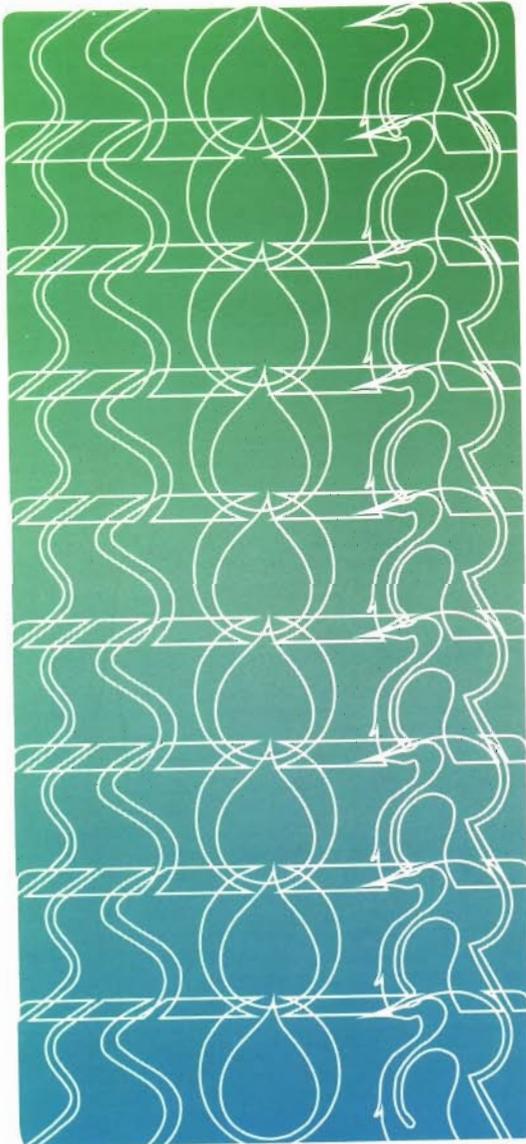


# Five Year Plan



*Save Our Rivers*



*Land For Waters' Sake*

1 9 9 3



**Timer Eugene Powers**  
August 9, 1936 - May 21, 1992

"The greatest challenge in front of us is to take the steps that are necessary to assure that our younger generation has the rivers, the creeks and the critters that are at the heart of our whole society. There's not many people representing the critters, and if we fail to represent those who can't represent themselves, either nature or people, then we have failed."

*Timer Powers*

---

# Save Our Rivers



## Land For Waters' Sake

Five Year Plan  
1993



SOUTH FLORIDA  
WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Save Our Rivers Division  
Department of Land Management  
P.O. Box 24680, 3301 Gun Club Road  
West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680  
(407) 686-8800

## *1993 Save Our Rivers - Five Year Plan*

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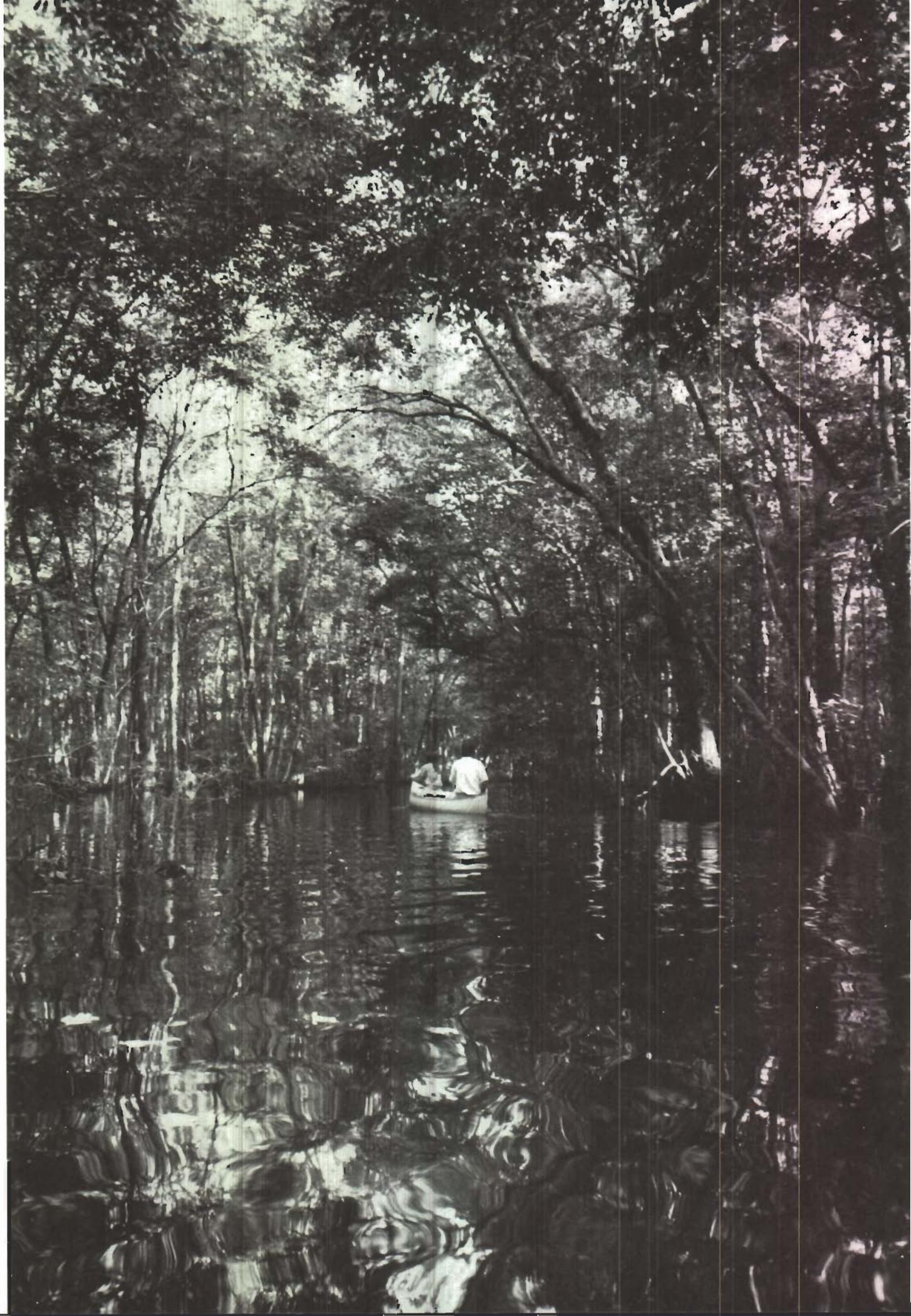
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## List of Abbreviations

<b>CARL</b>	<b>Conservation and Recreation Lands Program</b>
<b>CREW</b>	<b>Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed</b>
<b>DER</b>	<b>Department of Environmental Regulation</b>
<b>DOF</b>	<b>Division of Forestry</b>
<b>DOT</b>	<b>Department of Transportation</b>
<b>DNR</b>	<b>Department of Natural Resources</b>
<b>DRSF</b>	<b>DuPuis Reserve State Forest</b>
<b>EEWEA</b>	<b>East Everglades Wildlife and Environmental Area</b>
<b>FNST</b>	<b>Florida National Scenic Trail</b>
<b>FTA</b>	<b>Florida Trail Association</b>
<b>GFC</b>	<b>Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Committee</b>
<b>MOA</b>	<b>Memorandum of Agreement</b>
<b>SCS</b>	<b>Soil Conservation Service</b>
<b>SFWMD</b>	<b>South Florida Water Management District</b>
<b>SITAC</b>	<b>Savannas Interagency Technical Advisory Committee</b>
<b>SOR</b>	<b>Save Our Rivers</b>
<b>SWIM</b>	<b>Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan</b>
<b>TNC</b>	<b>The Nature Conservancy</b>
<b>WUMP</b>	<b>Water Use Management Plan</b>
<b>VWCD</b>	<b>Valencia Water Control District</b>





## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

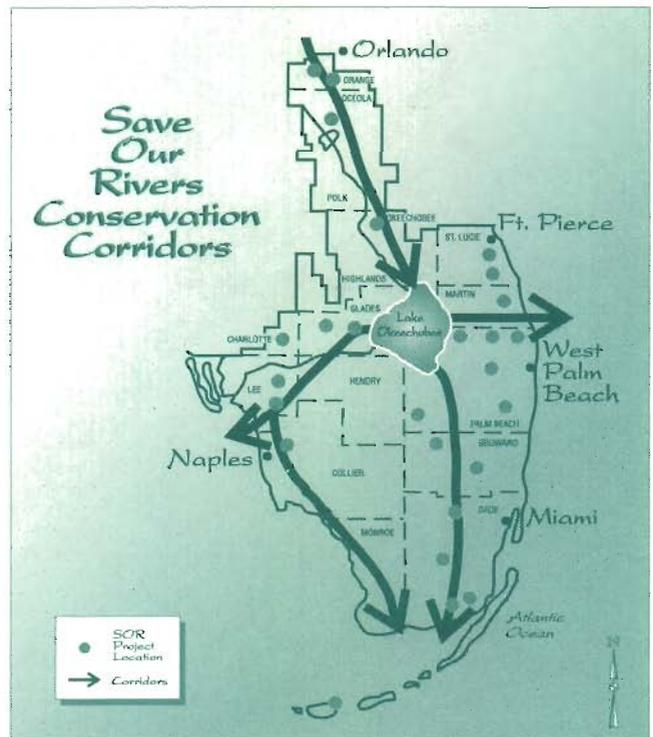
As the South Florida Water Management District's Save Our Rivers program enters its second decade, we can reflect on our many accomplishments with pride. Through this program, we have placed more than 150,000 acres of land into public ownership for the purposes of water supply, water management and conservation of water resources. Virtually all of this land is currently open or in the planning phase to be open to the public for hiking, horseback riding, hunting, fishing and nature study.

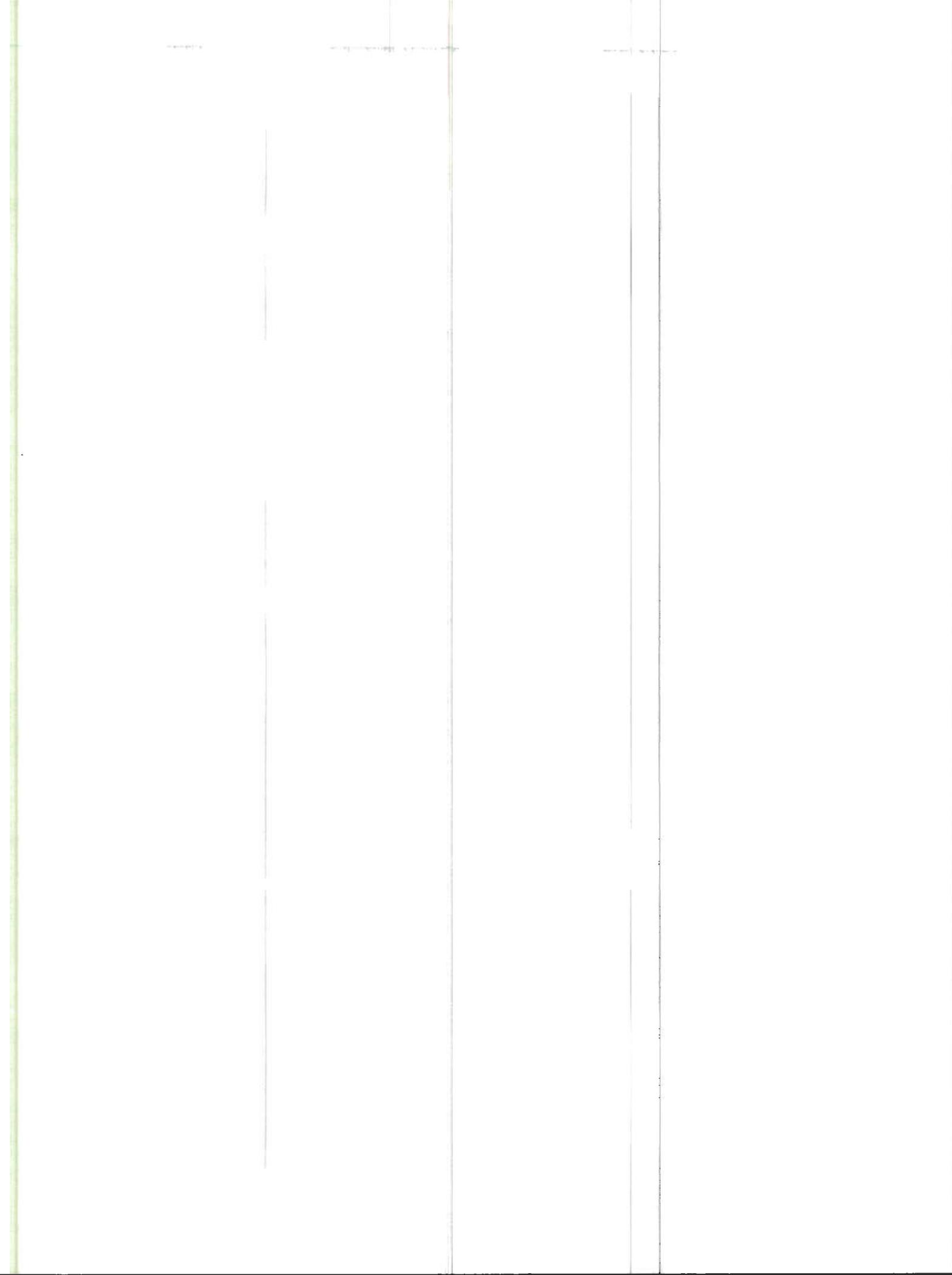
We have helped protect outstanding water resources from Lake Tibet-Butler in Orange County to the only year round freshwater supply on Big Pine Key. The Save Our Rivers program allowed us to acquire the Loxahatchee River corridor in Palm Beach County, which surrounds Florida's only national Wild and Scenic River. We also are well on our way toward acquiring the land necessary to restore much of the channelized Kissimmee River to its original meandering path. Our management efforts following acquisition are restoring wetlands, controlling exotic vegetation, returning natural fire to the forests, and making the lands available for public use. I am confident that the Save Our Rivers dollars spent so far have been wisely invested to preserve and manage South Florida's water resources for the future.

As exciting as the past 10 years have been, the future holds much challenge and promise as we contemplate the bigger picture. Our goal is for Save Our Rivers projects to function in concert with other state and local conservation corridors throughout the 16-county District. The Kissimmee River, Lake Okeechobee, and the Everglades make up the backbone of the District's regional ecosystem from which other environmental corridors are formed. By working cooperatively with other public agencies and private organizations to link such projects together, we can enhance their natural-resource values, share the acquisition costs, and create unified, comprehensive resource-management programs. These large conservation areas will provide greater resource-management benefits than individual and unrelated projects of similar size.

Our greatest challenge, however, will be to increase the public's understanding of the Save Our Rivers program. Through the acquisition, management, and public use of these lands, we can show South Florida residents how they can benefit from a well-planned and properly managed area set aside for conservation and recreation. As we acquire and use our lands to provide flood protection and water supply and to preserve the natural environment, we truly then will have "Land for Water's Sake."

Tilford C. Creel  
Executive Director





*1993 Save Our Rivers - Five Year Plan*

**INTRODUCTION**

# I ntroduction

The South Florida Water Management District (District) is a regional agency working to protect and manage the wetlands, lakes, bays and rivers of south and central Florida. The District is the largest of five districts established across the state to act as guardians of the quality and supply of each region's present and future water resources. The mission of the District is to manage water and related resources for the benefit of the public and in keeping with the needs of the region. The key elements of the mission are:

- \* Environmental protection and enhancement
- \* Water supply
- \* Flood protection, and
- \* Water quality protection.

In 1981, the Florida Legislature enacted a program known as "Save Our Rivers (SOR)." The legislation created Section 373.59 Florida Statutes, the Water Management Land Trust Fund. The trust fund receives revenues from the documentary stamp tax and is administered by the Department of Environmental Regulation (DER). Section 373.59 enables the water management districts to use moneys from the trust fund for the acquisition of fee or other interest in lands necessary for water management, water supply, and the conservation and protection of water resources. The act specifies the allocation formula to each District and the process for use of the fund.

Funds are also added from the Preservation 2000 Act. The Legislature enacted Preservation 2000 in 1990. The act creates the Florida Preservation Trust Fund, which is administered by the Department of Natural Resources. Projects must meet both criteria from Preservation 2000 and Save Our Rivers acts.

The South Florida Water Management District is responsible for acquiring such critical water resource lands in South Florida under the state's Save Our Rivers (SOR) program. The District program's key emphasis revolves around the major purposes of the program are water management, water supply, and the conservation and protection of water resources.

As steward of these vital resources, it is the charge of the District to provide for their protection, enhancement, restoration, and preservation for the beneficial use and enjoyment of existing and future generations.

Manageability, surface and ground water systems, and the formation of corridors for the critical interaction of wildlife populations are major considerations in the land acquisition process. Prime requisites in managing these public lands are to ensure that the water resources, fish and wildlife populations, and native plant communities are maintained in an environmentally acceptable manner, and made available for

appropriate outdoor recreational activities consistent with their environmental sensitivity. The care and nurturing of these resources may be accomplished in cooperation with other governmental agencies and the private sector through the design and implementation of appropriate stewardship programs.

## Selection and Evaluation Process

Section 373.59, Florida Statutes, specifies that monies from the Water Management Lands Trust Fund shall be used for acquiring fee title or other interest in lands necessary for water management, water supply and the conservation and protection of water resources. In addition, lands which include other features are eligible as well. These include, but are not limited to:

- \* River and stream flood plains and flow ways
- \* River and stream flood hazard areas
- \* Littoral zones
- \* Springs and lakes
- \* Aquifer recharge areas
- \* Wetlands
- \* Wellfields
- \* Unique water features

Each January, the South Florida Water Management District must submit to the Legislature and the Department of Environmental Regulation, pursuant to the Water Management Lands Trust Fund an annual update to the Five-Year Plan.

In 1988, the South Florida Water Management District began a proactive program of identifying lands within the District that might be suitable as candidates for acquisition. Save Our Rivers applications from private and public groups were reviewed, and District staff selected other sites for consideration from small-scale aerial photography.

Land Evaluation Matrix: The Save Our Rivers staff developed a matrix which addresses the water and natural resource values of each parcel. The matrix consists of the following ten parameters:

- \* Water Management
- \* Water Supply
- \* Conservation and Protection of Water Resources
- \* Manageability
- \* Habitat Diversity
- \* Species Diversity
- \* Connectedness
- \* Rarity
- \* Vulnerability
- \* Nature Oriented Human Use

The Land Evaluation Matrix is set up to review parcels for the water resource related issues (Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources), before consideration is given to environmental values. If proposed projects do not have appropriate water resource values, they are not evaluated for the remaining seven categories. Following on-site and aerial inspections of each tract, the value of each project, with regard to the matrix parameters, is determined by a team of senior technical staff. A detailed explanation of matrix parameters and scoring criteria is covered in **Appendix F**.

Following matrix scoring, projects are recommended by Save Our Rivers staff for inclusion on the Five-Year Plan. Those not receiving adequate scores are dropped from the list. Staff recommendations are presented to the Land Selection Committee, which consists of senior managers representing all of the District's departments. The endorsements or changes from the Land Selection Committee are presented to the Governing Board for final approval as the annual Five-Year Plan.

A project benefits criteria system is also utilized to address projects which protect the integrity of ecological systems and provide multiple off-site as well as on-site benefits. These include the preservation of fish and wildlife habitat, recreation space, and water recharge areas. Projects are included in order to reverse the decline in the ecological, aesthetic, recreational and economic value of the State's water resources.

This system applies to projects designed primarily to supply off-site water resource benefits. Thus, evaluation is performed not on the lands themselves, as with the resource-based matrix, but consider the way these lands will be utilized within the described project. Examples for benefits provided by such lands would be:

- A. Distribution systems to simulate sheet flow inputs into wetlands systems.
- B. Detention systems operated to simulate the natural hydrograph for delivery of water into natural wetlands, lakes or estuaries.
- C. Water quality treatment system utilizing managed or unmanaged wetland vegetation processes.
- D. Groundwater recharge and/or water table control to facilitate recharge to aquifers or retain seepage from water storage facilities.
- E. Buffer, access or transitional areas necessary to protect core lands from adverse impacts, provide wildlife corridors, provide for public enjoyment of the core land, or isolate certain management practices such as flooding and prescribed burning.

All proposed projects must meet the following criteria: (any land acquisition would require prior Governing Board approval of the subject plan).

1. Proposed project lands are identified in a District Plan such as Water Use Management Plan (WUMP) or Surface Water Management Plan (SWIM), and
2. Subject lands would be utilized to provide simulated or naturally functioning water resource quality/quantity benefits, and
3. Lands would be part of the project resulting in net increase of natural resource values when considering both any on-site losses and off-site gains, and
4. Capital improvements, such as canals, levees, weirs, and pumps shall be limited to only those necessary to achieve the proposed water resource benefits, and
5. All appropriate funding sources for acquisition have been identified.

Persons reviewing this plan should be aware that funding levels and other factors may not allow acquisition of all lands shown in the plan.

#### **1992 SOR Project Applications**

Two new project applications were submitted in 1992. In addition, staff proposed boundary revisions to two other projects. The following is summary of the actions taken in 1992.

#### **Boundary Revisions**

1. **Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW)**  
--Add 642 acres to provide needed access for public use and management activities. The additional lands contain significant upland areas, which will act as a buffer to the interior of the swamp.
2. **Kissimmee Lakes Watershed**--Add 1280 acres to make the Reedy Creek Swamp and Walker Ranch project contiguous.

#### **Applications Not Recommended for Addition to Five Year Plan**

3. **Peacock Ranch**-- Add 4100 acres in Okeechobee County, adjacent to National Audubon's Kissimmee Prairie Sanctuary, and east of the Kissimmee River SOR project.
4. **Uptown/Downtown**--640 acre tract in Palm Beach County, located between Florida's Turnpike and the West Palm Beach Water Catchment Area.

# ***SELECTION AND EVALUATION PROCESS***

**SOR Application  
Submitted by Private  
Individual or Public Agency**

**Project Proposed  
for Consideration by  
Save Our Rivers Staff**

## ***EVALUATION***

**Natural Resources -  
Based Matrix**

**Project  
Benefits Criteria**

**Save Our Rivers Staff  
Recommendation to Land  
Selection Committee**

**Land Selection  
Committee Recommendation  
to Governing Board**

**Governing Board  
Adoption of Five Year Plan**

*1993 Save Our Rivers - Five Year Plan*

**LAND STEWARDSHIP**

# L and Stewardship

The Florida Resource Rivers Act specifically states that “Lands acquired with money from the fund shall be managed and maintained in an environmentally acceptable manner and, to the extent practicable, in such a way as to restore and protect their natural state and condition” and make available to the general public for appropriate recreational purposes. Further, Section 373.59, Florida Statutes, as amended, provides that up to 15% of the monies in the Water Management Lands Trust Fund may be allocated annually to the District for management, maintenance and capital improvements. District activities directed at achieving this level of stewardship are divided into the following categories:

- I. STEWARDSHIP PLANNING
- II. STEWARDSHIP IMPLEMENTATION
- III. FIVE YEAR MANAGEMENT PLAN

## I. STEWARDSHIP PLANNING

Stewardship planning includes both the development of Conceptual and Operational Management Plans. Conceptual Management Plans are prepared to provide long-term goals and objectives and to establish a direction for the management of individual properties. Operational Management Plans are more specific with regard to what, why, how, and when various management activities will be undertaken, and which recreational activities are compatible.

A key element in the preparation of operational plans is the environmental assessment, which is conducted for each parcel. The environmental assessments supply descriptions of the existing plant and animal communities and make recommendations for action to be taken to restore or maintain natural conditions.

The District has entered into cooperative management agreements with other public agencies, such as the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission, the Department of Natural Resources, and Lee, Palm Beach, Martin and Orange Counties.

Under these agreements, the District retains ownership of the lands, but management is undertaken at a level where it can have the most positive effect on the resource and its users.

## II. STEWARDSHIP IMPLEMENTATION

The District’s efforts under stewardship implementation revolve around three major areas. The principal management efforts are listed under each heading, followed by a brief description of each:

- A. Restore and protect the natural state and condition.
  - a. Hydrologic restoration
  - b. Exotic control
  - c. Habitat protection and enhancement
- B. Manage and maintain in an environmentally acceptable manner.
  - a. Conserve, maintain and protect water resource-related features
  - b. Prescribed burning
  - c. Grazing
  - d. Fencing
- C. Provide public recreation.
  - a. Fishing and other water oriented activities
  - b. Hunting
  - c. Hiking
  - d. Camping
  - e. Horseback riding
  - f. Environmental and water resource education programs

## A. RESTORE AND PROTECT

**Hydrologic Restoration** — The most important stewardship task is returning SOR lands to as near a natural state, hydrologically, as possible. This provides for groundwater storage in wetlands, water quality improvement by slowing the rate of surface runoff, and habitat improvement for fish and wildlife. The Kissimmee River is the District’s most aggressive restoration effort. Less intense programs are either planned or underway at the DuPuis Reserve, Nicodemus Slough, Loxahatchee River, and Southern Glades (Canal 111). These efforts range from the installation of diversion dams and water control structures in the Kissimmee River to filling or blocking drainage swales and ditches at the DuPuis Reserve.

**Exotic Control** — Includes the application of environmentally acceptable herbicides and physical removal of vegetation.

**Habitat Protection and Enhancement** — Habitat enhancement on SOR lands includes a combination of hydrologic restoration in wetlands, prescribed burning to improve forage for wildlife and maintenance of native plant communities, and control of exotic vegetation.

## B. MANAGE AND MAINTAIN

**Conserve, Maintain and Protect Water Resource - Related Features** — Natural features of the South Florida landscape are rapidly being lost to agricultural and urban

development. A major thrust of the Save Our Rivers program is to protect the flow ways, watersheds, and wetlands, which are critical to the water resources of the District.

**Prescribed burning**— Periodic fire is a natural element of native Florida ecosystems. The District uses prescribed burning as a tool for land management purposes, such as reduction of hazardous fuel load build-up, wildlife habitat enhancement and encouraging the restoration of native plant communities. The District began burning SOR lands in 1988, and intends to burn the larger tracts on an approximate five year rotation. Lands where burning is occurring include the South Fork St. Lucie River and several of the tracts along the Kissimmee River. Some SOR lands are being burned by the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission, the Division of Forestry, and the National Park Service under a cooperative management agreements. SOR lands on Big Pine Key will be burned by the contract manager.

**Grazing**— Livestock grazing has been a customary activity on many of the lands purchased under the SOR Program. Studies have shown that when undertaken properly, livestock grazing is one of the most efficient means of effectively managing our native range lands. The District has been working closely with the USDA Soil Conservation Service and other cooperating agencies to identify properties, or portions of properties, suitable for this activity, and to design and implement grazing plans that are compatible with the goals and purposes of the program. Grazing leases will be typically of short duration (not in excess of five [5] years) and awarded through a process of competitive bidding. District policy prohibits the conversion of native range to improved pasture. Where properties have been acquired that contain improved pastures, measures will be implemented to insure their conversion to native range or woodland.

**Fencing and Posting**— In order to delineate the District's property lines, deter trespass/vandalism and protect the integrity of the resource, most major SOR land holdings are fenced and posted following acquisition. The District presently constructs or replaces approximately thirty miles of fence annually.

### **C. PUBLIC RECREATION**

**Environmental Education** — The District is developing an environmental education program to inform school groups and the general public about the importance of maintaining water resources and environmentally sensitive land tracts. Environmental education programs for teachers have been conducted at the DuPuis Reserve and the Loxahatchee River.

**Hiking and Camping** — The Florida Trail Association (FTA) is working closely with the District on the development of hiking trails on SOR lands. Primitive campsites are being designated at appropriate locations along these trails for use by backpackers. Maintenance of the trails will be performed by FTA members. The Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST), one of eight officially designated national scenic trails, is currently being developed by FTA in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and a host of federal, state and local agencies and private landowners. A portion of the FNST has been certified for location along the Kissimmee River. Hiking trails provide a means by which visitors can view and enjoy, in quiet solitude, these sensitive lands. By eliminating areas used by off-road vehicles, plants and animal species are less likely to be subjected to adverse impacts.

**Horseback Riding** — The District is consulting with a variety of horseback-riding interests regarding the development of equestrian trails on District lands. Thirty-six miles of Equestrian trails have been developed for the DuPuis Reserve, and it is anticipated that additional areas may be targeted in the future. Care is being taken to limit the construction of these trails to suitable ecosystem types and to avoid sensitive wetland areas. Trail development and maintenance will be undertaken by private trail-riding organizations and/or other public agencies under appropriate agreements with the District.

**Fishing and Other Water-related Activities** — Fishing, boating and canoeing are limited to those SOR projects associated with rivers, such as the Kissimmee, Loxahatchee and South Fork St. Lucie.

**Hunting** — The District, in cooperation with the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, has opened SOR lands that are large enough, and support adequate game populations, for public hunting. Hunt programs are designed to provide a quality hunting experience while maintaining healthy populations of game species. Seasonal harvest quotas are established by the commission and are based on annual population surveys. Annual hunting regulations are proposed by the Commission for each area and approved by the District. Walk-in hunting is encouraged, as vehicular access is limited to the use of street licensed vehicles (excluding motorcycles) on designated roads.

## **III. FIVE YEAR MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **A. NEEDS**

As the acquisition program continues to add land to the management function, the needs for management resources will grow.

In order to realize the full potential of our Save Our Rivers program, the following commitments need to be considered:

1. Increase planning resources.
  - a) to assure that our acquisition program is properly focused and is in cooperation with state and local programs, including the District's revised mitigation program.
  - b) to provide water and natural resource analysis of potential acquisitions to assure that our dollars are wisely invested.
  - c) to assess, plan, and design the necessary natural resource restoration programs which restore the land and water resources back to the natural state and condition.
  - d) to assess, plan, and design the necessary land maintenance and management programs to assure that the natural resources are preserved and protected in an environmentally sensitive manner.
  - e) to assess, plan and design appropriate public use and recreational programs on the SOR lands. SOR lands are public assets, and it is the public which should be a principal beneficiary of this program both in terms of general recreation and education.
2. Increase evaluation and monitoring resources.
  - a) to monitor, evaluate and refine the water resource restoration projects.
  - b) to monitor, evaluate and refine the land management practices such as:
    1. Cattle grazing
    2. Exotic vegetation control
    3. Prescribed burning
    4. Reforestation
  - c) to monitor, evaluate and refine the public recreation and use programs to assure that the resource values are not being degraded and that public needs are being met.
3. Increase maintenance, security and management capabilities.
  - a) to protect and preserve the natural resources.
  - b) to operate and maintain various restoration projects.
  - c) to support public use, education facilities and programs.
  - d) to administer the interagency management programs.
  - e) to provide sound business administration of the natural resource, recreational and real estate assets.
4. Increase the public access and awareness of the SOR program.
  - a) by creating and maintaining volunteer programs.

- b) creating and maintaining brochures, videos, exhibits and other mass communication efforts explaining the SOR program.

5. Increase technical capabilities for land use planning, evaluation and management by employing a GIS data base and analysis program. This should include a program to collect contemporary land use/cover data via remote sensing techniques (aerial/satellite photos or images).

## B. PROGRAMS

The management resources need to be increased and reorganized in order to accomplish the goals and objectives of the SOR program, due to the ever increasing amount of land to be managed. There are three major functions that are necessary for the management of the program.

1. *Administrative Support*
2. *Planning and Evaluation*
3. *Field Operations and Public Use*

The total manpower needs for the entire SOR program is a function of management approach (internal or contractual) and intensity (passive or proactive). At current levels of activities and plans, the program will involve approximately 200,000 acres of land valued at over \$200,000,000 within the next five years. The program will be a part of a major environmental restoration project, several regional water quality and water supply projects, and own or control access to major tracts of highly sensitive and endangered habitats, including Florida's only Wild and Scenic River, and Everglades National Park. These circumstances place the program in a pivotal position with respect to the District's management and stewardship responsibilities for the 21st Century. Our requirements for the next five years are to provide the planning, organization, resources and leadership commensurate with this obligation to the future of Florida's water and natural resources.

### 1. *Administrative Support*

This group includes the managerial, administrative, secretarial, clerical and appropriate technical support functions. The role of this group is to provide managerial and policy direction. To provide coordinating functions, both internally and externally, on issues of program planning, selection and funding. To provide administrative support for contracts, leases and other real estate and business or related needs; and to provide program promotional and communication functions.

## 2. Planning and Evaluation

The planning function should be organized on three levels.

**A. Program.** The Program planning activities evaluate the entire program's acquisition and management status from the overall District perspective. This function reviews policies, proposed projects, acquisition priorities in term of the District's goals and strategic plans. In addition, it reviews and revises project identification, evaluation and selection criteria, and conducts these activities. It also coordinates the District's program with other federal, state and local acquisition programs. This function will rely heavily on the GIS system.

**B. Conceptual Project Planning.** Conceptual planning for each identified project is performed by this group. This function gathers and analyzes the physical/geographical, water resources, and natural resource data on each project. Using this data, this team produces conceptual management plans which includes water resource management and restoration plans, natural resources/land management plans and recreational, public use/education plans. This process uses existing data, GIS data management systems and contractual studies/plans to produce these products. This function requires substantial support from aerial photo and satellite image data and GIS data management systems.

**C. Operational Planning (Tract/Project).** Operational planning may be done on individual tracts within large watershed, i.e., Kissimmee River Valley or an entire small preservation watershed, i.e., Big Pine Key. These functions lay out the necessary steps to translate the conceptual plans into operational management guidelines for the Field Operations Units and/or management cooperators. Operational plans contain specific guidelines and programs for:

- 1) Water management practices for environmental restoration, water supply augmentation and flood water storage.
- 2) Land management practices for exotic removal, prescribed burning, and cattle grazing.
- 3) Public use practices such as general recreation, hunting, day use, overnite use and educational centers.
- 4) General guidelines on security, hazardous materials, structures and other improvements.

## 3. Field Operations and Public Use

**Operations.** Due to the location and nature of field operations activities, these functions must be decentralized to field locations. Depending on the management philosophies and objectives identified for several of the large conservation watersheds, it may be necessary to create several field operations units. These units would implement the management responsibilities assigned to the District within the Operational plans. These units would have general security, operation and maintenance, and administrative responsibilities of all tracts from time of purchase to implementation of approved operational plans. These units would implement the operational plans for a project that is retained by the District. These units would incorporate the use of convict labor and community volunteer groups to accomplish the objectives. These functions would be coordinated by the Land Management Coordinator with the assistance of professional land manager specialist, water resource engineers, environmentalist and recreational specialist, as well as field maintenance crews and supervisors.

### RESOURCES

As the acquisition program continues to bring land into District ownership, during the next five years, the management program must keep pace. The following is a general accounting of the possible staff needs by the end of the next ten years.

### STAFF

Director (E)  
Administrative Assistant (E)  
Administrative Secretary (E)

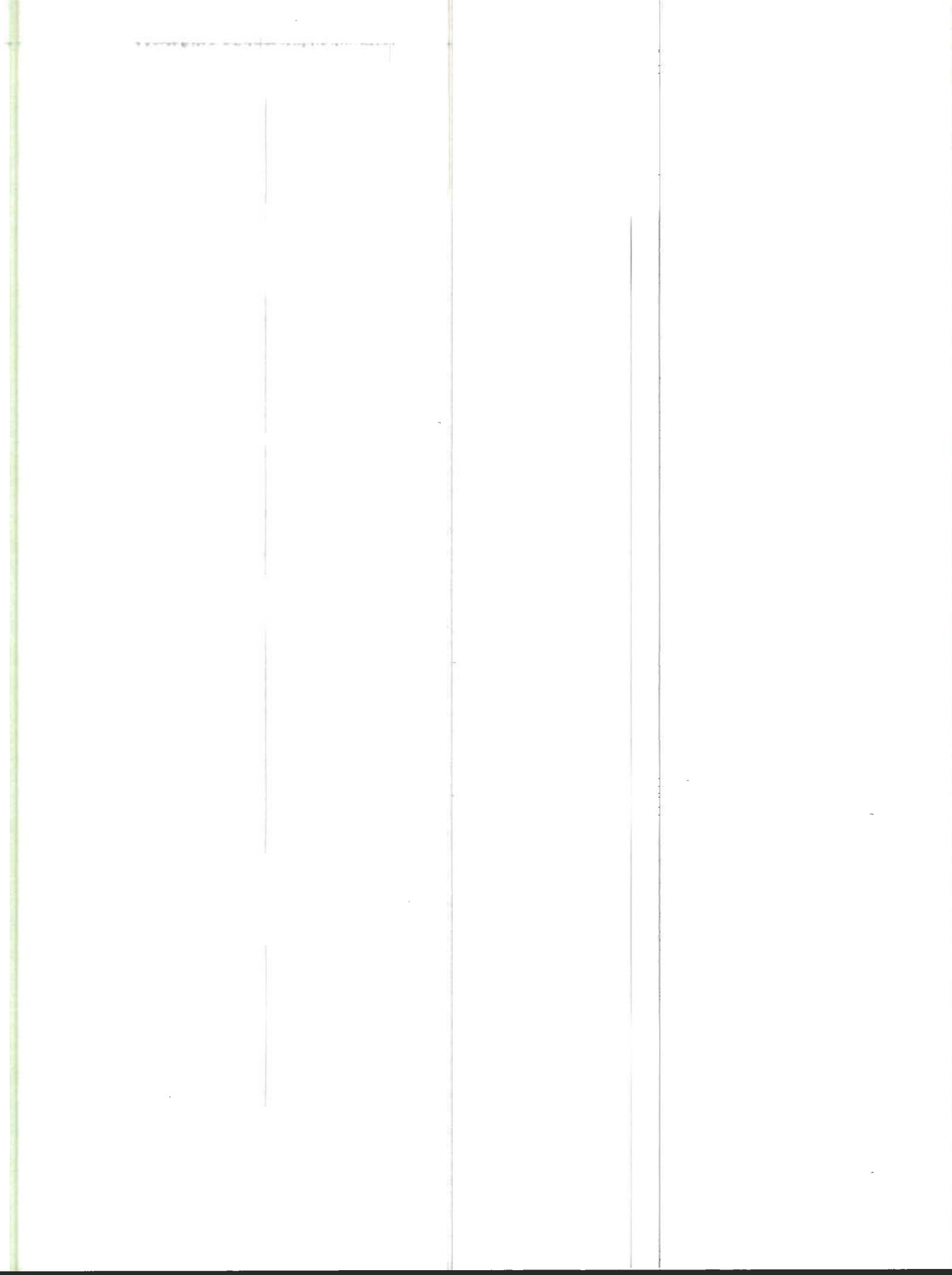
### PLANNING UNIT

Planning Coordinator (E)  
Environmental Land Use Planners (E) (N)  
Wetlands Ecologist (E)  
Water Resource Engineer (E)  
Recreation Planner (E) (N)  
Land Use/GIS Technician (2N)

### OPERATIONS UNIT

Field Operations Manager (E)  
Area Managers (N)  
Land Managers (2E)  
Maintenance Crews Supervisors (E) (N)  
Equipment (5E) (3N)  
Clerical Staff (N)

E = Existing N = New



*1993 Save Our Rivers - Five Year Plan*

**1992 LAND STEWARDSHIP REPORT**

# L

# and Stewardship Report (1992)

## Land Stewardship Planning and Management Report

This report covers the period of July 1, 1991, to June 30, 1992, and summarizes the Land Stewardship Planning and Management Activities for the District's Save Our Rivers lands. During the period of this report, the District's SOR land ownership increased from 147,341 acres to 161,004 acres.

## Big Pine Key

The draft conceptual management plan for Big Pine Key was completed by contract with The Nature Conservancy. Internal, interagency and public review of this plan is now underway. The plan will be used by future contract managers of this property.

SOR staff conducted basic maintenance on the property. Exotic vegetation was removed along with forty tons of trash and other materials. Some abandoned and derelict structures were removed from the property.

## Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (Crew)

The multi-agency CREW management planning team continued its regular meetings during the past year. The Conceptual Management Plan was completed and presented to the CREW Trustees for discussion. The conceptual management plan will remain in effect until an operational management plan can be completed.

The SOR Field crew surveyed exotic vegetation in Corkscrew Marsh. A fencing contractor replaced the boundary fence for the Corkscrew Marsh along CR 850. Efforts continued with adjoining landowners to improve our access to this area.

A contract to map the density and age classification of exotic vegetation in the Flint Pen Strand portion of the CREW project was prepared and advertised. Selection of a contractor is in process.

## DuPuis Reserve State Forest

The DuPuis Reserve State Forest Operational Management Plan was presented to, and accepted by, the governing board.

Efforts to restore the property's former hydrology continued with the installation of additional ditch blocks at locations selected by the Research Appraisal Division.

The ditch blocks are necessary to halt overdrainage of the DRSF's sloughs, marshes and wet prairies, resulting from the drainage system installed by the previous owner. Permits from COE, DER, and Palm Beach County were issued, enabling SOR Field Operations personnel to plug, in three places, the FPL powerline canal which runs along the east boundary of the property. Planning, design, and coordination activities continued on the project to reflood the L-8 marsh.

The Youth Conservation Corps completed work on the fence between the Corbett and District boundary.

A cross trail connecting the Corbett Wildlife Management Area with the DuPuis Reserve State Forest was completed with Florida Trail Association (FTA) volunteers. A primitive campsite was established on that cross trail. Members of the DuPuis Horsemen's Association established a new cross trail within the existing equestrian trail network.

Trailhead registration data indicates that use of the DRSF hiking trails is continuing to increase as word of their availability spreads. Horseback riding has also increased steadily since the dedication of the equestrian trail system in August of 1990, and the DRSF is rapidly becoming one of the more popular riding areas in the State.

The Game Commission conducted the very popular and successful fall and spring hunts. The Commission also reports that the number of known eagles nest is now at seven, and that six of these nests were active and produced young eaglets.

## Kissimmee River

Hickory Hammock (McArthur). A hiking trail was completed by the Florida Trail Association (FTA) in the hammock line along the edge of the floodplain. SOR field personnel installed a trailhead off US 98 near the southeast corner of the property and a fence stile on Bluff Hammock Road. District carpenters constructed and installed a bulletin board and registration desk. Entrance signage was completed by the District's sign shop. A primitive campsite was located on the Hickory Hammock trail and a backpacking permit system to register use at this site was implemented. The district and FTA held a formal dedication on December 14, 1991. The trail is now receiving regular use. In the future it is planned to become part of the Florida National Scenic Trail.

Turf maintenance, installation of culverts, boundary posting and prescribed burning of 2961 acres were completed

by SOR field personnel. Exotic vegetation control was performed on cogon grass infestations and along the fence by US 98. Turf maintenance was accomplished along main roads.

There were numerous incidents of unlawful and illegal activity on this property involving trespass, poaching, and drug trafficking.

**Bluff Hammock Slough.** The SOR staff performed control on exotic grass (cogon grass) on the Bluff Hammock parcel.

**KICCO Wildlife Management Area.** Restoration of the Rattlesnake Hammock Marsh appears to be progressing satisfactorily. Water levels behind the new control structure were up throughout most of the year, and there was substantial use of the marsh by waterfowl and wading birds. Many of the woody terrestrial shrubs that invaded the marsh prior to the implementation of the restoration project have declined substantially as a result of the wet conditions.

The District has secured the services of a live-on caretaker for the KICCO WMA. The responsibilities are to provide general observation of the property, maintain the trailhead area and monitor the Rattlesnake Hammock Restoration Area water levels. This has allowed the District to cease patrols by the private security services.

The field staff installed fence along the new property line between Outdoor Resorts and the District. They also performed road maintenance on main grade, constructed a new road at south end of the property, fenced around the caretaker site, installed a water pump, and generally prepared the site for new caretaker.

The Operations & Maintenance Department utilized their exotic control contractor to treat Brazilian pepper on the KICCO tract, along the C-38 Canal.

Public use of the National Scenic trail on KICCO continued to increase. The Game Commission had a very successful spring turkey hunt.

**Yates Marsh.** The contractor completed the boundary fence and the staff posted the property. District staff fenced marsh areas. Okeechobee Field Station installed new access control gate on the east side of property. The SOR staff installed fire lines for future burning.

## Overall Project

Work is proceeding on a Conceptual Land and Natural

Resources Management Plan for the Kissimmee River. This plan is being prepared by a consulting group and will include the river area from Lake Kissimmee to Lake Okeechobee.

## Kissimmee Lakes

**Johnson Island (Candler).** The property was surveyed and boundary posted. Old buildings and structures were removed. Trash, garbage, and general debris were removed from the land. A new fence was installed at the entrance to the property.

Future management of this property will be coordinated with the management of Walker Ranch by The Nature Conservancy.

## Kissimmee Lakes Watershed

**(Reedy Creek Swamp, Lake Marion Creek, Walker Ranch).** Work continued on the development of a conceptual management plan for the Lake Marion Creek and Reedy Creek management units. SOR personnel assisted the Nature Conservancy in the development of a management plan and operations budget for the Walker Ranch property.

## Loxahatchee River

SOR staff performed the annual maintenance program on the property.

The Construction Management Department executed a contract with Westinghouse Environmental Consultants to begin uncovering the agricultural dump on the east side of the river.

The cooperative management agreement with Palm Beach County for the Reese tract was executed.

Preliminary design work was completed for culvert locations/sizes. Related engineering data was gathered for hydroperiod restoration work on the Reese property.

## Nicodemus Slough

Brazilian peppers on the property were treated. Turf maintenance was performed along SR 78.

A conceptual management plan and proposed management agreement with Glades County were drafted. Revegetation plans for the lake littoral zone and upland areas were prepared.

### **South Fork St. Lucie River (Martin County)**

Florida Trail Association and Martin County Boy Scouts began construction of a hiking trail. SOR staff conducted annual work period including fence line spraying for exotic vegetation and turf maintenance.

### **Shingle Creek Swamp Mitigation**

Save Our Rivers Division conducted a site inspection with Planning Department environmentalists and assisted in the development of a hydrologic and environmental assessment of the swamp. Work is proceeding to satisfy the requirements of the Department of Environmental Regulation permit.

### **East Everglades**

The SOR East Everglades lands were transferred to the Everglades National Park effective October 1, 1991.

### **Six Mile Cypress**

Lee County opened the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve facility. Features include an interpretative center, amphitheater, observation decks, and more than one mile of boardwalk trails. Removal and treatment of exotic plants continued.

### **Florida National Scenic Trail (Lake Okechobee).**

The Corps of Engineers began work on a certification plan for submittal to and approval by the USDA Forest Service. A local group, the Lake Development Board, Inc. is assisting with the establishment of the trail on the Hoover Dike and is in the process of developing a promotional video. District pump station gates will require modification to permit passage of hikers.

### **Environmental Education**

District staff completed an introductory video on the District's Save Our Rivers Program. This video is available from the Office of Communications.

SOR staff assisted the Office of Communication in field training programs at DuPuis Reserve State Forest and Hickory Hammock for area school environmental education coordinators. Twenty-five teachers participated in each program.

SOR staff acted as leaders for more than 200 hikers on Take a Hike Day at DuPuis Reserve State Forest and Hickory Hammock.

SOR staff gave numerous presentations on the Save Our Rivers program to local, state and national organizations.



# Summary of Acquisition

July 1991 - June 1992

Acquisition from the beginning of the Save Our Rivers program in 1981 through June 1991 totaled 147,341 acres at land cost of \$118,071,024.

Acquisition during the 1992 Plan period (July 1991 - June 1992) added approximately 13,829 acres at land cost of \$17,305,598. These acquisitions bring the Save Our Rivers program totals for June 30, 1992, to 161,004 acres at land cost of \$134,177,722.

The complete list of acquisitions are shown on the next page. There are an additional 2,211 acres of land which have been approved for purchase and are pending closing. Purchase of these lands will expend an additional \$15,704,241. A complete list of these pending transactions are also shown on the next page. The high apparent cost per acre of these acquisitions are due to the inclusion of the Everglades Buffer Strip lawsuit settlements as acquisitions.

