

The Florida Senate
COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA

AGRICULTURE
Senator Truenow, Chair
Senator Grall, Vice Chair

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, February 11, 2025
TIME: 11:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
PLACE: 301 Senate Building

MEMBERS: Senator Truenow, Chair; Senator Grall, Vice Chair; Senators Bernard, Boyd, Burton, and Rouson

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
1	Presentation by Aquaculture Producers		Presented
2	Presentation by UF/IFAS on Education, Research, and Extensions		Presented
3	Presentation by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services		Presented
Other Related Meeting Documents			

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

2/11/25-

Meeting Date

Apiculture

Committee

Apiculture

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Cannon Gregg

Phone 843-291-9322

Address

Street

Email

City

State

Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☒ Information

OR

Waive Speaking: ☐ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☒ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☐ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

2/11/25

Meeting Date

Agriculture

Committee

Agua Culture

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Tim Salano

Phone

352-740-5678

Address

Street

Email

City

State

Zip

Speaking:

☐

For

☐

Against

☒

Information

OR

Waive Speaking:

☐

In Support

☐

Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☒

I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☐

I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

☐

I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

February 11, 2025



UF/IFAS Extension Efforts in the Suwannee Valley to Meet BMAP

*Bob Hochmuth,
UF/IFAS Regional Extension Agent,
North Florida REC- Suwannee Valley*

*Team Credit: UF/IFAS State Specialists, Regional
Specialized Extension Agents, Surrounding County
Extension Faculty, and other BMP staff*

