

# Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem

Partnerships and Regional Incentives

Brevard County

<i>Year Added to Priority List</i>	<i>1993</i>
<i>Project Acres</i>	<i>41,814</i>
<i>Acquired Acres</i>	<i>24,433</i>
<i>Cost of Acquired Acres</i>	<i>\$86,373,773</i>
<i>Remaining Project Acres</i>	<i>17,381</i>
<i>2023 Assessed Value of Remaining Acres</i>	<i>\$349,537,199</i>

## Purpose for State Acquisition

The Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem project will protect some of the best scrub fragments in the county, aiding the survival of the endangered Florida scrub-jay and providing areas where the public can appreciate and learn about the unique landscape. 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 project will ensure the preservation of remaining scrub habitats. In addition to the Florida scrub-jay, the project will also provide habitat for species such as the red-cockaded woodpecker, eastern indigo snake and gopher tortoise.

## General Description

The project includes 20 areas considered essential to the preservation of scrub, mesic and scrubby flatwoods, floodplain marsh and marsh lake along the Atlantic Coastal Ridge and St. Johns 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 project also supports several rare vertebrates and at least eight rare plant species, including a very rare mint. The project is surrounded by development and several peripheral areas are already being destroyed. The rapid encroachment of housing developments is likely to eliminate any unprotected scrub and adjacent flatwoods communities of Brevard County in the very near future. No archaeological sites are recorded within the project.



FNAI Element Occurrence Summary

<b><u>FNAI Elements</u></b>	<b><u>Score</u></b>
Florida scrub-jay	G1G2/S1S2
Red-cockaded woodpecker	G3/S2
Eastern indigo snake	G3/S2?
Gopher tortoise	G3/S3
Florida black bear	G5T4/S4
<i>Titusville balm</i>	G1Q/S1
<i>pine pinweed</i>	G2/S2
<i>tampa vervain</i>	G2/S2
<i>sand-dune spurge</i>	G2/S2
Horn's aethecerinus long-horned beetle	G2/S2
Round-tailed muskrat	G2/S2
<i>hay scented fern</i>	G4/S1

**Public Use**

The project is designated as a wildlife and environmental area with limited public use, including picnicking and environmental education.

**Acquisition Planning**

**1992**

On December 10, 1992, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council added the Scrub Jay Refugia project to the Conservation and Recreational Lands Priority List. The 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, which contained five sites: Tico ( $\pm$  2,421 acres with Grand Central being a major owner, Brevard County has acquired 52 acres); Valkaria ( $\pm$  2,764 acres with multiple owners, Brevard County has acquired 155 acres); Rockledge ( $\pm$  2,591 acres with three major owners: Barge and Tabacchi, Duda, and Grand Central, Brevard County has acquired 141 acres); Condev (52 acres with two owners: Nelson and SR 405 Ltd.); and South Babcock (529 acres with multiple owners).

**1993**

On February 17, 1993, Baytree Preserve (54.47 acres) conservation easement is established.

In May 1993, Brevard County acquired 60 acres in Malabar Scrub Sanctuary.

In July 1993, Brevard County acquired 285 acres in Malabar Scrub Sanctuary.

On July 23, 1993, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council approved a fee-simple, 179-acre addition (Rockledge Scrub Sanctuary) to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the South Florida Water Management District, consisted of six landowners (T. Barge and M. Tabacchi, L.R. Pierce Trust, N. Schopke and M. Tabacchi, TCM Investment, Inc., A.L. and M. Jacoboski, and Florida Power and Light Co.), and had a taxable value of \$3,600,000.

In December 1993, Brevard County acquired Dicerandra Scrub Sanctuary (44 acres).

**1994**

In January 1994, Brevard County acquired 30.86 acres in Malabar Scrub Sanctuary.





On March 9, 1994, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council 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., and had a taxable value of \$1,500,120. Brevard County acquired the site.

In October 1994, Brevard County acquired 20 acres in Malabar Scrub Sanctuary.

#### **1995**

On July 14, 1995, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council 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 the addition, which consisted of multiple landowners and a taxable value of \$13,283,659. Brevard County has acquired the Malabar and the Dicerandra Scrub sites.

