

ITEM 8:

Consider a 10-year update to the Juno Dunes Natural Area Management Plan (Lease No. 4161).

LOCATION:

Palm Beach County

APPLICANT:

Palm Beach County

STAFF REMARKS:

Background

The 569-acre Juno Dunes Natural Area (JDNA) is located in the northeastern portion of Palm Beach County (County). The County owns approximately 202.89 acres of land within the natural area, leases 335.65 acres from the Board of Trustees and leases 30.15 acres from the Florida Inland Navigation District. The County acquired most of the natural area in six purchases from 1992 through 1999. County funds for the acquisitions were provided from the sale of bonds authorized by the Palm Beach County Environmentally Sensitive Lands Bond Issue Referendum of March 12, 1991. State Preservation 2000 matching funds for acquisition of three tracts were provided through the Conservation and Recreation Lands Program and the Florida Communities Trust Program.

The primary purposes for the acquisition of this natural area were to preserve, restore/enhance and manage the site's ecological and cultural resources, including the existing natural communities, their component plant and animal species, and local groundwater resources. Acquisition, development and management of the site as a natural area has provided members of the public with opportunities for recreational activities, environmental education and scientific research that are consistent with the primary purposes of the site's acquisition. It also has helped the County and the Town of Juno Beach comply with portions of their respective comprehensive plans.

Management Plan Overview

The JDNA contains 13 natural communities and one altered land cover type. The predominant natural community occurring on JDNA is scrub. As of May 2022, 664 species of plants have been recorded in the natural area. Of these, 26 have been listed for protection or special management by a government agency or have been ranked by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI). As of May 2022, 301 species of animals have been recorded at the natural area. Forty-one of these species have been listed for protection or special management by a government agency or have been ranked by FNAI.

Florida Division of Historical Resources (DHR), which maintains the Florida Master Site File, identifies two resources within the oceanfront portion of the natural area – Celestial Railroad (Florida Master Site 8PB233), and U.S. Highway 1 (Florida Master Site 8PB12192) which runs north-south through the eastern portion of the site. The right of way for U.S. 1 is managed and maintained by the Florida Department of Transportation. The activities proposed in this management plan will have no effect on these resources. Any future ground disturbance will be coordinated with DHR and the County Archaeologist.

The Florida Legislature requires that all land management plans include long and short-term goals. These goals must be measurable objectives, and short-term goals must be achievable within a two-year planning period. Pursuant to section 253.034, Florida Statutes, the Division of State Lands began compiling the short-term goals from each land management plan approved since July 1, 2016. The management plan identified objectives under the following short-term goals: habitat restoration and improvement, imperiled species habitat maintenance, exotic and invasive species maintenance and control, hydrological restoration, cultural and historic resources, facilities and infrastructure, and public access and recreational opportunities.

Public Involvement

A public hearing was held on November 1, 2022. The purpose of this hearing was to present this draft management plan to the public. Comments from public input were considered and where logistical and not contrary to the primary purpose and goals of this Plan, were incorporated. Following review and input of the plan at the public hearing, a Natural Areas Management Advisory Committee meeting was held on November 18, 2022. Several comments were received regarding scrub-jay and light pollution.

Surplus Lands

The evaluation of this site has determined that no portion of the JDNA is to be declared surplus.

State Land Management Review Team

The JDNA has not been subject to a recent review by an inter-agency land management review team.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the management plan.

ARC RECOMMENDATION:

- APPROVE**
- APPROVE WITH MODIFICATIONS:** _____
- DEFER**
- WITHDRAW**
- NOT APPROVE**
- OTHER:** _____

LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Lead Agency: Palm Beach County Department of Environmental Resources Management

Common Name of Property: Juno Dunes Natural Area

Location: Town of Juno Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida

Total Acreage: 569 (335.6 State-Owned, 202.9 County-Owned, 30.1 leased from Florida Inland Navigation District)

<u>Land Cover Classification</u>	<u>Acreage*</u>	<u>Land Cover Classification</u>	<u>Acreage*</u>
Basin Marsh	91.6	Mesic Flatwoods	14.8
Beach Dune	5.3	Open Water	7.9
Coastal Strand	4.3	Parking Lot	1.0
Depression Marsh	17.6	Scrub	315.0
Hydric Hammock	4.3	Scrubby Flatwoods	38.8
Mangrove Swamp	45.7	Wet Flatwoods	5.5
Maritime Hammock	9.0	Xeric Hammock	14.1

