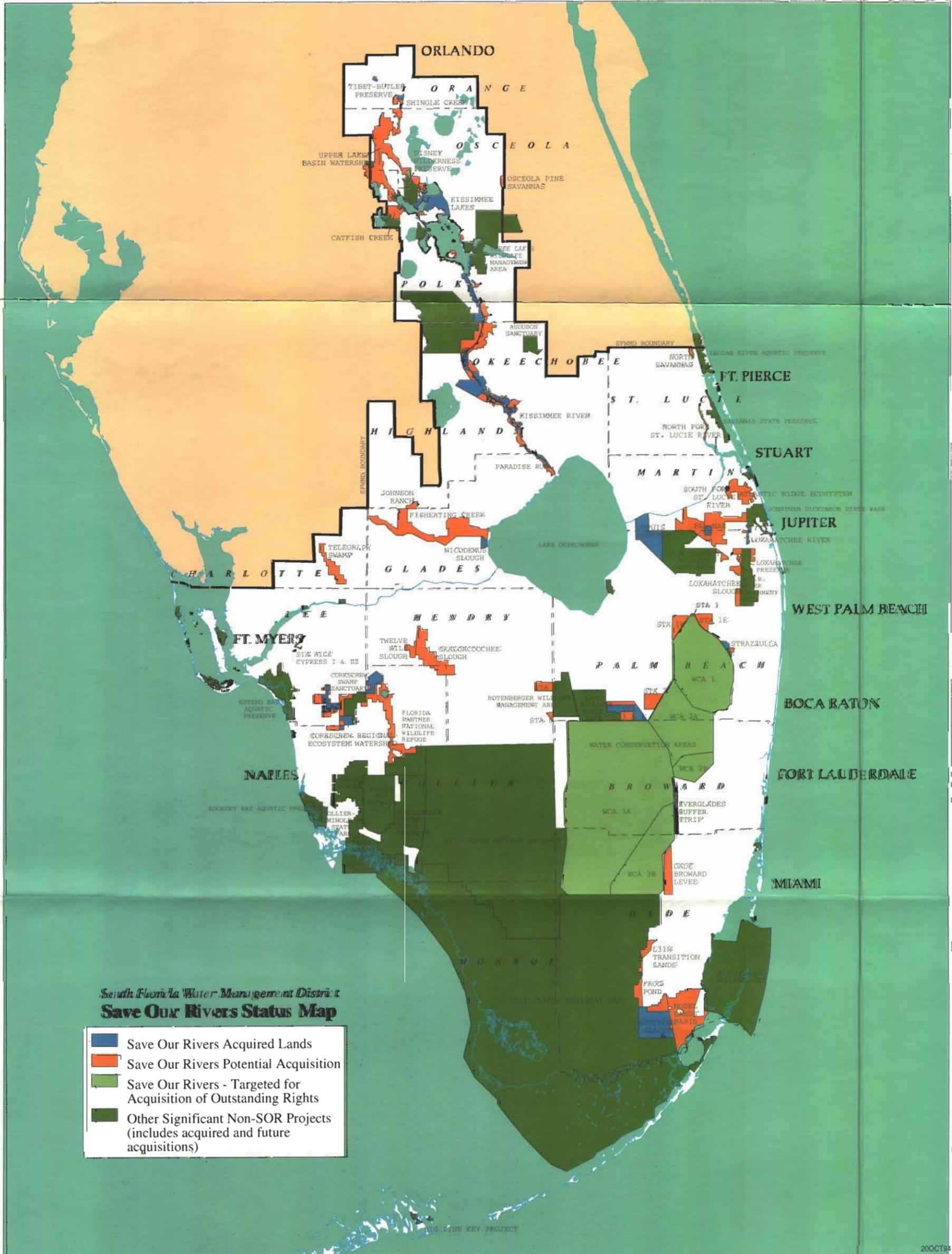


1995 Five Year Plan



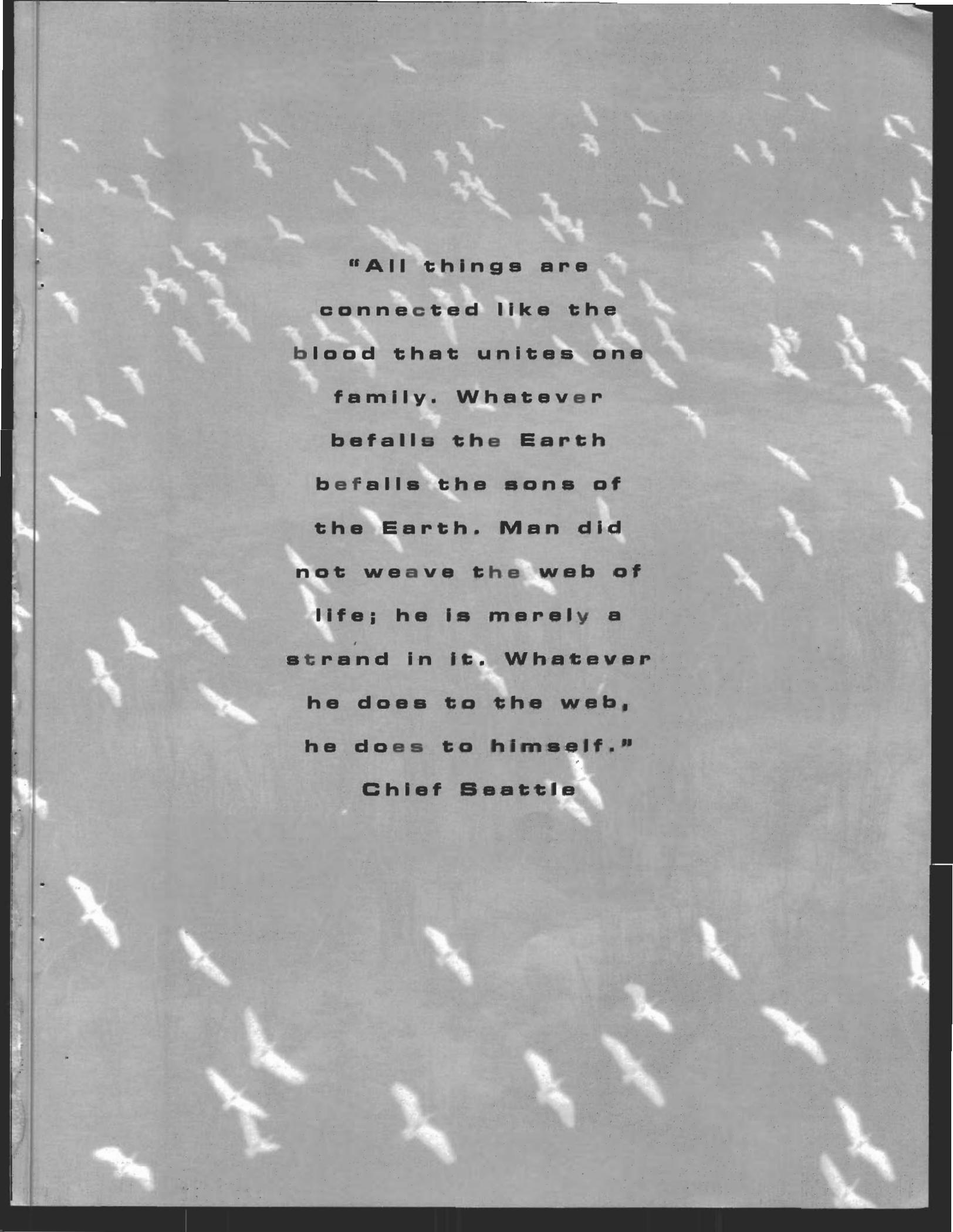
Land for Water's Sake



South Florida Water Management District
Save Our Rivers Status Map

- Save Our Rivers Acquired Lands
- Save Our Rivers Potential Acquisition
- Save Our Rivers - Targeted for Acquisition of Outstanding Rights
- Other Significant Non-SOR Projects (includes acquired and future acquisitions)

LEGEND KEY PROJECT

A large flock of birds, possibly seagulls, is flying in a circular pattern against a light, hazy background. The birds are scattered throughout the frame, with a higher concentration in the center, creating a sense of movement and unity.

**"All things are
connected like the
blood that unites one
family. Whatever
befalls the Earth
befalls the sons of
the Earth. Man did
not weave the web of
life; he is merely a
strand in it. Whatever
he does to the web,
he does to himself."**

Chief Seattle

Contents

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	2
--	----------

INTRODUCTION	3
---------------------	----------

<i>Selection and Evaluation Process Chart</i>	4
---	----------

<i>List of Abbreviations & Map Keys</i>	5
---	----------

LAND STEWARDSHIP	8
-------------------------	----------

Summary of 1994 Stewardship Activities	13
---	-----------

<i>Location Map</i>	12
---------------------	-----------

<i>Land Acquisition Activity Charts</i>	16
---	-----------

PRIORITY PROJECTS

1995 Acquisition Plan	20
------------------------------	-----------

<i>1995 Acquisition Plan - Priority Projects Chart</i>	21
--	-----------

<i>1995 SOR Key Dates</i>	21
---------------------------	-----------

Projects

Crew	22	Pal-Mar	44
-------------	-----------	----------------	-----------

Dade Broward Levee	24	Shingle Creek	46
---------------------------	-----------	----------------------	-----------

Everglades Buffer Strip	26	Six Mile Cypress II	48
--------------------------------	-----------	----------------------------	-----------

Frog Pond/L31N	28	South Fork St. Lucie River	50
-----------------------	-----------	-----------------------------------	-----------

Kissimmee River	30	Southern Glades	52
------------------------	-----------	------------------------	-----------

Loxahatchee Slough	34	Storm Water Treatment Areas	54
---------------------------	-----------	------------------------------------	-----------

Model Lands Basin	36	Twelve Mile Slough	56
--------------------------	-----------	---------------------------	-----------

North Fork St. Lucie River	38	Upper Lakes Basin Watershed	58
-----------------------------------	-----------	------------------------------------	-----------

North Savannas	40	Water Conservation Areas	62
-----------------------	-----------	---------------------------------	-----------

Osceola Pine Savannas	42		
------------------------------	-----------	--	--

APPROVED PROJECTS

Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem	66	Okaloacoochee Slough	76
---------------------------------	-----------	-----------------------------	-----------

Cattfish Creek	68	Paradise Run	78
-----------------------	-----------	---------------------	-----------

Fisheating Creek	70	Savannas	80
-------------------------	-----------	-----------------	-----------

Johnson Ranch	72	Strazzulla	82
----------------------	-----------	-------------------	-----------

Loxahatchee River	74	Telegraph Swamp	84
--------------------------	-----------	------------------------	-----------

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Big Pine Key	88	Six Mile Cypress	94
---------------------	-----------	-------------------------	-----------

DuPuis Reserve	90	Tibet-Butler Preserve	96
-----------------------	-----------	------------------------------	-----------

Nicodemus Slough	92		
-------------------------	-----------	--	--

APPENDICES	100
-------------------	------------

Appendices F.S. 373.59, F.S. 259.101, Chapter 40E-7 F.A.C., 17.402 F.A.C., and SFWMD District Administrative Policies and Procedures 4.100 and 4.200 are available from the Land Stewardship Division upon request.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As the South Florida Water Management District proceeds into its second decade of acquiring *land for water's sake*, it is with great pride that I continue the tradition that previous executive directors established in supporting the Save Our Rivers program. Since 1981, when then-Governor Graham established Save Our Rivers, this agency has spent approximately \$164 million for 180,000 acres of land.

The District is in the forefront of the national trend of pursuing the restoration of naturally functioning water resource ecosystems to reverse past ecological damage. Once these systems are restored, urban and agricultural growth must be properly planned so that our natural resources are not endangered.

South Florida's biggest resource problem is indeed water resource management, especially water supply. We must ensure that the environment gets its water supply first — state law requires that — while continuing to meet urban and agricultural needs in a fair and equitable manner.

In the past, the water management district focused entirely on water-resource planning and left land use decisions to the local governments. That time has passed, and we must now work in concert with other agencies and local governments to protect the remaining lands needed for our water supply. As we have found out, almost too late, land development not only requires drainage, but *drives the demand for an increasingly limited water supply*. The challenge is *how to make that work*.



Samuel E. Poole III

We have added four new projects to our 1995 Save Our Rivers Five Year Plan. These are the Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem in Martin County, Cattfish Creek in Polk County, the Okaloacoochee Slough in Hendry County, and Osceola Pine Savannas. While not directly in the middle of the Everglades ecosystem, they form important extensions to the ever-growing natural system we want to preserve throughout the 16-county district.

Lands high on our priority list for acquisition continue to include acreage in the Everglades Agricultural Area to use for stormwater treatment areas as required by the state's Everglades Forever Act of 1994. The STAs will help clean the runoff from farm fields before it flows south to the remnant Everglades.

We also are looking to acquire more land throughout the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes and river basin and in south Dade County to assist in Everglades restoration at both ends of the system. I hope we can continue to count on the Preservation 2000 program, established in 1990, to help us buy these lands.

Once we acquire these lands, they must be managed to meet multi-purpose needs, rather than single-minded goals. We intend to work with our partners on the state and federal levels to establish policies for management before the District acquires them.

We have only recently begun to understand that a *healthy economy* — especially ours in Florida, based so heavily on tourism and development — *depends on a healthy environment*. Look at the number of American and international visitors who flock to our natural areas every year — from Lake Okeechobee to Florida Bay and in between — the southeast areas that are the backbone of our water supply.

The interdependence of a healthy economy and a healthy environment is one of the main tenets of sustainability — which states: *"meeting the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."*

We have put so much pressure on our natural resources that we all must make our decisions, including the acquisition of these sensitive lands, with an eye toward how future generations will live. I look forward to being part of the process that makes that happen in south Florida.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam E Poole III". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

INTRODUCTION

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 regions 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 Lands Trust Fund. The trust fund receives revenues from the documentary stamp tax and is administered by the Department of Environmental Protection (formerly Department of Environmental Regulation). 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 Environmental Protection (formerly 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, which 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.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION 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:

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

Each January, the South Florida Water Management District must submit to the Legislature and the Department of Environmental Protection, 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
- Manageability
- Species Diversity
- Rarity
- Vulnerability
- Water Supply
- Habitat Diversity
- Connectedness
- Conservation and Protection of Water Resources
- 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.

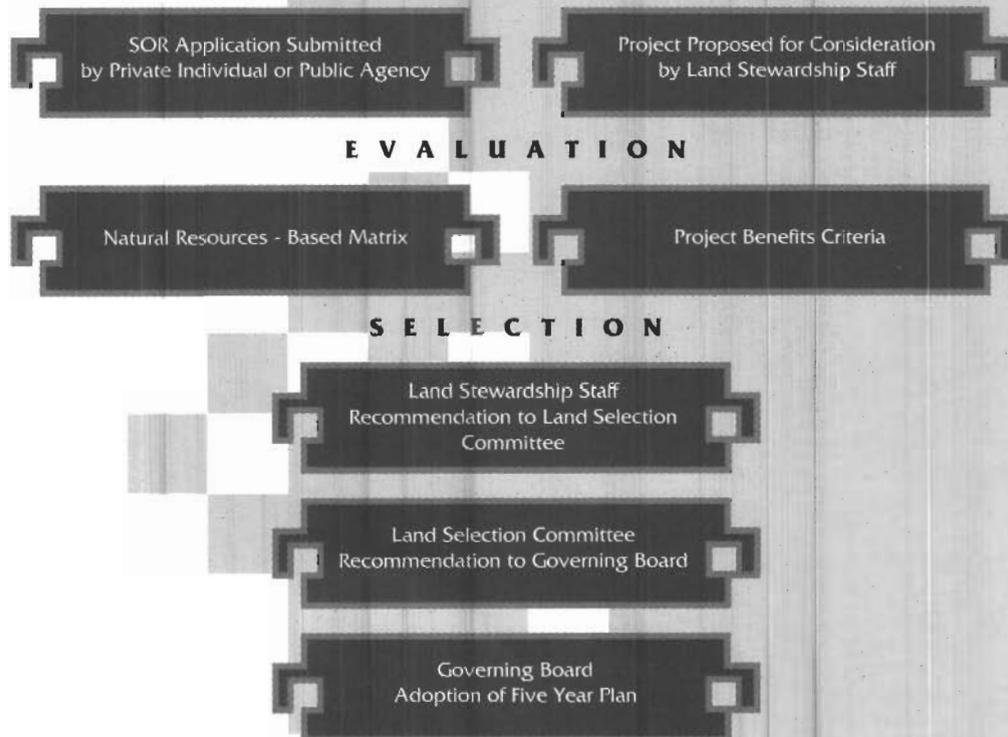
A project benefits criteria system is a second method utilized to address projects which protect the integrity of ecological systems and provide multiple off-site as well as on-site benefits. These include the preservation of fish and wildlife habitat, recreation space, and water

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 by considering 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.

Selection and Evaluation Process



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.

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.

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

List of Abbreviations

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

Map Keys

				
Florida Turnpike	Interstate Highway	U.S. Highway	State Road	County Road





Land 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

STEWARDSHIP PLANNING

Stewardship planning includes the development of Strategic, Conceptual and Operational Management Plans. Strategic planning includes development of the District's water resource corridors concept, integration of the District's acquisition plan with other state and local programs, and coordination of acquisition and management programs with regulatory programs. 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 conceptual and 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.

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
- d. Environmental Monitoring

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 selective application of environmentally acceptable herbicides in a manner not harmful to the resource.

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.

Environmental Monitoring Program — The environmental monitoring program is to evaluate the success of our land management and restoration programs. The program includes development of natural community maps and evaluation of changes in vegetation by monitoring plots and photomonitoring points. The wildlife observation/inventory program tracks what species use Save Our Rivers lands. Once discovered, threatened and endangered species are monitored. The location of rare plants is noted and recorded. Special

management needs of rare species are incorporated into conceptual and operational management plans.

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 buildup, 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 three to 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 agencies such as: Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission, Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Forestry, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, County Governments and the National Park Service under cooperative management agreements.

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. 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 encourage their conversion to native range or woodland.

Security of Lands — In order to delineate the District's property lines, deter trespass/vandalism and protect the integrity of the resource, some of the SOR land holdings are fenced and posted following acquisition. Fencing is replaced on an as-needed basis. The District contracts for additional security service to provide after-hours and weekend coverage. This general surveillance of lands and law enforcement helps prevent misuse, dumping of waste material, unauthorized hunting, trespassing and other unauthorized activities.

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 workshops for teachers have been conducted on many SOR properties. SOR properties are always available for responsible research and educational activities.

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, plant 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.

Airboating — Airboating may be allowed on lands within Water Conservation Areas 2 and 3, as well as selected tracts along the Kissimmee River, and around the Chain of Lakes.

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.

D. Cooperative Management Agreements

The District strives to obtain the expertise capabilities required for the management of SOR lands by entering into cooperative management agreements with other state and federal agencies, local governments, and private organizations.

Under the terms of these agreements, the cooperator may assume all or a limited number of management functions. These agreements may be funded, although cooperators who can donate in-kind services are preferred.

The District usually retains responsibility for management of the water resources with the project. These agreements greatly enhance the District's management capabilities, although substantial administrative and technical oversight is required to assure that the principles of our stewardship program are being adhered to.

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. Exotic vegetation control
 2. Prescribed burning
 3. Reforestation
 4. Cattle grazing
- 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 support public use, education facilities and programs.
- b. to protect and preserve the natural resources.
- c. to operate and maintain various restoration projects.
- d. to assure 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).

The total manpower, financial, and commodity 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 by 1998. 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.

B. Programs

The management resources need to be increased and organized 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

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. Strategic. — These planning activities evaluate the entire programs acquisition and management status from the overall District perspective. This function develops policies, proposed projects, acquisition priorities in terms of the District's goals and strategic plans. It also integrates the District's program with other federal, state and local acquisition programs, and coordinates with regulatory programs such as off-site mitigation. In addition, it reviews and revises project identification, evaluation and selection criteria, and conducts these activities. This function will rely heavily on the GIS system.

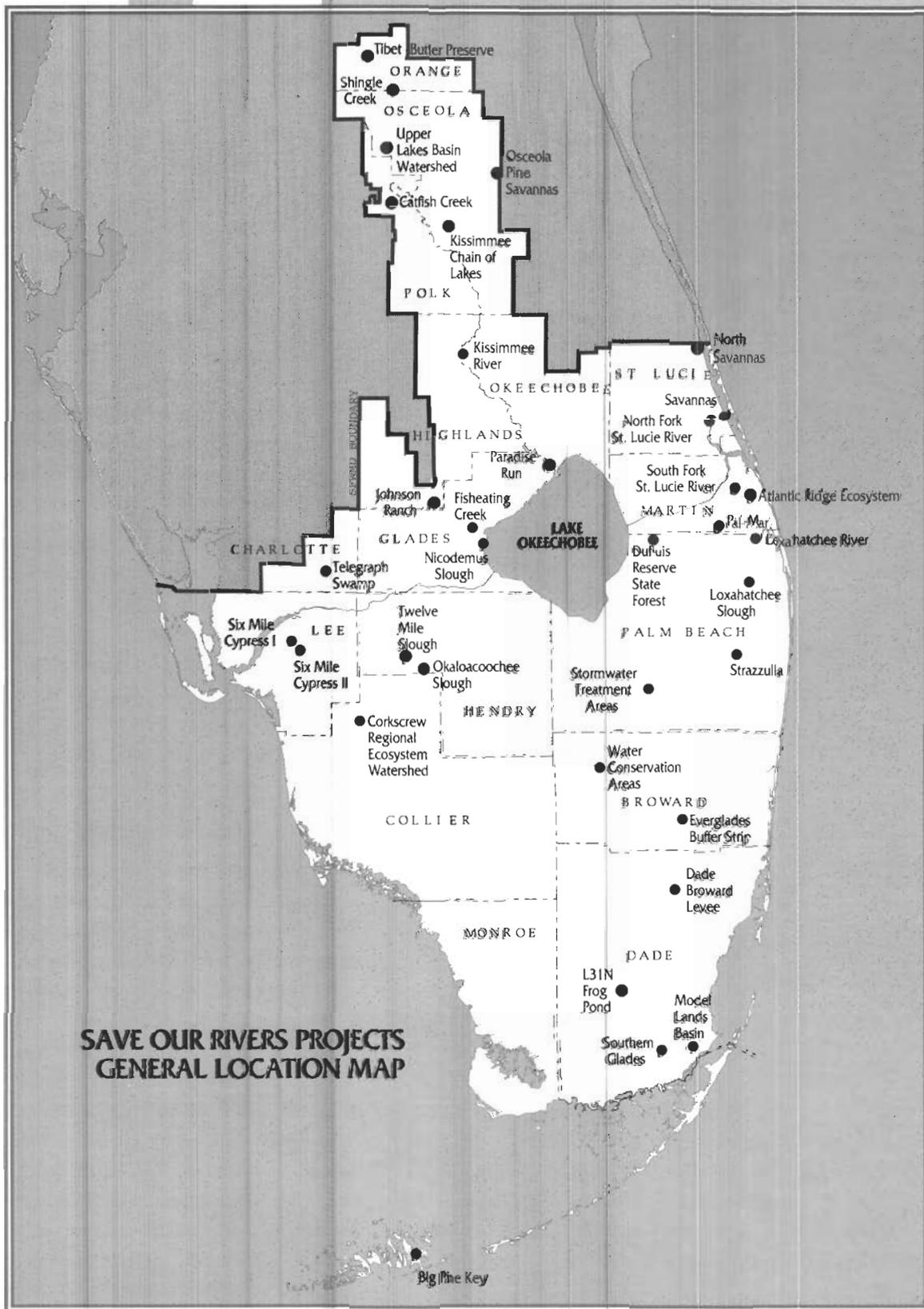
B. Conceptual. — Conceptual planning for each identified project is performed by this group. This function gathers and analyzes the physical/geographical, water resources, and natural resource data on each project. Using this data, this team produces conceptual management plans which includes water resource 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 (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, overnight 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; have general security, operation and maintenance, and administrative responsibilities of all tracts from time of purchase to implementation of approved operational plans; implement the operational plans for a project that is retained by the District; and would incorporate the use of convict labor and community volunteer groups to accomplish the objectives. 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, will coordinate these functions.



PLANNING

The long-range management needs for the stewardship of SOR and other District lands continues to be evaluated. Based on simple projections of current rates of expenditures/acre, growth in acres to be managed and rates of management fund income from the Water Management Lands Trust Fund (WMLTF), it appears that the WMLTF will be unable to meet all SOR land management needs after FY 96. Efforts are underway to identify and utilize additional funding sources, such as mitigation, in-kind services, grants, and ad valorem taxes.

The analysis of future management requirements also identified the need for a master plan to determine the best way to allocate District resources. An outside consultant has completed an evaluation of various management options, including expanded SOR service centers, utilization of existing field stations, contractual service agreements, and management agreements with other state and local agencies.

This consultant recommended increased staffing levels for land managers, transfer of maintenance functions to the Operations and Maintenance Department, and continued use of inter-agency management agreements.

Master Acquisition Plan

The SOR staff continues to work with other District planners, the CARL program, and other state and regional organizations to compile and evaluate the master land acquisition needs map. The integration of the various mapping efforts throughout the state employing GIS techniques has been greatly facilitated by the University of Florida's mapping program for the Florida Greenways Commission.

Off-site Mitigation

The District's SOR needs for acquisition, restoration, and perpetual care are being considered as acceptable mitigation projects by various regulatory agencies, including the District. This acceptance appears to be favored by the regulated community. District SOR staff have been advocates of this policy, since it tends to support the master acquisition plan concept and helps relieve the financial burden of stewardship management costs. In 1994, Save Our Rivers lands played a major role in off-site mitigation, including:

1. **Johnson Island**—Possible acquisition of this tract to be complete in late 1994 by Florida DOT as mitigation.
2. **Shingle Creek**—mitigation for wetland impacts by several projects in

Orange and Osceola County will be satisfied through acquisition, restoration, and management in 1995.

3. **Upper Lakes Basin Watershed**—No land was purchased within the project in 1994; however, since 1992, more than 11,000 acres have been acquired at no cost. These lands include Walker Ranch (Disney Wilderness Preserve), and additional tracts which have been purchased to mitigate Universal Studios, Orlando International Airport expansion, and others. In early 1995, approximately 400 additional acres will be deeded to the District, and managed by TNC, through mitigation activities.
4. **DuPuis Reserve**—Construction of swales, designed to allow sheet-flow to be restored between the Corbett Wildlife Management Area and DuPuis, was funded by FPL as mitigation. The "Geoweb" swales allow stabilized vehicular access while permitting an equalization of water levels between the two natural areas. Construction of the 8 mile levee to impound water to restore the marsh at the south end of the property will be partially funded by mitigation agreements.

Project Activity-Planning

CREW

In accordance with the conceptual management plan, the Game and Freshwater Fish Commission (GFC) is preparing to conduct wildlife and habitat inventories and develop a wildlife management plan for CREW. A cooperative management agreement between the District and GFC is in process and is expected to be executed soon.

The Land Stewardship monitoring program includes a project to evaluate the effectiveness of fire following chemical treatment on the control of melaleuca. This investigation is within the Flint Pen Strand portion of CREW.

DUPUIS RESERVE STATE FOREST

The District, Division of Forestry (DOF), GFC, and other interested parties continue to work on refining the management goals and plans for the state forest.

EVERGLADES BUFFER STRIP

The District Land Management staff continued preparing the draft conceptual management plan for the Save Our Rivers portion of the buffer strip. The District intergovernmental representative is assisting in coordination and communication with Broward County staff as well as adjacent developers.

Project Activity-Operations

Water Management and Supply

Water management facilities enhanced this year include items installed at the KICCO, CREW, Oak Creek and DuPuis projects. The Land Stewardship staff continued the wetland restoration project at Hickory Hammock. At Nicodemus Slough, a District contractor installed wetland and transitional plantings around the lake in the northeast corner. District staff continued monitoring of the restored Marsh at Rattlesnake Marsh in the KICCO project. Design continued on the L-8 marsh restoration at the DuPuis Reserve State Forest.

Exotic Control

The Districts SOR program conducted or directed exotic control activities on more than 3,000 acres of SOR and P-2000 lands during the year. These activities included work by the SOR operations unit in Nicodemus Slough, Hamm, Yates Marsh, Bluff Hammock, Lockett, Micco Landing, Southern Glades Strazzulla and CREW. District staff treated Melaleuca, Australian Pine, Cogon Grass, Downy Rosemyrtle and Brazilian Pepper. Management partners conducted major efforts in the Loxahatchee River (Department of Environmental Protection/Palm Beach County), Southern Glades (Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission), and DuPuis Reserve State Forest (Division of Forestry).

Prescribed Burning

The prescribed burning program included the planned burning activities and two fire research items. More than 5,000 acres were burned in areas at Johnson Island, Hickory Hammock, CREW, Nicodemus Slough, South Fork, Johnson Island and KICCO. District staff presented elements of our fire management program to the Society of Wetland Scientists meeting in Portland, Oregon, and at the International Fire in Wetlands Conference at the Tall Timbers Fire Ecology Research Center in Tallahassee, Florida.

Management Activities Evaluation

The goal of the monitoring program is to determine if land management actions are causing natural community types to shift toward a restored condition. Forty-nine (49) monitoring sites distributed among thirteen (13) community types have been established. The program consists of permanent vegetation plots and/or photo-monitoring stations. The land management actions being evaluated by the program include prescribed fire, wetland, restoration, roller-chopping, and exotic plant control. Often these land management actions are used in combination to achieve a desired effect. The effectiveness of these combined areas are also evaluated.

Inspections and Assessments

During the year, each of our tracts of land was inspected at least three times by SOR staff. In addition, contract security forces patrolled certain properties and on-site managers provided security for lands under management contracts. SOR staff prepared pre-acquisition management audits for lands proposed for acquisition. The Land Stewardship Division made arrangements for an on-site caretaker at the Lockett properties.

Public Use

The District's rule governing public use of SOR and other District lands (Chapter 40E-7, Part V) became effective in May after over a year of public discussion and review. A Public Use Guide (PUG) setting forth the rule, the designated land management areas, and the special provisions applicable thereto has been developed to assist persons interested in accessing these lands. Copies of the PUG are available upon request at the District's headquarters. It will be updated periodically to reflect new management areas or required changes in the special provisions. The new rule together with recent liability legislation affecting the WMDs will enable the District to open lands that have been previously closed to public use. A new project boundary sign has been designed and will replace the "NO TRESPASSING" signs currently in use.

Work continued on improvements to the Lake Okeechobee section of the Florida National Scenic Trail. The Florida Trail Association (FTA) working with the Corps of Engineers office in Clewiston has identified the locations for primitive campsites along the Hoover Dike. Native trees are being planted to provide future shade at these sites. Additionally, the Florida Department of Transportation has selected a firm to develop a master plan for trail improvements to be constructed with ISTEAF funds. Of particular importance will be the conceptual design for road, bridge, and navigational lock modifications that will be needed to facilitate use of the trail by the public.

A new hiking trail located on SOR lands along the South Fork of the St. Lucie River was opened in June at a special ceremony attended by the public and officials from the District, FTA, and Martin County. The new trail is currently accessible from the river only. A canoe landing located near the south end of the property serves as a combined trailhead and picnic area. Overnight camping is allowed with a special use permit from the District. The trail includes a footbridge and an elevated walkway constructed by Stewardship personnel and FTA volunteers.