Land-Grant University

3-Legged Stool

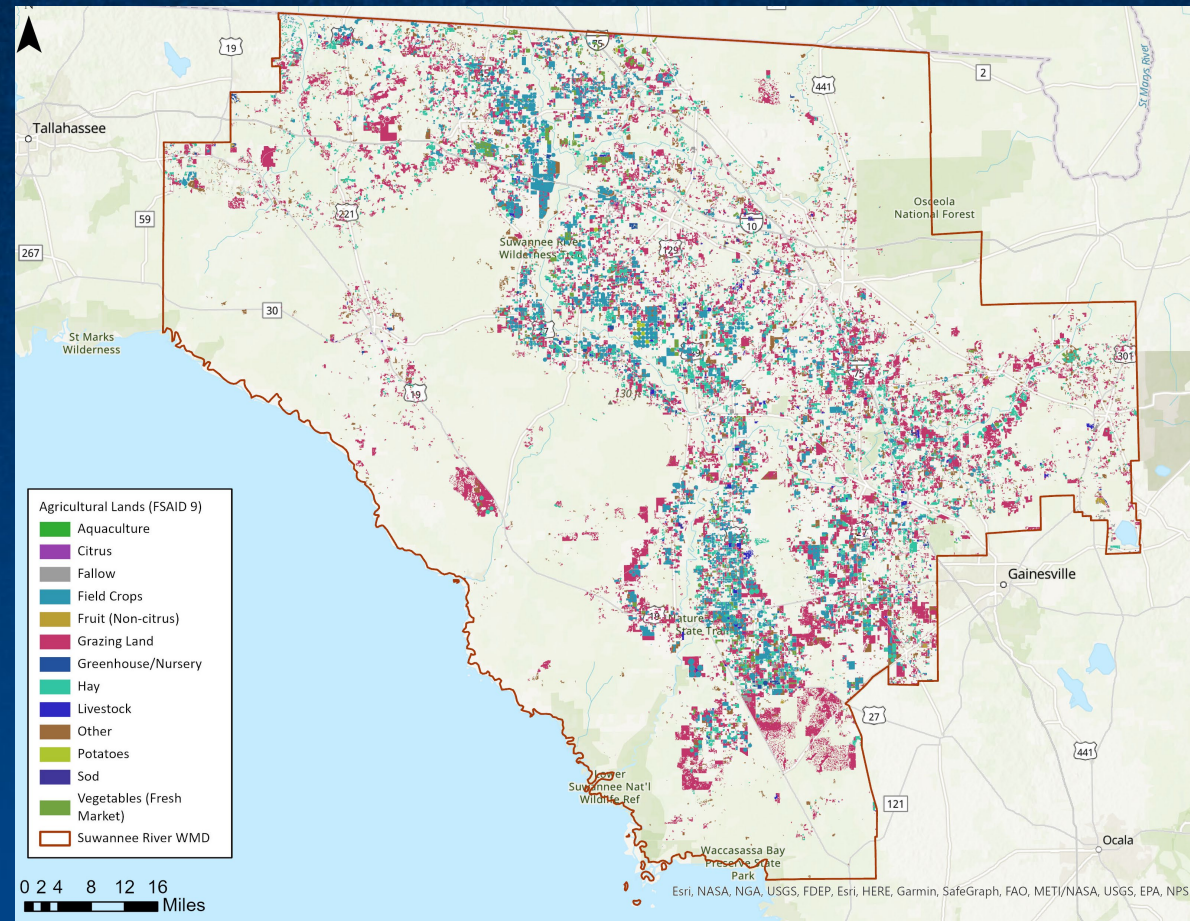
1. Teaching

2. Research

3. Extension

Suwannee Valley Agriculture Acres

- **Peanuts:** 70,000-90,000
- **Corn (Grain and Silage):** 50,000-60,000
- **Watermelons:** 8,000-10,000
- **Carrots:** 4,000-5,000
- **Peppers:** > 1,000
- **Snap Beans:** 4,000-5,000
- **Sweet Corn:** 3,000-5,000
- **Dry Beans:** 5,000
- **Cold Hardy Citrus:** 1,000-2,000
- **Protected Agriculture:** Small footprint, high value
- **Hay:** 80,000+



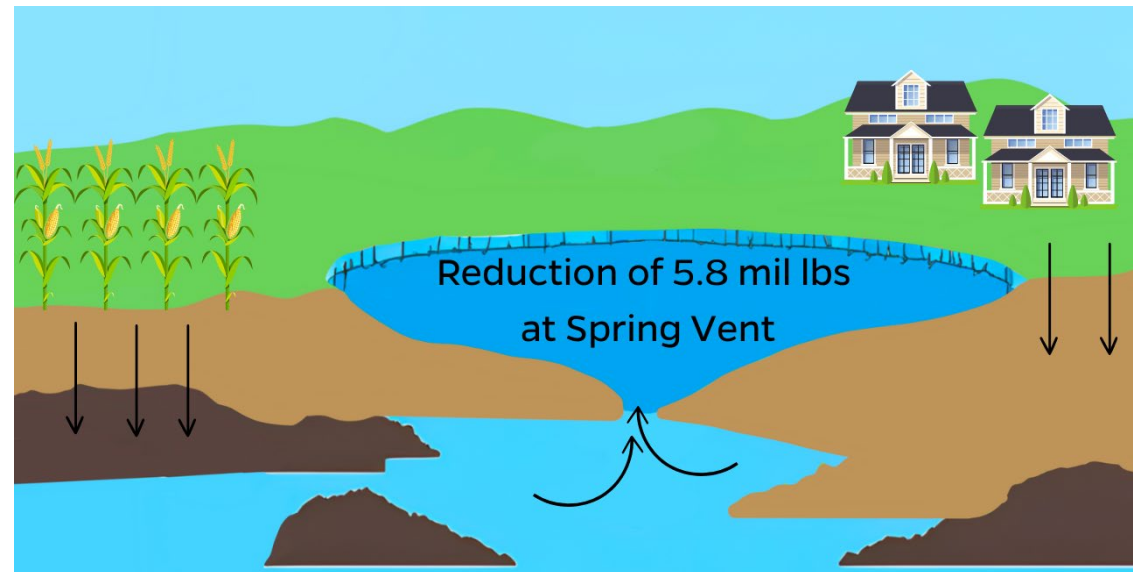
The Challenge: Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP)

Nitrogen load reductions are reassessed regularly

Agriculture Fertilizer Portion (Suwannee BMAP)

- 2016 - 4,075,935 lbs
- 2023 - 5,807,282 lbs
- 2025 - Possible increase

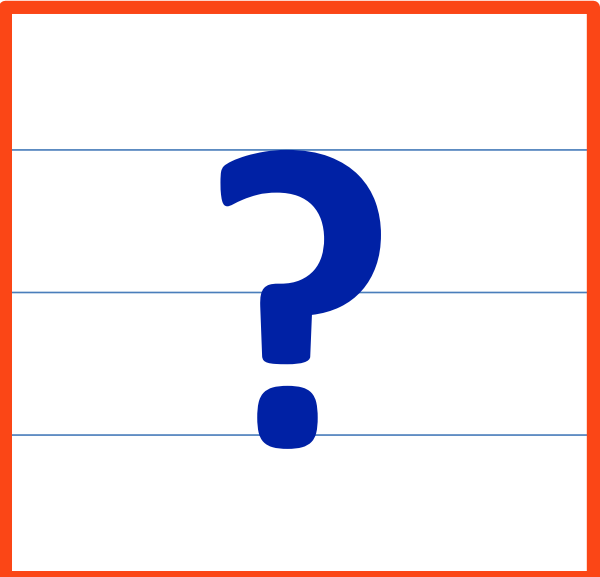
For discussion purposes today, I am using the 5.8 million lbs as my target until someone documents a different regulatory target. As you will see, it is hard enough to reach!