#### **1996**

In 1996, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council combined the Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem Initiative project with the Scrub Jay Refugia project, bringing the new total acres to 27,745 with a tax assessed value of \$86,847,875. On December 5, 1996, it was renamed the Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem project. The Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem Initiative consisted of six sites totaling 16,307 acres with a tax assessed value of \$40,780,060: 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)

#### **1998**

On December 3, 1998, the Acquisition and Management Advisory Council approved the transfer of the Valkaria, South Babcock, Ten Mile Ridge and Grissom Parkway sites to the Mega-Multiparcel List (which was renamed Small Holdings in 2001).

#### **1999**

On March 26, 1999, Brevard County acquired the South Lake Conservation Area (155 acres).

#### **2000**

On December 19, 2000, the Acquisition and Restoration Council approved a fee-simple 9,528-acre addition to the project boundary. Sponsored by the Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands Program, it consisted of 2,250 landowners at a taxable value of \$23,819,800. The addition consisted of two sites: Malabar Expansion – 959.85 acres (Bargain/Shared); and Valkaria/Micco Expansion – 4,144.48 acres (Bargain/Shared) and 4,739.48 acres (Mega/Multiparcel).

In 2000, the following sites were removed from the project due to development/improvement, habitat fragmentation or isolation: Canova Beach – 152.34 acres; Condev – 52.52 acres; Wickham Road Complex – 809.62 acres.; and Rockledge (select properties) – 860 acres.

#### **2001**

On May 17, 2001, the Acquisition and Restoration Council approved a fee-simple 3,529-acre addition to the project boundary. The addition, sponsored by the Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection, consisted of 11 landowners with a taxable value of \$3,456,290.





## **2002**

On April 25, 2002, the Acquisition and Restoration Council approved a fee-simple 112-acre addition to the project boundary. The addition, sponsored by The Nature Conservancy for Brevard County, consisted of two sites (10 Mile Ridge Expansion – 62 acres; Valkaria/Micco Expansion – 50 acres), multiple landowners and a taxable value of \$199,070.

On November 12, 2002, Mary A Ranch Mitigation Bank (2,068 acres) was issued.

On December 5, 2002, the Acquisition and Restoration Council moved the project to Group A of the 2003 Florida Forever Priority List.

## **2003**

On October 3, 2003, the Office of Greenways and Trails acquired South Brevard Trail Connector parcel (14.72 acres) in Turkey Creek Sanctuary.

On December 5, 2003, the Acquisition and Restoration Council approved a fee-simple 7,444-acre addition to the project boundary. The addition, sponsored by the Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands 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.

## **2005**

On May 27, 2005, Brevard County acquired Capron Ridge Sanctuary (20.55 acres), of which 4.5 acres are within the project boundary.

## **2006**

In 2006, Brevard County acquired the Brookhollow piece (173.09 acres) of Malabar Scrub Sanctuary, bringing the total acquired at the Malabar Scrub site by the county to 568.95 acres.

On April 18, 2006, Brevard County acquired Indian Mound Station Sanctuary (118.62 acres).

On September 21, 2006, DEP purchased 5.52 acres in the Valkaria section at a tax deed sale (Oxford Finance Co., \$83,000).

## **2007**

In June 2007, Brevard County acquired 41 acres from Vero-Pittsburgh Partners LLC and added it to the boundary of the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary.

In December 2007, Brevard County acquired Fox Lake Sanctuary (2,568 acres).

## **2008**

On June 13, 2008, the Acquisition and Restoration Council 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 seven 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, DEP purchased 1.29 acres of the Hightower/Frasier ownership at Grissom Parkway for \$5,500. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission will manage the section.





In October 2008, The Nature Conservancy donated 2.71 acres, valued at \$40,000, which will be managed by the Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands Program.

**2009**

On December 11, 2009, the Acquisition and Restoration Council removed 1,667 acres located within the Malabar Expansion and Valkaria/Micco Expansion from the boundary at the following landowners' request: John S./John D. Copanos (20 acres); John Copanos/Sebastian Resources 400, LP (902 acres); and Nick Dionisio/Brevard Landvest, LLC (745 acres).

**2010**

In April 2010, the Acquisition and Restoration Council removed 3,694 acres due to residential/commercial infrastructure and development. An additional 183 acres were removed at the request of Mr. Wilton Banack, landowner.

**2011**

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

**2020**

In February 2020, the 63.45-acre Grissom Parkway parcel was acquired from The School Board of Brevard County for \$288,000.

**2021**

In 2021, DEP acquired 1.40 acres fee simple via donation from the Estate of Margie D. Mollenauer.

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 with Brevard County to help 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 the state or a larger geographic area; and to conserve and protect significant habitat for native and imperiled species.

