Save Our Rivers

1998 Land Acquisition and Management Plan

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Save Our Rivers

SOR

Land For Waters' Sake

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Five Year Plan Message

In 1997, the District acquired nearly 100,000 acres, continuing the successful land acquisition momentum experienced last year. Once again, thanks to the dedication of our staff, and our public and private partners, we are able to report great progress in our land acquisition and stewardship programs.

We are now near completion, or have made significant headway, on many of our major long-term projects. These include lands needed for regional ecosystem management efforts, such as Kissimmee River restoration, the construction of Stormwater Treatment Area (STA) filter-marshes, and the restoration of more natural water flows to Everglades National Park and Florida Bay. We also assisted in acquiring two large natural areas that are critical to maintaining south Florida's ecological integrity — the Kissimmee Prairie and the Okaloacoochee Slough.

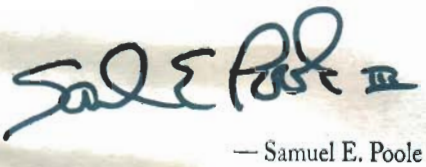
While we celebrate these accomplishments, we recognize that we have much more to do. The projects listed on the following pages of this document attest to the great need for further acquisitions and, equally important, for the proper management of all lands once acquired.

The 1997, Florida Legislature recognized the importance of these issues through passage of two related bills. The first legislative action was a directive to all state agencies that are recipients of Preservation 2000 (P-2000) funds to outline the remaining needs and priorities for the final years of the program. Our report echoed that of others: that the program has been extremely successful in the acquisition of much needed lands, and that the amount of needed lands far exceeds the projected funding amounts. Our analysis indicates that when P-2000 ends, our agency alone will face a $250 million acquisition deficit, resulting in 175,000 acres of needed water resources development lands not being acquired. In addition, planning studies indicate that even more land will be necessary in the Kissimmee, Upper East Coast, and Caloosahatchee Basins to meet water resource development needs in these areas.

The second legislative action eliminated the funding cap on the use of "Save Our Rivers" dollars for management and stewardship purposes. Previously, only 25% of these funds were available for management activities. This action gives us a lot more flexibility to use these funds where most needed. That's the good news. The bad news is that, for the past 10 years, the amount of Save Our Rivers funding has remained relatively fixed. Today, we are trying to manage twice as much land with the same amount of money that we received three years ago. Land management needs keep going up — both in costs and acreage — while funding stays the same.

The growing acceptance of conservation easements are a possible solution to the limited availability of funds for both acquisition and management. These easements preserve important natural resources while allowing private landowners to retain low intensity use of their property. The cost of easements is far less than fee title acquisition. The easement concept also leaves the private landowners as the steward of the land, thereby reducing public management costs. We have several of these transactions planned for the coming year.

The District's Save Our Rivers land acquisition program is a multipurpose tool that preserves rare and unique resources, protects areas of special local interest, and prepares the ground for the water resource management needs of the 21st Century. As P-2000 draws to a close, we must concentrate on developing strong support for a revised program that will allow us to adequately address our critical "unmet" water resource development needs in the future.



— Samuel E. Poole III

Introduction

As part of its mission, the South Florida Water Management District protects and manages the wetlands, lakes, bays, and rivers of south and central Florida. The District, a regional agency, is the largest of five water management districts established across Florida to safeguard the quality and supply of each region's water resources, now and for the future.

State law requires the water management districts to manage water and related resources for the benefit of the public. And the mission of this agency is to specifically provide environmental protection and enhancement, water supply, flood control, and water-quality protection.

In 1981, the Florida Legislature created the "Save Our Rivers" program for the districts to acquire environmentally sensitive land. The legislation produced Section 373.59, Florida Statutes, known as the Water Management Lands Trust Fund. The trust fund receives revenues from the documentary stamp tax, which the Florida Department of Environmental Protection administers.

The statute enables the water management districts to use money from the trust fund to acquire fee title or other interest in lands needed to manage, protect, and conserve the state's water resources. The act specifies an allocation formula for each district and the process for them to use the fund.

The Preservation 2000 Act, enacted by the Legislature in 1990, also added land-acquisition funds to the Save Our Rivers program. P-2000 created the Florida Preservation Trust Fund, which DEP also administers. Land acquisition with P-2000 money requires that projects meet criteria of both the P-2000 and Save Our Rivers programs.

As part of its process in acquiring these lands, the District must consider the property's manageability, surface and ground water systems, and the formation of corridors for the critical interaction of wildlife populations. In managing these public lands, the District ensures the maintenance of the water resources, fish and wildlife populations, and native plant communities in an environmentally acceptable manner.

The District also opens these lands for appropriate recreational use consistent with their environmental sensitivity. Other government agencies and the private sector may assist the District with the care of these lands through the design and implementation of appropriate stewardship programs.

Evaluation and Selection Process

Lands Trust Fund shall be used to acquire fee title or other interest in lands necessary for water management, water supply and the conservation and protection of water resources. In addition, lands that include other features are eligible as well. These include, but are not limited to:

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

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

In 1988, the District began a proactive program to identify lands within its 16-county jurisdiction that might be suitable for acquisition. The agency reviews Save Our Rivers applications from private and public groups, and the staff considers other sites based on the District's strategic planning needs.

