

Annutteliga Hammock

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

Citrus and Hernando Counties

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| <i>Year Added to Priority List</i> | <i>1995</i> |
| <i>Project Acres</i> | <i>19,890</i> |
| <i>Acquired Acres</i> | <i>11,831</i> |
| <i>Cost of Acquired Acres</i> | <i>\$35,925,705</i> |
| <i>Remaining Project Acres</i> | <i>8,059</i> |
| <i>2023 Assessed Value of Remaining Acres</i> | <i>\$162,403,933</i> |

Purpose for State Acquisition

The Annutteliga Hammock project will conserve the remaining forestland between the Withlacoochee State Forest and Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area. 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 project will protect habitat for rare and imperiled species such as the Florida black bear, Eastern indigo snake, gopher tortoise and many sandhill-dwelling plants including giant orchids. The project will also provide the public with a large area for outdoor recreation in this fast-growing region.

General Description

The project is defined by its quality sandhill and upland hardwood forest. Remnants of Annutteliga Hammock on steep-sided hills and in small valleys cover approximately 15 percent of the project area. The project's hardwood forests resemble forests far to the north; in fact, several northern trees reach their southern limits near the area. Westward, the hardwoods give way to drier longleaf pine sandhills on slightly lower and more level terrain. Remnants of these sandhill forests cover approximately 64 percent of the project. It is an excellent habitat for many rare vertebrates adapted to xeric communities and for several rare plant species. Additionally, twenty archaeological sites that attest to the long history of Native American occupation are located within the project area.

Limerock mines, golf courses and residential developments have fragmented these natural areas, but excellent examples of the original vegetation and wildlife, including the Florida black bear, remain. The Suncoast Parkway was constructed and bisects the project.



FNAI Element Occurrence Summary

| <u>FNAI Elements</u> | <u>Score</u> |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Florida black bear | G5T4/S4 |
| Eastern indigo snake | G3/S2? |
| Gopher tortoise | G3/S3 |
| Florida mouse | G3/S3 |
| Swallow-tailed kite | G5/S2 |
| <i>Brooksville bellflower</i> | G1/S1 |
| <i>scrub bluestem</i> | G1G2/S1S2 |
| <i>Cooley's water-willow</i> | G2Q/S2 |
| <i>pinkroot</i> | G2/S2 |
| Southern hognose snake | G2/S2S3 |
| <i>Peters' bristle fern</i> | G4/S1S2 |
| Gopher frog | G2G3/S3 |

Public Use

The 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

The project consists of several large tracts as well as large, subdivided areas. Essential parcels include Sugarmill Woods (acquired), World Woods (acquired by the Florida Forest Service), Florida Crushed Stone, Orange Meadow Corp./Seville (acquired), Blackwell (westernmost tract - acquired by the Southwest Florida Water Management District), Tooke’s Lake Joint Venture and other large hammock and sandhill parcels.

1994

In 1994, Hernando County established the Fickett Hammock Preserve (148 acres), all of which would be inside the project boundary when the project was started.

1995

On March 10, 1995, the Land Acquisition and Management Advisory Council approved the addition of 990 acres to the project boundary.

1995

On December 5, 1996, the Land Acquisition and Management Advisory Council transferred 773 acres from the Priority category to the Less-Than-Fee category.

1999

On July 29, 1999, the Land Acquisition and Management Advisory Council combined Lecanto Sandhills (2,029 acres of sandhills, xeric hammocks and depression marshes in Citrus County) with the Annutteliga Hammock project.

2001

In 2001, DEP acquired the Lecanto Sandhills to be managed by the Florida Forest Service and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.





2011

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

On December 9, 2011, the Acquisition and Restoration Council placed the project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category.

2016

On June 17, 2016, the Acquisition and Restoration Council approved a boundary reduction of 5,348 acres consisting of 4,125 parcels with a total 2015 market value of \$37,692,703.

2018

On June 15, 2018, Acquisition and Restoration Council members added 403 acres in Hernando County (Buckner/Coastal Trails Partnership Property) to the project boundary. This is an inholding of the Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area.

2020

In 2020, a 0.52-acre inholding of Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area was acquired to be managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

On December 11, 2020, the Acquisition and Restoration Council approved an addition of 48.3 acres in Hernando County to the project boundary.

2021

On June 11, 2021, the Acquisition and Restoration Council approved an addition of 15 acres in Hernando County to the project boundary.

