

# *2019 Florida Forever Five-Year Plan*



## *Summary of Recommendations and Status as of December 2018*

**Division of State Lands  
Florida Department of Environmental Protection**



*May 2019*



# Contents

- Summary of Recommendations and Status as of December 2018 ..... 1
- Abstract .....47
- New Projects added to the List .....47
- Projects with Boundary Amendments .....47
- ARC’s Recommended 2018 Florida Forever Priority List for Land Acquisition Projects .....48
- Introduction .....49
- Legislation and Policy .....49
- Partnerships .....50
- Results .....50
- Accomplishments of Florida Forever Acquisition Program.....50
- Explanation of Project Information.....52
- Purpose for State Acquisition .....54
- Manager .....54
- General Description.....54
- Public Use.....54
- FNAI Elements .....54
- Acquisition Planning .....54
- Coordination .....55
- Placed on List .....55
- Project Area .....55
- Acres Acquired.....55
- At a Cost of.....55
- Acres Remaining .....55
- Estimated Value of .....55
- Management Policy Statement .....55
- Management Cost Summary .....55
- Project Map(s) .....56
- Distribution of Florida Forever Land Acquisition Projects as of January 2019 .....57
- Facsimile of 2019 Florida Forever Priority List – ARC Recommended .....58
- 2018 Florida Forever Project Priority List Modifications.....67
- Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) as of December 2018 .....68
- Agency Council Members .....68
- Agency Appointee Council Members .....68
- Gubernatorial Appointee Council Members.....68
- Support Staff.....69
- Adams Ranch .....70





Purpose for State Acquisition .....70

Manager(s).....70

General Description.....70

Public Use.....71

Acquisition Planning .....71

Coordination.....72

Management Policy Statement .....72

Management Prospectus .....72

Adams Ranch Table 1 .....73

Adams Ranch Table 2 .....73

Annutteliga Hammock .....74

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....74

    Manager(s).....74

    General Description.....74

    Public Use.....74

    Acquisition Planning .....75

    Coordination.....75

    Management Policy Statement .....75

    Management Prospectus .....76

    Annutteliga Hammock Table 1.....79

    Annutteliga Hammock Table 2.....79

    Annutteliga Hammock Table 3a.....79

    Annutteliga Hammock Table 3b.....80

Apalachicola River.....81

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....81

    Manager(s).....81

    General Description.....81

    Public Use.....82

    Acquisition Planning .....82

    Coordination.....83

    Management Policy Statement .....84

    Management Prospectus .....84

    Apalachicola River Table 1 .....85

    Apalachicola River Table 2.....85

    Apalachicola River Table 3a .....85

    Apalachicola River Table 3b .....86



Apalachicola River Table 3c .....86

Arbuckle Creek Watershed .....87

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....87

    Manager(s).....87

    General Description.....87

    Public Use.....88

    Acquisition Planning .....88

    Coordination .....88

    Management Policy Statement .....88

    Management Prospectus .....88

    Arbuckle Creek Watershed Table 1.....89

    Arbuckle Creek Watershed Table 2.....89

Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge.....90

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....90

    Manager(s).....90

    General Description.....90

    Public Use.....90

    Acquisition Planning .....91

    Coordination .....91

    Management Prospectus .....92

    Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge Table 1 .....93

    Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge Table 2 .....93

Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem .....94

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....94

    Manager(s).....94

    General Description.....94

    Public Use.....94

    Acquisition Planning .....94

    Coordination .....95

    Management Policy Statement .....95

    Management Prospectus .....96

    Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem Table 1 .....97

    Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem Table 2 .....97

    Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem Table 3 .....97

Ayavalla Plantation .....98

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....98



Manager(s).....98

General Description.....98

Public Use.....99

Acquisition Planning .....99

Coordination.....99

Management Policy Statement .....100

Management Prospectus .....100

Ayavalla Plantation Table 1 .....101

Ayavalla Plantation Table 2 .....101

Baldwin Bay / St. Marys River .....102

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....102

    Manager(s).....102

    General Description.....102

    Public Use.....102

    Acquisition Planning .....103

    Coordination.....103

    Management Policy Statement .....103

    Management Prospectus .....103

    Baldwin Bay/St. Marys River Table 1.....105

    Baldwin Bay/St. Marys River Table 2.....105

    Baldwin Bay/St. Marys River Table 3.....105

Battle of Wahoo Swamp .....106

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....106

    Manager(s).....106

    General Description.....106

    Public Use.....106

    Acquisition Planning .....107

    Coordination.....107

    Management Policy Statement .....107

    Management Prospectus .....107

    Battle of Wahoo Swamp Table 1.....109

    Battle of Wahoo Swamp Table 2.....109

    Battle of Wahoo Swamp Table 3.....109

Bear Creek Forest.....110

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....110

    Manager(s).....110



General Description.....110

Public Use.....110

Acquisition Planning .....111

Coordination.....111

Management Policy Statement .....111

Management Prospectus .....111

Bear Creek Forest Table 1 .....113

Bear Creek Forest Table 2 .....113

Bear Creek Forest Table 3 .....113

Bear Hammock .....114

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....114

    Manager(s).....114

    General Description.....114

    Public Use.....114

    Acquisition Planning .....115

    Coordination.....115

    Management Policy Statement .....115

    Management Prospectus .....115

    Bear Hammock Table 1 .....117

    Bear Hammock Table 2 .....117

    Bear Hammock Table 3 .....117

Belle Meade .....118

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....118

    Manager(s).....118

    General Description.....118

    Public Use.....118

    Acquisition Planning .....118

    Coordination.....120

    Management Policy Statement .....120

    Management Prospectus .....120

    Belle Meade Table 1 .....122

    Belle Meade Table 2 .....122

    Belle Meade Table 3 .....122

Big Bend Swamp / Holopaw Ranch.....123

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....123

    Manager(s).....123



General Description.....123

Public Use.....123

Acquisition Planning .....124

Coordination.....124

Management Policy Statement .....124

Management Prospectus .....125

Big Bend Swamp/Holopaw Ranch Table 1 .....127

Big Bend Swamp/Holopaw Ranch Table 2 .....127

Big Bend Swamp/Holopaw Ranch Table 3 .....127

Blue Head Ranch .....128

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....128

    Manager(s).....128

    General Description.....128

    Public Use.....129

    Acquisition Planning .....129

    Coordination .....130

    Management Policy Statement .....130

    Management Prospectus .....130

    Blue Head Ranch Table 1 .....132

    Blue Head Ranch Table 2.....132

Bombing Range Ridge .....133

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....133

    Manager(s).....133

    General Description.....133

    Public Use.....133

    Acquisition Planning .....133

    Coordination .....134

    Management Policy Statement .....135

    Management Prospectus .....135

    Bombing Range Ridge Table 1 .....137

    Bombing Range Ridge Table 2 .....137

    Bombing Range Ridge Table 3a.....137

    Bombing Range Ridge Table 3b .....138

Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem .....139

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....139

    Manager(s).....139



General Description.....139

Public Use.....139

Acquisition Planning .....140

Coordination.....142

Management Policy Statement .....142

Management Prospectus .....142

Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem Table 1.....145

Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem Table 2.....145

Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem Table 3.....145

Caber Coastal Connector .....146

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....146

    Manager(s).....146

    General Description.....146

    Public Use.....146

    Acquisition Planning .....147

    Coordination.....147

    Management Policy Statement .....147

    Management Prospectus .....148

    Caber Coastal Connector Table 1 .....149

    Caber Coastal Connector Table 2.....149

    Caber Coastal Connector Table 3.....149

Caloosahatchee Ecoscape .....150

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....150

    Manager(s).....150

    General Description.....150

    Public Use.....150

    Acquisition Planning .....150

    Coordination.....151

    Management Policy Statement .....151

    Management Prospectus .....151

    Caloosahatchee Ecoscape Table 1 .....153

    Caloosahatchee Ecoscape Table 2.....153

Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway.....154

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....154

    Manager(s).....154

    General Description.....154



Public Use.....155

Acquisition Planning .....155

Coordination .....155

Management Policy Statement .....155

Management Prospectus .....156

Camp Blanding Raiford Greenway Table 1 .....160

Camp Blanding Raiford Greenway Table 2 .....160

Camp Blanding Raiford Greenway Table 3 .....160

Carr Farm / Price’s Scrub.....161

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....161

    Manager(s).....161

    General Description.....161

    Public Use.....161

    Acquisition Planning .....162

    Coordination .....162

    Management Policy Statement .....162

    Management Prospectus .....162

    Carr Farm/Price’s Scrub Table 1 .....164

    Carr Farm/Price’s Scrub Table 2 .....164

    Carr Farm/Price’s Scrub Table 3 .....164

Catfish Creek .....165

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....165

    Manager(s).....165

    General Description.....165

    Public Use.....165

    Acquisition Planning .....166

    Coordination .....166

    Management Policy Statement .....166

    Management Prospectus .....166

    Catfish Creek Table 1 .....168

    Catfish Creek Table 2 .....168

    Catfish Creek Table 3 .....168

Charlotte Harbor Estuary .....169

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....169

    Manager(s).....169

    General Description.....169



Public Use.....170

Acquisition Planning .....170

Coordination .....172

Management Policy Statement .....172

Management Prospectus .....172

Charlotte Harbor Estuary Table 1 .....175

Charlotte Harbor Estuary Table 2.....175

Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods.....176

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....176

    Manager(s).....176

    General Description.....176

    Public Use.....176

    Acquisition Planning .....176

    Coordination .....177

    Management Policy Statement .....177

    Management Prospectus .....177

    Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Table 1 .....179

    Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Table 2 .....179

    Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Table 3 .....179

Clay Ranch.....180

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....180

    Manager(s).....180

    General Description.....180

    Public Use.....181

    Acquisition Planning .....181

    Coordination .....181

    Management Policy Statement .....181

    Management Prospectus .....181

    Clay Ranch Table 1 .....183

    Clay Ranch Table 2 .....183

Clear Creek / Whiting Field.....184

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....184

    Manager(s).....184

    General Description.....184

    Public Use.....184

    Acquisition Planning .....184





Coordination .....185

Management Policy Statement .....185

Management Prospectus .....186

Clear Creek/Whiting Field Table 1 .....187

Clear Creek/Whiting Field Table 2 .....187

Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest .....188

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....188

    Manager(s).....188

    General Description.....189

    Public Use.....190

    Acquisition Planning .....190

    Coordination .....190

    Management Policy Statement .....190

    Management Prospectus .....191

    Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest Table 1 .....192

    Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest Table 2.....192

Conlin Lake X.....193

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....193

    Manager(s).....193

    General Description.....193

    Public Use.....194

    Acquisition Planning .....194

    Coordination .....194

    Management Policy Statement .....194

    Management Prospectus .....194

    Conlin Lake X Table 1 .....196

    Conlin Lake X Table 2 .....196

Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed.....197

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....197

    Manager(s).....197

    General Description.....197

    Public Use.....197

    Acquisition Planning .....197

    Coordination .....199

    Management Policy Statement .....199

    Management Prospectus .....199



Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Table 1 .....201

Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Table 2.....201

Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Table 3 .....201

Coupon Bight / Key Deer.....202

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....202

    Manager(s).....202

    General Description.....202

    Public Use.....202

    Acquisition Planning .....203

    Coordination.....203

    Management Policy Statement .....203

    Management Prospectus .....204

    Revenue-generating potential .....204

    Cooperators in management activities.....204

    Coupon Bight / Key Deer Table 1 .....205

    Coupon Bight / Key Deer Table 2.....205

    Coupon Bight / Key Deer Table 3 .....205

Crossbar / Al Bar Ranch .....206

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....206

    Manager(s).....206

    General Description.....206

    Public Use.....207

    Acquisition Planning .....207

    Coordination .....207

    Management Policy Statement .....207

    Management Prospectus .....208

    Crossbar/Al Bar Ranch Table 1 .....210

    Crossbar/Al Bar Ranch Table 2.....210

    Crossbar/Al Bar Ranch Table 3 .....210

Dade County Archipelago.....211

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....211

    Manager(s).....211

    General Description.....211

    Public Use.....211

    Acquisition Planning .....211

    Coordination.....212



Management Policy Statement .....212

Management Prospectus .....213

Dade County Archipelago Table 1 .....214

Dade County Archipelago Table 2 .....214

Dade County Archipelago Table 3 .....214

Devil’s Garden .....215

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....215

    Manager(s).....215

    General Description.....215

    Public Use.....216

    Acquisition Planning .....216

    Coordination .....216

    Management Policy Statement .....216

    Management Prospectus .....216

    Devil’s Garden Table 1 .....219

    Devil’s Garden Table 2 .....219

    Devil’s Garden Table 3 .....219

Dickerson Bay / Bald Point.....220

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....220

    Manager(s).....220

    General Description.....220

    Public Use.....220

    Acquisition Planning .....221

    Coordination .....221

    Management Policy Statement .....222

    Management Prospectus .....222

    Dickerson Bay/Bald Point Table 1 .....224

    Dickerson Bay/Bald Point Table 2 .....224

Eastern Scarp Ranchlands .....225

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....225

    Manager(s).....225

    General Description.....225

    Public Use.....226

    Acquisition Planning .....226

    Coordination .....226

    Management Policy Statement .....226



Management Prospectus .....226

Eastern Scarp Ranchlands Table 1 .....227

Eastern Scarp Ranchlands Table 2 .....227

Escribano Point .....228

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....228

    Manager(s).....228

    General Description.....228

    Public Use.....228

    Acquisition Planning .....229

    Coordination.....229

    Management Policy Statement .....229

    Management Prospectus .....229

    Escribano Point Table 1.....231

    Escribano Point Table 2.....231

Estero Bay .....232

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....232

    Manager(s).....232

    General Description.....232

    Public Use.....232

    Acquisition Planning .....232

    Coordination.....233

    Management Policy Statement .....233

    Management Prospectus .....234

    Estero Bay Table 1 .....235

    Estero Bay Table 2 .....235

Etoniah / Cross Florida Greenway .....236

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....236

    Manager(s).....236

    General Description.....236

    Public Use.....237

    Acquisition Planning .....237

    Coordination.....239

    Management Policy Statement .....239

    Management Prospectus .....239

    Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway Table 1 .....241

    Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway Table 2 .....241



Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway Table 3a.....241

Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway Table 3b .....242

Fisheating Creek Ecosystem .....243

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....243

    Manager(s).....243

    General Description.....243

    Public Use.....244

    Acquisition Planning .....244

    Coordination .....245

    Management Policy Statement .....245

    Management Prospectus .....245

    Fisheating Creek Ecosystem Table 1.....246

    Fisheating Creek Ecosystem Table 2.....246

Flagler County Blueway .....247

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....247

    Manager(s).....247

    General Description.....247

    Public Use.....247

    Acquisition Planning .....248

    Coordination .....248

    Management Prospectus .....248

    Flagler County Blueway Table 1.....254

    Flagler County Blueway Table 2.....254

    Flagler County Blueway Table 3.....254

Florida Keys Ecosystem.....255

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....255

    Manager(s).....255

    General Description.....255

    Public Use.....255

    Acquisition Planning .....256

    Coordination .....258

    Management Policy Statement .....258

    Management Prospectus .....258

    Florida Keys Ecosystem Table 1 .....260

    Florida Keys Ecosystem Table 2 .....260

Florida Springs Coastal Greenway.....261



Purpose for State Acquisition .....261

Manager(s).....261

General Description.....261

Public Use.....262

Acquisition Planning .....262

Coordination.....263

Management Policy Statement .....263

Management Prospectus .....263

Florida Springs Coastal Greenway Table 1 .....265

Florida Springs Coastal Greenway Table 2.....265

Florida’s First Magnitude Springs .....266

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....266

    Manager(s).....266

    General Description.....267

    Public Use.....267

    Acquisition Planning .....267

    Coordination.....271

    Management Policy Statement .....271

    Management Prospectus .....271

    Florida’s First Magnitude Springs Table 1 .....273

    Florida’s First Magnitude Springs Table 2.....273

    Florida’s First Magnitude Springs Table 3.....273

Garcon Ecosystem.....274

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....274

    Manager(s).....274

    General Description.....274

    Public Use.....274

    Acquisition Planning .....274

    Coordination.....275

    Management Policy Statement .....275

    Management Prospectus .....275

    Garcon Ecosystem Table 1 .....277

    Garcon Ecosystem Table 2.....277

Green Swamp.....278

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....278

    Manager(s).....278



General Description.....278

Public Use.....279

Acquisition Planning .....280

Gulf Hammock.....294

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....294

    Manager(s).....294

    General Description.....294

    Public Use.....294

    Acquisition Planning .....295

    Coordination.....295

    Management Policy Statement .....295

    Management Prospectus .....295

    Gulf Hammock Table 1 .....298

    Gulf Hammock Table 2 .....298

    Gulf Hammock Table 3 .....298

Half Circle L Ranch .....299

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....299

    Manager(s).....299

    General Description.....299

    Public Use.....300

    Acquisition Planning .....300

    Coordination.....300

    Management Policy Statement .....300

    Management Prospectus .....300

    Half Circle L Ranch Table 1.....303

    Half Circle L Ranch Table 2.....303

    Half Circle L Ranch Table 3.....303

Hall Ranch .....304

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....304

    Manager(s).....304

    General Description.....304

    Public Use.....304

    Acquisition Planning .....304

    Coordination.....305

    Management Policy Statement .....305

    Management Prospectus .....305



Hall Ranch Table 1 .....307

Hall Ranch Table 2 .....307

Hall Ranch Table 3 .....307

Hardee Flatwoods .....308

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....308

    Manager(s).....308

    General Description.....308

    Public Use.....309

    Acquisition Planning .....309

    Coordination.....309

    Management Policy Statement .....309

    Management Prospectus .....309

    Hardee Flatwoods Table 1 .....310

    Hardee Flatwoods Table 2.....310

Heather Island / Ocklawaha River .....311

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....311

    Manager(s).....311

    General Description.....311

    Public Use.....311

    Acquisition Planning .....312

    Coordination.....312

    Management Policy Statement .....312

    Management Prospectus .....312

    Heather Island/Ocklawaha River Table 1 .....315

    Heather Island/Ocklawaha River Table 2.....315

    Heather Island/Ocklawaha River Table 3a.....315

    Heather Island/Ocklawaha River Table 3b.....315

    Heather Island/Ocklawaha River Table 3c.....315

Hixtown Swamp.....316

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....316

    Manager(s).....316

    General Description.....316

    Public Use.....316

    Acquisition Planning .....317

    Coordination.....317

    Management Policy Statement .....317





Management Prospectus .....317

Hixtown Swamp Table 1 .....319

Hixtown Swamp Table 2 .....319

Hixtown Swamp Table 3 .....319

Horse Creek Ranch .....320

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....320

    Manager(s).....320

    General Description.....320

    Public Use.....321

    Acquisition Planning .....321

    Coordination .....322

    Management Policy Statement .....322

    Management Prospectus .....322

    Horse Creek Ranch Table 1.....323

    Horse Creek Ranch Table 2.....323

Hosford Chapman’s Rhododendron Protection Zone .....324

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....324

    Manager(s).....324

    General Description.....324

    Public Use.....324

    Acquisition Planning .....325

    Coordination .....325

    Management Policy Statement .....325

    Management Prospectus .....325

    Hosford Chapman’s Rhododendron Protection Table 1.....326

    Hosford Chapman’s Rhododendron Protection Table 2.....327

    Hosford Chapman’s Rhododendron Protection Table 3.....327

Ichetucknee Trace .....328

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....328

    Manager(s).....328

    General Description.....328

    Public Use.....328

    Acquisition Planning .....328

    Coordination .....329

    Management Policy Statement .....329

    Management Prospectus .....330



Ichetucknee Trace Table 1.....332

Ichetucknee Trace Table 2.....332

Ichetucknee Trace Table 3.....332

Indian River Lagoon Blueway .....333

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....333

    Manager(s).....333

    General Description.....334

    Public Use.....334

    Acquisition Planning .....334

    Coordination.....336

    Management Policy Statement .....336

    Management Prospectus .....336

    Indian River Lagoon Blueway Table 1.....339

    Indian River Lagoon Blueway Table 2.....339

    Indian River Lagoon Blueway Table 3.....339

Kissimmee – St. Johns River Connector.....340

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....340

    Manager(s).....340

    General Description.....340

    Public Use.....341

    Acquisition Planning .....341

    Coordination.....341

    Management Policy Statement .....341

    Management Prospectus .....342

    Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector Table 1 .....343

    Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector Table 2.....343

    Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector Table 3.....343

Lafayette Forest.....345

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....345

    Manager(s).....345

    General Description.....345

    Public Use.....345

    Acquisition Planning .....346

    Coordination.....346

    Management Policy Statement .....346

    Management Prospectus .....346



Lafayette Forest Table 1 .....348

Lafayette Forest Table 2.....348

Lafayette Forest Table 3.....348

Lake Hatchineha Watershed .....349

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....349

    Manager(s).....349

    General Description.....349

    Public Use.....349

    Acquisition Planning .....350

    Coordination.....350

    Management Policy Statement .....350

    Management Prospectus .....350

Lake Hatchineha Watershed Table 1 .....352

Lake Hatchineha Watershed Table 2.....352

Lake Hatchineha Watershed Table 3.....352

Lake Santa Fe.....354

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....354

    Manager(s).....354

    General Description.....354

    Public Use.....354

    Acquisition Planning .....355

    Coordination.....355

    Management Policy Statement .....355

    Management Prospectus .....355

Lake Santa Fe Table 1 .....360

Lake Santa Fe Table 2 .....360

Lake Santa Fe Table 3 .....360

Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem.....361

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....361

    Manager(s).....361

    General Description.....361

    Public Use.....362

    Acquisition Planning .....362

    Coordination.....366

    Management Policy Statement .....366

    Management Prospectus .....366



Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem Table 1 .....367

Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem Table 2 .....367

Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem Table 3a .....368

Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem Table 3b .....368

Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem Table 3c .....368

Limestone Ranch.....369

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....369

    Manager(s).....369

    General Description.....369

    Public Use.....370

    Acquisition Planning .....370

    Coordination .....370

    Management Policy Statement .....370

    Limestone Ranch Table 1 .....372

    Limestone Ranch Table 2 .....372

Little River Conservation Area .....373

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....373

    Manager(s).....373

    General Description.....373

    Public Use.....374

    Acquisition Planning .....374

    Coordination .....374

    Management Policy Statement .....374

    Management Prospectus .....374

    Little River Conservation Area Table 1 .....375

    Little River Conservation Area Table 2 .....375

Lochloosa Forest .....376

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....376

    Manager(s).....376

    General Description.....376

    Public Use.....377

    Acquisition Planning .....378

    Coordination .....378

    Management Policy Statement .....378

    Management Prospectus .....378

    Lochloosa Forest Table 1 .....380



Lochloosa Forest Table 2 .....380

Lochloosa Forest Table 3 .....380

Lochloosa Wildlife.....381

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....381

    Manager(s).....381

    General Description.....381

    Public Use.....381

    Acquisition Planning .....381

    Coordination .....382

    Management Policy Statement .....382

    Management Prospectus .....382

Lochloosa Wildlife Table 1 .....383

Lochloosa Wildlife Table 2 .....383

Longleaf Pine Ecosystem.....384

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....384

    Manager(s).....384

    General Description.....384

    Public Use.....385

    Acquisition Planning .....385

    Coordination .....385

    Management Policy Statement .....385

    Management Prospectus .....386

Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Table 1 .....390

Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Table 2 .....390

Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Table 3a .....390

Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Table 3b .....390

Lower Perdido River Buffer .....392

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....392

    Manager(s).....392

    General Description.....392

    Public Use.....393

    Acquisition Planning .....393

    Coordination .....393

    Management Prospectus .....393

Lower Perdido River Buffer Table 1 .....395

Lower Perdido River Buffer Table 2 .....395



Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed.....396

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....396

    Manager(s).....396

    General Description.....396

    Public Use.....397

    Acquisition Planning .....397

    Coordination .....398

    Management Policy Statement .....398

    Management Prospectus .....398

    Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed Table 1 .....400

    Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed Table 2 .....400

Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor .....401

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....401

    Manager(s).....401

    General Description.....401

    Public Use.....402

    Acquisition Planning .....402

    Coordination .....402

    Management Prospectus .....403

    Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor Table 1 .....404

    Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor Table 2 .....404

Maytown Flatwoods.....405

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....405

    Manager(s).....405

    General Description.....405

    Public Use.....406

    Acquisition Planning .....406

    Coordination .....406

    Management Policy Statement .....406

    Management Prospectus .....406

    Maytown Flatwoods Table 1 .....407

    Maytown Flatwoods Table 2 .....407

Middle Chipola River.....408

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....408

    Manager(s).....408

    General Description.....408



Public Use.....409

Acquisition Planning .....409

Coordination .....409

Management Policy Statement .....410

Management Prospectus .....410

Middle Chipola River Table 1 .....412

Middle Chipola River Table 2 .....412

Mill Creek .....413

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....413

    Manager(s).....413

    General Description.....413

    Public Use.....414

    Acquisition Planning .....414

    Coordination .....414

    Management Policy Statement .....414

    Management Prospectus .....414

    Mill Creek Table 1.....415

    Mill Creek Table 2.....415

Millstone Plantation .....416

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....416

    Manager(s).....416

    General Description.....416

    Public Use.....416

    Acquisition Planning .....416

    Coordination .....417

    Management Policy Statement .....417

    Management Prospectus .....417

    Millstone Plantation Table 1 .....419

    Millstone Plantation Table 2 .....419

Myakka Ranchlands .....420

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....420

    Manager(s).....420

    General Description.....420

    Public Use.....421

    Acquisition Planning .....421

    Coordination .....422



Management Policy Statement .....423

Management Prospectus .....423

Myakka Ranchlands Table 1 .....425

Myakka Ranchlands Table 2 .....425

Natural Bridge Creek .....426

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....426

    Manager(s).....426

    General Description.....426

    Public Use.....427

    Acquisition Planning .....427

    Coordination .....427

    Management Policy Statement .....427

    Management Prospectus .....427

    Natural Bridge Creek Table 1.....430

    Natural Bridge Creek Table 2.....430

    Natural Bridge Creek Table 3.....430

North Waccasassa Flats .....432

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....432

    Manager(s).....432

    General Description.....432

    Public Use.....432

    Acquisition Planning .....433

    Coordination .....433

    Management Policy Statement .....433

    Management Prospectus .....433

    North Waccasassa Flats Table 1 .....434

    North Waccasassa Flats Table 2.....434

Northeast Florida Blueway .....435

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....435

    Manager(s).....435

    General Description.....435

    Public Use.....436

    Acquisition Planning .....436

    Coordination .....437

    Management Policy Statement .....437

    Management Prospectus .....437





Northeast Florida Blueway Table 1 .....440

Northeast Florida Blueway Table 2.....440

Northeast Florida Blueway Table 3a .....440

Northeast Florida Blueway Table 3b.....441

Northeast Florida Blueway Table 4.....441

Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve.....442

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....442

    Manager(s).....442

    General Description.....442

    Public Use.....442

    Acquisition Planning .....443

    Coordination .....444

    Management Policy Statement .....444

    Management Prospectus .....444

    Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve Table 1 .....446

    Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve Table 2 .....446

    Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve Table 3 .....446

Ochlockonee River Conservation Area.....447

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....447

    Manager(s).....447

    General Description.....447

    Public Use.....448

    Acquisition Planning .....448

    Coordination .....449

    Management Policy Statement .....449

    Management Prospectus .....449

    Ochlockonee River Conservation Area Table 1 .....450

    Ochlockonee River Conservation Area Table 2 .....450

Okeechobee Battlefield .....451

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....451

    Manager(s).....451

    General Description.....451

    Public Use.....452

    Acquisition Planning .....452

    Coordination .....452

    Management Policy Statement .....452



Management Prospectus .....453

Okeechobee Battlefield Table 1 .....454

Okeechobee Battlefield Table 2 .....454

Okeechobee Battlefield Table 3 .....454

Old Town Creek Watershed.....455

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....455

    Manager(s).....455

    General Description.....455

    Public Use.....455

    Acquisition Planning .....455

    Coordination .....456

    Management Policy Statement .....456

    Management Prospectus .....456

    Old Town Creek Watershed Table 1 .....458

    Old Town Creek Watershed Table 2 .....458

Osceola Pine Savannas.....459

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....459

    Manager(s).....459

    General Description.....459

    Public Use.....459

    Acquisition Planning .....460

    Coordination .....460

    Management Policy Statement .....461

    Management Prospectus .....461

    Osceola Pine Savannas Table 1 .....463

    Osceola Pine Savannas Table 2 .....463

    Osceola Pine Savannas Table 3 .....463

Pal-Mar .....464

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....464

    Manager(s).....464

    General Description.....464

    Public Use.....464

    Acquisition Planning .....465

    Coordination .....465

    Management Policy Statement .....465

    Management Prospectus .....465



Pal-Mar Table 1 .....467

Pal-Mar Table 2.....467

Pal-Mar Table 3a .....467

Pal-Mar Table 3b.....468

Panther Glades .....469

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....469

    Manager(s).....469

    Public Use.....469

    Acquisition Planning .....470

    Coordination.....471

    Management Policy Statement .....471

    Management Prospectus .....471

    Panther Glades Table 1 .....473

    Panther Glades Table 2.....473

Peace River Refuge .....474

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....474

    Manager(s).....474

    General Description.....474

    Public Use.....475

    Acquisition Planning .....475

    Coordination.....475

    Management Policy Statement .....475

    Management Prospectus .....475

    Peace River Refuge Table 1 .....477

    Peace River Refuge Table 2 .....477

Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie .....478

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....478

    Manager(s).....478

    General Description.....478

    Public Use.....478

    Acquisition Planning .....478

    Coordination.....479

    Management Policy Statement .....479

    Management Prospectus .....479

    Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie Table 1 .....481

    Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie Table 2 .....481



Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie Table 3 .....481

Pierce Mound Complex .....482

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....482

    Manager(s).....482

    General Description.....482

    Public Use.....482

    Acquisition Planning .....482

    Coordination .....483

    Management Policy Statement .....483

    Management Prospectus .....483

    Pierce Mound Complex Table 1 .....485

    Pierce Mound Complex Table 2.....485

    Pierce Mound Complex Table 3.....485

Pine Island Slough Ecosystem .....486

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....486

    Manager(s).....486

    General Description.....486

    Public Use.....486

    Acquisition Planning .....487

    Coordination .....487

    Management Policy Statement .....487

    Management Prospectus .....487

    Pine Island Slough Ecosystem Table 1.....490

    Pine Island Slough Ecosystem Table 2.....490

    Pine Island Slough Ecosystem Table 3.....490

Pineland Site Complex.....491

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....491

    Manager(s).....491

    General Description.....491

    Public Use.....491

    Acquisition Planning .....491

    Coordination .....492

    Management Policy Statement .....492

    Management Prospectus .....492

    Pineland Site Complex Table 1 .....494

    Pineland Site Complex Table 2 .....494



Pineland Site Complex Table 3 .....494

Pinhook Swamp .....495

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....495

    Manager(s).....495

    General Description.....495

    Public Use.....496

    Acquisition Planning .....496

    Coordination.....496

    Management Policy Statement .....497

    Management Prospectus .....497

    Suwannee Buffers: Management Prospectus.....498

    Pinhook Swamp Table 1 .....500

    Pinhook Swamp Table 2.....500

    Pinhook Swamp Table 3a.....500

Pringle Creek Forest.....502

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....502

    Manager(s).....502

    General Description.....502

    Public Use.....502

    Acquisition Planning .....503

    Coordination.....503

    Management Policy Statement .....503

    Management Prospectus .....503

    Pringle Creek Forest Table 1 .....505

    Pringle Creek Forest Table 2.....505

Pumpkin Hill Creek .....506

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....506

    Manager(s).....506

    General Description.....506

    Public Use.....506

    Acquisition Planning .....506

    Coordination.....507

    Management Policy Statement .....508

    Management Prospectus .....508

    Pumpkin Hill Creek Table 1 .....509

    Pumpkin Hill Creek Table 2.....509



Pumpkin Hill Creek Table 3.....509

Raiford-Osceola Greenway.....510

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....510

    Manager(s).....510

    General Description.....510

    Public Use.....511

    Acquisition Planning.....511

    Coordination.....511

    Management Policy Statement.....512

    Management Prospectus.....512

    Raiford to Osceola Greenway Table 1.....513

    Raiford to Osceola Greenway Table 2.....513

Rainbow River Corridor.....514

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....514

    Manager(s).....514

    General Description.....514

    Public Use.....515

    Acquisition Planning.....516

    Coordination.....516

    Management Policy Statement.....516

    Management Prospectus.....516

    Rainbow River Corridor Table 1.....518

    Rainbow River Corridor Table 2.....518

    Rainbow River Corridor Table 3a.....518

    Rainbow River Corridor Table 3b.....518

Ranch Reserve.....519

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....519

    Manager(s).....519

    General Description.....519

    Public Use.....519

    Acquisition Planning.....519

    Coordination.....520

    Management Policy Statement.....520

    Management Prospectus.....520

    Ranch Reserve Table 1.....522

    Ranch Reserve Table 2.....522



San Felasco Conservation Corridor .....523

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....523

    Manager(s).....523

    General Description.....523

    Public Use.....523

    Acquisition Planning .....524

    Coordination .....524

    Management Policy Statement .....524

    Management Prospectus .....524

    San Felasco Conservation Corridor Table 1 .....525

    San Felasco Conservation Corridor Table 2.....525

San Pedro Bay .....526

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....526

    Manager(s).....526

    General Description.....526

    Public Use.....526

    Acquisition Planning .....527

    Coordination .....527

    Management Policy Statement .....527

    Management Prospectus .....528

    San Pedro Bay Table 1 .....532

    San Pedro Bay Table 2 .....532

    San Pedro Bay Table 3 .....532

Sand Mountain .....533

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....533

    Manager(s).....533

    General Description.....533

    Public Use.....533

    Acquisition Planning .....534

    Coordination .....534

    Management Policy Statement .....534

    Management Prospectus .....534

    Sand Mountain Table 1 .....536

    Sand Mountain Table 2 .....536

    Sand Mountain Table 3 .....536

Save Our Everglades.....537



Purpose for State Acquisition .....537

Manager(s).....537

General Description.....537

Public Use.....538

Acquisition Planning .....538

Coordination.....538

Management Policy Statement .....538

Management Prospectus .....539

Save Our Everglades Table 1 .....541

Save Our Everglades Table 2 .....541

Save Our Everglades Table 3a.....541

Save Our Everglades Table 3b .....542

Save Our Everglades Table 3c.....542

Save Our Everglades Table 3d .....542

Seven Runs Creek Final Phase.....543

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....543

    Manager(s).....543

    General Description.....543

    Public Use.....544

    Acquisition Planning .....544

    Coordination.....544

    Management Policy Statement .....544

    Management Prospectus .....545

    Seven Runs Creek Table 1 .....546

    Seven Runs Creek Table 2 .....546

Shoal River Buffer .....547

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....547

    Manager(s).....547

    General Description.....547

    Public Use.....548

    Acquisition Planning .....548

    Coordination.....548

    Management Policy Statement .....548

    Management Prospectus .....549

    Shoal River Buffer Table 1.....551

    Shoal River Buffer Table 2.....551





Shoal River Buffer Table 3.....551

South Goethe.....552

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....552

    Manager(s).....552

    General Description.....552

    Public Use.....553

    Acquisition Planning.....553

    Coordination.....553

    Management Policy Statement.....554

    Management Prospectus.....554

    South Goethe Table 1.....556

    South Goethe Table 2.....556

    South Goethe Table 3.....556

South Walton County Ecosystem.....557

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....557

    Manager(s).....557

    General Description.....557

    Public Use.....557

    Acquisition Planning.....558

    Coordination.....559

    Management Policy Statement.....559

    Management Prospectus.....559

    South Walton County Ecosystem Table 1.....561

    South Walton County Ecosystem Table 2.....561

    South Walton County Ecosystem Table 3.....561

Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves.....562

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....562

    Manager(s).....562

    General Description.....562

    Public Use.....562

    Acquisition Planning.....562

    Coordination.....563

    Management Policy Statement.....563

    Management Prospectus.....563

    Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves Table 1.....565

    Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves Table 2.....565



Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves Table 3 .....565

Spruce Creek .....566

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....566

    Manager(s).....566

    General Description.....566

    Public Use.....567

    Acquisition Planning .....567

    Coordination .....567

    Management Policy Statement .....567

    Management Prospectus .....568

    Spruce Creek Table 1 .....570

    Spruce Creek Table 2 .....570

    Spruce Creek Table 3 .....570

St. Joe Timberland .....571

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....571

    Manager(s).....571

    General Description.....571

    Public Use.....571

    Acquisition Planning .....571

    Coordination .....573

    St. Joe Timberland Table 1 .....574

    St. Joe Timberland Table 2.....574

St. Johns River Blueway .....575

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....575

    Manager(s).....575

    General Description.....575

    Public Use.....575

    Acquisition Planning .....576

    Coordination .....576

    Management Policy Statement .....576

    Management Prospectus .....576

    St. Johns River Blueway Table 1.....578

    St. Johns River Blueway Table 2.....578

    St. Johns River Blueway Table 3.....578

Strategic Managed Areas Lands List .....579

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....579



Manager(s).....579

General Description.....579

Public Use.....580

Acquisition Planning .....580

Coordination.....581

Management Policy Statement .....581

Management Prospectus .....581

Strategic Managed Areas Lands List (SMALL) Table 1.....582

Strategic Managed Areas Lands List (SMALL) Table 2.....582

Suwannee County Preservation .....583

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....583

    Manager(s).....583

    General Description.....583

    Public Use.....584

    Acquisition Planning .....584

    Coordination.....584

    Management Policy Statement .....584

    Management Prospectus .....585

    Suwannee County Preservation Table 1 .....586

    Suwannee County Preservation Table 2.....586

Taylor Sweetwater Creek.....587

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....587

    Manager(s).....587

    General Description.....587

    Public Use.....588

    Acquisition Planning .....588

    Coordination.....588

    Management Policy Statement .....588

    Management Prospectus.....588

    Taylor Sweetwater Table 1.....591

    Taylor Sweetwater Table 2.....591

    Taylor Sweetwater Table 3a.....591

    Taylor Sweetwater Table 3b.....591

    Taylor Sweetwater Table 3c.....592

Terra Ceia.....593

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....593



Manager(s).....593

General Description.....593

Public Use.....593

Acquisition Planning .....593

Coordination .....594

Management Policy Statement .....594

Management Prospectus .....595

Terra Ceia Table 1 .....596

Terra Ceia Table 2 .....596

Terra Ceia Table 3 .....596

Three Chimneys .....597

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....597

    Manager(s).....597

    General Description.....597

    Public Use.....597

    Acquisition Planning .....597

    Coordination .....598

    Management Prospectus .....598

    Three Chimneys Table 1 .....600

    Three Chimneys Table 2 .....600

    Three Chimneys Table 3 .....600

Tiger Island / Little Tiger Island .....601

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....601

    Manager(s).....601

    General Description.....601

    Public Use.....601

    Acquisition Planning .....602

    Coordination .....602

    Management Policy Statement .....602

    Management Prospectus .....602

    Tiger/Little Tiger Island Table 1 .....604

    Tiger/Little Tiger Island Table 2 .....604

    Tiger/Little Tiger Island Table 3 .....604

Tippen Bay Ranch.....605

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....605

    Manager(s).....605



General Description.....605

Public Use.....606

Acquisition Planning .....606

Coordination.....606

Management Policy Statement .....606

Management Prospectus .....606

Tippen Bay Ranch Table 1 .....607

Tippen Bay Ranch Table 2.....607

Triple Diamond.....608

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....608

    Manager(s).....608

    General Description.....608

    Public Use.....609

    Acquisition Planning .....609

    Coordination.....609

    Management Policy Statement .....609

    Management Prospectus.....609

    Triple Diamond Table 1 .....611

    Triple Diamond Table 2 .....611

    Triple Diamond Table 3 .....611

Twelvemile Slough .....612

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....612

    Manager(s).....612

    General Description.....612

    Public Use.....612

    Acquisition Planning .....612

    Coordination.....613

    Management Policy Statement .....613

    Management Prospectus.....614

    Twelvemile Slough Table 1.....617

    Twelvemile Slough Table 2.....617

    Twelvemile Slough Table 3.....617

Upper Shoal River.....618

    Purpose for State Acquisition.....618

    Manager(s).....618

    General Description.....618



Public Use.....618

Acquisition Planning .....619

Coordination .....619

Management Policy Statement .....619

Management Prospectus .....619

Upper Shoal River Table 1 .....624

Upper Shoal River Table 2 .....624

Upper Shoal River Table 3 .....624

Upper St. Marks River Corridor .....625

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....625

    Manager(s).....625

    General Description.....625

    Public Use.....625

    Acquisition Planning .....626

    Coordination .....626

    Management Policy Statement .....626

    Management Prospectus .....627

    \*Historical Management Prospectus .....630

    Upper St. Marks River Corridor Table 1 .....632

    Upper St. Marks River Corridor Table 2 .....632

Volusia Conservation Corridor .....633

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....633

    Manager(s).....633

    General Description.....633

    Public Use.....633

    Acquisition Planning .....634

    Coordination .....634

    Management Policy Statement .....635

    Management Prospectus .....635

    Volusia Conservation Corridor Table 1 .....637

    Volusia Conservation Corridor Table 2 .....637

    Volusia Conservation Corridor Table 3 .....637

Wacissa / Aucilla River Sinks .....638

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....638

    Manager(s).....638

    General Description.....638



Public Use.....638

Acquisition Planning .....639

Coordination .....640

Management Policy Statement .....640

Management Prospectus .....640

Wacissa / Aucilla River Sinks Table 1 .....641

Wacissa / Aucilla River Sinks Table 2 .....641

Wacissa / Aucilla River Sinks Table 3 .....641

Wakulla Springs Protection Zone .....642

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....642

    Manager(s).....642

    General Description.....642

    Public Use.....643

    Acquisition Planning .....643

    Coordination .....643

    Management Policy Statement .....644

    Management Prospectus .....644

    Wakulla Springs Protection Zone Table 1 .....649

    Wakulla Springs Protection Zone Table 2.....649

    Wakulla Springs Protection Zone Table 3a.....649

    Wakulla Springs Protection Zone Table 3b.....649

    Wakulla Springs Protection Zone Table 3c.....650

Watermelon Pond.....651

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....651

    Manager(s).....651

    General Description.....651

    Public Use.....651

    Acquisition Planning .....651

    Coordination .....652

    Management Policy Statement .....652

    Management Prospectus .....652

    Watermelon Pond Table 1 .....654

    Watermelon Pond Table 2 .....654

    Watermelon Pond Table 3 .....654

Wekiva-Ocala Greenway .....655

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....655



Manager(s).....655

General Description.....655

Public Use.....656

Acquisition Planning .....656

Coordination.....657

Management Policy Statement .....658

Management Prospectus .....658

Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Table 1.....660

Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Table 2.....660

Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Table 3a.....660

Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Table 3b.....661

Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Table 3c.....661

West Aucilla River Buffer .....662

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....662

    Manager(s).....662

    General Description.....662

    Public Use.....663

    Acquisition Planning .....663

    Coordination.....663

    Management Policy Statement .....663

    Management Prospectus .....663

    West Aucilla River Buffer Table 1.....664

    West Aucilla River Buffer Table 2.....664

West Bay Preservation Area .....665

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....665

    Manager(s).....665

    General Description.....665

    Public Use.....666

    Acquisition Planning .....666

    Coordination.....666

    Management Policy Statement .....666

    Management Prospectus .....667

    West Bay Preservation Area Table 1.....668

    West Bay Preservation Area Table 2.....668

Wolfe Creek Forest .....669

    Purpose for State Acquisition .....669





Manager(s).....669

General Description.....669

Public Use.....670

Acquisition Planning .....670

Coordination.....670

Management Policy Statement .....670

Management Prospectus .....671

Wolfe Creek Forest Table 1.....673

Wolfe Creek Forest Table 2.....673

Wolfe Creek Forest Table 3.....673

Atlas Introduction .....675

Map(s): Adams Ranch .....676

Map(s): Annutteliga Hammock.....677

Map(s): Apalachicola River .....678

Map(s): Arbuckle Creek Watershed.....681

Map(s): Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge.....682

Map(s): Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem .....688

Map(s): Ayavalla Plantation .....689

Map(s): Baldwin Bay / St. Marys River.....690

Map(s): Battle of Wahoo Swamp.....691

Map(s): Bear Creek Forest.....692

Map(s): Bear Hammock.....693

Map(s): Belle Meade.....694

Map(s): Big Bend Swamp / Holopaw Ranch.....695

Map(s): Blue Head Ranch.....696

Map(s): Bombing Range Ridge .....697

Map(s): Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem.....700

Map(s): Caber Coastal Connector.....704

Map(s): Caloosahatchee Ecoscape.....705

Map(s): Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway.....706

Map(s): Carr Farm / Price’s Scrub .....707

Map(s): Catfish Creek.....708

Map(s): Charlotte Harbor Estuary.....709

Map(s): Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods .....712

Map(s): Clay Ranch .....713

Map(s): Clear Creek / Whiting Field .....714

Map(s): Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest.....715

Map(s): Conlin Lake X .....718

Map(s): Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed.....719



Map(s): Coupon Bight / Key Deer .....720

Map(s): Crossbar / Al Bar Ranch.....721

Map(s): Dade County Archipelago .....722

Map(s): Devil’s Garden .....733

Map(s): Dickerson Bay / Bald Point .....734

Map(s): Eastern Scarp Ranchlands .....735

Map(s): Escribano Point.....736

Map(s): Estero Bay .....737

Map(s): Etoniah / Cross Florida Greenway4 .....738

Map(s): Fisheating Creek Ecosystem.....744

Map(s): Flagler County Blueway.....745

Map(s): Florida Keys Ecosystem .....749

Map(s): Florida Springs Coastal Greenway4.....760

Map(s): Florida’s First Magnitude Springs.....763

Map(s): Garcon Ecosystem.....780

Map(s): Green Swamp .....781

Map(s): Gulf Hammock.....786

Map(s): Half Circle L Ranch .....787

Map(s): Hall Ranch.....788

Map(s): Hardee Flatwoods.....789

Map(s): Heather Island / Ocklawaha River.....790

Map(s): Hixtown Swamp .....791

Map(s): Horse Creek Ranch.....792

Map(s): Hosford Chapman’s Rhododendron Protection Zone .....793

Map(s): Ichetucknee Trace.....794

Map(s): Indian River Lagoon Blueway.....795

Map(s): Kissimmee – St. Johns River Connector .....806

Map(s): Lafayette Forest.....807

Map(s): Lake Hatchineha Watershed.....808

Map(s): Lake Santa Fe .....809

Map(s): Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem .....810

Map(s): Limestone Ranch.....821

Map(s): Little River Conservation Area .....822

Map(s): Lochloosa Forest .....823

Map(s): Lochloosa Wildlife .....824

Map(s): Longleaf Pine Ecosystem .....825

Map(s): Lower Perdido River Buffer.....831

Map(s): Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed .....832

Map(s): Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor .....833

Map(s): Maytown Flatwoods .....834



Map(s): Middle Chipola River .....835

Map(s): Mill Creek.....841

Map(s): Millstone Plantation .....842

Map(s): Myakka Ranchlands .....843

Map(s): Natural Bridge Creek.....844

Map(s): North Waccasassa Flats.....845

Map(s): Northeast Florida Blueway.....846

Map(s): Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve .....850

Map(s): Ochlockonee River Conservation Area .....855

Map(s): Okeechobee Battlefield .....856

Map(s): Old Town Creek Watershed .....857

Map(s): Osceola Pine Savannas .....858

Map(s): Pal-Mar .....859

Map(s): Panther Glades.....860

Map(s): Peace River Refuge .....861

Map(s): Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie .....862

Map(s): Pierce Mound Complex.....863

Map(s): Pine Island Slough Ecosystem.....864

Map(s): Pineland Site Complex .....865

Map(s): Pinhook Swamp.....866

Map(s): Pringle Creek Forest.....869

Map(s): Pumpkin Hill Creek.....870

Map(s): Raiford-Osceola Greenway .....871

Map(s): Rainbow River Corridor.....872

Map(s): Ranch Reserve.....873

Map(s): San Felasco Conservation Corridor.....874

Map(s): San Pedro Bay .....875

Map(s): Sand Mountain .....876

Map(s): Save Our Everglades .....877

Map(s): Seven Runs Creek Final Phase .....880

Map(s): Shoal River Buffer.....881

Map(s): South Goethe .....882

Map(s): South Walton County Ecosystem.....883

Map(s): Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves .....884

Map(s): Spruce Creek .....893

Map(s): St. Joe Timberland.....894

Map(s): St. Johns River Blueway.....902

Map(s): Strategic Managed Areas Lands List.....905

Map(s): Suwannee County Preservation.....909

Map(s): Taylor Sweetwater Creek .....910



Map(s): Terra Ceia .....911  
Map(s): Three Chimneys .....912  
Map(s): Tiger Island / Little Tiger Island .....913  
Map(s): Tippen Bay Ranch .....914  
Map(s): Triple Diamond .....915  
Map(s): Twelvemile Slough.....916  
Map(s): Upper Shoal River .....917  
Map(s): Upper St. Marks River Corridor .....918  
Map(s): Volusia Conservation Corridor.....919  
Map(s): Wacissa / Aucilla River Sinks .....922  
Map(s): Wakulla Springs Protection.....923  
Map(s): Watermelon Pond .....926  
Map(s): Wekiva-Ocala Greenway.....927  
Map(s): West Aucilla River Buffer .....928  
Map(s): West Bay Preservation Area.....929  
Map(s): Wolfe Creek Forest .....930



**Abstract**

2019 Florida Forever Five-Year Plan: Each of the 124 ARC-approved land acquisition projects are described in the Florida Forever Five-Year Plan. ARC recommends the following adjustments to the 2019 priority list of acquisition projects:

- (a) add three new projects (Table 1);
- (b) add to the boundaries of eight projects (Table 2); and
- (c) reduce the boundaries of one project after a landowner requested that his acreage be removed from the project (Table 2).

New Projects added to the List

Project	GIS Acres	County
North Waccasassa Flats	14,153	Gilchrist
Tippen Bay Ranch	2,862	DeSoto
Strategic Managed Areas Land List (SMALL)	11,573	Alachua, Bay, Broward, Charlotte, Clay, Collier, Columbia, Dade, DeSoto, Dixie, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Manatee, Madison, Marion, Orange, Putnam, Santa Rosa, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Sumter, Taylor, Union, Volusia, Wakulla and Washington

Table 1

Projects with Boundary Amendments

Projects with Boundary Amendments	GIS Acres	County
Northeast Florida Timberlands	52	Nassau
Northeast Florida Timberlands	327	Nassau
Annutteliga Hammock	403	Hernando
Etoniah-Cross Florida Greenway	50	Putnam
Etoniah-Cross Florida Greenway	821	Putnam
Florida’s First Magnitude Springs	563	Columbia
Middle Chipola River	151	Jackson
Seven Runs Creek Final Phase	586	Walton
St. Joe Timberland	555	Franklin
Wakulla Springs Protection Zone	261	Wakulla
Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor	-7,428	St. Johns

Table 2

The Project known as the Strategic Managed Area Lands List (SMALL) is 11,573 acres (GIS). These are 40 single-owner parcels identified as strategically valuable for better management (conservation and operation) by the applicants (Division of Recreation and Parks, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Forest Service, and the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT).) None of these parcels are already in a Florida Forever project boundary, but all are within the optimum management boundary parcels (OMBs) approved in conservation land management plans.



### ***ARC's Recommended 2018 Florida Forever Priority List for Land Acquisition Projects***

The 2019 Five-Year Plan includes the [Florida Forever Priority List](#) of acquisition projects recommended by ARC on December 14th, 2018 and proposed for approval by the Board of Trustees. This list includes 124 projects, each one of which was ranked within one of the following six categories: CNL - Critical Natural Lands projects; PRI - Partnerships & Regional Incentives projects; LTF - Less-Than-Fee projects; CCL - Climate Change Lands projects; SC - Substantially Complete projects; and CHR - Critical Historical Resources projects.

The numbers in the Priority List indicate ARC's December 2018 priority rank within the project category.

Pursuant to section 259.04(1)(c), F.S., "...the board shall approve, in whole or in part, the list of projects in the order of priority in which such projects are presented" [see also s. 259.105(14), F.S.].

The 2019 Florida Forever Five-Year Plan is being submitted in digital format. Hyperlinks external to this document were verified as functional as of April 25, 2019



## ***Introduction***

Background and Status - Florida Forever is the state's current blueprint for conserving our natural resources. It replaced the highly successful Preservation 2000, the largest program of its kind in the United States. Preservation 2000 acquired more than 1.78 million acres of land for protection. The Florida Forever Act, implemented in 2000, reinforced Florida's commitment to conserve its natural and cultural heritage, provide urban open space, and better manage the land acquired by the state.

Florida Forever is more than an environmental land acquisition mechanism. It encompasses a wide range of goals including: environmental restoration; water resource development and supply; increased public access; public lands management and maintenance; and increased protection of land by acquisition of conservation easements.

The additional \$3 billion investment over the 2010-2020 decade demonstrates Florida's continuing commitment to protecting and restoring our vital natural resources. Our state continues to be the model for other states when developing land acquisition programs of their own. Florida has been at the forefront of the nation's land protection efforts.

## **Legislation and Policy**

In 1998, Florida voters amended the state constitution by ratifying a constitutional amendment that re-authorized bonds for land acquisition. The 1999 legislature responded with the 10-year \$3 billion Florida Forever Program to acquire and manage land for conservation. This was extended another 10 years in 2008 for a total of \$6 billion.

In 2014 Florida voters amended the state constitution again, ratifying a constitutional amendment that dedicated 33 percent of documentary stamp taxes to finance or refinance acquisition and improvement of land, water areas, and related property interests, including conservation easements, and resources for conservation lands including wetlands, forests, and fish and wildlife habitat; wildlife management areas; lands that protect water resources and drinking water sources, including lands protecting the water quality and quantity of rivers, lakes, streams, springsheds, and lands providing recharge for groundwater and aquifer systems; lands in the Everglades Agricultural Area and the Everglades Protection Area, as defined in Article II, Section 7(b); beaches and shores; outdoor recreation lands, including recreational trails, parks, and urban open space; rural landscapes; working farms and ranches; historic or geologic sites; together with management, restoration of natural systems, and the enhancement of public access or recreational enjoyment of conservation lands.

The [\*ten-member Acquisition and Restoration Council \(ARC\)\*](#) makes recommendations about acquisition, management and disposal of state-owned lands. This important advisory group includes private citizen members with backgrounds in scientific disciplines of land, water, or environmental sciences as well as wildlife management, forestry management, and outdoor recreation, in addition to four state agency representatives.



The Governor and Cabinet, as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, are responsible for acting on ARC's recommendations. The Board also approves the acquisition of each parcel and has ultimate oversight on state lands leases and management plans.

The Department of Environmental Protection's Division of State Lands (DSL) provides primary staff support for the Acquisition and Restoration Council. DSL coordinates Council meetings; prepares agendas and reports; prepares or obtains appraisal maps, title work, appraisals and closing documents for acquisitions; and negotiates land purchases on behalf of the Board of Trustees. The Division also provides staff support for managing all leases, reviewing and approving management plans, and coordinating management review team functions for state-owned lands titled to the Board.

### **Partnerships**

The state's land acquisition programs have a long history of cooperative partnerships with local and national land trusts, water management districts, counties, cities and other local governments, as well as the federal government. The successful acquisition of many state projects is the direct result of these partnerships. Many of the projects on the Florida Forever list have partners.

Partnerships with local governments have increased in recent years. Of Florida's 67 counties, 30 have land acquisition programs (please see Addendum). These local government initiatives have dramatically enhanced the state's ability to protect its remaining important natural areas.

### **Results**

For decades, the State of Florida had one of the most aggressive conservation and recreation land acquisition programs in the United States and the world. Since 1963, Florida has invested approximately \$8 billion to conserve approximately 3.9 million acres of land for environmental, recreational and preservation purposes. This has been accomplished with a number of programs, including Environmentally Endangered Lands, Outdoor Recreation, Save Our Coasts, Save Our Rivers, Conservation and Recreation Lands, Preservation 2000, and Florida Forever.

Thanks to Florida Forever and its predecessor programs, millions of Americans can enjoy the outdoor experience and know that Florida is continuing to protect and create safe havens for its many endangered and threatened plants and animals.

### **Accomplishments of Florida Forever Acquisition Program**

Since its inception in July 2001, the state's Florida Forever land acquisition program provided protection for the following:

- 637,570 acres of strategic habitat conservation areas
- 603,510 acres of rare species habitat conservation areas, including 1,038 sites that are habitats for 345 different rare species, 146 of which are federal or state-listed as endangered, 63 federal or state-listed threatened, and 6 species of special concern
- 758,520 acres of ecological greenways
- 133,040 acres of under-represented natural communities
- 521,600 acres landscape-sized protection areas
- 436,000 acres of natural floodplains





- 770,860 acres important to significant water bodies
- 440,430 acres minimize damage from flooding
- 9,580 acres of fragile coastline
- 309,600 acres of functional wetlands
- 745,250 acres of significant groundwater recharge areas
- 460 miles of priority recreational trails
- 398,840 acres of sustainable forest land
- 1,084 archeological/historic sites
- 12,120 acres in urban service areas

These figures were derived from the updates of the Florida Forever data layers, which are continuously updated by Florida Natural Areas Inventory to reflect the most current scientific analyses of Florida's natural resources. The acreages include properties acquired under the Florida Forever program, as well as donations and acquisitions by other entities with funding from other sources that were within Florida Forever project boundaries. Additionally, the acreages recorded for each measure often overlap, and thus should not be added together. Collectively, under the Florida Forever program the State of Florida has protected over 770,279 acres of land with a little over \$3 billion in Florida Forever funds. Donations and lands acquired with non-Florida Forever program funding are not included. If these are included, the total acreage protected within Florida Forever projects is more than 817,582 acres.

All property within the boundaries of the Florida Forever acquisition projects, unless specifically noted otherwise, is proposed to be purchased, in fee-simple or a lesser interest, for conservation purposes.

The 2019 Florida Forever Priority List of land acquisition projects is consistent with section 187.201(9), F.S., the Natural Systems and Recreational Lands section of the State Comprehensive Plan.



## ***Explanation of Project Information***

The following information summarizes the evaluation reports for the projects that were recommended by the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) to be included on the current Florida Forever Priority List.

The 2008 Legislature established project categories as follows:

- (a) a critical natural lands category, including functional landscape-scale natural systems, intact large hydrological systems, lands that have significant imperiled natural communities, and corridors linking large landscapes, as identified and developed by the best available scientific analysis;
- (b) a partnerships and regional incentives category, including:
  - 1. Projects where local and regional cost-share agreements provide a lower cost and greater conservation benefit to the people of the state. Additional consideration shall be provided under this category where parcels are identified as part of a local or regional visioning process and are supported by scientific analysis; and
  - 2. Bargain and shared projects where the state will receive a significant reduction in price for public ownership of land as a result of the removal of development rights or other interests in lands or will receive alternative or matching funds;
- (c) a less-than-fee category for working agricultural lands that significantly contribute to resource protection through conservation easements and other less-than-fee techniques, tax incentives, life estates, landowner agreements, and other partnerships, including conservation easements acquired in partnership with federal conservation programs, which will achieve the objectives of Florida Forever while allowing the continuation of compatible agricultural uses on the land. Terms of easements proposed for acquisition under this category shall be developed by the Division of State Lands in coordination with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services;
- (d) a climate-change category list of lands where acquisition or other conservation measures will address the challenges of global climate change, such as through protection, restoration, mitigation, and strengthening of Florida's land, water, and coastal resources. This category includes lands that provide opportunities to sequester carbon, provide habitat, protect coastal lands or barrier islands, and otherwise mitigate and help adapt to the effects of sea-level rise and meet other objectives of the program;
- (e) a substantially complete category of projects where mainly inholdings, additions, and linkages between preserved areas will be acquired and where 85 percent of the project is complete.

The ARC implemented these category changes on June 11, 2010. In the October 15, 2010 meeting, ARC voted to add a new category for

- (f) a critical historical resources category which will include those projects determined to have significant archaeological or historical value. Six projects were moved to the critical historical resources category for ranking during the December 10, 2010 meeting.

All acquisition projects approved by the Board of Trustees are eligible for funding. However, the Board of Trustees may approve the purchase of any project from any category in furtherance of the intent expressed in 259.105(2)(e), Florida Statutes. Each project summary contains: project name, listing



category, acreage, cost and general project information. The following provides a brief explanation of each of the sections contained in the project summaries:



### ***Purpose for State Acquisition***

The primary reason(s) the state is attempting to acquire the property.

### **Manager**

The agency to assume primary management responsibilities. If more than one agency is listed, then lead management responsibilities will be divided between agencies for portions of the project. Or, one agency may lead, the other cooperate in overall management.

### **General Description**

Brief synopsis of the significant natural and cultural resources located on the tract, including: natural communities, endangered species, game and nongame species, hydrological systems, archaeological and historic sites. It also describes vulnerability and endangerment; that is, the susceptibility of the project's area and resources to natural and anthropogenic disturbances and the imminence of, or threat of, such degradation.

### **Public Use**

The State designated use pursuant to §259.032(4), F.S., under which the project qualifies for state acquisition. Florida Forever projects may be managed as: State Parks, State Preserves, State Reserves, State Aquatic Preserves, State Botanical or Geological Sites, State Recreation Areas, State Archaeological or Historical Sites, Wildlife Management Areas, Wildlife and Environmental Areas, Wildlife Refuges, and State Forests. Under certain circumstances, they may also be managed as County or City Nature Parks, Environmental Education Centers, etc., but they still must qualify for state designation and be managed accordingly. This section also includes a list of the potential recreational activities and public uses (e.g., timber management) that the project could readily accommodate.

### **FNAI Elements**

The total number (and partial list) of the most endangered or threatened “elements of biodiversity”—species and certain species aggregations of animals or plants—in the project from records in the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) data base. Animals are displayed in standard typeface while plants are in italics. The smaller the number in an FNAI rank, the rarer or endangered the element is. For example, the most critically endangered elements have a rank of G1/S1. “G” refers to a species’ rarity in a Global context, while “S” refers to its rarity within the State of Florida. “T,” if present, refers to the global rarity of a subspecies.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Lists the number of acres and/or ownerships acquired by other public and nonprofit organizations, and the number of remaining owners. Describes acquisition activity during the past, the general status of current negotiations, and other technical aspects of acquisition, if applicable, and provides an estimated tax value of the acreage to be acquired. Values for larger acreage tracts and those with numerous ownerships, including recorded and unrecorded subdivisions, are sometimes estimates of tax values based on information from: (1) county property appraisers, or (2) average per acre and per lot tax values obtained from (a) project applications, and (b) evaluation reports.



**Coordination**

Identifies acquisition and/or management partners who are contributing to or facilitating the acquisition or management of project lands.

**Placed on List**

The first year that the project, or a portion thereof, was placed on the CARL Priority List or the Florida Forever List.

**Project Area**

The total size of the current project, including acres acquired or under option and acres remaining to be acquired.

**Acres Acquired**

Within the project boundaries, the number of acres acquired by the state, federal government, water management district, or local government.

If a nonprofit organization has acquired acreage within the project boundary but has not yet transferred or sold the property (in whole or in part) to the state, that acreage is excluded from the Acreage Acquired. Such cases are identified with an asterisk (\*) and are explained in the text of the project summary under Acquisition Planning or Coordination.

**At a Cost of**

The amount of funds spent by the state, federal government, water management district, or local government on the acquisition of a project. If a nonprofit organization has funds within a project, those funds are excluded from the Funds Expended or Encumbered but are identified with an asterisk (\*) and explained in the text of the project summary under Acquisition Planning or Coordination.

**Acres Remaining**

An estimate of the acres in the project not yet acquired.

**Estimated Value of**

The county's tax assessed value of the acreage to be acquired.

**Management Policy Statement**

Briefly describes how the project meets selection criteria and public purposes pursuant to §259, F.S.

Management Prospectus - Identifies the rationale for the state designation under which the project will be managed; the lead and, if appropriate, the cooperating state or local agencies recommended to manage the tract if acquired; the conditions that may affect the intensity of management activities; a timetable for implementing specific management activities; the project's revenue-generating potential; and the role(s) of potential management cooperators.

**Management Cost Summary**

Estimated start-up and recurring costs for project lands not yet under current management. Some costs may include areas outside the Florida Forever project boundary if the Florida Forever project is to be



managed as a component of a larger tract, while others may not report additional management costs under the same circumstances. Cost information is categorized as:

- Salary = salaries of permanent employees, including fringe benefits;
- OPS = other personnel services (temporary employee) salaries;
- expense = costs of office supplies, fuel, utilities, tools, implements, and other expendable items valued at less than \$1,000;
- OCO = operating capital outlay costs (equipment and machinery valued at \$1,000 or greater);
- FCO = fixed capital outlay (permanent structures, including buildings, paved roads, and other permanent facilities).
- The primary or proposed sources of management funds are also indicated as follows:
- GR = General Revenue Fund;
- IITF = Internal Improvement Trust Fund;
- LATF = Land Acquisition Trust Fund;
- SPTF = State Park Trust Fund;
- WMLTF = Water Management Lands Trust Fund; or federal, local, or other funding sources that should be self-explanatory.

**Project Map(s)**

Identifies the project boundary; the essential parcels pursuant to 259.105(15), F.S.; property within the project boundary that is state owned; and property within, adjacent, or near the project area that is owned by another public agency or non-profit conservation organization.



### Distribution of Florida Forever Land Acquisition Projects as of January 2019

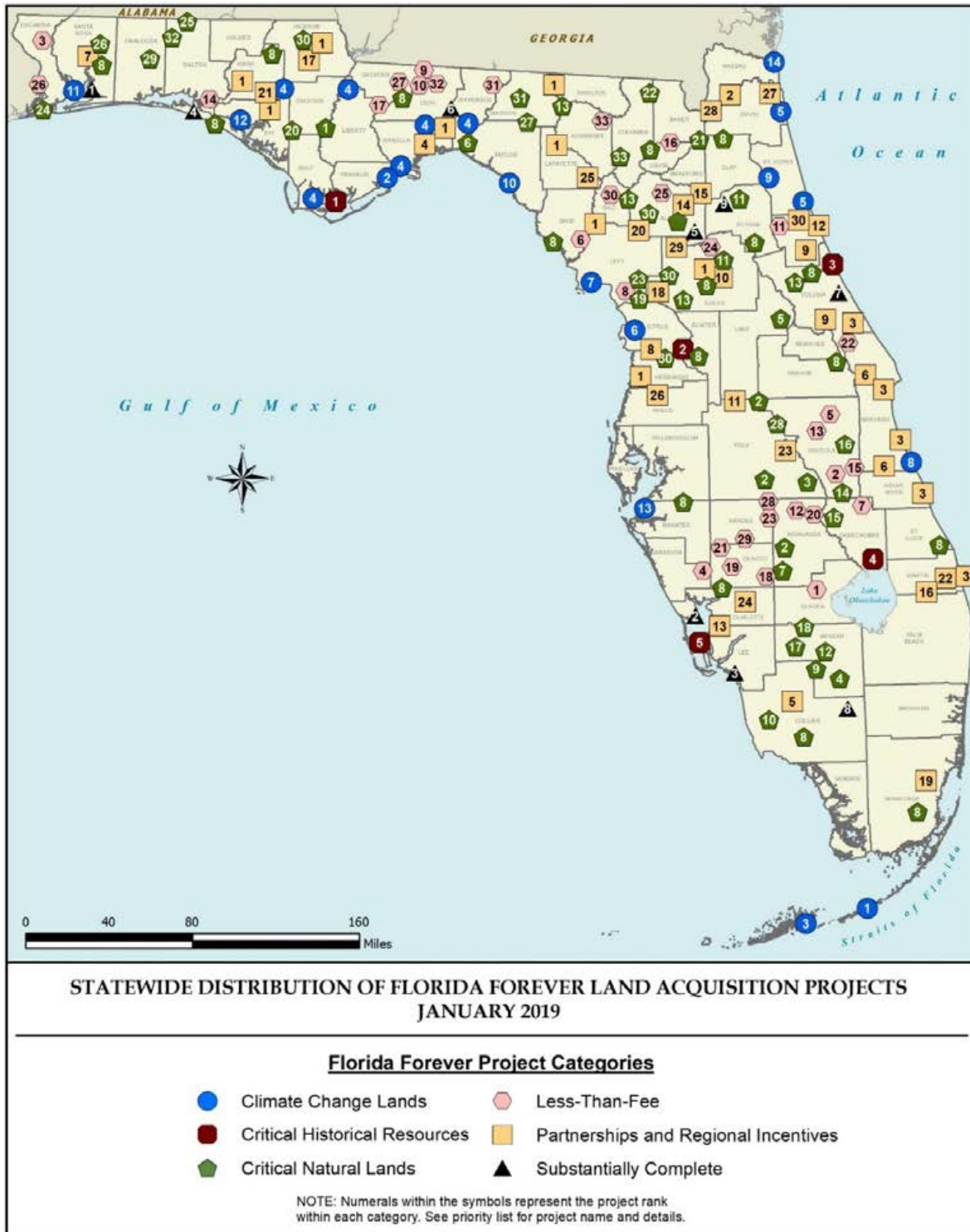


Figure 1 Statewide Distribution of Florida Forever Land Acquisition Projects as of January 2019



**Facsimile of 2019 Florida Forever Priority List – ARC Recommended**

ARC’s Recommended 2018 Florida Forever Priority List for Land Acquisition Projects

**Florida Department of Environmental Protection**  
 Division of State Lands  
 Office of Environmental Services  
*on behalf of*  
 Acquisition and Restoration Council  
**2019 Florida Forever Priority List – ARC Recommended**

**Critical Natural Lands Projects**

Rank	Critical Natural Lands Projects	County(ies) 1	Remaining Acres	Cumulative Acres2	Work Plan Priority3
1	Apalachicola River	Jackson/ Gadsden/ Liberty/ Calhoun/ Gulf	47,893	47,893	High
2	Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem	Lake/ Osceola/ Highlands	22,097	69,989	High
3	Bombing Range Ridge	Polk/ Highlands/ Osceola	31,862	101,852	High
4	Panther Glades	Hendry	39,384	141,235	High
5	Wekiva-Ocala Greenway	Lake/ Orange/ Seminole/ Volusia	23,077	164,312	High
6	Wacissa/ Aucilla River Sinks	Jefferson/ Taylor	17,293	181,605	High
7	Blue Head Ranch	Highlands	43,051	224,656	High
8	Strategic Managed Area Lands List	Alachua/ Bay/ Broward/ Charlotte/ Clay/ Collier/ Columbia/ Dade/ Desoto/ Dixie/ Gadsden/ Gilchrist/ Hamilton/ Lafayette/ Levy/ Manatee/ Marion/ Orange/ Putnam/ Santa Rosa/ St. Johns/ St. Lucie/ Sumter/ Taylor/ Union/ Volusia/ Wakulla/ Washington	11,573	236,230	High
9	Half Circle L Ranch	Hendry/ Collier	11,182	247,411	High
10	Belle Meade	Collier	7,175	254,586	High
11	Etoniah/ Cross Florida Greenway	Clay/ Putnam/ Marion/ Levy/ Citrus	59,994	314,580	High/ Medium
12	Devil's Garden	Hendry/ Collier	71,308	385,889	Medium
13	Longleaf Pine Ecosystem	Hamilton/ Gilchrist/ Volusia/ Marion	9,671	395,560	Medium
14	Pine Island Slough Ecosystem	Osceola	48,973	444,533	Medium

*Footnotes:*

1 Counties with no remaining acreage to acquire in a project not listed here – see project summaries for counties in which acquisitions completed

2 Cumulative acres used to calculate in which Priority Group of the Acquisition Work Plan each project will qualify.

3 Work Plan Priority Groups pursuant to Rule 18-24.006(6), F.A.C.:

High Priority = top 1/3 acreage within each Category	High/ Medium Priority = Portion of project in High Priority Group & portion in Medium Priority Group	Medium Priority = middle 1/3 acreage within each Category	Medium/ Low Priority = Portion of project in Medium Priority Group & portion in Low Priority Group	Low Priority = bottom 1/3 acreage within each Category
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Figure 2 Facsimile of 2019 Florida Forever Priority List – ARC Recommended





Rank	Critical Natural Lands Projects	County(ies) 1	Remaining Acres	Cumulative Acres <sup>2</sup>	Work Plan Priority <sup>3</sup>
15	Triple Diamond	Okeechobee	7,998	452,530	Medium
16	Osceola Pine Savannas	Osceola	27,500	480,031	Medium
17	Twelvemile Slough	Hendry	8,128	488,158	Medium
18	Caloosahatchee Ecoscape	Hendry/ Glades	10,646	498,804	Medium
19	South Goethe	Marion/ Levy	11,642	510,446	Medium
20	Bear Creek Forest	Bay/ Calhoun/ Gulf	100,425	610,871	Medium/ Low
21	Camp Blanding to Raiford Greenway	Baker/ Bradford/ Clay/ Union	32,437	643,308	Low
22	Pinhook Swamp	Baker/ Columbia	53,806	697,113	Low
23	Bear Hammock	Marion	4,680	701,794	Low
24	Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie	Escambia	2,390	704,184	Low
25	Natural Bridge Creek	Walton Escambia	1,797	705,981	Low
26	Wolfe Creek Forest	Santa Rosa Madison/ Taylor	9,433	715,415	Low
27	San Pedro Bay	Madison/ Taylor	44,999	760,413	Low
28	Lake Hatchineha Watershed	Osceola/ Polk	5,413	765,827	Low
29	Shoal River Buffer	Okaloosa	2,180	768,007	Low
30	Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves	Jackson/ Alachua/ Marion/ Citrus/ Sumter	589	768,596	Low
31	Hixtown Swamp	Madison	22,399	790,995	Low
32	Upper Shoal River	Walton	12,027	803,022	Low
33	Ichetucknee Trace	Columbia	1,877	804,899	Low

Table 1

Footnotes:

1 Counties with no remaining acreage to acquire in a project not listed here – see project summaries for counties in which acquisitions completed

2 Cumulative acres used to calculate in which Priority Group of the Acquisition Work Plan each project will qualify.

3 Work Plan Priority Groups pursuant to Rule 18-24.006(6), F.A.C.:

High Priority = top 1/3 acreage within each Category	High/Medium Priority = Portion of project in High Priority Group & portion in Medium Priority Group	Medium Priority = middle 1/3 acreage within each Category	Medium/ Low Priority = Portion of project in Medium Priority Group & portion in Low Priority Group	Low Priority = bottom 1/3 acreage within each Category
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Figure 3 Facsimile of 2019 Florida Forever Priority List – ARC Recommended



**Partnerships and Regional Incentives Projects**

Rank	Partnerships and Regional Incentives Projects	County(ies) 1	Remaining Acres	Cumulative Acres2	Work Plan Priority3
1	Florida's First Magnitude Springs	Walton/ Washington/ Bay/ Jackson/ Wakulla/ Leon/ Hamilton/ Madison/ Suwannee/ Lafayette/ Levy/ Marion/ Hernando/ Gilchrist/ Citrus	6,165	6,165	High
2	Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve	Duval/ Nassau/ Clay	83,729	89,894	High
3	Indian River Lagoon Blueway	Volusia/ Brevard/ Indian River/ St. Lucie/ Martin	19,433	109,328	High
4	Wakulla Springs Protection Zone	Wakulla/ Leon	3,908	113,236	High
5	Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed	Lee/ Collier	34,751	147,987	High
6	Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem	Brevard	21,061	169,048	High
7	Clear Creek/ Whiting Field	Santa Rosa	2,868	171,916	High/ Medium
8	Annuteliga Hammock	Citrus/ Hernando	8,797	180,713	Medium
9	Volusia Conservation Corridor	Volusia/ Flagler	18,311	199,024	Medium
10	Heather Island/ Ocklawaha River	Marion	13,658	212,682	Medium
11	Green Swamp	Lake/ Pasco/ Polk	161,215	373,897	Medium/ Low
12	Flagler County Blueway	Flagler	3,915	377,812	Low
13	Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods	Charlotte/ Lee	4,442	382,254	Low
14	Lochloosa Forest	Alachua	4,693	386,947	Low
15	Lake Santa Fe	Alachua/ Bradford	9,506	396,453	Low
16	Pal-Mar	Palm Beach/ Martin	9,564	406,017	Low
17	Middle Chipola River	Jackson/ Calhoun	12,080	418,097	Low
18	Rainbow River Corridor	Marion/ Citrus	1,129	419,227	Low
19	Dade County Archipelago	Miami-Dade	307	419,533	Low
20	Watermelon Pond	Levy/ Alachua	5,696	425,229	Low
21	Sand Mountain	Washington/ Bay	14,444	439,673	Low
22	Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem	Martin	8,193	447,866	Low

*Footnotes:*

1 Counties with no remaining acreage to acquire in a project not listed here – see project summaries for counties in which acquisitions completed

2 Cumulative acres used to calculate in which Priority Group of the Acquisition Work Plan each project will qualify.

3 Work Plan Priority Groups pursuant to Rule 18-24.006(6), F.A.C.:

High Priority – top 1/3 acreage within each Category	High/Medium Priority – Portion of project in High Priority Group & portion in Medium Priority Group	Medium Priority – middle 1/3 acreage within each Category	Medium/ Low Priority – Portion of project in Medium Priority Group & portion in Low Priority Group	Low Priority – bottom 1/3 acreage within each Category
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Figure 4 Facsimile of 2019 Florida Forever Priority List – ARC Recommended



Rank	Partnerships and Regional Incentives Projects	County(ies) 1	Remaining Acres	Cumulative Acres2	Work Plan Priority3
23	Catfish Creek	Polk	3,221	451,087	Low
24	Hall Ranch	Charlotte	7,517	458,604	Low
25	Lafayette Forest	Lafayette	10,251	468,855	Low
26	Crossbar/ Al Bar Ranch	Pasco	12,440	481,295	Low
27	Pumpkin Hill Creek	Duval	11,978	493,273	Low
28	Baldwin Bay/ St. Marys River	Duval/ Nassau	8,395	501,688	Low
29	Carr Farm/ Price's Scrub	Marion/ Alachua	305	501,973	Low
30	Pringle Creek Forest	Flagler	8,446	510,418	Low

Table 2

Footnotes:

1 Counties with no remaining acreage to acquire in a project not listed here – see project summaries for counties in which acquisitions completed

2 Cumulative acres used to calculate in which Priority Group of the Acquisition Work Plan each project will qualify.

3 Work Plan Priority Groups pursuant to Rule 18-24.006(6), F.A.C.:

High Priority = top 1/3 acreage within each Category	High/Medium Priority = Portion of project in High Priority Group & portion in Medium Priority Group	Medium Priority = middle 1/3 acreage within each Category	Medium/ Low Priority = Portion of project in Medium Priority Group & portion in Low Priority Group	Low Priority = bottom 1/3 acreage within each Category
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Figure 5 Facsimile of 2019 Florida Forever Priority List – ARC Recommended



**Less-than-Fee Projects**

Rank	Less-than-Fee Projects	County(ies) 1	Remaining Acres	Cumulative Acres2	Work Plan Priority3
1	Fisheating Creek Ecosystem	Glades/ Highlands	112,638	112,638	High
2	Adams Ranch	Osceola	5,598	118,236	High
3	Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest	Escambia/ Santa Rosa	99,501	217,737	High
4	Myakka Ranchlands	Manatee/ Sarasota	31,362	249,099	High/ Medium
5	Conlin Lake X	Osceola	9,041	258,140	Medium
6	Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed	Dixie	50,383	308,523	Medium
7	Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector	Okeechobee/ Indian River	34,292	342,815	Medium
8	Gulf Hammock	Levy	25,611	368,426	Medium
9	Ochlockonee River Conservation Area	Gadsden/ Leon	3,869	372,295	Medium
10	Ayavalla Plantation	Leon	5,903	378,198	Medium
11	Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor	Flagler/ St. Johns/ Putnam	100,821	479,020	Medium/ Low
12	Arbuckle Creek Watershed	Highlands	5,849	484,869	Low
13	Big Bend Swamp/ Holopaw Ranch	Osceola	46,115	530,984	Low
14	Seven Runs Creek Phase 2	Walton/ Washington	6,581	537,566	Low
15	Ranch Reserve	Brevard/ Indian River/ Osceola	12,515	550,081	Low
16	Raiford to Osceola Greenway	Baker/ Union	67,702	617,783	Low
17	Hosford Chapman's Rhododendron Protection Zone	Gadsden/ Liberty	6,923	624,706	Low
18	Tippen Bay Ranch	Hardee	2,862	627,568	
19	Peace River Refuge	Desoto	3,842	631,411	Low
20	Eastern Scarp Ranchlands	Highlands	2,214	633,625	Low
21	Horse Creek Ranch	DeSoto/ Hardee	16,316	649,941	Low
22	Maytown Flatwoods	Brevard	4,925	654,866	Low
23	Hardee Flatwoods	Hardee	1,676	656,542	Low

*Footnotes:*

1 Counties with no remaining acreage to acquire in a project not listed here – see project summaries for counties in which acquisitions completed

2 Cumulative acres used to calculate in which Priority Group of the Acquisition Work Plan each project will qualify.

3 Work Plan Priority Groups pursuant to Rule 18-24.006(6), F.A.C.:

High Priority = top 1/3 acreage within each Category	High/Medium Priority = Portion of project in High Priority Group & portion in Medium Priority Group	Medium Priority = middle 1/3 acreage within each Category	Medium/Low Priority = Portion of project in Medium Priority Group & portion in Low Priority Group	Low Priority = bottom 1/3 acreage within each Category
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Figure 6 Facsimile of 2019 Florida Forever Priority List – ARC Recommended



Rank	Less-than-Fee Projects	County(ies) 1	Remaining Acres	Cumulative Acres2	Work Plan Priority3
24	Mill Creek	Marion	12,293	668,835	Low
25	San Felasco Conservation Corridor	Alachua	376	669,210	Low
26	Lower Perdido River Buffer	Escambia	2,326	671,536	Low
27	Little River Conservation Area	Gadsden	2,057	673,593	Low
28	Old Town Creek Watershed	Hardee/ Polk	1,266	674,860	Low
29	Limestone Ranch	Hardee	6,382	681,242	Low
30	North Waccasassa Flats	Gilchrist	14,153	695,395	Low
31	West Aucilla River Buffer	Jefferson	710	696,105	Low
32	Millstone Plantation	Leon	56	696,160	Low
33	Suwannee County Preservation	Suwannee	1,254	697,414	Low

Table 3

Footnotes:

1 Counties with no remaining acreage to acquire in a project not listed here – see project summaries for counties in which acquisitions completed

2 Cumulative acres used to calculate in which Priority Group of the Acquisition Work Plan each project will qualify.

3 Work Plan Priority Groups pursuant to Rule 18-24.006(6), F.A.C.:

High Priority = top 1/3 acreage within each Category	High/Medium Priority = Portion of project in High Priority Group & portion in Medium Priority Group	Medium Priority = middle 1/3 acreage within each Category	Medium/Low Priority = Portion of project in Medium Priority Group & portion in Low Priority Group	Low Priority = bottom 1/3 acreage within each Category
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Figure 7 Facsimile of 2019 Florida Forever Priority List – ARC Recommended



**Climate Change Lands Projects**

Rank	Climate Change Lands Projects	County(ies) 1	Remaining Acres	Cumulative Acres2	Work Plan Priority3
1	Florida Keys Ecosystem	Monroe	6,182	6,182	High
2	Dickerson Bay/ Bald Point	Wakulla/ Franklin	19,610	25,792	High
3	Coupon Bight/ Key Deer	Monroe	1,149	26,940	High
4	St. Joe Timberland	Bay/ Franklin/ Gadsden/ Gulf/ Jefferson/ Leon/ Liberty/ Taylor/ Wakulla/ Walton/ Washington	76,491	103,431	High/ Medium
5	Northeast Florida Blueway	Duval/ St. Johns/ Flagler	11,850	115,282	Medium/ Low
6	Florida Springs Coastal Greenway	Citrus	6,930	122,212	Low
7	Caber Coastal Connector	Levy	1,723	123,935	Low
8	Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge	Brevard/ Indian River	219	124,154	Low
9	St. Johns River Blueway	St. Johns	19,200	143,354	Low
10	Taylor Sweetwater Creek	Taylor	3,702	147,057	Low
11	Garcon Ecosystem	Santa Rosa	3,404	150,461	Low
12	West Bay Preservation Area	Bay	4,347	154,808	Low
13	Terra Ceia	Manatee	2,203	157,011	Low
14	Tiger/ Little Tiger Island	Nassau	1,137	158,149	Low

Table 4

*Footnotes:*

1 Counties with no remaining acreage to acquire in a project not listed here – see project summaries for counties in which acquisitions completed

2 Cumulative acres used to calculate in which Priority Group of the Acquisition Work Plan each project will qualify.

3 Work Plan Priority Groups pursuant to Rule 18-24.006(6), F.A.C.:

High Priority = top 1/3 acreage within each Category	High/ Medium Priority = Portion of project in High Priority Group & portion in Medium Priority Group	Medium Priority = middle 1/3 acreage within each Category	Medium/ Low Priority = Portion of project in Medium Priority Group & portion in Low Priority Group	Low Priority = bottom 1/3 acreage within each Category
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Figure 8 Facsimile of 2019 Florida Forever Priority List – ARC Recommended



**Substantially Complete Projects**

Rank	Substantially Complete Projects	County(ies) 1	Remaining Acres	Cumulative Acres2	Work Plan Priority3
1	Escribano Point	Santa Rosa	296	296	High
2	Charlotte Harbor Estuary	Charlotte/ Lee/ Sarasota	6,295	6,591	High/ Medium
3	Estero Bay	Lee	1,885	8,475	Medium
4	South Walton County Ecosystem	Walton	2,697	11,173	Medium
5	Lochloosa Wildlife	Alachua	4,434	15,606	Medium/ Low
6	Upper St. Marks River Corridor	Leon/ Jefferson/ Wakulla	1,298	16,904	Low
7	Spruce Creek	Volusia	366	17,270	Low
8	Save Our Everglades	Collier	24	17,294	Low
9	Clay Ranch	Putnam	154	17,448	Low

Table 5

*Footnotes:*

1 Counties with no remaining acreage to acquire in a project not listed here – see project summaries for counties in which acquisitions completed.

2 Cumulative acres used to calculate in which Priority Group of the Acquisition Work Plan each project will qualify.

3 Work Plan Priority Groups pursuant to Rule 18-24.006(6), F.A.C.:

High Priority = top 1/3 acreage within each Category	High/Medium Priority = Portion of project in High Priority Group & portion in Medium Priority Group	Medium Priority = middle 1/3 acreage within each Category	Medium/ Low Priority = Portion of project in Medium Priority Group & portion in Low Priority Group	Low Priority = bottom 1/3 acreage within each Category
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Figure 9 Facsimile of 2019 Florida Forever Priority List – ARC Recommended





**Critical Historical Resources Projects**

Rank	Critical Historical Resources Projects	County(ies) 1	Remaining Acres	Cumulative Acres2	Work Plan Priority3
1	Pierce Mound Complex	Franklin	558	558	High
2	Battle of Wahoo Swamp	Sumter	853	1,412	High/ Medium
3	Three Chimneys	Volusia	56	1,468	Low
4	Okeechobee Battlefield	Okeechobee	89	1,557	Low
5	Pineland Site Complex	Lee	145	1,702	Low

Table 6

*Footnotes:*

1 Counties with no remaining acreage to acquire in a project not listed here – see project summaries for counties in which acquisitions completed

2 Cumulative acres used to calculate in which Priority Group of the Acquisition Work Plan each project will qualify.

3 Work Plan Priority Groups pursuant to Rule 18-24.006(6), F.A.C.:

High Priority = top 1/3 acreage within each Category	High/ Medium Priority = Portion of project in High Priority Group & portion in Medium Priority Group	Medium Priority = middle 1/3 acreage within each Category	Medium/ Low Priority = Portion of project in Medium Priority Group & portion in Low Priority Group	Low Priority = bottom 1/3 acreage within each Category
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Figure 10 Facsimile of 2019 Florida Forever Priority List – ARC Recommended





### 2018 Florida Forever Project Priority List Modifications

## Florida Forever projects added to the priority list, deleted, or modified during 2018

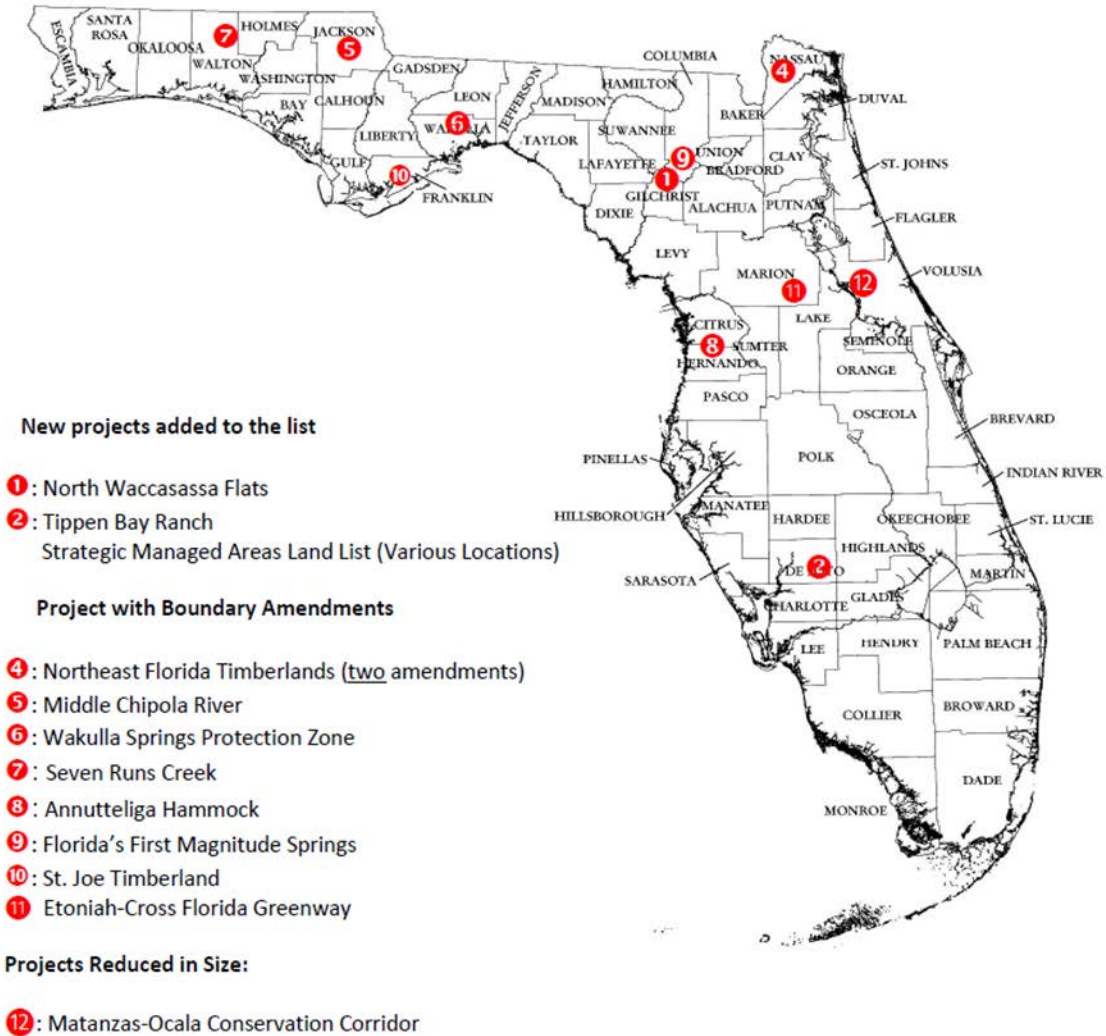


Figure 11 Florida Forever Project Priority List Modifications, 2018



## ***Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) as of December 2018***

### ***Legislation and Policy***

Hank Vinson, Staff Director  
Office of Environmental Services  
Division of State Lands  
Department of Environmental Protection

### ***Agency Council Members***

#### ***Florida Department of Environmental Protection (Chair)***

David Clark, Deputy Secretary for Land and Recreation  
Designee for Secretary Noah Valenstein

Callie DeHaven, Director  
Division of State Lands

#### ***Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission***

Thomas Eason, Ph.D., Assistant Executive Director  
Designee for Executive Director Eric Sutton  
Staff: Tom Houston  
Division of Habitat and Species Conservation

#### ***Florida Forest Service***

Jim Karels, Director  
Staff: John Browne

#### ***Florida Division of Historical Resources***

Tim Parsons, Ph.D., RPA, Director  
Staff: Julie Duggins / Josh Goodwin  
B. Calvin Jones Center for Archeology

### ***Agency Appointee Council Members***

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Chiefland, Florida 32644

Bill Palmer, Ph. D., President (Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission)  
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Elva Peppers, President  
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Tallahassee, Florida 32303

Jack Vogel, President  
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Maurice “Mo” Pearson, Vice-President  
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Orlando, Florida 32822

**Support Staff**

Department of Environmental Protection  
Division of State Lands  
Office of Environmental Services  
Ray Spaulding, Chief

***Land Conservation Planning***

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Keith Singleton  
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Simone James

***Acquisition and Restoration Council/Conservation Easements***

Hank Vinson  
  
Florida Natural Areas Inventory  
1018 Thomasville Road Suite 200-C  
Tallahassee, Florida 32303  
Daniel Hipes, Director



## **Adams Ranch**

Osceola County  
Less-than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2007
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	7,128
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	1,530*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$1,442,155
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	5,598

\*795 acres purchased through R&FLP (DACS-FF funds);698 acres within FF project boundary (\$2,017/acre).

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The goal of the Adams Ranch Florida Forever project is to protect open rangeland and native prairie that support many rare species with large habitat requirements. It was originally part of a larger proposal (55,000 acres) submitted to the Conservation and Recreation Lands program in 1986-87 by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory. A portion of the 1986-1987 proposal is now part of Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area, but the majority remains in private ownership. The intervening 20 years has not diminished the significance of this area to the many species and natural communities of concern.

One of the primary concepts of this project is the protection of the way of life for the ranch, which is managed in a way that has historically allowed for the continued protection of an important and biodiverse assemblage of imperiled vertebrate wildlife. Another goal of the project is to provide continued buffering of the Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area from development, avoiding fragmentation of the landscape and allowing continued proper management on a landscape scale through prescribed fire, maintenance of hydrological regimes, and other appropriate strategies.

This project meets the Florida Forever goals of increasing protection of biodiversity by acquiring 81 acres of Priority 1 habitat and 6,140 acres of Priority 2 habitat and preserving 7,139 acres of habitat for such rare species as the eastern indigo snake and the bald eagle. Another Florida Forever goal is to increase the acreage of landscape linkages and conservation corridors, by contributing connection to the nearby Adams Ranch conservation easements of the USFWS and DEP. Other Florida Forever goals are to protect waters and wetlands of the state, and the Adams Ranch will preserve 762 acres of floodplain, 5,811 acres that would help protect surface waters, and 2,598 acres of functioning wetlands. Some 10,979 acres of the proposal help recharge the aquifer

### **Manager(s)**

The Office of Environmental Services, or its successor, would serve as the conservation-easement (CE) monitor unless otherwise noted. Adams Ranch CE will be monitored by the Florida Forest Service-FFS.

### **General Description**

The Adams Ranch Florida Forever project will protect 7,139 acres of habitat in southern Osceola County. The northwestern boundary fronts Lake Marian for 1.3 miles. The project stretches east through



the center of the entire Adams Ranch holding, which is bracketed to the north and south with Adams Ranch, Inc. property and bounded on the east by Peavine Road. Avon Park Air Force Range and Bombing Range Ridge Florida Forever project are no more than 10 miles to the west of the project. The Mills Ranch and Escape Ranch Conservation Easements lie approximately 3.5 miles to the east. Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park is approximately 8.5 miles to the south.

Adams Ranch is a working ranch with large acreages of improved pasture for beef cattle and sod production. Improved pasture covers approximately 34 percent of the proposed area. The great majority has been planted with bahia grass.

The natural communities present within the matrix of agricultural land include basin marsh, depression marsh, dome swamp, dry prairie, mesic flatwoods, prairie hammock, and scrubby flatwoods. Many of these are in good condition even though they are impacted by cattle and a network of roads and drainage ditches that have altered hydrology.

Nearly 60 percent of the area is designated by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission as a Strategic Habitat Conservation Area for a variety of rare and imperiled species. This project seeks to conserve a mosaic of remaining and increasingly rare natural communities on the site that provide important habitat for an abundance of listed species occurring there as well as providing aquifer recharge, watershed and wetlands protection.

Adams Ranch not only provides habitat for listed species, but also for many species of neotropical migrant birds passing through during the spring and fall. The habitat is also important for game species including white-tailed deer, wild turkey and northern bobwhite quail. These species depend on the dry and wet prairie, mesic and scrubby flatwoods, marshes and hammocks for cover, roost sites, nesting sites and forage.

### **Public Use**

The project is a less-than-fee purchase without public access. Due to the lack of public access, there will not be any public resource-based outdoor recreation potential for the project.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 15, 2007, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added Adams Ranch to the A list of the Florida Forever Priority List. This less-than-fee project was sponsored by The Nature Conservancy in a proposal submitted on December 29, 2006, with 11,023 acres. After the request from landowners to remove the 4-H Ranch, the project has about 7,159 acres and a 2007 assessed taxable value of \$10,638,040.

In 2010, The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) closed on a 795-acre Easement owned by the Adams family for \$1,603,510.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project into the Florida Forever category of Less-than-Fee projects.



In 2015 DACS closed on an additional 1,536 acres. Some 698 acres of the 2010 CE purchase are within the Florida Forever project boundary and some 154 GIS-calculated acres of the 2015 purchase are within the project boundary.

On October 17, 2017 DEP received a request from the new owners of what had been the 4-H Ranch, the Bexley Ranch Land Trust, to remove the land they had purchased, about 3,898 acres, from the project boundary. This reduced the project to about 7,128 acres and eliminated a 2017 assessed value of \$1,442,155. After this most recent boundary change in 2017, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$9,195,885. This change eliminates a potential connection to the Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area (WMA), though the project still connects to the existing Adams Ranch conservation easements of the DACS and the USFWS to the southeast.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$22,285,151.

### **Coordination**

The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Osceola County, and the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) are partners in this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a proposed conservation easement or other less-than-fee interest, the project will be managed by the private landowner with conditions outlined in a conservation easement. The purchase of development rights, the prohibition of any further conversion of existing natural areas to agricultural use, and the limited public access to some sites will likely be the primary focus of the conservation easement.

### **Management Prospectus**

The Office of Environmental Services, or its successor, is designated to ensure oversight of the conservation easement on this project.



Adams Ranch Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2007
Project Area (GIS acres)	7,128
Acres Acquired (GIS)	1,530*
at a Cost of	\$1,442,155
Acres Remaining (GIS)	5,598

\*795 acres purchased through R&FLP (DACs-FF funds);698 acres within FF project boundary (\$2,017/acre).

Adams Ranch Table 2

Adams Ranch FNAI Elements	Score
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3

There are 3 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Adams Ranch](#)



## ***Annutteliga Hammock***

Citrus and Hernando Counties  
Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1995
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	19,717
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	10,920
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$35,925,705
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	8,797

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The Brooksville Ridge in west-central Florida supports some of the last large tracts of longleaf-pine sandhills in Florida, unique forests of northern hardwood trees, and many archaeological sites. The Annutteliga Hammock project will conserve the remaining fragments of the forests between the Withlacoochee State Forest and the Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area. This will protect habitat for black bear and many sandhill- dwelling plants and animals and give the public a large area for recreation in the original landscape of this fast-growing region.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Forest Service (FFS) for northeastern and southeastern parts and Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) for western part.

### **General Description**

This project is defined by its excellent quality sandhill and very good upland hardwood forest natural communities (there is little upland hardwood forest protected in this ecoregion). Remnants of Annutteliga Hammock on steep-sided hills and in small valleys cover 15 percent of the project area. This hardwood forest resembles forests far to the north; in fact, several northern trees reach their southern limits near this area. Westward the hardwoods give way to drier longleaf-pine sandhills on slightly lower and more level terrain. Remnants of these sandhill forests cover 64 percent of the project. It is an excellent habitat for many rare vertebrates adapted to xeric communities and several rare plant species. Twenty archaeological sites attest to the long history of Native American occupation here. Limerock mines, golf courses, and residential developments are now seriously fragmenting these natural areas, but excellent examples of the original vegetation and wildlife, including the Florida black bear, remain. The Suncoast Parkway is planned to run through this project.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated for use as a state forest and wildlife management area. Such uses as camping, picnicking, hiking, and boating will be compatible with the protection of the area.





### **Acquisition Planning**

This project consists of several large tracts as well as large subdivided areas. Essential parcels include Sugarmill Woods (acquired), World Woods (acquired by the FFS), Florida Crushed Stone, Orange Meadow Corp./Seville (acquired), Blackwell (westernmost tract—acquired by the SWFWMD), Tooke’s Lake Joint Venture, and other large hammock and sandhill parcels.

On March 10, 1995, the LAMAC approved the addition of 990 acres to the project boundary. On July 29, 1999, the Council combined Lecanto Sandhills (2,029 acres of sandhills, xeric hammocks, and depression marshes) in Citrus County with the Annutteliga Hammock project.

Lecanto Sandhills area was acquired in 2001 by the Division of State Lands to be managed by FFS/FWC.

On April 15, 2011 ARC recommended a 6,211-acre reduction to the project boundary due to residential/rural/commercial/development.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Florida Forever project category of Partnerships and Regional Incentives.

On June 17, 2016, ARC approved a boundary reduction of 5,348 acres in the project boundaries. ARC approved the removal of 4,125 parcels that had a total 2015 market value of \$37,692,703.00. ARC removed sites in 10 areas that had a total of 4,125 parcels.

After the most recent boundary change in 2016, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$15,414,600.

On June 15, 2018 ARC members voted to add 403 acres in Hernando County of the Buckner/Coastal Trails Partnership Property to the project. This is an inholding of the Chassahowitzka WMA.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$64,755,273.

### **Coordination**

On August 3, 1998, a Memorandum of Understanding between FDOT and DEP for the future conveyance of a portion of the Annutteliga Hammock project within the proposed alignment for the Suncoast Parkway was signed. This project is also included within SWFWMD’s Five-Year Plan. Hernando County is an acquisition and management partner.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Annutteliga Hammock project are: 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 this state or a larger geographic area; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or



state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project has the size and resource diversity to qualify as a Wildlife Management Area and a State Forest.

### ***Manager***

The FFS proposes to manage approximately 14,336 acres in the northeastern and southeastern portions of the project. The FWC is recommended to be lead manager on the southwestern 14,048 acres next to the Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Florida Forest Service identifies no known major disturbances that will require extraordinary attention, so the level of management intensity is expected to be typical for a state forest.

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission expects that the Annatteliga Hammock will be heavily used for wildlife-oriented recreation, since it lies within 40 miles of the St. Petersburg/Tampa metropolitan area. The demand for hunting, camping, hiking, horseback riding and nature study is expected to be high. Additionally, the sandhill community will need the frequent application of fire to rejuvenate itself.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

The primary land management goal for the Florida Forest Service is to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; to integrate compatible human use; and to insure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. This total resource concept will guide the FFS management activities on this project.

Once the core area is acquired and assigned to the FFS for management, public access will be provided for low intensity, non-facility related outdoor recreation activities. Until specific positions are provided for the project, public access will be coordinated through Withlacoochee Forestry Center (WFC) Headquarters and management activities will be conducted using WFC personnel.

Initial or intermediate management efforts will concentrate on site security, public and fire management access, resource inventory, and removing existing trash. Steps will be taken to ensure that the public is provided appropriate access while simultaneously protecting sensitive resources. Vehicular use by the public will be confined to designated roads and unnecessary access points will be closed. An inventory of the site's natural resources and threatened and endangered flora and fauna will be conducted to provide the basis for formulating a management plan.

Prior to collection of necessary resource information, management proposals for this project is conceptual. Long-range plans for this property will generally be directed toward the restoration of disturbed areas and maintenance of natural communities. To the greatest extent practical, disturbed sites



will be restored to conditions that would be expected to occur in naturally functioning ecosystems. Management activities will also stress enhancement of the abundance and spatial distribution of threatened and endangered species.

An all-season burning program will be established using practices that incorporate recent research findings. Whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks will be used to contain, and control prescribed and natural fires. Timber activities will primarily consist of improvement thinning and regeneration harvests to maintain and perpetuate forest ecosystems. Plantations will be thinned to achieve a more natural appearance and, where appropriate, will be reforested with species that would typically be found in a naturally functioning ecosystem. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age but will be managed to maintain a broad diversity of age classes ranging from young stands to areas with old growth characteristics. This will provide habitat for the full spectrum of species that would be found in the natural environment.

The resource inventory will be used to identify sensitive areas that need special attention, protection or management, and to locate areas that are appropriate for any recreational or administrative facilities. Infrastructure development will primarily be in already disturbed areas and will be the absolute minimum required to allow public access for the uses mentioned above, to provide facilities to accommodate public use, and to administer and manage the property. The FFS will promote recreation and environmental education in the natural environment. As a general practice, if it is determined that a new recreation area is needed, low impact, rustic facilities will be the only kind developed. High-impact, organized recreation areas will be discouraged because of possible adverse effects on the natural environment. Unnecessary roads, firelines and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned and restored to the greatest extent practical.

During the first year after acquisition, Fish and Wildlife's emphasis will be placed on securing and posting boundaries, assuring public access to the tract, surveying wildlife and plant communities, and restoring fire as a viable component of the ecosystem. A management plan for the tract will be prepared. Longer-range plans for the property include securing and stabilizing necessary roads for public access, developing camping and nature interpretive facilities and developing hiking and horseback riding trails. All-weather access roads will be developed and maintained for use by the public and for management operations. An all-season prescribed burning program will be established using both aerial and ground ignition techniques. Whenever possible existing roads, trails and firebreaks will be used to control both prescribed and natural fires. Unnecessary roads, firelines and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned or restored as appropriate. Environmentally sensitive areas will be identified, and appropriate protective measures will be implemented to assure the areas are protected from abuse.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

The FFS will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. Revenue from these sales will vary, but the FFS expects the revenue-generating potential of this project to be low to moderate.



The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission may harvest some pinelands to help offset operational costs. Any estimate of revenue from harvest of the pinelands will depend on a detailed timber cruise. Revenue may also be generated from the sale of Wildlife Management Area stamps to recreational users of the property.



Annutteliga Hammock Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1995
Project Area (GIS acres)	19,424
Acres Acquired (GIS)	11,030
at a Cost of	\$35,925,705
Acres Remaining (GIS)	8,394

Annutteliga Hammock Table 2

Annutteliga Hammock FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Florida Mouse	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Cooley's water-willow	G2Q/S2
Southern Hognose Snake	G2/S2S3
giant orchid	G2G3/S2
Bachman's Sparrow	G3/S3
Chapman's skeletongrass	G3/S3
Gopher Frog	G3/S3
scrub stylisma	G3/S3

*There are 22 rare species associated with the project.*

Annutteliga Hammock Table 3a

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$85,020	\$85,020
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$25,000	\$25,000
OCO	\$116,800	\$10,000
FCO	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$226,820</b>	<b>\$120,020</b>



Annutteliga Hammock Table 3b

<b>Management Cost Summary: FWC</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>	<b>CARL</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$78,353</b>	<b>\$78,353</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$10,500</b>	<b>\$5,250</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$52,500</b>	<b>\$42,000</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$124,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$404,958</b>	<b>\$135,603</b>

[Map\(s\): Annutteliga Hammock](#)



## ***Apalachicola River***

Jackson, Gadsden, Liberty, Calhoun, and Gulf Counties  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1991
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	56,020
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	8,127*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$10,120,682*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	47,893

*\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the NFWFMD.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring the natural lands of the Apalachicola River would greatly increase protection of the waters of the Apalachicola River and the productive Apalachicola Bay, as well as providing the public with scenic outdoor-recreation areas from the Torreya State Park south to Wewahitchka and the Dead Lakes. The high plateaus, steep bluffs and deep ravines of the northern Apalachicola River valley are some of the most significant natural features of the southeastern Coastal Plain, with many northern, rare, and endemic plants and animals, such as the nearly extinct Florida Torreya tree.

### **Manager(s)**

Most of the project would be managed under a conservation easement by The Forestland Group. Past owners have harvested hardwood timber on the property, and this practice will continue. Parts of the project purchased outright by the State would be managed by the Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Florida Department of Environmental Protection, including an addition to the Torreya State Park. The Florida Forest Service/FFS will be a cooperating manager for the Sweetwater Creek tract in managing the forest resources, and timber issues related to planning and implementing forest management activities and provide assistance in developing prescribed burn plans.

### **General Description**

This project includes much of Florida’s upland glades natural community, currently not represented on conservation lands, and harbors several globally rare plant species as well as 16 endemic species occurring nowhere else in Florida. It consists of four tracts of land along the upper Apalachicola River: 1) a large tract on the east bank, running south from near Chattahoochee to Torreya State Park, including rich upland and floodplain forests and most of the upland glades in the state. It shelters several extremely rare plants such as the Florida Torreya. 2) The Land property, west of the former area, containing floodplain forest important for southeastern and gray bats. 3) The Sweetwater Creek tract, connecting Torreya State Park with a Nature Conservancy preserve, including some of the deepest steephead ravines in the state, with unique hardwood forests harboring many rare plants and animals. The uplands between the steepheads are a sand pine plantation. 4) 37,895 acres from The Forestland Group offered to the state for purchase as a conservation easement (including 715 acres of fee-simple purchase of the Skyland Ranch tract), The upper Apalachicola has a high potential for archaeological



sites; several are already known. All these areas are threatened by timbering and unrestricted vehicular access.

### **Public Use**

Most of the acreage would be acquired as a less-than-fee conservation easement, limiting public use. But it will provide habitat for wildlife including the Florida black bear and provide buffers for other conservation lands such as the St. Joe Timberland Apalachicola River and the Southeastern Maternity Bat Cave in Sneads, Jackson County. Forestry uses could continue under a well-crafted forest stewardship management plan. Portions of the project purchased in fee-simple would be managed as state parks or preserves, wildlife management areas, and state forests, and allow such uses as hiking, nature appreciation, limited hunting and fishing, and boat launching.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 7, 1990, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) separated the Apalachicola River and Bay CARL project into two projects: Apalachicola Bay, and Apalachicola River, Phase I. The Apalachicola River, Phase I project included the Aspalaga Landing tract (800 acres/2 owners), Atkins tract (3,210 acres/7 owners), and Gadsden County Glades (1,912 acres/13 owners) and had an estimated tax value of \$4,532,300.

On April 7, 1992, the LAAC approved a 4,570-acre addition to the project boundary. It consisted of 30 owners and a taxable value of \$1,813,157.

On July 14, 1995, the LAAC approved a 374-acre addition (Land property) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the owner and had a taxable value of \$282,712. The tract is across from the Gadsden Glades tract and nearly adjacent to the Sneads Cove site of the Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves project.

On December 5, 1996, the Land Acquisition Management Advisory Council (LAMAC) transferred the Atkins/Trammell tract (approximately 3,210 acres) and the Hatcher tract (approximately 544 acres within the 9,145-acre Sweetwater site) to the Less-Than-Fee category. A 613-acre conservation easement was acquired on the Hatcher tract in 2002.

On May 6, 1999, the LAMAC designated an additional 11,800 acres (Lake Wimico) as essential.

On April 6, 2001, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) removed the Atkins/Trammell tract site (approximately 3,210 acres) from the project because the resources had been compromised and negotiations had reached an impasse.

On April 25, 2002, the ARC approved a less-than-fee, 2,242-acre addition (Corbin/Tucker site) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the TNC, consisted of 2 owners, David Corbin & Ken Tucker, and had a taxable value of \$1,106,820. On August 15, 2002, the ARC approved a less-than-fee, 1,514-acre addition of the Trammel tract (that was previously part of the 3,210-acre Atkins/Trammell tract that was removed on April 6, 2001) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Trammel, and had a taxable value of \$430,000.





On February 7, 2003, the ARC approved a fee simple and less-than-fee 3,113-acre addition to the project boundary. Sponsored by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), it consisted of 4 landowners, 5 tracts, and had a 2002 taxable value of \$764,996. The tracts break down as follows: Soterra Crooked Creek tract, 447 acres;

Soterra Connector tract, 117 acres; Thompson tract, 304 acres; Hatcher tract, 160 acres; and TNC Dupuis/Traveler's tract, 1,846 acres. On October 17, 2003, the ARC approved a less-than-fee, 1,244-acre addition (Glenn Summers tract) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the owner, Glenn Summers, and had a taxable value of \$91,645.

On December 23, 2007, the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) purchased a 1,544-acre conservation easement from Robert D./Kay S. Trammell and Robert Douglas Trammell and Meredith Trammell Roop for \$2,985,108. The CE is known as the Trammell tract.

On September 30, 2010 DRP purchased 553 acres known as Torreya State Park Addition for \$1,418,000 from Plum Creek. DRP will manage this.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project into the Florida Forever category of Critical Natural Lands projects.

In 2017 The Forestland Group, owners of acreage along the Apalachicola River formerly owned by Neal Land and Timber, proposed a less-than-fee purchase of more than 37,000 acres as the Upper Apalachicola River Ecosystem Florida Forever project and added another 700 acres of the Skyland Ranch tract proposed for fee simple. The proposal totaled 37,895 acres and had a tax assessed value of \$5,756,412 in 2017. ARC approved this as a stand-alone project in October. In December, the ARC moved to combine the newly approved Upper Apalachicola River Ecosystem project into the boundary of the existing Apalachicola River project, in the Critical Natural Lands category.

After the most recent addition to the boundary in 2017, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$11,048,386. In calendar year 2017, a total of 288.26 acres closed in this project were acquired using Florida Forever program funding.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$43,443,036.

### **Coordination**

The NFWFMD and TNC have provided information and assistance with this project.

The 37,895 acres to be acquired mostly as less-than-fee conservation land complement Jackson County's goal of preserving environmentally sensitive lands and greenways for connectivity. The Gulf County plan's conservation elements have goals of keeping flood prone areas undeveloped and designating habitat for important species as environmentally sensitive areas, which complements the project lands.



## **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Apalachicola River project are: to conserve the rich bluffs and ravines along the upper Apalachicola River, unique in North America, that provide critical habitat for many rare plants and animals; to conserve and restore these important ecosystems and their plant and animal resources through purchase because regulation cannot adequately protect them; to provide areas for natural-resource-based recreation; and to preserve several significant archaeological sites. The project should be managed under the single-use concept, with management activities being directed toward the preservation of steephead streams, hardwood forests, glades, and archaeological sites, the removal of pine plantations, and restoration of natural pine forests. The project, when completed, will include most of the bluffs and ravines in private ownership and will link a Nature Conservancy preserve with Torreya State Park. It has the appropriate size and location to achieve the management goals.

## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The unique and sensitive forests, glades, and streams on the east side of the Apalachicola River qualify these lands as state forests, parks, and preserves. The Atkins tract on the west side of the river has the size and wildlife resources to qualify as a wildlife management area.

### ***Manager***

The DRP will manage the fee-simple lands east of the river between Sweetwater Creek and the old Gadsden Glades area. The FFS, however, will manage the Sweetwater Creek tract for the first ten years after the state acquires it. The DRP will manage the Skyland Ranch site added in 2017 as part of Torreya State Park.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The portions of the project near the Torreya State Park and east of the river will be high-need management areas with emphasis on public recreational use and development compatible with resource protection and management. During an initial 10-year period in which the FFS will restore natural pine forests on the Sweetwater Creek tract, the site will be a low-need management area.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, management activities will concentrate on site security, natural and cultural resource protection, and efforts toward the development of a plan for long-term public use and resource management.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue is expected to be generated in the first several years, nor any significant facilities developed initially after the lands are placed under management of the DRP. The degree of future revenue generated will depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

No local governments or other non-state agencies are recommended for management of this project area.



Apalachicola River Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1991
Project Area (GIS acres)	56,020
Acres Acquired (GIS)	8,127*
at a Cost of	\$10,120,682*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	47,893

\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the NFWFMD.

Apalachicola River Table 2

Apalachicola River FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Torreya	G1/S1
Gulf Sturgeon	G3T2T3/S2?
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Gholson's blazing star	G1/S1
Southern Elktoe	G1/S1
Torreya Pygmy Grasshopper	G1/S1
Apalachicola rosemary	G1/S1
Brother Spike	G1G2/S1
Apalachicola wild indigo	G2/S1
fringed campion	G2/S1

There are 85 rare species associated with the project.

Apalachicola River Table 3a

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$105,910	\$105,910
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$30,000	\$30,000
OCO	\$168,000	\$13,000
FCO	\$0	\$0
Total	\$303,910	\$148,910



Apalachicola River Table 3b

<b>Management Cost Summary: DRP Sweetwater</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>	<b>CARL</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$83,306</b>	<b>\$72,319</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$24,960</b>	<b>\$44,720</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$16,800</b>	<b>\$49,730</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$101,252</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$226,318</b>	<b>\$167,769</b>

Apalachicola River Table 3c

<b>Management Cost Summary: DRP North</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>	<b>CARL</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$72,319</b>	<b>\$72,319</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$44,720</b>	<b>\$44,720</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$49,730</b>	<b>\$49,730</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$81,527</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$248,296</b>	<b>\$167,769</b>

[Map\(s\): Apalachicola River](#)



## ***Arbuckle Creek Watershed***

Highlands County

Less-than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2014
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	11,979
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	6,130
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	5,849

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring the Arbuckle Creek Watershed would preserve agricultural lands under threat of conversion to residential use by using a less-than-fee acquisition and provide resource protection for Lake Istokpoga and the Greater Everglades Ecosystem. Arbuckle Creek is a major tributary into Lake Istokpoga, which is part of the watershed of the Greater Everglades Ecosystem. The proposed Arbuckle Creek Florida Forever project consists of multiple large tracts of land that are mostly complete and contiguous, border Arbuckle Creek and act as a wildlife and eco-corridor. Also, of significance is that the properties are either contiguous to or near the southwestern boundary of Avon Park Air Force Range. Combined, they create an open space protection buffer to the military base.

### **Manager(s)**

As a conservation easement acquisition, primary management would be the responsibility of the landowner, with oversight by the Division of State Lands. These owners are continuing to pursue what programs they can to establish easements across their lands, with assistance from The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Department of Defense (DOD) and other sources.

### **General Description**

The Arbuckle Creek Watershed is on the eastern edge of the ancient Lake Wales Ridge, and almost entirely in the Kissimmee Valley of the Eastern Flatwoods District. It is characterized by seasonally flooded lowlands and grassland prairies. The westernmost portion of the Rafter T Ranch and Long R Ranch fall into the Lake Wales Ridge of the Central Lake District, the topographic crest of central Florida, formed from relic dunes with deep sand deposits. An eastern arm of the Lake Wales Ridge juts out and terminates in the northeastern part of Arbuckle Creek Ranch.

The land in Arbuckle Creek Watershed is working cattle ranches and improved pasture, and small areas of ruderal or agricultural areas make up about 64 percent of the proposal. There are a few offices or homes, barns and equipment sheds associated with cattle operations, mainly on Rafter T and SY Hartt ranches. Arbuckle Creek Road (CR 700A) runs through SY Hartt Ranch and unimproved roads are present on all the properties. Most of the uplands, historically dominated by mesic, wet, and scrubby flatwoods, dry prairie, mesic and xeric hammock, and scrub, have been converted to improved pasture with relatively small remnants of intact natural uplands remaining (about 17 percent), the majority of



which occur on Rafter T and Long R Ranches. Wetland natural communities make up an additional 18 percent of the proposal and include baygall/hydric hammock, floodplain marsh, floodplain swamp and small, mostly disturbed, depression marshes and dome swamps. Species such as the gopher tortoise, the Florida scrub jay, the bald eagle and the Sherman's fox squirrel have been documented on this site.

### **Public Use**

Because this project would be perpetual conservation easements, opportunities for public access and outdoor recreation are highly unlikely, according to the application materials. Thus, a detailed assessment of the project's potential for public recreation has not been conducted. The properties are not adjacent to any units of the Florida State Park system. The project is not within a "land trail opportunity corridor" but is adjacent to the Arbuckle Creek Run "paddling trail opportunity corridor."

### **Acquisition Planning**

The project sponsor is The Nature Conservancy (TNC). On August 15, 2014, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) voted to allow this proposal to be evaluated. On December 12, 2014, ARC voted to add this project to the Florida Forever list as a Less-than-Fee project. At that time, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$4,133,966. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$2,501,611.

### **Coordination**

There are no specific acquisition partners at the time this project was added. However, the landowners and TNC are in contact with the Federal Department of Agriculture and may explore less-than-fee acquisition opportunities there and elsewhere. Some of the lands within the ranches are not included in the proposal boundary because conservation easements have been acquired on them already. Rafter T had one WRP easement and the second REPI easement in place at the time the project was approved. At the time of approval for Florida Forever, some of the Rafter T property and the SY Hartt property in this project boundary also had been awarded Tier 1 status in the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Rural and Family Lands Protection Program (RFLPP). In 2016 the acquired an easement on 3,229 acres of SY Hartt.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a proposal for conservation easement acquisition, primary management would be provided by the landowner, with oversight by the Division of State Lands. All the land within the proposal should be considered essential and seems best suited for the Less Than Fee category. Furthermore, all these owners are continuing to pursue what programs they can to establish easements across their lands, with assistance from TNC, the DOD and other programs as they become available for applications.

### **Management Prospectus**

The property would continue to be managed by the current owner, with periodic management oversight by the Division of State Lands to confirm compliance with agreed-upon easement conditions.



Arbuckle Creek Watershed Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2014
Project Area (GIS acres)	11,981
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	11,981

Arbuckle Creek Watershed Table 2

Arbuckle Creek Watershed FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
highlands goldenaster	G2/S2
short-leaved rosemary	G2Q/S2
Sand Skink	G2/S2
cutthroatgrass	G3/S3
Florida jointweed	G3/S3
Wood Stork	G4/S2
Florida Burrowing Owl	G4T3/S3
Sherman's Fox Squirrel	G5T3/S3

*There are 20 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Arbuckle Creek Watershed](#)



## **Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge**

Brevard and Indian River Counties

Climate Change Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1991
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	895
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	677
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$35,650,365
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	219

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Although sea turtle nesting occurs from the southern tip of Texas to the southern coast of Virginia, this 20-mile stretch of beach in Brevard and Indian River Counties is the second most significant nesting area for Loggerhead sea turtles in the world, one of the most significant nesting areas for Green Turtles in the western hemisphere, and an occasional nesting area for the Leatherback, the largest and rarest sea turtle. For thousands of years, these sea turtles have returned each year to these beaches to lay their eggs and continue the species. The Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge project is designed to help protect the habitat and assure the continued survival of these endangered sea turtles.

### **Manager(s)**

The Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (USFWS) and Brevard and Indian River Counties will be the cooperating managers.

### **General Description**

This project will consolidate several small public ownerships and substantially add to them, protecting almost 10 miles of undeveloped Atlantic Coast shoreline. Natural communities are in good condition and include beach, coastal strand, and maritime hammock, but the primary significance of this tract is its value as sea turtle nesting habitat. Stretches of quiet, undisturbed sandy beaches, with little or no artificial light, are essential to the reproductive success and survival of sea turtles. The project harbors several other rare plant and animal species and is of importance to unique offshore reefs (sabellariid “worm” and hard coral) that have been proposed for listing as the focus of a Florida Coral Grounds National Marine Sanctuary. At least 30 archaeological sites (primarily shell middens) are located near or within the refuge. It is threatened by intense development pressure, both commercial and residential.

### **Public Use**

The project is designated as a recreation area and a wildlife and environmental area. The designation will allow such uses as photography, swimming, fishing and nature appreciation.





### **Acquisition Planning**

Appraisals on the remaining essential or core parcels are being reviewed. Phase I: 500 feet or more of contiguous beach frontage adjacent to publicly owned lands; Phase II: 500 feet or more of contiguous beach frontage in a single ownership or under the contract of a single agent; Phase III: less than 500 feet of beach frontage adjacent to publicly owned lands. The project excludes developed and undeveloped parcels situated between developed parcels. Acquisition efforts are ongoing. The LAMAC approved the addition of 112 acres to the project boundary on 3/10/1995 and directed that a \$10 million cap per year be set on acquisition expenditures within the project. The acres acquired include a 1.34-acre exchange with the County and Windsor Properties. On April 6, 2001, the Council transferred this project to the Full Fee group from the Negotiated Impasse group.

On January 25, 2001, the Acquisition and Restoration Council added 5 acres to the project.

In January 2009, the state was part of a multi-part exchange that resulted in 1.34 acres inside the project boundary of ACSTR going to Windsor Properties. \$245,000 was originally paid for this parcel.

On August 13, 2010 ARC decided to reduce the project boundary by 233 acres (a \$288,812,490 just value reduction) because of infrastructure and commercial buildings.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project into the Florida Forever category of Climate Change Lands projects.

In calendar year 2017, a total of 2.6 acres closed in this project were acquired using Florida Forever program funding.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$59,689,862.

### **Coordination**

This project was developed in conjunction with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. In 2000, the federal government approved \$2 million for the acquisition of parcels within Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge. Indian River County is an acquisition partner on several tracts within the Indian River County portion of the project. The Richard King Mellon Foundation has made a substantial contribution to the overall protection and acquisition of the project area, having acquired several tracts within the project boundary.

In 1994, individuals representing 11 government agencies, conservation groups, non-profit organizations and the local community formed the Archie Carr Working Group to enhance coordination, cooperation, and communication among the diverse interest groups involved in the protection of the refuge and barrier island ecosystem. This group is still active as of 2016.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge project are: to conserve scarce, undeveloped Atlantic Coast shoreline that is globally important nesting habitat for threatened and endangered sea turtles; to conserve this important ecosystem and its wildlife resources through purchase



because regulation cannot adequately protect them; and to provide areas for natural-resource-based recreation.

## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge is recognized as the most important sea turtle nesting site in the United States and qualifies as a wildlife and environmental area.

### ***Manager***

The USFWS will manage most of the project as a National Wildlife Refuge. Primary management partners include the State of Florida DEP, Brevard County, and Indian River County. The portion of the project immediately north of the Sebastian Inlet State Recreation Area and west of the highway will be added to the state recreation area.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The project includes low-need, moderate-need and high-need tracts as defined by 259.032 (11)(c) F.S. About 30 percent of the lands are low-need, 50 percent are moderate need and 20 percent are high-need properties.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, activities will concentrate on site security, providing public access, inventorying resources and removing trash. A management plan will be formulated. Brevard County plans to develop an innovative environmental education program for the area. Long-range plans for the properties, beginning one year after acquisition, will be directed toward protecting the nesting beach, restoring disturbed areas, inventorying resources, and perpetuating natural communities and listed species. To the greatest extent practical, parking lots and dune crossovers will be confined to already disturbed sites.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Collecting parking or access fees is the only means of generating revenue from the tracts to be managed by the USFWS and by local governments. The Florida DRP expects no significant revenue to be initially generated from the tracts to be added to the state recreation area.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The USFWS will collaborate in management with local governments. Non-profit organizations with active management and education interests include The Nature Conservancy, The Trust for Public Land, Caribbean Conservation Corporation, Center for Marine Conservation and local non-profits and land trusts. A Brevard County volunteer warden program has been proposed to involve the local community in conservation, management and educational programs.



Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1991
Project Area (GIS acres)	895
Acres Acquired (GIS)	677
at a Cost of	\$35,650,365
Acres Remaining (GIS)	219

Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge Table 2

Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge FNAI Elements	Score
Leatherback	G2/S2
Green Turtle	G3/S2S3
Loggerhead	G3/S3
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Mouse	G3/S3
Atlantic Coast Florida lantana	G2T1/S1
coastal hoary-pea	G1T1/S1
Southeastern Beach Mouse	G5T1/S1
Simpson's prickly apple	G2/S2
coastal vervain	G3/S3

*There are 11 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge](#)



## ***Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem***

Martin County

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1995
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	14,319
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	6,126
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$38,215,961
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	8,193

*Note: 1,532 acres were removed February 19, 2010 due to residential/commercial/infrastructure development.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Cities spreading north from Miami and Fort Lauderdale have all but eliminated natural areas, such as coastal scrub, near the southeast Florida coast. The Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem project will protect one of the largest patches of natural land left on this coast by conserving important scrub, pine flatwoods, marshes, and South Fork’s floodplain on the St. Lucie River. Protection will also be provided for the quality of water in the St. Lucie and Loxahatchee River basins and the public will have the opportunity to enjoy the original landscape of this fast-growing area.

### **Manager(s)**

Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

### **General Description**

Mesic to Wet Flatwoods, which cover almost half (43 percent) of the project, extend from the floodplain forest along the South Fork St. Lucie River east to two ridges. One of the largest remaining islands of Atlantic Coastal Ridge scrub occupies these ridges. Most of the rare plants and animals known from the project inhabit the scrub, including the extremely rare and federally listed perforate reindeer lichen, and the Florida scrub jay. The area includes the headwaters of the South Fork St. Lucie River, which is part of the drainage basin of the Loxahatchee River, an Outstanding Florida Water, and is important for water supply to coastal Martin County. No archaeological sites are known from the project. The scrub and its resources are being lost to development.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated as a state park with uses such as picnicking, hiking, fishing and canoeing.

### **Acquisition Planning**

This project consists of 28 ownerships; five relatively large ownerships. Essential parcels are those on the eastern project boundary including Davis, Shaw, and Commercial Bank Medalist (acquired under contract by SFWMD). Mobil-Seawind (acquired) is also an essential tract.

On February 14, 1995, the Governor and Cabinet directed the LAMAC to hold a public workshop with Martin County, South Florida Water Management District, Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, interested environmental and economic development organizations, private landowners, and interested



citizens to establish a workplan for this project. Further, the Governor and Cabinet directed that the “CARL committee report to the Cabinet with their determination prior to any purchases on that particular tract of land”. Public meetings were held on June 12, 1995, and October 5, 1995. Because of the public meetings, the LAMAC deleted about 480 acres from the project boundary. The tracts had been recently developed.

On July 16, 1996, LAMAC added 41 acres to the project boundary and about 2,118 acres were marked as the minimum acceptable acquisition boundary for the Mobil (Seawind) ownership within the project boundary. After the most recent boundary change in 1996, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$61,172,512.

On October 15, 1998, LAMAC designated the Phase II corridor to Jonathan Dickinson State Park as essential.

On October 21, 1999, the Council added 598 acres to the project boundary as essential parcels.

On August 22, 2000 the Acquisition and Restoration Council added 1,920 acres to the project.

On February 11, 2005 the Council approved adding 304 acres in 16 parcels (Kitching Creek Addition) to the boundaries of the project.

On December 8, 2006, ARC approved moving the project from Group B to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) Priority list.

On February 19, 2010, ARC approved removing 1,532 acres, disturbed by development and no longer desirable for state acquisition (just tax value of \$489,091,150), from the project boundary

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever project.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$77,196,453.

### **Coordination**

The South Florida Water Management District is an acquisition partner.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The goals of management of the Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem project are: 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 this state or a larger geographic area; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; and to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation.



## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

This project has the size and quality of resource desired for management under the state park system.

### ***Manager***

The Division of Recreation and Parks.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem is a high-need management area requiring intensive resource management and protection. Depending on the nature and extent of public use determined by the management plan process, there might be additional needs for management of public use activities and facilities.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

After acquisition, management activities will concentrate on site security, natural resource protection, and efforts to develop a plan for long-term public use and resource management consistent with the stated goals and objectives of the approved Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem Project Assessment.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. After the initial acquisition, it will probably be several years before any significant public-use facilities are developed. The degree of any future revenue generated would depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities. Revenue generated by the nearby Jonathan Dickinson State Park for Fiscal Year 1993-1994 was \$364,711.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

No local governments or others are recommended for management of this project.



Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1995
Project Area (GIS acres)	14,319
Acres Acquired (GIS)	6,126
at a Cost of	\$38,215,961
Acres Remaining (GIS)	8,193

Note: 1,532 acres were removed February 19, 2010 due to residential/commercial/infrastructure development.

Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem Table 2

Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
perforate reindeer lichen	G1/S1
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Piedmont jointgrass	G3/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3

There are 6 rare species associated with the project.

Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem Table 3

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$52,994	\$52,994
OPS	\$8,000	\$8,000
Expense	\$26,307	\$26,307
OCO	\$129,212	\$129,212
FCO	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$216,132</b>	<b>\$88,301</b>

[Map\(s\): Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem](#)



## ***Ayavalla Plantation***

Leon County

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2008
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	5,903
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>At a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	5,903

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring a less-than-fee conservation easement over the Ayavalla Plantation property in northern Leon County meets state goals of enhancing coordination of land acquisition policies efforts by making a conservation link among properties. This project will connect the Ochlockonee River Conservation Area to properties near Lake Jackson. Using a conservation easement for this project also meets state conservation goals of finding alternatives to fee-simple purchases. The property also meets Florida Forever goals of increasing protection of Florida’s biodiversity of species, landscapes, and natural communities by preserving a large area of natural habitat. Another major state conservation goal of the state conservation policies is to ensure that Florida has enough quantities of fresh water, and as such the Ayavalla Plantation conservation easement will protect a large array of ponds, lakes, and wetlands.

### **Manager(s)**

The Office of Environmental Services within the Division of State Lands will periodically monitor the conservation easement over the property while the primary management will be by the private property owner.

### **General Description**

Ayavalla Plantation is 6,081 acres in northern Leon County, bordering the Ochlockonee River and stretching from Old Bainbridge Road eastward to the northern edge of Lake Jackson. It has a large number of parcels, all under the ownership of the Phipps family. As part of the planned less-than-fee acquisition, the Phipps family will retain 15 small-acreage tracts spaced throughout the project area that may be used as home sites.

The project includes more than five and one-half miles of river frontage. The eastern-southeastern boundary is partly defined by Meridian Road (County Road 155) and part of the western boundary fronts on Old Bainbridge Road (County Road 157). The project is also adjacent to land managed by Leon County as a local park.

The Ayavalla Plantation landscape is part of the Red Hills Physiographic Province, characterized by rolling terrain clay soils that rest upon limestone. The wetlands on the property include a variety of freshwater lake and riparian systems. Elevations range from approximately





90 to 200 feet above mean sea level, being generally lower near the river. The principal native landcover was once upland pine forest but has been heavily disturbed by centuries-long agriculture and timber production, food plots, and clearing, with substantial disturbance to native groundcover (now mostly weedy species). However, a pine component is once again prominent, albeit one that is more characteristic of successional old fields, including shortleaf, loblolly, and slash pines rather than the original longleaf pine. Roughly one-third of these pinelands are now in intensive silviculture. The remainder more closely resembles upland pine forest at a structural level although its floral components have been altered to such an extent that it is not considered by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) as a native upland pine forest community. These pine-dominated uplands are selectively timbered pine plantation on former agricultural fields. Approximately fifteen percent of the property is classified as a “Strategic Habitat Conservation Area”; primarily for wading birds. The river corridor segment of the property may provide habitat for larger, more far roaming listed species such as the Florida black bear. Other rare and imperiled species that are likely to occur on the upland habitat within this project includes the Sherman’s fox squirrel, gopher frog, pine barrens treefrog, and the Florida pine snake, which are all Species of Special Concern, as well as the gopher tortoise and gopher frog that are listed as Threatened. Since gopher tortoise burrows are on the site, there is some potential for restoration and establishment of gopher tortoise habitat.

### **Public Use**

Because the property would remain in private hands but under a conservation easement, opportunities for public recreation would be limited to what the landowner would allow. As a less-than-fee property, this could not be a state park or state forest or other state use, however there are possibilities of a walking or biking trail along the edges of the property. The site could possibly be used for scientific studies and educational tours, and special opportunity hunts for disabled individuals or military veterans. These uses are conditional on whatever the conservation easement would allow.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 13, 2008, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Ayavalla Plantation to the Florida Forever project list as a less-than-fee project. In 2008, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$23,675,453.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project into the Florida Forever category of Less-than-Fee projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$17,546,210.

### **Coordination**

Leon County is supportive of the goals of the acquisition but is not a partner in the acquisition at this time.



**Management Policy Statement**

As a less-than-fee acquisition, the Ayavalla Plantation will continue to be managed by the private landowner, but in accordance with the conservation easement terms. The purchase of the development rights, prohibition of converting more natural areas to intensive uses and the management of the property for habitat will likely be the primary focus of the elements of the conservation easement.

**Management Prospectus**

The Office of Environmental Services of the Division of State Lands is designated to ensure oversight of the conservation easement on this project.



Ayavalla Plantation Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>5,903</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>At a Cost of</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>5,903</b>

Ayavalla Plantation Table 2

<b>Ayavalla Plantation FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Sculptured Pigtoe</b>	<b>G3/S2S3</b>
<b>Round-tailed Muskrat</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Suwannee Cooter</b>	<b>G5T3/S3</b>
<b>Alligator Snapping Turtle</b>	<b>G3G4/S3</b>
<b>Southeastern Weasel</b>	<b>G5T4/S3?</b>
<b>Southeastern Fox Squirrel</b>	<b>G5T5/S3</b>
<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>

*There are 9 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Ayavalla Plantation](#)



## ***Baldwin Bay / St. Marys River***

Duval and Nassau Counties

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2002
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	9,129
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	734
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	8,395

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The 9,129 acres of the Baldwin Bay/St. Marys River project would preserve relatively intact forests and flatwoods of older growth trees. This project would also assist in the development of an ecological connector between Cary State Forest and Jennings State Forest and provide a corridor from the Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve Florida Forever project to the St. Marys River. The proposal will connect to the Jacksonville-Baldwin Rail Trail and will increase the recreational opportunities for all trail users. The Jacksonville-Baldwin Rail Trail connection occurs in an area where the City of Jacksonville is developing its primary equestrian facility access point.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Forest Service/FFS proposes to manage the project with a multiple-use management regime consistent with the state forest system. Management would be designed to accomplish the goals and measures for this project.

### **General Description**

The Baldwin Bay/St. Marys River project is in Nassau and Duval counties and is approximately 9,129 acres in size. The multiple owners are offering the project as fee simple. The proposal is characterized by its bottomland forests and wet flatwoods that contain numerous older growth trees. These communities have high species diversity and should provide habitat for numerous rare plant and animal species. Portions of the property have been converted to pine plantation but several of these areas have intact ground cover. The project borders Cary State Forest and the Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve Florida Forever project.

### **Public Use**

If public access of and through these properties is acquired, the project has potential for a variety of forest related recreational activities. Access to the St. Marys River could allow activities such as canoeing, swimming, bird watching, environmental education, nature study and photography.

Due to the connectivity with the Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve Florida Forever project and Cary State Forest, this project contributes to governmental efforts to protect and restore the regional land and water resources.



The project, as proposed, has potential for diverse forms of resource-based recreation. For those areas that would be acquired in fee simple, the project can accommodate such activities as hiking, natural resource appreciation and education, picnicking, camping, bicycling and horseback riding. Depending on management emphasis, hunting is also supportable.

The general resource-based recreation potential for the project is considered low to moderate, depending on the extent of fee simple acquisition. Hunting potential is considered medium to high.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The Baldwin Bay/St. Marys River project was added to the 2003 Florida Forever project list at the December 5, 2002 meeting of the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) it had a 2002 estimated tax assessed value of \$3,587,753. The essential parcels are identified as the Baldwin Bay LLC, Brandy Branch LLC, International Paper, and International Paper Realty ownerships. The essential parcels should be mapped and before the other parcels, which are important, but not critical to the project as a whole. The parcels are being offered fee simple.

On December 8, 2006, ARC approved moving the project from Group B to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) Priority list.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project into the Florida Forever category of Partnerships and Regional Incentives projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$25,078,142.

### **Coordination**

Portions of this project may be acquired in partnership with Duval County. The St. Johns River Water Management District is also interested in acquisition of the project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary land management goal for the FFS is to restore, maintain and protect all native ecosystems in perpetuity; to integrate compatible human use; and to insure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. This ecosystem approach will guide the FFS's management activities on this project.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Based on a review of the Florida Forever Act, this project meets Florida Statute Goals and Measures for significant landscapes, for increasing natural-resource based recreation, and for restoring such natural functions as protection of the floodplain, surface waters, and functional wetland systems. This project also has a great prospect for sustainable forestry.



### ***Manager***

The FFS proposes to manage the project under a multiple use management regime consistent with the state forest system. Management would be designed to accomplish the goals and measures for this project.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

There are major restoration challenges that will need to be addressed if the Baldwin Bay/St. Marys River proposal is purchased. The hydrology of the entire site is affected by logging roads and ditches. The decreased hydroperiod has allowed exotic and upland species to encroach into wetlands, particularly in the areas around Baldwin Bay and in the wet flatwoods and dome swamps that are surrounded by pine plantations. To restore normal hydrology, ditches will need to be filled and plugged and roads closed and lowered to grade.

Much of this site (59 percent) has been converted to intensive silviculture. Recent clearcuts and slash piles mar the landscape. Intensive site prep activities such as roller chopping, and bedding have severely disturbed the ground vegetation and soils. Fire suppression has led to woody species encroachment and deep needle litter build-up in the understories of some of the pine plantations.

Invasive exotic plant and animals were documented on the Baldwin Bay/St. Marys River site, but if measures are taken soon, these invasives can be controlled with reasonable effort. Chinese tallow tree (*Sapium sebiferum*), Japanese climbing fern (*Lygodium japonicum*), and Cogon grass (*Imperata cylindrica*) were observed. There were also numerous signs of feral hogs digging within the site.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the project area is acquired and assigned to the FFS, public access will be provided for low intensity outdoor recreation activities. The FFS proposes to manage the site as a part of Cary State Forest, and the Jacksonville District personnel will carry out management activities and coordinate public access and use.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

As mentioned above, timber sales will be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue dependent upon a variety of factors. Due to the existing condition of the timber resource on the property, revenue generating potential of this project is expected to be low to medium.



Baldwin Bay/St. Marys River Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2002
Project Area (GIS acres)	9,129
Acres Acquired (GIS)	734
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	8,395

Baldwin Bay/St. Marys River Table 2

Baldwin Bay/St. Marys River FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
ciliate-leaf tickseed	G1G2/S1

*There is 2 rare species associated with the project.*

Baldwin Bay/St. Marys River Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	not available
Salary (X FTE)	\$231,839	not available
Expense	\$140,000	not available
OCO	\$354,600	not available
Total	\$726,439	not available

[Map\(s\): Baldwin Bay / St. Marys River](#)



## ***Battle of Wahoo Swamp***

Sumter County

Critical Historical Resources

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2002
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	853
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	853

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The Battle of Wahoo Swamp project is in Sumter County, and is approximately 854 acres. The project, if acquired, will preserve a Second Seminole War battle site as well as protect habitat for several rare plant species. This battlefield may represent the best-preserved site of its kind and would offer opportunities to increase public awareness of Florida history during the Second Seminole War (1835-1842). The battle that occurred here November 21, 1836 was in response to the 1835 ambush and annihilation by Seminole warriors of 100 men under the command of Major Francis Dade, now memorialized at the Dade Battlefield, which is about 10 miles from Wahoo Swamp.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) proposes to manage the property.

### **General Description**

The Battle of Wahoo Swamp site consists of 850 acres in eastern Sumter County, approximately four miles east of the Withlacoochee River and six miles west of I-75 and Bushnell. The northeast corner of the site that extends across County Road 48 lies only 0.2 mile from the extreme southwest corner of the Jumper Creek Tract of Withlacoochee State Forest. Dade Battlefield, a historical site managed by Florida DEP Division of Recreation and Parks, lies about five miles southeast of Wahoo Swamp. The natural communities on the Wahoo site largely include “islands” of hardwood hammock, or upland mixed forest, scattered throughout an extensive wetland matrix of freshwater marsh and cypress swamp. The project consists of a fee simple acquisition of the battlefield area and less-than-fee acquisition over the remainder of the project. The primary focus of the conservation easement will likely be acquiring development rights and prohibiting further conversion of existing natural areas to agricultural uses.

### **Public Use**

The property has diversity for limited quantities of resource-based recreational pursuits. The project’s most important resource is cultural as a Seminole war battle site. Primary emphasis should be placed on interpretation of the historic elements of this site to the public. Varied public recreational uses could include camping, picnicking, nature appreciation, hiking, and battle re-enactments. The project also provides opportunities for wildlife viewing and nature study.





### **Acquisition Planning**

The Battle of Wahoo Swamp project was added to the 2003 Florida Forever project list at the December 5, 2002 meeting of the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC). The essential parcel is identified as the Hamilton ownership. This is a single-owner project, with five parcels that total 832.5 acres. The fee-simple portion of the project should be mapped and appraised before proceeding with the less-than-fee portion of the project. In 2002, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$30,218. On December 10, 2010, ARC voted to move this project from the Critical Natural Lands category to a new category called, “Critical Historical Resources.”

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$2,744,165.

### **Coordination**

Sumter County Historical Society is considered an acquisition partner. No partnership funding sources were known at the time this project was added to the priority list.

### **Management Policy Statement**

Although proposed originally for its archaeological values, the Battle of Wahoo Swamp site also supports many rare plant and animal species and examples of intact natural communities. The rocky hardwood hammocks and surrounding wetlands on this proposal represent high quality examples of a landscape that has been heavily altered throughout central Florida by conversion to pasture and residential development. This site is one of the few remaining in Florida that support the suite of rare ferns and orchids associated with limestone outcrops and grottoes. Nearby similar sites have been drained and filled, mined for limerock, and invaded by exotic species.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Although the project evidences past uses, its present condition is good quality hardwood hammock, freshwater slough and marsh. The greater significance of the site is in the location of a battle between U.S. forces and Seminole Indians during the Second Seminole War. The battle was fought within the project and complements the history of two nearby state parks, Dade Battlefield Historic State Park and Fort Cooper Historic State Park. It is the complementary aspect of this property that makes the project desirable as a unit of the state park system. Management of the project as a unit of the state park system is based on acquiring fee title.

#### ***Manager***

DRP has been designated as manager of the property.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Management is generally expected to entail basic resource management, such as securing and protecting the property, while a management plan is completed. As the project is in a relatively natural state, there will not be a need for any high-level resource restoration as can be the case with many projects. Prudent control of public access will be needed to protect and preserve any historic elements of the site.



Management should provide for uses and recreational activities that are compatible with the protection of the rare and sensitive resources.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the project is acquired and assigned to the Division of Recreation and Parks, the acquired lands will be secured, and management planning implemented. There is no infrastructure on the site. Access for low intensity resource-based recreation will be initially accommodated and may include the installation of a starter kit at an appropriate time and location. At some future date, historic reenactment of the battle may be included in the interpretive element of the site.

***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. As public use is increased and interpretive programs, particularly reenactment programs, are implemented, revenue is expected to be generated. The degree of any future revenue generated would depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities placed on the land.

***Cooperators in management activities***

No local governments or others are recommended for management of this project. The Division of Recreation and Parks will cooperate with and seek the advice of other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate.



Battle of Wahoo Swamp Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2002
Project Area (GIS acres)	853
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	853

Battle of Wahoo Swamp Table 2

Battle of Wahoo Swamp FNAI Elements	Score
Craighead's nodding-caps	G1/S1
modest spleenwort	G1/S1
Rickett's nodding-caps	G1/S1
ruffled spleenwort	G1Q/S1
Florida spiny-pod	G2/S2
Curtiss' spleenwort	GNA/S1
Peters' bristle fern	G4G5/S1S2
comb polypody	G5?TNR/S2
plume polypody	G5/S2
Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake	G4/S3

*There are 10 rare species associated with the project.*

Battle of Wahoo Swamp Table 3

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL Trust Fund	not provided
Salary (1 FTE)	\$28,000	not provided
Expense	\$30,000	not provided
OCO	\$60,000	not provided
FCO	\$350,000	not provided
Total	\$468,000	not provided

[Map\(s\): Battle of Wahoo Swamp](#)



## ***Bear Creek Forest***

Bay, Calhoun and Gulf Counties  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2004
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	100,425
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	100,425

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Public acquisition of this project would help establish the Northwest Florida Ecological Greenway, a proposed system of natural areas forming a significant corridor connection between State, Federal and Non-Profit conservation lands in the central Florida Panhandle. A few of the benefits offered by this acquisition would be to increase the protection of Florida biodiversity at the species, natural community and landscape levels; protect, restore and maintain the quality and natural functions of Florida land, water and wetlands ecosystems; and ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural ecosystems and the public. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses a number of Florida Forever project sites.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Forest Service (FFS) of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS).

### **General Description**

The Bear Creek project consists of approximately 100,425 acres in Calhoun, Bay and Gulf Counties, Florida. This landscape consists of numerous pine plantations that are interspersed with disturbed wet prairies and forested wetlands including baygalls, dome swamps, basin swamps and floodplain swamps. The boundaries also contain upland forest types that are represented by sandhill, scrubby and mesic flatwoods. The Bear Creek Florida Forever project is 6 miles southeast of the Econfina Creek Water Management Area (Northwest Florida Water Management District), 6 miles north of Tyndall Air Force Base, and 2.3 miles southwest of the Middle Chipola River Florida Forever project. The Patton tract, a small 940-acre area recently acquired by the U.S. Forest Service, is adjacent to the project on its northwest side near SR 20.

### **Public Use**

Management and public use will be resource-based public recreation and educational opportunities. The managers will promote recreation and environmental education in the natural environment. Recreation (and administrative) development will be primarily located in disturbed areas. They will be the absolute minimum required to allow suitable public access, provide facilities for public use, and the administration and management of the property. FFS anticipates that interpretive and user services



recreation facilities will be developed and the use of low impact, rustic facilities will be stressed. High impact organized recreation areas are not planned due to possible adverse effects on the natural environment. The project is accessible from public highways and local public roads. It is also near a major urban area, Panama City, and large population base.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 4, 2004 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Bear Creek Forest project to Group B of the Florida Forever (FF) 2004 Interim Priority list. This fee-simple project, sponsored by the Florida Forest Service (FFS) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC), consisted of approximately 104,461 acres, with a single owner, the Great Western Timber Company.

The essential parcels were identified as the Great Western Timber Company ownership, a willing seller, interested in exploring possible options regarding less-than-fee purchases, fee purchases with deed restrictions or other management agreements as mutually beneficial. In 2004, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$15,041,536.

On January 27, 2005 ARC moved the project to Group A of the FF 2005 priority list. On June 3, 2005 ARC moved the project to Group B of the FF 2005 Interim priority list.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project into the Florida Forever category of Critical Natural Lands projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$91,197,349.

### **Coordination**

The FFS and TNC are acquisition partners.

### **Management Policy Statement**

Since principal purposes of the project include protection of biodiversity, and provision of resource-based public recreation and educational opportunities, programs would be oriented towards conserving and protecting wildlife species, and careful control of public uses.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The majority of the acreage of this project consists of planted mesic and wet flatwoods, sandhill, and scrubby flatwoods. The project primarily consists of slash and loblolly pine plantations, and it is estimated that at least 80 percent of the project area has been converted to planted pines. Some of the pine plantations have been bedded, but several areas still have native groundcover and understory species. With thinning, introduction of prescribed fire, and sustainable forestry management practices, the project could be quickly transformed from management for silviculture values to an area managed for ecological and recreational benefits. The project's size and diversity make it desirable for use and management as a state forest.



## ***Manager***

FFS

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Much of the project's flatwoods, hardwood forest and sandhill areas have been disturbed by silviculture operations and will require restoration efforts. Areas where timber species are off-site may require thinning or removing trees to help regenerate native ground covers and canopy.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the project area is acquired and assigned to the FFS, public access will be immediately provided for low intensity outdoor recreation activities such as hunting and fishing. The FFS proposes to manage the site as a State Forest and will carry out management activities and coordinate public access and use. The FFS will cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate. It should be noted that Florida Forever capital project expenditures are going to be needed on this parcel for prescribed fire, vegetative and hydrologic restoration, improved public access/use, and facilities, both public and administrative. It is anticipated that some of the existing roads and trails may be used as multi-use trails for hiking, horseback riding and biking. This management prospectus is not intended to be an application for capital project funding; however, as more information is gathered, and an analysis of the site is completed, the Florida Forest Service intends to apply for capital project funds.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Timber sales will be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in planted pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue dependent upon a variety of factors. Due to the existing condition and volume of the timber resources on the property, revenue generating potential of this property is expected to be moderate. Some revenues might be realized in the future from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities, if such projects could be economically developed.



Bear Creek Forest Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2004
Project Area (GIS acres)	100,425
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	100,425

Bear Creek Forest Table 2

Bear Creek Forest FNAI Elements	Score
Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander	G2/S1S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
dark-headed hatpins	G1/S1
pinewoods aster	G1/S1
Godfrey's butterwort	G2/S2
mock pennyroyal	G2G3/S2S3
giant water cowbane	G3/S3
Bachman's Sparrow	G3/S3
Alligator Snapping Turtle	G3G4/S3
primrose-flowered butterwort	G3G4/S3
Southeastern Weasel	G5T4/S3?

There are 14 rare species associated with the project.

Bear Creek Forest Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	not provided
Salary (9 FTE)	\$293,345	not provided
Expense	\$797,000	not provided
OCO	\$852,260	not provided
Total	\$1,942,605	not provided

[Map\(s\): Bear Creek Forest](#)



## ***Bear Hammock***

Marion County  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2008
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	4,680
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	4,680

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring the Bear Hammock project in southern Marion County would meet the state goals of enhanced coordination of land-acquisition efforts by making a conservation link that fills a gap among several other properties. One goal of state conservation is to preserve areas of at least 50,000 acres, and Bear Hammock provides a connector between Goethe State Forest and the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway, creating a continuity of more than 200,000 acres. Bear Hammock meets state goals of preserving habitat areas, because the project has an estimated 4,232 acres of rare species habitat. About 24 percent of the area is considered Strategic Habitat Conservation Area. Bear Hammock is known to be habitat for such species as wood stork, bald eagle, diamondback rattlesnake, and gopher tortoise. Finally, the property has a high potential to fill the Florida Forever goals of providing recreation by trails, horseback riding, camping, picnicking, and water access.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is recommended by staff as manager of the project, except for a separate piece that is an island in Lake Rousseau. That island would be managed as part of the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway, which is managed by the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT).

### **General Description**

Bear Hammock is located in the valley of the Withlacoochee River, near Dunnellon and Brooksville. About two-thirds of this 4,685-acre site is covered by pine plantations that were historically a mix of pine flatwoods and sandhill, or scrub, terrain. While slash pines have been planted in most areas, there are also native shrubs that include saw palmetto, dwarf live oak, shiny blueberry, gallberry and fetterbush. There are several natural lakes on the property, ranging from shallow ponds with abundant aquatic herbs to sandy-bottomed clear water lakes. At least one of these lakes is a sandhill upland lake with no associated swamp.

### **Public Use**

Bear Hammock has many potential resource-based recreational opportunities. It is within a few miles of Dunnellon, with excellent paved highway access, and is adjacent to the Cross Florida Greenway, and is adjacent to the South Goethe Addition Florida Forever project and Goethe State Forest. This land





contains seven lakes. Access to the lakes and rivers would provide canoeing, kayaking, sailing, fishing and possibly swimming. The highly scenic areas around the lakes could provide picnicking and wildlife viewing. The many roads within the property will provide off-road bicycling, hiking and horseback riding opportunities. The expansive trail system that can be supported by the property can also be connected with trails and recreational opportunities from other nearby public lands. The property has about 3½ miles of access from CR 40 and CR 363. This easy access could bolster the project as a full-service recreation area by providing camping, picnicking, extensive trails, nature study, environmental education and water access. Depending on management emphasis, hunting can also be supported.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 12, 2008, the Acquisition and Restoration Council added the Bear Hammock project to the Florida Forever acquisition list as a fee-simple project. In 2008, the project had an estimated tax value of \$32,576,529.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project into the Florida Forever category of Critical Natural Lands projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$16,694,576.

### **Coordination**

FWC is considered an acquisition partner for this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The objectives of acquiring Bear Hammock are to conserve and protect the significant Strategic Habitat Conservation Area that makes up almost a quarter of the project area, helping preserve species that are documented on this site, including the wood stork, the bald eagle, the diamondback rattlesnake, and the gopher tortoise. Another major goal is to provide recreation for the public on trails, with horseback riding, with camping and picnicking, and by access to water. The FWC management prospectus also says that hunting is possible depending on management plans.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Bear Hammock will increase the connectivity within the conservation landscape extending from north central peninsular Florida to the Gulf Coast, from the Ocala National Forest westward along the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway State Recreation and Conservation Area to Goethe State Forest, to the NATC Gulf Hammock Conservation Easement (Suwannee River Water Management District), the Cedar Key Scrub Preserve State Park, and to other conservation lands extending to Big Bend Wildlife Management Area. If acquired, Bear Hammock would provide considerable restoration and expansion of existing habitat for imperiled species and would advance the goals of species and habitat recovery plans.



### ***Manager***

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has been chosen as the manager for this project.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Major portions include lands that are natural areas, requiring resource management methods such as prescribed fire where appropriate. Additional methods may be necessary for some management units to restore a desired future condition. FWC would conduct historic vegetation analysis to determine appropriate desired future conditions, objectives, and restoration methods. This is especially important for conservation of habitats and populations of imperiled or rare species.

Among methods for perpetuation of less disturbed natural communities are those to control human uses, ecological restoration, exotic species removal, prescribed burning, and other important methods for management and protection of resources. Any suburban development around Bear Hammock could affect certain management actions and uses such as the ability to conduct prescribed burning.

Biotic surveys would be important to accomplish during the early part of plan development and implementation because imperiled or rare species are expected to occur on Bear Hammock. Developing facilities, as on all wildlife and environmental areas and wildlife management areas, would be kept to the minimum level necessary to assure protection of the resources and compatible recreational experiences. Any such development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after acquisition, emphasis would be placed on site security, posting boundaries, public access, fire management, resource inventory, and removal of refuse. A management plan would be developed by FWC stating management goals and objectives necessary to implement future resource management, taking into consideration existing conditions and approaches necessary to achieve desired future conditions. The management plan will also establish future roles of cooperating entities including governmental agencies and other stakeholders. Long-range goals would emphasize ecosystem management and the conservation of fish and wildlife.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

The revenue generating potential of Bear Hammock is not known and will depend upon future uses to be approved in the management plan. However, revenue from such environmental lands might include forest products production, sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area permits, and other special hunting permits and user fees.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

FWC should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies including the Florida Forest Service, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the St. Johns River Water Management District in management of the property.



Bear Hammock Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2008
Project Area (GIS acres)	4,680
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	4,680

Bear Hammock Table 2

FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake	G4/S3

There are 2 rare species associated with the project.

Bear Hammock Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds		
Resource Management	\$102,745	\$88,629
Administration	82,345	\$33,072
Support	\$149,080	\$31,566
Capital Improvements	\$217,898	\$88,179
Visitor Services/Recreation	\$41,300	\$17,000
Law Enforcement	\$3,251	\$3,251
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$596,619</b>	<b>\$261,697</b>

Figures include salary for 1 FTE.

[Map\(s\): Bear Hammock](#)



## **Belle Meade**

Collier County

Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1993
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	27,709
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	20,534*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$38,391,158
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	7,175

*\*Includes donations: 147 acres September 2007 (The Conservancy of Southwest Florida) and 650 acres (private group) October 2009.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The cypress swamps and old-growth slash pine flatwoods in the Belle Meade project, extending to the fast-developing suburbs of Naples, are important for such endangered wildlife as Florida panthers, red-cockaded woodpeckers, and Florida black bear. Belle Meade is also the watershed for Rookery Bay. The Belle Meade project will conserve the westernmost large natural area in southwest Florida, protect some of the southernmost populations of several rare animals, and help protect the quality of the subtropical estuary of Rookery Bay. It will also provide a large area for recreation in a natural environment to residents of, and visitors to, rapidly urbanizing southwest Florida.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Florida Forest Service (FFS).

### **General Description**

This project includes some of the most extensive examples of old-growth wet flatwoods (hydic pine flatwoods) in southwest Florida, and high quality, undisturbed subtropical dwarf cypress savanna communities. It has a plant community type endemic to southern Florida that is not within other projects. The hydrology of the hydic pine flatwoods and dwarf cypress communities within the project is relatively intact. The project will protect habitat for at least 20 FNAI-listed plants and animals, including the Florida panther, red-cockaded woodpecker, and Florida black bear. Three archaeological sites have been recorded within the project boundaries, and other sites may be present. The project is vulnerable to changes in the timing and amount of water flowing through it. Residential and commercial development spreading from Naples is the primary threat.

### **Public Use**

The project will provide a state forest with uses such as hiking, hunting and nature appreciation. Uses will be limited during the wet seasons.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 10, 1992, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) added the Belle Meade project to the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition, sponsored jointly by what was then the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and by the Conservancy, Inc.,



consisted of approximately 40,846 acres, 762 parcels, 504 landowners, and a 1991 taxable value of \$62,933,000.

On July 20, 1994, the LAAC deleted a ± 11,985-acre area of the project, at the request of DEP staff. The cut covers the area north of I-75 from the project. It also removes the Collier property and the property to the south adjacent to SR 951 from the project. The approximate taxable value of the deletion was \$18,465,769 based on the 1991 value. On December 7, 1994, the LAAC was presented with and approved the revised project boundary which reduced the total acreage of the current boundary from 23,500 to 17,800 acres. The revised boundary included two additions to the current project boundary, approximately 640 acres in the southwest corner and 160 acres in the southeast corner. Approximately 500 landowners remain in the revised boundary; close to 41 percent are owners of tracts 10 acres or less in size; 53 percent are owners of tracts greater than 100 acres. On July 14, 1995 the LAAC approved a fee-simple, 2,220-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the three landowners and consisted of 20 parcels. The acreage was included in the original project boundary, but later deleted during the redefinition of the project boundary by the Belle Meade Work Group appointed by the Council in 1994. The Work Group consisted of landowners, representatives of local government, the water management district, state agencies and others with local expertise. The boundary recommended by the Work Group included primarily willing sellers – approximately 500 ownerships.

On July 16, 1996, the LAAC approved a fee-simple, 1,240-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by eight landowners and consisted of 9 parcels. On October 30, 1996, LAAC approved a “Landowner Request Zone” (in effect, all tracts considered on July 16, 1996). The zone defined areas in which a landowner may request inclusion in the boundary in writing. Highest priority must be given to parcels within the LAAC approved December 1994 boundaries. On June 9, 2006, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) moved this project from Group B to Group A on the August 2006 Florida Forever priority list. On November 20, 2006, FNAI removed 490 acres from the project boundary in compliance with the November 15, 2000 request of private landowners Howard N. Galbut and Gary R. Edwards (Galbut property data provided by Dan Jones of Southern Mapping Technology November 15, 2006, and Edwards property data derived from the February 14, 2000 removal request letter and property appraiser digital boundaries).

In September 2007, The Conservancy of Southwest Florida donated 147 acres (value of \$2,310,000). On October 9, 2009, approximately 650 acres were donated by Estates at TwinEagles, LTD (no value listed). FFS agreed to manage all acres. In October 10, 2009, Estates at Twin Eagles, LTD donated 650 acres. FFS agreed to manage this.

On August 13, 2010 ARC approved a 348-acre (\$19,232,935 just value) reduction to the boundary because of commercial development and infrastructure. After the most recent boundary change in 2010, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$14,082,600.

In August 2011, Citigate Development donated 86.34 acres in Picayune Strand State Forest; a donation valued at \$274,785 that was to be managed by FFS.



On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project into the Florida Forever category of Critical Natural Lands.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$30,330,991.

### **Coordination**

Recent acquisition partners include The Conservancy of Southwest Florida.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Belle Meade project are to conserve and protect unaltered wet flatwoods and cypress swamps that provide significant habitat for many rare and endangered species of wildlife, including the Florida panther. Other goals are to conserve and restore these important ecosystems, their significant wildlife resources, and their critical hydrological connection to the Gulf Coast by fee-simple purchase because regulation cannot adequately protect them. The project will be managed under the multiple-use concept, with management activities directed toward protecting old-growth forests (using growing-season burns where necessary) and restoring natural surface water flows. The project, when completed, will link Collier-Seminole State Park and the future Picayune Strand State Forest and will approach the Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve; it will be large enough to achieve the primary management goals.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Belle Meade project has the forest resources (extensive areas of old-growth South Florida slash pine) and the location (twelve miles of common border with the Picayune Strand) to make it highly suitable for management as a state forest.

#### ***Manager***

The FFS is recommended as manager.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Portions of the project may require hydrological restoration, but these activities will probably be conducted by the water management district. No other known disturbances that will require extraordinary attention are known. The FFS expects its management efforts to be typical for a state forest.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

After the core area is acquired, the FFS will provide access for low intensity outdoor recreation. Initial activities include securing the site, providing public and fire management access, inventorying resources, and removing trash. The sites' natural resources and threatened and endangered plants and animals will be inventoried to develop a management plan. Long-range plans for this project are to restore disturbed areas to their original conditions, as far as possible, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. Some of the pinelands have been degraded by timbering and require restoration. An



all-season burning program will use, whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks to contain fires. Timber management will mostly involve improvement thinning and regeneration harvests. Plantations will be thinned and, where appropriate, reforested with species found in natural ecosystems. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age. Infrastructure will primarily be located in disturbed areas and will be the minimum required for management and public access. The Division will promote environmental education. Budget needs for interim management are covered under the Save Our Everglades/Golden Gate Project.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The FFS will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will provide a variable source of revenue, but the FFS expects the revenue-generating potential for this project to be low.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The FFS will cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate.



Belle Meade Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1993
Project Area (GIS acres)	27,709
Acres Acquired (GIS)	20,534*
at a Cost of	\$38,391,158
Acres Remaining (GIS)	7,175

\*Includes donations: 147 acres September 2007 (The Conservancy of Southwest Florida) and 650 acres (private group) October 2009.

Belle Meade Table 2

Belle Meade FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Panther	G5T1/S1
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	G3/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
narrow-leaved Carolina scalystem	G4T2/S2
fuzzy-wuzzy air-plant	G4/S1
ghost orchid	G2G4/S2
cowhorn orchid	G5?/S1
powdery catopsis	G5?/S1
tailed strap fern	G5/S1
hand fern	G4/S2
Bald Eagle	G5/S3

There are 13 rare species associated with the project.

Belle Meade Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$0	\$0
OPS	\$9,140	\$9,140
Expense	\$0	\$0
OCO	\$44,000	\$0
FCO	\$0	\$0
Total	\$53,140	\$9,140

[Map\(s\): Belle Meade](#)





## **Big Bend Swamp / Holopaw Ranch**

Osceola County

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2000
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	56,709
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	10,594
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$21,548,060
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	46,115

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Many kinds of wildlife live in the expanses of palmetto prairies, pine flatwoods, and cypress swamps in Osceola County. The Big Bend Swamp project will acquire certain rights from landowners to maintain a link of natural lands between the Bull Creek and Three Lakes Wildlife Management Areas, and help to ensure the survival of crested caracara, red-cockaded woodpeckers, sandhill cranes, and other wildlife that require these large natural areas. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses several Florida Forever project sites.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) would be lead manager, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Florida Forest Service (FFS) as a cooperating manager, and OES will monitor the conservation easements, unless otherwise noted. Osceola County will manage the Camp Lonesome Ranch property they acquired.

### **General Description**

The Big Bend Swamp project includes a diverse sample of the natural environments of central Florida. Natural communities on the project are in good condition because the uplands have been burned regularly. Mesic flatwoods and dry prairie cover 40 percent of the project. These communities are interrupted by Big Bend Swamp, which is a large cypress-dominated strand swamp, and smaller dome swamps, depression marshes, wet prairies, and hydric hammocks. Fire-suppressed scrub also occurs in patches. Disturbed areas, largely improved pasture or sod farms cover 18 percent of the project. No FNAI-listed plants are known from the project. But the Big Bend Swamp may be particularly important for up to 30 rare animal species that require large areas of flatwoods, prairie, and wetlands, such as red-cockaded woodpeckers, Florida sandhill cranes, Florida grasshopper sparrows, Sherman’s fox squirrels, swallow-tailed kites, and crested caracaras.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated as a wildlife management area, with uses such as hunting, hiking, and wildlife observation. Public use will depend on agreements with landowners.



### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 9, 1999, the Land Acquisition and Management Advisory Council (LAMAC) added the Big Bend Swamp/Holopaw Ranch project to the less-than-fee group of the CARL 2000 Priority list. This less-than-fee project, sponsored by Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI), consisted of approximately 56,710 acres with multiple owners. While primarily a less-than-fee acquisition, full fee will be considered in the subdivision.

The essential parcels were identified as Bronson, Partin, Ridgewood Ranch, Oberry, Gannarelli, Whaley, Lee Ranch, and Smith.

On April 25, 2002, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) approved a less-than-fee addition of 5,714 acres to the project boundary. The addition, sponsored by Holland & Knight Consulting, consisted of one owner, Birchwood Acres Limited Partnership.

In June 2007 Osceola County acquired, and will manage, the 342-acre Camp Lonesome Ranch property. In November 2007 Osceola County purchased an additional 2,100 acres that will be managed as part of the Camp Lonesome Ranch Conservation Area.

In April 2010, ARC voted to remove 7,722 acres from the boundary because they have already been developed with residential and commercial structures.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project into the Florida Forever category of Less-than-Fee projects.

On August 16, 2017 the Florida Cabinet, acting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (BOTITF) approved a 1,100-acre conservation easement on the Camp Lonesome tract of this project.

After the time of the most recent boundary change in 2010, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$25,661,908.

In calendar year 2017, a total of 1,109.68 acres closed in this project were acquired using Florida Forever program funding.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$231,092,132.

### **Coordination**

Osceola County is an acquisition partner in this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The Big Bend Swamp/Holopaw Ranch Lands project includes nearly 50,000 acres and is a mosaic of upland and wetland natural communities that serve as important integral portions of a large south-central Florida natural area. These communities include cypress strands, mesic flatwoods, dome swamp, wet prairie, scrub and baygall. Ownership and management of these communities is important to the protection of the natural system of the Kissimmee River Basin and will form important adjunct lands for a public lands complex already under management (or proposed for management) by FWC.



Additionally, this complex of natural communities serves as important habitat for such listed bird species as the Florida grasshopper sparrow, the Florida sandhill crane, red-cockaded woodpecker, crested caracara, American swallow-tailed kite, and is of special importance to the burrowing owl. Most of the characteristic vertebrates of the Kissimmee Basin require vast tracts of land to support viable populations. This project, though largely contemplated for less-than-fee purchase, consists of a variety of wetland and upland habitats that support a broad diversity of wildlife, both common and rare. Several islands of scrub provide habitat for such species as gopher tortoises and Florida scrub jays. The Big Bend Swamp / Holopaw Ranch proposal has the resource diversity to qualify as a wildlife management area, and portions of the project have the potential to provide the public with opportunities for activities such as hunting, hiking, and wildlife observation. The FWC is recommended as lead manager, with the FFS as a cooperating manager.

### **Management Prospectus**

Priority will be given to conservation and protection of native wildlife species' habitats, and especially to that of threatened and endangered species. Management actions on fee simple acquisitions will be designed to conserve, protect, and restore important ecosystems and plant communities. FWC will work with landowners on less-than-fee purchases to oversee conservation easement provisions negotiated for the Trustees' by the Division of State Lands and FWC. The lands within this project will provide a variety of multiple-use activities including hunting, fishing, camping, boating, hiking, horseback riding, environmental education, ecotourism, and other natural resource-based recreational activities. They also provide opportunity to generate revenues from timber management, cattle-grazing and public recreational uses.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The lands within this proposal are low-need tracts, requiring basic resource management, including the use of frequent prescribed fire. However, special precautions and frequent coordination will be necessary for any contemplated hydrological and plant community restoration projects, and for prescribed burning activities since ranchers and other landowners will continue to maintain a presence on many of these properties. Additionally, if negotiated provisions allow, some low-level public-use activities may be allowed on lands acquired under conservation easements.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year of management after acquisition, emphasis will be placed on securing and posting boundaries, assuring public access to the tract, surveying wildlife and plant communities, using prescribed fire, and establishing relationships with adjacent landowners. A management plan for the tract will be prepared, including forming an appropriate Management Advisory Group with stakeholders in the management of these lands. Long- range activities on the property will include securing and stabilizing roads for public access, developing hiking / horseback riding trails, and developing camping and nature interpretive programs that key on facilities being provided on the adjacent Three Lakes WMA. An all-season prescribed burning program will be established. Whenever possible, existing



roads, trails and firebreaks will be used to control both prescribed and natural fires. Infrastructure development will be kept to the minimum required to allow public access, provide facilities, and manage the property. Also, for the long term, FWC will try to maintain and establish rapport with landowners adjacent to the WMA; provide technical assistance and advice in order to assure the welfare of such ecosystem components as wetlands; and establish working relationships with local representatives of regulatory agencies such as Water Management Districts, counties, DEP, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. That would ensure solutions if conflicts arise.

Floral and faunal inventories will be continually updated by FWC biologists with observations and systematic surveys. Inventory data will be supplemented as available with data from other sources which may include, but not be limited to, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Recreation and Parks, FFS, Florida Natural Areas Inventory, The Nature Conservancy, Water Management Districts, or other private contractors.

Over the long-term, some previously-disturbed sites will be restored or managed to specifically benefit wildlife species that thrive in early successional plant communities. Selected sites may be planted with native or non-invasive agronomic plants to: (1) provide dove hunting opportunities; (2) provide high quality forage for quail, dove, deer, and wild turkey; and / or (3) to enhance wildlife viewing opportunities.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Much of the proposed area is current or former ranch lands and mesic flatwoods with scattered longleaf or slash pine. Some revenues might be generated on fee-simple portions of the acquisition by stocking cattle, or with timber management by means of a wildlife-oriented forest management plan developed with the assistance of the Division of Forestry. Also, fees could be established for touring the area to view the plant and animal communities through ecotourism programs being developed on the adjacent WMA. A \$25 wildlife management area stamp would be required to hunt on the portions of the area acquired in fee simple. For areas where only conservation easements are acquired, FWC will be bound by negotiations between landowners and the Division of State Lands. However, if negotiated provisions allow, there may be some opportunities on these lands for generating revenues from low-level hunting activities such as quota hunts, or special-opportunity hunts. Funding of requisite positions, OPS, expenses and OCO would come from the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) Trust Fund, and the State Game Trust Fund as needed. Since these lands are adjacent to an existing land complex being managed by FWC, initial staffing would be limited to one Biological Scientist III and one Fish and Wildlife Technician.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The FWC will cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies in managing the area but will seek special assistance from the FFS in managing forest resources and implementing prescribed burning programs.



Big Bend Swamp/Holopaw Ranch Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2000
Project Area (GIS acres)	56,709
Acres Acquired (GIS)	9,475
at a Cost of	\$21,548,060
Acres Remaining (GIS)	47,234

Big Bend Swamp/Holopaw Ranch Table 2

Big Bend Swamp/Holopaw Ranch FNAI Elements	Score
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	G3/S2
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Crested Caracara	G5/S2

There are 4 rare species associated with the project.

Big Bend Swamp/Holopaw Ranch Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	2000/01	2001/02
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salaries	\$72,311	\$74,480
OPS	\$5,500	\$5,500
Expense	\$32,424	\$32,424
OCO	\$72,500	\$0
FCO	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$182,735</b>	<b>\$112,404</b>

[Map\(s\): Big Bend Swamp / Holopaw Ranch](#)



## **Blue Head Ranch**

Highlands County  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2012
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	43,051
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	43,051

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring the lands and waters of the Blue Head Ranch project will extend conservation ownership and management in a region of the state with renowned, high quality natural, hydrological and wildlife resources.

The Blue Head Ranch project protects a large portion of the Fisheating Creek watershed and interlinked hydrological system, including additional creek frontage and important tributaries. Additionally, the project encompasses a wide range and diversity of natural resources within a matrix dominated by high quality natural communities, including large blocks of the endemic Dry Prairie and Mesic Flatwoods communities. The Blue Head Ranch project also serves to capture, store and slowly release (although the later attribute could be enhanced through some hydrological restoration) substantial volumes of water that ultimately make their way to the interconnected downstream ecosystems of Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades. As such, the state is now presented with the opportunity to protect additional high-quality lands that will provide continued water supplies, enhanced water quality, more natural seasonal storage and a wide variety of indispensable ecosystem services to the millions of residents of South Florida.

The project appears to meet at least portions of all three Florida Forever measures for water supply of the Florida Forever program. Those include the number of acres to provide retention and storage of surface water in naturally occurring storage areas, and the number of acres acquired of groundwater recharge areas.

### **Manager(s)**

The project could be acquired by less-than-fee means. If acquired in full fee, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) would be the designated manager. At the ARC meeting, there was discussion that the owners were willing to consider less-than-fee acquisition, and that there could be other alternatives to the entire site being managed by FWC.

### **General Description**

Blue Head Ranch is in the heart of the native, and endemic, Florida grassland country that stretches north and west of Lake Okeechobee. The entire Blue Head Ranch ownership lies within Highlands



County, Florida, straddling the northern and southern sides of S.R. 70. Only the 40,559 acres located south of S.R. 70, however, are proposed for acquisition by the Florida Forever program.

Blue Head Ranch is a working ranch with approximately 4,000 head of cattle and has a relatively small area of associated barns, equipment sheds, pens and several houses. According to the proposal a few additional, occupied and unoccupied, employee houses are scattered around the property. Pasture is interspersed among prairie, hammocks, and depressional wetlands throughout the property with the largest occurring in the southern quarter of the main block of the proposal. Fisheating Creek has been channelized for about 75 percent of its length through the property but retains a more natural flow at the southern end of the property. Other ditching, some substantial, is present throughout the ranch along roads and through wetlands. There are woods roads throughout most of the property and several regularly graded limerock roads.

There is one, very large, block of improved pasture along the southern boundary of the property that occupies at least six sections (three miles wide by two miles deep). This area was the site of the old Graham Dairy and was previously owned by the family of former Florida Governor and U.S. Senator Bob Graham. Although highly disturbed, the pasture areas often support abundant vertebrate wildlife, including several rare species. Facilities and other kinds of disturbances include the management complex consisting of several houses, barns, equipment sheds, pens and other facilities located near the northwestern corner of the project, just south of S.R. 70. Additionally, there are a few other employee houses scattered around the property, some occupied, some not.

### **Public Use**

Public use would depend on the property being acquired in full fee or, if the owner agrees to public access, then in a less-than-fee acquisition. The Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) reports the property could be used for hiking, geocaching, bird watching, and primitive camping if it were publicly accessible.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Much of this area was submitted as a proposal and approved as a project in 1986. However, the landowner requested its removal from the list in 1987 because he was not interested in selling the land. On August 17, 2012, the current project was presented to ARC by The Nature Conservancy and Realtor Dean Saunders representing the landowner. The proposal was approved by ARC as a Florida Forever project in the Critical Natural Lands category on December 14, 2012. It had an estimated tax assessed value of \$ \$5,559,153.

On June 19, 2015 ARC approved evaluation of a new project proposal for A.P. Ranch, 822 acres in Highlands County adjacent to the Blue Head Ranch Florida Forever project. At the October 16, 2015 ARC meeting this was project, with a 2015 tax assessed value of \$255,910, was approved by ARC. ARC added this acreage into the boundary of the adjacent Blue Head Ranch Florida Forever project. This proposal is three parcels south of Lake Placid, all bordering the Blue Head Ranch Florida Forever project, but hydrologically connected to the Fisheating Creek area. The land is a mix of improved





pasture that has been regularly burned (694 acres), scattered natural pines (467 acres) and wetland forests (448 acres). \$5,815,063. After the most recent boundary change in 2015, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$5,815,063.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$18,012,402.

### **Coordination**

This project would help establish a wildlife corridor between the Lake Wales Ridge and the South Florida Water Management District's Bright Hour Watershed Conservation Easement. There are no acquisition partners at this time.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of managing the Blue Head Ranch are to establish a landscape-size connection with adjacent conservation properties, to ensure the environmental and hydrological health of the Florida Everglades Ecosystem with minimal residential and commercial development and provide and enhance habitat of numerous rare species and imperiled communities.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Blue Head Ranch would conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, enhance or protect significant surface water and wildlife resources, and conserve, protect, manage or restore the Fisheating Creek and other area watersheds and the interconnected downstream systems of Lake Okeechobee and the Florida Everglades. The project would also conserve and protect significant landscape scale habitat and provide wildlife corridors.

#### ***Manager***

The FWC has submitted a management prospectus to manage the entire project area if it is acquired in full fee. If the property was acquired by less-than-fee (conservation easement), the Office of Environmental Services of the Division of State Lands, or its successor, would monitor the progress and condition of the property.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The intensity of the management of Blue Head Ranch would depend on the conditions of its acquisition or its monitoring. Much of the area has been used for cattle ranching. Much of the land is dry prairie that has been converted to improved pasture, with ditching, clearing, tilling, and reseeding with specific grass types.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

If acquired and leased to FWC for management, they will develop a management plan describing the management goals and objectives necessary to implement future resource management. The management plan will also establish the current and future roles of cooperating entities including governmental agencies, non-government organizations and other stakeholders.





### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Revenue from conservation lands such as Blue Head Ranch can include permits and recreational user fees and ecotourism activities, if such projects could be economically developed. Area regulations would be developed to identify the necessary and required permits, fees and regulations. Timber sales from thinning operations or restoration of off-site plantations may also yield additional revenue. Apiary leases will be considered as a revenue source depending on the area meeting the criteria of FWC's Apiary Policy. Additionally, cattle grazing leases may also be considered, contingent upon the suitability of the site within FWC's cattle grazing criteria.

The property within the Blue Head Ranch boundary that began as AP Ranch Florida Forever project is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition and would therefore generate no actual revenue for the state. Its acquisition would provide ecosystem value to the watershed of the region. The initial non-recurring (first year only) start-up costs for this project are estimated to be \$6,490,240 which includes public access and infrastructure and fixed capital outlays necessary for management. Following is an estimate of the annual operating costs to operate and manage Blue Head Ranch. Optimal management of the area would require eight (8) full-time equivalent (FTE) positions to optimally manage the area. Salary requirements for these FTE positions, as well as those of other needed FWC staff, and costs to operate and manage the area are reflected as follows: Year one and each year thereafter will include activities related to exotic species control, prescribed burning, cultural resource management, timber management, hydrological management, and other restoration and natural resource inventories at a 2012 estimated cost of \$1,550,356. Land management planning, training/staff development, vehicle operation and maintenance as well as other maintenance and data management activities will also take place in year one and each year thereafter, at a 2012 estimated cost of \$433,629. Capital improvement activities in the first year and each year thereafter will address facility maintenance, visitor services/recreation information/education and law enforcement/ resource protection, at a 2012 estimated cost of \$416,186. Vehicle purchases would be expected every 3 to 4 years, at a 2012 estimated cost of \$169,152. Costs related to land management reviews would be incurred every 5 years, at a 2012 estimated cost of \$8,113. All land management funding is dependent upon annual legislative appropriations.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

If Blue Head Ranch is acquired and leased to FWC for management, FWC will cooperate with other Federal, State and local governmental agencies including the USFWS, USDA, Florida Forest Service, DEP, SFWMD, and Highlands County, (deleted "and") among others, in management of the property.



Blue Head Ranch Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>43,051</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>43,051</b>

Blue Head Ranch Table 2

<b>Blue Head Ranch FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Florida Scrub-Jay</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Edison's ascyrum</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>Florida Sandhill Crane</b>	<b>G5T2/S2</b>
<b>Short-tailed Hawk</b>	<b>G4G5/S1</b>
<b>Bachman's Sparrow</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>cutthroatgrass</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Wood Stork</b>	<b>G4/S2</b>
<b>Crested Caracara</b>	<b>G5/S2</b>
<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>
<b>Snowy Egret</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>

*There are 13 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Blue Head Ranch](#)



## ***Bombing Range Ridge***

Polk, Highlands and Osceola Counties  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1998
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	46,294
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	14,431*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$24,431,085*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	31,862

*\*Including dollars spent and acres acquired by SFWMD, and Polk County.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Public acquisition of this project would conserve and protect significant habitat for native species and endangered and threatened species. Additionally, public acquisition would provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource based recreation. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses several Florida Forever project sites.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Forest Services (FFS) and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will manage all but some 540 acres in the north portion of the project. The 540 acres, lying adjacent to Rosalie Creek, will be managed by the Department of Environment Protection’s Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP).

### **General Description**

As originally proposed, the Bombing Range Ridge project, with flatwoods, marshes, swamps, hammocks, and part of a scrub ridge, would connect Avon Park Air Force Range, Lake Kissimmee State Park, and South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) land. It provides critical habitat for at least 20 rare animals, including red-cockaded woodpeckers, snail kites, Florida scrub jays, and grasshopper sparrows. Water resources adjacent to the project include the Kissimmee River, Lake Rosalie, Tiger Lake, Lake Walk-in-Water, and several creeks and marshes; the scrub ridge is a recharge area. The remains of Sumica, a 19th-century town, are in the project, and there are probably more archaeological and historical sites in the area.

### **Public Use**

The area can support a range of recreation from hiking and primitive camping to canoeing, fishing, and hunting.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The Bombing Range Ridge project was added to the Land Acquisition and Management Advisory Council’s (LAMAC) 1997 Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) Priority list at their December meeting. This fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) and the



FWC, consisted of approximately 39,073 acres, multiple owners, and a 1997 taxable value of \$15,238,510.

The project was divided into Priority I and Priority II areas. The essential parcels are Priority I, especially Wheeler, Avatar, Winter Haven Christian School, Lightsey, River Ranch Landowners Association members, Polk County, and the Patrick Nee ownerships.

On August 19, 1997, the Polk County Board of County Commissioners signed a resolution that gave high priority to this project and supported the acquisition through the CARL program.

In 1998, Polk County and the SFWMD acquired the Sumica tract (4,167 acres).

On May 17, 2001, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) approved a fee-simple 1,521-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the owner, Meredith Scott MD Trust, and had a 2000 taxable value of \$3,256,856.

On August 15, 2003, the ARC approved a less-than-fee 1,691-acre addition (Brahma Island tract) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by Saunders Realty, consisted of one owner, Cary & Layne Lightsey, and had a 2002 taxable value of \$176,180. The Office of Environmental Services (OES) will monitor the conservation easement. In April 2005, the Board of Trustees acquired the Brahma Island Tract (1,063.40 acres) through a conservation easement.

On October 13, 2006, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 3,189-acre addition (aka Goolsby Ranch) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the Nature Conservancy (TNC), had one landowner, the Goolsby family, and had a 2004 taxable value of \$415,291. If acquired, the site, in Highlands County, will be managed by the FFS. In view of the configuration of the Bombing Range Ridge project, this site is not essential to project completion or manageability. After the time of the most recent addition in 2006, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$13,179,693.

On August 15, 2011, the DSL purchased 2,674.61 acres from TNC (\$5,349,220) in the project. The DSL Office of Environmental Services will be responsible for monitoring compliance with the terms and conditions of the easement.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands category of Florida Forever.

On November 30, 2018, The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACs) closed on a 4,468.16-acre Easement owned by the Goolsby Ranch.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$31,045,282.

### **Coordination**

About 2 percent of the parcels within the project are either county owned or county tax certificates. The county has expressed interest in giving the land to the state and letting the state manage it, selling the parcels to the state, or exchanging the parcels with the state for other parcels outside the proposal. TNC is an intermediary on this project.



## **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Bombing Range Ridge project are: to conserve and protect critical habitat for rare, endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Bombing Range Ridge project is a vast area of quality flatwoods together with marshes, swamps, hammocks and scrub. The project contains valuable habitat for numerous listed bird species.

Approximately 400 acres of the northwest corner of the project is adjacent to the Lake Kissimmee State Park. The area is largely a wetland through which Rosalie Creek flows. Rosalie Creek is a drainage joining Lake Rosalie with Tiger Lake, and a portion of the creek is already a part of the park. Also, the project's size and diversity make it desirable for a state forest. Management by the FFS as a state forest depends on the state obtaining legal public access to the site and acquiring fee simple title to the core parcels.

### ***Manager***

FFS is recommended as lead manager, and DRP is recommended for the Oglesby and Beerman parcels in the northeast section of the project.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The project includes a "high-need" management area. Public use and recreation facility development would be done compatible with long-term resource protection.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Upon the fee title acquisition, the DRP proposes to provide public access for low intensity, non-facility related outdoor recreation activities. The FFS proposes to manage the site as a unit of the Lake Wales Ridge State Forest (LWRSF), and management activities will be done with district and LWRSF personnel. Initial or intermediate efforts of the FFS will concentrate on site security, public and fire management access, resource inventory, and removing trash. The public will have appropriate access while, simultaneously, sensitive resources will be affordably protected. Vehicle use by the public will be confined to designated roads and unnecessary access points will be closed. An inventory of the site's natural resources and threatened and endangered flora and fauna will be conducted to provide the basis for formulation of a management plan. Emphasis will be given to protection of Rosalie Creek and its surrounding ecological system. Resource management activities in the first year of each fee title acquisition will concentrate on site security, including posting boundaries and developing a resource inventory in conjunction with the development of a comprehensive management plan. Long-term



management of the 540 acres by DRP would include resource-based recreation and associated facilities compatible with the resources.

***Revenue-generating potential***

Timber sales will be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in upland pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue dependent upon a variety of factors. Revenue generating potential of this project is expected to be moderate.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The FFS and the DRP will cooperate with local governments, other state agencies, and the water management district to further resource management, recreational and educational opportunities, and the use of the lands for state park purposes.



Bombing Range Ridge Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1998
Project Area (GIS acres)	46,294
Acres Acquired (GIS)	14,431*
at a Cost of	\$24,431,085*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	31,862

\*Including dollars spent and acres acquired by SFWMD, and Polk County.

Bombing Range Ridge Table 2

Bombing Range Ridge FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	G3/S2
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Snail Kite	G4G5/S2
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Berry's Skipper	G2/S2
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Bachman's Sparrow	G3/S3
nodding pinweed	G3/S3
Florida Burrowing Owl	G4T3/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3

There are 12 rare species associated with the project.

Bombing Range Ridge Table 3a

Management Cost Summary (1998): DRP	Startup
Source of Funds	CARL
Salary	\$0
OPS	\$0
Expense	\$1,000
Total	\$1,000



Bombing Range Ridge Table 3b

<b>Management Cost Summary (1998): FFS</b>	<b>Startup</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$86,412</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$136,400</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$292,812</b>

[Map\(s\): Bombing Range Ridge](#)





## **Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem**

Brevard County

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1993*
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	41,140
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	20,079*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$86,085,773*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	21,061

*\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by Brevard County and the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD). The donation by TNC is valued at \$40,000. Note: 1,667 acres were removed from the project boundary per landowners' request in December 2009. 3,877 acres were removed in April 2010 due to residential/commercial infrastructure/development and one owner's request.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The strip of coastal scrub that once paralleled the Indian River in Brevard County is now a set of small fragments surrounded by housing developments. The Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem project will preserve a few of the best scrub fragments in the county, which will aid survival of the endangered scrub jay and provide areas where the public can appreciate and learn about this unique landscape.

### **Manager(s)**

Brevard County will manage the original six sites, and the Valkaria/Micco Expansion Site added in 2002. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will manage the six sites added in 1996, and the Ten Mile Ridge site added in 2002. The Florida Coastal Office (FCO, formerly CAMA, Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas) will manage one site added in 2001. The City of Titusville will manage the Falcon Woods portion added in 2008.

### **General Description**

The project includes twenty areas considered essential to the preservation of scrub, mesic and scrubby flatwoods, floodplain marsh and marsh lake along the Atlantic Coastal Ridge and St. John's River marshes. Acquisition and management of these core areas are imperative for the survival of the Florida scrub jay on the east coast of Florida. The tracts comprising this project also support several rare vertebrates and at least eight rare plant species, including a very rare mint. All of the tracts in the project are surrounded by development and several peripheral areas are already being destroyed. The rapid encroachment of housing developments is likely to completely eliminate any unprotected scrub and adjacent flatwoods communities of Brevard County in the very near future. No archaeological sites are known from the project.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated as a wildlife and environmental area with limited public use, including picnicking and environmental education.



## **Acquisition Planning**

On December 10, 1992, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) added the Scrub Jay Refugia project to the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition consisted of approximately 8,178 acres, several hundred parcels and landowners, and a taxable value of \$53,319,683. Brevard County sponsored the project that contained 5 sites:

- Tico ( $\pm$  2,421 acres, Grand Central a major owner, Brevard County has acquired 52 acres);
- Valkaria ( $\pm$  2,764 acres with multiple owners, County has acquired 155 acres);
- Rockledge ( $\pm$  2,591 acres, three major owners: Barge & Tabacchi, Duda, and Grand Central, the remainder is subdivided, County has acquired 141 acres);
- Condev (52 acres, two owners: Nelson and SR 405 Ltd);
- South Babcock (529 acres, multiple owners).

On July 23, 1993, the LAAC approved a fee-simple, 179-acre addition (Rockledge Scrub Sanctuary) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), consisted of 6 landowners (T. Barge & M. Tabacchi, L.R. Pierce Trust, N. Schopke & M. Tabacchi, TCM Investment, Inc., A.L. & M. Jacoboski, and Florida Power & Light Co.), and a taxable value of \$3,600,000.

On March 9, 1994, the LAAC approved a fee-simple, 1,322-acre addition (Micco Scrub) to the project boundary. The addition was sponsored by Brevard County, consisted of one landowner, Kentucky Central Life Ins. Co., at a taxable value of \$1,500,120. Brevard County acquired this site.

On July 14, 1995, the LAAC approved a fee-simple, 1,410-acre addition to the project boundary. The addition consisted of four sites:

- Dicerandra Scrub, 44 acres,
- Malabar Scrub Sanctuary, 395 acres,
- Canova Beach Scrub, 138 acres, and
- Jordan Blvd, 833 acres.

Brevard County sponsored this addition that consisted of multiple landowners, at a taxable value of \$13,283,659. The County has acquired the Malabar and the Dicerandra Scrub sites.

In 1996, the LAAC combined the Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem Initiative (CSEI) project with the Scrub Jay Refugia project bringing the new total acres to 27,745 with a TAV (Tax Assessed Value) of \$86,847,875, and on 12/5/1996 renamed it Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem. The CSEI consisted of 6 sites:

- Fox/South Lake Complex - 9,189 acres;
- Titusville Wellfield - 972 acres;
- Grissom Parkway - 2,962 acres;
- Wickham Road - 822 acres;
- Micco Expansion - 1,833 acres; and
- Ten Mile Ridge – 529 acres, totaling 16,307 acres with a TAV of \$40,780,060.



On December 3, 1998, the Land Acquisition Management Advisory Council (LAMAC) approved the transfer of the Valkaria, South Babcock, Ten Mile Ridge, and Grissom Parkway sites to the Mega-Multiparcel list. In 2001 this list was renamed Small Holdings.

On December 19, 2000, the ARC approved a fee-simple, ± 9,528-acre addition to the project boundary. The addition consisted of two sites:

- Malabar Expansion – 959.85 acres (Bargain/Shared) and
- Valkaria/Micco Expansion – 4,144.48 acres (Bargain/Shared) & 4,739.48 acres (Mega/Multiparcel).

Sponsored by the Brevard County EEL Program, it consisted of 2,250 landowners, at a taxable value of \$23,819,800.

The following sites were deleted from the project due to development/improvement, habitat fragmentation or isolation:

- Canova Beach - 152.34 acres; Condev – 52.52 acres; and
- Wickham Road Complex – 809.62 acres;
- & Rockledge (select properties) – 860 acres.

The total TAV for these sites was approximately \$35,952,477.

On May 17, 2001, the ARC approved a fee-simple, ± 3,529-acre addition to the project boundary. The addition, sponsored by the CAMA (now FCO), consisted of eleven landowners, and a taxable value of \$3,456,290.

On April 25, 2002, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 112-acre addition to the project. The addition, sponsored by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for Brevard County, consisted of two sites (10 Mile Ridge Expansion – 62 acres and Valkario/Micco Expansion – 50 acres), multiple landowners, and a taxable value of \$199,070.

On December 5, 2002, ARC moved this project to Group A of the 2003 Florida Forever Priority list.

On December 5, 2003, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 7,444-acre addition to the project boundary. The addition, sponsored by the Brevard County EEL Program, consisted of three landowners, Bernard Hersch – 112.25 acres; OLC, Inc/Campbell – 5,229.94 acres; and Babcock, LLC – 2,091.81 acres, and a taxable value of \$2,808,217.

On September 21, 2006, the DSL purchased 5.52 acres in the Valkaria section at a tax deed sale (Oxford Finance Co. / \$83,000).

In June 2007, Brevard County acquired 41 acres from Vero-Pittsburgh Partners LLC and added it to the boundary of the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary.

On June 13, 2008, ARC approved the 94-acre Falcon Woods Florida Forever project and incorporated it into the boundary of the existing Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem project. The Falcon Woods portion has a tax value of \$4,556,000 and is proposed for fee-simple acquisition. The site includes 7 parcels



under one ownership. The City of Titusville sponsored the project and will also act as manager for the site. Falcon Woods consists primarily of imperiled sand pine scrub habitat. The project is also known as Tortoise Ridge, a name chosen by Brevard County students for its Florida Communities Trust application. In September 2008, the Division of State Lands purchased 1.29 acres of the Hightower/Frasier ownership at Grissom Parkway for \$5,500. The FWC will manage this section. In October 2008, TNC donated 2.71 acres, valued at \$40,000, which will be managed by the Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands program.

At the landowners' requests, ARC on December 11, 2009 recommended that 1,667 acres be removed from the boundary--ownerships requesting:

- John S./John D. Copanos (20 ac.);
- John Copanos/Sebastian Resources 400, LP (902 ac.);
- Nick Dionisio/Brevard Landvest, LLC (745 ac.);

all located within the Malabar Expansion and Valkaria/Micco Expansion.

In April 2010, ARC voted to remove 3,694 acres due to residential/commercial infrastructure and development plus 183 acres at the request of Mr. Wilton Banack, landowner, for total of 3,877 acres removed. After the most recent boundary change in 2010, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$38,395,620.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project into the Florida Forever category of Partnerships and Regional Incentives projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$128,794,052.

### **Coordination**

Brevard County, an acquisition partner, committed \$10 million towards the acquisition of the project and \$2.6 million for site management. The Nature Conservancy is under contract to the county to provide assistance with acquisition of the county's projects.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem project are 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 this state or a larger geographic area; and to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Scrub on the Atlantic Coastal Ridge is one of the most endangered natural upland communities in North America. This unique scrub, with its many rare plants and animals, qualifies the Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem project as a wildlife and environmental area.



### ***Manager***

Brevard County proposes to manage the six original sites of the Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem. The FWC will manage the six sites added in 1996 and will manage the Ten Mile Ridge site added on April 25, 2002. The City of Titusville will manage the Falcon Woods portion added in 2008. On May 16, 2001, 3,529 acres were added that are to be managed by CAMA.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem Project includes low-need, moderate-need and high-need tracts. All sites are fire-maintained communities with an immediate need for fire management.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

The Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands Program is preparing a Conceptual Natural Areas Management Manual for all sanctuary sites. Once these sites are acquired, the EEL Program will work with local, state and federal agencies to develop a Comprehensive Management Plan for long-term management. Initial management activities in this project focus on site security, burn management, determination of status of listed species, location of a core area for resource protection, identification of passive recreation areas, and the development of innovative environmental education programs. A management plan will be developed and implemented about one year after the completion of this multi-parcel acquisition project, or, site-specific management plans will be developed as management units are acquired. The plan will detail how each of the FNAI special elements on each site will be protected and, when necessary, restored. Fire management will be a vital component of each plan. Long-range plans for this project, beginning approximately one year after acquisition is complete, will be directed towards biodiversity protection, exotic species removal, wetland restoration and enhancement, and the maintenance of links between upland, wetland and estuarine areas. Management will protect biological diversity and listed species. Specific areas will be fenced as needed. Property signs will have appropriate language to enable protection of the property. Unnecessary roads and other disturbances will be identified as areas for restoration. Firebreaks will be cleared where necessary. Infrastructure development will be confined to already disturbed areas and will be low-impact. An interagency partnership among the participating agencies provides opportunities for revenue sharing. The Brevard County EEL Program proposed to set aside 2.6 million dollars from their excess ad valorem revenues to begin a management endowment for the EEL Program sanctuary network. The EEL Program will work to increase funds for management consistent with or exceeding State management appropriations.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue sources are anticipated from this project at this time. Mitigation agreements with USFWS have generated some funds for management within the Valkaria Core area. Implementation and funding of the Scrub Conservation and Development Plan provide a potential source of management funds for these sites. Timber might be sold on some sites where habitat restoration requires thinning.



***Cooperators in management activities***

Brevard County will require support from the USFWS and other agencies (The Nature Conservancy, Division of Forestry, FWC, and others) to implement a quality management program for scrub communities. The EEL Selection Committee will aggressively seek matching funds for site management, development of environmental education programs, and for necessary research and monitoring.



Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1993*
Project Area (GIS acres)	41,261
Acres Acquired (GIS)	20,207*
at a Cost of	\$86,085,773*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	21,054

\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by Brevard County and the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD). The donation by TNC is valued at \$40,000. Note: 1,667 acres were removed from the project boundary per landowners' request in December 2009. 3,877 acres were removed in April 2010 due to residential/commercial infrastructure/development and one owner's request.

Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem Table 2

Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Titusville balm	G1Q/S1
celestial lily	G2/S2
pine pinweed	G2/S2
Tampa vervain	G2/S2
Horn's Aethecerinus Long-Horned Beetle	G2/S2
sand-dune spurge	G2/S2
giant orchid	G2G3/S2
hay scented fern	G4/S1

There are 19 rare species associated with the project.

Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem Table 3

Management Cost Summary: Brevard County, FWC, City of Titusville, & CAMA	1994/95	1995/96
Source of Funds	County	County
Salary	\$0	\$3,500
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$500	\$1,000
OCO	\$0	\$0
FCO	\$0	\$125,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$500</b>	<b>\$130,200</b>

[Map\(s\): Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem](#)





## ***Caber Coastal Connector***

Levy County

Climate Change Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2004
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	3,634
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	1,910
<i>At a Cost of</i>	\$2,500,000
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	1,723

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The public acquisition of this project would preserve a mosaic of basin swamps, dome swamps, basin marshes, hydric hammocks, mesic and wet flatwoods, tidal marshes, xeric hammocks and pine plantations. The southern and northern boundaries have contiguous borders with several other land acquisition projects. This meets the Florida Forever goals of enhancing coordination and completion of land acquisition projects and protecting and restoring the quality and natural functions of land, water and wetland systems of the state. Another benefit of this project is protecting water quality and estuarine resources in the area by preventing conversion of the property to development or intensive agriculture.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) is the recommended manager.

### **General Description**

The proposed area is 3,672 acres and is located in Levy County, Florida, northeast of the town of Cedar Key. The northern portion of the project has a southern boundary with 2.5 miles of frontage along C.R. 326, or Southwest 78th Street, including a two-mile contiguous border with the Cedar Key Scrub State Reserve. The eastern boundary of that portion is formed by C.R. 347, on which it has about one mile of road frontage. The western boundary is formed by a one and a quarter mile congruous boundary with a disjunctive portion of the Lower Suwannee NWR. The remaining, or southern, portion of the Caber Coastal Connector is east of Cedar Key and State Road 24, including Live Oak Key, and extending to the south and west side of the Wacassassa Bay Preserve State Park.

### **Public Use**

The project has the potential of providing diverse resource-based recreation for the region. It is strategically located among state and federally owned coastal lands for which there is no full-service park area. It is also located within 10 miles of the town of Cedar Key and has excellent paved highway access. What differentiates the project from adjacent and nearby public lands, such as Cedar Key Scrub State Reserve and Waccasassa Bay State Preserve, is the existence of sufficient uplands on the coast that can provide easy access internally and support infrastructure to create a destination park and compliment the surrounding public resources. Parts of the property have been disturbed, however, other areas are





highly scenic and many roads on the property could provide off-road bicycling, hiking and horseback riding opportunities. The expansive trail system that can be supported by the property could also be connected with trails from other nearby state and federal lands. Other resource-based activities could be provided such as nature appreciation and wildlife observation. Camping (primitive and RV), picnicking and canoe/kayak access would bolster the project as a destination park. A campground would serve the public well in this area. The property could also provide one or more stop-off sites in connection with the Big Bend Canoe Trail. While a public boat ramp cannot be ruled out, there is a public boat ramp facility at the south end of the project. An environmental education facility has been discussed in connection with the adjacent Cedar Key Scrub State Reserve and Waccasassa Bay State Preserve. Should the project be acquired, it would be considered along with locations in other management units for developing such a facility. Depending on management emphasis, the project could support hunting. As a full-service park site, however, hunting opportunities would not be provided.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On January 25, 2005, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Caber Coastal Connector project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2005 Priority list. This fee-simple project, sponsored by the Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), consisted of a single owner, Caber Corporation, and a 2003 taxable value of \$920,610. The essential parcels were owned by Caber Corporation.

On August 11, 2006, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 1,709-acre addition (aka Thompson Tract) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by TNC, consisted of one owner, Thompson, 12 parcels, and a 2005 taxable value of \$1,524,160. The parcels were designated as essential.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Climate Change Lands category.

On June 14, 2013, ARC removed 3,590 acres from the design of the project after the Caber Corporation of Sarasota asked to have the 27 parcels in Levy County removed. The parcels are west of County Road 347, next to the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge. This most recent boundary change in 2013 eliminated \$576,497 of the project's tax assessed value, leaving the project with a combined, historic tax assessed value of \$3,368,000.

In 2015 1,491.7 acres of the Caber Coastal Connector was acquired in fee-simple.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$1,438,112.

### **Coordination**

The DRP and TNC are acquisition partners on this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary land management goals of the project are to restore, maintain and protect important ecosystems and to plan for and provide a diverse resource-based recreational park consistent with the management prospectus.



## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The property has long been sought to connect tens of miles of coastal public lands. The project was within the original boundary of the Cedar Key Scrub Conservation and Recreation Land (CARL) project but was never acquired because of an unwilling seller. When the CARL project was removed from the CARL/P2000 list in 1997, the DRP maintained an interest in the project area for resource connectivity and park purposes. The project also has limited scrub jay habitat. The scrub jays in this area are considered one of the westernmost populations in Florida. The population would be enhanced with the acquisition of this project.

### ***Manager***

The DRP would be the manager of the Caber Coastal Connector properties if acquired full fee.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Portions of the project are in planted pine that will require rehabilitation over time to provide a natural landscape. Scrub areas will require significant work to restore the lands for scrub jay use. Over the long-term, the intensity of management and related costs would significantly increase if management emphasis shifts from protection and restoration efforts with limited public uses to a broader public use with more substantial infrastructure.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the property is acquired and assigned to the DRP, the lands will be secured, and management planning implemented. Resource inventories and analysis will be performed to determine objectives for restoration. Low intensity resource-based recreation, such as canoeing/kayaking and trails will initially be provided on the property. The magnitude and diversity of future resource-based recreation opportunities offered will depend on establishing a management plan for the property and funding for positions and infrastructure.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

DRP expects that no significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. Some revenue may be generated through timber sales as the land is being restored. The degree of future revenue generated will depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities placed on the land.



Caber Coastal Connector Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2004
Project Area (GIS acres)	3,634
Acres Acquired (GIS)	1,9910
At a Cost of	\$2,500,000
Acres Remaining (GIS)	1,723

Caber Coastal Connector Table 2

Caber Coastal Connector FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Salt Marsh Vole	G5T1/S1
Gulf Salt Marsh Mink	G5T2/S2
Bald Eagle	G5/S3

There are 7 rare species associated with the project.

Caber Coastal Connector Table 3

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup
Salary (1 FTE, 1 OPS)	\$47,700
Expense	\$12,000
OCO	\$36,100
Total	\$95,800

[Map\(s\): Caber Coastal Connector](#)



## ***Caloosahatchee Ecoscape***

Hendry and Glades Counties  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1998
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	18,387
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	7,741
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$2,320,700
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	10,646

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

In order to preserve Florida panthers and black bears, large landscape linkages of land must be protected. Although large areas are protected to the south within Big Cypress National Preserve and Everglades National Park, both the panther and bear populations are dependent on much of the proposed ranch land in Hendry County. This 16,055-acre project connects at its southern boundary by an abandoned rail corridor with the Okaloacoochee Slough project.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

### **General Description**

The project has a mosaic of wet prairies, cypress basin and dome swamp, mesic flatwoods, wet flatwoods, depressional marshes, and scrub. The majority of the natural communities on the properties have been impacted by clearing and drainage from improved pasture development or farming. Despite the disturbed plant communities, the project provides important habitat for a variety of listed wildlife species. Most of the land is within the Barron Water Control District and canals have altered the natural hydrology to the extent that no significant natural water resources remain. Eleven archaeological sites are known from the project area, some with material dated back to the Archaic period. This project qualifies as a wildlife management area with uses such as hunting, various sorts of trails, camping, and picnicking, among other activities.

### **Public Use**

This project qualifies as a wildlife management area with uses such as hunting, various sorts of trails, camping, and picnicking, among other activities.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The initial proposal is 16,055 acres. The three largest ownerships, IMC Agrico, Floriland Dairy (Milicevic) and Atlantic Gulf Communities, are designated essential. The owners of the Floriland Dairy tract (Milicevic) have indicated they would consider negotiating a Less-Than-Fee sale at some time in the future.



On March 26, 1999, the Council added 2,400 acres to the project. In 2002 a conservation easement was placed on the LaBelle Ranch (2,994 acres for \$2,320,700). After the most recent boundary change in 1999, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$2,320,700. On June 13, 2008, the Acquisition and Restoration Council moved the Caloosahatchee Ecoscape project to the A List of Florida Forever projects to expedite acquisition. On November 4, 2009, Panther Passage Conservation Bank CE (1,292 acres) was purchased and is managed by FWC.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands category.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$62,935,727.

### **Coordination**

TNC is considered an acquisition partner.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The project area has been highly impacted by timbering and other clearing for farming and grazing. A management goal will be to restore and maintain native plant and animal communities to the extent feasible. A secondary goal will be to provide compatible, nature-based recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, camping, hiking and nature study.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project will provide a refuge for threatened animals like the Florida panther and black bear, sandhill crane, wood stork, and crested caracara, and a variety of other endangered species, as well as species of special concern. It will protect habitat for game species like white-tailed deer and turkey as well as provide the public with a large area for natural-resource-based recreation. The project is also within an area where the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has conducted significant panther and bear research.

#### ***Manager***

FWC is designated as manager.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Hydrologic manipulation and conversion of native range to improved pastures will require habitat restoration. Urbanization within, and adjacent to, the proposed project boundary will require that any large-scale controlled burning efforts be coordinated between appropriate state and federal agencies and the local affected residents.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after acquisition, posting the boundary, erecting entrance signs, and resource inventory will be a priority. A conceptual management plan will also be written. Location and control of exotic plant species will be ongoing. The long-term management goals shall be to restore and maintain native plant and animal communities to the extent feasible, with a secondary goal of providing



compatible nature-based recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, camping, hiking and nature study. Establishment of access and other facilities necessary for approved nature-based recreational activities will be developed as funding permits.

***Revenue-generating potential***

This property has historically provided timber and cattle production. Potential revenue sources may include hunting, fishing, ecotourism, cattle grazing, and sustainable timber production.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The FWC will cooperate with other federal, state and local governmental agencies and non-profit organizations in managing the area. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers presently maintains a campground and the locks at Ortona, along the northeastern corner of the Caloosahatchee Ecoscape project boundary.



Caloosahatchee Ecoscape Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1998
Project Area (GIS acres)	18,387
Acres Acquired (GIS)	7,741
at a Cost of	\$2,320,700
Acres Remaining (GIS)	10,646

Caloosahatchee Ecoscape Table 2

Caloosahatchee Ecoscape FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Panther	G5T1/S1
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Mangrove Fox Squirrel	G5T2/S2
Crested Caracara	G5/S2
Bald Eagle	G5/S3

There are 7 rare species associated with the

[Map\(s\): Caloosahatchee Ecoscape](#)



## ***Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway***

Baker, Bradford and Clay Counties

Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2010
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	33,974
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	1,537
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	32,437

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway Florida Forever Project was created at the request of the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) from a portion of the 2003 Camp Blanding to Osceola Greenway Florida Forever project. Public acquisition of the Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway (CB-RG) project will contribute to the following Florida Forever goals:

- (1) Increase the protection of Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels - provide a landscape connector between Camp Blanding on the southeast, the Northeast Florida Timberlands (when acquired) on the east, and Raiford WMA on the south;
- (2) Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state - four major blackwater streams from three major river basins originating within the project area, as well as several headwaters and tributaries; and
- (3) Increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources. The Florida National Scenic Trail, a cross-Florida hiking and non-motorized trail, is also planned to cross this project. The trail is a congressionally designated national scenic trail.

### **Manager(s)**

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and the Florida Forest Service (FFS) of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will be co-managers.

### **General Description**

The original Camp Blanding-Osceola Greenway was divided to create two projects that maintain ecological connectivity among existing and proposed conservation lands, particularly as it relates to habitat for the Florida black bear. One of the key concepts is to permanently link disconnected habitat for species like the Florida black bear as well as other important focal species. As a result of the redesign, the two projects created are Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway and Raiford-Osceola Greenway (R-OG). The Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway project consists of approximately 33,973 acres of land from the northwest corner of Camp Blanding Military Reservation to the southwest tip of Nassau County. It connects several managed areas in Bradford, Clay, and Union Counties, resulting in a contiguous area of more than a half-million acres of publicly owned or managed lands in north-central Florida. It abuts portions of the Northeast Florida Timberlands Florida Forever project. Physiographic features of interest include the Trail Ridge, the eastern boundary of the Cody Scarp, and several large





wetlands that have been ecologically devalued by silvicultural activities or mining. Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway Florida Forever project will be acquired in fee simple with multiple landowners.

### **Public Use**

This project could have significant natural resource-based public recreational and educational potential if portions of the project were available to the public. All trails throughout the project have potential for being multiple-use trails with hiking, horseback riding, and bicycling. Other recreational opportunities would include camping, picnicking, and hunting. Of the activities mentioned, the 2000 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan identifies hunting within the Bradford County portion of the project as having a high need for the year 2005 for the region in which these counties are located.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 5, 2003, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) added the Camp Blanding–Osceola Greenway project to Group A of the Florida Forever 2004 Priority list. This fee-simple and less-than-fee project, sponsored by the Office of Greenways & Trails (OGT) and the Conservation Trust of Florida (CTF), consisted of approximately 153,000 acres, multiple ownerships, and a 2002 taxable value of \$28,508,089. The essential parcels were identified as the Plum Creek and Wachovia ownerships.

On October 13, 2006, the ARC approved a redesign to the essential parcels within the project. The number and acreage of essential parcels was revised by removing 106 parcels (64,250 acres) and adding 52 parcels (10,180 acres) which resulted in a declassification of 54,070 acres currently designated essential. The new essential parcel configuration retained a narrower greenway connection between Camp Blanding, Raiford Wildlife Management Area, and the Osceola National Forest.

On June 11, 2010, the ARC approved a redesign of the Camp Blanding-Osceola Greenway Florida Forever project that divided and reduced the expansive project into Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway (33,973 acres) and Raiford - Osceola Greenway (67,673 acres). After the most recent boundary change in 2010, the Camp Blanding to Raiford Greenway project had a historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$92,890,463.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands category.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$50,386,151.

### **Coordination**

Conservation Trust of Florida and OGT are acquisition partners on this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

Areas of the project purchased in fee-simple will be managed to further the long-term protection of the site's plant and wildlife resources, promote sound stewardship of land, timber and water resources, and provide the public with access and quality recreational opportunities where possible.



## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Camp Blanding to Raiford Greenway (CB-RG) Florida Forever project has approximately 33,973 GIS acres in Baker, Bradford, and Clay counties, southwest of Jacksonville, 10 miles east of Lake City, and 16 miles north of Gainesville. The project area ranges from 2 to 6.5 miles wide, and connects and adjoins the Camp Blanding Military Reservation, Osceola National Forest, Northeast Florida Timberlands Florida Forever Project, and the Raiford Wildlife Management Area. The project would provide a landscape linkage of conservation lands of substantial ecological value, a critical component of a conservation corridor extending from central Florida to southeast Georgia. The most widespread community type within the project boundary is mesic flatwoods, of which the majority of acres are in silviculture operations, and a smaller number of acres are in a relatively natural condition. Sandhill communities total only about 230 acres but may have substantial ecological value. The forested wetlands are the least disturbed natural areas. There are several large basin swamps, including (with approximate acreages) Turkey Creek Swamp (7,000 acres) and New River Swamp (4,000 acres). Dome swamps, wet flatwoods, and baygalls represent the remaining 15-20,000 acres. Floodplain swamps extend over approximately 4,000 acres of the joint CB-RG and the Raiford-Osceola Greenway project areas. Several flatwoods lakes are also present and an important blackwater stream, the New River. The Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) Florida Forever Measures Evaluation indicates that 2 percent of the project area is under-represented natural communities. Imperiled or rare animal species documented to occur on the project include the eastern indigo snake, and the many-lined salamander. Additional imperiled or rare species reported to occur on the combined projects are the swallow-tailed kite, the white ibis, and the wood stork. Among other rare or imperiled species, the project is potential habitat for the Florida black bear and the red-cockaded woodpecker. Natural shorelines and shallow waters of the flatwoods lakes on the project provide habitat for wading birds, waterfowl, and many other aquatic and semi-aquatic animal species. Forested riparian corridors provide a habitat connection to the Santa Fe River floodplain and bottomland forests for species such as the bobcat, Florida black bear, gray fox, river otter and numerous other species of wildlife. A wildlife corridor such as the combined projects (CB-RG and R-OG) provides linkage to larger areas of high ecological value. Such corridors require habitat of sufficient size (optimally a mile or more in width), and quality (natural forested communities), to adequately provide for animal migration. This project provides habitat for Florida black bears and which occur on other public lands in the vicinity (Camp Blanding, Raiford WMA, Ocala National Forest, and the Osceola National Forest/Okefenokee Complex). Substantial populations of white-tailed deer and other game species occur. FNAI classifies 99 percent of the project area as priority 1 critical parcels and potential importance as an ecological greenway. The hooded pitcher plant has been documented to occur within the project boundary.

According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), approximately 53.5 percent of the lands (18,259.2 acres) within the project are within a designated Strategic Habitat Conservation Area (SHCA) for black bear, Florida mouse, and striped newt. The project provides



additional habitat for many focal species, which are indicators of natural communities, and suitable habitat conditions for other wildlife species. Focal species overlap: 1-3 species for 29,916 acres (43.5 percent); 4-6 species 33,264.8 acres (48.4 percent); 7-9 species 2,383.6 acres (3.4 percent); 10-12 species 8.9 acres (0.01 percent) for a total of 31,298 acres or 91.7 percent of the project.

### ***Manager***

The FFS and the FWC.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The CB-RG Greenway consists of medium-need tracts that will require up-front resource management, including frequent use of prescribed fire where appropriate. Approximately 69 percent of the project area has disturbed ground cover due to past silviculture. Consequently, additional effort will be required to restore it to a desired future condition. FWC and FFS propose to work cooperatively to assess site management needs and develop the conceptual management plan (CMP) for the site. Examples of situations that may require cooperative effort include: restoring mesic and wet flatwoods previously managed for timber production, removing or thinning off-site timber species to promote regeneration of native ground covers and appropriate tree species, and reforesting recently harvested areas. As part of the unified management approach, the managing agencies will conduct an historic vegetation analysis to assist in determining appropriate desired future conditions and identify appropriate restoration methods and tools. This effort will help conserve habitats and populations of imperiled or rare species. Other unified management priorities will include protecting and restoring sensitive wetlands, and the identification, control, and follow-up monitoring of exotic species. Restoration methods will also include thinning dense pine stands to decrease canopy cover and facilitate restoring native groundcovers. Protecting and restoring sensitive wetlands on the project would be a priority. It is also possible that recreational trails on the parcels could function as firelines, provide access for prescribed burning equipment, and provide an opportunity for wildlife viewing. Exotic plant species (tung oil tree, air potato, mimosa and others), have been observed in the project area. Air potato and mimosa are listed as Category I (most adversely affecting Florida's ecology) by the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council; the tung oil tree is listed as Category II (increased abundance in Florida). Although observed infestations appear to pose no imminent threat to the ecological integrity of the project, there would be surveillance for, and removal of, such infestations of exotic invasive species. Due to the presence of imperiled or rare species expected to occur within the proposed project, it is anticipated that resource inventories would be an initial priority under the unified management approach. Environmentally sensitive areas such as erosion-prone sites, listed species habitats, outstanding natural areas, and wetlands, are to be identified during the initial resource inventory to implement appropriate protective measures for each specific area. Such inventories are considered vital to unified management planning efforts directed at facility and infrastructure development, and design and implementation of recreational use programs.



### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after acquisition, both agencies - operating under the unified management approach - anticipate emphasis on site security, posting boundaries, public access for low-intensity outdoor recreation, fire management, resource inventory, and removing trash. Both managing agencies will meet frequently to coordinate task assignments, and cooperate with, and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local governments, and other appropriate participants as it affects management of the project site. Both agencies will participate in the joint development of a CMP specifying area management goals and objectives. Long-term goals would emphasize ecosystem multiple use management and conserving the site's natural resources including timber, fish and wildlife, and water. These goals would include restoring habitat and hydrology and conserving and protecting listed species of flora and fauna. Following completion of plant community inventory and historic vegetation analysis, quantified vegetation management objectives would be developed pursuant to an objective-based vegetation management process. Where practical, disturbed sites would be restored to conditions expected to occur in naturally functioning ecosystems, including re-establishment of species expected to occur naturally on specific sites. Management would emphasize enhancement of abundance, and spatial distribution of imperiled or rare species. Essential roads would be stabilized to provide all-weather public access and management operations. Programs providing multiple recreational uses would also be implemented. Both agencies will work towards the development of a fire management plan that will apply prescribed burning in a manner that maximizes natural resource protection and enhancement. Whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines, and natural breaks will be used to contain, and control prescribed and natural fires. Where appropriate, practical, and in pursuit of natural resource management objectives, timber resources will be managed with acceptable silvicultural practices. Thinning timber, introducing prescribed fire and sustainable forestry management practices could provide silvicultural products, ecological benefits and recreational benefits. Archaeological and historic sites would be managed in coordination with the Department of State's Division of Historical Resources (DHR). The DHR lists 12 such sites in the project area. Both agencies will work towards development of a road plan identifying roads to be used for vehicular access by the public, and roads for administrative use. Unnecessary roads, fire lanes, and hydrological disturbances would be abandoned or restored as practical. The road plan would ensure that the public has appropriate access and sensitive resources are protected. Infrastructure development would be the minimum required to serve needs of the public, including provisions for facilities necessary for the security and management of the project area.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Timber sales would be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions, under a multiple-use management concept. The FNAI indicates that 63 percent of the project area is available as priorities 1, 2, 3, and 5 for sustainable forestry. However, management would seek to improve the other revenue-generating potential of areas currently serving for forest products production by improving wildlife diversity and resource-based recreation in such areas. Additional revenue would be generated from sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area permits, and



other special hunting permits. Some revenues might be realized in the future from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities, if such projects could be economically developed. Fifteen percent of all gross revenues will be returned to the county from which those funds were generated. Both agencies have agreed to a unified management framework whereby all CARL management funds, site generated revenues, and management expenditures are to be evenly divided between the FFS and FWC.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The two agencies have agreed to a unified management framework whereby all CARL management funds, site generated revenues, and management expenditures are to be evenly divided between the FFS and FWC. The unified managers (FFS and FWC) should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies, including the Florida Department of Corrections, St. Johns River Water Management District, State Armory Board, Suwannee River Water Management District, and the U. S. Forest Service, in managing the area.



Camp Blanding Raiford Greenway Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2010
Project Area (GIS acres)	33,974
Acres Acquired (GIS)	1,537
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	32,437

Camp Blanding Raiford Greenway Table 2

Camp Blanding Raiford Greenway FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
giant orchid	G2G3/S2
Southeastern Weasel	G5T4/S3?

*There are 3 rare species associated with the project.*

Camp Blanding Raiford Greenway Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS & FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Resource Management	\$1,747,592	\$969,434
Administration	\$77,713	\$10,388
Support	\$153,462	\$13,047
Capital Improvements	\$3,441,310	\$323,273
Visitor Services and Recreation	\$3,363	\$58
Law Enforcement	\$42,880	\$42,880
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,436,320</b>	<b>\$1,359,080</b>

[Map\(s\): Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway](#)



## ***Carr Farm / Price’s Scrub***

Alachua and Marion Counties  
Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2001
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	1,267
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	962*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$1,975,000*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	305

*\*Acquisition and expenditure was done by the Office of Greenways and Trails*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The Carr Farm/Price’s Scrub in southwestern Alachua County includes scrub, upland mixed forest, scrubby flatwoods, wet flatwoods, depression marsh, marsh lake and sinkhole lake. This scrub is one of the northernmost examples of the community in peninsular Florida. Sandhill cranes have been seen on the Carr Farm as have bald eagles and swallow-tailed kites. Kestrels have been found using experimental nest boxes close to the project site along CR 320. Wood storks (presumably from the River Styx rookery) have been observed feeding on the site, and gopher tortoises are present. The area is expected to provide good habitat for the gopher frog and other declining amphibians because it has so many isolated seasonal ponds in proximity to extensive upland habitat. Indigo snakes have been observed in the vicinity.

### **Manager(s)**

The Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

### **General Description**

The Carr Farm/Price’s Scrub in Alachua and Marion counties consists of three tracts totaling 1,260 acres owned by the family of the zoologist, Archie Carr. The property is in the Fairfield Hills physiographic unit and is underlain by the Miocene Hawthorne Formation of sandy clay mixed with phosphatic pebbles, capped in places by a sandy Plio-Pleistocene deposit. The property is predominantly upland mixed forest on the northern half, and scrub and wet flatwoods on the southern half. The division between hardwood-dominated communities in the northern half and the pine-dominated communities in the southern half are marked by a change in soil types. The property slopes from an elevation of 200 feet on the southern boundary to 90 feet on the northeastern border. Topography of the southern half is flat, with an imperceptible downward slope to the north, whereas the northern portion consists of rolling hills with steep slopes separated by ponds and depression marshes.

### **Public Use**

The varied topography and resources of the site would provide opportunities for limited freshwater fishing and canoeing, primitive camping, nature trails, hiking trails, bicycle riding trails and horseback riding trails. Picnicking and environmental education would also be suitable for this property. The Carr





Farm site has potential for interpretation of the life and times of one of the leading naturalists of Florida, Archie Carr.

### **Acquisition Planning**

This project was ranked for the first time on April 6, 2001. The Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) purchased the Price's Scrub portion of the project as part of the Marion County Greenway. The Division of State Lands (DSL) is not actively pursuing this project. After the most recent boundary change in 2001, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$86,144.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$1,373,382.

### **Coordination**

Alachua County could not commit funding any portion at this time but is willing to consider funding toward the project sometime in the future. Mitigation funds from DOT may be available through the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD).

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management are 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 the state or a larger geographic area. Other goals are to conserve and protect significant habitat for several rare species, to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project has historic and archaeological sites, including the home site of Archie and Marjorie Carr. As such, the project would qualify as a state historic site. The natural resource portions of the project will provide a variety of resource-based recreational opportunities to compliment the cultural-resource aspect of the site.

#### ***Manager***

Division of Recreation and Parks

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The project will be a high need management area. Public recreational use and development of compatible cultural and resource-based facilities will be an integral aspect of management. The close proximity of I-75 and the long years since the scrub, scrubby flatwoods and wet flatwoods have burned will require more intensive preparation to burn in the short-term.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Upon fee acquisition, management will concentrate on site security and development of a cultural and natural resource inventory. Hunting will not be allowed. Access to and within the project will be





confined to designated points and routes. In the short-term, low-intensity, non-facility related outdoor recreation will be provided as soon as practical to allow for compatible public access. Emphasis will be given to developing a short-term burn program to begin restoration efforts in the scrub, scrubby flatwoods and wet flatwoods. Long-term management will include a range of resource-based recreation and associated facilities, together with resource management goals.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The DRP expects no significant revenue from this property immediately after acquisition. The amount of any future revenue will depend on the nature and future extent of public use and facilities development.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The DRP will, as appropriate, cooperate with local governments, other state agencies, and the water management district to further resource management, recreational and educational opportunities and the development of lands for state park purposes.



Carr Farm/Price’s Scrub Table 1

Project -at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2001
Project Area (GIS acres)	1,267
Acres Acquired (GIS)	962*
at a Cost of	\$1,975,000*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	305

\*Acquisition and expenditure were performed by the Office of Greenways and Trails

Carr Farm/Price’s Scrub Table 2

Carr Farm/Price’s Scrub FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Florida spiny-pod	G2/S2
Hobbs' Cave Amphipod	G2G3/S2S3
pondspice	G3?/S2

There are 5 rare species associated with the project.

Carr Farm/Price’s Scrub Table 3

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring
OPS	Not provided	\$15,000
Expense	Not provided	\$28,000
OCO	\$124,000	0
FCO	\$298,000	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$422,000</b>	<b>\$130,000</b>

[Map\(s\): Carr Farm / Price’s Scrub](#)



## Catfish Creek

Polk County

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### Project-at-a-Glance

<i>Placed on List</i>	1990
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	19,415
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	16,194*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$49,414,766
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	3,221

\*Includes a donation from TNC.

### Purpose for State Acquisition

The high, sandy Lake Wales Ridge, stretching south from near Orlando almost to Lake Okeechobee, was originally covered with a mosaic of scrub, flatwoods, wetlands, and lakes. The scrub is unique in the world—it is inhabited by many plants and animals found nowhere else—but it has almost completely been converted to citrus groves and housing developments. The Catfish Creek project, with its scrub ridges overlooking the nearly pristine shore of Lake Pierce, will protect an especially scenic example of Lake Wales Ridge scrub and its associated ecosystems and allow the public to enjoy camping, fishing, and swimming in this unique and beautiful natural area. It will also protect an important archaeological site on Lake Pierce. The Florida National Scenic Trail, a cross-Florida hiking and non-motorized trail, is also planned to cross this project. The trail is a congressionally designated national scenic trail.

### Manager(s)

The Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will manage the project, less that portion known as Snodgrass Island.

### General Description

Catfish Creek is a diverse natural area extending over high scrub ridges, interspersed with lakes, next to the pristine shore of Lake Pierce. Natural communities include sandhill, scrub, scrubby flatwoods, mesic flatwoods, xeric hammock, bottomland hardwood forest, basin swamp, sandhill upland lake, wet flatwoods, blackwater stream, seepage slopes, and floodplain swamp, all in excellent condition. The tract harbors at least 19 rare plant and animal species state listed as endangered or threatened. Rare or endangered animal species include the bald eagle, wood stork, gopher tortoise, and scrub jay. The 1993 addition on Snodgrass Island contains a potentially important archaeological site. The project is threatened by agriculture and eventual residential development.

### Public Use

This project is designated for use as a state preserve, with such uses as hiking, camping, fishing and nature study.



### **Acquisition Planning**

Phase I: (essential) Rolling Meadows (acquired), TNC (acquired) and Palo Alto (acquired); Phase II: Imagination Farms, Progress Homes (acquired) and K-Rocker. Phase III: Section two which is subdivided (state has acquired all of section consolidated by Bowen). In 1992 The Nature Conservancy (TNC) acquired 68 acres in this project and in August 2007 donated it to the state.

On October 21, 1999, the Council added 6,991 acres and designated it as essential.

In August 2002, the Council added the Rolling Meadows Ranch to the project. On December 5, 2002, the Council added the K-Rocker Tract to the project. After the most recent boundary change in 2002, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$13,586,636.

On December 5, 2003, the Council moved the project to the Group B list.

On December 9, 2011, ARC moved the project to the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$5,621,448.

### **Coordination**

TNC sponsored this project, assisted in providing information in the preparation of the project, and in discussions with some of the major landowners. TNC and SFWMD are considered acquisition partners for this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Catfish Creek project are conserving and protecting 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 this state or a larger geographic area. Also, the project can conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species, provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation; and preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The sensitive resources in the Catfish Creek project—sandhills, a large lake, and high-quality scrub with its rare plants and animals—qualify it as a state preserve.

#### ***Manager***

The DRP, Department of Environmental Protection, is the identified manager of the project, less that portion known as Snodgrass Island.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The project is a low-need management area emphasizing resource protection while allowing compatible public recreational use and development.



***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, management activities will concentrate on site security, natural and cultural resource protection, and the development of a plan for long-term public use and resource management.

***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. After acquisition, it will probably be several years before any significant public use facilities are developed. The amount of any revenue generated will depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities. With emphasis on resource protection, and with minimal public use, future generated revenues are not expected to be high.

***Cooperators in management activities***

No local governments or others are recommended for management of this project area.



Catfish Creek Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1990
Project Area (GIS acres)	19,415
Acres Acquired (GIS)	16,194*
at a Cost of	\$49,414,766
Acres Remaining (GIS)	3,221

\*Includes a donation from TNC.

