever Coalition has found that over \$20 billion is currently needed to purchase parks and recreational facilities, wildlife and wilderness areas, and open space for our state's increasing population; and

**WHEREAS**, a 2007 public opinion survey conducted by members of the Florida Forever Coalition found that more than 70% of Florida's voters approve of the Florida Forever program; and

**WHEREAS**, the benefits of Florida Forever to Nassau County have included the purchase in such valuable local resources as the American Beach Historic Park project,

the Baldwin Bay/St. Marys River project, the Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve project, and the Tiger Island/Little Tiger Island project.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** this 20<sup>th</sup> day of February 2008 by the Board of County Commissioners of Nassau County, Florida, as follows:

1. That the County hereby declares its support to the Florida legislature for the creation and funding of a successor program to the Florida Forever program and requests Nassau County's legislative delegation to advocate for the creation and funding of a successor program to Florida Forever.
2. That the County hereby declares its support to the Florida Legislature for an immediate doubling of funding for Florida Forever because of the enormous need for land conservation funding in all parts of Florida and requests Nassau County's legislative delegation to work actively for this increase in funding.
3. The Ex-Officio Clerk is hereby directed to forward a copy of this resolution to the President of the Florida Senate, the Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, Governor Charlie Crist, and the members of the Nassau County Legislative Delegation.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
NASSAU COUNTY, FLORIDA



MARIANNE MARSHALL  
Its: Chair

ATTEST AS TO CHAIR'S SIGNATURE:

APPROVED AS TO FORM BY THE  
NASSAU COUNTY ATTORNEY:



JOHN A. CRAWFORD  
Its: Ex-Officio Clerk



DAVID A. HALLMAN