Land Evaluation Matrix

The District developed an evaluation matrix that addresses the water- and natural-resource values of each parcel. The matrix consists of the following 10 parameters:

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

In addition to the resource matrix, the District uses a "project benefits criteria system" to address projects that protect the integrity of ecological systems and provide multiple on- and off-site benefits. These include preserving fish and wildlife habitat, recreation space, and water-recharge areas. Projects are included that can help 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, the District doesn't evaluate the lands themselves, as with the resource-based matrix, but it considers how these lands will be used within a 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 using managed or unmanaged wetland vegetation processes

D. Groundwater recharge and/or water table control to allow 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

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
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
SFWMD	South Florida Water Management District
SOR	Save Our Rivers
SWIM	Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
WUMP	Water Use Management Plan

Water resource projects

A third method the District uses to screen prospective land candidates for the Save Our Rivers Five-Year Plan is the SOR Selection Criteria for Water Resource Projects. This applies to projects intended to supply off-site water resource benefits.

These water resource projects must meet all of the following criteria: (any land acquisition would require prior Governing Board approval of the subject plan)

A. Proposed project lands are identified in a District plan, such as a water use management plan or Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) plan

B. Subject lands would be used to provide simulated or naturally functioning water resource quality/quantity benefits

C. Lands would be part of the project resulting in net increase of natural resource values when considering any on-site losses and off-site gains

D. Capital improvements, such as canals, levees, weirs, and pumps, shall be limited on only those necessary to achieve the proposed water-resource benefits

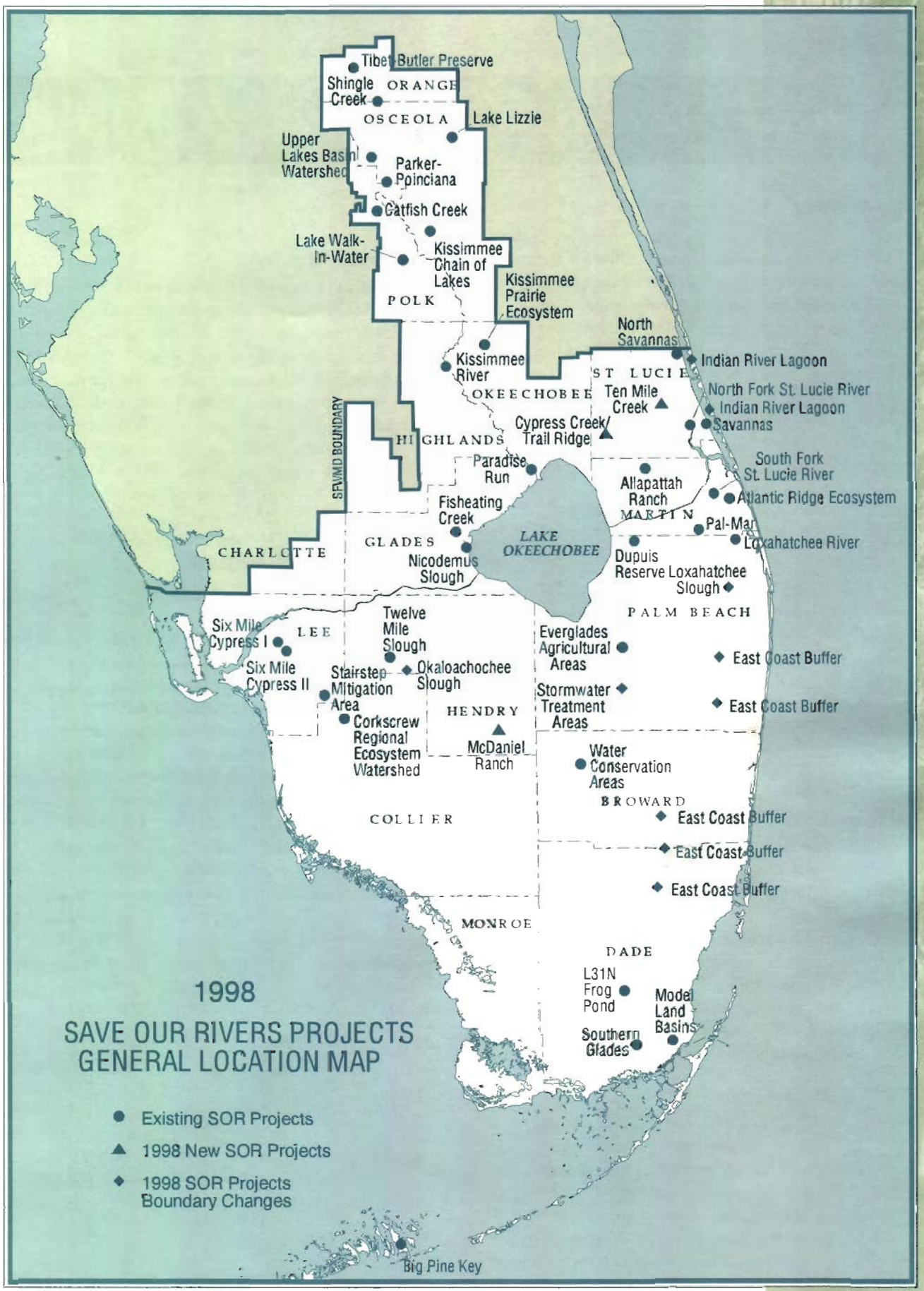
E. All appropriate funding sources for acquisition have been identified

Approval process for the Save Our Rivers Five-Year Plan

The District's Construction and Land Management Department receives and evaluates all Save Our Rivers project applications and boundary modifications. An evaluation team made up of senior technical staff representing the Planning, Regulation, and Construction and Land Management departments review and score each project.