Acquisition activity involved the following individual projects:

**Kissimmee River Restoration.** A total of 3,953 acres were added to this project. Most of these acreages are on the east side of the river. With these acquisitions, most of the east side of the river has been acquired from mid Pool B to mid Pool D.

**Kissimmee Chain of Lakes.** One large purchase, Rough Island, was made in this project. This purchase is on the

west side of Lake Cypress and is adjacent to the Johnson Island purchase made last year on Lake Hatchineha.

**CREW.** Lee County continued its land acquisition in the Flint Pen strand portion area of the CREW project. The District reimbursed Lee County for \$3,097,715 (2,286 acres) and accepted donation of an additional 1,320 acres. The District purchased 3,207 acres in the Bird Rookery area of Collier County just south of Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary.

**Southern Glades.** An additional 557 acres was purchased along the C-111 canal on the Southern Glades project. This was a major reduction to the few remaining out parcels in this 29,643 acre project.

**Shingle Creek.** The initial purchase of 533 acres was made in this project. The acquisition includes a mixture of habitats, has road access, and adjoins to land owned by Orange County.

**Everglades Buffer Strip.** The initial acquisitions have been made on this project. These transactions are a result of settling several legal actions within this project. Several additional settlements have been approved and are expected to close soon. Due to the unique nature of the project, the land cost will be shared by SOR, District ad-valorem and Broward County funds. For the FY '92 acquisition, a total of \$3,050,600 is being requested as reimbursement from the SOR funds.

## Save Our Rivers Acquisition Activity July 1, 1991 - June 30, 1992

PROJECT	PARCEL	CLOSING DATE	ACRES	COST	FUND
Kissimmee	Prescott	07/22/91	360.82	276,000.00	WMLTF
Kissimmee	Clemons, Pete	10/24/91	858.00	1,671,978.00	WMLTF
Kissimmee	McClelland	10/29/91	106.25	212,500.00	P2000
Kissimmee	McClelland	11/27/91	21.00	42,000.00	P2000
Kissimmee	Barker	12/16/91	35.00	122,600.00	P2000
Kissimmee	Clemons, P.	01/29/92	687.00	1,334,435.00	P2000
Kissimmee	Hamm	02/04/92	165.10	1,200,000.00	Ad Valorum
Kissimmee	Lanier	02/21/92	1,886.00	3,049,000.00	P2000
KCOL	Overstreet	12/04/91	1,732.98	1,835,000.00	P2000
CREW	Lee County	07/01/91	2,286.00	3,097,715.00	P2000
CREW	Lee County	08/30/91	1,320.00	Donation	WMLTF
CREW	Fisch/TNC	07/30/91	3,207.00	1,795,820.00	P2000
C-111	Reisenberger	07/29/91	557.31	585,175.00	P2000
Shingle Creek	Black, Trustee	12/05/91	533.75	1,334,400.00	WMLTF
EBS	Forman	05/01/92	73.10	884,510.00	WMLTF

## Save Our Rivers Acquisition Activity (*Pending*) July 1, 1991 - June 30, 1992

PROJECT	PARCEL	CLOSING DATE	ACRES	COST	FUND
Kissimmee	Clemons, P.	Pending	140.90	190,980.00	
CREW	Fisch/TNC	Pending	210.00	117,600.00	
CREW	Musca	Pending	661.00	595,000.00	
EBS	Greater Jewish	Pending	392.00	8,775,748.00	
EBS	Walton	Pending	267.00	5,968,313.00	
WCA	Kent	Pending	20.00	2,000.00	
WCA	Bagoon	Pending	520.00	54,600.00	

*1993 Save Our Rivers - Five Year Plan*

ACQUISITION PLAN (1993)

# A

# Acquisition Plan (1993)

The 1993 SOR Five-Year Plan reflects a conservative outlook on acquisition funding. The plan utilizes years one and two of Preservation 2000 funding, but does not assume any Preservation 2000 funds beyond that approved by the 1990, 1991, and 1992 legislatures. The plan also assumes that the Water Management Land Trust Fund revenues will remain fixed at \$7,900,000 per year, and that SOR management cost will utilize up to 15% of that income.

For the 1993 SOR Five-Year Plan, the following criteria were utilized to establish the general acquisition priority for qualified SOR projects:

## 1. Standing on the District Strategic Plan

SOR land acquisition is an integral element of the District's overall strategic plan for resource management. The priority of SOR land acquisition needs, as established by the Plan, must be directly translated to the SOR acquisition priority.

## 2. Potential for Resource Loss

Continued development activity in and around identified SOR projects raises concerns about loss of resource values for these projects if they are not protected by outright purchase or conservation easements. The Departments of Planning and Regulation, as well as local governments, are consulted annually as to the trend in development pressures around various SOR projects.

## 3. Potential for Cooperative Acquisitions

Several SOR projects are potentially qualified for cost sharing with other state and local agencies. Other projects are located in counties with land acquisition programs. Projects that can be acquired and/or managed with cost-sharing programs and remain consistent with SOR objectives receive priority consideration. It is important to establish the intent of the potential partner before granting a priority status.

## 4. Disposition of Owner(s)

The expressed willingness of the owner(s) of specific critical tracts within an SOR project is a factor in the acquisition priority consideration. Conversely, well managed lands owned by private interests reluctant to sell are given a low priority, even if the resource values are high.

Although this priority analysis should apply to SOR projects, it may be necessary to single out certain key tracts within a project as the critical factor for a priority; that is, the status or priority of certain core tracts within a project may determine the priority of the overall project. In these cases, the commitment of funds to the project should be to acquire the core pieces rather than the less critical (lower priority) tracts.

The Priority Acquisition Plan was developed using these criteria. The acquisition resources of the District will be specifically directed to accomplish this plan. However, any qualified SOR project may be considered for acquisition during the life of this plan as conditions and circumstances warrant.

The objective of the Save Our Rivers program is to acquire necessary interests in lands for water management, water supply and the conservation and protection of water resources. The Five-Year Plan shows projects that have been determined to meet the Save Our Rivers objectives. Projects have been submitted from a variety of sources and analyzed through the District Save Our Rivers matrix. However, financial and other constraints may not allow acquisition of all lands included in the Five-Year Plan.

The Five-Year Plan indicates to local governments that certain lands within their jurisdiction meet the criteria for Save Our Rivers project consideration. Budget, or other considerations, may constrain the acquisition of these lands. Accordingly, local governments should use the Five-Year Plan as only one of the many criteria in making land use planning evaluations.

# Save Our Rivers 1993 Five Year Acquisition Plan Priority Projects

Project	Included in Strategic Plan	Potential For Resource Loss	Cooperative Acquisition	Willingness To Sell	P-2000 Criteria
Kissimmee/KCOL	Yes	L			4,6
WCA	Yes	L			4,6
Six Mile Cypress II	No	M	Lee County		4,6
Southern Glades (C-111)	Yes	L		Yes	6
Shingle Creek	Yes	M	Mitigation		4,6
Kissimmee Lakes Watershed (Lake Marion Creek, Reedy Creek, Walker Ranch)	Yes	M			4,6
Pal-Mar	Yes	M	Martin	Yes	1,6
Loxahatchee Slough		H	Palm Beach County		1,6
Loxahatchee River		H	Palm Beach County		1,6
Stormwater Treatment Areas	Yes	L	Special Taxing District	Yes	6

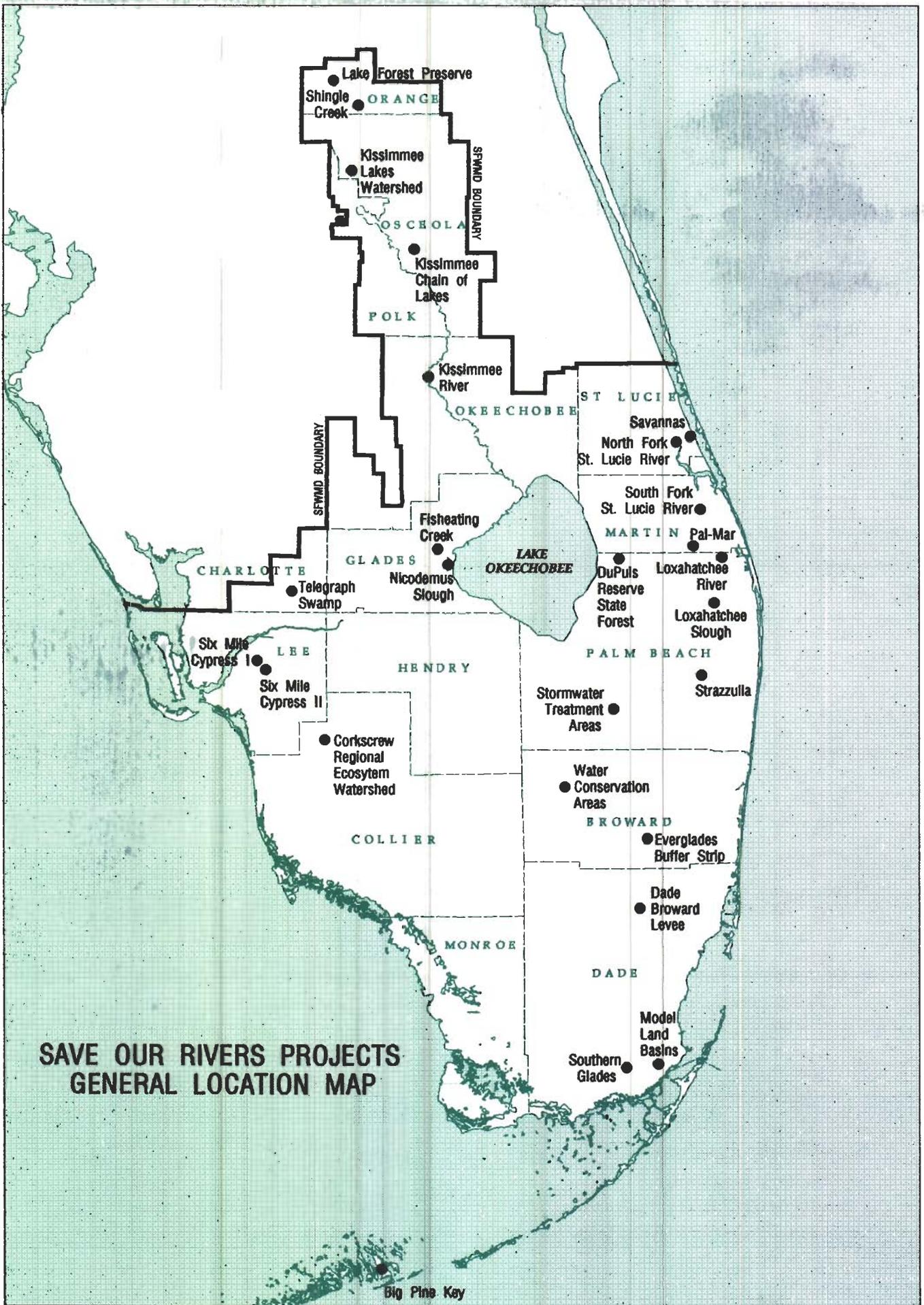
### Assumptions:

1. P-2000 and SOR doc. stamps generate \$30,000,000/year.
2. There are sufficient staff resources to execute the program.

**Note:** Pursuant to Governing Board Policy, any SOR/P-2000 funds used to purchase lands in the Everglades Buffer Strip will be reimbursed from Ad Valorem taxes, at a later date.

### P-2000 Criteria:

- 1 - Imminent danger of development
- 2 - Imminent danger of subdivision
- 3 - High rate of appreciation
- 4 - Groundwater recharge
- 5 - Purchase at 80% of appraised value
- 6 - Serves/Protects endangered habitat/species



**SAVE OUR RIVERS PROJECTS  
GENERAL LOCATION MAP**

Big Pine Key

## *1993 Save Our Rivers - Five Year Plan*

*The goal of the Save Our Rivers Program is to acquire necessary interests in lands for water management, water supply, conservation and protection of water resources. Projects may be submitted by nearly any interested party. These lands are analyzed to determine the extent that each project meets the program objectives. Projects that are incorporated into the Five-Year Plan are updated annually.*

*Projects included in the FIVE YEAR PLAN will not necessarily be acquired. Acquisition is dependent upon the level of funding and a number of priority factors (see Policies 4.100, 5.001).*



# Kissimmee River

## 1. General Description:

The project area covers nearly 90,000 acres in both the upper basin and the lower basin. More than 57,000 acres in the lower basin represents the historic flood plain of the Kissimmee River. This land is necessary for the restoration of the river under the governor's Save Our Everglades program.

In the lower basin more than 27,000 acres have been acquired, and 1000 acres placed under easement agreements, through the Save Our Rivers Program. In addition more than 2000 acres is in non-SOR SFWMD ownership, more than 2000 acres covered by non-SOR easements, 4000 acres in State and Federal ownership, and more than 2500 acres in Federal easements.

In 1991 the project was expanded to include 20,000 acres of the shoreline of the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes in the upper basin. This portion of the project is to acquire fee title or flowage easements to allow stages in these lakes to be raised from 52.5' NGVD to 54' NGVD. The additional water is needed to "drive" the Kissimmee River restoration project by providing year round flow. In the upper basin nearly 4000 acres have been acquired, more than 900 acres placed under easement and almost 1500 acres placed in State ownership.

## 2. Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources:

All of the attributes of free flowing rivers, including attenuation of flood discharges, providing year round base flows, water quality improvement and wildlife habitat, were lost when Canal 38 was excavated. District ownership of the historic flood plain is necessary if restoration of the river is to be accomplished.

## 3. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition:

The Kissimmee River stretched over 98 miles between Lake Kissimmee and Lake Okechobee. With the Construction of Canal 38 the River became a straight line 56 miles with remnant oxbows in various places. More than 47,000 acres of wetlands were altered by the construction. The proposed restoration alternative will reestablish prechannelization hydrologic characteristics along 52 miles of river channel and within 24,000 acres of flood plain.

<sup>1</sup>Approximate sizes include entire lower basin acreage

<sup>2</sup>Includes lands acquired under other District programs

There is additional potential in portions of the river other than the targeted restoration. In 1990, a restoration of a slough in Rattlesnake Hammock was completed. This project has resulted in reflooding nearly 500 acres of lands that were previously wetlands.

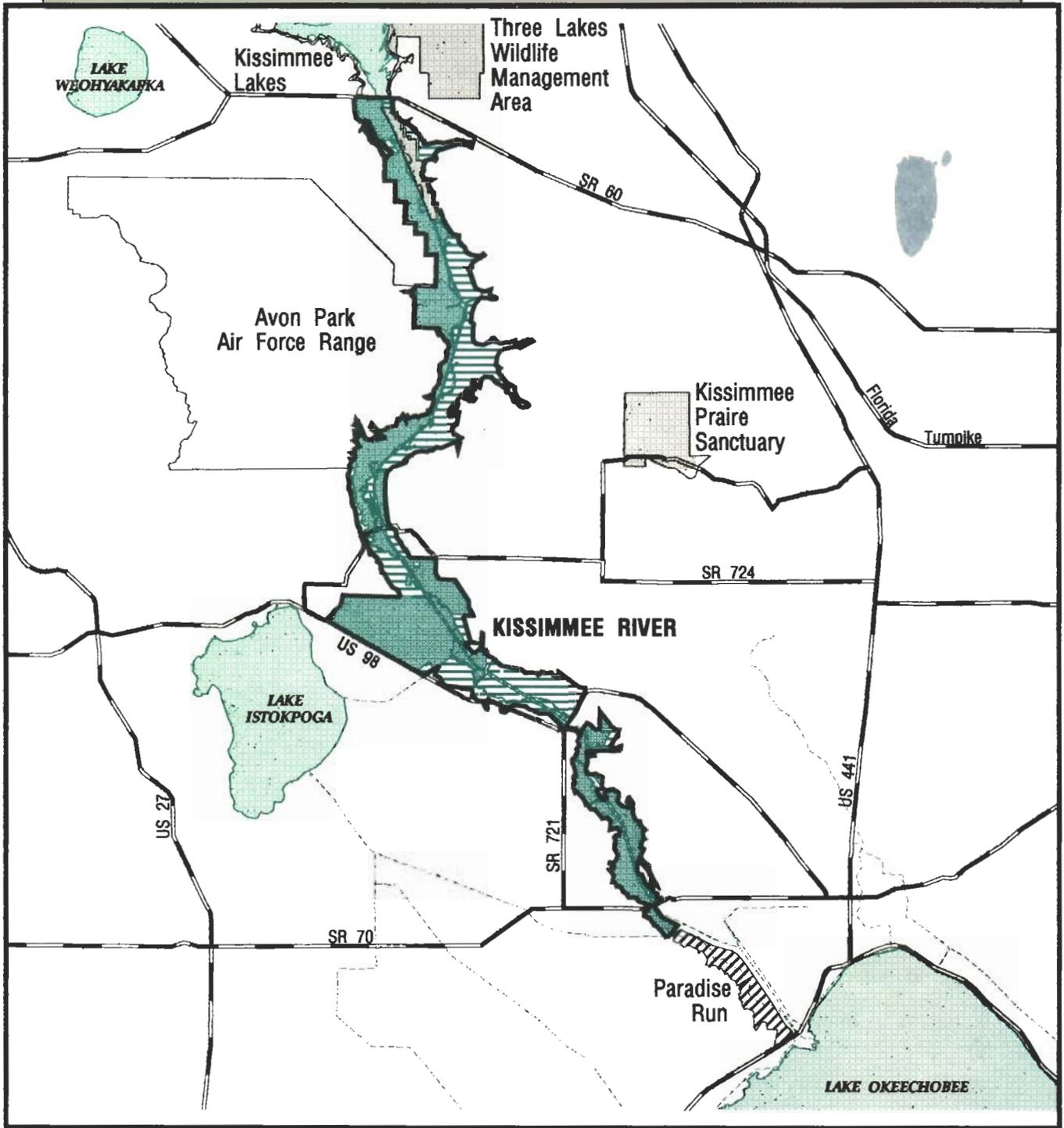
## 4. Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner:

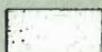
Management of lands in the Kissimmee Valley will be time and manpower intensive. Prior to beginning restoration, control of shrubs and exotic vegetation could be difficult. Blocking the numerous drainage ways and restoring sheetflow into the flood plain will be a major task. Even if other organizations are willing to manage the lands, the District will still be responsible for hydrologic restoration. Given the size of the project, this will be a large and ongoing venture.

## 5. Public Recreation:

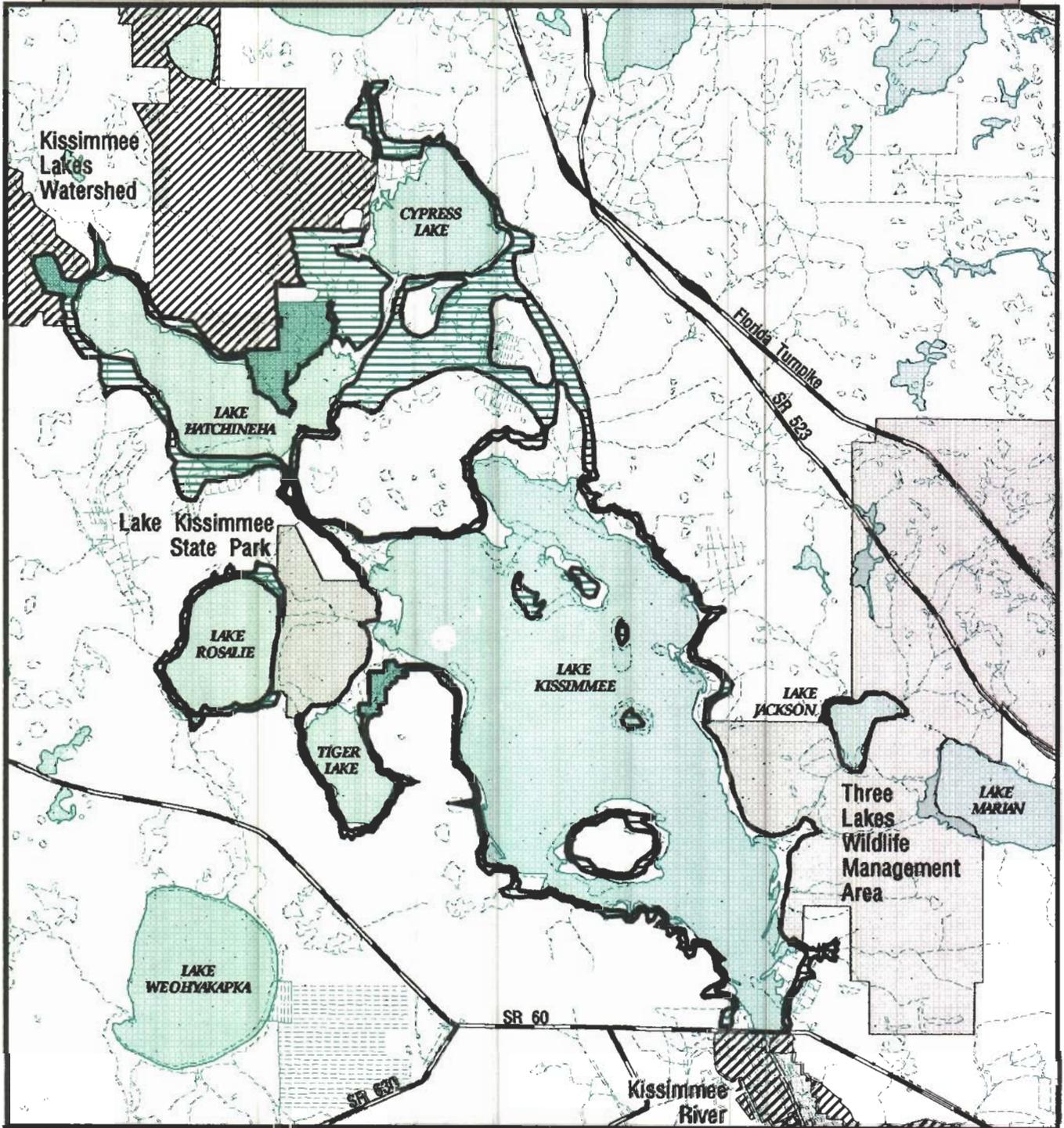
Existing recreational activities consist primarily of power boating and fishing in Canal 38, and those oxbows of the river that were not cut off as a result of project construction. There are opportunities for bank fishing and picnicking at several access sites along the river. Improvement of flows into the river oxbows will increase the opportunities for fishing, canoeing, nature observation and waterfowl hunting. Thirty-six (36) miles of the Florida National Scenic Trail were dedicated in 1991 at a joint ceremony held by the District, the Florida Trail Association (FTA), the USDA Forest Service, and the Avon Park Air Force Range. Recently, a new section of trail on the McArthur Ranch tract was completed by the District and FTA. Additional sections of the trail will be developed as contiguous parcels of land are acquired by the District. The long-range plan is to extend the trail the full length of the river.

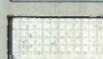
<b>Counties:</b>	<b>Osceola, Polk, Okeechobee and Highlands</b>
<b>Total Project Area:</b>	<b>75,000 Acres<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Acres Acquired:</b>	<b>30,385 Acres<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>Land Cost (SOR - only):</b>	<b>\$34,900,000</b>
<b>Per Acre Cost (SOR):</b>	<b>\$1,350</b>
<b>Acres Remaining:</b>	<b>42,000 Acres<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Estimated Assessed Value:</b>	<b>\$45,000,000</b>

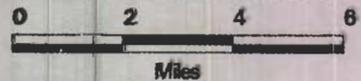


-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary





-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary







# Kissimmee Lakes Watershed

## 1. General Description:

The project area includes Walker Ranch and a substantial portion of the Reedy Creek and Lake Marion Creek drainage basins. Walker Ranch encompasses approximately 8,500 acres in Osceola and Polk Counties and borders on Lake Russell, Reedy Creek and Lake Hatchineha. The property contains expanses of improved pasture, pine flatwoods, bay swamp, wet prairies and scattered patches of xeric oak.

Reedy Creek Swamp is an extensive area of mixed hardwood/cypress swamp running for nearly 25 miles through western Osceola County, from the boundary of the Reedy Creek Improvement District, to Cypress Lake. It includes the Huckleberry Islands and totals more than 30,000 acres.

Lake Marion Creek is located in Polk County and flows from Lake Marion north and then southeasterly to Lake Hatchineha. The project area totals approximately 17,300 acres, 3,800 acres of which are within the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). It includes the 1,324 acre Horse Creek Scrub, designated for possible acquisition under the CARL program, and the Snell Creek Drainage Basin.

Negotiations are underway for Disney Development, Inc. to acquire Walker Ranch and donate it to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) as mitigation for wetland destruction that will occur from future Disney development. If this proposal is approved by state and federal regulatory agencies, fee title to Walker Ranch will be transferred to TNC over a 20 year period, but a conservation easement will prevent any development from occurring in the meantime.

Disney has proposed to fund a stewardship program, to be undertaken by TNC, as well as conduct wetland restoration to mitigate the wetland impacts resulting from their development. Disney will also fund an annuity to provide a perpetual monetary source for management.

Management and mitigation plans have been prepared to direct the long term management activities, as well as guide the restoration activities that will be conducted to satisfy Disney's mitigation requirements.

Reedy Creek Swamp is an extensive area of mixed hardwood/cypress swamp running for nearly 25 miles through western Osceola County, from the boundary of Reedy Creek Improvement District to Cypress Lake. It includes the Huckleberry Islands and totals more than

30,000 acres. The habitat types are similar to those of Walker Ranch, and include pine flatwoods, wet prairies, broadleaf marshes, and mixed hardwood swamp forest. Addition of this area would create a continuous natural area connecting the Reedy Creek Swamp, Walker Ranch, and Kissimmee Chain of Lakes projects. In 1992, the Governing Board approved the boundary modification to include this area.

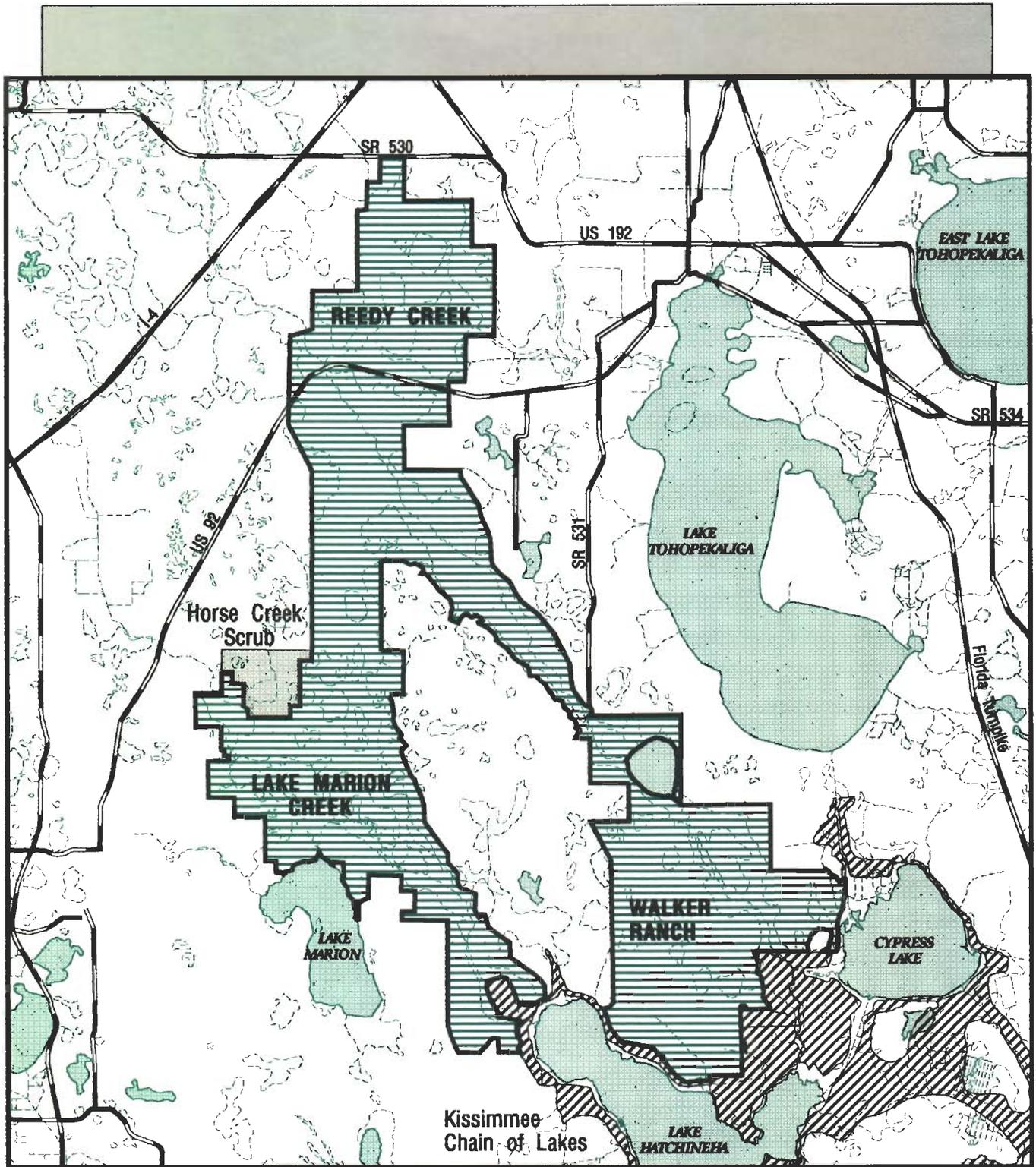
Lake Marion Creek is located in Polk County and flows from Lake Marion north and then southeasterly to Lake Hatchineha. The project area totals approximately 17,300 acres, 3,800 acres of which are within the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). It includes the 1,324 acre Horse Creek Scrub, designated for possible acquisition under the CARL program, and the Snell Creek Drainage Basin.

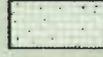
## 2. Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources:

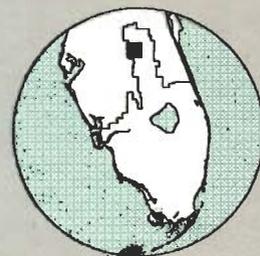
Portions of Walker Ranch lie within the flood plain of Reedy Creek and Lake Hatchineha, and the property's uplands serve as contributory watersheds. Significant recharge to the Floridan Aquifer from the property is likely, although detailed groundwater information is not currently available.

Reedy Creek serves as the headwaters for Lake Russell and Cypress Lake. Peak discharges from major storm events are modified and stored within the swamp and provide year-round base flow for downstream lakes. The flood plain provides recharge to the Surficial Aquifer, which in turn recharges the Intermediate and Floridan Aquifers. The Floridan Aquifer is the major source of groundwater for large-scale wellfield development in the area, and the Surficial and Intermediate Aquifers provide water for individual, domestic and small-scale irrigation use.

Wetlands comprise approximately 50% of the Lake Marion Creek portion of the project, and most are within the 100 year flood plain. The area consists of two distinct physiographic regions - the Lake Wales Ridge and the Osceola Plain. Contained within the Lake Wales Ridge and the Osceola Plain. The area is of critical importance to the recharge of the Floridan Aquifer because the sand allows water to infiltrate, rather than run off, and the many sinkholes and sinkhole lakes provide a more direct route for water to enter the aquifer. The water quality of Lake Marion is very good, and the lake serves as the headwaters for Lake Marion Creek. Snell and Lake Marion Creek provide a constant supply of high quality water to Lake



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary



Hatchineha which in turn discharges to Lake Kissimmee, the Kissimmee River and Lake Okeechobee. All three lakes are priority water bodies under the SWIM Program.

### **3. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition:**

A mitigation plan which accompanies the Walker Ranch Management Plan gives a detailed listing of hydrologic restoration needs and a timetable for accomplishing those tasks.

Reedy Creek Swamp has been fairly well protected due to its large size and inaccessibility. Unless high density urban encroachments or damaging silvicultural operations are permitted in the future, the swamp should be able to buffer itself. Exotic vegetation is not a problem at this time, and it does not appear that hydrologic restoration will be necessary. Security and poaching may be a problem due to the extended boundary and the close proximity of paved roads.

The Lake Marion Creek properties have a number habitat types, including riverine swamps, isolated marshes, pine flatwoods and sand pine scrub. Several rare, threatened and endangered species inhabit the basin, including bald eagles, scrub jays, squirrels and gopher tortoises. The natural habitats within the Lake Marion Creek area are generally in good condition although some scrub areas have been destroyed through land development activities. Exotic vegetation is not a problem, and hydrologic restoration will not be a major requirement. The size of the property and the deep swamps allow the interior portions to remain buffered from activities along the ridge. A security program will be required to prevent unauthorized activities.

### **4. Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner:**

A management plan was prepared for Walker Ranch by

TNC in 1992, which describes management needs, as well as proposed actions. The plan emphasizes prescribed burning, exotic plant control, and security.

Save Our Rivers staff prepared a combined conceptual management plan for the Lake Marion/Reedy Creek portions of the project. The plan addresses general management needs, including prescribed burning exotic control, security, and restoration of native plant communities.

### **5. Recreation Potential:**

Recreational opportunities are discussed in both the Walker Ranch and Lake Marion/Reedy creek Management Plans. At this time, it is anticipated that recreation will be centered around passive uses, such as hiking and canoe trails, with the possibility of equestrian trail development on Walker Ranch.

Reedy Creek could become a popular canoeing area with selective removal of deadfalls and overhanging growth from the creek. Some periodic aquatic weed control may also be necessary. The swamp is very dense and access would be limited primarily to canoes and foot traffic. An interpretive boardwalk, nature trail and an environmental education center operated by the Osceola County School Board are located on the east side of the creek off Poinciana Boulevard. A system of footpaths could be developed to provide opportunities for hiking, nature observation and photography. A multi-agency cooperative effort will be necessary to manage this extensive system properly.

Portions of Lake Marion Creek are currently accessible to fishermen, and travel by canoe is possible during high-water conditions. Selective clearing of deadfalls and overhanging growth and the installation of trail markers would facilitate canoeing. A system of footpaths within the swamp corridor and adjacent areas of scrub and flatwoods would facilitate access to the property for hiking, nature observation and photography.

<b>County:</b>	<b>Polk and Osceola</b>
<b>Total Project Area:</b>	<b>52,005 Acres</b>
<b>Estimated Assessed Value:</b>	<b>\$48,000,000</b>
<b>Number of Owners:</b>	<b>Numerous</b>





# Loxahatchee River

## 1. General Description:

This project includes the historic flood plain of the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River, a National Wild and Scenic River.

## 2. Land Stewardship Activities:

### A. Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

The District has been working closely with the Florida Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Palm Beach County, and a variety of local agencies and interest groups on plans to preserve and protect the Loxahatchee River and a major portion of its headwaters (Loxahatchee Slough). Extensive studies on the water supply and drainage requirements of the Loxahatchee River Basin have been completed. The latter work has facilitated the restoration and maintenance of base flows to the Northwest Fork and will help to reduce the frequency of discharge at Structure 46, which flows into the North Fork of the river and has caused downstream erosion and siltation problems in the past. In combination with other measures, the enhancement of flows to the Northwest Fork should help to stem the progress of the saltwater front which has advanced upstream in recent years, resulting in heavy mortality of bald cypress along the river.

The District is proceeding with hydrologic, engineering, and environmental studies necessary to restore the natural water levels and drainage for the lands south of Indiantown Road.

### B. Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

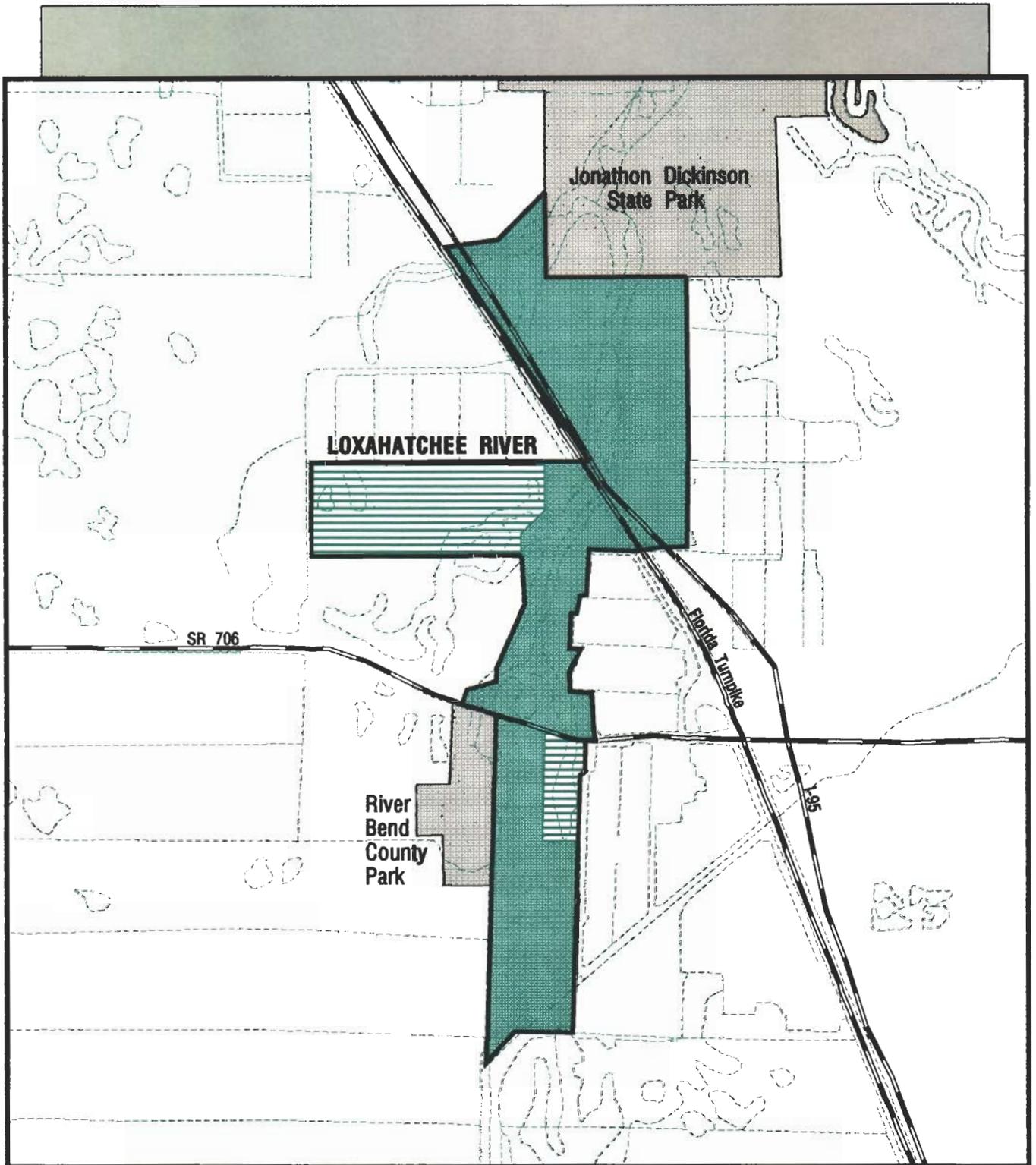
The District and DNR are working to implement the Loxahatchee River Wild and Scenic River Management Plan, which was prepared in 1985 as a requirement for inclusion of this portion of the river in the National Wild

and Scenic River System. The District has purchased most of the private lands along the Northwest Fork and efforts have been made to post the properties, repair fences and gates, remove trash and debris, and otherwise bring them up to safe and acceptable conditions. Lands north of Indiantown Road (State Road 706) are being managed by DNR, in conjunction with Jonathan Dickinson State Park. Lands south of the highway will be managed by Palm Beach County under a separate agreement with the District. Management activities include law enforcement, prescribed burning, exotic species control, public-use regulation, development of hiking trails, and interpretive programs. In general, the purpose is to carry out the intent of the Management Plan.

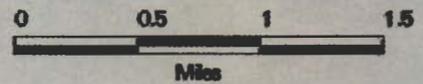
### C. Public Recreation

The Loxahatchee River has become a popular canoe trail in recent years. The number of canoeists has increased so dramatically that severe overcrowding is not uncommon on peak days. Concerned about damage to fragile plant species and the maintenance of a quality outdoor experience, DNR is working with Palm Beach County and local livery operators to identify a daily carrying capacity for the river and to implement appropriate user regulations. Fishing and powerboating is mainly confined to the lower reaches of the river; however, boaters frequently travel upriver to the Trapper Nelson site. A No Wake Zone has been established by DNR in an attempt to control erosion and avoid conflicts between boaters and canoeists. In the future, Public-use management will concentrate on providing opportunities for non-consumptive recreational pursuits, such as hiking, nature appreciation and photography, through the provision of interpretive sites, boardwalks, and footpaths. Palm Beach County is considering the development of a campground and interpretive center in its plans for Riverbend Park. Preliminary discussions have been held with the Florida Trail Association regarding the development of a future major connector trail that would link Jonathan Dickinson State Park to the proposed Florida National Scenic Trail that surrounds Lake Okeechobee.

<i>Counties:</i>	<i>Martin and Palm Beach</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>1,918 Acres</i>
<i>Acres Acquired:</i>	<i>1,462</i>
<i>Land Cost:</i>	<i>\$7,020,968</i>
<i>Per Acre Cost:</i>	<i>\$4,802</i>
<i>Acres Remaining:</i>	<i>456</i>
<i>Estimated Assessed Value:</i>	<i>\$6,000,000</i>



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary





# Loxahatchee Slough

## 1. General Description:

The Loxahatchee Slough is located in Palm Beach County, and covers nearly 13,000 acres. It contains a mixture of habitat types, including pine flatwoods, cypress forest, and wet prairie. The present land-use is native range. Some of the current landowners have long-range plans for urban development.

## 2. Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources:

The lands included in this project are those that border the "Loxahatchee Corridor," which has been pledged for protection by the present landowner. The proposed project would provide additional watershed and upland buffer to the slough corridor. Public water supply potential does not appear to be significant; however, aquifer recharge does occur over the vast expanse of uplands and wetlands. This system is an important watershed for storing surface runoff and providing groundwater baseflow to Canal 18 and the Loxahatchee River.

The site contains a mosaic of habitats and lies in close proximity to several natural areas, including Jonathan Dickinson State Park, the Loxahatchee River SOR corridor, and the West Palm Beach Water Catchment Area. The mixture of upland and wetland communities

provide needed foraging and nesting sites for wildlife in an area undergoing rapid urban development.

## 3. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition:

The project area is in relatively good condition. Exotic vegetation is invading the site due to overdrainage on adjacent parcels. The exotics appear to be a controllable amount, but would require regular attention. Drainage swales and ditches exist, but not to a large degree. Hydrologic restoration could be accomplished by filling or blocking swales and ditches.

## 4. Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner:

Palm Beach County has expressed an interest in cooperative management. Hydrologic restoration, exotic control, and prescribed burning all will be required, whoever manages the tract.

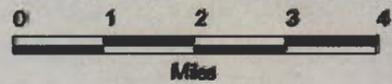
## 5. Recreation Potential:

Its proximity to a large metropolitan area lend this area to heavy public use. Hiking and equestrian trails could be developed in conjunction with local citizen's groups. Environmental education would also be an expected use.

<i>Project County:</i>	<i>Palm Beach</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>13,000 Acres</i>
<i>Estimated Assessed Value:</i>	<i>\$36 Million</i>
<i>Number of Owners:</i>	<i>Numerous</i>



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary



# **P**al-Mar

## **1. General Description:**

Pal-Mar is located in Palm Beach and Martin Counties, east of J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area (WMA). In 1991, the District Governing Board approved the addition of 4500 acres to the project. The addition includes those lands which separate Pal-Mar from Jonathan Dickinson State Park. Acquisition of the addition would form an extensive wildlife corridor connecting J.D. State Park, Pal-Mar, Corbett W.M.A., and DuPuis State Forest.

## **2. Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources:**

The extensive wetlands in this project provide significant conservation of surface water resources. The aquifer under the Pal-Mar area may be expected to have slow recharge due to 15-25 feet of confining sands near the surface. The estimated transmissivity shows the aquifer is adequate for small-scale development and individual use.

## **3. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition:**

Pal-Mar contains the largest concentration of contiguous wetlands in Martin County. Habitat diversity is rela-

tively low, since all that exists are pine flatwoods mixed with wet prairies. However, the quality of habitat is very good. It scores high for connectedness because it is only separated from Corbett Wildlife Management Area by SR 710.

If permits could be obtained to drain the area, the development pressure would be very high since it is subdivided into many small parcels. If a wellfield were developed in the area, it could have severe environmental impacts, as the confining layer is inadequate to protect wetlands from leakage.

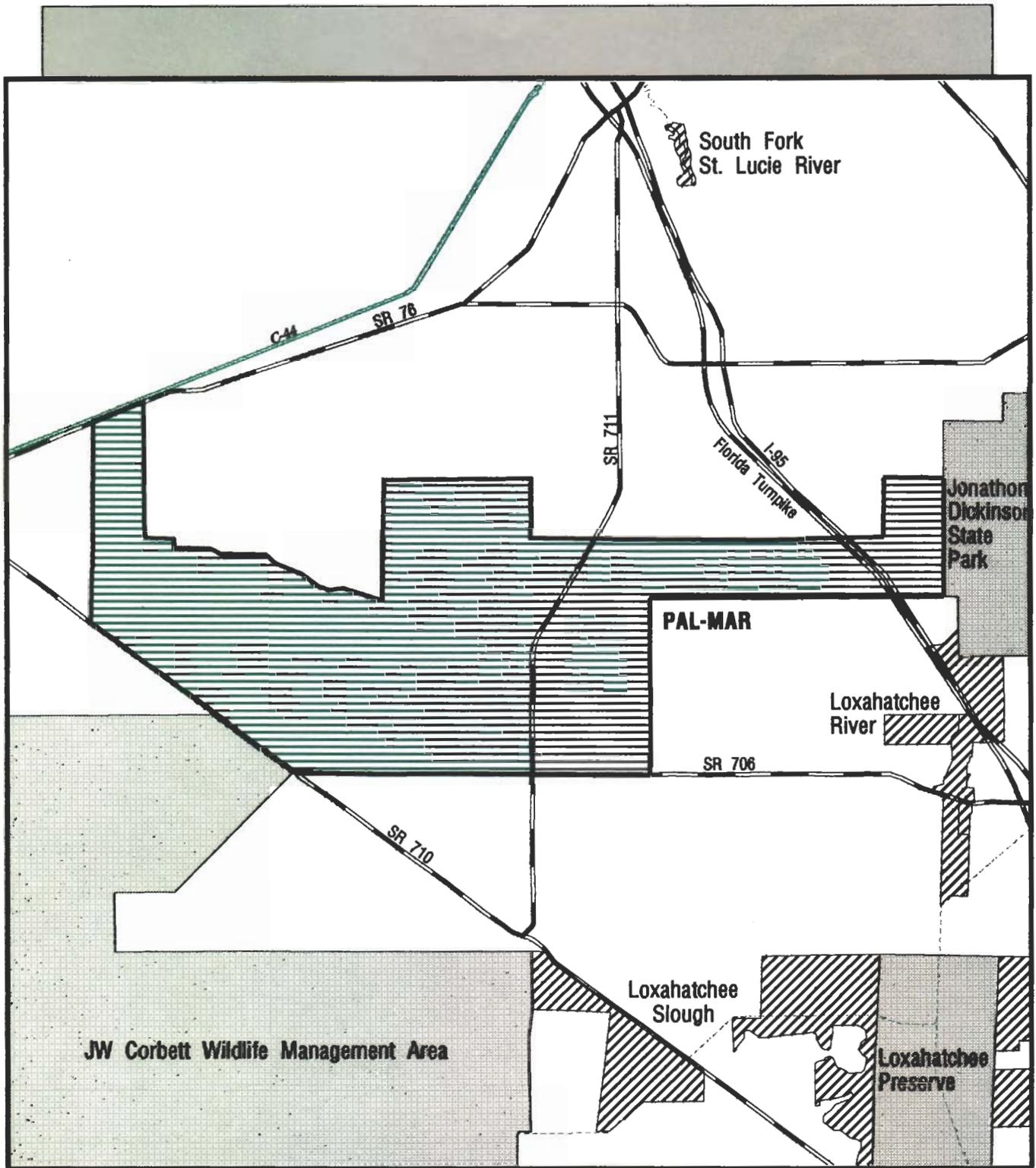
## **4. Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner:**

The management of the area would probably depend on the type and amount of public activity allowed. It has been used for some trash dumping and controllable infestations of exotic vegetation are present.

