RESOLUTION

of the

ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

regarding

SUPPORTING FLORIDA FOREVER AND A SUCCESSOR PROGRAM FOR THE FUTURE

Resolution No. 2007-M-13

WHEREAS, the Florida Forever program and its predecessor Preservation 2000 program have immeasurably contributed to environmental health, quality of life, recreation, and sustainability in Florida for this and future generations; and

WHEREAS, through Florida Forever, the State of Florida has acquired over one million acres throughout Florida since 2000; and

WHEREAS, the State of Florida allocates $300 million annually to purchase environmentally sensitive and other lands through Florida Forever, and has done so through numerous successful partnerships with cities, counties, state agencies, water managements districts, nonprofit organizations, private landowners, and others in achieving its conservation purposes; and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever, through its partnerships with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the five water management districts, and others, produces benefits that include clean air and water; healthy fisheries and wildlife habitat; improved water supply protection; and protected open spaces including greenway corridors, park lands, forests, and water bodies; and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever, through the Florida Communities Trust, has assisted Florida's cities and counties protect their cultural and historical resources, meet and challenges of growth management, direct development away from coastal high hazard areas and floodplains; foster a healthier life style for Floridians; and provide recreational outdoor experiences in both urban and rural settings; and
WHEREAS, the State of Florida should secure at-risk lands while they are still available by accelerating funding of the Florida Forever program and setting the stage for the creation of a successor program to Florida Forever; and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever has helped to save many of Florida’s beaches, rivers, bays, forests, coral reefs and estuaries that provide the foundation for our three billion dollar tourism industry that attract more than seventy million visitors each year; and

WHEREAS, fifty Florida local governments have enacted land acquisition financing programs in the past decade, and this conservation finance programs serve to leverage Florida Forever funding and increase the impact of State land conservation funding; and

WHEREAS, Orange County’s Green PLACE Program relies on partnership funding to further its land acquisition goals in a competitive real estate environment; and

WHEREAS, Florida is experiencing rapid population growth, with approximately 1,100 new residents every day; and Floridians demand a high quality of life that includes green space, access to water, pastoral settings and recreational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Florida Forever and other land conservation programs must compete in Florida’s market of surging land and housing prices; and

WHEREAS, the effectiveness of Florida Forever has diminished because of escalating land prices and the impacts of inflation; and

WHEREAS, the funding for the Florida Forever program will sunset in 2010; and

WHEREAS, research by the Florida Forever Coalition has determined that over ten billion dollars is currently needed to purchase parks and recreational facilities, wildlife and wilderness areas, and open space to meet the demand created by our state’s increasing population; and

WHEREAS, a 2005 public opinion survey conducted by members of the Florida Forever Coalition found that 78% of Florida’s voters approve of the Florida Forever program; and

WHEREAS, the benefits of Florida Forever have included the acquisition of Split Oak Preserve, Parcel 105, NRC Parcel and the Kelly Park Expansion within Orange County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ORANGE COUNTY who hereby declares its support to the State of Florida Legislature for the creation and funding of a successor program to the
Florida Forever program and requests its legislative delegation to advocate for the creation and funding of a successor program to Florida Forever.

ADOPTED THIS 17th DAY OF APRIL, 2007.

ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA
By: Board of County Commissioners
By: Richard T. Crotty
County Mayor

ATTEST: Martha O. Haynie, County Comptroller
As Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners

By: Deputy Clerk