

TAB 8



To: Florida Mayors

From: John Charles Thomas, Executive Director

Date: February 28, 2008

Re: Resolution supporting reauthorization of Florida's
Communities Trust

At a recent Florida League of Mayors board of directors meeting, the board heard from the Trust for Public Lands about the reauthorization of the current Florida Forever program or a successor program that would support Florida Communities Trust.

As you know, many cities use Florida Communities Trust dollars for a variety of city land acquisition initiatives. Funding for the Florida Forever program is set to sunset in 2010.

Attached is a resolution in support of continued funding for the Florida Forever program or a successor program that you may consider adopting and sending to your local legislative delegation.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

RESOLUTION NO. 08-10

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PALMETTO SUPPORTING THE FLORIDA FOREVER PROGRAM AND THE CREATION AND FUNDING OF A SUCCESSOR PROGRAM TO FLORIDA FOREVER; AND PROVIDING FOR 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 one million 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 district, 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, 50 Florida local governments have enacted land acquisition financing programs in the past decades, and these 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 Florida's market of surging land and housing prices; and,

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

WHEREAS, the funding for the Florida Forever program will sunset in 2010; 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 2005 public opinion survey conducted by members of the Florida Forever Coalition found that 78% of Florida's voters approve of the Florida Forever program, and

WHEREAS, the benefits of Florida Forever have included the Palmetto Estuary Preservation Project in the City of Palmetto.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Commission of the City of Palmetto the

Section 1: The City of Palmetto declares its support to the State of Florida Legislature for the creation and funding of a successor program to the Florida Forever program.

Section 2: The City of Palmetto requests its legislative delegation to advocate for the creation and funding of a successor program to Florida Forever.

Section 3: This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its passage.

Section 4: All Resolutions and parts of Resolutions in conflict herewith are repealed.

Passed by the City Commission of the City of Palmetto, Florida in regular session with a quorum present and voting this 17th day of March, 2008.

BY: _____
Lawrence E. Bustle, Jr., Mayor

ATTEST:

James R. Freeman, City Clerk