

SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lands Committee

FROM: Stephen Schroeder, Chief, Office of Administration

THRU: Steve Minnis, Deputy Executive Director, Business and Community Services

DATE: October 19, 2020

RE: Decline Right of First Refusal on Plantations at Deep Creek Conservation Easement, Columbia County

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend the Governing Board decline to exercise the right of first refusal for the Plantations at Deep Creek Conservation Easement over 2,144 +/- acres in Columbia County.

BACKGROUND

In May 2006, the District acquired a conservation easement for the Plantations at Deep Creek on 2,144 +/- acres in Columbia County. The easement included a clause allowing the District the right of first refusal for the fee-simple purchase of the property.

In September 2020, the District received an e-mail from a local realtor advising that the owner of the Plantations at Deep Creek had an offer to purchase the property in the amount of \$7,650,000 and requested that the District act in regards to the right of first refusal acquired as part of the conservation easement over the parcel.

After review, staff recommended that the District decline to exercise the right of first refusal in this instance. Under the terms of the right of first refusal, the fee owner should have invited an offer from the District prior to offering the property for sale, however that was not done. Staff maintains the position that there is no advantage to the District to owning the fee over owning the conservation easement.

The e-mail from the realtor and a location map are attached.

SCS/rl
Attachments
File # 04-002