Catfish Creek Table 2

Catfish Creek FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Morris' Tiny Sand-loving Scarab	G1/S1
Archbold Cebrionid Beetle	G1G2/S1S2
Scrub Little Mole Scarab	G1G2/S1S2
Florida blazing star	G2/S2
Nocturnal Scrub Velvet Ant	G2/S2
Sand Skink	G2/S2
Sandyland Onthophagus Beetle	G2/S2
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Lewton's polygala	G2/S2S3
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3

There are 38 rare species associated with the project.

Catfish Creek Table 3

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	not provided
Salary	\$22,167	not provided
OPS	\$0	not provided
Expense	\$5,712	not provided
OCO	\$6,978	not provided
FCO	\$8,640	not provided
Total	\$43,497	not provided

[Map\(s\): Catfish Creek](#)



## **Charlotte Harbor Estuary**

Charlotte, Lee and Sarasota Counties

Substantially Complete

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1972
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	45,696
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	39,401
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$35,040,125
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	6,295

*(Includes Charlotte Harbor, Charlotte Harbor Additions, Cape Haze/Charlotte Harbor, Myakka Estuary) Note: 2,260 acres adjustment/removal due to residential/commercial structures or infrastructure.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The Charlotte Harbor Estuary was formed by combining the boundaries of three projects: the Myakka Estuary, the Cape Haze/Charlotte Harbor project, and the Charlotte Harbor project.

The Myakka Estuary project portion of Charlotte Harbor Estuary protects the largest natural area left around northern Charlotte Harbor, conserving flatwoods, scrub, and salt marshes that support bald eagles, sandhill cranes, scrub jays, and manatees. The project will also help protect an important fishery and provide residents of, and visitors to, the rapidly growing Charlotte Harbor area with opportunities for hiking, camping, and other recreational pursuits.

The Charlotte Harbor Estuary is one of the largest and most productive estuaries in Florida, supports an important recreational and commercial fishery, but is rapidly being surrounded by residential developments that could harm this important resource. Conserving flatwoods and prairies behind the mangrove swamps and salt marshes along Charlotte and Placida Harbors will help the Cape Haze/Charlotte Harbor project protect the water quality of the estuary, protect habitat for the Florida manatee and other rare wildlife, and provide residents of and visitors to the area with opportunities for boating, fishing, and other recreational pursuits.

### **Manager(s)**

The Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), will manage most of the project. The DRP will manage that portion of the project west of SR 775. Florida Forest Service/FFS, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will manage the western portion of the Myakka Estuary portion of the project, with the DRP managing the east side.

### **General Description**

The project includes the ecotone of flatwoods and dry prairies, and the estuarine tidal marshes and mangrove swamps along Charlotte Harbor and Placida Harbor. Less than 10 percent of the area is disturbed. The area provides habitat for rare animals—the bald eagle, scrub jay, indigo snake, and gopher tortoise—and influences important manatee habitat offshore.

The project protects the water quality of the Charlotte Harbor estuary, designated as a series of Outstanding Florida Waters, and its recreational and commercial fisheries. The Coral Creek Mound is a



possibly significant archaeological site; no other sites are known from the area. The area is vulnerable to development, invasive exotic plants, and damage by off-road vehicles. There are 12,000 platted lots in the project vested from most development restrictions, so endangerment is extremely high. This project provides an essential addition to lands previously acquired through the Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) program. Most of the lands are wetlands, including mangrove, salt marsh, and salt flats, but there are some mesic flatwoods. The project area offers habitat for several rare species, and directly influences the water quality of Charlotte Harbor. There are two shell midden archaeological sites known from the project. Regulations notwithstanding, the area is threatened by dredging and filling from residential development.

The nearly intact uplands of the Myakka Estuary are primarily mesic flatwoods, like those in the Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods project, 15 miles to the south, but different in that they include scrub and the Florida scrub jay. The project provides habitat for nesting bald eagles and sandhill cranes and buffers the tidal marsh and waters of the Myakka River and Sam Knight Creek. Manatees use the adjacent waters heavily all year. The Myakka River estuary and the coastal wetlands associated with this project will support valuable commercial and recreational fisheries. The Florida Site File records five archaeological sites in the project. The project is surrounded by development and its uplands will inevitably be developed if not purchased.

### **Public Use**

This project qualifies as a forest and buffer preserve. Wetlands will limit outdoor recreation to such activities as fishing, canoeing, picnicking, hiking, and natural-resource education. The Myakka Estuary area has potential for such public uses as hiking, picnicking, camping, and nature appreciation.

### **Acquisition Planning**

In 1980, the Charlotte Harbor project was added to the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) Priority list. The project, which was started in 1972 under the EEL (Environmentally Endangered Lands) program, consisted of approximately 17,854 acres of which 15,582 acres had been acquired under EEL. The remaining 2,272 acres had a taxable value of \$1,931,820. Essential tracts included Atlantic Gulf Communities (acquired in 1995) and Mariner Properties (unwilling seller but for wetlands).

In September 1986, the Land Acquisition Selection Committee (LASC) approved adding 840 acres (Alligator Creek) to the project. Sponsored by Charlotte County, the addition had four landowners (Starnes, City of Punta Gorda, Lowe, and Punta Gorda Isles) that owned a majority of the addition). In June 1988, the LASC approved the modification of the project design that retained 16-17 parcels from the original project (2215 acres) and added 10 parcels in nine ownerships (3141 acres) for a total of 5,356 acres with a taxable value of \$2,302,000. To date, 17,141 acres have been acquired at a cost of \$8,070,838.

On November 20, 1992, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) approved adding three parcels, totaling 188 acres with an estimated tax value of \$66,086, to the project boundary. The Southwest





Florida Aquatic Preserve (60 acres), and the Trust for Public Lands (TPL), (128 acres) sponsored the addition.

On March 9, 1994, the LAAC approved the addition of 892 acres located in Lee County to the project boundary. The landowners, Burnt Store Company, Inc, sponsored the amendment with an estimated taxable value of \$2,119,000.

On July 14, 1995, the LAAC approved a 750-acre addition with a taxable value of \$953,918. The Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) sponsored the addition.

On October 15, 1998, the LAAC designated additional acreage of Cape Haze/Charlotte Harbor as essential—approximately 174 acres consisting of the Rotonda Properties out-parcels, and the Cole and Lemon Bay Partners parcels. The Council also designated an additional 1,390 acres of the Myakka Estuary as essential. Previously, essential parcels had included all acreage acquired up to January 26, 1995, and the Cayo Pelau, Lowe, Ansin, and Freeland ownerships. The essential acreage also includes approximately 100 acres adjacent to the Amberjack Scrub site, an FCT project that has been acquired.

On December 9, 1999, the LAMAC transferred this project to the Substantially Complete group. On April 6, 2001, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) combined the Cape Haze/Charlotte Harbor project with the Charlotte Harbor project. The total project acreage became 32,909. To date, 28,133 acres have been acquired at a cost of \$29,337,199. The updated acreage and cost include EEL, CARL, and Donations. On December 5, 2001, the ARC combined the Cape Haze/Charlotte Harbor project with the Myakka Estuary project and renamed the project Charlotte Harbor Estuary. The total project acreage became 46,709 acres. To date, 32,736 acres have been acquired at a cost of \$35,461,055. The updated acreage and cost include EEL, CARL, and Donations.

On June 12, 2009, ARC approved a 79-acre addition owned by Burnt Store Land Group, LLC.

On February 19, 2010, ARC approved removal of 13 sites with 466 individual parcels totaling 2,260 acres containing residential/commercial structures or infrastructure.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Substantially Complete category.

On October 16, 2015, ARC voted to add the 5-acre (GIS) Lemon Bay Midden parcel (\$48,322 tax assessed value) to the project to protect an archeological site the site of a historic Indian encampment and very large pre-Columbian midden. The site straddles two adjacent waterfront parcels with more than 800 feet of frontage on Lemon Bay Aquatic Preserve. After the most recent addition in 2015, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$9,126,489.

In calendar year 2017, a total of .27 acres closed in this project were acquired using Florida Forever program funding.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$73,835,504.



### **Coordination**

SWFWMD was an acquisition partner in the purchase of the Rotonda ownership (Cape Haze). The TPL has been an intermediary in the state's acquisition of two large tracts within the Charlotte Harbor project.

In 1995, the SWFWMD negotiated the purchase (CARL program reimbursed half) of the Atlantic Gulf Communities Corporation's ownership land within the Charlotte Harbor (704 acres) and Myakka Estuary (9,264 acres) projects.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Charlotte Estuary project are to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish, or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

Achieving this objective will help to protect the water quality of Charlotte Harbor, its important nursery areas for fish and shellfish, its important recreational and commercial fisheries, and its manatee habitat. It will also provide the public with an additional area for natural resource-based recreation.

The project should be managed under the single-use language change made October 1999. Managers should control access to the project; limit public motor vehicles to one or a few main roads; thoroughly inventory resources; restore hydrological disturbances; burn the fire-dependent pine flatwoods in a pattern mimicking natural lightning-season fires, using natural firebreaks or existing roads for control; strictly limit timbering in old-growth stands; and monitor management activities to ensure that they are preserving resources.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project provides essential additions to lands previously acquired through the EEL program of the 1970's and the Save Our Coast (SOC) Program of the 1980's. Most of the lands are wetlands, including mangrove, salt marsh, and salt flats, with occasional uplands including pine flatwoods, and oak/sabal palm hammocks. The forest resources around the Myakka River estuary have the diversity and size to make a state forest. These lands will aid in the protection or buffering of state waters, primarily the Cape Haze, and Charlotte Harbor / Gasparilla Sound Aquatic Preserves, as well as improve the protection and recreational value of the existing state-owned lands. They will also provide a land base for public access to the Don Pedro Island State Park. These lands therefore qualify as an addition to the existing Charlotte Harbor State Buffer Preserve and the Don Pedro Island State Park.



### ***Manager***

The DRP will manage these lands as an addition to the state park system. FFS proposes to manage 12,800 acres north and west of Highway 776. The Florida Coastal Office would manage the Lemon Bay Midden added in 2015 as part of the Aquatic Preserve.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The project is surrounded by rapidly developing areas. Development in the area may alter the flow of water and nutrients by dredging, filling, and shoreline armoring. Urbanization of surrounding lands is also increasing, thereby justifying the need for an increased patrol and law enforcement presence. Initially the project lands will be “high need,” requiring management to control exotic plants and animals and reducing illegal activities, such as poaching and trash dumping. Thereafter, routine management activities will be at the “moderate need” level. Lands to be used, and developed, as a land base to provide access to Don Pedro Island State Park will be “high need” areas. West of the Myakka River there are no known major disturbances and the level of management is expected to be typical for that of a state forest.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year of appropriate funding, management activities will concentrate on; property security, including fencing, posting, and patrols; public access, staff access for management activities such as prescribed fire and restoration projects, trash removal; and exotic plant and animal eradication. The DRP will provide appropriate resource based public access while protecting critical resources. The site will be biologically inventoried, and a management plan will be written within one year. Long range goals will be established by the management plan and will provide for ecological restoration and habitat maintenance. Prescribed and natural fires will be used to maintain the appropriate communities and associated wildlife populations. The resource inventory will be used to identify appropriate uses for the property, including management activities and public use. Areas disturbed by man and exotic plants will be restored to an “as natural as possible” condition. Infrastructure will be kept to a minimum and include only a sufficient amount of structures to provide for management facilities, public access, and resource interpretation. After the core of the Myakka River forests are acquired, the FFS and DRP will provide public access for low-intensity, non-facilities-related outdoor recreation. The FFS’s long-range plan is generally to restore disturbed areas to their original conditions, as far as possible, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. An all-season burning program will use, whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines, and natural breaks to contain fires. Timber management will mostly involve improvement thinning and regeneration harvests.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

The forest land in the Myakka River estuary portion of the project has potential for a variable source of revenue from timber sales, but the revenue-generating potential for this project is expected to be low to moderate. The part of the project east of the river will provide indirect financial benefit to the state including enhanced water quality, fisheries, and public recreation opportunities. Limited revenue may be



available through small timber sales to initially thin some stands and through some entrance and user permit fees in the future. Elsewhere, the project will benefit the state indirectly by enhancing water quality, fisheries and public recreation activities, and preserving natural and historical resources. Future user fees may also contribute limited revenue.



Charlotte Harbor Estuary Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1972
Project Area (GIS acres)	46,696
Acres Acquired (GIS)	39,401
at a Cost of	\$35,040,125
Acres Remaining (GIS)	6,295

(Includes Charlotte Harbor, Charlotte Harbor Additions, Cape Haze/Charlotte Harbor, Myakka Estuary) Note: 2,260 acres adjustment/removal due to residential/commercial structures or infrastructure.

Charlotte Harbor Estuary Table 2

Charlotte Harbor Estuary FNAI Elements	Score
Manatee	G2/S2
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
aboriginal prickly apple	G1/S1
beautiful pawpaw	G1/S1
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Southern Mink, Southern Florida Pop	G5T2Q/S2
iguana hackberry	G5/S1
Bachman's Sparrow	G3/S3
Wood Stork	G4/S2
Florida Long-tailed Weasel	G5T3?/S3
Manatee	G2/S2

There are 20 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Charlotte Harbor Estuary](#)



## **Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods**

Charlotte and Lee Counties

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1992
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	20,748
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	16,306
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$36,828,279
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	4,442

*Note: 2,352 acres were removed from the project at the landowner's request plus 683 isolated/disturbed acres were removed in 2009.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Northwest of Fort Myers lies the largest and highest quality slash-pine flatwoods left in southwest Florida. The Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods project will protect these flatwoods and connect the Charlotte Harbor State Buffer Preserve with the Babcock-Webb Wildlife Management Area, helping to protect these managed areas and the waters of the Aquatic Preserve.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)

### **General Description**

This project encompasses the largest remaining tract of intact pine flatwoods in southwestern Florida. Old-growth South Florida slash pine forests on site are home to at least 10 rare animals including red-cockaded woodpeckers, bald eagles, and Florida panthers. The tract also provides important habitat for several rare plants, most notably a globally critically imperiled plant, the beautiful pawpaw, *Deeringothamnus pulchellus*. The project provides additional protection for the Outstanding Florida Waters of the Gasparilla Sound-Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve and will also connect the Charlotte Harbor State Buffer Preserve and the Babcock-Webb Wildlife Management Area. This upland site is particularly suited for development, especially considering the rapid growth of Charlotte and Lee counties. No archaeological sites are known from the project.

### **Public Use**

The project is designated as a wildlife management area, with such uses as hiking, environmental education and hunting.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Phase I tracts include Ansin (essential —acquired), Zemel (essential—Phase I acquired), Bower (essential), Section 20 SE of Burnt Store Marina Road and Section 24.

On October 15, 1998, LAMAC (the Land Acquisition Management and Advisory Council) removed 165 acres from the Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods and added it to the Charlotte Harbor Estuary project (then called Charlotte Harbor) as part of a 490-acre increase of that project.



On February 11, 1999, the Council added 333 acres, and on October 21, 1999, added 1,793 acres as essential parcels. In June 2007 the 9-acre Honenberg Parcel was purchased by FWCC and added to the Yucca Pens Unit of the project.

Large essential parcels have been acquired. The Division of State Lands (DSL) is not active in this project.

On February 26, 2009 FWC purchased 37.63 acres (Yucca Pens) for \$298,000 from Allcoat, Inc. to add to Babcock Webb WMA. On June 12, 2009, ARC approved removal of 3,035 acres (2,352 of ZREV-owner's request-plus 683 isolated / disturbed acres) from the boundary with a tax assessed value of \$43,524,121.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category.

On August 15, 2015, ARC approved adding Bond Ranch to the project. This increased the boundary by 670 acres and was added to help restore sheet-flow conditions in south Charlotte County.

At the December 15th and 16th 2016 ARC meeting, the members approved the 557-acre Hog Branch/Bear Branch proposal as a new Florida Forever project with a tax assessed value of \$837,602. This area is east of Burnt Store Road in Charlotte County. This is part of an effort to restore traditional sheet flow of water in Charlotte County that was disrupted over the years by the roadbeds for railroads and highways, which flooded areas in adjoining Lee County and degraded the tidal creeks that are important to snook, redfish and tarpon. After approving this for Florida Forever, the ARC then added these lands to the boundary of Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods. After this most recent boundary change in 2016, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$9,373,652.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$14,595,560.

### **Coordination**

The FWC is acquiring small inholdings in the project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods project are: to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs can adequately protect; and to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods project meets the qualifications of a wildlife management area, because of the project's size (more than 18,000 acres), location (adjacent to the Babcock-Webb Wildlife Management Area), outstanding wildlife habitat (the largest stand of undisturbed flatwoods in southwest



Florida) and wildlife resources (red-cockaded woodpeckers, Florida panthers, and Florida black bears, among others).

***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Development surrounding and within the project, and the intense urbanization of southwest Florida, suggest a broad array of management problems. Trash dumping, other illegal trespass and the presence of numerous inholdings will certainly increase the need for intensive and careful management. Law enforcement and fire control issues are expected to be at the forefront.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

The first year of management activity will entail controlling public access with gates and/or fencing and controlling the littering and dumping problems. Additional emphasis will be placed on planning and on establishing an adequate and appropriate fire regime. Subsequent years should result in this project becoming an integral part of the management scheme for Babcock-Webb WMA.

***Revenue-generating potential***

Though this property contains significant timber resources, the timber revenue potential is low. There is little or no market for South Florida Slash Pine timber in Southwest Florida (in fact, very little timber market at all). Nevertheless, the potential for generating recreational revenue is significant, if new recreational user fees were to be implemented on this WMA.





Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1992
Project Area (GIS acres)	20,748
Acres Acquired (GIS)	16,306
at a Cost of	\$36,828,279
Acres Remaining (GIS)	4,442

Note: 2,352 acres were removed from the project at the landowner's request plus 683 isolated/disturbed acres were removed in 2009.

Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Table 2

Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods FNAI Elements	Score
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	G3/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Beautiful Pawpaw	G1/S1
Florida Panther	G5T1/S1
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3
giant orchid	G2G3/S2
Bachman's Sparrow	G3/S3
Florida beargrass	G3/S3
Wood Stork	G4/S2
Sherman's Fox Squirrel	G5T3/S3

There are 17 rare species associated with the project.

Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	CARL 1996/1997	CARL 1997/1998
Salary	\$54,200	\$54,200
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$10,000	\$10,000
OCO	\$0	\$0
FCO	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$64,202</b>	<b>\$64,202</b>

[Map\(s\): Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods](#)



## **Clay Ranch**

Putnam County

Substantially Complete

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2006
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	2,446
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	2,292
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	154

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring a conservation easement over Clay Ranch would contribute to the goal of eventually attaining connections among the conservation lands in the region to create landscape-scale protection of the xeric uplands and associated wetlands characteristic of the Trail Ridge. It could also help to preserve and protect the healthy aquatic biota in lower reaches of Etoniah Creek. The tract has the characteristics needed to harbor imperiled species, and some imperiled species are documented to occur there. The sandhill upland lakes and marsh natural communities that occur on the tract are mostly intact and fulfilling their natural function. Although much of the uplands are in commercial uses including sod farming, cattle grazing, hay production and silviculture, the majority is in a semi-natural condition and has good potential, with the reintroduction of fire, for providing quality habitat for many imperiled species in the future.

### **Manager(s)**

The property will continue to be managed by the landowner with restrictions imposed by a negotiated conservation easement. The Department of Environmental Protection’s Office of Environmental Services (OES) will be responsible for monitoring compliance with the terms and conditions of the easement, unless otherwise noted.

### **General Description**

Clay Ranch, approximately 2,446 acres in northwestern Putnam County, consists of a mix of forested uplands, scattered depression marshes and sandhill upland lakes and areas - both uplands and wetlands – that have been converted to pasture and/or sod farm. Some remnant sandhill remains in the western half, although a large portion of the forested area has developed into xeric/mesic hammock. Clay Ranch is situated on the southeastern portion of Trail Ridge, a physiographic province dominated by rolling sandhills and dotted with sandhill upland lakes.

The proximity to other conservation lands in this region embellish the less-than-fee acquisition proposal. An added benefit is the potential to connect a corridor for the Florida black bear and provide a large tract of conservation land for watershed and wildlife protection. However, even with this acquisition, other tracts would need to be protected for the corridor to be complete. If a conservation easement were



acquired on this site, perhaps other private landowners within the corridor would also consider their tracts for public acquisition.

### **Public Use**

Since the Clay Ranch is being offered as a less-than-fee acquisition, public access is not being contemplated at this time. During the negotiations with the Clay family, some limited access for research or education may be possible to acquire.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 9, 2006, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Clay Ranch project to Group A of the August 2006 Florida Forever Priority list. This less-than-fee acquisition, sponsored by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Alachua Conservation Trust, consists of one landowner, the Clay Family, ±2,380 acres and a 2005 tax assessed value of \$1,634,125.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Less-than-Fee category.

\*In June 2017, the Rural and Family Lands program acquired a 2,292-acre rural and family lands protection easement over the Clay Ranch Florida Forever less-than-fee project area.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$320,180.

### **Coordination**

No acquisition partnerships were suggested initially at the time this project was placed on the list. However, in June 2017, the Rural and Family Lands program acquired a 2,292-acre rural and family lands protection easement over much of the project area.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a conservation or less-than-fee interest, the project will be managed by the private landowner with restrictions. The purchase of the development rights, the prohibition of further conversion of existing natural areas and open space to more intensive uses, and limited public access will likely be the primary focus of the conservation easement.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Protection of Clay Ranch would contribute to the goal of eventually connecting the conservation lands in the region to create landscape-scale protection of the xeric uplands and associated wetlands characteristic of the Trail Ridge, as well as agricultural open space. TNC indicates that efforts are being made to secure some of this area that could provide a direct connection between Clay Ranch and Ordway-Swisher Preserve. Katharine Ordway Preserve and Carl M. Swisher Memorial Nature Preserve (contiguous properties and both managed by the University of Florida) lay approximately 1.5 and 2.75 miles, respectively, west of the western boundary of Clay Ranch. The former Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) project, Putnam County Sandhills, abuts Ordway-Swisher Preserve on its eastern boundary and approaches to within approximately one mile of Clay Ranch. Etoniah Creek State



Forest is located 1.75 miles northeast of the site. Camp Blanding Military Reservation, Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park, and Belmore State Forest are within 6 to 10 miles to the north and northwest of Clay Ranch.

***Manager***

The property will continue to be managed by the landowner with restrictions imposed by a negotiated conservation easement. OES will be responsible for monitoring compliance with the terms and conditions of the easement, unless otherwise noted.

***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Acquiring the Clay Ranch could help to preserve and protect the healthy aquatic biota in lower reaches of Etoniah Creek. While the natural communities on Clay Ranch need restoration, the site still exhibits a nice transition from higher xeric uplands in the west to more mesic conditions to the east.



Clay Ranch Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>2,446</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>2,292</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>154</b>

Clay Ranch Table 2

<b>Clay Ranch FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Southeastern American Kestrel</b>	<b>G5T4/S3</b>

*There are 3 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Clay Ranch](#)



## ***Clear Creek / Whiting Field***

Santa Rosa County

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2004
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	5,004
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	2,136
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$6,258,258*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	2,868

*\*Includes contribution by U.S. Navy, Dept. of Justice*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

This acquisition would establish conservation and regional protection through a land linkage of natural areas forming a significant corridor connection between state and private conservation lands. The project would provide open space in an urbanizing area. The project would also stabilize the land uses around the Whiting Field Naval Air Station so as to forestall encroachment that could be incompatible with the continued function of this military installation. Conceptual management planning would benefit from a coordinated, bioregional consideration among all stakeholders and management agents.

### **Manager(s)**

The Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) would accept management responsibility for the Clear Creek project, if acquired.

### **General Description**

The project is 3 miles north of the Blackwater River Water Management Area (WMA), 12 miles east of the Lower Escambia River WMA, and 8 miles north of the Yellow River WMA. The project is close to the City of Milton. It adjoins Whiting Field, the Naval Air Station used to train Navy pilots on T-34 aircraft and helicopters. Most of the project is upland pine forests, sandhills, mature and young pine plantations, recent clear-cuts, and agricultural lands. The upland pine forests and sandhills are in various stages of selective harvest. Narrow bands of upland hardwood forest occur on the slopes of the two creeks. A small part (5 percent) of the site is in a Strategic Habitat Conservation Area.

### **Public Use**

Potential recreational uses include canoeing, camping, hiking, biking, wildlife observation, environmental education, nature photography, and scientific research. Hunting may also be done in some areas. The site is particularly appropriate for extending the Blackwater River Heritage State Trail to increase the growing trails network in this region.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 4, 2004, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) added the Clear Creek/Whiting Field project to Group B of the Florida Forever (FF) 2004 Interim Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition,



sponsored by the Nature Conservancy (TNC), consisted of approximately 5,026 acres, 45 landowners, and a taxable value of \$1,648,733.

On December 9, 2005, the ARC approved a project design change to allow acquisition phasing. Phase I was added to Group A, consisted of 7 landowners, approximately 2,029 acres, and a taxable value of \$665,593. The ownership acreage is as follows: International Paper Company (1,154), Phillips (121), Leonard (160), Florimor Inc. (320), Blue Sky (120), Lowery (74) and Jernigan (80). Phase II remained in Group B, consists of 38 landowners, and about 2,996 acres with a taxable value of \$982,808. On June 9, 2006 ARC moved the Group B portion of this project to Group A. On December 12, 2008 the ARC voted to amend the boundary by adding Coldwater Creek Addition, consisting of two parcels totaling 265 acres owned by TNC, with a tax-assessed value of \$28,167. The acquisition is proposed fee-simple and the parcels were approved as essential. On March 10, 2009 with the help of the U.S. Navy, 210.48 acres were purchased from TNC for \$1,158,258. On September 30, 2009, 1,401 acres were purchased from TNC by Florida Forever (\$2,625,000), Florida Forest Service or FFS/Incidental Trust Fund (\$1,200,000), a.k.a. off-highway vehicle funds, and Department of Navy and Department of Justice (\$1,275,000). On June 30, 2011, DSL purchased 172.59 acres to be managed by FFS.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category.

On August 17, 2012, ARC removed 163 acres from the project because staff analysis found these lands were either developed, or not contiguous to the project. After the most recent boundary change in 2012, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$1,111,387.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$11,045,329.

### **Coordination**

Acquisition partners are the U.S. Navy, Santa Rosa County, OGT, and FFS. Developing the management plan will be conducted with the project partners (Whiting Field, the FFS and Santa Rosa County).

### **Management Policy Statement**

OGT proposes to manage the project with the FFS, Whiting Field and Santa Rosa County to protect habitat for native species and endangered or threatened species; protect water quality in wetlands and surface waters, notably Clear Creek and Coldwater Creek; provide interpretive and recreation activities consistent with resource protection, including development of a multiuse loop trail surrounding Whiting Field and connecting to the northern terminus of the existing Blackwater Heritage State Trail; and protect archaeological and historical sites. In general, the project area will be managed to protect its environmental and natural resource values, drawing upon its natural characteristics to provide appropriate recreation opportunities and enhancing other adjacent managed lands, such as Whiting Field and the Blackwater River State Forest. The project will be managed consistent with the appropriate goals and objectives of FF, as well as consistent with other projects that are part of the statewide system of greenways and trails.



## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project will protect a conservation landscape adjacent to a vital military training facility, Whiting Field. More than half of the project area lies within an identified Priority Ecological Greenway and a portion lies within a High Priority Segment of the Florida Recreational Trails Network Opportunities (the Blackwater Multi-Use Trail). This project will help enhance the resource and recreation value of the adjacent Blackwater River State Forest, Blackwater Heritage State Trail and State Designated Coldwater Creek Canoe Trail. Coldwater Creek and Clear Creek are also tributaries to the Blackwater River which ultimately flows into Blackwater Bay, an Outstanding Florida Water.

### ***Manager***

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, OGT will manage this property in partnership with Whiting Field, the FFS and Santa Rosa County.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

In general, the property does not appear to require intense management beyond that typically associated with a managed greenway or trail project. But intensity of long-term management will depend on the ability to acquire as intact an area surrounding Whiting Field as possible. Areas with adjacent residential properties will require more management. The intensity of management will increase as recreation facilities and trails are developed and public usage increases. Other issues that will determine intensity of management include exotic plant removal in some locations, with particular attention to areas where endangered and threatened species exist, such as pitcher plant; water quality protection and enhancement, particularly related to Clear Creek; and protecting archaeological sites and historical structures.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Following acquisition, issues to be addressed in the first year would include site security, posting boundaries and fencing, and conducting assessments/inventories to more fully determine resource management needs. Those needs include exotic and invasive plant removal, water quality enhancement and protection, protection of archaeological sites and historic structures, and prescribed burn needs. Intermediate and long-term management will address the broader issue of managing the area for resource protection and recreation opportunities as described in the “General Scope of Management” above. Development of the management plan will be conducted in coordination with the project partners (Whiting Field, FFS, Santa Rosa County).

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. However, as public use is increased, modest revenue may be generated for camping and use of other recreational facilities. Some areas may be managed by the FFS for timber production.





Clear Creek/Whiting Field Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>5,004</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>2,136</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$6,258,258*</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>2,868</b>

*\*Includes contribution by U.S. Navy, Dept. of Justice*

Clear Creek/Whiting Field Table 2

<b>Clear Creek/Whiting Field FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Panhandle lily</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>hairy-peduncled beaksedge</b>	<b>G2G3/S2</b>
<b>trailing arbutus</b>	<b>G5/S2</b>
<b>Spiny Softshell</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>

*There are 7 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Clear Creek / Whiting Field](#)



## ***Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest***

Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties

Less-than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2014
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	99,501
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	99,501

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring a perpetual conservation easement over the Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest would preserve working forest lands and return them to the historic stands of longleaf pine and accompanying understory habitat for flora and fauna and provide resource protection for the Escambia River watershed.

This proposal meets the public purposes for Florida Forever lands that include enhancing the coordination and completion of other, nearby, land acquisition projects; increasing protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels; protecting, restoring, and maintaining the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state; ensuring that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state; preserving significant archaeological or historic sites; and increasing the amount of forest land available for sustainable management of natural resources.

The Florida Forever Measures Evaluation prepared by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory shows that 95 percent of the site contributes to protecting surface water, 100 percent to aquifer recharge, 21 percent to functional wetlands, and 18 percent to natural floodplain functions. About 87 percent of the site contributes to ecological greenways.

### **Manager(s)**

The property would continue to be managed by the current owner, Resource Management Services, with periodic management oversight by the state to confirm compliance with agreed-upon easement conditions. The representatives of RMS described issues and activities they expect to address in the conservation easements they negotiate with Florida: 1) As existing stands of loblolly and slash pine are finally harvested, all soils capable of supporting longleaf pine will be regenerated with longleaf pine and managed to promote herbaceous understory development; 2) All longleaf pine stands that can be prescribe burned without undue liability risk will be burned at a frequency approximating every 5 years at a minimum, and on a more frequent basis as funding to conduct burns is available; 3) The predominance of longleaf pine over-story trees in any stand will be approximately 45 years of age or older before final harvest occurs; 4) No heavy mechanical site preparation will be done prior to regeneration; no stand will be bedded prior to longleaf pine establishment; and, 5) RMS is willing to



burn on greater frequency and carry longleaf to older age classes than stated above; five years for burns and 45 years for over-story age are the base case for easement valuation.

### **General Description**

The Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest Florida Forever proposal covers 99,498 acres (per proposal; 99,544 acres as determined by GIS) in northern Escambia and central and western Santa Rosa counties, with 51,222 acres in Escambia County, and 48,109 acres in Santa Rosa County (GIS measurements have that as 51,202 acres and 48,342 acres, respectively). The Lower Escambia River Water Management Area bisects the two main tracts of the proposal. The Perdido River Water Management Area is about 6 miles south of the proposal in Escambia County. Two of the easternmost tracts of the proposal are adjacent to the western boundary of Blackwater River State Forest. These two tracts are also adjacent to the Wolfe Creek Forest Florida Forever Project which, in conjunction with the Clear Creek/Whiting Field Florida Forever Project, would form a continuous corridor between Blackwater River State Forest and Naval Air Station Whiting Field, if acquired. State Road 89 passes through the proposal area.

The property has been managed for commercial timber production and, to a much lesser extent, private hunting, fishing, camping, and other outdoor recreation. Prescribed fire is used for site preparation for planting, particularly of longleaf pine stands. If a conservation easement is established on the property, the application outlines a plan to plant longleaf pine stands for the purposes of ecological restoration and sustainable forestry with a 5-year rotation of prescribed fire. The proposed project is located on the Escambia Terraced Lands and on the western side of the Blackwater Hills, uplands that are underlain by sand, gravel, silt, and clay.

A small, fragmented proportion of the upland areas (totaling less than 450 acres) remains as upland pine (FNAI global/state ranks: G3/S2) (or sandhill [G3/S2] at some sites) in somewhat natural condition. One of these stands was visited during the field evaluation. It supported a mixed age stand of longleaf pine with some remnant native groundcover including sparse wiregrass. Before it was converted to pine plantations, upland pine was the dominant natural community within the proposed project and vicinity. Bottomland forest (G4/S3) is the most extensive natural community within the proposed project. It occurs as a closed-canopy forest on terraces and levees in floodplains of larger streams and rivers. Only one area of bottomland forest was visited during the field assessment. Loblolly pine had been planted on the upper slopes of the community, creating moderately dense pine stands.

Agricultural land and pastures comprise only a small part of the proposal and include food plots for wildlife. Other ruderal areas include cemeteries, utility rights-of-way, sand pits, clearings, and successional hardwood forests that often develop along the interface between planted pine stands and adjacent agricultural land.

Rare plants such as Florida Flame Azalea and White-top pitcherplant are found in the forest. Rare animals that have been documented on this site include gopher tortoise, the alligator snapping turtle, little blue heron, the swallow-tailed kite and Bachmann's sparrow.



### **Public Use**

The purpose for conserving this area would be to preserve working forest lands and return them to the historic stands of longleaf pine and accompanying habitat for flora and fauna via a perpetual conservation easement document, and to provide resource protection for the Escambia River watershed. The owner has indicated an interest in making the site available for some limited research or educational efforts, therefore this proposal meets the education measure to some degree. The Division of Recreation and Parks reviewed the proposal and said the project area has thousands of acres of rolling uplands where hiking, biking, horseback riding, and camping could be accommodated. However, it is expected that the recreational experience would be of low quality due to the monotonous conditions and lack of diversity. Paddling, boating, and fishing appear to be impractical on most of the narrow seepage streams due to the shallow channels, dense vegetation and an abundance of tree falls. Boating access to the Escambia River is very limited. There are several public ramps on each side of the river but only one ramp was identified on the subject property, just south of the public ramp at Chumuckla Springs. No tracts were identified that would be suitable for developing a state park.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest was submitted as a conservation easement by The Conservation Fund for the timber investment and the management company Resource Management Services (RMS), LLC. RMS is a timber investment and management organization (TIMO) and conducts silvicultural operations on multiple continents. On August 15, 2014 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) voted to allow this proposal to be evaluated, subsequently on December 12, 2014, ARC voted to add this project to the Florida Forever list in the Less-than-Fee category. In 2014, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$108,444,429.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$110,119,591.

### **Coordination**

There were no confirmed acquisition partners when this project was added. However, the landowner is in contact with the Federal Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service to match some federal funding with Florida Forever funding. The applicants may explore other less-than-fee acquisition opportunities as well. The landowner is interested in phased acquisition.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a conservation easement or less-than-fee interest, the project will be managed with restrictions by the private landowner. The purchase of the development rights, the prohibition of the further conversion of existing natural areas to more intensive uses and limited public access will likely be the primary focus of the conservation easement. For this project, however, the landowner proposes to agree to a more specific level of management for burn intervals and longleaf pine harvesting age.



**Management Prospectus**

The Office of Environmental Services is to ensure oversight of the conservation easement on this project.



Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>99,501</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>99,501</b>

Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest Table 2

<b>Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Round Ebonyshell</b>	<b>G1/S1</b>
<b>Escambia Map Turtle</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>Gulf Lilliput</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>Hairy-peduncled Beaksedge</b>	<b>G2G3/S2</b>
<b>Fontal Dwarf Crayfish</b>	<b>G2G3/S2S3</b>
<b>Turk's cap lily</b>	<b>G5/S1</b>
<b>Harlequin Darter</b>	<b>G5/S1</b>
<b>Florida flame azalea</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Alligator Snapping Turtle</b>	<b>G3G4/S3</b>
<b>Alligator Gar</b>	<b>G3G4/S3</b>

*There are 27 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest](#)



## **Conlin Lake X**

Osceola County  
Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2015
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	9,041
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	9,041

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

About nine miles east of the City of St. Cloud is the 9,041-acre forested Conlin Lake X (or CLX) property completely surrounding a 1,000-plus-acre-lake formerly used by Mercury Marine for developing and testing motorboats. The land has a well-maintained 2,215-acre basin swamp and a large freshwater lake. This project will increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels; help protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state; ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of Central Florida; and increase natural resource-based public recreation opportunities and the amount of open space available in urban areas.

### **Manager(s)**

This property would be managed by the current owner as a less-than-fee conservation easement. If the property is acquired as a conservation easement with the Kenneth Kirchman Foundation retained as land manager, the expected uses are consistent with the current uses. Current uses include preserving, protecting and enhancing the natural environment for the enjoyment of the public and for educational purposes. Hunting on CLX property is currently prohibited, except for the occasional Make-A-Wish Foundation hunt.

### **General Description**

The CLX site encompasses the entirety of Lake Conlin, a meandered, sovereign lake owned by the State of Florida. It is bordered by Deseret Ranch on the north and east, by Birchwood Acres Limited Partnership on the south, and Bay Lake Ranch Subdivision to the west. Important nearby conservation areas include the Lake Lizzie Conservation Area a couple of miles to the west, the Triple N Ranch and Herky Huffman/Bull Creek Wildlife Management Areas five miles to the southeast, and the Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area 15 miles to the south. The Big Bend Swamp/Holopaw Ranch Florida Forever Project abuts the southern boundary of the CLX, and the Osceola Pines Florida Forever Project is seven miles to the south. The CLX property is a high-quality landscape, a well-managed mosaic of uplands and wetlands surrounding a large mostly undeveloped lake, Lake Conlin. The proposal is dominated by large cypress swamps, intermixed with pine flatwoods (mostly mesic but also including



scrubby and wet flatwoods) dotted with smaller dome swamps and depression marshes (see table below). The property surrounds Lake Conlin and is bisected by a 2,215-acre basin swamp that serves as the eastern floodplain of the lake. The lake border is undeveloped with the exception of a small area of pasture and facilities on its southwestern side. Lake Conlin is reported to be in good condition in terms of water quality and natural biota.

### **Public Use**

The Kenneth Kirchman Foundation currently provides natural resource education classes to the school children of Osceola County schools and provides week-long camp opportunities for at-risk children during the summer. These activities are expected to continue if this property is acquired by less-than-fee.

### **Acquisition Planning**

In December 2014 the CLX proposal was submitted to the Division of State Lands. Testimony favoring the project was brought to ARC in February 2015, and ARC staff and members visited this and other proposed sites March 30th through April 2nd of 2015. On June 19th of 2015 ARC voted 7-0 (with two abstentions and one absence) to add this property to the Florida Forever Priority List in the Less-than-Fee category. The owner is anticipating selling an easement on this parcel as one transaction. The entire acreage would be designated as essential. In 2015, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$33,907,500.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$33,862,289.

### **Coordination**

There are no acquisition partners at this time.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a less-than-fee conservation easement, the project would be managed for preservation by the current landowners. The conservation easement would spell out what activities or uses would be allowed or restricted to preserve the resources of the property.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Protection of Lake Conlin and its surrounding basin swamps, mesic flatwoods and wet flatwoods would, according to the FWC, contribute to the goals of protecting imperiled and common fish, and possibly forming a landscape connection to the nearby Big Bend Swamp and Holopaw Ranch conservation project, if the latter is acquired. Species documented on the site include the sandhill crane, bald eagle, Sherman's fox squirrel, and Bachmann's sparrow. Another Florida Forever goal is protection of natural floodplains, and 83 percent of the project meets this function. Some 99 percent of the project meets Florida Forever goals of protecting the surface waters of the state, and an analysis of the site shows that the entire site contributes to groundwater recharge for the aquifer.





***Manager***

The CLX property will continue to be managed by the landowner with restrictions by a negotiated conservation easement. OES will be responsible for monitoring compliance with the terms and conditions of the easement, unless otherwise noted.

***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Due to a long history of no cattle grazing, limited public use, and an ecological focus of land management, the field review showed that most of the natural communities on the Conlin Lake X proposal are in good to outstanding condition. The frequent prescribed fire (two-year rotation) with a focus on growing season burns has resulted in a healthy and vibrant herbaceous layer and the property is often used as a site for native seed collection. Invasive plants were found to be under control on this property.



Conlin Lake X Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>9,041</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>9,041</b>

Conlin Lake X Table 2

<b>Conlin Lake FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Bachman's Sparrow</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Wood Stork</b>	<b>G4/S2</b>
<b>Sherman's Fox Squirrel</b>	<b>G5T3/S3</b>
<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>
<b>Bird Rookery</b>	<b>G5/SNR</b>

*There are 5 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Conlin Lake X](#)



## ***Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed***

Collier and Lee Counties

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1991
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	70,296
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	35,545*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$94,659,111*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	34,751

*\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the State of Florida in conjunction with the SFWMD, Lee County, Collier County, and the United States government.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The large, interconnected swamps of southwest Florida must be preserved if such wildlife as the Florida panther and black bear are to survive. The Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW) project will conserve connections between three conservation areas and will provide critical protection for rare wildlife; protect the flow of water feeding the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge, Fakahatchee Strand, and other areas. Public opportunities will be provided to learn about and enjoy these natural resources as southwest Florida develops rapidly around them.

### **Manager(s)**

South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD).

### **General Description**

The project, which mostly consists of excellent examples of cypress swamps and marshes, will connect the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge and Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve with the National Audubon Society’s Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, thereby securing important habitat for the Florida panther and Florida black bear. These large expanses of wetlands are believed to be critical to the survival of these critically imperiled species. The project supports at least two species of rare and endangered orchids and includes an unusual stand of dwarf bald cypress. No archaeological sites are recorded from the project. Upland areas are vulnerable to agricultural and residential development.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated as a wildlife and environmental area, with such uses as hiking, camping and environmental education.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 7, 1990, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) added the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW) project to the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) Priority list. This project, sponsored by the SFWMD, consists of some 18,205 acres, 73 landowners, and a taxable value of \$23,704,330. The entire project in both Lee and Collier counties contains approximately 49,810 acres, however, the initial focus of land acquisition is on the Camp Keis Strand Corridor (18,205 acres).



The Collier family is the largest landowner in the Strand. If fee-simple acquisition is not negotiable, then conservation easements or other less-than-fee acquisition techniques will be pursued.

On November 20, 1992, the LAAC amended the project design to allow matching funds anywhere within the project for “new” acquisitions (acquired after November 20, 1992) by its partners Lee County and the SFWMD. On September 20, 1993, the LAAC approved a 3,182- acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the SFWMD, consisted of 4 tracts and multiple landowners, and a taxable value of \$8,636,331. The original amendment was for 4,022 acres, however 840 acres of 1 tract were already in the current boundary.

On October 30, 1995, the LAAC approved a 612-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the SFWMD and had a taxable value of \$891,403. The original amendment was for 1,132 acres; however, 520 acres were already in the current boundary.

On December 5, 1996, the LAAC approved a 3,040- acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the SFWMD, consisted of 2 sites, and a taxable value of \$9,029,712. The original amendment was for 4 sites and 4,040 acres, however only sites 3 (excluding the south half of section 35) and 4 were approved.

On December 9, 1999, the Land Acquisition Management Advisory Council (LAMAC) approved a 2,560-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the SFWMD and the CREW Trust, consisted of 353 parcels, 260 landowners, and a taxable value of \$10,500,000. The parcels were designated as essential.

On June 6, 2002, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) approved a 424-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the SFWMD, consisted of 147 parcels and multiple landowners, and a taxable value of \$2,570,240.

In February 2009, Collier County bought 2,499 acres known as Pepper Ranch for \$32,525,080; in October 2009, Lee County bought approximately 15 acres/\$136,500 from their 20/20 program; and SFWMD donated 10 acres to FWC in the same month. The following lands were bought by SFWMD: June 2009 and November 2009 (58 GIS acres/\$661,250); three easement tracts (15) were donated by Bonita Springs Utility Co.; 11/2010 (191 acres/\$3,828,890); December 2010 (5 acres/\$75,000).

On December 9, 2011, ARC added this project to the Florida Forever list in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category.

On February 15, 2013 ARC agreed to remove 77 acres from the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed in Lee and Collier counties because development has already disturbed the property. At the December 2016 ARC meeting, the members voted to add the CREW Headwaters proposal to the existing Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed project as an amendment. This adds 2,841 acres to CREW in the southeastern corner of Lee County in a plan to use willing sellers of groves to make hydrologic fixes to drainage areas that affected downstream areas. After the 2016 boundary change, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$27,209,033. The goals for the addition



included conserving fresh water that has run off into other areas, restoring water levels of the Corkscrew Swamp, improving habitat for such species as the Florida panther and the wood stork, and creating public recreation and wildlife viewing opportunities. FDOT is coordinating with South Florida Water Management District staff to possibly use this area as mitigation for the widening of State Road 82.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$191,454,497.

### **Coordination**

Acquisition partners are SFWMD, Lee and Collier Counties. Both the Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Trust for Public Land (TPL) have been intermediaries in the acquisition of some tracts. Resolutions in support of this project include a pledge from Lee County for \$1.5 million.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the CREW project are to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; and to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project's size, natural communities, and extremely sensitive wildlife resources qualify it as a wildlife and environmental area.

#### ***Manager***

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is lead Manager.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

There are various intensities of management required for lands in CREW. There are low-need parcels such as virgin stands of cypress that require little or no management. Also, within CREW are moderate-need tracts that need basic resource management such as prescribed burning, and high- need tracts that have been completely altered. Severely altered tracts, such as agricultural fields, must be ecologically restored.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

The initial land management plan was implemented in February 1991. Planning and operational activities are ongoing. Public use guidelines, including public access, have been established and are constantly being revised.

#### ***Revenue-generating potential***

No revenue is expected to be generated for at least the next two and one-half years. At that time recommendations by the FWC may lead to activities such as hunting that will generate revenue through



permit and license fees. No other revenue-producing practices are envisioned at this stage of the management program.

***Cooperators in management activities***

A cooperative management agreement with the FWC was executed September 6, 1994. The project now receives regular inspections by SFWMD staff and law enforcement patrol by the FWC Reserve program. Under the agreement, the FWC will enforce all laws, rules and regulations applicable to the management of CREW. Additional lands acquired will be given the same protection.



Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1991
Project Area (GIS acres)	70,296
Acres Acquired (GIS)	35,545*
at a Cost of	\$94,659,111*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	34,751

\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the State of Florida in conjunction with the SFWMD, Lee County, Collier County, and the United States government.

Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Table 2

FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Panther	G5T1/S1
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Wood Stork	G4/S2
Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake	G4/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3
Snowy Egret	G5/S3
Yellow-crowned Night-heron	G5/S3
Little Blue Heron	G5/S4
Tricolored Heron	G5/S4

There are 10 rare species associated with the project.

Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Table 3

Management Cost Summary: SFWMD	1996/97	1997/98
Source of Funds	WMLTF	WMLTF
Salary	\$107,238	\$117,961
OPS	\$35,000	\$38,500
Expense	\$197,250	\$216,915
OCO	\$0	\$28,000
FCO	\$0	N/A
Total	\$339,448	\$401,436

[Map\(s\): Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed](#)



## **Coupon Bight / Key Deer**

Monroe County

Climate Change Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1985
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	3,067
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	1,918*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$30,241,577
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	1,149

*Includes purchases from USFWS and SFWMD in coordination with TNC and TPL.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The subtropical pine forests of rapidly developing Big Pine Key and the islands around it are the home of the endangered Key deer and many Caribbean plants found nowhere else in the country. Rich coral reefs and other hardbottom communities flourish in shallow water around the islands. The Coupon Bight/Key Deer project will protect the remaining undeveloped land on Big Pine and No Name Keys (critical for the survival of the Key deer), protect water quality of the Coupon Bight Aquatic Preserve, provides a preserve buffer to the National Key Deer Refuge (NKDR), and the other waters surrounding the islands, and provide the public an area to appreciate the unique natural world of this part of Florida.

### **Manager(s)**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will manage the majority of this project, however, the Monroe County Land Authority (MCLA) will manage some of the project.

### **General Description**

The project, within the Florida Keys Area of Critical State Concern, encompasses virtually all of the undeveloped land between the Coupon Bight Aquatic Preserve and the NKDR on Big Pine Key and No Name Key. It includes the only significant sources of fresh water in the lower keys, which are critical to the survival of the endangered Key deer. The pine rocklands and associated communities in this project are the largest and the best remaining anywhere. No fewer than 36 special plant species (specified by Florida Natural Areas Inventory) (mostly West Indian, 28 of which are state listed as endangered or threatened) are known from the project. Several will probably go extinct if this area is developed for residential uses. At least 17 FNAI-listed animal species (4 state-listed as endangered, threatened, or special concern) are known or strongly suspected from the project area. No cultural sites are known from the project. Residential development of Big Pine Key threatens this area.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated as a buffer preserve, and a wildlife and environmental area to the NKDR. It will allow such uses as photography, nature appreciation, and hiking.





### **Acquisition Planning**

Coupon Bight Phase I: The Strachley Tract (acquired by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the Trust for Public Lands), and the Brothers tract; Phase II: Developable uplands (a few larger acreage tracts have been acquired by the state—the Pepper and Papps tracts, as well as some subdivision lots in Piney Point, Tropical Park, and Kinercha north of the bight); Phase III: jurisdictional wetlands. The Division of State Lands (DSL) further refined the priority acquisitions to large acreage tracts.

On October 30, 1995, LAMAC (the Land Acquisition and Management and Advisory Council) added 11.38 acres to the project boundary.

On December 9, 2011, ARC (Acquisition and Restoration Council) placed this project in the Climate Change Lands category.

No phasing. Negotiations on remaining parcels continue. Acquisition activity is also focusing on tracts providing a viable corridor between the Coupon Bight and Key Deer portions of the project. All of the owners have received an offer.

On February 11, 2005, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) approved a +376-acre fee-simple addition to the project boundary, with a 2004 total assessed value of \$3,240,815.

On April 20, 2012, ARC removed 271 acres (810 parcels) from the project that a staff review found were disturbed by development.

After the most recent boundary change in 2012, the Coupon Bight/Key Deer project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$9,142,863.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$61,734,566.

### **Coordination**

South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and USFWS are acquisition partners for this site. The Nature Conservancy acted as intermediary in negotiation of 520 acres, expending approximately \$5,124,000 on behalf of the SFWMD and USFWS. The USFWS included this project as an addition to the NKDR.

The MCLA is also an acquisition partner on this project. MCLA has acquired 57 acres from January 1, 2005 through December 31, 2008 for approximately \$663,000.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Coupon Bight/Key Deer project are 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 this state or a larger geographic area; to conserve and protect lands within areas of critical state concern; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; and to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface



water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The property will function as a buffer preserve to Coupon Bight Aquatic Preserve, the NKDR, and sovereign submerged lands.

#### ***Manager***

The USFWS, NKDR, and the MCLA

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Impediments to management are illegal dumping, vehicular trespass, poaching and clandestine drug activities. Regular patrols, cleanup efforts and posting of the property would curtail these problems and require “moderate-need” management. The USFWS land is open to the public but because of limited facilities development is considered a low-need tract requiring minimal resource management and protection.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, the area north of US 1 would be posted in the same manner as existing NKDR lands and provided protection under Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations. NKDR law enforcement officers would routinely patrol the area. Permitted activities would be limited to uses such as hiking, bird watching and photography. There would be no night visits, pets, camping, use of motorized vehicles, and collection of plants and animals. Long-range goals would include development of a detailed management plan for perpetuation and maintenance of natural communities. A prescribed-burning plan would be formulated in pine rockland habitat; long-term monitoring and an active research program would be part of this program. An in-depth resource inventory would be carried out to identify and map sensitive areas that warrant special consideration and management. There will be no infrastructure development in natural areas; unnecessary roads will be abandoned or removed. Long term management needs include exotic plant control and wetlands restoration. Public access will be provided on a limited basis. Acquisition has been primarily directed at unimproved properties. If the preserve acquires improved property, efforts would be made to make use of it for office, education facilities and workshop and storage space.

#### **Revenue-generating potential**

Given the sensitivity of the natural resources of the preserve, large-scale use by the public or private sector is not recommended. Low impact recreational and/or private commercial activities, such as canoe/kayak concessions, wildlife photography/filming may potentially generate some revenue.

#### **Cooperators in management activities**

Security of the project area will depend upon the assistance and cooperation of state and local law enforcement. Regular patrols by preserve staff will assist in detection of potential encroachments and/or violations.



Coupon Bight / Key Deer Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1985
Project Area (GIS acres)	3,067
Acres Acquired (GIS)	1,918*
at a Cost of	\$30,241,577
Acres Remaining (GIS)	1,149

*Includes purchases from USFWS and SFWMD in coordination with TNC and TPL.*

Coupon Bight / Key Deer Table 2

Coupon Bight / Key Deer FNAI Elements	Score
Key Deer	G5T1/S1
Loggerhead Sea Turtle	G3/S3
Cape Sable thoroughwort	G1/S1
tree cactus	G1/S1
Keys Mudcloak	G1/S1?
Key Ringneck Snake	G5T1/S1
Klots' Skipper	G3G4T1/S1
Striped Mud Turtle, Lower Keys Population	G5T1Q/S1
wedge spurge	G2T1/S1
Bartram's Scrub-Hairstreak	G4?T1/S1
Lower Keys Rabbit	G5T1/S1
sand flax	G1G2/S1S2

*There are 48 rare species associated with the project.*

Coupon Bight / Key Deer Table 3

Management Cost Summary: Category	2000/2001	2001/2002
Salary	Not provided	Not provided
OPS	Not provided	Not provided
Expense	\$12,048	\$21,000
OCO	Not provided	Not provided
Special Category	\$1,445	Not provided
FCO	Not provided	Not provided
Grant	Not provided	Not provided
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13,493</b>	<b>\$21,000</b>

[\*Map\(s\): Coupon Bight / Key Deer\*](#)



## **Crossbar / Al Bar Ranch**

Pasco County

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2007
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	12,440
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	n/a
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	12,440

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring the Crossbar/Al Bar Ranch property would fulfill Florida Forever goals of preserving rare-species habitat and preserving a number of rare species documented to be on the site. The site has a high potential for a variety of listed species, and the wetlands on the ranch are used by numerous species of wading birds. Acquiring the property will also meet the goal of protecting, restoring, and maintaining the quality of land and water in Florida by adding to the number of acres of land needing restoration, or land that has already been substantially restored. Another goal of the Florida Forever program measures is to increase the acreage of groundwater-recharge area. The Crossbar/Al Bar Ranch has a very high value as a water-recharge area. The property also has potential to be a regional park, meeting the Florida Forever measure of increasing natural-resource based recreation.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Forest Service (FFS) of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) will manage the Crossbar Ranch portion of the project. At the December 2007 meeting of the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC), the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) expressed interest in managing the Al Bar Ranch portion of this project (about one-third of the project area) if its acquisition were pursued by the Division of State Lands.

### **General Description**

The Crossbar/Al Bar Ranch (also known as the Ranch) Florida Forever project is about 12,440 acres in north-central Pasco County. The property is owned by Pinellas County. The Crossbar portion is 8,069 acres and is the location of the 6.41 acres of the 17 active municipal wellhead sites that Tampa Bay Water owns in fee simple. The Al Bar parcel is 4,100 acres and has several wells on-site used for augmentation, but they are owned by Pinellas County, not Tampa Bay Water. Crossbar/Al Bar Ranch supports cattle, timber, a profitable pine-straw operation, an active Tampa Bay Water wellfield, an environmental education center, and three houses for staff. Most of this activity occurs on the western two-thirds, or Crossbar Ranch part, of the property. The Al Bar portion of the ranch, or eastern one-third, consists of some pine plantation and pasture but has no wellfield facilities and Pinellas County retains all water rights. About 60 percent of Crossbar/ Al Bar Ranch is in planted pine and improved pasture. (There are approximately 3,602 acres of pine plantation on Crossbar Ranch and about 1,514



acres on the Al Bar.) The natural communities present within the matrix of timber and pasture land include xeric hammock and remnant sandhill, depression marsh, mesic flatwoods, scrubby flatwoods, dome swamp, flatwoods lake, mesic hammock, baygall, and sinkhole.

### **Public Use**

A resource inventory will be used to identify sensitive areas that need special attention, protection or management, and to identify areas that are appropriate for responsible recreational or administrative facilities. Recreation and administrative infrastructure development will be primarily located in disturbed areas and will be, at a minimum, required to allow suitable public access, provide facilities for public use, and to administer and manage the property. The manager will promote recreation and environmental education in the natural environment. It is anticipated that interpretive and user services recreation facilities will be developed and the use of low impact, rustic facilities will be stressed. High-impact organized recreation areas are not planned due to possible adverse effects on the natural environment. Development of facilities, as on all conservation lands, will be kept to a level necessary to assure a high-quality recreational experience and any such development will be confined to areas of previous disturbance.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 14, 2007, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) voted to add the Crossbar/Al Bar Ranch to the A list of the Florida Forever projects. The property is proposed to be a fee-simple acquisition. The Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) would focus on the Crossbar portion of the acquisition, and the Department of Environmental Protection, Division of State Lands would focus on the Al Bar portion of the acquisition, both in partnership with Pasco County and others. In 2007, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$3,730,476.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$58,870,625.

### **Coordination**

As stated above, the SWFWMD indicated in a letter provided in the application that if the project were approved, it would consider being a project cosponsor, based on its evaluation of financial needs and partnership commitments at that time.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary land management goals for the management of the tract are: restore, maintain, and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; integrate compatible human use; and insure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. This ecosystem, and multiple use approach, will guide the management activities on this project. Multiple use is defined as a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that takes into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources. This includes, but is not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural scenic, scientific, and historic values; harmonious and



coordinated management of the various resources without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment. Management will be designed to accomplish the goals and measures for this project.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Crossbar/ Al Bar ranches have been managed for cattle and pine production for more than 40 years. There does not appear to be bedding within the pine plantations, but because of the conversion to pasture and straw production, most native groundcover and understory species are absent. With thinning, introduction of prescribed fire, and sustainable forestry management practices, these portions of the project could be restored to a more natural state. The project's size and diversity make it desirable for use and management as a state forest.

#### ***Manager***

The FFS will be the lead manager of the Crossbar Ranch portion of the project and FWC will manage the Al Bar Ranch portion.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Much of the Crossbar Ranch's flatwoods and sandhill areas were altered by silviculture and cattle operations and require restoration. The majority of the acreage of this project consists of planted pine straw production area and improved pasture supporting an active cattle operation. About 60 percent of the project was converted to the pine straw and cattle operations. The pine straw production area is 4,100 acres of slash pines and the pines are 15 to 20 years old. There is an additional 500 acres of planted longleaf pine in areas to be restored before the pine straw production area is restored. The improved pastures total about 2,100 acres with multiple combinations of grasses planted in them. Biotic surveys will be important to accomplish during the early part of plan development, because many rare or listed species are expected to occur in the project. Restoration efforts will focus on introducing prescribed fire and thinning dense pine stands, exotic species treatment, restoring native groundcovers, and possible wetland restoration. The level of management intensity and related management costs is expected to initially be moderate to high to obtain the necessary information and resources to restore and manage this system as a State Forest. Once this information is obtained and resources are available, long-term management costs are expected to be moderate to maintain this area as a State Forest.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the project area is acquired and assigned to the FFS, public access will be immediately provided for low-intensity outdoor resource-based recreation activities such as hiking, biking, hunting, and fishing. Initial and intermediate management efforts will concentrate on resource inventory, restoration, and reforestation of areas where harvesting has occurred, site security, and public and fire management access. Inventories of the site's natural resources, threatened, and endangered flora and fauna will be conducted to provide a basis for the formulation of a management plan. The numerous roads throughout the property require development of a road plan to identify those roads to be used for vehicular access



by the public and roads for administrative use. Roads found to be unnecessary for management or access should be closed. Long-range plans for this property will be directed toward the restoration of disturbed areas, maintenance of natural communities, and responsible public access. To the greatest extent practical, disturbed sites will be restored to conditions that would be expected to occur in naturally functioning ecosystems. Off-site species will eventually be replaced with species that would be expected to occur naturally on those specific sites. Very little of this project area has been burned by prescribed fire in recent years. Burning goals for this project will be to eventually establish an all-season prescribed burning program on all of the fire dependent community types. Whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines, and natural breaks will be utilized to contain, and control prescribed and natural fires. Timber management activities will primarily consist of re-introducing longleaf pines, restoration harvests, and improvement cuts aimed at restoring and perpetuating native ground covers. Stands will be managed to maintain a broad diversity of age, from young stands to areas with old growth characteristics. This will provide habitat for the full spectrum of species that would be found in the natural environment.

***Revenue-generating potential***

As mentioned above, timber sales from the Crossbar Ranch by the DOF will be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in planted pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue dependent upon a variety of factors. Due to the existing condition and volume of the timber resources on the property, revenue generating potential of this project is expected to be moderately high. Some revenues might be realized in the future from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities if such projects could be economically developed. It is anticipated that management funding will come from the CARL trust fund.





Crossbar/Al Bar Ranch Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2007
Project Area (GIS acres)	12,440
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	n/a
Acres Remaining (GIS)	12,440

Crossbar/Al Bar Ranch Table 2

Crossbar/Al Bar Ranch FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Gopher Frog	G3/S3
Florida Burrowing Owl	G4T3/S3
Pine Snake	G4/S3
Southeastern American Kestrel	G5T4/S3
Tricolored Heron	G5/S4

*There are 9 rare species associated with the project.*

Crossbar/Al Bar Ranch Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS & FWC	Startup	Recurring
Salary (3 FTE)	\$108,341	not provided
Expense	\$500,000	not provided
OCO	\$450,000	not provided
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,058,341</b>	<b>not provided</b>

[\*Map\(s\): Crossbar / Al Bar Ranch\*](#)





## ***Dade County Archipelago***

Miami-Dade County

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1994
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	885
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	578*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$35,651,244*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	307

\*Includes acquisitions by Dade County

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

On a limestone ridge east of the Everglades, where Miami and Homestead and surrounding farms now stand, were subtropical pinelands and hardwood hammocks unique to the United States. Now only tiny pieces of these forests remain, the best of which the Dade County Archipelago project will protect. In so doing, the project will conserve habitat for rare animals and dozens of rare plants, many found nowhere else in the world, and will provide areas where residents and visitors can learn about and appreciate what was here before the cities.

### **Manager(s)**

Miami-Dade County.

### **General Description**

This project contains some of the most outstanding examples of rockland hammock that remain in Florida, as well as the best remaining examples of the highly endangered pine rockland outside Everglades National Park. The pine rocklands are critical to the survival of at least 51 rare and endangered plant species found nowhere else, and several rare animal species occur within the project. Several of the hammocks contain significant archaeological sites. The urbanization of Dade County has nearly destroyed these ecosystems. The remaining sites are still threatened by agriculture and urban development.

### **Public Use**

The project tracts are designated for use as botanical sites with passive recreational use.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The Dade County Archipelago dates from 1994 when the former Tropical Hammocks of the Redlands and Miami Rockridge Pinelands, both in Miami-Dade County, were combined.

### ***Tropical Hammocks of the Redlands***

Phasing of the hammocks in order of priority: Silver Palm (two of three tracts purchased through TNC), Castello Extension, Loveland, Big and Little George, Meissner Ross, Southwest Island, Holiday, Lucille, Ross, Madden's. All sites are essential. Miami-Dade County has acquired acreage in Holiday and Lucille Hammocks.



### ***Miami Rockridge Pinelands***

Phasing of the pineland sites in order of priority: Site 12 (partially acquired), Site 2 (partially acquired), Site 6, Site 15 (majority acquired in 1992), Site 14, Site 13 (partially acquired), Site 8 (acquired in 1991), Site 1 (acquired in 1991), Site 16 (half acquired in 1992), Site 7 (majority acquired in 1992), FNAI addition to Site 10, Site 9. The Ludlam Pineland (10 acres) was added in 1994. Miami-Dade County has acquired the tract. All sites are essential.

During 1995, Miami-Dade County proposed adding 16 sites to the project area. All of the sites were assessed during the 1995 cycle with LAMAC approving in December 1995. The sites added were Boystown (77 acres); Tamiami Addition; Wilkins- Pierson Addition; Whispering Pines; Castellow Complex #28; Castellow Complex #31; Castellow Complex #33; Goulds, Hardin, Owaissaa Bauer Addition; Fuchs; Navy Wells #2; Navy Wells #23; Navy Wells #39; Round Hammock; and Bauer Drive Pineland. Miami-Dade County acquired approximately 348 acres within the project at a cost of \$21,889,314. After the most recent boundary change in 1995, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$184,320.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$49,511,755.

### **Coordination**

Miami-Dade County is the acquisition partner. In May 1990, county voters approved a referendum, which increased ad valorem tax by .75 mills for two years, generating approximately \$90 million specifically for the acquisition and management of environmentally endangered lands. The county participated in all phases of project development and paid for initial mapping and title work on all the hammock sites. TNC has been an intermediary in the acquisition of some sites. Miami-Dade County continues with acquisition of the remaining tracts. Resolutions in support of this project included a pledge from the Miami-Dade County Commission to participate in providing 50 percent of acquisition funds and to manage the acquired sites.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary objective of management of the Dade County Archipelago project is to preserve and restore the best of the small areas of pine rockland and rockland hammock left in Miami-Dade County.

Achieving this objective will protect over fifty rare plant species, several of which are found nowhere else in the world and allow the public to learn about and appreciate the original landscapes of the Miami Rock Ridge. The project should be managed under the single-use concept: management activities should be directed toward the preservation of resources. Consumptive uses such as hunting or logging should not be permitted. Managers should control public access to the sites; thoroughly inventory the natural and historical resources of the sites; work to eliminate invasive exotic plants; and monitor management activities to ensure that they are actually preserving the natural communities and their constituent



species. Managers should limit the number and size of recreational facilities, such as interpretive trails, ensure that they do not harm the most sensitive resources, and site them in already disturbed areas when possible. This project includes most of the high-quality pine rockland and rockland hammock sites remaining in Miami-Dade County and therefore, with intensive management, has the configuration to achieve its primary objective.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Dade County Archipelago includes some of the best rockland hammocks and pine rocklands in Florida. Their rare West Indian and endemic plant species and their small size qualify these areas as state botanical sites.

#### ***Manager***

Miami-Dade County Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Dade County Archipelago generally includes lands that are high-need tracts, requiring site-specific resource management and protection.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, initial activities concentrate on site security; removing existing trash; public and fire management access; and resource inventory, including areas of special concern such as archaeological sites, rare species, fern, vine, and exotic dominated areas. Long-range plans will generally be toward restoring disturbed areas and perpetuating and maintaining natural communities. Management activities will also stress protecting threatened and endangered species. The resource inventory will be used to identify sensitive areas that need special attention, protection or management. Unnecessary roads, firelines and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned and/or restored to the greatest extent practical.



Dade County Archipelago Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1994
Project Area (GIS acres)	885
Acres Acquired (GIS)	572*
at a Cost of	\$35,651,244*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	307

\*Includes acquisitions by Dade County

Dade County Archipelago Table 2

Dade County Archipelago FNAI Elements	Score
tiny polygala	G1/S1
Florida lantana	G2T1/S1
Miami Cave Crayfish	G1/S1
Small's milkpea	G1Q/S1
Carter's small-flowered flax	G2T1/S1
Cuban snake-bark	G2G3T1/S1
deltoid spurge	G2T1/S1
Fakahatchee ladies'-tresses	G4T1/S1
Florida brickell-bush	G5T1/S1
Florida filmy fern	G4G5T1/S1
pinelands spurge	G2T1/S1
Rim Rock Crowned Snake	G1G2/S1S2

There are 57 rare species associated with the project.

Dade County Archipelago Table 3

Management Cost Summary: Dade County	1996/97	1997/98
Source of Funds	County	County
Salary	\$120,362	\$190,986
OPS	\$57,119	\$0
Expense	\$0	\$58,424
OCO	\$31,320	\$140,084
FCO	\$8,357	\$66,812
Total	\$217,158	\$456,306

[Map\(s\): Dade County Archipelago](#)



## ***Devil’s Garden***

Collier and Hendry Counties  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2002
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	82,964
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	11,656
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	71,308

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring this project will contribute to Florida Forever goals of increasing protection of Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels and filling a gap in the corridor for a large landscape for the federally endangered Florida panther. Numerous records of panther use of the property as well as numerous other rare and threatened plants and animals have been noted.

It will also increase the forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources. The project borders the Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest on the west and Dinner Island to the south. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses a number of Florida Forever project sites. The trail is a congressionally designated national scenic trail.

### **Manager(s)**

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is the recommended lead manager for most of the area (approximately 71,608 acres). Florida Forest Service/FFS will manage the two westernmost parcels (approximately 10,900 acres) adjoining the Okaloacoochee State Forest.

### **General Description**

The Devil’s Garden proposal includes 82,995 acres (per digitized boundaries) in Hendry and Collier counties. The proposal has a single owner and includes four parcels. The major parcel (71,608 acres) adjoins the eastern boundary of Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest and encompasses an area, roughly 18 miles long (east-west) and six miles wide (north-south); an additional parcel (6,445 acres) is adjacent to the northeastern boundary of the State Forest and Okaloacoochee Slough Wildlife Management Area and lies across Keri Road from the northwest corner of the major parcel. Two smaller parcels (T-shaped parcel: 3,328 acres and 1,127 acres) abut the southwestern boundary of the State Forest.

Devil’s Garden is a huge tract of ranch land that has been heavily impacted by cattle ranching activities (conversion to pasture) and to a lesser extent by agriculture. Non-forested wetlands, including basin/depression marsh, swale, and wet prairie make up the dominant natural communities still present on the property. Mesic/wet flatwoods have been, to a large extent, cleared and converted to pasturelands. Prairie hammocks were scattered throughout the property and formed irregularly shaped forests, usually



with basin/depression wetlands. In a helicopter survey, a few small (15 acres) patches of dome swamp fringing swale systems could be seen in the southwestern T-shaped parcel. Both southern parcels have few remaining upland natural communities except for narrow fringes adjacent to wetlands; some hammock remains in the southwest corner of the T-shaped parcel.

### **Public Use**

The property can accommodate resource-based recreation, including camping, picnicking, hiking, natural resource appreciation (nature study), wildlife observation, bicycling, horseback riding and environmental education. Depending on management emphasis, the land could provide significant hunting opportunities. Careful planning would need to be done to coordinate hunting and wildlife observation. Because the project is so large, it may be possible to set areas aside where wildlife observation can be emphasized and encouraged.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 5, 2002, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) added the Devil's Garden project to Group A of the Florida Forever 2003 Priority List. This fee-simple project, sponsored by the Nature Conservancy (TNC) and FFS, consisted of approximately 82,508 acres with a single owner, Alico Inc., and a 2001 taxable value of \$9,483,649.

On December 14, 2007 ARC voted to move Devil's Garden to Group B of the 2008 Florida Forever Priority List.

On December 9, 2011 Devil's Garden was classified as a Critical Natural Lands project.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$268,280,121.

### **Coordination**

TNC is the intermediary and is working to find a purchaser for the eastern portion of the tract (farm land).

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management for the Devil's Garden project are to increase protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels; protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state; increase natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities including but not limited to wildlife viewing, hunting, hiking and camping; and increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Due to the diversity, and connectivity to the Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest, the two westernmost parcels (approximately 10,900 acres) qualify as State Forests. The high wildlife resource values and the



designation of primary or secondary panther habitat zones on the project qualify the eastern parcel (approximately 71,608 acres) as a wildlife management area.

***Manager***

FWC will manage the eastern parcel. FFS will manage the two westernmost parcels as part of the Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest.

***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Much of the project's drier natural community types have been disturbed, with many converted to some improved form of agriculture. This conversion usually involves some type of hydrologic alteration for water management. This property contains vast areas of wetlands with sensitive natural resources. Land management and public use will specifically be structured to improve and protect these areas. Surrounding land uses are not expected to affect prescribed burning on this parcel. The level of management intensity and related management costs is expected to be initially high to obtain the necessary information and resources to restore and manage the system. Given the importance of this property to panther recovery, this link between habitat management and panther use will be critical to insuring the property is managed consistent with the primary purposes for acquisition. The Devil's Garden proposal, when acquired by the state, will require 14 FTE positions to manage the project area. Certain activities may be privatized, which would reduce the number of FTEs required. Funding for natural-resource management and public use administration would come from the CARL (Conservation and Recreation Lands) Trust Fund (as of 2015 the LATF). It is anticipated that revenue sources would include public use fees and timber harvests.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after acquisition, emphasis will be placed on site security, posting boundaries, public access, fire management, resource inventory, exotic species control and removal of refuse. Conceptual management plans will be developed describing the management goals and specific objectives necessary to implement future resource management. Once the area is acquired, steps will be taken to ensure that the public is provided appropriate access while simultaneously affording protection of sensitive resources. Public use will be limited to activities that will have little or no impact to these areas. Vehicular use by the public will be confined to designated roads. Unnecessary access points will be closed. Both agencies will cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate. Long-range plans for this property will generally be directed toward the restoration of disturbed areas and maintenance of natural communities. To the greatest extent practical, disturbed sites will be restored to conditions that would be expected to occur in naturally functioning ecosystems. Management activities will also stress enhancing abundance and spatial distribution of threatened and endangered species. Multiple use principles will be practiced where compatible with resource management goals and acquisition purposes. An all-season prescribed burning management plan will be developed and implemented to improve the habitat quality of native fire-dependent plant communities and wildlife habitats.



### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Management will seek to improve revenue-generating potential by improving wildlife diversity and resource-based recreation. Anticipated revenues from wildlife conservation will come from sales of hunting licenses, wildlife management area permits and other special hunting permits. Additional revenues might be generated from ecotourism and wildlife viewing activities. Timber sales will be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue dependent upon a variety of factors. Due to the existing condition of the timber resource on the property, revenue generating potential of this project is expected to be low. Some revenues might be generated from agricultural farming contracts in areas currently being farmed as row crops until such areas can be restored in the interest of wildlife conservation.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The FWC and FFS will cooperate with other federal, state and local government agencies, including the South Florida Water Management District, in managing the area.





Devil’s Garden Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2002
Project Area (GIS acres)	82,964
Acres Acquired (GIS)	11,656
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	71,308

Devil’s Garden Table 2

Devil’s Garden FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Panther	G5T1/S1
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Wood Stork	G4/S2
Crested Caracara	G5/S2
Little Blue Heron	G5/S4
White Ibis	G5/S4

There are 9 rare species associated with the project.

Devil’s Garden Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	not provided
Salary (6 FTE)	\$216,639	not provided
Expense	\$725,000	not provided
OCO	\$418,200	not provided
Total	\$1,354,839	not provided

[Map\(s\): Devil’s Garden](#)



## ***Dickerson Bay / Bald Point***

Franklin and Wakulla Counties

Climate Change Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1996
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	25,430
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	5,820
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$9,424,365
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	19,610

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

On the coast of Wakulla and Franklin Counties, the shallow Gulf of Mexico laps against the westernmost Big Bend salt marshes and the easternmost white sand beaches of the Panhandle. The St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge already protects much of this coast; the Dickerson Bay/Bald Point project will protect more including areas critical to the survival of the endangered Kemp’s ridley sea turtle. In so doing, it will also protect the fishery in the area by protecting its foundation - rich mud flats and seagrass beds - and will add land to Mashas Sands County Park where people may enjoy the beauty of this little-disturbed coast.

### **Manager(s)**

The Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Florida Department of Environmental Protection will manage that portion of the project in Franklin County; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Wakulla County will separately manage individual parcels in Wakulla County.

### **General Description**

The project, comprising three separate areas, includes uplands around Dickerson, Levy, and Ochlockonee Bays. These bays provide foraging habitat for juvenile Kemp’s ridley sea turtles, the world’s most endangered sea turtle, and other state or globally rare birds (e.g., wood stork, bald eagle) and sea turtles (e.g., loggerhead). The uplands surrounding the three bays are an intricate mosaic of lakes, depression marshes, mesic flatwoods (high quality to disturbed) that support populations of such rare animals as Sherman’s fox squirrel and gopher tortoise, scrubby flatwoods, and scrub connected with the marine communities by numerous tidal creeks, salt flats, and salt marshes. The Bald Point site includes beach dunes used by many species of shore birds. The condition of these uplands might be expected to play a larger role in maintaining the quality of the marine communities than would be the case with a straight shoreline. The natural upland communities adjoin similar communities in St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge to the north and west. Twelve archaeological sites are known from Bald Point. The Bald Point site is threatened by development.

### **Public Use**

The southern part of this project (i.e., Bald Point and southern Dickerson Bay) is designated for use as a state park that will augment the recreational opportunities of the adjacent Mashas Sands County Park



with areas for picnicking, hiking, camping, and canoeing. The beaches of Bald Point are suitable for swimming and other activities. The northern part of this project will be incorporated into the St. Marks Wildlife Refuge. This portion is suitable for boating. With a 17,041-acre addition in 2016, there is interest by the FFS and DEP's Division of Recreation and Parks.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Dickerson Bay: Larger ownerships should be negotiated before the smaller ones. The essential parcels are McMillan, Brunstad, Nichols, JDN Enterprises, Meara, Cobleigh, Panacea Coastal Properties and Metcalf. Piney Island, also an essential parcel, was donated to the USFWS in 1996. Bald Point: All parcels are essential. The LGR Investment Fund, LTD. has been acquired.

On October 15, 1998, the LAMAC redesignated the Jer Be Lou Development Co. parcel as essential. The parcel has been acquired. Initial acquisition started in 1999 with funds from the CARL/P2000 acquisition program along Apalachee Bay.

On August 30, 1999 the Board of Trustees purchased 1,349 acres in Franklin County from the Trust for Public Land which later became the Bald Point State Park. In 2003 the park was expanded when 3,485 acres were purchased from the St. Joe Company. As of January 2006, the park contained 4,859 acres, and is jointly administered with the Ochlockonee River State Park.

On September 6, 2011, DRP purchased to manage .77 acres (Kennedy-\$67,500).

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Climate Change Lands category.

In October 2016, ARC approved the Bluffs of St. Teresa project and immediately amended that project into the Dickerson Bay/Bald Point project. This added 17,041 acres adjacent to Bald Point State Park, across the Ochlockonee River from the Ochlockonee River State Park, and adjacent to the Tate's Hell State Forest. If acquired, different portions of this land could be managed by the Florida Forest Service (FFS) as part of Tate's Hell and by the Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) as part of Bald Point. Access to Ochlockonee Bay, Alligator Harbor (Aquatic Preserve), and several of the ponds provide opportunities for paddling and fishing. The extensive network of woods roads can easily accommodate hiking, biking, and nature study. The extensive frontage on U.S. highways expands the possibilities for siting of a campground and visitor center. The property's large size also makes hunting feasible.

After the most recent boundary addition in 2016, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$5,652,224.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$37,677,949.

### **Coordination**

The USFWS is an acquisition partner, and coordination between the state and federal government should be maintained. On August 27, 1998, a portion of the Bald Point project was selected to receive Florida Communities Trust grant money.



## **Management Policy Statement**

The primary objectives of management of the Dickerson Bay/Bald Point project are to maintain and restore the natural communities around Dickerson and Levy Bays and to give the public an area for hiking, fishing, camping, and other recreation compatible with protection of the natural resources. Protecting the natural communities of the area is critical to the survival of the endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtle and will also help protect habitat for wading birds and shore birds. It will also help protect a recreational and commercial fishery that depends on the marine life of the bays. The project should be managed under the single-use concept: management activities should be directed toward the preservation of the salt marshes, flatwoods, and other communities around the bays. Consumptive uses such as hunting or logging should not be permitted. Managers should control public access to the project; limit public motor vehicles to one or a few main roads; thoroughly inventory the resources; burn the fire-dependent flatwoods in a pattern mimicking natural lightning-season fires, using natural firebreaks or existing roads for control; and monitor management activities to ensure that they are actually maintaining or improving the quality of the natural communities. Managers should limit the number and size of recreational facilities, such as hiking trails, ensure that they avoid the most sensitive resources, and site them in already disturbed areas when possible.

The project includes nearly all of the undeveloped, privately-owned land along Dickerson and Levy Bays and adjoins the Mashes Sands county park on its southeast border. It therefore has the configuration and location to achieve its primary objectives.

## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The large south parcel of the Dickerson Bay portion of the project has the capacity to provide an effective buffer for the protection of the marine communities of Levy and Dickerson Bays. The Kemp's Ridley sea turtle frequents the waters of these bays. The parcel is also capable of providing resource based recreational opportunities, particularly in support of the adjacent county park at Mashes Island. For these reasons, the property would be suitable as a state park within the state park system.

### ***Manager***

In Franklin County, the Division of Recreation and Parks and the Florida Forest Service. In Wakulla County, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Wakulla County.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The property will be a high-need management area. Public recreational use and development compatible with resource management will be an integral aspect of management.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Upon acquisition and assignment to the Division, public access will be provided for low intensity, non-facility related outdoor recreation activities. Also, management will concentrate on site security, fire management and developing a resource inventory and public use plan. Vehicle access by the public will be confined to designated points and routes. Protecting the adjacent marine environment will be a



primary focus for the property. Over the long term, however, a wide range of resource-based recreation and environmental education facilities may be promoted. The nature, extent and location of infrastructure will be defined by the management plan for the property. Restoring and maintaining natural communities will be incorporated into long range management efforts and disturbed areas will be restored to conditions that would be expected to occur in natural systems, to the extent practical.

***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue is expected to be generated from this property initially. After acquisition, it will probably be several years before any significant public facilities might be developed. The amount of any future revenue will depend on the nature and extent of public use in the management plan for the property. The property has potential for generating local economic benefits. The pine plantation that covers a large portion of the Bald Point project will be managed with the assistance of the Florida Forest Service (aka Division of Forestry/DOF) has considerable value and can be expected to provide significant revenue if acquired with the land. No other significant revenues would be expected over the short term after acquisition. The amount of future revenues from other than timber sales will depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities developed.

***Cooperators in management activities***

Due to the potential for enhancement of the adjacent county park by this project area, coordination of management efforts may be desirable. On the Bald Point site, the FFS, will be consulted on forest management and timber issues related to planning and implementation of a forest resource management plan. Other federal, state, and local government agencies will be consulted, as appropriate, to further resource management, recreational and educational opportunities, and the development of the project lands for state park purposes.



Dickerson Bay/Bald Point Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1996
Project Area (GIS acres)	25,430
Acres Acquired (GIS)	5,820
at a Cost of	\$9,424,365
Acres Remaining (GIS)	19,610

Dickerson Bay/Bald Point Table 2

Dickerson Bay/Bald Point FNAI Elements	Score
Kemp's Ridley	G1/S1
Green Sea Turtle	G3/S2S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Loggerhead Sea Turtle	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Lobeless Spiny Burrowing Beetle	G1G2/S1S2
Godfrey's blazing star	G2/S2
Sculptured Pigtoe	G3/S2S3
zigzag silkgrass	G3/S3
Gulf Coast lupine	G3T3/S3
Suwannee Cooter	G5T3/S3
Kemp's Ridley	G1/S1
Green Sea Turtle	G3/S2S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3

There are 23 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Dickerson Bay / Bald Point](#)



## ***Eastern Scarp Ranchlands***

Highlands County

Less-than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2013
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	2,214
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	2,214

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring this property as a conservation easement would buffer the Avon Park Air Force Range against encroachment and changing land uses. This property also has potential water quality benefits for the Kissimmee River and Lake Istokpoga.

### **Manager(s)**

The property would continue to be managed by the landowner, with compliance reviews of management being the responsibility of the Division of State Lands.

### **General Description**

The 2,214-acre property of Eastern Scarp Ranchlands (ESR) in Highlands County was proposed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) as a less-than-fee acquisition. The project has three parcels. The property is accessed from Scrubpens Road, part of which is a county-maintained road. The site was visited by the ARC assessment team on October 15, 2013. The ESR project name is taken from its geology. It spans a slope that descends 50 feet in elevation over the course of about two miles. The western side of the property occupies part of the southern tip of Bombing Range Ridge, a narrow sand ridge of Pleistocene origin. On this ridge, which reaches an elevation of about 95 feet above sea level on the proposal, soils are moderately well-drained. A broad slope, about 300 meters wide going from west to east, descends from the ridge. From this point eastward, the plain begins a very gradual descent, eventually dropping to an elevation of about 50 feet along the edge of the Kissimmee floodplain. The ESR is adjacent to the Avon Park Air Force Range (APAFR), which forms the northern boundary of the site. Floodplain lands adjacent the east side of the proposal are managed by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). Northeast of the property on the other side of the Kissimmee River is Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park. The ESR is a working ranch, almost 80 percent converted to improved Bahia grass-dominated pasture. Most of the pasture occupies former dry prairie that once stretched unbroken from the cutthroat seep located in the western portion of the property to the Kissimmee River floodplain that forms the eastern boundary of the site. The pasture is dotted with numerous depression marshes, many of which have been dug to form watering holes for cattle or drained via a network of ditches. The largest remaining natural community is a zone of wet prairie-cutthroat grass seep (ca. 164 acres) on the eastern slope of the Bombing Range Ridge.



### **Public Use**

The Division of Recreation and Parks' analysis is that, although the tract is potentially significant as a military buffer area and as an addition to an existing mosaic of other fee and less-than-fee conservation lands within the Kissimmee River watershed, opportunities for public recreation are unlikely. Consequently, this tract is not appropriate for management by the Division of Recreation and Parks. The project is not located within Florida Greenways and Trails System Plan's Land Trail or Paddling Trail Network.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The parcel would most likely be acquired in one purchase, as a single conservation easement, and therefore the entire parcel would be designated as essential.

On December 13, 2013, the Acquisition and Restoration Council voted to add the Eastern Scarp Ranchlands to the list of Florida Forever projects. At the time, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$938,262.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$1,329,121.

### **Coordination**

TNC has been working with the Department of Defense and the County and has secured 1,382 acres in this region contiguous with APAFR. TNC confirmed in late 2013 that an application has been submitted for additional Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) funding to match with Florida Forever funding to acquire this proposal.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a less-than-fee acquisition, the Eastern Scarp Ranchlands project would continue to be managed by the private landowner, but in accordance with the terms of a conservation easement. The likely elements of such an agreement could include purchasing the development rights, prohibiting turning more natural areas into intensive use areas, and managing the property for wildlife habitat.

### **Management Prospectus**

The Office of Environmental Services of the Division of State Lands would be designated to ensure the proper oversight of the conservation easement of this project.





Eastern Scarp Ranchlands Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2013
Project Area (GIS acres)	2,214
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	2,214

Eastern Scarp Ranchlands Table 2

Eastern Scarp Ranchlands FNAI Elements	Score
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Gopher tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
White ibis	G5/S4

*There are 4 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Eastern Scarp Ranchlands](#)



## ***Escribano Point***

Santa Rosa County  
Substantially Complete

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2002
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	3,045
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	2,813
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$1,590,000
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	232

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquisition of this proposal would complete public land ownership of Escribano Point and the mouth of the Yellow River, thereby achieving the goals of the original 1994 Escribano Point CARL project. It encompasses three sets of parcels: a northern set at the mouth of the Yellow River that adjoins Yellow River Water Management Area (WMA) lands; a middle set around Catfish Basin adjoining Eglin Air Force Base lands on the east and Yellow River WMA lands on the north and south, and a southern set, encompassing Escribano Point, that adjoins Yellow River WMA lands on the north and Eglin lands on the north and east. If purchased, the proposal plus these public lands would provide recreation opportunities and natural resource protection for 10.4 miles of shoreline along East Bay and Blackwater Bay. Its purchase would contribute to the protection of the waters of Blackwater Bay along with that afforded by the Garcon Point Water Management Area, which borders 4.6 miles of the west shore. It would also help protect 37 miles of the Yellow River by adding to the public shoreline of the Yellow River Water Management Area. Uplands south of the river floodplain are protected as part of Eglin Air Force Base.

### **Manager(s)**

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is the recommended lead manager for the area.

### **General Description**

The Escribano Point project is located in Santa Rosa County and is comprised of 3,049 acres. Located along the eastern shore of Pensacola Bay, Escribano Point is by Eglin Air Force Base to the east, and provides an upland buffer for the Yellow River Marsh Aquatic Preserve to the west. The proposal contains relatively intact examples of wetland communities, hammocks, and wet prairies that provide habitat for numerous rare and threatened plants and animals. The project is also very rich in archaeological and historical resources, containing nine recorded archaeological sites and two historic structures.

### **Public Use**

The project has potential to provide a varied recreation experience by offering opportunities such as saltwater swimming, bicycling, picnicking, camping, saltwater fishing, hiking, hunting, nature appreciation and natural resource education. Some of the several archaeological and historical sites



known to exist on the project may have potential for viewing. The wetlands in this project limit the placement of facilities, dispersal of activities and the quantity of activities. As access is through Eglin Air Force Base, access itself may be a limiting factor.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On February 25, 2003, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) added the Escribano Point project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2003 Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition proposal, sponsored by the Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the NFWFMD, consisted of approximately 2,914 acres, 10 owners, and a 2001 taxable value of \$1,337,730. The entire proposal was identified as essential.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Substantially Complete category of projects.

On April 20, 2012 the ARC added 63.4 acres to the project that had been authorized for sale from the US Forest Service. After the most recent addition in 2012, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$802,454. On December 2012 1,541 acres were acquired by a donation from the Trust for Public Land.

On September 15, 2017, the Trust for Public Land (TPL) donated 28 acres toward the completion of this project.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$877,232.

### **Coordination**

The Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) is an acquisition partner. The US Air Force, through a Memorandum of Agreement, is also an acquisition partner, to help buffer and prevent encroachment of Eglin Air Force Base.

### **Management Policy Statement**

Priority will be given to conserving and protecting environmentally unique native habitats, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. Management programs will be designed to conserve, protect, manage and/or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, wildlife populations, forests and water resources. The tract will also be managed to provide opportunities for camping, environmental and cultural resource education, fishing, hiking, hunting, and wildlife viewing.

The connection and proximity of this proposed project to other conservation lands, as well as its diversity of natural community types, provide important habitats for wildlife populations. Since the principal purposes of the proposal are to protect habitat for wildlife, management goals will be oriented to conservation and protection of these species, and to carefully control public uses.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

This project meets the Goals and Measures for significant corridors, landscape linkages, for preserving archeological and historic sites, and to increase nature-based recreation.



### ***Manager***

The high wildlife resource value of this project indicates that the FWC is the suitable lead manager for the area. The FWC should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies in managing the area.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Much of the Escribano Point proposal includes lands that are relatively undisturbed and representative of the natural ecology of the area. Such areas may require basic resource management practices, such as the use of prescribed fire, maintenance of natural hydrology, and control of access where appropriate. Biotic surveys should be a priority, since there are potentially many taxa of rare or listed species. In addition, the Escribano Point project may need some specific management measures to promote survival of listed species and other species of wildlife. As with all wildlife management areas, minimal infrastructure development will be required to provide for public access and use, site, security, and management. Any such development will be confined to areas of previous disturbance.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

After acquisition, emphasis will be placed on site security, posting boundaries, public access, fire management, resource inventory, exotic species control and removing refuse. A conceptual management plan will be developed by the FWC describing management goals and objectives necessary for resource management. Long-range plans will emphasize restoring and maintaining ecosystem functions; restoring native wildlife populations and wildlife diversity, including protecting and managing threatened and endangered species; and managing sustainable public use of game wildlife populations balanced with other wildlife oriented recreational activities. Essential roads will be stabilized to provide all weather public access and management operations. An all-season prescribed burning management plan will be developed and implemented to improve the habitat quality of native fire-dependent plant communities and wildlife habitats. Where appropriate, practical and in pursuit of wildlife habitat objectives, forest resources will be managed using acceptable silvicultural practices.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Revenue will be generated from sales of hunting and fishing licenses, wildlife management area stamps and possibly other special hunting stamps. Some revenues might be realized from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The FWC should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies in managing the area. These agencies might include the Department of Defense (Eglin AFB), the Department of Environmental Protection, the Division of Forestry, and the Northwest Florida Water Management District.



Escribano Point Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2002
Project Area (GIS acres)	3,045
Acres Acquired (GIS)	2,813
at a Cost of	\$1,590,000
Acres Remaining (GIS)	232

Escribano Point Table 2

Escribano Point FNAI Elements	Score
Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander	G2/S1S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Bog Dwarf Salamander	G1G2/S1S2
Panhandle lily	G2/S2
Curtiss' sandgrass	G3/S3
Lavender Burrowing Crayfish	G4/S2
Florida Clapper Rail	G5T3?/S3?
hairy wild indigo	G3T3/S3
Alligator Snapping Turtle	G3G4/S3
Common Kingsnake	G5/S2S3
Coal Skink	G5/S3
Hairy Woodpecker	G5/S3

*There are 13 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Escribano Point](#)



## ***Estero Bay***

Lee County

Substantially Complete

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1985
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	13,894
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	12,009
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$54,461,790
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	1,885

*Note: 433 acres were removed October 2009 due to residential/commercial/infrastructure development.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Estero Bay is one of the most productive estuaries in the state. Its mangroves shelter important nesting colonies of water birds, and feed and protect many aquatic animals. These animals, in turn, are the foundation of a commercial and sport fishery. Important archaeological remains of the Calusa Indians dot the area. The Estero Bay project will protect the bay’s water quality, its native plants and animals, its archaeological sites, and will provide recreational opportunities to the people of the rapidly growing Fort Myers area.

### **Manager(s)**

Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

### **General Description**

Much of the Estero Bay project area is composed of wetlands fronting Estero Bay (mangrove swamp, salt marsh, and salt flats). These communities provide nutrients to the bay, contributing substantially to its biological productivity. The bay area supports a diversity of wildlife, including the federally threatened bald eagle. The wetlands in a natural condition help maintain high water quality in the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve. Several archaeological sites attributed to the Calusa Indians and their prehistoric ancestors are known from the project area. The project is threatened by the rapid residential development in the area.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated as a buffer preserve to the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve and can provide opportunities for fishing, hiking, nature appreciation, and primitive camping.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Phase I: Windsor/Steven’s tract (acquired) and the Estero Bay ownership (acquired). Phase II: developable uplands from Section 19 north. Phase III: developable uplands from Section 30 south. Phase IV: wetlands and islands. Other essential tracts more specifically identified by LAMAC in 1994 include the Chapel Ridge area and other high quality scrub areas in sections 19, 30, 31 and 5.

On October 15, 1998, the LAMAC revised the designation of the following parcels to essential: Boone, Haywood/Staffile Trust, Zemel, TNC, Rubin, Kagin, Bigelow, C. Bigelow, Cape Corp., ADP Chimney,



Marsh and Chitwood, Francisco, Goldberg, and Helmerich. On February 5, 1998, and March 20, 1998, the Council added 302 acres and 1,586 acres, respectively. The Council deleted 932 acres at the March meeting.

On October 17, 2000, The Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added 160 acres to the project. The additions were made to complete ownerships that were partially included.

On December 6, 2001, this project was moved from the Florida Forever “B” list to the “A” list.

On February 6, 2004, the Council added a 98-acre parcel on the Estero River to the boundaries of the project. At the August 20, 2004 meeting, the Council deleted 1,312 acres north and south of the community of Estero from project. The majority of the large tracts have been acquired. A number of smaller tracts remain to be acquired.

On October 9, 2009. ARC recommended for removal from the boundary seven sites of 88 individual parcels containing residential/commercial structures or infrastructure, totaling 433 acres. After the boundary change in 2009, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$6,943,661.

On April 21, 2010, DRP purchased 36.60 acres for \$91,500 provided through a federal grant from U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service. The DRP is to manage this acreage.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Substantially Complete category of Florida Forever projects.

Acreage figures have changed from 2018 because of an adjustment in the managed areas boundary. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$15,677,877.

### **Coordination**

Approximately 316 acres were acquired through donation from The Nature Conservancy in 1986. Along with TNC, the Florida Coastal Office (formerly Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas, CAMA) and USFWS are considered partners on this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Estero Bay project are: 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 this state or a larger geographic area; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.



## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Estero Bay project borders the state-owned submerged lands of the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve and includes swamps, marshes, and other natural communities that contribute to the productivity of the bay. These resources qualify it as a state buffer preserve.

### ***Manager***

Lands acquired through this project will be included in the Estero Bay Buffer Preserve and managed by DRP. The Division of Historical Resources will participate in the management and protection of archeological and historical resources.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The project is surrounded by one of the most rapidly developing areas in the state. Development is also occurring within the project boundary. This urbanization requires immediate implementation of a patrol schedule and law enforcement presence. The control of exotic plants and animals and reduction of illegal activities, such as off-road vehicle use and poaching, will require “medium need” initial management followed by “low need” routine maintenance.

Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure

Long-range goals will be established by the management plan for this property and will provide for ecological restoration and habitat maintenance. Prescribed and natural fires will be used to maintain natural communities with particular emphasis on the requirements of listed species. The resource inventory will help identify site-specific management needs and appropriate uses for the property. Infrastructure development will be confined to already disturbed areas and will be the minimum required to allow appropriate uses identified in the management plan.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Initially, the revenue-generating potential of the project will be limited, with indirect financial benefits accruing to the state from increased public awareness and enhanced water quality, fisheries, and public recreation. In the future, user fees may directly generate revenue.





Estero Bay Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1985
Project Area (GIS acres)	13,894
Acres Acquired (GIS)	12,009
at a Cost of	\$54,461,790
Acres Remaining (GIS)	1,885

Note: 433 acres were removed October 2009 due to residential/commercial/infrastructure development.

Estero Bay Table 2

Estero Bay FNAI Elements	Score
Manatee	G2/S2
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Loggerhead Sea Turtle	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Bird Rookery	G5/SNR
Sanibel lovegrass	G5T1/S1
giant orchid	G2G3/S2
spiny hackberry	G4/S1
iguana hackberry	G5/S1
red stopper	G5/S1
Reddish Egret	G4/S2

There are 21 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Estero Bay](#)



## **Etoniah / Cross Florida Greenway**

Citrus, Clay, Levy, Marion and Putnam Counties  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1995*
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	92,180
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	32,186**
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$20,773,131**
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	59,994

*\*Etoniah Creek, Cross Florida Greenways and Cross Florida Greenways Phase II were combined in 1995 to create Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway. A less-than-fee parcel of approximately 18,406 acres was added to the project in 1997.*

*\*\* Includes a donation of 43 acres and acreage acquired and funds spent by the SJRWMD on Plum Creek/Rick Co.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Though partially logged and planted in pine, the large expanse of flatwoods, sandhills, and scrub in central Putnam County, extending to the Cross Florida Greenway along the Ocklawaha River, is important for the survival of many kinds of wildlife and plants. The Greenway itself is a unique strip of land for recreation and conservation that makes a cross-section of the peninsula from the Withlacoochee River to the St. Johns. The Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway project will conserve the Putnam County land as well as fill in gaps in the Greenway; ensure that wildlife such as Florida black bear and scrub jays and plants such as the Etoniah rosemary will have areas in which to live; and provide recreation for the public ranging from long-distance hiking trails to fishing, camping, and hunting. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses several Florida Forever project sites.

### **Manager(s)**

The managers are the Florida Forest Service/FFS (Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services) for the Etoniah Creek tract and for the remaining tracts, the Office of Greenways and Trails /OGT, (Florida Department Environmental Protection). FFS will monitor compliance with the terms of any less-than-fee purchase agreement.

### **General Description**

The project consists of a large tract extending north from the Cross Florida Greenway to Clay County, and four smaller tracts designed to fill in gaps in state ownership along the Cross Florida Greenway. The original Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway project is important for the survival of black bear in northeast Florida. It has many acres of pine plantation and cutover flatwoods, but also high-quality sandhill, a unique white-cedar swamp along Deep Creek, and patches of sand pine scrub near Etoniah Creek that harbor at least a dozen rare species. They include fox squirrel, gopher tortoise, indigo and pine snakes, rare crayfish, and seven rare plants, including the only known site for federally listed Etoniah rosemary. The smaller tracts include high-quality floodplain swamps along the Ocklawaha River; mixed forest land near U.S. 441 south of Ocala; and Inglis Island, disturbed pinelands between the old Cross Florida



Barge Canal and the Withlacoochee River. Eight archaeological sites are known from the project. The greatest threat to the project area is intensive logging, but the uplands on the large tract are suitable for residential development. The smaller sites would lose their value as connectors if developed for residences.

### **Public Use**

The Cross Florida Greenway connectors will form part of a conservation and recreation area; the majority of the large (Etoniah) tract will become a state forest. The various parts of the project will offer opportunities for hiking, hunting, fishing and nature appreciation.

### **Acquisition Planning**

#### ***Etoniah Creek***

Phase I tracts (essential) include Stokes and Agricola, formerly Deltona (acquired), Union Camp, Manning (acquired) and Interlachen Lake Estates Subdivision. Life-of-the-South (Odom) is also an essential tract. Phase II includes other large ownerships, such as Roberts, as well as other smaller tracts and subdivisions.

#### ***Cross Florida Greenway***

Phase I (essential) includes the westernmost segment (Deep Creek Corridor) consisting of a portion of the Miller family ownerships and approximately 14 other owners.

#### ***Cross Florida Greenway Phase II***

The priority tract (essential) within this portion of the project is the Inglis Island site (acquired by the Office of Greenways and Trails).

On July 20, 1994 the Council added 210 acres to the boundaries of the predecessor projects.

On December 7, 1995, the Council approved the addition of 2,664 acres to the project boundary. The addition included lakeshore and lake bottom associated with Rodman Reservoir. A second modification was made to allow the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) to acquire, on the State's behalf, a large ownership (Odom) not identified in the original Phase I area. Acquisition of the canal easement areas is also a priority.

On March 15, 1996 the Council approved adding 141 acres to the project boundaries. On December 5, 1996, the Council transferred the Georgia-Pacific ownership (18,146 acres) to the Less-Than-Fee category.

On October 15, 1998, the Council designated as essential an additional 9,870 acres - Georgia-Pacific and seven smaller tracts in a corridor between two already acquired tracts, and portions of the Roberts ownership.

On August 22, 2000, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added 2,110 acres (Florida Power ownership along the Cross Florida Greenway State Recreation and Conservation areas) to the project. On January 25, 2001, ARC added 1,543 acres to the project boundary in the Deep Creek area. On May 1, 2001, ARC added 1,110 acres to the boundaries of the project.



On February 25, 2003 the project was added to the Group A list of Florida Forever projects.

On April 13, 2007, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 85- acre addition, known as Foxtrotter Ranch, to the project boundary. It was sponsored by OGT, and consisted of one landowner, Richard Simon, one parcel, and a taxable value of \$2,267,908. OGT will manage the site. The house (approximately 2.5 acres) is not included in the addition, however, it may be donated to the state subsequent to acquisition. After this most recent boundary change in 2007, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$170,079,702.

In June 2008, 1.19 acres of the Harrington ownership were purchased for \$15,000 with the FFS Florida Forever funds. FFS will manage this section. In September 2008, the FFS used Florida Forever funds to buy the following acreages: 1.08 acres (Fred Yankee, LLC) for \$13,500; 0.87 acres (Goddard) for \$23,000; 1.01 acres (Land Reclamation, Inc.) for \$15,000; 2.52 acres (Cann) for \$23,000; 1.21 acres (Martin) for \$14,000; 1.27 acres (Vehoski) for \$14,000; and 1 acre (Murray) for \$15,000. The DOF will manage all of these parcels. In October 2008, the FFS used Florida Forever funds to buy 1.25 acres (Uttech) for \$11,500; 2.5 acres (Lachmansingh) for \$25,000; 3.61 acres (Chapman) for \$37,500; and 2.53 acres (Thornton) for \$23,000. The FFS will manage these parcels. In November 2008, the FFS used Florida Forever funds to buy 1.27 acres (Dubay) for \$14,000; 1.24 acres (Hood) for \$15,500; 1.25 acres (Contreras) for \$14,000; and 1.24 acres (South) for \$14,000. FFS will manage these parcels.

On January 21, 2009 SJRWMD purchased 208 acres for \$474,363 (Plum Creek/Rick Co.). In October 2009, 1.25 acres were purchased from Margaret Vail for \$14,000. In November 2009, 1.25 acres were purchased from Kenneth/Diane Schwing for \$15,500. On December 10, 2009, FFS purchased 1.43 acres for \$13,500 and will manage this tract.

On November 4, 2010, FFS purchased 106 acres (Moore--\$405,000) with Florida Forever funds. FFS will manage this.

On January 3, 2011, FFS purchased 1.29 acres (Williams--\$18,000 with FF funds. The FFS will manage this. On May 2, 2011 the FFS purchased 1.25 acres (Cearley-\$12,000) in the Cross Florida Greenway portion and will manage it. On August 3, 2011, FFS purchased 3.69 acres (Interlachen Lakes Estates) for \$27,500; FFS to manage. On December 9, 2011 ARC recommended a 1,509-acre reduction to the project boundary containing residential development, commercial buildings, and other infrastructure.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands category of Florida Forever projects.

On September 21, 2012, the BOT acquired 1.25 acres for \$6,000 to be part of the Etoniah Creek State Forest.

On August 24, 2018 ARC members voted to amend the project by adding two parcels, 48 acres, in Putnam County to the project boundary. The addition was proposed by Patrick E. Troxel and is near the town of Satsuma.



The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$144,155,578.

### **Coordination**

The SJRWMD was the intermediary in the acquisition of the Manning tract and has provided information and expertise on several other tracts. The Office of Greenways and Trails used additions and inholding funds to acquire Inglis Island. The Division of State Lands will assume the lead on acquisition of the remaining tracts.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway project are: 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 this state or a larger geographic area; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; and to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The large size, restorable pine plantations, and diversity of the Etoniah Creek portion of this project make it highly desirable for management as a state forest. The Cross Florida Greenway State Recreation and Conservation Area includes scenic and historic rivers, lakes, wetlands, and uplands. It is also near, or contiguous with, many other state-owned lands. The Cross Florida Greenway portion of this project, together with the lands already in the Greenway, has the configuration, location, and the resources to qualify as a state recreation area.

#### ***Manager***

The FFS proposes to manage the 57,000-acre Etoniah Creek portion of the project and the OGT will manage the remaining lands near the old Cross Florida Barge Canal.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

There are no known major disturbances in the Etoniah Creek portion that will require extraordinary attention, so management intensity is expected to be typical for a state forest. Lands in the Cross Florida Greenway portion are generally moderate-need tracts.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the core area of the Etoniah Creek portion is acquired, the FFS will provide access to the public for low-intensity, non-facilities-related outdoor recreation. Initial activities will include securing the tract, providing public and fire management accesses, inventorying resources, and removing trash. The FFS will provide access to the public while protecting sensitive resources. The tract's natural resources and threatened and endangered plants and animals will be inventoried to provide the basis for a management



plan. Long-range plans for the Etoniah Creek portion will generally be directed toward restoring disturbed areas to their original conditions, as far as possible, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. An all-season burning program will use, whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks to contain fires. Timber management will mostly involve improvement thinning and regeneration harvests. Plantations will be thinned and, where appropriate, reforested with species found in natural ecosystems. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age. Infrastructure will primarily be in disturbed areas and will be the minimum required for management and public access. The FFS will promote environmental education. For the Greenway portion, activities within the first year after acquisition will primarily consist of site security, resource inventory, removal of trash, and resource-management planning. Long-range activities proposed include a multipurpose trail and facilities for public access.

***Revenue-generating potential***

In the Etoniah Creek portion, the FFS will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will provide a variable source of revenue, but the revenue-generating potential for this project is expected to be moderate. In the Greenway portion, no revenues are expected to be generated within the first three years after acquisition. However, as the Greenway is developed during its 20-year facility development plan, revenues will be derived from user fees, the sale of products from the lands (limerock berm and timber), and the sale of surplus lands.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The FFS will cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate. Currently, properties along the Greenway are managed in partnership with Marion County, the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, and private individuals for recreational purposes.



Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1995*
Project Area (GIS acres)	92,180
Acres Acquired (GIS)	32,186**
at a Cost of	\$20,773,131**
Acres Remaining (GIS)	59,994

\*Etoniah Creek, Cross Florida Greenways and Cross Florida Greenways Phase II were combined in 1995 to create Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway. A less-Than-Fee parcel of approximately 18,406 acres was added to the project in 1997.

\*\* Includes a donation of 43 acres and acreage acquired and funds spent by the SJRWMD on Plum Creek/Rick Co.

Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway Table 2

Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway FNAI Elements	Score
Etonia Rosemary	G1/S1
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Florida Mouse	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Curtiss' loosestrife	G1/S1
Gopher Tortoise Acrolophus Moth	G1/S1
Black Creek Crayfish	G2/S2
Florida spiny-pod	G2/S2
Florida willow	G2/S2

There are 37 rare species associated with the project.

Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway Table 3a

Management Cost Summary: OGT	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	LATF	LATF
Salary	\$36,380	\$36,380
OPS	\$72,660	\$72,660
Expense	\$62,301	\$46,362
OCO	\$3,167	\$0
FCO	\$100,000	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$274,508</b>	<b>\$185,402</b>



Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway Table 3b

<b>Management Cost Summary: DOF</b>	<b>1996/97</b>	<b>1997/98</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>	<b>CARL</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$45,337</b>	<b>\$56,487</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$11,225</b>	<b>\$22,825</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$43,320</b>	<b>\$50,500</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$99,882</b>	<b>\$132,814</b>

[Map\(s\): Etoniah / Cross Florida Greenway4](#)





## ***Fisheating Creek Ecosystem***

Glades and Highlands Counties

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2000
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	183,809
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	71,171
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$55,628,563
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	112,638

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Fisheating Creek, the only undammed tributary to Lake Okeechobee, flows through vast prairies and flatwoods primarily owned by Lykes Brothers, Inc. The Fisheating Creek Ecosystem project will acquire both less-than-fee and fee-simple property to help preserve this natural land, which links the Okaloacoochee Slough, Big Cypress Swamp, Babcock-Webb Wildlife Management Area, and Lake Okeechobee. This project will also help to ensure the survival of the Florida panther, swallow-tailed kite, other plants and animals that require such natural lands. It may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses a number of Florida Forever project sites.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will monitor conservation easements and manage the fee-simple acquisitions unless otherwise noted.

### **General Description**

Natural communities in the project area include dry prairies and flatwoods interrupted by numerous freshwater marshes of various kinds, including seepage slopes, wet prairies, and depression marshes. Diverse prairie hammocks occur east of U.S. 27. Hydric hammocks, bottomland forests, and floodplain swamp along Fisheating Creek make up most of the remainder of the natural communities. Large areas of the project are improved pasture, former and current eucalyptus plantations, or current pine plantations. Invasive exotic plants are largely confined to the Hoover Dike system around Lake Okeechobee.

As one of the largest fairly natural areas in the Florida peninsula, with a strategic position between several other natural areas, the project is important for the protection of rare plants and animals. The area includes large populations of three plants endemic to central Florida: Edison’s ascyrum, cutthroat grass, and nodding pinweed. The proposal is extremely important as a Strategic Habitat Conservation Area for the Florida panther and the American swallow-tailed kite, as well for such animals as Audubon’s crested caracara, snail kite, Florida grasshopper sparrow, Florida sandhill crane, mottled duck, red-cockaded woodpecker, and short-tailed hawk. At least six bald eagle nests are known to be in this project.



The water quality of Fisheating Creek and Gator Slough is good, but agricultural runoff has impaired the water quality of canals in the project.

The project area includes at least 31 archaeological sites, many associated with the important Fort Center Site Complex of the Belle Glades culture (500 B.C. to A.D. 1700). More recent sites are also known, and there could be many more in the project. The Fort Center Complex offers an opportunity for an interpretive center.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated as a wildlife management area, with uses such as hunting, hiking, and wildlife observation. Public use in easement areas will depend on agreements with the landowner, but the project could support such activities as hiking, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, and canoeing.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On May 6, 1999, the LAMAC added the Fisheating Creek Ecosystem project, in Glades and Highlands counties, to the CARL Priority list. This less-than-fee acquisition, sponsored by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), consisted of approximately 168,360 acres, a single owner, Lykes Bros. Inc., and a 1999 taxable value of \$22,297,408.

On May 25, 1999, the BOT approved a settlement agreement with Lykes Bros. Inc. on the case of Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund v. Lykes Bros. Inc. The settlement agreement was contingent upon, among other things, a multiple-phase, and combined less-than-fee acquisition.

On December 12, 2000, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) approved a less-than-fee addition, in Glades County, to the project boundary. This addition, also known as the Venus Ranch, sponsored by TNC, consisted of approximately 8,400 acres with a single owner at a 1999 taxable value of \$667,863. The Fisheating Creek project was also moved to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) Priority list. This easement was acquired by the BOT in 2003.

On August 15, 2002, ARC approved an addition, seized by law enforcement in Glades County, to the project boundary. The .46-acre Lucky Whidden parcel was sponsored by the Division of State Lands (DSL) and FWC. It had a 2001 taxable value of \$4,000.

On June 16, 2004, ARC approved a fee-simple addition to the project boundary in Glades County. The addition, sponsored by the two owners and known as Journigan Place, consisted of 115.4 acres and a 2003 taxable value of \$207,692.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Less-than-Fee list of Florida Forever projects.

On June 19, 2015 ARC voted to add a new project proposal, Chaparral Slough, a 6,859-acre corridor, about 11 miles long and one mile wide. It runs along Chaparral Slough, a tributary to Cypress Branch, to the Florida Forever list. The ARC then immediately added this new project boundary into the boundary of the existing Fisheating Creek Florida Forever project. Chaparral Slough was originally proposed by Lykes Brothers as a standalone less-than-fee project to provide habitat, an ecological greenway, and aquifer recharge. The land has been used for cattle ranching, silviculture and hunting. It includes 1,919



acres of pine plantation and a 669-acre eucalyptus plantation that is harvested and replanted several times a year. Another 2,365 acres, about a third of the addition, is pasture. After this most recent addition in 2015, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$15,326,651. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$531,556,348.

### **Coordination**

TNC is considered an acquisition partner and there may be some potential for joint acquisition with the South Florida Water Management District.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary objectives of the acquisition of the Fisheating Creek project are to conserve and protect natural communities along the shores of Fisheating Creek, and thereby assist in maintaining and possibly improving the status of several rare plant and animal communities. Achieving this objective will help to secure the survival of the Florida panther in this state, as well as protect many other rare and endangered animals and a number of migratory bird species and provide for traditional public uses and recreational activities within sovereignty submerged lands and fee lands as specified in the Settlement Agreement.

### **Management Prospectus**

Pursuant to the Settlement Agreement the BOT will lease the sovereignty submerged lands and the fee lands to the FWC, which was designated as the managing agency for sovereignty submerged lands and fee lands, and as the Easement Monitor over the conservation easements at this site. The sovereignty submerged lands and the fee lands will be managed as the Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area. The Settlement Agreement outlining specific management guidelines is on file with the Office of Environmental Services.



Fisheating Creek Ecosystem Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>183,809</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>71,171</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$55,628,563</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>112,638</b>

Fisheating Creek Ecosystem Table 2

<b>Fisheating Creek Ecosystem FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Florida Panther</b>	<b>G5T1/S1</b>
<b>Swallow-tailed Kite</b>	<b>G5/S2</b>
<b>Florida Scrub-Jay</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>Red-cockaded Woodpecker</b>	<b>G3/S2</b>
<b>Eastern Indigo Snake</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Perforate Reindeer Lichen</b>	<b>G1/S1</b>
<b>wedge-leaved button-snakeroot</b>	<b>G1/S1</b>
<b>Edison's ascyrum</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>Florida blazing star</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>Sand Skink</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>

*There are 32 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Fisheating Creek Ecosystem](#)



## ***Flagler County Blueway***

Flagler and Volusia Counties  
Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2003
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	4,134
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	219
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$790,000*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	3,915

\*Flagler County paid \$395,000

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Public acquisition of this project will contribute to the following Florida Forever goals: (1) Increase the protection of Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels – will help close gaps and gain public ownership of some remaining hammock, marshes, flatwoods and swamps; (2) Increase the amount of open space available in urban areas – several parcels have future potential for serving as urban open space which will increase the amount of open space available in urban areas; and, (3) Increase natural resource-based public recreation and educational opportunities - recreational opportunities may also increase if the land is managed carefully.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Forest Service (FFS) and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) are to be cooperating managers for this project, while Flagler County will manage the Emerald Coast parcel.

### **General Description**

The Flagler County Blueway project has changed significantly during the evaluation phase, growing from its original 122 acres to approximately 5,015 acres clustered from south of Pellicer Creek on the north to the Flagler County line on the south. The project essentially follows the Intracoastal Waterway and includes most undeveloped and available land east of I-95 in Flagler County.

### **Public Use**

There are usable uplands within the project that will accommodate resource-based recreation activities, but the degree of ownership acquired will determine the degree of public access and use that can be assured. Portions of the project include tidal marshes with numerous small creeks and hammock islands. Other areas have creeks associated with them. Boating, canoeing and kayaking can be accommodated on many of these creeks and there are opportunities to create a water borne trail system that might accommodate limited facilities, especially for canoes and kayaks.

Where road access or connectivity with existing public lands exists, there are opportunities for upland activities such as short nature hikes, primitive camping, picnicking and shoreline fishing. RV camping may not be well suited for this project, due to the general wet nature of the lands and the disbursement of uplands within the project. Still, it is possible that a site might be located, should a demand for that



activity become apparent and compatible with the purpose of acquisition. Off-road bicycling might be accommodated on the more upland sites that have access. The Flagler County Blueway proposal has tracts of land adjacent to or very near the following managed areas (in alphabetical order): Bulow Creek State Park, Faver-Dykes State Park, Gamble Rogers Memorial State Recreation Area, Graham Swamp Conservation Area, Guana-Tolomato-Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTM), North Peninsula State Park, Pellicer Creek Corridor Conservation Area, Princess Place Preserve, Pellicer Creek Aquatic Preserve, Washington Oaks Gardens State Park.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 5, 2003, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) added the Flagler County Blueway project to Group B of the Florida Forever (FF) 2004 priority list. While fee simple acquisition is preferred, there may well be parcels that are not available in fee-simple but lend themselves to conservation easements or other less- than-fee approaches. Sponsored by Flagler County, this project consisted of approximately 5,015 acres, multiple owners, and a 2002 taxable value of \$20,502,164. On June 3, 2004, ARC moved this project to Group A of the FF 2004 Priority list.

On October 13, 2006, ARC approved a project redesign that reduced the project size to 4,409 acres. All parcels removed had been developed or become isolated since the original boundary was identified. In 2006, ARC approved a fee-simple, 20-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by Flagler County, consisted of one parcel & landowner, Kitteridge Investments, and had a 2002 taxable value of \$6,800. The addition is considered important, but not critical to the project as a whole, and, if acquired, will be managed by Flagler County as part of Princess Place Preserve.

In October 2008, 59.19 acres of the Emerald Coast Development Partners, LLC ownership, were purchased for \$790,000 (\$395,000 from DSL Florida Forever funds, \$395,000 from Flagler County). Flagler County will manage this site.

On October 14, 2011 ARC recommended a 182-acre reduction to the project boundary because of residential development/commercial buildings/infrastructure. After the most recent boundary change in 2011, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$17,050,409.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$112,966,540.

### **Coordination**

The St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) and Flagler County are considered partners on this project.

### **Management Prospectus**

The FFS and FWC will share all management responsibilities for Flagler County Blueway under a unified management concept. Under unified management, both agencies will identify mutually



acceptable goals that further the long-term protection of the site's plant and wildlife resources, promote sound stewardship of land, timber and water resources, and provide the public with access and quality recreational opportunities. The project has the capability to provide needed protection for fish and wildlife habitat in a manner that is compatible with sound silvicultural practices. More importantly, the project could serve an important biogeographical function by providing physical linkages and connections to several other publicly owned lands in the Flagler County area. Project goals include protection of biodiversity, and provision of natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities, so programs would be developed to manage ecosystems for multiple use. Multiple use means harmonious and coordinated management of timber, recreation, conservation of fish and wildlife, forage, archaeological and historic sites, habitat and other biological resources, or water resources so that they are used to best serve the people of the state, making judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources and giving consideration to the relative values of the various resources. Conserving and protecting the unique coastal maritime community, xeric oak scrub community, and imperiled or rare species should be an important management goal for the project. A broad-scale management program will be developed to manage and/or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, wildlife populations, forests and water resources, and promote recreation and environmental education in the natural environment. Timber stands would be managed using even age and/ or uneven aged methods to maintain a broad diversity of age classes ranging from young stands to areas with old growth characteristics. This would provide habitat for the full spectrum of species found in the natural environment and enhance and maintain biodiversity. The project area is near many users who enjoy fishing, hiking, hunting, kayaking, and wildlife viewing. There is also potential for equestrian use, off-road biking, and multi-use trails through the proposed project. Additionally, the Department of Environmental Protection and University of Florida Statewide Greenways System Planning Project shows 81 percent (6,717 acres) of the project area to be suitable for Priority 2 recreational trails.

This project contributes to the following goals in accordance with the Florida Forever Act (259.105(4), F.S.): (c) Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state; (d) Ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state; (e) Increase natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities; and, (h) Increase the amount of open space available in urban areas.

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Flagler County Blueway Florida Forever project has multiple parcels in the Matanzas River ecosystem watershed, which includes the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW). The tracts of private lands in this project vary greatly in size, from 10 to 1,056 acres, and vary in type and quality of habitats. Some tracts in this project adjoin and provide connectivity among federal, state and local conservation lands. These tracts, if acquired, would be part of the Flagler County Blueway Project, which extends from the headwaters of Pellicer Creek and the Princess Place Preserve in the north, past the Graham Swamp Conservation Area (CA), to Bulow Creek State Park (SP), just south of the Flagler County line. Project





lands are primarily west of the ICW, with a smaller acreage on the eastern shore of the ICW. The project extends for a north-south distance of approximately 17 miles. The northernmost tract in the project is approximately 56 miles south of Jacksonville, and 17 miles south of St. Augustine. The southernmost tract is approximately 14 miles north of Daytona Beach, and 28 miles northeast of Deland. Other nearby conservation lands in addition to those mentioned above include the GTM, the Bulow Plantation Ruins Historic SP, the Pellicer Creek Aquatic Preserve (AP), the Tomoka Marsh AP, Tomoka SP and Washington Oaks Gardens SP. Overall, the Flagler County Blueway proposal is a landscape of three distinguishable groups of conservation lands. They are as follows: (1) northern perimeter conservation lands include the northernmost extent of the project adjacent to Washington Oaks Gardens SP, Pellicer Creek CA, and Princess Place Preserve; (2) southern perimeter conservation lands are at the southern end of the proposal boundary, including Bulow Creek SP, Gamble Rogers State Recreation Area and North Peninsula SP; and (3) the central, connecting part of the proposed blueway project that is near the northern and southern borders of the Graham Swamp CA. This project is significant as an ecological greenway, with 94 percent (7,791 acres) of the project area qualifying as a Priority 7 in potential importance, according to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) Florida Forever Measures Evaluation. Approximately 48 percent of the project is uplands. Scrub is 132 acres of the project area, with mesic flatwoods and scrubby flatwoods making a total of 883 acres. Coastal uplands include 1,063 acres of coastal strand and maritime hammock. These uplands are important flyway resting and feeding areas for migratory birds, and occur primarily on islands, and along the edge of the estuarine tidal marsh. Pine plantation, agricultural use (mostly pasture), and otherwise disturbed and developed lands are 1,901 acres of the project. Freshwater wetlands are mostly forested, including basin swamp, baygall, hydric hammock, and perhaps a small area of dome swamp, for a total of 2,815 acres. Some hydric hammocks are of particularly good quality. One of the basin swamps is a southern extension of the Graham Swamp CA and is the largest natural area in the project. About 51 acres are depression marsh. Functional wetlands are 45 percent (3,692 acres) of the project area and help conserve areas for aquifer recharge (8 percent, or 672 acres of project area), and protect fragile coastal resources (28 percent, or 2,300 acres of project area). FNAI data show 84 percent (6,963 acres) of the project would provide surface water protection. There are 1,222 acres of estuarine tidal marsh, mostly along the ICW, Matanzas River and Smith Creek. There are 218 acres classified as open water. FNAI data that 25 percent (2,075 acres) of the project area is under-represented natural communities.

Imperiled or rare animal species documented by FNAI to occur on the project include the gopher tortoise and MacGillivray's seaside sparrow. The bald eagle has been reported to nest near the project area. The West Indian manatee occurs nearby in the ICW. Other imperiled or rare animals which potentially occur in the project area include the Cooper's hawk, hairy woodpecker osprey and the spotted turtle. Many other vertebrate species are expected to use the project area as habitat. According to the FWC approximately 42 percent (3,486 acres) of the project area is within Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (SHCAs). Another 31 percent (2,583 acres) of the project is a habitat conservation priority for rare species with the greatest conservation need, according to the FNAI.





### **Manager**

The FFS of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the FWC are recommended as unified managers of the fee simple portions of the project that are acquired.

#### Conditions affecting intensity of management

The disjunct nature of parcels comprising the Flagler County Blueway creates a special management consideration to be addressed by the unified managers. The FFS and FWC will need to devise a strategy to deploy manpower, equipment, and other management resources in a coordinated and efficient manner. Some portions of Flagler County Blueway are low-need areas that will require up-front implementation of resource management, including the frequent use of prescribed fire where appropriate. About 23 percent of the project area has been subjected to ground cover disturbance due to past silviculture, consequently, additional effort will be required to accomplish objectives for restoring to a desired future condition. The FFS and FWC propose to work cooperatively to assess site management needs and develop a conceptual management plan (CMP) for the site. Examples of situations requiring cooperative effort include restoring mesic and wet flatwoods previously managed for timber production, removing or thinning off-site timber species to promote the regeneration of native ground covers and appropriate tree species, and reforesting recently harvested areas. The managing agencies will conduct an historic vegetation analysis to assist in determining appropriate desired future conditions and identify appropriate restoration methods and tools. This effort will help conserve habitats and populations of imperiled or rare species. Other unified management priorities will include protecting maritime hammock communities, restoring sensitive wetlands, and the identification, control, and follow-up monitoring of exotic species. Brazilian pepper, a Category I exotic (most adversely affecting Florida's ecology), is an established shrub in the project area and deserves aggressive control. The principal land management activities slated for less disturbed natural communities include introducing prescribed fire and control of human uses in certain management units. Restoration methods will also include thinning of dense pine stands to decrease canopy cover and facilitate restoring native groundcovers. Biotic surveys would be conducted as part of early unified management activities. With imperiled or rare species expected to occur within the project, resource inventories would be an initial priority under the unified management approach. Environmentally sensitive areas such as erosion-prone sites, listed species habitats, outstanding natural areas, and wetlands, would be identified during the initial resource inventory to implement appropriate protective measures for each specific area. Such inventories are vital to unified management planning efforts directed at facility and infrastructure development, and design and implementation of recreational use programs.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after acquisition, both agencies operating under the unified management approach will emphasize site security, posting boundaries, public access for low-intensity outdoor recreation, fire management, resource inventory, and removal of refuse. Both managing agencies will participate in the joint development of a CMP specifying area management goals and objectives. Both managing agencies will meet frequently to coordinate task assignments, and to cooperate with and seek the assistance of



other state agencies, local governments, and other appropriate participants affecting management of the project site. Goals for the long term emphasize multiple use management and the conservation of the site's natural resources including timber, fish and wildlife, and water. These goals would include restoring habitat and hydrology, and conservation and protection of listed species of flora and fauna. Following completion of plant community inventory and historic vegetation analysis, quantified vegetation management objectives would be developed pursuant to an objective-based vegetation management process. Where practical, disturbed sites would be restored to conditions expected to occur in naturally functioning ecosystems, including re-establishment of species expected to occur naturally on specific sites. Management would emphasize enhancement of abundance, and spatial distribution of imperiled or rare species. Essential roads would be stabilized to provide all-weather public access and management operations. Programs providing multiple recreational uses would also be implemented. Both agencies will work towards the development of a fire management plan that will apply prescribed burning in a manner that maximizes natural resource protection and enhancement. Most of this project area has not been burned by prescribed fire in recent years. Whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks will be utilized to contain, and control prescribed and natural fires. Growing-season prescribed burning would be used where appropriate to best achieve management objectives. Where appropriate, practical, and in pursuit of natural resource management objectives, timber resources will be managed using acceptable silvicultural practices. Thinning of timber, introduction of prescribed fire, and sustainable forestry management practices could provide silvicultural products, ecological, and recreational benefits. It is also possible that recreational trails on the parcels could function as back up firelines, provide access for prescribed burning equipment, and provide an opportunity for wildlife viewing. Archaeological and historic sites would be managed in coordination with the Department of State's Division of Historical Resources (DHR). The DHR lists 16 such sites as occurring in the project area.

Both agencies will work towards development of a road plan identifying roads to be used for vehicular access by the public, and roads that are required for administrative use. Unnecessary roads, fire lanes and hydrological disturbances would be abandoned or restored as practical. The road plan would insure that the public has appropriate access, and that sensitive resources are protected. Other existing infrastructure necessary for management would be protected to the extent possible. Infrastructure development would be the minimum required to serve needs of the public, including provision of facilities, and would include provisions for the facilities necessary for security and management of the project area. The Emerald Coast parcel, already purchased, will be separately managed by Flagler County.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Timber sales would be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions, under a multiple-use management concept. The FNAI indicates that 27 percent (2,260 acres) of the project area is available as priorities 2, 3, and 5 for sustainable forestry. The FNAI estimate is that 1.34 percent (111 acres) of forest provides aquifer recharge. Management would seek revenue-generating



potential by improving wildlife diversity and resource-based recreation in such areas. Additional revenue would be generated from sales of fishing licenses, wildlife management area permits, and daily use permit fees. Some revenues might be realized in the future from other recreational user fees, and ecotourism activities, if such projects could be economically developed. Fifteen percent (15 percent) of all gross revenues will be returned to the county from which those funds were generated. Both agencies have agreed to a unified management framework whereby all management funds, site generated revenues, and management expenditures are to be evenly divided between the FFS and FWC.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The unified managers (DOF-FFS and FWC) should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies, including the Saint Johns River Water Management District, to manage the project area. The project should be designated as both a state forest and a wildlife management area.



Flagler County Blueway Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2003
Project Area (GIS acres)	4,134
Acres Acquired (GIS)	219
at a Cost of	\$790,000*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	3,915

\*Flagler County paid \$395,000

Flagler County Blueway Table 2

Flagler County Blueway FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4

There are 2 rare species associated with the project.

Flagler County Blueway Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS & FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Resource Management	\$143,188	\$145,854
Administration	\$75,494	\$25,133
Support	\$149,080	\$31,566
Capital Improvements	\$988,553	\$85,164
Visitor Services/Recreation	\$2,335	\$141
Law Enforcement	\$5,799	\$5,799
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,364,449</b>	<b>\$293,656</b>

Includes employee salaries

[Map\(s\): Flagler County Blueway](#)



## **Florida Keys Ecosystem**

Monroe County

Climate Change Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	<i>1992</i>
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	<i>12,686</i>
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	<i>6,504*</i>
<i>at a Cost of</i>	<i>\$91,025,252</i>
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	<i>6,182</i>

*\*Includes donations*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The unique hardwood hammocks of the Florida Keys, forests of West Indian plants that shelter several extremely rare animals, are being lost to the rapid development of these islands. The Florida Keys Ecosystem project will protect all the significant unprotected hardwood hammocks left in the Keys and many rare plants and animals, including the Lower Keys marsh rabbit and Key deer. It will also help protect the Outstanding Florida Waters of the Keys, the recreational and commercial fisheries, and the reefs around the islands, and also give residents and visitors more areas for enjoying the natural beauty of the Keys.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) (19 sites) and Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) (10 sites). U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Monroe County, City of Marathon, and City of Islamorada also to manage some properties.

### **General Description**

This project includes most of the remaining unprotected rockland hammocks (tropical hardwood hammocks) in the Keys from South Key Largo to Sugarloaf Key. It is important to many rare plants and animals and consists of 17 sites in the Upper and Middle Keys encompassing the remaining fragments of unprotected tropical hardwood hammock greater than 12.5 acres. The project includes habitat for migratory birds and virtually all remaining Lower Keys marsh rabbits, Key deer, and the state-threatened white-crowned pigeon. In all, it provides habitat for at least 34 species of rare vascular plants and 34 rare animals. Many archaeological and historical sites are recorded from the area. All the project sites are threatened by intense development in the Keys.

### **Public Use**

The tracts will become botanical sites, parks, and wildlife and environmental areas. Some will offer camping, swimming, hiking, and boating, while others will be suitable only for nature appreciation.



## **Acquisition Planning**

On December 7, 1995, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) approved combining the Hammocks of the Lower Keys and Tropical Flyways projects into a single project named Florida Keys Ecosystem. The combined project consisted of approximately 4,438 acres; 465 acres acquired for \$24,324,425 and 3,973 remained with a taxable value of \$9,619,059. Hammocks of the Lower Keys: No phasing is recommended; however, some sites are extremely vulnerable to immediate development: Cudjoe Key— Kephart tract; Big Torch Key—Outward Bound/ Stelmok tract (acquired); Summerland Key—the area around the pond; and Little Torch Key—Torch Key Estates Subdivision (acquired). Estimated acreage for each site is: Cudjoe Key, 38 acres; Big Torch Key, 450 acres; Little Torch Key, 217 acres; Summerland Key, 20 acres; Sugarloaf Key, 2711 acres; Little Knockemdown Key, 300 acres; Middle Torch Key, 811 acres; Ramrod Key, 615 acres; and Wahoo Key, added at the LAMAC's December 3, 1993 meeting, 26 acres (acquired).

Tropical Flyways: No phasing is recommended; all 17 sites are being acquired with the Monroe County Land Authority (MCLA) as intermediary. The 17 sites are: North Creek ( two large ownerships, remaining subdivided—16 acres acquired through MCLA), Largo Sound (one major ownership—68 acres acquired through MCLA), Pennekamp North (one major ownership - acquired through MCLA), Newport (one major ownership, remainder subdivided), Point Charles (one major ownership), Key Largo Narrows (one major ownership—acquired through MCLA), Dove Creek (several large ownerships, remaining subdivided—187 acres acquired through MCLA), Tavernier Creek (one major ownership), Lake San Pedro (several large ownerships), Snake Creek (one major ownership - acquired through MCLA), Green Turtle (one major ownership), Teatable (one major ownership), Lower Matecumbe (one major ownership), North Layton (several large ownerships), Grassy Key (several large ownerships), Vaca Cut (one major ownership), Stirrup Key (one ownership).

On June 11, 1998, the LAMAC approved a fee-simple, 53-acre addition (Wilson & Cotton Keys) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the William Roberts Estate trustee and had a 1996 taxable value of \$115,106. On February 11, 1999, the LAMAC approved a fee-simple, 955-acre addition (Boot Key) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the FGFC (now FWC), consisted of one owner, Azurite Corp. LTD Florida, and a 1998 taxable value of \$178,019. On July 29, 1999, the LAMAC approved an owner requested, 6-acre deletion (on Ramrod Key) from the project boundary.

In 2003 The Nature Conservancy (TNC) purchased 593.75 acres, known as Tarpon Basin, in the Newport Hammocks site. On 12/5/2003, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 11.5-acre addition (Channel Key Island) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the owner, Barbara Trueman, and had a 2003 taxable value of \$17,268. On June 4, 2004, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 3,063-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the FWC, consisted of multiple owners, and a 2003 taxable value of \$7,400,000. The 910 parcels are located on several offshore islands and six named Keys (Little Torch, Saddlebunch, Ramrod, Summerland, Cudjoe, and Upper Sugarloaf). FWC will manage 1,758 acres as an addition to the Florida Keys Wildlife Environmental Area (WEA) and the USFWS will manage the remaining acres as an addition to the Florida Key Deer Refuge.



On February 11, 2005, the ARC approved a fee-simple, ±3,695-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the multiple entities, consisted of multiple owners, and a 2004 taxable value of approximately \$31,847,907.

On October 13, 2007, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 8.6-acre addition to the Sugarloaf Key portion of the project boundary. It was sponsored by the FWC, consisted of two parcels, a single owner (Community Sons of the Divine Will), and a taxable value of \$6,286,220. The proposed manager, FWC, does not consider the parcels essential. This boundary addition was approved with the understanding that FWC would share in the cost of the acquisition.

In June 2008, the 67-acre Camilus House exchange with University of Miami for other BOT land was completed, at no cost to Florida Forever funds. The following acres (ownerships) were purchased with DSL Florida Forever funds: 0.07 acre of Dove Creek (Cameron) for \$46,250; 1.3 acres (Neff) of Grassy Key for \$382,000; 0.15 acre (Marrerro) in Newport Hammocks for \$235,000; 42.22 acres (M&M Joint Venture, LLP) in Boca Chica Key for \$566,100; and 54.75 acres (Utility Board of the City of Key West) in Cudjoe Key for \$1,938,000, Monroe County as manager. In July 2008, Florida Forever funds were used to buy 0.11 acre of the Pierce ownership in Charles Hammocks for \$46,250. Monroe County will manage this. In September 2008, DSL Florida Forever funds were used to buy 3.03 acres (1.01 acre plus (2.02 acres) from the Otha Cox Estate in Cudjoe Key for a total of \$137,500 (\$47,500 plus \$90,000) Monroe County will manage this site. In November 2008, Florida Forever funds purchased 1.01 acre of the Smith ownership for \$37,000. FWC will manage this site.

On February 6, 2009 the Department of Transportation (FDOT) donated a total of 14.18 acres on Sugarloaf (.86 acre inside the project boundary) with a total donated value of \$9,265,212. At the June 2009 meeting, ARC accepted a request by the Retus Group LLC to remove 7 acres of their ownership in Marathon from the project. On June 24, 2010 Gary Burchfield donated 1.78 acres on Sugarloaf Key (donated value of \$60,000). FWC will manage this. On October 15, 2010 ARC approved requests by property owners to remove 7 acres of their ownership within the project boundary (\$23,832 just value). On December 10, 2010 ARC approved an 11.25 acre boundary addition in Boot Key with a tax assessed just value of \$410,544, to assist with a Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) grant application. The City of Marathon is interested in purchasing all of Boot Key as proposed in the CELCP application.

On January 20, 2011 Anne Kirkly donated 7.39 acres (\$3,208) in Dove Creek Hammocks to be managed by FWC. On June 1, 11 James D. Hanson, Jr. donated 284.54 acres (Windley Key-value of \$200,000) to be managed by DRP.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Climate Change Lands list of Florida Forever projects.

On April 20, 2012 ARC removed 8.6 acres from the project at a landowner's request. On June 15, 2012 ARC deleted a 3.2-acre property on Plantation Key from the project boundary at the request of the landowner. After the most recent change to the project boundary in 2012, the project had a combined,





historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$38,187,008. There may be additional small acreage changes (additions and removals) not captured above, however in calendar year 2017, a total of 138.65 acres closed in this project were acquired using Florida Forever program funding.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$262,813,560.

### **Coordination**

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the National Audubon Society sponsored this project. TNC, the Monroe County Land Authority, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service are participants and have been intermediaries in the acquisition of some of the sites within this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the project are 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 this state or a larger geographic area; conserve and protect lands within areas of critical state concern; conserve and protect habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; and conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources that local or state programs cannot adequately protect.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The unique wildlife, plant, and recreational resources of the Florida Keys Ecosystem sites qualify them as wildlife and environmental areas, botanical sites or preserves, and state parks.

#### ***Manager***

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is recommended to managed 19 sites: (Cudjoe Key; Tavernier Creek; Little Torch Key; Lake San Pedro; Middle Torch; Key Snake Creek; Big Torch Key; Green Turtle; Summerland Key; Vaca Cut; Sugarloaf Key; Stirrup Key; Little Knockemdown; Key; Saddlebunch Key; Ramrod Key; Wahoo Key; Dove Creek; and, Upper Sugarloaf Key).

Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Recreation and Parks is recommended to manage 10 sites (Key Largo Narrows; Grassy Key Site; Point Charles Hammock; Teatable Hammock; Largo Sound Hammock; Pennekamp North; North Creek Hammock; Newport Hammock; Lower Matecumbe Hammock; and, North Layton Hammock). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Monroe County, City of Marathon, and City of Islamorada also manage some properties.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Florida Keys Ecosystem project generally includes high-need tracts because of their small size and proximity to intensive residential and commercial development. They require basic natural areas land management including exotic-species removal, avoidance of actions that further fragment the hammocks, general trash and debris removal, posting and some fencing, and the establishment of some





basic visitor amenities at selected sites. Special species may require specific management actions. The project areas are a high-need management area which, because of their location, size and nature, will require a high level of attention to maintain and perpetuate their individual resources.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, the FWC will give management priority to natural resource inventory and planning. Sites will be surveyed for rare and endangered species and management plans will be prepared. In future years, management will concentrate on implementing the plans with emphasis on exotic species eradication and maintenance, trash and debris removal, and posting and fencing for security. Long-range management will focus on using the sites to build public awareness and support for natural areas protection in general, and for tropical hardwood hammock preservation in particular. Most tracts will provide passive recreational activities for the general public. Longer range goals would include development of a detailed management plan focused on perpetuation and maintenance of natural communities. An in-depth resource inventory would be carried out to identify and map all sensitive areas that warrant special consideration. Visitor amenities will be planned and constructed at appropriate sites within the project and public environmental-education programs will be developed. First year management activities will include site security, natural and cultural resource protection, and efforts toward the development of a plan for long-term public use and resource management.

***Revenue-generating potential***

Public use of sites managed by the FWC will be relatively low because no infrastructure will be provided. For the sites managed by the DRP, no significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. After acquisition, it will probably be several years before any significant level of public use facilities is developed. The amount of any future revenue generated would depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The FWC will cooperate with and seek the assistance of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate.



Florida Keys Ecosystem Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1992
Project Area (GIS acres)	12,686
Acres Acquired (GIS)	6,504*
at a Cost of	\$91,025,252
Acres Remaining (GIS)	6,182

\*Includes donations

Florida Keys Ecosystem Table 2

Florida Keys Ecosystem FNAI Elements	Score
Key Deer	G5T1/S1
Lower Keys Rabbit	G5T1/S1
Loggerhead Sea Turtle	G3/S3
Cape Sable thoroughwort	G1/S1
Garber's spurge	G1/S1
semaphore pricklypear	G1/S1
tree cactus	G1/S1
Cuban snake-bark	G2G3T1/S1
Key Ringneck Snake	G5T1/S1
Striped Mud Turtle, Lower Keys Population	G5T1Q/S1
Eastern Ribbon Snake, Lower Keys Population	G5T1Q/S1
Florida Brown Snake, Lower Keys Population	G5T1Q/S1

There are 70 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Florida Keys Ecosystem](#)



## Florida Springs Coastal Greenway

Citrus County

Climate Change Lands

### Project-at-a-Glance

<i>Placed on List</i>	1995*
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	42,593*
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	35,663**
<i>At a Cost of</i>	\$50,869,573**
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	6,930

\*Crystal River, St. Martins and Homosassa Reserve projects combined in 1995.

\*\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the SWFWMD.

### Purpose for State Acquisition

The ragged coastline of Citrus County, with its salt marshes, clear spring runs, hammocks, and flatwoods, is being affected by the encroaching development in this part of the state. The Florida Springs Coastal Greenway project will conserve the natural landscape of this coast, protecting the water quality of the spring runs and estuaries where endangered manatees congregate, preserving natural lands that link with conservation lands to the south, and providing scenic areas where the public can enjoy fishing, hiking, or learning about the natural world of this coast.

### Manager(s)

Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to manage Crystal River and St. Martins River property; Florida Forest Service (FFS) to manage Homosassa Reserve/Walker Property; and the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) to manage the northern part of the project, adjacent to the Cross Florida Greenway.

### General Description

The project is a major link in efforts to preserve the northern peninsular Gulf Coast. It includes three tracts along the karst coastline of Citrus County. The Crystal River tract, a significant part of the headwaters of the Crystal River, is a crucial habitat for the Gulf Coast manatee population; it is also a prime nesting location for bald eagles and ospreys. Natural communities within the tract include floodplain marsh, freshwater tidal swamp, tidal marsh, and upland hammock. It also contains some pine plantations. The St. Martins River tract is predominantly hydric hammock, bottomland forest, salt marsh, mangrove islands, and spring-run streams, all in good to excellent condition. It borders the St. Martins Marsh Aquatic Preserve. Though much of its timber has been harvested, and a quarter is in pasture, the Homosassa Reserve/Walker Property is important as a corridor between Chassahowitzka Water Management District and Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge and the conservation lands to the north. The archaeological significance of this area is high. Citrus County is one of the fastest growing in the state, and residential development is a serious threat here. Development will increase boat traffic, which is the greatest current threat to the manatee population.



## **Public Use**

The project will be managed as buffer preserves and a state forest, providing such recreational opportunities as fishing, canoeing, hiking and camping.

## **Acquisition Planning**

On November 19, 1994, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) amended Crystal River to add three tracts that include Three Sisters Springs (56 acres). On that date LAAC also combined three CARL projects (Crystal River, St. Martins, and Homosassa Reserve) and renamed the project Florida Springs Coastal Greenway. The project breakdown is as follows: Crystal River (~14,758 acres) Phase I: Crystal River II; Phase II: Crystal Cove—major owner is Burnip and Sims (acquired); Phase III: Crystal River State Reserve—major owner is Hollins (acquired). St. Martins (~14,040 acres) Phase I: Large ownerships within Area I as identified in Project Design; Phase II: Other ownerships within Area I and large ownerships within Area II; Phase III: Other ownerships within Area II; and Phase IV: ownerships in Area III. Major tracts have been acquired. Only smaller strategic tracts and offshore islands remain. Homosassa Reserve (~8,577 acres) Phase I: Rooks tract (acquired); the Walker tract (acquired by the Southwest Florida Water Management District) and other ownerships except in Sections 28, 33, 34 and 7; Phase II: minor ownerships in Sections 28 and 33, the 160-acre Villa Sites Addition to Homosassa Sub in Section 34, also the 134-acre Johnson parcel in Section 7. All large and strategic ownerships with willing sellers have been acquired with the exception of the Black ownership, an unwilling seller. This portion of the project is, in effect, complete.

On March 10, 1995, the Land Acquisition & Management Advisory Council (LAMAC) approved a fee-simple, 424-acre addition (in former Crystal River project) to the project boundary. The addition was sponsored by the landowners, James C & Alice H. Rhoades, and had a 1994 taxable value of \$821,700. On October 30, 1995, the LAMAC approved a fee-simple, 200-acre addition (in former Crystal River project) to the project boundary. The addition, sponsored by landowner Corneal B Myers, consisted of one parcel and a 1994 taxable value of \$400,000.

On October 30, 1996, the LAMAC transferred this project to the Substantially Complete Category. On March 14, 1997, the LAMAC approved a fee-simple, 80-acre addition (in former Crystal River project) to the project boundary. The addition, sponsored by landowner Dixie Hollins, consisted of one parcel and a 1996 taxable value of \$64,000. On October 15, 1998, the LAMAC designated an additional 156 acres as essential. Previous essential parcels included land acquired as of January 26, 1995, and the Black ownership (in the former Homosassa Reserve project).

On April 6, 2001, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) adopted a Group A and Group B for the Florida Forever (FF) Priority list and moved this project to Group B. On December 5, 2003, the ARC moved this project to Group A of the 2004 FF Priority list.

On February 6, 2004, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 142-acre addition (in former Homosassa Reserve project) to the project boundary. The addition, sponsored by the Audubon Society and DEPs CAMA and DRP, consisted of two landowners (Hampton Facilities LTD & Barr), 2 parcels, and a 2003 taxable



value of \$524,000. After the most recent addition in 2004, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$5,855,164

On July 28, 2010 the Southwest Florida Water Management District closed on the 57-acre Three Sisters Springs property in Crystal River, paying with a combination of water-management district money and Florida Forever funds allocated to the Florida Communities Trust. It is primarily owned by the City of Crystal River and is managed by the USFWS.

On September 30, 2011 NCDC, LLC donated 25.82 acres (Old Greiner Parcel-valued at \$146,285) to be managed by DRP.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Climate Change Lands category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$54,083,422.

### **Coordination**

The Southwest Florida Water Management District has acquired a major ownership within the project, as well as tracts adjacent and south of the project area.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Florida Springs Coastal Greenway project are: to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests; to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The proximity of the Crystal River and St. Martins River tracts of the Florida Springs Coastal Greenway Project to the St. Martins Marsh Aquatic Preserve and its major freshwater sources qualifies them as a state buffer preserve. The size and restorable forest resources of the Homosassa Reserve/Walker Property tract make it suitable for a state forest.

#### ***Manager***

DRP is recommended as the lead manager for the Crystal River and St. Martins River tracts. The FFS will manage the Homosassa Reserve tract.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Portions of the Florida Springs Coastal Greenway include lands that would be considered “low-need” tracts requiring basic resource management and protection. However, increasing public pressure for recreational access and a developing ecotourism industry may push portions of this project into the “moderate to high-need” category.



***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, management will concentrate on site security, public and fire management access, resource inventory, and exotic removal. DRP and FFS will provide access to the public while protecting sensitive resources. The project's natural resources will be inventoried, and a management plan developed within one year. Long-range plans for this property will generally be directed at the perpetuation of natural communities and protection of listed species. An all-season burning program will use existing roads, black lines, foam lines, and natural breaks to contain fires. Areas of silviculture in the Crystal River project will be returned to their original character and species composition. About 25 percent of the Homosassa Reserve tract contains pasture suitable for reforestation and restoration. The resource inventory will be used to identify sensitive areas and to locate any recreational or administrative facilities. Unnecessary roads, fire lines, and hydrological disturbances will be restored to the greatest extent practical. Infrastructure will be placed in disturbed areas and will be the minimum needed for public access and management.

***Revenue-generating potential***

Initially, no revenue is expected to be generated. During restoration of pine plantations, some revenue to offset the cost of management may be generated from the sale of timber. Any estimate of revenue from this harvest depends upon a detailed assessment of the value of the timber. As the recreational component develops and additional staff is assigned, there may be a potential for revenue from this source. No potential revenue estimates are available. On the Homosassa Reserve, the FFS will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will provide variable revenue, but the revenue-generating potential for this tract is expected to be low.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is recommended as a cooperating manager for hunts to eliminate feral hogs and to manage certain species. Because of the proximity of certain parcels to the Cross Florida Greenway and the Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge, the Office of Greenways and Trails and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service can be cooperative managers on parts of the project. Citrus County and the City of Crystal River may also cooperate in management.

The FFS will manage the Homosassa Reserve tract as an addition to the Withlacoochee State Forest, and will cooperate with other state agencies, local governments and interested parties as appropriate.



Florida Springs Coastal Greenway Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1995*
Project Area (GIS acres)	42,593*
Acres Acquired (GIS)	35,663**
At a Cost of	\$50,869,573**
Acres Remaining (GIS)	6,930

\*Crystal River, St. Martins and Homosassa Reserve projects combined in 1995.

\*\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the SWFWMD.

Florida Springs Coastal Greenway Table 2

Florida Springs Coastal Greenway FNAI Elements	Score
Manatee	G2/S2
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Green Sea Turtle	G3/S2S3
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Florida Mouse	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Hawksbill Sea Turtle	G3/S1
Tampa vervain	G2/S2
Florida Olive Hairstreak	G5T2/S2
Gulf Salt Marsh Mink	G5T2/S2
Manatee	G2/S2

There are 31 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Florida Springs Coastal Greenway4](#)



## Florida’s First Magnitude Springs

Bay, Citrus, Hamilton, Hernando, Jackson, Lafayette, Leon, Levy, Madison, Marion, Suwannee, Wakulla, Walton and Washington Counties

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### Project-at-a-Glance

Placed on List	1991
Project Area (GIS acres)	16,451
Acres Acquired (GIS)	10,286*
at a Cost of	\$104,192,527*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	6,165

\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the SRWMD and a 130-acre donation on the Weeki Wachee Springs site.

### Purpose for State Acquisition

Large springs of clear, continuously flowing water are among Florida’s most famous and important natural and recreational resources. The cavernous, water-filled rock of the Floridan Aquifer supplies the largest springs. By preserving land around springs, this project will aid in the protection of springs, karst windows, and the Floridan Aquifer from the effects of commercial, residential, and agricultural runoff; clearcutting and mining; and unsupervised recreation. This project will ensure that Floridians and visitors from all over the world will be able to enjoy Florida springs for years to come.

### Manager(s)

Spring or Property	Managers
Morrison Springs	Walton County
Blue Springs Park	DRP
Brunson Landing and Cypress Spring	Leased from owner and managed by NFWFMD
Gainer Springs	DRP / NFWFMD
Jackson Blue Springs	Jackson County
River Sink Spring	US Forest Service
Church Sink	Leon County
St. Marks Springs	DRP
Hardee Spring	Florida Forest Service
Madison Blue Springs	DRP
Damascus Peanut Tract and Falmouth Spring	NFWFMD
Lafayette Blue Springs	Lafayette County
Troy Spring	DRP
Fanning Springs	DRP / OGT / NFWFMD
Silver Springs Sandhill	Marion County
Weeki Wachee Springs	FWC
Springs Coast Research	Wildlands Conservation
Horne Spring	FFS





### **General Description**

Because of the thick, water-filled limestone underlying it, Florida has more large springs (including river rises and karst windows) than any other state or even country. Those discharging an average of 100 cubic feet of water per second or more are called first-magnitude springs. The 33 recognized first magnitude springs in Florida are scattered in the northern peninsula and the eastern panhandle where the limestone of the Floridan Aquifer arches close to the surface. Each day, these 33 springs send out much more water than is used for drinking water by all the people in the state. The springs, with generally clear, continuously flowing waters, are among Florida's most important natural resources and some are famous tourist attractions. The tracts harbor at least seven FNAI-listed plants and eighteen FNAI-listed animals. The Weeki Wachee tract includes one of the best remaining scrubs on Florida's West Coast. Several archaeological or historic sites are known from these springs, from remains over 2000 years old to an historic Sinclair gas station. All these springs are vulnerable to development and unsupervised use.

### **Public Use**

The project sites are designated for use as state parks, geological sites and wildlife and environmental areas, with high recreational potential for swimming, canoeing, camping and nature appreciation.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 7, 1990, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) added the Florida's First Magnitude Springs – Phase I project to the CARL Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by the Department of Environmental Regulations, consisted of approximately 2,907 acres, 36 landowners, 136 parcels, and a taxable value (TAV) of \$5,718,493. In 1990, five springs made up the project: Falmouth Spring (Suwannee County, 75 acres, 1 parcel, 1 landowner, TAV \$45,000), Fanning Springs (Levy County, 525 acres, 98 parcels, 17 landowners, TAV \$1,187,610), Gainer Springs (Bay County, 1,258 acres, 19 parcels, 7 landowners, TAV \$3,256,739), River Sink Spring (Wakulla County, 105 acres, 4 parcels, 4 landowners, TAV \$64,956), and St. Marks Springs (Leon County, 890 acres, 19 parcels, 6 landowners, TAV \$1,164,188). According to the 1990 Project Design document, the DRP will manage St. Marks Springs. The US Forest Service will manage River Sink Spring. The OGT, DRP, and SRWMD will manage Fanning Springs. A lead manager has not been determined for Falmouth Springs. The lead manager is still unclear for Gainer Springs; however, the NFWMD and Bay County both expressed interest. A portion of the Fanning Springs sites have been acquired. The NFWMD has acquired 214 acres of the Gainer Springs sites.

On June 28, 1991, the LAAC approved a 218-acre addition to the Falmouth Springs site, located in Suwannee County, within the project boundary. It was sponsored by the landowner, Nemours Foundation, who already has acreage within the current boundary and is not willing to sell only a portion of the tract. The taxable value of the addition is \$129,600. SRWMD will manage if acquired.

On December 10, 1992, the LAAC approved Phase II that added three springs, 1,880 acres with a taxable value of \$5,180,452. This addition consisted of Jackson Blue Springs (Jackson County, 348



acres, 3 parcels, 2 landowners, TAV \$256,556); Troy Spring (Lafayette County, 265 acres, 6 parcels, 2 landowners, TAV \$261,897); and Weeki Wachee Springs (Hernando County, 1,267 acres, 59 parcels, 24 landowners, TAV \$4,661,999). The FWC will manage the Weeki Wachee Springs sites. The DRP will manage the Troy Spring site. Jackson County will manage the Jackson Blue Springs sites. Portions of Troy Spring, Weeki Wachee Springs, & Jackson Blue Springs sites have been acquired. On December 10, 1992, the LAAC also approved a fee-simple, 1,635-acre addition (Gainer Springs Expansion) and combined it with the Gainer Springs site. The majority of the addition is owned by Hunt Petroleum/Rosewood Timber Co. and St. Joe Paper. There are also several small ownerships. The estimated taxable value is \$3,000,000. Phase I was combined with the new Florida's First Magnitude Springs Phase II. The springs are located in Bay & Washington counties. The NFWFMD will manage the 214-acre Harder tract that it acquired.

On October 30, 1995, the LAAC approved a fee-simple, 20-acre addition (Jackson Blue Springs) to the project boundary in Jackson County. It was sponsored by the two landowners, Carolyn D. Huff and Wayne Mixon, located along Spring Run of Merritt's Mill Pond in Jackson County, and has a taxable value of \$258,790. Jackson County will manage. Both properties were acquired in 1997.

On December 3, 1998, the Land Acquisition Management Advisory Council (LAMAC) transferred the St. Marks Springs, River Sink Spring, Fanning Springs, and Gainer Springs sites to the Negotiation Impasse group. On July 29, 1999, the LAMAC approved a fee-simple, 65-acre addition (Madison Blue Springs) in Madison County to the project, sponsored by the landowners' representative. It contains 45 parcels, 22 landowners, and a taxable value of \$604,000. The addition was designated essential and added to the Priority portion of the project. Madison County will manage it. Approximately 44 acres have been acquired.

On August 22, 2000, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 40-acre addition (Cypress Spring) in Washington County to the project boundary. The addition was sponsored by Conservation Properties for the landowner, Harold Vickers, and had a taxable value of \$131,400. Mr. Vickers was willing to manage it if acquired; however, property was sold to a third party in 2002.

On April 18, 2003, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 200-acre addition (Morrison Springs) in Walton County to the project boundary with a taxable value of \$63,880. The addition was sponsored by Conservation Properties, Inc. and Walton County will manage the site. Also on April 18, 2003 ARC approved a fee-simple, 4,552-acre addition (Silver Springs Addition) north of Silver Springs in Marion County to the project boundary. The addition was sponsored by the Silver Springs Basin Working Group, consisted of one landowner, Avatar Properties Inc., and had a taxable value of \$3,406,945. The FFS will manage this if it is acquired.

On August 15, 2003, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 172-acre addition (Lafayette Blue Springs) in Lafayette County to the project boundary. The addition was sponsored by Conservation Properties, consisted of one landowner, Union Land & Timber Corp., 9 parcels, and a taxable value of \$97,000. Lafayette County will manage if acquired. On October 17, 2003, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 365-



acre addition (Silver Springs Addition No. 2) in Marion County to the project boundary. The addition was sponsored by the Silver Springs Basin Working Group and the Marion County Audubon, Inc., consisted of one landowner, Seldin, 2 parcels, and a taxable value of \$2,889,223. Marion County will manage the site. In 2005, 330 acres were acquired. On December 5, 2003, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 1,717-acre addition (Jackson Blue Springs) in Jackson County to the project boundary. The addition, sponsored by Conservation Properties, consisted of 11 parcels, 5 landowners (Edinburgh Investment Corp; AJ Green; Howard Muncaster Partnership; LH Alford Farms Inc.; Doyle Green), and a taxable value of \$303,367. Jackson County will manage it if acquired. On October 15, 2004, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 5-acre addition (Church Sink) in Leon County to the project boundary. The addition was sponsored by the landowner, J. Lee Vause Trust, consisted of one parcel, and a taxable value of \$47,700. Leon County will manage if acquired.

On October 13, 2006, ARC approved a fee-simple 305-acre addition (Hardee Spring) to the boundary in Hamilton County. The addition was sponsored by Harold Hardee and involved one parcel with a taxable value of \$57,001. The FFS would manage the site as part of the Twin Rivers State Forest if acquired. In July 2007, the BOT acquired 4,471 acres of the Avatar property in Marion County. On February 25, 2009, the BOT acquired 54.74 acres from the Rakestraw family in the St. Marks Site.

On January 6, 2010, FFS purchased approximately 1 acre for \$16,065 from Kaiser/TNC in the Indian Lake State Forest. On May 11, 2010, FFS purchased 0.12 of an acre for \$2,550. FFS will manage both purchases. In July 2010, FFS purchased two parcels (0.23 for \$5,100 and 0.12 for \$2,800) and will manage both. On November 15, 2011, FFS purchased to manage .23 acres in Indian Lake State Forest (Potter-\$5,100).

In October 2010, FFS purchased 5 parcels (Silver Spring Addition--Bloom, Dinkins, Dupras, Hanson, Szymialis ownerships) making 1/2 acre for a combined \$10,200 and will manage all. In November, 2010 FFS purchased 2 parcels (Silver Spring Addition--Stovall, Landry) or .29 acre for \$6,375 and will manage these.

On May 2, 2011, FFS purchased and will manage .23 acre (Jean & Giselle Raymond-\$12,000). On August 3, 2011, the Felburn Foundation donated 2.42 acres in Silver Springs (valued at \$100,000) for FFS to manage. On 9/16/2011, DRP purchased to manage 55.73 acres (Gerrell Plantation, Inc.- \$457,000), as an addition to Natural Bridge Historic State Park.

On December 9, 2011, this project was placed in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever projects.

On February 15, 2013 ARC changed the design of the Florida's First Magnitude Springs project in Madison County to add the 608-acre Damascus Peanut Tract, then found that conveying the tract to the Suwannee River Water Management District in exchange for the District's 670-acre Ellaville tract would make a greater conservation value and that the Damascus Peanut Tract was no longer needed for conservation by the Board of Trustees.



In April 2014 ARC agreed to add the 360-acre Brunson Landing Tract on Holmes Creek, north of Vernon, to the project boundary to protect water resources from development. It provides over 2,200 feet of frontage along Homes Creek and is adjacent to NFWFMD land. It would also be managed by the NFWFMD if acquired.

On June 19, 2015 ARC voted to add the 405-acre Blue Springs Park on the Santa Fe River in Gilchrist County to the Florida's First Magnitude Springs. The park has a just value of \$1,361,547 and has a second-magnitude spring and two smaller springs. Blue Springs was then added by ARC to the boundary of the existing Florida's First Magnitude Springs project. On April 20, 2012 the ARC added 63.4 acres to the project that had been authorized for sale from the US Forest Service. After the most recent addition in 2012, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$802,454.

The 470-acre fee-simple Silver Springs Sandhill on the edge of Ocala was proposed, considered, and approved by ARC as a stand-alone project on June 19, 2015. It was then added by ARC to the boundary of the existing Florida First Magnitude Springs project.

On October 2, 2017 the state purchased 465 acres of the Sandhill tract to be managed by Marion County as part of the Coehadjoe Park.

On October 6, 2017 DEP closed on 399 acres of Blue Springs Park in Gilchrist County.

In October 2017, ARC approved the Springs Coast Research Station as a Florida Forever project. The project had an estimated tax value of \$643,154. This 28-acre parcel in southwest Citrus County is north of the town of Chassahowitzka. It shares northern and western boundaries with the Chassahowitzka River and Coastal Swamps (managed by SFWMD). The parcel is at the edge of Crab Creek, which is the site of Crab Spring, part of the Chassahowitzka first magnitude spring group. The facilities on the property have been well maintained, and the campus layout and functions of the residence and satellite buildings would make it suitable as a research center for springs systems and habitats. The project was proposed by Wildlands Conservation, a nonprofit conservation group based in Tampa, who would manage the property as a springs research campus in coordination with several educational institutions, as well as protecting the surrounding public lands and underwater acreage. In December 2017, ARC voted to add the 28-acre Springs Coast Research Station Florida Forever project boundary to that of the Florida's First Magnitude Springs project. After the most recent addition in 2017, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$15,137,721.

In calendar year 2017, a total of 863.45 acres closed in this project were acquired using Florida Forever program funding.

On June 15, 2018 ARC members voted to add 556 acres in Columbia County to the project. This is the Santa Fe Springs Tract, on the north side of the Santa Fe River. The Florida Forest Service (FFS) will manage this site through the Florida Forest Service's Suwannee Forestry Center if acquired, however it may be managed as a standalone Forest property. The FFS estimates the budget needs for the one year of interim management to require a total of \$167,974 from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund (1 fulltime employee at \$44,439, Expenses of \$71,935, and Operating Capital Outlay of \$167,974).



The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$27,092,009.

### **Coordination**

Hernando County has limited acquisition funds but is very supportive of state acquisition efforts. The NFWFMD has acquired the 214-acre Harder tract in Gainer Springs.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Florida's First Magnitude Springs project are to preserve land around springs, karst windows, and springs to aid in the protection of the Floridan Aquifer from the effects of commercial, residential, and agricultural runoff; clearcutting and mining; and unsupervised recreation.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Blue Spring has the diversity of resources and recreational opportunities to qualify as a state park. The location of the Weeki Wachee project adjacent to the Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area (WEA), as well as its sensitive natural resources, qualifies it as a WEA. River Sink spring is a first-magnitude karst window. This qualified it as a state geological site. St. Marks, Fanning, Troy, Falmouth, and Gainer Springs have the diversity of resources and recreational opportunities to qualify as a state park.

#### ***Manager***

FWC (Weeki Wachee Springs excluding the springhead, which is part of the Chassahowitzka WMA; Jackson County (Jackson Blue Springs); U.S. Forest Service (River Sink Springs); DRP (St. Marks, Fanning, Troy, Gainer Springs, Madison County Blue Springs, and Blue Springs Park of Gilchrist County); Walton County (Morrison Springs); Leon County (Church Sink); Marion County (Silver Springs); FFS (Hardee Springs); OGT (Fanning Springs); NFWFMD (Gainer Springs); SRWMD (Fanning Springs, Falmouth Springs); Lafayette County (Lafayette Blue Springs), Marion County (Silver Springs Sandhills); and Florida Forest Service (Santa Fe Springs tract).

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

River Sink and Blue Spring are moderate-need tracts, requiring more than basic resource management and protection. Gainer Springs is a high-need management area including public recreational use and development compatible with resource management. Florida Forest would manage the Santa Fe Spring parcel for Operation Outdoor Freedom Hunts.

Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure  
Jackson County Blue Spring is now being used by the public and Jackson County has no plans to curtail activities. The County would continue to open the swim area in season and maintain year-round access for boating, fishing, and nature appreciation. The smaller second spring may need restrictions to ensure public safety and preservation of the limestone bluffs. A lifeguard will be on duty while the swim area is



open. Access will be controlled primarily by fences. River Sink would immediately fall under the National Forests in Florida's Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). Within the first few years after acquisition, management activities would focus on site security, resource inventory, removal of existing trash, and any necessary prescribed fire management. In the first year after Gainer Springs is acquired, the Division of Recreation and Parks will concentrate on site security, natural and cultural resource protection, and the development of a plan for long-term public use and resource management.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The Blue Springs swim area generated \$21,946 in revenue in fiscal year 1992- 1993 and \$13,045 in fiscal year 1993-94. DRP expects Gainer Springs to generate no significant revenue initially. The amount of any revenue generated would depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities. As facilities are developed, River Sink may become a national recreational fee area. Fees collected from use of this area would be activities of the Federal Government. It is estimated that the area will receive more than 5,000 visits annually once it is developed.

***Cooperators in management activities***

Jackson County expects the FWC to cooperate in managing wildlife on the Blue Springs project area. Other appropriate agencies may wish to become involved in the project. As funds become available and subject to public approval, the USDA Forest Service may enter into a cooperative agreement to manage the property.





Florida’s First Magnitude Springs Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1991
Project Area (GIS acres)	16,451
Acres Acquired (GIS)	10,286*
at a Cost of	\$104,192,527*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	6,165

\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the SRWMD and a 130-acre donation on the Weeki Wachee Springs site.

Florida’s First Magnitude Springs Table 2

Florida’s First Magnitude Springs FNAI Elements	Score
Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander	G2/S1S2
Manatee	G2/S2
Florida Mouse	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Withlacoochee Tiny Sand-loving Scarab	G1/S1
Woodville Karst Cave Crayfish	G1/S1
Suwannee Moccasinshell	G1/S1
ciliate-leaf tickseed	G1G2/S1
Coastal Lowland Cave Crayfish	G1G2/S1S2
Gulf Moccasinshell	G2/S1
Florida Longbeak Crayfish	G1G2/S1S2

There are 66 rare species associated with the project.

Florida’s First Magnitude Springs Table 3

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	Federal	Federal	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$0	\$5,000	\$22,167	\$22,167
OPS	\$0	\$0	\$7,280	\$7,280
Expense	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$5,424	\$5,424
OCO	\$0	\$0	\$6,978	\$6,978
FCO	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$3,000	\$10,000	\$41,849	\$41,849

[Map\(s\): Florida’s First Magnitude Springs](#)



## **Garcon Ecosystem**

Santa Rosa County  
Climate Change Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1995
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	7,372
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	3,968*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$3,362,561*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	3,404

*\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the NFWFMD*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The peninsula jutting into the north end of Pensacola Bay is covered with wet grassy prairies, dotted with carnivorous pitcher plants as well as other rare plants, and are some of the best pitcher-plant prairies left in Florida. The Garcon Ecosystem project will protect these prairies, thereby helping these ecosystems' rare plant and animal inhabitants to survive, maintaining Pensacola Bay's water quality, and allowing the public to learn about and enjoy this unique natural environment.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), is lead Manager for the northern portion. The Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) is the lead Manager for the southern portion.

### **General Description**

Natural communities within this project are in good to excellent condition and include wet prairie, estuarine tidal marsh, and wet flatwoods. The prairie community is species-rich and includes orchids and insectivorous plants such as pitcher plants, sundews, butterworts, and bladderworts. Especially significant is the large population of state endangered white-topped pitcher plants, and the globally imperiled panhandle lily. The tracts are also habitat for the flatwoods salamander, a candidate for federal listing. Four cultural sites are known from the project. The sensitive prairies are threatened by ditching, plant collecting and residential development. Development pressure will increase when the bridge across Pensacola Bay is completed.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated as a buffer preserve, for such uses as nature study, hiking, and fishing.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On November 18, 1994, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) combined the Prairies of Garcon and Garcon Point CARL projects and renamed the new project Garcon Ecosystem. This fee-simple project consisted of approximately 7,601 acres, multiple owners, and a 1994 taxable value of \$6,573,507.





Garcon Point – consisted of approximately 21 owners. Phase I: FDIC (acquired by NFWFMD). Phase II: all other ownerships except in sections 24 & 25. Phase III: ownerships in sections 24 & 25. Prairies of Garcon – essential tracts included the larger ownerships of Jenkins (acquired by the NFWFMD), Henzelman, Culpepper, Thompson and other ownerships greater than 160 acres. Phase II tracts included smaller ownerships and lots within Avalon Beach Subdivision. On February 5, 1998, the Land Acquisition & Management Advisory Council (LAMAC) approved a fee-simple, 845-acre addition to the project boundary. The addition, sponsored by the owners’ representative, consisted of five owners, and a 1997 taxable value of \$483,356. The NFWFMD will manage this addition that has been designated as non-essential, meaning it is important, but not critical to the project as a whole.

On October 25, 2002, NFWFMD acquired 10 acres from Perdido Key, Inc. for \$9,000.

On December 5, 2003, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) moved this project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2004 Priority list.

On July 10, 2007, 20 acres within the project boundary were donated (Woodlands Ventures of Pensacola for a value of \$2,620).

On December 9, 2011, the ARC moved this project to the Climate Change Lands (CCL) category.

On August 17, 2012, the ARC removed 283 acres from the project because the 89 parcels making up that land had been developed or had become otherwise unmanageable. After the most recent boundary reduction in 2012, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$4,322,492.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$12,221,664.

### **Coordination**

In November 1995, the NFWFMD accepted \$1,025,350 of mitigation funds from the Santa Rosa Bridge Authority to acquire land (Jenkins) within the project boundary.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Garcon Ecosystem project are: 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 this state or a larger geographic area; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; and to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project has the size, location, and quality of resources to qualify as a “State Buffer Preserve” to the Yellow River Marsh Aquatic Preserve and adjacent Class II shell fishing waters.



### ***Manager***

DRP is lead manager for the northern portion. The NFWFMD is the manager for the southern portion. The prospectus was provided by the DRP.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Garcon Ecosystem Project includes lands that require prescribed fire management.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, initial or intermediate activities will concentrate on site security, fire management planning, resource inventory, and a completed management plan. Long-range plans for this property will generally be directed toward the restoration of disturbed areas and the perpetuation and maintenance of natural communities. Management activities will also stress the protection of threatened and endangered species. An all-season burning program will be established using conventional practices. Whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks will be used to contain, and control prescribed and natural fires. An educational program for all age groups will be used in conjunction with a carefully designed hiking trail, to keep the public away from sensitive areas. Efforts to prohibit vehicle activity except in designated areas will be a major concern. The resource inventory will be used to identify sensitive areas that need special attention, protection or management and to locate areas that are appropriate for any recreational or administrative facilities. Infrastructure development will be confined to already disturbed areas and will be the absolute minimum required to allow public access, provide facilities for the public, and to manage the property.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

No revenue is expected to be generated for some years.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Forest Service/FFS, or the DRP, may help with fire management.



Garcon Ecosystem Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1995
Project Area (GIS acres)	7,372
Acres Acquired (GIS)	3,968*
at a Cost of	\$3,362,561*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	3,404

\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the NFWFMD.

Garcon Ecosystem Table 2

Garcon Ecosystem FNAI Elements	Score
Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander	G2/S1S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Louisiana yellow-eyed grass	G2G3/S1
spring hill flax	G2/S2
Berry's Skipper	G2/S2
Panhandle lily	G2/S2
Louisiana Seaside Sparrow	G4T4/S1
Saltmarsh Topminnow	G3/S2
pond rush	G5/S1
Curtiss' sandgrass	G3/S3
pinewoods bluestem	G3/S3
yellow fringeless orchid	G3G4/S3

There are 13 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Garcon Ecosystem](#)



## **Green Swamp**

Lake, Pasco and Polk Counties

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **At-a-Glance Data**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2015
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	266,442
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	105,227*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$59,466,086
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	161,215

\*Includes acreage acquired and funds expended by the SWFWMD and SJRWMD.

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The mosaic of cypress swamps, pine forests, and pastures known as the Green Swamp is vital to the water supply of central Florida. The Green Swamp gives rise to four major river systems and is important for maintaining the flow of water from the Florida Aquifer. By preserving the combination of land uses in this region, the Green Swamp will protect the Floridan Aquifer and the several rivers, preserve a large area for wildlife to inhabit and use as wildlife corridors, and provide areas for public recreation in the rapidly growing region between Tampa and Orlando. The project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses a number of Florida Forever project sites.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is recommended as the manager for most of the area acquired in fee-simple. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) will manage the Overstreet Ranch and the area within the optimum boundary of Colt Creek and Lake Louisa State Parks. Land purchased in less-than-fee will be monitored by the Division of State Lands, Office of Environmental Services.

Archeological and historic sites will be managed in coordination with the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources. The DRP anticipates any shift from protection and restoration efforts with limited public uses to a broader public use with more infrastructure will require a greater intensity of management.

### **General Description**

The Green Swamp is a critical hydrological resource. It encompasses the headwaters of four major rivers; the Withlacoochee, Oklawaha, Hillsborough and Peace; and has the highest groundwater elevation in the Peninsula. It is therefore critical to the recharge of the Florida Aquifer. For this reason, it has been designated as an Area of Critical State Concern. The Green Swamp has the size and the wildlife resources to qualify as a Wildlife Management Area (WMA), thereby preserving a large area for wildlife and public recreation in the part of the state between Tampa and Orlando. The area is a complex ecosystem of disturbed uplands and wetlands intermixed with high-quality swamps. It is estimated that 90 percent of the native upland vegetation in this project has been disturbed by agriculture and



development, but the project does contain some uplands with 15 distinct natural communities and other community types. These include scrub, sandhill, and pine flatwoods, which are natural communities underrepresented in state conservation holdings.

Geographically, the Green Swamp project is located within the Green Swamp Area of Critical State Concern but does not include the entire Area of Critical State Concern. The project extends from the southwest corner of the City of Clermont, west and south to US Highway 98, south to Polk City, almost to Haines City on the southeast side, and east to Lake Louise State Park.

Biologically, at least six rare plants and 17 rare animals have been documented within the project boundary. Based on habitat, there is potential for 35 rare species to occur within the project, especially within the Pine Island Recharge section. Historically, a total of 23 sites are listed in the Florida Master Site files in the project area. Extensive lakes and wetlands suggest a moderate to high potential for archeological and historical sites that have not yet been discovered in the portion of the project formerly identified as the Pine Island Recharge area, which is bordered in the southeast by the Hilochee Wildlife Management Area, and to the northeast by Lake Minnehaha. Florida Highway 50 serves as the northern border of this project.

<b>Green Swamp Project FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Eastern Indigo Snake</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Florida Mouse</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Swallow-tailed Kite</b>	<b>G5/S2</b>
<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Calhoun's Skipper</b>	<b>G3T1/S1</b>
<b>Arogos Skipper</b>	<b>G3T1T2/S1</b>
<b>Berry's Skipper</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>celestial lily</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>giant orchid</b>	<b>G2G3/S2</b>
<b>Peninsular Floater</b>	<b>G2G3/S2S3</b>
<b>Eastern Indigo Snake</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>

*There are 38 rare species associated with the project.*

**Public Use**

The project will become a wildlife management area and a state park, providing such activities as hunting, hiking and nature appreciation.

The project will also include numerous conservation easements. For the less-than-fee acquisitions, the degree and type of public use will be negotiated with the landowners and is expected to be minimal; the landowner typically retains all hunting and fishing rights in negotiated land use agreements and conservation easements, including the right to lease lands for hunting or agriculture. Public use of these



lands is linked to the environmental services of aquifer recharge and surface water protection they provide, as well as serving as an ecological greenway and wildlife habitat. Monitoring easements and agreements will be done by the OES.

### **Acquisition Planning**

A large Green Swamp project was added to the CARL list in 1992. That project was associated with the Green Swamp Land Authority (GSLA). It worked with the Southwest Florida Water Management District in acquired lands within the boundary. In 1999, the GSLA's responsibilities were passed to the DEP.

In 2011, the project was reduced in size to eliminate isolated and otherwise unmanageable parcels and divided into four projects. Those four projects were placed on the list, and the single Green Swamp project was removed from the list. The Green Swamp project described here comprises less acreage than the original 1992 Green Swamp project. Descriptions and maps of each of the four areas that had been considered projects follow the overarching project description, as they provide more detailed information on resources and management.

In December 2015, the ARC voted to combine the four Green Swamp projects on the priority list and create a single Green Swamp project. This 266,895-acre project was placed and ranked in the Partnerships and Regional Initiatives category. It includes all lands found within the 2011 Florida Forever project boundaries of the Green Swamp-Hilochee Corridor, the Green Swamp-Peace River Headwaters, the Green Swamp-Pine Island Recharge, and the Green Swamp-Withlacoochee Headwaters.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$991,857,393.



**Hilochee Corridor**

**At-a-Glance Data**

<i>GIS acres</i>	91,456
<i>GIS Acres Remaining</i>	55,712

**Managers**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will be the primary manager for the majority of this area since it is contiguous with Hilochee Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Division of Recreation and Parks (FDEP/DRP) will be the primary manager for the portion within the optimum boundary of Lake Louisa State Park.

**General Description**

The Green Swamp-Hilochee Corridor portion is the easternmost of the four sub-units in the Green Swamp FF Project. Covering 91,456 GIS acres in northern Polk and southern Lake Counties, it has 5,138 parcels with multiple owners. About 39 percent of the lands in its boundary (36,000 acres) has been acquired for conservation.

Hydrologically and geologically, this section of the Green Swamp is split north to south into two major drainage basins. The western basin drains north and west to the Withlacoochee River, and the eastern basin drains north and east into the Palatlahaha River and ultimately into the St. Johns River. Another sliver of the area joins the drainage basin to the Kissimmee River drainage to the east and south. For the most part, elevations range between 120 and 175 feet above mean sea level (MSL). The marshes and swamps are generally lower than 120 feet MSL.

Five rare plants are documented within the boundary. Ten rare animal species are documented on site (see FNAI Elements). From an urban planning perspective, this area has a moderate potential for being developed, subdivided or losing significant natural attributes or open spaces. The potential for development and loss of open space is highest on the uplands adjacent to the US 27 corridor on the Lake Wales Ridge.

Lake Minnehaha. Florida Highway 50 serves as the northern border of this project.

<b>Hilochee Corridor Site FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Florida Scrub-jay</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>Eastern Indigo Snake</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Florida Mouse</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Swallow-tailed Kite</b>	<b>G5/S2</b>
<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>
<b>Giant Orchid</b>	<b>G2G3/S2</b>
<b>Florida Sandhill Crane</b>	<b>G5T2T3/S2S3</b>
<b>Bachman’s Sparrow</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>



Hilochee Corridor Site FNAI Elements	Score
Cutthroat Grass	G3/S3
Florida Bonamia	G3/S3
Florida Long-tailed Weasel	G5T3/S3

As of 2015, there were 18 rare species associated with the site.

Management Policy Statement

Plans are to manage the Green Swamp-Hilochee Corridor to conserve and protect lands within areas of critical state concern; conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered or threatened species; provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural, resource-based recreation; and conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes and forests in a manner to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources that local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect.

The 84-acre portion of the Green Swamp-Hilochee Corridor within the optimum boundary of Lake Louisa State Park will be managed consistent with the goals and objectives in the approved Unit Management Plan. General management recommendations are restoration and enhancement of natural systems, maintenance of water quality, and public resource-based recreational use and resource education and interpretation.

Management Prospectus

*Qualifications for state designation*

The Hilochee Corridor has the size and wildlife resources to qualify as a wildlife management area (WMA). Its variety of land uses helps protect the Floridan Aquifer and the headwaters of several rivers that start in this region. The Corridor preserves a large area for wildlife and provides areas for public recreation in a fast-growing region between Tampa and Orlando.

*Manager*

The FWC and DRP.

*Conditions affecting intensity of management*

The Hilochee Corridor requires resource-management methods for its natural areas, including prescribed fire where appropriate. Other areas may require ecological restoration of ground cover, control of invasive species, and reforestation. These will be especially important to achieve the objectives of conserving habitats and populations of imperiled or rare species. Because of the importance of landscape ecology, a land use change near a managed area may affect efforts to reach resource conservation goals of the area, and the overall effectiveness of the necessary resource-management. Biotic monitoring is necessary to achieving resource-management goals. Infrastructure development will be appropriate to allow public access, and to provide facilities, security, and property management.

*Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure*

When acquired, the FWC will develop a management plan describing the goals and objectives to implement future resource management. The plan would also establish current and future roles of





cooperating entities. Long-range goals will stress ecosystem management and protecting and managing rare or imperiled species. The FWC will assess the wildlife resources and provide planning support to enhance rare and imperiled species management and recovery of imperiled species. Prescribed fire and other resource-management activities will maintain and restore natural communities and vegetation to benefit native wildlife. Essential roads will be maintained; and unnecessary roads, fire lanes and hydrologic disturbance will be abandoned or restored as practical. Generally, development of facilities is to be kept to the minimum level necessary to assure protection of resources and to ensure the recreational experience. Where possible, such development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance. The DRP’s resource management activities in the first year will concentrate on site security, protecting natural and cultural resources, and developing a resource inventory. Particular emphasis will be given to the monitoring of public land and water-use planning and regulatory activities to ensure that adequate consideration is given to maintaining the quality of the water resources and any adjacent lake or other waters designated as Outstanding Florida Waters.

*Revenue-generating potential*

Revenue could include sales of various permits and recreation use fees, and fees from ecotourism activities if such activities could be economically developed. Area regulations would be developed to identify the necessary permits and fees. The long-term value of this ecosystem to human health and local and regional land and water resources are thought to be significant. The DRP expects no significant revenue to be generated from this property immediately after fee title acquisition, and the amount of any future revenue will depend on the nature and extent of public use and development.

*Cooperators in management activities*

The FWC will cooperate in managing the Hilochee Corridor of the Green Swamp with SWFWMD, Florida Forest Service (FFS), Lake and Polk Counties.

<b>Management Cost and Revenue Sources- Hilochee Corridor Site*</b>	<b>In US Dollars (2011)</b>
<b>Resource Management</b>	
<b>Exotic Species Control</b>	<b>\$37,186</b>
<b>Prescribed Burning</b>	<b>\$111,221</b>
<b>Cultural Resource Management</b>	<b>\$1,794</b>
<b>Timber Management</b>	<b>\$7,176</b>
<b>Hydrological Manager</b>	<b>\$193,739</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>\$805,332</b>
<b>Resource Management Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,156,447</b>
<b>Administration</b>	
<b>General Administration</b>	<b>\$10,636</b>
<b>Administration Subtotal</b>	<b>\$10,636</b>
<b>Support</b>	
<b>Land Management Planning</b>	<b>\$103,285</b>



<b>Management Cost and Revenue Sources- Hilochee Corridor Site*</b>	<b>In US Dollars (2011)</b>
<b>Land Management Reviews</b>	<b>\$20,133</b>
<b>Training/Staff Development</b>	<b>\$5,339</b>
<b>Vehicle Purchase</b>	<b>\$68,433</b>
<b>Vehicle Operation/Maintenance</b>	<b>\$53,816</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>\$13,274</b>
<b>Support Subtotal</b>	<b>\$284,281</b>
<b>Capital Improvements</b>	
<b>New Facility Construction</b>	<b>\$89,694</b>
<b>Facility Maintenance</b>	<b>\$311,312</b>
<b>Capital Improvements Subtotal</b>	<b>\$401,006</b>
<b>Visitor Services/Recreation</b>	
<b>Info/Education/Operations</b>	<b>\$60,032</b>
<b>Visitor Services/Recreation Subtotal</b>	<b>\$60,032</b>
<b>Law Enforcement</b>	
<b>Resources Protection</b>	<b>\$40,501</b>
<b>Law Enforcement Subtotal</b>	<b>\$40,501</b>
<b>FWC Projections Total</b>	<b>\$1,932,903**</b>

*\*The estimate of costs to operate and manage the area yet to be acquired is a projected estimate to fully implement management and reflects an estimate of the potential annual operating budget. All land management funding is dependent on annual legislative appropriations.*

*\*\*Based on the FWC's current staffing ratio of approximately one full-time employee (FTE) per 5,000 acres of managed area, eleven FTE positions would be optimal to fully manage the area covered by this prospectus. All land management funding is dependent upon annual legislative appropriations.*



**Peace River**

**At-a-Glance Data**

GIS acres	39,978
GIS Acres Remaining	23,703

**Managers**

Since the Peace River site parcels are primarily less-than-fee, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Division of State Lands’ Office of Environmental Services (FDEP/DSL/OES) will monitor most of the lands acquired.

**General Description**

This portion is 39,977 (GIS) contiguous acres and is composed of 15 distinct natural communities and other landcover. It is primarily basin swamps, depression marshes, pine flatwoods, pastures, and other agricultural lands. Pine flatwoods are underrepresented in state conservation holdings. About 51 percent of the area is in natural condition, while 49 percent is disturbed (ruderal, improved and semi-improved pasture and about 400 acres of pine plantation). Geographically, it is between Dean Still Road and Interstate 4. It is bounded on its east, north, and west sides with the Hilochee Corridor and the Withlacoochee River Headwaters. State Road 33 bisects the proposal from north to south. Old Grade Road (County Road 557) serves as the area’s eastern edge.

Hydrologically, the majority of the site is within the south Withlacoochee River watershed and drains northward. The land is mostly flat, ranging between 120 and 130 feet above mean sea level (MSL), though in the northwest corner, where the land slopes down towards the river, the elevation drops to 115 MSL. Most of the area (99 percent or more) meets the FF Evaluation’s Measures for Surface Water Protection and Aquifer Recharge.

Historically, there are 15 archaeological sites, one historic structure, and one resource group listed in the Florida Master Site files. The hydrology and minimal elevation changes suggest a low potential for significant archaeological and historical sites that have not been discovered.

No rare species have been documented within this area. Based on habitat, there is potential for several rare species to occur here. About 98 percent of the area meets the Florida Forever Evaluation’s Measures for Ecological Greenways; and 82 percent is within the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission’s (FWC) Strategic Habitat Conservation Area.

Peace River Site FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2T3/S2S3
Bachman’s Sparrow	G3/S3

*As of 2015, there were 2 rare species associated with the site.*

From an urban planning perspective, this portion has a moderate potential for being developed or subdivided, and a moderate-low potential for loss of significant natural attributes or open spaces. The



current and future land uses are mostly agricultural and rural residential. It is a short drive from Lakeland, Polk City, Auburndale, and Lake Alfred.

A disjunct portion of Hilochee Wildlife Management Area (WMA/FWC) and some of General James A. Van Fleet State Trail (FDEP/Division of Recreation and Parks [DRP] Office of Greenways and Trails [OGT]) is within the boundary. It also includes FDEP Green Swamp Land Authority (GSLA) Land Protection Agreements, and Green Swamp Conservation Easements.

#### Management Policy Statement

Green Swamp lands acquired through alternatives to fee-simple should be managed to accomplish the following: conserve and protect lands within areas of critical state concern; conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered or threatened species; and conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes and forests in a manner that enhances or protects significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources.

#### Management Prospectus

##### *Qualifications for state designation*

Green Swamp is essential to a clean adequate water supply for Central Florida.

##### *Manager*

The landowner manages the property, with monitoring oversight provided by the OES.

##### *Conditions affecting intensity of management*

The intensity of management will be decided in the negotiation of the agreement or conservation easement.

##### *Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure*

The landowner will provide security and infrastructure protection.

##### *Revenue-generating potential*

There is no revenue-generating potential for this portion of the Green Swamp.

##### *Management costs and sources of revenue*

The OES is responsible for periodic monitoring of land use agreements and conservation easements.



### ***Pine Island Recharge***

#### **At-a-Glance Data**

<i>GIS acres</i>	30,688
<i>GIS Acres Remaining</i>	29,513

#### **Managers**

Because this site within the overall Green Swamp project is proposed primarily as a less-than-fee acquisition, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Division of State Lands Office of Environmental Services (FDEP/DSL/OES) will monitor most of the lands acquired.

#### **General Description**

The Pine Island Recharge area has 13 distinct natural communities and other landcover types. Natural communities make up about half of the proposal; and various types of agricultural, rural residential, and mined lands make up the remainder. The natural communities are almost entirely wetlands. Several large lakes and numerous basin swamps and depression marshes are interspersed in a complex mosaic with the disturbed landcover types. Geographically, the Pine Island Recharge Area is south of SR 50, north of CR 474, and west of Lakes Minnehaha and Louisa. Much like the Hilochee Corridor, it is bounded to the west, south and southeast by two other portions of the Green Swamp Florida Forever project (Green Swamp-Hilochee Corridor and Green Swamp-Withlacoochee River Headwaters). Its boundary is contiguous with five publicly managed conservation areas. Hydrologically, it is split lengthwise (north-south) into two major drainage basins. Almost three-quarters of this area is in the Oklawaha River watershed, draining east and northeast. The remaining quarter is the Withlacoochee River watershed which drains west. The northern portion of the Pine Island Recharge includes an area identified as the Groveland Karst Region; it is sandhill karst with solution basins, a region of the most active collapsed sinkhole development, and the principle recharge area of the Floridan aquifer. Most of the area (98 percent) meets the FF Evaluation’s Measures for Aquifer Recharge.

Eight archaeological sites are listed in the Florida Master Site files within this area, but its extensive lakes and wetlands suggest a moderate to high potential for significant archaeological and historical sites that have not been discovered yet.

Few rare species have been documented within this area (see FNAI Elements). Based on habitat, there is potential for all 36 of the rare species identified for the original Green Swamp project to occur here. About 94 percent of the area meets the FF Evaluation’s Measure for Ecological Greenways and 10 percent is within a Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Strategic Habitat Conservation Area.

<b>Pine Island Recharge Site FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>
<b>Florida Sandhill Crane</b>	<b>G5T2T3/S2S3</b>

*As of 2015, there were 3 rare species associated with the site.*



From an urban planning perspective, the Pine Island Recharge has a moderate potential for being developed or subdivided or losing significant natural attributes or open spaces. It is a short drive from Clermont and the Disney World complex. Development potential is higher on the north side near Groveland and Clermont. It is located within an Area of Critical State Concern. The current and future land uses are mostly agricultural and low-density residential, but a portion of the area just south of Grove land is designated for one dwelling unit per five acres.

#### Management Policy Statement

The Green Swamp lands acquired through alternatives to fee-simple should be managed to accomplish the following: conserve and protect lands within areas of critical state concern; conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered/threatened species; and conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes and forests in a manner that enhances or protects significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources.

#### Management Prospectus

##### *Qualifications for state designation*

The Green Swamp-Pine Island Recharge Area land is essential to a clean, adequate water supply for Central Florida.

##### *Manager*

The landowner manages the property with monitoring oversight provided by the FDEP/DSL/OES.

##### *Conditions affecting intensity of management*

The intensity of management will be decided in the negotiation of the agreement or easement.

##### *Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure*

The landowner will provide security and infrastructure protection.

##### *Revenue-generating potential*

There is no revenue-generating potential for the Pine Island Recharge area.

##### *Management costs and sources of revenue*

The OES is responsible for periodic monitoring of land use agreements and conservation easements.



***Withlacoochee River Headwaters***

Managers

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will be the primary manager for the majority of the site yet to be acquired. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Division of Recreation and Parks (FDEP/DRP) will be the primary manager for the portion that is within the optimum boundary of Colt Creek State Park. (See Acquisition Planning section for managers of land already acquired within the boundary.)

General Description

The Withlacoochee River Headwaters has 103,458 (GIS) acres, composed of 13 distinct natural communities and 4 other landcover types. The natural communities include pine flatwoods, scrub, and sandhill, which are underrepresented in state conservation holdings. About 61 percent of the area is in natural condition, while 39 percent is disturbed (most in improved and semi-improved pasture and smaller acreages in ruderal and pine plantation). Geographically, this area is located between SR 50 on the north and US 98 on the south. It is close to Lakeland and Clermont. Its northwestern boundary is contiguous with the Withlacoochee State Forest and the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD)-managed Green Swamp land. To the east and the south are the other three sections of the Green Swamp Florida Forever project. The western two-thirds is characterized by low, rolling limestone plains. The land surface of the remaining third is comprised of sandhills and karst solution features with the Green Swamp region in the southeast being lower and closer to the water table. It is also a moderate distance to the Disney World complex.

Hydrographically, the majority of this portion of the overall Green Swamp Florida Forever is within the Withlacoochee River watershed. A small portion along the southern boundary is within the Hillsborough River watershed to the southwest. The Withlacoochee River bisects the area along the Lake-Polk County line; the river westward forms a significant portion of the western boundary. Elevations range from knolls greater than 140 feet above mean sea level (MSL) to less than 100 feet above MSL, but the majority of the area is below 115 feet MSL. Six rare plants and 17 rare animals are documented as occurring within this portion of the Green Swamp project, mostly associated with existing conservation lands in the southwestern part. (See FNAI Elements.)

<b>Withlacoochee River Headwaters Site FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Eastern Indigo Snake</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Gopher Tonoisc</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Swallow-tailed Kite</b>	<b>G5/S2</b>
<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>
<b>Arogos Skipper</b>	<b>G3T1T2/S1</b>
<b>Giant Orchid</b>	<b>G2G3/S2</b>
<b>Redmargin Zephyrlily</b>	<b>G2G3/S2S3</b>
<b>Short-tailed Hawk</b>	<b>G4GS/S1</b>



<b>Withlacoochee River Headwaters Site FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Peninsular Floater</b>	<b>G2G3/S2S3</b>
<b>Wood Stork</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Bachman's Sparrow</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>Sherman's Fox Squirrel</b>	<b>GST3/S3</b>

*As of 2015, there were 12 rare species associated with the site.*

From an urban planning perspective, the Withlacoochee River Headwaters has a moderate potential for being developed, subdivided, or losing significant natural attributes or open spaces. Development potential is higher on the south end, in the vicinity of Lakeland and Polk City. The Withlacoochee River Headwaters is within an Area of Critical State Concern.

Management Policy Statement

The Withlacoochee River Headwaters area will be managed to accomplish the following: conserve and protect lands within areas of critical state concern; conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered or threatened species; provide areas, including trails, for natural resource-based recreation; and conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests in a manner that enhances or protects significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish and wildlife resources that local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect.

Management Prospectus

*Qualifications for state designation*

The Withlacoochee River Headwaters has the size and wildlife resources to qualify as a wildlife management area (WMA). Its mosaic of land uses would help protect the Floridan Aquifer and the headwaters of several rivers that start in this region. It would preserve a large area for wildlife and provide areas for public recreation in a fast-growing region between Tampa and Orlando.

*Manager*

The FWC will manage most of the Withlacoochee River Headwaters remaining to be acquired (about 54,250 acres). The FDEP/DRP will manage a 488-acre parcel that is within the Colt Creek State Park optimum boundary. The Florida Forest Service (FFS) will manage a 11,963-acre parcel within the Withlacoochee State Forest optimum boundary. (See site management plans for lands already acquired.) Polk County has indicated willingness to be involved in acquisition and management when possible.

*Conditions affecting intensity of management*

For the FWC-managed lands, environmentally sensitive areas, such as erosion-prone sites, important habitats, and outstanding natural areas and wetlands, if acquired, would be identified, appropriately managed, and protected.

The Green Swamp-Withlacoochee River Headwaters includes natural areas requiring application of resource management methods, such as prescribed fire, where appropriate. Other areas may require restoring ground cover, controlling invasive species, and reforestation. Such resource management actions





may be necessary to accomplish restoration to attain a specific-desired, future condition. This is especially important for conservation of habitats and populations of imperiled or rare species. Due to the importance of landscape ecology, land use changes in the vicinity of a managed area may affect attainment of resource conservation goals for the area and the overall effectiveness of necessary resource management projects. Continued biotic monitoring is necessary for the accomplishment of natural resource management goals. Also, development of facilities is to be kept to the minimum level necessary to assure protection of the resources and compatible recreational experiences. To the extent possible, any such development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance. The FDEP/DRP's management costs will increase when parcels near Colt Creek State Park are acquired and will increase over time as work shifts from protection and restoration to broader public use. The FFS restoration efforts will focus on introducing prescribed fire; removing offsite pine species and exotic species; restoring native groundcovers and possibly wetlands.

*Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure*  
If acquired, a management plan will be developed by the FWC describing the management goals and objectives necessary for resource management. The management plans will establish the current and future roles of cooperating entities including governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders. Long-range plans would stress ecosystem management and the protection and management of rare and imperiled species. If acquired, quantified vegetation management objectives may be developed to guide management for actively-managed natural communities. The FWC would assess the condition of wildlife resources and provide planning support to enhance rare and imperiled species management and recovery of imperiled species within the land acquired within the Withlacoochee River Headwaters and managed by the FWC. Prescribed fire and other resource management activities will maintain and restore natural communities and vegetation types to benefit native wildlife resources Programs providing multiple fish and wildlife based public outdoor recreational uses will be considered for implementation if land within the Withlacoochee Headwaters is acquired. These potential public outdoor fish- and-wildlife-based recreational uses will enhance public understanding of the region while providing recreation. Essential roads will be maintained to provide all weather public access and management operations. Unnecessary roads, fire lanes, and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned or restored as practical. Infrastructure development will be appropriate to allow public access and provide facilities, security, and management of the property. Archaeological and historic sites would be managed in coordination with the Florida Department of State, DHR. The DRP will develop short-term management goals of security, protection of resources, and resource inventory for its parcels. The FFS proposes to manage parcels within the optimum boundary of the Withlacoochee State Forest as a state forest. Burn goals of the FFS will be to eventually establish an all-season prescribed burning program.

*Revenue-generating potential*

Revenue from the FWC-managed conservation lands, such as an acquisition within the Withlacoochee River Headwaters for a WMA, could include selling permits and recreation fees, and ecotourism



activities, if such activities could be economically developed. Area regulations would be developed to identify the necessary and required permits, fees, and regulations. The long-term value of ecosystem services to local and regional land and water resources, and to human health, are thought to be significant. The DRP expects no significant revenue immediately after acquisition. Future revenue will depend on the nature and extent of public use.

*Cooperators in management activities*

The FWC will cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies including the SWFWMD; the SJRWMD (St.Johns River Water Management District); the FFS; and Lake, Pasco and Polk Counties in management of the property. The DRP plans to cooperate with state agencies but plans no work with local agencies.

*Management costs and sources of revenue\**

Below is the FWC’s estimate of costs to operate/manage the area yet to be acquired within the Green Swamp- Withlacoochee River Headwaters that is outside the Colt Creek State Park and the Withlacoochee State Forest optimal boundaries. Costs listed below are projected estimates necessary to fully implement management activities within the area and reflect an estimate of the potential annual operating budget.

FWC Projections

<b>Management Cost and Revenue Sources- Withlacoochee River Headwaters site</b>	<b>In US Dollars(2011)</b>
<b>Resource Management</b>	
<b>Exotic Species Control</b>	<b>\$37,186</b>
<b>Prescribed Burning</b>	<b>\$111,221</b>
<b>Cultural Resource Management</b>	<b>\$1,794</b>
<b>Timber Management</b>	<b>\$7,176</b>
<b>Hydrological Manager</b>	<b>\$193,739</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>\$805,332</b>
<b>Resource Management Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,156,447</b>
<b>Administration</b>	
<b>General Administration</b>	<b>\$10,636</b>
<b>Administration Subtotal</b>	<b>\$10,636</b>
<b>Support</b>	
<b>Land Management Planning</b>	<b>\$103,285</b>
<b>Land Management Reviews</b>	<b>\$20,133</b>
<b>Training/Staff Development</b>	<b>\$5,339</b>
<b>Vehicle Purchase</b>	<b>\$68,433</b>
<b>Vehicle Operation/Maintenance</b>	<b>\$53,816</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>\$13,274</b>
<b>Support Subtotal</b>	<b>\$284,281</b>



<b>Management Cost and Revenue Sources- Withlacoochee River Headwaters site</b>	<b>In US Dollars(2011)</b>
<b>Capital Improvements</b>	
<b>New Facility Construction</b>	<b>\$89,694</b>
<b>Facility Maintenance</b>	<b>\$311,312</b>
<b>Capital Improvements Subtotal</b>	<b>\$401,006</b>
<b>Visitor Services/Recreation</b>	
<b>Info/Education/Operations</b>	<b>\$60,032</b>
<b>Visitor Services/Recreation Subtotal</b>	<b>\$60,032</b>
<b>Law Enforcement</b>	
<b>Resources Protection</b>	<b>\$40,501</b>
<b>Law Enforcement Subtotal</b>	<b>\$40,501</b>
<b>FWC Projections Total</b>	<b>\$1,932,903*</b>

*\*Based on the FWC current staffing ratio of approximately one full-time employee (FTE) per 5,000 acres of managed area, 11 FTE positions would be optimal to fully manage the area covered by this prospectus. All land management funding is dependent upon annual legislative appropriations.*

FDEP/DRP Projections

<b>Colt Creek State Park Management Costs- Withlacoochee River Headwaters site</b>	<b>In US Dollars (2011)</b>
<b>Salary (1 FTE position)</b>	<b>\$33,000</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Operating Capital Outlay</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>
<b>Outsourcing</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>FDEP/DRP Projections</b>	<b>\$68,000</b>

FFS Projections

<b>Withlacoochee State Forest Management Costs – Withlacoochee River Headwaters Site*</b>	<b>In US Dollars (2011)</b>
<b>Salary (4 FTE positions)</b>	<b>\$132,141</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$315,000</b>
<b>Operation Capital Outlay</b>	<b>\$188,600</b>
<b>FFS Projections</b>	<b>\$635,741</b>

*\*The Florida legislature annually appropriates funds for land management.*

[Map\(s\): Green Swamp](#)



## ***Gulf Hammock***

Levy County

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2004
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	25,611
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	25,611

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The Gulf Hammock Florida Forever proposal is designed to protect a large forested system with a watershed draining into an aquatic preserve. Acquiring this project meets the Florida Forever goals of increasing biodiversity by protecting nesting habitats for swallow tailed kites and bald eagles; protecting and restoring natural functions of land and water by restoring the hydrology that existed before silviculture operations; and increasing natural-resource based public recreation by possibly providing passive recreation including picnicking, hiking trails, and nature appreciation and education.

### **Manager(s)**

Most of the project (25,611 GIS acres) will be managed under a conservation easement (CE) by the Office of Environmental Services (OES), Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is recommended as lead manager for the portion of the project that would be acquired in full fee (3,652 acres); located at the west end of the property, and being more intact both hydrologically and environmentally it would be an addition to, or buffer for the Waccasassa Bay Preserve State Park. The FWC currently manages most of the project area as the Gulf Hammock Wildlife Management Area.

### **General Description**

The Gulf Hammock project consists of some 25,611 acres (GIS) in southwest Levy County, of which approximately 3,652 acres are proposed for full-fee sale and the remainder would be protected by a less-than-fee conservation easement. A total of 23,248 acres of the lands within the project area are currently managed in cooperation with the FWC as Gulf Hammock Wildlife Management Area, the State’s oldest wildlife management area, established in 1948.

### **Public Use**

Management programs would conserve, protect, manage and/or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, wildlife populations, forests and water resources. The project area will be managed to provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, camping and hiking. The DEP and University of Florida Statewide Greenways System Planning Project shows 3 percent (716 acres) of the project area to be priority 1 or 2 recreational trails.



The conservation easement area is not expected to provide significant levels of resource-based recreation use. Other than hunting, nature appreciation, trails and primitive camping might be considered the most prominent public uses of the area proposed for full fee purchase. As with the conservation area, the extent of public use will greatly depend on the wet and dry conditions of the property.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Of this project, 21,959 acres (86 percent) is proposed for less-than-fee easement. The property is owned by Plum Creek Timber Company. Most of the property that is offered in less-than-fee is currently being used for intensive silvicultural production. The 3,652 acres that is being offered in fee, located at the west end of the property, is more hydrologically and environmentally intact, and would be an addition to, or buffer to the Waccasassa Bay Preserve State Park. Council staff is continuing project development work with the major owner and with other landowners with significant natural resources to determine optimum boundaries and uses of the fee and less-than-fee portions of the project. In 2004, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$11,524,000.

On June 4, 2004 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added this project to the B List of Florida Forever projects.

On December 9, 2011 the ARC placed this project in the Less-Than-Fee category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$35,359,530.

### **Coordination**

The FWC should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies, including the Florida Forest Service/FFS (the former Florida Division of Forestry/DOF) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in management of the property.

### **Management Policy Statement**

Since principal purposes of the project include protecting biodiversity and providing resource-based public recreation and education opportunities, programs would be oriented toward conserving and protecting wildlife species, and to carefully control public use. Conserving and protecting environmentally unique native habitats, and imperiled and rare species, should be an important management goal for the project. Management programs would conserve, protect, manage and/or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, wildlife populations, forests and water resources. The project area will be managed to provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, camping and hiking.

### **Management Prospectus**

The OES, or its successor, is designated to ensure oversight of the proposed conservation easement for this project. As a proposed conservation easement or other less-than-fee interest, the project will be managed by the private landowner with restrictions. The purchase of development rights, the prohibition of any further conversion of existing natural areas to agricultural uses, and limited public access to some



sites will likely be the primary focus of the conservation easement. FWC submitted the following management plans for any full-fee purchases in this project:

***Qualifications for state designation***

The entire project area is a habitat conservation priority for rare species with the greatest conservation need, according to the FNAI. The project also provides habitat for many focal species, which are indicators of natural communities, and suitable habitat conditions for other wildlife species. The FWC indicates that 43 percent (11,105 acres) of the project area includes at least seven focal species. Focal species are those that are indicators of natural communities or suitable habitat conditions for many other species of wildlife. Many important conservation lands have become increasingly isolated and no longer support viable populations of large widely ranging mammals. The Gulf Hammock Florida Forever project would provide landscape connectivity that, if realized, should benefit fish and wildlife resources by linking large areas of natural habitat, and by providing to the user community diverse outdoor recreational opportunities.

***Manager***

OES for the CE; FWC for any full-fee purchases

***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Some portions of the project include lands that are low-need tracts, requiring application of resource management methods, including the frequent use of prescribed fire where appropriate. Additional methods may be necessary for some management units in order to accomplish objectives for restoration to a desired future condition. The FWC would conduct historic vegetation analysis to determine appropriate, desired future conditions; objectives; and restoration methods. This is especially important for conserving habitats and populations of imperiled or rare species. The primary methods for perpetuation of the less disturbed natural communities might involve, for example, reintroducing prescribed fire and control of human uses in certain management units. Surveillance for, and removal of infestations of exotic invasive plant species will be done. Biotic surveys would be important to accomplish during the early part of planned development and implementation, because imperiled or rare species are expected to occur on the project. Development of facilities, as on all wildlife management areas, would be kept to the minimum level necessary to assure a high-quality recreational experience, and any such development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after acquisition, emphasis would be placed on site security, posting boundaries, public access, fire management, resource inventory and removal of refuse. A conceptual management plan would be developed by the FWC describing the management goals and specific objectives necessary to implement future resource management. Long-range goals would emphasize ecosystem management and the conservation of fish and wildlife. Following completion of plant community inventory and historic vegetation analysis, quantified vegetation management objectives would be developed pursuant to the FWC objective-based vegetation management process. Essential roads would



be stabilized to provide all-weather public access and management operations. Programs providing multiple recreational uses would also be implemented. An all-season prescribed burning management plan would be developed and implemented using conventional and biologically acceptable methods. Growing-season prescribed burning would be used where appropriate to best achieve management objectives. Management activities would strive to manage natural plant communities to benefit native wildlife resources. Where appropriate, practical and in pursuit of wildlife habitat objectives, these resources would be managed using acceptable silvicultural practices. Archaeological and historic sites would be managed in coordination with the Division of Historical Resources (DHR). The DHR lists two of these sites in the project area.

Environmentally sensitive areas, such as erosion-prone sites, important habitats, outstanding natural areas and wetlands, would be identified and appropriate protective measures would be implemented on those areas. Unnecessary roads, fire lanes and hydrological disturbances would be abandoned or restored as practical. Other existing infrastructure would be protected to the extent possible. Infrastructure development would be the minimum required to allow public access, provide facilities for the public, and provide security and management of the project area.

#### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Substantial revenue from forest products production, as currently occurs, should continue. Management would seek to improve the other revenue-generating potential in areas currently serving for forest products production by improving wildlife diversity and resource-based recreation in such areas. Additional revenue would be generated from sales of hunting and fishing licenses, wildlife management area stamps and other special hunting stamps. Some revenues might be realized in the future from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities if such projects could be economically developed.

#### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The FWC should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies, including the FFS and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in management of the property.





Gulf Hammock Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2004
Project Area (GIS acres)	25,611
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	25,611

Gulf Hammock Table 2

Gulf Hammock FNAI Elements	Score
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Tampa vervain	G2/S2
Variable-leaved Indian-plantain	G2/S2
wood spurge	G5/S2
Common Kingsnake	G5/S2S3
Little Blue Heron	G5/S4

There are 10 rare species associated with the project.

Gulf Hammock Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC-2004	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	State and/or federal	State and/or federal
Resource Management	\$91,369	\$72,532
Administration	\$ 75,494	\$ 25,133
Support	\$149,080	\$ 31,566
Capital Improvements	\$185,583	\$ 25,347
Visitor Services/Recreation	\$ 1,285	\$ 141
Law Enforcement	\$ 2,534	\$ 2,534
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$505,344</b>	<b>\$157,252</b>

Figures are for the fee-simple portion and include salary for 1 FTE.

[Map\(s\): Gulf Hammock](#)





## ***Half Circle L Ranch***

Collier and Hendry Counties  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2003
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	11,182
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	11,182

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Located within primary habitat zones for both the Florida panther and the Florida Black bear the project complements the ongoing conservation efforts in this region of the state for these and numerous other species. Protection of these and other endangered and threatened species is a primary concern. Habitat and hydrological restoration of disturbed areas is another goal of state acquisition of this project. Public recreation compatible with resource protection is also an acquisition goal. More information is cited below in the Public Uses description.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is the designated lead manager for the project. All management activities on Florida Forever land should include a monitoring component so that managers can judge the effectiveness of their actions. Management plans, which are required for all Florida Forever land, should indicate specifically how and when the results of management activities will be monitored and how that information will be used to improve subsequent management activities.

### **General Description**

Adjoining the southern boundary of the Devil’s Garden Florida Forever project, the southwestern boundary of the Dinner Island Wildlife Management Area, and the southeastern boundary of the Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest/ Wildlife Management Area in Collier and Hendry counties, this proposal contains approximately 11,182 acres.

The dominant communities on the property are basin and depression marshes, wet prairies, hydric/mesic hammocks, and wet/mesic flatwoods. Forty-five percent of the project has been converted to improved pasture, row crops, and citrus.

According to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory there are eight rare plants and animals recorded on the site. More than 60 percent of the lands within the Half Circle L Ranch project proposal are designated as Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas. Nearly all the land in this project is classified as a Primary Zone or Priority One for panther habitat (currently used by panthers), and the Florida black bear. The remainder of the site is identified as a Secondary Zone for panther habitat (buffer areas for dispersing cats or areas that could be converted to Primary Zone status with restoration), by the Panther Subgroup



of the Multispecies/Ecosystem Recovery Implementation Team. Radio telemetry studies have confirmed panther use of the site.

### **Public Use**

Due to extensive wetlands, the project is limited in its ability to provide year-round diverse resource-based recreational opportunities. Hiking and horseback trails would be traversable in limited dry season conditions. In the more upland sites, the project can accommodate, to one degree or another, camping, picnicking, wildlife observation (nature study), and environmental education. Depending on management emphasis, hunting can also be supported. Due to the wet conditions of the project, bicycling is questionable and would require further review. Should it be considered suitable, bicycling would be limited in its range throughout the property.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The project consists of some 11,182 (GIS) acres, multiple parcels and two owners. The 2002 tax assessed/taxable value is estimated at \$2,811,833.00. On June 6, 2003 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added this project to the A List of Florida Forever projects. In 2004 ARC moved this project to the B List of the Florida Forever projects.

On December 9, 2011 ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands category.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$36,592,381.

### **Coordination**

This project is adjacent to Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest (approximately 32,039 acres) and Dinner Island Wildlife Management Area (approximately 19,639 acres). The Panther Glades and Devil's Garden Florida Forever projects are also adjacent.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary land management goal for the project is to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; to integrate compatible human use; and to ensure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. An ecosystem approach will guide the management activities on this project.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project's size and diversity make it desirable for use and management as part of Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest, or Dinner Island Wildlife Management Area. Management is contingent upon the state obtaining legal public access to the site and acquiring fee simple title to the parcel. Major communities represented on this project include swale, slough, basin marsh, depression marsh, wet prairie, strand swamp, dome swamp, hammock, mesic and wet flatwoods. These community types are consistent with the adjacent state forest and the wildlife management area.



## ***Manager***

FWC.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Much of the project's drier natural community types have been disturbed; many converted to some improved form of agriculture. This conversion usually means some type of hydrologic alteration to facilitate water management has occurred. This property contains vast areas of wetlands with sensitive natural resources; accordingly, land management and public use will specifically be structured to improve and protect these areas. The level of management intensity and related management costs is expected to be initially high to obtain the necessary information and resources to restore and manage this system as a part of Okaloacoochee State Forest and/or the Dinner Island Wildlife Management Area. Once this information is obtained and the resources are available, long-term management costs are expected to be moderate to maintain this area. The FWC reports that wildlife habitat values and habitat restoration on the semi-improved pasture and native range areas could be improved and potentially restored by removing cattle grazing and utilizing prescribed fire.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Restoration of the natural communities on this project will be a priority. Initial or intermediate management efforts will concentrate on resource inventory, restoration planning, fire management and planning, site security, public access, and removal of exotic species. The inventory of the site's natural resources and threatened and endangered flora and fauna will be conducted to provide the basis for formulation of management goals. Restoration efforts will focus on water flow alterations, ditching, agriculture improvements to the land, and perpetuating natural communities that have historically been changed. Steps will be taken to ensure that the public is provided appropriate access while simultaneously affording protection of sensitive resources. Public use will be limited to activities that will have little or no impact to these areas. Long-range goals will stress ecosystem management and the protection and management of threatened and endangered species. Essential roads will be stabilized to provide all weather public access and management operations. Programs providing multiple recreational uses will also be implemented. An all-season prescribed burning management plan will be developed and implemented using conventional and biologically acceptable guidelines. Management activities will strive to manage natural plant communities to benefit native wildlife resources. Archaeological and historic sites will be managed in coordination with the Division of Historical Resources.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Timber sales will be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue dependent upon a variety of factors. Because of the existing condition of the timber resource on the property, revenue generating potential of this project is expected to be low. Additional revenue would be generated from sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area stamps and other



special hunting stamps. Some revenues might be realized in the future from ecotourism activities which can be economically developed.

Florida Forever capital project expenditures will be needed on this parcel for hydrological restoration, for public access and public use. This management prospectus is not intended to be an application for capital project expenditure; however, as more information is gathered, and an analysis of the site is completed an application may be submitted for capital project expenditure funds. It is anticipated that some the existing roads will be used as multi-use trails for hiking, horseback riding and off-road bicycling. Management funding will come from the CARL trust fund or its successor.



Half Circle L Ranch Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2003
Project Area (GIS acres)	11,182
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	11,182

Half Circle L Ranch Table 2

Half Circle L Ranch FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Panther	G5T1/S1
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Narrow-leaved Strap Fern	G4G5/S1
Wood Stork	G4/S2
Hand Fern	G4/S2
Florida Burrowing Owl	G4T3/S3
Crested Caracara	G5/S2
White Ibis	G5/S4

There are 9 rare species associated with the project.

Half Circle L Ranch Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	not provided
Salary (2 FTE)	\$70,751	not provided
Expense	\$261,372	not provided
OCO	\$300,600	not provided
Total	\$632,723	not provided

[Map\(s\): Half Circle L Ranch](#)



## **Hall Ranch**

Charlotte County

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1997
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	8,518
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	1,001
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	7,517

*\*Includes federal easement acquisition and GIS acreage update.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Inland from the rapidly growing coast of southwest Florida are expanses of ranchland still in essentially natural condition. By adding some of this ranchland to the Babcock-Webb Wildlife Management Area, the Hall Ranch project will help preserve a corridor of natural land - slash pine flatwoods, marshes, and cypress swamps - from Charlotte Harbor to Telegraph Swamp, protect habitat for Florida black bear, and enlarge the area in which the public can hunt, hike, and camp.

### **Manager(s)**

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

### **General Description**

Hall Ranch, adjacent to Babcock-Webb Wildlife Management Area, includes good quality South Florida slash pine flatwoods and depression marshes, with a few other natural communities. The area is more significant for rare animals like black bear than for plants (no rare plants are known). It includes part of Shell Creek (the water supply for Punta Gorda) and the head of the important Telegraph Swamp. It would contribute significantly to the wildlife corridor coming from the WMA.

No archaeological sites are known. The area is vulnerable to development and conversion to intensive agriculture; since development pressures are low, endangerment is moderate.

### **Public Use**

This project qualifies as a wildlife management area, with uses such as hunting, various sorts of trails, camping, and picnicking, among other activities.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Negotiations on the essential or core parcel have been unsuccessful and have reached an impasse (or the owners are not willing to consider a sale to the state). This project consists of one major owner—the Hall Ranch Corporation. The essential parcel is the Hall ownership south of State Road 74. There are multiple small ownerships scattered throughout the Hall ownership north of SR 74. This project was ranked for the first time in December 1996. After the most recent boundary change in 1996, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$4,997,720.

On April 6, 2001, the Council transferred this project to the “B” Grouping.



On December 9, 2011, this project was placed in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever projects.

In 2018, a 592-acre easement was acquired through the Grassland Reserve Program (federal). The 1,000-acre increase noted for 2018 also includes a 409-acre adjustment that was made to GIS data layer and maps for acreage acquired in the project, where the Babcock/Webb WMA boundary line overlaps this project boundary.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$12,586,647.

### **Coordination**

The FWC is considered an acquisition partner on this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary objective of management of the Hall Ranch project is to preserve and restore the mosaic of pine flatwoods, hammocks, and wetlands between the Babcock-Webb Wildlife Management Area and Telegraph Swamp. Achieving this objective will provide a refuge for threatened animals like the Florida black bear and red-cockaded woodpecker, preserve an area of natural lands extending from Charlotte Harbor to Telegraph Swamp, and, by expanding the wildlife management area, provide the public with a large area for natural-resource-based recreation. The project should be managed under the multiple-use concept: management activities should be directed first toward preservation of resources and second toward integrating carefully controlled consumptive uses such as hunting and timber harvesting. Managers should control access to the project; limit public vehicles to one or a few main roads; thoroughly inventory the resources; restore the hydrological disturbances; burn fire-dependent pine flatwoods in a pattern mimicking natural lightning-season fires, using natural firebreaks or existing roads for control; reforest pine plantations with original species; strictly limit timbering in old-growth stands; and monitor management activities to ensure that they actually preserve resources. Managers should limit the number and size of recreational facilities, ensure that they avoid the most sensitive resources, and site them in already disturbed areas when possible. The project includes much of the undeveloped land between the Babcock-Webb Wildlife Management Area and Telegraph Swamp and consequently has the size and location to achieve its primary objective.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Hall Ranch project has the resource diversity to qualify as a wildlife management area and will provide the public with a large tract for activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking and wildlife observation.

#### ***Manager***

The FWC is recommended as Manager.



### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Hall Ranch proposal generally includes lands that will require moderate to intensive resource management including frequent fire, roller chopping and some timber management to open the thicker pine stands. The primary management needed for the perpetuation of the natural communities on the area would involve continuing the frequent fire regime already established and control of human access. Additional management projects will involve gradual restoration of improved pasture and agricultural fields into native habitat. On portions of existing disturbed areas, native and nonnative agronomic plantings may be used to benefit both game and nongame wildlife on the area and to promote special hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities for the general public. Development of facilities, as on all wildlife management areas, would be kept to the minimum level necessary to assure quality recreational experience for those members of the public interested in less infrastructure and other disturbance factors.

Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure

During the first year after acquisition, emphasis will be placed on site security, posting boundaries, public access, fire management, resource inventory and removal of existing refuse. A conceptual management plan will be developed by the FWC, describing the goals and objectives of future resource management. Long-range plans will stress ecosystem management and protection and management of threatened and endangered species. Essential roads will be stabilized to provide all weather public access and management operations. Programs providing multiple recreational uses will be implemented. An all-season prescribed burn management plan will be developed and implemented with conventional and biologically acceptable guidelines. Management activities will strive to manage natural plant communities to benefit native wildlife resources. Timber resources include pine flatwoods (62 percent), cypress domes/strands (4 percent) and xeric hammock (2 percent). Where appropriate and practical, these resources will be managed using acceptable silvicultural practices as recommended by the Florida Forest Service. Environmentally sensitive areas will be identified, and appropriate protective measures will be implemented to those areas. Unnecessary roads, fire lanes and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned or restored as practical. Minimal infrastructure development will be required to allow public access, provide facilities for the public, and provide security and management of the property.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

About 62 percent of the Hall Ranch consists of pine flatwoods that could be managed to offset operational costs. Future revenue from timber resources will depend on successful reforestation and management of already existing pine stands. Another revenue source would include cattle grazing which would help reduce fuel loads and provide fire line maintenance by the lessee. Additional revenue would be generated from sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area stamps and other special hunting stamps and other user fees.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The FWC will cooperate with other state and local government agencies in managing the area.





Hall Ranch Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1997
Project Area (GIS acres)	8,518
Acres Acquired (GIS)	1,001
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	7,517

*\*Includes federal easement acquisition and GIS acreage update.*

Hall Ranch Table 2

Hall Ranch FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	G3/S2
Sherman's Fox Squirrel	G5T3/S3
Crested Caracara	G5/S2

*There are 4 rare species associated with the project.*

Hall Ranch Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL/SGTF	CARL/SGTF
Salary	\$59,415	\$59,415
OPS	\$5,000	\$5,000
Expense	\$32,000	\$32,000
OCO	\$48,128	\$0
FCO	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$139,543</b>	<b>\$86,415</b>

[Map\(s\): Hall Ranch](#)



## ***Hardee Flatwoods***

Hardee County  
Less-than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2017
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	1,676
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	1,676

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Hardee Flatwoods is proposed for the following public purposes: Enhance the coordination and completion of land acquisition projects; Increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels; Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state; Ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state; Increase the amount of forest land available for sustainable management of natural resources.

### **Manager(s)**

As a less-than-fee purchase, or conservation easement, this area would be managed by the landowner by a signed agreement to maintain the land for its natural assets. Periodic monitoring provided by the Division of State Lands of DEP would ensure that conditions of the easement are being met.

### **General Description**

The Hardee Flatwoods project is a single tract of 1,678 GIS acres about 11 miles northeast of the town of Zolfo Springs in eastern Hardee County and bordering the Highlands County line. It is held by a single owner and is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition. This land includes most of the headwaters of Bee Branch, a tributary of Charlie Creek, which itself is a principal headwater of the Peace River. Hardee Flatwoods is the only land along Bee Branch that remains in a natural state and provides a continuous natural link to conservation lands to the east. In contrast to the surrounding agricultural lands, most of the tract has had low to moderate disturbance. About 91 percent of Hardee Flatwoods is in varying degrees of natural condition. Although there are no major structural additions, the property is fenced and cross-fenced. About 100 head of cattle graze the improved pasture in the western third of the property under a lease. A few small cattle ponds are scattered over the property.

Mesic flatwoods cover most of the eastern half and generally are in good condition. Scrubby flatwoods mixed with xeric hammock, about 1 percent of the project, occur on small elevated mounds and ridges of white sand at the west end of the site. High quality hydric hammock covers 22 percent of the site along the Bee Branch blackwater stream corridors. Mature laurel oak, live oak, and cabbage palm dominate the closed canopy.



### **Public Use**

The project is to be a less-than-fee acquisition, which would limit the ability of the state to provide public use.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 16, 2017, the Hardee Flatwoods proposal was considered by the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) as a possible conservation land project and advanced for in-depth review. On October 20, 2017, ARC voted to add this as a Florida Forever project. The project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$106,126.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$4,401,936.

### **Coordination**

This project abuts Highlands County's Sun`N Lake Preserve, is within three miles of the Old Town Creek Watershed project and parts of the Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem Florida Forever project. As a less-than-fee acquisition, there would be no direct governmental management of the site.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a less-than-fee acquisition, the Hardee Flatwoods project would continue to be managed for conservation purposes by the landowner as outlined in the conservation easement.

### **Management Prospectus**

The Office of Environmental Services of the Florida DEP would coordinate the periodic monitoring of the conservation easement.



Hardee Flatwoods Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2017
Project Area (GIS acres)	1,676
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	1,676

Hardee Flatwoods Table 2

Hardee Flatwoods FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Sherman's Fox Squirrel	G5T3/S3

There are 3 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Hardee Flatwoods](#)



## **Heather Island / Ocklawaha River**

Marion County

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2002
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	19,920
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	6,262
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$1,165,000
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	13,658

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The Heather Island/Ocklawaha River project offers important ecological benefits. Foremost among those benefits are links with existing public conservation lands, corridors for wildlife dispersal, preservation of habitat for rare species, corridors for wildlife dispersal and floodplain protection. Given its diversity of wildlife species, quality of plant communities, and strategic location, this project has substantial conservation attributes. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses a number of Florida Forever project sites. The trail is a congressionally designated national scenic trail.

### **Manager(s)**

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is the lead manager for most of the southern two parcels: Marshall Swamp and Cow Hammock, approximately 5,200 acres. The remaining parcels, approximately 12,700 acres, will be managed by the Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) (portions between Sharpes Ferry Road and the Silver River) and the Florida Forest Service/FFS.

### **General Description**

The Heather Island/Ocklawaha River project consists of approximately 19,953 (GIS) acres in Marion County. The project area consists of a mosaic of upland and wetland communities with the majority being forested wetlands. Several conservation areas including the Ocala National Forest and the Cross-Florida Greenway Recreation and Conservation Areas border the project. The project will protect and restore the floodplain and the adjacent upland forests along the Ocklawaha River. The project area provides suitable habitat for the black bear and the rare plant pink root. The Heather Island/ Ocklawaha River project was previously on the CARL acquisition list but was removed due to an impasse reached with unwilling sellers in 2000. Recently the landowners have expressed an interest in selling to the state and/or the St. Johns Water Management District (SJRWMD). To date the SJRWMD has acquired approximately 4,465 acres within the original CARL project boundaries.

### **Public Use**

The Heather Island/Ocklawaha River project can accommodate a diversity of resource-based recreation opportunities, such as hiking, environmental resource appreciation and education, picnicking, camping, horseback riding and bicycling. Depending on management emphasis the property will also support



hunting. The project abuts the Ocklawaha River or public lands adjacent to the river that could accommodate shoreline freshwater fishing and or boat launching sites.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 5, 2002, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) added the Heather Island/Ocklawaha River project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2003 Priority list. This fee-simple project, sponsored by Office & Greenway Trails (OGT) and the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), consisted of approximately 19,949 GIS acres, two landowners, the Rayonier Timberland Corp. and the Alawest-AI LLC, and a 2001 taxable value of \$32,234,776. The essential parcels were identified as the Rayonier ownership. These should be mapped and appraised first. On January 25, 2005, ARC moved this project to Group B of the 2005 Florida Forever Priority list.

On December 9, 2011 ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Initiatives category.

On January 11, 2011 about 400 acres (TNC/Rayonier Forest Resources LP--\$1,165,000) were purchased by DRP to be managed by DRP as the Silver River Addition.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$33,349,073.

### **Coordination**

This project will be acquired in partnership with SJRWMD, with a mixture of state and WMD funding. Contribution percentages have not been determined.

### **Management Policy Statement**

Priority will be given to conserving and protecting environmentally unique native habitats and threatened and endangered species. Management programs will be designed to conserve, protect, manage and/or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, forests and water resources. The tract will also be managed to provide opportunities for biking, camping, canoeing, environmental and cultural resource education, fishing, hiking, hunting, and wildlife viewing.

The connection and proximity of this project to other conservation lands, as well is its landscape diversity and high-quality wetlands, provide important habitats for wildlife populations and a unique environment for outdoor recreation in Florida. Since the principal purposes of the proposal are to protect habitat for wildlife, management goals will be oriented to conserving and protecting these species and carefully managing public access.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Based upon a review of the Florida Forever Act, this project meets the Goals and Measures, as outlined in Statute to increase nature-based recreation, to enhance the coordination and completion of land acquisition projects, to increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels, to protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of



land, water, and wetland systems of the state, and to increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources.

### ***Manager***

The high wildlife resource value of this Heather Island/Ocklawaha River proposal indicates that the FWC is the suitable lead manager for most of the southern two parcels (approximately 5,200 acres in Marshall Swamp and Cow Hammock), with the remaining parcels (approximately 12,700 acres between Sharpes Ferry Road and the Silver River) to be managed DRP and FFS.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Some portions of the project include lands that are low-need tracts, requiring basic resource management including the frequent use of prescribed fire where appropriate. However, since more than 53 percent of the proposal area has been disturbed for silviculture or other purposes, significant restoration activities are contemplated for some of the acreage on which fee title is acquired. FWC will use restoration techniques recommended by specialists in the field of ecological restoration, including the most recent advancements identified by on-going research and lessons learned on the ground through adaptive management. The primary management needed to preserve the less disturbed natural communities will involve introducing prescribed fire and carefully managing public use. Biotic surveys will be a priority, since many rare or listed species are expected to be present.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure.***

During the first year after acquisition, emphasis will be on site security, posting boundaries, public access, fire management, resource inventory and removing refuse. A conceptual management plan will be developed by the FWC describing management goals and specific objectives to implement future resource management. Long-range plans will emphasize restoring and maintaining ecosystem functions; restoring native wildlife populations and wildlife diversity, including protecting and managing threatened and endangered species; and management for sustainable public use of game wildlife populations balanced with other wildlife oriented recreational activities. Multiple use principles will be practiced where compatible with resource management goals and acquisition.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

The harvest and sale of forest products should continue to provide revenues under State management, where silvicultural activities are consistent with wildlife habitat management objectives. The FWC, however, will seek to expand and enhance the revenue-generating potential of the property improving wildlife diversity and providing a broad spectrum of resource-based recreational opportunities. Additional revenue will be generated from sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area stamps and other special hunting stamps. Some revenues might be realized in the future from recreational user fees and ecotourism and wildlife viewing activities. The Heather Island/Ocklawaha River proposal, when acquired by the State, will require one FTE position to manage the project area. However, if certain activities are privatized, it would reduce the number of FTEs required. Funding for natural resource management and public use administration would come from the



CARL Trust Fund. See the anticipated costs below. Revenue sources would likely include public use fees and timber harvests.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The FWC should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies, including the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), FFS and the SJRWMD in managing the area.





