Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area
Land Management Plan

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Office of Greenways and Trails

June 10, 2005

Prepared by
Muller and Associates, Inc.
with the
Office of Greenways and Trails

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Office of Greenways and Trails

Working to establish a statewide system of greenways and trails for recreation and conservation purposes.

Department of Environmental Protection

Jeb Bush
Governor

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Colleen M. Castille
Secretary

June 6, 2005

Ms. Marsha Rickman
Office of Greenways and Trails
3900 Commonwealth Blvd.
M. S. 795
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Re: Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area **Lease #4301**

Dear Ms. Rickman:

On **June 3, 2005**, the Acquisition and Restoration Council recommended approval of the **Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area** management plan. Therefore, the Office of Environmental Services, acting as agent for the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, approved the management plan for the **Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area**. Pursuant to Sections 253.034 and 259.032, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 18-2, Florida Administrative Code this plan's ten-year update will be due on **June 3, 2015**.

Approval of this land management plan does not waive the authority or jurisdiction of any governmental entity that may have an interest in this project. Implementation of any upland activities proposed by this management plan may require a permit or other authorization from federal and state agencies having regulatory jurisdiction over those particular activities. Pursuant to the conditions of your lease, please forward copies of all permits to this office upon issuance.

Sincerely,

Paula L. Allen
Office of Environmental Services
Division of State Lands
Department of Environmental Protection

Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area
Land Management Plan Executive Summary

Lead Agency: Florida Department of Environmental Protection/Office of Greenways and Trails
Common Name of the Property: Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area
Location: Columbia County
Acreage: 657±
Acreage Breakdown:

Natural Community/Land Cover	Acreage
Upland Mixed Forest	83
Limerock mines, spoil, and roads	292
Silvicultural lands	280
Other	2

Lease: #4301, dated January 13, 2003
Use: Multiple-use concept with management activities directed first toward conservation and protection of natural resources, especially the water quality of the area, and then to provide public outdoor recreation that is compatible with protection of the resources
Management Responsibilities: Agency – FDEP, Office of Greenways and Trails
Responsibilities – Lessee, lead manager (greenways and trails)
Designated Land Use: The management prospectus states this property qualifies as a fish management area with potential for development of a variety of compatible recreational activities
Subleases: None
Contracts: None
Encumbrances: None
Type Acquisition: Fee simple through Preservation 2000 and Florida Forever/Board of Trustees
Unique Features: Giant orchid, gopher tortoise
Archaeological/Historical: The DHR Florida Master Site File reports no known historical resources on site and believes there is a low probability of significant, unrecorded sites being located in this area. The Carpenter homestead buildings are not significant from a regional or national perspective.
Management Needs: Limerock mine reclamation; multi-use trail system, off-road bicycle and other recreation facilities with natural resource interpretive materials; natural community restoration; establishment of a Citizens Support Organization; local community involvement in planning and maintaining onsite facilities; establishment of prescribed fire program
Acquisition Needs: Acquire access through Bedrock Road; potential acquisition of other properties in the north and northeast for management and recreation purposes
Surplus Lands: None
Public Involvement: Two advisory group meetings and two public hearings

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ARC Approval Date _____ BTIITF Approval Date: _____
Comments: _____

MANAGEMENT PLAN COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

REQUIREMENTS	PAGE NUMBERS
18-2.021 Land Management Advisory Council.	
(4) Management Plans. Plans submitted to the division for council review under the requirements of Section 253.034 F.S. should contain where applicable to the management of resources the following:	Page
1. The common name of the property.	1
2. A map showing the location and boundaries of the property plus any structures or improvements to the property.	Map 1 p. 3 Map 9 p. 33
3. The legal description and acreage of the property.	App. 1
4. The degree of title interest held by the Board, including reservations and encumbrances such as leases.	1
5. The land acquisition program (e.g., C. A. R. L., E. E. L., Save Our Coast), if any, under which the property was acquired.	1
6. The designated single use or multiple use management for the property, including other managing agencies.	44
7. Proximity of property to other significant State, local, or federal land or water resources.	Map 1 p. 3 9
8. A statement as to whether the property is within an aquatic preserve or a designated area of critical State concern or an area under study for such designation.	13
9. The location and description of known and reasonably identifiable renewable and non-renewable resources of the property including, but not limited to, the following:	
A. Brief description of soil types, using U. S. D. A. maps when available;	Map 5 p. 15 12
B. Archaeological and historical resources;	29
C. Water resources including the water quality classification for each water body and the identification of any such water body that is designated as an Outstanding Florida Waters;	17
D. Fish and wildlife and their habitat;	20
E. State and federally listed endangered or threatened species and their habitat;	20
F. Beaches and dunes;	NA
G. Swamps, marshes and other wetlands;	18
H. Mineral resources, such as oil, gas and phosphate;	29
I. Unique natural features, such as coral reefs, natural springs, caverns, large sinkholes, virgin timber stands, scenic vistas, and natural rivers and streams; and	19
J. Outstanding native landscapes containing relatively unaltered flora, fauna, and geological conditions.	18
10. A description of actions the agency plans, to locate and identify unknown resources such as surveys of unknown archaeological and historical resources.	47-51
11. The identification of resources on the property that are listed in the Natural Area Inventory.	App. 5

MANAGEMENT PLAN COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

REQUIREMENTS	PAGE NUMBERS
12. A description of past uses, including any unauthorized uses of the property.	31
13. A detailed description of existing and planned use(s) of the property.	31-44
14. A description of alternative or multiple uses of the property considered by the managing agency and an explanation of why such uses were not adopted.	44
15. A detailed assessment of the impact of planned uses on the renewable and non-renewable resources of the property and a detailed description of the specific actions that will be taken to protect, enhance and conserve these resources and to mitigate damage caused by such uses.	32-44
16. A description of management needs and problems for the property.	46-58
17. Identification of adjacent land uses that conflict with the planned use of the property, if any.	36
18. A description of legislative or executive directives that constrain the use of such property.	10
19. A finding regarding whether each planned use complies with the State Lands Management Plan adopted by the Trustees on March 17, 1981, and incorporated herein by reference, particularly whether such uses represent "balanced public utilization", specific agency statutory authority, and other legislative or executive constraints. A copy of the plan may be obtained by writing to the Department of Environmental Protection, Division of State Lands, Bureau of Land Management Services, 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, Mail Station 130, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000.	1
20. An assessment as to whether the property, or any portion, should be declared surplus.	36
21. Identification of other parcels of land within or immediately adjacent to the property that should be purchased because they are essential to management of the property.	36
22. A description of the management responsibilities of each agency and how such responsibilities will be coordinated, including a provision that requires that the managing agency consult with the Division of Archives, History and Records Management before taking actions that may adversely affect archaeological or historic resources.	51, 57
23. A statement concerning the extent of public involvement and local government participation in the development of the plan, if any, including a summary of comments and concerns expressed.	10 App. 2
Additional Requirements—Per Trustees	
24. Letter of Compliance of the management plan with the Local Government Comprehensive Plan.	App. 10

MANAGEMENT PLAN COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

REQUIREMENTS	PAGE NUMBERS
253.034 State-Owned Lands; Uses. —	
(5) Each entity managing conservation lands shall submit to the Division of State Lands a land management plan at least every 5 years in a form and manner prescribed by rule by the board.	
25. All management plans, whether for single-use or multiple-use properties, shall specifically describe how the managing entity plans to identify, locate, protect and preserve, or otherwise use fragile nonrenewable resources, such as archaeological and historic sites, as well as other fragile resources, including endangered plant and animal species.	46-58
26. Provide for the conservation of soil and water resources and for the control and prevention of soil erosion.	47
27. Land management plans submitted by an entity shall include reference to appropriate statutory authority for such use or uses and shall conform to the appropriate policies and guidelines of the state land management plan.	10 App. 10
28. All land management plans for parcels larger than 1,000 acres shall contain an analysis of the multiple-use potential of the parcel, which analysis shall include the potential of the parcel to generate revenues to enhance the management of the parcel.	44
29. Additionally, the land management plan shall contain an analysis of the potential use of private land managers to facilitate the restoration or management of these lands.	56
253.036 Forest Management. —	
30. For parcels larger than 1,000 acres the lead agency shall prepare the analysis, which shall contain a component or section prepared by a qualified professional forester which assesses the feasibility of managing timber resources on the parcel for resource conservation and revenue generation purposes through a stewardship ethic that embraces sustainable forest management practices if the lead management agency determines that the timber resource management is not in conflict with the primary management objectives of the parcel.	App. 6
259.032 Conservation And Recreation Lands Trust Fund; Purpose.	
(10)(a) State, regional, or local governmental agencies or private entities designated to manage lands under this section shall develop and adopt, with the approval of the board of trustees, an individual management plan for each project designed to conserve and protect such lands and their associated natural resources. Private sector involvement in management plan development may be used to expedite the planning process. Individual management plans shall conform to the appropriate policies and guidelines of the state land management plan and shall include, but not be limited to:	

MANAGEMENT PLAN COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

REQUIREMENTS	PAGE NUMBERS
31. Individual management plans required by s. 253.034(5), for parcels over 160 acres, shall be developed with input from an advisory group.	10 App. 2
32. The advisory group shall conduct at least one public hearing within the county in which the parcel or project is located.	10 App. 2
33. Notice of such public hearing shall be posted on the parcel or project designated for management, advertised in a paper of general circulation, and announced at a scheduled meeting of the local governing body before the actual public hearing.	App. 2
34. The management prospectus required pursuant to paragraph (9)(d) shall be available to the public for a period of 30 days prior to the public hearing.	App. 2
35. Individual management plans shall conform to the appropriate policies and guidelines of the state land management plan and shall include, but not be limited to:	
A. A statement of the purpose for which the lands were acquired, the projected use or uses as defined in s. 253.034, and the statutory authority for such use or uses.	2
B. Key management activities necessary to preserve and protect natural resources and restore habitat, and for controlling the spread of nonnative plants and animals, and for prescribed fire and other appropriate resource management activities.	46-58
C. A specific description of how the managing agency plans to identify, locate, protect, and preserve, or otherwise use fragile, nonrenewable natural and cultural resources.	46-58
D. A priority schedule for conducting management activities, based on the purposes for which the lands were acquired.	46-59 App. 8
E. A cost estimate for conducting priority management activities, to include recommendations for cost-effective methods of accomplishing those activities.	55 Table 8 p.55 App. 8
F. A cost estimate for conducting other management activities which would enhance the natural resource value or public recreation value for which the lands were acquired. The cost estimate shall include recommendations for cost-effective methods of accomplishing those activities.	55 Table 8 p. 55 App. 8
40. A determination of the public uses and public access that would be consistent with the purposes for which the lands were acquired.	32
259.036 Management Review Teams.—	
41. The managing agency shall consider the findings and recommendations of the land management review team in finalizing the required 5-year update of its management plan.	NA

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I. Introduction

The Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area (ITRA) is located in Columbia County, about 11 miles south-southwest of Lake City. Access to the property is from the east through Bedrock Road off of SR 47, to the west from Carpenter Road, and to the south from Bountiful Road.

The State of Florida acquired the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area to protect the water quality of Ichetucknee Springs by removing the threat of further mining and groundwater contamination along the area believed to be a major conduit to the springs. The ITRA is 657± acres, with approximately 577 upland and 80 acres of wetland/open water wetland acres. About 214 acres are spoil and mining roads from a former limerock mine operation, and an additional 78 acres are mined areas/gravel pits that have filled with water. About 246 acres of pine plantations are north of the mined area. Approximately 83 acres of mixed hardwoods are in and around the mined area, and 34 acres of cutover lands are in the southwest corner of the tract.

On September 7, 2000, and October 1, 2001, the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (BOT) obtained title to the property, which was a portion of the Ichetucknee Trace CARL project. The acquired lands were subsequently named the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area. The project was purchased with funds from Preservation 2000 and Florida Forever. The BOT holds fee simple title to ITRA. The Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Greenways and Trails manages these lands under Lease #4301, dated January 13, 2003. The lease is for fifty (50) years, and expires on January 12, 2053 (see Appendix 1).

The property is intended to be managed under the multiple-use concept with management activities directed first toward conservation and protection of natural resources, especially the water quality of the area, and then to provide public outdoor recreation that is compatible with protection of the resources.

This is the initial management plan for the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area.

Purpose and Scope of Plan

This management plan for the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area describes its setting, natural resources, and the intended management. Acquired through the Conservation and Recreation Land Program and Florida Forever, the general management and use of the land are directed by the statutes and rules of that program. Additionally, management is guided by the purpose and intended use of the land described in the land acquisition project selection process. Other statutes and rules also control the use of the land.

The mission of the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) is to establish a statewide system of greenways and trails for recreation and conservation purposes. ITRA will be managed to conserve and protect the natural resources of the recreation area and to provide public recreation consistent with protection of natural resources.

This management plan is submitted for review to the BOT through the Department of Environmental Protection, Division of State Lands (DSL). It is intended to comply with paragraph 7 of Lease #4301 between the BOT and DEP/OGT (Appendix 1); Chapters 253 and 259, Florida Statutes (F.S.); and Chapters 18-2 and 18-23, Florida Administrative Code (FAC). The plan is intended to be consistent with the State Land Management Plan. The format and content of this plan for ITRA are in accordance with the Acquisition and Restoration Council recommendations for management plans and the model plan outline provided by the staff of DSL.
All development and resource alteration encompassed in this plan are subject to the granting of appropriate permits, easements, licenses, and other required legal instruments. Approval of the management plan does not constitute an exemption from complying with the appropriate local, state, or federal agencies rules and regulations.

Location

ITRA is located in Columbia County, about 11 miles south-southwest of Lake City (Map 1), about 2 miles SSW of Columbia City and about 3 miles north of Ichetucknee Springs State Park. Fort White is approximately 7 miles to the south. The site is being managed through the Cross Florida Greenway office of the OGT. Access is arranged through this office.

There are two legal access points and one historical access through private property. To approach from the east using the historical access, from the intersection of I-75 and SR 47 south of Lake City, take SR 47 south approximately six miles to Bedrock Road (aka Kirby Pit Road) and turn right (west) on Bedrock Road, following it to the property gates on the eastern side of the property. A portion of Bedrock Road runs through private property, and the ingress/egress rights have not been resolved at this time.

The northwest part of the property can be accessed by going south on SR 47, turning west on CR 240 to Carpenter Road. A gated entrance is on the east side of Carpenter Road. The southern access is through a neighborhood with unpaved, winding roads. Go south on SR 47, west on Williams Road to Watson Road, Watson Road to Orville Terrace, right on Orville Terrace, left (west) on Lenvil Road, right (north) on Bountiful Road, and left (west) onto the road leading to the property. The 911 address is 340 SW Bountiful Avenue, Fort White, FL 32038.

Regional Significance

The ITRA is located about three miles north of the Ichetucknee Springs, a first magnitude spring system. The property is along the Ichetucknee Trace, believed to represent the flow of groundwater to the spring. Cessation of limerock mining on the ITRA is thought to be important in the protection of the quality of water flowing to Ichetucknee Springs. With the acquisition of the property by the State, the danger posed by continued mining is now removed. The site has the potential to have regional significance as a recreational destination.

The DEP Office of Greenways and Trails has prioritized multi-use trail opportunities in the State of Florida. A multi-use trail is one where two or more user groups (equestrian, hiking, off-road biking) can use the trail simultaneously. ITRA is within a low priority multi-use trail opportunity corridor that parallels and includes SR-47. If this trail corridor is established, ITRA will have additional significance since this connectivity will provide additional opportunities for hikers and bikers.

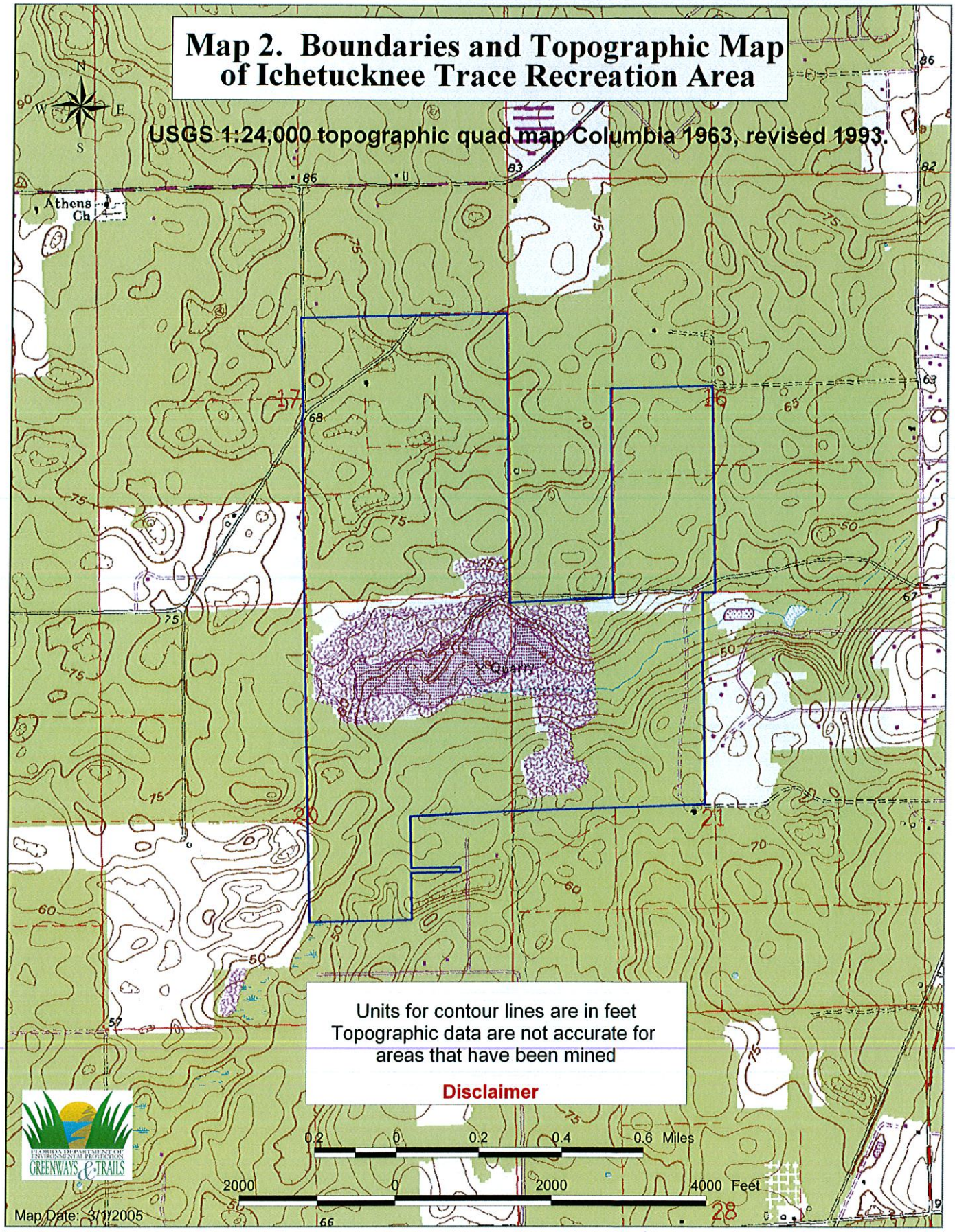
Land Acquisition

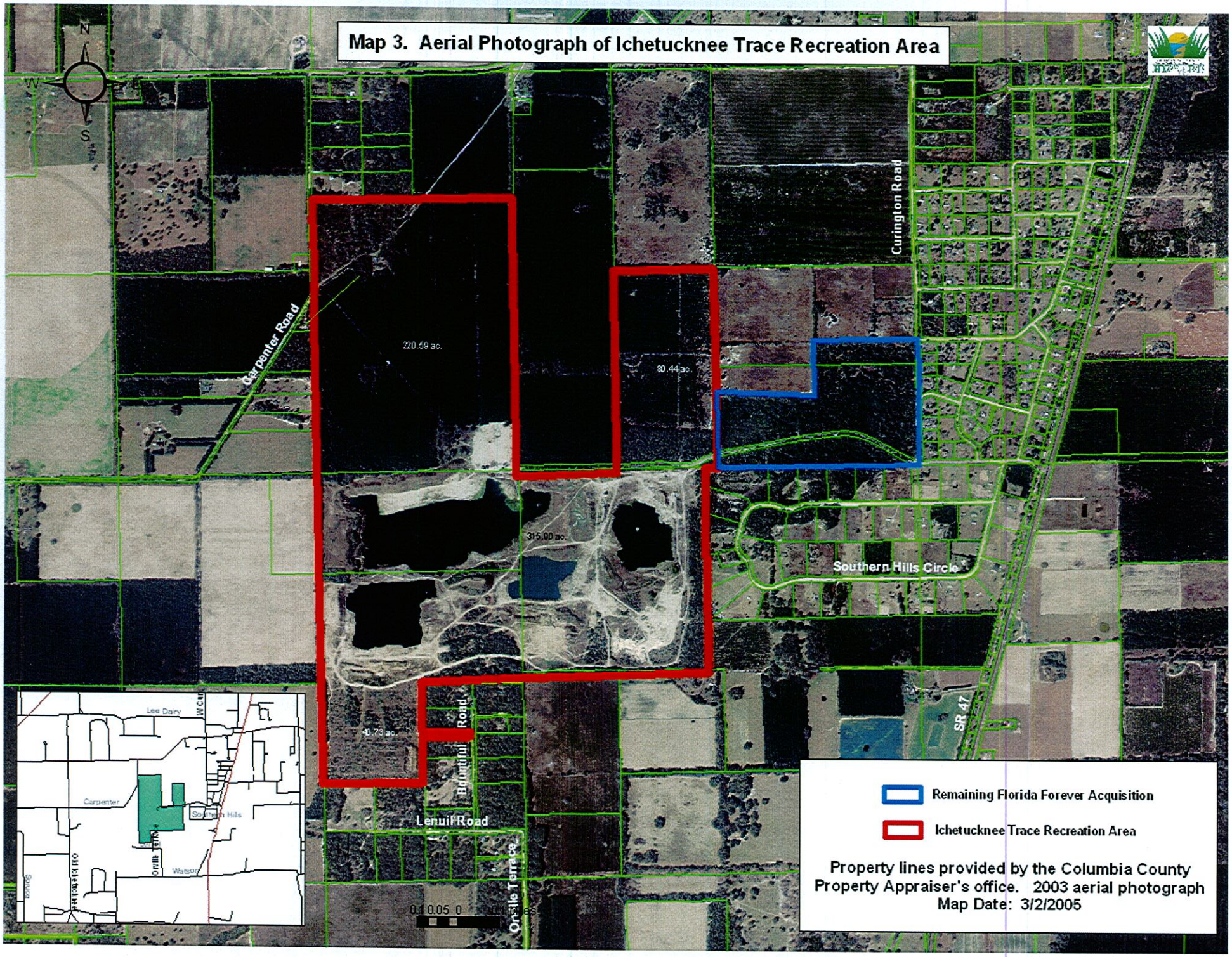
Purpose

This recreation area was acquired as part of the Ichetucknee Trace Florida Forever/CARL Project, using funds from Preservation 2000 and Florida Forever. The Trace is a dry valley marking the route of a major underground conduit supplying the springs' clear water. According to the Florida Forever Five Year Plan 2004 (Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of State Lands. 2004), the purpose for state acquisition of lands within the project is to protect the water quality of the Ichetucknee Springs by removing the threat of further mining and groundwater contamination along the Trace. The plan designated the public use of the Ichetucknee Trace project as a fish management area, recreation parks, and geologic sites. The public use is secondary to the water quality protection purpose. The ITRA is one of five separate parcels in the Trace project. Originally, the ITRA was intended to be managed by Columbia County, but Columbia County declined to enter into a lease to manage the property and the Office of Greenways and Trails became the managing entity. Map 2 denotes the boundary of the current recreation area and Map 3 is an aerial photograph of the property that also denotes the portion of the property that is within the Florida Forever project boundary but has not been purchased.

ITRA is not an aquatic preserve as designated under the Florida Aquatic Preserve Act of 1975 (section 258.35, Florida Statutes), as amended, nor is it adjacent to an aquatic preserve. Waters within the recreation area have not been designated as Outstanding Florida Waters, pursuant to Chapter 62-302 Florida Administrative Code. Surface waters in the ITRA are classified as Class III waters by DEP.

Map 2. Boundaries and Topographic Map of Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area




Map 3. Aerial Photograph of Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area
N
W
E
S
Carpenter Road
Curington Road
220.59 ac.
80.44 ac.
315.00 ac.
40.73 ac.
Southern Hills Circle
SR 47
Lenuil Road
Boundful Road
Orville Terrace
Lee Dairy
Carpenter
Southern Hills
Watson
0 0.05 0
Remaining Florida Forever Acquisition
Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area
Property lines provided by the Columbia County Property Appraiser's office. 2003 aerial photograph
Map Date: 3/2/2005

ITRA is not within an Area of Critical State Concern as defined in section 380.05, Florida Statutes, and is not under study for such designation.
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History

The southern portion of the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area was placed on the Conservation and Recreation Lands list in 1997 as part of the original Ichetucknee Trace Limerock Mines Project (later renamed Ichetucknee Trace Project). Land was first acquired in September 2000, and later that year the northwestern portion of ITRA was added to the project. The northwestern portion was acquired in October 2001. Columbia County was given interim management authority on March 1, 2001, but on November 7, 2002, the Columbia County Commission voted not to approve the ITRA lease agreement with the State because of the County's inability to assume the fiscal responsibilities required under the terms of the lease, which included mine reclamation.

OGT signed a 50-year lease agreement (Lease Number 4301) for the property with the Board of Trustees on January 13, 2003. The ITRA was one of three properties identified as a potential off highway vehicle (OHV) recreation area by the *Off-Highway Vehicle Safety and Recreation Act Report*, which was submitted to the Governor and Legislature in January 2003. The report identified the property as a possible location for OHV use because of the highly disturbed nature of much of the site.

OGT intended to manage the property primarily for OHV use, with appropriate safeguards for water quality and gopher tortoises. However, since an OHV park was not an approved use of the property under the Columbia County Comprehensive Plan, a land use special exception waiver was required. At an April 2004 meeting, the Columbia County Board of County Commission refused to allow the OHV land use. This was primarily due to neighbors' concerns about potential noise from OHVs. At the same meeting, the Commission also refused to allow overnight camping on the property. Table 1provides an outline of benchmarks in the history of ITRA. In January 2005, the Acquisition and Restoration Council recommended moving Ichetucknee Trace to Group B on the Florida Forever list.

Table 1: Acquisition History and Status for ITRA

Year	Benchmark
1997	Ichetucknee Trace Limerock Mines Project first placed on CARL list
2000	First 3 parcels (approx. 350 acres) of ITRA acquired (most of the limerock mine area)
2000	Northwestern portion of ITRA (296 ac owned by Kirby Family) added to Ichetucknee Trace Project
2001	Northwestern portion of ITRA acquired
2001	Interim management authority for ITRA given to Columbia County
2002	Columbia County Commission votes not to approve ITRA lease agreement with State
2003	Management authority given to OGT through a lease with the Board of Trustees (January 13, 2003)
2004	Columbia County Board of County Commission upholds Zoning Board decision to refuse to allow OHV land use and also preclude overnight camping
2005	Acquisition and Restoration Council recommends moving Ichetucknee Trace to Group B on the Florida Forever acquisition list

Nearby Public Lands and Designated Water Resources

At least three public conservation lands occur within 10 miles of ITRA, with about nine other public conservation lands within a 15 mile radius (Map 1). Ichetucknee Springs State Park is approximately three miles south-southwest of ITRA. South of Ichetucknee are the Lower Santa Fe Conservation Area and the Ft. White Mitigation Park Wildlife and Environmental Area. Other portions of the Ichetucknee Trace Florida Forever Project are to the northeast and southwest of the ITRA.

FDEP: Aquatic Preserves / Outstanding Florida Waters
Although the waters of ITRA itself are not designated as Outstanding Florida Waters, the waters of Ichetucknee Springs State Park, about three miles to the south-southwest, are designated as such. Since the ITRA is positioned in a dry valley thought to mark the route of a major underground conduit supplying the springs' clear water, care must be taken to design recreation improvements so that pollutants don't enter the onsite waters and to prevent contamination of groundwater. Surface waters in the ITRA are classified as Class III waters by DEP.

Management Authority

Management authority for this property is addressed in Section 253.03, F.S. and Chapter 18-2, FAC, "Management of Uplands Vested in the Board of Trustees." Management of this property is addressed in Lease #4301between the BOT and DEP/OGT (Appendix 1). The Governor and Cabinet sit as the Board of Trustees and are responsible for state-owned lands. The BOT is authorized to lease State lands to State agencies for the use and benefit of the people of the State of Florida. Each lease is for 50 years. The land title and legal description are provided in Appendix 1.

In addition to the guidance provided for the overall management of ITRA from the documents cited above, a portion of the limerock mining area of the property is required to undergo reclamation pursuant to Part IV of Chapter 378, F.S., and Chapter 62C-36, FAC. The northwestern lake/pit is the only former limerock mine on the property that is not required to undergo reclamation.

Clay Electric Cooperative has officially recorded distribution rights of way in the northwest arm of the property and along the northern border of the east half of the mining area. The survey also shows utility easements and a Bedrock Road easement on the property, but these are apparently unrecorded.

Public Involvement

OGT conducted a management advisory group meeting in Lake City, Florida on August 22, 2003 to obtain input from both public and private stakeholders regarding management of ITRA. A summary of issues and opportunities raised by the advisory group, as well as a list of participants, is included as Appendix 2. A public hearing, as required by Ch. 259.032(10), F.S., was held on August 27, 2003 in Lake City, Florida. The report of that hearing is also contained in Appendix 2.

Because the proposed OHV park and overnight camping were not allowed uses on the ITRA under the Columbia County Comprehensive Plan, OGT filed a request for a special exception to allow OHV use and overnight camping. In February 2004, the Columbia County Zoning Board held a public hearing and a meeting on the special exception request. There was a large public turnout, with both opponents and supporters of the proposed OHV park. The Zoning Board denied the special exception, primarily because of neighbors' opposition. A local OHV and motorcycle dealer filed an appeal, and in April 2004 the Board of County Commission upheld the Zoning Board's decision.

As a result of these votes, the draft management plan for the property was revised to emphasize biking, hiking, fishing, and boating. OGT conducted a management advisory group meeting in Lake City, Florida on March 31, 2005 to obtain input from both public and private stakeholders regarding the draft management plan for ITRA. This meeting was followed the same day by a public hearing on the draft management plan. Summaries of the advisory group meeting and the public hearing are included as Appendix 2.

II. Natural and Cultural Resources

This chapter describes the natural and cultural resources of the ITRA and identifies resource protection needs. Chapter IV details how the resources will be managed and how the needs will be addressed.

Physiography

Topography and Geology

ITRA is in Florida's Gulf Coastal Lowlands within the Northern Zone of the state. More specifically, it is in the High Springs Gap, a relatively recent erosion break between the Northern Highlands and the Brooksville Ridge, and is east of the Bell Ridge. The topography of that portion of the property that was mined has been drastically altered (Map 4). The mine pits are reportedly up to 80 feet deep, and the mine spoil has been deposited in large hills scattered around the mining area. Remnants of paved roads are in place around the mining area. Away from the mining area the topographic changes are less severe, and include plowed fire lines, woods roads, the road to the old homestead, and the limerock entrance road to the south.

The following text is excerpted from the Conservation and Recreation Lands Project Assessment for the Ichetucknee Trace Limerock Mines Project (Land Acquisition Advisory Council Liaison Staff and Florida Natural Area Inventory. 1996). At the time of the assessment, the project included only the limerock mine area and the area to the east along Bedrock Road. The remainder of the property is sufficiently close and of similar characteristics so that the description below applies to the entire project.

> The Ichetucknee Trace Limerock Mines tract is situated on the karstic terrain of the Gulf Coastal Lowlands geomorphic zone. This province is characterized by gently rolling sand and clayey sand hills overlying shallow, karstic limestone. Land surface elevations range from about 40 to 75 feet above mean sea level in the immediate vicinity of the proposed acquisition. The terrain is pocked by karst depressions and water filled sinkholes. Surface streams are small, commonly intermittent, with most surface drainage captured by caverns in the underlying limestone.
>
> Eocene Ocala Limestone forms the bedrock under the limerock mines. This limestone is locally overlain by Miocene Hawthorn Group siliciclastics and Undifferentiated sands and clays, generally totaling less than 25 feet thick. The proposed project straddles a topographic valley, locally known as the Ichetucknee Trace, which extends southwestward from approximately State Road 47 to Ichetucknee Springs State Park. This valley is well-delineated on topographic maps by the 50-foot elevation contour line. Downgradient at the Park, the Trace becomes the Ichetucknee River Valley.
>
> The Ichetucknee Trace is composed of a series of northeast – to southwester-trending linear valley segments approximately matching in orientation the bearings of regional fracture systems. Topographic maps and aerial photos from pre-mining dates show at least two water-filled sinks in the Trace at the mine site. A series of small sinks also lies along the axis of the Trace south of the mines, bearing some similarity to the surface pattern of sinks formed along subterranean cave systems, such as the Wakulla Cave system thought to feed Wakulla Spring. These observations have led to concern that the Trace may overlie a waterfilled karst cave system, developed along fracture trends, and leading ultimately to the springs feeding the pristine Ichetucknee River. Should this be true, mining operations in the Trace might break into such a cave, or damage it by dynamite blasting associated with mining, and compromise the quality and quantity of water entering the Ichetucknee River through springs in the Park. Hypothesized catastrophic scenarios include possible shunting of the underground flow to the surface at the mine, or contamination of the Ichetucknee Spring waters with fine carbonate particulate washed downstream from the mine pits. Due to the lack of local hydrogeological data, however, the presence of a cave cannot be verified, and the effects from either scenario, should they occur, cannot be reliably predicted or quantified.

In recent years, two studies have fueled these concerns about mining in the trace. Explorations by cave divers in Rose Sink, near the northern end of the Trace, have documented the presence of underground conduit systems within the limestone, trending due south, at a depth of about 145 feet below land surface; according to the divers, domes within these caves are known to extend upward to within 50 feet of the land surface. These pipe-like conduits carry regional groundwater from the Floridan aquifer system and, during periods of high precipitation, also receive an influx of surface drainage through several open sinkholes northeast of the mines. Secondly, a gas tracer study, conducted during thesis research by University of Florida graduate student Dan Hirth, has revealed a direct hydrologic connection between Rose Sink and the springs within Ichetucknee Springs State Park. However, no direct evidence has proven the existence of a cave underlying the trace. The gas tracer study indicates a connection only, not the path of the connection. There are apparently no written records to correlate the infrequent water-clarity degradation events at Ichetucknee Springs with blasting or other activities at the mine. At this writing [1996], no diving explorations or tracer testing between the mine and Ichetucknee Springs have been undertaken.

