

NEWS RELEASE

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POLK COUNTY BUILDERS ASSOCIATION AND PARTNERS RECEIVE GRANT TO PROMOTE FLORIDA-FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING

Polk IS Florida-Friendly Program Funding from Water Management District and Alafia, Hillsborough and Peace River Basin Boards

Lakeland, Florida – (October 15, 2008) – The Polk County Builders Association (PCBA) and several partners in Polk County have been awarded a cooperative funding grant for 2009-2010 for **Polk IS Florida-Friendly**, a program promoting greater public awareness of our fragile environment and resources issues, giving interested citizens and organizations a venue to participate in viable environmental solutions. The program will kick off at the Water, Wings & Wild Things Polk NatureFest 2008 on November 1.

The goal of this program is to teach and promote landscape best management practices (BMPs) and the Florida Yards & Neighborhoods (FYN) program's nine Florida-friendly landscaping principles through education outreach to all stakeholders in Polk County, including homeowners, builders and developers, schools and government employees within the county. The nine Florida-friendly landscaping principles are designed to educate the public on ways we can all help to protect and conserve water – our most precious natural resource.

The PCBA will work closely with Polk County Natural Resources and Utility Departments, the City of Lakeland, the City of Winter Haven, the City of Haines City, Polk County Florida Yards & Neighborhoods and the Friends of the Parks on a range of educational presentations, demonstration sites and development and distribution of educational materials.

“Our association members and our grant partners all recognize the need to promote the wise use of Florida-friendly landscaping,” said PCBA President Tim Davis. “This grant

will permit us to communicate this important information throughout the county in a variety of ways.”

The grant will help underwrite costs associated with the production of a printed guide of Florida-Friendly yards and demonstration landscape sites throughout Polk County; an illustrated list of plants most suited to the county; a companion electronic presentation and DVD for use in workshops and at community events throughout the year. All materials produced under this grant will be distributed free of charge. Municipalities and other interested groups will be provided with the electronic version to use on their websites.

“We are grateful to the Southwest Florida Water Management District and Basin Boards of the Alafia, Hillsborough and Peace rivers for awarding this grant,” said Davis.

Chartered by the National Association of Homebuilders in 1952, the Polk County Builders Association is a construction industry organization comprised of builder and associate members. PCBA promotes quality and affordable housing for the citizens of Polk County while creating a favorable and prosperous business climate for its members.