



Florida Conservation Voters

Position Statement: SB10 and Protecting Water & Land Resources

In Florida, preserving land is conserving water. Wetlands are nature's water storage systems and act as pollution filters. It's also far less expensive to buy land or conservation easements on undeveloped lands that protect our water resources than it is to restore polluted waterways or build water treatment plants.

Protecting the natural flow of water throughout the Florida peninsula from the surface to our underground aquifers through land conservation is a foundational goal of our land conservation policies, and should be at the core of Florida's water policy. Acquiring lands that protect water resources and drinking water sources,

including those that protect the quality and quantity of water for our rivers, lakes, streams, springs, and aquifer systems is an effective and economical way to ensure our residents and millions of tourists will have ample water supplies in the future.

We agree that conserving and protecting water in Florida is a high priority. The debate currently taking place this legislative session about the best use of Florida's conservation dollars boils down to the balance we strike between natural, conservation-based solutions (e.g. protecting lands important to water resources) and engineered, technology-based solutions (e.g. constructing reservoirs and replenishing aquifers).

In the case of the Everglades, where the ecosystem has been so altered that buying land is no longer enough to achieve restoration goals, engineered solutions are necessary and inevitable to protect our water resources. For the rest of Florida, acquiring and protecting conservation lands that are already doing the job of protecting our water resources remains an important and effective tool. **We must not abandon our land conservation policies that have been so successful and have proven that acquiring and conserving land does protect our waters.**



Wetlands are nature's water storage systems and act as pollution filters.

BALLOT TITLE: Water and Land Conservation - Dedicates funds to acquire and restore Florida conservation and recreation lands

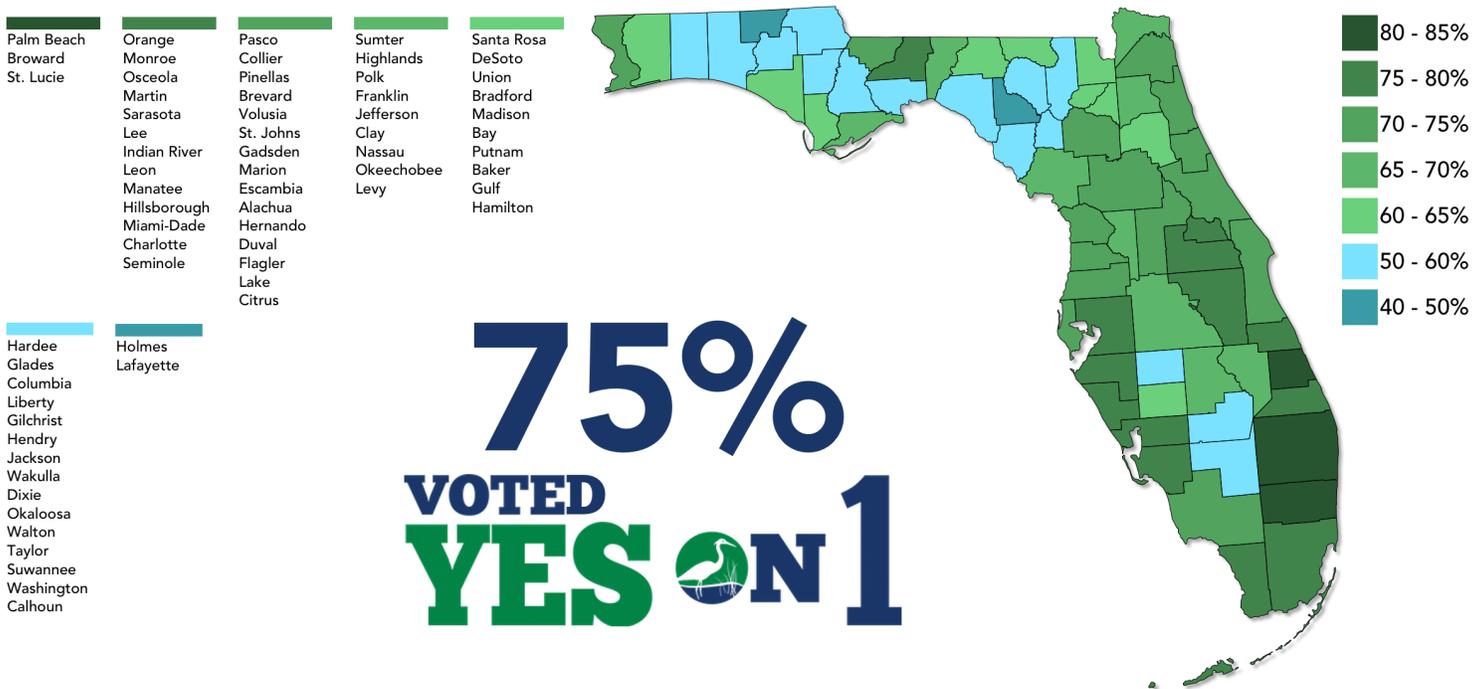
BALLOT SUMMARY: Funds the Land Acquisition Trust Fund to acquire, restore, improve, and manage conservation lands including wetlands and forests; fish and wildlife habitat; lands protecting water resources and drinking water sources, including the Everglades, and the water quality of rivers, lakes, and streams; beaches and shores; outdoor recreational lands; working farms and ranches; and historic or geological sites, by dedicating 33 percent of net revenues from the existing excise tax on documents for 20 years.



Outside of the Everglades, Florida Conservation Voters maintains that the Land Acquisition Trust Fund (LATF) monies set aside by the Water and Land Conservation Amendment (Amendment 1 in 2014) should be spent first on conservation-based solutions, **namely acquiring and protecting “lands that protect water resources and drinking water sources.”**

Senate President Joe Negron has shown great leadership by proposing a plan to expedite the construction of a reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee, as expressed in Senate Bill 10 sponsored by Senator Rob Bradley. However, the strike-all amendment filed on the first day of the 2017 legislative session drastically expanded the scope of the original plan beyond providing more water storage around Lake Okeechobee.

Senate Bill 10 now proposes an extreme shift away from land acquisition and conservation-based solutions to protecting our water resources, contrary to the intent of the Water and Land Conservation Amendment. If passed, Senate Bill 10 bill would fundamentally reduce, if not eliminate funding available for land conservation in Florida. Therefore, FCV opposes Senate Bill 10 in its current form.



FCV's 2017 Priorities for Water and Land Conservation

- Honor the intent and purpose of the Water and Land Conservation Amendment (Article 10, Section 28) by statutorily dedicating at least twenty-five percent of the Land Acquisition Trust Funds to the Florida Forever and Florida Communities Trust programs to expedite the purchase of ecologically sensitive lands.
- With regard to the Everglades:
 - Increase water storage capacity around Lake Okeechobee;
 - Expedite the construction of a reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee.

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