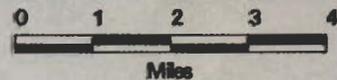
## **5. Recreation Potential:**

Recreational use would probably be high, particularly if it is used as a wildlife management area like the Corbett Wildlife Management Area. Several deepwater canals remain from earlier attempts to drain the property. Since these have no positive outfall, they provide good fishing.

<b>Counties:</b>	<i>Palm Beach and Martin</i>
<b>Total Project Area:</b>	<i>27,500 Acres</i>
<b>Estimated Assessed Value:</b>	<i>\$45.5 Million</i>
<b>Number of Owners:</b>	<i>Numerous</i>



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary





# Shingle Creek Swamp

## 1. General Description:

Shingle Creek Swamp covers nearly 3,000 acres in Southern Orange County. It is a major receiving body for storm water runoff from areas south and southwest of Orlando. In 1990, the Florida Legislature mandated the South Florida Water Management District to develop a mitigation plan that would offset the impacts of wetland destruction to be caused by construction of the Orlando Beltway. A plan proposing a combination of wetland enhancement and wetland preservation by acquisition was approved by the Department of Environmental Regulation.

A one year study is underway to assess the existing hydrologic conditions and map the vegetative communities. Three water level recorders have been installed to evaluate the impact of the Orlando Utilities Authority service road on sheetflow across the swamp. In conjunction with this study, vegetation transects and permanent photo points have been established throughout the swamp to collect baseline data. The Department of Environmental Regulation permit for the Orlando Beltway requires the District to submit a final mitigation plan by May, 1994, that will provide hydroperiod enhancement to 950 acres within the swamp. Land acquisition will be used to protect areas not needing enhancement.

Orange County presently holds title to 320 acres, which were dedicated to the county as offsite mitigation through the District Surface Water Management Permitting process. A Conceptual Surface Water Management Permit

was issued for a development to the north of the swamp. Part of the land holdings of the development are located within the SOR project boundary, and others lie along Shingle Creek to the north of the project, but are contiguous. The developer agreed to donate 279 acres of uplands and wetlands to the District. Efforts are underway to complete the transfer of both titles to the Save Our Rivers program.

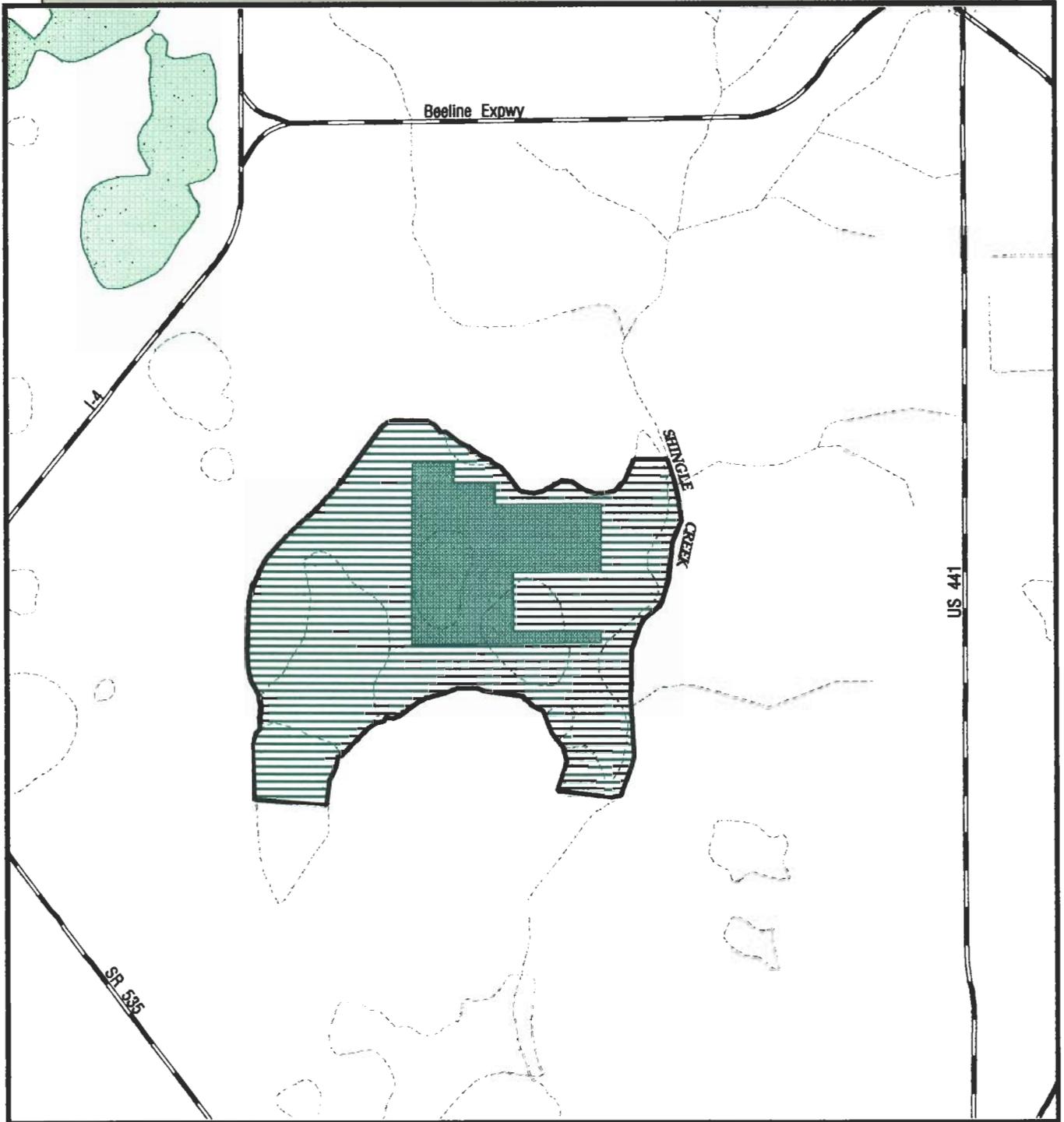
## 2. Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources:

Shingle Creek Swamp is largely isolated, except for its connection with Shingle Creek, which flows along the eastern border of the swamp. It plays a very important water management role because it receives the stormwater from most of Valencia Water Control District (VWCD). The swamp has several wetland habitat types, but it has been divided by two powerline easements and their associated service roads. The swamp plays major roles in flood attenuation and water quality improvement.

## 3. Public Recreation:

Canoeing in Shingle Creek is a popular activity. The berm, which was constructed along the west side of the creek during channelization in the 1920's, would be an excellent place for a hiking trail. Additional hiking trails and primitive camping areas could be established on upland islands within the swamp.

<i>County:</i>	<i>Orange</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>2,780 Acres</i>
<i>Total Acres Acquired:</i>	<i>533</i>
<i>Land Cost:</i>	<i>\$1,334,400</i>
<i>Per Acre Cost:</i>	<i>\$2,500</i>
<i>Acres Remaining:</i>	<i>2,247</i>
<i>Estimated Assessed Value:</i>	<i>\$5.0 million</i>



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary





# Six Mile Cypress II

## 1. General Description:

Six Mile Cypress Slough occupies approximately 2000 acres in Lee County, southeast of the City of Ft. Myers. It extends from State Road 82 southwesterly for approximately nine miles to Ten Mile Canal. The slough averages 1,500 feet in width. This project (Six Mile Cypress II), locally known as the "North Arm", covers approximately 225 acres and appears to be a transitional arm of the main slough. It extends to the east for approximately two miles and varies in width from 400' - 1000'. The arm collects runoff from the north and areas east of I-75. Box culverts under the interstate direct runoff through the arm and into the main strand of Six Mile Cypress. The slough consists of cypress swamp, interspersed with numerous open ponds. It is fringed with pine flatwoods, transitional hardwoods, wet prairies, and Melaleuca.

## 2. Land Stewardship Activities:

### A. Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Lee County has agreed to develop, operate and maintain the slough as a nature preserve under an agreement with the District. A detailed description of the slough is contained in the Six Mile Cypress Slough Management Plan prepared by the County in 1986. Specific actions to implement the plan are set forth in the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve Land & Water Management Plan prepared by the County and approved by the District in 1988.

Six Mile Cypress Basin is being studied as part of the Lee County Surface Water Management Master Plan. It will recommend design criteria to prevent further degradation and slough enhancement. A principal objective will be to restore a more natural hydroperiod to aid in wetland revitalization.

The District, through its local Government Assistance Program, is working with Lee County to develop a Surface Water Management Master Plan for Six Mile Basin. The plan will propose management strategies, such as revitalization of flow ways, to restore flows to the

North Arm and main strand of the slough.

Melaleuca and Brazilian pepper are problem exotics that have proliferated in certain portions of the slough. Native vegetation has been completely replaced by Melaleuca in approximately 200 acres. A vigorous eradication/control program involving chemical and mechanical applications is planned to halt the future spread of these species. Reforestation with native species will be undertaken where large stands of exotics are removed.

### B. Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

The entire perimeter of the slough is being posted to prevent unauthorized access, and problem areas are being fenced and/or barricaded. Routine patrol will be provided by preserve personnel and the Lee County Sheriff's Department.

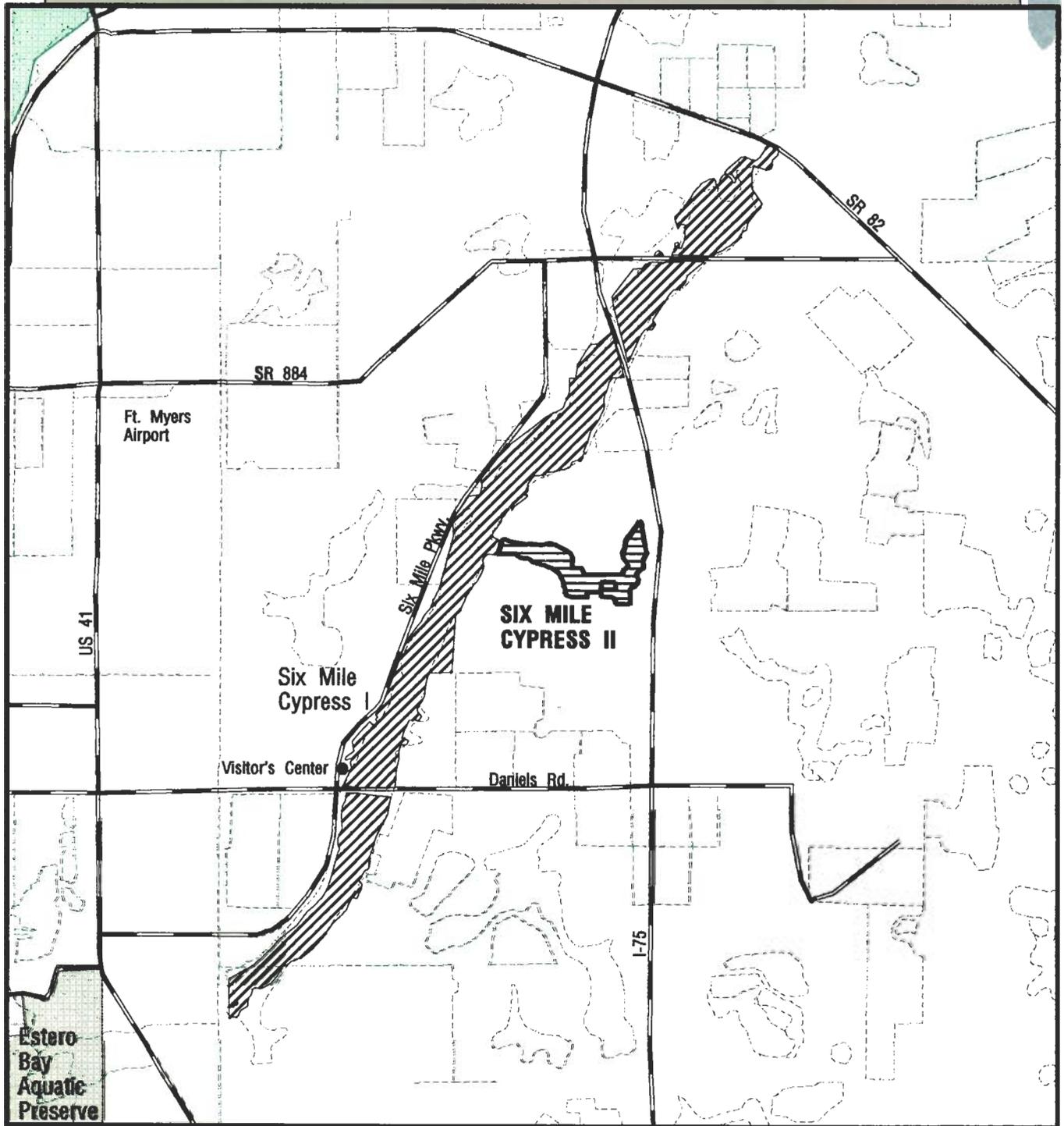
A prescribed burning program is proposed for the pine flatwoods north of Penzance Road to maintain the species composition of this community and prevent the buildup of fuels that could result in damaging wildfires. Fire lanes will be constructed to facilitate the burns and to protect sensitive cypress and hardwood areas. Wildfires will be suppressed only when considered necessary to protect adjacent lands and highway travel or when preserve resources would be subject to irreparable damage.

### C. Public Recreation

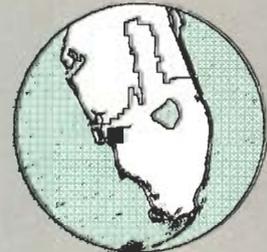
The slough has been used informally for both active and passive recreational activities for many years. The continuation of passive activities, such as fishing, picnicking, photography and nature observation, will be encouraged in appropriate locations within the preserve. Interpretive facilities consisting of an elevated boardwalk, covered amphitheater and parking area have been developed by Lee County to enhance visitor appreciation of the preserve. Special programs will be conducted by the Lee County Parks and Recreation Department. The Lee County School Board Department of Environmental Education will continue its past practice of conducting field trips to the slough.

<i>County:</i>	<i>Lee</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>225 Acres<sup>1</sup></i>
<i>Estimated Assessed Value:</i>	<i>\$2,000,000</i>
<i>Number of Owners:</i>	<i>Multiple</i>

<sup>1</sup> See Six Mile Cypress I



-  **SOR Lands Acquired to Date**
-  **Potential Acquisition Area**
-  **Other Conservation Area**
-  **Other SOR Projects**
-  **SOR Project Boundary**





# Southern Glades (Canal-111)

## 1. General Description:

The lands in this project lie adjacent to the Canal-111 (Aerojet Canal), east of Everglades National Park, west of U.S. Highway 1, and south of SR 27. The project will benefit the flow of water into Everglades National Park and Northeast Florida Bay.

## 2. Land Stewardship Activities:

### A. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Major problems associated with periodic flood releases to Barnes Sound from Canal-111 and a reduction in sheet flow to Northeast Florida Bay have prompted the District to work with the National Park Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, South Dade agricultural interests, Florida Bay fishing interests, and a number of other federal, state and local agencies on a plan for structural and operational changes to the existing flood control system. An attempt is being made to restore a more natural distribution of flow to these tidewater zones, while at the same time maintaining an acceptable level of flood protection for the South Dade area. The purchase of private lands adjacent to Canal-111 is necessary for

implementation of restoration efforts and to assure that the biota of this portion of Everglades National Park, Florida Bay and Barnes Sound are protected from the harmful effects of urban and agricultural development.

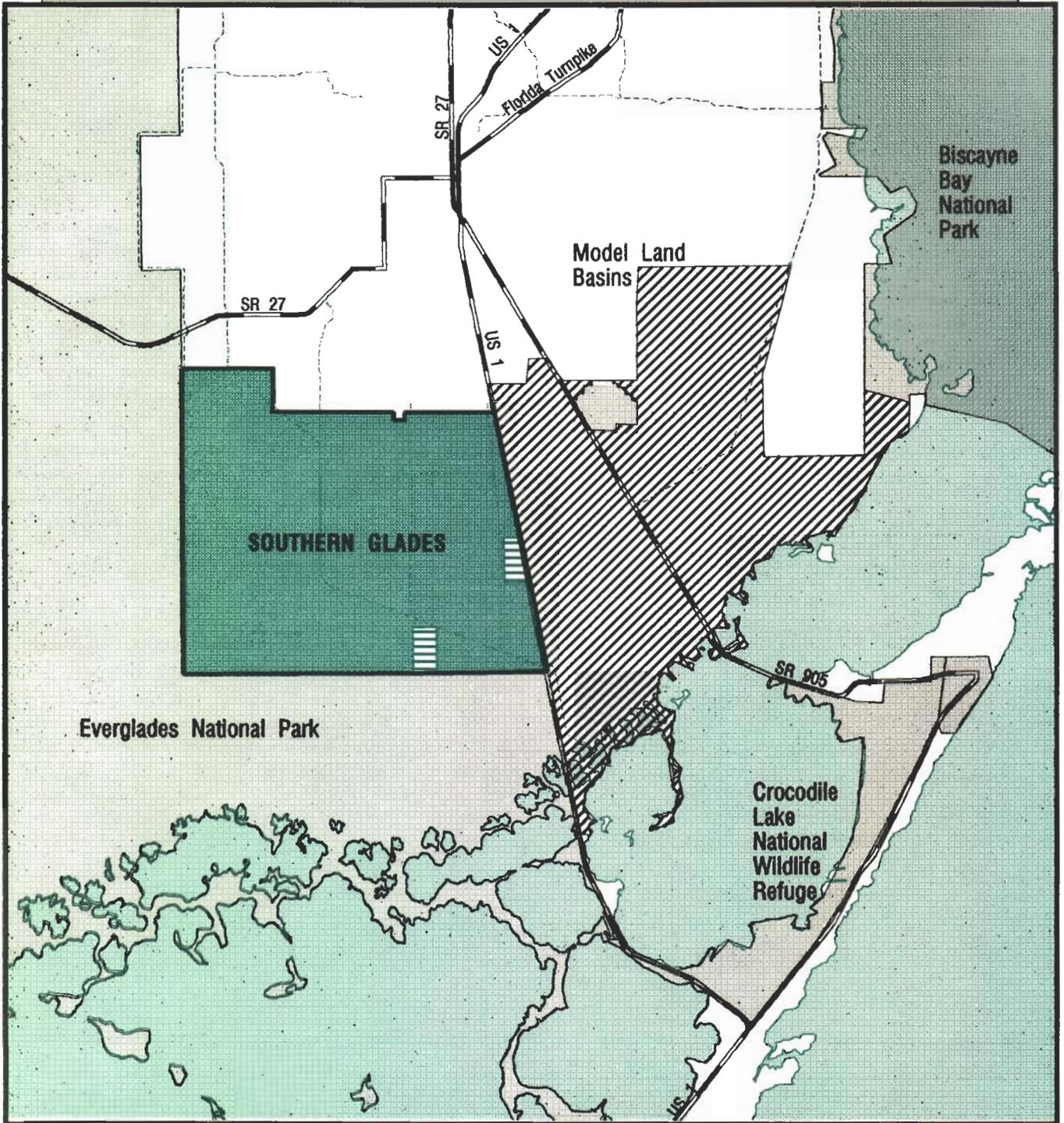
### B. Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

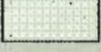
Lands purchased to date are being managed by the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission (GFC) as part of the East Everglades Wildlife and Environmental Area (EEWEA) under an agreement with the District. The District provides supplementary funding for the employment of a full-time biologist by the GFC. A conceptual management plan has been prepared for the EEWEA, and recommendations call for maintaining the Canal-111 portion in as pristine a condition as possible.

### C. Public Recreation

The Canal-111 is open to boats with outboard motors. Fishing, sightseeing, and environmental education are the principal public recreation uses of the Canal-111 area. Southern Glades Wildlife Environmental Area will be open for hunting this year. Permitted game will include, deer, migratory birds and frogs.

<b>County:</b>	<b>Dade</b>
<b>Total Project Area:</b>	<b>29,977 Acres</b>
<b>Acres Acquired:</b>	<b>27,849</b>
<b>Land Cost:</b>	<b>\$6,889,815</b>
<b>Per Acre Cost:</b>	<b>\$247</b>
<b>Acres Remaining:</b>	<b>3,257</b>
<b>Estimated Assessed Value:</b>	<b>\$6,000,000</b>



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary





# Stormwater Treatment Areas

## 1. General Description:

The Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) are filter marshes which will naturally remove nutrients from the stormwater runoff exiting the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA), and prior to the water entering the Everglades Protection Area (EPA). Construction of the STAs has been mandated by the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Everglades Protection Act, the settlement of the Everglades lawsuit and the District's Everglades SWIM Plan and is the key to the improvement of the water quality in the Everglades.

Four STAs are proposed under the current Everglades clean-up plan, with each serving the area tributary to the primary agricultural drainage canals of the EAA, which are the West Palm Beach (STA-1), Hillsboro (STA-2), North New River (STA-3) and Miami Canals (STA-4). The STAs locations were selected to maximize the District's ability to use the existing network of canals and water control structures to most efficiently intercept the nutrient-laden stormwater flows.

## 2. Land Stewardship Activities:

### A. Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

The STAs will be designed, operated and managed to filter out harmful nutrients contained in stormwater runoff before this water enters the Water Conservation Areas, including the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge and Everglades National Park. The size and location of the STAs will allow significant improvements in the manner in which water flows to natural areas by allowing the reintroduction of sheet flow into tens of thousands of acres of the Everglades.

### B. Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

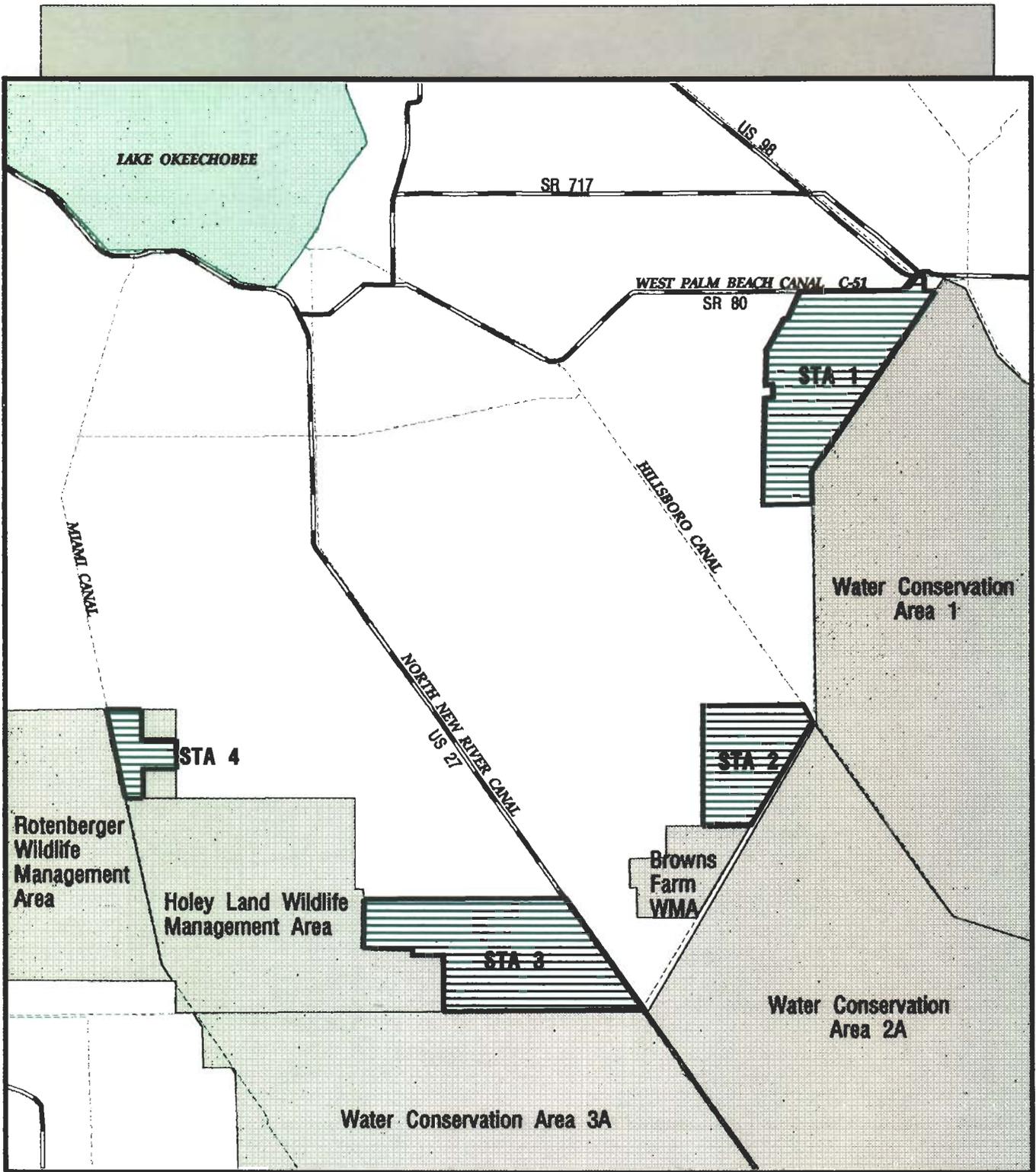
The STAs will be subject to intense management and monitoring in order to maximize their nutrient removal performance. Additionally, the District is considering various options to prevent unauthorized entry and trespassing.

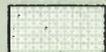
### C. Public Recreation

Public use and recreation on the STA lands will be examined in the planning and design process. Parcels will be evaluated for resource value and public use potential. Potential public uses will also be examined for their effect on environmental sensitivity and water management values of the lands.

<i>County:</i>	<i>Palm Beach</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>35,000 Acres*</i>
<i>Estimated Assessed Value:</i>	<i>\$92 million</i>
<i>Number of Owners:</i>	<i>Numerous</i>

\*Acreage is inclusive of the Everglades Nutrient Removal Project



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary





# Water Conservation Areas

## 1. General Description:

The three Water Conservation Areas (WCAs) are part of the original Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project to provide water supply and flood control to South Florida. The SOR project is designed to complete the public acquisition of outstanding land interests in order to protect this area's role in long-term water resource management. This acquisition was mandated in the original legislation for the Save Our Rivers Program.

## 2. Land Stewardship Activities:

### A. Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

The District and the US Army Corps of Engineers have been regulating water levels in the three Water Conservation Areas, in accordance with criteria initially established in the 1950s and modified at various times over the years to meet changing conditions. The general purpose of the schedules is to provide for the storage of floodwater from developed areas adjacent to the WCAs for later use during the dry season. In establishing the schedules, consideration was given to the needs of wildlife indigenous to the WCAs and the requirements of emergent vegetation. Releases from the WCAs during the dry season and, particularly during drought conditions, are considered vital to the maintenance of adequate water levels in the coastal canals and wellfields and the prevention of saltwater intrusion. Flows from WCA 3 are essential to the well-being of Everglades National Park. The amount and manner of delivery of these flows has and continues to be the subject of intense public debate. Much work has been done to devise a system of delivery that most closely approximates historical patterns (See Canal-111 SOR Project discussions).

### B. Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

WCA 1 is managed as the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). WCAs 2 and 3 are managed as the Everglades Wildlife Management Area by the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission (GFC) under separate cooperative and license agreements with the District. Both agencies have developed management plans and actively manage the fish and wildlife resources and public use of the areas under their charge. The District has been engaged in environmental research in the WCA for many years, concentrating on the effects of water quantity and quality on the biota. In recent years, efforts to halt backpumping into Lake Okeechobee have resulted in increased flows from the Everglades Agricultural Area into WCA 3 and this in turn appears to be triggering certain vegetative changes of concern to environmentalists. ENP officials have expressed concern that water quality problems appearing in WCA 3 will be translocated to ENP unless remedial action is taken. All parties are actively working to find acceptable solutions to this problem.

### C. Public Recreation

The Water Conservation Areas are important outdoor recreation areas used heavily by the public for fishing, hunting, boating, frogging, and nature appreciation. Over the years, numerous recreation sites and facilities have been provided to facilitate public access. Site development has generally followed the recommendations set forth in two published recreational plans: *RECREATION PLAN, THE AREA SOUTH OF LAKE OKEECHOBEE*, prepared in 1960 for the District by the Florida Development Commission and *RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE EVERGLADES WATER CONSERVATION AREAS: FIVE YEAR PLAN 1973-1978*, prepared in 1974 by the Everglades Recreational Planning Board. Both the USFWS and the GFC have established rules and regulations governing public-use of these areas.

**Counties:** Dade, Broward and Palm Beach

**Total Project Area:** 256,000 Acres

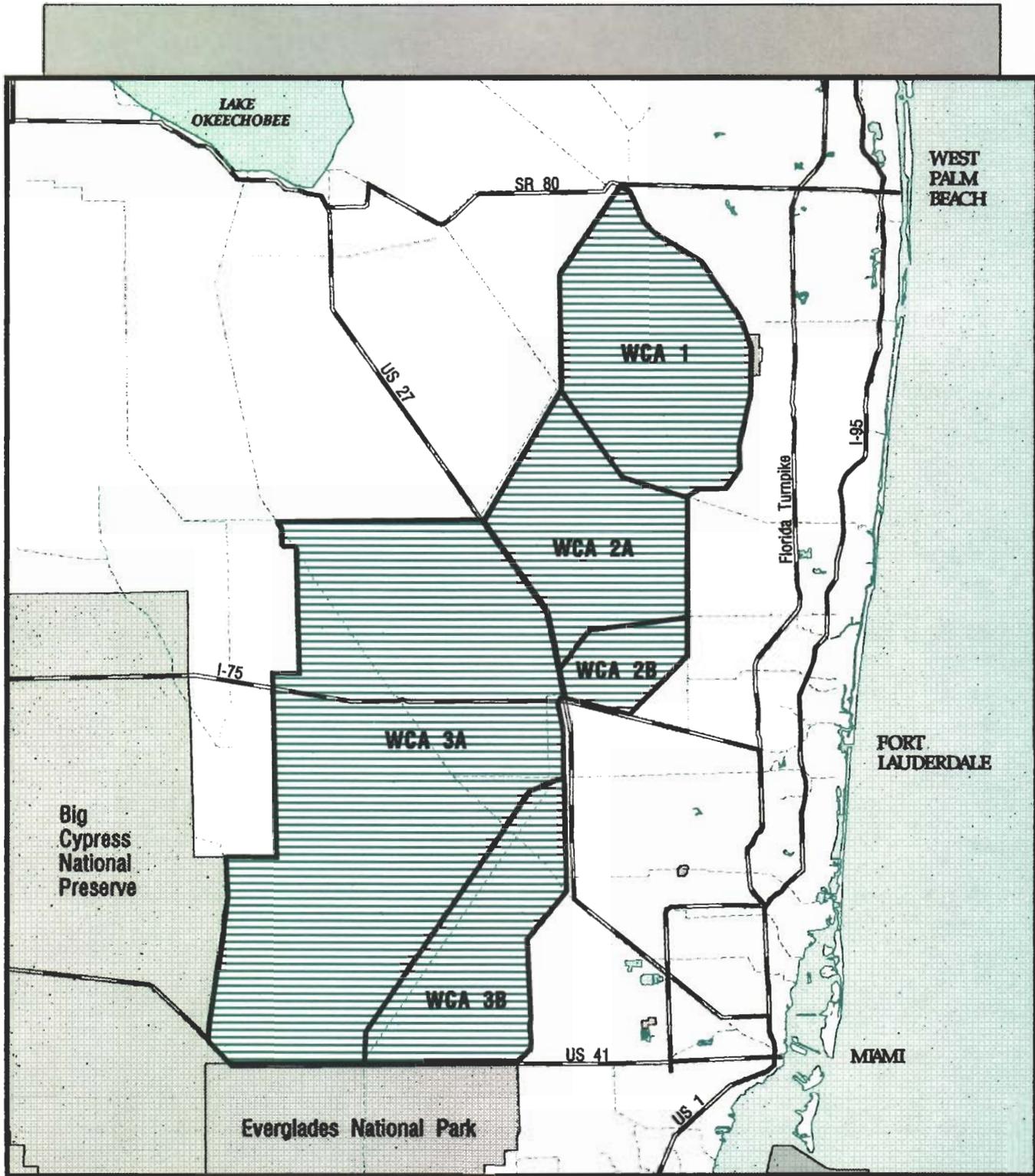
**Acres Acquired:** 42,124

**Land Cost:** \$7,943,552

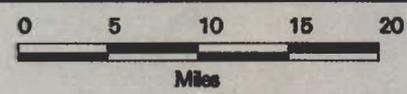
**Per Acre Cost:** \$189

**Acres Remaining:** 214,000

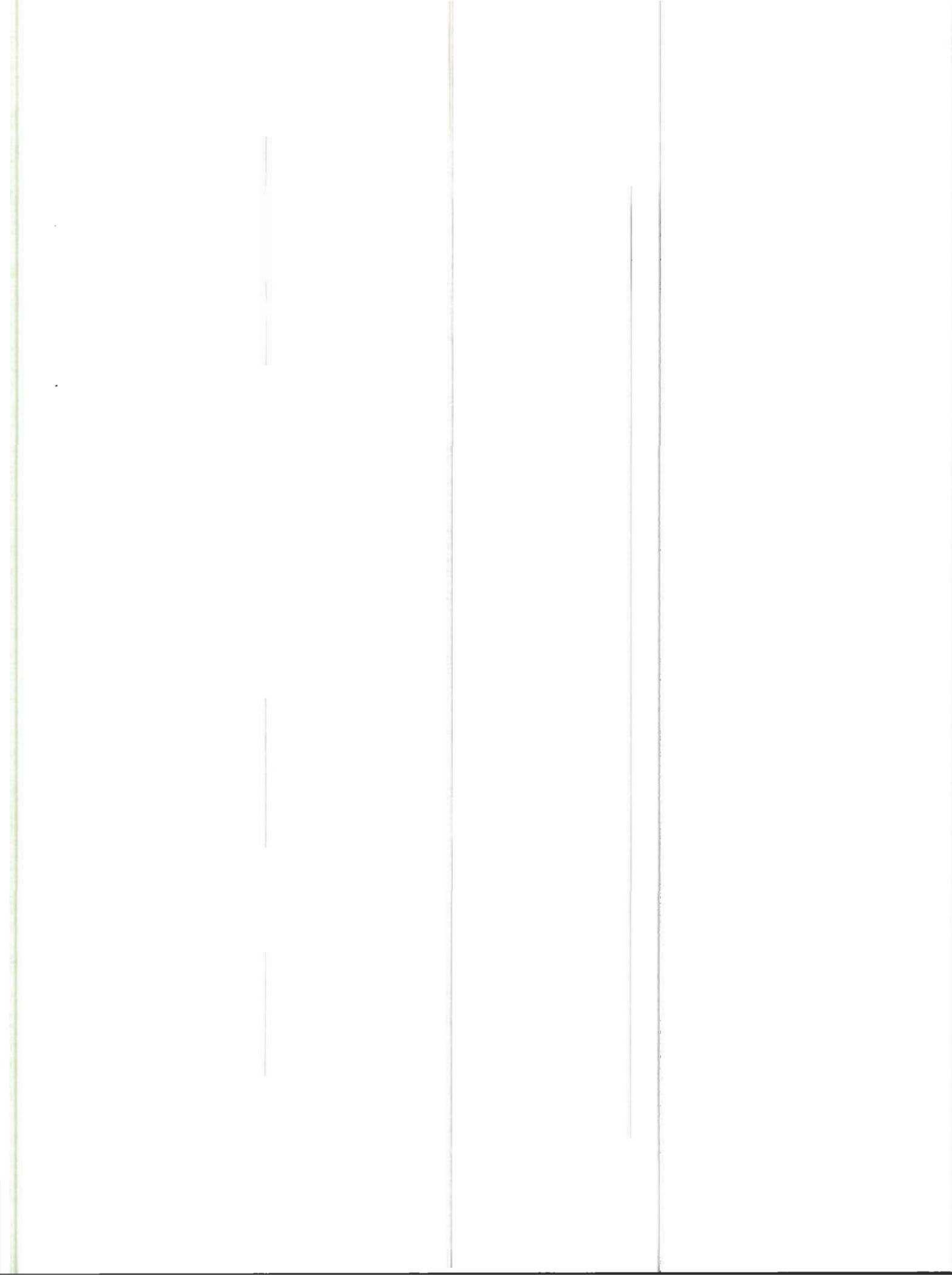
**Estimated Assessed Value:** \$20,000,000



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary



NOTE: SOR has Partial Ownership in the Water Conservation Areas.



## *1993 Save Our Rivers - Five Year Plan*

*The goal of the Save Our Rivers Program is to acquire necessary interests in lands for water management, water supply, conservation and protection of water resources. Projects may be submitted by nearly any interested party. These lands are analyzed to determine the extent that each project meets the program objectives. Projects that are incorporated into the Five-Year Plan are updated annually.*

*Projects included in the FIVE YEAR PLAN will not necessarily be acquired. Acquisition is dependent upon the level of funding and a number of priority factors (see Policies 4.100, 5.001).*



# Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed

## 1. General Description:

Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed is a generic name for a vast project covering 58,000 acres in Lee and Collier counties. National Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary is surrounded by the project, but is not included, and will not be acquired.

In 1992, the District governing board expanded the project by 652 acres, to include two additional areas in Flint Pen Strand (Lee County). The additional lands will provide public and management access from Corkscrew Road, as well as adding additional upland habitat to buffer the main corridor of the swamp.

In 1992, 1,320 acres were acquired by Lee County. The District purchased an additional 5,493 acres. Ownership of all land purchased by Lee County will either be sold or donated to the District.

These acquisitions bring the public ownership to over 14,000 acres.

## 2. Land Stewardship Activities:

### A. Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

A multi-agency planning team completed the CREW Conceptual Management Plan. The major participants are Lee County, Florida game and Freshwater Fish Commission, Florida Division of Forestry, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Conservancy, Inc., National Audubon, Alico, Inc., Naples Tomato Growers, and the District. The plan addresses management needs and agency responsibilities. SFWMD

will be the lead management agency. The plan also lists management goals and objectives, which include:

- Developing inventories of biological communities
- Maintaining existing hydrologic conditions
- Development/implementation of exotic vegetation control plan
- Developing prescribed burn/wildfire control plans
- Developing public use facilities

Lee County and Save Our Rivers field crews treated exotics in Flint Pen Strand and Corkscrew Marsh during the past year. In addition, Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission volunteer reservists treated exotics and posted District lands in Corkscrew Marsh and Bird Rookery Swamp.

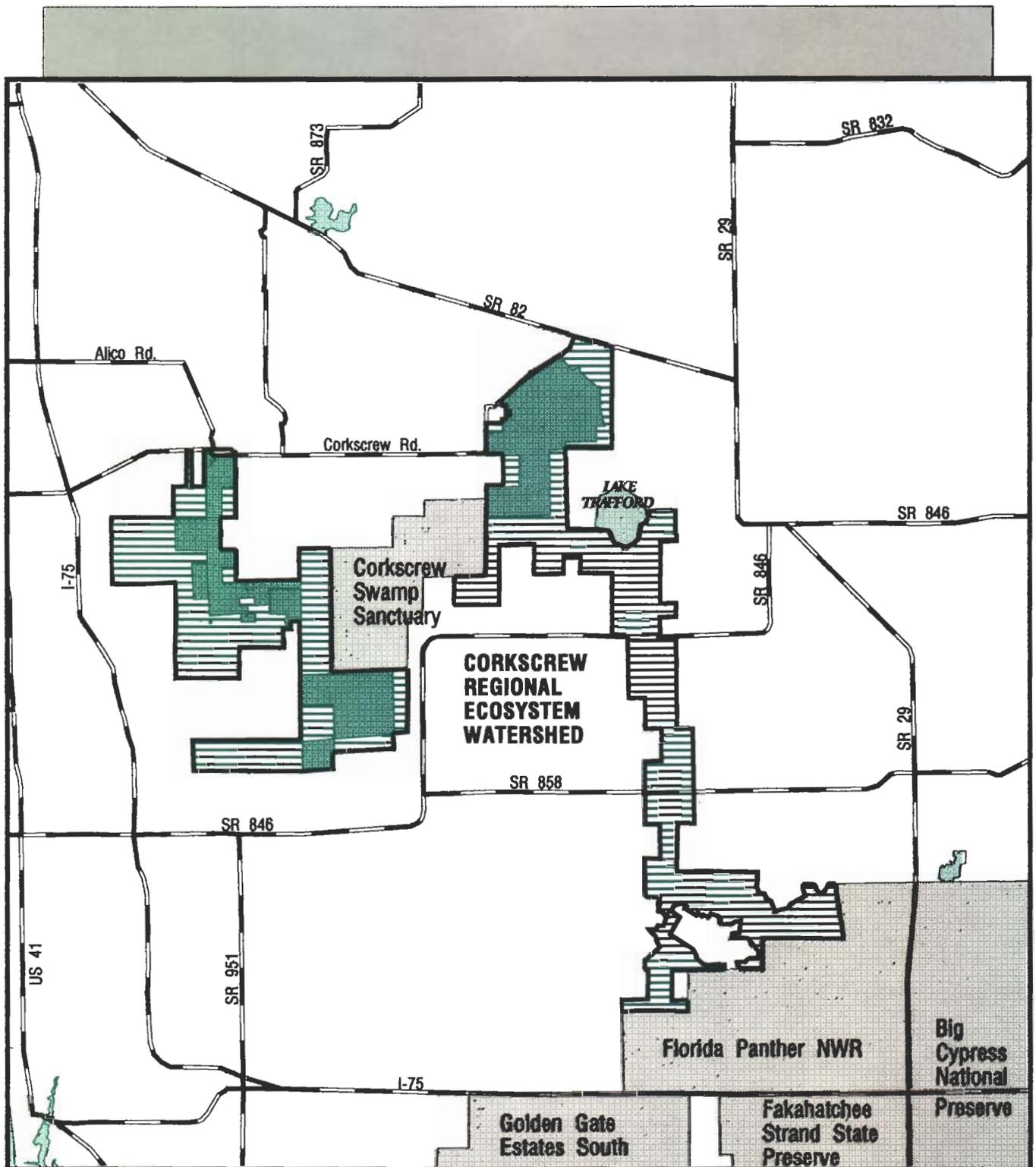
A water resources study that was contracted to map the CREW watershed, evaluate the existing water resources and water supply potential, and assess the wetland resources and water requirements of the natural system will be complete in Fall, 1992.

### B. Public Recreation

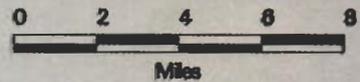
District staff began assessing the potential for hiking trail development in the uplands adjacent to Corkscrew Marsh. It is anticipated that trail development will begin in 1993 in Corkscrew Marsh. If permanent public access can be obtained, hiking trails will also be developed along former logging trams in Bird Rookery Swamp.

<i>Counties:</i>	<i>Lee and Collier</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>50,642 Acres</i>
<i>Total Acres Acquired:</i>	<i>14,076</i>
<i>Land Cost:</i>	<i>\$12,086,390</i>
<i>Per Acre Cost:</i>	<i>\$859</i>
<i>Acres Remaining:</i>	<i>36,500</i>
<i>Estimated Assessed Value:</i>	<i>\$16 Million</i>

\* Lee Co. acquired 4,905 ac. at a cost of \$7,376,527



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary





# Dade Broward Levee

## 1. General Description:

The property is located directly north of the Tamiami Canal (Canal-4), with Levee 30/US 27 forming the western boundary and the Dade Broward Levee the eastern boundary.

## 2. Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources:

The project provides water supply benefits by maintaining groundwater levels to the east and may help support proposed wellfields. The land lies within the cone of influence of Dade County's Northwest Wellfields. The project is anticipated to have a positive impact upon the area designated as "urban water conservation area." The project also provides recharge to the Snapper Creek wellfield located south of Tamiami Trail and east of Florida's Turnpike.

## 3. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition:

Dade County has shown interest in assisting to restore and maintain the property. They have added the land to the Dade County proposed acquisition list. Exotic invasion has occurred, primarily concentrated in the southern one-half of the property. Overdrainage by the Tamiami Canal has seriously degraded the southern portion. It is unlikely that this area could be restored.

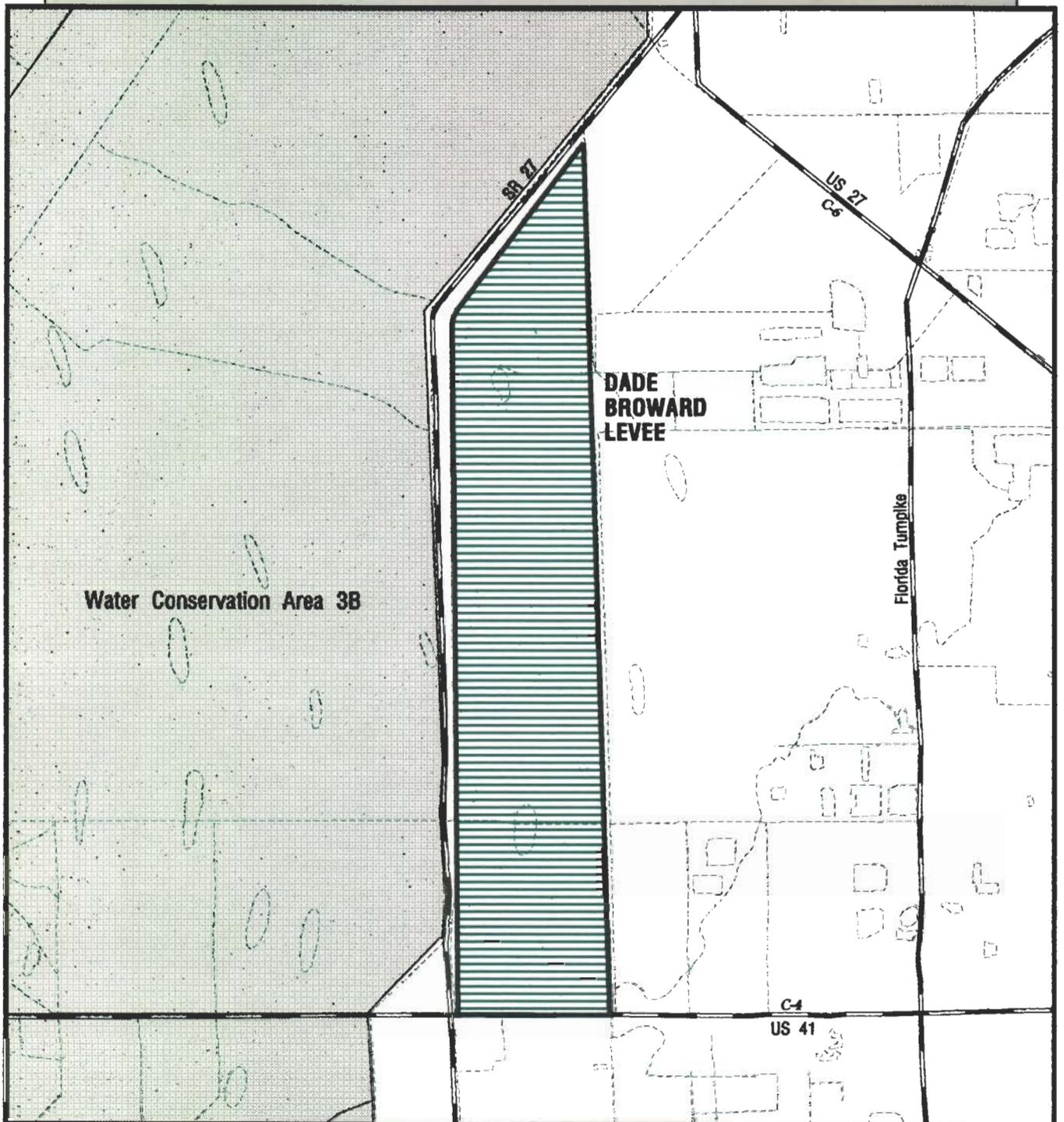
## 4. Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner:

Management needs would be basically directed toward control of Melaleuca and coordination with the Dade County Water and Sewer Authority.

