

Item Title: Acquisition of the Perry Property through the County's Open Space Program

Specific Action Requested:
That the Board of Commissioners:

- 1. Authorizes the County Manager to execute contracts (along with any other supporting documentation) to purchase the Perry property at 7712 Mitchell Mill Road in Zebulon subject to terms and conditions acceptable to the County Attorney; and**
- 2. Appropriates \$1,104,500 of PGROS Bond Funding and \$265,500 of NCDOT 540 Settlement funding for contribution to the Open Space purchase.**

Item Summary:

Purpose: The Board of Commissioners approves all County real estate transactions and appropriates all expenditures.

Background: One goal of the 2018 Parks Greenways Recreation & Open Space bond was to continue the County's efforts toward open space preservation. To this end, staff put forward an open space Request for Proposals (RFP) in 2019 to solicit responses from interested landowners. Forty target acquisitions were presented to the Board of Commissioners at their October 26, 2020, work session.

The approximately 91-acre Perry property is located on Fowlers Mill Creek, a tributary of the Little River in Northeast Wake County. The property is almost completely forested and has a large wetland area associated with the downstream Penny Hill Lake. Conservation of this property would serve to protect water quality in Little River.

The Perry family has agreed to sell the property for \$1,328,000, or \$14,593 per acre; this value is supported by an appraisal by Carter Kennemur, CCIM, a NC General Appraiser. Due diligence costs add approximately \$42,000 brings the total acquisition cost to \$1,370,000.

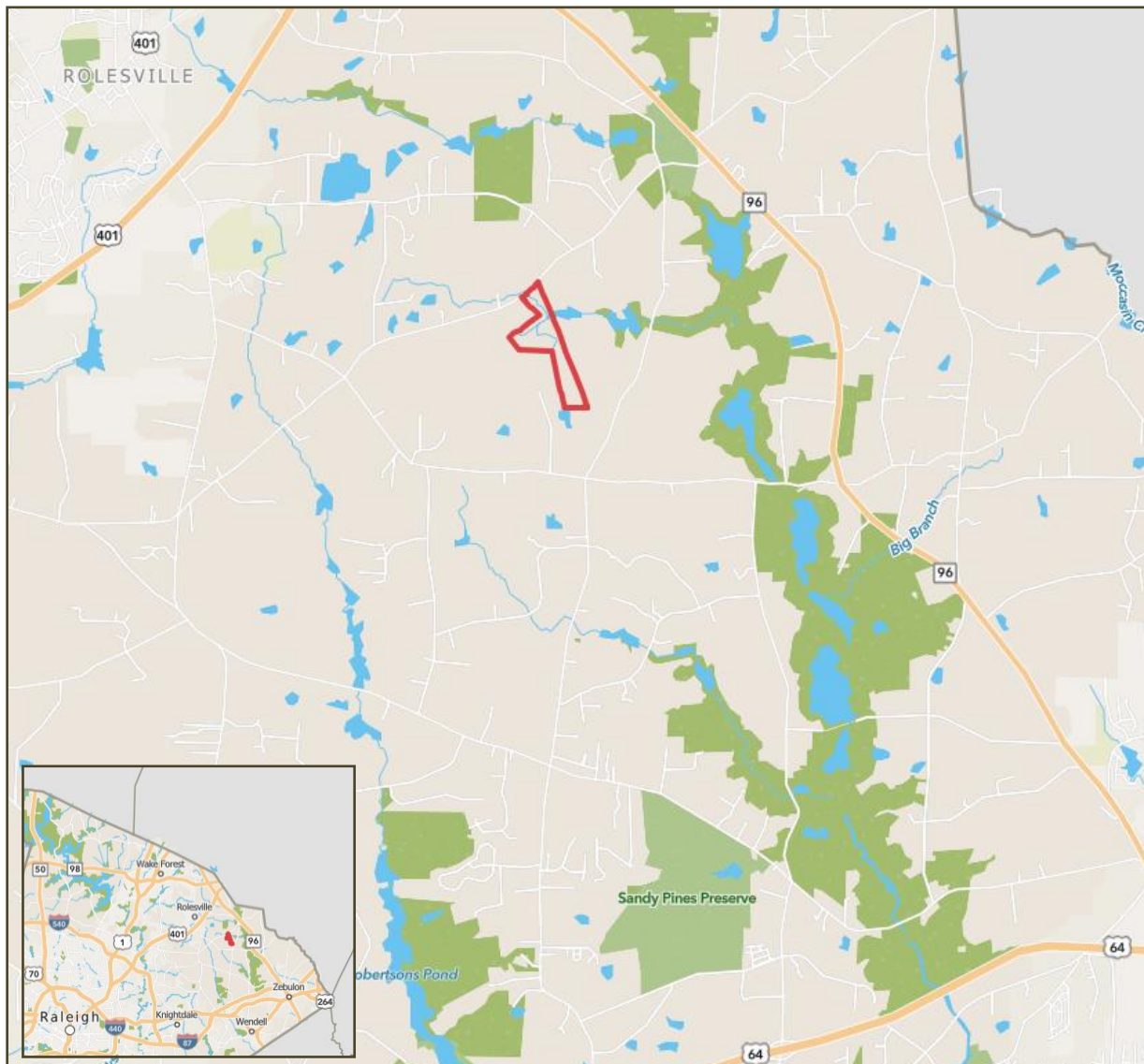
Board Goal: This action supports Growth and Sustainability Goal 4: Preserve open space and expand access to parks, preserves, recreation resources, and greenways.

Fiscal Impact: The total project cost, including acquisition, surveying, and due diligence is \$1,370,000; of this amount, \$1,104,500 will be appropriated from the PGROS bonds set aside for Future Open Space, with the remaining \$265,500 appropriated from the NCDOT I-540 settlement funding.

Additional Information:

The successful 2018 Parks Greenways Recreation & Open Space bond reserved approximately \$20 million to continue the County's efforts toward open space preservation. In 2019, County staff put forward an open space Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit responses from landowners interested in preserving their property. From over two hundred responses, staff presented approximately 40 target acquisitions to the Board of Commissioners at their October 26, 2020, work session.

Little River has been a priority target area for open space acquisition since the County's program began in 2000. This priority stems from the water supply watershed designation the lands in the basin have and the future drinking water reservoir planned by the City of Raleigh. The Little River and its tributaries are also home to several threatened and endangered species that call the watershed home. The approximately 91-acre Perry property is located on Fowlers Mill Creek, a tributary of the Little River.



The property is forested after having been timbered in 1997 due to damage from Hurricane Fran the previous year. Two formerly open fields on the south end of the property were planted in pine about 2005. The property also contains a large wetland area associated with the upper reaches of Penny Hill Lake. A much larger Penny Hill Lake covered part of this property from the late 1940's until September 1996. Hurricane Fran's rain breached the original larger dam on family land to the east. The dam was subsequently repaired, but the resulting lake surface was smaller; forest succession has been reclaiming the some of the former lake. Conservation of this property would serve to protect water quality in Little River.



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The Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee (OSAPAC) reviewed this acquisition at its February 28, 2022, meeting and voted unanimously to forward the item to the Board of Commissioners for their consideration.

Attachments:

1. CIP Budget Memo – FY 2023 County Capital - PGROS
2. OS Bond and NC DOT Funding Tracker