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St. Lucie County Achieves Green Recertification *FGBC Designation Confirms Sustainability Commitment*

(Tallahassee, FL) – The Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC) that administers green certification standards in Florida has recertified St. Lucie County as a Florida Green Local Government after it successfully met the sustainability standards established in the FGBC Green Local Government 5-year recertification program.

First certified in April 2010 at the gold level with 43 percent of its applicable points, St. Lucie County continued to expand its sustainability strategic planning and performance management actions to earn 46 percent of its 369 applicable points, thus qualifying it for a silver-level designation.

The program criteria includes evaluations of energy and water usage, air quality, health issues, land use, recycling and waste disposal, maintenance policies, educational programs, purchasing practices, regulatory policies, and many others.

Suzanne Cook, FGBC Executive Director, said the designation demonstrates exemplary leadership by the County Commission and administration who provided the framework and support to move forward with the process that helps to better manage the cost of government. This is a reflection of more than a decade of commitments by county leadership and strong support by members of the community.

“Their leadership in this effort will help protect and conserve the community’s natural resources, enhance the efficiency of government thus reducing the cost to taxpayers, and raise public awareness about the benefits of environmental stewardship,” Cook said. “Our membership applauds St. Lucie County’s dedication and commitment to the important ideals outlined in this program.”

In order to achieve the FGBC Green Local Government Certification, St. Lucie’s “green team” led by Sandra Bogan, the Environmental Education & Outreach Manager, undertook an extensive audit of the functions performed by every department. From there teams used the FGBC’s program tools to identify methods to improve the sustainability of their business practices and operations.

One goal of the Florida Green Local Government Standard is for the local government to “lead by example” and to encourage the private sector to apply the same principles through the creation of green homes, green commercial buildings, and green land developments. Bringing together community businesses and residents with common objectives and overlapping interests can lead to integrated environmental solutions to local issues.

Some of St. Lucie County’s green achievements were:

- Include environmental commitment in the County’s mission statement and incorporate the mission statement into the government’s comprehensive plan.
- Develop and implement an Environmental Purchasing Program for the County
- Adopt green cleaning and maintenance procedures
- Enact green landscaping ordinance for local government buildings
- Offer free or discount green products to the public
- Provide green building education to the public and government staff
- Maintain an active student/teacher education program and provide incentives for environmental training of teachers
- Apply Florida Friendly Landscape principles at public amenities and maintain an active Florida Yards & Neighborhoods outreach program for builders, developers and homeowners
- Create and maintain an electronic database of all green building certifications and energy ratings
- Adopt FGBC or LEED green building certification standards as the official green standards for the County
- Require mitigation for consumption of natural habitat or resources and enact a tree preservation and land clearing ordinance
- Team with tourism board to encourage eco-tourism
- Provide energy audits and incentives to reduce energy use in residential and commercial buildings
- Operate a government computer and equipment reuse center and recycle all end-of-life county equipment
- Minimize chlorine in public pools
- Maintain community organic gardens
- Enact sea turtle and manatee protection ordinances or plans
- Minimize heat island affect through the use of highly-reflective materials

- Enhance pedestrian travel within the county to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by maintaining urban boundaries, incorporating healthy street design into government policies, and by encouraging mixed-use zoning
- Offer recycling collection services to businesses and multi-family dwellings, and mandate recycling for construction & demolition (C&D) debris
- Reduce potable water use by creating a reclaimed water infrastructure, and adopting policies to encourage alternative onsite wastewater and water reuse technologies and approaches

For a complete list of St. Lucie County's green achievements, visit the FGBC website at

www.FloridaGreenBuilding.org.

FGBC's Green Local Government Certification program is the only one of its type in Florida and is endorsed by the Florida Legislature, the Florida League of Cities and the Florida League of Mayors.

Since the FGBC Green Local Government Certification program was launched, 88 Florida governments have registered to participate in the program, with 64 of those achieving certification to date.

About the Florida Green Building Coalition

The Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC) is a 501(C)3 nonprofit Florida corporation founded in 2000 and dedicated to improving the built environment. Its mission is "to lead and promote sustainability with environmental, economic, and social benefits through regional education and certification programs." FGBC certification programs are the only standards developed with climate specific criteria to address issues caused by Florida's hot-humid environment and natural disasters. Currently, FGBC is the leading certifier of green projects in Florida.

FGBC's membership is comprised of individuals and businesses from all areas of the building industry, including research, design, materials, products, construction, inspection, marketing, finance and public advocates. For more information about the FGBC "Florida Green" certification programs visit www.floridagreenbuilding.org.

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