

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA, TO HEREBY EXPRESS THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE ACQUISITION OF CONSERVATION EASEMENTS AT THE RIVER RIDGE PLANTATION BY THE STATE'S FLORIDA FOREVER PROGRAM, AND ENCOURAGES THE STATE TO COMPLETE THE PURCHASE AS EXPEDITIOUSLY AS POSSIBLE.

WHEREAS, the 2004 Tallahassee Leon County Greenways Master Plan designated a shared-use bicycle pedestrian trail adjacent to Meridian Road from Elinor Klapp Phipps Park to the Florida/Georgia Border, and

WHEREAS, the Greenways Master Plan also designates the Ochlockonee River as a part of the Statewide system of paddling trails, and

WHEREAS, the State of Florida's Acquisition and Restoration Council has ranked the Ochlockonee River Conservation Area Florida Forever Project located within Leon County as one of twenty-one Highest Priority Acquisition Projects, and

WHEREAS, the Ochlockonee River Conservation Area Project is proposed as a Less-Than-Fee acquisition, encompassing over 6000 thousand acres of land along the Ochlockonee River, and

WHEREAS, the Ochlockonee River Conservation Area Project boundary also runs along North Meridian Road up to the Florida/Georgia Border, and

WHEREAS, the owner of River Ridge Plantation whose property encompasses more than 4000 acres of that project area desires to make the Plantation the premier example of public access on conservation easements acquired under the Florida Forever program, and

WHEREAS, the River Ridge Plantation proposal within this project area proposes to include public access on the property to provide for a shared-use bike/pedestrian path along Meridian Road from Orchard Pond Road to State Road 12, trailhead at or close to the intersection of Meridian and SR 12, a canoe launch and public park at or near SR 12 and the Ochlockonee River, and primitive camping and hiking trails on the property, and

WHEREAS, the River Ridge Plantation encompasses some of the highest density wading bird habitat in Ochlockonee River watershed within Leon County, and

WHEREAS, the River Ridge Plantation follows a long term forest management plan supporting numerous red-cockaded woodpecker nests including practices which encourage growth in the number of RCW nests, and

WHEREAS, THE River Ridge Plantation manages its forests to support such charismatic species as the Florida Black Bear, Osceola or Florida Wild Turkey and the Whitetail Deer

WHEREAS, purchase of this conservation easement with such natural resource protection and these public access amenities will provide Leon County's current and future residents and visitors with nature-based recreational opportunities that otherwise will be lost, and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LEON COUNTY, that:

1. The Board does hereby express their support for this acquisition by the state's Florida Forever Program, and encourages the state to complete the purchase as expeditiously as possible.

LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA

BY: _____
Bob Rackleff, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

ATTESTED BY:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
Leon County Attorney's Office
Leon County, Florida

BY: _____
Bob Inzer
Clerk of the Circuit Court

BY: _____
Herbert W.A. Thiele
County Attorney