



P.O. Box 233 • Stuart, FL 34995-0233

November 25, 2020

Subject: Loxa-Lucie Headwaters

To Whom it May Concern:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Martin County Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society, I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters conservation initiative.

The acquisition and transfer of privately-owned properties into conservation ownership and management will conserve native plant communities and protect the ecological corridor between the Atlantic Ridge Preserve State Park and Jonathan Dickinson State Park. These conservation lands are currently bisected by Bridge Road and are vulnerable to further impacts as a result of development pressure from surrounding areas.

The mosaic of low pine flatwoods, depression marshes, wet prairies, mixed upland forests, cypress domes and ruderal communities within the project provide habitat for a high diversity of plant and animal life, including a number of plant species that are designated by the State of Florida as Endangered, Threatened or Commercially Exploited. Additionally, these areas serve as hydrologic feeder areas for the South Fork of the St. Lucie River and through Kitching Creek to the Loxahatchee River, Florida's first designated Wild and Scenic River. Bringing privately-owned lands into conservation management will allow hydrologic restoration to take place and encourage the removal of invasive pest plants, two activities that will benefit native plant and animal communities.

The purpose of the Florida Native Plant Society is to preserve, conserve and restore the native plants and native plant communities of Florida, and we support the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters project because it contributes directly to this mission.

Sincerely,

Linda K. Eastman
President