*Includes approximately 6.5 acres of submerged and upland areas between the eastern edge of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and the official property boundary that are not being managed by another entity

Lease Number: 4161

Use: Single Multiple

<u>Management Responsibility:</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
	Palm Beach County	All management activities
	Town of Juno Beach	Public safety and law enforcement

Designated Land Use: Natural Area (Conservation)

Sublease(s): None

Encumbrances: Five utility/access easements, one road easement, one conservation easement, setback requirements, two potable water service agreements, one wastewater service agreement

Type Acquisition: Fee Simple Shared Acquisition- Conservation and Recreation Lands funds and Palm Beach County Environmentally Sensitive Lands Bond Referendum funds

Unique Resources: Natural Pamlico Dune Ridge, Florida Scrub
 Archaeological/Historical Celestial Railroad, U.S. Highway 1

Management Needs: Maintenance of native ecosystems (primarily through prescribed burning and mechanical vegetation reduction), maintenance of listed species population, and continued control of invasive nonnative species

Acquisition Needs/Acreage: None (11 vacant lots in the New Palm Beach Heights subdivision & Holy Spirit Lutheran Church parcel, see Sec 1.5)

Surplus Land Needs/Acreage: None

Public Involvement: Natural Areas Management Advisory Committee meetings, public hearing, Board of County Commissioners Meeting, Acquisition and Restoration Council meeting

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE (FOR DIVISION OF STATE LANDS USE ONLY)

