

**ITEM 22:**

Consider a 10-year update to the Tiger Bay State Forest Management Plan (Lease Nos. 3902, 4086, and 4326).

**LOCATION:**

Volusia County

**APPLICANT:**

Florida Forest Service (FFS)

**STAFF REMARKS:**

*Background*

The Tiger Bay State Forest (TBSF) was named after its largest physiographic feature, Tiger Bay; an extensive wetland that provides critical aquifer recharge for the local area. Pine islands dot the extensive hydric swamp forest and comprise 40 percent of the property. Besides Tiger Bay, there are other wetlands including Bennett Swamp, Little Tiger Bay, and the Middle Haw Creek floodplain. These wetlands are critical to surface water storage and aquifer recharge in the area. Water originating from deep within the forest swamps eventually forms the headwaters of the Little Tomoka River, which transitions into one of the most popular recreational fishing rivers in Central Florida, the Tomoka River. The forest is located in central Volusia County, about seven miles west of Daytona Beach and consists of 27,389 acres. The initial acquisition of TBSF was completed in 1979 under the Environmentally Endangered Lands Program (EEL). Additional parcels were acquired using Preservation 2000 and Florida Forever funds between 1994 and 2004. The largest addition was in 2001 when more than 11,000 acres were acquired with both Preservation 2000 and Save Our River funds as a joint acquisition project with the St. Johns River Water Management District. This area is now known as the Rima Ridge Tract. The most recent addition was the Weiner-Krumholz parcel acquired in 2008.

The primary mission of the FFS is to “protect Florida and its people from the dangers of wildland fire and manage the forest resources through a stewardship ethic to assure they are available for future generations.” Management strategies for FCSF center on the multiple-use concept, as defined in sections 589.04(3) and 253.034(2)(a), Florida Statutes (F.S.).

Multiple-use management for FCSF will be accomplished with the following strategies:

- Practice sustainable forest management for improved forest health and efficient generation of revenue in support of state forest management objectives;
- Provide for resource-based outdoor recreation opportunities for multiple interests;
- Restore and manage healthy forests and native ecosystems ensuring the long-term viability of populations and species listed as endangered, threatened or rare, and other components of biological diversity including game and nongame wildlife and plants;
- Protect known archaeological, historical, and cultural resources;
- Restore, maintain, and protect hydrological functions related to water resources and the health of associated wetland and aquatic communities; and
- Provide research and educational opportunities related to natural resource management.

### *Management Plan Overview*

In 2017, the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) completed an inventory and natural community mapping project on TBSF and created a current and historic natural community type maps. Thirteen natural community types are found on TBSF. The predominant natural community types are basin swamp and mesic flatwoods. FNAI also identified six altered landcover types. There are eight endangered or threatened plant and animal species documented on FCSF.

A review of information contained in the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Florida Master Site File has determined there are eight archaeological sites, three resource groups, one historic bridge, and one historic cemetery found within TBSF.

A variety of recreational opportunities are available on the forest. Visitors can enjoy hiking, horseback riding, bicycling, fishing, boating, camping, hunting, picnicking, nature study, and photography. Horseback riding and bicycling are allowed only on forest roads, firelines, and designated trails.

The FCSF is a participant in a Firewise community program. Communities in wildfire prone areas must work together to be fully prepared for wildfire. A “Fire Adapted Community” incorporates people, buildings, businesses, infrastructure, cultural resources, and natural areas to prepare for the effects of wildfire. The Fire Adapted Community concept serves as an umbrella to the various programs that help communities become more fire adapted. The FFS has implemented the Fire Adapted Community concept for prevention statewide. Specifically, in the area adjacent to or nearby FCSF, efforts will continue to identify communities at risk and to contact their representatives.

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, F.S., 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: Public Access and Recreational Opportunities.

### *Public Involvement*

FFS responds to public involvement through liaison panels, management plan advisory groups, public hearings, and through ongoing direct contact with user groups. The plan was developed with input from the FCSF Management Plan Advisory Group and was reviewed at a public hearing on June 9, 2022. No comments from the public were received.