Orange County opened its new Environmental Education and Visitor Center at the Tibet-Butler Preserve at a special ceremony in January. Development and operation of the Preserve is being undertaken by the

Orange County Parks and Recreation Department pursuant to an agreement with the District.

The first increment of hiking trails for the CREW project was developed on the Corkscrew Marsh unit this past year. The trails, which utilize existing woods roads, are open each day from sunrise to sunset and give visitors the opportunity to view some of the pine flatwoods, hardwood hammocks, and interior marsh. A trailhead equipped with bulletin board and registration desk has been established off Corkscrew Road (County Road 850). The trails will be extended into other portions of the unit in the future. In addition, the suitability of the unit for horseback riding is being evaluated. CREW trust employees are conducting nature hikes on the unit periodically.

NEW PROJECTS AND BOUNDARIES REVISIONS

Four (4) new projects were added to the 1995 Five Year Plan:

1. **Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem**—Martin County: A 12,700 acre project located between U.S. 1 and I-95. It contains pine flatwoods, scrub ridges, and extensive wetland systems which are tributary to the Loxahatchee River and the South Fork St. Lucie River. This area is extremely important for aquifer recharge and water supply to the coastal portion of Martin County. This project connects the watersheds of the Loxahatchee and St. Lucie River in Martin County.
2. **Catfish Creek**—Polk County: A 6,142 tract that connects with the Catfish Creek CARL project. This project, combined with the CARL project, would extend from Lake Hatchineha to Lake Pierce, and would form a protected natural area of nearly 12,000 acres. The tract contains mesic hammocks, wet flatwoods, scrub, and seepage slopes. The District has already acquired the shoreline of Lake Hatchineha as part of the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes SOR project. Nearly 4,000 acres have been acquired in the CARL tract.
3. **Okaloacoochee Slough**—Hendry County: A 22,000 acre tract that is the major headwater of Fakahatchee Strand and Big Cypress Preserves. The site contains more than 11,000 acres of largely undisturbed wetlands, including wet flatwoods, wet prairies, hydric hammocks of live oak and cabbage palm. The diversity of community types provides habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. The Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission Habitat Protection Plan identifies Okaloacoochee Slough as a Priority 1 protection area for the Florida panther.
4. **Osceola Pine Savannas**—Osceola County: A 41,000 acre project, most of which lies within St. Johns River Water Management District. A 1,600 acre portion is within SFWMD. The site contains dry palmetto prairie,

mesic flatwoods, wet prairies, and forested sloughs. Acquisition of this tract would form a connection between Three Lakes and Bull Creek Wildlife Management Areas, and create a protected natural area that exceeds 117,000 acres.

Boundary Revisions

Boundaries were revised on five (5) existing projects:

1. **CREW—Collier County**: The boundary was expanded on the eastern shore of Lake Trafford to include a 176 acre tract of floodplain swamp and hydric hammock.
2. **Loxahatchee River**—Palm Beach County: The project was expanded by eighteen (18) acres to include a remnant slough and river tributary, located west and adjacent to Riverbend Park, south of SR 706. A second area of seven (7) acres was added to the east side of River Corridor lands north of SR 706 to provide management access to a disturbed area.
3. **Pal-Mar—Martin/Palm Beach Counties**: Several entities are involved with land acquisition in Pal-Mar, including CARL, Martin County, and Palm Beach County. The intent of the revision was to make all program acquisition boundaries similar. This was accomplished with the exception of a connection from the St. Lucie Canal to Pal-Mar. The District retained this area as a possible water resource asset. No other acquisition program includes this land.
4. **Shingle Creek**—Osceola County: The 1993 addition was limited to the floodplain of Shingle Creek and did not include any upland buffer, nor did it correspond to property lines or definable geographic features. In 1994, the Board again revised the project to add upland areas which correspond to property ownership lines. The 1994 addition totals approximately 2,230 acres.
5. **Stormwater Treatment Areas**—Palm Beach/Hendry Counties: The Governing Board approved two boundary revisions in 1994. The first will remove 3,680 acres from STA 3/4, which is known as the "Toe of the Boot" in the Holeyland. This area will be replaced by adding 3,510 acres along the northern boundary of STA 3/4. The second revision involves STA 5. The location of STA 5 in the northern portion of the Rothenberger tract will be moved to a new, 5,120 acre tract, immediately west of the present location. These changes do not affect the overall acreage of the project.

A C Q U I S I T I O N A C T I V I T Y (C L O S E D)

July 1, 1993 - June 30, 1994

Project	Acres	Cost	Fund
Everglades Buffer Strip	80.86	\$1,118,952	District
Everglades Buffer Strip (Non-SOR)	43.40	781,200	SOR/P2000
CREW	1,904.85	1,000,000	SOR/P2000
KCOL	2,004.66	3,896,800	SOR/P2000
Kissimmee River	1,461.53	2,335,792	SOR/P2000
L-31N	277.94	1,878,125	SOR/P2000
Loxahatchee	82.19	2,037,175	SOR/P2000
Pal Mar	940.62	469,891	SOR/P2000
Pal Mar	980.84	452,182	Martin County
Six Mile	25.00	250,000	SOR/P2000
Southern Glade	1,327.38	699,574	SOR/P2000
Stormwater Treatment Areas	7,065.40	12,200,000	SOR/P2000
Water Conservation Area	160.00	16,000	District
TOTALS	16,354.77	*27,135,691	

*SOR/P2000 total = 25,548,557

A C Q U I S I T I O N A C T I V I T Y (A P P R O V E D)

July 1, 1993 - June 30, 1994 (Approved by Governing Board)

Project	Acres	Cost	Fund
Everglades Buffer Strip	64.2	\$1,047,440	SOR/P2000
Everglades Buffer Strip	80.86	\$1,118,952	District
Everglades Buffer Strip (Non-SOR)	156.94	2,512,632	SOR/P2000
CREW	1,904.85	1,000,000	SOR/P2000
KCOL	14,654.60	15,102,500	SOR/P2000
Kissimmee River	2,742.06	1,086,650	SOR/P2000
L-31N	277.94	1,878,125	SOR/P2000
Loxahatchee	82.19	2,037,174	SOR/P2000
Pal Mar	1,921.46	472,818	SOR/P2000
Six Mile	25.00	250,000	SOR/P2000
Stormwater Treatment Area	10,121.58	18,837,000	SOR/P2000
Water Conservation Area	160.00	16,000	District
TOTALS	32,191.68	45,359,291	

*Some approved acquisitions have not closed

SUMMARY OF ACQUISITION JULY 1993 - JULY 1994

Acquisition from the beginning of the Save Our Rivers program in 1981 through June 1993 totaled 163,673 acres at land cost of \$138,699,710. During the 1994 Plan period (July 1993 - June 1994), the Governing Board acquired approximately 16,354.77 acres at land cost of \$25,548,557. These acquisitions bring the Save Our Rivers program totals for June 30, 1993, to 180,027 acres at a land cost of \$164,248,267. See Table 1 for details of which lands were purchased with what funds. 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:

CREW. Under an agreement with Lee County, the District acquired 1,901 acres within the CREW project.

Everglades Buffer Strip. Additional progress was made on acquiring this area. Tracts closing included 43.4 acres purchased with \$781,200 of SOR funds and 80.86 acres purchased with \$1,118,952 of District funds. Many of these transactions are a result of several legal actions within the

project. The purchase price includes various settlement fees. The land cost will eventually be shared by the District, SOR, and Broward County.

KCOL. The District acquired 2,005 acres from various owners.

Kissimmee River. Acquisition on the Kissimmee River included 1,462 acres from various owners.

L31-N. The District acquired 77 acres from Brooks.

Loxahatchee River. 82 acres from Gildan was added to the project.

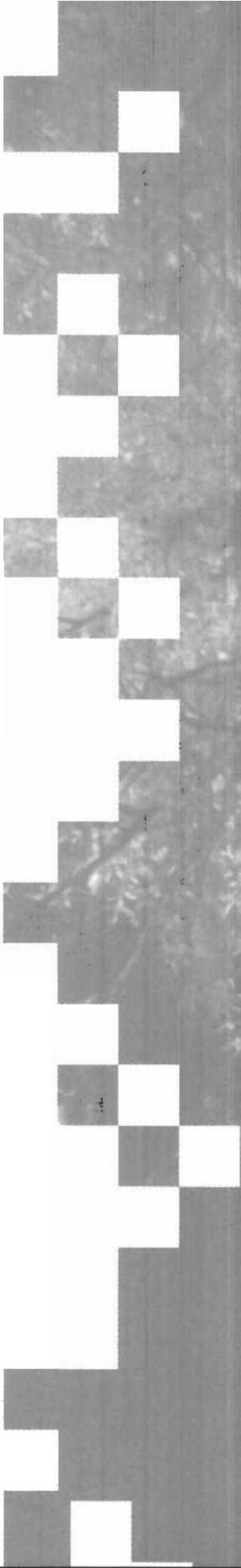
Pal-Mar. Martin County funded the acquisition of 980 acres and the District purchased 940 acres from FDIC.

Six Mile Cypress. The District added 25 acres from Lee County.

Southern Glades. The SOR program added 28 acres from various owners.

Stormwater Treatment Area. The District staff acquired 7,065 acres from Multi-turf.

WCA. The District staff acquired 160 acres through District funding.



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).



Priority Projects

ACQUISITION PLAN (1995)

The 1995 SOR Five-Year Acquisition Plan optimistically anticipates significant cost-sharing with the state and local governments. The plan utilizes all approved Preservation 2000 funding. The plan also assumes that the Water Management Land Trust Fund revenues will be \$11,400,000 for FY '95 and that SOR management cost will utilize up to 15% of that income. Note: Estimated assessed values are very generalized numbers included to provide an overall idea of program need. Property values are calculated according to District, land selection and acquisition policies.

For the 1995 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, 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.

1996 SAVE OUR RIVERS FIVE YEAR PLAN KEY DATES

The following schedule has been established to discuss additions and revisions to the 1996 Five Year Plan. All meetings are open to the public and are advertised in the Florida Administrative Weekly.*

March 17, 1995

Deadline for new project application/boundary revision submittal

May 18, 1995

Land Selection Committee meeting to consider new applications/boundary revisions

June 22, 1995

Land Selection Committee meeting to consider 1996 priority projects

July 12, 1995

Governing Board Workshop to discuss new projects/boundary revisions and priority projects for 1996

September 14, 1995

Governing Board public hearing to adopt 1996 Five Year Plan

*A Save Our Rivers Project Proposal Form can be found in the Appendix section of this document.

S O R P R I O R I T Y P R O J E C T S

1995 Five Year Plan

Project	Included In Strategic Plan	Potential for Resource Loss	Cooperative Acquisition	Willingness to Sell	P-2000 Criteria
Kissimmee River Restoration	Yes	L	Federal Government		4,6
Everglades Construction Project (Stormwater Treatment Area)	Yes	L	Special Taxing District	Yes	6
Florida Bay (Southern Glades, Model Lands, Frog Pond/L-31N)	Yes	M	CARL Dade County		1,4,6
Upper Lakes Basin Watershed	Yes	H	Mitigation	Yes	4,6
South Fork St. Lucie	No	M	Martin County	Yes	5,6
Pal Mar	Yes	M	Martin & Palm Beach Counties/CARL	Yes	1,6
Loxahatchee Slough	Yes	M	Palm Beach County		1,6
Six Mile Cypress	No	L	Lee County	Yes	1,6
CREW	Yes	H	Lee County -CARL-BCB		4,6
Water Conservation Area	Yes	L			4,6
Everglades Buffer Strip	Yes	L	Broward County U.S. Government	Yes	6
North Savannas	No	M	St. Lucie County	Yes	1,4,6
Shingle Creek	Yes	M	Mitigation	Yes	1,6
Dade Broward Levee	Yes	M		Yes	1,4
North Fork St. Lucie	Yes	M	St. Lucie County	Yes	1,6
Osceola Pine Savannas (a)	Yes	M		Yes	6
Twelve Mile Slough	Yes	M	Federal Grant	Yes	1,6

(a) Part of a larger St. Johns River Water Management District/CARL Project

Assumptions

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

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

CREW

Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW) is a generic name for a vast project covering nearly 55,000 acres in Lee and Collier Counties. National Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary is surrounded by CREW. However, the sanctuary is not included in the project boundary, nor will it be acquired.

In 1994, the District governing board expanded the project by 176 acres, to include the addition of a tract of hammock just east of Lake Trafford. The site addition contains a red maple swamp along the eastern shore of Lake Trafford. Moving inland, the site contains a hammock dominated by live oak and cabbage palm, with a diverse understory.

In 1994, 1,582 acres were acquired by Lee County. The District purchased an additional 771 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 more than 16,000 acres.

Project Boundary Revisions

The addition lands are upland and wetland buffer areas to lands within the existing CREW project. The boundary revisions will contribute land to four separate parts of CREW. The Corkscrew Marsh addition is a mixture of wet prairie and low pine flatwoods. It totals approximately 1,800 acres and will connect Lake Trafford with lands currently owned by the District. The Corkscrew Sanctuary addition covers approximately 1,450 acres and borders Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary. It consists of high quality cypress swamp and uplands which were cleared for row crops. The Bird Rookery Swamp addition is 320 acres of swamp forest which lies between two agricultural fields and connects Board of Education lands to the west with SR 846 to the east. The Flint Pen Strand addition covers approximately 500 acres in Lee County and consists of pine flatwoods mixed with cypress swamp forest. It will provide much needed upland habitat and direct road frontage for the project on Corkscrew Road.

The additional lands provide a mixture of upland and wetland habitats. The Flint Pen Strand and Corkscrew Marsh additions contain high quality pine flatwood and wet prairie communities, both of which are in limited amounts within the existing project boundaries.

The Corkscrew Sanctuary addition contains uplands which were

pine flatwoods that were cleared for agriculture. It is proposed that these areas could be restored through mitigation efforts. Some ditch and swale plugging could be done in specific wetland areas, but overall, the wetlands are in relatively good condition.

Land Stewardship Activities

Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

The CREW Conceptual Management Plan was endorsed by the CREW Trust and District governing board. The major participants in the plan development were Lee County, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Florida Division of Forestry, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Conservancy, Inc., National Audubon, Allico, Inc., Naples Tomato Growers, and the District. The plan addresses management needs and agency responsibilities. SFWMD will be the lead management agency.

Save Our Rivers field crew treated exotics in Flint Pen Strand and Corkscrew Marsh during the past year. Exotic vegetation in Flint Pen Strand was mapped under District contract. Infestations were mapped by species type and concentration. Permanent photo points were installed in representative areas to document treatment effectiveness and spread of the plants. In addition, Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission volunteer reservists treated exotics and posted District lands in Corkscrew Marsh and Bird Rookery Swamp.

Public Recreation

Most of the existing CREW project has limited public use potential due to the dense swamps and sawgrass marshes which dominate much of the area. Some areas have good potential for hiking trail development, although much of the trail may be wet.

Trail development began in 1994 in the flatwoods adjacent to Corkscrew Marsh. If permanent public access can be obtained, hiking trails will also be developed along former logging trams in Bird Rookery Swamp.

**SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE**

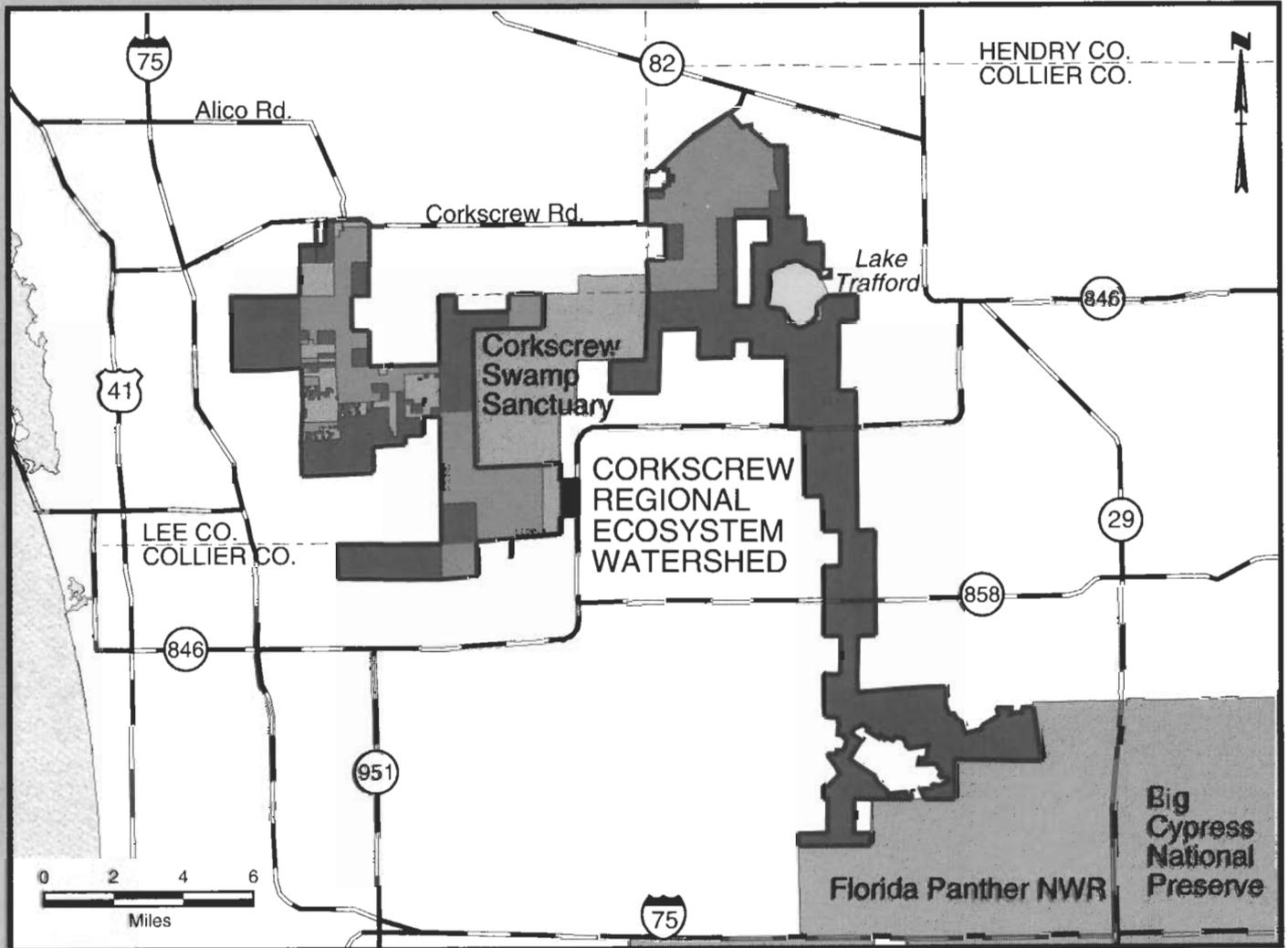
**POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS**

**OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS**

**OTHER SOR
PROJECTS**

**1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS**

**SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY**



COUNTIES:
Lee and Collier

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
54,888

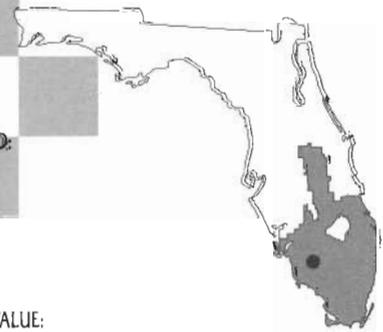
TOTAL ACRES ACQUIRED:
16,429*

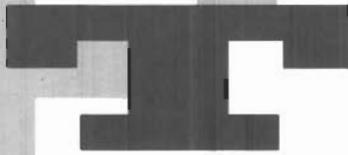
LAND COST:
\$16,704,882

ACRES REMAINING:
38,283

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$20 Million

*In 1994, Lee County acquired 1,582 acres at a cost of \$4,044,102.





Dade Broward Levee

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.

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.

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 concentrat-

ed 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.

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.

Recreation Potential

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

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

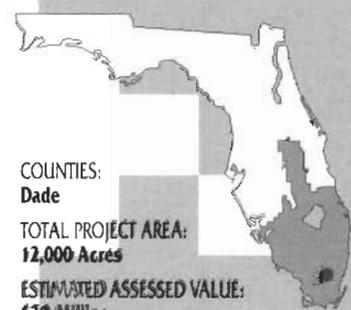
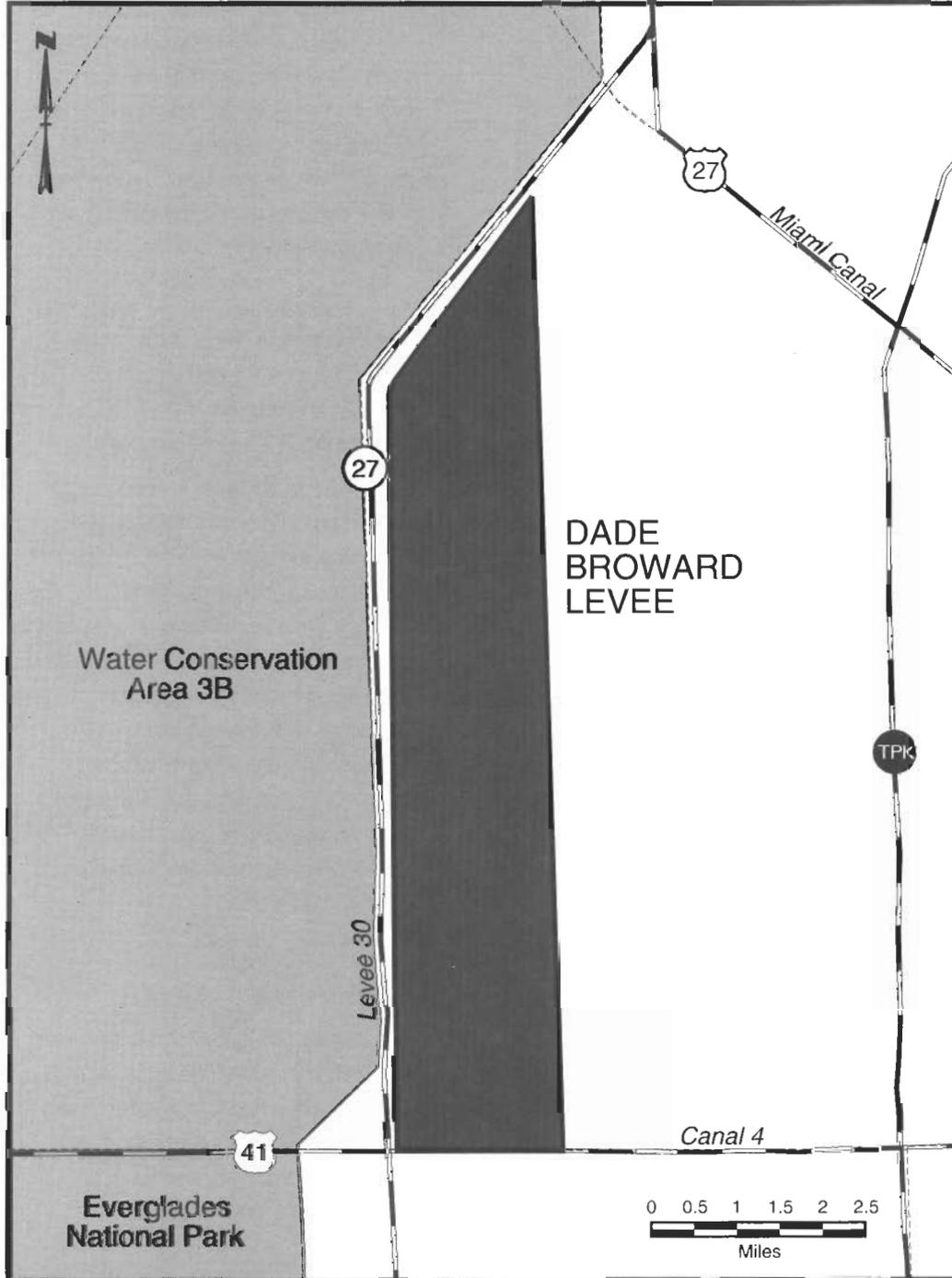
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



COUNTIES:
Dade
TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
12,000 Acres
ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$30 Million
NUMBER OF OWNERS
Numerous



Everglades Buffer Strip

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

During the past year the District made additional acquisitions on this project. We added sixty four acres purchased with \$1,047,440 of SOR funds and 124 acres purchased with \$1,900,152 of District funds. These transactions are a result of settling several legal actions within this project. Due to the unique nature of the project, the land cost will be shared by SOR, District ad-valorem and Broward County funds. The project is funded in part by funds received from Land and Water Conservation Fund (LMWCF) Act of 1965, Public Law 88-578, 78 Stat 897, as amended. (\$4,134,000-50% of project acquisition costs). As an Approved Outdoor Recreation Project Conservation and resource protection are the primary purposes of the Project.

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.

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.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Broward County has indicated significant interest in the entire 4,000 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.

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.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

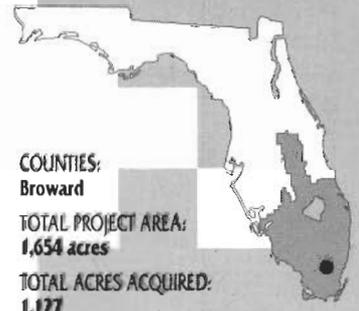
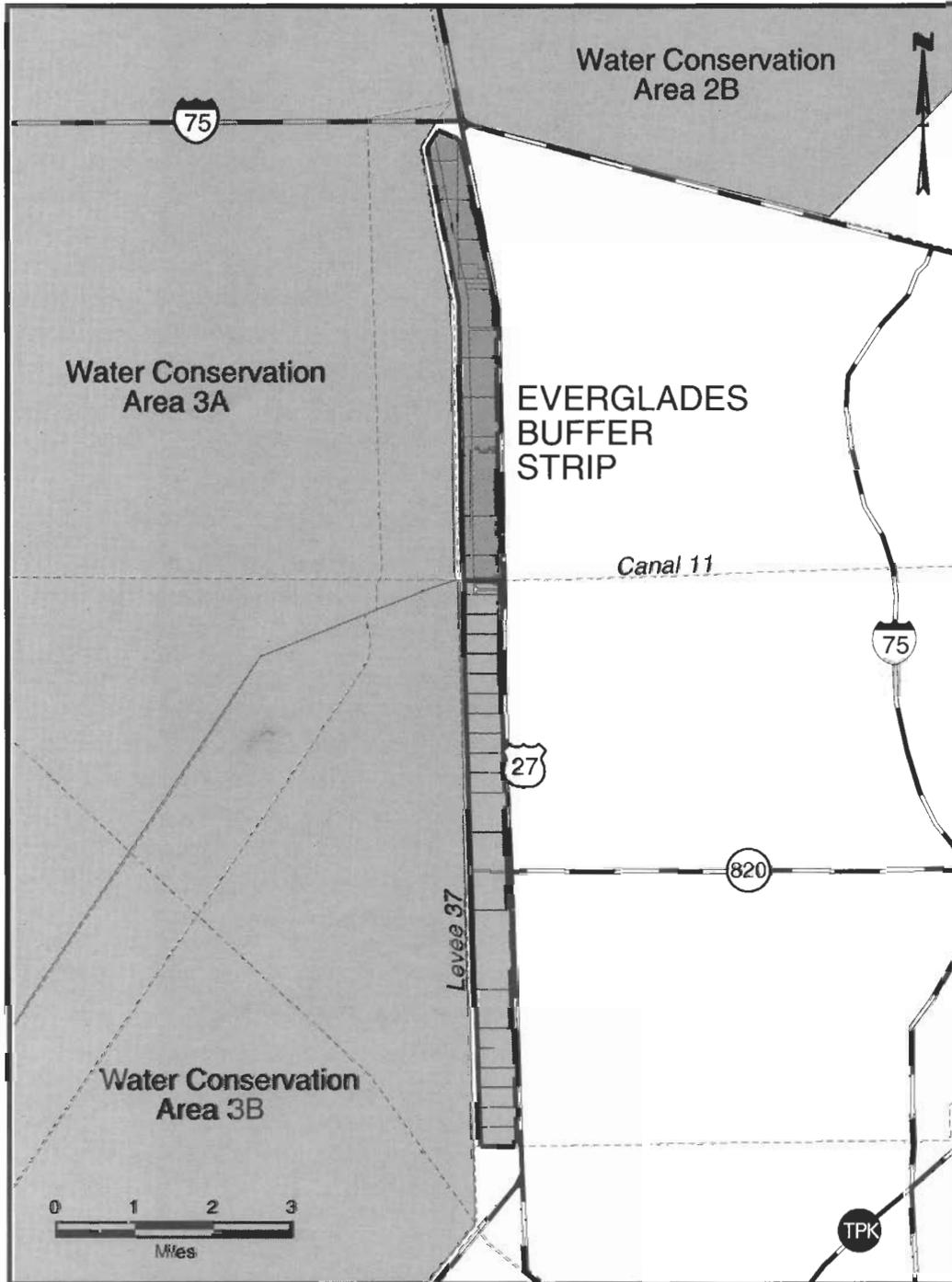
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



COUNTIES:
Broward

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
1,654 acres

TOTAL ACRES ACQUIRED:
1,127

LAND COST (SOR):
\$10,926,570

LAND COST (OTHER):
\$1,118,952

FP&L ACRES: 446
(Other Agencies 56)

ACRES REMAINING:
25

NUMBER OF OWNERS
Numerous

Frog Pond/L-31N Transition Lands

The Frog Pond and L-31N Transition Lands cover approximately 10,450 acres and are located in Dade County. The project includes 5,200 acres of agricultural lands known as the Frog Pond, which lie immediately north of the C-111 SOR project, as well as 5,250 acres of transitional lands, which are located east of C-111 and L-31N, north of the Frog Pond, and south of the 8.5 Square Mile Area.

Acquisition Activity

In 1994, the District made its first purchases, and acquired approximately 280 acres in the L-31N Transition area. Additional purchases are anticipated in late 1994.

Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and the Conservation and Protection of Water Resources

The purpose of the project is to increase the hydroperiod of the marshes in eastern Everglades National Park and to improve freshwater flow to Taylor Slough and Florida Bay. Under the South Florida Water Management District's C-111/Taylor Slough Interim Plan, the groundwater table, as controlled through stages in C-111 and L-31 canals, will be maintained at higher levels to promote increased discharge into Taylor Slough.

In addition, the SFWMD preferred plan under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers C-111 General Re-evaluation Report (GRR) calls for a floodway to be located in the Frog Pond agricultural area. This area will serve several purposes:

- A. to simulate the natural hydrograph for delivery of water into Taylor Slough,
- B. to utilize natural vegetation and microbial soil processes to cleanse runoff before discharge into Everglades National Park, and
- C. to restore the connection between Taylor Slough and its headwaters.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

The Frog Pond and Transitional Lands are an integral part of the C-111/Taylor Slough Interim Plan and Corps GRR project that would result in restoration of natural freshwater hydropatterns to Florida Bay. Observations of seagrass die-off, mangrove losses, reduced fisheries, and algal blooms provide strong evidence that the Florida Bay ecosystem is declining under current water management practices. Current delivery of freshwater to the bay differs in volume, timing and distribution from pre-managed conditions. In addition, as recommended in the Everglades SWIM Plan, the Taylor Slough ecosystem within Everglades National Park itself will be enhanced through the improved hydroperiods and re-establishment of sheetflow over existing wetlands under this project.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Capital improvements, such as canals, levees, weirs, and pumps will be limited to only those necessary to achieve the proposed water resources benefits. Removal of existing canals and levees along the western boundary of the Frog Pond will be examined as part of the preferred C-111 GRR alternative. The area will be managed in accordance with plans to restore Taylor Slough and Florida Bay. These plans will be developed by the District, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the National Park Service.