Staff recommendations are made to the Construction and Land Management director, who circulates them for comment to each District department. Following District comment and widely publicized notification, public workshops are held in geographical locations represented by the new projects.

In July of each year, the staff presents the revised Save Our Rivers Five-Year Plan to the District Governing Board in workshop session. Final Governing Board adoption of the plan is scheduled for August of each year at a public hearing.


Tibet-Butler Preserve
Shingle Creek
ORANGE
OSCEOLA
Lake Lizzie
Upper Lakes Basin Watershed
Parker-Ponciana
Catfish Creek
Lake Walk-In-Water
Kissimmee Chain of Lakes
POLK
Kissimmee Prairie Ecosystem
North Savannas
Kissimmee River
ST LUCIE
Indian River Lagoon
OKEECHOBEE
Ten Mile Creek
North Fork St. Lucie River
Indian River Lagoon
Savannas
SFWMD BOUNDARY
HIGHLANDS
Cypress Creek/ Trail Ridge
Paradise Run
South Fork St. Lucie River
Allapattah Ranch
Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem
Fisheating Creek
MARTIN
Pal-Mar
CHARLOTTE
GLADES
LAKE OKEECHOBEE
Loxahatchee River
Nicodemus Slough
Dupuis Reserve
Loxahatchee Slough
PALM BEACH
Six Mile Cypress I
LEE
Twelve Mile Slough
Everglades Agricultural Areas
East Coast Buffer
Six Mile Cypress II
Stairstep Mitigation Area
Okaloachochee Slough
Stormwater Treatment Areas
East Coast Buffer
HENDRY
Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed
McDaniel Ranch
Water Conservation Areas
BROWARD
COLLIER
East Coast Buffer
East Coast Buffer
East Coast Buffer
MONROE
DADE
L31N
Frog Pond
Model Land Basins
Southern Glades
Big Pine Key
1998
SAVE OUR RIVERS PROJECTS
GENERAL LOCATION MAP
Existing SOR Projects
1998 New SOR Projects
1998 SOR Projects Boundary Changes

Land Stewardship

The Florida Resource Rivers Act specifically states that lands acquired with money from the Water Management Lands Trust Fund shall be managed and maintained in an environmentally acceptable manner and, to the practicable extent, in such a way as to restore and protect their natural state and condition and make available to the public for appropriate recreational purposes. Further, Section 373.59, Florida Statutes, as amended, provides that 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 part of the Stewardship program.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Land Stewardship Program is to plan and implement measures necessary for the proper management of land and associated water areas owned or controlled by the District. These lands generally include those acquired by the Save Our Rivers program and other large holdings not utilized for operational or administrative purposes.

As steward of District lands, the Program is responsible for their protection, enhancement, restoration, and preservation for the beneficial use and enjoyment of existing and future generations. A prime requisite in managing these public lands is to ensure that the water, fish and wildlife populations, native plant communities, and related resources are maintained in an environmentally acceptable manner and made available for appropriate outdoor recreational activities consistent with protection of the water resources.

The Program is primarily directed by the Land Stewardship Division with assistance from several other District departments, service centers and field stations. Considerable assistance in managing the lands is provided by other governmental agencies and volunteers through cooperative agreements. Where appropriate, the private sector is encouraged to undertake certain management activities through leases and concession contracts.

The Program's Mission is composed of six major functions:

1. Strategic, project, and management planning
2. Operation and maintenance of land resources
3. Development of public use programs
4. Development of restoration projects
5. Evaluation of management activities (monitoring)
6. Administration of land management service contracts

In the following pages, progress in each of these six major functions will be outlined.

Stewardship Report

The District's Stewardship program uses an adaptive ecosystem management approach with strong consideration for multiple use and renewable resources concepts. We seek and receive considerable assistance in managing our lands from both the public and private sector in funded, voluntary, and revenue type partnerships.

The growth of the District's ownership has accelerated with the additional dollars from P-2000 since 1990. During the first ten years of our program, from 1980 to 1990, we acquired land in nine projects, with fifteen management areas, totalling 150,000 acres. During the period 1990 to 1996, we added six projects, forty-five management areas, and 110,000 acres. Acquisition from July 1, 1996 to September 30, 1997 added 101,220 acres. The program now includes more than 330,000 acres.

Resources

A variety of sources pay for the District's land-management costs (see Figure S-1). The principal source is the Water Management Lands Trust Fund. This state documentary tax stamp revenue totals about $12 million per year.

As a result of our policy to seek management partnerships, the District receives about $1 million in in-kind services from the state (Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission) as well as local governments. Most of this money is for law-enforcement services and is about 20 percent of our total effort.

We also have aggressively pursued use of our renewable resources and other revenue-generating opportunities, especially the opportunity available from various regulatory programs seeking off-site mitigation. This growing part of our management funds represents about $300,000 in annual revenue or 7.5 percent of our total cost. Internal contracting and general administrative overhead meet the final 7.5 percent of the program costs. This support is funded from the District's ad valorem budget.

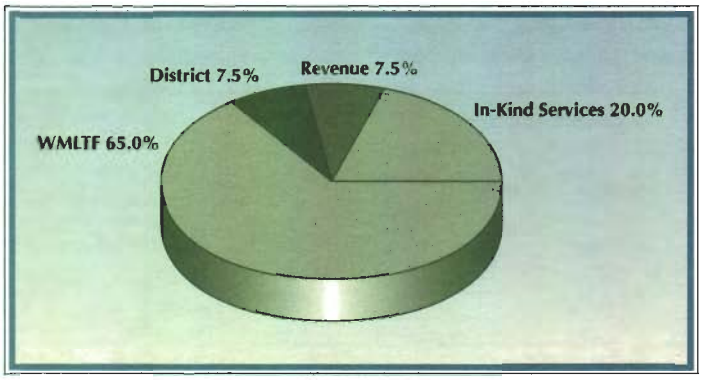


Figure S-1. Management Resources

Stewardship Elements (1–6)

The stewardship program involves six elements. The activities and the approximate portions of total effort denoted to each are shown in the figure below.

