

ITEM 16:

Vote on whether to amend the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Florida Forever Project Boundary to add 9 parcels totaling approximately 9 acres in Seminole County with a tax assessed market value of \$6,400.

LOCATION:

Seminole County

DSL STAFF REMARKS:

The Wekiva River Islands amendment proposed by the owner, C.R. Powell Trust, adds 9 parcels in Seminole County totaling approximately 9 acres to the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Florida Forever project. The property consists of nine parcels with a combined tax assessed value of \$6,400.

The 9 parcels comprise three islands in the Wekiva River adjacent to the Seminole State Forest, the Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park and the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway and are proposed for fee simple acquisition. The landowner is the applicant and a willing seller. The Florida Forest Service has confirmed that the parcels would be managed as part of the Seminole State Forest. The parcels that comprise Island 47, locally Big Oak Island, are adjacent to SR 46 and the Wekiva Parkway Bridges. Densely vegetated, the island is home to a reportedly 250-year old live oak tree, 9 feet in diameter. Island 2 consists of two islands (locally Big Buck and Little Buck Islands) and is located 150 yards from Katie's Landing. If acquired the parcels will increase the ecological value of the state forest, provide public access and benefit from multiple-use management activities consistent with the State Forest.

The proposal meets the criteria to be submitted as a boundary amendment. The parcels total less than 1,000 acres, have a tax assessed value of less than \$2 million, and are less than 10% of the size of the overall project to which it is being added. The proposal area should be designated as essential.

Project History:

Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Florida Forever Project is in Lake, Orange, Seminole and Volusia Counties. The project was approved on the CARL list in 1995. The project was designed to conserve a contiguous natural landscape of wetlands and uplands stretching from Orlando north to the Ocala National Forest by protecting existing natural corridors between multiple state and federal conservation lands in this rapidly growing region of the state. When complete, the project, will provide a critically important refuge for the Florida black bear, and other wildlife such as the bald eagle, swallow-tailed kite, and Florida scrub jay. Public recreation benefits include a wide array of resource-based recreational opportunities for Florida residents and visitors including camping, fishing, swimming, hiking, and paddling.

The Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Florida Forever Project includes over 80,779 acres with 22,156 acres remaining and is ranked number 6 in the Critical Natural Lands category on the 2020 Florida Forever Priority List. The tax assessed value for the remaining acres to be acquired in this project per property appraiser information (2018) is \$188,186,015.

FNAI Review:

According to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI), 100% of the site contributes to

Ecological Greenways with significant contributions to Natural Floodplain Function, Surface Water Protection, and Functional Wetlands. Based on habitat for imperiled species, the site also scores 91% for Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas and 95% for FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Vote on the proposed boundary amendment.

ARC RECOMMENDATION:

Project	DHR	FFS	Lynetta Griner	FWC	Bill Palmer	Elva Peppers	DEP	Selected
Wekiva-Ocala Greenway: Wekiva River Islands								



1018 Thomasville Road
 Suite 200-C
 Tallahassee, FL 32303
 850-224-8207
[Florida Natural Areas Inventory](#)

To: Deborah Burr, DEP/OES
 From: Katy NeSmith, FNAI
 Date: November 9, 2020
 Subject: Proposed Boundary Modification to Florida Forever BOT Project: **Wekiva River Islands, Wekiva-Ocala Greenway, Seminole County**

The major goals of the Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Florida Forever Project are to protect the springs, riverine systems, and wetland and upland natural communities from the burgeoning Orlando area north to the Ocala National Forest, their rare plant and animal inhabitants, and a variety of recreational pursuits for residents and tourists. Both the Wekiva and St. Johns River basins are part of this project.