## 5. Recreation Potential:

Public use of this property is anticipated to be low due to the lack of recreational opportunities.

<i>County:</i>	<i>Dade</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>12,000 Acres</i>
<i>Estimated Assessed Value:</i>	<i>\$30,000,000</i>
<i>Number of Owners:</i>	<i>Numerous</i>

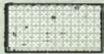
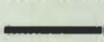


Water Conservation Area 3B

DADE  
BROWARD  
LEVEE

Florida Turnpike

C-4  
US 41

-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary





# Everglades Buffer Strip

## 1. General Description:

Everglades Buffer Strip totals approximately 4,000 acres. It exists as a one-half mile wide strip lying between the District's Levee 37 and Levee 33 and U.S. Highway 27 in Broward County. It extends from State Road 84 to the Dade County line.

The project application includes a 1,600 acre portion which extends from SR 84 on the north to Canal 11 on the south.

## 2. Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources:

Conservation Areas 3A and 3B leak large amounts of water through Levee 37 and Levee 33, due to the high head differential that presently exists. District ownership of the Buffer Strip could allow higher control elevations to be maintained, thus reducing leakage from the Conservation Areas.

## 3. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition:

The project area has been impacted by rock mining and exotic plant invasion, primarily Melaleuca. There appears

to be a number of constraints to restoration: The existing FP&L service road, the elevation of the sub-grade for U.S. 27, the relative elevation of lands and levees, and the long narrow shape of the project.

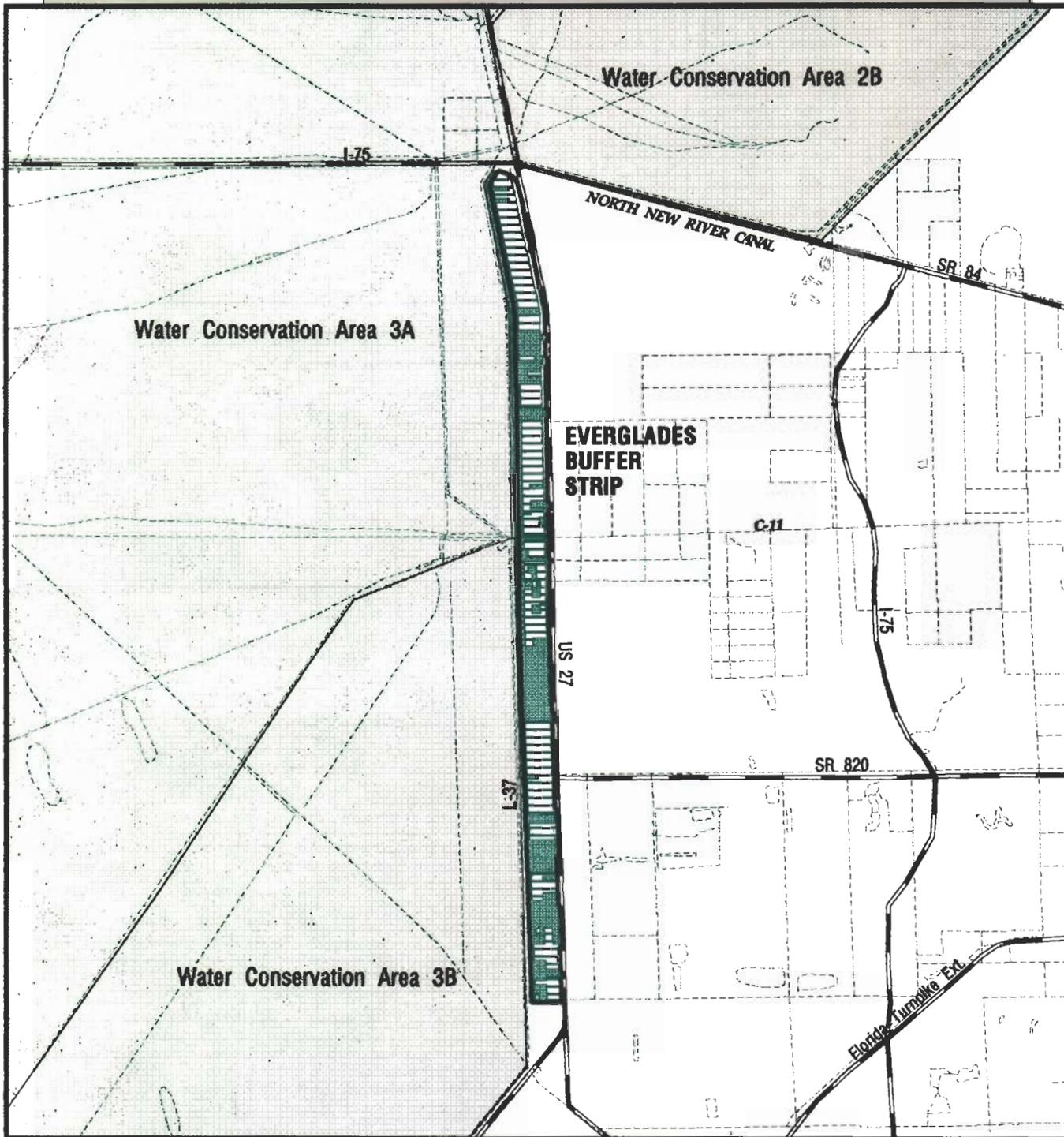
## 4. Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner:

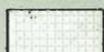
Broward County has indicated significant interest in the entire 4000 acres of buffer strip, which includes the 1600 acres submitted as a Save Our Rivers project. The County is already participating in research for controls to inhibit the spread of Melaleuca. They have indicated an interest in monetary programs to help in acquisition of the land and to assist in Melaleuca removal and control. Early management tasks will include a program to inform the public about the importance of the Buffer Strip and an exotic removal/control effort.

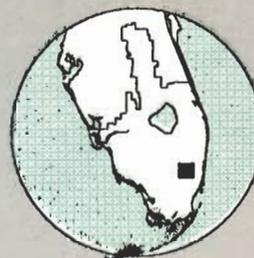
## 5. Recreation Potential:

Broward County has indicated the Buffer Strip lands offer potential for public recreation, which take advantage of its abundant open-space. Recreational activities could include fishing, canoe trails, and environmental education/interpretive facilities.

<i>County:</i>	<i>Broward</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>1,654Acres</i>
<i>Estimated Assessed Value:</i>	<i>\$1,600,000</i>
<i>Number of Owners:</i>	<i>Multiple</i>



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary



NOTE: SOR interests are north of canal C-11 only. South of C-11 is Non-SOR.



# Fisheating Creek

## 1. General Description:

Fisheating creek is an extensive riverine swamp system flowing through Glades County. The creek and its headwaters form an extensive watershed covering hundreds of square miles.

In 1991, the District Governing Board approved a boundary revision, which added nearly 15,000 acres to the project. The additional area includes a large freshwater marsh and low pine flatwoods, which buffer the riverine swamp corridor.

## 2. Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources:

Fisheating Creek is the only free-flowing tributary to Lake Okeechobee. The meandering runs and associated flood plain attenuate peak discharges during heavy storm events and are important for water quality improvement prior to discharges entering Lake Okeechobee. Groundwater resources have not been quantified for this area; however, the Surficial Aquifer has suitable capacity to supply low-volume users.

## 3. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition:

Much of the uplands and wetlands defined by the limits of this project remain in a relatively undisturbed state. Habitat types include cypress sloughs/mixed hardwood swamp forest, emergent marshes, willow thickets and openwater ponds and runs. Land-use in and around the flood plain is mostly native range. Use by wading birds is very heavy, including endangered wood storks, white ibis and great egrets. When stages in Lake Okeechobee are high, Fisheating Creek serves as an important feeding area for birds, which normally use the lake marshes.

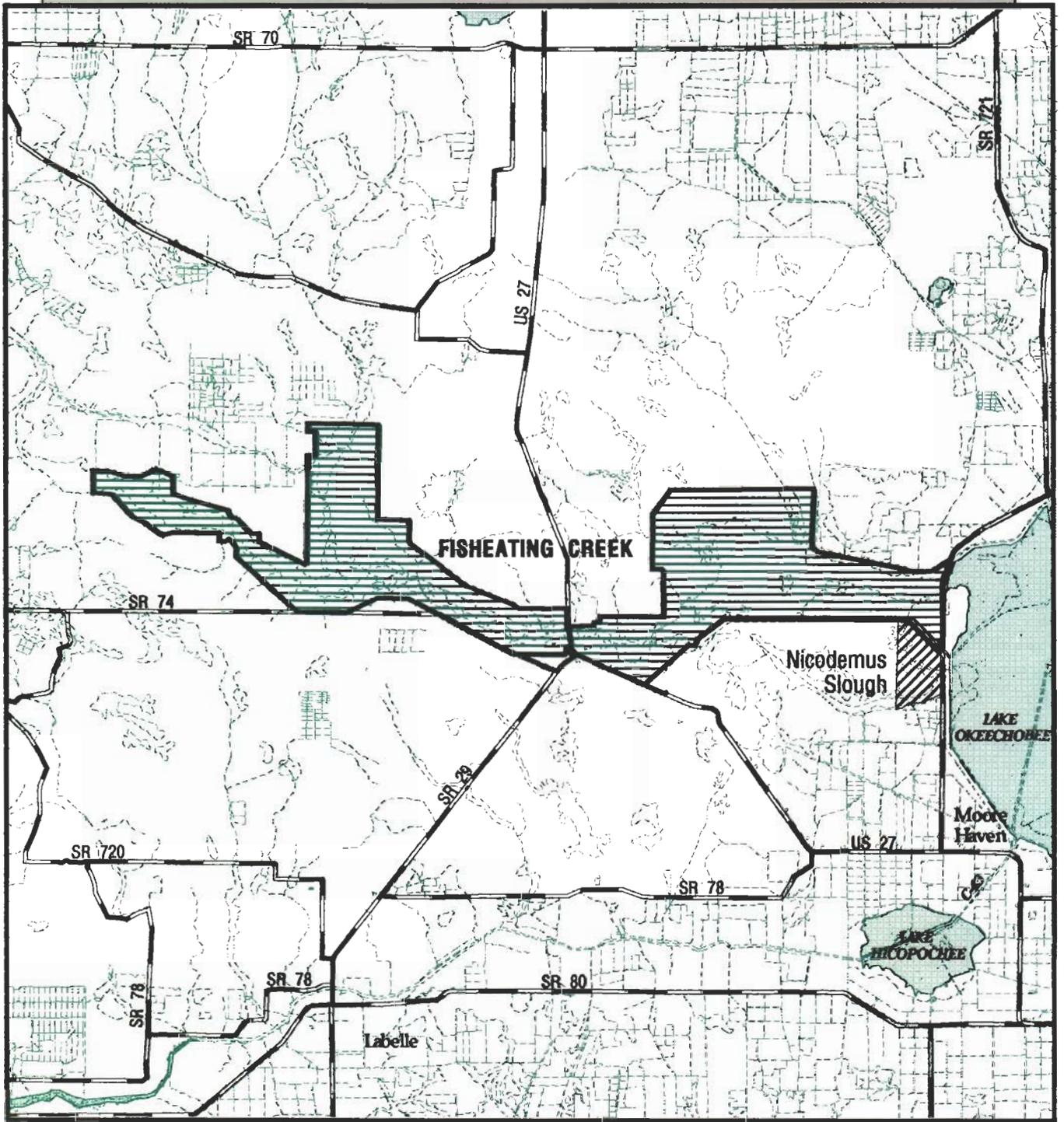
## 4. Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner:

Restoration requirements, if any, would be minimal, as most of the property is in its natural state. A prescribed burning program would be necessary to maintain appropriate species diversity in the plant communities and to reduce the potential for harmful wildfires. Additionally, it would be necessary to target the removal of noxious aquatic weeds from the lakes and creek channel to facilitate canoeing and fishing. Continued livestock grazing would be a likely condition to acquisition of the property and would necessitate the development of an approved program by the USDA Soil Conservation Service in consultation with the District and the livestock operator. Special consideration would be given to maintenance of critical habitat for endangered and/or threatened species, and a trapping program would be required to control the population of feral hogs. Implementation of a comprehensive security program would be needed to prevent unauthorized entry and to discourage poaching and other illegal activities.

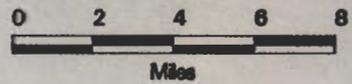
## 5. Recreation Potential:

Acquisition and protection of Fisheating Creek, its floodplain and suitable upland corridor, could provide the public with opportunities for a variety of outdoor recreational activities. The reach of the creek upstream of Palmdale has been a popular canoe run for many years and is famous for its scenic attributes. Opportunities to view and photograph the flora and fauna that abound along the creek could be enhanced by the establishment of suitable hiking trails throughout the property and the implementation of guided tours. A connector trail to the proposed Florida National Scenic Trail around Lake Okeechobee would be a possibility. Access to the Fort Center archaeological site and the provision of appropriate interpretive facilities could provide visitors an insight to the area's history and early inhabitants. Environmental education programs could also be developed to enhance visitor awareness of the area's ecology. A full service campground is located west of US Highway 27 at Palmdale, and would avoid the necessity of providing these facilities elsewhere on the property.

<b>County:</b>	<b>Glades</b>
<b>Total Project Area:</b>	<b>43,872 Acres</b>
<b>Estimated Assessed Value:</b>	<b>\$13 Million</b>
<b>Number of Owners:</b>	<b>One</b>



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary



# **M**odel Land Basins

## **1. General Description:**

The project is located primarily in Dade County with a very small portion on the edge of Monroe County. With the exception of the extreme northwest corner and a one mile wide strip along the northern township line, this area includes all the land east of U.S. 1 and south of the northern boundary of Township 58 South. The FPL cooling ponds at Turkey Point are not included in the project boundary.

The total project area is approximately 31,000 acres and includes a variety of habitats, both freshwater and estuarine. The northwestern corner has been invaded by Australian pine and Brazilian pepper, but the great majority of the site is exotic-free. The majority of the tract is undisturbed fresh and salt water wetlands. The dominant habitat type is wet prairie, interspersed with tree islands. Vegetation in the tree islands includes red bay, dahoon holly, cocoplum and buttonbush in the upland islands, and red, white and black mangroves in the estuarine islands.

This area was historically listed as transverse Everglades by John Henry Davis in his original characterization of the Everglades. These lands form a contiguous habitat corridor with Everglades National Park, the Canal 111 Aeroject purchases, Biscayne National Park, Crocodile Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, the north Key Largo CARL purchases, John Pennekamp State Park, and the existing National Marine Sanctuary.

## **2. Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources:**

The sheet flow of water across this area provides high quality freshwater to the estuarine areas of Card Sound, Barnes Sound and Manatee Bay. This basin is the primary source of overland freshwater for Biscayne National Park and the southern portions of Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve. Card Sound is classified as both an Aquatic Preserve and Outstanding Florida Water.

This area functions as a recharge area for maintenance of

the salt-barrier line thus serving an important function for the prevention of further saltwater intrusion into the region. Holding water on the property will aid this process.

## **3. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition:**

This area is habitat for many threatened and endangered species including: Florida panthers, American crocodiles, wood storks, the coast leather fern, and the silver palm. This area is federally designated as critical habitat for the American crocodile. Natural communities are still in excellent condition for the most part. In conjunction with the shoreline of Biscayne National Park, this area forms the longest undeveloped strip of red mangroves on the east coast of Florida. The project has received support from the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Dade County.

The District is working with DOT in the design of U.S. 1 improvements to increase freshwater flows under the highway from the west.

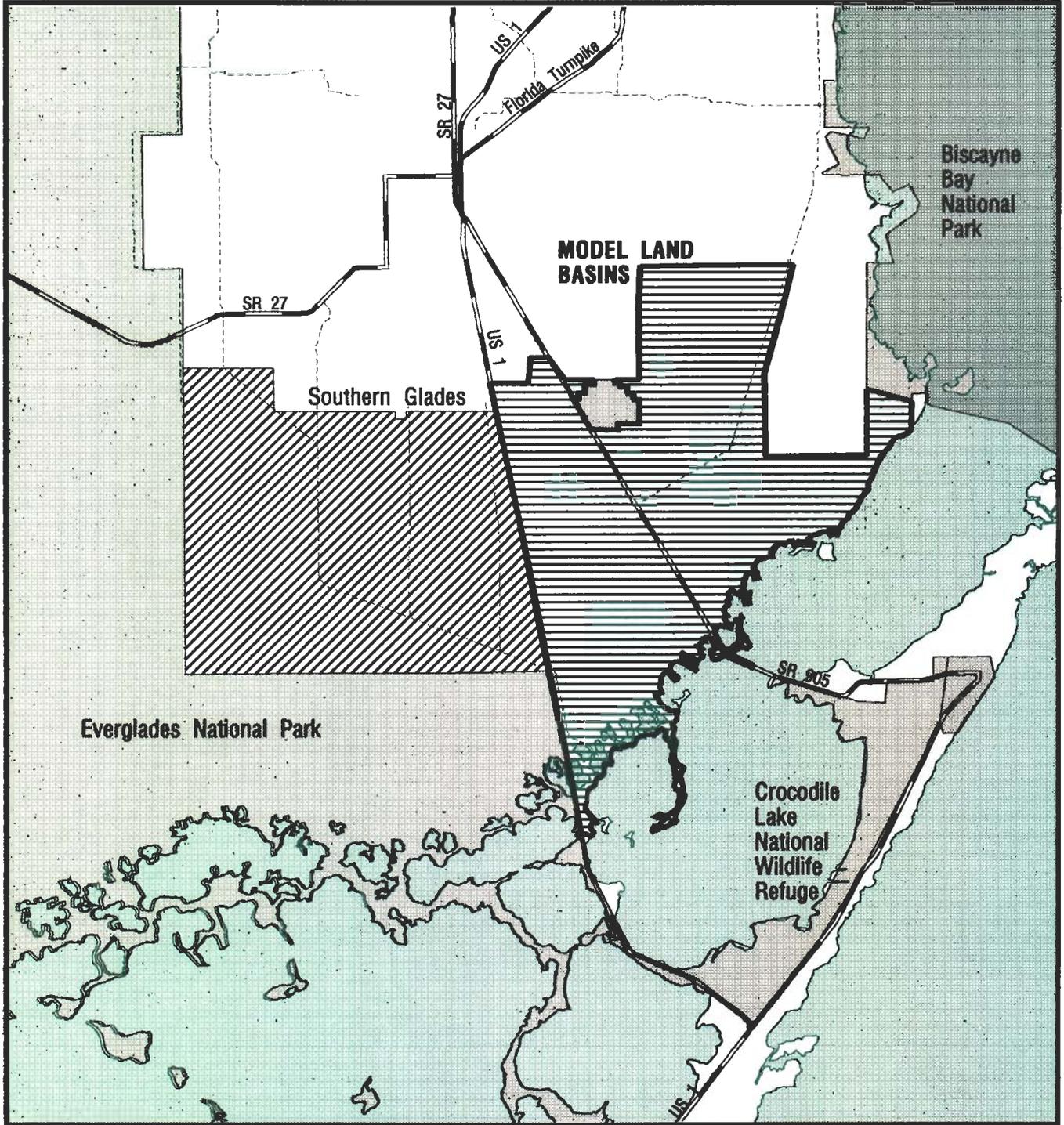
## **4. Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner:**

With the exception of the exotic invasion in the northwest corner, the tract is in very good condition. Dade County has indicated that this site would be a high priority area for treatment of exotics as part of their off-site mitigation program for development elsewhere in the county. The National Park Service has stated that they would be willing to manage the lands under certain conditions. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, through Crocodile Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, has also made a verbal offer to assist in management.

## **5. Recreation Potential:**

This tract is surprisingly open and, for the dedicated hiker, would provide the opportunity to explore a rather unique part of Florida. There is excellent opportunity for use of the extensive shoreline, by boaters and fishermen.

<b>County:</b>	<b>Dade/Monroe</b>
<b>Total Project Area:</b>	<b>31,000 Acres</b>
<b>Estimated Assessed Value:</b>	<b>\$25 Million</b>
<b>Number of Owners:</b>	<b>Numerous</b>



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary





# North Fork St. Lucie River

## 1. General Description:

The stretch of North Fork under consideration is approximately six miles long, and extends from the White City bridge to Canal 24.

## 2. Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources:

More than 80% of the project area is comprised of wetlands within the river flood plain. The wetland types include hardwood swamp, low hammock, sawgrass marsh and mangrove forest. The mangroves are limited to approximately the lower one-third of the project. The flood plain wetlands help lower current velocities in the river, thereby attenuating and gradually releasing the flood waters. This action also facilitates recharge of the surficial aquifer, and filters out nutrients, pollutants and suspended solids.

## 3. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition:

This stretch is included within the North Fork St. Lucie River

Aquatic Preserve and is classified as Outstanding Florida Water. In addition to the river flood plain, the project includes approximately 175 acres of high quality uplands, such as high hammock, pine flatwoods and sand pine scrub.

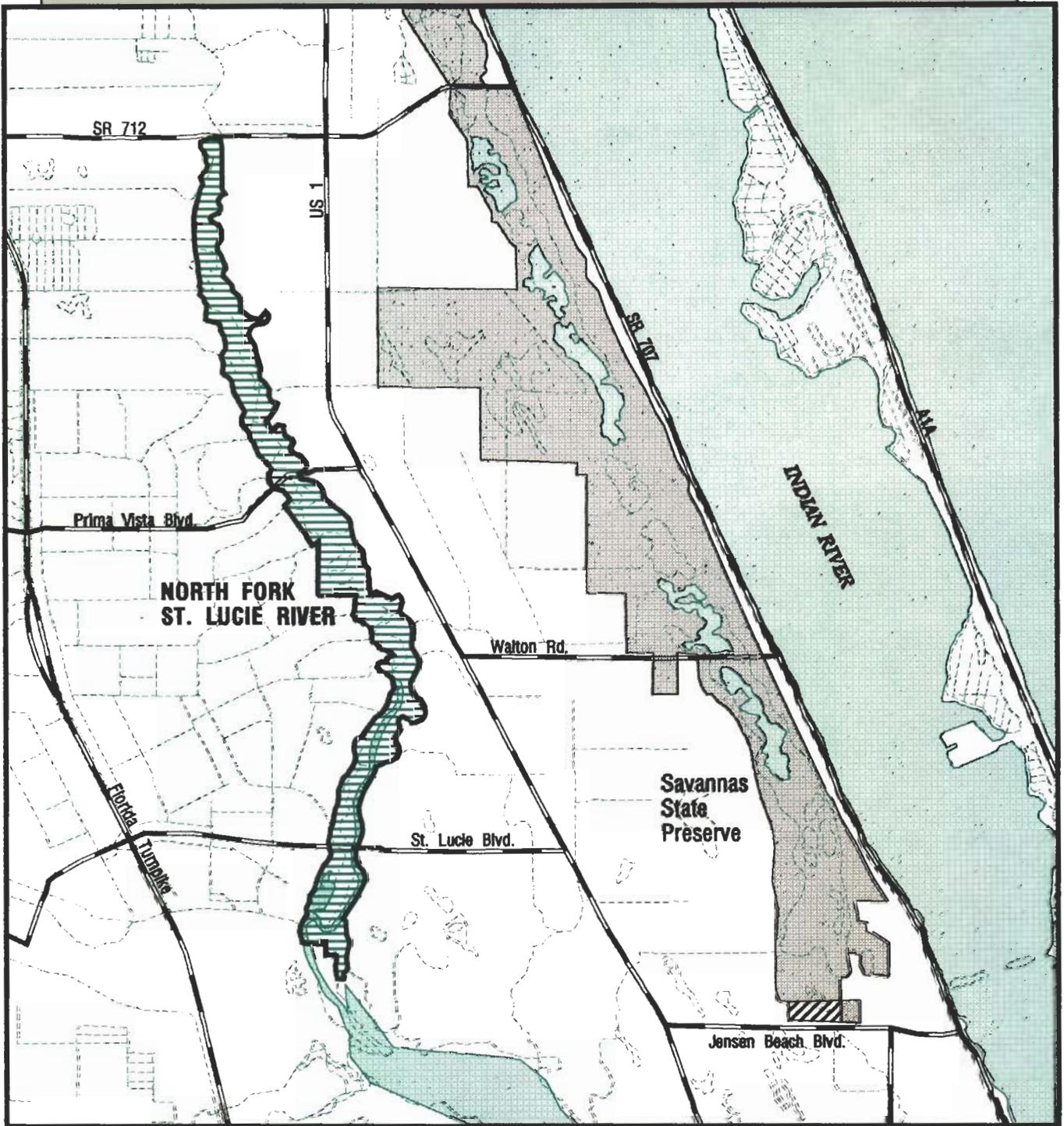
## 4. Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner:

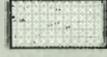
Encroaching urban development proves the greatest threat. No flood plain restoration or structure replacement appears necessary. Some exotic vegetation is present, but in controllable amounts. Both St. Lucie County and the City of Port St. Lucie have agreed to manage the property and commit funds for management should it be acquired.

## 5. Public Recreation:

Due to its proximity to the rapidly expanding areas of St. Lucie County, the property is readily accessible to potential users. Boating, fishing and canoeing are actively pursued on this part of the river at this time. The willingness of local government to participate in management increases the likelihood of riverfront parks and other passive recreational facilities.

<i>County:</i>	<i>St. Lucie</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>2,000 Acres</i>
<i>Estimated Assessed Value:</i>	<i>\$5,600,000</i>
<i>Number of Owners:</i>	<i>Numerous</i>



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary





# Paradise Run

## 1. General Description:

The project lies west of Canal-38, between Structure-65 E and Lake Okeechobee. Unlike the other pools of the Kissimmee River, Paradise Run will not be reflooded by Level II Backfilling, since it is controlled by the stage in Lake Okeechobee. Remnant river oxbows are still present, although the surrounding land has been drained and is now improved pasture.

## 2. Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources:

Paradise Run has degenerated because it receives no continuous surface water input to allow it to operate as a flowing riverine system. Runoff from adjacent uplands is the primary source of water. Flap-gated structures in the Levee-59 Borrow Canal can discharge water into Paradise Run when stages are high enough, but that does not occur on a regular basis. Paradise Run is physically separated from Canal-38 by a continuous spoil pile. Numerous wetlands still exist adjacent to the old river channel. Although these wetlands suffer from a lack of water, according to the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Paradise Run still has high wildlife utilization in the form of water fowl and wading birds.

## 3. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition:

Since water levels in Paradise Run will not be affected by Kissimmee River restoration, other structural methods will have to be employed to provide a continuous flow of water to the reach. It appears that several engineering solutions exist. To date, time and funds have not been available to explore fully the various possibilities. Paradise Run suffers from lack of flow, resulting in stagnant conditions and low dissolved oxygen levels. Increased flows would improve greatly the quality of water being discharged to Canal-38 and Lake Okeechobee, as well as increase the habitat diversity gained by a flowing system versus a confined wetland.

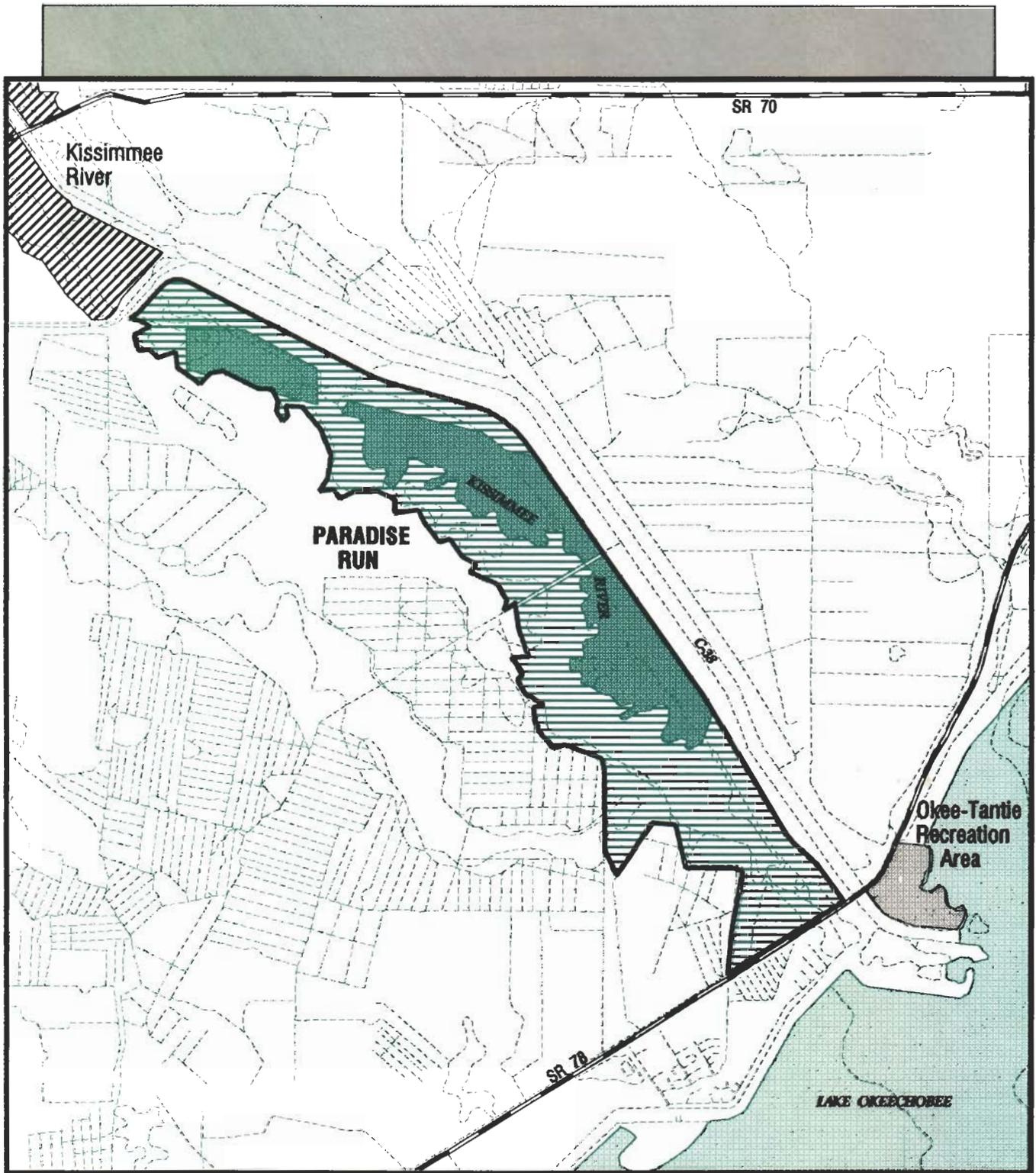
## 4. Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner:

Land management in Paradise Run will be difficult if restoration of the floodplain cannot be accomplished. The present land use is improved pasture and cattle grazing.

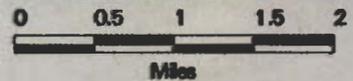
## 5. Recreation Potential:

If connected with Canal-38 and constant flows reestablished, there is excellent potential for canoeing, fishing, and wildlife observation. Paradise Run's close proximity to the City of Okeechobee and Lake Okeechobee would make it a popular recreational destination. It is also possible that the Florida National Scenic Trail would be extended through Paradise Run.

<b>Counties:</b>	<i>Okeechobee and Glades</i>
<b>Total Project Area:</b>	<i>4,265 Acres</i>
<b>Acres Acquired:</b>	<i>1,406</i>
<b>Land Cost:</b>	<i>\$2,287,335</i>
<b>Per Acre Cost:</b>	<i>\$1,627</i>
<b>Acres Remaining:</b>	<i>2,859</i>
<b>Estimated Assessed Value:</b>	<i>\$4.5 Million</i>



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary



# Savannas

## 1. General Description:

The Savannas is located between the coastal dune, west of the Indian River, and the pine flatwoods of southeastern St. Lucie County. The Savannas extend into Northern Martin County. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has acquired approximately 4,100 acres under the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) program. This area is managed by DNR as the Savannas State Preserve. The 1,000 acres is the remainder of the project to be acquired. The District and DNR would cooperate in acquisition.

## 2. Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources:

The freshwater aquifer which underlies the Savannas is not productive enough for municipal uses, but the recharge that occurs along the coastal ridge serves to hold back the saltwater wedge, thereby reducing the danger of saltwater intrusion. Habitat types are diverse and include sand pine scrub, open water sloughs, emergent marshes and low pine flatwoods. The wetlands are important feeding and nesting sites for wading birds in St. Lucie and Martin Counties whose habitat has been lost to urban development. The Savannas is under heavy development pressure on both the east and west sides.

## 3. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition:

The Savannas is one of the most unique and endangered natural systems in the District. It is a remnant coastal wetland system, which historically extended along most of the Southeast Florida coast. Most of the area is in its natural state, thus eliminating the need for restoration. The wetlands are highly susceptible to degradation by stormwater inputs from urban development.

## 4. Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner:

Exotic plant growth is minimal. Wetland communities are still in good condition. Extensive hydrologic restoration does not appear necessary. Management of the additional lands would be undertaken by DNR as part of the Savannas State Preserve.

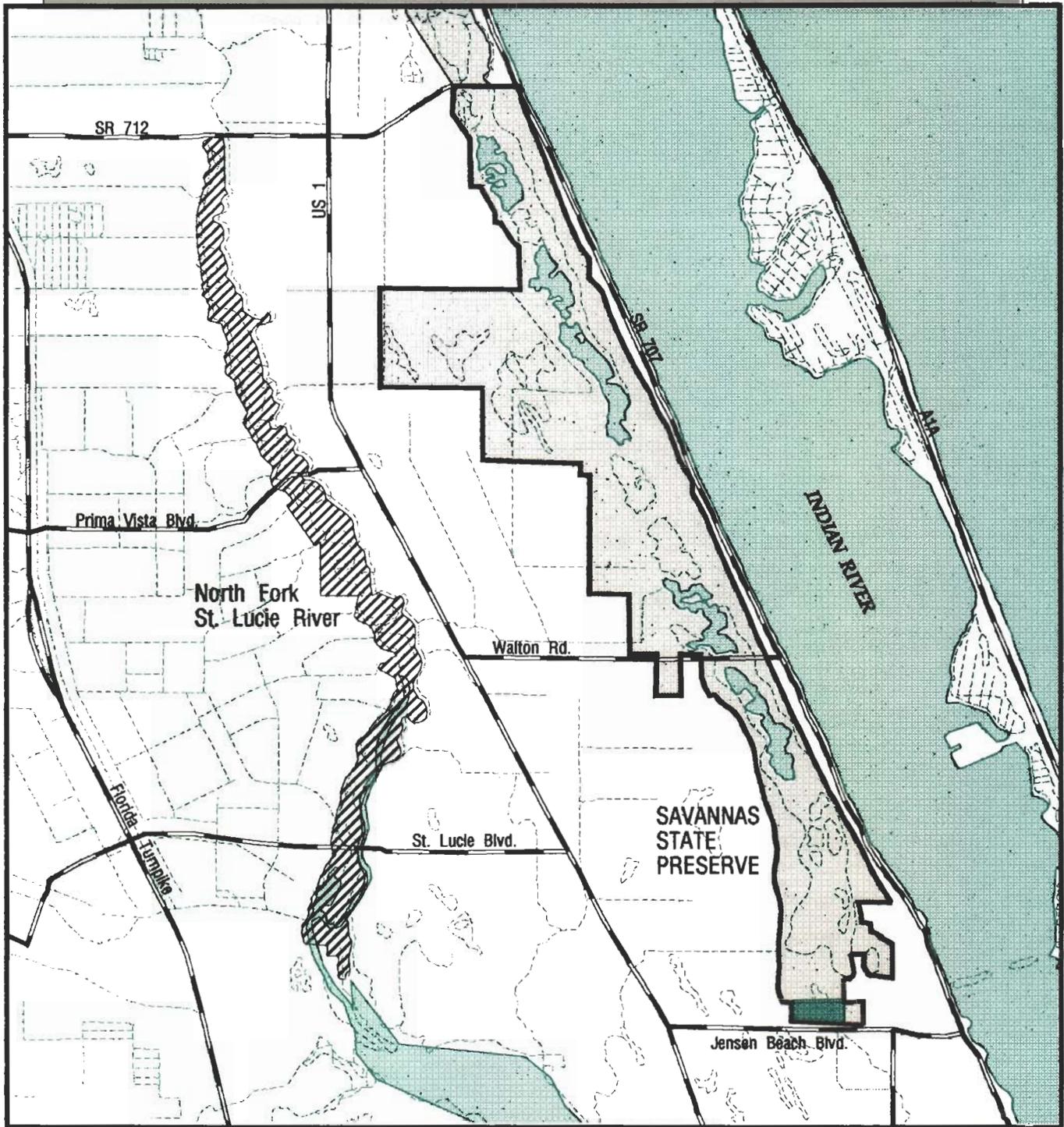
## 5. Public Recreation:

Public use of the Savannas is very high. It is used extensively by fishermen, canoeists and photographers. Its close proximity to urban population centers will increase the use by the public and school groups.

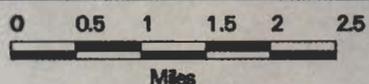
<b>County:</b>	<i>St. Lucie and Martin</i>
<b>Acres Acquired:</b>	<b>77.13</b>
<b>Land Cost:</b>	<b>\$3,100,000<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>Total Project Area:</b>	<b>5,100 Acres<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Estimated Assessed Value:</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>
<b>Number of Owners:</b>	<b>Numerous</b>

<sup>1</sup>4,100 Acres acquired under Conservation and Recreation Lands Program (CARL)

<sup>2</sup>\$1,000,000 provided by Martin County



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary



NOTE: SOR has Partial Ownership in the Savannas.



# South Fork St. Lucie River

## 1. General Description:

This project includes a portion of the upper reach of the South Fork St. Lucie River, commencing approximately three-fourth of one mile south of State Road 76 and extending approximately one and one-fourth miles southward. The project was proposed by the citizens of Martin County to preserve and protect this relatively undisturbed portion of the river for the use and enjoyment of existing and future generations.

## 2. Land Stewardship Activities:

### A. Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

The productivity of the St. Lucie Estuary is dependent upon both the quantity and quality of water entering the river. There is evidence that adjacent land-use activities have altered the natural hydrologic regime, resulting in changes in the density and species composition of the hydric-hammock along this reach of the river.

A conceptual management plan covering the river corridor has been prepared by Martin County, in consultation with the District. The purpose of the plan is to preserve and enhance the condition of this reach through a combination of land acquisition, land-use regulation, and public-use management. The effective implementation of development guidelines and regulations for private properties within, and immediately adjoining, the corridor will be critical to the success of this effort.

Regular inspections will be made by Martin County Code Enforcement Officers to ensure that no activities are taking place within the corridor that are inconsistent with the goal of protecting and enhancing this reach of the river. A boundary fence along the west side of the District's property will be installed and posted to prevent unauthorized access from areas to the west. The Martin County Sheriff's office will provide regular patrols to those areas accessible by vehicle. The District will continue to monitor appropriate properties for surface water management permit compliance.

### B. Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Martin County has agreed to manage the portion of the corridor purchased by the District and to develop and implement the necessary land-use regulations. An agreement setting forth the general terms and conditions governing management of the tract will be executed between the parties.

The need for exotic species control, prescribed burning, and other management measures will be determined by the county in consultation with appropriate state and federal agencies. Where appropriate, specific programs will be implemented.

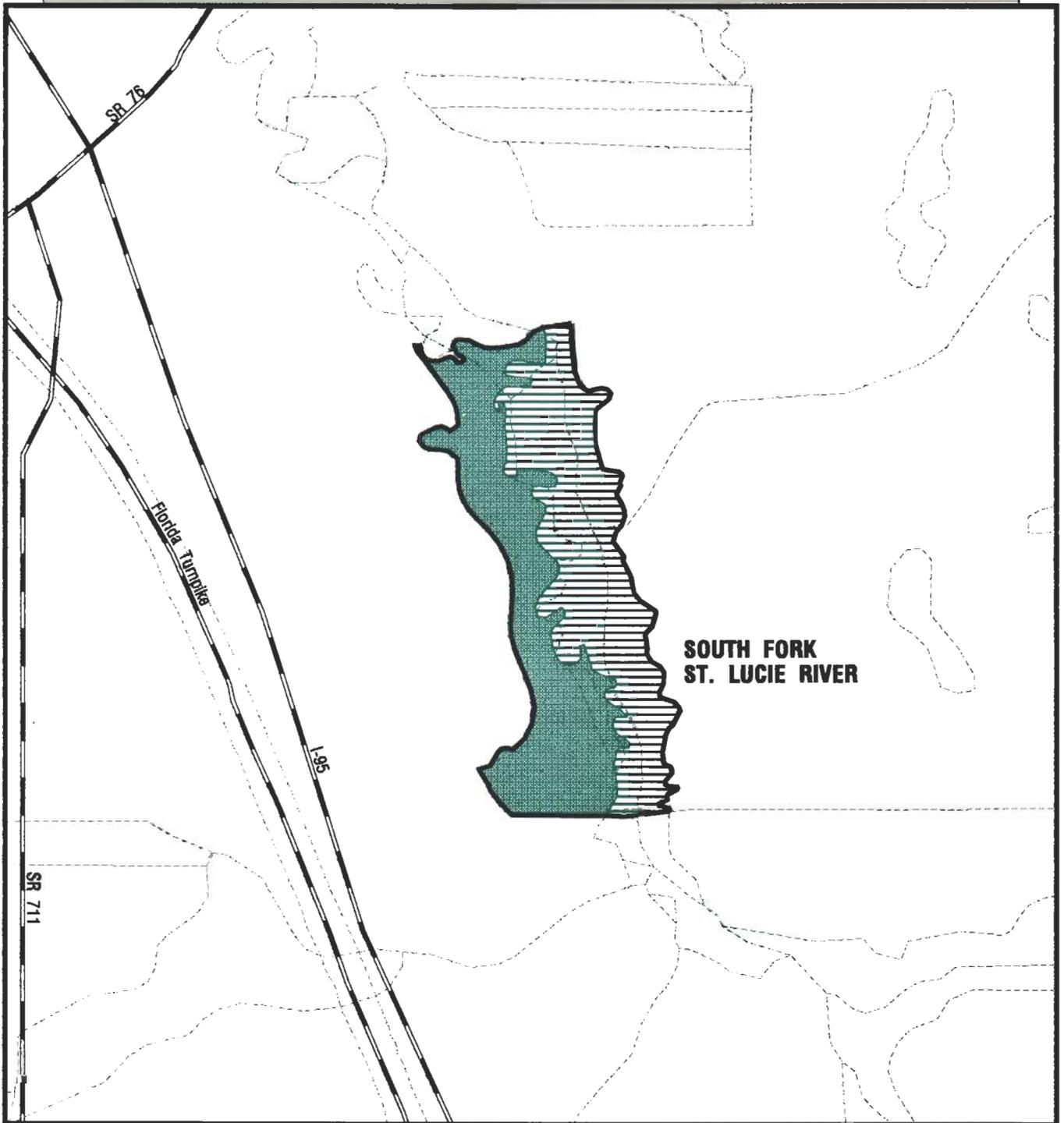
### C. Public Recreation

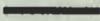
This reach of the river is quite scenic and has been used rather infrequently in the past by canoeists and fishermen. Martin County maintains a small boat access site near State Road 76. Additionally, an upland site on the west side of the river has been used in the past by the Boy Scouts.

A hiking trail is being developed in cooperation with the Florida Trail Association.

Future uses of the river corridor will be restricted to passive uses, such as canoeing, hiking, fishing, picnicking and nature appreciation. Hunting will be prohibited, and vehicular access will be restricted to established access sites. Consideration will be given to the establishment of additional sites to facilitate public-use; however, new river access sites will be restricted to the use of non-motorized craft. Site maintenance will be undertaken by Martin County.

<i>County:</i>	<i>Martin</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>184 Acres</i>
<i>Acres Acquired:</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Land Cost:</i>	<i>\$2,000,000</i>
<i>Per Acre Cost:</i>	<i>\$20,000</i>
<i>Acres Remaining:</i>	<i>84</i>
<i>Estimated Assessed Value:</i>	<i>\$250,000</i>



-  **SOR Lands Acquired to Date**
-  **Potential Acquisition Area**
-  **Other Conservation Area**
-  **Other SOR Projects**
-  **SOR Project Boundary**



# S trazzulla

## 1. General Description:

The Strazzulla tract is located east of the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge and adjacent to Levee 40. The western half of the property is sawgrass marsh. Cypress Sloughs, mixed with low pine flatwoods and wet prairies, dominate the eastern half.

## 2. Land Stewardship Activities:

### A. Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Much of the eastern one-third of the project is being invaded by Melaleuca. The reason for this appears to be due to the lowering of the water table on the residential property to the east. If efforts to halt the invasion of exotic plants are expected to be successful, hydrologic restoration is essential.

An investigation was made to determine the feasibility of diverting pumped stormwater away from the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge and onto the exotic-infested portion of the SOR tract. It was hoped that the plan

would provide the SOR property with needed water, while providing an acceptable level of treatment for the stormwater. Unfortunately, a large enough area could not be provided to accept the volume of water necessary to make the project work.

### B. Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

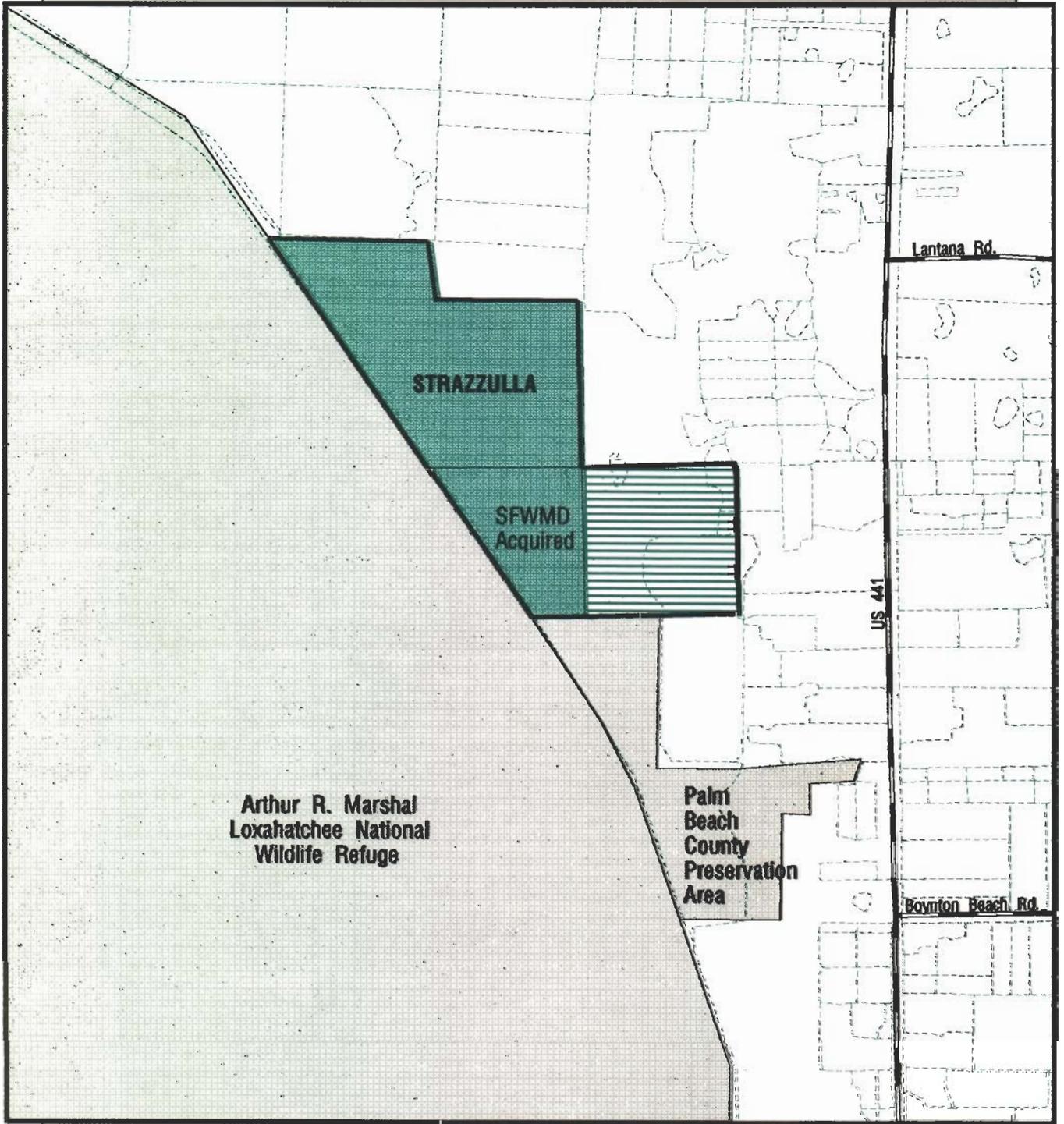
Illegal hunting and trespassing by individuals on off-road vehicles continues to be a problem. The District has contracted with a private security firm with certified law enforcement personnel to provide regularly scheduled road patrols.