How can we develop a possible long-range plan of meeting the BMAP target?

Consider crops with large acreage and high Nitrogen use

What is a potential
target reduction?
lbs of N/acre

	Acres		
Hay	80,000 +		Many Producers, Highly Variable
Corn	50,000		Few Producers, Possible, Fast
Vegetables	20,000		Few Producers, Lower Impact
Livestock Waste			1.46 Million of Total Load Reduction

Funding Sources

Coordination through Suwannee River Partnership

**FDACS, Office of Ag Water Policy
SRWMD**

**UF/IFAS
FDEP**

- USDA, NIFA, NRCS, etc
- Grower Associations (ex. Watermelon, Peanuts, CA Carrots)
- VoLo Foundation
- Florida Farm Bureau
- The Nature Conservancy
- Conservation Districts

- Stetson Sustainable Farming Fund
- Southern SARE
- Multiple farmer cooperators
- Industry Partners (many partners, fertilizer, irrigation, soil moisture sensors, automation controllers, seed, plastic mulches, potato equipment, soil and leaf tissue lab services, and more)

Methods



Increase in likelihood of adoption

A series of horizontal orange lines of varying lengths are arranged in a vertical column, centered on the page. Some lines are solid, while others are broken or have gaps, creating a rhythmic, abstract pattern.

Corn

Corn BMP On-Farm Extension Efforts

Identified as Top Priority Crop

Multiple funding sources (FDACS, Office of Ag Water Policy, etc.)

- **4R Project**
- **Controlled Release Fertilizer**
- Soil Moisture Sensor Network
- STEP Program (at NFREC-SV)
- Side-dressing equipment retrofits
- N-rate demos
- NDVI readings
- Everlizer poultry litter comparison
- Nitrogen rate calibration strips
- All with Irrigation management component, 5th R



Precision Nutrient Application Project (aka- the 4Rs Project)

Awarded \$1.8M for large on-farm demonstrations

High clearance tractor side-dressing 3 farms per year

Funded by: FDACS OAWP and SRWMD



Florida Agricultural Soil Moisture Sensor Network

- Collaboration with extension faculty, specialists, agents and the producer
- Real-time data of what is happening in the root zone
- Top adopted BMP



Extension = Adoption

Trial with One Corn Producer in Suwannee Valley

Farmer adopted

- Precision placement of Nitrogen
- Soil Moisture Sensors

Benefit to Basin

- 250,000 lbs yearly reduction of Nitrogen
- 200,000,000 gallons of water saved



A series of horizontal orange lines of varying lengths are arranged in a vertical column, centered on the page. Some lines are solid, while others are broken or have gaps, creating a rhythmic, abstract pattern.

Watermelon

Watermelon BMP On-Farm Extension Efforts

Identified as Top Priority Vegetable



Multiple funding sources (FDACS, Office of Ag Water Policy, etc.)

- Controlled-Release Fertilizer
- “Blue Dye Don’t Lie” Demonstrations
- Soil Moisture Sensor Network
- Drip Irrigation Zone Control Automation Demo
- Petiole-sap testing over 100 farms weekly
- Irrigation System Evaluation

Controlled-Release Fertilizer

Suwannee Valley Regional Project

Funded by FDACS, Office of Ag Water Policy and SRWMD

- Source of N using controlled release fertilizer, research and on-farm demos.
- Incentive for farms in 2022-2027 for polymer coating technology portion
- Including what is planned in 2025: collaborating with 15 watermelon farms



Blue Dye Don't Lie

Demonstration of Irrigation Rate/Timing

Innovative Extension memorable method to teach farmers



Extension = Adoption

Combination of On-Farm Demos

Estimated 200,000 lbs reduction of Nitrogen

- 20% of total for vegetables from watermelons alone

In 2025, 4,000 acres adopting automation of irrigation for less water, less leaching, and less nitrogen.