The Ichetucknee Trace Limerock Mines proposed acquisition is designed to purchase the Anderson Corporation and Limestone Industries mining properties lying in the axis of the Trace. A portion of the property consists of water-filled mine pits. Other areas within the property contain spoil piles or are undergoing active mining. The Florida DOT has been purchasing most of the mines' product for use a roadbase for the Interstate 75 expansion projects. Present mining is taking place to a depth of about 80 feet below land surface (65 feet below water surface), deep enough to break into a cave dome like those observed northeast of this site, should they exist under the mines. Purchase of the mine property by the State would preclude future mining and blasting damage to any cave system passing under this portion of the Ichetucknee Trace.

The mine properties, as far as is presently known, contain no significant geologic resources. The road-base-quality limerock in the mines qualifies as an economic mineral resource. However, the purpose of the acquisition is not mining, but rather the protection of a downstream freshwater and recreational resource at the Ichetucknee Springs State Park. The Ocala Limestone exposed in the mine underlies much of Florida and is present under other state-owned parcels as well; this exposure is not considered unique. Topographic map data, combined with the observation by cave divers north of the site and tracer studies, suggest some possibility of a cave system following the axis of the Trace to Ichetucknee Springs. If such a cave does exist, it could be considered a significant geologic feature; however, due to the lack of site-specific hydrogeologic data, the numeric probability of such a cave being present under the proposed acquisition cannot be ascertained.

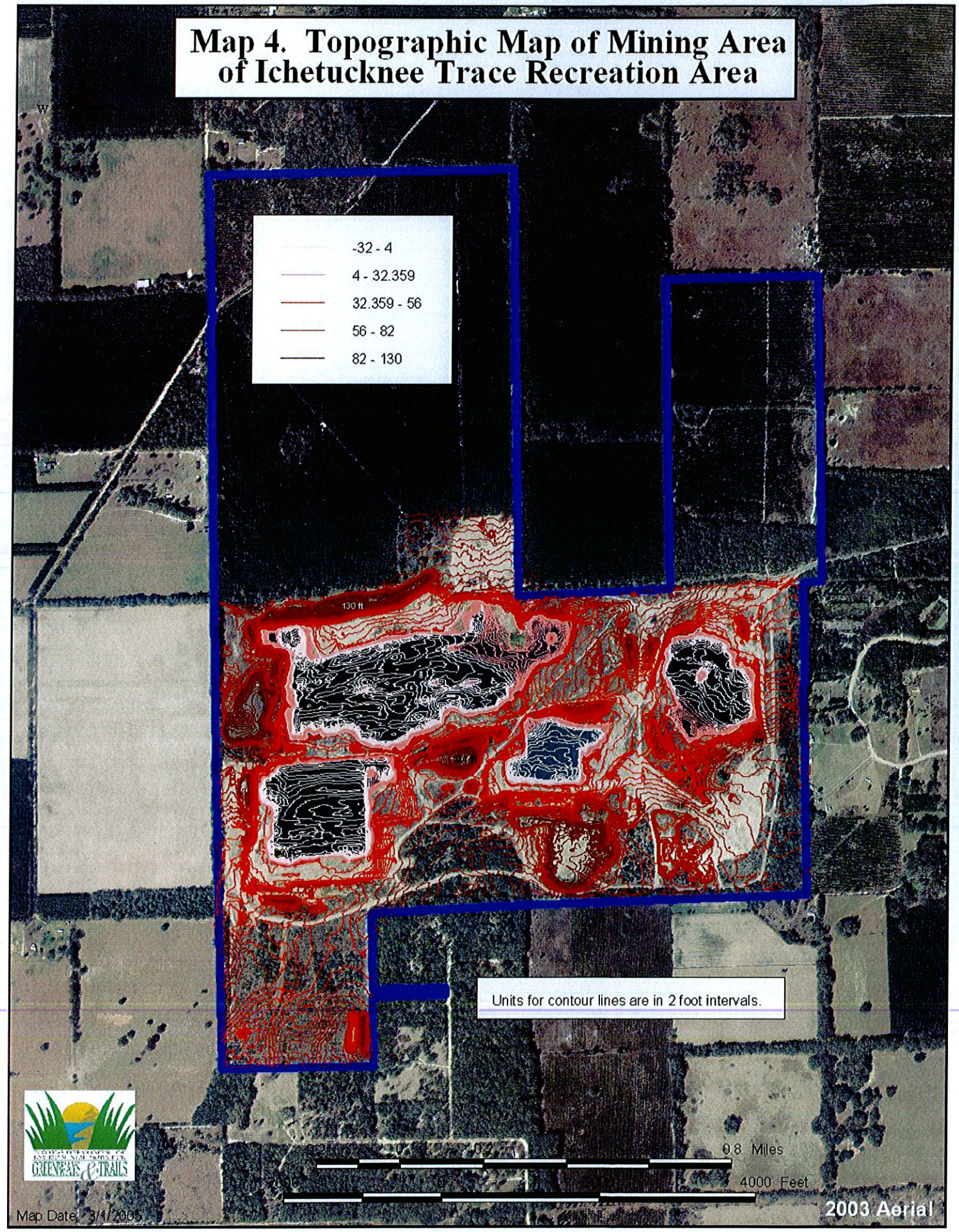
According to the 1999 proposal to add the northwestern portion of the property to the project boundaries, this area has three long-established sinkholes – one wet and two dry. Reportedly, the Kirby Family has never known the wet sinkhole to go dry, and other sinkholes have opened and closed on the property over the years. An assessment by DEP staff of the proposed 200-acre addition in 2000 concluded that the limerock on this parcel would be comparable to that on the remainder of the site, that the parcel was within the general limits of the Ichetucknee Trace (75-foot contour line), and that subsurface fractures could run from this parcel to the Trace (W. Schmidt, undated memo to M. Glisson). The northeastern parcel also has a dry sinkhole.

Soils

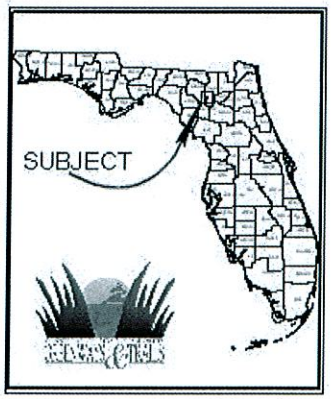
The soils of Columbia County vary widely. The general soil map of Columbia County (USDA NRCS, 1984), lists six broad groups of soils with 13 soil complexes. The ITRA occurs in a sand ridge area of Columbia County. The entire property is within an area characterized by Blanton-Alpin-Bonneau soils. This soil complex is described as nearly level to strongly sloping, with moderately well drained and excessively drained soils that are sandy to a depth of 20 to 40 inches or 40 to 80 inches and loamy below or sandy throughout.

The detailed soils map of the USDA publication shows eight types of soil map units on ITRA: Alpin fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes; Alpin fine sand, 5 to 12 percent slopes; Blanton fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes; Bonneau fine sand, 2 to 5 percent slopes; Bonneau-Blanton complex, 2 to 5 percent slopes; Electra Variant fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes; Plummer fine sand, depressional; and, Pit (limerock mining area). The soils map (Map 5) available through the Suwannee River Water Management District does not show the Bonneau-Blanton complex. All of the

Map 4. Topographic Map of Mining Area of Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area



Map Date: 3/1/2005



SSURGO SOILS

- ALPIN
- BLANTON
- BONNEAU
- ELECTRA VARIANT
- PLUMMER
- PITS
- WATER

SOURCE INFORMATION

SOURCE TITLE:	*NRCS and SRWMD Soils Survey Data*
SCALE:	*1:24,000*
MEDIA OF SOURCE:	*Digital ArcInfo Coverage*
AGENCY/ORGANIZATION:	*Suwanee River Water Management District*
CONTACT:	*Paul Buchanan*
PHONE NUMBER:	*800/226-1066*
LAST UPDATE:	*5/27/03*

0.2 0 0.2 0.4 Miles

MAP DATE: 3/1/05

Map 5. Soils Map of the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area

Columbia County, Florida

natural soils are fine sand. The Plummer fine sand and Electra Variant fine sand areas were severely disturbed by mining subsequent to the soil survey except for a small area of Electra Variant on the extreme southwest corner of the property. The remaining soils are excessively to moderately well drained soils. Natural communities normally associated with the remaining soil types are sandhill and upland mixed forest. Detailed soil descriptions are provided in Appendix 3.

Hydrology/Water Management

The property contains four large water-filled pits and some smaller pits resulting from mining operations (Map 3). The water-filled pits reportedly extend as deep as 80 feet below surface level. The Florida Geological Survey conducted a bathymetric survey of the largest (northwestern) pit in July 2003 (Florida Geological Survey, 2003). Average depth was 33 feet, and a depth of 45 feet was recorded for the northwest corner of the pit. Bathymetric surveys of the other pits are planned. The U.S.G.S. 1:24,000 topographic quad shows that a small stream was present in the area. The stream is no longer present and has been replaced by the pits and spoil. A borrow pit and small pond related to the stream still remain to the east of the project. As mentioned above, some wet and dry sinkholes are present on the property.

Two of the limestone pits were sampled as part of a water quality baseline assessment of the Ichetucknee Trace performed by FDEP (FDEP Chemistry Section, 1996). Other than high nitrate levels, water quality in the pits appeared good, with very low nutrients. The nitrates could have been the result of oxidation of organic nitrogen compounds and ammonia by autotrophic nitrifying bacteria, or as a result of explosives in use at the time for mining.

The Suwannee River Water Management District is monitoring water levels in an old well on the property (W. Zwanka, pers. comm. of December 19, 2003 to J. Muller, Muller and Associates, Inc.). The District has data starting in 2001, and in late 2003 installed a continuous recorder on the well. The District hopes to get an idea of the transmissivity of water in the area based on surges in groundwater level between this well and other wells, both upgradient and downgradient (at Ichetucknee Springs).

In April 2003, a series of wells were drilled on the property as part of a contamination study (Murray and Newton, 2003). Nine 2-inch monitoring wells were installed to monitor water quality for suspected contamination on the ITRA. Samples were tested for volatile organic contaminants, base neutral acid extractables, metals, pesticides and ethylene glycol. Ethylene glycol was detected at a former vehicle maintenance area; there were no other unusual results.

Surface water samples from the pits were also taken and tested for contaminants. Other than a high pH (8.58 to 8.88), no unusual results were reported. The tissues of five bass were analyzed for pesticides, metals and PCBs. Four of the five bass had mercury levels in excess of 0.5 mg/Kg, which is considered elevated for human consumption. PCBs were detected in three of the five fish, and the Florida Department of Health has been contacted for their review and comments.

The soil from potential contamination areas was also sampled, and Total Recoverable Petroleum Hydrocarbons (TRPH) were detected in seven of 10 samples. The highest levels were in an area where the soil was obviously stained. Other contaminants were also reported.

After review of the sampling results, FDEP did not recommend any further soil, ground water or surface water sampling except in one area where additional hydrocarbon and volatile organic contaminant tests should be conducted to determine the extent of the contamination. Additional fish tissue sampling was recommended to determine if advisory levels should be considered for these water bodies for fish consumption.

Additional information on groundwater and probable connection to Ichetucknee Springs is addressed in the topography and geology section, above.

Climate

The area experiences the typical north Florida climate. From 1948 to 2003, the annual average maximum temperature in the area was 82 ºF, with the highest monthly average of 92ºF. The annual average minimum temperature in the area was 57ºF, with the lowest monthly average of 41 ºF. The average total precipitation is 53 inches, with June through September accounting for about half the rainfall, and October through December only providing about 8 inches of rain.

Natural Communities

The natural community classification used in this plan was developed by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The community types are defined by a variety of factors, such as vegetation structure and composition, hydrology, fire regime, topography and soil type. The community types are named for the most characteristic biological or physical feature (FNAI and DEP, 1990). FNAI also assigns Global (G) and State (S) ranks to each natural community and species that FNAI tracks. These ranks reflect the status of the natural community or species worldwide (G) and in Florida (S). Lower numbers reflect a higher degree of imperilment (e.g., G1 represents the most imperiled natural communities worldwide, S1 represents the most imperiled natural communities in Florida).

Much of the ITRA is disturbed. Approximately 292 acres are heavily disturbed due to limerock mining (pits, spoil areas, and mining roads) that occurred prior to acquisition by the state. Another roughly 246 acres have been converted to pine plantations, and a 34-acre site was recently cutover. The remaining areas that can be classified as natural communities comprise about 83 acres of ITRA.

The Florida Natural Areas Inventory conducted field surveys of the ITRA in July and August, 2003 (Herring and Jackson, 2003; Appendix 4). According to FNAI's report, only one type of natural community, Upland Mixed Forest (G4/S4, apparently secure globally and in Florida), occurs within the ITRA. The following text is excerpted from that report; in some cases the acreage estimates were refined.

Upland Mixed Forest
Four areas identified as upland mixed forest occur on site. Along the northwestern portion of the site east of Carpenter Road and north of the large pine plantation, a small area of upland mixed forest supports large diamond-leaved oaks (*Quercus laurifolia*) as well as an understory of red bud (*Cercis canadensis*) and sparkleberry (*Vaccinium arboreum*). The site also has several weedy and exotic pest plant species, not surprising given the site's close proximity to an old homesite. Exotic plants in the upland mixed forest are camphor tree, chinaberry, and Chinese wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*). Additional exotic plants located at the homesite include lantana (*Lantana camara*) and Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*).

A small strand of upland mixed forest is situated along the western boundary of the site, on the northern boundary of the limerock mine area. Hardwoods are small in diameter and form a dense, closed canopy. Diversity of plant species is low. Pine plantation extends into this forest.

North of Bedrock Road, two areas have remnants of upland mixed forest. Immediately north of Bedrock Road in a small area between the remnant sandhill to the south and pine plantation to the north, a very species-rich upland mixed forest was observed. The mix of hardwoods includes laurel oak and sand live oak (*Quercus geminata*). The subcanopy supports wild cherry (*Prunus serotina*), redbay (*Persea borbonia*) and wild olive (*Osmanthus americanus*).

The fourth upland mixed forest is located along the western boundary of the northeastern portion of the site. Historically, this site may have been a sinkhole, given its large drop in elevation. Land clearing has altered the site, which now supports mostly weedy species such as muscadine grape (*Vitis rotundifolia*) and the invasive exotic chinaberry, but hardwoods such as laurel oak and sand live oak still persist.

The predominant land cover on the ITRA are the limerock mine areas and silvicultural lands. The FNAI description of these two cover types follows.

Silvicultural Lands
The silvicultural lands cover approximately one-half of the site and occur both north and south of Bedrock Road and the limerock mines. The largest block of pine plantation (approximately 166 acres) occupies the northwestern portion of the site, north of Bedrock Road. The plantation consists primarily of densely stocked slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) that appears to be between 20 and 30 years old, although growth in the local sandy soils has been poor. Understory beneath the pines is sparse except for scattered laurel oaks (*Quercus hemisphaerica*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), winged sumac (*Rhus copallina*), and sand blackberry (*Rubus cuneifolius*). The native grass, sweet tanglehead (*Heteropogon melanocarpus*) is common along the numerous woods roads, fencelines, and powerlines that dissect the site. The deep layer of pine needles that covers the forest floor reflects several years of fire suppression. Based on remnant native vegetation, the surrounding community, and the large concentration of gopher tortoise burrows (15 observed during the July visit), this site historically supported a sandhill community. A smaller area of 20 acres, in the northwestern corner of the tract just north of the powerline, supports more recently planted slash pines, although there remain many native sandhill species such as longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*), southern red oak (*Quercus falcata*), and wiregrass (*Aristida stricta*).

North of Bedrock Road, within the northeast portion of the site, another slash pine plantation covers approximately 60 acres. The young pines are approximately 10-15 feet in height and are estimated to be less than 10 years old. Plant diversity on this site is low. Dominant species are panic grasses (*Panicum* spp) and sand blackberry (*Rubus cuneifolius*). The terrain has been ridged and furrowed from site preparation for the pine plantation. Dirt roads encircle and bisect the site. Bordering the southern end of the pine plantation, just north of Bedrock Road, is a small remnant (approximately 12 acres) of sandhill/upland mixed forest. Native sandhill species include longleaf pine, sandbur (*Krameria lanceolata*), and Carolina false vervain (*Stylodon carneus*).

A third area of cutover pine plantation occurs in the southwestern portion of the site south of the limerock mines. Encompassing an area of approximately 34 acres, this area was recently cleared when the pines were harvested. The site is characterized by large, scattered piles of slash left from the harvest operation. A diverse assemblage of sandhill forbs and graminoids, many of which were in flower during the July visit, still occurs throughout the site. A single occurrence of giant orchid (*Pteroglossaspis ecristata*; state listed; G2/S2) occurs within this portion of the site. Woody plants are also abundant. Of special interest is the abundance of the shrub, chinquapin (*Castanea pumila*). While not a listed species, the occurrence of this plant signifies that the area once supported a high quality sandhill.

Limerock Mines
Two generations of limerock mine are situated within the mid to southern-most portion of the site. This area now consists of artificial lakes and surrounding cleared land and spoil piles. This area, which represents the most altered of all of the terrain on site, covers approximately 292 acres. Dominant vegetation is weedy and includes many introduced exotic pest plants. Exotic plants observed in July were mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*), camphor tree (*Cinnamomum camphora*), air potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*), China berry (*Melia azedarach*), Chinese brake fern (*Pteris vittata*), and natal grass (*Rhynchelytrum repens*).

Data used to produce a map delineating the major natural community types found on ITRA (Map 6) were developed using information from the Division of Forestry's timber assessment and FNAI's rare and exotic species evaluation of the property.

There are no virgin timber stands on the ITRA. There are no named springs. There are some dry and wet sinkholes on the northwestern and northeastern portions of the property. It is possible that limerock mining pits connect to the Ichetucknee Springs system.

Table 2: Summary of Natural Communities and Cover Types on ITRA					
FNAI Natural Community Type	**# Acres**	**% of Area**	**Global Rank**	**State Rank**	**Comments**
Upland Mixed Forest	83	13	G4	S4	Scattered in about 4 areas on the site
Other Cover Types					
Limerock mines, spoil, and roads	292	44			
Silvicultural lands/cutover areas	280	43			

G4 (S4) = Apparently secure globally (in state) - may be rare in parts of range

Native Species

Due to the disturbance from mining and the pine plantation on the property, neither native species diversity nor numbers of individuals is expected to be high. Some of the native plant species on-site are listed in the Natural Community section, above. In their August 2003 report, FNAI noted that, because of the degraded and isolated condition of the remaining habitat, the site's current potential to support sandhill species is low. The 1996 CARL assessment indicated that the site is of low importance for protecting plant diversity in the state.

According to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (K Singleton, pers. comm. of June 12, 2003 to M. Rickman, OGT), due to its size and current use, it appears that ITRA "has been disturbed to the point where most of the high quality wildlife habitat values are no longer available." In general, the water-filled mine pits are not suitable for wading birds because of the steep sides. The 1996 CARL assessment noted that the upland mixed forest portion of the site was the most valuable portion for wildlife, and that wildlife species typical for this type of habitat include gray squirrel, gray fox, raccoon, opossum, white-tailed deer, cotton mouse, black racers, barred owl, pileated woodpecker, and various passerine birds.

An inventory of native species on site has not been conducted.

Listed Species

Statutorily-recognized lists of rare and endangered species are produced at the federal level by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, and at the state level by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) also produces a list of rare and endangered species, and maintains a data base of occurrences of these species in Florida.

FNAI lists 8 types of vascular plants, 54 vertebrates, and 5 invertebrates as rare or endangered in Columbia County (Appendix 5). Prior to the FNAI field survey of the recreation area, FNAI had no documented occurrences of FNAI-listed plants or animals (E. Abbey, FNAI, pers. comm. of May 21, 2003 to M. Rickman, OGT). Subsequently, FNAI has recorded one listed animal species (gopher tortoise, *Gopherus polyphemus*) and one listed plant species (giant orchid, *Pteroglossaspis ecristata*) from the ITRA (Herring and Jackson, 2003) (Table 3). FNAI also notes that portions of the recreation area appear to be located on or near Potential Habitat for wood stork (*Mycteria americana*) and eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*). FNAI qualifies their data by stating that the data should not be used as a substitute for actual field work, as many areas FNAI covers have not been adequately surveyed.

Listed Plant Species

Only one listed plant species was noted during the FNAI survey. One individual of giant orchid (*Pteroglossaspis ecristata*; State Threatened; FNAI G2/S2) was noted in the southwest portion of ITRA in an area converted to

Map 6. Land Cover Map of the FNAI Natural Communities and other Features of the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
GREENWAYS & TRAILS

- Upland Mixed Forest
- Slash Pine Plantation
- Cutover Area
- Mine Spoil Area
- Water Bodies
- Homesite Area

** Based on information from Florida Division of Forestry (2003) and FNAI (2003).*
Map Date: 3/1/2005

silviculture. The former sandhill had been cleared and planted in pine. A few native sandhill plants and weedy species dominate the site.

According to FNAI, other listed plant species potentially occurring on the ITRA include incised groove-bur (*Agrimonia incisa*), Wagner's spleenwort (*Asplenium x heteroresiliens*), autumn coralroot (*Corallorrhiza odontorhiza*), Chapman's skeletongrass (*Gymnopogon chapmanianus*), and Florida spiny-pod (*Matelea floridana*). Incised groove-bur and Chapman's skeletongrass both occur in sandhill. The other three species inhabit upland mixed forest or hammocks and are often associated with exposed limestone.

Listed Animal Species

In the 1996 CARL assessment, it was noted that no portions of the site have been designated as a Strategic Habitat Conservation Area (Cox *et al.*, 1994) or as wetlands critical to the survival of listed vertebrates (Kautz *et al.*, 1994). The assessment indicated the most likely listed animal species potentially using the site would be wading bird species, including little blue heron, tricolored heron, snowy egret, and possibly white ibis.

In his timber assessment dated July 14, 2003, Neal White of the Florida Division of Forestry noted a few active gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*, State listed as Species of Special Concern, FNAI G3/S3) burrows near the edges of woods roads and in the more open areas.

In August, 2003, the Florida Natural Areas Inventory conducted a field survey on ITRA to determine the distribution of gopher tortoises, their habitat use, and their general abundance on the site (Herring and Jackson, 2003). FNAI noted tortoise burrows throughout much of the unmined portion of the site. The highest numbers of burrows were observed in the southwestern tract and along fire lanes and roads in the northeastern young plantation (former improved pasture) and eastern half of the older northwestern pine plantation. Map 7 indicates the location of the burrows. Fifty-eight of the 94 burrows observed (62%) were characterized as showing recent tortoise activity. The majority of the burrows were likely those of adult tortoises. FNAI did not search areas of dense groundcover, so it is likely that additional tortoises are present on site. On a subsequent field trip to the site by OGT staff and consultants in November 2003, at least two previously unrecorded tortoise burrows were noted.

Table 3: Listed Species Known to Occur on ITRA

Scientific Name	Common Name	FNAI Global	FNAI State	State Status	Federal Status
Pteroglossaspis ecristata	giant orchid	G2	S2	LT	N
Gopherus polyphemus	gopher tortoise	G3	S3	LS	N

G2 (S2) = Imperiled globally (in state) because of rarity (6 to 20 occurrences or less than 3000 individuals) or because of vulnerability to extinction due to some natural or man-made factor.
G3 (S3) = Either very rare and local throughout its range (in state) [21-100 occurrences or less than 10,000 individuals] or found locally in a restricted range or vulnerable to extinction from other factors.
LT = Threatened; LS = Species of Special Concern; N = Not currently listed, nor currently being considered for listing
See Appendix 5 for full explanation of FNAI ranks and statuses

Invasive Non-native Species

At least nine invasive, non-native plant species are known to occur within the ITRA (Table 4), according to a survey conducted by FNAI. No invasive non-native animal species have been reported from the site, although FNAI noted pigs on an adjoining property. Six of the nine plant species are ranked as Category I by the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (EPPC), and three are ranked as Category II. Category I invasive plant exotics alter native plant communities by displacing native species, changing community structures or ecological functions, or hybridizing with natives. This definition does not rely on the economic severity or geographic range of the problem, but on the documented ecological damage caused. Category II invasive exotics are those that have increased in abundance or frequency but have not yet altered Florida plant communities to the extent shown by Category I species. Florida

does not have an official invasive non-native animal species list, but at least 270 exotic animal species are known to occur in Florida.

Mimosa (*Albiza julibrissin*, Category I) and Chinese wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*, Category II) are located on the old homesite and the borders of nearby stands of trees in the northwestern area of ITRA. FNAI also thinks it is probable that the exotic Cogon grass (*Imperata cylindrica*) and Japanese climbing fern (*Lygodium japonicum*) are in the area. All exotic species occurrences noted by FNAI on ITRA were located in ruderal areas, and the estimated coverage is less than 6000 square feet.

The distribution of the invasive non-native species on ITRA is shown on Map 8.

Table 4: Invasive Non-native Species Known to Occur on ITRA

Scientific Name	Common Name	EPPC Cat.	Gov. List	Degree Of Infestation
Albizia julibrissin	mimosa	I		Low
Cinnamomum camphora	camphor tree	I		Low
Dioscorea bulbifera	air potato	I	N	Low
Lantana camara	lantana	I		Low
Ligustrum sinense	Chinese privet	I		Low
Melia azedarach	China berry	I		Low
Pteris vittata	Chinese brake fern	II		Low
Rhynchelytrum repens	natal grass	II		Low
Wisteria sinensis	Chinese wisteria	II		Low

EPPC Cat. = Exotic Pest Plant Council Category. Category I invasive plant exotics alter native plant communities by displacing native species, changing community structures or ecological functions, or hybridizing with natives. Category II invasive exotics are those that have increased in abundance or frequency but have not yet altered Florida plant communities to the extent shown by Category I species.
Gov. list: P = Prohibited by Fla. Dept. of Environmental Protection, N = Noxious weed listed by Fla. Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services, U = Noxious weed listed by U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Problem Species

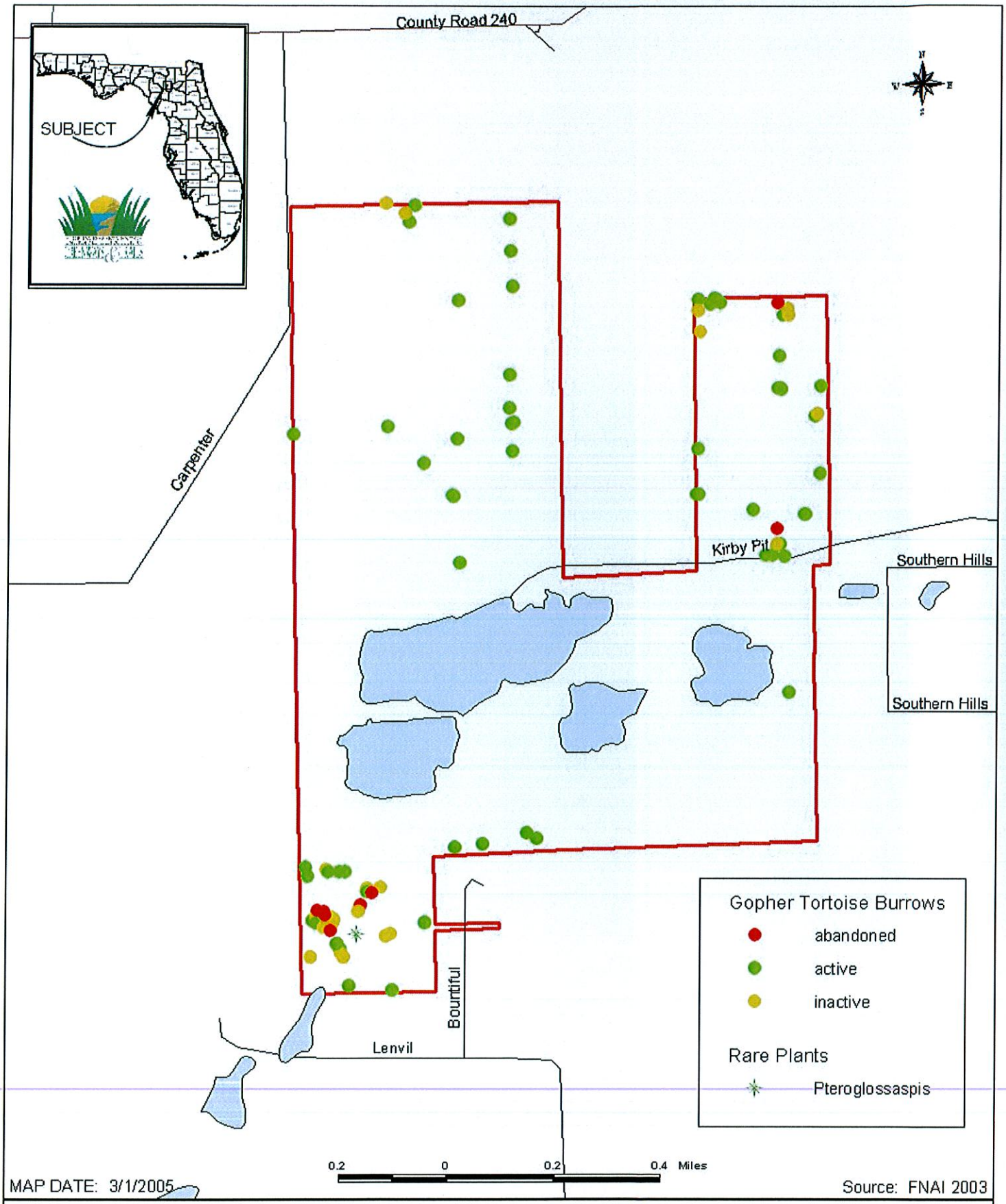
There are no reports of native species being problem species on the site.

Forest Resources

Sustainable forestry is an important component of Florida's economy and can provide funds for management of lands. A Timber Assessment for this area was prepared by Florida Division of Forestry staff on July 14, 2003 (White, 2003), and is included as Appendix 6.

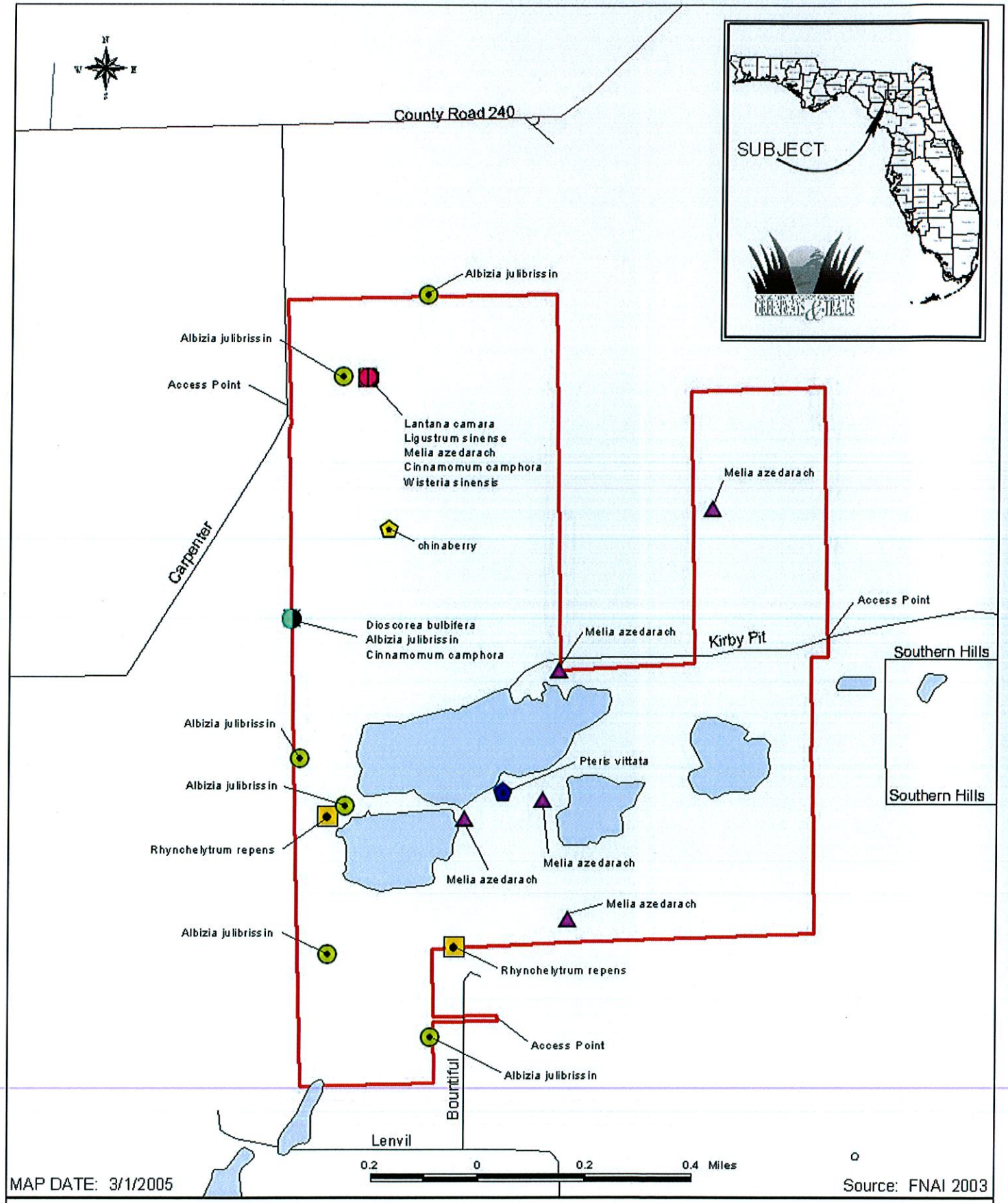
The timber assessment divides ITRA into 8 stands: 3 slash pine plantations, hardwood hammocks, a cutover area, mine spoil area, waterbodies, and the homesite. There are 246 acres of slash pine plantation north of the mining area, and a 34-acre cutover area in the southwestern corner of the tract. The 83 acres of mixed hardwood stands are in and around the mined area.

According to the timber assessment, the slash pine plantations have a moderate potential for future timber sales revenues. The plantations are well-stocked and are apparently productive for slash pine. As of 2003, the 166-acre stand in the northwestern area has trees approximately 13 years of age, while the trees of the northeastern stand (60 acres) are about seven years old, and those of the extreme northwestern stand (20 acres) are four years old. Various thinning options are outlined. The assessment offers suggestions for restoration, and notes that some plantations have little native groundcover remaining, but two stands have remnant native groundcover.



