

Aucilla River Corridor
Jefferson and Madison Counties

Florida Forever Project Evaluation Report

Prepared by:
Division of State Lands
Office of Environmental Services

Submitted to the Acquisition and Restoration Council
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Acquisition Type: Less-than-Fee & Fee Simple
Acres: 18,575
Just Value: \$14,572,633
Application Date: October 31, 2021
Project Sponsor: Tall Timbers Research Station & Land Conservancy

Executive Summary

The proposed Aucilla River Corridor Florida Forever project contains 109 individual parcels across 13 ownerships in Jefferson (9,983 acres), and Madison (8,592 acres) counties. The project generally follows the course of the Aucilla River from Sneads Smokehouse Lake, four miles south of the Georgia border, to Herndon Landing Road, south of U.S. 19. Interstate 10 (I-10) passes through the project and nearby communities include Lamont and Greenville. According to the property tax appraiser, the total project area contains 18,575 acres and has a total tax assessed value of \$14,572,633. The project proposes less-than-fee and fee simple acquisition.

The Aucilla River Corridor project would ensure the health of the Aucilla River (an Outstanding Florida Water), Little Aucilla River, Wacissa River and related springs and tributaries by completing an existing corridor of public and private conservation lands along the Aucilla River. The proposed lands are in a landscape of broad level areas interspersed with areas of rolling uplands; with extensive areas of wetlands associated with the Aucilla River and its tributaries. Most of the uplands have been converted to pine plantation, and most are still managed at least in part for silviculture, with a smaller portion dedicated to agriculture and cattle. The project contains a diverse mix of high-quality wetland communities from large cypress and tupelo dominated basin swamps to palm hammock and a rare spring-fed basin marsh.

Approximately 15,859 acres of the project is within the Wacissa Springs Group Basin Management Action Plan boundary and approximately 8,764 acres occupy the Priority Focal Area for the Wacissa Springs Group. Two third-magnitude springs were recently identified within the project area. The project is characterized by a mix of working landscapes and large blocks of un-fragmented wildlife habitat critical for aquifer recharge. When complete, the project will provide a robust wildlife corridor and critical habitat for imperiled species such as the Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*), and the wood stork (*Mycteria americana*). The numerous water sources within the project boundary provide ample habitat for fish and invertebrates (including game fish). The mix of uplands and wetland areas located within the MWF IV Osceola Tract could provide a variety of resource-based recreational opportunities that would be developed along with restoration plans.

Cultural resources found throughout the project contain evidence of a variety of pre-Columbian and historical occupations encompassing at least 12,000 years of Florida history, representing a broad range of cultural periods from the region's first human inhabitants through the twentieth century. The project contains thirty-seven documented cultural resource sites, two historic railroads, an old tung oil plantation, 30 pre-historic archaeological sites, and multiple historic buildings, structures and bridges. Given what is known of the high density of archaeological sites in the region, particularly in areas adjacent to the Aucilla River, and the fact that very little of the project area has been subject to professional archaeological survey, there is a very high potential for more unrecorded sites to exist. There is a high probability that archaeological resources within the project could be impacted by ground disturbance from agricultural or silvicultural practices and artifact collecting. Therefore, it should be noted within the terms of potential conservation easements that these resources should not be disturbed or destroyed.

If approved for addition to the 2023 Florida Forever Priority List, all 18,575 acres proposed for acquisition are considered essential, due to the resources documented on the property (see Appendix C). During the project evaluation process, the acreage of this project was reduced from 18,607 to 18,575 acres due to the removal of two parcels totaling approximately 32 acres. The size and/or location of these parcels made less-than-fee acquisition impractical. An interagency team conducted site visits to the Aucilla River Corridor project on January 19 and 20, and February 11, 2022. The information included in this report is a result of these site visits.

PURPOSE FOR ACQUISITION

If acquired, the Aucilla River Corridor project will ensure the health of the Aucilla River (an Outstanding Florida Water), Little Aucilla River, Wacissa River and related springs and tributaries by completing an existing corridor of working landscapes and private and public conservation lands along the Aucilla River. The project will protect springs and a diversity of wetland ecosystems, provide a critical wildlife corridor, promote sustainable forestry and protect habitat for a variety of imperiled plant and animal species including the Florida black bear and the Cranefly orchid.

Acquisition of this project would serve to:

- 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.
- Increase the amount of forestland for sustainable management of natural resources.
- Conserve and protect a portion of Florida's rural landscape in order to provide and enhance wildlife corridors for rare and imperiled species.
- Increase natural resource-based public recreation or educational opportunities.
- Preserve significant cultural resources.
- Provide surface and groundwater protection and protect natural floodplain functions.

LOCATION AND PROXIMITY TO OTHER MANAGED AREAS

The Aucilla Corridor proposal includes several disjunct blocks of land totaling 18,575 acres (per proposal and as determined in GIS). The project lies in Jefferson and Madison counties. The property is proposed for a combination of full-fee acquisition and conservation easement. This evaluation is based on information gathered from the proposal, 1994-2021 aerial photographs, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5' topographic maps, Cooperative Land Cover data (Florida Natural Areas Inventory, Florida Cooperative Land Cover Map, version 3.4), and information in the FNAI database.

The land included in this proposed project extends in a patchwork approximately 16 miles along the Aucilla River, beginning near the U.S. Hwy 90 bridge over the Aucilla River, and extending south to about three quarters of a mile north of the bridge on County Road 257 (CR 257). This project would protect 0.7 miles of river frontage on the Aucilla River, several miles of frontage on multiple tributaries to the Aucilla, and buffer extensive areas of wetlands associated with the river.

The largest contiguous block of land in the project is the Pines of Avalon tract in Jefferson County. It is located to the north of Lamont, approximately 1-mile west of the Aucilla River. This property straddles Beasley Creek, which flows from the northwest to the southeast for six miles across the property. This property is adjacent to the Three Creeks Ranch conservation easement, and is contiguous to the Turkey Scratch Plantation conservation easement. Both are managed by The Nature Conservancy. The Turkey Scratch Plantation conservation easement is connected to several other easements and the Middle Aucilla Conservation Area which is managed by the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD). Together they form a conservation corridor to the Aucilla River. Nearly 9,000 acres of additional conservation easements are located 1/3-mile west, and the Econfina Timberlands Florida Forever project adjoins this property on the east.

Also included in the proposal is a large nearly contiguous area east of the Aucilla River bisected by I-10 and County Road 150, containing 1.2 miles of frontage on the Aucilla and Little Aucilla River. The largest tract in this area, known as the MWF IV Osceola tract, is located on both sides of I-10 and is the only land in the project proposed for fee-simple acquisition. This tract lies 0.7 miles east of the Aucilla River and a portion of the Upper Aucilla Conservation Area. The Champion tract and the smaller

adjoining Dobson tract are a quarter mile northwest of the MWF IV Osceola tract, extending west and almost connecting to the Robert Feagin conservation easement. The Little Aucilla, which crosses the Champion parcel for about 0.4 miles, converges with the Aucilla here; and together these parcels adjoin both sides of the Aucilla for a distance of 0.3 miles. Upstream, an additional portion of the Upper Aucilla Conservation Area is less than a mile to the north.

The Adams tract is located south of I-10 and the MWF IV Osceola tract, and contains 0.3 miles of river frontage, but parallels the floodplain of the Aucilla for over 2.5 miles. This property shares over three miles of boundary with the Upper Aucilla Conservation Area and the Ragans conservation easement.

Approximately 2.3 miles southeast of the Pines of Avalon tract, and 2.5 miles southwest of the Adams tract, is a 1,178-acre portion of the project known as the Welch tract. This property contains wetlands that are part of the headwaters of an unnamed tributary of the Aucilla River that flows off the property to the southwest. These lands would close a significant gap along the middle Aucilla between the Middle Aucilla Conservation Area to the north, and the Lickskillet conservation easement to the south.

The Cooley tract lies between U.S. 19 and CR 257, and is only 0.85 miles southwest of the Welch tract along the west side of the Aucilla River. This 123-acre property borders conservation easements managed by SRMWD on three sides, with the Mt. Gilead easement to the north, and the Middle Aucilla conservation easements to the east and south.

Continuing downstream along the Aucilla, adjoining the south end of the Middle Aucilla Conservation Easements, is a 1,197-acre parcel referred to as the North Florida Timber Holdings tract. This property parallels the west bank of the Aucilla River for almost four miles, along which it shares nearly its entire eastern boundary with the Middle Aucilla Conservation Area. The western boundary has approximately 1.6 miles of frontage on CR 257.

RESOURCE DESCRIPTION

Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI)

This evaluation is based on information gathered from the proposal, 1994-2018 aerial photography, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5' topographic maps, Cooperative Landcover Data (FNAI Florida Cooperative Landcover Map, version 3.4), and information in the FNAI database. Field surveys were conducted by FNAI biologist Geoffrey Parks, along with the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) liaison staff. The proposal is situated mostly in the Greenville Islands and Swamps province of the Ocala Uplift district, a district of mostly low rolling limestone plains which have been sculpted by streams and by dissolution of the underlying limestone. The proposed lands are in a landscape of broad level areas interspersed with areas of rolling uplands; elevations on the proposal properties range from 165-feet above mean sea level (msl) on ridges near the upstream end of the project to 35 feet above mean sea level near the Aucilla River at the project's downstream extent. Soils vary dramatically from well-drained sands on ridges to poorly drained soils in low, level areas. With a few exceptions, most of the uplands have been converted to pine plantation, and most are still managed at least in part for silviculture, with a smaller portion dedicated to agriculture and cattle. Lower areas nearer the streams and poorly drained level areas are mostly forested, although some harvesting of swamps has taken place.

Basin swamp is the most widespread natural community type in the project area, making up about 16% of the total project acreage, or slightly less than 1/3 of the remaining naturally vegetated area. This natural community occurs in irregularly shaped basins on most of the project parcels. Typically these areas have a canopy of cypress (*Taxodium* sp.) and black gum (*Nyssa biflora*), although other species such as sweetbay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), and water and laurel oak (*Quercus nigra* and *Q. laurifolia*) are occasional. Herbaceous plants, including sugarcane plume grass (*Saccharum giganteum*), Virginia chain fern (*Woodwardia*

virginica), netted chain fern (*Woodwardia areolata*), Rumex sp., sedges (*Carex* spp.) and soft rush (*Juncus effusus*). Ecotones of swamps on the North Florida Timber holdings tract were rutted by logging equipment and had piled logging debris. Old cypress stumps and the absence of large cypresses are evidence of past selective logging in a few locations; aerial photos also indicate that a very large basin swamp on the MWF IV Osceola tract and a smaller one on the northeastern portion of the Adams tract were heavily logged in recent decades.

Bottomland forest occurs commonly in somewhat low areas that are nonetheless not prone to frequent flooding, such as higher portions of swamp drainages and slight elevations above floodplains. This community covers a large area of the Pines of Avalon Tract, and in scattered locations in a few other project parcels, totaling about 14% of the proposal's acreage. The canopy consists of southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*), live oak (*Quercus virginiana*), water oak, swamp chestnut oak (*Quercus michauxii*), and spruce pine (*Pinus glabra*). These forests tend to have a lush groundcover of wood oats (*Chasmanthium laxum*), and occasional netted chain fern. The midstory is generally open, consisting of occasional shrubs such as highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*) and large sweet gallberry (*Ilex coriacea*), as well as switchcane (*Arundinaria gigantea*).

Hydric hammocks occur in on slightly elevated but generally level areas, sometimes just above a floodplain, sometimes adjoining basin swamps, and sometimes as relatively large hardwood islands within pine plantations. Hydric hammock is found throughout the project area, but particularly large blocks of this community are mapped in the Pines of Avalon tract. Laurel oak is the dominant canopy species, and cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*) and bluestem palm (*Sabal minor*) are frequent. Elliott's blueberry (*Vaccinium elliotii*) can be common, and wood oats may form a near carpet on the forest floor. Because this community can be difficult to distinguish from other hardwood communities in aerial photos, some areas mapped as hydric hammock that were not visited during the site assessment may contain bottomland forest or basin swamp communities as well.

Baygalls, forested wetlands hydrated by soil seepage, occur on the properties as a fringe around swamps, or sometimes as at the bottoms of slight slopes within pine plantations or other forest types. Dominated by evergreen hardwood species, most commonly sweetbay magnolia, loblolly bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*), these also sometimes have black gum and red maple in the canopy. Shrubs including large sweet gallberry and fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*) can be frequent and dense, and netted chain fern occurs on the forest floor. Baygall communities make up approximately 3% of the project area.

Numerous dome swamps are scattered throughout the pine plantations in most of the larger tracts, most notably in the MWF IV Osceola, North Florida Timberlands, Adams, and Pines of Avalon tracts. Most dome swamps in the project area have black gum and pond cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*) in the canopy. A few lacked cypress; in some cases this appears to be natural, whereas in others, cypress stumps indicated that this species had been selectively removed. Other canopy trees include red maple, laurel oak, and/or sweetbay magnolia. These swamps have an open to dense shrub layer, with fetterbush and occasional Virginia sweetspire (*Itea virginica*). Laurel greenbrier (*Smilax laurifolia*) is common; herbaceous species, often at the outer edges of the swamp, include foxtail clubmoss (*Lycopodiella alopecuroides*), warty sedge (*Carex verrucosa*), and purple bluestem (*Andropogon glomeratus glaucopsis*).

The majority of the uplands within the proposal have been converted to some other use, but most of the remaining natural upland vegetation is upland hardwood forest. This community is found on the northwestern portion of the Adams tract on ridges above the Aucilla floodplain, and extensive examples are also found on the Welch tract. Elsewhere in the project area, it is found in a few small patches or as a fringe between clear-cuts and adjacent wetlands. Canopy species found in these forests are numerous, including American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), white oak (*Quercus alba*), southern magnolia, swamp chestnut oak, water oak, upland laurel oak (*Quercus hemisphaerica*), sweetbay magnolia, hop-

hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*), loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*), spruce pine. American holly (*Ilex opaca*), Florida maple (*Acer saccharum* subsp. *floridanum*), sparkleberry (*Vaccinium arboreum*) and American hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), are common midstory species. There is a variety of herbaceous species, including Walter's violet (*Viola walteri*), common blue violet (*Viola palmata*), longbract wakerobin (*Trillium underwoodii*), and variable witchgrass (*Dichanthelium commutatum*). Two rare species were documented in the upland hardwood forest during the site visit: crane fly orchid (*Tipularia discolor*, documented on the Adams and Welch tract), and little brown jug (*Asarum arifolium*, documented on the Adams tract).

Depression marshes are small, isolated herbaceous wetlands that are generally surrounded by flatwoods or other fire-dependent pinelands. Like dome swamps, these marshes are interspersed throughout pine plantations on most of the larger project parcels, though the marshes are somewhat less frequent. These wetlands vary depending on their size and depth, but typically have concentric bands of vegetation, with outer zone of grasses such as maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*) and warty panicgrass (*Kellochloa verrucosa*), along with spikerush (*Eleocharis* sp.) and other sedges, primrose willow (*Ludwigia* spp.) and yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris* sp.). Deeper zones in the center have species more tolerant of inundation, and sometimes open water areas with floating aquatic species such as spatterdock (*Nuphar advena*), water lilies (*Nymphaea* sp), and watershield (*Brasenia schreberi*). Woody species such as black gum, pond cypress, or myrtle-leaved holly (*Ilex cassine* var. *myrtifolia*) may occur sporadically in the interior.

Over 30 basin marshes occur sporadically in all of the larger tracts in the Aucilla River Corridor proposal area. By contrast with depression marshes, these are not small isolated marshes surrounded by pinelands, but are relatively large and/or surrounded by swamps or hardwood forest communities. Species present in these communities include maidencane, yellow-eyed grass, bulrushes (*Scirpus* sp.), sedges (*Rhychospora* and *Carex* spp.), and buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*). Some had zones of open water with water lilies, pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*), and/or watershield. Most appear to be in good condition, although a few are undergoing succession to swamp, and one on the MWF IV Osceola tract had evidence of hog damage at its margins. One particularly noteworthy basin marsh, dominated by sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*) and buttonbush, is adjacent to the spring pools on the Adams tract. It is unusual for basin marsh to be continually hydrated with flowing water, and this marsh may share some traits with slough marsh, a natural community more typical of other parts of the state.

Aerial photo analysis suggests that several areas in the proposal properties are wet flatwoods. Most of these are in relatively inaccessible portions of the project area, and no wet flatwoods areas were visited during the site assessment.

A block of floodplain swamp is found at the western edge of the Adams tract along the Aucilla River, and also in a few small areas along tributaries at the southern end of the tract, as well as in the Pines of Avalon and North Florida Timber Holdings tracts. These low forests are influenced by frequent flooding from the surrounding waterways; canopy species typically include black gum, baldcypress (*Taxodium distichum*) and red maple. A variety of herbaceous species can be present, including lizard's tail (*Saururus cernuus*), Savanna panicum (*Phanopyrum gymnocarpon*), royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*), common yellow stargrass (*Hypoxis curtisii*) and Virginia chain fern.

Mesic flatwoods are found in a few areas in the Aucilla Corridor, although this community is relatively rare in the area. Flatwoods occur near the Aucilla River on the McElveen and Cooley tracts, where it occupies an intergrade just above the mesic hammock that adjoins the river, and is mapped in a few other locations as well. Mesic flatwoods in the Aucilla Corridor are characterized by tall canopy of slash pine (*Pinus elliotii*) with an understory of saw palmetto, gallberry (*Ilex glabra*) and staggerbush. There were few if any signs of fire, which is consistent with the paucity of herbaceous species, although bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*) was frequent and one or more wiregrass (*Aristida stricta*) plants persisted in a mowed area.

Shrub bog communities are found at several locations in the project area. They occur in small areas at the margins of swamps, possibly as a result of shrub encroachment into former wet prairie communities. Large areas of baygall or basin swamp that have been cutover have a similar signature on aerial photos, and may now better resemble shrub bog. These areas have a dense canopy of titi and fetterbush, generally under 20 feet high, as well as some loblolly bay and swamp bay. Laurel greenbrier is common. At one site, a few pond pine (*Pinus serotina*) are present. Other than sphagnum mosses and occasional beaksedges (*Rhynchospora* sp.), there are few groundcover plants.

In areas along the Aucilla River in the Dobson and McElveen tracts where the river is somewhat incised, the vegetation surrounding the waterway is mesic hammock rather than floodplain. These forests of live oak and water oak have a shrub layer with saw palmetto, and herbaceous species such as partridge pea (*Mitchella repens*) and goldenrod (*Solidago* sp.). Wood oats are common, and blackseed needlegrass (*Piptochaetium avenaceum*) occurred as well.

One sinkhole pond, less than an acre in size, is in the upland hardwood forest of the Welch tract. Water oak and live oak grow on the slope of the basin, and no aquatic plants were seen growing in the pond itself.

The Adams property contains multiple springs that were only recently documented. The largest is a 2nd magnitude spring that is one of the most significant springs on the Aucilla. Water emerges in two boils into a series of impoundments connected by culverts with weirs; the impoundments are fringed by grasses, sedges, pennywort (*Hydrocotyle* sp.), water hemlock (*Cicuta maculata*), and dogfennel (*Eupatorium capillifolium*), with occasional red maple and cypress. Berms between pools were vegetated with fogfruit (*Phyla nodiflora*), and spatterdock grows in the pools. One additional small spring, in the nearby upland hardwood forest, is a 2-3' fissure feeding a pool a few feet in diameter fringed by sedges and ferns. Additional small springs in the immediate vicinity of the others are believed to hydrate the marsh that is adjacent to the main spring impoundments.