Extension Extends to All Crops

More than just corn and watermelon

Carrots

- N-rate study
- Controlled Release Fertilizer

Potato

- N-rate study
- Controlled Release Fertilizer
- Adoption of Flat Beds

Snap Beans

- N-rate study
- Controlled Release Fertilizer

Cover Crops Demonstrations



How do we get there?
5.8 millions lbs +

How can we (Research & Extension) develop a possible long-range plan of meeting the BMAP target?

Reductions: 65 lbs/acre from Corn & 50 lbs/acre from Vegetables

	Acres	Potential Reduction lbs of N/acre	
Hay	80,000 +		Many Producers, Highly Variable
Corn	50,000	3,250,000	Few Producers, Possible, Fast
Vegetables	20,000	1,000,000	Few Producers, Lower Impact

Total Reduction: 4,250,000

Crop target from 2016: 4,075,935 lbs of N (Suwannee BMAP)

How can we (Research & Extension) develop a possible long-range plan of meeting the BMAP target?

Adding 20 lbs/acre Reduction to Hay

	Acres	Potential Reduction lbs of N/acre	
Hay	80,000 +	1,600,000	Many Producers, Highly Variable
Corn	50,000	3,250,000	Few Producers, Possible, Fast
Vegetables	20,000	1,000,000	Few Producers, Lower Impact

Total Reduction: 5,850,000

New crop target from 2023: 5,807,282 lbs of N (Suwannee BMAP)

Thank you!

**UF/IFAS NFREC-
Suwannee Valley**



The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Meeting Date

Committee

Name

Phone

Address

Email

Street

City

State

Zip

Speaking:

☐

For

☐

Against



Information

OR

Waive Speaking:

☐

In Support

☐

Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:



I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☐

I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

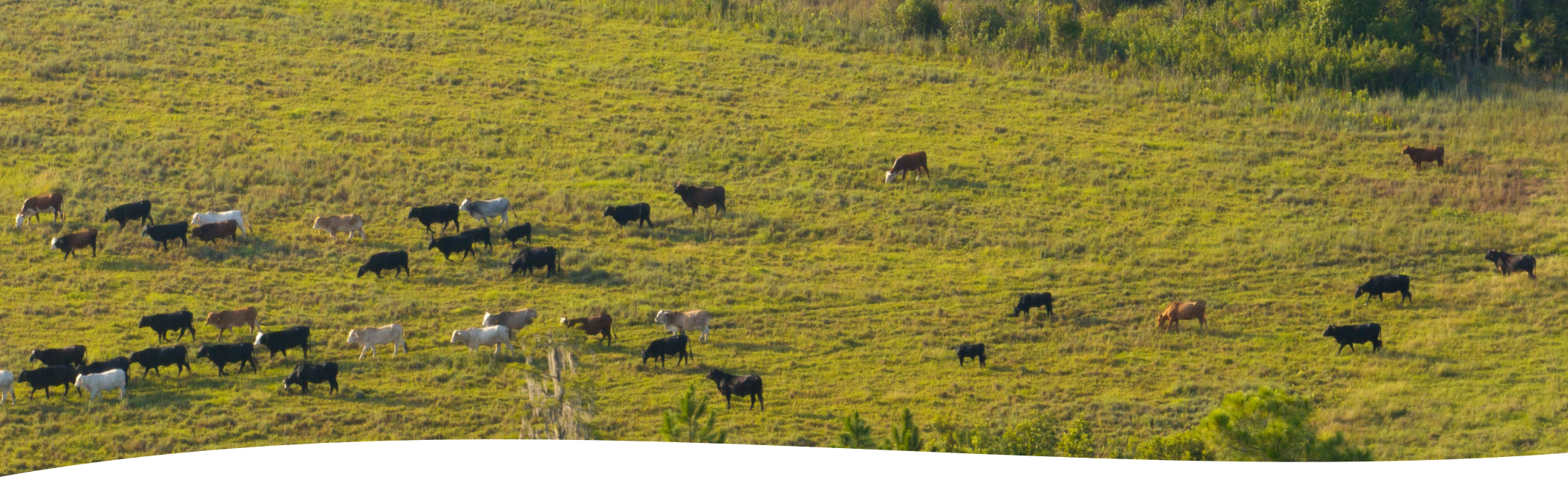
☐

I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)



