

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT
OF
Florida Forever Resolution**

WHEREAS The Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. is committed to protecting lands critical to the future of Florida's drinking water, economy, and quality of life; and

WHEREAS The Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. represents approximately 15,000 members; 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 \$3 billion tourism industry; and

WHEREAS Florida Forever has acquired more than 600,000 acres throughout Florida since 2000 and allocates \$300 million annually to purchase environmentally sensitive and other lands; and

WHEREAS Early in 2008 the Florida Legislature approved unanimously, and Governor Crist signed into law, a measure that authorizes Florida Forever for 10 more years at \$300 million annually, and at the same time the Legislature approved \$300 million in the next State budget for Florida Forever; and

WHEREAS An additional two million acres of key conservation land are necessary to protect according to The Nature Conservancy; and

WHEREAS Florida Forever's annual \$300 million has not increased in 18 years and will not grow under the new law, thus the effectiveness of Florida Forever has diminished due to escalating land prices and the impacts of inflation; and

WHEREAS Virtually all of the funding for the Florida Forever program through the Fiscal Year 2009–2010 is already obligated to or anticipated for planned land purchases, leaving practically no funding for new conservation projects for the next two years; and

WHEREAS Responsibility for the conservation of Florida's most important natural places is a daily obligation, and the Florida Forever Coalition continues to support actively the expansion and improvement of Florida Forever, and will do so before and during the Regular Session of the 2009 Florida Legislature, and

WHEREAS Future opportunities and costs to protect Florida's significant resources will only increase in the future.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the Board of Directors of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. meeting in regular session, September 17 -18, 2008 in Winter Park, Florida, representing the membership of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. urges the 2009 Florida Legislature to enact legislation to enhance and expand the Florida Forever program.

Margaret "Cinny" O'Donnell

September 17, 2008

President

Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