Recreation Potential

As part of the overall planning process, restoration of scenic benefits at the entrance to Everglades National Park and other public recreational values will be examined. Potential public uses will also be examined for their effects on environmental sensitivity and water management values of the lands.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

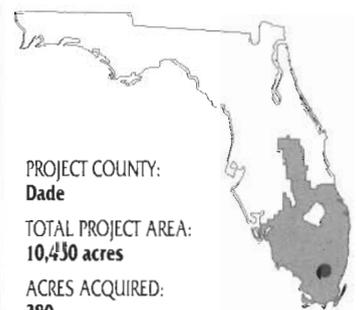
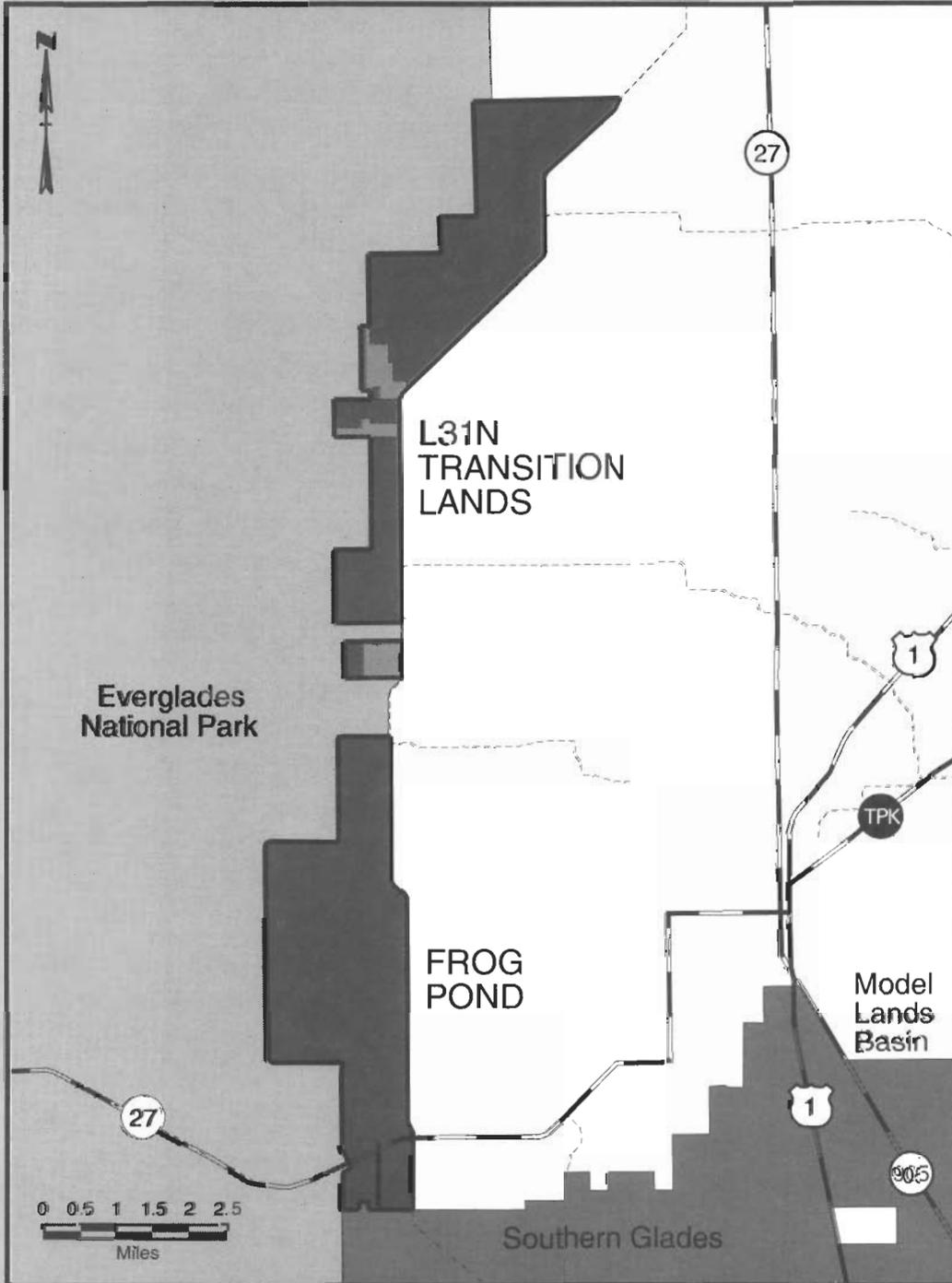
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



PROJECT COUNTY:
Dade

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
10,430 acres

ACRES ACQUIRED:
280

LAND COST:
1.9 million

ACRES REMAINING:
10,170

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$60 Million

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
Numerous

Kissimmee River

The Kissimmee River Save Our Rivers Project includes lands in the upper basin, referred as the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes and the lower basin, the Kissimmee River. A portion of the SOR project is the Kissimmee River Restoration project. The restoration includes land in the upper and lower basins and covers an estimated 88,000 acres. The objective is to acquire lands necessary to accomplish the restoration. This figure and the project map will be adjusted as surveys of the required area are completed. In some areas, lands beyond the restoration project have characteristics that fit into the Save Our Rivers criteria. The Five Year Plan includes these lands.

The lower basin comprises the area required for the restoration of the river under the Governor's Save Our Everglades program. More than 57,000 acres in the basin represent the historic flood plain of the Kissimmee River. In the lower basin real property interests have been acquired in more than 28,000 acres.

In 1991, The District expanded the project to include 24,000 acres of the shoreline of the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes in the upper basin. This includes 6,933 acres that meet the qualifications of the SOR program and are not a part of the Kissimmee River Restoration project. Real property interests have been acquired in nearly eight thousand (8,000) acres. An additional seventeen hundred (1,700) acres are in State ownership. This portion of the project is to acquire real property interests 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.

Note: More detailed maps of Kissimmee River properties may be found in the District publication "Public Use Guide For Designated Land Management Areas."

Land Stewardship Activities

Planning

The District staff continued to work with the consultant to prepare the Conceptual Land and Natural Resources Management Plan. District staff expects this plan to be ready for public input during 1995.

Exotic Control

Bluff Hammock - Okeechobee County. The Land Stewardship Division Staff treated 489 acres for Brazilian Pepper. Operations and

Maintenance Department continues to monitor previously treated Cogon grass plots.

Hamm - Highlands County. LSD staff treated several Cogon grass infestations for a total treatment area of approximately fifteen acres. The staff also treated seventy-five acres of Brazilian Pepper.

Hickory Hammock - Highlands County. LSD staff treated fifty-six additional Cogon grass sites. SOR staff personnel treated six miles of the old McArthur levee for Brazilian pepper.

Fort Basinger - Highlands County. LSD staff treated ten acres of Brazilian Pepper along the old Kissimmee River.

Micco Landing - Okeechobee County. LSD staff treated five acres of Brazilian Pepper along the old Kissimmee River and the C-38 Canal.

Kicco - Polk County. The staff treated three hundred thirty-five acres of C-38 and land adjacent to River Ranch for Brazilian pepper.

Yates Marsh - Okeechobee County. The District staff treated the entire area of six hundred eighty six acres for Brazilian Pepper.

General Maintenance

On the lands acquired within the Riverwoods subdivision district staff relocated two mobile homes. In addition staff initiated a caretaker contract to maintain four houses, three vacant lots and other lands nearby.

District staff conducted cleanups of old trailers, tanks, and assorted junk on the Lockett Estate lands.

Hydrologic Restoration

Water management facilities enhanced this year include items installed at the KICCO, CREW, Hickory Hammock, Oak Creek and DuPuis projects. District staff continued monitoring the restored Marsh at Rattlesnake Marsh in the KICCO project.

Environmental Monitoring

The ongoing photo monitoring program is continuing at Hickory Hammock, KICCO and Micco Landing. Land Stewardship staff is creating a natural community map for the Johnson Island project. Reports of pre and post-burn data for prescribed fires were completed for Hickory Hammock and KICCO.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

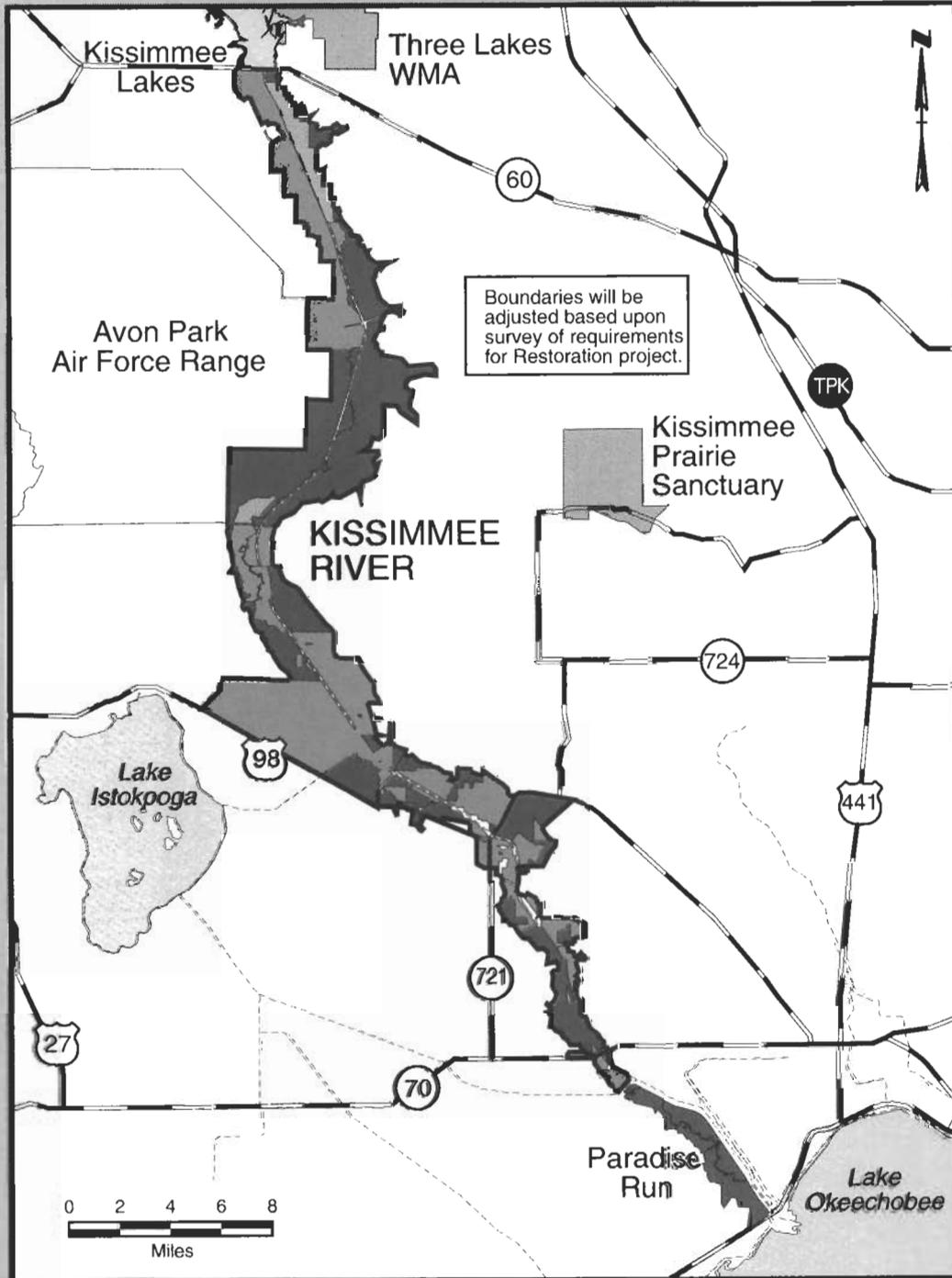
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



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.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

The Kissimmee River stretched over 98 miles between Lake Kissimmee and Lake Okeechobee. With the Construction of Canal 38 the River became a straight line fifty-six (56) miles with remnant oxbows in various places. More than 47,000 acres of wetlands were altered by the construction. The proposed restoration will re-establish pre-channelization hydrologic characteristics along fifty-two (52) miles of river channel and within 24,000 acres of flood plain.

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 re-flooding nearly 500 acres of lands that were previously wetlands.

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 plants will be needed. Vegetation management will be

required on each property. Security for acquired lands is important. 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.

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 are open along the Kissimmee River. A section of trail on Hickory Hammock (formerly the McArthur Ranch tract) is open for use. As contiguous parcels of land are acquired by the District, additional sections of the trail will be developed. The long-range plan is to extend the trail the full length of the river.

The District's rule governing public use of SOR and other District lands (Chapter 40E-7, Part V) became effective in May after more than a year of public discussion and review.

A Public Use Guide (PUG) setting forth the rule, the designated land management areas, and the special provisions applicable thereto has been developed to assist persons interested in accessing these lands. The guide contains specific information about public use on each management area. Copies of the Public Use Guide are available upon request at the District's headquarters.

**SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE**

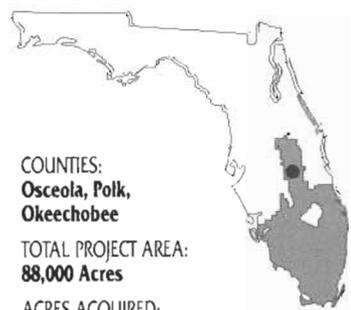
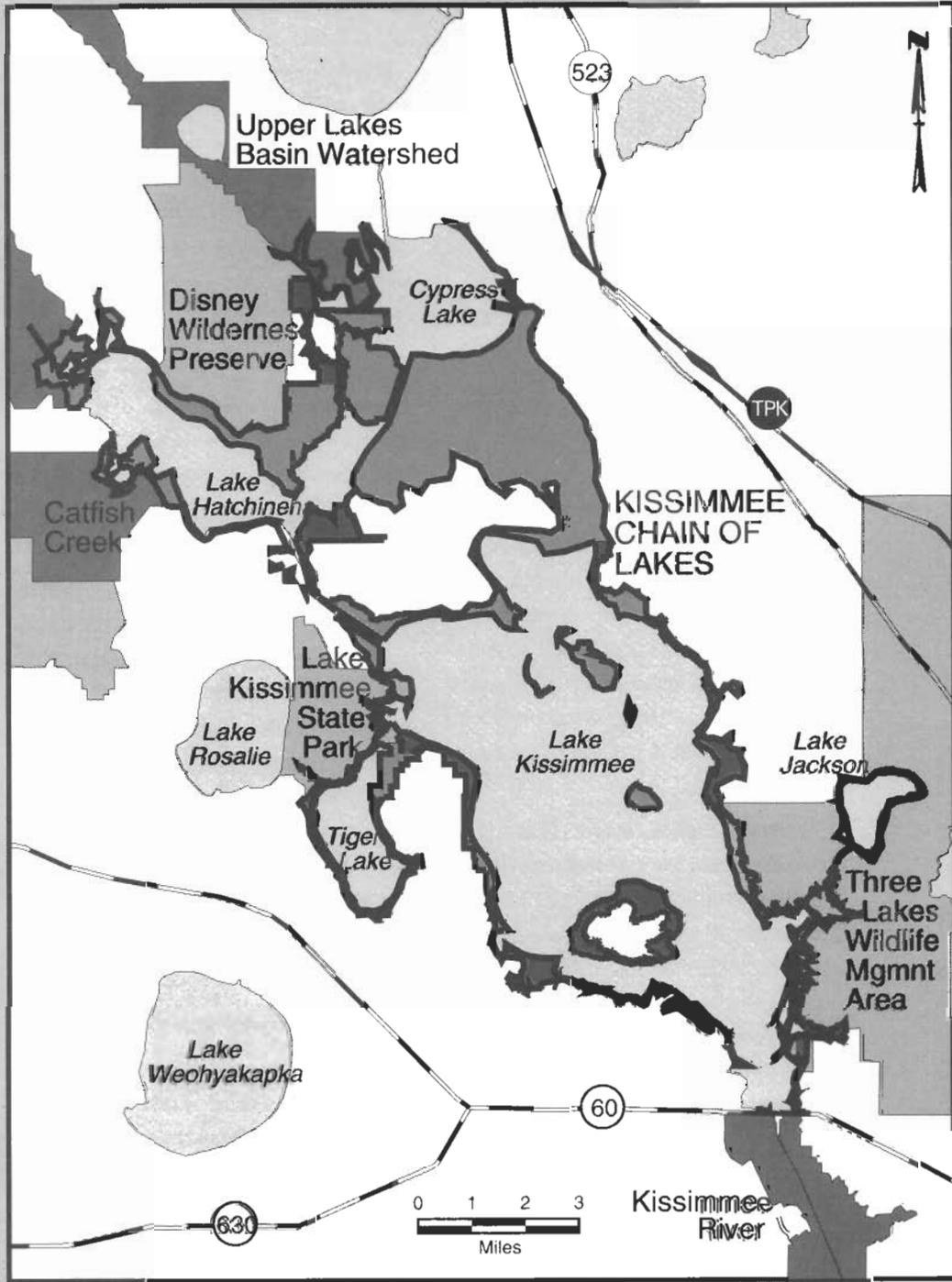
**POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS**

**OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS**

**OTHER SOR
PROJECTS**

**1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS**

**SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY**



COUNTIES:
Osceola, Polk,
Okeechobee

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
88,000 Acres

ACRES ACQUIRED:
40,738 Acres

LAND COST (SOR - ONLY):
\$59,000,000

ACRES REMAINING:
47,000 Acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$50,000,000



Loxahatchee Slough

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.

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.

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 their impacts are correctable. Hydrologic restoration could be accomplished by filling or blocking swales and ditches.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Palm Beach County Department of Environmental Resources Management, with assistance from the District, has begun drafting a conceptual management plan. It will inventory resource information, list goals and objectives for overall management, and identify management responsibilities. In addition, it will specify management needs with regard to prescribed burning, exotic control, and public use. The District will prepare a separate section dealing with hydrology and hydrologic restoration needs. A draft plan is expected in early 1995.

Recreation Potential

Its proximity to a large metropolitan area will 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.

 **SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE**

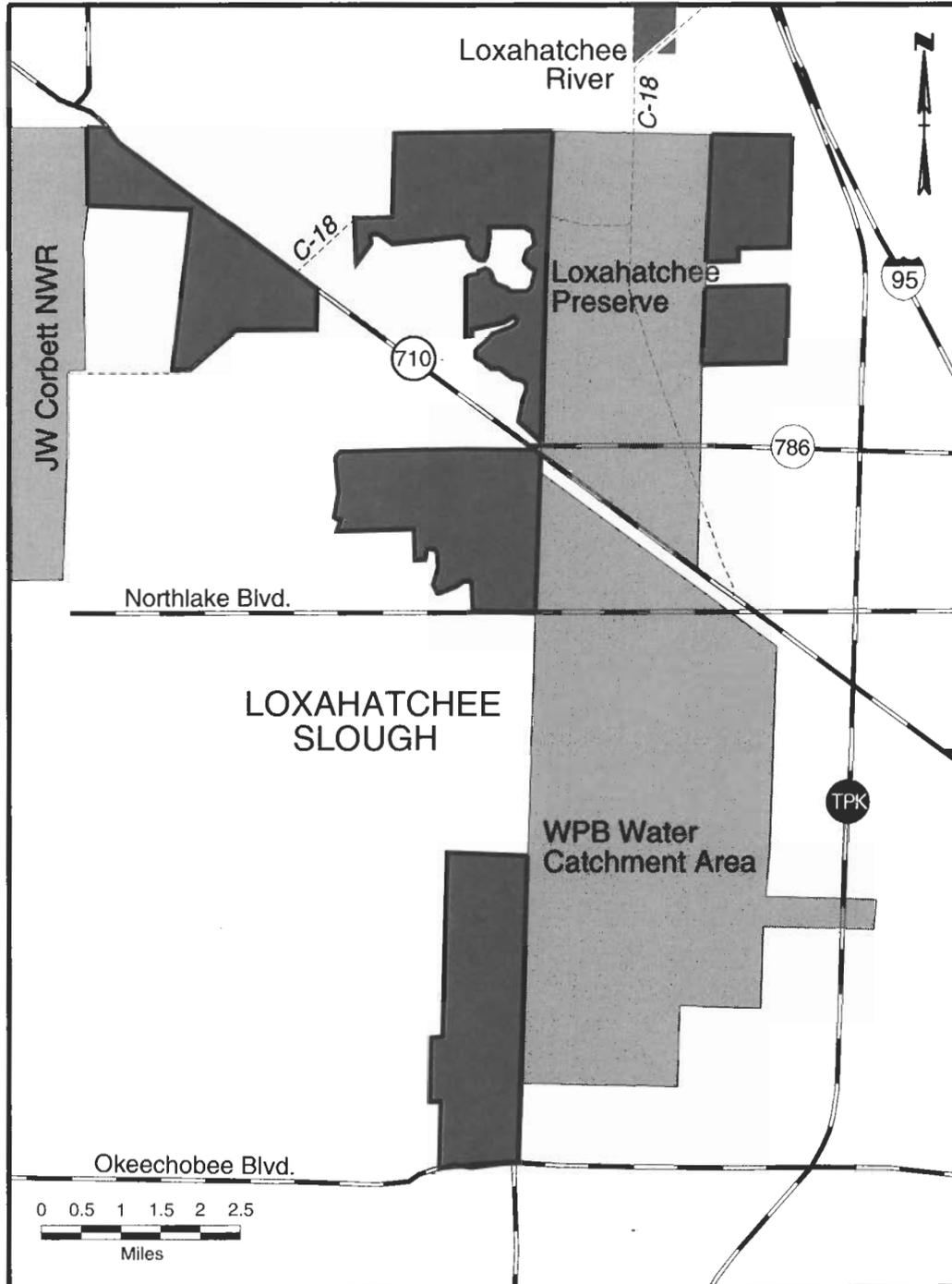
 **POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS**

 **OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS**

 **OTHER SOR
PROJECTS**

 **1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS**

 **SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY**



PROJECT COUNTY:
Palm Beach

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
13,000 acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$36 Million

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
Numerous

Model Lands Basin

This project is located primarily in Dade County, with a very small portion on the edge of Monroe County. The FPL cooling ponds at Turkey Point nuclear power plant are not included in the project boundary.

The project area 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 freshwater habitat type is wet prairie, interspersed with tree islands. Vegetation includes red bay, dahoon holly, cocoplum and button-bush in the freshwater upland islands, and red, white and black mangroves in the estuarine islands.

These lands form a contiguous habitat corridor with Everglades National Park, Southern Glades SOR project, Biscayne National Park, Crocodile Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, the north Key Largo CARL purchases, John Pennekamp State Park, and the existing National Marine Sanctuary.

In 1994, discussions were held with Dade County and The Nature Conservancy, regarding an acquisition strategy. In early 1995, priority acquisition areas will be targeted, and appraisals ordered.

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. Card Sound is classified as both an Aquatic Preserve and Outstanding Florida Water. This basin is a primary source of overland freshwater flow for Biscayne National Park and the southern portions of Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve.

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.

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 is supported by the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Dade County.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining In an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Exotic invasion in the northwest corner, and in the addition lands is severe. 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.

Dade County has a funding source for partial management, through the County's Freshwater Wetlands Mitigation Trust Fund, which could include exotic plant treatment and hydrologic restoration.

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.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

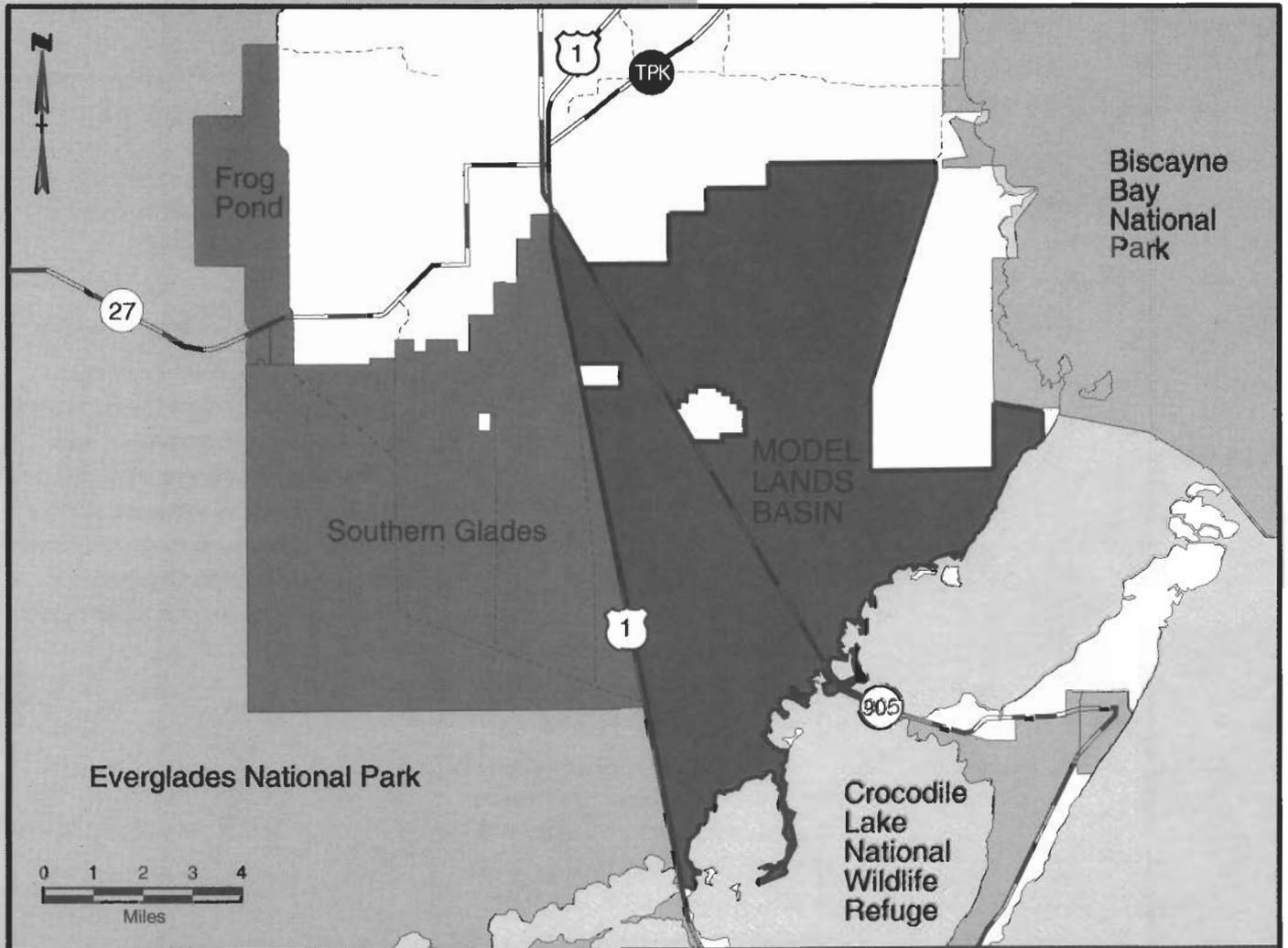
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY

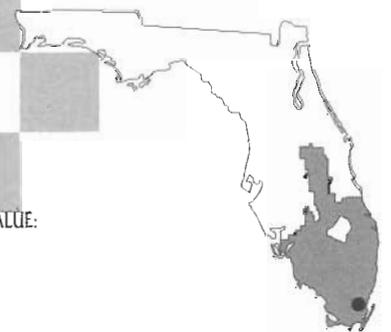


COUNTY:
Dade/Monroe

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
41,620 Acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$30 Million

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
Numerous





North Fork of the Saint Lucie River

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

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.

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.

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.

Recreation Potential

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.