Senate Committee on Agriculture

Rural and Family Lands Protection Program

February 11, 2025



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Commissioner Wilton Simpson

Rural and Family Lands Protection Program

- Agricultural land preservation program
- Designed to protect lands from being developed into uses incompatible with agriculture and natural habitat
- Program meets this goal by acquiring development rights through permanent rural land protection easements



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Commissioner Wilton Simpson

Our Critical Role in Florida's Future

- Preserves agricultural lands in perpetuity
- Protects our food supply as a matter of national security
- Maintains status as taxable property supporting local government services
- No cost to the state to maintain the land

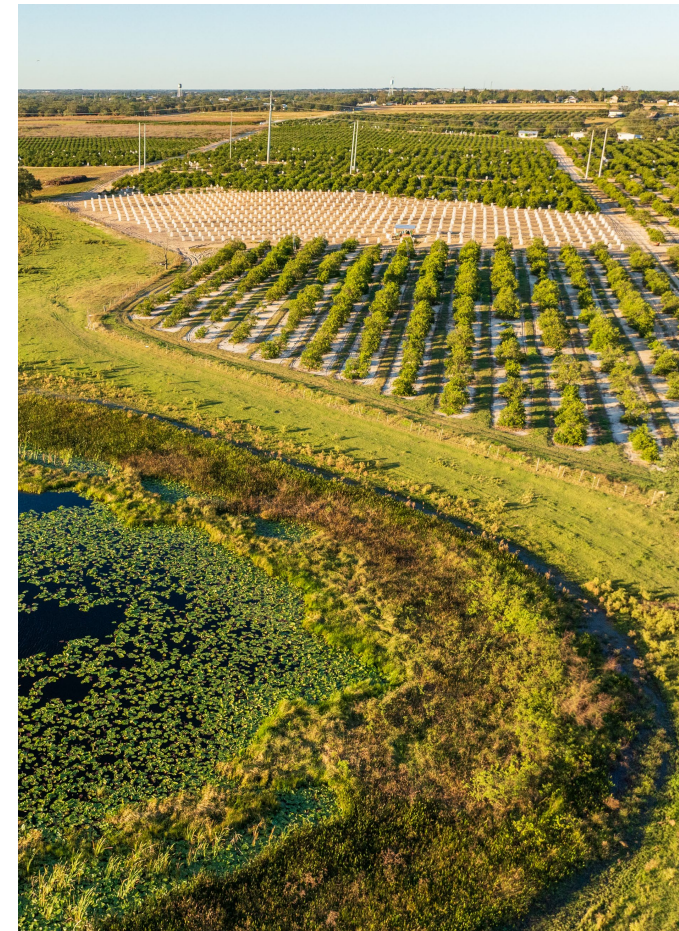


Buck Island Ranch, Highlands County

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Commissioner Wilton Simpson

Agriculture's Role

- Promotion and improvement of wildlife habitat;
- Protection and enhancement of water bodies, Aquifer Recharge Areas, wetlands, and watersheds;
- Perpetuation of open space on lands with Significant Natural Areas; or
- Protection of Agricultural Lands threatened by conversion to other uses.
- Required to enroll in Best Management Practices (BMP) prior to close.