Heather Island/Ocklawaha River Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2002
Project Area (GIS acres)	19,920
Acres Acquired (GIS)	6,262
at a Cost of	\$1,165,000
Acres Remaining (GIS)	13,658

Heather Island/Ocklawaha River Table 2

Heather Island/Ocklawaha River FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
pinkroot	G2Q/S2

There are 3 rare species associated with the project.

Heather Island/Ocklawaha River Table 3a

Management Cost Summary: FWC	Startup	Recurring
Resource Management	\$271,345	not provided
Administration	\$75,494	not provided
Support	\$149,080	not provided
Capital Improvements	\$1,130,236	not provided
Visitor Services/Recreation	\$2,361	not provided
Law Enforcement	\$13,874	not provided
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,642,389</b>	<b>not provided</b>

Heather Island/Ocklawaha River Table 3b

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Startup
Salary (2FTE)	\$80,870
Expense	\$117,500
OCO	\$225,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$423,970</b>

Heather Island/Ocklawaha River Table 3c

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup
Expense	\$0
FCO	\$268,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$268,000</b>

[Map\(s\): Heather Island / Ocklawaha River](#)



## ***Hixtown Swamp***

Madison County  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1993
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	24,449
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	2,050*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$200,331
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	22,399

\*Acquired by SRWMD

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The complex of cypress swamps, marshes, and ponds called Hixtown Swamp, an important overwintering and nesting site for wading birds, has been spared the intensive tree-farming practices of the surrounding uplands. The Hixtown Swamp project will conserve these swamps and marshes, thereby protecting wading-bird rookeries and wildlife habitat as well as a possible Spanish mission site and other important archeological remains and giving the public a large area in which to hunt, hike, or simply observe wildlife.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

### **General Description**

Hixtown Swamp is 24,479 acres and is one of the largest cypress-dominated basin swamps in northern Florida. The moderately disturbed core swamp is a mixture of cypress swamp, freshwater marsh, and open marsh ponds (50 percent), as well as shrub swamp (20 percent), and disturbed uplands, which are mostly silvicultural/agricultural land. There are no well-defined channels or streams associated with the swamp. At least during high water, the waters of Hixtown Swamp flow slowly southward, and the swamp is functionally a part of the much larger San Pedro Bay ecosystem. Hixtown Swamp is regionally significant as habitat for both game and nongame wildlife. It is particularly important as an overwintering area for waterfowl. It supports large numbers of sandhill cranes, some perhaps residents. Twenty-one archaeological or historical sites have been recorded within this project, including perhaps a Spanish mission site. The project has high cultural-resource value. Timber harvesting is the greatest current threat to the area.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated as a wildlife management area, with uses such as hiking, picnicking, camping and wildlife observation.



### **Acquisition Planning**

Phase I (essential): Mitchell (aka Musselwhite), G&G, Miller, Collins, Genecer, Muggee and Gillman (contingent upon 50 percent donation). In 1993, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$9,542,800.

On December 9, 2011, this project was placed in the Critical Natural Lands category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$27,794,782.

### **Coordination**

Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) is an acquisition partner.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Hixtown Swamp project are: to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The size of the Hixtown Swamp project, and its importance to wildlife, particularly its value as an overwintering area for waterfowl, qualify it as a wildlife management area.

#### ***Manager***

The FWC will manage the project.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

This natural wetland system now generally requires basic resource management and protection, but it is in danger of being modified hydrologically in order to drain the area for timber and agricultural production. Pine plantations and agricultural areas on the uplands will require restoration. Depending on the nature and extent of public recreational use determined by the management planning process, there may be additional needs for management of public-use facilities.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, management activities will concentrate on site security, natural resource management and conceptual planning. Public-use facilities will be developed in subsequent years.

#### ***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. As public use increases, modest revenue may be generated.



***Cooperators in management activities***

The Florida Forest Service (FFS) is recommended as a cooperator to assist in reforestation of the upland areas.



Hixtown Swamp Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1993
Project Area (GIS acres)	24,449
Acres Acquired (GIS)	2,050*
at a Cost of	\$200,331
Acres Remaining (GIS)	22,399

\*Acquired by SRWMD

Hixtown Swamp Table 2

Hixtown Swamp FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Bird Rookery	G5/SNR
incised groove-bur	G3/S2
Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake	G4/S3
Little Blue Heron	G5/S4
White Ibis	G5/S4

There are 7 rare species associated with the project.

Hixtown Swamp Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL or successor	CARL or successor
Salary	\$180,000	\$180,000
OPS	\$5,500	\$5,500
Expense	\$45,500	\$40,000
OCO	\$124,800	\$10,000
FCO	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$355,800</b>	<b>\$236,500</b>

Map(s): Hixtown Swamp



## **Horse Creek Ranch**

DeSoto and Hardee Counties

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2010
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	16,316
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	16,316

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The purpose for state acquisition of this conservation easement is to provide a buffer for Horse Creek, a high water-quality tributary of the Peace River; provide for habitat protection and enhancement of numerous rare species and imperiled natural communities; and afford additional resource protection for the Peace River waters and riverine wetlands within the boundaries of the Peaceful Horse Ranch and Peace River Refuge Florida Forever projects, the downstream Charlotte Harbor Estuary, and the Gasparilla Sound-Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve.

### **Manager(s)**

The owner has expressed interest in preserving this land with a conservation easement, which would be monitored by the Office of Environmental Services (OES) of the Division of State Lands or its successor.

### **General Description**

The Horse Creek Ranch project is approximately 16,316 (GIS) acres in size and its tax assessed just value is \$35.5 million. It is in southwestern Hardee County and northwestern DeSoto County, southwest of the town of Wauchula. It is held by a single. The county line divides the ranch about midway north-south. County Roads (CR) 663 and 661 form the eastern boundary in a portion of the north and south, respectively, and CR 665 traverses the northern third of the property east-west. Approximately 52 percent of the project is in natural condition. Relatively little area is occupied by invasive exotic plants. The natural communities include mesic and wet flatwoods, bottomland forest, depression and basin marshes, mesic hammock, scrubby flatwoods, baygall, and blackwater streams. The natural uplands are principally longleaf-pine-dominated mesic flatwoods with pockets of scrubby flatwoods on the highest elevations and more hydric wet flatwoods in the ecotone between the uplands and the Horse Creek floodplain.

A large block of high-quality mesic flatwoods extends from the eastern floodplain of Horse Creek to the eastern boundary of the property in the southern part of the project. The groundcover in these flatwoods is in excellent condition and is well managed with prescribed fire. There is a lush, diverse mixture of low shrubs, grasses and other vegetation, all less than one meter in height.



Smaller pockets of flatwoods occur to the north and also to the west of Horse Creek. Extensive stands of old growth longleaf pines occur in the southern portions of the property. Smaller patches of flatwoods that support a mix of South Florida slash pine and longleaf pine can be found in the northeastern portion of the project. Hurricane Charley in 2004 severely damaged large, mature stands of slash and longleaf pines (up to 80 percent according to the applicant). The canopy is now very sparse and regeneration is patchy, although some regeneration may not be visible, not yet taller than the groundcover. The owner has left many snags that greatly benefit cavity nesting birds. The majority of the remainder of the property is extensive areas of improved pastures and old agricultural fields (approximately 46 percent) that are distributed throughout. The property is a working cattle ranch, and there are some small areas of row crops and sod fields. Horse Creek and Limestone Creek are blackwater streams, as is typical of most creeks in the area. A small tributary to Horse Creek on the western side of the property, called “Sand Gully” by the property owner, appears to be, at least in part, a seepage stream. The segment of this tributary that was visited ran clear and shallow over white sand, at the base of a sandy slope. The tributary may have been channelized in the past; the owner stated that it is “flashy” i.e., water quickly rises during heavy rains and quickly subsides afterwards. Limestone Creek has been channelized throughout its length on the property. Horse Creek appears to be in good, relatively unaltered condition. A 5.3-mile stretch of the middle reaches of Horse Creek, a major tributary to the Peace River, runs south through the project. The surrounding area is largely pasture land and citrus groves, and the property is not contiguous with any existing conservation lands. An approximately 243-acre inholding (citrus grove) straddles CR 665 in the northern portion of the project. Along the Peace River, DeSoto County’s Morgan Park is four miles south and the Southwest Florida Water Management District’s Lower Peace River Corridor is 16 miles south of the project. With the exception of the 520-acre Altman Tract Conservation Easement at the headwaters of Horse Creek in Manatee County, no other conservation lands are along this important tributary.

### **Public Use**

While there is the possibility that some kind of limited public access could be negotiated for research or school groups for educational purposes, as a working cattle ranch, any form of unrestricted or otherwise unsupervised access that could interfere with the property’s economic uses or increase liability would not be acceptable to the landowner. Canoers and kayakers would observe its riverbanks passing through from the headwaters of Horse Creek to conservation areas such as Desoto County’s Morgan Park.

### **Acquisition Planning**

At the December 10, 2010 meeting, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) recommended that this less-than-fee project be added to the list. In 2010, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$9,893,163.

On December 9, 2011, this project was placed in the Less-than-Fee category.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$39,479,612.



### **Coordination**

As a co-applicant, The Nature Conservancy is a partner on this project; however, they do not have funding available for assistance with acquisition. Because this project buffers Horse Creek and ensures better water quality for Horse Creek and the Peace River, the water management district would be supportive of state acquisition of this parcel.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a proposed conservation easement or other less-than-fee interest, the project will be managed by the private landowner with restrictions. The purchase of the development rights, the prohibition of the further conversion of existing natural areas to more intensive uses will likely be the primary focus of the conservation easement.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

This project meets the following public purposes: Enhance the coordination and completion of land acquisition projects; Increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels; Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water and wetland systems of the state; Ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state ; Increase natural resource-based public recreation or educational opportunities; Preserve significant archaeological or historic sites; and, Increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources.

#### ***Manager***

The property will continue to be managed by the landowner with restrictions imposed by a negotiated conservation easement. The OES will be responsible for monitoring compliance with the terms and conditions of the easement unless otherwise noted.





Horse Creek Ranch Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>16,316</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>16,316</b>

Horse Creek Ranch Table 2

<b>Horse Creek Ranch FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Florida Sandhill Crane</b>	<b>G5T2/S2</b>
<b>Crested Caracara</b>	<b>G5/S2</b>
<b>Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake</b>	<b>G4/S3</b>
<b>White Ibis</b>	<b>G5/S4</b>
<b>Little Blue Heron</b>	<b>G5/S4</b>

*There are 6 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Horse Creek Ranch](#)



## ***Hosford Chapman’s Rhododendron Protection Zone***

Gadsden and Liberty Counties

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2002
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	6,923
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	6,923

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The purpose for this project is to preserve a habitat for one of only two core populations of the rare Chapman’s Rhododendron, a federally listed plant that is found in the world only in three Panhandle counties of Florida (Gulf, Gadsden and Liberty counties). This proposal is for a conservation easement. On the western portion of the project, the easement that would cover about 70 percent of the known Hosford area Chapman’s Rhododendron. The eastern portion has greater potential for diverse forms of resource-based recreation. The project is located in an area the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has identified as a priority ecological greenway area that would augment the value of the Lake Talquin State Forest and help Gadsden County increase its resource-based recreational opportunities. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) identifies this area as potential habitat for a number of rare and imperiled species.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Forest Service (FFS) of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The Office of Environmental Services (OES) will monitor any conservation easements.

### **General Description**

The original boundary of 3,262 acres extended west from State Road 267 in an irregular-shaped block on the west side of Lake Talquin. This project adjoins the Lines Tract of the Lake Talquin State Forest on the northwest side of Lake Talquin. The Wakulla Unit of the Apalachicola National Forest is approximately two miles to the south of this site. About half of this site is historically flatwoods but, over the years, most of this has been converted to pine plantations. About 75 percent of the site is now cultivated as pine plantations. About 15 percent of the site is pine flatwoods. The project has about 1,414 acres of functioning wetlands that would be protected by this acquisition.

On October 24, 2002, 3,648 more acres were added to the project, creating a connection from Lake Talquin to Apalachicola National Forest, and bringing the project GIS-acre total to 6,923 GIS acres.

### **Public Use**

The degree of public use that could be enjoyed will be determined by the degree of ownership and public access acquired. Much of the property is proposed as a less-than-fee acquisition. Currently the



property is within the Robert Brent Wildlife Management Area, and is open to hunting, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding and nature-appreciation activities. Such activities are, of course, dependent upon permission by the owner. If public access is acquired, the project has the potential for a variety of forest related management activities. The possibility of linking this project to Lake Talquin State Forest would provide activities such as birdwatching, environmental education, hiking, horseback riding, off-road bicycling, hunting, nature study and photography.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The Hosford Chapman's Rhododendron Protection Zone Florida Forever project was added to the 2002 Florida Forever project list at the June meeting of the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) as a Group B project. The essential parcel is the St. Joe Timberlands and Blairwoods tract which makes the connection to the Lake Talquin State Forest (3,249 acres).

On October 24, 2002 ARC approved the addition of 3,648 acres to the project boundary. This addition formed the connection from the Lake Talquin State Forest to the Apalachicola National Forest. After this addition in 2002, the project had a combined, historic estimated tax value of \$1,064,452. On December 9, 2011, this project was placed in the Less-than-Fee category of Florida Forever projects. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$11,870,291.

### **Coordination**

The Nature Conservancy and the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) are considered acquisition partners. No alternative funding sources have been identified for the project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of establishing the Hosford Chapman's Rhododendron Protection Zone project are to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity the native ecosystems, including the core population of the rare Chapman's Rhododendron. The FFS proposes to manage the project under a multiple-use management regime consistent with the State Forest system, and in a manner designed to accomplish the goals and measures for this project as approved by the ARC. The ecosystem approach will guide the management activities of the FFS on the site.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The major communities represented on this site are flatwoods and sandhills. The project's location and diversity make it desirable as an addition to the Lake Talquin State Forest. Its management as a state forest, or its oversight as a conservation easement, will depend upon the level of title acquired by the Board of Trustees. The highest level of protection for the rare species would be accomplished by fee simple acquisition. Parcels acquired in fee simple would be added to the state forest, contingent on obtaining some level of public access to the site.



**Manager**

FFS/DACS proposes to manage this site as part of the Lake Talquin State Forest with Tallahassee District Headquarters personnel.

**Conditions affecting intensity of management**

Portions of the project have been disturbed and will require restoration. Management on these sites would be structured toward creating optimal conditions for propagation of the rhododendrons. This would preclude more intensive restoration, such as some types of mechanical understory control and site preparation. Certain types of public use, if acquired, may be reduced in the most sensitive areas of the project. Additionally, water-resource development projects, stormwater management projects and any linear facilities are considered incompatible with this ecosystem and with the resource value of this project.

**Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure**

If the site is a less-than-fee acquisition, management and public use will be consistent with the terms of each conservation easement. Initial and intermediate management efforts will concentrate on site security, public access, fire management, resource inventory, reforestation of areas where off-site species have been harvested, natural regeneration of native species, and any restoration activity. Steps will be taken to ensure that the public is provided appropriate access while simultaneously affording protection of sensitive resources.

**Revenue-generating potential**

Timber sales will be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystems. These sales will primarily take place in upland pine stands and provide a variable source of revenue, dependent on a variety of factors. Due to the existing condition of the timber resource on this property, the revenue potential of this project is expected to be medium.

**Cooperators in management activities**

The FFS will cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and other interested parties as appropriate.

Hosford Chapman’s Rhododendron Protection Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2002</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>6,923</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>6,923</b>



Hosford Chapman’s Rhododendron Protection Table 2

Hosford Chapman’s Rhododendron Protection Zone FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Chapman's rhododendron	G1/S1
Apalachicola Floater	G2/S1S2
Sculptured Pigtoe	G3/S2S3
zigzag silkgrass	G3/S3
Suwannee Cooter	G5T3/S3
Alligator Snapping Turtle	G3G4/S3
Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake	G4/S3

*There are 8 rare species associated with the project.*

Hosford Chapman’s Rhododendron Protection Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Recurring
Salary (1 FTE)	\$29,000
OCO	\$40,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$69,900</b>

[Map\(s\): Hosford Chapman’s Rhododendron Protection Zone](#)



## ***Ichetucknee Trace***

Columbia County  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1997
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	2,775
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	898*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$33,433,774
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	1,877

\*Includes donated acreage

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

A dry valley known as the Ichetucknee Trace runs north and east of Ichetucknee Springs and marks the route of a major underground conduit supplying the springs with clear water. Though the Ichetucknee Springs State Park protects the springs and much of the Ichetucknee River that flows from them, limerock mining and other land uses near the sinks in the Trace pose a threat to that conduit of groundwater that flows to the springs. Limerock mines and sinks along the trace have exposed the conduit in some areas, leaving these areas vulnerable to pollutants from mining and encroaching development. Acquiring the nine project sites will help protect the trace and the underlying conduit and will improve the quality and quantity of Ichetucknee Springs water. Acquisition will also provide the public with a park and a fishing area.

### **Manager(s)**

Recommended managers include Columbia County, the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

### **General Description**

The project includes two active limerock mines and seven other sinkhole sites along the Trace. More than 80 percent of the 450-acre limerock mine has no natural communities on it, but a small area of upland mixed forest and floodplain forest remains northeast of the mines. The majority of the areas around the five sinkholes are highly disturbed but includes some fair quality forests. No rare plants or animals are known from the project.

### **Public Use**

This project qualifies as a fish management area, recreation park, 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.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The essential parcels are Anderson Mining (acquired) and Kirby (acquired) ownerships and all parcels within the addition. The Council amended the boundary to add 636 acres in 1999. This project was



ranked for the first time on December 5, 1996. In January 2000, the Board of Trustees (BOT) authorized DEP's Division of State Lands (DSL) to purchase 60 acres outside the project boundary. If the 60 acres tract is acquired, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) and ultimately the BOT will consider whether to retain ownership or designate the tract surplus.

On July 29, 1999, the Council added 636 acres: Rose Sink (since acquired); Saylor Sink (acquired); and Clay Hole Creek.

On July 18, 2000, the Council added 200 acres to the project.

On August 9, 2002 the Trust for Public Land donated the 2-acre parcel around Rose Sink to the State of Florida.

On December 8, 2006, ARC approved moving the project from Group B to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) Priority list. On August 15, 2003 the Council added 7.8 acres to the project boundaries.

On December 8, 2006, ARC approved moving the project from Group B to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) Priority list. On February 16, 2007, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 120-acre addition (Kirby parcel within the Limerock Mines Site) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by John Hankinson, Jr., consisted of one landowner, B. L. Kirby, and a single parcel with a taxable value of \$26,160. The Office of Greenways & Trails (OGT) will manage this essential parcel. On June 15, 2007, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 1,050-acre addition (aka Sinks Addition) to the project boundary. The proposal was sponsored by the Thousand Friends of Florida, consisted of 34 parcels, 18 landowners, and a taxable value of \$1,397,263. The O'Stern-Pittman Tract, Bishop Tract, Ichetucknee Springs East Addition, and acreage added to the existing Limerock Mines Site and Ichetucknee Springs North make up this addition. The OGT has agreed to manage the parcels adjacent to its proposed Columbia County Recreation Area as part of that area, and the DRP will serve as the project manager for the remaining parcels. The added parcels have been designated as essential. After the most recent boundary change in 2007, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$1,874,065.

On December 29, 2010, 12.96 acres in Rose Sink (Kirby Mine Area) valued at \$214,372 were donated by TPL. The DRP will manage this.

On December 9, 2011, this project was designated as a Critical Natural Lands (CNL) Florida Forever project.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$10,641,902.

### **Coordination**

Columbia County is considered an acquisition partner for this project. The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is an intermediary.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary objective of management of the Ichetucknee Trace project 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 and by preventing groundwater contamination through major sinkholes. Achieving this objective will help to ensure the public can continue to enjoy recreation in the scenic springs and spring run. It will also provide additional recreational opportunities and geologic education. 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. Managers should control access to the project; limit public motor vehicles to one or a few main roads; restrict the use of fertilizers, herbicides, and gasoline-powered boats to protect water quality; inventory the resources; contour the mine pits to provide shallow littoral zones for colonization by aquatic plants and animals, and recontour spoil piles so they can be revegetated with native trees, shrubs, and grasses; reforest cleared, but unmined, areas with original species; control exotic pest plants that may invade the disturbed parts of the site; and monitor management activities to ensure that they are actually preserving resources. Managers should limit the number and size of recreational facilities, ensure that they avoid the most sensitive resources, and site them in already disturbed areas when possible.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project has the potential for a family fishing park, and the site can be developed for a variety of other compatible recreational activities such as canoeing, hiking, biking, picnicking, environmental education and nature studies. It therefore qualifies as a fish management area.

#### ***Manager***

DRP is recommended as lead manager for the site adjacent to the existing state park, and Columbia County as lead manager for the other nine sites. The FWC is recommended as co-manager on the limerock mine site.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Habitat restoration will require intense management activities involving extensive earth moving and some actual excavation of quarry pit perimeters to create desired gradual slopes and provide additional shallow littoral zones. Importantly, this excavation work will be vital from a public safety standpoint as existing quarry sides are perpendicular. Considerable mining refuse is anticipated to be present and will need to be removed. Some actual salvage or demolition may be necessary. Earthmoving to abolish some roads and to spread any available soil will be extensive but will then allow plant succession to proceed. Because there is no valuable habitat here to manage, succession is the appropriate strategy. Earthmoving will allow work on planned vehicle access and parking in areas where eventual erosion to lakes can be precluded. Some fencing to prohibit or direct vehicular and non-vehicular access will be necessary. Plant community inventory and restoration of disturbed mined areas by planting or other techniques will be secondary to major initial physical reconfiguration of the landscape and mine pits.





***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after acquisition, emphasis will be on site security, posting boundaries, fencing, public access, resource inventory and removal of existing refuse. A conceptual management plan will be developed by the DRP, the County, and the FWC describing future resource management. Because of the expense of excavating and earth moving and prerequisite planning/bidding, most of this actual work will not be scheduled for year one. Year two will concentrate on accomplishment of initial phases of conceptual plan (earth moving and excavation). This work will proceed into year three, when some infrastructure work on facilities will commence. Long- range plans will stress fish and wildlife habitat creation/management and family fishing opportunities. Programs providing multiple recreational uses will also be implemented and all management activities will stress protection of water quality in the mine pits. Future infrastructure may include a handicapped fishing pier, docks for canoes and small boats, an education/information pavilion and designated hiking/biking trails.

***Revenue-generating potential***

Some potential for sale of timber exists on this property. Additional revenue-generating potential would be the sale of fishing licenses, special use or entrance fees.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The DRP, County, and FWC will cooperate with various offices of the DEP and local government agencies in managing the area.



Ichetucknee Trace Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1997
Project Area (GIS acres)	2,775
Acres Acquired (GIS)	898*
at a Cost of	\$33,433,774
Acres Remaining (GIS)	1,877

\*Includes donated acreage

Ichetucknee Trace Table 2

Ichetucknee Trace FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
North Florida Spider Cave Crayfish	G2/S2
giant orchid	G2G3/S2
Hobbs' Cave Amphipod	G2G3/S2S3
Pallid Cave Crayfish	G2G3/S2S3

There are 7 rare species associated with the project.

Ichetucknee Trace Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL/SGTF	CARL/SGTF
Salary	\$40,000	\$75,000
OPS	\$10,000	\$10,000
Expense	\$20,000	\$200,000
OCO	\$35,000	\$20,000
FCO	\$0	\$20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$105,000</b>	<b>\$325,000</b>

[Map\(s\): Ichetucknee Trace](#)



## **Indian River Lagoon Blueway**

Brevard, Indian River, Martin, St. Lucie and Volusia Counties  
Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1998
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	27,338
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	7,905*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$45,794,168*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	19,433

*\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the SJRWMD and Martin/Brevard/Indian River counties, and Harbor Branch.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Public acquisition would help preserve and improve the aquatic natural communities of the Indian River Lagoon, one of the country’s most productive, diverse, and commercially and recreationally important estuaries. A third of the country’s manatee population lives in the Indian River, and the area is important for many migratory birds as well as for oceanic and estuarine fishes. Additionally, public acquisition would provide natural resource-based recreation in a developing area of Florida.

### **Manager(s)**

The Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) management centers around the Mullet Creek area. The previous managing agency, DEP Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA), also requested that the lands purchased for this project within St. Lucie County be leased directly to the county. The county has purchased parcels using county funds, Florida Communities Trust (FCT) money and other sources, and they would like to manage the lands under a single plan. Other agencies participating as cooperating managers are Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program, Brevard Mosquito Control, and Indian River Mosquito Control. Several of the previously listed cooperating managers are currently managing some of the tracts within the project boundaries. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) wishes to participate in the management of some sites (including Phase II sites). Additionally, the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) and South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) will likely be cooperating managers on some sites as part of their SWIM programs. The FWC will manage that part of the project that was formally the North Indian River Lagoon project. The Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge will manage the Pelican Island Addition site, if it is acquired. Florida Atlantic University (FAU) will manage the Harbor Branch sites. Management of lands previously owned by to Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute will be divided among several entities. Some of the unimproved uplands will be managed by St. Lucie County Environmental Resources Division and some of the unimproved wetlands by St. Lucie County Mosquito Control District. Much of the improved acreage will be leased by the Board of Trustees for management by Harbor Branch Oceanographic Foundation or Florida Atlantic University.



## **General Description**

The 5,136-acre, Phase I, project is in five counties, includes 36 separate areas (combined into 20 sites), and lies within the jurisdictions of two water management districts. It spans approximately 150 miles along the east and west sides of the Indian River Lagoon. Marine tidal marsh and maritime hammock, largely in good condition, cover roughly 60 per cent of the project; many of the marshes have been diked for mosquito control and require reconnection to the lagoon. Mangrove swamps, scrub, and flatwoods cover small portions of the proposal areas. A large part of the country's manatee population lives in the Indian River, and the area is important for many migratory birds as well as for oceanic and estuarine fishes. The Indian River Lagoon is a state aquatic preserve and classified as an Outstanding Florida Water. It is also a SWIM priority water body, and an Estuary of National Significance. The commercial and recreational fisheries (based on estuarine-dependent species) in the Indian River are some of Florida's most important—over 100,000 saltwater recreational anglers are registered in the proposal area.

## **Public Use**

Parcels in the project fall within or are adjacent to five aquatic preserves; Mosquito Lagoon, Banana River, Indian River—Malabar to Vero Beach, Indian River—Vero Beach to Ft. Pierce, and Jensen Beach to Jupiter Inlet. It will be managed as a buffer to the aquatic preserves.

## **Acquisition Planning**

On December 12, 1997, the LAAC added the Indian River Lagoon Blueway project to the CARL 1998 Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by multiple sponsors, consisted of approximately 5,136 acres, 460 owners, and a 1996 taxable value of \$24,519,173.

On June 17, 1999, the LAMAC approved a fee-simple, 42-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by Brevard County, consisted of multiple owners, and a 1998 taxable value of \$865,400.

On December 9, 1999, LAMAC approved combining the North Indian River Lagoon project with the existing Indian River Lagoon Blueway project. The added acreage brought the total Project Area to approximately 25,345 acres.

On December 19, 2000, the LAMAC approved a fee-simple, 186-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by multiple sponsors, consisted of multiple owners, and a 1999 taxable value of \$4,205,800. The addition was broken down as follows: (1) Brevard County Snagg Point, sponsored by TNC, consisted of 125 acres with a taxable value of \$1,246,520. The SJRWMD acquired 14.63 acres in 2005; (2) Martin County Bon Air Beach, sponsored by the Town of Jupiter Island, consisted of 43 acres with a taxable value of \$1,116,000; and (3) St. Lucie County Hobe Sound Addition, sponsored by St. Lucie County, consisted of 18 acres with a taxable value of \$1,798,280.

On April 16, 2001, ARC established Groups A & B and moved this project to Group B of the 2001 Florida Forever Priority list.

On December 5, 2002, ARC moved this project to Group A of the 2003 Florida Forever Priority list. On August 15, 2003, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 15-acre addition, aka Old Oak Lodge Preserve, to the



project boundary. It was sponsored by the Florida Institute of Technology, Dept. of Marine & Environmental Systems, consisted of one owner, Indian River No. 1 Developer, and a 2002 taxable value of \$685,170.

On February 11, 2005, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 297-acre addition, to the project boundary. It was sponsored by TNC, consisted of four owners, and a 2004 taxable value of \$1,137,380.

On February 16, 2007, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 194-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the Brevard County EEL Program, consisted of nine ownerships, 10 parcels, and a taxable value of \$984,310. Brevard County will manage these parcels considered essential to the project.

On April 13, 2007, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 296-acre addition, known as Harbor Branch, to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the St. Lucie County government, and consisted of three landowners, 12 parcels, and a taxable value of \$16,248,257. The parcels were designated as essential and will be managed by the St. Lucie County Mosquito Control District.

On August 16, 2007, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 47-acre addition (aka Pelican Island Addition Site) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the landowner, Torwest, Inc., and the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge and consisted of one parcel with a 2006 taxable value of \$5,816,550. The Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge is the recommended manager of this essential parcel.

Approximately half an acre of the parcel overlaps with the Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge site in Indian River County.

In August 2008, 41.88 acres of the Kaufman/Young ownership were purchased for \$1,970,000 (\$1,313,333 from DSL Florida Forever funds and \$656,666 paid for by the SJRWMD). The DRP will manage this addition.

On December 12, 2008 ARC voted to extend the boundary with a fee-simple 230-acre addition in St. Lucie County, with a tax-assessed value of \$33,756,700. This is the Indian River Lagoon Blueway Harbor Branch, Phase II. This addition is part of the Harbor Branch Oceanographic campus. The proposal was submitted as a stand-alone project and designated as essential, then added to this project boundary. After this boundary addition in 2008, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax value of \$90,061,244.

On March 10, 2010, two parcels - about 384 acres (136/DSL plus 248/DCA) - were purchased from Harbor Branch (HB) for \$24,040,488 funding from FF-HB-Other. These parcels are to be managed by FAU.

On December 9, 2011, this project was placed in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$424,219,847.



### **Coordination**

Acquisition of this project will be a coordinated effort between directly involved local governments, water management districts and the State. The five counties (Volusia, Brevard, Indian River, St. Lucie and Martin) and the water management districts (St. Johns River WMD and South Florida WMD) have sent resolutions in support of this project. The District and Brevard County have acquired more than 3,200 acres. The District has acquired the Snag Point tract (214 acres), an essential parcel.

A “161” agreement has been formalized for the tracts in the St. Johns River WMD.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of Indian River Lagoon Blueway project are: to conserve and protect environmentally unique and irreplaceable lands that contain native flora and fauna representing a natural area unique to or scarce within this state; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage or restore important ecosystems in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, fish and wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; and to provide areas for natural resource-based recreation.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project will acquire numerous parcels adjoining the Indian River Lagoon. The habitats include freshwater marsh, salt marsh, mangrove fringe, maritime hammock, coastal strand, scrub, baygall, and pine flatwoods. Many of the wetland sites are impounded or otherwise hydrologically altered. Management and restoration of these habitats would provide protection for the Indian River Lagoon, increase estuarine habitat, and improve public access and recreational opportunities. The parcels fall within five aquatic preserves; Mosquito Lagoon, Banana River, Indian River—Malabar to Vero Beach, Indian River—Vero Beach to Fort. Pierce, and Jensen Beach—to Jupiter Inlet, and therefore is appropriate for designation as a State Buffer Preserve.

#### ***Manager***

Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will serve as the project manager.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Initially all acquisitions will be of “high need.” Most of the wetlands are impounded, some are connected to the lagoon and managed, and others are not. The long-term goal will be to reconnect all impoundments to the Lagoon through control structures. Structures will have to be installed and maintained in many areas and dikes repaired or removed where no longer functional. Most of the upland parcels have been unmanaged and have exotic plant infestations, and trash. Since most of the parcels are in urbanized areas the demand for water access will be high. Construction of several access points will be needed. Increased patrol and law enforcement presence will be necessary to prevent future dumping and vandalism. Long-term routine management activities within the upland areas will be at the



“moderate need” level. However, due to the maintenance needs of the dikes and water control structures, and the required management of water levels, the impoundments will continue to require “high need” management.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

The management goals of this project are to utilize an ecosystems management approach: to enhance the protection of the adjacent Indian River Lagoon and its aquatic preserves; to conserve and restore coastal wetlands and uplands; to protect and manage native flora and fauna; to provide areas for boating, fishing, camping, hiking, bike riding, picnicking and nature appreciation; to protect archaeological and historical resources; to enhance public appreciation for natural diversity; and to cooperate with local mosquito control authorities to ensure that impoundments are properly managed. Upon acquisition, initial activities will concentrate on the site security of the upland properties, including posting, fencing where needed, and patrols. Within the first year of appropriate funding, management activities will concentrate on trash removal, public access, and planning for management activities such as impoundment management, restoration, prescribed fire, and exotic plant and animal eradication. Appropriate access to the public will be provided while protecting sensitive resources on site. The site’s natural resources and threatened and endangered species will be inventoried, and a management plan will be formulated. The resource inventory will be used to identify sensitive areas that need special attention, protection or management and to locate areas that are appropriate for any recreational or administrative facilities. Unnecessary roads, fire lanes and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned and/or restored to the greatest extent practical. Infrastructure development will be confined to already disturbed areas and will be the minimum required to allow public access, and to manage the property. Long-range goals will be established by the management plan and will provide for ecological restoration, the removal of exotic species, and the perpetuation and maintenance of natural communities. Prescribed fires will be used to maintain the appropriate communities and associated wildlife populations. Management activities will also stress the protection of threatened and endangered species, and the preservation of the significant archaeological sites for professional investigation. Existing mosquito control impoundments will be reconnected to the Indian River Lagoon and rotational impoundment management implemented to meet both the goals of improved estuarine habitat and mosquito population management. Managed marshes offer excellent habitat for waterfowl and wading birds and viewing opportunities for the public.

***Revenue-generating potential***

No revenue is expected to be directly generated from this property. The project will benefit the state indirectly by protecting or enhancing water quality, fisheries and public recreation activities, and preserving natural and historical resources.

***Cooperators in management activities***

This project will require a great deal of coordination between the affected parties. The SJRWMD and the SFWMD, Volusia/Brevard/Indian River/St. Lucie/Martin Counties, and Mosquito Control Districts



have all expressed interest in some form of cooperative management of portions of the project. This level of cooperation is needed if the project is to successfully serve the multiple purposes for which it was designed. In a few cases intensive recreation or stormwater infrastructure have been suggested as management uses, which might not be compatible with the management approach or capabilities. Such parcels may be more appropriately managed directly by the interested agency. The Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge will manage the Pelican Island Addition site.





Indian River Lagoon Blueway Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1998
Project Area (GIS acres)	27,338
Acres Acquired (GIS)	7,905*
at a Cost of	\$45,794,168*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	19,433

\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the SJRWMD and Martin/Brevard/Indian River counties, and Harbor Branch.

Indian River Lagoon Blueway Table 2

Indian River Lagoon Blueway FNAI Elements	Score
Manatee	G2/S2
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Atlantic Coast Florida Iantana	G2T1/S1
Atlantic Salt Marsh Snake	G4T1Q/S1
Lakela's balm	G1T1/S1
Burrowing Four-o'clock	G3?/S2
coastal vervain	G3/S3
large-flowered rosemary	G3/S3
Wood Stork	G4/S2

There are 17 rare species associated with the project.

Indian River Lagoon Blueway Table 3

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring
Salary	\$64,805	not provided
OPS	\$36,100	not provided
Expense	\$16,146	not provided
OCO	\$27,692	not provided
Special	\$20,311	not provided
FCO	\$0	not provided
Grant	\$15,000	not provided
Total	\$180,054	not provided

[Map\(s\): Indian River Lagoon Blueway](#)



**Kissimmee – St. Johns River Connector**

Indian River and Okeechobee Counties  
Less-Than-Fee

**Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2002
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	37,139
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	2,847*
<i>At a Cost of</i>	\$11,095,000*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	34,292

\*Indian River Co. CEs.

**Purpose for State Acquisition**

The purpose of this project is to provide a habitat and hydrological connection between the Fort Drum Marsh Conservation Area to the east and the Kissimmee Prairie State Preserve and the Ordway-Whittell Kissimmee Prairie Sanctuary to the west. The land in this area is important habitat for the grasshopper sparrow, sandhill crane, mottled duck, wood stork, crested caracara, and numerous other wildlife species. Strategic habitat conservation areas (SHCAs) for some of these species are a large portion of the project lands. Acquiring and managing lands in this project is particularly important to the long-term welfare of the wildlife species described above, as well as also being important habitats for the red-cockaded woodpecker and wading birds. Acquiring the project meets Florida Forever goals of increasing protection of Florida’s biodiversity, protecting and restoring the natural functions of land, and increasing natural resource-based public recreation. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses a number of Florida Forever project sites.

**Manager(s)**

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is the lead manager with cooperation from Florida Forest Service/FFS of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD). Indian River County will monitor any conservation easement they purchase.

**General Description**

The 36,1787-acre (GIS) project consists of a landscape mosaic primarily of improved pasture. It also contains mesic flatwoods (approximately 500 acres, or 1 percent), scrub and scrubby flatwoods (approximately 480 acres, or 1 percent) and dry/wet prairie (approximately 1,800 acres, or 5 percent). With the exception of the hydric hammock/blackwater stream habitats (approximately 3,106 acres, or 9 percent), the natural communities on the project are fragmented within a mosaic of improved pasture. The bottomland forest and blackwater stream communities appear intact and are generally located on the eastern portion of the project. The dry and wet prairie communities are confined to the southwestern portion of the proposal and are impacted by numerous ditches. The remaining natural communities are largely fragmented and scattered across the proposal.



### **Public Use**

The project has potential for a variety of forest related recreational activities, and the resource diversity to qualify as a wildlife management area. Recreation activity might include bird watching, environmental education, hiking, horseback riding, off-road bicycling, hunting, nature study and photography.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The Kissimmee-St. Johns Connector project was added to the 2002 Florida Forever project list as a Group A project at the December 6, 2001 meeting of the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC). The project consists of 91 parcels under 11 owners. The essential parcels are identified as the Okeechobee Partnership, Oliver, Callaway, LOR, Russakis Ranch, Wedgeworth, Padgett Creek, and the Triple S Cattle Company ownerships.

On December 12, 2007 and December 19, 2007, Indian River County closed on two easements on two adjacent ranches (Triple S Land Company/728 acres for \$5,096,000 and Padgett Creek LLC/857 acres for \$5,999,000). The combined purchases totaling 1,585 acres for \$11,095,000 are known as the Padgett Branch Conservation Easement.

On December 9, 2011, this project was placed in the Less-than-Fee category of Florida Forever projects. At the December 13, 2013 ARC meeting the project was placed on the list of Less-Than-Fee projects.

On April 22, 2016 after voting to add the Lewis Friend Farm proposal to the Florida Forever list, ARC voted to increase the Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector project in size by adding the Lewis Friends Farms land into the boundary of the Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector. This 1,088-acre wedge-shaped property is in western Indian River County alongside State Road 60 and the Turnpike. It has planted longleaf pine and natural upland and wetland forest and is next to the Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector less than fee Florida Forever project. After the time of the most recent addition in 2016, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$28,065,895.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$96,670,684.

### **Coordination**

TNC is partnering with the Division of State Lands on this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of the project under FWC management will be given to conservation and protection of environmentally unique native habitats and threatened and endangered species. Management programs will be designed to conserve, protect, manage and/or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, forests and water resources. The area will also be managed to provide opportunities for hunting, hiking, camping, environmental and cultural resource education, and other natural-resource based recreational activities.



## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector has the resource diversity to qualify as a wildlife management area and would provide the public with a large tract for activities such as hunting, hiking and off-road bicycle trails, horseback riding, camping and wildlife observation. The project encompasses nearly 57 square miles.

### ***Manager***

FWC is recommended to be the lead managing agency, with cooperation from FFS and the SJRWMD.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Some portions of the Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector include lands that are low-need tracts, requiring basic resource management, including frequent prescribed fires where appropriate. But because so much of the lands were converted to improved pasture, significant restoration is planned. This includes re-establishing native plants and a more natural hydrology. Eliminating exotic species, particularly cogon grass, is necessary. Development of facilities would be kept to a minimum to ensure the quality of recreation, and those developments would be in areas that are already disturbed.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

In the first year after acquisition, the emphasis will be on site security, posting boundaries, arranging public access, fire management, resource inventory, control of exotic species and removing refuse. A conceptual management plan will be developed by the FWC that will describe the management goals and the specific objectives that are necessary to implement the future resource management.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Little of the area is currently available for producing forest products, so any future revenue from timber resources would depend on successfully reforesting and managing the pasturelands and other disturbed areas. If managers indicate that it might be appropriate, some revenues might be generated by grazing contracts in the flatwoods and pastured areas that are not restored in the interest of habitat diversity, or because of lack of funds for reforestation. Additional revenue would be generated by sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife-management area permits, and other special hunting permits. Some revenue might be found in the future with ecotourism activity, if such projects could be economically developed.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The FWC will cooperate with other state and local government agencies, including the FFS and the SJRWMD.



Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2002
Project Area (GIS acres)	37,139
Acres Acquired (GIS)	2,847*
At a Cost of	\$11,095,000*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	34,292

\*Indian River Co. CEs.

Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector Table 2

Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Wood Stork	G4/S2
Crested Caracara	G5/S2
cutthroatgrass	G3/S3
large-flowered rosemary	G3/S3
Bachman's Sparrow	G3/S3
hand fern	G4/S2
Florida Burrowing Owl	G4T3/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3
Limpkin	G5/S3
Little Blue Heron	G5/S4

There are 12 rare species associated with the project.

Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	Startup	Recurring
Resource Management		
Exotic Species Control	\$23,758	\$47,516
Prescribed Burning	\$7,247	\$14,494
Hydrological Management	\$80,000	\$6,000
Other	\$88,364	\$88,364
Subtotal	\$199,369	\$156,374
Administration		
Central Office/Headquarters	\$52,845	\$17,593
Districts/Regions	\$22,648	\$7,540
Subtotal	\$75,494	\$25,133
Support		



<b>Management Cost Summary: FWC</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Land Management Planning</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Land Management Reviews</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$500</b>
<b>Training/Staff Development</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>Vehicle Purchase</b>	<b>\$80,850</b>	<b>\$11,550</b>
<b>Vehicle Operation/Maintenance</b>	<b>\$13,230</b>	<b>\$13,230</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$119,080</b>	<b>\$119,080</b>
<b>Capital Improvements</b>		
<b>New Facility Construction</b>	<b>\$426,766</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Facility Maintenance</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$60,215</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$426,766</b>	<b>\$60,251</b>
<b>Visitor Services/Recreation</b>		
<b>Operations</b>	<b>\$1,405</b>	<b>\$141</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,405</b>	<b>\$141</b>
<b>Law</b>		
<b>All Activities</b>	<b>\$8,315</b>	<b>\$8,315</b>

Map(s): Kissimmee – St. Johns River Connector



## **Lafayette Forest**

Lafayette County

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2004
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	13,168
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	2,917
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$1,312,224
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	10,251

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The Lafayette Forest projects fills the Florida Forever goals of enhancing coordination and completion of land acquisition projects by forming a significant corridor connection between state and private conservation lands. As such, it could create a 70,000-acre block of conservation lands. The project fills the goal of increasing the protection of biodiversity because the project area is known to support rare species of plants and animals; it protects and restores the natural function of land and water by restoring, where necessary, the natural, pre-existing hydrology; it ensures that sufficient quantities of water are available by preserving wetlands that aid surface retention of water; it increases natural resource-based recreation and education by possibly accommodating hunting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, bicycling, nature appreciation, picnicking and primitive camping; and it increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management by managing existing natural communities to perpetuate natural species.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Forest Service/FFS is recommended as the lead manager.

### **General Description**

The Lafayette Forest proposal consists of approximately 13,168 acres in Lafayette County. This landscape consists of basin swamps, wet prairies, floodplain swamps, interspersed between pine silviculture plantations established on disturbed mesic and hydric flatwoods and sandhill community types. The property is in eastern Lafayette County on the western side of the Suwannee River and extends south to the Levy County line.

### **Public Use**

The primary land management goals for the management of the tract is to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; to integrate compatible human use; and to insure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. Development of facilities would be kept to the minimum level necessary to assure a high-quality recreational experience and any such development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance. This ecosystem and multiple use approach will guide the management activities on this project. Protection and restoration of the sensitive wetlands on this project will be a priority. Public use will be limited to activities that will have little or no impact to these areas.



Restoration efforts will focus on introduction of prescribed fire and thinning of dense pine stands and facilitating the restoration of native groundcovers.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 4, 2004, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) added the Lafayette Forest project to Group B of the Florida Forever (FF) 2004 Priority list. This fee-simple project, sponsored by the Conservation Fund (TCF) and FFS, consisted of approximately 13,176 (GIS) acres with a single owner, International Paper Co., and a 2003 taxable value of \$1,706,933. The essential parcels were identified as the International Paper Company ownership.

On January 25, 2005, ARC moved this project to Group A of the Florida Forever 2005 Priority List.

On December 9, 2011, this project was placed in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$9,250,027.

### **Coordination**

The Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) acquired 820 acres in 2007.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary land management goals for managing the tract are to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; integrate compatible human use; and ensure long-term viability of populations and species that are considered rare. This ecosystem and multiple use approach will guide the management activities on this project. Multiple use is defined as a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that takes into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural scenic, scientific, and historic values; harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Much of the acreage of this project consists of planted mesic and wet flatwoods. The project primarily consists of slash and loblolly pine plantations, and it is estimated that approximately 62 percent of the project area has been converted to planted pines. The tract has been managed for silviculture production for several years. The current silviculture objectives are pulpwood and chip-n-saw production, and range in age from 1 to 25 years. With thinning, introducing prescribed fire, and sustainable forestry management practices, the project could be quickly transformed from management for silviculture to and area managed for its ecological and recreational benefits.

#### ***Manager***

FFS is recommended as the lead manager.





### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Much of the project's flatwoods, mesic hammock and upland mixed forest areas have been disturbed by silviculture operations and will require restoration. Areas where timber species are off-site may require thinning or removal to promote the re-generation of native ground covers and canopy.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the project area is acquired and assigned to the FFS, public access will be immediately provided for low intensity outdoor recreation activities such as hunting and fishing. The FFS proposes to manage the site as a State Forest and will manage activities and coordinate public access and use. Initial and intermediate management will concentrate on resource inventory, restoration and reforestation of areas where harvesting has occurred, hydrological restoration, providing site security, and assessing public and fire management access. Inventories of the site's natural resources, its threatened and endangered flora and fauna, will be conducted to provide a basis for the formulation of a management plan. The numerous roads throughout the property necessitate the development of a road plan to identify those roads to be utilized for vehicular access by the public, those roads that are required for administrative use, and roads that are determined to be unnecessary for management or access should be closed. Steps will be taken so the public is provided appropriate access while simultaneously affording protection of sensitive resources.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

As mentioned above, timber sales will be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in planted pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue dependent upon a variety of factors. Due to the existing condition and volume of the timber resources on the property, revenue generating potential of this project is expected to be moderate. Some revenues might be realized in the future from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities, if such projects could be economically developed. Capital Project Expenditures Florida Forever capital project expenditures are going to be needed on this parcel for prescribed fire, vegetative and hydrologic restoration, improved public access/use, and facilities, both public and administrative. It is anticipated that some the existing roads and trails may be used as multi-use trails for hiking, horseback riding and biking. This management prospectus is not intended to be an application for capital project funding; however, as more information is gathered, and an analysis of the site is completed, the FFS intends to apply for capital project funds.



Lafayette Forest Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2004
Project Area (GIS acres)	13,168
Acres Acquired (GIS)	2,917
at a Cost of	\$1,312,224
Acres Remaining (GIS)	10,251

Lafayette Forest Table 2

Lafayette Forest FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Mouse	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Little Blue Heron	G5/S4
White Ibis	G5/S4

There are 5 rare species associated with the project.

Lafayette Forest Table 3

Management Cost Summary: Agency	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	not provided
Salary (3 FTE)	\$77,035	not provided
Expense	\$123,300	not provided
OCO	\$423,725	not provided
Total	\$624,060	not provided

[Map\(s\): Lafayette Forest](#)



## **Lake Hatchineha Watershed**

Osceola and Polk Counties

Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2012
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	5,473
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	60*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	n/a
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	5,413

\*GIS adjustment

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

This project consists of about 5,473 acres in Osceola and Polk Counties that would preserve a rare continuum of natural communities from the high scrub on the edge of the Central Ridge to marsh, floodplain, lakeshore and blackwater streams in the lowland areas. Approximately 4,778 acres in the project area would protect surface waters of the state. Approximately 777 acres of the project are groundwater recharge areas. Proposed additions to this project could eventually bring it to 11,300 acres, which would create a natural-area connection between two watersheds. Acquiring the Lake Hatchineha Watershed would meet Florida Forever goals of increasing the amount of forest land for sustainable communities, increasing natural resource-based public recreation and education opportunities, and increasing the protection of Florida’s biodiversity by preserving the habitat of the rare species identified on this project. This project’s acquisition may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide nonmotorized trail that crosses several Florida Forever project sites. The trail is a congressionally designated national scenic trail.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)

### **General Description**

The Lake Hatchineha Watershed Project consists of three separate parcels of land on the Osceola-Polk County line, north and northwest of Lake Hatchineha, and west of Reedy Creek Swamp in Osceola County. The northernmost parcel, named the Beagle Tract, is 3,350 acres of mesic flatwoods, dome swamps and some pasture that straddles State Road 580. The southeastern parcel, 1,970 acres, is dominated by a 260-acre dome swamp surrounded by former mesic flatwoods that have been cut and then used for rangeland. The southwest parcel, 1,132 acres, is about 3 miles south of the Beagle parcel and it includes a high scrubby ridge about 100 feet above sea level, with sudden changes in elevation through the site. The general site is about five miles east of Haines City, and the eastern boundary of the southeastern parcel adjoins the Disney Wilderness Preserve in Osceola County.

### **Public Use**

The project has the resource diversity to qualify as a wildlife management area and may provide the public with many different recreational activities, including hunting, hiking, horseback riding, group and



primitive camping, and cultural resource education. Other uses of the forest resources that may be compatible with management of this area include cattle grazing and apiaries.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The Lake Hatchineha Watershed project was added to the 2002 Florida Forever project list at the June 6, 2002 meeting of the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) as a Group A project. This project is proposed for fee-simple ownership. The essential parcel has been identified as the Parker Poinciana ownership.

On December 5, 2003 the Council moved the project to the Group B list.

On October 15, 2010 ARC approved a 994-acre (\$158,208,631 just value) boundary reduction to the project boundary due to residential/commercial/infrastructure developments. After the 2010 boundary change, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$865,890.

On December 9, 2011, this project was placed in the Critical Natural Lands category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$41,481,128.

### **Coordination**

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is considered an acquisition partner on this project. No alternative funding resources have been identified.

### **Management Policy Statement**

Priority will be given to the conservation and protection of environmentally unique native habitats and threatened and endangered species. Management programs will be designed to conserve, protect, manage and/or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, forests, and water resources. The tract will also be managed to provide opportunities for hunting, camping, hiking, environmental and cultural resource education and other natural resource-based activity. Because one of the principal purposes of the proposal is water conservation, the FWC will cooperate with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and other water-conservation agencies to achieve that purpose.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

This project has the resource diversity to qualify as a wildlife management area and would provide the public with a large tract for activities such as hunting, hiking and off-road bicycle trails, horseback riding, camping and wildlife observation.

#### ***Manager***

FWC will manage the Lake Hatchineha Watershed Florida Forever project, in cooperation with other state and local agencies, including the SFWMD.



***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The primary management need of the Lake Hatchineha Watershed project to perpetuate the less-disturbed natural communities is to re-establish prescribed fires, and control human access. Some relatively small areas of xeric and mesic uplands have been converted to pasture or otherwise disturbed. Significant restoration is contemplated for some of these areas. Development of facilities, as on all wildlife management areas, would be kept to the minimum necessary to assure a high-quality recreation experience, and any such development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after acquisition, emphasis will be placed on site security, posting boundaries, public access, fire management, resource inventory, control of exotic species, and removal of refuse. A conceptual management plan will be developed by the FWC describing management goals and specific objectives necessary to implement future resource management.

***Revenue-generating potential***

Because very little of this project is appropriate for producing forest products, future revenue from timber resources will depend on successful reforestation and management of restored pasturelands and other disturbed areas. If managers' assessments indicate it would be appropriate, some revenues might be generated from grazing leases in flatwoods or pasture areas not restored. Additional revenue would be generated from sale of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area stamps and other special hunting stamps. Some revenues in the future might be realized from ecotourism activity, if such projects can be economically developed.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The cooperators in management activities on this project include the DEP Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) and the SFWMD.



Lake Hatchineha Watershed Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2002
Project Area (GIS acres)	5,473
Acres Acquired (GIS)	60*
at a Cost of	n/a
Acres Remaining (GIS)	5,413

\*GIS adjustment

Lake Hatchineha Watershed Table 2

Lake Hatchineha Watershed FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Scrub-jay	G2/S2
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	G3/S2
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Celestial Lily	G2/S2
Bald Eagle	G5/S3
Osprey	G5/S3S4

There are 6 rare species associated with the project.

Lake Hatchineha Watershed Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	Startup	Recurring
<b>Resource Management:</b>		
Exotic Species Control	\$25,748	\$51,496
Prescribed Burning	\$3,927	\$7,854
Hydrological Management	\$40,000	\$4,475
Other	\$52,991	\$52,991
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$122,666</b>	<b>\$116,816</b>
<b>Administration:</b>		
Central Office/Headquarters	\$57,642	\$23,151
Districts/Regions	\$24,704	\$9,922
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$82,345</b>	<b>\$33,072</b>
<b>Support:</b>		
Land Management Planning	\$25,000	\$0
Land Management Reviews	\$0	\$500
Training/Staff Development	\$0	\$1,000
Vehicle Purchase	\$83,900	\$11,986
Vehicle Operation/Maintenance	\$13,230	\$13,230
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$122,130</b>	<b>\$26,716</b>



<b>Management Cost Summary: FWC</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Capital Improvements:</b>		
<b>New Facility Construction</b>	<b>\$498,865</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Facility Maintenance</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$47,481</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$498,865</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Visitor Services/Recreation:</b>		
<b>Operations</b>	<b>\$1,625</b>	<b>\$178</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,625</b>	<b>\$178</b>
<b>Law Enforcement</b>		
<b>All Activities</b>	<b>\$4,506</b>	<b>\$4,506</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$832,137</b>	<b>\$228,768</b>

*Including salaries for 2 full-time employees.*

[Map\(s\): Lake Hatchineha Watershed](#)



## Lake Santa Fe

Alachua and Bradford Counties  
Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### Project-at-a-Glance

<i>Placed on List</i>	2004
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	10,379
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	873*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$1,721,516*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	9,506

\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the SRWMD and Alachua County.

### Purpose for State Acquisition

Acquiring this project will achieve Florida Forever goals by increasing the protection of Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels. The project will also provide protection to the only remaining shoreline of Lake Santa Fe that supports wading bird nesting and resting, natural shoreline fauna, historic cypress fringe, swamps with attendant habitat qualities, and mostly undisturbed wetlands. It will protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state; will help to protect existing publicly-owned wetlands and swamp systems by maintaining water quality and preventing additional development; will ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state; and contributing lands to the health and function of the Santa Fe Swamp will help to ensure adequate surface water resources and water quality. This project will assist with the completion of the Florida National Scenic Trail, a cross-Florida hiking and non-motorized trail designated by the U.S. Congress.

### Manager(s)

The Florida Forest Service (FFS) of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) are recommended as unified managers of the fee simple portions of the project that are acquired. County and WMD purchases will be managed by those entities.

### General Description

The Lake Santa Fe project includes 14 tracts in the Lake Santa Fe vicinity with a total of 10,387 (GIS) acres. This project is proposed as fee simple, with possible use of less-than-fee on some parcels and would build upon the Suwannee River Water Management District’s (SRWMD) Santa Fe Swamp Conservation Area, which includes most of the Santa Fe Swamp and Lake Alto Swamp. It is designed to protect the surface headwaters of the swamps through prevention of further development and septic input, and to protect undeveloped portions of the Lake Santa Fe shoreline. The project is segmented by lakefront residential development, limiting the lake edge protection and recreational opportunities.

### Public Use

Several of the parcels in the project qualify for passive recreational opportunities including picnicking, short trails and nature appreciation. One parcel may provide opportunity for more diverse (but passive)





opportunities such as canoeing, fishing, and bird watching. The Lake Santa Fe project is in northeastern Alachua County and southeastern Bradford County, centered on Lake Santa Fe. It is fragmented by residential development. Balu Forest (Alachua County) and Austin Cary Memorial Forest are within three miles to the west of the general project area; Camp Blanding Military Reservation is three miles to the northeast; the (Ordway-) Swisher Memorial Nature Preserve is three miles to the southeast. All of the parcels in this proposed project boundary are for the most part in, but also adjacent to and near a medium priority multi-use trail corridor.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 5, 2003, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Lake Santa Fe project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2004 Priority List. This fee-simple project, sponsored by the Lake Santa Fe Dwellers Association and the Nature Conservancy (TNC), consisted of approximately 10,574 (GIS) acres, multiple owners, and a 2003 taxable value of \$3,914,013. The Rayonier tract was identified as essential to this project with the Lake Santa Fe shoreline protection a concurrent priority. On December 9, 2011, this project was placed in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever projects. On April 20, 2012 the ARC removed 174.5 acres from the project at the landowner's request. After the 2012 boundary change, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$3,664,230.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$30,155,043.

### **Coordination**

SRWMD and Alachua County are acquisition partners. Originally the SRWMD had expressed an interest in buffering the Santa Fe Swamp Conservation Area.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary management goals for the Lake Santa Fe project are to protect Florida's surface water quality; to protect wetland and aquatic habitat for species associated with freshwater swamps and lakes; to preserve nesting and resting habitat for upland and aquatic species; to provide natural-resource based outdoor recreation opportunities for the people of Florida including, but not limited to, fishing, boating, hiking, camping and nature appreciation; to help buffer and protect existing conservation lands at the Santa Fe Swamp Conservation Area; and to protect Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community and landscape levels.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

This project is proposed for a unified management prospectus. Several parcels are adjacent to, and would provide buffer for, the SRWMD's Santa Fe Swamp Conservation Area, several smaller named-lakes (including Bonnet Lake, Hickory Lake, Lake Alto and Little Lake Santa Fe). The project area is two miles west of the Camp Blanding Military Reservation, and three miles northeast of the Austin Cary Memorial Forest (managed by the University of Florida). This project is designed to protect the last



remnants of undeveloped land around the Lake Santa Fe/Santa Fe Swamp headwaters system, by protecting shoreline, and upland and wetland natural communities. This would benefit the entire Santa Fe River system, including its associated fish and wildlife, hydrology and water quality. The project area includes functional wetlands (32 percent, or 3,429 acres), and provides protection for surface water (67 percent, or 7,247 acres of project area) and natural floodplain function (26 percent, or 2,817 acres of project area). Part of the project area (25 percent, or 2,635 acres) recharges the Floridan aquifer. This project is also significant as an ecological greenway, with 92 percent (9,894 acres) of the project area qualifying as priorities 4, 6 and 7 in potential importance, according to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) Florida Forever Measures Evaluation.

About 70 percent of the project is upland natural plant communities. Most uplands are pine plantation (6,136 acres), while remaining cover types (570 acres) include upland mixed forest and mesic flatwoods, which together make about 570 acres. Most of the uplands are pine plantation, which is 6,136 acres of flatwoods. About 775 acres of uplands are in agricultural use, most as improved pasture, with about 160 acres in row crops. There are 80 acres of residential properties within the project uplands. Wetland communities consist mostly of basin and dome swamp, which together comprise 2,300 acres. Other wetland communities include baygall and depression marsh. The FNAI indicates that 6 percent (677 acres) of the project area are under-represented natural communities. The flatwoods salamander is an imperiled animal species documented at a breeding location in the proposed project. Focal species, which are indicators of natural communities and suitable habitat conditions for other species of wildlife, occur widely in the project area. FWC reports that more than 25 percent (2,725 acres) of the project area includes at least seven focal species. Another 55 percent (5,876 acres) of the project is a habitat conservation priority for rare species with the greatest conservation need, according to the FNAI.

The FFS and the FWC are prepared to share all management responsibilities for Lake Santa Fe under the unified management concept that both agencies are developing. Under unified management, agencies will identify mutually acceptable goals that further the long-term protection of the site's plant and wildlife resources, promote sound stewardship of land, timber and water resources, and provide the public with access and quality recreational opportunities. Both agencies agree that the project has the capability to provide important protection for fish and wildlife habitat in a manner that is compatible with sound silvicultural practices. Since the project goals include protecting biodiversity and providing resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities, programs would be developed to manage ecosystems for multiple use. Multiple use means the harmonious and coordinated management of timber, recreation, conservation of fish and wildlife, forage, archaeological and historic sites, habitat and other biological resources, or water resources so that they are utilized in the combination that will best serve the people of the state, making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources and giving consideration to the relative values of the various resources. Conservation and protection of environmentally unique native habitats and threatened and endangered species should be an important management goal for the project. Particular attention should be directed to the protection of wetlands which are important habitat to the state and federally listed flatwoods salamander. Wetland



drainage and converting wetlands to silviculture have contributed to the decline of this species throughout its range. Management programs would promote recreation and environmental education in the natural environment. The project area will be managed to provide opportunities for bicycling, boating, canoeing, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, kayaking, picnicking, and wildlife viewing. The Department of Environmental Protection and University of Florida Statewide Greenways System Planning Project shows 27 percent (2,937 acres) of the project area to be suitable for priority 1 or 2 recreational trails. The managing agencies would promote recreation and environmental education in the natural environment. This project contributes to the following goals in accordance with the Florida Forever Act (259.105(4), F.S.): (a) Enhance the coordination and completion of land acquisition projects; (b) Increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels; (c) Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state; (d) Ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state; (e) Increase natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities; and (g) Increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources.

### ***Manager***

The FFS of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the FWC are recommended as unified managers of the fee simple portions of the project that are acquired. County and WMD purchases will be managed by those entities.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Most of the project is a medium-need tract that will require up-front resource management, including frequent prescribed fire where appropriate. About 60 percent of the project area has been subjected to ground cover disturbance due to past silviculture. Consequently, additional effort will be required to restore to a desired future condition. The FFS and FWC propose to work cooperatively to assess site management needs and develop the Conceptual Management Plan (CMP) for the site. Examples of situations that will require cooperative effort include restoring flatwoods previously managed for timber production, removing off-site species, practices that promote regeneration of native ground cover, and reforesting ruderal and recently harvested areas. As part of the unified management approach, the managing agencies will conduct an historic vegetation analysis to determine appropriate desired future conditions and identify appropriate restoration methods and tools. This effort will help conserve habitats and populations of imperiled or rare species. Other unified management priorities include protecting and restoring forested wetlands, and the identification, control, and follow-up monitoring of invasive exotic species. Biotic surveys would be conducted as part of early unified management activities. Due to the presence of imperiled or rare species expected to occur within the proposed project, it is anticipated that resource inventories would be an initial priority under the unified management approach.

Environmentally sensitive areas such as erosion-prone sites, listed species habitats, outstanding natural areas, and wetlands, are to be identified during the initial resource inventory to implement appropriate protective measures for each specific area. Such inventories are considered vital to unified management



planning efforts directed at facility and infrastructure development, and design and implementation of recreational use programs.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after full acquisition, both agencies operating under the unified management approach will emphasize site security, posting boundaries, public access for low-intensity outdoor recreation, fire management, resource inventory, and removing refuse. Both managing agencies will meet frequently to coordinate task assignments, and cooperate with, and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local governments, and other appropriate participants as it affects management of the project site. Both managing agencies will participate in the joint development of a Combined Management Plan specifying area management goals and objectives. Goals intended for long-term implementation would emphasize multiple use management and the conservation of the site's natural resources including timber, fish and wildlife, and water. These goals would include restoring habitat and hydrology and conserving and protecting imperiled or rare species of flora and fauna. Following completion of plant community inventory and historic vegetation analysis, quantified vegetation management objectives would be developed pursuant to an objective-based vegetation management process. Where practical, disturbed sites would be restored to conditions expected to occur in naturally functioning ecosystems, including re-establishment of species expected to occur naturally on specific sites. Management would emphasize enhancement of abundance, and spatial distribution of imperiled and rare species. Essential roads would be stabilized to provide all-weather public access and management operations. Programs providing multiple recreational uses would also be implemented. Both agencies will work towards the development of a fire management plan that will apply prescribed burning in a manner that maximizes natural resource protection and enhancement. Most of this project area has not been burned by prescribed fire in recent years. Whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks will be utilized to contain, and control prescribed and natural fires. Growing-season prescribed burning would be used where appropriate to best achieve management objectives. Timber resources will be managed using acceptable silvicultural practices. Thinning of timber, introduction of prescribed fire, and sustainable forestry management practices could provide silvicultural products, ecological, and recreational benefits. Archaeological and historic sites would be managed in coordination with the Department of State's Division of Historical Resources. Both agencies will work to develop a road plan that identifies the roads to be used for access by the public, and roads that are required for administrative use. Unnecessary roads, fire lanes and hydrological disturbances would be restored as practical. The road plan would ensure that the public has appropriate access, and that sensitive resources are protected. Other existing infrastructure necessary for management would be protected to the extent possible. Infrastructure development would be the minimum required to serve needs of the public and would include provisions for facilities necessary for the security and management of the project area.



***Revenue-generating potential***

Timber sales would be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions, under a multiple-use management concept. Additional revenue would be generated from sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area permits, and other special hunting permits. Future revenues might be realized in the future from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities, if such projects can be economically developed. Fifteen percent of all gross revenues will be returned to the county from which funds were generated.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The unified managers (FFS and FWC) should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies, including the Suwannee River Water Management District, to manage the project area. The project should be designated as a state forest and wildlife management area.



Lake Santa Fe Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2004
Project Area (GIS acres)	10,387
Acres Acquired (GIS)	873*
at a Cost of	\$1,721,516*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	9,506

\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the SRWMD and Alachua County.

Lake Santa Fe Table 2

Lake Santa Fe FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
narrowleaf naiad	G3/S3
Wood Stork	G4/S2
Sherman's Fox Squirrel	G5T3/S3
Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake	G4/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3
Osprey	G5/S3S4

There are 8 rare species associated with the project.

Lake Santa Fe Table 3

Unified Management Cost Summary: FFS & FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Resource Management	\$170,478	\$184,467
Administration	\$75,494	\$25,133
Support	\$149,080	\$31,566
Capital Improvements	\$1,412,903	\$124,743
Visitor/Recreation	\$2,404	\$141
Law Enforcement	\$7,518	\$7,158
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,817,877</b>	<b>\$373,568</b>

[Map\(s\): Lake Santa Fe](#)



## **Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem**

Highlands, Lake, Osceola and Polk Counties

Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1992*
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	58,664
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	36,568**
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$93,500,015**
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	22,097

\*Lake Wales Ridge sites and Warea Archipelago projects were combined in 1994.

\*\*Includes acres and expenditures by the SWFWMD, SFWMD, SJRWMD, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Polk Co. and NRCS.

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The high, sandy Lake Wales Ridge, stretching south from near Orlando almost to Lake Okeechobee, was originally covered with a mosaic of scrub, flatwoods, wetlands, and lakes. The scrub is unique in the world—it is inhabited by many plants and animals found nowhere else—but it has almost completely been converted to citrus groves and housing developments. The Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem project is designed to protect the best remaining tracts of this scrub and the ecosystems associated with it, thereby preserving numerous endangered species and allowing the public to see examples of the unique original landscape of the ridge. The Florida National Scenic Trail, a cross-Florida hiking and non-motorized trail, is also planned to cross this project. The trail is a congressionally designated national scenic trail.

### **Manager(s)**

Managers include Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Florida Department of Environmental Protection (Lake June West); Florida Forest Service, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (Lake Walk-in- Water, Hesperides and five Warea sites) and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) (remaining sites). The FFS will monitor the less-than-fee portion. The Office of Environmental Services (OES) will monitor some Conservation Easements.

### **General Description**

Judging from its many unique species, Central Florida Ridge scrub may be among the oldest of Florida’s upland ecosystems. This project consists of separate sites along the Lake Wales Ridge which are intended to be part of a system of managed areas that conserve the character, biodiversity, and biological function of the ancient scrubs of the Ridge. The sites contain the best remaining examples of unprotected ancient scrub as well as lakefront, swamps, black water streams, pine flatwoods, seepage slopes, hammocks, and sandhills. The project is the last opportunity to protect the highest concentration of narrowly endemic scrub plants and animals on the Lake Wales Ridge, many in jeopardy of extinction. Seventy-five rare elements are found in this diverse ecosystem (62 cited by FNAI), including a population of scrub mint that may be a new species. No archaeological or historical sites are known





from the project. All the sites are fragments, and vulnerable to mismanagement and disturbance. They are also seriously threatened by conversion to citrus groves or immediate development pressure.

### **Public Use**

Sites within this project are designated for use as state parks, state forests, botanical sites and preserves, providing opportunities for natural-resource education, hiking, and on some sites, camping, picnicking, hunting and fishing.

The Boy Scouts and Morgan less-than-fee parcels would qualify as state forests. The amount and nature of public use will be negotiated with the landowners.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Full Fee: The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is an intermediary in most of the ridge sites. Lake Walk-in-Water (8,615 acres): major owner, Alico, has been acquired; contracts have been approved/ negotiations ongoing on other relatively large tracts; TNC worked with Morgan on details of the completed less-than-fee acquisition. Lake June West (831 acres): acquired. Gould Road (419 acres): major ownership acquired; discussions ongoing with owner of smaller inholding. Henscratch Road (2,869 acres): largest tracts acquired by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and CARL; TNC planned to negotiate a few other relatively large tracts in 1999. Silver Lake (2,020 acres): largest tracts acquired. Lake McLeod (55 acres): at least 45 acres acquired by USFWS. Mountain Lake Cutoff (217 acres): negotiations ongoing with owner of the one large tract. Lake Blue (65 acres) has been acquired. Hesperides (2,696 acres) has been acquired from Babson. Acquisition of most other tracts dependent upon acquisition of these ownerships. Boy Scouts West (335 acres): acquired. Horse Creek (1,325 acres): SFWMD has acquired the major ownerships within this site. Trout Lake (65 acres): appraisal completed. Eagle Lake (10 acres): removed from list - developed. Ridge Scrub (80 acres): on hold pending reanalysis by FNAI. McJunkin Ranch (750 acres): acquired.

Priority phasing for the Warea Archipelago sites is: Scofield Sandhill (120 acres): negotiations were scheduled to begin in early 1999 on both ownerships. Lake Davenport (500 acres): appraisals on hold pending reanalysis of site. Flat Lake (120 acres): acquired. Castle Hill (75 acres): negotiations unsuccessful with major owner. Purchase of other tracts contingent on major owner. Ferndale Ridge (104 acres): removed from list due to site fragmentation and habitat destruction.

Sugarloaf Mountain (52 acres): southernmost tract acquired by St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD). TNC was unable to reach agreements with a large ownership at northern end and owners of small tracts in between.

Less-than-Fee and Small Holdings: Carter Creek (4,630 acres): most of this parcel is acquired, a few large ownerships on western project boundary also remain.

Flamingo Villas (1,420 acres): USFWS acquired approximately 600 acres. Holmes Avenue (1,269 acres): approximately half of the site has been acquired, multiple ownerships remain. Sunray (1,970 acres): negotiations have begun on major owners. Avon Park Lakes (225 acres): subdivided, TNC projects a three-year 70 percent success rate. Highlands Park Estates (232 acres) subdivided, acquisition





activity not yet begun. Sun 'N Lakes South (570): more than 200 acres acquired, remaining developed and fragmented. Lake Apthorpe (2,503 acres): larger ownerships acquired, several lots important for management acquired as well. On December 6, 1991, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) added the Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem (LWRE) project to the CARL Priority list. This fee simple and less-than-fee acquisition, sponsored by TNC, consisted of approximately 32,480 acres, several thousand ownerships, and a taxable value of \$33,954,187. The project contains 20 separate sites located in Polk and Highlands counties and breaks down as follows: Ridge Scrub (80 acres); Lake Blue (65.23 acres); Eagle Lake (10.30 acres); Lake McLeod (55 acres); Mountain Lake Cutoff (201.05 acres); Hesperides (3,900 acres); Lake Walk-in-the-Water (9,835 acres); Sunray/Hickory Lake South (1,925 acres); Trout Lake (59 acres); Avon Park Lakes (225 acres); Silver Lake (1,194 acres); Carter Creek (4,630 acres); Flamingo Villas (1,420 acres); Henscratch Road/Jack Creek (3,985 acres); Lake Apthorpe (1,722 acres); Highlands Park Estates (232 acres); Holmes Avenue (1,199 acres); Lake June West (897 acres); Sun 'N Lakes South (503 acres); Gould Road (343 acres). The SFWMD acquired 1,309 acres within the Henscratch Road/Jack Creek site for \$1,540,000.

On July 23, 1993, the LAAC approved an 848-acre addition to the Lake Apthorpe site within the project boundary. The addition in Highlands County was sponsored by TNC, consisted of two ownerships, Clements Family (4 parcels) and Michael Rider (1 parcel), with a taxable value of \$313,910. On September 20, 1993, the LAAC approved a 16-acre addition to the Mountain Lake Cutoff site within the project boundary. It was sponsored by the landowner, J. K. Stuart, and had a taxable value of \$18,548. The landowner has holdings within the site and is unwilling to sell only a part of his tract. The Council recommended that the addition be sold or exchanged if it is not needed for resource protection or management purposes.

On March 9, 1994, the LAAC approved a 160-acre addition to the Lake Walk-in-the-Water site within the project boundary. It was sponsored by the landowner (Alico) and TNC with a taxable value of \$160,000. The landowner has holdings within the current boundary and is unwilling to sell only a part of its holdings. The Council recommended that the addition be sold or exchanged if it is not needed for resource protection or management purposes. In July 1994, the LAAC approved a 61-acre addition to Flamingo Villas site within the project boundary. The addition was sponsored by the landowner; American Homes Service Corp.–Wohl tract, consisted of 2 contiguous parcels, with a taxable value of \$95,180. The landowner has holdings within the current boundary and is unwilling to sell only a part of his holdings. The Council recommended that the addition be sold or exchanged if it is not needed for resource protection or management purposes. In November 1994, the LAAC combined the Warea Archipelago project (1,021 acres/taxable value \$4,552,797/Lake and Osceola Counties), with the LWRE. The Warea Archipelago project contained 6 separate sites that break down as follows: Schofield Sandcastle (120 acres); Lake Davenport (500 acres); Flat Lake (120 acres); Castle Hill (125 acres); Ferndale Ridge (104 acres); Sugarloaf Mountain (52 acres). On November 18, 1994, the LAAC approved a 2,336-acre addition, in Highlands County, to the project boundary. It was sponsored by TNC with a taxable value of \$2,201,330. The breakdown follows: 400 acres to the Silver Lake site, 76 acres



to the Gould Road site, and the 1,860-acre McJunkin Ranch was added. On July 14, 1995, the LAAC approved an 850-acre (sponsored by TNC; taxable value of \$2,035,980 addition in Highlands County to the project boundary, 70 acres to the Holmes Avenue site and 780 acres to the Lake Apthorpe site. On December 7, 1995, the LAAC approved combining the Horse Creek Scrub project (2,365 acres/taxable value \$3,330,700/Polk County) with the LWRE. The SFWMD made the request to expand the LWRE boundary. On December 7, 1995, the LAAC approved combining the Highlands Ridge project (6,318 acres/taxable value \$11,980,140/ Highlands County/several thousand parcels/600-700 landowners) with the LWRE. TNC sponsored the Ridge project in 1994.

On December 5, 1996, the LAAC approved the transfer of two ownerships – Boy Scouts West in the Hesperides site and Morgan in the Lake Walk-in-the-Water site – to the newly created Less-Than-Fee category. These Polk Co. ownerships, total 2,407 acres and a taxable value of \$2,407,000. On December 7, 1997, the Land Acquisition Management Advisory Council (LAMAC) approved a 3,724-acre deletion (sponsored by TNC) to the project boundary. The deletion affected 10 sites, with a taxable value of \$5,036,700. The breakdown of the deletions follows: Ferndale Ridge (104 acres), Castle Hill (50 acres), Eagle Lake (10 acres), Hesperides (177 acres), Sun Ray/Hickory Lake (1,070 acres), Henscratch Road (760 acres), Lake June West (66 acres), Highlands Park Estates (232 acres), Holmes Avenue (145 acres), and McJunkin Ranch (1,110 acres).

On October 15, 1998, the LAMAC approved a 580-acre addition to the project boundary, sponsored by TNC. It totaled 1,414 parcels (1,132 landowners) with a taxable value of \$159,086. Several landowners already have ownerships within the current boundary and will not sell without including the proposed additions. The additions to sites in Polk and Highlands counties follows: Lake Apthorpe site (.34 acre, Levingston), Silver Lake site (427 acres, multiple owners), Sun’N’Lakes South site (67 acres, Gables Engineering, Inc.), Sunray/Hickory Lake South site (80 acres, Alico, Inc.), and Trout Lake site (7 acres, Sistrunk, Trustee). The parcels were designated as essential. On October 15, 1998, the LAMAC approved the addition of the following tracts to the list of essential parcels: approximately 320 acres of the Saddleblanket Resorts II ownership in the Lake Walk-in-the-Water site, and approximately 3,200 acres (two large ownerships) in the Highlands Ridge site. July 12, 2001, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) approved a fee-simple, 2,512-acre addition (Royce Ranch next to Lake Apthorpe site) to the project boundary, sponsored by the FWC, it consisted of one landowner owner, Raymond Royce, with a taxable value of \$1,230,591. The FWC will manage the addition. On November 11, 2002, 1.25 acres were bought in Carter Creek (Benvenuti--\$3,800) to be managed by FWC. On October 17, 2003, the ARC approved a less-than-fee 2,330-acre addition (Henscratch Ranch-Highlands Co.--taxable value of \$352,419) to the project boundary. Sponsored by a representative for the landowner, Highlands Farms, Inc. The Office of Environmental Services (OES) will monitor the easement.

On August 20, 2004, the ARC approved a less-than-fee, 520-acre addition (Lake Josephine--Highlands Co.-- taxable value of \$17,063) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by representatives of the landowner, E. P. Jones Jr. The OES will monitor the easement.



On October 13, 2006, the ARC approved a fee-simple and less-than-fee, 11,444-acre addition (Crooked Lake West) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by Polk County, FWC, and the SWFWMD. The addition, in Polk County, consisted of 1,430 parcels; 1,120 landowners; a taxable value of \$6,612,464. The parcels have been designated as essential.

In June 2008, the following acreages (ownerships) were purchased: 0.9 acre (McKay) in Carter Creek for \$11,500 - FWC's FF funds; 1,146.91 acres (Dunham/ Cannon) in Dunham Ranch known as Gopher Tortoise Mitigation Park for \$12,353,761 - FWC's LATF money was used for purchase. FWC will manage these sites. In September of 2008, the following acreages (ownerships) were purchased with DSL FF funds: 1.19 acres (Boise) in Carter Creek for \$11,500; 1.3 acres (Carpinello) for \$11,500; and 1.3 acres (O Such) for \$11,500--all in the Carter Creek area, and FWC will manage. In October 2008 the following acreages (ownerships) were purchased with DSL FF funds: 1.1 acres (Dumervil/Cameron) for \$11,500; 1.3 acres (Hreschak) for \$11,500; 5.4 acres (Pollard) for \$46,000; 1.3 acres (Romani) for \$11,500; and 1.3 acres (Higgins Estate) for \$11,500. FWC will manage these sites. On October 3, 2008, DSL Florida Forever funds were used to buy a 345-acre parcels from the Palmer ownership in Pine Plantation for \$24,930,304 (40 acres in the SE corner of the parcel were acquired by the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority to be conveyed to Orange County for a park). On 10/15/2008, TNC bought a Conservation Easement of 57.62 acres within the Scrub Conservation Bank which overlaps the Gould Road site. Archbold Biological Station monitors the easement. In November 2008, the following acreages (ownerships) were purchased with DSL FF funds: 1.3 acres (Roselle) for \$11,500; 1.3 acres (Stockard) for \$11,500; 1.4 acres (Barbuto) for \$11,500; 1.3 acres (Schaffner) for \$11,500; and 1.1 acres (Smith) for \$11,500. Again, FWC will manage these sites.

From December 2008 through May 2009, 46 acres were purchased for \$445,161. In January 2009, SWFWMD and Polk Co. acquired 3510 acres (Crooked Lake West site) for \$5,369,950 from SWFMD; \$2,000,000 from Polk Co.; and \$12,239,500 from NRCS. In 6/2009, 5 acres were purchased in Carter Creek site for \$46,000. In July 2009 another acre was received as a donation from C.L./Vera Stegmaier in Lake Apthorpe. In October 2009 a little over 2 acres were purchased for \$24,000 in Carter Creek site. All of these are to be managed by FWC. On December 29, 2009, 1.1 acres were purchased by DSL for \$11,500. FWC will manage this.

On March 29, 2011, 1/2 acre on Holmes Ave. was donated (Dorothy A. Sanders Revocable Trust--\$2,000), FWC managing. On April 5, 2011 16.21 acres were purchased (TNC/Lawson--\$97,000). FFS will manage this.

On April 15, 2011 ARC recommended a 2,071-acre reduction to the project boundary due to residential/rural/commercial development. After this most recent boundary change in 2011, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$15,522,254.

On July 20, 2011, DSL purchased 1.87 acres on Holmes Avenue for \$8,422. In August 2011, DSL bought 13.53 acres on Holmes Avenue via tax deed sales for \$40,429.

On December 9, 2011 ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands (CNL) category.



In calendar year 2017, 21.49 acres in this project were acquired with Florida Forever program funding. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$69,240,900.

### **Coordination**

The Lake Wales Ridge sites are included within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Lake Wales Ridge National Wildlife Refuge which is the top priority endangered species project of the Service. The Service will also participate in management. TNC is an intermediary for non-mega parcel sites on this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystems project are 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 this state or a larger geographic area; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; and to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***FWC***

#### **Qualifications for state designation**

The full fee sites of the Lake Wales Ridge project qualify as single-use Wildlife and Environmental Areas (WEA) because of their high concentration of threatened or endangered species, particularly plants. The forest resources of the Lake Walk-in-Water, Hesperides and Warea sites make them desirable for use as state forests. The natural and recreational resources of the Lake June West parcel qualify it as a unit of the state park system. The small parcels sites of the Lake Wales Ridge project qualify as single-use WEA because of its high concentration of threatened or endangered species, particularly plants. Thirty percent of the plants and animals of the Lake Wales Ridge occur nowhere else in the world.

#### **Manager**

DRP (Lake June West); FFS (Lake Walk-in-Water, Hesperides and five Warea sites) and FWC (remaining sites). FFS will monitor the less-than-fee portion.

#### **Conditions affecting intensity of management**

This project is a high-need area, which will require additional funding to stabilize and protect the natural resources. Managing this ecosystem will require large prescribed burning crews that are well-trained and well-equipped to handle high intensity fires near residential areas.



Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure  
 During the first year after acquisition, management will focus on site security, conducting fuel reduction burns, conducting inventories of natural resources, and mapping of sensitive resources and conceptual planning. Public use facilities, if any, will be provided in succeeding years.

Revenue-generating potential

No significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. As public use increases, modest revenue may be generated.

Cooperators in management activities

It is recommended that the Archbold Biological Station and TNC serve as cooperators in managing some of the sites.

Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1992*
Project Area (GIS acres)	58,664
Acres Acquired (GIS)	36,568**
at a Cost of	\$93,500,015**
Acres Remaining (GIS)	22,097

\*Lake Wales Ridge sites and Warea Archipelago projects were combined in 1994.

\*\*Includes acres and expenditures by the SWFWMD, SFWMD, SJRWMD, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Polk Co. and NRCS.

Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem Table 2

Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem FNAI Elements	Score
clasping warea	G1/S1
Garrett's scrub balm	G1/S1
scrub ziziphus	G1/S1
Florida Panther	G5T1/S1
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Florida Mouse	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
A Comb-Clawed Beetle	G1/S1
Archbold's Treehopper	G1/S1
Auburndale Scrub Scarab Beetle	G1/S1

There are 102 rare species associated with the project.



Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem Table 3a

<b>Management Cost Summary: DRP</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>	<b>CARL</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$44,334</b>	<b>\$97,575</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$14,560</b>	<b>\$12,000</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$23,000</b>	<b>\$24,000</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$67,000</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$57,720</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$206,614</b>	<b>\$134,575</b>

Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem Table 3b

<b>Management Cost Summary: FFS (Warea)</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>	<b>CARL</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$44,334</b>	<b>\$97,575</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$14,560</b>	<b>\$12,000</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$23,000</b>	<b>\$24,000</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$67,000</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$57,720</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$206,614</b>	<b>\$134,575</b>

Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem Table 3c

<b>Management Cost Summary: FFS (Hesperides)</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>	<b>CARL</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$63,440</b>	<b>\$63,440</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$17,000</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$111,700</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$195,140</b>	<b>\$90,440</b>

[Map\(s\): Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem](#)





## **Limestone Ranch**

Hardee County  
Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2012
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	6,382
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>At a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	6,382

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquisition of the Limestone Ranch conservation easement will provide a buffer for Limestone Creek (a tributary of the Peace River with high water quality), provide habitat protection and enhancement of numerous rare species and imperiled natural communities, and afford additional resource protection for the Peace River waters and riverine wetlands within the boundaries of the Peace River State Forest, and the Horse Ranch, Horse Creek Ranch and Peace River Refuge Florida Forever projects, the downstream Charlotte Harbor Estuary, and the Gasparilla Sound-Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve.

This project meets Florida Forever goals of protecting Florida’s biodiversity by preserving 1,500 acres of Strategic Habitat Conservation Area, preserving acreage for such species as the swallow-tail kite and the Cooper’s Hawk, the Eastern indigo snake and the Florida sandhill crane. The uplands buffering the Peace River also help protect manatees in the river. This project also meets Florida Forever goal of preserving linked landscapes by connecting with the Horse Creek Ranch, Peace River Refuge and the Peaceful Horse Ranch. The project advances the Florida Forever goal of protecting, restoring and maintaining water and wetlands by protecting 762 acres of floodplain. The entire project provides for aquifer recharge. Finally, about 4,219 acres of the project are suitable for sustainable forest management.

### **Manager(s)**

The property would continue to be managed by the current owner, with periodic management oversight by the Division of State Lands’ Office of Environmental Services to confirm compliance with agreed-upon easement conditions.

### **General Description**

Limestone Ranch is about 6,400 acres. Most of the project is just west of the Peace River, with the southeast corner straddling a half mile section of the river. The property is bisected by Limestone Creek which flows eastward into the Peace River. The proposed project is adjacent to the northeastern corner of the Horse Creek Ranch Florida Forever Board of Trustees (BOT) project approved in 2010. Morgan Park (De Soto County) and the Peace River Refuge Florida Forever BOT project are approximately seven miles south of Limestone Ranch. The surrounding area is largely cattle pasture and citrus groves with remnant flatwoods adjacent to the mostly natural forested wetland corridor along the Peace River.



County Road 663 runs through the western portion of the property. Access to the property is east from the community of Limestone off CR 663.

Limestone Ranch is a mosaic of flatwoods, forested wetlands and pastures. Major natural communities include mesic and scrubby flatwoods, bottomland forest, and widely scattered depression marshes. The natural communities cover approximately 3,774 acres of the tract and appear to be in good to very good condition. The canopy cover varies widely, with many areas nearly treeless to a more normal multi-aged stand of the dominant longleaf pine. Many mature pine trees were lost during Hurricane Charlie (2005), however, sparse pine regeneration was observed even in nearly treeless areas. Recent prescribed fire was evident during the site visit as many pines had scorched trunks. The land is home to two under-represented natural community types -- 1,919 acres of pine flatwoods, and 42 acres of scrubby flatwoods. Approximately 1,500 acres of the site are identified as a strategic habitat conservation area.

The disturbed or worked portion of the land comprises improved pastures and agricultural fields. For the ranch's cow-calf operation, cattle-grazing is the primary use of the improved pasture. There is a 92-acre citrus grove out-parcel in the southeast section of the property, at the end of Jim Williams Road.

Invasive exotic plants are relatively infrequent on the property. The western boundary is adjacent to the Horse Creek Ranch Florida Forever project.

### **Public Use**

The owner intends to sell the land as a conservation easement and continue managing it for ranching and sod farming. There would be no general public access, nor would the easement be open for recreational uses. However, the owner has hosted FWC-coordinated youth hunts annually on the property and expressed interest in continuing to offer that periodic recreational opportunity.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The Limestone Ranch project in Hardee County was submitted as a conservation easement by the landowner, Mr. David M. Durando. On June 15, 2012, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added this project to the Florida Forever Priority List as a Less-than-Fee project. In 2012, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$18,830,416.

This is one ownership, and the owner is anticipating selling it in one transaction. Though adjacent to Horse Creek Ranch, the Acquisition and Restoration Council wanted this to be a stand-alone project. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$18,889,389.

### **Coordination**

In 2012, no acquisition partners were identified. The Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) reviewed the project and responded that the SWFWMD would not be an appropriate partner for acquisition of this property.

### **Management Policy Statement**

Acquiring Limestone Ranch will help protect Limestone Creek and the Peace River as well as Charlotte Harbor, which receives most of its fresh water from the Peace River. The project will be managed by the





private landowner, with restrictions and periodic monitoring by the state after it purchases the easement. The conservation easement will likely focus on purchasing the development rights, and on prohibiting conversion of existing natural area to more intensive uses.



Limestone Ranch Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2012</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>6,382</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>At a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>6,382</b>

Limestone Ranch Table 2

<b>Limestone Ranch FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Giant Orchid</b>	<b>G2G3/S2</b>
<b>Bachman’s Sparrow</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>

*There are 3 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Limestone Ranch](#)



### ***Little River Conservation Area***

Gadsden County

Less-Than-Fee

#### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2004
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	2,057
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>At a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	2,057

#### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Purchase of a less-than-fee-simple interest in the Little River Conservation Area would protect a portion of the Little River watershed while maintaining a scenic and undeveloped rural area outside an expanding urban area. A conservation easement would preserve habitat for wildlife and game species, protect forested land, and provide support for the owner’s ongoing efforts to restore the property to a natural longleaf pine community. This would fulfill Florida Forever goals of increasing protection of Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels; protecting, restoring and maintaining the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state; and increasing the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources. Due to its proximity of the Lake Talquin State Forest, managed by Florida Division of Forestry, and Joe Budd Wildlife Management Area, managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, acquiring a conservation easement would also enhance coordinating and completing other land acquisition projects.

#### **Manager(s)**

The Office of Environmental Services (OES) is designated to monitor the easement.

#### **General Description**

The Little River Conservation Area is situated within the Tallahassee Red Hills region and consists of an upland ridge about 2.4 miles long and 0.75 miles wide, forming the drainage divide between the Little River on its northwest side and its tributary, Hurricane Creek, on the southeast side, and extending to their confluence of the total area. The original upland natural community was probably either upland pine forest, or sandhill, or the site are in pine plantation, approximately 63 percent at the south end of the property. Most of the uplands on both. Hardwood (slope) forest (4 percent) occupies the steeper slopes that extend for about a mile above the Little River. Most of the remainder of the project is occupied by floodplain/bottomland forest and floodplain swamp along the drainage ways with some of the higher transitional areas in baygall and wet flatwoods. The western portion of the project encompasses about 375 acres of floodplain along Little River at its confluence with Quincy Creek.



### **Public Use**

The project is being offered as a less-than-fee purchase without public access. Hence, the project does not satisfy any of the year 2005 needs reflected in the 2000 Florida Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. Without public access, there will not be any public resource-based outdoor recreation potential for the project. Due to an indicated lack of general public access for hunting, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission advises that there would be no public hunting potential.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The project has 2,057 (GIS) acres in east-central Gadsden County under a single owner and is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition. The Woodlands Company, Inc. of Quincy Florida, submitted this project. The Gadsden County Property Appraiser's office lists the tax assessed value of the entire project as \$355,820 in 2004. The easement would be a single purchase.

On December 9, 2011, this project was placed in the Less-than-Fee category of Florida Forever projects. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$6,002,449.

### **Coordination**

There are no acquisition partnerships.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a conservation easement or less-than-fee interest, the project will be managed by the private landowner with restrictions. The purchase of the development rights, the prohibition of the further conversion of existing natural areas to more intensive uses and limited public access will likely be the primary focus of the conservation easement.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

As a less-than fee acquisition, a conservation easement over this parcel will preserve a working Florida landscape and protect existing natural areas from conversion to alternative uses. The development of additional structures and facilities on the parcel will be controlled through the terms of the conservation easement. The Office of Environmental Services, or its successor, to insure the terms of the easement are adhered to and that undue degradation of the resources on the tract does not occur, will coordinate monitoring of the conservation easement on this tract.



Little River Conservation Area Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2004
Project Area (GIS acres)	2,057
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
At a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	2,057

Little River Conservation Area Table 2

Little River Conservation Area FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Sculpted Pigtoe	G3/S2S3
Pyramid Magnolia	G4/S3
Mountain Laurel	G5/S3

*There are 4 rare species associated with the project*

[Map\(s\): Little River Conservation Area](#)



## ***Lochloosa Forest***

Alachua County

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2016
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	4,693
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	4,693

\*Donation

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Lochloosa Forest is part of a long-term effort to establish a wildlife and forested regional habitat along the eastern lakes portion of Alachua County, linking these landscapes to the Camp Blanding and Lake Santa Fe Florida Forever projects to the northeast. It fills the area between the Austin Carey Memorial Forest managed by the University of Florida and the Balu County Park managed by Alachua County, between Gainesville and Waldo. This project would contribute to the Florida Forever goals of protecting surface-water supplies, protecting groundwater recharge areas to ensure the groundwater supply of the state, restoring natural functions of land and water by curtailing commercial forestry chemicals and restoring natural groundwater flow, and increasing the protection of wildlife species by increasing the acreage of their habitat. One-hundred percent of the proposal is within the Surface Water Protection layer of the Florida Forever Measures Evaluation. Protecting these wetlands from further cutting and disturbance will improve the quality of water entering adjoining conservation lands on the south and to Newnans Lake.

### **Manager(s)**

The University of Florida’s Austin Carey Memorial Forest will manage the site as part of their forest, with emphasis on wildlands education and training. The Florida Forest Service (FFS) has offered to participate in the management of this forest, if necessary, possibly managing it as part of the Newnan’s Lake State Forest. The property is under a timber lease until 2023.

### **General Description**

Lochloosa Forest is an area of upland terraces, where flatwoods, swamps and marshes predominate. The land is from 95 to 150 feet above sea level and has two creeks flowing through it - Hatchet Creek from northwest to southeast, and Bee Tree Creek running north to south through the eastern part of the property.

Historically, most of the plantation areas supported a mosaic of mesic and wet flatwoods and a few small pockets of sandhill. Wetlands associated with the creek system and scattered dome swamps throughout the plantation make up approximately 19 percent of the site. Bee Tree Creek has several large floodplain swamp wetlands in the eastern part of Lochloosa Forest, the largest being just north of where Bee Tree Creek enters Balu Forest. A big swath of the western side of this swamp and smaller



areas north and south, totaling nearly 100 acres, have been logged in the past for cypress and, to a lesser extent, hardwoods.

Structure and species composition varies considerably between timber stands and generally reflects the amount of heavy shading or severe soil and vegetation disturbances associated with forestry operations. Very little natural groundcover remains in the pine plantations although many are dominated by native shrubs indicative of the natural communities the pines were planted on. This is especially true of the older stands; younger stands have a very sparse shrub layer as well as a needle-dominated groundcover. One area, located on former sandhill, has retained some native groundcover and would greatly benefit from the reintroduction of fire. Forested wetlands make up most of the existing natural communities on the property. Bottomland forest is the predominant natural community that borders Hatchet Creek and its tributaries and the narrower parts of Bee Tree Creek. Floodplain swamp is present in the larger wetlands associated with Bee Tree Creek, where the canopy is dominated by cypress (*Taxodium* sp.). Numerous dome swamps are scattered throughout the pine plantations. Cypress and hardwoods have been heavily harvested from many of the dome and floodplain swamp natural communities and scattered large stumps can be seen in the bottomland forest, indicative of past logging. Hydrology has been disrupted in some wetlands by ditches that drain formerly isolated dome swamps into the larger creeks.

### **Public Use**

Because more than 80 percent of this area has been managed over the years as a pine plantation, the fire dependent character of the Lochloosa Forest and the potential for ongoing silviculture may preclude development of recreation access or interpretive facilities. The altered landcover sites may be best suited for restoration, operational support or small-scale education facilities. The ridgeline ecotone and creek system are scenic features of the proposal and offer significant conservation value. Hatchet Creek, in particular, yields a scenic bottomland forest and basin swamp, which would be well-protected under forest-wide management as an educational “outdoor classroom/laboratory” comparable to the University of Florida’s adjacent Austin Cary Forest. The Austin Cary Forest currently performs the conservation and education functions, which could be fittingly extended to the Lochloosa Forest.

Florida’s Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) does not identify any categories of resource-based recreation access lacking in the North Central Region that could be addressed by management of the Lochloosa Forest. Significant recreational opportunities that may be offered by the acquisition would include hiking, nature interpretation, and primitive camping. Integration of teaching opportunities may be feasible with trail development and sustainable recreation management.

Also, managers at UF’s Austin Cary Memorial Forest noted that hunting may be an appropriate compatible multiple-use on the tract. The university forest manager’s suggestion was to use the activity as part of an educational opportunity for wildlife management studies, and the Florida Forest Service noted that it could also be a site for Operation Outdoor Freedom (OOF) hunts.



### **Acquisition Planning**

Lochloosa Forest was originally planned to be a much larger project in parcels across eastern Alachua County, but was redesigned to its current acreage once permanent conservation easements lands already in Florida Forever projects, and the Weyerhaeuser property, were eliminated from the boundary. It was approved as a 4,693-acre project adjoining the Austin Carey Memorial Forest. It was introduced to the Acquisition and Restoration Council for evaluation at the June 17th, 2016 meeting, and advanced to the next phase of review. On October 21st, ARC voted to add this proposal to the list of Florida Forever projects. It had a 2016 tax assessed value of \$894,300.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$5,227,568.

### **Coordination**

Partners in funding and in acquiring the Lochloosa Forest are likely to include Alachua County, the Alachua Conservation Trust, and the University of Florida's Austin Carey Memorial Forest.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The goals of managing the Lochloosa Forest are to establish a connectivity of managed lands among conservation lands in North Florida that include the Balu Forest, the Ocala National Forest and Camp Blanding. Lochloosa Forest represents a missing piece needed to create a conservation land corridor in northeast Florida. State acquisition of this site would also allow regional watershed protection and continuation of wildlife corridors, revenue from timber harvests, and recreation.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Lochloosa Forest would support the education, research and public outreach role of the University of Florida. This includes developing diverse conditions for students and land-management professionals learning land-management techniques, researchers studying impacts of different land-management techniques on hydrology, wildlife, recreation, ecotourism and financial outcomes of management; and for the public to learn about scientific and systematic resource management.

#### ***Manager***

Lochloosa Forest will be managed by the University of Florida as part of the Austin Cary Memorial Forest to support the education, research and public outreach role of the University of Florida.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Management of the property will be limited through the year 2023 by the existing timber and hunting leases with the owner of the property. Management intensity can be expected to increase gradually toward the termination of the leases in 2013. In keeping with sustainable forestry, the pines will be replanted before the lessee cedes the site.





***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

The first step of this project, starting in 2018, would be to develop a management plan among acquisition partners Alachua County and the University of Florida that would meet teaching, research and outreach goals, and guide coordination with the current owner of the land to the termination of the timber leases. The second step would be adjusting reforestation under access limited by the timber leases, from 2018 to 2023. The third step would be to fully implement a land-management plan with specific activities to support teaching, research and public access. Because the project is adjacent to Austin Cary Memorial Forest, it is anticipated to be secured.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The prospective managers estimate that when the existing leases expire in 2023, about 30 percent of the property will have been clear-cut and will need reforestation. Another 30 percent will have timber from 10 to 14 years old, which could provide revenue over the subsequent five years. The remaining 40 percent of the property will have trees less than three years old, and not yet of harvestable size.

Otherwise, the addition of the Lochloosa Forest to the Austin Cary Forest is expected to require one additional technical staff member at an estimated \$40,000 yearly and three to five student employees at \$15,000 to \$26,000 yearly. The staff would also need about \$10,000 yearly in fuel, equipment and operations expenses. The University of Florida would be responsible for these costs, which would be periodically offset with such revenue as timber sales, hunting leases, pine straw harvesting and other sales.



Lochloosa Forest Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>4,693</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0*</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>4,693</b>

*\*Donation*

Lochloosa Forest Table 2

<b>Lochloosa Forest FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>

*There are 2 rare species associated with the project.*

Lochloosa Forest Table 3

<b>Management Cost Summary: UF/IFAS</b>	<b>Annual</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>UF/IFAS</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>
<b>Student employees/OPS</b>	<b>\$15,000 -\$26,000</b>

[Map\(s\): Lochloosa Forest](#)



## ***Lochloosa Wildlife***

Alachua County

Substantially Complete

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1994
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	31,591
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	27,157*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$11,379,952*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	4,434

\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), Alachua County and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The large lakes, flatwoods, and prairies in southeast Alachua County are still in good condition, though much of the flatwoods is now pine plantation and Gainesville and Ocala are growing. The Lochloosa Wildlife project will conserve a large part of this area, protecting forested lands linking Newnan’s Lake, Lochloosa Lake, Orange Lake, and Paynes Prairie; protecting habitat for many kinds of wildlife, especially black bear, osprey, and wood storks; maintaining the high water quality found in the lakes, streams, and marshes here; and providing a scenic natural area for people to boat, fish, hike, or hunt in.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)

### **General Description**

The project encompasses the significant resources associated with Lochloosa Lake (particularly large populations of birds of prey), a bird rookery used by wood storks, and possibly the largest intact Mesic Flatwoods remaining in Alachua County. Tracts in intensive timber production account for more than half the project acreage. Magnesia Springs in the project supports the only known population in the world of the freemouth hydrophobe snail. Nineteen other rare or endangered species of animals are known to occur on site, including wood stork, Florida sandhill crane, and Florida black bear.

The good quality surface waters in the project are a significant hydrological resource and the project will also buffer several Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW) in the vicinity.

### **Public Use**

The project would be designated as a wildlife management area.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Essential tracts within this project include: Georgia Pacific (St. Johns River Water Management District has acquired a conservation easement over 10,300 acres surrounding Lake Lochloosa); Franklin Crates; Concora (Container Corp./Wachovia); Goethe; and Brown.

On December 9, 2011, this project was placed in the Substantially Complete list of Florida Forever projects.



The Division of State Lands is not currently working this project.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$7,426,303.

### **Coordination**

The St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) is an acquisition partner. The district's expenditures are reflected in the table below. Resolutions in support of this project include: 93-023: SJRWMD pledging up to 50% of the acquisition cost.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Lochloosa Wildlife project are to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The significant wildlife resources of the Lochloosa Wildlife project, including such threatened species as bald eagles, wood storks, Florida sandhill crane, and Florida black bears, as well as good stocks of game animals, qualify it as a wildlife management area.

#### ***Manager***

The FWC is recommended as the project manager.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Lochloosa Wildlife project is an area in imminent danger of development and in high need of intense resource management and protection. The large pine plantations will require restoration.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, management will concentrate on site security, natural resource management and conceptual planning. Public-use facilities will be developed in succeeding years.

#### ***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. As public use is increased, modest revenue may be generated.

#### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The Florida Forest Service/FFS is recommended as a cooperator to assist with forest management.



Lochloosa Wildlife Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1994
Project Area (GIS acres)	31,591
Acres Acquired (GIS)	27,157*
at a Cost of	\$11,379,952*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	4,434

\*Includes acreage acquired and funds spent by the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), Alachua County and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

Lochloosa Wildlife Table 2

Lochloosa Wildlife FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Striped Newt	G2G3/S2
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Wood Stork	G4/S2
Osprey	G5/S3S4
Freemouth Hydrobe Snail	G1/S1
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Black-banded Sunfish	G3G4/S1S3
Gopher Frog	G3/S3
Sherman's Fox Squirrel	G5T3/S3
Mud Sunfish	G4G5/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3

There are 16 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Lochloosa Wildlife](#)



## ***Longleaf Pine Ecosystem***

Gilchrist, Hamilton, Marion and Volusia Counties  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	<i>1993</i>
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	<i>22,314</i>
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	<i>12,643*</i>
<i>at a Cost of</i>	<i>\$30,408,180</i>
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	<i>9,671</i>

*\*Includes 54 acres at Caraway Lake acquired by the Florida Audubon Society in 1990.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Though they once covered much of north and central Florida, old-growth longleaf pine sandhills are now only distant memories, replaced by pine plantations, pastures, and housing developments. Nevertheless, fragments of good sandhills still remain. The Longleaf Pine Ecosystem project will conserve two of the largest and best of these fragments, in so doing helping to ensure the survival of several rare animals like the red-cockaded woodpecker as well as some plants and giving the public an opportunity to see and enjoy the original, and increasingly rare, natural landscape of Florida’s uplands. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide nonmotorized trail that crosses several Florida Forever project sites.

Bell Ridge: The primary goal is to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; to integrate compatible human use; and to insure long-term viability of populations and rare species. The Bell Ridge is a small xeric upland physiographic feature lying just north of the much larger Brooksville Ridge. The gently rolling hills and ridges of the Bell Ridge represent relict beach dunes now at elevations of 60-100 feet and consist of excessively well-drained sands of generally low fertility. It is predominantly sandhill of variable quality. The Bell Ridge Sandhills can be expected to support most of the fauna, both game and nongame, typical of sandhill habitat. Evidence of one rare species, the gopher tortoise was found.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Forest Service/FFS, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will manage the Ross Prairie sites, except the ones that are part of the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway portion and under an approved management lease to Office of Greenways and Trails—OGT), Blue Spring Longleaf site, Bell Ridge site, and Deland Ridge site). The FFS will manage Bell Ridge under a multiple-use management regime consistent with the State Forest system.

### **General Description**

Longleaf Pine Ecosystem sites (Ross Prairie Sandhill, Ross Prairie Addition, Bell Ridge, Blue Spring Longleaf, and Deland Ridge) are some of the highest quality longleaf pine sandhills in Florida. Longleaf pine sandhills are one of Florida’s most distinctive and endangered forest types and have declined by more than 80 percent in the last century. The project will protect nearly 20 plants, animals, and natural



communities listed by Florida Natural Areas Inventory. Archaeological sites are known in the Ross Prairie tract. These sites are vulnerable to logging and fire suppression as well as development.

### **Public Use**

The project will be state forest, with opportunities for hunting, hiking, horseback riding, camping and nature appreciation.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Largest property owners south of canal lands (essential) within the Ross Prairie (8,216 acres) site are Janet Land Corp. (acquired) and Deltona-Marion Oaks Sub. (unwilling seller). North of the canal lands are seven (essential), Ocala Waterway Estates (essential), Guy (essential), Davis, and less than 35 other smaller tracts. The Blue Spring (1,978 acres) site consists of one owner (acquired, through TNC).

On December 3, 1998, LAMAC transferred the Deland Ridge and Chassahowitzka Sandhill sites to the Negotiation Impasse group. On July 29, 1999, the Council added the 3,040-acre Ross Prairie Addition project to the Longleaf Pine Ecosystem project (Priority Group). On December 9, 1999 the Council approved the Bell Ridge project to be added to the Longleaf Pine Ecosystem project.

On August 13, 2010 ARC approved a 3,612-acre (\$528,396,412 just value) reduction to the project boundary due to residential/commercial/infrastructure disturbances.

On December 9, 2011 ARC designated this project as a Critical Natural Lands (CNL) project.

On July 3, 2012 BOT acquired 5.16 acres in the Ross Prairie area for \$8,000.

On April 19, 2013, ARC approved changing the boundary of the Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Florida Forever project in Madison County, adding the 986- acre Ellaville Sandhill Tract that was approved in the February ARC meeting to the project boundary.

In 2013, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$20,329,303.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$37,409,779.

### **Coordination**

TNC, the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Trust for Public Lands (TPL), and the Florida Audubon Society are acquisition partners on this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Longleaf Pine Ecosystem project are 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 this state or a larger geographic area; conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests; and enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulator programs cannot adequately protect. The primary objective of management of the Bell Ridge Sandhills is to protect and restore the threatened sandhill natural community. A secondary



objective is to provide resource-based recreation compatible with protection of the natural and cultural resource values of the project. The site will be managed under the multiple-use concept—management activities will be directed first toward conservation of resources and second toward integrating carefully controlled consumptive uses. Managers will control access to the proposal; thoroughly inventory the resources; restore hydrological disturbances; conduct prescribed burning of fire-dependent communities to mimic natural lightning-season fires, using existing fire lines, natural firebreaks, existing roads, or foam lines for control; strictly limit timber harvesting in mature stands; and monitor management activities to ensure that they are conserving resources. Managers will limit the number and size of recreation facilities, ensure that they avoid the most sensitive resources, and site them in already disturbed areas when possible. The project includes over 3,000 acres of relatively undisturbed land adjacent to an existing area of conservation lands. It consequently appears to have the size and location to achieve its primary and secondary objective. The Bell Ridge Sandhill is about 3,500 acres in Gilchrist, Florida. The site is located some 9 miles north east of Trenton, seven miles east of Bell, seventeen miles north of the Watermelon Pond Unit of Goethe State Forest, and twenty miles west of Gainesville. The FFS proposes to manage the project under a multiple use management regime consistent with the State Forest system, and in a manner designed to accomplish the acquisition goals and measures for this project as approved by the Acquisition and Restoration Council. These goals and measures are hereby incorporated by reference. The primary land management goal for the FFS is to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; to integrate compatible human use; and to insure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. This ecosystem approach will guide the FFS management activities on this project.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The quality of the pine forests on the Blue Spring Longleaf and Ross Prairie sites, and their size and diversity, make them suitable for state forests. Bell Ridge: The major community represented on this project is sandhill. The project's size and diversity make it desirable for use and management as a State Forest. Management by the FFS as a State Forest is contingent upon the state acquiring fee simple title to the entire project and obtaining some level of legal public access to the site, which is likely since the eastern and northern property boundaries are county maintained graded roads.

#### ***Manager***

The Florida Forest Service (FFS) is to manage Blue Spring Longleaf; Bell Ridge; and Deland Ridge, and the Ross Prairie sites not already a portion of the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway that is under an approved management plan by the OGT.

Bell Ridge: The FFS will manage the project under a multiple use management regime consistent with the State Forest system.





### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

On the Blue Spring tract, there are no known major disturbances that will require extraordinary attention, so management intensity is expected to be typical for a state forest. On Ross Prairie, however, the construction of an extension of the Florida Turnpike may hinder fire management activities and public access to the forest. Bell Ridge: There are portions of the parcel that have been disturbed that will require restoration efforts. There is at least one linear facility that bisects the parcel, which will be an area of management concern for monitoring unauthorized uses and introduction of invasive exotic species. The sandhill community is considered imperiled and as such may be sensitive to certain uses and the intensity of use. As such, water resource development projects, water supply development projects, stormwater management projects and any additional linear facilities, other than those that already exist on the project, are considered incompatible with this type of ecosystem and with the resource values on this project. The adjacent residential developments will pose a management concern associated with prescribed burning, public use, unauthorized uses, and other natural resource management activities. There are areas that have refuse and debris and which should be removed prior to closing on the core parcel. Other than those above-mentioned points, there are no other known major disturbances that will require extraordinary attention. The level of management intensity and related management cost is expected to be moderately high initially to establish this as a state forest. Capital project expenditures will be needed on this parcel as listed below. They include relocation of the Trenton Work Center to this site to provide site management, security and public service. The existing Trenton Work Center is currently leased from the private sector and this lease was scheduled to expire in 2005, with no anticipation that the lease would be renewed. The existing house and barn on the property can be used for these facilities so that the expense associated with it can be reduced, although, they will require renovation. Reinforcing the fencing in the areas of residential development will be necessary to clearly establish the boundary with resources that cannot be easily burned or altered. It is anticipated that some of the existing roads will be used as multi-use trails for hiking, horseback riding and off-road biking. As such, visitor services in the disturbed area will be provided.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

The Blue Spring Longleaf tract and part of the Ross Prairie Sandhills tract have been acquired (the OGT manages the MHC Cross Florida Greenway portion). The FFS is now providing public access to these tracts for low-intensity, non-facilities-related outdoor recreation.

Management on the Blue Spring Longleaf tract will concentrate on maintaining the existing open conditions and seeds will be collected with as little disturbance as possible to the resources.

On all three tracts, the FFS will provide access to the public while protecting sensitive resources. The sites' natural resources and threatened and endangered plants and animals will be inventoried to provide the basis for a management plan. Long-range plans will address restoring disturbed areas to their original conditions, as far as possible, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. An all-season burning program will use, whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks to contain fires. Timber management will mostly involve improvement thinning and regeneration



harvests. Plantations will be thinned and, where appropriate, reforested with species found in natural ecosystems. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age. Infrastructure will primarily be in disturbed areas and will be the minimum required for management and public access. The FFS will promote environmental education. Bell Ridge: Once the core area is acquired and assigned to the DOF, public access will be provided for low intensity outdoor recreation activities. The FFS proposes to manage the site as a new unit of the State Forest system, and the Waccasassa Forestry Center personnel will carry out initial management activities and coordinate public access and use. The FFS will cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate. Initial and intermediate management efforts will concentrate on site security, public and fire management access, resource inventory, reforestation of areas where off-site species have been harvested, natural regeneration of the native species in the areas with low densities, and any restoration activities. Steps will be taken to ensure that the public is provided appropriate access while simultaneously affording protection of sensitive resources. There are many roads throughout the property, and as such a road plan will need to be developed to determine those to be used for vehicular use by the public, those that are required for administrative use, and unnecessary access points and roads that should be closed. An inventory of the site's natural resources and threatened and endangered flora and fauna will eventually be conducted to provide a basis for formulation of a management plan. Prior to collection of necessary resource information, management proposals for this project can only be conceptual in nature. Long-range plans for this property will generally be directed toward the restoration of disturbed areas and maintenance of natural communities. To the greatest extent practical, disturbed sites will be restored to conditions that would be expected to occur in naturally functioning ecosystems. Any existing pine plantations will be thinned to achieve a more natural appearance. Offsite species will eventually be replaced with species that would be expected to occur naturally on those specific sites. Management activities will also stress enhancement of the abundance and spatial distribution of threatened and endangered species. Portions of the area can sustain an all season prescribed burning program utilizing practices which incorporate recent research findings. The objective is to eventually establish an all season prescribed burning program on all the fire dependent community types. Whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks will be utilized to contain, and control prescribed and natural fires. Timber management activities will primarily consist of improvement of thinning and regeneration harvests aimed at maintaining and perpetuating forest ecosystems. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age but will be managed to maintain a broad diversity of age classes ranging from young stands to areas with old growth characteristics. This will provide habitat for the full spectrum of species that would be found in the natural environment and enhance and maintain biodiversity. The resource inventory will be used to identify sensitive areas that need special attention, protection or management, and to locate areas that are appropriate for any recreational or administrative facilities. Recreation and administrative infrastructure development will primarily in already-disturbed areas and will be the absolute minimum required to allow public access for the uses mentioned above, to provide facilities to accommodate public use, and to administer and



manage the property. The FFS will promote recreation and environmental education in the natural environment. It is anticipated that interpretative and user services recreational facilities will be developed and the use of low impact, rustic facilities will be stressed. High impact, organized recreation areas are not planned because of possible adverse effects on the natural environment. Unnecessary roads, fire lines and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned and/or restored to the greatest extent practical.

If acquired, Florida Forever Performance Measures G (Acres acquired that are available for sustainable forest management), G2 (Acres of state-owned forestland managed for economic return in accordance with current Best Management Practices), and G4(Percentage and number of acres identified for restoration restored by reforestation) would apply. There is the possibility that other measures apply, however, that may be determined after acquisition and an inventory of the resources on the project.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The FFS will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will provide a variable source of revenue, but the revenue-generating potential for these tracts is expected to be low. Bell Ridge: As mentioned above, timber sales will be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in upland pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue dependent upon a variety of factors. Due to the existing condition of the timber resource on the property, revenue generating potential of this project is expected to be medium. It is anticipated that management funding will come from the CARL trust fund or its successor.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The FFS will cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and interested agencies.



Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1993
Project Area (GIS acres)	22,314
Acres Acquired (GIS)	12,643*
at a Cost of	\$30,408,180
Acres Remaining (GIS)	9,671

\*Includes 54 acres at Caraway Lake acquired by the Florida Audubon Society in 1990.

Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Table 2

Longleaf Pine Ecosystem FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Scrub-jay	G2/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Florida Mouse	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Orange Lake Cave Crayfish	G1/S1
longspurred mint	G1/S2
Equal-clawed Gopher Tortoise Hister Beetle	G1G2/S1S2
sand butterfly pea	G2Q/S2
Southern Hognose Snake	G2/S2S3
giant orchid	G2G3/S2
Hobbs' Cave Amphipod	G2G3/S2S3

There are 32 rare species associated with the project.

Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Table 3a

Management Cost Summary: FFSBell Ridge	1995/96	1996/97
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$31,080	\$41,013
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$25,505	\$11,302
OCO	\$40,626	\$0
FCO	\$0	\$0
Total	\$97,211	\$52,315

Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Table 3b

Management Cost Summary: FFS Deland Ridge	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL



<b>Management Cost Summary: FFS Deland Ridge</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$7,000</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,000</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>

Map(s): Longleaf Pine Ecosystem



## ***Lower Perdido River Buffer***

Escambia County

Less-Than-Fee

<i>Project-at-a-Glance</i>	
<i>Placed on List</i>	2002
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	7,691
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	5,365
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$12,085,069
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	2,326

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

This project is to preserve a riverine area along one of the state’s “Outstanding Florida Waters” that has low levels of development, while providing recreational access points for canoeing and kayaking. A conservation easement is planned for this project, keeping land ownership in private hands while shielding the area from development and ensuring public access, within a managed framework, for outdoor recreation. The small access points will be acquired in fee simple and provide recreational access to the river where none exist today. This project meets the Florida Forever goal of increasing natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities by enhancing access to the Perdido River. Use of a conservation easement allowing silviculture would meet the Florida Forever goal of preserving forest land for sustainable management of natural resources, contingent on what management plan was developed.

### **Manager(s)**

Escambia County will manage the access points once they are determined. The Office of Environmental Services (OES) of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection will oversee monitoring of the conservation easement when such a plan is developed.

### **General Description**

The Perdido River is a medium-size sand-bottom blackwater stream that starts in southern Alabama. It has a low relief that is typical of many rivers in the lower Gulf Coastal Plain. It has no first-magnitude or second-magnitude springs but depends on rainfall for most of its water. As a result, its flow has substantial fluctuations. The high flows have caused erosion bends upstream that created large and medium-size sandbars – suitable for camping - along many of the river’s inner upstream of State Road 184. The river is exceptionally winding, with few straight stretches of more than 200 yards. There are plenty of fallen trees, usually Atlantic white cedar, but below Barrineau Park most of the fallen trees have been cut to allow small boats to pass. The river is about 100 yards wide at the mouth on Perdido Bay but is only about 30 yards wide near Barrineau Park. The Lower Perdido River Buffer includes land on the eastern, or Florida, side of the river from roughly the center of Escambia County (near the Barrineau Park community) downstream to the river’s mouth on Perdido Bay. This project has approximately 5,053 acres of functional wetlands that will be protected by acquisition. Approximately



2,094 acres have been identified that provide groundwater recharge, and approximately 1,056 acres of forest have been identified that would maintain natural groundwater recharge functions.

### **Public Use**

The potential for public-resource recreation for this project is limited; the owner of the property was not interested in allowing general public access. However, the owner is willing to sell limited access points to the Perdido River. This would allow river access for launching and landing canoes and small boats.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The Lower Perdido River Buffer Florida Forever project was added to the 2002 Florida Forever project list at the June 6, 2002 ARC meeting as a Group A project. At that time, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$217,336.

The project property was entirely owned by International Paper when the project was added to the list. The specific locations of the small access sites along the river for fee-simple will be determined during the negotiation process.

On May 31, 2006, the Northwest Florida WMD purchased 5,456 acres within the Florida Forever project boundary.

The project was designated a less-than-fee project in 2002 and was placed in the Less-Than-Fee category of Florida Forever projects on December 9, 2011.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$6,336,612.

### **Coordination**

The Division of State Lands, Office of Environmental Services (OES) will oversee monitoring of the easement. Escambia County will manage the access points on fee-simple portions of the project once they are determined. The acquisition partnership is expected to include local, state and NFWMD funding sources. Contribution funding percentages have not been determined.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of this project are to increase the natural-resource based public education and recreational opportunities along the Perdido River. Acquisition of access to the river by way of the Lower Perdido River Buffer would be a benefit to those activities because public access to the river is minimal.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Protecting the Lower Perdido River Buffer with a combination of a conservation easement and the outright purchase of select access points will benefit the public in several major ways – 1) This project will keep wetland and marsh habitats located within a major metropolitan statistical area free from the pressures of development; 2) The use of the conservation easement for the project will keep the majority



of the land in private hands; 3) This project will allow, at selected points, riverine access for the public for boating and fishing.

***Manager***

Escambia County will manage the access points once they are determined and acquired in fee simple. Management Costs will be formulated by Escambia County, as manager of the project site. The Office of Environmental Services (OES) of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection is to oversee the monitoring of the conservation easement.

***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Perdido River itself appears to be free of major structural alterations and point sources of pollution that substantially affect either flow or water quality. Hence, no major restoration efforts along the immediate river corridor are necessary. Nonetheless, all areas of minor structural alterations (e.g., houses, boat ramps, highway crossings) should be examined in the future to determine whether any of them are contributing erosion, siltation, or pollution.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Management of the property would depend on the nature and the provisions of the conservation easement that would be used to secure riverine access in this project.

***Revenue-generating potential***

Revenue generation potential is minimal since the Lower Perdido River Buffer project is for a conservation easement. The small areas for river access to be acquired in fee simple would not be expected to generate revenue.

***Cooperators in management activities***

Escambia County would manage the access points to the river.





Lower Perdido River Buffer Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2002</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>7,691</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>5,365</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$12,085,069</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>2,326</b>

Lower Perdido River Buffer Table 2

<b>Lower Perdido River Buffer FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Louisiana yellow-eyed grass</b>	<b>G2G3/S1</b>
<b>Escambia Crayfish</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>West Florida cowlily</b>	<b>G5T2/S2</b>
<b>Curtiss' sandgrass</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Rusty Grave Digger</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>primrose-flowered butterwort</b>	<b>G3G4/S3</b>
<b>Spiny Softshell</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>

*There are 15 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Lower Perdido River Buffer](#)



## ***Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed***

Dixie County  
Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2010
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	58,540
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	8,158
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$4,178,700
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	50,383

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The purpose for state acquisition of the project is to enhance management practices of the ongoing timbering operation, to protect and enhance water quality, and wetland communities, wildlife habitat and archaeological sites found within the proposal boundary. Purchase of a conservation easement over the property would buffer and protect the natural resources of the Suwannee River and the Gulf of Mexico and provide habitat and corridors for rare plants and animals over a wide swath of undeveloped public lands, including the neighboring Big Bend Wildlife Management Area, the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge, water management district conservation areas, and the Big Bend Seagrasses Aquatic Preserve (BBSAP).

The Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed project meets the Florida Forever measures and public purposes of enhancing the coordination and completion of land acquisition projects, using alternatives to fee-simple; increasing the protection of Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community and landscape levels; protecting, restoring and maintaining the quality and natural functions of land, water and wetland systems of the state; ensuring that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state; increasing natural resource-based public recreation or educational opportunities; preserving significant archaeological or historic sites; and increasing the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources.

### **Manager(s)**

The Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) would manage this conservation easement and 10 acres in fee-simple that provide access to California Lake. The SRWMD already holds a conservation easement on the adjacent 32,000 acres. This Forest Systems Conservation Easement or “California Lake” easement was purchased in 2001.

### **General Description**

This project consists of four large undeveloped, forested less-than-fee tracts in Dixie County. It is a total of 46,519 (GIS) acres. The parcels range in size from 5,800 to 19,200 acres and include a 10-acre tract proposed for fee-simple acquisition. The 10-acre parcel will guarantee continued public access to California Lake, a traditional use located within the SRWMD’s adjacent conservation easement area. The California Lake water body appears to be a wide segment of California Creek rather than a true



lake. The proposal area is located between County Road (CR) 358 to the north and CR 349 to the south, about 6 to 10 miles south-southwest of U.S. 19/98, and 1 to 7 miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico shoreline. The BBSAP encompasses the submerged lands in this region. Hunting leases are in place over much of the property. Timber harvesting will be prohibited in the hardwood and cypress swamps under the proposed easement, as it is in the adjacent California Lake easement. Considering the importance of the hardwood and cypress swamps to many wildlife species, this would provide substantial wildlife conservation benefits. This is also secondary habitat for the Florida black bear. The vast natural wetlands on the proposal lands serve to funnel and filter water from the upland areas toward the Suwannee River and/or Gulf of Mexico as well as buffer several small stream systems that meander through the proposal. The topography of the three westernmost properties ranges from 20 to 5 feet above mean sea level (MSL), gradually sloping downward toward the Gulf, forming numerous braided, intermittent stream systems that empty into the marshlands and tidal creeks of the Gulf. The topography of the easternmost tract ranges from 25 to 5 feet above MSL. About half of this tract drains westward into the California Creek basin, a flat, highly braided stream system that is mostly outside the boundary of this tract, and that empties into the Gulf. Waters on the other half of this tract drain southward, bounded by higher ground along CR 349, and then eastward to the Suwannee River. A portion of the easternmost tract is within the Fanning/Manatee Springshed.

For the last century, approximately half of the project area has been managed for silviculture. Before, the site would have supported a mosaic of mesic and wet flatwoods, hydric hammocks, and swamp, interspersed with many small depression marshes and ponds. Although deep bedding has significantly altered the groundcover, many stands of pines and even recently planted areas seen on site retain good remnant flatwoods vegetation. The proposal property is managed under guidelines of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative to protect water quality, biodiversity, and species at risk.

Hydric hammocks make up the bulk of the natural community acreage on the property. There are several large hammocks in excellent condition with canopies of large hardwood trees. Species composition is typical of good quality hammocks with limestone near the soil surface. Basin and floodplain swamps within the larger hammocks are in excellent condition. Canopy trees are large and dominated by pond cypress, with a mix of hardwoods. Smaller dome swamps are common throughout the pine plantations.

### **Public Use**

The parcels adjacent to the SRWMD's California Lake conservation easement will not be open to the public. The managers have leased the property for hunting for hunt clubs, but no general public access is contemplated.

For the 10-acre fee-simple parcel that is within the boundary of the SRWMD easement, the project would guarantee opportunities for public recreational activities and public access to California Lake.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 10, 2010 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed project to the Florida Forever list in the Less-Than-Fee category, ranking it as



number 6 of 25 projects considered in that category. This less than fee project was sponsored by The Conservation Fund and the SRWMD in a proposal submitted on June 30, 2010. It is approximately 46,441 acres with a 2010 market value of \$94,249,477, all under the same ownership. It also includes fee simple acquisition of 10 acres on the SRWMD's California Lake conservation easement.

On December 9, 2011, this project was placed in the Less-than-Fee category of Florida Forever projects. On September 13, 2016 a conservation easement over 8,075 acres of the Lyme Timber Company was acquired in this project at a cost of \$4,178,700 and will be managed by the Suwannee River Water Management District.

On October 16, 2015 the ARC voted to add the 12,023-acre Otter Sinks proposal in Dixie County to the Florida Forever list, and then to make it an addition to the Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed project. This is a rectangular area west of County Road 349, adjacent to the existing project. After this most recent addition in 2015, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$94,249,478.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$70,279,657.

### **Coordination**

The SRWMD is a partner in this project. Since the SRWMD holds the easement for the California Lake parcel, it may be more appropriate for them to pursue acquisition and fee simple title to the 10-acre parcel providing access to California Lake.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a proposed conservation easement or other less –than-fee interest, the project will be managed by the private landowner with restrictions under the agreement. The purchase of development rights, the prohibition of any further conversion of existing natural areas to agricultural uses, and limited public access to some sites will likely be the primary focus of the conservation easement, similar to that established for the adjacent SRWMD easement with the same landowner. The 10-acre fee simple interest parcel in this project will be managed by the SRWMD. The primary management objective will be focused on recreational opportunities associated with the boat ramp. The property will be managed at the District's base level of recreational development which will include a designated, stabilized parking area for vehicles and trailers using the existing boat ramp. The parking area will be enclosed by a rail fence. A kiosk with information about the site and its recreational use is also planned. Maintenance of the boat ramp and general oversight of the property will also take place.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The less-than-fee portion of the Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed project meets Florida Forever measures of using alternatives to fee-simple acquisitions, protecting Strategic Habitats, natural floodplains and significant surface waters. The proposed 10-acre fee-simple-title site meets Florida



Forever measures of protecting Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas, natural floodplains and significant surface waters.

***Manager***

The landowner would manage the site. The SRWMD, or a successor, would oversee the conservation easement. The SRWMD will manage the 10-acres to be acquired in fee-simple

***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Half of this property has been managed for silviculture for the last century. Sustainable timber management practices have evolved over the years and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative bolsters conservation practices such as providing for buffers around wetlands. The overall historic management of the property has been for wood and wood products using sustainable timber management practices. The 10-acre site includes a mixture of natural pine and bottomland hardwood tree species as well as an access road and boat ramp. SRWMD does not expect to harvest timber on the site for commercial purposes but may need to remove underbrush or selected individual trees to maintain a healthy ecosystem. The cost of the monitoring by SRWMD staff could add to the administrative costs of the easement. No sources of revenue are known at this time, nor are there any startup costs involved.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Not applicable to the conservation easement but management implementation will begin immediately after fee simple title is taken on the 10-acre site to keep the boat ramp available for public use. Other improvements on the 10-acre site will begin within one year. Security will be provided through the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission as well as other existing contractors for maintenance of infrastructure.

***Revenue-generating potential***

This project has no direct revenue-generating potential under a conservation easement, nor is any revenue expected from acquisition of the 10-acre site to be acquired in fee simple.



Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>58,540</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>8,158</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$4,178,700</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>50,383</b>

Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed Table 2

<b>Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Florida Olive Hairstreak</b>	<b>G5T2/S2</b>
<b>Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake</b>	<b>G4/S3</b>
<b>Pine Snake</b>	<b>G4/S3</b>
<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>
<b>White Ibis</b>	<b>G5/S4</b>

*There are 7 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed](#)



## ***Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor***

Flagler, Putnam and St. Johns Counties

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2016
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	102,989
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	2,167
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	100,821

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring a less-than-fee interest over the 110,382 acres of the Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor would enhance the connections of at least 15 conservation lands and conservation easements in this region of Florida, preserve natural areas for wildlife biodiversity, and protect surface waters and wetlands in this area, ensuring an adequate water supply for the current and the future needs of the natural systems and for the citizens of the state. Much of this land is silvicultural land, and this corridor would preserve these lands in an agricultural use. As a wildlife corridor among other conservation lands, the Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor would help the long-term survival of larger and wide-ranging wildlife such as the Florida black bear and other wildlife species, both rare and common.

The Florida Forever Measures Evaluation identifies how much of the area would contribute to the Florida Forever goals, with 100 percent of the area contributing to surface-water protection. Some 99 percent of the area would help aquifer recharge, 45 percent of the area would preserve functional wetlands, 40 percent of the area would preserve natural floodplain functions, and 97 percent of the area would preserve ecological greenways. This project meets the requirements of the 2014 Amendment One constitutional initiative. There are currently two approved Developments of Regional Impact (DRI), totaling 10,000 acres, and eight other developments, totaling 20,000 acres, that are within the boundary of this conservation corridor. Development of these projects with their related roads and infrastructure would impact the ability of the Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor to function as a viable wildlife corridor.

### **Manager(s)**

As a less-than-fee property, the land would be managed by the landowners with periodic visits from the staff of the Division of State Lands to ensure compliance with the agreed-upon easement conditions. There is a possibility that some of the parts of this area could be acquired in fee-simple.

### **General Description**

The Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor has 19 different landowners in Flagler, Putnam and St. Johns counties. It is in the Eastern Flatwoods physiographic district described as coastal lowlands, with flatwoods and swamps on silty sand soils. The land stretches from State Road 100 in Flagler and Putnam counties on the southwest end, east to US Highway 1 in St. Johns County and to Interstate Highway 95



on the northeast side. It is basically one contiguous piece with several outparcels. There are several public conservation lands on the boundaries of this project, including the Matanzas State Forest, the Faver-Dykes State Park, the Pellicer Creek Conservation Area, and at the southern end, the Haw Creek Preserve State Park. The Pringle Creek Forest Florida Forever project and the Northeast Florida Blueway Florida Forever project also abut this project, on the eastern side.

Historically this was a mix of mesic and wet pine flatwoods. Currently the trees on this land are mainly stands of slash pine up to 40 years old, with understory that ranges from heavily wooded with shrubs to no understory in areas where the pines are bedded. Commercial pine plantations account for about half of the acreage. Natural uplands are about 5 percent of the project, with small patches of wet and mesic flatwoods.

Other areas have scrub, scrubby flatwoods and sandhill terrain.

Wetland communities make up most of the natural communities on the property, about 40 percent of the area. Vegetation is generally dominated by bald cypress or swamp tupelo, with other wetland trees and shrubs. Isolated wetlands are abundant throughout the property. Dome swamps dominated by pond cypress and open depression marshes are common within the pine plantation and flatwoods uplands. Several natural lakes occur on the property, with the largest in the southeast quarter – Speckled Perch Lake, Black Lake, and Tank Lake. These are in a higher, more xeric portion of the property. Baygall vegetation dominated by loblolly bay and slash pine surrounding these lakes indicates the increased seepage originating from the xeric uplands.

### **Public Use**

The project is planned to be a less-than-fee acquisition, which would limit the ability of the state to provide public use. However, the project proposal has suggested recreational uses hosted by the landowners once the state acquires and precludes the rights to use the property for more intensive uses. Some parts of the property could be acquired in fee-simple to augment the adjoining and existing public lands, in which case the acquired land would be managed by the agency already managing those adjacent lands.

### **Acquisition Planning**

This Less-than-Fee project was sponsored in a proposal by the Conservation Trust of Florida and was presented to the Acquisition and Restoration Council at the October 16, 2015 meeting. At that time, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$21,223,436.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$161,437,959.

### **Coordination**

No partners in the acquisition were identified for this project.





**Management Prospectus**

The Office of Environmental Services of the Division of State Lands is tasked with ensuring the oversight of the conservation easement on this project. If any of the lands in this project are acquired in fee-simple, they would be managed according to the management plans of the associated public conservation land.



Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2016
Project Area (GIS acres)	102,989
Acres Acquired (GIS)	2,167
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	100,821

Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor Table 2

Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
lake-side sunflower	G1G2/S1S2
celestial lily	G2/S2
Florida beargrass	G3/S3
nodding pinweed	G3/S3
Bachman's Sparrow	G3/S3
Florida mountain-mint	G3/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3

There are 10 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Myakka Ranchlands](#)



## **Maytown Flatwoods**

Brevard County  
Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2010
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	7,156
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	2,231
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	4,925

\*Acreage acquired by donation to the St. Johns River Water Management District.

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring a conservation easement over the Maytown Flatwoods would advance several major Florida Forever goals: preserving 3,060 acres of strategic habitat; 1,189 acres of rare species habitat for wood storks and the Florida sandhill crane; 7,598 acres of land for creating ecological greenways; 2,080 acres of natural floodplain; and various priorities of land that contribute to surface-water protection. A conservation easement would also protect thousands of acres of water-recharge land for springs, sinks, and the aquifer.

### **Manager(s)**

The owner has expressed interest in preserving this land with a conservation easement, which would be monitored by the Office of Environmental Services (OES) of the Division of State Lands.

### **General Description**

The Maytown Flatwoods project is about 7,187 (GIS) acres with a tax assessed value of \$7,189,500 (2010). All but 379 acres are owned by the Miami Corporation or Swallowtail LLC. The Swallowtail property was purchased by Miami Corporation to assist Brevard County with their conservation goals.

The project is in northern Brevard County, adjacent to the Buck Lake Conservation Area which is managed by the St. Johns River Water Management District. Other conservation properties in the area include the Charles H. Bronson State Forest, Little Big Econ State Forest, Salt Lake Wildlife Management Area and the Seminole Ranch Conservation Area. Currently the property is under a long-rotation silvicultural management regime. The project is being offered as a less-than-fee acquisition.

Natural communities located within the project include wet prairie, depression marsh, basin marsh and swamp, hydric hammock, dome swamp, and pine plantation. Several listed species are likely to occur on the tract. These include the Florida black bear, American alligator, little blue heron, gopher tortoise, and white ibis.

In 1998, the project area was devastated by wildfires that consumed most of the timber on the tract. Following the 1998 wildfires, the tract was aerially seeded with slash pine creating an even-age stand that is approximately 10 years in age. Mechanical treatments to control the understory have been used in lieu of prescribed fire. Scattered across the tract are numerous dome swamps in various conditions. Cypress trees in some of the domes are being harvested.



### **Public Use**

When the project is acquired as a less-than-fee acquisition, there will likely not be any public access granted under the terms of the easement, except the already established Rails-to-Trails project that runs along an abandoned Florida East Coast Railway right-of-way.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 11, 2009 ARC recommended that this project be added to the 2010 Florida Forever list as a Less-than-Fee project. At the time, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$7,189,500.

A 4,800-acre conservation easement was donated to the St. Johns River Water Management District, Florida Audubon and Brevard County by Swallowtail LLC (a subsidiary of Miami Corp) to satisfy the Farmton Local Plan Agreement. Approximately 2,250 acres of that easement is within the boundary of Maytown Flatwoods. The property owner still manages the property and Brevard County, The Audubon Society and the St Johns River Water Management are co-grantees with shared monitoring rights.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$2,541,837.

### **Coordination**

The Nature Conservancy is considered a partner on this project. Brevard County's Environmentally Endangered Lands program may participate in the acquisition and management of the Swallowtail or Membrey parcel.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a proposed conservation easement or other less-than-fee interest, the project will be managed by the private landowner with restrictions. The purchase of the development rights, the prohibition of the further conversion of existing natural areas to more intensive uses and limited public access will likely be the primary focus of the conservation easement.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Manager***

The property will continue to be managed by the landowner with restrictions imposed by a negotiated conservation easement. The OES will be responsible for monitoring compliance with the terms and conditions of the easement unless otherwise noted.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Currently the property is under a long rotation silvicultural management regime. In 1998, the project area was devastated by wildfires that consumed most of the timber on the tract. Following the 1998 wildfires, the tract was aerially seeded with slash pine creating an even-age stand that is approximately 10 years in age. Mechanical treatments to control the understory have been used in lieu of prescribed fire.



Maytown Flatwoods Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2010
Project Area (GIS acres)	7,156
Acres Acquired (GIS)	2,231
at a Cost of	\$0*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	4,925

\*Acreage acquired by donation to the St. Johns River Water Management District.

Maytown Flatwoods Table 2

Maytown Flatwoods FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Celestial Lily	G2/S2
Pine Pinweed	G2/S2

There are 3 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Maytown Flatwoods](#)



## ***Middle Chipola River***

Calhoun and Jackson Counties  
Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1996*
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	14,205
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	2,124
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$828,600
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	12,080

\*Project combined with Waddell’s Mill Pond (1991) Dec. 1996

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Flowing through a landscape of farm fields, the Chipola River exposes the limestone bedrock of Jackson and Calhoun Counties on its way to join the Apalachicola River in a swampy wilderness. The Middle Chipola River project will protect remnants of the unique hardwood forests of this region for 30 miles along the high banks of the river, maintaining the water quality of the river; providing habitat for several rare plants and many rare animals, from mussels to turtles and cave-dwelling crayfish; helping to preserve the abundant archaeological remains in and along the river; and ensuring that the public will always have access to the river for fishing, swimming, and simple enjoyment of the beauty of this unique stream. The Florida National Scenic Trail, a cross-Florida hiking and non-motorized trail, is also planned to cross this project. The trail is a congressionally designated national scenic trail.

### **Manager(s)**

The Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Department of Environmental Protection, will manage the land next to the Florida Caverns State Park and a seven-mile stretch adjacent to “Look and Tremble Shoals.” Any conservation easements acquired in this project will be monitored by the Office of Environmental Services (OES) of the Division of State Lands (DSL). The Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWMD) will manage the properties to which they hold title.

### **General Description**

The project encompasses a strip of land on either side of the Chipola River from Florida Caverns State Park to State Road 20, almost 8,000 acres of mostly second-growth hardwood forest. The river is a major tributary and drainage basin of the Apalachicola River. The river itself has an interesting combination of alluvial and spring-run characteristics. Its high banks underlain by limestone support several rare plants, one of which is the globally imperiled ciliate-leaf chickseed. It is among eight plants of conservation concern on the site. Rare to imperiled animal species include alligator snapping turtle, at least four bivalve mollusks, five rare fishes, three rare salamanders, and Barbour’s map turtle. The project will help protect the water quality of the river (an Outstanding Florida Water and state canoe trail) and preserve public access to the river. Forty-three archaeological sites, mostly underwater scatters, are known from the project, and the potential for more is high. The scenic riverbanks are attractive for development and the river is vulnerable to intensive agriculture and mining.



## **Public Use**

The project will be managed as an addition to Florida Caverns State Park and as a canoe trail, with opportunities for canoeing, boating, fishing, hiking, and camping.

## **Acquisition Planning**

Middle Chipola 1996: Essential tracts are Land (acquired), Trammell (impasse), and Florida Public Utilities Co. (acquired). Waddell's Mill Pond: Essential tracts are Waddell Plantation ownership and smaller archaeologically significant parcels west and adjacent to Waddell Plantation. On October 30, 1996, LAMAC adopted criteria for establishing a Less-Than-Fee acquisition category: 1) resource value of the project/tract can be adequately protected through a less-than-fee instrument; 2) seller is willing to accept a less-than-fee-simple instrument and LAMAC has determined that the project's or site's acquisition objectives can be met by acquiring a less- than-fee interest; and 3) manager is willing to oversee a less-than-fee-simple instrument. In 1996, the Council combined the Middle Chipola project with the Waddell's Mill Pond project and added 170 acres to the Middle Chipola boundary. On 12/5/1996, the Council transferred the Rex Lumber/McRae (impasse), Trammell, Myers, Manor, Myrick and Waddell Plantation ownerships (3,633 acres) to the Less-Than- Fee category. None of the less-than-fee parcels have been acquired.

On February 11, 1999, the Council added 5 acres. The addition includes two entrances to the Hollow Ridge Cave system and is adjacent to other public land. On June 6, 2002 the Council combined the Less-Than-Fee Middle Chipola project with the Full Fee Middle Chipola project, and moved both projects to Group A. In 2002, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$5,788,661. In 2005, ARC moved the project to the Group B list.

On December 9, 2011 the Council placed the Middle Chipola River project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category.

On October 20, 2017 ARC amended the boundary of the project near US Highway 90, adding 6 acres, placing a single-ownership parcel near a popular access to the river completely within the boundary for future acquisition.

On August 24, 2018 ARC members voted to add four parcels, totaling 156 acres in Jackson County (81.2 acres, 23 acres, 32.5 acres and 19.5 acres), to the project. This surrounds the Peacock Bridge boat ramp. FNAI reports that this addition contributes to Ecological Greenways, Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas, Natural Floodplain Function, Surface Water Protection, and Aquifer Recharge. At least half (85 percent) contributes to FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities and Sustainable Forestry.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$34,740,129.

## **Coordination**

The NFWFMD has acquired portions of the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York (Waddell's Mill Pond project—approximately 705 acres within the project Phase II boundary), as well as approximately 1,217 acres east/southeast of the project connecting with the Florida Caverns State Park



and ultimately the Middle Chipola Project. The district will retain title to the Mutual Life Insurance Company parcels. There are no acquisition partners for the less-than-fee portion.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary objectives of management of the Middle Chipola River project are to conserve a corridor of natural communities along the Chipola River and to provide the public with controlled recreation access to the river. Achieving these will protect the unique collection of rare plants and animals, ranging from rare mussels and fish to cave crayfish and gray bats, in this part of the Apalachicola River basin. It will also help to protect the significant archaeological resources of the riverbed and shores.

The project should be managed under the single-use concept: management activities should be directed toward the preservation of resources. Consumptive uses such as hunting or logging should not be permitted immediately adjacent to the river. Managers should control public boat access to the river; thoroughly inventory the natural and archaeological resources of the river; burn fire-dependent pine flatwoods in a pattern mimicking natural lightning-season fires, using natural firebreaks or existing roads for control; reforest pine plantations along the river with original species; strictly limit timbering in natural hardwood forests adjacent to the river; and monitor management activities to ensure that they are actually protecting the water quality and scenic values of the river. Managers should limit the number and size of recreational facilities, such as boat ramps and camp sites, ensure that they do not harm the most sensitive resources, and site them in already disturbed areas when possible.

This project includes all the undeveloped land along the Chipola River from Florida Caverns State Park to State Road 20 and therefore has the configuration, location, and size to achieve its primary objectives.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

to define resource management and public use of the property will define the extent and placement of compatible infrastructure. The primary focus of any negotiated conservation easements will be protection of the floodplain along the Chipola River, maintenance of natural areas and control of invasive exotic plants.

#### ***Manager***

The DRP will manage the land next to the Florida Caverns State Park and a seven-mile stretch adjacent to “Look and Tremble Shoals.” Any conservation easements acquired by the DSL in this project will be monitored by the Office of Environmental Services. NFWFMD will manage any purchases to which they hold title.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The property will be a high need management area. Protection and perpetuation of the property’s resources, particularly as related to caverns, bats and restoration of logged areas, will be the primary emphasis. Compatible resource-based recreation is expected to be emphasized in the long-term.





***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Upon acquisition and assignment of that portion of the project to be managed by the DRP, as described under “Manager” above, short term management efforts will concentrate on site security, control of vehicular access and the development of a resource inventory and public-use plan. Public use will be allowed for low intensity, non-facility related outdoor recreation activities in the short term.

***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue is expected to be generated from this addition initially. After acquisition, it will probably be several years before any significant public facilities might be developed. The amount of any future revenue will depend on the nature and extent of public use identified in the management plan developed the property.

***Cooperators in management activities***

No cooperators are recommended for this tract. However, consultation with the NFWFMD on water related matters and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission on wildlife issues will be enlisted as needed.



Middle Chipola River Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1996*
Project Area (GIS acres)	14,205
Acres Acquired (GIS)	2,231
at a Cost of	\$828,600
Acres Remaining (GIS)	12,080

\*Project combined with Waddell's Mill Pond (1991) Dec. 1996

Middle Chipola River Table 2

Middle Chipola River FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Chipola Slabshell	G1/S1
ciliate-leaf tickseed	G1G2/S1
Miccosukee Mayfly	G1G2/S1S2
Gulf Moccasinshell	G2/S1
Rayed Creekshell	G2G3/S1
Oval Pigtoe	G2/S1S2
Shiny-rayed Pocketbook	G2/S1S2
Florida merrybells	G3/S1
Barbour's Map Turtle	G2/S2
Georgia Blind Salamander	G2/S2
Inflated Spike	G2/S2

There are 45 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Middle Chipola River](#)



## Mill Creek

Marion County  
Less-Than-Fee

### Project-at-a-Glance

<i>Placed on List</i>	2003
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	12,293
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	12,293

### Purpose for State Acquisition

Public acquisition of this project in the form of a conservation easement will contribute to the following Florida Forever goals: (1) Increase the protection of Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels – a conservation easement will preserve a working Florida landscape and protect existing natural areas from conversion to alternative uses. Existing wetlands will be enhanced through the prohibition of future harvesting of timber. The use of prescribed fire will be continued and recommendations for fire-frequency and fireline character will be provided. Additional structures and facilities on the parcel will be controlled through the terms of the conservation easement. (2) Increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources – approximately 49 percent of this property is managed for forest resources. A conservation easement will allow for continued forest management with the use of Best Management Practices and the continuation of prescribed burning; (3) Ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state – due to its proximity to the Orange Creek Restoration area, protection of this property from conversion will enhance and protect water quantity and flow to Orange Lake.

### Manager(s)

The Office of Environmental Services (OES), or its successor, will monitor the conservation easement unless otherwise noted.

### General Description

The Mill Creek proposal includes over 12,000 acres of land in northern Marion County. It is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition and is owned by four different entities, but it is controlled by the Moxon family. Several conservation lands lie within five miles of the Mill Creek property including Orange Lake, Lochloosa Lake, Ocklawaha River, Orange Creek Restoration Area, Lochloosa Wildlife Conservation Area, Black Sink Prairie, Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway and the Ocala National Forest. The Mill Creek property has been impacted by cattle and timber operations, including conversion to pasture, pine plantation and cypress harvesting. Two rare plants and eight rare animals are documented to occur on the property.



### **Public Use**

As a less-than-fee project, public resource-based recreation potential is severely limited. However, the eastern portion of the property is leased for hunting. There was no indication at the time of the field investigation that the owners would allow hunting by the general public. Willingness for other public uses was also not indicated.

The project, as offered, does not satisfy any of the year 2005 needs reflected in the 2000 Florida Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for the region. The resource-based recreation potential for the project, as offered, is low. However, it could potentially increase significantly, should public access and use of the land be allowed. Due to an indicated lack of general public access for hunting, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) advises that the hunting potential for this project is low.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 5, 2003, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) added the Mill Creek project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2004 Priority list. This less-than-fee acquisition, sponsored by the Conservation Real Estate Group, consisted of approximately 12,285 acres, multiple owners, and a 2002 tax assessed value of \$13,694,672. On January 27, 2005, ARC moved this project to Group B of the 2005 FF Annual Priority list. On June 3, 2005, ARC moved this project to Group A of the 2005 FF Interim Priority list. On December 14, 2007 ARC voted to move the Mill Creek project to Group B of the 2008 Florida Forever priority list.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed the Mill Creek project in the Less-than-Fee category of projects. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$27,246,267.

### **Coordination**

There are no acquisition partners at this time.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a conservation easement or less-than-fee interest, this project will be managed by the private landowner or landowners with restrictions. The purchase of the development rights, the prohibition of the further conversion of the existing natural areas to more intensive uses and limited public access will likely be the primary focus of the conservation easement.

### **Management Prospectus**

The OES, or its successor, is to ensure oversight of the conservation easement on this project.



Mill Creek Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2003</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>12,293</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>12,293</b>

Mill Creek Table 2

<b>Mill Creek FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Snowy Egret</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>
<b>Little Blue Heron</b>	<b>G5/S4</b>
<b>Tricolored Heron</b>	<b>G5/S4</b>
<b>White Ibis</b>	<b>G5/S4</b>

*There are 6 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Mill Creek](#)



## ***Millstone Plantation***

Leon County  
Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2001
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	134
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	78
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$862,000
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	56

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The proposal includes part of Lake McBride, which is reported to have low nutrient and pollutant levels and a nesting pair of bald eagles. According to the Nature Conservancy, the lakes of Leon County comprise one of the most important groups of solution lakes in the northern hemisphere. Most of these lakes hold sinkholes that breach the Floridian aquifer, so it is important that they are afforded some protection from runoff.

### **Manager(s)**

The Apalachee Land Conservancy would be responsible for the monitoring and enforcing the conservation easement.

### **General Description**

The property consists of a mosaic of vegetated communities, a deeply incised Seepage Stream, some open pasture and a portion of Lake McBride. It falls within the “Red Hills” physiographic region, which consists of pine-dominated uplands and numerous karst sinkholes and lakes. It ranges in elevation from 140 to 225 feet above sea level and is a critical recharge area for the Floridan aquifer. The seepage stream and karst lake are breeding, nesting and foraging areas for numerous wildlife species. The lands of Millstone Plantation are rich in archaeological sites recorded in The Division of Historic Resources Master Site File.

### **Public Use**

Public use of the project will be by invitation for environmental and cultural learning purposes on a limited basis. A limited walking trail exists throughout the project.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The project consists of approximately 134 acres and one owner. In 2001, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$69,970. The public access would include access for public education for school children, environmental researchers, organic agriculturist, artists and writers. The money from the conservation easement will go for management and outreach programs for the Millstone Institute. The entire parcel is essential.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Less-than-Fee category of projects.



The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$1,356,984.

### **Coordination**

The Trust for Public Lands will be the intermediary for acquisition of the conservation easement. On April 6, 2001, the Acquisition and Restoration Council placed this project on the new Florida Forever list.

### **Management Policy Statement**

Millstone Plantation is proposed as a less-than-fee acquisition; therefore, specific management activities and public access would be limited by the terms of the purchase. A conservation easement is sought to preclude the eventual development pressure from the Tallahassee area. The Millstone Institute of Preservation, Inc., a Florida not-for-profit, was founded in 1995 to promote the use of the property for educational purposes. The Institute has and will continue to sponsor scientific aquatic research of Lake McBride and its surrounding area. It is expanding its nature trails and implementing a management plan for the property that will include longleaf pine and native groundcover restoration on the uplands, wildlife habitat management, wetlands management and enhancement and the protection of the many historical century-old live oaks. Further archaeological investigations and surveys are also planned.

### **Management Prospectus**

The Millstone Plantation Florida Forever project encompasses nearly 134 acres in northwestern Leon County, at the southern edge of the Red Hills region. Millstone is a highly significant archaeological site containing Florida Master Site File sites showing a continuous pattern of settlement for over 10,000 years, including the Paleo-Indian, Early Archaic, Late Archaic, Deptford, Weeden Island, Fort Walton, Apalachee, Spanish Mission, Seminole, English, and Colonial periods. The Millstone Plantation House, an example of late 19th century Colonial revival architecture, and related structures and out-buildings, are also of great historical significance, eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Sites. The Millstone project includes significant shoreline on Lake McBride, (Class III. Waters of the State) one of the last unpolluted sinkhole or elastic upland lakes in Leon County, and Millstone Creek, a seepage stream, which form the headwaters of the Lake Lafayette Basin. Millstone encompasses significant recharge areas for the Floridan Aquifer. Also, the project contains a basin swamp and upland mixed forest and upland pine forests suitable for restoration. Primary goals of management of the Millstone Plantation project are: investigation, protection, interpretation, and educational activities for the site's archaeological resources; conservation and protection of and continued aquatic, biological, and geologic research into the waters of Lake McBride and Millstone Creek; conservation, protection, sustainable management and restoration of the upland pine forests; and historic preservation, restoration, and interpretation of the Millstone Plantation House and related structures.



### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Due to the site's unique archaeological resources representing a continuous pattern of human settlement and the importance of the Millstone Plantation House and related structures, the site may qualify for designation as a State Historical Site.

### ***Manager***

The Apalachee Land Conservancy was identified for monitoring and enforcing the conservation easement. The primary management goal of Millstone Plantation is continued protection, preservation, investigation, and interpretation of the property's rich archaeological resources and stabilization, preservation, and restoration of the Millstone Plantation House and related structures. The Institute will also continue efforts to foster the protection of the water quality of Lake McBride and Millstone Creek and continue aquatic research, as well as begin restoration of the project's natural upland communities. Central to these efforts is continuation of the Institute's public education activities and community outreach programs, including continued limited public access to the property for outdoor educational and recreational activities. The Millstone Institute will seek funding through both public and private (foundations, corporations, and individuals) grant sources to support management activities.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The greatest challenge facing the management of Millstone is the tremendous amount of archaeological resources on the property. Developing a plan for ongoing systematic survey, investigation, and interpretation of the site's archaeological resources will be essential. The proximity of highways and residential and commercial development to the site may pose fire and smoke management problems for restoration of Millstone's natural communities. Due to development pressure in the Lake McBride Basin, accelerating the timeline for aquatic research is important.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Archaeological surveys and investigation are ongoing; initial management activities should concentrate on identifying and researching these resources. In subsequent years, the Institute plans to implement a management plan for the property that will include longleaf pine and native groundcover restoration on the uplands, wildlife management, wetlands management, and enhancement and protection of the many century-old live oaks on the property. Restoration of natural communities will require eradication of exotic and pest plants (Chinese tallow, Japanese climbing fern, and tropical soda apple), as well as prescribed burning and re-vegetation. The Institute has and will continue to sponsor scientific aquatic research into Lake McBride. Existing nature trails on the property will be improved and expanded to enhance public access. The Institute will also continue and expand its existing public education programs, including traditional, sustainable, organic agricultural practices and North Florida farm arts, such as spinning and weaving. Plans will also be made for historically accurate and appropriate preservation and restoration of the Millstone Plantation House and related structures.





Millstone Plantation Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2001</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$862,000</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>56</b>

Millstone Plantation Table 2

<b>Millstone Plantation FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>

*There are 2 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Millstone Plantation](#)



## **Myakka Ranchlands**

DeSoto, Manatee and Sarasota Counties

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2007
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	40,873
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	9,511
<i>at a Cost of</i>	n/a*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	31,362

*Not acquired through Florida Forever.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

This project has multiple areas, on opposite sides of the Myakka River State Park, that protect a system of conservation areas, making a connection among state, county and non-profit conservation lands in southwest Florida. Acquiring these lands would increase the number of acres protected with fee-simple purchase (802 acres) and with alternatives to fee-simple acquisition (24,493 acres) and help build landscape size protection areas of more than 50,000 acres by adding to the existing 121,000 acres of conservation land already protecting the Myakka River and Charlotte Harbor Estuary. It would protect lands that are known to have rare plants and animals and protect waters of the state and functional wetlands. The Myakka Island Conservation Corridor ranches would build a landscape-sized protection area in the Myakka River and upstream of the Charlotte Harbor Estuary.

### **Manager(s)**

Sarasota County Natural Resources, a division of the Sarasota County government, is recommended as the manager of 802 acres of the project once it is acquired, with assistance and cooperation from the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and Myakka River State Park. The rest of the proposed project is recommended for less-than-fee acquisitions and therefore would be monitored through the Office of Environmental Services (OES), Division of State Lands (DSL).

### **General Description**

The original Myakka Ranchlands Florida Forever project had 18,737 (GIS) acres, consisting of three ownerships in two disjunct tracts: the Hi Hat Ranch in the northwest (10,770 acres) and the combined Walton and Longino Ranches in the southeast (7,969 acres).

On June 27, 2014 ARC added the proposed Myakka-Peace River Watershed Connector, which abuts it on the east side, as an amendment to the Myakka Ranchlands, adding 5,552 acres.

When ARC added the 7,564-acre Myakka Island Conservation Corridor proposal to the Myakka Ranchlands on December 12, 2014, that brought the total to 31,853 GIS acres.

The Hi Hat tract is about five miles east of the city limits of Sarasota in the northern part of Sarasota County. The Longino/Walton tract is about 13 aerial miles southeast of Hi Hat Ranch, between State Road 72 and I-75 in eastern Sarasota County. The eastern edge of the tract abuts the Lewis Longino



Preserve, a 3,895-acre conservation easement purchased by Sarasota County and the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) to protect regional water supplies. The Myakka Island Conservation Corridor consists of three ranches. Triangle Ranch (1,067 acres) and Sheps Island Ranch (723 acres) are along the Manatee River where Sarasota and Manatee counties join. Orange Hammock Ranch (5,774 acres) borders existing conservation lands on the DeSoto County line. The working ranches have cattle operations, sod farms, row crops, citrus groves, pine and cabbage palm harvesting, and hunting. About 90 percent of the land for the Myakka Island Conservation Corridor parcels is in various degrees of natural condition, with some improved pasture. The Hi Hat tract includes 2,500 acres of wastewater sprayfield owned by the City of Sarasota for which the owners have rights to purchase back from the City. The Hi Hat owners also retain a permit from the SWFWMD for withdrawal of 6-7 million gallons of groundwater per day at the ranch. The properties are crisscrossed with internal roads, access ways and ditches associated with ranch and farming operations. About half of the Hi Hat, Longino and Walton ranches have been converted to pasture, agriculture, or various uses such as impoundments, canals, roads, and buildings. The majority of these areas are improved pasture. The remaining natural areas support a mosaic of mesic flatwoods, depression and basin marshes, prairie and hydric hammocks. About 70 percent of the Myakka-Peace River Watershed Connector ranches are in natural condition. The quality of these natural communities is variable, depending upon the fire history and levels of physical disturbances or invasive exotic plant encroachments.

### **Public Use**

In the 802 acres within the Hi Hat Ranch to be managed by Sarasota County, some existing roads and trails may become multi-use trails for hiking and horseback riding. Such uses as camping, picnicking, hiking, and boating will be compatible with the protection of the area. Longino Ranch and Walton Ranch, the remainder of Hi Hat Ranch, and the ranches of the Myakka-Peace River Watershed Connector and the Myakka Island Conservation Corridor will likely not have any public access under the terms of their conservation easements. Without access there will not be any public-resource based outdoor recreation potential in these areas.

### **Acquisition Planning**

This project consists of several large tracts as well as large subdivided areas. Essential parcels include Sugarmill Woods (acquired), World Woods (acquired by the FFS), Florida Crushed Stone, Orange Meadow Corp./Seville (acquired), Blackwell (westernmost tract—acquired by the SWFWMD), Tooke's Lake Joint Venture, and other large hammock and sandhill parcels.

On March 10, 1995, the LAMAC approved adding 990 acres to the project boundary.

On December 14, 2007 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) voted to add the Myakka Ranchlands to the A list of Florida Forever projects. The application proposes a combination of full-fee and less-than-fee acquisition. Longino Ranch is less-than-fee; Hi-Hat is fee and/or less-than-fee; and Walton Ranch was proposed as fee simple, but the owner is willing to consider it as a less-than-fee acquisition.



On July 15, 2010 Sarasota County and SWFWMD in partnership purchased for \$22,559,100 fee simple (\$9,023,640) and as a conservation easement (\$13,535,460) 3,760 acres known as Walton Ranch. The partnership ownership interests are 100 percent fee and 10 percent CE for the County, and 90 percent CE for SWFWMD.

On August 19, 2010 SWFWMD and Sarasota County in partnership acquired Longino Ranch Conservation Easement (3,981 acres) for \$14,559,000 (Conservation Easement is held jointly by the District and County). This easement has a provision for public access to a recreational trail along the southern property boundary that if developed would connect public ownerships from the Myakka River to the Peace River. On September 27, 2011 SWFWMD and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in partnership purchased a CE (1,237 acres known as Horton Ranch) for \$2,230,000. In 2014 ARC voted to combine the proposed Myakka-Peace River Watershed Connector, originally another Florida Forever proposal, with the Myakka Ranchlands project.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Less-Than-Fee category of projects.

On December 12, 2014, ARC added the proposed Myakka Island Conservation Corridor as an addition to the Myakka Ranchlands, making the project a total of 31,853 GIS acres.

At the August 2015 ARC meeting the 543-acre Murphy Marsh parcel was added to the Myakka Ranchlands Florida Forever project.

At the October 2015 meeting, upon completion of full proposal reviews, ARC formally added the 1,356-acre Myakka Addition Lands in Sarasota County and the 2,659-acre Upper Myakka Watershed in Manatee County to the Florida Forever project list, then by motion, added the acreage within the boundaries of those two projects into the existing Myakka Ranchlands Florida Forever project to include.

At the December 2016 ARC meeting, the 4,530-acre Blackbeard's Ranch proposal in southern Manatee County was approved for the Florida Forever list, then added to the Myakka Ranchlands project for its water protection benefits and for its high potential for restoration. The Blackbeard's Ranch addition adjoins Myakka River State Park and is about 10 miles east of Sarasota. within the Myakka watershed. It includes the headwaters of two important sloughs in the watershed—Deer Prairie Slough and Mud Slough—that both run south through adjacent conservation lands. This area is home to the Florida black bear, the burrowing owl, the eastern indigo snake and the roseate spoonbill. After this most recent addition in 2016, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$85,657,692.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$126,172,982.

### **Coordination**

Acquisition of the Myakka Ranchlands would be a shared acquisition along with Sarasota County and the SWFWMD. It is already part of the SWFWMD Florida Forever Work Plan. It abuts the Myakka River State Park. The rest of the project is recommended for less-than-fee acquisitions and therefore



would be monitored through the Office of Environmental Services (OES), Division of State Lands (DSL).

### **Management Policy Statement**

Principal purposes of the project include protection of biodiversity, protection of the quality and natural functions of the land and water systems, availability of sufficient quantities of water and, within the portion to be managed by Sarasota County, provision of resource based public recreational and educational opportunities. Programs would be oriented towards conservation and protection of wildlife species, and careful control of public uses. The primary land management goals for the management of the tract are to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; to integrate compatible human use; and to insure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. This ecosystem and multiple use approach will guide the management activities on this project.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project's size, diversity, and location make it desirable for use and management compatible with the adjacent state park. The majority of the acreage of this project consists of isolated wetlands in oak hammock and improved pasture supporting an active cattle operation. Approximately 20 percent of the proposal has been converted to cattle operations and spray irrigation. The improved pastures total approximately 160 acres with multiple grass species planted in them. Hi Hat Ranch, has been managed for cattle for over 40 years with pastures devoid of most native groundcover and under story species.

#### ***Manager***

Sarasota County Natural Resources, a division of the Sarasota County government, is recommended as the manager of the 802 acres of the project to be purchased in full once it is acquired, with assistance and cooperation from the Southwest Florida Water Management District and Myakka River State Park. The rest of the project, 31,051 acres in five parcels, is recommended as a less-than-fee acquisition and therefore would be monitored through the Office of Environmental Services, Division of State Lands.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Much of the project's former dry prairie and pine flatwoods have been altered by cattle operations and spray irrigation fields. Hi Hat Ranch, will fence the 802 acres and remove the aboveground spray-irrigation equipment at no cost to the project. Hydrological alterations in the form of ditches will be analyzed for potential restoration. Such areas may be restored with native ground covers and canopy. The level of management intensity and related management costs is expected to be minimal to obtain the necessary information and resources to restore and manage this system compatible with the state park. Once this information is obtained and the resources are available, long-term management costs are expected to be low to maintain this area like the adjacent state park.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the fee-simple portion of the project is acquired and assigned for management to Sarasota County, existing trails will be evaluated for nature-based recreation use. After the installation of the fence and



removal of the above ground spray irrigation equipment by Hi Hat Ranch at no cost to the project primitive trails will be opened to hikers. Initial and intermediate management efforts will concentrate on resource inventory, providing site security, assessing public and fire management access, and hydrological restoration potential. Inventories of the site's natural resources, its threatened and endangered flora and fauna, will be conducted to provide a basis for the formulation of a management plan. The numerous roads throughout the property necessitate the development of a road plan to identify which roads will continue to be used for vehicular access by the public, which are required for administrative use, and which are unnecessary for management or access and should be closed. Steps will be taken to ensure that the public is provided appropriate access while simultaneously affording protection of sensitive resources.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The revenue-generating potential of the portion managed by Sarasota County is expected to be moderately low. Some future revenues might come from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities, if such projects could be economically developed. No capital project expenditures will be needed on the full-fee parcel managed by Sarasota County, but land management activities such as prescribed fire, vegetative restoration, and primitive public access/use will need to be funded. As more information is gathered and an analysis of the site is completed, Sarasota County intends to include project funds contingent on availability.

***Cooperators in management activities***

Sarasota County proposes to manage the 802-acre section of the project like the adjacent state park and will carry out management activities and coordinate public access and use. Sarasota County will cooperate with and seek the assistance of Myakka River State Park, the SWFWMD and interested parties as appropriate.



Myakka Ranchlands Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2007
Project Area (GIS acres)	40,873
Acres Acquired (GIS)	9,511
at a Cost of	n/a*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	31,362

*Not acquired through DSL Florida Forever program.*

Myakka Ranchlands Table 2

Myakka Ranchlands FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Florida Burrowing Owl	G4T3/S3
Crested Caracara	G5/S2
Roseate Spoonbill	G5/S2
Black-crowned Night-heron	G5/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3
Snowy Egret	G5/S3
Little Blue Heron	G5/S4
White Ibis	G5/S4
Tricolored Heron	G5/S4

*There are 12 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Myakka Ranchlands](#)



## ***Natural Bridge Creek***

Walton County

Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2012
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	1,797
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	1,797

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquisition would provide a buffer for Natural Bridge Creek, protect surface water, functional wetlands and aquifer recharge, and preserve underrepresented natural communities. The local community used the creek as a recreational site until recently, when the landowner became concerned about liability issues. The county would like to manage the area around the creek as a county park, compatible with conservation purposes.

This proposal meets the following public purposes as identified in 259.032(3) Florida Statutes, to varying degrees: (d) To conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, if the protection and conservation of such lands is necessary to enhance or protect significant surface water, groundwater, coastal, recreational, timber, or fish or wildlife resources which cannot otherwise be accomplished through local and state regulatory programs; (e) To promote water resource development that benefits natural systems and citizens of the state; (g) To provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural resource based recreation and other outdoor recreation on any part of any site compatible with conservation purposes; and, (h) To preserve significant archaeological or historic sites.

### **Manager(s)**

The 62-acre creek area would be managed by Walton County if acquired in fee. The balance of the property, 1,735 acres, would be managed by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), perhaps as a gopher tortoise preserve.

### **General Description**

The project boundary includes 1,797 acres (calculated through GIS; 1,812 as reported in the initial proposal) in northern Walton County along the Alabama state line. It is mostly a contiguous piece of property with one outlying tract about 885 feet away. The property is situated roughly mid-way between the Yellow and Choctawhatchee rivers.

Natural Bridge Creek, a sand-bottomed seepage stream, flows northeastward across the property before entering Alabama. Much of its tributary seepage arises within the property, although two streams drain from uplands just to the south. The stream temporarily sinks at Natural Bridge in the northeastern





disjunct tract, and then rises as a small “spring” reported to be the westernmost sink/rise formation in the Floridan Aquifer. The rise is a locally popular recreational site (currently closed for liability reasons) but also was used by both Native American and 19th century historic cultures.

### **Public Use**

Walton County has provided a management prospectus for 62 acres of this site for recreation if it is acquired in fee simple. FWC has prepared a management prospectus for the balance, more than 1,700 acres in pinelands.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The project was submitted for acquisition in fee or conservation easement by the landowners, Mr. Benton Hester and Ms. Judith Hester. Their family has managed it as pinelands since World War II.

On August 17, 2012 the current project was presented to ARC and accepted for review. It was added to the Florida Forever list of Critical Natural Lands projects on December 14, 2012. After the most recent boundary change in 2012, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$1,880,000.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$891,983.

### **Coordination**

There is a possibility that Walton County could provide some of the funding toward the acquisition of the Natural Bridge Creek Park. At the time of this project’s approval however, the Board of County Commissioners has committed only to using revenue they have set aside for the development of the park once it has been acquired. There has also been discussion of some participation from the federally funded Forest Legacy program.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary management goals for the portion managed by the county as the Natural Bridge Park include restoring and protecting the spring and creek, providing public access and limited facilities for recreation, managing and controlling exotic invasive species, protecting any existing cultural or historical resources and protecting habitat for imperiled species. Other recreational activities that could take place on this parcel to a limited degree are hiking, nature studies, picnicking and interpretation of archaeological and historic sites. (Evidence of an old creekside grist mill and historic turpentine activities are present.)

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

As well as its recreational value, much of the site retains the “park-like” characteristic of longleaf pine forest with an abundance of native ground cover. Many rare, imperiled and species of special concern have been documented on site including gopher tortoise and bluenose shiner. While specific species



densities are unknown, the property could potentially serve as a gopher tortoise recipient or mitigation site due to its high-quality habitat.

***Manager***

Walton County for the Natural Bridge Creek area, and FWC for the remaining acreage.

***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Most of the property has never been converted to cropland or undergone commercial forestry type rotations with clear-cut, site preparation, and herbicide applications. The sink/rise formation of Natural Bridge Creek has been disturbed for many years due to its popularity as a local swimming hole and the road that crosses the natural bridge itself. A spring stabilization report (NFWFMD 2008) lists previous agricultural practices and road erosion as sources of sediment in the creek system.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

A management plan would be developed by FWC describing the management goals and objectives necessary to implement future resource management. The management plan would establish the current and future roles of cooperating entities including governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders. Long-range plans would stress ecosystem management and the protection and management of focal, species of special concern, rare and imperiled species. Historic analysis of natural communities and vegetation types may be conducted if deemed necessary. Quantified vegetation management objectives shall be developed. The FWC shall assess the condition of wildlife resources and provide planning support to enhance management of focal species and recovery of imperiled species on the NBCFFP. Use of prescribed fire and other essential resource management activities have been implemented by the landowner to maintain and restore natural communities and vegetation types to benefit native wildlife resources.

***Revenue-generating potential***

Revenue from conservation lands can include sales of various permits and recreational user fees, and ecotourism activities, if such projects could be economically developed. If needed, thinning operations within the longleaf pine forests to improve or reset the basal area consistent with the target for this forest community type and the species that occur there may generate additional revenues. Area regulations would be developed to identify the necessary and required permits, fees and regulations. The initial non-recurring (first year only) start-up costs for the pinelands of the NBCFFP are estimated to be \$289,920.00, which includes public access and infrastructure and fixed capital outlays necessary for management. Optimal management of the area would require one fulltime equivalent (FTE) position to optimally manage the area. Salary requirements for these FTE positions, as well as those of other needed FWC staff, and costs to operate and manage the project are reflected in the following cost estimate. All land legislative appropriations management funding is dependent upon annual.

***Cooperators in management activities***

If this project is acquired and leased to FWC for management, FWC will cooperate with other Federal, State and local governmental agencies including Walton County, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,



U.S. Department of Agriculture, Florida Forest Service, Department of Environmental Protection, Northwest Florida Water Management District, and others in management of the property.



Natural Bridge Creek Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2012
Project Area (GIS acres)	1,797
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	1,797

Natural Bridge Creek Table 2

Natural Bridge Creek FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3

There are 2 rare species associated with the project.

Natural Bridge Creek Table 3

Management Cost Summary: Agency	Expenditure	Priority
<b>Resource Management:</b>		
Exotic Species Control	\$4,476	(1)
Prescribed Burning	\$9,585	(1)
Cultural Resource Management	\$399	(1)
Timber Management	\$616	(1)
Hydrological Management	\$4,059	(1)
Other (Restoration, Enhancement, Surveys, Monitoring, etc.)	\$50,120	(1)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$69,255</b>	
<b>Administration:</b>		
General Administration	\$1,504	(1)
<b>Support:</b>		
Land Management Planning	\$2,446	(1)
Land Management Reviews	\$362	(3)
Training/Staff Development	\$435	(1)
Vehicle Purchase	\$7,556	(2)
Vehicle Operation and Maintenance	\$4,458	(1)
Other (Technical Reports, Data Management, etc.)	\$4,113	(1)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$19,370</b>	
<b>Capital Improvements:</b>		
Facility Maintenance	\$10,546	(1)
<b>Visitor Services/Recreation:</b>		



<b>Management Cost Summary: Agency</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Priority</b>
<b>Information/Education/Operations</b>	<b>\$6,650</b>	<b>(1)</b>
<b>Law Enforcement:</b>		
<b>Resource Protection</b>	<b>\$1,395</b>	<b>(1)</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$108,720</b>	

Priority Schedule: (1) Immediate (annual), (2) Intermediate (3-4 years), (3) Other (5+years)

[Map\(s\): Natural Bridge Creek](#)



## ***North Waccasassa Flats***

Gilchrist County

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2018
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	14,153
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	14,153

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Setting up a conservation easement over the 14,153 acres of the North Waccasassa Flats in Gilchrist County would boost the Florida Forever goals of preserving strategic habitat and rare-species habitat, protect the headwaters of a tributary to the Santa Fe River, protect the natural floodplain function of 9,585 acres in this area and protect some 7,358 acres of functioning wetland systems. The entire 14,153-acre project is a groundwater-recharge area.

### **Manager(s)**

The Lyme Timber Company has expressed interest in preserving this land with a conservation easement, which would be monitored by the Office of Environmental Services (OES) of the Division of State Lands. The periodic monitoring would confirm continued compliance with the goals of the conservation easement. Other monitoring options may be available if, in the future, acquisition partners are found.

### **General Description**

The North Waccasassa Flats property is a Florida Forever “less than-fee” proposal of 14,153 acres in Gilchrist County. The property is owned by the Lyme Timber Company and is bordered on the north by Loncala, Inc. and other silviculture and agriculture-oriented landowners. The east and west boundaries consist of numerous rural residential and agricultural properties. The southern boundary is a livestock operation on the west side and County Road 232 along the east half. The property is also bisected by County Road 340. Important established conservation areas nearby include Fort White Wildlife and Environmental Area to the north and Bell Ridge Longleaf Wildlife and Environmental Area to the west. There are also numerous State Parks, County Parks, and private conservation easements along the Santa Fe River to the north and the Suwannee River to the west. Most of the project area is completely undeveloped though there are many miles of unpaved roads servicing forestry and hunting activities. The project area is also crossed by a highway, a former rail line, one newly constructed pipeline and by utility transmission corridors.

### **Public Use**

As a conservation easement, this provides for no additional public recreational and educational opportunities, and it would not assist in the completion of the Florida National Scenic Trail. It does not increase the number of archeological sites protected or preserved for public use because the sites would



not be preserved for public use, but, the easement would increase the number of sites under state oversight.

### **Acquisition Planning**

This area has been considered for conservation projects in the past, including a 1980s proposal under the CARL program for a 56,000-acre State Forest. At that time the landowner did not want to sell in a phased schedule. The Suwannee River Water Management District also proposed a planned 34,000-acre project overlapping this area.

On October 31, 2017 the Conservation Fund sponsored the 14,153-acre proposal for the North Waccasassa Flats, and on April 20, 2018 ARC voted to add this proposal to the Florida Forever list.

The tax assessed value for the acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$28,851,636.

### **Coordination**

This area has also been considered for acquisition through the Rural and Family Lands program and by the St. Johns River Water Management District, which means there may be partnership opportunities.

### **Management Policy Statement**

This project would be managed by the landowner as a conservation easement. Periodic monitoring of the site's management to confirm continued compliance with the conditions of the easement would be coordinated by the Florida DEP Division of State Lands, Office of Environmental Services, though other monitoring options may become available if partnerships develop for acquisition.

### **Management Prospectus**

The Office of Environmental Services of the Division of State Lands would be responsible for periodic monitoring of the property to ensure compliance with the conditions of the conservation easement.



North Waccasassa Flats Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>14,153</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>14,153</b>

North Waccasassa Flats Table 2

<b>North Waccasassa Flats FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Swallow-tailed Kite</b>	<b>G5/S2</b>

[Map\(s\): North Waccasassa Flats](#)





## ***Northeast Florida Blueway***

Duval, Flagler and St. Johns Counties  
Climate Change Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2001
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	27,891
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	16,040*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$32,438,430**
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	11,850

*\*Acquisition includes lands owned by public entities and NGO's. \*\*Money spent includes funds spent by the Board of Trustees (current) and acquisition partners (requires updating).*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Public acquisition of this project will contribute to the following Florida Forever goals: (1) Increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels – helps to maintain shoreline plant communities on the Tolomato & Matanzas rivers, benefiting the manatees that spend the warm season in these water; (2) Increase the amount of open space available in urban areas – serves as a vital connection in the Statewide System of Greenways and Trails; (3) Increase natural resource-based public recreation and educational opportunities – offers many resource-based recreation opportunities both directly and indirectly: fishing, canoeing, bicycling, and camping, to name a few; (4) Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state – connectivity with other areas contribute to ongoing governmental efforts to protect and restore the regional land and water; and (5) Increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources – areas observed within the Rayonier property that are capable of producing pine timber products have been site prepared and planted.

### **Manager(s)**

The City of Jacksonville, the Florida Forest Service (FFS) of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACCS), and the Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

### **General Description**

This project is composed of many publicly and privately-owned uplands and wetlands along both sides of the Intracoastal Waterway, the Tolomato and Matanzas rivers and selected tributaries, from the Duval County line south to the Flagler County line. Marshlands, open water, and small islands of shrub and hammock vegetation are 92 percent of the public lands. The intention of the project is to connect existing natural areas and greenspace to form a conservation lands corridor along the north-south waterway. It is adjacent to the following managed areas: Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (several WMD Conservation Areas included therein), Faver-Dykes State Park, Guana River State Park, Deep Creek State Forest, and Ft. Matanzas National Monument.



## **Public Use**

This project would support primitive camping opportunities with canoeing and kayaking taking place within the waterway and associated creeks. Some of the larger parcels may have potential for archaeological interpretation and nature study trails, depending on the ability of the public to gain access. The DRP proposes to manage the St. Johns County portion north of Faver-Dykes State Park and south of a haul road between US Highway 1 and a spoil site on the Matanzas River. This section of the project contains about 5,000 acres. As a part of Faver-Dykes State Park, hunting would not be allowed. The property would expand the quality and quantity of recreational activity at the park including bicycling, hiking, horseback riding, camping (RV and primitive camping), environmental education, and picnicking.

The FFS proposes to manage the remainder of the project under a multiple-use management regime consistent with the State Forest system. A portion of the project will become part of the Deep Creek State Forest, managed for multiple uses including, but not limited to, timber management and restoration, low impact recreational opportunities, and protecting archeological and historic sites.

## **Acquisition Planning**

On January 25, 2001, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) added the Northeast Florida Blueway – Phase I project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2001 Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition proposal, located in Duval County and known as Pablo Creek, was sponsored by the City of Jacksonville (Preservation Project Jacksonville). It consisted of approximately 6,943 acres, multiple owners (private & public), and a 1998 taxable value of \$15,700,000 on the 4,867 acres in private ownerships. The entire project was designated as essential.

On December 6, 2001, the ARC approved Phase II, also known as Tolomato & Matanzas Rivers, to the project boundary. The fee-simple addition in St. Johns County consisted of approximately 27,929 acres, multiple owners (private & public), and a 2001 taxable value of \$18,610,780 on the 17,834 acres in private ownerships. St. Johns County sponsored this addition. The essential parcels were designated as Rayonier Timberlands, Ponce de Leon Resort, Flagler Development, Roberts, Rayland, Wadsworth, and Swan Development.

On August 15, 2003, the ARC approved two additions to the project boundary. The Office of Coastal & Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA) sponsored a 20.26-acre addition with a single owner, Jacoby Development Inc., two parcels, and a 2002 taxable value of \$2,955,714. This fee-simple addition, located in St. Johns County, was added to Phase II. St. Johns County sponsored a 70-acre addition with a single owner, Marine Park Properties, LLC, multiple parcels, and a 2002 tax assessed value of \$8,400,000. This fee-simple addition is in Flagler County.

On October 13, 2006, the ARC approved a redesign of the project boundary. A total of 2,000 acres no longer suitable for conservation were removed from the project, 180 in Duval County and 1,820 in St. Johns County, reducing the total project size to 32,564 acres. The updated total includes lands in public



ownership and acres acquired. Previous project area estimates did not include lands in public ownership. After the time of the most recent project redesign in 2006, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$30,059,986.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Climate Change Lands list of projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$369,473,375.

### **Coordination**

The City of Jacksonville is an acquisition partner in Phase I, in Duval County. The city has contacted FEMA and they may contribute \$250,000 towards acquisition. Florida Communities Trust has already contributed acquisition funds with the City for several parcels, the SJRWMD has purchased some conservation easements and the Jacksonville Transportation Authority has mitigation funds to contribute towards acquisition. The Trust for Public Land will be the intermediary for negotiations.

Portions of Phase II, in St. Johns County, will likely be acquired through other conservation programs. St. Johns County, the Florida Communities Trust Program and the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) may be partners on portions of the project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

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 the state or a larger geographic area. To conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species. To conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources. Finally, to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The lands in Phase I are rapidly disappearing as Duval County grows. The Preservation Project, the city's land acquisition program, seeks to protect and preserve the existing habitat and waterway as it exists today. It is the goal of the City of Jacksonville to manage this project to conserve, protect or restore important ecosystems while providing opportunities for natural-resource-based recreation. The City of Jacksonville proposes to manage the lands in accordance with the standards of the Acquisition and Restoration Council.

Phase II is of a size and diversity that makes it desirable for use and management as a state forest. Management by the FFS as a state forest is contingent upon acquiring fee simple title to the parcels of interest to FFS. The portion of the project of interest for management by the DRP is largely disturbed land that has been managed for silviculture. While much restoration work will be required over time, the quality of the property when restored will make it suitable for state park purposes.



### ***Manager***

The City of Jacksonville will manage that portion of the project within Duval County. The DRP proposes to manage that portion of the Northeast Florida Blueway – Phase II project, approximately 5,000 acres, lying north of Faver-Dykes State Park, south of a haul road from US 1 to a spoil site on the Matanzas River, east of US 1 and west of the Matanzas River. The Florida Forest Service (FFS) proposes to manage the Rayonier parcel north of the spoil haul road (approximately 4,000 acres) plus two additional parcels, one adjoining Deep Creek State Forest and an adjoining Florida Natural Areas Inventory Addition (approximately 2,500 acres).

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Initial management efforts of Phase I by the City of Jacksonville will concentrate on site security, resource inventory, removing trash, and having limited public access to the property. Steps will be taken to ensure that the public is provided appropriate access while simultaneously protecting sensitive resources. Intensive restoration will be needed on the portion of Phase II managed by DRP to restore natural communities disturbed by timber operations. Intensity of restoration will be dictated by study of the site. Any immediate action, such as prescribed burning, would increase the early intensity of management. The lands bordering the river are in relatively good shape and will not require intensive management.

The portions of Phase II managed by FFS can be restored with the help of carefully prescribed fires and hydrologic restoration. The use of fire must be carefully applied because of the fuel load and type of fuel in this forest system. An inventory of the forest roads in this area would determine which stay open for public use, which would be used for management, and which would be closed.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Jacksonville's land-acquisition program, Preservation Project Jacksonville, will be responsible for developing and implementing the management plans for Phase I. The Preservation Project set aside \$950,000 to hire a program manager to develop and implement management plans. As properties are acquired, the City will first inventory natural resources and develop a plan to protect and restore resources, including removing invasive and exotic species, before developing access plans. The DRP plans for its portion of Phase II that, upon fee title acquisition, public access will be provided for low-intensity, non-facility outdoor recreation. First year management will concentrate on site security, natural and cultural resource protection, and developing a plan for long-term public use and resource management.

The FFS timetable for management of the remainder of Phase II also provides initial public access for diverse, low-intensity outdoor recreation. Management would be carried out by the FFS Bunnell District until additional personnel were available for resource management and restoration activity. Initial and intermediate management will concentrate on site security, public and resource management access, prescribed fire, reforestation, and removing trash.



### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Phase II, the portion to be added to Faver-Dykes State Park, will not initially make any significant revenue for the DRP. After acquiring and adding the land to Faver-Dykes State Park, it will probably be several years before significant public use facilities are developed. The amount of revenue generated will depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities developed. The FFS plans to conduct timber sales as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystems. These sales will primarily be from merchantable pine stands and provide a variable revenue depending on a variety of factors. The condition of the timber stands on the property is such that the revenue generating potential is expected to be moderate.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

Although not required, the City of Jacksonville commits to submitting management plans for city-controlled properties in the Blueway to the Acquisition and Restoration Council for review and comment, even though properties may have been acquired with other sources. Doing so will ensure that the Preservation Project takes a system-wide approach to managing Blueway properties.

In Phase II, DRP will consult other federal, state, and local government agencies, as appropriate, to further resource management, recreational and educational opportunities and developing the property for state park purposes. FFS plans to cooperate with, and seek the assistance of, local government entities, interested parties as appropriate and the Florida Natural Areas Inventory. The FFS also intends to coordinate the recreational use of the Rayonier parcel with the DRP because of the potential for a recreation trail on the eastern portion of the property. The FFS will work with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) in game and non-game management and related public use of the property.

The project also includes a substantial amount of property owned by other government agencies. It is not the intent that the City or State acquire these properties. However, it is hoped that the Blueway boundary will be the catalyst for a voluntary, joint management approach to publicly owned lands within the corridor. Other agencies that own lands within the Blueway include the U.S. Navy, the National Park Service, Florida Inland Navigation District, the cities of Jacksonville Beach and Atlantic Beach, the City of Jacksonville, the Jacksonville Electric Authority and the St. Johns River Water Management District.



Northeast Florida Blueway Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2001
Project Area (GIS acres)	27,891
Acres Acquired (GIS)	16,040*
at a Cost of	\$32,438,430**
Acres Remaining (GIS)	11,850

\*Acquisition includes lands owned by public entities and NGO's. \*\*Money spent includes funds spent by the Board of Trustees (current) and acquisition partners (requires updating).

Northeast Florida Blueway Table 2

Northeast Florida Blueway FNAI Elements	Score
Manatee	G2/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
coastal vervain	G3/S3
Wood Stork	G4/S2
yellow hibiscus	G4G5/S2
American Oystercatcher	G5/S2
Roseate Spoonbill	G5/S2
Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake	G4/S3
Least Tern	G4/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3
Osprey	G5/S3S4

There are 17 rare species associated with the project.

Northeast Florida Blueway Table 3a

Management Cost Summary (Phase II): DRP	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$0	\$29,000
OPS	\$25,000	\$8,000
Expense	\$18,000	\$12,000
OCO	\$28,000	\$0
FCO	\$20,000	\$0
Total	\$81,000	\$49,000



Northeast Florida Blueway Table 3b

<b>Management Cost Summary (Phase II): FFS</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>	<b>not provided</b>
<b>Salary (3 FTEs)</b>	<b>\$79,518</b>	<b>not provided</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$215,000</b>	<b>not provided</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$37,800</b>	<b>not provided</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$333,318</b>	<b>not provided</b>

Northeast Florida Blueway Table 4

<b>Management Cost and Revenue Sources (Phase I): Northeast Florida Blueway</b>	<b>Administration</b>
<b>Management Plans</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>
<b>Security</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>
<b>Invasion/exotics control</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>
<b>One-time capital outlay</b>	<b>\$2,500,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,750,000</b>

*Projected annual cost (FY 2001)*

[Map\(s\): Northeast Florida Blueway](#)





## ***Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve***

Clay, Duval and Nassau Counties  
Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2002
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	146,348
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	62,619*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$141,087,558*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	83,729

*\*Includes acreage and expenditures by the City of Jacksonville, JEA and SJRWMD.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Public acquisition of this project will contribute to the following Florida Forever goals: (1) Increase the protection of Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels – known to harbor four FNAI-listed species of vascular flora and four rare animals; (2) Increase the amount of open space available in urban areas – conserve spaces suitable for greenways or outdoor recreation that are compatible with conservation purposes; (3) Increase natural resource-based public recreation and educational opportunities – camping, picnicking, nature appreciation, hiking, and horseback riding are possible; and (4) Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state – 75-80 percent of land is disturbed with restoration a primary objective.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Forest Service/FFS of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The City of Jacksonville is manager for the 172-acre Jacksonville-Baldwin Rail Trail.

### **General Description**

This project describes a northeast-southwest diagonal along the west side of Duval County, stretching from the Nassau River north of Jacksonville to Trail Ridge in Clay County, near the town of Lawtey. Another section of the project makes a north-south connection about 12 miles long, between the Camp Blanding Military Reservation and the Etoniah Creek State Forest. About 75 percent of this land is used, or has been used, for silviculture. It also includes mesic flatwoods, cypress and hardwood swamp, sandhills and associated plant communities.

### **Public Use**

The FFS will promote recreation and environmental education in the natural environment. There is a possibility of an intermediate and long-term need for some type of developed recreation facilities. If such facilities are developed, the use of low-impact, rustic facilities will be stressed. If an organized recreation area is desired, it will be assessed and evaluated to minimize any possible adverse effects on the natural environment. Unnecessary roads, firelines and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned and/or restored to the greatest extent practical.





## **Acquisition Planning**

On December 6, 2001, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) recommended the Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve project for Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2002 Priority list. This fee-simple and less-than-fee acquisition, located in Clay, Duval and Nassau Counties, and sponsored by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the City of Jacksonville, and the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), consisted of approximately 132,450 acres, more than 150 landowners, and a 2001 taxable value of \$50,158,195. The following 37 ownerships were identified as essential: Gilman, Jackson, Carter, Owen, Nemours, Miller, Bostwick, Klieg, Bullock, 1st Bank & Trust, Rayonier, International Paper, Motes, Boyd, South Regional Industrial Realty, East Fiftone Partners, Monticello Drugs, St. Joe, Barnett Bank Trustee, Anheuser-Busch, Inc., Travelers Ins., Foster, Tison, Castleton, Wright, Buck, Logan, Higgenbotham, Betz, Ogilvie, Milne, Kaleel & Roberts, Grey, Sythe, Pharr, Wilkinson, and Helmer. On June 6, 2003, the ARC approved a 506-acre addition, known as the Norfolk Southern property, to the project boundary in Duval County. The fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by TNC, consisted of a single owner, Southern Region Industrial Realty Inc., and had a 2002 taxable value of \$408,700. On December 5, 2003, the ARC approved a 7,043-acre addition, known as the Four Creeks Forest tract, to the project boundary in Nassau County. The fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by the SJRWMD, consisted of one landowner, Rayonier Timberlands Operating Co. LP, and a 2002 taxable value of \$1,478,838.

On December 3, 2004, the ARC approved a 3,500-acre addition, known as the Bull Creek tract, to the project boundary in Clay County. The fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by the SJRWMD, consisted of one landowner, Ventura LLC, and a taxable value of \$760,646.

On June 30, 2006, the Board of Trustees purchased 1,651 acres within the Florida Forever project boundary.

On February 16, 2007, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 2,665-acre addition to the Bull Creek portion of the project boundary. It was sponsored by the SJRWMD, consisted of one landowner, 1621 Venture II LLC, nine parcels, and a taxable value of \$445,189. The FFS will manage these essential parcels. After the most recent boundary change in 2007, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$30,699,048.

On November 5, 2010 DSL purchased 15 acres (Rayonier Forest Resources, L.P.--\$18,108 with FF funds) for FFS to manage. On April 25, 2011, 3.95 acres in Four Creeks State Forest/Pacett) were donated (valued \$2,925). FFS to manage.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever projects.

On February 16, 2018 ARC voted to expand the boundary of the project to include approximately 300 acres in Nassau County in the Studdard Tract, a partial inholding within the Four Creeks State Forest. ARC also voted to add a parcel to the Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve during the August 2018 meeting. This parcel, also an inholding in the Four Creeks State Forest, was described as



61 acres in Nassau County, near Highway A1A, but FNAI concluded it was 52 acres because some of the property is already within the project boundary.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$1,069,923,950.

### **Coordination**

In 1992 the 172-acre Jacksonville-Baldwin Rail Trail was acquired with Florida Greenways & Trails funds. This trail which meanders through the project is managed by the City of Jacksonville. The SJRWMD is an acquisition partner in areas of the project to help protect the multiple creeks and rivers. The National Guard Bureau through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is an acquisition partner in areas of the project to help buffer and prevent encroachment of Camp Blanding. TNC, City of Jacksonville, Duval County, FCT, and the U.S. Navy are considered partners in this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The FFS proposes to manage the project under a multiple-use management regime consistent with the FFS management of the Cary State Forest, the Jennings State Forest and the Cecil Field Conservation Corridor, all of which are adjacent to this project. The acquisition goals and objectives as approved by ARC would include timber management and restoration, low-impact diverse recreation uses, and management of archaeological and historic sites, habitat and other biological resources.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project's size and diversity make it desirable for use and management as a state forest. Management by the FFS as a state forest is contingent on acquiring fee-simple title to the core parcels adjacent to the existing state forests and to approximately 60 percent of the project.

#### ***Manager***

FFS is recommended to be the lead managing agency.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Much of the parcel has been disturbed by past pine plantings and will require restoration work. This area of Florida is experiencing rapid urban growth, so that any prescribed burning to restore the forest will have to be carefully planned. The level of management and the related management costs are expected to initially be high to obtain necessary information to restore and manage portions as a state forest. It is recognized that a portion of the project will be less-than-fee simple. This technique is valuable on the fringes of urban growth because it allows the landowners to manage the property as they have been managing it, and continuing to produce forest products for Florida's economy, while protecting the property from conversion to urban growth.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the core areas of the project are acquired and assigned to the FFS, initial public access will be provided for diverse, low-intensity outdoor recreation activities. Initial and intermediate management



efforts will concentrate on site security, public and resource management access, prescribed burns, reforestation, and restoration activity.

***Revenue-generating potential***

Timber sales will be conducted as needed to improve or to maintain the desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in the marketable pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue, depending on a variety of factors. The existing condition of the timber stands on the property is such that the revenue-generating potential is expected to be moderate. Other compatible state forest sources of income will be considered. It is anticipated that management funding will come from the Conservation and Recreation Lands Trust Fund.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The FFS will cooperate with, and seek the assistance of, other state agencies, local government agencies, other interested parties as appropriate, and with the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI). The FFS intends to coordinate with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) regarding game and non-game management activity and related public use of the property.



Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2002
Project Area (GIS acres)	146,348
Acres Acquired (GIS)	62,619*
at a Cost of	\$141,087,558*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	83,729

\*Includes acreage and expenditures by the City of Jacksonville, JEA and SJRWMD.

Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve Table 2

North Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve FNAI Elements	Score
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	G3/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Florida toothache grass	G2/S2
hartwrightia	G2/S2
variable-leaf crownbeard	G2/S2
Thorne's beaksedge	G3/S1S2
giant orchid	G2G3/S2
Bartram's ixia	G2G3/S2S3
nightflowering wild petunia	G3?/S2

There are 22 rare species associated with the project.

Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	
Source of Funds	CARL
Salary (4 FTEs)	\$154,357
Expense	\$620,000
OCO	\$148,075
Total	\$887,007

[Map\(s\): Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve](#)



## ***Ochlockonee River Conservation Area***

Gadsden and Leon Counties

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2005
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	4,971
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	1,102*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	3,869

*\*Includes 497-acre conservation easement privately donated in 2005 to, and monitored by, Tall Timbers Research Station & Land Conservancy. Another 615 acres were added to the conservation easement in 2007.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Purchase of a less-than-fee-simple interest in the Ochlockonee River Conservation Area would provide an opportunity to protect a portion of the Ochlockonee River watershed, including six miles of river frontage, while maintaining a scenic and undeveloped rural area outside an expanding urban area. A conservation easement would preserve habitat for wildlife and game species, protect forested land, and would provide support for the owner’s ongoing efforts to restore the property to a natural longleaf pine community. A conservation easement could also provide an opportunity to manage the site in coordination with the adjacent Tall Timbers conservation lands.

### **Manager(s)**

The Office of Environmental Services will serve as the easement monitor unless otherwise noted. The Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy (TTRS&LC) monitors the conservation easements they acquired through donation.

### **General Description**

This project is located in western Leon County on the eastern bank of the Ochlockonee River. It is connected to the Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy (TTRS&LC)--contiguous to the east with the Foshalee Plantation conservation easement--by a narrow strip of land. South of SR 12, the Hiamonee Plantation conservation easement abuts the proposal’s eastern boundary. Lands included within the proposal are important to the water quality of the Ochlockonee River, a state-designated Outstanding Florida Water Body despite degradation (poor water quality) from a number of upstream sources. Water quality of both Lake Talquin (a downstream impoundment) and Lake Iamonia (which occasionally connects to the river during high water) is also directly tied to the river’s condition. The proposal includes a portion of the floodplain of this meandering alluvial river, which eventually empties into the commercially important Apalachee Bay. Four tributaries, two of which are partially impounded, run through the project.

Elevations across the proposal range from about 100 feet above MSL along the river to 230 feet in the northeastern uplands. Most of the site’s uplands probably once supported longleaf pine-dominated upland pine forest, with a rich groundcover including wiregrass and other herbs. Most of this has been



destroyed or degraded for agriculture, including silviculture; however, some tracts have returned to a shortleaf/loblolly pine-dominated community with a relatively diverse groundcover that includes exotic grasses and weedy vegetation in addition to some original components. Slopes on site generally support hardwood forests, although it is possible that seepage slope communities once may have been present.

### **Public Use**

The majority of the project is being offered as a less-than-fee purchase without public access which does not satisfy any of the year 2005 needs reflected in the 2000 Florida Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. The boundary modification approved by ARC on 2/19/2010 is committed to public access by the landowner, Mr. James Dahl, who has designed a public park on the north boundary to support river access for canoes, kayaks, and small boats at Highway 12 and picnic and play areas for families and a primitive camp area near oxbow lake, private island. Hiking and off-road and paved bike trails are proposed. Also, an environmental education program/facility is in the planning stages.

The project is located within the Meridian Trail High Priority Multi-Use Recreational Trail Network Opportunity Corridor. The project is also partially within the Upper Ochlockonee River Low Priority Paddling Recreational Trail Network Opportunity Corridor.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On January 25, 2005, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) voted to add the Ochlockonee River Conservation Area project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2005 Priority list. This less-than-fee project, sponsored by the Woodlands Company Inc. of Quincy, consisted of approximately 3,105 acres, two owners, and a 2003 taxable value of \$1,067,948.

On October 13, 2006, the ARC approved a less-than-fee 1,025-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the Woodlands Company, consisted of two parcels (one landowner, James Dahl) and a 2005 taxable value of \$200,198. The parcels are located in Gadsden and Leon counties and are designated as essential.

On February 19, 2010 ARC added to the boundary an approximately 31-acre linear conservation easement (comprising portions of two parcels owned by James Dahl, valued at \$93,935) to the boundary.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Less-Than-Fee category of projects.

In December 2016, ARC approved a boundary amendment that deletes the disjunct 63 acres in Gadsden County, west of the Ochlockonee River, and adds 664 acres east of the Ochlockonee River in Leon County, a net gain of 601 acres. The added acreage has a tax-assessed value of \$844,328. The 31-acre linear easement added in February 2010 remains in the boundary, but this 2016 change to the boundary also included a notice from the landowner rescinding their earlier (2010) commitment to public access. In 2016, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$926,794.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$19,102,896.



### **Coordination**

The Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy acquired a 497-acre conservation easement through a donation in 2005. Another 615 acres was donated in 2007 as part of the River Ridge Plantation Conservation Easement.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a conservation easement or less-than-fee interest, the majority of the project will be managed by the private landowner with restrictions imposed by the CE agreement. The purchase of the development rights, the prohibition of the further conversion of existing natural areas to more intensive uses and limited public access will likely be the primary focus of most of the agreement. The conservation easements donated to TTRS&LC will be manage/monitored by that group. The boundary modification known as River Ridge Plantation has planned amenities for public access.

### **Management Prospectus**

The Office of Environmental Services is to ensure oversight of the conservation easements on this project, except the River Ridge Plantation parcels that were donated to Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy will be managed by them.



Ochlockonee River Conservation Area Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2005
Project Area (GIS acres)	4,971
Acres Acquired (GIS)	1,102*
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	3,869

\*Includes 497-acre conservation easement privately donated in 2005 to, and monitored by, Tall Timbers Research Station & Land Conservancy. Another 615 acres were added to the conservation easement in 2007.

Ochlockonee River Conservation Area Table 2

Ochlockonee River Conservation Area FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Flyr's brickell-bush	G3/S2
Turk's cap lily	G5/S1
Sculptured Pigtoe	G3/S2S3
Suwannee Cooter	G5T3/S3
White-breasted Nuthatch	G5/S2
Alligator Snapping Turtle	G3G4/S3
Little Blue Heron	G5/S4
White Ibis	G5/S4
Bird Rookery	G5/SNR

There are 11 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Ochlockonee River Conservation Area](#)





## ***Okeechobee Battlefield***

Okeechobee County

Critical Historical Resources

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2001
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	234
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	145
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$3,217,250
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	89

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Okeechobee Battlefield the site of one of Florida’s most significant events during the Second Seminole War. On Christmas Day in 1837, more than 1,000 U.S. Army and Missouri Volunteer soldiers led by Colonel Zachary Taylor attacked several hundred Seminoles and Miccosukee’s north of Lake Okeechobee. Sam Jones, Alligator and Wildcat led the Indians, and the battle resulted in the loss of 26 U.S. forces killed and 112 wounded, while 14 Indians lost their lives. The battlefield, recorded in the Florida Master Site File as 8OB10, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in the 1960s and later became a National Historic Landmark.

The 55-acre project consists of improved pasture and freshwater marsh and provides the backdrop for a yearly reenactment of the battle. State acquisition of Okeechobee Battlefield would meet Goal F of the Florida Forever program by adding a site listed in the Florida Master Site File. The battlefield site is described by the National Park Service as one of the 11 most endangered historic sites in the United States. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses a number of Florida Forever project sites.

### **Manager(s)**

The Archeological and Historical Conservancy proposes to manage the property in cooperation with Okeechobee County and the Friends of the Okeechobee Battlefield, a Florida not-for-profit corporation.

### **General Description**

This +211-acre project consists of improved pasture and freshwater marsh and provides the backdrop for a yearly reenactment of the battle. The site is home to bald eagles and offers potential habitat for the crested caracara and wood stork. The project is adjacent to U.S. Highway 441/98 along the northeastern rim of Lake Okeechobee, approximately five miles southeast of the town of Okeechobee in southern Okeechobee County. There are no adjacent or close by conservation lands in the FNAI database. However, the South Florida Water Management District lands of Paradise Run and Kissimmee River are approximately 8 and 12 miles to the west, respectively. St. Lucie County’s Bluefield Ranch and St. Lucie Pinelands are approximately 8.5 miles to the east, and 12 miles to the northeast, respectively.



### **Public Use**

The project is proposed as the site for an interpretive center/museum and a place to conduct a yearly commemorative re-enactment of the battle. The small size of the project limits the relative diversity and quantity of resource-based recreational opportunities. The site's importance is in its cultural significance as a smaller part of a larger battlefield site. Further study will be needed to determine the degree and nature of facilities suitable for the interpretation of the battle. Conceptually, management and development of the project could be similar to that of Okeechobee Battlefield State Historic Site with an interpretive facility and an annual enactment, but on a smaller scale. The ability to interpret and enhance enactment capabilities would be enhanced by bringing more of the battlefield site into the project. In addition to cultural interpretation and activities, picnicking would be a suitable secondary usage.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 6, 2001, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Okeechobee Battlefield project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2002 Priority list. This fee-simple project, sponsored by the Archeological and Historical Conservancy (AHC) and the First Bank of Indiantown, consisted of approximately 56 acres, a single owner, First Bank of Indiantown, and a 2001 market value of \$113,970.

On December 5, 2003, ARC approved a fee-simple addition of approximately 141 acres to the project boundary. The addition was sponsored by the AHC, had 3 owners, and a 2002 market value of \$172,442. After the most recent addition in 2003, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$89,588.

On June 30, 2006, the Board of Trustees acquired the 158.04-acre property (146 acres GIS) that constitutes the present area of Okeechobee Battlefield Historic State Park from Rowland Foundation Inc, a Kentucky Corporation.

On December 14, 2007 ARC voted to move the Okeechobee Battlefield project to Group B of the 2008 Florida Forever priority list.

On December 10, 2010, ARC voted to move this project from the Critical Natural Lands category to a new category called, "Critical Historical Resources."

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$926,484.

### **Coordination**

Archaeological and Historical Conservancy, Inc; Friends of the Okeechobee Battlefield, and Okeechobee County are considered partners on this project. No alternative funding sources have been identified.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Okeechobee Battlefield are to preserve a historical site of true state and national significance and the various archeological and environmental features associated with



it. A secondary goal is to interpret the battlefield by providing controlled public access and living history events, establishing the battle site as a community educational resource and heritage tourist destination.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The historical significance of the Okeechobee Battlefield is confirmed by its inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, and by its “endangered” status as a National Landmark. Currently no portions of the battlefield are in public ownership.

#### ***Manager***

The Archeological and Historical Conservancy proposes to manage the property in cooperation with Okeechobee County and the Friends of the Okeechobee Battlefield, a Florida not-for-profit corporation.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The property is a low-need management area that emphasizes historic resource protection while allowing compatible public access and site interpretation.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition the management will concentrate on protection of cultural and environmental resources, and on developing a long-term management plan.

#### ***Revenue-generating potential***

The long-term plan is anticipated to include recurring costs for wetlands restoration and site development to be determined, based on available public and private resources.

#### ***Cooperators in management activities***

Okeechobee County and the Friends of the Okeechobee Battlefield will cooperate in management activities, including developing and implementing a long-term plan for the battlefield site. The Seminole Tribe of Florida and the Miccosukee Tribe will be included in all phases of planning for preservation, protection and appropriate improvement of the site for public use and benefit.



Okeechobee Battlefield Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2001</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>234</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$3,217,250</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>89</b>

Okeechobee Battlefield Table 2

*No rare species are associated with the project*

Okeechobee Battlefield Table 3

<b>Management Cost Summary: The Archaeological and Historical Conservancy</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Salary Manager (half-time)</b>	<b>\$26,500</b>	<b>\$26,500</b>
<b>Maintenance</b>	<b>\$5,500</b>	<b>\$5,500</b>

[Map\(s\): Okeechobee Battlefield](#)



## **Old Town Creek Watershed**

Hardee and Polk Counties

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2001
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	7,303
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	6,037
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$9,790,000
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	1,266

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The Old Town Creek Watershed proposal is proposed as a less-than-fee-acquisition. A primary purpose of less-than-fee acquisitions is to preserve existing, low intensity use of large tracts of private land, where such protection will complement management objectives on adjacent public conservation land. Management objectives would be directed to conserve the mosaic of natural habitats and improved/working landscapes that constitute the Old Town Watershed and protect significant habitat for native species or rare species and integrate carefully controlled consumptive uses.

### **Manager(s)**

The conservation easement will be monitored by the Office of Environmental Services (OES).

### **General Description**

The northeastern corner of the site includes part of the Lake Wales Ridge, a physiographic region of the state that is rich in rare plant and animal species. The site supports many natural communities which are characteristic of south-central Florida. Although a large percentage of the former flatwoods have been converted to improved pasture, they nevertheless remain important for several rare animals in the region.

### **Public Use**

Most of the project is proposed as a less than fee acquisition. The property is a working ranch and the owner has indicated that unsupervised public access would not be desirable, but occasional visitation on a prearranged basis may be possible for natural resource education and nature appreciation purposes.

The Crews Ranch owner has indicated a willingness to consider a fee sale of the scrub in the north part of the project. This area is adjacent to The Nature Conservancy’s (TNC) Saddle Blanket Lake Preserve, which allows public visitation. If this scrub area were managed as an extension of that preserve, nature appreciation, natural resource education and nature trails could be made more readily available.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The essential parcels are contained within Crews Ranch. Mallory Ranch (2 noncontiguous tracts) is the other ownership in this project boundary. The estimated tax value for the project in 2001 was \$788,200. On April 6, 2001, the Acquisition and Restoration Council placed this project on the Florida Forever list. On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Less-than-Fee list of projects.



On December 19, 2017, the Board of Trustees closed on the 6,047-acre Crews Ranch conservation easement in the project, at a cost of.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$4,122,237.

### **Coordination**

This project has been submitted to Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) for a Save Our Rivers proposal. SWFWMD is a potential acquisition partner.

### **Management Policy Statement**

Specific management activities and public access to the Old Town Creek Watershed would be limited by the terms of the purchase. Management objectives should be directed to conserve the mosaic of natural habitats and improved/working landscapes that constitute the Old Town Creek Watershed and protect significant habitat for native species or rare species and integrate carefully controlled uses.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Protecting this area will benefit the public in at least three major ways: 1) This project consists of a matrix of wetland and upland habitats, including a globally imperiled natural community that supports a variety of common and rare plant and animal species and is of a size to qualify as a wildlife management area; 2) Protecting the watershed and natural habitats surrounding Old Town Creek, which feeds into Charlie Creek and ultimately into the Peace River, from conversion to more intensive uses, particularly dairies or residential development, will help protect the water quality within the region; and 3) The ranches in this region contain large areas of natural lands that should be protected if an ecological connection between the Big Cypress and the Osceola National Forest/Okefenokee Swamp is to be achieved.

#### ***Manager***

The landowner would manage the site and the Office of Environmental Services will periodically monitor the site for compliance with the conditions in the agreed-upon easement.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

This less-than-fee project includes lands requiring monitoring only. The Crews Ranch is a working cattle ranch that is and will continue to be managed by the private land owner. The Nature Conservancy and other land managing agencies will provide management advice and guidance to the landowner as necessary to maintain and enhance the resource management program.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after acquisition, management activities will focus on securing and posting the property and developing a management plan. Existing management activities will continue throughout the management planning process. The property owner will develop a management plan which will include fire management, exotic control and restoration components. Prior to the development of the



management plan, the tract's natural resources and threatened/endangered plants and animals and any archaeological and cultural sites will be inventoried and mapped to provide the basis for the management plan. Protection and security of infrastructure and the property will be the responsibility of the private landowner.

***Revenue-generating potential***

No revenue will be generated from this easement.

***Cooperators in management activities***

No cooperators are recommended for this site. However, consultation with the SWFWMD, TNC and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) could be helpful to the landowner.



Old Town Creek Watershed Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2001
Project Area (GIS acres)	7,303
Acres Acquired (GIS)	6,037
at a Cost of	\$9,790,000
Acres Remaining (GIS)	1,266

Old Town Creek Watershed Table 2

Old Town Creek Watershed FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Florida Scrub Lizard	G2G3/S2S3
Pygmy Fringe Tree	G2G3/S2S3
Bachman's Sparrow	G3/S3
Cutthroat Grass	G3/S3
Southeastern American Kestrel	G5T4/S3

There are 8 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Old Town Creek Watershed](#)





## **Osceola Pine Savannas**

Osceola County  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1995
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	46,563
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	19,063
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$46,260,334
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	27,500

*\*Includes acreage and expenditures by BOT, FWC, and SJRWMD*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

A wide range of wildlife uses the open rangelands of pastures, pine flatwoods, and palmetto prairies in Osceola County. The Osceola Pine Savannas project will conserve a large part of these lands, maintaining a link of natural lands between the Bull Creek and Three Lakes Wildlife Management Areas. Preserving these lands will help ensure the survival of wildlife including swallow-tailed kite and the caracara. Together with the two wildlife management areas, this project provides a large area for the public to enjoy hunting, wildlife observation, and other activities.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will manage the Osceola Pine Savannas. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Office of Environmental Services (OES) will monitor any conservation easements unless otherwise noted.

### **General Description**

The project covers an area of old beach ridges and intervening swales, with high-quality, longleaf-pine flatwoods interrupted by cypress strands, cypress domes, and wet prairies. There are also extensive dry prairies and patches of oak or sand pine scrub, all of which are natural communities of the Kissimmee Prairie. It is an important habitat to wildlife, especially birds, requiring extensive natural areas. Six Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) listed animals occur, including sandhill crane, wood storks, and crested caracara, and several more, including the federally endangered Florida grasshopper sparrow, are possible. Much of the land is used as unimproved range; seriously disturbed areas are mainly improved pastures in the south end. Two archaeological sites are known. Any construction of roads or ditches will destroy the unique character of the project, but development pressure is low. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses a number of Florida Forever project sites.

### **Public Use**

The project will be designated as a wildlife management area, with such uses as hiking, wildlife observation and hunting.



### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 7, 1994, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) added the Osceola Pine Savannas project to the CARL 1995 Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by FNAI, consisted of approximately 42,491 acres, multiple owners, and a 1993 taxable value of \$32,430,057.

Essential tracts were determined to be those owned by Robertson, McNamara, Equitable Life (acquired), Donovan, Montsococa, Redding, Keen, Kennedy, Henderson, Campos, and the Mormon Church. The Canaveral Acres subdivision was designated essential when Dr. Broussard consolidated a significant number of parcels.

On October 15, 1998, LAAC designated two additional parcels as essential: a 229-acre tract adjacent to the Equitable Life ownership and a 17-acre tract between two other large tracts.

On June 6, 2002, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) moved this project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2002 Priority list and approved a 2,279-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by Dr. William Broussard, consisted of two owners, and had a 2001 taxable value of \$695,238. The Broussard property consisted of 1,282 acres, will be acquired as a conservation easement, and monitored by OES. The Vanosdol property consisted of 997 acres to be purchased as fee-simple. The FWC acquired 904 acres of this property in 2006.

On August 11, 2006, the ARC approved a fee-simple & less-than-fee, 5,529-acre addition (aka Lucky L Ranch) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by TNC & FWC, consisted of 5 ownerships, 25 parcels, and a 2005 taxable value of \$1,504,685. The parcels have been designated as essential.

In October 2007, the BOT acquired 1,430 acres from William Broussard that is to be managed as a conservation easement.

In June 2008, 1,649.8 acres were purchased in FWC's Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area (Lucky L Ranch-11 Limited Partnership ownership) for \$11,651,000 from FWC's Florida Forever funds, with the FWC to manage the property.

On October 15, 2010 ARC approved a 557-acre (\$6,691,997 just value) reduction to the project boundary due to residential/commercial/infrastructure development. After the most recent boundary change in 2010, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$17,759,975.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands list of projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$103,836,397.

### **Coordination**

St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) and the FWC have acquired over 19,007 acres (Triple N Ranch WMA) in the northern one-third of the project area. The FWC has also acquired 1,920 acres adjacent to the southern boundary and has completed a 1,921-acre acquisition centrally located within the project boundary. They have also acquired a large "essential" tract in the central portion of the project (Equitable Life).



## **Management Policy Statement**

The primary objective of management of the Osceola Pine Savannas project is to preserve and restore the integrity of the extensive functional ecosystems, ranging from pine flatwoods, dry prairie, and scrub to marshes and cypress swamps, that now extend from the Bull Creek to the Three Lakes Wildlife Management Areas. Achieving this objective will protect habitat for several endangered species of wildlife that need large natural areas to survive, such as Florida grasshopper sparrows, Florida sandhill cranes, Audubon's crested caracaras, and American swallow-tailed kites. It will also provide to the public over 100,000 acres in which to enjoy natural-resource-based recreation, such as hiking and hunting.

The project should be managed under the multiple-use concept: management activities should be directed first toward preservation of resources and second toward integrating carefully controlled consumptive uses such as hunting and logging. Managers should control access to the project; limit public motor vehicles to one or a few main roads; thoroughly inventory the resources; restore hydrological disturbances; burn the fire-dependent pine flatwoods in a pattern mimicking natural lightning-season fires, using natural firebreaks or existing roads for control; reforest pine plantations and improved pastures with original species; prohibit timbering in old-growth stands; and monitor management activities to ensure that they are actually preserving resources. Managers should limit the number and size of recreational facilities, ensure that they avoid the most sensitive resources, and site them in already disturbed areas when possible. This project includes most of the undeveloped land between Bull Creek Wildlife Management Area and Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area and consequently has the size and location to meet its primary objective.

## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Osceola Pine Savannas project has the resource diversity to qualify as a Wildlife Management Area.

### ***Manager***

The FWC is recommended as lead manager. OES will manage any conservation easements.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The project generally includes lands that are low-need tracts, requiring basic resource management and protection.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, activities will concentrate on site security, public access, fire management, resource inventory, and the removal of any existing trash. A conceptual management plan will be developed that describes the goals of future resource management on the site. Long-range plans for this property, beginning one year after acquisition, will stress the protection and management of threatened and endangered species. Programs recreational uses will also be implemented. A burn management plan will be developed and implemented using conventional and biologically acceptable providing multiple guidelines. Management activities will also strive to manage natural plant



communities for the benefit of native wildlife. Where appropriate and practical, forest resources will be managed using acceptable silvicultural practices as recommended by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Florida Forest Service/FFS (aka Division of Forestry/ DOF). A resource inventory will be used to identify sensitive areas that need special attention, protection, or management.

Unnecessary roads, fire lines and ditches will be abandoned or restored. Infrastructure will be kept to the minimum necessary for public access and management.

***Revenue-generating potential***

While the pinelands have significant economic value, their value to the area's wildlife may be even greater. A \$25 management area stamp would be required to hunt on the area. A management area stamp could also be required for all users. Additional revenue would be generated by sales of hunting licenses and special hunting stamps (i.e., archery stamp, turkey stamp, etc.).

***Cooperators in management activities***

The SJRWMD and the FFS are recommended as cooperating managers.



Osceola Pine Savannas Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1995
Project Area (GIS acres)	46,563
Acres Acquired (GIS)	19,063
at a Cost of	\$46,260,334
Acres Remaining (GIS)	27,500

\*Includes acreage and expenditures by BOT, FWC, and SJRWMD.

Osceola Pine Savannas Table 2

Osceola Pine Savannas FNAI Elements	Score
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Striped Newt	G2G3/S2
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	G3/S2
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Crested Caracara	G5/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Loammi Skipper	G1/S1
Arogos Skipper	G3T1T2/S1
Berry's Skipper	G2/S2
celestial lily	G2/S2
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2

There are 26 rare species associated with the project.

Osceola Pine Savannas Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	1996/97	1997/98
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$74,645	\$114,485
OPS	\$0	\$30,500
Expense	\$55,473	\$131,525
OCO	\$0	\$308,148
FCO	\$0	\$0
Total	\$130,118	\$584,658

[Map\(s\): Osceola Pine Savannas](#)



## ***Pal-Mar***

Martin and Palm Beach Counties  
Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1992
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	35,970
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	26,406*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$16,044,487
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	9,564

*\*Includes acreage and expenditures by the SFWMD.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Agriculture and residential development have reduced natural areas in the interior of southeast Florida to fragments. One of the largest and best fragments, part of what was once a transition zone between pine flatwoods and the sawgrass marshes of the Everglades, will be protected by the Pal-Mar project. This project, by protecting these flatwoods and marshes, will ensure habitat for the rare species listed below, will preserve natural lands linking the J. W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area (WMA) with Jonathan Dickinson State Park and other conservation lands, as well as provide land to the public of this fast-growing region for hiking, bicycling, camping, hunting, and learning about the original nature of this part of Florida.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) manages west of I-95 and north of Indiantown Road (Hungryland WEA [Wildlife and Environmental Area]). The Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) manages east of I-95. Palm Beach County (PBC) manages south of Indiantown Road.

### **General Description**

The project includes some of the highest quality, most intact pine flatwoods in southern Florida in an ecotone between pine flatwoods and the treeless Everglades and includes high-quality examples of wet prairie and savanna with exceptional ground-cover diversity. The project provides habitat for at least five federally endangered or threatened animals including the snail kite, red-cockaded woodpecker, and wood stork. It includes the Pine Glades Natural Area, is contiguous with the J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area (WMA), the private Pratt-Whitney Preserve and the Cypress Creek lands owned by South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and includes a mile-wide connector to Jonathan Dickinson State Park. The project has low archaeological or historic value, except for a segment of the historic Jupiter-Indiantown Road. Urbanization is rapidly isolating the State Park and growth pressures on the uplands in this project are intense.

### **Public Use**

Most of this project has been designated for use as a wildlife management area. Plans are for the easternmost portion of the project area to be added to Jonathan Dickinson State Park. Public uses will



include hunting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding and nature appreciation. The project area south of Indiantown Road is the Pine Glades Natural Area, managed by PBC. Hunting is not allowed on that site.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Phase I of this project consisted of approximately five larger ownerships, including tracts adjacent to J.W. Corbett WMA, FDIC (acquired by SFWMD and Martin County), MacArthur (acquired by PBC), Pal-Mar Water Control District (acquired), Lara (acquired by PBC) and Florida National Bank. The MacArthur lands north of Indiantown Road were sold to the State by PBC. Phase II consists of subdivided areas and a corridor to Jonathan Dickinson State Park. On October 21, 1999, the Council added 1,280 acres to the project boundary as essential parcels. After the most recent boundary change in 1999, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$27,570,411.

There is very little property remaining to acquire in the Palm Beach County side of the project. Martin County and the SFWMD have acquired most of the property on the Martin County side of the project. In July 2007 the SFWMD acquired a 427-acre parcel from Indiantown Realty Partners LP. The parcel is part of the John C. and Mariana Jones/Hungryland WEA.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$22,622,530.

### **Coordination**

SFWMD, PBC and Martin County are acquisition partners in this project. Most of the larger ownerships have been acquired. PBC has acquired a number of the smaller parcels, totaling 223.63 acres, that are located north of Indiantown Road.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Pal-Mar Florida Forever project are 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 this state or a larger geographic area; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; and to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural resource-based recreation.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Preventing isolation of natural lands is important in enabling genetic interchange among plant and animal populations. This project is a large natural area connecting the J.W. Corbett WMA on the west with the SFWMD and PBC Cypress Creek lands and Jonathan Dickinson State Park on the east. The





size, quality of wildlife resources and location next to the Corbett WMA of the northwestern part qualify it as a WMA. The part that lies south of Indiantown Road is part of the PBC Pine Glades Natural Area. The part of the project east of Interstate 95 is adjacent to Jonathan Dickinson and is a logical addition to that park.

### ***Manager***

The FWC is manager for the area west of I-95 and north of Indiantown Road (Hungryland WEA). The DRP of DEP is the manager for the area east of I-95; PBC is the manager for the area south of Indiantown Road and a few small areas north of Indiantown Road.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

For the project area west of I-95 and north of Indiantown Road, no known conditions would result in the need for intensive management. The land could be managed as a normal component of the WMA system. The portion of the project east of I-95 will be added to Jonathan Dickinson State Park, which is a high-need management area. The portion of the project south of Indiantown Road is being managed by PBC, which is conducting a multi-year restoration program on the site.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Initial management of the area west of I-95 involved posting and otherwise securing the tract against trespassing and vandalism, preparing roads and other infrastructure for public recreation, performing resource inventories and initiating the planning process. Subsequent resource and recreation management have occurred since the portion of the project north of Indiantown Road has been added to an existing WEA (Hungryland). Management activities, after acquisition of the eastern part, were concentrated on site security, natural and cultural resource protection, and the development of a plan for long-term public use and resource management. Most of the remaining lands to be acquired would represent an addition to an existing WMA (J.W. Corbett) or an existing WEA (Hungryland).

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Revenue potential for the western part (excluding the lands owned by PBC) would be moderate to low since it does not contain significant upland (timber) resources. However, some revenue could be generated from recreational use (over and above licenses and permits sold by FWC) if the Legislature could approve user fees for non-consumptive activities. The eastern part will be added to Jonathan Dickinson State Park. No significant revenue is expected to be generated by these lands on their own.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

PBC manages the property south of the Indiantown Road, which is called the Pine Glades Natural Area.





Pal-Mar Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1992
Project Area (GIS acres)	35,970
Acres Acquired (GIS)	26,406*
at a Cost of	\$16,044,487
Acres Remaining (GIS)	9,564

\*Includes acreage and expenditures by the SFWMD.

Pal-Mar Table 2

Pal-Mar FNAI Elements	Score
Snail Kite	G4G5/S2
meadow jointvetch	G4T1/S1
celestial lily	G2/S2
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
many-flowered grass-pink	G2G3/S2S3
Bachman's Sparrow	G3/S3
Round-tailed Muskrat	G3/S3
Piedmont Jointgrass	G3/S3
Wood Stork	G4/S2
banded wild-pine	G5/S3
Glossy Ibis	G5/S3
Limpkin	G5/S3

There are 16 rare species associated with the project.

Pal-Mar Table 3a

Management Cost Summary: FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$45,000	\$100,000
OPS	\$5,000	\$5,000
Expense	\$30,000	\$65,000
OCO	\$30,000	\$15,000
FCO	\$0	\$40,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>	<b>\$225,000</b>



Pal-Mar Table 3b

<b>Management Cost Summary: DRP</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>	<b>CARL</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$12,000</b>	<b>\$12,000</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$92,000</b>	<b>\$18,000</b>

[Map\(s\): Pal-Mar](#)



## ***Panther Glades***

Hendry County  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2001
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	64,810
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	25,426
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$40,564,708
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	39,384

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The Panther Glades project is important to many wildlife species, particularly the Florida panther and the Florida black bear that require extensive areas of habitat to maintain viable populations. This project forms a connection between Devils’ Garden, Half Circle L Ranch, and Save Our Everglades Florida Forever projects with the Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest and the Big Cypress National Preserve. This large landscape and watershed in south-central Hendry County would provide important habitat for many species including the Eastern indigo snake, bald eagle, and Florida sandhill crane.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is recommended as the manager. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Forest Service/FFS is recommended as a cooperating agency.

### **General Description**

Located in south-central Hendry County approximately 25 miles southeast of Clewiston and 46 miles northeast of Naples, the project is a mosaic of forested uplands interspersed among forested wetland communities. Ranging approximately 19 miles north to south and nine miles east to west. The far west southern boundary shares one mile with a part of Save Our Everglades project site and the eastern third of the south boundary borders the Big Cypress National Preserve.

### **Public Use**

The Panther Glades proposal encompasses a wide range of natural resources. A majority of owners wish to sell conservation easements, but a few wish to sell fee title. Less-than-fee acquisition areas may have no, or at best very limited, public recreation depending on whether public access is allowed. However, fee acquisition areas have the potential for varied natural resource recreation. For fee areas, environmental education and potentially ecosystem tourism tied in with nearby public lands may be accommodated. Ecosystem tourism may be appealing to landowners willing to consider conservation easements. Cabins may be appropriate in both cases, particularly if overnight accommodations are to be a part of environmental and ecosystem tourism programs. Further study will need to be accomplished to determine the desirability of cultural resource interpretation.



## **Acquisition Planning**

On January 25, 2001, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) added the Panther Glades project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2001 Priority list. This fee-simple & less-than-fee acquisition, sponsored by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), consisted of approximately 21,223 acres, multiple owners, and a 2000 taxable value of \$3,947,680. The essential parcels were identified as McDaniel, Jolly, Giddens, Roberts, and the O R Ranch ownerships in the central and eastern portion of the proposal.

On July 12, 2001, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 20,895-acre addition (aka Dinner Island) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by TNC, consisted of one owner, Hilliard Bros. of Florida LTD, and a 2000 taxable value of \$5,364,370.

On December 5, 2002, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 3,860-acre addition (aka Barfield Tract) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the TNC, consisted of one owner, James Barfield, and a 2002 taxable value of \$3,098,640. On April 18, 2003, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 1,615-acre addition to the project boundary. Sponsored by the ARC Vice Chair Jack Moller, it consisted of one owner, STOF Holding LTD, and a 2003 taxable value of \$1,550,990. The addition was a transfer of acreage from the Save Our Everglades FF project into this project.

On June 6, 2003, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 3,711-acre addition (aka Crow's Nest Tract) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the landowner, Robert J. Underbrink, and had a 2002 taxable value of \$8,630,020.

On December 14, 2007 ARC voted to move the Panther Glades project to Group B list of the FF priority list.

On December 12, 2008 ARC voted to extend the boundary of Panther Glades by adding a less-than-fee 4,208-acre parcel (the McDaniels Ranch Reserve) with a tax value of \$20,456,810. This proposal was submitted as a stand-alone project and designated as essential.

On June 12, 2009 ARC voted to add 4,694 acres, with a tax value of \$12,300,000, consisting of the Kissimmee Billy Strand project (full fee), including the Green Glades/Bergeron (less-than-fee) property, to this Panther Glades project. This proposal was initially submitted as a stand-alone project, the lands were designated as essential, ARC added it to the Florida Forever list, then approved amending the acreage into the Panther Glades boundary. After the most recent boundary change in 2009, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$38,188,781.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands list of projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$155,882,987.



### **Coordination**

TNC is considered an acquisition partner. Efforts will be made to coordinate state and local governmental agencies including the FFS, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) in management of the property.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The principal purposes of the project are to protect significant natural habitat important to the Florida panther, Big Cypress black bear, Florida black bear, swallow-tailed kite, multiple wading birds (including wood stork, white ibis, little blue heron, tricolored heron, snowy egret, and great egret) and numerous other rare species, as well as to preserve the hydrological connection with protected lands to the south.

### **Management Prospectus**

Priority will be given to the conservation and protection of environmentally unique native habitats and threatened and endangered species. Management programs will be designed to conserve, protect, manage and/or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, forests, and water resources. The tract will also be managed to provide opportunities for hunting, camping, hiking, environmental and cultural resource education, and other natural resource-based recreational activities. Since the principal purposes of the project are to protect habitat for the Florida panther and other species of concern, management goals will be oriented to conservation and protection of these species and to public use that is carefully controlled.

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Panther Glades project has the resource diversity to qualify as a wildlife and environmental area.

### ***Manager***

FWC is recommended as the manager. FFS is recommended as a cooperating agency.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Some portions of the project include lands that are low-need tracts, requiring basic resource management including the frequent use of prescribed fire where appropriate. A significant portion of the uplands have been developed for agriculture or other purposes; therefore, restoration activities are contemplated for some of the acreage. The primary management needed for perpetuation of the less disturbed natural communities would involve the introduction of prescribed fire and control of human access. Biotic surveys should be a priority, since there are potentially many taxa of rare or listed species. Development of facilities would be kept to the minimum level necessary to assure a high-quality recreational experience, and any such development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance. Restoration activities would focus around reforestation of pasturelands and hydrological restoration following a full assessment of the necessity for such activities. Invasive non-indigenous species can likely be controlled if control activities are implemented hastily.



***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after acquisition, emphasis will be placed on site security, posting boundaries, public access, fire management, resource inventory, exotic species control, and removal of refuse. A management plan will be developed by the FWC describing the management goals and specific objectives necessary to implement future resource management. The management plan will also establish future roles of cooperating entities including governmental agencies and other stakeholders.