Manager(s)

Brevard County will manage the original six sites, as well as the Valkaria/Micco Expansion Site (added in 2002). The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission will manage the six sites added in 1996 and the Ten Mile Ridge site added in 2002. The Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection will manage one site added in 2001. The city of Titusville will manage the Falcon Woods portion added in 2008.

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.





### **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.

### **Management Implementation, Public Access, Site 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 Environmentally Endangered Lands Program will work with local, state and federal agencies to develop a Comprehensive Management Plan for long-term management. Initial management activities in the 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 Florida Natural Areas Inventory 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 the 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 and 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 Environmentally Endangered Lands Program proposed to set aside \$2.6 million from their excess ad valorem revenues to begin a management endowment for the Environmentally Endangered Lands Program sanctuary network. The Environmentally Endangered Lands 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 the project at this time. Mitigation agreements with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 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 may be sold on some sites where habitat restoration requires thinning.

### **Cooperators in Management Activities**

Brevard County will require support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Forest Service and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and The Nature Conservancy to implement a quality management program for scrub communities. The Environmentally Endangered Lands Selection Committee will aggressively seek matching funds for site management, development of environmental education programs and necessary research and monitoring.





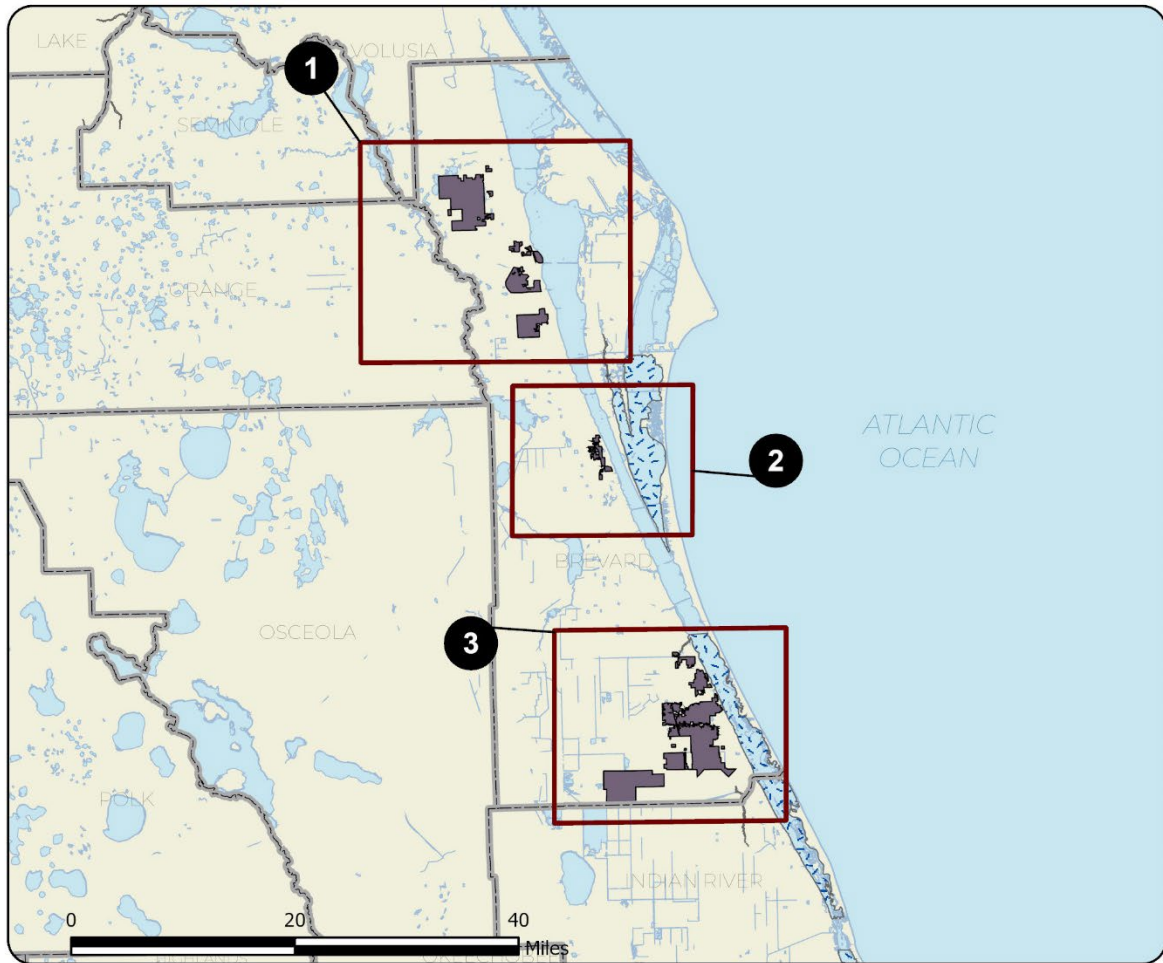
Management Cost Summary

<u>Brevard County, FWC, City of Titusville, ORCP</u>	<u>1994/95</u>	<u>1995/96</u>
Source of Funds	County	County
Salary	\$0	\$3,500
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$500	\$1,000
OCO	\$0	\$0
FCO	\$0	\$125,700
TOTAL	\$500	\$130,200

