

# Acquisition and Restoration Council Public Hearing

**Date:** March 2, 2021

**Time:** 3:00 p.m. ET

**Webinar Registration:** <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8249199649689024528>  
After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

**Accessibility information:** Pursuant to the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person requiring special accommodations to participate in this workshop/meeting is asked to advise the agency at least 5 days before the workshop/meeting by contacting: Office of Environmental Services at (850) 245-2555. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the agency using the Florida Relay Service 1(800) 955-8771 (TDD) or 1(800) 955-8770 (Voice).

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## Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- ARC Role in Project Selection and Ranking Process
- Overview of 2021 Cycle 1 Florida Forever Project Proposals
- Public Testimony
  - Big Pine Preserve
  - Wilson Ranch
- Adjourn

## **Overview of the 2021 Cycle 1 Florida Forever Project Proposals**

The Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) received two new Florida Forever project proposals for the Florida Forever 2021 Cycle 1: Big Pine Preserve and Wilson Ranch. On December 11, 2020 ARC voted to move both proposals on for more detailed review.

Section 259.07, Florida Statutes, requires ARC to hold public meetings to take testimony on new Florida Forever proposals “in such areas of the state where the major portions of such land are situated.” In accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department’s Emergency Final Order requires DEP to hold all public meetings and hearings by electronic means to encourage public engagement while protecting public health, ARC will take the required public testimony on these proposals as well as other existing Florida Forever projects.

### **2021 Cycle 1 Florida Forever Proposals**

<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
Big Pine Preserve	Marion	Fee Simple	541
Wilson Ranch	Polk	Fee Simple	490

**ITEM 11:**

Vote on whether the Big Pine Preserve and Wilson Ranch 2021 Cycle 1 Florida Forever proposals will proceed through the project evaluation process for potential addition to the 2022 Florida Forever Priority List.

**DSL STAFF REMARKS:**

The Division of State Lands has received the following complete Florida Forever proposals for consideration during the First Cycle of 2021: Big Pine Preserve and Wilson Ranch. Only those proposals receiving at least five affirmative Council votes will be further evaluated for possible addition to the 2022 Florida Forever Priority List.

<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
Big Pine Preserve	Marion	Fee	541
Wilson Ranch	Polk	Fee	450

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Vote on each proposal.

**ARC RECOMMENDATION:**

<b>Project</b>	<b>DHR</b>	<b>FFS</b>	<b>Griner</b>	<b>FWC</b>	<b>Palmer</b>	<b>Peppers</b>	<b>DEP</b>	<b>Selected</b>
Big Pine Preserve	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YES
Wilson Ranch	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	YES

**PRELIMINARY EVALUATIONS  
OF THE NOVEMBER 2020  
FLORIDA FOREVER PROPOSALS**

Prepared by  
Florida Natural Areas Inventory  
1018 Thomasville Road  
Suite 200-C  
Tallahassee, FL 32303



The Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) is dedicated to gathering, interpreting, and disseminating information critical to the conservation of Florida's biological resources. The Inventory was founded in 1981 as a member of The Nature Conservancy's international network of natural heritage programs, and it is now part of Florida State University's Institute of Science and Public Affairs. Funding for FNAI is provided through contracts, which currently include work for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Forest Service, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and Florida's Water Management Districts.

FNAI staff builds and maintains a comprehensive statewide database that now includes more than 35,000 occurrences of rare plant and animal species and high-quality natural communities. The database also contains information on more than 2,000 lands managed wholly or in part for conservation. This database includes national forests, parks and wildlife refuges; state parks, forests, aquatic preserves, and wildlife management areas; water management district lands; county and municipal parks; private preserves; and military installations with substantial natural areas. Boundaries of state land acquisition projects are also represented.

As part of an agreement with DEP, FNAI provides data and expertise to assist with the multi-step process of evaluating lands proposed for acquisition through the Florida Forever Program. This document presents our preliminary review of proposals submitted for the cycle beginning November 2020. This includes two proposals: Big Pine Preserve (Marion County) and Wilson Ranch Property (Polk County). This review includes the following for the proposals: Biological Conservation Priority; Natural Resource Description; Rare Species on the site; and maps of the proposed site. Recreational and archeological values are not considered in this evaluation. A tabular evaluation based on the Florida Forever Conservation Needs Assessment (FFCNA) GIS data layers is also included.

**Biological Conservation Priority:** We summarize our overall preliminary assessment of the proposals as a "Biological Conservation Priority" for each site. This rank represents our initial assessment of a proposal's contribution to the protection of significant ecological resources from a **statewide perspective**. These ranks reflect the FNAI scientific staff's best judgment based on information available at the time of the evaluation. Further assessment may be needed for some proposals in order to appreciate their biological importance. Factors weighed in the assignment of the priority ranks include rarity, condition, and diversity of ecological resources; perceived degree of threat to the site; and relative degree of protection of the resources (i.e., number and quality of resources already adequately protected elsewhere). The importance of a proposal to the natural resource management of contiguous or nearby conservation lands is also considered. Finally, we acknowledge that sites with low ranks, though of lesser statewide significance, may nonetheless be locally valuable for education, recreation, and protection of locally rare resources.

The Biological Conservation Priority is based on a proposal's boundary as submitted. These ranks may change if alterations are made to the boundary or if new biological information about a site becomes available.

**Natural Resource Description:** The description of the natural resources presented for each proposal is developed from information provided in the proposal application, the FNAI database, FNAI staff comments, and aerial photographs. The natural communities listed in this evaluation and the percentage of the total area that each comprises were derived principally from aerial photographs as interpreted by FNAI staff and by landcover information from the Water Management Districts. These data were supplemented by FNAI natural community occurrence data where available. These sources were also used to determine the extent of disturbed lands that no longer support natural communities (agriculture areas, developed areas, mines, etc.). Acreages of communities and disturbances are approximate, but provide a reasonable estimate for this stage of the evaluation process. More precise landcover information is gathered during the project assessment phase for those proposals selected for further evaluation.

