DATE: February 14, 2022

APPLICATION TYPE: Fee Simple Acquisition

SITE NAME (APPLICATION NUMBER): 2021-2-1332 Frank A. Ford Trust

OWNER NAME: Frank A. Ford Trust

SIZE: 1,200 +/- acres

LOCATION: Ormond Beach, south of Walter Boardman Lane and Highbridge Road.

SITE DESCRIPTION
The property is located in northeast Volusia County and is adjacent to, and accessed through, Bulow Creek State Park. The Halifax River is to the east of the property and the Atlantic Ocean is approximately 1,420 feet from the parcels. The County of Volusia’s Highbridge Park is directly northeast of this property which lies within the “Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail.” Several mosquito ditches have been created throughout the marsh system. The future land use designation is Environmental Systems Corridor (ESC) with the Natural Resource Management Area (NRMA) overlay.

The ESC designates important ecological corridors comprised of environmentally sensitive and ecologically significant lands. Land use activities occurring within these corridors shall not degrade these natural functions and connections. The minimum lot size is twenty-five (25) acres.

The NRMA overlay contains expanses of relatively uninterrupted lands that need to be managed as a system. It is the intent of this category that development does not adversely impact the quality and quantity of existing resources. Accordingly, development standards for lands located within the NRMA are more restrictive than for the same uses falling outside of the NRMA.

The zoning classification is Resource Corridor (RC). The RC classification is to provide protected, natural corridors consisting of environmentally-sensitive and ecologically significant lands which connect to other protected areas such as parks and water bodies. The corridor shall provide a contiguous hydro-ecological pathway, where the wetlands and uplands are integrated and conductive to the maintenance and perpetuation of the system. The minimum lot size is twenty-five (25) acres.

NATURAL AREA DESCRIPTION
This area is dominated by salt marsh and open water with a minimal amount of uplands. Salt marsh is a largely herbaceous community that are in coastal areas that are affected by the tides. The plant species that occur most often in this marsh is saltmarsh cordgrass, needle rush, saltgrass, saltwort, perennial glasswort, seaside oxeye, saltmeadow cordgrass, marsh elder, and christmasberry.
Several bird species occur in a salt marsh. A few of these include black rail, sparrow, wren, reddish egret, roseate spoonbill, white ibis, little blue and great white heron. A animal that may occur on this property is the imperiled Atlantic salt marsh snake is endemic to Volusia County and is listed as federally and state threatened.

There are two scarce and unique natural communities on site per Florida Natural Area Inventory’s list, maritime hammock and scrubby flatwoods.

Maritime hammock is a predominantly evergreen hardwood forest growing on stabilized coastal dunes lying at varying distances from the shore. Species composition is live oak, cabbage palm, and red bay combine to form a dense canopy. Scrubby flatwoods have an open canopy of widely spaced pine trees and a low, shrubby understory dominated by scrub oaks and saw palmetto, often interspersed with areas of barren white sand. Principal canopy species are longleaf pine and slash pine in northern and Central Florida. The shrub layer consists of one or more of the four scrub oaks, sand live oak, myrtle oak, Chapman’s oak, and scrub oak. The animals that may occur in scrubby flatwoods are Florida mouse, Florida scrub-jay, gopher tortoise, and associated commensal species.

CONNECTIVITY TO OTHER CONSERVATION LANDS
Bulow Creek State Park abuts the property on its north, south and west boundaries. A portion of the north eastern most parcel is connected to North Peninsula State Park.

HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE
Historical sites have been identified around the periphery of these parcels. No archeological survey has been provided with the application. Therefore, location and historical type cannot be determined. There is a building foundation on the property. The debris around the foundation indicates the home site is likely not historic.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES
The parcels can only be accessed by water or through the Bulow Creek State Park. This limits staff’s strategies to manage the land. Exotic plant treatment will be difficult with most of the Brazilian pepper being along the shoreline. Staff at the state park system have expressed an interest in managing this property should it be acquired.

ECONOMIC/ACQUISITION ISSUES
According to the Volusia County Property Appraisers webpage, the 10 parcels have a 2022 Just Value Total of $393,685 and 2022 estimated taxes totaling $17,430. This figure is for comparative purposes between properties and is not necessarily an accurate reflection of the true cost of the property, if acquired by the Volusia Forever Program.

POTENTIAL MATCHING FUNDS SOURCE
These parcels lie within the optimum boundary of Bulow Creek State Park. Staff have communicated with FLDEP about the possibility of a funding partnership for this acquisition and they are exploring options. No commitments have been made at this time.
OTHER CONSIDERATIONS
None.

VOLUSIA FOREVER CRITERIA
This property meets eleven (11) of the nineteen (19) Site Ranking Criteria. This includes two (2) from Proximity and Connectivity criteria, one (1) from Water Resources criteria, four (4) from Environmentally Sensitive Lands criteria, three (3) from Provide Resource Based Recreation Lands and one (1) from Management (Initial Review Report was provided during the Eligibility meeting on January 26, 2022).