

ITEM 10:

Consider a request to remove approximately 2,213 acres from the boundary of the Caloosahatchee Ecoscape Florida Forever Project.

LOCATION:

Glades and Hendry Counties

DSL STAFF REMARKS:

Bexley Sumter, Inc., purchased the Amtel Farms property totaling 2,213 acres on September 11, 2020. The property was added to the boundary of the Caloosahatchee Ecoscape Florida Forever project on June 12, 2020. The owners submitted a certified letter to DEP requesting removal of their property from the project. The property has 3.75 miles of frontage on the north shore of the Caloosahatchee River and is accessed by Marshall Field Road, east of the town of Labelle. The property consists of improved pasture and woodland pasture along with mesic hammock in a series of large patches. The eastern quarter of the property is within the dispersal zone for the Florida panther crossing the Caloosahatchee River and an activity zone for the Florida black bear. Most to all of the property contributes to the acquisition of ecological greenways, surface water protection and aquifer recharge, with additional significant contribution to natural floodplain function according to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory.

The Caloosahatchee Ecoscape project was added to the Conservation and Recreation Lands priority list in 1998 by the Land Acquisition and Management Advisory Council with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) as the designated manager. The project currently includes 18,387 acres of which 10,646 remain to be acquired (2020 Florida Forever 5-year Update). The project preserves large landscape linkages of land to support Florida panther and black bear recovery and habitat for game species like white-tailed deer and turkey while providing nature-based recreational opportunities.

Pursuant to Rule 18-24.005(5)(a) and 18-24.007(2), F.A.C., ARC shall delete property from a Florida Forever project boundary if a landowner requests to do so by a certified letter. ARC may recommend that the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (BOT) add such property back into the project boundary, if appropriate. Pursuant to Section 259.105(7)(b)2, Florida Statutes, the BOT has the option of adding this property back into the project boundary if the BOT determines that the property is critical to achieve the purposes of the project.

DSL STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Vote to approve the owner-requested deletion.

ARC RECOMMENDATION:

- () ACCEPT OWNER-REQUESTED DELETION
- () ACCEPT OWNER-REQUESTED DELETION AND RECOMMEND THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES ADD OWNER-REQUESTED DELETION BACK INTO THE PROJECT BOUNDARY

Project	DHR	FFS	Lynetta Griner	FWC	Bill Palmer	Elva Peppers	DEP	Selected
Caloosahatchee Ecoscape								

Parcels to be deleted from the boundary: Glades and Hendry County Property Appraiser

County	Parcel Id	Acres	Tax Value	Market Value
Glades	A25-42-29-A00-0050-0000	571.85	\$115,294	\$2,802,065
Glades	A26-42-29-A00-0030-0000	339.65	\$109,847	\$1,710,478
Glades	A30-42-30-A00-0040-0000	171.27	\$31,539	\$839,223
Glades	A34-42-29-A00-0010-0000	644.57	\$76,850	\$4,125,248
Glades	A35-42-29-A00-0010-0000	427.47	\$84,784	\$2,094,603
Glades	A36-42-29-A00-0050-0000	39.16	\$9,495	\$191,884
Hendry	1-29-43-03-A00-0003.0000	19.98	\$2,426	\$756,840
Totals		2,213.95	\$430,235	\$12,520,341



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[Florida Natural Areas Inventory](#)

To: Deborah Burr, DEP/OES
From: Katy NeSmith, FNAI
Date: November 16, 2020
Subject: Proposed Boundary Modification to Florida Forever BOT Project:
Caloosahatchee Ecoscape – Amtel Farms property, Glades County