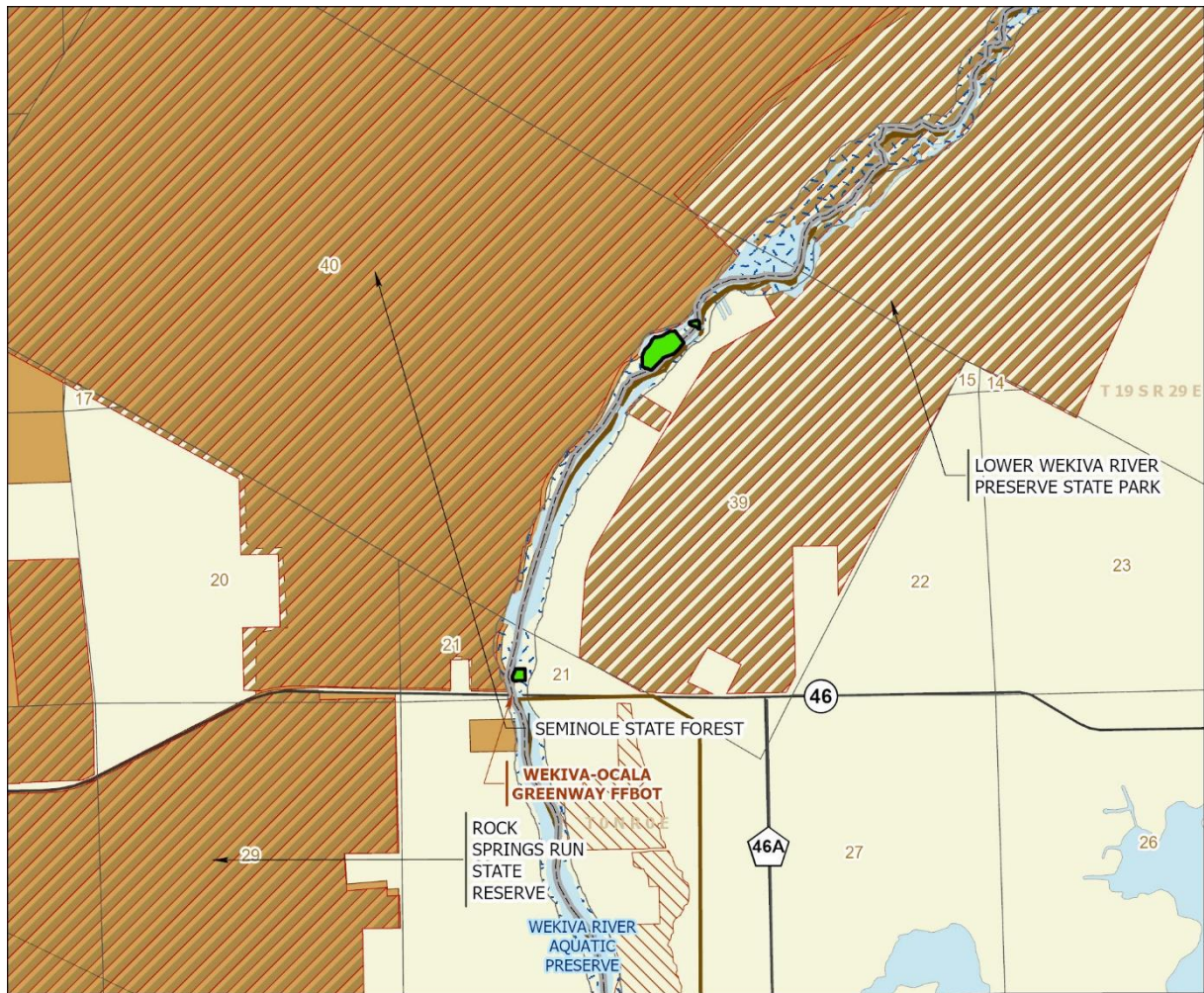
The proposed addition includes three islands in the Wekiva River totaling 9 acres (7.63 GIS acres) located approximately 9 miles west of Sanford, and just north of State Road 46 in northwestern Seminole County; the river forms the boundary between Seminole County on the east and Lake County on the west. There is about 1 mile between the two north islands and the southern island. The islands are adjacent to Seminole State Forest on the west bank of the river and are separated from the Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park on the east bank by a narrow strip of river front homes. Little Buck Island, the small northernmost island is adjacent and perhaps overlapping with an arm of the State Park that juts south in this area. The Wekiva River Aquatic Preserve encompasses the three islands. The Wekiva River Rock Springs Run Canoe Trail runs by the islands. The property is proposed as fee simple and the Florida Forest Service is designated as the manager.

The islands are 100% forested with no alterations of any kind according to the proposal. The islands appear to consist mostly of hydric hammock interspersed with higher patches of mesic hammock. The southernmost island (Island 47 or Big Oak Island) is described in the proposal as having a nine-foot diameter live oak, estimated to be over 250 years old.

The FNAI database contains only one record of rare species on site – the Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*, G5T4/S4, N, N), based on its being considered abundant regionally by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The bluenose shiner (*Pteronotropis welaka*, G3G4/S3S4, N, T) is documented in the adjacent Wekiva River. Numerous records for rare caddisflies, including Tavares White Miller caddisfly (*Nectopsyche tavares*, G3/S3, N, N), little Oecetis longhorned caddisfly (*Oecetis parva*, G2/S2, N, N), Porter's long-horn caddisfly (*Oecetis porteri*, G3G4/S2S3, N, N), and Pescador's bottle-cased caddisfly (*Oxyethira pescadori*, G3G4/S3, N, N), are known from nearby the islands along the river.