The water from the main springs on the Adams property flows through impoundments and ditches a short distance before entering upland hardwood forest and follows a natural channel, and can be classified as a spring run stream. The banks of the stream are fairly steep, and there is little to no floodplain. Shallow water at the margins of the spring run stream are covered with a heavy growth of golden club (*Orontium aquaticum*) and a dense mat of cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*). This stream flows approximately .3 miles, feeding into the Aucilla River.

The larger springs in the project area issue from an aquatic cave system that has received only limited exploration. Aquatic caves may provide habitat for a variety of unique animals, but whether any rare species are present is not known.

Several other natural communities, each accounting for a small portion (less than 1%) of the proposal acreage, were mapped based on aerial photos and other data sources, but could not be confirmed during the site visit. These include possible remnant areas of upland pine and possible wet prairie as a fringe around a few dome or basin swamps. In addition, 3 ponds on the project area are mapped as swamp lakes. A marshy swale on the North Florida Timber Holdings property is separated from the river by a slight ridge of bottomland forest; this is likely a floodplain marsh, hydrated by riverine flooding.

While numerous natural communities are found across the Aucilla Corridor parcels, the largest landcover type, over 6,500 acres, is pine plantation. Across the various project tracts, these plantations vary dramatically in their structure, composition, and management. Plantations on the North Florida Timber Holdings, Pines of Avalon, and MWF IV Osceola tracts are typically slash and loblolly pine. Younger stands contain *Smilax* spp., young water oak and sweetgum, broomsedge (*Andropogon virginicus*), and dogfennel. In a few cases, remnant species indicative of former natural pinelands, such as silkgrass (*Pityopsis* spp.) and seedling southern red oak (*Quercus falcata*) occasionally persisted

among the planted pines, but this was not common and was most often observed along roadsides. Some stands are densely overgrown and in need of thinning. Pine plantations on the Welch tract differed from other pine stands observed during site visits. While older stands were also slash pine and loblolly, they typically showed evidence of fire, were generally thinned to low density. Extensive areas of the Welch tract were recently planted with longleaf pine, which make up the majority of the pine stands on the property.

The Cooley property and a portion of the Adams tract have significant areas of improved pasture. These consist of non-native pasture grasses including bahiagrass and centipedegrass, with a few native ruderal species, and occasional remnant trees such as live oak. At intergrades with surrounding natural communities near the river, a variety of native plants such as yellow-eyed grass and multiple St. John’s worts (*Hypericum* spp.) were fairly common. Tropical soda apple (*Solanum viarum*) was seen in pasture on the Cooley tract but was not abundant. According to the applicant, the area currently in bahiagrass pasture on the Champion tract is slated to be planted with longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*).

Semi-improved pasture is uncommon in the project area, but does occur in a significant area on the west side of the Adams tract, where it is reported to be used for haying. Although this area had been recently mowed and could not be closely inspected during the site visit, it appeared to be dominated by native grasses, herbs, and low-statured shrubs, and it is possible that the native plant diversity in these areas is relatively high.

Agriculture is a significant land use on only one of the properties included in the proposal. Cotton and peanuts are grown on the Champion tract, occupying most of its upland acreage and a majority of the parcel overall. The fields were fallow at the time of the site visit, with only a low growth of ruderal herbaceous species such as rabbit tobacco (*Gamochoeta* sp.).

Considerable acreages on the North Florida Timber Holdings, Pines of Avalon, and Osceola properties have recently been harvested for timber and not yet replanted. Some of these were former pine plantation, while some newly harvested areas on the MWF IV Osceola property had cypress and hardwood stumps, standing water, and remnant species such as warty sedge, fetterbush, and spruce pine, suggesting that some these cleared areas were recently basin swamp or bottomland. In addition to timber harvesting areas, a few wildlife food plots, particularly on the Welch tract, are included in the acreage mapped as clearing/regeneration.

Small developed areas are on several of the project parcels, although they make up a very small percent of the total project area. The Adams tract, Cooley tract, and Welch tract each have a residence onsite, along with typical outbuildings including small sheds and pole barns. On the Champion tract, buildings associated with the agricultural operation include a historic tobacco barn and the former Aucilla rail depot, which was relocated to the site. A county-maintained public boat ramp on the Aucilla River, consisting mainly of a small gravel parking area, is a noteworthy feature on the Adams tract. Table 1 provides a list of the landcover types identified on the proposal and their approximate acreages.

Table 1. Natural communities and landcover types within Florida Forever proposal

Community or Landcover	Acres	Percent of Proposal
basin swamp	2971	16%
bottomland forest	2632	14%
hydric hammock	1674	9%
baygall	555	3%
dome swamp	540	3%
upland hardwood forest	446	2%

Community or Landcover	Acres	Percent of Proposal
depression marsh	244	1%
wet flatwoods	220	1%
basin marsh	215	1%
floodplain swamp	173	1%
shrub bog	112	1%
mesic flatwoods	85	1%
upland pine	78	<1%
mesic hammock	46	<1%
clastic upland lake	45	<1%
wet prairie	7	<1%
floodplain marsh	4	<1%
sinkhole pond	4	<1%
swamp lake	3	<1%
blackwater stream	1	<1%
pine plantation	6721	36%
improved pasture	842	5%
semi-improved pasture	271	2%
agriculture	240	1%
clearing/regeneration	140	1%
clear-cut pine plantation	66	<1%
utility corridor	62	<1%
road	55	<1%
successional hardwood forest	49	<1%
artificial pond	40	<1%
developed	24	<1%
borrow area	5	<1%
canal/ditch	4	<1%
impoundment	3	<1%
Totals	18575	100%

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)

The Aucilla River Corridor is a Florida Forever proposal that includes both less-than-fee (eight properties) and fee simple (1 property) properties. These lands extend approximately 22 miles along the Aucilla River watershed and would afford protection to portions of the Aucilla River shoreline (~0.8 miles), its tributaries (~1.9 miles), and wetlands associated with the Aucilla River.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Florida Landscape Assessment Model (FLAM) is a GIS model that determines the landscape value based on natural resources and fish and wildlife habitat. The FLAM ranks habitat from a 0-10; a rank of 10 being of greatest value. The mean FLAM score for this project is 6.6. Approximately 48% is identified as Priority 1 or 2 (of 5) for the Critical Lands and Waters Identification Project. Areas within the project are Priorities 1 and 5 (of 5) of the Florida Ecological Greenways Network (FEGN). The National Wetlands Inventory data shows 46% classified as wetlands.

Less-than-fee properties

Eight different tracts are proposed for conservation easements. While each of these properties is unique, the primary commonality would be the protection of the Aucilla River watershed, including 0.8 miles of the Aucilla River, 0.7 miles of the Little Aucilla River, 1.2 miles of Beasley Creek, and extensive areas of wetlands associated with these rivers. Protection of these properties will benefit a multitude of wetland-dependent species and various freshwater fish, increase connections between multiple existing conservation lands, and create an important wildlife corridor for both wetland and upland wildlife species in a region of the state facing increasing development.

Based on field inspections, the majority of the Aucilla River floodplain and associated wetlands were in relatively good condition across all properties and a conservation easement would be important in preserving these areas into the future. Most of the upland habitats have been altered and converted to either pine plantations, agricultural pastures or cropland. However, it is worth noting that several properties (Pines of Avalon, North Florida Timber Holdings, and Champion tracts) have begun management practices more favorable for wildlife habitat (e.g., longleaf pine restoration, timber thinning, and prescribed burning). The Adams Tract includes multiple springs, some of which have been highly altered in the past by the construction of ponds for aquaculture that have altered the spring runs and hydrology. But here are plans to restore these springs in the future. There is also a unique seepage marsh and a relatively pristine and plant-diverse hydric hammock down flow of the spring run.

Several wildlife species and/or their sign were observed during field inspections, including wood stork (State and Federally Threatened), gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*; State Threatened), various wading birds, and white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*). Based on other reports, eastern diamondback rattlesnake (*Crotalus adamanteus*), sandhill crane (*Antigone canadensis pratensis*; State Threatened), Florida black bear, swallow-tailed kite (*Elanoides forficatus*), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Bachman's sparrow (*Peucaea aestivalis*), mud sunfish (*Acantharchus pomotis*; considered a rare species), and beaver (*Castor canadensis*) have also been documented.

Although significant damage was not observed, feral hog signs were observed on the property. Chinese tallow (*Triadica sebifera*), a Category I invasive species, was present on the Champion Tract but is being controlled.

While these less-than-fee properties are unlikely to provide direct public recreational opportunities, larger properties (e.g., Pines of Avalon) currently include hunting leases thus offering some level of recreational opportunity. Also, preserving portions of the Aucilla River shoreline would maintain a more primitive experience for those paddling the Aucilla River.

Fee-simple property

The MWF IV Osceola property is proposed for fee simple acquisition and is currently managed as an investment timber property and leased for hunting. Prior ownership indicates a history of industrial timber production (e.g., Southern Timber Venture LLC [2000-2016], Packaging Corporation of America [1999-2000], Four States Timber Venture [1991-1999], and Georgia Pacific [1981-1991]).

This property is bisected by I-10 with approximately 560 acres lying south of I-10 and the remainder north. The property includes 2 outparcels (~28 ac. and ~120 ac.) and there is also a 214-acre inholding owned by Georgia Pacific LLC. A railway and a utility transmission line bisect the northern portion of the property.

With a history of industrial timber production, most of the uplands (~1,297 ac.) have been converted to pine plantations that are predominately slash pine. Some stands were bedded, resulting in hydrologic alteration. The pine plantations observed during the field review were planted at high densities, are in various stages of growth, and some stands have been recently clear-cut. There was limited evidence of any recent use of prescribed fire. If this property was acquired and placed under state management,

the restoration of existing pine plantations and clear-cuts to a more natural condition with prescribed fire, timber thinning, replanting longleaf pines, and the release of native ground cover would greatly benefit a diverse array of upland wildlife species endemic to the area.

The property includes approximately 1,950 acres of wetland habitats. The marshes, dome swamps, and other wetlands observed during field inspections appeared to be in relatively good condition, but it appeared some of the basin swamps may have experienced some timber harvest in the past. Due to the lack of prescribed fire, there was evidence of tree encroachment into some of the basin marshes. If these lands were acquired, these wetland habitats could be improved through hydrological restoration, prescribed fire, and possibly some hand removal of encroaching trees. Ultimately, these wetland habitats would be important for many wetland wildlife species, as well as for conserving water resources.

Habitat for game species, such as white-tailed deer and eastern wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo silvestris*) is adequate, and with active management of habitat, could be greatly improved to better support northern bobwhite quail (*Colinus virginianus*). Habitat for many common nongame species appears adequate but could also be greatly improved through active management.

While no evidence of Florida black bears was observed during the field review, they are common in this area and 100% of the area is classified as bear range. In this regard, if acquired, it would be worthwhile to work in partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to explore the possibility of installing a wildlife underpass under I-10 to connect the north and south portions of the property that would help to reduce roadkill of black bears and other wildlife crossing the Interstate.

No significant feral hog damage was observed during the field inspection. Signs of feral hog were observed suggesting there is a population of feral hogs on the property that could use some level of control through hunting or other means.

In examining the 2009 Strategic Habitat Conservation Area dataset, 72% of the property is designated as American swallow-tailed kite habitat and a relatively small area of Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) habitat. The rare fish imperiled waters dataset, designates 56% of the property as important for the eastern mudminnow (*Umbra pygmaea*). The striped newt (*Notophthalmus perstriatus*), a candidate for federal listing, occurs at a site near the property boundary and could potentially be present in the ephemeral wetlands located on the property.

If acquired, this property would provide high-quality public recreational opportunities through public hunting (e.g., white-tailed deer, wild turkey, northern bobwhite, waterfowl, and small game) and nature-based recreation (e.g., bird watching, wildlife observation, hiking). A large interior pond would provide fishing opportunities. The proximity to I-10 would make the property easily accessible to the public. The interior roads observed during the field inspection were well dispersed throughout the property, were in relatively good condition, and would provide good access to the interior of the property for hunting and other recreation.

The Aucilla River Corridor properties in their current condition will provide conservation value as both a less-than-fee and fee simple acquisition for the State of Florida. The primary benefit of this body of properties would be filling in voids among numerous existing conservation lands within the Aucilla River basin. This would prevent future development that could negatively impact this important watershed and wildlife habitat and would be a significant step toward the creation of an important wildlife corridor in support of the 2021 Florida Wildlife Corridor Act. A wildlife corridor in this area would be of particular benefit to the Florida black bear, as it would be a step toward establishing a long-term connection between the Apalachicola and Osceola bear populations. Additionally, the protection of sections of the Aucilla River shoreline, tributaries, and wetlands will provide great value for wetland wildlife and water

resources into the future. The proposed protection, restoration, and management of uplands would also benefit a multitude of upland wildlife species.

GOALS, MEASURES AND CRITERIA

GOAL A:

ENHANCE THE COORDINATION AND COMPLETION OF LAND ACQUISITION PROJECTS

Measure A1:

The number of acres acquired through the state's land acquisition programs that contribute to the enhancement of essential natural resources, ecosystem service parcels, and connecting linkage corridors as identified and developed by the best available scientific data.

If acquired, 18,575 acres would contribute to the enhancement of essential natural resources, ecosystem service parcels, and connecting linkage corridors.

Measure A2:

The number of acres protected through the use of alternatives to fee simple acquisition.

Approximately 14,589 acres or (78%) of the project is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition via conservation easement.

Measure A3:

The number of shared acquisition projects among Florida Forever funding partners and partners with other funding sources, including local governments and the federal government.

Tall Timbers Research Station through its partnership with the National Resources Conservation Service Regional Conservation Partnership Program (NRCS-RCPP) will be contributing to the purchase of conservation easements within the project area.

GOAL B:

INCREASE THE PROTECTION OF FLORIDA'S BIODIVERSITY AT THE SPECIES, NATURAL COMMUNITY, AND LANDSCAPE LEVELS

Measure B1:

The number of acres acquired of significant Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (SHCA).

The SHCA Florida Forever Conservation Needs layer identifies potential habitat conservation areas for 33 wildlife species on private lands. Priority 1 and 2 represent habitat for species considered imperiled or critically imperiled in Florida. The Florida Forever Measure Evaluation (FFME) (Appendix B) reports the site contains approximately 17,221 acres (93% of site) of Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas. This is mostly within Priority 3 (73% of site) and Priority 5 (20%) with the remainder in Priority 2 (< 1%).

Measure B2:

The number of acres acquired of highest priority conservation areas for Florida's rarest species.

An analysis of priority conservation areas based on Florida Forever Conservation Needs Assessment data may be found in the FFME. Habitat conservation priorities for 281 of Florida's rarest species were mapped and divided into six priority classes. The FFME shows the acres for each priority class found on the Aucilla River Corridor proposal. Overall, the site contains approximately 13,224 acres (71% of site) of rare species habitat. The habitat is mostly divided between Priority 6 (16% of site), Priority 5 (45% of site), and Priority 4 (9% of site), with the remainder in Priority 3 (2% of site).

Table 2 lists the acres of habitat for each species that may be found on the site, based on the FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities. Please note that habitats for these species overlap, so that the sum total of habitat for all species is more than the total acreage of the priority conservation areas.

Table 2. Rare species habitat based on FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities*

Scientific Name	Common Name	Global Rank	Acres
<i>Drymarchon couperi</i>	eastern indigo snake	G3	340
<i>Mycteria americana</i>	wood stork	G4	4,159
<i>Ursus americanus floridanus</i>	Florida black bear	G5T2	10,344

*For 281 species with the greatest conservation need.

Measure B3:

The number of acres acquired of significant landscapes, landscape linkages, and conservation corridors, giving priority to completing linkages.

The FFME reports approximately 18,451 acres (99%) of the proposed project contributes to protection of ecological greenways with 69% of the acreage falling within Priority 2 areas, and 31% in Priority 5. Priority 1 and 2 areas represent a significant opportunity to maintain the large connected landscape needed to conserve viable populations of Florida’s flagship animal species such as the Florida panther and Florida black bear.

Measure B4:

The number of acres acquired of under-represented native ecosystems.

The Florida Forever natural community analysis includes only those communities that are under-represented on existing conservation lands. This analysis provides a conservative estimate of the extent of these communities, because it identifies only relatively undisturbed portions of these communities that occur within their historic range. The Florida Forever Measures table lists the acreages of under-represented natural communities found on the site. Based on this analysis, the Aucilla Corridor proposal contains 446 acres of upland hardwood forest (2% of site), 305 acres of mesic/wet flatwoods (2% of site), and 78 acres of upland pine (< 1% of the site).

Measure B5:

The number of landscape-sized protection areas of at least 50,000 acres that exhibit a mosaic of predominantly intact or restorable natural communities established through new acquisition projects, or augmentations to previous projects.

The Aucilla River Corridor proposal, along with adjacent conservation lands that include Middle Aucilla Conservation Area, Aucilla Wildlife Management Area, Big Bend Wildlife Management Area, Plank Road State Forest, St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, and Econfina River State Park, would contribute to a contiguous landscape-sized protection area of >172,000 acres.

Measure B6:

The percentage increase in the number of occurrences of imperiled species on publicly managed conservation areas.

The waterways, forests, and wetlands of these sites potentially provide habitat for many rare species of conservation concern. Those that are documented or reported from the site are listed in Table 3. Observations of note during the site visits include one gopher tortoise which was observed on the MWF IV Osceola tract, although habitat for this species is not widespread in the project area. A mixed species blackbird flock observed on the Pines of Avalon Tract during the site visit contained an unknown number of rusty blackbirds (*Euphagus carolinus*). Although this species is not listed and is not tracked by FNAI, it has undergone a precipitous range wide decline in recent decades; and extensive

appropriate foraging habitat occurs throughout the wetlands on the proposal area. The site visit documented cranefly orchid on the Welch and Adams tracts, and little brown jug on the Adams tract. It is likely that more extensive surveys of these properties could reveal populations of additional rare plant species. A large number of rare invertebrates are limited to aquatic caves in north Florida; the caves underlying the spring system could be expected to provide habitat for rare crayfish, amphipods, or other obligate cave species, although this has not been determined.

The FFME lists the number of Element Occurrences by Global Rank (G-rank) that are found on the proposal. Note that the number of occurrences does not necessarily match the number of species in the following table because a) some species may have more than one occurrence on the proposal site, or b) some species observed on site do not meet the criteria for addition to the FNAI database at this time. Table 3 contains species falling into any of these observational categories, as well as species gleaned from other sources (e.g., Florida Breeding Bird Atlas) with different degrees of locational precision. Species ranks and conservation status are described below. Rarity rankings are listed in the following order: FNAI global (G, T) and state (S) ranks, federal status, state status. Species ranks and conservation status are described in Appendix D.