Acreages of natural communities, particularly mesic and wet flatwoods, may differ from acreages given in the Florida Forever Measures Evaluation (FFME) evaluation table (described below). The FFME relies on statewide remotely sensed data where on the ground information is lacking. Using current high resolution aerial photography, FNAI scientists sometimes identify different acreage of certain landcover types, for example, pine plantation or flatwoods, than is identified through remotely sensed data.

Rare species on the proposed areas are listed in each evaluation. Species recorded in the FNAI database and those reported in the application are listed separately in the table. Potential rare species may be discussed in the evaluation text. FNAI Global and State ranks and Federal and State legal statuses are given for each species in the table. Rank and statuses provided in the text are listed in the same order after the scientific species name. A rank/status explanation sheet is included at the end of this document.

**Maps:** This report provides two maps of each proposed site. The first is a small-scale map showing the proposed site in the context of surrounding conservation lands and land protection projects. The second map is of larger scale and uses recent aerial imagery that provides a view of the overall landcover of each site.

**Florida Forever Measures Evaluation:** Accompanying each evaluation is a table illustrating to what extent each proposed site meets 15 Florida Forever performance measures. These 15 measures were selected because they are resource-based criteria that can be used to set acquisition priorities. For each measure, we report the acres of the resource found on the proposed site and the percentage of the site containing the resource. The data in this assessment represent a highly standardized, statewide perspective of natural resource distributions. More detailed information may be gathered during the Project Assessment phase for those proposals voted upon for further evaluation. The data used in this evaluation are described in detail in the Florida Forever Conservation Needs Assessment Summary Report and Technical Report, available at [www.fnai.org](http://www.fnai.org).

## ***Big Pine Preserve (Marion County)***

Fee Simple

### Preliminary Evaluation

**Biological Conservation Priority:** Medium

**Natural Resources Description:** This evaluation is based on information gathered from the proposal, high resolution aerial imagery, U.S. Geologic Survey (USGS) 7.5' topographic maps, Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) Cooperative Land Cover data (FNAI, Florida Cooperative Land Cover Map, version 3.4), and information in the FNAI database.

The Big Pine Preserve proposal encompasses 541 acres (522 acres per GIS) in three separate tracts along the northern and western edges of Lake Kerr (embedded within Ocala National Forest [ONF]). County Road 316 separates the two northern tracts from ONF. The western tract shares approximately half of its non-shoreline boundary with ONF.

The Big Pine Preserve is within the Upper St. John's River watershed. Outfall from Lake Kerr flows east, then north to the Ocklawaha River, which subsequently feeds into the St. John's River. The site lies at the northern end of the Ocala Scrub Province of the Central Lake District, which is an area of deep sands over limestone with high input into the Florida aquifer. The site is included within the area generally referred to as the Mt. Dora Ridge, which essentially encompasses ONF.

Although the Big Pine Preserve is mostly forested, the tracts have a long history of use by modern humans. The proposal describes at least some of the tracts as being the site of the former (ghost) town of Kerr City. Other portions of the site are described as having citrus close to the turn of the century. These once-heavily disturbed areas have been left fallow to a large degree and now support successional hardwood forest. Sandhill tentatively has been identified as occurring on 35% of the site, but it is likely to be altered by historic use and recent fire exclusion. The proposal highlights the many old growth longleaf pines present in the sandhill and successional hardwood forest. Other natural communities (Table 1) include mesic hammock, which occurs along the lake edge and in transitional areas to other wetlands. A small area of scrub is present on the southernmost tract; this scrub is part of a large scrub island that extends into the adjacent ONF.

Table 1. Natural communities and landcover types within the Big Pine Preserve Florida Forever proposal.

<b>Community or Landcover</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Proposal</b>
sandhill	181.0	35%
mesic hammock	46.5	9%
basin marsh	41.2	8%
scrub	22.2	4%
depression marsh	5.3	1%
successional hardwood forest	180.0	34%

woodland pasture	34.0	7%
developed	7.4	1%
road	4.4	1%
<b>Total</b>	522	100

The Big Pine Preserve is within an area identified by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission where Florida black bear is considered abundant. The FNAI database includes no other records of rare species on site; however, the proposal states that red-cockaded woodpeckers have been observed foraging on site, and that old cavities are present. The surrounding sandhill (including the well-known Riverside [sandhill] Island) supports the largest population of red-cockaded woodpeckers in peninsular Florida. Restoration of the former sandhill on site would further bolster this population by filling in additional habitat to help connect sub-populations. Gopher tortoise and eastern diamondback rattlesnake also are reported by the applicant as occurring on site. A substantial gopher tortoise population is known to occur in the surrounding sandhill. Additional species are possible.

Table 2. Rare plants and animals documented or reported to occur within the Big Pine Preserve Florida Forever proposal.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Global Rank	State Rank	Federal Status	State Status
<b>Rare plants documented on site</b>					
none					
<b>Additional rare plants reported on site by applicant</b>					
none					
<b>Rare animals documented on site</b>					
<i>Ursus americanus floridanus</i>	Florida black bear	G5T4	S4	N	N
<b>Additional rare animals reported on site by applicant</b>					
<i>Dryobates borealis</i>	red-cockaded woodpecker	G3	S2	E	E
<i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>	gopher tortoise	G3	S3	N	ST
<i>Crotalus adamanteus</i>	eastern diamondback rattlesnake	G3	S3	N	N

The Florida Forever Measures Evaluation that follows 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. As summarized in the evaluation, 97 to 100% of the site contributes to FNAI habitat conservation priorities, ecological greenways, surface water protection, and aquifer recharge. Slightly less area, 79%, contributes to Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas. There is minimal contribution to Natural Floodplain Function and Functional Wetlands.