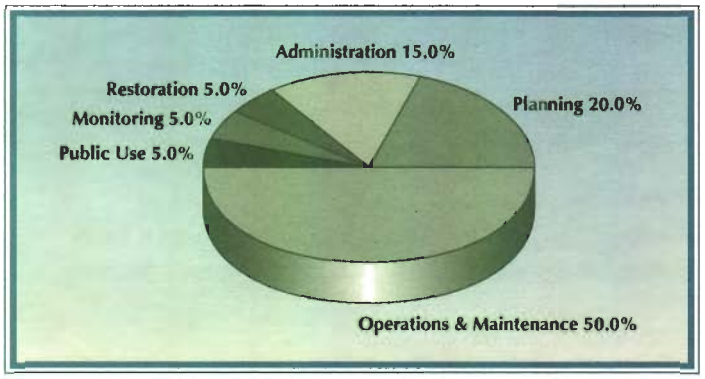


Figure S-2. Stewardship Elements

1. Planning

Strategic — The stewardship planning unit prepares and coordinates the development of the SOR Five-Year Plan. This group then integrates the plan with other District planning processes and the land-acquisition and management programs of various state, county, and local government agencies. The District's Land Stewardship Division works closely with the agency's Regulation Department to locate suitable offsite mitigation areas.

Project Planning — The District must evaluate all potential SOR projects before they are placed on the Five-Year Plan. Each year, a team of District professionals, under the direction of the Land Stewardship Division, rates the water and other natural resources of the proposed projects to produce the Five-Year Plan. To date, they have evaluated more than 50 projects and have reviewed numerous project boundary modifications.

Preliminary Management Strategies and Conceptual Management Plans (CMP) — The District develops preliminary management strategies to guide initial management activities immediately after acquiring the property and before preparing more detailed plans. The conceptual management plan incorporates all relevant information about the project, including resource data, access, past and present land uses, public-use potential, restoration and management needs, and goals and objectives to guide management actions. The District may prepare separate planning documents for restoration projects or substantial recreation programs. Restoration projects typically consist of hydrologic restoration but may also include upland restoration. Conceptual management plans, restoration plans, and public-use plans may be produced in-house or by outside contractors.

Planning Partners

Internal:	Planning Department, Ecosystem Restoration Department, Regulation Department
State/Federal:	Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, other water management districts,
Counties:	Orange, Osecola, Polk, Okeechobee, Highlands, St. Lucie, Martin, Palm Beach, Broward, Dade, Lee
Other:	The Nature Conservancy, Kissimmee Chain of Lakes Land Management Advisory Committee

FY 97 Planning Highlights

Strategic Planning

- Governing Board approved 1997 acquisition plan, including four new projects and revisions to eight existing projects. These changes added 87,660 acres to the District's land-acquisition plan.
- Governing Board approved a revised policy to evaluate and select lands for the acquisition plan.
- Seven applications submitted for consideration as new/revised acquisition areas for FY '98 plan.
- Acquisitions closing since July 1, 1996, added 101,220 acres of land to District ownership. Total District SOR ownership now exceeds 330,000 acres.
- District staff submitted three major reports on District's acquisition and management programs to various committees of the 1997 Florida Legislature.
- Completed Preservation 2000 needs and priority study.

Project Planning

- Management plans completed for Shingle Creek (final draft) and Lake Marion Creek (first draft).
- Management agreement with Osecola County School Board for Lake Russell tract executed. Management agreement exe-

cuted with The Nature Conservancy for certain lands in Reedy Creek.

FY 98 Objectives

- Prepare 1998 Five-Year Plan; evaluate new SOR projects for 1999
- Conduct reviews for five management areas
- Initiate management plans for Kissimmee River, Kissimmee Chain of Lakes, and Reedy Creek
- Complete management plan for Lake Marion Creek Management Area
- Complete forestry management study

2. Operation and Maintenance Of Land Resources

The land maintenance program involves a wide range of activities to protect, maintain, and enhance the natural resources and the District's real property assets. Several professional land managers — with unique skills and experience and based in both the service centers and at District headquarters — implement the program. Major program components include:

• Security and Resource Protection.

An integrated program of contractual law enforcement, on-site caretakers, lessees' vigilance, and employer inspections protects the natural resources and District assets. Staff fence boundaries and/or mark them with District ownership signs. The protection program must, however, be open to appropriate public use of the lands.

• Natural Resource Management

Exotic Plant Control — Includes selective application of environmentally acceptable herbicides in a manner that does not harm the natural resources.

Prescribed Burning—Periodic fire is a natural element of native Florida ecosystems. The District uses prescribed burning to reduce hazardous buildup of fuel loads, to enhance wildlife habitat, and to encourage restoration of native-plant communities. The District began burning SOR lands in 1988 and intended to burn the larger tracts on three to five-year rotations, based on resource needs. During both winter and growing seasons, the agency uses burns as a management tool. Prescribed burning is also an integral part of the exotic plant control program and can be used to prepare areas for hydrologic restoration.