Tracking Florida's Biodiversity

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. The proposed addition contributes substantially (by percent of site, not total acreage) to protection of Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas, FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities, Ecological Greenways, Natural Floodplain Function, Surface Water Protection, and Functional Wetlands.



**WEKIVA-OCALA GREENWAY PROPOSED ADDITION
(WEKIVA RIVER ISLANDS)**

SEMINOLE COUNTY

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

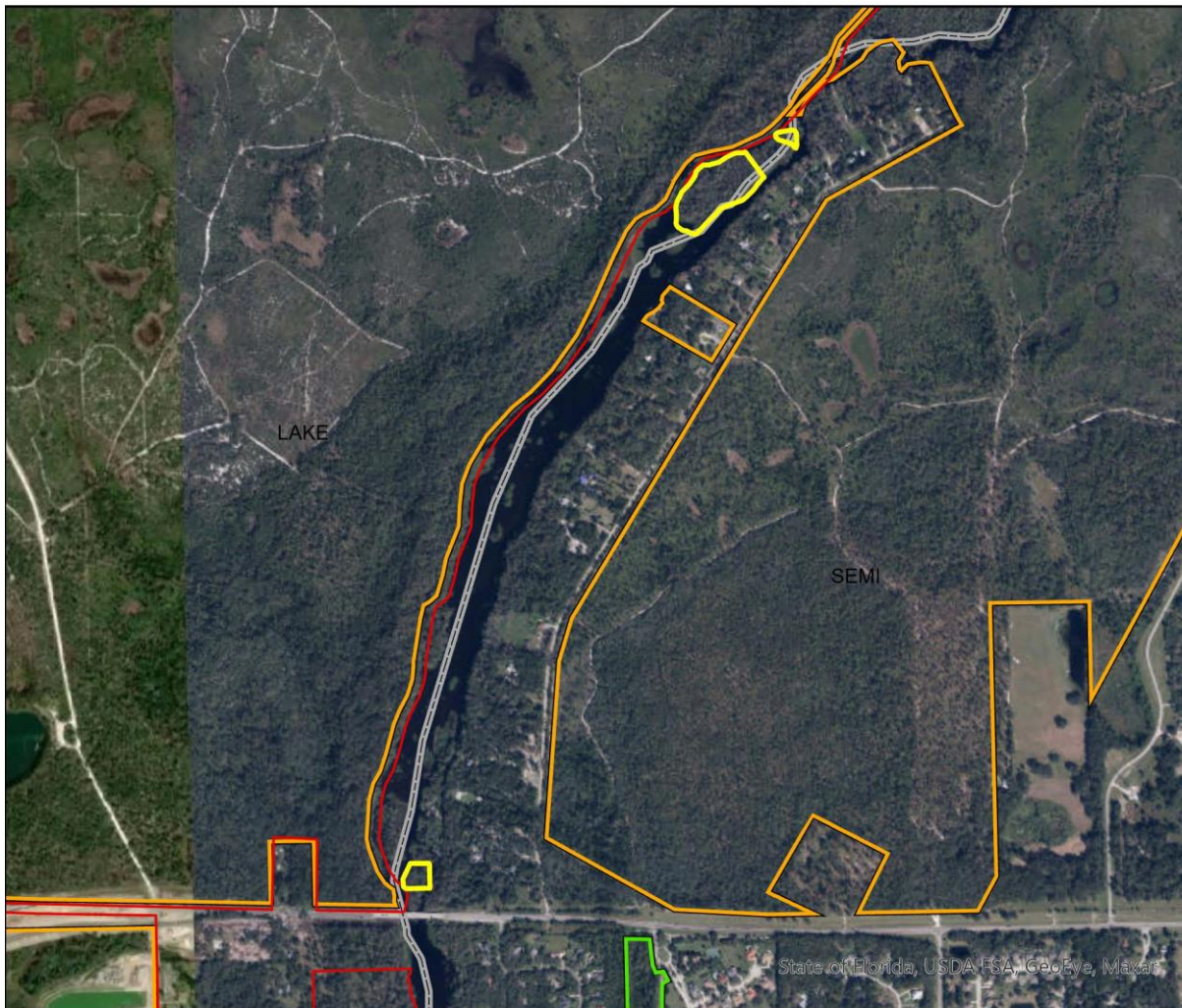


NOVEMBER 2020



Wekiva-Ocala River Greenway Proposed Addition (Wekiva River Islands)