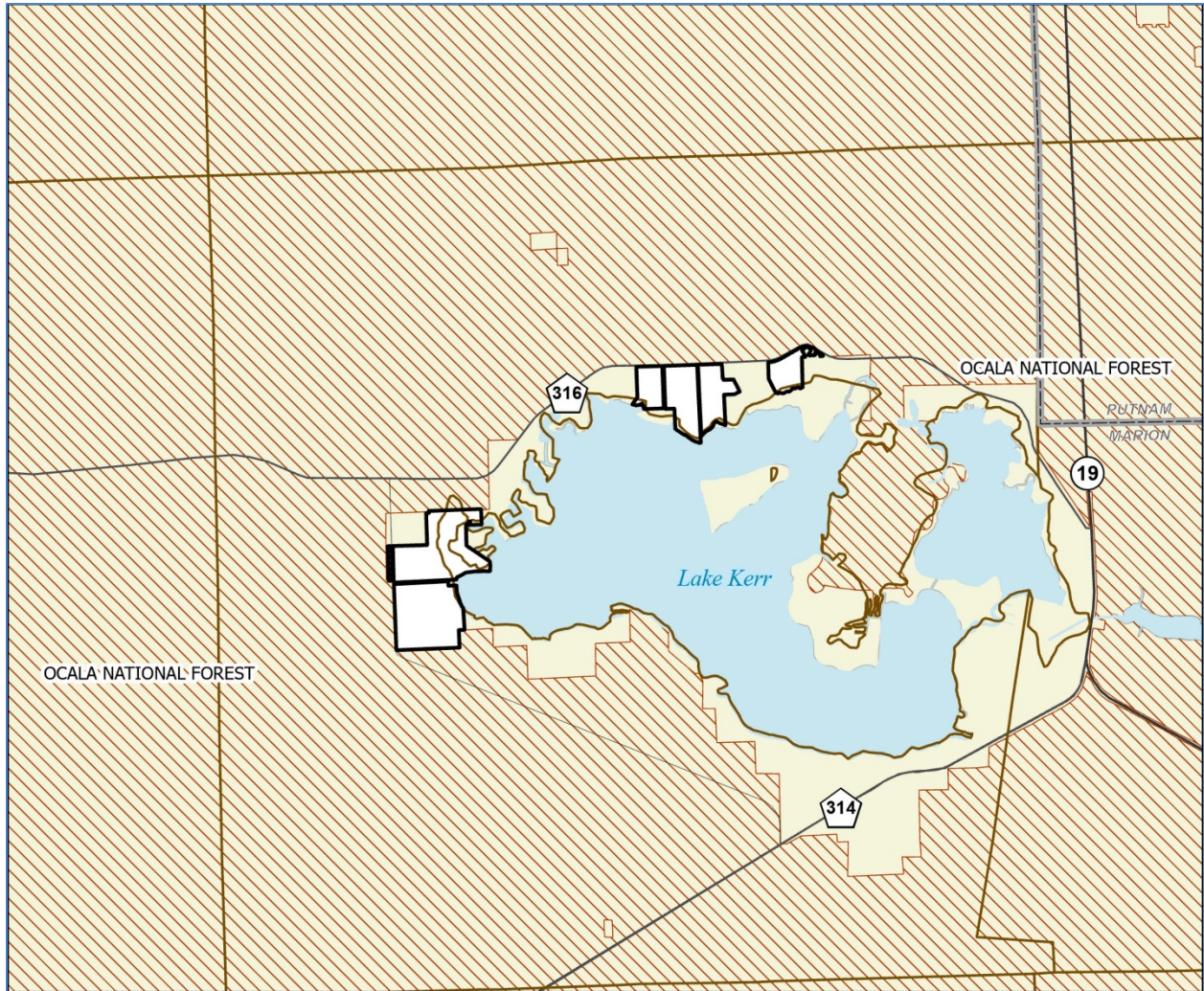
## Big Pine Preserve: Florida Forever Measure Evaluation 20201104

GIS ACRES = 522

MEASURES	Resource Acres <sup>a</sup>	% of project
<b>B1: Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	361	69%
Priority 3	49	9%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	1	< 1%
Total Acres	411	79%
<b>B2: FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities</b>		
Priority 1	154	29%
Priority 2	95	18%
Priority 3	258	49%
Priority 4	1	< 1%
Priority 5	12	2%
Priority 6	0.4	< 1%
Total Acres	521	100%
<b>B3: Ecological Greenways</b>		
Priority 1	7	1%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	514	98%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	521	100%
<b>B4: Under-represented Natural Communities</b>		
Upland Glade (G1)	0	0%
Pine Rockland (G1)	0	0%
Scrub and Scrubby Flatwoods (G2)	22	4%
Rockland Hammock (G2)	0	0%
Dry Prairie (G2)	0	0%
Seepage Slope (G2)	0	0%
Sandhill (G3)	181	35%
Sandhill Upland Lake (G3)	0	0%
Upland Pine (G3)	0	0%
Mesic/Wet Flatwoods (G4)	2	< 1%
Upland Hardwood Forest (G5)	0	0%
Total Acres	205	39%
<b>B6: Occurrences of FNAI Tracked Species</b>		
G1	0	
G2	0	
G3	1	
G4	1	
G5	0	
Total	2	
<b>C4: Natural Floodplain Function</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	7	1%
Priority 3	63	12%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	71	14%



MEASURES (continued)	Resource Acres <sup>a</sup>	% of project
<b>C5: Surface Water Protection</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	19	4%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	183	35%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	302	58%
Priority 7	0	0%
Total Acres	504	97%
<b>C7: Fragile Coastal Resources</b>		
Fragile Coastal Uplands	0	0%
Imperiled Coastal Lakes	0	0%
Coastal Wetlands	0	0%
Total Acres	0	0%
<b>C8: Functional Wetlands</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	4	< 1%
Priority 3	43	8%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	48	9%
<b>D3: Aquifer Recharge</b>		
Priority 1	190	36%
Priority 2	173	33%
Priority 3	115	22%
Priority 4	41	8%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	519	99%
<b>E2: Recreational Trails (miles)</b>		
<small>(prioritized trail opportunities from Office of Greenways and Trails &amp; Univ. Florida)</small>		
Land Trail Priorities	1.5	
Land Trail Opportunities	0.0	
Total Miles	1.5	
<b>F2: Arch. &amp; Historical Sites (number)</b>		
	0 sites	
<b>G1: Sustainable Forestry</b>		
Priority 1	0.3	< 1%
Priority 2	197	38%
Priority 3	7	1%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5 - Potential Pinelands	33	6%
Total Acres	238	45%
<b>G3: Forestland for Recharge</b>		
	186	36%

<sup>a</sup>Acres 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.