Source: Management Prospectus as originally submitted







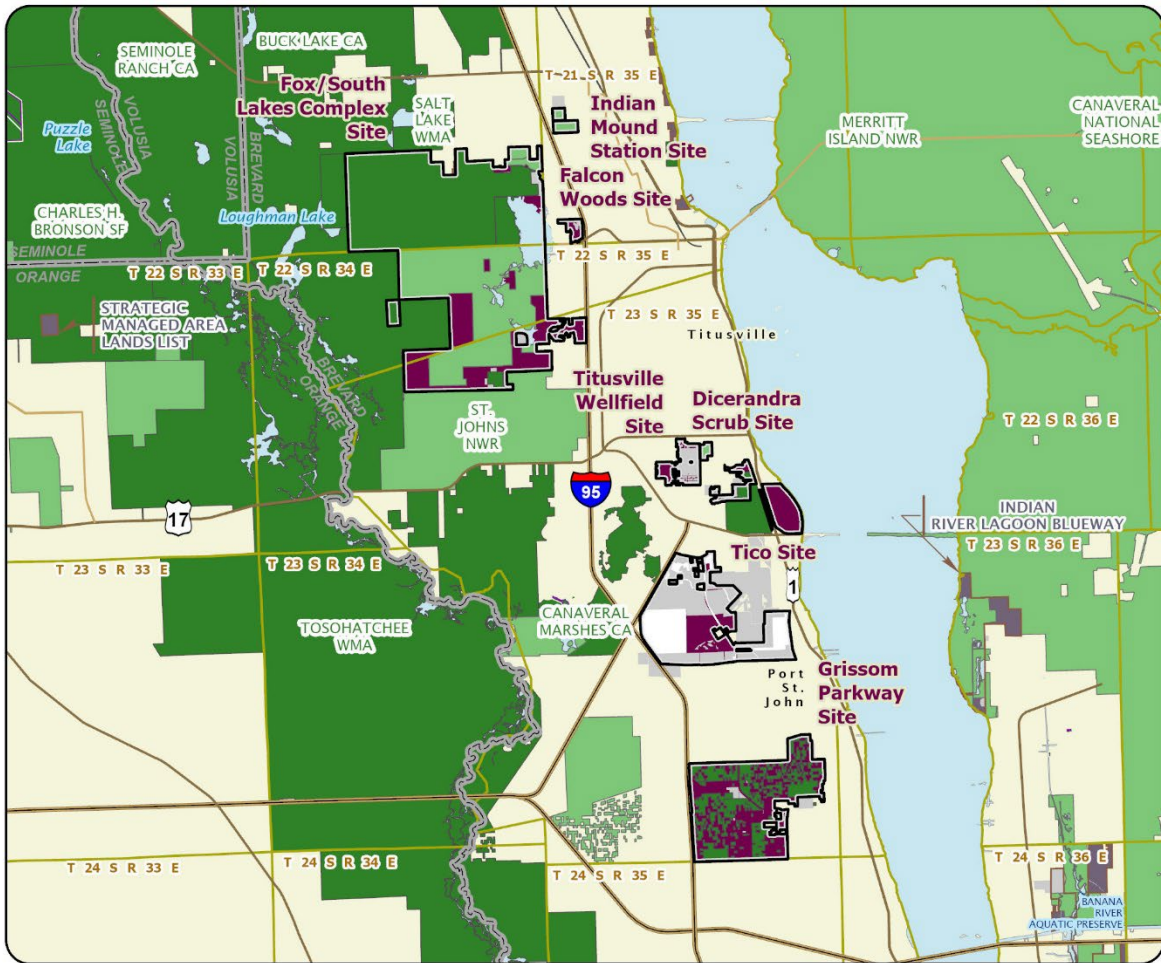
### BREVARD COASTAL SCRUB ECOSYSTEM: OVERVIEW

#### BREVARD COUNTY

- Map 1 Dicerandra Scrub Site
- Map 1 Falcon Woods Site
- Map 1 Fox/South Lakes Complex Site
- Map 1 Grissom Parkway Site
- Map 1 Indian Mound Station Site
- Map 1 Tico Site
- Map 1 Titusville Wellfield Site
- Map 2 Rockledge Site
- Map 3 Jordan Boulevard Site
- Map 3 Malabar Expansion and Valkaria/Micco Expansion Sites
- Map 3 Malabar Scrub Sanctuary Site
- Map 3 Micco Expansion Site
- Map 3 Micco Site
- Map 3 South Babcock Site
- Map 3 St. Sebastian-St. Johns River Greenway Site
- Map 3 Ten Mile Ridge Site
- Map 3 Valkaria Site