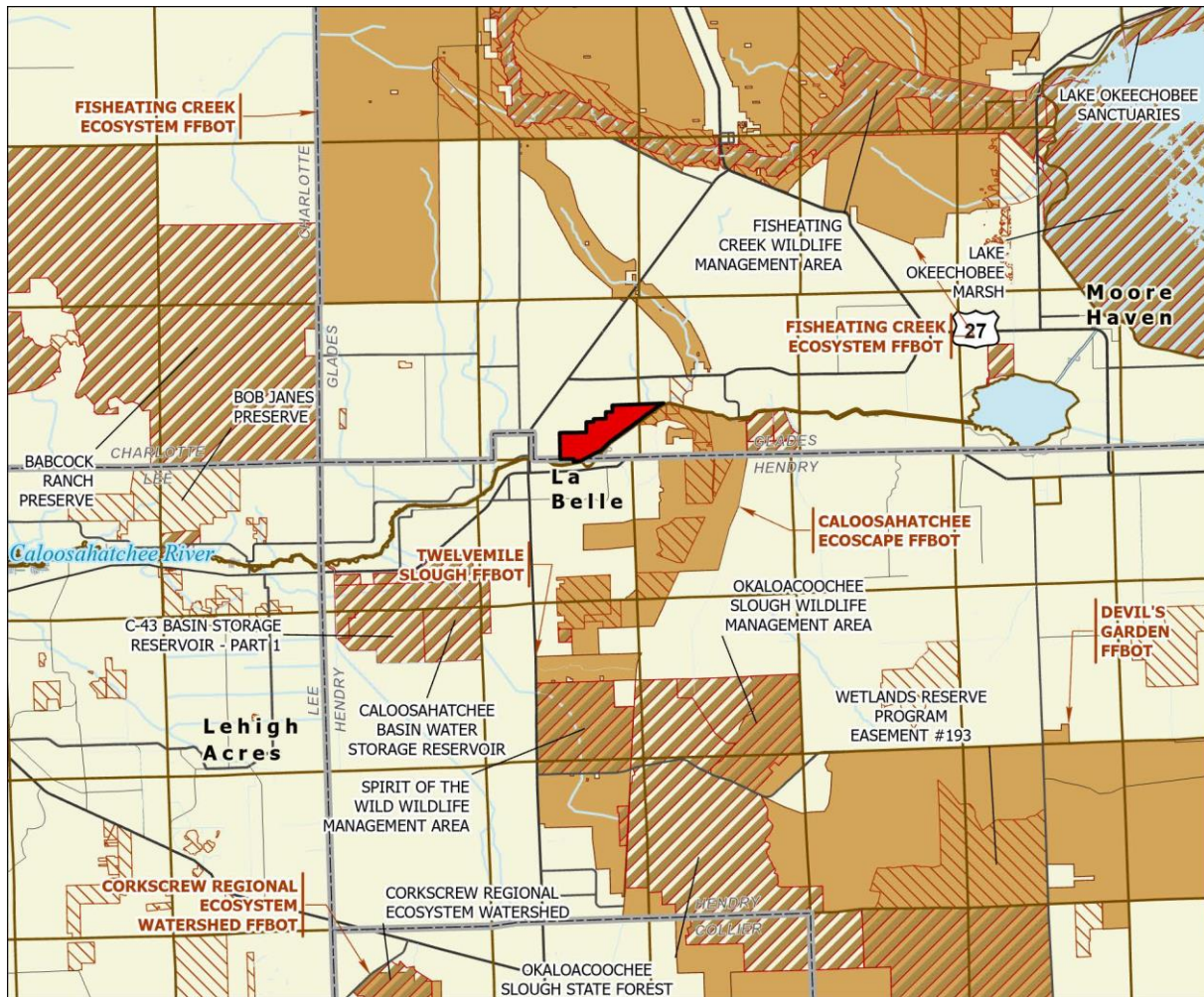
The Caloosahatchee Ecoscape FFBOT project is designed to preserve large landscape linkages to help protect Florida panthers and Florida black bears. The path from large protected lands south of the Caloosahatchee River (e.g., Big Cypress National Preserve, Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest) to areas north of the Caloosahatchee (e.g., Fisheating Creek WMA) would be enhanced by protection of additional lands in Hendry and Glades counties.

Amtel Farms is proposed for deletion from the FFBOT project at the request of the owner. It encompasses 2,214 contiguous acres (per application; 2,208 GIS acres) in southwestern Glades County along the northern side of the Caloosahatchee River (3.75 miles of river frontage), less than 2 miles east of La Belle. Lone Ranger Ranch conservation easement (The Nature Conservancy [TNC]) lies, south, across the river from the property's easternmost mile of river frontage. This TNC property and a series of additional conservation easements to the south have been secured within the boundary of the Caloosahatchee Ecoscape Florida Forever BOT Project. Cypress Creek Grove conservation easement (TNC, ca. 465 acres) is north of the river, across from the eastern extent of Lone Ranger Ranch and just east of the eastern tip of Amtel Farms. From there, a narrow arm of Fisheating Creek Ecosystem FFBOT extends north.

The majority of the property (85%) is improved pasture and woodland pasture. Mesic hammock is the most extensive natural community (7% of acreage) and is located in the central and southwestern portion of the property.

The eastern quarter of Amtel Farms is within the very small dispersal zone across the Caloosahatchee River identified for Florida panther (*Puma concolor coryi*, G5T1/S1, E, FE). This zone is considered to be critical for movement of the panther north across the river, potentially to the extensive network of conservation lands in central Florida. The site is also within a zone where Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*, G5T4/S4, N, N) activity is considered to be common by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. A crested caracara (*Caracara cheriway*, G5/S2, T, FT) was observed during the 2020 site visit.