### BIG PINE PRESERVE FLORIDA FOREVER PROPOSAL

#### MARION COUNTY

-  Proposed Florida Forever BOT Project
-  Other Conservation Lands

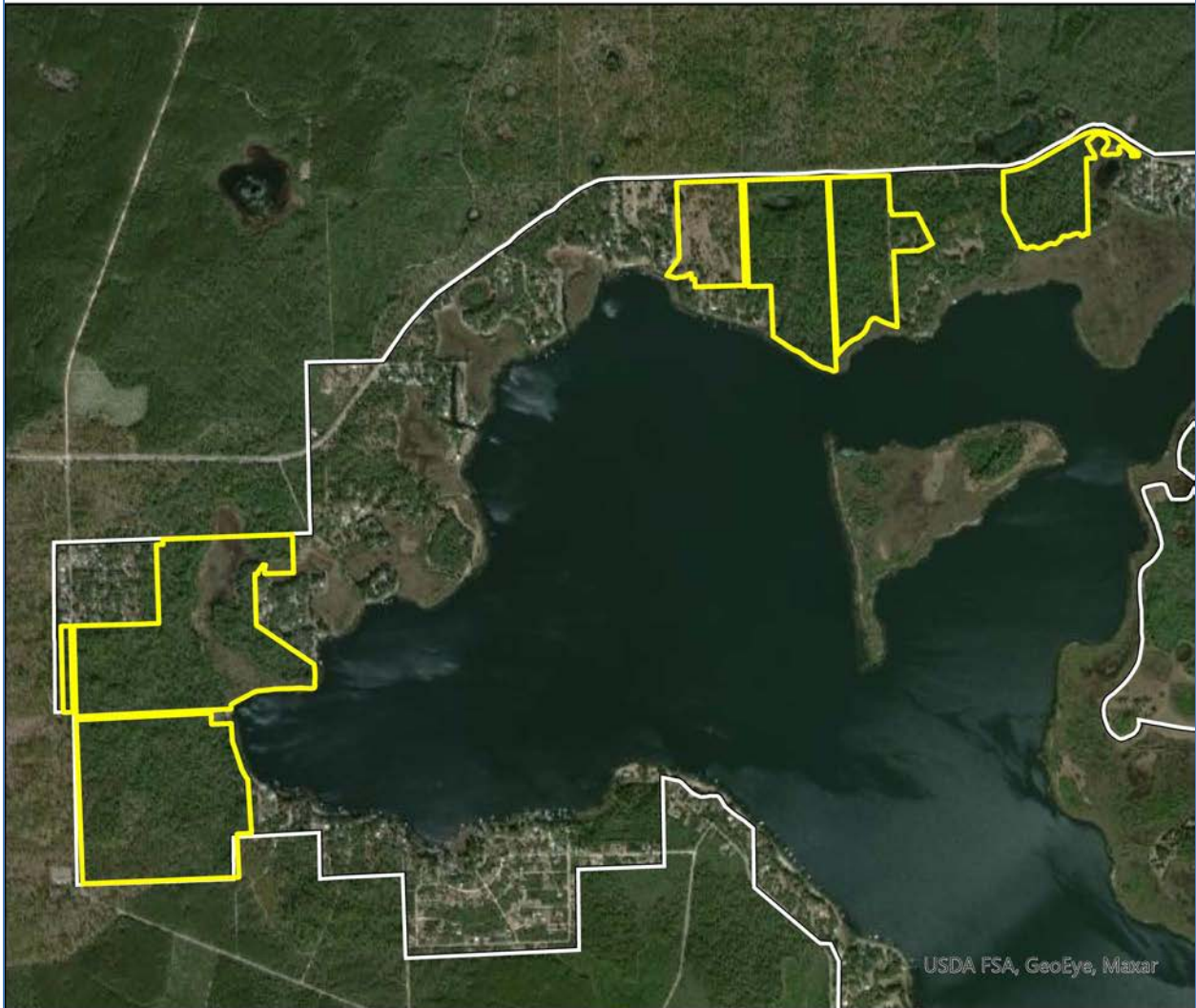


NOVEMBER 2020



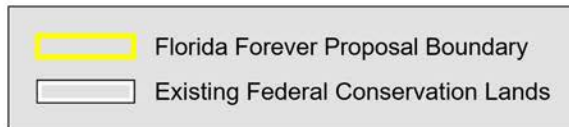
# Big Pine Preserve Florida Forever Proposal

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

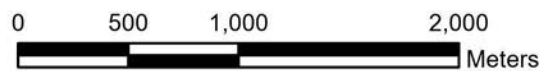


Map Produced by: N. Pasco, November 2020

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



## ***Wilson Ranch Property (Polk County)***

Fee Simple

### Preliminary Evaluation

**Biological Conservation Priority:** Medium

**Natural Resources Description:** This evaluation is based on information gathered from the proposal, high resolution aerial imagery, U.S. Geologic Survey (USGS) 7.5' topographic maps, Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) Cooperative Land Cover data (FNAI, Florida Cooperative Land Cover Map, version 3.4), and information in the FNAI database.

The Wilson Ranch property encompasses 450 acres (450 per GIS) in essentially one tract at the confluence of Saddle Creek (Canal) and Peace Creek, which merge to form the Peace River. The property is within the City of Bartow and situated between Lake Hancock Conservation Area (SWFWMD) to the northwest and the Laurent/Peace River property (Polk County) just across SR 60 to the south. Clear Springs (DEP), south of the Laurent/Peace property, continues the protection/restoration of the river corridor to the south. The property is proposed for water quality protection.