During the past year District staff has been in discussion with the management of the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge concerning the possibility of the Refuge accepting management responsibility for this project. Those discussions are unsolved at this date.

### C. Public Recreation

Recreational possibilities would be mostly passive, in nature, and probably limited to hiking and wildlife observation.

<b>County:</b>	<b>Palm Beach</b>
<b>Total Project Area:</b>	<b>1,865 Acres</b>
<b>Acres Acquired:</b>	<b>1,225 Acres</b>
<b>Land Cost:</b>	<b>\$3,000,000</b>
<b>Per Acre Cost:</b>	<b>\$2,449</b>
<b>Acres Remaining:</b>	<b>640</b>



-  **SOR Lands Acquired to Date**
-  **Potential Acquisition Area**
-  **Other Conservation Area**
-  **Other SOR Projects**
-  **SOR Project Boundary**





# Telegraph Swamp

## 1. General Description:

Telegraph Swamp is located in Charlotte County and covers nearly 10,000 acres. It is a mixture of low pine flatwoods, cypress heads and emergent freshwater wetlands. The surrounding land-uses are improved pasture and native range, as well as some row-crop farming.

## 2. Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources:

This is a diverse system with a number of habitat types. It connects with the C.M. Webb Wildlife Management Area to the north, which covers an additional 65,000 acres of similar habitat. Telegraph Swamp has important water supply features. Although little hydrogeologic investigation has been done for this area, the following assumptions can be made:

- a. This part of Charlotte County is underlain by a water table aquifer, which has a potential for development of large quantities of water for public supply. The aquifer is thickest beneath Telegraph Swamp.
- b. A situation in which a swamp occurs over the thickest part of an aquifer is ideal for aquifer recharge during the transition from dry to wet season.

c. Telegraph Swamp appears to be an important resource with good aquifer recharge capability and potential for wellfield development. However, excessive withdrawals from the aquifer, particularly from poorly placed wells, will alter the hydroperiod of the wetland and adverse environmental impacts will result.

## 3. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition:

Telegraph Swamp is in excellent condition. No exotic vegetation has been observed. Hydrologic restoration would not be necessary. The size of the swamp and the single ownership of land around it provide it the highest degree of protection.

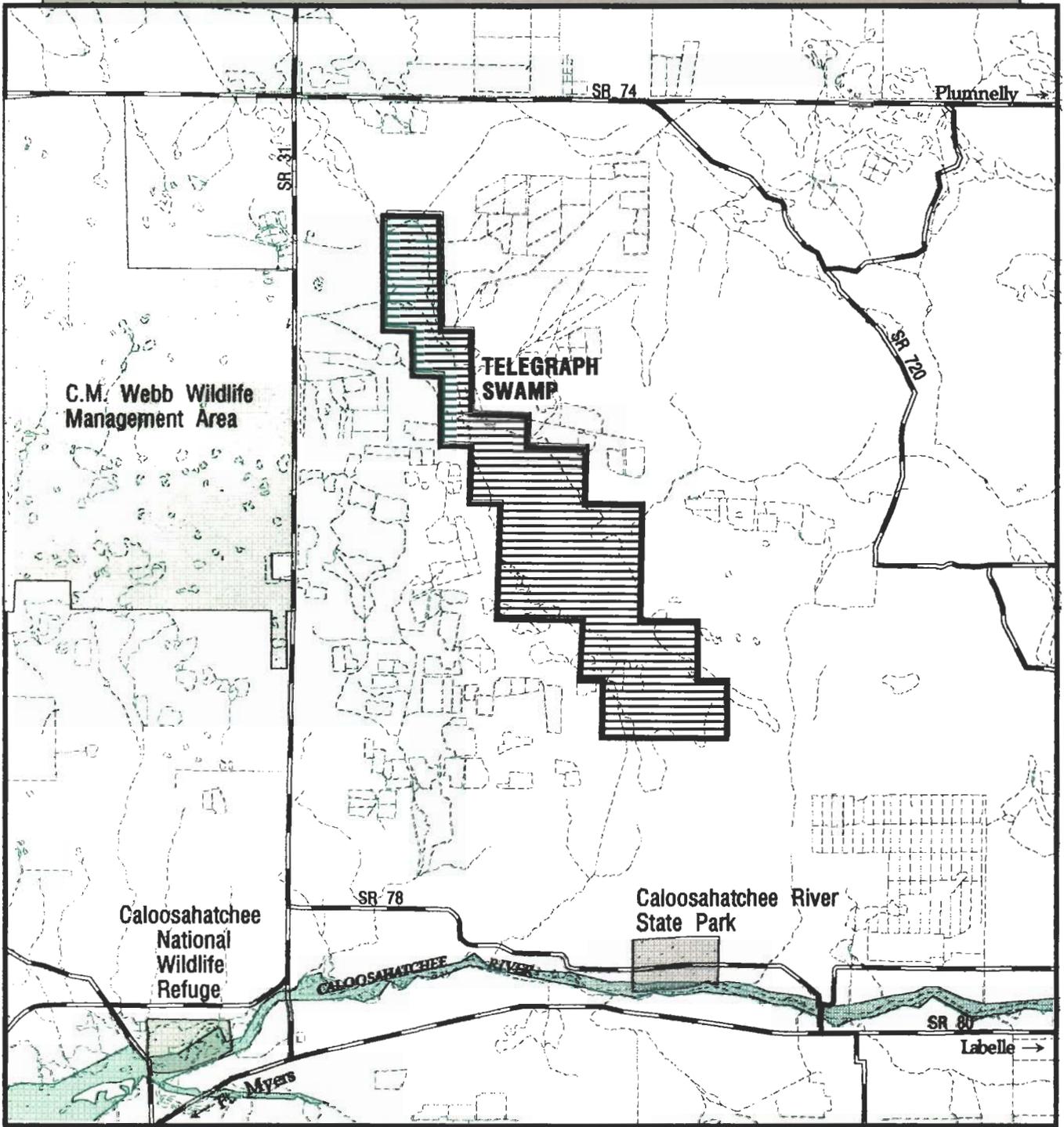
## 4. Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner:

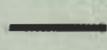
Due to the size and healthy condition of the system, management requirements are minimal.

## 5. Public Recreation:

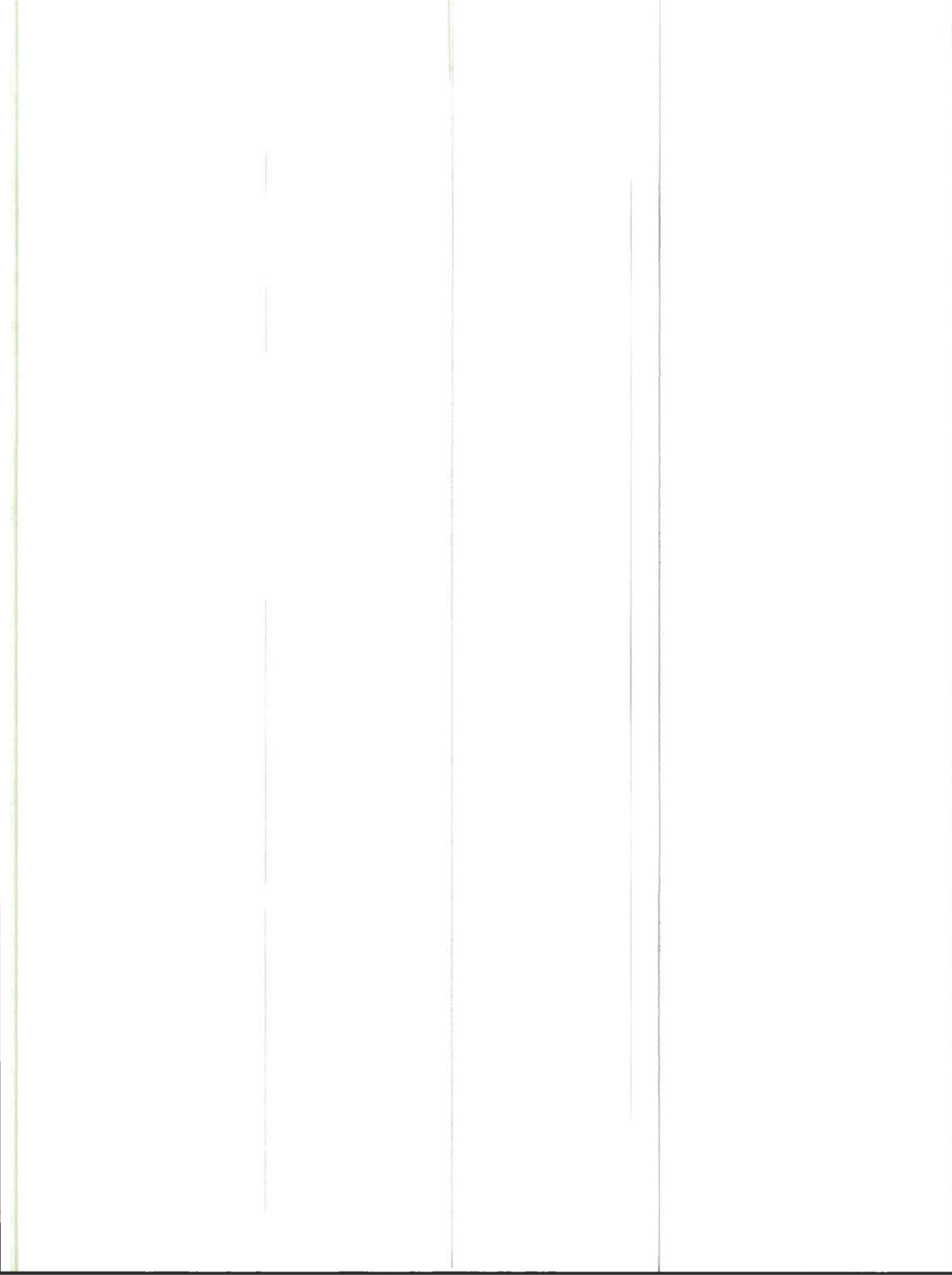
The potential for public use is uncertain. It provides excellent opportunities for hunting, but the fact that it is totally surrounded by private land and has minimal access probably limits its public-use potential.

<i>County:</i>	<i>Charlotte</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>10,000 Acres</i>
<i>Estimated Assessed Value:</i>	<i>\$5,000,000</i>
<i>Number of Owners:</i>	<i>One</i>



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary





*1993 Save Our Rivers - Five Year Plan*

**COMPLETED PROJECTS**

# B *ig Pine Key*

## 1. General Description:

The Big Pine Key project is designed to compliment the existing Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge. Land acquisitions were initiated by The Nature Conservancy, and by Governing Board action. The District's contribution was limited to \$2,000,000. In 1990, the District completed its land acquisition commitment to the project. The District supports the ongoing land acquisition efforts by the Fish and Wildlife Service and The Nature Conservancy to protect the remaining undeveloped parcels within the project boundaries.

## 2. Land Stewardship Activities:

### *A. Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition*

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) was under a one year contract to conduct management activities, such as exotic removal and treatment, general cleanup work, natural area inventory, and preparation of a land management plan.

In March, the SOR field operations crew spent two weeks with TNC personnel doing general cleanup and exotic vegetation treatment. TNC continued these efforts and removed many tons of trash and exotic vegetation from several individual lots in the project. These lots are being monitored to prevent the re-invasion of Brazilian pepper, and to determine if they will naturally revegetate with native material.

Preparation of a long term management plan was the major activity. The purpose of the plan is to provide future managers with guidelines for protecting and restoring the unique vegetative communities and wildlife populations on Big Pine Key. The plan includes descriptions and maps of the vegetative communities, as well as lists of observed wildlife, endangered plants and animals, and summaries of the island's freshwater lenses and hydrogeology.

### *A. The plan lists goals and objectives which include*

Promotion of interagency cooperation  
Restoration of a natural fire regime  
Control and removal of exotic vegetation  
Hydrologic restoration, where necessary  
General cleanup and security  
Development of a community-based volunteer program  
Nature oriented public use

Management of Big Pine Key SOR lands by District personnel is very difficult due to its remote location. It is proposed that management will be done under contract, based on a scope of work developed from the management plan. It is important to have a full time on-site manager to handle the day to day activities, as well as provide a security presence and deterrent to vandalism and illegal dumping.

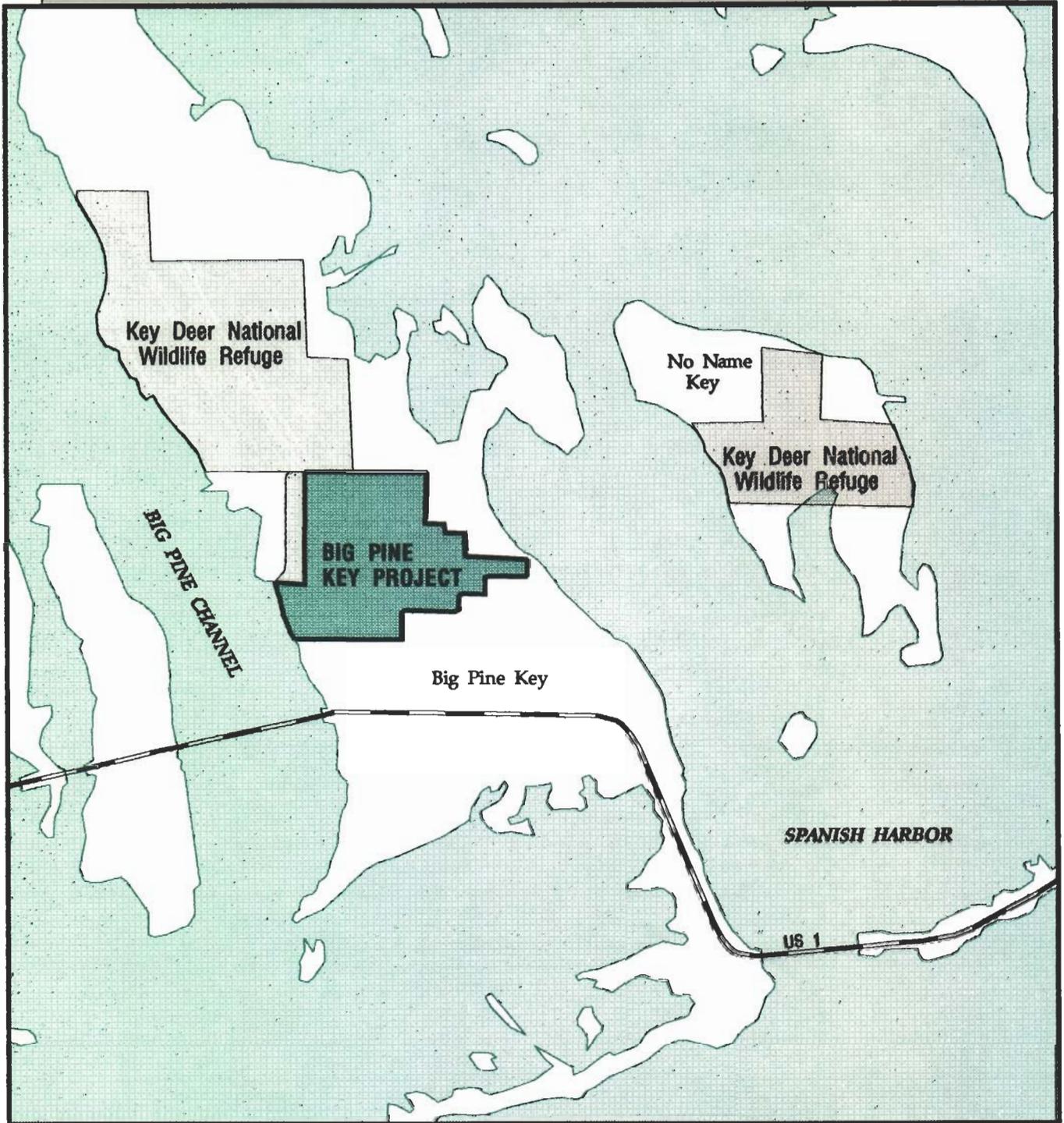
### *B. Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition*

With the exception of a single 78 acre tract, the District's ownership pattern within the project is scattered and made up of several small parcels. Due to the scattered ownership and the long travel distance for Save Our Rivers field personnel, the District is trying to enter into a contractual management agreement with a qualified agency or firm. In preparation for this, the The Nature Conservancy has developed an operational management plan, with particular emphasis on prescribed fire, exotic plant control, habitat improvement, and mosquito ditch restoration.

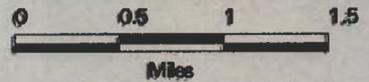
### *C. Public Recreation*

The development of a hiking trail is possible on the largest tract (78 acres), but coordination will be done first with the National Key Deer Refuge, to see if additional trails are needed, and if the two systems can be combined.

<i>County:</i>	<i>Monroe</i>
<i>Acres Acquired:</i>	<i>190</i>
<i>Land Cost:</i>	<i>\$1,999,900</i>
<i>Per Acre Cost:</i>	<i>\$10,581</i>
<i>Acres Remaining:</i>	<i>0</i>



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary



NOTE: SOR has only Partial Ownership in the Big Pine Key Project.



# uPuis Reserve

## 1. General Description:

The DuPuis Reserve State Forest encompasses 21,875 acres in northwestern Palm Beach and Southwestern Martin Counties. The property is interspersed with numerous ponds, wet prairies, cypress domes and a remnant of Everglades marsh.

## 2. Land Stewardship Activities:

### A. Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Hydrologic restoration efforts on the part of the District continued in 1992. Ditch plugs which had been installed in 1990-1991 are blocking the discharge of water from wetlands which were previously drained. Upland vegetation which had become established due to over drainage is being replaced with wetland species. Three ditch plugs were designed and installed, by SOR personnel, in the FPL canal along the DuPuis/Corbett boundary. The intent is to breach the FPL service road and allow the restoration of sheetflow between Corbett and DuPuis.

Design work continues on a levee and water control structure along the L-8 canal. The levee will hold water in an area which has been drained for many years. When completed, more than 2500 acres of former Everglades marsh will be reflooded, and the hydroperiod will be significantly increased on several thousand additional acres adjacent to the marsh. It is anticipated that final design work will be completed during Winter, 1993, with construction scheduled to begin during the Spring.

The Florida Division of Forestry (DOF) continued their management activities as a contractor to the District. Their work included constructing seven miles of road, prescribed burning 4300 acres, and spot treating exotic vegetation on more than 7,000 acres.

### B. Public Recreation

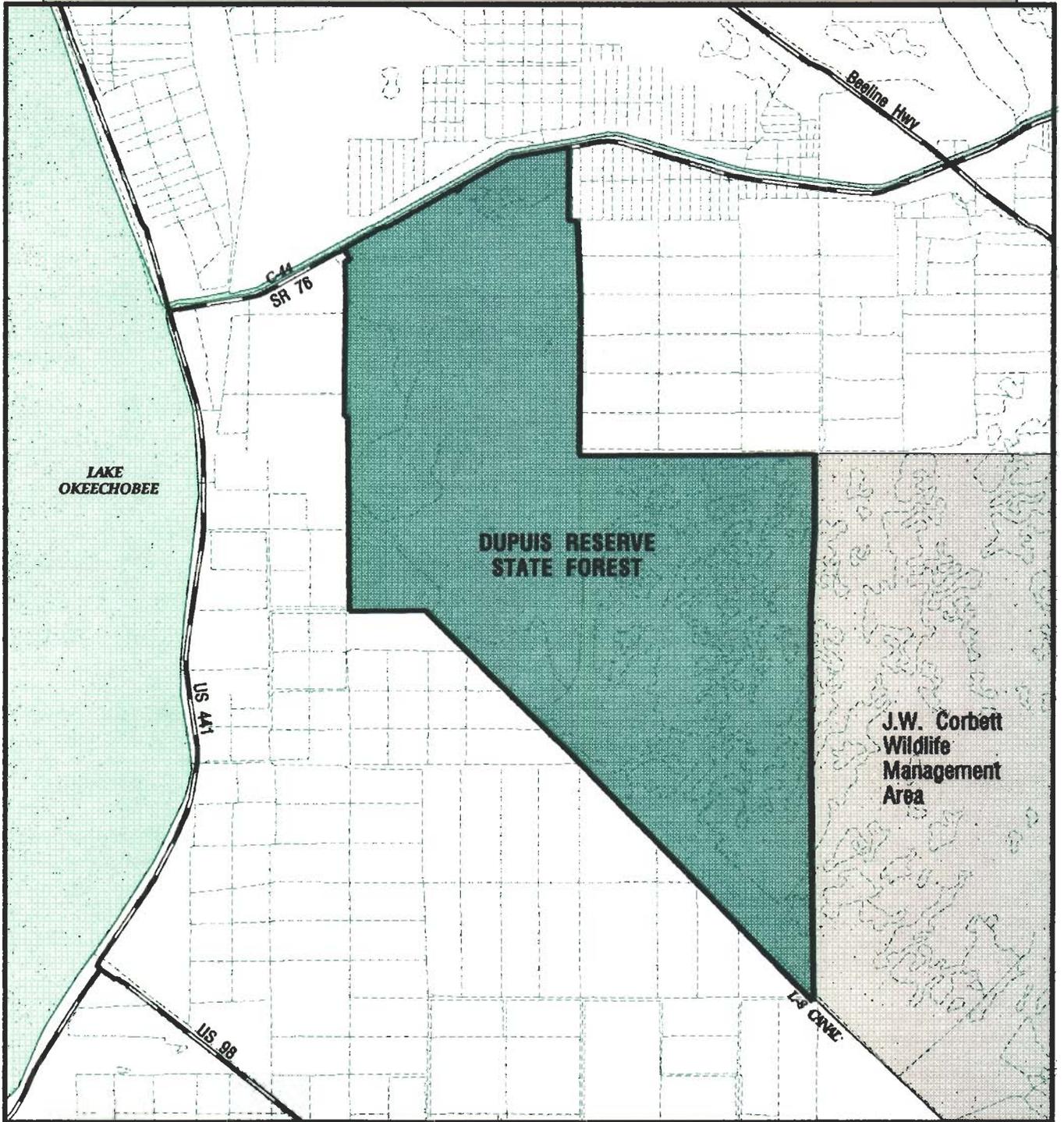
Hiking and equestrian trail systems have been developed through separate memorandums of understanding (MOU) with the Florida Trail Association (FTA) and the Dupuis Horsemen's Association (DHA). The hiking trails consist of four (4) loops, affording hikers the opportunity of progressively longer hikes ranging from 4.3 to 16.3 miles. A primitive campsite is available for backpackers. Horseback riders have their choice of three trail loops ranging from 7.2 to 16.5 miles. An equestrian center features a restroom with showers, covered picnic area, water and tethering facilities, a corral, stables and areas for parking and overnight camping (tents and self-contained RVs).

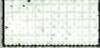
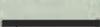
DuPuis continues to be a popular spot with hikers, campers, and horseback riders. More than 1200 hikers and general day users visited the site, and more than 600 equestrian users were recorded.

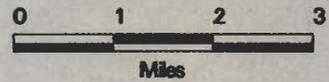
A new hiking trail which connects the existing loop with the Corbett trail system was constructed, and will eventually allow hikers to walk from the Loxahatchee Slough to DuPuis.

Public recreational activities are regulated by the DOF and the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, and the DOF is implementing a user fee system. A series of limited quota hunts for deer, turkey and feral hogs is held each year under the supervision of the Commission. The program has been designed to provide a high quality hunting experience. No more than 50 hunters are permitted on the reserve each day, and the use of dogs and off road vehicles is prohibited. The Reserve is closed to general recreation activities on hunt days, and hunting schedules are set to minimize closures during the prime hiking and horseback riding periods.

<i>Counties:</i>	<i>Martin and Palm Beach</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>21,875</i>
<i>Acres</i>	
<i>Land Cost:</i>	<i>\$23,000,000</i>
<i>Acres Acquired:</i>	<i>21,875</i>
<i>Per Acre Cost:</i>	<i>\$1,051</i>
<i>Acres Remaining:</i>	<i>0</i>



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary





# Lake Forest Preserve

## 1. General Description:

The preserve covers 439 acres along the southwest shore of Lake Tibet-Butler in Orange County. The land is designated for preservation and restoration for use in public education and passive recreation. The vegetative communities include major areas of Bay Swamp, Pine Flatwoods and Wetland Forested Mixed and smaller areas of Xeric Oak, burned trees, Coniferous Plantation, Cypress, Pond Pine, Freshwater Marsh and Emergent Aquatic Vegetation. The Lake Forest Nature Preserve site includes approximately 4000 feet of shoreline on Lake Tibet. The majority of the site is within the 100 year flood plain and is subject to seasonal inundation. State Road 535(Winter Garden-Vineland Road) traverses the southwest edge of the property.

## 2. Land Stewardship Activities:

### *A. Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition*

The stated County goals of the Preserve are wetland and wildlife habitat preservation as well as educational and passive recreation. A program of prescribed burning and wildfire suppression is planned for the site. Vegetative management is planned to include wetland preservation, prescribed burning, exotic control, selective cutting of trees to improve habitat, and reforestation in some areas.

### *B. Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner*

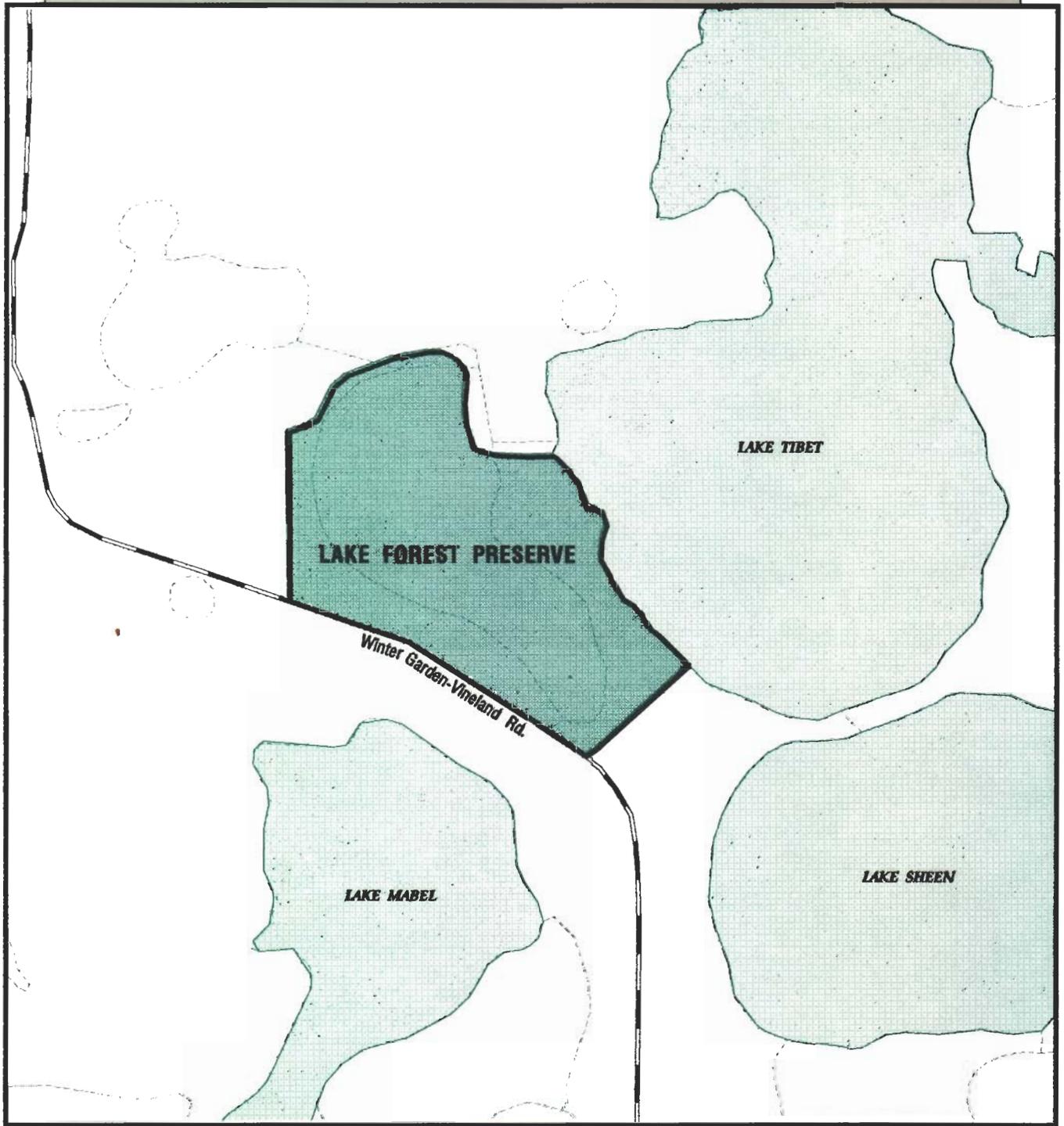
Orange County is managing the property under an agreement with the District. During 1991 and 1992, Orange County Staff performed extensive studies and field work to locate phase one facilities of the nature center. Primary attention was directed toward locating facilities in non-wetland areas. Design and permitting activities also sought minimum clearing for nature center facilities. District staff reviewed site locations with Orange County staff. Construction of phase one items commenced in mid-1992.

### *C. Public Recreation*

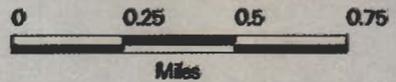
The diverse natural features of the Preserve make it attractive for hiking, wildlife observation, environmental education and an overall experience of the variety of the Central Florida environment. Careful planning, siting and control of access is a portion of the management program.

The master plan concentrates the nature center and related uses within the pine flatwood community adjacent to SR 535, in the southwest portion of the site. From the nature center, trail systems will extend outward reaching into wetland and bog communities, xeric communities and marsh and lake communities. In some areas boardwalks are planned to extend out in short runs from the main trail loops to observation blinds. Other facilities include controlled primitive group camping areas as well as group and individual picnic areas.

<i>County:</i>	<i>Orange</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>439 Acres</i>
<i>Acres Acquired:</i>	<i>439</i>
<i>Land Cost:</i>	<i>\$3,700,000</i>
<i>Per Acre Cost:</i>	<i>\$ 8,428</i>
<i>Acres Remaining:</i>	<i>0</i>



-  **SOR Lands Acquired to Date**
-  **Potential Acquisition Area**
-  **Other Conservation Area**
-  **Other SOR Projects**
-  **SOR Project Boundary**





# Nicodemus Slough

## 1. General Description:

Nicodemus Slough encompasses approximately 2200 acres of wet prairie, broadleaf marsh and transitional wetland (cordgrass) south of the Herbert Hoover Dike (LD-3) and west of State Road 78. Scattered tree growth occurs along the western edge of the tract. It was targeted for purchase in the original SOR legislation because the land floods periodically under the higher regulation stages, of Lake Okeechobee. The property was used for cattle grazing.

## 2. Land Stewardship Activities:

### A. Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Until recently, the construction of the Herbert Hoover Dike, coupled with the maintenance of lower stages in Lake Okeechobee, resulted in a shortened hydroperiod and general lowering of water levels in Nicodemus Slough. This in turn altered vegetative patterns on the property and permitted the spread of transitional and upland species. The installation of new water control structures and associated improvements to the Canal 19/Levee-41/42 system will enable the retention and manipulation of flood waters on the property that result from runoff and higher lake stages. A marsh revitalization program has been proposed by District staff for implementation in the future, following the completion of the new water control facilities.

### B. Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

The District prepared a conceptual management plan for

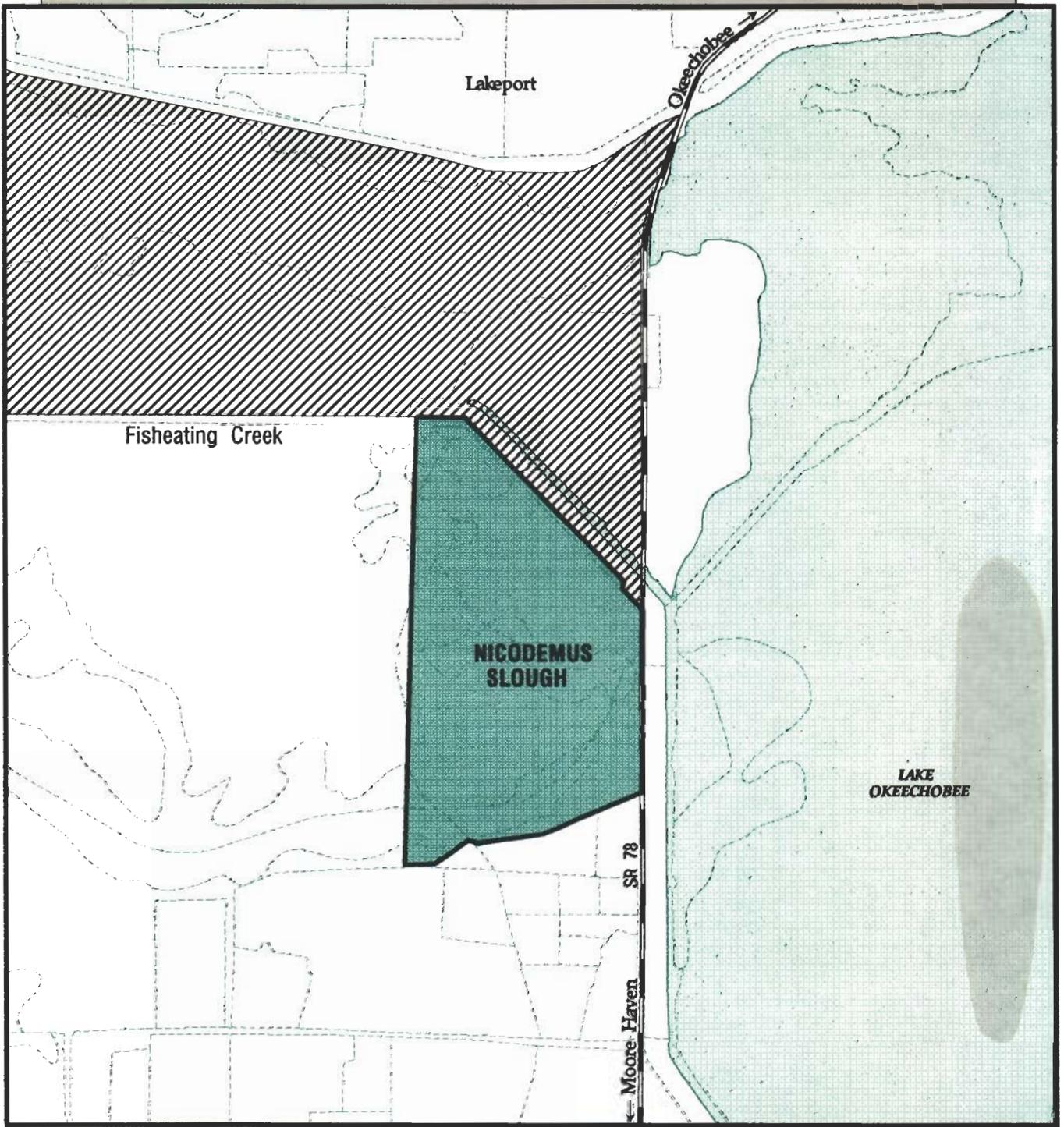
the property. Discussions are being held with Glades County regarding the establishment of a cooperative management program. If approved, the District will undertake all those activities related to habitat management, water quality and the manipulation of water levels in Nicodemus Slough. Such activities will include, but not be limited to, prescribed burning, exotic species control, water quality monitoring and biological monitoring. Water control structures will be operated to increase the use of the area by waterfowl and wading birds. Glades County will manage and regulate public use of the property for approved educational and outdoor recreation activities.

### C. Public Recreation

Facilities will be provided to facilitate access to, and use of, Nicodemus Slough for fishing, picnicking, canoeing, hiking, nature observation and photography. Hunting, power boating (including airboating), and the use of off-road vehicles will be prohibited, as the area is too small and such activities would conflict with the District's restoration objectives.

Some unauthorized hunting has taken place on the property since it was acquired by the District, and there is local interest to open the area to airboat use. Some limited waterfowl hunting may be feasible in the future; however, the use of airboats and other types of motorized craft does not appear compatible with the goal of improving the habitat for waterfowl and wading birds, particularly in light of the limited size of the tract. The property is probably best suited for operation as a wildlife viewing area and should be limited to passive, non-consumptive activities.

County:	Glades
Total Project Area:	2,219 Acres
Acres Acquired:	2,219
Land Cost:	\$1,800,000
Per Acre Cost:	\$811
Acres Remaining:	0



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary



# Six Mile Cypress I

## 1. General Description:

Six Mile Cypress Slough occupies approximately 2000 acres in Lee County southeast of the City of Ft. Myers. It extends from State Road 82 southwesterly for approximately nine miles to Ten Mile Canal. The slough averages 1,500 feet in width. The Slough consists of cypress swamp, interspersed with numerous open ponds. It is fringed with pine flatwoods, transitional hardwoods, wet prairies, and Melaleuca. Melaleuca has become the dominant vegetation type south of Daniels Road.

## 2. Land Stewardship Activities:

### A. Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Lee County has agreed to develop, operate and maintain the slough as a nature preserve under an agreement with the District. A detailed description of the slough is contained in the Six Mile Cypress Slough Management Plan prepared by the County in 1986. Specific actions to implement the plan are set forth in the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve Land and Water Management Plan prepared by the County and approved by the District in 1988.

Melaleuca and Brazilian Pepper are problem exotics that have proliferated in certain portions of the slough. Native vegetation has been completely replaced by Melaleuca in approximately 200 acres. A vigorous eradication/control program involving chemical and mechanical applications is planned to halt the future spread of these species. Reforestation with native species will be undertaken where large stands of exotics are removed. Lee County has a management agreement with the Division of Forestry to provide exotic control and reforestation for the Preserve.

### B. Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

In 1991 control structures at the terminus of the Slough were completed. These help retention of water in the area and serve to maintain the water table in the slough. In addition, a water conservation facility is located at the intersection of Daniels Parkway and Six Mile Parkway.

The entire perimeter of the slough is posted to discourage unauthorized access. Problem areas are being fenced and/or barricaded. Routine patrol is provided by preserve personnel and the Lee County Sheriff's Department.

A prescribed burning program is proposed for the pine flatwoods north of Penzance Road to maintain the species composition of this community and prevent the buildup of fuels that could result in damaging wildfires. Fire lanes will be constructed to facilitate the burns and to protect sensitive cypress and hardwood areas. Wildfires will be suppressed only when considered necessary to protect adjacent lands and highway travel or when preserve resources would be subject to irreparable damage.

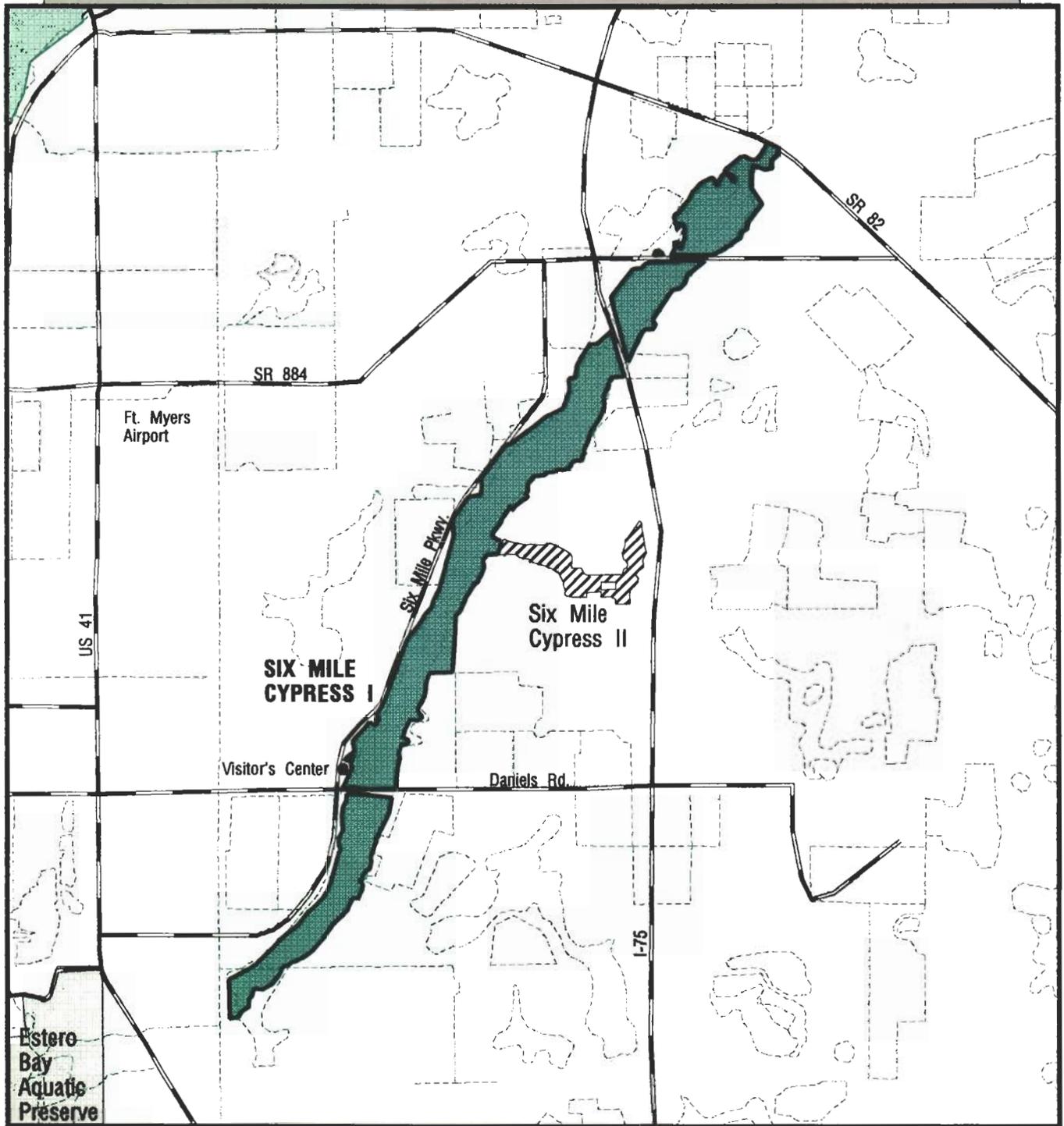
A complete list of wildlife species utilizing the slough is contained in the County's original management plan. Monitoring the occurrence of wildlife will be continued to determine if any changes in usage occurs. Consideration will be given to the needs of wildlife in reforestation efforts. Nest boxes will be installed to benefit cavity nesters, such as wood ducks, owls, and woodpeckers.

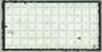
### C. Public Recreation

The slough has been used informally for both active and passive recreational activities for many years. The continuation of passive activities such as fishing, picnicking, photography and nature observation will be encouraged in appropriate locations within the preserve. Interpretive facilities consisting of an elevated boardwalk, covered amphitheater and parking area opened this year. Special programs are conducted by the Lee County Parks and Recreation Department. The Lee County School Board Department of Environmental Education continues to conduct field trips to the slough. Each year several thousand school children get a first hand exposure to the slough.

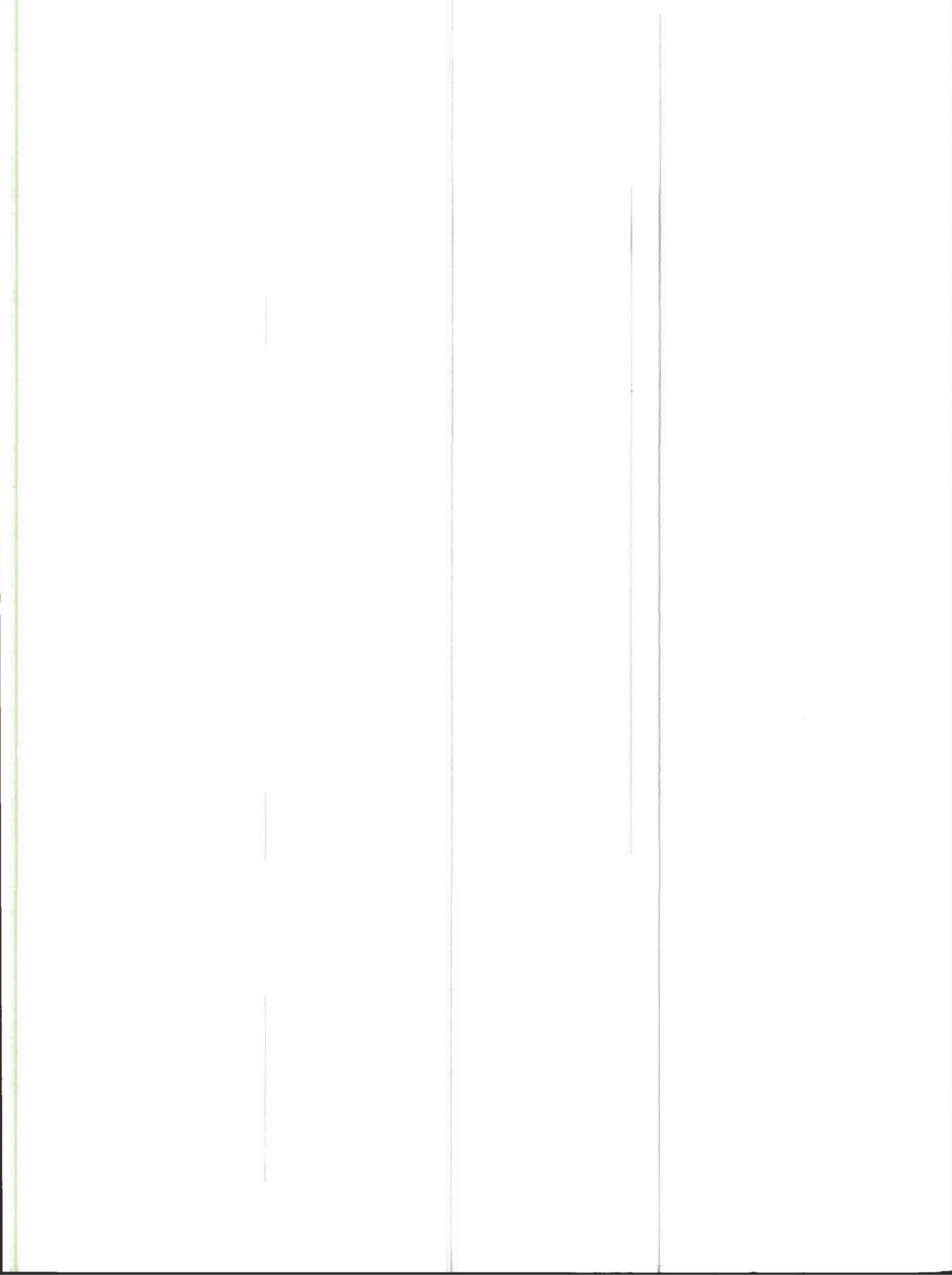
<i>County:</i>	<i>Lee</i>
<i>Total Project Area:</i>	<i>1,741 Acres<sup>1</sup></i>
<i>Acres Acquired:</i>	<i>794</i>
<i>Land Cost:</i>	<i>\$1,520,321</i>
<i>Per Acre Cost:</i>	<i>\$1,914</i>
<i>Acres Remaining (SOR):</i>	<i>0<sup>1</sup></i>
<i>(See Also Six Mile Cypress II)</i>	

<sup>1</sup> SOR acquisition completed.  
Lee County to acquire remainder of Six Mile Cypress I.