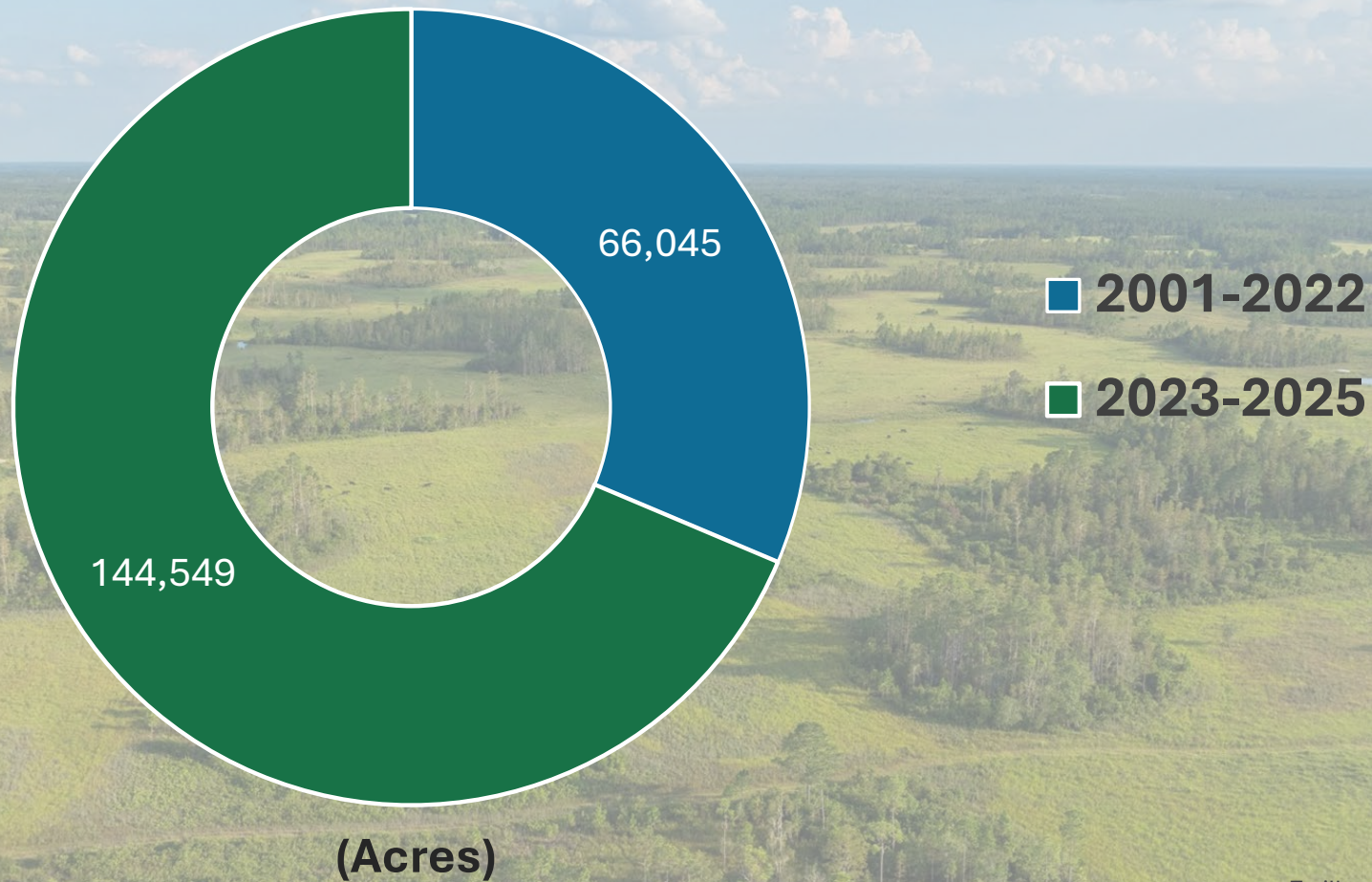


Raley Grove, Polk County



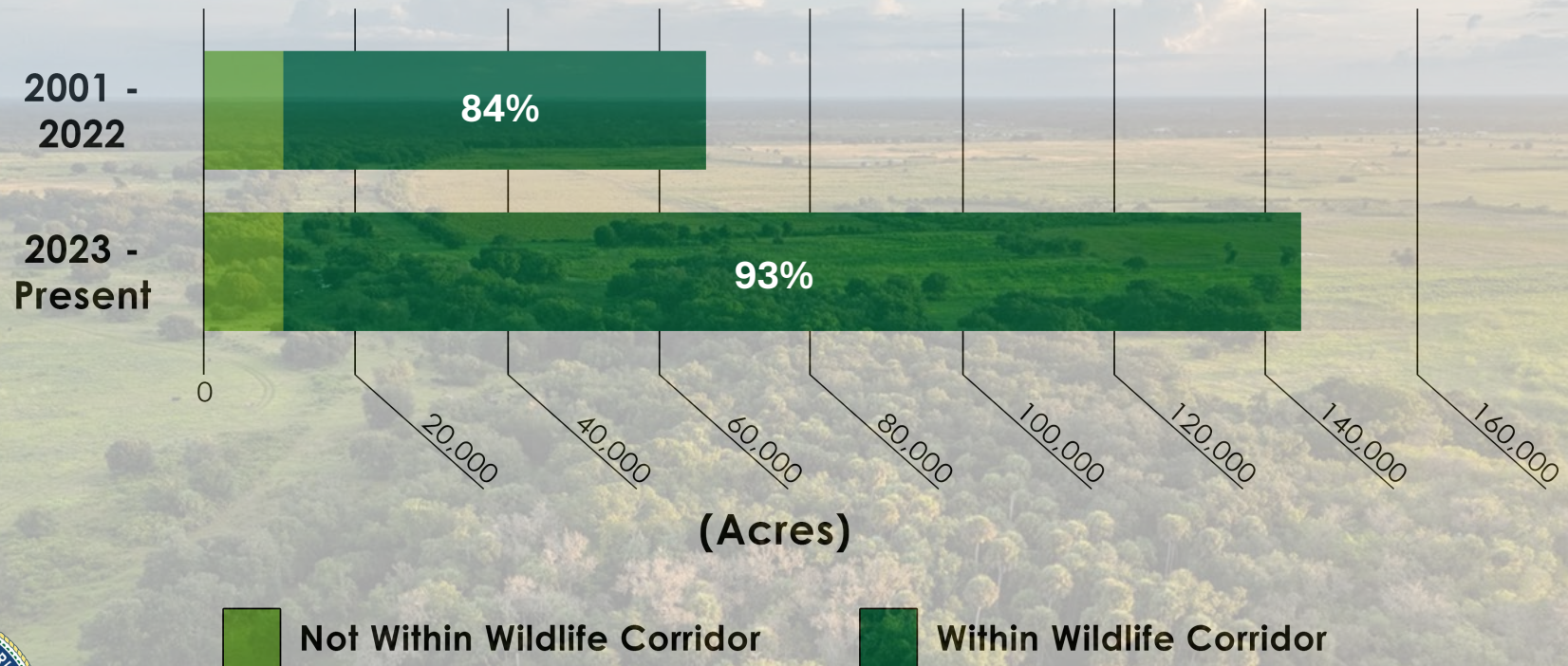
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Commissioner Wilton Simpson

Protected Agriculture Lands



Trailhead Blue Springs, Levy County

Investments Within the Florida Wildlife Corridor



One Nine Cattle, Okeechobee County

Using Technology to Streamline Our Process

- Creation of an online portal
- Reduced review time of applications
- Statutory vs Board of Trustees closings
- Closing process improvements through templates and partnerships

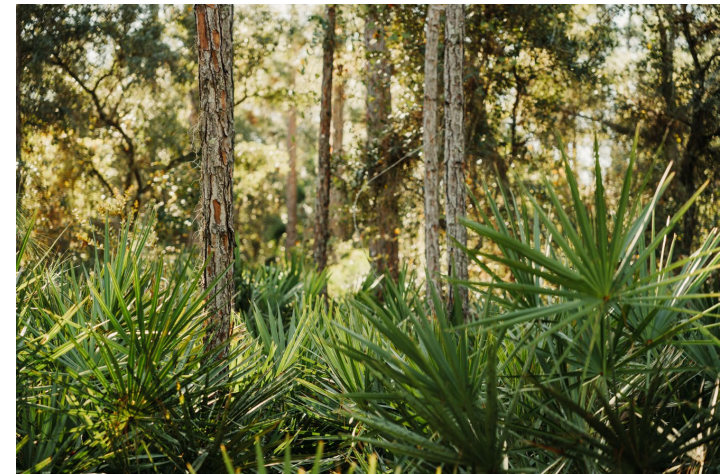


Overstreet Ranch, Highlands County

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Commissioner Wilton Simpson

Funding Opportunity

- Commissioner Simpson's Budget Request:
\$200 million non-recurring funding
- \$100 million existing recurring funding
- Total Projects Estimated Value: \$1.99 billion
 - 203 Existing Projects
 - 254,544 Total Acres
 - Estimated Cost: \$891 million
 - 224 New Applications (2025)
 - 314,000 Total Acres
 - Estimated Cost: \$1.1 billion



Peebles Family Ranch, Glades County

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Commissioner Wilton Simpson

Thank you!



JP Fraites, Director

John.Fraites@FDACS.gov



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Commissioner Wilton Simpson

02/11/2025

Meeting Date

Agriculture

Committee

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

N/A

Bill Number or Topic

N/A

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name **John Paul "JP" Fraites**

Phone **(850) 617-7700**

Address **400 S. Monroe St**

Email **N/A**

Street

Tallahassee

FL

32399

City

State

Zip

Speaking: ☐ For ☐ Against ☒ Information **OR** Waive Speaking: ☐ In Support ☐ Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

☒ I am appearing without
compensation or sponsorship.