Coordination

On August 3, 1998, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Florida Department of Transportation and DEP for the future conveyance of a portion of the Annutteliga Hammock project within the proposed alignment for the Suncoast Parkway was signed. The project is also included within the Southwest Florida Water Management District'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 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, 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.





Manager(s)

The Florida Forest Service will manage acreage acquired in the northeastern and southeastern portion of the project. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission will manage acreage acquired in the western portion.

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.

Conditions Affecting Intensity of Management

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

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission expects that the Annutteliga Hammock will be heavily used for wildlife-oriented recreation as 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.

Management Implementation, Public Access, Site 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 ensure long-term viability of populations and species considered rare. This total resource concept will guide Florida Forest Service management activities on the project.

Once the core area is acquired and assigned to the Florida Forest Service 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 Headquarters and management activities will be conducted using the Center's personnel.

Initial or intermediate management efforts will concentrate on site security, public and fire management access, resource inventory and removing refuse. 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 the collection of necessary resource information, management proposals for the project are conceptual. Long-range plans for the 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 Florida Forest Service 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, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission'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 Florida Forest Service will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. Revenue from these sales will vary, but the Florida Forest Service expects the revenue-generating potential of the project to be low to moderate.

The Florida 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.





Management Cost Summary

| <u>FFS</u> | <u>Startup</u> | <u>Recurring</u> |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Source of Funds | LATF | LATF |
| Salary | \$85,020 | \$85,020 |
| OPS | \$0 | \$0 |
| Expense | \$25,000 | \$25,000 |
| OCO | \$116,800 | \$10,000 |
| FCO | \$0 | \$0 |
| TOTAL | \$226,820 | \$120,020 |

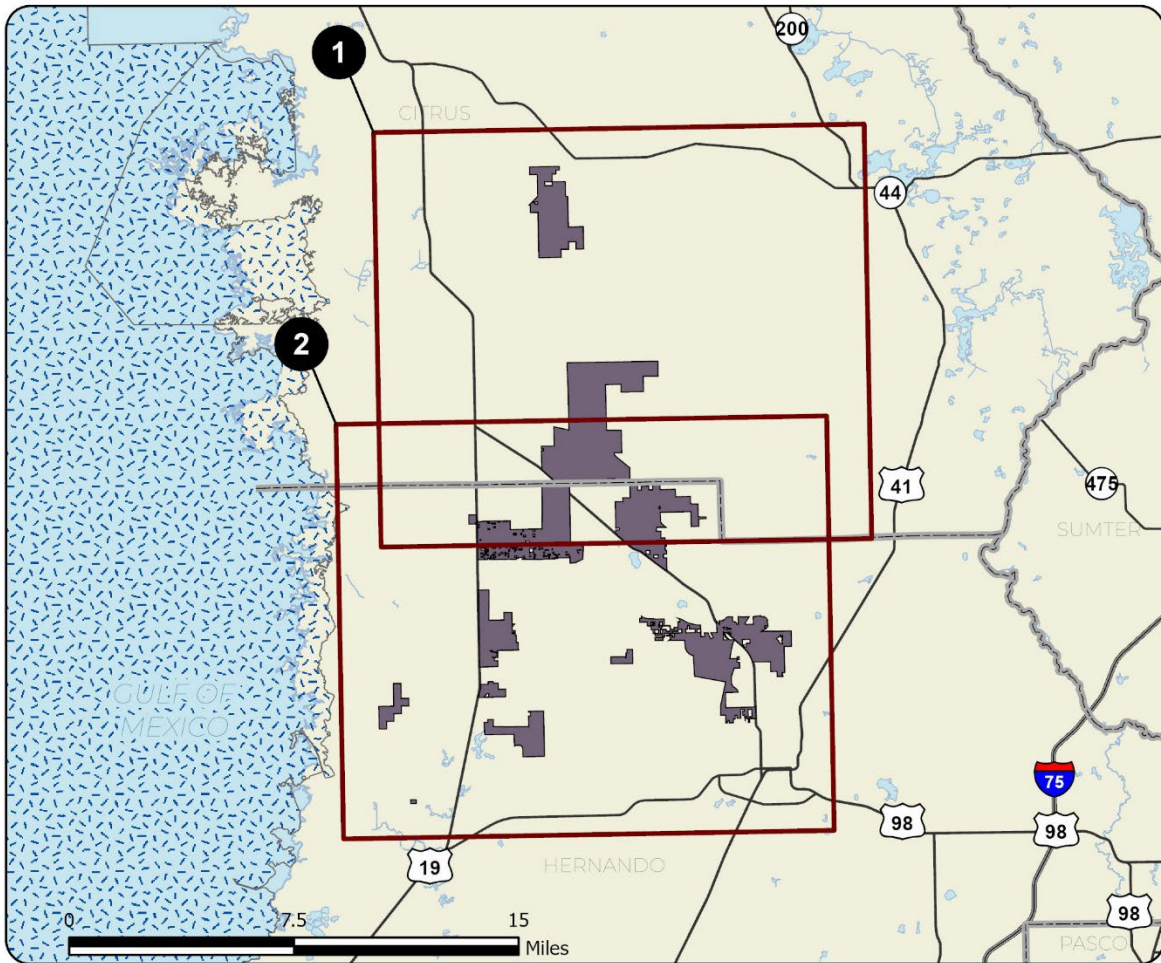
Source: Management Prospectus as originally submitted