Map 7. Rare and Endangered Species Locations on the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area

Columbia County, Florida



Map 8. Invasive Non-native Species Locations on the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area

Columbia County, Florida

- Albizia julibrissin
- Cinnamomum camphora
- Dioscorea bulbifera
- Lantana camara
- Ligustrum sinense
- Pteris vittata
- Rhynchelytrum repens
- Wisteria sinensis
- chinaberry
- Melia azedarach

Map 8. Invasive Non-native Species Locations on the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area

Mineral Resources

Limerock was mined from the ITRA from about 1963 to 2000. During this time, four large pits were dug for extraction of the limerock for roadbuilding material. As of 1996, Florida Department of Transportation was purchasing most of the mines' products to serve as the roadbase for Interstate 75. The limerock on the site is road-base quality and is not considered a significant geological feature. Similar limerock underlies much of Florida (Land Acquisition Advisory Council Liaison Staff and Florida Natural Area Inventory, 1996). The northwestern 200 acres is presumed to have limestone of similar quality to that extracted from the mine area (Schmidt, ca. 2000). As detailed above, the primary purpose for acquisition of the site was the fear that continued mining could lead to deterioration of the water quality of Ichetucknee Springs. Mining on the property ceased on June 23, 2000.

Cultural, Archaeological, and Historic Resources

The Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources (DHR) maintains a Master Site File that documents many of Florida's archaeological and historical features. A review of the Florida Master Site File by DHR disclosed no known historical resources on site, and one site (Lithic Scatter/Non-quarry site type and Archaic Unspecified, 19th Century American, and Weeden Island Cultures) approximately ¼ mile east of ITRA. The recreation area has not been systematically searched for cultural resources. DHR believes there is a low probability of significant, unrecorded sites being located in this area (DHR letters of May 22 and May 29, 2003 to M. Rickman, OGT).

On the northwestern portion of the tract are the remains of the homestead of Pierce and Mattie Carpenter (Jennifer Chasteen, pers. com.). The Carpenters reportedly settled on the site in the 1890s. The original owners and date of construction of the homestead are unknown. The Carpenters' property was passed to Edgar Kirby and Maude Carpenter Kirby in 1940. The buildings that remain from the homestead are reportedly the Carpenter House (approximately 1800 square feet), the cotton /corncrib, and the sugar kettle foundation. A portion of a berm for logging tram tracks is also present. A descendent of the Carpenters, Jennifer Chasteen, has a personal interest in restoration of the homestead and establishment of a living history museum or educational center.

The house is in poor condition. The floorboards and floor joists have been removed from the original portion of the house, some windows have been removed, and the roof is in poor shape. The outside has been significantly altered over the years, and it appears that one or more additions were added to the rear of the house. The Florida Department of State, Division of Historic Resources determined that the buildings are not significant from a regional or national perspective (DHR emails of January 2 and 14, 2004 to J. Muller, Muller and Associates, Inc.).

III. Use of the Property

Previous Use and Development

Prior to acquisition by the State, ITRA was the homestead of members of the Carpenter and Kirby families and then the site of limerock mines, old fields and pine plantations. According to Jennifer Chasteen (pers.comm.), the property became the homestead of Pierce and Mattie Carpenter in the 1890s. The previous ownership is not known at this time. The Carpenters' property was passed to Edgar and Maude Carpenter Kirby in 1940. The house, cotton/corncrib, and sugar kettle foundation of the Carpenter/Kirby homestead can still be found on the northwestern portion of the ITRA.

According to the 1996 CARL assessment, limerock mining operations on the Limerock Industries, Inc. – Columbia City Mine portion of the ITRA started well before 1963, and the area disturbed by mining expanded between 1984 and 1989 into section 17, south of the original pit and into the southeast corner. Mining operations on the Anderson Mining Company – Columbia City Pit portion of the ITRA began prior to December 1986. Additional expansion occurred between 1986 and 1989, and between 1989 and 1993. Expansion also occurred after 1993.

Timber operations have been conducted on four areas of the ITRA outside of the mining area. The majority of the northwestern arm of the property, approximately 166 acres, is in pine plantation that was planted in approximately 1990 (White, 2003). Information is not available as to what the immediately previous land cover was. Based on remnant vegetation and the presence of gopher tortoises, FNAI believes that the area was originally sandhill (Herring and Jackson, 2003). The 20 acres in the extreme northwest corner area was planted in pine in approximately 1999. Although the previous land use is not known, scattered large hardwoods remain, and wiregrass is found in some areas. Again, based on the presence of many sandhill plant species, FNAI believes this area was formerly sandhill. The northeastern 60 acres of the ITRA was an old field; pine was planted about 1996. The 34 acres in the extreme southwestern portion of the ITRA is a cutover area that FNAI classifies as pine plantation. Based on the diverse sandhill plant species, FNAI believes this was a high quality sandhill.

The presence of the Carpenter-Kirby homestead on the northwestern portion of the ITRA, the fact that the family farmed, and the reported presence of the logging tram (Chasteen, 2003), indicates that the lands of the area have been utilized by humans prior to the recent mining and establishment of pine plantations.

Current Public Use and Land Uses

At present, there is no public use of the property. From at least 1963 to 2000, limerock was mined from the property, and portions of the property on the northern end were converted to pine plantation. A few small mining-related structures that apparently housed staff-operated weigh-stations, storage facilities and similar functions remain on the property (Map 9). The Carpenter homestead with several related structures remains on the northwestern portion of the property. No other facilities are present. No on-site mine reclamation activities have started, and the reclamation schedule will affect when the property can be open for public use.

State rules require that mine reclamation activities be completed within three years of the final cessation of mining operations. The former Anderson Mining Corporation-Columbia City Mine property was acquired by the State in September 2000, and a 50-year lease agreement between the Board of Trustees and Greenways and Trails was executed for management of the entire property in January 2003. In June 2003, OGT requested a temporary variance from the Department of Environmental Protection regarding the timeline to complete the mine reclamation because of the delay in securing a permanent manager for the property after acquisition by the State, the need to hold public workshops and complete a management plan prior to starting mine reclamation, and to allow time to determine whether possible contamination sites may need to be cleaned up before reclamation activities proceed. On October 1, 2003, OGT was granted a temporary variance until June 30, 2007 to complete the mine reclamation.

It is anticipated that reclamation activities can be completed by June 2007 and that the property will be open for public use soon after that date.

Planned Uses and Assessment of their Impacts

Determination of Public Uses that are Consistent with Acquisition Purposes

Public uses of ITRA must follow the statutory requirements of the program(s) under which it was acquired, the management policy statement, and the management prospectus. According to the approved CARL project assessment, "The primary objective of management of the Ichetucknee Trace Limerock Mines CARL project [of which ITRA is a portion] is to preserve the quality and quantity of water flowing into the first-magnitude Ichetucknee Springs by preventing mines from disturbing a major conduit to the springs." Further, "The project should be managed under the multiple-use concept: Management activities should be directed first toward conservation and restoration of resources and second toward integrating carefully controlled consumptive uses such as fishing."

According to the Florida Forever Five Year Plan 2004, the ITRA "qualifies as a fish management area, recreation parks, and geologic sites. With appropriate contouring, the water-filled mine pits could serve as a recreational fishery or fish hatchery and as a county park". The CARL project assessment and Five Year Plan both emphasize the need for mine reclamation, especially as in regard to public safety and recontouring the mine pit walls so that they are not perpendicular. Uses planned for ITRA comply with the Conceptual State Lands Management plan and represent "balanced public utilization" and are detailed below under "Planned Public Uses and Assessment of Impacts" and "Analysis of Multiple-Use Potential". Uses other than those approved below must be reviewed and approved by OGT in advance of such use.

Planned Public Uses and Assessment of Impacts

The ITRA is one of five separate parts of the Ichetucknee Trace Florida Forever project. As stated earlier, Columbia County was given interim management authority for the ITRA portion of the project in March 2001, but in November 2002 the County decided not to enter into a lease agreement. The Office of Greenways and Trails became the managing entity in January 2003.

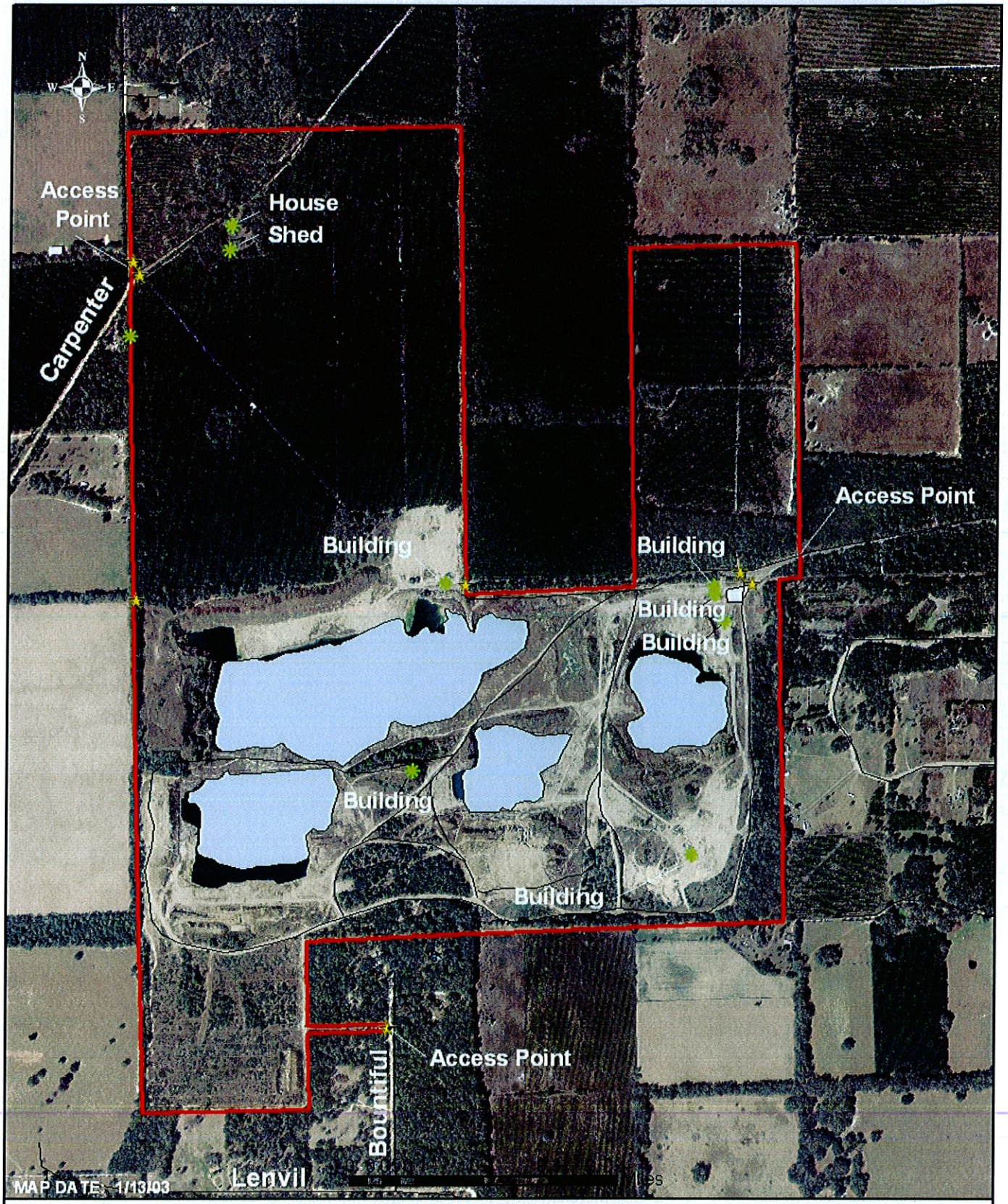
Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area

The ITRA was purchased not for its intrinsic environmental values, but rather to preclude the potential deterioration of the Ichetucknee Springs water quality if mining operations continued. At the time the project was placed on the CARL list, almost the entire site was either severely altered by mining operations or was in pine plantation. The CARL project assessment did not identify any outstanding natural resources on the site.

The ITRA was recommended as a potential site for off highway vehicle (OHV) activities in the *Off-Highway Vehicle Safety & Recreation Act Report, A Requirement of: The T. Mark Schmidt Off-Highway Vehicle Safety and Recreation Act* (FL Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services, 2002) because of its extremely disturbed state. Other than the protection of water quality, no outstanding natural resources were known from the site. The report made recommendations on facilities and fee structures for operation of OHV activities on the site.

OGT initially planned to make ITRA available as an OHV recreation area, and held a management advisory group meeting and public hearing. However, since a recreation area was not an approved use of the property under the Columbia County Comprehensive Plan, a land use special exception waiver was required. In January 2004, the Columbia County Board of Adjustments agreed to allow a recreation area but refused to allow the OHV land use or overnight recreation use (camping) of the property. This decision was upheld by the Columbia County Board of County Commission at an April 2004 meeting. This was primarily due to neighbors' concerns about potential noise from OHVs. If Columbia County approves such use in the future, OGT will consider OHV use on the property, with the proper environmental safeguards and sound buffers.

OGT intends to provide a variety of recreational opportunities and facilities on the ITRA, with emphasis on bicycle-related activities. The primary concern is protection of the water quality. This can be accomplished by establishing



Map 9. Current Public Uses and Facilities on the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area

Columbia County, Florida

☆ Gates

✱ Structures

buffers around the water bodies and prohibiting the use of gasoline motors on boats. Protection and management of gopher tortoises will be coordinated with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Discussions have been initiated, and FWC staff have indicated that bicycle use and protection of the gopher tortoises should be compatible. If necessary, a variety of methods are available to protect the gopher tortoises from human activities, including establishing buffers around burrows, placing tripods over burrows to mark and protect them, installing fencing to direct tortoise movements, and establishing new foraging area for the tortoises away from trails. Signage will be erected, and all bike riders will be provided educational and regulatory information concerning the tortoises.

Map 10 provides a conceptual use map of the ITRA. Placement of facilities in the mining-disturbed area will likely change as the detailed reclamation/recreation plan is developed. Reclamation requirements and efficiency of earth moving will dictate some placement. In addition to mountain bike trails, technical riding areas and bike motocross tracks, bank and boat fishing will be encouraged. One or more boat ramps will be established, and petroleum-fueled boat motors will be prohibited to protect water quality. Hiking and nature trails will be established in non-motorized use areas. Picnic and restroom facilities will be provided.

Camping facilities will also be developed, assuming that Columbia County will approve a special exception to the land use. Campsites with water and power are planned, and a group primitive camping site is also planned. All wastewater facilities will at least meet the minimum treatment requirements, and OGT will also consider advanced wastewater treatment or the use of wastewater technologies that could be used as a demonstration project for protection of groundwater.

An environmental education/meeting facilities building is also planned. An entrance station with staff offices will be constructed, as well as a staff residence and maintenance building. Concession facilities will also be constructed, and will offer refreshments and bicycle and boat rental. Parking will be located in the former mining area in locations convenient to facilities. Fishing benches/shelters will be scattered around the lakes to provide a higher quality fishing experience. Picnic pavilions will also be dispersed.

The deep, clear waters of the mining pits on ITRA also provide a good training opportunity for SCUBA divers. Academic and law enforcement SCUBA diver training programs will be allowed to use the mining pits on a pre-arranged basis. A diver entry area and a benthic dive platform are planned. Areas in use by divers will be marked to avoid conflicts and safety issues with boaters and fishers.

A variety of bike venues will be provided on ITRA. Dispersed, wooded trail systems of varying degrees of difficulty will be established in the northern pine plantation areas. Map 10 shows the general areas of concentration of the bike trails. The bike trails will also extend out of these pine plantation areas and connect to other ITRA activity areas. This will afford longer trails and will also provide the rider with a variety of scenery.

A youth training/educational BMX area, advanced bike motocross area, technical riding area, and parking are planned for the mine/spoil portion of ITRA. Prior to establishing the motocross venues, OGT will coordinate with the County and local municipalities to consider other bike venues being considered in the region. OGT will consider these venues and user demand in planning the facilities for ITRA. For all bike trails and facilities, OGT will emphasize connectivity, signage, and safety.

FWC will advise regarding fishery management of the water bodies, and has already prepared a preliminary fish enhancement document (FWC, 2003; Appendix 7). Management may include stocking, but nutrient enrichment will not be a major activity due to water quality concerns.

The exact configuration and placement of trails and facilities will be determined as the detailed mine reclamation/recreation plan is developed. Reclamation requirements and efficiency of earth moving will dictate some placement. The property was mined from the early 1960s to June 2000. Reclamation activities are required pursuant to Part IV of Chapter 378, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 62C-36, Florida Administrative Code. Reclamation will require intense management activities involving extensive earth moving and some excavation of quarry pit perimeters to create gradual slopes and additional shallow littoral zones. The submerged gradual slopes are important from a public safety standpoint because in many areas the existing quarry sides are perpendicular. The integration of reclamation and recreation design and construction will be a cost-effective approach. This will ensure

that the required reclamation is accomplished, and the earth-moving equipment and mine spoil can be used to construct more varied and enjoyable technical riding areas. The topographic relief provided by the spoil mounds in proximity to the artificial lakes provides scenic vistas not normally available in Florida. OGT will attempt to maintain these scenic characteristics during the reclamation/recreation design and construction process.

Adjacent Land Uses

The ITRA is in an area of Columbia County that is predominantly rural, with some subdivisions. Subdivisions in this area are located primarily near highways. Land uses immediately adjacent to the property are timberland, pastureland, cropland, Improved A, mobile home, single family home, no agricultural acreage, and vacant (Map 11).

Land adjacent to the northern boundary of the property includes: timberlands, pasture, improved–A, and mobile homes. Adjacent to the eastern boundary are timberlands, improved–A, and a mobile home park that also includes two single-family residential homes and vacant lots. Land adjacent to the southern boundary of the property includes: croplands, timberlands, single-family residential homes, mobile homes, and non-agricultural land. Adjacent to the west are croplands, timberland, mobile homes, and non-agricultural land.

There are a total of 13 residences that share the immediate boundary as follows:
North Boundary - One mobile home
Eastern Boundary - Four mobile homes
Southern Boundary - Four single-family residential homes and one mobile home
Western Boundary - Three mobile homes

Potential Surplus Lands

All of the lands within the ITRA are suitable and necessary for the stated management objectives and none should be considered or declared as surplus.

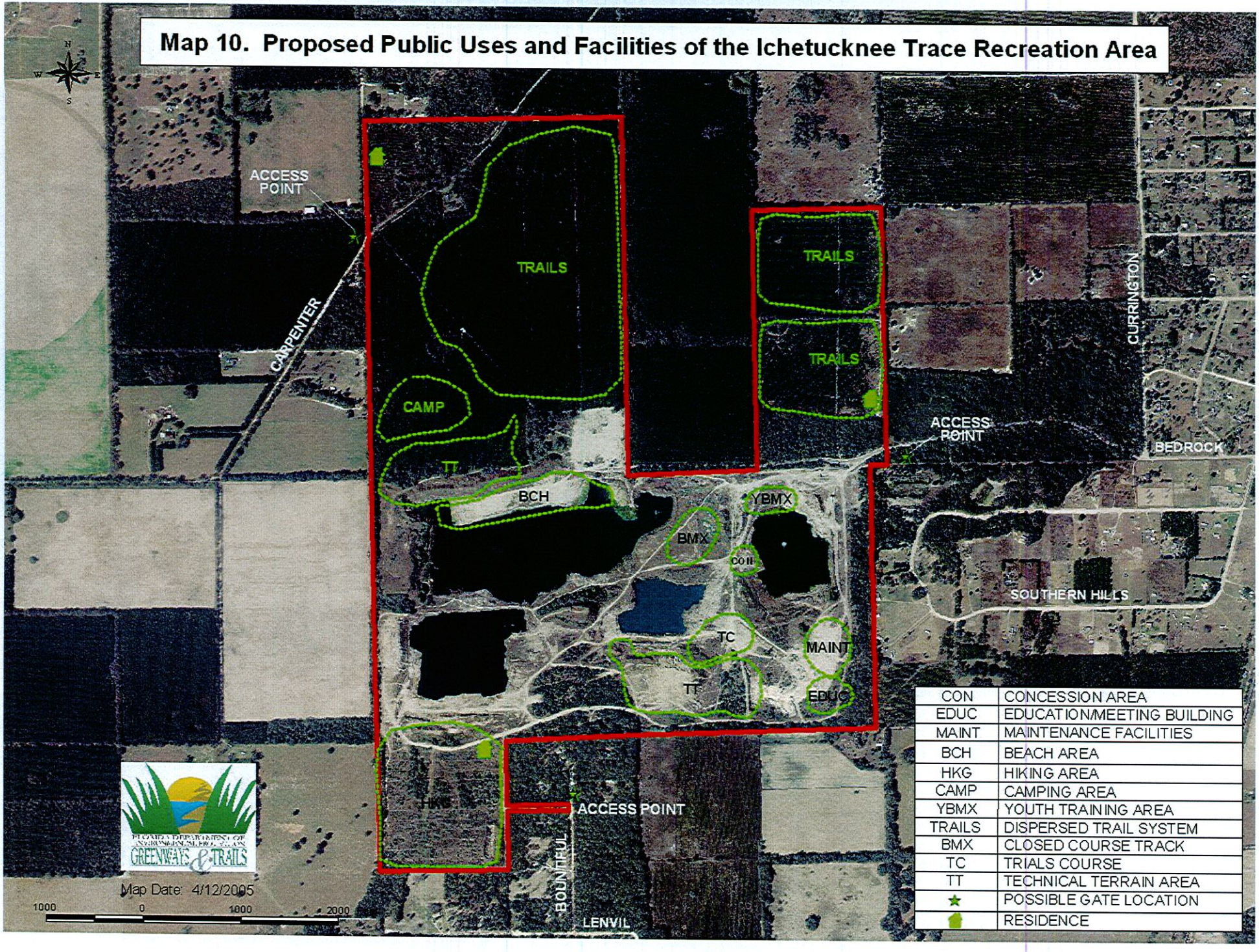
Prospective Land Acquisitions

Not all lands within the Florida Forever project boundaries for ITRA have been acquired. One parcel within this site (Limerock Mine Site) of the Ichetucknee Trace Florida Forever Boundary remains to be acquired. Map 12 shows this parcel, owned by the Elbert Curinton Estate *et al*. The current legal accesses to the ITRA are not very satisfactory. The southern entrance requires traveling for approximately 1-1/2 miles over dirt roads with several right angle turns. The last ½ mile is through a subdivision. Visitors to ITRA may be towing trailers and driving RVs. A winding, dirt road ending in a subdivision is not optimum for this type of traffic.

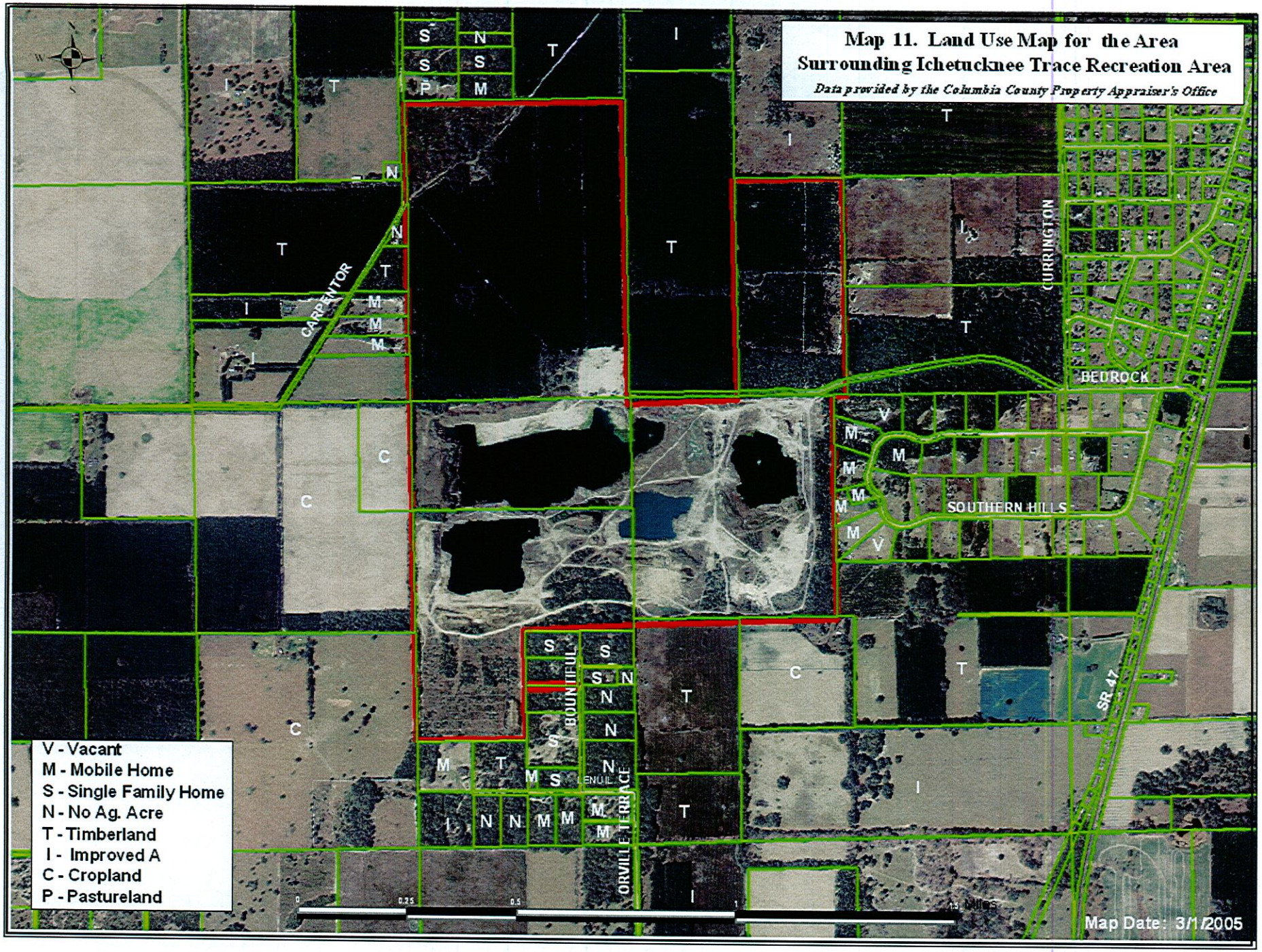
The northwestern entrance is also off of a dirt road. Visitors will have to travel about ½ mile on a dirt road to the entrance. This entrance would be in a portion of ITRA that is planned for woods trails for cyclists. Only woods roads exist in this area at this time. An entry station in this area would infringe upon this area. Residents around ITRA have expressed concern about the suitability of the southern and northwestern entrances. If either of these entrances is to be used for the main entrance, OGT will consult with the County on the possibility of paving the roads to the access point.

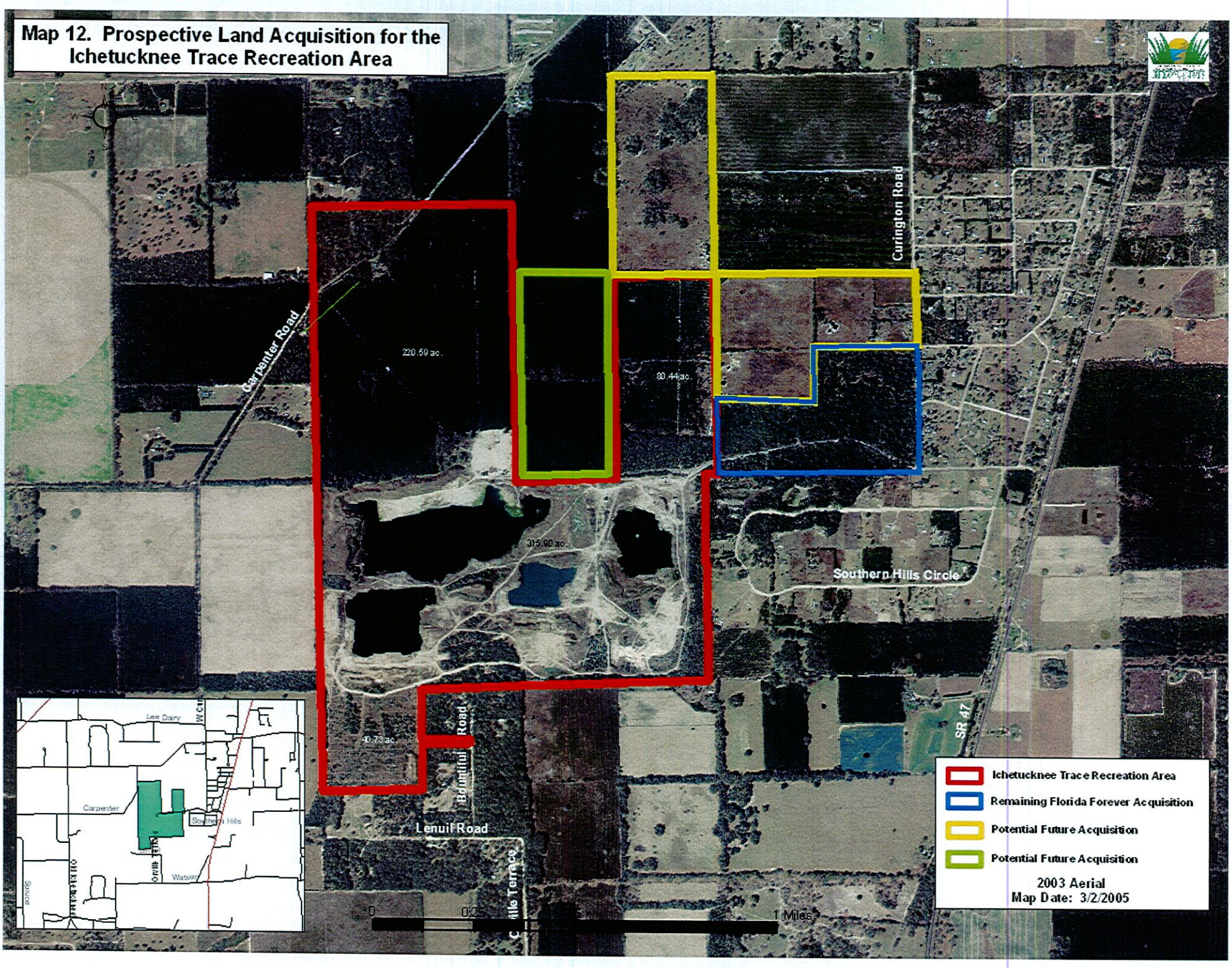
The preferred entrance is through the Curinton tract. Bedrock Road (aka Kirby Pit Road) travels east-west through the Curinton tract on the eastern boundary of ITRA. This was the established access road to the area when the mine was in operation. This parcel is less than ½ mile from SR 47. Although an additional turning lane on SR 47 may have to be established, this parcel would provide the most direct, controllable access to ITRA. This established entry would have visitors arrive at the optimum parking area. Paved roads are in place on this portion of the site. The length of Bedrock Road through the Curinton tract would provide an area for an entry station, which could be located far enough within the tract to keep lines of vehicles within the ITRA. Table 5 lists the individual ownerships and why the properties are important.

Map 10. Proposed Public Uses and Facilities of the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area



CON	CONCESSION AREA
EDUC	EDUCATION/MEETING BUILDING
MAINT	MAINTENANCE FACILITIES
BCH	BEACH AREA
HKG	HIKING AREA
CAMP	CAMPING AREA
YBMX	YOUTH TRAINING AREA
TRAILS	DISPERSED TRAIL SYSTEM
BMX	CLOSED COURSE TRACK
TC	TRIALS COURSE
TT	TECHNICAL TERRAIN AREA
★	POSSIBLE GATE LOCATION
	RESIDENCE


Map 11. Land Use Map for the Area
Surrounding Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area
Data provided by the Columbia County Property Appraiser's Office
CARPENTOR
CURRINGTON
BEDROCK
SOUTHERN HILLS
BOUNTIFUL
LENUIL
ORVILLE TERRACE
SR 47
V - Vacant
M - Mobile Home
S - Single Family Home
N - No Ag. Acre
T - Timberland
I - Improved A
C - Cropland
P - Pastureland
0
0.25
0.5
1
1.5 Miles
Map Date: 3/1/2005


Map 12. Prospective Land Acquisition for the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area
Curington Road
Carpenter Road
220.59 ac.
80.44 ac.
315.90 ac.
40.73 ac.
Southern Hills Circle
SR 47
Lenuil Road
Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area
Remaining Florida Forever Acquisition
Potential Future Acquisition
Potential Future Acquisition
2003 Aerial
Map Date: 3/2/2005
0
0.25
1 Miles

Council members and staff involved in the evaluation of CARL and, now, Florida Forever applications develop project boundaries based on numerous factors, primarily related to the natural and cultural resources of a project. After a project is acquired, management staff are often able to assess the natural resource and management needs of a recreation area in more detail. Oftentimes a change or potential change in surrounding land use or the necessity to provide additional facilities indicate the original boundaries are not sufficient to ensure the recreation area's perpetual protection. OGT staff identified two additional parcel properties totaling approximately 140 acres for addition to the recreation area that are not contained within the Florida Forever project boundary (Map 12). Acquisition of these properties would provide the optimum boundary for the recreation area.

The Curinton Estate tract is a portion of the Curinton Estate parcel already within the Florida Forever project boundaries. Approximately 60 of the 80 acres of the parcel were originally included because the remaining 20 acres were not wooded. Inclusion of the 20 acres would make negotiations easier. Two other parcels of the Curinton estate are also identified for potential acquisition. These two parcels (one real estate identification number, a total of about 160 acres) would provide additional recreational opportunity. Reportedly, the estate wishes to sell all, not a portion of, their holdings.