• General Maintenance of Improvements, Restoration Structures, and Public Use Facilities

The many firelines, roads, fences, culverts, houses, and sheds associated with SOR lands require general maintenance. This includes building and discing fire lines, mowing roadsides, grading roads, replacing and repairing culverts, and repairing and replacing perimeter fences. Houses, barns, and sheds also require periodic maintenance and repair.

Maintenance Partners

Internal:	Operations and Maintenance Department, General Services Division
State/Federal:	Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Servicee
Counties:	Orange, Palm Beach, Lee
Other:	Lessees, User Groups, Non-profit organizations

FY 97 Highlights

Exotic Control
- District contractors and field staff treated exotic plants on nearly 9,000 acres in four project areas.

Prescribed Burning
- Staff from the Land Stewardship Division, the Okeechobee field station, and the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission conducted prescribed burns on almost 3,000 acres in three areas.

Vegetation management
- More than 1,000 acres were roller-chopped to reduce woody vegetation and prepare pine flatwoods for prescribed burning.

Security
- Posted more than 20 miles of District boundary and replaced fence for nearly 10 miles.
- Executed lease with law enforcement officers to live in District housing.
- Met with Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and other water management districts to discuss/review law-enforcement programs.
- Initiated quarterly reports on law-enforcement activities.

FY 98 Objectives

Operations and Maintenance
- Conduct exotic-plant control activities on 10,000 acres
- Conduct prescribed burns on 5,000 acres
- Roller-chop and mow 1,000 acres
- Construct 10 miles of fence
- Post 20 miles of boundary

3. Public Use Programs

The District encourages public access to and use of its lands for appropriate outdoor recreational activities, consistent with the

agency's legal interest and preservation and management of the water and environmental resources.

Recreational development focuses on the provision of basic facilities for access, health and safety, and interpretation. Special consideration is given to the provision of outdoor recreational opportunities for persons with disabilities. Where appropriate, the District considers the provision of needed facilities and services through concession contracts and/or agreements with private non-profit organizations.

These activities are described for each management unit in the District's Public Use Guide.

Public Use Partners

Internal:	Planning Department, Ecosystem Restoration Department, Field Stations
State/Federal:	Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission
Counties:	Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Lee
Other:	Florida Trail Association, DuPuis Horsemen Association, Florida Sportmen's Conservation Association, Kissimmee River Valley Sportsman Association, DuPuis Users Committee, CREW Trust

FY 97 Public Use Highlights

- FY '97 Public Use Guide rule revision approved without major objections from any user groups.
- 10,000 additional acres opened to public use.
- Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission opened 4,000 acres to small game hunting in Kissimmee valley.
- One-page summary of Public Use Guide "map" produced.
- Volunteer/user-group contacts increased.
- User fee study contract initiated.
- Revenue from public use at DuPuis Reserve substantially increased.
- Quarterly report initiated to estimate public use on SOR properties.
- User response cards included in Public Use Guide and Five-Year Plan.

FY '98 objectives

- Complete user fee study
- Revise format for Public Use Guide
- Develop memoranda of understanding with volunteer groups.
- Construct/improve three user access points.

4. Restoration

Natural features of South Florida's landscape are rapidly disappearing because of encroaching agricultural and urban development. A major thrust of the Save Our Rivers program is to protect the flowways, watersheds, and wetlands, all critical to the water resources of the District. Common disturbances to SOR lands include clearing to improve pasture and drainage. The Land Stewardship Division assesses SOR lands for hydrologic and environmental restoration needs and recommends how to correct those impacts. Restoration projects may be funded, designed, constructed, and maintained by the District, by developers as mitigation, or by a combination of methods.

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

A major stewardship task is to return SOR lands as close to their original natural state, hydrologically, as possible. This improves groundwater storage in wetlands, water quality by slowing runoff, and habitat for fish and wildlife. The SOR program is conducting several small hydrologic restorations, but the primary focus is on the nationally significant program to restore the Kissimmee River, Lake Okeechobee, and Everglades ecosystem. Several SOR acquisition projects are contributing directly to the effort to restore and protect the vital water and natural resources of South Florida.

Restoration Partners

Internal:	Planning Department, Field Stations, Regulation Department
State/Federal:	Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission
Counties:	Lee
Mitigation:	Florida Power & Light, Florida Department of Transportation, Palm Beach County, Orlando Beltway Authority

FY 97 Restoration Highlights

- Use of off-site mitigation funds from District permits initiated for DuPuis Reserve, CREW, and Shingle Creek projects.
- Revised plans for Johnson Island (Lake Hatchineah) completed in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy and Florida Department of Environmental Protection.
- District approves Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission proposal for hydroperiod management of Terrytown Water Management Area.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service removed fill from wetland on District property on Big Pine Key.

FY 98 Objectives

- Complete mitigation bank project
- Develop standard off-site mitigation procedures
- Design upland restoration project

5. Evaluation Of Management Activities

(Monitoring)

A major objective of the Save Our Rivers program is to restore and maintain the natural condition of SOR land resources. The Land Stewardship Division has an established monitoring program to evaluate its management and restoration activities, including hydrologic restoration, prescribed burning, and exotic vegetation control.

The division uses an established protocol for vegetative and photographic monitoring. Staff compile photographs and written summaries into an annual report. Vegetative sampling data is stored on GIS databases for future analysis.

