

Help end the continuous battle for Florida Forever funding by supporting a “fix” to Amendment 1. Attend a local meeting of the Constitution Revision Commission (meeting dates and locations listed below) and express your support for a proposed amendment that would provide dedicated funding to Florida Forever.

The Florida Native Plant Society and virtually every other conservation organization in the state continues to fight, year after year, for the restoration of funding to the Florida Forever land conservation program. **We now have a rare opportunity to move beyond this never-ending battle and ensure that Florida Forever will receive a dedicated source of funding that is not subject annual debate and shifting political winds**, and without imposing any new taxes on Floridians.

Every 20 years, Florida establishes a Constitution Revision Commission (CRC) for the purpose of examining the constitution and proposing changes for voter consideration. **A CRC has been convened this year and one of the proposed amendments (“P-46”) now under consideration would require that 33% of each year’s Water and Land Conservation Amendment (Amendment 1) proceeds must go directly to the Florida Forever land acquisition program.**

Most of us thought funding for land conservation would be restored after we voted Amendment 1 into law in 2014. It passed easily with 75 percent of voters choosing “yes” on the ballot. And still, the Florida Legislature didn’t budget a single dollar for Florida Forever in 2017, despite the nearly \$800 million that were deposited into the Land Acquisition Trust Fund as the annual allotment for Amendment 1.

The language of Amendment 1 allowed for some latitude in deciding exactly how the funds could be expended in any given year, which was appropriate given the many environmental and conservation challenges facing our state. Land acquisition isn’t the answer to ALL our problems. But **our legislators have settled on an interpretation that allows money in the Land Acquisition Trust Fund to be expended on nearly anything EXCEPT Florida Forever land purchases.**

P-46 would require that at least 1/3 of annual Amendment 1 revenues must go directly into the Florida Forever Trust Fund to be used for land conservation. But first P-46 must survive the CRC process. Without clear expressions of public support, it will not make its way onto the 2018 election ballot.

You may have heard that the legislature is reviewing a bill that would dedicate at least \$100 million of Amendment 1 revenues to Florida Forever each year. That is a substantial sum, and most conservation organizations have rightly expressed support for the legislation; however, it is far short of the \$300 million Florida Forever received annually prior to the recession and there is no guarantee the legislation will pass, or will not be changed in subsequent years. **P-46 would restore funding comparable to historic levels, estimated to range from \$200-\$300 million/year based on the total real estate documentary taxes collected in any given year.** Keep in mind these are existing tax collections – NO NEW TAXES WOULD BE IMPOSED ON FLORIDIANS!

And the annual deposits to the Florida Forever Trust Fund would continue until Amendment 1 expires in 2034!

Florida has recovered from the recession, development and population growth have rebounded, and **it’s time for us to restore some balance to the land development versus land conservation equation.** Please plan to attend one of the regional CRC meetings (see list below) and tell the Commissioners:

- You support the restoration of historic funding levels of \$300 million per year to the Florida Forever program.
- You voted for passage of the Water and Land Conservation Amendment (Amendment 1) in 2014 largely to ensure that land conservation through the Florida Forever program would resume.
- You feel betrayed by the legislature’s unwillingness to restore funding to Florida Forever despite the resounding passage of Amendment 1 by 75% of the voters.
- Proposed amendment “P-46” would provide the certainty of Florida Forever funding that voters were seeking when they passed Amendment 1 in 2014 by ensuring that at least 1/3 of annual Amendment 1 revenues would go directly to the Florida Forever Trust Fund.
- P-46 would still allow legislative discretion over how the remaining 2/3 of annual Amendment 1 revenues are spent for natural resource protection purposes, including land acquisition.
- Please give voters the opportunity to decide the fate of P-46 by advancing it to the 2018 election ballot, consistent with the CRC’s charge.

If you cannot attend a meeting, please let CRC Chair Carlos Beruff know about your support for P-46 by phoning him at (850)717-9550 or sending a brief email message to Carlos.Beruff@flcrc.gov . In addition to making the points listed above, consider including a brief, personal statement explaining why Florida Forever and land conservation are important to you.

You can get additional information about P-46 and the CRC from their website at <https://www.flcrc.gov/> . More details about the regional meetings, including flyers and public appearance forms, are available at <https://www.flcrc.gov/Meetings/PublicHearings> . Please be advised that if you wish to speak at one of the public hearings, you must submit a public appearance form when you arrive at the meeting location. The forms should be available at the meeting location, or can be downloaded in advance from the webpage listed above. However, the appearance forms cannot be submitted in advance. Individuals requiring an accommodation to participate in the hearings (such as a sign language interpreter) are requested to notify the CRC five days prior to the scheduled hearing date by email to admin@flcrc.gov or by calling (850) 717-9550.

CRC Public Hearing Schedule

Tuesday, February 06, 2018

1:00-7:00 PM EST

Rick Case Arena at the Don Taft

University Center

3301 College Avenue

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33314

Fort

Lauderdale

- [Flyer](#)
- [Notice](#)
- [NSU Campus Map](#)
- [Public Parking Pass](#)
- [Map](#)
- [Public Hearing Appearance Form](#) (PDF)
- [Audiencia Pública formulario de presentación](#) (PDF)

Monday, February 19, 2018

1:00-7:00 PM EST

Eastern Florida State College
Maxwell C. King Center
3865 North Wickham Road
Melbourne, FL 32935

Melbourne

- [Flyer](#)
- [Notice](#)
- [Map](#)
- [Public Hearing Appearance Form](#) (PDF)
- [Audiencia Pública formulario de presentación](#) (PDF)

Tuesday, February 20, 2018

1:00-7:00 PM EST

University of North Florida
Herbert University Center
12000 Alumni Drive
Jacksonville, FL 32224

Jacksonville

- [Flyer](#)
- [Notice](#)
- [Map](#)
- [Public Hearing Appearance Form](#) (PDF)
- [Audiencia Pública formulario de presentación](#) (PDF)

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

1:00-7:00 PM CST

University of West Florida
Conference Center & Ballroom
11000 University Parkway, Building 22
Pensacola, FL 32514

Pensacola

- [Flyer](#)
- [Notice](#)
- [Map](#)
- [Public Hearing Appearance Form](#) (PDF)
- [Audiencia Pública formulario de presentación](#) (PDF)

Tuesday, March 13, 2018

1:00-7:00 PM EST

University of South Florida - St.
Petersburg
University Student Center
200 6th Ave S
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

St. Petersburg

- [Flyer](#)
- [Notice](#)
- [Map](#)
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- [Audiencia Pública formulario de presentación](#) (PDF)