ARC Approval Date: _____ Trustees Approval Date: _____

Comments: _____

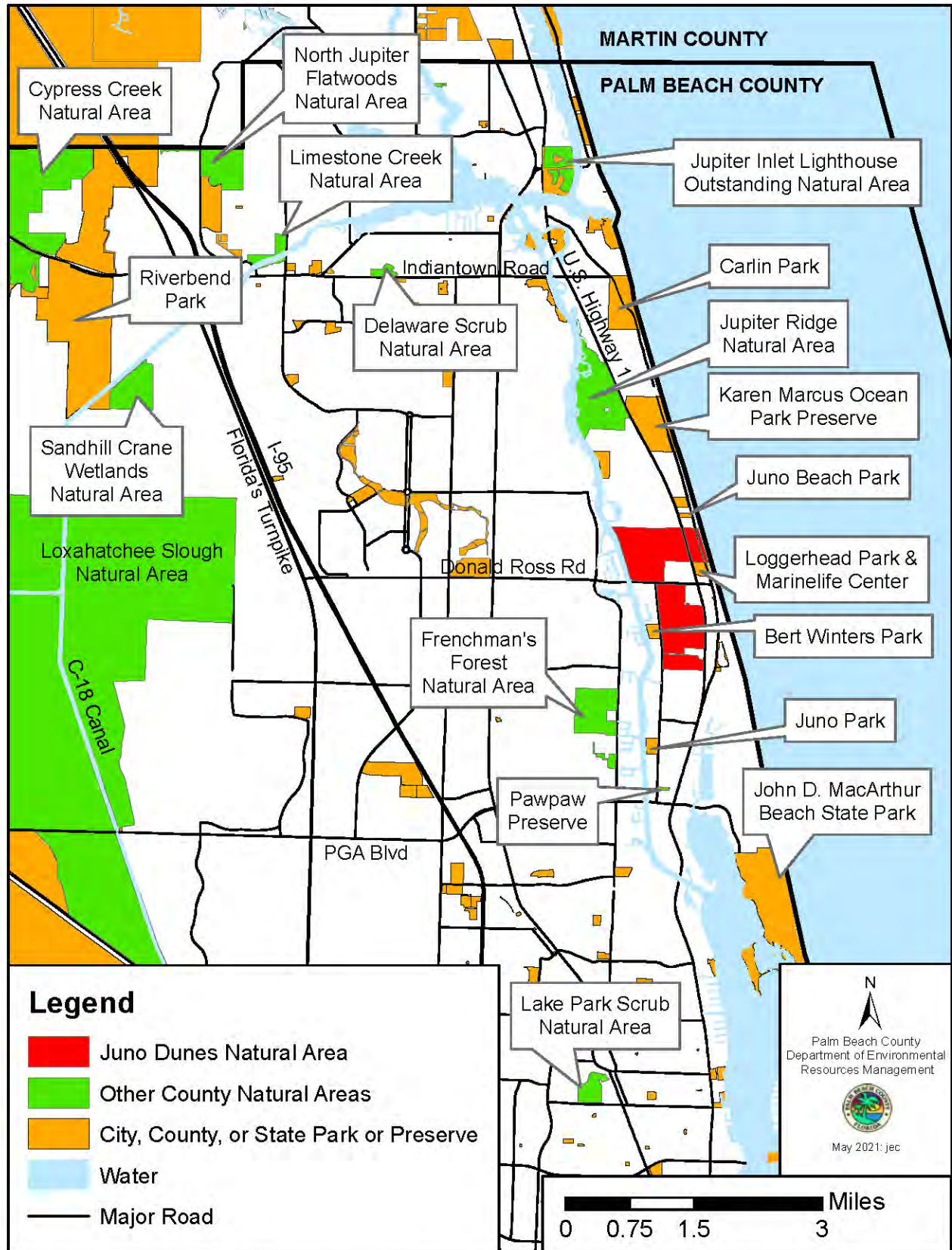


Figure 1. Juno Dunes Natural Area Location Map

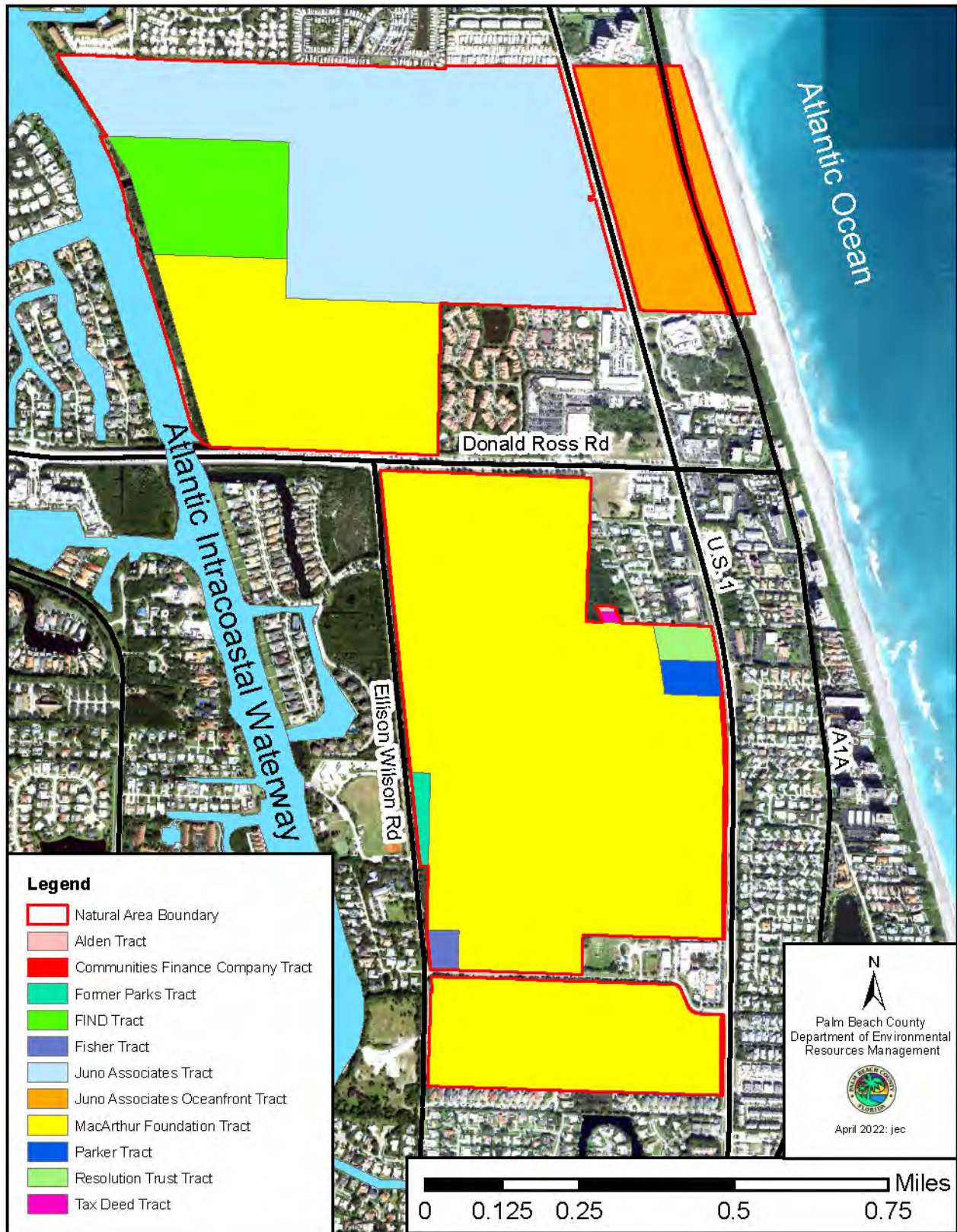


