



## BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AGENDA REQUEST

**DATE:** April 5, 2016  
**TO:** Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board  
**FROM:** Rick Owen  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution supporting wildflowers  
**DEPARTMENT:** County Administrator  
**BCC DISTRICT:** All

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**STATEMENT OF ISSUE:** Staff requests Board approval of a resolution encouraging conservation of wildflowers and exploration of other activities to promote roadside wildflower growth.

**BACKGROUND:** The purpose of the resolution is to create a partnership between Okaloosa County and the Florida Department of Transportation to maintain and enhance existing roadside populations of native wildflowers and to implement and maintain future plantings.

Funding for this program is provided by proceeds from the sale of the Florida Wildflower License Plate.

Okaloosa County is part of FDOT District Three. Of the sixteen counties in the district, nine have already adopted a County Wildflower Resolution by approval of their County Commissioners. These counties include: Walton, Washington, Calhoun, Leon, Franklin, Gadsden, Wakulla, Holmes and Jefferson.

Okaloosa County citizens would work with FDOT to identify existing roadway populations of wildflowers for reduced mowing regimens, and would select other roadways for new plantings and enrichment. The following is a link to the website for the Florida Wildflowers Foundation which contains information on the project with FDOT: [www.flawildflowers.org](http://www.flawildflowers.org)  
<<http://www.flawildflowers.org>>

Agreements from local Garden Clubs, Master Gardeners, Civic Organizations and private citizens that using native plants on roadways would be beneficial in many ways including, but not limited to:

- Beautification
- Reduced mowing and manpower costs
- Tourism
- Enhancement of natural corridors for migrating fauna
- Increase in native pollinator species

A county resolution would support H.R.2738 - Highways Bettering the Economy and Environment Pollinator Protection Act (better known as the "The Bee Act")

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of a resolution encouraging conservation of wildflowers and exploration of other activities to promote roadside wildflower growth.

  
Rick Owen, Administrative Manager 3/28/2016

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

  
John Hofstad, County Administrator 3/30/2016

**APPROVED BY:**

**John Hofstad, County Administrator**

**Resolution 16 – \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS OF OKALOOSA COUNTY;  
ENCOURAGING THE CONSERVATION OF  
ROADSIDE NATIVE WILDFLOWERS ON STATE  
AND COUNTY ROADWAYS; DIRECTING STAFF  
TO EXPLORE VARIOUS PARTNERSHIPS TO  
ADDRESS ROADSIDE MANAGEMENT  
PRACTICES THAT WILL INCREASE THE  
VISIBILITY AND ENJOYMENT OF FLORIDA  
NATIVE WILDFLOWERS; PROVIDING AN  
EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**Whereas**, the natural beauty of native wildflowers in Okaloosa County can be enjoyed by everyone; can attract guests, and benefit commerce, environmental health, and public well-being; and

**Whereas**, enjoyment of native wildflowers is an occasion for all Okaloosa County and community leaders to unite for the benefit of everyone; and

**Whereas**, many naturally beautiful species of native wildflowers, including Coreopsis, the state wildflower, as depicted upon the State Wildflower license tag, are already prominently displayed along Okaloosa state and county roadways; and

**Whereas**, increasing the visibility of native wildflowers in Okaloosa County is consistent with the vision of the Comprehensive Plan, and goals of many individuals, businesses, and community-based organizations; and;

**Whereas**, the presence of native wildflowers is essential to the fitness of native pollinator species necessary for productive and profitable farms and forests; and

**Whereas**, in the spring of 1513, Juan Ponce de Leon named this beautiful place La Florida, Land of Flowers, because of the wealth of native wildflowers; and

**Whereas**, it is desirable and attainable to experience the beauty of many more native wildflowers by reducing the frequency and extent of roadside mowing.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** as follows:

1. The Board of County Commissioners of Okaloosa County Florida, do hereby commit and encourage others to commit to the conservation of roadside native wildflowers on state and county roadways, and directs County staff to explore various partnerships with the Florida Department of Transportation and adjoining property owners to address roadside management practices that will increase the visibility and enjoyment of Florida native wildflowers.
2. This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA**

\_\_\_\_\_  
CHARLES K. WINDES, JR., CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

