

## **Draft Funded Priorities List 3b**

### **Proposal Abstract**

**Sponsor:** Florida Department of Environmental Protection

**Proposal:** Florida Strategic Gulf Coast Land Acquisition Program

Florida, through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), is requesting \$20M in Council-Selected Restoration Component funding for the proposed Florida Strategic Gulf Coast Land Acquisition Program. This would include \$2M in planning funds as FPL Category 1, as well as a separate \$18M implementation component as an FPL Category 2 priority for potential funding. The program would support the primary RESTORE Comprehensive Plan goal to restore and conserve habitat through a suite of linked activities to increase conserved and protected State owned or managed lands by 10,000 to 20,000 acres. Program activities include implementation of land acquisitions, partnering with the existing Florida Forever Program (FF), Florida's premier conservation and recreation lands acquisition program. The proposed program would utilize the FF priority list to identify parcels for acquisition; parcels on the FF priority list are ranked using a thorough scientific review and a comprehensive natural resource analysis. FDEP would target lands draining into the Gulf of Mexico that are in the FF Critical Natural Lands and Climate Change Lands categories or other FF parcels with similar attributes. Land acquisitions could include both fee simple acquisition and conservation easements from willing sellers.

Program activities would result in environmental benefits to Florida's natural resources and ecosystems by protecting critical habitats, preserving native biodiversity and ecosystem function, mitigating sea level rise, flooding, and other current and future risks to coastal communities. Program duration is 10 years.