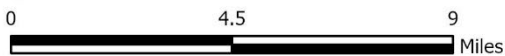


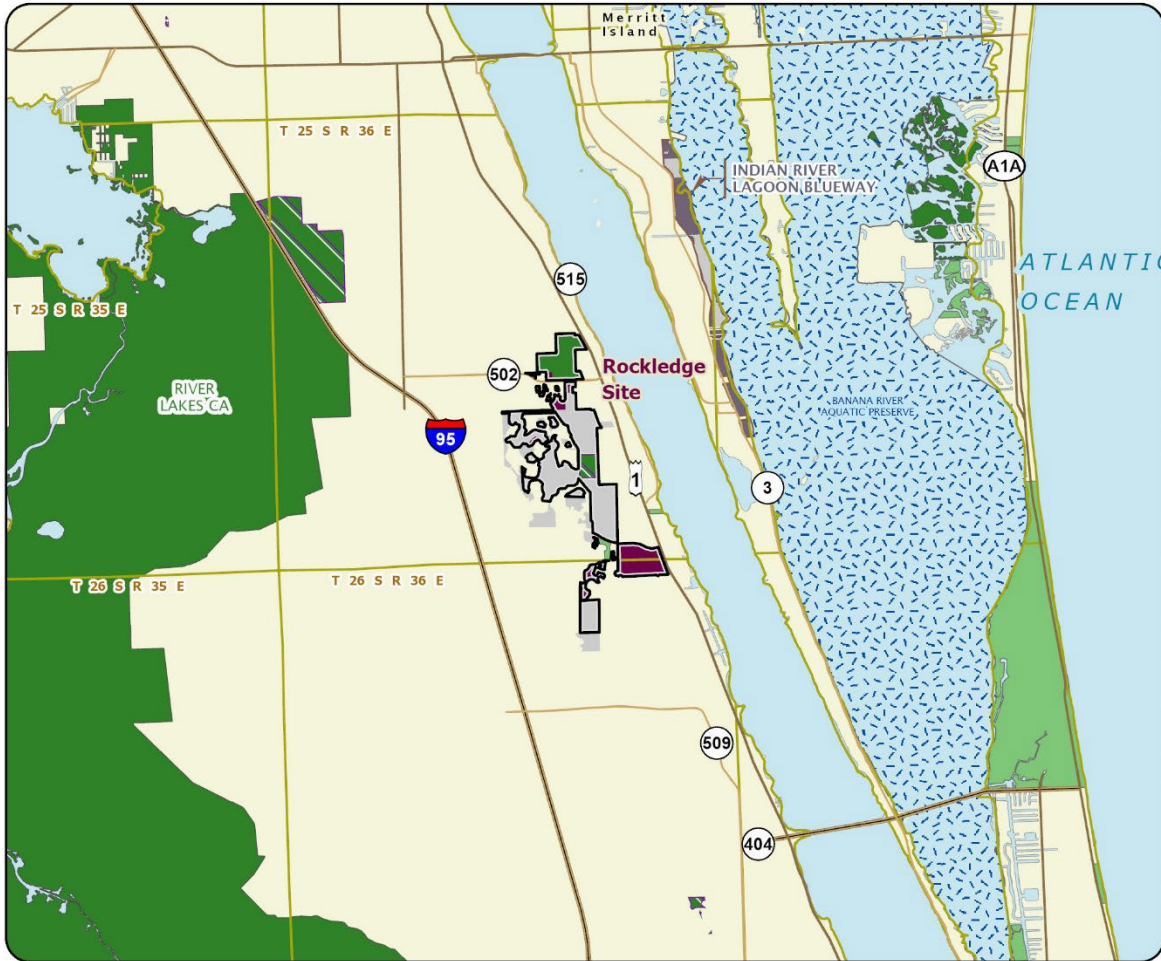




BREVARD COASTAL SCRUB ECOSYSTEM: MAP 1

BREVARD COUNTY