Table 3. Rare plants and animals documented or reported to occur within the proposed project.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Global Rank	State Rank	Federal Status	State Status
Rare plants documented on site					
<i>Asarum arifolium</i>	little brown jug	G5*	S3	N	ST
<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	cardinal flower	G5	SNR	N	ST
<i>Osmunda regalis</i>	royal fern	G5	SNR	N	CE
<i>Rhapidophyllum hystrix</i>	needle palm	G4	S4	N	CE
<i>Tipularia discolor</i>	cranefly orchid	G4G5	S4	N	ST
Additional rare plants reported on site by applicant					
<i>Gonolobus suberosus</i>	anglepod	G5	SNR	N	ST
Rare animals documented on site					
<i>Acantharchus pomotis</i>	mud sunfish	G4G5	S3	N	N
<i>Ursus americanus floridanus</i>	Florida black bear	G5T4	S4	N	N
<i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>	gopher tortoise	G3	S3	C	ST
<i>Eudocimus albus</i>	white ibis	G5	S4	N	N
Additional rare animals reported on site by applicant					
<i>Anthanassa texana seminole</i>	Seminole crescent	G5T3T4	S2S3	N	N
<i>Alligator mississippiensis</i>	American alligator	G5	S4	SAT	ST(S/A)
<i>Antigone canadensis pratensis</i>	Florida sandhill crane	G5T2	S2	N	ST
<i>Crotalus adamanteus</i>	eastern diamondback rattlesnake	G4	S3	N	N
<i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>	gopher tortoise	G3	S3	C	ST
<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	little blue heron	G5	S4	N	ST
<i>Egretta thula</i>	snowy egret	G5	S3	N	N

Scientific Name	Common Name	Global Rank	State Rank	Federal Status	State Status
<i>Egretta tricolor</i>	tricolored heron	G5	S4	N	ST
<i>Elanoides forficatus</i>	swallow-tailed kite	G5	S2	N	N
<i>Haliaeetus erythrocephalus</i>	bald eagle	G5	S3	N	N
<i>Mycteria americana</i>	wood stork	G4	S2	T	FT
<i>Peucaea aestivalis</i>	Bachman's sparrow	G3	S3	N	N

GOAL C:

PROTECT, RESTORE AND MAINTAIN THE QUALITY OF NATURAL FUNCTIONS OF LAND, WATER, AND WETLAND SYSTEMS OF THE STATE

Measure C1:

The number of acres of publicly-owned land identified as needing restoration; enhancement, and management, acres undergoing restoration or enhancement; acres with restoration activities completed, and acres managed to maintain such restored or enhanced conditions; the number of acres which represent actual or potential imperiled species habitat; the number of acres which are available pursuant to a management plan to restore, enhance, repopulate, and manage imperiled species habitat; and the number of acres of imperiled species habitat managed, restored, and enhanced, repopulated, or acquired.

Most of the property is offered for less-than-fee acquisition, intended to be utilized in a manner consistent with existing uses. The natural bottomland forest, upland hardwood forest, dome swamps, and marshes are mostly in good ecological condition, as are many of the basin swamps. Two of the landowners are taking significant steps to enhance the condition of pine plantations and former pasture areas by planting longleaf pine, and at least one manages pine plantations using regular prescribed fire. However, the relative lack of remnant native species such as wiregrass in the extensive acreage of pine plantations would render it very costly to restore upland native communities. Extensive upland restoration to the degree that would be required is not likely to be feasible or compatible with the intended future uses of most of these properties, although these actions could conceivably be undertaken on the MWF IV Osceola Tract if acquired.

Many of the current pine plantations and some of the recently harvested areas in the project are in low-lying, poorly drained areas that were likely swamp or bottomland in the past. Facilitating the return of these communities to a condition closer to the original forests could have ecological and water quality benefits. Whether these would regenerate on their own or whether this would need to be facilitated by planting is unclear, but wet soils and relative inaccessibility of some of these areas could pose logistical challenges for any restoration efforts.

Measure C4:

The number of acres acquired that protect natural floodplain functions.

The FFME reports approximately 12,983 acres (70%) of the proposed project may contribute to the protection of natural floodplain function. This area is mostly divided between Priority 3 (25% of site), Priority 2 (21% of site), and Priority 4 (17% of site), with the remainder in Priority 1 (7% of site). Priority 1 areas the most natural with the lowest intensity land uses.

Measure C5:

The number of acres acquired that protect surface waters of the State.

The FFME reports approximately 18,278 acres (98%) of the proposed project could provide protection for those surface waters of the State that currently remain in good condition. This area is divided between Priority 4 (32% of site), Priority 5 (18% of site), Priority 6 (16% of site), Priority 3 (13% of site), and Priority 2 (13% of site), with the remainder in Priority 7 (6% of site). These areas represent acreage

that contributes to the protection of state-designated Outstanding Florida Waters, springs, rare fish habitat, or other surface waters.

Measure C8:

The number of acres of functional wetland systems protected.

The FFME reports approximately 9,811 acres (53%) of the proposed project would provide protection for functional wetland systems. This area is divided between Priority 2 (20% of site), Priority 3 (17% of site), Priority 4 (9% of site), and Priority 1 (7% of site). Priority 1 areas the most natural with the lowest intensity land uses.

Measure C11:

The number of acres of public conservation lands in which upland invasive, exotic plants are under maintenance control.

A few small patches of Japanese climbing fern (*Lygodium japonicum*), Chinese tallow (*Sapium sebiferum*) and isolated individuals of tropical soda apple were observed during the site visit. Overall, however, invasive plant infestations appear to be very limited throughout the project, although the entire project area was not surveyed. Approximately 8,000 acres within the project has some form of active management of invasive, exotic plants in the upland areas. Exotic plant species are not actively controlled on the Welch, Adams, and Dobson tracts. On the Champion tract about 1 acre would need to be treated for Chinese tallow and less than 1 acre should be treated for Japanese climbing fern. If acquisition of easements or title interest moves forward, a more detailed baseline assessment of invasive plants should be conducted.

GOAL 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

Measure D1:

The number of acres acquired which provide retention and storage of surface water in naturally occurring storage areas, such as lakes and wetlands, consistent with the maintenance of water resources or water supplies and consistent with district water supply plans.

The project is within the Aucilla Basin and the Wacissa Primary Focus Area. The project appears to be mostly timber and wetlands and contains little to no development. There are significant natural resources present (lakes and/or ponds, creeks and/or streams, and springs) such that protecting the site can provide additional long-term benefits of retention and natural storage throughout the site's wetland communities as well as a protected corridor for wildlife movement. The project currently provides significant water retention and storage in wetlands and springs. Major portions of the project are within Zone A and Zone AE flood areas. Water improvement projects would only increase the ability of the project area to achieve additional storage. However, the number of properties and size of the project makes it difficult to estimate the acres of natural retention within the project area.

Measure D2:

The quantity of water made available through the water resource development component of a district water supply plan for which a water management district is responsible.

This project is not in a District water supply plan. However, a portion of the project was under consideration by the District to be purchased. The purchase was not authorized by the Governing Board.

Measure D3:

The number of acres acquired of groundwater recharge areas critical to springs, sinks, aquifers, other natural systems, or water supply.

The FFME reports, that 18,575 (100%) acres proposed for acquisition would contribute to aquifer recharge, with most acres categorized as priority 3 (49%) or priority 4 (41%). The property is in a restoration plan area (Wacissa Basin Management Action Plan), and the project would provide surface and ground water protection.

Table 4. Spatial Analysis for Potential Water Quality Benefits of Aucilla River Corridor

Categories	Scoring Criteria	Project Score
DEP High Profile Springs (In 1,2,3 or > spring sheds)	12, 24, 36	0
DEP Select Agricultural Land Use (0-30%, >30-65%, >65%)	4,8,12	4
DEP Florida Aquifer Vulnerability (FAVA)	4,7,10	10
DEP Special Nutrient Impaired WBIDs	9	0
DEP Distance to Major Lakes (100, 500, 1000 meters)	8,7,6	0
DEP Springsheds or within 5 miles	10, 7	7
DEP BMAPs	10	10
DEP Distance to Major Rivers (100, 500, 1000 meters)	6,5,4	6
Total Possible	101	37

GIS Evaluation score is converted to a 1 to 5 value (low to high),

FINAL DEAR SCORE = 3 – Medium water quality protection benefits.

GOAL E:

INCREASE NATURAL RESOURCE-BASED PUBLIC RECREATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Measure E1:

The number of acres acquired that are available for natural resource-based public recreation or education.

The 3,985 acres of the MWF Osceola IV Tract would provide natural resource-based public recreation or education if acquired. This tract is proposed for fee-simple acquisition and would be managed by the FWC. The remaining acreage of Aucilla River Corridor project is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition with no public access.

Measure E3:

The number of new resource-based recreation facilities, by type, made available on public land.

The majority of the project is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition with no public access and no new resource-based recreation facilities would be made available. Facilities for outdoor resource-based recreation could be developed on the MWF Osceola Tract according to the management prospectus outlined in Appendix D, should this property be acquired.

GOAL F:

PRESERVE SIGNIFICANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL OR HISTORIC SITES

Measure F1:

The increase in the number of and percentage of historic and archaeological properties listed in the Florida Master Site File or National Register of Historic Places which are protected or preserved for public use.

Less-than-fee acquisitions within the Aucilla River Corridor project would not increase the number of and percentage of historic and archaeological properties listed in the Florida Master Site File or

National Register of Historic Places which are preserved for public use; however, through the conservation easement agreement, Aucilla River Corridor would protect a number of historic and archaeological sites that are listed in the Florida Master Site File.

Any portion of the Aucilla River Corridor project that is acquired fee simple would increase the number of and percentage of historic and archaeological properties listed in the Florida Master Site File which are both protected and preserved for public use.

Measure F2:

The increase in the number and percentage of historic and archaeological properties that are in state ownership.

Less-than-fee acquisitions within the Aucilla River Corridor project would not meet Measure F2, as the number and percentage of historic and archaeological properties on the project would remain privately owned.

Any portion of the Aucilla River Corridor project that is purchased fee simple would meet Measure F2, as this would increase the number and percentage of historic and archaeological properties that are in state ownership.

CULTURAL RESOURCES:

According to the Division of Historical Resource's (DHR) Florida Master Site File, there are currently 30 archaeological sites, three historic structures, and three resource groups recorded as being located within or intersecting the boundary of the Aucilla River Corridor project. The assemblage of sites found throughout the project collectively contain evidence of a variety of pre-Columbian and historical occupations encompassing at least 12,000 years of Florida history, representing a broad range of cultural periods from the region's first human inhabitants through the twentieth century. The recorded historic structures and resource groups located within the project include a building complex associated with the Florida tung oil industry of the mid-twentieth century (JE822) and the former Atlantic Coast Line (ACL) Railroad Perry Cutoff (JE1992).

Given what is known of the high density of archaeological sites in the region, particularly in areas adjacent to the Aucilla River, and the fact that very little of the project area has been subject to professional archaeological survey, there is a very high potential for more, as-yet-unrecorded sites to exist. There are 418 archaeological sites, 422 historic structures, and 11 resource groups recorded within a 5-mile radius of the boundaries of the project.

FIELD OBSERVATIONS:

All archaeological and historic sites currently listed in the Florida Master Site File that were observed during the field review appear to be in good condition. On the Champion property, there are two structures and at least one archaeological site that have not been recorded and listed in the Florida Master Site File. Based upon our field observation, there are likely a number of additional unrecorded sites throughout the Aucilla River Corridor project. This includes lithic artifacts that were removed from the spring basin on the Adams property. These artifacts are now housed at the Aucilla Research Institute in Monticello, Florida, and DHR would recommend recording this spring as an archaeological site based upon these findings. Should any artifacts be observed in the future, in the spring or elsewhere within the project, DHR recommends leaving them in place and contacting a DHR archaeologist.

The dangers to archaeological resources on the project come in the form of ground disturbance from agricultural or silvicultural practices and artifact collecting. Should any portions of this project be acquired (less-than-fee or fee-simple), it is recommended that all known and unrecorded cultural resources are recorded in the Florida Master Site File; noting their current condition, and for

conservation easement land owners to be made aware of their responsibility to neither disturb nor destroy the protected resources on their property.

Table 5. Recorded Historical Resources for Aucilla River Corridor Florida Forever Project

Site Name	Site Number	FMSF Category	Site Type
Bell	8JE00075	Archaeological Site	Indeterminate
NN	8JE00136	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
NN	8JE00137	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
NN	8JE00138	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
Thomas Road 1	8JE00231	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
NN	8JE00362	Archaeological Site	Artifact Scatter - Prehistoric
NN	8JE00363	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
Little Sink	8JE00364	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
NN	8JE00368	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
NN	8JE00382	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
NN	8JE00383	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
NN	8JE00384	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
May's Place	8JE00389	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
Chance Rapids 1	8JE00567A	Archaeological Site	Historic refuse / dump
P112-4	8JE00567C	Archaeological Site	Artifact scatter-prehistoric
Clear Cut 1	8JE00568	Archaeological Site	Single artifact or isolated find
P112-1	8JE00875	Archaeological Site	Habitation (prehistoric)
P112-2	8JE00876	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
P112-3	8JE00877	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
Beasley Creek	8JE00899	Archaeological Site	Campsite (prehistoric)
ATW-451.11-01	8JE01640	Archaeological Site	Artifact scatter - Prehistoric
Dixie Branch	8JE01764	Archaeological Site	Campsite (prehistoric)
Ironstone scatter	8JE01765	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
Chert scatter	8JE01766	Archaeological Site	Campsite (prehistoric)
Mathis Field Scatter	8JE01780	Archaeological Site	Habitation (prehistoric)
Brad Cooley Site	8JE02198	Archaeological Site	Campsite (prehistoric)
Base Line	8MD00008	Archaeological Site	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter
NN	8MD00010	Archaeological Site	Habitation (prehistoric)
White Sand	8MD00069	Archaeological Site	Campsite (prehistoric)
Buck Pass Site	8MD00350	Archaeological Site	Homestead
Tung Oil Processing Plant Office	8JE00822A	Historic Structure	Wood frame, office (Destroyed)
Tung Oil Processing Plant BLDG 1	8JE00822B	Historic Structure	Masonry, power plant (Destroyed)
Tung Oil Processing Plant BLDG 2	8JE00822C	Historic Structure	Wood frame, power plant (Destroyed)
Tungston Plantation	8JE00822	Resource Group	Building Complex
S F&W-CSX Railroad Corridor	8JE01493	Resource Group	Linear Resource
ACL Railroad (Perry Cutoff)	8JE01992	Resource Group	Linear Resource

Florida Master Site File 2022

GOAL G:**INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF FORESTLAND AVAILABLE FOR SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES****Measure G1:**

The number of acres acquired that are available for sustainable forest management.

The FFME reports approximately 7,400 acres (40% of site) could be available for sustainable forest management, divided between Priority 3 (6,960 acres) and Priority 5 (440 acres). Prioritization is based on four criteria set by the Florida Forest Service (FFS): whether trees are natural or planted, size of tract, distance to market, and hydrology. Priority 5 areas are considered “potential” pinelands; agricultural areas that could be restored to pineland.

Properties within the project would:

- Increase the amount of proper pine management and wildlife habitat around the Aucilla river.
- Increase the amount of riparian habitat along the Aucilla river for sustainable forest management.
- Protect unforested or partially forested land that could be restored or reforested to increase the available acreage for sustainable natural resource management.

Measure G2:

The number of acres of state-owned forestland managed for economic return in accordance with current best management practices.

The MWF Osceola Tract could provide over 2,250 acres of state-owned forestland managed for economic return. The remaining acreage within the project is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition and would not be state-owned.

Measure G3:

The number of acres of forestland acquired that will serve to maintain natural groundwater recharge functions.

The FFME reports approximately 3,901 acres (21%) would provide forestland to maintain natural groundwater recharge functions.

Measure G4:

The percentage and number of acres identified for restoration actually restored by reforestation.

Approximately 2,000+ acres are identified for reforestation on the MWF Osceola IV Tract and about 240 acres, (20% of the property), of the North Florida Timber Holdings is actively being restored through longleaf pine reforestation.

FLORIDA FOREVER CRITERIA

The proposed project meets the following Florida Forever criteria (section 259.105, F.S.)

- The project meets multiple goals described in subsection (4).
- The project enhances or facilitates management of properties already under public ownership. The project has significant archaeological or historic value.
- The project may be acquired, in whole or in part, using alternatives to fee simple, including but not limited to, tax incentives, mitigation funds, or other revenues, the purchase of development rights, hunting rights, agricultural or silvicultural rights, or mineral rights or obtaining conservation easements or flowage easements.
- The project is a joint acquisition, either among public agencies, nonprofit organizations, or private entities, or by a public-private partnership.

The Acquisition and Restoration Council shall give increased priority to:

- Projects for which matching funds are available.
- Projects that can be acquired in less-than-fee ownership, such as a permanent conservation easement.
- Projects that contribute to improving the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater.
- Projects that contribute to improving the water quality and flow of springs.
- Projects for which the state's land conservation plans overlap with the military's need to protect lands, water, and habitat to ensure the sustainability of military missions.

MANAGEMENT

If acquired as a perpetual conservation easement, primary management responsibility would remain with the landowner. Periodic monitoring of the site's management would occur to confirm continued compliance with the conditions of the easement. Monitoring would be coordinated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Division of State Lands (DSL), Office of Environmental Services (OES). If acquired fee-simple the 3,096-acre MWF Osceola Tract would be managed by FWC.

FUNDING SOURCES

Florida Forever. Portions of the Aucilla River Corridor project is also within the northwest Florida sentinel landscape and the associated REPI Partnership Opportunity Area. Tall Timbers Research Station through its partnership with the National Resources Conservation Service Regional Conservation Partnership Program (NRCS-RCPP) will be contributing to the purchases of conservation easements within the project area.

OWNERSHIP PATTERN AND ACQUISITION PLANNING

Title and Legal Access Issues

The project consists of 13 non-contiguous properties, some to be fee acquisitions with the majority being less than fee acquisitions. Legal access from a public right of way would be determined on a per property basis during the appraisal mapping.

Jurisdictional and Sovereignty Lands Issues

Several of the properties are either bisected by or bounded by the Aucilla River, the Little Aucilla River, and/or Beasley Creek, all of which have been determined to be sovereign waterbodies within the subject properties. The extent and resulting impacts of these sovereign lands would be determined during the appraisal mapping. Additionally, approximately 53% of the 18,600 total project acres has been identified as being functional wetland systems. The extent and limits of these systems would be determined during the appraisal mapping by an environmental scientist.

Known Encumbrances (easement, long-term leases, restrictive covenants, etc.)

The easements and encumbrances of record would be determined during the appraisal mapping. A current title insurance commitment would be obtained, or the owner's title insurance policy would be reviewed if the policy is available. The easements and encumbrances would be depicted or noted on the appraisal map.

Description and location of hazardous waste sites, dumps, borrow pits

There are no apparent contamination sites within the project based on the application form.

Estimated Cost of Appraisal and Mapping

DEP's Bureau of Appraisal estimates \$10,000 to \$20,000 in appraisal fees.

Acquisition Phases

Subject to funding, the Aucilla River Corridor Florida Forever project will be purchased in phases.

GOVERNMENT PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT

Contribution to Recreation and Open Space Needs

High Potential: The contribution to Recreation and Open Space Needs would be significant. The size of the project and the fact that Adams, Champion, Dobson, and McElveen tracts all include frontage along the Aucilla River offer important recreational opportunities. Portions of the site are within State of Florida Designated Paddling Trail for the Aucilla River. The purchase of McElveen tract would help to protect almost 700-feet of the paddling trail for continued recreational use. The Adams tract contains a boat ramp to the Aucilla at end of seven bridges road which help to ensure that the property is continued for recreational uses. The purchase of the MWF IV Osceola tract proposed for management by the Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission would create almost 4,000 acres of public land for wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting, hiking and other recreational opportunities. Many of these properties border other existing public lands in the Aucilla Corridor. The protection of the Aucilla Corridor as a whole increases the ability to manage the lands and help preserve game and non-game species providing for enhanced recreational opportunities.