 **SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE**

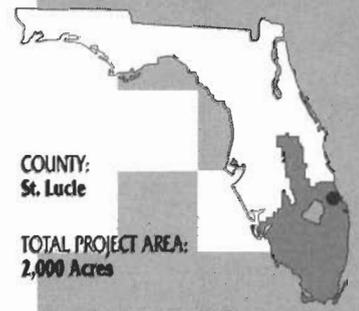
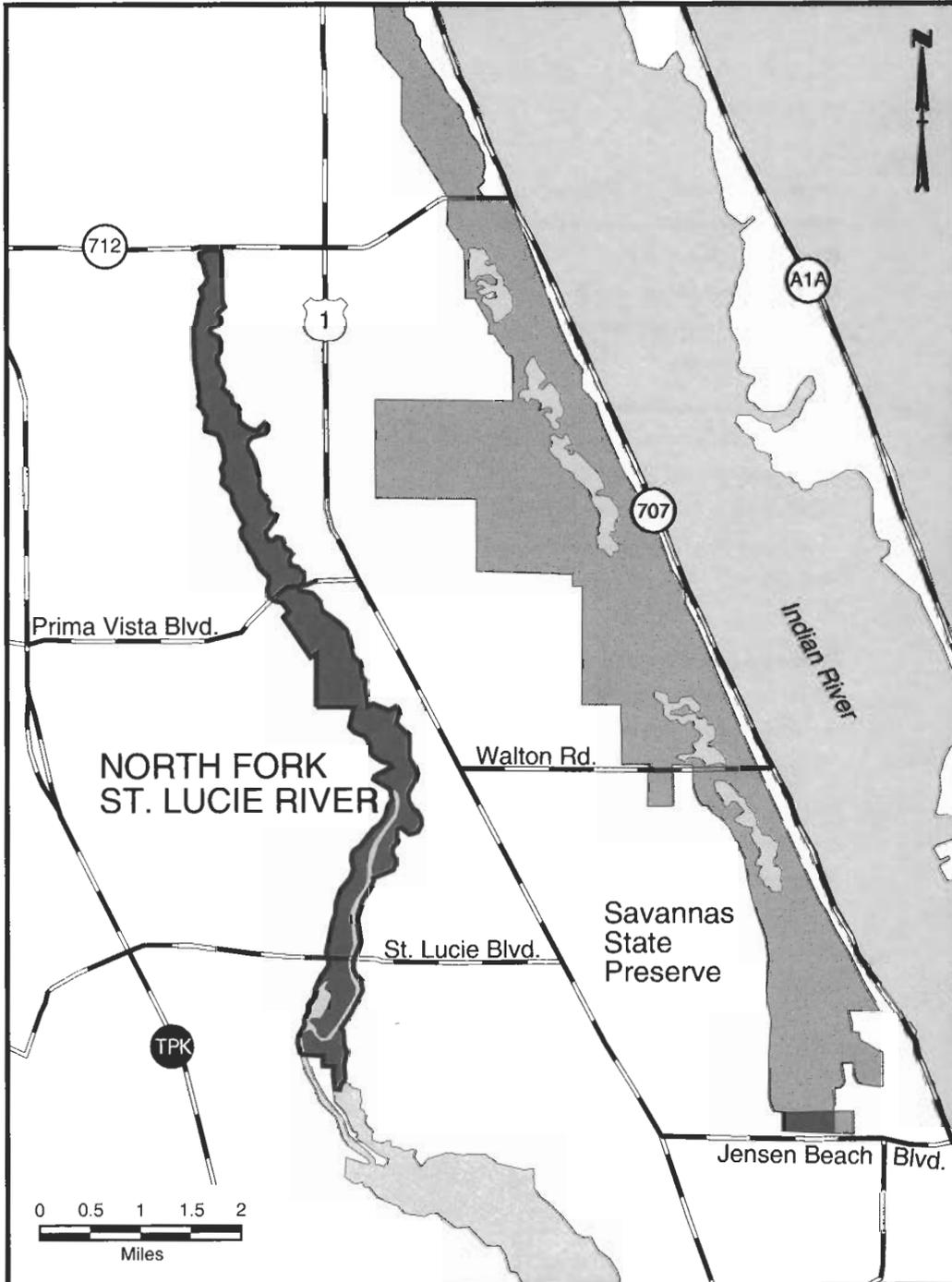
 **POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS**

 **OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS**

 **OTHER SOR
PROJECTS**

 **1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS**

 **SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY**



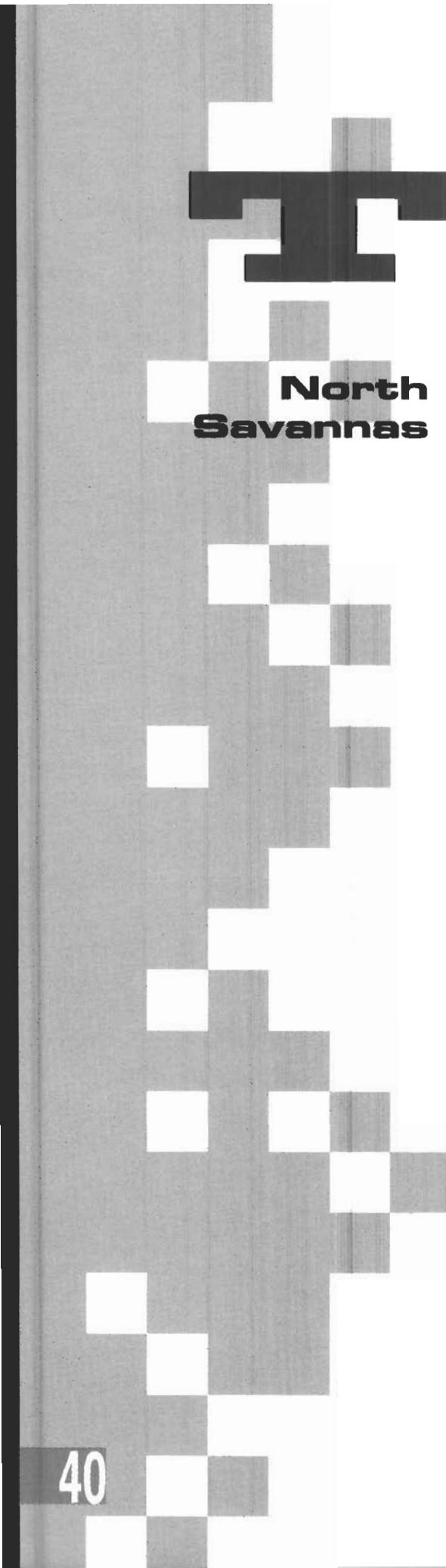
COUNTY:
St. Lucie

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
2,000 Acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$5,600,000

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
Numerous





North Savannas

he site contains a 900 acre remnant of the historic savannas community type in St. Lucie County. It is completely separated from the Savannas State Preserve by the City of Ft. Pierce. St. Lucie County owns two adjacent tracts, totalling 353 acres, which were purchased as mitigation for expansion of the St. Lucie County Airport.

Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and the Conservation and Protection of Water Resources

Important water management functions of the site include attenuating peak discharges and improving water quality. The site promotes recharge to the surficial Aquifer, which is the primary source of potable water in St. Lucie County.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

The site is in relatively good condition; however, numerous shellrock roads cross an old platted portion. Removal of the old roads would probably benefit sheetflow.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

The site is very accessible, which may prove to be a security problem. Prescribed burning of the flatwoods would be difficult, due to the dense residential development immediately to the west and US Highway 1 to the east. Exotic vegetation is not a major problem at the present, but the area will require periodic checking and treatment.

Recreation Potential

The site would be very suitable for hiking trails. Due to its proximity to a major metropolitan area, use of the property would probably be very high. The diversity of community types makes this area particularly appealing. Fishing in the deep water areas would be very popular.

 **SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE**

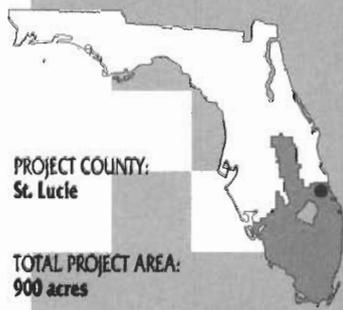
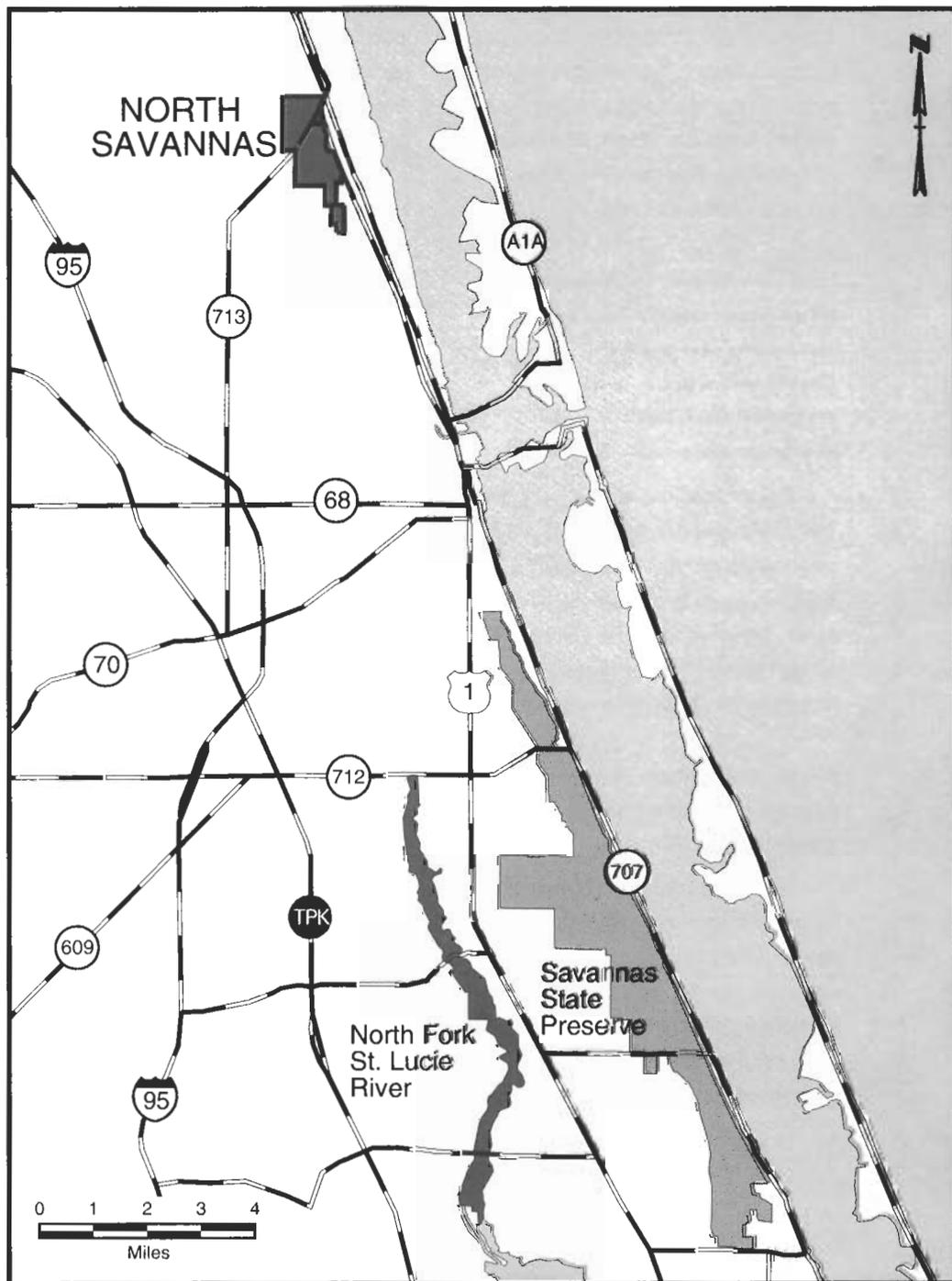
 **POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS**

 **OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS**

 **OTHER SOR
PROJECTS**

 **1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS**

 **SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY**

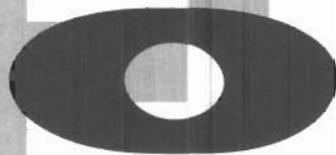


PROJECT COUNTY:
St. Lucie

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
900 acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$5 Million

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
Numerous



Osceola Pine Savannas

Osceola Pine Savannas is a 41,000 acre Save Our Rivers and CARL project, most of which is within the boundaries of St. Johns River Water Management District. The proposed 1,600 acre project is only that portion which lies within SFWMD. The entire project is located in Osceola County. Current land use is native range grazing. The 1,600 acre tract provides a good representation of the overall project. It contains a variety of community types, and is tributary to Crabgrass Creek.

Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and the Conservation and Protection of Water Resources

This tract contains isolated wet prairies, floodplain swamp forests, and hydric hammocks which are tributary to Crabgrass Creek and other waters in the Upper St. Johns River Basin. The site also contains a diversity of upland habitats, including dry prairie, longleaf pine-dominated mesic flatwoods, and scrub.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

This tract is in very good condition. Disturbances appear to have been limited to woods hunting trails. Exotic vegetation is not a problem. The biggest threat is from expanding citrus development in the area. Dry prairie and mesic flatwoods are highly susceptible to citrus conversion.

Acquisition of Osceola Pine Savannas would provide a key link connecting Bull creek Wildlife Management Area with Three Lakes WMA, creating a protected corridor in excess of 117,000 acres. Several listed species, including the red-cockaded woodpecker, have colonies on adjacent protected lands. Protecting this tract offers an excellent opportunity to extend their geographic distribution.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Management of this tract will likely be by Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, in conjunction with Three Lakes and Bull Creek Wildlife Management Areas. These lands are in good condition at present, with minimal restoration required. Most of the management activities would likely center around a prescribed burning program.

Recreation Potential

This site offers excellent recreational opportunities. Hiking, wilderness camping, nature appreciation, horseback riding, and hunting are all likely uses.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

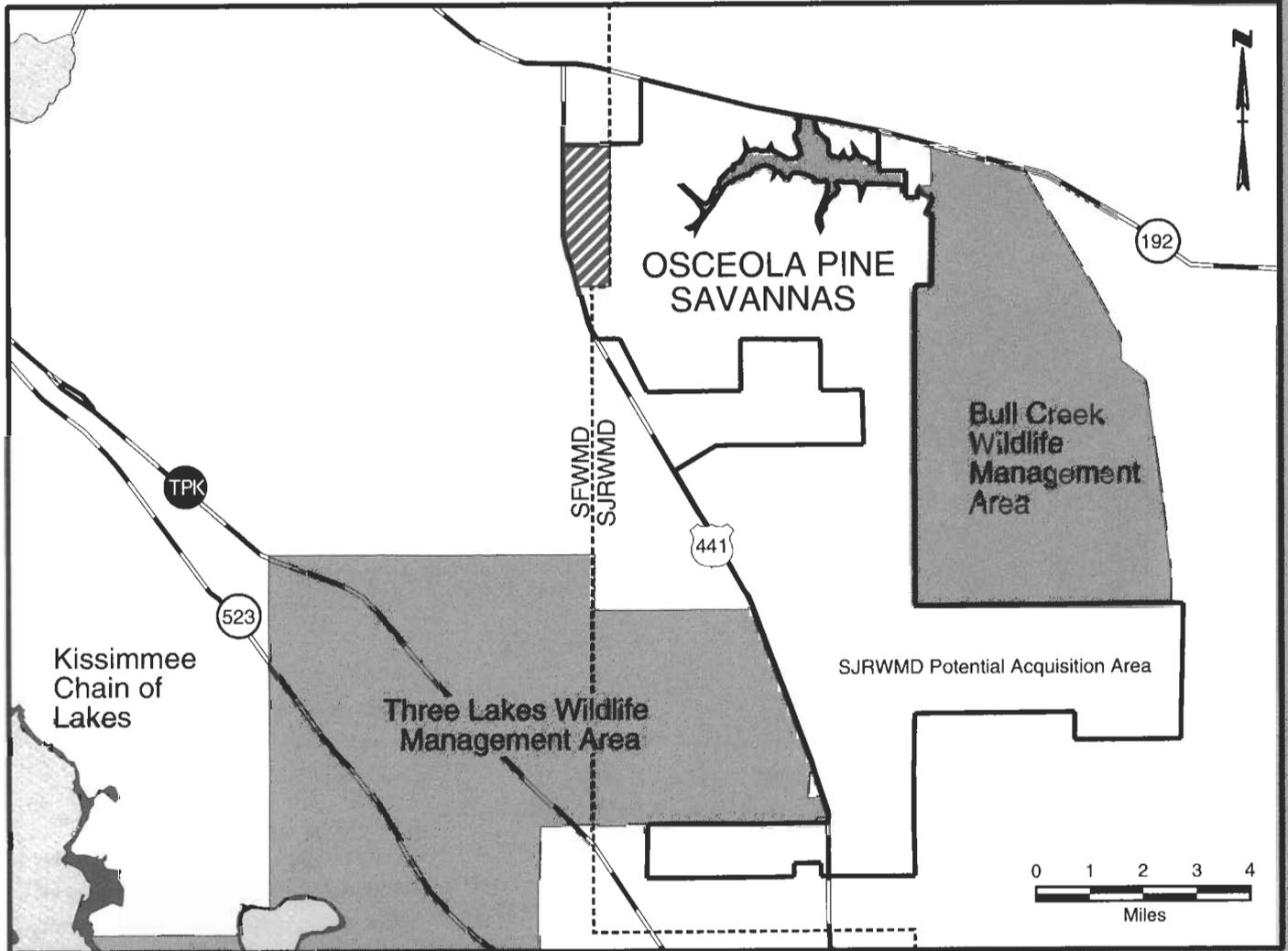
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



COUNTY:
Osceola

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
1,600 Acres (SEWMD Portion)

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$1,500,000

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
One



A large, bold, black letter 'P' is positioned at the top left of the page. It is partially overlaid by a vertical column of grey and white squares that runs down the left side of the page.

Pal-Mar

al-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 Reserve State Forest.

In 1994, the District Governing Board revised the project boundary. Several additional entities are involved with land acquisition in Pal-Mar, including CARL, Martin County, and Palm Beach County. The current revision will make all agency boundaries coincide. The new revision deleted a portion of the project with lower resource value. The revision also added lands in the Palm Beach County portion of the project. The net of all the boundary revisions will add 9,814 acres to the project.

Acquisition Activities

In late 1994, the first purchase of 1,922 acres was completed, in what will be a cost share project with Martin County. Discussions are under way with additional landowners. Stewardship activities, with public use opportunities, will start being developed in 1995.

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 fifteen to twenty-five feet of confining

sands near the surface. The estimated transmissivity shows the aquifer is adequate for small-scale development and individual use.

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 relatively 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 sub-divided 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.

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.

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.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

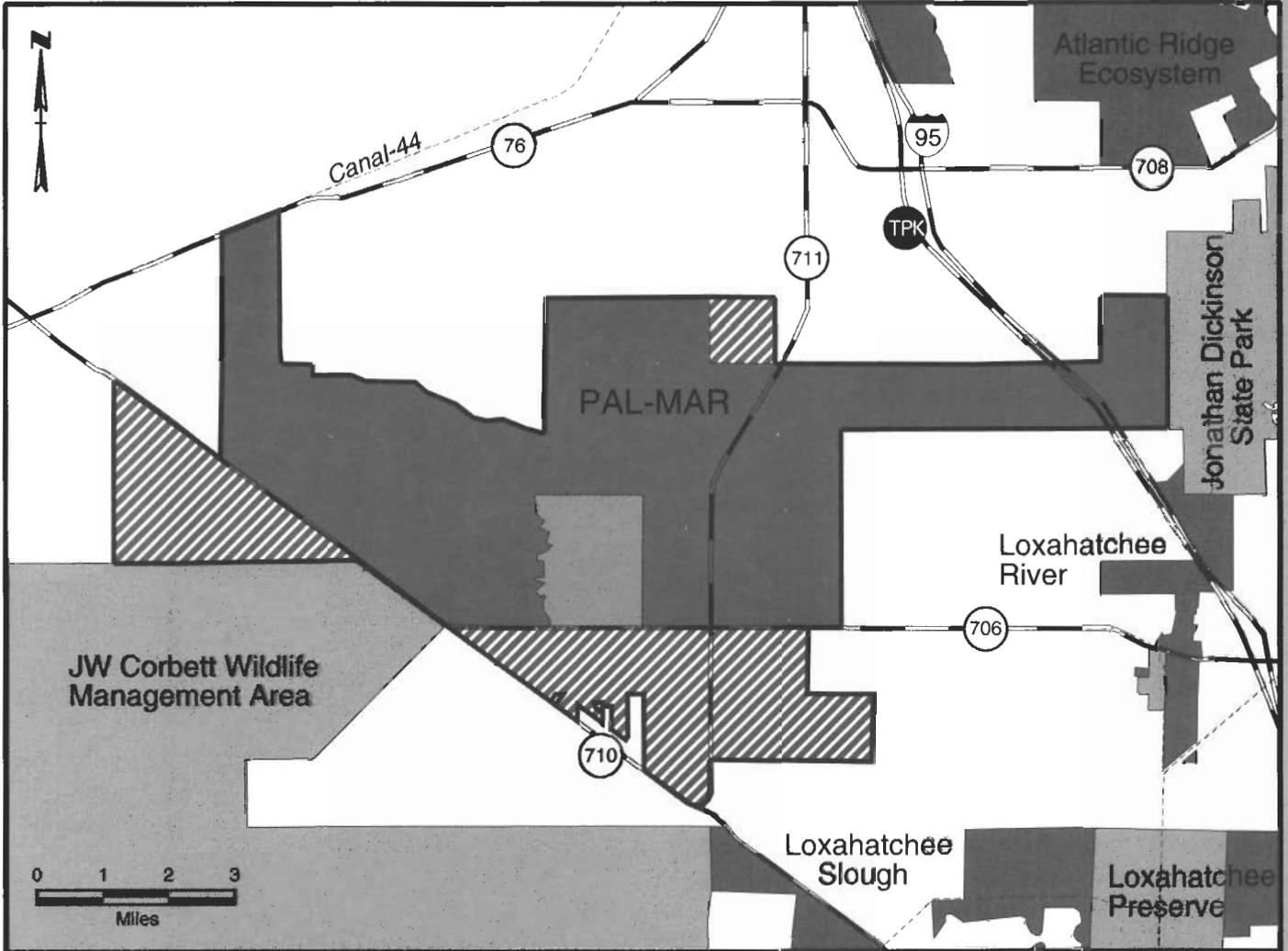
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



PROJECT COUNTIES:
Martin/Palm Beach

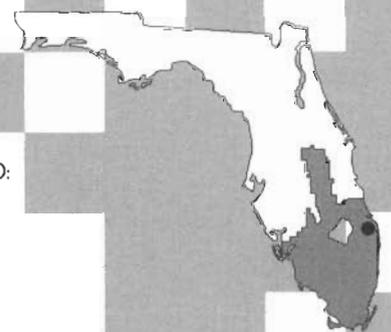
TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
37,314 acres

TOTAL ACRES ACQUIRED:
1922

LAND COST:
\$922,073

ACRES REMAINING:
33,567

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$50 million



Shingle Creek

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 Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

A hydrologic study and modeling project carried out in 1993 revealed that a transmission line access road was blocking sheetflow across the swamp and holding water levels too high for too long on the upstream side. The extended hydroperiod is resulting in a die-off of swamp vegetation. In 1994, a hydrologic restoration plan was submitted and approved by DEP, which calls for the construction of a 100' wide stabilized crossing of the access road, which will allow for an equalization of water levels across the swamp and restore sheetflow conditions. Construction of the crossing is expected in early 1995.

Project Boundary Revisions

In 1993, the District Governing Board approved the addition of approximately 2,000 acres in Osceola County. The 1993 addition was limited to the floodplain of Shingle Creek and did not include any upland buffer, not did it correspond to property lines or definable geographic features, such as roads. In 1994, the Board again revised the project to add additional upland areas which correspond to property ownership lines. The 1994 addition totals approximately 2230 acres.

The 1994 addition will allow the restoration of upland communities adjacent to the swamp which have been cleared for improved pasture. It is anticipated that acquisition, restoration, and management of lands in Osceola County will be accomplished with mitigation funds.

1994 Acquisition Summary

In 1994, the District received title to approximately 286 acres in the extreme northeast corner of the tract. These lands were obtained as a donation in conjunction with a District-issued Surface Water Management Permit.

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.

Public Recreation

Canoeing in Shingle Creek is a popular activity. The berm along the west side of the creek 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. Public access to District-owned lands is presently not available.

 **SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE**

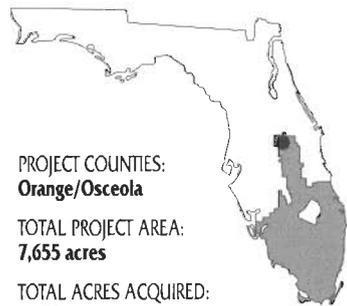
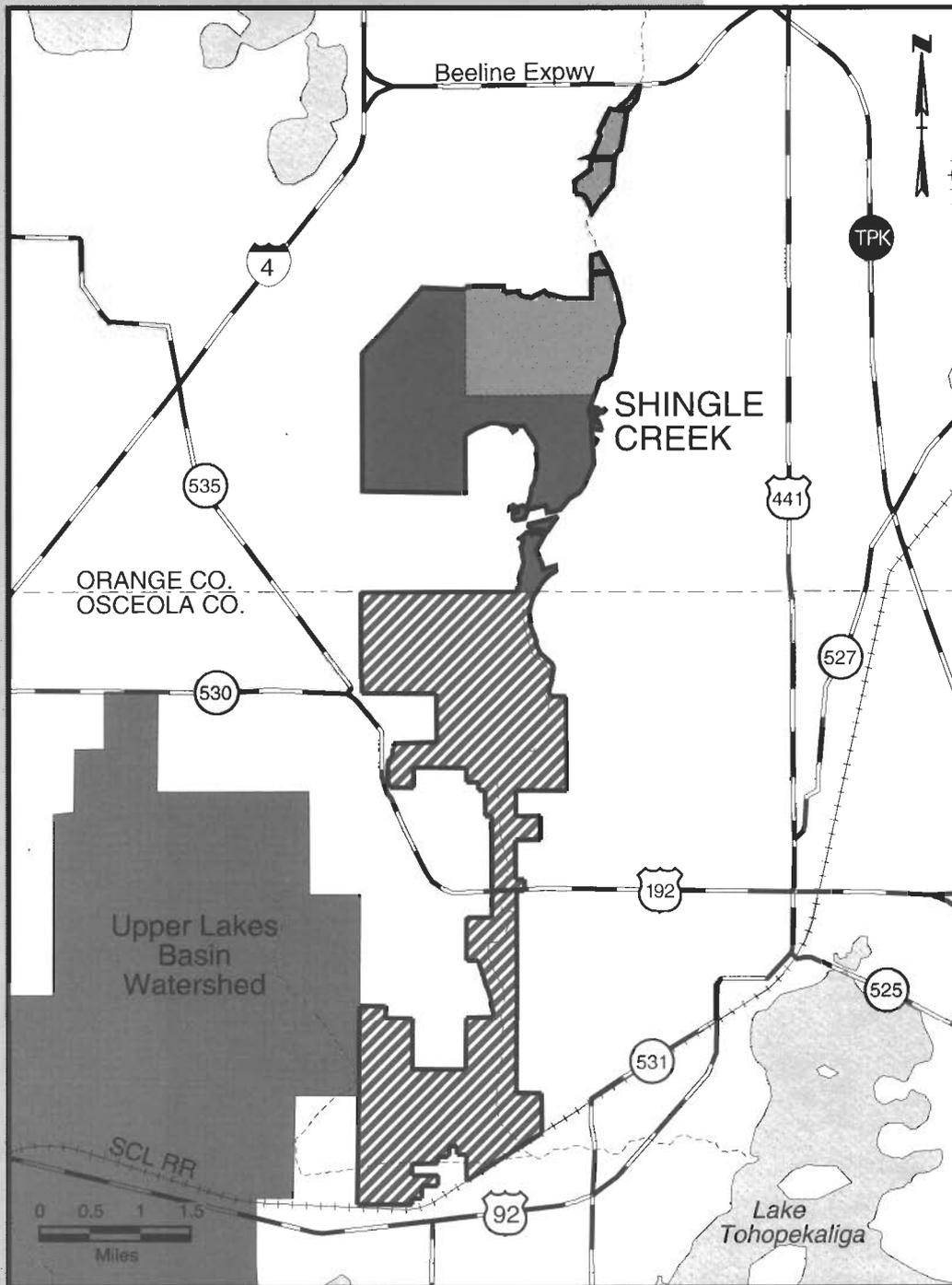
 **POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS**

 **OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS**

 **OTHER SOR
PROJECTS**

 **1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS**

 **SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY**



PROJECT COUNTIES:
Orange/Osceola

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
7,655 acres

TOTAL ACRES ACQUIRED:
1,172 acres

LAND COST:
\$1,334,400

ACRES REMAINING:
6,483

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$22 million

1994 DONATION:
286 acres

Six Mile Cypress II

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.

Land Stewardship Activities

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.

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.

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.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

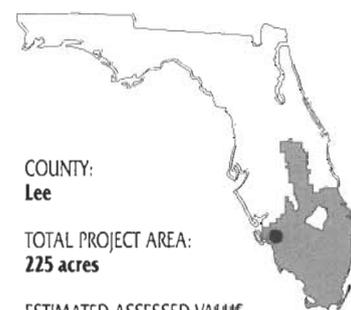
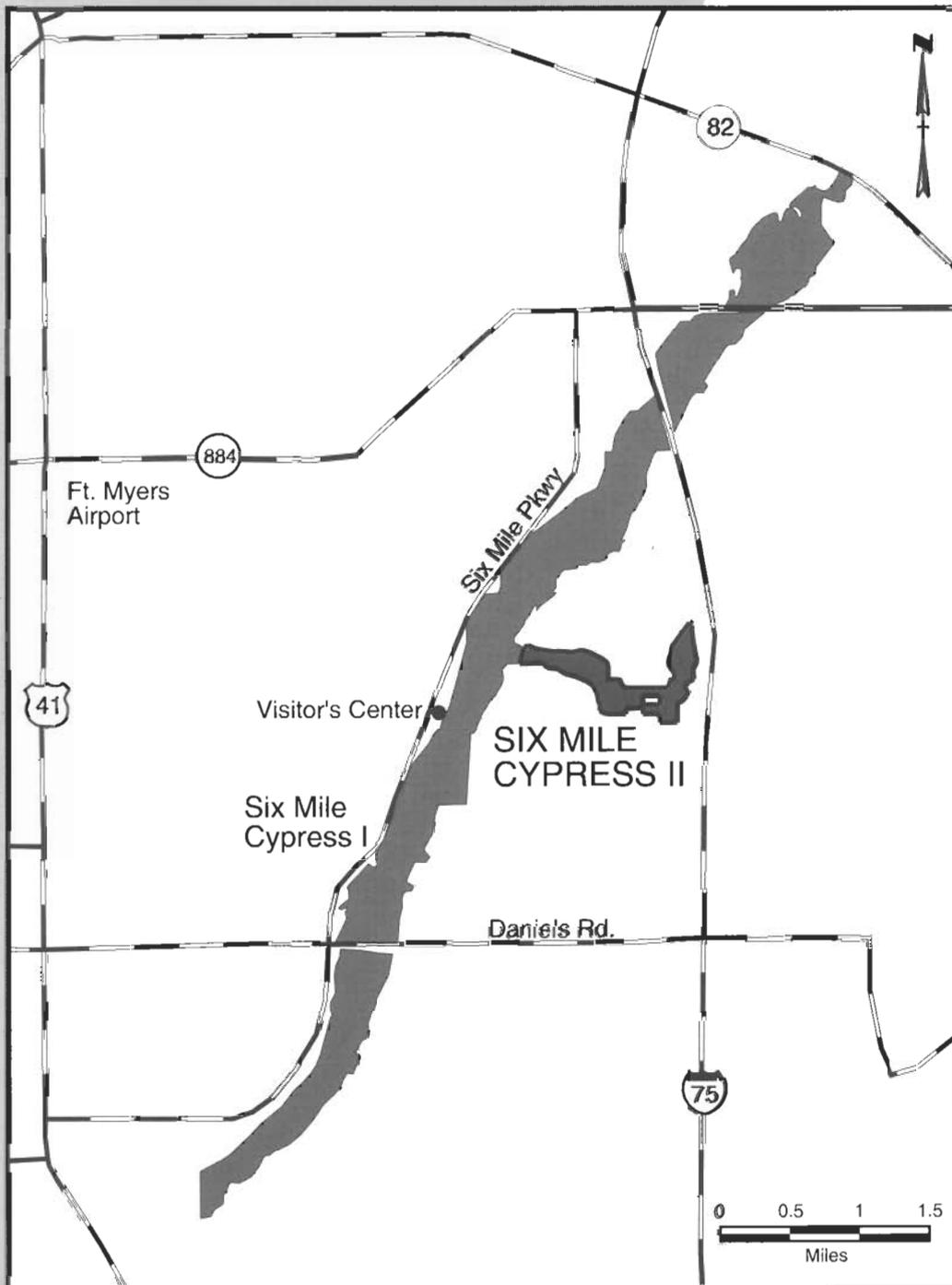
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



COUNTY:
Lee

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
225 acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$2 million

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
Multiple

South Fork St. Lucie River

This project includes a portion of the upper reach of the South Fork St. Lucie River, commencing approximately 0.75 miles south of State Road 76 and extending approximately 1.25 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.

In 1993, Martin County submitted an application to Florida Communities Trust (FCT) for the joint acquisition of thirty-seven (37) additional acres adjacent to, and immediately north of, the 100 acre SOR tract. FCT has informed Martin County that their application has been approved. Activities are now under way so that negotiations with the land owners can begin.

Land Stewardship Activities

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.

Martin County, in consultation with the District, prepared a conceptual management plan covering the river corridor. 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.

A boundary fence along the west side of the District's property has been constructed 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.

Managing and Maintaining In an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Land Stewardship staff mapped the vegetative communities of the South Fork property in 1993. Staff established vegetation monitoring plots in the scrubby flatwood community to evaluate District management activities. A permanent photo point accompanies the vegetation plots, and will provide visual documentation of changes that occur. Wildlife observations that are made during data collection visits are being entered into a wildlife data base to track long-term wildlife observations. In 1994, District staff treated the entire site for Brazilian Pepper.

