

**ALLIANCE OF FLORIDA
LAND TRUSTS**

Alachua Conservation Trust, Inc.
Gainesville

Apalachee Land Conservancy
Tallahassee

Bay County Conservancy
Panama City

**Calusa Land Trust and Nature Preserve
of Pine Island, Inc.**
Bokeelia

Conservation Trust for Florida, Inc.
Micanopy

CREW Land & Water Trust
Estero

Davie Area Land Trust
Davie

Florida Trail Association
Gainesville

Green Horizon Land Trust
Lake Wales

Indian River Land Trust
Vero Beach

Lemon Bay Conservancy, Inc.
Englewood

Manatee County Audubon Society, Inc.
Bradenton

North Florida Land Trust
St. Augustine

Putnam Land Conservancy, Inc.
Palatka

Sarasota Conservation Foundation
Osprey

St. Lucie County Land Trust
Fort Pierce

Tall Timbers Land Conservancy
Tallahassee

Tampa Bay Conservancy, Inc.
Riverview

The Conservancy of Southwest Florida
Naples

Treasured Lands Foundation
Stuart

Wildlands Forever Trust, Inc.
Tampa

Alliance of Florida Land Trusts
P.O. Box 134
Micanopy, Florida 32667

March 10, 2010

RE: Support for Florida Forever, FY2010

Dear Florida Lawmaker:

The Alliance of Florida Land Trusts supports full funding of the Florida Forever program. This funding is consistent with the Legislature's unanimous approval of the ten-year renewal of Florida Forever in 2008.

In a 2009 report entitled *Economic Benefits of Land Conservation: A Case for Florida Forever*, The Nature Conservancy makes clear the economic rewards of Florida Forever and the state's commitment to protecting conservation land. The report concludes that "the Florida state park system had an overall direct economic impact of more than \$1 billion on local economies throughout the state, according to fiscal year 2007-2008 data. More than \$70 million was contributed to general revenues in the form of state sales taxes and 20,100 jobs were generated as a result of the state parks' operations."

This month Mark Wilson, President & CEO of the Florida Chamber of Commerce, endorsed this funding request because "the Florida Forever program makes a critical contribution to the long-term economic well-being of our state and preservation of the quality of life of our citizens."

The Alliance is a coalition that represents the 21 land trusts in the state. Land trusts provide a vital service to landowners by assisting them in protecting their land with conservation easements and direct acquisition through programs like Florida Forever. Across the United States, land trusts have helped landowners preserve 37 million acres of land for private and public use.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,



Ken Grudens
President
Alliance of Florida Land Trusts