Evaluation Partners

Internal:	Ecosystem Restoration Department, Regulation Department
State/Federal:	Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission
Counties:	Palm Beach
Others:	Private contractors, The Nature Conservancy

FY 97—Evaluation of Management Activities Highlights

- Continued routine data collection at six locations.
- Completed cattle closures for pasture restoration study; initiated data collection.
- Published paper on barn owls.
- Continued inventories of natural resources with outside contractors.
- Hired AmeriCorps employee for routine data collection.

FY 98 Objectives

- Continue resource inventories
- Design inventory for conservation easements
- Develop contract for routine monitoring services

6. Administration Of Land Management Service Contracts

Contractual agreements for management services and leases on District land are an important part of the stewardship program. The program currently administers more than 90 contracts, agreements, leases, and reservations. The program prepares contract specifications, negotiates terms, and monitors compliance. Managing the number and diversity of these contracts is a substantial task.

The number and types of contracts can be summarized into four groups.

Type	Number
Funded Specific/General Management Services	21
Unfunded General Management Services	16
Revenue Leases and Reservations	40
Recreation Agreements	16

Administrative & Service Partners

Internal:	Management Services, Legal Office, Office of Budget and Procurement
State/Federal:	Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Counties:	Martin, Highlands, Broward, Dade, Palm Beach, Orange, Lee

FY 97 — Administrative & Service Highlights

- Executed agreement with AIM Engineering for management of Nicodemus Slough.
- Executed eight agriculture leases.
- Initiated revised cattle lease RFP (request for proposal) for three grazing sites.
- Initiated RFP for two agricultural leases.
- Initiated lease with State of Florida for Kissimmee Prairie Ecosystem.
- Executed agreement with Highlands County for management of Lockett Estate.
- Continued negotiations for two mitigation banks.
- Created new unit to manage revenue contracts.

FY 98 Objectives

- Increase revenue on interim management lands
- Execute management agreements for Okaloacoochee Slough and Pool A of Kissimmee River.

Performance Measures

The Land Stewardship Division adopted performance measures for FY '97 based on recommendations of a 1995 internal audit. These standards gauge the efficiency of the stewardship program through its assigned tasks. Based on the historical data presented below, the program has adopted the following performance goals:

(1) 7,000 acres per stewardship employee
(2) $20/acre/year management cost
(3) 20 percent of management cost from non-public funds

In addition to these performance measures, each functional area and employee also have criteria to measure progress towards the District's stewardship goals. Below, a table illustrates the program's performance in a number of categories.

Land Stewardship Program

For Profit and Non-Profit Land Management Providers

FY 97 Performance Measures

	FY 90/91	FY 91/92	FY 92/93	FY 93/94	FY 94/95	FY 95/96
SOR Acres Purchased (Total)	147,300	161,000	163,700	180,000	215,800	228,960
Cost (Total)	$118,071,000	$134,178,000	$138,700,000	$164,248,800	$209,100,000	$250,000,000
Acres Managed (Total)	97,000	102,000	107,000	128,000	140,502	150,000
Management Expenditures (Public Dollars)	$1,742,000	$1,472,000	$2,136,000	$2,227,000	$3,928,000(1)	$3,220,044
# Employees in Stewardship Program	15	17	17	19	21	26(3)
Management Cost/Acre	$18.00	$14.40	$19.95	$17.50	$27.95(2)	$21.50
Acre/Employee	6,500	6,000	6,300	6,700	6,700	5,770

(1) Includes $1,338,000 of fixed capital cost (primarily L-8 levee restoration)

(2) Management cost excluding capital outlay = $18.43/acre/year for FY 94/95

(3) Includes all employees with 100 percent salaries paid by WMLTF.

Note: The acres managed in this analysis exclude the water conservation areas and several other project areas managed entirely by other entities. In addition, the management expenditures include only SOR funds minus lease revenues. The cost-per-acre rates do not include any estimates of the value of in-kind services. It is estimated that the in-kind services are equivalent to about 20 percent of the total management cost of all District ownership. Revenue from various leases and off-site mitigation requirements is growing rapidly and now provides about 7.5 percent of the management funds. Internal contracting and general support from other District departments also represent about 7.5 percent of the management effort.

Customer Service

The program provides a variety of products to an array of internal and external customers. A summary of our customer list and products includes:

Internal

Governing Board
- Annual updates of SOR Acquisition Plan
- Annual update of Public Use Guide
- Land Stewardship Management Policies and Plans

Real Estate Division
- Technical review of acquisition strategies and proposals
- Management appraisals of acquisition parcels

Regulation Department
- Consultation on off-site mitigation proposals

Service Centers
- Stewardship program policies and programs

Government and Public Affairs
- Pertinent information regarding public-use activities and opportunities

External

State Agencies and Local Government
- Assistance in developing comprehensive ecosystem management program for land and water resources.
- Opportunities for management partnerships

For Profit and Non-Profit Land Management Providers
- Fair opportunity to participate in appropriate management activities

General Public
- Appropriate public use opportunities
- Healthy/Recovering ecosystems contributing to the welfare of the state

Seventh Generation
- A self functioning ecosystem contributing to an economy based on the principles of sustainable natural resources.

Implementation Strategies

The District employs a diversified strategy to implement its land stewardship program. The ever-increasing size and complexity of the program's management needs require this approach. The foundations of this program are: (1) a core professional management group, (2) internal contracting, (3) cooperative management agreements, and (4) alternative funding.

1. **Core Professional Management Group** — A select number of District employees plan and manage the functions of the land stewardship program. This group includes professional land managers assigned to service centers. These employees have specific geographical responsibilities for comprehensive management in their respective areas. They also have special areas of management expertise that they share with other managers throughout the agency.

