

FLORIDA'S WATER & LAND LEGACY

The Campaign to Protect Florida's Most Cherished Waters and Natural Areas

Florida's Water and Land Legacy • 316 Williams Street, Tallahassee, FL 32303 • (850) 629-4656
campaign@FloridaWaterLandLegacy.org • www.FloridaWaterLandLegacy.org

Florida's Water and Land Legacy is a coalition of the state's leading conservation organizations including The Trust for Public Land, Audubon Florida, Florida Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club and many others. Together with concerned citizens, they have united to launch a major constitutional amendment campaign for the November 2014 ballot.

A constitutional amendment is the best way we can assure that adequate funding is dedicated solely to restoring critical natural areas, like the Everglades, and protecting Florida's magnificent waters and lands for future generations. Floridians understand the value of clean and abundant water for people and wildlife, and they cherish the natural areas that make Florida special. That's why the amendment would ensure that these values have a place in our state's constitution.

This important amendment:

- 1. Ensures that our cherished beaches, rivers, lakes, springs and forests are protected for future generations.** Vibrant and healthy natural areas supply us with clean water and improve our quality of life. Irreplaceable treasures like the Everglades and our world-class beaches also draw millions of visitors every year and form the backbone of our tourism economy. Yet almost 2 million acres of important water protection areas, beaches, springs and other vital natural areas remain vulnerable to unwise development decisions and deep funding cuts. This amendment creates stable and long-term funding for conservation programs like Florida Forever and Everglades restoration, ensuring that we safeguard our most treasured waters and lands for future generations.
- 2. Directs one-third of existing state revenues from "doc stamps" to fund restoration and conservation projects in Florida's most critical water protection areas and lands.** The amendment will dedicate funding to conserve and restore Florida's most cherished waterways and natural areas using existing state revenues generated by real estate transactions. Fees on real estate transactions, aka "doc stamps," have been assessed in Florida for decades to pay for important programs including land conservation and affordable housing. Yet since 2009, these fees have been diverted to the state's general revenues while Florida Forever funding for water and land conservation projects has been slashed by **97.5 percent**.
 - In 2012, the legislature allocated only \$8.5 million to protect important water protection areas and conservation lands. Compared to the state budget of \$60 billion, that means that for every dollar the state spends in 2012, less than **two-hundredths of a penny** will go to water and land conservation. That's less than \$1 for every Floridian.
 - The amendment would provide more than \$5 billion for water and land conservation in Florida over the next ten years and \$10 billion over the twenty-year life of the measure, all without any tax increase.
- 3. Reinforces Florida's long-standing leadership on water and land conservation.** In Florida, conserving the water quality of our lakes, rivers and springs and acquiring lands necessary to protect drinking water sources historically has transcended party politics. Popular programs like Florida Forever—geared towards funding important conservation projects—have been a priority of every Governor for the last four decades, including Governors Graham, Martinez, Chiles, Bush and Crist.