

ITEM 7:

Consider a 10-year update to the Hillsborough River State Park Management Plan (Lease No. 3623)

LOCATION:

Hillsborough County

DSL STAFF REMARKS:

Background

Hillsborough River State Park (HRSP) is located in Hillsborough County along the Hillsborough River and between the cities of Temple Terrace and Zephyrhills. Access to the park is from U.S. Highway 301. Land acquisition for Hillsborough River State Park began in 1934 as one of Florida's nine New Deal Era Parks that were shaped by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The park officially became part of the Florida state park system in 1935. Currently, the park comprises 3,319.06 acres. The Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (Trustees) holds fee simple title to the park and on January 23, 1968, the trustees leased the property to DRP under a 99-year lease. HRSP is designated as single use. The park is one of the original New Deal era parks created in Florida by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

The purpose of HRSP is to provide outstanding public outdoor resource-based recreation opportunities to Florida residents and visitors while facilitating conservation efforts along the Hillsborough River.

Management Plan Overview

The Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) has identified nine distinct natural community types at HRSP. They also identified six altered landcover type. The predominant natural communities are floodplain swamp, hydric hammock, mesic flatwoods and mesic hammock. Eighteen species of imperiled plants and twenty-one species of imperiled animals have been identified at HRSP.

The Division of Historical Resources (DHR) maintains a Master Site File that documents many of Florida's archaeological and historical features. A review of information obtained from the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) disclosed seven archaeological sites within the park. Five sites within the park are prehistoric in nature.

HRSP is a dynamic property hosting a variety of land-based and water-based recreational activities. Swimming, fishing, canoeing, camping, historic site visitation, hiking, nature study, picnicking, and scenery appreciation are the popular activities provided at this unit. The park is frequently a destination for field trips, family reunions, and small weddings. These groups utilize the park's many picnic pavilions and the Recreation Hall. Concession operations include a poolside café, bike rentals and canoe rentals.

The Florida Legislature requires that all land management plans include long and short-term (ST) goals. These goals must be measurable objectives, and ST goals must be achievable within a two-year planning period. Pursuant to changes to Section 253.034, F.S., the Division of State Lands tracks the status of short-term goals in each land management plan approved since July 1, 2016. The short-term goals from this management plan are included as part of this item.

While the ten-year management plan serves as the basic statement of policy and future direction for each park, a number of annual work plans provide more specific guidance for DRP staff to

accomplish many of the resource management goals and objectives of the park. Where such detailed planning is appropriate to the character and scale of the park's natural resources, annual work plans are developed for prescribed fire management, exotic plant management and imperiled species management. Annual or longer-term work plans are developed for natural community restoration and hydrological restoration.

Public Involvement

DRP solicited public input by conducting a public workshop on June 4, 2019. The purpose was to present the management plan to the public. On Wednesday June 5, 2019, an advisory Group meeting was held. The purpose of this meeting was to provide the Advisory Group members the opportunity to review and discuss the management plan.

New recreational opportunities and facilities have been proposed that are appropriate for this park and consistent with the DPR mission: These include:

- Construction/addition of an accessible canoe/kayak dock, additional interpretation and erosion control at Seminole Trail, construction of restroom, interpretive kiosk at Old Fort King Trailhead. Addition to Clivus restroom, pole barn and safe crossing for US 301 at Fort Foster Property. Addition to pole barn at the shop area.
- Renovate/repair stationary bridge, renovate campsites. Upgrade restroom and restore CCC pavilion at picnic area. Replace 2 bathhouses in campground.
- Pave access and loop road in campground and shop areas. Repair shoreline and seawall at Hillsborough River/Cedar Landing.
- Research Solar options for shop roof in shop area.

Surplus Lands

The evaluation by the DRP determined that no portion of the HRSP is recommended for a potential surplus designation.

State Land Management Review Team

A Land Management Reviews (LMR) was conducted in Aug 2015. The review team unanimously found that the property is managed in accordance with the purposes for which it was acquired and the management practices, including public access, are in compliance with the management plan. One consensus recommendation was offered:

- 1) The team recommends that DRP consider re-instating the staff positions that have been cut since 2010.

The review team recommendations were considered and addressed in this plan, as appropriate.

DSL STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve management plan.

ARC RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE

APPROVE WITH MODIFICATIONS: _____

DEFER

WITHDRAW

NOT APPROVE

OTHER:

Hillsborough River State Park
Land management plan short term goals

Goal (ST)	Details of Goal	Objective	Details of Objective	Action	Details of Action	Measures
II	Protect water quality and quantity in the park, restore hydrology to the extent feasible, and maintain the restored condition.	A	Conduct/obtain an assessment of the park's hydrological needs.	N/A	N/A	Assessment conducted.
II	Protect water quality and quantity in the park, restore hydrology to the extent feasible, and maintain the restored condition.	C	Seek assistance to monitor and analyze water resources of the park.	N/A	N/A	Water resources monitored.
III	Restore and maintain the natural communities/habitats.	B	Conduct habitat/natural community restoration on 94 acres of abandoned pasture to bring to desired mesic flatwoods community.	N/A	N/A	Number of acres restored or with restoration underway.
III	Restore and maintain the natural communities/habitats.	C	Conduct habitat/natural community improvement activities on 337 acres of mesic flatwoods and wet flatwoods to bring into maintenance condition.	N/A	N/A	Number acres improved or underway.

Goal (ST)	Details of Goal	Objective	Details of Objective	Action	Details of Action	Measures
III	Restore and maintain the natural communities/habitats.	C	Conduct habitat/natural community improvement activities on 337 acres of mesic flatwoods and wet flatwoods to bring into maintenance condition.	1	Develop site specific improvement plan for 17 acres wet flatwoods	Plan developme
III	Restore and maintain the natural communities/habitats.	C	Conduct habitat/natural community improvement activities on 337 acres of mesic flatwoods and wet flatwoods to bring into maintenance condition.	2	Continue to conduct hardwood removal in targeted mesic flatwoods.	Hardwood removed.
IV	Maintain, improve or restore imperiled species populations and habitats.	B	Monitor and document 1 selected imperiled animal species.	1	Use existing FWC protocols for gopher tortoise monitoring; adopt new FWC protocols when they are complete.	Number protocols developed.
IV	Maintain, improve or restore imperiled species populations and habitats.	C	Monitor and document 3 selected imperiled plant species.	1	Develop monitoring protocols and FNAI reporting structures, at the Tier level recommended in Table 2.	Number protocols developed.
V	Remove exotic and invasive plants and animals and conduct needed maintenance control.	B	Implement control measures on 2 exotic animals' species.	2	Develop SOW for contracted services.	SOW developed.

