

Agenda

11/18/2025

Subject

Conservation Land Acquisition Selection Advisory Committee (CLASAC) recommendations on the following sites nominated to the Environmental Lands Program are to pursue acquisition on EL-148-25: Ridge to River Corridor, EL-150 -25: Backbone, EL-152-25: Arbuckle Road, EL-153-25: Joshua Land Ranch, EL-154 -25: Kuder Ranch & Groves, EL-155-25: Griffin Properties, EL-156-25: Lake Buffum Ranch, EL-158-25: Black Properties, EL-159-25: LJR Partnership, EL-160-25: The 45 Acres, and EL-161-25: Butler Tree Farm. CLASAC recommends not to pursue acquisition EL-149 -25: Windyhill, EL-151-25: Cody Cove Hillside, EL-157-25: Sink Branch Buffer, and EL-162-25: Meadowbrook SPD

Description

The Polk County Board of County Commissioners ("Board") adopted Polk County Ordinance No.22-050 ("Ordinance") calling for a bond referendum on November 8, 2022, to finance capital projects related to the acquisition, preservation, protection, management, operation, and restoration of environmental lands, water resources and important fish and wildlife habitat ("Bond Referendum").

A majority of voters of Polk County approved of the Bond Referendum. The Ordinance provides that upon passing of the Bond Referendum, the Board shall create the Polk County Conservation Land Acquisition Advisory Committee ("CLASAC") by resolution; and the Board in determining the acquisition of land in accordance with the Ordinance.

The Ordinance provides that each proposed site will undergo a preliminary site assessment by the County to ensure the lands meet the basic criteria of environmental lands; and provides the criteria which will be considered in evaluation lands include (A) Water Resources, (B) Natural Communities and Landscape, (C) Plants Animals, (D) Human Values, and (E) Management.

Resolution No.2023-009 authorizes CLASAC to create subcommittees consisting of members and non-members of the CLASAC. CLASAC created a technical advisory group (TAG) to assist CLASAC in the technical fact-finding that is necessary in evaluating lands in accordance with the criteria provided in the ordinance.

The following sites have been evaluated by TAG and the recommendations made by CLASAC. These sites are now presented to the Board, for Board to determine if staff should pursue acquisition or not pursue acquisition.

EL-148-25: Ridge to River Corridor/ TAG 103/ CLASAC = YES to Pursue Acquisition
EL-149 -25: Windyhill/ TAG 84/ CLASAC = NO to Pursue Acquisition
EL-150 -25: Backbone/ TAG 92/ CLASAC = YES to Pursue Acquisition

EL-151-25: Cody Cove Hillside/ TAG 74/ CLASAC = NO to Pursue Acquisition
EL-152-25: Arbuckle Road/ TAG 89/ CLASAC = YES to Pursue Acquisition
EL-153-25: Joshua Land Ranch/ TAG 79/ CLASAC = YES to Pursue Acquisition
EL-154 -25: Kuder Ranch & Groves/ TAG 75/ CLASAC = YES to Pursue Acquisition
EL-155-25: Griffin Properties/ TAG 68/ CLASAC = YES to Pursue Acquisition
EL-156-25: Lake Buffum Ranch/ TAG 89/ CLASAC = YES to Pursue Acquisition
EL-157-25: Sink Branch Buffer/ TAG 64/ CLASAC = NO to Pursue Acquisition
EL-158-25: Black Properties/ TAG 80/ CLASAC = YES to Pursue Acquisition
EL-159-25: LJR Partnership/ TAG 90/ CLASAC = YES to Pursue Acquisition
EL-160-25: The 45 Acres/ TAG 83/ CLASAC = YES to Pursue Acquisition
EL-161-25: Butler Tree Farm/ TAG 82/ CLASAC = YES to Pursue Acquisition
EL-162-25: Meadowbrook SPD/ TAG 61/ CLASAC = NO to Pursue Acquisition

If the Board approves staff to pursue acquisition, staff will enter discussions with the property owners, seek acquisition partners as appropriate and conduct due diligence. Then any agreement drafted will be brought back to the Board for consideration of approval for acquisition.

Recommendation

Approve Conservation Land Acquisition Advisory Committee ("CLASAC") recommendation of the following:

1. Approve staff to pursue acquisition under the Environmental Lands Program for EL-148-25, EL-150-25, EL-152-25, EL-153 -25, EL-154-25, EL-155-56, EL-156-25, EL-158-25, EL-159-25, EL-160-25 and EL-161-25.
2. Support CLASAC recommendation not to pursue acquisition under the Environmental Lands Program for EL-149 -25, EL-151-25, EL-157-25, and EL-162-25

Fiscal Impact

No Fiscal Impact

Contact Information

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