

Conservation Land Acquisition Management Program

FAQ

We want to thank for participating in the conservation planning process for Nassau County. Your input will help the county determine what kind of conservation lands they should invest in for Nassau County's future. Please take the time to review the webinar, which will give a comprehensive review of the conservation planning process and the resources the public is being asked to consider. A copy of the Powerpoint is also available for reference.

Finally, if you have any questions, many concerns are addressed in the Frequently Asked Questions here. If you still have questions, feel free to contact county planning staff at planninginfo@nassaucountyfl.com.

The survey is only open until May 12th, so please provide your input before then.

Q: How many people participated in the webinar?

A: 66 people were live participants in the webinar, though members of the Nassau County public who did not make it are still invited to participate in the survey.

Q: Is there any opportunity to successfully preserve the 50 acres next to Amelia Island State Park that is currently privately owned?

A: There is always opportunity with undeveloped private lands, though the purpose of the conservation planning process is to give the county tools to compare properties like the one mentioned to other opportunities, and make decisions on which properties are best for the program based on the public and experts input.

Q: Thank you Marc for all this information and the opportunity to participate!

A: Thank you for participating!

Q: I want to be sure that Amelia Island/Fernandina Beach gets its fair share of "County" conservation initiatives. Could you possibly let me know the answers to the questions in the survey that would be most advantageous to the island? I am not sure I really understood the implications of many of the selections.

A: The purpose of the process chosen for input was to specifically avoid prioritizing one area of the county over the other unless the quality and quantity of natural resources themselves created the priority. Never fear, when ranking those resources in the survey, the resources are represented in ALL PORTIONS OF THE COUNTY. But the purpose of this exercise is to make informed decisions not based on political boundaries (eastern Nassau County versus west ern Nassau County) but on the natural resources themselves.

Conservation Land Acquisition Management Program

FAQ

Q: Are City of Fernandina Beach residents included in the survey polling or is it solely for County residents?

A: Citizens of Fernandina Beach ARE also citizens of Nassau County. So yes, all citizens of the county, or within municipalities within the county, are encouraged to take part.

Q: What is the relationship between CLAM and the County Economic Development?

A: The Conservation Land Acquisition and Management Program (CLAM) is currently being planned by the Planning and Economic Opportunity Department of Nassau County, in consultation with North Florida Land Trust. However, once the planning process is over, responsibility for decisions about which lands to buy will be most likely made by some form of committee or advisory board which uses the criteria established in the conservation plan – though the specific details on process and composition are being studied now.

Q: How can we slow down development to better protect natural resources?

A: Generally speaking, you should talk with your Commissioners about what is important to you. However, the goal of the CLAM isn't necessary to slow down development but increase the pace of conservation.

Q: What happens to development in the flood plain and sea level rise predictions?

A: Generally speaking, and assuming no other preventive action is taken – they become inundated.

Q: How will the information collected from the survey be integrated with the current Parks & Recreation Master Plan that Nassau County is working on?

A: The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a study of the kind of ACTIVE park facilities the county needs in the future, where active parks are defined as facility intensive parks – think baseball fields, swimming pools, playgrounds, and very little natural areas. The CLAM focuses on PASSIVE parks and conservation areas, where the primary purpose is the setting aside of vital natural resources, and while some limited facilities may be present (trailheads, bathrooms, trails and boat launches), the parks look very different. While different assessments and processes, the consultants for both projects are sharing their observations and findings in case there is useful information for either party.

Q: Can anyone take this survey even if they did not listen to this live webinar? I would like to share with my neighbors.

A: Of course – a recording of the webinar is posted on the Nassau County website (<https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/933/Conservation-Lands>) for them to catch up and participate.

Conservation Land Acquisition Management Program

FAQ

Q&A: Multiple questions were submitted indicating a specific need in a specific place. In this process we avoid questions regarding that much specificity because doing so often overemphasizes the wishes of the one participant over the needs of maybe of thousands of non-participating members of the county. However, if you care about boat ramps (for example), trails, or specific natural resources, such as one specific kind of habitat, or one particular stream, we encourage you to think about it in terms of the survey questions provided. While we don't allow for considerations of a particular boat ramp in a particular place, there is a question emphasizing paddling trails. While we don't identify one kind of habitat for preservation, we do emphasize declining and rare habitats.

Q: Will there be any new employment opportunities anticipated for this program?

A: Conservation Lands, generally speaking, need caretakers, in the form of foresters, biologists, facilities maintenance staff and more. And companies that encourage use of conserved lands, such as kayak guides, outfitters, and more are expected to benefit. However, communities which are proactive in conserving their natural resources have also shown to have better economies over time. We encourage you to read the following report from our partners at the Trust for Public Land:

https://www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/cloud.tpl.org/pubs/benefits_econbenefits_landconservation.pdf

Q: How long will this whole process take? I understand that a petition will go on the November Ballot. Then what? Since it is critical that conservation land be acquired sooner rather than later, I fear that some of that land could be purchased by the cadre of eager developers ready to pounce. Or are those properties on reserve for a certain period of time?

A: The reason we are developing the plan ahead of the ballot is so the program can be ready shortly afterwards. That said, while the ballot is spurring the timelines, the purpose of the CLAM is to guide the county in acquisitions NO MATTER THE SOURCE OF FUNDS. So, even if the ballot item does not pass, other potential funding sources the county may develop will ideally be led by the CLAM Plan.