Longer-range plans will stress ecosystem management and the protection and management of threatened and endangered species. Following completion of plant community inventory and historic vegetation analysis, quantified vegetation management objectives would be developed pursuant to the FWC objective-based vegetation management process. Additionally, the Wildlife Conservation Prioritization and Recovery program of FWC would provide assessment, recovery, and planning support for project and to enhance management of focal species and recovery of listed species. An all-season prescribed burning management plan will be developed and implemented using conventional and biologically acceptable guidelines. Management activities will strive to manage natural plant communities to benefit native wildlife resources. Programs providing multiple recreational uses will also be implemented. Environmentally sensitive areas will be identified, and appropriate protective measures will be implemented on those areas. Unnecessary roads, fire lanes and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned or restored as practical. Minimal infrastructure development will be required to allow public access, provide facilities for the public, and provide security and management of the property. Archaeological and historic sites would be managed in coordination with the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources (DHR). FWC should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies including FFS, DEP, and SFWMD in management of the property.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The revenue generating potential is not known and will depend upon future uses to be approved in the management plan. Since very little of the project is currently appropriate for forest products production, future revenue from timber resources will depend on successful reforestation and management of the restored pasturelands and other disturbed areas. If managers' assessments indicate it would be appropriate, some revenues might be generated from grazing leases in flatwoods or pastured areas not restored in the interest of habitat diversity or due to lack of funding. Additional revenue would be generated from sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area permits, and other special hunting permits and user fees. Some revenues might be realized in the future from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities, if such projects can be economically developed. Long-term value of ecosystem services to local and regional land and water resources, and to human health, are expected to be significant if the Legislature appropriates funds for land management.



Panther Glades Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2001</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>64,810</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>25,426</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$40,564,708</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>39,384</b>

Panther Glades Table 2

<b>Panther Glades FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Florida Panther</b>	<b>G5T1/S1</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Swallow-tailed Kite</b>	<b>G5/S2</b>
<b>Florida Sandhill Crane</b>	<b>G5T2/S2</b>
<b>hand fern</b>	<b>G4/S2</b>
<b>Wood Stork</b>	<b>G4/S2</b>
<b>Florida Burrowing Owl</b>	<b>G4T3/S3</b>
<b>Crested Caracara</b>	<b>G5/S2</b>
<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>
<b>banded wild-pine</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>
<b>Glossy Ibis</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>
<b>Limpkin</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>

*There are 14 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Panther Glades](#)



## ***Peace River Refuge***

DeSoto County

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2010
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	3,850
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	8
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	3,842

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The purpose for the proposed acquisition is to buffer and preserve the water quality and habitat of the Peace River and its creeks; to protect the water quality for the downstream Charlotte Harbor Estuary; to protect aquatic and upland wildlife associated with the floodplains, rivers, creeks and estuary; and to provide for a diverse array of natural-resource-based recreational opportunities for Florida residents and visitors if any of the fee-simple parcels are offered for purchase.

The Peace River Refuge project meets Florida Forever measures of using alternatives to fee-simple acquisitions; of protecting strategic habitats, natural floodplains and significant surface waters.

### **Manager(s)**

Office of Environmental Services (OES) of the Division of State Lands (DSL), or its successor, would serve as the conservation-easement monitor unless otherwise noted.

### **General Description**

The Peace River Refuge Florida Forever proposal is in central DeSoto County, southwest of the city of Arcadia. Beginning at SR 70 in Arcadia, the proposal extends a total of approximately seven miles south, flanking the Peace River on both sides for six river miles and then bordering only the east side of the river for four more river miles south of CR 760. Additionally, the eastern portion of the proposal contains frontage along Joshua Creek, a Peace River tributary. Most of the proposal’s eastern boundary is formed by an abandoned railroad grade located less than one mile west of US 17. Although the proposal is mainly contiguous, it contains inholdings consisting of a six-acre parcel fronting the east side of the river and many smaller lots on the western half of the property. Overall, the site is primarily hardwood forested uplands; however, bottomland forests and open point bars are associated with the river and old meander features of the floodplain. Approximately 88 percent of the proposal can be classified as natural communities.

Most uplands on the proposal are mesic hammock with a live oak canopy over a predominantly saw palmetto understory. While flooding from the Peace River likely inundates many of these hammocks occasionally or even annually, the land is dry for most of the year.





Much of the land on the northeastern portion of the proposal has been converted to improved pastures. Scattered oaks are common throughout these pastures. Various other clearings are scattered on the property, including areas with standing structures (hunt camps, bridges, and remnants of old buildings such as a saw mill on the western side of the property).

### **Public Use**

If acquired as a less-than-fee property, public access would depend on the terms of access permitted by the owner as part of the conservation easement agreement. The landowners have indicated that they are open to some portions of their property being acquired in fee-simple.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 11, 2010, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Peace River Refuge project to the Florida Forever list in the Less-Than-Fee category. The project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$12,567,267.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$10,895,996.

### **Coordination**

There are no known acquisition partners at this time.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a proposed conservation easement or other less-than-fee interest, the project will be managed by the private landowner with restrictions under the agreement. The purchase of development rights, the prohibition of any further conversion of existing natural areas to agricultural uses, and limited public access to some sites will likely be the primary focus of the conservation easement. Purchase of a conservation easement over the property would be most beneficial for protecting the Peace River and for providing habitat for rare plants and animals. The cost of the monitoring contractor plus staff time in the OES would add to the administrative costs of the easement. No sources of revenue are known at this time.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Peace River Refuge project meets Florida Forever measures of using alternatives to fee-simple acquisitions and of protecting Strategic Habitat Areas, natural floodplains and significant surface waters. It is important to buffer and preserve the water quality and habitat of the Peace River and its creeks and to protect the water quality for the downstream Charlotte Harbor Estuary.

#### ***Manager***

Landowner with the OES, or its successor, would serve as the conservation easement monitor.



***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Property is impacted by historical phosphate mining in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and logging operations and agriculture and wildlife game farming fire have left the historically mixed-pine hardwood forest devoid of any pines.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The property will continue to be managed by the landowner with restrictions defined in a negotiated conservation easement. OES will be responsible for monitoring compliance with the terms and conditions of the easement.



Peace River Refuge Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>3,850</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>3,842</b>

Peace River Refuge Table 2

<b>Peace River Refuge FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Wood Stork</b>	<b>G4/S2</b>
<b>Little Blue Heron</b>	<b>G5/S4</b>

*There are 2 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Peace River Refuge](#)



## ***Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie***

Escambia County  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1995
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	6,777
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	4,387
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$27,299,939
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	2,390

*Note: 658 acres removed on 4/16/2010 due to residential/commercial/infrastructure development.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The pine flatwoods and swamps west of Pensacola are interspersed with wet grassy prairies dotted with carnivorous pitcher plants that are some of the last remnants of a landscape unique to the northern Gulf Coast. The Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie project will conserve these prairies and the undeveloped land around them, helping to protect the water quality of Perdido Bay and Big Lagoon, and giving the public a wealth of opportunities to learn about and enjoy this natural land. Acquisition of this project is essential to the US Navy’s base-buffering initiative.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP)

### **General Description**

The project covers a large undeveloped area of undulating topography where low ridges, remnants of ancient dune lines, alternate with slightly lower intervening swales that drain east or west, parallel to the Gulf coast; and includes 2.5 miles of frontage on Perdido Bay. The Wet Prairies in this area are some of the last examples of perhaps the most diverse plant community in the southeast. They support one of the largest stands of white- topped pitcher plants in Florida along with almost 100 other plant species. The prairies still have intact ecotones to basin swamp, scrub, sandhill, and mesic flatwood communities. The large expanses of flatwoods and Basin Swamps in the proposal provide habitat for many species of animals. No archaeological sites are known from the project. The uplands on the site are moderately vulnerable to development, particularly in the Tarkiln Bayou area.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated for use as a state park, providing opportunities for swimming, fishing, boating, camping, hiking and nature appreciation.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 7, 1994, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) added the Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie project to the CARL Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition proposal, sponsored by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI), consisted of approximately 5,515 acres, multiple owners, and a 1993 taxable value of \$3,210,940.



On October 15, 1998, LAAC redefined the essential parcels. On December 3, 1998, the LAAC approved a fee-simple, 385-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the Friends of the Prairie group, consisted of 23 owners, and a 1997 taxable value of \$380,371.

Acquisition work is proceeding on the important resource areas and in areas needed for connectivity and optimum management. Two large ownerships within the project boundary remain to be acquired, along with several smaller parcels. Significant pitcher plant prairies in sections 11, 12, 20 and 21 and the area surrounding Tarkiln Bayou and Garcon Swamp are important first priorities.

In April 2010, ARC voted to remove 658 acres because of existing residential, commercial and infrastructure development. After this most recent boundary change in 2010, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$11,544,945.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands list of projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$9,704,486.

### **Coordination**

The Nature Conservancy, as an intermediary in this project, is considered a partner as well as the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD).

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie project are 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 this state or a larger geographic area; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; and to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect. Secondary goals are to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project has the size and resource diversity to provide for uses and natural-resource-based recreational activities that are compatible with the protection of rare and sensitive resources under the state park system.

#### ***Manager***

DRP is the recommended manager. Lands acquired within the project boundary are being managed as Tarkiln Bayou Preserve State Park.



***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie Project is a high-need management area requiring intensive resource management and protection. Depending on the nature and extent of public use determined by the management plan process, there may be additional needs for management of public-use activities and facilities.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, management activities will concentrate on site security, natural and cultural resource protection, and efforts toward the development of a plan for long-term public use and resource management consistent with the stated goals and objectives of the approved Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie Project Assessment.

***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. After the initial acquisition, it will probably be several years before any significant public-use facilities are developed. The amount of any future revenue generated would depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities.

***Cooperators in management activities***

No local governments or others are recommended for management of this project.



Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1995
Project Area (GIS acres)	6,777
Acres Acquired (GIS)	4,387
at a Cost of	\$27,299,939
Acres Remaining (GIS)	2,390

Note: 658 acres removed on 4/16/2010 due to residential/commercial/infrastructure development.

Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie Table 2

Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie FNAI Elements	Score
Wherry's redflower pitcherplant	G4T3/S3
Escambia Crayfish	G2/S2
large-leaved jointweed	G3/S3

There are 4 rare species associated with the project.

Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie Table 3

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$50,515	\$50,515
OPS	\$10,000	\$10,000
Expense	\$61,307	\$61,307
OCO	\$106,000	\$1,000
FCO	\$178,000	\$0
Total	\$405,822	\$122,822

[Map\(s\): Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie](#)



## ***Pierce Mound Complex***

Franklin County

Critical Historical Resources

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1994
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	567
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	9
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$810,000
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	558

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The group of mounds near the salt marsh north of Apalachicola, left by people who lived here for over a thousand years, is one of the most important historical sites in Florida. The Pierce Mound Complex project will preserve this site and the pinelands, hammocks, and marshes around it, giving archaeologists opportunities to examine it and the public opportunities to learn about the prehistory of this region and to enjoy the scenic natural landscape.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Florida Coastal Office (formerly CAMA, Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas). The DEP's Division of Recreation & Parks (DRP) will manage the Orman site.

### **General Description**

The Pierce Mound Complex site served as both a secular and ritual center during its centuries of use. It has the potential to yield considerable data to researchers using present-day methodology. An aspect of the site not previously considered is the potential for normally perishable organic artifacts of wood and fibers in the saturated anaerobic wetland soils adjacent to the uplands portion of the site. The extensive shell midden contains subsistence data and artifacts and reflects changing environmental conditions over a thousand-year period. Salt marsh covers nearly three fourths of the project. Hydric Hammock and dense Mesic Flatwoods and Scrub, overgrown with shrubs in some places from suppression of fire, cover most of the southern quarter. The upland is threatened by residential development.

### **Public Use**

The project will be designated as an archaeological site. It will give the public an opportunity to learn about the archaeological remains, hike and picnic.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 7, 1994, the Land Acquisition and Advisory Council (LAAC) added the Pierce Mound Complex project to the Conservation & Recreation Lands (CARL) 1995 Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by the Division of Historical Resources (DHR), consisted of approximately 559 acres, nine owners, and a 1993 taxable value of \$877,311. The nine landowners are as follows: David





Miller (Mahr), John G. Hodges, Sharon Delores Connell Shuler, Joe Lindsey, Franklin County, Alvin Pines, Christene Rhodes, ANRR Company, and the City of Apalachicola. The essential parcel to acquire is the Mahr tract.

On June 27, 2000, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) approved a fee-simple, 10-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the City of Apalachicola, consisted of four owners (Roger Ingram, Apalachicola Oyster Works Inc., Douglas Gaidry, and the City of Apalachicola), and a 1999 taxable value of \$787,585. The addition included the Orman House, Chapman Botanical Garden (owned by the City), and two other parcels. The historic Orman house (1-acre) has been acquired. After the most recent addition in 2000, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$1,661,968.

On June 9, 2006, ARC moved this project to Group A of the 2006 Florida Forever (FF) Priority list. On December 10, 2010, ARC voted to move this project from the Critical Natural Lands category to a new category called, "Critical Historical Resources."

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$4,485,228.

### **Coordination**

The portion of the project within the City of Apalachicola is in the Apalachicola Bay Area of Critical State Concern.

### **Management Policy Statement**

Management should provide for uses and recreational activities that are compatible with the protection of any rare and sensitive resources, particularly the mounds. The major activity will be interpretation of the cultural resources on the site in such a way that they are not degraded. The old railroad grade is suitable for a hiking trail.

### **Management Prospectus**

The Pierce Mound Complex is one of the most important archaeological sites on the Gulf Coast of Florida. Major natural communities in the project include estuarine tidal marsh, hydric hammock, mesic flatwoods, and scrub.

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Pierce Mound Complex has the archaeological resources to qualify as a state archaeological site.

### ***Manager***

DEP's Florida Coastal Office is recommended as lead manager. Staff of the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve will serve as on-site managers. The Division of Historical Resources is recommended as the cooperating manager.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, initial or intermediate activities will concentrate on site security, resource inventory, and removal of existing trash. The Florida Coastal Office will provide appropriate



access to the public while protecting environmental and archaeological resources on-site. Management of the site will be incorporated into the existing management plan of the Research Reserve. Long-range plans for this property involve its use for research and education activities. A future trail will link the property with the environmental education complex of the reserve. The habitat diversity (estuarine tidal marsh, mesic flatwoods, hydric hammock, scrub, maritime hammock and scrubby flatwoods) combines with one of the most important archaeological sites on the Gulf coast of Florida to produce an exceptional opportunity for public education.

***Revenue-generating potential***

There are no plans for revenue generation from this site.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The Division of Historical Resources will cooperate in managing the archaeological resources of the site.



Pierce Mound Complex Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1994
Project Area (GIS acres)	567
Acres Acquired (GIS)	9
at a Cost of	\$810,000
Acres Remaining (GIS)	558

Pierce Mound Complex Table 2

Pierce Mound Complex FNAI Elements	
Alligator Snapping Turtle	G3G4/S3
Eastern River Cooter	G5T5/S3

There are 2 rare species are associated with the project

Pierce Mound Complex Table 3

Management Cost Summary: CAMA	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$0	\$8,000
OPS	\$14,500	\$6,500
Expense	\$0	\$6,500
OCO	\$0	\$0
FCO	\$50,000	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$64,500</b>	<b>\$21,000</b>

[Map\(s\): Pierce Mound Complex](#)



## ***Pine Island Slough Ecosystem***

Indian River and Osceola Counties

Critical Natural Lands

<i>Project-at-a-Glance</i>	
<i>Placed on List</i>	2004
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	48,973
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	48,973

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Public acquisition of this project will contribute to the following Florida Forever goals: (1) Increase the protection of Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels – preserves habitat for several rare species of vascular flora and rare animals; (2) Increase natural resource-based public recreation and educational opportunities – provides a potential for a diverse recreational experiences such as hiking, camping, nature appreciation; bird watching, and horseback riding, to name a few; (3) Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state – constitutes an intact example of an endemic Florida ecosystem. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses a number of Florida Forever project sites.

### **Manager(s)**

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has been designated as the lead manager.

### **General Description**

The Pine Island Slough Ecosystem project consists of approximately 48,973 (GIS) acres in Osceola and Indian River Counties. This landscape of intact ecological upland and wetland habitat is reminiscent of the kind of landscape that once dominated Central Florida in pre-European settlement times. It is contiguous with the Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park, which is noted for its high-quality resource values, and the project’s acquisition would allow for the protection of and management of additional high ecological quality habitats in an area of Florida with significant vertebrate wildlife, hydrological values and other important natural resource attributes.

### **Public Use**

The size, resource values and location of the Pine Island Slough project provides a potential for a diverse recreational experience. The size, location and high resource quality of Pine Island Slough offers potential for recreational activities typically envisioned on high quality state-owned conservation land (i.e., this would not include the more intensively developed uses like ball fields, playgrounds, off-road-vehicle or motocross tracks). Since its principal purposes include protection of biodiversity, and provision of resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities, programs would be oriented towards conservation and protection of wildlife species, with careful control of public uses.



Development of facilities, as on all wildlife management areas, would be the minimal amount necessary to assure a high-quality recreational experience. Development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On August 20, 2004, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Pine Island Slough Ecosystem project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2004 Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition, by the Nature Conservancy (TNC), consisted of approximately 49,583 acres, a single owner, Latt Maxcy Corp., and a 2003 estimated tax assessed value of \$13,144,221.

On June 5, 2005 ARC moved Pine Island Slough Ecosystem to the Group B list.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands list of projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$198,551,316.

### **Coordination**

The Office of Environmental Services is pursuing partnerships with South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and the counties. TNC is considered a partner on this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The FWC proposes to manage the Pine Island Slough project for protection and management of high ecological quality habitats in an area of Florida with significant vertebrate wildlife, hydrological values and other important natural resource attributes. It is contiguous with the Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park, which is noted for its high-quality resource values. This area should be restored to a natural character to the greatest extent possible. The placement of facilities shall be restricted to existing disturbed areas. Public and private uses that are incompatible or would interfere with the protection, restoration or management of the natural resources, for which this project is to be acquired, shall be prohibited.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The proposed project would be expected to provide additional habitat for many focal species, which according to the FWC, are indicators of natural communities, and suitable habitat conditions for other wildlife species. The list of species documented or reported to occur within the proposal predicts that as many as five focal species may occur on the property. The FWC environmental resource analysis shows strategic habitat conservation areas to exist within the Pine Island Slough proposed project for three species: crested caracara, Florida grasshopper sparrow and the mottled duck. Many important conservation lands have become increasingly isolated and no longer support viable populations of large widely ranging mammals and other species of wildlife. The Florida Forever Program identifies projects which provide for increased connectivity across the landscape, and which serve as ecological greenways, which provide improved habitats for fish and wildlife, opportunities for outdoor recreation,



and improved conservation of other natural resources. The Pine Island Slough Ecosystem proposed project would contribute to landscape connectivity by means of linkage to existing managed areas, and especially if acquisition of adjoining or nearby Florida Forever projects can be accomplished. These Florida Forever projects in the conservation landscape surrounding the Pine Island Slough Ecosystem proposal include the Bombing Range Ridge project, the Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector project, and the Ranch Reserve project.

### ***Manager***

FWC has been designated as the lead manager.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Some portions of the project include lands that are low-need tracts, requiring application of resource management methods, including the frequent use of prescribed fire where appropriate. However, since an estimated 47% of the project area has been disturbed for silviculture or other purposes, additional methods would be necessary for some management units in order to accomplish objectives for restoration to a desired future condition. The FWC would conduct historic vegetation analysis to determine appropriate desired future conditions, objectives, and restoration methods. This is especially important for conservation of habitats and populations of imperiled or rare species. The primary methods for perpetuation of the less disturbed natural communities might involve, for example, the reintroduction of prescribed fire and control of human uses in certain management units. Although exotic plants have not yet been observed to pose an imminent threat to the ecological integrity of the proposed project, there will be surveillance for, and removal of such infestations of exotic invasive species.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after acquisition, emphasis would be placed on site security, posting boundaries, public access, fire management, resource inventory and removal of refuse. A conceptual management plan would be developed by the FWC describing the management goals and specific objectives necessary to implement future resource management. Long-range goals would emphasize ecosystem management and the conservation of fish and wildlife. After the inventory of the plant community and historic vegetation is finished, quantified vegetation management objectives would be developed using the FWC objective-based vegetation management process. Essential roads would be stabilized to provide all-weather public access and management operations. Programs providing multiple recreational uses would also be implemented. An all-season prescribed burning management plan would be developed and implemented using conventional and biologically acceptable methods. Natural plant communities would be managed to benefit native wildlife resources. Growing-season prescribed burning would be used where appropriate to best achieve management objectives. These resources would be managed using acceptable silvicultural practices where appropriate, practical, and in pursuit of wildlife habitat objectives. Archaeological and historic sites would be managed in coordination with the Division of Historical Resources (DHR). Potential for these sites to occur in the project area is moderate.



***Revenue-generating potential***

Management would seek to improve the revenue-generating potential of areas currently in forest products production by improving wildlife diversity and resource-based recreation in such areas. Additional revenue would be generated from sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area stamps and other special hunting stamps. Some revenues might be realized in the future from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities if such projects could be economically developed.



Pine Island Slough Ecosystem Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2004
Project Area (GIS acres)	48,973
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	48,973

Pine Island Slough Ecosystem Table 2

Pine Island Slough Ecosystem FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Grasshopper Sparrow	G5T1/S1
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Large-flowered Rosemary	G3/S3
Nodding Pinweed	G3/S3
Crested Caracara	G5/S2
Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake	G4/S3
Florida Grasshopper Sparrow	G5T1/S1

There are 8 rare species associated with the project.

Pine Island Slough Ecosystem Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Resource Management	\$598,900	\$790,661
Administration	\$75,494	\$25,133
Support	\$149,080	\$31,566
Capital Improvements	\$1,091,187	\$137,415
Visitor Services/Recreation	\$1,888	\$141
Law Enforcement	\$34,511	\$34,511
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,951,060</b>	<b>\$1,019,426</b>

\*Figures include salaries for 10 FTE's.

[Map\(s\): Pine Island Slough Ecosystem](#)





## ***Pineland Site Complex***

Lee County

Critical Historical Resources

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1996
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	207
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	62
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$1,355,000
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	145

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Among the rich remains of the Calusa and earlier peoples around Charlotte Harbor, the Pineland Site Complex, with its large mounds and canals and well-preserved remains dating back almost 2000 years, may be archeologically the most important. But it is also one of the more desirable areas for development on Pine Island. The Pineland Site Complex project will protect the archaeological site and mangrove swamps near it, preserving a link of natural land to the Charlotte Harbor State Reserve, giving archaeologists the opportunity to continue their research at the site, and giving the public an opportunity to learn how the ancient inhabitants of this fast-growing area lived.

### **Manager(s)**

The University of Florida Foundation

### **General Description**

This internationally significant archaeological site was inhabited by the Calusa for over a thousand years, and includes substantial midden mounds, a burial mound, remnants of an Indian-engineered canal, and buried deposits containing organic remains. Natural habitats within the project area include tidal saltern, a tidal creek, intertidal shoreline, and a large tract of mangrove wetland. Ponds on the property are important to white ibis, egrets, herons, and wood stork. The intertidal shoreline has an eastern oyster bar community, numerous species of gastropods and bivalves, and black and red mangroves. Shoreline shell mounds exhibit a distinctive plant community. A third of the project area is pasture land. There are several species of exotic plants in the project. It is threatened by residential construction on the mounds. The project is adjacent to the Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve.

### **Public Use**

The Florida Museum of Natural History plans to provide a research and educational center on the site.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Essential parcels include all ownerships except: American Bible Church, Sapp, Samadani, and Celec. Several houses, built atop significant archaeological mounds, are included within the project boundary. These tracts with improvements should be acquired, if possible. If not, life-estates should be pursued. One tract has been acquired with Emergency Archaeological Trust funds. Another is being negotiated as



a conservation easement. Negotiations on the core parcel have begun. After the time of the most recent addition in 1996, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$1,308,148.

On October 15, 1998, the LAMAC revised the designation of the following parcels to essential: The Cloisters and Jessy Chris. On December 10, 2010, the ARC voted to move this project from the Critical Natural Lands category to a new category called, "Critical Historical Resources."

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Historical Resources list of projects. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$10,263,889.

### **Coordination**

The Archeological Conservancy was an intermediary in the acquisition of the acreage that has been acquired. In addition, the University of Florida Foundation, Lee County, and Calusa Land Trust are considered partners on this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary objective of management of the Pineland Site Complex project is to preserve the Pineland Site Complex, an archaeological site of national significance. Achieving this objective will allow further scientific research on this site and provide the public with scientific research on this site and give the public opportunities to learn about the prehistoric inhabitants of Pine Island.

The project should be managed under the single-use concept: management activities should be directed toward the preservation of the site's archaeological resources. Consumptive uses such as hunting or logging should not be permitted. Managers should control public access to the project; limit public motor vehicles to a small part of the area; thoroughly inventory the resources; and monitor management activities to ensure that they are actually protecting the archaeological resources and maintaining or improving the quality of any natural communities, such as mangrove swamps, on site. Managers should limit the number and size of recreational facilities, such as hiking trails, ensure that they avoid the most sensitive resources, and site them in already disturbed areas when possible.

The project area includes the known components of the Pineland Site Complex and therefore has the configuration to achieve its primary objective.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Pineland Site complex is an internationally significant archaeological site listed on the National Register of Historic Places; it qualifies as a state historic site.

#### ***Manager***

The University of Florida Foundation is recommended as the lead manager.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Needs will include maintenance (fences, weed and exotic plant control, etc.) and security (periodic patrol of the more remote wetlands areas, active surveillance of the central site area).



***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, initial or intermediate activities will concentrate on site security, resource inventory, and property maintenance (cleaning up of dumped materials, exotic plant eradication, etc.). A master plan will be in place to guide a phased development process leading to a permanent research/education center open regularly to the public within five years. Initial development will concentrate on public safety, security, and resources assessment, including inventory of endangered and threatened species. A plan for conservation and enhancement of significant habitats identified in this process will be developed.

***Revenue-generating potential***

In addition to the income produced by the invested endowed funds, the Center's director will be responsible for bringing in grant funds from public and private sources and for establishing and maintaining reciprocal relationships with local and regional schools, colleges, universities, museums, nature centers, and conservation societies. With the establishment of a visitor's center, a book store and gift shop will be operated to offset expenses of center operation and provide funds to enhance center programs. A local support organization has already been formed and is operating under the auspices of the University of Florida Foundation. It will continue to raise funds to support specific center programs and initiatives.

***Cooperators in management activities***

Activities to enhance natural resources will be undertaken in consultation with qualified conservation personnel, including staff from the Lee County Division of Environmental Sciences and the cooperating manager, the DEP Aquatic Preserve and State Buffer Preserve.



Pineland Site Complex Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1996
Project Area (GIS acres)	207
Acres Acquired (GIS)	62
at a Cost of	\$1,355,000
Acres Remaining (GIS)	145

Pineland Site Complex Table 2

*There are no rare species associated with the project*

Pineland Site Complex Table 3

Management Cost Summary: University of Florida Foundation	Startup	Development
Source of Funds	Grants	Grants
Salary	\$44,450	\$45,809
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$1,000	\$1,200
OCO	\$0	\$0
FCO	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$45,450</b>	<b>\$47,009</b>

[\*Map\(s\): Pineland Site Complex\*](#)



## ***Pinhook Swamp***

Baker and Columbia Counties

Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1992
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	183,724
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	129,918*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$65,183,376
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	53,806

*\*Includes acreage acquired by the Suwannee River Water Management District.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Pinhook Swamp: The pine flatwoods and swamps between the Osceola National Forest and the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge have been logged but are otherwise undisturbed. The Pinhook Swamp project will protect and restore a natural area linking those two conservation lands and the Suwannee River, providing a huge unpopulated tract of land for such wildlife as the Florida black bear and sandhill crane; maintaining the water flows from this area to the Okefenokee Swamp, Suwannee River, and St. Mary’s River; and giving the public a large, near-wilderness tract in which to enjoy various recreational activities, from simple nature appreciation to active hunting and fishing.

Suwannee Buffers (Deep Creek Site): The Suwannee River, for all its beauty, flows through pine plantations and farms for much of its course, and only its high limestone banks are in close to a natural state—and they are prime sites for residential development. The Deep Creek Site will protect two natural areas along the river or its tributaries, protecting the highest waterfall in the peninsula and the highest bluffs on the river, enhancing the water quality of the river and its tributaries; protecting northern plants that grow along the river and rare fish that live in the river; and giving the public scenic areas to enjoy for years to come. The Florida National Scenic Trail, a cross-Florida hiking and non-motorized trail, is also planned to cross this project. The trail is a congressionally designated national scenic trail.

### **Manager(s)**

Pinhook Swamp: United States Forest Service (USFS) and the Florida Forest Service/FFS, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Florida Department of Environmental Protection (Suwannee Buffers/southern Deep Creek); the FFS (northern Deep Creek).

### **General Description**

Pinhook Swamp: The project consists of a large tract of mostly wet flatwoods, floodplain swamp, and floodplain forest between Osceola National Forest and Okefenokee Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. It provides a linkage between these managed areas as well as increased protection for this wetlands/flatwoods ecosystem, which is important for the long-term conservation of the state-threatened Florida black bear and other animals. Pinhook Swamp also provides excellent habitat for other wetland-dependent species such as the state-threatened Florida sandhill crane. The Swamp is connected to the



Suwannee River, St. Mary's River and the Okefenokee Swamp. The archaeological and historic value of the project is low to moderate. The greatest threats to the area are intensive silviculture and mining. The Deep Creek Drainage Tract protects buffer areas of four tributaries of the Suwannee River and much of the watershed of Deep Creek and serves as a corridor between the Osceola National Forest, Big Shoals State Park, and Suwannee River Water Management District lands along the River.

### **Public Use**

The Pinhook Swamp is designated as a forest with such uses as fishing, hunting, canoeing, camping and hiking. The Deep Creek site will be designated for use as a state park and a state forest, with such public uses as fishing, boating, hunting, camping, hiking and environmental education.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The large Rayonier tract connecting the Osceola National Forest to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge has been acquired by the state. It will be used as the basis for a land-and-minerals exchange with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service. Pinhook Swamp: Phase I (essential) consists of large tracts adjacent to Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge and Osceola National Forest—J.W. Langdale Woodlands, Inc. and Jefferson Smurfit Corp./Carnegie US Steel Pension Funds. Phase II is the "Impassable Bay" tract—ITT Rayonier/Sam Summers (acquired by USFS through The Nature Conservancy (TNC)) and all remaining owners.

On July 16, 1996, the LAMAC added 18,100 acres to the project boundary. Additionally, the LAMAC approved the addition of federal mineral rights under state-owned lands to the Pinhook project for exchange purposes.

On August 22, 2000, the Acquisition and Restoration Council added 25,000 acres to the Pinhook Swamp project boundary.

At the April 6, 2001, Council meeting, the Suwannee Buffers, Deep Creek Site was combined with the Pinhook Swamp project boundary.

On October 24, 2002 the Council added 4,585 acres to the project boundaries.

On June 4, 2004 the Council added 31,225 acres in Baker County, previously assumed to be included, as part of a 2000 boundary amendment, in the boundaries of the Pinhook Swamp project. After the most recent boundary change in 2004, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$16,469,070.

The BOT acquired 8,311 acres in August 2005 through five conservation easements.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the category of Critical Natural Lands.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$65,438,484.

### **Coordination**

Pinhook Swamp is a shared acquisition with the USFS. TNC is an intermediary in the purchase of some tracts for the federal government. The Deep Creek site is on the Suwannee River Water Management



District (SRWMD) five-year plan for land acquisition. St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) is also considered a partner.

### **Management Policy Statement**

**Pinhook Swamp:** The primary goals of management of the Pinhook Swamp project are: to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; and to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation.

**Suwannee Buffers (Deep Creek):** The primary goals of management of this part of the project are: 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 this state or a larger geographic area; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; and to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Pinhook Swamp is a large area of timbered flatwoods and swamps between the Osceola National Forest and the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. Its large size, strategic location, and forest and wildlife resources qualify it as a state forest and state wildlife management area.

#### ***Manager***

The FFS and the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service are the recommended Managers.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Pinhook is a low-need (moderate need) tract.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

A portion of the site would immediately fall under the National Forests in Florida's Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and a portion under state protection. Management activities will focus on site security, resource inventory and management, plus any necessary prescribed fire management.

#### ***Revenue-generating potential***

In cooperation with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), this area may one day provide revenues from quota hunts. The Forest Service and FFS will soon be working with FWC to obtain a projected revenue. State and National Forest user fees are other sources of revenue.



### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge adjacent to Pinhook's northern boundary, will be cooperators in managing the area.

### **Suwannee Buffers: Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The southern part of the Deep Creek Drainage tract has unique resources that qualify it as a unit of the state park system. The project's size and diversity also make it highly desirable for use and management as a state forest.

#### ***Manager***

The DRP is recommended to manage Deep Creek's southern portion. The FFS is recommended to manage the northern three-quarters of the Deep Creek Drainage tract.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The southern portion of the Deep Creek Drainage tract is a high-need management area including public recreational use and development compatible with resource management. On the areas to be managed by the FFS there are no known major disturbances that will require extraordinary attention, so the level of management intensity is expected to be typical for a state forest.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition of the areas to be managed by the DRP, management activities will concentrate on site security, natural and cultural resource protection, and efforts toward the development of a plan for long-term public use and resource management. The FFS will provide public access for low-intensity, non-facilities-related outdoor recreation. Initial activities will include securing the site, providing public and fire management accesses, inventorying resources, and removing trash. The FFS will provide access to the public while protecting sensitive resources. The project's natural resources and threatened and endangered plants and animals will be inventoried to provide the basis for a management plan. Long-range plans of the FFS will generally be directed toward restoring disturbed areas to their original conditions, as far as possible, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. An all-season burning program will use, whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks to contain fires. Timber management will mostly involve improvement thinning and regeneration harvests. Plantations will be thinned and, where appropriate, reforested with species found in natural ecosystems. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age. Infrastructure will primarily be located in disturbed areas and will be the minimum required for management and public access. The FFS will promote environmental education.

#### ***Revenue-generating potential***

The DRP expects no significant revenue to be generated initially. After acquisition, it will probably be several years before any significant public facilities are developed. The amount of any future revenue generated would depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities. The FFS will sell timber as





needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will provide a variable source of revenue, but the revenue-generating potential for this project is expected to be low.

***Cooperators in management activities***

None.



Pinhook Swamp Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1992
Project Area (GIS acres)	183,724
Acres Acquired (GIS)	129,918*
at a Cost of	\$65,183,376
Acres Remaining (GIS)	53,806

\*Includes acreage acquired by the Suwannee River Water Management District.

Pinhook Swamp Table 2

Pinhook Swamp FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Okefenokee Zale Moth	G2/S1
Suwannee Alligator Snapping Turtle	G2/S2
Carpenter Frog	G4/S1
large rosebud orchid	G4/S1
pondspice	G3?/S2
Many-lined Salamander	G5/S1
Blackbanded Sunfish	G3G4/S1S3
Gopher Frog	G3/S3

There are 21 rare species associated with the project.

Pinhook Swamp Table 3a

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$22,167	\$22,167
OPS	\$14,560	\$14,560
Expense	\$11,400	\$11,400
OCO	\$55,000	\$1,000
FCO	\$85,000	\$0
Total	\$188,127	\$49,127



Pinhook Swamp Table 3b

<b>Management Cost Summary: FFS</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>	<b>CARL</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$28,140</b>	<b>\$28,140</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$13,000</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$81,100</b>	<b>\$2,000</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$122,140</b>	<b>\$35,140</b>

[Map\(s\): Pinhook Swamp](#)



## ***Pringle Creek Forest***

Flagler County

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2012
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	8,446
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	8,446

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The purpose for acquisition would be to enhance the landscape mosaic of conservation lands that provides protection of the Pellicer Creek watershed and its tributaries. It would also retain functioning natural systems that reduce the possibilities of flood damage and water supply shortages, provide habitat protection and enhance numerous rare species and imperiled natural communities, and ensure and improve upon the ecosystem services this property provides for capturing, storing, filtering, and slowly releasing clean water to Pellicer Creek and its significant downstream estuary.

### **Manager(s)**

Flagler County

### **General Description**

Pringle Creek originates in the northern portion of the project and flows north into Pellicer Creek which then flows eastward into the estuarine waters of the Matanzas River. In the proposal site, Pringle Creek is surrounded by a mostly natural forested wetland corridor. Acquiring the proposal would contribute to surface water protection of Pringle and Pellicer creeks as well as the Matanzas River. Aquifer recharge is thought to be high on this site due to the functional wetlands.

Over one-half (56 percent) of Pringle Creek Forest consists of pine plantations planted on former mesic and wet flatwoods communities. They are North Florida slash pine and almost all the trees 12 to 14 years old because of the 1998 wildfire. Slightly more than one-third (38 percent) is represented by dome and basin swamps impacted by logging of cypress. Less than 6 percent is categorized as baygall, blackwater stream, hydric hammock, mesic/wet flatwoods, floodplain swamp, marsh/prairie, scrubby flatwoods, and mesic hammock natural communities.

### **Public Use**

Regarding recreational opportunities, the property has potential for hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, picnicking, primitive camping, nature interpretive trails and geocaching. At this time, some of these activities could be offered on existing woods roads without the need for major development. The current roads could serve as trails suitable for hiking, biking and horseback riding. Currently, there is a hunting lease on the property.



### **Acquisition Planning**

Pringle Creek Forest was submitted by Flagler County and DEP's Guana-Tolomato-Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTMNERR). Being on the Florida Forever priority list is a requirement for getting acquisition grant funding with the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP), associated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA). Flagler County and the GTMNERR plan to pursue CELCP funding for this project. After the most recent boundary change in xxxx, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$12,700,000.

This project was placed on the Florida Forever list as a Partnerships and Regional Incentives project.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$13,136,004.

### **Coordination**

Flagler County is anticipating being an acquisition partner on this site, but with NOAA rather than the State of Florida. The St. Johns River Water Management District is supportive of this project. However, they have not committed to any assistance with funding of the acquisition.

### **Management Policy Statement**

This proposal meets the following public purposes as identified in 259.032(3), Florida Statutes, to varying degrees: (d) To conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, if the protection and conservation of such lands is necessary to enhance or protect significant surface water, groundwater, coastal, recreational, timber, or fish or wildlife resources which cannot otherwise be accomplished through local and state regulatory programs; (e) To promote water resource development that benefits natural systems and citizens of the state; (g) To provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural resource based recreation and other outdoor recreation on any part of any site compatible with conservation purposes; and (i) To conserve open spaces suitable for greenways or outdoor recreation which are compatible with conservation purposes.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The vast majority of the property (77 percent) is wetlands, with most uplands in silviculture and about 2,500 acres of the jurisdictional wetlands also in silviculture production. Flagler County plans to, over time, convert silviculture areas back to their historic natural communities.

Pringle Creek Forest is within the CELCP targeted watershed boundary. This will qualify the parcel for federal acquisition funding under the CELCP. The CELCP reserves fifteen percent of its appropriated funds for acquisitions within National Estuarine Research Reserve targeted watersheds. The Florida Forever listing is a prerequisite for funding through CELCP. Additional management obligations and details will be presented in a later comprehensive land management plan.

#### ***Manager***

Flagler County will assume responsibility for managing the park using existing staff.



***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Managing this property is not anticipated to require intense management due to the proposed activities.

Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure

Implementing the intended uses of this property would begin immediately upon acquisition. It is anticipated that environmental studies and archaeological and cultural resource surveys would be initiated as part of or immediately following the acquisition process. The development of passive recreation plans, permitting and construction of the improvements would have a goal of initiation within 5 years.

No infrastructure other than pumphouses for the wells is presently on the property. Planned infrastructure includes the installation of restroom facilities and a parking facility, picnic tables, limited camping facilities, and nature trails with bird watching stations. Flagler County Parks and Recreation will perform grounds keeping and maintenance on the facilities and improvements. Flagler County Land Management will oversee the natural community restoration and maintenance. Security will be provided by the Flagler County Sheriff's Office.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The revenue generating potential is limited to the harvesting of existing silviculture stands. It is premature to speculate on the revenue potential as it is unknown whether the current owner intends to harvest merchantable timber as part of the purchase and sale terms. Development, operation, and maintenance costs for natural communities, activities, passive recreation and camping will be provided by Flagler County via grants and general revenue funding. The county will assume responsibility for managing the park utilizing existing staff. County Parks and Recreation personnel will maintain the park features and facilities and the Land Management Department will monitor and conduct natural resource activities. Volunteer and educational groups will be welcomed and encouraged to become involved in the management and care of the park.

***Cooperators in management activities***

Currently the GTMNERR is an anticipated co-manager of the Pringle Creek Forest property, however, these obligations and restrictions may shape future management activities and partnerships.



Pringle Creek Forest Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2012
Project Area (GIS acres)	8,446
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	8,446

Pringle Creek Forest Table 2

Pringle Creek Forest FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Celestial Lily	G2/S2

*There are 2 rare species associated with the project.*

*[Map\(s\): Pringle Creek Forest](#)*



## ***Pumpkin Hill Creek***

Duval County

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1994
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	23,235
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	11,257*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$9,868,766*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	11,978

\*Includes expenditures of SJRWMD.

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The growth of the city of Jacksonville and its outlying developed areas has reduced natural lands in Duval County to a fraction of their original extent. The Pumpkin Hill Creek project will protect one of the larger natural uplands left in the county, helping maintain the water quality of the Nassau and St. Johns Rivers and their fringing marshes—the foundation of an important fishery—protecting wading bird rookeries, and giving the public opportunities to fish, hunt, hike, and canoe.

### **Manager(s)**

Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), City of Jacksonville and the federal government all manage lands within the project boundaries.

### **General Description**

As a remnant of relatively intact natural communities in the urban landscape of Duval County, the Pumpkin Hill Creek project will protect upland buffer to the Nassau River—St. Johns River Marshes Aquatic Preserve, an Outstanding Florida Water that supports a significant commercial and recreational fishery. Besides sandhill, large areas of scrubby flatwoods of diverse quality, wet flatwoods, and salt marsh, the project contains nearly pristine maritime hammock. It provides habitat for several rare species and contains two colonial wading bird rookeries, one of which is used by the federally endangered wood stork. Manatees frequent both the St. Johns and Nassau Rivers and move into tidal creeks, such as Hill Creek and Clapboard Creek, adjacent to the project. Fourteen archaeological sites are known from the project, including the ruins of the early 19th century Fitzpatrick Plantation house. The cultural resource value of the project is high. The area is threatened by urban development.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated as a buffer preserve.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 9, 1993, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) added Pumpkin Hill Creek to the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by the City of Jacksonville and the SJRMD, is approximately 6,292 acres, 25 parcels, 12 owners, and a





1993 taxable value of \$9,383,700. The essential parcels included North Shore (acquired by TNC using Cedar Bay Cogeneration Project mitigation funds), Verdie Forest and Penland (acquired jointly with SJRWMD), and Tison and Birchfield (acquired by the SJRWMD).

On March 14, 1997, the LAAC approved a fee-simple, 635-acre addition (aka Sample Swamp property) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the City of Jacksonville, consisted of multiple owners and parcels, and a 1996 taxable value of \$995,638. On October 15, 1998, the Land Acquisition Management Advisory Council (LAMAC) designated an additional 1,419 acres as essential including Sample Swamp, City National, Beasley, Wingate, and two small connecting parcels.

On October 17, 2000, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) approved a fee-simple, 18,995-acre addition to the project boundary. The addition was sponsored by the City of Jacksonville, the Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA) and consisted of 93 owners, 176 parcels, and a 1999 taxable value of \$7,624,669. On February 7, 2003, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 73-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by TNC, consisted of 3 owners, Caldwell Trust (37 acres), the Cambridge A&E Ltd, & Squires (36 acres), 5 parcels, and a 2002 taxable value of \$399,726.

On December 5, 2003, ARC moved this project to Group A of the 2004 Florida Forever Priority list.

On December 3, 2004, the ARC approved a 658.3-acre deletion to the project boundary. The deletion consisted of 4 parcels (D2, D3, D4, and the southern 2/3rds of D7) with a taxable value of \$541,781. The project was moved to Group B of the 2005 Florida Forever Priority list.

On December 9, 2005, ARC moved this project to Group A of the 2006 Florida Forever Priority list.

On August 11, 2006, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 713-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the Division of Recreation & Parks, in coordination with the City of Jacksonville Preservation Project, consisted of 41 ownerships, 50 parcels, and a 2005 taxable value of \$4,180,827. DRP will manage the addition, with the exception of 24.75 acres in Component 11, owned by Hughes, which will be managed by the City of Jacksonville. The parcels have been designated as essential. After the most recent boundary change in 2006, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$14,784,841.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$123,798,142.

### **Coordination**

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is an intermediary in the project. Resolutions in support of this project include SJRWMD in support of a shared acquisition. SJRWMD, the Florida Coastal Office (formerly CAMA), the Florida Communities Trust (FCT), and the City of Jacksonville are acquisition partners.



### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Pumpkin Hill Creek project are to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Pumpkin Hill Creek project includes uplands centrally located in the Nassau River-St. Johns River Marshes Aquatic Preserve. The project qualifies as a state buffer preserve because it will protect uplands important to the hydrology of the sensitive tidal marshes of the aquatic preserve.

#### ***Manager***

Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), is recommended as the lead Manager.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Pumpkin Hill Creek Project generally includes lands that are “low-need” tracts, requiring basic resource management and protection.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Long-range plans for this project will generally be directed toward restoring disturbed areas to their original conditions, as far as possible, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. An all-season burning program will use, whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks to contain fires. Infrastructure will be located in disturbed areas and will be the minimum needed for management and public access.

#### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Portions of this project are composed of manageable pinelands that could be used to help offset operational costs. Any estimate of the revenue from the harvest of these pinelands depends upon a detailed assessment of the value of the timber and upon the amount of harvesting that is consistent with protection of natural resources on this project. No revenue is expected to be generated for some years.

#### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The SJRWMD will cooperate in managing the project.



Pumpkin Hill Creek Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1994
Project Area (GIS acres)	23,235
Acres Acquired (GIS)	11,257*
at a Cost of	\$9,868,766*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	11,978

\*Includes expenditures of SJRWMD.

Pumpkin Hill Creek Table 2

Pumpkin Hill Creek FNAI Elements	Score
Striped Newt	G2G3/S2
Piping Plover	G3/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Bird Rookery	G5/SNR
pondspice	G3?/S2
Macgillivray's Seaside Sparrow	G4T3/S2
Worthington's Marsh Wren	G5T3/S2
Wood Stork	G4/S2
Atlantic Salt Marsh Mink	G5T3/S3
Roseate Spoonbill	G5/S2
Least Tern	G4/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3

There are 15 rare species associated with the project.

Pumpkin Hill Creek Table 3

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL/LATF	not provided
Salary	\$62,079.65	not provided
OPS	\$28,631.85	not provided
Expense	\$24,762.68	not provided
OCO	\$0	not provided
Special	\$0	not provided
FCO	\$50,000	not provided
Total	\$165,474.18	not provided

[Map\(s\): Pumpkin Hill Creek](#)



## **Raiford-Osceola Greenway**

Baker and Union Counties

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Redesigned for List</i>	2010
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	67,702
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	67,702

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Raiford-Osceola Greenway (R-OG) Florida Forever Project, created at the request of the Office of Greenways and Trails to divide the Camp Blanding to Osceola Greenway into two projects. The R-OG project is a 67,702-acre portion of the 2003 Camp Blanding to Osceola Greenway Florida Forever project. Public acquisition of the R-OG project will contribute to the following Florida Forever goals: (1) Increase the protection of Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels - provide a landscape connector between Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway project on the east which connects to the Northeast Florida Timberlands further east, the Raiford Wildlife Management Area (WMA) on the south, and Osceola National Forest on the northwest; (2) Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state - four major blackwater streams from three major river basins originating within the project area, as well as several headwaters and tributaries; and (3) Increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources, many of these areas are in pine plantation. In addition, natural areas of floodplain, basin, and baygall swamp can be found on more than 32,000 acres. The Florida National Scenic Trail, a cross-Florida hiking and non-motorized trail, is also planned to cross this project. The trail is a congressionally designated national scenic trail.

### **Manager(s)**

The Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) Office of Environmental Services (OES) monitors conservation easements unless otherwise noted. The Florida Forest Service/FFS and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) offered a management statement on the original project, Camp Blanding-Osceola Florida Forever Greenway.

### **General Description**

The Camp Blanding-Osceola Greenway project was subdivided to create two projects: Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway (CB-RG) and Raiford-Osceola Greenway (R-OG). The Raiford-Osceola Greenway project consists of land abutting the Camp Blanding- Raiford Greenway project on the east to the southeast boundary of the Osceola National Forest. It connects several managed areas in Baker and Union Counties, resulting in a potential contiguous area of more than half a million acres of publicly owned, managed, or planned to own/managed lands in north-central Florida. Physiographic features of



interest include: The Trail Ridge, the eastern portions of the Cody Scarp, and several large wetlands that have been ecologically devalued by silvicultural activities or mining.

### **Public Use**

The R-OG project is an expansive area that could have significant natural resource-based potential if portions of the project were available to the public. Particularly significant is the block of land west of SR 231 containing Palestine Lake. This project is being offered as less-than-fee with limited public access. Through discussion, representatives of the landowner have indicated that they will consider allowing continued limited public uses that are being allowed today. All trails throughout the project have potential for being multiple-use trails with hiking, horseback riding, and bicycling. Of the activities mentioned, the 2000 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan identifies hunting within the Union County portion of the project as having a high need for the year 2005 for the region in which these counties are located.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 5, 2003, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Camp Blanding–Osceola Greenway project to Group A of the Florida Forever 2004 Priority list. This fee-simple and less-than-fee project, sponsored by the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) and the Conservation Trust of Florida (CTF), consisted of approximately 153,000 acres, multiple ownerships, and a 2002 taxable value of \$28,508,089. The essential parcels were identified as the Plum Creek and Wachovia ownerships.

On October 13, 2006, the ARC adopted a redesign of the essential parcels within the original project. The number and acreage of essential parcels was revised by removing 106 parcels (64,250 acres) and adding 52 parcels (10,180 acres). The result of this was that a total of 54,020 acres remaining within the boundary were longer designated as essential. The new essential parcel configuration will connect Camp Blanding to the Raiford WMA, then to the Osceola National Forest.

On June 11, 2010 the ARC adopted a redesign to the Camp Blanding-Osceola Greenway project that identified 67,457 acres in the Raiford-Osceola Greenway as well as 33,977 acres in the Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway. After the most recent project redesign in 2010, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$193,255,020.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Less-Than-Fee category in the Florida Forever list.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$96,312,862.

### **Coordination**

CTF and OGT are considered acquisition partners on this project.



### **Management Policy Statement**

The owners of the property have indicated they want to continue the operation of their property under the protection and guidance of a conservation easement. Should this request change to a full-fee purchase, FFS and FWC have agreed to be cooperating managers. The Division of Historical Resources reports the new configuration of the R-OG project holds 92 archaeological sites and 2 historical sites with no historical cemeteries.

### **Management Prospectus**

This project is being offered as less-than-fee with limited public access. The property is currently managed as a commercial timber operation, and it will continue to be managed as such if a conservation easement over the property is purchased. Representatives of the landowner have indicated that they will consider allowing continued limited public uses that are being allowed today. Details of the level of public access would be negotiated with the landowner during the development of a conservation easement. The Office of Environmental Services will be responsible for monitoring the property to ensure that the terms of the conservation easement are met.



Raiford to Osceola Greenway Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Redesigned for List</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>67,702</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>67,702</b>

Raiford to Osceola Greenway Table 2

<b>FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Red-cockaded Woodpecker</b>	<b>G3/S2</b>
<b>Eastern Indigo Snake</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Many-lined Salamander</b>	<b>G5/S1</b>
<b>Bachman's Sparrow</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Chapman's fringed orchid</b>	<b>G2/SNR</b>
<b>Timber Rattlesnake</b>	<b>G4/S3</b>
<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>

*There are 10 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Raiford-Osceola Greenway](#)



## **Rainbow River Corridor**

Citrus and Marion Counties  
Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2007
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	1,171
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	42
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$2,926,164*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	1,129

\*Includes \$2,606,164 in FCT funds.

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The Rainbow River Corridor project is designed to protect most of the undeveloped or minimally developed private land remaining along the Rainbow River. The southern parcels would bring a remaining large portion of undeveloped shoreline along the eastern side of the river into state ownership and provide a connection to the southern end of the Rainbow Springs State Park. Public acquisition of these lands will prevent further development and conflicting land uses that could further degrade the ecological value of this area. In addition, the potential restoration of altered habitats would help restore and maintain water quality and habitat along one of Florida’s largest spring-run streams. This project meets several Florida Forever goals, including those of increasing biodiversity protection by conserving 916 acres of rare species habitat, of preserving landscape linkages and conservation corridors by preserving 1,062 acres of ecological greenways, of protecting surface waters of the state by preserving 1,154 acres that provide surface-water protection, of preserving aquifer recharge areas, and by increasing natural-resource based recreation opportunities by filling several land gaps between sections of the Rainbow River State Park.

### **Manager(s)**

The property is proposed to be managed by the Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) and the Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT). DRP would assume management of the parcels east of the river and a parcel adjacent to the state park, in Section 12 of Township 16 South, Range 18 East, on the north side of Southwest 77th Loop.

OGT is recommended as lead manager for the parcels on the west side of the Rainbow River and parcels on the south side of the Withlacoochee River.

The DRP notes that much of this is a full-fee acquisition adjacent to the park, which will mean that public access will be provided across the acquired parcel for varied natural resource recreation currently offered within the park, along with water-based recreation.

### **General Description**

The Rainbow River, a large spring-run stream, is a state-designated Aquatic Preserve and Outstanding Florida Water that runs southward for approximately six miles before entering the Withlacoochee River





at Dunnellon. The State Park encompasses the headwaters, with a first magnitude spring considered Florida's fourth largest, as well as much of the eastern side of the northern 60 percent of the river. This river is one of the longest spring runs in the world and represents a rare and unique natural resource worldwide. The Marjorie Harris Cross Florida Greenway State Recreation and Conservation Area adjoins a short stretch of the river at Dunnellon, then extends eastward to include a 3/4-mile common boundary inland with the state park; it also includes a tract on the western side of the river but with only two very narrow connections with the river itself. Two of the main goals of acquiring these land parcels are to fill the gaps in existing public lands, Rainbow Springs State Park (RSSP) and Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway (CFG), that are adjacent to the proposed properties and to provide added protection to this river and the ecosystem that it supports. It would connect the current northern and southern parcels of the park. The proposed acquisitions would provide a more contiguous system of natural areas by creating an intact corridor between conservation lands. It would also provide added protection for the river by safeguarding the remaining undeveloped lands in the already significantly altered waterway.

RRC encompasses several disjunct tracts lying to the north of as well as along both eastern and western sides of the river. Nearly all tracts (but not necessarily all ownerships) are contiguous with public lands. The Headwaters Property Group (370 acres) lies north of the river and runs from the state park to SR 40. The Indian Creek Property Group (193 acres), which lies along the eastern side of the river and includes about 1,264 feet of river frontage, shares its northern and southern boundaries with the state park. The Meredith Property (63 acres) is a split parcel with a small tract along the eastern side of the river (ca. 1849 feet frontage) that is surrounded by the state park. The larger tract to the west of the river is isolated from the water. The Rainbow River Ranch Property (ca. 247 acres) is north of SR 484 with 5390 feet of frontage along the eastern side of the Rainbow River. The Greenberg Property (89 acres) has ca. 3,298 feet of frontage along the western side of the river, north of Dunnellon. The Blue Run of Dunnellon Property (24 acres) is on the southern side of SR 484, east of the river across from Dunnellon, and has ca. 1,322 feet of river frontage. The Nature Preserves of America property (47 acres) is at the confluence of the Rainbow and Withlacoochee rivers, with the Rainbow River forming ca. 2,813 feet of its northern boundary, and the Withlacoochee River forming ca. 3,409 feet of its southern boundary. The FWC has calculated the river frontage as encompassing 15,935 feet.

### **Public Use**

Much of this is identified for full-fee acquisition adjacent to the park, which will mean that public access will be provided across the acquired parcel for varied natural resource recreation currently offered within the park, along with water-based recreation. Potential recreation would include hiking, biking, and picnicking. The river frontage could be used as a rest stop for canoeists, kayakers and tubers. The southern triangular 47-acre parcel is heavily forested and has several wetland areas. This property is currently used as the Rainbow River Club and includes several buildings including a clubhouse, cabins for lodging, and boating and cookout facilities. The acquisition and use of the facilities could be continued as park lodging, administration, park residence and low impact recreation such as hiking, bird



watching, kayaking and education if the membership of the current club is dissolved. The northwest, 374-acre parcel would help protect the headsprings recharge area and could provide a suitable site for future park development. The 110- acre Priest parcel is a wetland area and would be limited to passive activities such as hiking, bird watching and kayaking.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 15, 2007 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Rainbow River Corridor project to the A-list of the Florida Forever Priority List. This full-fee project was sponsored by the Rainbow River Conservation, incorporated as RRC, Inc. in a proposal submitted on December 30, 2006. It has about 1,183 acres and an assessed taxable value of \$1,157,483.

On March 28, 2008 the City of Dunnellon acquired 32.4 acres of this project for a riverside park on the south side of Highway 484 (the Cunningham/Nelson Tuber Exit Property). Funds came from the City (\$320,000) and a grant from the Florida Communities Trust (\$2,606,164). The city manages this site.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category in the Florida Forever list.

In calendar year 2017, a total of 5.09 acres closed in this project were acquired fee-simple using Florida Forever program funding.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$10,744,609.

### **Coordination**

Rainbow River Conservation Inc. worked with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and submitted the application to the Florida Communities Trust (FCT) for acquiring the Cunningham/Nelson Tuber Exit Property. The Division of State Lands has been pursuing a portion of this area that is within the park optimum boundary, on behalf of the Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP).

### **Management Policy Statement**

DRP will manage its property under a single-use concept as part of Rainbow River State Park. The OGT-manages its portion under the single-use concept as part of the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway. The primary objective of management of the Rainbow River project is to preserve the water quality of the Rainbow and Withlacoochee Rivers and Rainbow Springs by protecting the land above the underground conduits that supply the spring and providing and ensuring that the resource-based outdoor recreational opportunities of the park will continue to be enjoyed by the public. Precluding major residential and commercial development along the river will assist efforts to preserve water quality, as well as wildlife habitat in this fast-developing region.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project will be included in the management of the Rainbow River State Park. The site can be used for a variety of compatible resource-based outdoor recreational activities. As a part of the Rainbow



River State Park, hunting would not be permitted. Public use of the cabins and recreational facility on the southern parcel may be continued. Portions managed by OGT will be included in the management of the Greenway. The site can be utilized for a variety of compatible resource-based outdoor recreational activities. As a part of the Greenway, hunting would not be permitted.

***Manager***

DRP is recommended as the lead manager for the parcels on the east side of the river. OGT is recommended as lead manager for the parcels on the west side of the Rainbow River and parcels on the south side of the Withlacoochee River.

***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Rainbow River project will be a high-need management area with emphasis on perpetuation of the property's resources, particularly as related to the Withlacoochee and Rainbow Rivers, the springs of the Rainbow River, and compatible resource-based recreation. An evaluation of the condition of existing structures will need to be completed. The OGT portion of the Rainbow River project will emphasize perpetuation of the property's resources, particularly the Withlacoochee and Rainbow Rivers, the springs of the Rainbow River, and compatible resource-based recreation. Both managing agencies will need an evaluation of the condition of existing structures. Public use of existing structures, such as those existing on the southern parcel, and the addition of any other infrastructure for the lands added to the park will increase the intensity of management. Restoration would require an intensity of management as dictated by study of the site.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Vehicular access by the public will be confined to designated points and routes. Emphasis will be given to the protection of water quality of adjacent rivers and springs. Resource management activities in the first year of each fee title acquisition will concentrate on site security and development of a resource inventory. Long-term management may include a wide range of resource-based recreation and associated facilities. The integration of appropriate public uses will create a recreational linkage between the State Park and land managed by the Office of Greenway and Trails.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The DRP and the OGT expect no significant revenue from this property immediately after fee title acquisition, and the amount of future revenue will depend on the nature and extent of public use and the facilities existing or developed in the future.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The DRP and the OGT will, as appropriate, cooperate with local governments, other state agencies, and the water management district to further resource management, recreational and educational opportunities, and the development of the lands for state park and for Greenway purposes.



Rainbow River Corridor Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2007
Project Area (GIS acres)	1,171
Acres Acquired (GIS)	42
at a Cost of	\$2,926,164*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	1,129

\*Includes 2,606,164 in FCT funding.

Rainbow River Corridor Table 2

Rainbow River Corridor FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Suwannee Cooter	G5T3/S3
Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake	G4/S3

There are 3 rare species associated with the project.

Rainbow River Corridor Table 3a

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring
Salary	\$0	not provided
OPS	\$20,000	not provided
Expense	\$5,000	not provided
OCO	\$26,000	not provided
FCO	\$5,000	not provided
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$56,000</b>	<b>not provided</b>

Rainbow River Corridor Table 3b

Management Cost Summary: OGT	Startup	Recurring
Salary	\$0	not provided
OPS	\$25,000	not provided
Expense	\$5,000	not provided
OCO	\$20,000	not provided
FCO	\$5,000	not provided
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>	<b>not provided</b>

[Map\(s\): Rainbow River Corridor](#)



## **Ranch Reserve**

Brevard, Indian River and Osceola Counties  
Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1997
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	36,334
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	23,818*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$10,773,500*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	12,515

\*Includes funds spent and acreage acquired by the BOT and the SJRWMD.

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Large cattle ranches in Osceola County occupy a vast area of open lands—pastures, pine flatwoods, palmetto prairies, and marshes—west of the St. Johns River. These flatlands are important for wildlife like sandhill cranes, caracara, red-cockaded woodpeckers, and an experimental group of extremely rare whooping cranes. The Ranch Reserve project will acquire certain rights from ranch owners to ensure that a large part of these lands will remain as they are today, to preserve a connection of open land with public lands to the north and east, and to maintain or increase the diversity of wildlife on this wide plain.

### **Manager(s)**

The St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) will monitor compliance with the terms of the less-than-fee-simple purchase.

### **General Description**

The four cattle ranches in the project lie on the Osceola Plain west of and above the St. Johns River marshes. Mesic flatwoods interrupted by depression marshes cover about 40 percent of the project area. Swamps and hammocks make up much of the remaining natural communities. Improved pastures cover about 30 percent of the area. At least 24 Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI)-listed animals are known or reported from the project, including red-cockaded woodpeckers and one of the largest populations of sandhill cranes in Florida. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has released whooping cranes on the SJRWMD’s Escape Ranch in an attempt to reestablish the species in Florida. The project includes the headwaters of several streams that flow into the St. Johns River marsh. No archaeological sites are known. The wildlife habitat in the project is threatened by harvest of old-growth pines and conversion to more intensive agriculture or to non-agricultural use.

### **Public Use**

This project qualifies as a wildlife management area; the amount and type of public use will be negotiated with the landowners.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On October 30, 1996, Land Acquisition and Management Advisory Council (LAMAC) adopted criteria for establishing a Less-Than-Fee acquisition category: 1) resource value of the project/tract can be



adequately protected through a less-than-fee instrument; 2) seller is willing to accept a less-than-fee-simple instrument and LAMAC has determined that the project's or site's acquisition objectives can be met by acquiring a less-than-fee interest; and 3) manager is willing to oversee a less-than-fee-simple instrument.

On December 5, 1996, LAMAC transferred the remaining ownerships within the Ranch Reserve project boundary—Campbell (acquired), Mills (acquired), Kelly/Bronson and Kaup—to the Less-Than-Fee group. The SJRWMD has acquired a conservation easement over the large central tract—Escape Ranch. In 2000 the Board of Trustees acquired a conservation easement over the Mills Ranch. After that acquisition in 2000, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$11,566,678. On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Less-than-Fee category in the Florida Forever list. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$50,383,148.

### **Coordination**

SJRWMD is an acquisition partner with the state and has acquired substantial acreage within the project area. TNC is an acquisition partner also.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary objective of management of the Ranch Reserve project is to preserve and restore the mosaic of pine flatwoods and wetlands in southeastern Osceola County (and contiguous portions of Brevard and Indian River counties), along with the populations of wildlife that use these lands. Achieving this objective will provide a refuge for threatened animals like the red-cockaded woodpecker, sandhill crane, and many others. The project should be managed to foster, preserve and protect in perpetuity the natural, ecological, wildlife and plant life features and values of the property and to prevent any use of the property that will significantly impair its conservation values. The conservation easement allows the landowner to continue to use the property for commercial cattle operation, hunting, fishing and other activities that are not inconsistent with the terms of the conservation values of the property. The project includes 35,300 acres of contiguous property, including nearly 23,800 acres of the highest-quality land in the southeastern Osceola and adjacent areas of Brevard and Indian River counties. Consequently, it has the size and location to achieve its primary objective.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The size of the Ranch Reserve project and its importance to wildlife, particularly to birds such as sandhill cranes and red-cockaded woodpeckers, qualify it as a wildlife management area.

#### ***Manager***

The SJRWMD will monitor to ensure compliance with the conservation easement.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The project generally includes lands requiring monitoring only and minimum-intensity management.



***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, the District will take aerial photographs to record the condition of each ranch and begin to inventory natural resources on site. Landowners will develop management and monitoring plans to address site security, monitor and control public access, and implement fire management. Long-range plans will stress ecosystem management and the protection and management of rare species. Forest communities will be managed using techniques recommended by the Florida Forest Service. Appropriate protections will be provided to environmentally sensitive areas. Minimal infrastructure development will be required.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The underlying fee ownership will remain with the present landowners, so no public revenue is anticipated from this area.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The SJRWMD will cooperate with other state and local government agencies in monitoring land in the project.



Ranch Reserve Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1997
Project Area (GIS acres)	36,334
Acres Acquired (GIS)	23,818*
at a Cost of	\$10,773,500*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	12,515

\*Includes funds spent and acreage acquired by the BOT and the SJRWMD.

Ranch Reserve Table 2

Ranch Reserve FNAI Elements	Score
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	G3/S2
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Whooping Crane	G1/SNR
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Crested Caracara	G5/S2
Bachman's Sparrow	G3/S3
Sherman's Fox Squirrel	G5T3/S3
Florida Burrowing Owl	G4T3/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3

There are 10 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Ranch Reserve](#)





## ***San Felasco Conservation Corridor***

Alachua County

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2003
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	376
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	376

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The primary purposes for acquiring conservation easements from landowners in this project are to facilitate the development of a greenway conservation corridor in northeast Alachua County, and to protect significant natural and cultural resources.

### **Manager(s)**

As a proposed less-than-fee acquisition project, the project will be managed by the private landowner and monitored and overseen by Alachua County or by a local land trust.

### **General Description**

The San Felasco Florida Forever proposal consists of three separate tracts of land totaling approximately 379 acres. While these three parcels do not create a viable project, the importance of these tracts can be seen when they are combined with a larger Conservation Corridor project. The tracts proposed for this Florida Forever project include a narrow fringe of hardwood forest bordering (but not including) a shallow lake, a small parcel of hardwood forest along a blackwater stream bordered by development and a four-lane highway, and a pine plantation with a few isolated wetlands and a blackwater stream. The western tract (roughly 30 acres), the undeveloped Burnett Lake Subdivision property, consists principally of a narrow strip of land bordered on the northwest by a railroad and partially surrounding, but only very narrowly abutting, the north and west sides of Burnett Lake. About two-thirds of the tract supports a predominantly second-growth hardwood forest. The small (roughly 15-acre) central parcel lies between U.S. 441 on the south, a railroad on the north, Mol-Tech battery manufacturing plant on the west, and the small residential area of Hague on the east. The south-flowing Cellon Creek flows through this parcel from state-owned IFAS property. The tract supports second-growth hardwood forest and other hardwoods, growing along the small floodplain and slopes of a blackwater stream. Though narrow and disturbed, this tract may have some, though certainly limited, value as a wildlife corridor.

### **Public Use**

Its small size, separation into three disjunct parcels, limited uplands and status as a less-than-fee (LTF) acquisition limit the public resource-based recreation potential of this project. Generally, owners do not allow public recreation on LTF lands. However, limited fishing and nature appreciation could possibly be allowed on the project. Some environmental education potential may also be possible as part of the



nature appreciation aspect. As a part of a larger multiple agency cooperative effort to protect forests and wetlands connecting San Felasco Hammock Preserve State Park with the Gainesville Wellfield and the Santa Fe River, these properties would also lend support to any trail that might eventually be made possible through other acquisitions.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The project consists of multiple parcels and multiple owners. The project has been proposed for less-than-fee acquisition. On June 6, 2003 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added this project to the A list of Florida Forever projects.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Less-Than-Fee category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$1,027,876.

### **Coordination**

The San Felasco Land Trust has created a large 25,000-acre Corridor project and brought together the Department of Environmental Protection, the Suwannee River Water Management District, The Florida Communities Trust, and the Alachua Forever land acquisition program to cooperatively acquire the Conservation Corridor. There are no adjacent land acquisition projects begun under the CARL, P2000 or Florida Forever programs. The San Felasco Hammock Preserve State Park and the TTC/Gainesville Wellfield Conservation Easement are adjacent to the larger 25,000-acre Corridor project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a proposed conservation easement or other less-than-fee interest, the project will be managed by the private landowner with restrictions. The purchase of development rights, the prohibition of any further conversion of existing natural areas to agricultural uses, and limited public access to some sites will likely be the primary focus of the conservation easement.

### **Management Prospectus**

As a less-than-fee acquisition, the San Felasco Conservation Corridor will likely be monitored and overseen by Alachua County or by a local land trust. As such, questions about intensity of the management of the property, a timetable for implementing management, cooperators in the management activities or revenue-generating potential of the project cannot be detailed at this time.



San Felasco Conservation Corridor Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2003</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>376</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>376</b>

San Felasco Conservation Corridor Table 2

*There are no rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): San Felasco Conservation Corridor](#)



## ***San Pedro Bay***

Madison and Taylor Counties

Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2003
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	44,999
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	44,999

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

This project is one of the largest undeveloped areas of the state not in public ownership and is essentially unoccupied by humans. It is clearly a landscape scale system and would make a significant wilderness. A large part of this project is within the existing San Pedro Bay Wildlife Management Area. Acquisition would expand that area and broaden hunting opportunities in the region. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses a number of Florida Forever project sites.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Forest Service/FFS of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) are recommended as unified managers of the fee simple portions of the project that are acquired.

### **General Description**

This fee simple acquisition proposal is owned by Wachovia and the Foley Timber and Land Company and consists primarily of wet timberland interspersed with basin swamps and baygalls. The proposal has been revised to include two parcels: a large parcel in Taylor and Madison counties between CR 14 and CR 53, and a smaller, 3,000-acre parcel in Taylor County. Conservation lands near the proposal include the Hixtown Swamp Florida Forever project and several conservation areas of the Suwannee River Water Management District’s conservation areas.

### **Public Use**

The consumptive recreational uses on the area consist of hunting with a limited amount of bank fishing. The game species hunted are primarily deer, hog, and turkey hunting. Deer populations are low but could increase with added protection and habitat improvement. Protection could be improved by securing boundaries, limiting access roads, and installing entrance gates. Wading birds and aquatic animals such as amphibians and reptiles that are present would benefit from applied management such as prescribed burning. State ownership would offer potential for wildlife viewing and nature study that could be improved with viewing towers or elevated walkways to offer vistas of the swamp habitat. Outdoor recreation that can be done on the property would be hunting, camping, hiking, horseback



riding, bicycling and picnicking. The extent of these uses will greatly depend on the wet and dry conditions of the property.

The 2000 Florida Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan reflects hunting as having a high need for the year 2005 for the region in which the project is located.

The resource-based recreation potential for the project is generally low, except for the hunting potential, which the FWC advises is moderate to high.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The San Pedro Bay project is approximately 44,999 (GIS) acres in tracts in Madison and Taylor counties. The Wachovia ownership includes the Madison tract (about 19,742 acres) and the Taylor tract (about 3,120 acres) and has been acquired by Regions Bank. The Foley tract is about 25,900 acres. This proposal is being offered for a fee simple acquisition for the two ownerships. The Wachovia tract was acquired from the Gilman Trust in 1999 and has historically managed the pine timber for chip and saw rotations. The Foley tract is adjacent to the Wachovia Madison tract on the western border. Currently the FWC has a lease over this area for a Wildlife Management Area. The tax-assessed value is \$7,898,471.

On December 5, 2003 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the project to the Florida Forever project list. The project had an estimated tax assessed value in 2003 of \$7,898,471.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$33,629,787.

### **Coordination**

FWC and FFS are acquisition partners on this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

This project is part of San Pedro Bay, a distinct wetland system extending between the Suwannee and Econfinia rivers. It is the largest area of privately owned roadless land remaining in Florida. The San Pedro Bay project includes two owners and is designed to protect a large wetland system and the waters that receive its flow. Two parcels are proposed for fee simple acquisition as follows: The first parcel has two owners, and is 41,666 acres in Madison and Taylor counties, stretching 16 miles from east to west between County Road 14 and County Road 53. The second parcel has one owner, and has 3,121 acres located in Taylor County, two miles south of the first parcel. One part of the proposed project drains westward to the Gulf of Mexico via the Fenholloway and Econfinia Rivers; the other part of the project drains eastward via canals to the Suwannee River. Much of the central area of the proposed project has no clear drainage pattern.

The project is about five miles south of Madison, seven miles northeast of Perry, and 45 miles east of Tallahassee. The project consists primarily of wetlands resulting from a water table perched on top of a clay layer, which retains water on the surface and impedes movement of water into the underlying



Floridan aquifer. Natural communities make up about 49 percent of the San Pedro Bay proposal; the remaining 51 percent is in silviculture. Natural communities within the project include basin marsh, baygall, dome swamp and wet flatwoods. Most of the larger baygalls and dome swamps have been selectively logged in recent years. Basin marsh, including some interspersed wet flatwoods, is 5,653 acres of the project, and appears to be largely in a natural condition. Wet flatwoods comprise 22,822 acres interspersed with 16,252 acres of baygall and dome swamp. In the area where silviculture occurs, planted wet flatwoods includes an understory of native herbs and shrubs. Raised beds are used to improve growth of pine trees on poorly drained soils.

The Florida Natural Areas Inventory's (FNAI) Florida Forever Measures Evaluation indicates that 20 percent (8,756 acres) of the project area is under-represented natural communities. Imperiled or rare animal species documented to occur on the project include the Florida black bear, great egret, the little blue heron, snowy egret, white ibis, and wood stork. Other imperiled or rare animal species that are expected to occur in the project include Bachman's sparrow, eastern indigo snake, gopher tortoise, and swallow-tailed kite. The American alligator has also been observed on the project.

Game species are present in relatively low densities among scattered habitat for white-tailed deer and wild turkey. Other game species having been observed on the area include the common snipe, eastern gray squirrel, mourning dove, and rabbits.

This project provides habitat for larger, more widely ranging species such as the Florida black bear, and is significant as an ecological greenway, with the entire project area qualifying as either priority 3 or 7 in potential importance, according to the FNAI. The project would improve feasibility of establishing a landscape linkage with coastal publicly owned bear habitat on the Aucilla and Big Bend wildlife management areas (WMAs), and the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge. Other nearby conservation lands include: Hixtown Swamp Florida Forever project three miles northeast of the project; Twin Rivers State Forest along the Suwannee River, six miles to the east; and the Econfina Conservation Area along the Econfina River, miles to the west. The rare plant species occurring in the project area include pitcher plants in smaller areas of herbaceous wetlands. It is expected that additional rare and imperiled biota, yet to be documented, occur in the project area.

The San Pedro Bay project is of sufficient size for large-scale ecosystem management and restoration, as part of the larger San Pedro Bay wetland system. Successful restoration of important ecological and hydrological functions might require additional project design. Hydrological restoration would improve fish and wildlife resources, as well as opportunities for outdoor recreation. However, hydrological restoration could diminish certain types of public access due to increased water levels and wetland function.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The landscape ecology of this project provides connectivity among existing and proposed conservation lands, large areas of forest, functional wetlands (71 percent, or 31,936 acres of project area), and



protection of surface water (57 percent, or 25,379 acres of project area) and natural floodplain function (11 percent, or 4,833 acres of project area). Since the project goals include protection of biodiversity, and provision of natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities, programs would be developed that serve to manage ecosystems for multiple use. Management programs would conserve, protect, manage and/or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, wildlife populations, forests and water resources. Stands of timber would be managed using even age and/or uneven aged methods to maintain a broad diversity of age classes and canopy conditions that promote groundcover development and enhancement of wildlife. This would provide habitat for the full spectrum of species found in the natural environment and enhance and maintain biodiversity. The project area will be managed to provide recreation opportunities best suited to the characteristics of the site, as well as the needs of user groups. Currently, recreational use of the site consists of bicycling, canoeing, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, and wildlife viewing. Trails may be used as multi-use trails. The Department of Environmental Protection and University of Florida Statewide Greenways System Planning Project shows 66 percent (29,340 acres) of the project area suitable for priority 1 recreational trails. The managing agencies would promote recreation and environmental education in the natural environment. This project contributes to the following goals identified in the Florida Forever Act (259.105(4), F.S.):

- (b) Increase the protection of Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels;
- (c) Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state;
- (d) Ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state;
- (e) Increase natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities;
- (g) Increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources.

***Manager***

FWC and FFS will be unified managers of the fee simple portions of the project that are acquired.

***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Most of the project area is a high-need tract, requiring significant up-front design and engineering analysis to restore natural hydrologic functions. Under unified management, FFS and FWC will utilize in-house expertise in plant community restoration to develop long-term hydrologic goals and objectives in the conceptual management plan (CMP). Off-site timber species may require thinning or removal to promote the regeneration of native ground covers and appropriate tree species. Areas where pine has been harvested, but not yet replanted, will require reforestation of native pine species best suited for soil and moisture conditions, and at stocking levels that restore natural plant and wildlife community characteristics. Managing agencies would conduct historic vegetation analysis to determine appropriate desired future conditions, and restoration methods and tools. This is especially important for conserving habitats and populations of imperiled or rare species. The primary methods and tools for perpetuating





less disturbed natural communities might include introducing prescribed fire, controlling human uses and removing invasive exotic species. Because many imperiled or rare species are expected to occur in the project, biotic surveys would be conducted as part of early unified management activities. Facilities for public use and administration would feature rustic facilities and be kept to the minimum necessary to assure a high-quality recreational experience. Such development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

It is anticipated that during the first year after acquisition, both agencies under the unified management approach will emphasize site security, posting boundaries, public access for low-intensity outdoor recreation, fire management, resource inventory, and removing refuse. Both managing agencies will meet frequently to coordinate task assignments, and cooperate with, and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local governments, and other appropriate participants. Goals for the long term would emphasize multiple use management and conserving the site's natural resources including timber, fish and wildlife, and water. These goals would include restoring habitat and hydrology and conserving and protecting imperiled or rare species of flora and fauna. Because of past drainage and dewatering activities for silviculture, an extensive hydrologic analysis will be performed to guide long-term restoration strategies. Other concurrent assessments will include completing a plant community inventory and historic vegetation analysis. Where practical, disturbed sites would be restored to conditions expected to occur in naturally functioning ecosystems. Essential roads would be stabilized to provide all-weather public access and management operations. Programs providing recreational uses would also be implemented. An all-season prescribed burning management plan would be developed and implemented. Timber resources will be managed using acceptable silviculture practices. Thinning of timber and sustainable forestry management practices, could provide silvicultural products, ecological, and recreational benefits. Archaeological and historic sites would be managed in coordination with the Department of State's Division of Historical Resources. Infrastructure for management would be protected to the extent possible. Infrastructure development would be the minimum to serve needs of the public and would include facilities for the security and management of the project area.

***Revenue-generating potential***

Timber sales would be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable conditions, under a multiple-use management concept. The FNAI indicates that 44 percent (19,834 acres) of the project area is available as priorities 1, 2, 3, and 5 for sustainable forestry. However, management would seek to improve the other revenue-generating potential of areas currently serving for forest products production by improving wildlife diversity and resource-based recreation. Additional revenue would be generated from sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area permits, and other special hunting permits. Some revenues might be realized in the future from recreational user fees, and ecotourism activities, if such projects can be economically developed. Fifteen percent (15 percent) of all gross revenues will be returned to the county from which funds were generated. Both agencies have





agreed to a unified management framework whereby all CARL management funds, site generated revenues, and management expenditures are to be evenly divided between the FFS and FWC.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The unified managers (FFS and FWC) should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies, including the Suwannee River Water Management District, in managing the project area. The project should be designated as a state forest and wildlife management area.



San Pedro Bay Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2003
Project Area (GIS acres)	44,999
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	44,999

San Pedro Bay Table 2

San Pedro Bay FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4

*There is 1 rare species associated with the project.*

San Pedro Bay Table 3

Management Cost Summary: Agency	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Resource Management	\$548,732	\$719,677
Administration	\$75,494	\$25,133
Support	\$149,080	\$31,566
Capital Improvements	\$2,187,189	\$316,190
Visitor Services/Recreation	\$3,756	\$141
Law Enforcement	\$31,351	\$31,351
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,995,601*</b>	<b>\$1,124,056*</b>

*\*Includes employee salaries.*

[Map\(s\): San Pedro Bay](#)



## **Sand Mountain**

Bay and Washington Counties  
Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1994
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	33,836
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	19,392
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$26,637,412*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	14,444

\*Acquired by the Northwest Florida Water Management District.

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Until the early part of this century, the country north of St. Andrews Bay was a high longleaf–pine sandhill interrupted by deep depressions holding shallow sand –bottomed lakes. The lakes still pock the area, but pine plantations and residential developments have replaced most of the sandhill. The Sand Mountain project will conserve and restore part of this land, still one of the largest tracts of sandhill in the Florida panhandle; protect the watersheds of the lakes and of Econfina Creek (the source of Panama City’s water); maintain habitat critical to the survival of several rare plants that grow only around these lakes; and provide a large scenic area where the public can enjoy many recreation activities, from hiking to hunting. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses several Florida Forever project sites.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Forest Service/FFS, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

### **General Description**

This project protects the largest remaining tract of high quality, natural xeric uplands of Florida’s New Hope Ridge and Fountain Slope physiographic regions. The high rolling pinelands drop down to classic examples of steephead ravines, unique Sandhill Upland Lakes, and a portion of a nearly pristine stream. Much of the sandhills are of excellent quality, having a nearly intact ground cover of wiregrass and dropseed, but those owned by the Rosewood Timber Company have been cleared and planted in sand pine. At least 18 species of rare or endangered plants inhabit the project. The Slope Forests in the steepheads shelter several species, while around the Sandhill Upland Lakes are four globally imperiled plant species found nowhere else in the world. The project also contains a large part of the watershed of Econfina Creek, nearly pristine in terms of water quality. Three archaeological sites are known from the project and there is moderate potential for more. Development threatens the northern part and the lakes in the southern part.

### **Public Use**

This project would be designated as a state forest with such uses as hiking, hunting, fishing, swimming, camping and environmental education.



### **Acquisition Planning**

The larger longleaf pine sandhill tracts (essential) — Deltona, St. Joe and John Hancock Mutual Life Ins. Co.—should be acquired first. The Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) has acquired the Rosewood ownership in Phase II and a portion of the Deltona ownership. In 1994, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$10,363,475.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category in the Florida Forever list.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$27,818,936.

### **Coordination**

The NFWFMD is an acquisition partner.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Sand Mountain project are: 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 this state or larger geographic area; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; and to provide areas, including trails, for natural-resource-based recreation.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The large areas of natural longleaf pine sandhills and restorable pine plantations in the project make it desirable for management as a state forest.

#### ***Manager***

The FFS is recommended as the lead manager.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The pine plantations in the project will require restoration. Other than this, there are no known disturbances that will require extraordinary attention, so management intensity is expected to be typical for a state forest.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the core area is acquired, the FFS will provide public access for low-intensity, non-facilities-related outdoor recreation. Initial activities will include securing the site, providing public and fire management accesses, inventorying resources, and removing trash. The FFS will provide access to the public while protecting sensitive resources. The project's natural resources and threatened and endangered plants and animals will be inventoried to provide the basis for a management plan. Long-



range plans for this project will generally be directed toward restoring disturbed areas to their original conditions, as far as possible, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. Much of the pinelands has been cleared and planted in sand pine and requires restoration. An all-season burning program will use, whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks to contain fires. Timber management will mostly involve improvement thinning and regeneration harvests. Plantations will be thinned and, where appropriate, reforested with species found in natural ecosystems. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age. Infrastructures will primarily be located in disturbed areas and will be the minimum required for management and public access. The FFS will promote environmental education.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The FFS will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will provide variable amounts of revenue, but the revenue-generating potential for this project is expected to be low.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The NFWFMD has purchased land along Econfina Creek within the project boundary. The District will cooperate with the FFS in the management of this corridor. The FFS will also cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and other interested parties as appropriate.



Sand Mountain Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1994
Project Area (GIS acres)	33,836
Acres Acquired (GIS)	19,392
at a Cost of	\$26,637,412*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	14,444

\* Acquired by the Northwest Florida Water Management District.

Sand Mountain Table 2

Sand Mountain FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
quillwort yellow-eyed grass	G1/S1
Shaggy Ghostsnail	G1/S1
Crystal Lake nailwort	G3T1/S1
Apalachicola Cave Isopod	G1G2/S1
Oval Pigtoe	G2/S1S2
Panhandle meadowbeauty	G2/S2
smoothbark St. John's wort	G2/S2
Dougherty Plain Cave Crayfish	G2G3/S2
thread-leaf sundew	G4/S1
karst pond xyris	G2G3/S2S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3

There are 34 rare species associated with the project.

Sand Mountain Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$148,370	\$148,370
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$70,000	\$50,000
OCO	\$234,900	\$15,000
FCO	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$453,270</b>	<b>\$213,370</b>

[Map\(s\): Sand Mountain](#)



## Save Our Everglades

Collier County

Substantially Complete

### Project-at-a-Glance

<i>Placed on List</i>	1984
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	217,333
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	217,309
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$132,018,455
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	24

### Purpose for State Acquisition

The Save Our Everglades project will conserve three large pieces of a landscape of cypress swamps, marshes, slash-pine flatwoods, and tropical hammocks, through which water slowly flows to the mangrove swamps of the Ten Thousand Islands, thereby connecting and extending existing conservation lands, helping to save the last of the Florida panthers and a host of other rare animals and tropical plants, preserving the flow of water to the rich estuaries of the Gulf coast, and allowing the public to enjoy this unique landscape for years to come. The Florida National Scenic Trail, a cross-Florida hiking and non-motorized trail, is also planned to cross this project. The trail is a congressionally designated national scenic trail.

### Manager(s)

National Park Service (NPS) will manage Big Cypress Addition; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will manage Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge; Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services - Florida Forest Service/FFS will manage all of the Golden Gate Estates South - less that portion east of the Fakaunion Canal to be managed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP); and DRP will manage that portion of the Golden Gate Estates South lying east of the Fakaunion Canal - less the old resort hotel, its associated compound and the sewage treatment plant.

### General Description

This project includes important hydrological connections among Big Cypress National Preserve, Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve, and Everglades National Park. It serves as the headwaters of the largest strand swamp in the nation—the Fakahatchee Strand. It is also an excellent natural area. Natural communities on the property include cypress forest, pine forest, hammock, mixed swamp forest, wet and dry prairies and freshwater marsh. The area is known to support many endangered, threatened or rare species including a large variety of rare orchids and other epiphytes, as well as the endangered Florida panther. There is believed to be good potential for archaeological sites here. The project is threatened by drainage and other changes in water flow through the area, by oil and gas exploration, and perhaps by limerock mining.



### **Public Use**

The project will provide a preserve/reserve, wildlife and environmental area, and a forest, allowing such uses as fishing, hunting, hiking, camping and nature appreciation.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Completing the Collier Exchange on December 18, 1996, resulted in public protection of an additional 83,070 acres in the Big Cypress Addition and an additional 4,110 acres in the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge.

On April 18, 2003 ARC transferred 1,615 acres in Hendry County to the Panther Glades Florida Forever project. In 2003, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$4,050,796. In 2006 ARC moved this project from the A, Small Parcels list for acquisition to the B, Small Parcels list.

The NPS continues to pursue consolidation efforts in the Big Cypress Preserve Addition. The Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) Program continues to focus on acquiring land in Golden Gate Estates South. The USFWS has acquired and manages 28,410 acres (including Collier Exchange lands). The CARL Program received \$25 million of Federal “Farm Bill” funds for the Golden Gate portion of this project. All the acreage in this project is considered essential. In June 2009, approximately 3 platted acres were purchased for \$8,276.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the new Substantially Complete category of Florida Forever projects. This project will remain on the Florida Forever List until all court settlements are resolved.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$94,551.

### **Coordination**

The NPS, USFWS, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and DOT are all acquisition partners in this project area. Resolutions in support of this project include EO 88-25: Governor’s Executive Directive for Interagency Joint Participation Agreement.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Save Our Everglades project are: 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 this state or a larger geographic area; to conserve and protect lands within areas of critical state concern; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; and to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect.





## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The sensitive resources of the Big Cypress National Preserve qualify it as a state preserve. The extremely rare Florida panther and the undisturbed habitat needed to protect it qualify the Panther National Wildlife Refuge as a wildlife and environmental area. The size and diversity of Golden Gate Estates South, and its twelve miles of common border with the Belle Meade project (to be managed by the FFS), make it highly suitable for use and management as a state forest.

### ***Manager***

NPS, USFWS, FFS.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge is a low-need management area, requiring basic resource management and protection. Portions of Golden Gate Estates may require hydrologic restoration, but the local water management district will probably conduct these activities. There is a major road network that might eventually require partial removal. If this restoration effort is attempted, it will probably require funding beyond what is typically expected for a state forest.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

The Panther National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1989. In 1991, the USFWS began management programs of protection, prescribed burning and food plot management. The area is not open for public use. For the first four years, the refuge was burned to reduce accumulated fuel loads. Burns were confined to the winter and spring. The refuge will experiment with early summer burns in the future. Approximately 6,000 acres of Golden Gate Estates South have already been acquired within the project boundaries; however, this acreage is composed of thousands of lots scattered throughout the area so management for public access and use is not feasible at this time. Once sufficient area has been acquired, the FFS will provide public access for low-intensity, non-facilities-related outdoor recreation. Initial activities will include securing the access to the public while protecting sensitive resources. The project's natural resources and threatened and endangered plants and animals will be inventoried to provide the basis for a management plan. Long-range plans for this project will generally be to restore disturbed areas to their original conditions as fast as possible, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

No revenue is expected from the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge. In Golden Gate Estates, the FFS will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will provide variable amounts of revenue, but the revenue-generating potential for this project is expected to be low.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), (DEP), South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), FFS, Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Florida Department of



Environmental Protection Watershed (CREW), Collier County, and the NPS are cooperators in the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge.



Save Our Everglades Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1984
Project Area (GIS acres)	217,333
Acres Acquired (GIS)	217,309
at a Cost of	\$132,018,455
Acres Remaining (GIS)	24

Save Our Everglades Table 2

Save Our Everglades FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Panther	G5T1/S1
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Florida bonneted bat	G1/S1
pineland jacquemontia	G2/S2
Tampa vervain	G2/S2
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
narrow-leaved Carolina scalystem	G4T2/S2
Small's flax	G2T2/S2
Rafinesque's Big-eared Bat	G3G4/S1
Florida royal palm	G2G3/S2

There are 35 rare species associated with the project.

Save Our Everglades Table 3a

Management Cost Summary: FFS	1995/96	1996/97
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$35,376	\$50,658
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$24,975	\$34,125
OCO	\$4,190	\$40,000
FCO	\$0	\$0
Total	\$64,541	\$124,783



Save Our Everglades Table 3b

<b>Management Cost Summary: NPS</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>NPS</b>	<b>NPS</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$115,000</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$225,000</b>	<b>\$180,000</b>

Save Our Everglades Table 3c

<b>Management Cost Summary: SFWMD</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>WMLTF</b>	<b>WMLTF</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$3,265</b>	<b>\$3,265</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,265</b>	<b>\$3,265</b>

Save Our Everglades Table 3d

<b>Management Cost Summary: USFWS</b>	<b>1996/97</b>	<b>1997/98</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>FWS</b>	<b>FWS</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$642,600</b>	<b>\$747,300</b>

[Map\(s\): Save Our Everglades](#)



### **Seven Runs Creek Final Phase**

Walton and Washington Counties  
Less-Than-Fee

#### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2017
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	6,769
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	188*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	6,581

*\*Includes Sandhill Lakes Conservation Easement and GIS updates to calculations.*

#### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The distributed parcels that make up this project are integral to completing the Northwest Florida Greenway, a state-federal-private cooperative effort (formalized by a Memorandum of Agreement) to establish a series of protected lands of hundreds of thousands of acres from Eglin Air Force Base to Apalachicola National Forest. The property is offered to the state for perpetual conservation easement, comparable to protection already secured for other lands within Nokuse Plantation. Seven Runs Creek Final Phase is proposed for the following public purposes: Enhance the coordination and completion of land acquisition projects; Increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels; Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state; Ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state; Increase natural resource-based public recreation or educational opportunities; Preserve significant archaeological or historic sites; and Increase the amount of forest land available for sustainable management of natural resources.

#### **Manager(s)**

This project is proposed to be a less-than-fee purchase, or conservation easement. As a result, this area would be managed by the landowner by a signed agreement to maintain the land for its natural assets. Periodic visits coordinated by the Division of State Lands of DEP would ensure that the conditions the landowner agreed to are being met.

#### **General Description**

Seven Runs Creek Final Phase covers 6,228 GIS acres in the upland part of Walton County and has a parcel in Washington County, east of the Choctawhatchee River. The southernmost parcel is adjacent to Black Creek for just over three river miles, and the southeastern parcels border the Choctawhatchee River and Pine Log Creek for about 1.4 and 0.3 miles, respectively. It is a series of disjunct parcels that fill in gaps in the existing 53,505-acre Nokuse Plantation conservation area, all of them contiguous with conservation easements or existing state lands.

Elevations on the site grade from approximately 150 feet in the north to as low as five feet along Black Creek. Although the canopy is introduced slash pine, the stand is of widely spaced trees and has not



been disturbed for several decades. The vegetation composition remains natural – a mix of pines with an understory that includes turkey oak, wiregrass, and a mix of herbs such as dogtongue wild buckwheat and milkpea. Invasive exotic plants are relatively infrequent. Wildlife that has been documented on the site includes the Florida black bear, the gopher tortoise, the eastern diamondback rattlesnake and the pine snake.

About 68 percent of the project has been planted in slash pine plantations, and another 16 percent is bottomland forests. Other natural communities are successional hardwood forests, floodplain swamps, dome swamp, and mesic/wet flatwoods. About one-third of the project provides natural floodplain function. Non-natural areas include a few acres of artificial pond, improved pasture, and developed areas. Roads are generally small ORV trails. However, the largest parcel was slated for development before the 2008 recession, and wide roadways were cleared, but not paved.

### **Public Use**

As a less-than-fee acquisition proposal, public resource-based recreation potential is highly limited and, therefore, the overall recreation potential is considered low. The greatest recreational value of the proposal is the support it would provide to maintaining the ecological values of the region. Research by FNAI shows the site does have 7.7 miles of recreational trails.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On October 20, 2017 ARC voted to add this proposal to the Florida Forever project list in the Less-Than-Fee category. The parcel would most likely be acquired in one purchase, as a single conservation easement. The entire parcel would be designated as essential.

At the April 20, 2018 meeting, ARC members added a 660.6-acre less-than-fee addition that abuts State Road 3280. The purpose is to provide long-term protection of land in the Stella Davis Trust from development. The land also augments to buffer area around the Eglin Air Force Base

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$5,021,321.

### **Coordination**

The parcels in the Seven Runs Creek Final Phase project juxtapose and/or are contiguous with both the North Nokuse Plantation and Seven Runs Creek Florida Forever projects. These would enhance this wildlife connectivity across this portion of the Panhandle landscape. This is in keeping with the greatest recreational value of the proposal, the support it would provide to maintaining the ecological values of the region.

### **Management Policy Statement**

Because the Seven Runs Creek Final Phase project is a less-than-fee project, the land would continue to be managed by its owner under a conservation easement, in compliance with the terms and management conditions in the agreement. The likely elements of such an agreement could include purchasing the



development rights, prohibiting turning more natural areas into intensive use areas, and managing the property for wildlife habitat.

**Management Prospectus**

The Office of Environmental Services of the Division of State Lands would coordinate monitoring of management compliance with the conservation easement of this project.



Seven Runs Creek Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2017
Project Area (GIS acres)	6,769
Acres Acquired (GIS)	188*
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	6,581

\*Includes Sandhill Lakes Conservation Easement and GIS updates to calculations

Seven Runs Creek Table 2

Seven Runs Creek Phase 2 FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Barbour's Map Turtle	G2/S2
Gulf Lilliput	G2/S2
Ashe's magnolia	G3/S2
Florida flame azalea	G3/S3
wiregrass gentian	G3/S3
Alligator Snapping Turtle	G3G4/S3
Pine Barrens Treefrog	G4/S3
Pine Snake	G4/S3

There are 13 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): Seven Runs Creek Final Phase](#)





## ***Shoal River Buffer***

Okaloosa County  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2010
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	2,180
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	2,180

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring the Shoal River Buffer project would advance Florida Forever goals of increasing biodiversity; preserving landscape linkages, habitat for rare species, and water and wetland systems of the state by protecting 1,768 acres of rare species habitat; 2,062 acres of ecological greenways; 1,419 acres of surface waters; 1,443 acres of functional wetlands, and land that has a record of supporting black bears, alligator snapping turtles, sweet pitcher plants and hairy indigo. Acquiring this property would contribute to protecting the water quality of the Shoal River drainage area which harbors rare plant and animal species; to sustain wildlife in the area, particularly to provide long-term benefits to imperiled species; and to provide natural resource-based recreation opportunities. The Shoal River is an Outstanding Florida Water.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is the recommended manager for lands within this project acquired by both the Board of Trustees (BOT) and the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD). NFWFMD has indicated it will convey any lands the agency acquires within this project to the BOT at no cost.

### **General Description**

The Shoal River Buffer Florida Forever project is offered for fee simple acquisition of 2,097 (GIS) acres in eastern Okaloosa County. The tract is divided into two distinct parcels east and west of the Shoal River and 5.5 miles from the convergence of the Yellow River. It is bisected by land owned by Okaloosa County that consists of the immediate floodplain bordering the Shoal River. A portion of the western tract is adjacent to Eglin Air Force Base (AFB) to the south and the city of Crestview to the west. The eastern portion is bordered by Titi Creek to the south and agricultural lands to the north. Natural communities located within the project include upland hardwood forest, sandhills, mesic/wet flatwoods, floodplain forest, basin swamp, and blackwater stream. The site also has intact seepage slopes. The wetland types on both tracts have intact forest cover and are typical for the region. Timber species include oaks, cypress, Atlantic White Cedar, maple, and titi. The upland areas vary from excessively well drained to poorly drained sites. The extremely xeric sites are predominately longleaf pine with scattered sand pine. Understory tree species include typical xeric oaks and shrubs. Mesic sites contain



slash, longleaf and loblolly pines with oaks, sweetgum and maple intermixed. Slash pine is the predominant pine species on the mesic sites. Desirable groundcover species were noticed in all types; however, the absence of prescribed fire has severely suppressed their development. The tract provides the AFB with a critical buffer for both military operations and smoke generated from burning operations on base. The property has potential for some varied resource-based recreation; however, access to the property is through a series of obscure private woods roads that are difficult to follow. The Shoal River Paddling Trail (designated by the Office of Greenways and Trails) stretches nine and half miles through the property with access points north (Ray Barnes Boat Ramp) and southwest (Bill Duggar Jr. Park) of the property. The property has potential for hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, picnicking, primitive camping, nature interpretive trails and geocaching.

### **Public Use**

As on all FWC-managed areas, development of facilities would be kept to the minimum level necessary to assure protection of the resources, while providing for compatible recreation opportunities. Any such minimal development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance. The tract is currently leased to hunt clubs.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The project is owned by the Haiseal Timber company and is proposed for fee-simple acquisition. On December 11, 2009 ARC voted to add this project with a 2009 tax assessed value of \$3,841,189 to the March 2010 Florida Forever list.

On December 9, 2011 ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands category of projects.

On April 20, 2012 the ARC added 80 acres to the project that had been authorized for sale as surplus by the US Forest Service.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$3,475,628.

### **Coordination**

The Department of Defense (DOD) expressed interest in partnering with the state in acquiring this land. Furthermore, the NFWFMD has expressed to the DOD that it has interest in 500 acres or more of the property located along the county's riverfront ownership.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The purpose for acquisition would be to protect the water quality of the Shoal River drainage area which harbors rare plant and animal species; to sustain wildlife in the area, particularly to provide long-term benefits to imperiled species; and to provide natural resource-based recreation opportunities.

Conservation and protection of environmentally unique native habitats, and imperiled and rare species, will be important management goals for the project. A prescribed fire management regime would likely be a primary management goal. Dense stands of regenerated pines will probably need to be thinned before introducing fire.



## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

About 68 percent of the project is habitat for a range of at least 3-7 or more focal species (imperiled or rare wildlife). About 76 percent of the Shoal River Buffer tract lies within a designated FWC Strategic Habitat Conservation Area (SHCA) for the Florida black bear, listed as threatened by the State. In addition, the Florida Natural Areas Inventory's 2008 GIS data indicates potential habitat for blackmouth shiner, Gulf sturgeon, Eastern indigo snake, Escambia map turtle, Florida black bear, and red-cockaded woodpecker. The eastern tract consists mainly of a sandhill and pineland habitat dominated by longleaf with scattered sand pine. The understory consists mainly of xeric oaks and shrubs. Several listed species could potentially benefit from ongoing restoration of historic and current sandhill habitats on the proposed lands. The State listed species of special concern the fox squirrel and the State threatened southeastern American kestrel use sandhill habitats, as do red-cockaded woodpeckers, a federally endangered species. Sandhills also support populations of gopher tortoises, which are listed by the State of Florida as threatened. Bears have been documented utilizing riparian corridors of the Shoal River and its tributaries in Okaloosa County and are well documented on Eglin AFB, a primary breeding range for bears in the state.

### ***Manager***

The FWC is the manager of record for this property.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Shoal River Buffer project includes natural areas likely requiring application of resource management activities, such as ecological restoration of ground cover, control of invasive and exotic species, reforestation, and prescribed fire where appropriate. Such activities may be necessary to accomplish management objectives to attain the desired future condition for the area. This is especially important for conservation of habitats and populations of imperiled or rare species. Landscape-scale ecology and management concerns may also need to be considered.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year following acquisition, emphasis will be placed on site security, posting boundaries, public access, prescribed fire management, resource inventory, exotic species control, and removal of refuse. Within one year, a 10-year management plan will be developed by FWC describing short-term and long-term management goals, and measurable inventory, exotic species control, and removal of refuse. Within one year, a 10-year management plan will be developed by FWC describing short-term objectives with associated timelines for completion.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

The revenue generating potential of the Shoal River Buffer is not known and will depend upon future uses to be approved in the management plan. However, revenue from such environmental lands might include sales of various permits and recreational user fees and ecotourism activities if such projects could be economically developed.



***Cooperators in management activities***

FWC may partner and cooperate with other State and local governmental agencies including the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); the Florida Forest Service/FFS; the NFWFMD; DOD (Eglin AFB); and Okaloosa County in management of the property.



Shoal River Buffer Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2010
Project Area (GIS acres)	2,180
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	2,180

Shoal River Buffer Table 2

Shoal River Buffer FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Gulf Coast redblower pitcherplant	G4T2Q/S2
Lavender Burrowing Crayfish	G4/S2
hairy wild indigo	G3T3/S3
Alligator Snapping Turtle	G3G4/S3

There are 6 rare species associated with the project.

Shoal River Buffer Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Resource Management	\$74,548	\$48,848
Administration	\$82,345	\$33,072
Support	\$149,080	\$31,566
Capital Improvements	\$45,000	\$38,689
Visitor Services/Recreation	\$1,452	\$141
Law Enforcement	\$1,474	\$1,474
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$353,990</b>	<b>\$153,674</b>

[\*Map\(s\): Shoal River Buffer\*](#)



## **South Goethe**

Levy and Marion Counties  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2006
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	11,642
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	11,642

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

This addition provides a corridor from the Goethe State Forest to the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway State Recreation and Conservation Area along the Withlacoochee River and forms a linkage to the Etoniah Cross Florida Greenway Florida Forever project. One of the primary concepts of this project is to protect the Withlacoochee River’s watershed by connecting Goethe State Forest with the greenway. Another stated goal of the project is providing a significant buffer along the southern boundary of the forest while eventually enhancing the forest and its associated habitat through restoration.

### **Manager(s)**

The property is proposed to be managed by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Forest Service (FFS).

### **General Description**

The South Goethe Florida Forever project (SGFFP) includes two ownerships to be considered for fee-simple acquisition and principally separated by highway CR 40. The Robinson tract (north of CR 40) is a single, one-owner tract of 5,722 acres (5,692 acres calculated in GIS) contiguous with the southern boundary of Goethe State Forest in southeastern Levy County. The 3.6-mile shared boundary runs along an unpaved woods road for much of its length. The Marino tract (GIS-calculated area of 460 acres) is south of the Robinson tract, mostly on the south side of highway CR 40; however, the tract extends northward across CR 40 and shares a common boundary of 0.25 mile with the Robinson tract. At its closest point, the Robinson tract approaches to within 0.46 mile of the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway State Recreation and Conservation Area, which lies along Lake Rousseau (impounded in the Withlacoochee River) to the south.

This project addresses Florida Forever goals of acquiring acreage to complete the Preservation 2000 projects that predated the Florida Forever program, increasing the conservation of Florida’s highest priority conservation areas, increasing the number of acres of conserved conservation corridors and landscape linkages, increasing the amount of acreage needing restoration, and increasing the amount of land preserved that protects floodplain functions, protects surface waters and protects functional wetlands.



### **Public Use**

Since principal purposes of the project include protecting biodiversity, protecting the quality and natural functions of the land and water systems, ensuring sufficient quantities of water are available, providing resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities, and providing forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources, programs would be oriented towards conservation and protection of wildlife species, and to carefully control public uses. The primary land management goals for the management of the tract are to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; to integrate compatible human use; and to insure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. This ecosystem and multiple use approach will guide the management activities on this project. Multiple use is defined as a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that takes into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural scenic, scientific, and historic values; harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment.

The FFS will promote recreation and environmental education in the natural environment. It is anticipated that interpretative and user recreation facilities will be developed and the use of low impact, rustic facilities will be stressed in the more natural or restored areas of the tract. In the more heavily impacted areas of the tract, FFS will explore the possibility of an off-highway vehicle trail system. While portions of these impacted areas will be restored to a natural state, other portions could potentially provide a network of trails for off-highway enthusiasts.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 8, 2006 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the South Goethe Forest Addition to Group A of the Florida Forever priority list. This full-fee project was sponsored by the FFS. The project has 6,152 acres and a tax-assessed value of \$1,157,483.

On June 15, 2007, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 5,553-acre addition (aka Cold Springs Tract Addition) to the project boundary. The proposal was sponsored by the Rainbow River Conservation, Inc., consisted of 33 parcels, a single ownership, Throgmartin-Henke Development LLP, and a taxable value of \$10,416,820. FFS is the recommended manager. The parcels have been designated essential. After the most recent boundary change in 2007, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$11,574,303.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$25,294,366.

### **Coordination**

This property is proposed as fee simple acquisition. No acquisition partnerships have been proposed at this time.



### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary land management goals for the management of the tract are to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; to integrate compatible human use; and to insure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. This ecosystem and multiple use approach will guide the management activities on this project.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project's size and diversity make it desirable for use and management as a state forest. Most of the acreage of this project consists of planted mesic and wet flatwoods, and sandhills. With thinning, introduction of prescribed fire, and sustainable forestry management practices, the project could be quickly transformed from management for silvicultural values to an area managed for its ecological and recreational benefits.

#### ***Manager***

The FFS.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Much of the project's flatwoods and sandhill areas have been disturbed by silvicultural operations and will require restoration efforts. Timber thinning will provide revenue for restoration activities as well as promote the re-generation of native ground covers and canopy. Development of facilities, as on all conservation lands, would be kept to the minimum level necessary to assure a high-quality recreational experience, and any such development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance.

Protection and restoration of sensitive wetlands on this project will be a priority. Restoration efforts will focus on introducing prescribed fire and thinning dense pine stands, and on restoring native groundcovers. The level of management intensity and related management costs is expected to initially be high to obtain the necessary information and resources to restore and manage this system as a State Forest. Once this is done, long-term management costs are expected to be light to moderate to maintain this area as a State Forest.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

The initial and intermediate management efforts will concentrate on resource inventory, restoring and reforestation areas where harvesting has occurred, hydrological restoration, providing site security, and assessing public and fire management access. Inventories of the site's natural resources, threatened and endangered flora and fauna, will be conducted to provide a basis for the formulation of a management plan. Because of the numerous roads throughout the property, a plan will be needed to identify which ones will be needed for vehicular access by the public and which ones will be needed for administrative use, and which are unnecessary for management or access and should be closed. Steps will be taken to ensure the public is provided appropriate access. Burning goals for this project will be to establish an all season prescribed burning program on all of the fire dependent community types. Whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks will be used to contain, and control prescribed





and natural fires. Timber management activities will primarily consist of restoration harvests and improvement cuts aimed at restoring and perpetuating native ground covers. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age but will be managed to maintain a broad diversity of age classes ranging from young stands to areas with old growth characteristics. This will provide habitat for the full spectrum of species that would be found in the natural environment and enhance and maintain biodiversity. FFS will promote recreation and environmental education in the natural environment. It is anticipated that interpretative and user recreation facilities will be developed and the use of low impact, rustic facilities will be stressed in the more natural or restored areas of the tract. In the more heavily impacted areas of the tract DOF will explore the possibility of an off-highway vehicle trail system. While portions of these impacted areas will be restored to a natural state, other portions could potentially provide a network of trails for off-highway enthusiasts. There is also potential for obtaining funding for both acquiring the parcel as well as the implementing the trail system. Unnecessary roads, fire lines and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned and/or restored to the greatest extent practical.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Timber sales will be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in planted pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue dependent upon a variety of factors. Due to the existing condition and volume of the timber resources on the property, revenue-generating potential of this project is expected to be moderate to high. Some revenues might be realized in the future from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities if such projects could be economically developed. Revenue It is anticipated that management funding will come from the CARL trust fund. Florida Forever capital project expenditures are going to be needed on this parcel for prescribed fire, vegetative and hydrologic restoration, improved public access/use, and facilities, both public and administrative. It is anticipated that some of the existing roads and trails may be used as multi-use trails for hiking, horseback riding and biking. This management prospectus is not intended to be an application for capital project funding; however, as more information is gathered, and an analysis of the site is completed, the FFS intends to apply for capital project funds.



South Goethe Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2006
Project Area (GIS acres)	11,642
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	11,642

South Goethe Table 2

South Goethe FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
longspurred mint	G2/S2
Gopher Frog	G3/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3

There are 5 rare species associated with the project.

South Goethe Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Interim cost
Source of Funds	CARL (or successor)
Salary (2 FTE)	\$72,104
Expense	\$263,000
OCO	\$593,720
Total	\$928,824

[Map\(s\): South Goethe](#)



## ***South Walton County Ecosystem***

Walton County  
Substantially Complete

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1995*
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	22,272
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	19,575
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$188,506,210
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	2,697

*\*Point Washington and Topsail Hill projects combined in 1995. Note: Donation from DOT in 6/2009.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Where the Gulf of Mexico meets the coast of Walton County is a line of some of the most beautiful beaches and dunes in the world, backed by sparkling freshwater lakes and pine flatwoods and marshes spreading to Choctawhatchee Bay—one of the largest natural areas on the northern Gulf coast. The South Walton County Ecosystem project will conserve a part of this unique coast and the forests behind it, linking three state parks; protecting several rare plants and rare animals such as the Choctawhatchee beach mouse and red-cockaded woodpecker; and providing residents and tourists a scenic area in which to enjoy many recreational activities, ranging from hunting and fishing to hiking, picnicking, and sunbathing.

### **Manager(s)**

Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Florida Department of Environmental Protection (Topsail Hill, Grayton Beach and Deer Lake), and Florida Forest Service/FFS, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (Point Washington).

### **General Description**

This project includes much of the undeveloped land in Walton County south of Choctawhatchee Bay. This land is covered with a diverse mix of flatwoods, sandhills, and wetlands in the interior and superb sand-pine scrub, unique coastal dune lakes (occurring only in Florida and globally critically imperiled), and beach dunes on the Gulf Coast. Most of the interior has been logged and planted in slash pine but is restorable. The Topsail Hill and Deer Lake tracts are some of the most scenic and ecologically intact coastal areas in the panhandle and shelter the endangered Choctawhatchee beach mouse and red-cockaded woodpecker, as well as several other rare plants and animals (13 rare plant species, six rare animal species, and 14 natural communities). Seven archaeological sites are known from the project. The explosive coastal development of Walton County is a serious threat to this project, particularly the sensitive coastal areas.

### **Public Use**

The interior will be managed as a state forest, and the Topsail Hill and Deer Lake tracts will become state parks. The project will provide many recreation opportunities, including hiking, hunting, freshwater and saltwater fishing, camping, picnicking, nature appreciation, and beach activities.



## **Acquisition Planning**

On July 16, 1996, LAMAC directed staff to hold two public hearings to receive public input on the potential revision of the South Walton County Ecosystem project boundary. Public hearings were held on August 23 and 30, 1996. As a result of the public hearings and input from other interested parties and managing agencies, LAMAC modified the project boundary on December 5, 1996, by adding approximately 41 acres and removing 820 acres from the project boundary.

Point Washington: Inholdings (approximately 1,150 acres) within the State forest (SF) and parcels connecting Topsail to the Choctawhatchee Bay remain to be acquired. Acquisition of parcels (approximately 210 acres) along the State Forest to State Park trail/ greenway is needed to better connect portions of the trail/greenway.

Topsail: Most tracts have been acquired but the remainder are extremely vulnerable. Several ownerships were acquired through eminent domain in the 1990's.

Deer Lake: A 172-acre tract was acquired through eminent domain. The remaining property in the Deer Lake project was removed from the overall project boundary as part of the court settlement.

Grayton Beach: A small 20-acre inholding remains to be acquired in the Grayton Beach State Recreation Area.

Not included in the totals are the acres acquired (1,129) and funds spent (\$38,709,943) for the acquisition of the state recreation area. On December 9, 1999, the Council added 90 acres to the project boundary as an essential parcel. The addition included several hundred feet on Choctawhatchee Bay.

On August 15, 2002 the Council added 75 acres (the Coldeway Tract) to the project boundaries. On October 24, 2002 the Council added 90 acres (the Davie Tract) to the project boundaries. After the most recent addition in 2002, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$7,795,905.

In December 2008, FFS purchased 38.99 acres for \$2,600,000 to add to the Point Washington SF.

In June 2009 a 2-parcel donation (39 acres) from the Department of Transportation was accepted in Pt. Washington SF.

On December 9, 2011 ARC placed the South Walton County Ecosystem project in the Substantially Complete category of Florida Forever projects.

On December 27, 2012 the BOT acquired 9.43 acres for \$85,000 to be managed by the FFS as part of the Point Washington State Forest.

On October 11, 2017 the State completed a land swap with an adjoining owner of 28.5 acres of state land for 39 acres, thereby increasing the project size by 10.5 acres and adding 39 acres of acquired land.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$642,072,025.



### **Coordination**

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) was an intermediary in the acquisition of the 100-acre tract in Topsail Hill held by the Resolution Trust Corporation.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the South Walton County Ecosystem project are 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 this state or a larger geographic area; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreation, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot; and to provide areas, including recreation trails, for natural-resource-based recreation.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Point Washington project has the large size and forest resources—flatwoods and sandhills, some cut over but restorable—to qualify as a state forest. The exceptional flatwoods, dunes, and coastal dune lakes of the areas around Deer Lake, Grayton Beach and Topsail Hill have the diversity of resources and recreational opportunities to qualify as units of the state park system.

#### ***Manager***

FFS is managing most of the project. DRP is recommended as the manager for the Deer Lake tract, areas next to Grayton Beach State Recreation Area and Topsail Hill.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Large cutover areas in the project will require reforestation and restoration efforts beyond the level typical for a state forest. Consequently, management intensity and related management costs might be slightly higher than normal for a state forest. The portions to be managed by DRP are high-need management areas with an emphasis on public recreational use and development compatible with resource conservation.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

The FFS is providing public access for low-intensity, non-facility-related outdoor recreation, while protecting sensitive resources. Initial activities include securing the site, providing public and fire management accesses, inventorying resources, and removing trash. The project's natural resources and threatened and endangered plants and animals will be inventoried to provide the basis for a management plan. Long-range plans for this project will generally be directed toward restoring disturbed areas to their original conditions, as far as possible, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. Large areas of pinelands have been degraded by timbering and require restoration. An all-season burning program will use, whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks to contain fires. Timber management will mostly involve improvement thinning's and regeneration



harvests. Plantations will be thinned and, where appropriate, reforested with species found in natural ecosystems. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age. Infrastructure will primarily be located in disturbed areas and will be the minimum required for management and public access. The FFS will promote environmental education. In the first year after acquisition of its parcels. The DRP will concentrate on site security, natural and cultural resource protection, and efforts toward the development of a plan for long-term public use and resource management.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The FFS will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will provide variable amounts of revenue, but the revenue-generating potential for this project is expected to be low.

The DRP expects no significant revenue to be generated initially. Any significant public use facilities will take several years to develop, and the amount of any revenue generated will depend on the extent of these facilities. Revenues for fiscal year 1993-1994 for the nearby Grayton Beach State Recreation Area were slightly more than \$162,000.

***Cooperators in management activities***

FFS will cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local governments and interested parties as appropriate.

The DRP does not recommend that any local governments or others assist in management of the Deer Lake, Grayton Beach or Topsail Hill tracts.



South Walton County Ecosystem Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1995*
Project Area (GIS acres)	22,272
Acres Acquired (GIS)	19,575
at a Cost of	\$188,506,210
Acres Remaining (GIS)	2,697

\*Point Washington and Topsail Hill projects combined in 1995. Note: Donation from DOT in 6/2009.

South Walton County Ecosystem Table 2

South Walton County Ecosystem FNAI Elements	Score
Choctawhatchee Beach Mouse	G5T1/S1
Snowy Plover	G3/S1
Green Sea Turtle	G3/S2S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Loggerhead Sea Turtle	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Godfrey's goldenaster	G2/S2
Henry's spiderlily	G2TNR/S2
southern milkweed	G2/S2
Cruise's goldenaster	G5T2/S2
Curtiss' sandgrass	G3/S3
Florida flame azalea	G3/S3

There are 24 rare species associated with the project.

South Walton County Ecosystem Table 3

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$47,711	\$47,711
OPS	\$24,500	\$24,500
Expense	\$6,000	\$6,000
OCO	\$15,000	\$1,000
FCO	\$44,000	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$137,271</b>	<b>\$195,277</b>

[Map\(s\): South Walton County Ecosystem](#)



## ***Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves***

Alachua, Citrus, Jackson, Marion and Sumter Counties  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1994
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	589
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	589

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Caves where southeastern bats rear their young also protect several other rare animals, such as the gray bat and cave-dwelling crayfish and are easily damaged by vandals. The Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves Priority project will limit access to six of these caves by protecting land around them, helping to ensure the survival of the bats and the other unique denizens of these lightless worlds.

### **Manager(s)**

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will manage the full fee acquisitions and monitor the less than fee.

### **General Description**

Every spring, adult female southeastern bats leave their colonies and move to certain cases where they bear and raise their young. For the species to survive, these maternity roosts must be protected from human disturbance. The six caves in this project are or were used as maternity roosts by the bats. The caves also harbor several other rare and endangered animals and plants, including the federally endangered gray bat and rare cave-dwelling crayfish and amphipods. The sites are generally too small to have important vegetative communities, but the Gerome’s Cave site has an outstanding example of upland hardwood forest, the Jennings’s Cave site has intact sandhill, and the Sneads Cave site supports good floodplain forest and floodplain swamp. Three archaeological sites are known from Gerome’s Cave. Vandalism is the greatest threat to the caves.

### **Public Use**

The caves will be managed as wildlife and environmental areas. They are generally not suitable for recreation, but some could have nature trails. Grant’s Cave, the less than fee parcel, qualifies as a wildlife and environmental area. Any public use will be negotiated with the landowner, but this cave is probably not suitable for public recreation.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Overall, acquisition efforts should concentrate on purchasing occupied caves first. Sneads Cave—Occupied; Catacombs—Occupied; Sumter County Cave—Vacant; Sweet Gum Cave—Vacant; Gerome’s Cave—Vacant; Jenning’s Cave—Vacant.





On October 30, 1996, LAMAC adopted criteria for establishing a Less-Than-Fee category: 1) resource value of the project/tract can be adequately protected through a less-than-fee instrument; 2) seller is willing to accept a less-than-fee-simple instrument and LAMAC has determined that the project's or site's acquisition objectives can be met by acquiring a less-than-fee interest; and 3) manager is willing to oversee a less-than-fee simple instrument.

On December 5, 1996, LAMAC transferred Grant's Cave, consisting of two ownerships, to the Less-Than-Fee category. On June 6, 2002 the Council combined the Less-Than-Fee project to the Group B Full Fee project. After the boundary change in 2002, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$1,931,170. It included the following:

Sweet Gum Cave (Citrus County)—the site consists of approximately 10 acres, 1 parcel and 1 owner.  
Gerome's Cave (Jackson County)—the site consists of approximately 160 acres, 5 parcels, and 4 owners.

Sneads Cave (Jackson County)—the site consists of approximately 80 acres, 1 parcel, and 1 owner.

Catacombs Cave (Marion County)—the site consists of approximately 10 acres, 2 parcels, and 2 owners.

Jenning's Cave (Marion County)—the site consists of approximately 89 acres, 79 parcels, and 70

owners. Sumter County Cave (Sumter County)—the site consists of approximately 362 acres, 4 parcels, and 3 owners.

On December 5, 2003 the Council moved the project to the Group A list.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands category of projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$3,276,597.

### **Coordination**

The Northwest Florida Water Management District will be an acquisition partner on the Gerome's Cave site. There are no acquisition partners for the less-than-fee parcels.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goal of management of the Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves project is to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The sensitive wildlife resources of the Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves—southeastern bats and other rare cave-dwelling animals—qualify them as wildlife and environmental areas.

#### ***Manager***

The FWC will manage the project.



***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The caves will require protection from vandalism. Natural communities around some of the cave entrances will require restoration.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Initial management activities will concentrate on securing each cave site with chain link fencing, posting signs, and removing trash and debris from the caves and surrounding areas. Each cave also will be monitored to determine its current usage by bats and each site's natural resources, including listed species of flora and fauna, will be inventoried. Current management is based on ongoing and previous monitoring information. A management plan will be developed outlining long-term management strategies for the project on a cave-by-cave basis. Management considerations will include, but will not be limited to, site protection, biological monitoring, educational and recreational opportunities, and habitat restoration or enhancement.

***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue is currently being generated. However, future management activities will include educational and recreational opportunities that could generate revenue.

***Cooperators in management activities***

No other local, state or federal agencies are currently participating in the management of this project. The Northwest Florida Water Management District proposes to cooperate in the management of Gerome's Cave in Jackson County.



Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1994
Project Area (GIS acres)	589
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	589

Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves Table 2

Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves FNAI Elements	Score
Gray Bat	G4/S1
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
North Florida Spider Cave Crayfish	G2/S2
Dougherty Plain Cave Crayfish	G2G3/S2
Florida Cave Amphipod	G2G3/S2S3
Hobbs' Cave Amphipod	G2G3/S2S3
Light-fleeing Cave Crayfish	G2G3/S2S3
False Rue-anemone	G5/S1
Southeastern Bat	G4/S3

There are 9 rare species associated with the project.

Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$0	\$0
OPS	\$14,784	\$14,784
Expense	\$4,725	\$4,725
OCO	\$30,240	\$0
FCO	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$49,749</b>	<b>\$19,509</b>

[Map\(s\): Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves](#)



## ***Spruce Creek***

Volusia County

Substantially Complete

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1990*
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	2,798
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	2,432**
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$19,118,050**
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	366

\*Combined with Spruce Creek Addition in 1994.

\*\*Includes funds spent and acreage acquired by BOT, SJRWMD, Volusia County, and the City of Port Orange. Note: 97 acres removed 10/2009 due to residential/commercial/infrastructure development.

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Natural areas along the coast of Volusia County are becoming scarce as residential developments expand from Daytona Beach and New Smyrna Beach. The Spruce Creek project protects one of the largest tracts of undeveloped land left in this region along the estuary of Spruce Creek and helps to maintain the water quality of the creeks and bays here, thus protecting a fishery. Additionally, this project will conserve what may be the site of Andrew Turnbull’s 18th–century plantation and provide a recreation area where people can do anything from hiking and fishing to simply learning about the plants and animals of this scenic landscape.

### **Manager(s)**

Volusia County.

### **General Description**

The original Spruce Creek project area, north and west of Strickland Bay, contains good estuarine tidal swamps, hammocks, scrub, and flatwoods. It protects habitat for such endangered or threatened species as bald eagles, wood storks and manatees. The addition, between U.S. 1 and Turnbull Bay, contains good Maritime or Xeric Hammock, with live oaks, cabbage palms, and several tropical shrubs near their northern limits. Flatwoods also cover a large part of the addition, and tidal marsh with remnants of black mangrove fringes it. Disturbed areas include an historic house at the north end and the remains of a fish camp and marina east of U.S. 1. No FNAI-listed plants are known from the addition; of FNAI-listed animals, gopher tortoises have been found. The area is adjacent to several Outstanding Florida Waters, and the aquatic resources Florida Waters, and the aquatic resources are important to both recreation and commercial fisheries. There are two archaeological sites recorded within the project area: Spruce Creek Mound site, a prehistoric and historic burial mound; and J. D. site, a prehistoric and historic shell midden and burial site. The project may also contain historic archaeological sites related to the British Colonial Period occupation in this area of NE Florida (ca. 1763–1783 AD). The area is experiencing significant growth, so developable acreage is likely to be lost relatively soon.



### **Public Use**

This project is designated as a recreation area with uses such as cultural and environmental education, hiking, fishing, camping and picnicking.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 1, 1989, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) added the original Spruce Creek project to the CARL Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by Volusia County, consisted of approximately 1,718 acres, nine owners, and a 1989 taxable value of \$2,675,000. On December 7, 1990, an owner-sponsored 54-acre parcel was added to the boundary. The project was removed on December 10, 1992 due to unwilling sellers. At that time, it was less than 90 percent complete.

On December 6, 1994, LAAC added the current Spruce Creek project to the 1995 CARL Priority list. This fee-simple proposal was sponsored by Volusia County, as the previous one had been, and had the same name, but consisted of 524 acres -a 208-acre portion of the original project and a 316-acre addition and had a 1993 taxable value of \$2,124,141. The project boundary, as approved by LAAC, however, included the portions of the 1989 project that had already been acquired. The resulting project acreage equaled 1,593 acres with a taxable value of \$3,406,991.

On October 24, 2002, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) approved a fee-simple 648-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by Volusia County and consisted of five owners.

On October 9, 2009, ARC voted to remove 6 sites with 54 individual parcels (97 acres) containing residential and commercial buildings or infrastructure. The total acreage removed had a just value of \$9,166,381. After boundary change in 2009, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$10,068,445.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Substantially Complete category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$6,125,172.

### **Coordination**

Volusia County is a partner in the acquisition of this project as well as being identified as the manager. SJRWMD and City of Port Orange are acquisition partners also.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Spruce Creek project are to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreation, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; to provide areas, including recreation trails, for natural-resource based recreation; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.



## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Spruce Creek Recreation Area has the size, natural, cultural, and recreation resources, and surrounding population density to qualify as a State Recreation Area.

### ***Manager***

Volusia County in cooperation with the State of Florida.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The project includes moderate-need tracts requiring more than basic resource management and protection. These lands will contain more highly developed resource-related recreation facilities. Large portions of the property, however, would be considered low-need tracts requiring only basic resource management and protection. Recreation use will be incorporated but in a more dispersed and less intensive manner.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within the first year after acquisition, management activities will concentrate on site security and resource inventory. Volusia County will provide appropriate access to the site to maintain existing and historic uses while protecting sensitive resources on the site. The site's natural resources and listed plants and animals will be inventoried, recreation opportunities and uses identified, and a management plan formulated. Long-range plans for Spruce Creek will be specified in the management plan and will generally be directed as follows: Development of recreation facilities, a comprehensive trail management program, a comprehensive educational and interpretive program, and a comprehensive historic resource management program; restoration of disturbed areas; maintenance of natural communities through a program of selected harvest and fire management; and habitat enhancement for listed species.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

This will be determined by the concepts in the Management Plan. Some revenues will probably be generated by user and concession fees at recreation sites. Some revenues may be generated through sale of forest products, but any such revenues will be minimal. Use of small portions of the area as mitigation for development elsewhere would not only restore damaged areas on-site but would yield revenue as well. It will be several years before potential revenue sources could be fully developed.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

Port Orange and New Smyrna Beach both will be involved in the planning of the project. The Museum of Arts and Sciences and the Atlantic Center for the Arts may prove to be valuable partners in optimizing the educational and interpretive opportunities on this site. The Nature Conservancy still owns the 150 acres that is managed by the Museum of Arts and Sciences. The Environmental Council and Sierra Club have played important roles in the early protection of the creek including sponsoring OFW status in 1986. The Southeast Volusia Historical Society and Volusia Anthropological Society have had long-standing interest in protection and interpretation of the cultural, historical and archaeological



resources located on the project site. Volunteers will be invaluable in developing, managing, and interpreting this site.



Spruce Creek Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1990*
Project Area (GIS acres)	2,798
Acres Acquired (GIS)	2,432**
at a Cost of	\$19,118,050**
Acres Remaining (GIS)	366

\*Combined with Spruce Creek Addition in 1994.

\*\*Includes funds spent and acreage acquired by BOT, SJRWMD, Volusia County, and the City of Port Orange. Note: 97 acres removed 10/2009 due to residential/commercial/infrastructure development.

Spruce Creek Table 2

Spruce Creek FNAI Elements	Score
Gray Bat	G4/S1
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
North Florida Spider Cave Crayfish	G2/S2
Dougherty Plain Cave Crayfish	G2G3/S2
Florida Cave Amphipod	G2G3/S2S3

There are 5 rare species associated with the project.

Spruce Creek Table 3

Management Cost Summary: Volusia County	1996/97	1997/98
Source of Funds	Volusia County	Volusia County
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$0	\$0
OCO	\$0	\$0
FCO	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,240</b>	<b>\$6,240</b>

[Map\(s\): Spruce Creek](#)





## ***St. Joe Timberland***

Bay, Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Taylor, Wakulla, Walton and Washington Counties  
Climate Change Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2000
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	158,589
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	82,098*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$76,054,595
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	76,491

\* NFWFMD has purchased acreage in project boundary

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The St. Joe Company is one of the largest landowners in Florida. The St. Joe Timberland project will consolidate the St. Joe ownerships already included in other projects, thus helping to preserve large undeveloped tracts of land for native plants and animals and giving the public an opportunity to experience large natural areas throughout north Florida. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses a number of Florida Forever project sites.

### **Manager(s)**

The sites will be managed by various agencies. See the summaries for the projects listed below.

### **General Description**

The St. Joe Timberland project includes the St. Joe Company ownerships in the following projects: Apalachicola River (Sweetwater Creek 7,040 acres, Gadsden Glades 360 acres, and Aspalaga Landing 600 acres sites); Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem (Tico site 1,780 acres); Dickerson Bay/Bald Point (Bald Point site 3,840 acres); Florida’s First Magnitude Springs (River Sink 40 acres and St. Marks 700 acres springs sites); Lake Powell 600 acres; St. Joseph Bay Buffer 250 acres; Sand Mountain 1,680 acres; Tate’s Hell/Carrabelle Tract 16,000 acres; Wacissa/Aucilla River Sinks 19,840 acres; and Wakulla Springs Protection Zone 2,240 acres. The sites lie in the Panhandle from Bay and Washington Counties to Taylor County, except for the Tico site in Brevard County. They include samples of almost all the natural communities of north and central Florida, from scrub to swamps and springs. See the general descriptions for the projects listed above.

### **Public Use**

The sites are designated for various public uses. See the summaries for the projects listed above.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 9, 1999, the Land Acquisition Management Advisory Council (LAMAC) approved the creation of the St. Joe Timberland project and added it to the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) Priority list. The project was sponsored by the St. Joe Company, Division of State Lands (DSL), and The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and initially consisted of individual tracts owned by St. Joe



Company within existing projects. Other sites will be proposed for addition to the project. Approval was given to add an additional 1,318 acres (18 to the Wacissa/Aucilla River Sinks project and approximately 1,300 to the Apalachicola River Project – Lake Wimico site) to the project boundary as essential parcels. The initial project consisted of approximately 56,218 acres. The Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWMD) has acquired the majority of the Sand Mountain site. On August 22, 2000, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) approved a fee-simple, 12,360-acre addition, known as Lake Wimico site in Gulf County, to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), consisted of one owner, the St. Joe Company. Also, on August 22, 2000 the ARC approved a fee-simple, 1,592- acre addition, known as Snipe Island, to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the TNC, consisted of one owner, the St. Joe Company. On July 12, 2001, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 22,260-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the FWC, consisted of one owner, the St. Joe Company. About 19,445 acres are located in Jefferson County, the remainder in Taylor County. Also, at that meeting, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 2,560-acre addition, to the St. Joseph Bay buffers project boundary. It was sponsored by the FWC, consisted of one owner, the St. Joe Company. The property is located in Gulf County.

On April 25, 2002, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 2,194-acre addition, known as the Tiger Hammock Conservation Area, to the project boundary. It was sponsored by Dr. John Epler and consisted of one owner, the St. Joe Company.

Also, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 1,656-acre addition, known as Crooked Creek (1,365 acres, Gadsden/Liberty Counties) and Short Creek (291 acres, Liberty County), to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the TNC, consisted of one owner, the St. Joe Company.

On June 6, 2003, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 49,565-acre addition, known as St. Vincent Sound to Lake Wimico, to the project boundary in Gulf and Franklin counties. It was sponsored by the TNC, consisted of one owner, the St. Joe Company.

On June 4, 2004, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 10,444-acre addition in Jefferson County, known as the Flint Rock tract, to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the TNC and consisted of one owner, the St. Joe Company.

In January 2008 TNC acquired 10,905 acres known as Flint Rock.

On April 6, 2010, the FWC acquired from TNC approximately 2,836 acres of the Flint Rock site for \$5,246,371.

On December 9, 2011 ARC voted to place this project in the Climate Change Lands category of Florida Forever. On April 20, 2012, the ARC approved transferring the Flint Rock tract to the Wacissa/Aucilla River Sinks Florida Forever project, as this was no longer in St. Joe ownership.

In October 2016 ARC transferred 2,456 acres of land from the Franklin County sites of this project to the Dickerson Bay/Bald Point project, as part of the consideration for the Bluffs of St. Teresa Florida Forever proposal.



On April 21, 2017 ARC voted to add 879.5 acres of St. Joe land in two parcels in south Leon County to the project, with a tax assessed value of \$186,620. This addition was proposed by the Office of Park Planning. DRP will manage the western parcel as part of Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park and the Florida Forest Service (FFS) will manage the eastern parcel as part of Wakulla State Forest.

On August 18, 2017 ARC voted to add an 18-acre inholding in Franklin County within the Box-R Wildlife Management Area, surrounded by BOT-owned managed conservation lands, to the project. The addition had a tax assessed value of \$83,800. This fee-simple boundary amendment was submitted by the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

After the most recent addition in 2017, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$48,846,982. In calendar year 2017, a total of 1,044.50 acres closed in this project were acquired using Florida Forever program funding.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$116,659,174.

### **Coordination**

TNC has been an acquisition intermediary for this project.



St. Joe Timberland Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2000
Project Area (GIS acres)	158,589
Acres Acquired (GIS)	82,098*
at a Cost of	\$76,054,595
Acres Remaining (GIS)	76,491

\* NFWFMD has purchased acreage in project boundary

St. Joe Timberland Table 2

St. Joe Timberland FNAI Elements	Score
Florida torreya	G1/S1
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Apalachicola rosemary	G1/S1
Big Blue Spring Cave Crayfish	G1/S1
Chapman's rhododendron	G1/S1
Curtiss' loosestrife	G1/S1
Gholson's blazing star	G1/S1
pinewoods aster	G1/S1
quillwort yellow-eyed grass	G1/S1
Southern Elktoe	G1/S1

There are 99 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): St. Joe Timberland](#)



## ***St. Johns River Blueway***

St. Johns County

Climate Change Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2002
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	26,232
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	7,031
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$3,112,640
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	19,200

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

This project is located in one of the fastest growing areas in the state. The project is designed to preserve the last remaining shorelines of the St. Johns River and several of its tributaries. The project also has numerous recorded archaeological and historical resources, with the potential for many more.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Forest Service/FFS proposes managing part of the site as part of Watson Island State Forest, and the rest as a new state forest. Bunnell District personnel will manage the site and coordinate public access and use for all areas.

### **General Description**

The St. Johns River Blueway runs along the eastern shore of the St. Johns River between Green Cove Springs and Palatka. It includes considerable forested wetlands by the river and around six tributary creeks, plus mesic flatwoods, freshwater marsh, and a portion of disturbed uplands. The project also bounds the Watson Island State Forest on the west bank of the St. Johns River.

### **Public Use**

The degree of ownership acquired and whether there are usable uplands to have resource-based recreation will determine the degree of public access and use that can be assured. Both fee and less-than-fee acquisition approaches are recommended in the proposal. The resource-based recreation potential for the project is considered low to moderate, depending on what title rights and uplands can be obtained. Much of the project area is wetland or floodplain adjacent to the St. Johns River and its tributary creeks. These public waterways have boating and canoeing opportunities. Acquiring adjacent lands will help to ensure preservation of the quality recreation experience that presently exists. If upland sites along these waterways are acquired, these uplands could have access for the boating public and/or opportunities for environmental education and wildlife viewing. Success in acquiring lands with relatively dry upland areas will determine the ability to provide any kind of comprehensive hiking or bicycle trail system, or facilities to have camping or picnicking. Creating a comprehensive bicycle trail system between parcels will require use of the public road system. Lands adjacent to existing public areas may enhance access, usability and the recreation experience of those public areas.



### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 5, 2002, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the St. Johns River Blueway project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2003 Priority list. This fee-simple and less-than-fee acquisition, sponsored by St. Johns County, consisted of approximately 27,997 acres and 290 landowners. Six entities own more than 15,000 of the acres in the project: Rayonier, Meldrim, SJ Land Associates LLC, Klaerich, Ringhaver, and Plum Creek Timberlands LP.

On June 16, 2005 the Board of Trustees (BOT) approved buying 231.8 acres (Warner). The BOT also acquired 736 acres (Lambert) in August 2005. On June 11, 2010, the ARC placed this project in the Climate Change Lands category for the August priority list. On December 9, 2011 the ARC recommended a 1656-acre reduction to the project, removing residential development, commercial buildings or infrastructure from the boundary. After the most recent boundary change in 2010, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$56,230,980.

On August 16, 2016, the 5,237-acre Meldrim ownership was acquired as a perpetual conservation easement at a cost of \$5,991,803.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$202,645,364.

### **Coordination**

Portions of the project may be acquired in partnership with St. Johns County. The St. Johns River WMD is also interested in the acquisition of the project. The acquisition partnership may include local and state funding sources. Contribution percentages have not been determined.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The FFS proposes managing the project under a multiple use management regime for the State Forest system. Management would be designed to accomplish the goals and measures for this project. These goals and measures are referenced later in this prospectus. The primary land management goal for the FFS is to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; to integrate compatible human use; and to insure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. This ecosystem approach will guide the FFS's management activities on this project. perpetuity all native ecosystems; to integrate compatible human use; and to insure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. This ecosystem approach will guide the FFS's management activities on this project.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project's location, size, and diversity make it desirable for use and management as a state forest. State Forest designation requires that certain criteria be met, such as public access and acreage available for many types of recreational activities. Designation as a state forest is contingent upon acquiring property rights which are consistent with these criteria.



### ***Manager***

The FFS proposes to manage a portion of the site as part of Watson Island State Forest, and the remainder as a new state forest. Bunnell District personnel manage the site and coordinate public access and use for all areas.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Much of the project's upland areas have been disturbed and will require various levels of restoration. Natural communities that have been converted to pine plantation will require removal of off-site species and reforestation with native species. Protecting and restoring wetland communities will be a priority for the FFS. Restoration efforts will concentrate on removing and filling ditches and corrections of other hydrological alterations. Public use will be limited to activities that are compatible with any sensitive resources.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the project area is acquired and assigned to the FFS, public access will be provided for low intensity outdoor recreation activities. Initial and intermediate management efforts will concentrate on resource inventory, restoring and reforesting areas where harvesting has occurred, hydrologic restoration, as well as site security, public and fire management access. Inventories of the site's natural resources, threatened and endangered flora and fauna, will be conducted to provide a basis for formulation of a management plan.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Timber sales will be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue dependent upon a variety of factors. Due to the existing condition of the timber resource on the property, revenue generating potential of this project is expected to be low-medium. It is anticipated that management funding will come from the CARL trust fund.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

FFS will cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate.



St. Johns River Blueway Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2002
Project Area (GIS acres)	26,232
Acres Acquired (GIS)	7,031
at a Cost of	\$3,112,640
Acres Remaining (GIS)	19,200

St. Johns River Blueway Table 2

St. Johns River Blueway FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Canby's wild indigo	G3T1/S1
Creek Siltsnail	G2/S2
Thorne's beaksedge	G3/S1S2
Bartram's ixia	G2G3/S2S3
Bachman's Sparrow	G3/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3
Osprey	G5/S3S4
Little Blue Heron	G5/S4

There are 9 rare species associated with the project.

St. Johns River Blueway Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	not provided
Salary (X FTE)	\$173,346	not provided
Expense	\$125,000	not provided
OCO	\$361,000	not provided
Total	\$659,346	not provided

[Map\(s\): St. Johns River Blueway](#)





### ***Strategic Managed Areas Lands List***

Alachua, Bay, Broward, Charlotte, Clay, Collier, Columbia, Dade, Desoto, Dixie, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Manatee, Marion, Orange, Putnam, Santa Rosa, St. Lucie, Sumter, Taylor, Union, Volusia, Wakulla and Washington Counties

Critical Natural Lands

#### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2018
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	11,573
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>At a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres remaining</i>	11,573

#### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

As stated in the Florida Forever criteria in statute, these specific, small and scattered parcels would enhance or facilitate management of properties already under public ownership. Though collectively the parcels in the boundary of the project will meet most goals not associated with less-than-fee acquisitions, the overall goal is to enhance the coordination and completion of land acquisition projects (essential natural resources, ecosystem service parcels, and connecting linkage corridors as identified and developed by the best available scientific analysis).

#### **Manager(s)**

Each parcel would be managed as part of the site they are attached to, by the applicable state agency manager. The managing agency would be the Florida Forest Service (FFS), the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), the Department of Environmental Protection’s Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), or the Department of Environmental Protection’s Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT).

#### **General Description**

The Strategic Managed Areas Lands List, sponsored by the DEP Division of Recreation and Parks, the DEP Office of Greenways and Trails, the DACS Florida Forest Service, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, is a collection of one-owner parcels statewide that would augment or improve management of existing state-managed conservation lands, if acquired. The parcels included have been identified as part of the optimum management boundary within the approved management plans of ten state parks, seven trail corridors, ten state forests, and seven wildlife management/environmental areas. None of these parcels are located within the boundary of another Florida Forever project on the priority list. The largest parcel in this project would become part of the 77.8 thousand-acre Fakahatchee Strand State Park in Collier County, if acquired. The smallest is 2 acres of beachfront land on the Atlantic Ocean that would become part of the Mizell Johnson State Park in Broward County. The total GIS acres for all parcels in the project is 11,706, with a reported Tax Assessed Value of \$30,393,382. About 7,038 acres of these proposals are in Strategic Habitat



Conservation Areas. When ARC approved the SMALL project in October, there were 40 parcels. In mid-December, the landowner of the St. Johns parcel in the project requested its removal from the project boundary. This boundary adjustment will be reflected, along with any others that occur during the year, in the 2020 Florida Forever Report.

The properties identified for better management for the DRP are properties adjoining existing state parks. Properties chosen for better management by the FFS augment existing state forests such as the Blackwater River State Forest or the Peace River State Forest. Properties that would augment FWC lands would improve the management of such areas as the Andrews Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Levy County or the Lafayette Forest Wildlife and Environmental Area (WEA) in Lafayette County. Finally, railroad rights of way for the Office of Greenways and Trails would extend or further connect existing recreation trails such as the existing Palatka to Lake City Corridor or the new Georgia to Cross City Corridor.

Listed species element occurrences were reported by FNAI by parcel. A total of 48 listed species were identified overall, but some species may be counted more than once, as this is a statewide, multi-parcel, multi-county project. The maximum number of listed species at one site was 7.

### **Public Use**

Because these lands are to be acquired in full fee, they would increase the size of conservation or recreation areas and enhance the experience of such lands for members of the public. The public use would be predicated on the existing management of the adjoining areas. The parcels in this list all help to enhance essential natural resources, providing better operational or environmental management. The resource-based potential public use of the project is generally high, as the various parcels acquired in fee title can accommodate such activities as hiking, natural resource appreciation and education, picnicking, camping, bicycling, and horseback riding. Depending on management emphasis, fishing and hunting is also supportable.

### **Acquisition Planning**

As the application requires, the owners of parcels in this project were notified by mail that the Acquisition and Restoration Council would be considering a Florida Forever proposal that included their parcel in the boundary. This would mean that, if or when they wished to sell their parcel, state acquisition could be possible using Florida Forever funding. They were also made aware that they could remove their parcels from the project's boundary at any time, but that removing the parcel from the boundary would make it ineligible for state acquisition through the Florida Forever program. Florida statute requires that they send a certified letter requesting removal to the Division of State Lands.

This project was approved by the ARC in October of 2018. Based on the counties' tax information, the tax assessed value of the project's parcels total \$39,651,163. All the parcels within the boundary are considered essential. The parcels are proposed for fee simple acquisition.



### **Coordination**

These parcels are eligible for Florida Forever program funding. While opportunities for partnerships may present themselves in the years ahead, Florida Forever is the primary funding source.

### **Management Policy Statement**

These acquisitions would fall under the management plan of the existing conservation lands and projects they would be attached to. These are parcels that will improve resource management of state conservation lands.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

What qualifies this fee simple project for state designation is the intent is to improve management efficiency and effectiveness of state-managed conservation lands for citizens, visitors, natural systems and wildlife by adding strategic parcels or ownerships to the management units. These additions will make for more seamless operation and maintenance at the various sites.

#### ***Manager***

The Division of Recreation and Parks, the Office of Greenways and Trails, the Florida Forest Service and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission would incorporate responsibilities for the relevant lands acquired into the appropriate units under their management.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Existing managed unit conditions would apply.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

The timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure would become part of the general management of the larger management unit upon acquisition.

#### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Revenue -generating potential for each parcel would vary, but management efficiencies from these acquisitions could result in a reduction of some management costs.



Strategic Managed Areas Lands List (SMALL) Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2018
Project Area (GIS acres)	11,573
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	11,573

Strategic Managed Areas Lands List (SMALL) Table 2

Natural Bridge Creek FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Panther	G5T1/S1
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	G3/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
fragrant prickly apple	G1/S1
A Mayfly	G1G2/S1S2
Godfrey's goldenaster	G2/S2
Suwannee Alligator Snapping Turtle	G2/S2
pinewoods dainties	G4T2/S2
Florida Mapleleaf	G2G3/S2
Florida goldenaster	G3/S3
Suwannee Cooter	G5T3/S3
Florida Panther	G5T1/S1

*There are 17 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Strategic Managed Areas Lands List](#)



## ***Suwannee County Preservation***

Suwannee County

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2010
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	1,254
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	1,254

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring the Less-Than-Fee Suwannee County Preservation project will protect the water quality of the Suwannee River drainage area that harbors a number of rare plant and animal species; provide continued protection of Rocky Creek; sustain wildlife in the area, provide long-term benefits to imperiled species; and perhaps also provide natural resource-based recreational opportunities. The project will provide land area for Florida black bear movement.

Acquiring the Suwannee County Preservation project fulfills Florida Forever goals of acquiring conservation land with means other than fee-simple purchase, of acquiring significant strategic habitat conservation areas, of protecting floodplains in the Rocky Creek and in the Suwannee River areas, and of protecting the surface waters of the state. The landowner is open to fee simple purchase as well.

### **Manager(s)**

Landowner with Office of Environmental Services (OES) of the Division of State Lands (DSL), or its successor, would serve as the conservation easement monitor.

### **General Description**

Located in northeastern Suwannee County, just east of Live Oak and north of the Houston community, the Suwannee County Preservation project is a range of parcels in two primary locations—one parcel on the Suwannee River, and a cluster of parcels east of Live Oak, on both sides of Interstate-10. The original parcels total 1,660 acres, but the staff of the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) recommended that only the larger tract and one of the four isolated parcels, which fronts on the river, be included in the final boundary of 1,254 (GIS)-acre parcel. All are considered essential parcels. Rocky Creek, a perennial stream, crosses two of the largest parcels in the larger tract, then flows north for just over three miles before its confluence with the Suwannee River. The last stretch of Rocky Creek crosses through the Suwannee River Water Management District’s (SRWMD’s) Rocky Creek tract, which adjoins the Suwannee River.

The larger tract and three nearby parcels are just south of secondary habitat for Florida black bear. A significant population of black bears exists approximately 20 miles east of the area within the Osceola National Forest. The Suwannee River, just north of the Rocky Creek Tract, is a known corridor for the



black bear. In addition, black bears have been observed just a few miles south of the area near the town of Wellborn.

The Eastern Tracts consist principally of disturbed uplands and more naturally vegetated bottomland along the Rocky Creek system, which flows northward through the property on its way to the Suwannee River. Most of the better-drained uplands have been converted to pine plantation or have been timbered. The 139-acre River Tract on Suwannee River is undeveloped, other than a decrepit shed, a cement boat ramp covered with sediment at the lower end, and the existence of electrical power and a well. Rising abruptly from the river's eastern bank is a natural levee, behind which is a broader band of bottomland forest supporting a variety of hardwoods. Inland of this, the upland portion of the tract, about 99 acres, is mostly pine plantation.

### **Public Use**

If acquired as a less-than-fee property, public access would depend on the terms of access permitted by the owner as part of the conservation easement. The landowners indicated that they could be willing to sell their property in fee-simple. If acquired in fee-simple, the eastern tract bisected by Interstate 10 could provide many trail opportunities for hiking, off road biking, horseback riding, nature/interpretive and off-highway vehicle riding. The project could also provide picnicking, primitive camping, hunting and geocaching. The river tract located on the Suwannee River could provide, in addition to the activities listed above, freshwater boating, fishing, canoeing and kayaking.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 11, 2010, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Suwannee County Preservation project to the Florida Forever priority list in the Less-Than-Fee category. In 2010, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$2,995,178.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$2,550,204.

### **Coordination**

No acquisition partners identified.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a proposed conservation easement or other less-than-fee interest, the project will be managed by the private landowner with restrictions. Purchasing development rights, prohibiting further conversion of existing natural areas to agriculture, and limited public access to some sites will likely be the primary foci of the conservation easement. The current use of the property is mostly production of pine trees and pine straw. Purchasing a conservation easement over the property would allow continuation of these activities while allowing for continued maintenance of natural areas on the property. A conservation easement over the tract bordering the Suwannee River would protect natural areas along the river and prevent development from contributing to the degradation of the river.



## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Acquiring the Suwannee County Preservation project fulfills the Florida Forever goals of acquiring conservation land with means other than fee-simple purchase, of acquiring significant strategic habitat conservation areas, of protecting floodplains in the Rocky Creek and in the Suwannee River areas and protecting the surface waters of the state.

### ***Manager***

Landowner with the OES, or its successor, is designated to manage and ensure oversight of the conservation easement on this project.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Disturbed acreage includes pine plantation and associated facilities, power line rights-of-way, roads, and ruderal sites, some of which now support successional hardwood forest and row crops. Despite the high level of disturbance to uplands throughout the site, no exotic species listed by the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council were observed. Restoration of natural habitat would be extensive and prolonged due to the current land use. The small size and proximity of the tract to I-10 excludes the use of prescribed fire as a habitat management tool. Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) notes that the upland pine (sandhill or upland pine forest) natural community (and perhaps some mesic flatwoods) that usually occupy most of the higher, well drained uplands on site has been all but eliminated by silviculture and fire exclusion. Restoration to historic conditions would require removal of off-site pine, replanting with longleaf pine, and attempting to restore native groundcover and shrubby vegetation by seeding or planting. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) notes that substantial and prolonged habitat restoration would be necessary for the area to become beneficial to a more diverse variety of wildlife.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

This is not applicable to a Conservation Easement.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

None available under the conservation easement.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The landowner and the Division of State Lands' Office of Environmental Services (OES).



Suwannee County Preservation Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>1,254</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>1,254</b>

Suwannee County Preservation Table 2

<b>Suwannee County Preservation FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Suwannee Alligator Snapping Turtle</b>	<b>G1G2/S1S2</b>
<b>Florida Mapleleaf</b>	<b>G2G3/S2</b>
<b>Suwannee Cooter</b>	<b>G5T3/S3</b>

*There are 4 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Suwannee County Preservation](#)





## **Taylor Sweetwater Creek**

Taylor County

Climate Change Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2017
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	3,702
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	3,702

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The public purposes for acquisition include the following: Increasing the protection of Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels; Protecting, restoring, and maintaining the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state; Ensuring that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state; Increasing natural-based public recreation or educational opportunities; Preserving significant archaeological or historic sites; and, Increasing the amount of forest land available for sustainable management of natural resources.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

### **General Description**

Taylor Sweetwater Creek encompasses 3,702 acres in coastal Taylor County near Dekle Beach, about 20 miles south of Perry. It is a mostly contiguous tract of many parcels, split by CR-361 (Keaton Beach Road), with about two-thirds of the acreage west of the highway. Straight-line Gulf frontage is about 2.3 miles. The proposed property is located between the Spring Creek Unit and Tide Swamp Unit of Big Bend Wildlife Management Area, which lie 3 miles to the north and 2 miles to the south, respectively. The small (5 acres) Spring Warrior Creek Conservation Area (Suwannee River Water Management District) is nestled within the general perimeter of the proposal. Big Bend Seagrasses Aquatic Preserve lies just offshore of the entire site.

This land is mostly undeveloped coastline, with limestone at or near the surface overlain by sandy flats and rolling hills. The dominant natural communities on site are hydric hammock, saltmarsh, sandhill, wet flatwoods and mesic flatwoods. The hydric hammock, a densely forested canopy and sub-canopy, is the most extensive natural community on the Taylor Sweetwater Creek proposal. Salt marsh is the second most extensive community within the Taylor Sweetwater Creek proposal, with needle rush and saltmeadow cordgrass along the many tidal creeks. Sandhill is the most extensive upland natural community on the Taylor Sweetwater Creek proposal. Other land types are wet flatwoods, mesic flatwoods and small areas of xeric hammock, depression marshes, successional hardwood forest, improved pasture, and sandhill planted with pine.



### **Public Use**

The scenic qualities of this project could be excellent. Areas of previous disturbance such as former pasture might support development of camping opportunities. Considering these factors, the recreational potential of the proposal is considered medium to high. The scenic qualities and recreational potential of the proposal could be confirmed through field survey. The proposal meets initial criteria to consider management of this tract as a component of the Florida State Park System, although the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) is also a possible manager. The property may be ideal for recreational scenic hiking trails, equestrian trails on the upland sandhill areas, primitive camping, and water-based activities. The land would benefit recreation and open space use in Taylor County and the unincorporated areas of Keaton Beach and Dekle Beach (popular scalloping sites). In the Taylor County Comprehensive Plan, acquiring the property strengthens a coastal wildlife corridor linkage and improves opportunities for wildlife appreciation with low-intensity recreation such as bird watching, hiking, boating, snorkeling and managed hunting. The property does not currently have sites on the National Register, but the likelihood that it holds significant archaeological or historic sites is high.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 16, 2017, Taylor Sweetwater Creek was accepted by ARC for in-depth review. On October 20, 2017, ARC voted to add this proposal as a Florida Forever project.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$24,930,538.

### **Coordination**

The proposed property is located between the Spring Creek Unit and Tide Swamp Unit of Big Bend Wildlife Management Area, which lie 3 miles to the north and 2 miles to the south, respectively. The small (5 acre) Spring Warrior Creek Conservation Area (Suwannee River Water Management District) is nestled within the general perimeter of the proposal. Big Bend Seagrasses Aquatic Preserve lies just offshore of the entire site.

### **Management Policy Statement**

Primary management goals for the Taylor Sweetwater Creek are to increase protection of Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas, acquire landscapes that link other conservation corridors and landscapes, protect water resources of the State, support public resource-based recreation and increase the amount of forestland for sustainable natural-resource management.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Taylor Sweetwater Creek project adds an extremely valuable link along the west coast of Florida between two very large wildlife management areas that have Gulf of Mexico frontage. If acquired, this would conserve, protect, manage and restore important ecosystems, landscapes and forests, as well as protect significant surface-water coastal, recreation, timber and fish and wildlife resources. It would provide opportunities for fishing and wildlife based public recreation.



### ***Manager***

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Some areas may require ecological restoration of ground cover, control of invasive species, and either thinning or reforestation. Such resource management projects may be necessary to accomplish restoration objectives and attain the desired future conditions for communities on the area. This is especially important for conservation of habitats and populations of imperiled or rare species. Landscape ecology is also important, as land use changes in the area, such as intensive residential, commercial, and industrial developments and the roads that often accompany them, may also affect the attainment of resource conservation goals for the area and the effectiveness of necessary resource management projects.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

If acquired and leased to the FWC for management, a management plan will be developed by FWC describing the management goals and objectives necessary to implement future resource management programs on the area. The management plan will also establish the current and future roles of cooperating entities including governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders. Long-range plans would stress ecosystem management and the protection and management of focal, rare, and imperiled species. Historic analysis of natural communities and vegetation types may be conducted on the area if deemed necessary and quantified vegetation management objectives will be developed. FWC would assess the condition of wildlife resources and provide planning support to enhance management of focal species and recovery of imperiled species on the TSCFFP. Prescribed fire and other essential resource management activities will be implemented to maintain and restore natural communities and vegetation types to benefit native wildlife resources.

Programs providing multiple fish and wildlife-based public outdoor recreational uses will be considered for implementation. These recreational uses will enhance the public's understanding of the region while providing ample opportunities for public outdoor recreational enjoyment. Essential roads will be maintained to provide all weather public access and management operations. Unnecessary roads, fire lanes, and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned or restored as practical. Infrastructure development will be limited to only that which is necessary to allow public access and to provide for the necessary facilities, security, and management of the property. Archaeological and historical sites will be managed in coordination with the DHR.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Revenue from the Taylor Sweetwater Creek can include sale of various permits and recreational user fees and ecotourism activities, if such projects could be economically developed. Area regulations would be developed to identify the necessary and required permits, fees, and regulations. Timber sales from thinning operations or restoration of offsite plantations may also yield additional revenue. Apiary leases will be considered as a revenue source depending on whether the area meets the criteria of FWC's



Apiary Policy. The long-term values of ecosystem services to local and regional land and water resources, and to human health, are expected to be significant. The Florida Legislature appropriates funds for land management. The initial first-year startup cost is estimated to be \$604,480, including public access and infrastructure and fixed capital outlays necessary for management of the area. Below is an estimate of the recurring, annual operating costs to operate and manage the TSCFFP. Optimal management of the area would require one (1) full-time equivalent (FTE) position. Salary requirements for these FTE positions, as well as those of other needed FWC staff, and costs to operate and manage the TSCFFP are reflected in the cost estimate below. All land management funding is dependent upon annual legislative appropriations.

***Cooperators in management activities***

If the Taylor Sweetwater Creek project is acquired and leased to the FWC for management, FWC will cooperate with other Federal, State and local governmental agencies including the USFWS, USDA, Florida Forest Service, DEP, DHR, SRWMD, and Taylor County, among others, in the management of the property.



Taylor Sweetwater Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>3,702</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>3,702</b>

Taylor Sweetwater Table 2

<b>Taylor Sweetwater Creek FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>G5/S3</b>

*There are 2 rare species associated with the project.*

Taylor Sweetwater Table 3a

<b>Management Cost and Revenue Sources: Taylor Sweetwater Creek</b>	<b>Resource Management</b>
<b>Exotic Species Control</b>	<b>\$9,332</b>
<b>Prescribed Burning</b>	<b>\$19,986</b>
<b>Cultural Resource Management</b>	<b>\$831</b>
<b>Timber Management</b>	<b>\$1,285</b>
<b>Hydrological Management</b>	<b>\$8,463</b>
<b>Other (restoration, enhancement, surveys, monitoring, etc.)</b>	<b>\$104,499</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$144,395</b>

Taylor Sweetwater Table 3b

<b>Management Cost and Revenue Sources: Taylor Sweetwater Creek</b>	<b>Support</b>
<b>Land Management Planning</b>	<b>\$5,100</b>
<b>Land Management Reviews</b>	<b>\$756</b>
<b>Training/Staff Development</b>	<b>\$907</b>
<b>Vehicle Purchase</b>	<b>\$15,754</b>
<b>Vehicle Operation/Maintenance</b>	<b>\$9,294</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>\$8,576</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$40,387</b>



Taylor Sweetwater Table 3c

<b>Management Cost and Revenue Sources: Taylor Sweetwater Creek</b>	<b>Administration</b>
<b>General administration</b>	<b>\$3,136</b>
<b>Facility maintenance</b>	<b>\$21,988</b>
<b>Information/Education/Operations</b>	<b>\$13,865</b>
<b>Resource Protection</b>	<b>\$2,909</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$41,898</b>

*Based on the characteristics and requirements of this area, one (1) full time equivalent (FTE) position would be optimal to fully manage this area. All land management funding is dependent upon annual legislative appropriations.*

[Map\(s\): Taylor Sweetwater Creek](#)



## **Terra Ceia**

Manatee County

Climate Change Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1996
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	4,085
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	1,881*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$4,962,500*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	2,203

\*Includes acreage/expenditures/donation by SWFWMD.

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The mangrove swamps and flatwoods on the islands and mainland around Terra Ceia Bay are some of the last natural lands left on the southeast shore of Tampa Bay. The Terra Ceia project will protect and restore this natural area, helping to preserve the fishery and manatee feeding grounds in Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve and giving the public an area in which to fish, boat, and enjoy the original landscape of Tampa Bay.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP). Parcels in Frog Creek already owned and managed by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) will continue to be managed by that agency.

### **General Description**

The Terra Ceia project is two-thirds mangrove swamp and one-third a mix of xeric hammock, and flatwoods and old fields colonized by Brazilian pepper. The area is particularly significant for the protection it offers to bird rookeries (including nearby Bird Island, one of the top two rookeries in Florida) and to the adjacent Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve (an Outstanding Florida Water), with its seagrass beds used heavily by manatees, its nursery areas for fish and invertebrates, and its important fishery. Sixty-nine archaeological sites, mostly middens, are known from the project, and more are likely. The natural resources of the project are vulnerable to alteration or destruction by development and invasion by exotic plant species. Growth pressures are intense, so endangerment is high.

### **Public Use**

This project qualifies as a buffer preserve, with uses such as boating and fishing, and—in accessible uplands—activities like picnicking and hiking.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 5, 1996, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) added the Terra Ceia project to the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) list. This fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by Tampa Bay Aquatic Preserve, consisted of some 2,612 acres, multiple owners, and a 1995 taxable value of \$8,059,357. The essential parcels were identified as: Hendry Corp; Reeder; Schater; Huber; Blalock; and



First Union/Larson. Before the project's addition to the CARL list, the state's acquisition partner, the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD), acquired Terra Ceia Isles. The District acquired the Reeder (20-acres) and Schater parcels (39.1-acres) in 2000 with the State contributing half of the funding.

On October 15, 1998, the LAAC designated an additional 843 acres as essential.

On June 15, 2007, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 395-acre addition (aka Frog and McMullen Creek Addition) to the project boundary. The proposal was sponsored by the DEP's Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA) and the DRP and the SWFWMD. The addition consisted of 33 landowners and 61 parcels. The DRP is the recommended manager for most of the site. Parcels in Frog Creek already owned and managed by the SWFWMD will continue to be managed by them.

In June 2009, a donation of 40.06 acres was received from SWFWMD.

On August 13, 2010 ARC approved a 251-acre (\$51,544,946 just value) reduction to the project boundary due to residential/commercial/infrastructure development. After this most boundary change in 2010, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$7,137,528.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Climate Change Lands category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$20,608,722.

### **Coordination**

SWFWMD is an acquisition partner. DEP received a grant of \$504,731 from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to acquire Rattlesnake Key and Joe's Island.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary objective of management of the Terra Ceia project is to preserve and restore the coastal natural communities, ranging from xeric and maritime hammocks to coastal strand and mangrove swamps that remain around the Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve. Achieving this objective will protect the resources of the aquatic preserve (its seagrass beds used heavily by manatees, its nursery areas for fish and invertebrates, and its fishery). It will also play an important part in protecting and restoring the Tampa Bay estuary, the largest open-water estuary in Florida. The project should be managed under the single-use concept: management activities should be directed first toward preserving resources and second toward integrating carefully controlled consumptive uses such as fishing.

Managers should control access to the project; limit public motor vehicles to one or a few main roads; thoroughly inventory the resources; restore hydrological disturbances; burn any fire-dependent communities in a pattern mimicking natural lightning-season fires, using natural firebreaks or existing roads for control; strictly limit timbering; and monitor management activities to ensure that they are actually preserving the resources of the aquatic preserve. Managers should limit the number and size of recreational facilities, ensure that they avoid the most sensitive resources, and site them in already





disturbed areas when possible. The project includes nearly all the coastal undeveloped land south of Port Manatee and around Terra Ceia Bay, and consequently has the size and location to achieve its primary objective.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

This project qualifies as a state buffer preserve to protect the resources of the Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve.

#### ***Manager***

The DRP is the designated manager. Parcels in Frog Creek already owned and managed by SWFWMD will continue to be managed by them.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The Terra Ceia Project generally includes lands that are “low-need” tracts, requiring basic resource management and protection.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

The goals of management of the Terra Ceia Project are (1) protect the water quality and the highly productive marine habitat of the aquatic preserve by maintaining the project area in a substantially natural condition; (2) preserve and protect significant endangered and threatened species including the West Indian manatee, Roseate Spoonbill, Little Blue Heron, Tricolored Heron, Least Tern, Snowy Egret, Reddish Egret, and American Oystercatcher; (3) preserve and protect significant archaeological sites; (4) restore islands to a natural state which will include removal of exotic vegetation and habitat restoration activities; and (5) establish a self-guided canoe trail between the islands for use by the general public. Within the first year after acquisition, activities will concentrate on the site security of the mainland property and resource inventory. The site’s natural resources will be inventoried, and a management plan will be formulated. Long-range plans for this property will be to remove exotic plants, restore disturbed areas and to perpetuate and maintain natural communities. Management practices will also stress the protection of the water quality of the aquatic preserve by maintaining the project area in a substantially natural condition, the protection of threatened and endangered species and the preservation of the significant archaeological sites for professional investigation.

#### ***Revenue-generating potential***

No revenue is expected to be generated from this property.



Terra Ceia Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1996
Project Area (GIS acres)	4,085
Acres Acquired (GIS)	1,881*
at a Cost of	\$4,962,500*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	2,203

\*Includes acreage/expenditures/donation by SWFWMD.

Terra Ceia Table 2

Terra Ceia FNAI Elements	Score
Manatee	G2/S2
Hairy Beach Sunflower	G5T2/S2
Banded Wild-pine	G5/S3

There are 3 rare species associated with the project.

Terra Ceia Table 3

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring
Salary (2 FTE)	\$62,000	not provided
Expense	\$10,000	not provided
OCO	\$100,000	not provided
FCO	\$500,000	not provided
Total	\$672,000	not provided

[Map\(s\): Terra Ceia](#)



## **Three Chimneys**

Volusia County

Critical Historical Resources

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2000
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	64
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	8
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$889,900
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	56

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

An old live-oak hammock in the City of Ormond Beach protects the remains of a British sugar and rum factory from the 1700’s. The Three Chimneys project will protect the hammock and these remains—some of the few from the British period in Florida—and will give the public an opportunity to see and learn about this site.

### **Manager(s)**

Ormond Beach Historical Trust (OBHT).

### **General Description**

High-quality, old-growth hydric hammock, dominated by live oak, laurel oak, sweetgum, hackberry, elm, cabbage palm, and other trees, occupies nearly all the site. No FNAI-listed plants or animals are known from the site but migrating songbirds may use the hammock as a stopover. The site includes the ruins of a sugar and rum factory from the 1700’s British period, with two of the original three chimneys remaining. Few sites from Florida’s British period are now publicly owned. There are also early 20th-century remains on the site. The site is vulnerable to further neglect, is surrounded by development, and it is in danger of development.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated as a state historic site, with uses such as historic interpretation and possibly picnicking or walking.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The project includes eight parcels and five owners. In 2000, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$975,700. The Segev parcel is essential.

On December 5, 2003 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) moved this project to the Group B list.

On December 10, 2010, ARC voted to move this project from the Critical Natural Lands category to a new category of Critical Historical Resources.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$9,170,052.



## **Coordination**

City of Ormond Beach and the Ormond Beach Historical Trust are acquisition partners for this project.

## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Three Chimneys project, designated 8 Vo196, is 54.5 acres of land held by four private owners. Prehistoric Indian middens have been unearthed on the property as well as an historic coquina repository. Ruins of America's first rum distillery (circa 1764) have been excavated and over 50 large trees and rare plants identified that will enhance the quality of the project. The tract is a mature mesic hardwood hammock of massive live oaks (some up to 22 feet around and over 200 years old) elms, hickories and magnolias on the north side of State Road 40, or West Grenada Boulevard, in urban Ormond Beach, Volusia County, Florida. The proposed park is one mile west of US 1 and is jurisdictional wetlands with an elevation of 4 to 7 feet. The site was originally included in King George III's 20,000-acre land grant to Richard Oswald of Wednesday, July 23, 1763, and was the first settlement in what became Ormond Beach. The subject area is the only large green space remaining in the six miles between I-95 and the Atlantic Ocean, a rapidly developing commercial and residential district. This Management Prospectus is based on a 1995 archaeological study paid for by the Ormond Beach Historical Trust (OBHT) and city of Ormond Beach, aerial photographs, a site visit by Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) ecologist Dr. A. Johnson (June 19, 1999), and a Preservation Plan (July 7, 1999) prepared by Dr. L. Wayne of SouthArc Inc. in Gainesville. In addition to the historic ruins and large trees, it has exotics including air potato, bamboo, camphor, Chinese tallow, grapefruit and Cherokee rose. The invasive exotics will be removed. The size and diverse resources of the Three Chimneys site will provide a much-needed green-space buffer of state-owned lands in a busy commercial corridor which conforms with the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan developed pursuant to §375.021, the state management plan §253.03(7), state land acquisition plan §259.04(1)(a), and, lastly, the site qualifies under Rule 18-8.009(6)(c). Once the state obtains title to the property, the OBHT is recommended as lead manager. The Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) of Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is recommended as the cooperating manager.

### ***Manager***

Ormond Beach Historical Trust.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Although most of the Three Chimneys Project includes a hardwood hammock that is a low-need tract requiring only basic resource management and protection, there is a costlier aspect to this proposal. The archaeological areas containing extant ruins, has a subsurface nail scatter, glass and metal objects to be studied. In addition, areas around the prehistoric Indian middens and coquina pits will require prudence to preserve their intrinsic value and shelter them, intact, for future generations to experience. These factors will result in higher than typical costs compared to management of a state forest.



***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Within a year after the remaining acres are acquired and assigned to the OBHT to manage, initial activities will concentrate on site security from vandals and looters by installing a security fence around the boiling house, two-kettle distillery and large upright chimney and Indian midden. The site will immediately be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. Removing tree roots, stumps and encroaching vegetation from the masonry ruins will begin at once. Deteriorated masonry joints will be re-pointed with tabby or mortar of matching composition and colors. Root-damaged sections of the distillery will be reconstructed by a trained mason. A temporary protective roof will be installed over all ruins once they have been stabilized. A dilapidated 20th-century farm house and outbuildings will be removed along with all other trash, and an open cesspool will be filled. A resource inventory will be completed using the OBHT's Preservation Plan, completed by SouthArc, Inc. This Plan also identified many biologic species on the site. Invasive exotic plants will be removed. Public and fire management access will be addressed. As soon as possible, the OBHT will provide appropriate, albeit limited, access to the public while protecting sensitive resources and site work continues. Future goals include firmly establishing and promoting Three Chimneys as a heritage resource similar to those found in St. Augustine and at Bulow State Park.

This work will begin with cataloging recovered material and documenting the completed professional archaeologist's excavations since 1995 along the south side of the boiling house; excavating north of the boiling house to identify pier locations of other structures such as the grinding mill and fermentory; investigating the existing well to identify any old well beneath it and placing on-site signage with pictures, schematic drawings and interpretive displays, to be installed along with a demonstration cane field and miniature sugar works, a living history display, in an area used as cattle pasture 30 years ago. Other on-site usages will include building a vandal-proof Interpretive Center, parking lot, picnic area/playground, nature trails and an earthen berm along SR 40 to buffer the site from traffic noise. Finally, Three Chimneys will be tied into the East Coast Greenway Alliance network of hiking and biking trails.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The approximate tax value of the 54.5-acre parcel in the project is \$1.3 million, indicative of its choice location in the busy commercial corridor of Ormond Beach. This high value also has a positive advantage. The Three Chimneys Park will be the eighth state-owned Florida British Period site and a valued addition to this inventory of cultural resources as it is located in an urban location. A similar-sized historic park in Barberville, 25 miles to the west on SR 40, attracts over 31,000 visitors a year. Given Three Chimneys' locale and its tremendous educational opportunities for central Florida-area school children and tourists, substantial visitors' revenues are anticipated. There will be a small amount of revenue obtained from stumpage sold in areas designated for public parking and picnic grounds. The mayor and commissioners of Ormond Beach have indicated a positive attitude toward assisting the OBHT with the development and management of Three Chimneys.



Three Chimneys Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2000
Project Area (GIS acres)	64
Acres Acquired (GIS)	8
at a Cost of	\$889,900
Acres Remaining (GIS)	56

Three Chimneys Table 2

Three Chimneys FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4

*There is 1 species associated with the project.*

Three Chimneys Table 3

Management Cost Summary: Ormond Beach Historical Trust	Startup	Recurring not provided
Salary (2 FTE)	\$62,000	not provided
Expenses stabilizing ruins	\$10,000	not provided
OCO- park design	\$100,000	not provided
FCO- parking lots, trails	\$500,000	not provided
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$672,000</b>	<b>not provided</b>

[Map\(s\): Three Chimneys](#)



## ***Tiger Island / Little Tiger Island***

Nassau County

Climate Change Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2001
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	1,288
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	150
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$4,184,000
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	1,137

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring the Tiger and Little Tiger Islands would connect a missing link in a network of national and state preserves and parks that stretch from St. Andrews Sound in Georgia to the St. Johns River in Florida. Roughly three-quarters of the proposal appears to be estuarine tidal marsh along the St. Mary’s River, Amelia River, and a network of smaller connecting rivers and creeks. The remainder primarily represents upland maritime hammock on the elevated islands in the extensive tidal marsh ecosystem. The marsh and adjoining sand and mud flats are important feeding and nesting areas for many species of shorebirds, wading birds, and songbirds. A recent survey by FNAI biologists showed Little Tiger Island to have one of the highest nesting concentrations of Worthington’s marsh wren and MacGillivray’s seaside sparrow along the Florida Coast. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed to designate the Cumberland Sound side of Tiger and Little Tiger Islands as critical habitat for the wintering populations of the piping plover. The Tiger Islands have been occupied since aboriginal times and archaeological excavations in the area show that pottery-making aboriginal populations inhabited the coastal islands as early as the second millennium B.C.

### **Manager(s)**

Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Department of Environmental Protection.

### **General Description**

Natural communities include: Estuarine Tidal Marsh, Maritime Hammock, Coastal Strand and Beach Dune. The Tiger Islands have been occupied since aboriginal times. Archaeological excavations in the area show that pottery-making aboriginal populations inhabited the coastal islands as early as the second millennium B.C. The primary problems on the islands have been rampant looting of archaeological sites.

### **Public Use**

Potential recreational or other public uses of the land include: walking trails, picnicking, primitive camping, shoreline fishing and environmental education. The surrounding marshes with their intertwining creeks could provide a system of canoe or kayak trails. The islands could be a part of that trail system for primitive overnight visitation and provide limited trails on each.



### **Acquisition Planning**

On January 21, 2001 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Tiger Island/Little Tiger Island project to Group B of the Florida Forever (FF) 2001 Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition project, sponsored by the owners' representative, Jacobs & Associates PA, consisted of approximately 1,280 acres and multiple owners. All parcels were identified as essential except the eastern half of New Island, which was used as a spoil site. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) donated the western half of the island to the State in the 1970s. In 2001, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$3,598,894.

In June of 2002, the project was moved to Group A of the Florida Forever Priority List.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Climate Change Lands category.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$109,041.

### **Coordination**

The City of Fernandina voted April 10, 2001 to approve a \$6 million bond initiative for conservation lands. Nassau County had a November 2001 initiative for \$3 million a year bond issue for conservation land acquisition. Both city and county could have been able to contribute some funding for the acquisition of this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The land in this project will, when acquired, be managed to conserve and protect environmentally unique and irreplaceable lands. These lands contain native, relatively unaltered flora and fauna representing a natural area unique to, or scarce within, a region of the state or a larger geographic area. Another goal is to conserve significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species. This project will also conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources. A final goal is to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project is composed of a number of islands interspersed within a salt marsh system just west of Fort Clinch State Park and partially adjacent to Fort Clinch State Park Aquatic Preserve. It has the capacity to provide protection of marine communities and provide resource-based recreational opportunities. As such the project would be suitable as an extension of Fort Clinch State Park.

#### ***Manager***

The DRP would manage the project if acquired.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The project will be a high-need management area. Public recreational use and development of compatible facilities on the islands will be an integral aspect of management.





***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Upon fee acquisition, management will concentrate on site security and development of a resource inventory. As a part of Fort Clinch State Park, hunting, an activity presently allowed on the uplands, will not be allowed. Access to the islands will be confined to designated points and routes. Low-intensity, non-facility related outdoor recreation will be provided to allow for compatible public access. Long-term management may include a range of resource-based recreational and associated facilities. High impact recreation areas will be discouraged because of possible adverse effects on the natural systems.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The DRP expects no significant revenue from this property immediately after acquisition and the amount of any future revenue will depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities developed.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The DRP will, as appropriate, cooperate with local governments, other state agencies, and the water management district to further resource management, recreational and educational opportunities, and the development of the lands for state park purposes.



Tiger/Little Tiger Island Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2001
Project Area (GIS acres)	1,288
Acres Acquired (GIS)	150
at a Cost of	\$4,184,000
Acres Remaining (GIS)	1,137

Tiger/Little Tiger Island Table 2

Tiger/Little Tiger Island FNAI Elements	Score
Piping Plover	G3/S2
Manatee	G2/S2
Macgillivray's Seaside Sparrow	G4T3/S2
Worthington's Marsh Wren	G5T3/S2
Painted Bunting, eastern population	G5T3/S1S2
Wood Stork	G4/S2
Atlantic Salt Marsh Mink	G5T3/S3
American Oystercatcher	G5/S2
Migratory Bird Concentration Area	G3/SNR
Snowy Egret	G5/S3
Osprey	G5/S3S4
White Ibis	G5/S4

There are 12 rare species associated with the project.

Tiger/Little Tiger Island Table 3

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring
Expense	\$20,000	\$25,000
OCO	\$50,000	\$22,000
OPS	\$4,500	\$32,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$79,500</b>	<b>\$32,500</b>

[Map\(s\): Tiger Island / Little Tiger Island](#)



## ***Tippen Bay Ranch***

DeSoto County

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on list</i>	2018
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	2,862
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>At a cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining</i>	2,862

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring less-than-fee protection over the Tippen Bay Ranch property in DeSoto County would help complete a wildlife corridor that crosses the Bright Hour Watershed, Wetlands Reserve Program conservation easements, and Fisheating Creek. It would also protect the surface water, functional wetlands and groundwater recharge of this area, and protect habitat for rare and endangered flora and fauna. This area provides natural floodplain function that protects the quality and quantity of water flowing into the Peace River.

### **Manager(s)**

If acquired as less-than fee, the landowner will be responsible for managing the property in keeping with goals and parameters agreed upon between the landowner and the Division of State Lands.

### **General Description**

The Tippen Bay Ranch is 2,862 acres on a broad, sandy plain in rural southeastern DeSoto County, about 6 miles from the nearest paved highway (State Road 70). The property butts up against the Bright Hour Watershed conservation easement and is located near the Blue Head Ranch Florida Forever project and the Fisheating Creek Ecosystem Florida Forever project. About two-thirds of the property is in a natural or semi-natural state, about that of its historical condition or that of a dry successional hammock. About 1,000 acres of this project have a dry prairie landcover, and another 450 acres are depression marsh. There are 487 acres of semi-improved pasture, 364 acres of improved pasture, and 121 acres of pine plantation.

The entire property is zoned agricultural, both currently and as its future land use category. This zoning category promotes agriculture, recreation and low-density use and discourages commercial industrial and high-density uses. The project is not in the path of any foreseeable urban growth or proposed developments. The ranch is a working cow-calf operation with about 250 cows. This relatively low density of cattle keeps the agricultural footprint on the land light enough that there are large areas of natural wetlands, woods and dry prairies.

The owner has a program of roller chopping and controlled burning on a three-year cycle to prevent wildfires and discourage exotic plants; very few exotic plants were seen. The owners do their best to



eradicate them when they find them. Cow Slough, flowing south across the property, was channelized in the past but the owner has allowed vegetation to grow around the channelized section and oxbows to form.

Scrub jays, wood storks and a gopher tortoise were seen during the February 21, 2018 site assessment. Other rare species have been documented on property nearby. American alligator, eastern gray squirrel, scrub jay and game animals such as turkey, deer and quail were also seen during the site assessment.

### **Public Use**

Because the land management would be the owner's responsibility, and because the less-than-fee purpose is to preserve a natural area and ensure that the ecosystem services it provides for the Peace River watershed would continue in perpetuity, access by the public is not anticipated.

### **Acquisition Planning**

The property is owned by Eugene Paul and was proposed for consideration for the Florida Forever program on October 31, 2017, represented by Rick Dantzler. The planned acquisition would be a single transaction. It consists of 11 parcels and was approved by ARC to add to the 2019 Florida Forever priority list at the April 20, 2018 ARC meeting.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$5,643,781.

### **Coordination**

There are no acquisition partners for this project. The project abuts the Water Management District's 500-acre Bright Hour Watershed conservation easement to the south and west, but this project area is not identified for acquisition by the district.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a less-than-fee acquisition, the Tippen Bay Ranch would continue to be managed by the private landowner, in accordance with the terms of the conservation easement. The likely elements of such an agreement could include purchasing the development rights, ensuring that natural areas are not converted to more intensive agricultural use areas, and managing the property for wildlife habitat.

### **Management Prospectus**

The Office of Environmental Services of the Division of State Lands would be responsible for periodic monitoring of the property to ensure compliance with the conditions of the conservation easement.



Tippen Bay Ranch Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on list</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>2,862</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>2,862</b>

Tippen Bay Ranch Table 2

<b>Tippen Bay Ranch FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Florida Scrub Jay</b>	<b>G2/S2</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>

*There are 2 rare species associated with the project*

[Map\(s\): Tippen Bay Ranch](#)



## ***Triple Diamond***

Okeechobee County  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2009
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	7,998
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	7,998

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The acquisition of this project would preserve significant dry prairie, important in the long-term protection of this endemic natural community and the rare species that it supports, as well as provide recreational and research opportunities. Additionally, preserving this intact and well-managed landscape would allow for the protection and management of thousands of acres of additional high-quality habitats in an area of Florida known for its rare vertebrate wildlife, globally imperiled natural communities, and significant hydrological values. This project is bordered on the north by the Kissimmee River Prairie Preserve State Park. Other public lands in the near vicinity include Avon Park Air Force Range, Bombing Range Ridge, and the Kissimmee River to the west and Fort Drum Marsh Conservation Area and Blue Cypress Conservation Area to the east. The Kissimmee-St. Johns River Connector Florida Forever Project is also located within seven miles to the east of the property. Triple Diamond, along with existing conservation lands, would contribute to a large, contiguous landscape-sized protection area of more than 200,000 acres.

### **Manager(s)**

The Department of Environmental Protection’s Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) is the recommended to manage this site as part of Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park.

### **General Description**

Triple Diamond is a working ranch and is exemplary in its retention of Florida’s native prairie. Natural communities comprise 80 percent of the property and include basin marsh, depression marsh, dome swamp, dry and wet prairie, mesic hammock, and swales or sloughs. Dry prairie, endemic to this region of the state, is the most prevalent natural community on the proposed site. A smaller acreage of wet prairie occurs as open, herbaceous areas occupying lower spots in the dry prairie and in ecotones between wetlands and the dry prairie. The dry prairie provides habitat for state and federally listed animal species such as gopher tortoise, Florida grasshopper sparrow and crested caracara. Together dry and wet prairies make up approximately 42 percent of the property’s acreage and comprise one of the largest and perhaps highest quality blocks of native prairie remaining on private lands. Much of the Triple Diamond prairie has been burned frequently, often in the growing season, and is in excellent condition. Interconnected swale/slough and depression marsh wetlands form a branching network that



spreads over the length and breadth of Triple Diamond. There are also isolated depression/basin marshes scattered over the property. One small dome swamp is in the northeastern portion of the project. The canopy is dominated by mature pond cypress surrounding a small disturbed pond. A large, modern two-story home is in the southwestern part of the site as part of a complex of management facilities that also includes an equipment barn and horse stables.

### **Public Use**

The Triple Diamond project has the potential of providing a diverse recreational experience. There is already a well-maintained road system occurring throughout the property and all the existing facilities can greatly enhance the recreational and research potential of the property. There is a potential for a full range of trail activities including short distance nature trails, long distance hiking trails, bicycle trails and equestrian trails can be accommodated. Nature appreciation and wildlife observation as well as both primitive and facility camping could be supported. The infrastructure already on the property is in excellent shape and the existing residence could be converted to a spacious visitor/educational center. The barn and corrals could be used as part of an equestrian center for trail rides.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 12, 2009 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) recommended that the Triple Diamond Ranch be added to the Florida Forever list as an A list project. In 2009, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$\$23,007,107.

On June 11, 2010, the ARC placed this project into the Critical Natural Lands category.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$19,600,203.

### **Coordination**

TNC is considered an acquisition partner on this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of managing the Triple Diamond Ranch are to protect and manage thousands of acres of additional high-quality habitats in an area of Florida known for its rare vertebrate wildlife, globally imperiled natural communities, and significant hydrological values.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

This intact and well-managed landscape would allow protection and management of thousands of acres of additional high-quality habitats in an area of Florida known for its rare vertebrate wildlife, globally imperiled natural communities, and significant hydrological values. This project has the potential for providing a diverse resource-based recreation experience.

### ***Manager***

The DRP is recommended as the manager of this site.



***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The property should not require intense management in the short term; however, the buildings on the property will need to be maintained. Over the long term, the intensity of management and related costs will significantly increase as management emphasis shifts from protection and restoration efforts with limited public uses to a broader public use area with more use of the substantial infrastructure already on the property.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the property is acquired and assigned to the DRP, short term management efforts will concentrate on site security, control of vehicle access and management planning. Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park will serve initially as a point of access for low intensity resource-based recreation, such as hiking. Consideration will be given in the management planning process for the provision of access from other locations to accommodate recreation development. The magnitude and diversity of future resource-based recreation opportunities offered will in great part depend on establishment of a management plan for the property, funding for positions and using established infrastructure.

***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue is expected to be initially generated. The future revenue will depend on the nature and extent of public use and the use of the facilities already on the property. Vendors for future operation of the equestrian facility and two-story house will be considered.

***Cooperators in management activities***

No local governments or others are recommended for management of this project. The DRP will cooperate with and seek the advice of other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate.





Triple Diamond Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>7,998</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>7,998</b>

Triple Diamond Table 2

<b>Triple Diamond FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Swallow-tailed Kite</b>	<b>G5/S2</b>
<b>Florida Sandhill Crane</b>	<b>G5T2/S2</b>
<b>Crested Caracara</b>	<b>G5/S2</b>

*There are 4 rare species associated with the project.*

Triple Diamond Table 3

<b>Management Cost Summary: DRP</b>	<b>Startup</b>
<b>Salary (1 FTE, 1 OPS)</b>	<b>\$52,000</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>
<b>Outsourcing</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$272,000</b>

[Map\(s\): Triple Diamond](#)



## ***Twelvemile Slough***

Hendry County

Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2001
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	15,925
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	7,797
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$11,000,000
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	8,128

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The Twelvemile Slough project is important to many wildlife species, particularly those that require extensive areas of habitat to maintain viable populations. The most prominent feature of this project is that it contains a twelve-mile long slough. The swale, or “river of grass” natural community, forms the broad band of emergent sedges, grasses, and herbs that runs east through the southern part of the project.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is recommended as lead manager. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Florida Forest Service/FFS is recommended as a cooperating agency.

### **General Description**

The drainage basin of the proposal flows into the Okaloacoochee Slough project acquired by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and the FFS. The Okaloacoochee Slough and its associated watershed ultimately flow into the Fakahatchee Strand.

### **Public Use**

The Twelvemile Slough is primarily a wetland system joining with the Okaloacoochee Slough that could provide excellent opportunities for wildlife and natural resource observation. To achieve maximum potential for these activities, however, airboats and other motorized equipment that disrupt the quiet atmosphere of the site or infringe on the sensitivity of the wetlands should not be allowed. This is not to say that a manager should not be allowed to make appropriate use of such equipment in a controlled fashion, if that could enhance management and public use programs without causing damage or disruption. Other possible natural resource-based recreation includes picnicking, camping, nature study trails, hiking trails and non-boat freshwater fishing. Hunting might also be considered appropriate if further review of the effect of hunting on observable wildlife indicates this activity will not have an adverse impact on this activity.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On April 6, 2001, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) added the Twelvemile Slough project to Group B of the Florida Forever (FF) 2001 Priority list. This fee-simple and less-than-fee acquisition



project, sponsored by the Nature Conservancy (TNC), consisted of approximately 14,419 acres, multiple parcels and four landowners (A&M of Hendry County LTD, Richard H. Roberts, Alico Inc., McClure Properties LTD). The Roberts and Albritton parcels were designated as essential.

On April 25, 2002, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 1,416-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the Division of State Lands (DSL), consisted of one owner, McClure Properties LTD, and four parcels. The landowner, with property already in the original boundary, requested the remainder of his ownership be added.

In June 2002, the State of Florida acquired 7,486 acres (Albritton tract) with Florida Forever Land Acquisition Program funds of \$11 million, which will be managed by FWC as the Spirit of the Wild Wildlife Management Area (SWWMA). An additional 160-acre northern tract was acquired in December 2003. In May 2008, the 2003 acquisition was incorporated into the established boundary of the SWWMA in May 2008.

On June 9, 2006, ARC moved this project to Group A of the 2006 FF Priority list.

In May 2008, while reviewing the project, a correction to the boundary was warranted, and the 160 acres of land purchased in 2003 was officially incorporated into the SWWMA boundary.

On May 27, 2011, panther mitigation added 310.08 acres from AGBLLC of Florida. FFS will manage as part of Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest. This was a donation.

On April 15, 2011 ARC recommended an 87-acre boundary reduction for land occupied by residential development, commercial buildings, or infrastructure. After the most recent boundary change in 2011, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax value of \$1,031,339.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$51,490,415.

### **Coordination**

Because the SFWMD-Twelve Mile Slough-Save Our Rivers project includes the Roberts ownership, there is some potential for cost sharing with the District, as well as with TNC.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The principal purposes of the project are to protect significant natural habitat important to the Florida panther and numerous other species of concern, as well as to preserve the hydrologic connection with protected lands to the east and south. The project should be managed under the multiple-use concept whenever possible -management activities should be directed first toward conservation of resources and second toward integrating carefully controlled consumptive uses. Managers should control access to the project, thoroughly inventory the resources, and monitor management activities to ensure that they are actually conserving both the archaeological and natural resources. Managers should limit the number



and size of educational and recreational facilities, ensure that they avoid the most sensitive resources, and site them in already disturbed areas when possible.

### **Management Prospectus**

This project is part of the larger Okaloacoochee (OK) Slough wetlands that partially serve as headwaters of the Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve and the Big Cypress National Preserve. The land in this project serves to protect or recharge groundwater, and is important habitat for the Florida Panther, snail kite and many other wildlife species. Strategic habitat conservation areas (SHCAs) for some of these species comprise roughly a quarter of the project lands. The entire length of the eastern boundary of the project is contiguous with the 32,162-acre Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest/Wildlife Management Area. The following purposes should guide development of management goals: (1) assessing current land use and natural resources to determine existing conditions and future requirements for inventory and monitoring; (2) conserving, , protecting, and restoring cultural resources, landscapes, forests, water resources, and other elements important to ecosystem functions; (3) conserving, protecting and restoring characteristic biological diversity original to natural communities, including protecting, maintaining, or enhancing conditions for rare, threatened and endangered species; (4) developing and adapting project plans, procedures and techniques for improved success in meeting management goals, including the Florida Panther Habitat Preservation Plan; and (5) establishing multiple-use natural resource-based recreation opportunities that are compatible, and which are consistent with the other resource conservation purposes and management goals for the area.

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The Twelvemile Slough project has the resource diversity to qualify as a wildlife management/ and environmental area. (In 2002, a portion acquired became the Spirit of the Wild Wildlife Management Area.)

### ***Manager***

FWC is recommended as lead manager. FFS is recommended as a cooperating agency.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Biotic surveys should be a priority, since there are potentially many rare or listed species. Some portions of the Twelvemile Slough proposal include lands that are low-need tracts, requiring basic resource management including the frequent use of prescribed fire where appropriate. However, because 57 percent of the uplands have been developed for agriculture or other purposes, significant restoration activities are proposed for at least some of this acreage. The primary management needed for perpetuation of the less disturbed natural communities would involve hydrological restoration, re-establishing native groundcover, exotic vegetation control, prescribed fire and control of conservation-compatible access by the user community. Proposed uses of the area include opportunities for hunting, camping, hiking, environmental and cultural resource education, and other natural resource-based recreation activities. Since the principal purposes of the acquisition project are to protect habitat for the Florida panther and other species of concern, management goals will be oriented to conservation and



protection of these species, and to education and regulation of the user community. Development of facilities, as on all wildlife management areas, would be kept to the minimum level necessary to assure a high-quality recreational experience, and any such development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance. Restoration would be guided by established procedures and techniques, improved through adaptive management themes, and will emphasize re-establishing native plant communities on pasture and hydrological restoration, pending detailed analysis of the necessity and feasibility of such activities. Infestations of invasive exotic species, including Brazilian pepper, water hyacinth and tropical soda apple, occur within the area. There will be efforts to eradicate or control the infestations to reduce the potential for further spread.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after acquisition, emphasis will be on site security, posting boundaries, relationships with stakeholders, public-use assessments, fire management, resource inventories, exotic species control and removing refuse. A conceptual management plan, developed by the FWC with a stakeholder-based management advisory group, will specify management goals and objectives. Longer-range activities would focus on meeting goals and objectives in the conceptual management plan. They include, at a minimum: prescribed fire, habitat restoration, protecting or propagating critical habitat for listed species, and expanding recreation opportunities. Essential roads would be stabilized and maintained for public and management access. Floral and faunal inventories and evaluations of the management projects would be continually updated by FWC biologists and would be supplemented as available with data from other sources. Timber resources consist of South Florida slash pine in areas of mesic flatwoods. To meet wildlife habitat management objectives, sustainable timber harvests will be conducted using acceptable silviculture practices in consultation with the FFS. Environmentally sensitive areas will be identified, and appropriate protective measures will be implemented on those areas. Unnecessary roads, fire lanes and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned or restored as practical. Minimal infrastructure development will be required to allow public access, provide facilities for the public, and provide security and management of the property. Estimate of revenue-generating potential Currently, forest products production is limited on the project area. Revenue would be from sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area stamps and other special hunting stamps. Some future revenues might be from other nature-based recreation opportunities, and cattle-grazing contracts. About 13 percent of the Twelvemile Slough Acquisition Project is pine flatwoods that could be managed to offset operational costs. But future revenue from timber resources will depend on appropriate plant-community and hydrologic restoration. Recommendations as to other governmental agency involvement The FWC will cooperate with federal, state, and local government agencies, and non-government organizations, to the greatest extent possible. It is anticipated that the FWC will need the most assistance and cooperation from the following: (1) The FWC will require three full-time positions (FTEs) to manage this area and will contract with various private entities to procure services and materials to conduct resource management, capital improvements and visitor services on the area.



Funding sources include the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) Trust Fund and Florida Forever Trust Fund.



Twelvemile Slough Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2001
Project Area (GIS acres)	15,925
Acres Acquired (GIS)	7,797
at a Cost of	\$11,000,000
Acres Remaining (GIS)	8,128

Twelvemile Slough Table 2

Twelvemile Slough FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Panther	G5T1/S1
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Florida spiny-pod	G2/S2
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Wood Stork	G4/S2
Florida Burrowing Owl	G4T3/S3
Crested Caracara	G5/S2
Glossy Ibis	G5/S3
Snowy Egret	G5/S3
Tricolored Heron	G5/S4

There are 13 rare species associated with the project.

Twelvemile Slough Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Startup	Recurring
Resource Management	\$273,692	\$328,199
Administration	\$125,926	\$125,926
Support	\$106,207	\$25,441
Capital Improvements	\$565,196	\$51,763
Visitor Services/Recreation	\$192,565	\$10,323
Law Enforcement	\$9,350	\$9,350
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,272,936</b>	<b>\$551,002</b>

[Map\(s\): Twelvemile Slough](#)



## ***Upper Shoal River***

Walton County

Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2003
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	12,027
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	12,027

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The two parcels that make up this proposal have been managed for silviculture in a less obtrusive manner than is often found on commercial timberlands. The resulting scatter of intact groundcover provides good opportunity for restoration of habitat and attendant biota. Four rare plants and two rare animals have been documented on the property. Drainages and creeks on the sites appear to be unaltered and intact. Both of these sites within the project boundary have potential to provide quality outdoor recreational opportunities. Portions of these parcels lie within the Eglin to Blackwater Critical Ecological Linkage area and the Northwest Florida initiative combining the protection of buffer lands surrounding Eglin Air Force Base and the connection of conservation lands in the Florida Panhandle.

### **Manager(s)**

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and Florida Forest Service/FFS of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will be co-managers. The Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will manage the Gum Creek tract.

### **General Description**

The Upper Shoal River proposal does not include the river or its floodplain; however, it is comprised of two tracts of land that are within the river’s watershed. The first of the two tracts, the Pine Log Creek tract (PLC), is about 3.5 miles north of the river and abuts the Okaloosa County line. The PLC contains 9,727 (GIS) acres. The remaining 2,300 acres are included in the Gum Creek tract (GC), which is about 5 miles southeast of the Pine Log Creek tract. Both tracts are characterized by high, rolling sandy hills that drain downward through former mesic flatwoods and wet flatwoods and slope forests into bottomland and floodplain forests. Combined, the two tracts contain approximately 20 miles of headwater tributary streams. Most of the site’s original pinelands have been disturbed by conversion to pine plantations that comprise the majority of the proposal. Some of this acreage includes natural understory and ground cover vegetation that may be sufficient for reclassification as appropriate natural communities.

### **Public Use**

The Upper Shoal River has the potential of providing a diverse resource-based recreational experience. Both parcels have good boundary configurations that will enhance management efforts and they are





easily accessible from paved and unpaved public roads. Both tracts can support a diversity of resource-based outdoor recreational opportunities. Greater effort will be required to enhance PLC tract than will be needed for the GC tract. As the resources recover, the natural experience will be more and more enjoyable. Hiking, off-road bicycling and horseback riding can be accommodated on both tracts. Horseback riding may be more appropriate for the larger PLC. Depending on management emphasis, hunting would be suitable on the PLC tract. The smaller GC tract is closer to residential areas and would not be as suitable for this activity. Other activities supportable by both tracts could include natural resource appreciation and camping. Two small man-made ponds exist on the GC tract that could provide limited fishing in addition to the properties' main creeks. Neither tract is expected to provide extensive opportunities for this activity.

The 2000 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan states that more opportunities for bicycling, hiking and natural resource appreciation through short nature hikes (nature study) are needed in this region.

### **Acquisition Planning**

This project is planned for fee-simple acquisition. This project consists of two owners with multiple parcels totaling 12,035 acres (12,027 in GIS). In 2003, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$1,395,031.

On December 5, 2003 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) placed this project on the Florida Forever project list.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands category of projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$7,885,617.

### **Coordination**

The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the U.S. Department of Defense (USDOD) are acquisition partners for this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary land management goal for the FFS is to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; to integrate compatible human use; and to insure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. This ecosystem approach will guide the FFS's management activities on this project.

### **Management Prospectus**

The FFS and the FWC are prepared to share all management responsibilities for Upper Shoal River under the unified management concept that both agencies are currently developing. The project has the capability to provide important fish and wildlife habitat in a manner that is compatible with sound silvicultural practices. Since the project goals include protecting biodiversity and providing natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities, programs would be developed that



serve to manage ecosystems for multiple use. Conservation and protection of environmentally unique native habitats, and imperiled or rare species should be an important management goal for the project. Particular attention should be directed to the protection of upstream riparian systems that are an important habitat for imperiled fish and invertebrates. Under the unified management approach, timber stands would be managed using even aged and/or uneven aged methods to maintain a broad diversity of age classes ranging from young stands to areas with old growth characteristics. This would provide habitat for the full spectrum of species that would be found in the natural environment and enhance and maintain biodiversity. The project area is near many users that enjoy fishing, hiking, hunting, and wildlife viewing. Additionally, the Department of Environmental Protection and University of Florida Statewide Greenways System Planning Project shows that 9 percent (1,322 acres) of the project area is suitable for either priority 1 or priority 3 recreational trails. This project contributes to the following goals in accordance with the lettered measures in the Florida Forever Act (259.105(4), F.S.): (b) Increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels; (c) Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state; (d) Ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state; (e) Increase natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities; (g) Increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources.

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The project area consists of two separate tracts and ownerships situated in the Northern Highlands physiographic province, where some of Florida's highest elevations occur. The two ownerships include headwater streams and creeks connected to the Shoal River system and are entirely within its watershed. The DEP's DRP has expressed a strong interest in managing the Gum Creek tract. The FFS and the FWC will enter in to discussions with DRP to manage these 2,300 acres as a State Park. The project is located about 10 miles northeast of Crestview, where the Pine Log Creek tract borders the Okaloosa County line. The project area is distributed across about 15 miles because of the two tracts. Other conservation lands near the project include those on nearby Eglin Air Force Base, and the Yellow River Water Management Area and Upper Yellow River Florida Forever project. This project is significant for ecological greenways, with 99 percent of the project area qualifying as priorities 6 and 7 in potential importance, according to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) Florida Forever Measures Evaluation. Approximately 75 percent of the project area has been converted to silviculture. Water drains through rolling sandy hills downward through mesic or wet flatwoods, and through slope forests into bottomland and floodplain forests along the seepage streams that are tributaries of the Shoal River. Upland communities include approximately 750 acres of sandhill, and 300 acres of upland hardwood forest or slope forest. Approximately 100 acres of mesic and wet flatwoods are interspersed around these other natural community types. The sandhill communities are in moderately good condition with an intact diverse indigenous groundcover including wiregrass. Forested wetlands have 1,550 acres of baygall, floodplain or bottomland forest. The actual seepage stream communities are about 10 acres.



About 75 acres have been classified as disturbed. The FNAI indicates that 22 percent (3,202 acres) of the project area are under-represented natural communities. Functional wetlands comprise 8 percent (1,216 acres) of the project area and help conserve areas for aquifer recharge (35 percent, or 5,148 acres of project area), provide fish and wildlife habitat, and provide for natural floodplain function (13 percent, or 1,895 acres of project area). The FNAI Florida Forever Measures Evaluation also indicates that the entire project area (100 percent, or 14,483 acres) provides surface-water protection. Both tracts have been managed for silviculture operations. Neither tract shows evidence of intensive management activities. Scattered longleaf pine regeneration is present on both tracts. Most of the pine stands are planted in evenly aged compartments, with some compartments including uneven-aged stands, and a greater diversity of pine species. Past thinning of stands of loblolly pine, longleaf pine, and slash pine has occurred throughout both parcels. Fire has not occurred on the tracts for several years, resulting in increased fuel loads. Ecotones adjacent to forested wetlands and seepage streams appear intact and undisturbed. Imperiled or rare animal species either occurring or likely to occur within the project, include the blackmouth shiner, eastern diamondback rattlesnake, eastern indigo snake, Florida black bear, gopher frog, gopher tortoise, little blue heron, pine barrens treefrog, Sherman's fox squirrel, southern pine snake, and white ibis. Gopher tortoise burrows are of particular importance, because they often provide refugia for a suite of declining wildlife species, including the eastern indigo snake and gopher frog. Available groundcover may provide a sufficient forage base for the gopher tortoise population. Slope forests, forested wetlands and seepage streams may support several listed plant and animal species, such as the pine barrens tree frog, which has been documented to occur in the project area. Game species observed, or for which sign was available in the project area, included mourning dove, whitetailed deer, and wild turkey. Both tracts appear to have recently been used for hunting and fishing. Access to both sites is good. Imperiled or rare plant species documented to occur in the proposed project include Arkansas oak, mountain laurel, red pitcher plant, and white-top pitcher plant. Other imperiled or rare plant species known to occur nearby that may occur in the proposed project include: bog button, Florida flame azalea, hairy wild indigo, Harper's yellow-eyed grass, panhandle lily, sandhill sedge, silky camellia, umbrella magnolia, and yellow fringeless orchid. According to the FWC, approximately 349 acres (2 percent) of the Upper

Shoal River project is classified as a Strategic Habitat Conservation Area (SHCA). However, a large portion of the project provides habitat for many focal species, which according to the FWC, are indicators of natural communities and suitable habitat conditions for many other species of wildlife. Approximately 65 percent (9,512 acres) of the project includes at least seven focal species. Another 6 percent (849 acres) of the project is a habitat conservation priority for rare species with the greatest conservation need, according to the FNAI. Management goals for this site should take into account habitat management to protect and enhance focal species habitat. Additionally, large tracts of habitat are important to conserve widely ranging species such as the eastern indigo snake and the Florida black bear. Bears have been documented to use riparian corridors of the Shoal River and its tributaries in



Okaloosa County, and to occur in Walton County. These are likely migratory routes for the Florida black bear.

### ***Manager***

The FWC and the FFS will be co-managers. DRP will manage the Gum Creek tract.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Upper Shoal River is a medium-need tract that will require up-front implementation of resource management activities, including the frequent use of prescribed fire where appropriate. Approximately, 75 percent of the project area has been subjected to ground cover disturbance from past silvicultural activity, consequently additional effort will be required to accomplish objectives for restoration to a desired future condition. The FFS and FWC propose to work cooperatively to assess site management needs and develop the conceptual management plan (CMP) for the site. Examples of situations that may require cooperative effort include restoration of mesic and wet flatwoods previously managed for timber production, removal or thinning of off-site timber species to promote the regeneration of native ground covers and appropriate tree species, and reforestation of recently harvested areas. As part of the unified management approach, the managing agencies will conduct a historic vegetation analysis to assist in determining appropriate desired future conditions and identify appropriate restoration methods and tools. This effort will help facilitate conservation of habitats and populations of imperiled or rare species. Other unified management priorities will include protection and restoration of sensitive wetlands, and the identification, control, and follow-up monitoring of exotic species. Restoration methods will also include thinning of dense pine stands to decrease canopy cover and facilitate the restoration of native groundcovers. An adequate road system exists on both sites to assist with prescribed burning operations. Because many imperiled or rare species are expected to occur in the project, biotic surveys would be conducted as part of early unified management activities. Environmentally sensitive areas such as erosion-prone sites, listed species habitats, outstanding natural areas, and wetlands, are to be identified during the initial resource inventory to implement appropriate protective measures for each specific area.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

It is anticipated that during the first year after acquisition, both agencies will emphasize on site security, posting boundaries, public access for low-intensity outdoor recreation, fire management, resource inventory, and removing refuse. The managing agencies will meet frequently to coordinate task assignments, and cooperate with, and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local governments, and other appropriate participants as it affects management of the project site. Both managing agencies will participate in the joint development of a CMP specifying area management goals and objectives.

Goals intended for long-term implementation would emphasize management and the conservation of the site's natural resources including timber, fish and wildlife, and water. These goals would include restoring habitat and hydrology and conserving and protecting listed species of flora and fauna. Following completion of plant community inventory and historic vegetation analysis, quantified vegetation management objectives would be developed pursuant to an objective-based vegetation



management process. Where practical, disturbed sites would be restored to conditions expected to occur in naturally functioning ecosystems, including re-establishment of species expected to occur naturally on specific sites. Management would emphasize enhancement of abundance and spatial distribution of imperiled or rare species. Essential roads would be stabilized to provide all-weather public access and management operations. Programs providing multiple recreational uses would also be implemented. Both agencies will work towards the development of a fire management plan that will apply prescribed burning in a manner that maximizes natural resource protection and enhancement. Whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks will be utilized to contain, and control prescribed and natural fires. Growing-season prescribed burning would be used where appropriate to best achieve management objectives. Where appropriate, practical, and in pursuit of natural resource management objectives, timber resources will be managed using acceptable silvicultural practices. Archaeological and historic sites would be managed in coordination with the Department of State's Division of Historical Resources. Both agencies will work to develop a plan identifying road for vehicular access by the public, and roads required for administrative use. Unnecessary roads, fire lanes and hydrological disturbances would be abandoned or restored as practical. Other existing infrastructure necessary for management would be protected to the extent possible. Infrastructure development would be the minimum required to serve needs of the public, including provisions for facilities necessary for the security and management of the project area.

#### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Timber sales would be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. The FNAI indicates that 76 percent (11,054 acres) of the project area is available as priorities 1, 2, 3, and 5 for sustainable forestry, and that 19 percent (2,829 acres) of the project serves as forestland for aquifer recharge. However, management would seek to improve the other revenue-generating potential of areas currently serving for forest products production by improving wildlife diversity and resource-based recreation in such areas. Additional revenue would be from sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area permits and other special hunting permits. Some revenues might come from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities, if such projects can be economically developed. Fifteen percent (15 percent) of all gross revenues will be returned to the county from which funds were generated. Both agencies have agreed to a unified management framework whereby all CARL management funds, site generated revenues, and management expenditures are to be evenly divided between the FFS and the FWC.

#### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The unified managers (FFS and FWC) should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies, including the Northwest Florida Water Management District, to manage the project area. The project should be designated as a state forest and wildlife management area.



Upper Shoal River Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2003
Project Area (GIS acres)	12,027
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	12,027

Upper Shoal River Table 2

Upper Shoal River FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Arkansas Oak	G3/S3
Wherry's redflower pitcherplant	G4T3/S3
Pine Barrens Treefrog	G4/S3
Mountain Laurel	G5/S3

There are 6 rare species associated with the project.

Upper Shoal River Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS & FWC	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Resource Management	\$212,891	\$244,479
Administration	\$82,345	\$33,072
Support	\$149,080	\$31,566
Capital Improvements	\$2,187,189	\$58,179
Visitor Services/Recreation	\$10,191	\$10,191
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,643,331</b>	<b>\$377,628</b>

\*Includes employee salaries.

[Map\(s\): Upper Shoal River](#)





## ***Upper St. Marks River Corridor***

Jefferson, Leon and Wakulla Counties

Substantially Complete

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2003
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	14,535
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	13,237
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$15,711,316
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	1,298

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Public acquisition of this project will contribute to the Florida Forever goals of protecting Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels and beginning a long-sought and permanent wildlife corridor along the St. Marks River. The project forms a corridor to conservation lands to the north and south, thereby helping to form a contiguous landscape-sized Protection Area. This project is also important to protect water resources within this project and the surrounding area, protect twelve known historic sites, and increase public recreational and education opportunities.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is recommended to manage the Wood Sink Tract. The Fanlew Tract and part of the Horn Springs parcel (more than 1,900 acres acquired in 2017) will be managed by DRP. In 2017, the Florida Forest Service was recommended as manager for the 9,043 acres in the boundary and adjacent to the DRP-managed area.

### **General Description**

This project covers 14,535 acres located in Wakulla, Jefferson and Leon Counties that extend from the Wood Sink property north of U.S. Highway 27, along both sides of the St. Marks River, south to the Natural Bridge Battlefield State Historic Site. Most of the project is owned by the St. Joe Company. The corridor ranges from 1 to 3 miles wide along approximately 15 miles of the upper St. Marks River. Approximately 50 percent of the proposal is in natural condition and consists of forested wetland communities, and upland hardwood forest/mesic hammocks. The natural communities are in good condition and include an old-growth stand of cypress. Most of the remaining uplands are pine plantations of varying ages. Acquiring the project would also assist with the protection of the water quality in the river and numerous springs in the area.

Much of the project is located within the ecological greenways network identified by the Office of Greenways and Trails and the University of Florida.

### **Public Use**

The landscape connectivity and diversity provided by the Upper St. Marks River Corridor project has the potential for many resource-based public outdoor recreational activities, including canoeing, fishing,



hiking, hunting and wildlife viewing. This project is an excellent recreational trail opportunity, which provides a connection to other conservation and recreation lands in Leon County, such as the J.R. Alford Greenway, L. Kirk Edwards Wildlife and Environmental Area, Lafayette Heritage Trail Park, Tom Brown State Park, and Natural Bridge Battlefield Historic State Park.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 6, 2003, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Upper St. Marks River Corridor project to Group A of the Florida Forever Priority list. This fee-simple project, sponsored by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), is about 13,999 acres and has a single owner, St. Joseph Land and Development Company, and was designated essential.

On April 21, 2006, the ARC approved a fee-simple 1,671-acre addition to the project boundary. TNC sponsored the addition that consisted of multiple parcels owned by the St. Joe Company. Two tracts made up the addition: Wood Sink Tract with 1,057 acres and Fanlew Tract with 614 acres. DRP will manage Fanlew and FWC will manage Wood Sink. All parcels within the addition were designated as essential. After the most recent addition approved in 2006, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$3,497,344.

On June 30, 2006, the BOT acquired 2,589.67 acres from the St. Joe Land Development Company for \$10,617,647. In September 2006 TNC acquired 611 acres known as Fanlew Preserve.

In March 2007 TNC acquired 1,064 acres known as Wood Sink.

In December 2008, the BOT acquired Wood Sink (1,064 acres) from TNC for \$5,093,669.

On December 9, 2011, ARC put this project in the Critical Natural Lands category.

After the BOT authorized an option to buy more than 10,398 acres in the project south of U.S. Highway 27 in 2016, a total of 11,029 acres of this project were acquired in 2017 using in Florida Forever program funding. Management was divided between the DRP and the FFS. The DRP incorporated the management of its newly acquired acres into their existing Natural Bridge Battlefield Historic State Park management responsibilities. The Florida Forest Service would manage the balance of the acquisition as Plank Road State Forest.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$2,438,916.

### **Coordination**

TNC, NFWFMD, Leon County are acquisition partners for this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

A primary goal of the Upper St. Marks River Corridor proposal is to buffer the upper St. Marks River from development and preserve its water quality, while also protecting the natural communities in its floodplain. Presumably this would also protect, at least to some extent, the water quality of the first magnitude St. Marks Spring just south of the proposal boundary. The proposal encompasses all but 270 acres of the 940-acre Florida Forever First Magnitude Springs project surrounding St. Marks Spring.





The Florida black bear, a threatened species, is also known to occur on the project area. Black bears need large contiguous tracts of land to ensure a viable breeding population of more than 200 individuals per research by Cox and others. Special deliberation should be given to this fact when considering the value of this property as conservation lands. Considering the importance of the Upper St. Marks River Corridor as black bear habitat, together with its diverse plant and animal communities and the potential for resource-based public outdoor recreation, acquisition of this tract is warranted.

## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

FWC -The Wood Sink Tract proposed addition to the Upper St. Marks River Corridor Florida Forever Project is about 1,057 acres from Capitola Road on the north, Cap Tram Road (State Highway 364) and private lands in the St. Marks River Basin on the east, Apalachee Parkway (U. S. Highway 27) on the South, and private lands and Chaires Cross Road to the west. It was acquired in 2007. Priority will be given to conserving and protecting unique native habitats and threatened and endangered species.

Management goals will conserve, protect, manage and/or restore important ecosystems, forests, landscapes, water resources, and wildlife populations as intended by the Florida Forever Act.

Management goals will coordinate uses, especially conserving and protecting archaeological and historic sites, fish and wildlife resources, forage, habitat, timber, and water resources for their long-term benefits to the user community. The configuration and location of the Wood Sink addition within the landscape provides areas of functional wetlands for protection of surface water and natural river floodplain, and important habitat for wildlife populations. It provides unique opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Management goals will conserve and protect resources and provide for resource-oriented public uses.

Acquiring Wood Sink Tract conserves river corridor to protect resources of the St. Marks River ecosystem and connect other conservation lands. This addition is approximately 52 percent forested uplands and pasture, and 48 percent forested wetlands extending along the Upper St. Marks River. The outflow canal entering the western boundary of the tract is the hydrological connection to Lower Lake Lafayette and L. Kirk Edwards WEA. The uplands consist primarily of pine plantations, upland mixed forest, upland hardwood forest, and perhaps some bottomland forest. The pine plantations, although disturbed, include native midstory trees such as flowering dogwood and American holly as well as other native shrubs and herbs. The upland hardwoods are dominated by live oak and other hardwoods in the tree canopy, and an open understory consisting of saw palmetto, sparkleberry, American beautyberry, and other native shrubs and herbs. The wetlands consist of relatively less disturbed natural communities including bottomland forest and floodplain swamp, the latter mostly dominated by bald cypress mixed with more sparse swamp hardwood species including red maple and swamp magnolia. A diversity of native trees, including southern magnolia, in better drained areas, occur in the bottomland forest. These natural communities offer a protective buffer for the St. Marks River, an Outstanding Florida Water, and a habitat mosaic for wildlife. This addition is named after Wood Sink, a small (approximately 60 ft diameter) sinkhole which occurs on the tract, and which provides a direct connection to the Floridan aquifer. The Wood Sink addition is habitat for rare and listed species. Gopher tortoise and swallow-



tailed kite been observed to occur on the property. The mosaic of pine and upland hardwood communities could provide habitats for fox squirrels and other species which occur elsewhere on the Upper St. Marks River Corridor FFP. This tract constitutes secondary range for the Florida black bear (Much of the remainder of the Upper St. Marks River FFP is primary range for the Apalachicola population of the Florida black bear). Neotropical migrant species, in decline due to loss of habitat, use the hardwood forests during spring and fall migration as stopover and foraging habitat. Breeding passerines, thought to be in decline in these habitats, include the following species: prothonotary warbler, Kentucky warbler, hooded warbler, Swainson's warbler, wood thrush, and yellow-billed cuckoo. The floodplain swamp provides potential habitat for the Louisiana waterthrush at the southern edge of its breeding range. This species is in decline and prefers contiguous forest tracts and unpolluted headwater streams. Wading birds likely feed in shallows along the length of the St. Marks River. The floodplain swamp may also provide ephemeral breeding habitats for rare amphibian species. Other species occurring on the Wood Sink Tract are northern bobwhite, Virginia white-tailed deer, and wild turkey. Protection of this headwaters part of the St. Marks River helps preserve aquatic habitats for numerous species in this river system. Restoring the degraded upland natural communities of Wood Sink and protecting intact natural floodplain hardwood communities supports functioning ecosystem for wildlife diversity. This addition has the potential for many resource-based public outdoor recreational activities including bicycling, canoeing, environmental education, fishing, hiking, and wildlife viewing. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is recommended as lead manager, with the Department of Environmental Protection, the Division of Forestry, and the Northwest Florida Water Management District as cooperating agencies. This project contributes to the following goals of the Florida Forever Act: (b) Increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels; (c) Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state; (d) Ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state; (e) Increase natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities; (g) Increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources; and, (h) Increase the amount of open space available in urban areas.

***Manager***

FWC is recommended to manage this part of the project.

[Click to go to historical prospectus below.\\*](#)

***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Parts of the Wood Sink addition include lands that require resource management actions such as conservation of soil and water, resource protection, and prescribed fire. Ecological restoration activities will be planned for areas previously disturbed for silviculture or other purposes. Management of the less disturbed natural communities may include control of human access, removal of invasive exotic species, and use of prescribed fire. Biotic surveys will be a priority, since many rare or listed species are



expected to be present. Development of facilities, as on all wildlife management areas, will be kept to the minimum level necessary to assure a high-quality recreational experience. Any such development will be confined to areas of previous disturbance.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

During the first year after acquisition, emphasis will be on site security, posting boundaries, public access, fire management, resource inventory, and removal of refuse. A conceptual management plan will be developed by the FWC including management goals and objectives for the area. Essential roads will be stabilized to provide all-weather public access and management operations. Programs providing multiple recreational uses will be implemented. Project plans for resource inventory, monitoring and management will be developed, implemented and adapted using conventional land management and scientific guidance. Priority will be given to conserving and protecting unique native habitats and threatened and endangered species. Management goals will conserve, protect, manage and/or restore important ecosystems, forests, landscapes, water resources, and wildlife populations as intended by the Florida Forever Act. Management goals will coordinate uses, especially conserving and protecting archaeological and historic sites, fish and wildlife resources, forage, habitat, timber and water resources for their long-term benefits to the user community. The configuration and location of the Wood Sink addition within the landscape provides areas of functional wetlands for protection of surface water and natural river floodplain, and important habitat for wildlife populations. It provides unique opportunities for outdoor recreation. Management goals will conserve and protect resources and provide for resource-oriented public uses.

Management activities will strive to manage natural plant communities to benefit native wildlife resources and to conserve soil and water. These resources will be managed in pursuit of wildlife habitat objectives, where it is appropriate and practical, using acceptable silvicultural practices as recommended by the FFS.

Archaeological and historic sites will be managed in coordination with the Division of Historical Resources. Environmentally sensitive areas will be identified and protected. Unnecessary hydrological alterations, fire lanes, and roads will be abandoned or restored as practical. Existing infrastructure will be protected and used.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The FWC will conduct resource management activities to promote revenue-generating potential by conserving cultural and natural resources and providing opportunities for resource-based recreation on the Wood Sink tract. No significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. Resource management that conserves and maintains environmental quality ecosystem-wide will best support future revenue generation. Revenue-generating sources may include sales of daily use fees, fishing licenses, and other revenues from recreational uses. Some revenue may be generated through timber sales as the land is being restored. The Wood Sink Addition, when acquired by the State, will require one FTE position for the FWC to manage the project area. (This was acquired in 2007.)



### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The FWC should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies including Department of Environmental Protection, the Division of Forestry, and the Northwest Florida Water Management District in managing the area.

### **\*Historical Management Prospectus**

[Click this here to return to "Manager" in current Management Prospectus.](#)

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

DRP-A significant portion of the acreage within this project is floodplain. The project has frontage on both sides of the upper portion of the St. Marks River south of US 27. The project is defined as Phases I and II, with Phase II being the more southern portion. Of the two phases, Phase II has the greater potential for providing a diverse resource-based recreational experience of a regional context. This project is also adjacent to and fast becoming part of the Tallahassee urban area and the already existing Natural Bridge Historic State Park. It is the combination of all these factors that makes Phase II desirable as a unit of the state park system.

### ***Manager***

DRP is recommended as manager of additional lands adjacent to its managed area and the Fanlew Tract. In 2017, the DRP assumed management responsibility for 1,986 acres acquired adjacent to Natural Bridge Historic State Park, to be managed as a part of the park (Acquired in 2017. See historic prospectus below).

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Portions of Phase II are in planted pine that will require thinning over time to provide for a natural looking landscape. Otherwise the property should not require a high level of management intensity in the short term, except for the possible need to construct or maintain existing bridges or elevated pathways to provide access within the floodplain of the river. Over the long term, the intensity of management and related costs will significantly increase as management emphasis shifts from protection and restoration efforts with limited public uses to a broader public use area with more substantial infrastructure.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the property is acquired and assigned to the DRP, the acquired lands will be secured, and management planning implemented. Natural Bridge Historic State Park will serve initially as a point of access for low intensity resource-based recreation, such as canoeing and hiking. Consideration will be given in the management planning process for the provision of access from other locations as such may be considered necessary to accommodate recreation demand. The magnitude and diversity of future resource-based recreation opportunities offered will in great part depend on establishment of a management plan for the property and funding for positions and infrastructure



***Revenue-generating potential***

No significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. Some revenue may be generated through timber sales as the land is being restored. The degree of future revenue generated will depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities placed on the land.

***Cooperators in management activities***

No local governments or others are recommended for management of this project. The DRP will cooperate with and seek the advice of other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate.



Upper St. Marks River Corridor Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2003</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>14,535</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>13,237</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$15,711,316</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>1,298</b>

Upper St. Marks River Corridor Table 2

<b>Upper St. Marks River Corridor FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Gopher Tortoise</b>	<b>G3/S3</b>
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>
<b>Alabama rhododendron</b>	<b>G4/S2</b>
<b>Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake</b>	<b>G4/S3</b>
<b>Southeastern Weasel</b>	<b>G5T4/S3?</b>

*There are 6 rare species associated with the project.*

[Map\(s\): Upper St. Marks River Corridor](#)



## ***Volusia Conservation Corridor***

Flagler and Volusia Counties  
Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2001
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	79,031
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	60,721*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$76,566,247*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	18,311

*\*Includes acreage and expenditures by the SJRWMD, Volusia County, and USDA through 11/2011*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Public acquisition of this project sponsored by the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) will increase the protection of Florida’s biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels and provide a continuous corridor of environmentally significant land from the Tiger Bay State Forest, through the central wetlands and flatwoods of Volusia County, to the marshes of the St. Johns River. This project will also increase natural resource-based public recreation, education opportunities, and potential for recreation or other public uses on the fee-simple acquisition lands. This project will help ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state. Some areas contain moderate to good recharge to the Florida aquifer, which mainly occurs through rainfall.

### **Manager(s)**

SJRWMD and Volusia County are the recommended managers.

### **General Description**

The property is in central Volusia County, stretching from north of SR44, fourteen miles south to the St. Johns River. It is generally low and wet, consisting of alternating flatwoods and swamp, which occupy the northwest/southeast-trending ridge and swale topography on the eastern edge of the DeLand Ridge. It includes the parallel, southward-flowing drainages of Deep Creek and Lake Ashby canal, which empty into the St. Johns River. Natural communities include: Basin Swamp and Hydric Hammock, Mesic Flatwoods, Scrub, and Dome Swamp.

### **Public Use**

Fee acquisition areas have the potential of providing a variety of resource-based outdoor recreation opportunities such as, but not necessarily limited to, hiking, nature study, horseback riding, bicycling, camping, picnicking, freshwater fishing and hunting. Further review may reflect cabins to be suitable, particularly if a combination of lands is acquired that would allow for a more complete park or environmental education center atmosphere.





### **Acquisition Planning**

On January 25, 2001, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Volusia Conservation Corridor project to Group B of the Florida Forever (FF) 2001 Priority list. This fee-simple and less-than-fee acquisition, sponsored by the SJRWMD, consisted of approximately 33,503 acres and multiple owners. The essential parcels were defined as Leffler Co., Le Fils Corp. (easement acquired), Julia Menard (acquired), GJPS Lukas Inc., Jonathan S. Lukas, Gertrude G. Lukas, Donald Ray Fore (acquired), Norman N. Fore (acquired), Marvin Kelley Fore (acquired), Mark Fore et al., Lynda Russell Schroeder, and JAS Properties LTD ownerships.

On June 6, 2002, the ARC moved the project to Group A of the FF 2002 Priority list. On August 15, 2002, the ARC approved a less-than-fee 11,723-acre and fee-simple 7,654-acre addition to the project boundary. The 19,369-acre addition, sponsored by the SJRWMD, consisted of two owners, Plum Creek and Rayonier.

On June 6, 2003, the ARC approved a less-than-fee addition, in Flagler and Volusia counties, to the project boundary. The 26,740-acre addition, sponsored by the SJRWMD, consisted of one owner, Plum Creek Timberlands LP. After the most recent boundary change in 2003, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$11,598,844.

In December 2004, Volusia County, with help from SJRWMD and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), acquired a 1,711-acre conservation easement over the Le Fils Corporation property.

In April 2007, the SJRWMD and Volusia County acquired 2,272 acres as a joint acquisition. Each partner owns an undivided 50-percent interest in the property acquired from State Road 44 Properties, LLC.

On December 15, 2010, Volusia County closed on the 4,806-acre Leffler Ranch. The County will manage this property.

On November 22, 2011 SJRWMD purchased the Lukas Ranch Conservation Easement (1,093 acres) from Jonathan S. Lukas, as Trustee of the Jonathan S. Lukas Trust Agreement for \$1,912,697.50, comprised of a donation of value (\$478,174.38) from the Seller, \$956,348.75 from a USDA/NRCS Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program grant, and \$478,174.38 from SJRWMD.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$52,239,387.

### **Coordination**

The SJRWMD, the Florida Forest Service/FFS of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Volusia County and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) are acquisition partners.





Volusia County passed two bond measures in 2000 that will generate approximately \$80 million for open space land acquisition, historic preservation and improvements over the next twenty years.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Volusia Conservation Corridor project are to conserve and protect significant water resources in a priority water resource caution area; and to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, to enhance or protect significant timber, recreation, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The need to protect water resources within the caution area, combined with the restorable pine plantations, make it desirable for management by the SJRWMD.

#### ***Manager***

The SJRWMD is recommended as Manager.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The wildfires of 1998 impacted properties within the project, but most of the affected areas have been salvaged and replanted. Consequently, there are no known major disturbances that will require extraordinary attention, so management intensity is expected to be typical for water management district lands.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the core area is acquired, the SJRWMD will provide public access for low intensity, non-facilities related outdoor recreation. Initial activities will include securing the site, providing public and fire management accesses, inventorying resources, and removing trash. The District will provide access to the public while protecting sensitive resources. The site's natural resources and threatened and endangered plants and animals will be inventoried to provide the basis for a management plan. Long-range plans for this project will generally be directed toward restoring disturbed areas to their original conditions, as far as possible, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. Some of the pinelands have been degraded by timbering and wildfire and will require restoration. An all-season burning program will use, whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks to contain fires. Timber management will mostly involve improvement thinning and regeneration harvests. Plantations will be thinned and where appropriate, reforested with species found in natural ecosystems. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age. Infrastructures will primarily be located in disturbed areas and will be the minimum required for management and public access.

#### ***Revenue-generating potential***

The District will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will provide a variable source of revenue, but the revenue-generating potential for this project is expected to be low.



***Cooperators in management activities***

The District will cooperate with Volusia County and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate.



Volusia Conservation Corridor Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2001
Project Area (GIS acres)	79,031
Acres Acquired (GIS)	60,721*
at a Cost of	\$76,566,247*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	18,311

\*Includes acreage and expenditures by the SJRWMD, Volusia County, and USDA through 11/2011

Volusia Conservation Corridor Table 2

Volusia Conservation Corridor FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Rugel's pawpaw	G1/S1
lake-side sunflower	G1G2/S1S2
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
large-flowered rosemary	G3/S3
Bachman's Sparrow	G3/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3

There are 8 rare species associated with the project.

Volusia Conservation Corridor Table 3

Management Cost Summary: SJRWMD	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	WMLTF	WMLTF
Salary	\$45,000	\$45,000
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$80,000	\$80,000
OCO	\$20,000	\$60,000
FCO	\$100,000	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$345,000</b>	<b>\$185,000</b>

[Map\(s\): Volusia Conservation Corridor](#)



## **Wacissa / Aucilla River Sinks**

Jefferson and Taylor Counties  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1985
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	32,817
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	15,524*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$5,886,137*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	17,293

*\*Includes acreage and expenditures by the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD).*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The tea-colored Aucilla River and the crystal-clear Wacissa River flow through rich swamps and marshes on their way to meet each other before emptying into the Gulf. The Wacissa/Aucilla River Sinks project will protect the Wacissa River and the lower course of the Aucilla River, thereby maintaining the water quality of these streams, protecting aquatic caves and sinkholes, preserving important archaeological sites, and giving the public the opportunity to enjoy these rivers in their natural state for years to come. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses a number of Florida Forever project sites.