Figure 2. Juno Dunes Natural Area Tract Map

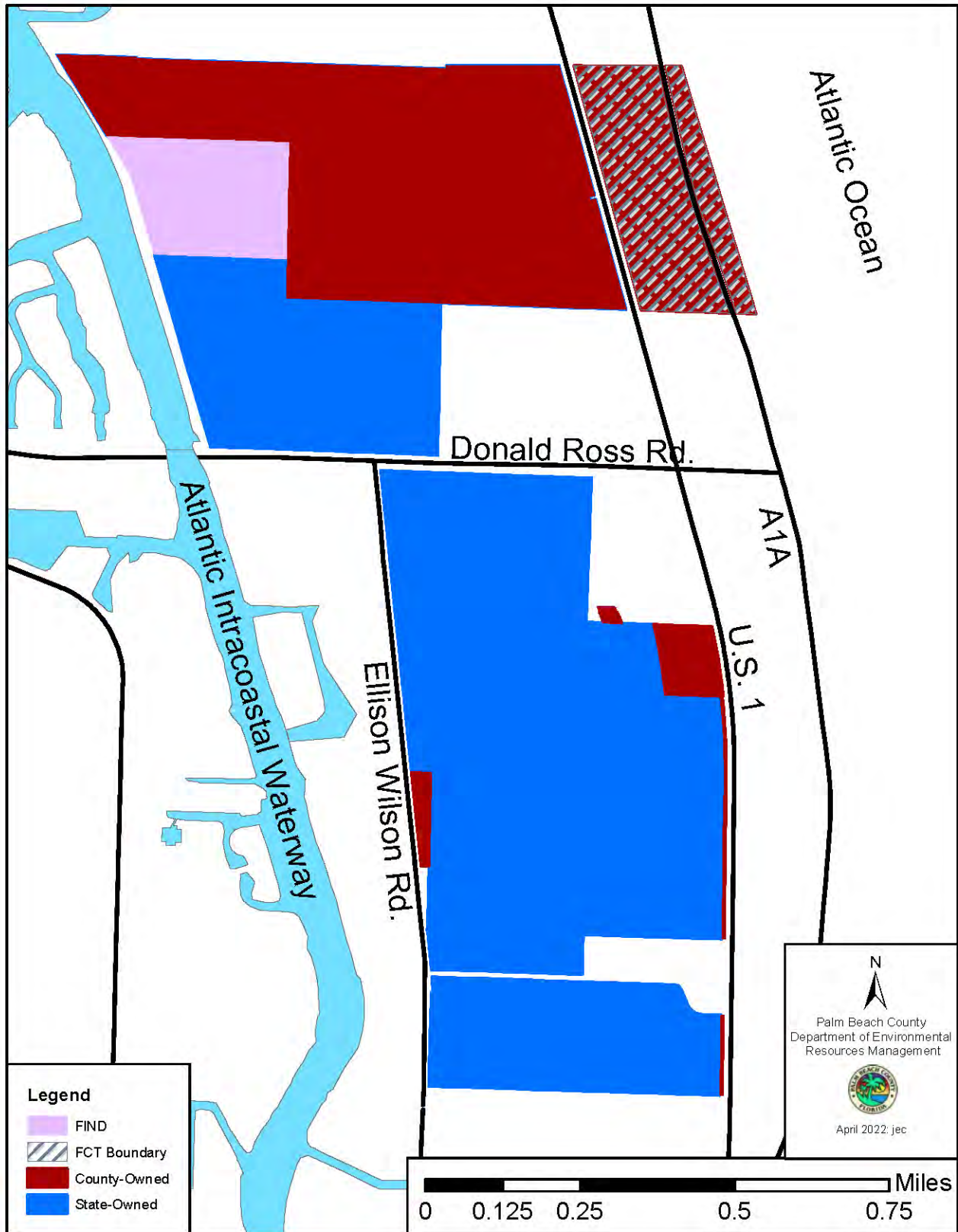


Figure 3. Juno Dunes Natural Area Ownership Map

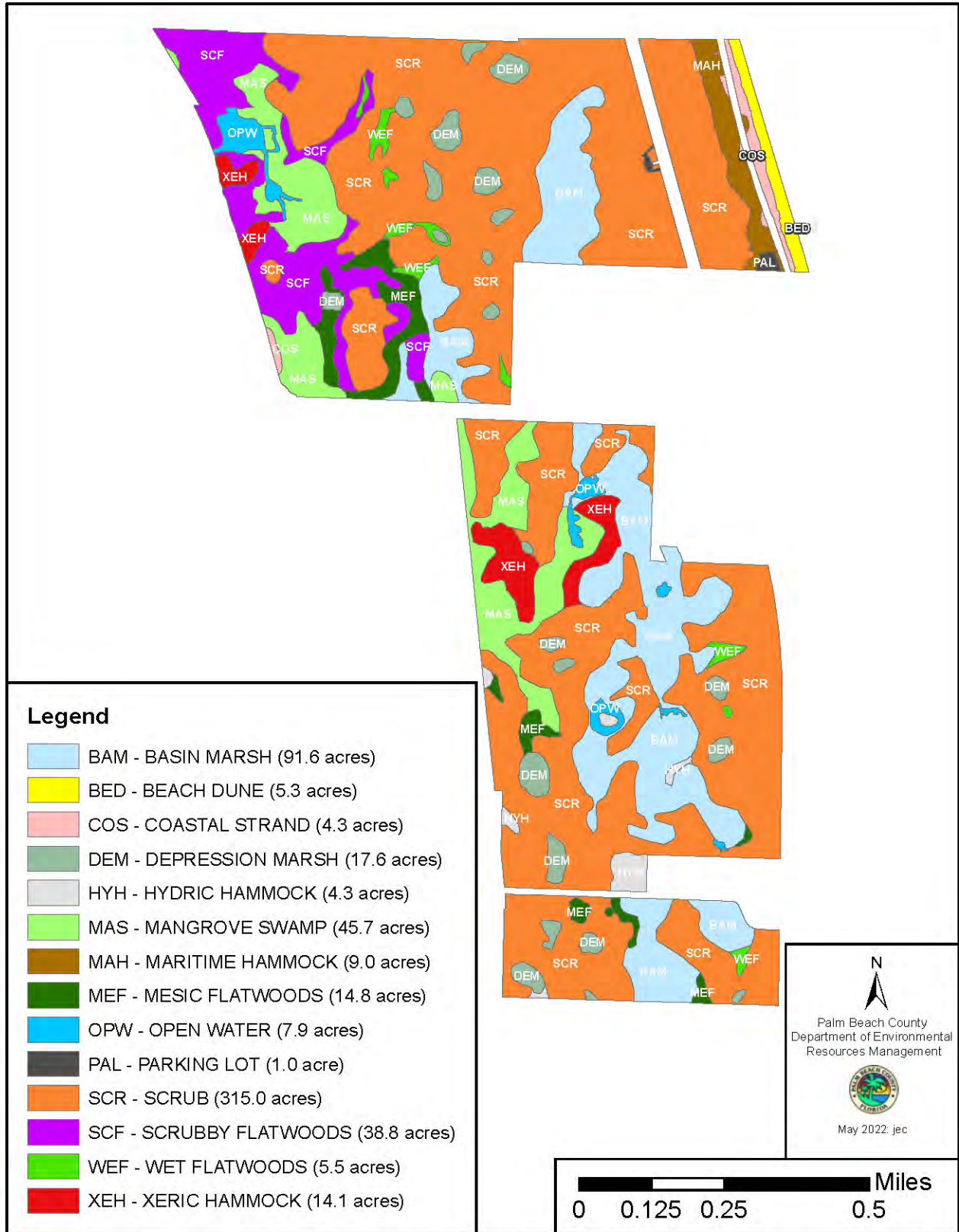


Figure 4. Juno Dunes Natural Area Vegetation Communities Map



Figure 7. Juno Dunes Natural Area Restoration Map



Figure 8. Juno Dunes Natural Area Greenways & Trails Map



Figure 9. Juno Dunes Natural Area Public Use Facilities Map