A highly trained field crew supports the professional staff by performing diversified tasks throughout the District. Crew members prepare and execute the fire-management plans for each area. They also control exotic plants and conduct general operations and maintenance services, as time permits.

District staff carries out the planning functions previously described and evaluate and monitor the District's natural resources and the effectiveness of the management program.

2. **Internal Contracting** — Several other District programs provide substantial management services to the land stewardship program. The most prominent is the availability of general maintenance services from the District's field stations. The program has developed a process by which the SOR land-management needs for general maintenance may be contracted to a field station.

These functions include roadside mowing, road maintenance, small culvert and ditch repair, as well as carpentry, electrical, and plumbing work on various houses.

The land stewardship program also relies on the District's vegetation management division to coordinate large jobs to control exotic plants, and the Management Services Department to manage and dispose of some real property assets not integral to the SOR mission.

This "internal contracting" reduces duplication and uses all existing capability to the maximum extent possible.

3. **Cooperative Management Agreements** — The District has numerous land management service agreements, primarily with other local, state, and federal agencies. They may involve complete management responsibility or specific services and may or may not be District-funded.

There are several advantages of these agreements that include the following factors:

a) **Expertise.** Other agencies provide knowledge, experience, and capabilities not available to the District. It is more cost effective to use this expertise from other agencies rather than to develop it.

b) **Location.** In several cases, local governments or other agencies are more conveniently located to provide essential services than the District.

c) **Continuity of Program.** District land adjacent to other public lands can be managed as part of the larger ownership.

d) **Local Benefits.** When people in a particular area almost exclusively use some District lands, it is appropriate for local programs to manage these lands because they are the ones who directly benefit.

4. **Alternative Funding** — Since 1989, the District has paid for SOR stewardship functions out of the management portion of the Water Management Lands Trust Fund. The District has augmented these funds in several ways:

In-Kind Services — As previously noted, several management agreements are at no cost to the District for either complete management services or selected services such as surveillance and law enforcement.

Revenue Agreements/Leases — The District has various land-use leases that it obtained with the land purchase or developed to use renewable resources. The principal type of lease is for native-range cattle grazing. Several other agreements involve short-term use of lands that are in an interim management condition.

User Fees — (c) User fees ? This source of revenue is relatively new to the District, although most user groups support reasonable fees and are willing to contribute in-kind services. The District has good experiences with several user groups on developing and maintaining trails, trailheads, and primitive camping areas.

Mitigation — Perhaps the most promising revenue source is through locating off-site mitigation projects on District's SOR lands. The District's stewardship program has received benefits in this manner in the form of land acquisition, restoration, and general management fees and services. This program will need to become more familiarized and structured and requires increased pre-acquisition planning. However, it offers the promise of substantial revenue to assist with covering the costs of managing SOR lands.

Acquisition Summary

Acquisition from the beginning of the Save Our Rivers program in 1981 through June 1996 totaled 228,960 acres of land(Includes lands purchased by others within SOR project boundaries)

Acquisition during the 1996 Plan period (July 1996 - June 1997) added approximately 95,745 acres. More than 1,000 of these acres were many small less than fee acquisitions. Property was purchased in 16 different projects. The larger acres were purchased in the Kissimmee River Ecosystem (38,000 acres), Kissimmee River Restoration (15,000 acres), and Okaloacoochee Slough (22,000 acres). Due to wide variations in the market value of land among projects, the most money was spent in the Stormwater Treatment Areas and East Coast Buffer. Both in terms of acres and dollars, the acquisition program made great progress in acquiring lands in our critical Kissimmee/Everglades/ Florida projects. The Kissimmee projects are very near complete, while the Stormwater Treatment Areas are more than fifty percent (50%) acquired. In addition to these purchases, an additional 10,000 acres have been approved for purchase, but have not yet closed.

The District is adjusting the Save Our Rivers Five Year Plan to coincide with the fiscal year, October 1-September 30. Therefore, This plan will include acquisition for a period of one year and three months. Acquisition during the additional three-month period (July 1, 1997 - September 30, 1997 added 5,475 acres. See Table 2 for details of which lands were purchased during the fifteen-month reporting period. These acquisitions bring the Save Our Rivers program total for September 30, 1997, to 330,180 acres.

ACQUISITION ACTIVITY — ACQUISITIONS JULY 1, 1996 - SEPTEMBER 30, 1997

Project	Closed	Pending
CREW	62	10
East Coast Buffer	4,222	943
Everglades Buffer Strip	5	0
Kissimmee Chain of Lakes	2,147	2,055
Kissimmee Prairie	38,315	0
Kissimmee River	13,291	394
L-31 North	426	73
Model Lands	1,270	734
North Fork St. Lucie	292	21
Okaloacoochee Slough	21,702	0
Pal-Mar	630	0
Southern Glades	242	708
Stairstep	633	0
STAs	13,548	146
Upper Lakes Basin	1,472	27
Water Management Area	1,233	737
Water Conservation Area	1,730	20
TOTAL	101,220	

Acquisition Plan

The 1998 SOR Five-Year Acquisition Plan includes District staff anticipation that significant cost-sharing will occur with the state and local governments. For the 1998 SOR Five-Year Plan, the staff used the following criteria 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 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 applies 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.

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.

