



COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FORM

The Board of County Commissioners meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month in the Columbia County School Board Administrative Complex Auditorium, 372 West Duval Street, Lake City, Florida 32055. The first meeting of every month is at 9:30AM while the second meeting of every month takes place at 5:30PM. All agenda items are due in the Board's office one week prior to the meeting date.

Today's Date: 2/10/2023 Meeting Date: 2/16/2023

Name: Jennifer (Goff) Daniels Department: Economic Development

Approved By:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "J. Daniels", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

1. Nature and purpose of agenda item:

Approve the resolution requesting the redesignation of the North Central Florida Rural Area of Opportunity (RAO) and continuation of the North Florida Economic Development Partnership (NFEDP) as the regional organization identified to continue to promote and improve economic development within the region.

2. Recommended Motion/Action:

Adopt Resolution 2023R-11 approving the redesignation of the North Central Florida RAO

3. Fiscal impact on current budget.

This item has no effect on the current budget.

DATE: February 10 2023

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Jennifer Daniels, Economic Development Specialist

RE: 2023 Rural Area of Opportunity Re-designation

Attached for your review and approval is Resolution 2023R-11; a resolution requesting the re-designation of the North Central Florida Rural Area of Opportunity RAO) as first identified by Governor Jeb Bush in 2003 as well as the continuation of the North Florida Economic Development Partnership (NFEDP) as the regional organization identified to work in partnership to promote and improve economic development within the North Central Florida Region.

Please note - The North Central Florida Rural Area of Opportunity designation expires June 11, 2023.

RESOLUTION 2023R-11

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF COLUMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA, EXPRESSING ITS SUPPORT THAT THE DESIGNATION OF RURAL AREA OF OPPORTUNITY (RAO) CONTINUE TO APPLY TO THE NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA REGION INCORPORATING BAKER, BRADFORD, COLUMBIA, DIXIE, GILCHRIST, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, LAFAYETTE, LEVY, MADISON, PUTNAM, SUWANNEE, TAYLOR, AND UNION COUNTIES (INCLUDING THE CITIES, TOWNS AND COMMUNITIES WITHIN EACH); AND, THE CONTINUATION OF ALL REGIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT FUNDING FOR THE NORTH FLORIDA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP (NFEDP) THROUGH FUNDS APPROPRIATED BY THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE AND ADMINISTERED THROUGH THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE NO LATER THAN JUNE 15, 2023.

WHEREAS, in 2003 Governor Jeb Bush, by executive order, identified fourteen counties (Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor, and Union) as one of the three Rural Areas of Opportunity (RAO), and that this designation was renewed in 2008; and again in 2013; and again in 2018; and

WHEREAS, the North Florida Economic Development Partnership (NFEDP) was created as the regional organization to work in cooperation with the 14 counties to promote and improve economic development throughout the North Central Florida region; and

WHEREAS, various counties and municipalities in the NFEDP's region request that Governor Ron DeSantis renew this designation as a Rural Area of Opportunity; and

WHEREAS, the NFEDP, in cooperation with and through the support of the 14 counties, all municipalities with the 14 counties, all Local Workforce Development Boards serving the region, and corporate sector partners, has made great strides in improving the economic outlook for the North Central Florida RAO by assisting with recruiting new industries, supporting infrastructure projects and working together with local communities and other organizations such as Enterprise Florida, DEO, DEP, FDOT, and the Governor's Office; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the progress that has been made since 2018, there is still much work that needs to be done to help these fourteen counties and the region strategically plan and actually compete for economic development projects, and to retain and expand existing businesses to generate jobs and wealth in the region.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Columbia County Board of County Commissioners does hereby express its support of the following:

1. That the designation of the North Central Florida Rural Area of Opportunity (RAO) continue to apply to Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor, and Union counties; and
2. The continuation of all Regional Rural Development Grant funding be continued and expanded for the North Central Florida Economic Development Partnership (NFEDP) through funds appropriated by the Florida Legislature and administered through the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Enterprise Florida, Inc., and/or other designated agencies.

DULY ADOPTED this 16th day February 2023.

COLUMBIA COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ATTEST:

By: _____
(Name of Clerk), Clerk of Court

By: _____
(Name of BOCC), Chair