Table 5: Recommended Acquisition Priorities for ITRA (in priority order)

Parcel Name	Acres	Property Description	Acquisition Reason
Parcels within Florida Forever Project boundaries			
Elbert Curinton Estate et al. (PIN 16-5S-16-03630-000)	Ca. 60	Timberland	Immediately to the east of existing public ownership; would provide safer and better access for visitors
Parcels outside Florida Forever Project boundaries			
Elbert Curinton Estate et al. (PIN 16-5S-16-03630-000)	Ca. 20	Pasture	Immediately to the east of existing public ownership; remainder of the parcel listed above that is within the project boundary
Elbert Curinton Estate et al. (PIN 16-5S-16-03629-000)	160	Pasture	Immediately north and east of the northeastern arm of ITRA – enhance area for recreation
Bobby Lex Kirby (PIN 16-5S-16-03631-001)	120	Timberland	Parcel is between the northeast and northwest parcels of ITRA – enhance area for recreation and facilitate management

The other parcel proposed for addition is the B.L. Kirby tract, which is located between the northwest and northeast arms of the ITRA. Acquisition of the B.L. Kirby tract would expand the area available for woods trails for cyclists by approximately one-third, and would let trails cyclists avoid the pinch-point between the northernmost lake and the Kirby property when moving between the trails on the northwest and northeast arms. At this time, Mr. Kirby is reportedly not a willing seller. If, in the future, he is willing to sell his land, OGT would like to have the land eligible for acquisition.

As additional needs are identified through recreation area use, development, and research, and as adjacent land uses continue to change on private properties, the optimum boundary for the recreation area may be modified for the enhancement of natural and cultural resources, recreational values, and/or management efficiency.

Identification of prospective land acquisitions is solely for planning purposes and not for regulatory purposes. A property's identification as a prospective acquisition is not meant to be used by any party or other government body to reduce or restrict the lawful right of private landowners. Identification of these lands does not empower or require any government entity to impose additional or more restrictive environmental land use or zoning regulations. Identification is not meant to be used as the basis for permit denial or the imposition of permit conditions.

Analysis of Multiple-Use Potential

The following actions or activities have been considered under the multiple-use concept as possible uses to be allowed on the recreation area. "Approved" uses are deemed to be in concert with the purposes for state acquisition, with the Conceptual State Lands Management Plan, and with DEP'S agency mission, goals and objectives. "Conditional" means the use may be acceptable, but will be allowed only if approved through a process other than the land management plan development and approval process. "Rejected" means the item is not in concert with one or more of these various forms of guidance available for decision-making:

Table 6: Analysis of Multiple-Use Potential for ITRA

Activity	Approved	Conditional	Rejected
Protection of endangered and threatened species	Y		
Ecosystem maintenance	Y		
Soil and water conservation	Y		
Hunting			Y
Fishing	Y		
Wildlife observation	Y		
Hiking	Y		
Bicycling	Y		
Boating (excluding petroleum powered motors)	Y		
Horseback riding		Y	
Timber harvest		Y	
Cattle grazing			Y
Camping		Y	
Apiaries			Y
Linear facilities			Y
Off road vehicle use		Y	
Environmental education	Y		
SCUBA training for law enforcement, academic, & public safety agencies	Y		
Citriculture or other agriculture			Y
Preservation of archeological and historical sites	Y		
(Other uses as determined on an individual basis)			

Timber harvesting may be conducted on ITRA as it contributes to restoration and recreation needs of the property. OHV use will be considered if Columbia County approves the special exception to the land use classification. SCUBA training will be allowed on a pre-arranged basis in a defined area.

Proposed Single- or Multiple-Use Management

OGT intends to manage ITRA as a multiple-use use property within the guidelines of the Florida Forever and Preservation 2000 land acquisition programs, and advocates the specific uses described above. Management will be directed first to protection of the Ichetucknee Springs water resources, and second to other uses of the property. Activities other than those listed above may be permitted as long as they do not interfere with the primary purpose of acquisition.

IV. Management Issues, Goals and Objectives

Central to the management of individual greenways and trails are the mission of the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT), the land acquisition program(s) through which a specific recreation area was acquired, and the original intent for acquiring the project. These are described below. Goals and objectives for ITRA over the next 10 years are addressed in the next section. Each management subject area is addressed, starting with a brief description of pressing issues, if any. A discussion of needs for the subject area follows, and the intended management direction and activities are described. At the end of each section the pertinent goals and objectives are listed. Many of the goals and objectives apply to more than one subject area. In this case, the goals and objectives are placed in the subject area that seems most appropriate. Goals and objectives for all subject areas are also presented in one table in Appendix 8.

ITRA will undergo mandatory and voluntary limestone mine reclamation. This will address the artificial lakes and the uplands disturbed by mining. Most of the visitor and recreation facilities will be placed on the area disturbed by mining. The mine reclamation plan and the detailed recreation/facilities plan will be developed simultaneously to ensure an efficient, integrated approach and to avoid conflicts between reclamation requirements and optimum recreation design.

Program Framework and Goals

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Greenways & Trails (OGT) is working to establish a statewide system of greenways and trails for recreational and conservation purposes. Efforts are guided by a legislatively adopted plan titled "Connecting Florida's Communities with Greenways and Trails". OGT works directly with local communities, developers, private landowners and state and federal agencies to facilitate the establishment of the statewide system of greenways and trails.

CARL/Florida Forever Management Prospectus

As a CARL and Florida Forever project, the purposes for public ownership are outlined in Chap. 259.032(3), F.S. and Chap. 259.105, F.S. The intent of the CARL statute is "to conserve and protect environmentally unique and irreplaceable lands that contain native, relatively unaltered flora and fauna representing a natural area unique to, or scarce within, a region of Florida or a larger geographic area." The intent of the Florida Forever statute is to acquire environmentally sensitive lands, restore damaged environmental systems, assist with water resource development and supply, manage and maintain public lands, and provide increased protection of land by acquisition of conservation easements.

The management prospectus for an acquisition project is intended to define the management perspective for project lands. As acknowledged in the CARL management prospectus, "Management goals of the Ichetucknee Trace Limerock Mines project differ from typical CARL projects in that conservation and protection of environmentally unique native habitats and endangered species will not be a direct management goal. Protection and conservation of important ecosystem and groundwater resources will be afforded by preserving the quality and quantity of water flowing into Ichetucknee Springs." (Anonymous, ca 1996). The prospectus stated that the property had the potential to be a family fishing park and to provide opportunities for other activities such as canoeing, hiking, biking, picnicking, environmental education and nature studies. Mine reclamation and providing for public safety were recognized as the first activities necessary, followed by habitat creation/management and recreation uses with protection of the water quality.

Initially, FWC was going to be the lead manager of the ITRA tract, primarily to create recreational fishing opportunities in the mining pits. Columbia County was then identified as the lead manager to provide local recreation. When Columbia County declined to enter into a management lease, OGT became the lead manager.

Regardless of the lead manager, the primary management goal remains the same: protect the water quality of the Ichetucknee Springs by removing the threat of further mining and groundwater contamination.

Manager
The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) is the recommended lead manager of the ITRA.

Major Accomplishments for ITRA

Since taking over as manager of the ITRA in January 2003, OGT has fenced and posted the boundary of the property and obtained a 911 address. Two and a half million dollars were appropriated for mine reclamation, and a request for proposals for reclamation work was initiated. A topographic survey of the former mining area was conducted in preparation for mine reclamation activities. A bathymetric study of the northwestern lake was conducted by the Florida Geological Survey. The Division of Forestry performed a timber assessment for OGT. OGT also contracted with the Florida Natural Areas Inventory to search for rare plant species and gopher tortoises on the property. The property was investigated for possible contamination as a result of a complaint made to the Department's Division of Law Enforcement. No serious environmental contamination was found, and recommendations were made for follow-up action.

OGT also conducted a Management Advisory Group meeting and a public hearing on the management of the property. A land use special exception waiver exception to the Columbia County land use designation was requested by OGT in January 2004 to allow for recreational use of the land. The exception was granted in April 2004. However, the BCC decided that neither public OHV use nor overnight camping would be allowed on the property. The management plan was revised to reflect these limitations, and another Advisory Group meeting and public hearing were held in March 2005.

Table 7: Major Accomplishments for the ITRA since January 2003

Accomplishment
Property fenced and posted
Investigation of potential environmental contamination by the DEP Division of Law Enforcement
Rare plant and animal and exotic species survey by FNAI
Timber assessment by DOF
Evaluation of the property as potential OHV site including public hearings
Evaluation of the property as public fishing area by FWC
Bathymetric survey of the northwest lake by the Florida Geological Survey
Topographic survey of mine reclamation area
Mine reclamation funds appropriated
Mine reclamation design RFP process initiated
Establishment of a 911 address
Management advisory group meetings and public hearings on proposed management of the land
Coordination with FSU Academic Dive Program regarding SCUBA training

Goals and Objectives for ITRA During 2005-2014

Goals and objectives were developed specifically for the ITRA based on the purposes for which the lands were acquired, the condition of the resources present, and management issues for the property. The goals and objectives presented here reflect programmatic goals and the ideas of OGT personnel in charge of managing and protecting the area, as well as input from cooperative managers, user groups and other stakeholders from outside the DEP. The agency believes the goals and objectives to be consistent with the various forms of guidance provided to managers.

Management issues related to the resource categories described in Chapter II, as well as other important management topics, are discussed below in separate sections. Within each section, approaches for dealing with these issues are described. At the end of each section, goals and objectives related to those issues are listed, as well as other objectives essential to the section. Appendix 8 presents all the goals and objectives in a table, along with timelines and, if available, estimated costs to accomplish management actions on the recreation area, as required by Florida Statutes. Objectives are listed in priority order under each goal. The ability to implement the specific goals and objectives identified in this plan is dependent upon the availability of funding resources for these purposes.

Resource Management and Protection

Soil Management

ITRA has four small artificial lakes and several large dirt mounds resulting from limerock mining activities starting about 1963. The remainder of the property has had little soil disturbance other than for pine plantations and woods roads. Three of the lakes and their mining spoil are subject to mandatory mine reclamation guidelines; OGT also intends to reclaim the fourth lake. Mine reclamation statutes and rules can be accessed at http://www.dep.state.fl.us /water/mines/rules.htm. OGT is in the process of contracting the reclamation design work. After completion of the design, OGT will contract out the reclamation construction work. Reclamation will involve recontouring and vegetating the submerged lake shoreline and the spoil mounds to control erosion and to provide for public safety. The mine reclamation plan and the recreation plan will be integrated. Photo points will be established to show the conditions before and after reclamation activities.

Outside of the mining area, few soil erosion problems have been noted on ITRA, but the property has not been comprehensively assessed for erosion. The soils of ITRA are all moderately to excessively drained sands, so erosion should generally not be a problem. If erosion problems are noted, they will be addressed by the least disruptive means possible. Erosion control will be considered as recreational facilities are planned, such as trails, technical riding areas and the boat launch area. Access around the small sinkholes will be controlled to prevent erosion.

Goal 1: Manage soil to reduce and prevent erosion
Objective 1a: Assess property to identify major erosion areas
Objective 1b: Integrate soil erosion prevention into reclamation and recreation design and construction
Objective 1c: Install erosion control measures and structures as recommended by design and engineering surveys
Objective 1d: Prevent shoreline erosion near canoe launches by installing boarding dock if necessary

Hydrology/Water Management

The property needs to be surveyed for hydrological disturbances outside of the mining area; no major disturbances are anticipated. The main hydrology-related features expected outside of the mining area are the wet and dry sinkholes. As discussed in the soil management section, safeguards (such as signage, monitoring, proper trail design) will be in place to prevent sedimentation from soil erosion. Activities related to the artificial lakes and sinkholes will be restricted to prevent possible contamination of the water. Boating activities should not be a problem, since no petroleum-powered motors will be allowed. During the integrated reclamation/recreation design process, consideration will be given to opening a connection between the two western-most lakes. This would significantly increase the amount of open water available to a boater through a single launching of a boat, rather than having to relaunch the boat to get access to another lake.

Based on FDEP's recommendations following the soil and water sampling effort, additional hydrocarbon and volatile organic contaminant tests will be conducted in the one area with evident contamination. Additional fish tissue sampling will be conducted to determine if advisory levels should be considered for these water bodies for fish consumption.

Goal 2: Maintain/restore natural hydrological features outside of the mining area and protect water quality
Objective 2a: Ensure that planned trails, technical riding areas, and boat launch sites do not cause runoff and water quality problems
Objective 2b: Inventory hydrological changes to the property (ditching, fire lines, etc.) and their impacts and formulate restoration actions

Objective 2c: Conduct additional soil contamination tests in the one area with evident contamination and undertake remediation, if recommended
Objective 2d: Sample additional fish tissue to determine if advisory levels should be considered for these water bodies for fish consumption and implement measures to inform the public, if needed
Objective 2e: Assess corrective measures needed for hydrological disturbances on the property
Objective 2f: Continue coordination with SRWMD regarding monitoring wells
Objective 2g: Restore all major hydrological alterations on the property (25%/year)
Objective 2h: Consider opening a connection between the two western-most lakes to increase the public's enjoyment

Natural Communities Management

OGT will manage the natural communities on site with a holistic, ecosystem based approach. Prescribed fire will be a significant management tool. A comprehensive restoration plan will be developed and implemented. The plan will consider the processes as well as the components of the ecosystems. Such aspects as vegetation structure and composition, hydrology, soil condition, fire, animal species, listed species, reintroduction of native species, cultural resources, and invasive non-native species will be addressed in the plan. Specific goals and objectives, an implementation schedule, and monitoring will be part of the plan.

Upland mixed forest is the only natural community occurring on ITRA. Exotics will be removed from this climax community. Initially, restoration efforts on ITRA will focus on those former sandhill sites that appear to be highly restorable based on the diverse number of species of sandhill plants and the large number of gopher tortoise burrows. These are the northwestern-most area, southwestern-most site, and the area immediately north of Bedrock Road. Hardwood species will be removed and longleaf pine will be planted at a low density. Within the pine plantation areas, thinning will be necessary to allow more sunlight to stimulate groundcover growth and a prescribed fire plan will be implemented. Photo points will be established to show conditions prior to, during, and after restoration efforts.

(See also Listed Species Management, Invasive Non-native Species Management, and Fire Management, below).

Goal 3: Restore, maintain and protect natural communities
Objective 3a: Prepare a revised GIS map and description of FNAI natural communities and disturbed areas on the property
Objective 3b: Identify historic vegetative community types of the property in order to restore habitats to the proper natural community composition
Objective 3c: Develop and implement a comprehensive restoration plan with specific goals and objectives, an implementation schedule and monitoring. Highest priority will be sandhills identified as restorable based on presence of gopher tortoises and remnant sandhill vegetation.
Objective 3d: Restore disturbed areas, setting priorities based on rarity and quality. Initiate on-ground restoration activities immediately after mine reclamation is complete.

Native Species Management

Little work has been done to compile a comprehensive list of native species on site and their population levels, but species present on ITRA can be predicted based on its geographic location and the natural communities present. Species lists will be compiled over the years through staff observations and that of volunteers. Given ITRA's proximity to the University of Florida, faculty or students may be interested in conducting some of the surveys. It is intended that the ecosystem management approach will suit the needs of native species, and no separate management efforts will be necessary for individual native species. The recontouring and revegetation of the lake shorelines is expected to attract more wading birds and to provide more habitat for fish species. Where feasible, the use of native wildflowers will be emphasized in the revegetation of the mine reclamation area. OGT is also willing to designate an area, perhaps a half acre, that volunteer groups can manage to provide a native wildflower display. (See also Research and Monitoring and Partnerships and Regional Coordination, below.)

Goal 4: Maintain and protect the native species
Objective 4a: Inventory native plants found on the property on an opportunity basis or through volunteer efforts
Objective 4b: Inventory native animals found on the property on an opportunity basis or through volunteer efforts

Listed Species Management

In general, OGT manages natural resources at the ecosystem level, with the assumption that proper management of ecosystems will provide for the needs of the myriad species that are part of each ecosystem. However, in certain situations this may not be true. An example is a natural community in poor condition, perhaps in conjunction with extreme circumstances such as drought. In this case, some species may not fare well and the continued survival of a species in the recreation area may require specific efforts. For listed species, OGT manages specifically for listed species as needed, in conjunction with ecosystem management activities.

Gopher tortoises are confirmed from the site, and a gopher tortoise survey has been conducted. Tortoises will be considered in the mine reclamation plan, fire management and natural community restoration plans, as well as recreation plans. Fragmentation of tortoise habitat will be avoided, and the fire program will be planned to provide herbaceous forage for the tortoises in suitable areas. The tortoises will also be considered in trail design and rider education. In some cases it may be necessary to erect protective tripods over gopher tortoise burrows, or fences to guide tortoises away from high activity areas.

One individual of giant orchid (*Pteroglossaspis ecristata*; State Threatened; FNAI G2/S2) was noted in the southwest portion of ITRA in an area converted to silviculture. This species will be considered in the fire management and natural community restoration plans. Prescribed fire and restoration efforts will be used to create sunny openings and to reduce competition from woody species. Soil disturbing activities such as trails and fire lanes will be not be conducted in the area.

Additional listed plants and animals may be noted during or as a result of fire and restoration efforts. These species will be incorporated into management plans as they are discovered.

Goal 5: Maintain and protect the listed species
Objective 5a: Integrate listed species needs into fire, restoration, and mine reclamation plans
Objective 5b: Monitor gopher tortoise and giant orchid occurrences on a biennial basis and provide information to FNAI
Objective 5c: Survey listed animal and plant species every five years and provide information to FNAI

Invasive Non-native Species Management

At least nine invasive, non-native plant species are known to occur within the ITRA; six of the nine are Category I on the EPPC list and three are Category II (see Chapter II, Invasive Non-native Species Management, above). The extent of the species is fairly limited – a total of about 6000 square feet are infested. All infestations are located in ruderal areas, primarily along roads, fencelines, powerlines, and the mining area. OGT will coordinate with DEP Bureau of Invasive Plant Management to establish an exotic species operational plan, if necessary. Assistance is also available from IFAS at the University of Florida.

Treatment will be applied in the non-mining area as soon as possible. Since the mining area will undergo extensive reclamation activities, it is likely that the invasive plants treatment in this area will be done after reclamation activities are complete.

Goal 6: Eradicate invasive non-native species or maintain at the lowest practical level
Objective 6a: Coordinate with DEP Bureau of Invasive Plant Management to establish an exotic species operational plan for the property, if necessary
Objective 6b: Treat non-mine reclamation areas for invasive non-native plants
Objective 6c: Treat mine reclamation areas for invasive non-native plants after completion of reclamation activities
Objective 6d: Monitor for invasive non-native species and treat as necessary

Problem Species Management

There are no reports of native species being problem species on the site, and no goals or objectives related to this.

Forest Resources Management

A timber assessment of ITRA has been conducted by FDOF, and includes suggestions for restoration and thinning. The assessment will be an important reference when restoration and burn plans are being prepared. Forest resources will be managed as part of the ecosystem management/restoration approach.

Goal 7: Manage forest resources consistent with the purposes of this property, when the activities contribute to restoration management

Objective 7a: Consult timber assessment when preparing restoration plan
Objective 7b: Consult with DOF as necessary for forest resource issues

Fire Management

Prescribed burning is intended to mimic the conditions provided by a natural burning regime. The desire is to maintain plant community structure and biodiversity within the natural communities. A fire management plan will be prepared for ITRA. All prescribed burns will be conducted with authorization from the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry (DOF). Wildfire suppression activities will be coordinated between OGT and DOF.

Most of the ITRA that needs to be burned is slash pine plantations. Fuel loads at this time are not inordinately high. While the long-term plan is to replace the slash pine with longleaf, the merchantability of the slash pine timber and the restoration plan will need to be factored into the fire management plan. One to two dozen residences border ITRA, and some of the neighbors may have allergies and respiratory problems aggravated by smoke. This needs to be taken into account when planning burns. SR 47 is about a mile to the east, and this needs to be considered also.

In developing a fire management plan, all woods roads, powerlines, trails, and firelines will be documented by GPS. Fuel loads will be noted, and burn units established. All prescribed burns will be conducted with authorization from the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry (DOF). Wildfire suppression activities will be coordinated between OGT and DOF. A notification system will be implemented to let neighbors know when prescribed burns are planned. Later in the restoration process, it may be desirable to redefine the burn units.

Also, related to fire management and emergency services, access routes for fire and rescue equipment will be delineated. This information will be included in the burn management plan and will also be on file with the Columbia County Sheriff and the County emergency services.

Goal 8: Conduct fire management operations to help restore and maintain natural communities and to mimic natural fire effects

Objective 8a: Document all woods roads, trails, and firelines using GPS
Objective 8b: Develop burn plan for the property
Objective 8c: Delineate fire management and rescue access routes and provide this information to the sheriff and emergency services
Objective 8d: Acquire necessary training and equipment for fire prescription and suppression
Objective 8e: Install firelines as necessary to facilitate fire management
Objective 8f: Establish a system for notifying neighboring landowners in advance of prescribed burns (via email, phone trees, etc.) and use this system before each burn
Objective 8g: Assess all pyrogenic communities in year one for the need for prescribed fire; all areas in need of fire will be burned within the first 5 years, and then re-assessed for subsequent fire application
Objective 8h: Reduce fuel loads on the property to recommended levels on 25% of the property each year
Objective 8i: Accomplish the annual burn objectives listed in the burn plan.
Objective 8j: Protect the property from wildfire.

Mineral Resources Management

No active management of mineral resources is planned.

Cultural, Archaeological, and Historic Resources Management

The management of cultural resources is often complicated because these resources are irreplaceable and extremely vulnerable to disturbances. The advice of historical and archaeological experts is required in this effort. Approval from Department of State, Division of Historical Resources (DHR) must be obtained before taking any actions, such as development or site improvements that could affect or disturb the cultural resources on state lands. A statement of DHR's policies and procedures for the management and protection of cultural resources is contained in Appendix 9.

Actions that require permits or approval from DHR include development, site excavations or surveys, disturbances of sites or structures, disturbances of the substrate, and any other actions that may affect the integrity of the cultural resources. These actions could damage cultural resources.

As stated in Section III, no significant historical or archaeological resources are reported from the site and DHR believes there is a low probability of significant, unrecorded sites being located in this area. The Carpenter homestead buildings on site are in poor condition. DHR determined the buildings are not significant from a regional or national perspective. However, Jennifer Chasteen, a Carpenter descendent and an area resident, has expressed interest in restoration of the homestead and establishment of a living history museum or educational center. OGT is willing to postpone disposal of the buildings for up to three years after approval of the management plan to allow Ms. Chasteen time to secure restoration, education, and operation funds and make substantial progress on restoration.

Goal 9: Protect archaeological and historic sites discovered on the property.
Objective 9a: Conduct all ground-disturbing activities in accordance with DHR guidelines
Objective 9b: Report all suspected historical/archaeological resources discovered during reclamation and restoration activities to DHR

Security Management

The entire site is fenced. There have been some reports of illegal entry on the property prior to the fencing. Mine reclamation activities will preclude public use of the property during the construction period. OGT will coordinate with FWC, DEP law enforcement, and the Columbia County Sheriff about security concerns. After reclamation is complete, public access will be encouraged. Because of the Columbia County Board of County Commission's action, no camping will be allowed, although OGT may ask the County to reconsider this in the future. OGT will also consider establishment of a security residence on site.

Goal 10: Establish security measures sufficient to protect the property's integrity and to restrict unauthorized access and use
Objective 10a: Evaluate the current boundary posting and fencing and maintain the boundary of the property
Objective 10b: Coordinate with FWC, DEP law enforcement, and the Columbia County Sheriff about security concerns
Objective 10c: Evaluate establishment of a security residence on site

Research and Monitoring

Limited research and monitoring have been conducted on ITRA, mostly related to water quality and potential environmental contamination. As restoration starts, it will be important to monitor the changes related to the those efforts. It is also important to monitor the status of listed species on the property, especially if restoration efforts are undertaken to benefit those species or may have a negative effect on the species. Research and monitoring are also important to assess the character and health of the various natural communities and species. Progress on eradication of invasive non-native species should also be monitored. Water quality should be monitored on a regular schedule. Some of these issues are addressed in the goal and objectives for this section; others are addressed in related sections.

Any research or other activity that involves the collection of plant or animal species on state recreation area property requires coordination with the recreation area manager. Permits from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may be required.

Given ITRA's proximity to the University of Florida, faculty or students may be interested in conducting some of the research and monitoring. Assistance with invasive non-native species is also available from IFAS at the University of Florida.

Goal 11: Facilitate and conduct scientific research and monitoring to optimally manage and protect natural communities and native plant and animal species of the property
Objective 11a: Establish photo-plots in restoration areas
Objective 11b: Annually sample established vegetative treatment plots
Objective 11c: Establish annual or biennial survey of gopher tortoises, at least in the early phases of restoration
Objective 11d: Establish water quality monitoring stations on the property
Objective 11e: Ensure that all research and monitoring projects have all required permits from relevant agencies

Education and Training

A prescribed fire program will be necessary to restore and maintain the sandhill natural community on ITRA. OGT staff will interact with adjacent landowners and neighbors to educate them about prescribed fire and to notify them when planned burning will occur. Although invasive non-native plants are not a major problem now on ITRA, vigilance is necessary to prevent exotics from gaining a foothold. The actions of adjacent landowners can have a large influence on the establishment and control of exotic species on ITRA. OGT staff will work with adjacent landowners to prevent exotic species problems. Visitors will also be educated about Ichetucknee Trace's relationship to Ichetucknee Springs, and resources on ITRA, including gopher tortoises. Bikers, in particular, will be informed how to avoid harming tortoises.

Goal 12: Educate the public and local governments concerning resources, issues and management goals/objectives of the property
Objective 12a: Interact with adjacent landowners via phone, mail, and direct contact regarding management issues, such as exotics and burns. Develop brochures and letters explaining the prescribed burning and exotic species programs.
Objective 12b: Develop natural resource educational materials and displays, including entrance kiosk(s) with regulations. Relate ITRA natural resources to the region in general
Objective 12c: Encourage adjacent landowners to establish control programs for invasive exotic plants
Objective 12d: Provide public service announcements to local and state media contacts on a quarterly basis

Public Access and Visitor Use

Public Access / Parking / Handicap Facilities

The main entrance to the property, and sole entrance for motorized vehicles, will be from the southwestern portion of the property unless the preferred eastern access can be secured. An entry area and entry station will be established here. Parking and restrooms will be established in the mining area. From the parking in the mining area, visitors will be able to access the trail system, technical riding area, BMX tracks, and lakes. There will also be limited parking by the lakes and other facilities in the mining area. Restroom facilities will be provided at the lakes area, and picnic facilities will be dispersed. A concession building will be on site. Facilities will be handicapped-accessible. Additional non-motorized access points at other points of the property boundary will be considered to promote connectivity if linkages to other public-access trails are established. This will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. (See also goals and objectives related to specific recreational activities.)

Goal 13: Provide public access to encourage compatible uses where appropriate on the property that do not detract from the conservation and management goals and objectives.
Objective 13a: Establish entrance sign to identify primary property entrance
Objective 13b: Develop the main public access point in the southwestern portion of the property
Objective 13c: Provide parking areas and picnic facilities in the lake area
Objective 13d: Provide picnic facilities at various locations
Objective 13e: As facilities are developed, provide universal access in all cases except where the law allows reasonable exceptions (e.g., where handicap access is structurally impractical, or where providing such access would change the fundamental character of the facility being provided).

Education Facilities

One or more kiosks will explain the relation of ITRA to Ichetucknee Springs and the karst topography of the area. On-site environmental resources such as sinkholes, sandhills, and gopher tortoises will also be featured. Reclamation and restoration before-and-after photos will be displayed and these processes will be explained. Entrance signage to trail systems will provide trail maps and brochures and caution trail users to be careful about the gopher tortoises. Discreet signage will be placed along the trail system to explain environmental features.

An education/meeting building is planned for the mining reclamation area of ITRA, featuring a large classroom/meeting room, restrooms, and some office space. The building will be available for environmental education, recreation classes such as bicycle safety and techniques, and also meetings.

The deep, clear waters of the mining pits on ITRA will provide a good training opportunity for SCUBA divers. Academic and law enforcement SCUBA diver training programs will be allowed to use the mining pits on a pre-arranged basis. ITRA's proximity to I-75 and I-10 will likely encourage use by academic and law enforcement SCUBA programs. One of the lakes will have a restricted diver entry area, and a diving platform is planned to be placed on the bottom of the lake. The platform will reduce suspension of sediments due to diver activity. When in use, a 200-foot buffer around the dive area will be off-limits to boaters and fishers for safety reasons.

Goal 14: Establish locations and facilities for providing educational materials and/or programs for visitors
Objective 14a: At the main parking area, establish a kiosk that interprets natural resources of ITRA and the region
Objective 14b: Develop trail signage that provides natural resources interpretation
Objective 14c: Construct education/meeting building
Objective 14d: Develop brochures that interpret natural resources of ITRA and the region
Objective 14e: Develop lists for public distribution of plants and animals known to occur on ITRA
Objective 14f: Provide designated site for SCUBA training

Biking /Hiking

Bicycle use will be one of the main focuses of ITRA. Trail systems will be developed for the forested areas, two BMX tracks (one for beginners, one for more advanced) will be located on the mine reclamation area, and technical riding areas will be established using the mining spoil. The trail system will be designed to connect the various activity areas on ITRA to provide the longest, quality trails possible, and to provide a variety of scenery and terrain for users. Some trails will also be open as hiking trails. All trails and riding areas will be designed to minimize environmental impacts. The trail systems will avoid the densest gopher tortoise areas, and tortoise protective devices will be put in place if needed. Soil erosion prevention will be a major concern near the water bodies and sinkholes. Natural resources interpretive information will be provided along the trails. One or more short loop trails will be established near the parking areas so that visitors will also have the option of brief hikes that still provide information on the natural resources of the area.

Goal 15: Establish hiking/biking trails, two BMX tracks, and technical riding areas where appropriate on the property that do not detract from the conservation and management goals and objectives
Objective 15a: Establish 10-20 miles of multi-use trails suitable for hiking/biking on the property, encouraging local participation in the planning, construction, and maintenance of the trails. Consider asking biking and hiking organizations for their input for trail design
Objective 15b: Establish two BMX tracks, one easy and one advanced, in the mining area of the property
Objective 15c: Establish technical riding areas in the mining area of the property, taking advantage of mine spoil
Objective 15d: Establish at least one short hiking trail loop with interpretive signs near the parking area
Objective 15e: Establish at least one hiking trail loop with interpretive signs in the southwest area

Camping

Camping is planned for ITRA. Before camping can be allowed, the Board of County Commissioners must modify the land use special exception waiver for the property. If the Commission approves camping, OGT intends to provide facilities for a variety of camping. Campsites will be located in disturbed areas. A group primitive campsite is planned, as well as individual campsites with water and power. All wastewater facilities will at least meet the

minimum treatment requirements, and OGT will also consider advanced wastewater treatment or the use of wastewater technologies that could be used as a demonstration project for protection of groundwater.

Goal 16: Encourage camping where appropriate on the property that does not detract from the conservation and management goals and objectives
Objective 16a: Obtain approval from the Board of County Commissioners to allow camping on the site
Objective 16b: Establish camping sites with power and water
Objective 16c: Establish group primitive camping area

Fishing

Fishing will be encouraged at the four lakes, from the shore and from non-petroleum motorized craft. During reclamation, shorelines will be contoured to ensure multiple bank fishing opportunities for each lake. Shaded benches will be provided at some of the bank fishing sites. At least one ADA fishing access site will be provided with limerock paths to tables/benches near the water. Staff will also consider the impacts, desirability, demand for, and cost of installing multi-purpose boardwalks/docks that would allow for fishing at one or more water bodies. The boardwalk/docks would provide greater fishing access and should reduce impacts on the wetlands by focusing activities in certain areas. OGT will consult with the Florida Department of Health and FWC regarding mercury and PCB contaminant levels in the fish from ITRA and whether a consumption advisory is needed. OGT will coordinate with FWC regarding fish stocking, fish feeding, and bag limits. Events such as fishing rodeos for kids will be conducted if the catch rate is sufficient.

Goal 17: Encourage fishing at the four lakes
Objective 17a: Establish two or more fishing access points at each lake on the property.
Objective 17b: Establish at least one ADA fishing access point
Objective 17c: Request FWC to assess the fish populations at the borrow pit, and to initiate a fish stocking plan if warranted
Objective 17d: Consult with DOH and FWC regarding contaminant levels in fish and whether a consumption advisory is needed
Objective 17e: Assess the impacts, desirability, demand for, and cost of installing multi-purpose boardwalks/docks that would allow for fishing at both water bodies. Consider if the structure would prevent erosion and impacts to shore vegetation

Boating

Non-motorized boats, such as kayaks, canoes and jon boats, and electric-powered craft will be allowed in all four lakes. No boats with petroleum-fueled motors will be allowed on the lake, even if they are not being used to power the boat. One or more canoe/kayak launch sites will be established for each lake, and three small boat ramps are planned. Staff will consider the impacts, desirability, demand for, and cost of installing multi-purpose boardwalks/docks in the boat launching areas. The boardwalk/docks would provide access and prevent damage to wetlands and soil erosion.

Goal 18: Allow non-motorized boats and electric-powered boats on the four lakes, ensuring that it does not detract from the conservation and management goals and objectives
Objective 18a: Establish one or more canoe/kayak launch sites at each lake
Objective 18b: Establish a small boat ramp at each of the larger lakes
Objective 18c: Assess the impacts, desirability, demand for, and cost of installing a multi-purpose boardwalk/dock or small boarding dock at each launch point. Consider if the structure would prevent erosion and impacts to shore vegetation

Swimming

Some of the locals have been swimming in the artificial lakes for years, and it is anticipated that swimming will be allowed in the recreation area. One or more swimming areas will be addressed in the reclamation plan. If there are concerns with the texture/turbidity from the sediment, OGT will consider placing sand in one or more designated swimming areas.

Goal 19: Allow swimming in designated swimming areas
Objective 19a: Incorporate establishment of swimming areas in reclamation design and construction
Objective 19b: Establish one or more designated swimming areas in the artificial lakes
Objective 19c: Determine if lifeguards are necessary and, if so, secure funding and establish a lifeguard team

Operations and Facilities

Cost Estimates and Funding Sources for Conducting Management Activities

The Estimated Annual Land Management Budget (Table 8) shows the activities planned for the next ten years and the annual cost estimate of each activity. Funds needed to protect and manage the property, and to achieve the objectives for the recreation area, are derived primarily from the CARL Trust Fund. Mine reclamation funds were appropriated from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund. Private conservation organizations may be cooperators for funding of specific projects. Alternative funding sources, such as grants and mitigation funds, will be sought to supplement existing funding.

The following represents the actual and unmet budgetary needs for managing the lands and resources of the ITRA. This budget was developed using data from OGT and other cooperating entities, and is based on actual costs for land management activities, equipment purchase and maintenance, and for development of fixed capital facilities. The budget below exceeds the funds OGT anticipates receiving for this property through the state appropriations process, but is consistent with the direction necessary to achieve the goals and objectives for the ITRA. Budget categories are those currently recognized by DEP and the Land Management Uniform Cost Accounting Council.