Goal (ST)	Details of Goal	Objective	Details of Objective	Action	Details of Action	Measures
V	Remove exotic and invasive plants and animals and conduct needed maintenance control.	B	Implement control measures on 2 exotic animal species.	3	Implement contracted services.	Contracted.
VI	Protect, preserve and maintain the cultural resources.	A	Assess and evaluate 26 of 26 recorded cultural resources in the park.	1	Complete 7 assessments/evaluations of archaeological sites.	Assessments complete.
VI	Protect, preserve and maintain the cultural resources.	B	Compile reliable documentation for all recorded historic and archaeological sites.	1	Ensure all known sites are recorded or updated in the Florida Master Site File.	Number sites recorded or updated.
VI	Protect, preserve and maintain the cultural resources.	B	Compile reliable documentation for all recorded historic and archaeological sites.	2	Propose a level 1 archaeological survey for priority zones identified by the predictive model.	Probability Map completed.
VII	Provide public access and recreational opportunities.	B	Expand the park's recreational carrying capacity by 100 users.	N/A	N/A	Number recreation / visitor.
VII	Provide public access and recreational opportunities.	D	Develop 3 new interpretive, educational, and recreational programs.	N/A	N/A	Number interpretive / education programs.

Goal (ST)	Details of Goal	Objective	Details of Objective	Action	Details of Action	Measures
VIII	Develop and maintain the capital facilities and infrastructure necessary to meet the goals and objectives of this management plan.	B	Continue to implement the park's transitional plan to ensure facilities are accessible in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act of 1990.	N/A	N/A	Plan implemented.

Source: Florida DEP, Office of Environmental Services, Revised 2019.

Hillsborough River State Park

Lead Agency: Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks

Common Name of Property: Hillsborough River State Park

Location: Hillsborough County

Direct Economic Impact: FY 17-18 206,836 visitors \$17.9 million and 251 jobs added to local economy

Acreage: 3,319.06 Acres

Acreage Breakdown

Natural Communities	Acres
Mesic Flatwoods	321.42
Mesic Hammock	200.29
Sinkhole	0.01
Wet Flatwoods	17.08
Depression Marsh	46.31
Dome Swamp	116.35
Floodplain Swamp	1,780.51
Hydric Hammock	468.90
Blackwater Stream	74.81
Abandoned Field	145.37
Clearing/Regeneration	27.65
Developed	84.59
Impoundment/Artificial Pond	7.57
Spoil Area	2.46
Successional Hardwood Forest	25.74

Lease/Management Agreement Number(s): 3623

Use: Single Use

Management Responsibilities

Agency: Dept. of Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation and Parks

Responsibility: Public Outdoor Recreation and Conservation

Designated Land Use: Public outdoor recreation and conservation is the designated single use of the property

Sublease: None

Encumbrances: See Addendum 1 for details

Type of Acquisition(s): See Addendum 1 for details

Hillsborough River State Park

Unique Features

Overview: Hillsborough River State Park is located in Hillsborough County along the Hillsborough River and between the cities of Temple Terrace and Zephyrhills. Access to the park is from U.S. Highway 301. Land acquisition for Hillsborough River State Park began in 1934 as one of Florida's nine New Deal Era Parks that were shaped by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The park officially became part of the Florida state park system in 1935. Currently, the park comprises 3,319.06 acres. The purpose of acquiring the park is to provide outstanding public outdoor resource based recreation activities while facilitating conservation efforts along the Hillsborough River.

Natural: The most notable natural feature of the unit is the Hillsborough River, especially where the water rushing over the exposed limestone creates rapids at normal river stages. Trails along the river provide visitors with a chance for wildlife observation and enjoying the natural landscape. The blackwater stream, hydric hammocks, floodplain swamps and other wetland communities are sensitive and less widely represented in the state than the other communities of the park. These areas can be interpreted through hiking or nature trails, interpretive signage, and observation stations for birdwatching and wildlife viewing.

Archaeological/Historical: The park protects 7 archaeological sites and 19 historic structures recorded in the Florida Master Site File. The cultural periods represented by the sites and structures include Safety Harbor (A.D. 900-A.D. 1725), Second Seminole War (1835-1842), the New Deal Era (1933-1938), and the Civilian Conservation Corps. The recorded cultural resources at Hillsborough River State Park offer opportunities for interpretive and educational programming. This can be accomplished through tours, cultural events, or interpretive signage displayed throughout the park property.

Management Goals, Objectives and Actions

Measurable objectives and actions have been identified for each of the Division's management goals for Hillsborough River [State Park](#). Please refer to the Implementation Schedule and Cost Estimates in the Implementation Component of this plan for a consolidated spreadsheet of the recommended actions, measures of progress, target year for completion and estimated costs to fulfill the management goals and objectives of this park.

While, the Division of Recreation and Parks utilizes the ten-year management plan to serve as the basic statement of policy and future direction for each park, a number of annual work plans provide more specific guidance for Division staff to accomplish many of the resource management goals and objectives of the park. Where such detailed planning is appropriate to the character and scale of the park's natural resources, annual work plans are developed for prescribed fire management, exotic plant management and imperiled species management. Annual or longer-term work plans are

Hillsborough River State Park

developed for natural community restoration and hydrological restoration.

The work plans provide the Division with crucial flexibility in its efforts to generate and implement adaptive resource management practices in the state park system. The work plans are reviewed and updated annually. Through this process, the Division's resource management strategies are systematically evaluated to determine their effectiveness. The process and the information collected is used to refine techniques, methodologies and strategies, and ensures that each park's prescribed management actions are monitored and reported as required by Chapters 253.034 and 259.037, Florida Statutes. The goals, objectives and actions identified in this management plan will serve as the basis for developing annual work plans for the park. Since the plan is based on conditions that exist at the time the plan is developed, the annual work plans will provide the flexibility needed to adapt to future conditions as they change during the ten-year management planning cycle. As the park's annual work plans are implemented through the ten-year cycle, it may become necessary to adjust the management plan's priority schedules and cost estimates to reflect these changing conditions.

Natural Resource Management

Hydrological Management

Goal: Protect water quality and quantity in the park, restore hydrology to the extent feasible and maintain the restored condition.

- *Objective A: Conduct/obtain an assessment of the park's hydrological restoration needs.*
- *Objective B: Restore natural hydrological conditions and function to 3 acres of mesic flatwoods.*
- *Objective C: Seek assistance to monitor and analyze water resources of the park.*

Natural Communities Management

Goal: Restore and maintain the natural communities/habitats of the park.

Objective A: Within 10 years, have 384.8 acres of the park maintained within optimum fire return interval.

Objective B: Conduct natural community/habitat restoration activities on 372 acres of abandoned pasture

- *Objective C: Conduct natural community/habitat improvement activities on 337 acres of mesic flatwoods and wet flatwoods.*

Imperiled Species Management

Goal: Maintain, improve or restore imperiled species populations and habitats in the park.