Potential for Losing Significant Natural Attributes or Recreational Open Spaces

High Potential: The potential for losing significant natural attributes located on the property due to development pressure is high. The project would help to protect aquatic resources and 0.8 miles of riverbank along the Aucilla River and 1.2 miles along the Little Aucilla River. The project would help to protect more than 18.5 miles of floodplains along the two rivers. The Adams tract contains a complex of springs that are almost entirely contained within the project boundary. Included are two recently discovered third-magnitude springs which flow directly into the Aucilla river. The project contains some floodplain and wetland forests dominated by bald cypress and swamp tupelo along the Aucilla River. The project sites also contain examples of relatively rare cypress dome swamps and seepage marshes. Examples of bottomland hardwood forests can be found throughout the project area, particularly in the Avalon Timberlands Tract. Pockets of secondary growth upland pine habitats can be found on the Cooley Tracts; the conditions of these habitats will improve significantly after purchase. The MF IV Osceola Tract is proposed to be managed by FWC and will have its pine forests restored to natural conditions that will benefit upland wildlife species.

Several imperiled federal and state listed species are known to exist on, or near the properties, including the federally listed Wood Stork and Red-Cockaded Woodpecker. In addition, the Striped Newt, a candidate for federal listing, occur in habitats similar to the Avalon and MWF IV Osceola tracts, and have been observed on a site nearby. State threatened and endangered species have also been observed within the project boundaries including the American Alligator, Florida Sandhill Crane, Wood Stork, Little Blue Heron, and Tri-Colored Heron. Also observed within the project boundaries are the Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake, Snowy Egret, Swallow-Tailed Kite, White Ibis, Bald Eagle, Bachman's Sparrow, Seminole Texas Crescent, and Florida Black Bear. Some 72 bird species have been documented on visits to the properties. Underwater caves are also known to exist on the site, and which have not been completely explored. Based on other caves in the area, it is possible that unique aquatic troglobitic species may exist in these habitats on the site.

There are a variety of plant species that potentially exist within the project boundary including Southern Wiregrass, Slim-Leaf Pawpaw, various milkweeds, and Bracken Ferns. Undisturbed bottomland forests and floodplain swamps harbor a wide variety of fern species, Needle Palm, Cardinal Flower, Ladies' Tresses Orchids, and Greenfly Orchid.

The sites contain thirty-seven documented cultural resource locations that are in the Florida Master Site File. These include two historic railroad lines and historic buildings on the site that relate to the production of Tung Oil. There are more than 30 known Native American sites found within the project boundaries. The Adams property includes remnants of two of the seven bridges from the historic Seven Bridges Road. This was a road used historically by residents to cross the floodplain swamps of the upper Aucilla in order to use the springs in the area. On the Champion Tract there are two pre-1900 buildings; a tobacco barn and a railroad depot structure, both of which are currently used for storage.

Potential for Being Subdivided

Low to Moderate Potential

Jefferson County

The subject property has low potential for being subdivided. In Jefferson County, the properties are surrounded largely by Agriculture and Conservation Land Uses. The Cooley Tract comes within two miles of land designated in and around Lamont as Mixed Use Suburban Residential. This land use allows residential density of up to four units/acre on septic tanks.

The Pines of Avalon Parcel comes within a mile and a half of lands designated as Mixed-Use Interchange Business around the intersection of 1-10 and US 19 to the northwest of the site. This land use has an impervious surface ratio of 0.80 and does not allow residential uses. The population of Jefferson County is one of the lowest in the state with 14,590 residents according to 2021 BEBR projections. Between 2010 and 2021, the population of the County declined by approximately by 171 persons. According to Department records, there has only been slight land use activity since 1993. There have been only 11 large scale amendments to the comprehensive plan, most of which were text amendments relating to the classification of Agricultural uses. Staff found only one large scale land use change involving a 30-acre agriculture change from Agriculture 20 to Agriculture 5. These statistics are indicative of a relatively low level of Future Land Use Map activity in the County over the last 29 years.

Madison County

In Madison County, the properties are surrounded by properties designated as Agriculture 1 and 2. The Osceola Property appears to skirt the western boundary of Greenville and appears to involve some property within the Residential 1 land use designation. According to the BEBR projections Madison County, the current population of the County is 18,122, and 756 for the nearby town of Greenville. Between 2010 and 2021 the population decreased from 19,224 to 18,122, a decrease of 1,102 residents. According to Department records, there have been more than 20 comprehensive plan amendments since 1993. There have been five amendments within the last 10 years that have involved significant land use changes. These changes have generally been from Conservation use to Agriculture and have involved more than a thousand acres. Most of these land use amendments have occurred within the last 10 years and involved conversion to the Agriculture-2 land use. There have been no large-scale amendments within the last 10 years to convert agricultural property to residential, commercial, or mixed use. There have been no large-scale land use amendments since 2020.

Zoning and Densities within the Project Boundaries

Existing Land Uses and Future Land Use Designations

According to the FWC data model, the largest habitats on the site are: Coniferous Plantations (6,286.23 acres), Mixed-Wetland Hardwoods (1,834.13 acres), Mixed Scrub-Shrub Wetland (1,598.84 acres), Cypress (922.77 acres), Mixed Hardwood-Coniferous (827.61), and Mixed Hardwood Coniferous Swamps (4,511.35).

Jefferson County

The Agriculture-20 land use category relates primarily to large scale agricultural activities. Included in the category are plantations and timber producing lands. Other uses include, but are not limited to, livestock, crop production, pasture lands, silviculture, orchards and groves, forestry, and agricultural related activities. Residential density may not exceed one unit per 20 acres. The Agriculture 5 land use relates to a variety of agricultural uses including crop land, pasture, orchards and groves, forestry, agricultural related activities, outdoor recreation, bed and breakfast inns, and hunting lodges and clubs. Residential development cannot exceed 1 unit per 5 acres. The conservation land use is for areas with extremely limited development potential due to environmental sensitivity, publicly owned natural reservations, or other land identified for protective treatment. Development is limited to water dependent uses. Passive recreational uses are also allowed. The allowable residential density is zero.

Madison County

The Agricultural 1 and 2 land use categories are intended to provide for crop cultivation, livestock, specialty farms, silviculture areas and dwelling units. For the Agriculture-1 land use the residential density is 1 unit per 40 acres. For the Agriculture-2 land use category the residential density is one unit per 10 acres. The Residential Land Use is intended to provide areas for the preservation or development of low-density neighborhoods. The maximum density is one unit per acre if sanitary sewer is not provided, and up to two units per acre with sewer.

Development Potential

Based on the Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use designations, the four parcels in Jefferson County are designated as Agriculture-20 (1 unit/20 acres, Agriculture-5 (1 unit/5 acres) and Conservation. For the parcels on the Madison County side, the applicable land uses are Agriculture 1 (1 unit/40 acres), Agriculture 2 (1 unit 10 acres) and Residential (1 unit/acre with septic tanks and 2 units per acre on sanitary sewer). With assigned residential density, the properties in both counties could accommodate over a thousand dwelling units.

Transportation Planning Issues

Located in FDOT's District 3 (Jefferson County) and District 2 (Madison and Taylor Counties), the proposed project would protect approximately 18,600 acres. Portions of the project lie adjacent to I-10 and US 90 and near US 19, all Strategic Intermodal System facilities. While the Department finds no adverse impact to this proposed project, there should be coordination with the appropriate FDOT District staff during the acquisition process to ensure that issues related to the transportation system and partnering opportunities are addressed and incorporated into the management plan as appropriate.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Staff in DEP's DSL and FNAI determined the final project recommendations. Sine Murray and Hannah Turbiville in DSL's OES were responsible for the overall coordination of this report, with contributions from the following:

- Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources – Joshua Goodwin
- Florida Forest Service – Cat Ingram, Colin Bogert & Zachary Butler
- Department of Economic Opportunity – Dan Evans & Barbara Powell
- DEP Division of State Lands, Bureau of Appraisal – Jay Scott & Amy Phillips
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission – Laramie Ferry, David Nicholson & Sharon Hester
- Florida Natural Areas Inventory – Geoffrey Parks, Amy Jenkins & Nathan Pasco

- DEP Division of Environmental Assessment and Restoration – Kevin Coyne
- Florida Department of Transportation – David Tyler & Jennifer Carver
- Suwanee River Water Management District – William McKinstry

APPENDICES

Appendix A:

Final Florida Forever Measures Table: Report requirement 259.105 (15)d, prepared by FNAI

Aucilla Corridor: Florida Forever Measure Evaluation 20220325

GIS ACRES = 18,575

MEASURES	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
B1: Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	15	< 1%
Priority 3	13,490	73%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	3,717	20%
Total Acres	17,221	93%
B2: FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	330	2%
Priority 4	1,860	9%
Priority 5	8,264	45%
Priority 6	2,970	16%
Total Acres	13,224	71%
B3: Ecological Greenways		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	12,723	69%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	5,729	31%
Total Acres	18,451	99%
B4: Under-represented Natural Communities		
Upland Glade (G1)	0	0%
Pine Rockland (G1)	0	0%
Scrub and Scrubby Flatwoods (G2)	0	0%
Rockland Hammock (G2)	0	0%
Dry Prairie (G2)	0	0%
Seepage Slope (G2)	0	0%
Sandhill (G3)	0	0%
Sandhill Upland Lake (G3)	0	0%
Upland Pine (G3)	78	< 1%
Mesic/Wet Flatwoods (G4)	305	2%
Upland Hardwood Forest (G5)	446	2%
Total Acres	829	4%
B6: Occurrences of FNAI Tracked Species		
G1	0	
G2	0	
G3	0	
G4	2	
G5	0	
Total	2	
C4: Natural Floodplain Function		
Priority 1	1,334	7%
Priority 2	3,827	21%
Priority 3	4,658	25%
Priority 4	3,145	17%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	12,963	70%

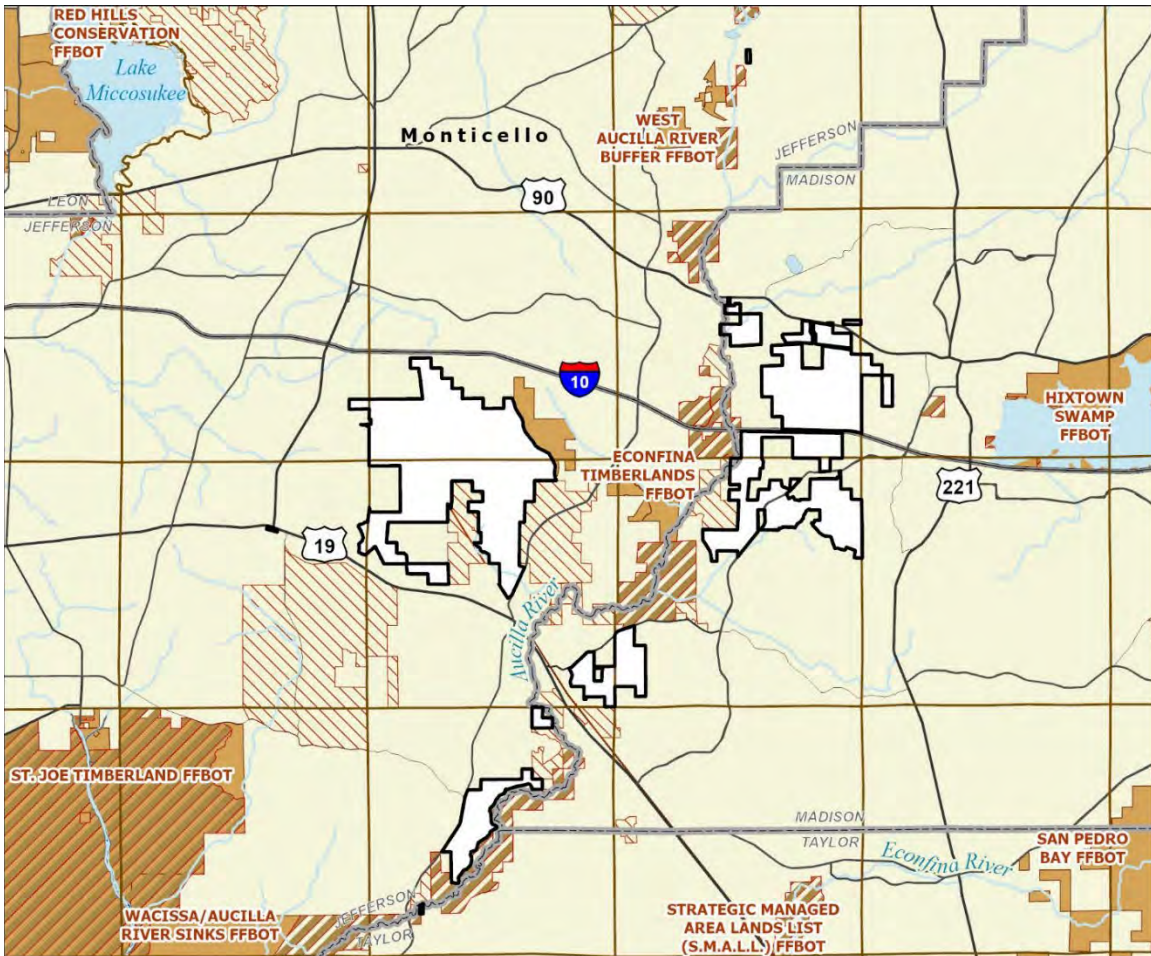
MEASURES (continued)	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
C5: Surface Water Protection		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	2,372	13%
Priority 3	2,392	13%
Priority 4	5,988	32%
Priority 5	3,432	18%
Priority 6	2,963	16%
Priority 7	1,131	6%
Total Acres	18,278	98%
C7: Fragile Coastal Resources		
Fragile Coastal Uplands	0	0%
Imperiled Coastal Lakes	0	0%
Coastal Wetlands	0	0%
Total Acres	0	0%
C8: Functional Wetlands		
Priority 1	1,291	7%
Priority 2	3,648	20%
Priority 3	3,231	17%
Priority 4	1,641	9%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	9,811	53%
D3: Aquifer Recharge		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	641	3%
Priority 3	9,179	49%
Priority 4	7,551	41%
Priority 5	1,196	6%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	18,567	100%
E2: Recreational Trails (miles)		
<small>(prioritized trail opportunities from Office of Greenways and Trails (AGT) Element)</small>		
Land Trail Priorities	8.4	
Land Trail Opportunities	0.0	
Total Miles	8.4	
F2: Arch. & Historical Sites (number) 30 sites		
G1: Sustainable Forestry		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	6,960	37%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5 - Potential Pinelands	440	2%
Total Acres	7,400	40%
G3: Forestland for Recharge 3,901 21%		

^aAcres of each resource in the project and percentage of project represented by each resource are listed except where noted. This analysis converts site boundary into pixels, which causes slight differences from GIS acres; this effect is most noticeable on small sites.

Appendix B:

Final FF proposal boundary maps: Report requirement 259.105 (15)k, prepared by FNAI

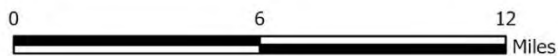
B1: Florida Forever map



AUCILLA CORRIDOR FLORIDA FOREVER PROPOSAL

JEFFERSON, MADISON, AND TAYLOR COUNTIES

-  Proposed Florida Forever BOT Project
-  Florida Forever BOT Projects
-  State Owned Lands
-  Other Conservation Lands
-  State Aquatic Preserve

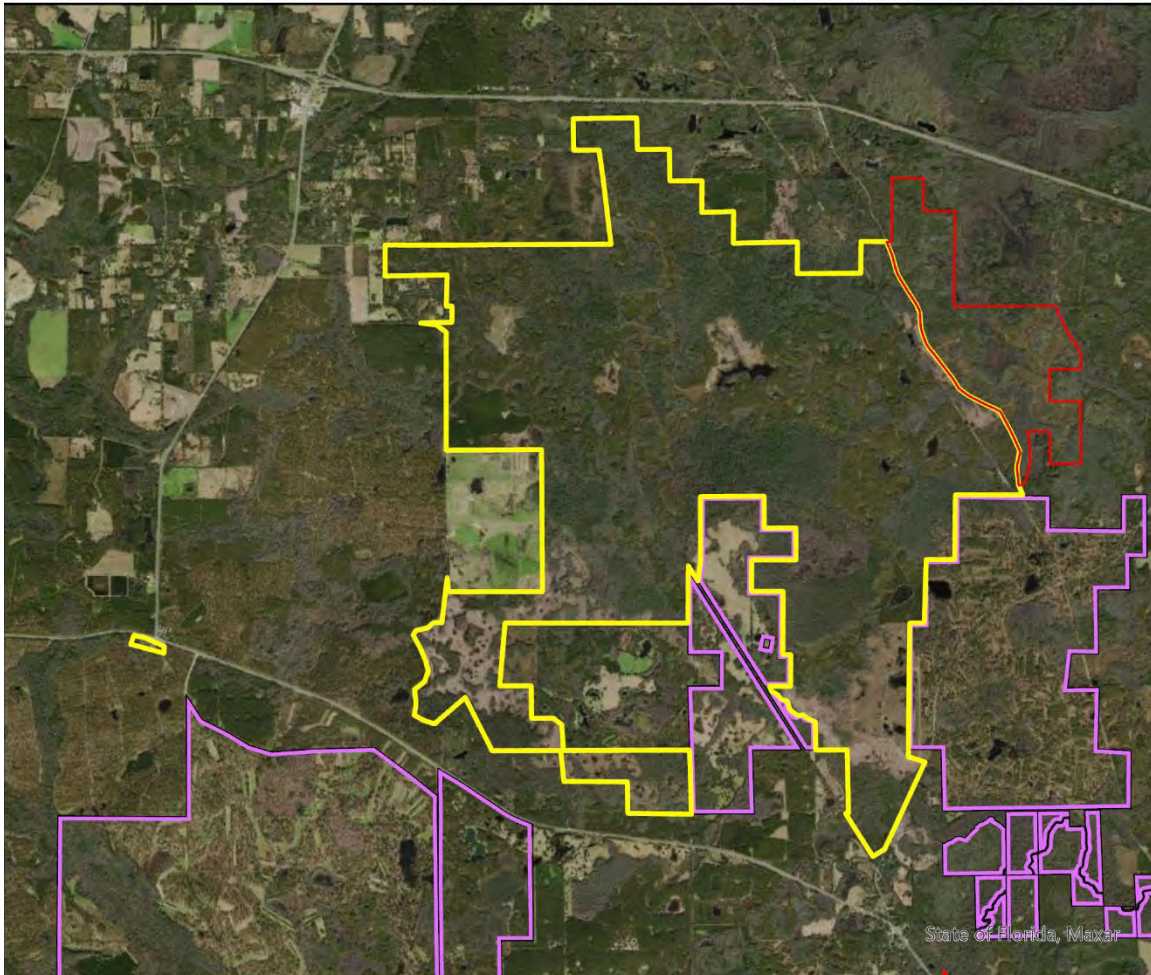


FEBRUARY 2022

B2: Aerial map

Aucilla Corridor Florida Forever Proposal - Map 1

FLORIDA FOREVER BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROPOSED PROJECT BOUNDARY AS OF MARCH 2022



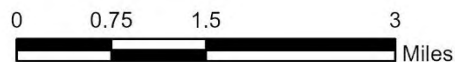
Map Produced by: N. Pasco, February 2022

