

Agenda

04/11/2025

Subject

Approve the Florida Defense Infrastructure Grant Agreement (S0281) made between the Florida Department of Commerce (Commerce) and Polk County (County) (one-time revenue of \$500,000)

Description

Polk County ("County") is home to Avon Park Air Force Range ("APAFR"). 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 an 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 to purchase conservation easements or full fee acquisitions near APAFR's boundary.

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 a military installation or installations that could be adversely affected by federal actions. The State Fiscal Year 2024-2025 funding for the grant is provided by the 2024-2025 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 the 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, 2024, the date on which the Award Letter was issued, and extends until June 30, 2027. The Commerce will reimburse the County up to \$500,000 for acquisition of lands that satisfy the scope of work, the match requirement for the County is \$150,000. The County will work with willing sellers that

are within the priority areas around the APAFR to acquire a conservation easement or full fee.

Recommendation

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

Fiscal Impact

Funds are budgeted and available in the Special Revenue Grant Fund.

Contact Information

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