District staff developed prescribed burn plans and established fire lines in anticipation of conducting winter burns. The close proximity of SR 76 and I-95 require very exact weather conditions before burning can be undertaken. Land Stewardship staff conducted a prescribed burn of slightly more than twenty acres.

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 SR 76.

A new hiking trail located on SOR lands along the South Fork of the St. Lucie River was opened in June at a special ceremony attended by the public and officials from the District, FTA, and Martin County. The new trail is currently accessible from the river only. A canoe landing located near the south end of the property serves as a combined trail-head and picnic area. Overnight camping is allowed with a special use permit from the District. The trail includes a footbridge and an elevated walkway constructed by Stewardship personnel and FTA volunteers.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

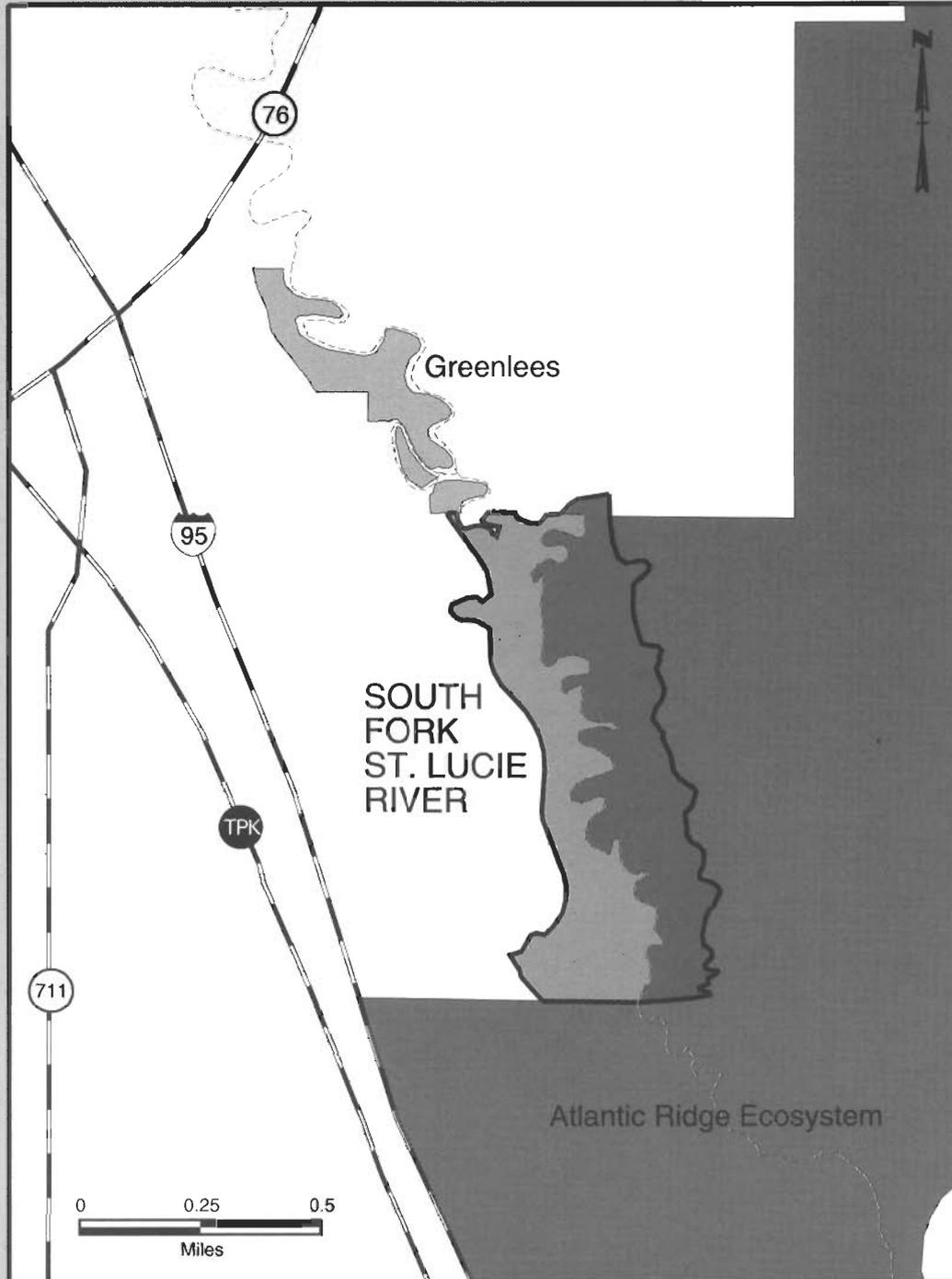
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



COUNTY:
Martin

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
184 Acres

ACRES ACQUIRED:
100

LAND COST:
\$2,000,000

ACRES REMAINING:
84

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$250,000

Southern Glades

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

Project Boundary Revision

In 1993, the District Governing Board approved the addition of 7,533 acres to the project. Much of the northern portion of the addition, which serves as a buffer to the agricultural area to the north, is heavily infested with exotic vegetation. However, Florida panthers are reported to use the exotic-infested buffer lands.

Acquisition and protection of the Southern Glades addition will help maintain sheetflow into southeastern Everglades National Park and northeast Florida Bay, contributing to the survival of both freshwater and marine communities. Protection of this area is consistent with the Everglades SWIM Plan and the development of strategies to better disperse stormwater discharge impacts to coastal resources, and to improve freshwater flows to Everglades National Park.

Some hydrologic restoration will be necessary in the form of constructing ditch plugs and removing berms. Several unimproved roads cross the addition lands which present barriers to sheetflow and should be degraded. Controlling illegal dumping and exotic vegetation will be ongoing management challenges.

Dade County has a funding source for future restoration, through the County's Freshwater Wetlands Mitigation Trust Fund. These funds may be available for exotic plant control and hydrologic restoration.

Land Stewardship Activities

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Stands of native vegetation within Southern Glades were severely impacted by Hurricane Andrew. In wetland areas, coastal plain willow appears to be the dominant species following the storm. On disturbed sites, Brazilian pepper invasion is extensive.

Exotic control efforts were undertaken along the rights-of-way of Canals 109, 110, and 111 by SFWMD personnel from Homestead Field Station and Vegetation Management Division. GFC personnel treated exotics within the interior of the project. A long-term survey of herpetile species in this area is continuing. Data from this project will be compared to others to help examine herpetofauna diversity and relative abundance.

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 the Southern Glades Wildlife and Environmental Area (SGWEA) 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 SGWEA, and recommendations call for maintaining the area in as pristine a condition as possible.

Public Recreation

SGWEA is open to boats with outboard motors. Fishing, sightseeing, and environmental education are the principal public recreation uses of the Southern Glades.

Southern Glades Wildlife and Environmental Area was opened for hunting in 1992. Permitted game animals included deer, migratory birds and frogs.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

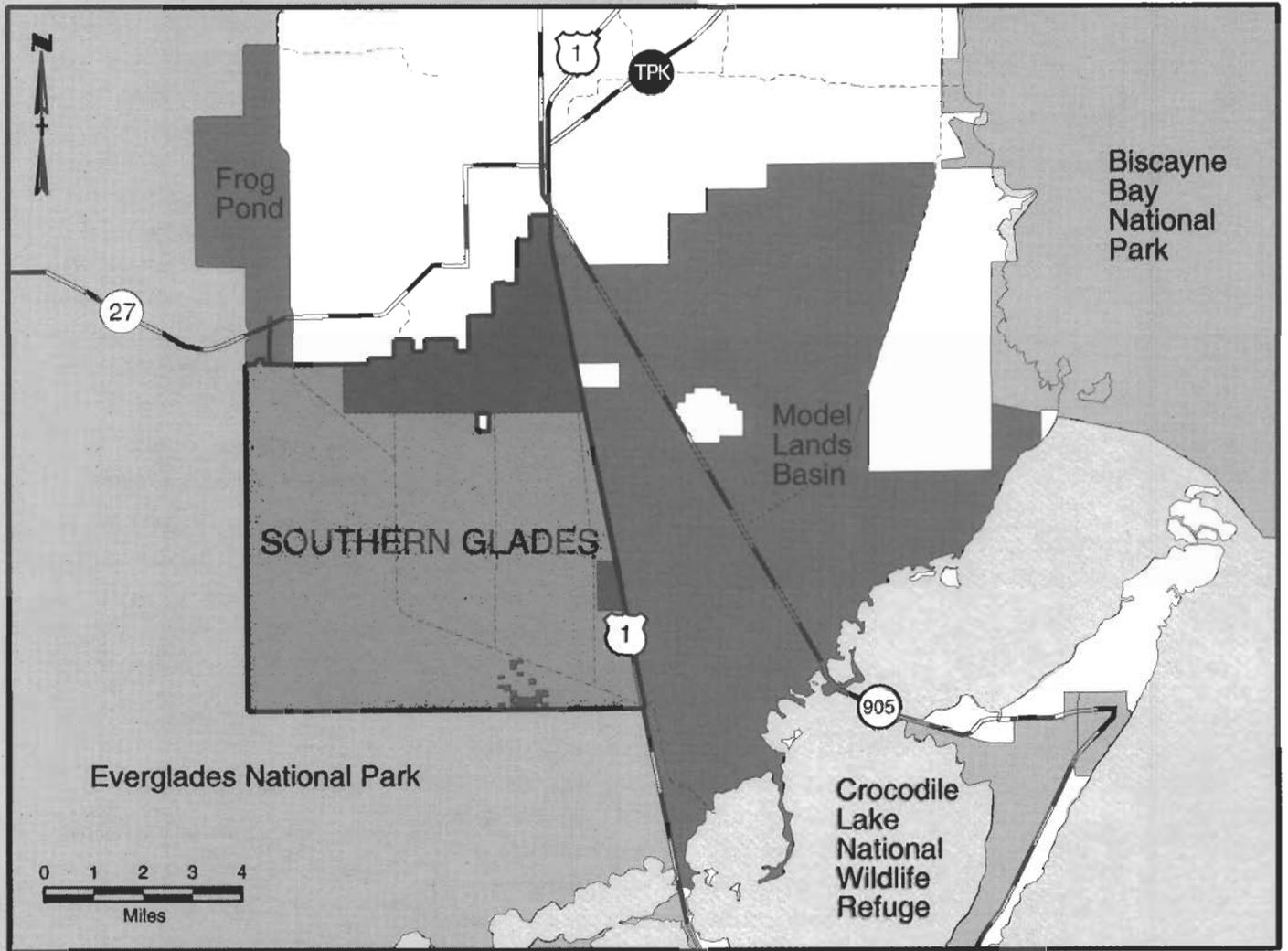
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



COUNTY:
Dade

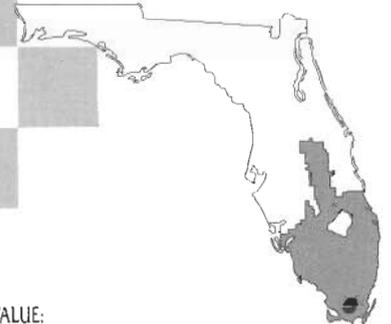
TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
37,510 Acres

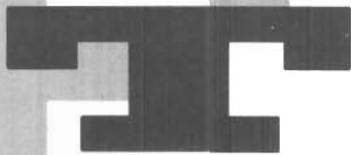
ACRES ACQUIRED:
28,157

LAND COST:
\$7,104,214

ACRES REMAINING:
9,359

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$18 Million





Stormwater Treatment Areas

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 Everglades Forever 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.

Six STAs are currently proposed under the Everglades Clean-up plan, with each serving this area tributary to the primary agricultural basins, which are the S-5A and L-8 basins (STA-1 and STA-1E), S-6 (STA-2), S-7 and a portion of S-8 (STA-3/4), and the remainder of S-8 (STA-5 and STA-6). The STA locations were selected to maximize the District's ability to use the existing network of canals and water control structures to most effectively intercept the nutrient-laden stormwater flows. The exact size and location of the STAs are continuing to be refined, according to the needs of the restoration plan.

In 1994, the District Governing Board approved two boundary revisions. The first will remove 3680 acres from STA 3/4, which is known as the "Toe of the Boot" in the Holeyland. This area will be replaced by adding 3,510 acres along the northern boundary of STA 3/4. The second revision involves STA 5. The location of STA 5 in the northern portion of the Rotenberger tract will be moved to a new, 5,120 acre tract, immediately west of the present location. These changes do not affect the overall acreage of the project.

Land Stewardship Activities

Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

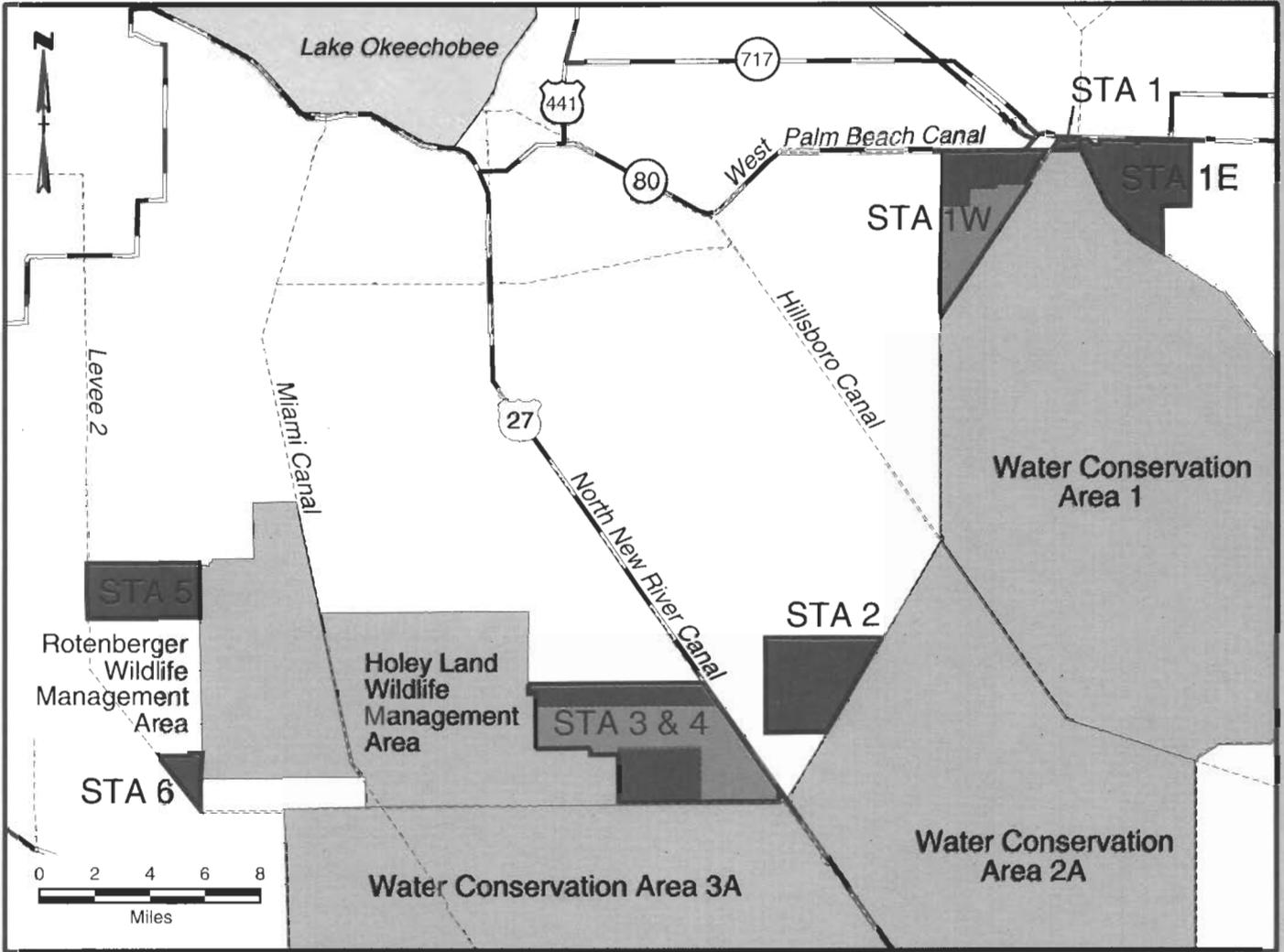
The STAs will be designed, operated and managed to filter out harmful nutrients contained in stormwater runoff before this water enters the Water Conservation Areas, including the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge and Everglades National Park. The size and location of the STAs will 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.

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.

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.



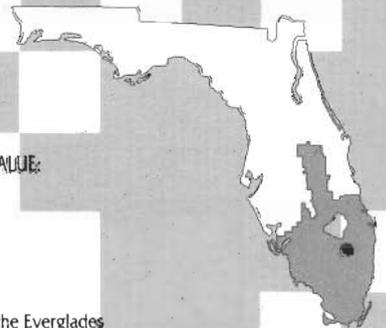
COUNTY:
Palm Beach

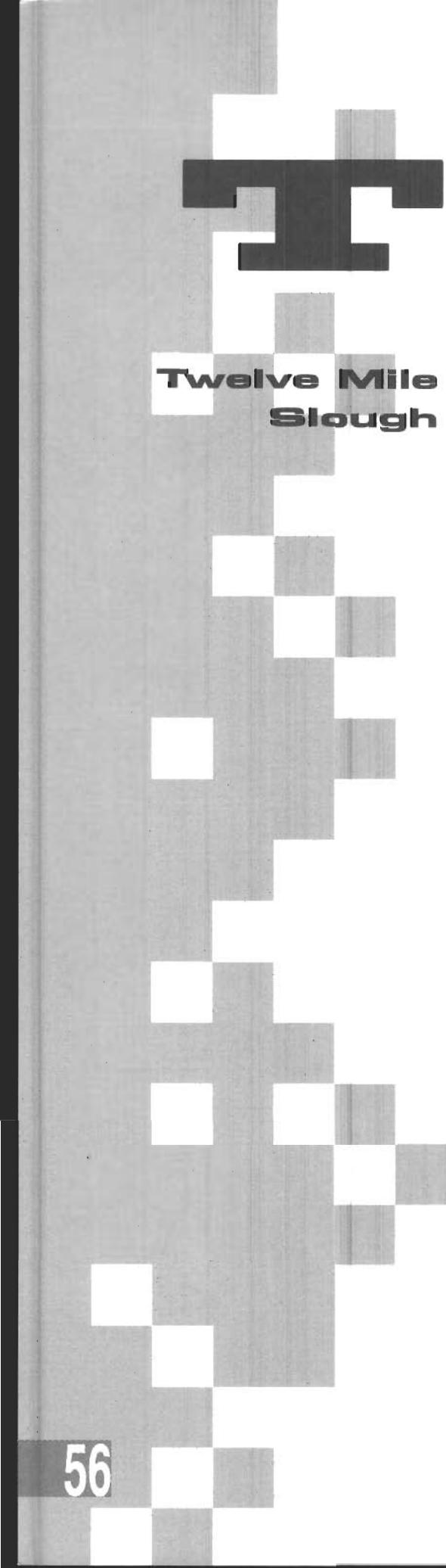
TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
44,500 Acres*

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$100 million

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
Numerous

*Acreage is inclusive of the Everglades
Nutrient Removal Project





Twelve Mile Slough

The property known as Twelve Mile Slough is located in Hendry County and is tributary to the much larger and regionally significant Okaloacoochee Slough. It covers 3,125 acres and contains a mosaic of uplands and wetlands, as well as improved pasture areas which appear to be reverting to native range.

Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and the Conservation and Protection of Water Resources

Twelve Mile Slough is a headwater tributary to Okaloacoochee Slough, which supplies a major source of water for Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve and Big Cypress National Preserve. Surface water storage in the numerous wetlands provides for groundwater recharge of the underlying Surficial Aquifer, and provides surface water supply to the Caloosahatchee River.

The site contains a variety of vegetative communities, including several types of freshwater wetlands, pine flatwoods, and oak/cabbage palm hammocks.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Numerous small ditches and swales, which have resulted in shortened hydroperiods in many of the wetlands, were excavated as part of ranch management practices to increase the amount of grazing area. Although the ditching is extensive, it is easily correctable through earthen ditch plugs.

The Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, in its 1993 publication "Florida Panther Habitat Protection Plan," identified this property as having occasional use by panthers, and recommended public acquisition of the tract.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Initial observations indicate that the property is overgrazed and could benefit from an ecological grazing plan. Prescribed burning and exotic control will continue to be management needs. Ditch plugging, to allow hydrologic restoration, will be extensive and time consuming, but a relatively easy undertaking.

This site is remote; however, pasture land conversion to citrus groves is rapidly occurring in the area. There may be an opportunity for this site to be acquired, restored, and managed with mitigation funding.

Recreation Potential

The mixture of habitat types would make this an interesting area for hiking trail development. However, its remoteness would probably make its use limited. An abandoned CSX Railroad grade runs adjacent to the property and lends opportunities for a "Rails to Trails" conversion, which could connect with hiking trails and primitive camping on this site.

 **SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE**

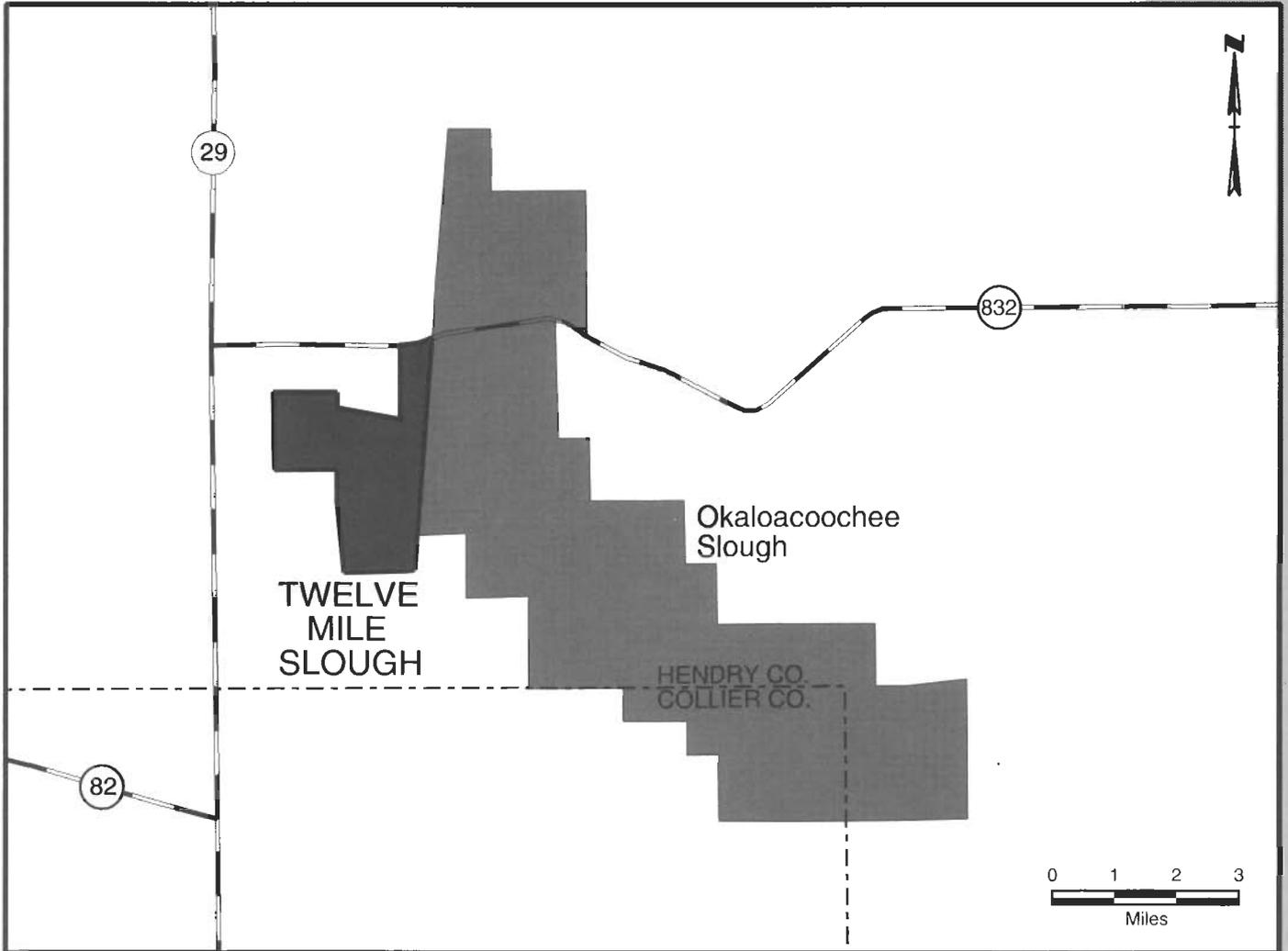
 **POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS**

 **OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS**

 **OTHER SOR
PROJECTS**

 **1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS**

 **SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY**

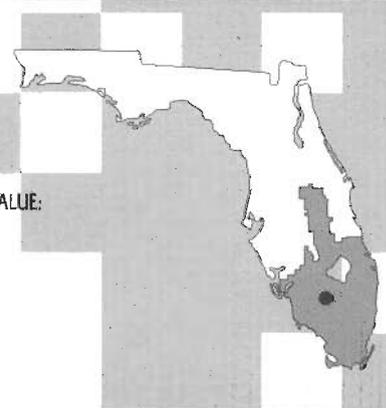


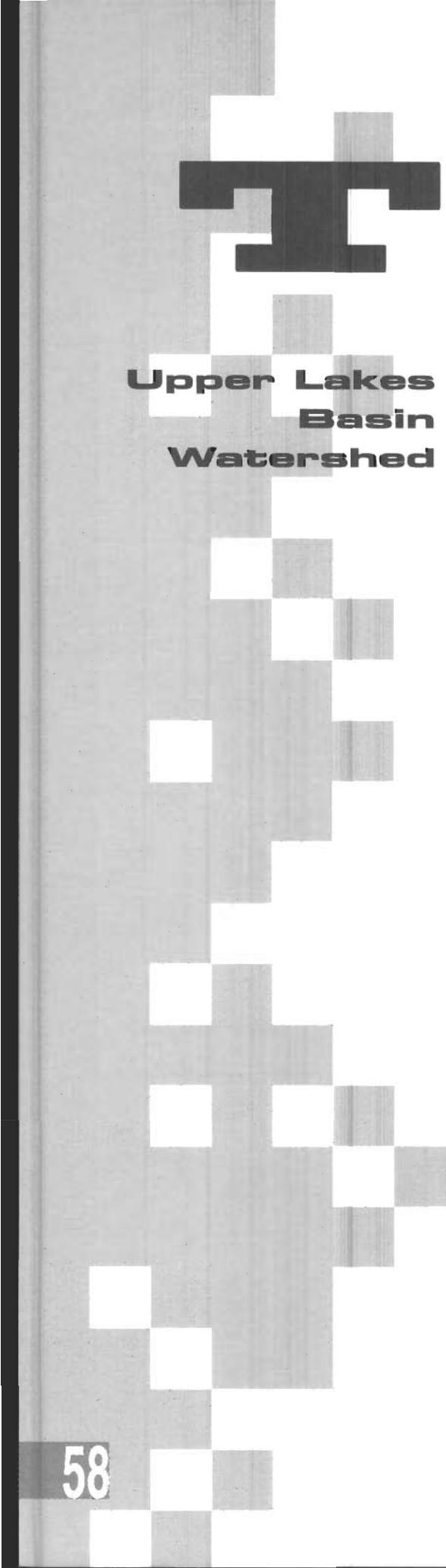
PROJECT COUNTY:
Hendry

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
3,125 acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$3.1 Million

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
One





Upper Lakes Basin Watershed

The project area includes a substantial portion of the Reedy Creek and Lake Marion Creek drainage basins. 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.

The Disney Wilderness Preserve (DWP), formerly known as Walker Ranch, has been acquired by Disney Development, Inc., as mitigation for wetland impacts on Disney's Celebrations project. The 8,500 acre tract is within the boundaries of the Upper Lakes Basin Watershed SOR project, and is now owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). In 1993 and 1994, additional lands were acquired

through mitigation for non-Disney projects. In 1995, offsite mitigation for two more projects is expected to result in the donation of more than 300 more acres to the District. Those lands will be managed by TNC in conjunction with DWP. Management and mitigation plans for DWP, which will direct the restoration and longterm management activities, have been completed. Hydrologic and upland restoration projects are currently underway.

Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources

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 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.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

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.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Land Stewardship Division staff prepared a 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.

Recreation Potential

Recreational opportunities are discussed in both the Lake Marion/Reedy Creek Conceptual Management Plan. At this time, it is anticipated that recreation will be centered around passive uses, such as hiking and canoe trails.

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.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

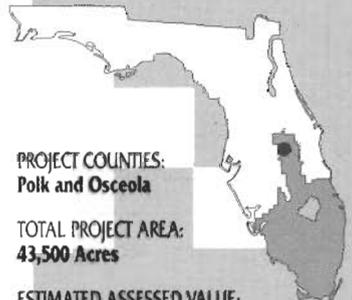
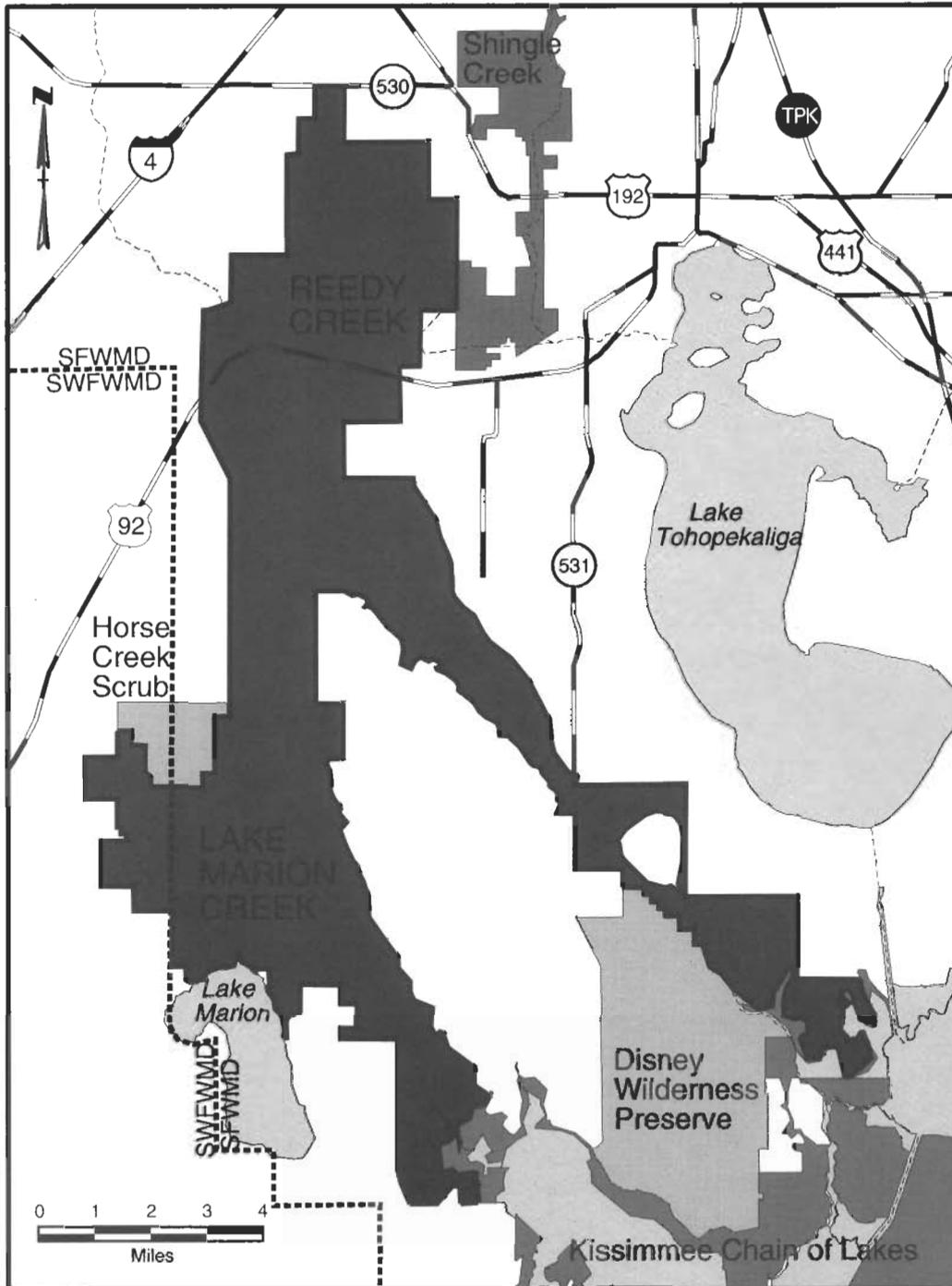
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



PROJECT COUNTIES:
Polk and Osceola

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
43,500 Acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$4 Million

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
Numerous

Water Conservation Areas

The three Water Conservation Areas (WCA's) 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.