Background: World Imagery Resolution = 0.3 meter



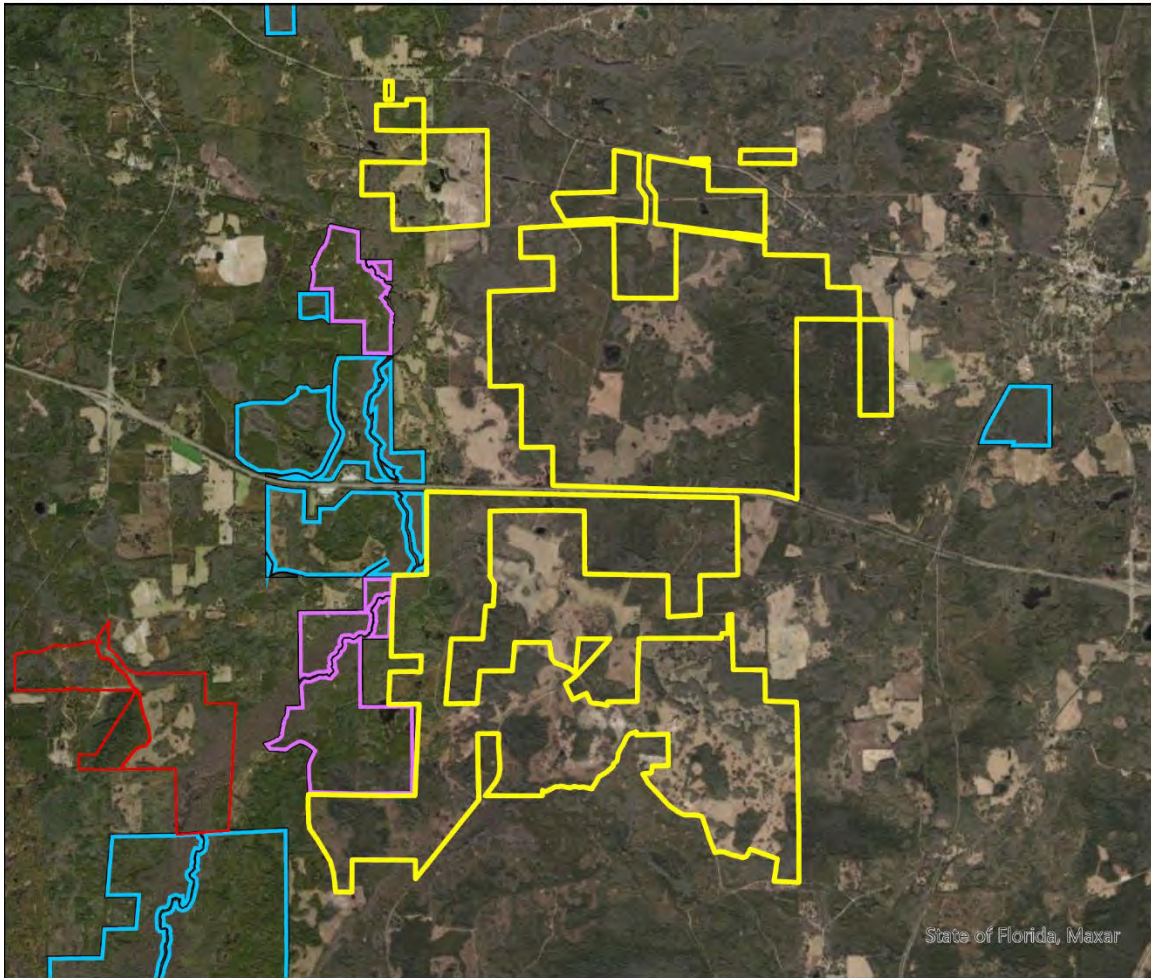
	Florida Forever Proposal Boundary
	Florida Forever BOT Projects
	Existing Private Conservation Lands

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Aucilla Corridor Florida Forever Proposal - Map 2

FLORIDA FOREVER BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROPOSED PROJECT BOUNDARY AS OF MARCH 2022

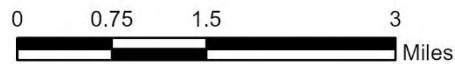
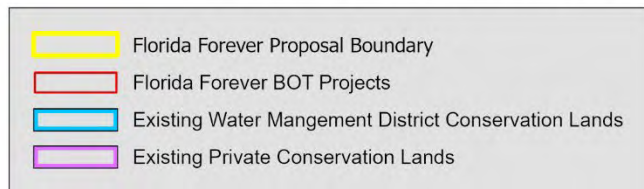


Map Produced by: N. Pasco, February 2022

Background: World Imagery Resolution = 0.3 meter

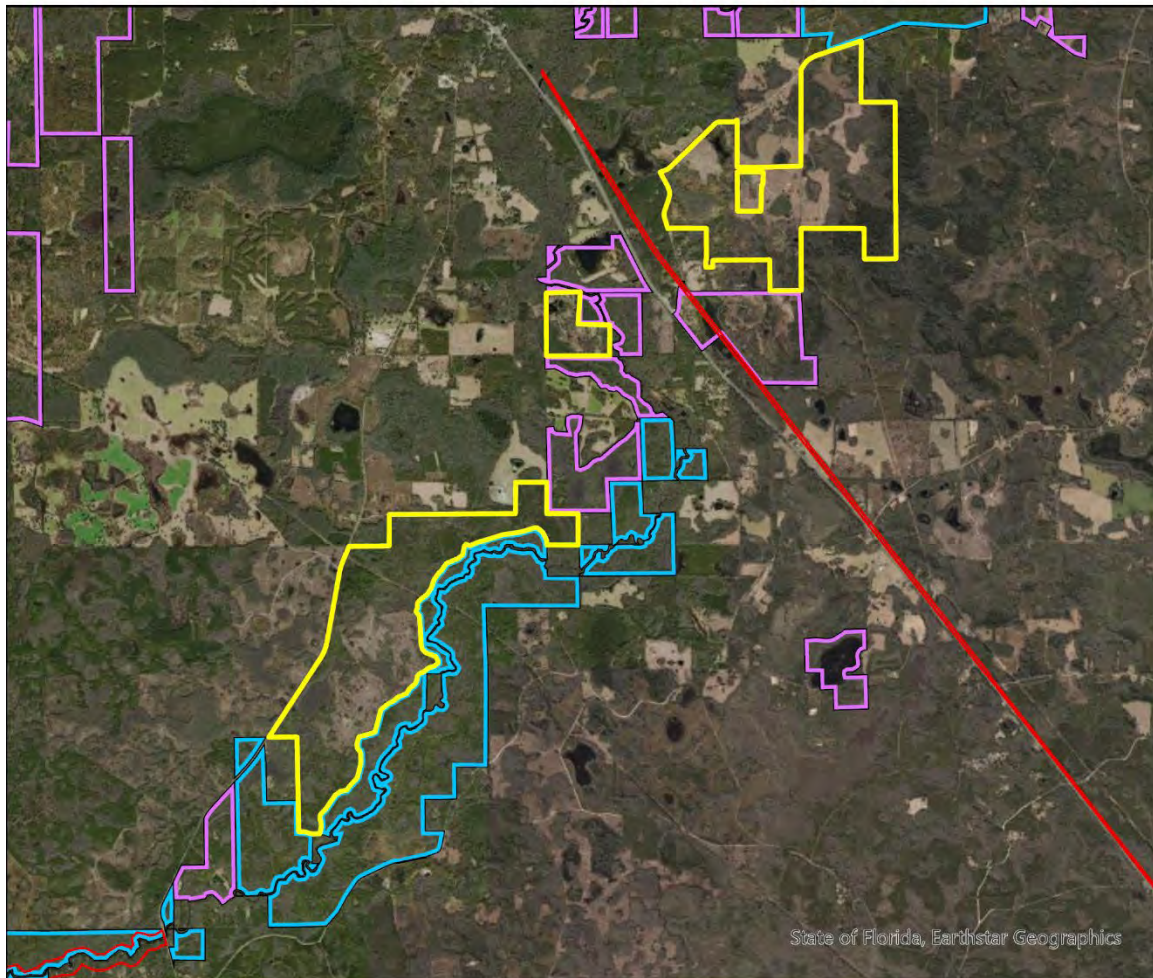


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Aucilla Corridor Florida Forever Proposal - Map 3

FLORIDA FOREVER BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROPOSED PROJECT BOUNDARY AS OF MARCH 2022



State of Florida, Earthstar Geographics

Map Produced by: N. Pasco, February 2022

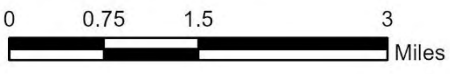
Background: World Imagery Resolution = 0.3 meter



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	Florida Forever Proposal Boundary
	Florida Forever BOT Projects
	Existing Water Mangement District Conservation Lands
	Existing Private Conservation Lands



Appendix C:**PROPERTY ID #'S FOR FINAL RECOMMENDED BOUNDARY****JEFFERSON COUNTY**

COUNTY	PARCEL ID*	OWNER	ACRES PER TAX CARD	JUST VALUE	ASSESSED VALUE	PARCEL DESIGNATION
Jefferson	02-2S-5E-0000-0020-0000*	Bradley J. & Linda Sue Cooley	100.17	\$138,924.00	\$88,605.00	Essential
Jefferson	02-2S-5E-0000-0021-0000*	Bradley O. & Jenny L. Cooley	19.83	\$153,709.00	\$122,232.00	Essential
Jefferson	03-1S-5E-0000-0010-0000	Pines of Avalon LLC	3002.36	\$314,050.00	\$114,817.00	Essential
Jefferson	08-1S-5E-0000-0012-0000	Pines of Avalon LLC	136.09	\$28,158.00	\$2,199.00	Essential
Jefferson	09-2S-5E-0000-0070-0000	North Florida Timber Holdings LLC	40.00	\$44,000.00	\$12,920.00	Essential
Jefferson	10-2S-5E-0000-0050-0000	North Florida Timber Holdings LLC	167.88	\$92,335.00	\$48,358.00	Essential
Jefferson	11-2S-5E-0000-0010-0000	North Florida Timber Holdings LLC	40.00	\$44,000.00	\$6,595.00	Essential
Jefferson	15-2S-5E-0000-0011-0000	North Florida Timber Holdings LLC	49.64	\$42,195.00	\$10,848.00	Essential
Jefferson	15-2S-5E-0000-0012-0000	North Florida Timber Holdings LLC	9.02	\$12,628.00	\$2,526.00	Essential
Jefferson	16-1N-6E-0000-0060-0000	Terry and Ronda Dobson	23.00	\$34,500.00	\$1,670.00	Essential
Jefferson	16-2S-5E-0000-0011-0000	North Florida Timber Holdings LLC	446.88	\$201,096.00	\$77,333.00	Essential
Jefferson	20-2S-5E-0000-0012-0000	North Florida Timber Holdings LLC	23.00	\$26,136.00	\$7,674.00	Essential
Jefferson	21-2S-5E-0000-0011-0000	North Florida Timber Holdings LLC	384.25	\$172,913.00	\$66,850.00	Essential
Jefferson	25-1N-4E-0000-0150-0000	Pines of Avalon LLC	75.00	\$168,750.00	\$22,763.00	Essential
Jefferson	28-2S-5E-0000-0011-0000	North Florida Timber Holdings LLC	32.49	\$53,609.00	\$9,957.00	Essential
Jefferson	31-1N-5E-0000-0010-0000	Pines of Avalon LLC	2062.74	\$954,540.00	\$155,031.00	Essential

COUNTY	PARCEL ID*	OWNER	ACRES PER TAX CARD	JUST VALUE	ASSESSED VALUE	PARCEL DESIGNATION
Jefferson	32-1N-5E-0000-0010-0000	Avalon Plantation II LLC	250.00	\$375,000.00	\$39,765.00	Essential
Jefferson	33-1N-5E-0000-0010-0000	Pines of Avalon LLC	3120.44	\$960,000.00	\$163,902.00	Essential
TOTALS			9,982.59	\$3,816,543.00		

*Parcel contains buildings/structures per tax card.

MADISON COUNTY

COUNTY	PARCEL ID*	OWNER	ACRES PER TAX CARD	JUST VALUE	ASSESSED VALUE	PARCEL DESIGNATION
Madison	01-1S-06-0068-000-000	Adams Rocky Creek Investments LLC	80.04	\$61,060.00	\$6,756.00	Essential
Madison	01-1S-06-0068-001-000	Adams North Florida Ranch LLC	28.01	\$17,020.00	\$1,720.00	Essential ¹
Madison	01-1S-06-0068-002-000	Adams North Florida Ranch LLC	43.31	\$46,965.00	\$6,274.00	Essential
Madison	01-1S-06-0068-003-000	Adams North Florida Investment	58.47	\$59,235.00	\$7,686.00	Essential
Madison	01-1S-06-0069-000-000	MWF IV Osceola LLC	60	\$82,500.00	\$14,980.00	Essential
Madison	02-1S-06-0073-001-000	Adams Moon Lake Investments LLC	28.2	\$40,100.00	\$5,875.00	Essential
Madison	02-1S-06-0073-001-001	Adams Moon Lake Investments LLC	23.99	\$32,980.00	\$5,987.00	Essential
Madison	02-1S-06-0073-002-000	Adams Rocky Creek Investments LLC	2.46	\$3,690.00	\$549.00	Essential
Madison	02-1S-06-0073-002-001	Adams North Florida Ranch LLC	37.31	\$42,655.00	\$5,817.00	Essential
Madison	02-1S-06-0073-002-002	Adams North Florida Investment	3.11	\$6,220.00	\$1,253.00	Essential
Madison	02-1S-06-0073-002-003	Adams North Florida Investment	14.12	\$21,180.00	\$3,148.00	Essential
Madison	02-1S-06-0073-002-004	Adams Rocky Creek Investments LLC	37.4	\$39,100.00	\$5,144.00	Essential

COUNTY	PARCEL ID*	OWNER	ACRES PER TAX CARD	JUST VALUE	ASSESSED VALUE	PARCEL DESIGNATION
Madison	03-1S-06-0076-000-000	Adams Rocky Creek Investments LLC	1.08	\$2,160.00	\$435.00	Essential
Madison	03-1S-06-0076-001-000	Adams Moon Lake Ranch LLC	165.96	\$97,980.00	\$8,800.00	Essential
Madison	03-1S-06-0076-001-001	Adams Rocky Creek Ranch LLC	19.84	\$27,680.00	\$5,051.00	Essential
Madison	03-1S-06-0076-001-002	Adams Moon Lake Investments LLC	51.81	\$39,715.00	\$4,409.00	Essential
Madison	03-1S-06-0076-001-003	Adams Moon Lake Investments LLC	80.01	\$85,020.00	\$13,784.00	Essential
Madison	03-1S-06-0077-001-000	Adams NGOC	9.13	\$5,970.00	\$653.00	Essential
Madison	03-1S-06-0078-001-000	Adams NGOC	40	\$56,000.00	\$9,998.00	Essential
Madison	04-1S-06-0079-001-000	Adams NGOC	40	\$32,000.00	\$4,344.00	Essential
Madison	04-1S-06-0079-002-000	Jon Jernigan	55.48	\$104,600.00	\$20,797.00	Essential
Madison	04-1S-06-0080-000-000	Adams Moon Lake Ranch LLC	39.44	\$47,380.00	\$8,151.00	Essential
Madison	09-1S-06-0082-000-000	Adams Moon Lake Ranch LLC	44.03	\$64,060.00	\$10,920.00	Essential
Madison	09-1S-06-0082-006-000	Adams Rocky Creek Ranch LLC	13.18	\$12,950.00	\$1,933.00	Essential
Madison	09-1S-06-0082-007-000	Adams Moon Lake Investments LLC	83.61	\$114,720.00	\$20,814.00	Essential
Madison	10-1S-06-0084-000-000	Adams NGOC	33.7	\$50,900.00	\$9,533.00	Essential
Madison	10-1S-06-0085-000-000	Adams Rocky Creek Investments LLC	58.46	\$36,690.00	\$3,448.00	Essential
Madison	10-1S-06-0085-002-000	Adams Moon Lake Ranch LLC	119.195	\$109,597.00	\$13,571.00	Essential

COUNTY	PARCEL ID*	OWNER	ACRES PER TAX CARD	JUST VALUE	ASSESSED VALUE	PARCEL DESIGNATION
Madison	10-1S-06-0085-002-001	Adams Rocky Creek Ranch LLC	60.17	\$65,255.00	\$8,717.00	Essential
Madison	10-1S-06-0085-002-002	Adams Rocky Creek Ranch LLC	80.01	\$72,005.00	\$8,816.00	Essential
Madison	10-1S-06-0085-002-003	Adams Moon Lake Investments LLC	70.47	\$83,940.00	\$14,415.00	Essential
Madison	10-1S-06-0085-003-000	Adams North Florida Ranch LLC	62.47	\$61,705.00	\$8,946.00	Essential
Madison	11-1S-06-0086-001-000	Adams Rocky Creek Investments LLC	19.42	\$23,130.00	\$3,202.00	Essential
Madison	11-1S-06-0086-001-002	Adams North Florida Ranch LLC	4.18	\$6,270.00	\$932.00	Essential
Madison	11-1S-06-0086-001-003	Adams North Florida Ranch LLC	12.39	\$8,585.00	\$882.00	Essential
Madison	11-1S-06-0086-001-004	Adams North Florida Ranch LLC	67.63	\$84,599.00	\$12,851.00	Essential
Madison	11-1S-06-0086-001-005	Adams North Florida Ranch LLC	18.3	\$20,450.00	\$2,764.00	Essential
Madison	11-1S-06-0086-001-006	Adams North Florida Investment	1.79	\$3,580.00	\$721.00	Essential
Madison	11-1S-06-0086-001-007	Adams North Florida Investment	65.89	\$84,835.00	\$12,061.00	Essential
Madison	11-1S-06-0086-001-008	Adams Rocky Creek Investments LLC	19.7	\$26,550.00	\$3,829.00	Essential
Madison	11-1S-06-0086-001-009	Adams Rocky Creek Investments LLC	45.8	\$53,700.00	\$7,393.00	Essential
Madison	11-1S-06-0086-001-010	Adams Rocky Creek Investments LLC	84.12	\$100,180.00	\$13,870.00	Essential
Madison	12-1S-06-0092-000-000	Adams Rocky Creek Investments LLC	80.01	\$82,005.00	\$10,696.00	Essential
Madison	12-1S-06-0092-002-000	Adams North Florida Ranch LLC	96.88	\$108,440.00	\$14,670.00	Essential