- *Objective A: Update baseline imperiled species occurrence inventory lists for plants and animals.*

Hillsborough River State Park

- *Objective B: Monitor and document 1 selected imperiled animal species.*
- *Objective C: Monitor and document 3 imperiled plant species in the park.*

Exotic Species Management

Goal: Remove exotic and invasive plants and animals from the park and conduct needed maintenance control.

- *Objective A: Annually treat 430 acres of exotic plant species in the park.*
- *Objective B: Implement control measures on 2 nuisance animal species in the park.*

Cultural Resource Management

Cultural Resource Management

Goal: Protect, preserve and maintain the cultural resources of the park.

Objective A: Assess and evaluate 26 of 26 recorded cultural resources in the park.

Objective B: Compile reliable documentation for all recorded historic and archaeological resources.

Bring 3 of 26 recorded cultural sites into good condition.

Ten-Year Implementation Schedule and Cost Estimates: See Future Objectives Section, pages 12-20.

Acquisition Needs/Acreage: Three parcels of land that total approximately 528 acres have been identified to complete the optimum boundary for the park. The purpose of the 2 northern parcels is to consolidate the division's management of the river shoreline and water-based recreation while protecting the natural communities adjacent to the river north of the park from potential land use changes. The parcel to the south of the park, which currently is Dead River Park, would allow the park to fence off the southern border all the way to the river. This fence would significantly decrease the number of feral hogs that could access the park. Additionally, there is potential that the current land manager of this parcel would be willing to turn over the management of it.

Surplus Lands/Acreage: No lands are considered surplus to the needs of the park.

Public Involvement: DRP solicited public input by conducting a public workshop on Tuesday, June 4, 2019. The purpose was to present the management plan to the public. On Wednesday, June 5, 2019, an Advisory Group meeting was held. The purpose of this meeting was to provide the Advisory Group members the opportunity to review and discuss the management plan (see Addendum 2).

Hillsborough River State Park

Summary of Significant Changes in the Management Plan Update

New recreational opportunities and facilities have been proposed that are appropriate for this park and consistent with the DRP mission. These include:

Picnic Area

Upgrade Restroom
Restore CCC Pavilion
Add Accessible Canoe/Kayak
Dock

Stationary Bridge

Renovate/Repair Bridge

Seminole Trail

Add Interpretation
Add Erosion Control

Campground

Renovate Campsites
Replace 2 Bathhouses
Pave Access and Loop Road

Hillsborough River/Cedar Landing

Stabilize Shoreline
Repair Seawall

Old Spray Field

Research/Consider Solar Panels

Old Fort King Trailhead

Add Restroom
Add Interpretive Kiosk
Restore Model Dairy Property

Parking Lot #1

Move CCC Cabin here for
Interpretation

Fort Foster Property

Add Clivus Restroom
Add Pole Barn
Safe Crossing for US 301

Shop Area

Add Pole Barn
Pave Access Road
Research Solar Options for Shop
Roof

Introduction

Hillsborough River State Park is located in Hillsborough County along the Hillsborough River (see Vicinity Map). Access to the park is from U.S. Highway 301 (see Reference Map). The Vicinity Map also reflects significant land and water resources existing near the park.

Land acquisition for Hillsborough River State Park began in 1934, and the park officially became part of the Florida state park system in 1935. Currently, the park comprises 3,319.06 acres. The Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (Trustees) hold fee simple title to the park and on January 23, 1968, the Trustees leased (Lease Number 3623) the property to DRP under a 99-year lease. The current lease will expire on January 22, 2067.

Hillsborough River State Park is designated single-use to provide public outdoor recreation and other park-related uses. There are no legislative or executive directives that constrain the use of this property (see Addendum 1).

Purpose and Significance of the Park

The purpose of Hillsborough River State Park is to provide outstanding public outdoor resource-based recreation opportunities to Florida residents and visitors while facilitating conservation efforts along the Hillsborough River.

- The park is one of the original New Deal era parks created in Florida by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The park is an excellent example of early 20th century recreation planning.
- During the Second Seminole War (1835–1842) Fort Alabama and Fort Foster were constructed within the park. Today, a replica of Fort Foster and an interpretive center provide educational programming describing events from this period of Florida's history from both the perspective of Seminoles and settlers.

- The park protects nine distinct natural communities, 47 designated animal and plant species, and 26 archaeological sites and historic structures listed on the Florida Master Site File.
- The park protects special natural features which include Class II rapids along the Hillsborough River (a designated Outstanding Florida Water (OFW)) and unique Suwannee limestone outcroppings created by the river.

Purpose and Scope of the Plan

Hillsborough River State Park is classified as a state park in the DRP's unit classification system. In the management of a balance is sought between the goals of maintaining and enhancing natural conditions and providing various recreational opportunities. Natural resource management activities are aimed at management of natural systems. Development in the park is directed toward providing public access to and within the park, and to providing recreational facilities, in a reasonable balance, that are both convenient and safe. Program emphasis is on interpretation on the park's natural, aesthetic and educational attributes.

This plan serves as the basic statement of policy and direction for the management of Hillsborough River State Park as a unit of Florida's state park system. It identifies the goals, objectives, actions and criteria or standards that guide each aspect of park administration and sets forth the specific measures that will be implemented to meet management objectives and provide balanced public utilization. The plan is intended to meet the requirements of Sections 253.034 and 259.032, Florida Statutes, Chapter 18-2, Florida Administrative Code, and is intended to be consistent with the State Lands Management Plan. With approval, this management plan will replace the 2004 approved plan.

Introduction - 1

Resource Management Component

The Resource Management Component provides a detailed inventory and assessment of the natural and cultural resources of the park. Resource management needs and issues are identified, and measurable management objectives are established for each of the park's management goals and resource types. This component provides guidance on the application of such measures as prescribed burning, exotic species removal, imperiled species management, cultural resource management and restoration of natural conditions.

The DRP's philosophy of resource management is natural systems management. Primary emphasis is placed on restoring and maintaining, to the degree possible, the natural processes that shaped the structure, function and species composition of Florida's diverse natural communities as they occurred in the original domain. Single species management for imperiled species is appropriate in state parks when the maintenance, recovery or restoration of a species or population is complicated due to constraints associated with long-term restoration efforts, unnaturally high mortality or insufficient habitat. Single species management should be compatible with the maintenance and restoration of natural processes and should not imperil other native species or seriously compromise the park values.

The DRP's management goal for cultural resources is to preserve sites and objects that represent Florida's cultural periods, significant historic events or persons. This goal often entails active measures to stabilize, reconstruct or restore resources, or to rehabilitate them for appropriate public use.