Land Stewardship Activities

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 Southern Glades SOR Project discussions).

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.

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.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

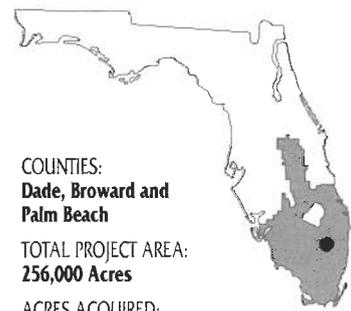
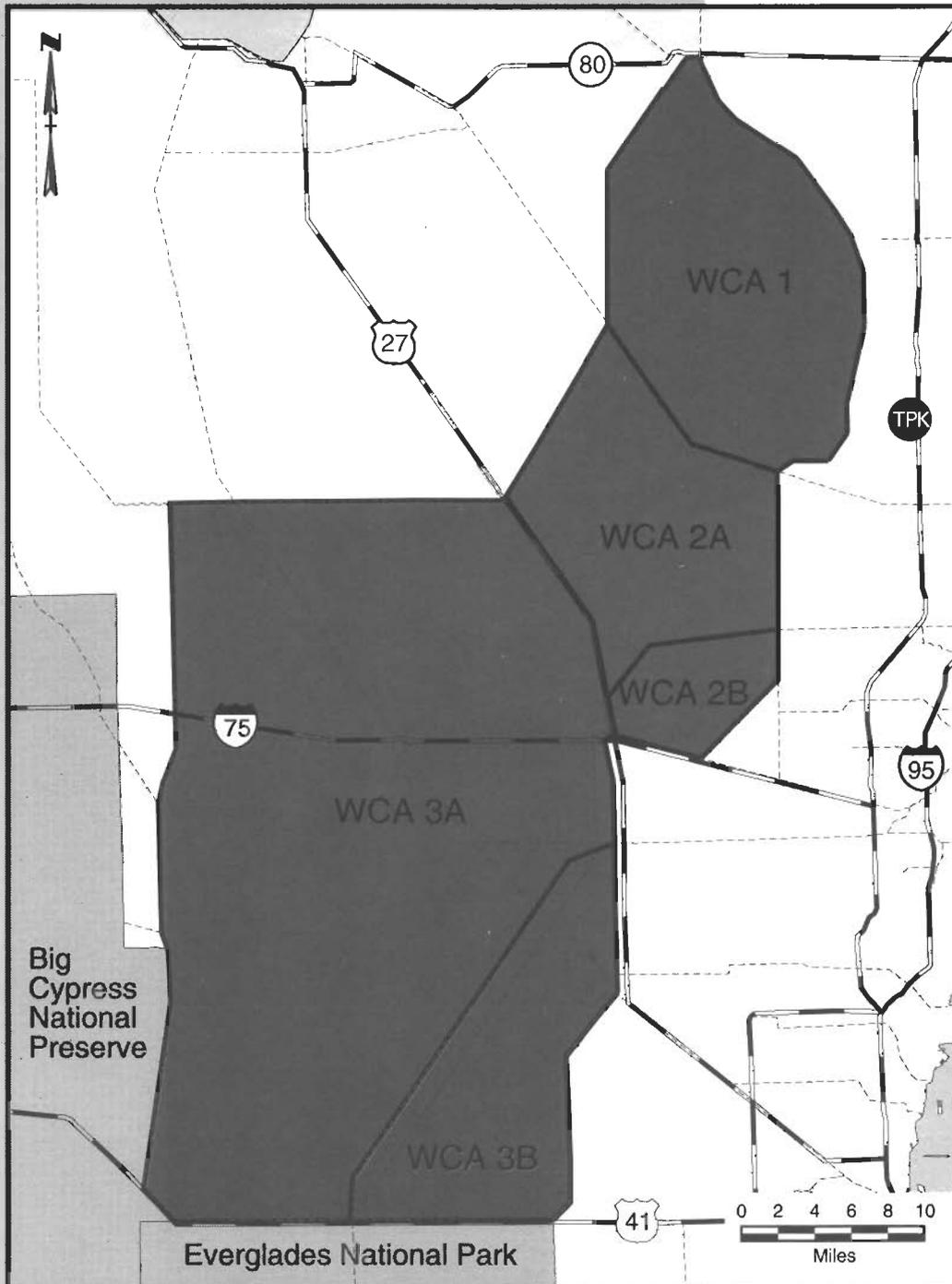
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



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

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
256,000 Acres

ACRES ACQUIRED:
42,124

LAND COST:
\$7,943,552

ACRES REMAINING:
214,000

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$20,000,000

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).

A black and white photograph showing a large flock of birds, likely terns, flying over a body of water. The birds are scattered across the sky, with some appearing as bright white shapes against the darker background. In the background, there is a dense line of trees along the shore. The water in the foreground shows some ripples and reflections. The overall scene is somewhat hazy or overcast.

Approved Projects



Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem

Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem is located in southern Martin County between I-95 and US 1. It covers approximately 12,700 acres. The project contains numerous land owners, but the majority of the site is in relatively few ownerships. The current land use is mostly cattle grazing on unimproved pasture. Intense agriculture and residential development are occurring around the edges.

Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and the Conservation and Protection of Water Resources

The project contains extensive upland/wetland systems. This site is very diverse. It has large areas of wet flatwoods and forested sloughs. One of its most important features is coastal scrub. The area is tributary to the South Fork St. Lucie River and North Fork of the Loxahatchee River (Kitching Creek). The extensive wetland systems provide a source of groundwater baseflow for the two rivers.

This area is extremely important for aquifer recharge and water supply to the coastal portion of Martin County. It is a groundwater high, with high ground elevations when compared to surrounding lands.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

There are numerous abandoned farm fields in the north end which need to be restored. A ditch system connects wetlands in the northwest portion of the project, and drains to the South Fork. However, sheetpile weirs were installed in these ditches as the result of District enforcement action in the mid-1980's. The weirs have prevented the total drainage of the wetlands, but the wetlands could be completely restored with ditch plugs.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Sensitive Manner

Management of the site would probably be by SFWMD, with possible cooperation from GFC. No large exotic infestations are present, but exotic control certainly will be a management task. Prescribed burning will be necessary and, as the surrounding area develops, will become more difficult.

Recreation Potential

This site is large and very accessible to major population centers in south Florida. Public access points could be established along three sides of the project. The variety of community types would make interesting hiking and the area could be opened to fishing. Hunting might be possible under agreement with GFC.

 **SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE**

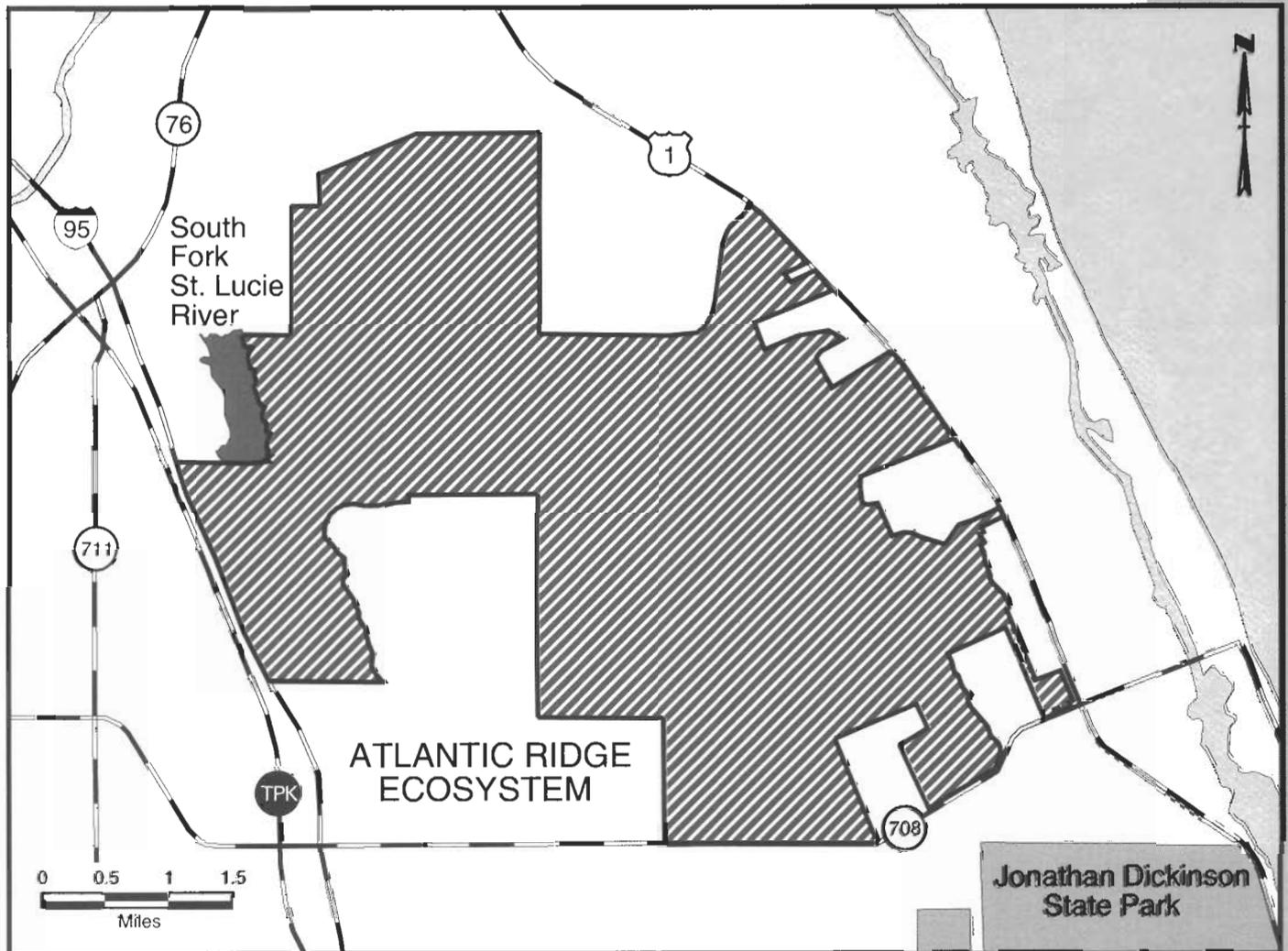
 **POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS**

 **OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS**

 **OTHER SOR
PROJECTS**

 **1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS**

 **SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY**

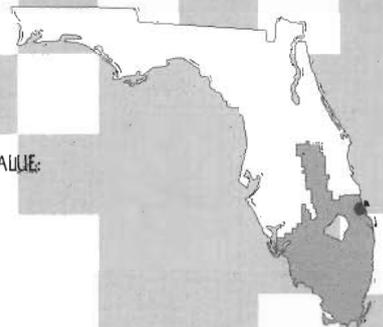


PROJECT COUNTY:
Martin

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
12,700 acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$12 Million

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
Number 995





Catfish Creek

atfish Creek is located in Polk County. The project totals 6,142 acres, and connects with an existing CARL project (same name). Nearly 4,000 acres of the CARL project have been purchased, and much of which remains lies within this project. The District has already acquired 650 acres from the same owner along Lake Hatchineha, as part of the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes SOR project. Current land use is native range grazing, with some areas of improved pasture. This tract contains a diversity of community types, including scrub, seepage slopes, several types of wetlands, and pine flatwoods.

Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and the Conservation and Protection of Water Resources

This property has important water resource values due to its location and varied topography. Also, the sand hills in the southwest corner have deep sands which provide direct recharge to the Floridan Aquifer. This site is very diverse, particularly when combined with the lakefront property already acquired, and the Catfish Creek CARL property. It contains mesic hammocks, low flatwoods, dry prairie, scrub, and seepage slopes along the edge of the sand hills.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Numerous shallow ditches exist in the improved pastures, which drain to Lake Hatchineha. These ditches can be easily plugged, and the associated wetlands, restored. Upland restoration could be accomplished on the improved pastures. No stands of exotic vegetation were observed. The site contains several threatened communities, including scrub, seepage slopes, and mesic flatwoods. This tract is the headwaters to Catfish Creek which, as a blackwater stream, is also rare. Bald eagles, gopher tortoises, scrub jays, and wood storks have all been documented on the Catfish Creek CARL lands, and are expected to occur on this site, as well.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Prescribed burning would be required over much of the site. The Catfish Creek CARL project is being managed as a State Preserve by Florida DEP. That management would likely be extended onto this tract as well.

Recreation Potential

This site has excellent potential for passive recreational use, including hiking, horseback riding, camping, and nature appreciation.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

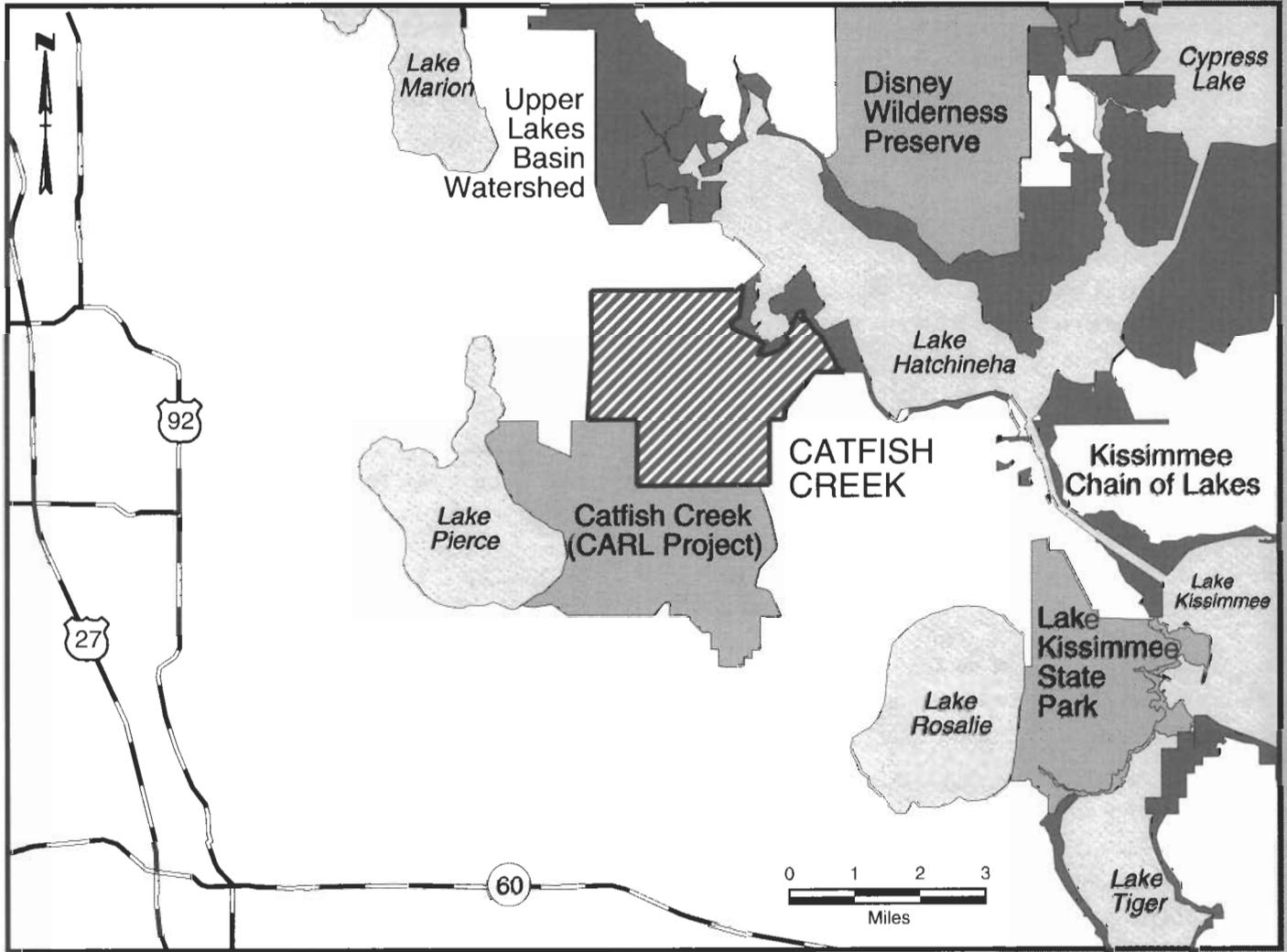
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY

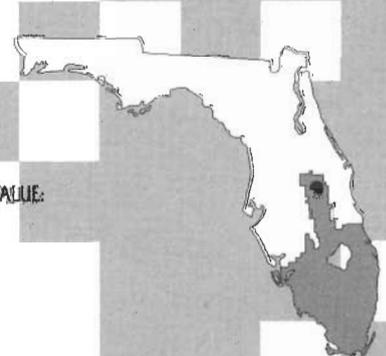


COUNTY:
Polk

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
6,142 acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$ 5,800,000

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
One



Fisheating Creek

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.

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.

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 open water 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.

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.

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.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

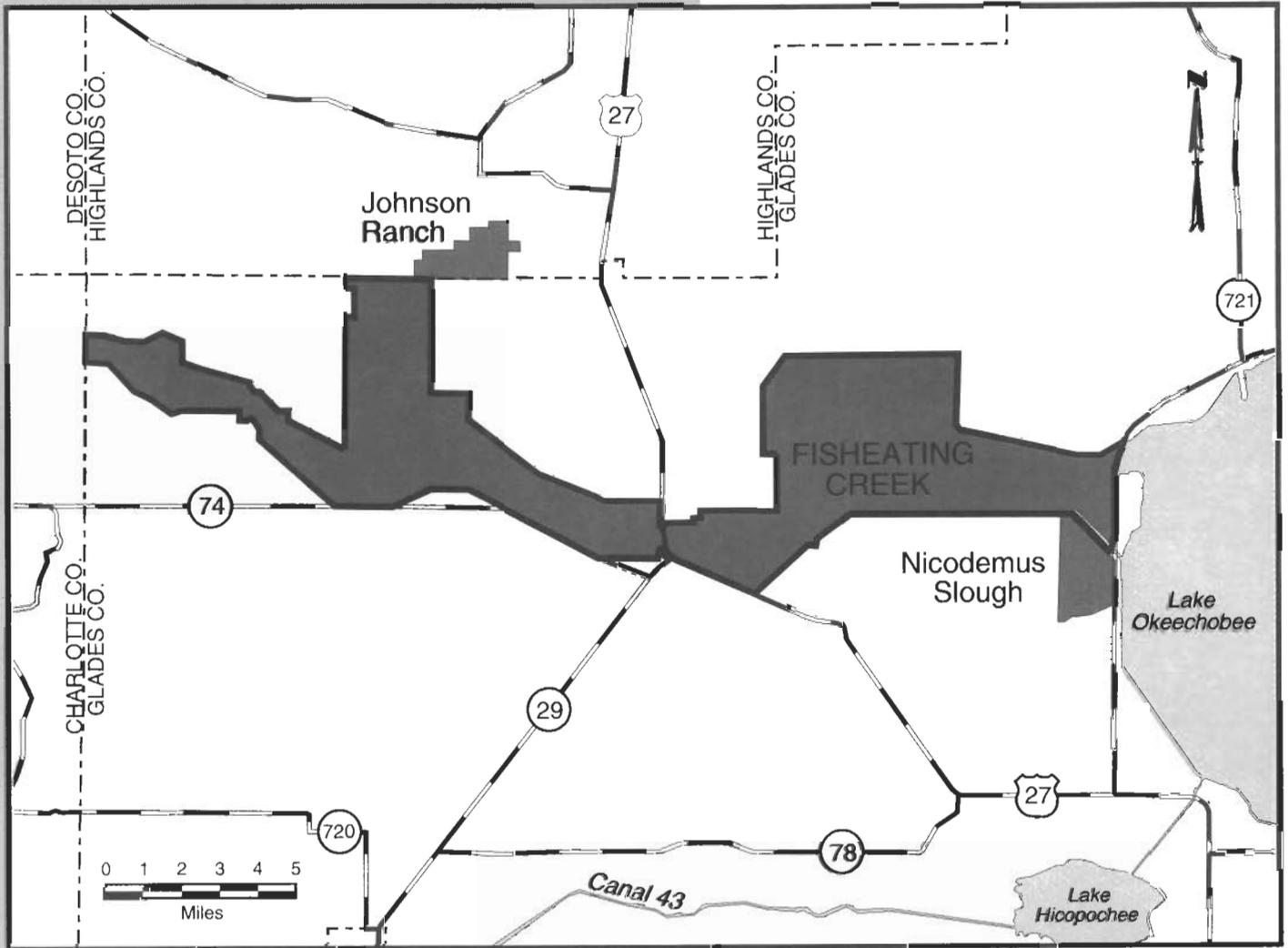
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY

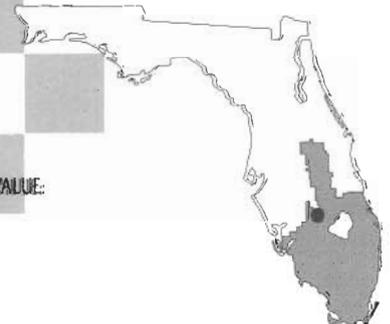


COUNTY:
Glades

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
43,872 Acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$13 Million

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
One





J

Johnson Ranch

Johnson Ranch is located in Highlands County, just east of Fisheating Creek. It covers approximately 1,642 acres and is owned by a single individual. The current land use is cattle grazing, with most of the property in native range or semi-improved pasture. In addition to range lands, the site contains a mixture of pine flatwoods, emergent marshes, and sand pine/oak scrub. The Nature Conservancy reports that Johnson Ranch will be acquired by Florida DOT in late 1994. Ownership and management responsibility will be transferred to the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. The property is being purchased as consolidated mitigation for impacts to gopher tortoise, scrub jay, and red-cockaded woodpecker habitat in a seventeen county area.

Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and the Conservation and Protection of Water Resources

The lands comprising Johnson Ranch include a tributary to Fisheating Creek, which flows into Lake Okeechobee. In their natural state, the upland and wetland areas filter runoff before entering the creek and provide important year-round base flow to the creek. Like the rest of the areas surrounding Fisheating Creek, this parcel contributes groundwater discharge to Fisheating Creek. There is little or no recharge to the Surficial Aquifer system in this area. The property contains a mixture of uplands and wetlands, including a portion of

the Fisheating Creek floodplain. The site has been inspected by biologists from Archbold Biological Station and Florida Natural Areas Inventory, who identified the site as priority habitat for Red Cockaded woodpeckers and Florida Scrub jays (both federally listed species).

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

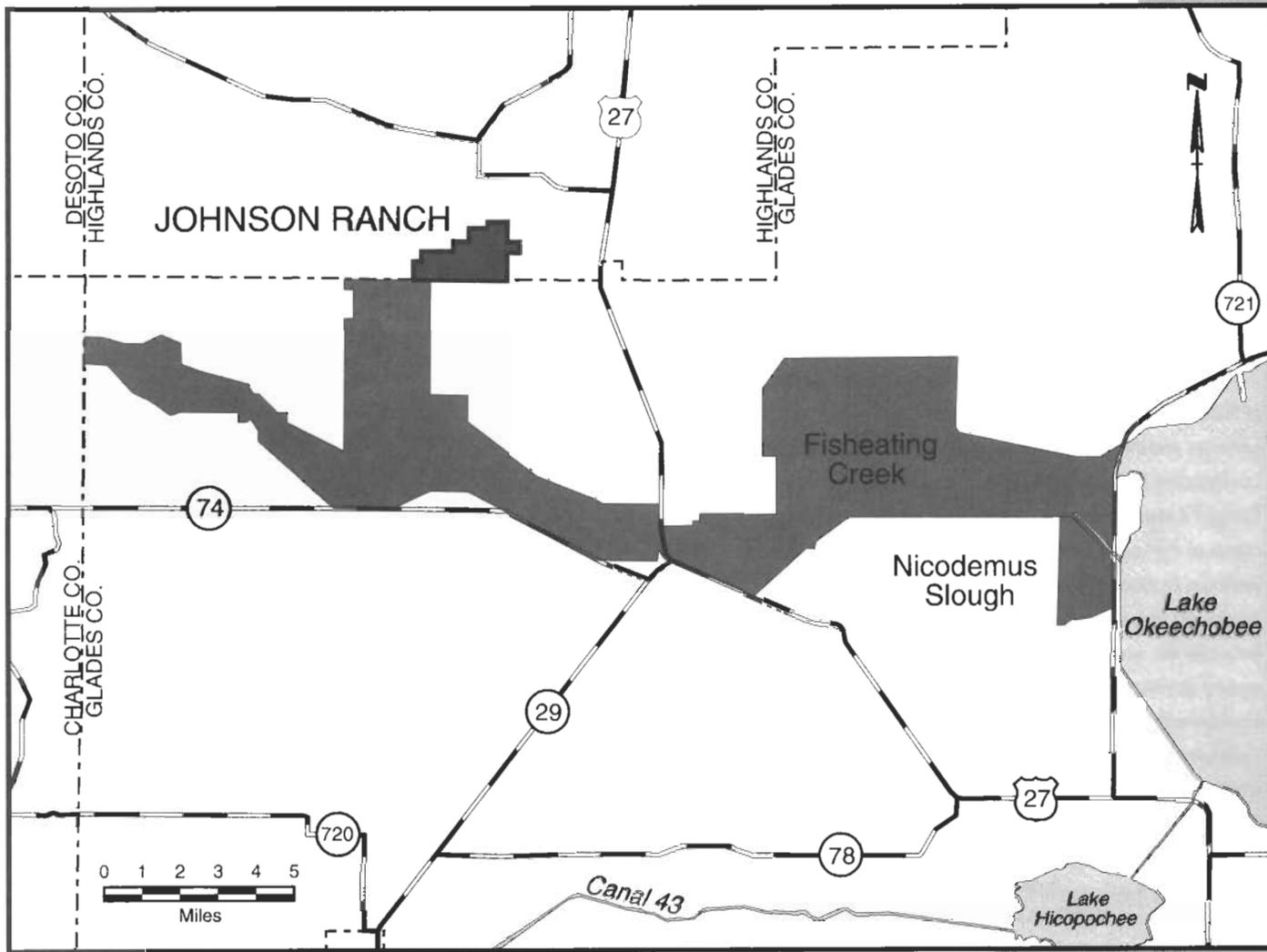
The property is in relatively good condition. The uplands appear to have been burned on a regular basis, with the exception of the scrub, where fire has been suppressed. There is some need for ditch and swale plugging to restore the natural hydroperiod.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Primary management activities will center around hydrologic restoration, prescribed burning, and exotic control to protect the habitat of endangered species.

Recreation Potential

The location is rural and isolated; however, since Scrub jays and Red Cockaded woodpeckers are present, the site would probably be popular with organized conservation groups and bird watchers.

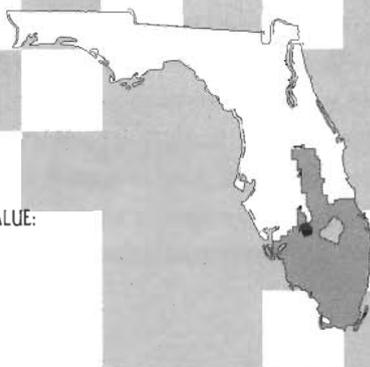


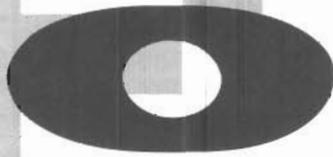
PROJECT COUNTY:
Highlands

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
1,642 acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$2 Million

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
One





Okaloacoochee Slough

Okaloacoochee Slough includes more than 19,000 acres in Hendry County. It is the major headwater to Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve and Big Cypress National Preserve. The property under proposal includes the heart of the slough and much of the high quality uplands and hammocks which lie adjacent. Okaloacoochee Slough was identified in the Florida Panther Habitat Protection Plan as a Priority 1 Habitat Protection Area. Native range grazing and logging are the primary land uses at this time.

Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and the Conservation and Protection of Water Resources

The project area contains the heart of Okaloacoochee Slough, which is the headwaters to Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve and Big Cypress National Preserve. The extensive network of sloughs and isolated wetlands store wet season runoff from the surrounding uplands. The site contains more than 11,000 acres of largely undisturbed wetlands. Okaloacoochee Slough is the most significant natural area in Hendry County. It is still in a rather remote area; intensive agriculture has not begun, although citrus groves are expanding in areas to the east and west. The mixture of uplands and wetlands forms a diverse ecosystem.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

This tract is very undisturbed. No drainage systems were observed, and the wetlands appear to be in excellent condition. Logging, native range grazing, and hunting leases have been the only uses for many years.

No large outbreaks of exotics are apparent. It is likely that isolated individuals are present.

The site contains cut over wet flatwoods, interspersed with wet prairies, hydric hammocks of live oak and cabbage palm, and a wide variety of wetland types within the slough. The center of the slough is comprised mostly of maidencane and sawgrass marshes, and is fringed with willow thickets. As the slough extends southward, cypress sloughs begin to dominate along the edges.

The diversity of community types provides habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. Many wading birds would be expected to use the wetlands as feeding areas, including wood storks and numerous hawks.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

The property has been regularly burned to improve the native range, so heavy fuel loads are not a problem. Most of the marketable pine has recently been logged. Management would consist mainly of prescribed burning, controlling outbreaks of exotic vegetation, and providing security.