COUNTY	PARCEL ID*	OWNER	ACRES PER TAX CARD	JUST VALUE	ASSESSED VALUE	PARCEL DESIGNATION
Madison	12-1S-06-0092-003-000	Adams North Florida Ranch LLC	76.7	\$96,050.00	\$13,532.00	Essential
Madison	12-1S-06-0092-004-000	Adams North Florida Ranch LLC	52	\$61,000.00	\$8,400.00	Essential
Madison	12-1S-06-0092-005-000	Adams North Florida Investment	33.39	\$42,695.00	\$6,056.00	Essential
Madison	12-1S-06-0092-006-000	Adams North Florida Investment	80.83	\$93,415.00	\$12,793.00	Essential
Madison	12-1S-06-0092-007-000	Adams North Florida Investment	80.5	\$90,750.00	\$12,311.00	Essential
Madison	12-1S-06-0092-008-000*	Adams North Florida Investment	41.93	\$84,754.00	\$44,666.00	Essential
Madison	12-1S-06-0092-009-000	Adams Rocky Creek Investments LLC	10.99	\$11,485.00	\$1,510.00	Essential
Madison	12-1S-06-0092-010-000	Adams Rocky Creek Investments LLC	78.98	\$95,470.00	\$13,288.00	Essential
Madison	13-1N-06-1677-000-000	MWF IV Osceola LLC	64.5	\$94,500.00	\$17,529.00	Essential
Madison	13-1S-06-0097-002-002	Adams North Florida Investment	47.35	\$47,675.00	\$6,169.00	Essential
Madison	13-1S-06-0097-002-003	Adams Rocky Creek Investments LLC	71.5	\$69,750.00	\$8,739.00	Essential
Madison	14-1N-06-1692-001-000	MWF IV Osceola LLC	77.55	\$128,775.00	\$24,794.00	Essential
Madison	15-1N-06-1697-000-000	Belle Terre Land Partners LLC	160	\$195,500.00	\$33,966.00	Essential
Madison	15-1S-06-0102-000-000	Adams Moon Lake Ranch LLC	25.79	\$51,580.00	\$10,393.00	Essential
Madison	15-1S-06-0102-002-000	Adams Rocky Creek Ranch LLC	7.67	\$9,340.00	\$1,619.00	Essential
Madison	15-1S-06-0102-003-000	Adams Moon Lake Investments LLC	9.54	\$19,080.00	\$3,844.00	Essential
Madison	16-1N-06-1705-000-000	James and Mary Clark	58.07	\$95,140.00	\$16,487.00	Essential

COUNTY	PARCEL ID*	OWNER	ACRES PER TAX CARD	JUST VALUE	ASSESSED VALUE	PARCEL DESIGNATION
Madison	16-1N-06-1707-000-000	Belle Terre Land Partners LLC	60	\$90,000.00	\$90,000.00	Essential
Madison	16-1S-06-0105-000-000	Adams Moon Lake Ranch LLC	81.59	\$119,680.00	\$22,208.00	Essential
Madison	16-1S-06-0105-002-000	Adams Rocky Creek Ranch LLC	64.41	\$76,320.00	\$13,077.00	Essential
Madison	19-1N-07-1911-000-000	MWF IV Osceola LLC	120	\$75,000.00	\$7,412.00	Essential
Madison	21-1N-06-1709-000-000	Belle Terre Land Partners LLC	17	\$14,500.00	\$1,599.00	Essential
Madison	21-1N-06-1711-000-000	Belle Terre Land Partners LLC	28	\$35,700.00	\$35,700.00	Essential
Madison	22-1N-06-1716-001-000*	Belle Terre Land Partners LLC	84.09	\$118,661.00	\$22,117.00	Essential
Madison	22-1N-06-1719-000-000	MWF IV Osceola LLC	118.6	\$162,200.00	\$25,300.00	Essential
Madison	23-1N-06-1721-000-000	MWF IV Osceola LLC	418.1	\$509,575.00	\$84,520.00	Essential
Madison	24-1N-06-1723-000-000	MWF IV Osceola LLC	548.3	\$713,600.00	\$126,400.00	Essential
Madison	25-1N-06-1736-000-000	MWF IV Osceola LLC	638	\$571,000.00	\$84,154.00	Essential
Madison	25-1S-05-0010-001-001	Monte Welch Trustee and Damon Welch Trustee	79.74	\$137,935.00	\$21,579.00	Essential
Madison	26-1N-06-1738-000-000	MWF IV Osceola LLC	640	\$911,000.00	\$156,766.00	Essential
Madison	27-1N-06-1742-000-000	MWF IV Osceola LLC	240	\$348,000.00	\$48,364.00	Essential
Madison	30-1N-07-2588-000-000	MWF IV Osceola LLC	120	\$115,000.00	\$13,486.00	Essential
Madison	30-1S-06-0132-002-000	Deep Water West Investments	20.01	\$30,015.00	\$30,015.00	Essential
Madison	30-1S-06-0132-002-001	Monte Welch Trustee and Damon Welch Trustee	20	\$22,000.00	\$3,644.00	Essential

COUNTY	PARCEL ID*	OWNER	ACRES PER TAX CARD	JUST VALUE	ASSESSED VALUE	PARCEL DESIGNATION
Madison	30-1S-06-0132-003-000	Deep Water West LLLP	40.5	\$60,750.00	\$60,750.00	Essential
Madison	30-1S-06-0132-004-000	Deep Water West Investments	40.5	\$62,250.00	\$11,721.00	Essential
Madison	30-1S-06-0133-000-000	Deep Water West LLLP	242.35	\$286,200.00	\$41,325.00	Essential
Madison	31-1S-06-0135-000-000	Deep Water West LLLP	282.1	\$272,050.00	\$35,359.00	Essential
Madison	34-1N-06-1747-000-000	Adams NGOC	188.37	\$257,185.00	\$34,251.00	Essential
Madison	34-1N-06-1747-001-000	Adams NGOC	60	\$172,933.00	\$107,414.00	Essential
Madison	35-1N-06-1750-000-000	MWF IV Osceola LLC	523.8	\$642,600.00	\$111,581.00	Essential
Madison	35-1S-05-0019-004-000	Monte Welch Trustee and Damon Welch Trustee	18.4	\$34,220.00	\$6,782.00	Essential
Madison	36-1N-06-1751-000-000	MWF IV Osceola LLC	416.3	\$621,100.00	\$115,835.00	Essential
Madison	36-1S-05-0024-001-000	Deep Water West LLLP	73.89	\$130,371.00	\$45,534.00	Essential
Madison	36-1S-05-0024-003-000	Monte Welch Trustee and Damon Welch Trustee	369.28	\$653,930.00	\$109,426.00	Essential
TOTALS			8591.195	\$10,756,090.00		

*Parcel contains buildings/structures per tax card.

Appendix D:

Management Prospectus for Aucilla River Corridor, a fee simple & less-than-fee proposal.

Concurrent with its adoption of the annual Conservation and Recreation Lands list of acquisition projects pursuant to s. 259.035, the board of trustees shall adopt a management prospectus for each project. The management prospectus shall delineate:

1. The management goals for the property.
2. The conditions that will affect the intensity of management.
3. An estimate of the revenue-generating potential of the property, if appropriate.
4. A timetable for implementing the various stages of management and for providing access to the public, if applicable.
5. A description of potential multiple-use activities as described in this section and section 253.034.
6. Provisions for protecting existing infrastructure and for ensuring the security of the project upon acquisition.
7. The anticipated costs of management and projected sources of revenue, including legislative appropriations, to fund management needs.
8. Recommendations as to how many employees will be needed to manage the property, and recommendations as to whether local governments, volunteer groups, the former landowner, or other interested parties can be involved in the management.

Introduction

The MWF IV property of the Aucilla Corridor Florida Forever proposal includes 13 parcels and encompasses approximately 3,909 acres in Madison County. The Aucilla Corridor is proposed to be added to the Partnerships and Regional Incentives Category as a new Florida Forever Board of Trustees project. Lands within the project include both those proposed for less-than-fee and fee-simple acquisition, but the MWF IV property is proposed for fee-simple and is the subject of this management prospectus. Although there are no directly adjacent conservation lands, there are many conservation easements within the vicinity of the area (e.g., those held by the SRWMD and The Nature Conservancy [TNC]).

The property consists of a variety of habitats with most of the area composed of tree plantations, prairies and bogs, freshwater forested wetlands, and mixed hardwood coniferous. The property has the potential to serve as an integral part of a larger system of conservation lands within the north central region of Florida that provides important water quality protection and conserves vital wildlife habitat for species including wood stork (*Mycteria americana*), gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*), striped newt (*Notophthalmus perstriatus*), Florida sandhill crane (*Antigone canadensis pratensis*), little blue heron (*Egretta caerulea*), and tricolored heron (*Egretta tricolor*).

FWC could manage the property for the purposes of operating a Wildlife Management Area (WMA), providing ecological diversity, managed habitat for both imperiled and common wildlife, and fish and wildlife-based outdoor recreational opportunities for the public. Fee-simple ownership of the property could also allow for a wildlife underpass or overpass to be built at some point in the future to allow wildlife a chance to safely cross I-10.

Qualifications for State Designation

As stated in the Florida Forever application: the property meets numerous Florida Forever goals, performance measures, and criteria as outlined in Florida Statutes (F.S.) 259.105. Acquisition of the property would help meet Florida Forever goals including enhancing the coordination and completion of land acquisition projects [e.g., Water Management District project (Goal A)]; increasing the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels (Goal B); protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state (Goal C); ensure sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural

systems and the citizens of the state (Goal D); and would increase natural resource-based public recreation and education opportunities (Goal E).

If acquired, conservation of the property would serve to:

- Conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, and fish and wildlife resources.
- Conserve and protect significant landscape-scale habitat and provide wildlife corridors for rare and imperiled species and increasing linkages and conservation corridors between public land and private conservation easements in the region.
- Conserve, protect, manage, or restore habitat in north central Florida, provide surface and groundwater protection, and protect natural floodplain functions.
- Provide opportunities for fish and wildlife resource-based public outdoor recreation.

Natural Resources

Florida is part of the Coastal Plain physiographic province which stretches from Cape Cod to the Mexican border. The Coastal Plain is divided into six physiographic sections, and Florida lies between two of these sections, the Floridian section which encompasses most of peninsular Florida and the East Gulf Plain section which encompasses the panhandle of Florida. Additionally, there are a total of ten physiographic divisions within Florida. The property is in the Tallahassee Hills division, as well as a region that contains Torreya and Miccosukee formations. These formations are characterized by quartz sands and fine-grained limestone with phosphate (Torreya) and interbedded and cross-bedded siliciclastics with a high clay content (Miccosukee). Soils found within the project consist of Dorovan and Pamlico soils, Plummer and Surrency soils, Ocilla sand, Lovett sand, and several other less prominent soils.

The natural communities for the property were mapped using the Florida Cooperative Land Cover (CLC) map. The CLC is a cooperative effort between the FWC and FNAI to develop ecologically based statewide land cover from existing sources and expert review of aerial photography. The CLC describes 20 natural and altered community types existing on the property (Table 3).

Table 1. Natural and Altered Community Types on the Property

Community	Acres	Percentage
Tree Plantations	1,327.16	33.78
Prairies and Bogs	922.88	25.27
Freshwater Forested Wetlands	510.66	13.00
Mixed Hardwood- Coniferous	220.22	5.60
Rural	168.21	4.29
Cypress	119.31	3.04
Shrub and Brushland	89.60	2.28
Upland Hardwood Forest	87.04	2.22
Wet Flatwoods	86.03	2.19
Marshes	65.66	1.67
Bare Soil/Clear Cut	63.04	1.60
Dome Swamp	34.40	0.88
Transportation	13.48	0.34
Utilities	8.59	0.22

Cropland/Pasture	4.89	0.12
Low Intensity Urban	2.52	0.06
Non-vegetated Wetland	1.93	0.05
Mesic Flatwoods	1.81	0.05
Lacustrine	0.86	0.02
Improved Pasture	0.79	0.02

No imperiled plant species were observed during the initial evaluation of the MWF IV property but are likely to be found through more intensive, field-based surveys following acquisition. Chinese tallow (*Triadica sebifera*) was observed on a different portion of the property project tour, however invasive and non-native plants do not appear to be a major issue. Additionally, it is likely that other invasive and non-native plant species are present within the project area and such species would be documented should the project be acquired.

Cooperative Landcover Type Descriptions

Following are brief descriptions of the primary cooperative landcover classifications found on the property. Descriptions are provided only for the more prevalent community types; however, as noted above, there are a total of 20 community types identified. If acquired, prescribed burning would be the primary practice needed to maintain and restore natural communities. Some areas would benefit from mowing prior to prescribed fire to reduce fuel. These community types and percentages may vary from this early assessment upon completion of a more comprehensive field-based analysis of the vegetative community compositions through natural communities mapping.

Tree Plantations

Pine plantations that are artificially generated by planting seedling stock or seeds.

Prairies and Bogs

Wetland areas that are dominated by woody vegetation less than 20 feet in height. This can occur in many situations, but in most cases involves transitional or disturbed communities on drier sites. Persistent examples of shrub wetlands include shrub bogs and willow swamps.

Freshwater Forested Wetlands

Includes mixed wetlands forest communities in which neither hardwoods nor conifers achieve a 66% dominance of the crown canopy composition.

Mixed Hardwood-Coniferous

Mix of hardwood and coniferous trees where neither is dominant.

Rural

Herbaceous or shrubby vegetated areas in a rural setting. Ground typically appears improved or disturbed to some degree.

Cypress

Dominated entirely by cypress, or cypress species are important in the canopy and have a long hydroperiod.

Hydrological Preservation and Restoration

The Aucilla Corridor, which this property is a part of, would conserve 0.8 miles of frontage along the Aucilla River, a river designated as an Outstanding Florida Water. In addition, the project includes the last 3/4 of a mile of the Little Aucilla River before it meets the Aucilla River. The Little Aucilla River is listed in the DEPs Verified Impaired List as impaired for dissolved oxygen with excessive nitrogen identified as a causative factor. Conservation of lands along it have been identified as one way to alleviate the threats and improve its water quality. The project also conserves most of Beasley Creek, another Aucilla River tributary.

According to the United States Geological Survey, most of the project area has medium to high aquifer recharge potential (10-15 inches of recharge per year). This recharge supports the underlying Floridan Aquifer, which provides over ten million people with drinking water. The Floridan Aquifer also supplies water to Florida’s springs.

The property includes ~1,950 acres of wetland habitats. The marshes, dome swamps, and other wetlands observed during field inspections appeared to be in relatively good condition, but it appeared some of the basin swamps may have included some timber harvest in the past. Due to the lack of prescribed fire, there was evidence of tree encroachment into some of the basin marshes. If these lands were acquired, these wetland habitats could be improved through hydrological restoration, prescribed fire, and possibly some hand removal of encroaching trees. Ultimately, these wetland habitats would be important for many wetland wildlife species, as well as for conserving water resources.

Fish and Wildlife

The various land cover types on the property provide the resources necessary to sustain diverse assemblages of wildlife and create habitat conditions beneficial to both migratory species and a number of resident imperiled species. Table 4 lists some of the documented wildlife species on the property. It is likely that imperiled species will be documented on the property during field surveys following acquisition. The pastures on property are suitable for use by other wildlife such as the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocphalus*), little blue heron, and wading birds. These species were not observed during the field tour but are known to occur in the surrounding landscape. In addition to the species listed in the tables below, one non-native wildlife species has been documented on the property. Currently, there have been signs suggesting there is a population of wild hogs (*Sus scrofa*) on the property. If acquired, further assessment of the area may be warranted. The project contributes to habitat connectivity given its location within a mosaic of conservation lands and easements.

Table 2. Documented Wildlife Species on the Property

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Bachman’s Sparrow	<i>Peucaea aestivalis</i>	NL
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocphalus</i>	NL
Beaver	<i>Castor canadensis</i>	NL
Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus adamateus</i>	NL
Florida Black Bear	<i>Ursus americanus floridanus</i>	NL
Gopher Tortoise	<i>Gopherus poluphemus</i>	ST
Mud Sunfish	<i>Acantharchus pomotis</i>	NL
Sandhill crane	<i>Grus canadensis</i>	ST
Swallow-Tailed Kite	<i>Elanoides forficatus</i>	NL

Common Name		Scientific Name	Status
White-Tailed Deer		<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>	NL
Wood Stork		<i>Mycteria americana</i>	ST, FT
Abbreviation	Status		
FE	Federal Endangered		
FT	Federal Threatened		
ST	State Threatened		
NL	Not Listed		

According to the GIS Environmental Resource Analysis, approximately 72% of the property lies within a designated FWC Strategic Habitat Conservation Area (SHCA) for species including the American swallow-tailed kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) and a relatively small area of Cooper’s hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) habitat. Also, records show Rare Fish Imperiled Waters designates 56% of the property as important for the Eastern mudminnow (*Umbra pygmaea*). The striped newt, a candidate for federal listing, occurs at a site near the property boundary and could potentially be present in the ephemeral wetlands located on the property. The analysis also shows approximately 1% of the property is habitat for a range of 1 to 3 locally important species, 58% is for a range of 4 to 6 locally important species, and 34% for a range of 7 or more locally important species. Additionally, approximately 37% of the property is Priority 1 or 2 (out of 5) for the Critical Lands and Waters Identification Project. Approximately 41% of the property is classified as wetland based on the National Wetlands Inventory, and approximately 34% of the property is considered to contain priority floodplain resources.

Management Intent

The property could be managed by the FWC as a new WMA and in a manner that best meets the goals and objectives of the newly acquired area. In creating the new WMA, the FWC would manage the property under the multiple-use concept. The property will provide fish and wildlife resource-based public outdoor recreation and educational opportunities, while protecting the natural and cultural resources. If acquired, all requirements of the Management Procedures document from DHR will be followed with regard to any potential ground disturbing activities. All the property’s natural and cultural resources would be managed for the purposes of acquisition included within the Florida Forever Act and Chapters 253 and 259, F.S., under a management plan approved by the Acquisition and Restoration Council.

The FWC uses a comprehensive resource management approach on FWC-managed areas. Restoring the form and function of Florida’s natural communities is the foundation of this management philosophy. The FWC uses Objective Based Vegetation Management (OBVM) to monitor how specific vegetative attributes are responding to FWC management. The OBVM includes the delineation of management units and the quantification of desired future conditions for each actively managed natural community.

Additionally, as another critical component of this comprehensive resource management approach, the FWC uses the Wildlife Conservation Prioritization and Recovery (WCPR) program to ensure that management is having the desired effect on wildlife. The goal of the WCPR is to provide assessment, recovery, and planning support for FWC-managed areas to enhance management of locally important species and recovery of imperiled species. The WCPR program objectives include prioritizing what the FWC does for imperiled and locally important species on FWC-managed areas; ensuring the actions taken on these areas are part of statewide conservation programs and priorities; and informing others about the work accomplished on lands that the FWC manages.

Conditions Affecting Intensity of Management

Resources described in this management prospectus indicate conditions affecting intensity of management. These include natural community types, topography and soils, surface and ground water conditions, extent of historic disturbance, and already existing improvements. Environmentally sensitive areas, such as erosion-prone sites, important habitats, outstanding natural areas, and wetlands shall be identified, appropriately managed, and protected.

The FWC conducts analysis of historic vegetation of natural community types when necessary to determine appropriate desired future conditions. Upland wildlife management concentrates on appropriate vegetative manipulations guided by the FWC's OBVM program, which includes the application of prescribed fire to achieve conditions acceptable to a broad range of wildlife species within the area's fire-adapted natural communities. Some areas may require ecological restoration of ground cover, control of invasive and non-native species, and either thinning or reforestation. Such resource management projects may be necessary to accomplish restoration objectives and to attain the desired future conditions for communities. This is especially important for conservation of habitats and populations of imperiled species. Landscape ecology is also important, as land use changes in the vicinity of 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 Provisions

If acquired and leased to the FWC for management, a new Management Plan will be developed by the FWC describing the management goals and objectives necessary to implement future resource management programs on the property. 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 locally important and imperiled species. If acquired, historic analysis of natural communities and vegetation types may be conducted, if deemed necessary, and quantified vegetation management objectives will be developed. The FWC would also assess the condition of wildlife resources and provide planning support to enhance management of locally important species and recovery of imperiled species on the area. Use of 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 following acquisition. These potential recreational uses will enhance the public's understanding of the region while providing ample opportunities for 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.