The Wilson Ranch property is within the Upper Peace River watershed. The site lies within the Bartow Embayment Province of the Central Lake District, which is a large erosion basin filled with Pliocene era phosphatic sand and clay sand over limestone with high input into the Floridan aquifer. Land use in the vicinity is primarily phosphate extraction, citrus, and cattle farms.

Land cover on Wilson Ranch is primarily improved pasture (65%). Floodplain swamp and possibly bottomland forest associated with the Peace River cover the greatest extent (approximately 26%) of the natural areas on the property. Some mesic hammock borders the wetlands on site. Saddle Creek is channelized within the last 2,500 meters (1.5 miles) including the 300-meter portion on Wilson Ranch. Peace Creek and the Peace River appear to have been dredged to form a berm along portions of the creek/river. Other small ditches drain the pastures. Several structures associated with the cattle farm are present within the proposed area.

Table 1. Natural communities and landcover types within the Wilson Ranch Florida Forever proposal.

<b>Community or Landcover</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Proposal</b>
floodplain swamp	116.1	26%
mesic hammock	27.9	6%
blackwater stream	9.8	2%
depression marsh	0.9	<1%
pasture-improved	291.4	65%
developed	2.7	1%
ditch/canal	1.1	<1%
successional hydric forest	0.5	<1%
total	450	100

The Wilson Ranch Property has no rare species documented in the FNAI database. The proposal states that Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has identified a bird rookery on site.

Table 2. Rare plants and animals documented or reported to occur within the Wilson Ranch Florida Forever proposal.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Global Rank	State Rank	Federal Status	State Status
<b>Rare plants documented on site</b>					
none					
<b>Additional rare plants reported on site by applicant</b>					
none					
<b>Rare animals documented on site</b>					
none					
<b>Additional rare animals reported on site by applicant</b>					
none					

The Florida Forever Measures Evaluation that follows 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. As summarized in the evaluation 100% of the site contributes to ecological greenways (all in Priority 3), surface water protection (mostly Priority 4), and aquifer recharge (Priorities 1-5). Nearly all of the site contributes to Natural Floodplain Function (Priority 3-5). The site contributes a lesser degree and priority to Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas, FNAI habitat conservation priorities, and Functional Wetlands. None of the site contributes to Sustainable Forestry or Forestland for Recharge.

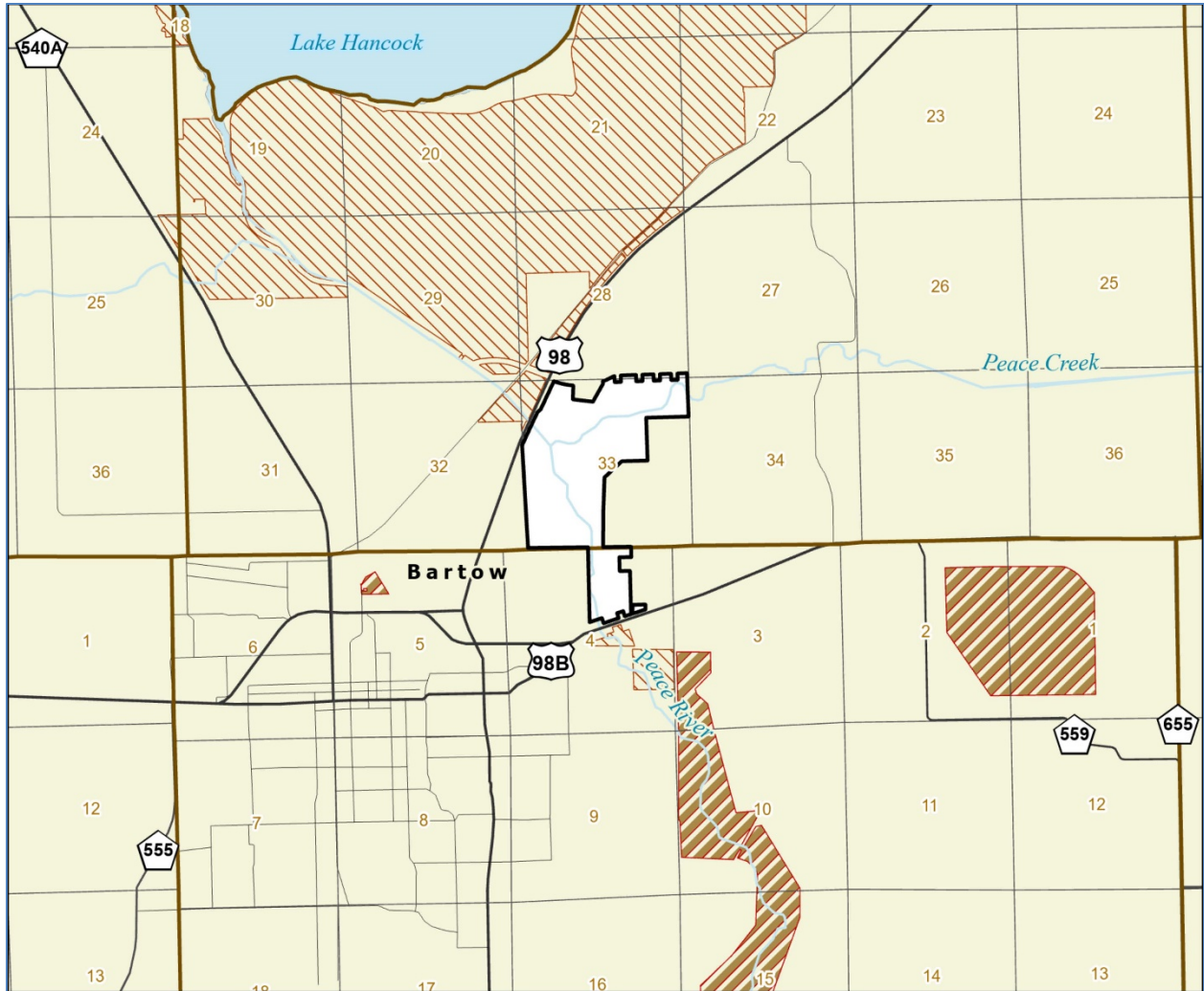
**Wilson Ranch: Florida Forever Measure Evaluation 20201104**

