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(850) 488-3831
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620 South Meridian Street
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32399-1600
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April 28, 2020

Mr. Brad Richardson
Department of Environmental Protection
Division of State Lands
Bureau of Public Land Administration
3800 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000

Re: Proposed Gulf Power Company (Gulf Power) new overhead 161 kV transmission line (the North Florida Resiliency Connection Line) – Columbia County to Jackson County – Application for Permanent Linear Facility Easement across a portion of the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (BOT) Land – Joe Budd Wildlife Management Area (Joe Budd WMA)

Dear Mr. Richardson:

Gulf Power requests a permanent linear facility easement (permanent easement) totaling 0.264 acres, MOL (11,488 sq. ft.) within the eastern boundary of the BOT-owned and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)-managed Joe Budd WMA (BOT Lease #3949) between the CFX Railroad right-of-way on the west and U. S. 90 to the east. The Ochlockonee River, at the southern end, serves as the base (16 ft. wide) of a triangular easement area that would parallel U. S. 90 just outside of its right-of-way, running northwest for approximately 1,000 feet to a point (see attached). The easement area would contain either 2 or 3 monopoles.

Gulf Power states the proposed transmission line is needed to connect its system with its sister utility company, Florida Power and Light's system. The line will run between Columbia County and Jackson County and is to be designed to "harden the power grid against storms".

In its locational analysis, Gulf Power determined that following I-10 through the Tallahassee area was not feasible for various reasons. This then necessitated the line to run south of Tallahassee, following the Florida Gas Transmission natural gas pipeline and a City of Tallahassee overhead electric line to within about 0.5 miles of the desired easement location. From that point, the line would run on the south side of U. S. 90 to and across the Ochlockonee River to the start of the easement. Per Gulf Power, the line cannot run on the north side of U. S. 90, thereby avoiding the Joe Budd WMA, due to the existence of a Duke Energy line running along that side.

FWC is constitutionally and legislatively mandated as the managing agency for Joe Budd WMA to protect the concerned state-owned conservation land. Legislation also mandates that state-owned conservation land is to be held in perpetuity. Additionally, the State's linear facilities policy requires an applicant to seek alternative routes where possible and to minimize the effects on state-owned conservation land. Further, legislation states that state agencies are to work with linear facility providers where linear facilities are in the public interest. FWC management, following the guidelines set forth in the State's linear facilities policy, has accepted Gulf Power's determination that it cannot avoid impacting the Joe Budd WMA and that it has worked to minimize the impacts by placing the linear facility on the perimeter of the state-owned conservation land east of the railroad tracks that is difficult to manage.

FWC recommends that any approval of the proposed Gulf Power project outlined herein be contingent upon, but not limited to, the following terms and conditions:

April 28, 2020

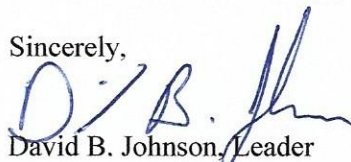
1. Gulf Power's line and access thereto shall not negatively impact FWC's various land management activities. Though not anticipated, Gulf Power shall be responsible for any gates or fencing that become necessary.
2. Gulf Power would need to agree to work with FWC in the management and control of vegetation along and within the permanent easement. This would include, but not be limited to prescribed burns, mechanical and herbicide treatments and plantings. Further, Gulf Power would need to be required to restore the permanent easement to its natural state to FWC's satisfaction should Gulf Power ever no longer need the permanent easement.
3. Gulf Power would need the approval of FWC in the trimming or cutting of any trees located outside of the permanent easement. Should Gulf Power receive the right to trim/remove any trees outside of the permanent easement that may be hazardous to its electric line, then Gulf Power should be required to mitigate that potential additional impact.
4. The easement's term should be for as long as it is needed for its intended purpose rather than perpetual.
5. Gulf Power is required to pay the fair market value for the easement in accordance with the State's Linear Facilities Policy.
6. Gulf Power is to pay all costs required to complete the transaction.
7. DSL and FWC will review and approve all due diligence documents associated with any land transaction pursuant to state standards, including but not limited to a review by the Department of State, Division of Historical Resources.
8. Gulf Power is to comply with the state's Linear Facilities Policy and provide a net positive benefit based upon the easement's appraised value that is acceptable to FWC.

Additionally, it is understood that the issuance of the proposed easement would also include all of DSL's standard conditions for issuance of linear facilities easements on state-owned conservation lands.

Please contact Richard Mospens at the address and phone number located hereon should there be any questions regarding this matter. He may also be reached by his cell phone of (850) 443-2514 or by email at richard.mospens@MyFWC.com.

Thank you for your assistance on this matter.

Sincerely,



David B. Johnson, Leader
Wildlife and Habitat Management Section

DBJ/rm