J. D. PEACOCK, II  
Clerk of the Circuit Court

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk  
(Seal)

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gregory T. Stewart  
County Attorney

**From:** [Mary Ann Friedman](#)  
**To:** [Rick Owen](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Citizen Request to Introduce Wildflower Resolution for Okaloosa County  
**Date:** Monday, March 07, 2016 8:51:27 PM

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Dear Mr. Owen,

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you need any information materials or brochures from other Florida Counties that have enacted the Wildflower Resolution with FDOT I can drop them off at the offices. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
MaryAnn Friedman

807 Weeden Island Drive  
Niceville, FL 32578  
850-729-2893 home  
850-496-6846 cell

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From: rowen@co.okaloosa.fl.us  
To: marsabones@hotmail.com  
CC: smack@co.okaloosa.fl.us  
Subject: RE: Citizen Request to Introduce Wildflower Resolution for Okaloosa County  
Date: Mon, 7 Mar 2016 17:53:12 +0000

Ms. Friedman – I will bring your request to the County Administrator and let you know if a resolution of this type is permissible and if so, the soonest date we can bring the document before the Board.

Thanks,

Rick

**Rick Owen**

Administrative Manager  
RESTORE Act Coordinator  
Okaloosa County Administrator's Office  
850-651-7515 (office)  
850-855-0589 (cell)

"Please note: Due to Florida's very broad public records laws, most written communications to or from County employees regarding County business are public records, available to the public and media upon request. Therefore, this written e-mail communication, including your e-mail address, may be subject to public disclosure."

**From:** Mary Ann Friedman [<mailto:marsabones@hotmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 27, 2016 11:12 AM  
**To:** Sandi Mack <[smack@co.okaloosa.fl.us](mailto:smack@co.okaloosa.fl.us)>  
**Cc:** Mary Ann Friedman <[marsabones@hotmail.com](mailto:marsabones@hotmail.com)>  
**Subject:** Citizen Request to Introduce Wildflower Resolution for Okaloosa County

Dear Sandy,

I am sending this letter to you to be forwarded to Rick Owen for his consideration and instruction on how to proceed. It concerns the possibility of introducing a Wildflower Resolution for Okaloosa County to the Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners. Please find attached a proposed/model resolution.

The purpose of the resolution is to create a partnership between Okaloosa County and the Florida Department of Transportation to maintain and enhance existing roadside populations of native wildflowers and to implement and maintain future plantings.

Funding for this program is provided by proceeds from the sale of the Florida Wildflower License Plate.

Our County is part of FDOT District Three. Of the sixteen counties in our district, nine have already adopted a County Wildflower Resolution by approval of their County Commissioners. They are Walton, Washington, Calhoun, Leon, Franklin, Gadsden, Wakulla, Holmes and Jefferson Counties.

Okaloosa County citizens would work with FDOT to identify existing roadway populations of wildflowers for reduced mowing regimens, and would select other roadways for new plantings and enrichment. Here is the website for the Florida Wildflowers Foundation which contains information on the project with FDOT: [www.flawildflowers.org](http://www.flawildflowers.org)

In our county we can rely on agreement from local Garden Clubs, Master Gardeners, Civic Organizations and private citizens that using native plants on our roadways would be beneficial in many ways including, but not limited to:

- Beautification
- Reduced mowing and manpower costs
- Tourism
- Enhancement of natural corridors for migrating fauna
- Increase in native pollinator species

A county resolution would support H.R.2738 - Highways Bettering the Economy and Environment Pollinator Protection Act <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/2738> better known as "The Bee Act."

As you know, several new road projects are underway in our county which, when completed, could be enhanced by the addition of swaths of beautiful wildflowers. FDOT will only consider adding wildflower plantings in counties which have a resolution in place. The process for requesting planting areas for consideration is described in the attached file, FDOT Wildflower Management Program provided to me by Dustie Moss, District Landscape Project Manager.

I await your instructions and am looking forward to being able to work with all parties to put this proposal before the Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners.

Sincerely,  
MaryAnn Friedman  
807 Weeden Island drive  
Niceville, FL 32578  
850-720-2893 home  
850-496-6846 cell