Estimate of 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. 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 whether the area meets the criteria of the FWC's

Apiary Policy. In addition, the Florida Legislature appropriates funds for land management. The long-term values of ecosystem services to local and regional land and water resources, and to human health, are expected to be significant.

Recommendations as to Other Governmental Agency Involvement

The FWC will continue to cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies including the DEP, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, FFS, the SRWMD, and Madison County in management of the property.

Estimate of Costs

The initial non-recurring (first year only) start-up cost for the property is estimated to be \$625,440, which includes 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 property. Optimal management of the area would require two full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. Salary requirements for these FTE positions, as well as those of other needed FWC staff, and costs to operate and manage the property, are reflected in the cost estimate below. All land management funding is dependent upon annual legislative appropriations.

MWF IV Property

Estimated Recurring Annual Management Costs

<u>Resource Management</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Priority schedule:</u>
Invasive Species Control	\$9,655	(1)	(1) Immediate (annual)
Prescribed Burning	\$20,679	(1)	(2) Intermediate (3-4 years)
Cultural Resource Management	\$860	(1)	(3) Other (5+ years)
Timber Management	\$6,329	(1)	
Hydrological Management	\$8,756	(1)	
Other (Restoration, Enhancement, Surveys, Monitoring, etc.)	\$108,123	(1)	
Subtotal	\$149,402		
<u>Administration</u>			
General administration	\$3,244	(1)	
<u>Support</u>			
Land Management Planning	\$5,277	(1)	
Land Management Reviews	\$782	(3)	
Training/Staff Development	\$938	(1)	
Vehicle Purchase	\$48,238	(2)	
Vehicle Operation and Maintenance	\$9,616	(1)	
Other (Technical Reports, Data Management, etc.)	\$8,873	(1)	
Subtotal	\$49,605		
<u>Capital Improvements</u>			
Facility Maintenance	\$22,750	(1)	
<u>Visitor Services/Recreation</u>			
Info./Education/Operations	\$14,346	(1)	
<u>Law Enforcement</u>			
Resource protection	\$3,010	(1)	
Total	\$271,477	*	

*Based on the characteristics and requirements of this area, two (2) full time equivalent (FTE) position would be optimal to fully manage this area. All land management funding is dependent upon annual legislative appropriations.

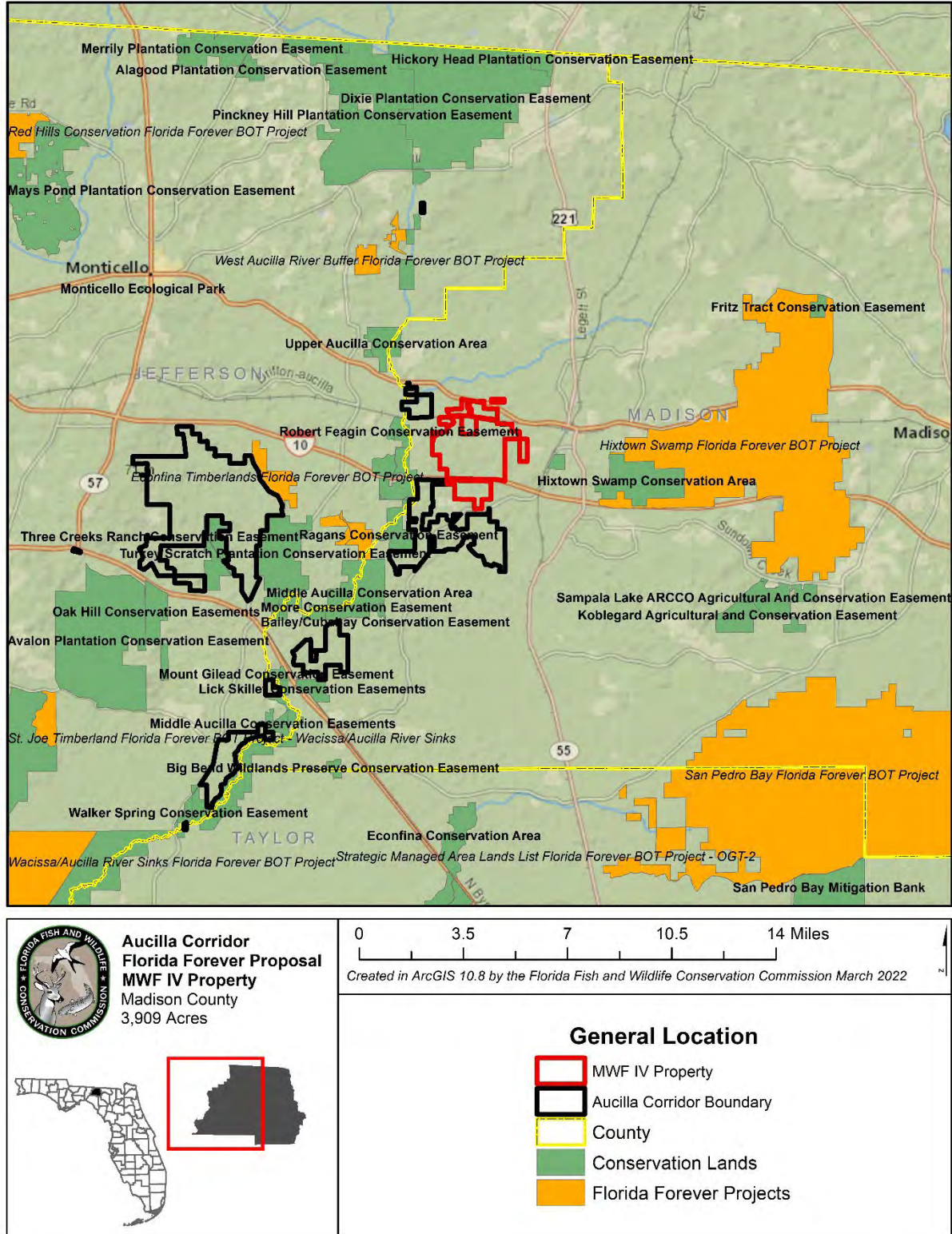


Figure 1. General Location of the MWF IV Property

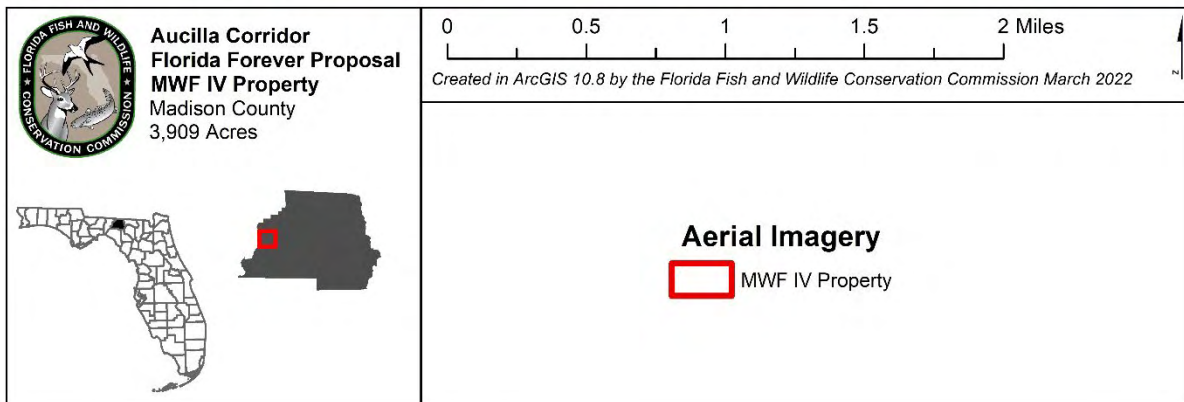
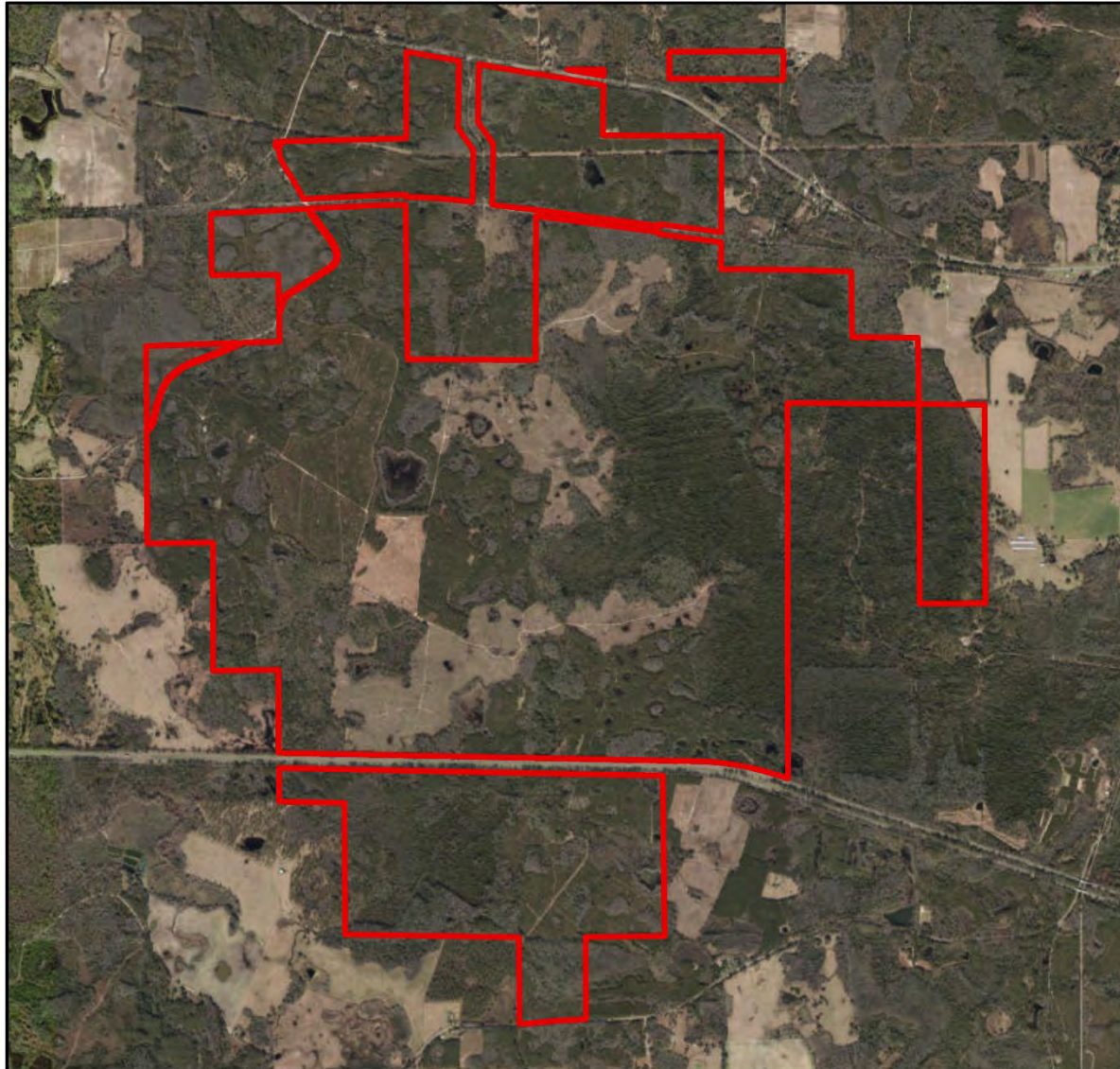


Figure 2. Aerial Map of the WMF IV Property

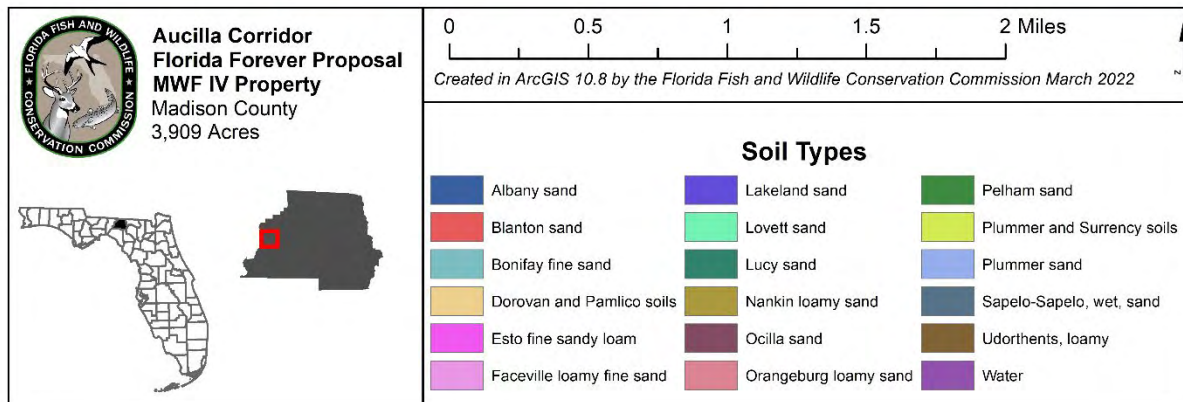
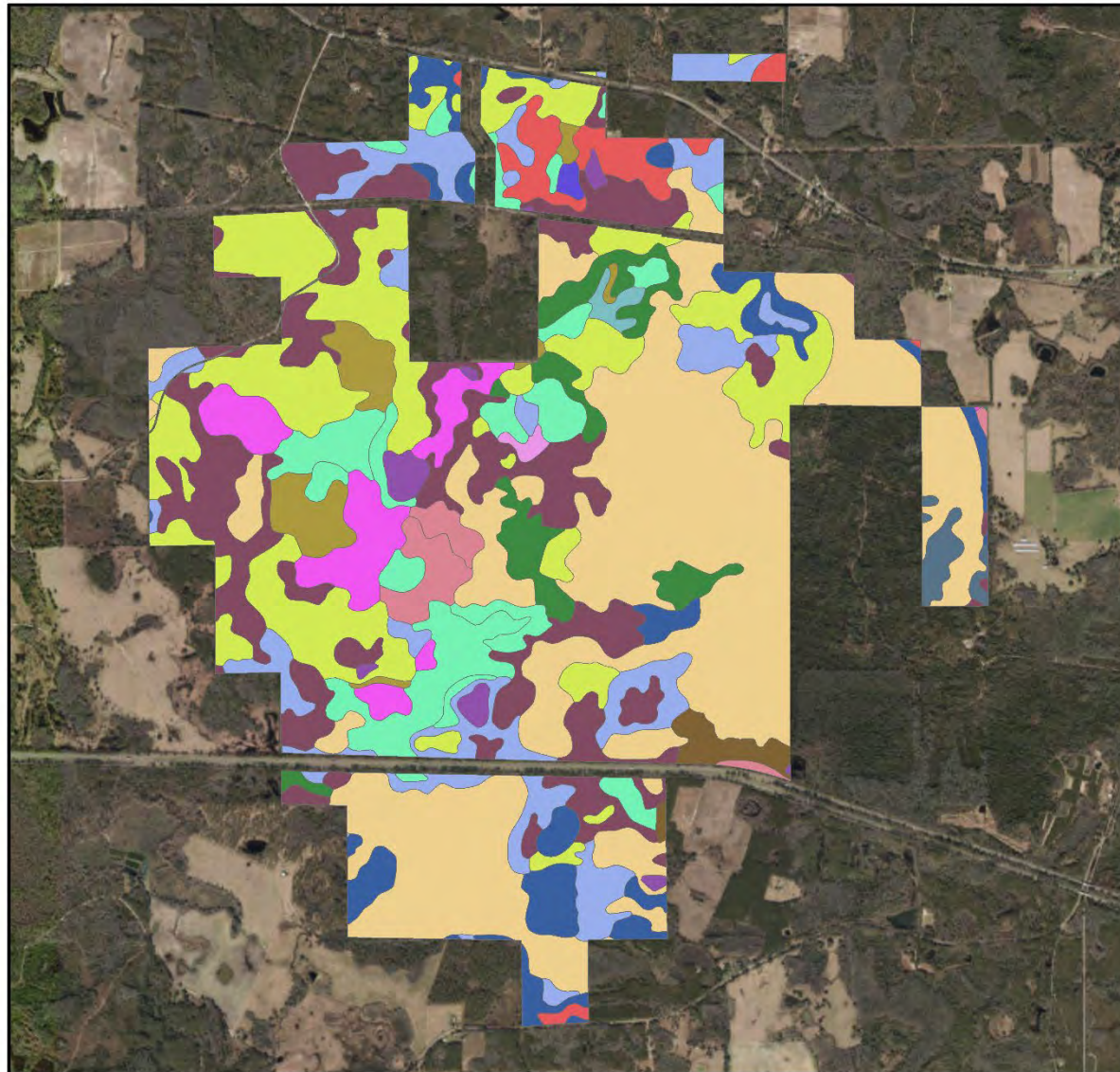