☐ I am a registered lobbyist,
representing:

☐ I am not a lobbyist, but received
something of value for my appearance
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

CourtSmart Tag Report

Room: SB 301
Caption: Senate Argiculture

Case No.:
Judge:

Type:

Started: 2/11/2025 11:01:07 AM

Ends: 2/11/2025 12:16:10 PM

Length: 01:15:04

11:01:06 AM Chair Truenow calls meeting to order
11:01:13 AM Roll call
11:01:24 AM Pledge of Allegiance
11:01:50 AM Chair Truenow makes opening remarks
11:01:59 AM Tab 1: Presentation by Aquaculture Producers
11:03:05 AM Tim Solano
11:08:54 AM Questions:
11:08:58 AM Senator Boyd
11:10:01 AM Tim Solano
11:10:35 AM Senator Bernard
11:11:01 AM Tim Solano
11:12:25 AM Senator Bernard
11:12:47 AM Chair Truenow thanks Tim Saleno
11:13:01 AM Cainnon Gregg
11:21:38 AM Questions:
11:21:43 AM Chair Truenow
11:21:51 AM Cainnon Gregg
11:22:31 AM Chair Truenow
11:22:37 AM Cainnon Gregg
11:23:00 AM Chair Truenow
11:23:04 AM Cainnon Gregg
11:24:07 AM Chair Truenow
11:24:16 AM Cainnon Gregg
11:25:11 AM Senator Boyd
11:25:21 AM Cainnon Gregg
11:26:16 AM Senator Burton
11:26:25 AM Cainnon Gregg
11:26:56 AM Chair Truenow
11:27:05 AM Cainnon Gregg
11:29:25 AM Chair Truenow thanks Cainnon Gregg
11:29:40 AM Senator Boyd
11:29:48 AM Senator Rouson
11:30:04 AM Chair Truenow
11:30:17 AM Tab 2: Presentation by UF/IFAS on Education, Research and Extensions
11:30:29 AM Dr. Robert C. Hochmuth, UF/IFAS
11:53:03 AM Questions:
11:53:06 AM Senator Bernard
11:53:22 AM Dr. Robert Hochmuth
11:55:12 AM Senator Bernard
11:55:20 AM Dr. Robert Hochmuth
11:56:20 AM Chair Truenow
11:57:14 AM Dr. Robert Hochmuth
11:58:18 AM Chair Truenow
11:58:28 AM Dr. Robert Hochmuth
11:58:57 AM Chair Truenow
11:59:12 AM Dr. Robert Hochmuth
11:59:50 AM Chair Truenow
12:00:03 PM Dr. Robert Hochmuth
12:00:13 PM Chair Truenow thanks Dr. Robert Hochmuth
12:00:31 PM Tab 3: Presentation by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
12:00:43 PM John Paul Fraites, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
12:11:38 PM Questions:

12:11:46 PM Chair Truenow
12:11:59 PM John Paul Fraites
12:12:21 PM Chair Truenow
12:12:56 PM John Paul Fraites
12:13:50 PM Senator Burton
12:14:03 PM John Paul Fraites
12:14:29 PM Senator Burton
12:14:37 PM Chair Truenow thanks John Paul Fraites
12:15:36 PM Chair Truenow makes closing remarks
12:15:53 PM Senator Rouson moves to adjourn
12:16:04 PM Meeting Adjourned
12:16:11 PM
12:16:11 PM



THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

SENATOR ERIN GRALL
29th District

COMMITTEES:
Education Postsecondary, *Chair*
Agriculture
Appropriations
Appropriations Committee on Agriculture,
Environment, and General Government
Appropriations Committee on Transportation,
Tourism, and Economic Development
Education Pre-K-12
Ethics and Elections

SELECT COMMITTEE:
Select Committee on Resiliency

JOINT COMMITTEE:
Joint Administrative Procedures Committee

February 10, 2025

Dear Chair Truenow,

I respectfully request an excused absence from the Committee on Agriculture on February 11, 2025 at 11:00am.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Erin K. Grall".

Senator Erin Grall
Florida Senate, District 29

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Chair Truenow".

REPLY TO:

- ☐ 3209 Virginia Avenue, Suite A149, Fort Pierce, Florida 34981 (772) 595-1398
- ☐ 306 Senate Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5029

Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

KATHLEEN PASSIDOMO
President of the Senate

DENNIS BAXLEY
President Pro Tempore