Because park units are often components of larger ecosystems, their proper management can be affected by conditions and events that occur beyond park boundaries. Ecosystem management is implemented through a resource management evaluation program that assesses resource conditions, evaluates management activities and refines

management actions, and reviews local comprehensive plans and development permit applications for park/ecosystem impacts.

Land Use Component

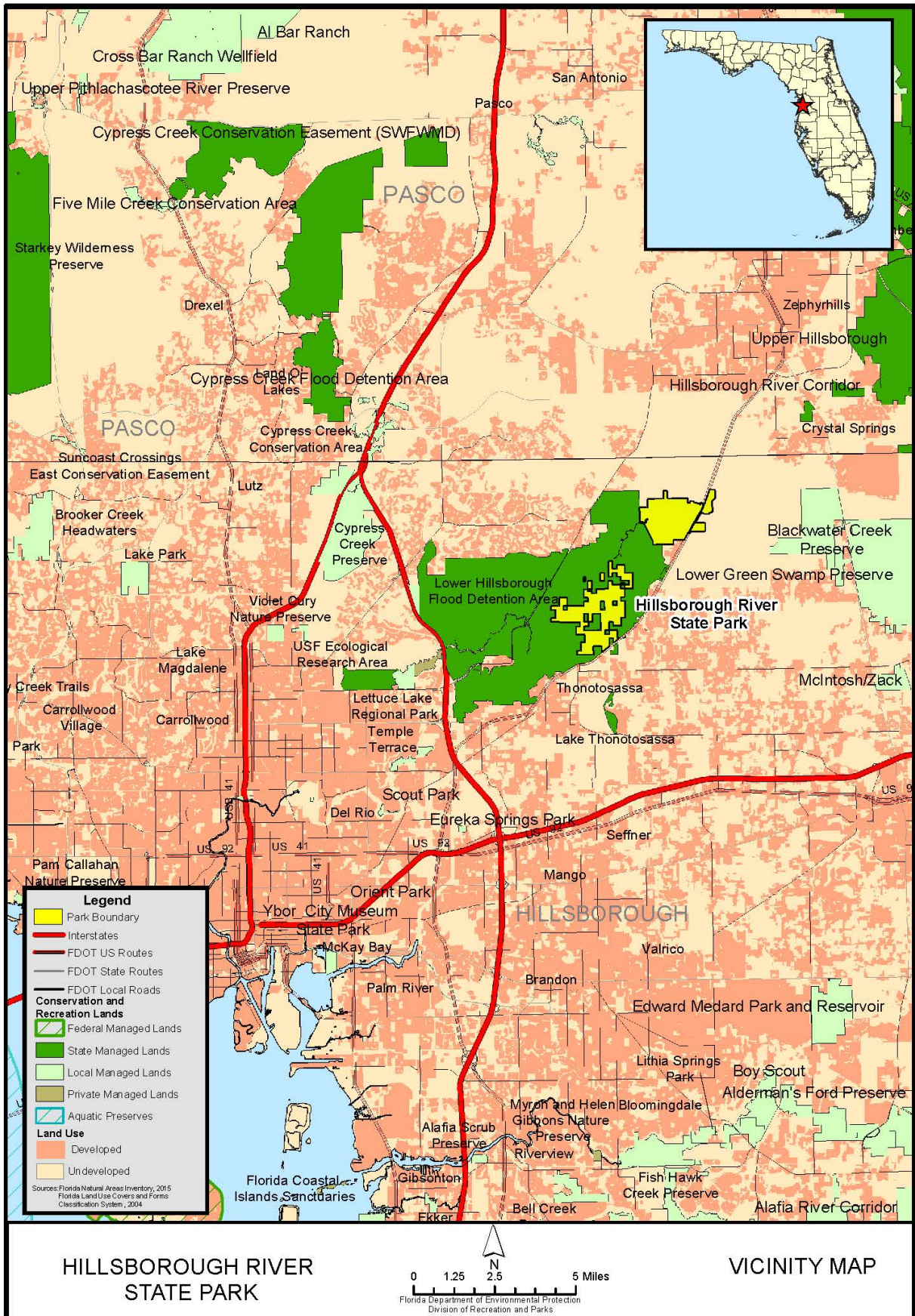
The Land Use Component is the recreational resource allocation plan for the park. Based on considerations such as access, population, adjacent land uses, the natural and cultural resources of the park, and current public uses and existing development, measurable objectives are set to achieve the desired allocation of the physical space of the park. These objectives identify use areas and propose the types of facilities and programs as well as the volume of public use to be provided.

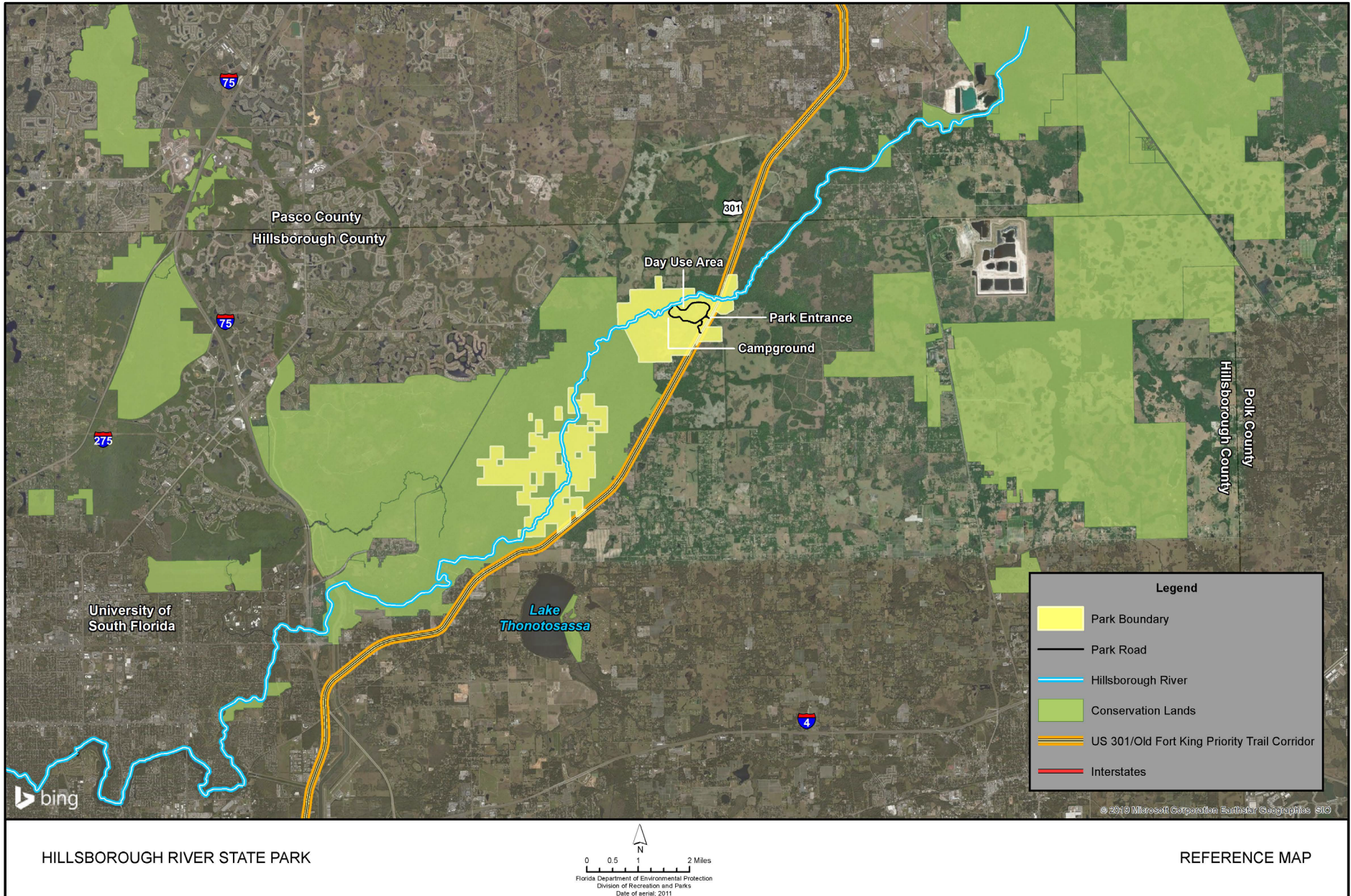
Land use planning and park development decisions for the state park system are based on the dual responsibilities of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation and Parks. These responsibilities are to preserve representative examples of original natural Florida and its cultural resources, and to provide outdoor recreation opportunities for Florida's citizens and visitors.