ITRA currently has no staff assigned to it. OGT estimates that 2.0 full-time equivalent permanent staff members (FTE) and 3 to 5 OPS (other personnel services) position will be needed to operate ITRA. Some routine tasks, such as exotic control, mowing, trash pickup and lavatory cleaning, are planned to be contracted. Some maintenance of the BMX tracks may be through volunteers and also contracted.

Table 8: Estimated Annual Land Management Budget for the ITRA. (Amount in thousands of dollars; includes staff time.)

Activity	2005	'06	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	'14
Resource Management										
Exotic species control	15	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Prescribed burning (including roller chopping)	10	6	1	6	1	6	1	6	1	6
Cultural resource management	0	10	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Timber management	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Hydrological management	2	2	2	5	2	2	2	2	2	2
Limestone mine reclamation	1250	1250	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other										
Subtotal	**1282**	**1274**	**11**	**19**	**11**	**16**	**11**	**16**	**11**	**16**
Administration										
Units/Projects	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Subtotal	**15**	**15**	**15**	**15**	**15**	**15**	**15**	**15**	**15**	**15**
Support										
Land management planning	3	3	3	3	25	3	3	3	3	25
Land management reviews	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	4
Training/staff development	5	5	10	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Vehicle purchase	35	45	0	0	50	0	0	45	0	0
Vehicle operation and maintenance	7	7	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
Other										
Subtotal	**50**	**60**	**38**	**33**	**109**	**33**	**33**	**78**	**33**	**59**
Capital Outlay										
New facility construction (incl. fencing)		591	1063	414	200		600	600		

Facility maintenance	4	4	20	20	20	40	40	40	40	40
Subtotal	**4**	**595**	**1083**	**434**	**220**	**40**	**640**	**640**	**40**	**40**
Visitors services/Recreation										
Information/Education programs	3	3	8	8	10	10	10	10	10	10
Operations	2	2	60	80	100	100	100	100	100	100
Subtotal	**5**	**5**	**68**	**88**	**110**	**110**	**110**	**110**	**110**	**110**
Law enforcement										
Law enforcement services	5	5	5	10	10	20	20	20	20	20
Subtotal	**5**	**5**	**5**	**10**	**10**	**20**	**20**	**20**	**20**	**20**
Total	**1361**	**1954**	**1220**	**599**	**475**	**234**	**829**	**879**	**229**	**260**

The ITRA has no staff at this time. Table 9 shows the proposed staffing level for ITRA. "FTE" refers to full-time equivalent permanent staff members. "OPS" refers to other personnel services, which are temporary staffing positions. The number of FTEs or OPS refers to the number of full-time permanent or temporary staff members in each position title.

Table 9: Proposed Staffing Level for ITRA

Position Title	# FTEs	# OPS
Park Manager	1.0	0
Assistant Manager	1.0	0
Lifeguard, Maintenance Person (number depends on season – 3 to 5)	0	4.0
Total	2	4

Goal 20: Conduct operations and obtain and maintain facilities and staff to soundly manage, protect and make accessible the property

Objective 20a: Obtain funding for sufficient staffing [2.0 FTE, 3-5 OPS] and outsourced assistance to provide support for property development and operations

Objective 20b: Pursue alternative funding sources, such as mitigation projects, grants and fundraising, to supplement baseline budget funds

Analysis of Potential for Contracting Restoration and Management Activities by Private Vendors

The following restoration and management activities have been considered for outsourcing to private entities. The Cross Florida Greenway currently outsources mowing, fencing, survey boundary work, restroom cleaning, trash pickup, exotic plant control, and engineering. OGT intends to outsource similar tasks involved with ITRA management. Table 10 contains potentially outsourced activities with categories as follows: "approved" designates items that FDEP does not have expertise to complete and/or those that can be done at less cost with equivalent results by outside sources; "conditional" designates items that could possibly be done by FDEP or outside sources for equivalent cost and results; "rejected" designates items that can be done with FDEP expertise and/or at less cost than outside sources. Depending on the size of the task, some things can be done more efficiently by existing OGT staff than through outsourcing.

Table 10: Potential Contracting for Activities on ITRA

Activity	Approved	Conditional	Rejected
Prescribed burning		Y	
Minor fireline installation		Y	
Fireline, fence, and trail maintenance		Y	
Fence installation	Y		
Roller chopping	Y		
Organism inventory and monitoring		Y	

Listed species mapping and needs assessment		Y	
Restore/enhance encroachment, ruderal, and disturbed areas		Y	
Determine extent of hydrologic needs of recreation area	Y		
Restore hydrology via fill and excavation	Y		
Mine reclamation work and recreation-related land contouring	Y		
Reduce exotic species		Y	
Education facilities, programs, and literature development and printing		Y	
Education signs development and installation		Y	
Building design and construction		Y	
Concessions, bike and boat rental, etc.		Y	
Trail and boardwalk installation	Y		
Law enforcement and patrol	Y		
Timber harvesting	Y		

Goal 21: Consider outsourcing those property operations that outside sources can conduct at less cost and with equivalent or better results than property staff
Objective 21a: On a continuing basis, analyze property operations and identify those activities for which property staff do not have the expertise or that can be completed at less cost with equivalent or better results by outside sources
Objective 21b: Consider outsourcing activities identified by Objective 21a

Partnerships and Regional Coordination

Cooperating Agencies

The recreation area will be managed in accordance with all applicable Florida Statutes and administrative rules. Agencies having a major or direct role in the management of the recreation area are discussed in relevant portions of this plan. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry (DOF), assists OGT staff in the development of wildfire emergency plans and provides the authorization required for prescribed burning.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) assists OGT in a variety of ways. FWC is responsible for enforcement of state laws pertaining to fish and wildlife. FWC staff also advise OGT on gopher tortoise management and fishery management. In addition, FWC aids OGT with wildlife management programs, including the development and management of Watchable Wildlife programs and fishery enhancement activities. Emphasis is placed on protection of existing resources as well as the promotion of compatible outdoor recreational uses.

The Department of State, Division of Historical Resources (DHR) assists staff to assure protection of archaeological and historical sites. The Suwannee River Water Management District is monitoring water features through wells on the ITRA. The Department of Health is being consulted regarding consumption of fish from the property.

Given ITRA's proximity to the University of Florida, some faculty or students may be interested in conducting some of the surveys or research and monitoring on the site. Assistance with invasive non-native species may also be available from IFAS and other facilities at the University of Florida.

ITRA's mining pits with deep, clear water provide a good controlled environment for SCUBA training. OGT intends to make the water bodies available for academic and law enforcement-related SCUBA training.

Goal 22: Establish and maintain relationships with other agencies to enhance management, protection and use of the property
Objective 22a: Coordinate management efforts with other agencies
Objective 22b: Coordinate on an as-needed basis with local law enforcement and permitting agencies regarding patrol and potential violations
Objective 22c: Establish collaborative efforts with DOF, FWC, DHR, DEP, DOH and others for the protection and management of activities on ITRA

Objective 22d: Encourage establishment of resource monitoring stations by WMD or other entities on the property
Objective 22e: Coordinate joint educational programs with other state agencies and the local education community
Objective 22f: Work with academic institutions and law enforcement agencies to make the ITRA water bodies available for SCUBA training for professionals

Cooperating Organizations

Cooperative relationships with other organizations can provide additional strength and expertise to both organizations. The Friends of Kirby Pit are interested in the planned use of the property. Volunteer assistance from this group, user groups and other local groups can help plan, establish, and maintain the recreational opportunities on ITRA and help to manage the natural resources. OGT staff will establish relationships with these groups and help establish a Citizen Support Organization in the hopes of providing the recreational opportunities and interpretive materials on ITRA in an accelerated timeframe. The Citizen Support Organization and other groups will also help maintain quality recreational experiences in a natural setting in the long run.

Goal 23: Establish and maintain relationships with other organizations to enhance management and protection of the property
Objective 23a: Establish a Citizen Support Organization and solicit volunteers to assist property staff to accomplish goals of the property
Objective 23b: Coordinate management efforts with other local natural areas and local environmental organizations
Objective 23c: Coordinate management efforts with local organizations such as hiking, biking, and nature clubs/organizations
Objective 23d: Provide property and community recognition and support for volunteers
Objective 23e: In the third year, generate 500 hours from volunteers to assist in property management and education, and increase volunteer hours by 10% in each succeeding year

Land Use Coordination

The long-term health and connectivity of ITRA will be directly influenced by the surrounding land use. Nearby residents have expressed a desire for the area to retain its current quality of life and atmosphere. OGT will work with neighboring landowners and residents to inform the public, Columbia County planning staff, and elected officials about the potential impact of proposed land use changes on ITRA and the surrounding area.

Goal 24: Review, define, and minimize impacts associated with planned and existing development near the property
Objective 24a: Address impacts associated with existing and future development concerning fire management, connectivity and other issues
Objective 24b: Continually review comprehensive plan amendments and land development regulations that govern proposed land use changes on properties adjacent to the property and coordinate with OGT headquarters on comments. Coordinate with neighbors on the review.

Prospective Land Acquisitions

More detailed information on prospective land acquisitions is included in Chapter III. Goals and objectives related to land acquisition are:

Goal 25: Refine optimum boundaries for the property and facilitate acquisition of lands to achieve these boundaries
Objective 25a: Assist Division of State lands in the acquisition of the Bedrock Road easement or other suitable access
Objective 25b: With local input, identify lands outside of the current project boundaries that are necessary for the perpetual protection of the property
Objective 25c: Investigate easements and rights-of-way on ITRA and consider options for extinguishing easements
Objective 25d: Nominate for acquisition through Florida Forever and the Greenway and Trails programs those parcels that are important for management of the property, contain important resources, or are linkages to provide additional greenways and trails opportunities
Objective 25e: Assist in the acquisition of all lands within the ITRA project by providing DEP DSL with information on development, available parcels, ownership, and local contacts every 3 months.

Compliance with State and Local Government Requirements

This land management plan is in compliance with the Columbia County Local Government Comprehensive Plan (see Appendix 10, Verification of Compliance with Local Comprehensive Plans).

The plan is intended to be in compliance with the State Lands Management Plan, adopted March 17, 1981 by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund and considering balanced public utilization, specific agency statutory authority, and other legislative or executive constraints.

Goal 26: Ensure that use and management of the property complies with state and local government requirements
Objective 26a: Ensure that each planned use of the property complies with the State Lands Management Plan adopted by the Trustees
Objective 26b: Ensure that each planned use of the property complies with the Local Government Comprehensive Plan

Land Management Review

Land management review teams were established by Section 259.036, Florida Statutes, to evaluate management of conservation, preservation, and recreation lands titled in the name of the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund. The teams determine whether the lands are being managed for the purposes for which they were acquired and in accordance with a land management plan adopted pursuant to s. 259.032 by the Board of Trustees, acting through the Department of Environmental Protection. The managing agency is to consider the findings and recommendations of the land management review team in finalizing the required 10-year update of its management plan.

ITRA has not been evaluated by a land management review team, and no evaluation is scheduled at this time.

Priority List of Management, Research, and Information Needs

- Complete the integrated reclamation/recreation design, then complete reclamation/recreation construction
- Acquire Bedrock Road access
- Involve the local community in planning and maintaining onsite facilities
- Establish prescribed fire program
- Develop and implement a comprehensive restoration plan
- Analyze additional fish samples and establish appropriate fish consumption advisory
- Analyze additional soil samples and undertake remediation if recommended
- Establish multi-use trail system with natural resource interpretive materials
- Establish BMX and technical bike riding areas
- Establish a Citizens Support Organization for ITRA

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Appendix 1:
Trustees Lease Agreement for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area

>>hard copy of lease to be inserted

Appendix 2:
Public Involvement in the Land Management Plan Preparation for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Office of Greenways and Trails

Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area
Management Plan Advisory Group

Summary of August 22, 2003 Meeting

(Lake City Emergency Operations Center, Lake City, Florida)

Prepared by Muller and Associates, Inc.

Members of the Columbia County Recreation Area Management Advisory Group met on the morning of August 22, 2003 in Lake City to provide input on the management of a proposed recreation area in Columbia County, currently managed by the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT). The group is made up of a diverse assemblage of interests.

At the meeting, all present were asked to identify the most important issues to consider in formulating the management plan for the Columbia County Recreation Area. Each person was given an equal opportunity to identify important issues. After all issues were listed, each member was asked to list their top five priorities in order from one (highest) to five (lowest). Two advisory group members left after identification of issues but prior to voting.

In determining the ranking, each member's highest priority was assigned five points, with the score of each lower priority assigned one less point, and the fifth (lowest) priority was assigned one point. The points for each item were then summed, and the results are presented below, from highest to lowest total points. Items receiving equal points were assigned equal ranks. Ideas receiving no points are also listed below.

Total votes	Total points	Rank	Idea/concern
12	57	1	Protect water (of Ichetucknee Springs)
8	21	2	Develop mountain bike trail
6	18	3	Non-motorized uses only
4	13	4	Multi-use park - habitat/recreation (Provide natural habitat and also recreation for people)
5	12	5	Reflect residents' and citizens' interests
4	10	6	Monitor impacts of use
2	7	7	Increase habitat
2	6	8	Connect to other trails planned for the area
2	6	8	OHV trail system with mountain bike use and other recreational facilities & amenities to support OHV; noise abatement

Total votes	Total points	Rank	Idea/concern
1	5	10	OHV use while minimizing impacts to adjacent landowners & protection of water
2	5	10	Recreational development for all users - shared use, minimize conflicts, no OHV (Shared, multi-use park but with no motorized off highway vehicles)
2	5	10	Site inappropriate for OHV
1	5	10	Kirby site was identified in the OHV report (Off-Highway Vehicle Safety and Recreation Act Report.)
2	5	10	Golf course
2	4	15	Consider impacts on future population in the area
1	4	15	Designated OHV sites needed in this area
3	4	15	Maximize economic benefits to county.
1	4	15	Noise elimination
1	4	15	Carefully developed, designed and managed OHV area with designated trails and multiple use
2	3	20	Fishing from banks and small boats
1	3	20	Limit OHV use - hours, noise level, age, etc.
1	2	22	OHV safety and education center
1	2	22	Remain flexible in planned use/design
1	2	22	Budget concerns for development and operation of area - now and in the future (Concern expressed that we might have enough money now to open the park, but don't know if we will have operation funds in the future.)
2	2	22	Carpenter House for education/interpretive center
1	1	26	Mine reclamation (Conduct mine reclamation activities)
0	0		Enhance health of aquifer (Related to protect water quality)
0	0		Accessibility - ADA enhancements
0	0		Transportation concerns, including turn-off lane and road improvements (Concerned that Hwy 47 has lots of traffic and is dangerous)
0	0		OHV report did not identify this as a high need area
0	0		Mountain bikes
0	0		Is Kirby [CCRA] the right place - how residents feel about it. If not OHV, what? (Is CCRA the right place to put an OHV facility? Do residents oppose it?)

Meeting attendees:

Management Advisory Group members:

Alan Whitehouse, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Bureau of Mine Reclamation
Dewey Weaver, Columbia County Commissioner (local elected official)
Edwin McCook, Suwannee River Water Management District
Harvey Campbell, Columbia County Tourist Development Council
Jack Terrell (user group representative)
Jen Chasteen, local private property owner
Jerry Krummrich, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Jim Stevenson, Springs Initiative
Loye Barnard, Save Our Suwannee (local conservation organization)
Lys Burden, Suwannee Bicycling Association (user group representative)
Marsha Rickman, FDEP, Office of Greenways and Trails
Mary Kay Hollingsworth, Columbia County Director of Financial Management
Michael Kinnison, FDEP Florida State Parks, Office of Park Planning
Rick Halvorsen, FDEP Office of Greenways and Trails

Other agency-related attendees:
Jena Brooks, Office of Greenways and Trails
Jim Muller, Muller and Associates, Inc., facilitator

Other attendees:
Jim Free, citizen
Todd Hunt, FL Trail Riders
Tony Britt, Lake City Reporter

Management Advisory Group members invited but unable to attend:
Columbia County law enforcement
Santa Fe Soil and Water Conservation District representative

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Office of Greenways and Trails

Summary of the August 27, 2003 Public Hearing On the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area Land Management Plan Held by the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area Management Plan Advisory Group

(Columbia County School Board Administration Building
372 West Duval St., Lake City, Florida 32055)

Prepared by Muller and Associates, Inc.

This hearing was advertised in one or more local newspapers, announced at the Columbia County Commission meeting, and advertised in the Florida Administrative Weekly, in compliance with Chapter 259.032 (10), Florida Statutes. Assistance with advertising and conducting the hearing was provided by the staff of the Department of Environmental Protection Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) and Muller and Associates, Inc.

Introduction

Ms. Jena Brooks, Director of OGT, opened the meeting at approximately 7:00 p.m. **Ms. Marsha Rickman**, member of the Management Plan Advisory Group, presented a Powerpoint briefing on the property. Mr. Jack Terrell, member of the Management Plan Advisory Group, presented a Powerpoint briefing on the Off Highway Vehicles (OHV). Mr. Terrell estimated that if the property were developed as an OHV facility, 30,000 people per year could expected for this property in the near future, based on Croom figures.

Public Comments

Richard Shepherd – nearby property owner. Mr. Shepherd lives near the property; moved from Jacksonville to get away from the noise. His house is 2 miles from a paved road. He lives here to enjoy peace and quiet. He enjoys wildlife, doesn't want it disturbed. He is very much against OHV on the property. He doesn't think it's good for the people who live near the property. He is not against using it as a recreation area, just doesn't want the noise.

Wynn Peeples, OHV Advisory Committee [see below]

Thomas Tompkins – Mr. Tompkins was born in the area. OHV is a normal sport for kids. He was worried if there was a deficit, then they wouldn't have the funds to operate the park. He thinks it is okay based on Croom's numbers. He thinks the noise can be designed around since the property has 600 acres. Mr. Tompkins rides OHVs, his young son doesn't ride yet. He asked that people be open-minded, and do research before opposing OHV. He lives about 2 miles from the area.

Jennifer Chasteen - Ms. Chasteen is on the management advisory committee, and represents property owners of the Kirby Pit area. Her family owns property that abuts the area. The family has been there 5 generations. The Kirby-Carptenter homestead is on the north end of the property, established about 1890. Ms. Chasteen wants the homestead to be used as cultural center, to connect residents with the past. Perhaps schools could use the homestead. It would help educate new residents about the area. Ms. Chasteen owns an ATV and participates in events. She is still concerned about noise issues, water contamination, and wildlife in the area. Ms. Chasteen believes the best use for the property would be as a non-motorized, multi-use area and cultural center.

Don Wilson – Mr. Wilson has been in Florida Trail Riders (FTR) since 1988, has an ATV, and rides with his children. If no one offers a place to ride, people will find a place, and may violate private property rights. Mr. Wilson said the noise is always a concern. Noise can be addressed by building in noise buffers and having a decibel limitation.

Gary Wyatt – Mr. Hyatt is in FTR, the Motorcycle club. He has ridden motorcycles for 30 years. People who live near rivers listen to boat noise. People who live near forests live with gunshots. Noise is a part of life. OHV is a family sport – he likes to watch his kids and grandkids ride. Mr. Wilson wants to make sure [ADA] access is there. Mr. Wilson serves on the [OHV?] committee. This is a sport he can do [he is wheelchair-bound].

Andy Dickinson – Mr. Dickinson is in FTR, lives in Jacksonville. He is involved in an event in Madison county and is working on this now. He has to deal with landowners and knows how important relationships with landowners are. Mr. Dickinson rRaces, his 7-year old rides. He started riding in Croom in early 80s, thinks the State did a great job stepping in and controlling and managing the area. State addressed fences, camping, barrier zones and has courteous rangers who are concerned with safety. Mr. Dickinson is for it, OHV is a growing sport, people need a place to ride.

Hugh Kirby – Mr. Kirby was living next door to the property when the mine first started, has heard the mine for 47 years, and doesn't want more noise. Mr. Kirby asked if the State was going to use the entire area. He lives on Carpenter Road and doesn't want lots of traffic. Ms. Rickman said access is now through Orville Terrace, and the State is looking at Bedrock road. Mr. Kirby asked if bike trails will be in the pine plantation, and motorcycles in the pit. Mrs. Anderson lives near the fence – will trails be next to her back door?

John Mullin - Mr. Mullin said there is an otter in one pit. Wildlife is showing up, Mr. Mullin thinks this is because it is quieter now. When trucks were there, it was very dusty, and you couldn't see the woods. Mr. Mullin said there is good, quiet fishing out there.

Don Paul – Mr. Paul is a property owner in the area. He lives just off Orville road and is concerned that dirt roads will be torn up. He said highway 47 is jam packed in the morning. Ms. Rickman asked if Mr. Paul wanted any recreational area. Mr. Paul said he didn't want it out there. Ms. Rickman stated traffic will have to be dealt with regardless of what goes on the property. Mr. Paul said he wants the foxes in his yard, and they won't be there long [if a park is put on the property].

George Edwards – Mr. Edwards is a member of the Suwannee Bike Association and Gainesville Cyclists. The Suwannee Century event is held in the fall, and attracts 10 thousand visitor days per year. The League of American bicyclists says participants spend about $100/day. The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) recognizes that biking is the second most popular outdoor activity in Florida, after going to the beach. San Felasco Preserve is a huge success. They put in bike trails last year and the Tour of Felasco (300 riders, 400 people total) sold out in January. Columbia County only has 5 miles of bike trails at this time. Mountain bike users have little impact. Motorized bikers make more noise, and require more maintenance. Trail design is for a specialist – make sure to use one. Many parts of Ichetucknee are old phosphate mines – he doesn't consider them disturbed now. Mr. Edwards wants the same thing for Kirby Mine.

Dewey Weaver – Mr. Weaver is the County Commissioner for this area, District 2. Commissioner Weaver thanked OGT for coming and doing a public meeting. He knows OGT is doing what they need under state law, regarding OHV use – this doesn't mean its going to happen in Kirby Pit. Commissioner Weaver said there is a need for OHV and mountain biking. He thinks Kirby Pit is good for mountain biking, not OHV. Columbia County urged Tallahassee to purchase Kirby Pit for aquifer protection and noise elimination for the people who had lived there all their life. The Division of Forestry report lists key factors to be considered for OHV – one is noise. The ideal location is next to airport and major highways. Kirby Pit is different from Croom. This is the fastest growing part of the county. The two undeveloped sides of the property will probably be developed. The Forestry report did not identify this area as an OHV priority area. South Florida is a priority area, not Lake City. Illegal riding is not good excuse for using Kirby Pit for OHV. Of a large contingency of riders, 2 of 3 responses said wanted they wanted places within a 1 hour drive of their home. These riders are not a boon for the economy – they go to the park, then back home at night.

Tom Bankston – Mr. Bankston said the park will have a disastrous affect on his habitat – his home. He lives on a dead end road that people will be traveling to go to the park. He doesn't want people – the road zigzags on the property lines. You will have to get permission for this. If you haven't gone down the zigzag road, need to go down it before you do the plan. His home investment will be devalued by the OHV park. The mine was not active when he bought the house. He wouldn't have bought it if he had known the mine was going to be active. You will need to pave and straighten road. There is wildlife there – deer, turkey. There was an eagle at one time, someone shot him. The area will reclaim itself. His son caught first bass there at 4 or 5 years of age. The area is used by wildlife. This will destroy his habitat. Four people were killed on hill on highway 47 – illegal passing [lots of traffic, dangerous].

Tom Hunt – Mr. Hunt is an avid hunter, fisher, who lives on edge of Osceola NF. He is an FTR member and goes to all their events. At the hare scramble at Rodman there are numerous deer tracks, and people ride there regularly. The OHV use won't have as bad an impact on wildlife as some people think. This is a family sport. He has been attending FTR events since 1976 – these are family events, good people. The access needs to be addressed for all the landowners. Traffic is unbelievable on 47 on weekdays, but Mr. Hunt thinks the park traffic will be on weekends. He thinks the noise can be controlled – bikes are pretty quiet. The Cherry Lake event is next week. He suggested people come to it next week and see how quiet it is. Noise is a big issue and should be addressed. He suggested making sure Kirby Pit is the right place [for an OHV facility].
Some people would like to live close to the track, and convenience stores and motels will benefit. He is glad to get the opportunity to go through this process – makes him proud to be an American.

Jim Free – Mr. Free has been a Columbia County resident for 43 years. He thinks DEP should look for an alternate area. There are 2 speed tracks in Columbia County, he suggested getting with them for OHV. The State spent $30 million to protect this small area – leave it alone, let it grow up. He is troubled by the two arms of DEP – this arm tonight is excellent. In the Panhandle – "promised us the moon, now they are backpedaling". DEP is the head of the tiger and has two arms. Mr. Free proposed the property as a golf course – quiet. Lake County Community College has a world class golf program, they will show the world how to reclaim the water.

Leon Mason – Mr. Mason thinks this track is not needed at all. He asked how many accidents did they have from ATVs. He is worried about young kids. He asked why give 655 acres to this group and isn't there some better use. He suggested having a trailer park for people coming from up north going to Ichetucknee. Mr. Mason said in the future we will have a need for a recreation area. If we let this organization come in and take over, what do we get?

Steve Williams – Mr. Williams lives off of Bedrock Road. He said kids are cutting the fence, going in. They don't have drivers licenses, and are riding at night without lights – dangerous.

Corry Lee – Mr. Lee has concerns about kids. The major manufacturers have age restrictions for ATVs, and they pay for the riders to go to training. Kids riding at night is a problem. The park needs to have reasonable hours, daylight only. Mr. Lee said dealers promote safety, manufacturers do also. He recommended noise restrictions, such as 105db.

Dan Booze – Mr. Booze has been a property owner in the area for 10 years. He has been a dirt bike rider for 30 years. It is a family sport – the best sport of all for a family to do, all can ride together. It is a clean sport – no drinking or rowdiness. He firmly supports this OHV park. All the other activities proposed for this property are great activities – but you can do all at 100 different places in this county. There is no place to ride dirt bikes legally. Alligator Lake park just did a new development. He has been there three times – nobody was there using it. He thinks perhaps too many of these types of parks. The new 4 stroke engines are very quiet. You can regulate noise as you come into the park. At Croom you can't ride your bikes in, you must trailer them in. [Don't have to worry about numerous ATVs and motorcycles on the access roads.]

Joe Hinkel – Mr. Hinkel's first exposure to ATVs was 30 years ago. He wrote the policy for ATV in Shawnee NF in Illinois. There are no designated ORV/ATV places in Florida much. He sees kids riding on highways, railroad rights-of-way. OHV use has a family atmosphere.

Loye Barnard – Ms. Barnard is a Springs ambassador. She talks with groups in the county about problems we're facing with water today, how above ground activities affect aquifer. The State spent $30 million to make sure this area wasn't developed. We need to lessen the impact of development of the area, not increase it. A low impact use of the property is needed. The quality of life will diminish without good planning

Randy Cody – Mr. Cody believes we need to keep kids off roads, give them a place to ride where they're not a risk. There are two conditions when set up riding area – no drinking, have to wear helmets. OHV riders want their fair share – already have ball parks, etc.

Al Williams - Mr. Williams wants to know if this project will stand on its own merit – upkeep, salaries, personnel – 4 or 5 years from now, will this project be feasible to this community? He hopes it will be. What about road costs, road maintenance costs?
The grant from DEP – this is your money, not the government's. Mr. Williams wanted to know if this will be something for our children in years to come, and if our property taxes will be raised to pay for it. He is a native Floridian from Columbia County. Don't burden our children – address this in the right way.

Brenda Fulford – Ms. Fulford's family has about 20-25 ATVs, and rides them as a family. Ms. Fulford thinks OGT will have everything under control. If Kirby Pit doesn't work out for OHV, she suggested looking for a place north of town.

Pete Southall – Mr. Southall's son and his friends have a passion for dirt bikes and 4 wheelers. They heard Kirby Pit is being considered for OHV and were excited. Mr. Southall said many kids ride on the road right-of-way and risk of collision with vehicles. Or they find secluded areas to try and ride, but the areas are not accessible to emergency vehicles. Mr. Southall strongly supports a safe, controlled area for OHV. There are many passive, hiking, equestrian, boat areas – but no designated off-road riding area in north Florida. He thinks fish management should also be considered in the lakes.

Ernie St. John – Mr. St. John lives in this area, and thinks is a good idea. He understands adjacent residents – people that live adjacent don't want people there.
There are sound and traffic issues, but he think maybe that adjacent people want it for themselves. We need a place to ride – not a place for us. That's why we want it – we're not trying to affect people next to it. Some are trespassing to ride on it now, but others are trespassing to fish on it also. There are more injuries from skateboards than from 4 wheelers and motorcycles. Most people that ride respect the sport, and wear full gear to protect themselves. He doesn't think this will impact the water – not doing the vehicles in the water.

James R. Menchan – Mr. Menchan appreciates everyone showing up. He is brand new to 4 wheelers. He just went to Big Scrub in Ocala – 20 people rode all day. It is family oriented. The noise level is a consideration, but not that bad. Mr. Menchan believes more people are here for it than against it. There is no place in north Florida to ride – closests is Croom, Ocala. People want a place to bring their family and ride.
This will be a positive thing for Columbia County

Craig Womer – didn't speak

Paul Bryant – had to leave

Jacob Bryant – Mr.Bryant has a bike, a CR80 2 stroke. He wants to get something out there. He has land to ride on, but many of his friends don't .

Mary Rose – didn't speak

Wynn Peeples – Mr. Peeples is a member of OHV advisory committee. He worked on passage of the OHV bill. He now has more respect for government process. It took 3 years of answering questions for the Legislature with Laura Pierce. They did an awesome job of passage of this bill – everything was considered. The environmental community is the reason this passed. They understood the statewide need for the need and the situation if we don't control and manage the use of OHV. The environment will suffer without this. OHV use in a safe controlled environment protects private and public property rights. He agrees about the the erosion problem – that is not the way to do things. Anything done will be done in consultation with the environmental community. He doesn't live in Columbia County, but has a relative that does live here. He has support from the environmental community and the riders wishes have to be merged with concerns of the people that spoke earlier. Access must be addressed. Mr. Peeples lives in Tallahassee on Miller Landing Road. It was dirt when he moved there, and it's now paved. There was a motocross track about 1 ½ miles from his house, but he didn't hear them. His son went through all the sports, tried motorcycles at age 8, and motorcycles stuck. We need something that parents and kids can do together. The OHV committee meets in Orlando in November – please come.

Peter McGee – Mr. McGee represents the Southeast Trail Riders Association. People are in opposition, afraid of that which they don't understand. He owns 60 acres in Alachua County. He said they are not putting a race track in the pit – they are putting in trail riding. Mr. McGee rides in Croom often. There are 18,000 permits annually. He can ride 3 hours on a trail and not see or hear any other motorcycle. Noise not a problem in Croom. He represents responsible motorcycle riders. People police themselves more than the sheriff could. They take it upon themselves to ask people to leave if they are out of line. There are accidents and a potential for danger, for getting hurt, but this potential exists for many activities. He is talking about riding, not racing – this is a family activity.

Closing

Jena Brooks, Office of Greenways and Trails
Ms. Brooks said that the public hearing provided lots of insight on what the community wants. Even if we don't do OHV on Kirby Pit, we need it somewhere else, we need your support. DEP doesn't have the final say on the OHV use. We're here to get community input. Any recreation use requires a zoning variance [exception] and has to go through the county process. It will be voted on by elected officials.
When OGT knows what uses are allowed, OGT will come back with a draft plan.
OGT's objectives –

- OGT would not propose a use that would jeopardize water quality, we have consulted with experts, and can design to protect water quality
- Safety
- Columbia County recreational opportunities
- OHV use – if approved, OGT hopes to develop this and make a revenue generating site. OGT would like county to be able to take it over – the long range plan is to have an economic benefit to the county.

Other questions/comments

This use requires an exception to Agriculture zoning. Commissioner Weaver – the land is zoned Agriculture, and you have to have an exception for recreation and for motorized use

Timeframe – want to have the plan done in December. For the mine reclamation – OGT is asking for money for the property for July 2004. It will be a couple of years before anything is in place.

Has the research been done for the impact on this area? There are sensitive species – white crawfish. There were 8000 petitions to DEP relating to the property in this area. A cement plant is considered an Agricultural use. DEP allowed 120 foot digging below the aquifer in this area. Answer – FNAI has been on site

Are there [OHV] reports available for everyone? Some people used misleading quotes out of this.

Addressed to the landowners – everyone said there is great fishing and wildlife – were they trespassing?

Lots of acreage out there – place OHV use in middle, lessen the noise.

Jim Free – if you need approval of Columbia County zoning, shouldn't you get this before going any further?

Things are going to change – more people are moving here every day.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Office of Greenways and Trails

Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area
Management Plan Advisory Group

Results of March 31, 2005 Meeting

(Columbia County School Board Administration Building
372 West Duval St., Lake City, Florida 32055)

Prepared by Muller and Associates, Inc.

Text in brackets "[ ]" refers to areas within the management plan that were changed in response to the Management Plan Advisory Group (AG) comments.

This hearing was advertised in one or more local newspapers, announced at the Columbia County Commission meeting, and advertised in the Florida Administrative Weekly, in compliance with Chapter 259.032 (10), Florida Statutes. Assistance with advertising and conducting the hearing was provided by the staff of the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) and Muller and Associates, Inc.

Members of the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area Management Plan Advisory Group met in the afternoon of March 31, 2005 in Lake City in Columbia County. The purpose of the meeting was to provide input on the draft management plan for the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area, Columbia County, managed by the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT). The Advisory Group is made up of a diverse assemblage of interests.

The meeting started at approximately 1:05 p.m. **Ms. Marsha Rickman, OGT,** opened the meeting**.** All present were then requested to introduce themselves. Ms. Rickman thanked Management Plan Advisory Group members for coming and for their time in reviewing the plan and providing input. Ms. Rickman provided a brief overview of the process and status of the planning process. **Jim Muller, Muller and Associates, Inc.**, then made a brief PowerPoint presentation on the management plan process, planned management and uses for the area, and Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area goals and objectives for the next 10 years.

Each advisory group member was in turn asked for their comments and questions on the management plan and especially the goals and objectives.

Commissioner Dewey Weaver asked if the reclamation would include moving some of the mining spoil into the water bodies. Mr. Muller replied that would depend the reclamation plan. The reclamation requires a 3:1 slope for public safety, some of the sides are now sheer. They may pull dirt out or push dirt in to get the slope. The shallows and uplands will be vegetated and erosion will be controlled.