### **Manager(s)**

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)

### **General Description**

This project comprises parcels needed to protect the headwaters of the Wacissa River to the north and provide a link to St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge on the south. It encompasses much of the Aucilla River, a blackwater stream, and the Wacissa River, a spring-fed stream. Both are in good condition and are popular canoe trails. Although the surrounding areas are part of a commercial timber operation, the natural resources at the site remain in good condition. Ten natural communities in the project, some rare in Florida, create a diverse natural area with an abundance of water birds, and rare invertebrates and turtles. The project boasts several unique geological features including the Aucilla River Sinks, where the Aucilla River alternately flows through subterranean passageways and reappears at the surface. Numerous aboriginal sites are known from both rivers. Twelve-thousand-year-old mastodon tusks from the Aucilla are the oldest evidence of butchering in North America. The project is threatened by riverfront development.

### **Public Use**

This project is designated for use as a wildlife management area, providing opportunities for canoeing, swimming, fishing, hunting and nature appreciation.



## **Acquisition Planning**

In 1985, the Land Acquisition Selection Committee (LASC) added the original Wacissa/Aucilla River Sinks project to the CARL Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI), consisted of approximately 13,668 acres, and three major ownerships (the largest with 13,000 acres).

On March 21, 1986, the LASC approved the project design for 20,258 acres that includes the original proposal and additional acreage.

On December 1, 1989, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) approved a fee-simple, 320-acre addition to the project boundary. Sponsored by the Division of Historical Resources (DHR), the addition consisted of one landowner, St. Joe Land and Development Co. The landowner already has property in the project boundary. This addition will bring into State ownership and management the remainder of the archaeologically significant feature known as Calico Hill. On April 7, 1992, the LAAC approved a fee-simple, 4,500-acre addition to the project boundary. The addition consisted of two ownerships, St. Joe Paper and Proctor & Gamble Cellulose. This addition will provide continuity between St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, the Big Bend WMA, and the project. St. Joe Paper is already in the project boundary. On March 26, 1999, the Land Acquisition & Management Advisory Council (LAMAC) approved a fee-simple, 11,920-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the Nature Conservancy (TNC), consisted of one landowner, the St. Joe Company. The landowner is already in the boundary. This addition would provide connectivity with the Aucilla Wildlife Management Area.

In 2000, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) approved the transfer of approximately 20,036 acres to the St. Joe Timberland FF project. This acreage is portions of the original project owned by the St. Joe Company. On October 25, 2001, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 7,068-acre addition to the project boundary. It was by the FWC, consisted of one landowner, the Foley Land & Timber Company. This tract fills a critical gap in the regional landscape of protected conservation areas, by billing the hole between Trustees ownership along the Wacissa River, and District ownership along the Aucilla. These parcels were designated as essential.

Also, on October 25, 2001, the ARC approved a fee-simple, 117-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the Division of State Lands (DSL), consisted of seven small ownerships. This addition will protect Aucilla Spring and the other springs in the Wacissa springhead group as well as provide buffer areas for the associated spring run. These parcels were designated as essential.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this Florida Forever project in the Critical Natural Lands category.

On April 20, 2012, the 2,836-acre Flint Rock tract was transferred to the Wacissa/Aucilla River Sinks Florida Forever project from the St. Joe Timberland project. After this most recent boundary change in 2012, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$3,413,439.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$32,656,185.



### **Coordination**

TNC, the FWC, and the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) will be acquisition partners for this project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Wacissa/ Aucilla River Sinks project are to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

Much of the Wacissa/Aucilla River Sinks project is within the Aucilla Wildlife Management Area (WMA). This, together with the rivers' value as wildlife habitat, qualifies the project as a wildlife management area.

#### ***Manager***

The FWC is the recommended project manager.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The nature of these two river corridors and their attendant floodplains indicate a relatively low need for intense management. The unique beauty of the area, and the presence of numerous cultural sites indicate a need for intense protective measures and a need to focus on control of public access.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Most public-access points are already in place, including a county park at the head spring of the Wacissa. Therefore, immediate management control could be assumed by FWC. First-year activities would include posting the boundaries, establishing control at public-access points, and beginning the planning process. Long-term management (second year and following) would entail management of these lands as an integral part of the Big Bend/Aucilla WMA recreational complex.

#### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Without new WMA fees charged for non-consumptive uses of this area, the revenue potential appears low, despite high recreation values. If a method for charging canoeists, nature enthusiasts, fishermen and hikers could be devised, the revenue potential would be moderate.

#### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The DHR and the FFS are expected to cooperate in the management of this property. Jefferson County may also be involved since it manages a county park at the head spring.



Wacissa / Aucilla River Sinks Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1985
Project Area (GIS acres)	32,817
Acres Acquired (GIS)	15,524*
at a Cost of	\$5,886,137*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	17,293

\*Includes acreage and expenditures by the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD).

Wacissa / Aucilla River Sinks Table 2

Wacissa / Aucilla River Sinks FNAI Elements	Score
Frosted Flatwoods Salamander	G2/S1S2
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Barbour's Map Turtle	G2/S2
Florida willow	G2/S2
Florida Olive Hairstreak	G5T2/S2
Chapman's sedge	G3/S3
corkwood	G3/S3
Suwannee Cooter	G5T3/S3
Alligator Snapping Turtle	G3G4/S3

There are 16 rare species associated with the project.

Wacissa / Aucilla River Sinks Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FWC	1996/97	1997/98
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$0	\$11,133
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$126	\$2000
OCO	\$0	\$0
FCO	\$0	\$0
Total	\$126	\$13,133

[Map\(s\): Wacissa / Aucilla River Sinks](#)



## ***Wakulla Springs Protection Zone***

Wakulla and Leon Counties

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1997
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	8,045
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	4,137
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$7,372,678
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	3,908

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

South of Tallahassee, Wakulla Springs - one of the largest and deepest artesian springs in the world - is now protected by a state park, but the enormous caverns that feed the spring spread far to the north and west of the park. The Wakulla Springs Protection Zone will protect the spring by protecting land above the conduits that feed it, connect the state park with the Apalachicola National Forest, and provide public areas for camping, hiking, and hunting. East of Tallahassee the Upper Lake Lafayette Aquifer Protection addition to the Wakulla Springs Protection Zone will protect the sinkholes and seepages that also connect to Wakulla Springs and create a 373-acre passive recreation area.

### **Manager(s)**

Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Forest Service (FFS), Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). The Upper Lake Lafayette Aquifer Protection Area may also be managed with the help of the Florida Wildlife Federation (FWF).

### **General Description**

Most of the project is in intensive silviculture or pasture. The Upper Lake Lafayette portion of the project is mixed pines and hardwoods on hills sloping down to Lake Lafayette. Remnant natural areas include floodplain swamps and forests, and unique features like sinkholes, aquatic caves, and spring-run streams.

The project is important to protecting the subterranean headwaters of Wakulla Springs, the state's largest first magnitude spring and source of the Wakulla River, which is one of the largest and deepest artesian springs in the world and an Outstanding Florida Water. At least five rare animals, including three crustaceans in the aquatic caves, have been found here. Eight archaeological sites, including four mounds, are known from the site, and more can be expected. There is also a historic cemetery in the project. The sinkholes in the project are vulnerable to trash dumping and development, which may degrade the quality of water flowing into Wakulla Spring; endangerment of the area is moderate.





### **Public Use**

Portions of the project qualify as state park, state forest, and wildlife management area. Hiking or bicycling trails could link the park through this area with the Apalachicola National Forest, and the project could also be suitable for camping, horseback riding, and perhaps hunting. The Upper Lake Lafayette land could be linked to such areas as the Lafayette Heritage Trail Park, the Fallschase Greenway and the L. Kirk Edwards Wildlife and Environmental Area.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 5, 1996 the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) added the Wakulla Springs Protection Zone project to the 1997 CARL priority list. This fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by the DRP, consisted of approximately 10,243 acres and multiple owners. The essential parcels are the Ferrell tract, McBrides Slough tract and smaller tracts between the Edward Ball—Wakulla Springs State Park and Ferrell Tract. The McBrides Slough tract has been mapped previously as a DRP Inholdings and Additions project.

On October 15, 1998, the LAMAC designated as essential approximately 1,004 acres that would connect the Ferrell tract with the Apalachicola National Forest.

On June 9, 2006, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) approved a fee-simple, 152-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the FDEP, Florida Springs Initiative, consisted of seven owners, and a 2005 taxable value of \$94,268. One owner, Linderand, Inc., already holds title to property within the current project boundary. These parcels were designated as essential since they are important to the future water quality of Wakulla Springs.

On December 9, 2011 ARC placed this project in the new Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever.

In 2014, a Tallahassee citizens' group, the Buck Lake Alliance, proposed making the 373-acre Upper Lake Lafayette Aquifer Protection Proposal a Florida Forever project. The project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$3,599,447. On December 12, 2014, ARC voted to add this area to the Florida Forever list and then incorporated its boundary into the boundary of this Wakulla Springs Protection Zone project.

After the most recent boundary addition in 2014, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$10,972,125.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$23,511,218.

### **Coordination**

Considering this project's linkages and connections above and below ground, coordination would be among the FWC, local governments, the Division of Recreation and Parks, the Florida Forest Service, the Florida Wildlife Federation and other nonprofit conservation groups, the Florida Geological Survey, and the US Forest Service.



### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary objective of management of the Wakulla Springs Protection Zone project is to preserve the water quality of Wakulla Springs by protecting the land above the underground conduits that supply the spring. Achieving this objective will provide a refuge for extremely rare cave-dwelling crustaceans, preserve wildlife habitat in this developing region, and provide various recreational opportunities, such as camping and hiking, to the public. Management activities should be directed toward the protection of surface-water and groundwater quality. Managers should control public access to the project; limit public motor vehicles to one or a few major roads and route them away from sinkholes; inventory resources; and monitor management activities to ensure that they are preserving the quality of the groundwater. Managers should limit the number and size of recreational facilities, such as hiking trails, ensure that they avoid the most sensitive resources, particularly sinkholes and spring runs, and site them in already disturbed areas when possible. If less-than-fee purchases are made within the project, activities such as silviculture, road improvements, or any development should be strictly monitored to ensure that surface-water and groundwater quality in the project area is maintained or improved. In areas managed by FFS, the primary land management goal is to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; to integrate compatible human use, and to insure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. This ecosystem approach will guide the FFS's management activities on this project. For areas managed by FWC, priority will be given to the conservation and protection of environmentally unique native habitats and threatened and endangered species. Under FWC management, the tract will also provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, hiking, and other natural resource-based recreational activities.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The unique subterranean resources connected with Wakulla Springs, one of Florida's most significant artesian springs and already managed as a state park, qualify this project as a unit of the state park system. The project's size and diversity of resources makes portions of it also desirable for use and management as a state forest and a wildlife management area. Management as a state forest is contingent upon the state acquiring fee-simple title to the core parcels.

#### ***Manager***

The DRP is recommended to manage areas south of State Road 267 and west of State Road 61, except for that portion of the Ferrell property in sections 22 and 27, T2S, R1W, consisting of approximately 120 acres of agricultural fields and the 152-acre boundary addition. The FWC is recommended as lead manager for the 120-acre portion of the Ferrell property described above. The FFS is recommended as lead manager for the remainder of the project except for the most recent addition. The Florida Wildlife Federation has been identified as manager for the Upper Lake Lafayette Aquifer Protection property.



***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

DRP: Under fee title acquisition, the Wakulla Springs Protection Zone will be a high-need management area. Resource restoration, public recreation, environmental education and development compatible with long-term resource protection will be an integral aspect of management. The areas around karst windows, springs and associated sloughs are often, and in some cases currently are being, subjected to inappropriate uses and levels of use that degrade the resource. The lands between the park and the national forest, west of State Road 61, contain a significant number of hydrological features which will require intensive management of people to ensure against resource degradation by users and allow for restoration where needed. Springs, karst windows and sinks are popular recreation sites. Hence, there will be a demand for their use. Close monitoring and study will be needed to decide which are suitable for public use and at what levels, followed with appropriate management measures. This concept also applies to other areas of the project managed by the DRP where the natural regime has been disturbed by silviculture and other land uses.

FFS: Many areas of the project will require considerable restoration efforts. Until these efforts are completed, the level of management intensity and related management costs is expected to be somewhat higher than what would be expected on a typical state forest.

FWC: The proposal generally includes lands that are low-need tracts requiring basic resource management, including the frequent use of prescribed fire. The Ferrell Property represents a relatively intact long-leaf pine/wire grass community. Land uses in the general area have severely impacted this community type. Close attention will need to be paid to ensure the perpetuation of this community through appropriate burning and other management practices, if acquired in fee title. The primary management needed for perpetuation of the natural communities on the area is the introduction of all-season prescribed fire and control of human access. On portions of existing disturbed areas such as the agricultural fields, native and non-native agronomic plantings will be used to benefit both game and non-game wildlife on the area and to promote special hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities for the public. Development of facilities, as on all wildlife management areas, would be kept to the minimum level to assure a high-quality recreational experience for those members of the public interested in less infrastructure and other disturbance factors.

FWF: This property is adjacent to commercial and residential development on the urban fringe. There is a platform mound on the property, which is incompletely fenced, and completed fencing will be needed. There are invasive plant species on the property, which will have to be managed. Managing the site for soil protection and for vegetative cover will offer the best protection for Upper Lake Lafayette.

***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

DRP: Upon fee title acquisition, public access will be provided for low-intensity, non-facility-related outdoor recreation. As a part of the Wakulla Springs State Park, hunting would not be permitted. Vehicular access by the public will be confined to designated points and routes. Emphasis will be given to protection of springs and associated sloughs, sinks and karst windows. Resource management



activities in the first year of each fee title acquisition will concentrate on site security (including posting boundaries) and development of a resource inventory in conjunction with the development of a comprehensive management plan. Long-term management may include a wide range of resource-based recreation and associated facilities. The integration of appropriate public uses will create wildlife and recreational linkages between the State Park and the national forest.

FFS: Once the core area is acquired and assigned to the FFS, public access will be provided for non-facilities-related, low-intensity outdoor recreation. Until specific positions are provided for the project, public access will be coordinated through the FFS's Tallahassee District Headquarters and management activities will be conducted with district personnel.

Initial or intermediate management efforts will concentrate on site security, public and fire management access, resource inventory, and removal of existing trash. Steps will be taken to ensure that the public is provided appropriate access while simultaneously affording protection of sensitive resources. Vehicular use by the public will be confined to designated roads. Any unnecessary access points will be closed. An inventory of the site's natural resources and threatened and endangered flora and fauna will be conducted to provide the basis for formulation of a management plan.

Prior to collection of necessary resource information, management proposals for this project can only be conceptual in nature. Long-range plans for this property will generally be directed toward the restoration of disturbed areas and maintenance of natural communities. Management activities will also stress enhancement of the abundance and spatial distribution of threatened and endangered species. To the greatest extent practical, disturbed sites will be restored to conditions that would be expected to occur in naturally functioning ecosystems. Pine plantations will be thinned to achieve a more natural appearance. Off-site species will eventually be replaced with species that would be expected to occur naturally on the site. An all-season burning program will be established, utilizing practices that incorporate recent research findings.

Whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks will be utilized to contain, and control prescribed and natural fires. Timber management activities will primarily consist of improvement thinning and regeneration harvests aimed at maintaining and perpetuating forest ecosystems. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age but will be managed to maintain a broad diversity of age classes ranging from young stands to areas with old growth characteristics. This will provide habitat for the full spectrum of species that would be found in the natural environment. The resource inventory will be used to identify sensitive areas that need special attention, protection or management, and to locate areas that are appropriate for any recreational or administrative facilities. Infrastructure development will primarily be located in already disturbed areas and will be the absolute minimum required to allow public access for the uses mentioned above, to provide facilities to accommodate public use, and to administer and manage the property.

Recreation and environmental education in the natural environment by the FFS, though no recreational facilities are planned. However, if it is later determined that facilities are needed, the use of low impact,



rustic facilities will be stressed. High impact, organized recreation areas will be discouraged because of possible adverse effects on the natural environment. Unnecessary roads, fire-lines and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned and/or restored to the greatest extent practical.

FWC: During the first year after acquisition, emphasis will be placed on site security, posting boundaries, public access, fire management, resource inventory and removal of existing refuse. A conceptual management plan will be developed by the FWC, describing the goals and objectives of future resource management. Long-range plans will stress ecosystem management, the protection and management of threatened and endangered species and the management of small game hunting opportunities. Essential roads will be stabilized to provide all weather public access and manage operations. Programs providing multiple recreational uses will also be implemented. An all-season prescribed burning management plan will be developed and implemented using conventional and biologically acceptable guidelines. Management activities will strive to manage natural plant communities to benefit native wildlife resources.

Where appropriate and practical, timber resources will be managed using acceptable silvicultural practices as recommended by the FFS. These practices will include reforestation of cleared pinelands and natural regeneration of pine plantations.

FWF: It will take a minimum of one year to develop a management plan for the Upper Lake Lafayette acreage after this area is acquired. Fencing the east and west boundaries will be necessary to create limited access points. Cultural resource sites will have to be identified and fenced off from general access.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

DRP expects no significant revenue from this property immediately after fee title acquisition, and the amount of any future revenue will depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities developed.

FFS will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in upland pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue, but the revenue-generating potential of this project is expected to be moderate.

FWC may also sell timber to help offset operational costs. Future revenue from timber resources will depend on successful reforestation and management of cleared pinelands. Additional revenue would be generated from sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area stamps and other special hunting stamps or permits.

FWF does not expect the Upper Lake Lafayette property to generate revenue from admissions but it will contribute to the local economy by spurring sales of outdoor goods and services.



***Cooperators in management activities***

DRP will, as appropriate, cooperate with local governments, other state agencies, and the water management district to further resource management, recreational and educational opportunities, and the development of the lands for state park purposes.

FFS and the FWC will also cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies in managing the area.

FWF developed a management prospectus for the Upper Lake Lafayette portion of the Wakulla Springs Protection Zone and suggests that its volunteers can help see that trails are properly maintained.



Wakulla Springs Protection Zone Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1997
Project Area (GIS acres)	8,045
Acres Acquired (GIS)	4,137
at a Cost of	\$7,372,678
Acres Remaining (GIS)	3,908

Wakulla Springs Protection Zone Table 2

Wakulla Springs Protection Zone FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Woodville Karst Cave Crayfish	G1/S1
Florida Cave Amphipod	G2G3/S2S3
Hobbs' Cave Amphipod	G2G3/S2S3
Suwannee Cooter	G5T3/S3
Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake	G4/S3
Pine Snake	G4/S3
Southeastern Fox Squirrel	G5T5/S3

There are 11 rare species associated with the project.

Wakulla Springs Protection Zone Table 3a

Management Cost Summary: DRP	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$48,840	\$48,840
OPS	\$10,000	\$10,000
Expense	\$86,342	\$6,342
OCO	\$58,956	\$0
FCO	\$0	\$0
Total	\$204,138	\$65,142

Wakulla Springs Protection Zone Table 3b

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	not provided
Salary	\$65,343	not provided
OPS	\$0	not provided



<b>Management Cost Summary: FFS</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$90,000</b>	<b>not provided</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$129,000</b>	<b>not provided</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>not provided</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$202,670</b>	<b>not provided</b>

Wakulla Springs Protection Zone Table 3c

<b>Management Cost Summary: FWC</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>	<b>CARL</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$37,170</b>	<b>\$74,340</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$7,000</b>	<b>\$7,000</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$38,500</b>	<b>\$38,500</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$202,670</b>	<b>\$179,840</b>

[Map\(s\): Wakulla Springs Protection](#)





## **Watermelon Pond**

Alachua and Levy Counties  
Partnerships and Regional Incentives

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1994
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	11,957
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	6,261*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$8,707,029*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	5,696

\*includes acreage and expenditures by the FWC.

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

In southwestern Alachua County, the original landscape of dry longleaf-pine sandhills pocked with marshes and lakes, important for wildlife, has been much reduced by agriculture and encroaching ranchettes. The Watermelon Pond project will conserve part of this original landscape for wildlife such as fox squirrels and sandhill cranes and for plants like the scrub bay; for the protection of the groundwater supply of the county; and for the public to enjoy for years to come.

### **Manager(s)**

Florida Forest Service/FFS, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

### **General Description**

The project is important for its extensive tract of xeric uplands (sandhill and scrub natural communities) and seasonally interconnected wetlands of the Brooksville Ridge physiographic province. The complex of these uplands with their marshes and lakes is regionally significant to vertebrate fauna in an area of the state subject to extensive development pressures. No comparable complex is protected in north-central Florida. The project is also the major aquifer recharge area in Alachua County. No archaeological sites are known from the project. The uplands are threatened by subdivision for agriculture and ranchette developments.

### **Public Use**

This project will be designated as a state forest with such public uses as hiking, fishing, horseback riding and camping.

### **Acquisition Planning**

Phase I: (essential) Loncala (acquired) and other large sandhill and xeric tracts including Gladman, Burch, Matson, Hart, Barry, O’Steen and Outler. Phase II: Remaining tracts.

On October 15, 1998, the Council designated the unsubdivided portion of section 36 and 11 other “corridor” parcels as essential.

On February 7, 2003 the Council added 250 acres in Alachua County to the project boundaries.

On December 5, 2003 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) moved this project to the Group B list.



In April 2007 the FWC acquired 1,288 acres, identified as Barry Ranch. Of these acres, 607 are within the Watermelon Pond Florida Forever project boundary.

On August 13, 2010 ARC approved a 3,161-acre reduction in the project boundary due to residential/commercial/infrastructure development. After the most recent boundary change in 2010, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$5,293,910.

On December 9, 2011 this project was placed in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$14,273,312.

### **Coordination**

FWC and Alachua County are acquisition partners for this project and on April 11, 2012 Alachua County purchased 640 acres in an adjoining area, which will help buffer the project.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Watermelon Pond CARL project are to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; and to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The natural pine forests and the restorable pine plantations of the Watermelon Pond project make it desirable for management as a state forest.

#### ***Manager***

The FFS is recommended as manager.

#### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

The areas of pine plantation and agricultural land in the project will require reforestation and restoration efforts beyond the level typically expected on a state forest. Consequently, management intensity and related management costs might be slightly higher than what would normally occur on a state forest.

#### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the core area is acquired, the FFS will provide public access for low-intensity, non-facilities-related outdoor recreation. Initial activities will include securing the site, providing public and fire management access, inventorying resources, and removing trash. The



FFS will provide access to the public while protecting sensitive resources. The project's natural resources and threatened and endangered plants and animals will be inventoried to provide the basis for a management plan.

Long-range plans for this project will generally be directed toward restoring disturbed areas to their original conditions, as far as possible, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. Some of the pinelands have been degraded by timbering and require restoration.

An all-season burning program will use, whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks to contain fires. Timber management will mostly involve improvement thinning and regeneration harvests. Plantations will be thinned and, where appropriate, reforested with species found in natural ecosystems. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age. Infrastructure will primarily be in disturbed areas and will be the minimum required for management and public access. FFS will promote environmental education.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The FFS will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will provide a variable source of revenue, but the revenue-generating potential for this project is expected to be low to moderate.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The FFS will cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and other interested parties as appropriate.



Watermelon Pond Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1994
Project Area (GIS acres)	11,957
Acres Acquired (GIS)	6,261*
at a Cost of	\$8,707,029*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	5,696

\*includes acreage and expenditures by the FWC.

Watermelon Pond Table 2

Watermelon Pond FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Sandhill Crane	G5T2/S2
Striped Newt	G2G3/S2
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Florida Mouse	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Sherman's Fox Squirrel	G5T3/S3
Skelley's June Beetle	G2/S2
Southern Hognose Snake	G2/S2S3
giant orchid	G2G3/S2
incised groove-bur	G3/S2
Bachman's Sparrow	G3/S3
Gopher Frog	G3/S3

There are 28 rare species associated with the project.

Watermelon Pond Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$80,530	\$80,530
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$30,000	\$20,000
OCO	\$112,500	\$6,000
FCO	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$223,030</b>	<b>\$106,530</b>

[Map\(s\): Watermelon Pond](#)



## **Wekiva-Ocala Greenway**

Lake, Orange, Seminole and Volusia Counties  
Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	1995
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	80,797
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	57,720*
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$183,142,325*
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	23,077

*\*Includes acreage and expenditures by the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) and the Orlando-Orange County Transportation Authority.*

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The springs, rivers, lakes, swamps, and uplands stretching north from Orlando to the Ocala National Forest are an important refuge for the Florida black bear, as well as other wildlife such as the bald eagle, swallow-tailed kite, Florida scrub jay, and wading birds. The Wekiva-Ocala Greenway will protect these animals and the Wekiva and St. Johns River basins by protecting natural corridors connecting Wekiwa Springs State Park, Rock Springs Run State Reserve, the Lower Wekiva River State Reserve, and Hontoon Island State Park with the Ocala National Forest. It will also provide the people of the booming Orlando area with a large, nearby natural area in which to enjoy camping, fishing, swimming, hiking, canoeing, and other recreational pursuits. The Florida National Scenic Trail, a cross-Florida hiking and non-motorized trail, is also planned to cross this project. The trail is a congressionally designated national scenic trail.

### **Manager(s)**

Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Florida Department of Environmental Protection (BMK Ranch, Seminole Springs, St. Johns River and portions of the Wekiva-Ocala Connector); Florida Forest Service/FFS, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (Seminole Springs and portions of the Wekiva-Ocala Connector).

### **General Description**

This project provides an important link between Ocala National Forest and the extensive state holdings along the Wekiva River. It is habitat for many rare animal species including the Florida black bear, the Florida sandhill crane, bald eagle, Eastern indigo snake, Florida scrub jay, Sherman’s fox squirrel, Florida scrub lizard and gopher tortoise. It incorporates most of the forested wetlands along the St. Johns and Wekiva Rivers between Orlando and the Ocala National Forest. The St. Johns River site consists of three large bottomlands and adjacent uplands between three existing state ownerships. The Seminole Springs/Woods site is reported to have 50-75 springs within its boundary. The Wekiva-Ocala Connector site provides a wildlife movement corridor between the Ocala National Forest and the other portions of the project along the Wekiva River.



## **Public Use**

The project sites are designated as state reserves or preserves and state forests, offering opportunities for canoeing, hiking, fishing and camping.

## **Acquisition Planning**

On November 18, 1994, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council (LAAC) approved combining the Seminole Springs/Woods, Wekiva-Ocala Connector, St. Johns River, and BMK Ranch projects and renaming the project Wekiva-Ocala Greenway. Based on GIS, the approximate total project acreage was 67,585 acres. Seminole Springs/Woods: Seminole Springs—core tracts include Strawn Tract, M.S. Carter (acquired), and Brumlick parcels (acquired through eminent domain). The Strawn tract is the largest and most significant ownership remaining to be acquired. Wekiva-Ocala Connector: Core Tracts West—Maxwell and Holman (acquired), Shockley (acquired), Harper (acquired by SJRWMD 2,228 acres/2.1 million), Alger Enterprises (acquired), Fisch (acquired by SJRWMD), Southland Gardens (contingent upon the acquisition of Harper and Fisch), Clemmons (acquired), Blaskovic (acquired), Kittridge (acquired). Core Tracts East—Stetson University (acquired), Stein, Lenholt Farms, Francolino (acquired), Jung (acquired), and Hollywood Pines, Inc. St. Johns River: New Garden Coal, the largest ownership, was acquired in 2005. The BMK Ranch parcel has been acquired. On October 30, 1995, the LAAC approved a fee-simple, ± 5,616-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by Eastern Marketing Inc, representative for several owners and consisted of multiple landowners and parcels. All tracts were designated as essential. In addition, the project phasing was removed. On October 30, 1996, the LAAC approved a fee-simple, 425-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the Division of State Lands, consisted of seven landowners (Jung, Hollywood Pines, Miranda Trust, Overstreet, New Garden Coal, Seminole Springs, and Fisch) and 12 parcels. Other acquisitions in the Wekiva Basin are Wekiva Buffers, Wekiva Springs State Park, Rock Springs Run, Lower Wekiva River State Park, Hontoon Island State Recreation Area, and Blue Spring State Park. These acquisitions total 18,400 acres. On July 18, 1997, the LAAC approved a fee-simple, 128-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the landowner, Conway Kittredge, who already has 20 acres in the current project boundary. Any portion of the addition that is not needed for resource protection or management will be surplus. On December 3, 1998, the Land Acquisition and Management Advisory Council (LAMAC) approved a fee-simple, 1,507-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the Division of Recreation and Parks and consisted of 20 parcels. At the time of the boundary addition, the parcels were owned by Neighborhood Lakes LTD and Lake Lerla LTD Partnership and were designated as essential parcels. They were subsequently purchased by BARN, LLC. These parcels were acquired in a transaction approved by the Board of Trustees on 12/19/2006. The total acquisition area contained 1,584 acres.

On December 6, 2001, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) approved a fee-simple, 5,455-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the Wekiva Basin Working Group, consisted of 14 sites, multiple landowners and parcels, and 13 tracts.



On June 4, 2004, the ARC approved a less-than-fee, 572-acre addition to the project boundary. The property was owned by Robert Maxwell and consisted of two parcels. The boundary amendment was sponsored by the owner's representative, Roland Pacetti Realty. On August 15, 2006, the Board of Trustees approved the purchase of a conservation easement covering these two parcels.

On December 8, 2006 the ARC approved a fee-simple 77-acre addition in Lake County (a.k.a. the Ellis and Windsor tracts) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), consisted of two parcels with two owners (Natalie Windsor and Jerry Ellis). The Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) will manage the 17-acre Windsor tract as part of the Lower Wekiva River Preserve State park. The 60-acre Ellis tract will be managed by the FFS as part of the Seminole State Forest. On December 14, 2007, ARC approved a fee-simple 675-acre addition, known as the Pine Plantation Addition, to the project boundary. It was sponsored by Henry Dean Esq. and consisted of five parcels and four landowners. The Division of Recreation and Parks agreed to manage the parcels. The parcels have been designated essential. Approximately 421 acres of this addition have been purchased and are being managed as part of the Greenway.

On September 30, 2008, the Board of Trustees approved the purchase of 385 acres from Project Orlando LLC; Pinestraw Partners LLC; and Herscho Properties, Inc. This acquisition was for a portion of the Pine Plantation property. On November 20, 2008, the Board of Trustees approved a 36-acre purchase from Project Orlando LLC which was part of the boundary amendment that included the Pine Plantation property. On October 3, 2008, from the Division of State Lands (DSL) Florida Forever funds a 345-acre parcel was purchased from Palmer ownership in Pine Plantation for \$24,930,304 (About 40 acres in the SE corner of the Palmer parcel was acquired by the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority for a future conveyance to Orange County for a park). In November 2008, DSL Florida Forever funds were used to buy 35.7 acres of the Project Orlando, LLC ownership. DRP will manage this site.

On March 27, 2009, 307.17 acres were purchased from the OOCEA for BARN, LLP parcel (payback of \$10M paid by the Authority—Neighborhood Lakes, Phase II).

On December 9, 2011 ARC placed this project in the category of Critical Natural Lands.

After the most recent boundary change in 2007, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax assessed value of \$31,792,123.

In calendar year 2017, a total of 236.26 acres closed in this project were acquired using Florida Forever program funding.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$117,037,690.

### **Coordination**

Florida Communities Trust (FCT), Lake County Water Authority, SJRWMD, DOT, Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority, and TNC are all acquisition partners in this project.





## **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway project are 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 this state or a larger geographic area; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; to provide areas, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The large size, variety of forest resources, and diversity of the former Seminole Springs project and the western Wekiva-Ocala Connector make them highly desirable for management as a state forest. The quality of resources on the remainder of the project make them suitable for state preserves.

### ***Manager***

The FFS proposes to manage the Seminole Springs and western connector portions of the project. The remainder will be managed by the DRP. The DRP may elect to assume management of the western portion of the Strawn property later if it is purchased.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

On the portion to be managed by the FFS, there are no known disturbances that will require extraordinary attention, so the level of management intensity is expected to be typical for a state forest. The portion to be managed by the DRP, the BMK Ranch (acquired), is a high-need management area, while the Eastern Connector of the former Wekiva-Ocala Connector project and the former St. Johns River project are low-need management areas. The BMK Ranch is expected to have a higher level of recreational use and development compatible with resource management than the other properties.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

About 8,000 acres have been purchased by the State of Florida and the SJRWMD and have been assigned to the FFS for management as the Seminole State Forest (SSF). The FFS is currently providing for public access for low-intensity, non-facilities-related outdoor recreation. Initial activities include securing the site, providing public and fire management access, inventorying resources, and removing trash. The project's natural resources and threatened and endangered plants and animals will be inventoried to provide the basis for a management plan. Long-range plans for this property will generally be directed toward restoring disturbed areas to their original conditions, as far as possible, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. An all-season burning program will use, wherever possible, existing roads, black lines foam lines and natural breaks to contain fires. Timber management will mostly involve improvement thinning and regeneration harvests. Plantations will be thinned and, where appropriate, reforested with species found in natural ecosystems. Stands will not have a targeted





rotation age. Infrastructure will primarily be in disturbed areas and will be the minimum required for management and public access. The DRP will promote recreation and environmental education. For the DRP, within the first year after acquisition, management activities will concentrate on site security, natural and cultural resource protection, and the development of a plan for long-term public use and resource management.

***Revenue-generating potential***

The FFS will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will provide a variable source of revenue, but the revenue-generating potential for this project is expected to be low. The DRP expects no significant revenue to be generated initially. After acquisition, it will probably be several years before any significant public facilities are developed on the BMK Ranch properties, and public facilities will probably not be a major emphasis on the eastern connector properties. The amount of any future revenue will depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities.

***Cooperators in management activities***

The FFS will cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate. The DRP recommends no local governments or others for management of its project area.



Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	1995
Project Area (GIS acres)	80,797
Acres Acquired (GIS)	57,720*
at a Cost of	\$183,142,325*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	23,077

\*Includes acreage and expenditures by the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) and the Orlando-Orange County Transportation Authority.

Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Table 2

Wekiva-Ocala Greenway FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Scrub-Jay	G2/S2
Swallow-tailed Kite	G5/S2
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Okeechobee gourd	G1/S1
Striped Newt	G2G3/S2
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	G3/S2
Eastern Indigo Snake	G3/S3
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Bald Eagle	G5/S3
Florida hasteola	G1/S1
Seminole Spring Siltsnail	G1/S1
Florida willow	G2/S2

There are 30 rare species associated with the project.

Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Table 3a

Management Cost Summary: DRP	1996/97	1997/98
Source of Funds	SPTF/LATF/CARL	SPTF/LATF/CARL
Salary	\$0	\$0
OPS	\$425	\$425
Expense	\$5,739	\$5,739
OCO	\$0	\$0
FCO	\$38,798	\$0
Total	\$44,962	\$6,164



Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Table 3b

<b>Management Cost Summary: FFS (Seminole State Forest)</b>	<b>1995/96</b>	<b>1996/97</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>	<b>CARL</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$35,440</b>	<b>\$64,440</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$4,500</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$22,600</b>	<b>\$40,225</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$29,270</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$58,040</b>	<b>\$138,435</b>

Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Table 3c

<b>Management Cost Summary: FFS (Wekiva-Ocala Connector: West Corridor)</b>	<b>Startup</b>	<b>Recurring</b>
<b>Source of Funds</b>	<b>CARL</b>	<b>CARL</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>\$28,140</b>	<b>\$28,140</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>
<b>OCO</b>	<b>\$90,400</b>	<b>\$4,500</b>
<b>FCO</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$138,540</b>	<b>\$47,640</b>

[Map\(s\): Wekiva-Ocala Greenway](#)



## **West Aucilla River Buffer**

Jefferson County

Less-Than-Fee

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2007
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	710
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	710

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The West Aucilla River Buffer Florida Forever project is a single ownership of 710 acres to be a less-than-fee acquisition, in northeastern Jefferson County, located approximately four miles north of US 90, and east of County Road 257. The project is designed to help protect the Aucilla River watershed.

This project meets Florida Forever goals of increasing the number of acres protected with alternatives to fee-simple purchase by establishing a conservation easement over the property and increases the acreage of landscape and landscape linkages by preserving 544 acres of Priority 4 Ecological Greenway habitat. The project also protects 37 acres with natural floodplain functions, and a total of 683 acres that provide surface water protection. There is a total of 130 acres of functional wetlands that would be protected in this proposal, with 36 acres being ranked Priority 1.

The majority of the project is within the Florida Forever Needs Assessment Aquifer Recharge and Surface Water Protection GIS overlays. The property is also largely within the Ecological Greenways, Sustainable Forestry and Forestland for Recharge areas.

### **Manager(s)**

The Office of Environmental Services (OES), or its successor, would serve as the conservation-easement monitor unless otherwise noted.

### **General Description**

The 710-acre project is in two parcels. The northeast tract (253 acres) adjoins a segment of the Upper Aucilla Conservation Area (UACA) of the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) for about 0.4 miles along the project’s eastern boundary. The second tract (468 acres), approximately 0.5 miles southwest of the first, is 0.6 miles due west of another segment of the UACA. It does not include any river frontage.

Approximately 70 percent of the proposal has been heavily altered by past land management practices, and includes pine plantations, wildlife food plots, pastures and other clearings, and an artificial lake. Approximately 30 percent of the proposal is in relatively intact natural communities on both tracts. These are primarily isolated forested wetlands (dome and basin swamps), Aucilla River floodplain forest, and small fragments of upland hardwood forests on upland slopes.



The northern tract contains a portion of Parker Pond, a 24-acre artificial lake created by a stream impoundment. The lake is bisected by Government Farm road. The western shoreline of the lake grades into a cypress and black gum swamp, with some dead trees scattered into the lake edge, a result of impoundment long ago. At the eastern end of the lake is an overflow ditch that runs in an east-west orientation, through uplands to the Aucilla River floodplain. An assessment of the potential impacts of the hydrology of the impoundment on nearby wetlands may be warranted if a conservation easement is pursued. Wildlife food plots, pastures, and other clearings make up the remainder of the site's disturbed uplands.

### **Public Use**

The project is a less-than-fee purchase with public access for hunting being offered to the handicapped. The landowner has committed to allowing handicap-access hunting as the only form of public access.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 15, 2007 the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the West Aucilla River Buffer project to the B list of the Florida Forever Priority List. This less-than-fee project was submitted by the landowner, Mr. Carl Joiner on December 29, 2006. In 2007, the project had about 721 acres and a taxable value of \$322,849. On December 14, 2007 ARC voted to move the West Aucilla River Buffer to Group A of the 2008 Florida Forever priority list.

On December 9, 2011 ARC placed this project in the Less-Than-Fee category of projects.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$2,096,768.

### **Coordination**

No partnerships for acquisition have been proposed. The SRWMD is not interested because it has no river frontage.

### **Management Policy Statement**

As a proposed conservation easement or other less-than-fee interest, the project will be managed by the private landowner with restrictions. The purchase of development rights, the prohibition of any further conversion of existing natural areas to agricultural uses and limited public access to some sites will likely be considered in the negotiation of the perpetual conservation easement.

### **Management Prospectus**

Any conservation easements acquired in this project will be monitored by the Office of Environmental Services. The primary focus of any negotiated conservation easements will be maintenance of intact natural areas, low intensity silviculture and control of invasive exotic plants. The landowner has committed to allowing handicap access hunting as a form of public access.



West Aucilla River Buffer Table 1

<b>Project-at-a-Glance</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Placed on List</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Project Area (GIS acres)</b>	<b>710</b>
<b>Acres Acquired (GIS)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>at a Cost of</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Acres Remaining (GIS)</b>	<b>710</b>

West Aucilla River Buffer Table 2

<b>West Aucilla River Buffer FNAI Elements</b>	
<b>Florida Black Bear</b>	<b>G5T4/S4</b>

[Map\(s\): West Aucilla River Buffer](#)



## **West Bay Preservation Area**

Bay County

Climate Change Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2012
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	4,347
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	0
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	4,347

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

The purpose of State acquisition is to protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of the land, water, and wetlands systems and to increase natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities. Acquiring the project area, whether in fee or less-than-fee, would contribute to the protection of the natural shoreline, water quality, and aquatic resources of West Bay as well as Crooked Creek and Burnt Mill Creek.

### **Manager(s)**

Bay County would manage the project if acquired in fee. If acquired in less-than-fee, the easement would be monitored by the Division of State Lands/Office of Environmental Services (OES).

### **General Description**

The West Bay Preservation Area includes approximately 4,347 acres (FNAI GIS) of St. Joe Company property in Southwestern Bay County. The three parcels border the 9,600-acre Panama City Airport Conservation Easement managed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). It is bounded on the north by CR 388, on the south by West Bay and CR 2300, on the west by Crooked Creek, and on the east by North Bay and the west boundary of the Fanning Creek Water Basin. The entire project area is undeveloped.

West Bay Preservation Area encompasses about 6 miles of frontage on West Bay and 1.7 miles on North Bay. It includes 6.1 miles of creek bank of Crooked and Burnt Mill Creeks. Both creeks are major sources of fresh water draining into West Bay. Protection of the project lands, when added to the Panama City Airport Conservation Easement and Breakfast Point Mitigation Bank lands, would preserve in natural condition a total of roughly 14.4 miles of the 30-mile West Bay shorefront.

About 40 percent of the project is in natural condition and the rest is in pine plantation. Most of the land in natural condition is concentrated near the coast and along the creek shores. The remainder is in inland freshwater wetlands and embedded pine plantation. Of the natural communities, salt marsh makes up the largest acreage. Extensive tidal flats are found in the upper portion of the salt marshes, and an approximately 100-foot-wide band of seagrasses was observed in 2011 between Burnt Mill and Crooked



Creeks. Archaeologically, there are 17 sites on the Florida Master Site File located within the project boundary.

Approximately 96 percent of the proposal is habitat for between three and seven focal species (imperiled or rare wildlife). Approximately 60 percent of the West Bay Preservation Area lies within a designated FWC Species Habitat Conservation Area for the America swallow-tailed kite Coopers hawk, and Gulf salt marsh snake.

There are hunting leases and timbering agreements on the property. Numerous dirt roads provide access to the project parcels; however, easement rights would be needed to cross St. Joe Company land and access the project parcels. Gulf Power owns the entire 200-foot-wide utility corridor extending in a westerly direction from their nearby power plant. It divides the three portions of the project and establishes the northerly boundaries for several of the project parcels. These lands have been designated by the County to have a Future Land Use of Conservation and are bound by a Stipulated Settlement Agreement requiring St. Joe Company to make the properties available for purchase for preservation, and to assist Bay County with the acquisition for preservation.

### **Public Use**

The management prospectus prepared by Bay County states that, if the property is acquired in fee, the primary management purpose will be protection of West Bay and restoration of the natural communities, while encouraging natural resource-based recreation that does not detract or interfere with that purpose. With easements and public access to the different areas, the resource-based recreation activities that were identified to be most suitable for the project would be hiking, off road bicycling, picnicking, primitive camping, nature study trails, canoe/kayaking, geocaching, and horseback riding trails.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On December 9, 2011, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added this project to the Florida Forever priority list in the Less-than-Fee category. This is a one ownership project, and the owner is anticipating selling it in one transaction. When this project was approved in 2011, it had an estimated tax assessed value of \$6,300,000.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$2,742,888.

### **Coordination**

There is potential for partnerships both in funding and in management. The Department of Defense (DOD) has expressed support for this project and will apply for federal acquisition dollars to partner in its purchase. The County has also expressed interest in partnering with the Gulf Coast State College for management and use of the part of the property (easternmost segment) for natural resource appreciation, education, and restoration.

### **Management Policy Statement**

This project will be managed to buffer and enhance West Bay, while providing compatible recreational and educational opportunities.





## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

This project meets the following goals for Florida Forever projects as required in statute: (A) Enhance the coordination and completion of land acquisition projects; (B) Increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape level; (C) Protect, restore and maintain the quality of natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the State; (D) Ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state; (E) Increase natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities; (F) Preserve significant archaeological or historic sites; and (G) Increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources. There could be the possibility of matching funds for this proposal through a Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI) grant from the DOD. This project overlaps with the military's need to protect lands, water, and habitat to ensure the sustainability of military missions, protecting areas underlying low-level military operating areas, described in 259.105(10)(b), Florida Statutes.

### ***Manager***

Bay County could manage the project area if it were acquired fee simple, or current landowner would manage, with Division of State Land providing for periodic monitoring of conservation easement.



West Bay Preservation Area Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2012
Project Area (GIS acres)	4,347
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	4,347

West Bay Preservation Area Table 2

West Bay Preservation Area FNAI Elements	Score
Bald Eagle	G5/S3
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
Florida Clapper Rail	G5T3?/S3?
Royal Tern	G5/S3
Osprey	G5/S3S4
Little Blue Heron	G5/S4
Tricolored Heron	G5/S4

There are 7 rare species associated with the project.

[Map\(s\): West Bay Preservation Area](#)



## ***Wolfe Creek Forest***

Santa Rosa County

Critical Natural Lands

### **Project-at-a-Glance**

<i>Placed on List</i>	2010
<i>Project Area (GIS acres)</i>	10,067
<i>Acres Acquired (GIS)</i>	634
<i>at a Cost of</i>	\$0
<i>Acres Remaining (GIS)</i>	9,433

### **Purpose for State Acquisition**

Acquiring the Wolfe Creek Forest project will conserve and protect wildlife species and protect and provide opportunities for carefully controlled public uses, including sustainably managed silvicultural practices. Purposes of acquisition include protection of the biodiversity, protection of the quality and natural functions of the land and water systems, protection of the surface waters of the state, provision of resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities, and provision of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources.

Conservation of lands within the project would afford protection to numerous seepage and blackwater stream systems that are contiguous with these conservation lands and the Blackwater River. These stream systems support numerous rare aquatic flora and fauna and are considered a focal habitat of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission’s Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. Twelve archaeological sites, two of which are historic and ten of which are prehistoric, one of which is Wolfe Creek Mill, are within the project.

### **Manager(s)**

The Florida Forest Service/FFS is recommended as manager of the project.

### **General Description**

The Wolfe Creek Forest project for fee-simple acquisition includes approximately 10,075 (GIS) acres in central Santa Rosa County, between Blackwater River State Forest (Forest) to the east, and Whiting Field Naval Air Station to the southwest. It has a tax-assessed value of \$14,080,729; all essential parcels. This project shares 5.7 miles of its southern boundary with two disjunct tracts of the state forest, forming a connection between all three tracts. Within it run 35 miles of streams that feed into Big Coldwater Creek and Big Juniper Creek, two major tributaries of the Blackwater River. The nearest city is Milton, Florida. The property is owned by Conservation Forestry of Florida, LLC, and is managed by American Forest Management.

Most of the site (82 percent) is in various stages of intensively managed pine plantation in areas that historically supported upland pine forest and sandhills. Approximately 18 percent of the site can be readily classified into natural communities. The most prominent and those in the best condition are



wetlands that include seepage and blackwater streams, and associated bottomland forest, floodplain swamp, and baygall. A few dome swamps occur with the plantations. Upland natural communities include a few small areas of mesic flatwoods and mesic hammock. The highest elevations, 220 feet above mean sea level, occur in the northernmost portion of the project (upper Wolfe Creek), and on either side of County Road 191 in the easternmost portion. The lowest elevations, around 30 feet above sea level, are in the Coldwater Creek floodplain in the western part of the proposal. From CR 191 the terrain generally slopes downward to the east, toward Big Juniper Creek. West of the road, and from north to south, the terrain slopes downward in a southwesterly direction toward Coldwater Creek.

The project is within a large gap in conservation lands between Whiting Field, outparcels of Blackwater River State Forest, and the main tract of the Forest. The Wolfe Creek Forest tract, according to the Florida Master Site File, holds 12 archaeological sites, two of which are historic. Ten of these are prehistoric, and one of those is Wolfe Creek Mill.

### **Public Use**

The project has potential for a variety of forest related recreational activities including activities such as canoeing, bird watching, hunting, hiking, horseback riding, biking, environmental education, nature study and photography. Once the project area is acquired and assigned to the FFS, public access will be immediately provided for low intensity outdoor resource-based recreation activities such as hiking, hunting, and fishing.

### **Acquisition Planning**

On June 11, 2010, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Wolfe Creek Forest project to the Florida Forever priority list in the Critical Natural Lands category. After the most recent boundary change in 2010, the project had a combined, historic, estimated tax value of \$14,080,729.

On November 3, 2016, the DEP Bureau of Real Estate Service closed on a 626.-acre restrictive easement to protect flight operations at nearby Whiting Field. The FFS will manage the easement to restore and maintain native ecosystems.

The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2017) is \$7,968,246.

### **Coordination**

The Department of Defense (DOD) has been interested in partnering with the state for nearby lands, however, they have not expressed a specific interest in assisting in the acquisition of this tract.

Furthermore, the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) does not have interest in acquisition of this tract.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The FFS has submitted a management prospectus for this project, with the primary land management goals of restoration, maintenance and protection in perpetuity of all native ecosystems; integration of compatible human uses; and insurance of long-term viability of populations and species considered rare.



## **Management Prospectus**

### ***Qualifications for state designation***

The tract is dominated by silviculture, but many of the plantations have retained some of the understory including wiregrass, bluestem grass, gallberry and yaupon holly. With thinning, prescribed fire, and sustainable forestry management practices, the project could be quickly transformed from management for silviculture to an area managed for its ecological and recreational benefits. With the removal of offsite pine species, replanting of longleaf pines, introduction of prescribed fire, and sustainable forestry management practices, this project could be restored to a more natural state. The project's size and diversity make it desirable for use and management as a state forest.

### ***Manager***

The FFS is recommended as manager of the project.

### ***Conditions affecting intensity of management***

Much of the project's upland pine and sandhill areas have been altered by silvicultural operations and will require restoration efforts. Areas where timber species are off-site species will necessitate removal as well as the restoration of native ground covers and canopy. Biotic surveys would be important to accomplish during the early part of plan development and implementation, because several rare or listed species are expected to occur in the project. Development of facilities, as on all conservation lands, would be kept to a level necessary to assure a high-quality experience, and any such development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance. Restoration efforts will focus on introduction of prescribed fire, removal of offsite pine species, exotic species treatment, facilitating the restoration of native groundcovers, and possibly wetland restoration. The level of management intensity and related management costs is expected to be moderate to high initially to obtain the necessary information and resources to restore and manage this system as a State Forest. Once this information is obtained and the resources are available, long-term management costs are expected to be moderate to maintain this area as a State Forest.

### ***Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure***

Once the project area is acquired and assigned to the FFS, public access will be immediately provided for low intensity outdoor resource-based recreation activities such as hiking, hunting and fishing. The FFS proposes to manage the site as a State Forest and will carry out management activities and coordinate public access and use. Initial and intermediate management efforts will concentrate on resource inventory, restoration and reforestation of areas where harvesting has occurred, providing site security, and assessing public and fire management access. Inventories of the site's natural resources, threatened and endangered flora and fauna, will be conducted to provide a basis for the formulation of a management plan. The roads throughout the property necessitate the development of a road plan to identify those roads to be utilized for vehicular access by the public, those roads that are required for administrative use, and roads that are determined to be unnecessary for management or access should be closed. Steps will be taken to ensure that the public is provided appropriate access while simultaneously



affording protection of sensitive resources. Prior to collection of necessary resource information, management proposals for this project are conceptual in nature. Long-range plans for this property will be directed toward the restoration of disturbed areas, maintenance of natural communities, and responsible public access. To the greatest extent practical, disturbed sites will be restored to conditions that would be expected to occur in naturally functioning ecosystems. Off-site species will eventually be replaced with species that would be expected to occur naturally on those specific sites. Very little of this project area has been burned by prescribed fire in recent years. Burning goals for this project will be to eventually establish an all-season prescribed burning program on all of the fire dependent community types. Whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks will be utilized to contain, and control prescribed and natural fires. Timber management activities will primarily consist of re-introducing longleaf pines, restoration harvests and improvement cuts aimed at restoring and perpetuating native ground covers. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age but will be managed to maintain a broad diversity of age classes ranging from young stands to areas with old growth characteristics. This will provide habitat for the full spectrum of species that would be found in the natural environment and enhance and maintain biodiversity. The resource inventory will be used to identify sensitive areas that need special attention, protection or management, and to identify areas that are appropriate for responsible recreational or administrative facilities. Recreation and administrative infrastructure development will be primarily located in disturbed areas and will be at a minimum required to allow suitable public access, provide facilities for public use, and to administer and manage the property. The FFS will promote recreation and environmental education in the natural environment. It is anticipated that interpretive and user services recreation facilities will be developed and the use of low impact, rustic facilities will be stressed. High impact organized recreation areas are not planned due to possible adverse effects on the natural environment. Unnecessary roads, fire lines and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned and/or restored to the greatest extent practical.

Please note that capital project expenditures are needed on this tract for prescribed fire, vegetative and hydrologic restoration, improved public access/use, and facilities, both public and administrative. It is anticipated that some of the existing roads and trails may be used as multi-use trails for hiking, horseback riding and biking. This management prospectus is not intended to be an application for capital project funding; however, as more information is gathered, and an analysis of the site is completed, the FFS intends to apply for capital project funds.

### ***Revenue-generating potential***

Timber sales will be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in planted pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue dependent upon a variety of factors. Due to the existing condition and volume of the timber resources on the property, revenue generating potential of this project is expected to be moderately high.

### ***Cooperators in management activities***

The FFS will cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate.



Wolfe Creek Forest Table 1

Project-at-a-Glance	Data
Placed on List	2010
Project Area (GIS acres)	10,067
Acres Acquired (GIS)	634
at a Cost of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	9,433

Wolfe Creek Forest Table 2

Wolfe Creek Forest FNAI Elements	Score
Florida Black Bear	G5T4/S4
hairy-peduncled beaksedge	G2G3/S2
Southeastern Weasel	G5T4/S3?
Spiny Softshell	G5/S3
Little Blue Heron	G5/S4

*There are 8 rare species associated with the project.*

Wolfe Creek Forest Table 3

Management Cost Summary: FFS	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	not provided
Salary (4 FTE)	\$132,141	not provided
Expense	\$315,000	not provided
OCO	\$188,600	not provided
Total	\$635,741	not provided

[Map\(s\): Wolfe Creek Forest](#)



## *2019 Florida Forever Five-Year Plan*



### *Project Site Map Atlas*

**Division of State Lands  
Florida Department of Environmental Protection**



*May 2019*





## ***Atlas Introduction***

This a collection of maps for each of the projects described in this report. Key attributes are shown as provided by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory - FNAI.

Additionally, at the time of the publication, internet links to interactive maps of Florida Forever Acquisitions and Florida Forever State Board of Trustee Projects are available through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's internet site\*.

### *Florida Forever Acquisitions*

*FNAI maintains a database specific to lands acquired through the State's Florida Forever Program, which began in 2001. The Florida Forever Acquisitions data layer contains parcel-specific information pertaining to lands purchased with Florida Forever funding. It currently includes parcels acquired by all of the programs that receive Florida Forever monies. Most of the Florida Forever parcels are also incorporated into the Florida Conservation Lands data layer, either as new managed areas (i.e., conservation lands) or additions to existing managed areas.*

*Funding for this dataset is provided by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.*

### *Florida Forever Board of Trustee Projects*

*FNAI maintains the boundaries of all current Florida Forever environmental land acquisition projects approved by the State's Acquisition and Restoration Council and administered by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of State Lands, for the State Board of Trustees (BOT). These lands have been proposed for acquisition because of outstanding natural resources, opportunity for natural resource-based recreation, or historical and archaeological resources. This map does not include Florida Forever projects administered by the water management districts or by other state agencies. Note that boundaries of each Florida Forever BOT project are for the entire project, including areas that have already been acquired. The FFBOT data are updated approximately every two to four months.*

*Funding for this dataset is provided by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.*

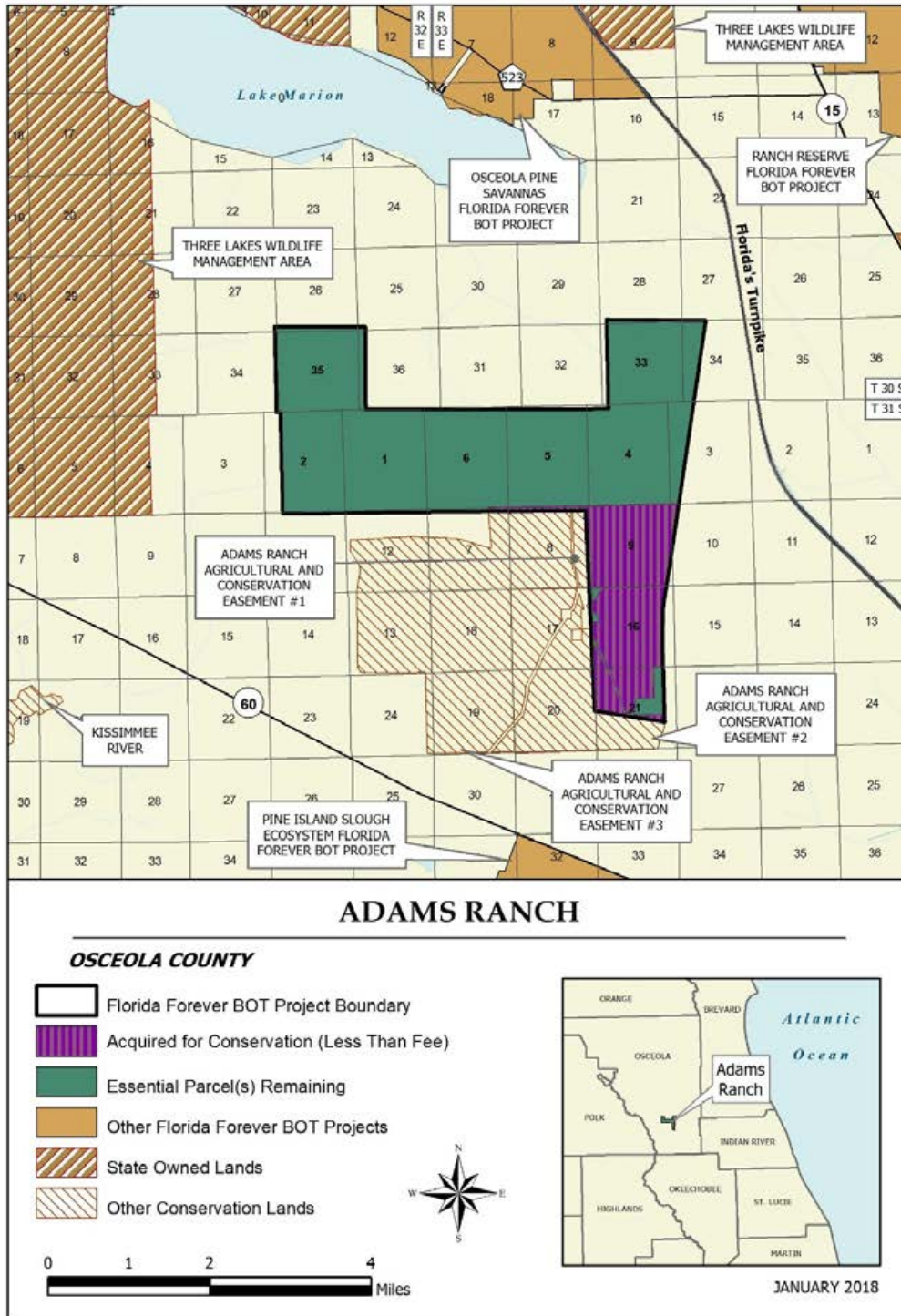
If additional assistance is needed with this content please contact the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of State Lands, Office of Environmental Services representative by telephone at 850-245-2555.

\*Source: [Florida Natural Areas Inventory](#)



### Map(s): Adams Ranch

#### Adams Ranch



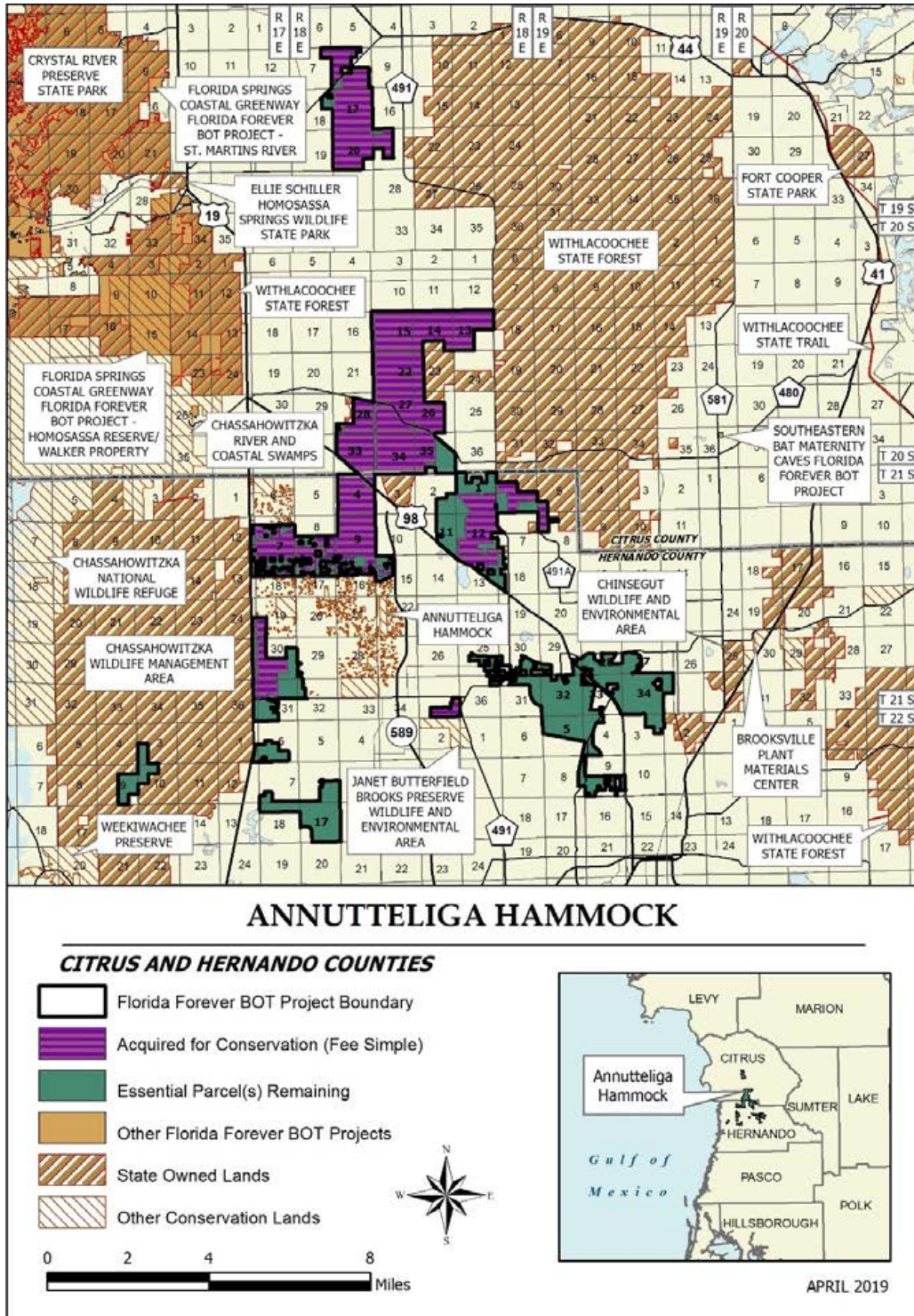
Map 1





### Map(s): Annutteliga Hammock

#### Annutteliga Hammock

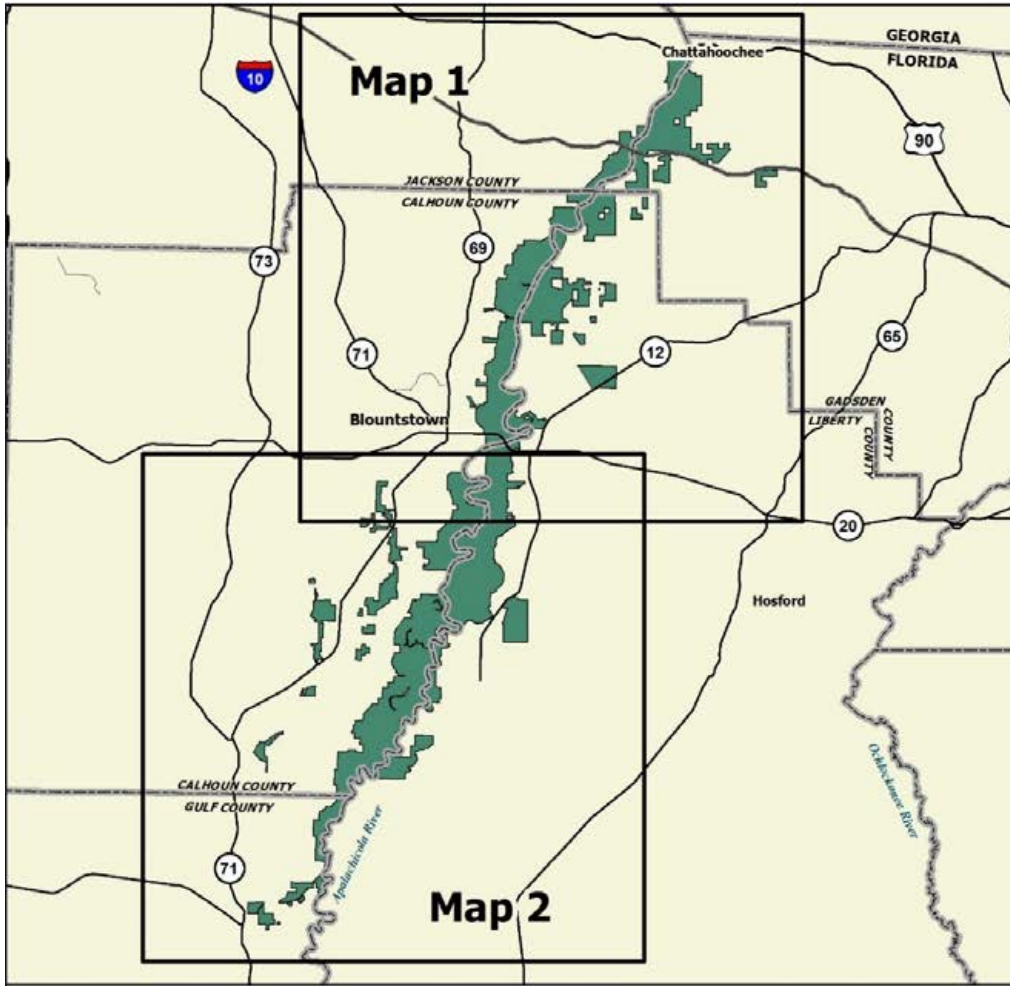


Map 2



### Map(s): Apalachicola River

#### Apalachicola River



### APALACHICOLA RIVER: OVERVIEW

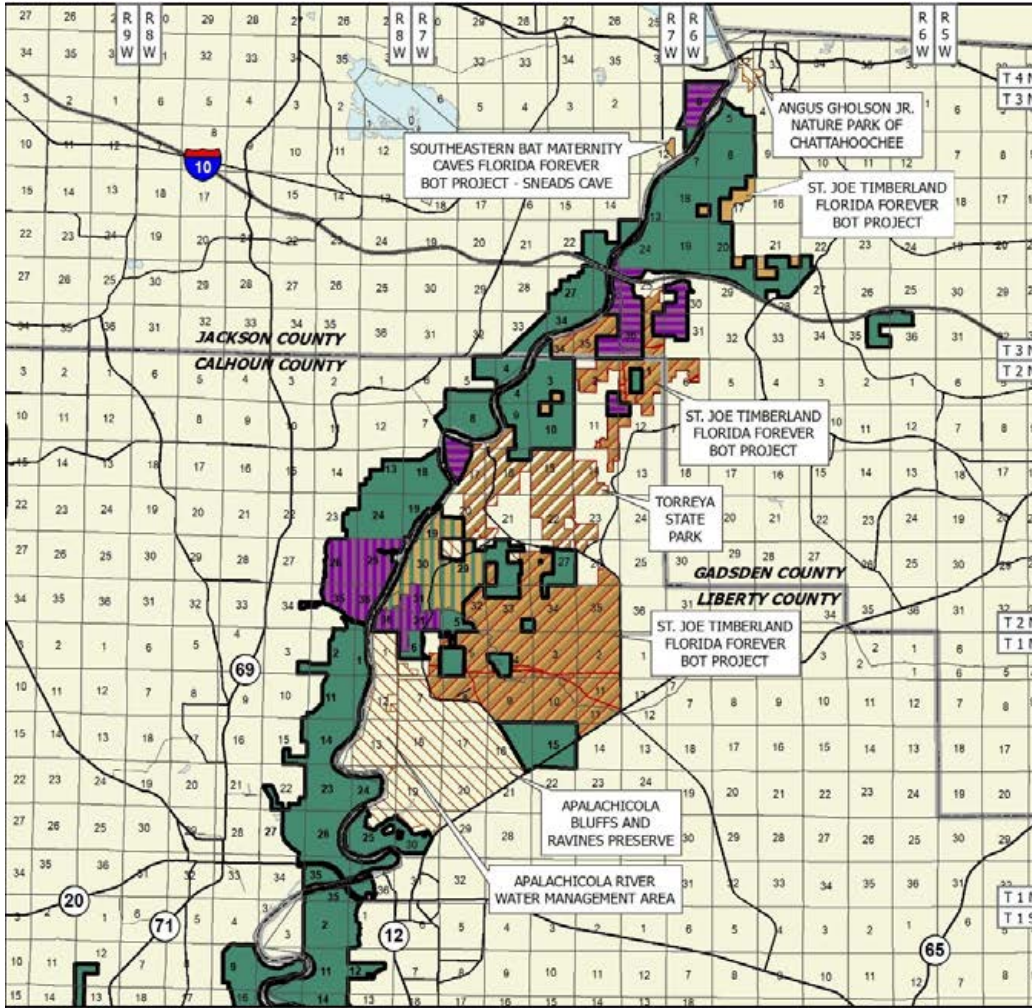
#### **JACKSON, GADSDEN, LIBERTY, CALHOUN, AND GULF COUNTIES**



JANUARY 2018

Map 3





### APALACHICOLA RIVER: MAP 1 OF 2

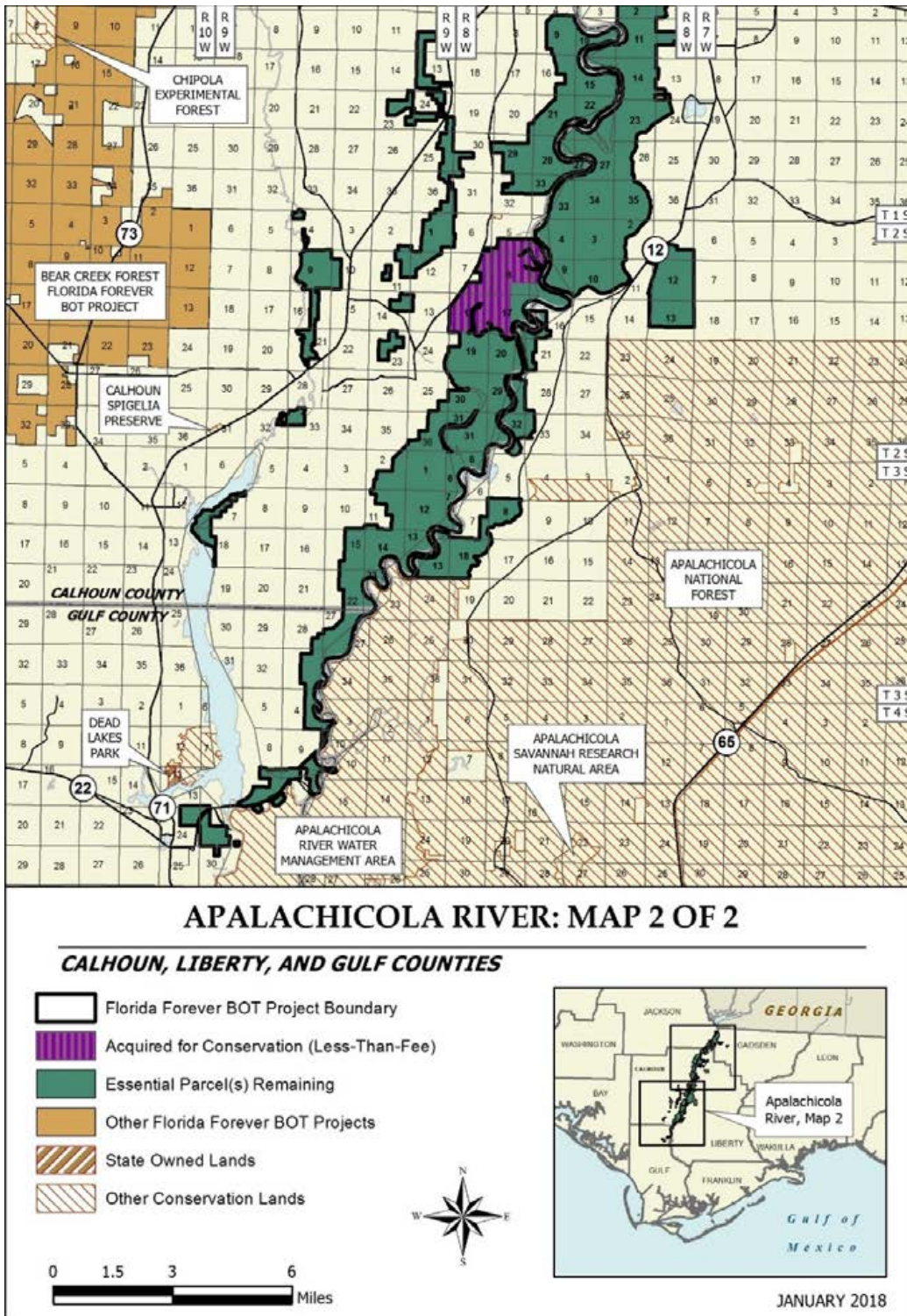
#### JACKSON, GADSDEN, CALHOUN, AND LIBERTY COUNTIES

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Acquired for Conservation (Less-Than-Fee)
- TNC Owned Lands Within the Project
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



APRIL 2019

Map 4



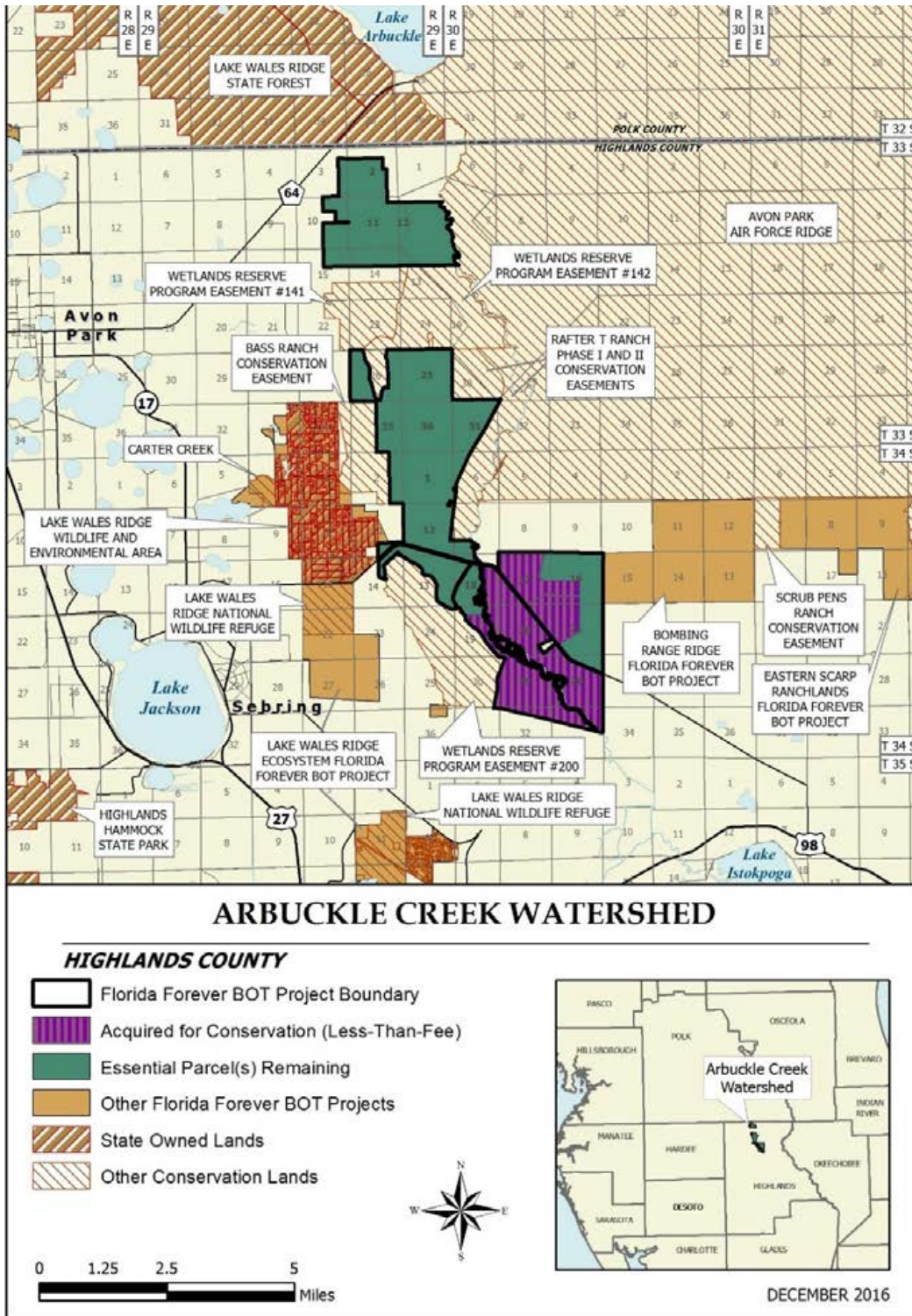
Map 5





### Map(s): Arbuckle Creek Watershed

#### Arbuckle Creek Watershed



Map 6



### Map(s): Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge

#### Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge



### ARCHIE CARR SEA TURTLE REFUGE: OVERVIEW

#### **BREVARD AND INDIAN RIVER COUNTIES**

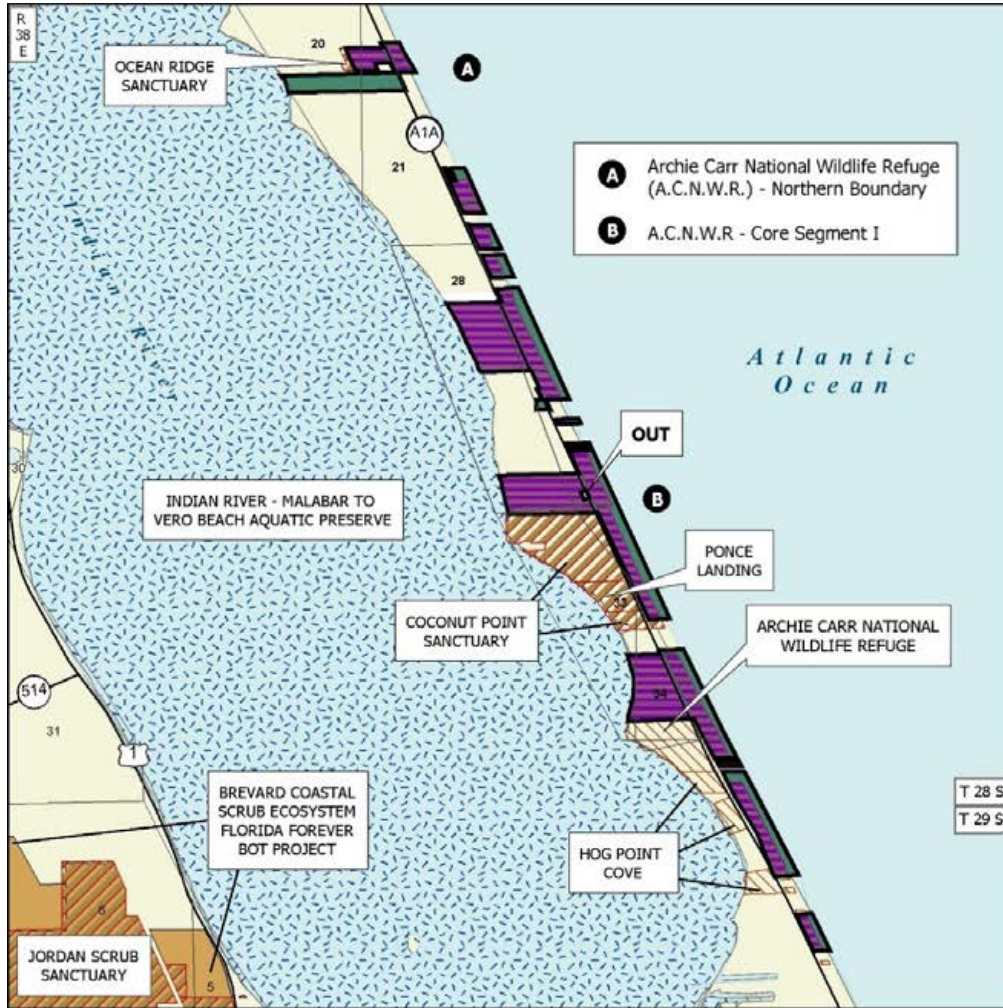
- Map 1:**
  - A. Archie Carr N.W.R. - Northern Boundary
  - B. Archie Carr N.W.R. - Core Segment I
- Map 2:**
  - A. Archie Carr N.W.R. - Core Segment II
- Map 3:**
  - A. Archie Carr N.W.R. - Core Segment III
- Map 4:**
  - A. Archie Carr N.W.R. - Core Segment IV, Southern Boundary
- Map 5:**
  - A. Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge



AUGUST 2010

Map 7





### ARCHIE CARR SEA TURTLE REFUGE: MAP 1 OF 5

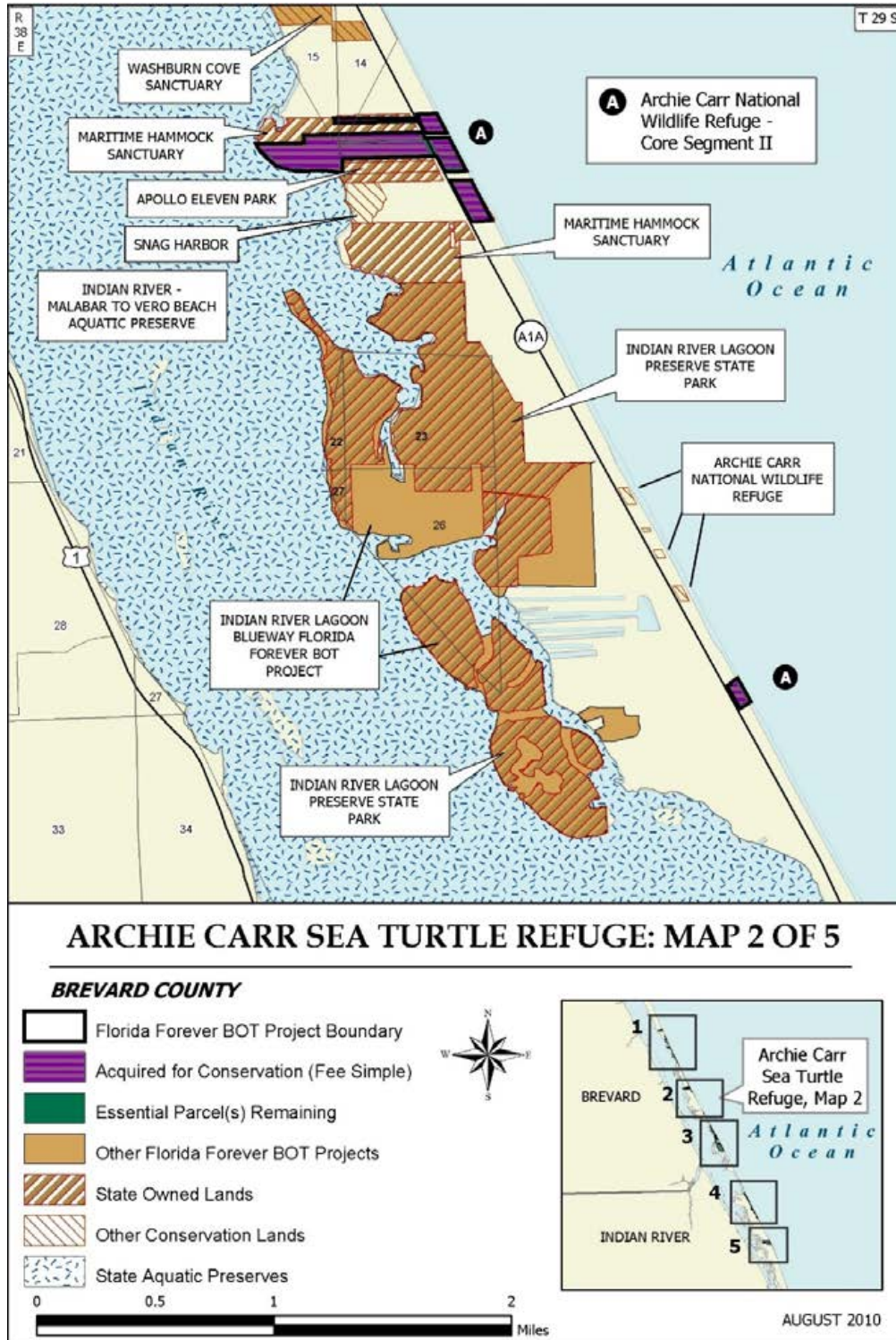
**BREVARD COUNTY**

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands
- State Aquatic Preserves



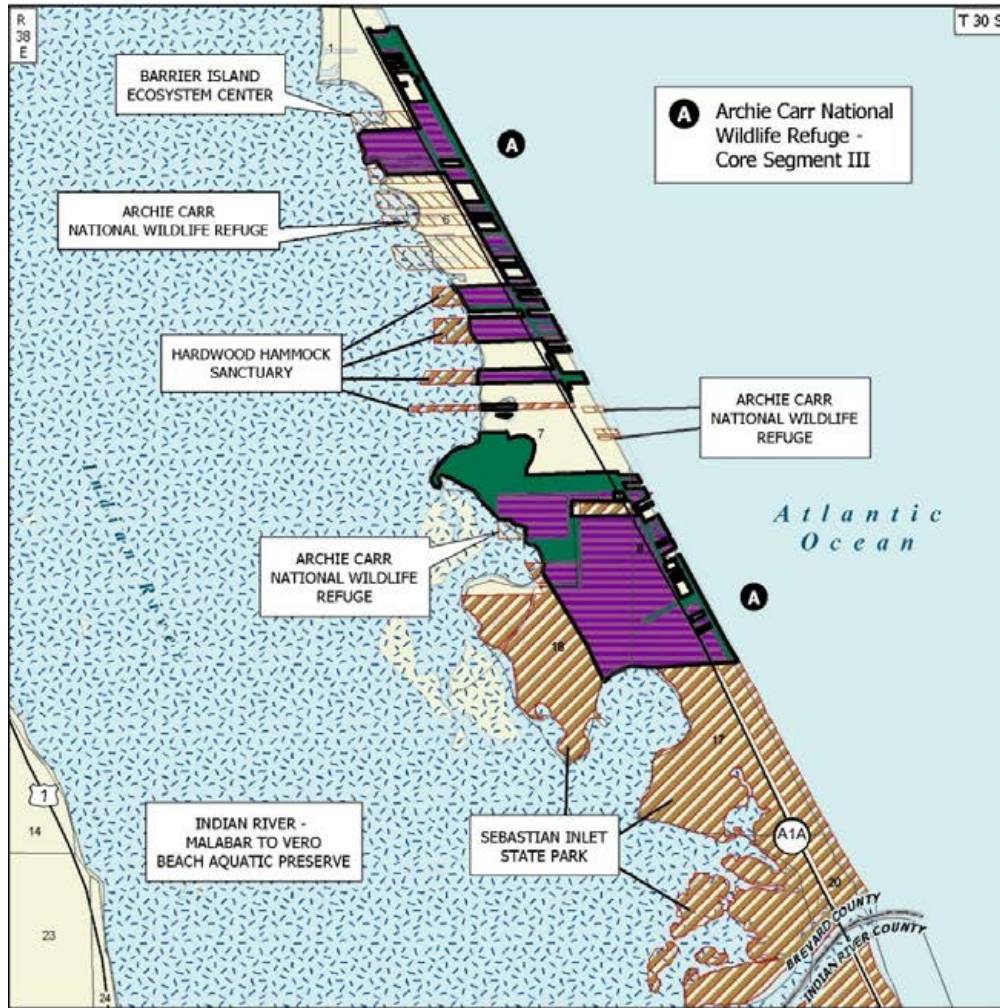
AUGUST 2010

Map 8



Map 9





### ARCHIE CARR SEA TURTLE REFUGE: MAP 3 OF 5

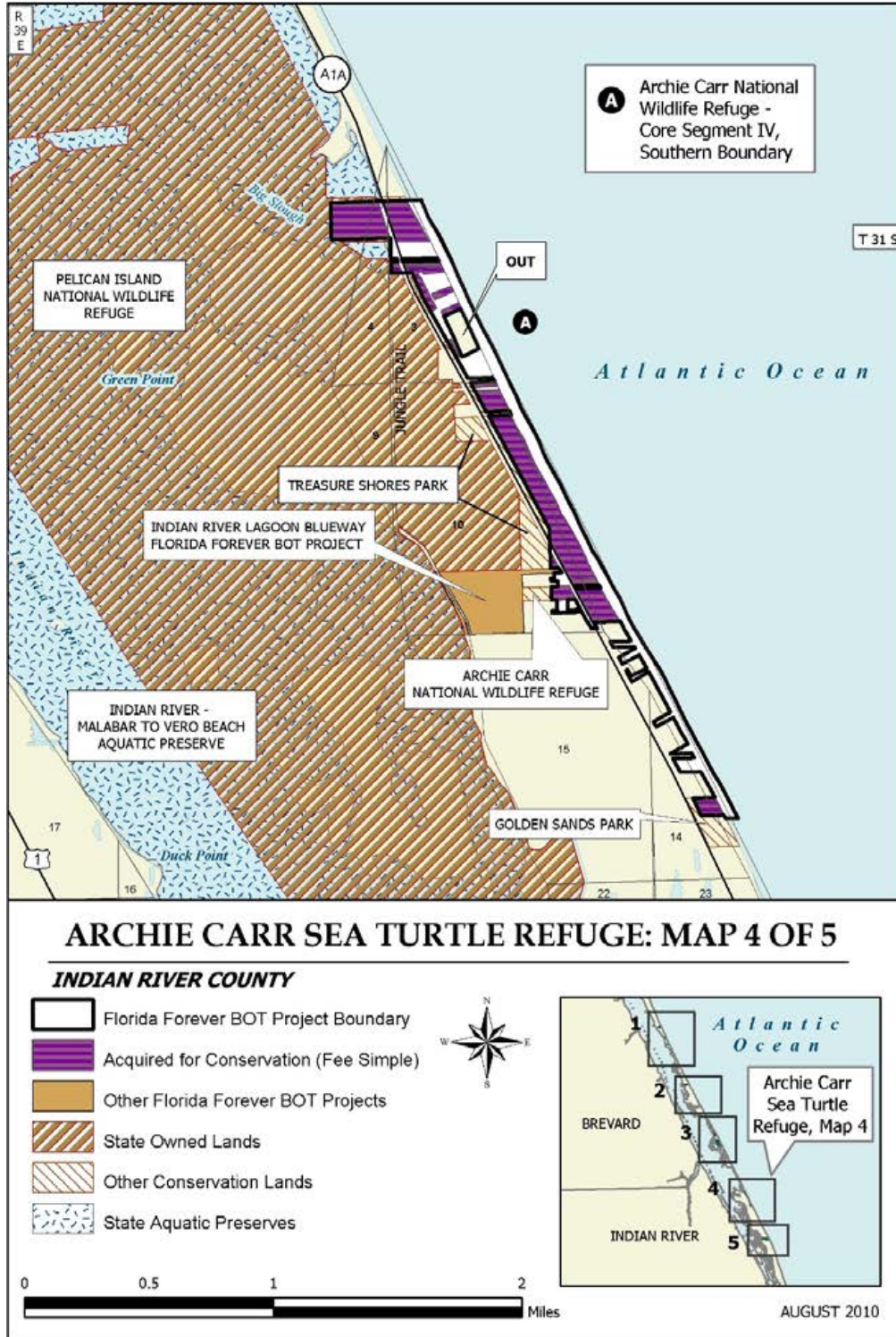
#### BREVARD COUNTY

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands
- State Aquatic Preserves



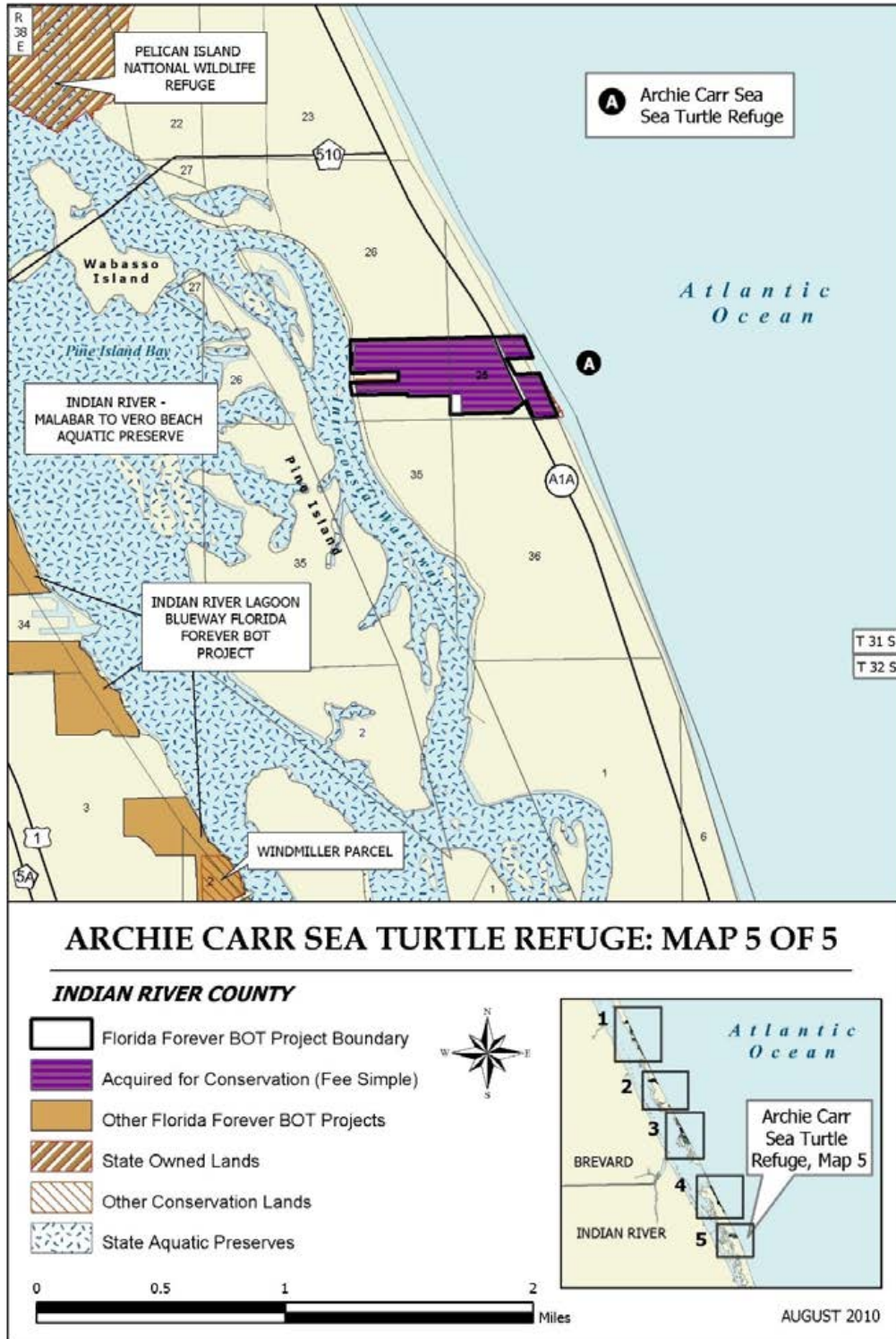
AUGUST 2010

Map 10



Map 11



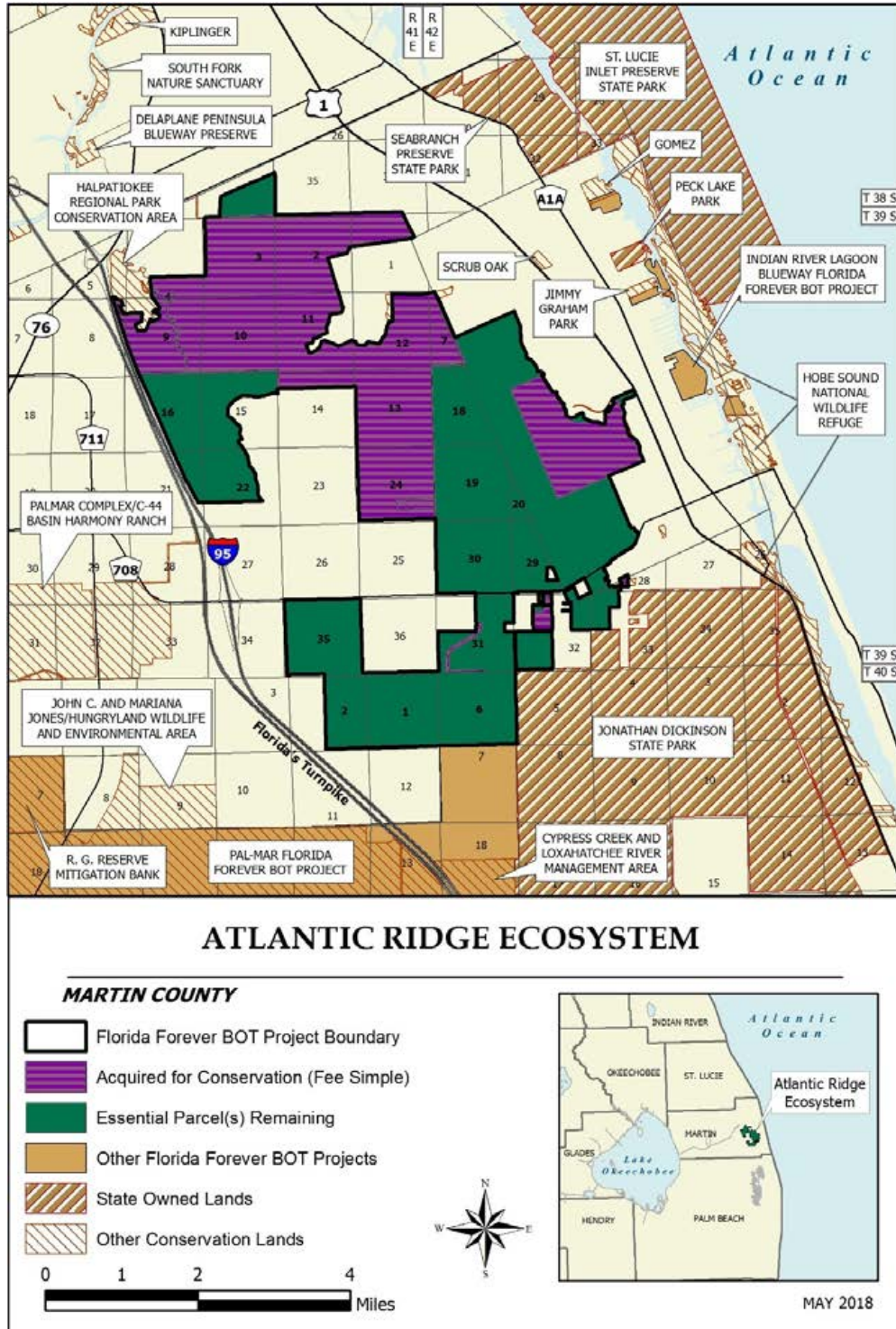


Map 12



### Map(s): Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem

#### Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem



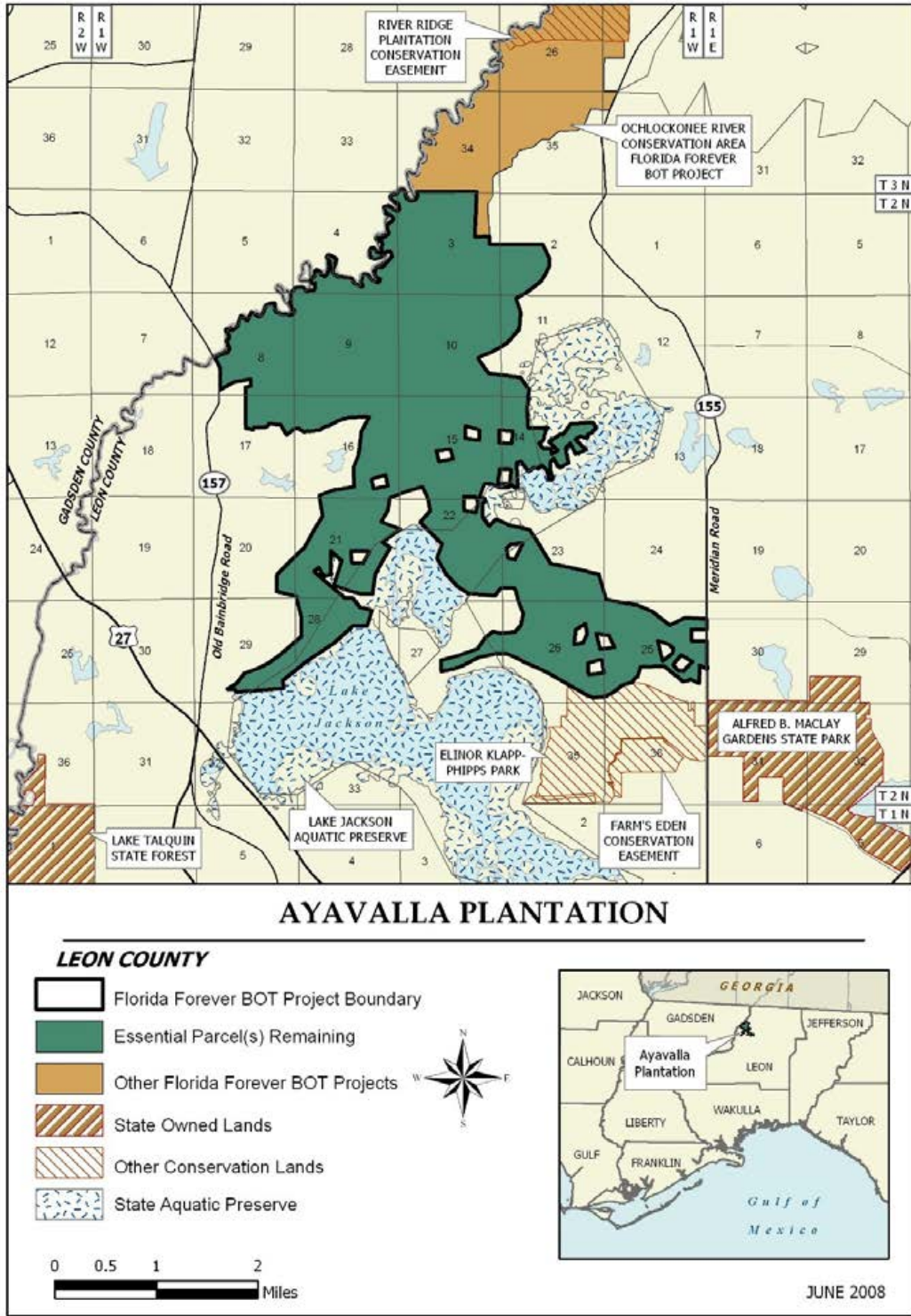
Map 13





### Map(s): Ayavalla Plantation

#### Ayavalla Plantation

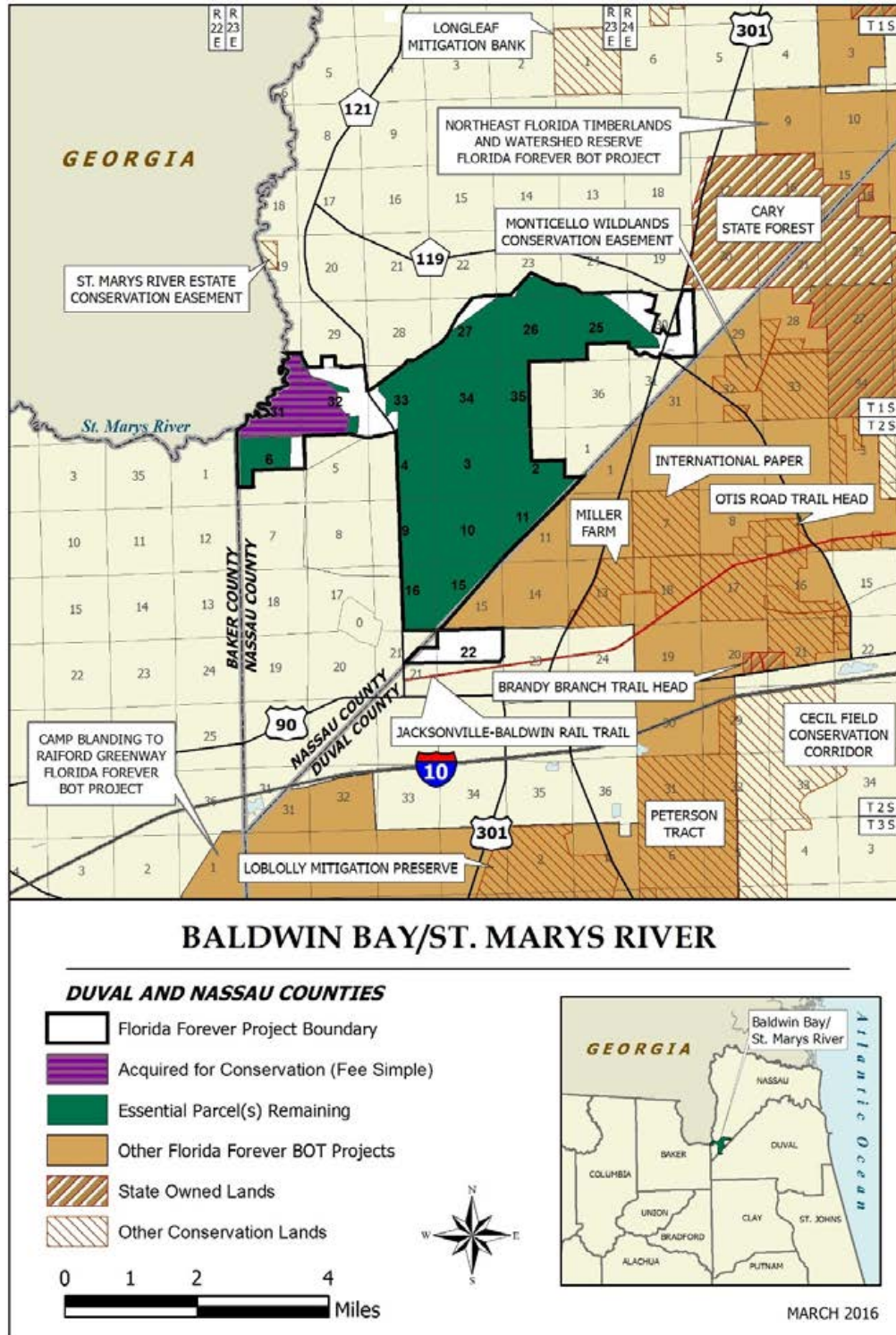


Map 14



### Map(s): Baldwin Bay / St. Marys River

#### Baldwin Bay / St. Marys River



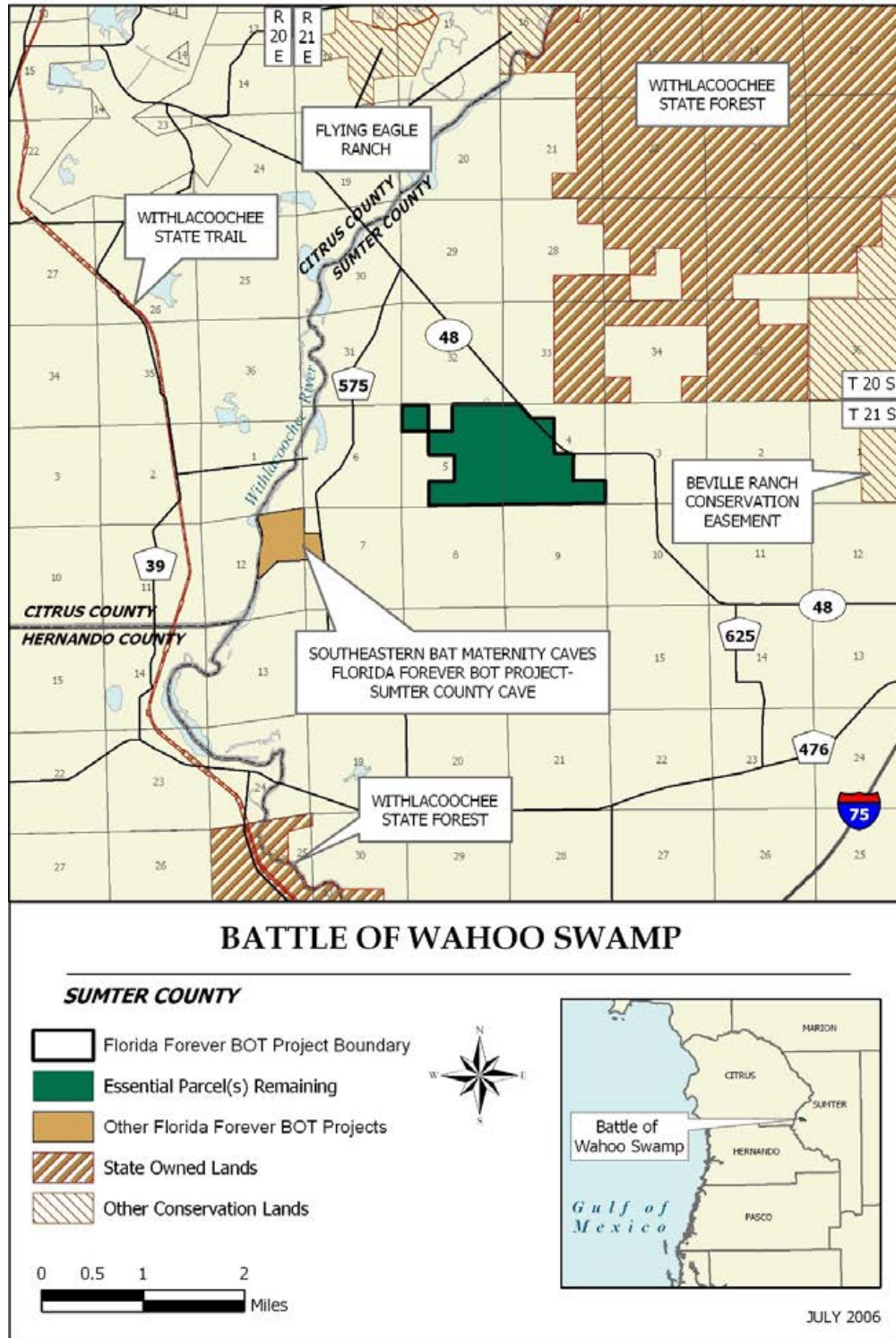
Map 15





### Map(s): Battle of Wahoo Swamp

#### Battle of Wahoo Swamp

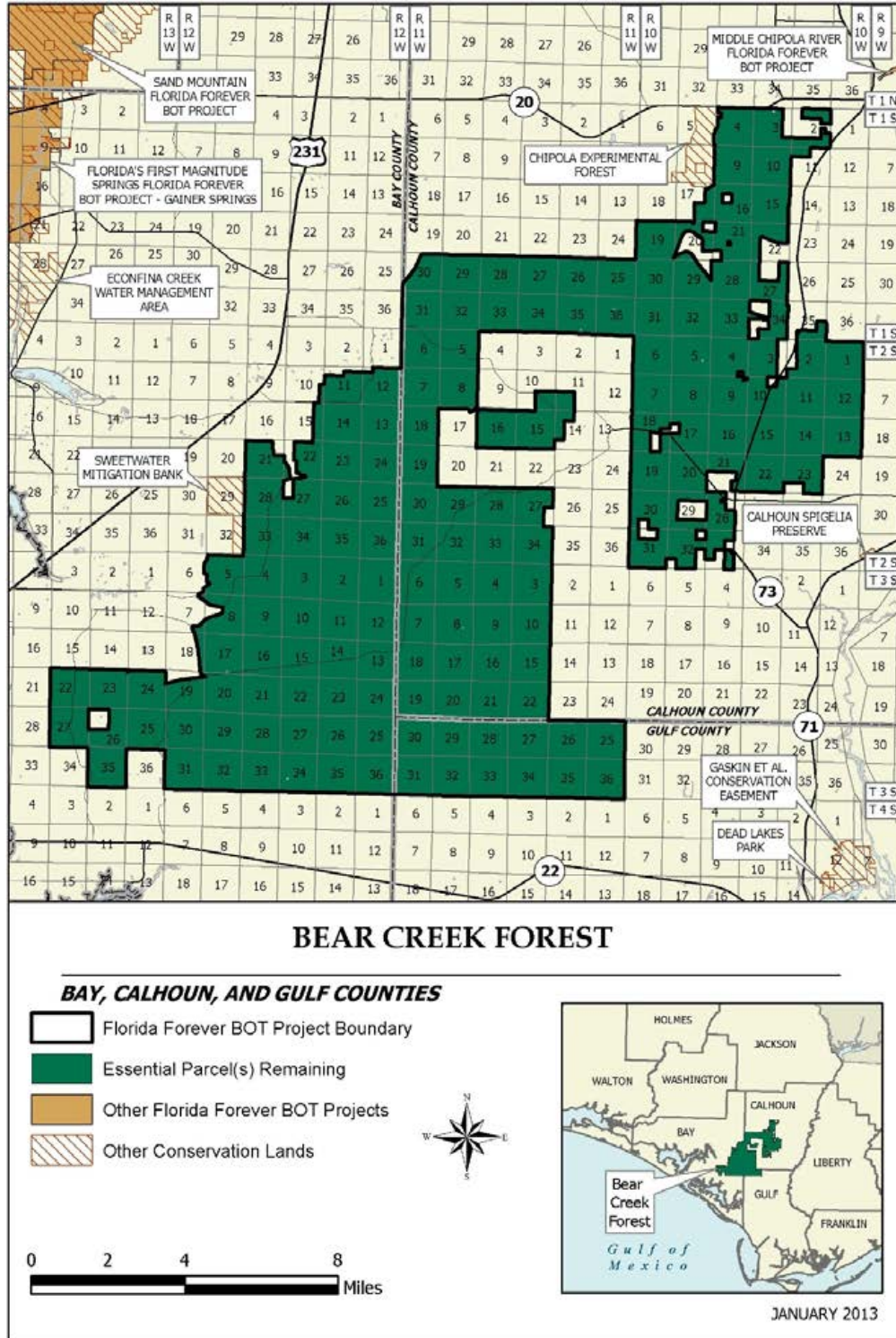


Map 16



### Map(s): Bear Creek Forest

#### Bear Creek Forest



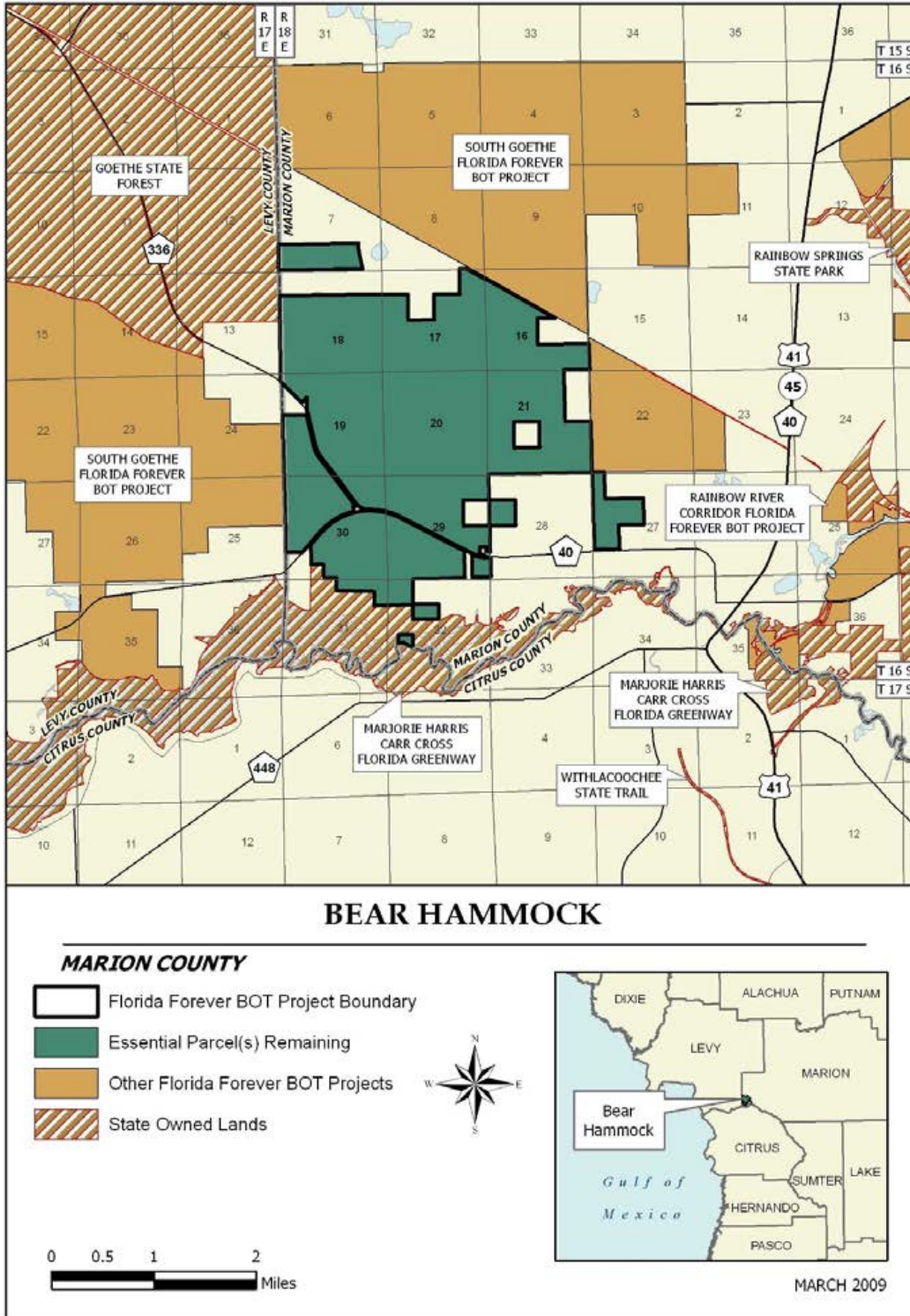
Map 17





### Map(s): Bear Hammock

#### Bear Hammock

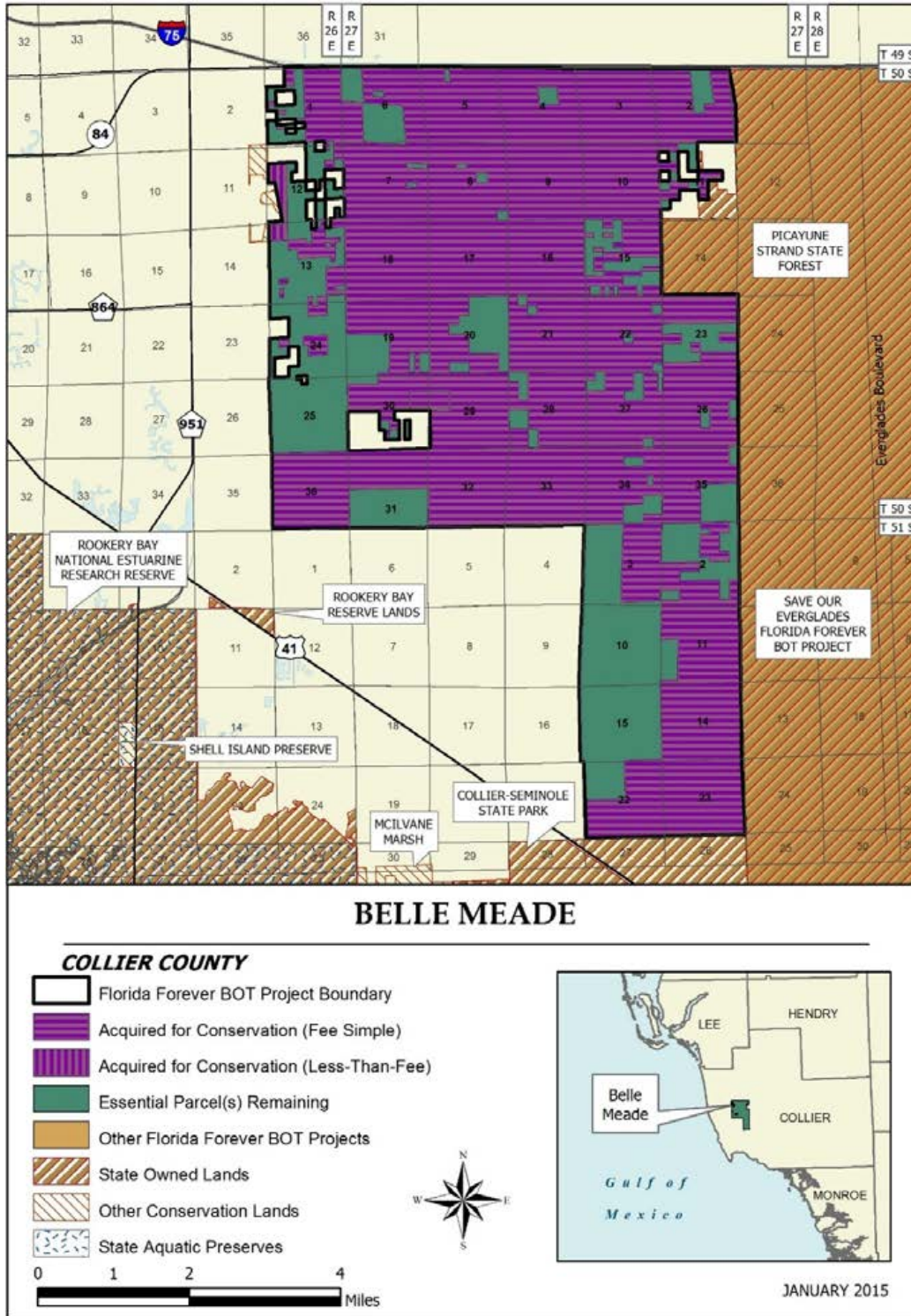


Map 18



### Map(s): Belle Meade

#### Belle Meade



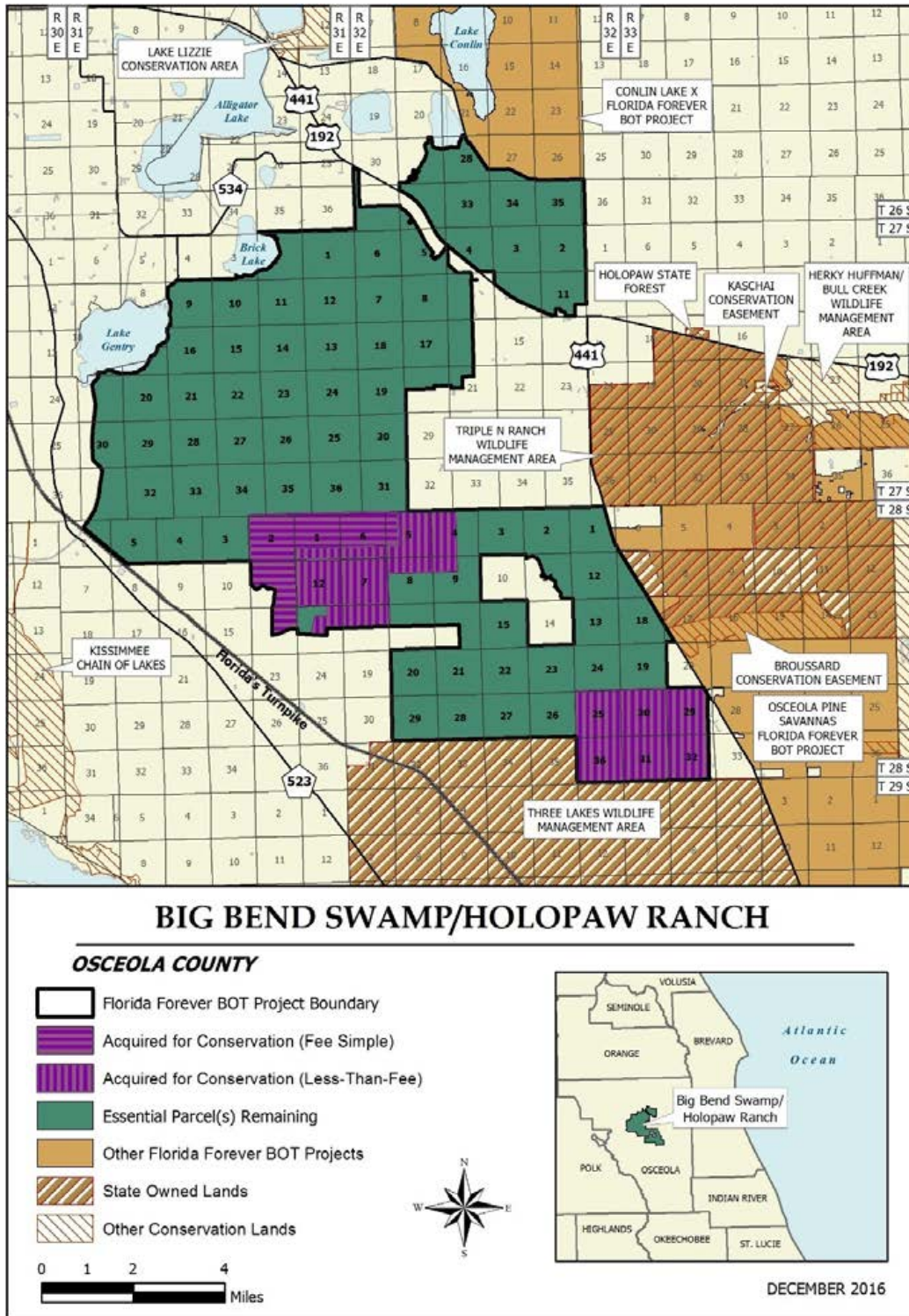
Map 19





### Map(s): Big Bend Swamp / Holopaw Ranch

#### Big Bend Swamp / Holopaw Ranch



Map 20

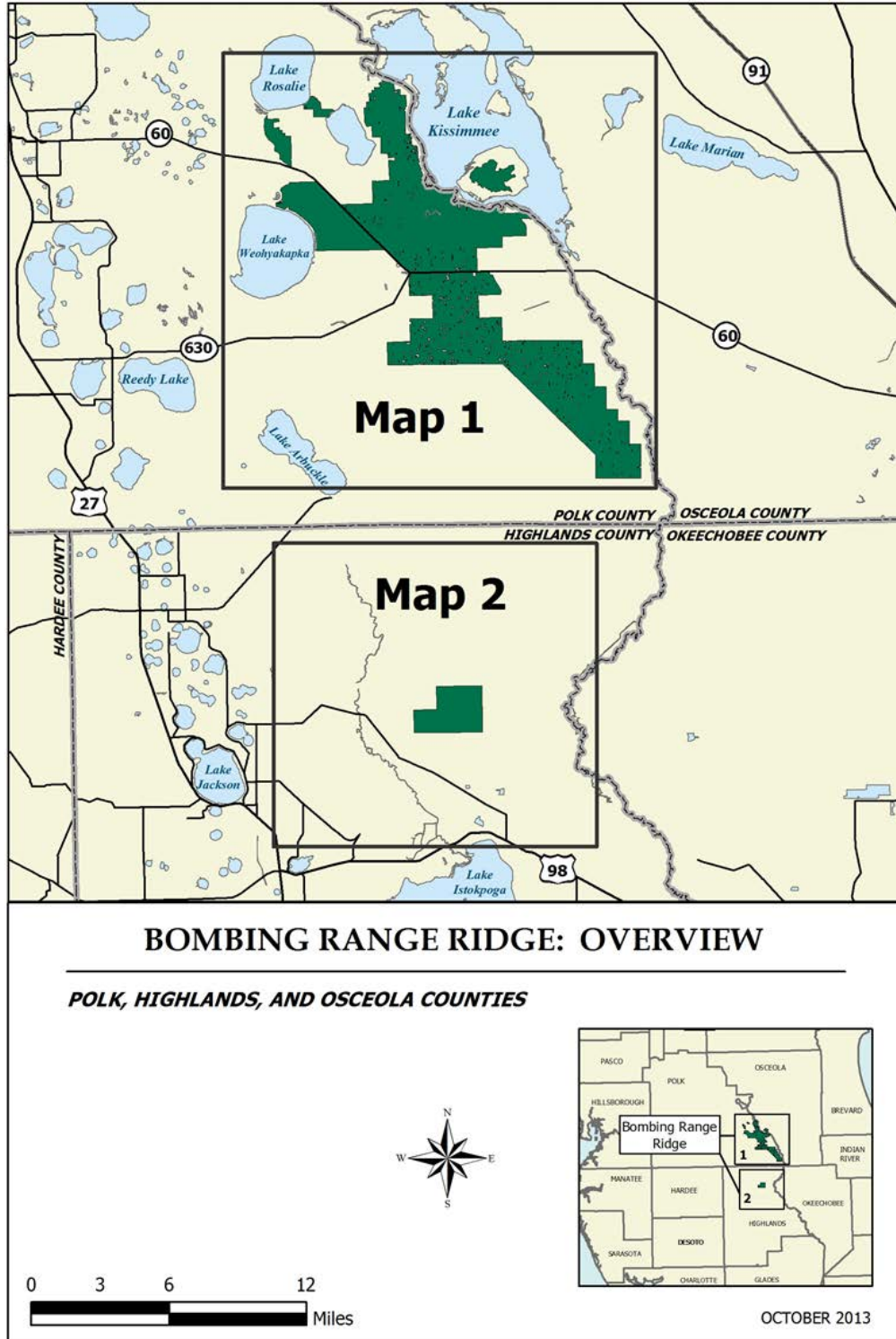




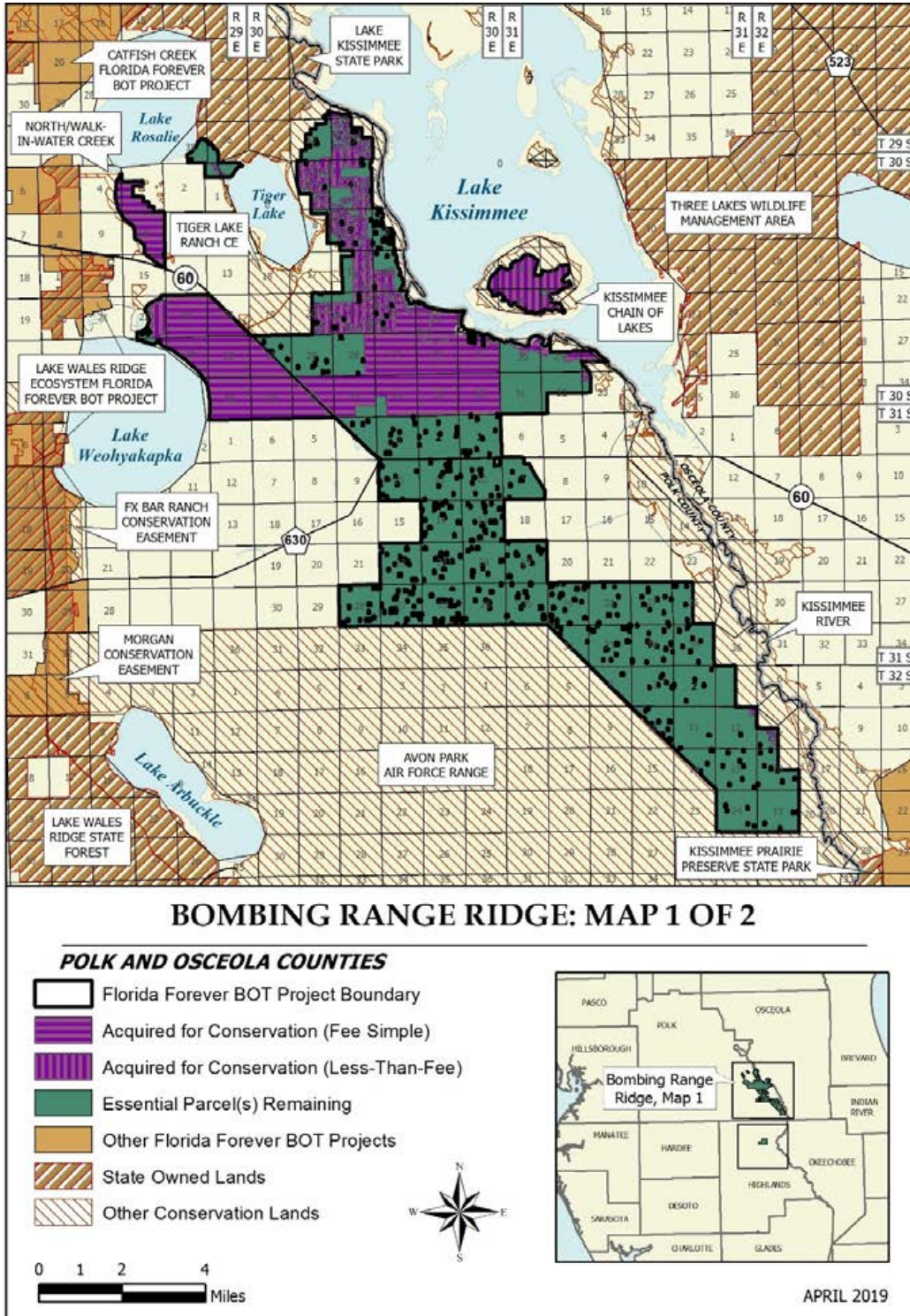


### Map(s): Bombing Range Ridge

#### Bombing Range Ridge

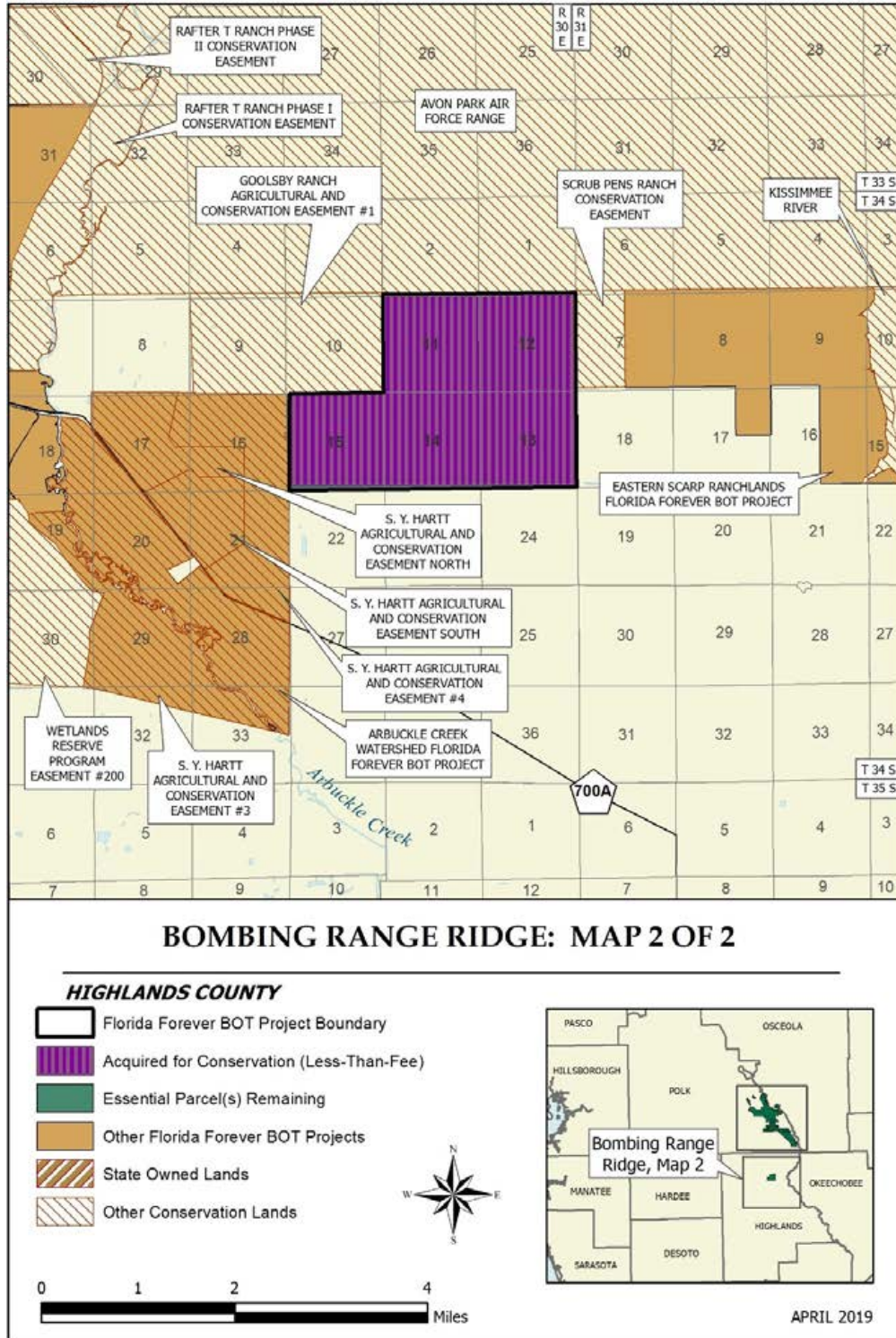


Map 22



Map 23



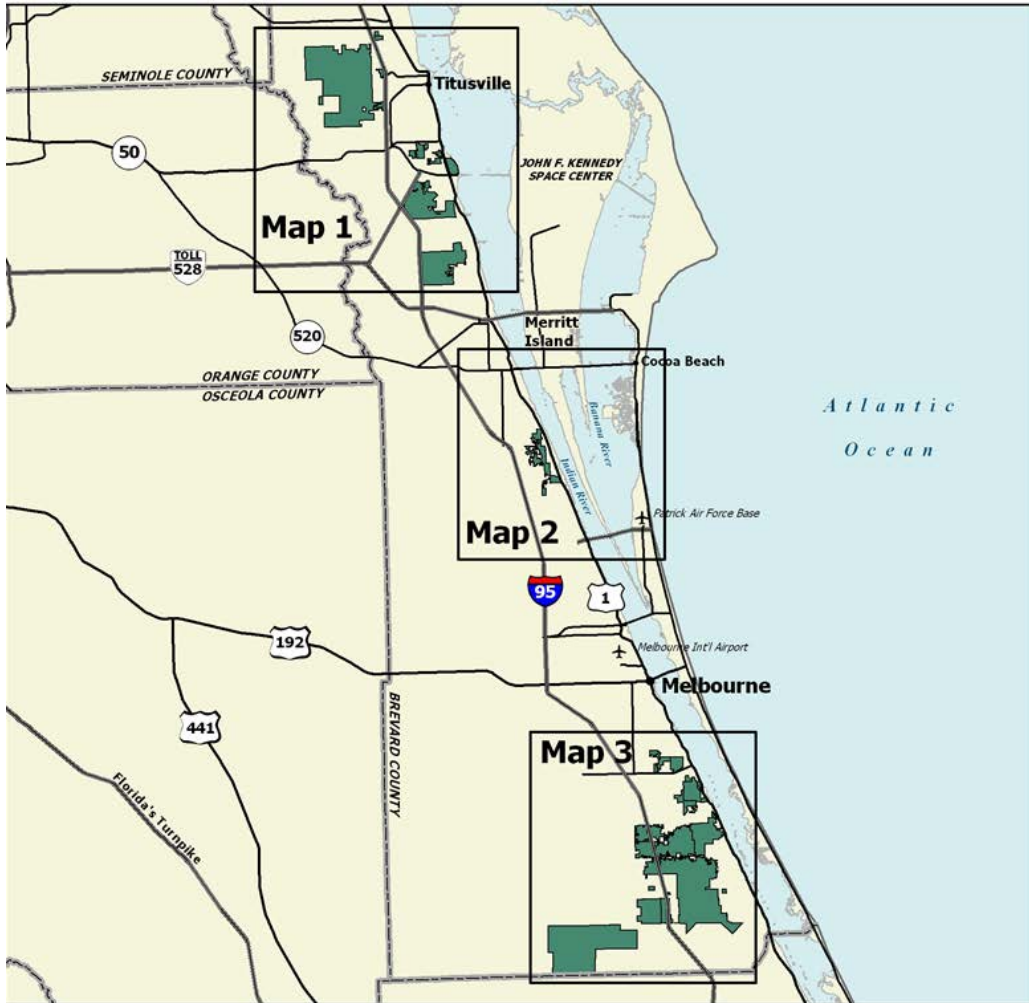


Map 24



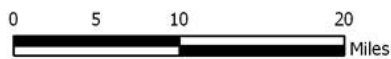
### Map(s): Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem

#### Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem



### BREVARD COASTAL SCRUB ECOSYSTEM: OVERVIEW

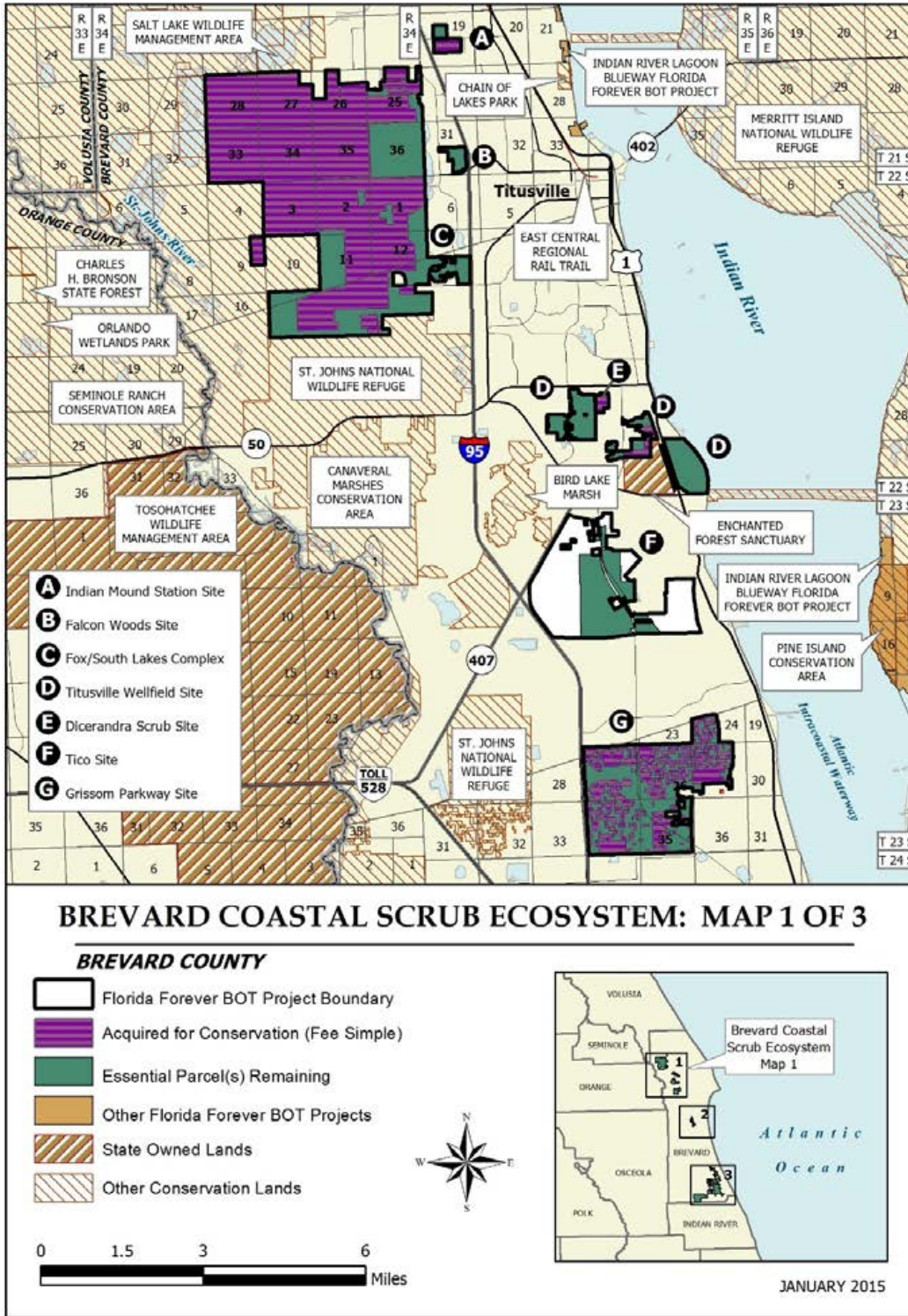
#### ***BREVARD COUNTY***



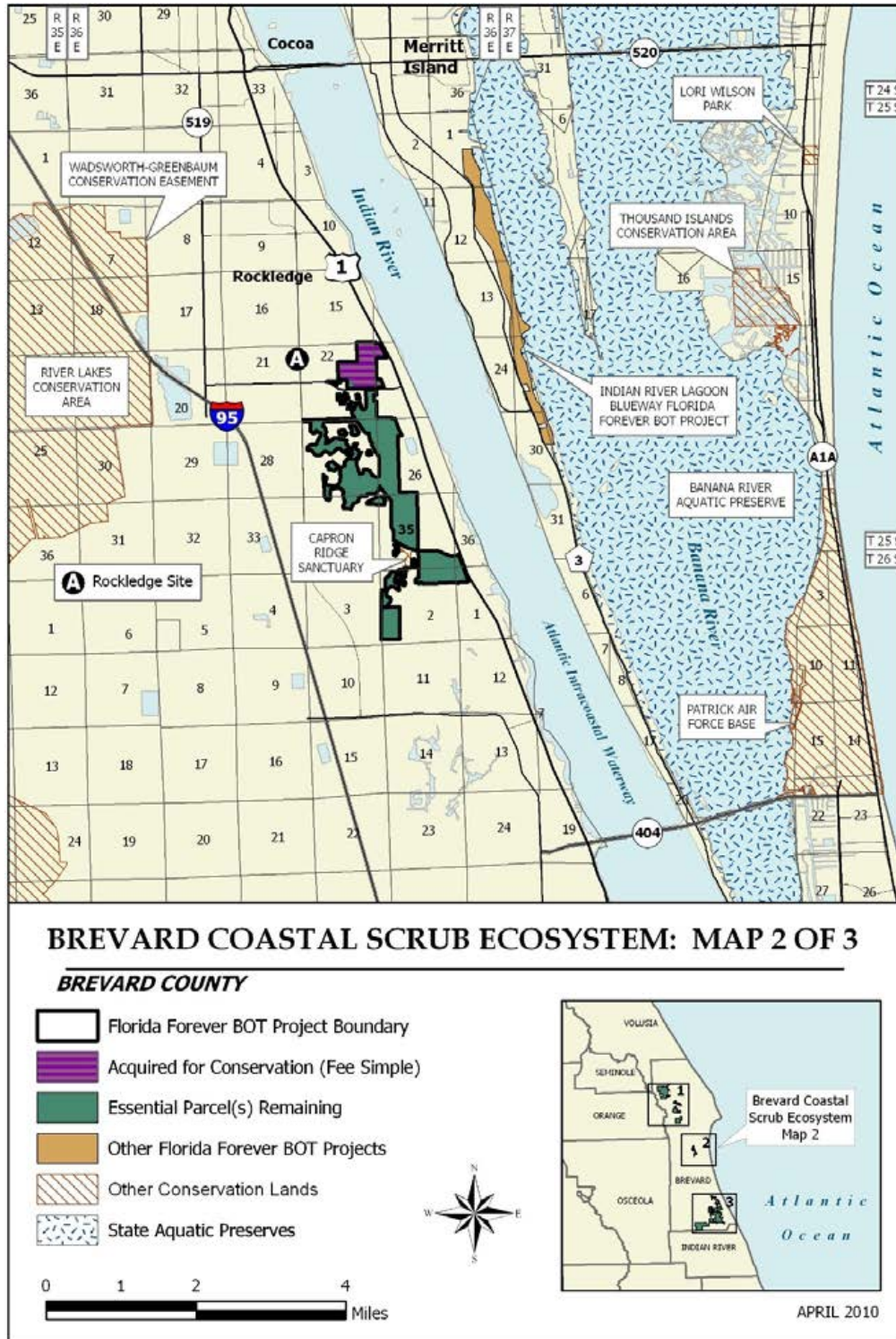
MAY 2010

Map 25



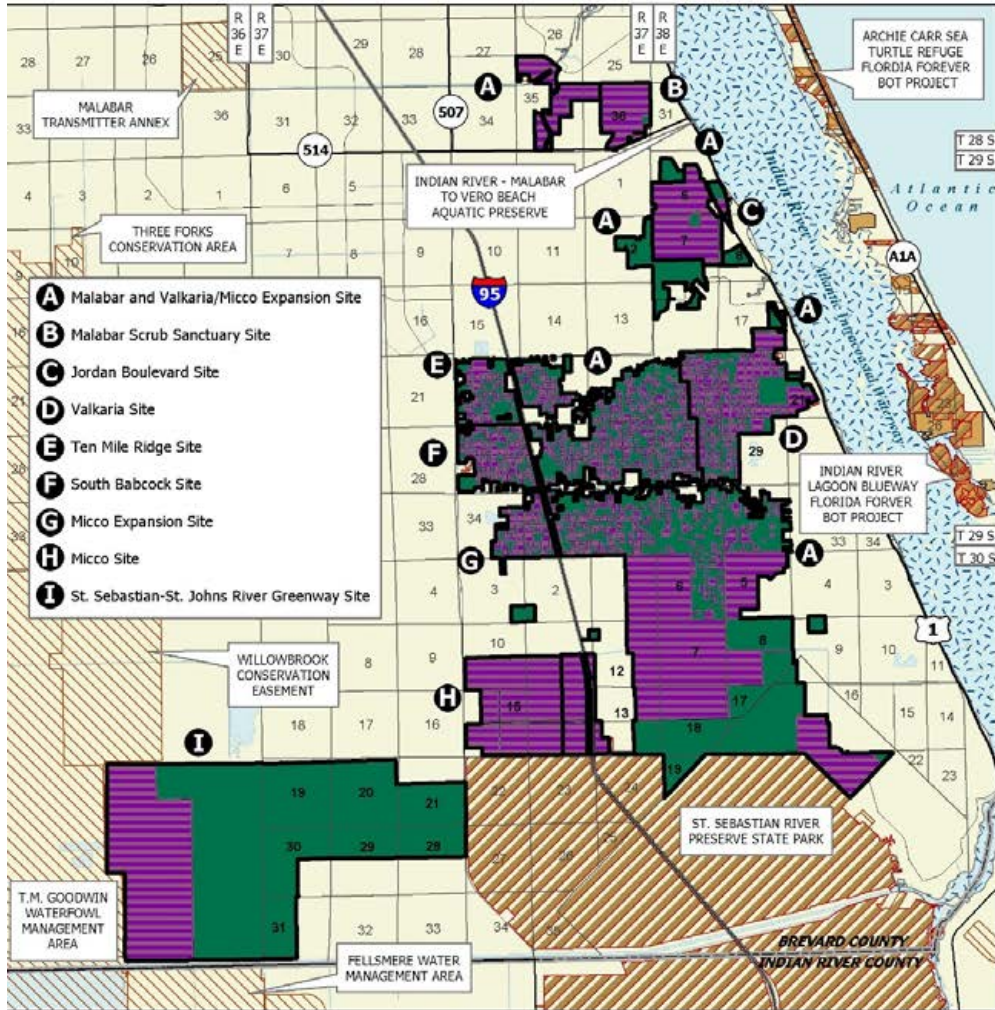


Map 26



Map 27





**BREVARD COASTAL SCRUB ECOSYSTEM: MAP 3 OF 3**

**BREVARD COUNTY**

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands
- State Aquatic Preserves



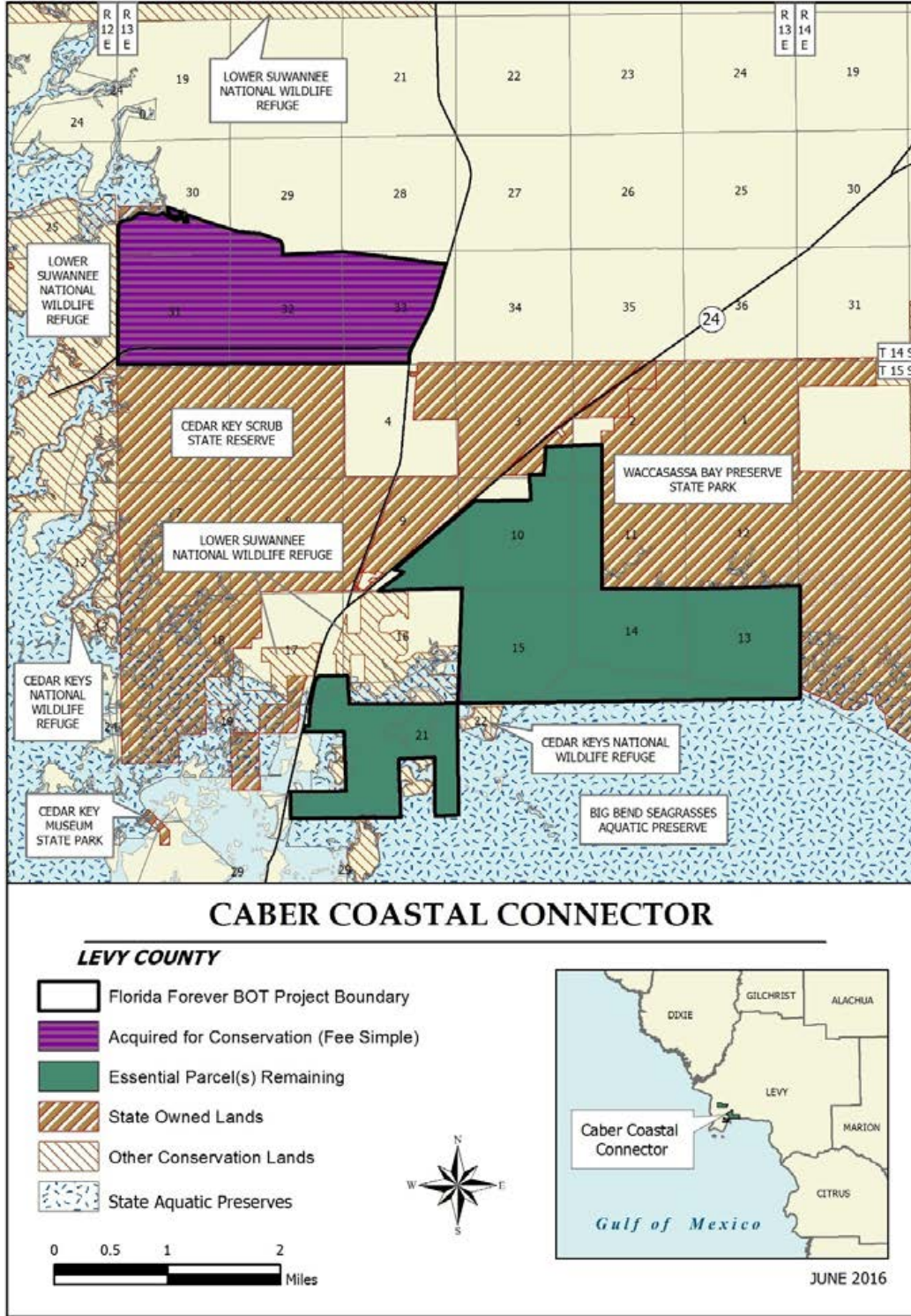
APRIL 2013

Map 28



### Map(s): Caber Coastal Connector

#### Caber Coastal Connector



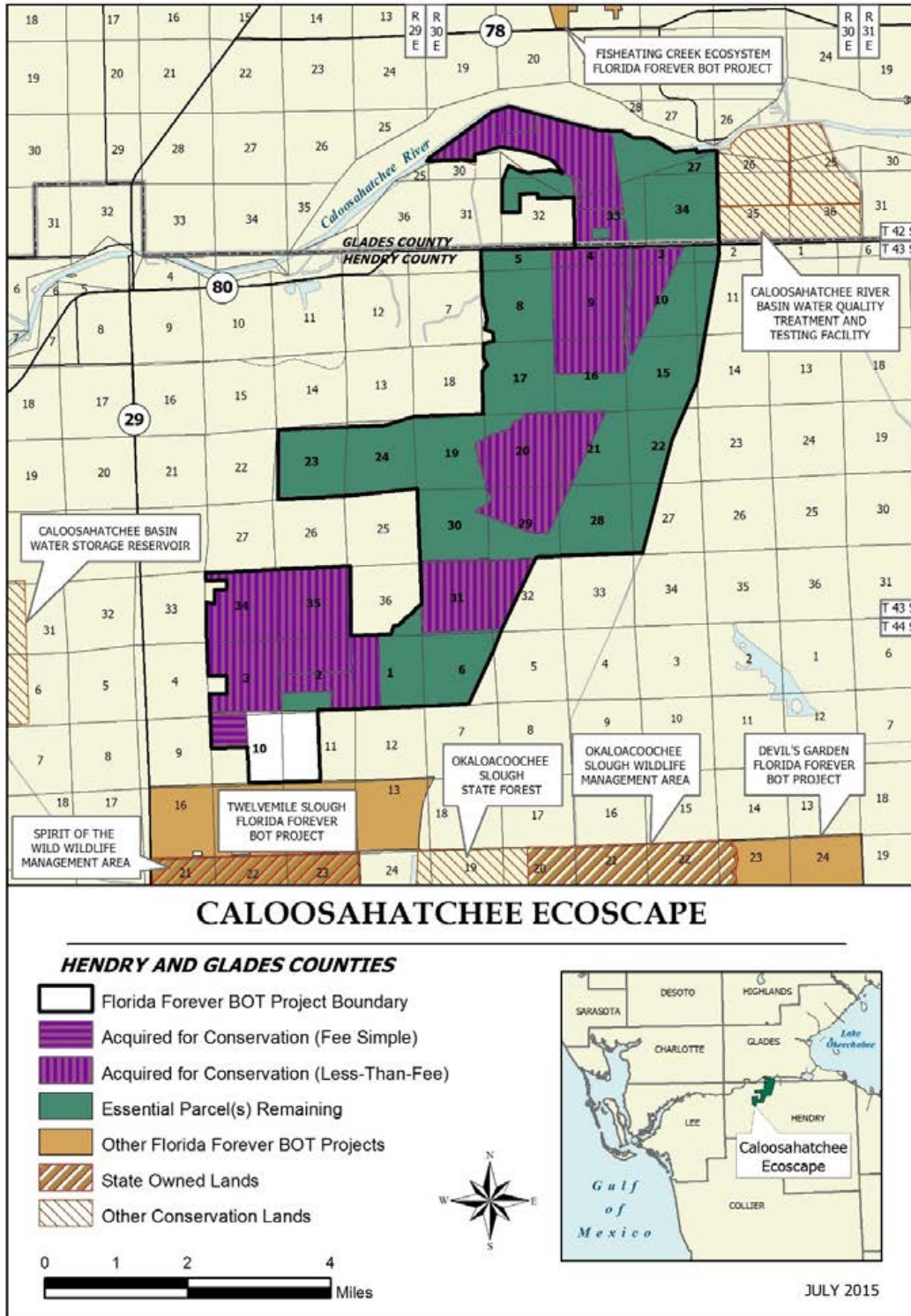
Map 29





### Map(s): Caloosahatchee Ecoscape

#### Caloosahatchee Ecoscape

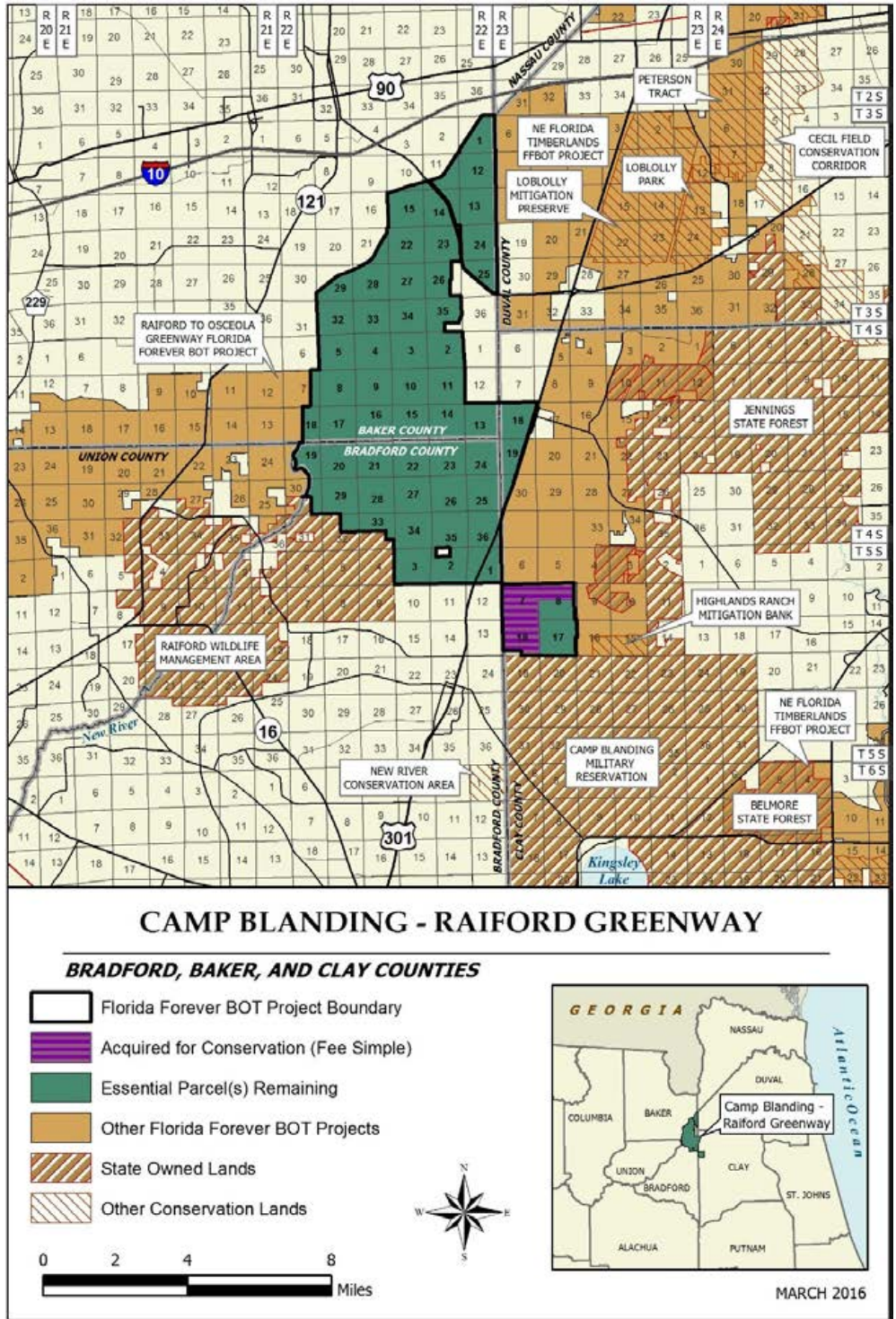


Map 30



### Map(s): Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway

#### Camp Blanding-Raiford Greenway



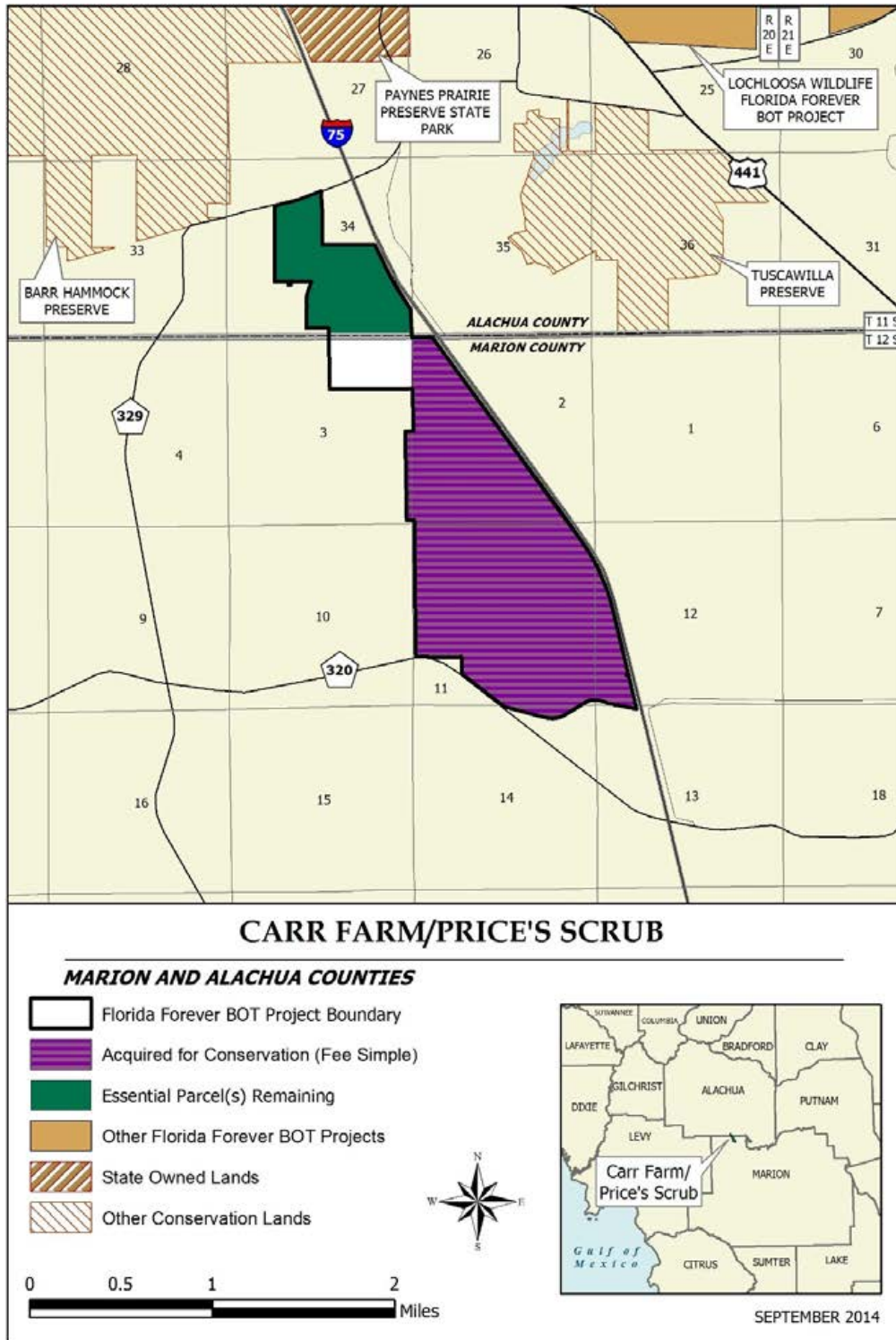
Map 31





### Map(s): Carr Farm / Price's Scrub

#### Carr Farm / Price's Scrub

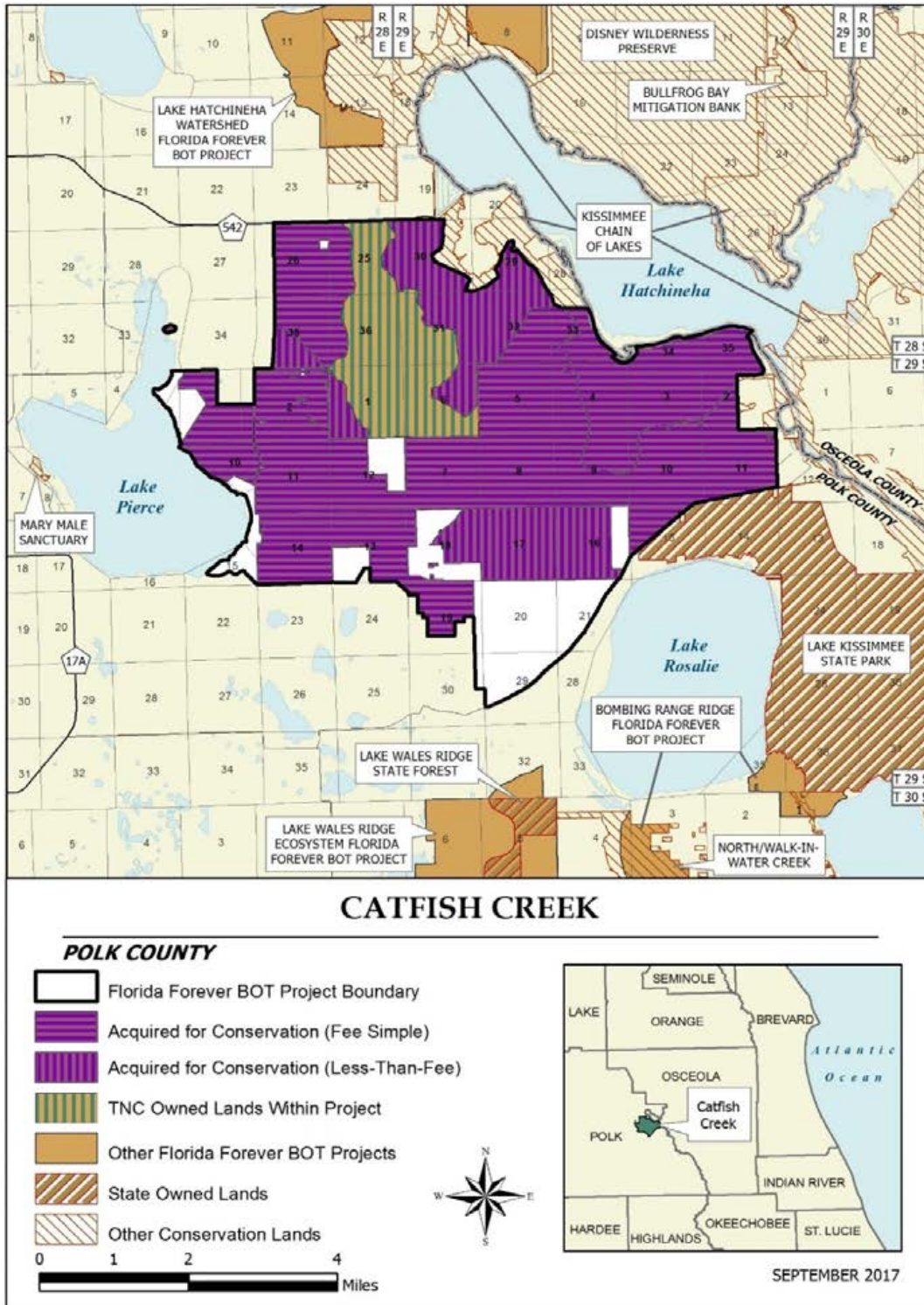


Map 32



### Map(s): Catfish Creek

#### Catfish Creek



Map 33



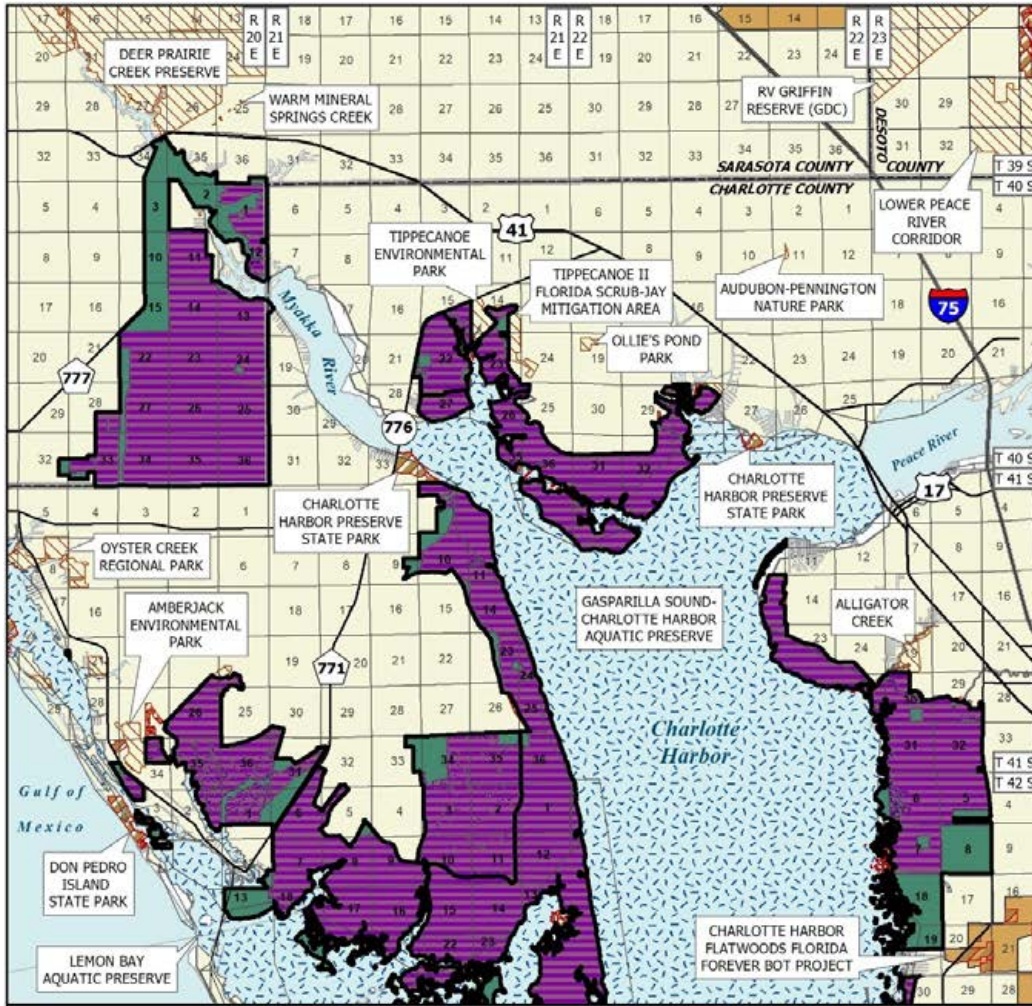
### Map(s): Charlotte Harbor Estuary

#### Charlotte Harbor Estuary



Map 34





### CHARLOTTE HARBOR ESTUARY: MAP 1 OF 2

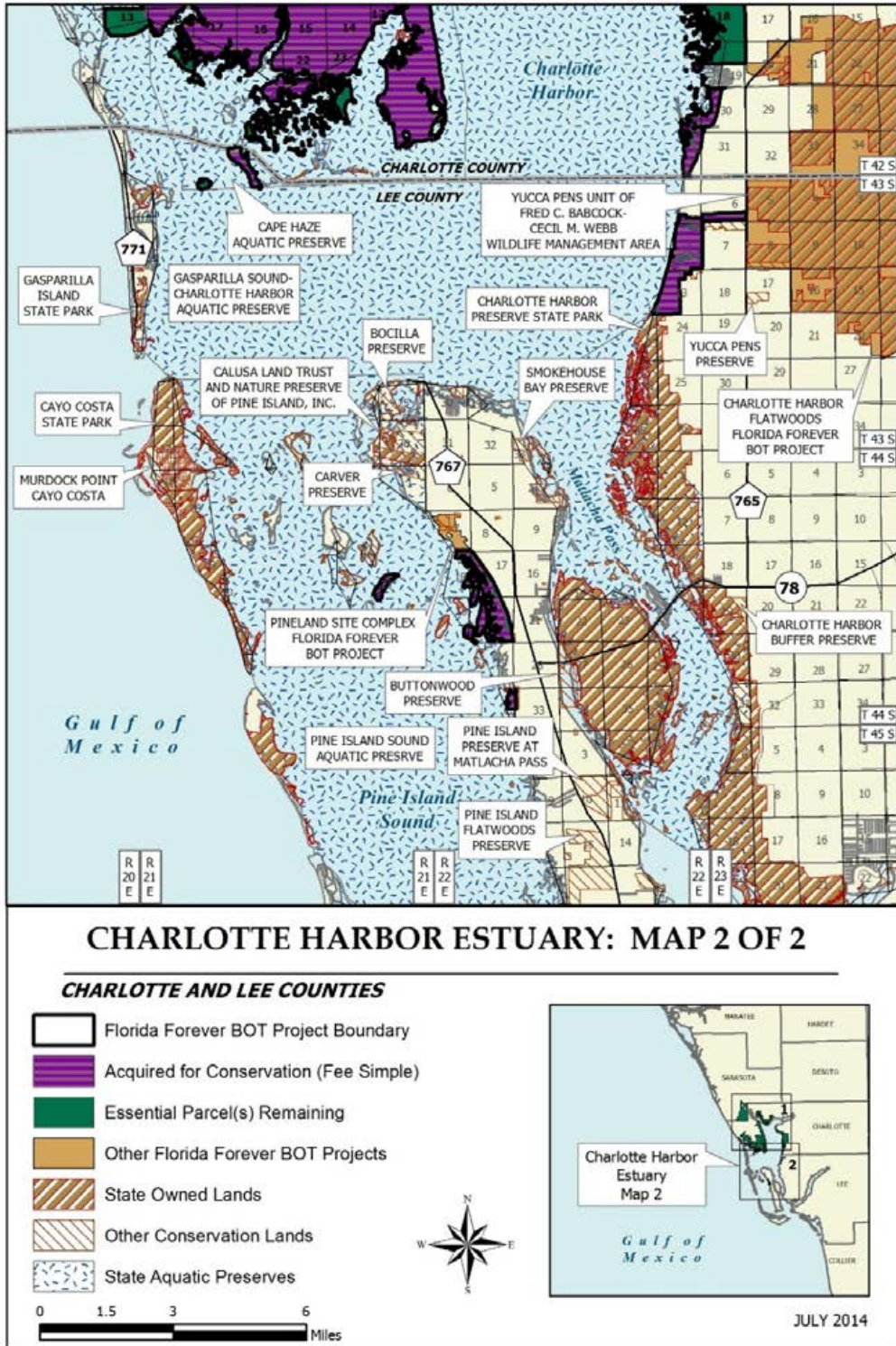
#### CHARLOTTE AND SARASOTA COUNTIES

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands
- State Aquatic Preserves



APRIL 2019

Map 35



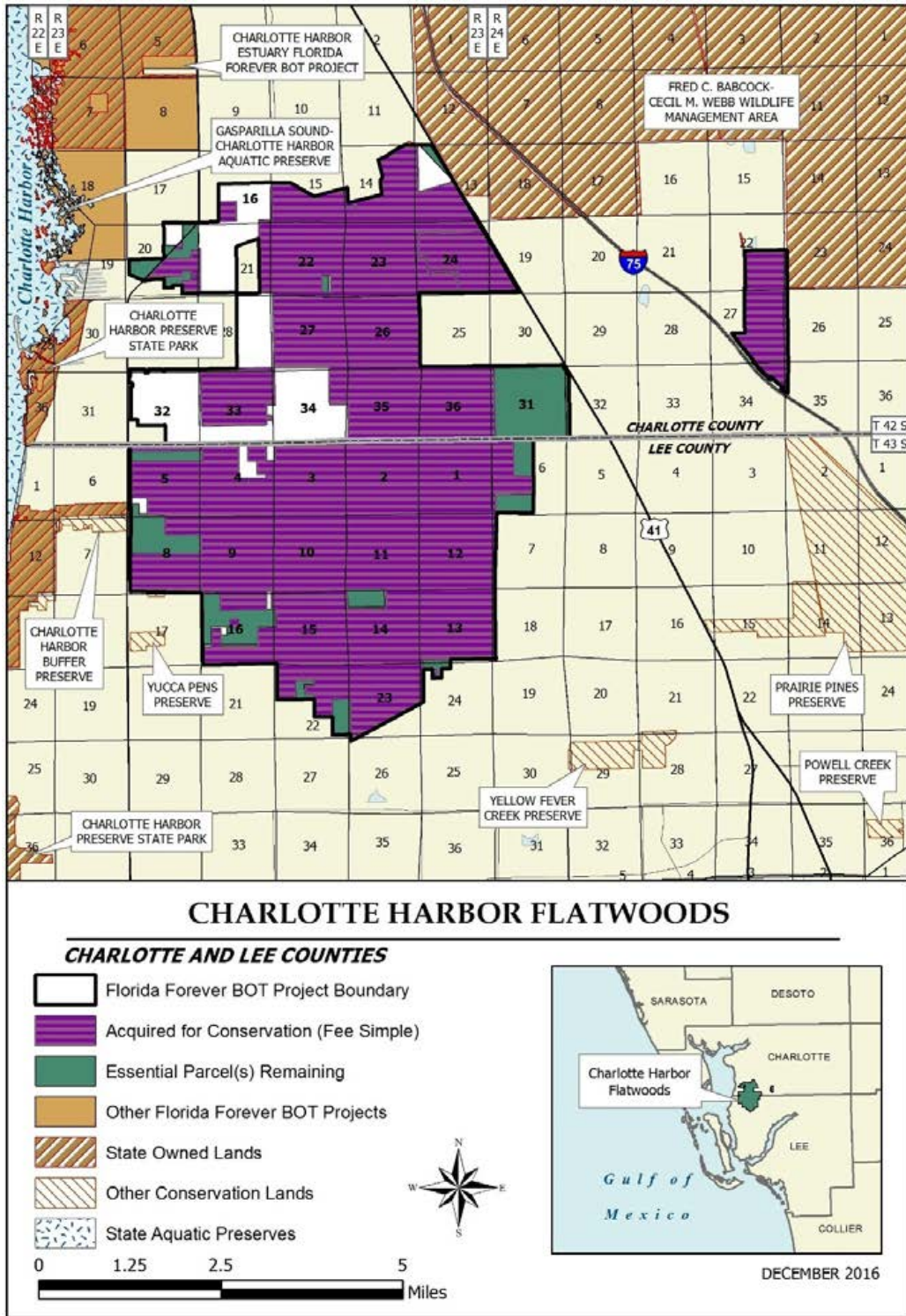
Map 36





### Map(s): Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods

#### Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods

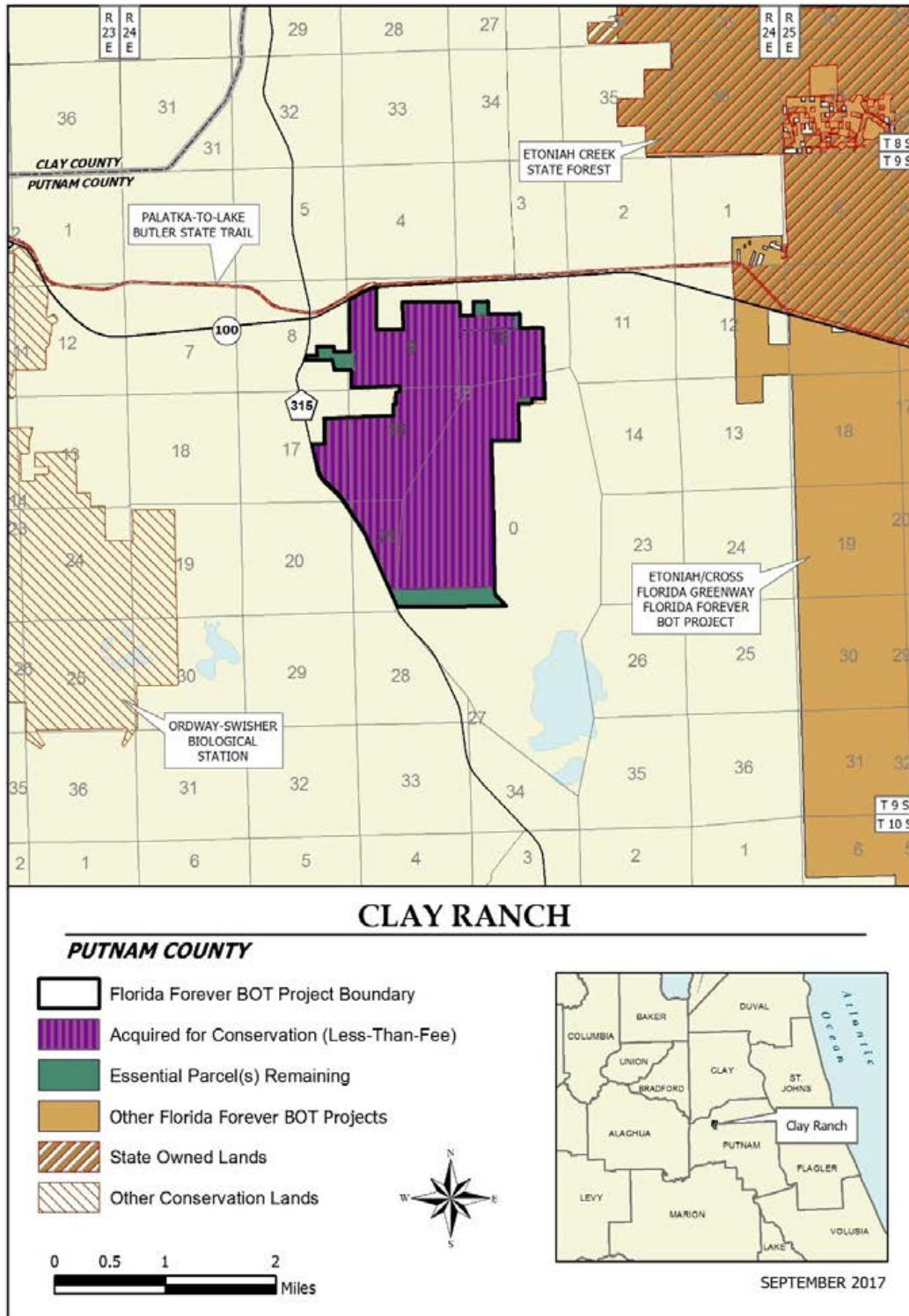


Map 37



### Map(s): Clay Ranch

#### Clay Ranch



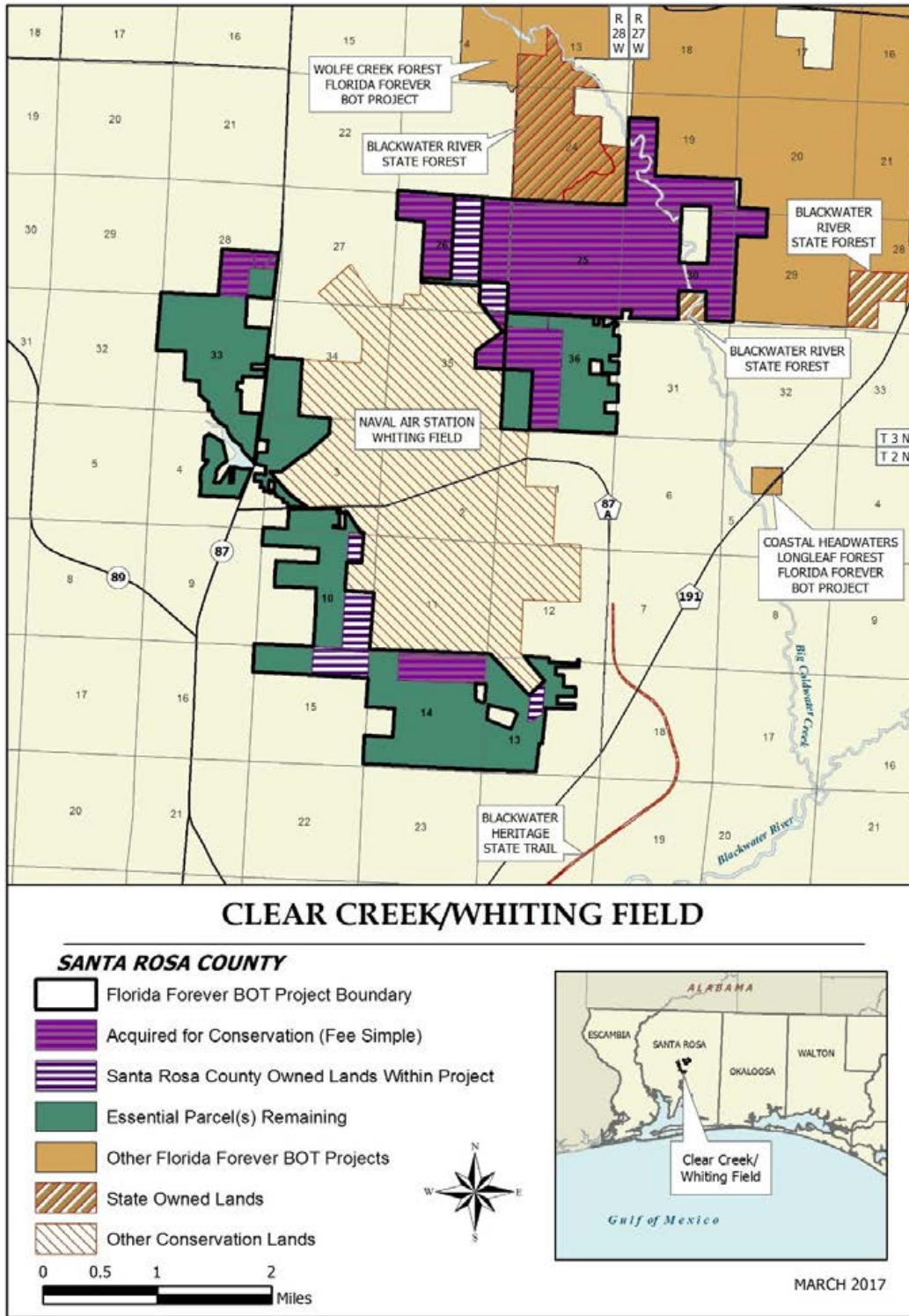
Map 38





### Map(s): Clear Creek / Whiting Field

#### Clear Creek / Whiting Field

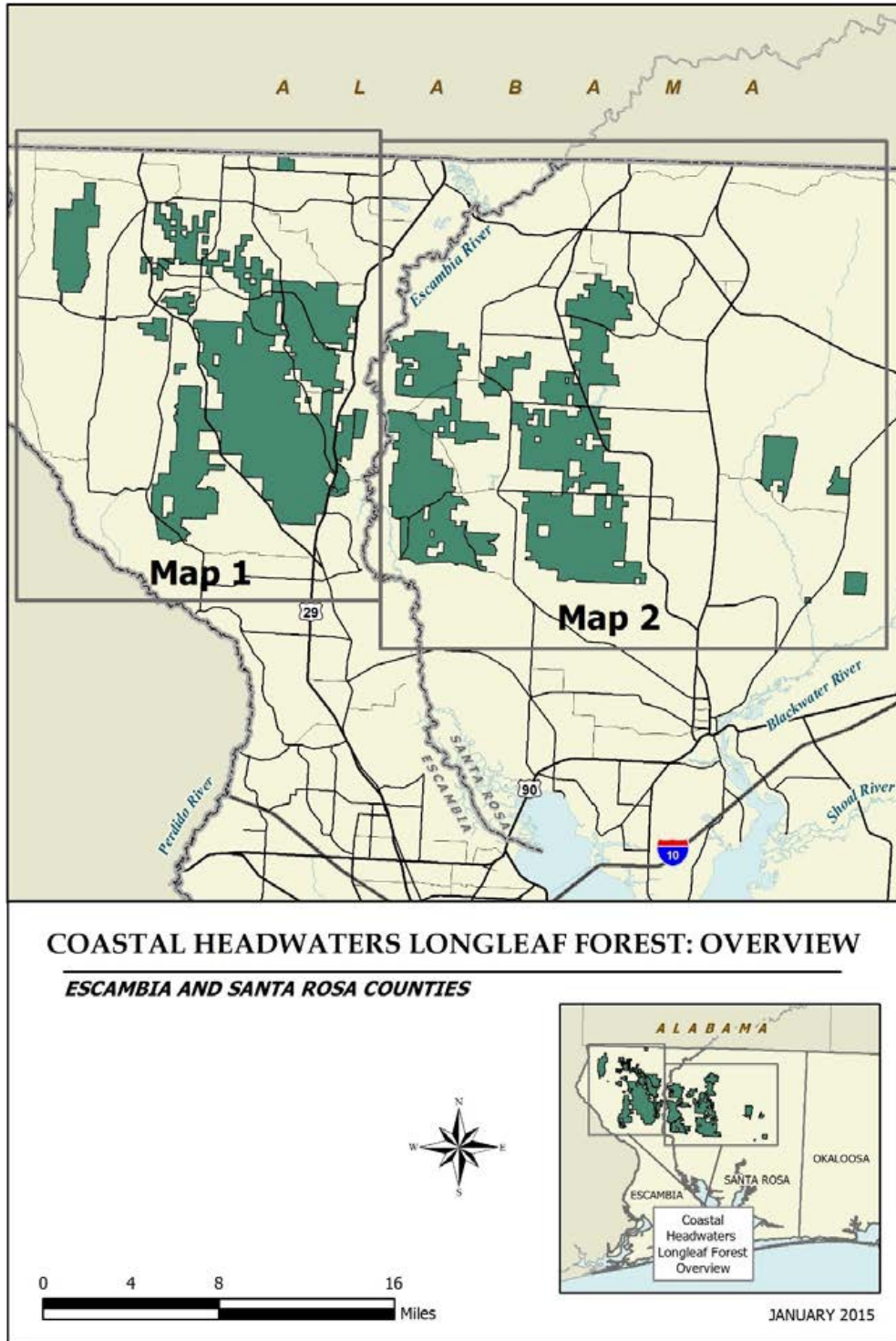


Map 39

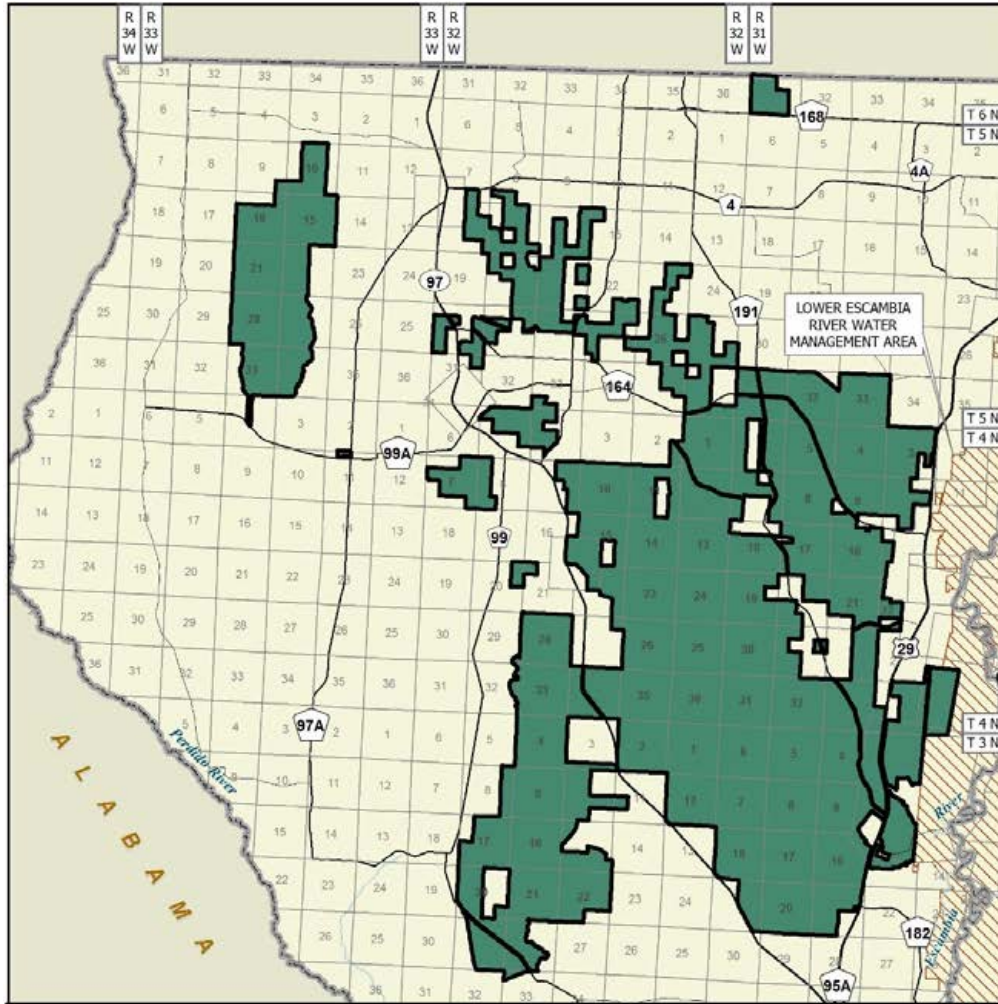


### Map(s): Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest

#### Coastal Headwaters Longleaf Forest



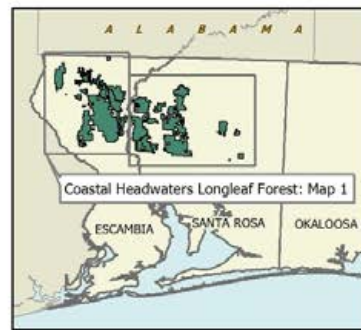
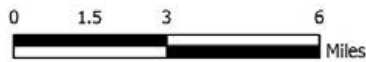
Map 40



### COASTAL HEADWATERS LONGLEAF FOREST: MAP 1 OF 2

#### ESCAMBIA COUNTY

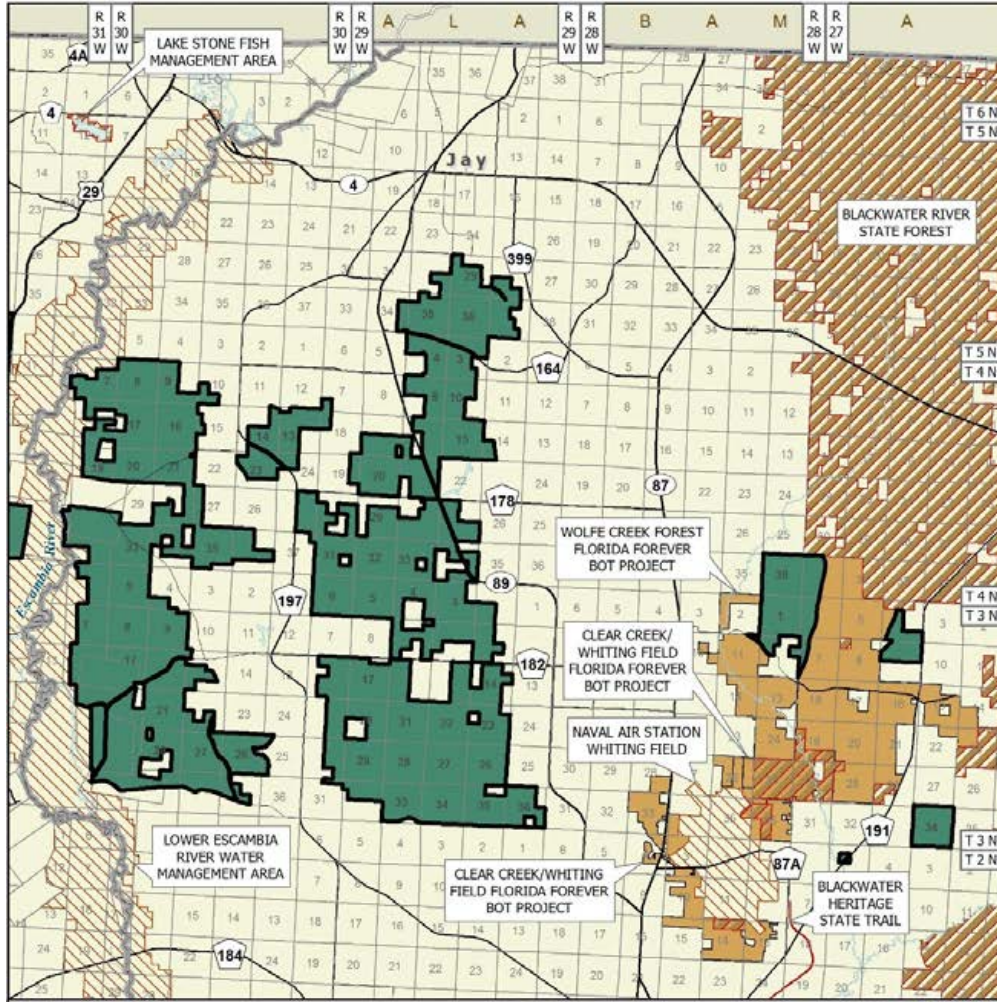
-  Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
-  Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
-  Other Conservation Lands



JANUARY 2015

Map 41





### COASTAL HEADWATERS LONGLEAF FOREST: MAP 2 OF 2

#### SANTA ROSA COUNTY

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



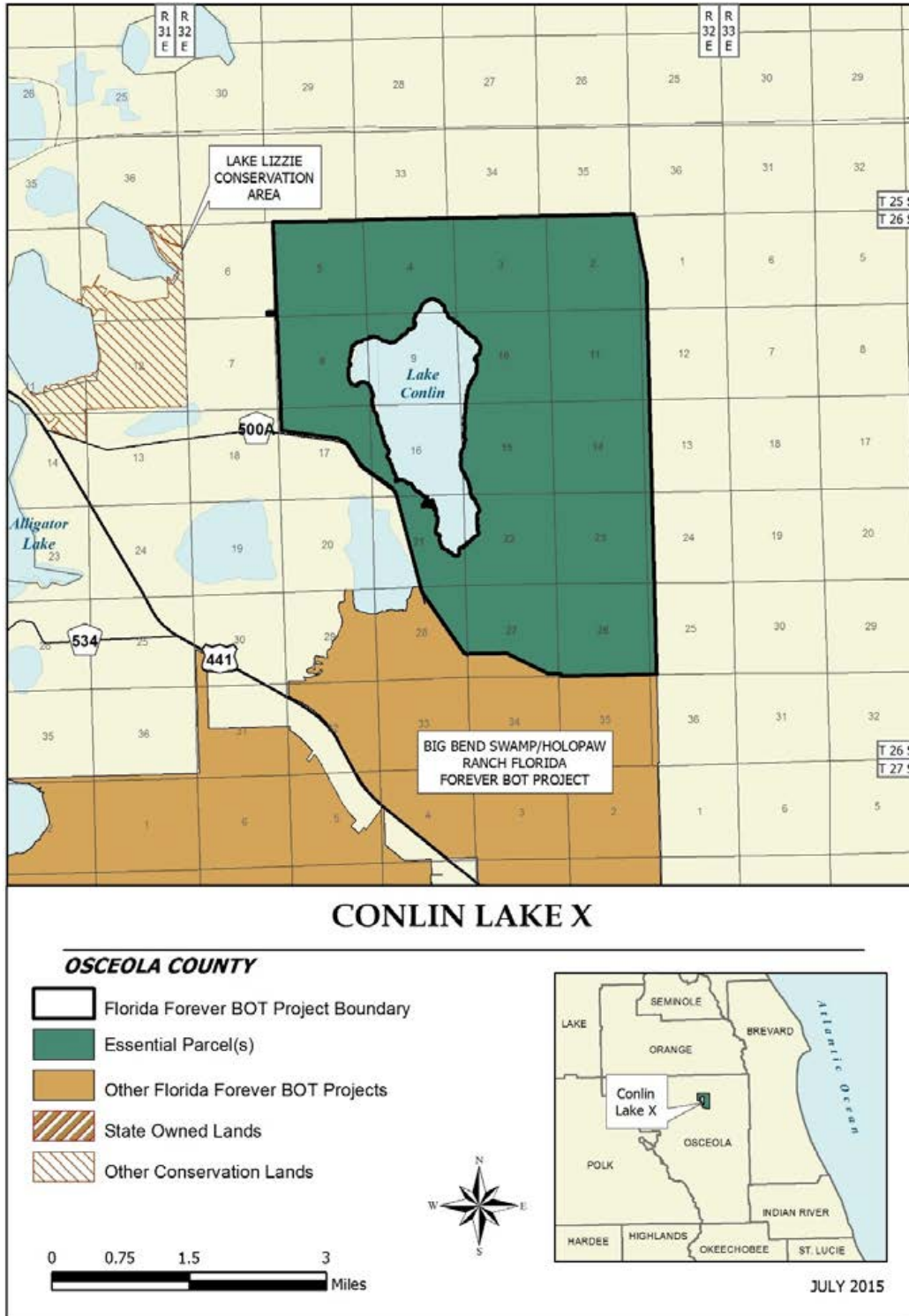
JANUARY 2015

Map 42



### Map(s): Conlin Lake X

#### Conlin Lake X



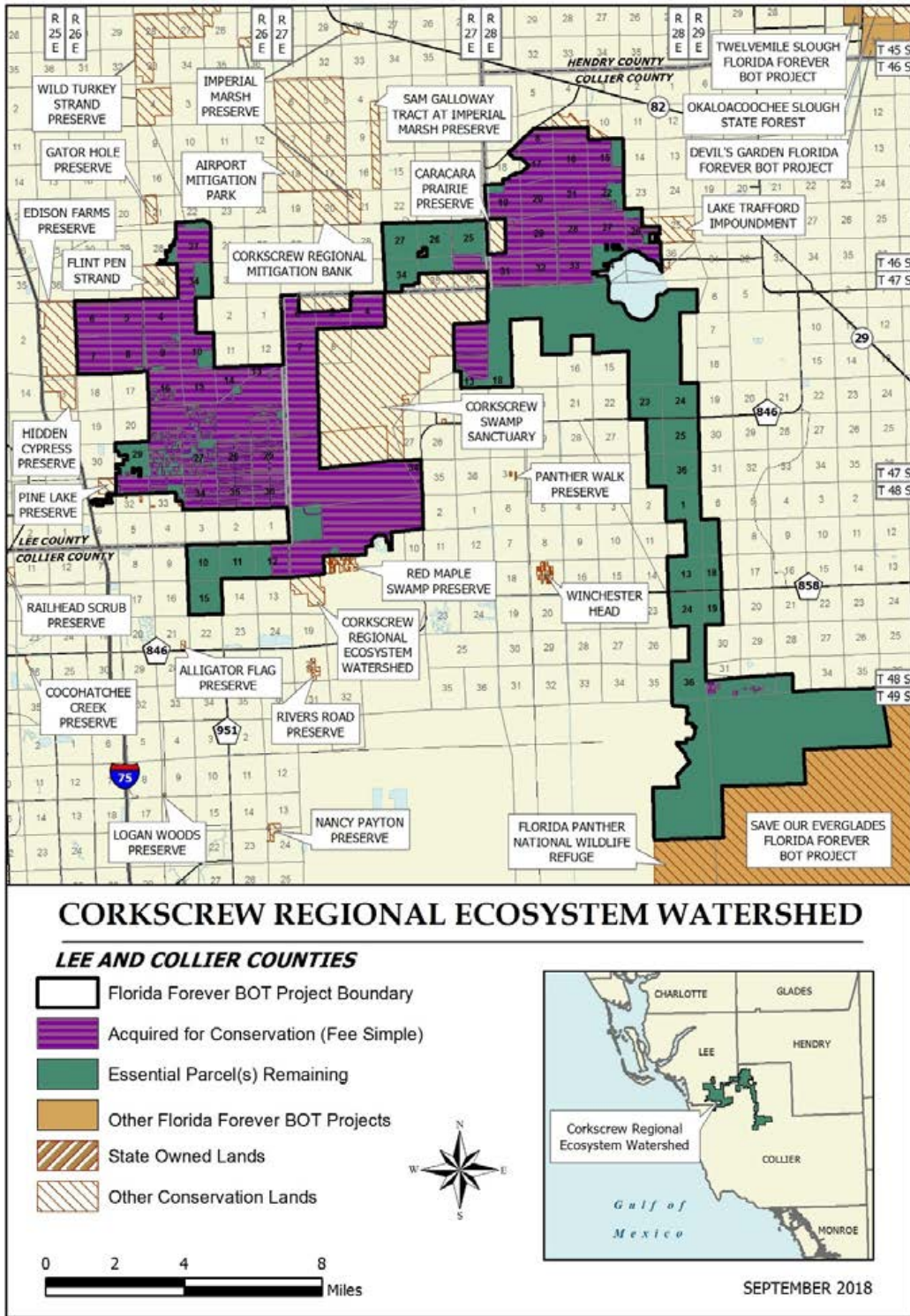
Map 43





### Map(s): Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed

#### Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed

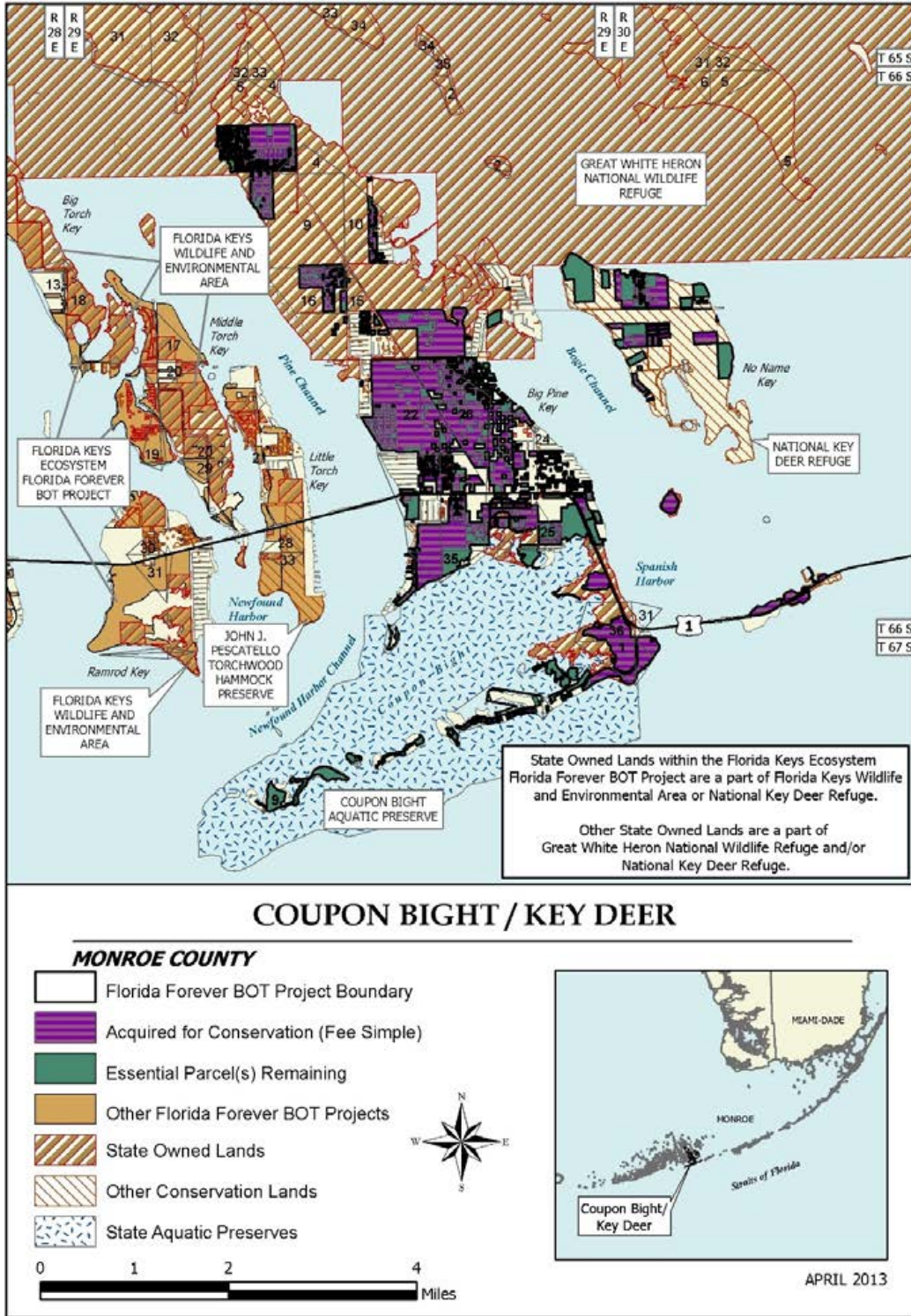


Map 44



### Map(s): Coupon Bight / Key Deer

#### Coupon Bight / Key Deer



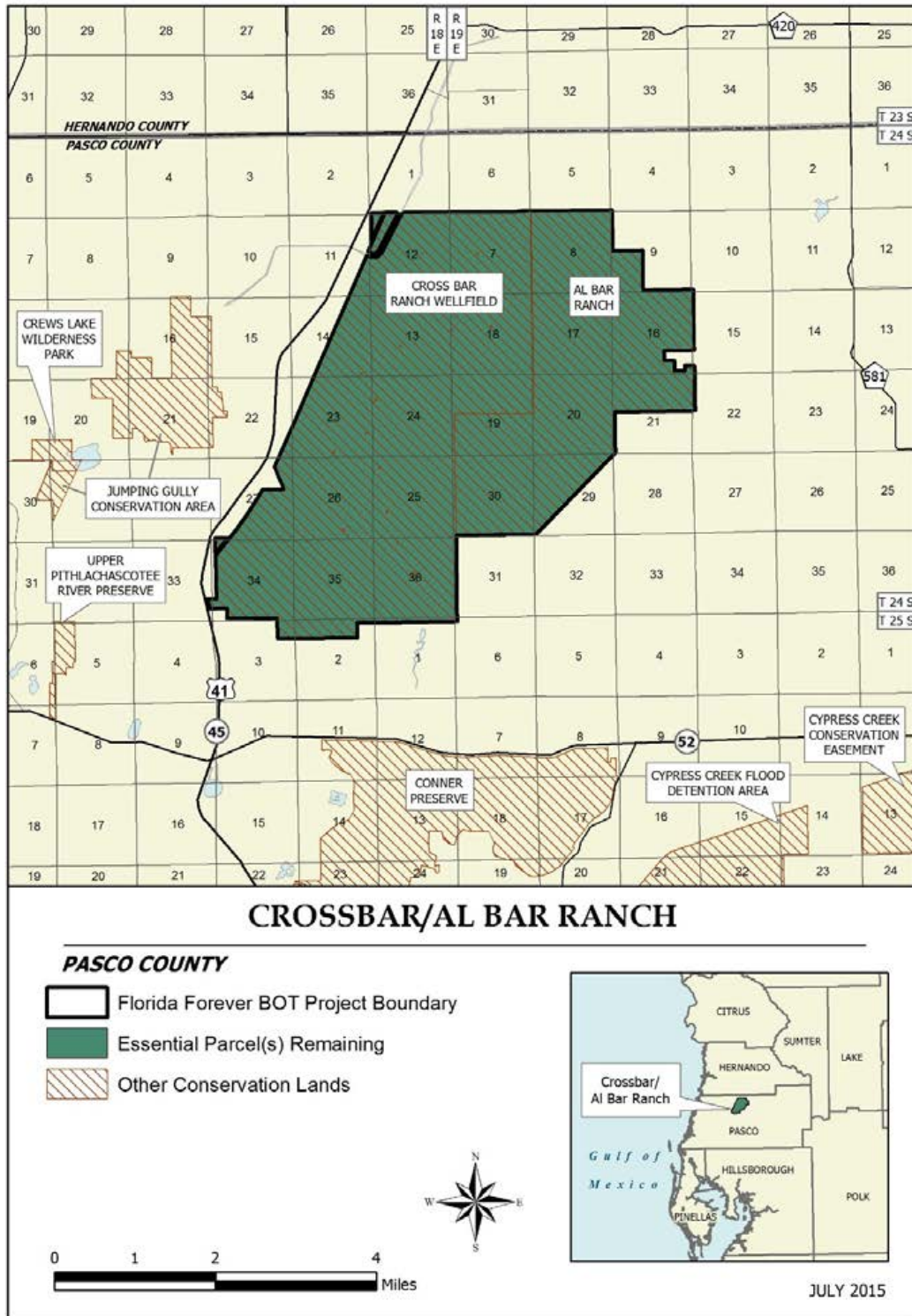
Map 45





### Map(s): Crossbar / Al Bar Ranch

#### Crossbar / Al Bar Ranch

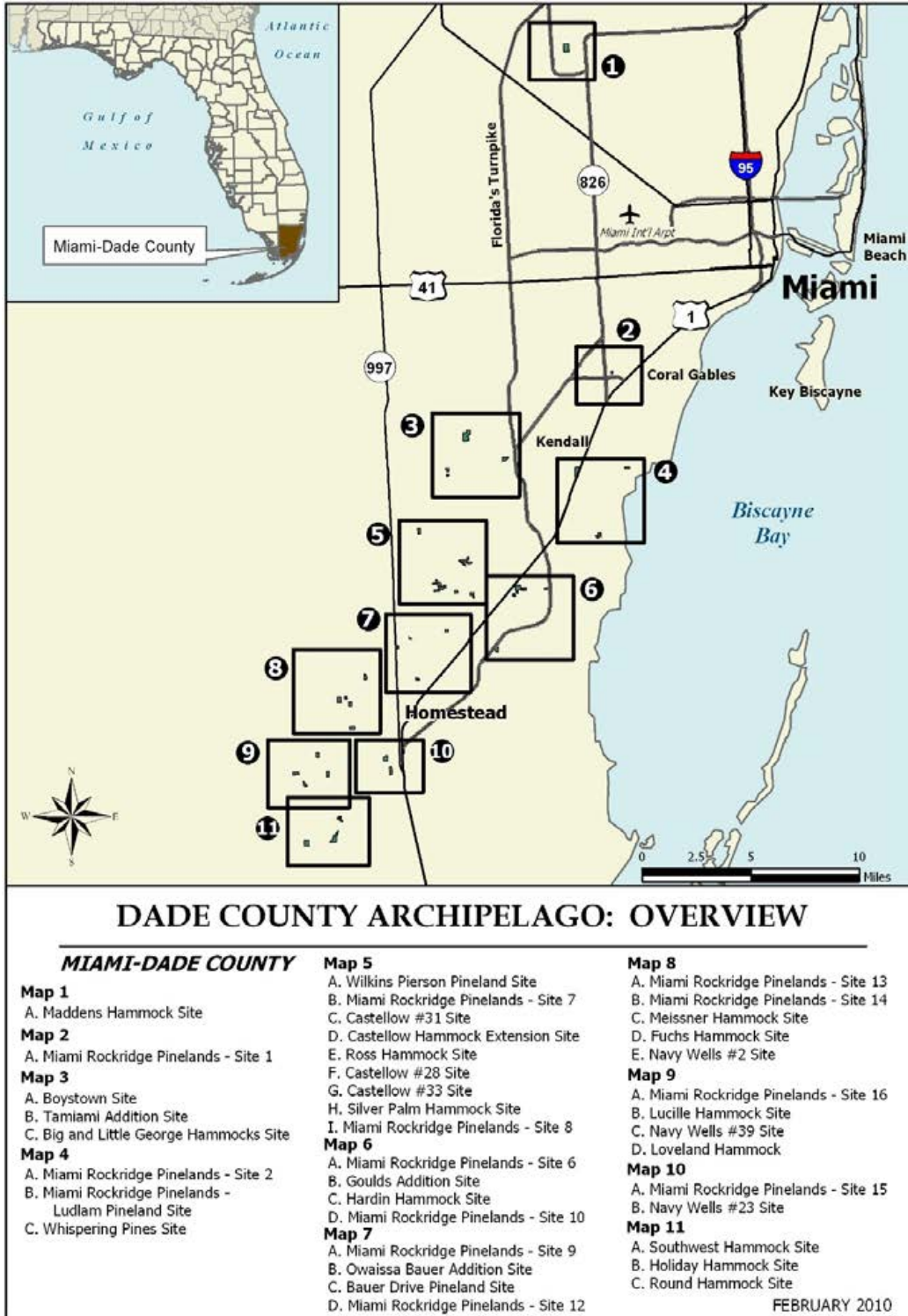


Map 46

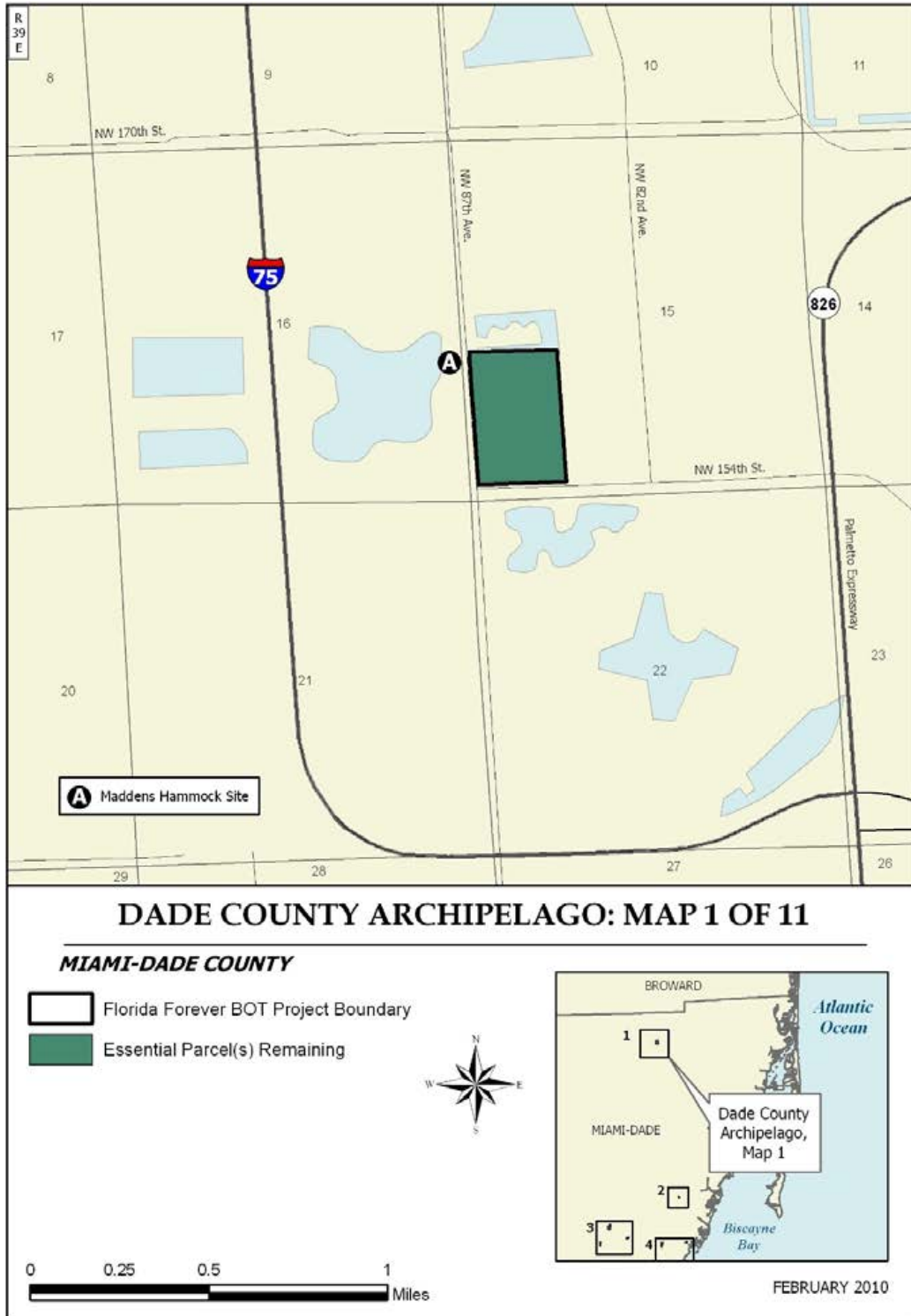


### Map(s): Dade County Archipelago

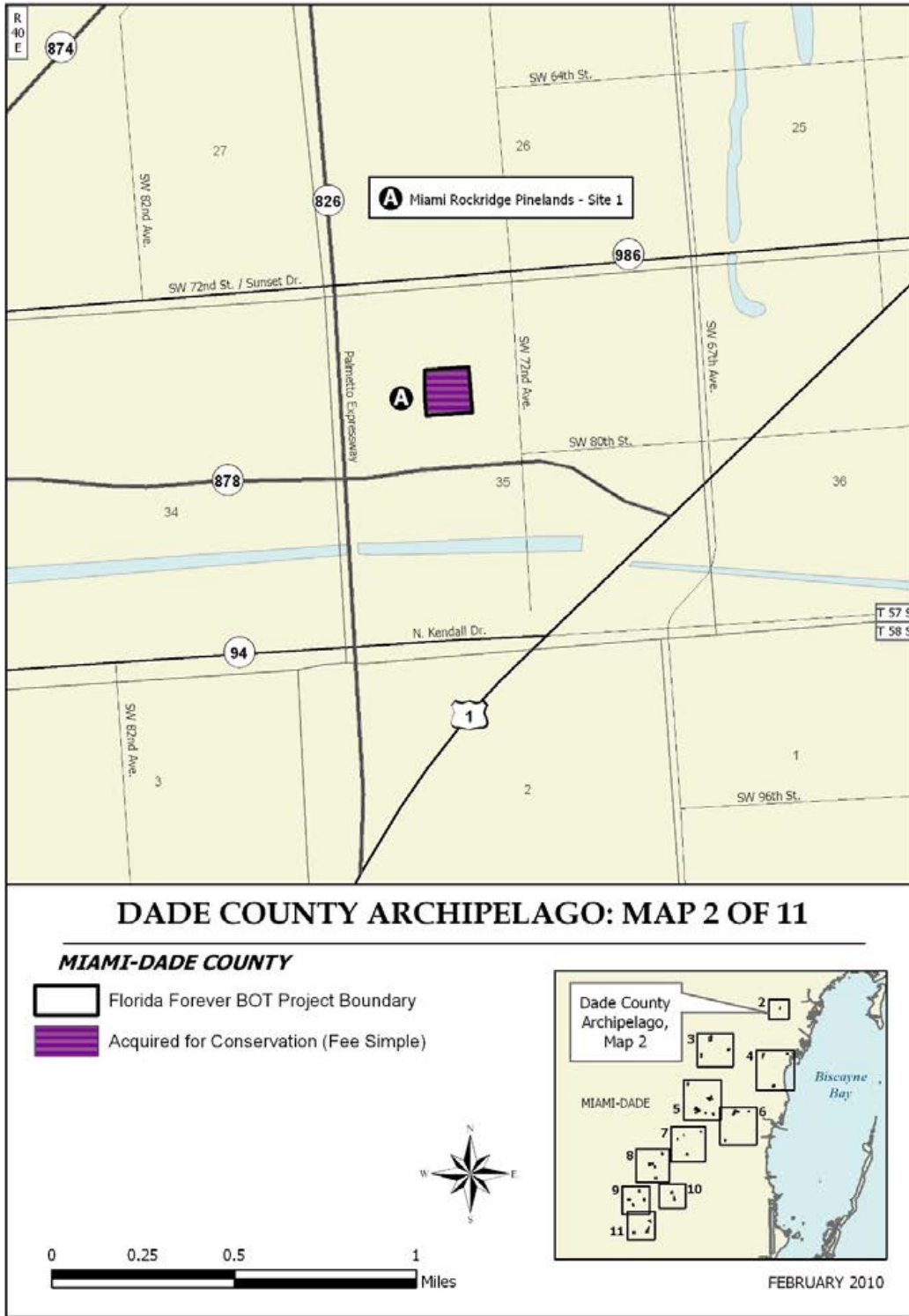
#### Dade County Archipelago



Map 47

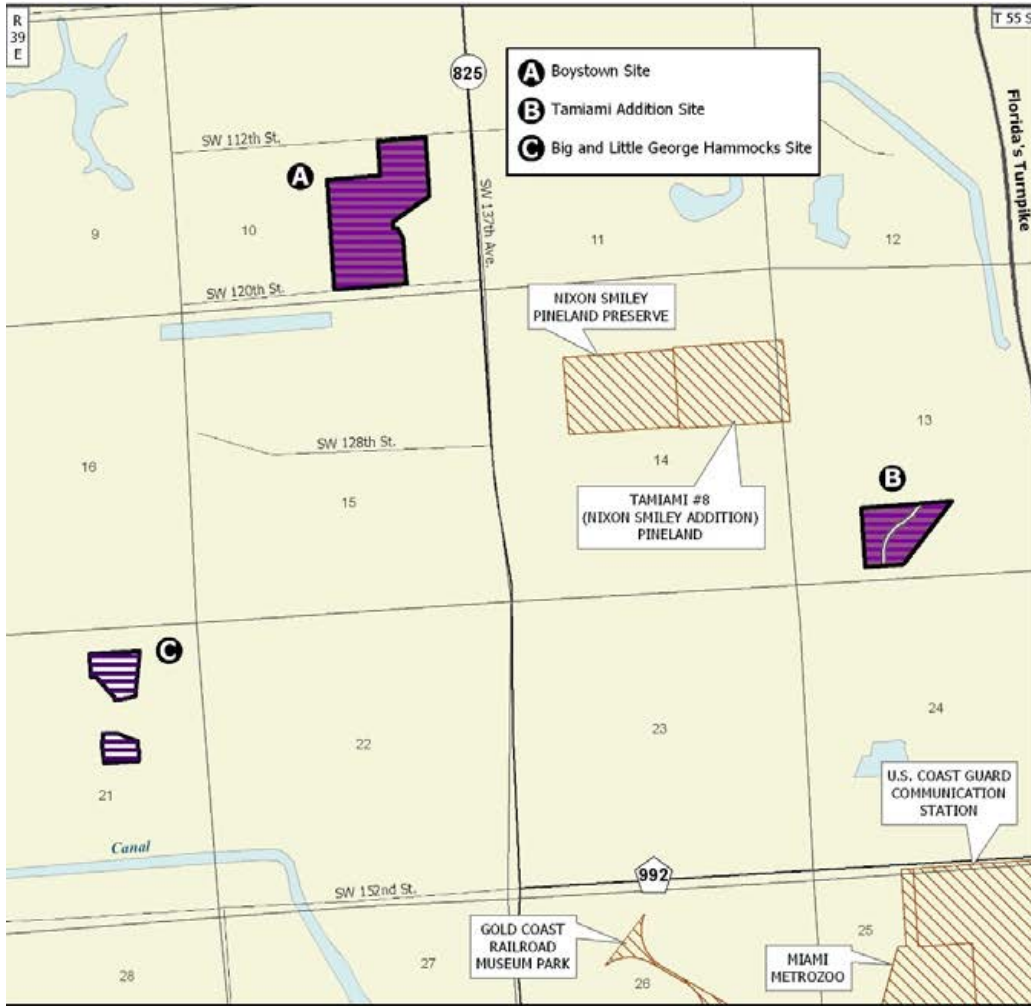


Map 48



Map 49

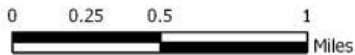
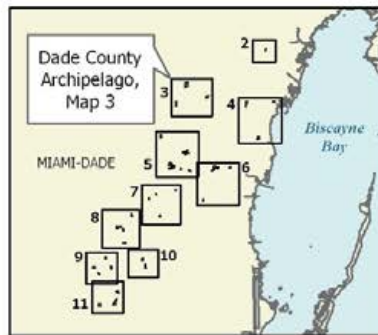




### DADE COUNTY ARCHIPELAGO: MAP 3 OF 11

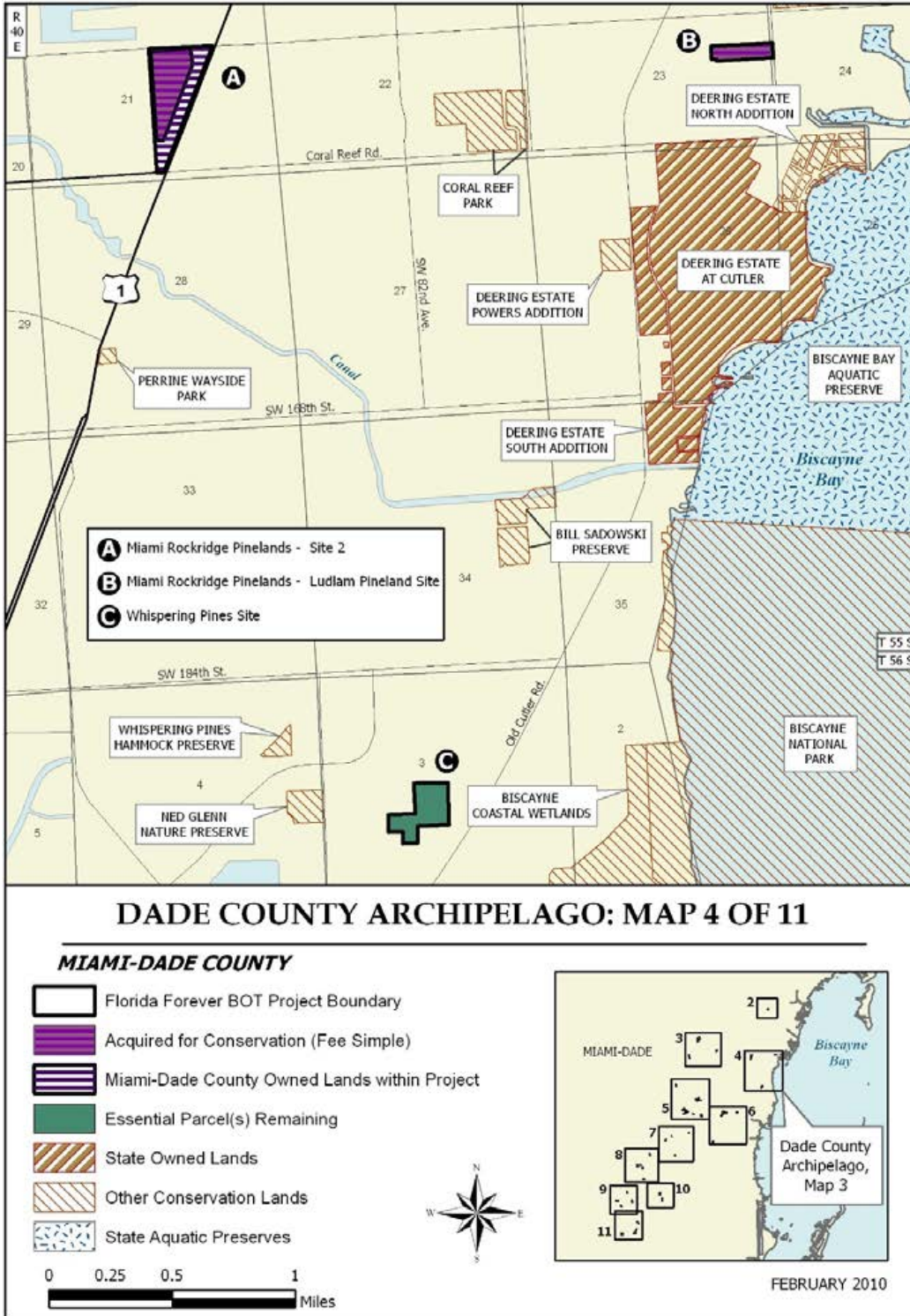
#### MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