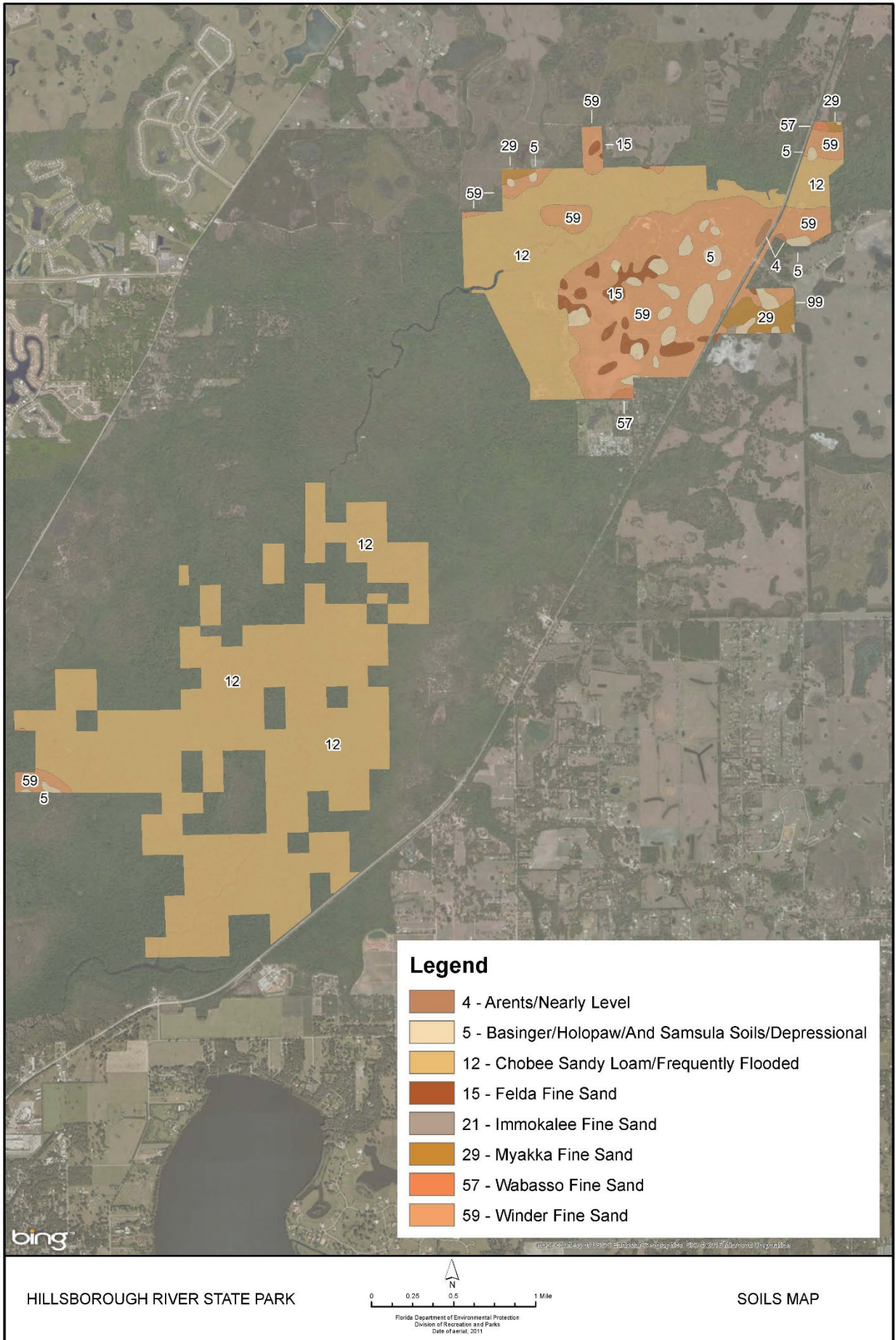
The general planning and design process begins with an analysis of the natural and cultural resources of the unit, and then proceeds through the creation of a conceptual land use plan that culminates in the actual design and construction of park facilities. Input to the plan is provided by experts in environmental sciences, cultural resources, park operation and management. Additional input is received through public workshops, and through environmental and recreational-user groups. With this approach, the DRP objective is to provide quality development for resource-based recreation throughout the state with a high level of sensitivity to the natural and cultural resources at each park.