Management Cost Summary

| <u>FWC</u> | <u>Startup</u> | <u>Recurring</u> |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Source of Funds | LATF | LATF |
| Salary | \$78,353 | \$78,353 |
| OPS | \$10,500 | \$5,250 |
| Expense | \$52,500 | \$42,000 |
| OCO | \$124,000 | \$10,000 |
| FCO | \$150,000 | \$0 |
| TOTAL | \$414,353 | \$135,603 |

Source: Management Prospectus as originally submitted

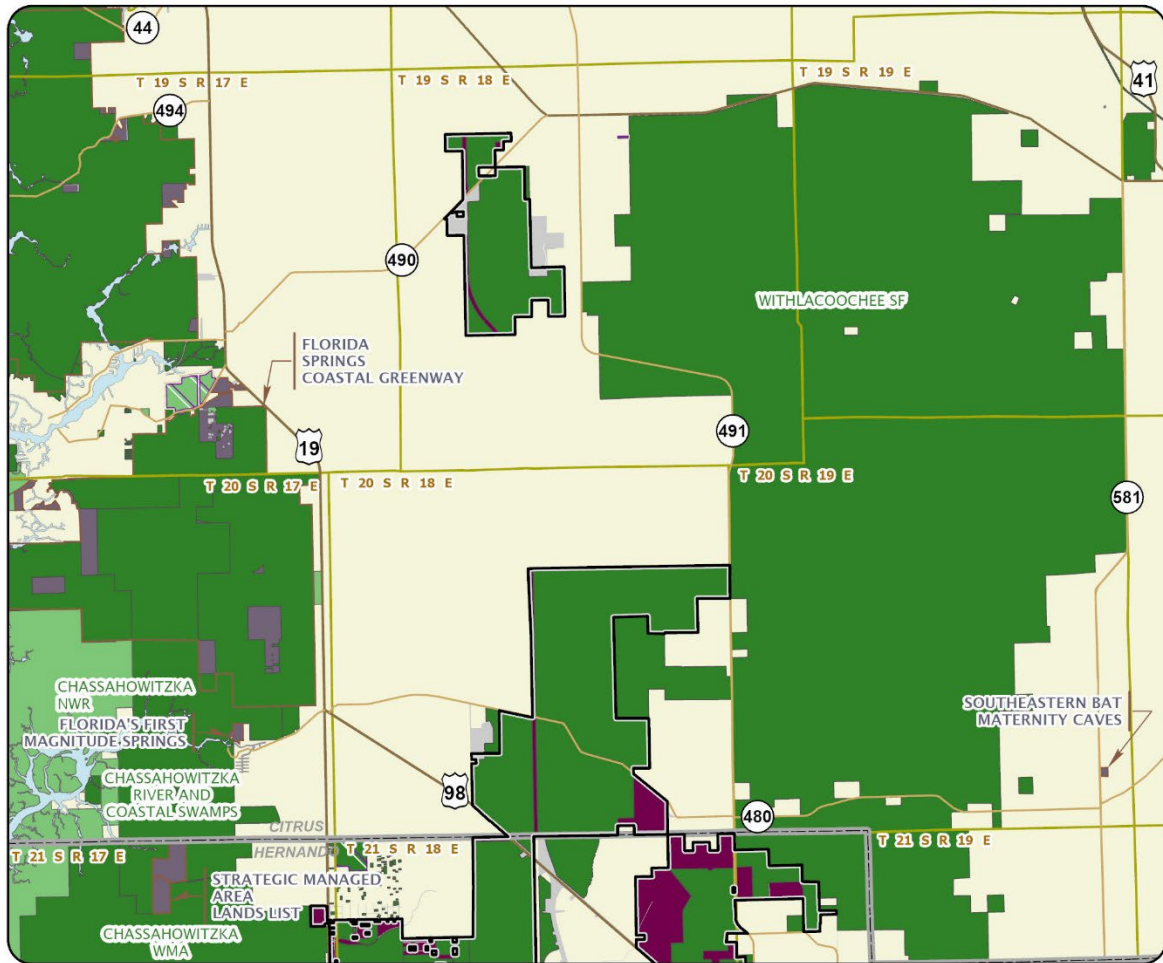




ANNUTTELIGA HAMMOCK: OVERVIEW

CITRUS AND HERNANDO COUNTIES

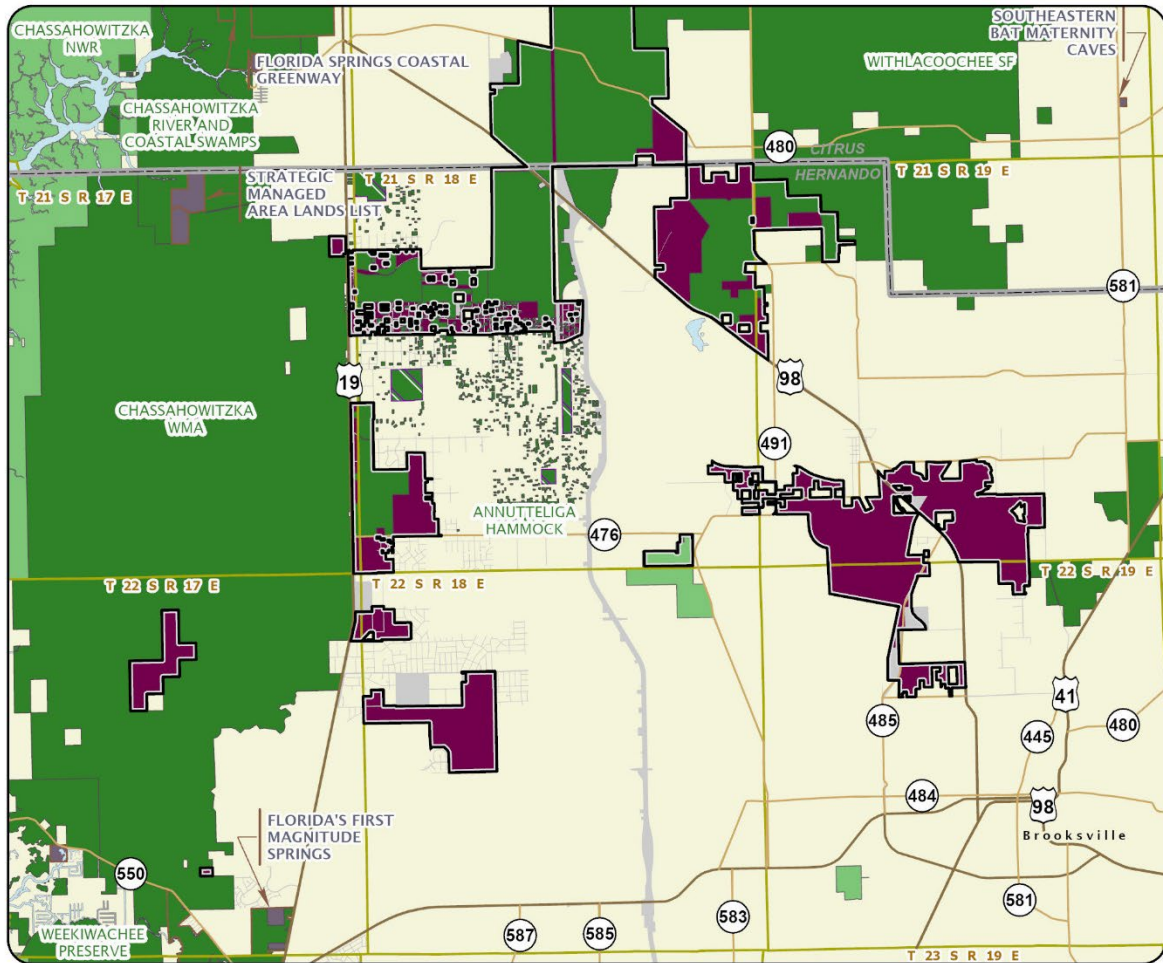




ANNUTTELIGA HAMMOCK: MAP 1

CITRUS AND HERNANDO COUNTIES





ANNUTTELIGA HAMMOCK: MAP 2

CITRUS AND HERNANDO COUNTIES

