

Subject

Approve Amendment One of the Florida Defense Infrastructure Grant Agreement (S0232-A1) made between the Florida Department of Commerce (Commerce) and Polk County (County) The amendment removes the minimum match requirement of 30% as match for the project. (no fiscal impact)

Description

Polk County ("County") has partnered with the Department of Commerce to acquire conservation lands. The County has been strategically working with the Department of Defense conserving lands near the APAFR to protect portions of the Florida Wildlife Corridor, preserve uplands and wetlands that support sustainable water resources for South Florida's agricultural operations and urban populations, support key wildlife conservation corridors to nearby protected lands, provide economic benefit by supporting outdoor recreation and agricultural production. To continue this successful partnership the County applied for a Florida Defense Infrastructure Grant and was awarded \$500,000.00 from the State of Florida Department of Commerce. The Commerce has amended the agreement to allow for full-fee acquisitions near APAFR's boundary. Original Agreement executed June 2024.

Section 288.980(5), Florida Statutes ("F.S."), established the Florida Defense Infrastructure Grant Program (the "Program") supports local infrastructure projects deemed to have a positive impact on the military value of installations within the state. Funds provided pursuant to this Agreement must be used to support the state or local community and the military installation. Projects that relate to encroachment, construction, transportation and access, utilities, communications, housing, environment, and security are eligible to receive funding under this program. The Grantee must represent a local government with military installation or installations that could be adversely affected by federal actions. The State Fiscal Year 2023-2024 funding for the grant is provided by the 2023-2024 General Appropriations Act in line-item number 2368, Grants and Aids to Local Governments and Non-state Entities-Fixed Capital Outlay Space, Defense, and Rural Infrastructure.

The proposed project addresses compatibility issues including APAFR's three-mile buffer zone around the perimeter as well as portions of low-level flying training areas and areas where night vision training is conducted.

The term of this agreement is from July 1, 2023, the date on which the Award Letter was issued, and extends until June 30, 2026. The Commerce will reimburse the County up to \$500,000 for acquisition of lands that satisfy the scope of work. The County will work with willing sellers that are within the priority areas around the APAFR to acquire property full fee or through conservation easement.

Recommendation

Approve Amendment One of the Florida Defense Infrastructure Grant Agreement (S0281) made between Florida Department of Commerce (Commerce) and Polk County (County)

Fiscal Impact

No fiscal impact.

Contact Information

Tabitha Biehl, Land and Water Natural Areas Manager

Parks and Natural Resources Division

(863) 534-7377

tabithabiehl@polk-county.net

Gaye Sharpe, Director

Parks and Natural Resources Division

(863) 534-7377

gayesharpe@polk-county.net