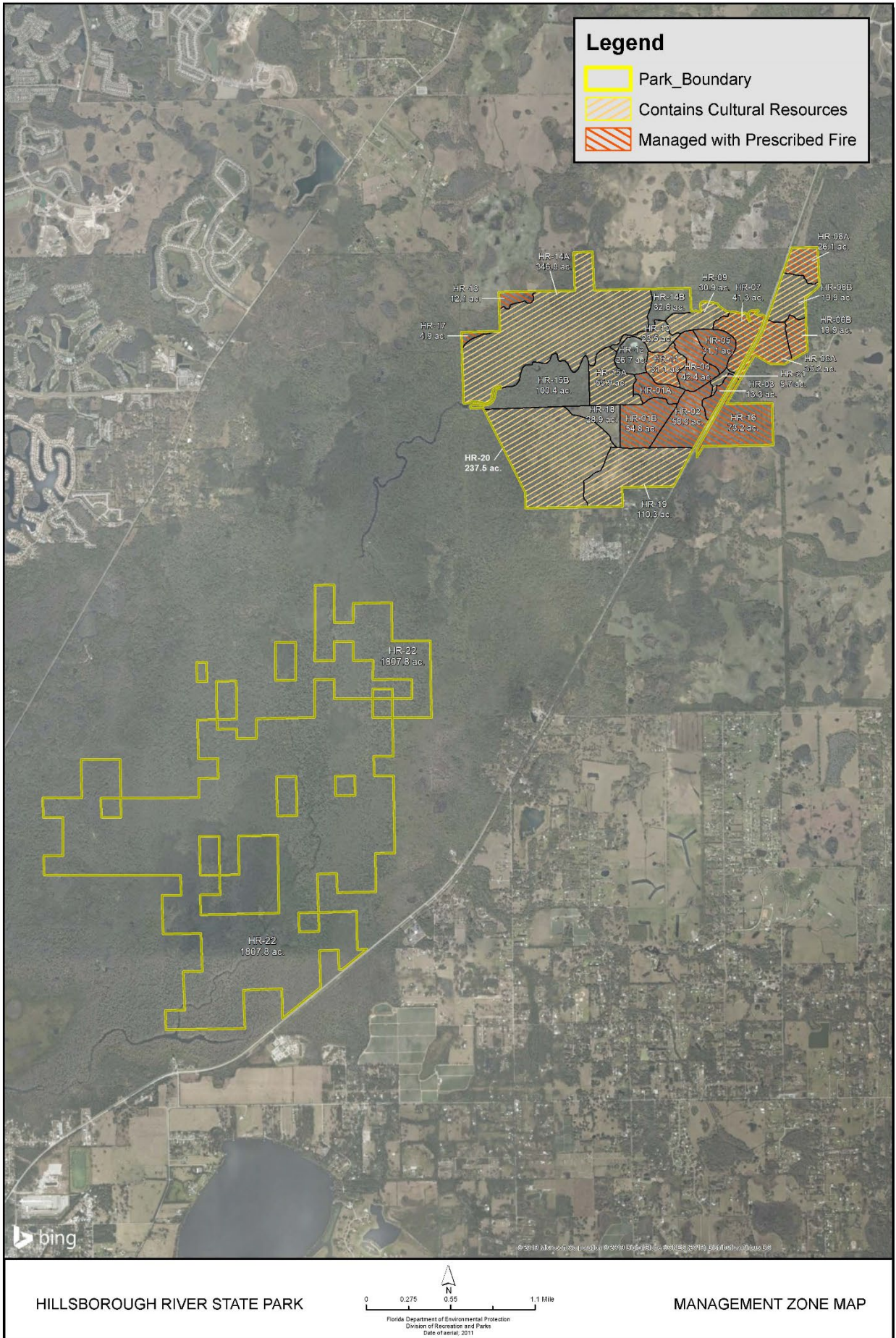
This component of the unit plan includes a brief inventory of the external conditions and the recreational potential of the unit. Existing uses, facilities, special conditions on use, and specific areas within the park that will be given special protection, are identified.