-  Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
-  Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
-  Miami-Dade County Owned Lands within Project
-  Other Conservation Lands

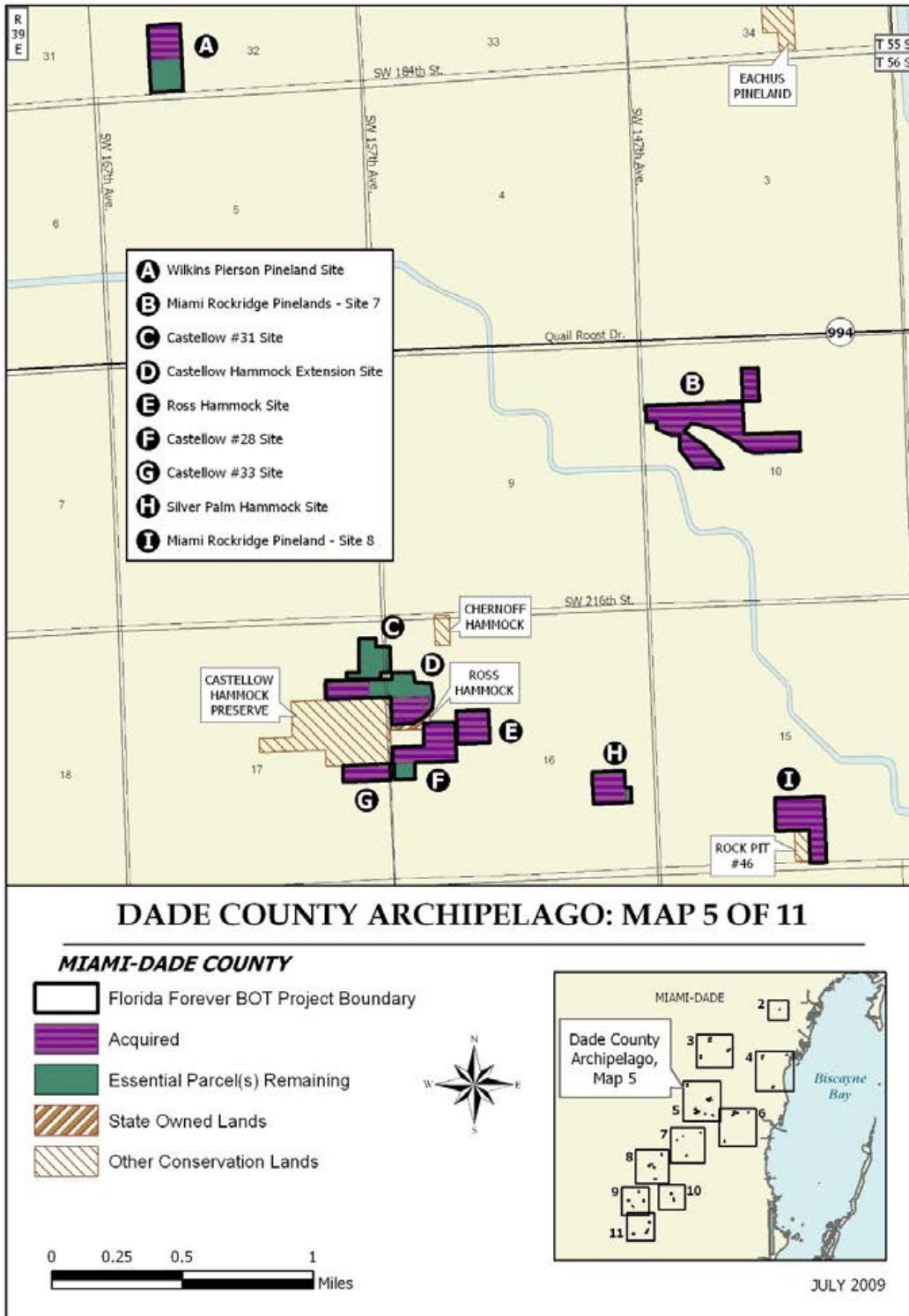


FEBRUARY 2010

Map 50

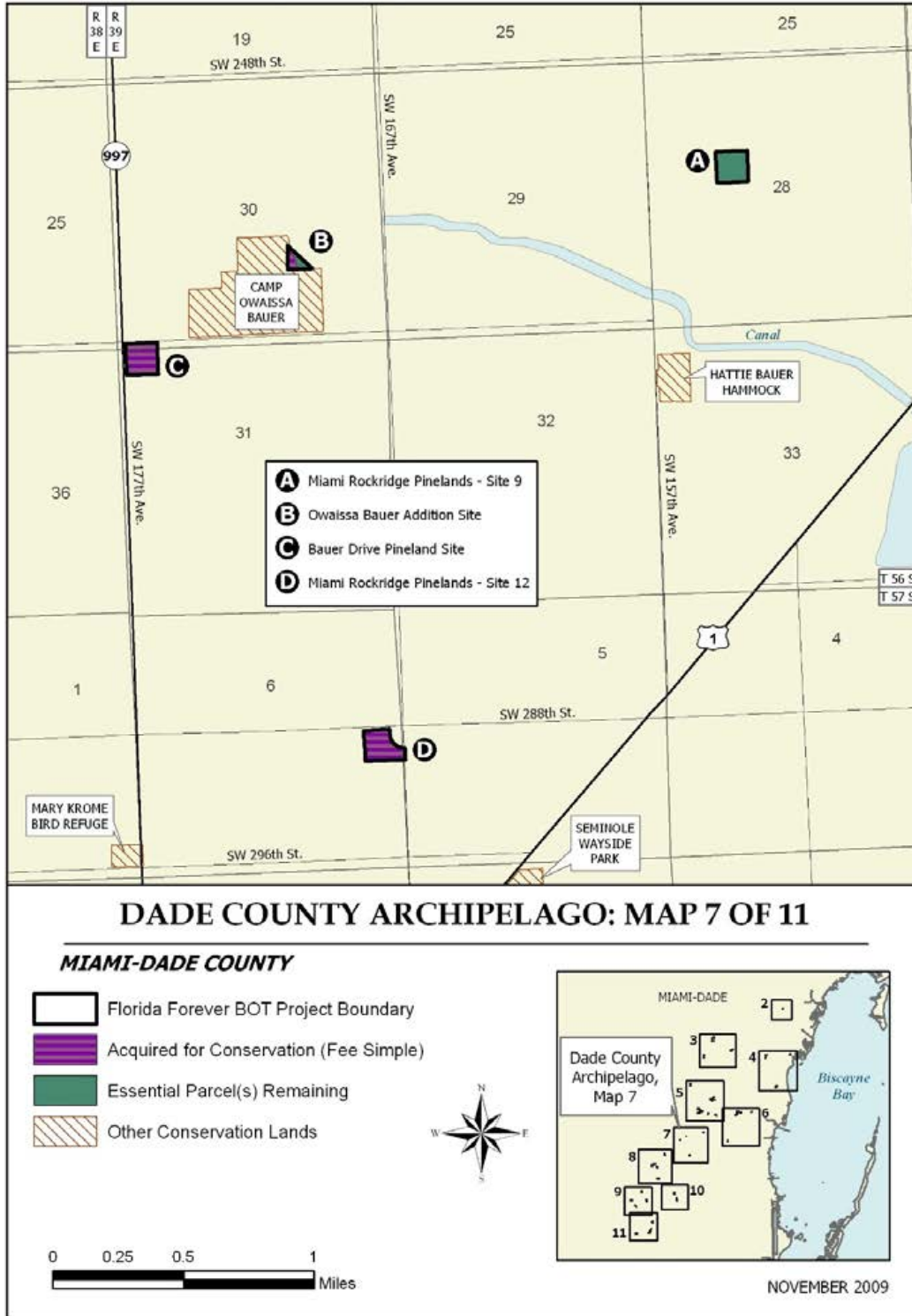


Map 51

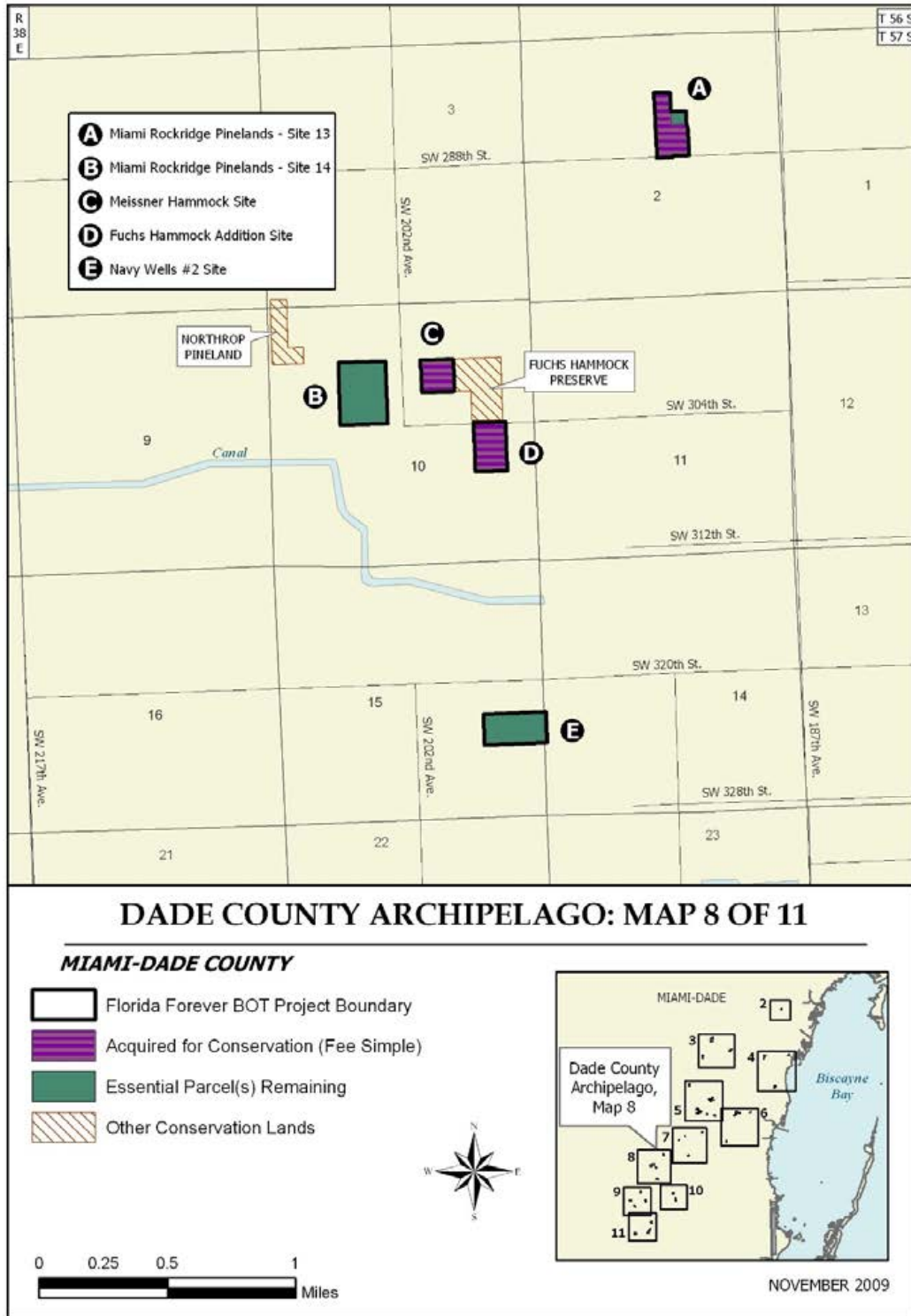


Map 52

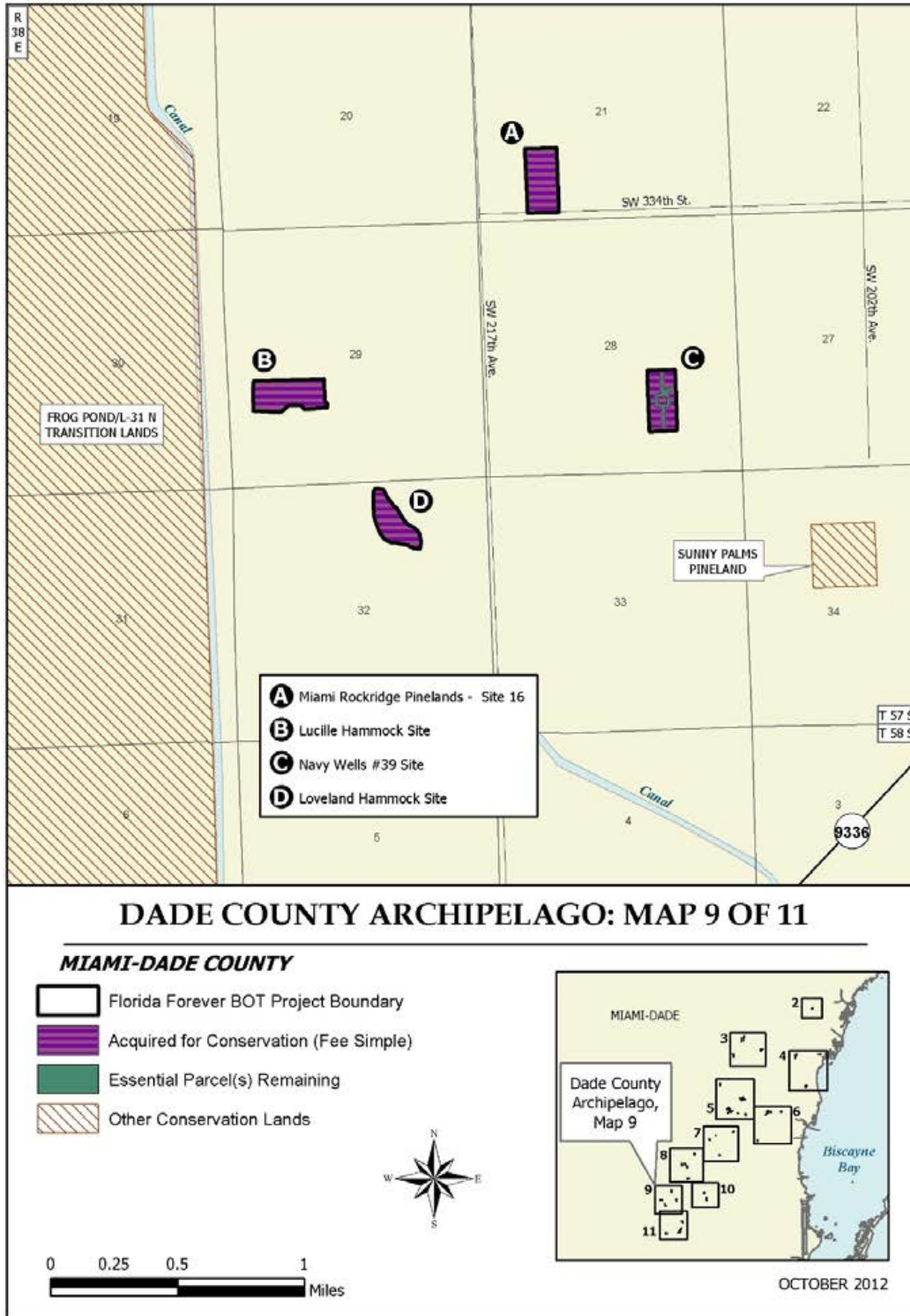




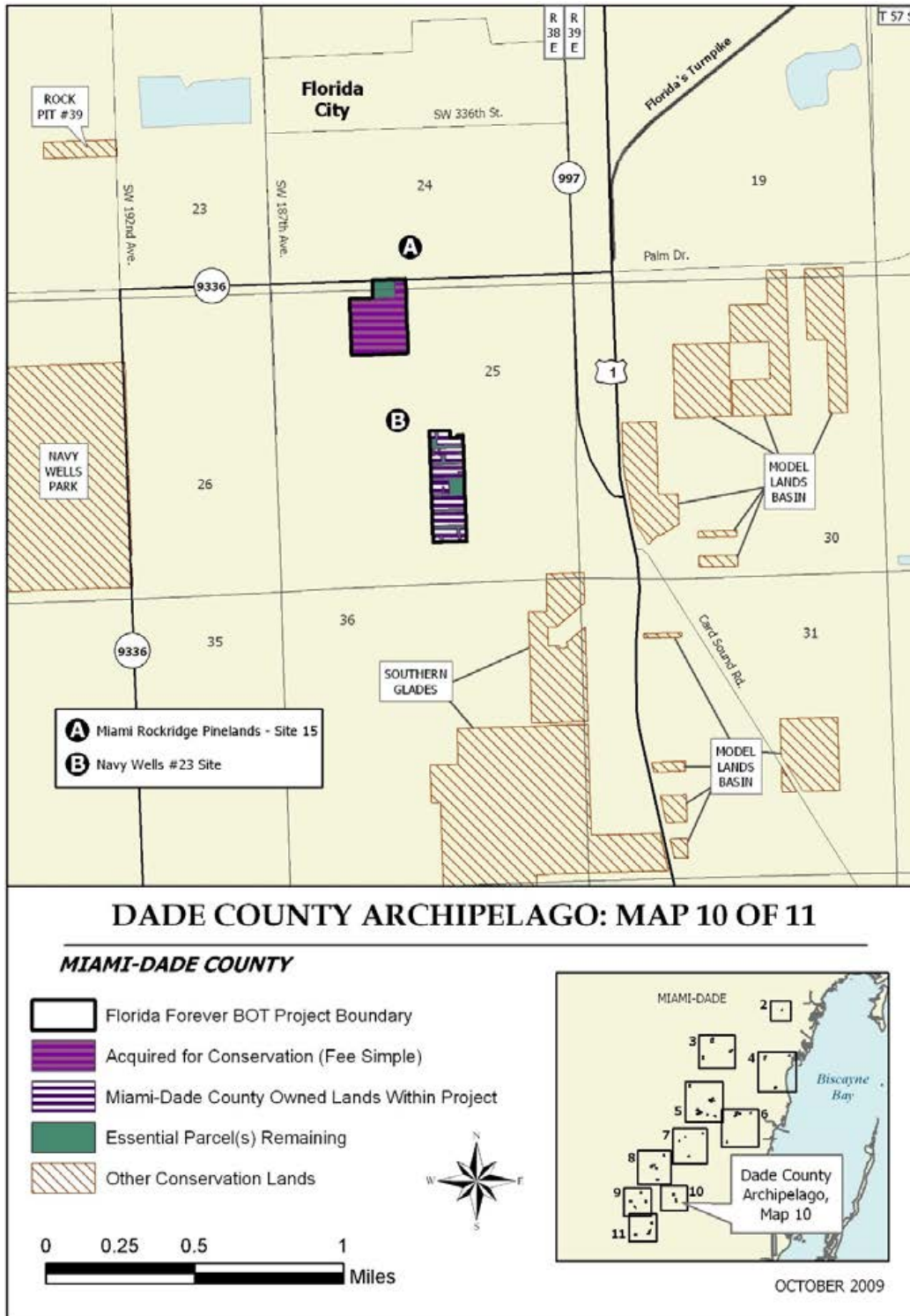
Map 53



Map 54

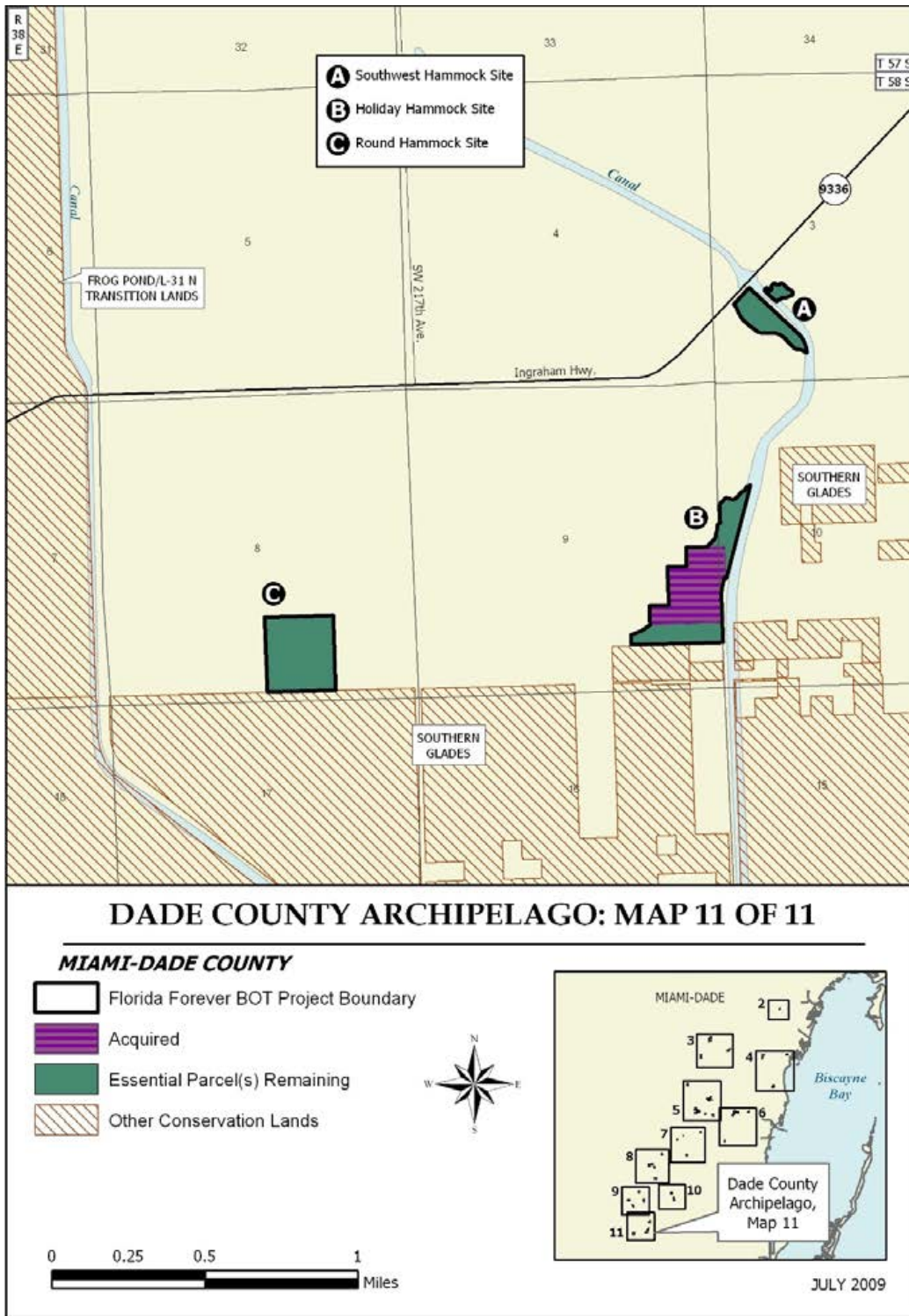


Map 55



Map 56



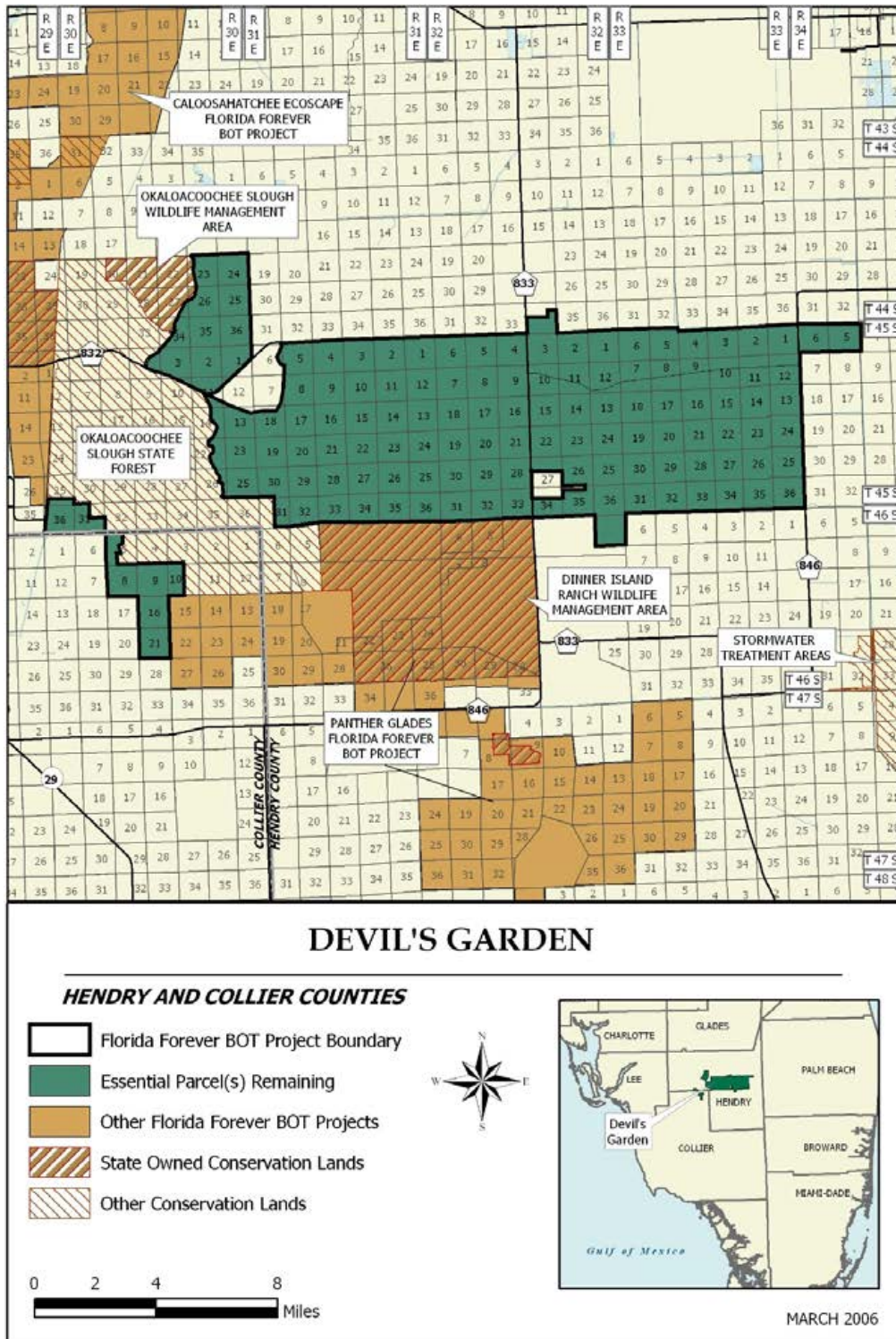


Map 57



### Map(s): Devil's Garden

#### Devil's Garden



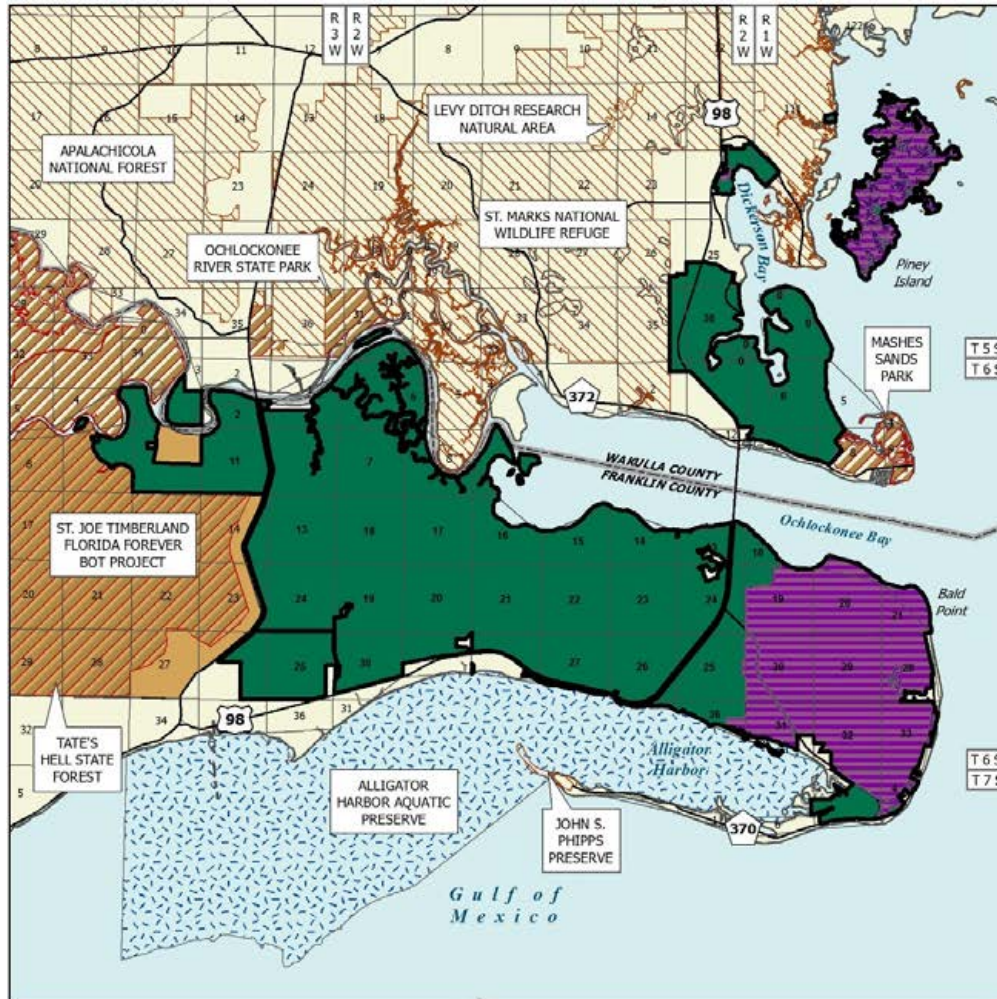
Map 58





### Map(s): Dickerson Bay / Bald Point

#### Dickerson Bay / Bald Point



### DICKERSON BAY/BALD POINT

#### WAKULLA AND FRANKLIN COUNTIES

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands
- State Aquatic Preserves



DECEMBER 2016

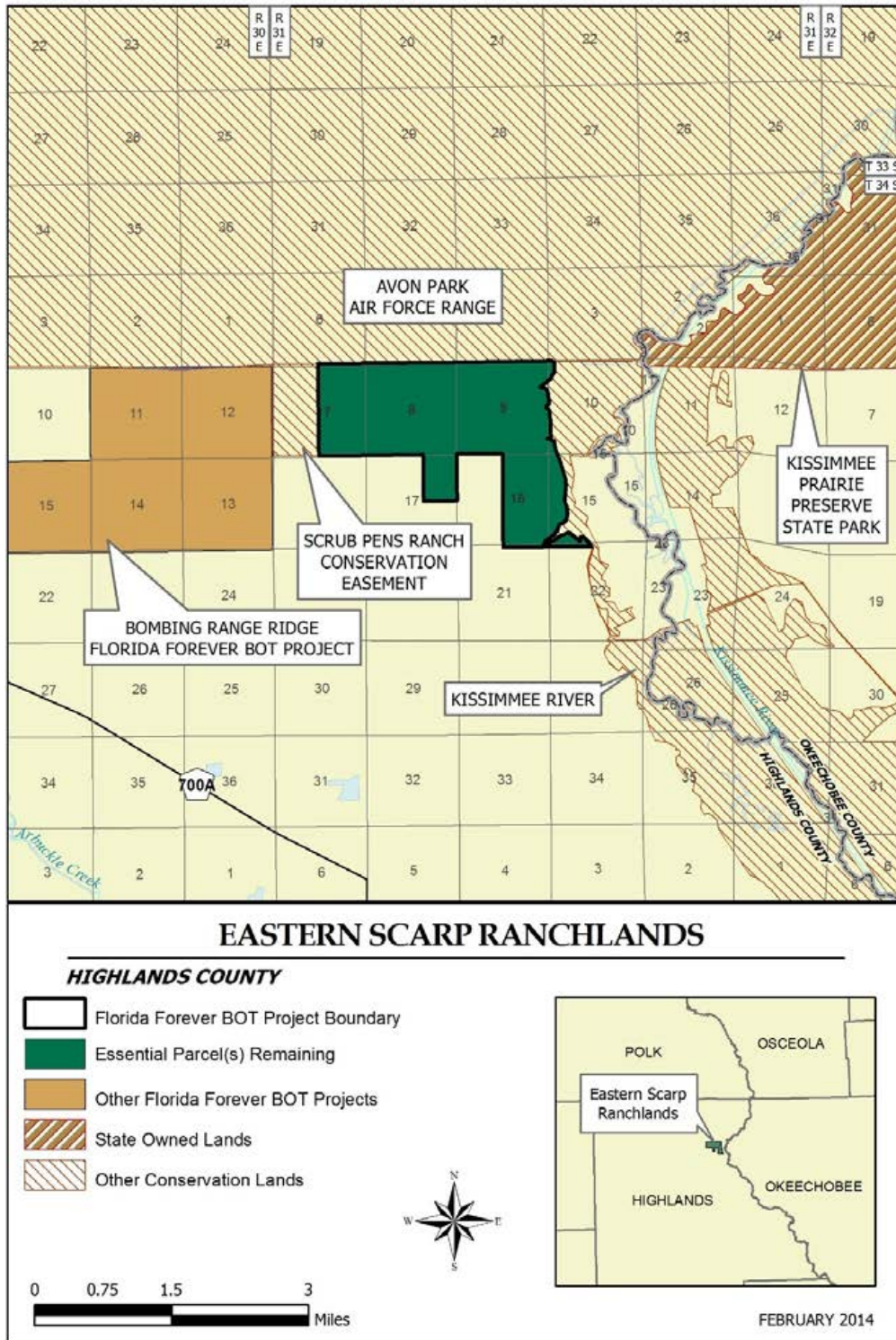
Map 59





### Map(s): Eastern Scarp Ranchlands

#### Eastern Scarp Ranchlands

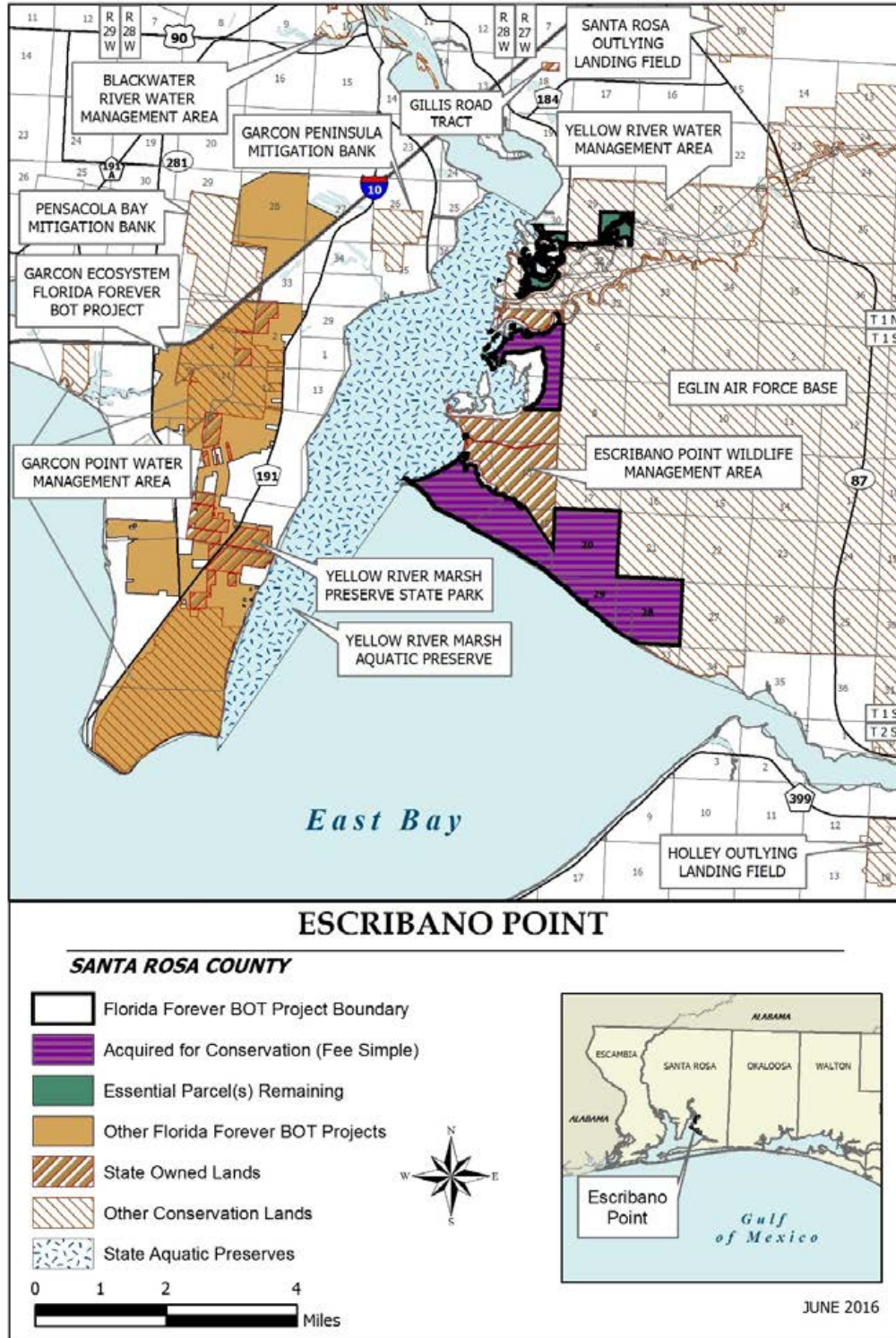


Map 60



### Map(s): *Escribano Point*

#### Escribano Point



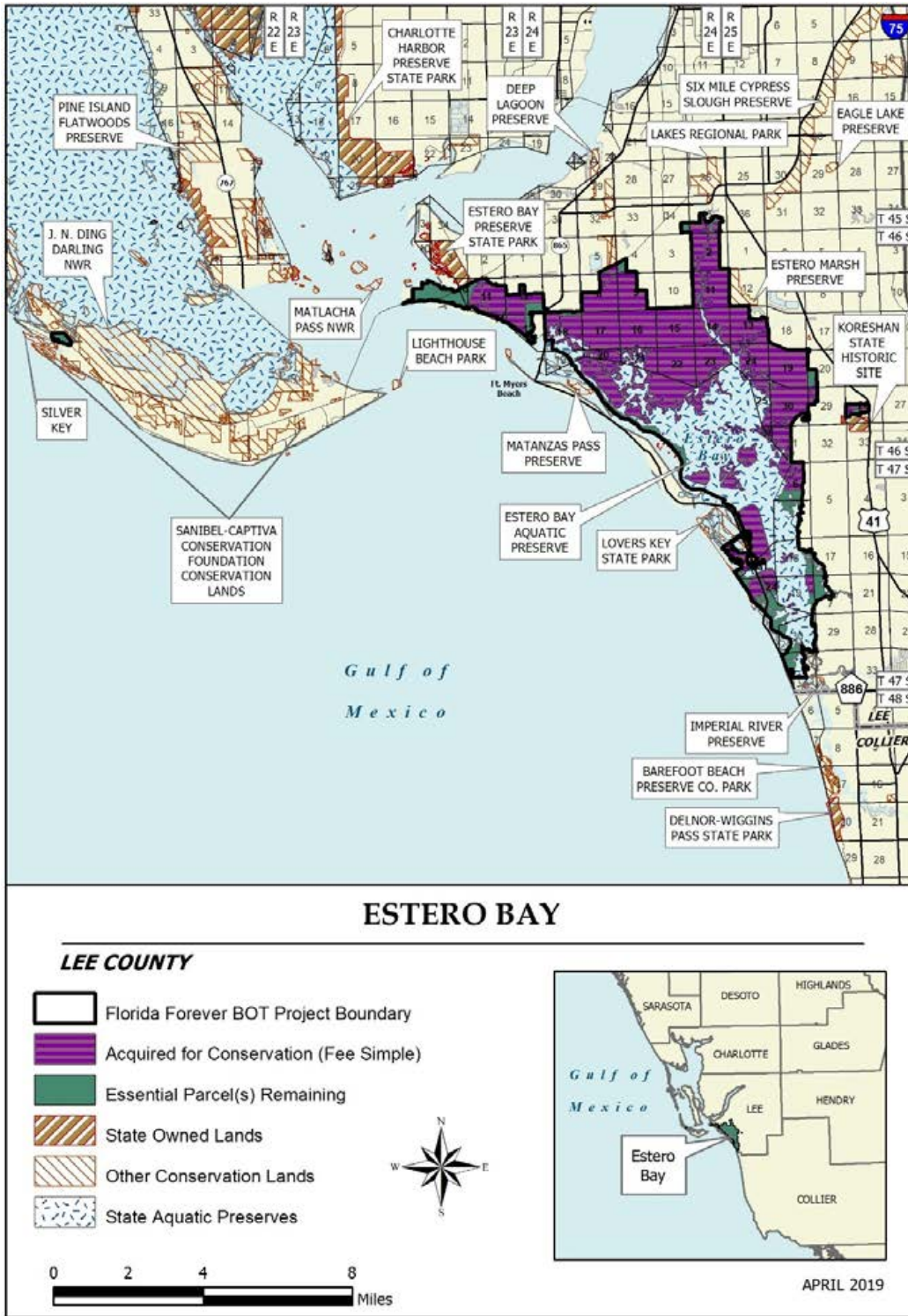
Map 61





### Map(s): Estero Bay

[Estero Bay](#)

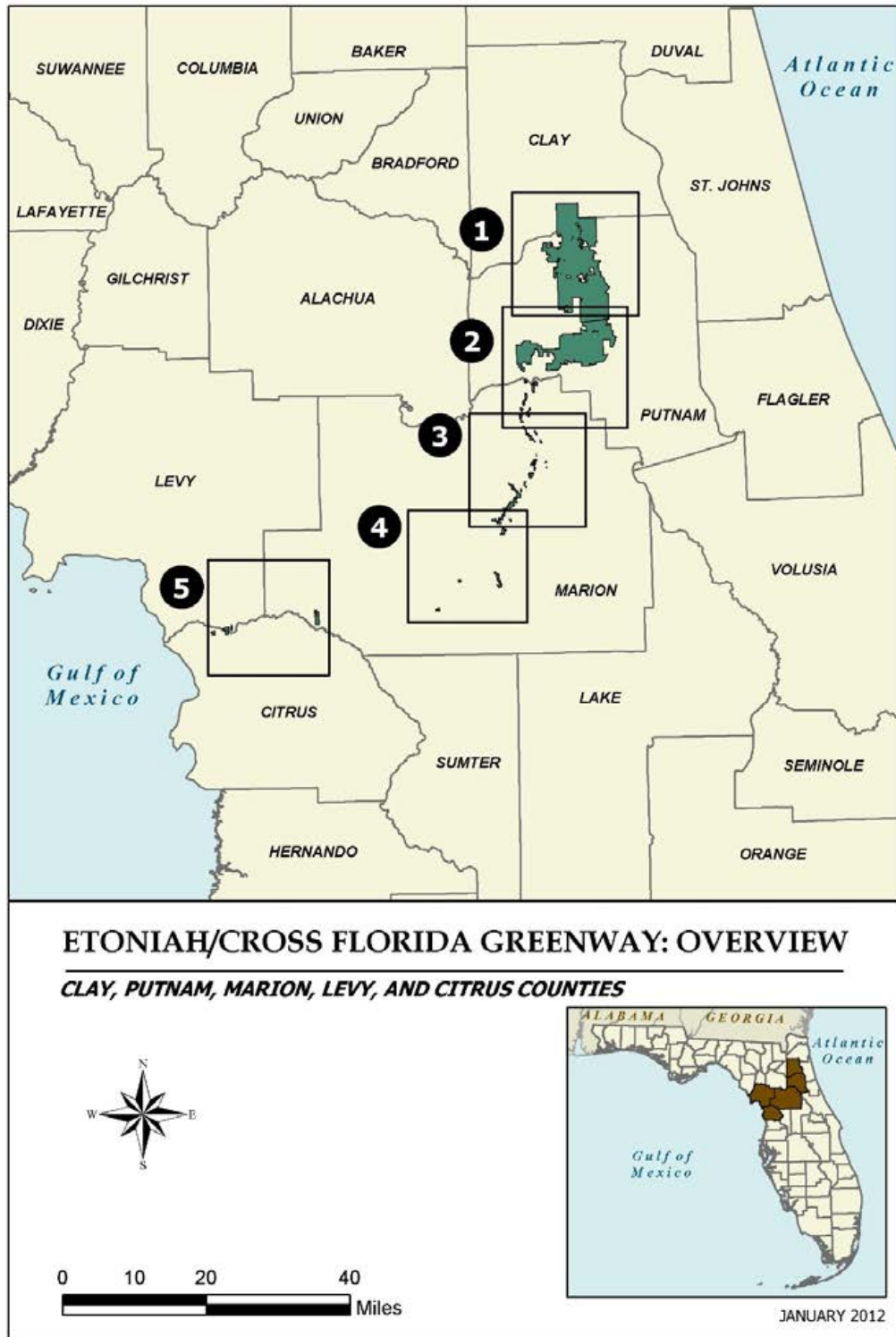


Map 62



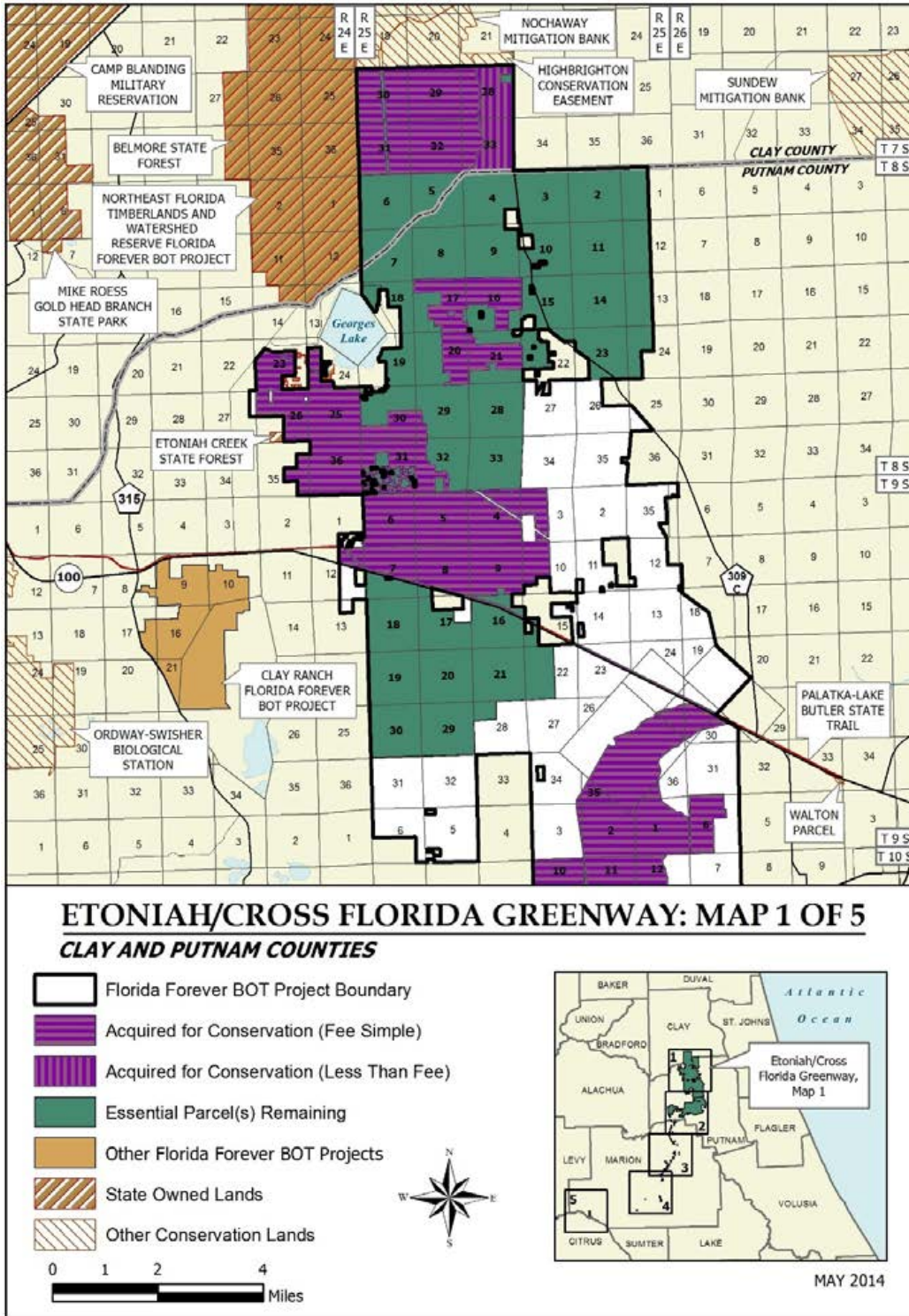
### Map(s): Etoniah / Cross Florida Greenway4

#### Etoniah / Cross Florida Greenway

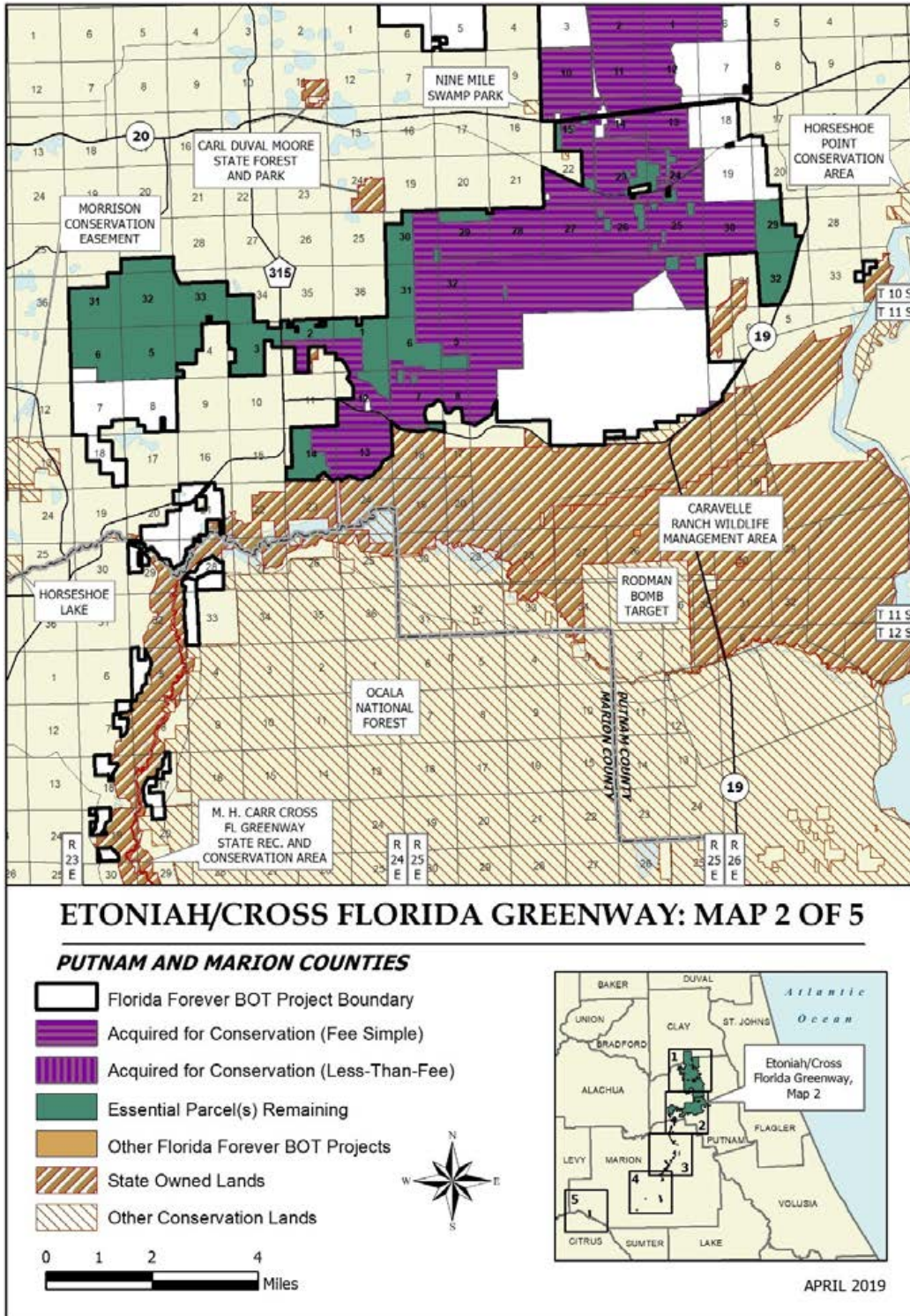


Map 63



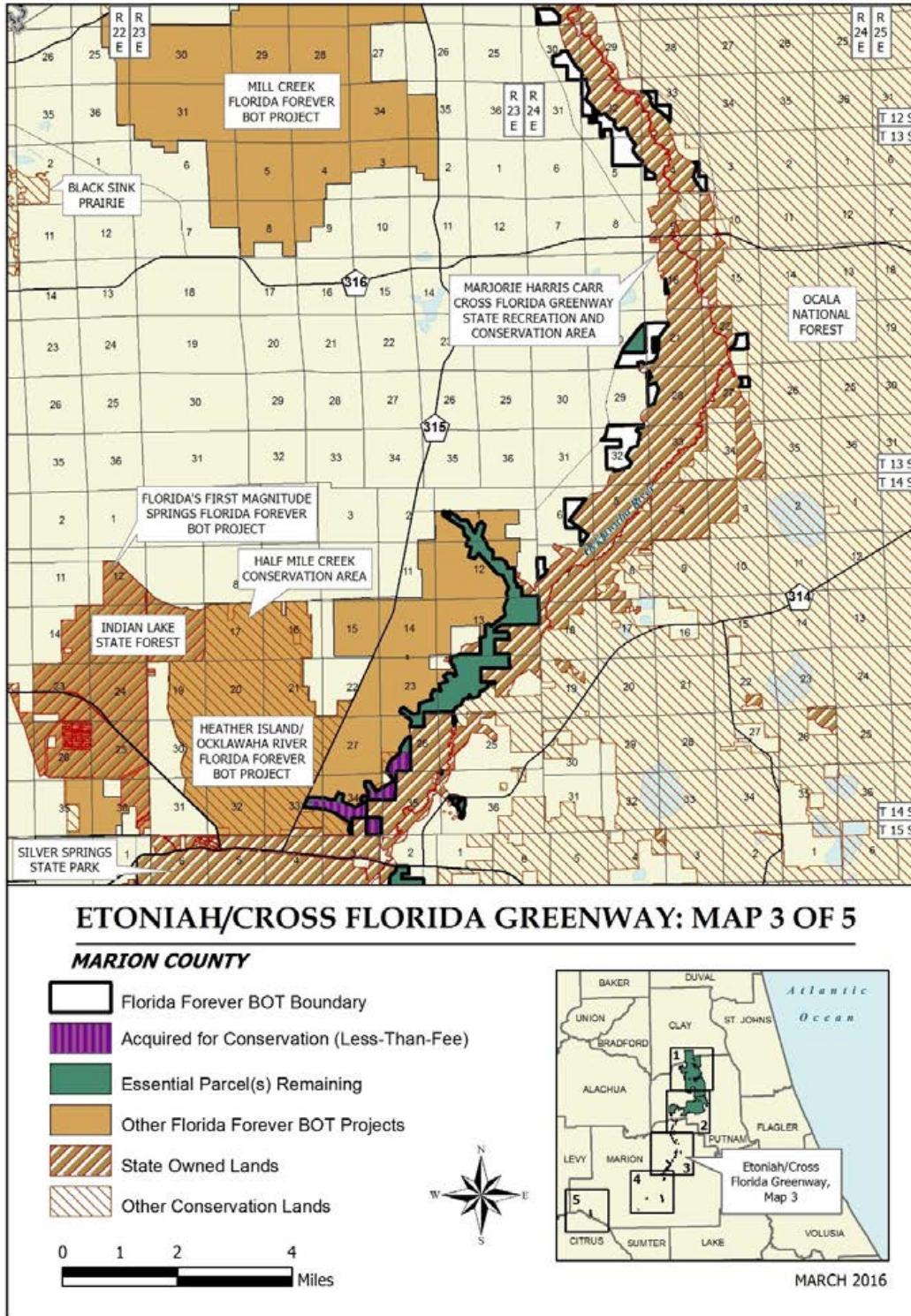


Map 64



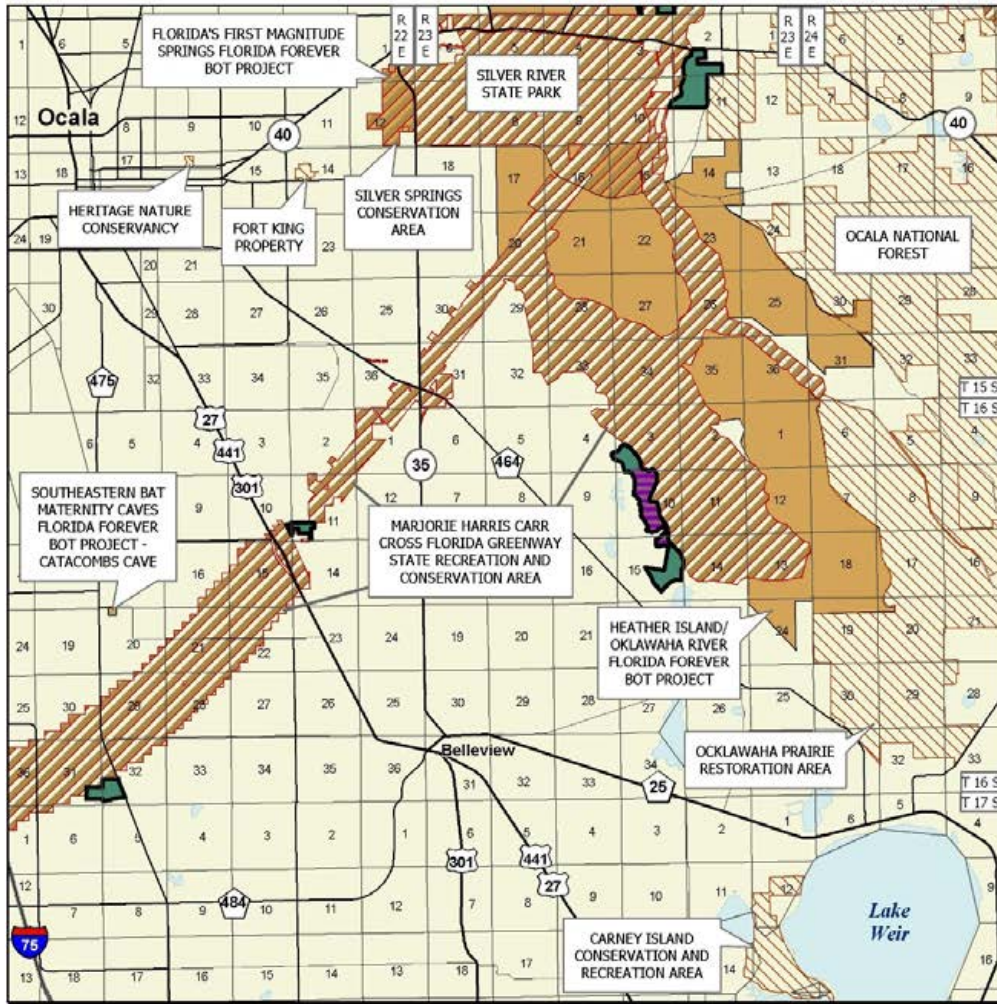
Map 65





Map 66





### ETONIAH/CROSS FLORIDA GREENWAY: MAP 4 OF 5

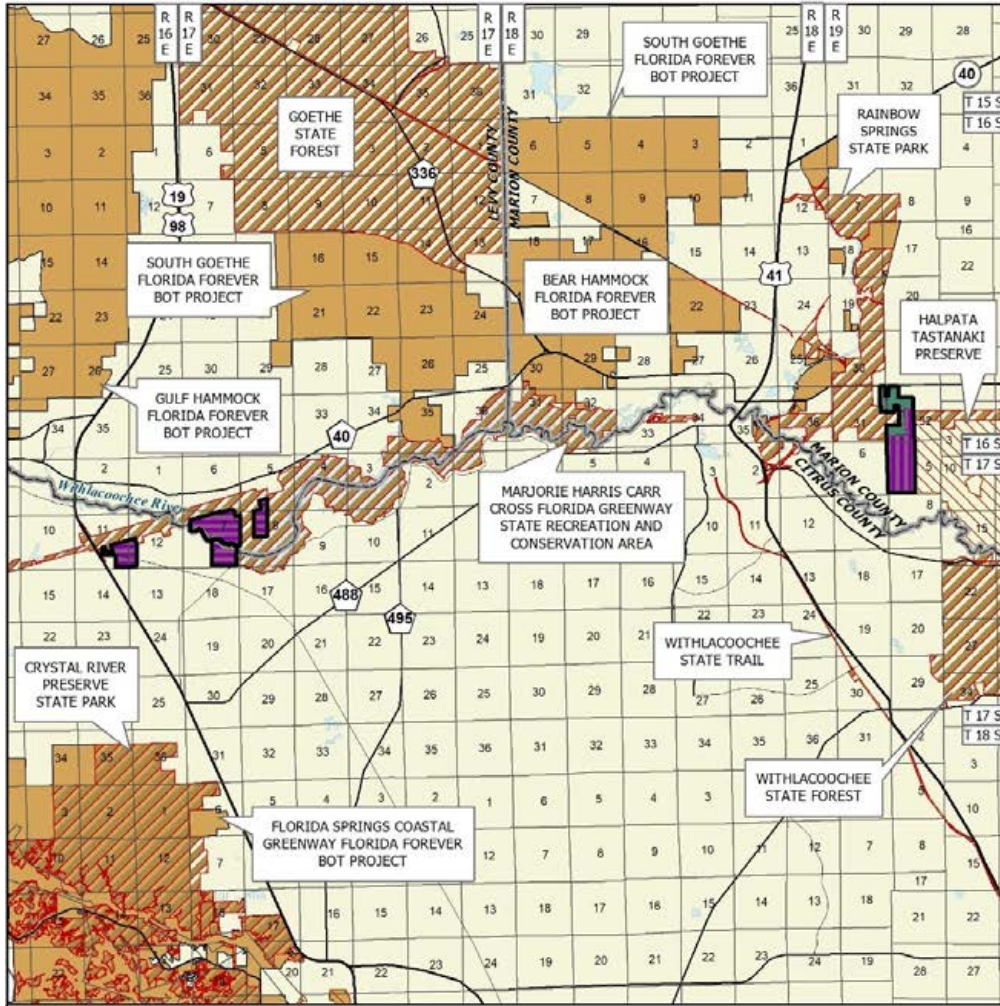
#### MARION COUNTY

- Florida Forever BOT Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



JANUARY 2012

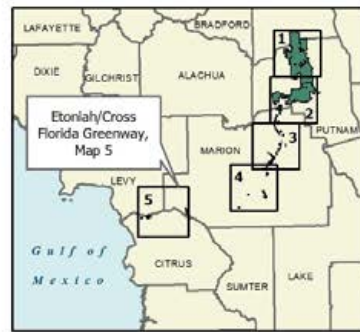
Map 67



### ETONIAH/CROSS FLORIDA GREENWAY: MAP 5 OF 5

#### MARION, LEVY, AND CITRUS COUNTIES

- Florida Forever BOT Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Acquired for Conservation (Less-Than-Fee)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



APRIL 2019

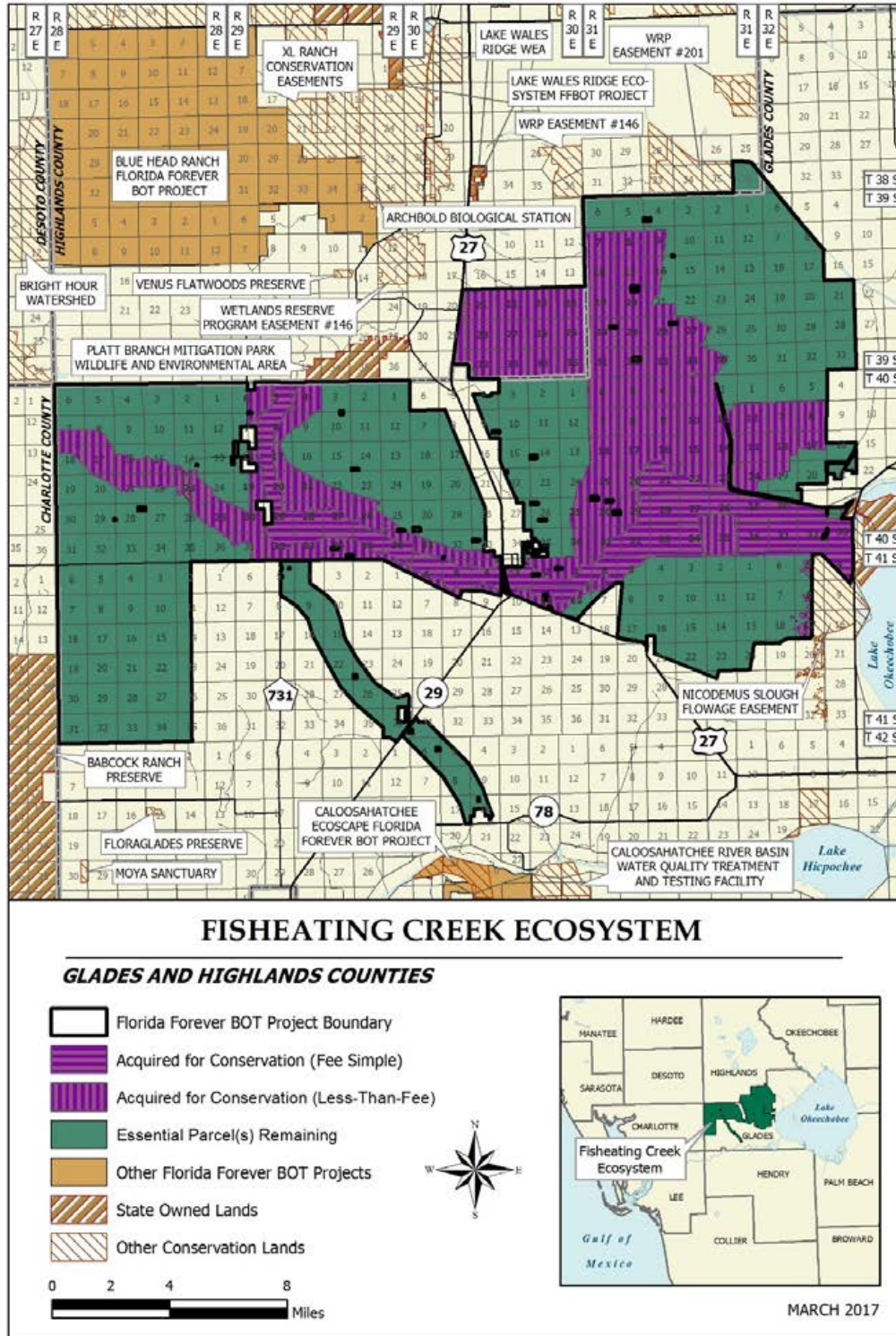
Map 68





### Map(s): Fisheating Creek Ecosystem

#### Fisheating Creek Ecosystem

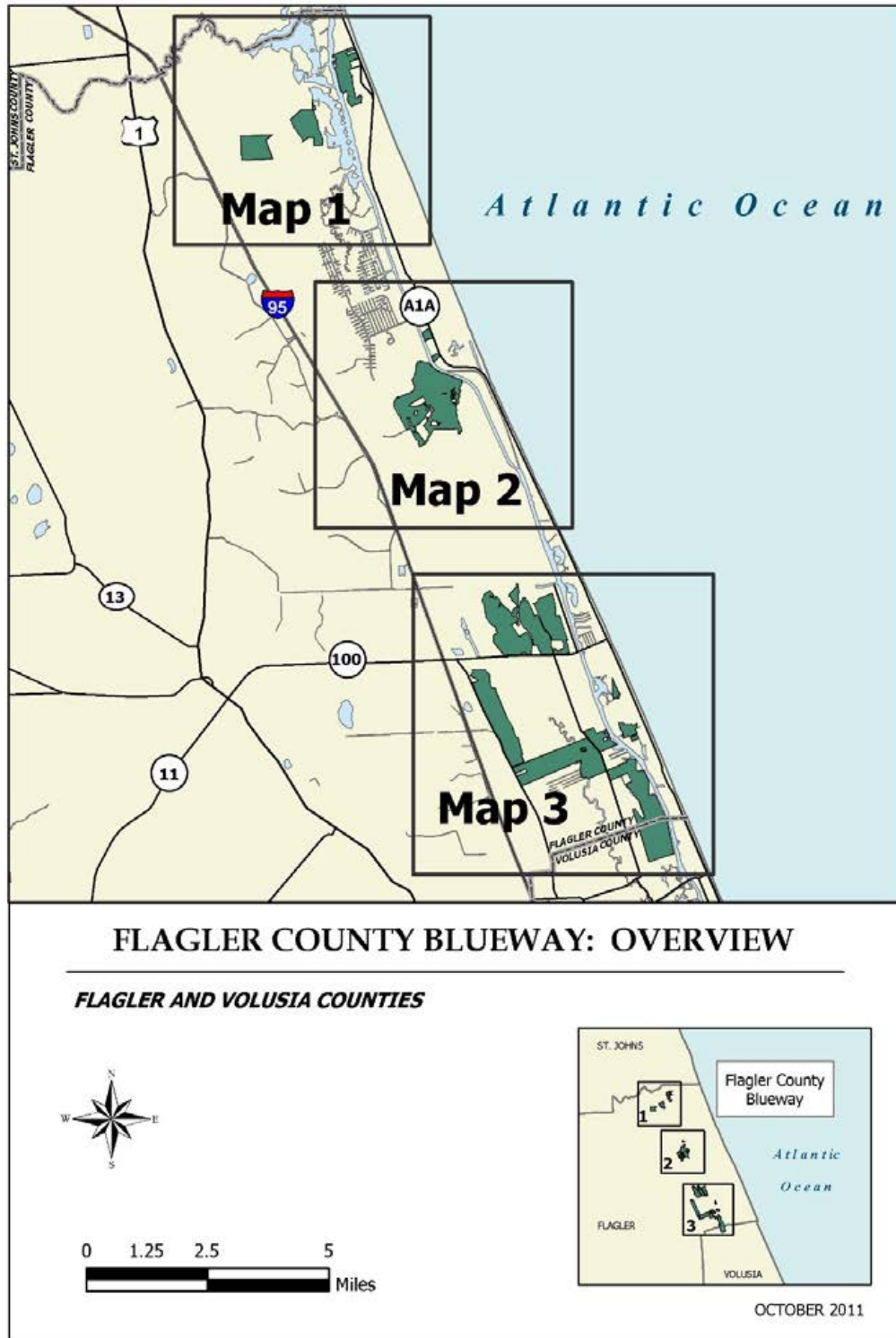


Map 69



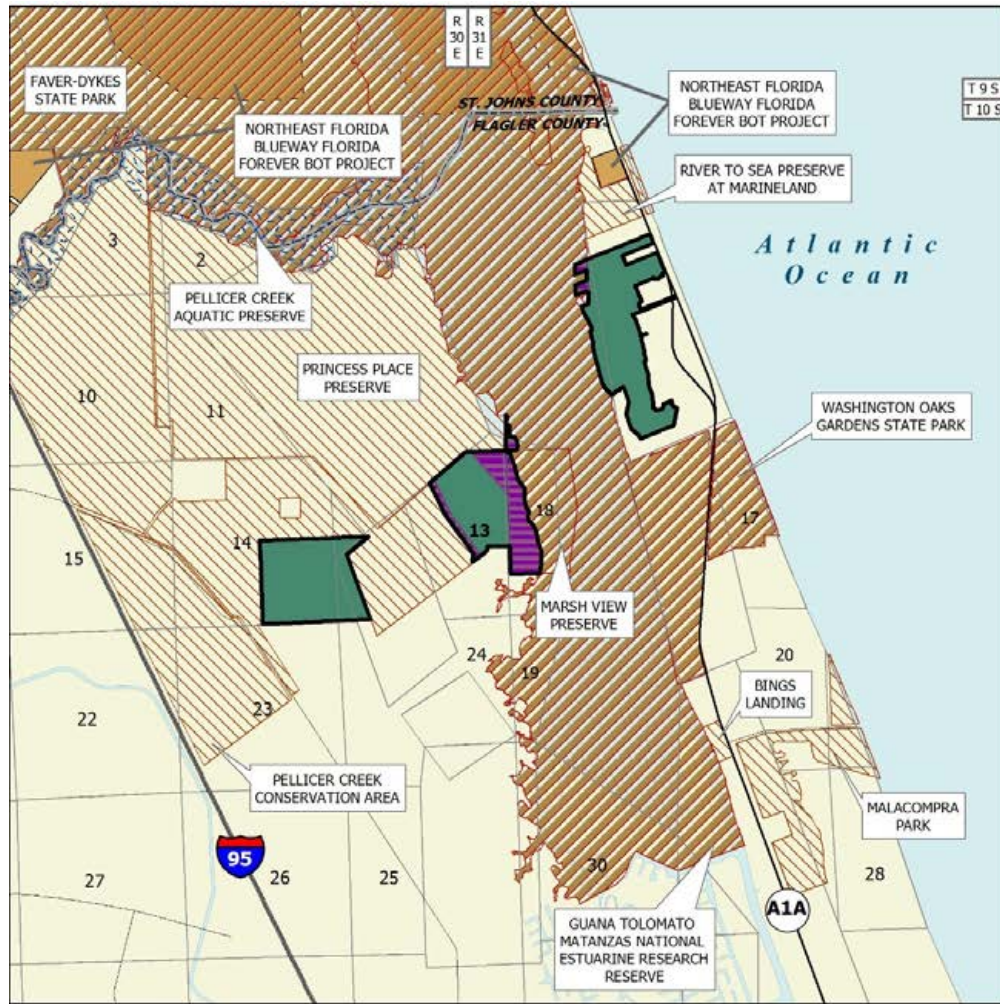
### Map(s): Flagler County Blueway

#### Flagler County Blueway



Map 70





### FLAGLER COUNTY BLUEWAY: MAP 1 OF 3

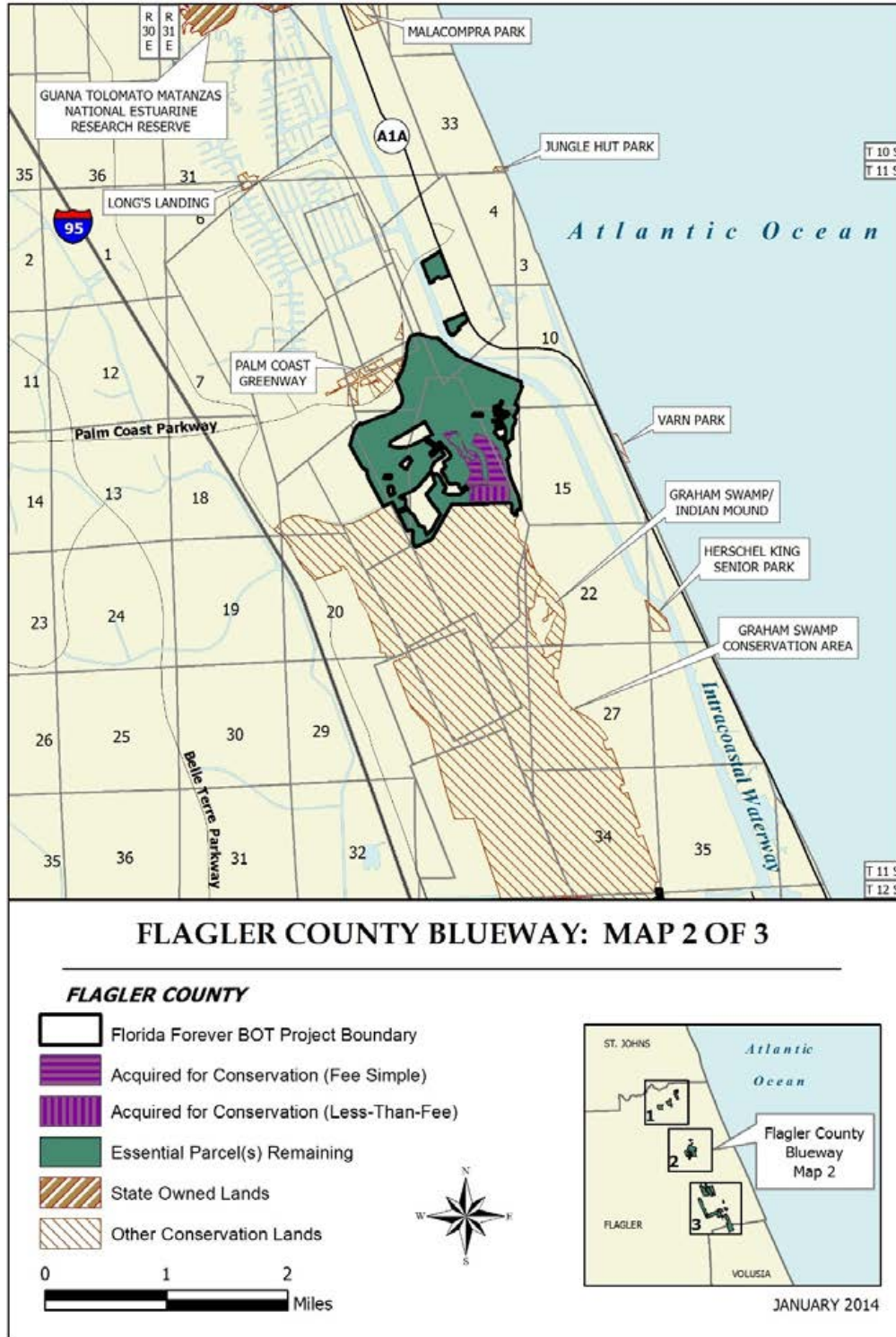
#### FLAGLER COUNTY

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands
- State Aquatic Preserves



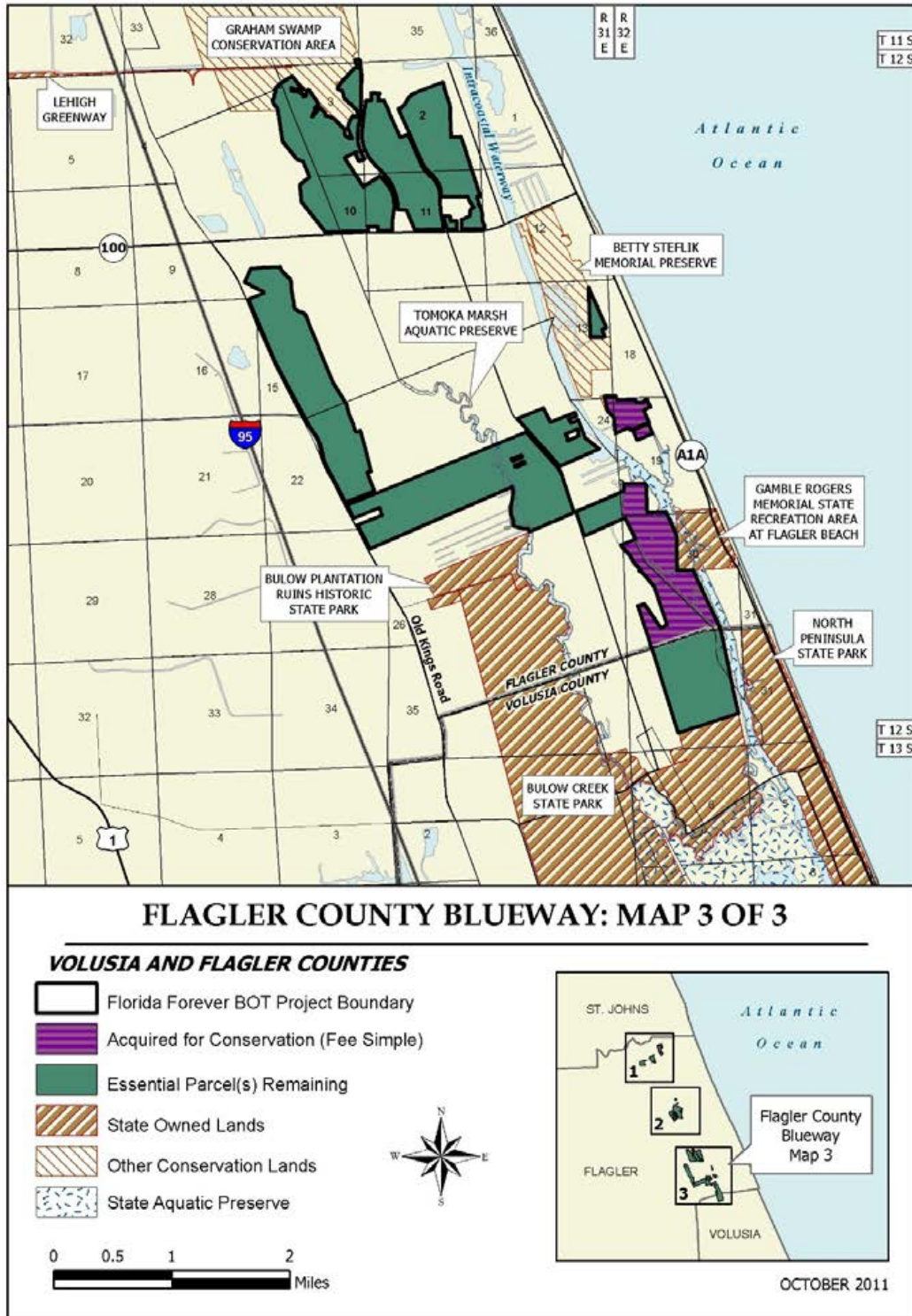
MAY 2014

Map 71



Map 72





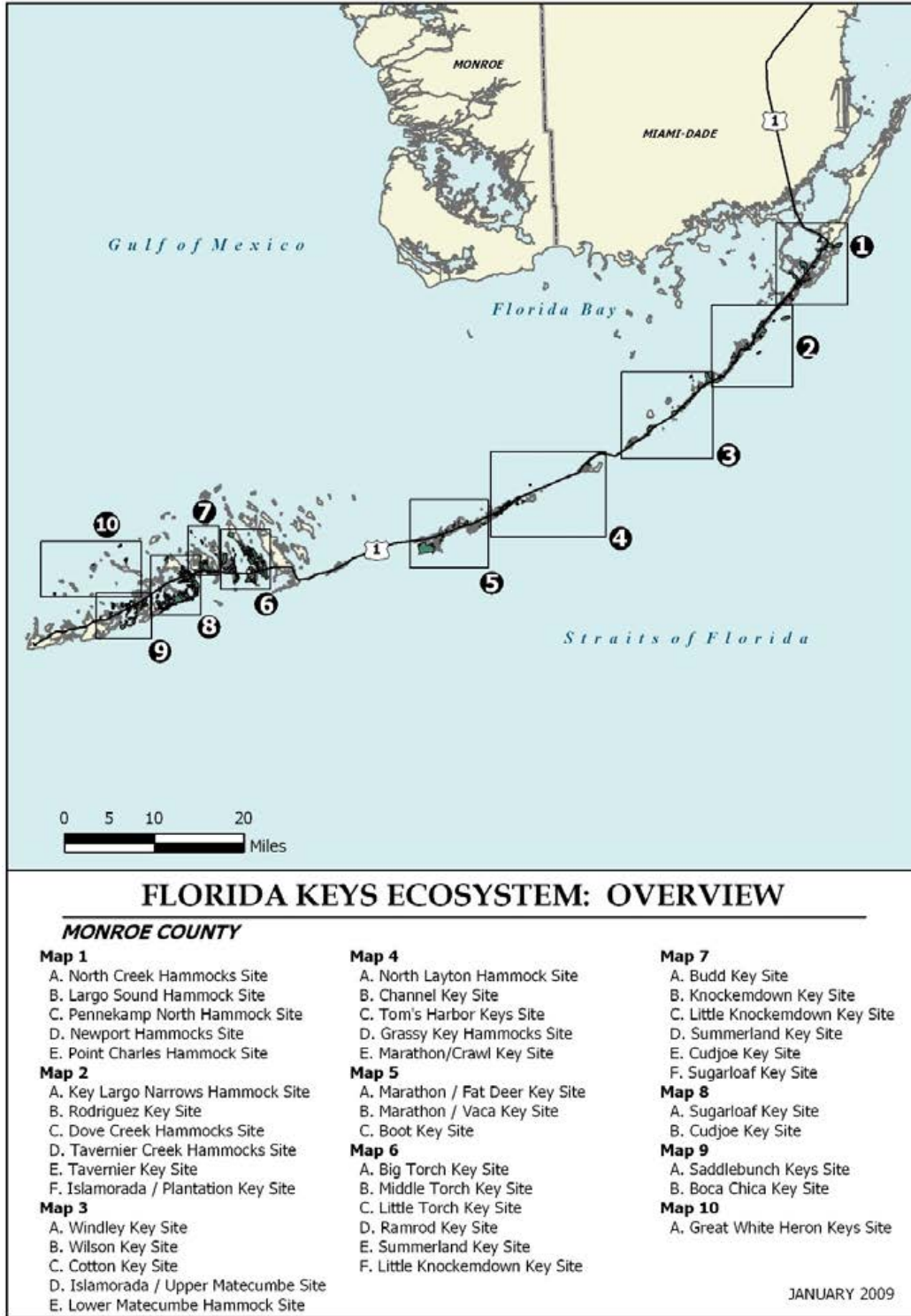
Map 73



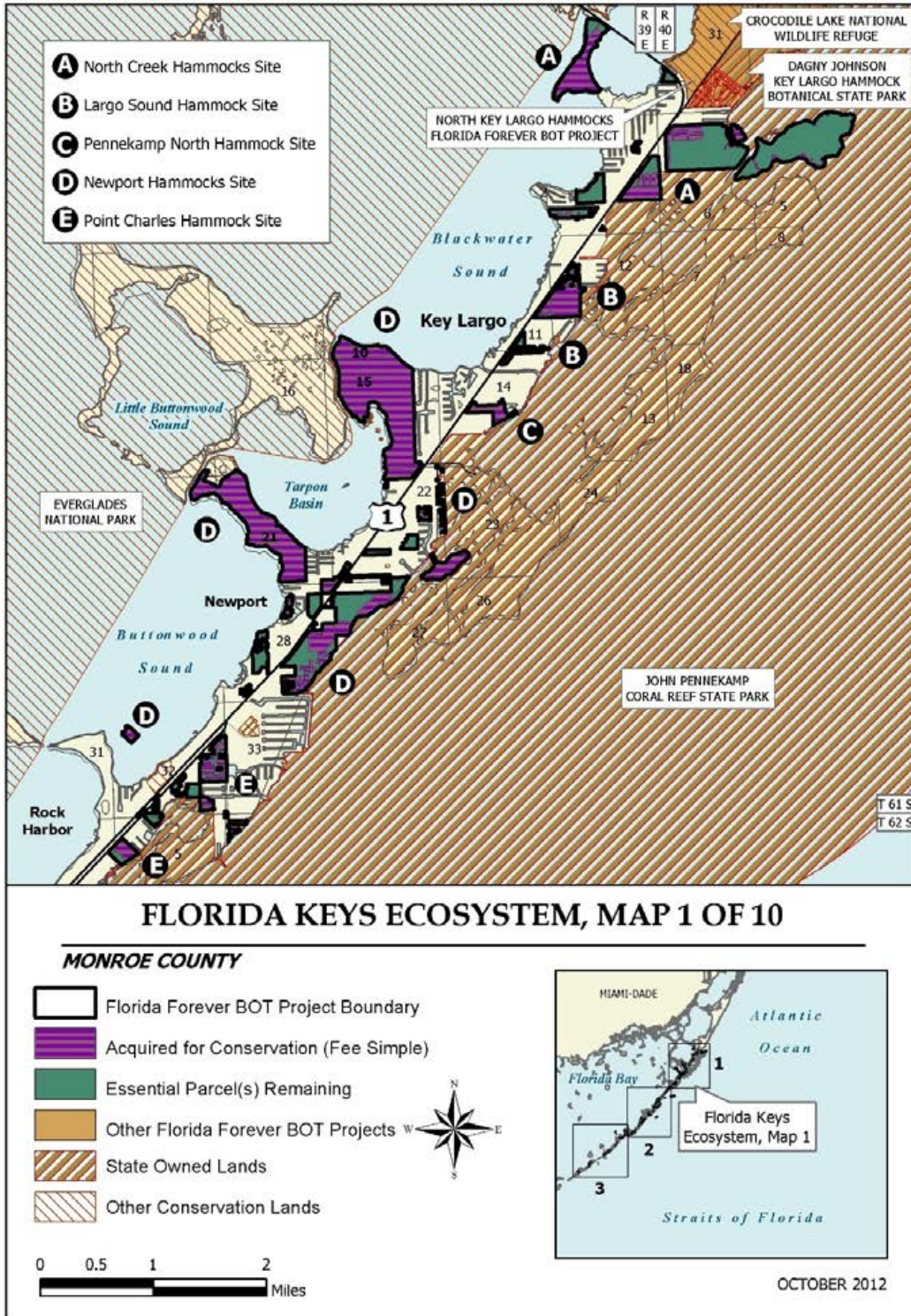


### Map(s): Florida Keys Ecosystem

#### Florida Keys Ecosystem

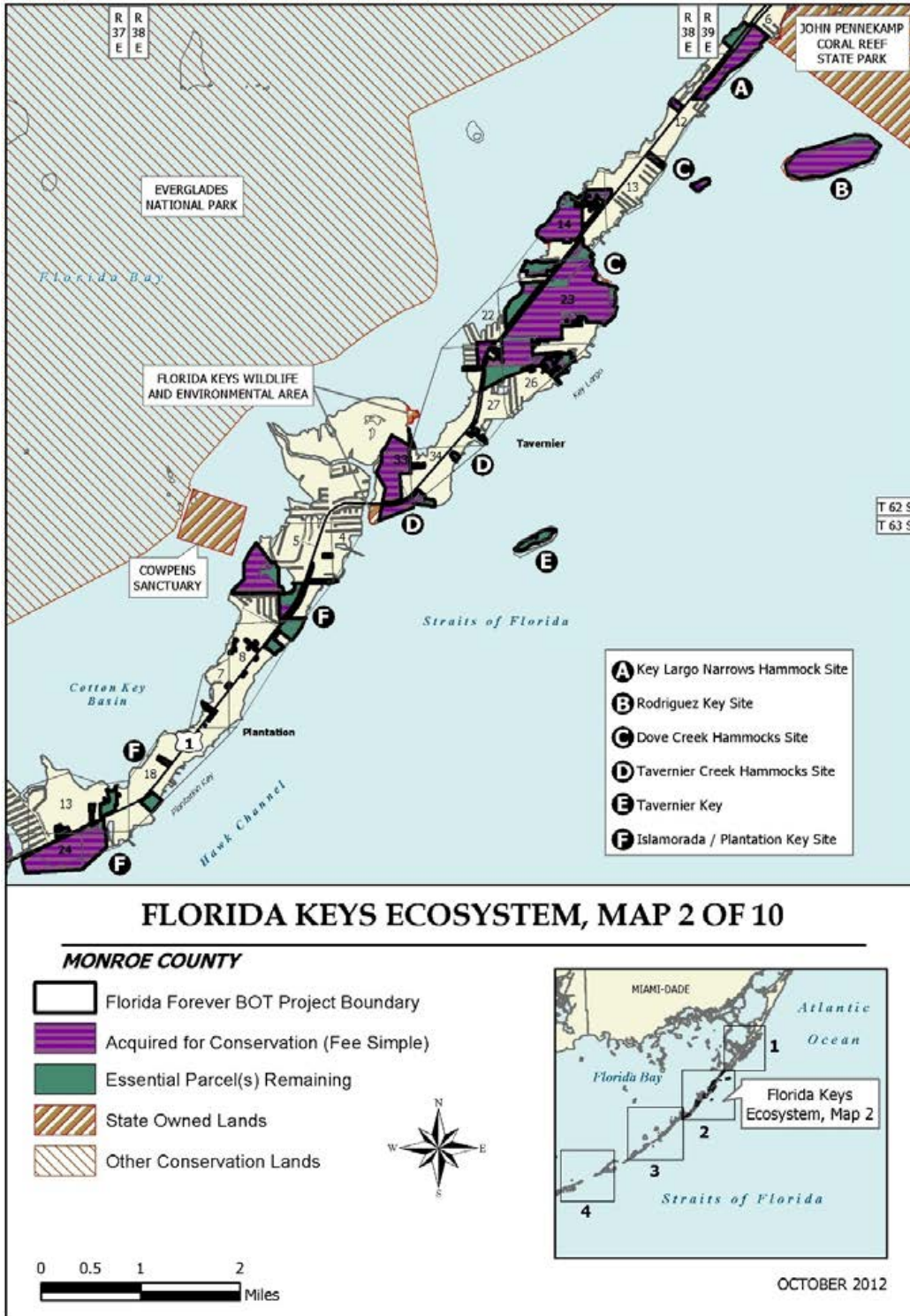


Map 74

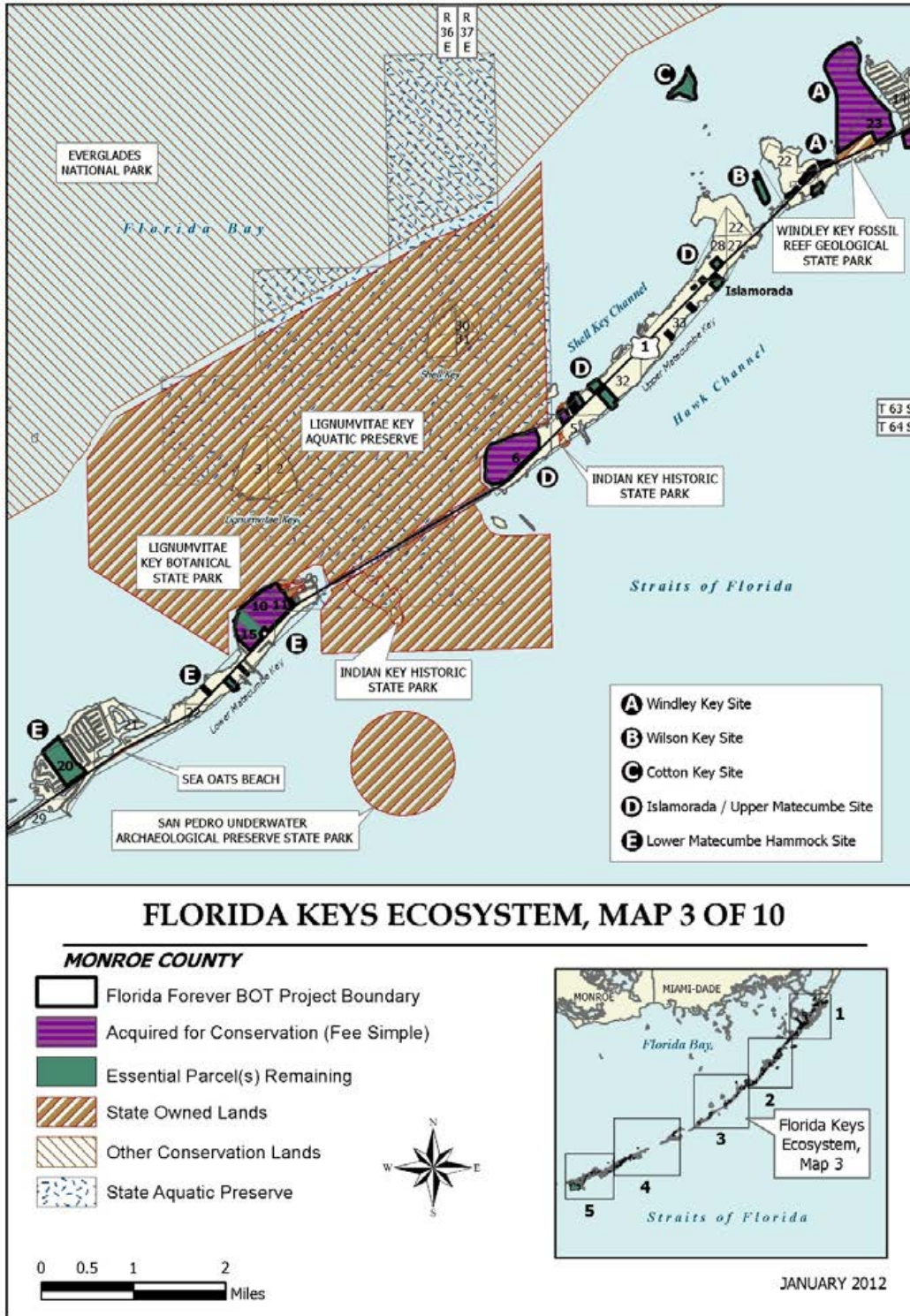


Map 75



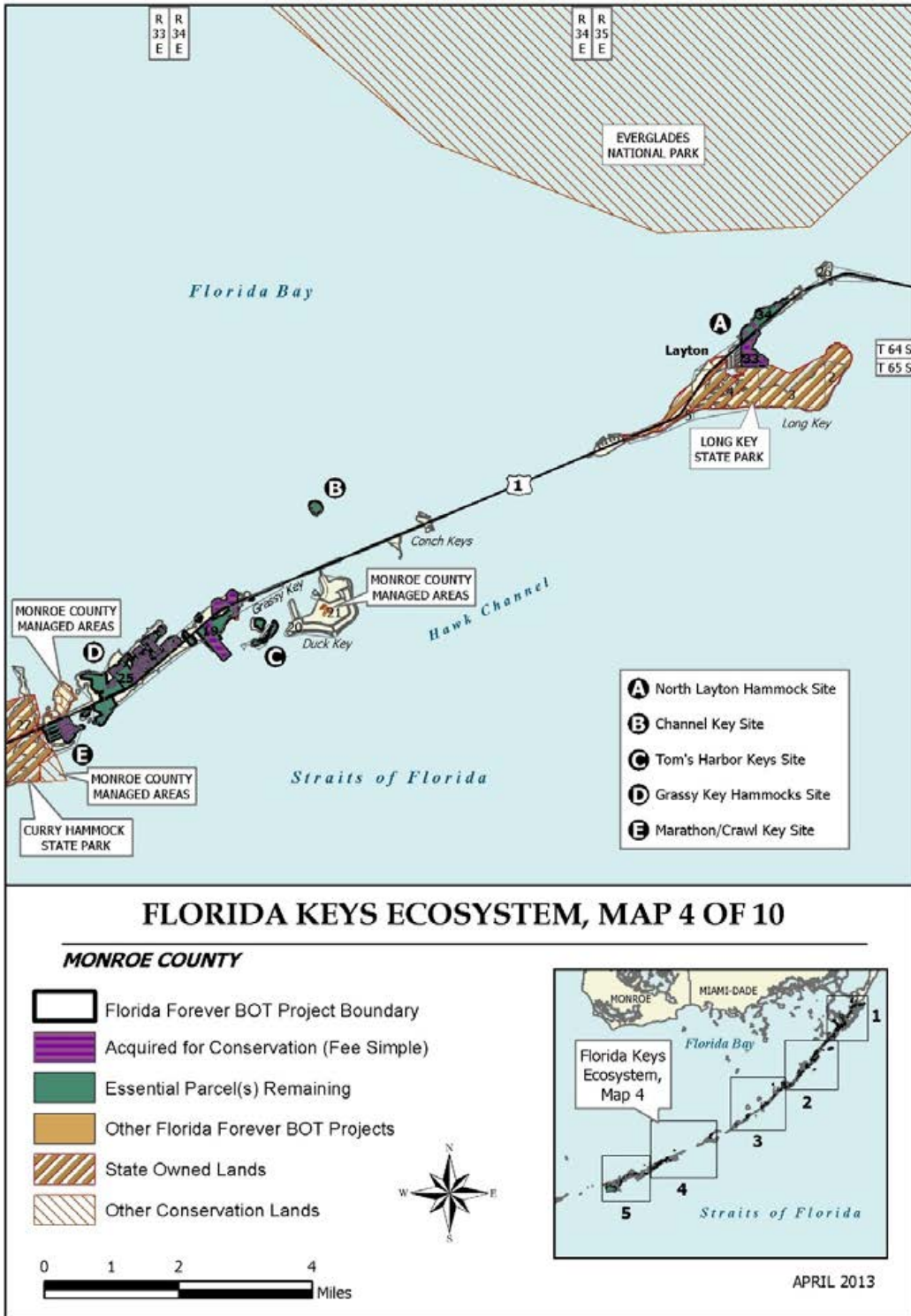


Map 76



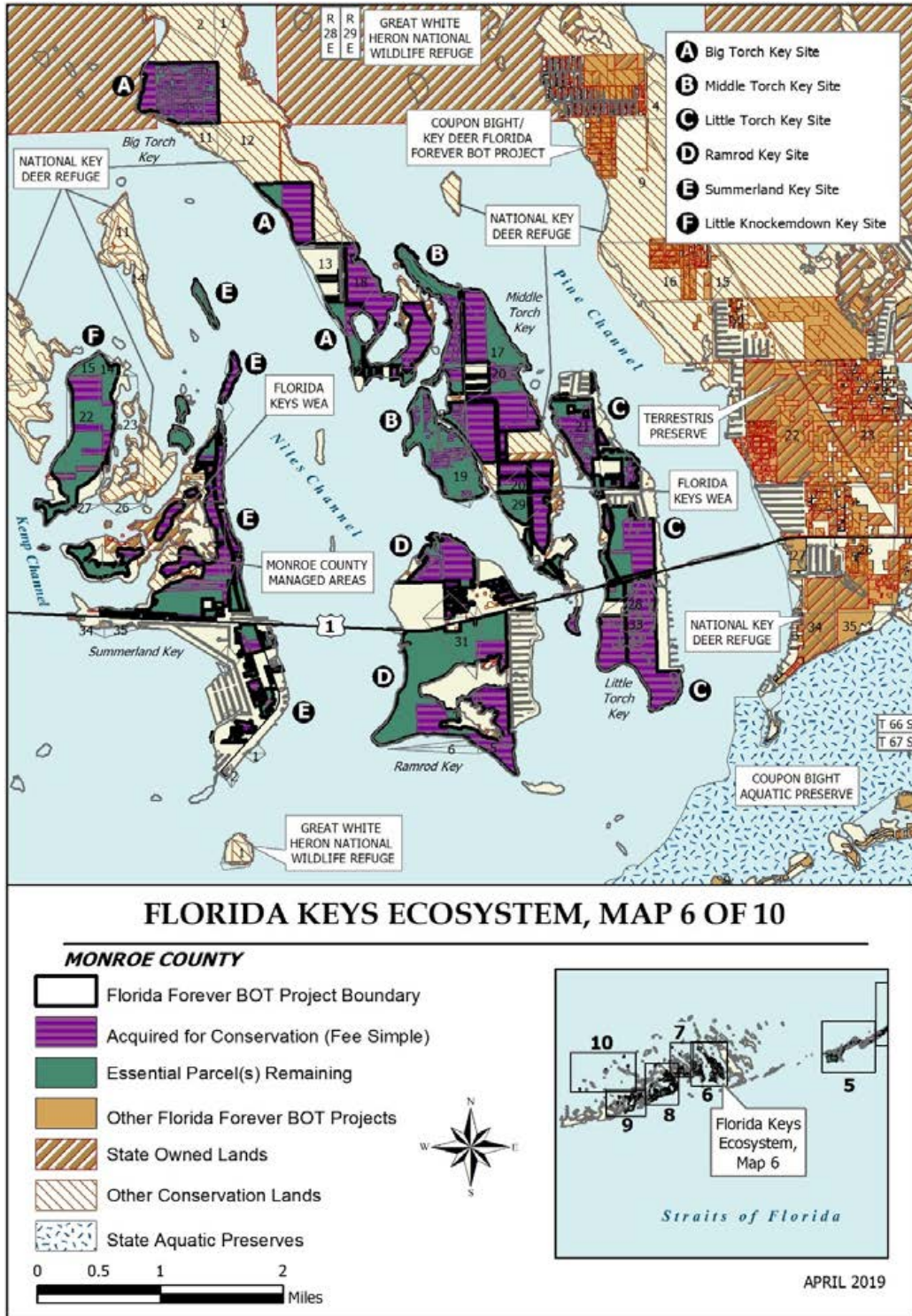
Map 77





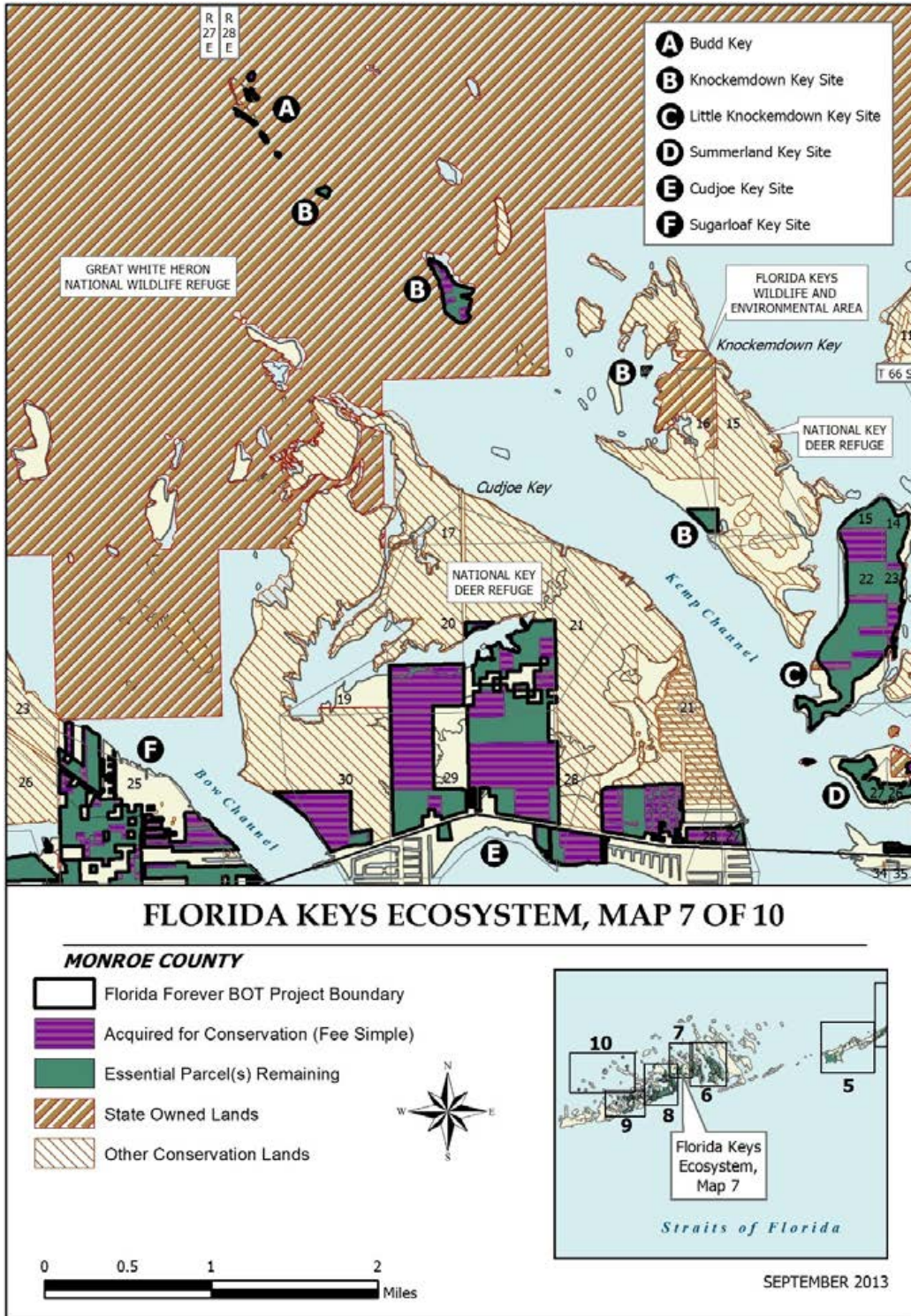
Map 78



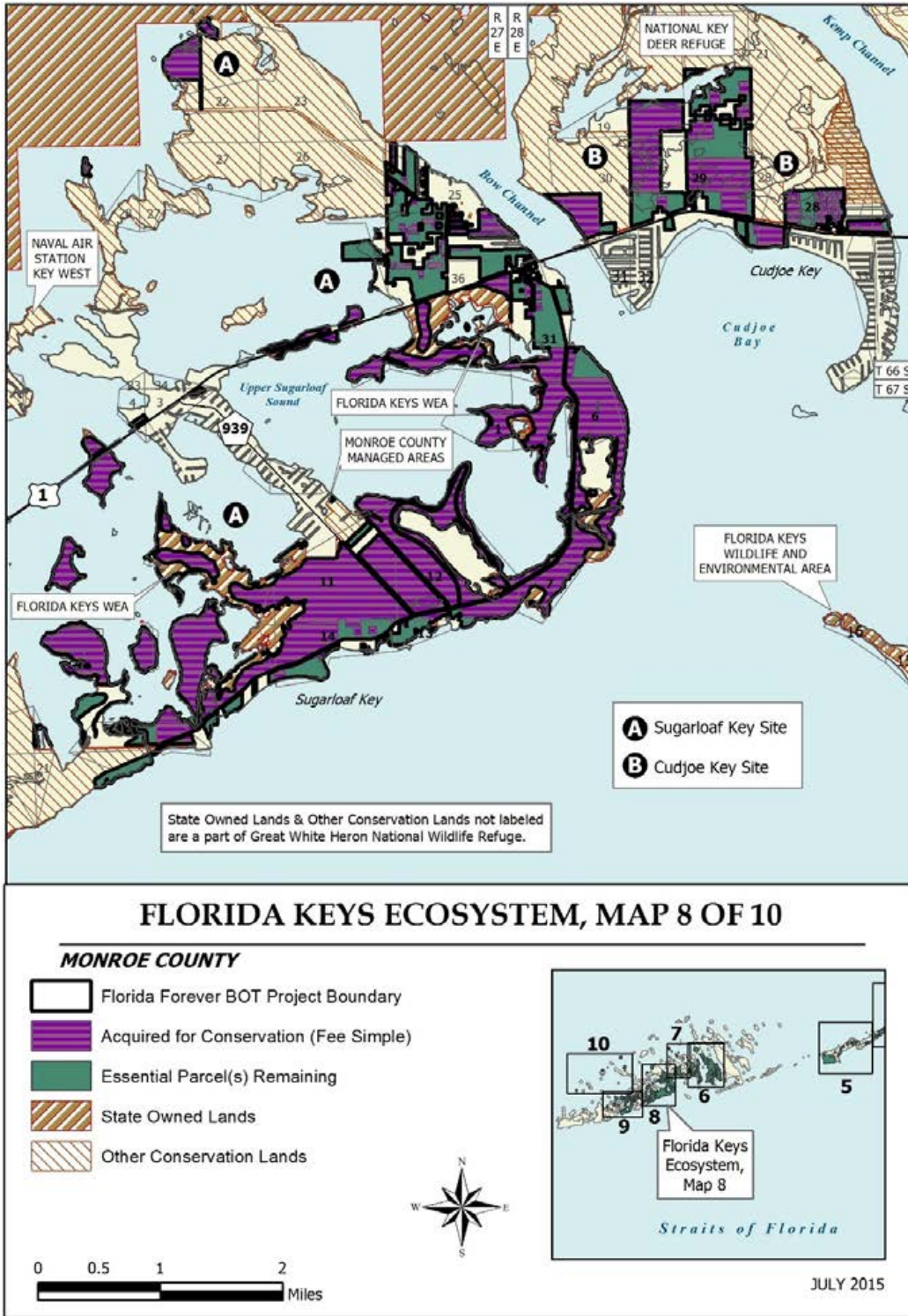


Map 80



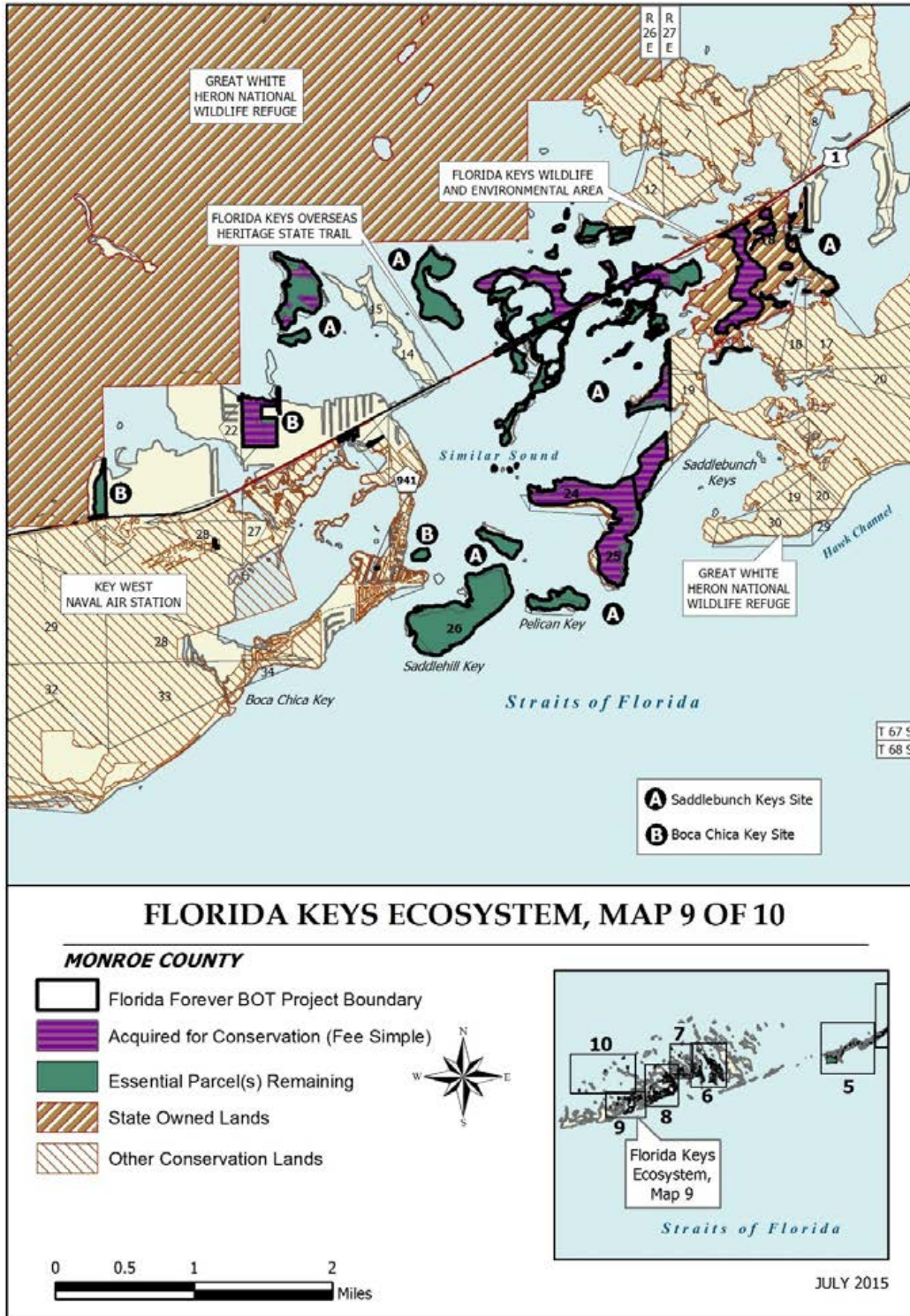


Map 81



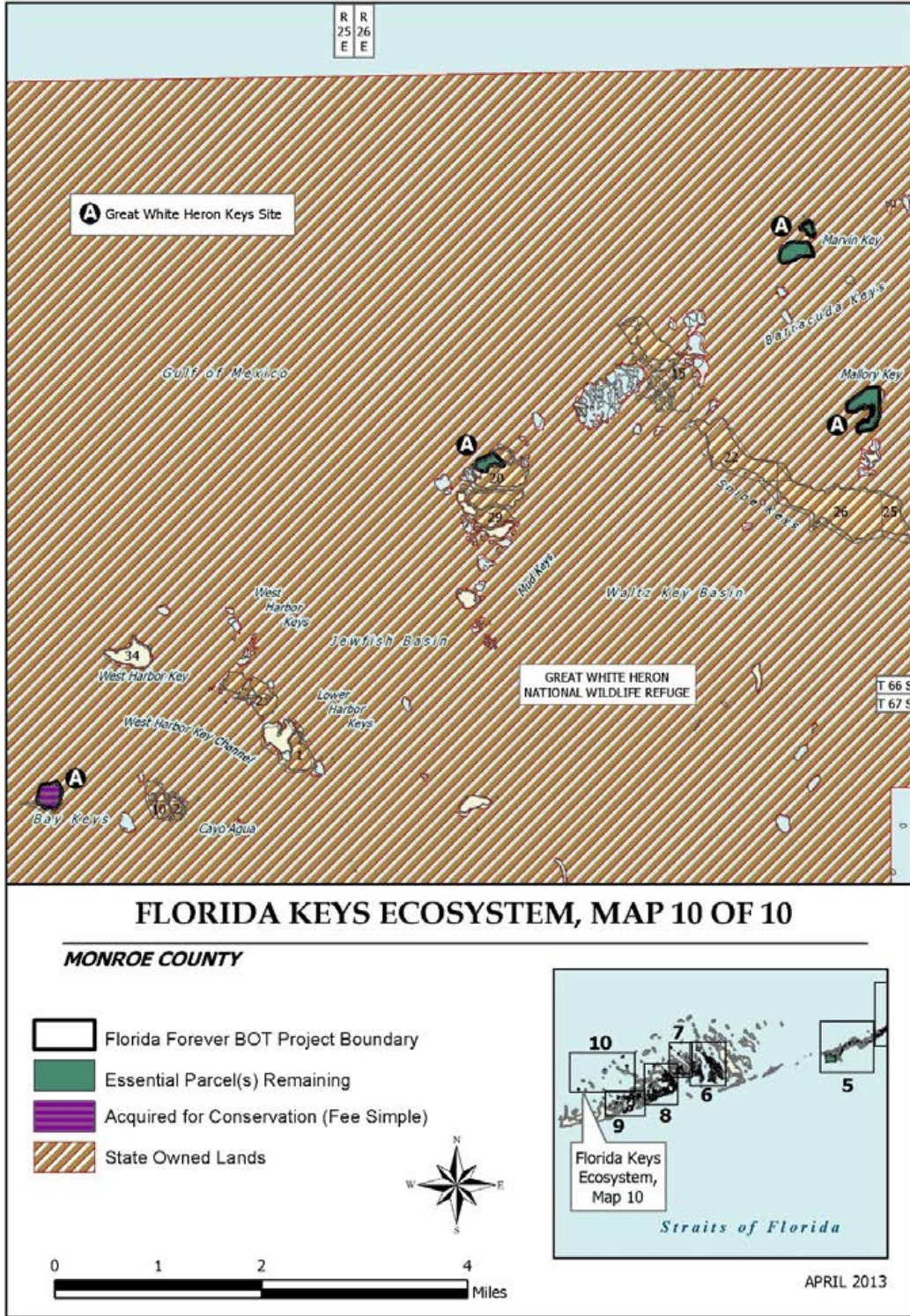
Map 82





Map 83



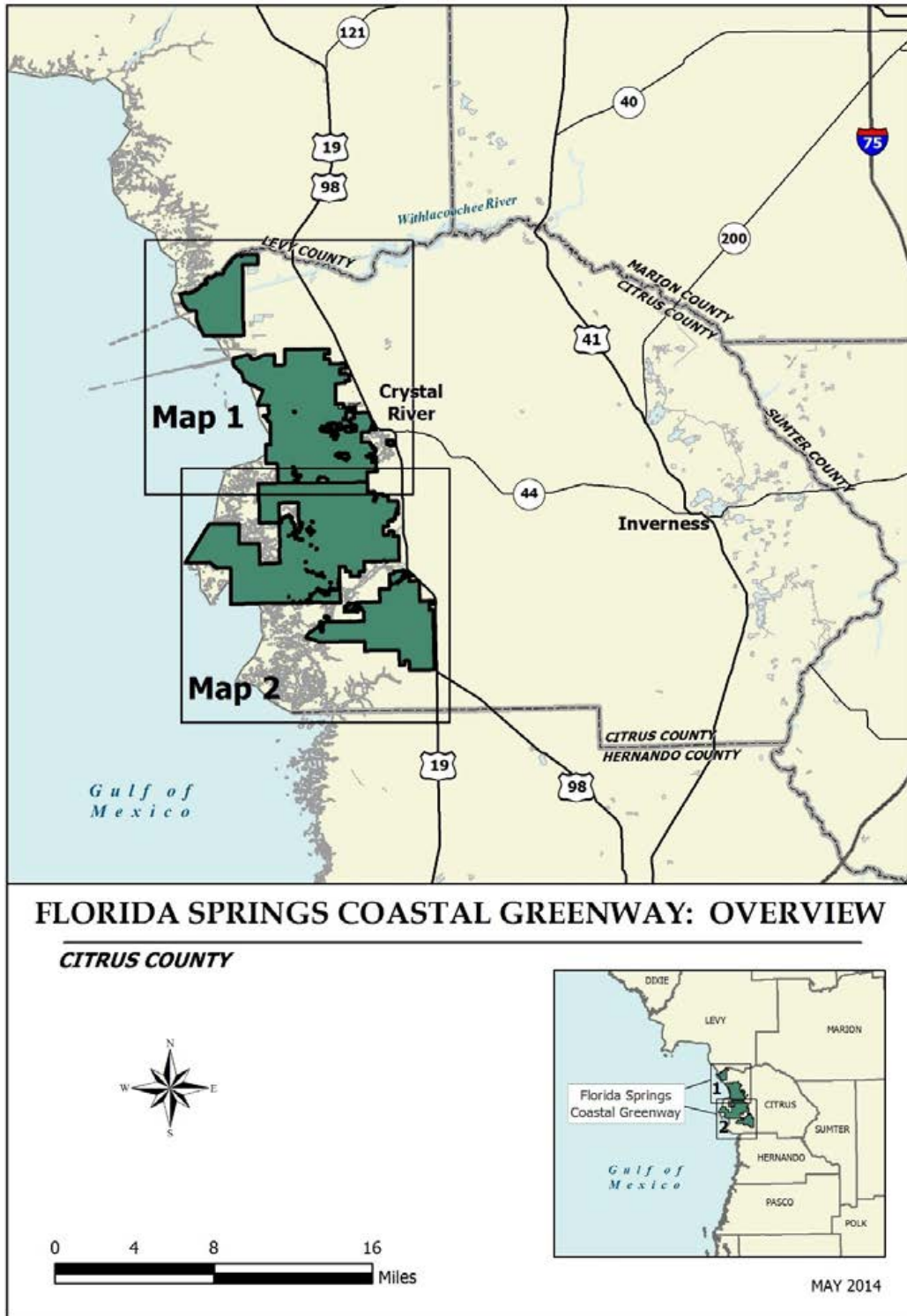


Map 84



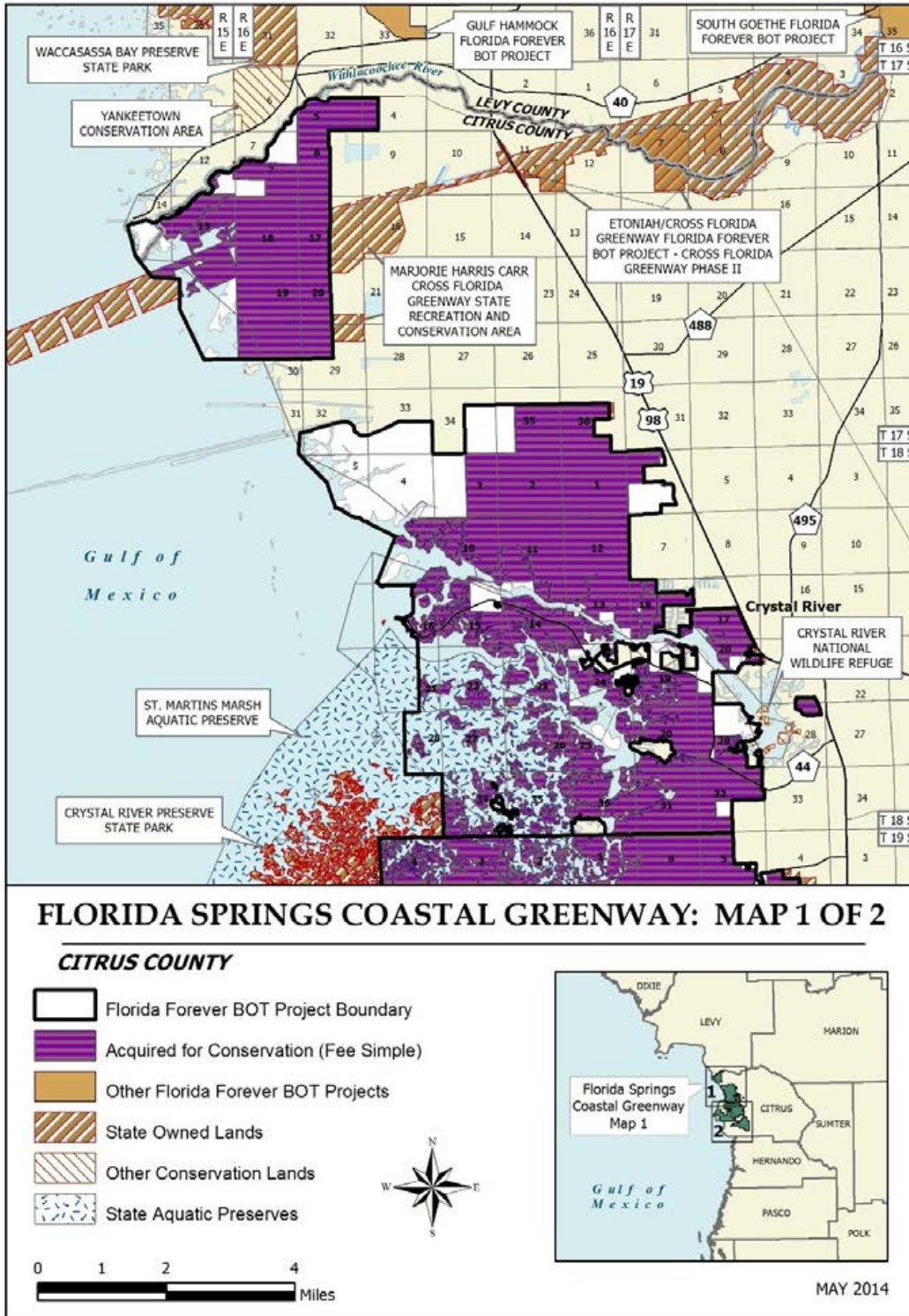
### Map(s): Florida Springs Coastal Greenway4

#### Florida Springs Coastal Greenway

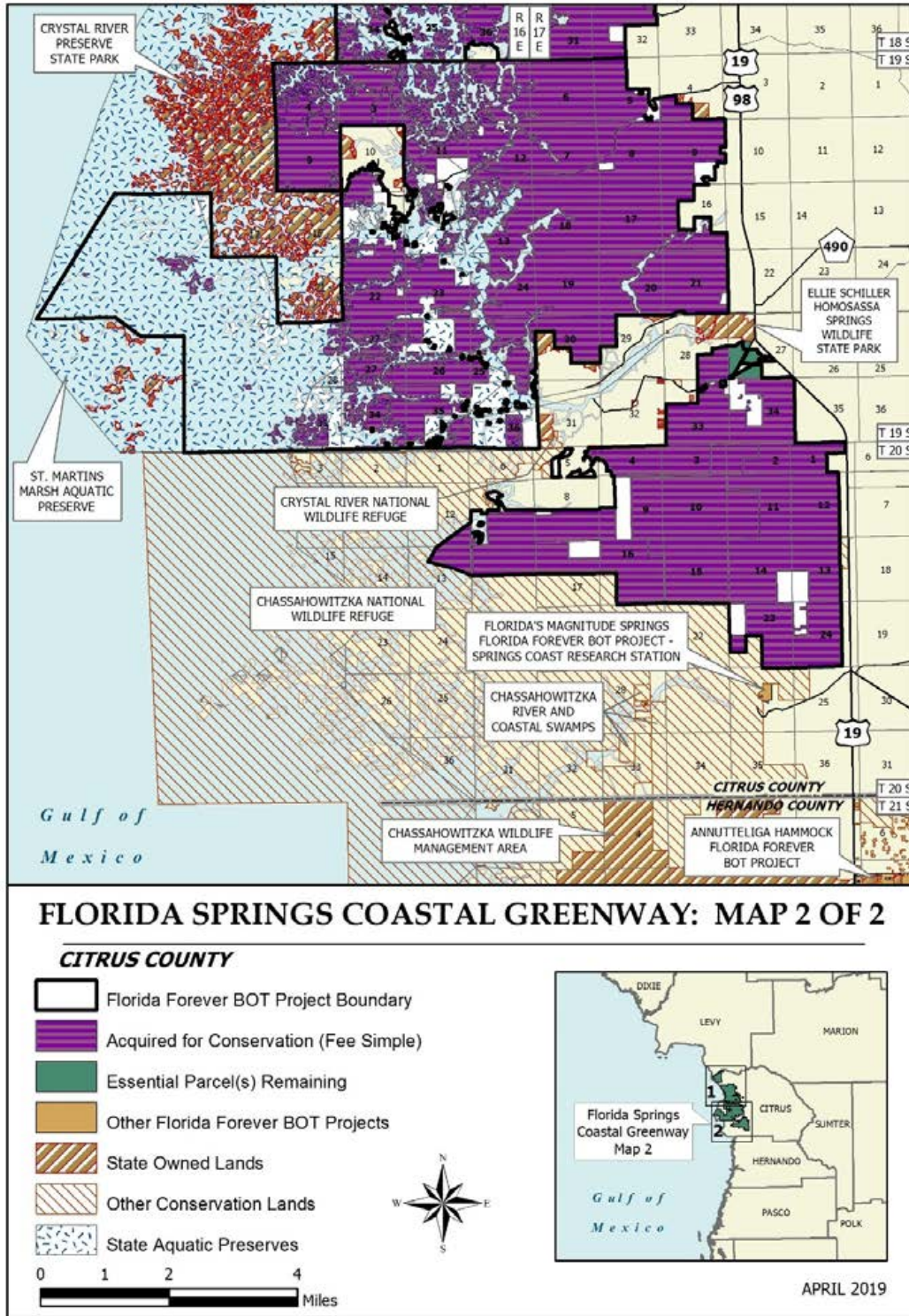


Map 85





Map 86



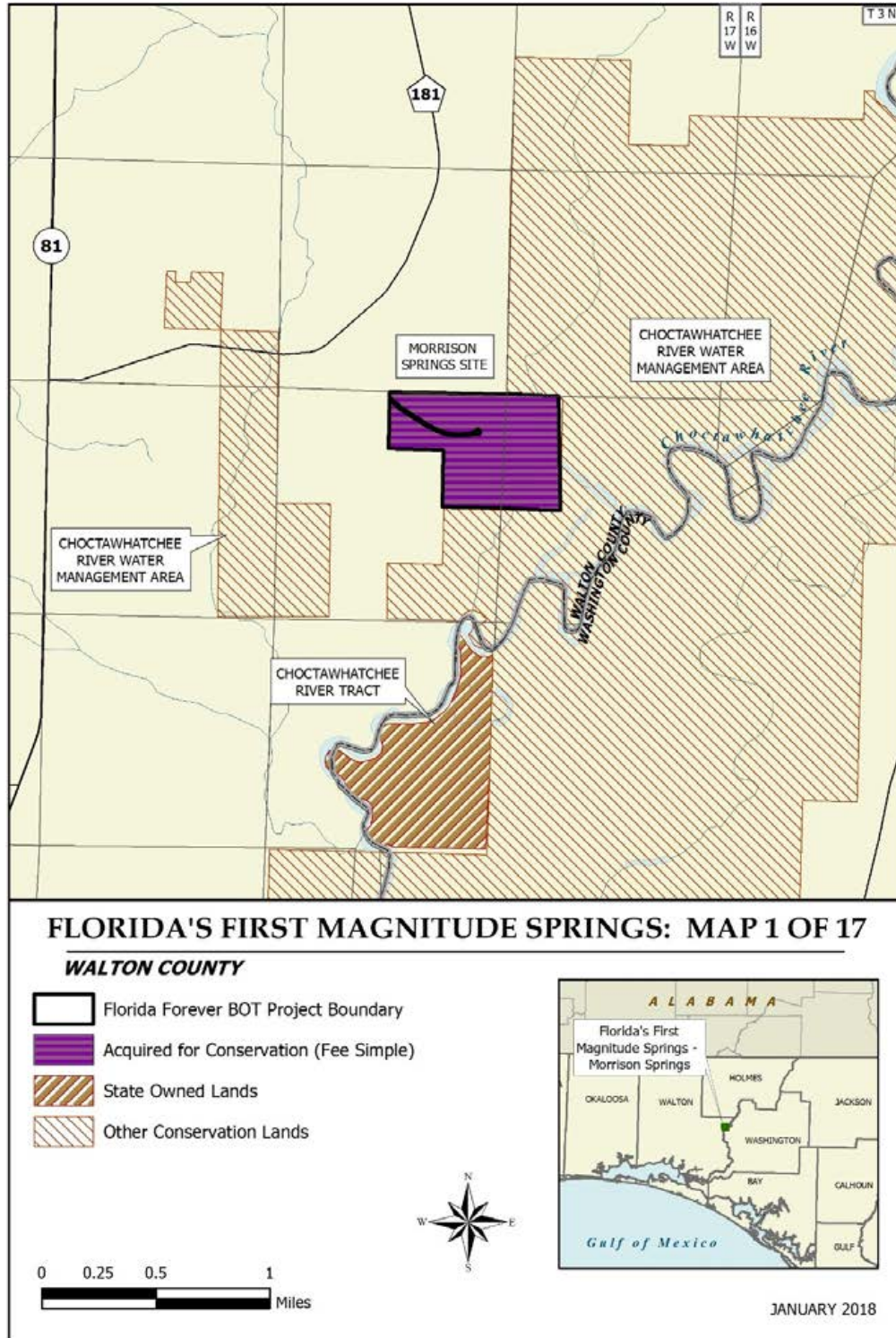
Map 87



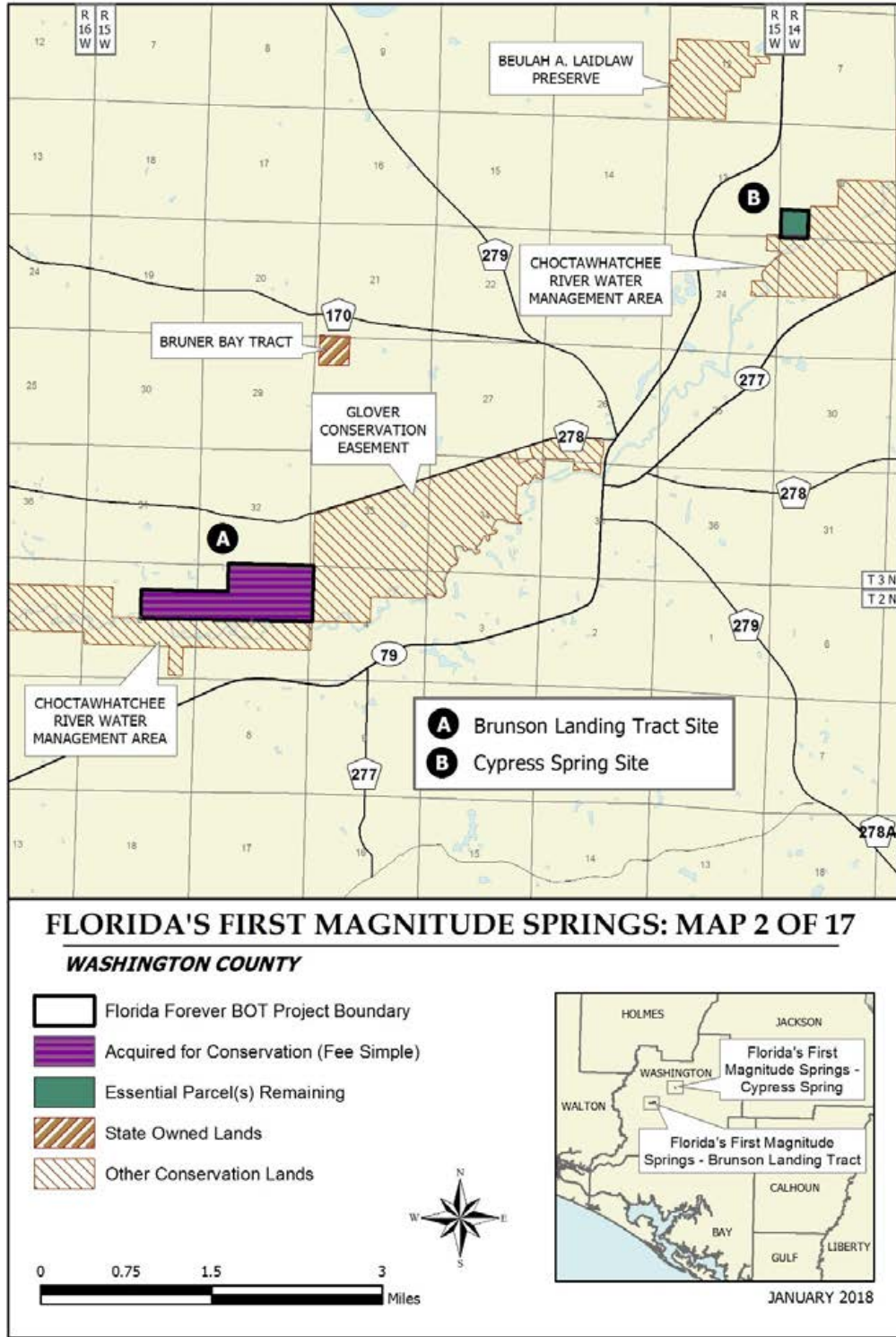


### Map(s): Florida's First Magnitude Springs

#### Florida's First Magnitude Springs

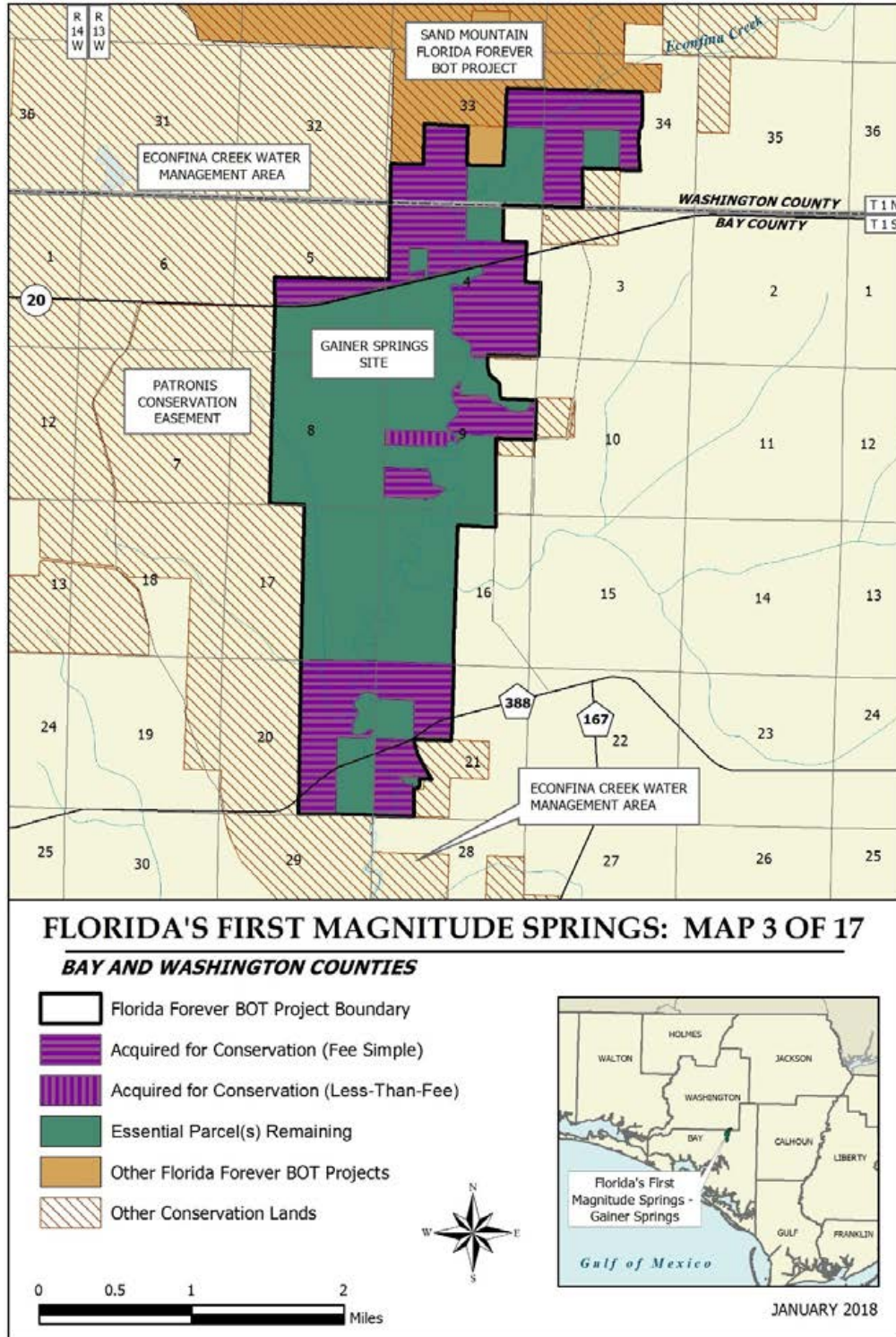


Map 88

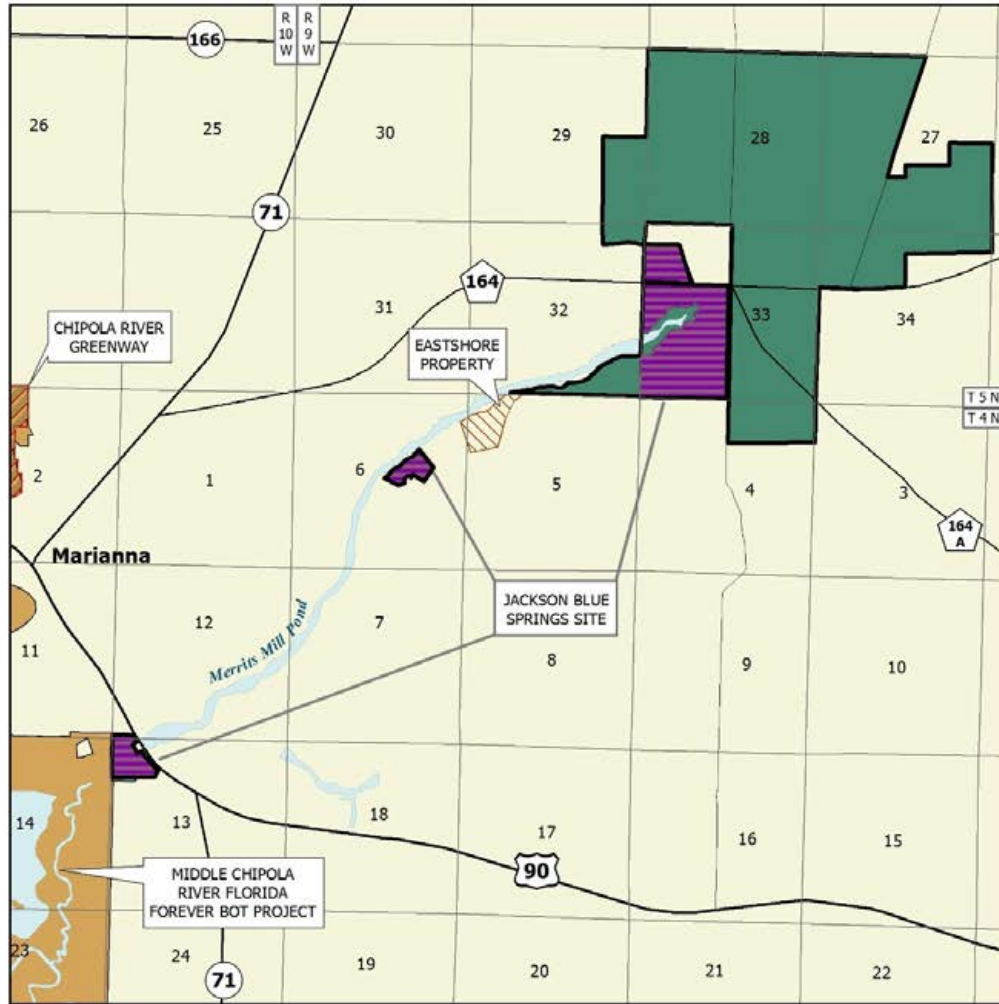


Map 89





Map 90



### FLORIDA'S FIRST MAGNITUDE SPRINGS: MAP 4 OF 17

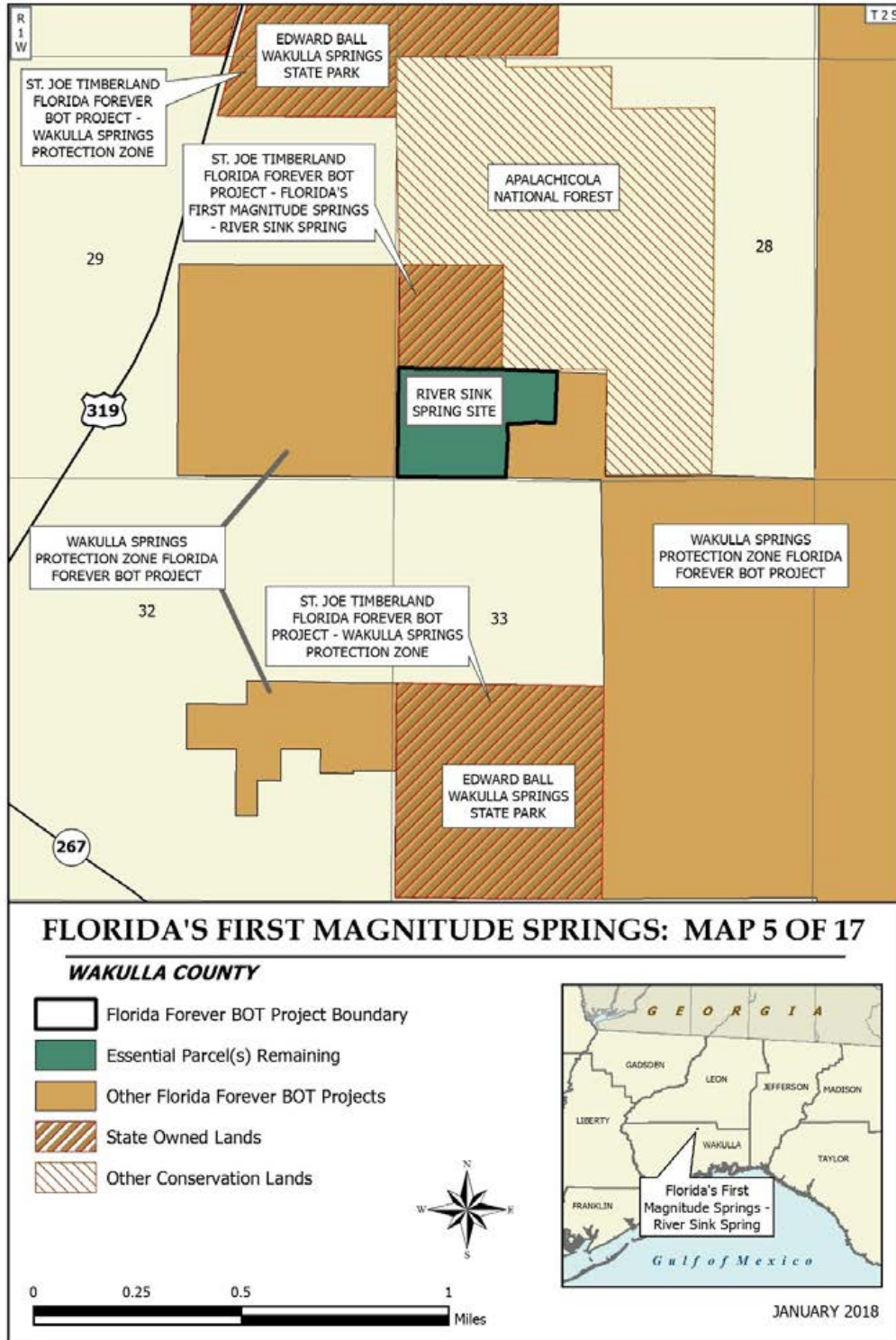
#### JACKSON COUNTY

-  Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
-  Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
-  Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
-  Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
-  State Owned Lands
-  Other Conservation Lands