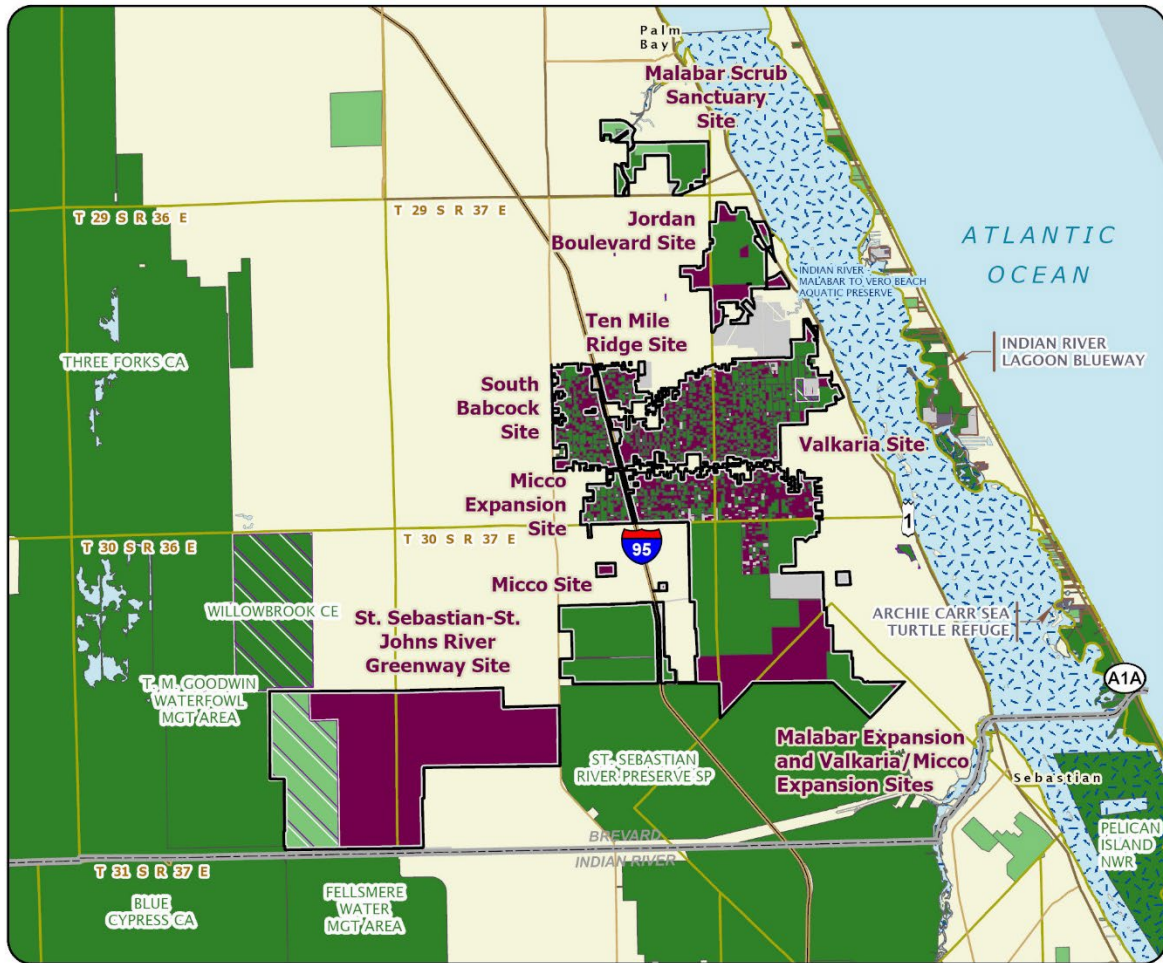


**BREVARD COASTAL SCRUB ECOSYSTEM: MAP 2**

**BREVARD COUNTY**







**BREVARD COASTAL SCRUB ECOSYSTEM: MAP 3**

**BREVARD COUNTY**