GIS ACRES = 450

MEASURES	Resource Acres <sup>a</sup>	% of project
<b>B1: Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	211	47%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	67	15%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>62%</b>
<b>B2: FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	13	3%
Priority 5	109	24%
Priority 6	196	44%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>71%</b>
<b>B3: Ecological Greenways</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	448	100%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>B4: Under-represented Natural Communities</b>		
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)	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)	0	0%
Upland Hardwood Forest (G5)	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>B6: Occurrences of FNAI Tracked Species</b>		
G1	0	
G2	0	
G3	0	
G4	0	
G5	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>C4: Natural Floodplain Function</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	30	7%
Priority 4	215	48%
Priority 5	166	37%
Priority 6	5	1%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>93%</b>




MEASURES (continued)	Resource Acres <sup>a</sup>	% of project
<b>C5: Surface Water Protection</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	29	6%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	412	92%
Priority 5	3	< 1%
Priority 6	6	1%
Priority 7	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>C7: Fragile Coastal Resources</b>		
Fragile Coastal Uplands	0	0%
Imperiled Coastal Lakes	0	0%
Coastal Wetlands	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>C8: Functional Wetlands</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	27	6%
Priority 4	119	27%
Priority 5	1	< 1%
Priority 6	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>D3: Aquifer Recharge</b>		
Priority 1	53	12%
Priority 2	100	22%
Priority 3	137	31%
Priority 4	126	28%
Priority 5	33	7%
Priority 6	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>E2: Recreational Trails (miles)</b> <small>(prioritized trail opportunities from Office of Greenways and Trails &amp; Univ. Florida)</small>		
Land Trail Priorities	1.1	
Land Trail Opportunities	0.7	
<b>Total Miles</b>	<b>1.8</b>	
<b>F2: Arch. &amp; Historical Sites (number)</b>		
	3 sites	
<b>G1: Sustainable Forestry</b>		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5 - Potential Pinelands	0	0%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>G3: Forestland for Recharge</b>		
	0	0%

<sup>a</sup>Acres 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.



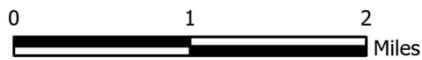
### WILSON RANCH FLORIDA FOREVER PROPOSAL

**POLK COUNTY**

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

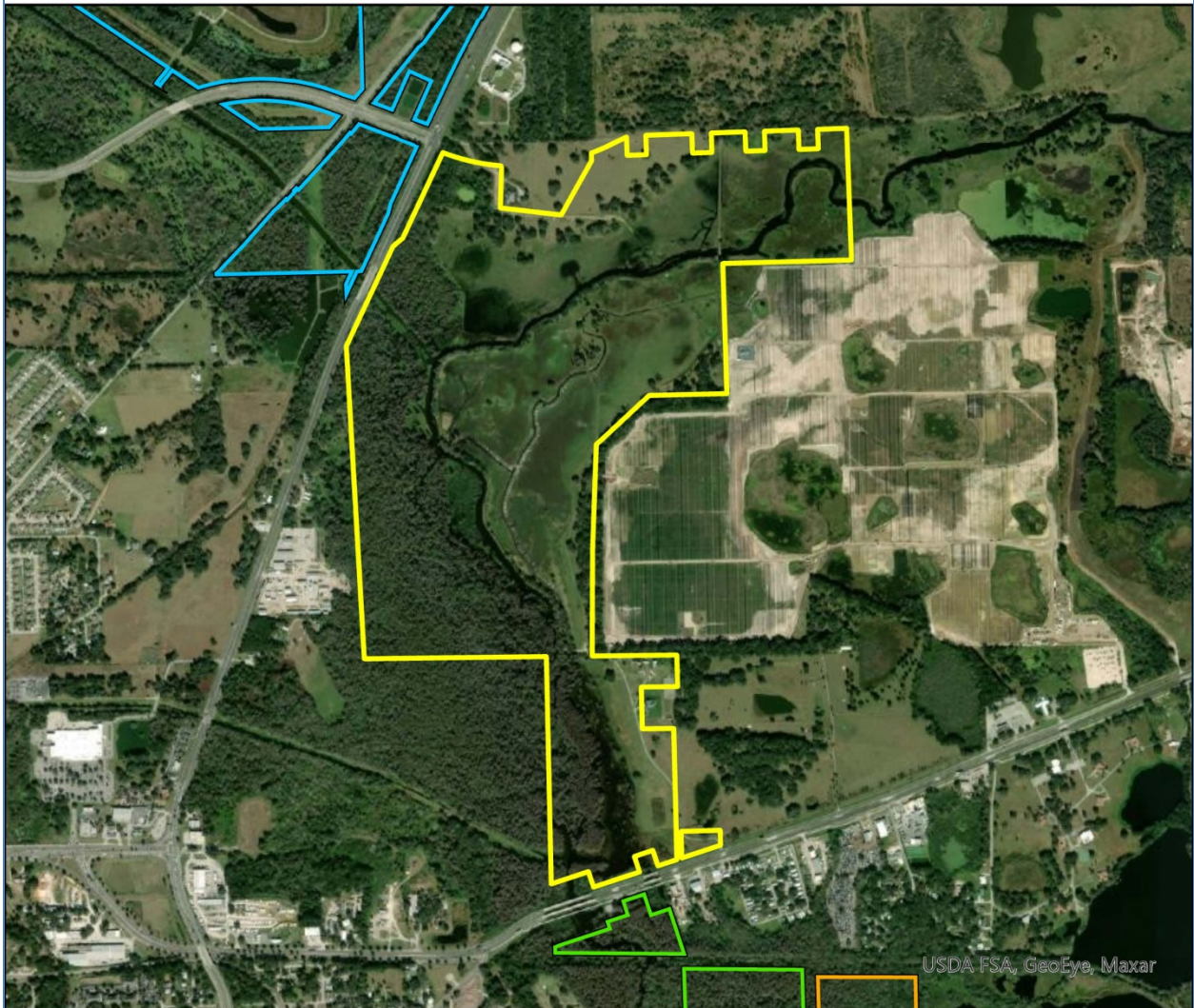


NOVEMBER 2020



# Wilson Ranch Florida Forever Proposal

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

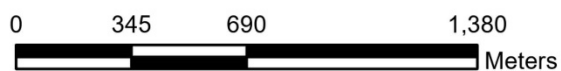
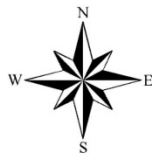


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Background: World Imagery Resolution = 0.3 meter



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fax 850-681-9364  
www.fnai.org





## Elements and Element Occurrences

An **element** is a biodiversity unit of conservation attention, such as a species, population, natural community, bird rookery, spring, sinkhole, or cave.