-  SOR Lands Acquired to Date
-  Potential Acquisition Area
-  Other Conservation Area
-  Other SOR Projects
-  SOR Project Boundary





# 1993 Save Our Rivers - Five Year Plan

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*1993 Save Our Rivers - Five Year Plan*

**WATER MANAGEMENT  
LANDS TRUST FUND  
F.S. 373.59**

APPENDIX A

### 373.59 Water Management Lands Trust Fund.--

(1) There is established within the Department of Environmental Regulation the Water Management Lands Trust Fund to be used as a nonlapsing fund for the purposes of this section. The moneys in this fund are hereby continually appropriated for the purposes of land acquisition, management, maintenance, and capital improvements in accordance with the provisions of this section. Up to 10 percent of the moneys in the fund may be allocated annually to the districts for management, maintenance, and capital improvements pursuant to subsection (7). The districts may contract with state agencies to provide the management and maintenance services.

(2) (a) Subsequent to public hearings, similar to those held pursuant to s. 120.54, each district shall file a 5-year plan for acquisition with the Legislature and the Secretary of Environmental Regulation by January 15, 1982. Annually thereafter, each district shall file with the Legislature and the secretary a report of acquisition activity together with modifications or additions to its 5-year plan of acquisition. The report shall also include a description of land management activity. Expenditure of moneys from the Water Management Lands Trust Fund shall be limited to the costs for acquisition, management, maintenance, and capital improvements of lands included within the plan as filed by each district; however, no such acquisition of lands shall occur without a public hearing similar to those held pursuant to the provisions set forth in s. 102.54. In the annual update of its 5-year plan for acquisition, each district shall identify lands needed to protect or recharge groundwater and shall establish a plan for their acquisition as necessary to protect potable water supplies. Lands which serve to protect or recharge groundwater identified pursuant to this paragraph shall also serve to protect other valuable natural resources or provide space for natural resource-based recreation.

(b) Moneys from the fund shall be used for continued acquisition,

management, maintenance, and capital improvements of the following lands and lands set forth in the 5-year land acquisition plan of the district:

1. By South Florida Water Management District--lands in the water conservation areas and areas adversely affected by raising water levels of Lake Okeechobee in accordance with present regulation schedules, and the Savannahs Wetland area in Martin County and St. Lucie County.

2. By Southwest Florida Water Management District--lands in the Four River Basins areas, including Green Swamp, Upper Hillsborough and Cypress Creek, Anclote Water Storage Lands (Starkey), Withlacoochee and Hillsborough riverine corridors, and Sawgrass Lake addition.

3. By St. Johns River Water Management District--Seminole Ranch, Latt Maxey and Evans properties in the upper St. Johns River Basin.

4. By Suwannee River Water Management District--lands in Suwannee River Valley.

5. By Northwest Florida Water Management District--lands in the Choctawhatchee and Apalachicola River Valleys.

(3) (a) Moneys from the Water Management Lands Trust Fund shall be used for acquiring the fee or other interest in lands necessary for water management, water supply, and the conservation and protection of water resources, except that such moneys shall not be used for the acquisition of rights-of-way for canals or pipelines. Such moneys shall also be used for management, maintenance, and capital improvements. Lands acquired with moneys from the fund shall be managed and maintained in an environmentally acceptable manner and, to the extent practicable, in such a way as to restore and protect their natural state and condition.

(b) The secretary of the Department of Environmental Regulation shall release moneys from the Water Management Land Trust Fund to a district for preacquisition costs within 30 days after

receipt of a resolution adopted by the district's governing board which identifies and justifies any such preacquisition costs necessary for the purchase of any lands listed in the district's 5-year plan. The district shall return to the department any funds not used for the purposes stated in the resolution, and the department shall deposit the unused funds into the Water Management Lands Trust Fund.

(c) The secretary of the Department of Environmental Regulation shall release acquisition moneys from the Water Management Lands Trust Fund to a district following receipt of a resolution adopted by the governing board identifying the lands being acquired and certifying that such acquisition is consistent with the plan of acquisition and other provisions of this act. The governing board shall also provide to the Secretary of Environmental Regulation a copy of all certified appraisals used to determine the value of the land to be purchased. If the purchase price is greater than the appraisal price, the governing board shall submit written justification for the increased price. The Secretary of Environmental Regulation may withhold moneys for any purchase that is not consistent with the 5-year plan or the intent of this act or that is in excess of appraised value. The governing board may appeal any denial to the Land and Water Adjudicatory Commission pursuant to s. 373.114.

(d) The secretary of the Department of Environmental Regulation shall release to the district moneys for management, maintenance, and capital improvements following receipt of a resolution and request adopted by the governing board which specifies the designated managing agency, specific management activities, public use, estimated annual operating costs, and other acceptable documentation to justify release of moneys.

(4) Water management land acquisition costs shall include payments to owners and costs and fees associated with such acquisition.

(5) If a district issues revenue bonds or notes under s. 373.584, the district may

pledge its share of the moneys in the Water Management Lands Trust Fund as security for such bonds or notes. The Department of Environmental Regulation shall pay moneys from the trust fund to a district or its designee sufficient to pay the debt service, as it becomes due, on the outstanding bonds and notes of the district; however, such payments shall not exceed the district's cumulative portion of the trust fund. However, any moneys remaining after payment of the amount due on the debt service shall be released to the district pursuant to subsection (3).

(6) Any unused portion of a district's share of the fund shall accumulate in the trust fund to the credit of that district. Interest earned on such portion shall also accumulate to the credit of that district to be used for land acquisition, management, maintenance, and capital improvements as provided in this section. The total moneys over the life of the fund available to any district under this section shall not be reduced except by resolution of the district governing board stating that the need for the moneys no longer exists.

(7) Moneys from the Water Management Lands Trust Fund shall be allocated to the five water management districts in the following percentages:

(a) Thirty percent to the South Florida Water Management District.

(b) Twenty-five percent to the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

(c) Twenty-five percent to the St. Johns River Water Management District.

(d) Ten percent to the suwannee River Water Management District.

(e) Ten percent to the Northwest Florida Water Management District.

(8) Beginning in fiscal year 1986-87, each district may use up to 10 percent of its allocation under subsection (7) for management, maintenance, and capital improvements. Capital improvements shall include, but need not be limited to, perimeter fencing, signs, firelanes, access roads and trails, and minimal public accommodations, such as primitive campsites, garbage receptacles, and toilets.

(9) Moneys in the fund not needed to meet current obligations incurred under this section shall be transferred to the State Board of Administration, to the credit of the fund, to be invested in the manner provided by law. Interest received on such investments shall be credited to the fund.

(10) Lands acquired for the purposes enumerated in this section shall also be used for general public recreational purposes. General public recreational purposes shall include, but not be limited to, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, swimming, camping, hiking, canoeing, boating, diving, birding, sailing, jogging, and other related outdoor activities to the maximum extent possible considering the environmental sensitivity and suitability of those lands. These public lands shall be evaluated for their resource value for the purpose of establishing which parcels, in whole or part, annually or seasonally, would be conducive to general public recreational purposes. Such findings shall be included in management plans which are developed for such public lands. These lands shall be made available to the public for these purposes, unless the district governing board can demonstrate that such activities would be incompatible with the purposes for which these lands were acquired.

(11) A district may dispose of land acquired under this section, pursuant to s. 373.089 or s. 373.056. However, revenue derived from such disposal may not be used for any purpose except the purchase of other lands meeting the criteria specified in this section or payment of debt service on revenue bonds or notes issued under s. 373.584, as provided in this section.

(12) No moneys generated pursuant to this act may be applied or expended subsequent to July 1, 1985, to reimburse any district for prior expenditures for land acquisition from ad valorem taxes or other funds other than its share of the funds provided herein or to refund or refinance outstanding debt payable solely from ad valorem taxes or

other funds other than its share of the funds provided herein.

*History.*--ss. 3, 5, ch. 81-33; s. 36, ch. 83-218; s. 5, ch. 85-347; s. 4, ch. 86-22; s. 8, ch. 86-294.

*1993 Save Our Rivers - Five Year Plan*

**FLORIDA  
PRESERVATION 2000 ACT**

**APPENDIX B**

**259.101 Florida Preservation 2000 Act -**

(1) **SHORT TITLE** - This section may be cited as the "Florida Preservation 2000 Act."

(2) **LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS** - The Legislature finds and declares that:

(a) The alteration and development of Florida's natural areas to accommodate its rapidly growing population have contributed to the degradation of water resources, the fragmentation and destruction of wildlife habitats, the loss of recreation space, and the diminishment of wetlands and forests.

(b) Imminent development of Florida's remaining natural areas and continuing increases in land values necessitate an aggressive program of public land acquisition during the next decade to preserve the quality of life that attracts so many people to Florida.

(c) Acquisition of public lands should be based on a comprehensive assessment of Florida's natural resources and planned so as to protect the integrity of ecological systems and to provide multiple benefits, including preservation of fish and wildlife habitat, recreation space, and water recharge areas. Governmental agencies responsible for public land acquisition should work together to purchase lands jointly and to coordinate individual purchases within ecological systems.

(3) **LAND ACQUISITION PROGRAMS SUPPLEMENTED** - Less the costs of issuance, the costs of funding reserve accounts, and other costs with respect to the bonds, the proceeds of bonds issued pursuant to this act shall be deposited into the Florida Preservation 2000 Trust Fund created by s. 375.045. No bonds shall be issued in fiscal year 1990-1991 pursuant to this act unless there is specific authorization for the issuance of such bonds in the act implementing the 1990-1991 General Appropriations Act. The proceeds of any bonds deposited into the Preservation 2000 Trust Fund shall be distributed by the Department of Natural Resources in the following manner:

(a) Fifty percent to the Department of Natural Resources for the purchase of public lands as described in s. 253.023. Of this 50 percent, at least one-fifth shall be used for the acquisition of coastal lands.

(b) Thirty percent to the Department of Environmental Regulation for the purchase of water management lands pursuant to s. 373.59, to be distributed among the water management districts as provided in that section.

(c) Ten percent to the Department of Community Affairs to provide land acquisition grants and loans to local governments through the Florida Communities Trust pursuant to part III of chapter 380. Of this 10 percent, one-half shall be matched by local governments on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

(d) Two and nine-tenths percent to the Department of Natural Resources for the purchase of inholdings and additions to state parks. For the purposes of this paragraph, 'state park' means all real property in the state under the jurisdiction of the Division of Recreation and Parks of the Department of Natural Resources, or which may come under its jurisdiction.

(e) Two and nine-tenths percent to the Division of Forestry of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to fund the acquisition of state forest inholdings and additions pursuant to s. 589.07.

(f) Two and nine-tenths percent to the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission to fund the acquisition of inholdings and additions to lands managed by the commission which are important to the conservation of fish and wildlife.

(g) One and three-tenths percent to the Department of Natural Resources for the Florida Rails to Trails Program, to acquire abandoned railroad rights-of-way for use as public recreational trails.

Local governments may use federal grants or loans, private donations, or environmental mitigation funds, including environmental mitigation funds required pursuant to s. 338.250, for any part or all of any local match required for the purposes described in this subsection. Bond proceeds allocated pursuant to paragraph (c) may be used to purchase lands on the priority lists developed pursuant to s. 259.035. Title to lands purchased pursuant to paragraphs (a), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g) shall be vested in the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund. Paragraphs (a) and (b) are repealed effective October 1, 2000, and paragraphs (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g) are repealed effective October 1, 1992. Prior to each repeal, the Legislature shall review the provisions scheduled for repeal and shall determine whether to reenact or modify the provisions or to take no action.

(4) **PROJECT CRITERIA** -

(a) Proceeds of bonds issued pursuant to this act and distributed pursuant to paragraphs (3)(a) and (b) shall be spent only on projects which

meet at least one of the following criteria, as determined pursuant to paragraphs (b) and (c):

1. A significant portion of the land in the project is in imminent danger of development.

2. A significant portion of the land in the project is in imminent danger of subdivision which will result in multiple ownership and may make acquisition of the project more costly or less likely to be accomplished;

3. The value of a significant portion of the land in the project is likely to appreciate at a rate that makes purchasing the land immediately with bond proceeds more cost-effective than delaying its purchase until acquisition funds which are not bonded are available for the project;

4. A significant portion of the land in the project serves to protect or recharge groundwater and to protect other valuable natural resources or provide space for natural resource-based recreation;

5. The project can be purchased at 80 percent of appraised value or less; or

6. A significant portion of the land in the project serves as habitat for endangered or threatened species or serves to protect endangered natural communities.

(b) Each year that bonds are to be issued pursuant to this act, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council shall review that year's approved Conservation and Recreation Lands priority list and shall, by the first board meeting in February, present to the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund for approval a listing of projects on the list which meet one or more of the criteria listed in paragraph (a). The board may remove projects from the list developed pursuant to this paragraph, but may not add projects.

(c) Each year that bonds are to be issued pursuant to this act, each water management district governing board shall review the lands on its current year's Save Our Rivers 5-year plan and shall, by January 15, adopt a listing of projects from the plan which meet one or more of the criteria listed in paragraph (a).

When a nonprofit environmental organization which is tax exempt pursuant to s. 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code sells land to the state, such land at the time of such sale shall be deemed to meet one or more of the criteria listed in paragraph (a) if such land meets one or more of the criteria at the time the organization purchases it. Listings of projects compiled pursuant to paragraphs (b) and (c) may be revised to include

projects on the Conservation and Recreation Lands priority list or in a water management district's 5-year plan which come under the criteria in paragraph (a) after the dates specified in paragraph (b) or paragraph (c). The requirement of paragraph (3)(a) regarding coastal lands is met as long as an average of one-fifth of the cumulative proceeds allocated through fiscal year 1999-2000 pursuant to that paragraph is used to purchase coastal lands.

(5) Any funds received by the Division of Forestry from the Preservation 2000 Trust Fund pursuant to paragraph (3)(e) shall be used only to pay the cost of the acquisition of lands in furtherance of outdoor recreation and natural resources conservation in this state. The administration and use of any funds received by the Division of Forestry from the Preservation 2000 Trust Fund will be subject to such terms and conditions imposed thereon by the agency of the state responsible for the issuance of the revenue bonds, the proceeds of which are deposited in the Preservation 2000 Trust Fund including restrictions imposed to ensure that the interest on any such revenue bonds issued by the state as tax-exempt revenue bonds will not be included in the gross income of the holders of such bonds for federal income tax purposes. All deeds or leases with respect to any real property acquired with funds received by the Division of Forestry from the Preservation 2000 Trust Fund shall contain such covenants and restrictions as are sufficient to ensure that the use of such real property at all times complies with s. 375.051 and s. 9, Art. XII of the 1968 Constitution of Florida; and shall contain reverter clauses providing for the reversion of title to such property to the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund or, in the case of a lease of such property, providing for termination of the lease upon a failure to use the property conveyed thereby for such purposes.

History - s. 1 Ch. 90-217

1 An act relating to public lands; amending s.  
 2 201.02, F.S.; exempting certain transfers of  
 3 real property by nonprofit organizations;  
 4 amending s. 253.023, F.S.; revising the  
 5 purposes and specified uses of the Conservation  
 6 and Recreation Lands Trust Fund; providing for  
 7 payment in lieu of taxes to certain counties  
 8 for lands acquired under the Florida  
 9 Preservation 2000 Program; amending s. 253.025,  
 10 F.S.; revising appraisal thresholds for  
 11 purchasing state lands; authorizing the Board  
 12 of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust  
 13 Fund to waive certain time limitations with  
 14 respect to negotiating the purchase of land  
 15 under certain circumstances; amending s.  
 16 259.035, F.S.; revising criteria for land  
 17 acquisition proposals by the Land Acquisition  
 18 Advisory Council; authorizing the Department of  
 19 Natural Resources to adopt rules; amending s.  
 20 259.101, F.S.; delaying the repeal of certain  
 21 provisions specifying distribution of moneys in  
 22 the Preservation 2000 Trust Fund; revising  
 23 criteria for projects for which certain bond  
 24 proceeds may be spent; amending s. 259.04,  
 25 F.S.; expanding the scope of the board's plan  
 26 to conserve and protect certain lands; amending  
 27 s. 259.07, F.S.; requiring the council to hold  
 28 additional public hearings before recommending  
 29 certain land purchases; amending s. 260.015,  
 30 F.S.; expanding the types of projects for which  
 31

1 certain evaluation and selection procedures do  
 2 not apply; amending ss. 375.031 and 380.08,  
 3 F.S.; deleting a requirement that a seller  
 4 include certain tax assessment information in  
 5 certain statements; requiring water management  
 6 district governing boards to give preferential  
 7 consideration to the State University System in  
 8 awarding research projects or studies; amending  
 9 s. 380.0666, F.S.; providing for nonapplication  
 10 of a certain restriction to certain land  
 11 purchases; amending s. 373.093, F.S.; creating  
 12 s. 373.1395, F.S.; limiting the liability of  
 13 water management districts for damages that  
 14 occur on real property or water areas of the  
 15 district that are made available to the public  
 16 under specified conditions; requiring that  
 17 leases of certain lands be consistent with the  
 18 purposes for which the land was acquired;  
 19 amending s. 373.59, F.S.; increasing allowable  
 20 allocations from the Water Management Lands  
 21 Trust Fund for certain purposes; providing for  
 22 payment in lieu of taxes to certain counties  
 23 for lands acquired under the Florida  
 24 Preservation 2000 Program; providing a  
 25 conditional appropriation for certain purposes;  
 26 adding a requirement to the annual report  
 27 required by s. 380.512, F.S.; repealing s.  
 28 259.035(3), F.S., relating to certain duties of  
 29 the Land Acquisition Advisory Council;  
 30 repealing s. 375.031(11), F.S., relating to  
 31

1 land acquisition projects of a certain value;  
 2 providing an effective date.  
 3  
 4 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
 5  
 6 Section 1. Subsection (6) is added to section 201.02,  
 7 Florida Statutes, as amended by chapter 92-32, Laws of  
 8 Florida, to read:  
 9 201.02 Tax on deeds and other instruments relating to  
 10 real property or interests in real property.--  
 11 (6) Taxes imposed by this section shall not apply to  
 12 any assignment, transfer, or other disposition, or any  
 13 document, which arises out of a transfer of real property from  
 14 a nonprofit organization to the Board of Trustees of the  
 15 Internal Improvement Trust Fund, to any state agency, to any  
 16 water management district, or to any local government. For  
 17 purposes of this subsection, "nonprofit organization" means an  
 18 organization whose purpose is the preservation of natural  
 19 resources and which is exempt from federal income tax under s.  
 20 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Department of  
 21 Revenue shall provide a form, or a place on an existing form,  
 22 for the nonprofit organization to indicate its exempt status.  
 23 Section 2. Section 253.023, Florida Statutes, is  
 24 amended to read:  
 25 253.023 Conservation and Recreation Lands Trust Fund;  
 26 purpose.--  
 27 (1) It is the policy of the state that the citizens of  
 28 this state shall be assured public ownership of natural areas  
 29 for purposes of maintaining this state's unique natural  
 30 resources; protecting air, land, and water quality; and  
 31 providing lands for natural resource-based recreation the

1 availability-of-public-lands-on-which-to-recreate. In  
 2 recognition of this policy, it is the intent of the  
 3 Legislature to provide such public lands for the people  
 4 residing in urban and metropolitan areas of the state as well  
 5 as those residing in less populated, rural areas; it is the  
 6 further intent of the Legislature, with regard to the lands  
 7 described in paragraph (3)(b), that a high priority be given  
 8 to the acquisition of such lands in or near counties  
 9 exhibiting the greatest concentration of population and, with  
 10 regard to the lands described in subsection (3), that a high  
 11 priority be given to acquiring lands within any area  
 12 designated as an area of critical state concern under s.  
 13 380.05 which, in the judgment of the advisory council  
 14 established pursuant to s. 259.035, cannot be adequately  
 15 protected by application of land development regulations  
 16 adopted pursuant to s. 380.05.  
 17 (2)(a) The Conservation and Recreation Lands Trust  
 18 Fund is established within the Department of Natural  
 19 Resources. The fund shall be used as a nonlapsing, revolving  
 20 fund exclusively for the purposes of this section. The fund  
 21 shall be credited with proceeds from the following excise  
 22 taxes:  
 23 1. The excise taxes on documents as provided in s.  
 24 201.15; and  
 25 2. The excise tax on the severance of phosphate rock  
 26 as provided in s. 211.3103(2)(a).  
 27  
 28 The Department of Revenue shall credit to the fund each month  
 29 the proceeds from such taxes as provided in this paragraph.  
 30 (b) There shall annually be transferred from the  
 31 Conservation and Recreation Lands Trust Fund to the Land

1 Acquisition Trust Fund that amount, not to exceed \$20 million  
 2 annually, as shall be necessary to pay the debt service on, or  
 3 fund debt service reserve funds, rebate obligations, or other  
 4 amounts with respect to bonds issued pursuant to s. 375.051 to  
 5 acquire lands on the established priority list as determined  
 6 by the advisory council pursuant to s. 259.035; however, no  
 7 moneys transferred to the Land Acquisition Trust Fund pursuant  
 8 to this paragraph, or earnings thereon, shall be used or made  
 9 available to pay debt service on the Department of Natural  
 10 Resources Save Our Coast revenue bonds. Amounts transferred  
 11 annually from the Conservation and Recreation Lands Trust Fund  
 12 to the Land Acquisition Trust Fund pursuant to this paragraph  
 13 shall have the highest priority over other payments or  
 14 transfers from the Conservation and Recreation Lands Trust  
 15 Fund, and no other payments or transfers shall be made from  
 16 the Conservation and Recreation Lands Trust Fund until such  
 17 transfers to the Land Acquisition Trust Fund have been made.  
 18 (3) The Governor and Cabinet, sitting as the Board of  
 19 Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, may allocate  
 20 moneys from the fund in any one year to acquire the fee or any  
 21 lesser interest in lands for land-in-each-of the following  
 22 public purposes categories:

- (a) To conserve and protect environmentally unique and  
 24 irreplaceable lands that contain native, relatively unaltered  
 25 flora and fauna representing a natural area unique to, or  
 26 scarce within, a region of this state or a larger geographic  
 27 area; lands-qualified-for-purchase-as-environmentally  
 28 endangered-lands-as-defined-in-s.-259.03(2);-or  
 29 (b) To conserve and protect native species habitat or  
 30 endangered or threatened species; lands-which-the-board-of  
 31

1 trustees-determines-should-be-acquired-in-the-public-interest  
 2 for-the-following-purposes:

- (a)4: To conserve, protect, manage, or restore  
 4 important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests For-use-and  
 5 protection-as-natural-flood-plain;-marsh;-or-estuary, if the  
 6 protection and conservation of such lands is necessary to  
 7 enhance or protect significant surface water quality-or  
 8 quantity, ground water, coastal, recreational, timber, or to  
 9 protect fish or wildlife resources habitat which cannot  
 10 otherwise be accomplished through local and state regulatory  
 11 programs;  
 12 (d) To provide areas, including recreational trails,  
 13 for natural resource-based recreation, or  
 14 2:--For-use-as-state-parks;-recreation-areas;-public  
 15 beaches;-state-forests;-wilderness-areas;-recreational-trails  
 16 such-as-the-Florida-National-Scenic-Trail;-or-wildlife  
 17 management-areas;  
 18 3:--For-restoration-of-altered-ecosystems-to-correct  
 19 environmental-damage-that-has-already-occurred;-or  
 20 (e)4: To preserve For-preservation-of significant  
 21 archaeological or historic historical sites.

- (4) Lands acquired under this section shall be for use  
 23 as state-designated parks, recreation areas, preserves,  
 24 reserves, historic or archaeological sites, geologic or  
 25 botanical sites, recreational trails, forests, wilderness  
 26 areas, wildlife management areas, or other state-designated  
 27 recreation or conservation lands; or they shall qualify for  
 28 such state designation and use if they are to be managed by  
 29 other governmental agencies or nonstate entities as provided  
 30 for in this section.  
 31

1 (5)(4) The board of trustees may allocate, in any  
 2 year, an amount not to exceed 5 percent of the money credited  
 3 to the fund in that year, such allocation to be used for the  
 4 initiation and maintenance of a natural areas inventory to aid  
 5 in the identification of areas to be acquired pursuant to this  
 6 section.

7 (6)(5) Moneys in the fund not needed to meet  
 8 obligations incurred under this section shall be deposited  
 9 with the Treasurer to the credit of the fund and may be  
 10 invested in the manner provided by law. Interest received on  
 11 such investments shall be credited to the Conservation and  
 12 Recreation Lands Trust Fund.

13 (7)(6)(a) The board of trustees may enter into any  
 14 contract necessary to accomplish the purposes of this section.  
 15 (b) On behalf of the board and before the appraisal of  
 16 parcels approved for purchase under chapter 259, the executive  
 17 director of the Department of Natural Resources or the  
 18 director of the Division of State Lands may enter into option  
 19 contracts to buy such parcels. Any such option contract shall  
 20 state that the final purchase price is subject to approval by  
 21 the board and that the final purchase price may not exceed the  
 22 maximum offer allowed by law. The consideration for such an  
 23 option may not exceed \$1,000 or 0.01 percent of the estimate  
 24 by the department of the value of the parcel, whichever amount  
 25 is greater.

26 (8)(9) Prior to or concurrent with the acquisition  
 27 under this section of any interest in lands, the board of  
 28 trustees shall designate an agency or agencies to manage such  
 29 lands and shall make a preliminary determination as to the  
 30 extent and nature of public use for which the lands will be  
 31 available. consistent with the purposes for which the lands

1 are acquired. Immediately following the acquisition of any  
 2 interest in lands under this section, the department, acting  
 3 on behalf of the board of trustees, may issue to the lead  
 4 managing entity an interim assignment letter to be effective  
 5 until the execution of a formal lease.

6 (9)(8) Lands to be considered for purchase under this  
 7 section are subject to the selection procedures of s. 259.035  
 8 and shall be acquired in accordance with acquisition  
 9 procedures for state lands provided for in s. 253.025, except  
 10 as otherwise provided by the Legislature. An inholding or an  
 11 addition to a project selected for purchase pursuant to this  
 12 chapter or s. 259.035 is not subject to the selection  
 13 procedures of s. 259.035 if the estimated value of such  
 14 inholding or addition does not exceed \$500,000. When at least  
 15 90 percent of the acreage of a project has been purchased  
 16 pursuant to this chapter or s. 259.035, the project may be  
 17 removed from the list and the remaining acreage may continue  
 18 to be purchased. Moneys from the fund may be used for title  
 19 work, appraisal fees, and survey costs related to acquisition  
 20 expenses for lands to be acquired, donated, or exchanged which  
 21 qualify under the categories of this section, at the  
 22 discretion of the board. When the Legislature has authorized  
 23 the Department of Natural Resources to condemn a specific  
 24 parcel of land and such parcel has already been approved for  
 25 acquisition under this section, the land may be acquired in  
 26 accordance with the provisions of chapter 73 or chapter 74,  
 27 and the fund may be used to pay the condemnation award and all  
 28 costs, including a reasonable attorney's fee, associated with  
 29 condemnation.

30 (10)(9) Governmental agencies or nonstate entities  
 31 designated to manage lands under this section shall develop

1 and adopt, with the approval of the board of trustees,  
 2 individual management plans for each project designed to  
 3 conserve and protect such lands and their associated natural  
 4 resources. Such plans may include transfers of leasehold  
 5 interests to appropriate conservation organizations designated  
 6 by the Land Management Advisory Council for uses consistent  
 7 with the purposes of the organizations and the protection,  
 8 preservation, and proper management of the lands and their  
 9 resources. Volunteer management assistance is encouraged,  
 10 including, but not limited to, assistance by youth  
 11 participating in programs sponsored by state or local  
 12 agencies, by volunteers sponsored by environmental or civic  
 13 organizations, and by individuals participating in programs  
 14 for committed delinquents and adults. Management plans shall  
 15 include, but not be limited to:

(a) A statement of the purpose for which the lands  
 16 were acquired.  
 17

(b) Key management activities necessary to preserve  
 18 and protect the existing natural resources.  
 19

(c) A priority schedule for conducting management  
 20 activities, based on the purposes for which the lands were  
 21 acquired.  
 22

(d) A cost estimate for conducting priority management  
 23 activities, to be updated biennially.  
 24

(e) A cost estimate for conducting other management  
 25 activities which would enhance the natural resource value or  
 26 public recreation value for which the lands were acquired.  
 27

(f) A determination of the public uses that would be  
 28 consistent with the purposes for which the lands were  
 29 acquired.  
 30

31

1 (11)(10)(a) The Legislature recognizes that acquiring  
 2 lands pursuant to this section and s. 259.101 serves the  
 3 public interest by protecting land, air, and water resources  
 4 which contribute to the public health and welfare, providing  
 5 areas for natural resource-based recreation, and ensuring the  
 6 survival of unique and irreplaceable plant and animal species.  
 7 The Legislature intends for these lands to be managed and  
 8 maintained for the purposes for which they were acquired and  
 9 for the public to have access to these lands where it is  
 10 consistent with acquisition purposes and would not harm the  
 11 resources the state is seeking to protect on the public's  
 12 behalf.

(b) For Beginning-in fiscal year 1992-1993 1987-1988,  
 13 15 10 percent of the moneys credited to the fund, and  
 14 beginning in fiscal year 1993-1994, 15 percent of the fund or  
 15 an amount equal to 1 percent of the cumulative total of funds  
 16 ever deposited into the Florida Preservation 2000 Trust Fund,  
 17 whichever is greater, each year shall be reserved from the  
 18 fund by the board of trustees for the purposes of management,  
 19 maintenance, and capital improvements, and for associated  
 20 contractual services, for lands acquired pursuant to this  
 21 section and s. 259.101 to which title is vested in the board  
 22 of trustees. Capital improvements shall include, but need not  
 23 be limited to, perimeter fencing, signs, firelanes, access  
 24 roads and trails, and minimal public accommodations, such as  
 25 primitive campsites, garbage receptacles, and toilets. In  
 26 allocating these funds, the board of trustees shall pay  
 27 particular attention to protecting the natural resources for  
 28 which lands are acquired under this section.  
 29

(c) Up to one-fifth of the funds provided for in  
 30 paragraph (b) shall be reserved by the board of trustees for  
 31

1 interim management of acquisitions and for associated  
 2 contractual services, to ensure the conservation and  
 3 protection of natural resources on project sites and to allow  
 4 limited public recreational use of lands. Interim management  
 5 activities may include, but not be limited to, resource  
 6 assessments, control of invasive exotic species, habitat  
 7 restoration, fencing, law enforcement, controlled burning, and  
 8 public access consistent with preliminary determinations made  
 9 pursuant to subsection (8). The board of trustees shall make  
 10 these interim funds available immediately upon purchase and  
 11 until a management plan is complete pursuant to subsection  
 12 (10).

13 (d)1. Beginning in fiscal year 1992-1993, not more  
 14 than one-fourth of the funds reserved pursuant to paragraph  
 15 (b) shall be reserved annually by the board of trustees for  
 16 payment in lieu of taxes to qualifying counties for actual tax  
 17 losses incurred as a result of board of trustees acquisitions  
 18 for state agencies under the Florida Preservation 2000 Program  
 19 during any year. Reserved funds not used for payments in lieu  
 20 of taxes in any year shall revert to the fund to be used for  
 21 management purposes or land acquisition in accordance with the  
 22 provisions of this section.

23 2. Payment in lieu of taxes shall be available to  
 24 counties which levy an ad valorem tax of at least nine mills  
 25 or the amount of the tax less from all completed Preservation  
 26 2000 acquisitions in the county exceeds 0.01 percent of the  
 27 county's total taxable value, and have a population of 75,000  
 28 or less and to counties with a population of less than 100,000  
 29 which contain all or a portion of an area of critical state  
 30 concern designated pursuant to chapter 380.  
 31

1 3. If insufficient funds are available in any year to  
 2 make full payments to all qualifying counties, such counties  
 3 shall receive a pro rata share of the moneys available.  
 4 4. The payment amount shall be based on the average  
 5 amount of actual taxes paid on the property for the 3 years  
 6 preceding acquisition. For lands purchased prior to July 1,  
 7 1992, applications for payment in lieu of taxes shall be made  
 8 to the Department of Revenue by January 1, 1993. For lands  
 9 purchased after July 1, 1992, applications for payment in lieu  
 10 of taxes shall be made no later than January 31 of the year  
 11 following acquisition. No payment in lieu of taxes shall be  
 12 made for properties which were exempt from ad valorem taxation  
 13 for the year immediately preceding acquisition. Payment in  
 14 lieu of taxes shall be limited to a total of 10 years of  
 15 annual payments.

16 5. Payment in lieu of taxes pursuant to this paragraph  
 17 shall be made annually to qualifying counties after  
 18 certification by the Department of Revenue that the amounts  
 19 applied for are appropriate, based on the amount of actual  
 20 taxes paid on the eligible property, and after the Department  
 21 of Natural Resources has provided supporting documents to the  
 22 Comptroller and has requested that payment be made in  
 23 accordance with the requirements of this section.

24 6. If the board of trustees conveys to a local  
 25 government title to any land owned by the board, any payments  
 26 in lieu of taxes on the land made to the local government  
 27 shall be discontinued as of the date of the conveyance.

28 (e) Not less than 85-percent of the Moneys credited to  
 29 the fund each year which are not used for management,  
 30 maintenance, or capital improvements, for payment in lieu of  
 31 taxes, or for the purposes of subsection (5) shall be

1 available for the acquisition of land pursuant to this  
2 section.

3 (12)(14) All lands managed under this section shall

4 be:

5 (a) Managed in a manner that will provide the greatest  
6 combination of benefits to the public and to the resources;

7 and

8 (b) Managed for public outdoor recreation which is  
9 compatible with the conservation and protection of public  
10 lands.

11

12 Such public use may include fishing, hunting, camping, hiking,  
13 nature study, swimming, boating, canoeing, horseback riding,  
14 diving, birding, sailing, jogging, and other related outdoor  
15 activities.

16 (13)(12) The board of trustees may adopt rules to  
17 further define the categories of land for acquisition under  
18 this section and under chapter 259.

19 Section 3. Paragraphs (a), (d), and (f) of subsection  
20 (7), paragraphs (d), (e), (h), and (i) of subsection (8), and  
21 subsections (9) and (15) of section 253.025, Florida Statutes,  
22 are amended to read:

23 253.025 Acquisition of state lands.--

24 (7) Prior to approval by the board of trustees or

25 when the purchase price does not exceed \$100,000, its designee  
26 of any agreement to purchase land pursuant to s. 253.023,

27 chapter 259, or chapter 375, and prior to negotiations with  
28 the parcel owner to purchase any other land, title to which  
29 will vest in the board of trustees, an appraisal of the parcel  
30 shall be required as follows:

31

1 (a) Each parcel to be acquired shall have at least one  
2 appraisal. Two appraisals are required when the value of the  
3 first appraisal exceeds \$500,000 \$250,000. However, when the  
4 values of both appraisals exceed \$500,000 \$250,000 and differ  
5 significantly, a third appraisal may be obtained. When a  
6 parcel is estimated to be worth \$100,000 \$50,000 or less and  
7 the director of the Division of State Lands finds that the  
8 cost of obtaining an outside appraisal is not justified, an  
9 appraisal prepared by the division may be used.

10 (d) Appraisal reports are confidential and exempt from  
11 the provisions of s. 119.07(1), for use by the agency and the  
12 board of trustees, until an option contract is executed or, if  
13 no option contract is executed, until 2 weeks before a  
14 contract or agreement for purchase is considered for approval  
15 by the board of trustees. However, the Division of State  
16 Lands may disclose appraisal information to public agencies  
17 local governments or nonprofit organizations that agree to  
18 maintain the confidentiality of the reports or information  
19 when joint acquisition of property is contemplated, or when a  
20 public agency local-government or nonprofit organization  
21 enters into a written an-informal agreement with the division  
22 to purchase and hold property for subsequent resale to the  
23 division. In addition, the division may use, as its own,

24 appraisals obtained by a public agency local-government or  
25 nonprofit organization, provided the appraiser is selected  
26 from the division's list of appraisers and the appraisal is  
27 reviewed and approved by the division. For the purposes of  
28 this paragraph, "nonprofit organization" means an organization  
29 whose purpose is the preservation of natural resources  
30 wildlife-or-land, and which is exempt from federal income tax  
31 under s. 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The agency

1 may release an appraisal report when the passage of time has  
 2 rendered the conclusions of value in the report invalid. This  
 3 exemption is subject to the Open Government Sunset Review Act  
 4 in accordance with s. 119.14.

5 (f) The appraisal report shall be accompanied by the  
 6 sales history of the parcel for at least the prior 5 years.  
 7 Such sales history shall include all parties and  
 8 considerations with the amount of consideration verified, if  
 9 possible; ~~and the amount of assessed value of the parcel.~~ If  
 10 a sales history would not be useful, or its cost prohibitive  
 11 compared to the value of a parcel, the sales history may be  
 12 waived by the executive director of the Department of Natural  
 13 Resources or the director of the Division of State Lands. The  
 14 department shall adopt a rule specifying guidelines for waiver  
 15 of a sales history.

16 (g)

17 (d) All offers or counteroffers shall be documented in  
 18 writing and shall be confidential and exempt from the  
 19 provisions of s. 119.07(1) until an option contract is  
 20 executed, or if no option contract is executed, until 2 weeks  
 21 before a contract or agreement for purchase is considered for  
 22 approval by the board of trustees. This exemption is subject  
 23 to the Open Government Sunset Review Act in accordance with s.  
 24 119.14. The agency shall maintain complete and accurate  
 25 records of all offers and counteroffers for all projects.

26 (e)1. The board of trustees shall adopt by rule the  
 27 method for determining the value of parcels sought to be  
 28 acquired by state agencies pursuant to this section. No offer  
 29 by a state agency may exceed the value for that parcel as  
 30 determined pursuant to the highest approved appraisal or the  
 31 value determined pursuant to the rules of the board of

1 trustees, whichever value is less, except under the following  
 2 circumstances:

3 a. The state agency has unsuccessfully attempted to  
 4 negotiate a parcel, pursuant to the price restrictions in this  
 5 subparagraph, for a period of 2 years after the date of the  
 6 state agency's first written offer on all or a substantial  
 7 part of the parcel, during which there have been at least two  
 8 bona fide offers at a purchase price at or within 10 percent  
 9 below the limits prescribed by this subparagraph. The board  
 10 of trustees may waive the 2-year period in cases in which it  
 11 has directed the department to exercise eminent domain  
 12 authority pursuant to subsection (12);

13 b. The parcel is within the top five projects on the  
 14 priority list and either includes substantial upland habitat  
 15 of endangered or threatened species or is located within an  
 16 area of critical state concern designated pursuant to chapter  
 17 380; and

18 c. The board of trustees determines that the parcel  
 19 meets the requirements for acquisition by eminent domain, as  
 20 provided in subsection (12), and that the cost of acquisition  
 21 by eminent domain, including jury determination of  
 22 compensation and other costs and fees provided for in chapter  
 23 73, is likely to exceed 95-percent-of the purchase price  
 24 value of the parcel as agreed upon in the most recent option  
 25 contract determined pursuant to this subparagraph.

26

27 In this case, the total purchase price may not exceed 125  
 28 percent of the limits otherwise prescribed by this  
 29 subparagraph. The decision to acquire a parcel pursuant to  
 30 sub-subparagraphs a.-c. must be made by a vote of at least  
 31 five members of the board of trustees.

1 2. In the case of a joint acquisition by a state  
 2 agency and a local government or other entity apart from the  
 3 state, the joint purchase price may not exceed 150 percent of  
 4 the value for a parcel as determined in accordance with the  
 5 limits prescribed in subparagraph 1. The state agency share  
 6 of a joint purchase offer may not exceed what the agency may  
 7 offer singly as prescribed by subparagraph 1.  
 8  
 9 3. The provisions of this paragraph do not apply to  
 10 the acquisition of historically unique or significant property  
 11 as determined by the Division of Historical Resources of the  
 12 Department of State.

13 (h) ~~All offers by the agency, including the final~~  
 14 ~~offer, shall be reviewed by the legal counsel of the agency.~~  
 15 A final offer shall be in the form of an option contract or  
 16 agreement for purchase and shall be signed and attested to by  
 17 the owner and the representative of the agency. ~~Before the~~  
 18 ~~agency executes the option contract or agreement for purchase,~~  
 19 ~~the contract or agreement shall be reviewed for form and~~  
 20 ~~legality by legal staff of the agency.~~ Before the agency  
 21 signs the agreement for purchase or exercises the option  
 22 contract, the provisions of s. 286.23 shall be complied with.  
 23 Within 10 days after the signing of the agreement for  
 24 purchase, the state agency shall furnish the Division of State  
 25 Lands with the original of the agreement for purchase along  
 26 with copies of the disclosure notice, evidence of  
 27 marketability, the accepted appraisal report, the fee  
 28 appraiser's affidavit, a statement that the inventory of  
 29 existing state-owned lands was examined and contained no  
 30 available suitable land in the area, and a statement outlining  
 31 the public purpose for which the acquisition is being made and  
 the statutory authority therefor.

1 (i) Within 45 days of receipt by the Division of State  
 2 Lands of the agreement for purchase and the required  
 3 documentation, the board of trustees ~~of~~ when the purchase  
 4 price does not exceed \$100,000, its designee shall either  
 5 reject or approve the agreement. An approved agreement for  
 6 purchase is binding on both parties. Any agreement which has  
 7 been disapproved shall be returned to the agency, along with a  
 8 statement as to the deficiencies of the agreement or the  
 9 supporting documentation. An agreement for purchase which has  
 10 been disapproved by the board of trustees may be resubmitted  
 11 when such deficiencies have been corrected.

12 (9) No dedication, gift, grant, or bequest of lands  
 13 and appurtenances may be accepted by the board of trustees  
 14 until the receiving state agency supplies sufficient evidence  
 15 of marketability of title. The board of trustees may not  
 16 accept by dedication, gift, grant, or bequest any lands and  
 17 appurtenances that are determined as being owned by the state  
 18 either in fee or by virtue of the state's sovereignty or which  
 19 are so encumbered so as to preclude the use of such lands and  
 20 appurtenances for any reasonable public purpose. The board of  
 21 trustees may accept a dedication, gift, grant, or bequest of  
 22 lands and appurtenances without formal evidence of  
 23 marketability, or when the title is nonmarketable, if the  
 24 board or its designee determines that such lands and  
 25 appurtenances have value and are reasonably manageable by the  
 26 state, and that their acceptance would serve the public  
 27 interest. The state is not required to appraise the value of  
 28 such donated lands and appurtenances as a condition of  
 29 receipt.

30 (15) The board of trustees, by an affirmative vote of  
 31 five members, may direct the department to purchase lands on

1 an immediate basis using up to 15 percent of the funds  
 2 allocated to the department pursuant to s. 259.101(3)(a) for  
 3 the acquisition of lands that:  
 4 (a) Are listed or placed at auction by the Federal  
 5 Government as part of the Resolution Trust Corporation sale of  
 6 lands from failed savings and loan associations; or  
 7 (b) Are listed or placed at auction by the Federal  
 8 Government as part of the Federal Deposit Insurance  
 9 Corporation sale of lands from failed banks; or  
 10 (g)(b) Will be developed or otherwise lost to  
 11 potential public ownership, or for which federal matching  
 12 funds will be lost, by the time the land can be purchased  
 13 under the program within which the land is listed for  
 14 acquisition.

15  
 16 For such acquisitions, the board of trustees may waive or  
 17 modify all procedures required for land acquisition pursuant  
 18 to this chapter and all competitive bid procedures required  
 19 pursuant to chapters 255 and 287. Lands acquired pursuant to  
 20 this subsection must, at the time of purchase, be on one of  
 21 the acquisition lists established pursuant to chapter 259, or  
 22 a significant portion of the lands must contain natural  
 23 communities or plant or animal species which are listed by the  
 24 Florida Natural Areas Inventory as critically imperiled,  
 25 imperiled, or rare, or as excellent quality occurrences of  
 26 natural communities.

27 Section 4. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 259.035,  
 28 Florida Statutes, are amended, and subsection (5) is added to  
 29 said section, to read:

30 259.035 Advisory council; powers and duties.--  
 31

1 (1) There is created a Land Acquisition Advisory  
 2 Council to be composed of the secretary of the Department of  
 3 Environmental Regulation, the executive director of the  
 4 Department of Natural Resources, the director of the Division  
 5 of Forestry of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer  
 6 Services, the executive director of the Game and Fresh Water  
 7 Fish Commission, the director of the Division of Historical  
 8 Resources of the Department of State, and the secretary of the  
 9 Department of Community Affairs, or their respective  
 10 designees. The chairmanship of the council shall rotate  
 11 annually in the foregoing order. The council shall hold  
 12 periodic meetings at the request of the chairman. The  
 13 Department of Natural Resources Division-of-State-Lands shall  
 14 provide primary staff support to the council and shall ensure  
 15 that council meetings are electronically recorded. Such  
 16 recordings shall be preserved pursuant to chapters 119 and  
 17 257. The Department of Natural Resources may adopt any rule  
 18 or form necessary to implement this section.

19 (2)(a) The council shall, by the time of the first  
 20 board meeting in February of each year, establish or update a  
 21 list of acquisition projects selected for purchase pursuant to  
 22 this chapter or s. 259.023 and, by the time of the first-board  
 23 meeting in January of each year, establish or update a list of  
 24 acquisition projects valued in excess of \$250,000 for purchase  
 25 pursuant to chapter 375.--The lists shall be mutually  
 26 exclusive. Acquisition projects shall be ranked in order of  
 27 priority individually as a single group or in individually  
 28 within up to 10 separate groups not to exceed 10 in number.  
 29 For each project on an acquisition list, the council shall  
 30 include in its report to the board of trustees the stated  
 31 purpose for acquiring the project, an the best estimate of

1 land value based on county tax assessed values available to  
 2 the department, a boundary map delineating project boundaries,  
 3 a brief and description of the important natural and cultural  
 4 resources to be protected, preacquisition planning and  
 5 budgeting, coordination with other public and nonprofit  
 6 public-lands acquisition programs, a preliminary statement of  
 7 the extent and nature of public use, an interim management  
 8 budget, and designation of a management agency or agencies.  
 9 The Department of Natural Resources Division of State-lands  
 10 shall prepare the information required by this section for  
 11 each acquisition project selected for purchase pursuant to  
 12 this chapter or s. 253.023. The Division of Recreation and  
 13 Parks shall prepare the information required by this section  
 14 for each acquisition project to be purchased pursuant to  
 15 chapter 375;

(b) An affirmative vote of four members of the council  
 16 shall be required in order to place a proposed project on a  
 17 list. Each list shall contain at least twice the number of  
 18 projects in terms of estimated cost as there are anticipated  
 19 funds for purchase. The anticipated cost of each project  
 20 shall include proposed costs for development of the lands  
 21 necessary to meet the public purpose for which such lands are  
 22 to be purchased.

(c) All proposals for acquisition projects pursuant to  
 24 this chapter; chapter 375; or s. 253.023 shall be developed  
 25 and adopted by originate from the council. The council shall  
 26 consider and evaluate in writing the merits and demerits of  
 27 each proposed project that is proposed submitted for  
 28 acquisition and shall ensure that each proposed acquisition  
 29 project will meet a stated public purpose for the preservation  
 30 of environmentally endangered lands, for the development of  
 31

1 outdoor recreation lands, or as provided in s. 253.023(3)(b)  
 2 and shall determine whether each acquisition project conforms  
 3 with the comprehensive plan developed pursuant to s.  
 4 259.04(1)(a), the comprehensive outdoor recreation and  
 5 conservation plan developed pursuant to s. 375.021, and the  
 6 state lands management plan adopted pursuant to s. 253.03(7).  
 7 Copies of a written report describing on each project proposed  
 8 evaluated or considered for acquisition shall be submitted to  
 9 the board of trustees. The council shall consider and include  
 10 in each project description report its assessment of a  
 11 project's ecological value, vulnerability, endangerment,  
 12 ownership pattern, utilization, location, and cost and other  
 13 pertinent factors in determining whether to recommend a  
 14 project for state or against a purchase.