Commissioner Weaver asked about the beach area. Mr. Muller said may bring in some sand to make an area nicer, but try to focus swimming in a certain area. Comm. Weaver was concerned that there be shallow areas.

Ms. Jennifer Chasteen asked if the entire water border area would be 3:1 slope. Mr. Muller said that is part of the reclamation requirements, but a small area may be left steeper for the dive programs. Ms. Chasteen thinks the current cliff-like look is attractive and would like to retain this characteristic. [III. Use of the Property, Planned Public Uses and Assessment of Impacts]

There was additional discussion on the proposed diving area characteristics and facilities.

A member asked if Fisheries had signed off on the fishing information. Mr. Muller said FWC has done an assessment that is included in the plan. A formal agreement about has not been made about the level of FWC involvement. The water quality issue is a concern, so there probably won't be nutrient enrichment to try and enhance the fisheries. The may be some stocking done, and one lake may be designated kids-only fishing.

Mr. Muller said some work had been done on mercury and PCBs in the fishes on site, and additional work would be done. Depending on the levels, the lakes may be designated as catch and release only. Reclamation will take a couple of years, so there is time to do this work before the lakes are opened for public fishing.

Mr. Muller then said members would be asked for their comments in a round-robin format. **Mr. Harvey Campbell** said from a tourism standpoint that they had always aspired to have a beach, and this would be a step in the right direction. He asked Ms. Burden how appealling the motocross would be. **Ms. Lys Burden** said a BMX track has just been constructed in High Springs and this put High Springs on the map for the circuit. People come from all over the region, many overnight. Mr. Campbell asked Mr. Williams or Commissioner Weaver what they thought the chance of the Commission allowing camping would be. Commissioner Weaver said the camping issue would depend a lot on the final plan for the camp ground. He mentioned issues such as the primitive campground - where is it going to be, facilities available for mobile homes, and sewage disposal. Commissioner Weaver doesn't think anyone wants generators running on the mobile homes overnight. He is not opposed to camping if it is done right and groundwater protection is the first priority. [III. Use of the Property, Planned Public Uses and Assessment of Impacts; IV. Management Issues, Goals, and Objectives, Public Access and Visitor Use, Camping]

Mr. Campbell asked if camping is allowed, would it be on septic tanks or a package plant. Mr. Muller said whatever DEP does, it will at least have to match the minimum requirements for the area according to Dept. of Health and local requirements. He said DEP generally does above the minimum required. It is clear this property was bought to protect the water quality. [III. Use of the Property, Planned Public Uses and Assessment of Impacts; IV. Management Issues, Goals, and Objectives, Public Access and Visitor Use, Camping]

Mr. Campbell asked about acquiring the Curinton property to increase access, he thinks this would be a major issue. **Ms. Rickman** said she had spoken to the Curinton estate representative, and they already have another buyer for the property. DEP will deal with the new property owners to gain the easement needed to go on Bedrock Road. The representative approached DEP a while back, and they are looking for an easement from DEP as well for access between their parcels. The Curinton estate is ready to close on the sale of the property. DEP is not sure what the property will be used for, possibly a mobile home park. The representative said he has talked with the buy and they are ready to work out the easement. Mr. Campbell asked if DEP would pave the road. Mr. Thomason said OGT could request the funding, but it is yet to be determined. Ms. Rickman said half of the road is county-maintained now. Mr. Muller said the main reason DEP is trying to acquire the Curinton land or easement is better access to the property from SR 47. [III. Use of the Property, Prospective Land Acquisitions]

Ms. Loye Barnard said the plan sounds good to her, but it is important to develop a sense of place in the community. She would like to consider the pathway between the headwaters of the Ichetucknee and the springs itself and what it can teach us about conservation. Ms. Barnard believes other plants and animals are present. She mentioned the indigo snake, and other species living in the gopher tortoise burrows. Water quality is what everyone is mentioning.

Ms. Chasteen said from a residential point of view the access point is crucial and thinks going down dirt roads for access is not acceptable. Ms. Chasteen thinks some residents may have issues with camping, such as the amount of traffic, overnight guests, waste disposal, water quality, and wildfires. Residents are concerned about water quality, and would like to see waste disposal beyond the regular type of waste disposal. [III. Use of the Property, Planned Public Uses and Assessment of Impacts]

Lys Burden thought the plan was great overall, and in giving a vision for the future management. She noticed that bicycling was mentioned as a main focus, and the property is a bit small for developing a lot of bicycle resources such as trails. A fairly comprehensive network of trails has been developed in the Suwannee region, mostly through in the White Springs area. Columbia County doesn't have much offroad bicycle access, other than Gar Pond and Little Shoals. Nothing is designated for bicycles in southern Columbia. There are many double track roads. If you

want to attract the whole range of bike users, you need more bike trails on the property. They often use perimeter trails when they work with the WMD on small properties. Ms. Burden suggested carrying the trails on by the water areas, which could provide scenic vistas. She suggested trying to get 20 miles of trails, this would attract more than just properties. Mr. Muller said the conceptual use maps did not show the actual trail routes, but rather where the area where the trails were intended to go. Ms. Burden suggested perhaps keeping out of the areas where the tortoises are. Mr. Muller said OGT has already talked with FWC, and they indicated that with proper precautions you could have activities around the tortoises. Mr. Muller said the tortoises would be kept in mind when the more detailed planning is done. The planned restoration work will benefit the tortoises. There are ways such as trail placement and protection of tortoise burrow that will allow public uses and protection of the tortoises. [III. Use of the Property, Planned Public Uses and Assessment of Impacts]

Mr. Thomason said that OGT manages the Santos site, south of Ocala on the Cross Florida Greenway. It is one of the most popular mountain biking destinations in the southeastern U.S., with 100,000 visitors per year. Santos also has two old limerock quarries that the trails are centered around. Most trails were developed and are maintained by a volunteer group, the Ocala Mountain Bike Association. In the last year and a half, OGT hired the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) to do some consulting work on Santos, to help maximize safety, enhance the connectivity and improve the signage system. Mr. Thomason recommends hiring IMBA for ITRA to help provide a diversity of bike riding. OGT is considering setting up a pit for free-ride style riding in Santos in the next couple of years. Having IMBA help design the site will help with the State's liability, along with heavy signage and controlled access. [III. Use of the Property, Planned Public Uses and Assessment of Impacts]

Ms. Burden said the WMD was very supportive when they wanted to build bike trails. The WMD said the biking public would be an extension of their eyes and ears when they are on the trails. A lot of the user groups would like to do low-impact tent camping and would not need advanced facilities like RV users. The provision of swimming would be a great plus.

Mr. Muller said OGT did look at opportunities for connectivity. Unfortunately, there are not a lot of opportunities for this in the area. Mr. Muller said ITRA could be more of a destination rather than along a connection. Ms. Burden suggested providing a variety of trail lengths. Near Alachua, concentric loops were used.

Ms. Laurie Windham did not have any comments.

Mr. Muller said the plan would be finalized within the next two to three weeks, sent to the printer, and then provided to the Acquisition and Restoration Council. The Council will consider the plan at their early June meeting.

Mr. Jerry Krummrich said he had not realized until today that the reclamation would provide 3:1 slopes in all of the lakes. Mr. Muller said that was the plan, unless there was a reason to request a variance.

Mr. Dale Williams said Lake City and Columbia County have a joint recreation committee and try to do projects on a community-wide basis rather than an entity-wide basis. A free-style bike demonstration is planned for April 5 at 6 p.m. There is a proposed plan to build a bike and skate park in Lake City. There is still concern about liability. Mr. Muller said that as the ITRA plan is being developed, it would be good for OGT to know what Columbia County is planning for recreation, and what the demand is before a facility is put in place. [III. Use of the Property, Planned Public Uses and Assessment of Impacts]

Mr. Williams said the access via Bountiful Road is poor. The support of people that live in the area, such as the Friend's group, is necessary, and the poor access may make it difficult to get that support. Dust and increased traffic will be problems. He supported acquisition of the Curinton tract for access. Ms. Rickman said OGT is working on this.

Ms. Barnard said at one time OGT was looking at connecting Lake City to Fort White, and she was wondering what happened with this. Ms. Rickman said she knew there were plans to connect O'Leno with Ichetucknee, but there are no planned connections for this site. Mr. Campbell said concern with connecting O'Leno with Ichetucknee had put the Lake City to Ichetucknee connection on the back burner, but they are ready to start on this again. Mr. Williams said the O'Leno to Ichetucknee connection is under construction.

Mr. Campbell asked if canoe rentals and campgrounds would be privatized, or if OGT would do these. Mr. Thomason said this varies. Sometimes the State does this directly, sometimes it is privatized. OGT has quite a bit of privatization on the Greenway. Many private businesses spring up around the sites. [IV. Management Issues, Goals and Objectives, Operations and Facilities, Analysis of Potential for Contracting]

Mr. Campbell wondered how appealing the park would be for fishing enthusiasts, and what potential it would have as birding habitat. Mr. Krummrich said because of productivity, the ponds would have a low number of fish but of decent size. There may be the opportunity to manage some ponds differently, such as if there is a kids pond. In that case, fish may be brought in rather than trying to grow them in the ponds. The ponds in the unique setting will appeal to some. Some people like to fish out of their canoes and kayaks. They won't fill their coolers with fish. Big crowds of fishing and swimming will deter some fishing enjoyment. It looks like there will be some areas isolated from swimming. Fishers will probably fish early in the morning, so there will still be many opportunities. For birding, seasonally there will be much activity during the migration period.

A member expressed concern that any facilities built for human waste should be super protective. This is an opportunity to educate the public about the water quality issue, and how it is important along the whole Trace. This is a primary place to say what we did to protect the conduits in the aquifer, and the importance of this. [III. Use of the Property, Planned Public Uses and Assessment of Impacts]

Mr. Muller said the Trace extends over a much larger area than this property, and that activities in other areas of the Trace will have a larger effect than what we do on this property.

A member asked what was there before the mining took place. Mr. Muller said apparently an old creek system came through the area.

Ms. Chasteen mentioned how the unique look of the area would attract people, and wondered how the reclamation would affect the spoil piles that provide the unique look. Mr. Muller said we don't know this right now, that it will depend on the reclamation plan. Hopefully there will be enough spoil left so that we will be able to keep some of these features. Ms. Chasteen mentioned the spoil mound in the middle and on the west side as having an aesthetic value, and that perhaps an observation area or tower could be put on the middle spoil area. Mr. Muller mentioned that the stability of the spoil dirt was not known. [III. Use of the Property, Planned Public Uses and Assessment of Impacts]

A member mentioned the desirability to design the building to have a rustic look, that will fit in with the look of the area, and that would be accommodating to a number of people that need to use it at one time. Mr. Muller said that level of planning had not been done yet, and that there is no baseline budget for this property right now. The only money appropriated right now is for reclamation. How much can be done will depend on how much the Legislature appropriates. It will probably be a gradual process for the facilities. It will take 2-3 years for the reclamation before it can be opened. It may be 10 years before all the facilities are in place, assuming that funds are provided. This is a 10-year plan.

Two visitors were given the opportunity to speak. **Mr. Tom Graham**, Vet Power of America, would like 160 acres to recreate the original Ft. White, the fort that was there from 1827 to 1838, and have a living museum on the property. They would also like to use it as a youth educational center, and to provide primitive overnight camping for Boy Scouts and Cadets. Mr. Graham asked for the Advisory Group thoughts on this. Mr. Graham said this size was needed because it would have the complete livestock, cavalry unit posted there, pasture, and crop area.

Mr. Williams said he had talked with Mr. Graham about this. The main concern is that this site will become the poster child for the Ichetucknee Trace, the symbol that represents the Trace. Many people are adamantly opposed to the things that Mr. Graham wants to do in the area. They will oppose the livestock, growing crops and other things because of the nitrates. Mr. Williams said we first need to talk to the powers that be before we can answer Mr. Graham's questions. Mr. Graham said there won't be a nitrate problem because not much was used in 1828; they want to do things as was done then. Mr. Williams doesn't think leachates will be allowed on site.

Mr. Muller said the property was acquired through programs for specific purposes, and this property was first put on list about 8 years ago. The property was acquired to protect the water quality, and compatible secondary recreation is allowed. We're pretty far in the process, and the plan is supposed to be approved in two months. There would probably be problems clearing some of the area for crops, due to gopher tortoises and other environmental concerns. One hundred sixty acres is a good portion of this property. Mr. Muller said he doesn't represent any agencies, Mr. Graham will have to talk with them about what they want. Mr. Muller also suggested looking for other opportunities in the area.

Mr. Thomason said no one present today could provide Vet Power with a yes or no answer. Mr. Muller said OGT, Division of State Lands, and ARC would be involved in any decision.

Ms. Chasteen said she would like to incorporate the Carpenter home in the plan in some way.

Mr. Muller thanked everyone for coming – local representatives and different agencies. The plan is slated to come before ARC in early June, but will be submitted a month ahead of time.

Ms. Chasteen asked if this plan included camping and bringing the request before the zoning board and County Commission. Mr. Muller said camping was not included in this plan right now, that it would require approval by the County Commission first. Mr. Muller said the detailed camping plan would probably not be done until OGT thinks the County Commission would approve camping. The planning takes time and is expensive, and OGT would probably wait until they know it will be allowed.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:15 p.m.

Meeting attendees:

Management Plan Advisory Group members:

Dale Williams	Columbia County Administrator, Columbia County
Jennifer Chasteen	Local private property owner
Lys Burden	Suwannee Bicycle Association, user group representative
Loye Barnard	Save Our Suwannee, conservation organization
Dewey Weaver	Columbia County Commissioner, local elected official
Jerry Krummrich	FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Laurie Windham	Columbia County Sheriff Office
Harvey Campbell	Columbia County Tourist Development Council
Marsha Rickman	Office of Greenways and Trails, lead management agency
Mickey Thomason	Office of Greenways and Trails, lead management agency

Other agency-related attendees:
Jim Muller, Muller and Associates, Inc., facilitator

Management Plan Advisory Group members invited but unable to attend:
Mike Kinnison, Florida Park Service
Alan Whitehouse, DEP Bureau of Mine Reclamation
Jack Terrell, Florida Trail Riders
Santa Fe Soil and Water Conservation District
Jim Stevenson, Florida Springs Initiative
Edwin McCook, Suwannee River Water Management District

Other attendees:
Mike Allen, Vet Power of America
Tom Graham, Vet Power of America

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Office of Greenways and Trails

Summary of the
March 31, 2005 Public Hearing
On the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area Land Management Plan
Held by the
Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area Management Plan Advisory Group

(Columbia County School Board Administration Building
372 West Duval St., Lake City, Florida 32055)

Prepared by Muller and Associates, Inc.

This hearing was advertised in one or more local newspapers, announced at the Columbia County Commission meeting, and advertised in the Florida Administrative Weekly, in compliance with Chapter 259.032 (10), Florida Statutes. Assistance with advertising and conducting the hearing was provided by the staff of the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) and Muller and Associates, Inc.

Approximately 25 people were in attendance; 17 of these signed attendance sheets. Four people completed a speaker form. **Ms. Marsha Rickman**, member of the Management Plan Advisory Group, opened the meeting at approximately 6:05 p.m. Ms. Rickman thanked those present for attending. She stated that the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area land management plan has been drafted, and that this hearing is part of the process for getting public input on the draft plan.

Ms. Rickman introduced **Jim Muller, Muller and Associates, Inc**., who prepared the management plan under a contract with OGT. Ms. Rickman said Mr. Muller will provide a short presentation on the property and then OGT will get everyone's comments concerning the property. Ms. Rickman also introduced **Mr. Mickey Thomason, OGT**, who will be responsible for managing the property. Ms. Rickman mentioned the role of the Management Plan Advisory Group and introduced those members present. Ms. Rickman thanked the members of the Advisory Group for their work and thanked the members of the public for attending this meeting, the seventh public forum to discuss the management activities on this site. The goals and objectives in the plan outline the management activities and public uses for this property for the next 10 years, and will be the focus of Mr. Muller's presentation.

Mr. Muller explained that the public hearing was part of the land management preparation process set in statute. He said he would ask for comments and information the public has on Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area and that OGT would consider these in the final revisions to the draft land management plan. Mr. Muller showed a PowerPoint presentation giving an overview of the Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area project, the planning process, and OGT's intended management and use of the property.

A member of the audience asked about the "dry valley" that was mentioned. Mr. Muller said this is the Ichetucknee Trace, a depression shown on maps. A water conduit to Ichetucknee Springs is underneath. The reason the land was bought was concern that mining of the limestone could go so deep that it would puncture through limestone separating the pits from the water conduit that leads to Ichetucknee State Park. The acquisition was made to stop the mining and to protect the water quality to the springs. The audience member asked if the water level moves up and down. Mr. Muller says it does, but it is not directly connected to the conduit to Ichetucknee Springs State Park.

A member of the audience was asked if the BMX was planned for events. Mr. Muller said quite possibly, depending on the level of interest and support in the community. The audience member also asked about camping. Mr. Muller said OGT would probably come back to the County Commission in the future to request to have camping, and the degree of camping and conditions would be discussed before a full proposal is brought back. The reclamation will

take about two years, so there is not a push to get camping approval right now. The level and types of camping haven't been decided yet, but primitive and RV camping with facilities are being considered. Until there is camping, this will be a daytime park. The County Commission did not approve OHV use or overnight camping.

An audience member asked where the primary access would be if the Bedrock easement wasn't obtained. Mr. Muller said OGT would probably talk with the County about roads and such, but at this point the best legal access is through Bountiful, but there is also access through Carpenter. OGT prefers to have access through Bedrock. The audience member owns land on the southern boundary, and wanted to know how close to the perimeter there would be activities. Mr. Muller said this would be decided during the reclamation process. The audience member asked how to be kept involved. Mr. Muller suggested providing an email address and phone number to OGT and letting them know of your interest.

An audience member asked if the reclamation would begin during 2005. Ms. Rickman said a bid had been written and OGT expected to hear something in April. OGT has until June 2007 to complete the reclamation, and she expects reclamation to begin in 2005. Mr. Muller said the process is two steps – design and construction. The company designing the project will also supervise the constructions. The company designing the reclamation will start in 2005. Dirt may not be turned in 2005.

Mr. Thomason recognized **Mr. H.L. Sistrunk** to speak. Mr. Sistrunk asked how many acres would be bought to get access through Bedrock Road. Ms. Rickman said OGT will be going for an easement of just the road itself at this time. The property is under contract to be sold to someone else, and OGT will be working with the new owner to get an easement for the road. Mr. Sistrunk said last time OGT had talked about buying 240 or 250 acres. Ms. Rickman said that was when OHV use was being considered on the property.

Mr. Sistrunk asked if the Florida Forever program requires something that endangers the environment or water quality. Ms. Rickman said the program requires that the environment be protected. Mr. Sistrunk asked which of the land this was. Mr. Muller said all the land was acquired either through Preservation 2000 or Florida Forever. Mr. Sistrunk liked the plans for the pit part of the property, but wanted to know what the rest of the property was for, and wanted to know if the land could be declared surplus and deeded to the County. Developers and real estate people are already asking for ½ acre lots, and want to go south. Mr. Sistrunk asked how deep the lakes were. Ms. Rickman said an average of about 30 feet, with depths of up to perhaps 80 feet. Mr. Sistrunk discussed pit depth, and depth of nearby wells. He said that some people said the land can't be reclaimed, because it may punch through to the conduit underneath. Mr. Muller said the mining was stopped to prevent going through to the conduit, and not the bottom of the lakes. The reclamation will be on the lake edges and the spoil. Mr. Sistrunk suggested the land not needed for reclamation be made surplus, deeded to the County, and they could build a sewage plant out there to take care of all the septic tanks. There needs to be talking about the land that doesn't include the pits.

Ms. Jennifer Chasteen, Friends of Kirby Pit, spoke next. Friends of Kirby Pit was formed to help voice the concerns of area residents around Kirby Pit. Ms. Chasteen thanked OGT for their work, but said she knew that residents had concerns about the revised plan. The access point through Bedrock Road would be best, and she knew that OGT knows this. Ms. Chasteen also mentioned waste disposal of any type. She wants restrooms built on the site to be appropriate for this particular area. Camping would have to be the right plan. Keep the residents in consideration and residential needs in consideration. Ms. Chasteen encouraged other residents with concerns to voice their concerns tonight.

Mr. Johnny Dame, interpreter of Florida's natural history and nature artist, spoke next. Mr. Dame wrote the petition in 1995 to put this project on the CARL list. Mr. Dame likes the management plan, and that the property has potential to be the poster child for restoration. He would like to tie the projects in with schools and 4-H, and encourage children and adults to participate in the restoration process. Mr. Dame thinks some scrub is also on the property, including dwarf sand pine and sand oak. Mr. Dame found a dead indigo snake on the property 10 years ago. He saw an immature bald eagle there today, and large bobcat prints. He would like to keep some relief in the reclamation process, perhaps put an observation deck up there. Mr. Dame suggested taking some before-and-after photographs to demonstrate the restoration process. Mr. Dame doesn't think there is any wasted land in this project. All can be used for passive recreation and habitat. Positioning of any large facilities such as wastewater would have to be done very carefully because of the groundwater and sinkhole concerns.

Mr. Harvey C. Faul, adjacent landowner, has concerns about establishing the BMX bicycle motocross. He has no problems with bike trails and bikers being allowed in. The BMX type activity leads to supervised programs being put on. This brings in a large influx of people, which is a direct deterrent to what we're trying to solve here, to keep the ecology as it is and to keep large crowds out. If motocross is allowed, then will likely have OHV use next, and he is definitely against this.

Mr. Thomason thanked everyone for coming.

The public hearing adjourned at approximately 6:50 p.m.

Meeting attendees:

Management Plan Advisory Group members:

Alan Whitehouse	DEP Bureau of Mine Reclamation
Jennifer Chasteen	Local private property owner
Loye Barnard	Save Our Suwannee, conservation organization
Dewey Weaver	Columbia County Commissioner, local elected official
Marsha Rickman	Office of Greenways and Trails, lead management agency
Mickey Thomason	Office of Greenways and Trails, lead management agency

Other agency-related attendees:
Jim Muller, Muller and Associates, Inc., presenter
Robin Turner, OGT

The public sign-in sheet is on file.

Appendix 3:
Soils Descriptions for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area

>>insert soil descriptions from printed soil survey

Appendix 4:
An Ecological Survey of the Ichetucknee Trace, Columbia County

AN ECOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE ICHETUCKNEE TRACE, COLUMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

Submitted To The
Office of Greenway And Trails
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
January 7, 2004

Florida Natural Areas Inventory
1018 Thomasville Road, Suite 200-C
Tallahassee, FL 32303
850-224-8207
www.fnai.org

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Survey

In 2002, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT), contracted with the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) to conduct surveys of rare plants and animals on the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway (CFG) in north and central Florida. Prior to the Rare Species Survey, FNAI conducted and continues to survey for exotic plants on the CFG. Data will facilitate a management plan that will contribute to the survival of local populations of rare species as well as help control and track exotic plant populations. This report presents data for one recently acquired OGT site in Columbia County, the Ichetucknee Trace.

B. Location and Proximity to Other Managed Areas

The Ichetucknee Trace property consists of approximately 659 acres in southwestern Columbia County. The site lies southwest of Lake City and the smaller community of Columbia City and north of Ft. White. Access to the property is from SR 47 and Bedrock Road from the east, and Carpenter Road on the western boundary. Ichetucknee Springs State Park is the closest Managed Area and is located several miles southwest of the site. Ichetucknee Trace was acquired by the state because of its hydrogeological connection with Ichetucknee Springs and River, with the primary goal being to protect the water quality of that outstanding resource.

II. RESOURCE DESCRIPTION

This assessment of the Ichetucknee Trace property is based on two site visits. A botanical and ecological assessment was conducted on July 21, 2003 by FNAI botanist/ecologists Brenda Herring and Gary Schultz. FNAI staff zoologists Dale Jackson, Dan Hipes, and Aubrey Davis visited the site on August 14, 2003, with a principal goal of assessing the tortoise population noted by the botanists during their assessment. Additional resource information is derived from The Florida Department of Environmental Protection 2003 Florida Forever Five Year Plan, the FNAI database, 1994 and 1998 false-color, infrared USGS Digital Ortho Quarter Quadrangles, and USGS 7.5 minute topographic quadrangle maps.

A. Natural Resources

1. Natural Communities and Land Cover Types

The majority of the Ichetucknee Trace site has been severely altered by silvicultural operations and limerock mining. Remnant vegetation of the historical sandhill natural

community, which once covered nearly the entire site, still exists, although most of the unmined portion of the tract has been degraded substantially by conversion to pine plantations or by years of fire suppression that have succeeded to xeric hammock/upland mixed forest.

Silvicultural Lands

These lands cover approximately one-half of the site and occur both north and south of Bedrock Road and the limerock mines. The largest block of pine plantation (221 acres) occupies the northwestern portion of the site, north of Bedrock Road. The plantation consists primarily of densely stocked slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) that appears to be between 20 and 30 years old, although growth in the local sandy soils has been poor. Understory beneath the pines is sparse except for scattered laurel oaks (*Quercus hemisphaerica*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), winged sumac (*Rhus copallina*), and sand blackberry (*Rubus cuneifolius*). The native grass, sweet tanglehead (*Heteropogon melanocarpus*) is common along the numerous woods roads, fencelines, and powerlines that dissect the site. The deep layer of pine needles that covers the forest floor reflects many years of fire suppression. Based on remnant native vegetation, the surrounding community, and the large concentration of gopher tortoise burrows (15 observed during the July visit), this site historically supported a sandhill community. A smaller area of 22 acres, in the northwestern corner of the tract just north of the powerline, supports more recently planted slash pines, although there remain many native sandhill species such as longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*), southern red oak (*Quercus falcata*), and wiregrass (*Aristida stricta*).

North of Bedrock Road, within the northeast portion of the site, another slash pine plantation covers approximately 81 acres. The young pines are approximately 10-15 feet in height and are estimated to be less than 10 years old. Plant diversity on this site is low. Dominant species are panic grasses (*Panicum* spp) and sand blackberry (*Rubus cuneifolius*). The terrain has been ridged and furrowed from site preparation for the pine plantation. Dirt roads encircle and bisect the site. Bordering the southern end of the pine plantation, just north of Bedrock Road, is a small remnant (approximately 12 acres) of sandhill/upland mixed forest. Native sandhill species include longleaf pine, sandbur (*Krameria lanceolata*), and Carolina false vervain (*Stylodon carneus*).

A third area of pine plantation occurs in the southwestern portion of the site south of Bedrock Road and the limerock mines. Encompassing an area of approximately 41 acres, this area was recently cleared when the pines were harvested. The site is characterized by large, scattered piles of

slash left from the harvest operation. A diverse assemblage of sandhill forbs and graminoids, many of which were in flower during the July visit, still occurs throughout the site. A single occurrence of giant orchid (*Pteroglossaspis ecristata*; state listed; G2/S2) occurs within this portion of the site. Woody plants are also abundant. Of special interest is the abundance of the shrub, chinquapin (*Castanea pumila*).

Limerock Mines

Situated within the mid to southern-most portion of the site, this area now consists of artificial lakes and surrounding cleared land and spoil piles. This area, which represents the most altered of all of the terrain on site, covers approximately 316 acres. Dominant vegetation is weedy and includes many introduced exotic pest plants. Exotic plants observed in July were mimosa (Albizia julibrissin), camphor tree (Cinnamomum camphora), air potato (Dioscorea bulbifera), China berry (Melia azedarach), Chinese brake fern (Pteris vittata), and natal grass (Rhynchelytrum repens).

Upland Mixed Forest

Four areas identified as upland mixed forest occur on site. Along the northwestern portion of the site east of Carpenter Road and north of the large pine plantation, a small area of upland mixed forest supports large diamond-leaved oaks (Quercus laurifolia) as well as an understory of red bud (Cercis canadensis) and sparkleberry (Vaccinium arboreum). The site also has several weedy and exotic pest plant species, not surprising given the site's close proximity to an old homesite. Exotic plants in the upland mixed forest are camphor tree, Chinaberry, and Chinese wisteria (Wisteria sinensis). Additional exotic plants located at the homesite include lantana (Lantana camara) and Chinese privet (Ligustrum sinense).

A small strand of upland mixed forest is situated along the western boundary of the site, on the northern boundary of the limerock mine area. Hardwoods are small in diameter and form a dense, closed canopy. Diversity of plant species is low. Pine plantation extends into this forest.

North of Bedrock Road, two areas have remnants of upland mixed forest. Immediately north of Bedrock Road in a small area between the remnant sandhill to the south and pine plantation to the north, a species-rich upland mixed forest was observed. The mix of hardwoods includes laurel oak and sand live oak (Quercus geminata). The subcanopy supports wild cherry (Prunus serotina), redbay (Persea borbonia) and wild olive (Osmanthus americanus).

The fourth upland mixed forest is located along the western boundary of the northeastern portion of the site. Historically, this site may have been a

sinkhole, given its large drop in elevation. Land clearing has altered the site, which now supports mostly weedy species such as muscadine grape (Vitis rotundifolia) and the invasive exotic Chinaberry, but hardwoods such as laurel oak and sand live oak still persist.

2. Fish and Wildlife/Habitats

Although the hardwood-dominated fringe along portions of the eastern and southern site boundaries offers some habitat for common wildlife (e.g., gray squirrel, red-shouldered hawk, barred owl, yellow-billed cuckoo, raccoon, armadillo), the extensively degraded former sandhill habitat was formerly of much greater importance. The latter habitat had the potential to support numerous rare species, including eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon couperi*), Florida pine snake (*Pituophis melanoleucus*), Bachman's sparrow (*Aimophila aestivalis*), southeastern American kestrel (*Falco sparverius paulus*), Florida mouse (*Podomys floridanus*), and Sherman's fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger shermani*). Because of the degraded and isolated condition of the remaining habitat, the site's current potential to support such species is low.

The severe land use alterations on site also would have destroyed the value of any pre-existing isolated wetlands, which in native xeric uplands are of immense value as reproductive sites for a diversity of amphibians, including rare species such as the striped newt (*Notophthalmus perstriatus*) and gopher frog (*Rana capito*). The lakes created by mining have relatively low value to most wildlife, especially because of the lack of a shallow littoral zone. Whatever management is adopted for these lakes, it is desirable to prevent the introduction of exotic aquatic plants such as hydrilla and elodea.

Subterranean groundwater habitats along the Santa Fe and middle Suwannee rivers are known to be occupied by at least one rare cave crayfish, the pallid cave crayfish (*Procambarus pallidus*). Other blind cave crustaceans, including amphipods and isopods, are also likely to occur in the local aquifer. Existence of these species depends upon maintaining high water quality in the aquifer.

Pigs that appeared to be uncontained were observed immediately across the site's northern boundary. This non-native species is well known for its propensity to destroy native vegetation, uproot soils, and likely damage native fauna.

3. Listed Species/Habitats

Listed Plants

Survey of the southwestern portion of the Ichetucknee Trace site yielded one individual of giant orchid (*Pteroglossaspis ecristata*; state listed; G2/S2). This is one of the remnant sandhill plant species that is persisting

despite conversion of habitat to silvicultural land. The sandhill has been cleared and planted and leftover debris from harvest operations persists. A mix of a few native sandhill plants as well as more numerous weedy species dominate the site.

Other listed vascular plant species that have the potential to occur in the Ichetucknee Trace site based on records from the FNAI Biological Conservation Database (BCD) for Columbia County and habitat preference include incised groove-bur (*Agrimonia incisa*), Wagner's spleenwort (*Asplenium x heteroresiliens*), autumn coralroot (*Corallorrhiza odontorhiza*), Chapman's skeletongrass (*Gymnopogon chapmanianus*), and Florida spiny-pod (*Matelea floridana*). Incised groove-bur and Chapman's skeletongrass both occur in sandhill. The other three species inhabit upland mixed forest or hammocks and are often associated with exposed limestone.

Listed Animals

The 14 August 2003 zoological survey focused on assessing the site's gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*; state Species of Special Concern; G2/S3) population, which had been noted during the earlier botanical reconnaissance. The survey was not intended as a complete burrow census but rather aimed at determining the distribution of tortoises on site, their habitat use, and their general abundance.

Tortoises require open sites with abundant herbaceous ground cover for forage. Therefore, surveyors drove most of the site's roads and fire lanes, which, because they often represented the most open habitats remaining, harbored many tortoises. Additionally, transects were walked through tracts that supported at least some herbaceous ground cover. These included tracts in the northwestern and southwestern corners as well as along the southern boundary. Little effort was conducted within the older pine plantation, which, because of absence of ground cover due to shading, provided little appropriate habitat for tortoises.

Tortoise burrows were observed throughout much of then unmined portion of the site. Highest numbers of burrows were observed in the southwestern tract and along fire lanes and roads in the northeastern young plantation (former improved pasture) and eastern half of the older northwestern pine plantation. A shapefile depicting observed burrows is included. Of 94 burrows observed, 58 (62 %) were characterized as showing recent tortoise activity; this is a high level of activity. Most burrows were of animals likely to represent adult individuals, although some evidence of reproduction was observed (13 burrows categorized as either medium or small). In addition to observing burrows, the team observed two adult tortoises at one burrow: a male just outside the burrow, and a second individual just within.

Remains of only one dead juvenile tortoise were observed; this is normal and indicates that the population has thus far escaped the Upper Respiratory Tract Disease (URTD) that has ravaged some populations elsewhere in Florida. It is therefore critical that no tortoise from off-site be introduced to the site.

Because of thick ground cover and brush as a result of insufficient recent fire, tortoise burrows that were not along fire lanes and roads were difficult to detect, and it is probable that many were overlooked. Further, survey efforts did not include all potential habitat.

4. Unique Natural Features

The site lies within the physiographic feature known as the Ichetucknee Trace, an area of slumped land overlying an ancient river bed and series of karst features. This unique feature is believed to be of critical importance to maintaining the ecological integrity of the Ichetucknee River and the aquifer and springs that feed it.

5. Exotic Pest Plants

Nine species of exotic pest plants were documented occurring within the Ichetucknee Trace site. Six of these are ranked by the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) as Category I. The Category I ranking means that these species "are altering native plant communities by displacing native species, changing community structures or ecological functions…" The Category II ranking refers to "Invasive exotics that have increased in abundance or frequency but have not yet altered Florida plant communities to the extent shown by Category I species" (FLEPPC 2003).[1]

Exotic Pest Plants Documented on the Ichetucknee Trace Property. Listing follows 2003 Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) Categories.

