



Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership
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Resolution: 3-2020
September 24, 2020

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING CITIZENS HAVING OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE ON
MANATEE COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION FUNDING**

WHEREAS, the Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership (CHNEP) encompasses parts or all of ten counties and twenty-seven cities in Central and Southwest Florida as well as state and federal entities that work collaboratively guided by the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) to protect water and wildlife in the region - including those that are in Manatee County; and

WHEREAS, the ballot language is whether “to finance the acquisition, improvement, and management of land to protect drinking water sources and water quality, preserve fish and wildlife habitat, prevent stormwater runoff pollution, and provide parks, shall Manatee County levy an additional 0.15 mill ad valorem tax and issue general obligation bonds in a total principal amount not exceeding \$50,000,000, maturing within 20 years, bearing interest not exceeding the legal rate, payable from such ad valorem taxes, with annual public audits”; and

WHEREAS, the proposed land acquisition and management funding would support implementation of the CHNEP’s CCMP Objectives for Water Quality Improvement WQ-3: Reduce urban stormwater and agricultural runoff pollution, and Fish Wildlife and Habitat Protection FW-2: Protect, restore, and monitor environmentally sensitive lands and waterways including critical habitat areas, as well as the Habitat Restoration Needs plan for the Manatee County area; and

WHEREAS, the new ballot measure bonds would cost the average Manatee homeowner \$2.40 a month or \$29 per year to conserve lands that protect drinking water sources, protect the water quality of bays, rivers, and creeks, prevent polluted runoff, preserve fish and wildlife habitat, provide natural floodwater storage to help reduce flooding, conserve natural areas, provide parks, and manage environmentally significant lands and parks.; and

WHEREAS, the total economic impact of natural resources in Manatee County within the CHNEP area is approximately \$299.7 million annually, with the primary economic driver in the county being natural resource-based recreation primarily tourism; and

WHEREAS, conserving additional lands will also contribute to increased spending on resource-based recreation and provide an even greater economic impact for Manatee County (as evidenced in the recent CHNEP Economic Valuation Study), as well as protect its environment and quality of life;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COASTAL & HEARTLAND NATIONAL ESTUARY PARTNERSHIP ON THIS 24th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2020 THAT:

The Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership supports the value of environmental land acquisition programs for implementation of its strategic goals, and the opportunity for citizens being able to vote on added land conservation and management funding in Manatee County.