

SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lands Committee

FROM: Stephen Schroeder, Chief, Office of Administration

THRU: Tim Alexander, Deputy Executive Director, Business and Community Services

DATE: November 28, 2022

RE: Denial of Conservation Easement Acquisition Offer from Greg Stafford, Hamilton County

RECOMMENDATION

Deny the request for acquisition of a conservation easement offer from Greg Stafford, Hamilton County.

BACKGROUND

In October 2022, the District received an offer from Greg Stafford to sell the District a conservation easement over a 212 acre +/- parcel of real property located in Hamilton County. The parcel is not adjacent to other District-owned lands and contains no riverine surface waters. It is not located within the District's Florida Forever Plan. It is within the Withlacoochee River protection area; contains 29.75 acres +/- within the floodway; 205 acres +/- are within the 10-year floodplain; and 212 acres +/- are within the 100-year floodplain. The parcel is within a springshed and the Troy, Falmouth, Lafayette Blue and Peacock Springs Priority Focus Area, is within the Eastern Water Supply Planning Area and the Suwannee Basin Management Action Plan.

In review, staff determined that the parcel would present management issues due to isolation from other District properties, and the current use as pasture/agricultural land. Staff noted that a portion of the property may be within the priority acquisition area for expansion of the Suwannee River State Park. District staff has recommended that the offeror contact the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

The offeror was notified of the staff recommendation and offered the opportunity to withdraw the offer or appear before the Lands Committee in opposition to the staff recommendation and there has been no response.

Copies of the Triage and Summary Maps are attached.

SCS/rl
File #2022-007
Attachments