An **element occurrence (EO)** is an area of land and/or water in which a species or natural community is, or was, present. An EO should have practical conservation value for the Element as evidenced by potential continued (or historical) presence and/or regular recurrence at a given location.

## Element Ranking and Legal Status

Using a ranking system developed by NatureServe and the Natural Heritage Program Network, the Florida Natural Areas Inventory assigns two ranks for each element. The global rank is based on an element's worldwide status; the state rank is based on the status of the element in Florida. Element ranks are based on many factors, the most important ones being estimated number of Element Occurrences (EOs), estimated abundance (number of individuals for species; area for natural communities), geographic range, estimated number of adequately protected EOs, relative threat of destruction, and ecological fragility.

### FNAI GLOBAL ELEMENT RANK DEFINITIONS

<b>G1</b>	<b>Critically Imperiled</b> —At very high risk of extinction or elimination due to extreme rarity, very steep declines, or other factors.
<b>G2</b>	<b>Imperiled</b> —At high risk of extinction or elimination due to very restricted range, very few populations or occurrences, steep declines, or other factors.
<b>G3</b>	<b>Vulnerable</b> —At moderate risk of extinction or elimination due to a restricted range, relatively few populations or occurrences, recent and widespread declines, or other factors.
<b>G4</b>	<b>Apparently Secure</b> —Uncommon, but not rare; some cause for long term concern due to decline or other factors.
<b>G5</b>	<b>Secure</b> —Common; widespread and abundant.
<b>GH</b>	<b>Possibly Extinct</b> —Known from only historical occurrences, but still some hope of rediscovery.
<b>GX</b>	<b>Presumed Extinct</b> —Not located despite intensive searches and virtually no likelihood of rediscovery.
<b>GXC</b>	<b>Captive or Cultivated Only</b> —Taxon at present is extinct in the wild across their entire native range, but is extant in cultivation, in captivity, or as a naturalized population or populations outside of its native range or a reintroduced population not yet established.
<b>G#?</b>	<b>Inexact Numeric Rank</b> —Denotes inexact numeric rank (e.g., G2?).
<b>G#G#</b>	<b>Range Rank</b> —Used to indicate uncertainty about the exact status of the element (e.g., G1G3, G2G3).
<b>G#T#</b>	<b>Infraspecific Taxon</b> —Rank of a taxonomic subgroup such as a subspecies; the G portion of the rank refers to the entire species and the T portion refers to the subgroup; numbers have same definition as above (e.g., G3T1).
<b>G#Q</b>	<b>Questionable Taxonomy</b> —Distinctiveness of this element as a taxon or ecosystem type at the current level is questionable; numbers have same definition as above (e.g., G2Q).
<b>G#T#Q</b>	<b>Questionable Taxonomy (T)</b> —Same as above, but validity as subspecies or variety is questioned.
<b>GU</b>	<b>Unrankable</b> —Currently unrankable due to lack of information and/or conflicting information (e.g., GUT2).
<b>GNA</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b> —The element is not a suitable target for conservation activities (e.g., a hybrid species).
<b>GNR</b>	<b>Unranked</b> —Global rank not yet assessed.
<b>GNRTNR</b>	<b>Unranked (T)</b> —Neither the element nor the taxonomic subgroup or population has yet been ranked.

### FNAI STATE ELEMENT RANK DEFINITIONS

<b>S1</b>	<b>Critically Imperiled</b> —At very high risk of extirpation from Florida due to extreme rarity, very steep declines, or other factors.
<b>S2</b>	<b>Imperiled</b> —At high risk of extirpation from Florida due to very restricted range, very few populations or occurrences, steep declines, or other factors.
<b>S3</b>	<b>Vulnerable</b> —At moderate risk of extirpation from Florida due to a restricted range, relatively few populations or occurrences, recent and widespread declines, or other factors.
<b>S4</b>	<b>Apparently Secure</b> —Uncommon, but not rare, in Florida; some cause for long term concern due to decline or other factors.
<b>S5</b>	<b>Secure</b> —Common; widespread and abundant in Florida.
<b>SH</b>	<b>Possibly Extirpated</b> —Known from only historical occurrences in Florida, but still some hope of rediscovery.
<b>SX</b>	<b>Presumed Extirpated</b> —Not located in Florida despite intensive searches and virtually no likelihood of rediscovery.
<b>SU</b>	<b>Unrankable</b> —Currently unrankable in Florida due to lack of information and/or conflicting information.
<b>SNA</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b> —Not a suitable target for conservation activities in Florida (e.g., a hybrid species).
<b>SNR</b>	<b>Unranked</b> —Neither the element nor the taxonomic subgroup/population has yet been ranked for Florida.

## FEDERAL LEGAL STATUS

Legal status information provided by FNAI for information only. For official definitions and lists of protected species, consult the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Definitions derived from U.S. Endangered Species Act of 1973, Sec. 3. Note that the federal statuses given by FNAI refer only to Florida populations and that federal statuses may differ elsewhere.

