

Florida Panther Payment for Ecosystem Services Pilot Program



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Program Overview

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) Florida Panther Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) Pilot Program rewards private landowners for maintaining and enhancing panther habitat on their land.

The program offers per-acre payments to private landowners for habitat conditions that support panther conservation and promote landscape connectivity, benefiting both landowners and the panther population.



The FWC recognizes that private landowners, especially those involved in beneficial land management practices such as rotational grazing and low-intensity agriculture, are essential partners in panther conservation.

Who is eligible to apply?

Enrollment is competitive and depends on the location, quantity, and quality of panther habitat provided, along with the available funding provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida, and FWC.

Eligibility Criteria

Land Ownership

Owned by a non-governmental entity or American Indian Tribe for private or commercial use.

Geographic Region

Within 17 select counties (see map) and within 2 miles of the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

Acreage

Enroll at least 500 contiguous acres of land (can enroll all or part of a property).

Habitat Conditions

Identified as highly suitable panther habitat. Contains a minimum of 10% native forested cover, a maximum of 70% open habitat, and no more than 25% of property dominated by invasive plants.

How much will a landowner get paid?

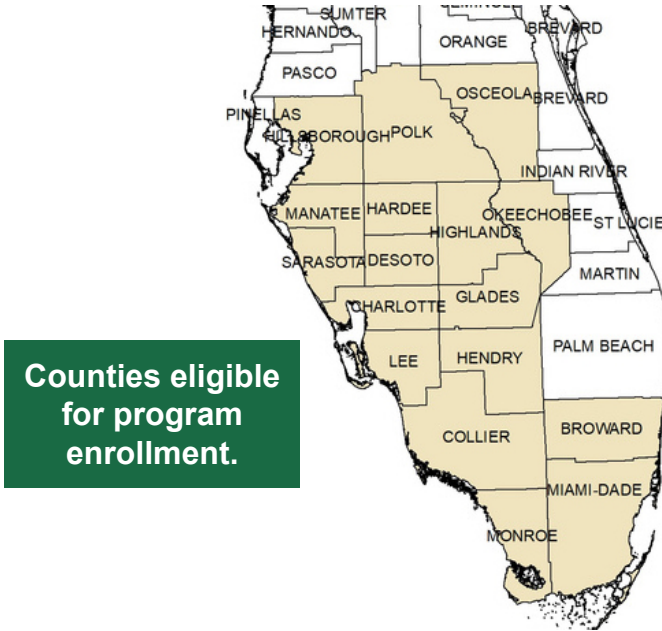
FWC staff will coordinate a site visit with eligible applicants to conduct a habitat assessment of their candidate acreage. Following the enrollment period, program staff will review all scores and rank candidate areas for enrollment.

If selected, payment is based on total habitat assessment scores and ranges from \$7 to \$17 per enrolled acre. Program participants receive annual payments for 3 years.

There are opportunities for bonus payments to be earned through monitoring and verified panther activity.

Request Information

For information on eligibility criteria, habitat assessments, payment rates, and more please, contact program staff at PES@MyFWC.com or visit MyFWC.com/PESPanther.



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