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



Map Produced by: N. Pasco, November 2020

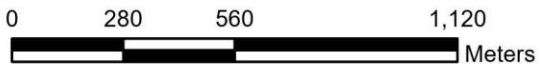
Background: World Imagery Resolution = 0.3 meter



1018 Thomasville Road
Suite 200-C
Tallahassee, Florida 32303
850-224-8207
fax 850-681-9364
www.fnai.org



	Florida Forever Proposed Addition
	Florida Forever BOT Projects
	Existing State Conservation Lands
	Existing Local Conservation Lands



Item 16: Wekiva-Ocala Greenway BA Wekiva River Islands

Wekiva-Ocala Greenway Addition (St. Johns River Islands): Florida Forever Measure Evaluation 20201105

GIS ACRES = 7.63

MEASURES	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
B1: Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas		
Priority 1	0.00	0%
Priority 2	6.78	91%
Priority 3	0.00	0%
Priority 4	0.00	0%
Priority 5	0.00	0%
Total Acres	6.78	91%
B2: FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities		
Priority 1	0.00	0%
Priority 2	0.00	0%
Priority 3	6.00	81%
Priority 4	0.89	12%
Priority 5	0.11	1%
Priority 6	0.06	< 1%
Total Acres	7.06	95%
B3: Ecological Greenways		
Priority 1	0.17	2%
Priority 2	0.00	0%
Priority 3	0.00	0%
Priority 4	0.00	0%
Priority 5	7.28	98%
Priority 6	0.00	0%
Total Acres	7.45	100%
B4: Under-represented Natural Communities		
Upland Glade (G1)	0.00	0%
Pine Rockland (G1)	0.00	0%
Scrub and Scrubby Flatwoods (G2)	0.00	0%
Rockland Hammock (G2)	0.00	0%
Dry Prairie (G2)	0.00	0%
Seepage Slope (G2)	0.00	0%
Sandhill (G3)	0.00	0%
Sandhill Upland Lake (G3)	0.00	0%
Upland Pine (G3)	0.00	0%
Mesic/Wet Flatwoods (G4)	0.00	0%
Upland Hardwood Forest (G5)	0.00	0%
Total Acres	0.00	0%
B6: Occurrences of FNAI Tracked Species		
G1	0	
G2	0	
G3	0	
G4	1	
G5	0	
Total	1	
C4: Natural Floodplain Function		
Priority 1	0.00	0%
Priority 2	0.00	0%
Priority 3	5.95	80%
Priority 4	0.89	12%
Priority 5	0.00	0%
Priority 6	0.00	0%
Total Acres	6.84	92%

MEASURES (continued)	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
C5: Surface Water Protection		
Priority 1	7.01	94%
Priority 2	0.00	0%
Priority 3	0.00	0%
Priority 4	0.00	0%
Priority 5	0.00	0%
Priority 6	0.00	0%
Priority 7	0.00	0%
Total Acres	7.01	94%
C7: Fragile Coastal Resources		
Fragile Coastal Uplands	0.00	0%
Imperiled Coastal Lakes	0.00	0%
Coastal Wetlands	0.00	0%
Total Acres	0.00	0%
C8: Functional Wetlands		
Priority 1	0.00	0%
Priority 2	0.00	0%
Priority 3	6.06	81%
Priority 4	0.89	12%
Priority 5	0.00	0%
Priority 6	0.00	0%
Total Acres	6.95	93%
D3: Aquifer Recharge		
Priority 1	0.00	0%
Priority 2	0.44	6%
Priority 3	0.00	0%
Priority 4	0.00	0%
Priority 5	0.00	0%
Priority 6	0.00	0%
Total Acres	0.44	6%
E2: Recreational Trails (miles) <small>(prioritized trail opportunities from Office of Greenways and Trails & Univ. Florida)</small>		
Land Trail Priorities	0.5	
Land Trail Opportunities	0.0	
Total Miles	0.5	
F2: Arch. & Historical Sites (number)		
	0 sites	
G1: Sustainable Forestry		
Priority 1	0.00	0%
Priority 2	0.00	0%
Priority 3	0.00	0%
Priority 4	0.00	0%
Priority 5 - Potential Pinelands	0.00	0%
Total Acres	0.00	0%
G3: Forestland for Recharge		
	0.00	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.