



December 21, 2022

Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative
P.O. Box 787
Hobe Sound, FL 33475

Re: Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative

To Whom It May Concern:

Since our founding in 1986, 1000 Friends of Florida has included protecting critical natural lands among our top priorities. While we are a statewide organization, we have also devoted particular attention to defending the environment and quality of life in Martin County, the home of our late co-founder, Nathaniel Reed. So we are especially pleased to endorse the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative, with its goal of creating a permanently protected corridor of almost 70,000 undeveloped acres between the sources of the Loxahatchee and St. Lucie rivers.

This critical corridor is facing increasing development pressure as the population of Martin County continues to grow. Acquiring land or development rights from willing sellers for conservation will safeguard habitat for plants and wildlife, enhance outdoor recreational opportunities for county residents and visitors, and prevent sprawling development. It will improve water quality, reduce flooding and lessen saltwater intrusion into groundwater. It will maintain a connection between two popular public recreation areas, Jonathan Dickinson and Atlantic Ridge State Parks. It will preserve the green gateway along Bridge Road to Hobe Sound and Jupiter Island. These and other significant benefits will help protect Martin County's rural character, healthy economy and high quality of life for future generations.

There is a laudable history in Martin County of successful privately led conservation efforts, epitomized by the Reed Family. We salute the Guardians of Martin County, The Conservation Fund and the Treasured Lands Foundation for upholding this tradition through the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative. We believe this effort not only deserves enthusiastic private support, but also matching funding from federal and state programs, including Florida Forever, with corresponding goals.

1000 Friends of Florida is proud to offer our enthusiastic endorsement of the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Owens".

Paul Owens
President

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