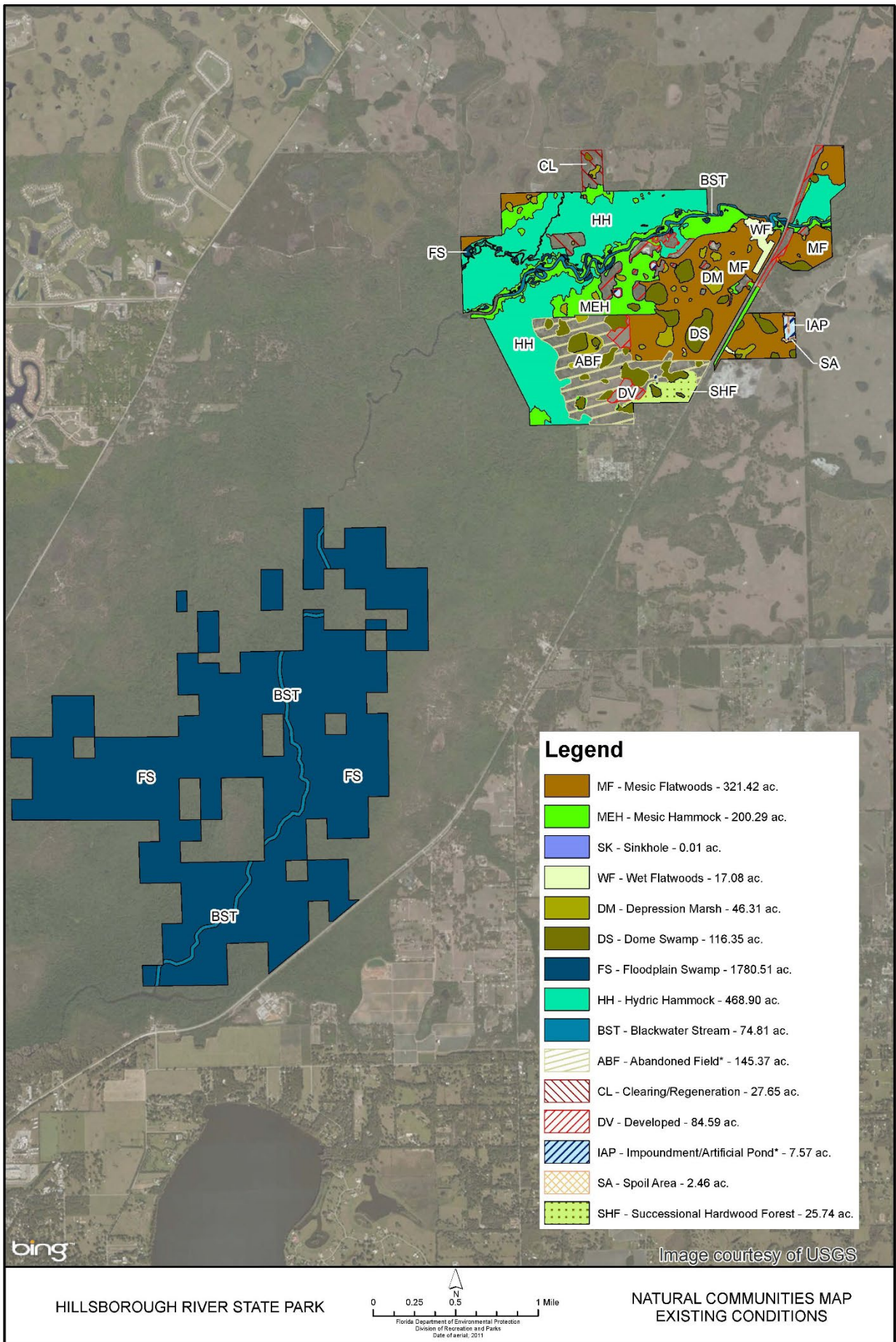
Introduction - 2

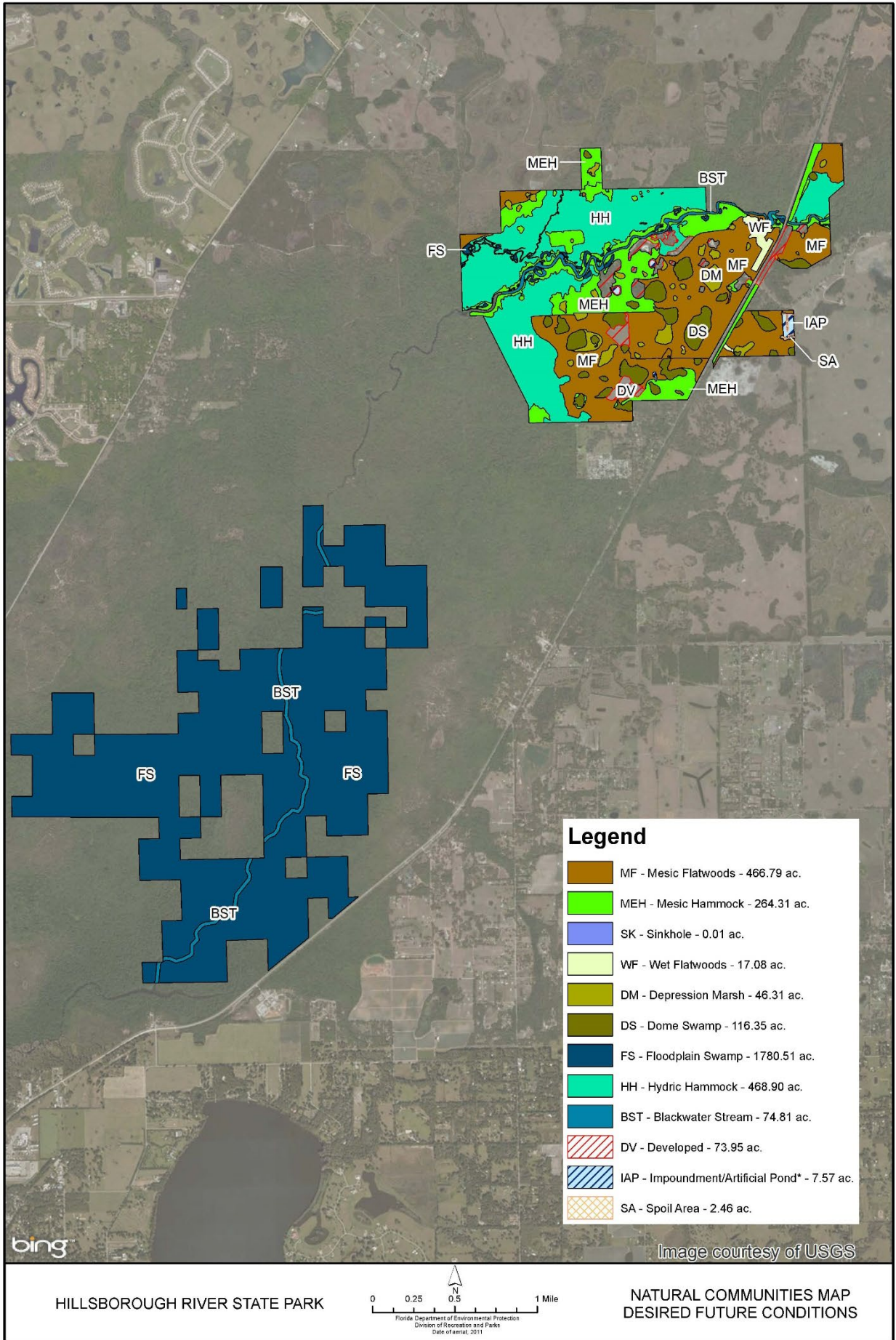


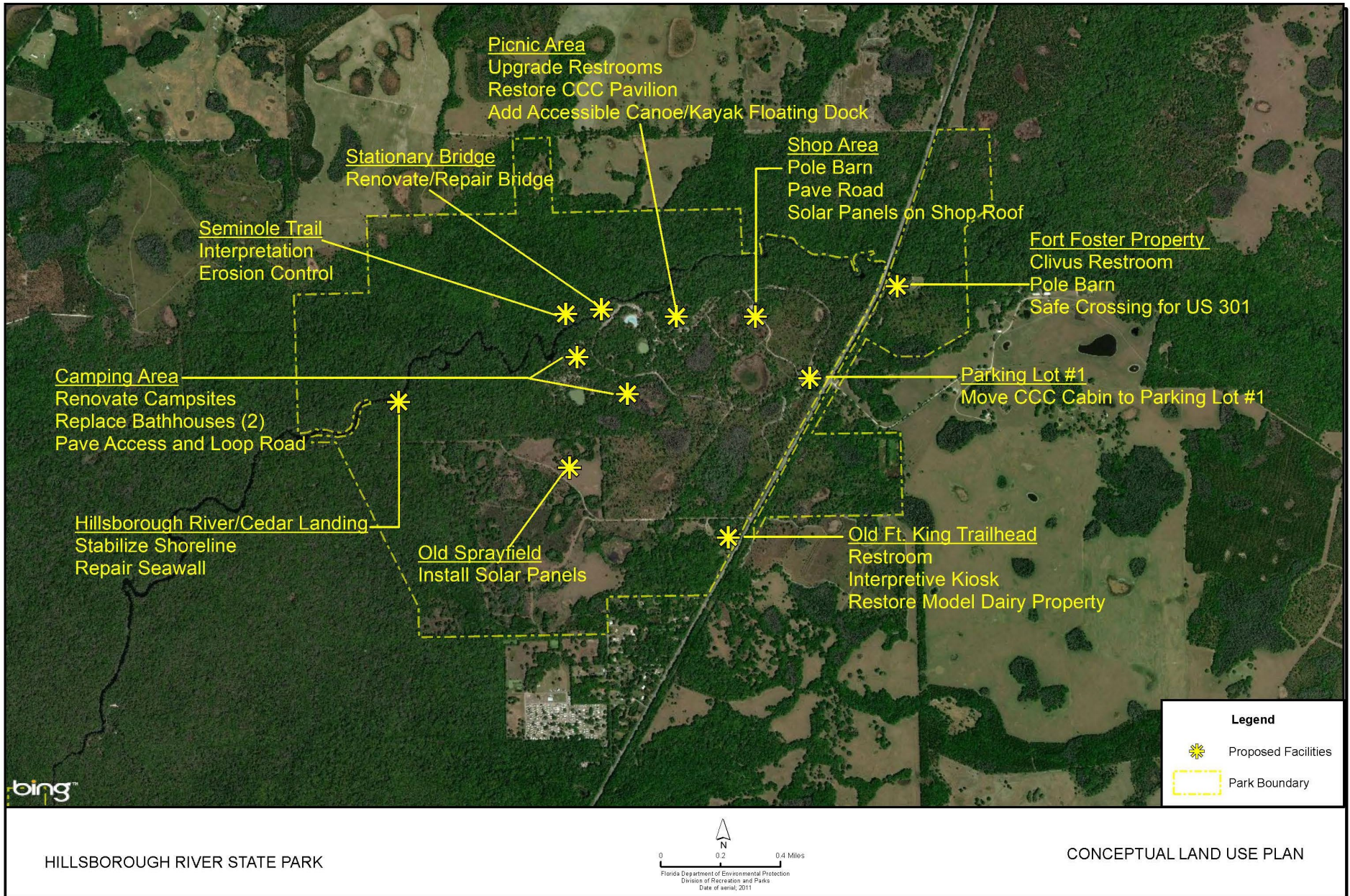


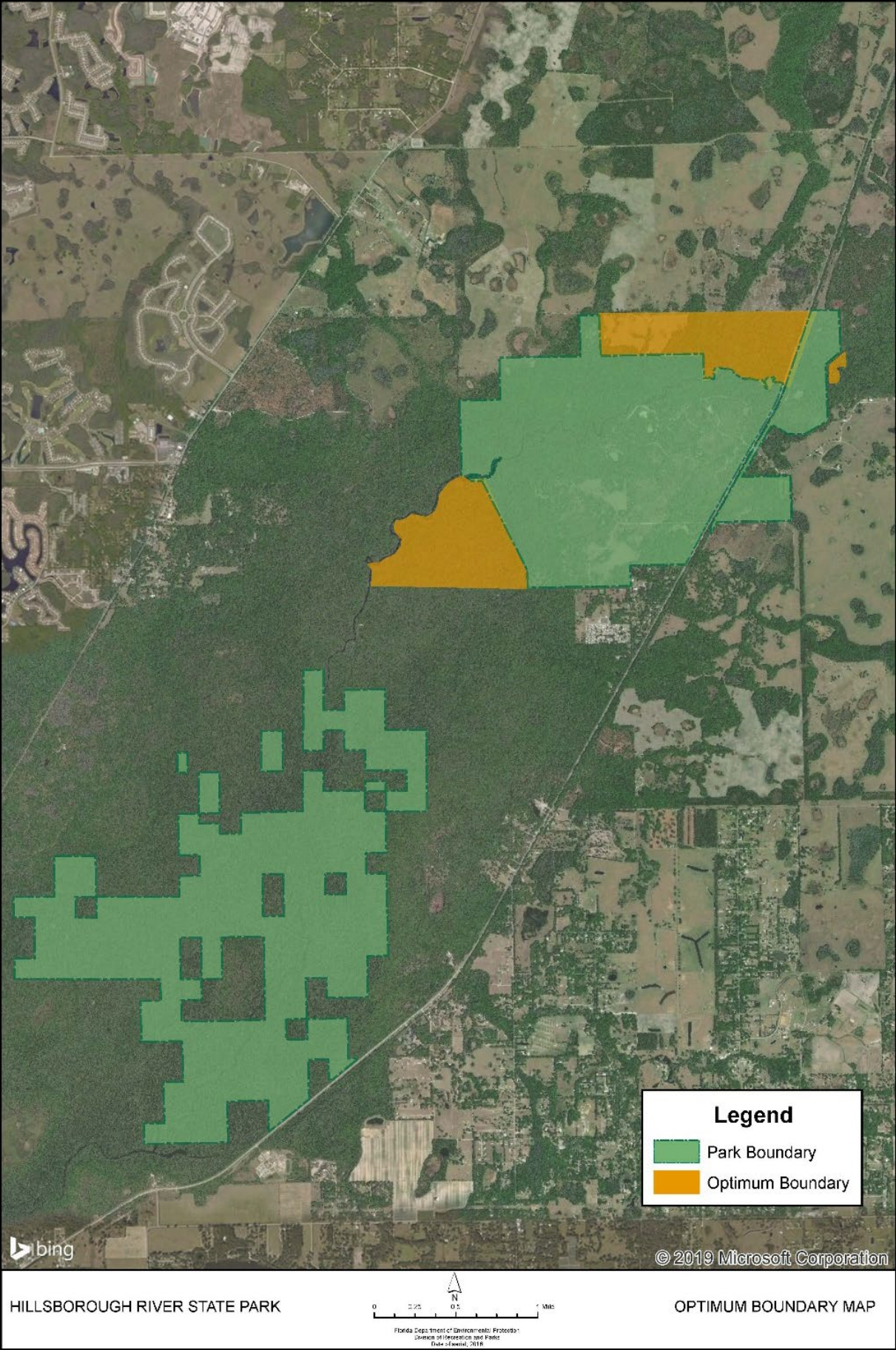












Land Management Review

1.1. Property Reviewed in this Report

Name of Site: Hillsborough River State Park

Managed by: DRP

Acres: 3,319.04

County: Hillsborough County

Purpose(s) for Acquisition: To manage the property in such a way as to protect and restore the natural and cultural values of the property and provide the greatest benefit to the citizens of the state.

Acquisition Program(s): "Old Money", LATF, P2000/CARL

Original Acquisition Date: 06/10/36

Area Reviewed: Entire Property

Last Management Plan Approval Date: 12/07/04

Review Date: 8/11/15

Agency Manager and Key Staff Present:

- Rick Argo, Park Manager
- Brett Gorman, Park Ranger

Review Team Members Present (voting)

- DRP: Matthew Hodge
- FWC: Victor Echaves
- FFS: Walter Mallet
- DEP: Mark Langford
- SWCD:
- Local gov't: Bernard Kaiser
- Conservation organization: Stephen Dickman
- Private land manager:

Other Non-Team Members Present (attending)

- Aric Larson, DEP/DSL
- Michael Sowinski, FWC IPMS

1.2 Property Map