Figure 3. The MWF IV Property Soils

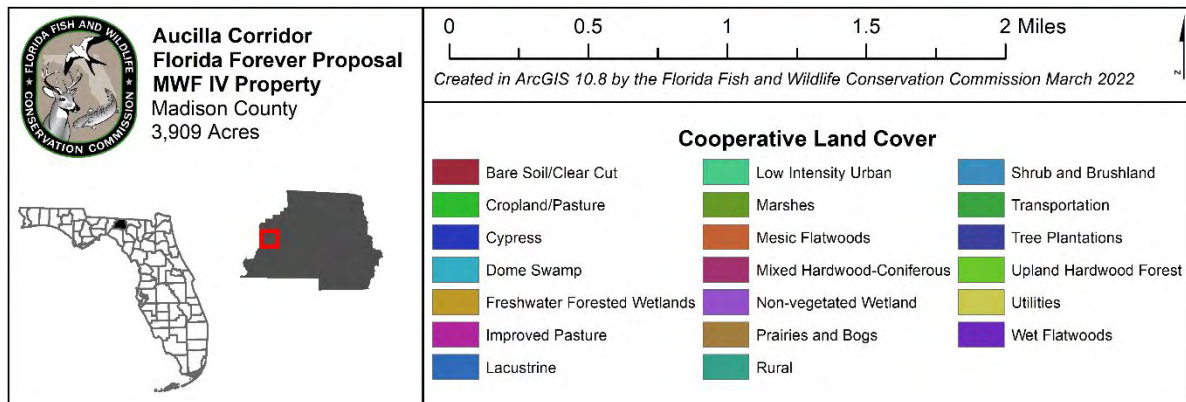
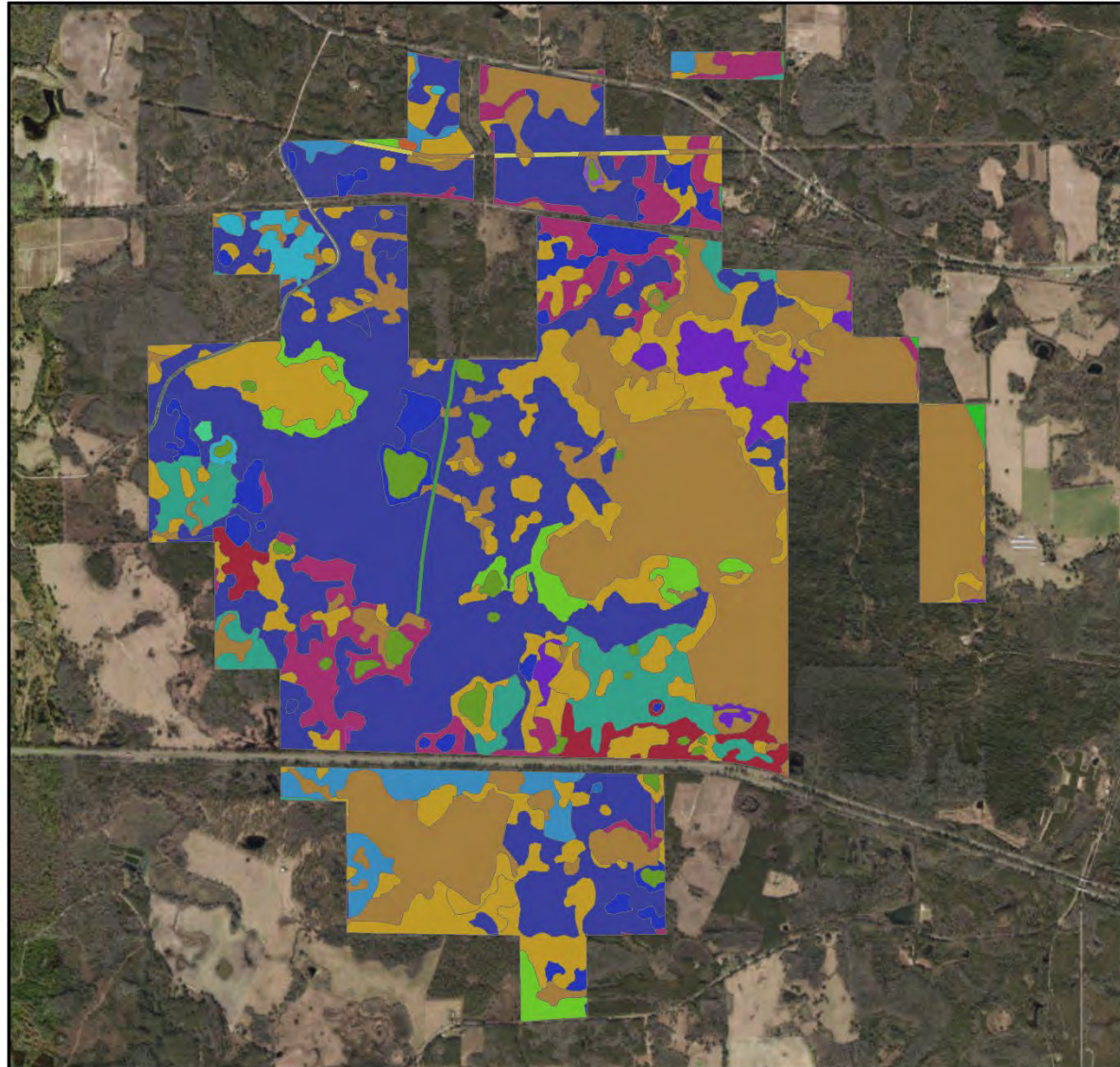


Figure 4. Cooperative Land Cover

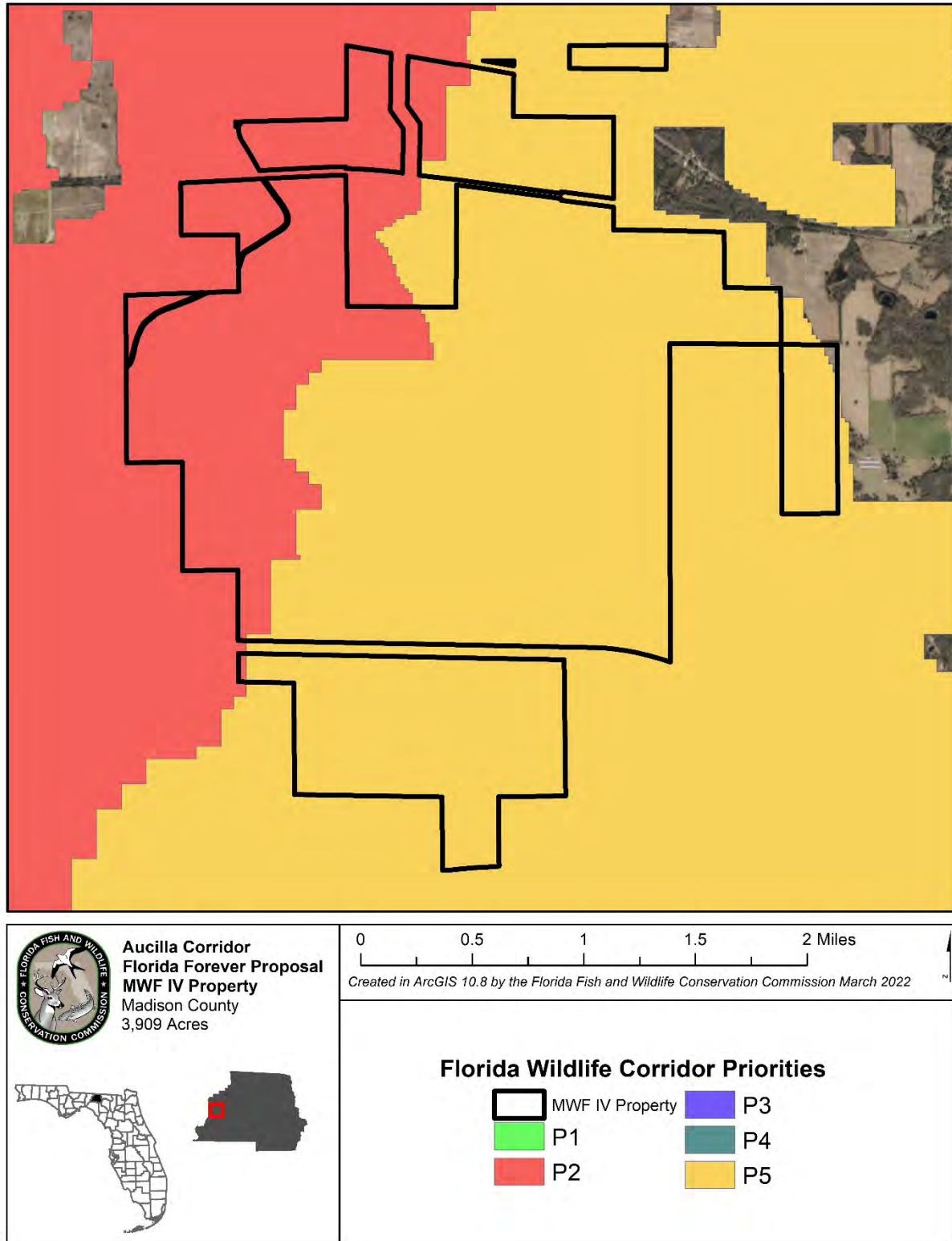


Figure 5. Florida Wildlife Corridor Priorities

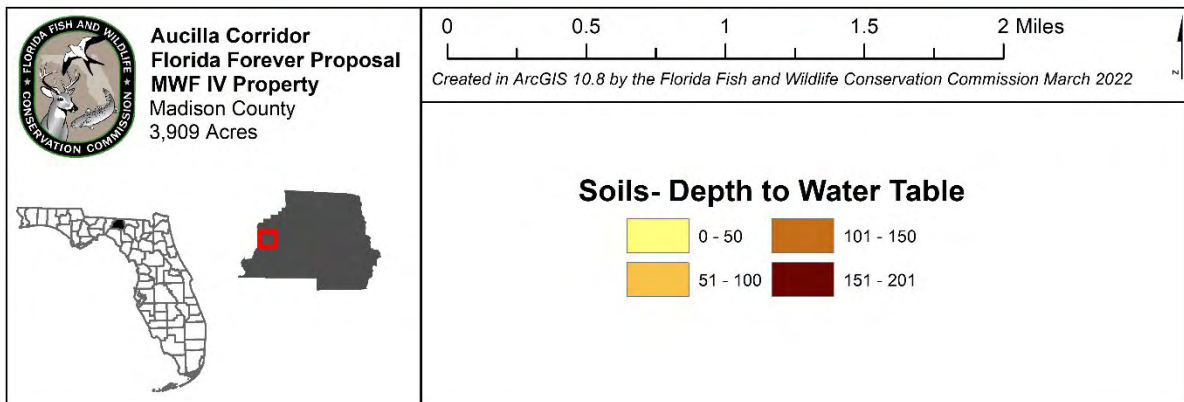
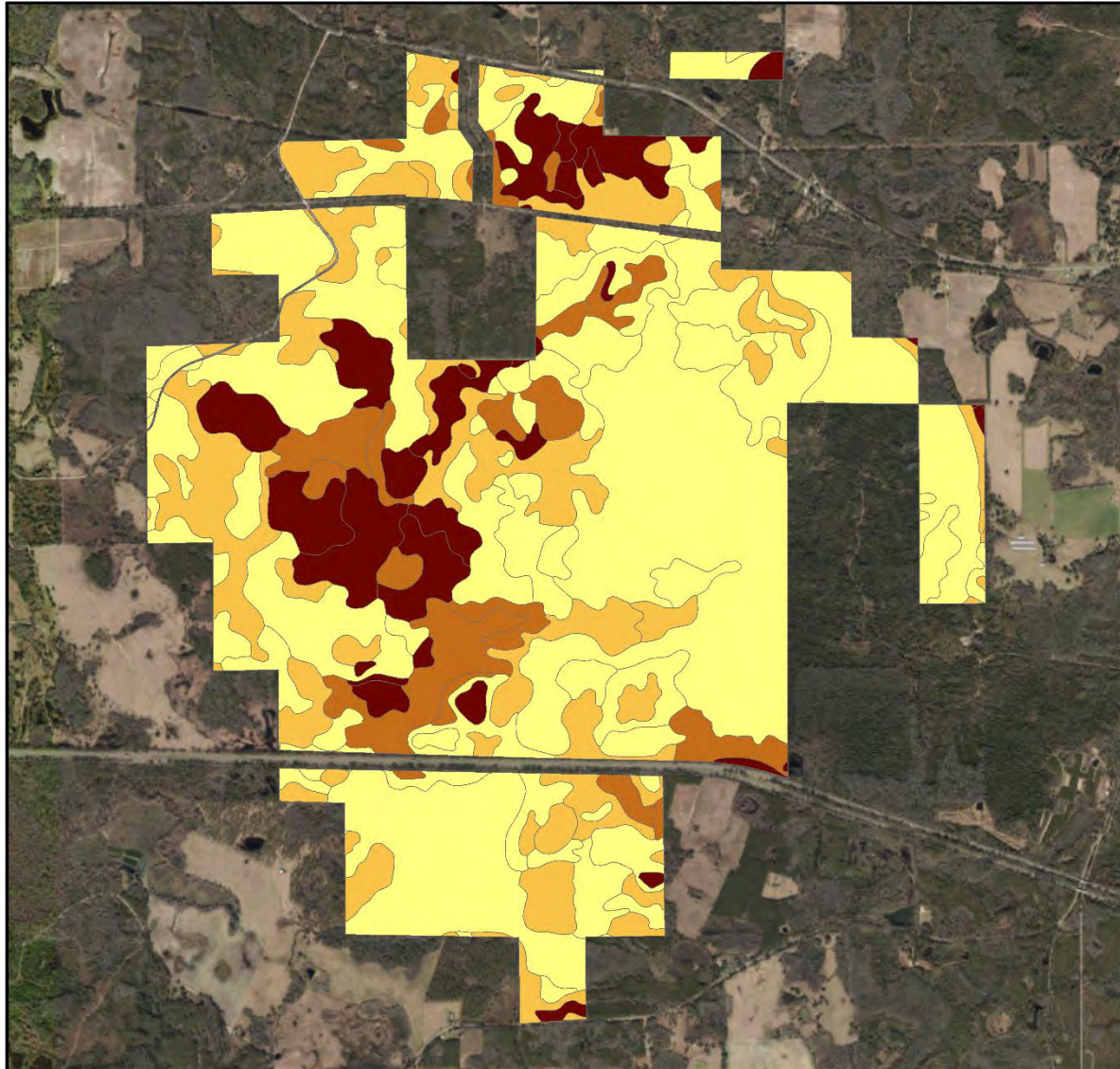


Figure 6. Soils-Depth to Water Table (cm)

Appendix E:**Imperiled Species FNAI Ranking Definitions**

FNAI
Definitions of imperiled species ranks and conservation status

Using a ranking system developed by NatureServe and the Natural Heritage Program Network, the Florida Natural Areas Inventory assigns two ranks for each element. The global rank is based on an element's worldwide status; the state rank is based on the status of the element in Florida. Element ranks are based on many factors, the most important ones being estimated number of Element Occurrences (EOs), estimated abundance (number of individuals for species; area for natural communities), geographic range, estimated number of adequately protected EOs, relative threat of destruction, and ecological fragility.

FNAI GLOBAL ELEMENT RANK

- G1** = Critically imperiled globally because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences or less than 1000 individuals) or because of extreme vulnerability to extinction due to some natural or man-made factor.
- G2** = Imperiled globally because of rarity (6 to 20 occurrences or less than 3000 individuals) or because of vulnerability to extinction due to some natural or man-made factor.
- G3** = Either very rare and local throughout its range (21-100 occurrences or less than 10,000 individuals) or found locally in a restricted range or vulnerable to extinction from other factors.
- G4** = Apparently secure globally (may be rare in parts of range).
- G5** = Demonstrably secure globally.
- GH** = Of historical occurrence throughout its range, may be rediscovered (e.g., ivory-billed woodpecker).
- GX** = Believed to be extinct throughout range.
- GXC** = Extirpated from the wild but still known from captivity or cultivation.
- G#?** = Tentative rank (e.g., G2?).
- G#G#** = Range of rank; insufficient data to assign specific global rank (e.g., G2G3).
- G#T#** = Rank of a taxonomic subgroup such as a subspecies or variety; the G portion of the rank refers to the entire species and the T portion refers to the specific subgroup; numbers have same definition as above (e.g., G3T1).
- G#Q** = Rank of questionable species - ranked as species but questionable whether it is species or subspecies; numbers have same definition as above (e.g., G2Q).
- G#T#Q** = Same as above, but validity as subspecies or variety is questioned.
- GU** = Unrankable; due to a lack of information no rank or range can be assigned (e.g., GUT2).
- GNA** = Ranking is not applicable because the element is not a suitable target for conservation (e.g. a hybrid species).
- GNR** = Element not yet ranked (temporary).
- GNRTNR** = Neither the element nor the taxonomic subgroup has yet been ranked.

FNAI STATE ELEMENT RANK

- S1** = Critically imperiled in Florida because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences or less than 1000 individuals) or because of extreme vulnerability to extinction due to some natural or man-made factor.
- S2** = Imperiled in Florida because of rarity (6 to 20 occurrences or less than 3000 individuals) or because of vulnerability to extinction due to some natural or man-made factor.
- S3** = Either very rare and local in Florida (21-100 occurrences or less than 10,000 individuals) or found locally in a restricted range or vulnerable to extinction from other factors.
- S4** = Apparently secure in Florida (may be rare in parts of range).
- S5** = Demonstrably secure in Florida.
- SH** = Of historical occurrence in Florida, possibly extirpated, but may be rediscovered (e.g., ivory-billed woodpecker).
- SX** = Believed to be extirpated throughout Florida.
- SU** = Unrankable; due to a lack of information no rank or range can be assigned.
- SNA** = State ranking is not applicable because the element is not a suitable target for conservation (e.g. a hybrid species).
- SNR** = Element not yet ranked (temporary).

FEDERAL LEGAL STATUS

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

Definitions derived from U.S. Endangered Species Act of 1973, Sec. 3. Note that the federal status given by FNAI refers only to Florida

2019-04-19

Page 2

FNAI
Definitions of imperiled species ranks and conservation status

populations and that federal status may differ elsewhere.

C = Candidate species for which federal listing agencies have sufficient information on biological vulnerability and threats to support proposing to list the species as Endangered or Threatened.
E = Endangered: species in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.
E, T = Species currently listed endangered in a portion of its range but only listed as threatened in other areas
E, PDL = Species currently listed endangered but has been proposed for delisting.
E, PT = Species currently listed endangered but has been proposed for listing as threatened.
E, XN = Species currently listed endangered but tracked population is a non-essential experimental population.
T = Threatened: species likely to become Endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.
PE = Species proposed for listing as endangered
PS = Partial status: some but not all of the species' infraspecific taxa have federal
PT = Species proposed for listing as threatened
SAT = Treated as threatened due to similarity of appearance to a species which is federally listed such that enforcement personnel have difficulty in attempting to differentiate between the listed and unlisted species.
SC = Not currently listed, but considered a "species of concern" to USFWS.

STATE LEGAL STATUS

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

Animals: Definitions derived from "Florida's Endangered Species and Species of Special Concern, Official Lists" published by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, 1 August 1997, and subsequent updates.

C = Candidate for listing at the Federal level by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
FE = Listed as Endangered Species at the Federal level by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
FT = Listed as Threatened Species at the Federal level by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
FXN = Federal listed as an experimental population in Florida
FT(S/A) = Federal Threatened due to similarity of appearance
ST = State population listed as Threatened by the FFWCC. Defined as a species, subspecies, or isolated population which is acutely vulnerable to environmental alteration, declining in number at a rapid rate, or whose range or habitat is decreasing in area at a rapid rate and as a consequence is destined or very likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future.
SSC = Listed as Species of Special Concern by the FFWCC. Defined as a population which warrants special protection, recognition, or consideration because it has an inherent significant vulnerability to habitat modification, environmental alteration, human disturbance, or substantial human exploitation which, in the foreseeable future, may result in its becoming a threatened species. (SSC* for *Pandion haliaetus* (Osprey) indicates that this status applies in Monroe county only.)
N = Not currently listed, nor currently being considered for listing.

Plants: Definitions derived from Sections 581.011 and 581.185(2), Florida Statutes, and the Preservation of Native Flora of Florida Act, 5B-40.001. FNAI does not track all state-regulated plant species; for a complete list of state-regulated plant species, call Florida Division of Plant Industry, 352-372-3505 or see: <<http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi/>>.

E = Endangered: species of plants native to Florida that are in imminent danger of extinction within the state, the survival of which is unlikely if the causes of a decline in the number of plants continue; includes all species determined to be endangered or threatened pursuant to the U.S. Endangered Species Act.
T = Threatened: species native to the state that are in rapid decline in the number of plants within the state, but which have not so decreased in number as to cause them to be Endangered.
N = Not currently listed, nor currently being considered for listing.

Appendix F:

Site Visit Photos



7. One of the numerous basin swamps documented within the project.



2. Pine plantation on MWF Oscola Tract.



3. Planted pine Pines of Avalon Tract



4. Large stand of Florida maple with needle palm in bottomland forest on Adams Tract



5. Unnamed sink on Welch Tract



6. Confluence of spring-run stream from Adams Tract and the Aucilla River



7. Spring and unusual spring-fed seepage marsh on Adams Tract



8. Josh Goodwin(DHR) points out evidence of one of the numerous cultural sites located along the Aucilla.



10. One of seven bridges recorded within the project along the historic Seven Bridges Road.



11. Recent clear-cut of Basin Swamp on MWF Osceola Tract



12. Depression Marsh on Pines of Avalon Tract



13. Large Basin Marsh on Pines of Avalon Tract



14. Small unnamed spring on Adams Tract



15. Improved pasture with river floodplain Cooley Tract.