Section 5. Subsection (3) and paragraph (a) of  
 16 subsection (4) of section 259.101, Florida Statutes, are  
 17 amended to read:

259.101 Florida Preservation 2000 Act.---

(3) LAND ACQUISITION PROGRAMS SUPPLEMENTED.---Less the  
 20 costs of issuance, the costs of funding reserve accounts, and  
 21 other costs with respect to the bonds, the proceeds of bonds  
 22 issued pursuant to this act shall be deposited into the  
 23 Florida Preservation 2000 Trust Fund created by s. 375.045.  
 24 No bonds shall be issued in fiscal year 1990-1991 pursuant to  
 25 this act unless there is specific authorization for the  
 26 issuance of such bonds in the act implementing the 1990-1991  
 27 General Appropriations Act. The proceeds of any bonds  
 28 deposited into the Preservation 2000 Trust Fund shall be  
 29 distributed by the Department of Natural Resources in the  
 30 following manner:  
 31

1 (a) Fifty percent to the Department of Natural  
 2 Resources for the purchase of public lands as described in s.  
 3 253.023. Of this 50 percent, at least one-fifth shall be used  
 4 for the acquisition of coastal lands.

5 (b) Thirty percent to the Department of Environmental  
 6 Regulation for the purchase of water management lands pursuant  
 7 to s. 373.59, to be distributed among the water management  
 8 districts as provided in that section. Funds received by each  
 9 district may also be used for acquisition of lands necessary  
 10 to implement surface water improvement and management plans  
 11 approved in accordance with s. 373.456 or s. 373.4592.

12 (c) Ten percent to the Department of Community Affairs  
 13 to provide land acquisition grants and loans to local  
 14 governments through the Florida Communities Trust pursuant to  
 15 part III of chapter 380. Of this 10 percent, one-half shall  
 16 be matched by local governments on a dollar-for-dollar basis.  
 17 An additional one-tenth shall be used specifically for  
 18 matching grants, also on a dollar-for-dollar basis, to  
 19 counties which submit projects for acquisitions within areas  
 20 of critical state concern.

21 (d) Two and nine-tenths percent to the Department of  
 22 Natural Resources for the purchase of inholdings and additions  
 23 to state parks. For the purposes of this paragraph, "state  
 24 park" means all real property in the state under the  
 25 jurisdiction of the Division of Recreation and Parks of the  
 26 Department of Natural Resources, or which may come under its  
 27 jurisdiction.

28 (e) Two and nine-tenths percent to the Division of  
 29 Forestry of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer  
 30 Services to fund the acquisition of state forest inholdings  
 31 and additions pursuant to s. 589.07.

1 (f) Two and nine-tenths percent to the Game and Fresh  
 2 Water Fish Commission to fund the acquisition of inholdings  
 3 and additions to lands managed by the commission which are  
 4 important to the conservation of fish and wildlife.

5 (g) One and three-tenths percent to the Department of  
 6 Natural Resources for the Florida Rails to Trails Program, to  
 7 acquire abandoned railroad rights-of-way and to assist in the  
 8 acquisition of the Florida National Scenic Trail for use as  
 9 public recreational trails.

10

11 Local governments may use federal grants or loans, private  
 12 donations, or environmental mitigation funds, including  
 13 environmental mitigation funds required pursuant to s.  
 14 338.250, for any part or all of any local match required for  
 15 the purposes described in this subsection. Bond proceeds  
 16 allocated pursuant to paragraph (c) may be used to purchase  
 17 lands on the priority lists developed pursuant to s. 259.035.

18 Title to lands purchased pursuant to paragraphs (a), (c), (d),  
 19 (e), (f), and (g) shall be vested in the Board of Trustees of  
 20 the Internal Improvement Trust Fund. Paragraphs (a) and (b)  
 21 are repealed effective October 1, 2000, and paragraphs (c),  
 22 (d), (e), (f), and (g) are repealed effective October 1, 1996  
 23 1992. Prior to each repeal, the Legislature shall review the  
 24 provisions scheduled for repeal and shall determine whether to  
 25 reenact or modify the provisions or to take no action.

## (4) PROJECT CRITERIA.--

26

27 (a) Proceeds of bonds issued pursuant to this act and  
 28 distributed pursuant to paragraphs (3)(a) and (b) shall be  
 29 spent only on projects which meet at least one of the  
 30 following criteria, as determined pursuant to paragraphs (b)  
 31 and (c):

1 1. A significant portion of the land in the project is  
 2 in imminent danger of development, in imminent danger of loss  
 3 of its significant natural attributes. OR  
 4 2. A significant portion of the land in the project is  
 5 in imminent danger of subdivision which will result in  
 6 multiple ownership and may make acquisition of the project  
 7 more costly or less likely to be accomplished;  
 8 3. Compelling evidence exists that the land is likely  
 9 to be developed during the next 12 months, or appraisals made  
 10 during the past 5 years indicate an escalation in land value  
 11 at an average rate that exceeds the average rate of interest  
 12 likely to be paid on the bonds;  
 13 4. The value of a significant portion of the land in  
 14 the project is likely to appreciate at a rate that makes  
 15 purchasing the land immediately with bond proceeds more cost-  
 16 effective than delaying its purchase until acquisition funds  
 17 which are not bonded are available for the project;  
 18 5. A significant portion of the land in the project  
 19 serves to protect or recharge groundwater and to protect other  
 20 valuable natural resources or provide space for natural  
 21 resource-based recreation;  
 22 6. The project can be purchased at 80 percent of  
 23 appraised value or less; or  
 24 7. A significant portion of the land in the project  
 25 serves as habitat for endangered, or threatened, or rare  
 26 species or serves to protect endangered natural communities  
 27 which are listed by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory as  
 28 critically imperiled, imperiled, or rare, or as excellent  
 29 quality occurrences of natural communities.  
 30 Section 6. Subsection (1) of section 259.04, Florida  
 31 Statutes, is amended to read:

1 259.04 Board; powers and duties.--  
 2 (1) For state capital projects selected for purchase  
 3 pursuant to s. 259.035 and s. 259.101:  
 4 (a) The board is given the responsibility, authority,  
 5 and power to develop and execute a comprehensive statewide  
 6 plan to conserve and protect environmentally endangered lands,  
 7 ecosystems, and other lands as identified in s. 259.023 and s.  
 8 259.101 in this state. This plan shall be kept current  
 9 through continual reevaluation and revision. The advisory  
 10 council shall assist the board in the development,  
 11 reevaluation, and revision of the plan.  
 12 (b) The board may enter into contracts with the  
 13 government of the United States or any agency or  
 14 instrumentality thereof; the state or any county,  
 15 municipality, district authority, or political subdivision; or  
 16 any private corporation, partnership, association, or person  
 17 providing for or relating to the conservation or protection of  
 18 certain lands in accomplishing the purposes of ss. 259.01-  
 19 259.06.  
 20 (c) Within 45 days after the advisory council submits  
 21 either list of acquisition projects to the board, the board  
 22 shall approve, in whole or in part, the list of acquisition  
 23 projects in the order of priority in which such projects are  
 24 presented. To the greatest extent practicable, projects on  
 25 the list shall be acquired in their approved order of  
 26 priority.  
 27 (d) The board is authorized to acquire, by purchase,  
 28 gift, or devise or otherwise, the fee title or any lesser  
 29 interest of lands, water areas, and related resources  
 30 sufficient to meet the purposes specified in s. 259.03(2) for  
 31 environmentally endangered lands.

1 Section 7. Section 259.07, Florida Statutes, is  
 2 amended to read:  
 3 259.07 Public meetings.--The council Department-of-  
 4 Natural-Resources, before making recommendations to the board  
 5 for the purchase of any environmentally-endangered land  
 6 pursuant to s. 259.035, shall hold one or more a public  
 7 meetings meeting on the proposed purchase of such land in  
 8 areas of the state the-county where a major portions portion  
 9 of such land is is situated. At least 30 days in advance of  
 10 such public meeting, notice shall be published in newspapers a  
 11 newspaper of general circulation in the area area where such  
 12 lands are land-is located, indicating the date, time, and  
 13 place of such public meeting. A report of the public meeting  
 14 shall be submitted to the board along with the recommendation  
 15 for purchase of such land.

16 Section 8. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section  
 17 260.015, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

18 260.015 Acquisition of land.--

19 (1) The department is authorized to acquire by gift or  
 20 purchase the fee simple absolute title or any lesser interest  
 21 in land, including easements, for the purposes of ss. 260.011-  
 22 260.018 pursuant to the provisions of chapter 375, except  
 23 that:

24 (c) Projects Abandoned-railroad-rights-of-way acquired  
 25 under this chapter shall not be subject to the evaluation and  
 26 selection procedures of s. 259.035, regardless of the  
 27 estimated value of such projects. All abandoned-railroad  
 28 rights-of-way projects shall be acquired in accordance with  
 29 the acquisition procedures of chapter 253, except that the  
 30 department may use the appraisal procedure used by the  
 31

1 Department of Transportation to acquire transportation rights-  
 2 of-way.

3 Section 9. Subsection (1) of section 375.031, Florida  
 4 Statutes, is amended to read:

5 375.031 Acquisition of land; procedures.--

6 (1) The department is empowered and authorized to  
 7 identify for acquisition lands, water areas, and related  
 8 resources and to perform all other activities necessary or  
 9 incident to improving, maintaining, selling, leasing, or  
 10 disposing of land, water areas, and related resources, and  
 11 improvements thereon. Prior to the acquisition of such land  
 12 by the department, the seller of the land shall file a  
 13 statement with the department disclosing, for at least the  
 14 last 5 years prior to the conveyance of title to the state,  
 15 all financial transactions concerning the land, and all  
 16 parties having a financial interest in any transaction; and  
 17 the-amount-of-the-tax-assessment-thereon-for-each-year. The  
 18 Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund shall  
 19 hold title to lands so acquired, but the beneficial use,  
 20 control, and management shall be with the department. All  
 21 lands identified for acquisition under this chapter shall be  
 22 acquired with funds from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund.

23 Section 10. Paragraph (c) of subsection (3) of section  
 24 380.0666, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

25 380.0666 Powers of land authority.--The land authority  
 26 shall have all the powers necessary or convenient to carry out  
 27 and effectuate the purposes and provisions of this act,  
 28 including the following powers, which are in addition to all  
 29 other powers granted by other provisions of this act:

30 (3) To acquire and dispose of real and personal  
 31 property or any interest therein when such acquisition is

1 necessary or appropriate to protect the natural environment,  
 2 provide public access or public recreational facilities,  
 3 preserve wildlife habitat areas, provide affordable housing to  
 4 very low-income, low-income, or moderate-income persons, as  
 5 defined in s. 420.0004, or provide access to management of  
 6 acquired lands; to acquire interests in land by means of land  
 7 exchanges; and to enter into all alternatives to the  
 8 acquisition of fee interests in land, including, but not  
 9 limited to, the acquisition of easements, development rights,  
 10 life estates, leases, and leaseback arrangements. However,  
 11 the land authority shall make such acquisition only if:  
 12 (c) The property to be acquired has not been purchased  
 13 within 9-year-after-being selected for purchase through  
 14 another local, regional, state, or federal public land  
 15 acquisition program. Such restriction shall not apply if the  
 16 land authority cooperates with the other public land  
 17 acquisition programs which listed the lands for acquisition.  
 18 to coordinate the acquisition and disposition of such lands.  
 19 In such cases, the land authority may enter into contractual  
 20 or other agreements to acquire lands jointly or for eventual  
 21 resale to other public land acquisition programs.  
 22 Section 11. Section 373.093, Florida Statutes, is  
 23 amended to read:

24 373.093 Lease of lands or interest in land.--The  
 25 governing board of the district may lease any lands or  
 26 interest in land, including but not limited to oil and mineral  
 27 rights, to which the district has acquired title, or to which  
 28 it may hereafter acquire title in the following manner: as  
 29 long as the lease is consistent with the purposes for which  
 30 the lands or any interest in land was acquired:  
 31

1 (1) For the best price and terms obtainable, to be  
 2 determined by the board.  
 3 (2) Before leasing any land, or interest in land  
 4 including but not limited to oil and mineral rights, the  
 5 district shall cause a notice of intention to lease to be  
 6 published in a newspaper published in the county in which said  
 7 land is situated and such other places as the board may  
 8 determine once each week for 3 successive weeks (three  
 9 insertions being sufficient), the first publication of which  
 10 shall be not less than 30 nor more than 45 days prior to any  
 11 lease, which said notice shall set forth the time and place of  
 12 leasing and a description of the lands to be leased.

13 (3) It shall not be necessary to publish the notice as  
 14 provided by subsection (2) where the lease is made to a person  
 15 in connection with land acquisition by the district and the  
 16 lease results in a diminution of the cost to the district in  
 17 the acquisition of the land.

18 Section 12. Section 373.1395, Florida Statutes, is  
 19 created to read:

20 373.1395 Limitation on liability of water management  
 21 district with respect to areas made available to the public  
 22 for recreational purposes without charge.--

23 (1) The purpose of this section is to encourage water  
 24 management districts to make available land, water areas, and  
 25 park areas to the public for outdoor recreational purposes by  
 26 limiting their liability to persons going thereon and to third  
 27 persons who may be damaged by the acts or omissions of persons  
 28 going thereon.

29 (2) Except as provided in subsection (4), a water  
 30 management district that provides the public with a park area  
 31 or other land for outdoor recreational purposes, or allows

1 access over district lands for recreational purposes, owes no  
 2 duty of care to keep that park area or land safe for entry or  
 3 use by others or to give warning to persons entering or going  
 4 on that park area or land of any hazardous conditions.  
 5 structures, or activities thereon. A water management  
 6 district that provides the public with a park area or other  
 7 land for outdoor recreational purposes does not, by providing  
 8 that park area or land, extend any assurance that such park  
 9 area or land is safe for any purpose, does not incur any duty  
 10 of care toward a person who goes on that park area or land,  
 11 and is not responsible for any injury to persons or property  
 12 caused by an act or omission of a person who goes on that park  
 13 area or land. This subsection does not apply if there is any  
 14 charge made or usually made for entering or using the park  
 15 area or land, or if any commercial or other activity from  
 16 which profit is derived from the patronage of the public is  
 17 conducted on such park area or land or any part thereof.  
 18 (3)(a) Except as provided in subsection (4), a water  
 19 management district that leases any land or water area to the  
 20 state for outdoor recreational purposes, or for access to  
 21 outdoor recreational purposes, owes no duty of care to keep  
 22 that land or water area safe for entry or use by others or to  
 23 give warning to persons entering or going on that land or  
 24 water of any hazardous conditions, structures, or activities  
 25 thereon. A water management district that leases a land or  
 26 water area to the state for outdoor recreational purposes does  
 27 not, by giving such lease, extend any assurance that such land  
 28 or water area is safe for any purpose, incur any duty of care  
 29 toward a person who goes on the leased land or water area, and  
 30 is not responsible for any injury to persons or property  
 31

1 caused by an act or omission of a person who goes on the  
 2 leased land or water area.  
 3 (b) This subsection applies to any person going on the  
 4 leased land or water area whether he goes as an invitee,  
 5 licensee, trespasser, or otherwise.  
 6 (4) This section does not relieve any water management  
 7 district of any liability that would otherwise exist for gross  
 8 negligence or a deliberate, willful, or malicious injury to a  
 9 person or property. This section does not create or increase  
 10 the liability of any water management district or person  
 11 beyond that which is authorized by s. 768.28.  
 12 (5) The term "outdoor recreational purposes," as used  
 13 in this section, includes, without limitation, hunting,  
 14 fishing, swimming, boating, camping, picnicking, hiking,  
 15 pleasure driving, nature study, water skiing, motorcycling,  
 16 and visiting historical, archaeological, scenic, or scientific  
 17 sites.  
 18 Section 13, Subsection (1), paragraph (a) of  
 19 subsection (2), and subsection (8) of section 373.59, Florida  
 20 Statutes, are amended, and subsection (13) is added to said  
 21 section, to read:  
 22 373.59 Water Management Lands Trust Fund.--  
 23 (1) There is established within the Department of  
 24 Environmental Regulation the Water Management Lands Trust Fund  
 25 to be used as a nonlapsing fund for the purposes of this  
 26 section. The moneys in this fund are hereby continually  
 27 appropriated for the purposes of land acquisition, management,  
 28 maintenance, and capital improvements, payments in lieu of  
 29 taxes, and administration of the fund in accordance with the  
 30 provisions of this section. Up to 15 percent of the moneys  
 31 in the fund may be allocated annually to the districts for

1 management, maintenance, and capital improvements pursuant to  
 2 subsection (7).  
 3 (2)(a) Subsequent to public hearings, similar to those  
 4 held pursuant to s. 120.54, each district shall file a 5-year  
 5 plan for acquisition with the Legislature and the Secretary of  
 6 Environmental Regulation by January 15, 1982. Annually  
 7 thereafter, each district shall file with the Legislature and  
 8 the secretary a report of acquisition activity together with  
 9 modifications or additions to its 5-year plan of acquisition.  
 10 The report shall also include a description of land management  
 11 activity. Expenditure of moneys from the Water Management  
 12 Lands Trust Fund shall be limited to the costs for  
 13 acquisition, management, maintenance, and capital improvements  
 14 of lands included within the 5-year plan as filed by each  
 15 district and to the department's costs of administration of  
 16 the fund. The department's costs of administration shall be  
 17 charged proportionally against each district's allocation  
 18 using the formula provided in subsection (7).; However, no  
 19 such acquisition of lands shall occur without a public hearing  
 20 similar to those held pursuant to the provisions set forth in  
 21 s. 120.54. In the annual update of its 5-year plan for  
 22 acquisition, each district shall identify lands needed to  
 23 protect or recharge groundwater and shall establish a plan for  
 24 their acquisition as necessary to protect potable water  
 25 supplies. Lands which serve to protect or recharge  
 26 groundwater identified pursuant to this paragraph shall also  
 27 serve to protect other valuable natural resources or provide  
 28 space for natural resource based recreation.  
 29 (6) Beginning in fiscal year 1986-1987; Each district  
 30 may use up to 15 10 percent of its allocation under subsection  
 31 (7) for management, maintenance, and capital improvements.

1 Capital improvements shall include, but need not be limited  
 2 to, perimeter fencing, signs, firelanes, control of invasive  
 3 exotic species, controlled burning, habitat inventory and  
 4 restoration, law enforcement, access roads and trails, and  
 5 minimal public accommodations, such as primitive campsites,  
 6 garbage receptacles, and toilets.  
 7 (13)(a) Beginning in fiscal year 1992-1993, not more  
 8 than one-fourth of the land management funds provided for in  
 9 subsections (1) and (6) in any year shall be reserved annually  
 10 by a governing board, during the development of its annual  
 11 operating budget, for payment in lieu of taxes to qualifying  
 12 counties for actual ad valorem tax losses incurred as a result  
 13 of lands purchased with funds allocated pursuant to s.  
 14 259.101(3)(b). In addition, the Northwest Florida Water  
 15 Management District and the Suwannee River Water Management  
 16 District shall pay to qualifying counties payments in lieu of  
 17 taxes for district lands acquired with funds allocated  
 18 pursuant to subsection (7). Reserved funds that are not used  
 19 for payment in lieu of taxes in any year shall revert to the  
 20 fund to be used for management purposes or land acquisition in  
 21 accordance with this section.  
 22 (b) Payment in lieu of taxes shall be available to  
 23 counties for each year in which the levy of ad valorem tax is  
 24 at least nine mills or the amount of the tax loss from all  
 25 completed Preservation 2000 acquisitions in the county exceeds  
 26 0.01 percent of the county's total taxable value, and the  
 27 population is 75,000 or less and to counties with a population  
 28 of less than 100,000 which contain all or a portion of an area  
 29 of critical state concern designated pursuant to chapter 380.  
 30  
 31

1 (c) If insufficient funds are available in any year to  
 2 make full payments to all qualifying counties, such counties  
 3 shall receive a pro rata share of the moneys available.  
 4 (d) The payment amount shall be based on the average  
 5 amount of actual taxes paid on the property for the 3 years  
 6 immediately preceding acquisition. For lands purchased prior  
 7 to July 1, 1992, applications for payment in lieu of taxes  
 8 shall be made to the districts by January 1, 1993. For lands  
 9 purchased after July 1, 1992, applications for payment in lieu  
 10 of taxes shall be made no later than January 31 of the year  
 11 following acquisition. No payment in lieu of taxes shall be  
 12 made for properties which were exempt from ad valorem taxation  
 13 for the year immediately preceding acquisition. Payment in  
 14 lieu of taxes shall be limited to a period of 10 consecutive  
 15 years of annual payments.  
 16 (e) Payment in lieu of taxes shall be made within 30  
 17 days after: certification by the Department of Revenue that  
 18 the amounts applied for are appropriate, certification by the  
 19 Department of Environmental Regulation that funds are  
 20 available, and completion of any fund transfers to the  
 21 district. The governing board may reduce the amount of a  
 22 payment in lieu of taxes to any county by the amount of other  
 23 payments, grants, or in-kind services provided to that county  
 24 by the district during the year. The amount of any reduction  
 25 in payments shall remain in the Water Management Lands Trust  
 26 Fund for purposes provided by law.  
 27 (f) If a district governing board conveys to a local  
 28 government title to any land owned by the board, any payments  
 29 in lieu of taxes on the land made to the local government  
 30 shall be discontinued as of the date of the conveyance.  
 31

1 Section 14. Notwithstanding any provision of law to  
 2 the contrary, the governing boards of the water management  
 3 districts, in considering the awarding of projects or studies  
 4 relating to research, restoration, or similar projects or  
 5 studies, shall give preferential consideration to universities  
 6 in the State University System.  
 7 Section 15. Subsection (2) of section 380.08, Florida  
 8 Statutes, is amended to read:  
 9 380.08 Protection of landowners' rights.--  
 10 (2) If any governmental agency authorized to adopt a  
 11 rule or regulation or issue any order under this chapter  
 12 determines that, to achieve the purposes of this chapter, it  
 13 is in the public interest to acquire the fee simple or lesser  
 14 interest in any parcel of land, such agency shall so certify  
 15 to the state land planning agency, the Board of Trustees of  
 16 the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, and other appropriate  
 17 governmental agencies. Prior to such agency's acquiring such  
 18 land, the seller of the land shall file a statement with the  
 19 department disclosing, for at least the last 5 years prior to  
 20 the conveyance of title to the state, all financial  
 21 transactions concerning the land, all parties having a  
 22 financial interest in any transaction; and the amount-of-the  
 23 tax-assessment-on-the-land-for-each-year.  
 24 Section 16. The report required under section 380.512,  
 25 Florida Statutes, shall, for fiscal year 1992-1993, include an  
 26 analysis of the role of a system of greenways in enhancing the  
 27 state's public recreation and conservation goals.  
 28 Section 17. Subsection (3) of s. 259.035, Florida  
 29 Statutes, is hereby repealed.  
 30 Section 18. For fiscal year 1992-1993, subject to an  
 31 appropriation for a third series of bonds for the Florida

ENROLLED

1992 Legislature

HB 315-H, 1st Engrossed

1 Preservation 2000 Program, there is hereby appropriated from  
2 the Conservation and Recreation Lands Trust Fund to the  
3 Department of Natural Resources an amount equal to \$468,915,  
4 to be allocated pursuant to s. 253.023(4), Florida Statutes,  
5 to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory for start-up expenses  
6 and other costs associated with a staffed geographic  
7 information system and data base staff for land acquisition  
8 and management.  
9 Section 19. Subsection (11) of section 375.031,  
10 Florida Statutes, is amended by chapter 90-217, Laws of  
11 Florida, is hereby repealed.  
12 Section 20. Amendments to sections of the Florida  
13 Statutes enacted by this act shall not operate to repeal or  
14 otherwise negate amendments to the same sections which may  
15 have been previously enacted at a 1992 session of the Florida  
16 Legislature and which are not indicated herein, and full  
17 effect shall be given to each, if that is possible. If  
18 provisions of this act are in direct conflict with amendments  
19 so enacted, the provisions of this act shall control.  
20 Section 21. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
21 law.  
22  
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*1993 Save Our Rivers - Five Year Plan*

**RULES OF THE  
SOUTH FLORIDA WATER  
MANAGEMENT DISTRICT  
CHAPTER 40 E-7 F.A.C.**

**APPENDIX C**

**Rules of the South Florida Water Management District  
MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS  
Chapter 40E-7**

**PART I WATER MANAGEMENT LANDS TRUST FUND**

- 40E-7.111 General
- 40E-7.121 Definitions
- 40E-7.131 Selection of Lands - Five Year Plan
- 40E-7.141 Acquisition Procedures -Negotiations
- 40E-7.151 Acquisition Procedures - Condemnation
- 40E-7.161 Surveys
- 40E-7.171 Appraisals
- 40E-7.181 Funding
- 40E-7.191 Disposition of Surplus Land

*Specific Authority* 373 044 373 113, F.S.  
*Law Implemented* 373 046, 373 056, 373 083, 373 084, 373 086, 373 089, 373 099, 373 103, 373 139, 373 59, Chapters 73 and 74, F.S.  
*History--New* 7-18-82, Amended 8-14-88.

- 40E-7.121 Definitions.**  
 When used in this chapter.
- (1) "Department" means Florida Department of Environmental Regulation.
  - (2) "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation.
  - (3) "District" means the South Florida Water Management District or its successor agency.
  - (4) "Board" means the South Florida Water Management District Governing Board.
  - (5) "Fund" means the Water Management Lands Trust Fund.
  - (6) "Plan" means the five year plan as approved by the Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District.
  - (7) "Project" means a parcel or parcels of land in a discrete unit of purchase.
  - (8) "Survey" means a certified survey signed by a licensed land surveyor authorized to practice surveying in the State of Florida.
  - (9) "Acquisition" means the reduction of the title to land to be acquired to fee or such other legal interest necessary for water management, water supply and the conservation and protection of water resources.
  - (10) "Capital improvement" shall mean those improvements including but not limited to perimeter fencing, signs, firelanes, access roads and trails, and minimal public accommodations, such as primitive campsites, garbage receptacles, and toilets.

**PART II PROCEDURES FOR CONTRACTING OF PROFESSIONAL AND CONTRACTUAL SERVICES**

- 40E-7.201 Policy and Purpose
- 40E-7.203 Qualifying Procedures
- 40E-7.205 Competitive Selection
- 40E-7.207 Competitive Negotiations
- 40E-7.208 Inconsistency with Section 287.055, Florida Statutes
- 40E-7.209 Prohibition Against Contingency Fees
- 40E-7.210 Reservation of Rights
- 40E-7.211 Resolution of Contract Bidding Protest
- 40E-7.212 Inconsistency with Section 120.53(5), Florida Statutes

**PART I  
WATER MANAGEMENT LANDS TRUST FUND**

**40E-7.111 General.**

The purpose of the rule in this part is to implement the legislative intent expressed in Section 373 59, Florida Statutes, and therefore, to establish District policies and procedures regarding a five year plan for the selection of land, and provide procedures for the acquisition and management of land, title to which shall vest in the District. It is also the intent of these rules to provide uniform acquisition procedures in order to effectuate efficient legal methods in accordance with sound business practices.

*Specific Authority* 373 044, 373 113, F.S.  
*Law Implemented* 373 046, 373 056, 373 083, 373 084, 373 086, 373 089, 373 099, 373 103, 373 019, 373 139, 373 59, Chapters 73 and 74, F.S.  
*History--New* 7-18-82, Amended 8-14-88.

**40E-7.131 Selection of Lands - Five Year Plan.**

- (1) The District shall adopt a five year plan designating the areas of land to be acquired, which shall be filed with the legislature and the Secretary by January 15, 1982. Annually thereafter, modifications or additions to the five

year plan shall be filed with the legislature and the Secretary.

(2) Prior to the adoption, amendment or modification of the five year plan, the District shall hold one or more public hearings.

(3) Acquisition activity for the preceding fiscal year shall be reported annually to the legislature and the Secretary by January 15 of each year.

*Specific Authority* 373.044, 373.113, F.S.  
*Law Implemented* 373.139, 373.59, F.S.  
*History--New* 7-18-82.

**40E-7.141 Acquisition Procedures - Negotiations.**

(1) Upon determination of land requirements, descriptions and maps sufficient to identify the lands to be acquired shall be prepared.

(2) Ownership information shall be obtained and reviewed in order to determine the title to the land being acquired.

(3) The District shall obtain at least one written appraisal pursuant to Rule 40E-7.171.

(4) The District shall attempt to acquire each parcel through voluntary negotiation prior to commencement of proceedings in eminent domain.

(5) All contracts to purchase shall be reduced to writing and shall be contingent upon approval by the Board.

(6) The District shall attempt to negotiate the acquisition of desired parcels in accordance with the following procedure:

(a) Each owner or authorized representative shall be contacted with an offer to acquire.

(b) A "Negotiation Report" may be prepared and forwarded to Office of Counsel, which shall summarize such negotiations, including the amount of offer made by the District, and any counter-offer made by the property owner.

(c) In the event an offer is accepted by an owner or a counter-offer is accepted by the District, the District shall:

1. Arrange for the proper execution and recording of all necessary documents, and

2. Request Office of Counsel to prepare a resolution requesting the Board to approve the necessary funds pursuant to Rule 17-42.03.

(d) When a negotiated settlement cannot be readily attained, an authorized officer shall send a memorandum to Office of Counsel which shall include:

1. A request for a resolution to institute eminent domain proceedings,

2. Identification of parcels by title memorandum number, and

3. Legal interest or estate considered for acquisition.

(e) In the event a property owner, or authorized representative, makes an offer to the District prior to the District obtaining an appraisal, the District may accept such offer or make a counter-offer subject to obtaining such appraisal.

(7) The District may accept donations of land. In such event the provisions of subsection (6) shall be followed, except that appraisals may be waived upon concurrence of both the landowner and the District.

*Specific Authority* 373.044, 373.113, F.S.  
*Law Implemented* 373.056, 373.083, 373.086, 373.099, 373.103, 373.139, 373.59, F.S.  
*History--New* 7-18-82, Amended 8-14-88.

**40E-7.151 Acquisition Procedures - Condemnation.**

(1) Proceedings in eminent domain shall not be commenced until authorized by the Board, with the advice and consent of the appropriate Basin Board whenever Basin funds will be utilized for such acquisition.

(2) The Board may adopt a resolution authorizing the institution of eminent domain proceedings, which shall include the following when applicable:

(a) identification of the project for which the property is being acquired and its location,

(b) a statement by the Board finding that the project is necessary and in the public interest,

(c) a statement that acquisition of lands for the project by eminent domain is necessary,

(d) a statement of the legal authority for the project and the acquisition of lands,

(e) identification of the lands to be acquired, the nature of the legal interest sought, and adoption of project maps, if available, and

(f) a statement authorizing and directing Office of Counsel to institute eminent domain proceedings and proceedings by way of Declaration of Taking.

*Specific Authority* 373.044, 373.113, F.S.  
*Law Implemented* 373.59, Chapters 73 and 74, F.S.  
*History--New* 7-18-82.

**40E-7.161 Surveys.**

(1) In order to determine the location, acreage and legal description of land to be acquired, the District may obtain a survey.

(2) In the event a survey is not obtained, the District shall then use the best available data

in order to arrive at the boundaries and acreage of the land to be acquired.

(3) All surveys shall meet the minimum technical standard for land surveying in the State of Florida as adopted by the Florida State Board of Land Surveyors

*Specific Authority* 373.044, 373.113, F.S.  
*Law Implemented* 373.056, 373.083, 373.086, 373.099, 373.139, 373.59, F.S.  
*History--New* 7-18-82.

**40E-7.171 Appraisals.**

(1) All lands to be acquired shall be appraised by at least one real estate appraiser, except as provided in Section 40E-7.141(7).

(2) Prior to contracting with the District, each appraiser selected shall submit an affidavit substantiating that such appraiser has no vested or fiduciary interest in the property to be appraised, except for the professional fee.

(3) After a contract between the District and the appraiser has been executed, the District shall transmit all pertinent data to the appraiser regarding the assignment.

(4) All appraisals shall be kept confidential subject to the provisions of Section 373.139(3), F.S.

(5) If approved by the Executive Director or his designee, District reviewed appraisals from other government agencies or non-profit organizations cooperating with the District on acquisition may also be used to establish just compensation values.

*Specific Authority* 373.044, 373.113, F.S.  
*Law Implemented* 373.083, 373.139, 373.59, F.S.  
*History--New* 7-18-82, Amended \_\_\_\_\_.

**40E-7.181 Funding.**

(1) For lands acquired by negotiation and purchase, the Board shall request the Department to release monies from the fund by adopting a resolution which shall comply with Chapter 17-42, Florida Administrative Code.

(2) For lands acquired by eminent domain, subsequent to the adoption of a resolution authorizing eminent domain proceedings, the Board shall adopt a resolution pursuant to subsection (1), which in addition shall authorize the Executive Director or other staff officer to request monies from the Fund as follows:

(a) A request from the District for funds sufficient to pay the owner the amount specified in the final judgment or the stipulation and order,

(b) A request from the District for funds sufficient to pay the amount specified in the court's order or the stipulation and order for any

costs and fees of the owner, whether incurred in the trial court or an appeal, and

(c) A request from the District for reimbursement of all costs and fees incurred by the District associated with such acquisition.

(3) The District shall request the Department to release funds specified in subsection (2) within a sufficient time to allow the District to comply with section 73.111, Florida Statutes.

(4) For the management, maintenance and capital improvements to lands acquired, the Board shall request the Department to release monies from the Fund by adopting a resolution which specifies the designated managing agency, specific management activities, public use, estimated annual operating costs, and other acceptable documentation to justify the release of monies. The District may contract with state agencies to provide the management and maintenance services.

*Specific Authority* 373.044, 373.113, F.S.  
*Law Implemented* 373.056, 373.083, 373.086, 373.099, 373.139, 373.59, F.S.  
*History--New* 7-18-82, Amended 8-14-88.

**40E-7.191 Disposition of Surplus Land.**

(1) The District may sell or exchange District lands which have been acquired with funds from the Water Management Lands Trust Fund. District lands are considered surplus when:

(a) They are not required for District or project purposes pursuant to section 373.590, Florida Statutes,

(b) They have no apparent present or future utility in the land management program of the District, and

(c) They have been declared surplus by the Board.

(2) Surplus land shall be disposed of in accordance with the procedures set forth in Rule 40E-9.955.

(3) All funds received from the sale of surplus lands shall be used to purchase other lands meeting the criteria specified in section 373.59, Florida Statutes.

(4) All lands exchanged shall be in return for other lands meeting the criteria specified in section 373.59, Florida Statutes.

*Specific Authority* 373.044, 373.113, F.S.  
*Law Implemented* 373.056, 373.083, 373.089, 373.099, 373.139, 373.59, F.S.  
*History--New* 7-18-82, Amended 8-14-88.

**DER WATER  
MANAGEMENT LANDS  
TRUST FUND  
CHAPTER 17-402 F.A.C.**

**CHAPTER 17-42  
WATER MANAGEMENT LANDS TRUST FUND**

- 17-42.001 Scope.
- 17-42.020 Definitions.
- 17-42.030 Release of Funds.
- 17-42.040 District Share of Acquisition Costs.
- 17-42.050 Financial Reports.
- 17-42.060 Water Management District Lands Trust Fund Bond Issues

**17-42.001 Scope.**

This chapter provides the requirements and procedures for the release of moneys from the Water Management Lands Trust Fund to the water management districts for use in acquiring lands necessary for water management purposes.

Specific Authority: 373.026, 373.043, F.S.

Law Implemented: 373.016, 373.026, 373.043, 373.59, F.S.

History: New 3-24-82. Previously numbered as 17-42.01.

**17-42.020 Definitions.**

(1) "Acquisition Costs" shall mean direct costs actually incurred by a water management district in the acquisition of the fee or other legal interest in lands and payments to owners.

(2) "Bonds" shall mean any revenue bonds or notes for which a district has pledged its share of the funds in the Water Management Lands Trust Fund as security.

(3) "Debt Service" shall mean payments for principal and interest due on any bonds issued by the district.

(4) "Department" shall mean the Department of Environmental Regulation.

(5) "District" shall mean any one of the five water management districts listed in Subsection 373.59(6), Florida Statutes.

(6) "Funds" shall mean moneys in the Water Management Lands Trust Fund.

(7) "Lands" shall mean the real property in which the fee or other legal interest has been acquired or is intended to be acquired according to the provisions of Section 373.59, Florida Statutes.

(8) "Year" shall mean the State fiscal year.

Specific Authority: 373.026, 373.043, F.S.

Law Implemented: 373.016, 373.026, 373.043, 373.59, F.S.

History: New 3-24-82. Previously numbered as 17-42.02. Amended 9-17-86.

**17-42.030 Release of Funds.**

(1) Funds may be released to the districts for payment of land acquisition costs as provided in (2)-(6) below; for payment of debt service on land acquisition bond issues as provided in Rule 17-42.060, FAC, and for other purposes where specified by state law.

(2) A formal resolution adopted by the district governing board, together with a copy of all certified appraisals obtained by the district to determine the value of the land to be purchased, shall be submitted to the Department for release of funds requested by a district. Except as provided in subsections (5)-(7), below, the Department shall release funds to a district within a reasonable time, not to exceed 30 days, after the receipt of the governing board resolution or, for lands acquired by eminent domain, after the receipt of a subsequent request from the district's legal counsel for the release of funds.

(3) The governing board resolution shall certify the following:

(a) The amount of funds being requested or, for lands acquired by eminent domain, that the district governing board has formally authorized condemnation proceedings and has delegated to its legal counsel the authority to request the release of funds sufficient to pay the acquisition costs of the district and the amount contained in any court orders awarding acquisitions costs;

(b) The legal interest acquired or sought to be acquired in lands for which funds are requested;

(c) A legal description of the lands being acquired, along with a general visual representation on a map, and the total amount of acreage being acquired;

(d) That the acquisition of lands or interests therein for which funds are requested is consistent with the five-year plan of acquisition filed with the Legislature and the Department or, in the case of lands acquired prior to July 15, 1982, is consistent with Section 373.59(2)(a), Florida Statutes.

(e) That the requested funds will only be used for the acquisition costs of lands;

(f) That lands acquired pursuant to this Chapter shall be made available for general public recreational uses which are not inconsistent with their water management purposes;

(g) That lands acquired pursuant to this Chapter shall be maintained in an environmentally acceptable manner, and to the extent practicable, in such a way as to restore and protect their natural state and conditions; and

17-42.001 -- 17-42.020(8)

17-42.030 -- 17-42.030(g)

(h) That should the district dispose of any lands or interests acquired pursuant to this Chapter, all revenues derived therefrom will be used to acquire other lands for water management, water supply and the conservation and protection of water resources.

(i) That the purchase price of the lands to be acquired is:

1. less than or equal to the appraised value, based on the certified appraisals that were used to determine the value of lands to be purchased or

2. greater than the appraised value, based on the certified appraisals that were used to determine the value of the lands to be purchased. The resolution shall state the justification for the increased price.

(4) All lands to be acquired shall be appraised by at least one independent real estate appraiser.

(5) Upon receipt by the Secretary of the Department of the resolution specified in Rule 17-42.030(2), FAC, the Department shall review the acquisition for consistency with the district's five year plan and the intent of Chapter 373, Florida Statutes, and shall evaluate the justification for any purchase price in excess of appraised value. The Department shall also determine whether there are sufficient funds allocable to the district, in excess of funds reserved for bond issue debt service or reserve accounts, to pay the acquisition costs. Within 20 days of receipt of the resolution, the Secretary shall notify the district in writing if the funds will or will not be released, and shall specify the reasons for withholding the moneys requested. If no notice is given, the release of funds shall be deemed to have been approved.

(6) Upon receipt of notice that the Secretary of the Department is withholding funds, the district governing board may, within 45 days, appeal such denial of funds to the Land and Water Adjudicatory Commission. Notice of such appeal shall be provided in writing to the Secretary of the Department at the time such appeal is filed with the Commission.

(7) Funds for acquisition of lands shall not be requested by the districts more than 60 days prior to the anticipated closing date, or the anticipated date of deposit in the registry of the court in the case of eminent domain proceedings.

Special Authority: 373.026, 373.043, F.S.  
Law Implemented: 373.016, 373.026, 373.043, 373.590, F.S.

History: New 3-24-82. Previously numbered as 17-42.03. Amended 9-17-86.

#### 17-42.040 District Share of Acquisition Costs.

Special Authority: 373.026, 373.043, F.S.

Law Implemented: 373.016, 373.026, 373.043, 373.59, F.S.

History: New 3-24-82. Repealed 9-17-86.

#### 17-42.050 Financial Reports.

The Department shall provide financial reports to the districts on a periodic basis and upon special request by a district.

Specific Authority: 373.026, 373.043, F.S.

Law Implemented: 373.016, 373.026, 373.59, F.S.

History: New 3-24-82. Previously numbered as 17-42-05.

#### 17-42.060 Water Management Lands Trust Fund Bond Issues.

A district that issues revenue bonds pursuant to Section 373.584, Florida Statutes, shall comply with the provisions of this section.

(1) Prior to issuance of bonds, the district shall submit to the department a resolution authorizing issuance of such bonds.

(2) At least 14 days prior to issuance of bonds, including issuance of additional bonds authorized under a previous resolution, the district shall enter into a written agreement with the Department that shall set forth the following:

(a) the debt service schedule which contains the actual amounts of the payments for principal and interest to be paid and the dates for payment and

(b) the name and address of the registrar and paying agent and the terms for transfer of funds to the paying agent, and

(3) The debt service schedule shall be structured in a manner to provide reasonable assurance that required payments will not exceed anticipated revenues for that purpose.

(4) After receipt of the district's resolution authorizing issuance of bonds, and the signed written agreement, the Department shall, commencing on the date of issuance of the bonds, or such prior date as may be agreed to by the Department and the district set aside and escrow from the first available fund in the Water Management Lands Trust Fund that are allocable to the district, sufficient funds to pay the principal and interest on the bonds that shall become due for the 12 month period commencing with the date of issuance, or more if required by the Bond Agreement. The Department shall similarly set aside and escrow funds for each following 12 month period in accordance with the agreement until the entire issue is retired.

17-42.030(h) -- 17-42.030(7)

17-42.030(h) -- 17-42.060(4)

(5) In the event that in any one year the funds in the 'Water Management Lands Trust Fund allocable the district are insufficient to pay the debt service on the bonds as it becomes due, the Department shall make up such deficiency first from reserve funds from bond proceeds and then from the next available funds in the Water Management Lands Trust Fund allocable to the district until the debt service payments are brought current. If any reserve funds from bond proceeds are used to pay such deficiencies, the reserve funds from bond proceeds shall be replenished to the level set forth in the bond agreement before additional funds are accrued for debt service payments.

(6) The district shall notify the Department if it purchases, redeems or refunds bonds from any surplus or other account; makes any modifications to the terms of the bonds that may affect the debt service payment amounts or schedule; or makes an assignment of its registrar or paying agent agreement. Where appropriate, the district shall submit an amended dept service schedule to the Department to reflect such modifications. Any change in the debt service schedule shall be submitted to the Department at least 45 days prior to the date first payment on the amended schedule is due.

(7) Any moneys in the Water Management Lands Trust Fund allocable to the district in excess of the amounts set aside for payment of debt service on the bond issue, or for other accounts as provided in Rule 17-42.060(2)(c), FAC, may be utilized and withdrawn in accordance with Rule 17-42.030, FAC.

(8) After the district has issued the bonds and the Department has undertaken payment of the debt service on such bonds, the district shall submit to the Department a separate formal resolution adopted by the governing board for each individual land acquisition that is made using proceeds from the bonds or interest earned on such proceeds. Such resolution shall conform to the requirements set forth for land acquisitions in Rule 17-42.030(3), FAC, and shall have a copy of all certified appraisals obtained by the district to determine the value of the land to be acquired attached. The district shall not disburse funds for the acquisition prior to the expiration of the 20 day review period set forth in Rule 17-42.030(5), FAC, and in the event the Secretary of the Department disapproves such purchase pursuant to Rule 17-42.030(5), FAC, the district shall not disburse funds for an acquisition unless and until the Secretary's decision is reversed on appeal by the Land and Water Adjudicatory Commission.

17-42.060(5) -- 17-42.060(8)

(9) The creation by the Department of any district accounts in the Water Management Lands Trust Fund for payment of debt service on bonds or for other purposes shall not require actual segregation of funds for those purposes so long as adequate accounting is made for funds reserved for each purpose.

Specific Authority: 373.016, 373.026, 373.043, 373.139, 373.589, 373.59, F.S.

Law Implemented: 373.016, 373.139, 373.589, 373.59, F.S.

History: New 9-17-86

17-42.060(9) -- 17-42.060(History)

# **SFWMD DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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- 4.100**    **SOR Land Selection and Acquisition Policy**
- 4.200**    **Negotiating Strategy for Land Acquisition Program**
- 5.001**    **Land Management Policy (Revised 8/13/92)**

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

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**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

**A. STATEMENT OF POLICY**

1. The Governing Board recognizes a need to provide guidelines for selecting projects to be considered under the Resource Rivers Act (Section 373.59 Florida Statutes), which is also known as the Save Our Rivers Program. These guidelines include procedures for project selection and land acquisition and are intended as an addition and complementary to Rule 40E-7, Florida Administration Code.
2. It is the Governing Board's intention to implement the Save Our Rivers Program in a manner that will provide long-term benefit to the citizens living within the District as well as the water resources of the District.
3. The Governing Board recognizes that the Program's resources are limited and that land acquisition under the Program will primarily be on a willing seller basis.
4. It is the goal of this Program to identify, prioritize and acquire necessary interests in lands for water management, water supply, conservation and protection of water resources.
5. In compliance with Section 373.59, Florida Statutes, the District will file an annual five-year plan with the Department of Environmental Regulation and the Florida Legislature.
6. Funding for the Save Our Rivers Program is derived from revenue and Preservation 2000 Bond proceeds collected from the documentary stamp tax and it is administered by the Department of Environmental Regulation as provided for by Rule 17-42, Florida Administration Code.
7. To most effectively administer the Save Our Rivers Program, the District will closely coordinate with all other public land acquisition programs.
8. Through its regulatory programs, the District shall apply the same regulatory criteria to lands being considered for acquisition/protection under the SOR program, as it does to similar lands not being considered for acquisition/protection.

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

The District's regulatory program shall not be used solely to reduce or control value of lands to be considered for acquisition/protection under the SOR Program, notwithstanding normal effects of regulations on land values.

9. It is the policy of the Governing Board that inclusion of a property in the Five-Year Plan, pursuant to Section 373.59, F.S., does not reflect a definite intention by the South Florida Water Management District to acquire said property. Inclusion in the Five-Year Plan indicates that the subject property has acquisition potential depending upon further investigation as to its water resources, environmental and management features and negotiation of a mutually acceptable acquisition price.
10. The acquisition cost shall be the purchase price plus ancillary cost as listed below.

**SOR Ancillary Cost:**

- a. Appraisal Contract
- b. Risk Assessment Contract
- c. Title Insurance
- d. Closing Cost
- e. Boundary Survey and Legal Descriptions
- f. Staff Time for Direct Negotiations
- g. Management and Review of Appropriate Contracts  
and Title Insurance Contracts
- h. Management and Review of Risk Assessment Contracts
- i. Staff Time for Legal Support
- j. Travel (Directly connected with a specific acquisition)

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

**B. SCOPE**

This policy will apply to all projects selected under the Save Our Rivers Program.

**C. GENERAL GUIDELINES**

**1. DEFINITIONS**

- a. *Acquisition* - acquiring title to land in fee; or in the discretion of the District, such other legal interest necessary for water management, water supply, or the conservation and protection of water resources.
- b. *Board* - the Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District.
- c. *Department* - the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation.
- d. *District* - the South Florida Water Management District.
- e. *Plan* - the Five Year Plan as approved by the.
- f. *Secretary* - the secretary of the Department.
- g. *Selection* - the process of identifying and evaluating proposed projects for inclusion in the plan..
- h. *SOR* - the Save Our Rivers Program as provided under Section 373.59 F.S.
- i. *SOR Project*- a geographical area possessing unique features necessary for water management, water supply, and the conservation and protection of water resources.
- j. *Florida Preservation 2000* - Section 259.101, Florida Section, providing for the proceeds of bonds deposited in the Florida Preservation 2000 Trust Fund and for criteria for certain projects financed by such proceeds.