<b>C</b>	Candidate species for which federal listing agencies have sufficient information on biological vulnerability and threats to support proposing to list the species as endangered or threatened.
<b>E</b>	Endangered: species in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.
<b>E, T</b>	Species currently listed endangered in a portion of its range but only listed as threatened in other areas.
<b>E, PDL</b>	Species currently listed endangered but has been proposed for delisting.
<b>E, PT</b>	Species currently listed endangered but has been proposed for listing as threatened.
<b>E, XN</b>	Species currently listed endangered but tracked population is a non-essential experimental population.
<b>T</b>	Threatened: species likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.
<b>PE</b>	Species proposed for listing as endangered
<b>PT</b>	Species proposed for listing as threatened
<b>SAE</b>	Treated as endangered due to similarity of appearance to a species that is federally listed such that enforcement personnel have difficulty in attempting to differentiate between the listed and unlisted species.
<b>SAT</b>	Treated as threatened due to similarity of appearance to a species that is federally listed such that enforcement personnel have difficulty in attempting to differentiate between the listed and unlisted species.
<b>S</b>	Not currently listed, but considered a "species of concern" to USFWS.
<b>N</b>	No federal status

## STATE LEGAL STATUS

Legal status information is provided by FNAI for information only. For official definitions and lists of protected species, consult the relevant state agency.

**Animals:** Definitions derived from "Florida's Endangered Species and Species of Special Concern, Official Lists" published by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), 1 August 1997, and subsequent updates.

<b>C</b>	Candidate for listing at the Federal level by USFWS
<b>FE</b>	Listed as endangered Species at the Federal level by USFWS
<b>FT</b>	Listed as threatened Species at the Federal level by USFWS
<b>FXN</b>	Listed as a non-essential experimental population in Florida by USFWS
<b>FT(S/A)</b>	Listed as threatened due to similarity of appearance by USFWS
<b>ST</b>	State population listed as threatened by the FWC. Defined as a species, subspecies, or isolated population that is acutely vulnerable to environmental alteration, declining in number at a rapid rate, or whose range or habitat is decreasing in area at a rapid rate and as a consequence is destined or very likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future.
<b>SSC</b>	Listed as Species of Special Concern by the FWC. An element that warrants special protection, recognition, or consideration because it has an inherent significant vulnerability to habitat modification, environmental alteration, human disturbance, or substantial human exploitation, which in the foreseeable future may result in its becoming a threatened species. (SSC* for <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> (Osprey) indicates that this status applies in Monroe county only.)
<b>N</b>	Not currently listed, nor currently being considered for listing.

**Plants:** Definitions derived from Sections 581.011 and 581.185(2), Florida Statutes, and the Preservation of Native Flora of Florida Act, 5B-40.001. FNAI does not track all state-regulated plant species; for a complete list of state-regulated plant species, call Florida Division of Plant Industry, 352-372-3505 or see: <http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi/>.

<b>E</b>	Endangered: species of plants native to Florida that are in imminent danger of extinction within the state, the survival of which is unlikely if the causes of a decline in the number of plants continue; includes all species determined to be endangered or threatened pursuant to the U.S. Endangered Species Act.
<b>T</b>	Threatened: species native to the state that are in rapid decline in the number of plants within the state, but which have not so decreased in number as to cause them to be endangered.
<b>N</b>	Not currently listed, nor currently being considered for listing.

## Element Occurrence Ranking

FNAI ranks of quality of the element occurrence in terms of its viability (EORANK). Viability is estimated using a combination of factors that contribute to continued survival of the element at the location. Among these are the size of the EO, general condition of the EO at the site, and the conditions of the landscape surrounding the EO (e.g., an immediate threat to an EO by local development pressure could lower an EO rank).

<b>A</b>	Excellent estimated viability
<b>A?</b>	Possibly excellent estimated viability
<b>AB</b>	Excellent or good estimated viability
<b>AC</b>	Excellent, good, or fair estimated viability
<b>B</b>	Good estimated viability
<b>B?</b>	Possibly good estimated viability
<b>BC</b>	Good or fair estimated viability
<b>BD</b>	Good, fair, or poor estimated viability
<b>C</b>	Fair estimated viability
<b>C?</b>	Possibly fair estimated viability
<b>CD</b>	Fair or poor estimated viability
<b>D</b>	Poor estimated viability
<b>D?</b>	Possibly poor estimated viability
<b>E</b>	Verified extant (viability not assessed)
<b>F</b>	Failed to find
<b>H</b>	Historical
<b>NR</b>	Not ranked, a placeholder when an EO is not (yet) ranked.
<b>U</b>	Unrankable
<b>X</b>	Extirpated

\*For additional detail on the above ranks see: <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer/eorankguide.htm>

FNAI also uses the following EO ranks:

<b>H?</b>	Possibly historical
<b>F?</b>	Possibly failed to find
<b>X?</b>	Possibly extirpated

The following offers further explanation of the H and X ranks as they are used by FNAI:

The rank of H is used when there is a lack of recent field information verifying the continued existence of an EO, such as (a) when an EO is based only on historical collections data; or (b) when an EO was ranked A, B, C, D, or E at one time and is later, without field survey work, considered to be possibly extirpated due to general habitat loss or degradation of the environment in the area. This definition of the H rank is dependent on an interpretation of what constitutes "recent" field information. Generally, if there is no known survey of an EO within the last 20 to 40 years, it should be assigned an H rank. While these time frames represent suggested maximum limits, the actual time period for historical EOs may vary according to the biology of the element and the specific landscape context of each occurrence (including anthropogenic alteration of the environment). Thus, an H rank may be assigned to an EO before the maximum time frames have lapsed. Occurrences that have not been surveyed for periods exceeding these time frames should not be ranked A, B, C, or D. The higher maximum limit for plants and communities (i.e., ranging from 20 to 40 years) is based upon the assumption that occurrences of these elements generally have the potential to persist at a given location for longer periods of time. This greater potential is a reflection of plant biology and community dynamics. However, landscape factors must also be considered. Thus, areas with more anthropogenic impacts on the environment (e.g., development) will be at the lower end of the range, and less-impacted areas will be at the higher end.

The rank of X is assigned to EOs for which there is documented destruction of habitat or environment, or persuasive evidence of eradication based on adequate survey (i.e., thorough or repeated survey efforts by one or more experienced observers at times and under conditions appropriate for the Element at that location).