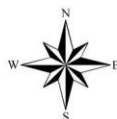
The Florida Forever Measures Evaluation (FFME) at the end of this memo is based on the Florida Forever Conservation Needs Assessment developed by FNAI. The data used in that analysis represent a standardized, statewide perspective of natural community distributions based primarily on data from the Cooperative Land Cover Map. Most to all of the proposed addition contributes (by percent of site, not total acreage of FFBOT) to FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities, Ecological Greenways, Surface Water Protection, Aquifer Recharge, with an additional substantial contribution to Natural Floodplain Function.



CALOOSAHATCHEE ECOSCAPE PROPOSED DELETION

GLADES COUNTY

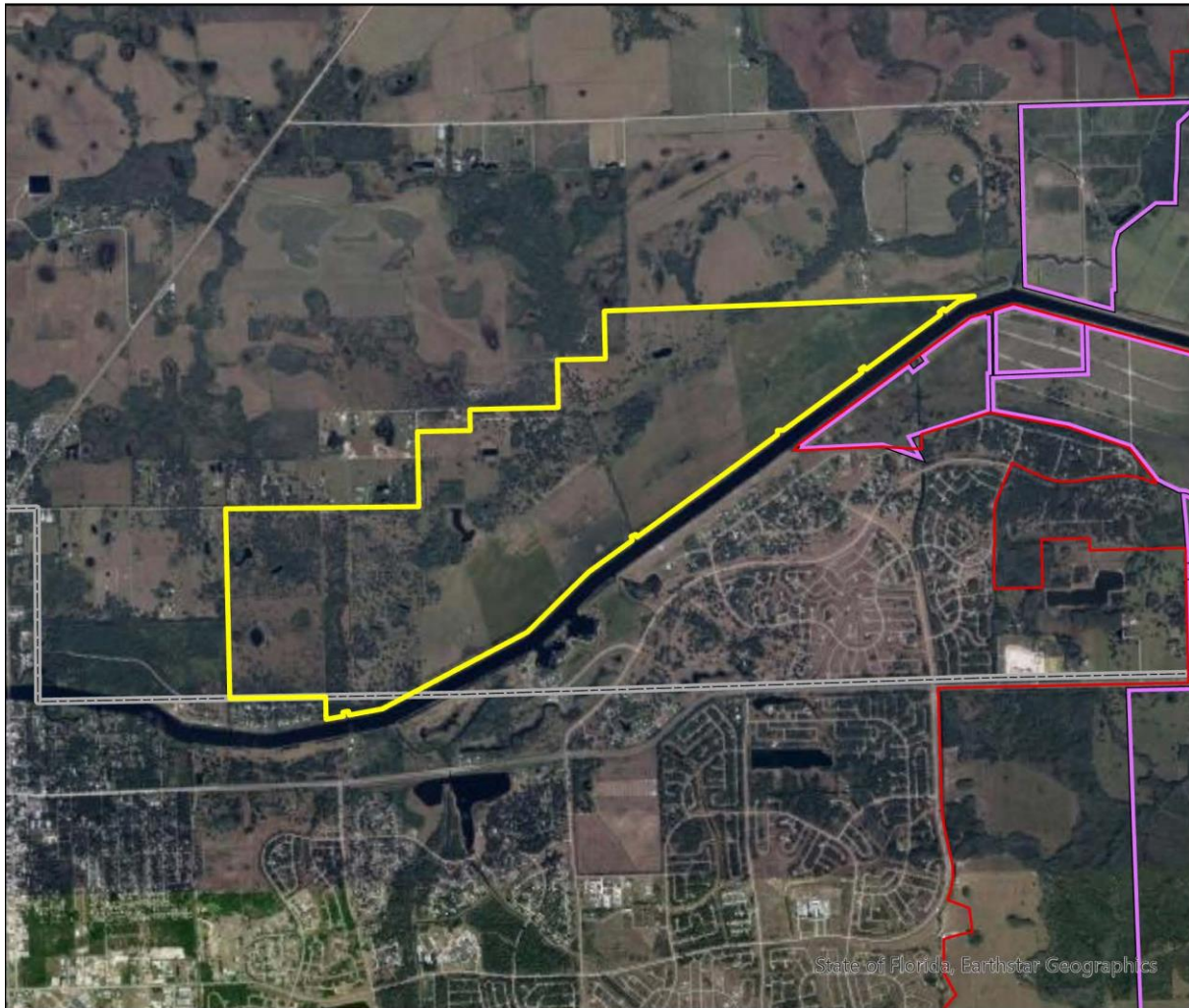
-  Proposed Florida Forever BOT Project Deletion
-  Florida Forever BOT Projects
-  State Owned Lands
-  Other Conservation Lands