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

2. **SELECTION COMMITTEE:** A committee shall be established and composed of the following District staff members to make recommendation to the Board for selection of projects for inclusion in the plan:
  - a. Director, Department of Planning
  - b. Director, Department of Regulation
  - c. Director, Department of Research and Evaluation
  - d. Director, Department of Operations and Maintenance
  - e. Director, Department of Land Management
  - f. Deputy Executive Director
  - g. District Counsel
  - h. Director, Department of Construction Management
  - i. Director, Department of Finance and Administration

Each committee member may designate a specific staff member to function as the representative on all committee work.

The Committee Chairman will be the Deputy Executive Director and Vice Chairman will be the Director of Land Management.

The committee shall be responsible for receiving and evaluating all suggestions for selection of projects under the Save Our Rivers Program. In addition, the committee shall provide direction to the Save Our Rivers Program for the Development of policies. This includes the incorporation and prioritization of the projects currently on the District's Strategic Plan with the Save Our Rivers Five Year Plan and the administration of Preservation 2000 requirements. All proposals to the Board for selection shall originate from the committee; all suggestions for selection shall be submitted to the committee. The committee shall meet at least twice a year to consider all suggestions for selection and to prepare a plan of proposed projects. In order for a suggested project to receive approval for consideration on the plan proposed by the committee, it must be nominated by one committee member and have votes of approval by at least five committee members. Should any members of the committee have a direct or indirect, present or contemplated future interest in a parcel proposed or could personally benefit from the acquisition of the parcel, the member shall not participate in discussion, vote or other action in regard to that parcel. The Board may consider appeals on any project proposed to the committee but not recommended to the Board by the committee.

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

The public meetings of the Selection Committee shall be widely publicized. Minutes summarizing all comments made at the meetings shall be prepared and distributed to all committee members.

**D. PROJECT SELECTION GUIDELINES**

1. **TYPES OF PROJECTS:** Projects considered necessary for water management, water supply and the conservation and protection of water resources and thus eligible for selection include but are not limited to:
  - a. river and stream flood plains
  - b. river and stream flood ways
  - c. river and stream flood hazard areas
  - d. river and stream littoral areas
  - e. springs
  - f. lakes including littoral zones
  - g. aquifer recharge area
  - h. wetlands,
  - i. well fields,
  - j. unique water features,
  - k. appropriate buffer zones qualifying for a - j
  - l. lands needed to retain or store water, or
  - m. remainders of land ownerships included in a - l
2. **SOR PROJECT PROPOSAL:** The SOR Projected Proposal Form shall be completed and submitted to the District for consideration of any proposed project.
3. **EVALUATION MATRIX:** The project Evaluation Matrix is used to screen and categorize prospective additions to the Five Year Plan. Based on the Project Ranking Criteria and Guidelines for Site Priority Ranking, each project will be scored on a 1-5 scale for each parameter. In addition, weighting factors, or multipliers, have been added to certain high priority parameters. The first phase, or Category I parameters, deal strictly with water resource related issues.

**CATEGORY I**

	PARAMETER	WEIGHTING FACTOR
a.	Water Management	5
b.	Water Supply	5

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

- c. Conservation and Protection of Water Resources 5

Each project will be screened by the parameters in Category I first. After the initial screening is complete, seven additional factors in Category II will be evaluated. Those include:

**CATEGORY II**

<u>PARAMETER</u>	<u>WEIGHTING FACTOR</u>
d. Manageability	2
e. Habitat Diversity	2
f. Species Diversity	1
g. Connectedness	2
h. Rarity	2
i. Vulnerability	1
j. Nature Oriented Human Use	1

It is intended that project scoring be conducted by a team of reviewers, each of whom is familiar with all the projects. In this manner, any personal biases will carry through all the projects, rather than only reflect in one or two. All projects will be rated against each other so comparisons can be made among parcels, rather than adhering to a strict set of criteria for scoring purposes.

Based on this matrix, the SOR projects have been separated into two categories:

**Category A Projects:** Category A projects are those lands which received the highest relative scores when compared with all parcels evaluated for consideration for the Five Year Plan. These projects represent the best examples of lands within the District necessary for water management, water supply and conservation and protection of water resources.

**Category B Projects:** Category B projects are those parcels that meet the qualifications of the Save Our Rivers Program but ranked lower in relative score to all projects evaluated for consideration in the Five Year Plan. Should landowners contact the District regarding the sale of their lands in these project areas, an attempt will be made to secure those rights as a gift or a bargain sale.

**Legislatively Mandated Projects:** In 1981, when Florida Resources Rivers Act was passed, the Florida Legislature specified that three projects within the

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

South Florida Water Management District be considered for purchase with the monies from the Water Management Lands Trust Fund.

- a. Water Conservation Areas
- b. Nicodemus Slough
- c. Savannahs

**4. SOR SELECTION CRITERIA FOR WATER RESOURCE PROJECTS:**

**Application**

These criteria apply to projects designed primarily to supply off-site water resource benefits. Thus, evaluation is performed not on the lands themselves, as with the resource-based matrix, but consider the use to which the lands would be put in context with a described project. Examples for benefits provided by such lands would be:

- a. Distribution systems to simulate sheet flow inputs into wetlands systems.
- b. Retention systems operated to simulate the natural hydrograph for delivery of water into natural wetlands, lakes or estuaries.
- c. Water quality treatment system utilizing managed or unmanaged wetland/marsh vegetation process.
- d. Groundwater recharge and/or water table control to facilitate recharge to aquifers or retain seepage from water storage facilities.
- e. Buffer, access or transitional areas necessary to protect core lands from adverse impacts, provide wildlife corridors, provide for public enjoyment of the core land, or isolate certain management practices such as flooding and prescribed burning.

**Criteria**

Any land acquisition would require prior Governing Board approval of the subject plan.

- a. Proposed project lands are identified in a District Plan such as WUMP or SWIM, and

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

- b. Subject lands would be utilized to provide simulated or naturally functioning water resource quality/quantity benefits, and
- c. Lands would be part of the project resulting in net increase of natural resource values, when considering both any on-site losses and off-site gains, and
- d. Capital improvements, such as canals, levees, weirs and pumps shall be limited to only those necessary to achieve the proposed water resource benefits, and
- e. All appropriate funding sources for acquisition have been identified.

**E. LAND ACQUISITION GUIDELINES**

**1. GENERAL CRITERIA**

- a. All projects on the plan shall be evaluated to determine the nature and extent of land interests that are necessary for acquisition in order to achieve the purposes for which the project was included in the plan.
- b. In order to maximize the overall benefits of the SOR Program, the District shall seek to acquire only the quality of the title necessary to achieve project purposes.

**2. ACQUISITION PRIORITY**

An acquisition priority analysis is conducted annually by the Land Management Department as part of the Five Year Plan preparation. The purpose of the analysis is to structure and direct the acquisition resources of the District. The criteria used to prioritize SOR projects are:

- a. Standing on District Strategic Plan
- b. Potential for Resource Loss
- c. Potential for Cooperative Acquisition
- d. Disposition of Owner(s)

**3. NOTIFICATION OF OWNERS**

As owners are identified in an approved Five Year Plan project, a notification letter will be mailed to them. The letter will briefly describe the program objectives and provide a focal point for future questions and discussion.

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

**F. NEGOTIATION GUIDELINES**

Negotiation strategies for SOR acquisitions are detailed in Administrative Policy and Procedures 4.200.

**1. CONSIDERATION OF APPRAISALS:**

- a) After review and approval by the District's Real Estate Division, the Executive Director or his designee authorizes the use of a District appraisal for purchase negotiations with the appropriate land owners.
- b) If approved by the Executive Director or his designee, appraisals from other government agencies or non-profit organizations cooperating with the District on acquisition may also be used to establish just compensation values after review and approval by the District's Real Estate Division to establish just compensation.
- c) Two approved appraisals are required for all SOR acquisitions parcels which exceed \$500,000 based on preliminary value estimates by the District's chief real estate review appraiser. However, the Director of the Land Management Department or his designee may require two appraisals for any parcels estimated at less than \$500,000 to establish just compensation value in complex situations or for other extenuating circumstances.
- d) The District's review appraisal report determines the just compensation value for all proposed acquisitions and resolves differences among two or more appraisals on any specific land parcel.
- e) An updated appraisal(s) is required every two years to account for long delays in the negotiating process. Updates in less than two years should be utilized by negotiators to account for rapidly changing values or other market conditions. Updates are recommended by the land acquisition negotiator and approved by the Appraisal Selection Committee. Authorization to proceed with negotiations using the updated appraisal is the same as a first appraisal.
- f) When a fee simple estate is acquired subject to outstanding interests such as a mineral interest, life estate, easement or lease, the purchase price shall be reduced in accordance with the affect the outstanding interests have upon the market value of the lands.

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

2. **PURCHASE:** SOR Director shall present a recommendation to the Board for approval of an offer to purchase according to Rule 40E 7.181.
3. **EMINENT DOMAIN:** When efforts to acquire lands through negotiation have been unsuccessful, the Board may authorize the use of eminent domain, where applicable.
4. **RECORDS:** Records of all contacts with property owners shall be retained in the Department of Land Management.

**G. PREPARATION OF FIVE YEAR PLAN:**

An Acquisition Plan and Status Report shall be prepared by the committee and presented to the Governing Board annually, or more frequently, if considered necessary by the Board or the committee.

1. **THE ACQUISITION PLAN** shall include a written report of the favorable and unfavorable merits of each project selected for acquisition consideration and shall consider and evaluate in writing:
  - a. An assessment of the projects water management, water supply and conservation values including ecological values, vulnerability, endangerment and any other related environmental information.
  - b. The public purpose of the project, including the statutory authority;
  - c. An assessment of management cost, utilization, ownership, and appraised value estimates;
  - d. The determination whether the project conforms with local and state comprehensive plans or any other adopted governmental plans;
  - e. The determination whether the project meets one or more of the six criteria for Preservation 2000.
    1. A significant portion of the land in the project is in imminent danger of development;
    2. A significant portion of the land in the project is in imminent danger of subdivision which will result in multiple ownership and may make acquisition of the project more costly or less likely to be accomplished;

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

3. The value of a significant portion of the land in the project is likely to appreciate at a rate that makes purchasing the land immediately with bond proceeds more cost-effective than delaying its purchase until acquisition funds which are not bonded are available for the project;
4. A significant portion of the land in the project serves to protect or recharge groundwater and to protect other valuable natural resources or provide space for natural resource-based recreation;
5. The project can be purchased at 80 percent of appraised value or less; or
6. A significant portion of the land in the project serves as habitat for endangered or threatend species or serves to protect endanged natural communities, and

f. Potential management options.

The Plan shall identify lands needed to protect or recharge groundwater and shall establish a plan for the acquisition as necessary to protect potable water supplies. These lands shall also serve to protect other valuable resources or provide space for natural resource-based recreation. The Five Year Plan report will include a detailed summary of acquisition activity, modification or additions to the acquisition plan and a description of all land management activity.

2. **BOARD CONSIDERATION OF THE FIVE YEAR PLAN:** As a minimum, the Board shall review all proposed projects and current projects on an annual basis. The Board shall annually adopt an update on the Five-Year Plans and after adoption, the projects approved shall be incorporated in a report and it will be made available to the public. The Board recognizes that the Five Year Plan is a list of projects that qualify for the program. Projects included on the Five Year Plan will not necessarily be acquired.

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

**SOR PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM**

Please return ten copies of this form with ten copies of all referenced attachments to:

Director, Save Our Rivers  
South Florida Water Management District  
P.O. Box 24680  
West Palm Beach, Florida 33416-4680

Please complete every question on this form. If necessary, designate N/A where a question is not applicable. Complete applications will receive more prompt and complete attention.

1. Name and Location

Property Name (commonly known as) \_\_\_\_\_  
County (or counties) \_\_\_\_\_

Within Municipal Boundaries - Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Please attach a location map (8 1/2 by 11") specifying the property location and include a north arrow (map drawn to scale if possible); also please provide with any additional property maps or aerial photography which may further clarify the suggested project.

2. Size

Estimated Number of Acres \_\_\_\_\_ Estimated Number of Parcels \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimated Acreage per parcel \_\_\_\_\_

3. Access

Does the property front on a public road? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
If not, describe type of legal access? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Ownership Information

Identify the property owner and the contact address and telephone number  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Survey Information

Are surveys and/or legal descriptions available? \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

If so, attached or specify where they may be obtained. \_\_\_\_\_  
6. Title Information

Are abstracts available from owner(s)? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
Do/Does owner(s) have title insurance policies? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

7. SOR Qualifications

Provide detailed information concerning the qualifications of the property for water management, water supply or the conservation and protection of water resources. \_\_\_\_\_

8. Natural Characteristics

Provide a description of the natural characteristics of the property, including the predominant plant and animal life; specify types of trees and percentage of coverage, types of animal life, any rare, or endangered or threatened species, identified by Federal or State programs or other unique geological features, etc. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Also, provide information on reports prepared by any other agencies on the physical characteristics of the property; if possible, attach a copy of the report.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. General History Influences

What are the historical and archaeological values of the property? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Provide a description of general history of the property; include the identification of significant past disturbances, both natural and human; include dates of storm damage, fires, floods, exotic infestations, farming, grazing, mowing, or other site disturbances; also describe any structures, roads, rails, fences, etc.; is land involved in litigation (if yes, specify); is land on other public land acquisition lists (if yes, specify program and agency).  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

10. Buildings

Describe types and occupancy, if any: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Future Impacts

Identify the anticipated future impacts which may have a negative affect on this property and whether the impacts are in the near future or are long range. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. Planning and Zoning

Indicate local zoning and land use designation (from future land use map) on each parcel. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Identify any other adopted state, regional and local plans that may affect the project; is it compatible with the State Water Use Plan? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. Local Participation

Will the local government participate the funding? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
Provide in-kind services? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
Assist the management? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, to what extent? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

14. Attachments

Identify and label each attachment: (with boundaries noted) Suggested attachments may include: zoning maps, soil maps, ownership maps, aerial photographs, vegetative maps, water resource maps, endangered species maps, on site photographs and U.S.G.S. Quadrangle maps.

Attachment A: \_\_\_\_\_  
Attachment B: \_\_\_\_\_  
Attachment C: \_\_\_\_\_  
Attachment D: \_\_\_\_\_  
Attachment E: \_\_\_\_\_

It is the policy of the Governing Board that inclusion of a property within the Five Year Plan pursuant to Section 373.59 ,F.S. does not reflect a definite intention by the

**SUBJECT: SOR LAND SELECTION AND ACQUISITION POLICY**

South Florida Water Management District to acquire said property. Inclusion within the Five Year Plan indicates that the subject property has acquisition potential, depending upon further investigation as to its environmental and management features and the negotiation of a mutually acceptable acquisition price.

15. Form Completed by:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Please state affiliation to owner(s) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECT: NEGOTIATING STRATEGY FOR LAND ACQUISITION PROGRAM**

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**SUBJECT: NEGOTIATING STRATEGY FOR LAND ACQUISITION PROGRAM**

**A. STATEMENT OF POLICY**

1. The District's efforts in land acquisition must be timely, effective and cost efficient.
2. The District bases its land acquisition program on accepted appraisal reports according to Policy No. 4.300.
3. The District's acquisition program includes a policy of identifying, surveying, legally describing, assessing for environmental risks and appraising the desired land. Offers are then made to the landowners based on appraisal values. If the negotiations are unsuccessful, the District may proceed to use the power of eminent domain where applicable.
4. In the District's project program, acquisitions are made at not less than the minimum appraised value.
5. In the Save Our Rivers Program, acquisitions for less than minimum appraised value are authorized.

**B. SCOPE**

1. This policy shall apply to all real property acquisitions in the District.

**SUBJECT: NEGOTIATING STRATEGY FOR LAND ACQUISITION PROGRAM**

**C. PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES**

1. The South Florida Water Management District presently has two (2) programs which involve land acquisition.
2. The first program is the South Florida Water Management District and/or Army Corps of Engineers projects for flood control or water storage. This land acquisition program allows the District to exercise its right to eminent domain, if an amicable settlement cannot be reached.
3. The second program of land acquisition is the Save Our Rivers (SOR) Program. Under the SOR Program condemnation when authorized by law is appropriate:
  1. When the seller is willing in order to determine value.
  2. To complete a project for which the majority of the land has been acquired.
  3. When the land is determined to be critical to the success of the project.
4. In both acquisition programs, the District employs an appraiser, or in some cases two (2) appraisers, to prepare a report determining the market value of the owner's interest in the land desired. The appraisers will include, when applicable, an indication of damages and/or cost to cure to the remainder.
5. When appraisers are engaged to determine market value, they may use three (3) approaches to determine value. Those approaches are the Market Data or Comparable Sale Approach, the Income Approach and the Cost Approach.
6. The Market Data or Comparable Sale Approach is widely accepted by the courts and actually supports its conclusion directly from the market itself.
7. The other two approaches are often used as support for the Market Data Approach but are rarely used alone.
8. The District reviews each appraisal report, and the compensation offered is based on the accepted appraisal reports.
9. With regard to acquisitions under the District and/or Corps of Engineers Program, offers made to the landowners are always not less than the minimum appraised value.

**SUBJECT: NEGOTIATING STRATEGY FOR LAND ACQUISITION PROGRAM**

10. The District actively seeks donations or partial donations of land it finds important to its needs.
11. The Save Our Rivers Program seeks to acquire land from willing sellers on a negotiated basis. The policy is to negotiate with any willing seller and to pay no more than the maximum appraised value for the high priority lands.
12. When negotiating with owners whose property is of a lower priority, the District may notify the owners of the appraised value but explain that the District may pay less than the appraised value to purchase. In addition, the District will provide information to the owners concerning potential tax benefits of selling land to the District for less than the market value.
13. The District will continue its policy of offering minimum appraised value to owners whose property is needed for District projects or when the District is acting as local sponsor for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



# ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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SUBJECT: Land Management Policy

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## ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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### I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- A. The policies, procedures, and guidelines contained herein are established to provide for the management of District lands in a manner consistent with the District's mission and the legislative directives set forth in Chapter 373.59 and Chapter 259.101 Florida Statutes.
- B. These policies, procedures, and guidelines shall apply to all District lands including, but not limited to, property acquired under the Save Our Rivers and Preservation 2000 programs.
- C. Nothing in these policies, procedures, and guidelines shall negate any statute, administrative rule, or other policy requirement.
- D. These policies, procedures, and guidelines will be reviewed at five (5) year intervals or earlier, if necessary, and updated as required. Public review and comment will be solicited as part of the review process.

### II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Cooperative Management Agreement - An agreement between two or more agencies setting forth the respective duties and responsibilities of each agency in the management of a specific tract of land.
- B. Lead Agency - Agency designated as the prime managing entity for a given tract of land; generally provides the on-site staff required for public use management.
- C. Cooperating Agencies - Two or more agencies working together to operate a specific management unit.
- D. Management Unit - A single tract or combination of tracts under one management program.
- E. Wildlife Corridor - Two or more contiguous tracts of land forming a natural linkage for wildlife populations.
- F. Primary Resource Lands - Lands having high water resource, fish and wildlife, and recreational values requiring acquisition by gift or purchase.



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- G. Buffer Lands - Those adjacent lands that can sustain some development provided sufficient control is maintained to prevent adverse impacts to the primary resource lands.
- H. Remainder Lands - Lands protected by local zoning that do not need to be placed in public ownership.

### III. SELECTION OF LAND MANAGERS

- A. The District shall strive to obtain the expertise and assistance required for the management of specific tracts of land by entering into cooperative management agreements with other state and federal agencies, units of local government, and private non-profit organizations. The cooperative management agreement will designate a lead agency for management purposes.
- B. Where appropriate, the private sector will be encouraged to furnish certain management related facilities and services through the execution of real estate leases, agreements, and/or licenses.
- C. The District is charged by law with the responsibility for management of all lands that it acquires under the Save Our Rivers and Preservation 2000 programs and therefore, must act as the final arbiter of disputes on said lands arising between cooperating agencies.

### IV. MANAGEMENT PLANS

#### A. Conceptual Management Plan

1. The preparation of a conceptual management plan (CMP) may be required for each major tract of land prior to acquisition. The CMP shall be prepared by or at the direction of the District.
2. Each CMP shall set forth a recommended management proposal and contain general background data on the property including but not limited to:
  - a. size, location, and access
  - b. history
  - c. existing land use and improvements
  - d. soils



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- e. topography
- f. hydrology
- g. vegetation
- h. fish and wildlife resources
- i. recreational potential
- j. water quality, and
- k. existing and potential impacts from adjacent areas

3. The process utilized by the District in developing the CMP shall solicit the comments and recommendations of individuals, organizations, local governments, and those regional, state and federal agencies having a stake in the management of the tract.

### B. Operational Management Plan

1. An operational management plan (OMP) shall be developed by the lead agency in consultation with the cooperating agencies for each major tract of land (or group of tracts) to be operated as a single management unit.
2. The OMP shall contain detailed information on the status of the area's critical resources, set forth general and specific management goals, objectives, and guidelines for each, and outline the specific procedures, funding requirements, and activities necessary for their accomplishment.
3. The OMP shall be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary.

### C. Annual Work Plans

1. An annual work plan shall be developed by each of the agencies participating in the management of a given unit.
2. Each work plan shall set forth the staffing levels, equipment and materials, funding requirements, and work activities proposed by the respective agency for implementation of the OMP.
3. The cooperating agencies shall meet at least once each year to discuss the status of the management unit and their planned activities for the upcoming year.



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### V. GENERAL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

#### A. Water Resources

1. Management activities on Save Our Rivers and Preservation 2000 lands shall include conservation and protection of water resources.
2. The District shall not support or encourage any activities or development that would significantly alter the natural (undisturbed) movement and/or degrade the quality of surface or groundwater on management units.
3. Where feasible, an attempt shall be made to restore a more natural hydroperiod on tracts where the drainage patterns have been substantially altered.
4. Visitor programs shall inform and educate the public relative to the importance of the area in maintaining adequate supplies of good quality water for the South Florida area.

#### B. Fish and Wildlife Resources

1. Management activities on Save Our Rivers and Preservation 2000 lands shall seek to establish and maintain an appropriate number and variety of indigenous game and non-game species.
2. Particular emphasis shall be placed on the identification and management of critical habitat for endangered or threatened species residing on or frequenting the management units.
3. On areas where hunting will be allowed, consideration shall be given to the need for the establishment of sanctuary areas or "no hunting zones" to provide additional protection for endangered species and facilitate passive observation of wildlife.
4. Activities that may contribute to a decline in water quality and/or a reduction in critical wildlife habitat shall not be encouraged on management units.



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### C. Native Plant Communities

1. Management practices on Save Our Rivers and Preservation 2000 lands shall seek to restore and maintain an appropriate variety and distribution of native plant communities.
2. Particular emphasis shall be placed on the identification and protection of rare and endangered species.
3. The planting of exotic plant species shall be prohibited on all management units. Management practices will strive to identify existing infestations and to develop and implement appropriate control and/or eradication measures.
4. Management of the forest resources on select tracts shall be undertaken in consultation with the Division of Forestry.
5. Forest management practices shall strive to maintain age-class diversity and where appropriate, species diversity.

### D. Archaeological and Historical Resources

1. The identification of sites within the management units that have unique archaeological and/or historical significance shall be undertaken in consultation with the Florida Bureau of History and Archives.
2. Management practices shall strive to protect these unique resources and in appropriate situations allow for the provision of access and interpretive facilities to enhance their appreciation and enjoyment by the public.

### E. Public Use

1. Public access to and use of District lands for outdoor recreational activities including, but not limited to, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, swimming, camping, hiking, canoeing, boating, diving, birding, sailing, jogging, and other related outdoor purposes shall be encouraged, consistent with the District's legal interest in said lands and the preservation and management of their water and environmental resources. Special consideration will be given to the provision of outdoor recreational opportunities for persons with disabilities.



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2. A preliminary determination of allowable recreational activities will be set forth in the conceptual management plan (CMP) for each management unit. Spatial distribution of activities, intensity of use, and required support facilities and services will be addressed in the operational management plan (OMP). Future changes that may be necessary based on operational experience will be included in subsequent OMP updates and carried out in the annual work plans of the managing agencies.
3. The recreation assessment for each project or management unit will include an evaluation of the following issues:
  - a. Title: Restrictions and/or prohibitions, if any, imposed by easements, leases, etc.
  - b. Roads: Availability of access and circulation roads or other suitable points of entry; need for improvements.
  - c. Environmental sensitivity: Compatibility of proposed activities, support facilities, and related improvements with ecosystem types; endangered species and/or critical habitats requiring special consideration.
  - d. Operational requirements: Need for support facilities and services such as fences, gates, signage, entrance stations, parking areas, trails, campsites, rest rooms, shelters, maintenance staff, trash collection, security, and user fees.
  - e. Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities: Feasibility of developing interpretive trails and nature observation opportunities for persons with disabilities.
  - f. Management impacts: Limitations imposed by other planned land management practices such as prescribed burning, hydrologic restoration, reforestation, etc.
4. Pedestrian access to District lands for hiking, birding, photography, and nature appreciation will be allowed prior to the preparation and implementation of conceptual and operational management plans upon completion, establishment, or implementation of:



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- a. Recreation assessment
  - b. Risk assessment and removal and/or mitigation of identified hazards.
  - c. Boundary survey and required posting.
  - d. Authorized point(s) of entry.
  - e. User rules and regulations.
  - f. Security measures.
5. Recreational development will focus on the provision of basic facilities for access, health and safety, and interpretation. Where appropriate, consideration will be given to the provision of needed facilities and services through concession contracts and/or agreements with private non-profit organizations.
  6. Rules and regulations governing the public use of each management unit shall be enforced by the appropriate management agency.
  7. The construction, occupation, and/or maintenance of private camps and campsites on District land and water areas shall be prohibited.
  8. Vehicular travel on District lands by the public shall be generally restricted to the use of conventional vehicles licensed for street use on roads designated by the managing agencies for public use. The use of airboats, swamp buggies, tracked vehicles, motorcycles and other types of off road vehicles on most management units shall be prohibited.
  9. Entrance and user fees, permits, licenses and/or advance reservations may be required for entry onto and use of project lands where considered necessary by the managing agency to supplement operating expenses and/or to properly regulate public use.
  10. Educational programs will be developed and implemented on select project lands by the District and/or other managing agencies to increase visitor awareness of, and appreciation for, the natural resources of these areas and the vital role of water management in maintaining their viability and productivity.
- F. Agricultural Use
1. Agricultural activities conducted on Save Our Rivers lands shall be limited to the grazing of livestock on native range and farming practices contributing to the production of food and cover for wildlife.



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2. The conversion of native range to improved pasture shall be prohibited on all management units.
3. To the extent practical, management practices shall seek to convert existing improved pastures to native range.
4. The development and implementation of livestock grazing programs on management units shall be undertaken in consultation with the Soil Conservation Service.
5. Managing agencies shall implement measures to reduce potential conflicts between livestock grazing operations and concurrent recreational use.

G. Bee Leases and Apiaries

1. Consideration may be given by the District to the establishment of apiaries on management units through the development and awarding of appropriate leases.
2. Current state of Florida Statutes, guidelines and standards regarding fees, distance between sites and from property boundaries, and related matters will be utilized in developing lease specifications.
3. Leases shall not be transferable or assignable in whole or in part without the written consent of the District.
4. If an existing annual lease is not renewed, the former lease holder shall have thirty (30) days from the expiration of the lease to remove all of his/her capital improvements from the area. Future leasing of this site shall then be determined through a publicly announced drawing conducted by the District.

H. Other

1. District shall support those research and academic endeavors on management units by qualified agencies, educational institutions, and public and private conservation organizations that will contribute to more effective management and use of these areas.
2. Requests from government and/or private sources for permission to place signs, roads, power lines, pipelines, and similar items on or through Save Our Rivers or Preservation 2000 property shall be



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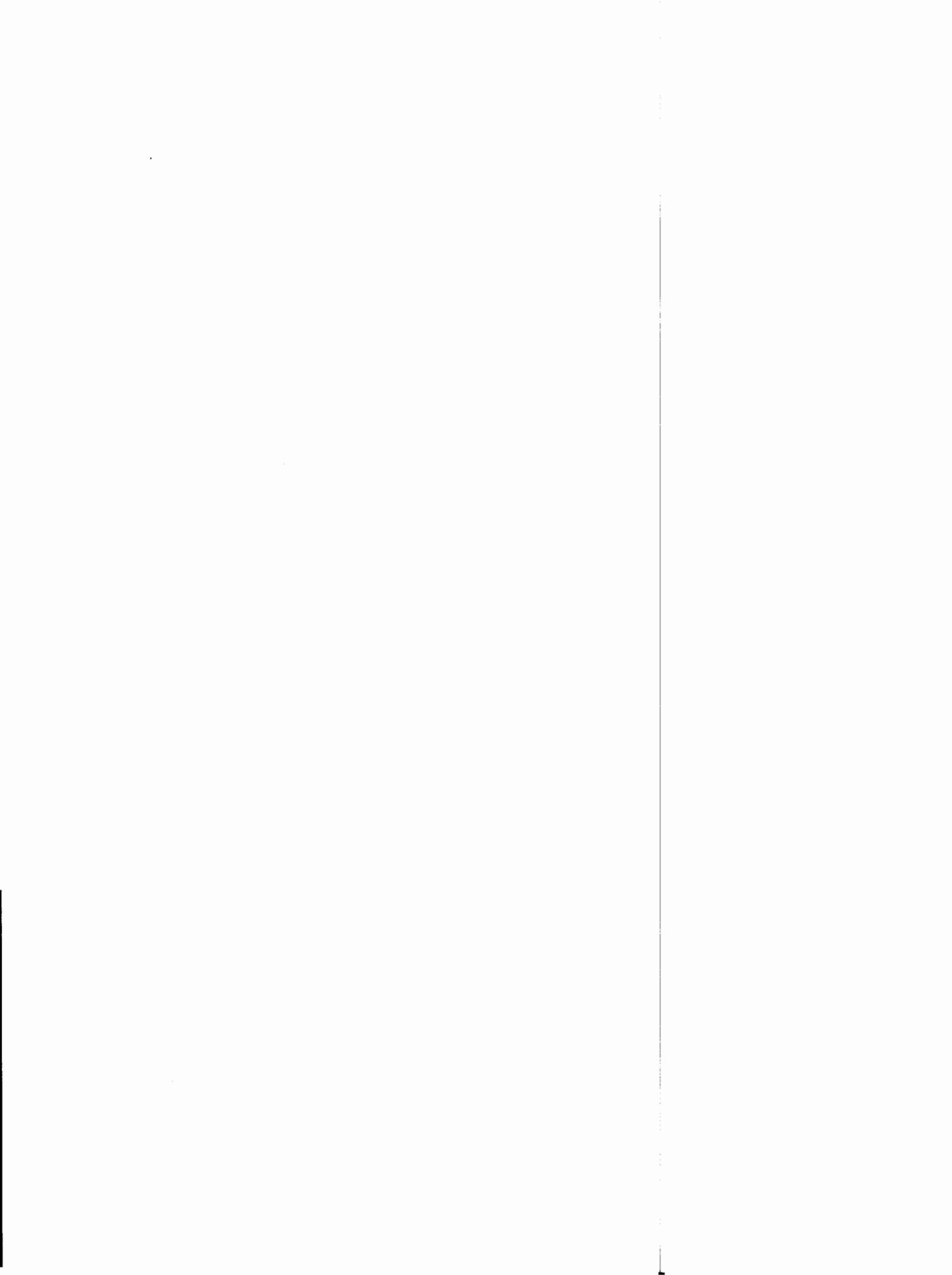
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approved by the District only when the applicant has affirmatively demonstrated that the proposed use is consistent with preservation and enhancement of the area's natural resources and scenic values and use of the area by the public for recreational purposes. Requests to place billboards on Save Our Rivers or Preservation 2000 property will be denied.

3. Management decision making shall consider whether the lands are primary resource lands, remainder lands, or buffer lands.
4. Local government support shall be encouraged throughout the management process particularly with respect to the regulation of buffer areas and the creation of wildlife corridors.
5. Where necessary, to protect the resources of the property, law enforcement assistance will be requested from the appropriate agency.
6. Detailed procedures to implement this policy are identified in the Land Acquisition/Management Procedures flow chart.
7. The District may lease any lands, or interests in lands in accordance with Section 40E-9.961, Florida Administrative Code and Section 373.093, Florida Statutes, so long as the requested use is not inconsistent with the purposes for which the property was acquired.
8. The District may convey any interest in lands to other governmental entities for management in accordance with Section 40E-9.961, Florida Administrative Code and Section 373.056, Florida Statutes, so long as the requested use is not inconsistent with the purposes for which the property was acquired.
9. The District may permit the usage or occupancy of right of way, works, or lands in accordance with Chapter 40E-6, Florida Administrative Code and Section 373.085, Florida Statutes, so long as the requested use is not inconsistent with the purposes for which the property was acquired.



**SAVE OUR RIVERS  
LAND EVALUATION MATRIX**

# SAVE OUR RIVERS LAND EVALUATION MATRIX

The Save Our Rivers Division has developed a two part Evaluation Matrix for the purpose of screening and prioritizing prospective additions to the Five Year Plan. Based on the Project Ranking Criteria and Guidelines for Site Priority Ranking, each project will be scored on a 1--5 scale for each parameter. In addition, weighting factors, or multipliers, have been added to certain high priority parameters. The first phase, or Category I parameters, deal strictly with water resource related issues.

## CATEGORY I

<u>PARAMETER</u>	<u>WEIGHTING FACTOR</u>
1. WATER MANAGEMENT	5
2. WATER SUPPLY	5
3. CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES	5

Each project will be screened by the parameters in Category I first. If passing scores are not attained, the project will be dropped from the list and will be given no further consideration. After the initial screening is complete, seven additional factors in Category II will be evaluated. Those include:

## CATEGORY II

<u>PARAMETER</u>	<u>WEIGHTING FACTOR</u>
4. MANAGEABILITY	2
5. HABITAT DIVERSITY	2

6. SPECIES DIVERSITY	1
7. CONNECTEDNESS	2
8. RARITY	2
9. VULNERABILITY	1
10. NATURE ORIENTED HUMAN USE	1

It is intended that project scoring be conducted by a team of reviewers, each of whom is familiar with all the projects. In this manner, any personal biases will carry through all the projects, rather than only being reflected in one or two. All projects will be rated against each other so comparisons can be made among parcels, rather than adhering to a strict set of criteria for scoring purposes.

## PROJECT RANKING CRITERIA

The following items are intended to be used for consideration when scoring. The reviewer is not bound to only these categories. Personal knowledge of additional factors should be included.

### 1. WATER MANAGEMENT

- A. Floodplains
- B. Flow ways
- C. Peak discharge attenuation
- D. Water quality improvement
- E. Aquifer recharge

This section deals with the physical water management parameters of the site. Does the project area lie within the floodplain or flow way of a river or stream? Does it provide basin storage for a surrounding watershed? Does ponding in low lying uplands or wetlands reduce peak discharge rates and recharge groundwater aquifers? Is water quality improved or maintained by allowing overland sheetflow and ponding? What properties, areas and activities can be protected by the site's flood retention/detention capacity?

### 2. WATER SUPPLY

- A. Existing wellfield
- B. Proposed wellfield on local comprehensive plan
- C. Reduced threshold area
- D. Aquifer source--is it hydraulically connected to water table
- E. Class I surface water

This category discusses all water supply issues. Are wellfields present or proposed on a local

government's comprehensive plan? What impact would construction of a wellfield have on the water table aquifer and associated wetlands. Is the project within a reduced threshold area? Does Class I surface water flow through project or receive runoff from it?

### 3. CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES

- A. Area of critical state concern
- B. Aquatic Preserve/Outstanding Florida Water
- C. Quantity and quality of major wetland systems

Has the project site been declared an Area of Critical State Concern? Is it adjacent to or within the watershed of an Aquatic Preserve or Outstanding Florida Water? Does the site contain major slough or other wetland systems which are significant water resources? Has the site been recommended for protection by a state or local program?

### 4. MANAGEABILITY

- A. Restoration ability/cost

This is an assessment of long term viability. Is the site large enough? Are degraded habitats in restorable condition? Is control burning as a management tool necessary or feasible? Is reflooding for water management or water quality improvement necessary or feasible? Will there be trespass or vandalism problems? How expensive will it be to properly manage the land?

### 5. HABITAT DIVERSITY

- A. Variety of viable natural habitat types/plant communities present
- B. All factors present for perpetuation of the population (food/foraging, cover/nesting, water)
- C. Degree of exotic plant infestation or disturbance from introduced animals
- D. Degree of human disturbance
- E. Could rare species of plants or animals be relocated to this site?
- F. Size

Is the site large enough to support a variety of communities? Does the site provide the necessary habitat factors, including food, cover and water, for the perpetuation of wildlife populations within the project boundaries? Do exotic plants or introduced animal species present long term problems for the site. Can they be controlled? Has the site been overdrained or impacted by off-road vehicles? Is

there suitable habitat/carrying capacity to support re-introduced native plants or animals.

### 6. SPECIES DIVERSITY

- A. Can the area support and maintain stable wildlife populations
- B. Bird rookery present
- C. Suitable habitat for migratory or transient wildlife species

Are most or all of the wildlife species normally associated with that habitat type present? Is the area large enough to maintain a breeding population, rather than just a number of individuals? Is the area used or suitable for use by migratory species?

### 7. CONNECTEDNESS

- A. Proximity to protected lands
- B. Wildlife corridor

This criteria concerns how the site links with other protected lands or large parcels of undisturbed lands. Does it lie within or will its protection create a wildlife corridor? How do the habitats relate to those nearby?

### 8. RARITY

- A. Endangered - threatened - rare - species of special concern present?
- B. Endangered - threatened - rare - species of special concern habitat?
- C. Unique ecological habitat
- D. Free flowing river or stream

This criteria incorporates the rarity or uniqueness of each of the site's community types and the rarity of the species it provides habitat for. The term "RARE" is considered to include endangered, threatened and species of special concern. Is the site unique by containing a major free flowing river or stream?

### 9. VULNERABILITY

- A. Urban development pressure
- B. Agricultural development pressure
- C. Is the site large enough to shield itself from adjacent development

This addresses the likelihood of events which might degrade or destroy the site through urban or agricultural development.

## 10. NATURE ORIENTED HUMAN USE

- A. Recreation potential
- B. Proximity of site to recreational users
- C. Game species present (harvestable resource)
- D. Suitability for scientific research
- E. Educational/Interpretive value

This concerns the site's suitability for human activities when consistent with the environmental sensitivity of those lands, and when such activities are compatible with the purposes for which the lands were acquired.

## GUIDELINES FOR SITE PRIORITY RANKING

### WATER MANAGEMENT

1. Property never floods; is not associated with a river, stream or other watercourse. Provides minimal flood storage for the watershed. No wetlands or other ponded areas.
2. Property occasionally floods during major storm events, but drains quickly. Provides basin storage during heavy storm events. Sparsely vegetated shallow wetlands.
3. Property is mostly low uplands or partially within floodplain of river or stream. Intermittent wetland sloughs. Short term ponding allows some aquifer recharge.
4. Within floodplain. Major wetland sloughs extending offsite. Numerous isolated wetlands. Seasonal inundation maintains groundwater aquifer.
5. Property is normally inundated during wet season. Within flow way of river or stream. Large interconnected marshes or sloughs. Serves as storage "sink" for upstream basin. Extensive groundwater aquifer recharge occurs due to year round standing water in wetlands.

### WATER SUPPLY

**NOTE: WHERE WELLFIELD DEVELOPMENT IS UNLIKELY AND NO OTHER SCORE IS APPROPRIATE, ASSIGN A VALUE OF "2.5".**

1. Salt water intrusion present in wells. Contains connate water. Under wellfield protection ordinance. Wellfield is directly connected with water table aquifer. All project

wetlands will be constantly drained by wellfield pumping.

2. Surface wetlands will remain wet only following heavy rain events. Degree of confinement inadequate to protect wetlands from induced leakage.
3. Water levels in wetlands will be lowered, but shallow standing water will still remain. Cone of depression minimized by linear distance separating wellfield and wetlands. Pumping will adversely affect wetlands only during extended drought.
4. Well-drained sandy soil, suitable for local aquifer recharge coastal ridge. Within Reduced Threshold Area. Existing wellfield inadequately protected by local ordinance. Water supply aquifer separated from water table by confining layer of very low permeability with low leakage. Project discharges to Class I surface water.
5. Delineated on comprehensive plan for wellfield development. Class I surface water flows through project. Existing wellfield not under wellfield protection ordinance. Water supply aquifer is well below ground or not hydraulically connected and will have no adverse impact on water table.

### CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES

1. Development prohibited by state or local program. All uplands. No significant water resource areas.
2. Development restricted by state or local program. Viable natural area isolated by development. Minimal wetland areas or irreparably altered wetlands.
3. Within the watershed of an Outstanding Florida Water (OFW), Aquatic Preserve (AP) or Area of Critical State Concern (ACC). Strong public support exists for protection. Isolated, seasonal wetlands. Restorable wetland systems.
4. Buffers lands adjacent to OFW, AP or ACC. Strong local government support for protection. Considerable portion of the site consists of mixed upland/wetland system, with a diversity of habitat types. Minimal restoration needed.

5. Property is adjacent to OFW, AP or ACC. A significant natural community exists with no regulatory protection. Large contiguous wetland sloughs exist totally on site or extend onto adjacent lands. Habitat in extremely good condition, showing little or no signs of stress or disturbance.

### MANAGEABILITY

1. Too small or degraded for restoration. Expense of restoration not justified by end result. Highly vulnerable to external impacts, making management nearly impossible.
2. Location and/or extent of degradation would make management difficult and expensive. Questionable whether restoration programs would be successful. Historic trespass/vandalism problems.
3. Could be restored to good condition, but would require vigilant management. Exotic plant removal/hydrologic restoration necessary. Control burning will be difficult due to external land uses. Trespass/ vandalism correctable, but will be expensive.
4. Habitats in good condition, but will require regular attention, such as burning. Size of area permits extensive restoration or manipulation of hydrologic regime without impacting offsite property owners.
5. How maintenance habitats in excellent condition. Control burning can be conducted without fear of impacting offsite interests. No restoration of natural systems required. Location minimizes problems with trespassers and vandalism.

### HABITAT DIVERSITY

1. How species and community diversity. Seriously degraded by human activity"overdrained, wetlands denuded by off-road vehicle use. Exotic plant infestation beyond control. Site too small/isolated to maintain normal flora and fauna.
2. Fair habitat. Moderate species and community diversity. Might be capable of supporting populations of relatively tolerant species. Most animal species will probably have to leave site to obtain all factors

necessary for survival. Exotics controllable with great effort and expense.

3. Good habitat. Good diversity of species and communities. Capable of supporting populations of most typical species. Food/forage, cover/nesting and water generally present. Exotics controllable with some expense. Minimal human disturbance.
4. Excellent habitat. Large enough to support diverse species, communities and successional stages. Exotics minimal and isolated. Good potential as relocation site for rare plants or animals.
5. Outstanding habitat. Contains large and diverse communities which extend offsite. Varying stages of succession present. Large enough to maintain long term disturbance/succession cycle. No exotics present.

### SPECIES DIVERSITY

1. Little or no wildlife present. Habitat not suitable for migratory species.
2. Few varieties of wildlife present. Most are associated with disturbed sites. No bird rookeries on site.
3. Good diversity of wildlife. Size and diversity of populations limited by project area.
4. Large diverse site. Most varieties of wildlife present, except for large predators. Breeding populations present. Habitat diverse enough to support migratory or transient wildlife species.
5. Many diverse species present, including large predators and rare species. Large gene pools present due to size/links to similar habitat types. Breeding colonies of birds present. Excellent potential as relocation site for rare species.

### CONNECTEDNESS

1. Isolated from other protected lands by an impenetrable barrier or large expanse of unsuitable/unrestorable habitat. No significant connecting corridors. Project isolated by urban development.

2. Isolated from other protected lands of significant size by a moderate expanse of unsuitable habitat, such as an interstate highway. Wildlife movement between protected lands restricted essentially to avian fauna.
3. Isolated from other protected lands of significant size by an expanse of marginally suitable habitat. Possible to connect with or create a wildlife corridor suitable for terrestrial species, but will require restoration.
4. Connected with protected areas, but not over a wide expanse. Connecting corridors in good condition or easily restorable. Good potential for creating wildlife corridor simply by acquisition.
5. Directly contiguous with protected lands over a large boundary. Acquisition will create an extensive wildlife corridor.

#### **RARITY**

1. Common community types in poor to average condition. Habitat types widespread throughout region. No rare plants or animals. No unique ecological habitat.
2. Typical community types still represented by extensive acreages throughout region. A few uncommon species, but no significant occurrences. Poor habitat for rare species.
3. Good examples of natural communities. Habitat types well represented statewide, but rare locally. A few rare species present. Good habitat exists for rare species, but limited in amount.
4. Excellent examples of natural communities. Rare habitat available. A number of rare species present, but none dependent on this site for survival. Unique ecological habitat types or old growth present. One of last remaining free flowing streams or rivers in region.
5. Extraordinary example of a natural community. Abundant unique ecological habitat. Critical habitat for a globally endangered specie. Nationally significant geological feature or wildlife site. Cited by

state or federal government as a Wild and Scenic river.

#### **VULNERABILITY**

1. Due to remoteness and surrounding land use it is highly unlikely this tract will be proposed for agricultural or urban development in the foreseeable future. Size of the tract allows it to buffer critical internal habitats from offsite impacts.
2. How intensity agricultural use, such as native range, currently exists or is proposed. Low intensity development would not impact critical internal habitats, but buffers would be affected.
3. More intensive agricultural development, such as improved pasture, is proposed. More intensive agricultural development, such as citrus, has occurred on similar parcels, but more suitable land still remains undeveloped. Low intensity urban development, such as rural ranchettes, is proposed on local land use plan. Portions of buffer areas would be remain undisturbed, but development activities, such as drainage, would shorten the hydroperiod of internal wetlands.
4. Located in good development site. Potential for urban development is high. Conversion to intensive agriculture, such as citrus, is occurring on surrounding parcels. Wetlands would remain undeveloped, but upland buffers would be developed as sub-division or orange grove.
5. Prime real estate, presently for sale. Last remaining tract suitable for agricultural development in area. Development for urban or agricultural purposes will destroy the natural value of the site.

#### **NATURE ORIENTED HUMAN USE**

1. Unsuitable for passive recreation. Aesthetically unappealing. Little scientific or educational value. Not suitable for hunting or fishing. Site inaccessible.
2. Suitable for limited passive recreation, but special management might be necessary to prevent adverse impacts. Pleasant setting. Useful site for school or nature center field trips or student research. Proximity of surrounding users prohibits use of high

powered weapons. Sport fishing would require removal of rough fish and restocking.

3. Suitable for limited passive recreation. Attractive environment. Ecologically interesting enough to be a good outing destination for local groups like Sierra Club, Audubon, etc. Useful site for scientific research. Limited hunting with carefully set bag limits.
4. Good for several types of passive recreation. Large enough to allow limited camping without adversely affecting more sensitive parts of the site. Scenic. Suitable for nature trails and/or environmental center. Valuable site for scientific research. Special enough to be a regional recreation destination. With proper game management, hunting with primitive weapons could be allowed on an annual basis. Many areas suitable for fishing.
5. Outstanding site for a variety of passive recreational uses. Excellent for nature trails and/or environmental center. Could support a campground as well as back country camping.

Important, well documented scientific study site. Features so exceptional the site could attract national/international visitors. Could be operated as a wildlife management area by GFC. Offers excellent sport fishing. Easily accessible







Receive copies of the  
Recreational brochures by writing:  
Office of Communications/South Florida Water Management District  
P.O. Box 24680 West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680  
1-800-432-2045 or (407)686-8800

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