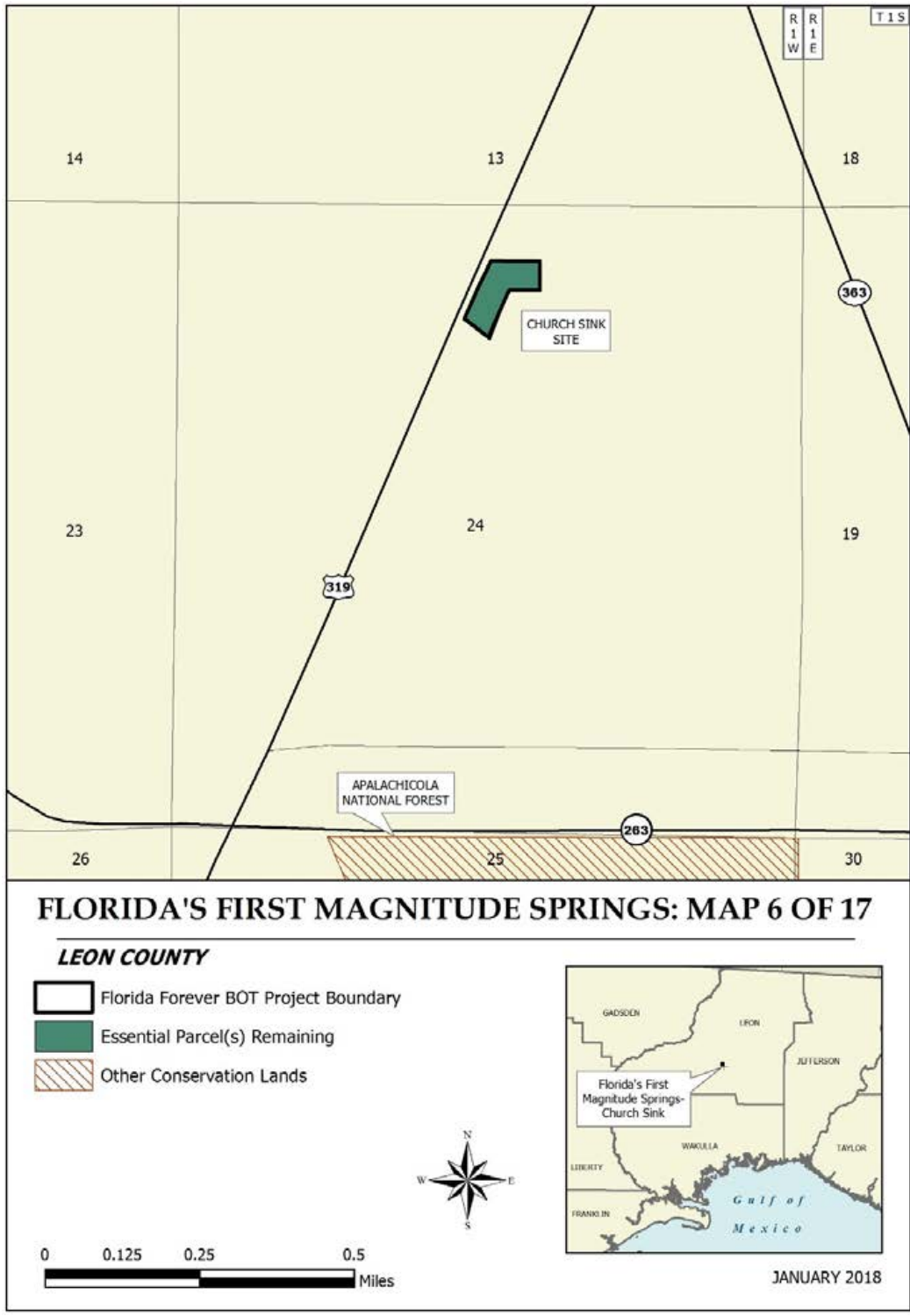
JANUARY 2018

Map 91



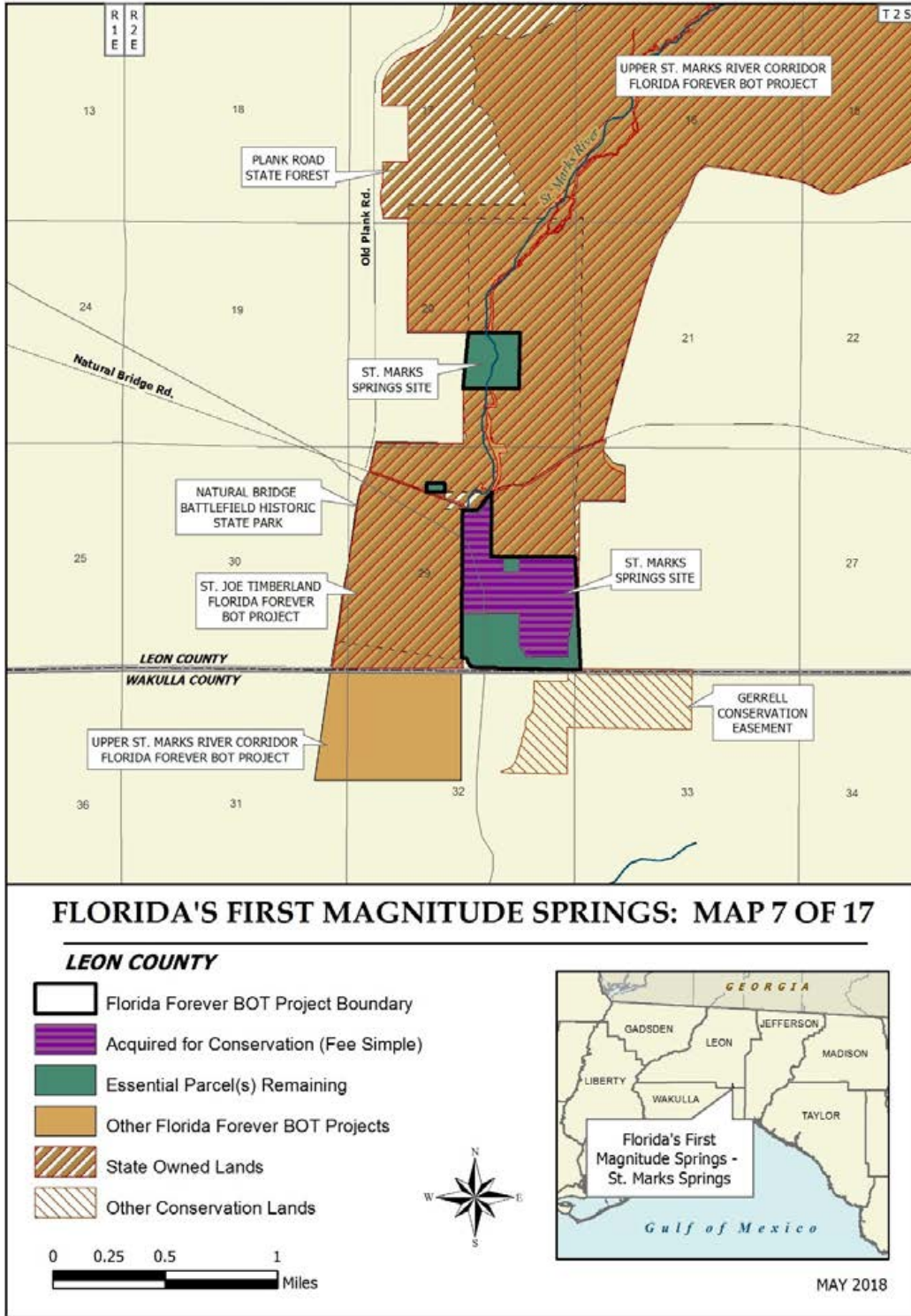
Map 92



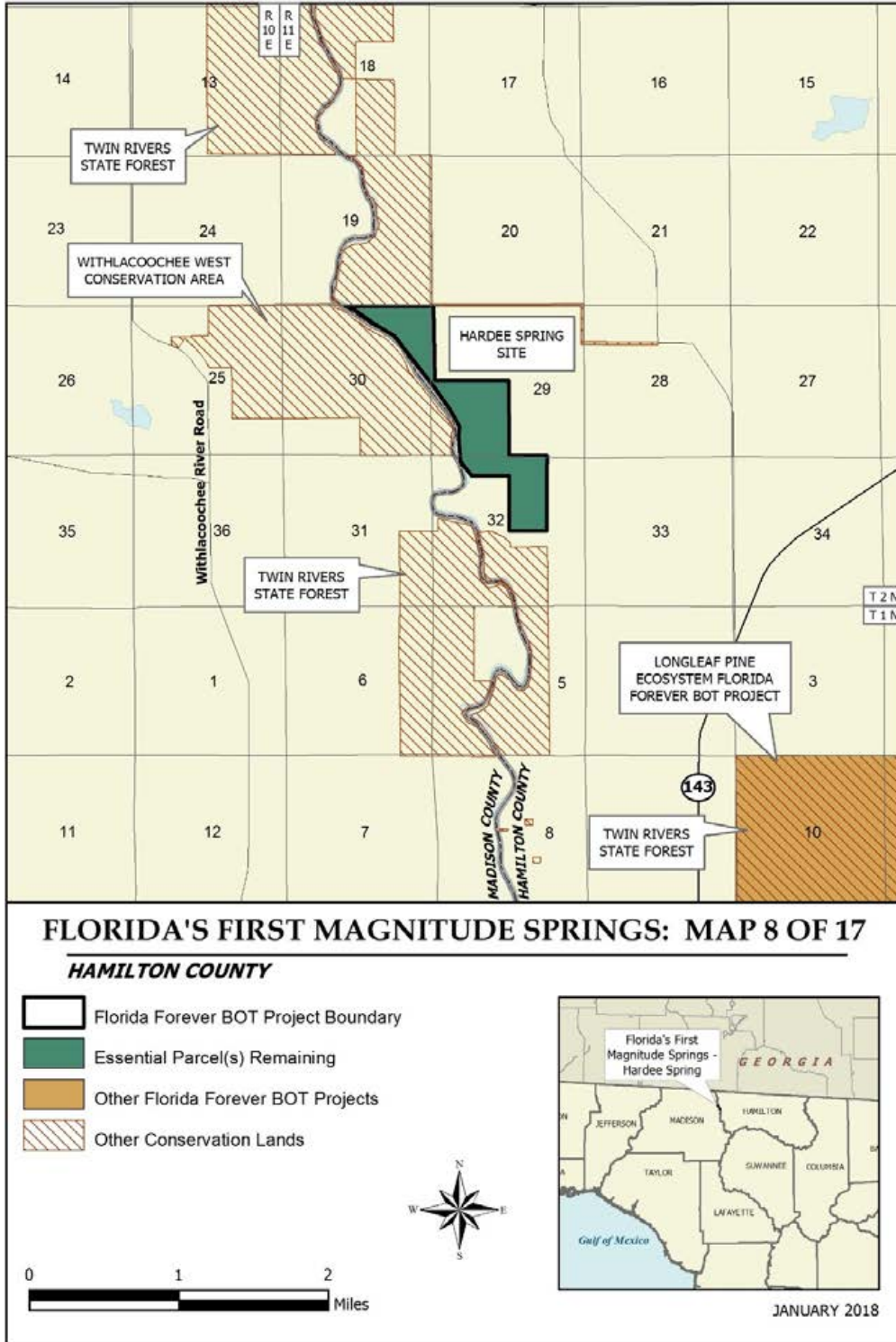


Map 93

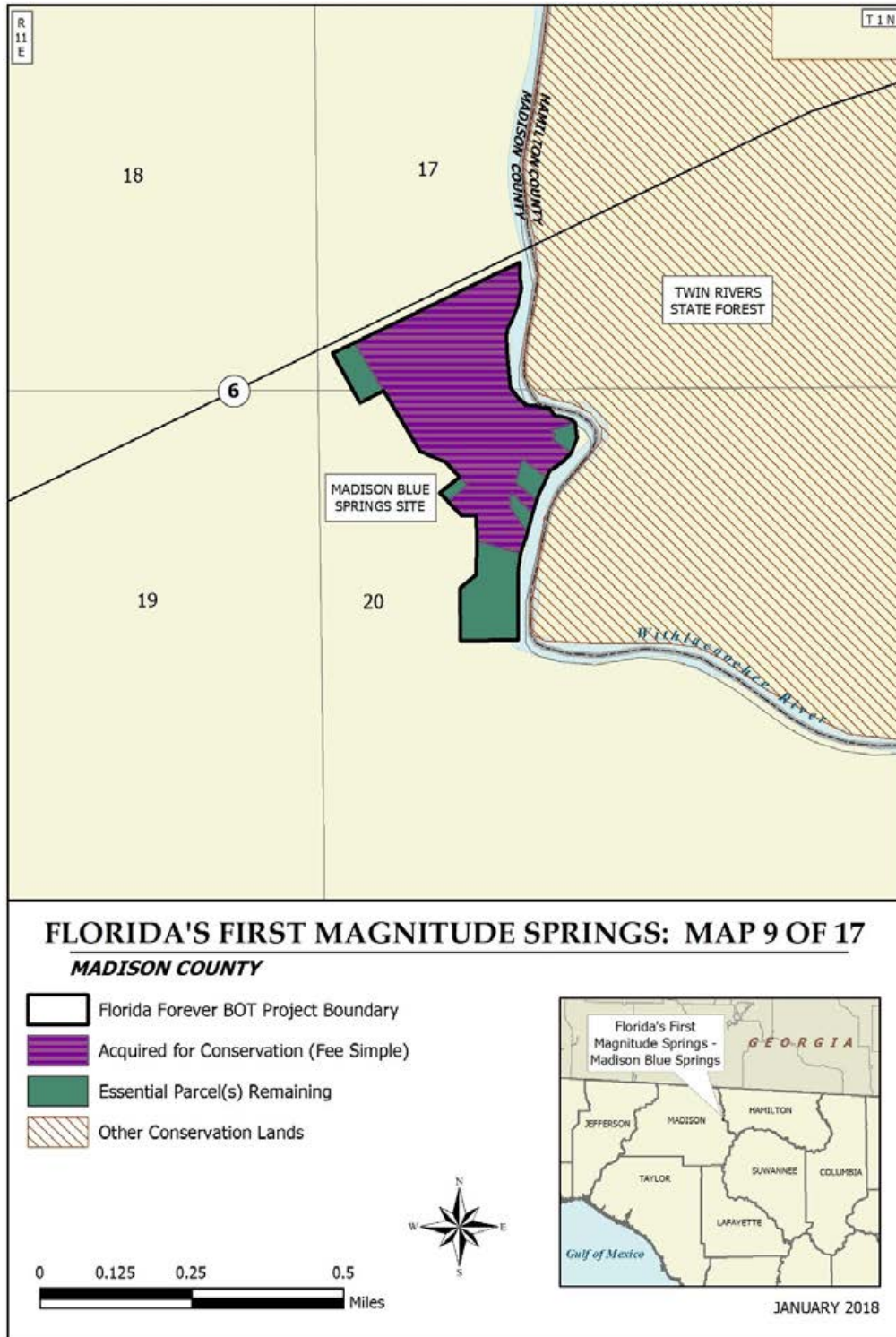




Map 94

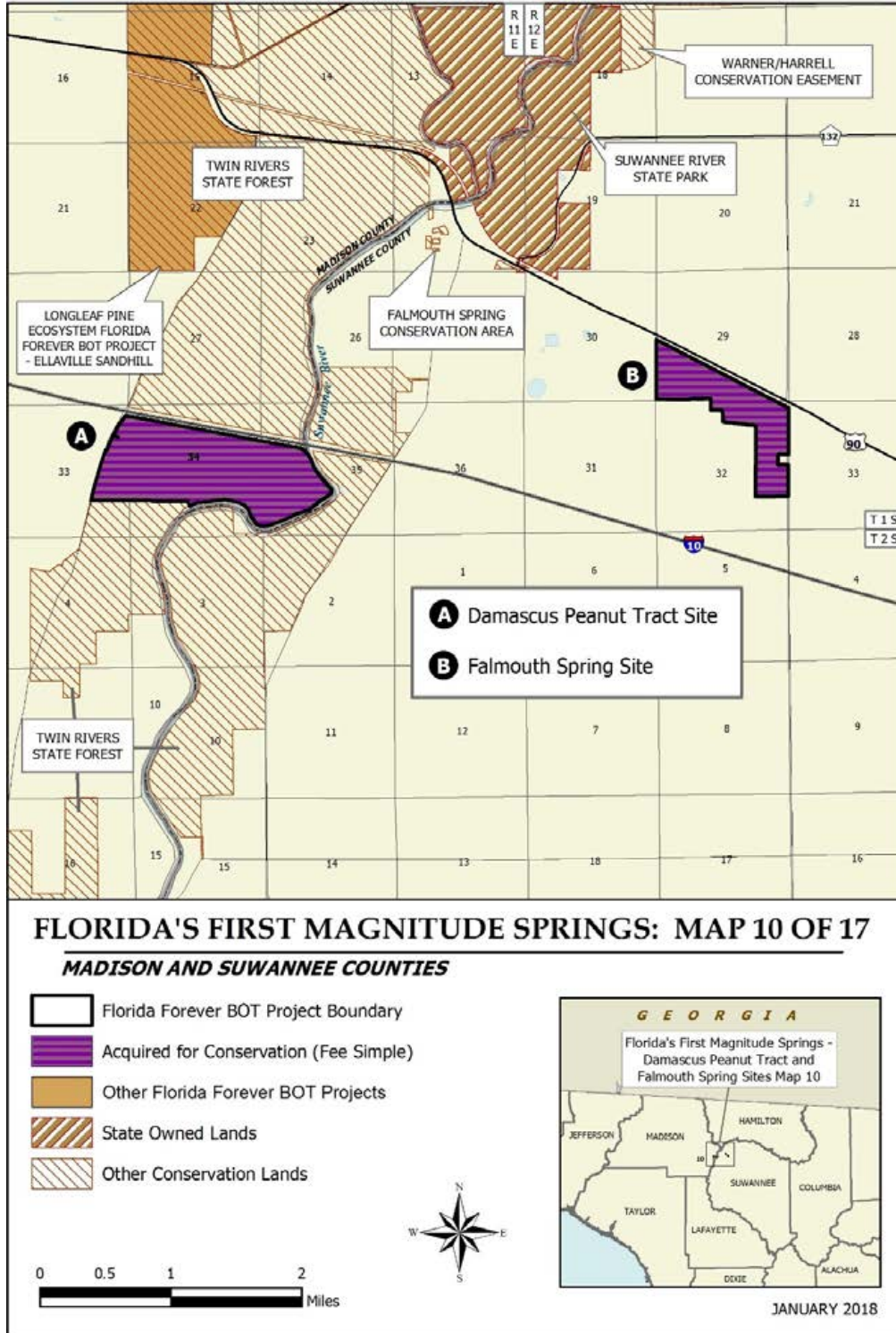


Map 95

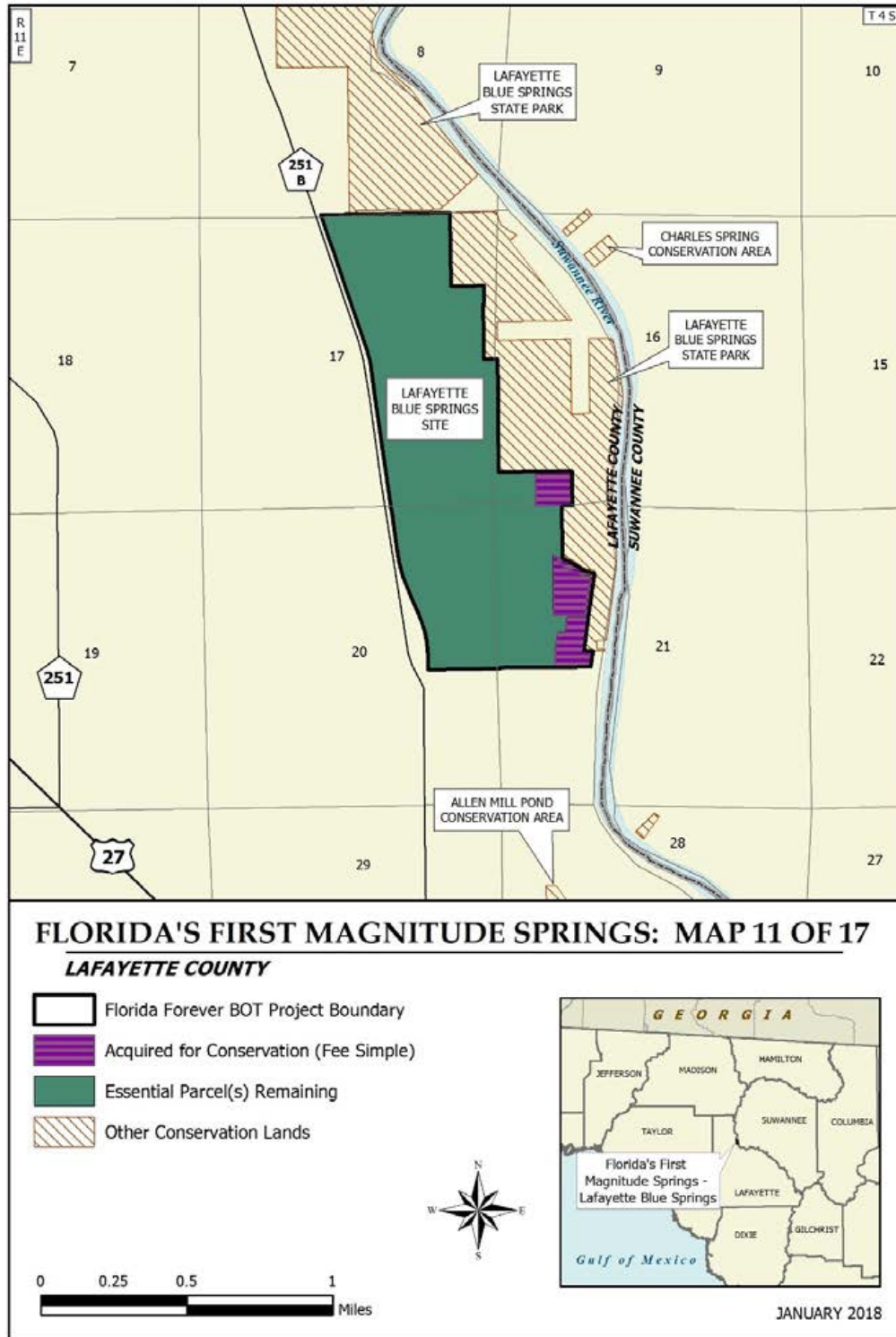


Map 96

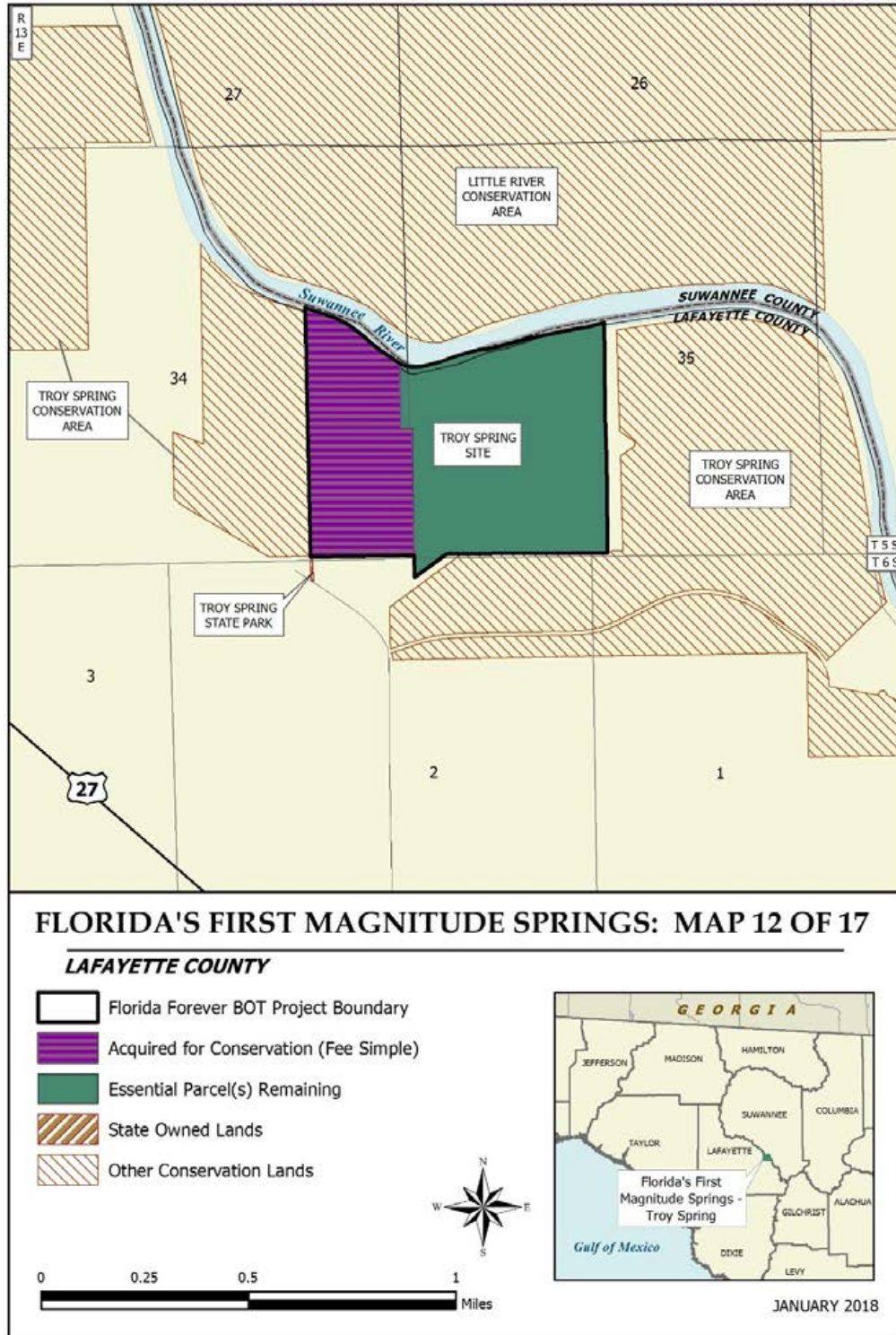




Map 97

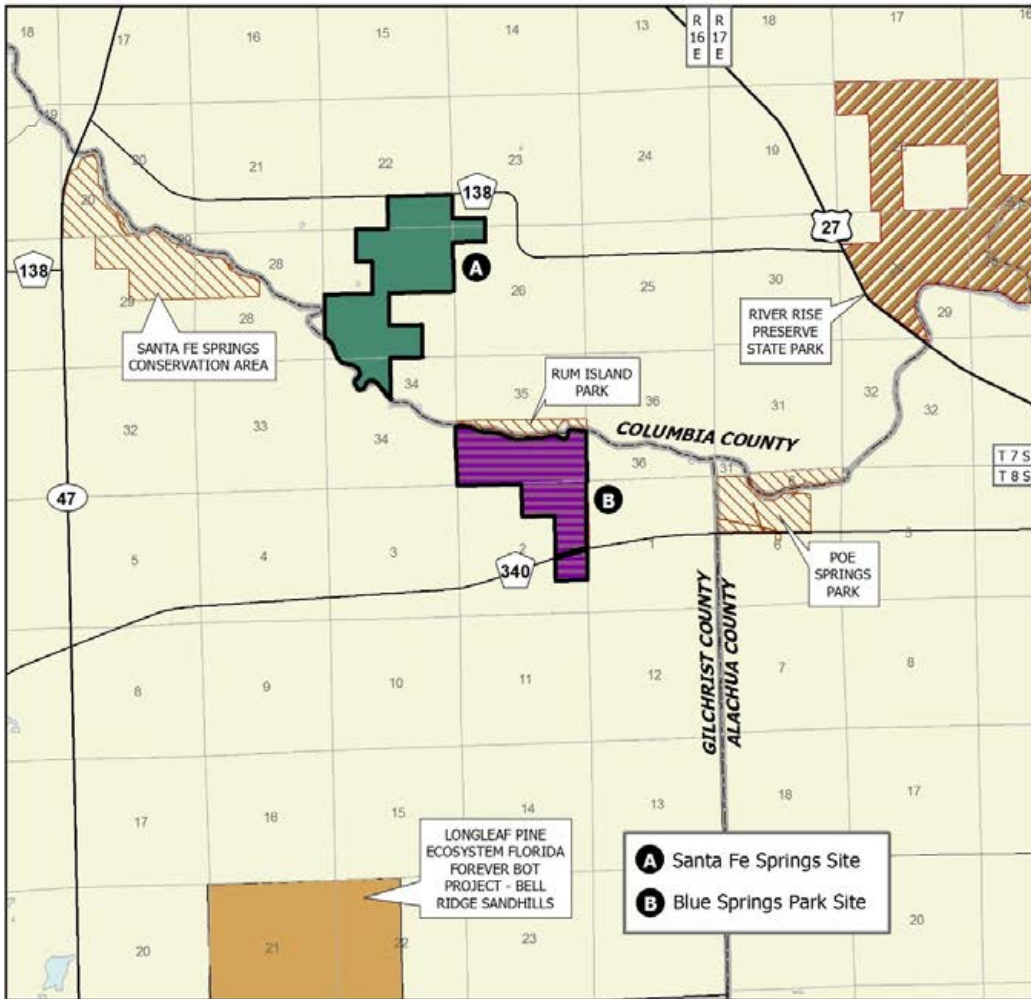


Map 98



Map 99





### FLORIDA'S FIRST MAGNITUDE SPRINGS: MAP 13 OF 17

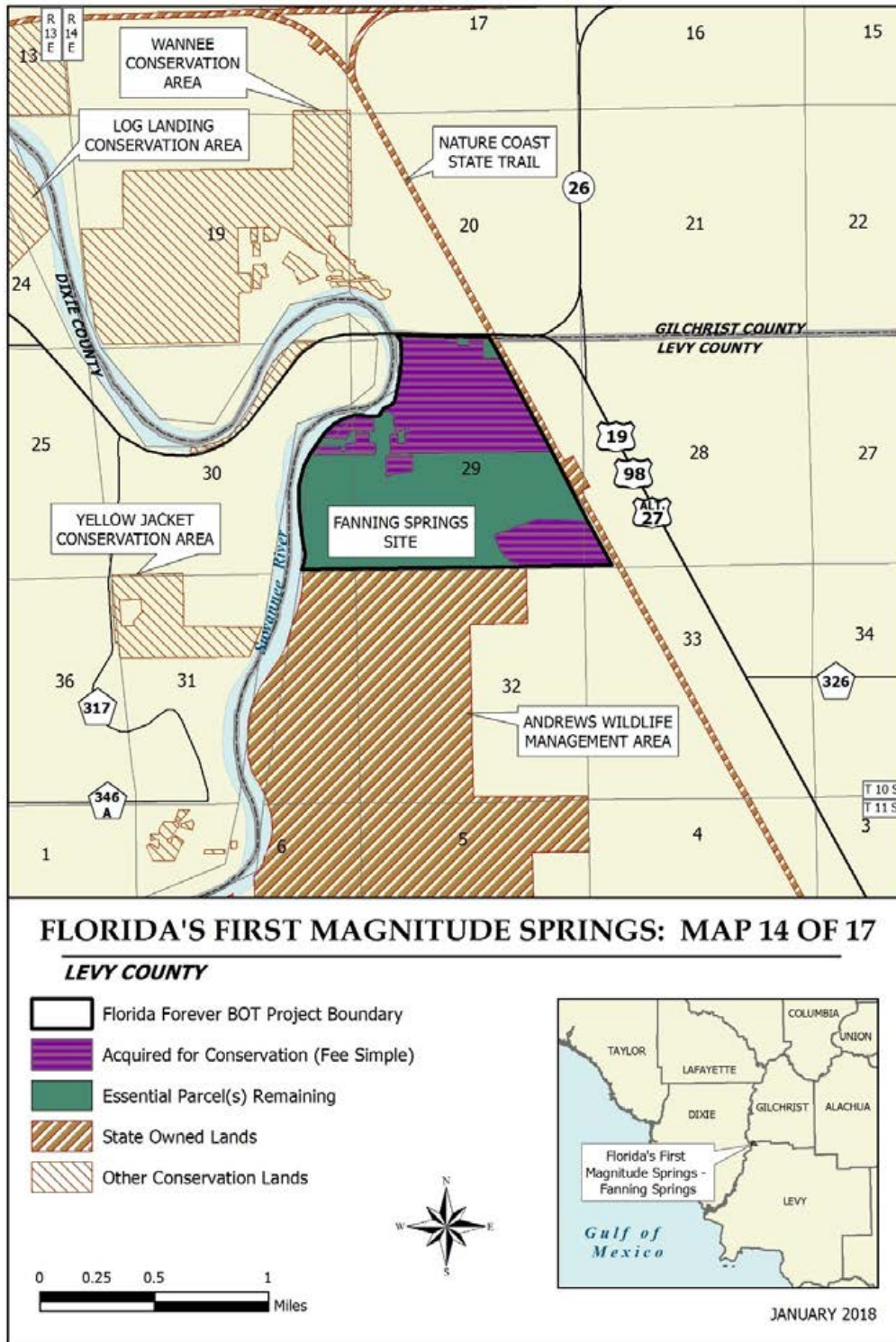
#### GILCHRIST AND COLUMBIA COUNTIES

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



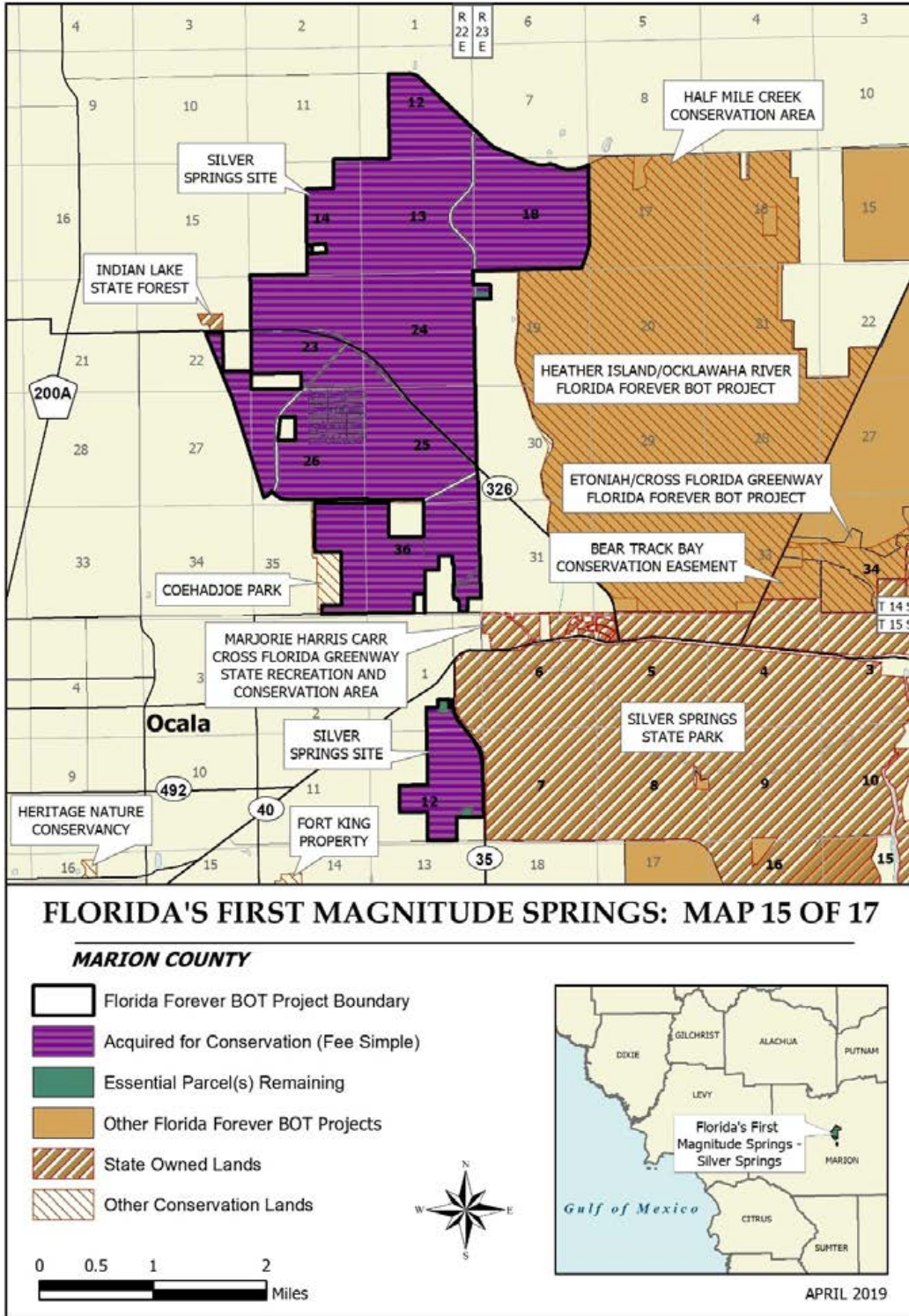
SEPTEMBER 2018

Map 100

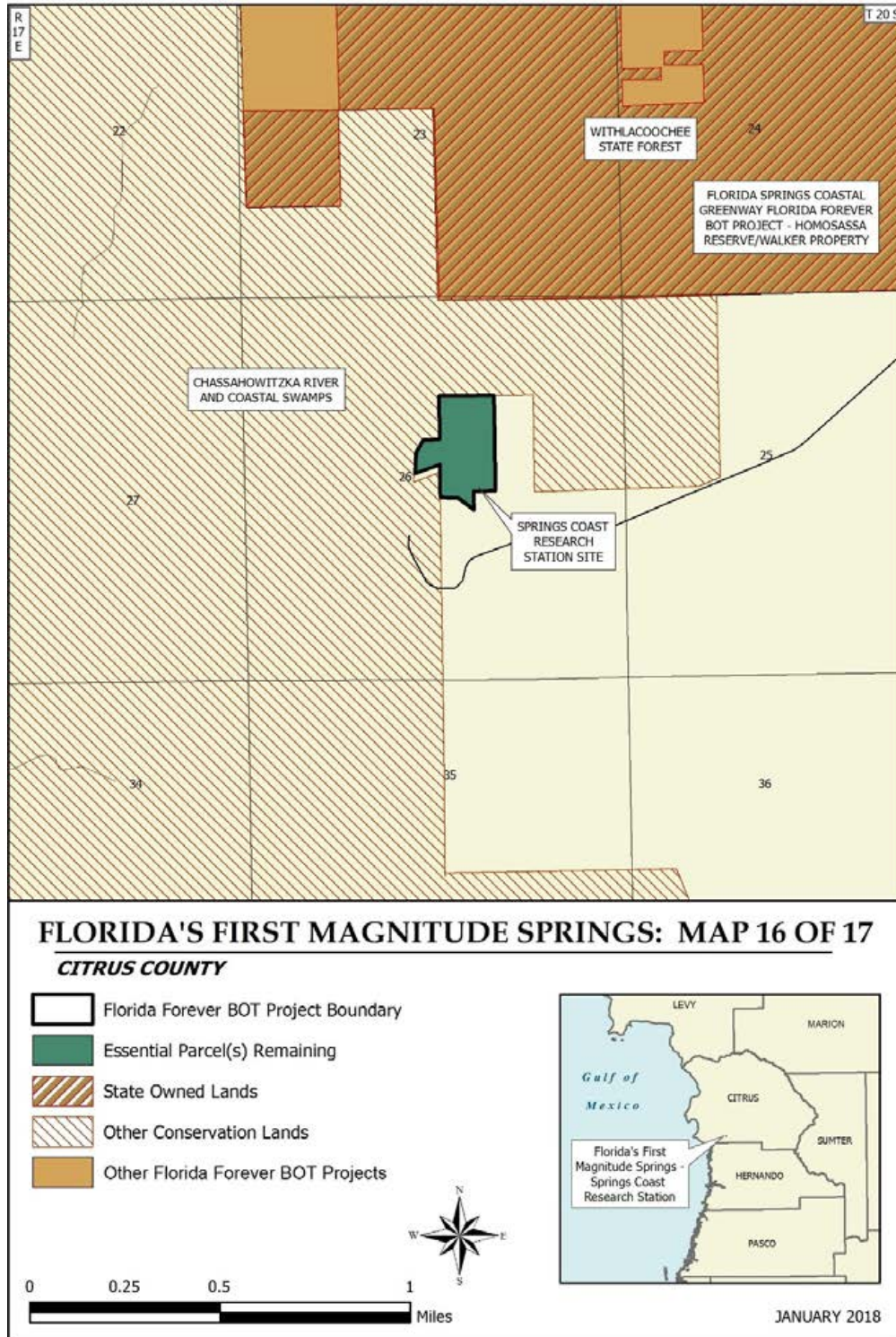


Map 101



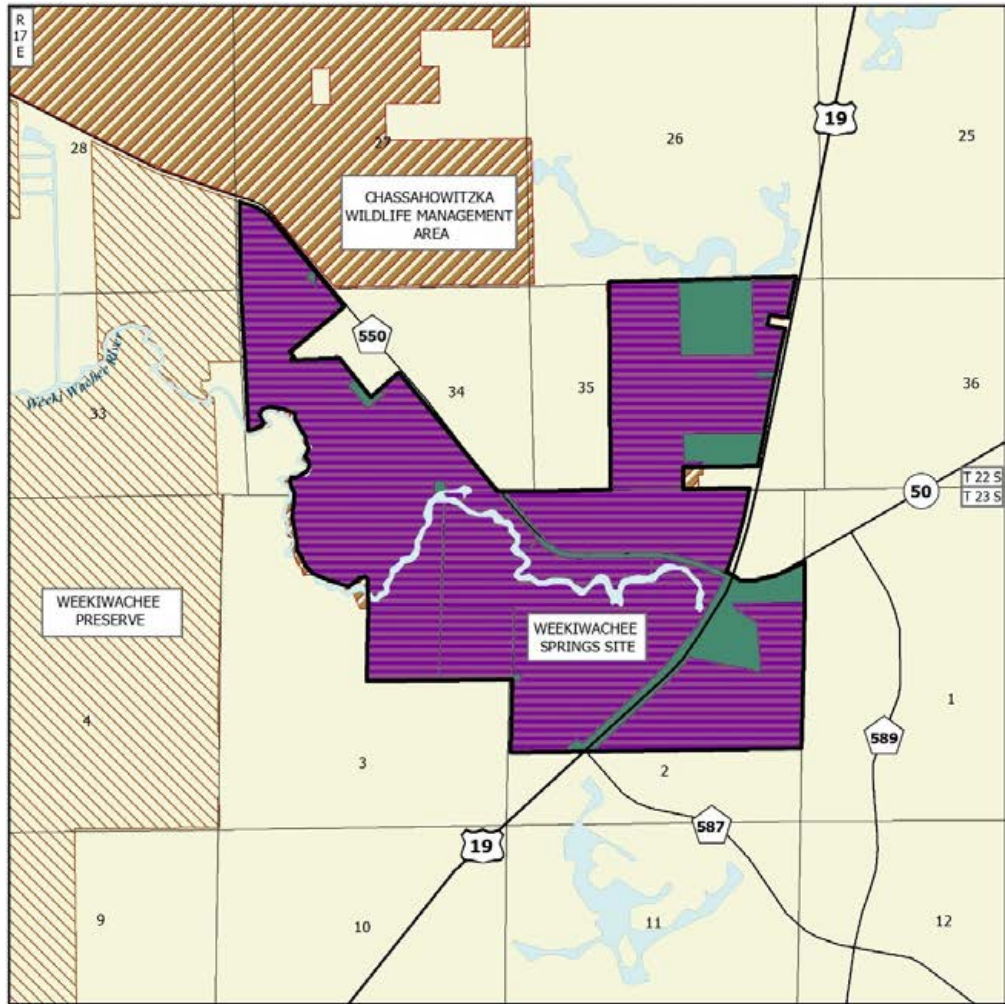


Map 102



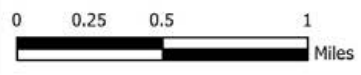
Map 103





**FLORIDA'S FIRST MAGNITUDE SPRINGS: MAP 17 OF 17**  
**HERNANDO COUNTY**

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



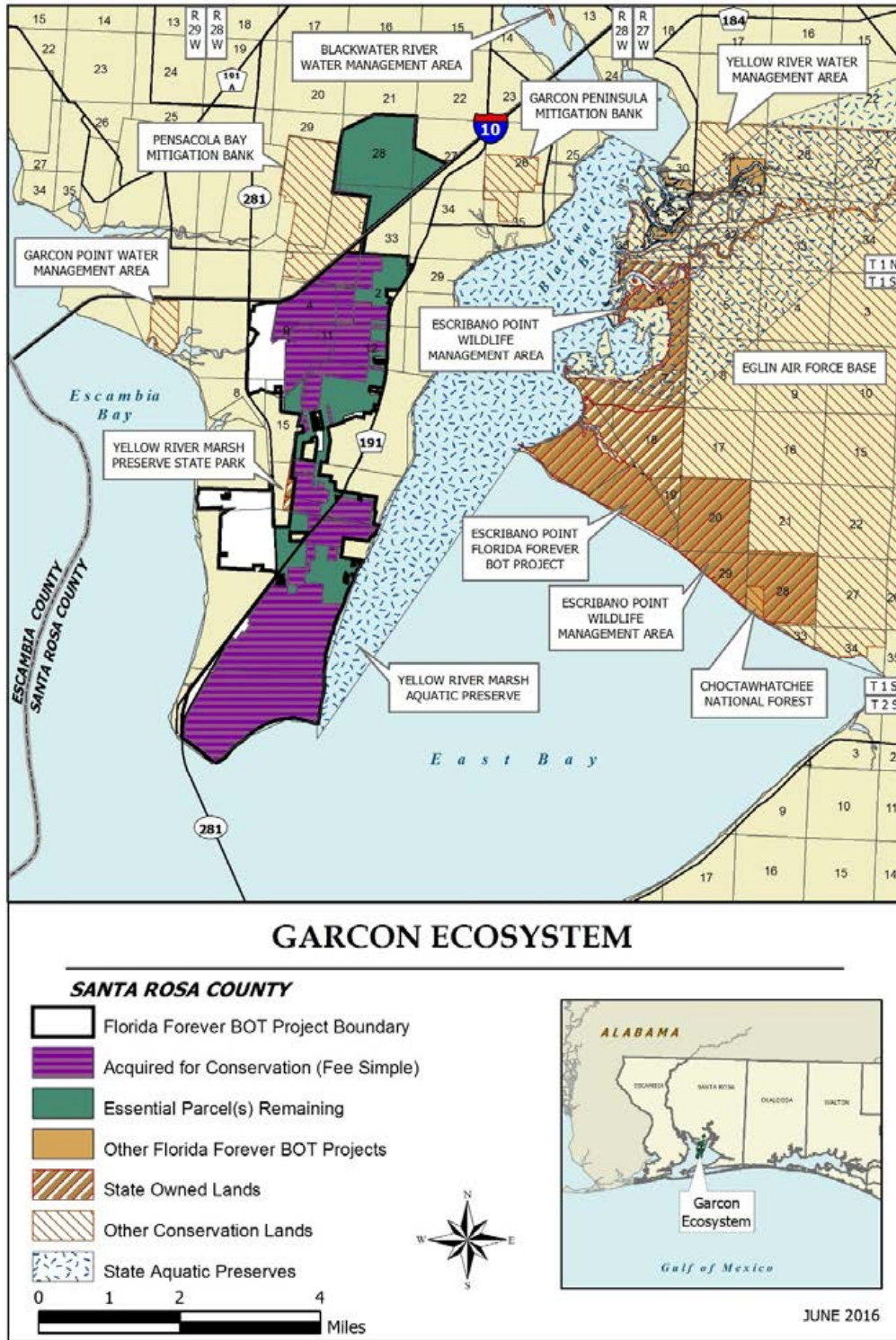
JANUARY 2018

Map 104



### Map(s): Garcon Ecosystem

#### Garcon Ecosystem



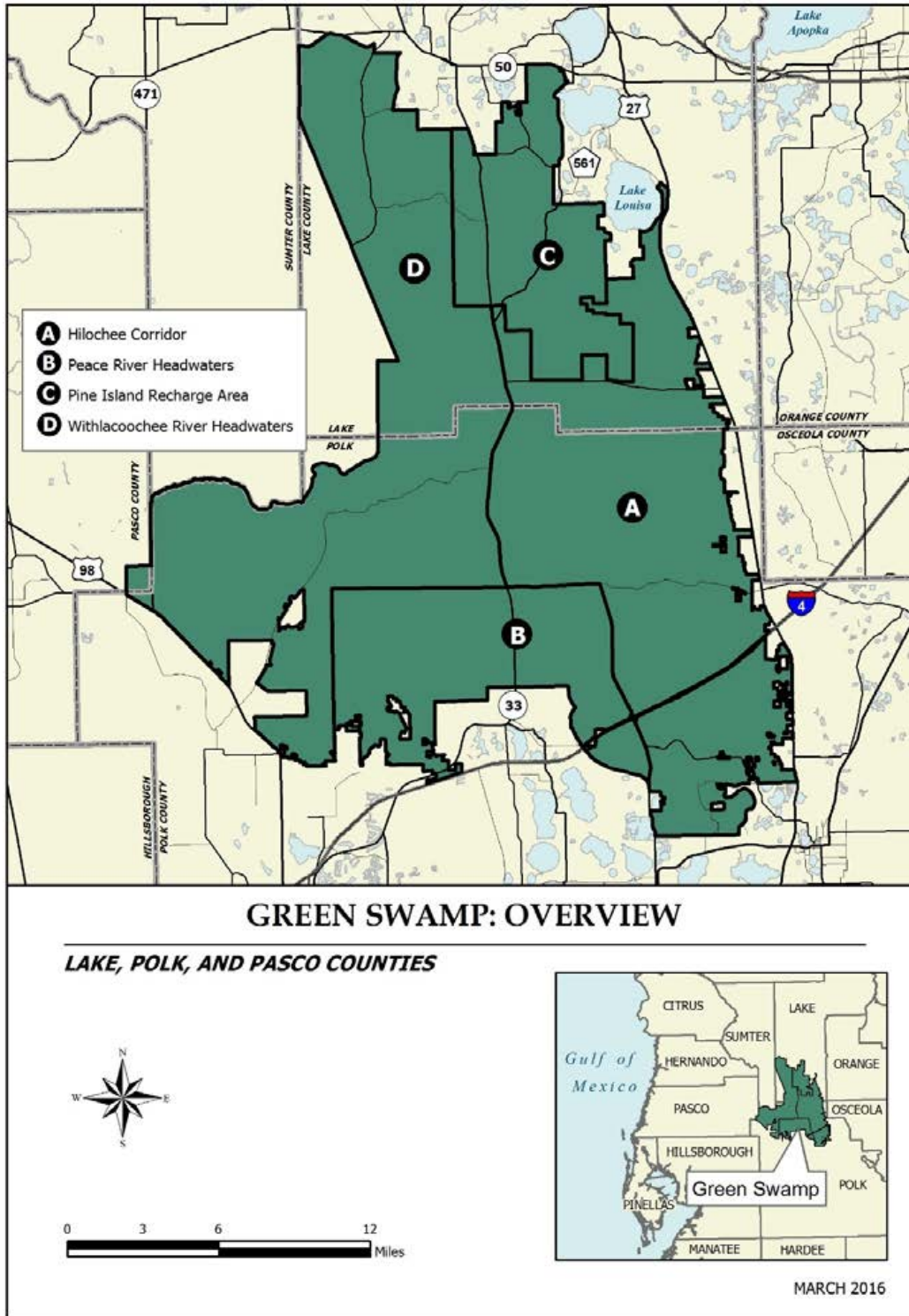
Map 105



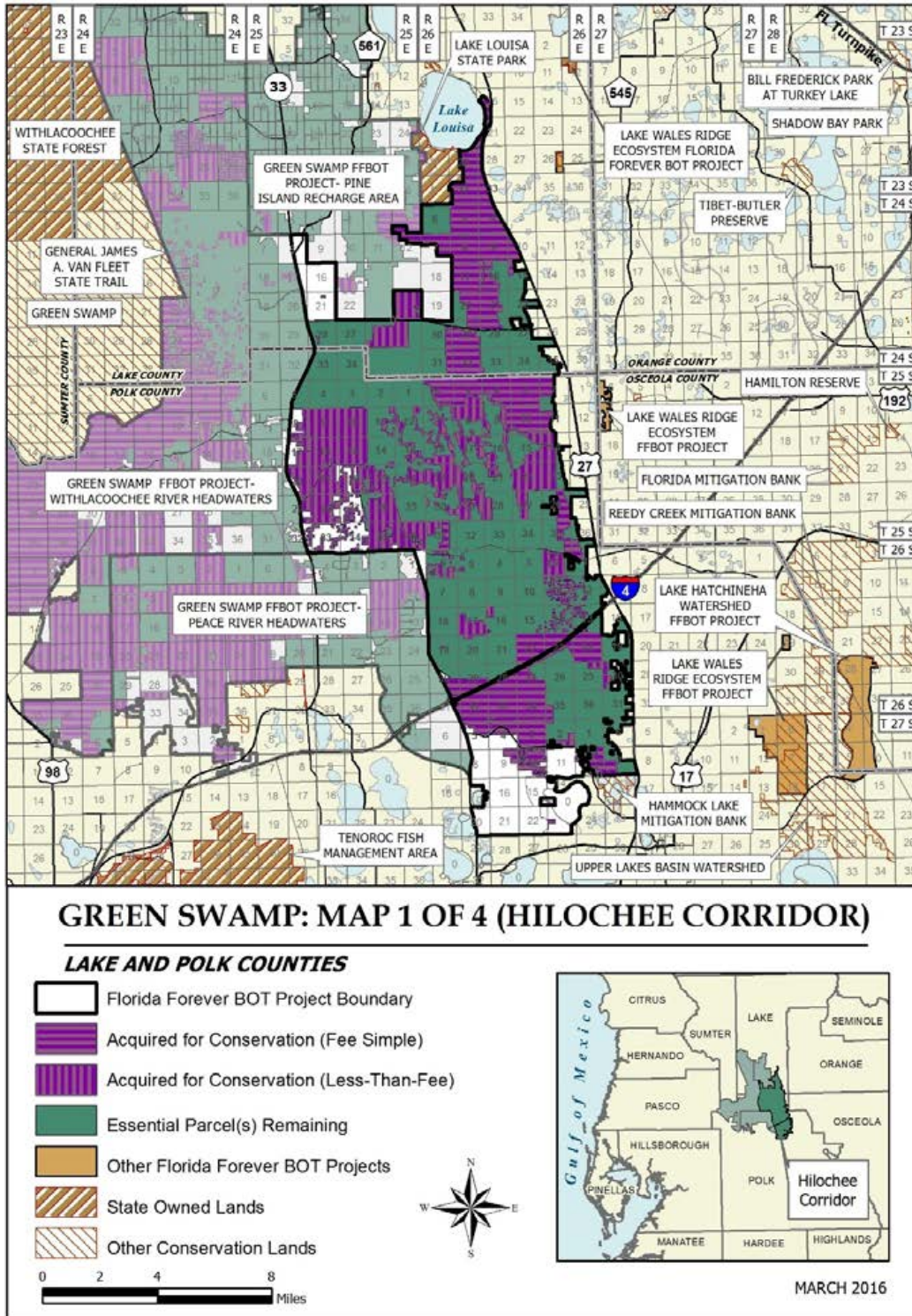


### Map(s): Green Swamp

#### Green Swamp

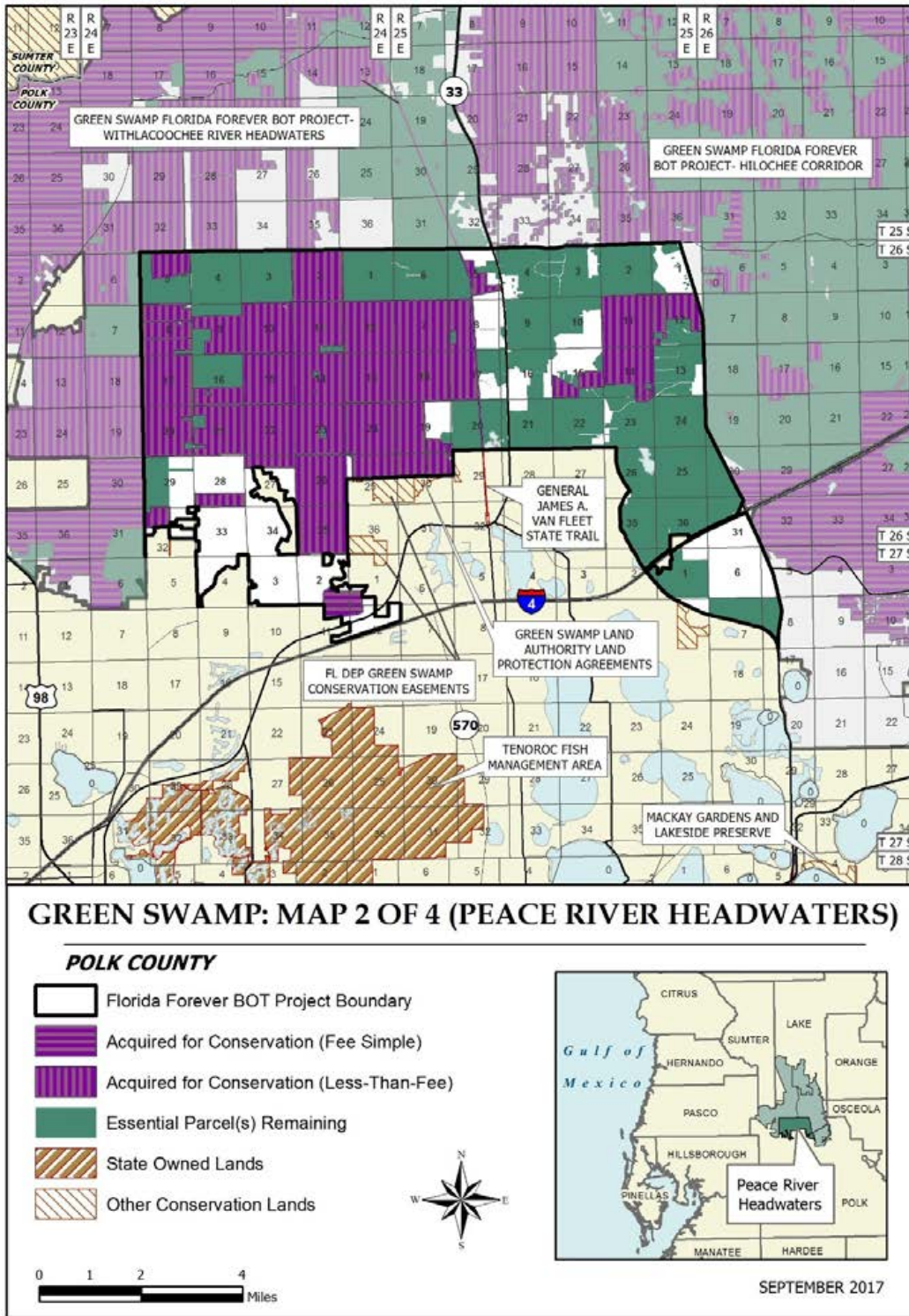


Map 106

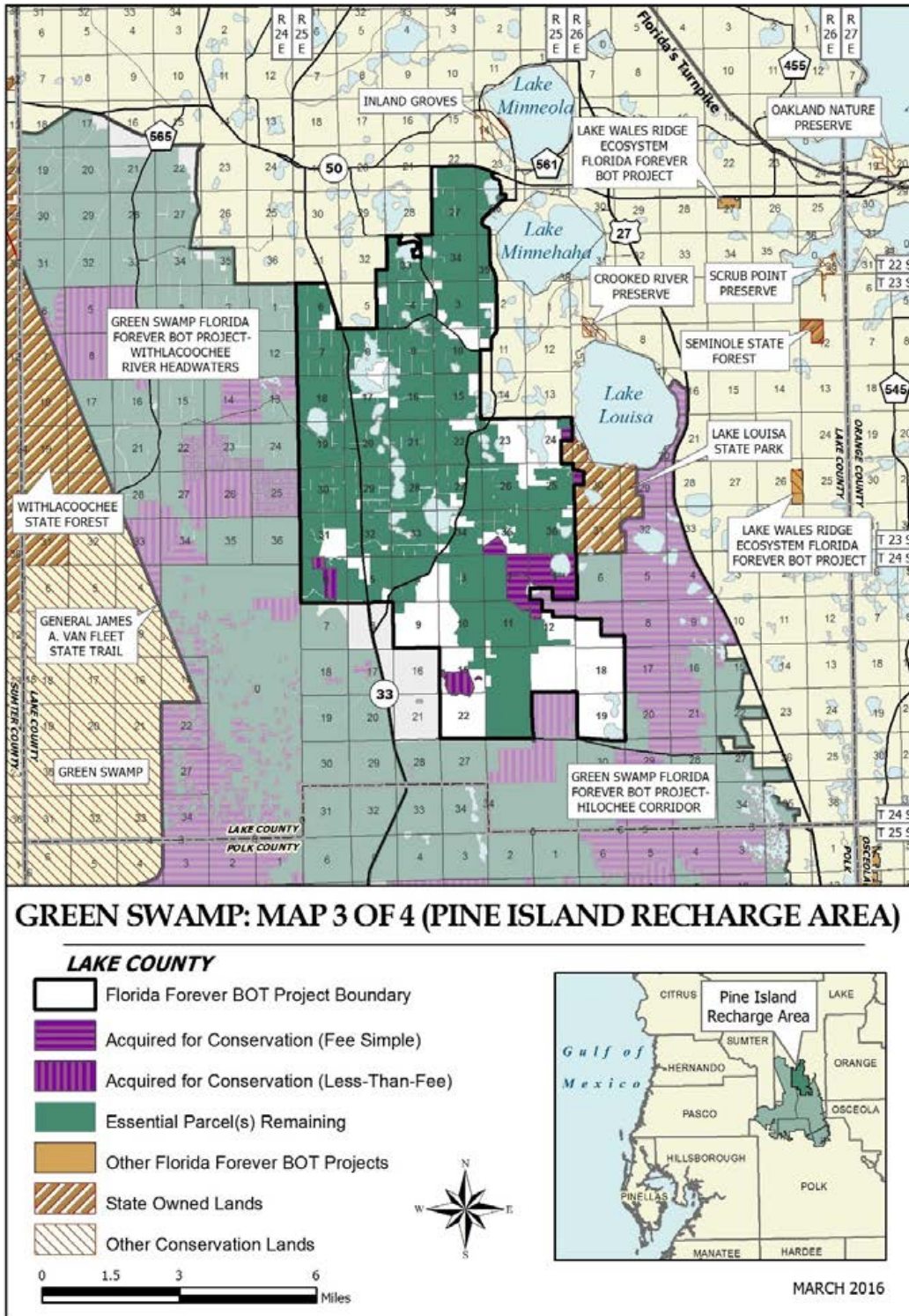


Map 107



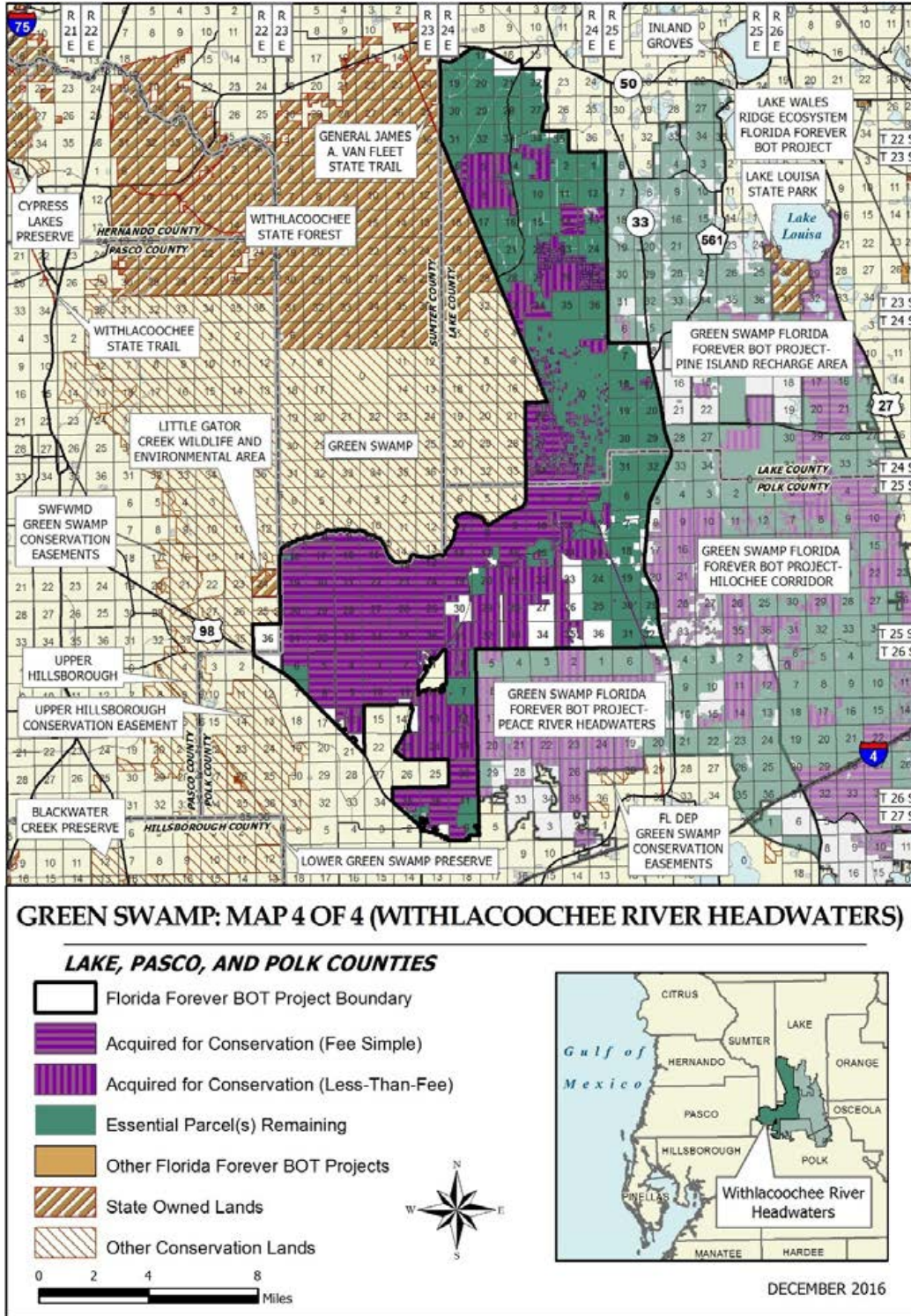


Map 108



Map 109



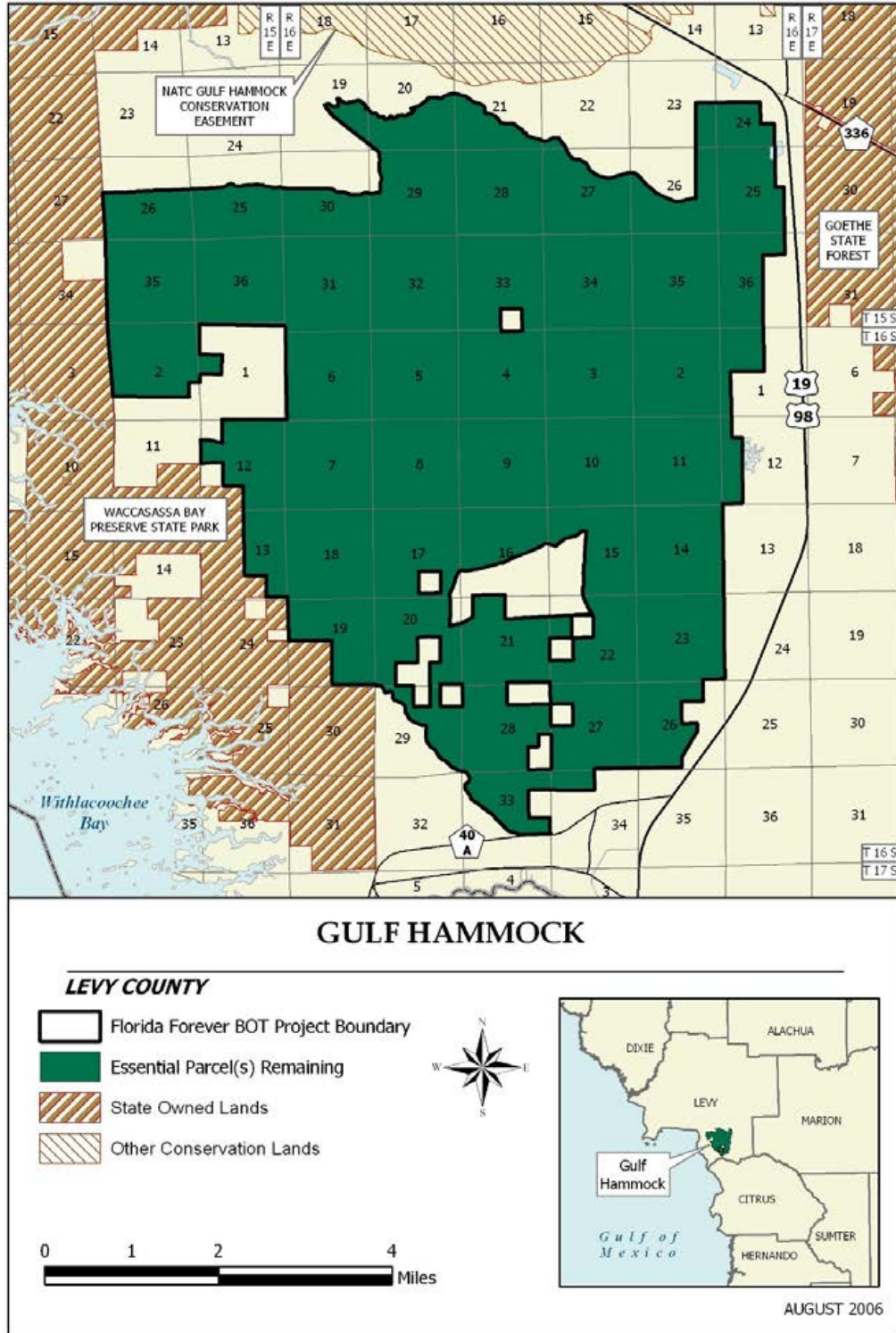


Map 110



### Map(s): Gulf Hammock

#### Gulf Hammock



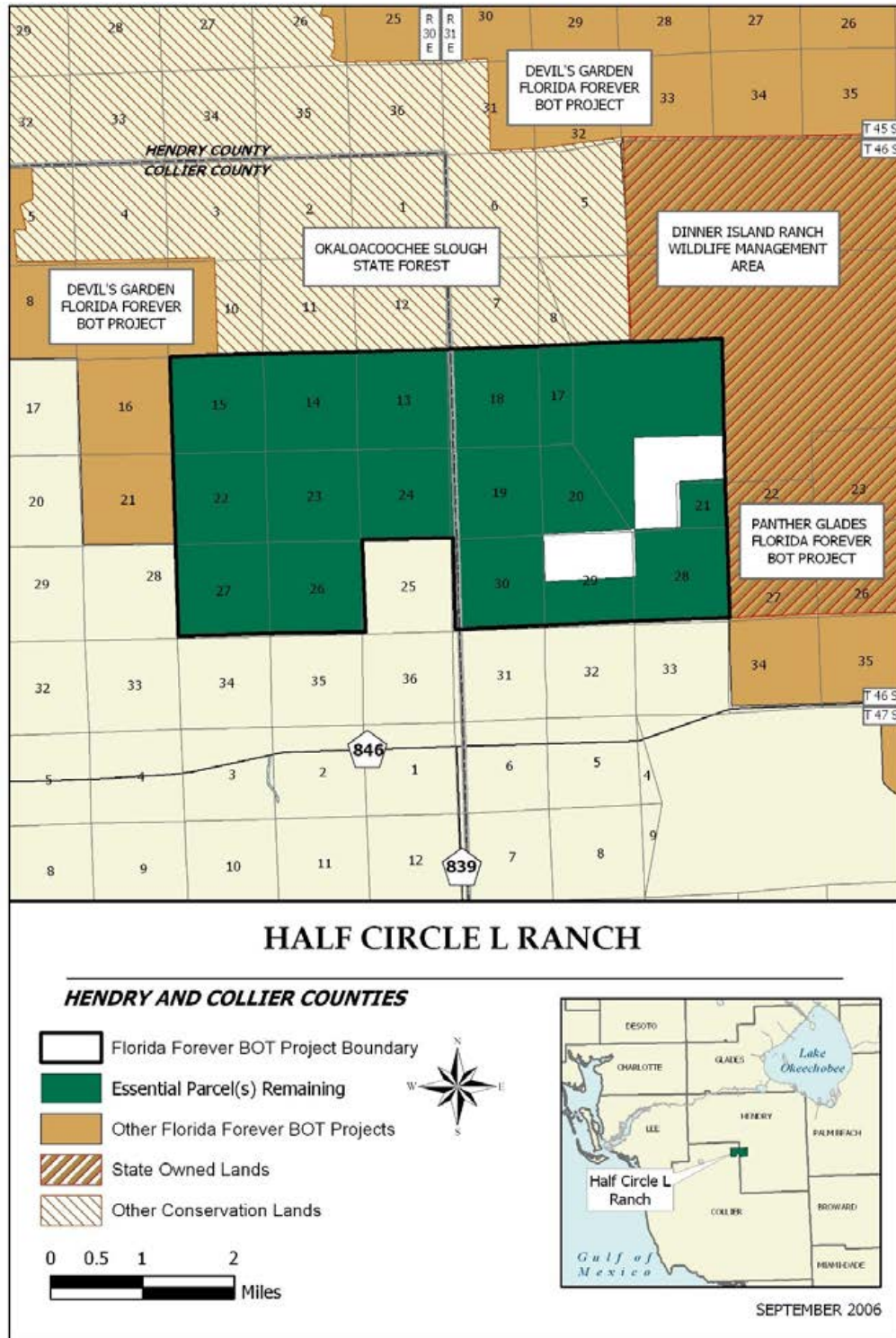
Map 111





### Map(s): Half Circle L Ranch

#### Half Circle L Ranch

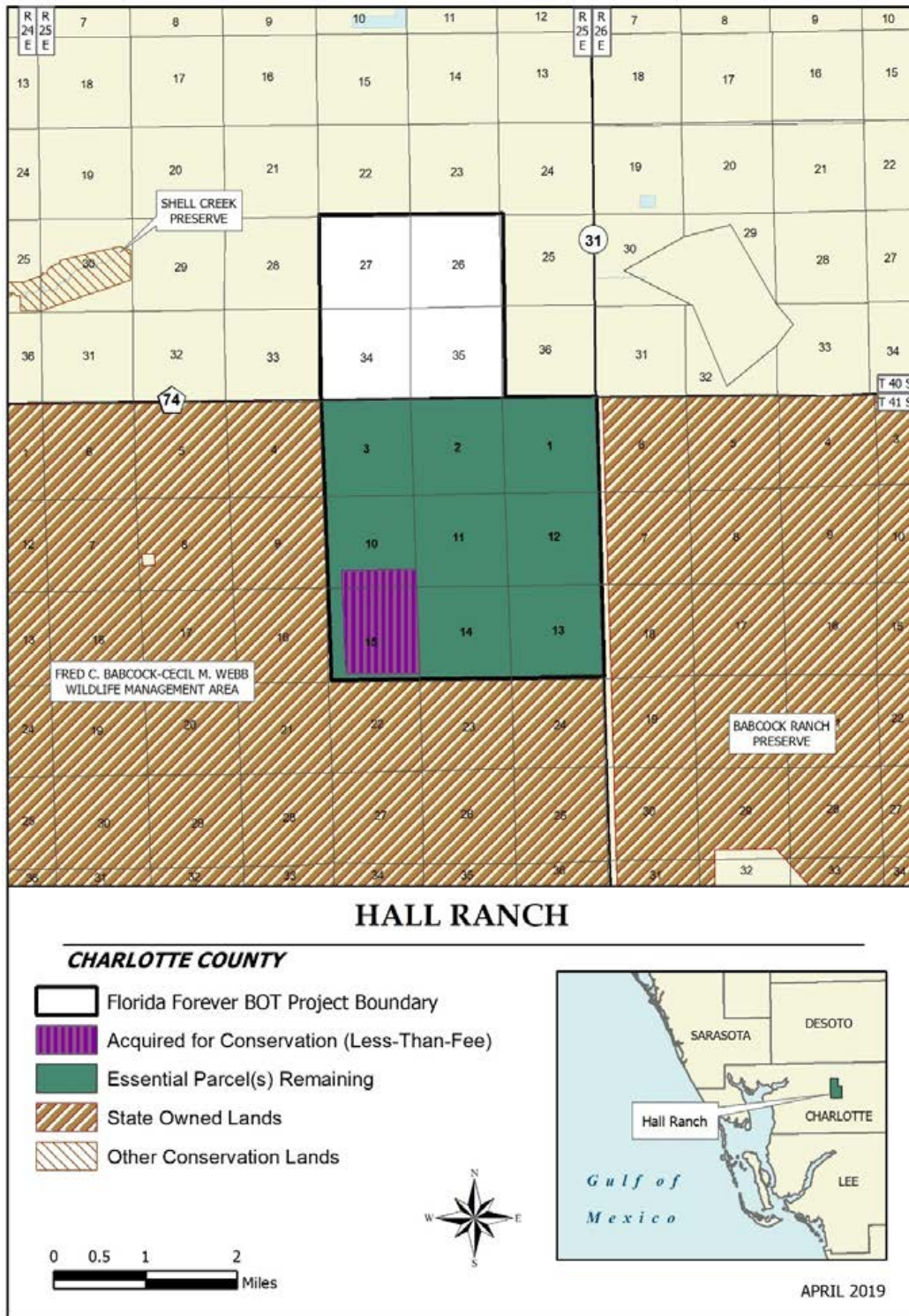


Map 112



### Map(s): Hall Ranch

#### Half Circle L Ranch



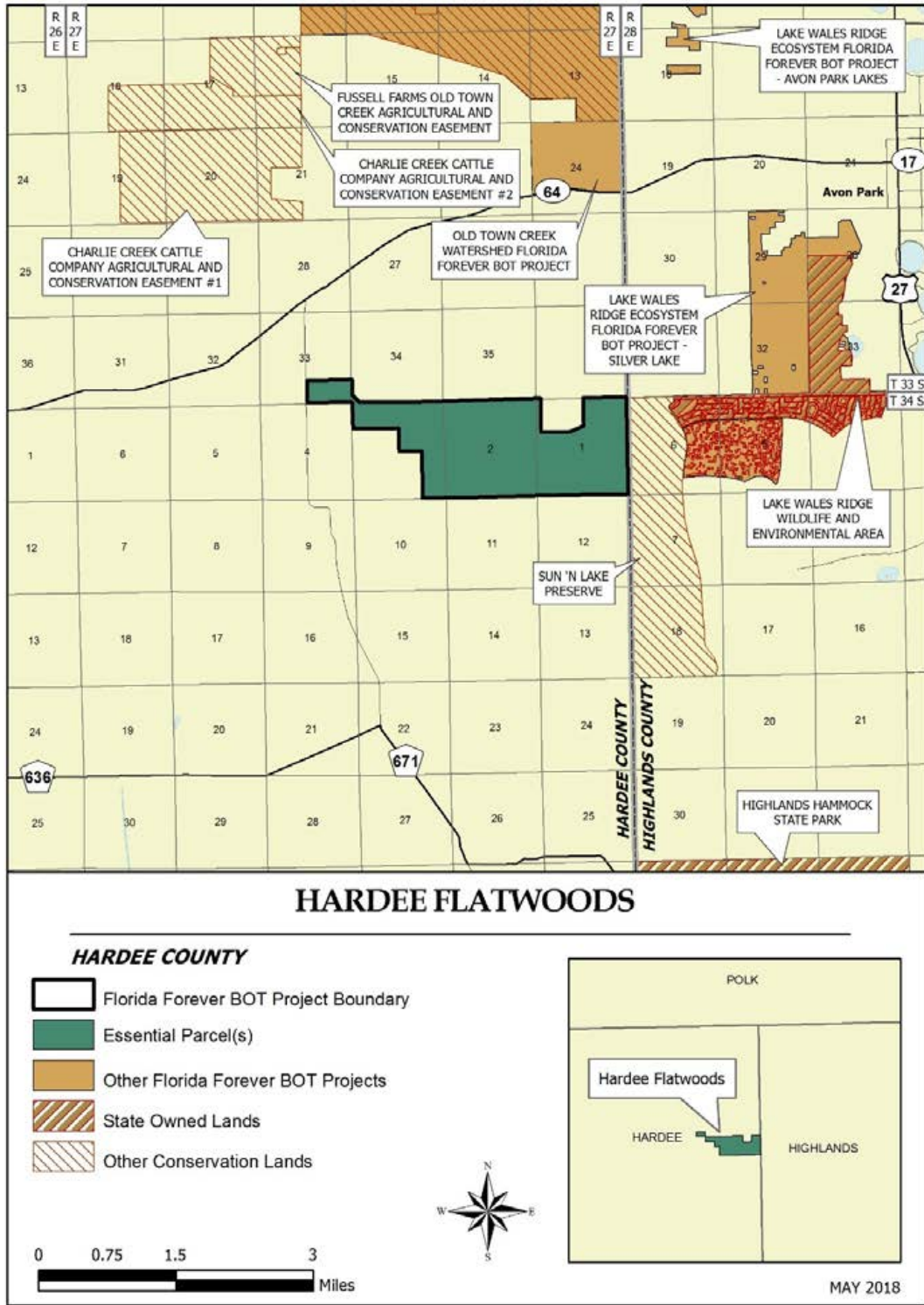
Map 113





### Map(s): Hardee Flatwoods

#### Hardee Flatwoods

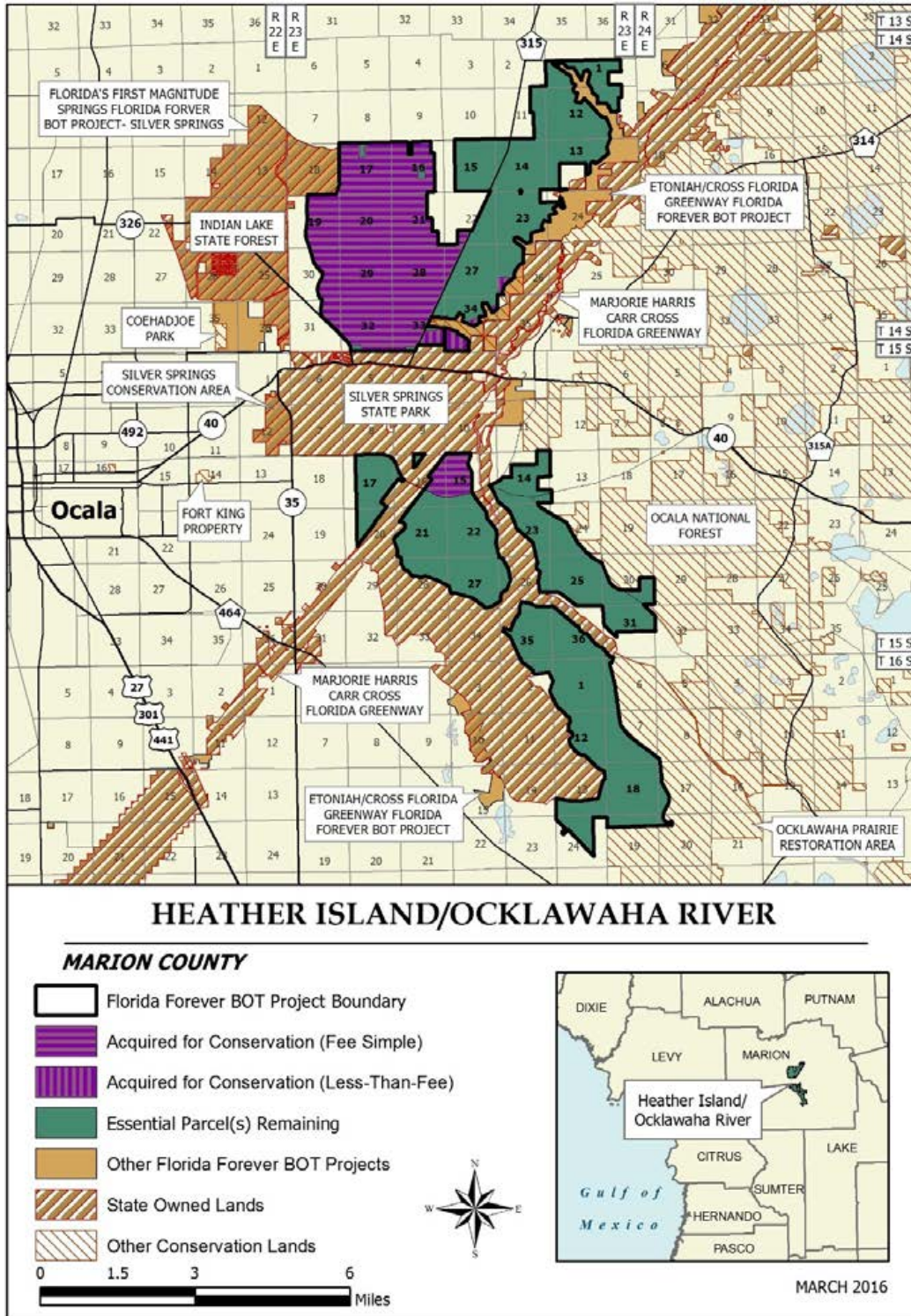


Map 114



### Map(s): Heather Island / Ocklawaha River

#### Heather Island / Ocklawaha River



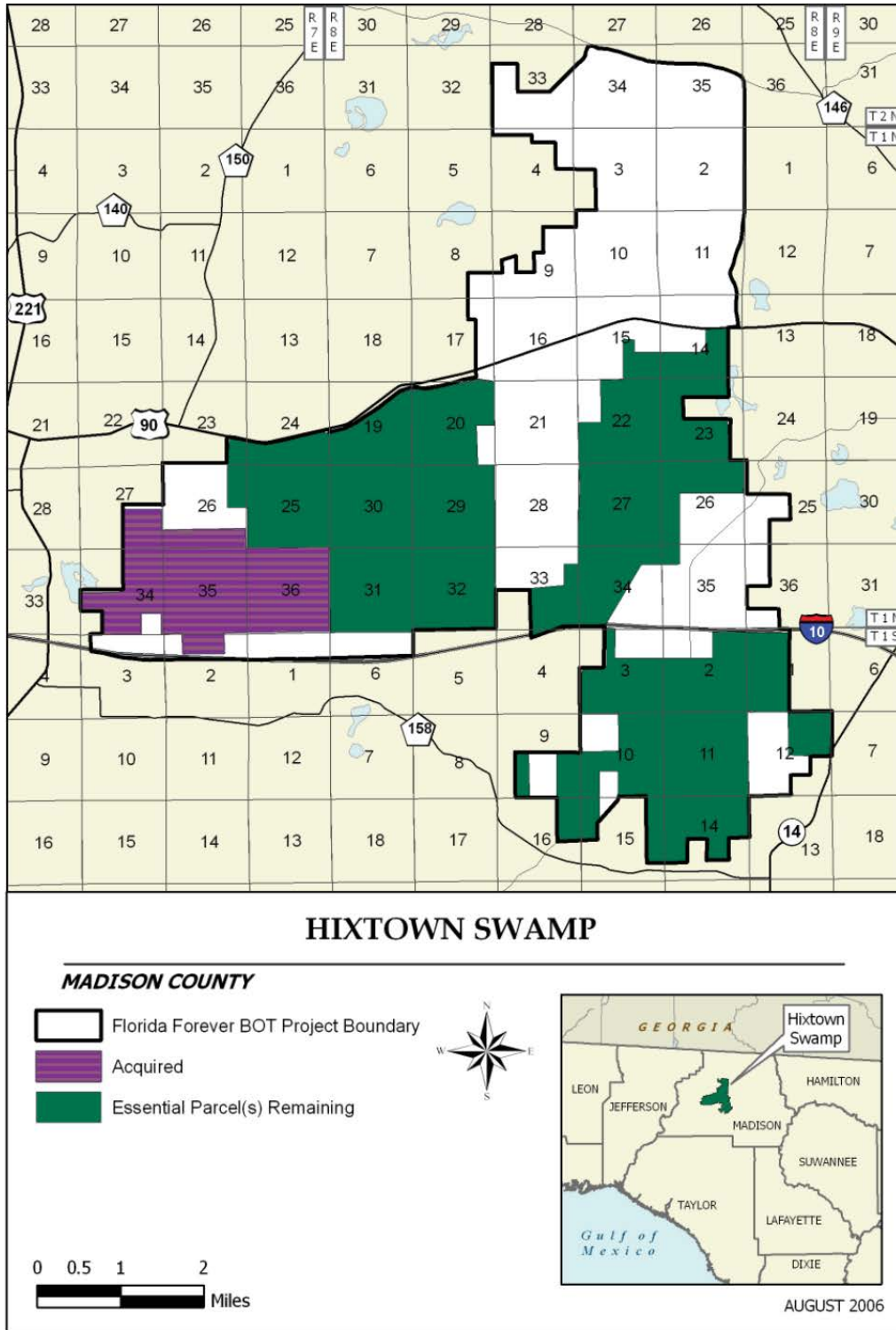
Map 115





### Map(s): Hixtown Swamp

#### Hixtown Swamp

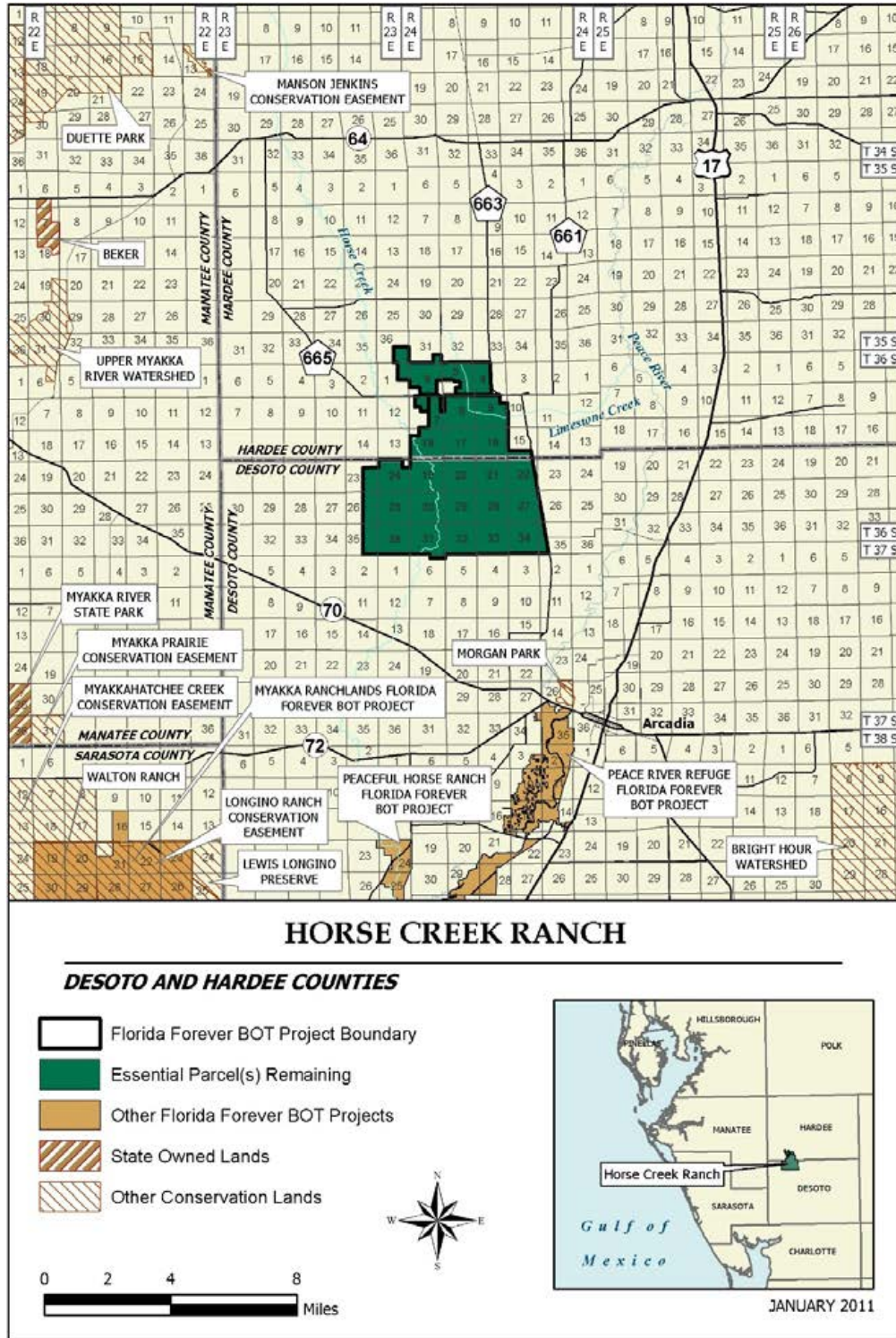


Map 116



### Map(s): Horse Creek Ranch

#### Horse Creek Ranch



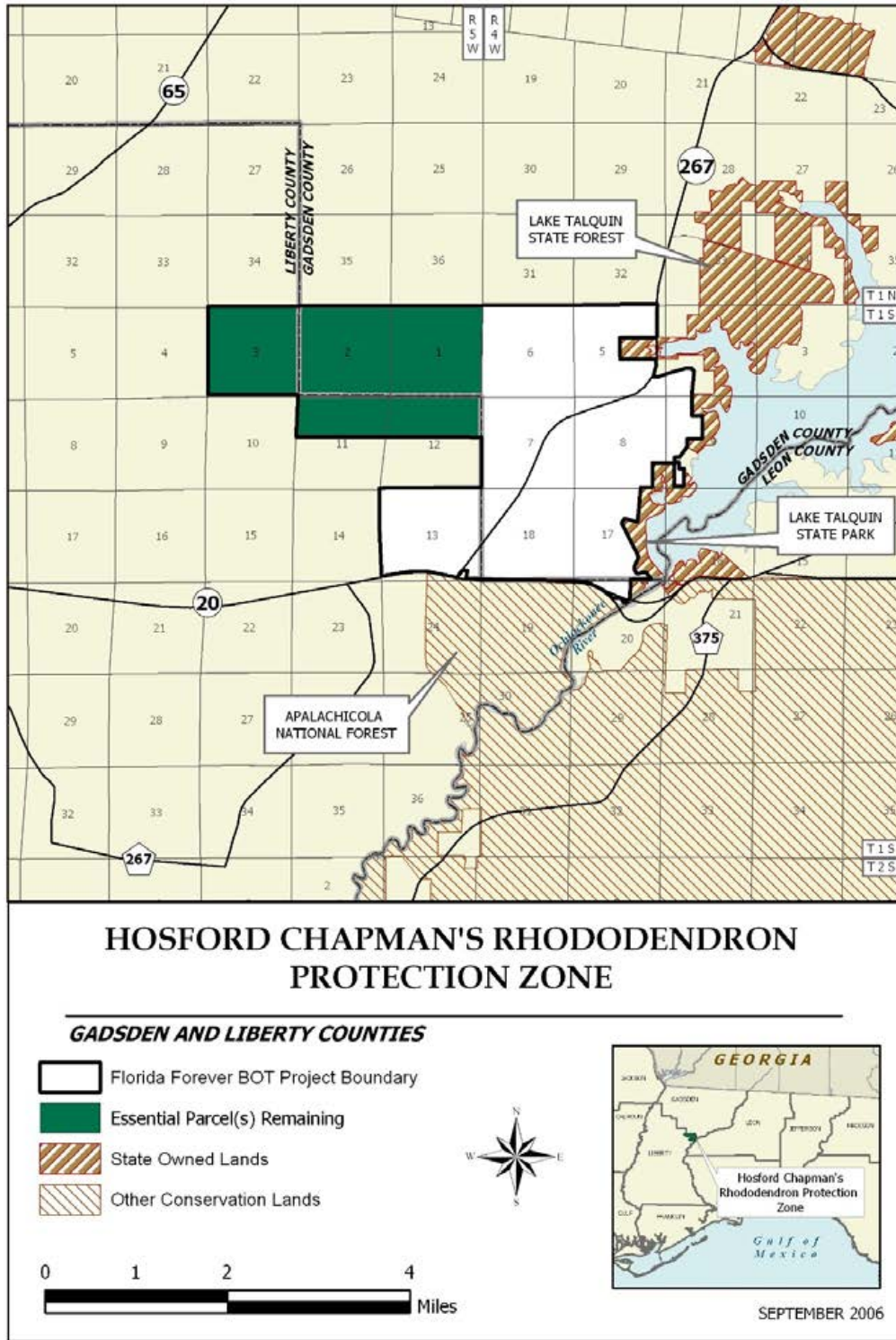
Map 117





### Map(s): Hosford Chapman's Rhododendron Protection Zone

#### Hosford Chapman's Rhododendron Protection Zone

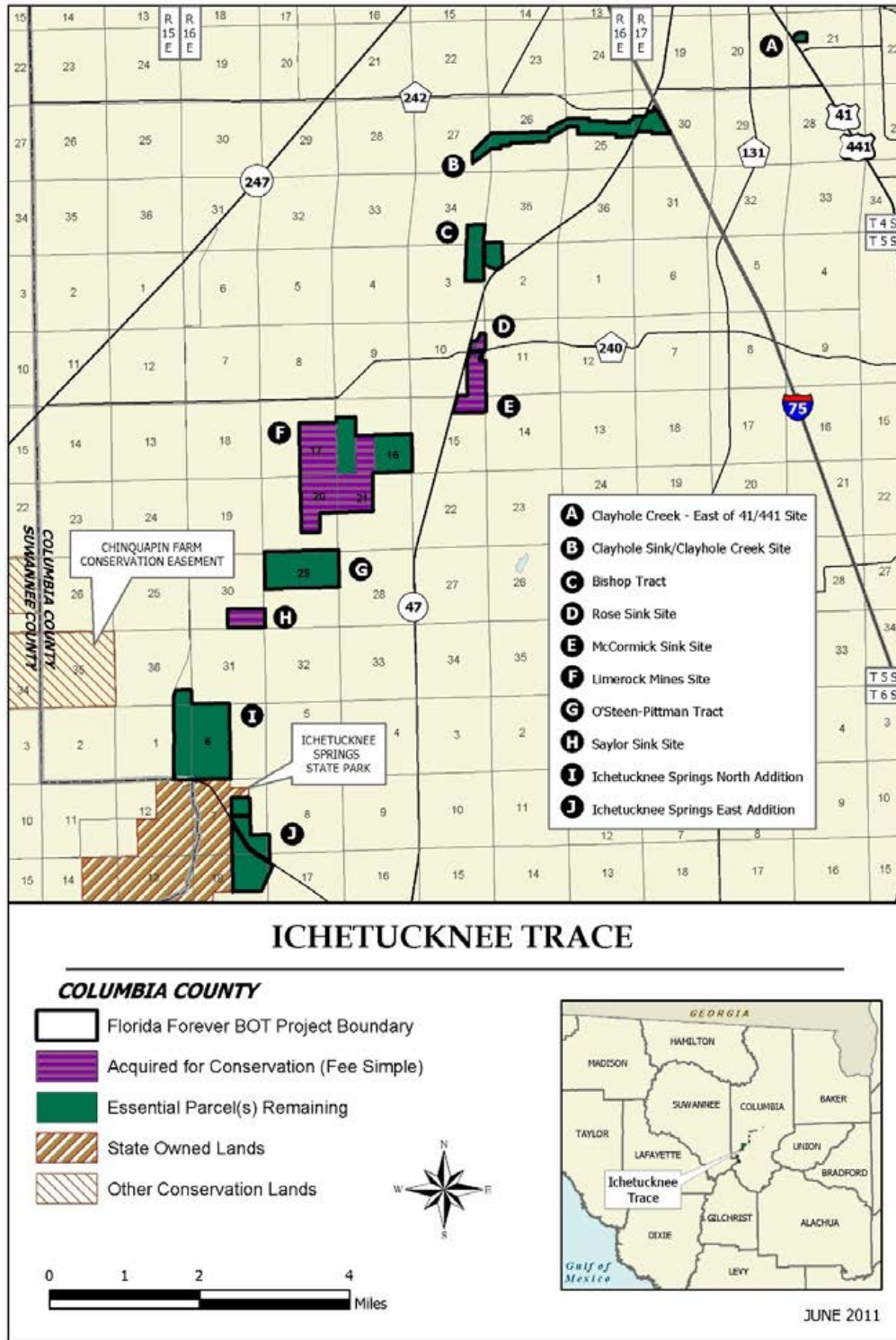


Map 118



### Map(s): Ichetucknee Trace

#### Ichetucknee Trace



Map 119



### Map(s): Indian River Lagoon Blueway

#### Indian River Lagoon Blueway



Map 120



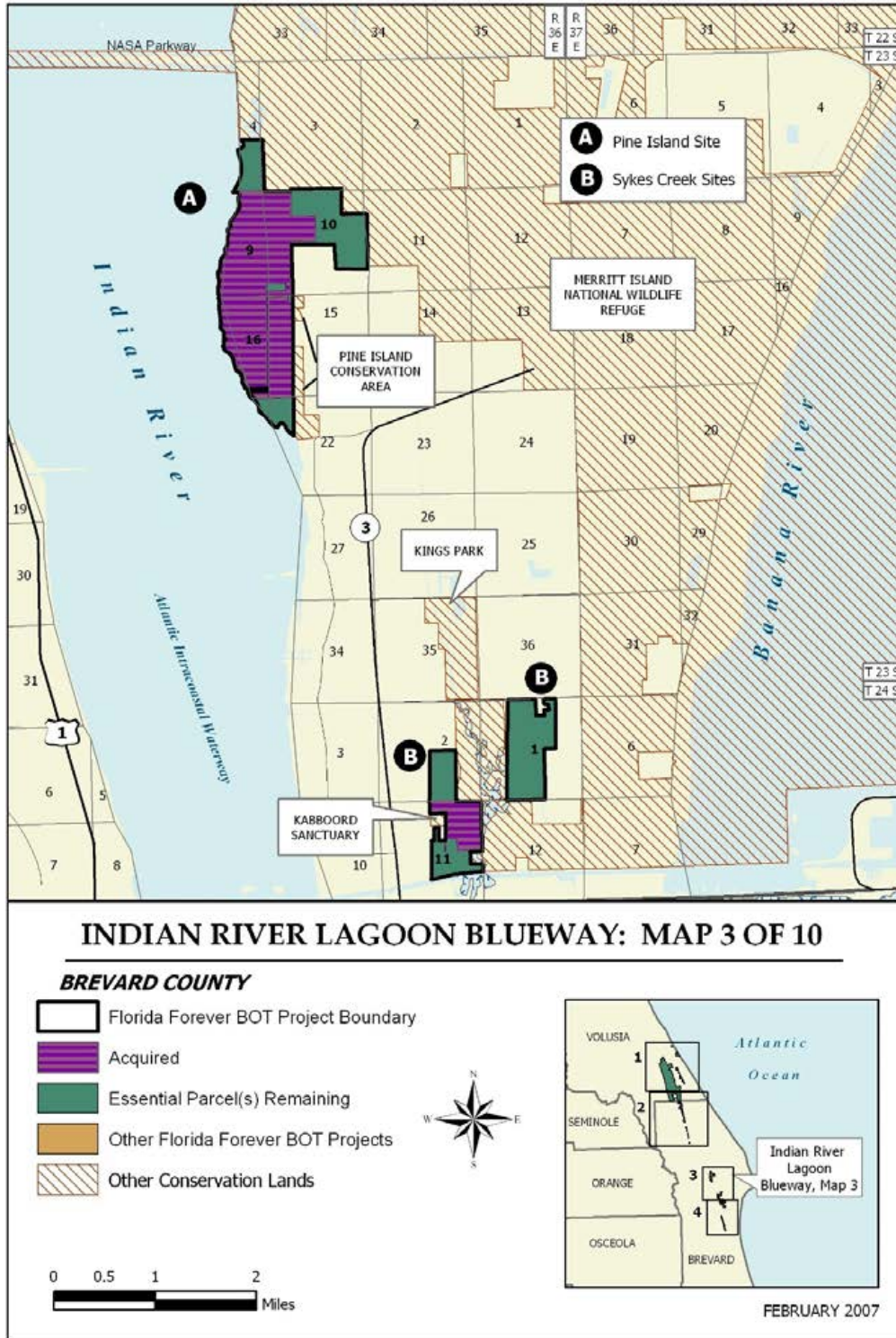


Map 121



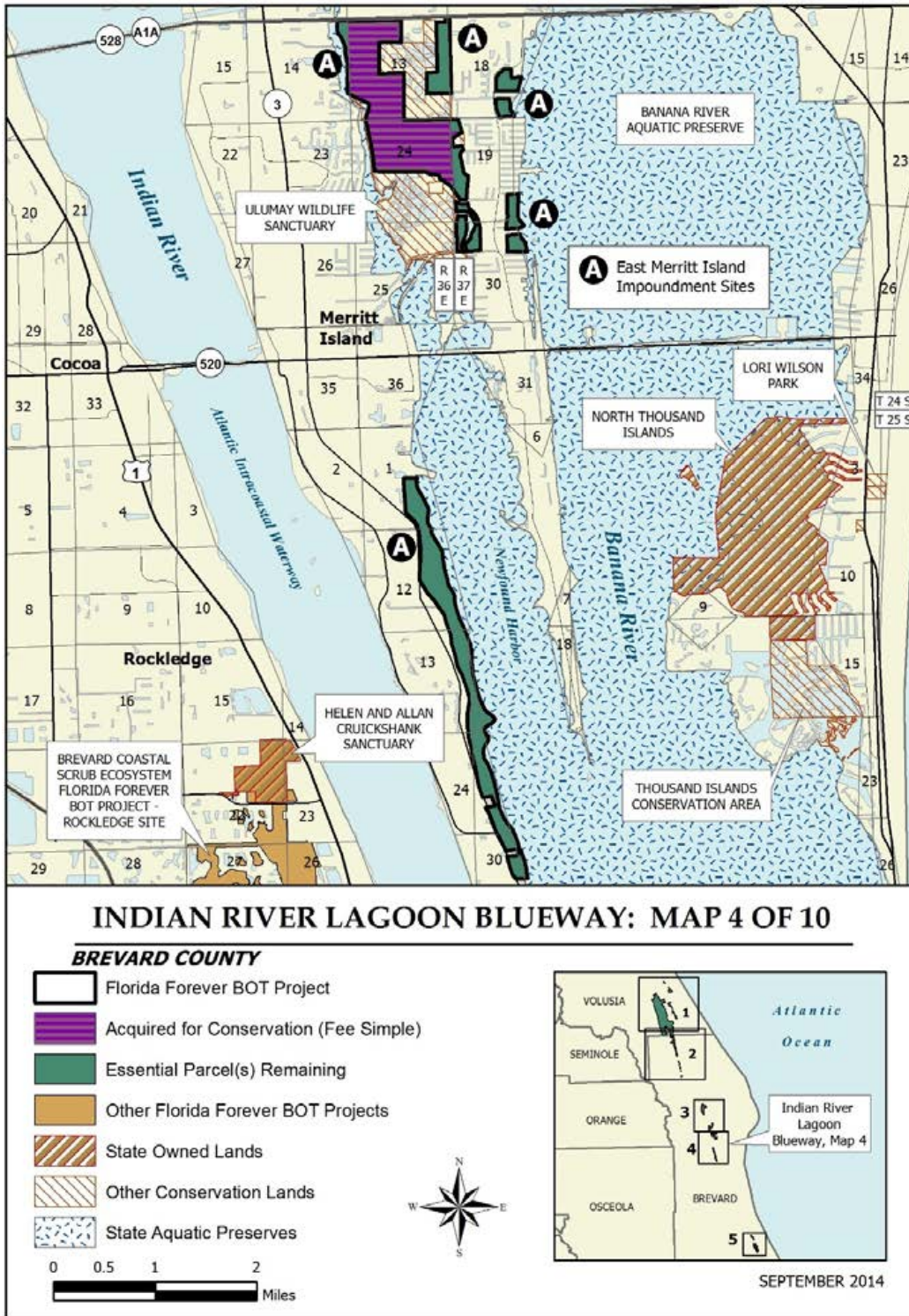
Map 122



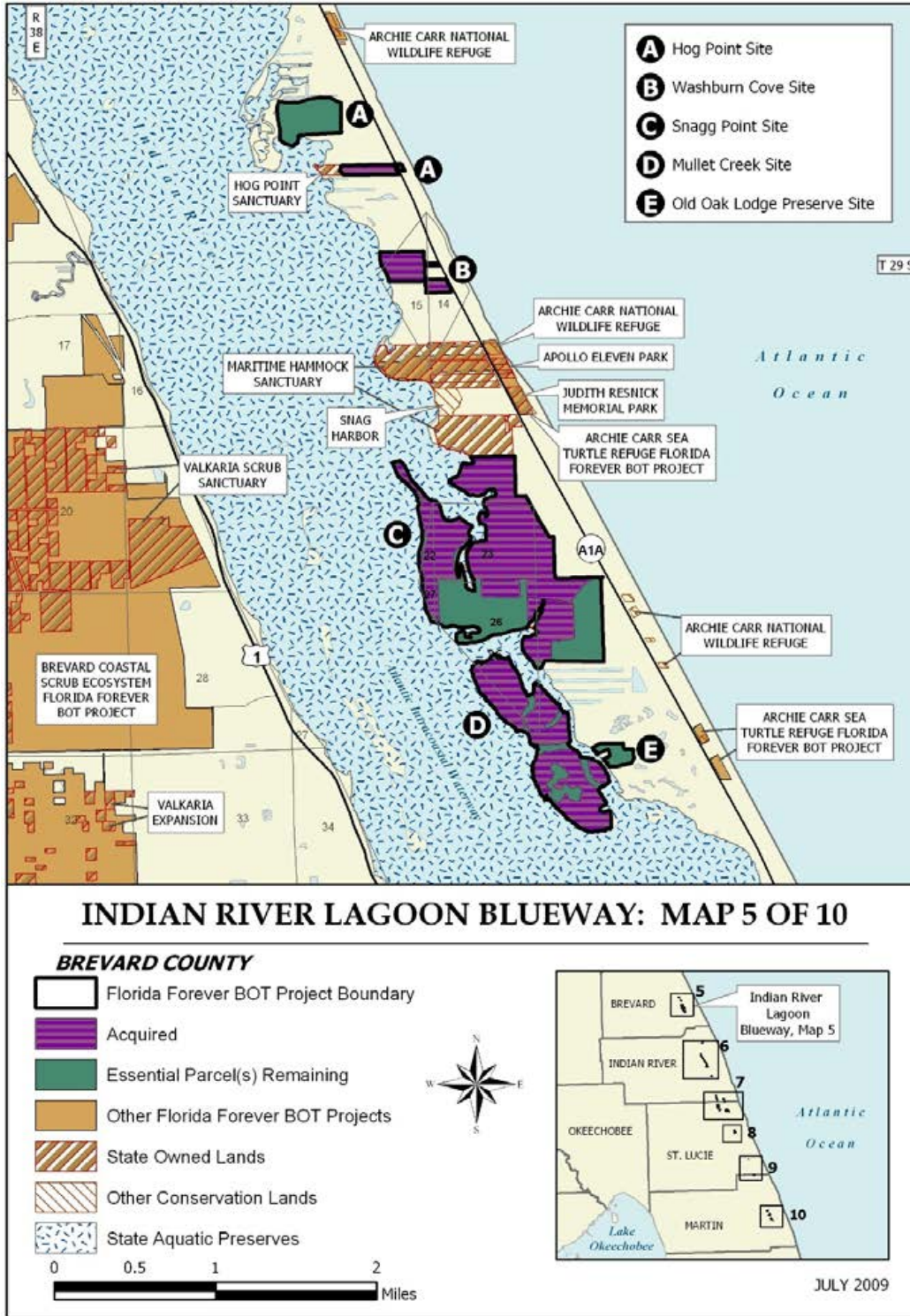


Map 123



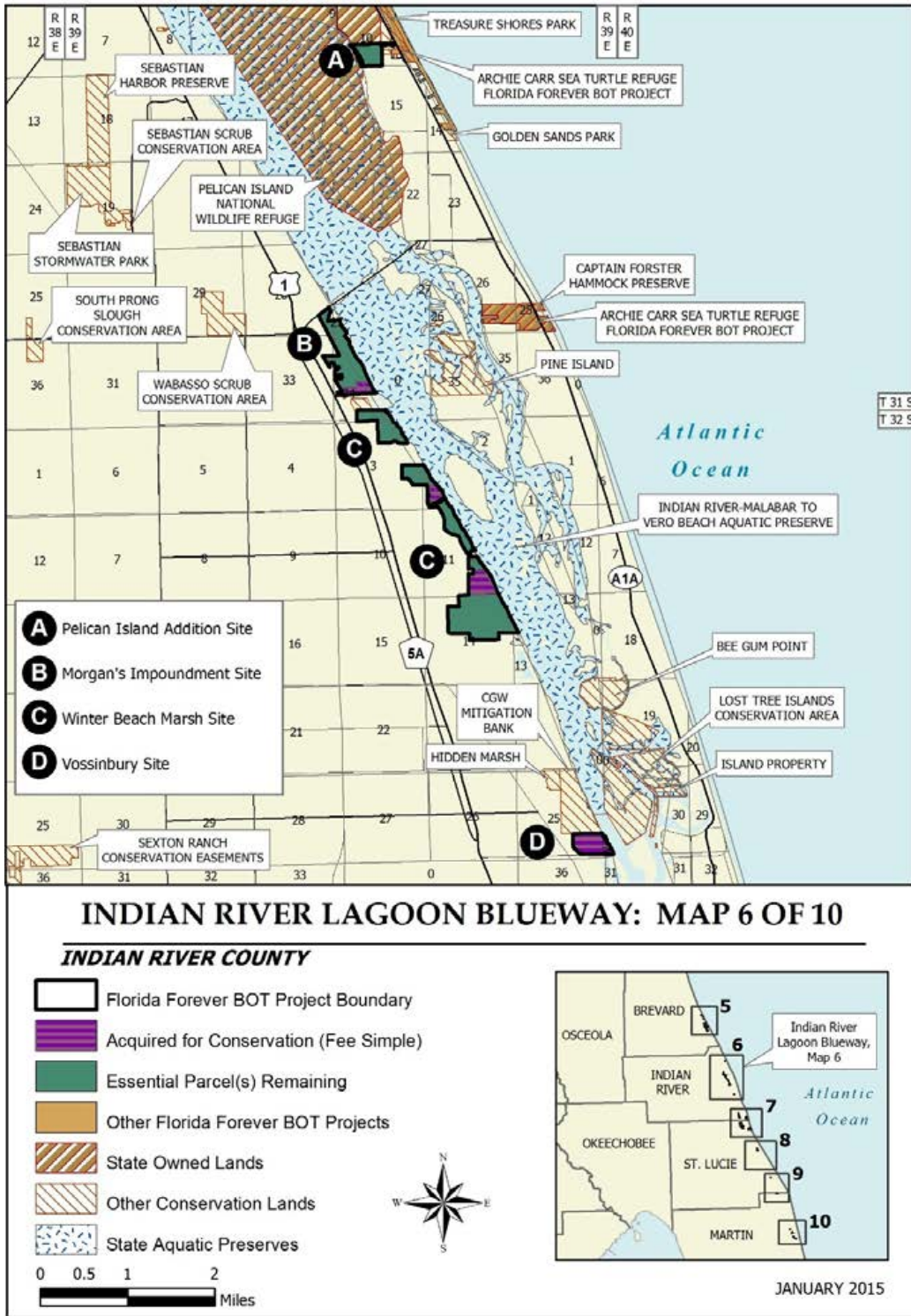


Map 124

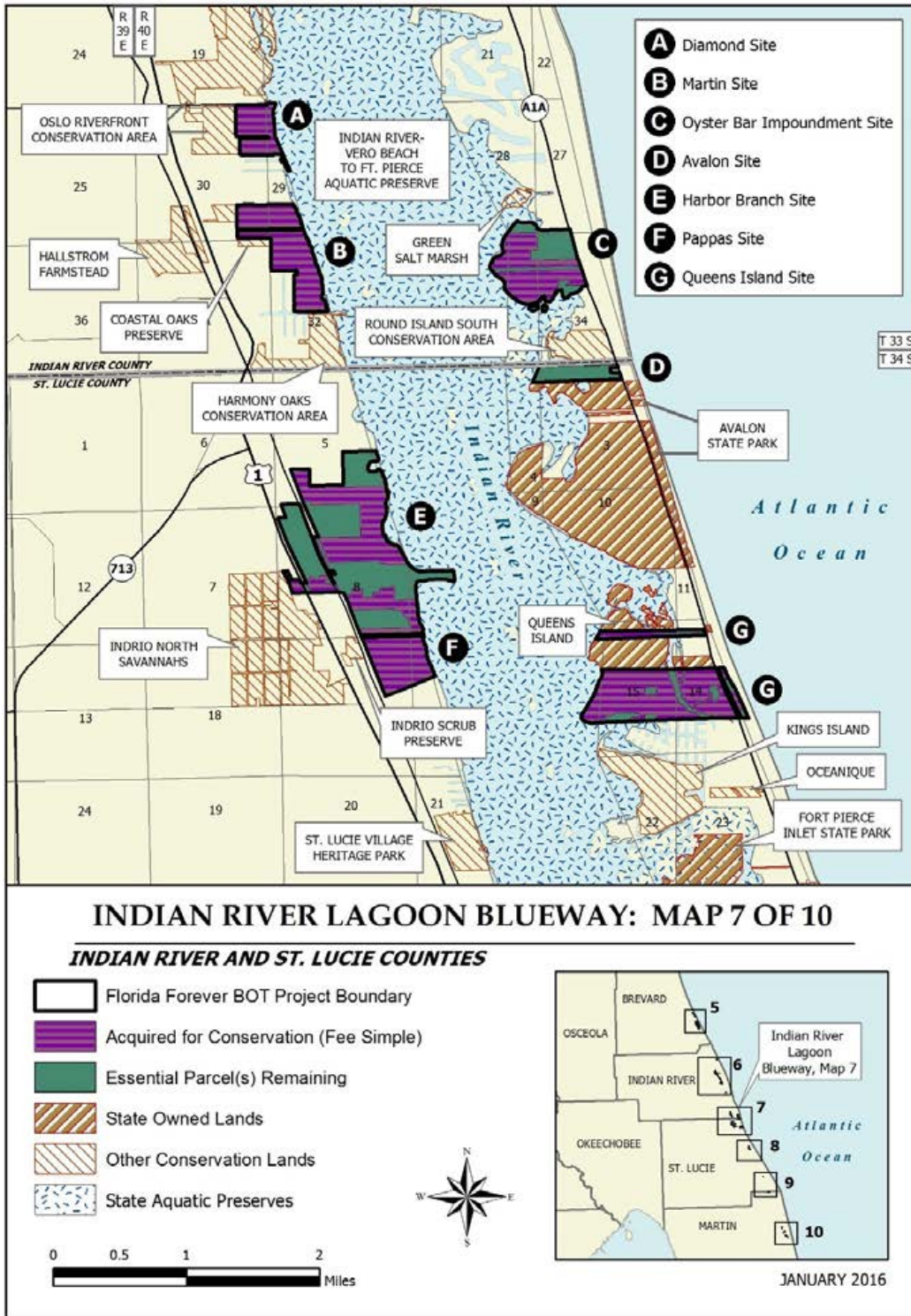


Map 125





Map 126



Map 127





Map 128



Map 129



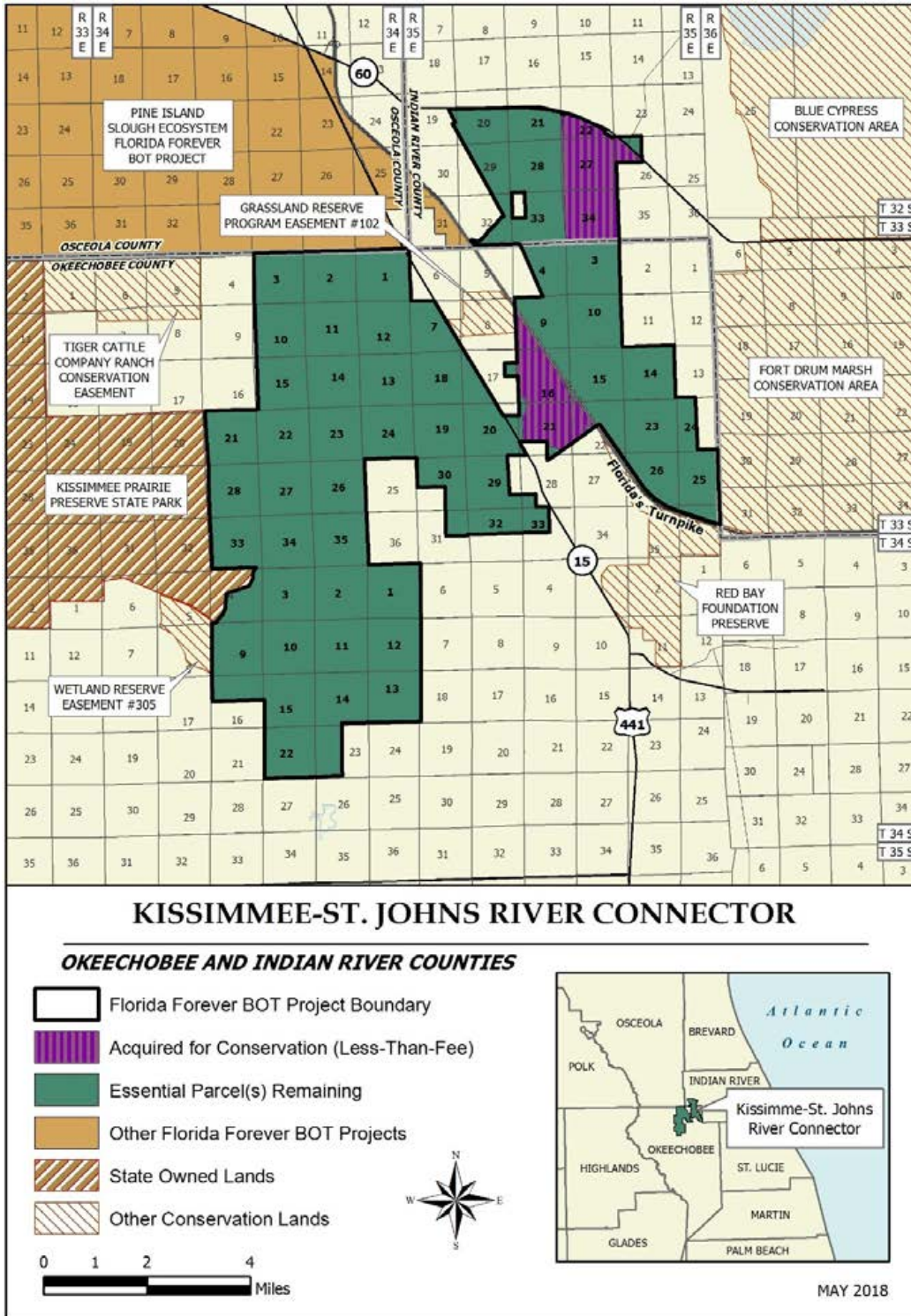


Map 130



### Map(s): Kissimmee – St. Johns River Connector

#### Kissimmee – St. Johns River Connector



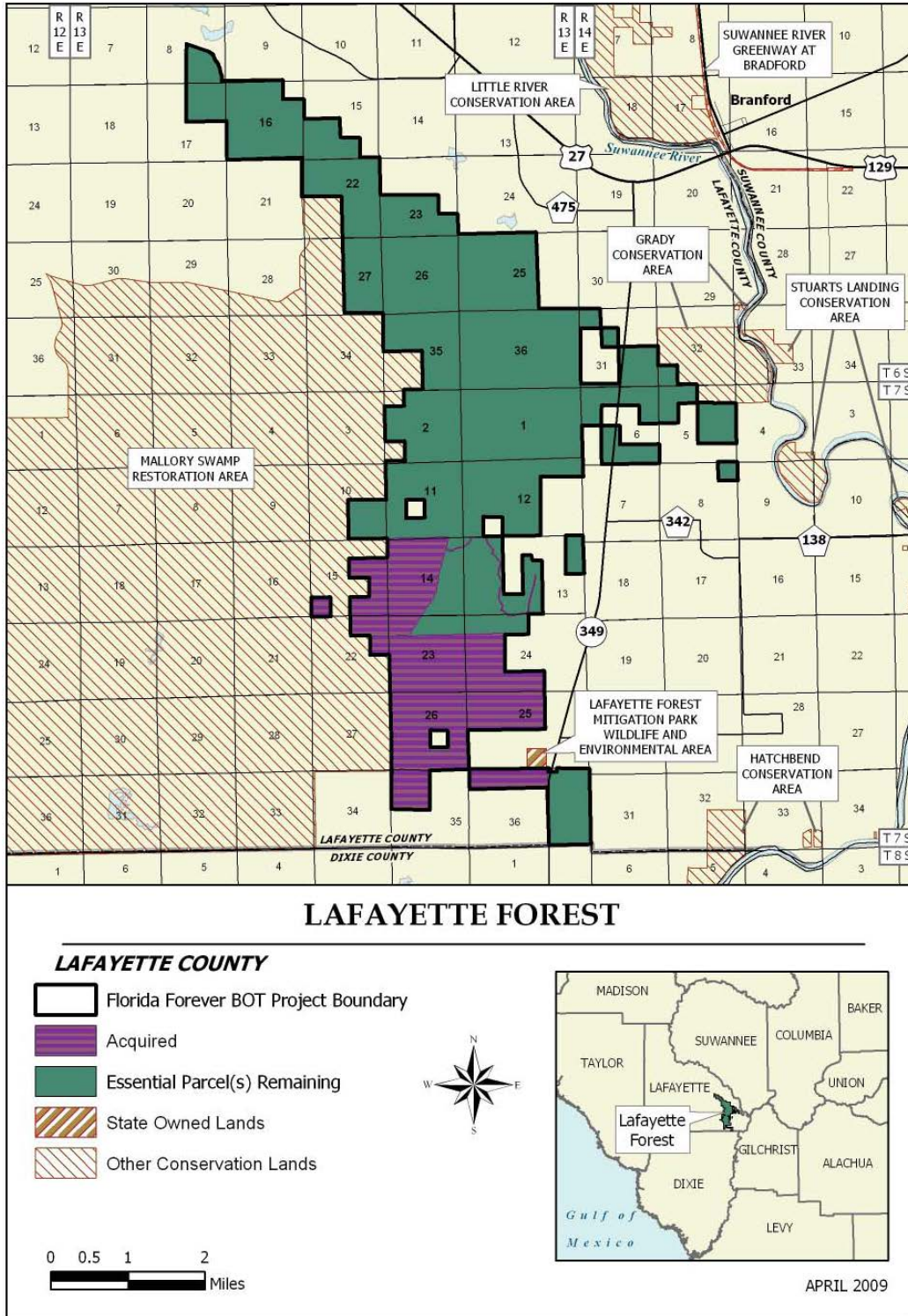
Map 131





# Map(s): Lafayette Forest

## Lafayette Forest

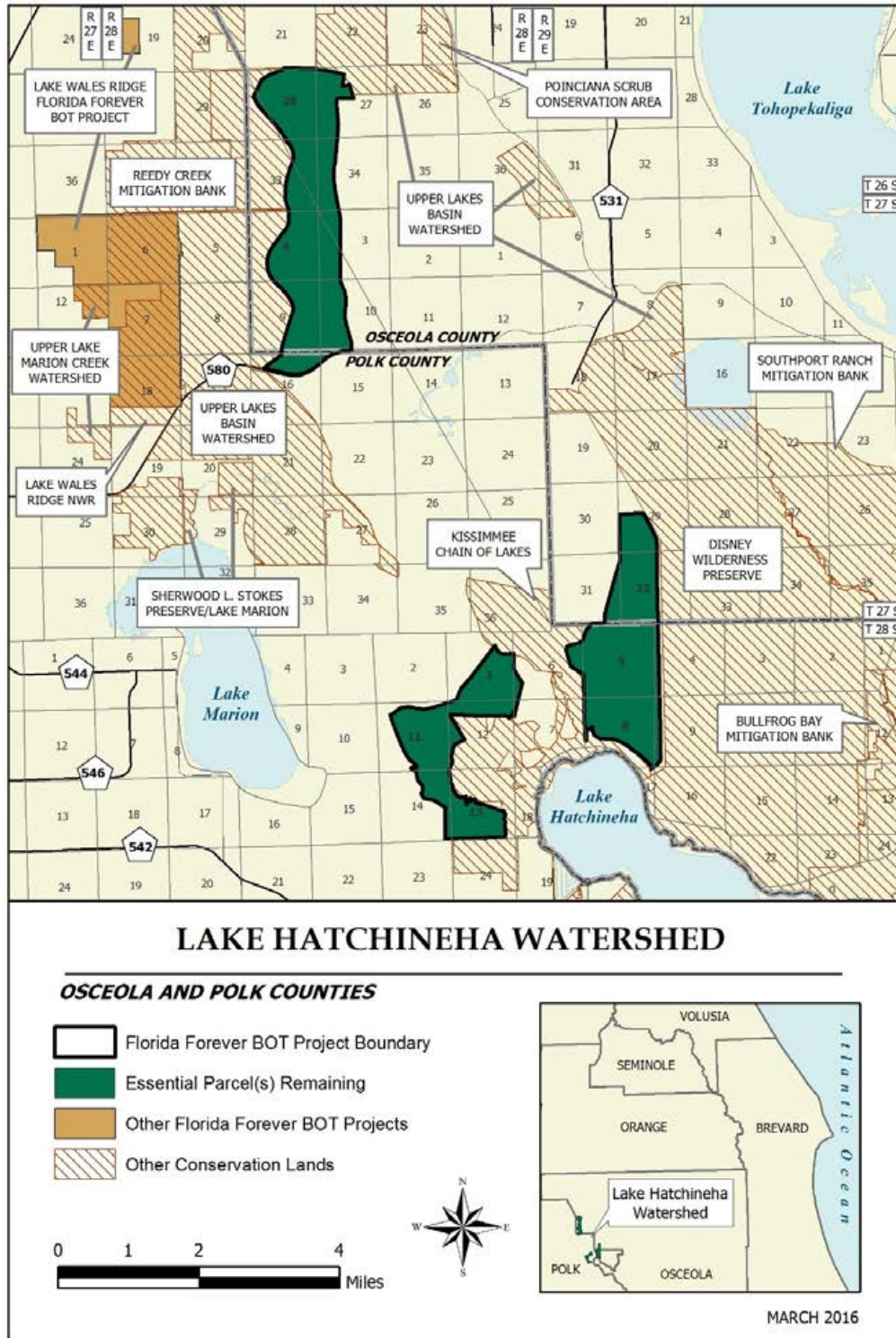


Map 132



### Map(s): Lake Hatchineha Watershed

#### Lake Hatchineha Watershed



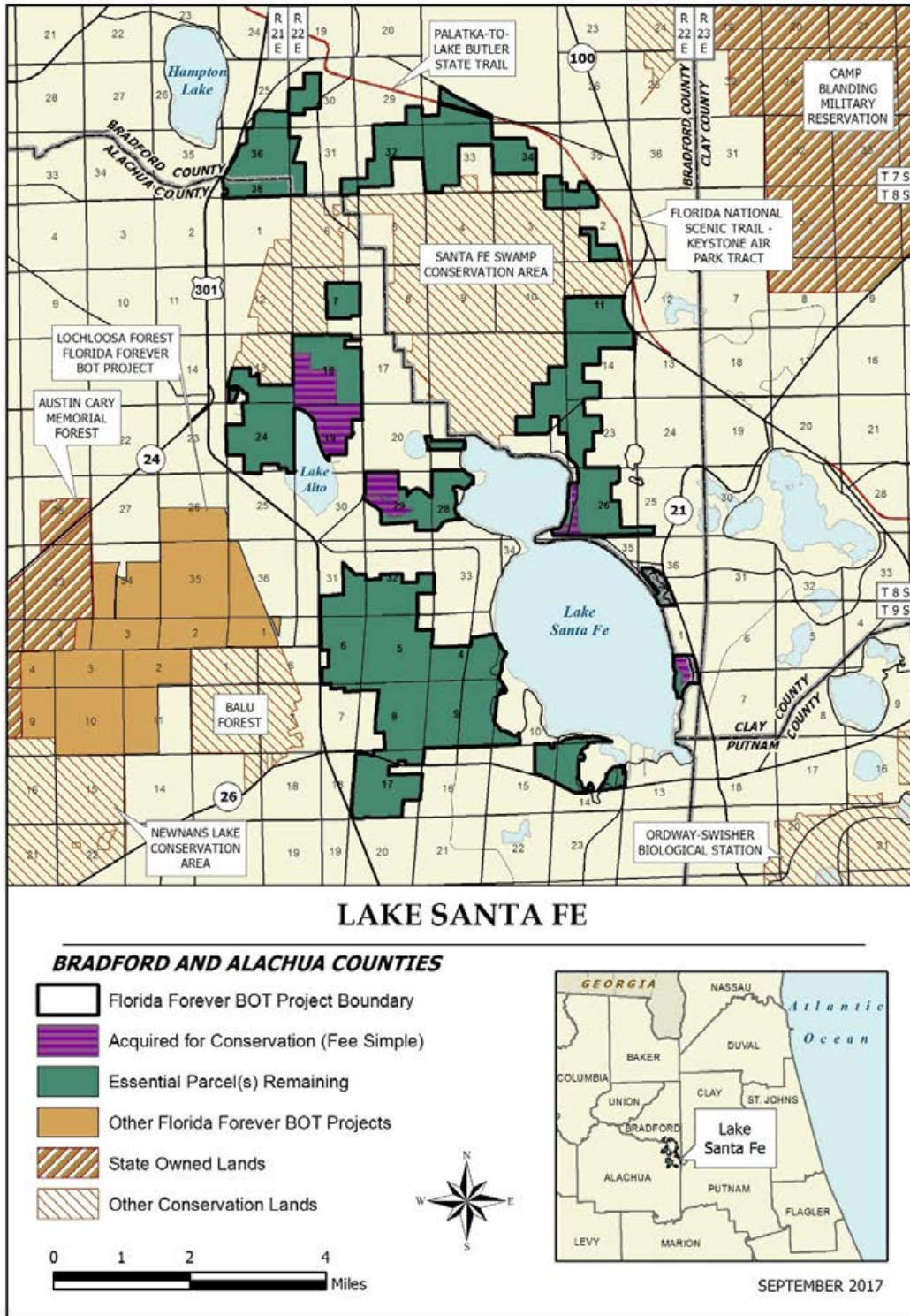
Map 133





### Map(s): Lake Santa Fe

#### Lake Santa Fe

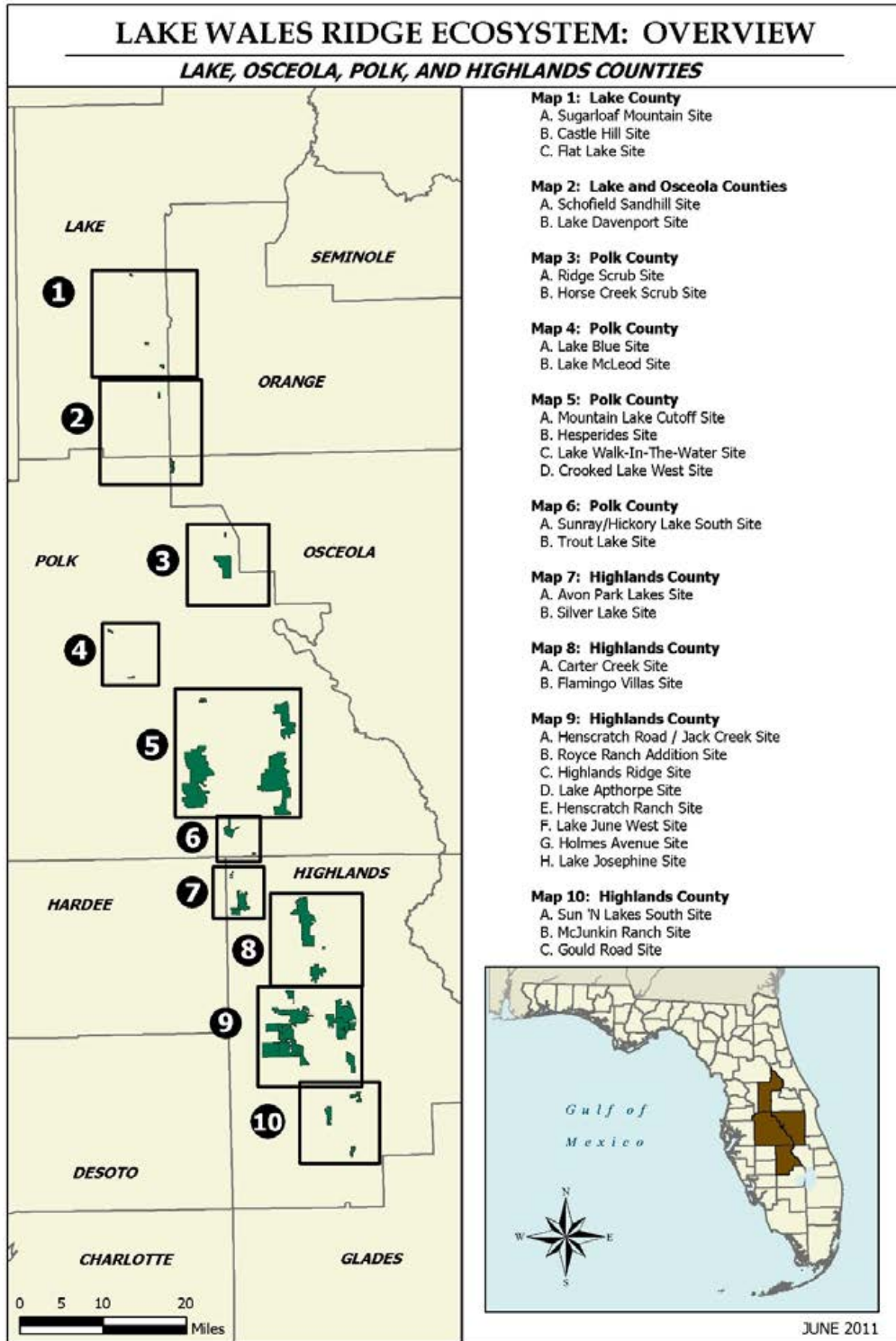


Map 134



### Map(s): Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem

#### Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem

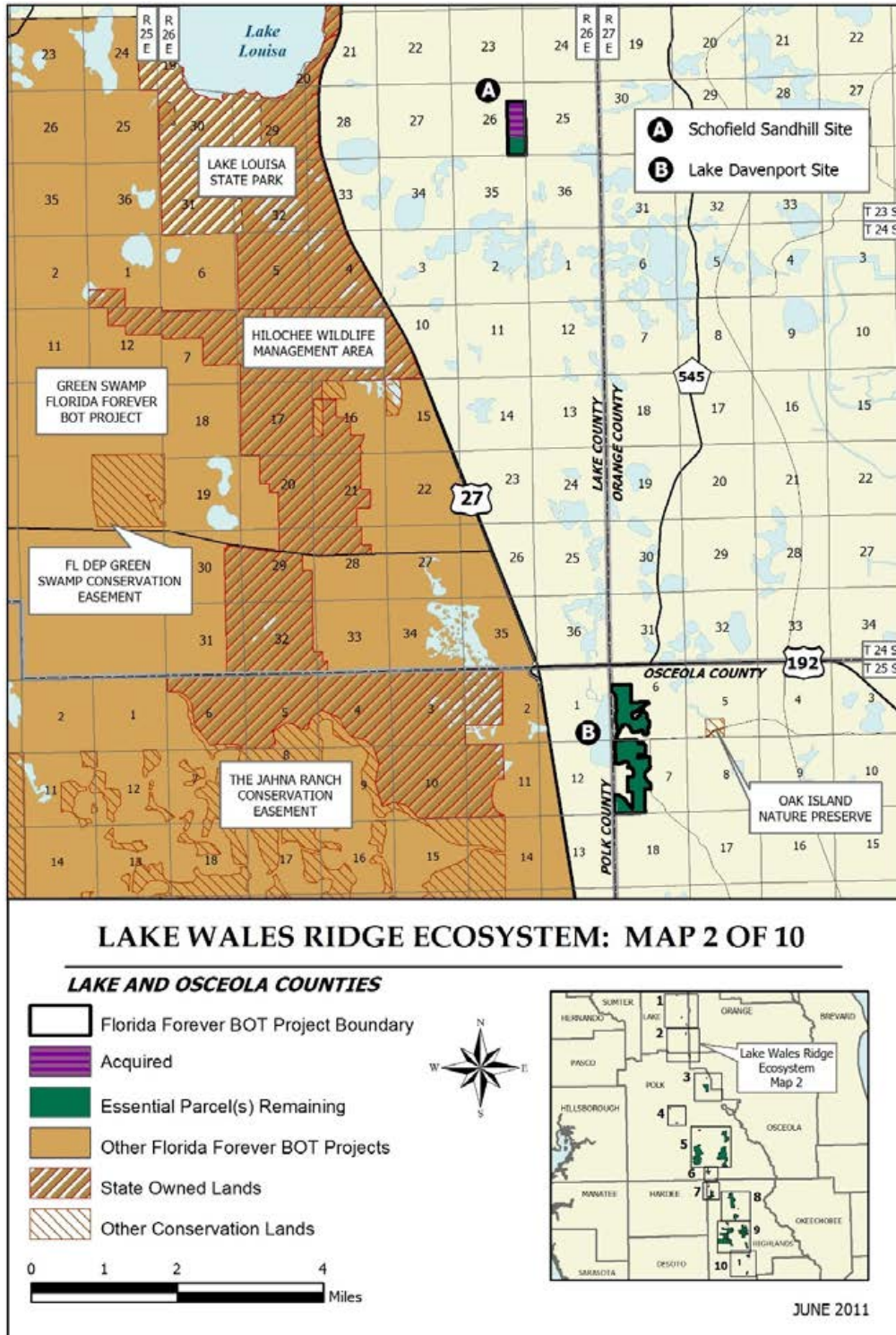


Map 135



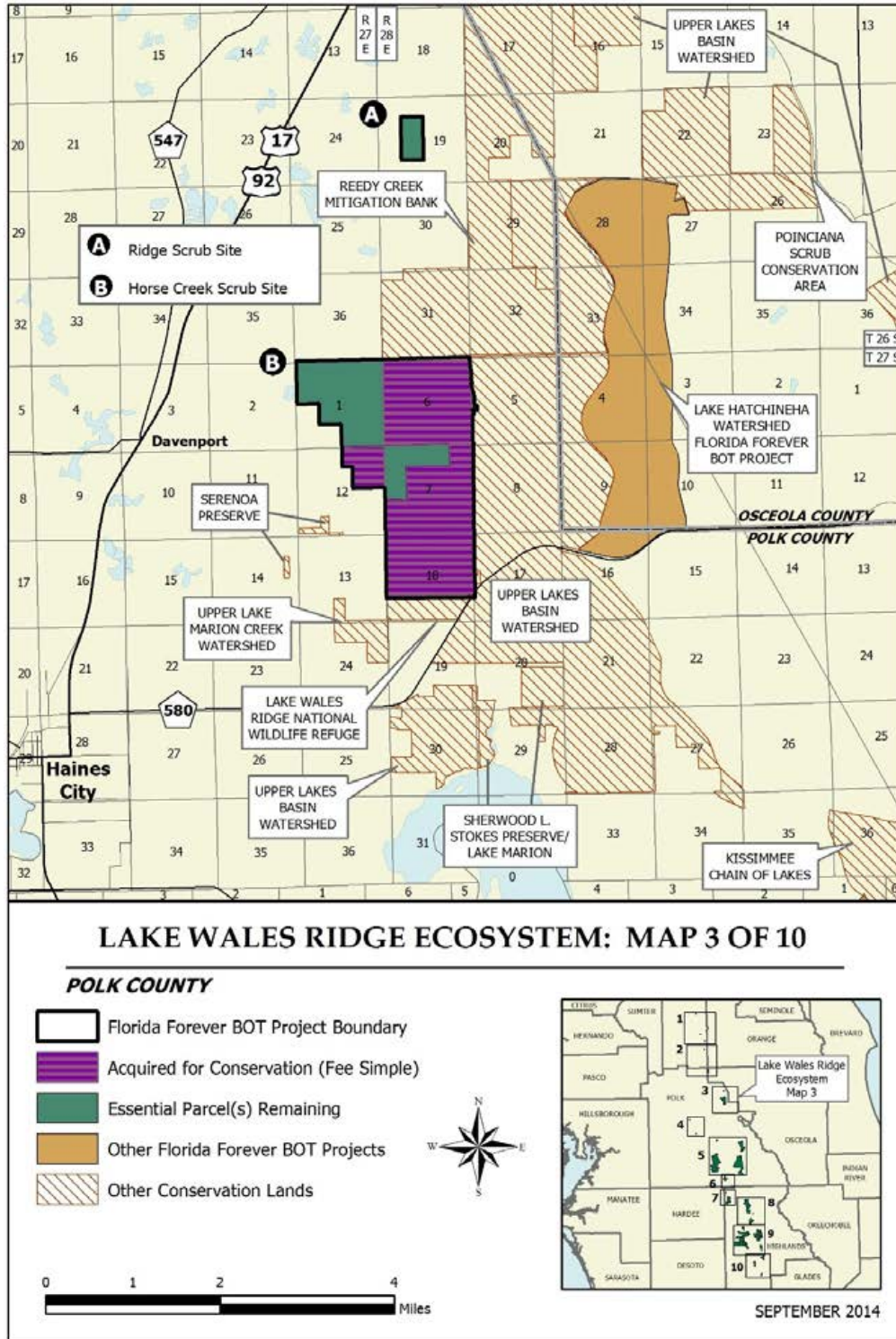


Map 136

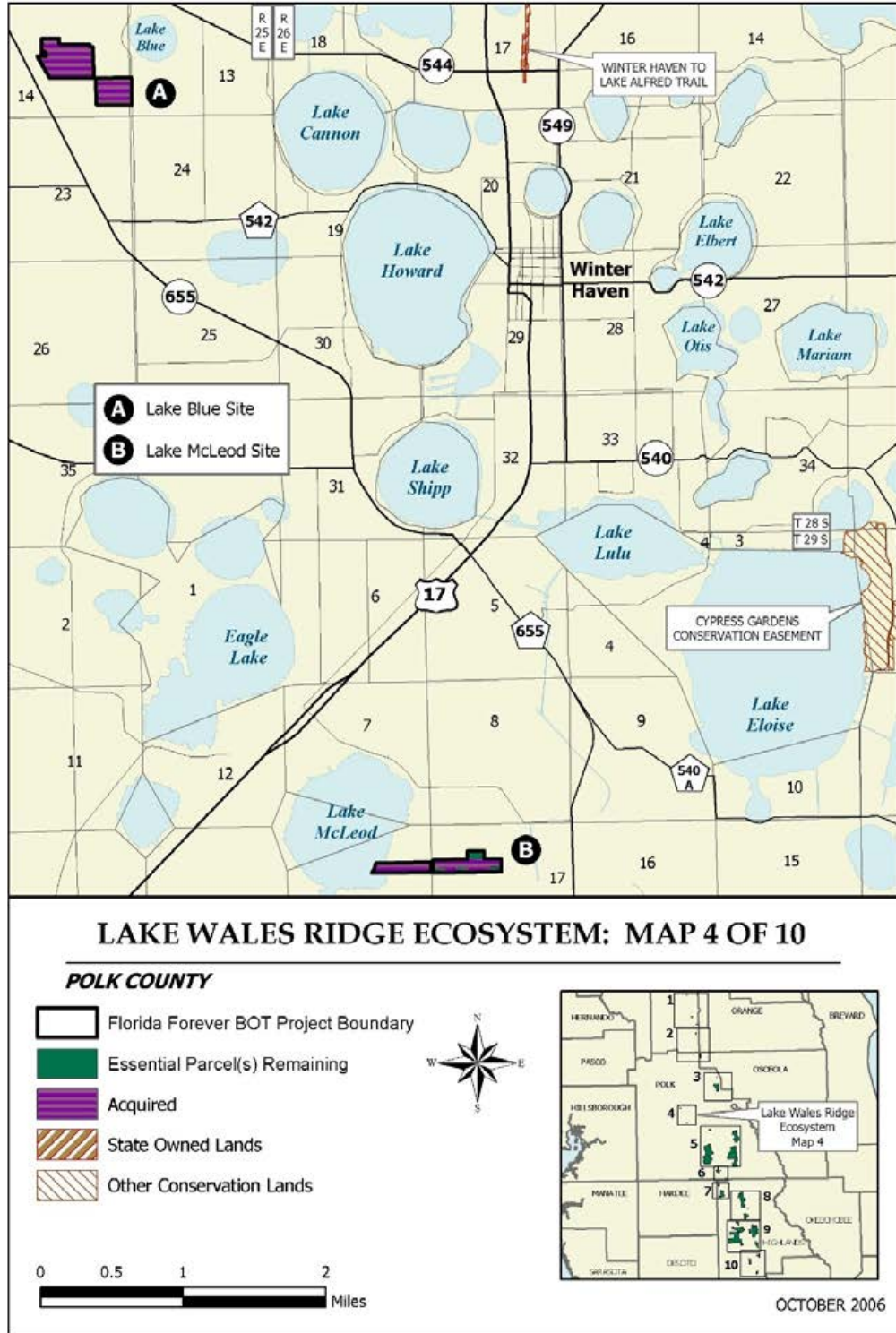


Map 137



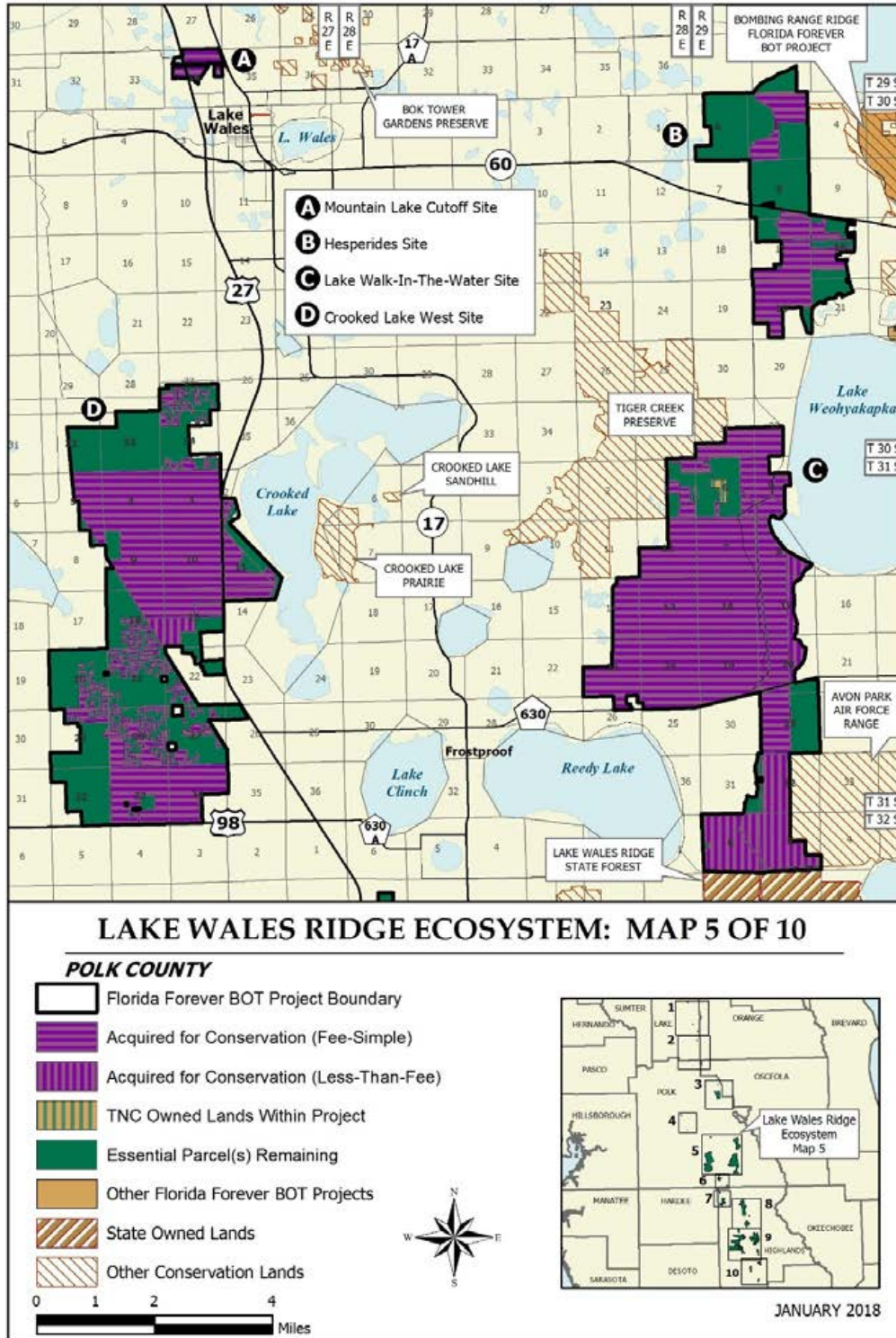


Map 138

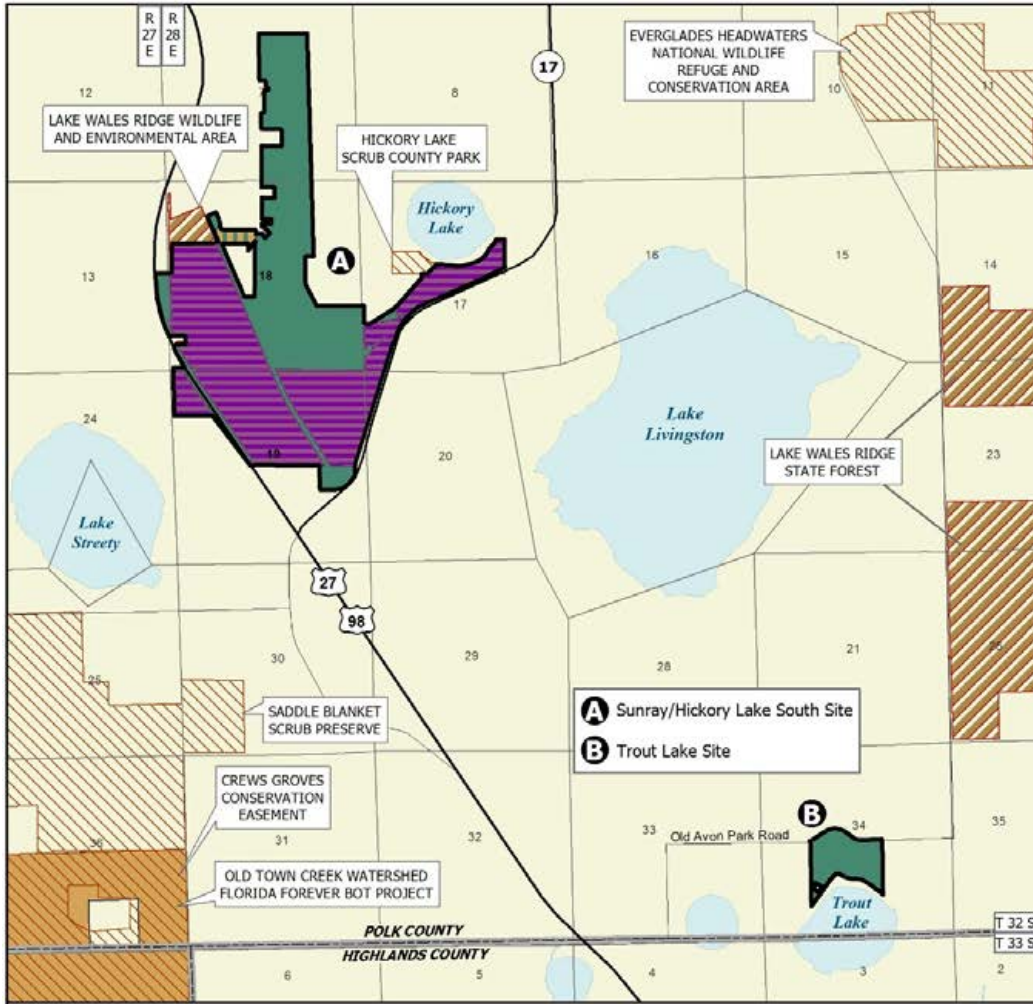


Map 139





Map 140



### LAKE WALES RIDGE ECOSYSTEM: MAP 6 OF 10

#### POLK COUNTY

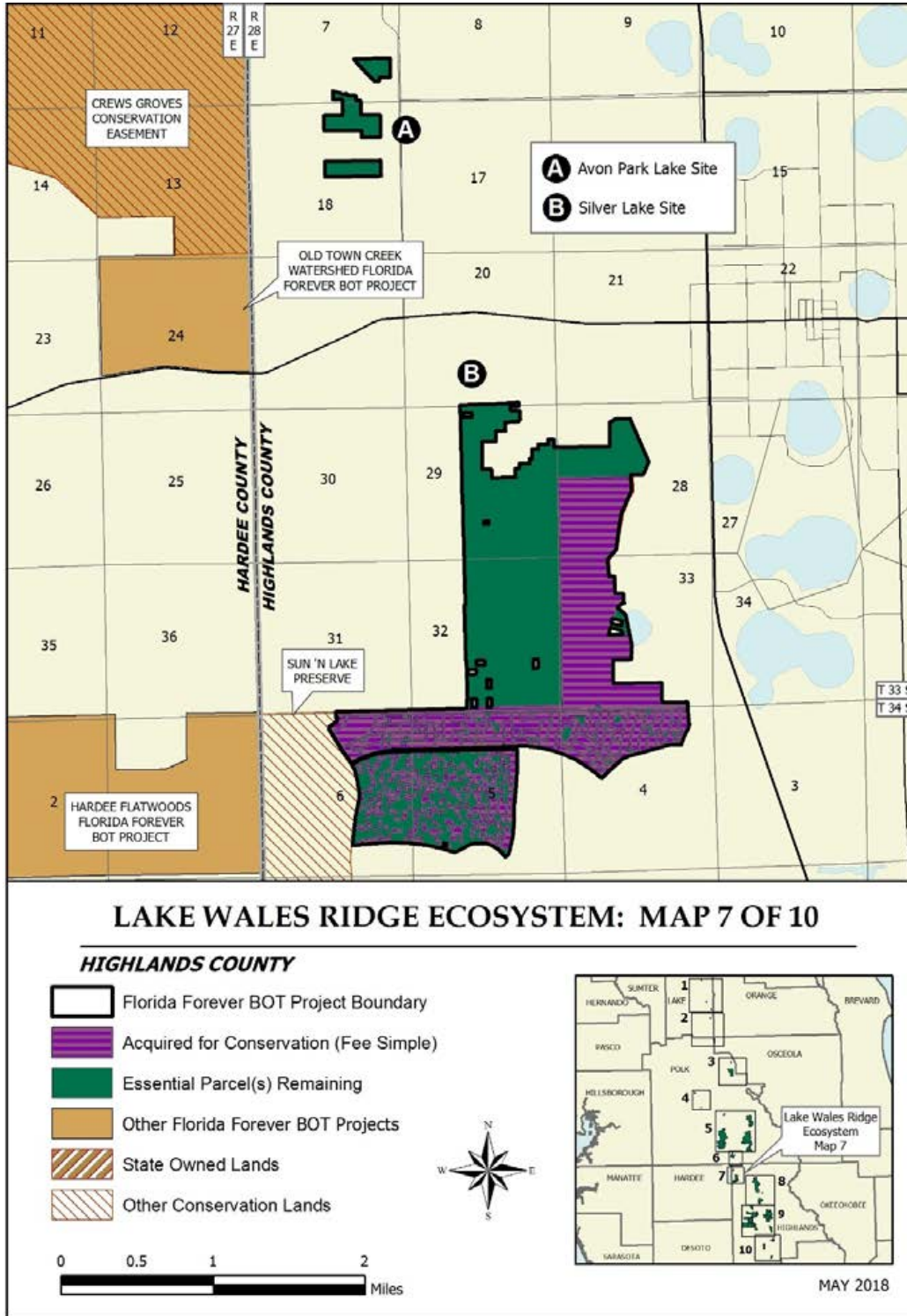
- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- TNC Owned Lands Within Project
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



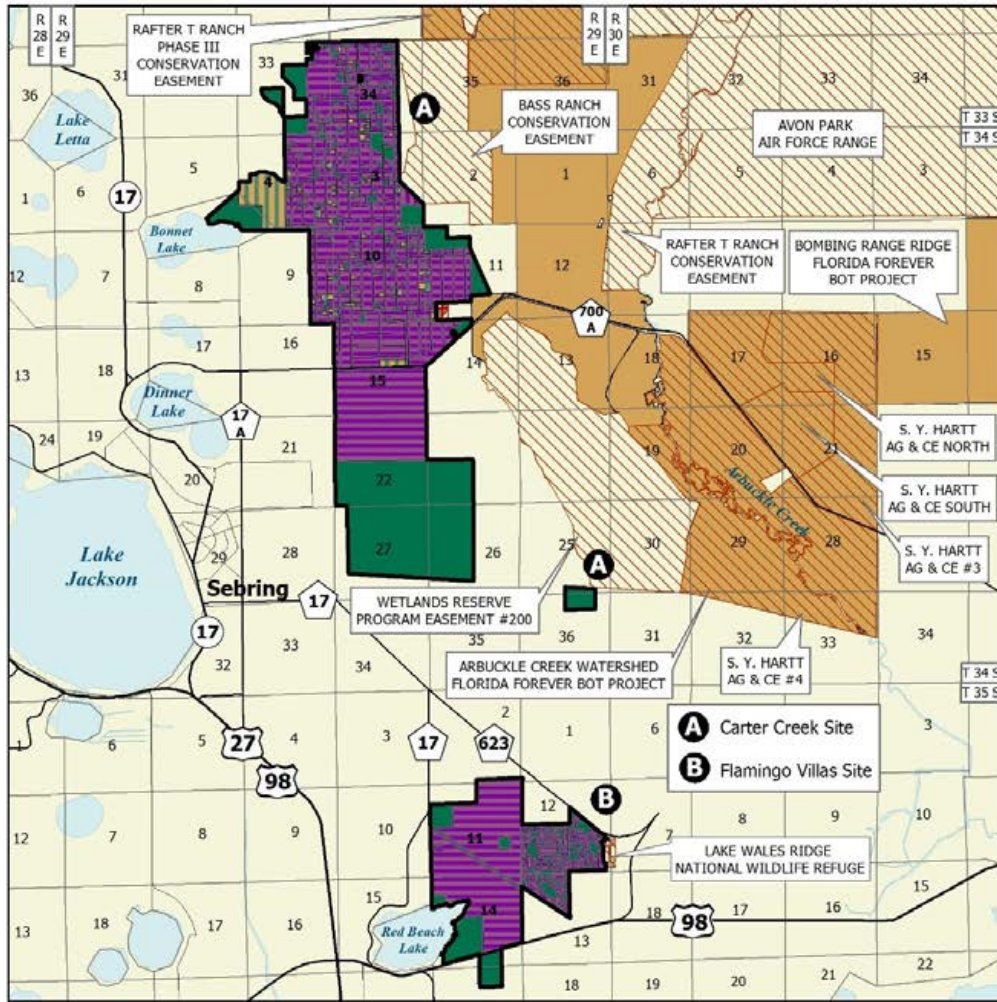
MAY 2018

Map 141





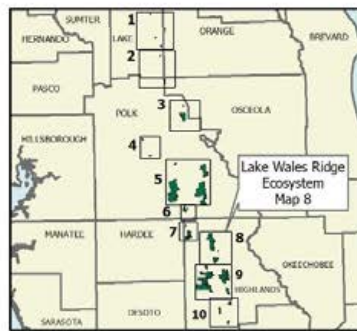
Map 142



### LAKE WALES RIDGE ECOSYSTEM: MAP 8 OF 10

#### HIGHLANDS COUNTY

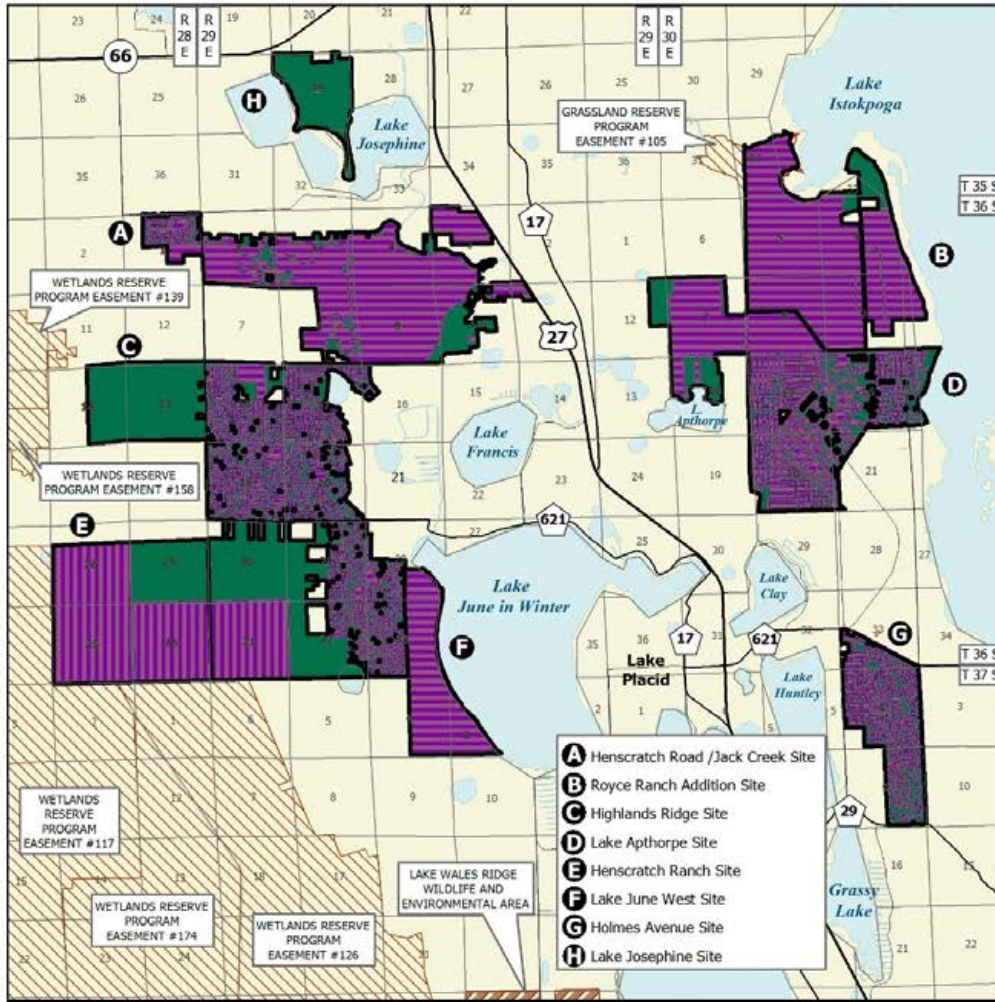
- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Less-Than-Fee)
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- TNC Owned Lands Within Project
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



JANUARY 2019

Map 143

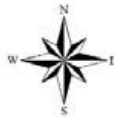




### LAKE WALES RIDGE ECOSYSTEM: MAP 9 OF 10

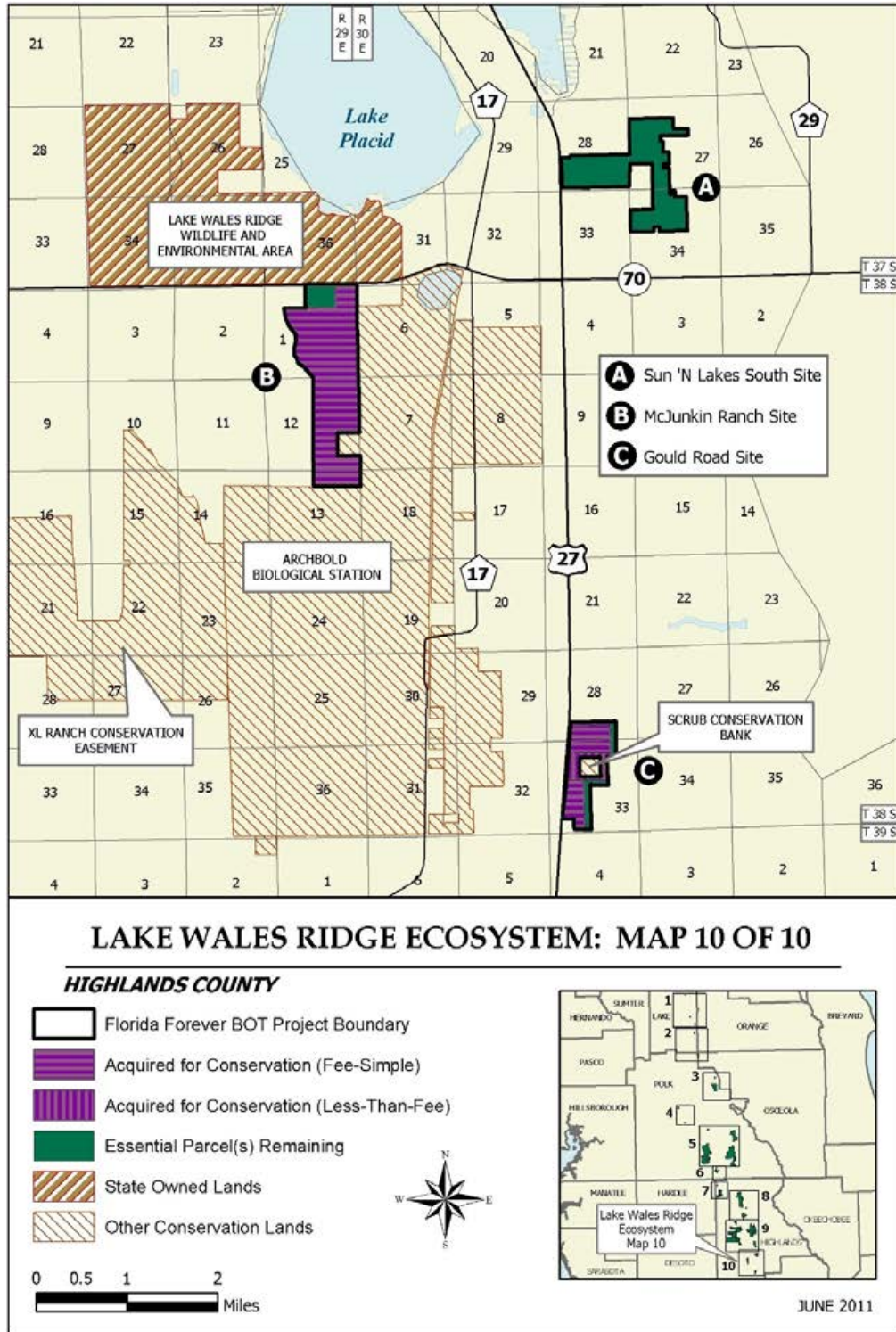
#### HIGHLANDS COUNTY

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee-Simple)
- Acquired for Conservation (Less-Than-Fee)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



SEPTEMBER 2018

Map 144



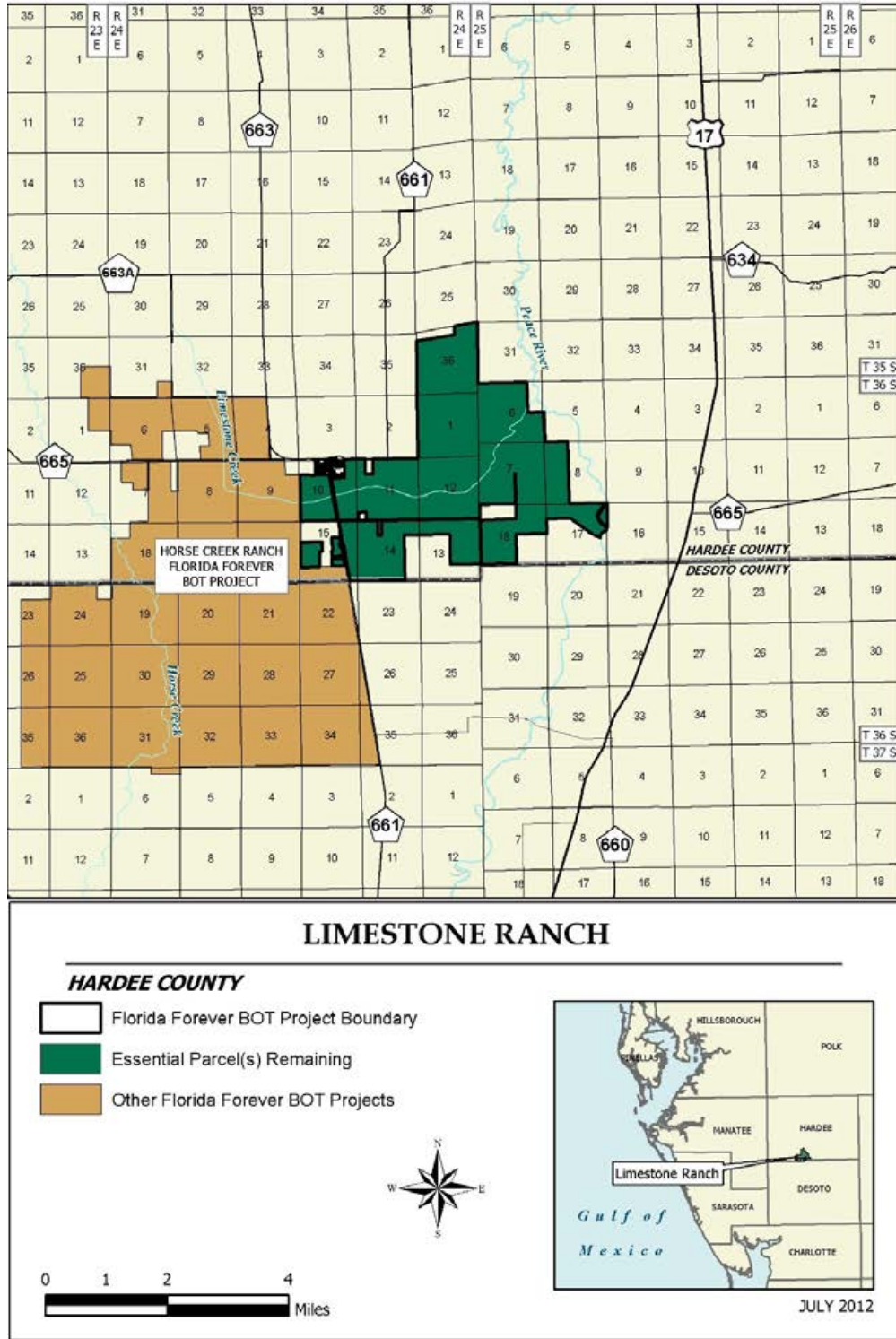
Map 145





### Map(s): Limestone Ranch

#### Limestone Ranch

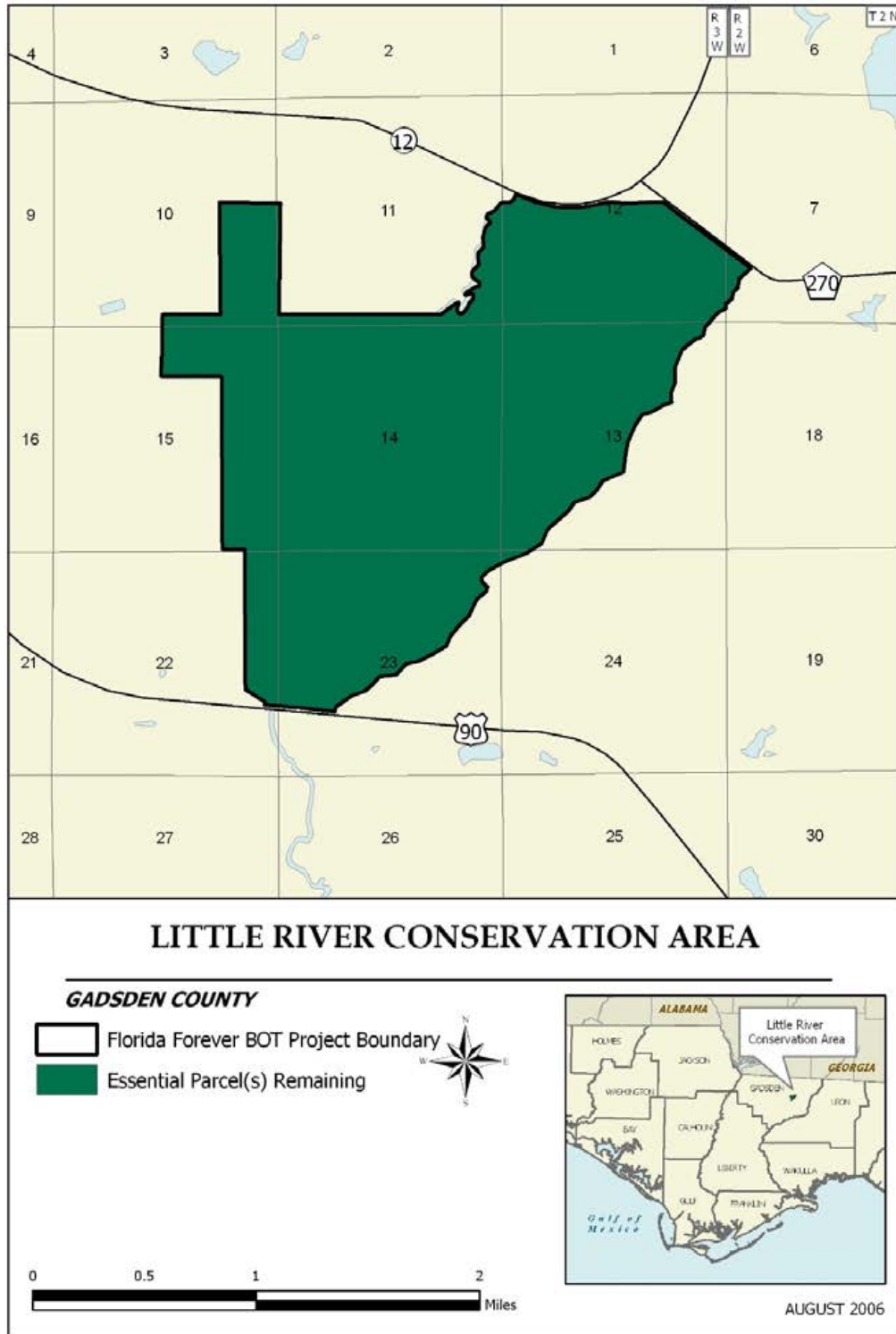


Map 146



### Map(s): Little River Conservation Area

#### [Little River Conservation Area](#)



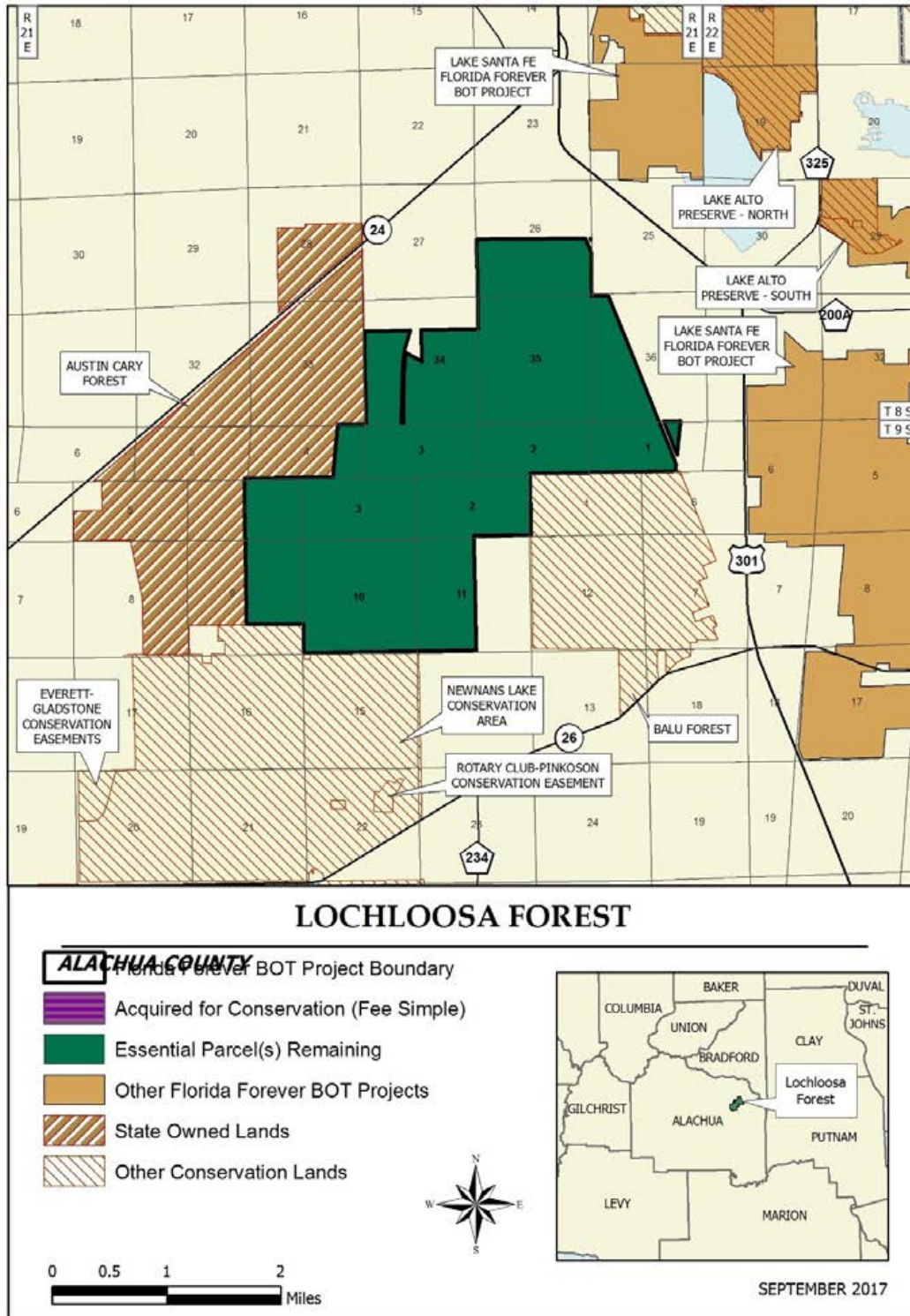
Map 147





### Map(s): Lochloosa Forest

#### Lochloosa Forest

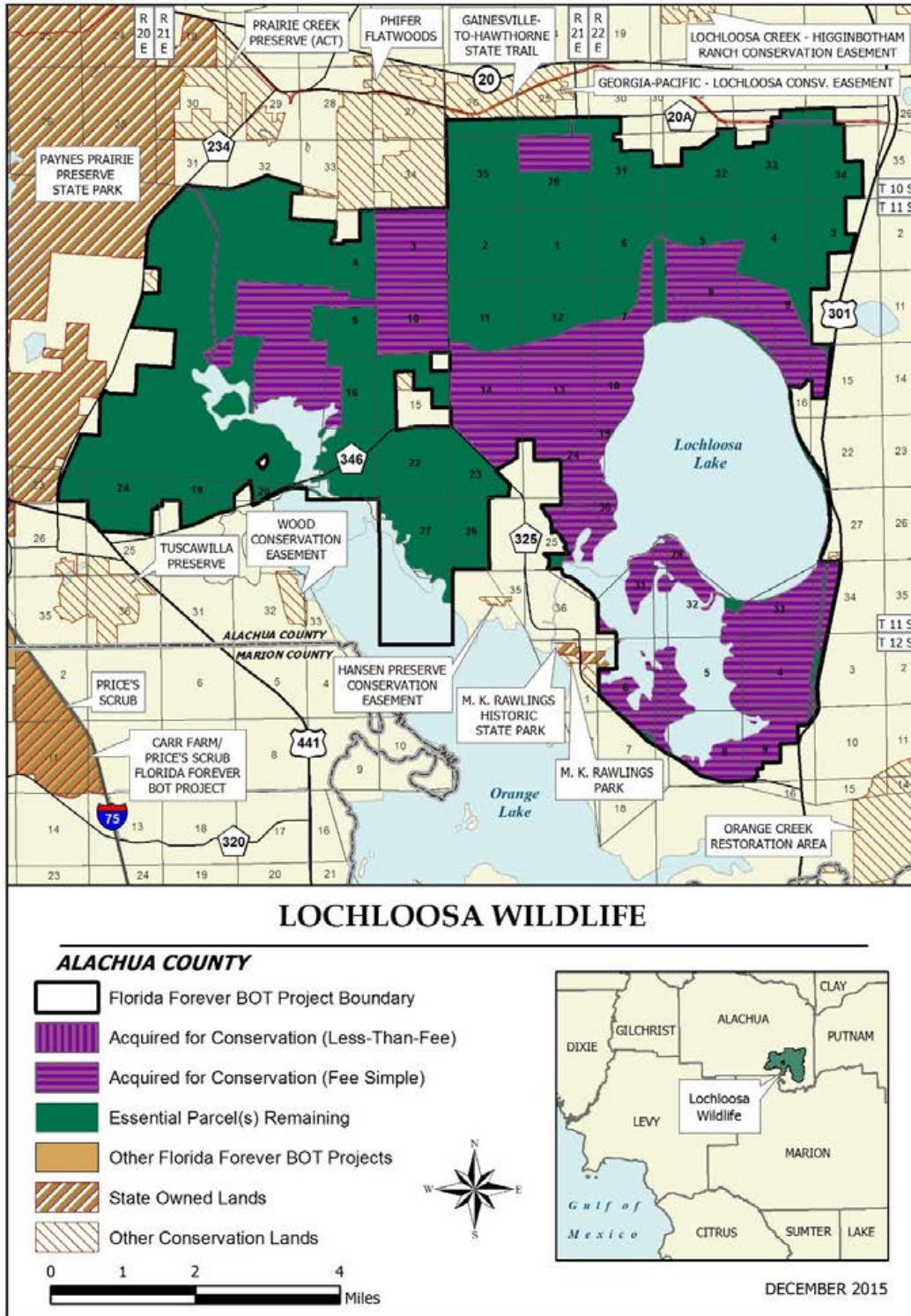


Map 148



### Map(s): Lochloosa Wildlife

#### Lochloosa Wildlife



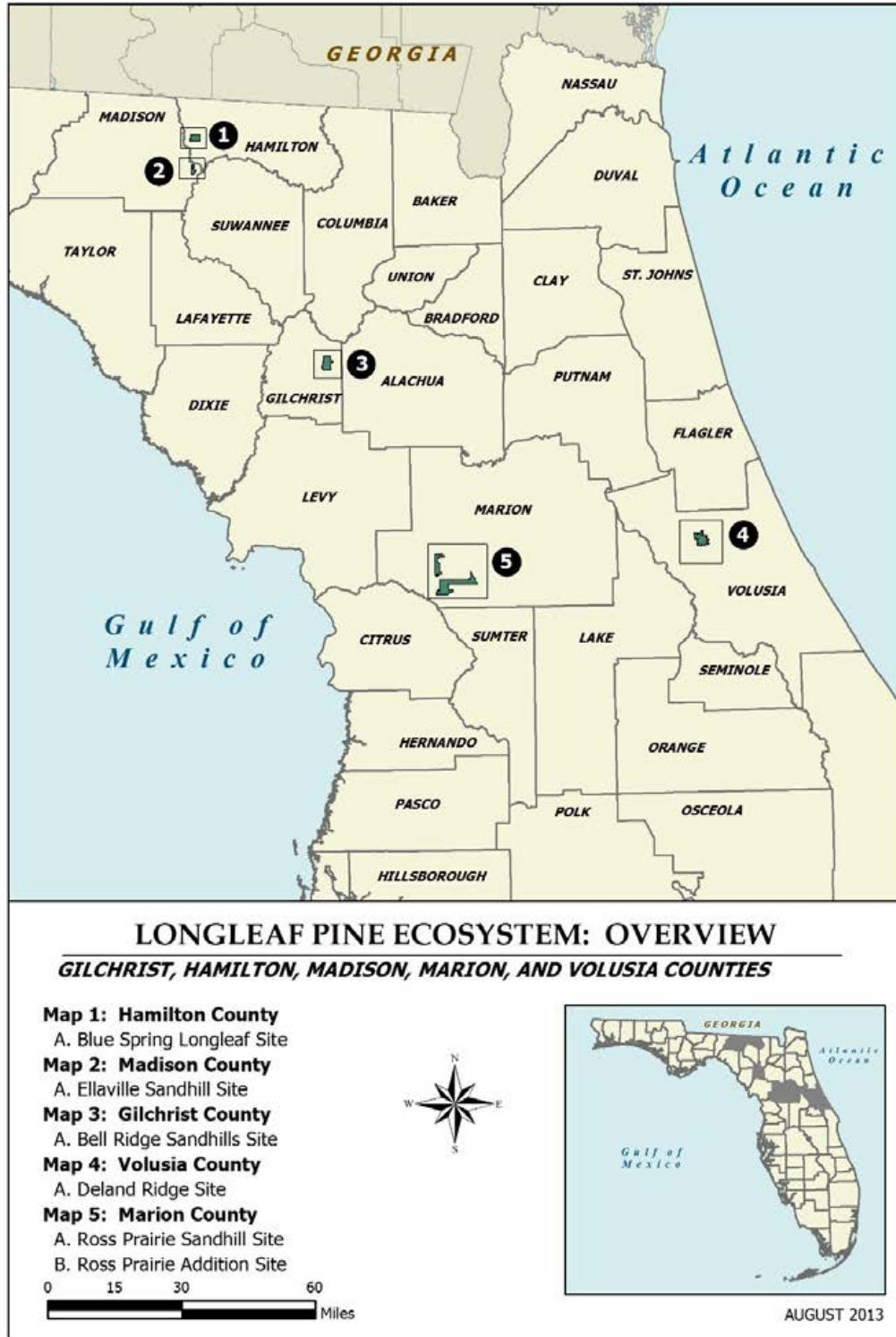
Map 149



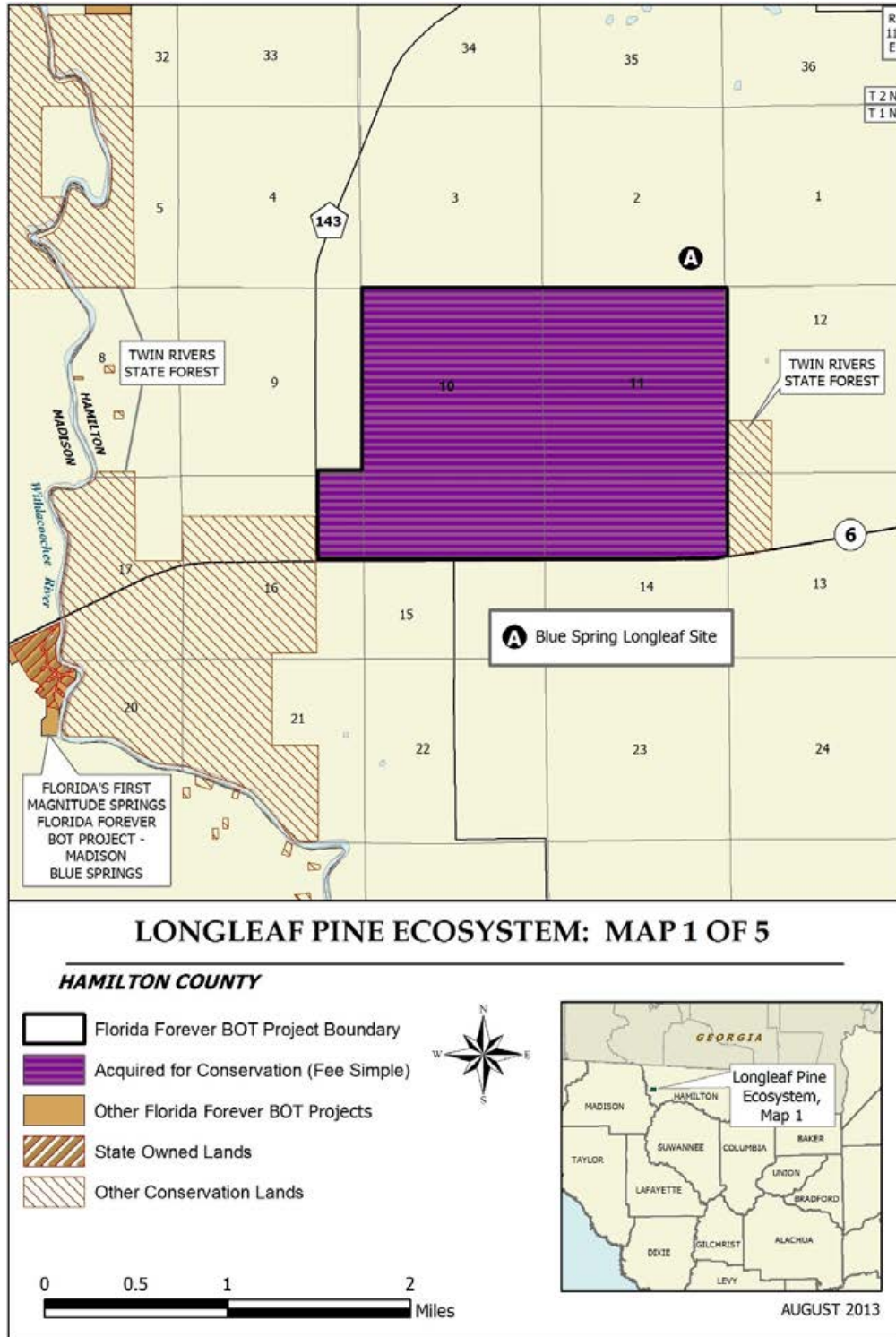


### Map(s): Longleaf Pine Ecosystem

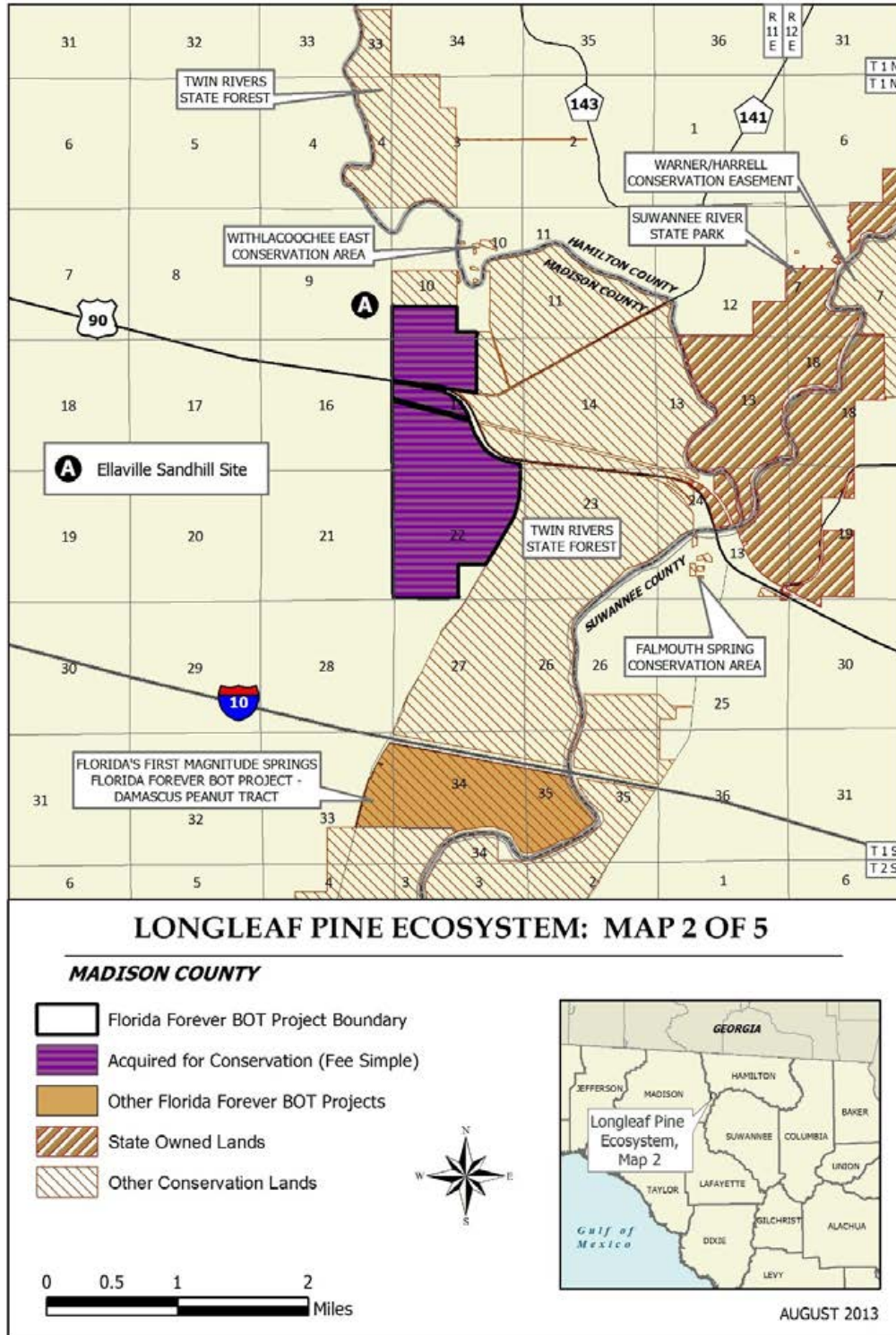
#### Longleaf Pine Ecosystem



Map 150

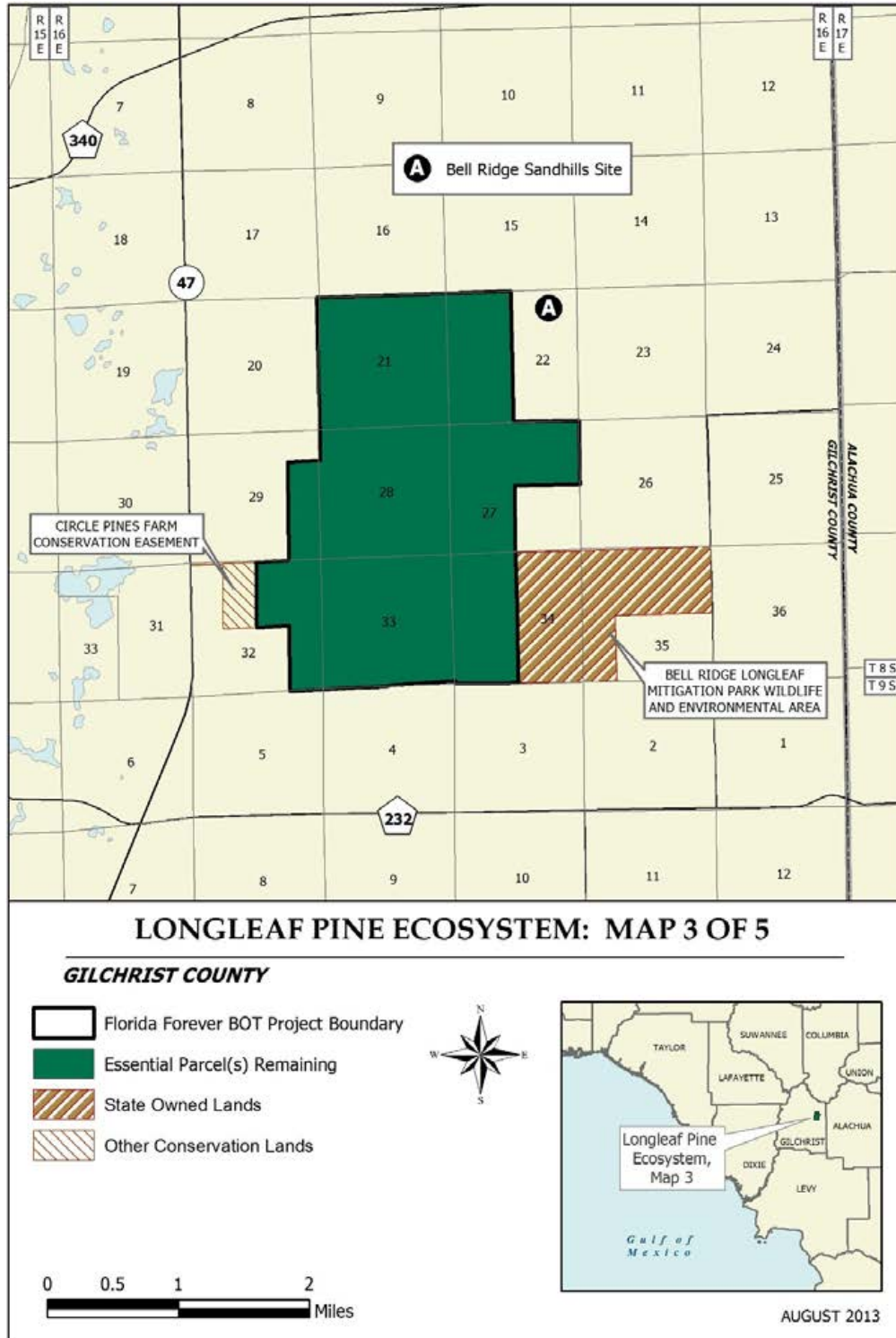


Map 151



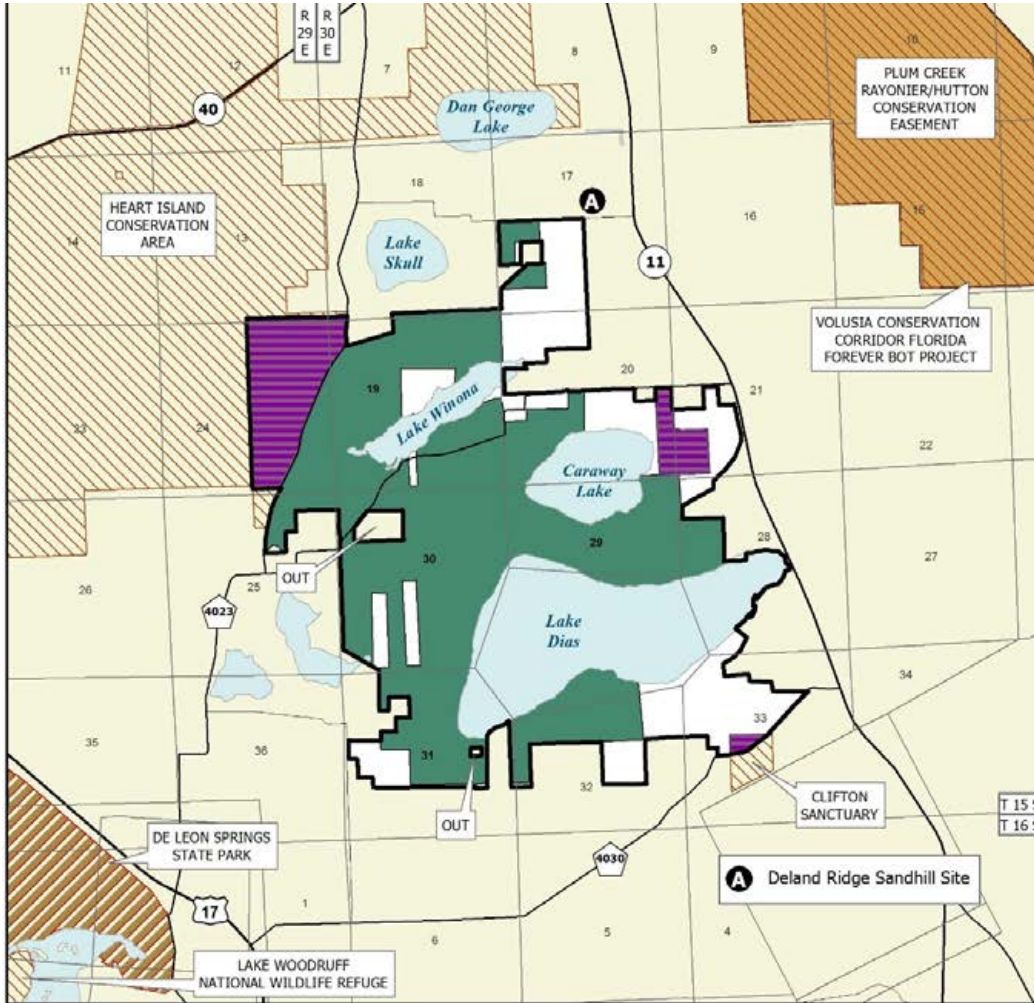
Map 152





Map 153





### LONGLEAF PINE ECOSYSTEM: MAP 4 OF 5

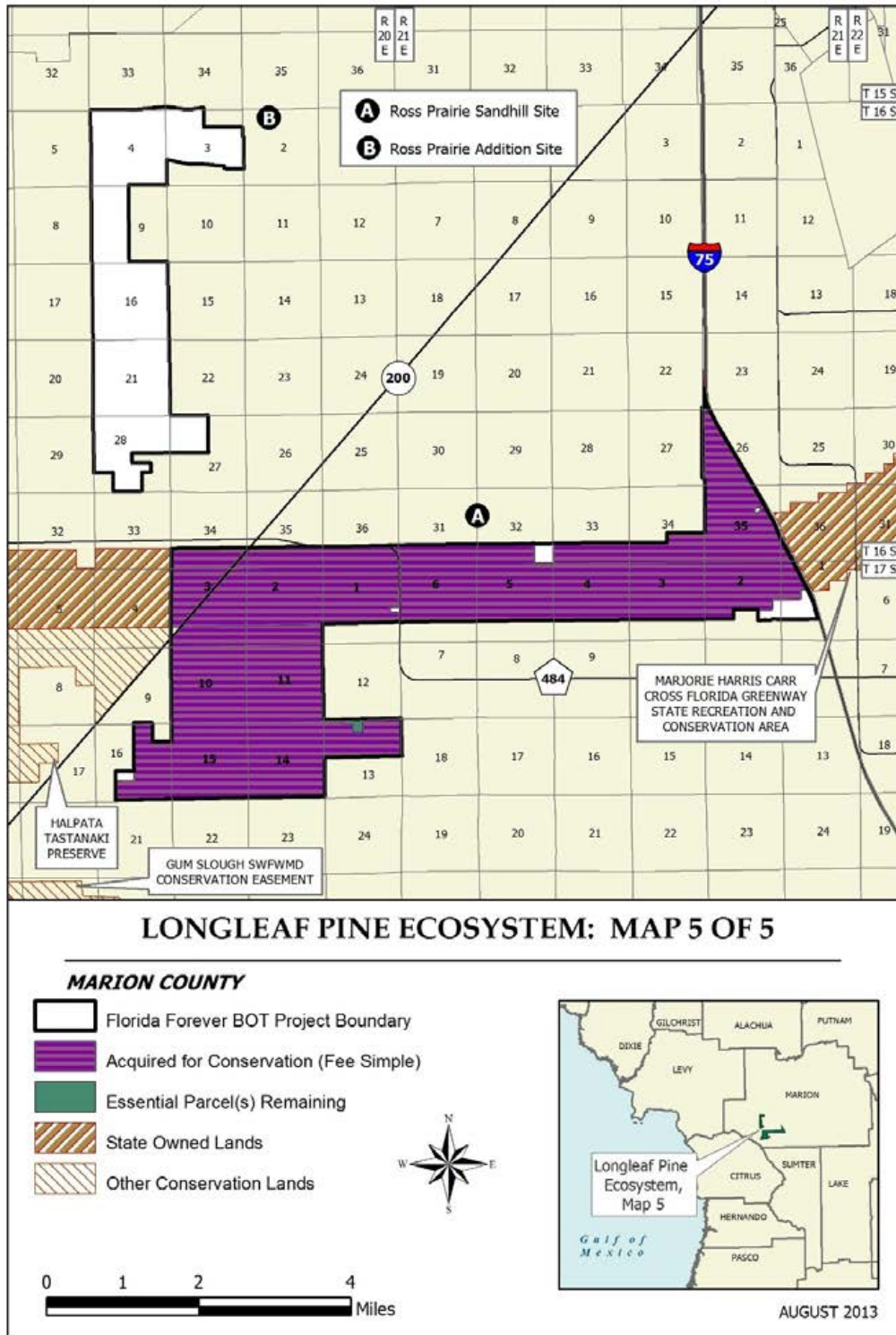
#### VOLUSIA COUNTY

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



AUGUST 2013

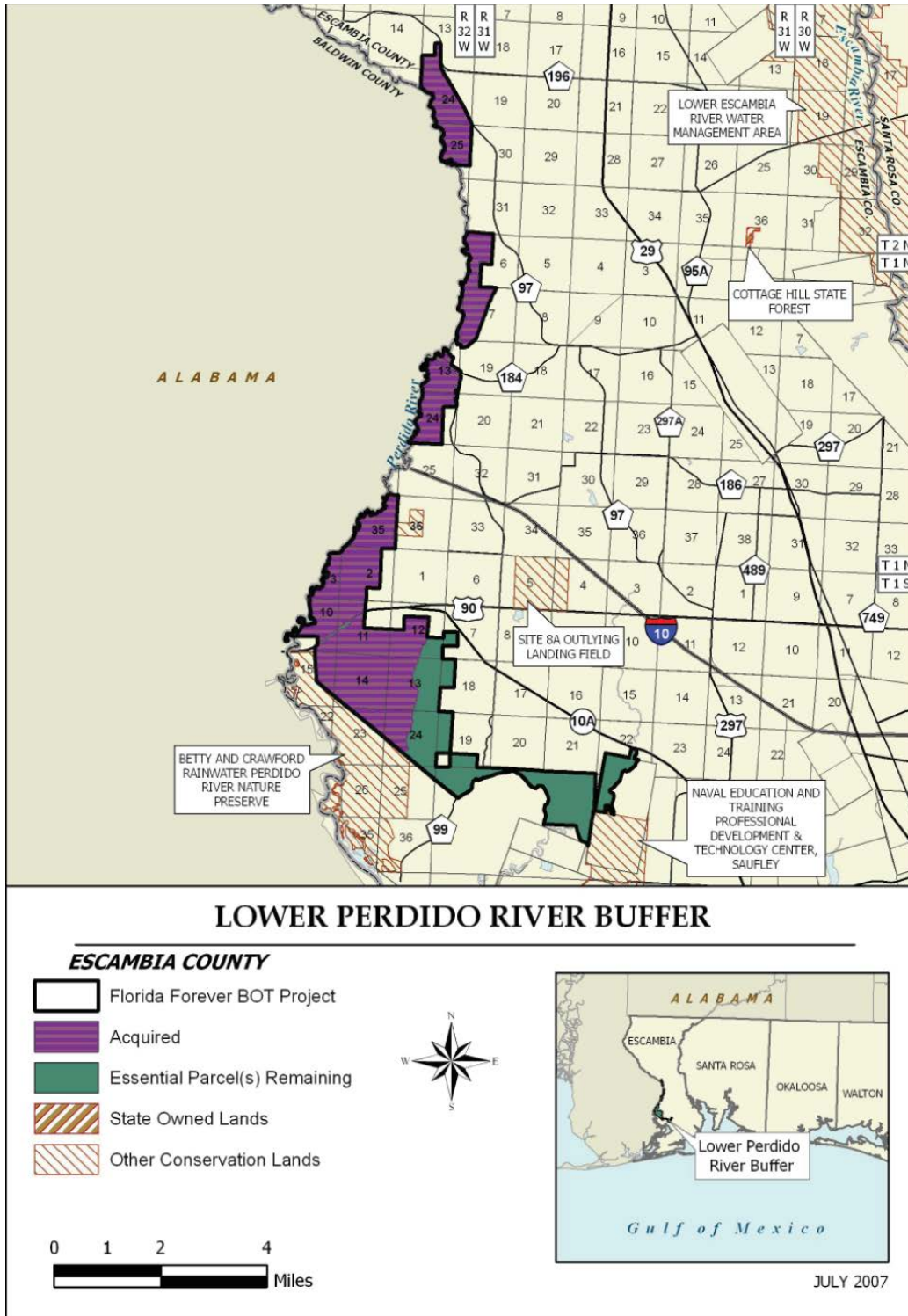
Map 154



Map 155

### Map(s): Lower Perdido River Buffer

#### Lower Perdido River Buffer



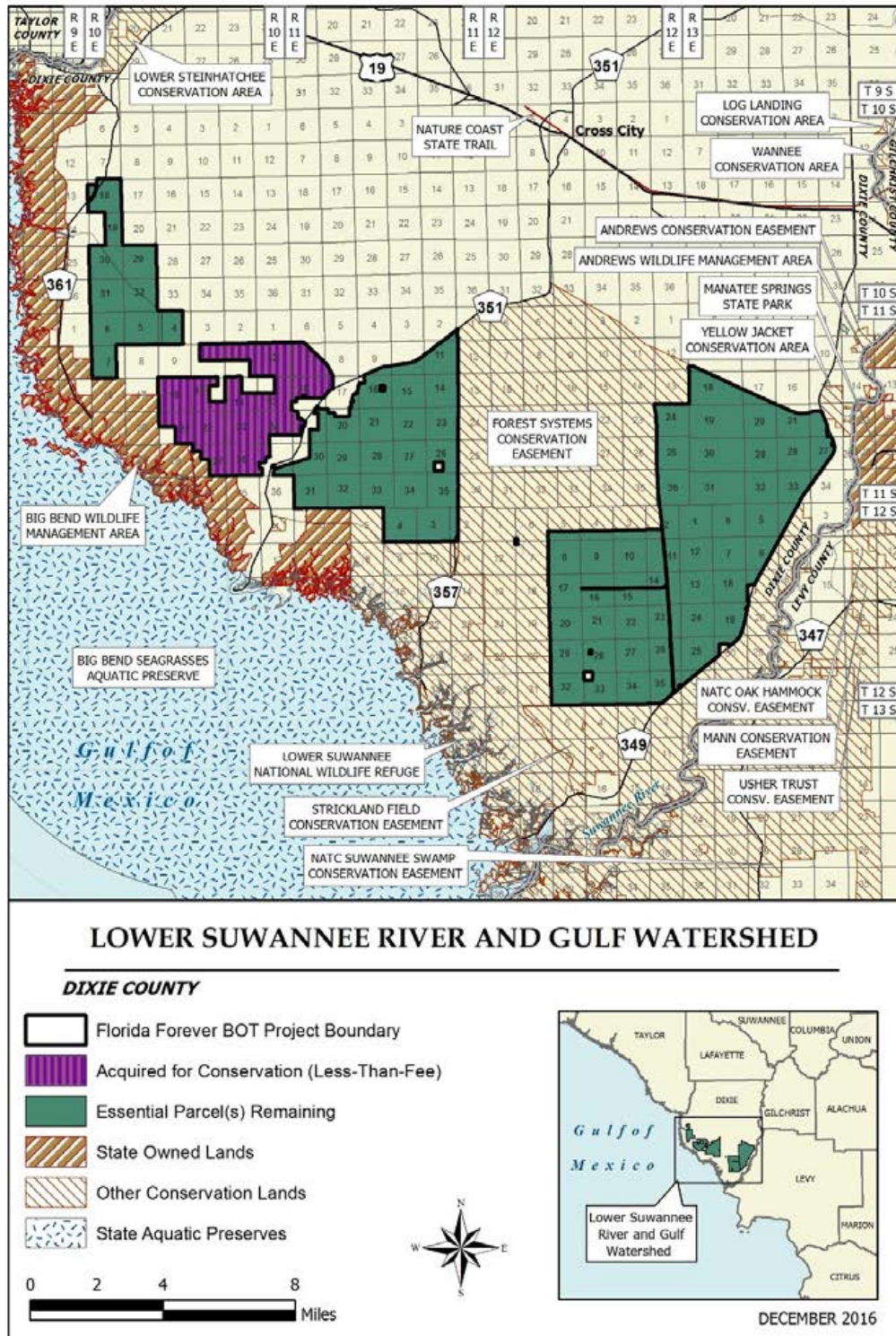
Map 156





### Map(s): Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed

#### Lower Suwannee River and Gulf Watershed



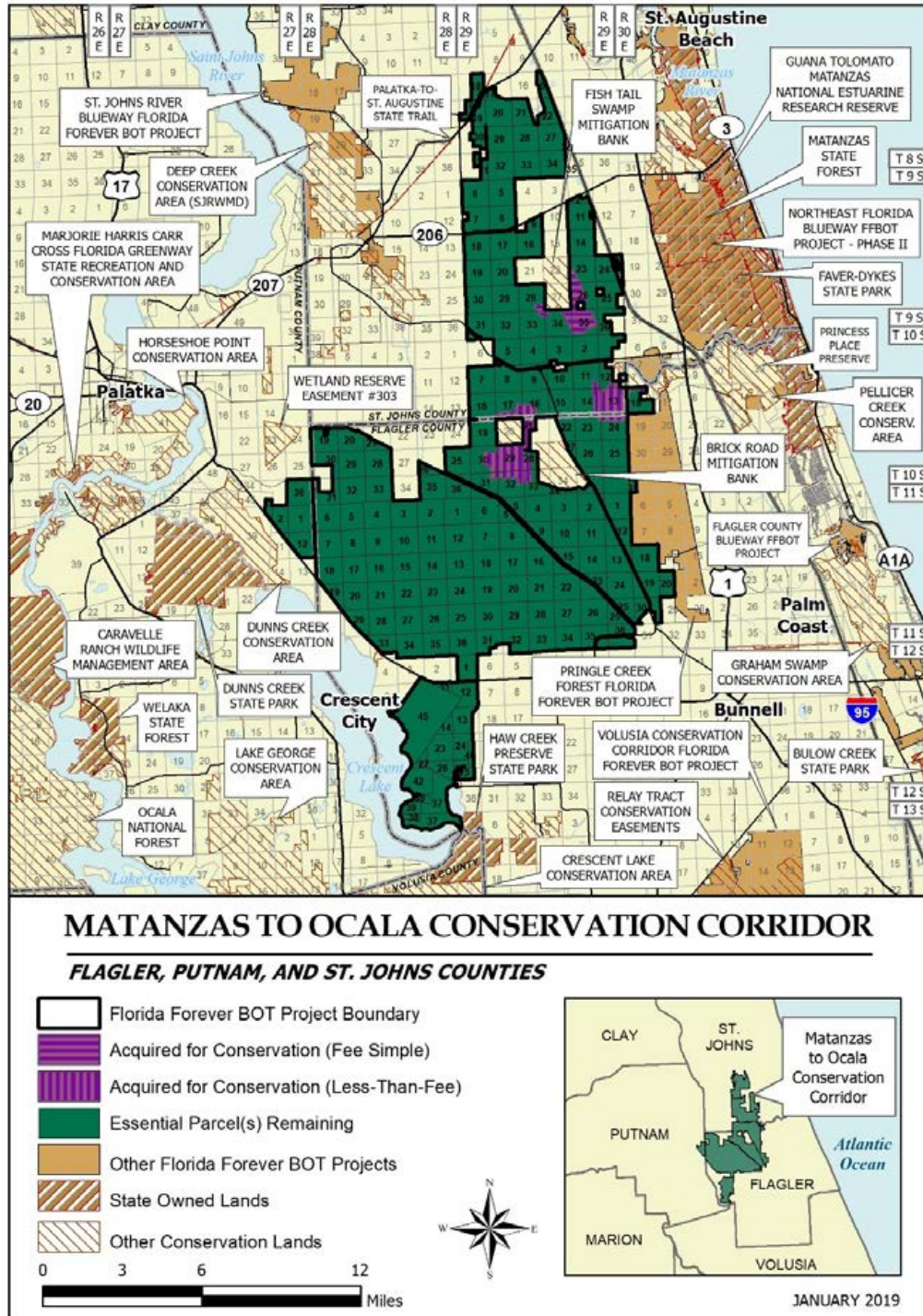
Map 157





### Map(s): Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor

#### Matanzas to Ocala Conservation Corridor

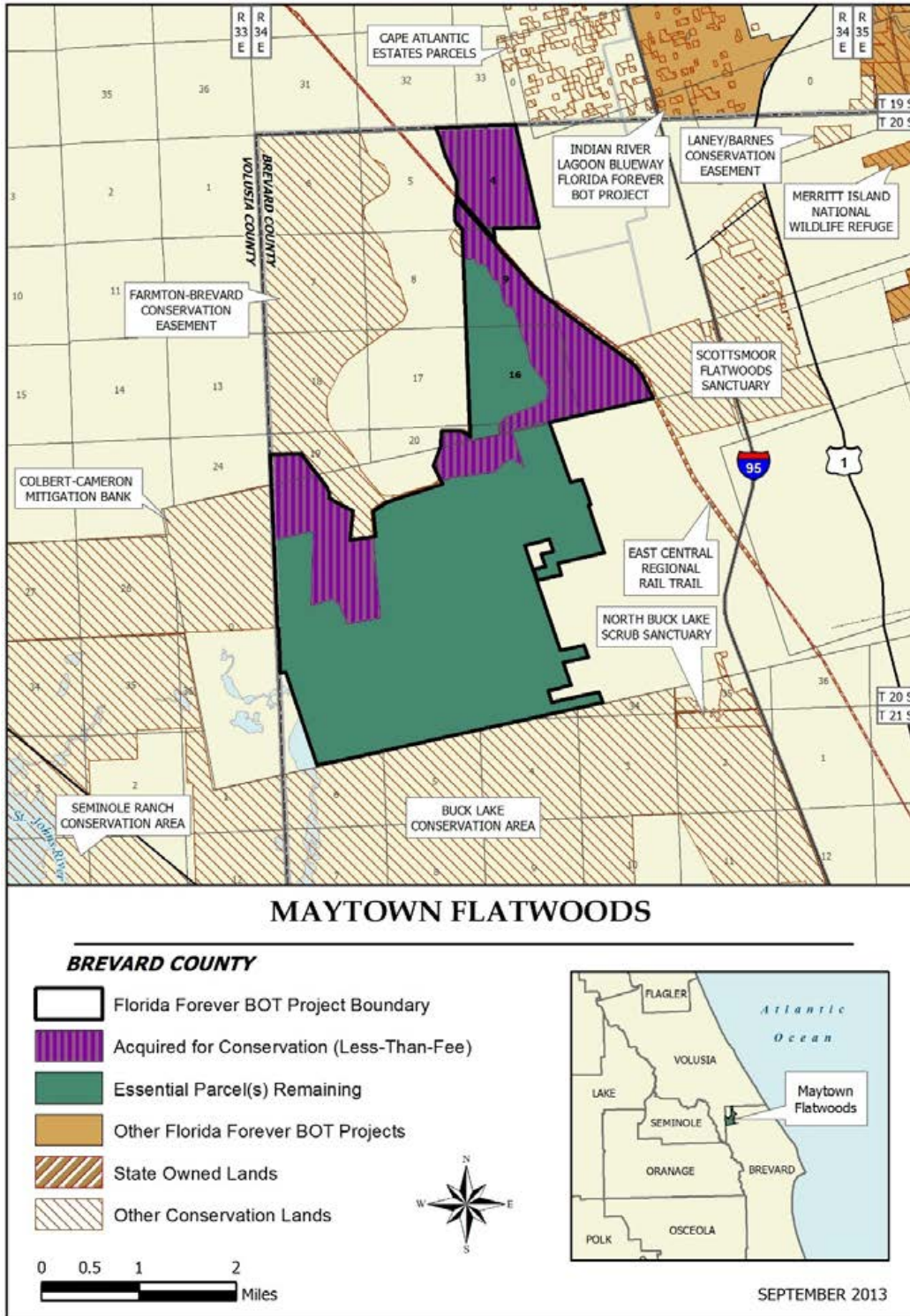


Map 158



### Map(s): Maytown Flatwoods

#### Maytown Flatwoods



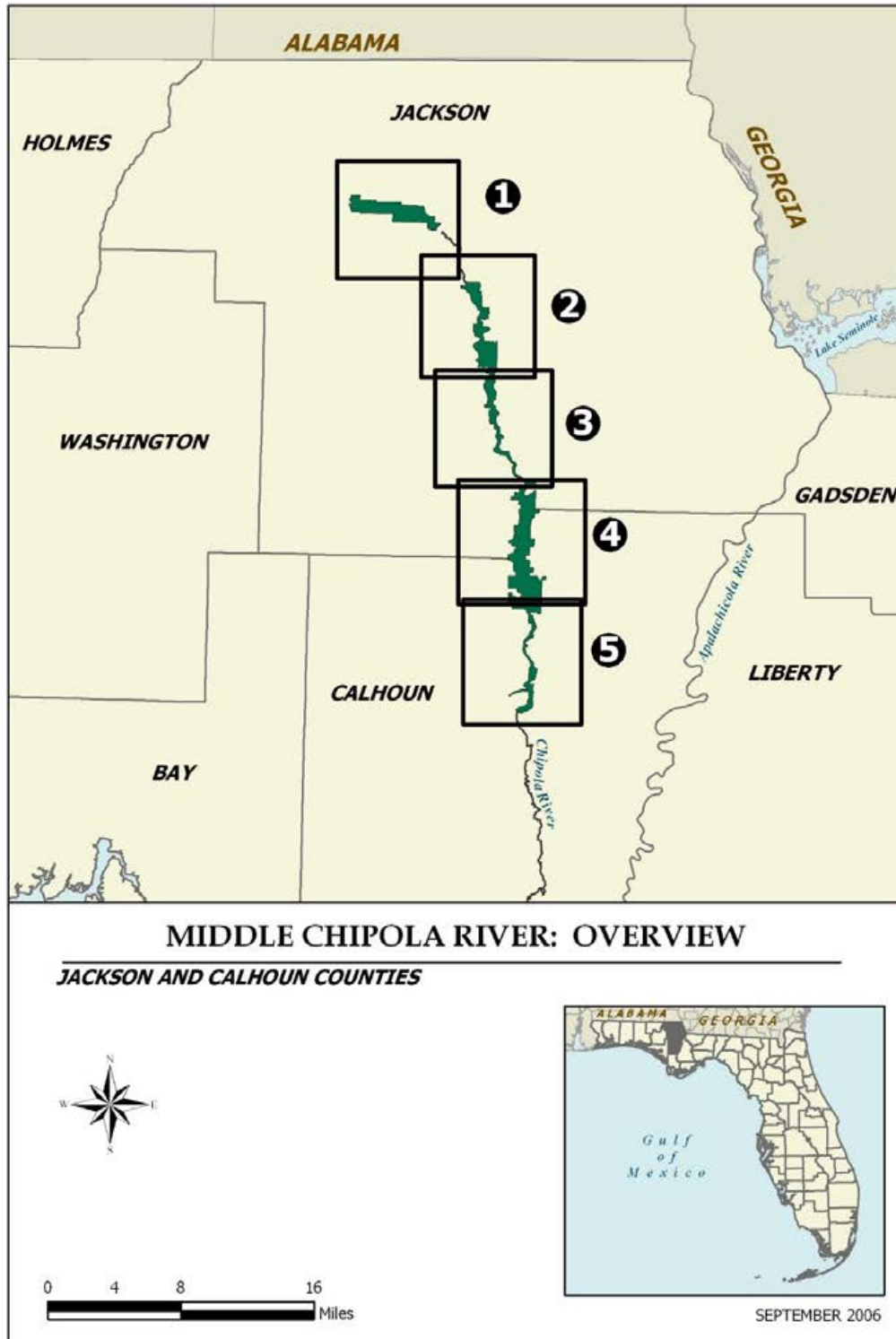
Map 159



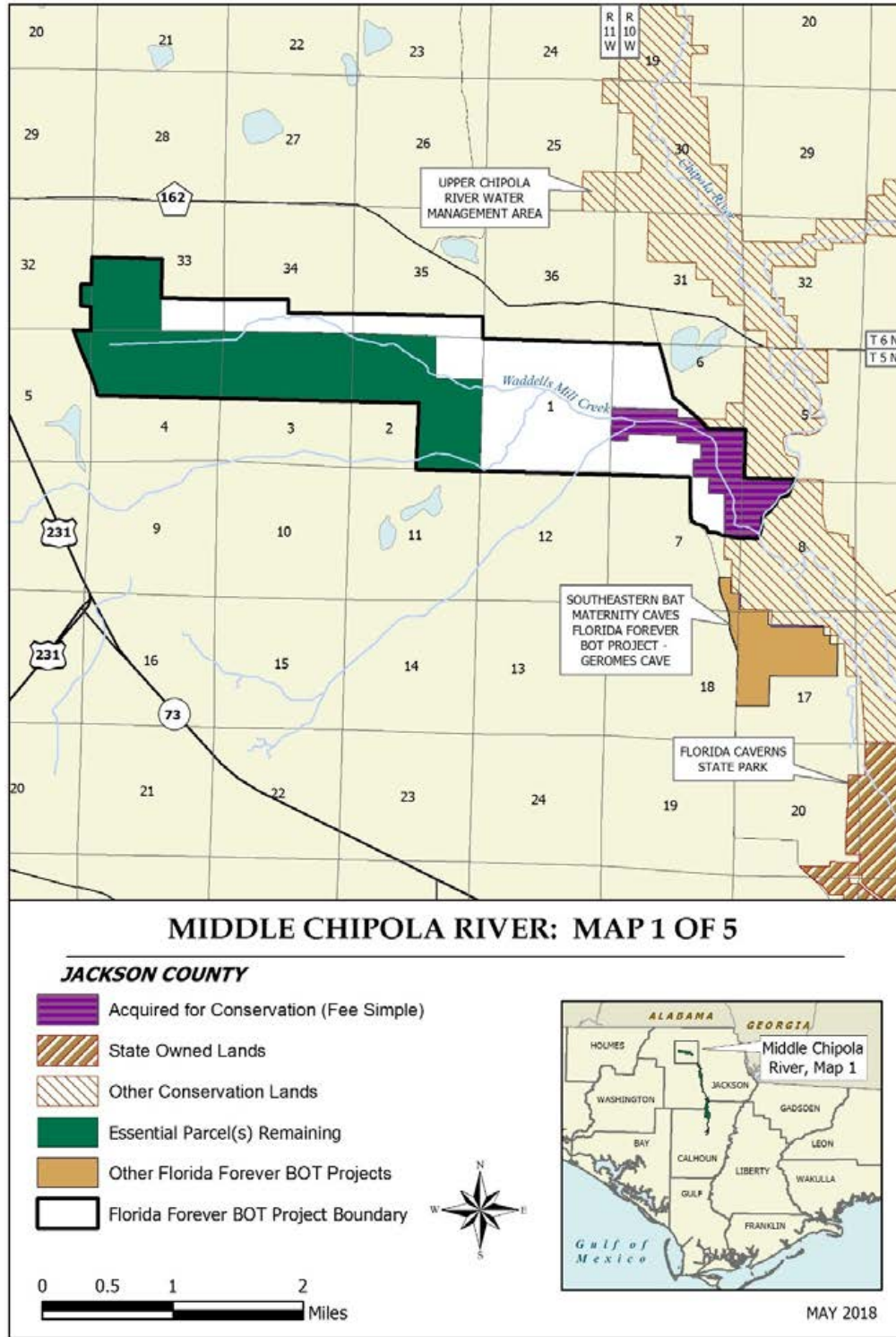


### Map(s): Middle Chipola River

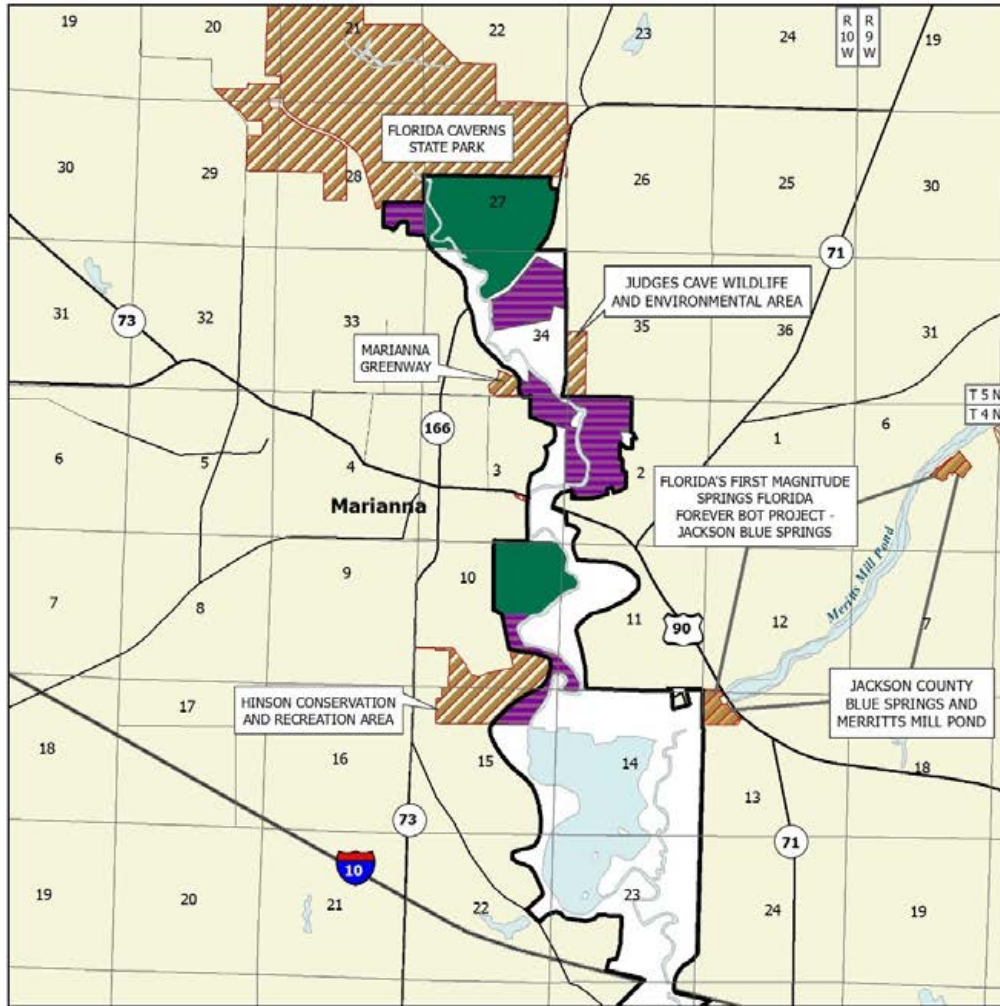
#### Middle Chipola River



Map 160



Map 161



### MIDDLE CHIPOLA RIVER: MAP 2 OF 5

#### JACKSON COUNTY

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



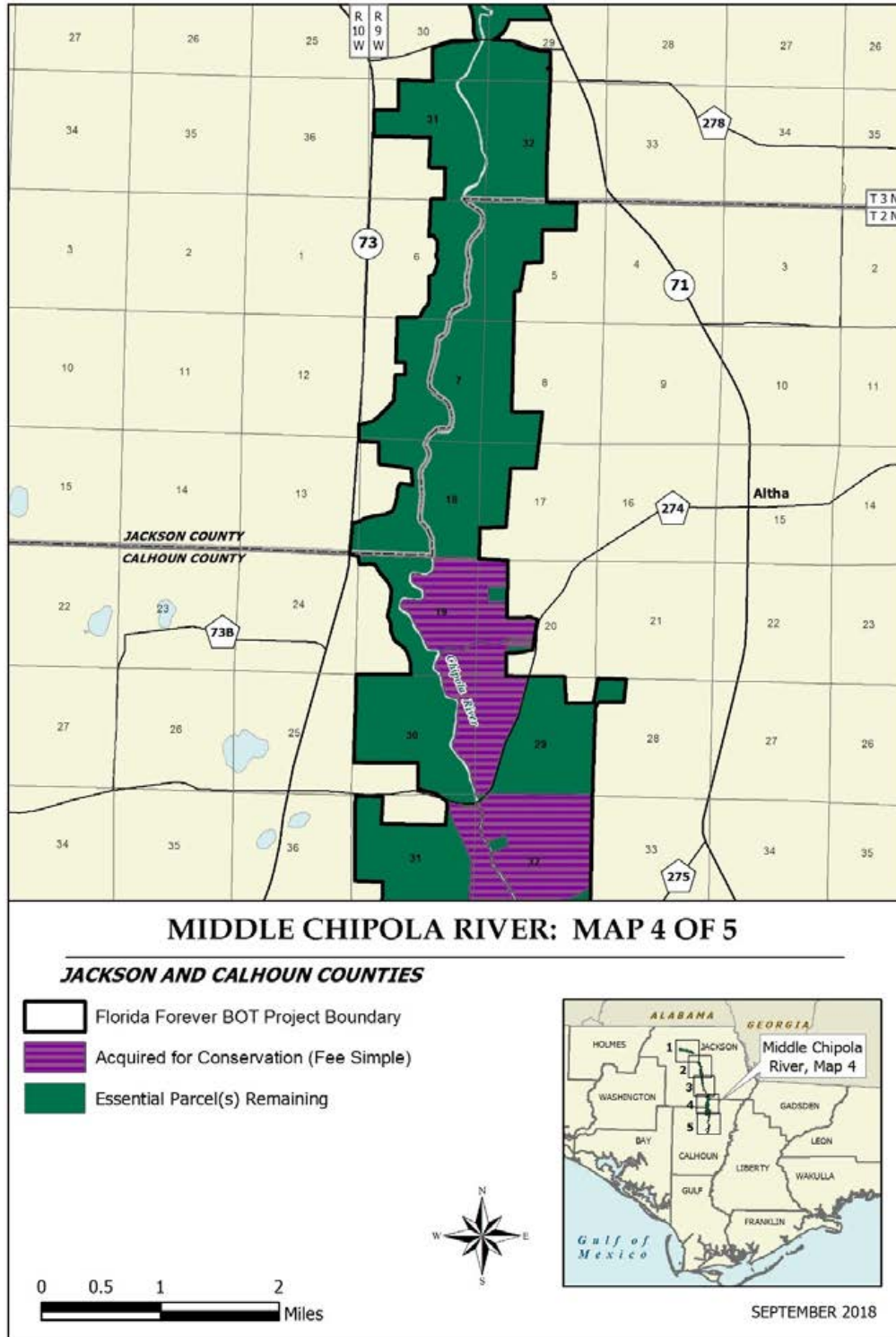
MAY 2018

Map 162

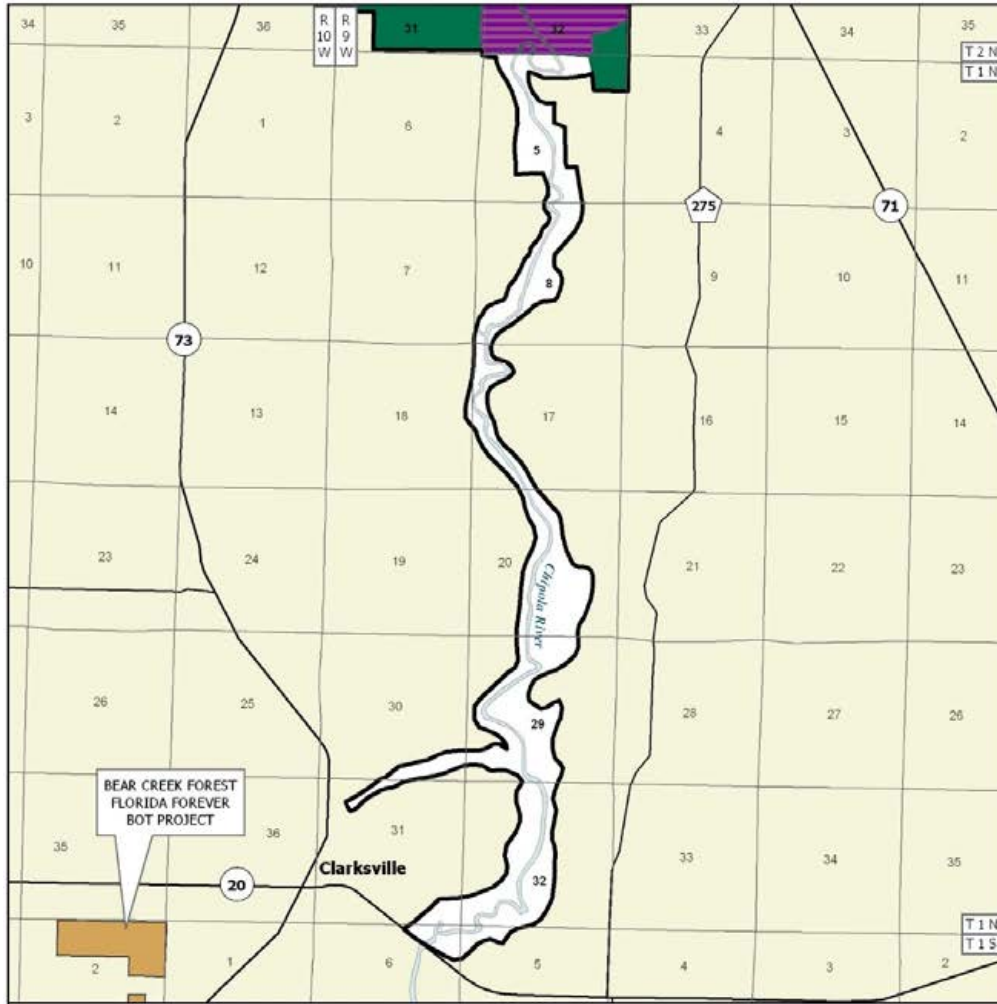


Map 163








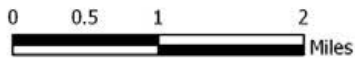
Map 164



### MIDDLE CHIPOLA RIVER: MAP 5 OF 5

#### CALHOUN COUNTY

-  Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
-  Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
-  Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
-  Other Florida Forever BOT Projects



APRIL 2010

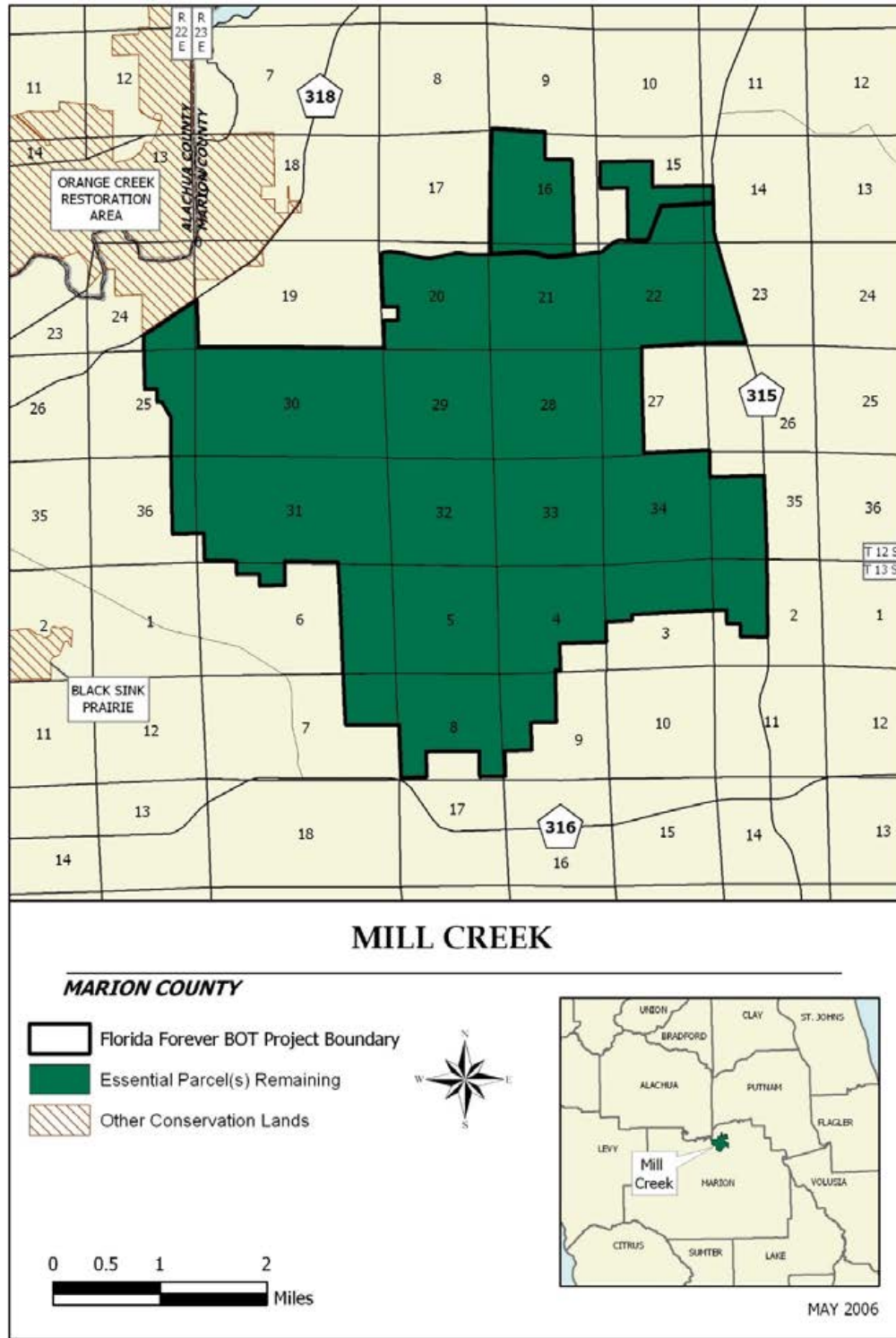
Map 165





### Map(s): Mill Creek

#### [Mill Creek](#)

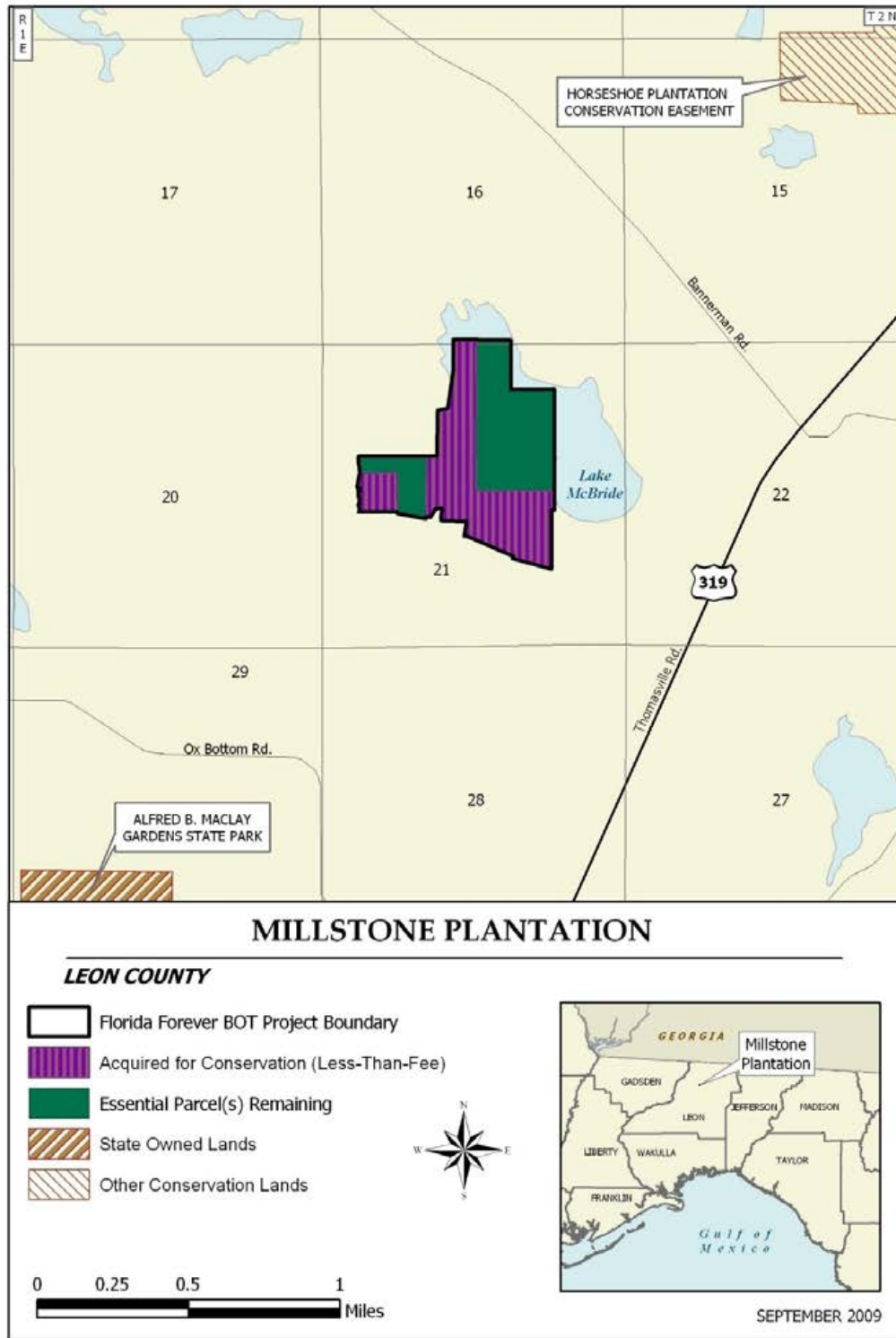


Map 166



### Map(s): Millstone Plantation

#### Millstone Plantation

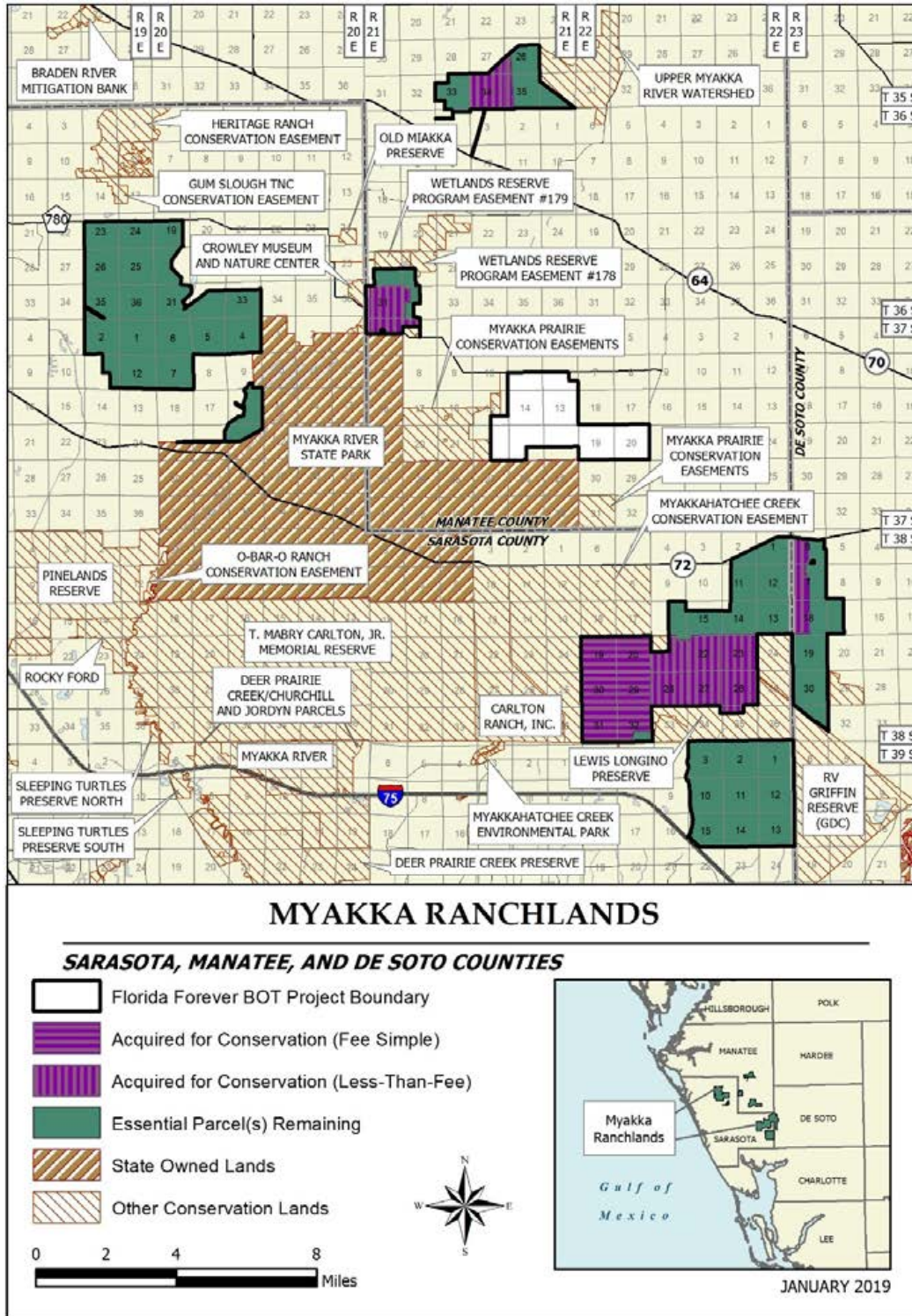


Map 167



### Map(s): Myakka Ranchlands

#### Myakka Ranchlands



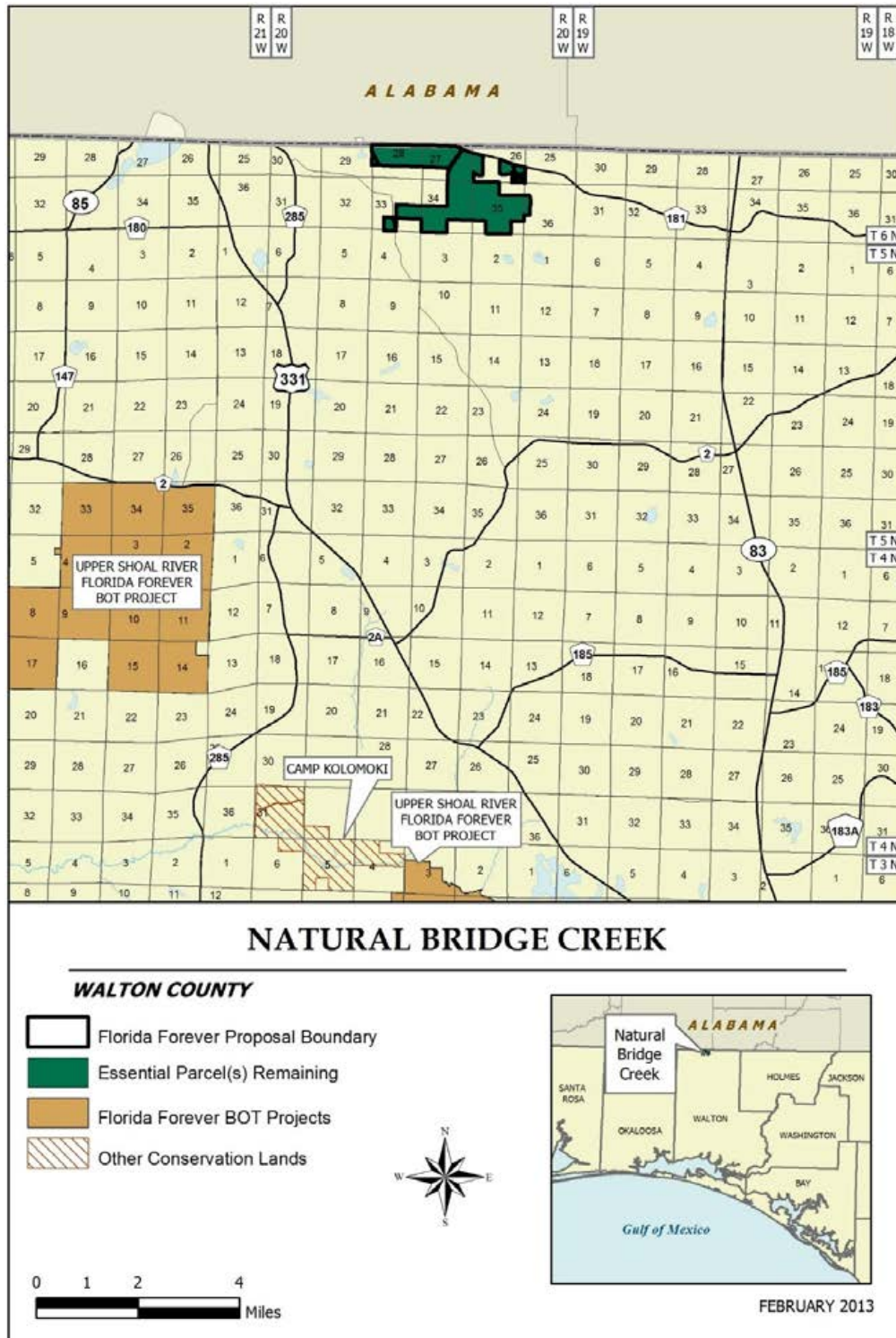
Map 168





### Map(s): Natural Bridge Creek

#### Natural Bridge Creek

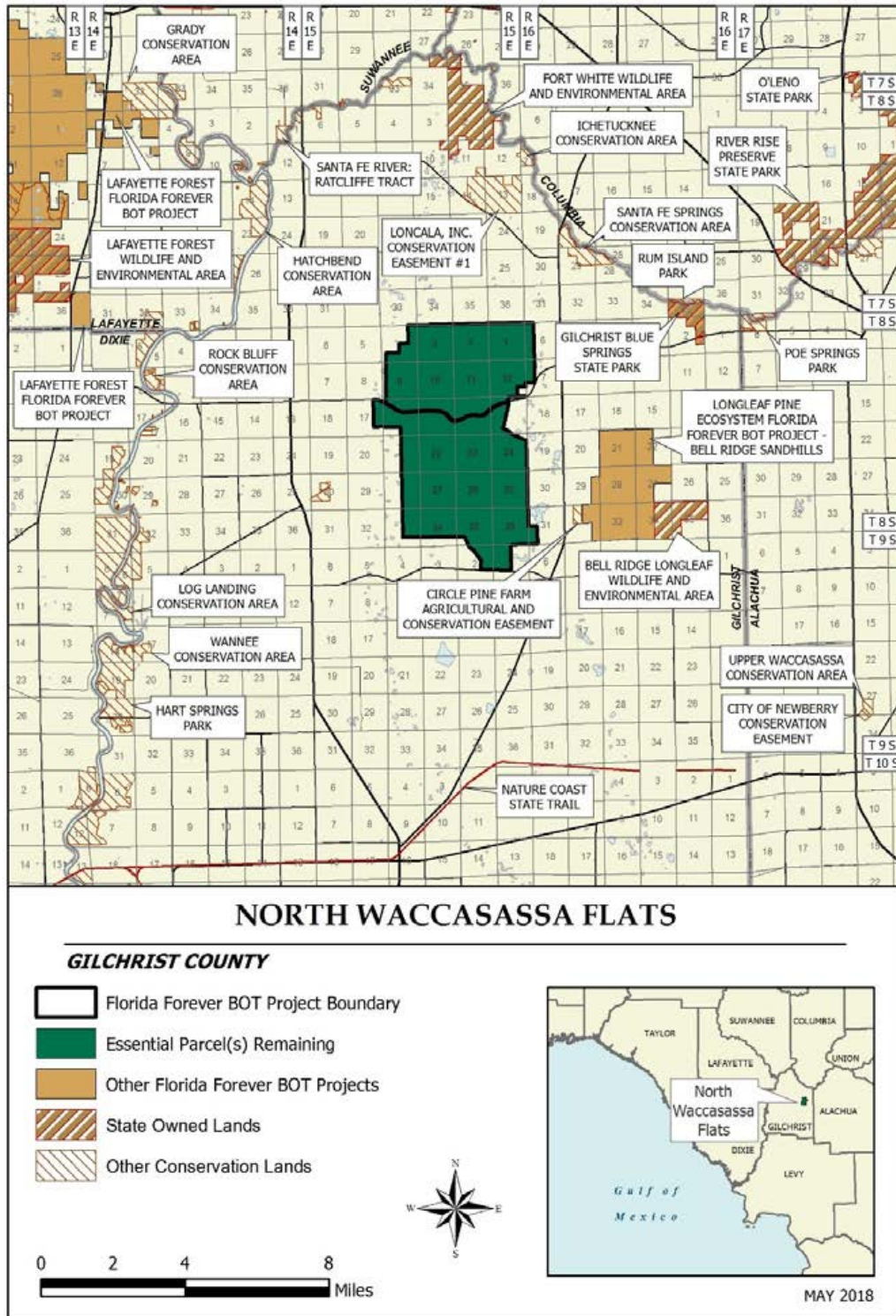


Map 169



### Map(s): North Waccasassa Flats

#### North Waccasassa Flats



Map 170





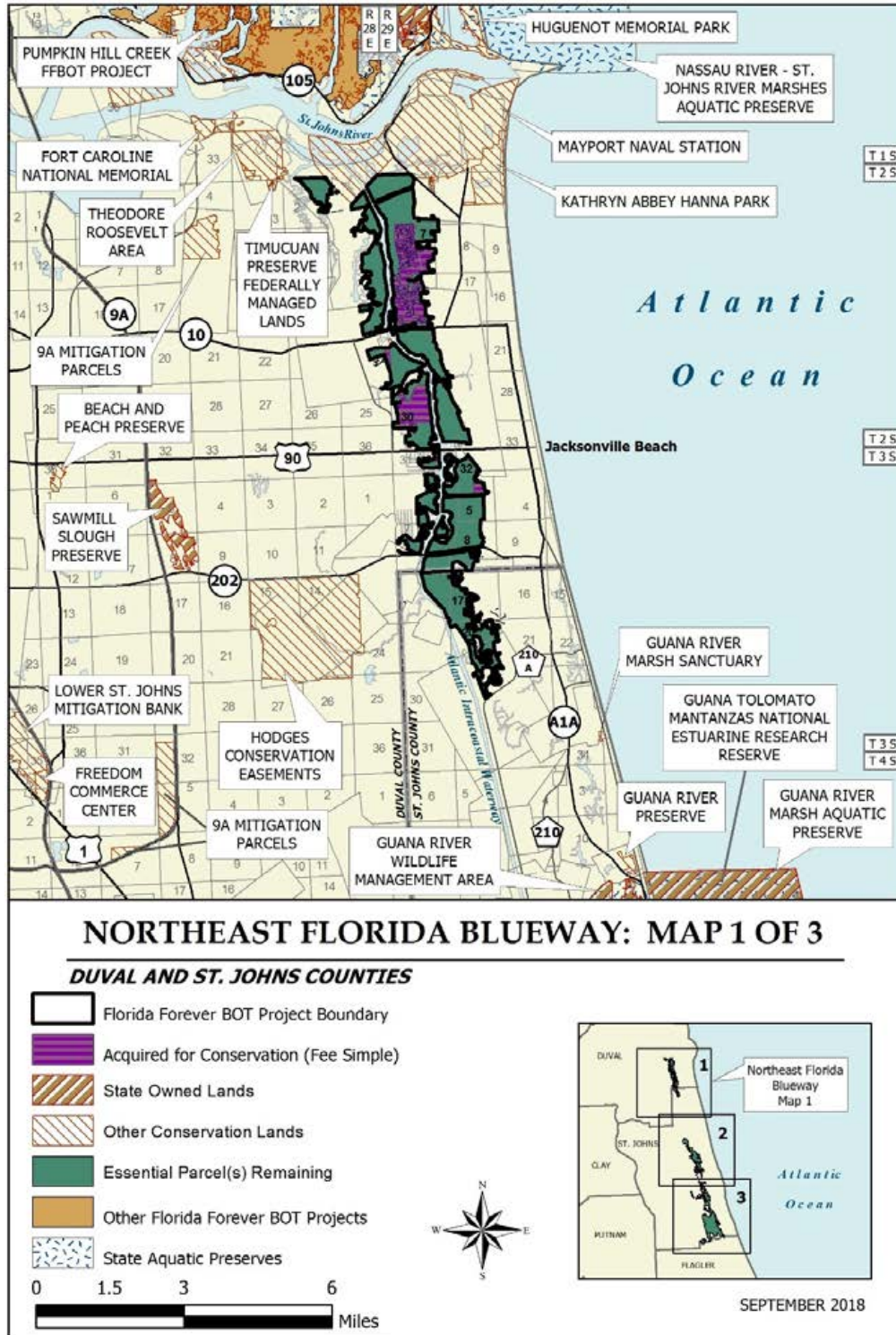
### Map(s): Northeast Florida Blueway

#### Northeast Florida Blueway



Map 171



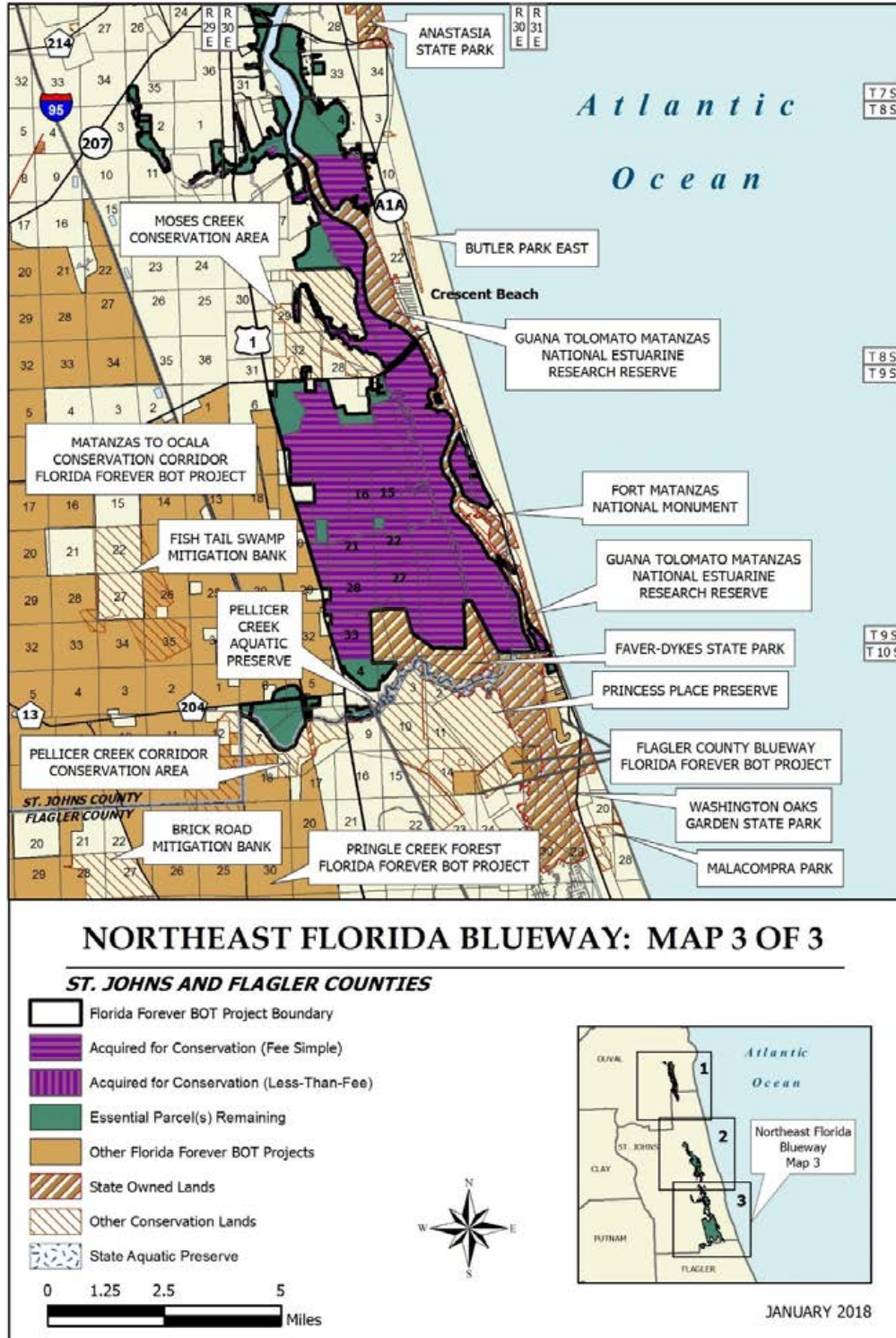


Map 172



Map 173



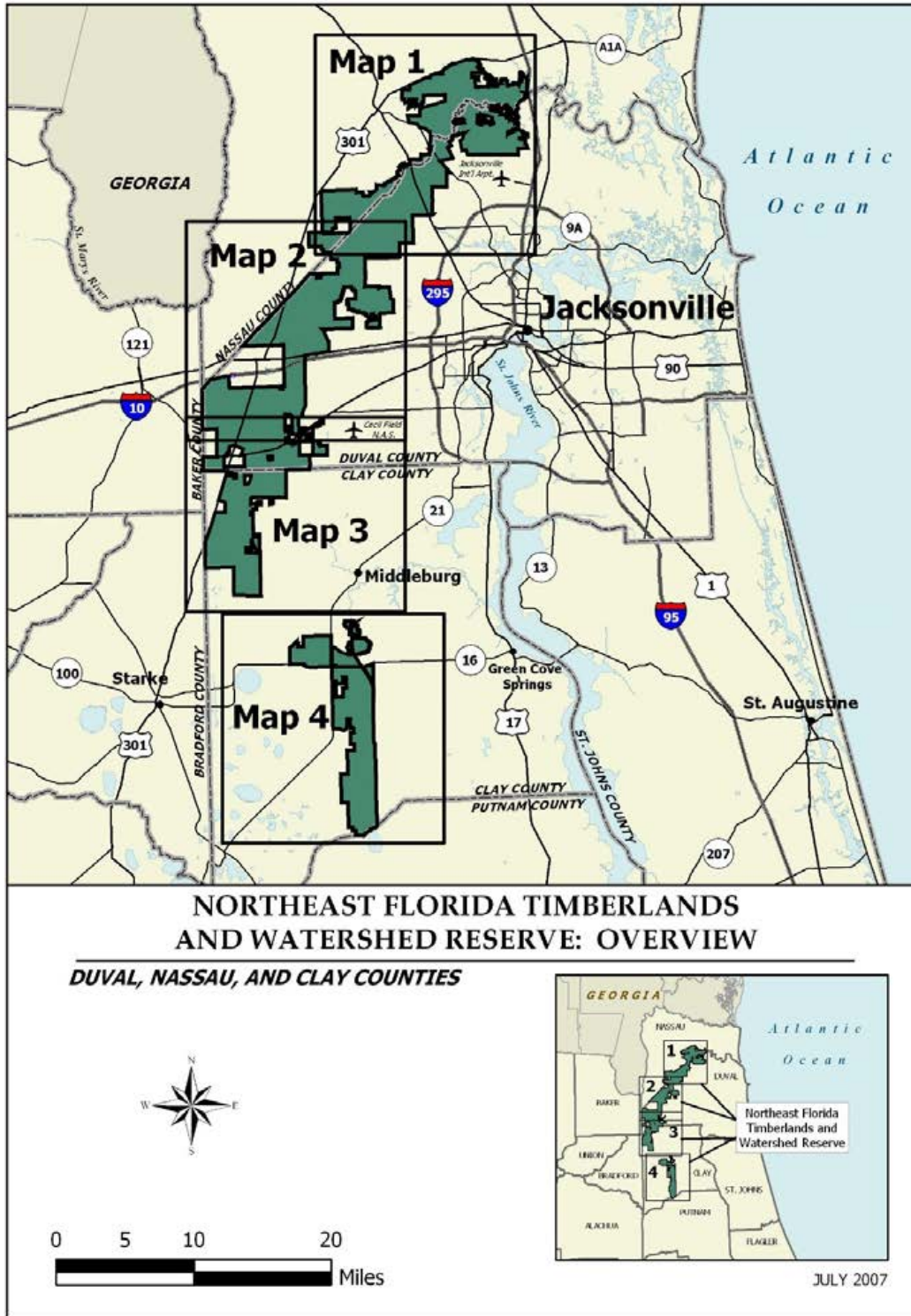


Map 174



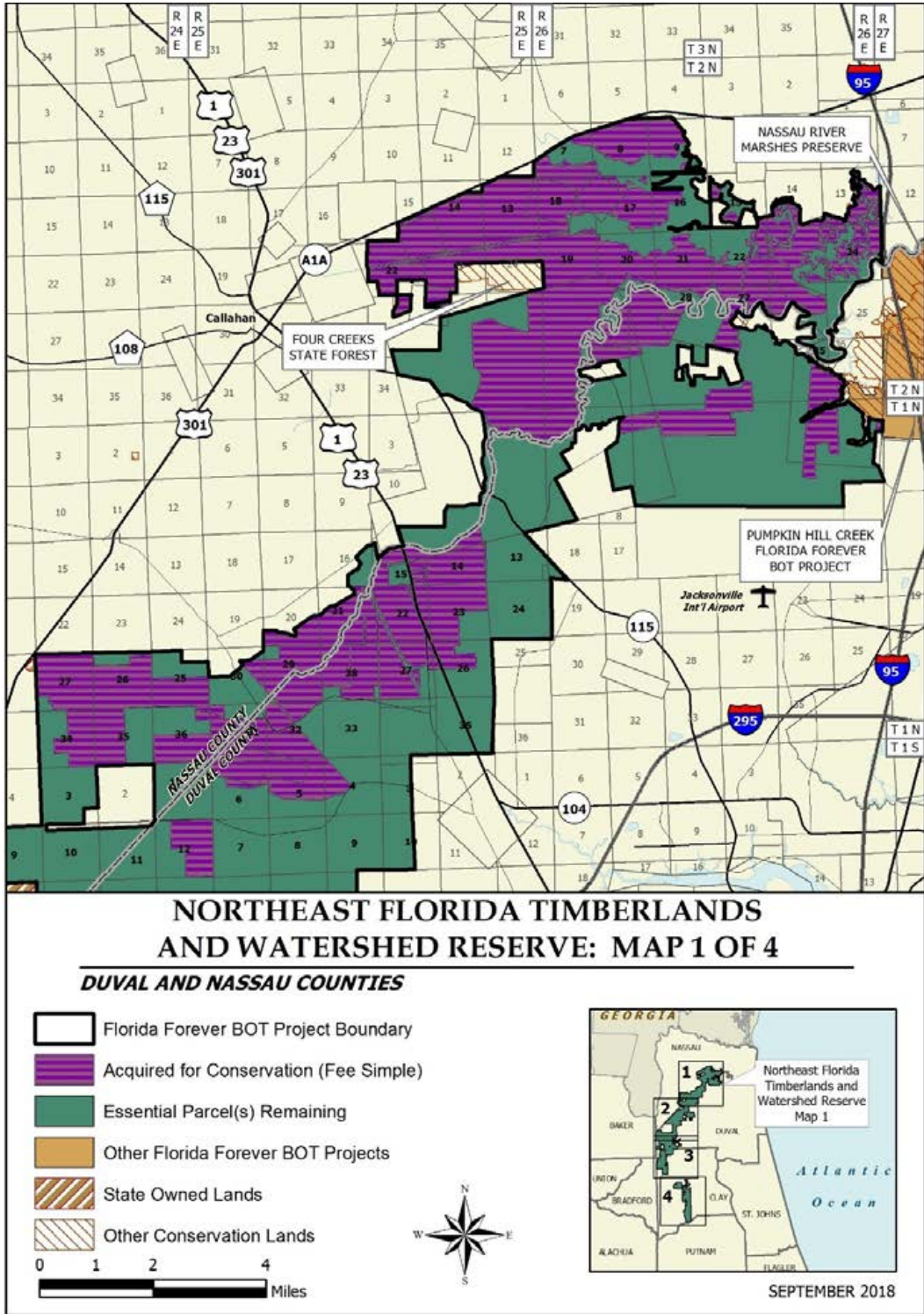
**Map(s): Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve**

Northeast Florida Timberlands and Watershed Reserve

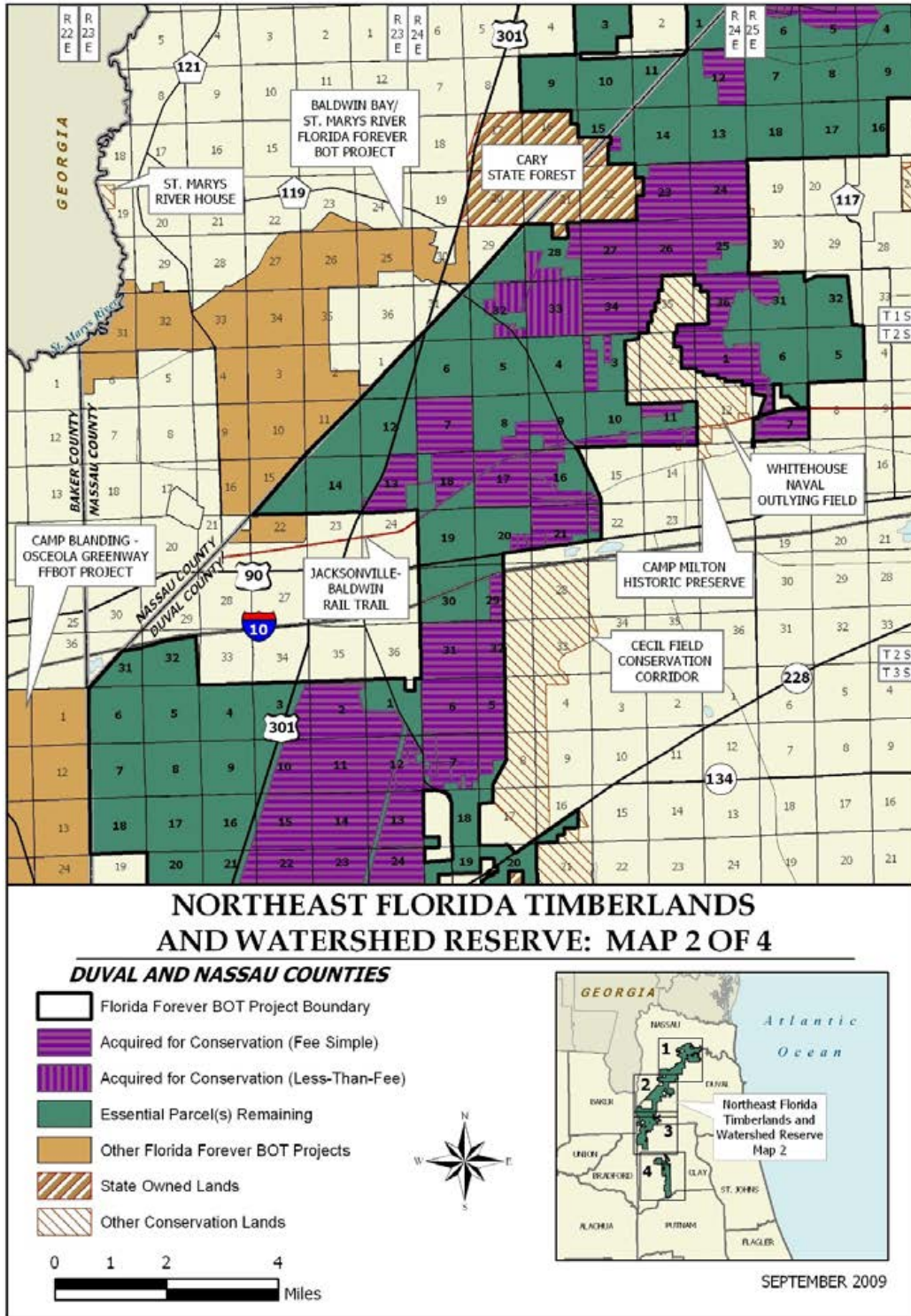


Map 175



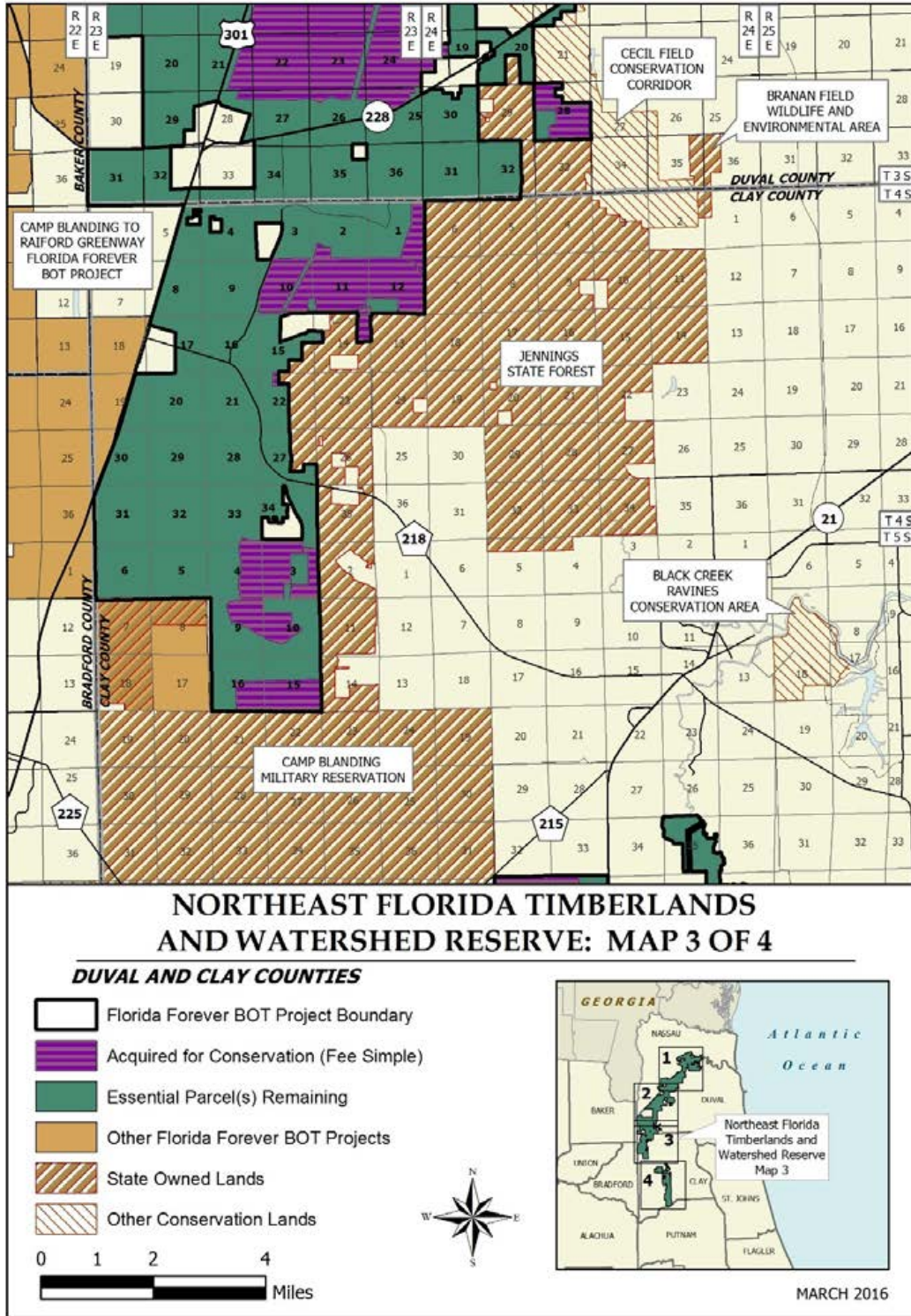


Map 176



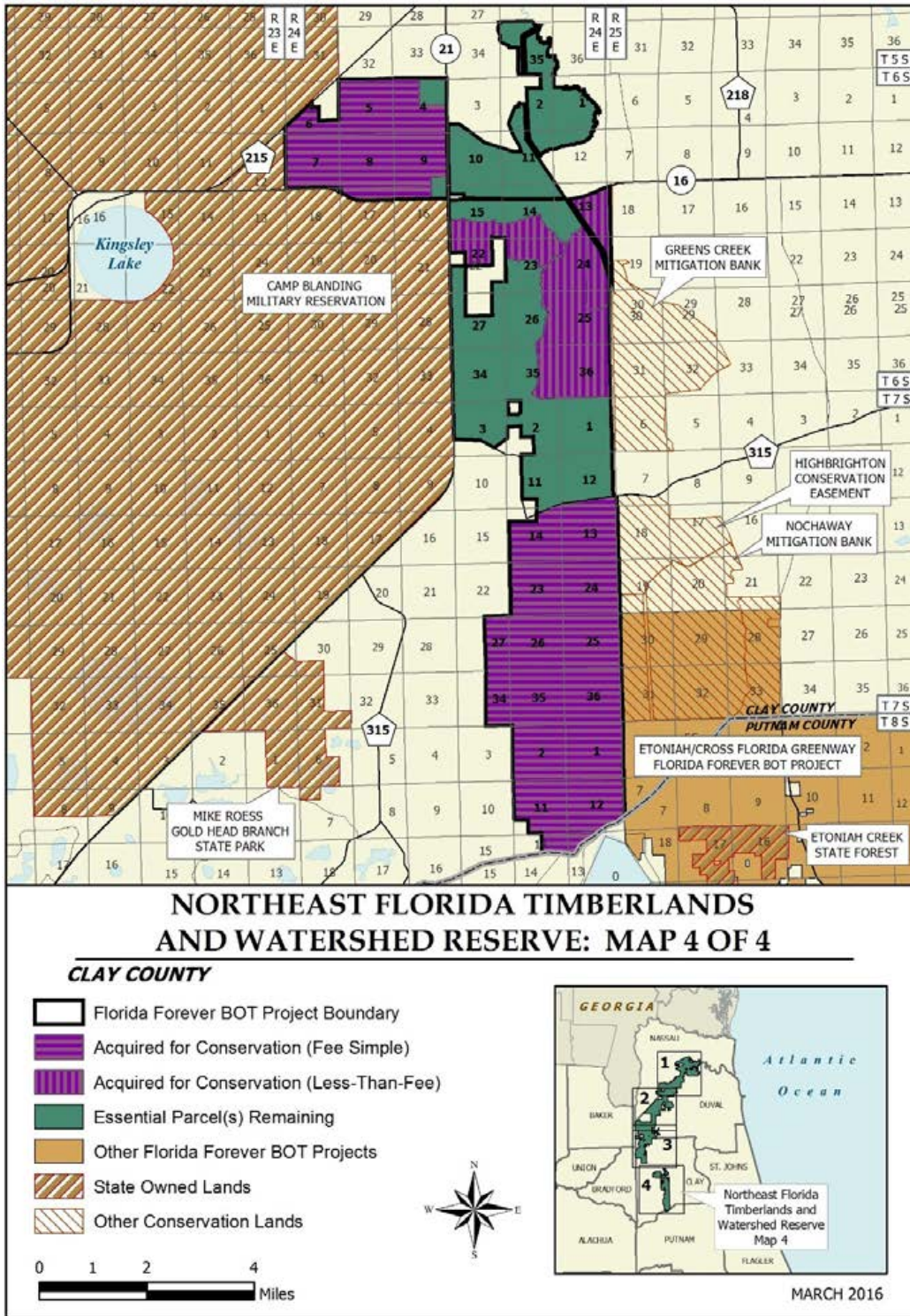
Map 177





Map 178



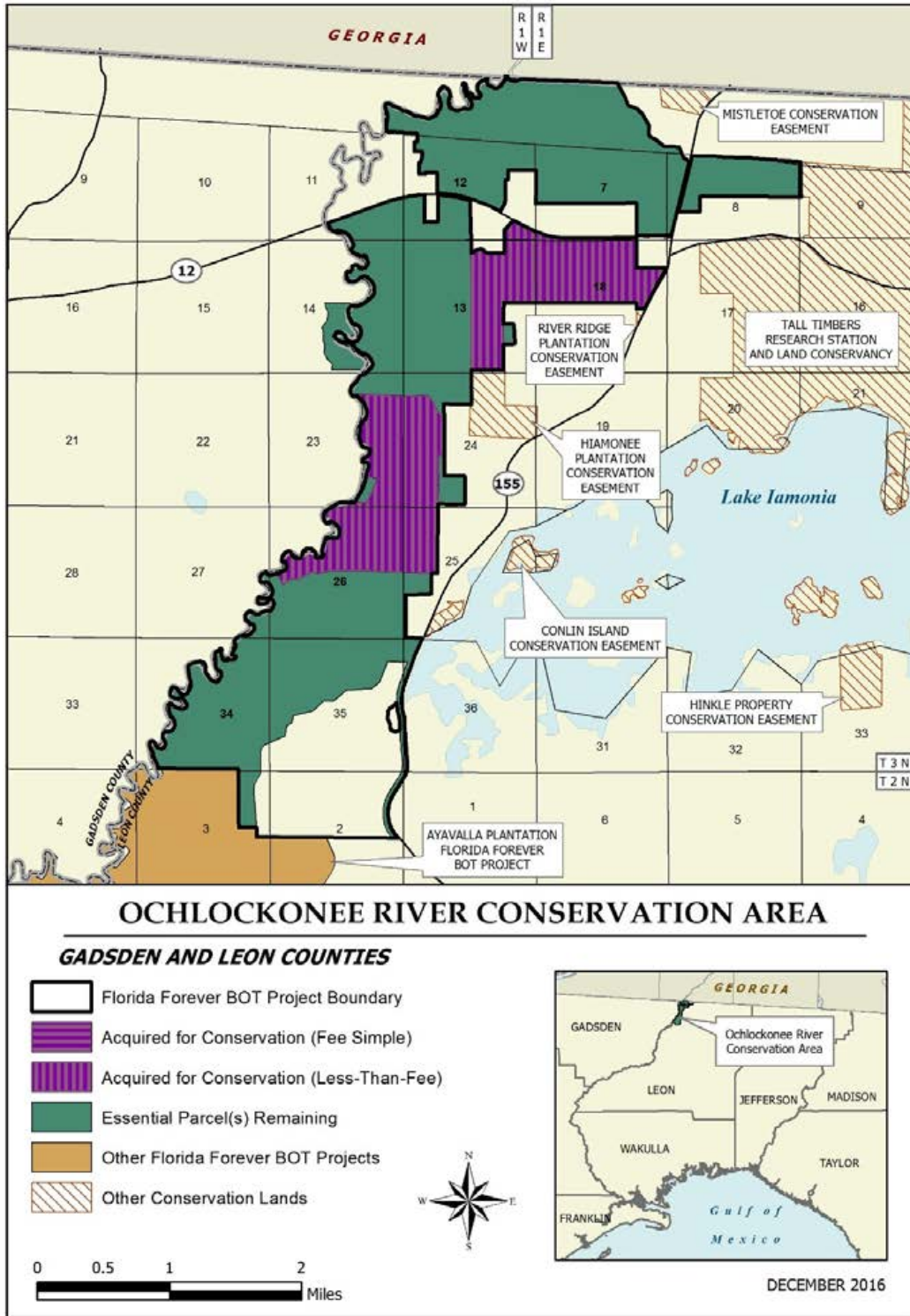


Map 179



### Map(s): Ochlockonee River Conservation Area

#### Ochlockonee River Conservation Area



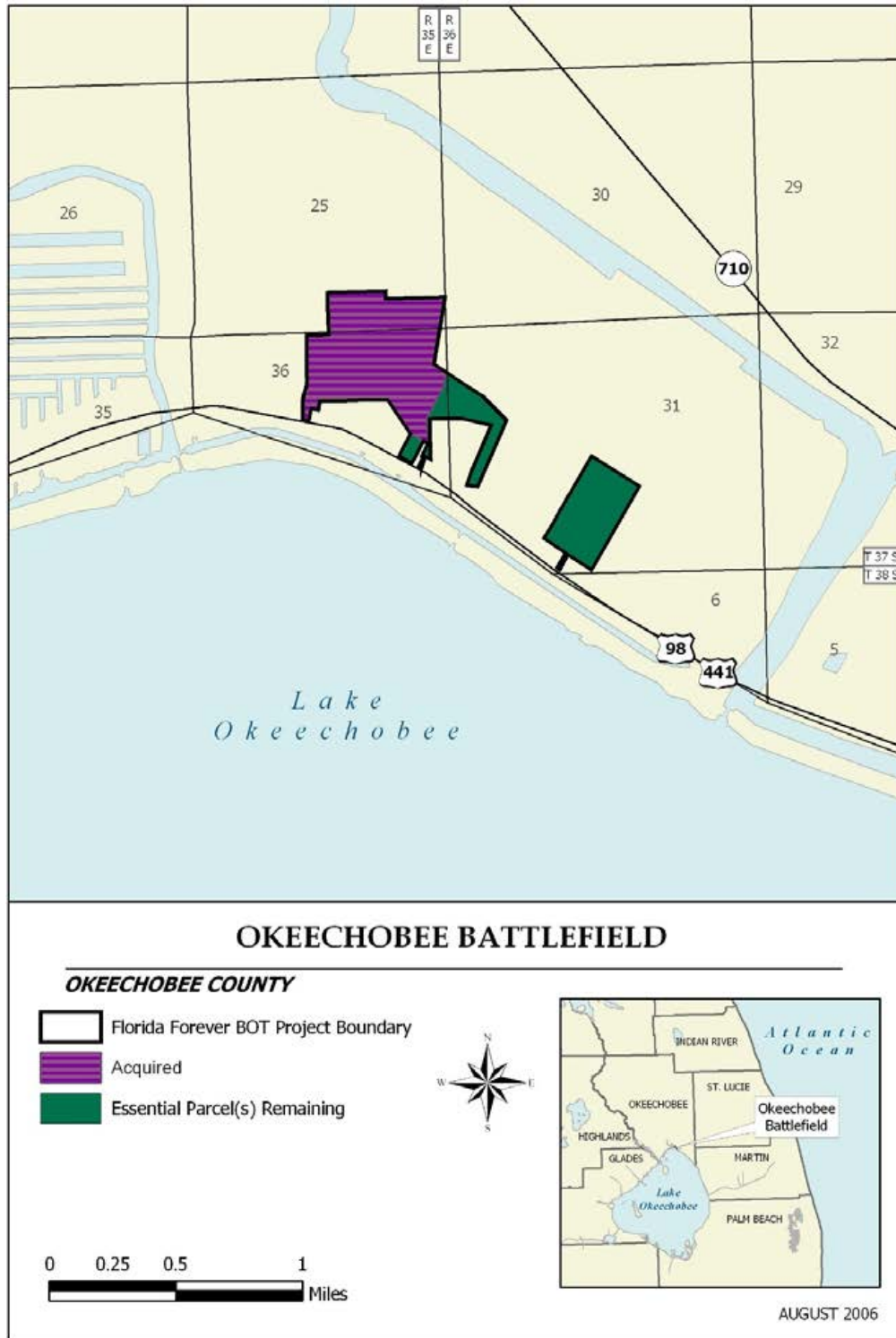
Map 180





### Map(s): Okeechobee Battlefield

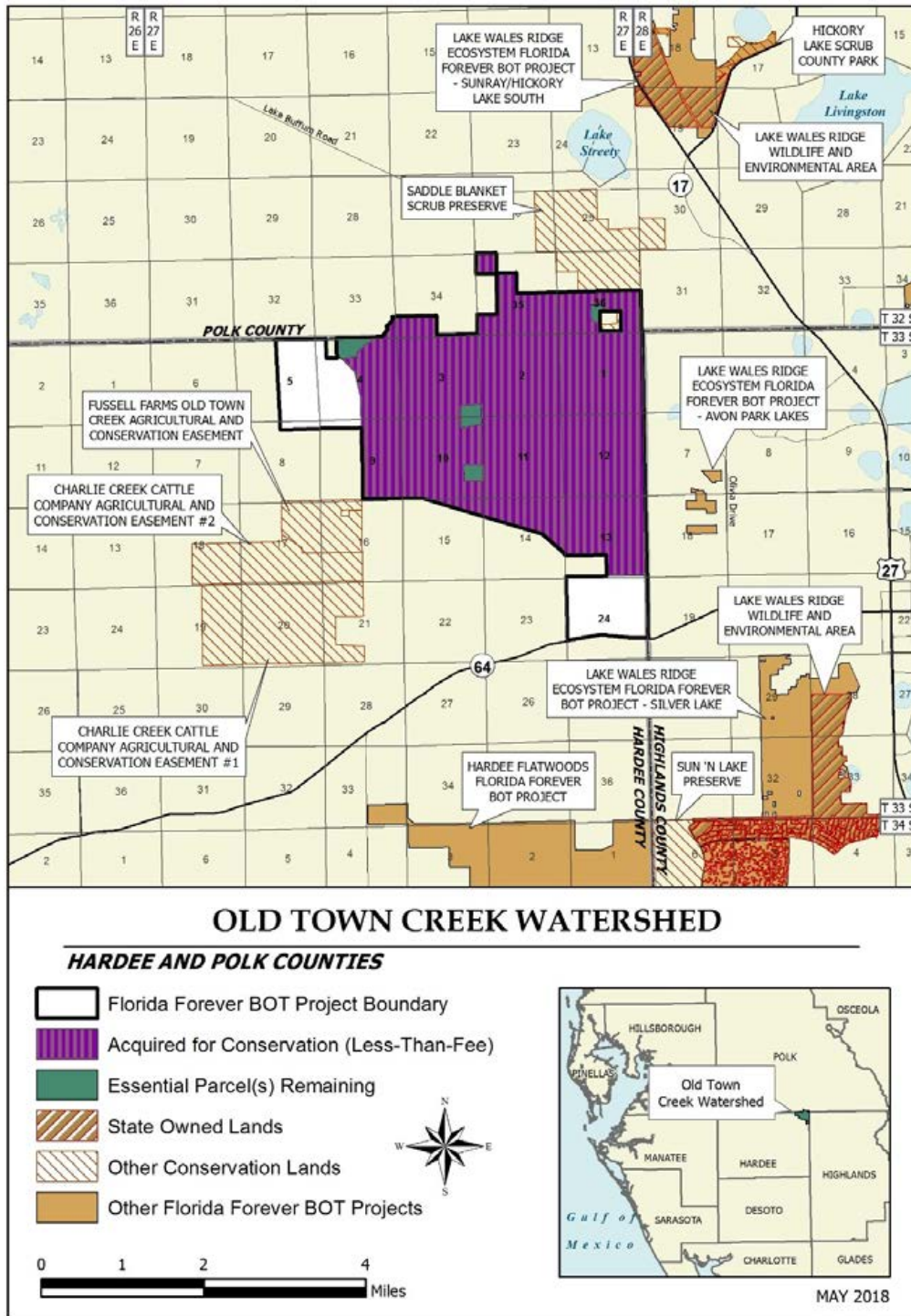
#### Okeechobee Battlefield



Map 181

## Map(s): Old Town Creek Watershed

### Old Town Creek Watershed



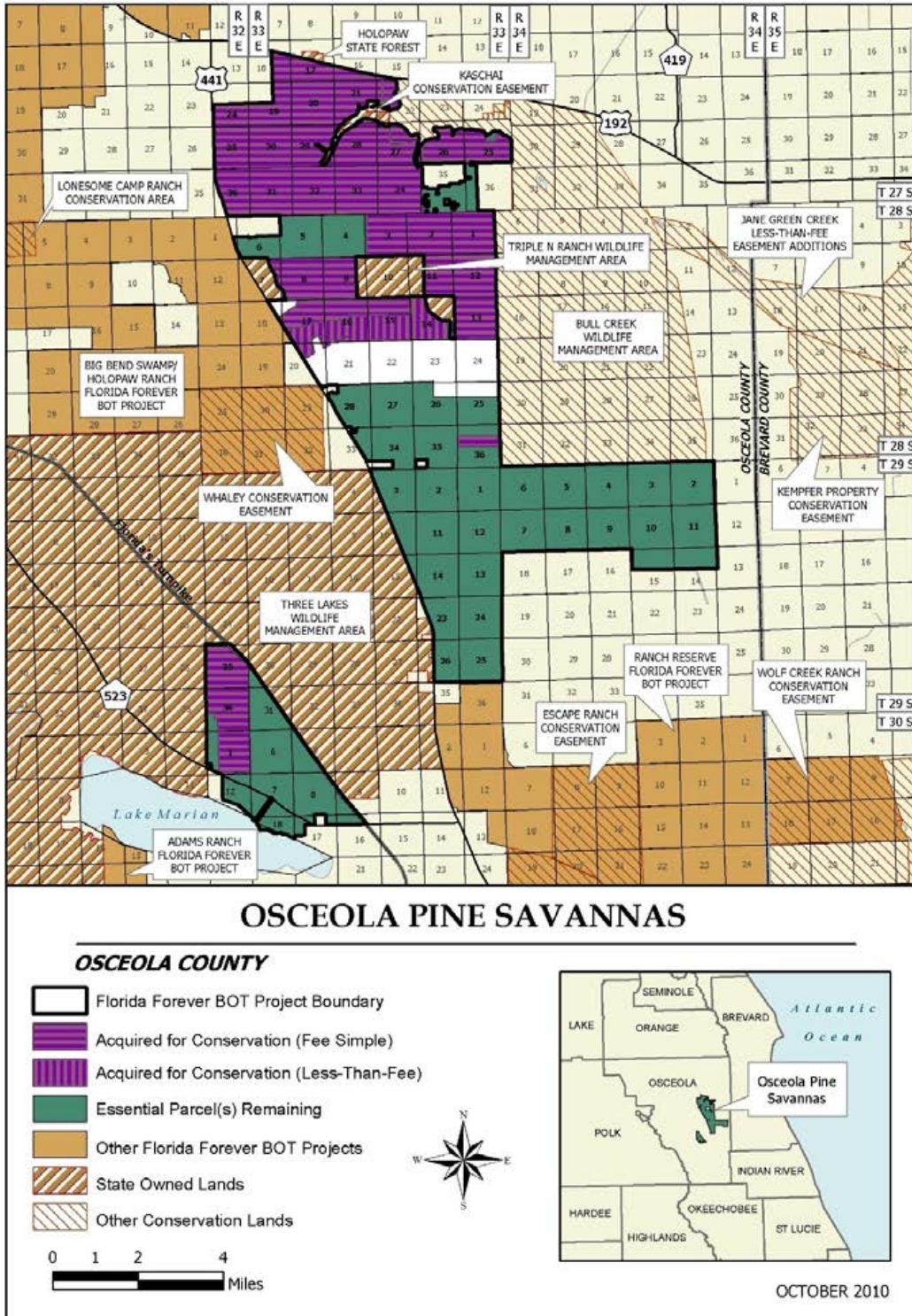
Map 182





### Map(s): Osceola Pine Savannas

#### Osceola Pine Savannas



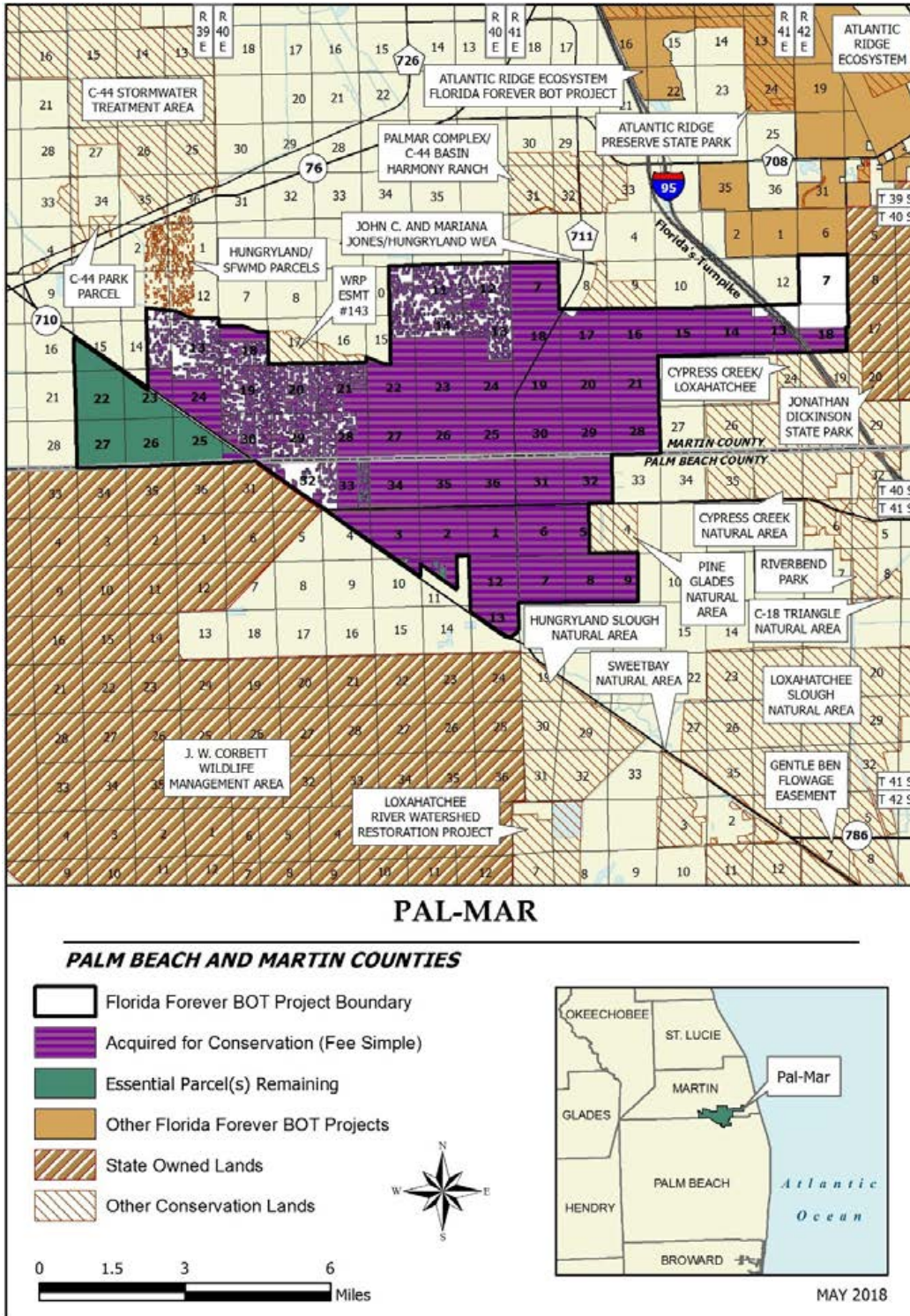
Map 183





### Map(s): Pal-Mar

#### Pal-Mar

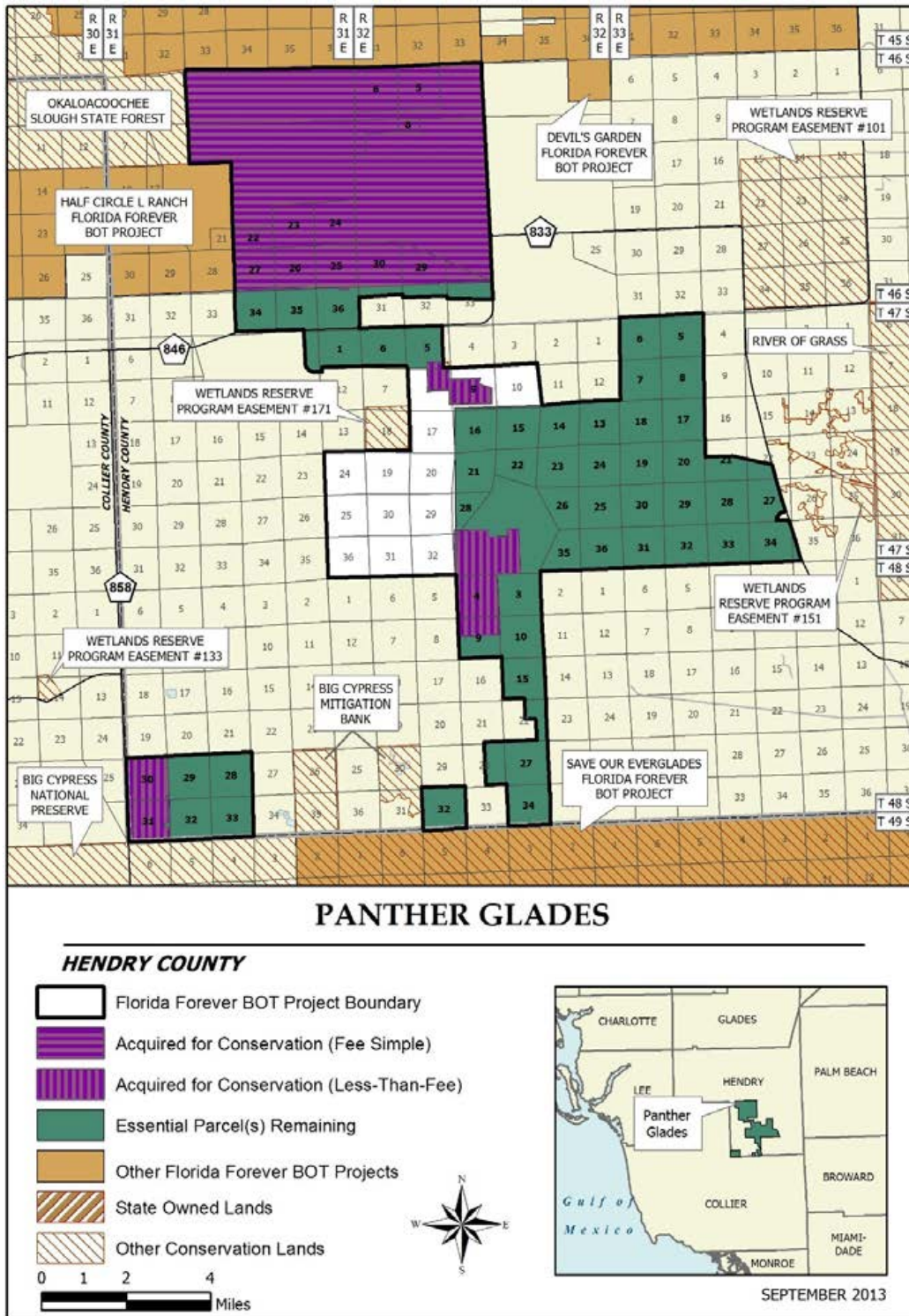


Map 184



### Map(s): Panther Glades

#### Panther Glades



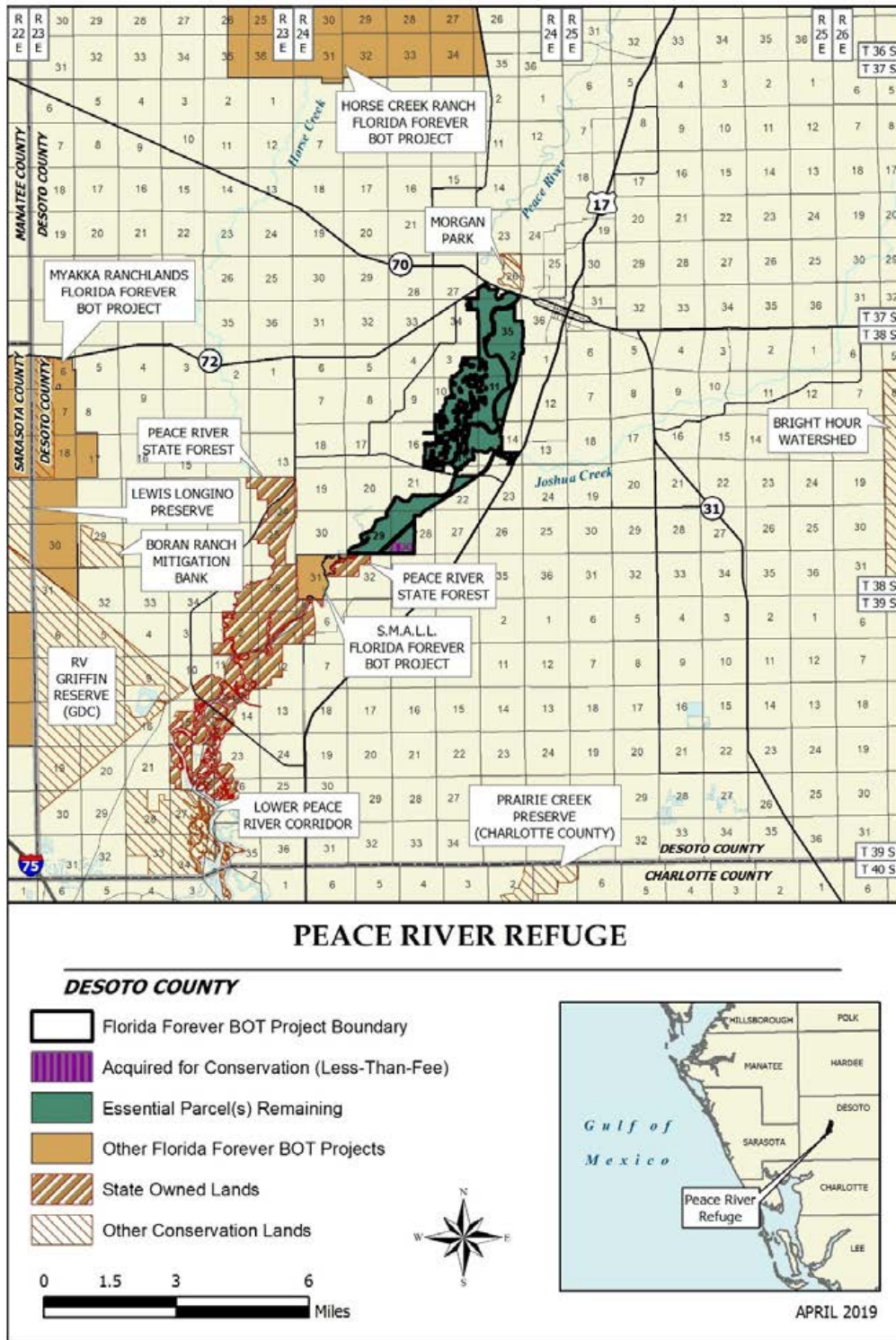
Map 185





### Map(s): Peace River Refuge

#### Peace River Refuge

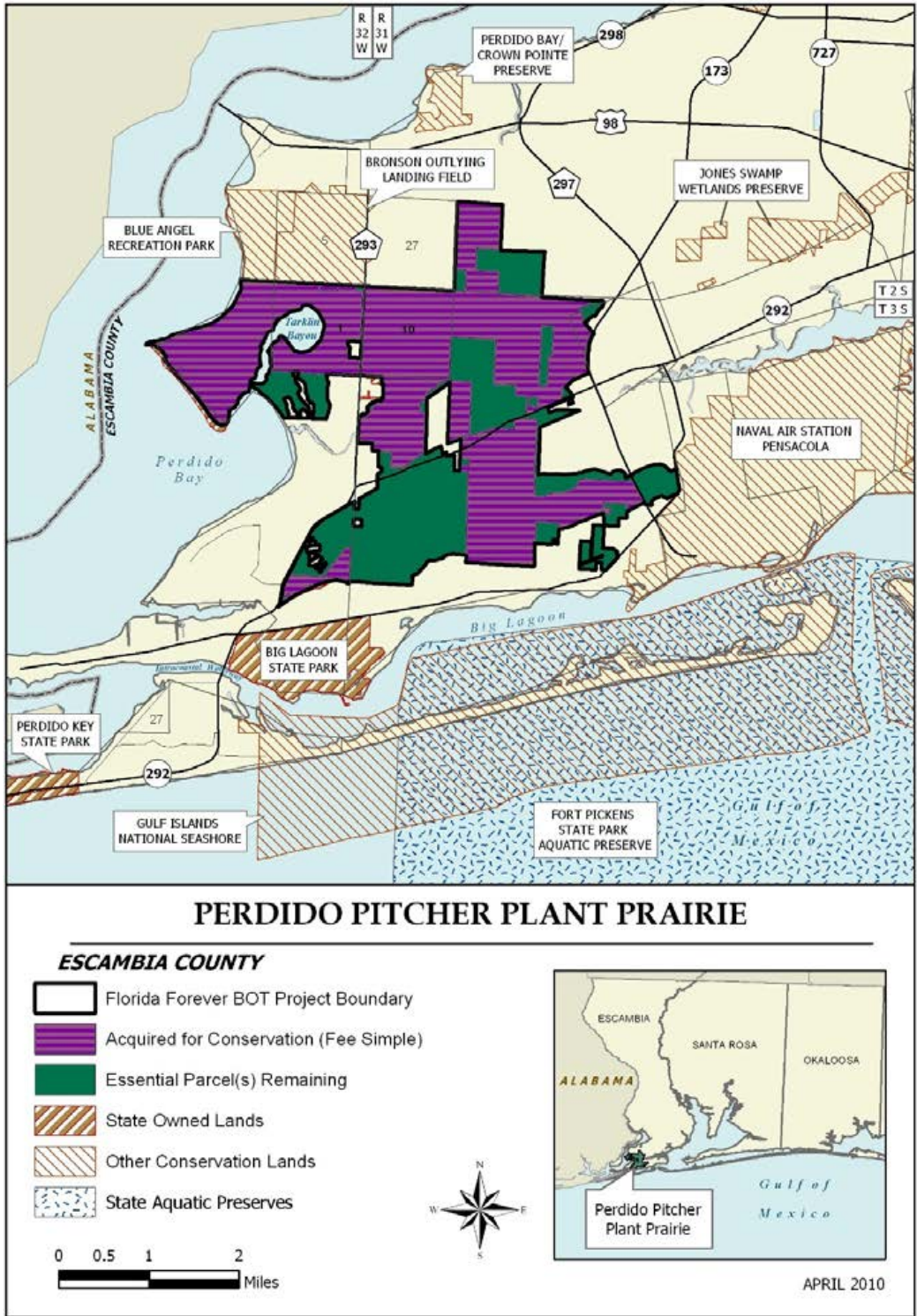


Map 186



### Map(s): Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie

#### Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie



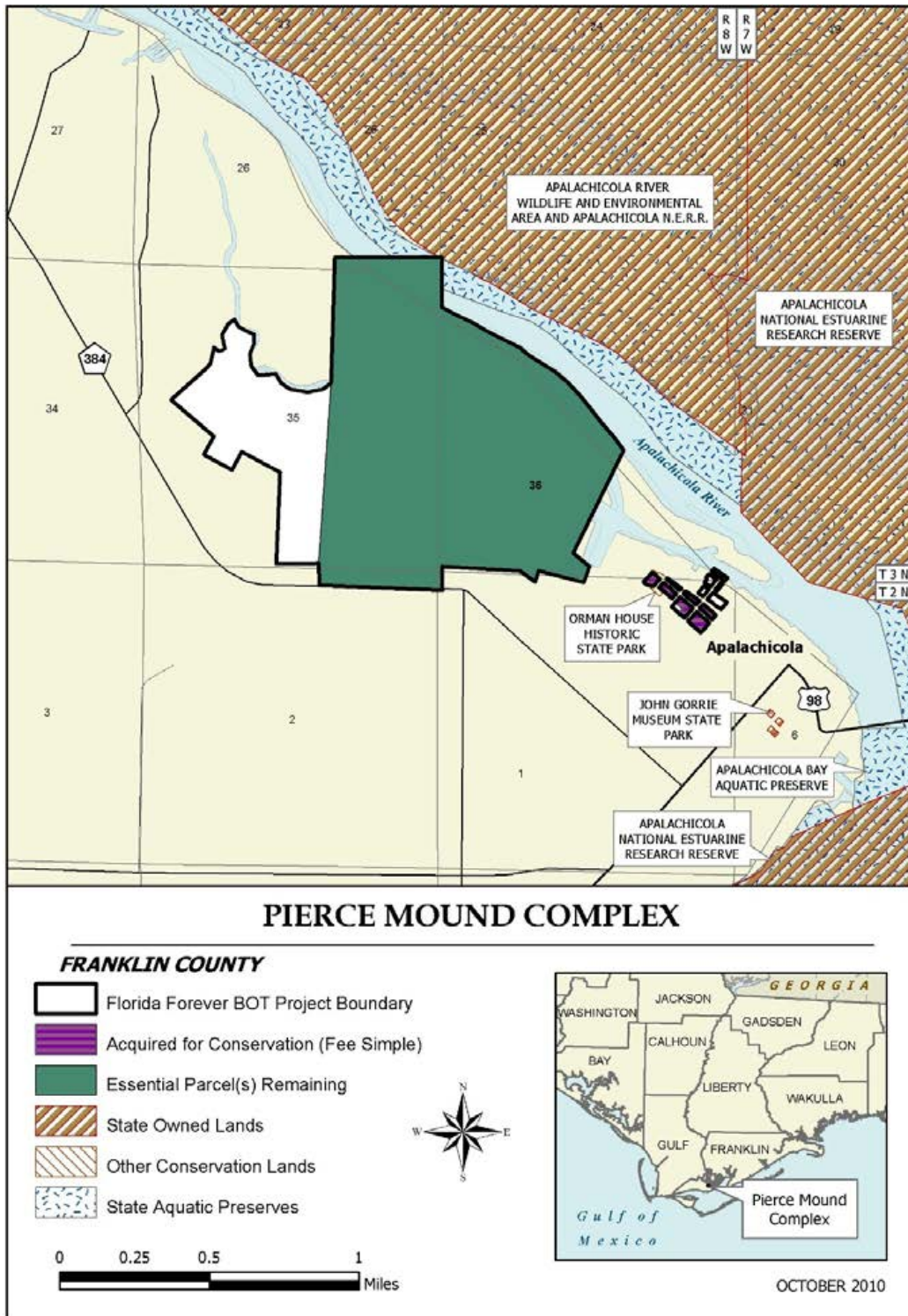
Map 187





### Map(s): Pierce Mound Complex

#### Pierce Mound Complex

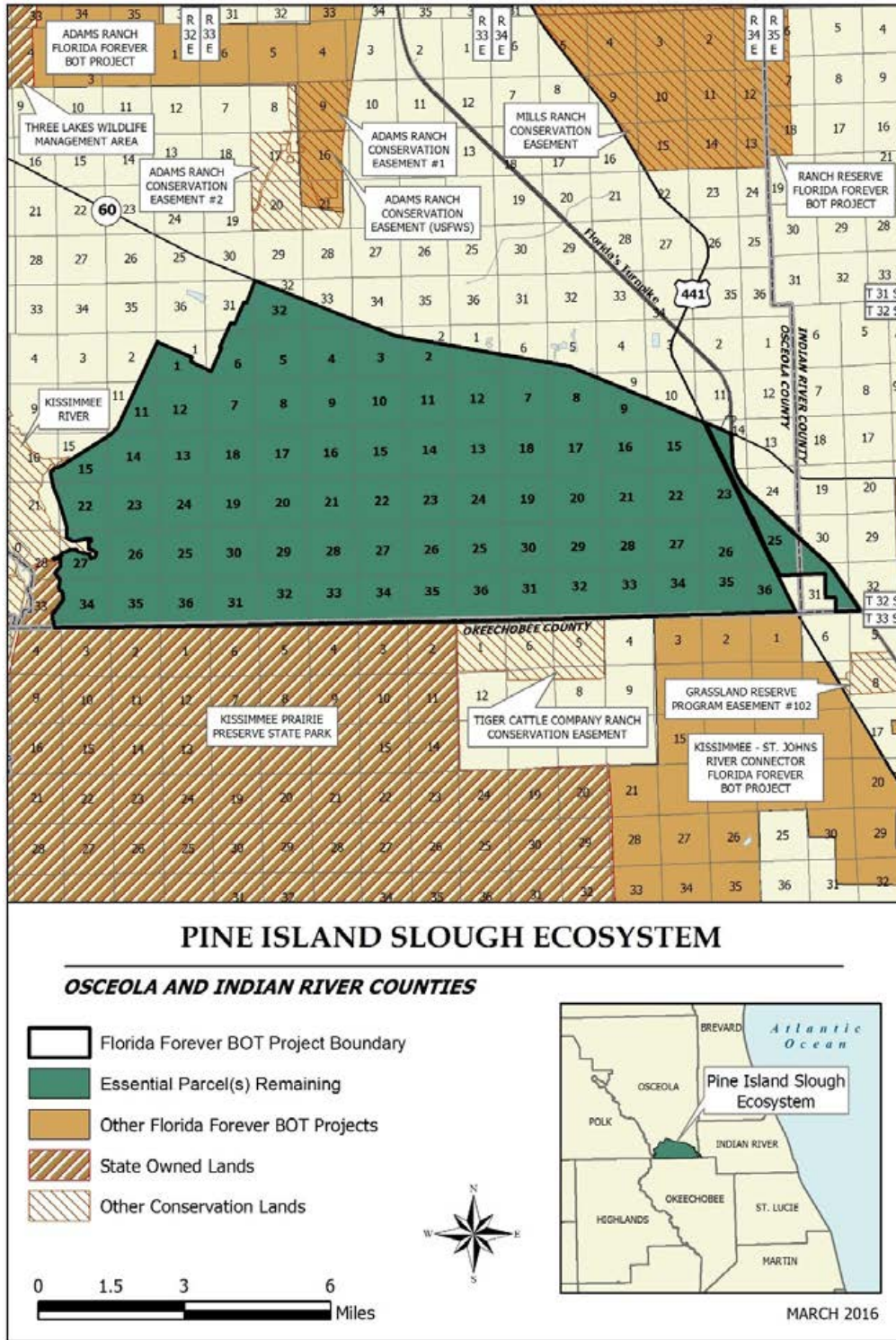


Map 188



### Map(s): Pine Island Slough Ecosystem

#### Pine Island Slough Ecosystem



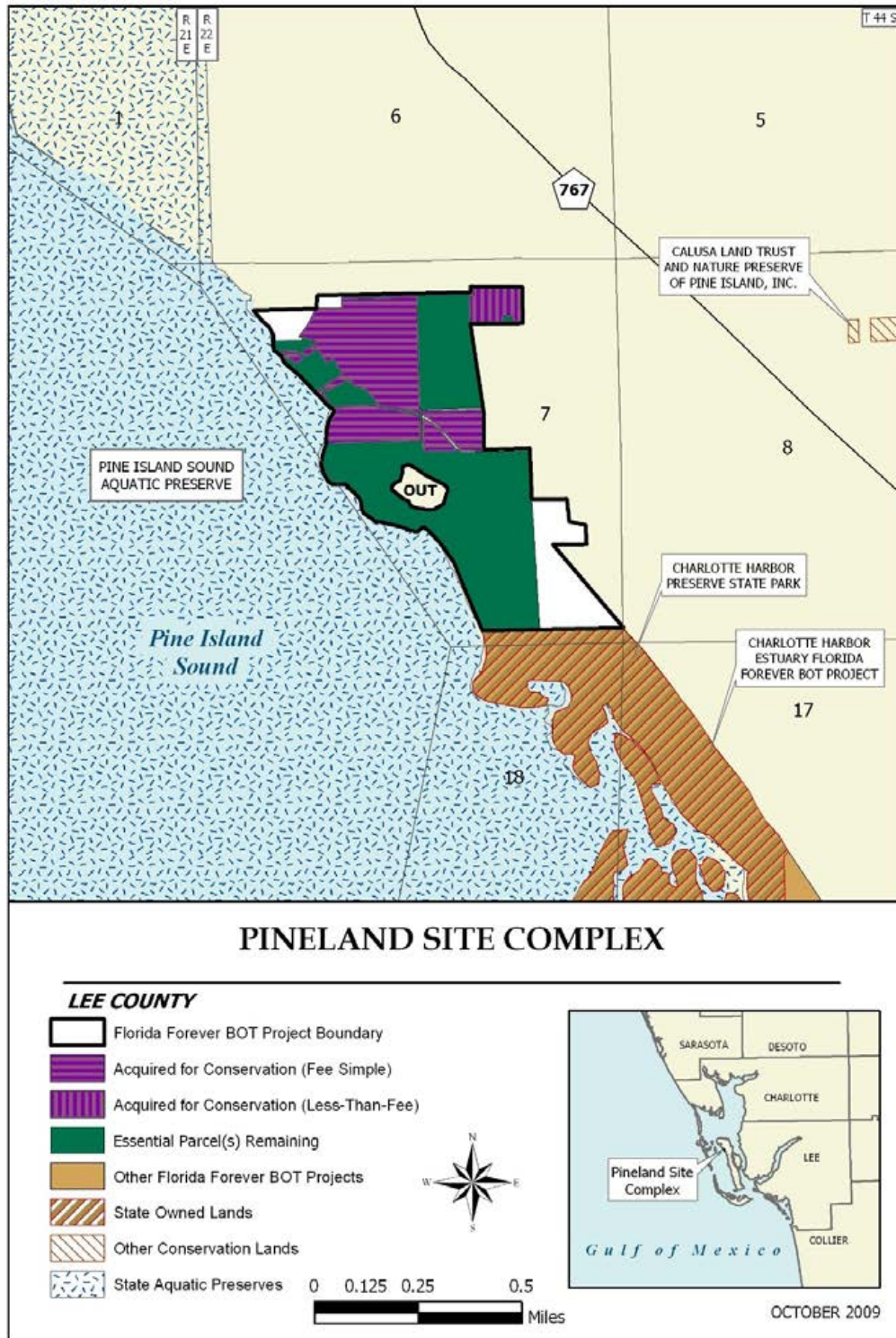
Map 189





### Map(s): Pineland Site Complex

#### Pineland Site Complex

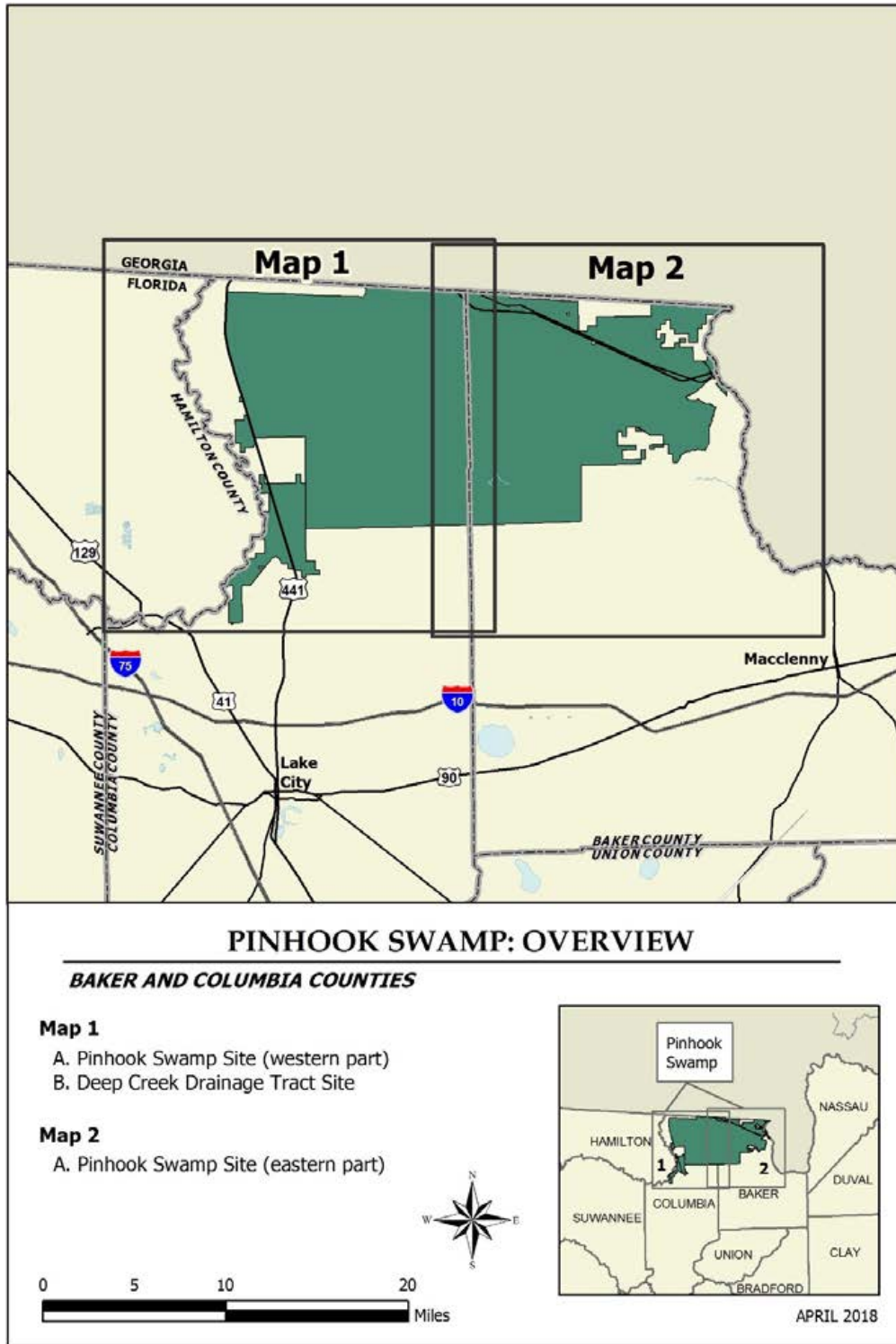


Map 190



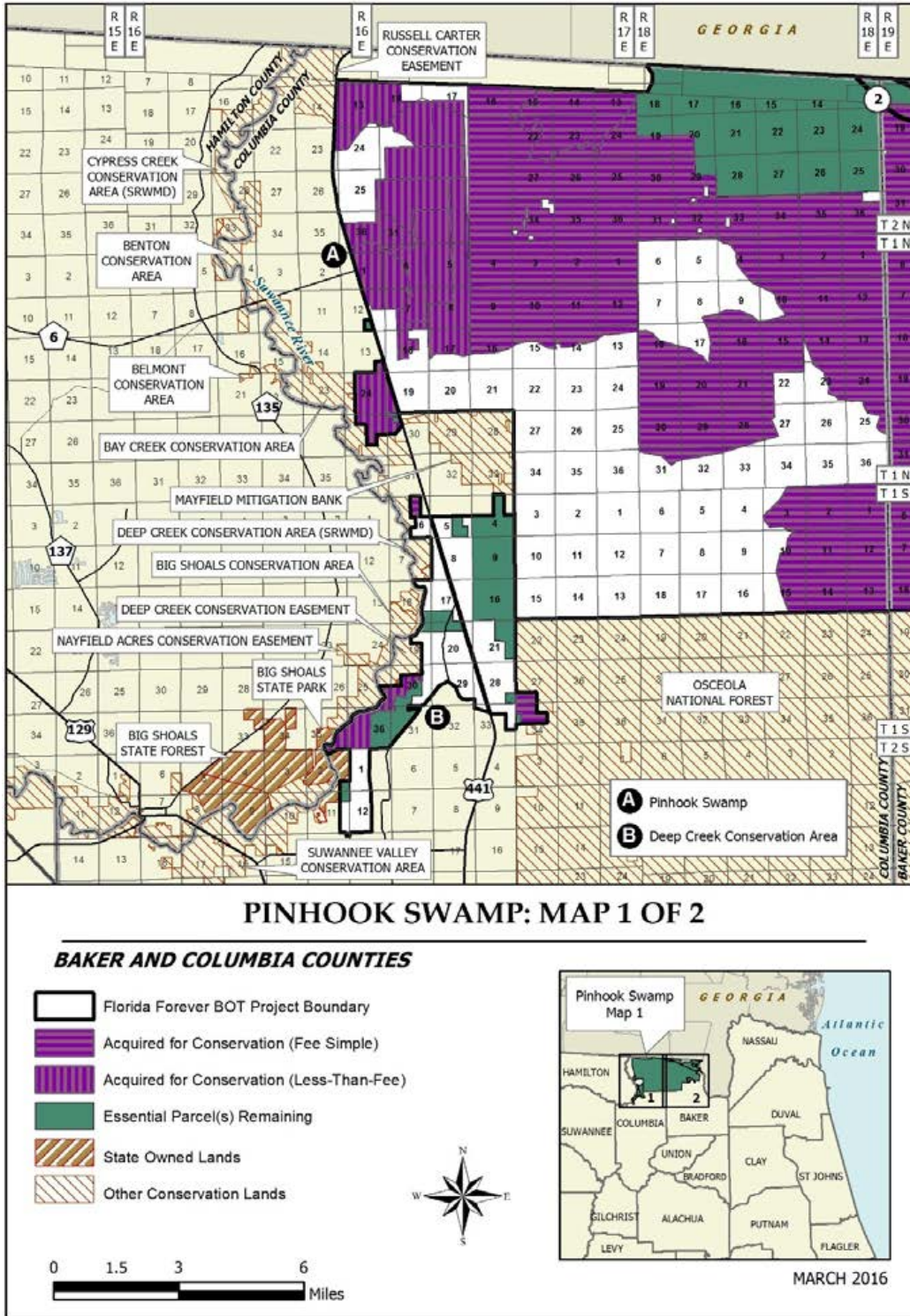
### Map(s): Pinhook Swamp

[Pinhook Swamp](#)