NOVEMBER 2020

Caloosahatchee Ecoscape Proposed Deletion

FLORIDA FOREVER BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROJECT PROPOSAL BOUNDARY AS OF NOVEMBER 2020

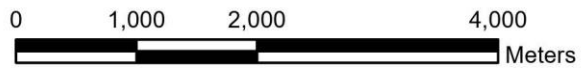


Map Produced by: N. Pasco, November 2020

Background: World Imagery Resolution = 0.3 meter



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Caloosahatchee Ecoscape Deletion: Florida Forever Measure Evaluation 20201110

GIS ACRES = 2,208

MEASURES	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
B1: Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas		
Priority 1	12	< 1%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	1	< 1%
Total Acres	13	1%
B2: FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	429	19%
Priority 4	681	31%
Priority 5	263	12%
Priority 6	135	6%
Total Acres	1,507	68%
B3: Ecological Greenways		
Priority 1	174	8%
Priority 2	2,034	92%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	2,208	100%
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)	15	< 1%
Seepage Slope (G2)	0	0%
Sandhill (G3)	0	0%
Sandhill Upland Lake (G3)	0	0%
Upland Pine (G3)	0	0%
Mesic/Wet Flatwoods (G4)	6	< 1%
Upland Hardwood Forest (G5)	0	0%
Total Acres	22	1%
B6: Occurrences of FNAI Tracked Species		
G1	1	
G2	0	
G3	0	
G4	1	
G5	0	
Total	2	
C4: Natural Floodplain Function		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	85	4%
Priority 5	801	36%
Priority 6	261	12%
Total Acres	1,147	52%

MEASURES (continued)	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
C5: Surface Water Protection		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	104	5%
Priority 5	2,094	95%
Priority 6	0	0%
Priority 7	0	0%
Total Acres	2,198	100%
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	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	39	2%
Priority 5	43	2%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	82	4%
D3: Aquifer Recharge		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	194	9%
Priority 4	909	41%
Priority 5	519	24%
Priority 6	585	27%
Total Acres	2,208	100%
E2: Recreational Trails (miles) <small>(prioritized trail opportunities from Office of Greenways and Trails & Univ. Florida)</small>		
Land Trail Priorities	0.0	
Land Trail Opportunities	0.0	
Total Miles	0.0	
F2: Arch. & Historical Sites (number)		
Total Sites	0	0 sites
G1: Sustainable Forestry		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	3	< 1%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5 - Potential Pinelands	821	37%
Total Acres	824	37%
G3: Forestland for Recharge		
	0	0%

^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.

Caloosahatchee Ecoscape less Deletion: Florida Forever Measure Evaluation 20201110

GIS ACRES = 18,456

MEASURES	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
B1: Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas		
Priority 1	5,036	27%
Priority 2	2,814	15%
Priority 3	1,125	6%
Priority 4	35	< 1%
Priority 5	0	0%
Total Acres	9,010	49%
B2: FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	2,495	14%
Priority 3	6,146	33%
Priority 4	8,101	44%
Priority 5	104	< 1%
Priority 6	1,078	6%
Total Acres	17,924	97%
B3: Ecological Greenways		
Priority 1	18,412	100%
Priority 2	43	< 1%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	18,455	100%
B4: Under-represented Natural Communities		
Upland Glade (G1)	0	0%
Pine Rockland (G1)	0	0%
Scrub and Scrubby Flatwoods (G2)	9	< 1%
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)	0	0%
Mesic/Wet Flatwoods (G4)	3,203	17%
Upland Hardwood Forest (G5)	0	0%
Total Acres	3,212	17%
B6: Occurrences of FNAI Tracked Species		
G1	1	
G2	2	
G3	0	
G4	1	
G5	3	
Total	7	
C4: Natural Floodplain Function		
Priority 1	226	1%
Priority 2	959	5%
Priority 3	2,781	15%
Priority 4	2,915	16%
Priority 5	3,621	20%
Priority 6	1,943	11%
Total Acres	12,445	67%

MEASURES (continued)	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
C5: Surface Water Protection		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	2,877	16%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	14,532	79%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	986	5%
Priority 7	0	0%
Total Acres	18,395	100%
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	137	< 1%
Priority 2	598	3%
Priority 3	2,006	11%
Priority 4	1,806	10%
Priority 5	564	3%
Priority 6	45	< 1%
Total Acres	5,156	28%
D3: Aquifer Recharge		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	619	3%
Priority 4	3,529	19%
Priority 5	4,807	26%
Priority 6	9,500	51%
Total Acres	18,456	100%
E2: Recreational Trails (miles) <small>(prioritized trail opportunities from Office of Greenways and Trails & Univ. Florida)</small>		
Land Trail Priorities	3.8	
Land Trail Opportunities	6.7	
Total Miles	10.5	
F2: Arch. & Historical Sites (number)		
	4 sites	
G1: Sustainable Forestry		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	2,159	12%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5 - Potential Pinelands	7,832	42%
Total Acres	9,992	54%
G3: Forestland for Recharge		
	80	< 1%

^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.