Scientific name	**Common name**	**FLEPPC Category**
Albizia julibrissin	mimosa	I
Cinnamomum camphora	camphor tree	I
Dioscorea bulbifera	air potato	I
Lantana camara	lantana	I
Ligustrum sinense	Chinese privet	I
Melia azedarach	China berry	I
Pteris vittata	Chinese brake fern	II
Rhynchelytrum repens	natal grass	II
Wisteria sinensis	Chinese wisteria	II

These exotic plant species populations should be monitored and controlled to stop their spread. Although not observed on-site, it is likely that the exotic Cogon grass (*Imperata cylindrica*) and Japanese climbing fern (*Lygodium japonicum*) are in the area and might likewise merit immediate attention.

[1] Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC). 2003. List of Florida's invasive species. Available on the internet at http://www.Fleppc.org.

6. Lake/Aquifer Management

FNAI has no specific expertise in hydrological resources. Given that the Ichetucknee Trace is based on karst terrain and is situated on an unconfined portion of the Floridan aquifer that serves as a major recharge area, managers may wish to consult with the Florida Geological Survey regarding management of the property as it relates to hydrological resources.

Appendix 5:
Florida Natural Areas Inventory Tracking List for Columbia County, Florida
and
FNAI ranking system explanation

>>insert FNAI county record after printing from the internet

FNAI GLOBAL RANK DEFINITIONS

G1 = Critically imperiled globally because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences or less than 1000 individuals) or because of extreme vulnerability to extinction due to some natural or man-made factor.
G2 = Imperiled globally because of rarity (6 to 20 occurrences or less than 3000 individuals) or because of vulnerability to extinction due to some natural or man-made factor.
G3 = Either very rare and local throughout its range (21-100 occurrences or less than 10,000 individuals) or found locally in a restricted range or vulnerable to extinction from other factors.
G4 = Apparently secure globally (may be rare in parts of range)
G5 = Demonstrably secure globally
GH = Of historical occurrence throughout its range, may be rediscovered (e.g., ivory-billed woodpecker)
GX = Believed to be extinct throughout range
GXC = Extirpated from the wild but still known from captivity or cultivation
G#? = Tentative rank (e.g., G2?)
G#G# = Range of rank; insufficient data to assign specific global rank (e.g., G2G3)
G#T# = Rank of a taxonomic subgroup such as a subspecies or variety; the G portion of the rank refers to the entire species and the T portion refers to the specific subgroup; numbers have same definition as above (e.g., G3T1)
G#Q = Rank of questionable species - ranked as species but questionable whether it is species or subspecies; numbers have same definition as above (e.g., G2Q)
G#T#Q = Same as above, but validity as subspecies or variety is questioned.
GU = Due to lack of information, no rank or range can be assigned (e.g., GUT2).
G? = Not yet ranked (temporary)

FNAI STATE RANK DEFINITIONS

S1 = Critically imperiled in Florida because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences or less than 1000 individuals) or because of extreme vulnerability to extinction due to some natural or man-made factor.
S2 = Imperiled in Florida because of rarity (6 to 20 occurrences or less than 3000 individuals) or because of vulnerability to extinction due to some natural or man-made factor.
S3 = Either very rare and local throughout its range (21-100 occurrences or less than 10,000 individuals) or found locally in a restricted range or vulnerable to extinction from other factors.
S4 = Apparently secure in Florida (may be rare in parts of range)
S5 = Demonstrably secure in Florida
SH = Of historical occurrence throughout its range, may be rediscovered (e.g., ivory-billed woodpecker)
SX = Believed to be extinct throughout range
SA = Accidental in Florida, i.e., not part of the established biota
SE = An exotic species established in Florida may be native elsewhere in North America
SN = Regularly occurring, but widely and unreliably distributed; sites for conservation hard to determine

FEDERAL LEGAL STATUS

Provided by FNAI for information only.
For official definitions and lists of protected species, consult the relevant federal agency.
Definitions derived from U.S. Endangered Species Act of 1973, Sec. 3. Note that the federal status given by FNAI refers only to Florida populations and that federal status may differ elsewhere.

LE Endangered: species in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.
LT Threatened: species likely to become Endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.
E(S/A) Endangered due to similarity of appearance to a species which is federally listed such that enforcement personnel have difficulty in attempting to differentiate between the listed and unlisted species.
T(S/A) Threatened due to similarity of appearance (see above).
PE Proposed for listing as Endangered species.
PT Proposed for listing as Threatened species.

C Candidate species for which federal listing agencies have sufficient information on biological vulnerability and threats to support proposing to list the species as Endangered or Threatened.
XN Non-essential experimental population.
MC Not currently listed, but of management concern to USFWS.
N Not currently listed, nor currently being considered for listing as Endangered or Threatened.

STATE LEGAL STATUS

Provided by FNAI for information only.
For official definitions and lists of protected species, consult the relevant federal agency.

Animals: Definitions derived from "Florida's Endangered Species and Species of Special Concern, Official Lists" published by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, 1 August 1997, and subsequent updates.
LE Endangered: species, subspecies, or isolated population so few or depleted in number or so restricted in range that it is in imminent danger of extinction.
LT Threatened: species, subspecies, or isolated population facing a very high risk of extinction in the future.
LS Species of Special Concern is a species, subspecies, or isolated population which is facing a moderate risk of extinction in the future.
PE Proposed for listing as Endangered.
PT Proposed for listing as Threatened.
PS Proposed for listing as Species of Special Concern.
N Not currently listed, nor currently being considered for listing.

Plants: Definitions derived from Sections 581.011 and 581.185(2), Florida Statutes, and the Preservation of Native Flora of Florida Act, 5B-40.001. FNAI does not track all state-regulated plant species; for a complete list of state-regulated plant species, call Florida Division of Plant Industry, 352-372-3505 or see: **http://doacs.state.fl.us/~pi/5b-40.htm#.0055**.
LE Endangered: species of plants native to Florida that are in imminent danger of extinction within the state, the survival of which is unlikely if the causes of a decline in the number of plants continue; includes all species determined to be endangered or threatened pursuant to the U.S. Endangered Species Act.
LT Threatened: species native to the state that are in rapid decline in the number of plants within the state, but which have not so decreased in number as to cause them to be Endangered.
PE Proposed for listing as Endangered.
PT Proposed for listing as Threatened.
N Not currently listed, nor currently being considered for listing.

Appendix 6:
Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area Timber Assessment

Columbia County Recreation Area

Timber Assessment

Prepared By:
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Florida Division of Forestry
July 14, 2003

I. Purpose

This document is intended to fulfill the timber assessment requirement for the Columbia County Recreation Area (CCRA) as required by Section 1. Section 253.036, Florida Statutes. The goal of this *Timber Assessment* is to evaluate the potential and feasibility of managing timber resources for conservation and revenue generation purposes.

II. Background

The 657 acre Columbia County Recreation Area was purchased by Florida Department of Environmental Protection from Anderson Columbia, Inc. in September 2000. The main portion of this tract is in an area that was strip mined for lime rock by Anderson Columbia, Inc. There are approximately 78 acres of mined areas (gravel pits) that have filled with water since mining operations have ceased, and approximately 214 acres of mine spoil, and mining roads that surround the gravel pits. The CCRA also contains approximately 246 acres of well-stocked pine plantations in the areas north of the gravel pits, and has 83 acres of mixed hardwood stands in and around the mined area. There is an additional 34 acres of cutover area located in the southwestern corner of the tract that is well suited to longleaf pine restoration. The boundary areas of the tract have been cleared and fencing was installed by DEP during the spring of 2003.

III. Goals and Objectives Related to Timber Management

1. Restore longleaf pine to approximately 34 acres of cutover area (stand 05) located in the southwestern corner of the property.
2. Implement an initial thinning in selected slash pine plantations (stands 01 & 02) when they reach 13-16 years in age.
3. Implement a prescribed burn program in appropriate slash pine plantations (see Recommendations & Prescribed Burning sections).
4. Clearcut appropriate slash pine plantations and replant with longleaf pine (see Recommendations).

IV. General Management Guidelines

Basal Area per acre (BA) will be the primary measurement tool in providing management recommendations for thinning of appropriate pine plantations on CCRA. BA is the cross sectional area (in square feet) of a tree measured four and one-half feet above the ground. (Diameter of trees measured at this height is referred to as its diameter at breast height or DBH). BA can be used to define stocking rates in determining the timing and rate of a thinning treatment. Fully-stocked pine stands have enough trees per acre of a size or sizes larger enough to utilize growing space without causing over-crowding, which can lead to an increased risk of insect and disease mortality. Longleaf and slash pine stands with 70 to 100 square feet of BA are considered fully stocked. It requires more, smaller diameter trees than larger diameter trees to equal one square foot of BA. (For example: It takes 357 evenly spaced

six-inch dbh trees to equal 70 sq. ft. of BA, whereas only 89 twelve-inch dbh trees per acre equal the same 70 sq. ft. of BA)

Basal area can be roughly correlated to crown density, and therefore to needle-cast. Generally 40 to 60 sq. ft. of BA should provide enough needle-cast to carry prescribed fire and adequate sunlight for maintenance of natural grass communities.

Another measurement that is considered when selecting leave trees during thinning treatments is "live crown ratio", which is the percentage of length of a trees stem that is clothed with living branches. A live crown ratio of ± 30% is a generally desired when selecting leave trees during thinning treatments of southern pine stands. This amount of live crown ratio helps to ensure that residual trees will not only grow in height and diameter, but provide good seed trees for natural regeneration as the stand matures.

Natural forest communities are dynamic, going though many stages of succession before reaching a climax or old-growth condition. The amount of time needed for stands to reach a climax condition is influenced by the life expectancy of a stands' dominant tree species. For example: Slash pine has an average life span of 100 years, whereas longleaf pine has been found to live up to 300 years. Natural disturbances such as bark beetle infestations, diseases, wildfires, and windstorms are instrumental in creating multi-age stands. This is accomplished by various sized gaps continually being created in the canopy layer, which allows unfiltered sunlight to reach the forest floor. If these gaps are large enough, shade intolerant species like southern pines will seed into these gaps, providing a new generation of pines to reach the forest canopy.

Where naturally occurring fire has kept the understory open, pine seedlings become established at very high densities. It is not uncommon to have ten to twenty thousand seedlings per acre in scattered openings. Frequent wildfires and competition for sunlight, water, and nutrients favor the healthiest, fastest growing pine saplings. Attrition continues over the life of the stand until the residual trees mature and more canopy openings are created to perpetuate the natural regeneration of the stand. This cycle results in uneven-aged stand structure where each group of trees created by a canopy opening are a similar age, but the entire stand will have mosaic of clusters of various sizes and shapes with different age classes and tree densities. The long-term BA will fluctuate around a constant figure depending on the soil productivity (as low as 20 sq. ft. on extremely poor sites, and up to 80 sq. ft. on highly productive sites).

Thinning type harvests in pine plantations help in maintaining the health and vigor of the stands by removing diseased, severely suppressed, and deformed trees. Creating open spaces in the canopy layer allows residual trees crowns to expand, and eventually provide sufficient seed trees for natural generation. Properly applied thinnings are also useful in enhancing the development of understory and groundcover communities which can provide a diversity of habitat for a wide variety of wildlife species. Recovery of groundcover communities (especially native forbs and grasses) provides fine fuels that are essential for successful prescribed burning of upland forest communities. Initial thinning methods would remove every third or fifth row of pines, and selective harvesting of forked, diseased and suppressed in the intermediate rows (third-row select or fifth-row select). A small percentage of co-dominant trees need to be harvested also to meet the desired residual BA. Stand BA's should be reduced to approximately 70-80 sq. ft. per acre (dependent on BA before treatment) during initial treatment, and thinned again whenever they contain >100 sq. ft of BA per acre. A general recommendation in southern pine stands is to remove no more than a third of the existing BA per acre during one treatment (For example: In a stand with 150 of sq. ft. of BA, thin back to 100 sq. ft. of BA per acre). This will help to minimize windthrow damage in residual trees.

V. Recommendations

A. Slash Pine Timber Management

Slash Pine Plantations				
Stand #	**Stocking**	**Acres**	**Pine Tree Species**	**Age (Years)**
01	Basal Area = 120 15 cords/acre (pulpwood class)	166	Slash pine	13
02	Approximately 700 trees/acre (pre-merchantable class)	60	Slash pine	7
03	Approximately 600 trees/acre (pre-merchantable class)	20	Slash pine	4

The CCRA currently contains three slash pine stands (See above table and attached maps). Stand 01 is a well-stocked stand with an average of 120 square feet of BA per acre. Merchantable timber volumes for this stand are approximately 15 cords/acre of primarily pulpwood class trees. Hardwood competition is light-moderate throughout the stand. There are a few active gopher tortoise burrows located in the plantation near the edges of the woods roads that dissect this stand. Stands 02 and 03 are well-stocked with approximately 600-700 pre-merchantable sized trees/acre. Stand 02 is a productive old-field site, with a groundcover of herbaceous weeds and grasses, small woody shrubs (blackberry, sparkleberry, etc.), and very few hardwood trees. This stand would be a good candidate for longleaf restoration since old-field sites are generally easier areas to achieve a higher survival rate on longleaf plantings due to the relative lack of competition. Stand 03 is a cutover area with scattered large hardwoods in the southern portion of the stand that is adjacent to an old homesite area. Hardwood competition is light-moderate throughout this stand. Wiregrass is found in some areas (primarily the northeast corner of the stand) where groundcover disturbance was limited, and where competition from vines (*Vitus* spp.) is not as severe as in the southern portion of the stand. Prescribed burning of this stand would help to control vine competition, although the heavier fuel loads in the southern portion may require waiting 6-7 years before the stand can be burned without risking significant mortality of the planted slash pines. Stand 03 is also a good candidate for longleaf pine restoration since wiregrass is scattered throughout most of the stand. Its small size also makes it difficult to produce a merchantable thinning sale unless it's combined with a thinning, and or clearcut harvests of other pine stands on the tract.

Although slash pine is the only pine species that has been planted on the CCRA prior to DEP acquisition, longleaf pine would also have naturally occurred on the majority of upland areas. Loblolly pine would also have been found on this tract, but mainly in the lower lying areas where wildfires were less common than on higher ground. As a result, forest management recommendations for these slash pine stands will focus on using thinnings, group selection, and longleaf pine plantings to assist with restoring self-sustaining mixed species natural pine communities. Clearcutting of some blocks (30-40 acres) of slash plantations when they reach merchantable size (15-20 years old), and replanting with longleaf pine is a viable management option if longleaf pine restoration is an immediate priority.

Generally, the preferred age range for an initial thinning in slash pine plantations is 13-15 years old. This is due to the self-pruning characteristics of slash pine when they are planted at high densities (600-700 per acre). Thinning slash pine plantations within the above age range will assist with maintaining a live crown ratio of 30% in the majority of residual trees. Stand 01 will be ready for thinning by the time the management plan is completed for this property. Either a fifth-row select or third-row select thinning treatment could be used for this stand. Generally a fifth-row select will remove approximately 30% of the stands basal area, whereas a third-row select will remove approximately 50% of a stands existing BA. Long-term management objectives should be considered when choosing a thinning method, for instance if a more open-stand condition is desired to meet recreation, wildlife management, or aesthetic goals then a heavier initial thinning may be the best management option. The majority of the trees that would be removed during the first thinning treatment will be pulpwood class trees, with a small percentage of chip-n-saw class trees harvested from every third or fifth row. These initial thinnings will not produce large revenues due to poor current market conditions for pulpwood in the southeast. A second thinning will produce higher revenues since the primary products will be higher value chip-n-saw and sawtimber class trees.

Once thinning operations have been completed and thinning debris have sufficiently dried out, a cool prescribed burn (winter) should be applied to reduce fuel loading and create open-ground conditions that will enhance reseeding of herbaceous weeds and grasses.

The second thinning in slash pine plantations would be a select thinning. The removal of every third or fifth row during the initial treatment provides enough spacing between residual trees for timber harvesting equipment to selectively remove marked trees during a second thinning without removal of additional rows. Group selection openings can be cut during the second thinning to create favorable conditions for establishment of an uneven-aged stand, and create opportunities for longleaf pine restoration. These openings (2-4 acres in size) allow young trees to

become established by seed falling from neighboring mature trees or by planting longleaf pine seedlings. Larger openings could be created in higher ground areas where the slash pines are of a lesser size due to poorer site quality. Soil survey maps can also be used to delineate these areas. (See attached soil & natural community maps) These areas should then be planted with longleaf pine at the densities mentioned under longleaf restoration. All trees would be removed from these openings to create a large enough gap in the canopy to allow direct sunlight to reach the forest floor, which is required for successful regeneration of pines. For natural regeneration, minimum width of openings should be two to three chains. These openings can be a wide variety of shapes, which provides valuable edge effect habitat for various wildlife species. Prescribed burning of these areas after group selection harvesting is advised to create favorable conditions for pine seedling germination. Slash pines generate some seeds each year, with good crops about every third year. Natural seedfall generally occurs in October, so seedbed preparation burns could be implemented during spring or summer of a good seedfall. It may be advisable to wait 1-2 years to burn after thinning and group selection treatments if there is a large amount of tops scattered throughout the stand to reduce the risk of intense fire conditions that could lead to high mortality in residual trees. Once sufficient numbers of new seedlings have become established in these openings, the next prescribed burn should be delayed until the new saplings average 5-6 feet in height. This will help to minimize mortality in this new age class, especially if the first burn is cooler.

B. Longleaf Pine Restoration

The restoration of longleaf pine within stand 05 (approximately 34 acres) may be implemented as soon as possible. This area has been heavily disturbed by past management practices (clearcutting of native pines, hardwoods and intensive land-clearing activities). These disturbances along with the exclusion of fire have had a large impact on natural communities, including native overstory and groundcover species. The natural community type for the majority of this stand is longleaf pine-turkey oak. This is somewhat confirmed on the ground by a few remnant (mature) longleaf pine and small areas of wiregrass that are located in areas where ground disturbance was limited. Gopher tortoise burrows are found in the more open areas of this stand. Disturbances to these burrows should be taken into account before any forest management activities are implemented in this area.

This stand currently contains a wide variety of hardwood species including; laurel oak, live oak, pignut hickory, black cherry, persimmon, and sumacs. The majority of these hardwoods are seedling and saplings, with larger trees occurring in groups≤(one acre) on th e lower lying portions of the stand. Hardwood competition is heavy throughout this stand and will require the use of selective herbicides like Velpar ULW before planting to reduce competition to longleaf seedlings. Velpar ULW can be applied at a lower rate (two lbs/acre) to minimize disturbance to existing groundcover plants and to lessen mortality of hardwood species like hickories, persimmon and black cherry. The small groups of larger hardwoods could be delineated and not treated with herbicide to provide structural and habitat diversity for various wildlife species. This stand also contains scattered piles of uprooted hardwood trees. It may be preferable to hire a site preparation contractor to push-up and burn these scattered piles to create more open ground conditions for planting longleaf seedlings and to promote groundcover restoration.

The same methods can also be used for reforesting areas where existing slash pine plantations may be cut, although stand 02 may not require an herbicide treatment to control competing hardwoods since it's an "old field" site.

Tree planting densities can be adjusted to specific management objectives (300-600 per/acre), although the relative difficulty in achieving a high survival rate in longleaf plantings should be considered during any planting project. Hand or machine planting are both good methods for planting longleaf, although hand planted rows tend to be less uniform than machine-planted rows, which may be more desirable for natural community restoration. Longleaf pine bare-root and tubeling stock can both be used for machine plantings, but only tubelings should be used for hand plantings. An initial prescribed burn should generally be applied to planted longleaf stands when tree heights average 5-6 feet.

Small areas within the mined area could be planted with native hardwood and pine species to meet aesthetic and restoration goals, although the primary use of this tract may decide if this is a proper management option.

VI. Prescribed Burning

There is no evidence of recent fires on CCRA before DEP acquisition, and more than likely no broadcast burning was done during Anderson-Columbia ownership. As a result, groundcover conditions have deteriorated in areas that were not disrupted by strip mining operations, and hardwood competition is moderate throughout stands 01 and 03. It would be preferable to hold off on prescribed burning of stand 01 until after it has been thinned to avoid potential mortality of merchantable trees and for better marketability of harvested trees since some pulpwood mills (i.e. Buckeye Mill, Perry, FL) do not accept trees that have been exposed to fire. Cooler prescribed fires could be implemented in stands 02 and 03 to promote groundcover restoration and control competing hardwoods, although it would be preferable it wait 3-4 years before burning stand 03 since these trees only an average of 3-4 feet tall. An initial prescribed burn could be implemented in stand 02 during the winter of 2003-2004.

Prescribed burning is an essential land management tool for restoring and maintaining Florida's natural pine communities. Properly applied prescribed burns provide many benefits: Reduction of wildfire hazard, groundcover restoration, hardwood and woody shrub control, wildlife habitat improvement, and overall more natural open-stand conditions. A properly applied prescribed burning program (with an emphasis on growing season burns in appropriate areas) along with longleaf pine restoration will further the process of restoring natural pine communities to CCRA.

VII. Exotic Species Control

There are several exotic species located on the "old homesite" area of this tract. Mimosa (*Albiza julibrissin*) and Chinese wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*) are both found along the borders of stand 03 and the old homesite area. Herbicide treatment of these exotic species is recommended to prevent them from spreading to other portions of the tract.

VIII. Summary

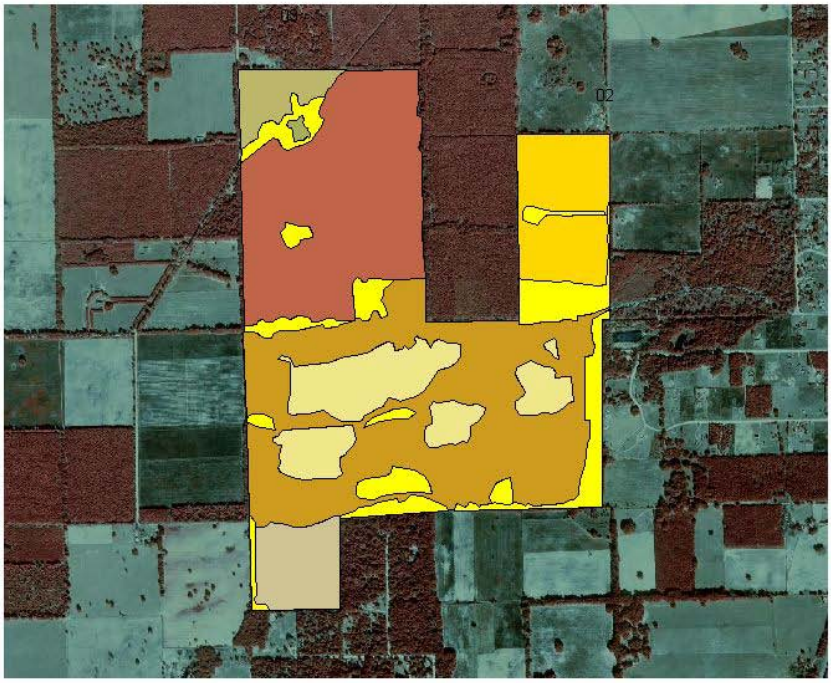
The CCRA slash pine plantations have moderate potential for producing future timber sale revenues. While the total pine plantation acreage is not large, all of the pine stands are well-stocked and are found on productive sites for slash pine. The biggest challenge will be in restoring native groundcover to stands 01 and 02 since these areas have been heavily disturbed by intensive pine plantation management and agricultural productive. If groundcover restoration is a priority, planting and reseeding of native species may be needed to restore natural groundcover conditions in these areas. Stands 03 and 05 should not require planting or seeding of native species since there are some remnants of native groundcover found in these areas. Restoring longleaf pine to stand 05 would begin the process of restoring natural forest communities to the CCRA.

Columbia County Recreation Area
Stand Map

Stand Numbers

- 01: Slash Pine Plantation
- 02: Slash Pine Plantation
- 03: Slash Pine Plantation
- 04: Hardwood Hammocks
- 05: Cutover Area
- 06: Mine Spoil Area
- 07: Waterbodies
- 08: Homesite Area

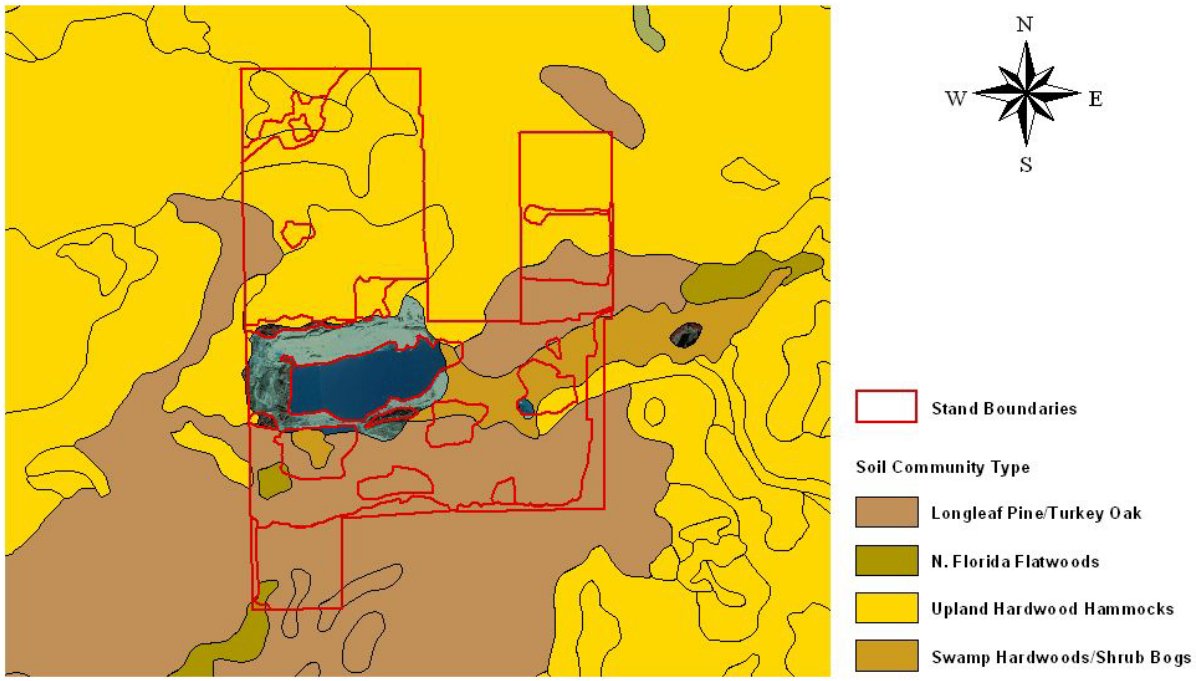
Columbia County Recreation Area
Stand Map



Stand Numbers

- 01: Slash Pine Plantation
- 02: Slash Pine Plantation
- 03: Slash Pine Plantation
- 04: Hardwood Hammocks
- 05: Cutover Area
- 06: Mine Spoil Area
- 07: Waterbodies
- 08: Homesite Area

Columbia County Recreation Area
Ecological Community Type Map



Appendix 7:
Kirby Pit Fishery Enhancement

KIRBY PIT FISHERY ENHANCEMENT

A recent (2 October 2003) walking inspection of the pits on property lead to following comments. In general, fishery improvement strategies will center around habitat and fish production (dependent upon spawning, growth and recruitment to harvestable sizes) and angler access. Comments pertain to 4 largest lakes, which will be referred to as eastern, central and 2 western. At this time water quality information is not available and fertility comments are based on experience with similar situations. Maximum depth is not overly important. Summer stratification will occur in all deep lakes but should not be a problem unless lakes are eutrophic which they are not. Of greater importance than maximum depth is relative proportion of shallow water for spawning and growth of emergent vegetation. Even though lakes are deep, all lakes do have some shallow shelves at this time. Native vegetation such as cattails, willow trees and Illinois pondweed on sunken bars occurs in some areas at this time. Islands are visible which indicate desireable depth diversity and more shallow water than originally anticipated.

Superimposed on all management comments is a concern for safety of all people who may want to walk up to edge of lakes. Shoreline of all these lakes is extremely steep and management planning will have to take fencing or bank resloping into consideration.

As part of property management planning, it is assumed that reclamation activities will involve potential for moving overburden piles. This material would have value in providing more shallow littoral area if pushed into lakes in strategic locations chosen not to smother existing vegetation or pushed off "cliffs" into excessively deep holes. Because vegetation already exists, more shallow bars are not prerequisite to fish production. Overburden may have a more valuable role used to create level areas for parking and walking.

One significant opportunity is to create a connection between 2 westernmost lakes to create a larger acreage of water for anglers to fish when launching a boat. This would provide a more varied and interesting fishing experience. Habitats appear similar and littoral areas of these 2 lakes combined would yield adequate habitat. Boating should be encouraged yet probably limited to use of electric motors only. Unless a zero tolerance for petroleum is mandated, it is recommended to allow presence of outboard motors on boats. This would allow fishing enjoyment by anglers owning and using (for example) bass boats.

The necessity for supplemental or corrective stocking cannot be assessed without fish species presence information. Native centrarchids (bass, redear and bluegill) were observed. These species spawn naturally and stocking would not be required. Following a determination of presence/absence other species to possibly be stocked would include fingerling Morone hybrids (white bass X striped bass), black crappie, brown bullhead, golden shiner (forage species) and catchable size channel catfish. Morones and channel catfish would not spawn and would need to be periodically restocked.

Regulations to spread harvest out among numerous users may be considered. In water bodies of this size which FWC staff consider urban due to high effort per acre fishing, typical regulations might be 20 panfish per day, 6 channel catfish per day (if stocked) and a minimum size of 16 inches enforced for largemouth bass.

If staffing would be available for maintenance, the use of automatic fish feeders would improve growth of fish in vicinity and angler catch rates in areas adjacent to placement.

Another strategy to increase fish production is to fertilize to stimulate algae growth and enhance natural food chain. Due to stated intent to preserve water quality and protect underlying groundwater, the introduction of nutrients is probably unwarranted. Existing habitat will provide fish growth and a philosophy to maintain balance but not to intensively manage for increased production is appropriate.

Other concerns include partitioning users either spatially or temporally.

All lakes do not have to be managed identically. Beyond normal habitat considerations, boat use, angler access, stocking regimes etc. could be varied between lakes.

Appendix 8:
Goals, Objectives, Project Priorities, Timelines, Cost for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area

Goals and Objectives for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area During Fiscal Years 2005-06 through 2014-15

The following goals and objectives were developed specifically for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area (ITRA). They reflect programmatic goals and the ideas of DEP Office of Greenways and Trails personnel in charge of managing and protecting the area, as well as input from cooperative managers, user groups and other stakeholders from outside DEP. The agency believes the goals and objectives to be consistent with the various forms of guidance provided to managers.

The table portrays all management goals and objectives for the next ten years. This is the first Land Management Plan for ITRA, so the listed goals and objectives were not included in previous plans. Each objective is marked with an X as to which of the next ten years it will be addressed by preserve staff ("Proposed Timeline"). The cost of each objective, if known, is also provided ("Estimated Cost"). In many cases the estimated cost is a rough estimate.

Each year identified under Proposed Timeline represents the fiscal year during which an objective will be addressed, (e.g., "05" means July 2005 through June 2006). These objectives and timelines provide the priority schedule for accomplishing management actions on the preserve, as required by Florida Statutes. Objectives are listed in priority order, from highest to lowest, under each goal. Although the goals and objectives are separated according to resources and issues, this does not necessarily mean that the manager will undertake separate tasks to achieve each objective.

The ability to implement the specific goals and objectives identified in this plan will be dependent upon the availability of funding resources for these purposes. Objectives that require funds above the anticipated normal baseline appropriation to be completed are indicated by "*" in the estimated cost column.

The objectives are discussed in more detail in the Chapter IV of the plan (and Chapter III for potential land acquisition and surplus).