Recreation Potential

The diversity of community types and remote setting would make this a hiking and wilderness camping destination. The property is currently leased for hunting, and it is likely that public hunts could be conducted.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

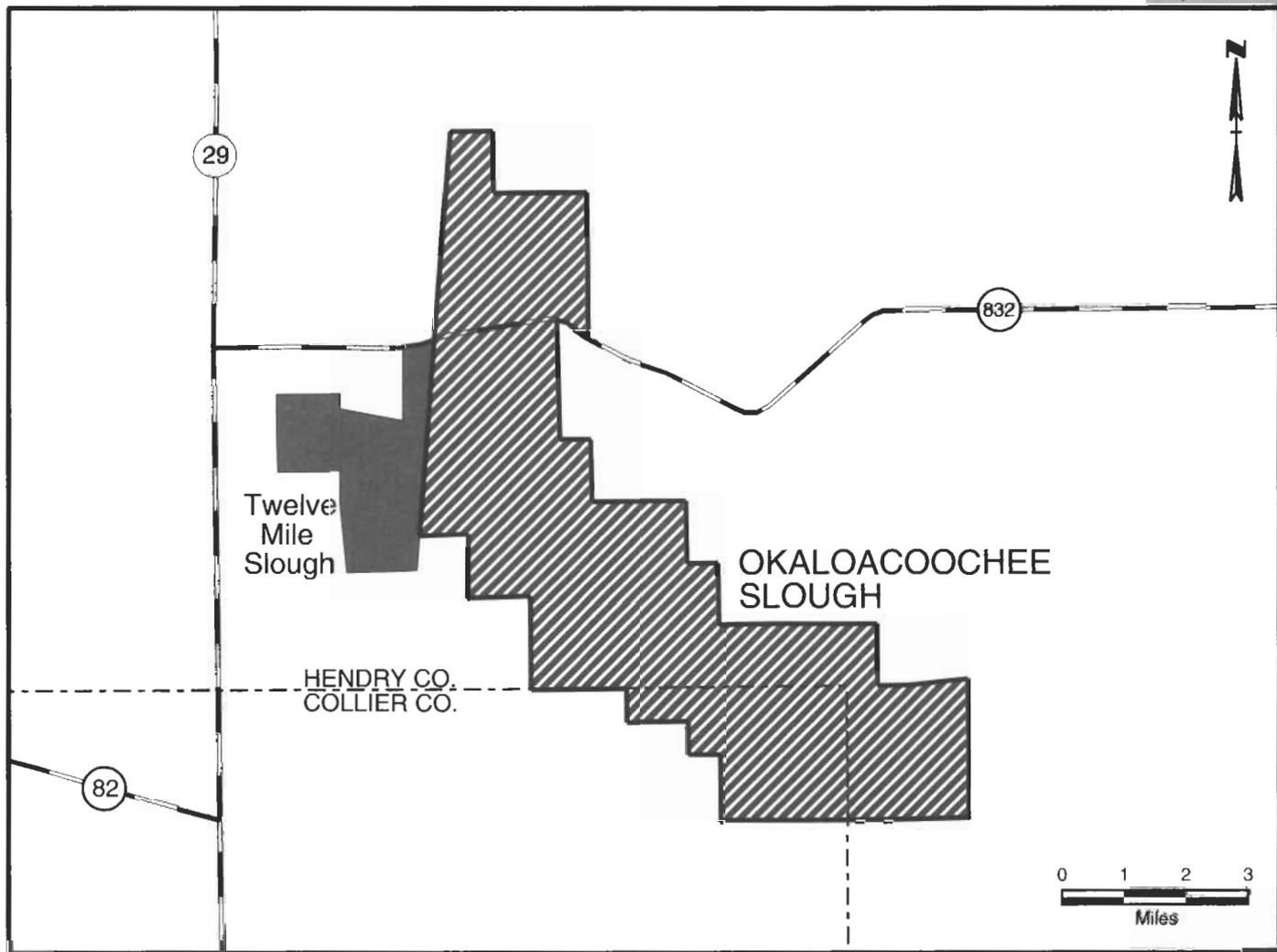
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY

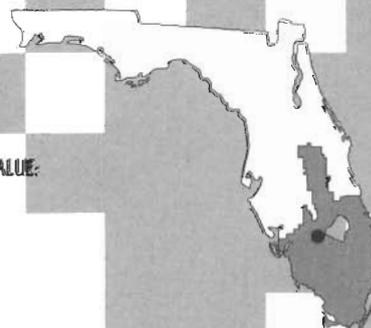


PROJECT COUNTY:
Hendry

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
22,000 Acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
17 Million

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
One



P

Paradise Run

Paradise Run 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.

Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and the 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.

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 fully explore 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.

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.

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.

 **SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE**

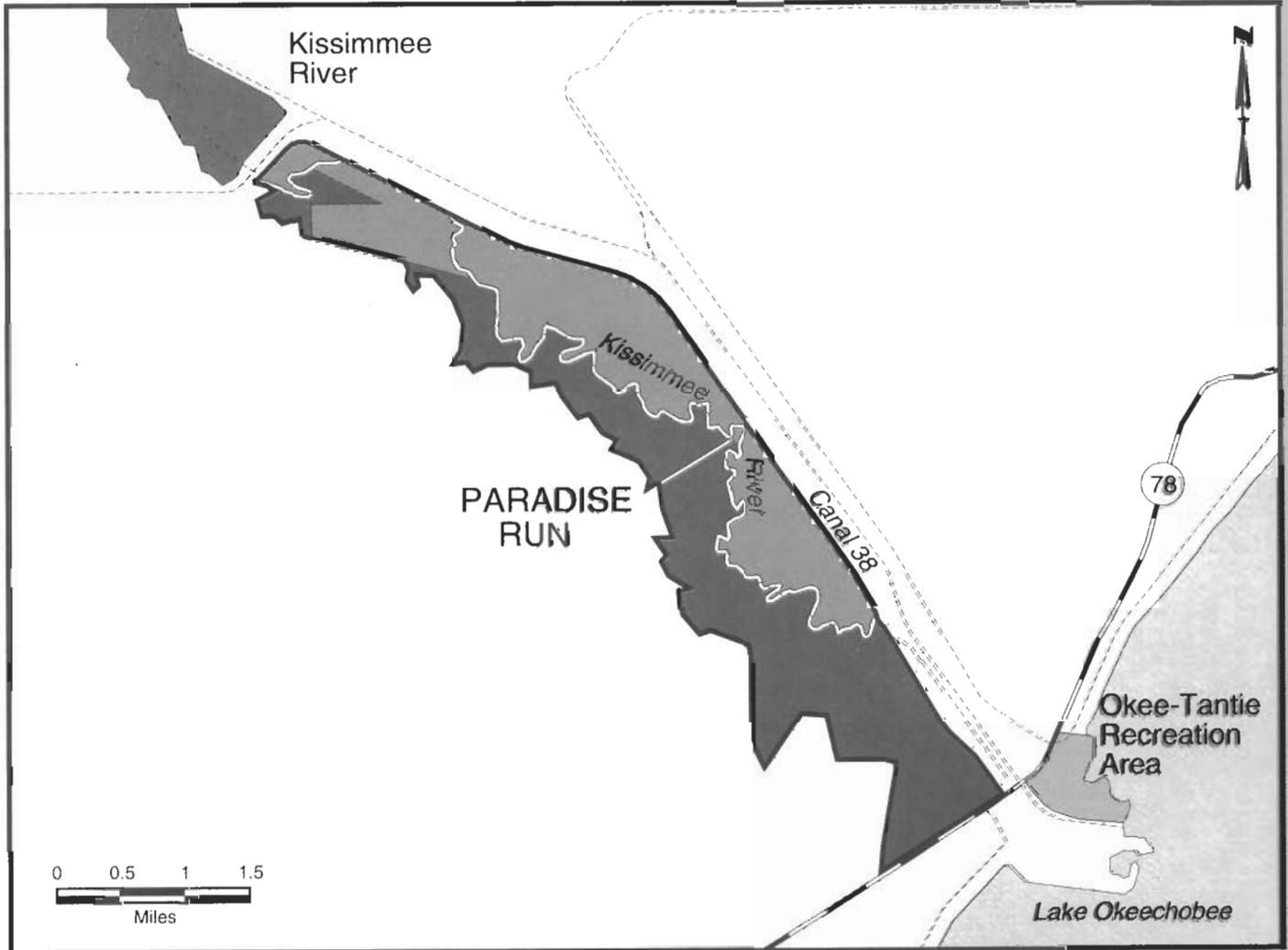
 **POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS**

 **OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS**

 **OTHER SOR
PROJECTS**

 **1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS**

 **SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY**



COUNTIES:
Okeechobee and Glades

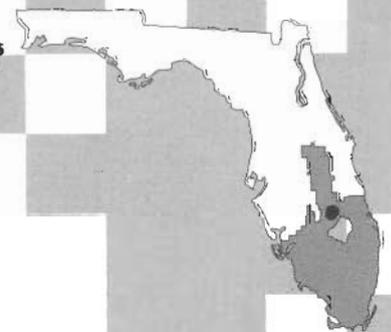
TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
4,265 Acres

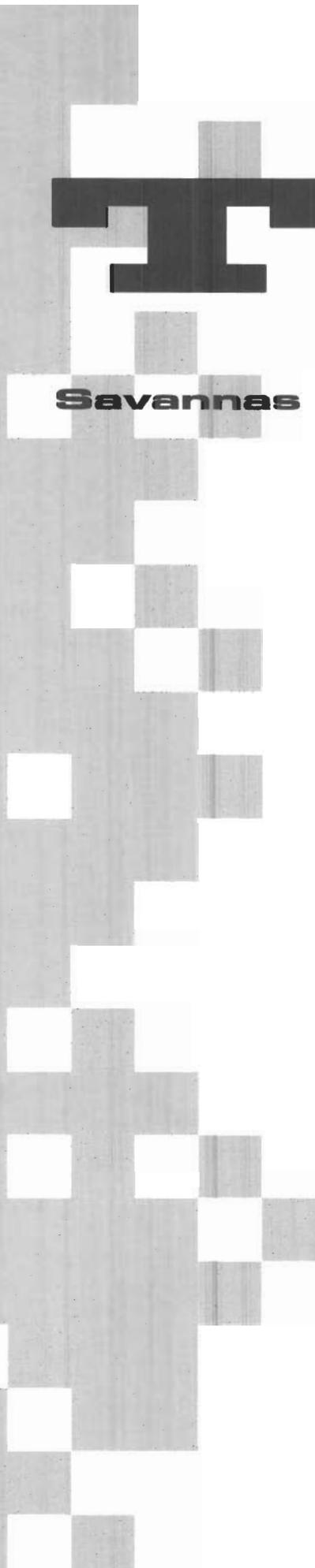
ACRES ACQUIRED:
1,406

PER ACRE COST:
\$1,627

ACRES REMAINING:
2,859

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$4.5 Million





Savannas

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 Environmental Protection (DEP) formerly Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has acquired approximately 4,700 acres under the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) program. This area is managed by DEP as the Savannas State Preserve. The 1,200 acres is the remainder of the project to be acquired. The District and DNR would cooperate in acquisition.

Stewardship Activities

Water resource restoration included filling 200 feet of a drainage ditch on the SOR lands. This is predicted to relood sixty acres of the Big Lake. In addition a mitigation project to offset installation of a 500-KV power line is projected to relood 200 acres in both Martin and St. Lucie Counties. The project also includes removal of exotic plant materials and replacement with native plant materials.

Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and the 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, openwater 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.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

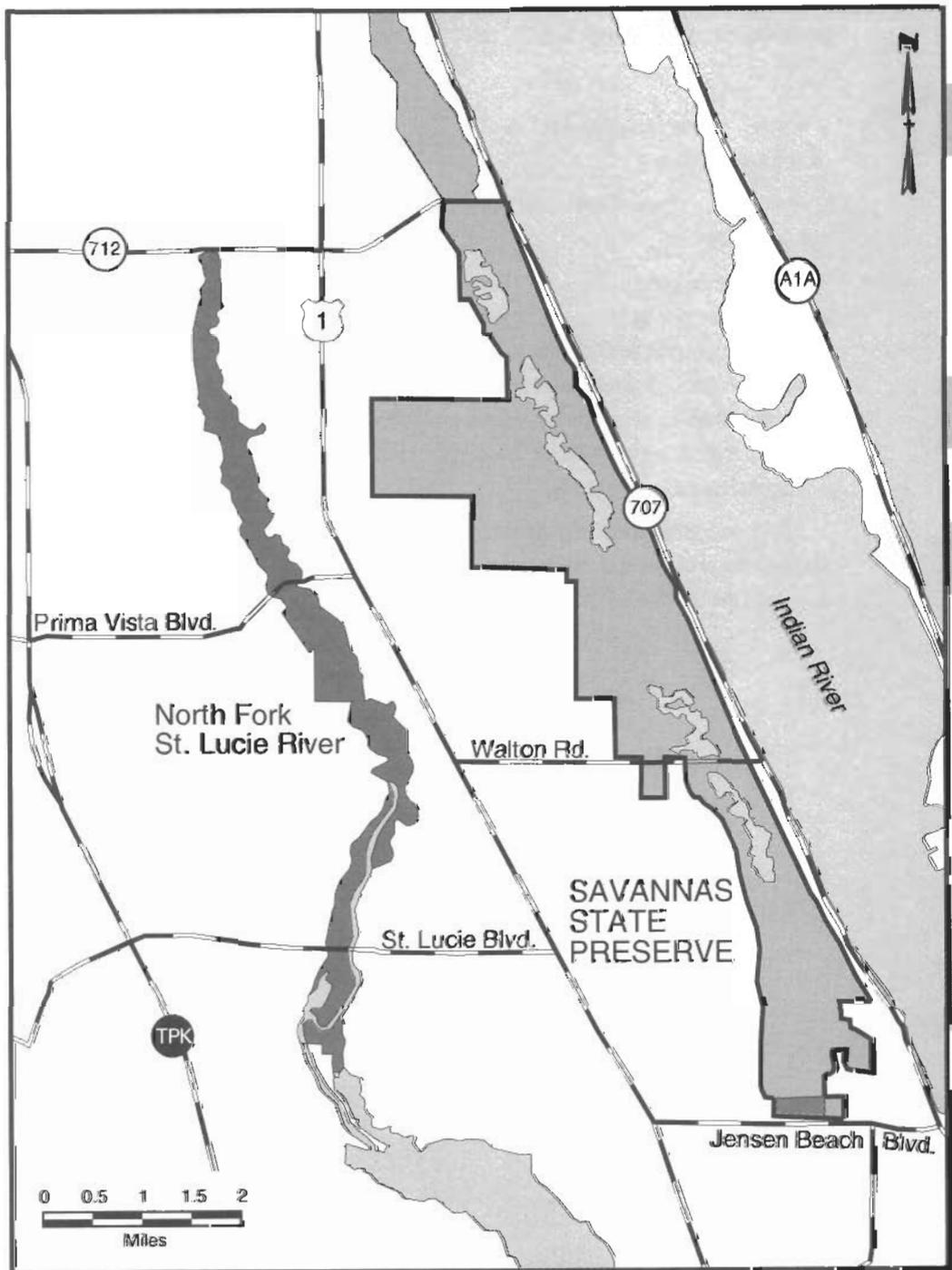
The Savannas is one of the most unique and endangered natural systems in the District. It is a remnant coastal wetland system, which historically extended along most of the Southeast Florida coast. Most of the area is in its natural state, thus eliminating the need for restoration. The wetlands are highly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

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 DEP as part of the Savannas State Preserve.

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.



PROJECT COUNTIES:
Martin and St. Lucie

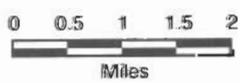
TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
5,900 Acres

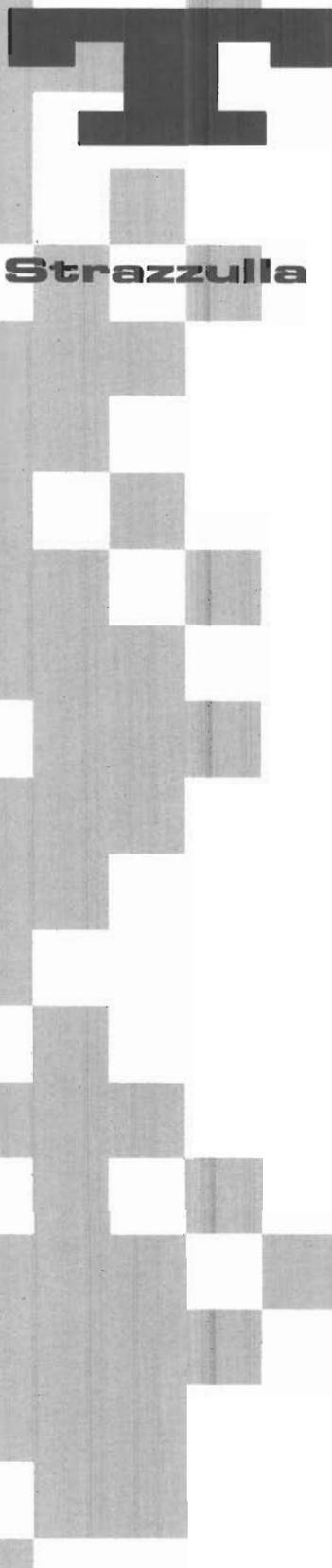
ACRES ACQUIRED:
77.13

LAND COST:
\$3,100,000

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
\$40 Million

NUMBER OF OWNERS:
Numerous





Strazzulla

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.

Land Stewardship Activities

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.

Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

The Strazzulla lands are now under the management of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as part of the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge.

Public Recreation

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

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

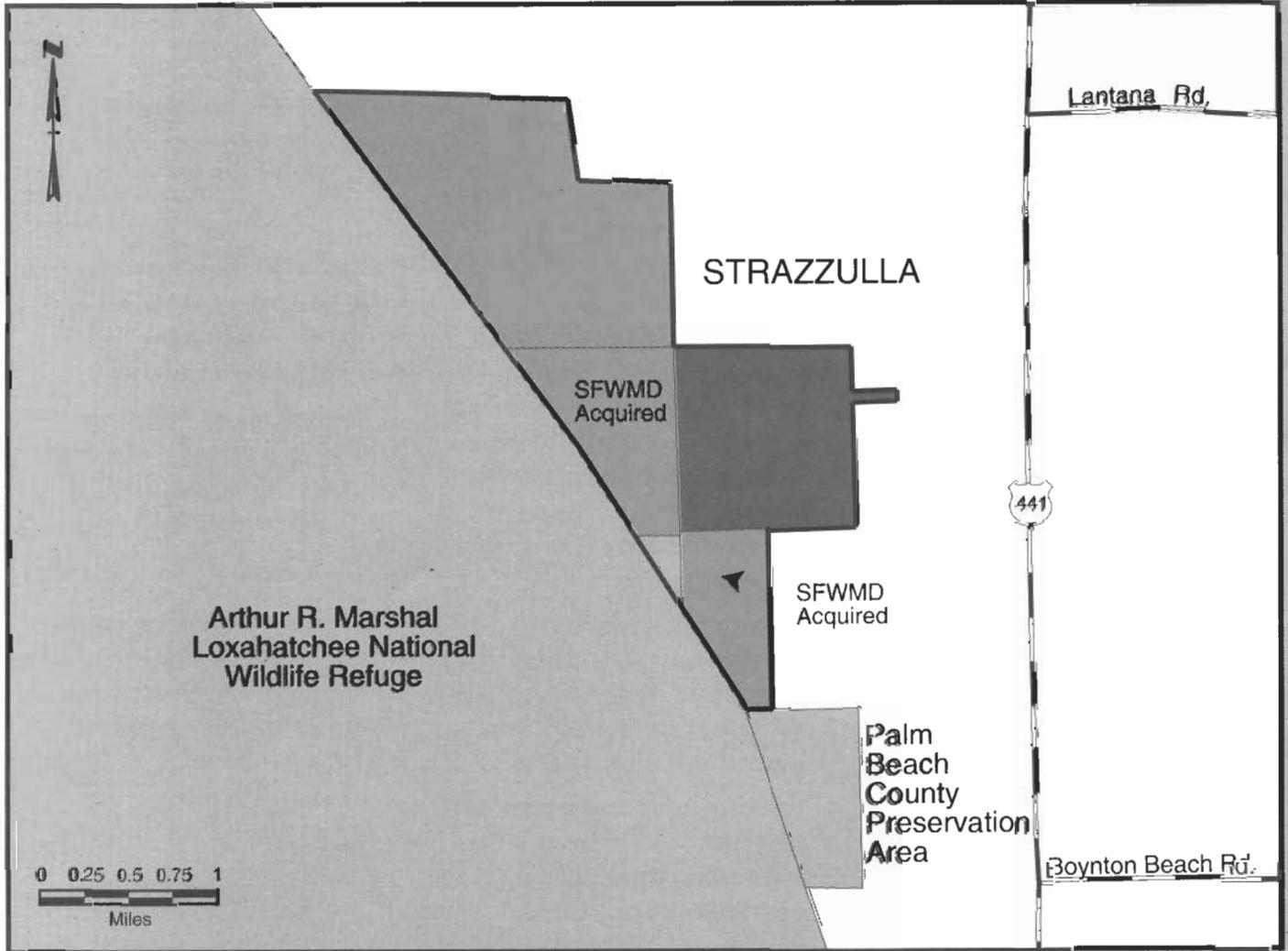
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



COUNTY:
Palm Beach

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
1,865 Acres

ACRES ACQUIRED:
1,225

LAND COST:
\$3 Million

ACRES REMAINING:
640





Telegraph Swamp

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.

Importance of Water Management, Water Supply, and the 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.

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.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

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

Recreation Potential

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.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

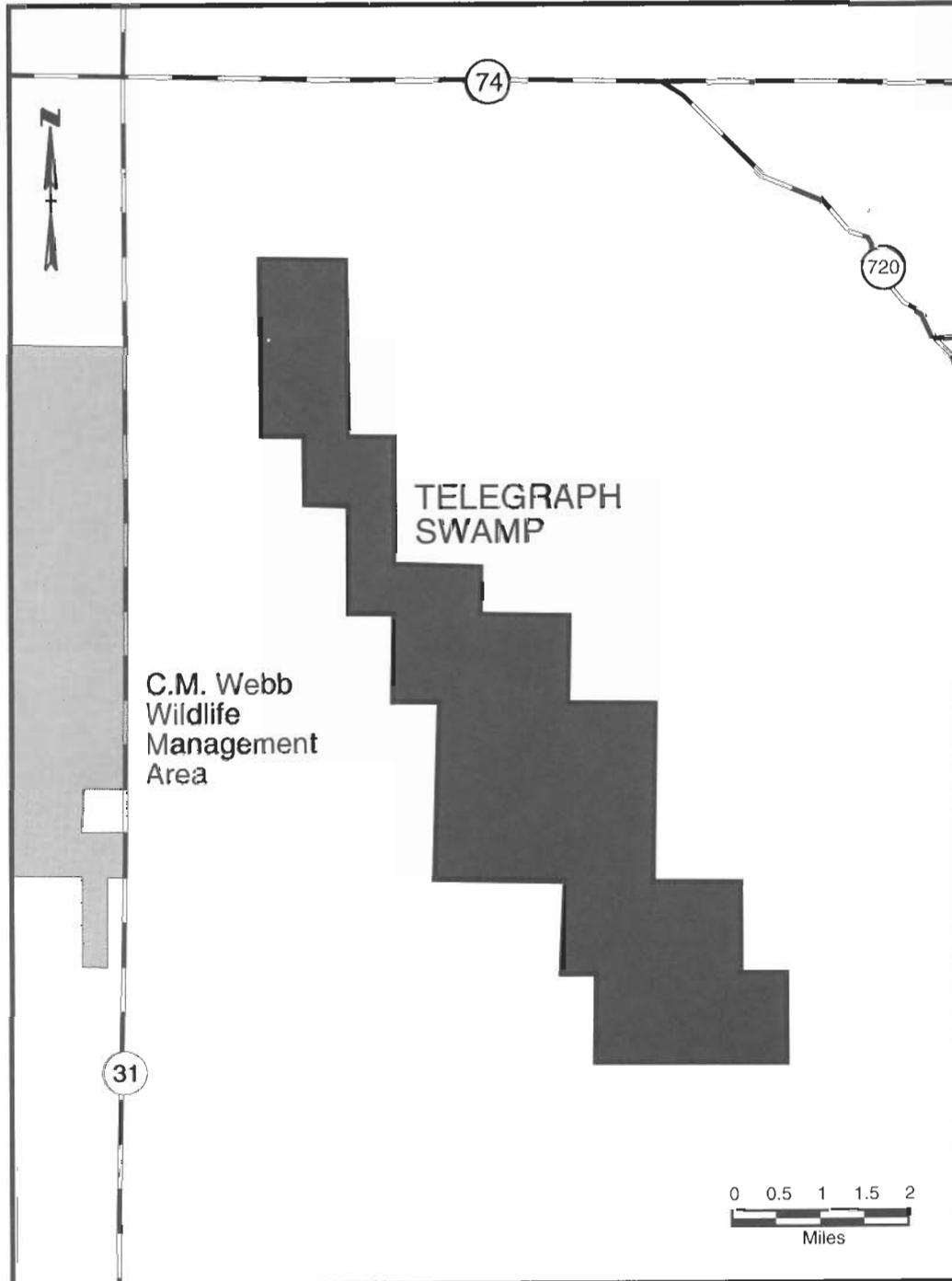
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY

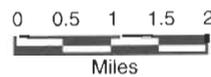


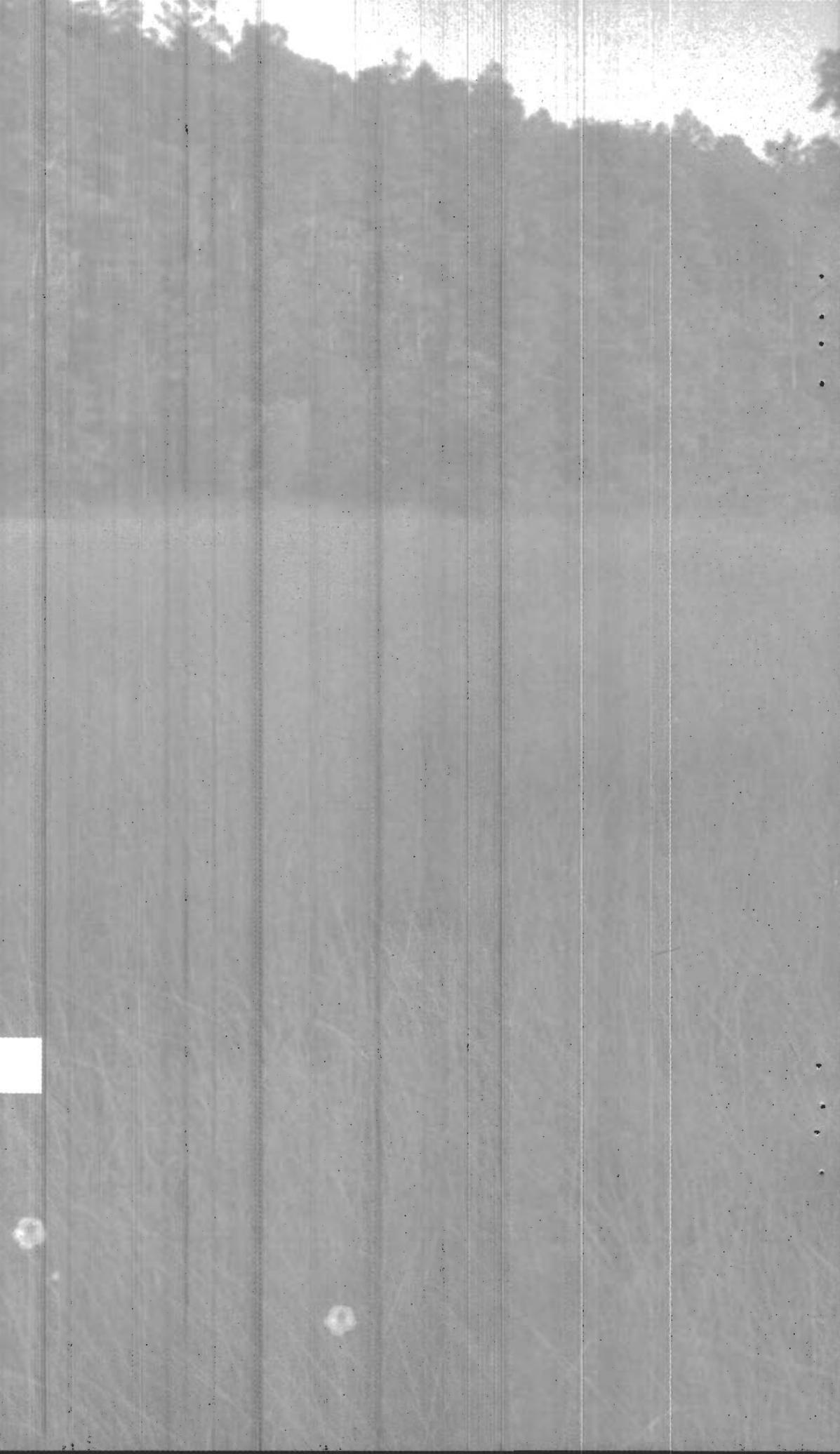
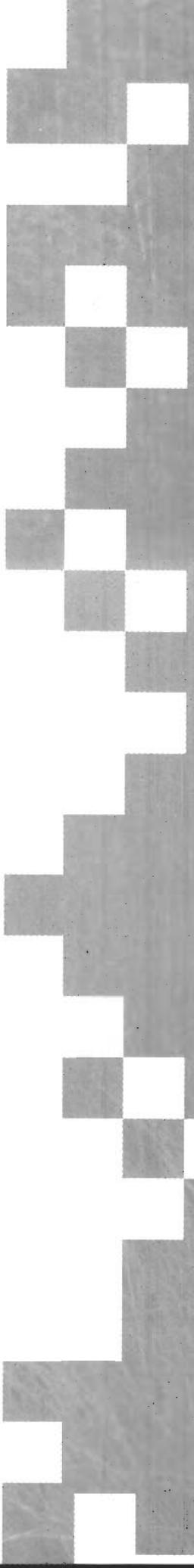
COUNTY:
Charlotte

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
10,000 Acres

ESTIMATED ASSESSED VALUE:
5,000,000

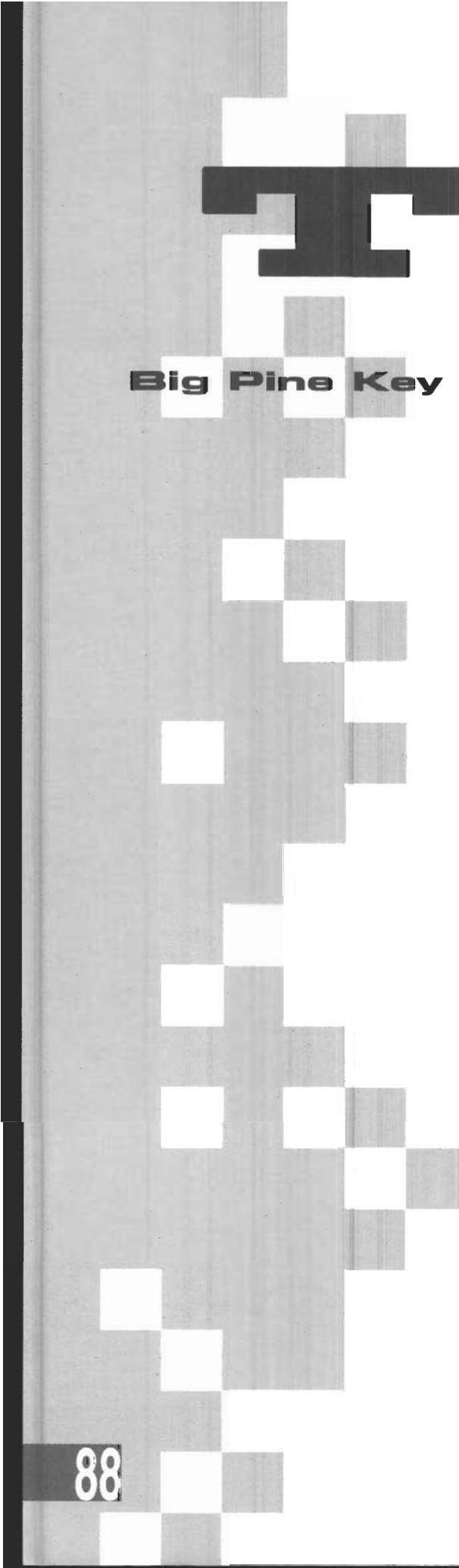
NUMBER OF OWNERS:
One





A black and white photograph of a grassy field with a line of trees in the background. The field is in the foreground, and the trees are in the background. The text "Completed Projects" is printed at the bottom of the image.