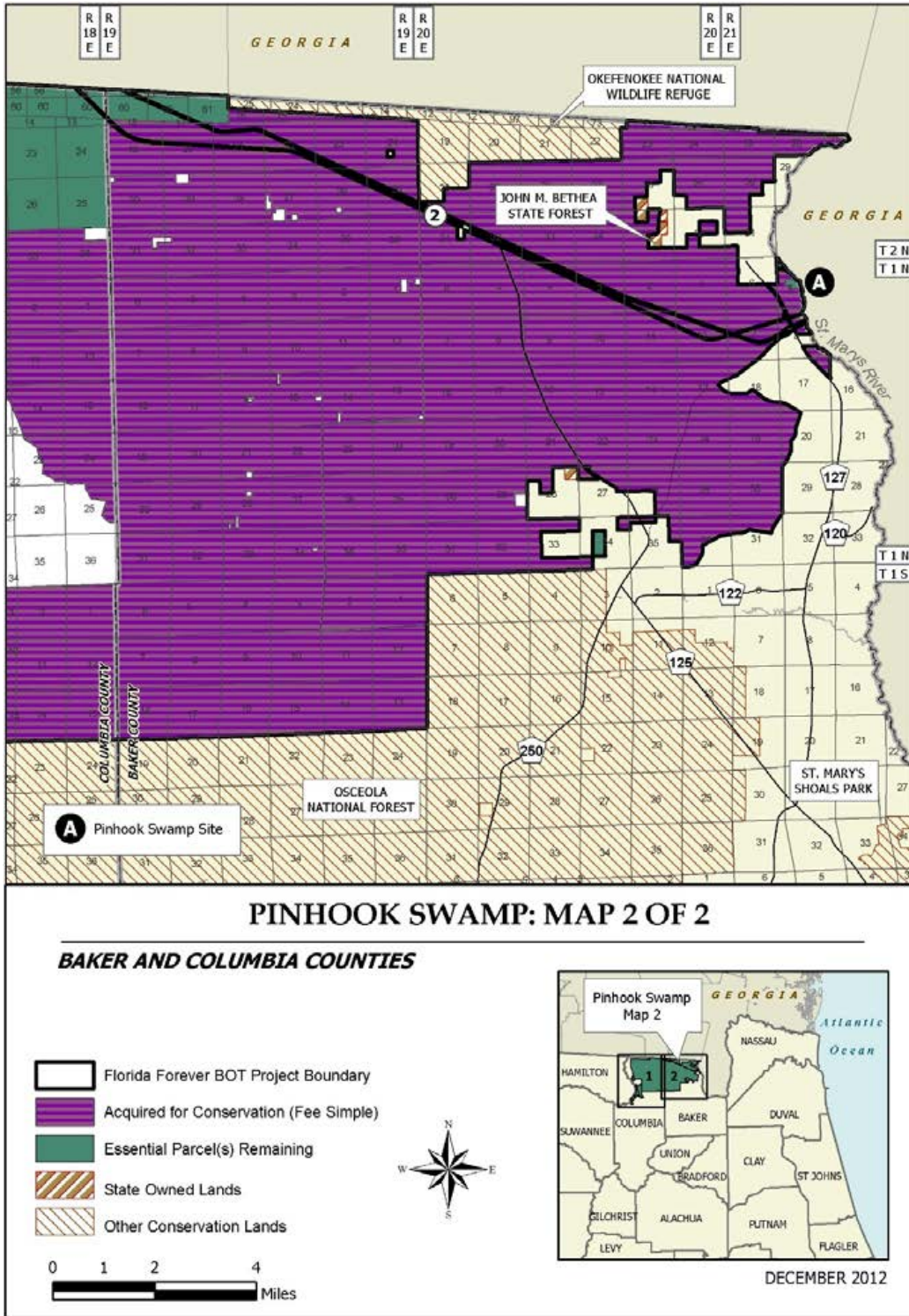
Map 191





Map 192



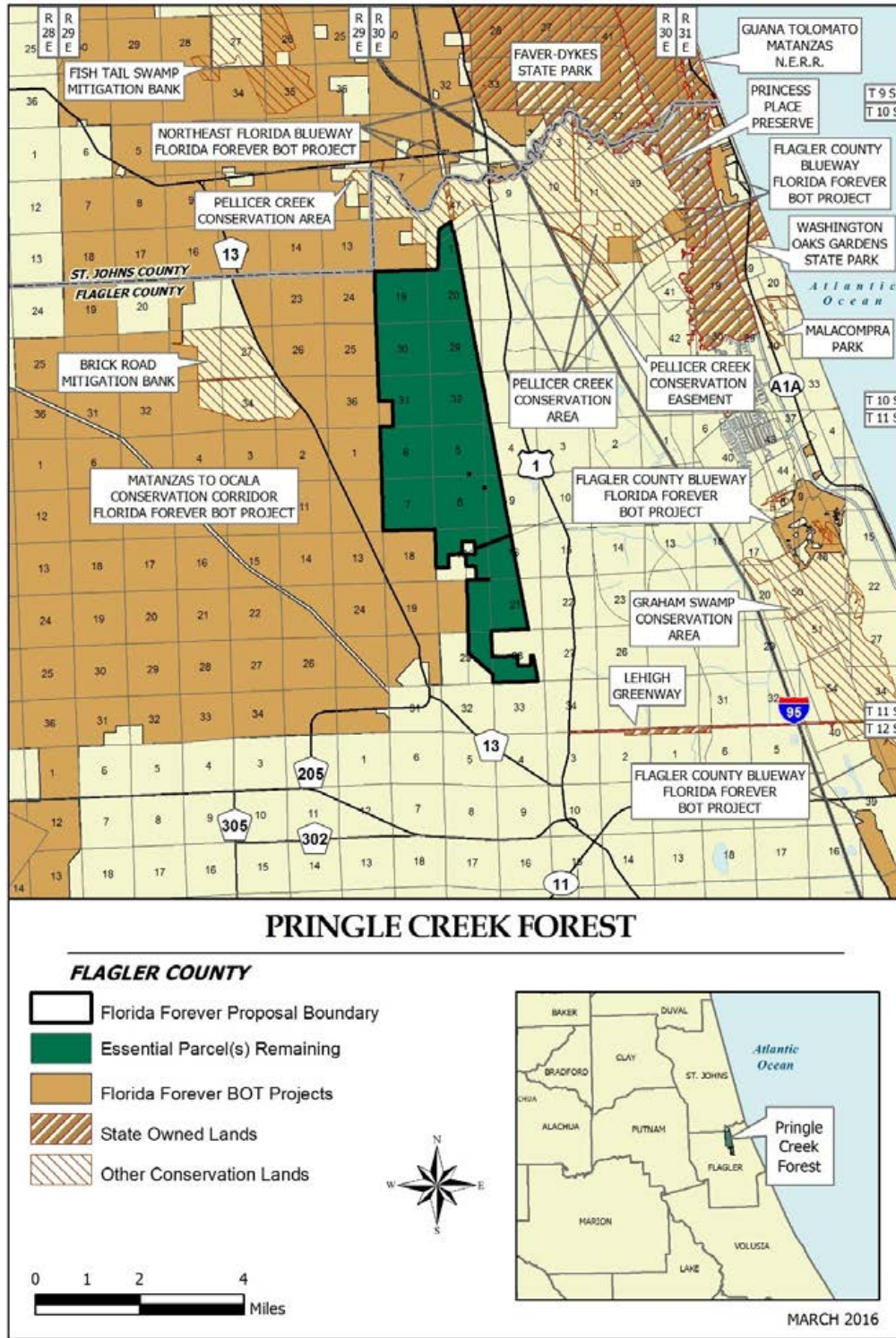


Map 193



### Map(s): Pringle Creek Forest

#### Pringle Creek Forest



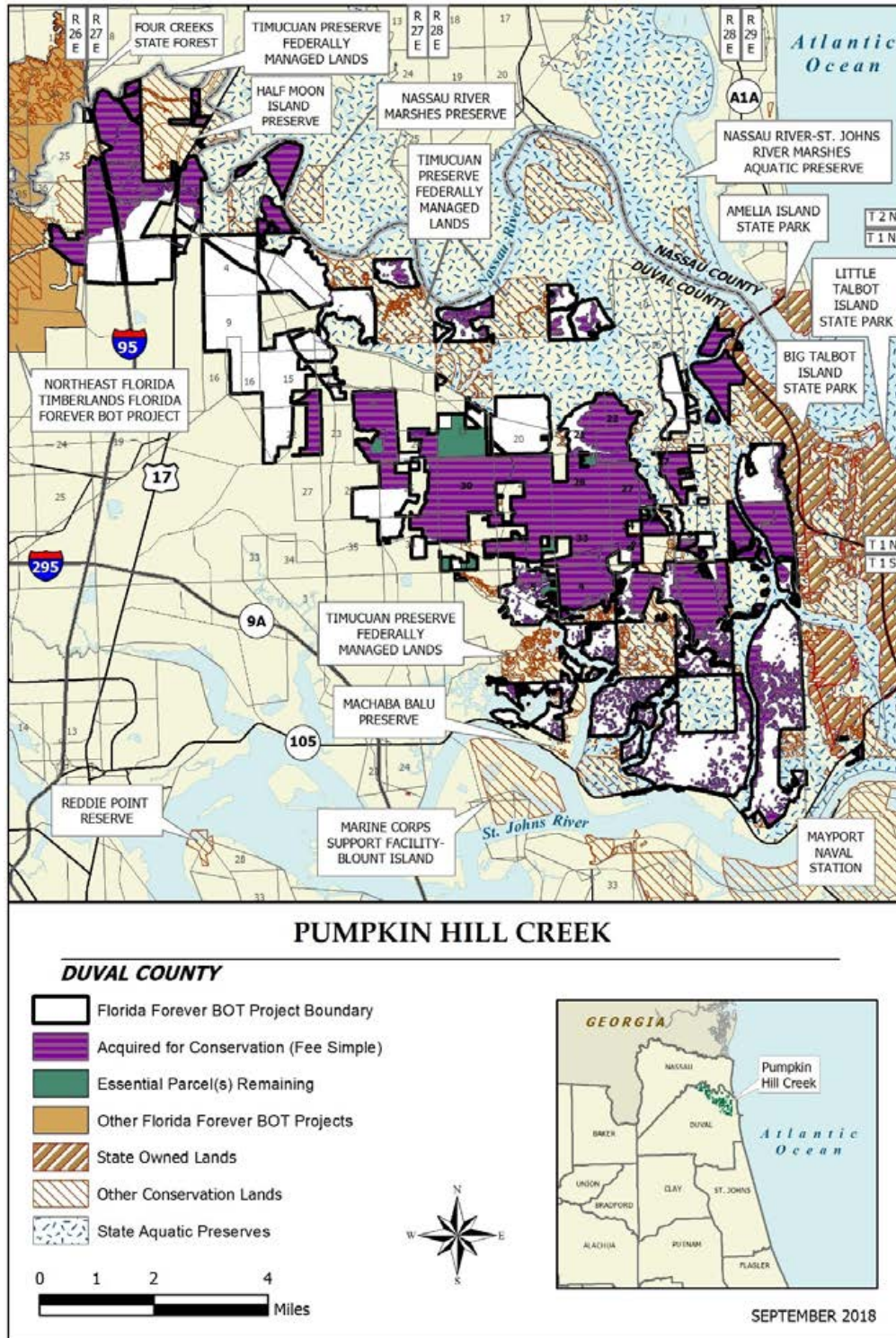
Map 194





### Map(s): Pumpkin Hill Creek

#### Pumpkin Hill Creek



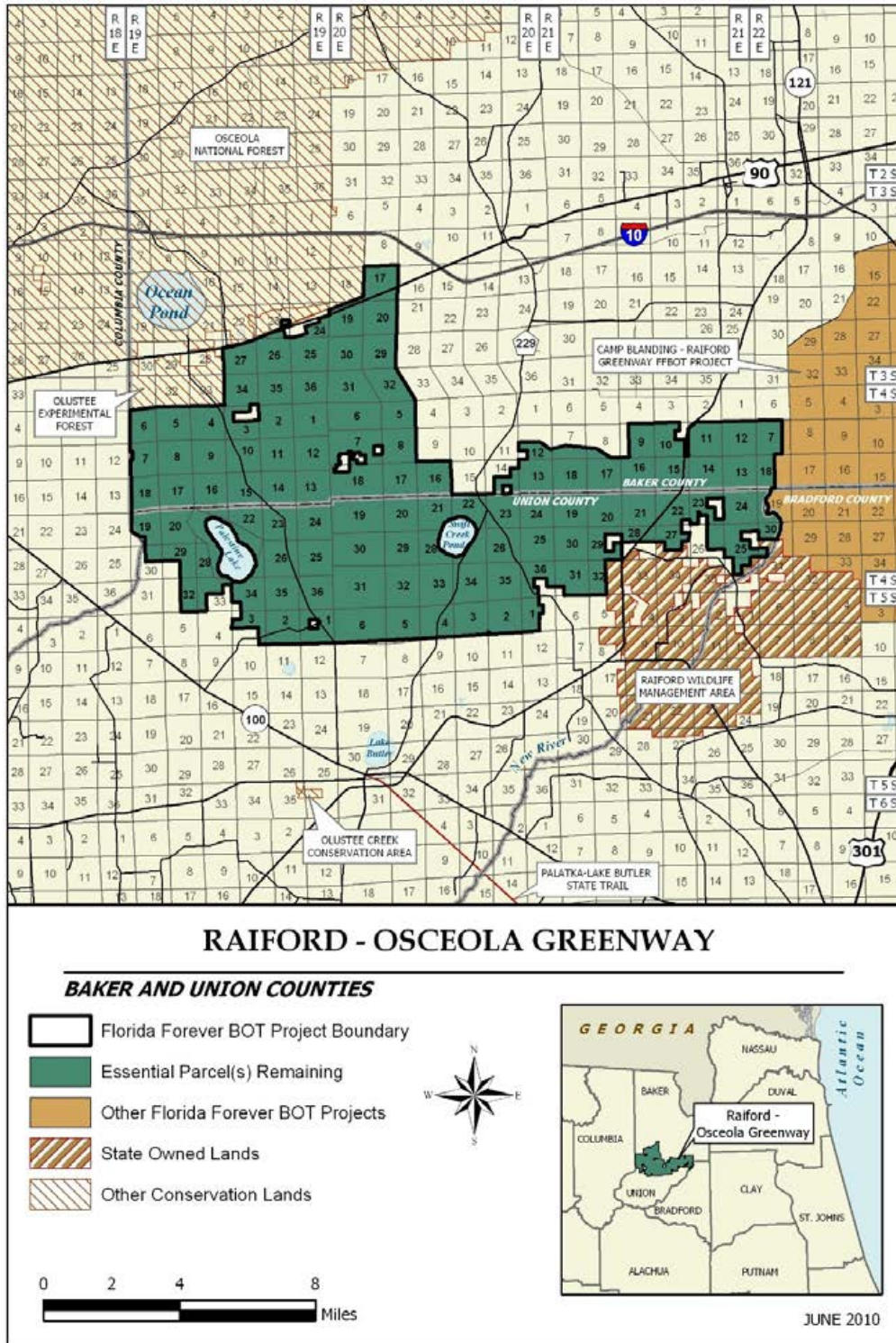
Map 195





### Map(s): Raiford-Osceola Greenway

#### Raiford-Osceola Greenway

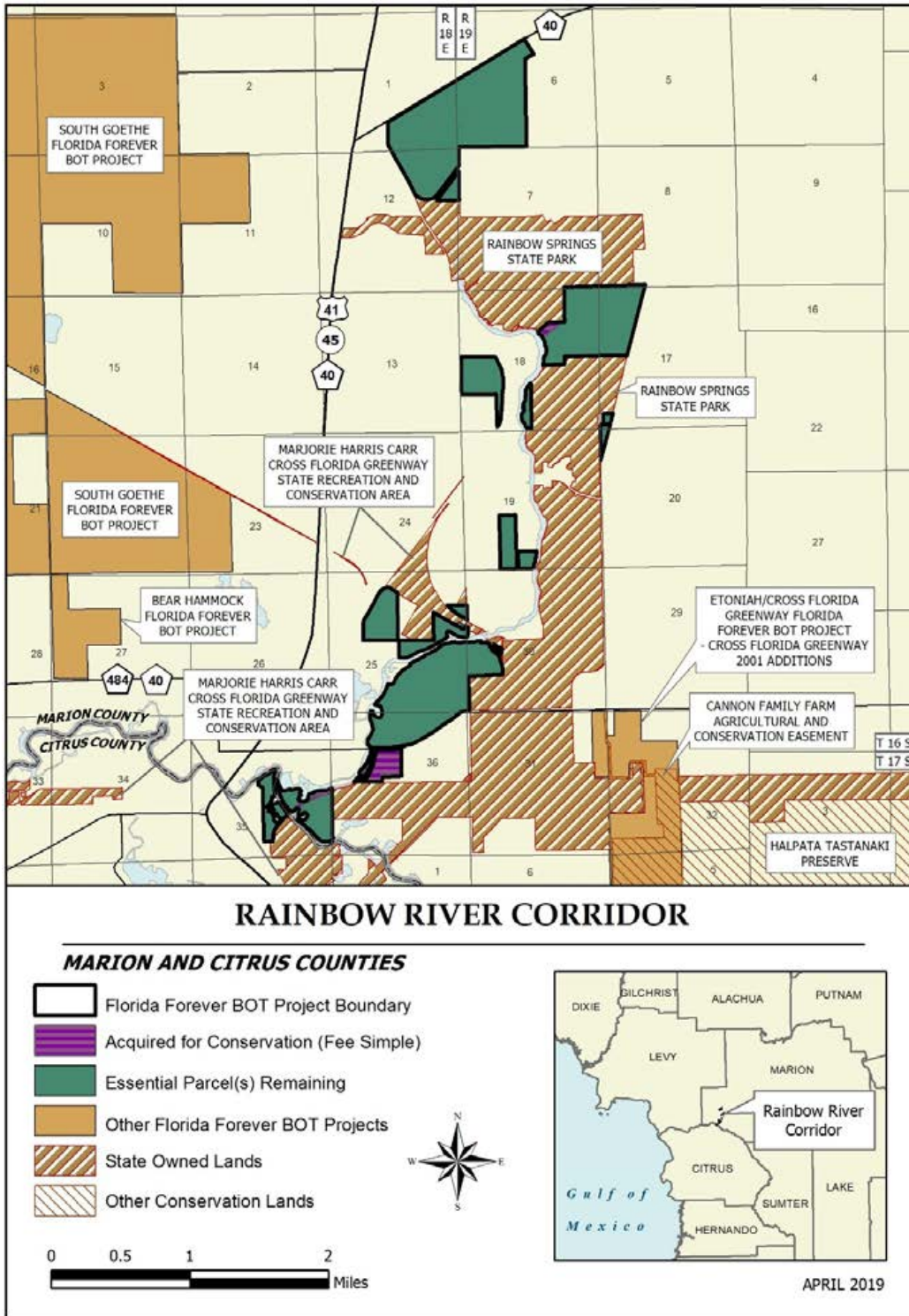


Map 196



### Map(s): Rainbow River Corridor

#### Rainbow River Corridor



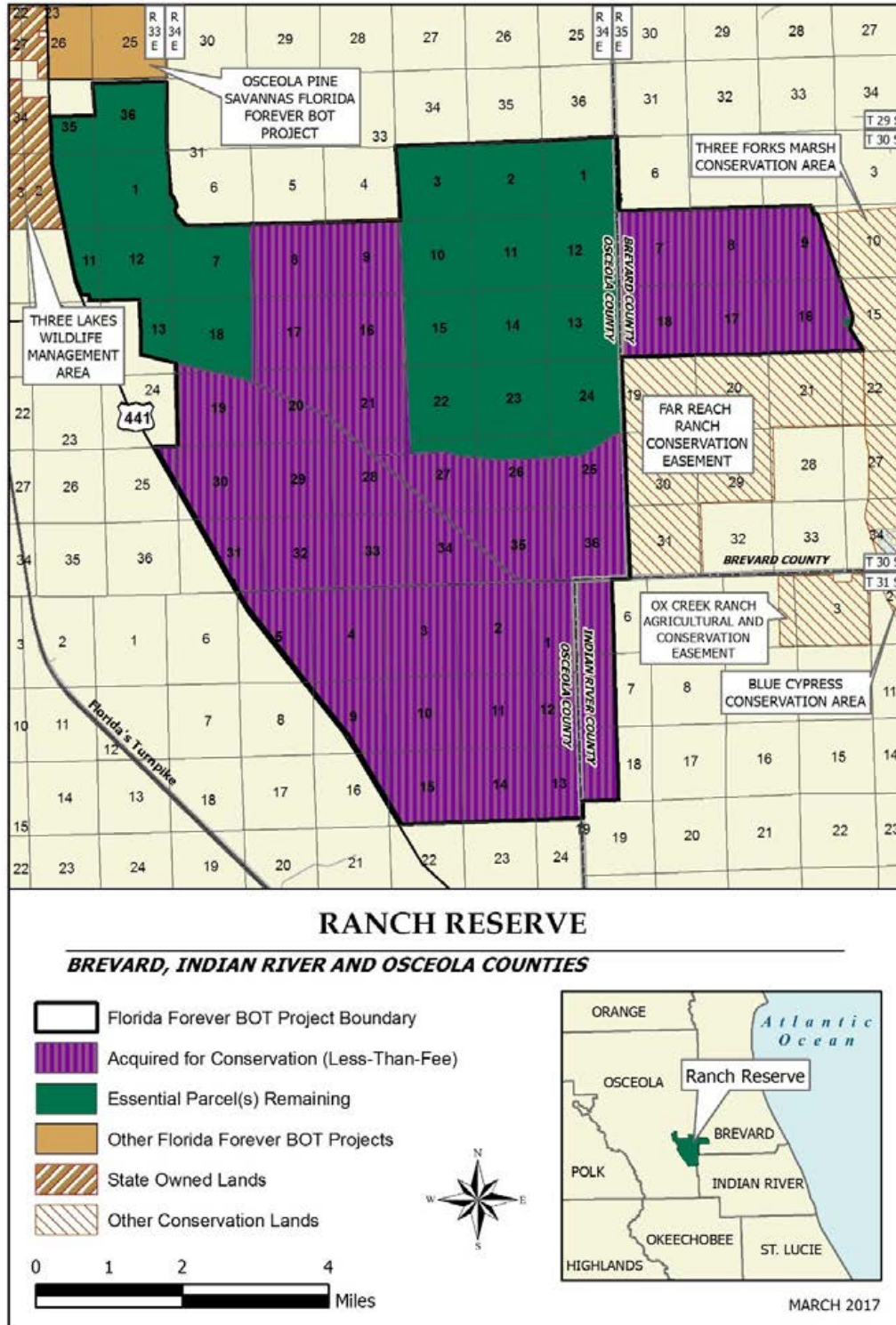
Map 197





### Map(s): Ranch Reserve

#### Ranch Reserve

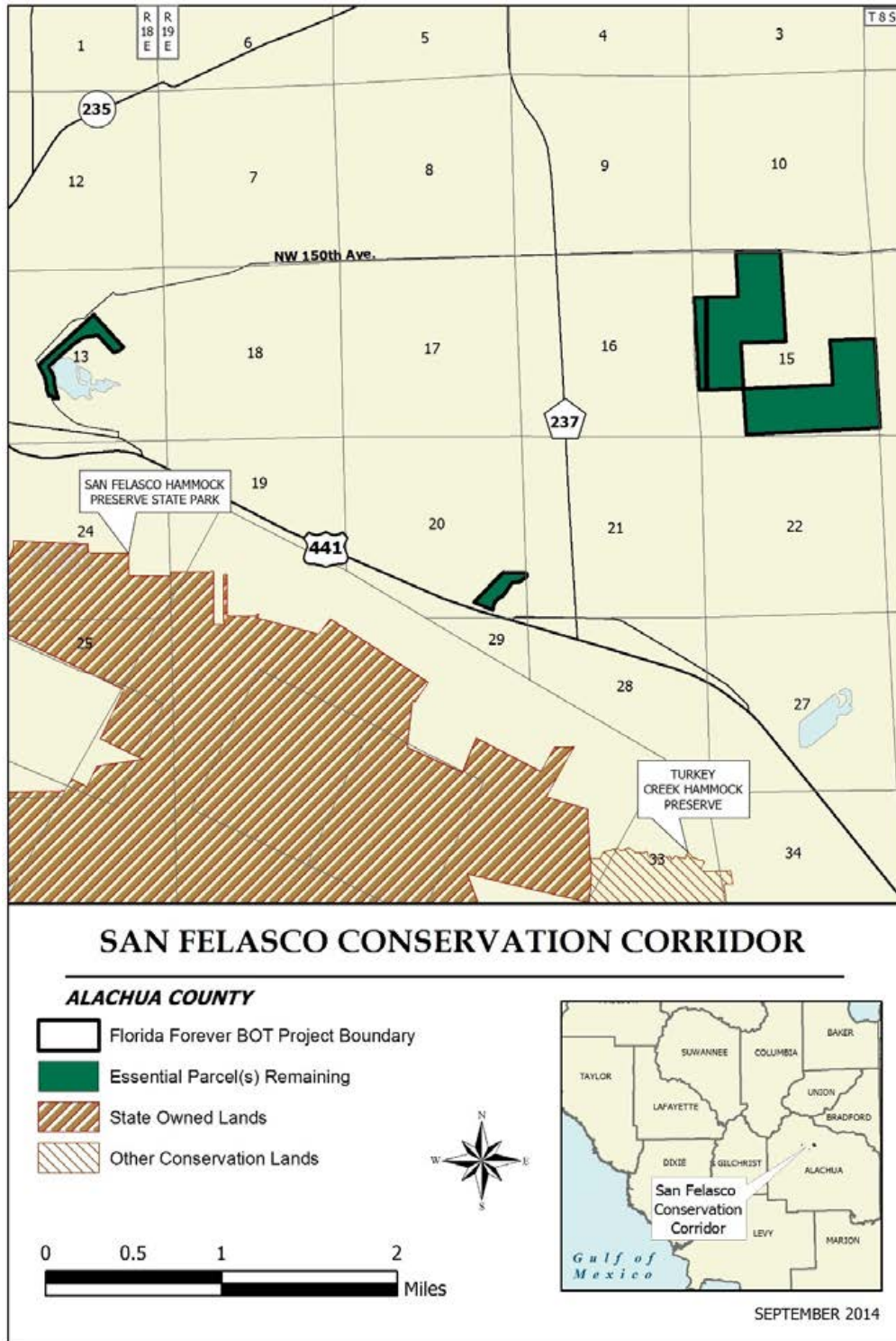


Map 198



### Map(s): San Felasco Conservation Corridor

#### San Felasco Conservation Corridor

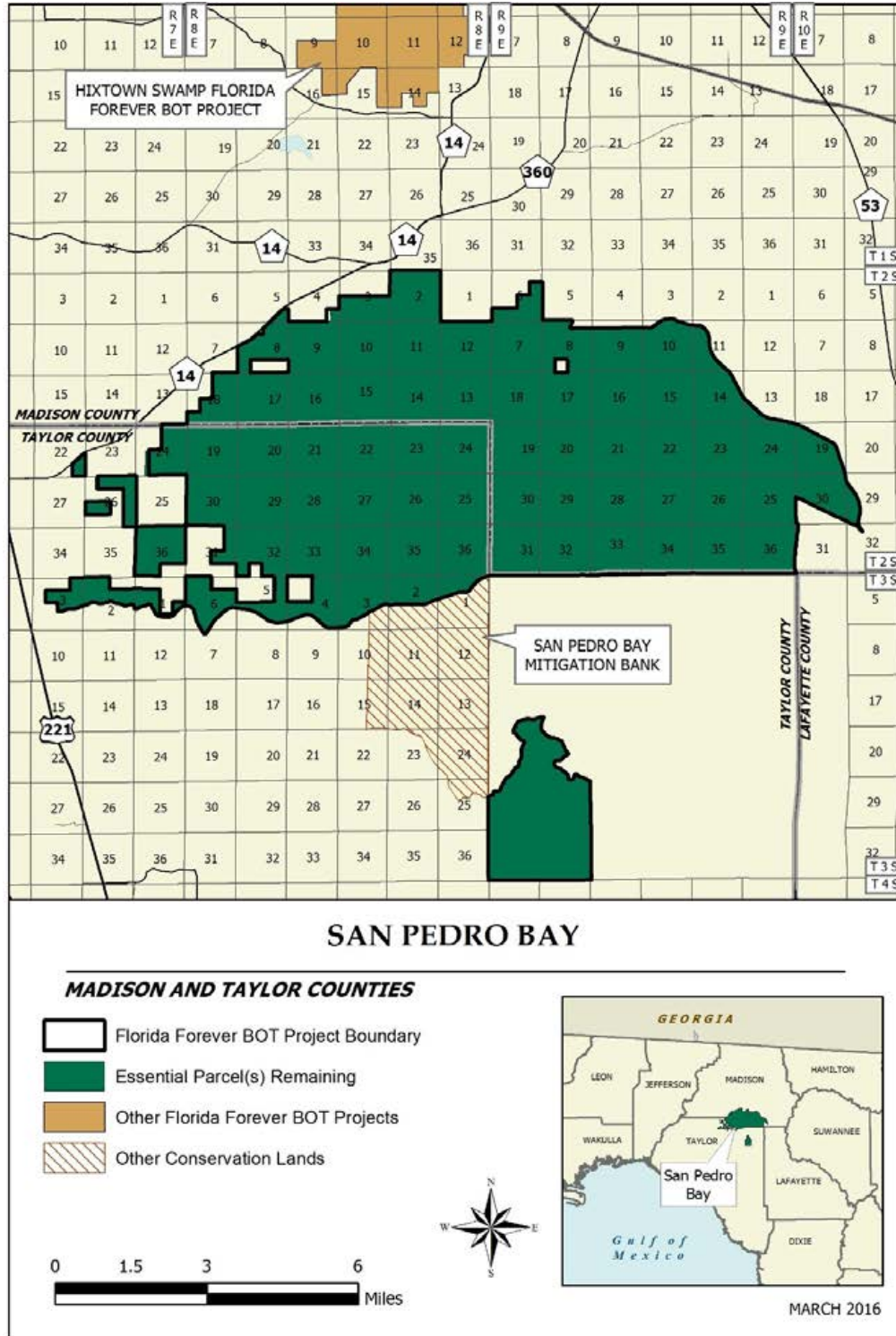


Map 199



### Map(s): San Pedro Bay

#### San Pedro Bay



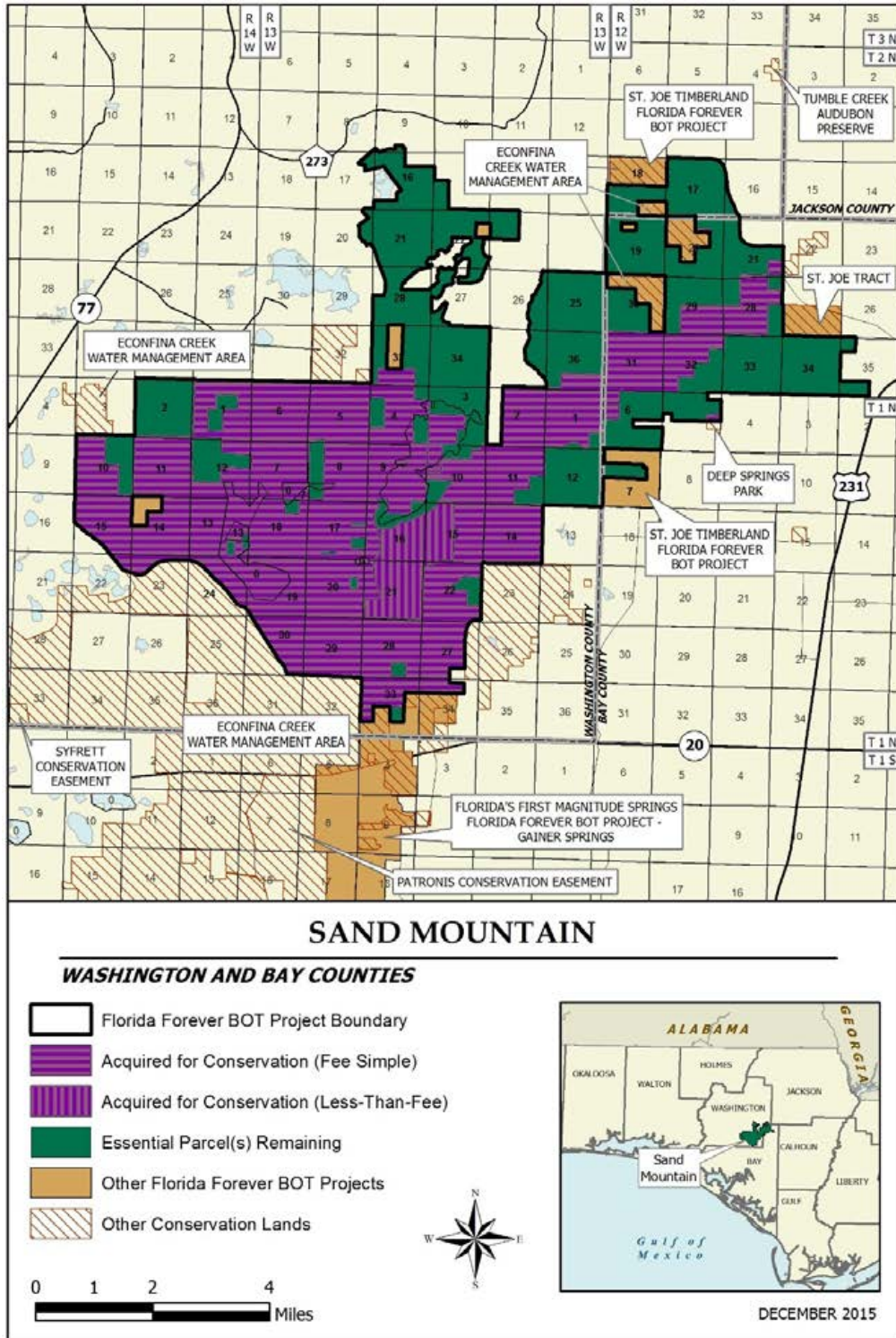
Map 200





### Map(s): Sand Mountain

#### Sand Mountain

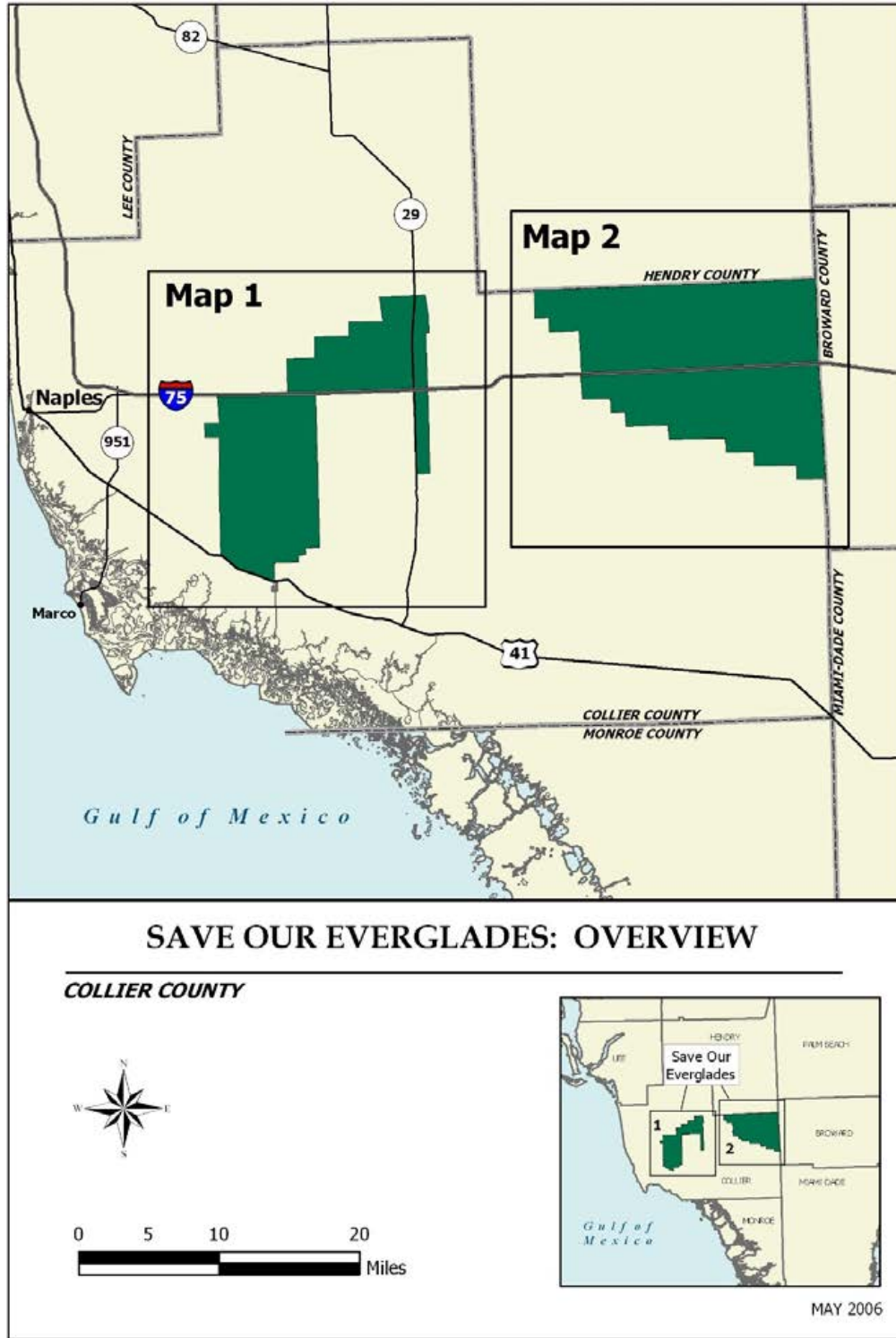


Map 201



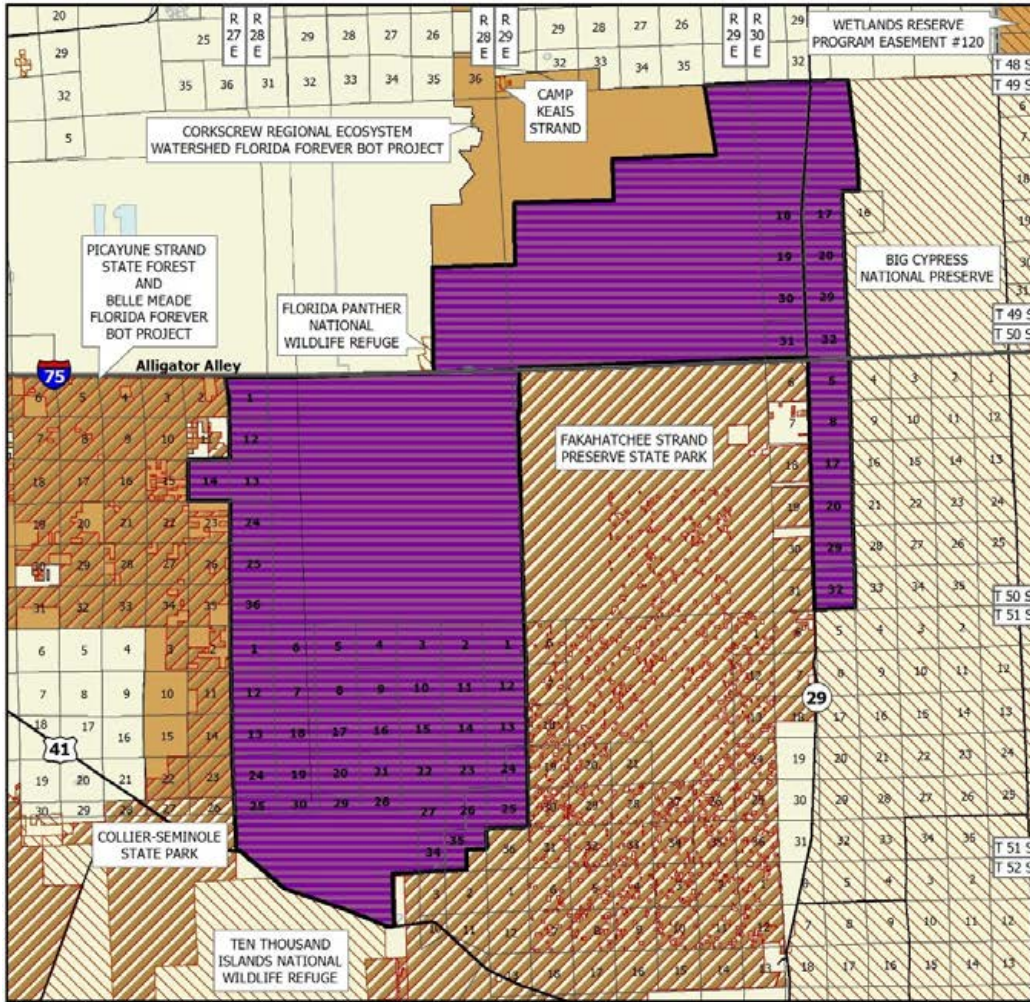
### Map(s): Save Our Everglades

#### [Save Our Everglades](#)



Map 202





### SAVE OUR EVERGLADES: MAP 1 OF 2

#### COLLIER COUNTY

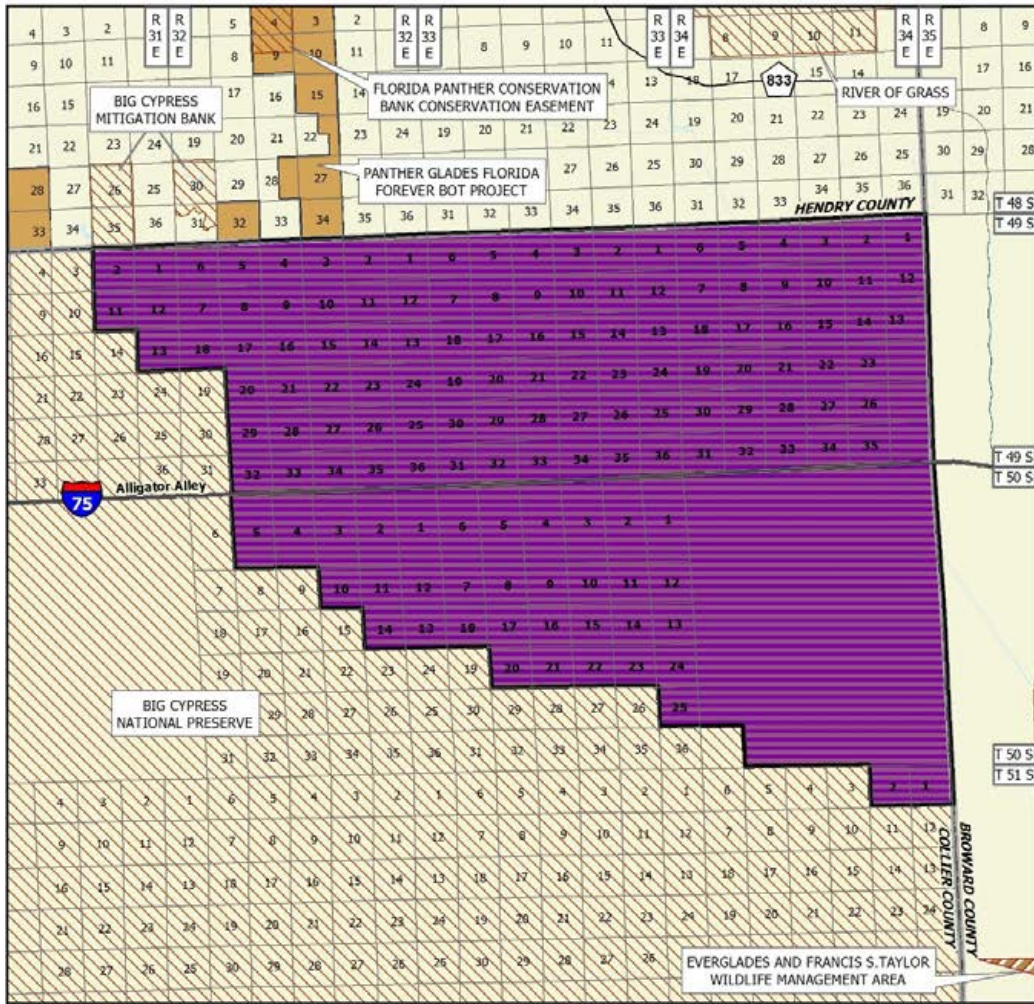
- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



MAY 2014

Map 203





### SAVE OUR EVERGLADES: MAP 2 OF 2

#### COLLIER COUNTY

-  Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
-  Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
-  Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
-  State Owned Lands
-  Other Conservation Lands



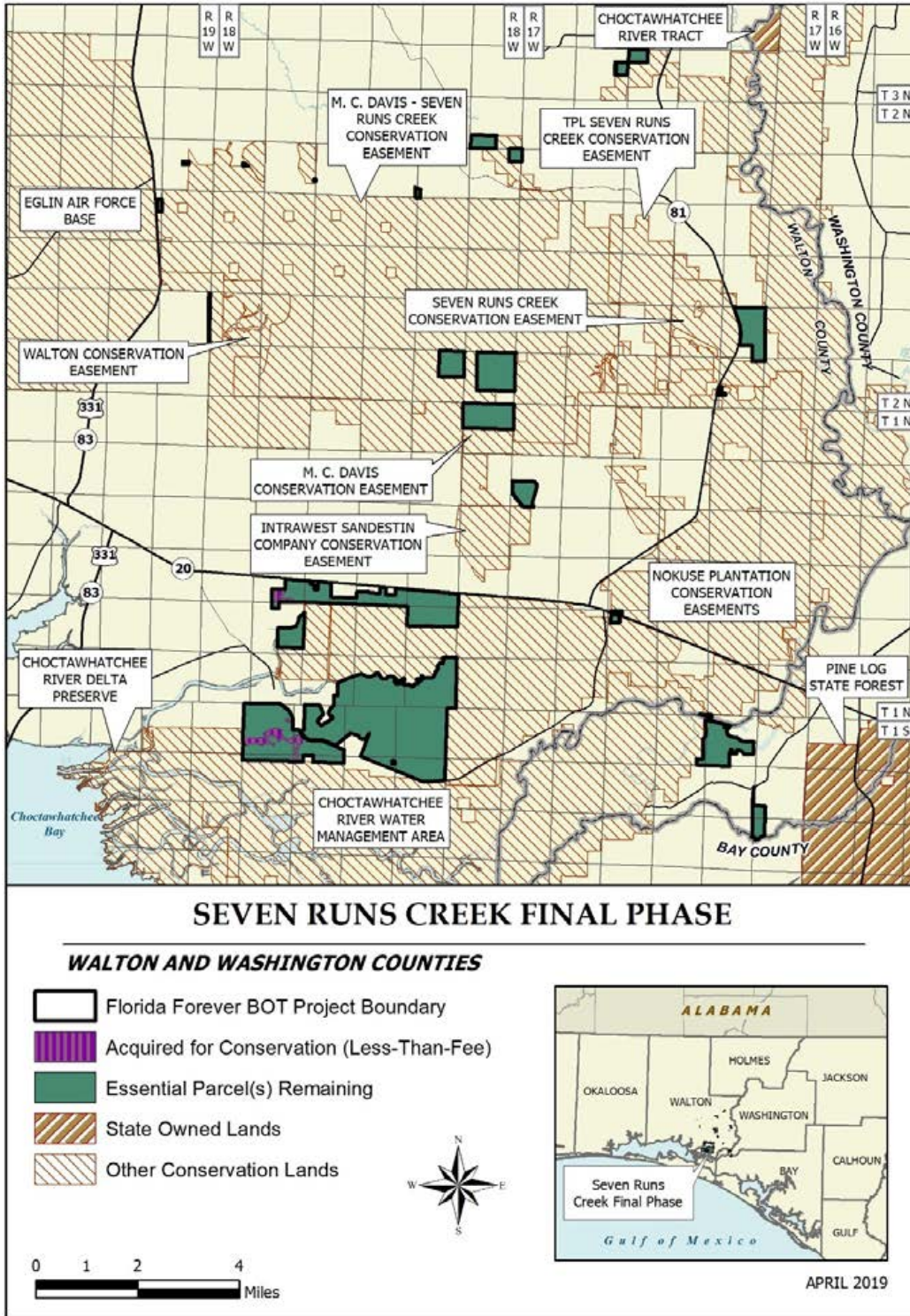
MARCH 2017

Map 204



**Map(s): Seven Runs Creek Final Phase**

Seven Runs Creek Final Phase

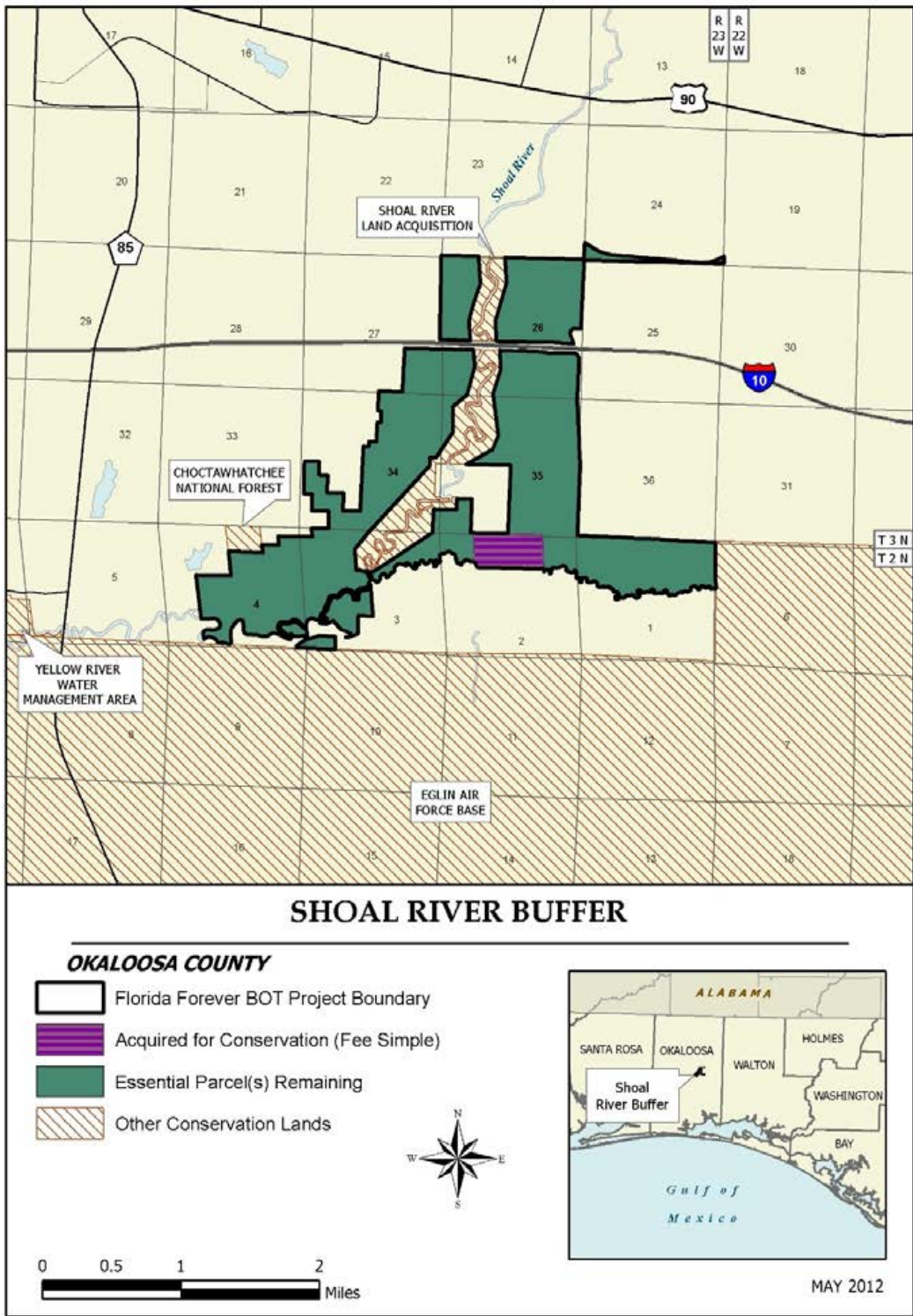


Map 205



### Map(s): Shoal River Buffer

#### Shoal River Buffer



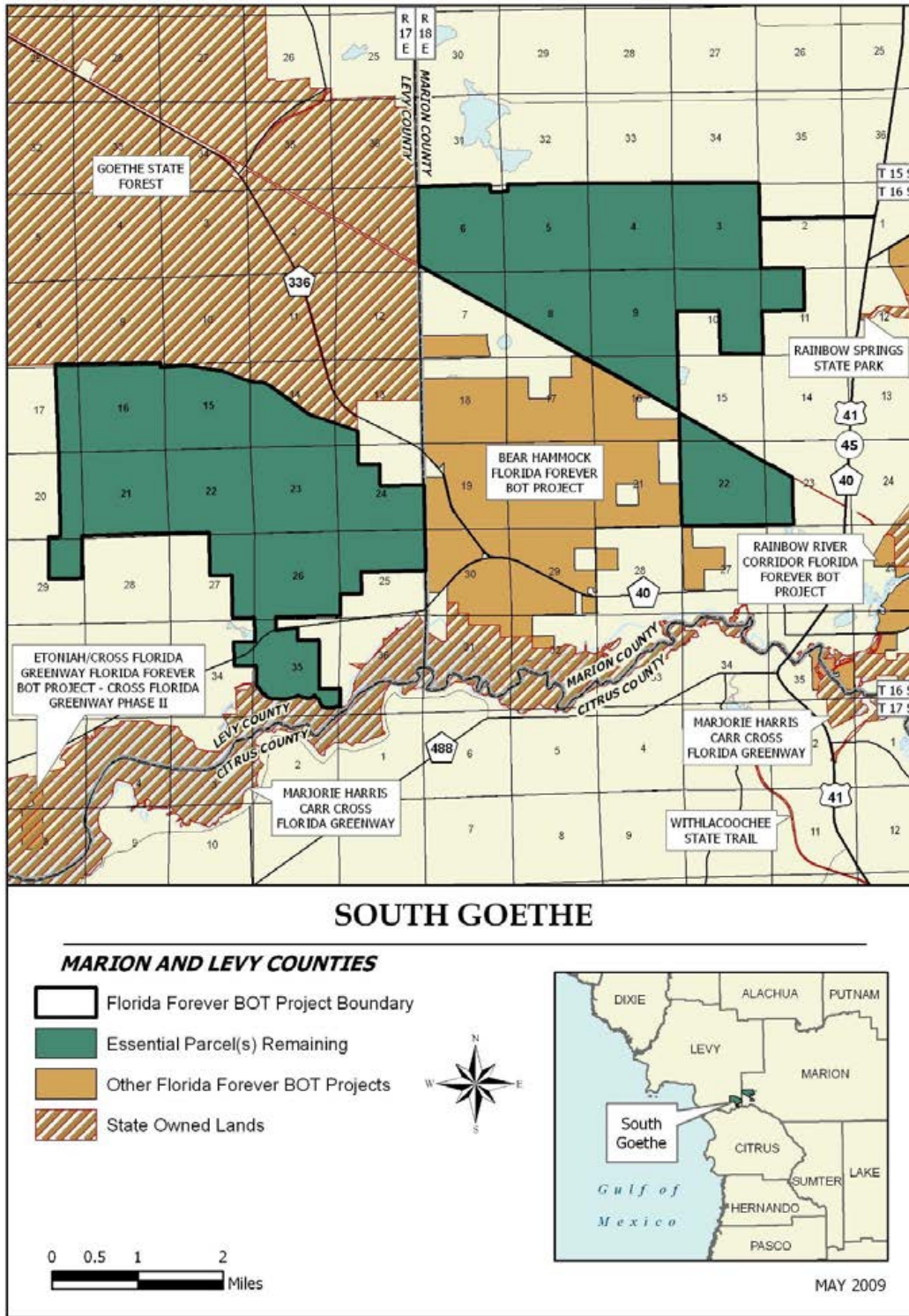
Map 206





### Map(s): South Goethe

#### South Goethe



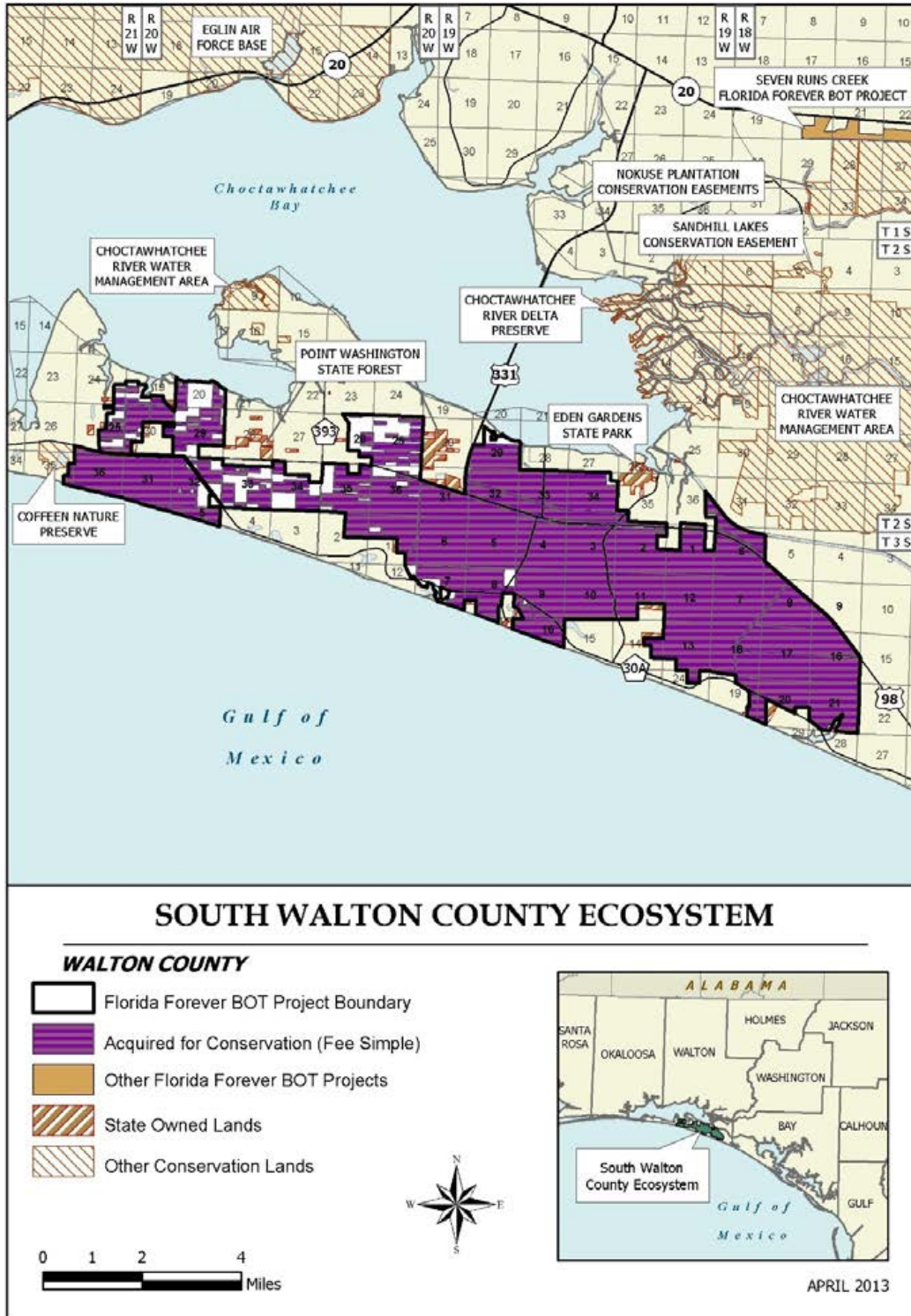
Map 207





### Map(s): South Walton County Ecosystem

#### South Walton County Ecosystem



Map 208

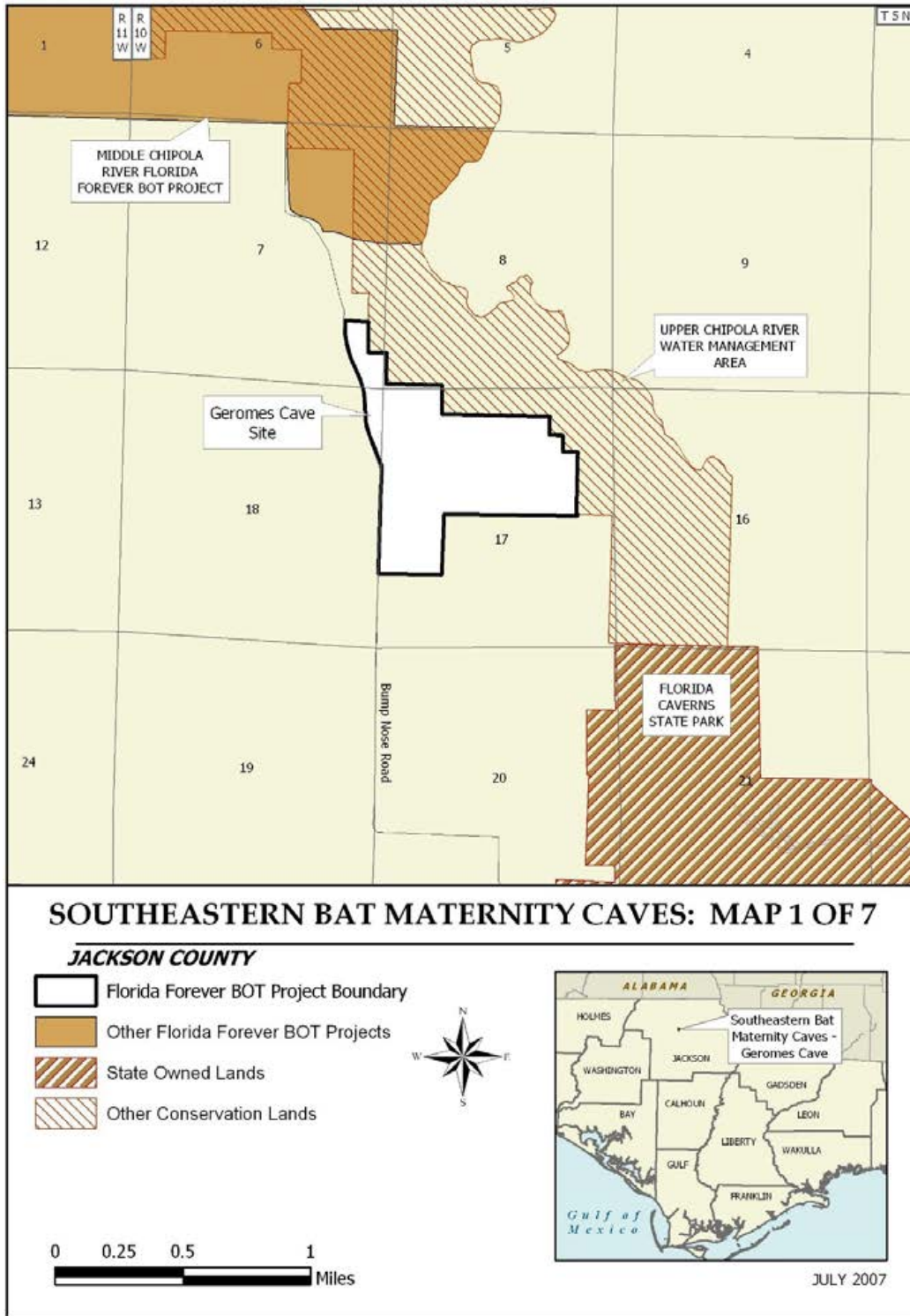


### Map(s): Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves

#### Southeastern Bat Maternity Caves

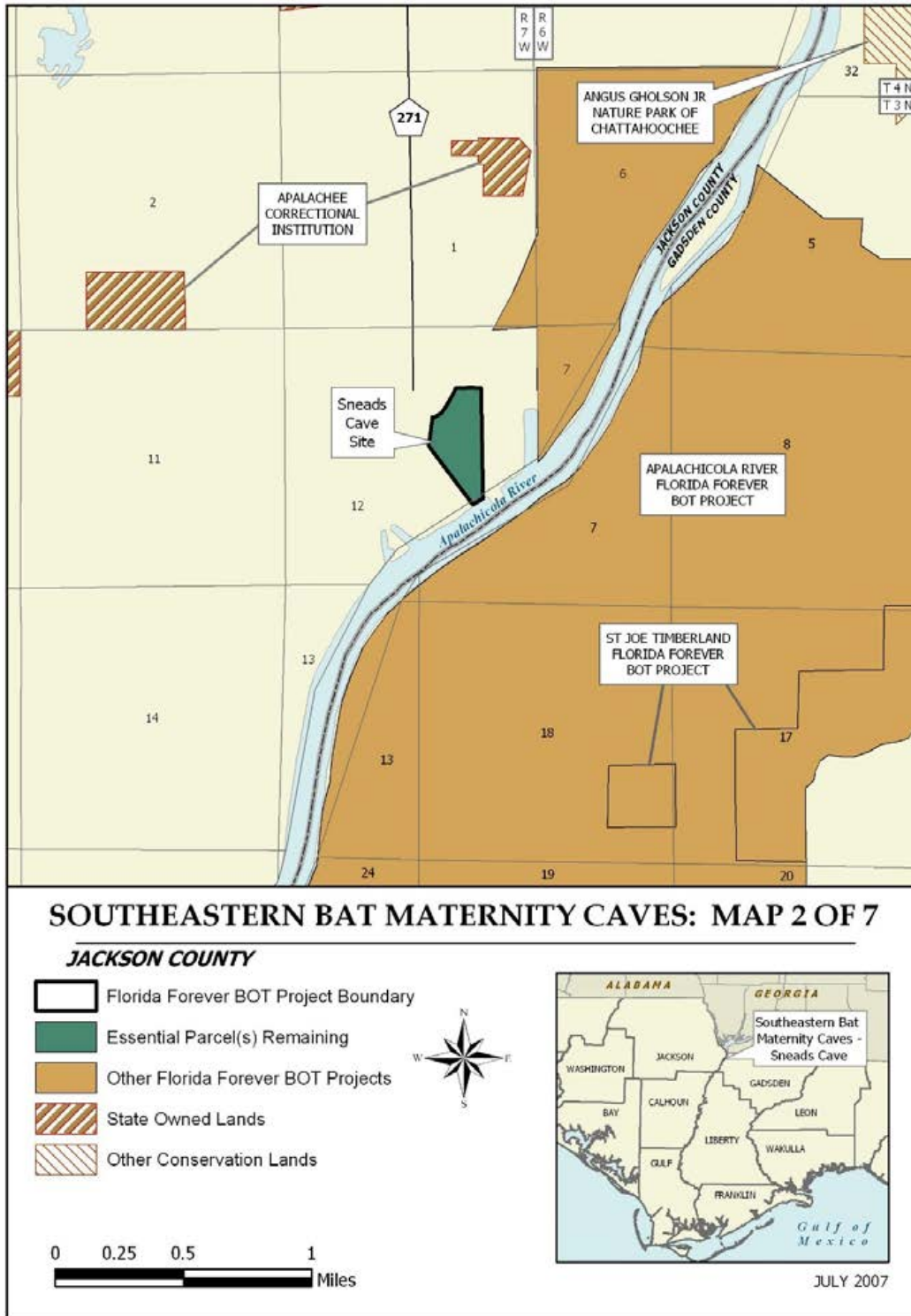


Map 209

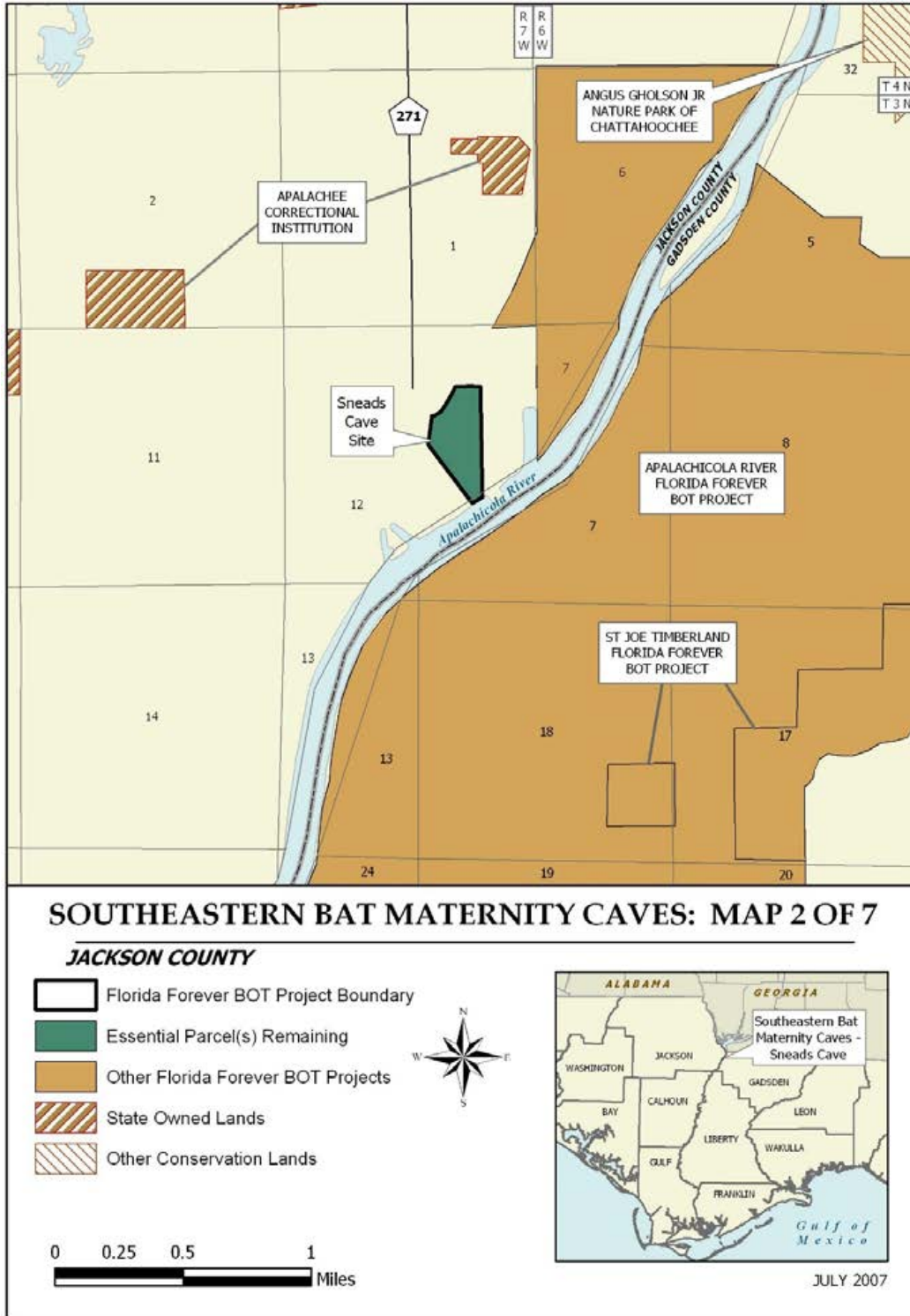


Map 210



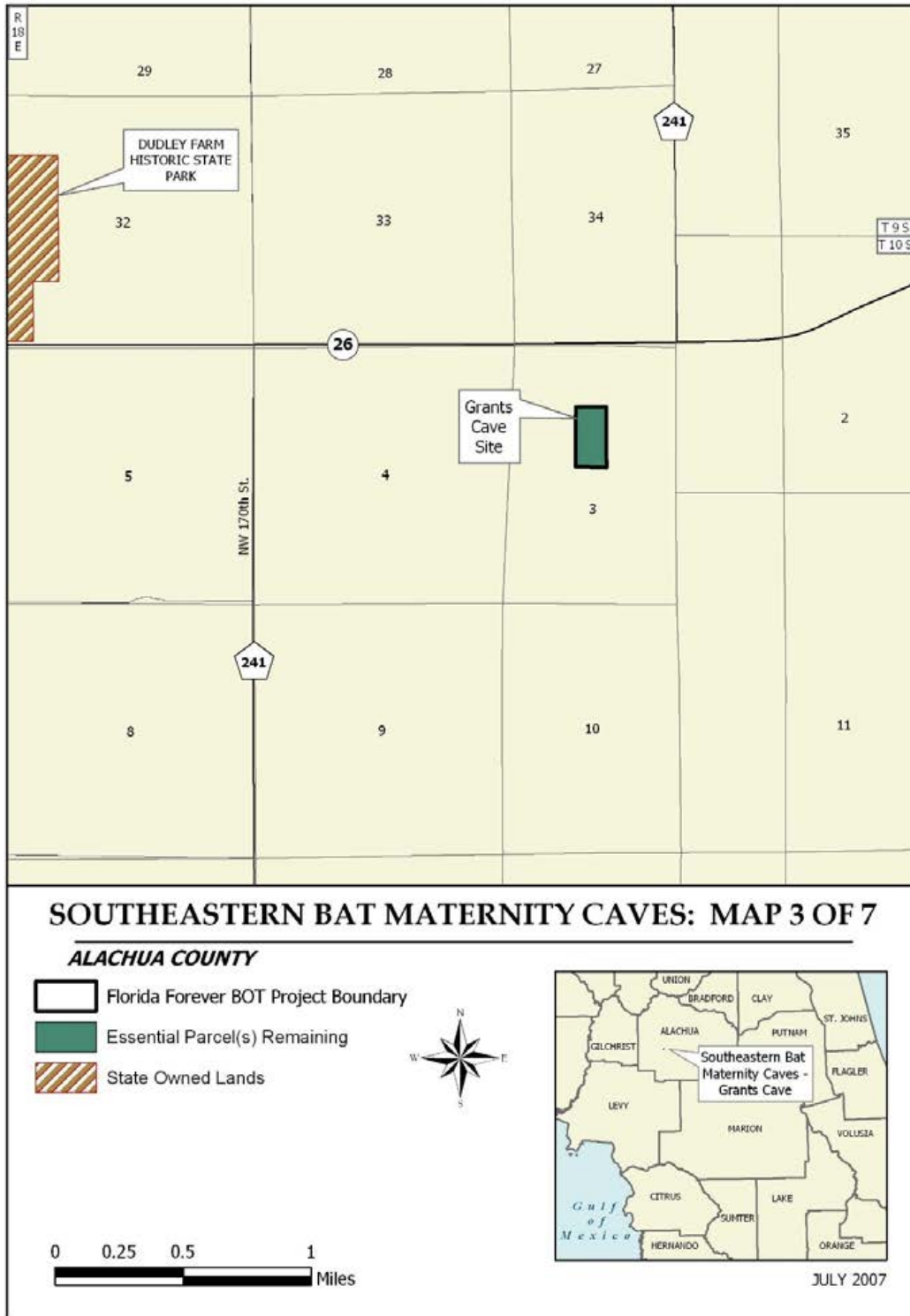


Map 211

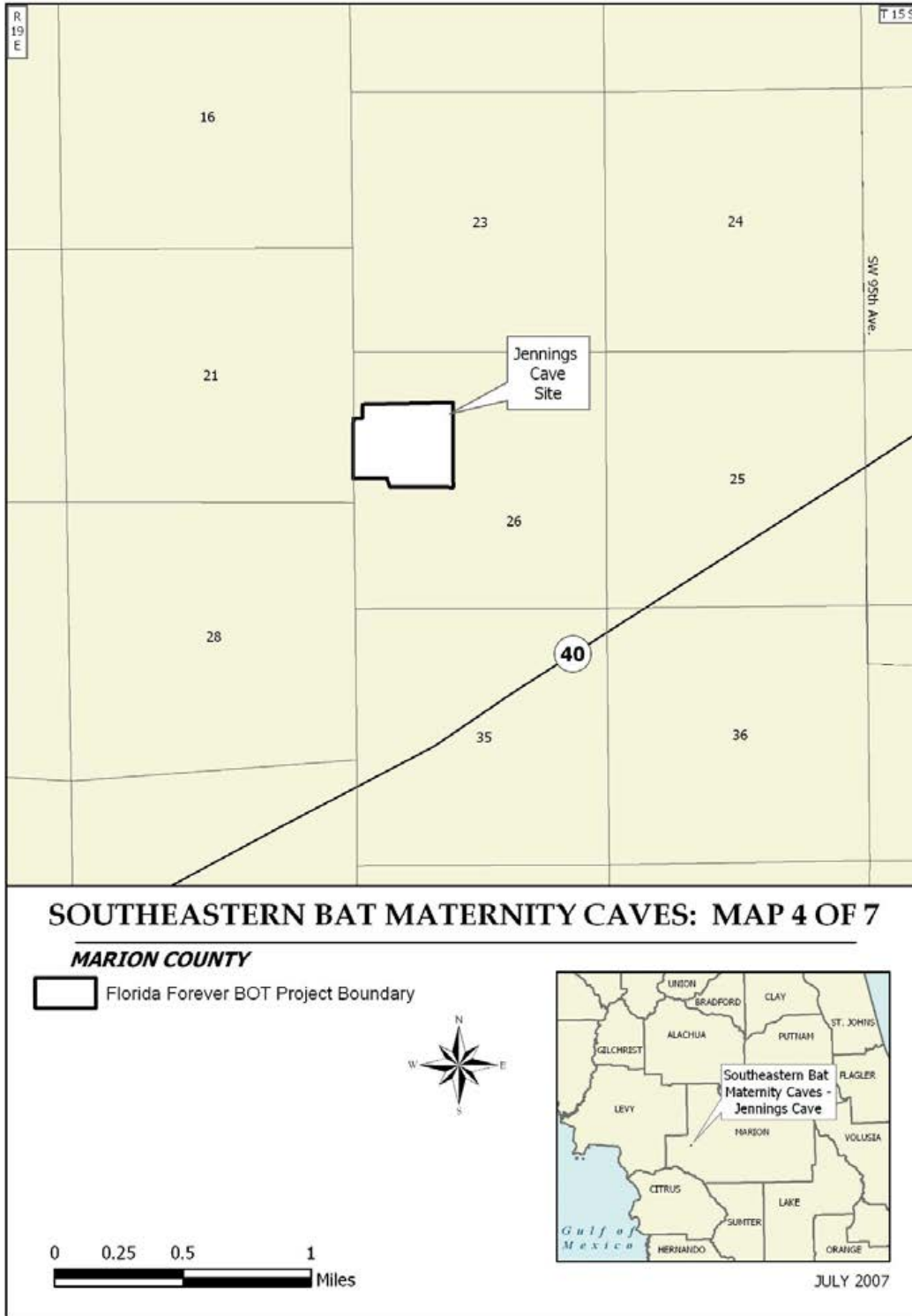


Map 212

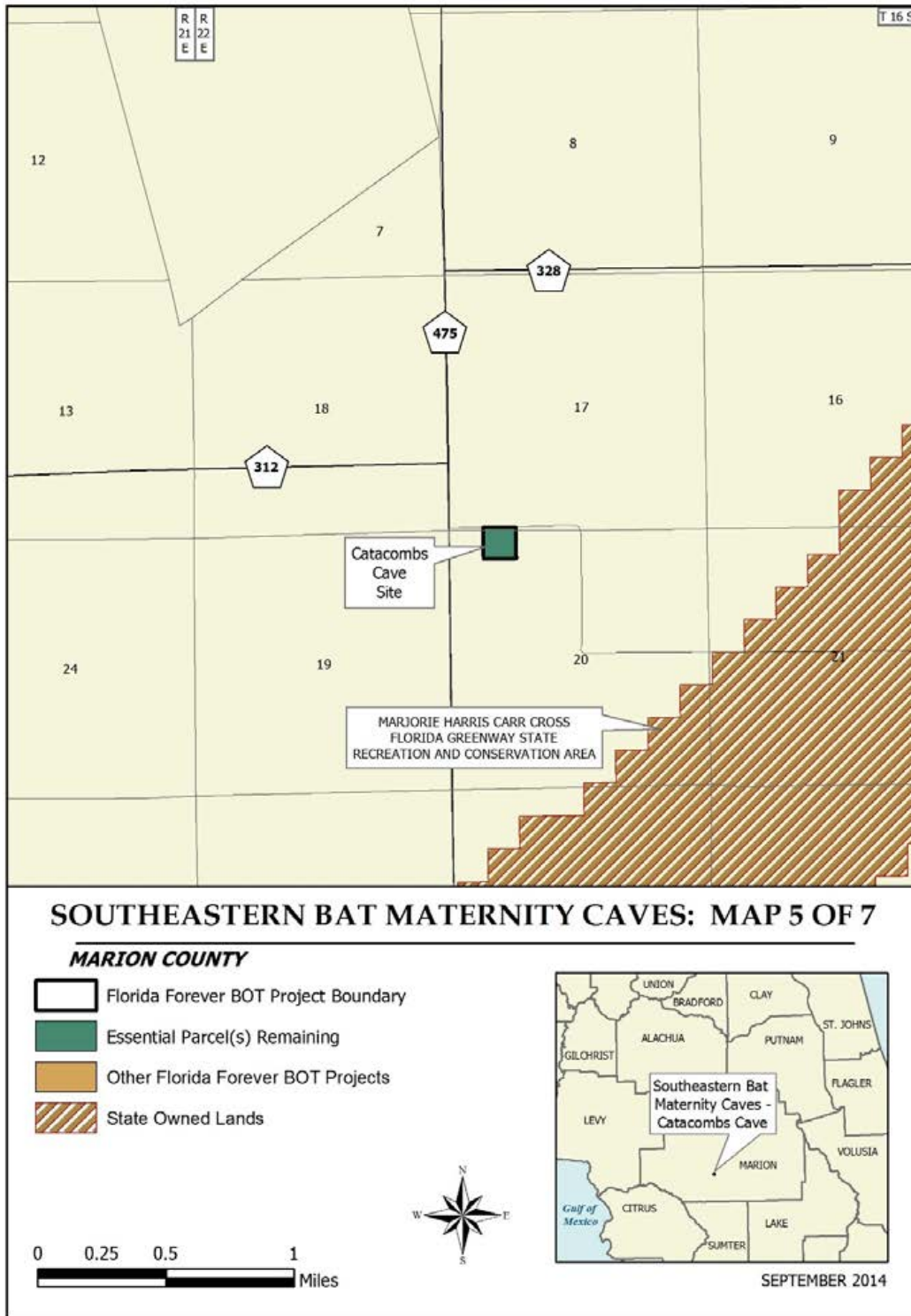




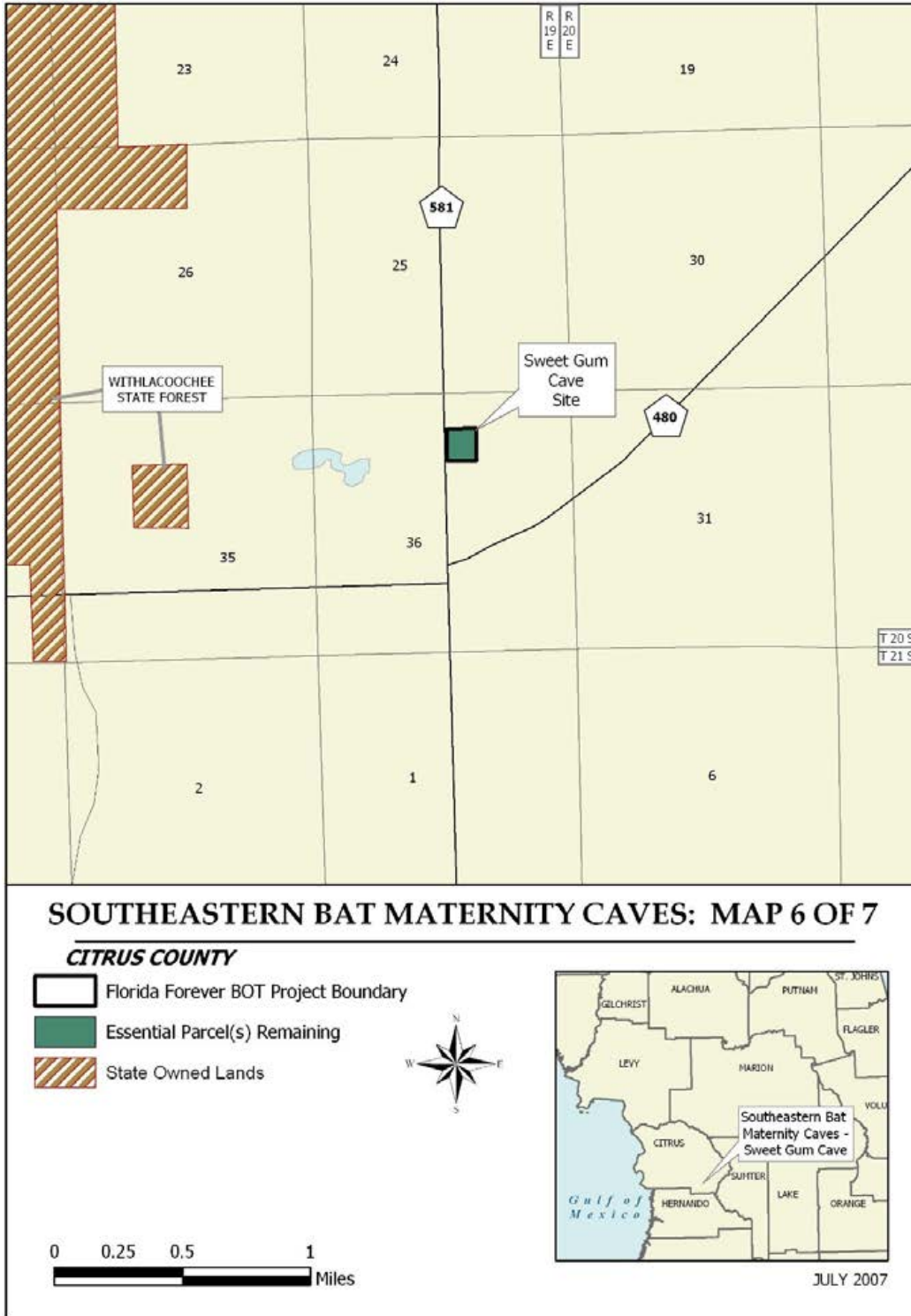
Map 213



Map 214



Map 215



Map 216

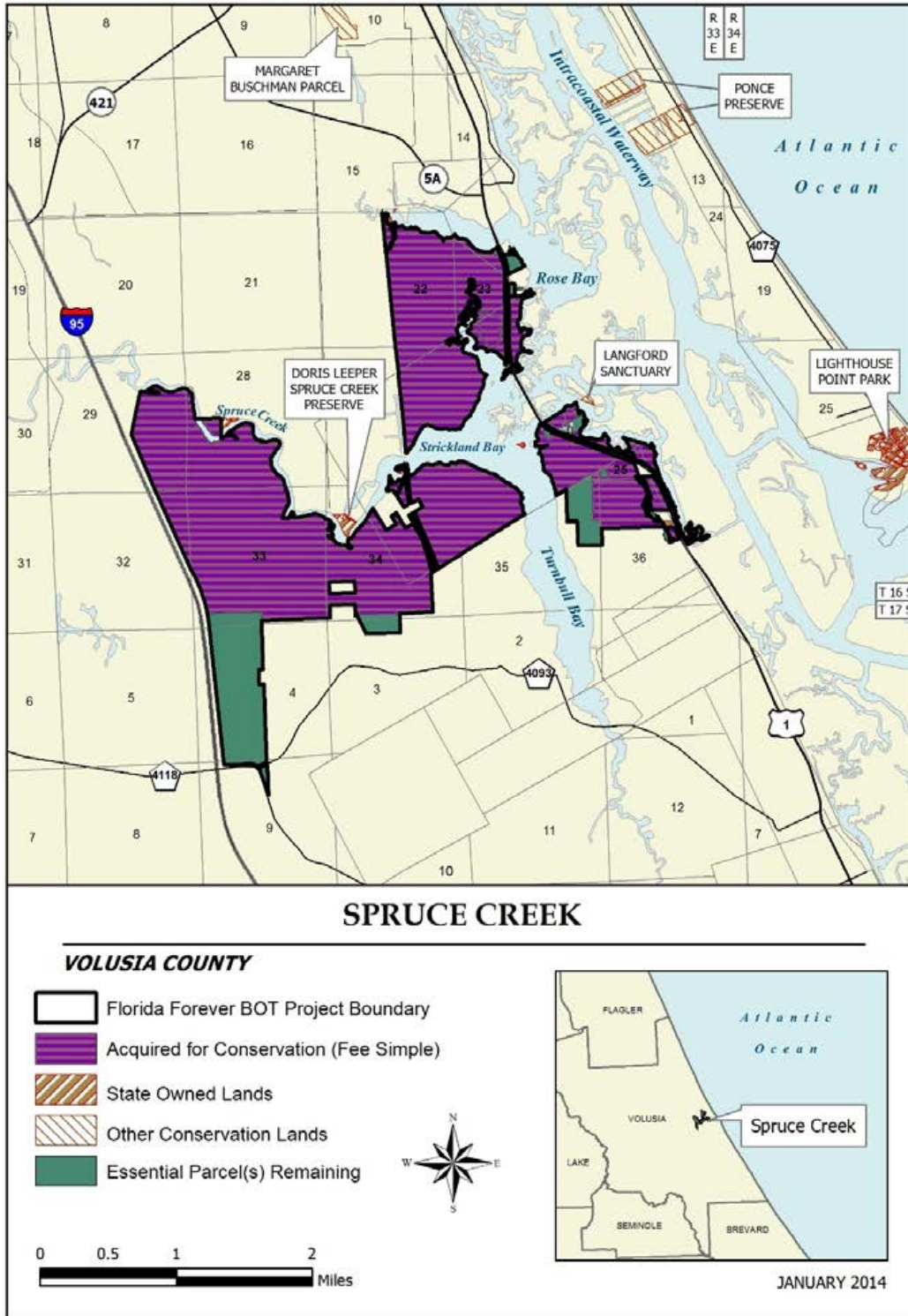






### Map(s): Spruce Creek

#### Spruce Creek

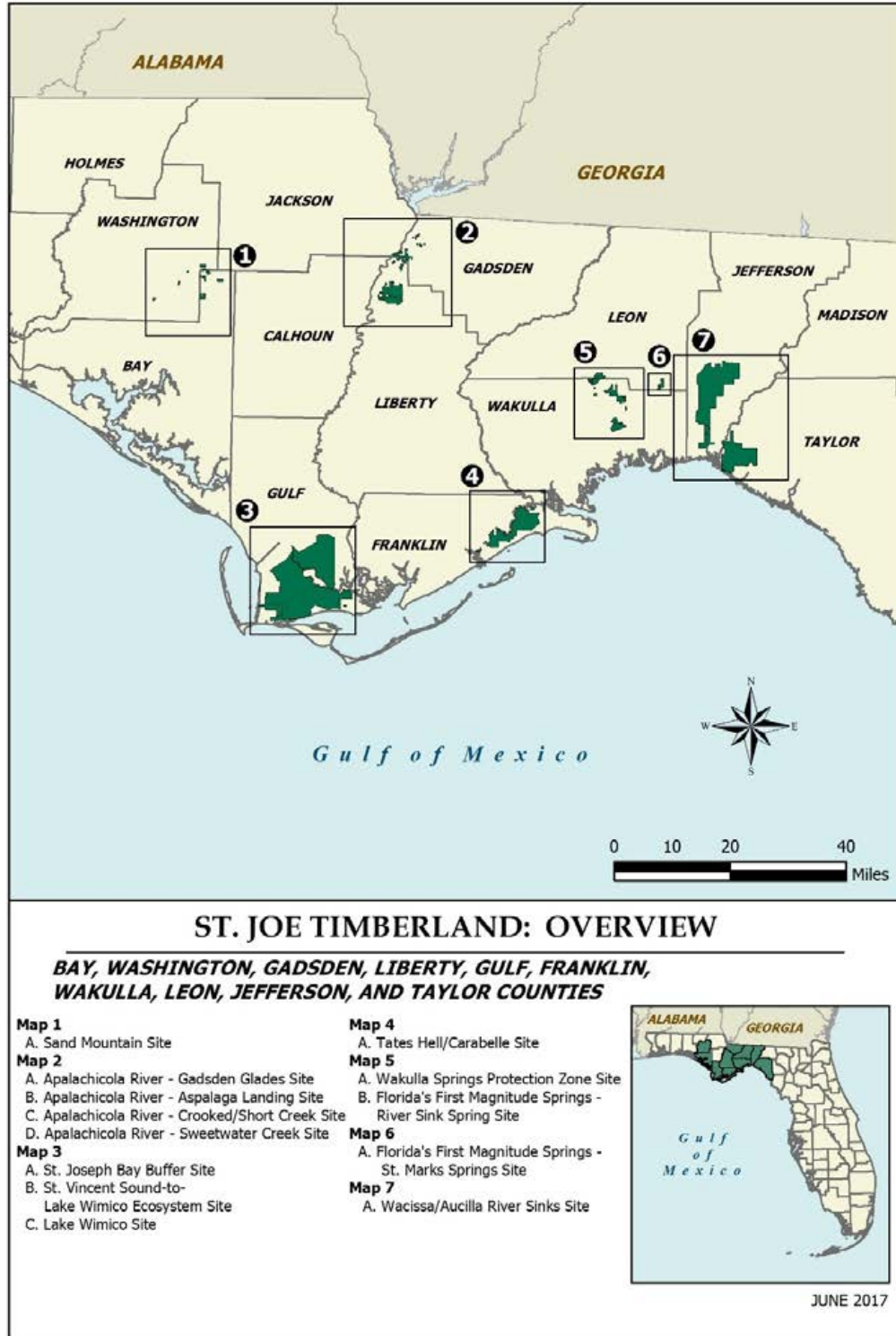


Map 218



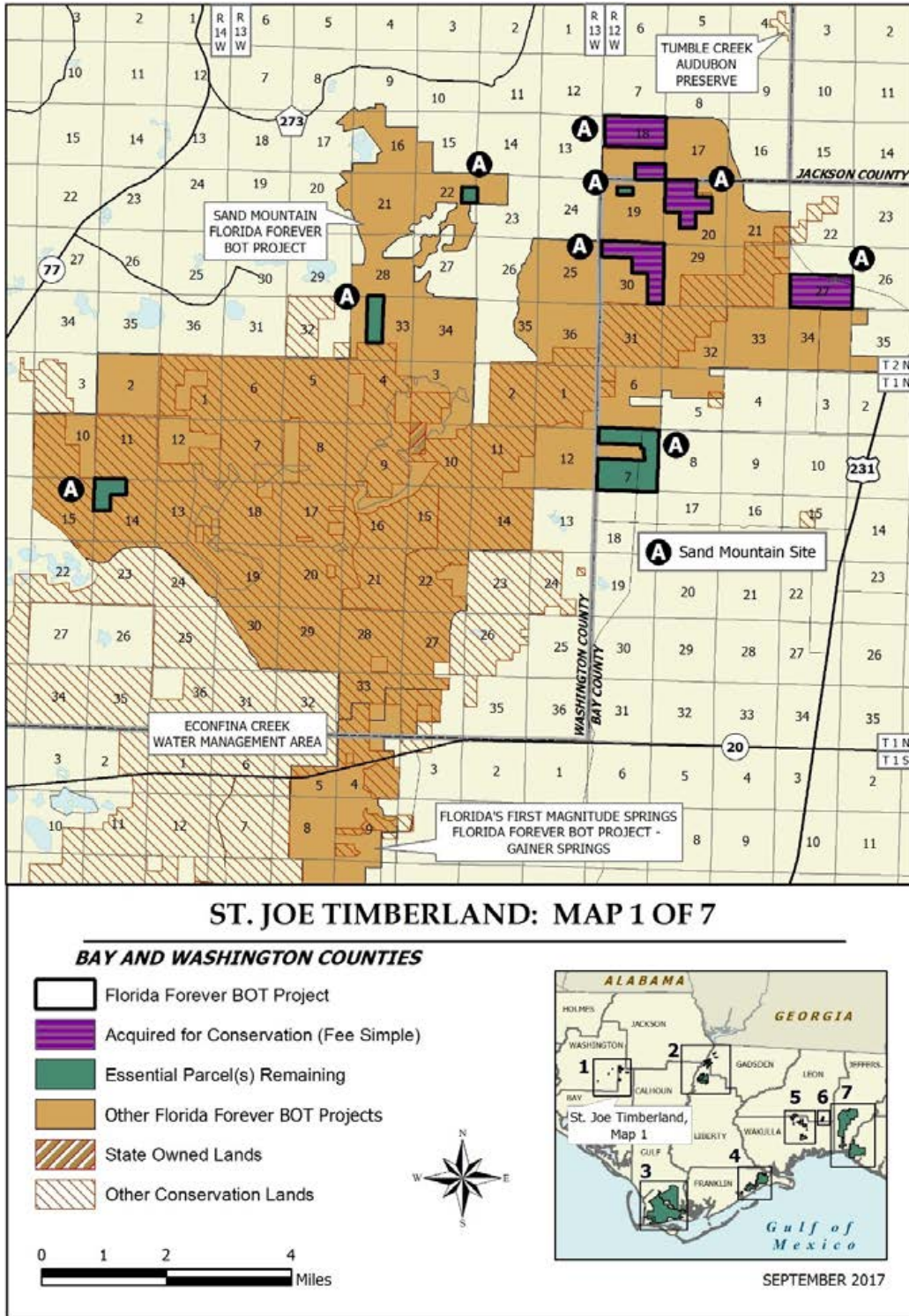
### Map(s): St. Joe Timberland

#### St. Joe Timberland

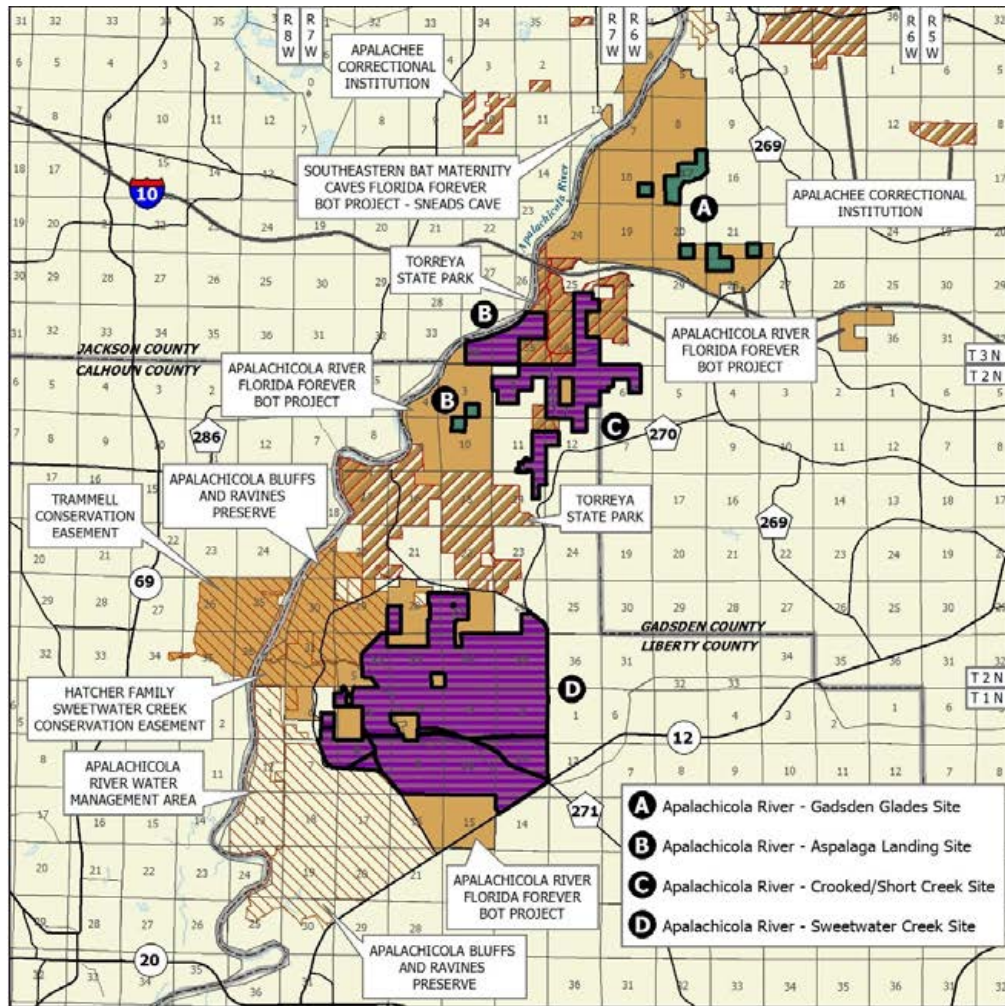


Map 219





Map 220



### ST. JOE TIMBERLAND: MAP 2 OF 7

#### GADSDEN AND LIBERTY COUNTIES

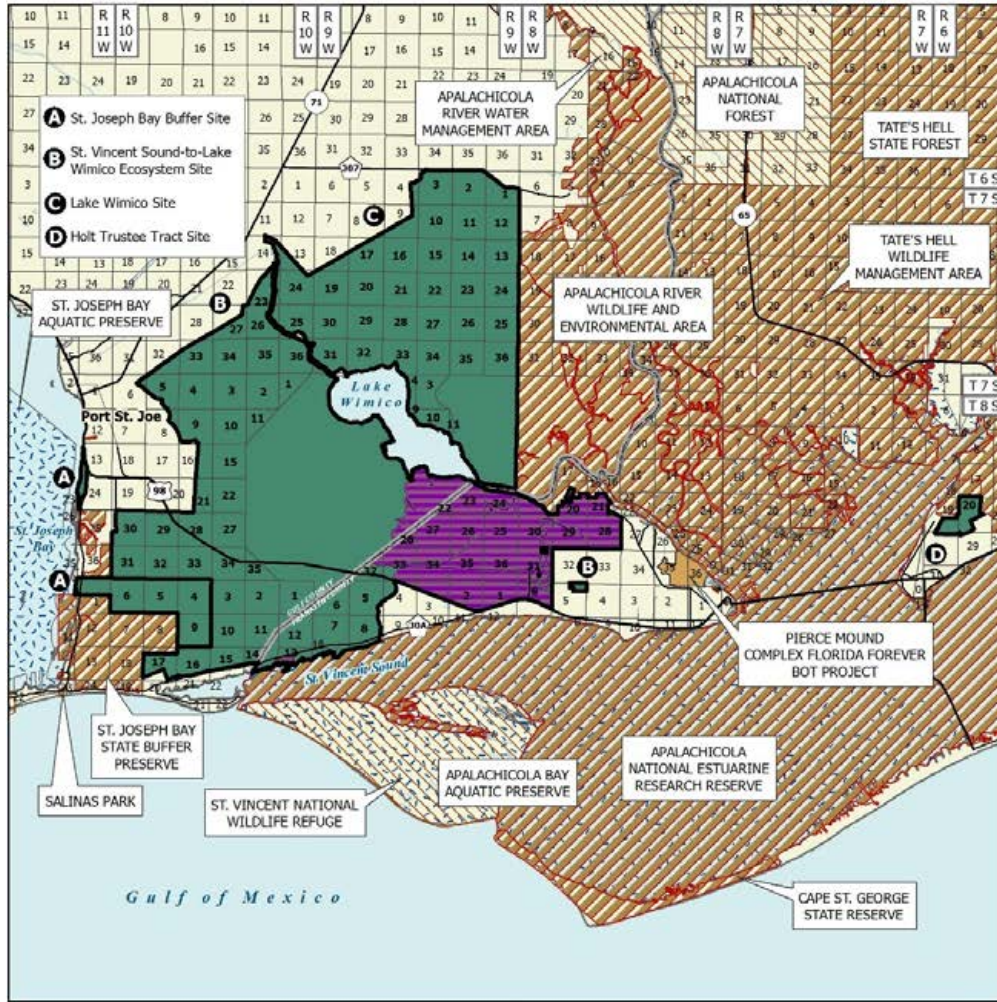
- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



SEPTEMBER 2017

Map 221





### ST. JOE TIMBERLAND: MAP 3 OF 7

#### GULF AND FRANKLIN COUNTIES

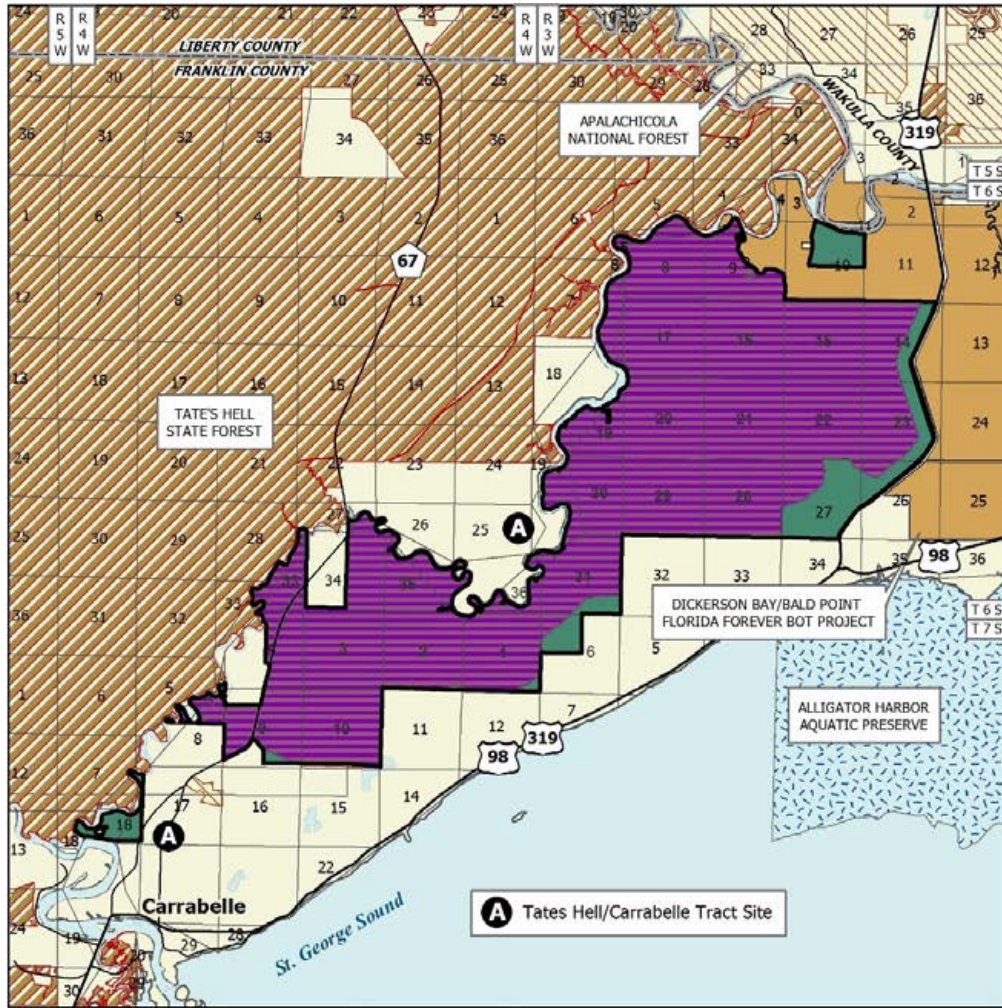
- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands
- State Aquatic Preserves



APRIL 2019

Map 222





### ST. JOE TIMBERLAND: MAP 4 OF 7

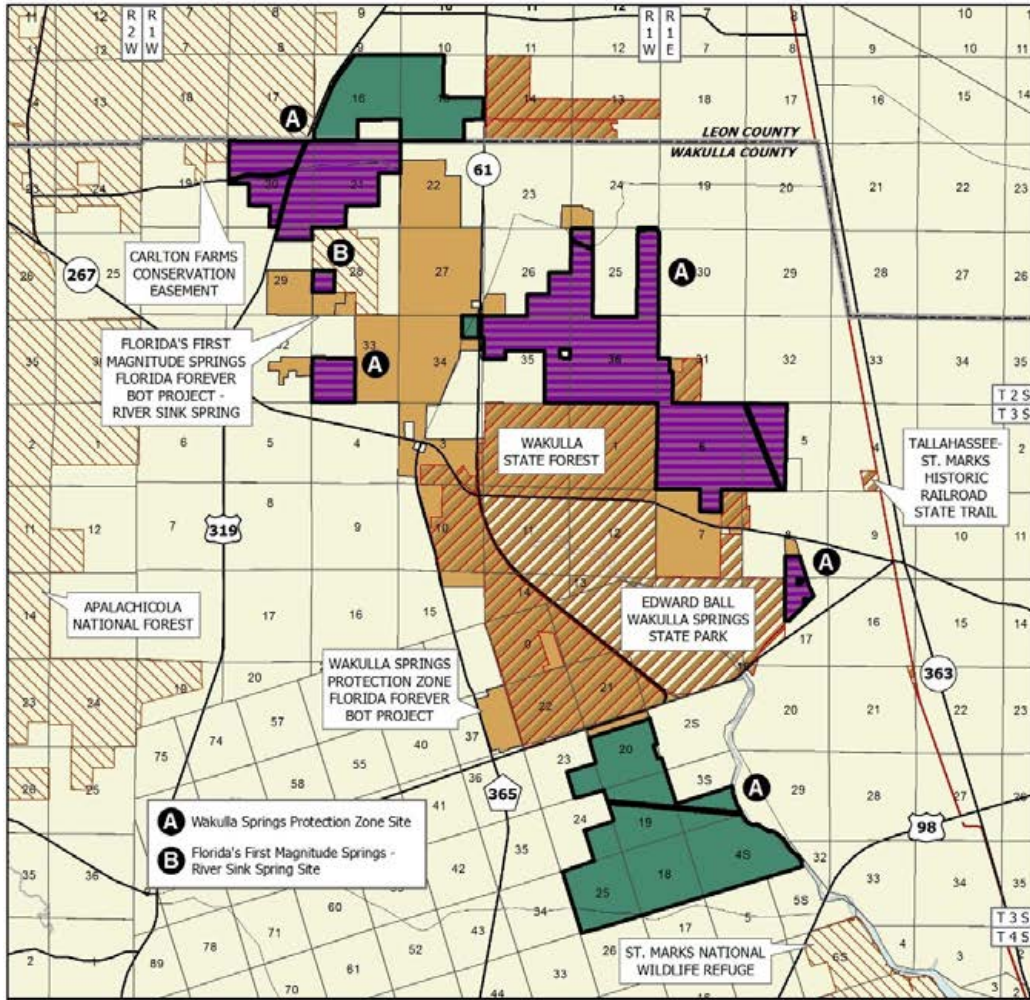
#### FRANKLIN COUNTY

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands
- State Aquatic Preserves



SEPTEMBER 2017

Map 223



### ST. JOE TIMBERLAND: MAP 5 OF 7

#### WAKULLA COUNTY

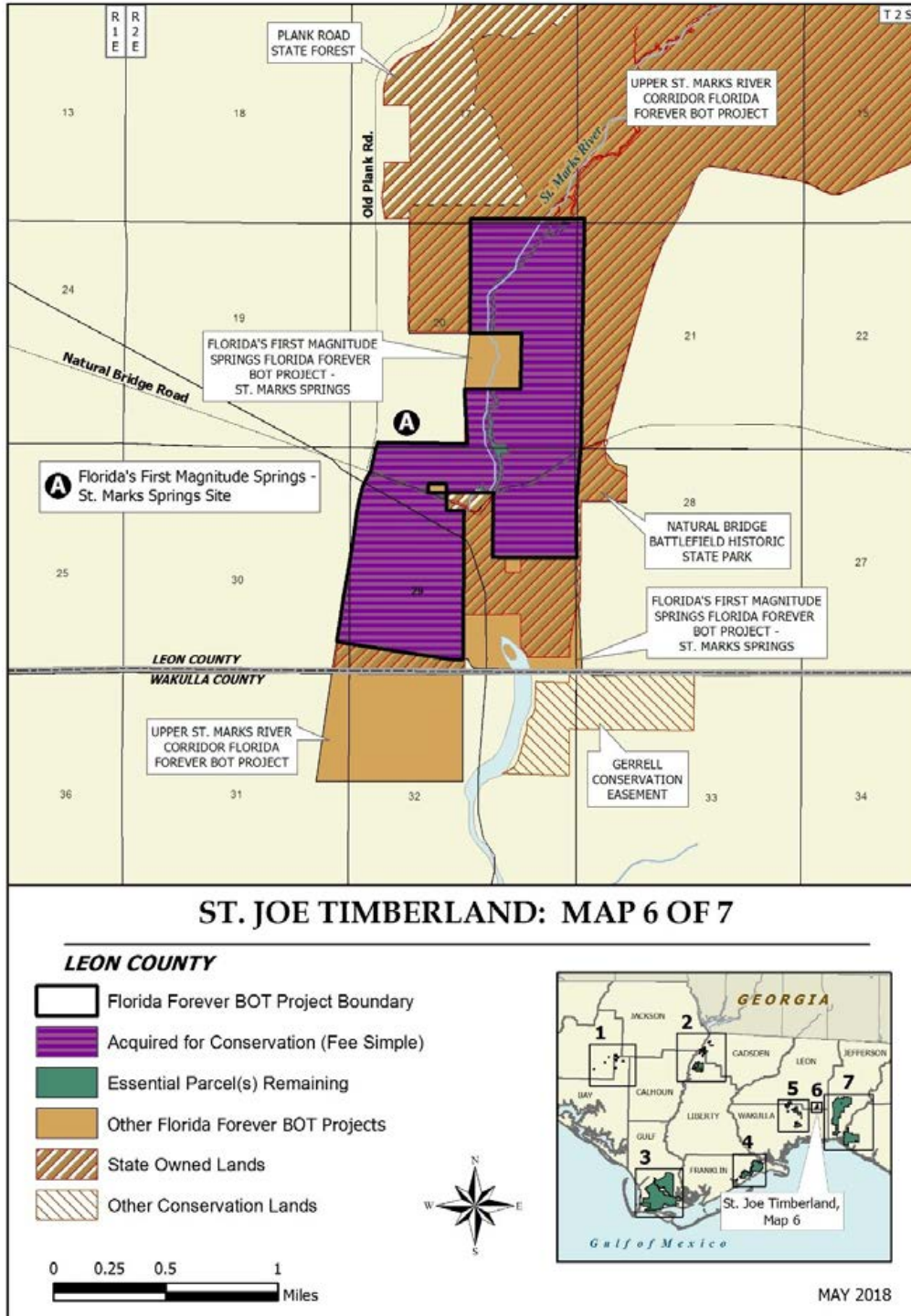
- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundaries
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



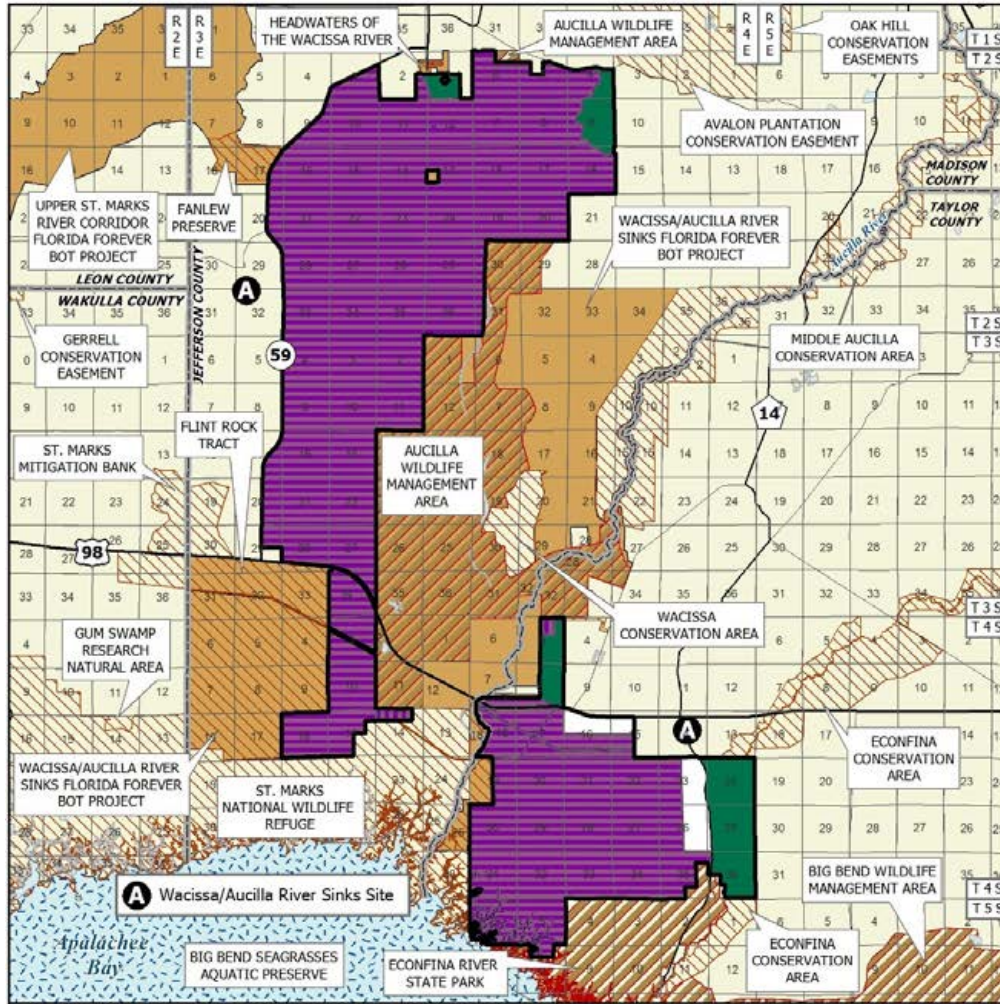
JUNE 2017

Map 224





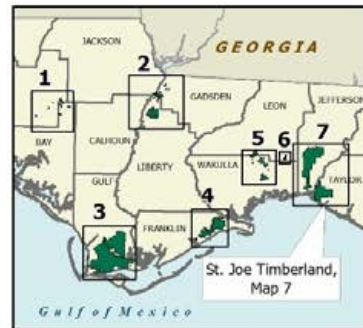
Map 225



### ST. JOE TIMBERLAND: MAP 7 OF 7

#### JEFFERSON AND TAYLOR COUNTIES

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Acquired for Conservation (Less-Than-Fee)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands
- State Aquatic Preserves



JANUARY 2018

Map 226





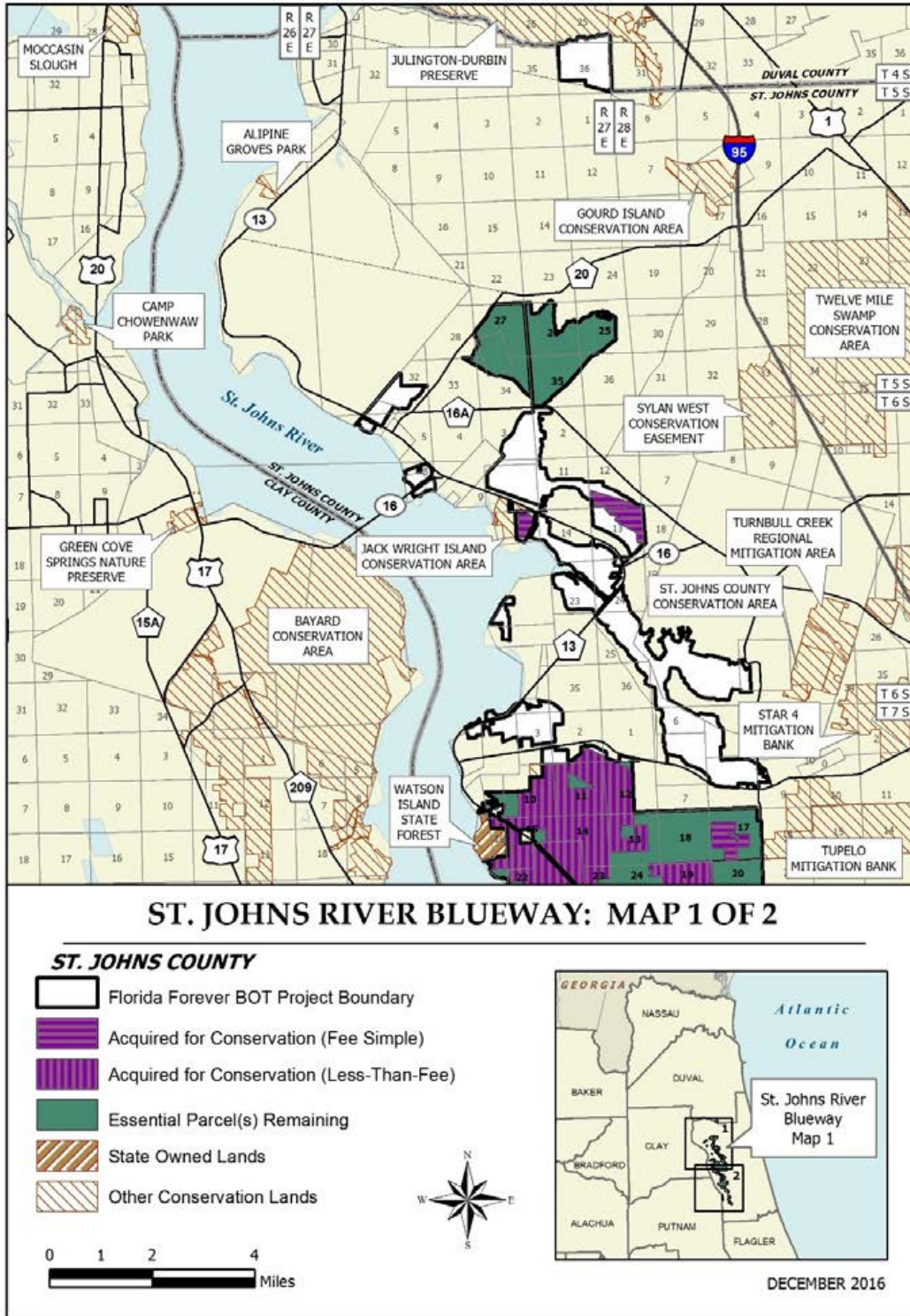
### Map(s): St. Johns River Blueway

#### [St. Johns River Blueway](#)

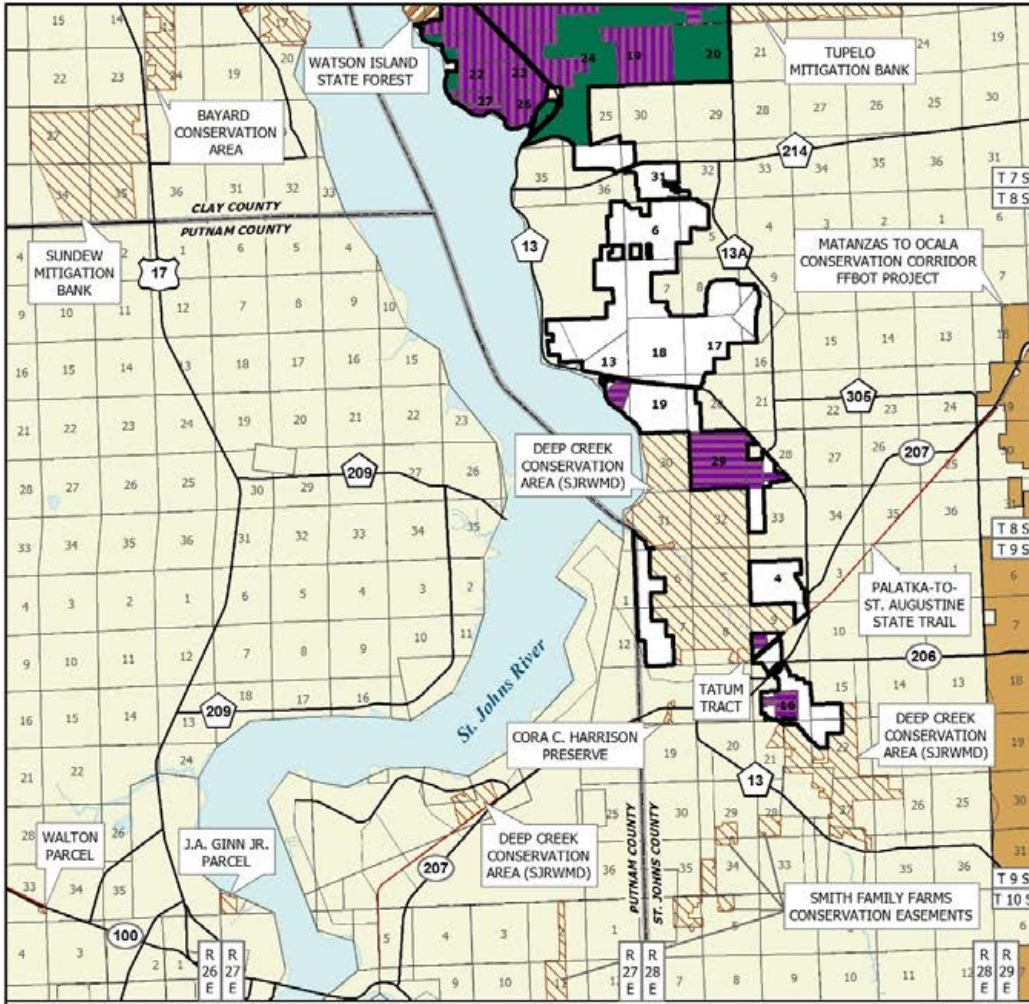


Map 227





Map 228



### ST. JOHNS RIVER BLUEWAY: MAP 2 OF 2

#### ST. JOHNS COUNTY

- Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
- Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
- Acquired for Conservation (Less-Than-Fee)
- Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
- Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
- State Owned Lands
- Other Conservation Lands



DECEMBER 2016

Map 229





### Map(s): Strategic Managed Areas Lands List

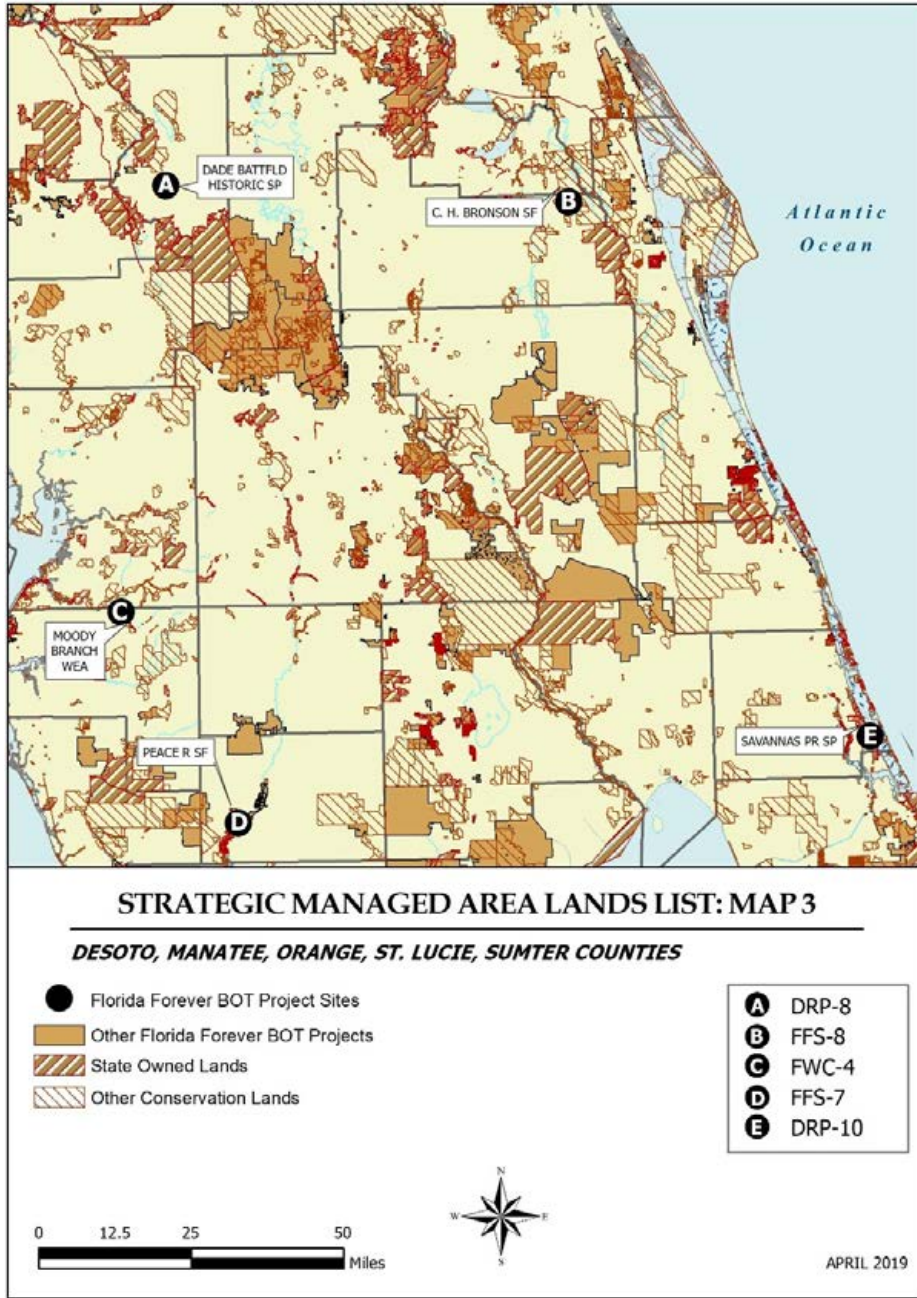
#### Strategic Managed Areas Lands List



Map 230

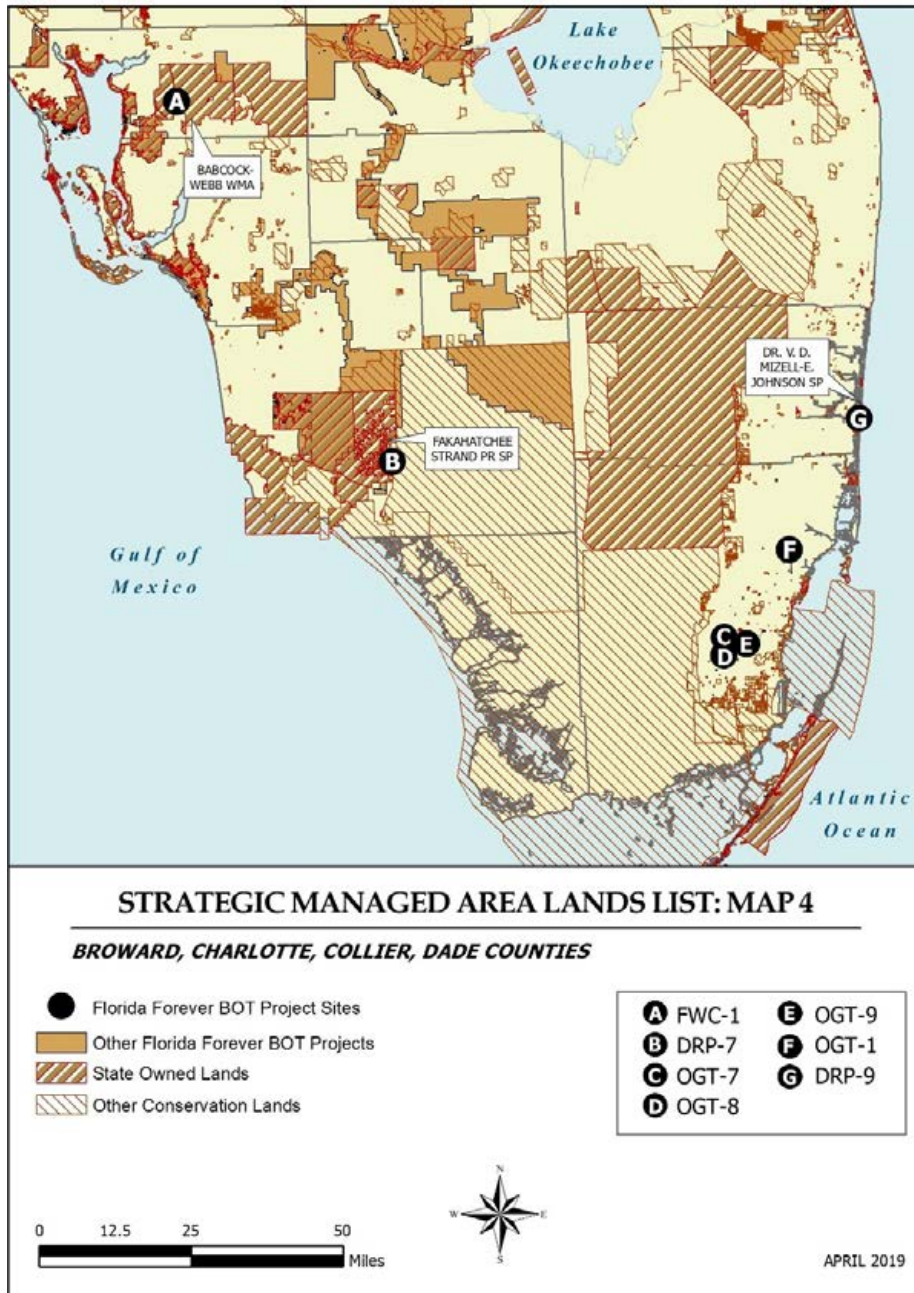


Map 231



Map 232



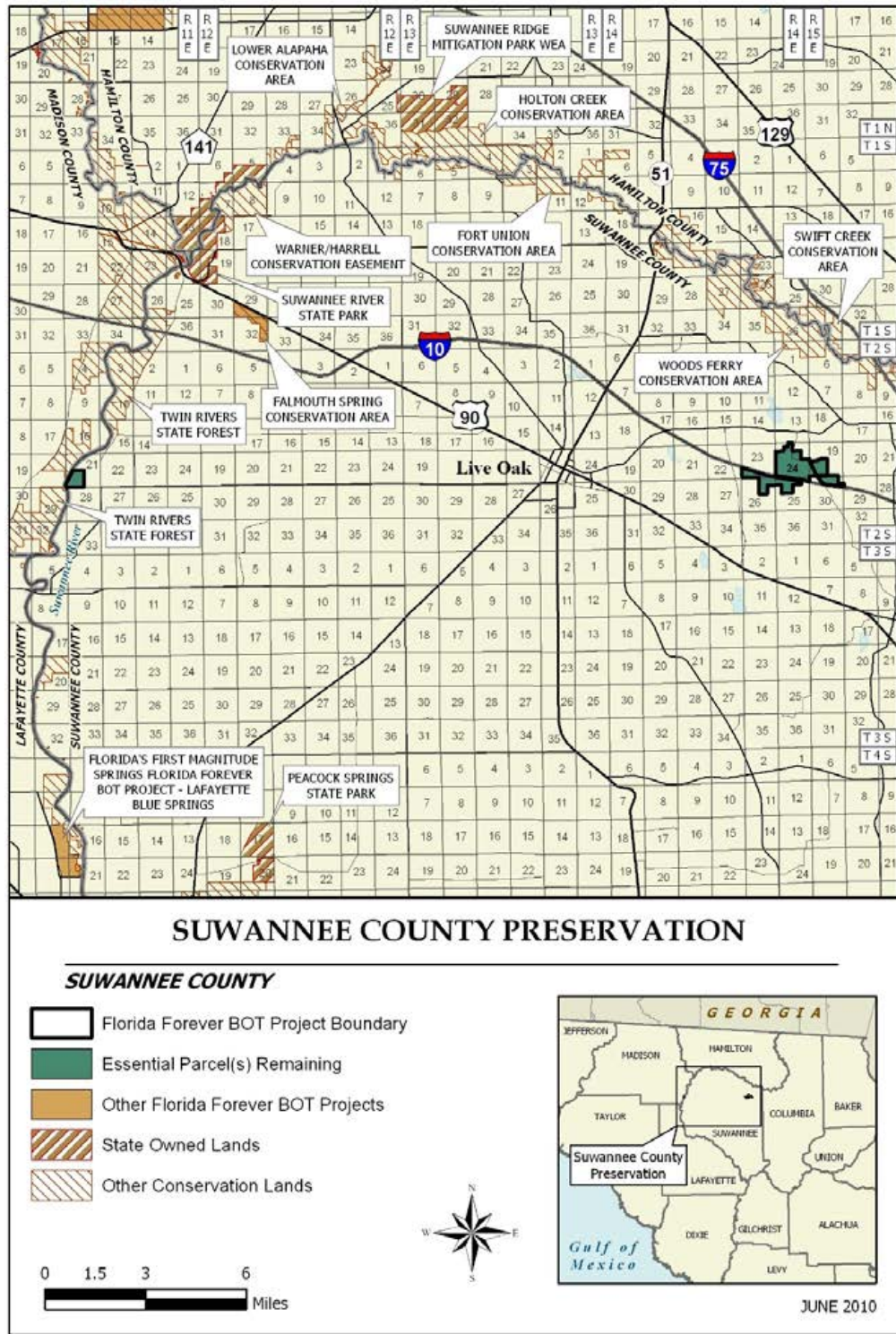


Map 233



### Map(s): Suwannee County Preservation

#### Suwannee County Preservation



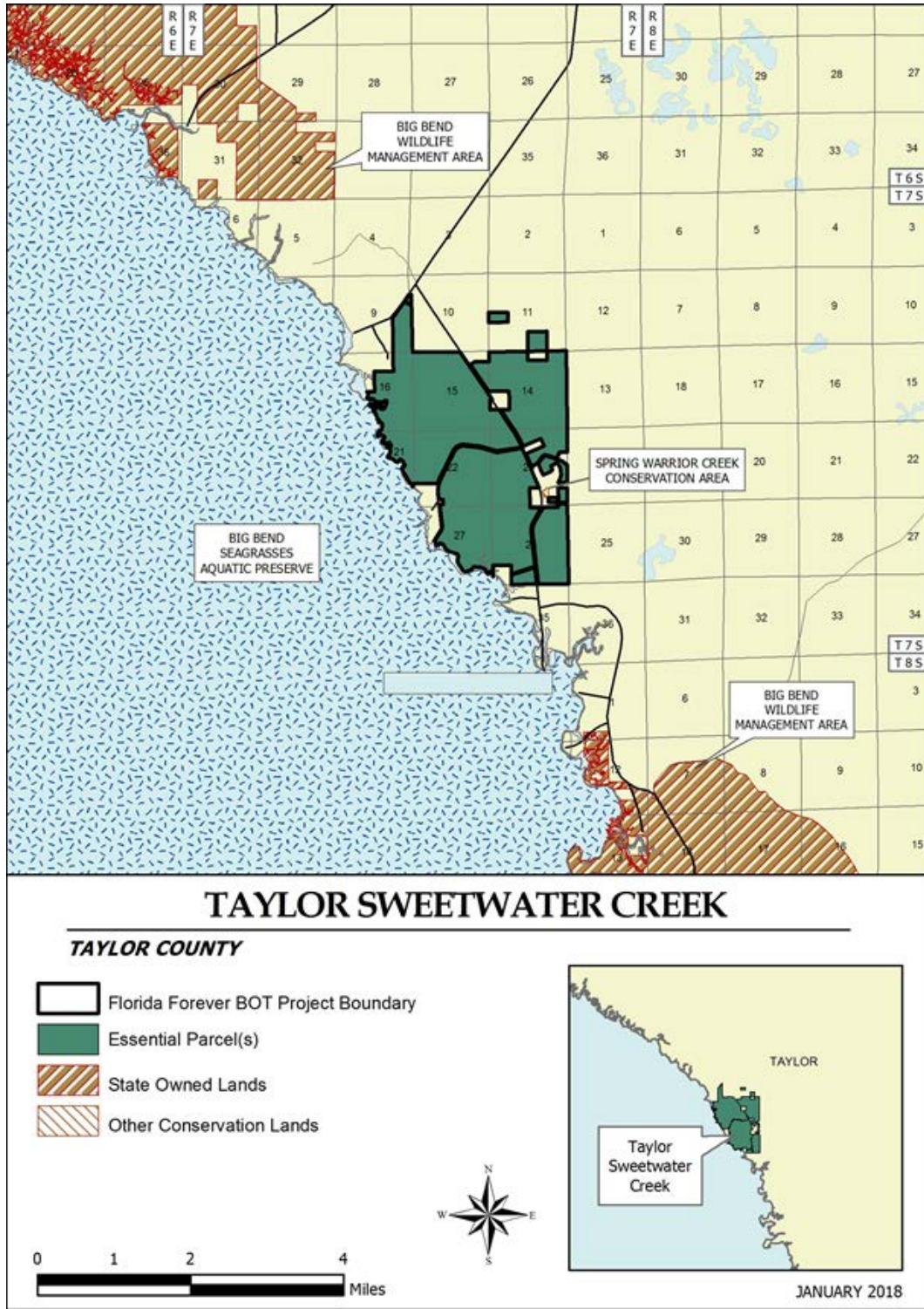
Map 234





### Map(s): Taylor Sweetwater Creek

#### Taylor Sweetwater Creek

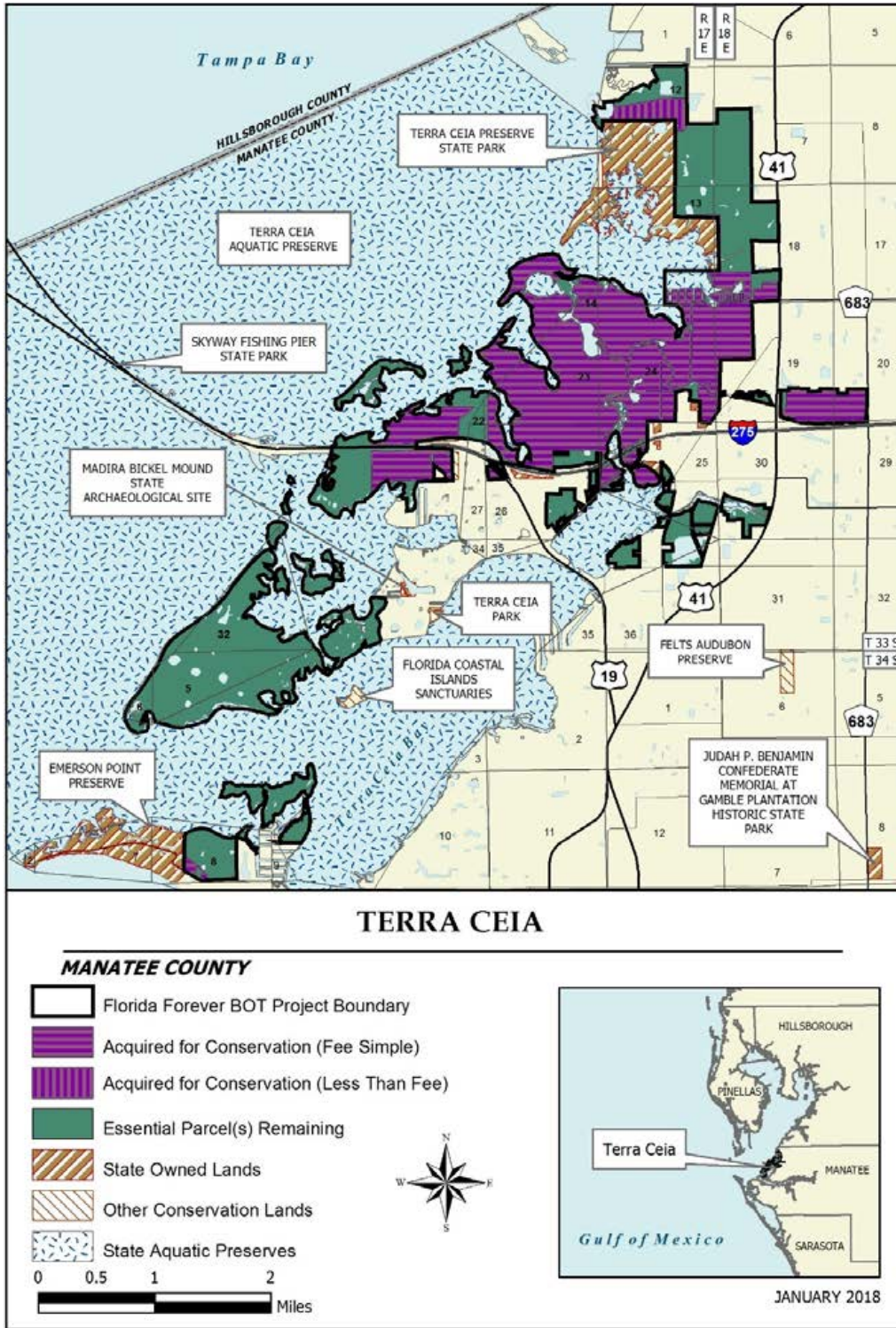


Map 235



# Map(s): Terra Ceia

## Terra Ceia



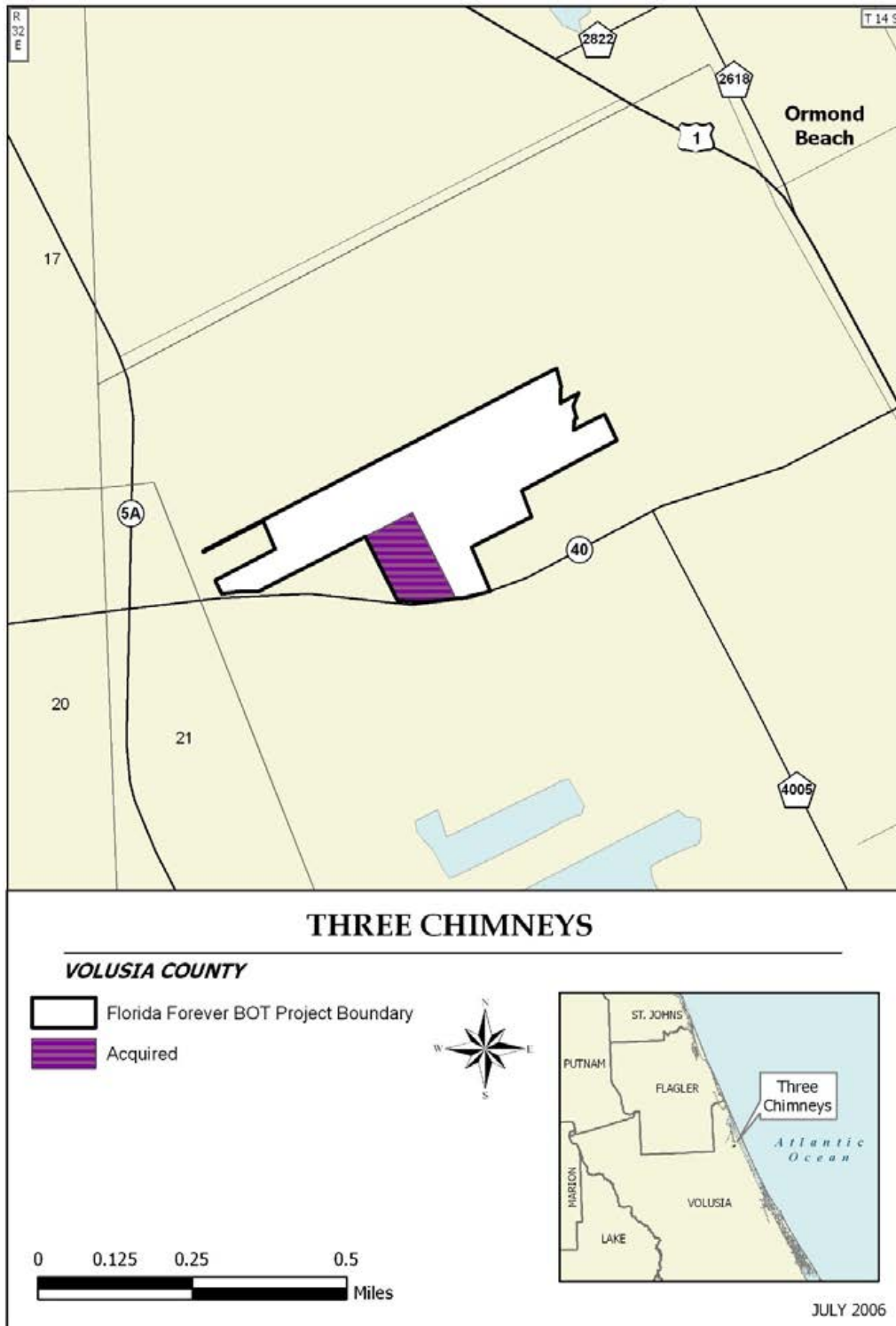
Map 236





### Map(s): Three Chimneys

#### Three Chimneys



Map 237





### Map(s): Tiger Island / Little Tiger Island

#### Tiger Island / Little Tiger Island

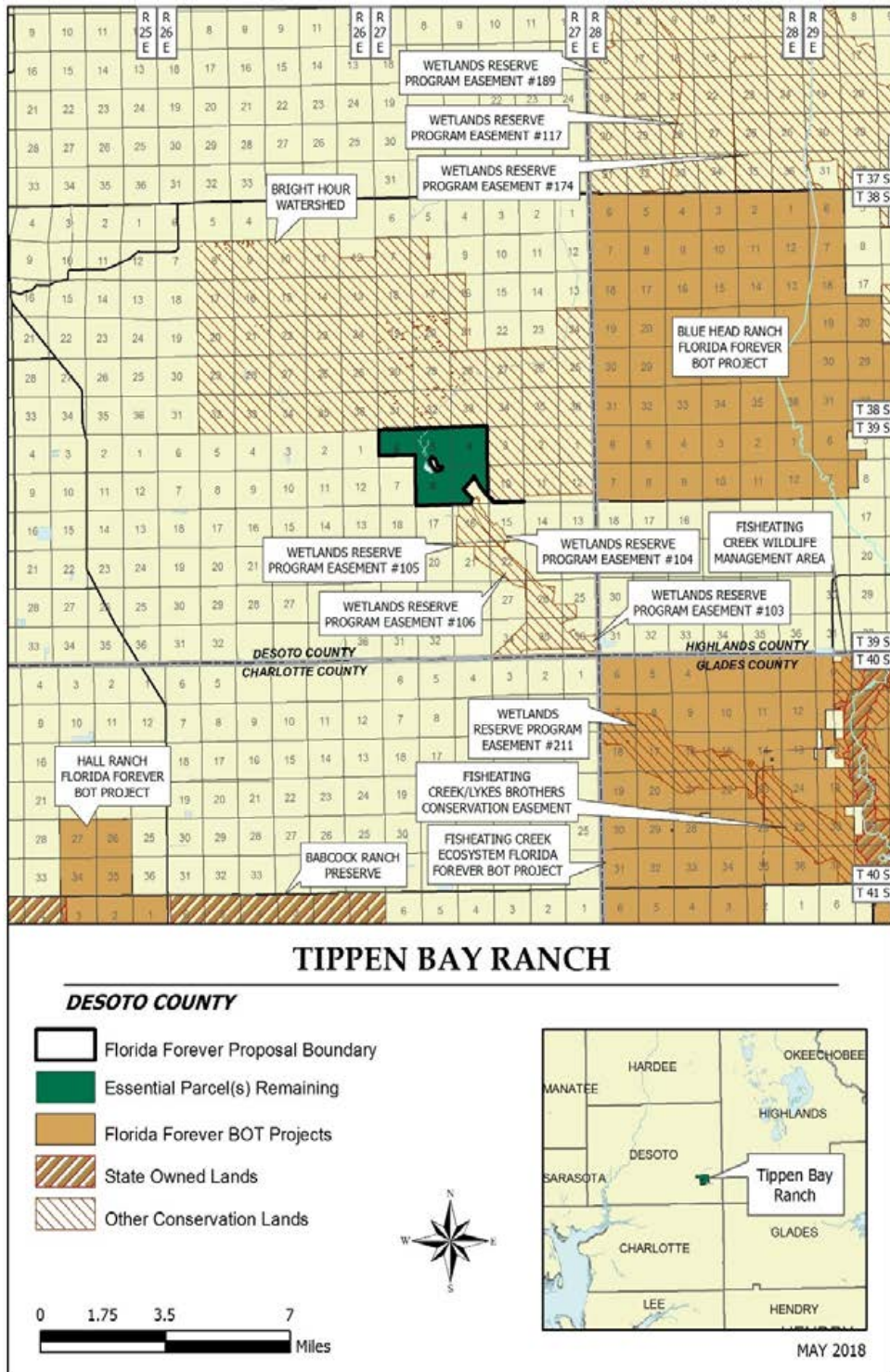


Map 238



### Map(s): Tippen Bay Ranch

#### Tippen Bay Ranch



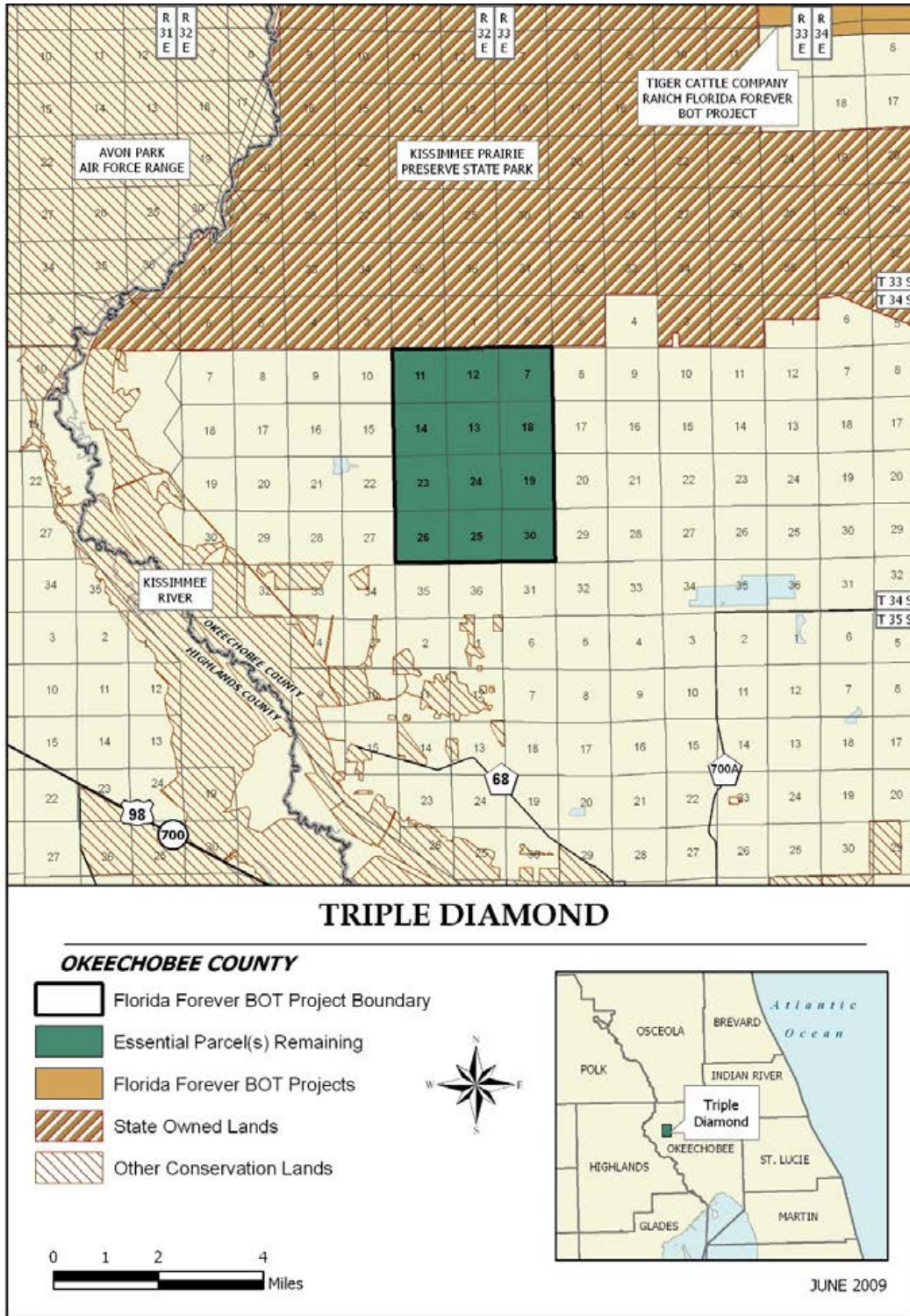
Map 239





### Map(s): Triple Diamond

#### Triple Diamond

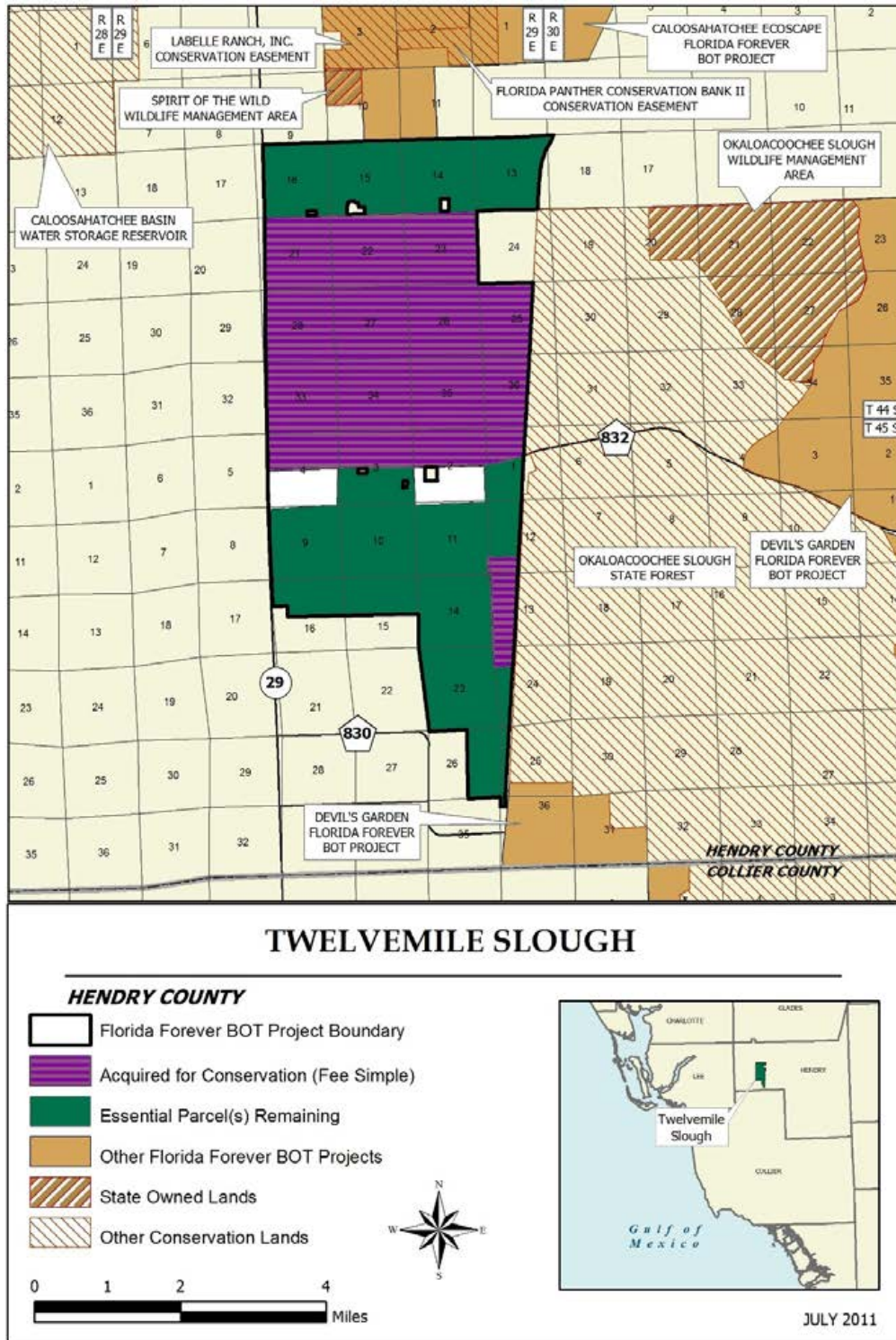


Map 240



### Map(s): Twelvemile Slough

#### Twelvemile Slough



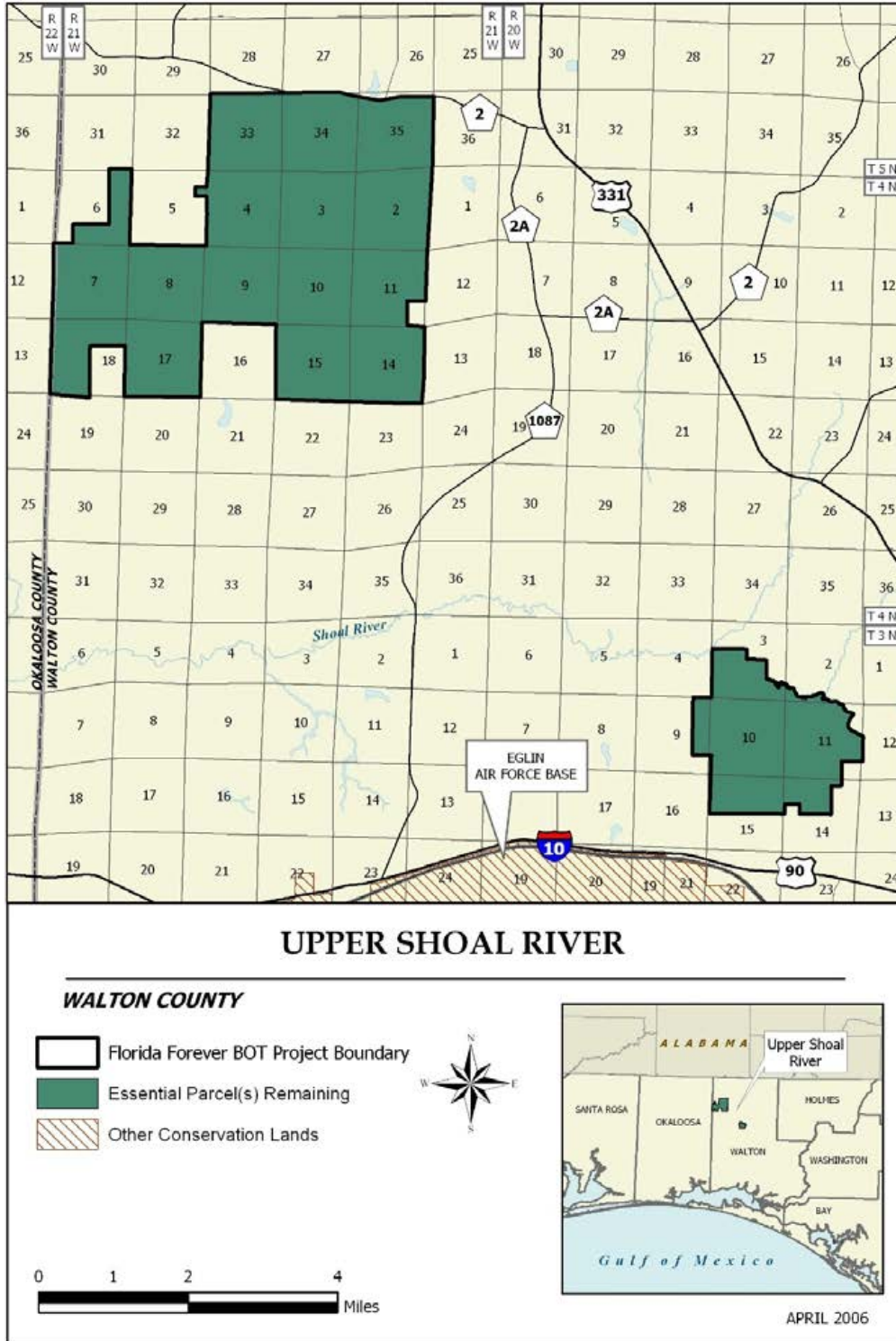
Map 241





### Map(s): Upper Shoal River

#### Upper Shoal River



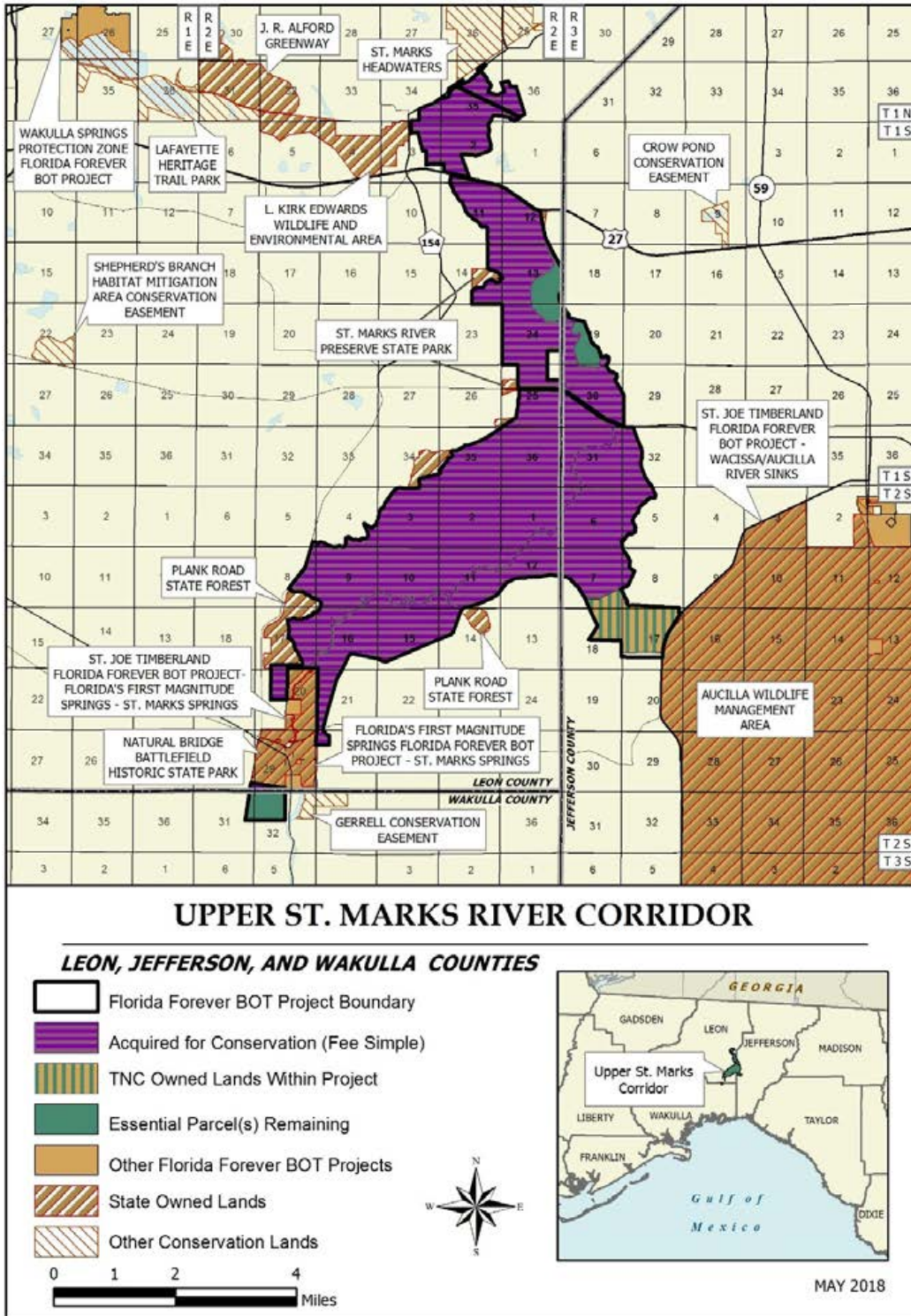
Map 242





### Map(s): Upper St. Marks River Corridor

#### Upper St. Marks River Corridor

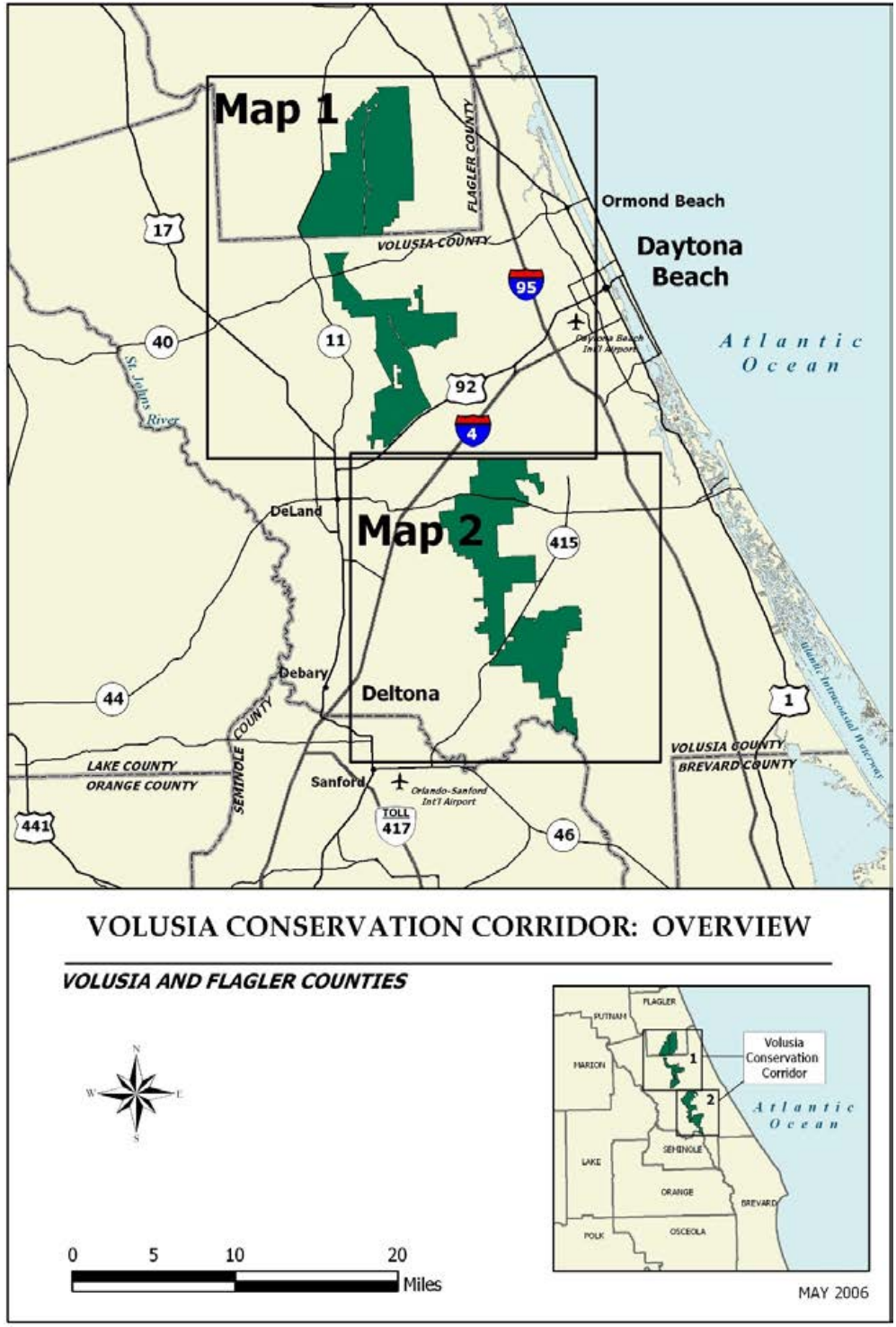


Map 243



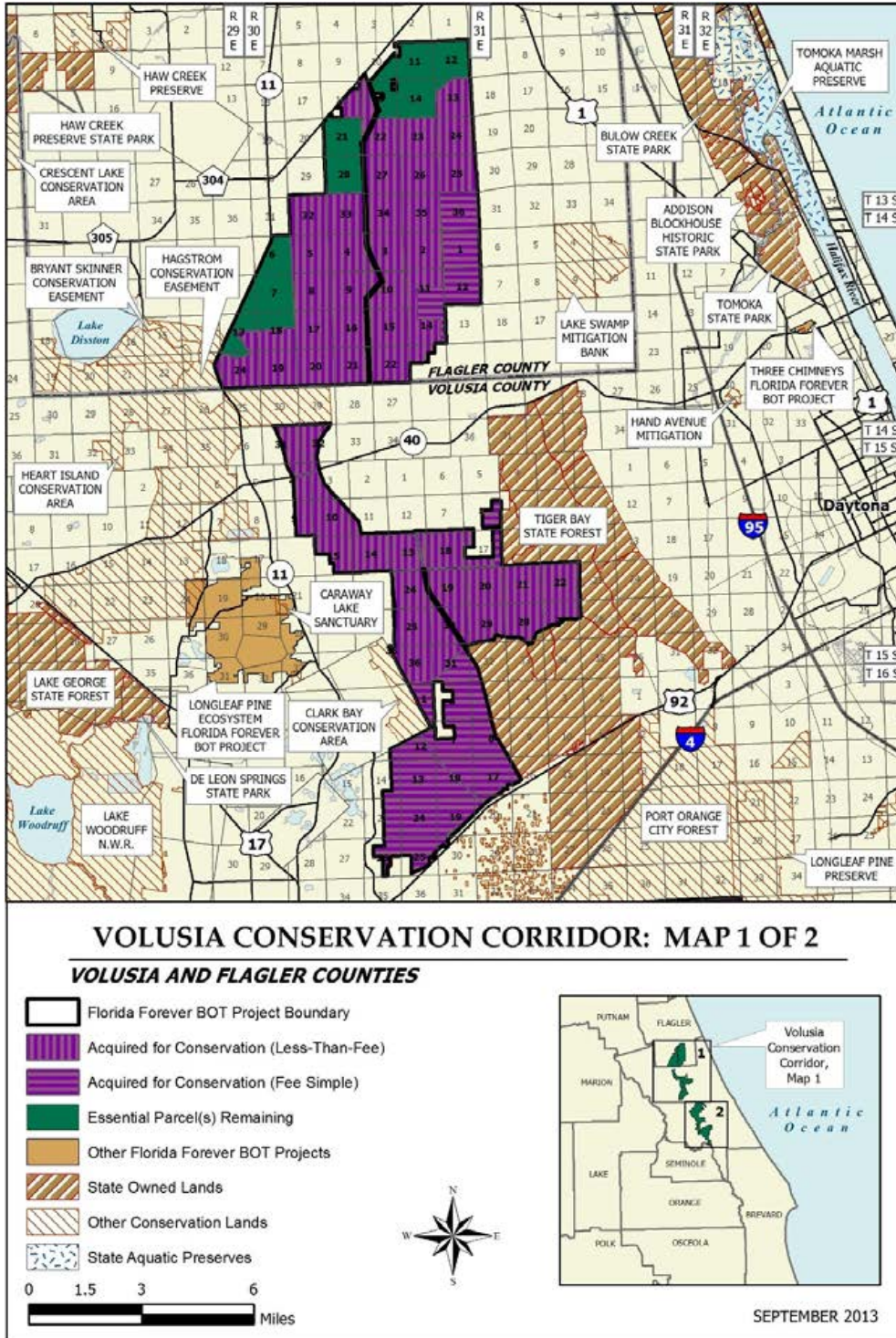
### Map(s): Volusia Conservation Corridor

#### Volusia Conservation Corridor

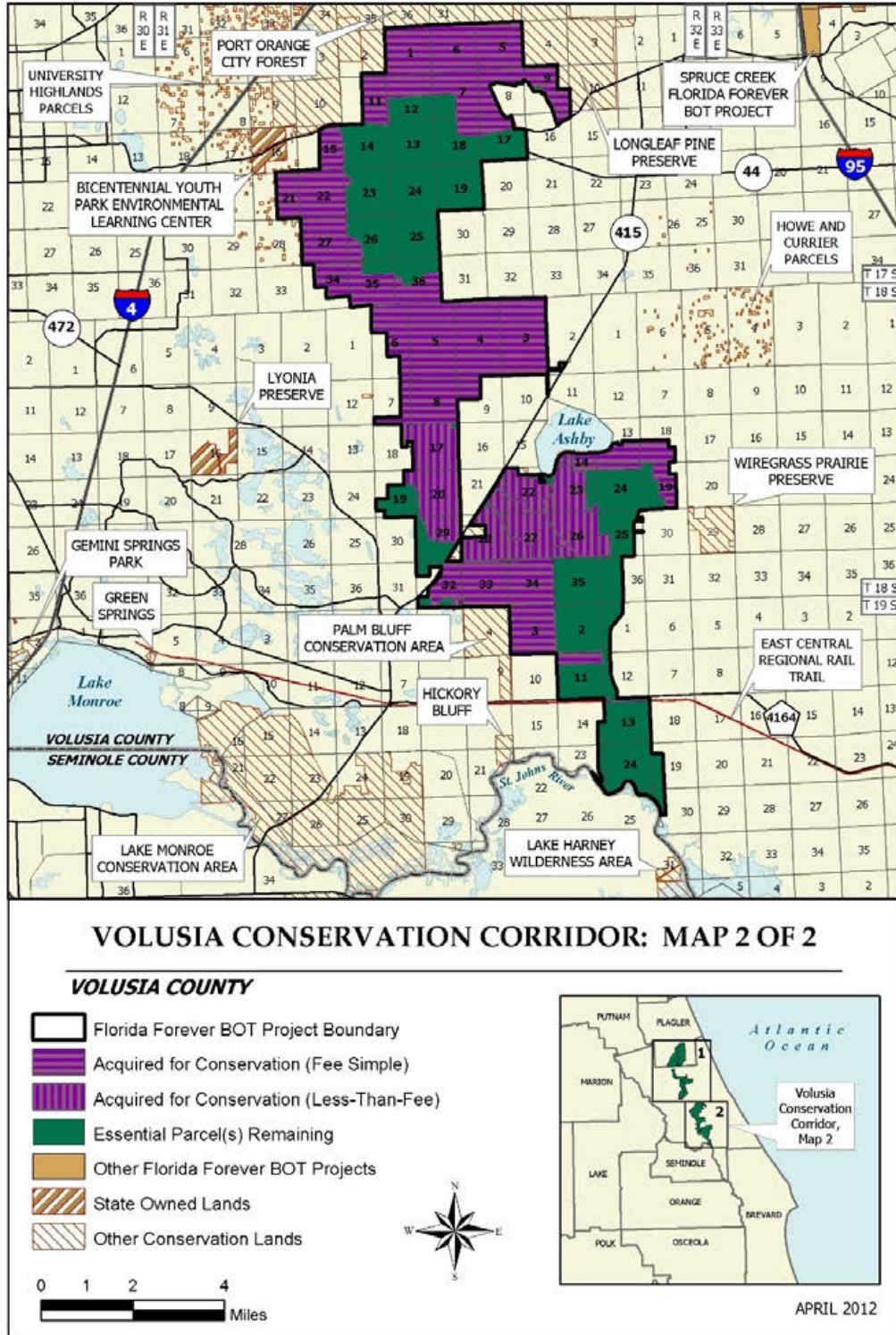


Map 244





Map 245



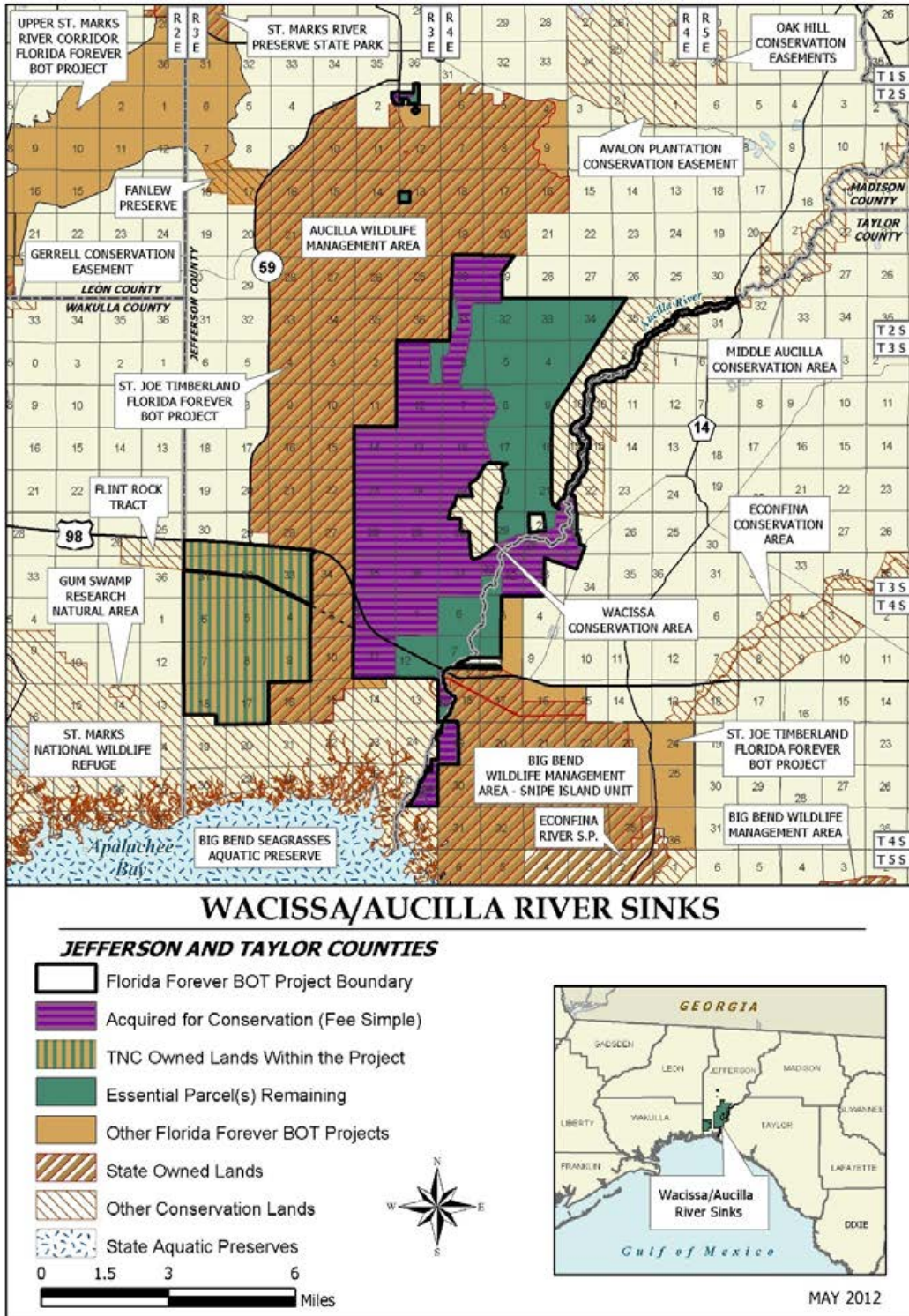
Map 246





### Map(s): Wacissa / Aucilla River Sinks

#### Wacissa / Aucilla River Sinks



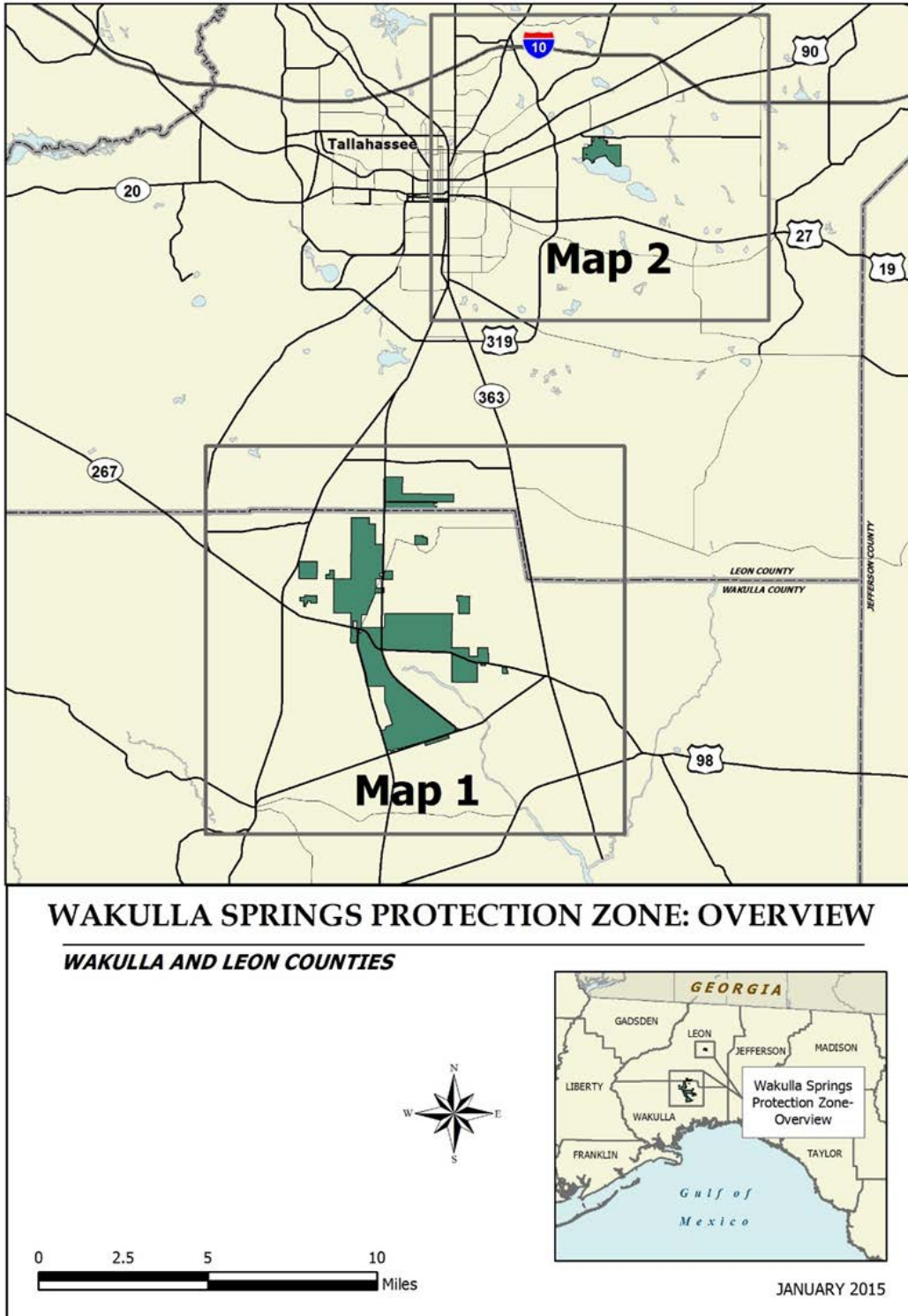
Map 247



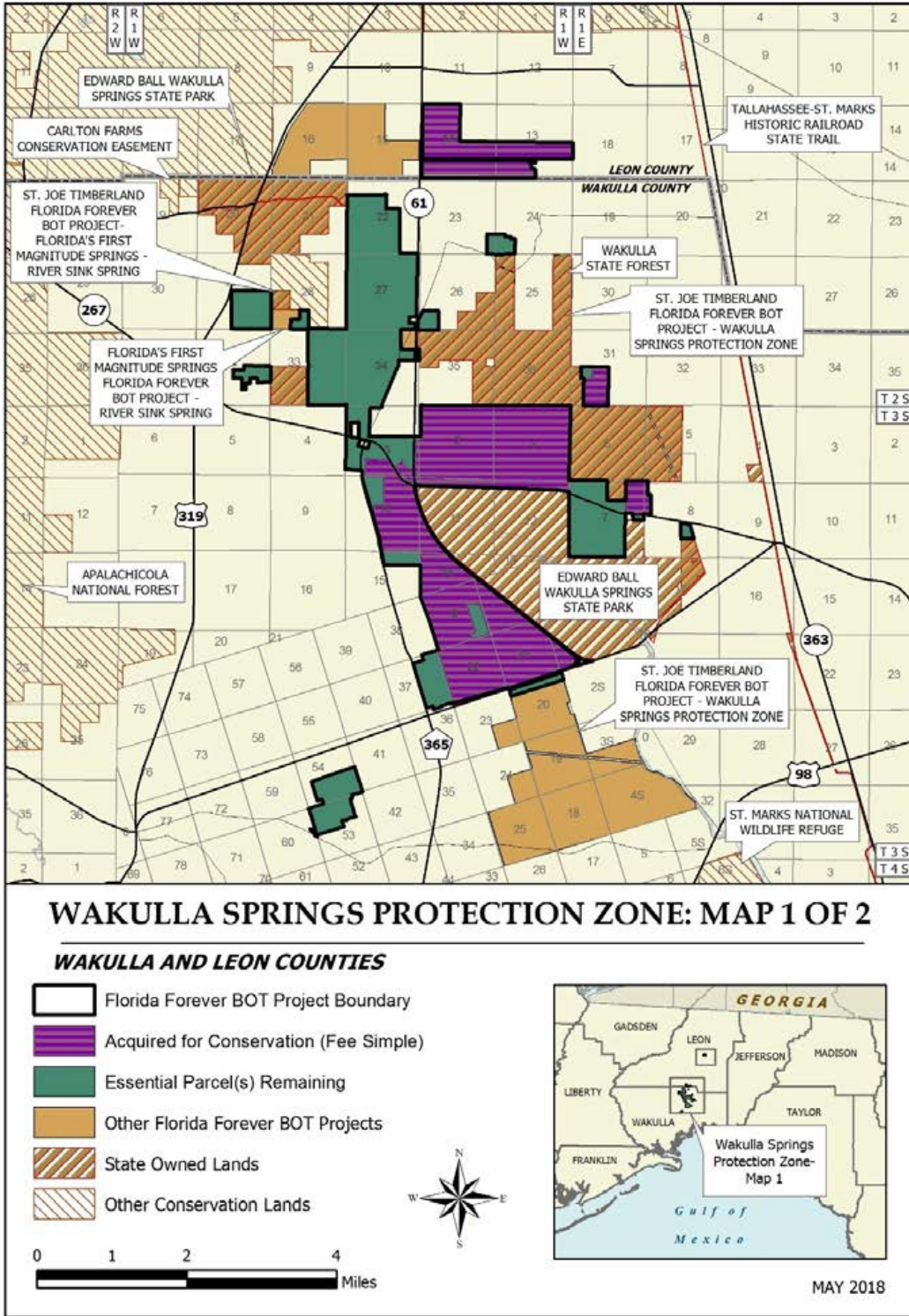


### Map(s): Wakulla Springs Protection

#### Wakulla Springs Protection Zone

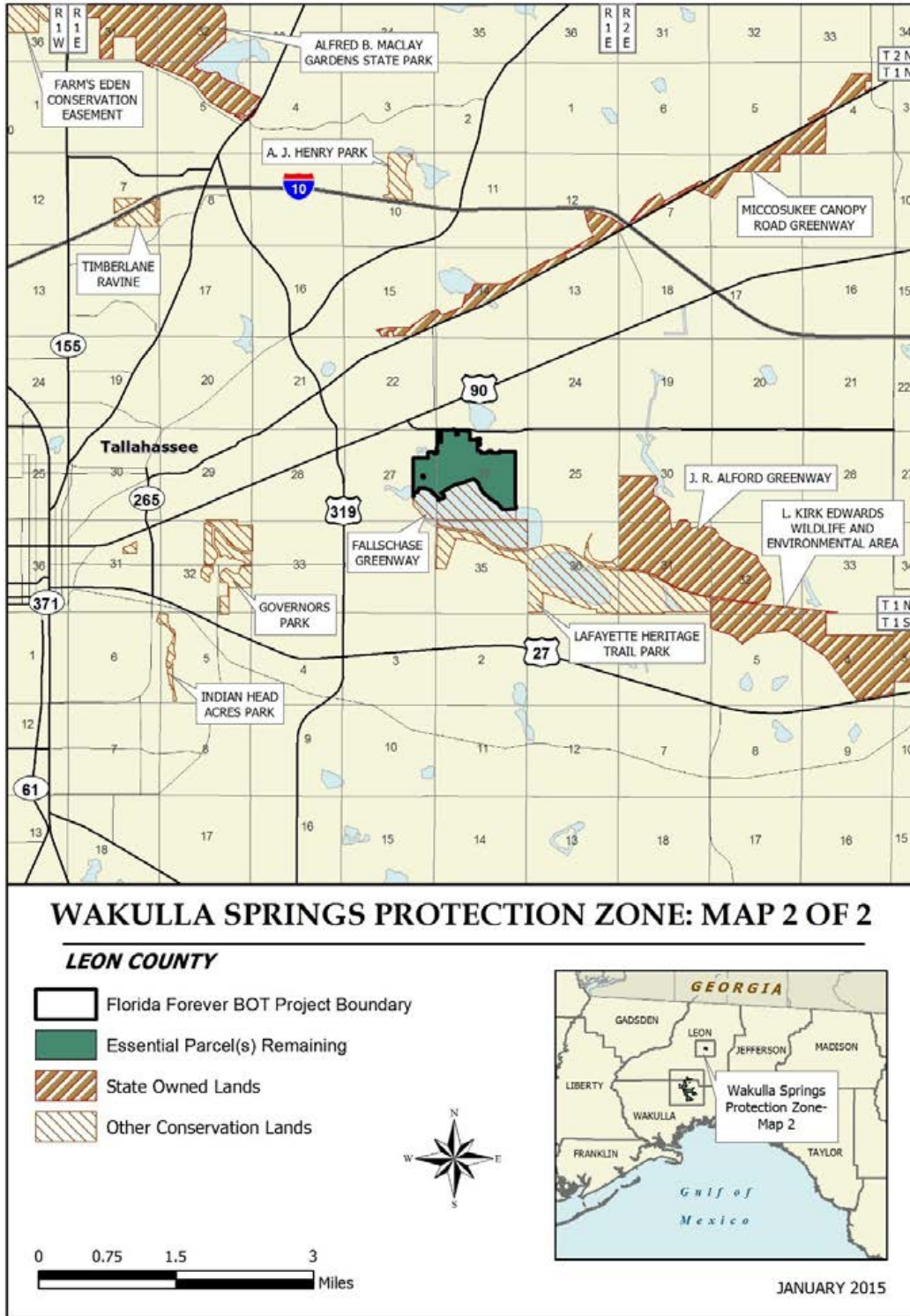


Map 248



Map 249



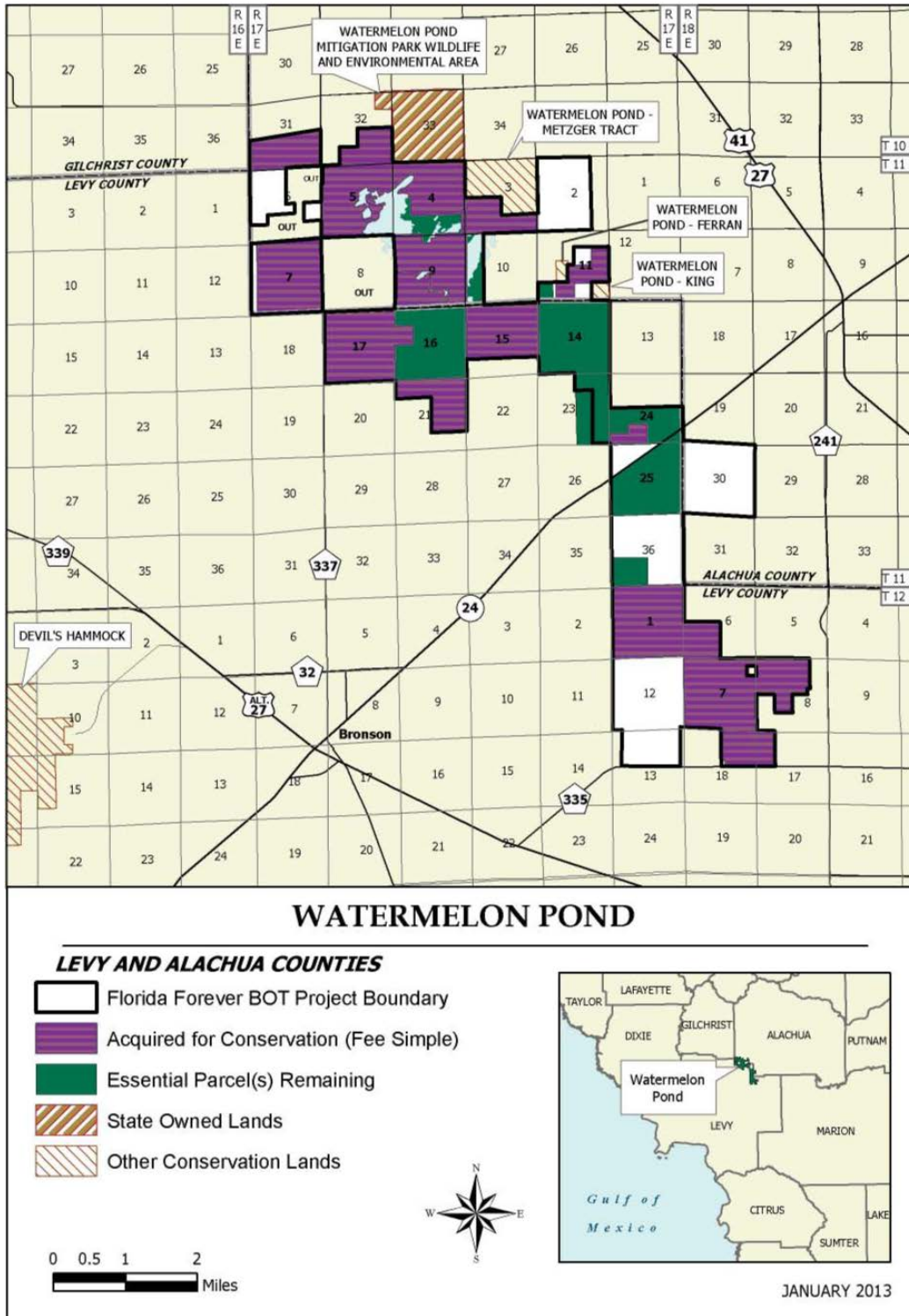


Map 250



### Map(s): Watermelon Pond

#### Watermelon Pond



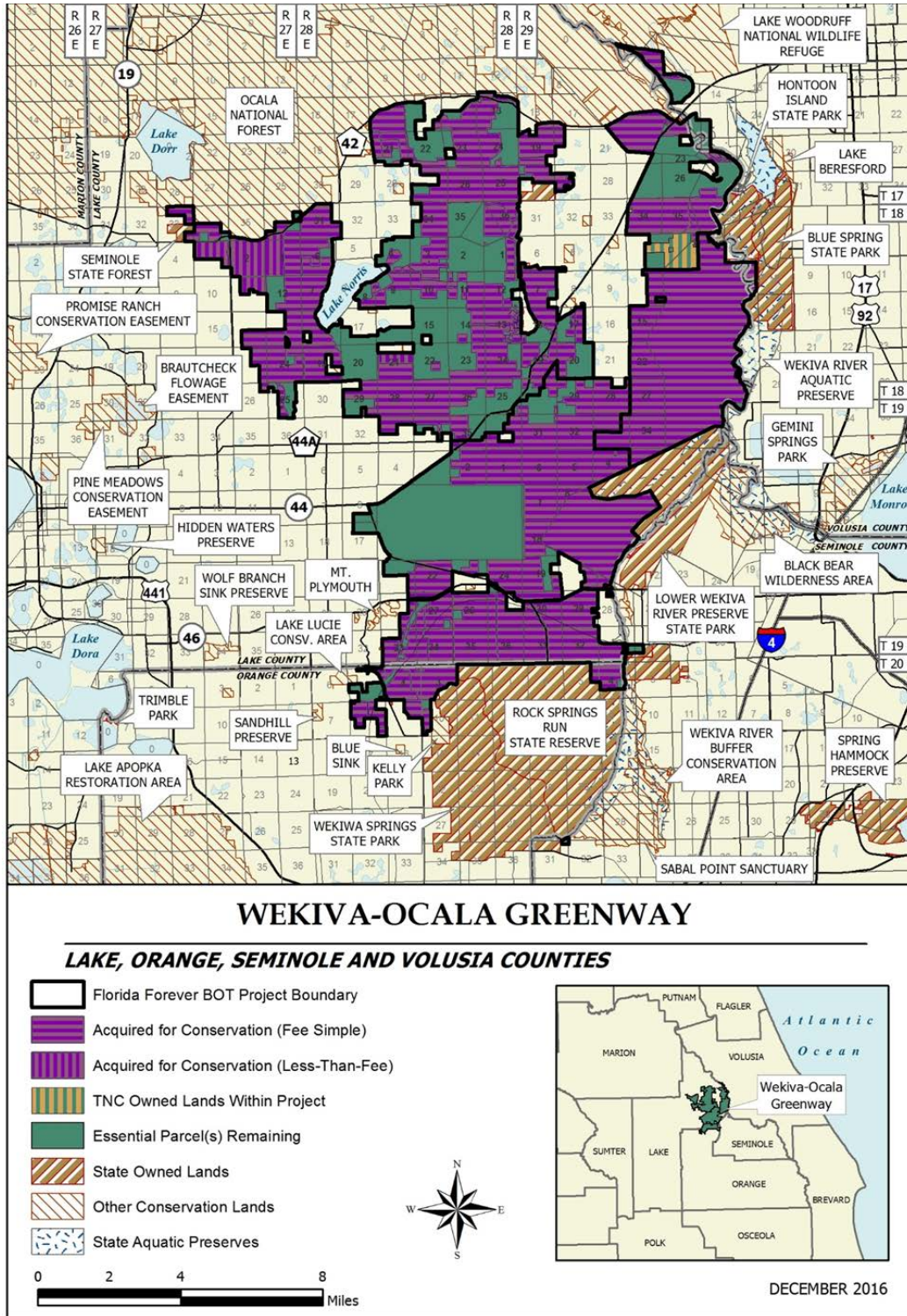
Map 251





### Map(s): Wekiva-Ocala Greenway

#### Wekiva-Ocala Greenway



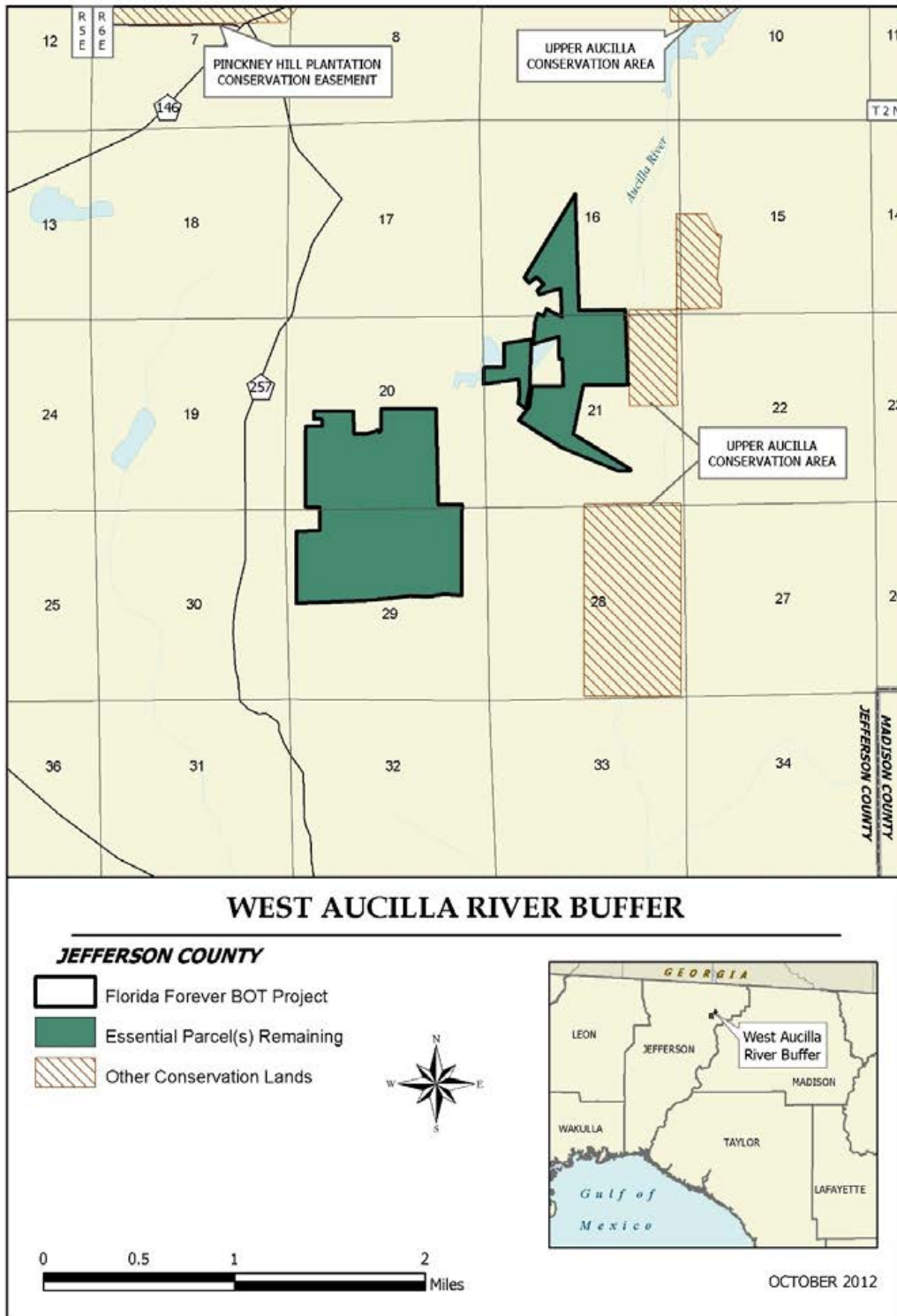
Map 252





### Map(s): West Aucilla River Buffer

#### West Aucilla River Buffer

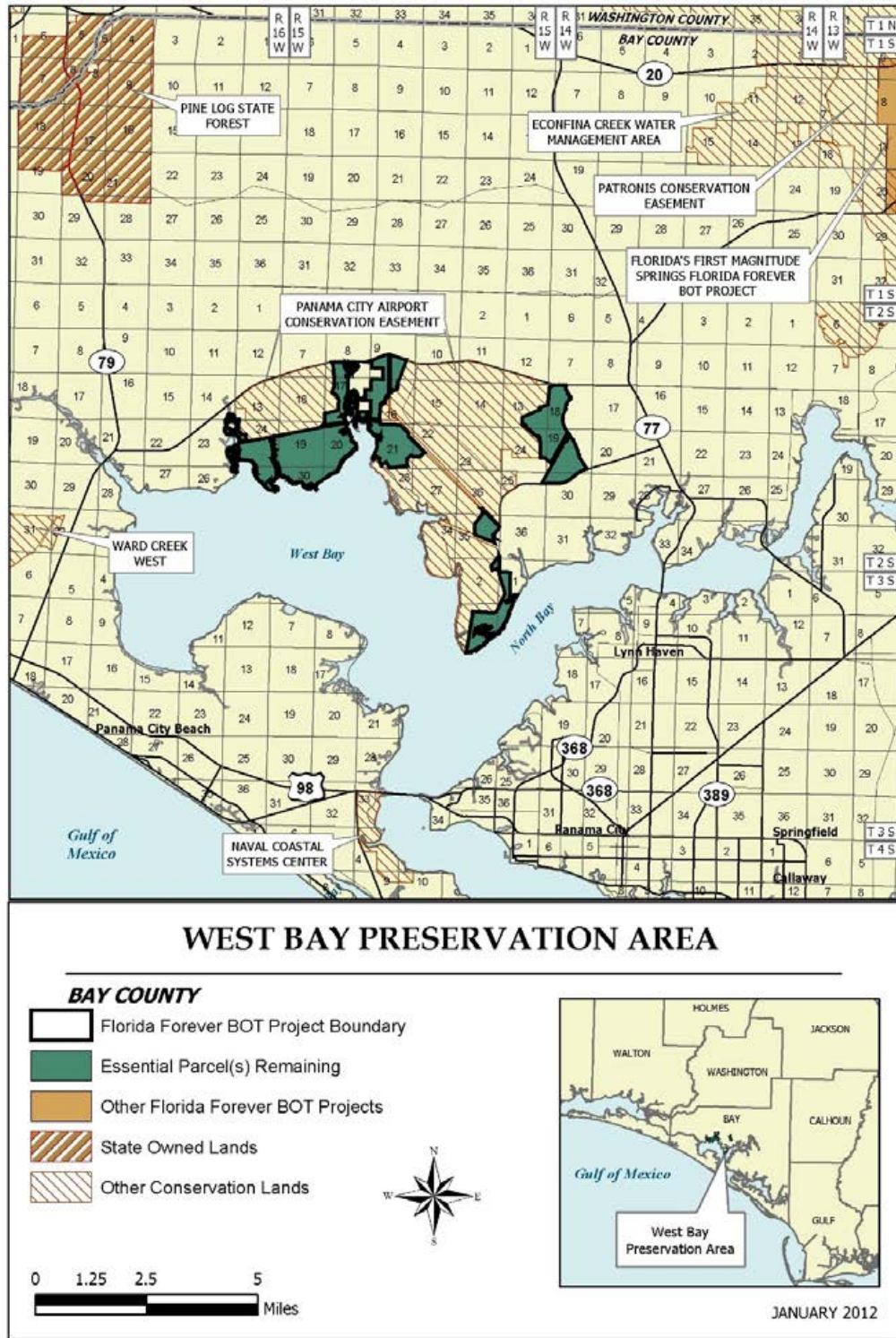


Map 253



### Map(s): West Bay Preservation Area

#### West Bay Preservation Area



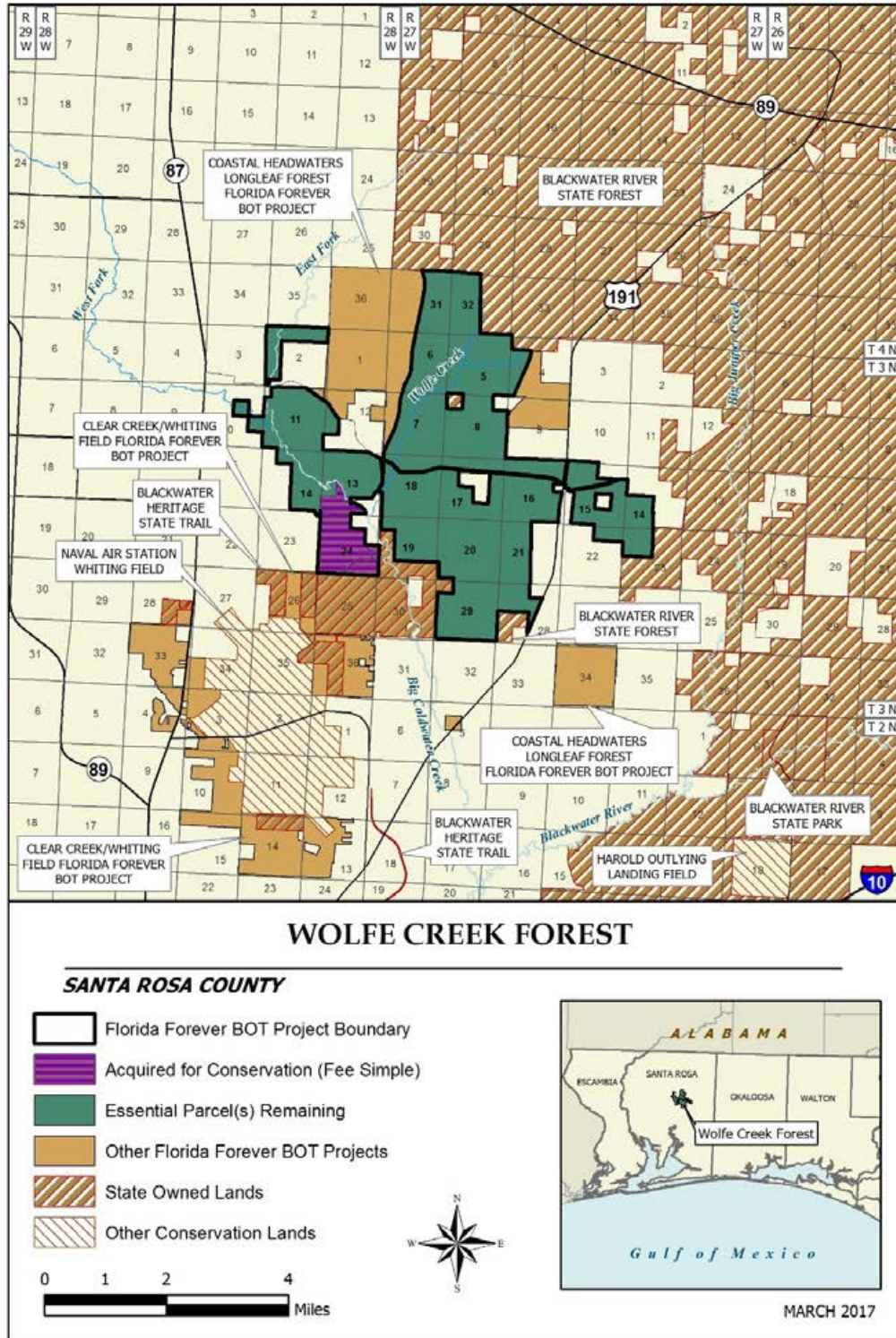
Map 254





### Map(s): Wolfe Creek Forest

#### Wolfe Creek Forest



Map 255