### *Surplus Lands*

On conservation lands where FFS is the lead manager, FFS assesses and identifies areas for potential surplus land. This consists of an examination of resource and operational management needs, public access and recreational use, and GIS modeling and analysis. The evaluation of TBSF by FFS has determined that all portions of the area are being managed and operated for the original purposes of acquisition, therefore, no portion of the TBSF is recommended for potential surplus.

### *State Land Management Review Team*

A Land Management Review (LMR) was conducted in October 2018. The review team 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. Six consensus recommendations were offered:

- The team recommended the FFS update the natural community typing in future revisions of the management plan to be updated to include the current FNAI natural community descriptions, including altered land cover or restoration community types.
- The team recommended the FFS amend the management plan to include the desired basal area for mesic and wet flatwoods, to include a broader range of acceptable densities.
- The team recommended the FFS develop and implement the scrub management plan as specified in the 10-year resource management plan.
- The team recommended the FFS partner with FWC to survey for imperiled reptiles and amphibians.
- The team recommended the FFS increase the annual number of acres burned throughout the forest, attempting to reach the appropriate fire return intervals.
- The team recommended the FFS take a more aggressive approach to reducing the fuel loads on the south tracts of the forest and consider using mechanical mowing treatments so that it can be burned safely.

The 2018 LMR notes were reviewed as part of developing this plan and the agreed upon changes and recommendations were made to this management plan.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve the management plan.

**ARC RECOMMENDATION:**

**APPROVE**

**APPROVE WITH MODIFICATIONS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DEFER**

**WITHDRAW**

**NOT APPROVE**

**OTHER:** \_\_\_\_\_

LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LEAD AGENCY: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), Florida Forest Service  
 COMMON NAME: Tiger Bay State Forest (TBSF)  
 LOCATION: Volusia County  
 ACREAGE TOTAL: 27,389 acres

Historic Natural Communities	Approximate Acreage
Basin swamp	11,270
Mesic flatwoods	9,540
Wet flatwoods	2,206
Dome swamp	1,130
Baygall	972
Wet prairie	879

Historic Natural Communities	Approximate Acreage
Scrubby flatwoods	661
Scrub	342
Swamp lake	123
Basin marsh	96
Sandhill	58
Depression marsh	33

TIITF LEASE AGREEMENT NUMBERS: 3902, 4086 and 4326  
 USE: Single  Multiple

MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Florida DACS, Florida Forest Service  
 Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
 St. Johns River Water Management District  
 Volusia County  
 Department of State, Division of Historical Resources

RESPONSIBILITY

General Forest Resource Management  
 Wildlife Resources and Laws  
 Water Resource Protection and Restoration  
 Overall Management Review  
 Historical and Archaeological Resource Management

DESIGNATED LAND USE: Multiple-Use State Forest  
 SUBLEASES: None  
 ENCUMBRANCES: Existing water wells and related easements, Gopher Tortoise Mitigation Site (121.45 acres), and Clark Bay Road (4.5 acres)  
 TYPE OF ACQUISITION: Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL), Save Our Rivers (SOR), Conservation and Recreation Lands Acquisition Program (CARL), Preservation 2000, and Florida Forever  
 UNIQUE FEATURES: Tiger Bay, the largest physiographic feature within the forest, was formed from an ancient marine terrace located between two historic dunes, the DeLand Ridge and the Daytona Ridge.  
 ARCHAEOLOGICAL / HISTORICAL: Thirteen (13) known sites  
 MANAGEMENT NEEDS: Reforestation and thinning, fuel/fire management, hydrological restoration, road repair and maintenance, maintenance and expansion of recreational trails and facilities, game and non-game wildlife management, gopher tortoise management, and update and maintain forest inventory  
 ACQUISITION NEEDS: 15,305.26 Acres of Optimal Management Boundary  
 SURPLUS ACREAGE: None  
 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: TBSF Liaison Committee, Volusia County Council, Management Plan Advisory Group and Public Hearing, Acquisition and Restoration Council - - - - -

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

ARC Approval Date: \_\_\_\_\_ TIITF Approval Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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