Completed Projects



Big Pine Key

The Big Pine Key project is designed to complement the existing Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge. Land acquisitions were initiated by The Nature Conservancy, and by District 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 (USFWS), CARL and The Nature Conservancy to protect the remaining undeveloped parcels within the project boundaries.

Land Stewardship Activities

Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

A conceptual management plan was prepared under contract by The Nature Conservancy 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. The plan discusses needs and methodologies for management activities which include prescribed burning, exotic plant removal and treatment, general cleanup work, natural resource inventory, and preparation of a land management plan.

Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Management of Big Pine Key SOR lands by District personnel is very difficult due to its remote location. 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. District staff have met with USFWS and Nature Conservancy land managers. It is proposed that long term management responsibility be turned over to USFWS. A fifty-year contract for management services with the US Fish and Wildlife Service is pending Governing Board and USF&W approval.

Protection of the wetlands and restoration of the pine rockland community centers around three major activities—exotic plant control, habitat improvement, and prescribed burning. With the exception of a single 78-acre tract, the District's ownership pattern within the project is scattered and made up of numerous small parcels.

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.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

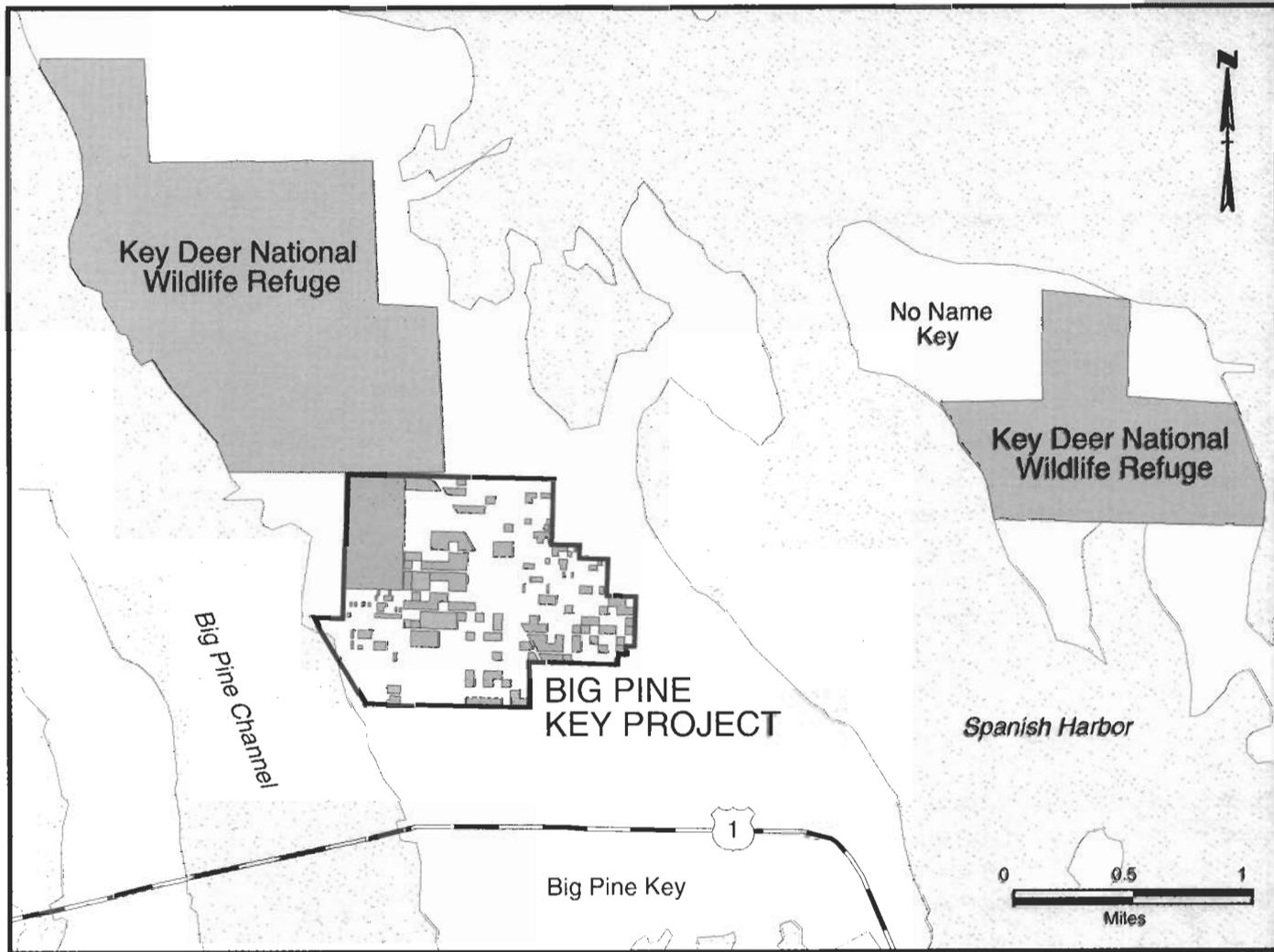
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



COUNTY:
Monroe

ACRES ACQUIRED:
190 Acres

LAND COST:
\$1,999,900

ACRES REMAINING:
0



DuPuis Reserve State Forest

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 remnant Everglades marsh.

Land Stewardship Activities

Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Hydrologic restoration efforts continued in 1994. 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 overdrainage is being replaced with wetland species.

Two crossings of the FPL access road along the east side were constructed as part of a mitigation plan by FPL. The crossings were constructed with a cellular confinement system, known as Ceoweb. These crossings will relieve some of the high water conditions which had caused the road to breach in previous years. More importantly, they will begin to restore historic sheetflow from Corbett to DuPuis. The crossings will work in conjunction with the plugs that were designed and installed by SOR personnel in the FPL canal during 1993.

Design of the L-8 marsh restoration project was completed by Construction Management Department. The project will reflood more than 2,500 acres of remnant Everglades marsh, and the hydroperiod will significantly increase on several thousand additional acres adjacent to the marsh. Requests for Bids were solicited and received. Award of contract and commencement of construction of the project is expected in late 1994. Construction should be complete in approximately one year. This project is being partially financed with mitigation funds from several sources.

Water level recorders, vegetational transects, and permanent photo points are being used to collect data which is documenting the changes occurring in the forest as a result of the District's hydrologic restoration efforts. Wildlife observations are recorded during site visits and a data base is set up to track observations.

The Florida Division of Forestry (DOF) and Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission (GFC) continued their management activities as

cooperating management agencies with the District. DOF's work included prescribed burning on more than 5,000 acres, treating exotic vegetation, and beginning the removal of old fences.

GFC continued collecting information on both game and non-game wildlife on the forest. A monthly wading bird survey is being conducted to provide background data for L-8 Marsh restoration project. GFC continues its surveys of the eagles at DuPuis. Since they began keeping records in 1988, thirty-five eagles have been successfully fledged from nests on the forest. In addition, GFC managed public hunts, provided security patrols, and assisted DOF with prescribed burns.

Public Recreation

Public recreational activities are regulated by the DOF and the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. District staff developed 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. Between July 1993, and June 1994, 864 hikers and general day users visited the site and 1,256 equestrian users were recorded.

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. A limited number of hunters are permitted on the reserve each day and the use of dogs and off road vehicles is prohibited. The Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission recorded 1,579 user-days during the 1993-94 hunting season.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

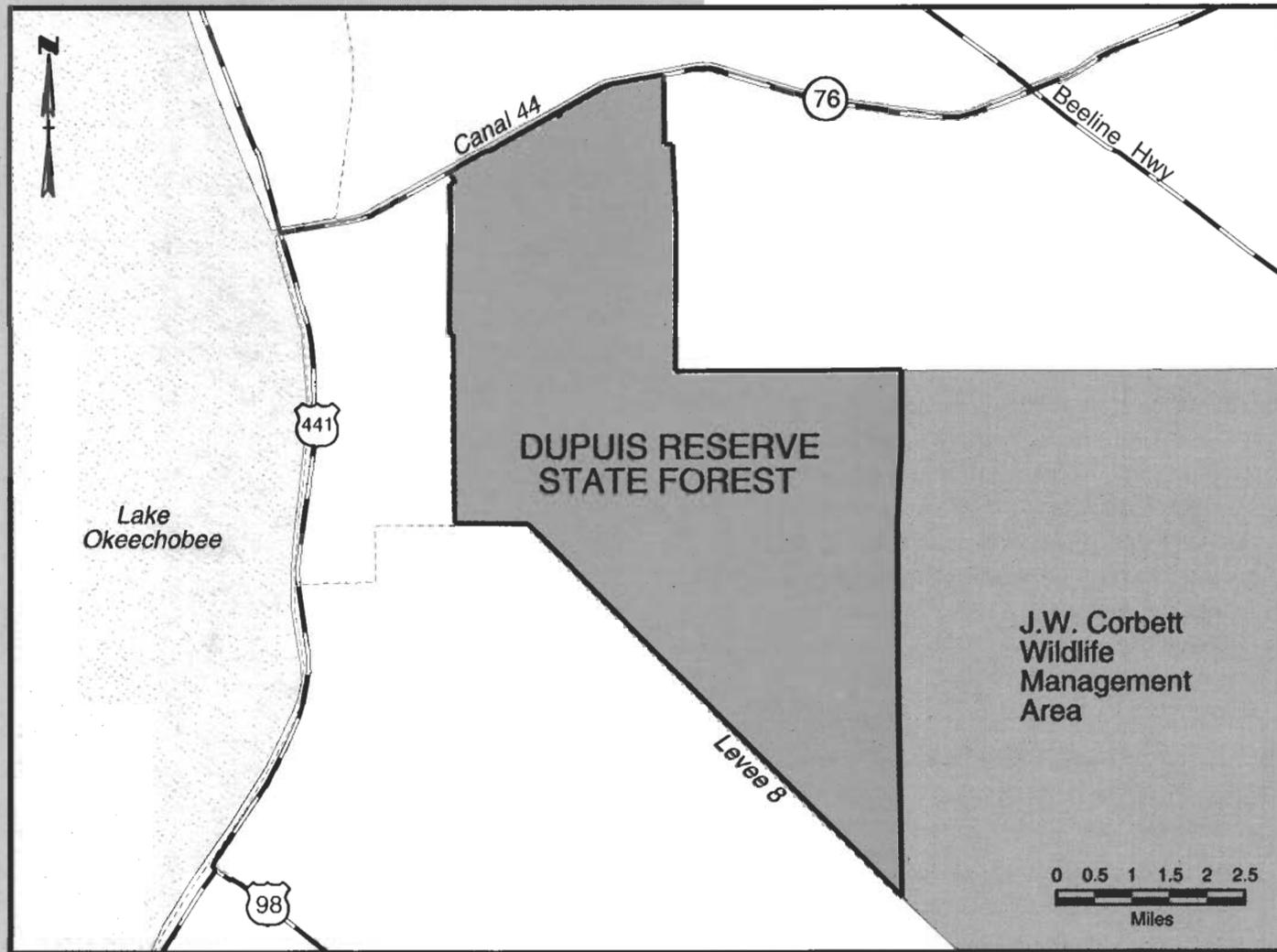
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY

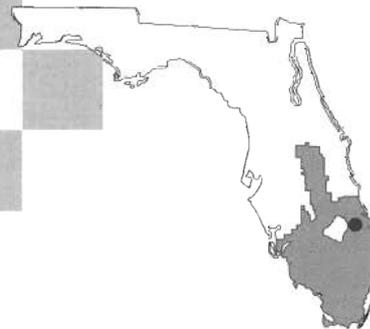


COUNTIES:
Martin and Palm Beach

TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
21,875 Acres

ACRES ACQUIRED:
21,875

LAND COST:
\$ 23 Million



Nicodemus Slough

Nicodemus Slough encompasses approximately 2,200 acres of wet prairie, broadleaf marsh and prairie hammock 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.

Land Stewardship Activities

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 along the south and east boundaries and associated improvements to the Canal 19/Levee-41/42 system were installed to improve the retention and manipulation of flood waters on the property. A marsh restoration program was implemented by District staff following the completion of the new water control facilities.

A borrow pit used for fill to raise the highway was shaped to be a new lake with a meandering shoreline. In 1994 Land Stewardship Division staff removed invading exotic plants and a district contractor planted the lake transitional area with native vegetation.

Restoration and land management activities are being evaluated by the Land Stewardship environmental monitoring program. A natural community vegetation map is being created and three photo points are set up among the basin marsh and wet prairie communities. These photo points are designed to monitor effects of the ongoing hydrologic restoration project and land management activities.

Wildlife observations are recorded during site visits and a data base is set up to track observations.

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.

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.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

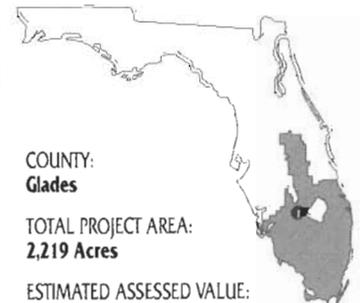
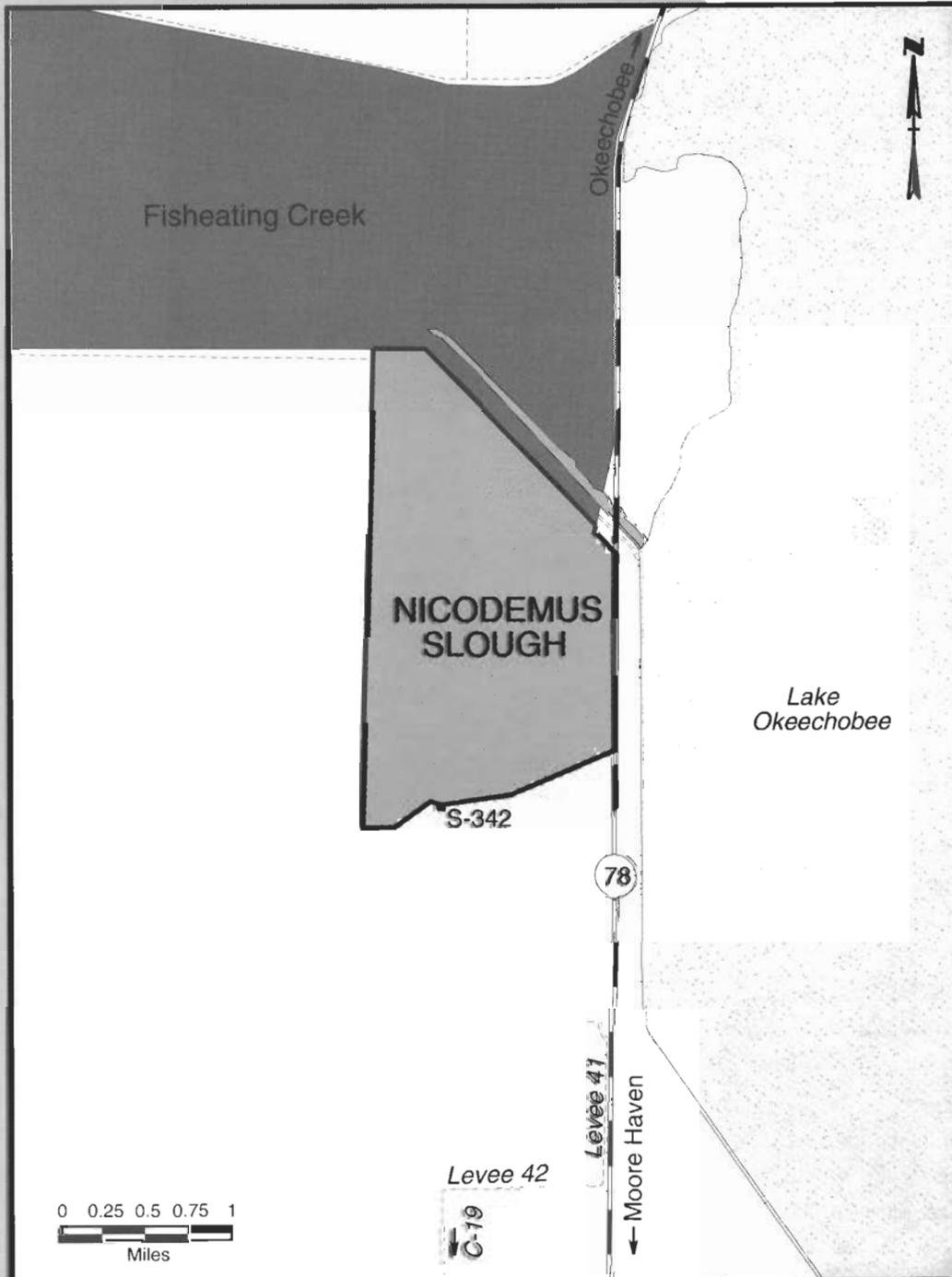
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



Six Mile Cypress Slough

Six Mile Cypress Slough occupies approximately 2,000 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.

Land Stewardship Activities

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.

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.

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.

SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE

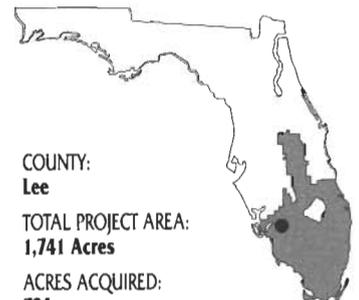
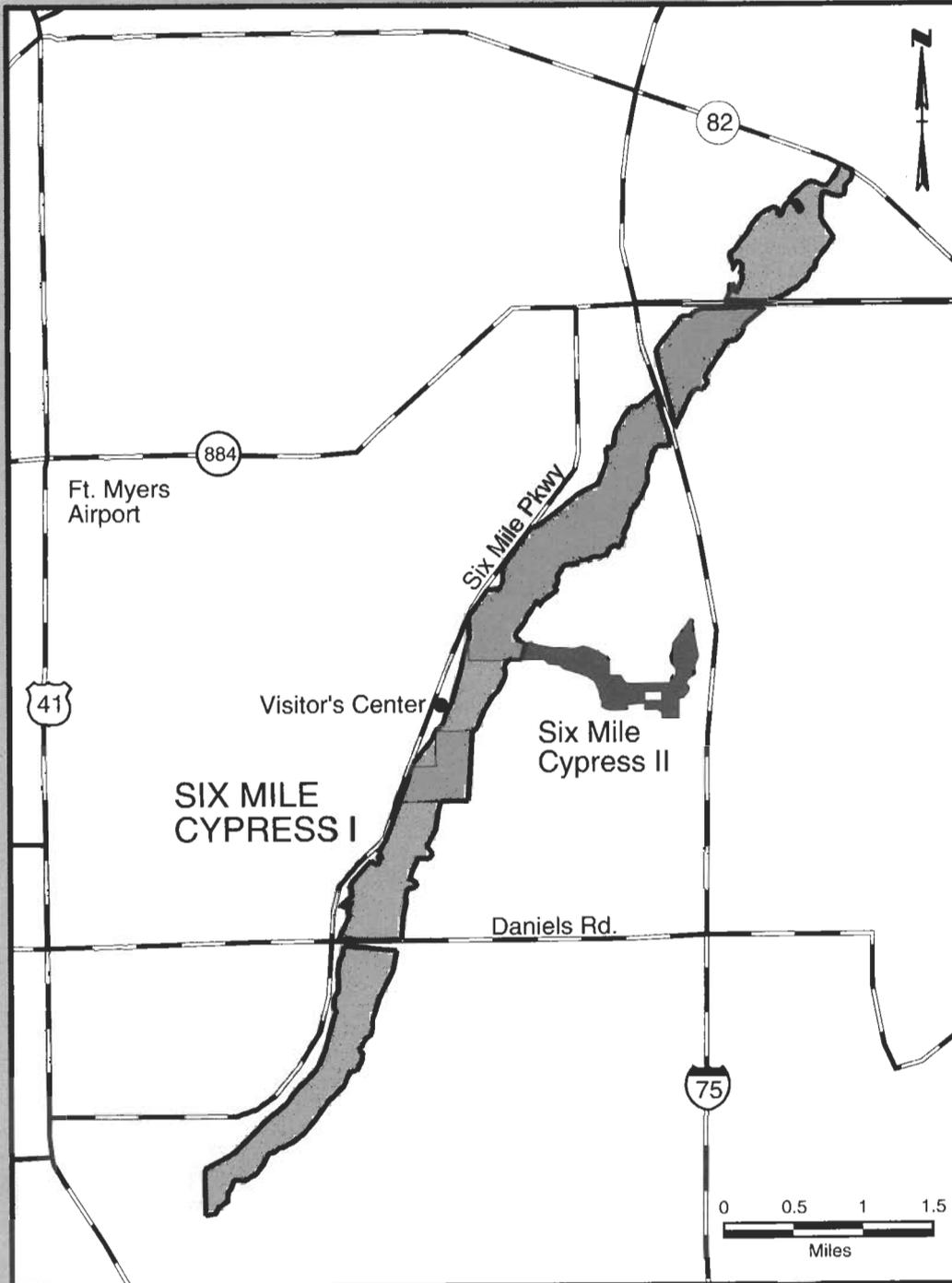
POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS

OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS

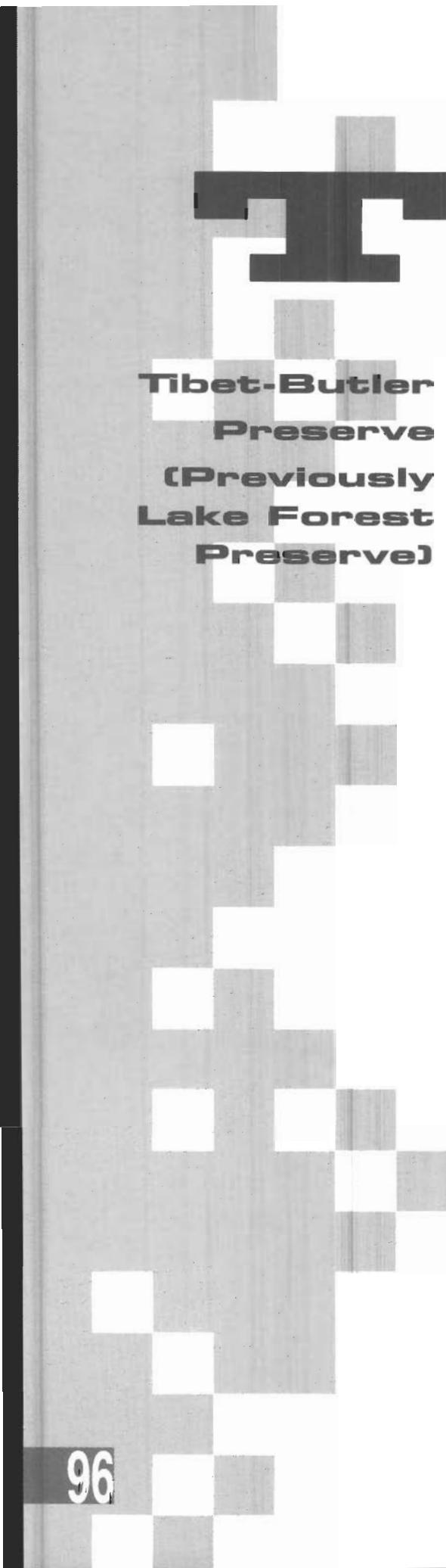
OTHER SOR
PROJECTS

1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS

SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY



COUNTY:
Lee
TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
1,741 Acres
ACRES ACQUIRED:
794
ACRES REMAINING (SOR):
0
LAND COST:
\$ 1,520,321



Tibet-Butler Preserve (Previously Lake Forest Preserve)

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 Tibet-Butler Preserve site includes approximately 4,000 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.

Land Stewardship Activities

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. Vegetative management is planned to include wetland preservation, prescribed burning, exotic control, selective cutting of trees to improve habitat, and reforestation in some areas.

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.

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. Phase two of the hiking trail network is field staked and nearing completion.

The County opened the environmental education and visitor center in January 1994. The first part of the interpretative trail was opened at the same time.

 **SOR LANDS
ACQUIRED TO
DATE**

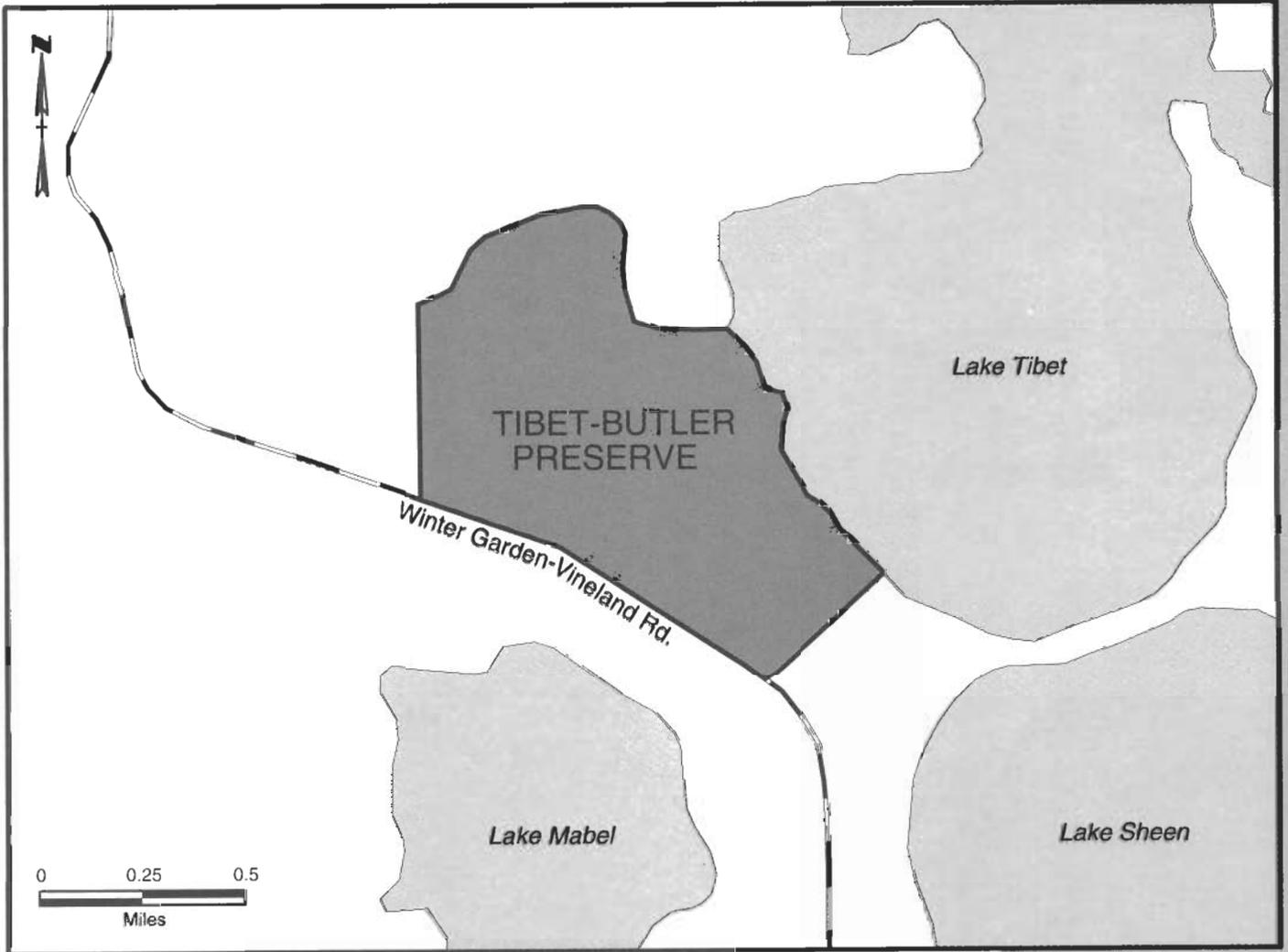
 **POTENTIAL
ACQUISITION
AREAS**

 **OTHER
CONSERVATION
AREAS**

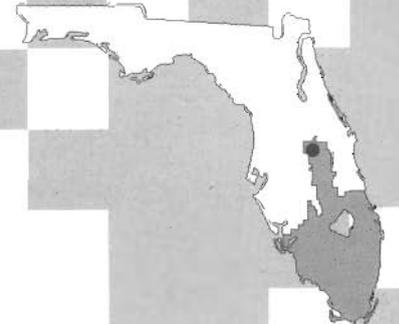
 **OTHER SOR
PROJECTS**

 **1994 PROJECT
ADDITIONS**

 **SOR PROJECT
BOUNDARY**



COUNTY:
Orange
TOTAL PROJECT AREA:
439 Acres
ACRES ACQUIRED:
439
LAND COST:
\$ 3,700,000





A black and white photograph of a dense tropical forest. Sunlight filters through the thick canopy of trees and plants, creating a dappled light effect on the ground. The scene is filled with various types of foliage, including palm trees and broad-leafed plants. The overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

Appendices

Table of Contents

SECTION	TITLE	PAGE
I.	Purpose and Scope	1
II	Definitions.....	1
III.	Selection of Land Managers	1
IV	Management Plans	1
V.	General Policies & Guidelines.....	2

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 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.

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
- 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.

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.

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.

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:

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.

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 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.

Your Guide To South Florida Land Management Areas



Copies of the Public Use Guide are available upon request at the District's headquarters

SOR PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM

Please return ten copies of this form with ten copies of all referenced attachments to:

Director, Land Stewardship Division
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/Countries _____

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, the contact address, and telephone number.

Property Owner: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

5. Survey Information

Are surveys and/or legal descriptions available? Yes _____ No _____

If so, attach 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)?

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 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) _____

**SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
SAVE OUR RIVERS FIVE YEAR PLAN**

Executive Director:

Samuel E. Poole III

Deputy Executive Director:

Michael Slayton

Governing Board:

**Chairman: Valerie Boyd, Vice Chairman: Frank Williamson, Jr.,
Annie Betancourt, William Hammond, Betsy Krant
Allan Milledge, Eugene K. Pettis, Nathaniel P. Reed, Leah G. Schad**

Construction and Land Management Department:

William Malone, Director

Land Stewardship Division:

Fred Davis, Director

Principal Editor:

Lee Henderson

Technical Assistance:

Izell Wilson

Maps:

Vicky Fairman

Contributors:

Ken Foote, Jim Goodwin, William Helfferich, Fred Schiller, Mia Van Horn, Kent Van Horn

Graphics & Photography:

SFWMD Graphic Communications Division