



What is Alachua County Forever?

Alachua County Forever (ACF) is the County's land conservation program. The program works with willing landowners to protect environmentally significant and agriculturally important lands by: 1. Acquiring or purchasing land and managing and restoring land as nature preserves; and, 2. Partnering with landowners to protect land through conservation easements (CEs). While this 1-page guide covers CEs, our nomination form on the next page can be used to nominate a property for land purchase/acquisition or a CE.

Alachua County Forever offers conservation easements (CEs) and agricultural conservation easements (ACEs). Both are voluntary deed restrictions that landowners place on their property to protect important resources by limiting certain uses. Easements provide benefits to landowners while conserving land, water, and cultural resources. Agricultural conservation easements are a subset of easements designed to keep land available for farming. CEs are flexible documents tailored to each property and the needs of landowners. They can cover either an entire parcel or portions of a property.

How do Conservation Easements work?

CEs permanently protect land while keeping the land in private ownership. CEs limit subdivision, intensive development, and uses that are inconsistent with the purposes of the easement. In an easement sale, landowners receive the proceeds. An easement's value is typically the fair market value of the property minus the value of any deed restrictions the landowner puts in place. Landowners often use these funds to expand or repair buildings or structures; buy equipment; buy additional land; pay down debt; adopt conservation practices; finance retirement or other family needs; and/or facilitate the transfer of the land to a successor. Landowners retain title to the property and can restrict public access, use it as collateral for a loan, or sell their land. CEs allow lots to be reserved for family members. Typically, lots must be reasonably sized; 1 to 2 acres is common. ACEs often permit development related to the farm and the construction of farm buildings.

What are the benefits of Conservation Easements?

Conservation easements are designed in collaboration to:

- Achieve goals such as wildlife conservation, protection of local agriculture, and financial benefits to landowners.
- Permanently protect land while keeping the property on the tax rolls to support local economic resilience.
- Be flexible documents tailored to meet the needs of individual landowners and unique properties.
- Provide landowners with financial benefits in the case of an easement sale as well as tax reductions.
- Allow the landowner to help decide which activities should be limited to protect specific resources.
- Permit structures but may restrict them to a designated building area or an impervious surface area.
- Help landowners, farmers, and ranchers transfer their land to the next generation.
- Provide benefits to the environment and local community by protecting soil and water resources.
- Ensure that future owners will uphold conservation values in perpetuity.

History

The citizens of Alachua County authorized the Alachua County Forever (ACF) Program by referendum in 2000. Voters then reauthorized funding with the Wild Spaces & Public Places referendum in 2008, 2016, and again in 2022, providing funding through surtax proceeds. In 2024, ACF expanded protection of farmland through the Agricultural Land Protection Strategy and its focus on agricultural conservation easements. The Land Conservation Board and the Agricultural Land Conservation Board represent citizen voices in the program and serve to review lands nominated for conservation easements.

To nominate a property, find our 1-page form online at: alachuacountyforever.us or turn the page!

Questions? Please contact: Alachua County Land Conservation

Office Phone: 352-264-6868 | Fax: 352-264-6852 | Email: landconservation@alachuacounty.us



Alachua County Forever | Property Nomination Form



Please return form via email, fax, or mail:

Email: landconservation@alachuacounty.us | **Fax:** (352) 264 6852

Mail: Alachua County Land Conservation, 14 NE 1st Street, Gainesville, FL 32601

Applicant Information (Note: Anyone can nominate a property for this program.)

Name: _____ **Address, City, State, Zip:** _____ **Phone:** _____

Signature: _____ **Email:** _____

Property Owner Information (Please share all known details.)

Owner Name(s): _____ **Owner's Authorized Agent (if applicable):** _____

Address, City, State, Zip: _____ **Address, City, State, Zip:** _____

Phone: _____ **Phone:** _____

Email: _____ **Email:** _____

Property Description (Please share all known details.)

Describe the property's significance, natural resources, agricultural resources, scenic beauty, wildlife habitat etc.

(In addition to this form, up to 15 pages may be attached. Providing supplemental information is optional but may assist staff with property evaluation. Examples: Map with the property outlined; photos; description of resources, etc.)

Property Information (Please share all known details.)

Location (address, intersection, etc.): _____ **Multiparcel project?** **YES** **NO** (Include parcel #s or map)

Tax Parcel Acreage: _____ **Section/Township/Range:** _____

Proposed Project Acreage: _____ **Future Land Use Map Designation:** _____

Tax Parcel Number(s): _____ **Zoning Designation:** _____

Property Owner Verification & Signature (If submitting as an owner; otherwise, no signature necessary.)

Does the applicant have any property ownership interest
in the project?

YES **NO**

Is this a proposed conservation easement
(agricultural or other) project?

YES **NO**

By signing, I, as a property owner, authorize County staff to visit the property upon reasonable notice for purposes of conducting necessary review to determine eligibility of the property. Only a property's owner may authorize access.

Owner Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Please Do Not Write Below This Line. Staff Use Only.

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|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Time/Date Stamp: | Received By: | Application Number: |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|