Appendix 8: Goals and Objectives for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area for 2005-2014				
Goal/Objective	**Previous Plan**	**Percent Complete**	**Proposed Timeline (fiscal year) '05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14**	**Estimated Cost ($)**
Resource Management and Protection				
Soil Management				
Goal 1: Manage soil to reduce and prevent erosion				
Objective 1a: Assess property to identify major erosion areas			X X	1,000
Objective 1b: Integrate soil erosion prevention into reclamation and recreation design and construction			X X	5,000
Objective 1c: Install erosion control structures as recommended by design & engineering surveys			X X	2,000
Objective 1d: Prevent shoreline erosion near canoe launches by installing boarding dock if necessary			X X X X	7,000
Hydrology/Water Management				
Goal 2: Maintain/restore natural hydrological features outside of the mining area and protect water quality				
Objective 2a: Ensure that planned trails, etc. do			X X X X	5,000

Appendix 8: Goals and Objectives for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area for 2005-2014				
Goal/Objective	**Previous Plan**	**Percent Complete**	**Proposed Timeline (fiscal year) '05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14**	**Estimated Cost ($)**
not cause runoff and water quality problems				
Objective 2b: Inventory hydrological changes to the property (ditching, fire lines, etc.) and their impacts and formulate restoration actions			X X	3,000
Objective 2c: Conduct additional soil contamination tests in the one area with evident contamination and undertake remediation, if recommended			X X	10,000
Objective 2d: Sample additional fish tissue to determine if advisory levels should be considered for these water bodies for fish consumption and implement measures to inform the public, if needed			X X X	
Objective 2e: Assess corrective measures needed for ditched areas on the property			X X	3,000
Objective 2f: Continue coordination with SRWMD regarding monitoring wells			X X X X X X X X X X	2,000
Objective 2g: Mine reclamation			X X	2,500,000
Objective 2h: Consider opening a connection between the two western-most lakes to increase the public's enjoyment			X X X	
Natural Communities Management				
Goal 3: Restore, maintain and protect natural communities				
Objective 3a: Prepare a revised GIS map and description of FNAI natural communities and disturbed areas on the property			X X	3,000
Objective 3b: Identify historic vegetative community types of the property in order to restore habitats to the proper natural community composition.			X X	1,000
Objective 3c: Develop and implement a comprehensive restoration plan with specific goals and objectives, an implementation schedule and monitoring. Highest priority will be sandhills identified as restorable based on presence of gopher tortoises and remnant sandhill vegetation.			X X X	30,000
Objective 3d: Restore disturbed areas, setting priorities based on rarity and quality. Initiate on-ground restoration activities immediately after mine reclamation is complete.			X X X X X X X X	120,000
Native Species Management				
Goal 4: Maintain and protect the native species				
Objective 4a: Inventory native plants found on the property on an opportunity basis or through volunteer efforts			X X X X X X	5,000
Objective 4b: Inventory native animals found on the property and assess their population requirements. on an opportunity basis or through volunteer efforts			X X X X X X	5,000

Appendix 8: Goals and Objectives for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area for 2005-2014				
Goal/Objective	**Previous Plan**	**Percent Complete**	**Proposed Timeline (fiscal year) '05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14**	**Estimated Cost ($)**
Listed Species Management				
Goal 5: Maintain and protect the listed species				
Objective 5a: Integrate listed species needs into fire, restoration, and mine reclamation plans			X X X	
Objective 5b: Monitor gopher tortoise and giant orchid occurrences on a biennial basis and provide information to FNAI			X X X X X	2,500
Objective 5c: Survey listed animal and plant species every five years and provide information to FNAI			X X	3,000
Invasive Non- native Species Management				
Goal 6: Eradicate invasive non-native species or maintain at the lowest practical level				
Objective 6a: Coordinate with DEP Bureau of Invasive Plant Management to establish an exotic species operational plan for the property, if necessary			X X X X X X X X X X	
Objective 6b: Treat non-mine reclamation areas for invasive non-native plants			X X X	20,000
Objective 6c: Treat mine reclamation areas for invasive non-native plants after completion of reclamation activities			X X X X	5,000
Objective 6d: Monitor for invasive non-native species and treat as necessary			X X X X X X X X X X	3,000
Problem Species Management				
NA				
Forest Resources Management				
Goal 7: Manage forest resources consistent with the purposes of this property, when the activities contribute to restoration management				
Objective 7a: Consult timber assessment when preparing restoration plan			X X	
Objective 7b: Consult with DOF as necessary for forest resource issues			X X X X X X X X X X	
Fire Management				
Goal 8: Conduct fire management operations to help restore and maintain natural communities and to mimic natural fire effects				
Objective 8a: Document all woods roads, trails, and firelines using GPS			X	1,000
Objective 8b: Develop burn plan for the property			X	2,000
Objective 8c: Delineate fire management and rescue access routes and provide this information to the sheriff and emergency services			X	500
Objective 8d: Acquire necessary training and equipment for fire prescription and suppression			X X X	45,000
Objective 8e: Install firelines to facilitate fire			X X X	5,000

Appendix 8: Goals and Objectives for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area for 2005-2014				
Goal/Objective	**Previous Plan**	**Percent Complete**	**Proposed Timeline (fiscal year) '05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14**	**Estimated Cost ($)**
management.				
Objective 8f: Establish a system for notifying neighboring landowners in advance of prescribed burns (via email, phone trees, etc.) and use this system before each burn			X X X X X X X X X X	1,000 PER ANNUM
Objective 8g: Assess all pyrogenic communities in year one for the need for prescribed fire; all areas in need of fire will be burned within the first 5 years, and then re-assessed for subsequent fire application			X X X X X X	1,000 PER ANNUM
Objective 8h: Reduce fuel loads on the property to recommended levels on 15% of the property each year			X X X X X X X	5,000
Objective 8i: Accomplish the annual burn objectives listed in the burn plan.			X X X X X X X X X X	10,000
Objective 8j: Protect the property from wildfire.			X X X X X X X X X X	1,000 PER ANNUM
Mineral Resources Management				
NA				
Archaeological, Historical, & Cultural Mgmt				
Goal 9: Survey, monitor and protect archaeological and historic sites on the property.				
Objective 9a: Conduct all ground-disturbing activities in accordance with DHR guidelines.			X X X X X X X X X X	
Objective 9b: Report all suspected historical/archaeological resources discovered during reclamation and restoration activities to DHR			X X X X X X X X X X	?
Security Management				
Goal 10: Establish security measures sufficient to protect the property's integrity and to restrict unauthorized access and use				
Objective 10a: Evaluate the current boundary posting & maintain the boundary of the property			X X X X X X X X X X	2,000 PER ANNUM
Objective 10b: Coordinate with FWC, DEP law enforcement, and the Columbia County Sheriff about security concerns			X X X X X X X X X X	2,000 PER ANNUM
Objective 10c: Establish three security residences on site			X X X	360,000
Research and Monitoring				
Goal 11: Facilitate and conduct scientific research and monitoring to optimally manage and protect natural communities and native plant and animal species of the property				
Objective 11a: Establish photo-plots in restoration areas			X X X	1,000
Objective 11b: Annually sample established vegetative treatment plots			X X X X X X X X X X	3,000
Objective 11c: Establish annual or biennial survey of gopher tortoises, at least in the early			X X X X X	(see listed

Appendix 8: Goals and Objectives for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area for 2005-2014				
Goal/Objective	**Previous Plan**	**Percent Complete**	**Proposed Timeline (fiscal year) '05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14**	**Estimated Cost ($)**
phases of restoration				species)
Objective 11d: Establish water quality monitoring stations on the property			X X X X X X X X X X	?
Objective 11e: Ensure that all research and monitoring projects have all required permits from relevant agencies			X X X X X X X X X X	0
Education and Training				
Goal 12: Educate the public and local governments concerning resources, issues and management goals/objectives of the property				
Objective 12a: Interact with adjacent landowners via phone, mail, and direct contact regarding management issues, such as exotics and burns. Develop brochures and letters explaining the prescribed burning and exotic species programs			X X X X X X X X X X	3,000
Objective 12b: Develop natural resource educational materials and displays, including entrance kiosk(s) with regulations. Relate ITRA natural and historical resources to the region in general			X X X	50,000*
Objective 12c: Encourage adjacent landowners to establish control programs for invasive exotic plants			X X X X X X X X X X	3,000
Objective 12d: Provide public service announcements to local and state media contacts on an as-needed basis			X X X X X X X X X X	2,000 PER ANNUM
Public Access and Visitor Use				
Public Access/Parking/Handicap Facilities				
Goal 13: Provide public access to encourage secondary compatible uses where appropriate on the property that do not detract from the conservation and management goals and objectives				
Objective 13a: Establish entrance sign to identify primary property entrance			X X	10,000
Objective 13b: Develop the main public access point			X X	100,000
Objective 13c: Provide parking areas			X X X	50,000
Objective 13d: Provide picnic facilities at various locations (4 covered)			X X	70,000
Objective 13e: As facilities are developed, provide universal access in all cases except where the law allows reasonable exceptions (e.g., where handicap access is structurally impractical, or where providing such access would change the fundamental character of the facility being provided).			X X X X X X X X X	?
Education Facilities				
Goal 14: Establish locations for providing educational materials and/or programs for visitors				
Objective 14a: At the main entrance point,			X X	5,000

Appendix 8: Goals and Objectives for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area for 2005-2014				
Goal/Objective	**Previous Plan**	**Percent Complete**	**Proposed Timeline (fiscal year) '05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14**	**Estimated Cost ($)**
establish a kiosk that interprets natural and historic resources of ITRA and the region				
Objective 14b: Develop trail signage that provides natural and historical resources interpretation			X X	10,000-50,000
Objective 14c: Construct education/meeting building			X X	525,000*
Objective 14d: Develop brochures that interpret natural and historic resources of ITRA and the region			X X	10,000-50,000
Objective 14e: Develop lists for public distribution of plants and animals known to occur on ITRA			X X X	2,000
Objective 14f: Provide designated site for SCUBA training			X X X	?
Hiking/Biking				
Goal 15: Encourage hiking/biking where appropriate on the property that does not detract from the conservation and management goals and objectives				
Objective 15a: Establish 10-20 miles of multi-use trails suitable for hiking/biking on the property, encouraging local participation in the planning, construction, and maintenance of the trails. Consider asking biking and hiking organizations for their input for trail design			X X	10,000
Objective 15b: Establish two BMX tracks, one easy and one advanced, in the mining area of the property			X X X X	20,000*
Objective 15c: Establish technical riding areas in the mining area of the property, taking advantage of mine spoil			X X X X	Part of reclamation
Objective 15d: Establish at least one short hiking trail loop with interpretive signs near the parking area			X X	3,000
Objective 15e: Establish at least one hiking trail loop with interpretive signs in the southwest area			X X	3,000
Camping				
Goal 16: Encourage camping where appropriate on the property that does not detract from the conservation and management goals and objectives				
Objective 16a: Obtain approval from the Board of County Commissioners to allow camping on the site			X	?
Objective 16b: Establish camping sites with power and water			X X	1,600,000*
Objective 16c: Establish group primitive camping area			X X	35,000*
Fishing				
Goal 17: Encourage fishing at the four lakes				
Objective 17a: Establish two or more fishing			X X X	Part of

Appendix 8: Goals and Objectives for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area for 2005-2014				
Goal/Objective	**Previous Plan**	**Percent Complete**	**Proposed Timeline (fiscal year) '05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14**	**Estimated Cost ($)**
access points at each lake on the property				reclamation
Objective 17b: Establish at least one ADA fishing access point			X X X	Part of reclamation
Objective 17c: Request FWC to assess the fish populations at the borrow pit, and to initiate a fish stocking plan if warranted			X X X	?
Objective 17d: Consult with DOH and FWC regarding contaminant levels in fish and whether a consumption advisory is needed			X X X	1,000
Objective 17e: Assess the impacts, desirability, demand for, and cost of installing multi-purpose boardwalks/docks that would allow for fishing at all water bodies. Consider if the structure would prevent erosion and impacts to shore vegetation			X X X X	50,000*
Boating				
Goal 18: Allow non-motorized boats and electric-powered boats on the four lakes, ensuring that it does not detract from the conservation and management goals and objectives				
Objective 18a: Establish one or more canoe/kayak launch sites at each lake			X X X	Part of reclamation
Objective 18b: Establish a small boat ramp at each of the larger lakes			X X X	75,000
Objective 18c: Assess the impacts, desirability, demand for, and cost of installing a multi-purpose boardwalk/dock or small boarding dock at the launch point. Consider if the structure would prevent erosion and impacts to shore vegetation			X	?
Swimming				
Goal 19: Allow swimming in designated swimming areas				
Objective 19a: Incorporate establishment of swimming areas in reclamation design and construction			X X X	Part of reclamation
Objective 19b: Establish one or more designated swimming areas in the artificial lakes			X X X	5,000; most covered by reclamation
Objective 19c: Establish a lifeguard team for warm water seaon			X X X X X X X X	35,000
Operations and Facilities				
Cost Est. & Funding Sources for Mgmt				
Goal 20: Conduct operations and obtain and maintain facilities and staff to soundly manage, protect and make accessible the property				
Objective 20a: Obtain funding for sufficient staffing [2.0 FTE, 3-5 OPS] and outsourced assistance to provide support for property development and operations			X X X X X X X X X X	?
Objective 20b: Pursue alternative funding			X X X X X X X X X X	?

Appendix 8: Goals and Objectives for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area for 2005-2014				
Goal/Objective	**Previous Plan**	**Percent Complete**	**Proposed Timeline (fiscal year) '05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14**	**Estimated Cost ($)**
sources, such as mitigation projects, grants and fundraising, to supplement baseline budget funds				
Analysis of Contracting Mgmt Activities				
Goal 21: Consider outsourcing those property operations that outside sources can conduct at less cost and with equivalent or better results than property staff				
Objective 21a: On a continuing basis, analyze property operations and identify those activities for which property staff do not have the expertise or that can be completed at less cost with equivalent or better results by outside sources			X X X X X X X X X X	Included in administrative cost
Objective 21b: Consider outsourcing activities identified by Objective 21a			X X X X X X X X X X	Included in administrative cost
Partnerships and Regional Coordination				
Cooperating Agencies				
Goal 22: Establish and maintain relationships with other agencies to enhance management and protection of the property				
Objective 22a: Coordinate management efforts with other agencies			X X X X X X X X X X	5,000 PER ANNUM
Objective 22b: Coordinate on an as-needed basis with local law enforcement and permitting agencies regarding patrol and potential violations			X X X X X X X X X X	See security mgmt
Objective 22c: Establish collaborative efforts with DOF, FWC, DHR, DEP, DOH and others for the protection and management of activities on ITRA			X X X X X X X X X X	SEE 22A
Objective 22d: Encourage establishment of resource monitoring stations by WMD or other entities on the property			X X X	0
Objective 22e: Coordinate joint educational programs with other state agencies and the local education community			X X X X X X X X X X	2,000 PER ANNUM
Objective 22f: Work with academic institutions and law enforcement agencies to make the ITRA water bodies available for SCUBA training for professionals			X X X X	5,000 PER ANNUM
Cooperating Organizations				
Goal 23: Establish and maintain relationships with other organizations to enhance management and protection of the property				
Objective 23a: Establish a Citizen Support Organization and solicit volunteers to assist property staff to accomplish goals of the property.			X X X X	10,000
Objective 23b: Coordinate management efforts with other local natural areas and local environmental organizations			X X X X X X X X X X	5,000
Objective 23c: Coordinate management efforts with local organizations such as hiking, biking,			X X X X X X X X X X	5,000

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Goal/Objective	**Previous Plan**	**Percent Complete**	**Proposed Timeline (fiscal year) '05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14**	**Estimated Cost ($)**
and nature clubs/organizations				
Objective 23d: Provide property and community recognition and support for volunteers			X X X X X X X X X X	2,000
Objective 23e: In the third year, generate 500 hours from volunteers to assist in property management and education, and increase volunteer hours by 10% in each succeeding year			X X X X X X X X X X	2,000 PER ANNUM
Land Use Coordination				
Goal 24: Review, define, and minimize impacts associated with planned and existing development along or within the property				
Objective 24a: Address impacts associated with existing and future development concerning fire management, connectivity and other issues			X X X X X X X X X X	2,000
Objective 24b: Continually review comprehensive plan amendments and land development regulations that govern proposed land use changes on properties adjacent to the property and coordinate with OGT headquarters on comments. Coordinate with neighbors on the review			X X X X X X X X X X	1,000
Prospective Land Acquisitions and Potential Surplus Lands				
Goal 25: Define optimum boundaries for the property and facilitate acquisition and/or surplusing of lands to achieve these boundaries				
Objective 25a: Assist Division of State lands in the acquisition of the Bedrock Road easement or other suitable access			X X X	2,000
Objective 25b: With local input, identify lands outside of the current project boundaries that are necessary for the perpetual protection of the property			X X X X X X X X X X	1,000
Objective 25c: Investigate easements and rights-of-way on ITRA and consider options for extinguishing easements			X X X	5,000
Objective 25d: Nominate for acquisition through Florida Forever and the Greenway and Trails programs those parcels that are important for management of the property, contain important resources, or are linkages to provide additional greenways and trails opportunities			X X X X X	1,000
Objective 25e: Assist in the acquisition of all lands within the ITRA project by providing DEP DSL with information on development, available parcels, ownership, and local contacts every 3 months			X X X X X X X X X X	5,000
Compliance with Govt. Requirements				
Goal 26: Ensure that use and management of the property complies with state and local government requirements				
Objective 26a: Ensure that each planned use of			X X X X X X X X X X	

Appendix 8: Goals and Objectives for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area for 2005-2014				
Goal/Objective	**Previous Plan**	**Percent Complete**	**Proposed Timeline (fiscal year) '05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14**	**Estimated Cost ($)**
the property complies with the State Lands Management Plan adopted by the Trustees				
Objective 26b: Ensure that each planned use of the property complies with the Local Government Comprehensive Plan			X X X X X X X X X X	5,000

* = additional money above anticipated baseline funds needed to complete this objective

Appendix 9:
Management Procedures for Archaeological and Historical Sites and Properties On State-owned or Controlled Lands

MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES FOR
ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SITES AND PROPERTIES
ON STATE - OWNED OR CONTROLLED LANDS
(revised August, 1995)

A. GENERAL DISCUSSION

Archaeological and historic sites are defined collectively in 267.021(3), F.S., as "historic properties" or "historic resources". They have several essential characteristics which must be recognized in a management program.

- First of all, they are a finite and non-renewable resource. Once destroyed, presently existing resources, including buildings, other structures, shipwreck remains, archaeological sites and other objects of antiquity, cannot be renewed or revived. Today, sites in the State of Florida are being destroyed by all kinds of land development, inappropriate land management practices, erosion, looting, and to a minor extent even by well-intentioned professional scientific research (e.g., archaeological excavation). Measures must be taken to ensure that some of these resources will be preserved for future study and appreciation.

- Secondly, sites are unique because individually they represent the tangible remains of events which occurred at a specific time and place.

- Thirdly, while sites uniquely reflect localized events, these events and the origin of particular sites are related to conditions and events in other times and places. Sites can be understood properly only in relation to their natural surroundings and the activities of inhabitants of other sites. Managers must be aware of this "systemic" character of historic and archaeological sites. Also, it should be recognized that archaeological sites are time capsules for more than cultural history; they preserve traces of past biotic communities, climate, and other elements of the environment that may be of interest to other scientific disciplines.

- Finally, the significance of sites, particularly archaeological ones, derives not only from the individual artifacts within them, but also equally from the spatial arrangement of those artifacts in both horizontal and vertical planes. When archaeologists excavate, they recover, not merely objects, but also a record of the positions of these objects in relation to one another and their containing matrix (e.g., soil strata). Much information is sacrificed if the so-called "context" of archaeological objects is destroyed or not recovered, and this is what archaeologists are most concerned about when a site is threatened with destruction or damage. The artifacts themselves can be recovered even after a site is heavily disturbed, but the context - the vertical and horizontal relationships - cannot. Historic structures also contain a wealth of cultural (socio-economic) data which can be lost if historically sensitive maintenance, restoration or rehabilitation procedures are not implemented, or if they are demolished or extensively altered without appropriate documentation. Lastly, it should not be forgotten that historic structures often have associated potentially significant historic archaeological features which must be considered in land management decisions.

B. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

Chapter 253, Florida Statutes ("State Lands") directs the preparation of "single-use" or "multiple-use" land management plans for all state-owned lands and state-owned sovereignty submerged lands. In this document, 253.034(5), F.S., specifically requires that "all management plans, whether for single-use or multiple-use properties, shall specifically describe how the managing agency plans to identify, locate, protect and preserve, or otherwise use fragile non-renewable resources, such as archaeological and historic sites, as well as other fragile resources..."

Chapter 267, Florida Statutes is the primary historic preservation authority of the state. The importance of protecting and interpreting archaeological and historic sites is recognized in 267.061(1)(a), F.S.:

The rich and unique heritage of historic properties in this state, representing more than 10,000 years of human presence, is an important legacy to be valued and conserved for present and future generations. The destruction of these nonrenewable historic resources will engender a significant loss to the state's quality of life, economy, and cultural environment. It is therefore declared to be state policy to:

1. *Provide leadership in the preservation of the state's historic resources; [and]*
2. *Administer state-owned or state-controlled historic resources in a spirit of stewardship and trusteeship;...*

Responsibilities of the Division of Historical Resources in the Department of State pursuant to 267.061(3), F.S., include the following:

1. Cooperate with federal and state agencies, local governments, and private organizations and individuals to direct and conduct a comprehensive statewide survey of historic resources and to maintain an inventory of such responses.
2. Develop a comprehensive statewide historic preservation plan.
3. Identify and nominate eligible properties to the *National Register of Historic Places* and otherwise administer applications for listing properties in the National Register of Historic Places.
4. Cooperate with federal and state agencies, local governments, and organizations and individuals to ensure that historic resources are taken into consideration at all levels of planning and development.
5. Advise and assist, as appropriate, federal and state agencies and local governments in carrying out their historic preservation responsibilities and programs.
6. Carry out on behalf of the state the programs of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and to establish, maintain, and administer a state historic preservation program meeting the requirements of an approved program and fulfilling the responsibilities of state historic preservation programs as provided in subsection 101(b) of that act.
7. Take such other actions necessary or appropriate to locate, acquire, protect, preserve, operate, interpret, and promote the location, acquisition, protection, preservation, operation, and interpretation of historic resources to foster an appreciation of Florida history and culture. Prior to the acquisition, preservation, interpretation, or operation of a historic property by a state agency, the Division shall be provided a reasonable opportunity to review and comment on the proposed undertaking and shall determine that there exists historic authenticity and a feasible means of providing for the preservation, interpretation and operation of such property.
8. Establish professional standards for the preservation, exclusive of acquisition, of historic resources in state ownership or control.
9. Establish guidelines for state agency responsibilities under subsection (2).

Responsibilities of other state agencies of the executive branch, pursuant to 267.061(2), F.S., include:

1. Each state agency of the executive branch having direct or indirect jurisdiction over a proposed state or state-assisted undertaking shall, in accordance with state policy and prior to the approval of expenditure of any state funds on the undertaking, consider the effect of the undertaking on any historic property that is included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the *National Register of Historic Places*. Each such agency shall afford the division a reasonable opportunity to comment with regard to such an undertaking.

2. Each state agency of the executive branch shall initiate measures in consultation with the division to assure that where, as a result of state action or assistance carried out by such agency, a historic property is to be demolished or substantially altered in a way which adversely affects the character, form, integrity, or other qualities which contribute to [the] historical, architectural, or archaeological value of the property, timely steps are taken to determine that no feasible and prudent alternative to the proposed demolition or alteration exists, and, where no such alternative is determined to exist, to assure that timely steps are taken either to avoid or mitigate the adverse effects, or to undertake an appropriate archaeological salvage excavation or other recovery action to document the property as it existed prior to demolition or alteration.

3. In consultation with the division [of Historical Resources], each state agency of the executive branch shall establish a program to locate, inventory, and evaluate all historic properties under the agency's ownership or control that appear to qualify for the National Register. Each such agency shall exercise caution to assure that any such historic property is not inadvertently transferred, sold, demolished, substantially altered, or allowed to deteriorate significantly.

4. Each state agency of the executive branch shall assume responsibility for the preservation of historic resources which are owned or controlled by such agency. Prior to acquiring, constructing, or leasing buildings for the purpose of carrying out agency responsibilities, the agency shall use, to the maximum extent feasible, historic properties available to the agency. Each agency shall undertake, consistent with preservation of such properties, the mission of the agency, and the professional standards established pursuant to paragraph (3)(k), any preservation actions necessary to carry out the intent of this paragraph.

5. Each state agency of the executive branch, in seeking to acquire additional space through new construction or lease, shall give preference to the acquisition or use of historic properties when such acquisition or use is determined to be feasible and prudent compared with available alternatives. The acquisition or use of historic properties is considered feasible and prudent if the cost of purchase or lease, the cost of rehabilitation, remodeling, or altering the building to meet compliance standards and the agency's needs, and the projected costs of maintaining the building and providing utilities and other services is less than or equal to the same costs for available alternatives. The agency shall request the division to assist in determining if the acquisition or use of a historic property is feasible and prudent. Within 60 days after making a determination that additional space is needed, the agency shall request the division to assist in identifying buildings within the appropriate geographic area that are historic properties suitable for acquisition or lease by the agency, whether or not such properties are in need of repair, alteration, or addition.

6. Consistent with the agency's mission and authority, all state agencies of the executive branch shall carry out agency programs and projects, including those under which any state assistance is provided, in a manner which is generally sensitive to the preservation of historic properties and shall give consideration to programs and projects which will further the purposes of this section.

Section 267.12 authorizes the Division to establish procedures for the granting of research permits for archaeological and historic site survey or excavation on state-owned or controlled lands, while Section 267.13 establishes penalties for the conduct of such work without first obtaining written permission from the Division of Historical Resources. The Rules of the Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, for research permits for archaeological sites of significance are contained in Chapter 1A-32,F.A.C.

Another Florida Statute affecting land management decisions is Chapter 872, F.S. Section 872.02, F.S., pertains to marked grave sites, regardless of age. Many state-owned properties contain old family and other cemeteries with tombstones, crypts, etc. Section 872.05, F.S., pertains to unmarked human burial sites, including prehistoric and historic Indian burial sites. Unauthorized disturbance of both marked and unmarked human burial sites is a felony.

C. MANAGEMENT POLICY

The choice of a management policy for archaeological and historic sites within state-owned or controlled lands obviously depends upon a detailed evaluation of the characteristics and conditions of the individual sites and groups of sites within those tracts. This includes an interpretation of the significance (or potential significance) of these sites, in terms of social and political factors, as well as environmental factors. Furthermore, for historic structures architectural significance must be considered, as well as any associated historic landscapes.

Sites on privately owned lands are especially vulnerable to destruction, since often times the economic incentives for preservation are low compared to other uses of the land areas involved. Hence, sites in public ownership have a magnified importance, since they are the ones with the best chance of survival over the long run. This is particularly true of sites which are

state-owned or controlled, where the basis of management is to provide for land uses that are minimally destructive of resource values.

It should be noted that while many archaeological and historical sites are already recorded within state-owned or controlled-lands, the majority of the uplands areas and nearly all of the inundated areas have not been surveyed to locate and assess the significance of such resources. The known sites are, thus, only an incomplete sample of the actual resources - i.e., the number, density, distribution, age, character and condition of archaeological and historic sites - on these tracts. Unfortunately, the lack of specific knowledge of the actual resources prevents formulation of any sort of detailed management or use plan involving decisions about the relative historic value of individual sites. For this reason, a generalized policy of conservation is recommended until the resources have been better addressed.

The generalized management policy recommended by the Division of Historical Resources includes the following:

1. State land managers shall coordinate all planned activities involving known archaeological or historic sites or potential site areas closely with the Division of Historical Resources in order to prevent any kind of disturbance to significant archaeological or historic sites that may exist on the tract. Under 267.061(1)(b), F.S., the Division of Historical Resources is vested with title to archaeological and historic resources abandoned on state lands and is responsible for administration and protection of such resources. The Division will cooperate with the land manager in the management of these resources. Furthermore, provisions of 267.061(2) and 267.13, F.S., combined with those in 267.061(3) and 253.034(4), F.S., require that other managing (or permitting) agencies coordinate their plans with the Division of Historical Resources at a sufficiently early stage to preclude inadvertent damage or destruction to known or potentially occurring, presently unknown archaeological and historic sites. The provisions pertaining to human burial sites must also be followed by state land managers when such remains are known or suspected to be present (see 872.02 and 872.05, F.S., and 1A-44, F.A.C.)

2. Since the actual resources are so poorly known, the potential impact of the managing agency's activities on historic archaeological sites may not be immediately apparent. Special field survey for such sites may be required to identify the potential endangerment as a result of particular management or permitting activities. The Division may perform surveys, as its resources permit, to aid the planning of other state agencies in their management activities, but outside archaeological consultants may have to be retained by the managing agency. This would be especially necessary in the cases of activities contemplating ground disturbance over large areas and unexpected occurrences. It should be noted, however, that in most instances Division staff's knowledge of known and expected site distribution is such that actual field surveys may not be necessary, and the project may be reviewed by submitting a project location map (preferably a 7.5 minute U.S.G.S. Quadrangle map or portion thereof) and project descriptive data, including detailed construction plans. To avoid delays, Division staff should be contacted to discuss specific project documentation review needs.

3. In the case of known significant sites, which may be affected by proposed project activities, the managing agency will generally be expected to alter proposed management or development plans, as necessary, or else make special provisions to minimize or mitigate damage to such sites.

4. If in the course of management activities, or as a result of development or the permitting of dredge activities (see 403.918(2)(6)a, F.S.), it is determined that valuable historic or archaeological sites will be damaged or destroyed, the Division reserves the right, pursuant to 267.061(1)(b), F.S., to require salvage measures to mitigate the destructive impact of such activities to such sites. Such salvage measures would be accomplished before the Division would grant permission for destruction of the affected site areas. The funding needed to implement salvage measures would be the responsibility of the managing agency planning the site destructive activity. Mitigation of historic structures at a minimum involves the preparation of measured drawings and documentary photographs. Mitigation of archaeological resources involves the excavation, analysis and reporting of the project findings and must be planned to occur sufficiently in advance to avoid project construction delays. If these services are to be contracted by the state agency, the selected consultant will need

to obtain an Archaeological Research Permit from the Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Archaeological Research (see 267.12, F.S. and Rules 1A-32 and 1A-46 F.A.C.).

5. For the near future, excavation of non-endangered (i.e., sites not being lost to erosion or development) archaeological sites is discouraged. There are many endangered sites in Florida (on both private and public lands) in need of excavation because of the threat of development or other factors. Those within state-owned or controlled lands should be left undisturbed for the present - with particular attention devoted to preventing site looting by "treasure hunters". On the other hand, the archaeological and historic survey of these tracts is encouraged in order to build an inventory of the resources present, and to assess their scientific research potential and historic or architectural significance.

6. The cooperation of land managers in reporting sites to the Division that their field personnel may discover is encouraged. The Division will help inform field personnel from other resource managing agencies about the characteristics and appearance of sites. The Division has initiated a cultural resource management training program to help accomplish this. Upon request the Division will also provide to other agencies archaeological and historical summaries of the known and potentially occurring resources so that information may be incorporated into management plans and public awareness programs (See Management Implementation).

7. Any discovery of instances of looting or unauthorized destruction of sites must be reported to the agent for the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund and the Division so that appropriate action may be initiated. When human burial sites are involved, the provisions of 872.02 and 872.05, F. S. and Rule 1A-44, F.A.C., as applicable, must also be followed. Any state agent with law enforcement authority observing individuals or groups clearly and incontrovertibly vandalizing, looting or destroying archaeological or historic sites within state-owned or controlled lands without demonstrable permission from the Division will make arrests and detain those individuals or groups under the provisions of 267.13, 901.15, and 901.21, F.S., and related statutory authority pertaining to such illegal activities on state-owned or controlled lands. County Sheriffs' officers are urged to assist in efforts to stop and/or prevent site looting and destruction.

In addition to the above management policy for archaeological and historic sites on state-owned land, special attention shall be given to those properties listed in the *National Register of Historic Places* and other significant buildings. The Division recommends that the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (Revised 1990) be followed for such sites.

The following general standards apply to all treatments undertaken on historically significant properties.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alterations of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.

5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.

6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual

qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired. (see *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* [Revised 1990]).

Division of Historical Resources staff are available for technical assistance for any of the above listed topics. It is encouraged that such assistance be sought as early as possible in the project planning.

D. MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

As noted earlier, 253.034(4), F.S., states that "all management plans, whether for single-use or multiple-use properties, shall specifically describe how the managing agency plans to identify, locate, protect and preserve, or otherwise use fragile non-renewable resources, such as archaeological and historic sites..." The following guidelines should help to fulfill that requirement.

1. All land managing agencies should contact the Division and send U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute quadrangle maps outlining the boundaries of their various properties.

2. The Division will in turn identify site locations on those maps and provide descriptions for known archaeological and historical sites to the managing agency.

3. Further, the Division may also identify on the maps areas of high archaeological and historic site location probability within the subject tract. These are only probability zones, and sites may be found outside of these areas. Therefore, actual ground inspections of project areas may still be necessary.

4. The Division will send archaeological field recording forms and historic structure field recording forms to representatives of the agency to facilitate the recording of information on such resources.

5. Land managers will update information on recorded sites and properties.

6. Land managers will supply the Division with new information as it becomes available on previously unrecorded sites that their staff locate. The following details the kind of information the Division wishes to obtain for any new sites or structures which the land managers may report:

   A. Historic Sites

      (1) Type of structure (dwelling, church, factory, etc.).

      (2) Known or estimated age or construction date for each structure and addition.

      (3) Location of building (identify location on a map of the property, and building

placement, i.e., detached, row, etc.).

(4) General Characteristics: (include photographs if possible) overall shape of plan (rectangle, "L" "T" "H" "U", etc.); number of stories; number of vertical divisions of bays; construction materials (brick, frame, stone, etc.); wall finish (kind of bond, coursing, shingle, etc.); roof shape.

(5) Specific features including location, number and appearance of:

(a) Important decorative elements;
(b) Interior features contributing to the character of the building;
(c) Number, type, and location of outbuildings, as well as date(s) of construction;
(d) Notation if property has been moved;
(e) Notation of known alterations to building.

B. Archaeological Sites

(1) Site location (written narrative and mapped location).
(2) Cultural affiliation and period.
(3) Site type (midden, burial mound, artifact scatter, building rubble, etc.)
(4) Threats to site (deterioration, vandalism, etc.).
(5) Site size (acreage, square meters, etc.).
(6) Artifacts observed on ground surface (pottery, bone, glass, etc.).
(7) Description of surrounding environment.

7. No land disturbing activities should be undertaken in areas of known archaeological or historic sites or areas of high site probability without prior review by the Division early in the project planning.

8. Ground disturbing activities may proceed elsewhere but land managers should stop disturbance in the immediate vicinity of artifact finds and notify the Division if previously unknown archaeological or historic remains are uncovered. The provisions of Chapter 872, F.S., must be followed when human remains are encountered.

9. Excavation and collection of archaeological and historic sites on state lands without a permit from the Division is a violation of state law and shall be reported to a law enforcement officer. The use of metal detectors to search for historic artifacts shall be prohibited on state lands except when authorized in a 1A-32, F.A.C., research permit from the Division.

10. Interpretation and visitation which will increase public understanding and enjoyment of archaeological and historic sites without site destruction or vandalism is strongly encouraged.

11. Development of interpretive programs including trails, signage, kiosks, and exhibits is encouraged and should be coordinated with the Division.

12. Artifacts found or collected on state lands are by law the property of the Division. Land managers shall contact the Division whenever such material is found so that arrangements may be made for recording and conservation. This material, if taken to Tallahassee, can be returned for public display on a long term loan.

E. ADMINISTERING AGENCY

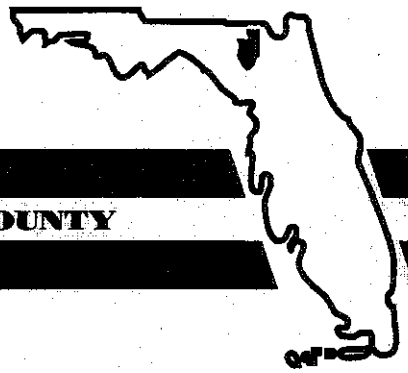
Questions relating to the treatment of archaeological and historic resources on state lands may be directed to:

Susan M. Harp Compliance Review Section
Historic Preservation Planner Bureau of Historic Preservation

Telephone (850) 245-6333
Suncom 205-6333
FAX (850) 245-6437

Division of Historical Resources
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Appendix 10:
Verification of Compliance with Local Comprehensive Plans for Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS • COLUMBIA COUNTY

25 April 2005

Marsha Rickman
Office of Greenways and Trails
3900 Commonwealth Blvd. MS 795
Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000

COPY TRANSMITTED VIA FACSIMILE
ORIGINAL TRANSMITTED VIA U.S. MAIL

RE: Columbia County Comprehensive Plan Compliance

Dear Marsha:

The Ichetucknee Trace Recreation Area Management Plan draft dated 16 March 2005 is consistent with the adopted Columbia County Comprehensive Plan, as amended pursuant to Section 163.3167 of the Florida State Statutes.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at 386.758.1007.

Sincerely,

Brian L. Kepner
Land Development Regulation Administrator,
County Planner