New Projects/Boundary Revisions

During 1997, the South Florida Water Management District Governing Board authorized mid-year revisions to the Five Year Plan:

A. Ten Mile Creek--1,266 Acres

B. Kissimmee River Addition--6,359 Acres

A. Changes to 1997 Five Year

In 1997, the South Florida Water Management District Governing Board authorized the addition of two new projects to the Five Year Plan, as well as boundary modifications to four existing projects. The Board authorized deleting one project from the Plan, Osceola Pine Savannas.

New Projects	Acres
Cypress Creek/Trail Ridge	13,788
McDaniel Ranch	7,000

Project Additions (Boundary Modifications)	Acres
East Coast Buffer	5,657
Indian River Lagoon	1,015
Okaloacoochee Slough	1,920
Loxahatchee Slough	7,315
Stormwater Treatment Areas	1,300

1997 Save Our Rivers Five Year Plan Schedule

March 1998 Deadline for new project applications

May 1998 Land Selection Committee meeting – discussion of new projects/boundary changes

June 1998 Land Selection Committee meeting – discussion of 1998 priority projects and spending plan

August 1998 Governing Board Workshop on new projects/boundary changes

September 1998 Governing Board public hearing to adopt 1998 Five Year Plan

1998 Five Year Plan — SOR Priority Projects

Project	Potential Acquisition Partner
Kissimmee River Restoration	Federal Government
EAA Lands	Everglades Privilege Tax
East Coast Buffer	CARL
Florida Bay	CARL/Dade County
Ten Mile Creek	St. Lucie County/Federal Government
Upper Lakes Basin	Mitigation/Polk County
Pal-Mar	CARL/Martin & Palm Beach Counties
CREW	CARL/Lee County
North Fork St. Lucie River	St. Lucie County
Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem	CARL
Indian River Lagoon	CARL/St. Lucie County/Federal Government
Parker-Poinciana	The Nature Conservancy
Lake Walk-In-Water	Polk County
Loxahatchee Slough	Palm Beach County
Okaloachoochee Slough	CARL
Shingle Creek	Mitigation
McDaniel Ranch	CARL
Cypress Creek	CARL/St. Lucie County

The 1996 Legislative changes to the program enacted a guideline that projects requiring full fee acquisition must be identified in the Five Year Plan. Other projects shown in the plan are either completed or would be acceptable by acquiring less than fee.

Project	Approved Acres	Acquisition Requirement
EAA Lands (Talisman)	49,027	Fee title required
East Coast Buffer	69,422	Fee title required
Frog Pond/L-31N	10,600	Fee title required
Kissimmee River (Lower Basin)	75,433	Fee title required
Kissimmee River (Upper Basin)	32,116	Fee title required
Parker-Poinciana	1,970	Fee title required
Stormwater Treatment Areas	44,500	Fee title required
Ten Mile Creek	1,266	Fee title required
Water Conservation Areas	256,000	Fee title required

Preservation 2000 Needs

Preservation 2000 Needs and Priorities Study

In 1997, the Florida Legislature enacted a law (HB 1119), which requires the water management districts and the CARL (Conservation and Recreational Lands) program to submit reports by October 1, 1997, outlining the remaining needs and priorities for the three final years of P-2000. The new law further states that the reports shall determine the following:

- What ecological resources are inadequately represented in the District's public land inventory and which approved projects can best fill the needs identified
- Projects with significant historical or archaeological importance
- For projects in which an acquisition has been completed, the minimal lands needed to be acquired for resource protection and effective management
- Significant natural areas and watersheds which can be conserved by the use of conservation easements or other less-than-fee techniques
- The best method of completing the P-2000 program to ensure that the program achieves its mission

Because of the close overlap between the District's Save Our Rivers/P-2000 program and the CARL/P-2000 program, state agencies associated with the CARL program prepared some parts of this study.

The South Florida Water Management District's Governing Board adopted this agency's portion of the report on September 11, 1997, and forwarded it to the Legislature. For the sake of space, only the executive summary is included in this Save Our Rivers Five-Year Plan. Please contact the District's land stewardship division at (561-687-6635) for a full copy of the report.

Executive Summary

P-2000 accomplishments

The South Florida Water Management District is responsible for the restoration, maintenance, and preservation of the ecosystem encompassing the Kissimmee River, Lake Okeechobee, and the Everglades. The District is also responsible for water supply planning in one of the fastest-growing regions of the country.

A third major mission is the expansion and refinement of the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project. These three missions, plus the desire to augment state and local efforts to restore and preserve significant ecological resources, have generated an 865,000-acre land-acquisition plan. A series of District, state, and federal studies identified these projects.

The District's Save Our Rivers land acquisition and management report, which consists of 40 individual projects (Figure 1), is designed to achieve one or more of the objectives listed below:

Project Type	Objective
• Water resource management	Protect water supply & provide water
• Regional ecosystem	Protect unique ecological resources
• Local preservation protection	Augment state & local natural resource
• Water conservation areas	Secure fee title

The District has acquired more than 315,000 acres in 25 separate projects at a cost of $458 million (Figure 2). The 31,800 acres of less-than-fee land purchased to date include 7,500 acres of flowage easements in the Kissimmee Valley and 24,300 acres of gas, oil, and mineral rights in the Everglades (water conservation areas).

The District used P-2000 money to acquire land in the Everglades Protection Area (stormwater treatment areas) and the Florida Bay emergency interim plan (Frog Pond/Rocky Glades). Both projects are 70 percent complete. These lands are necessary to reestablish historic hydropatterns and improve water quality in the Everglades.

P-2000 funds were used to acquire 80 percent of the lands necessary to restore the Kissimmee River. P-2000 funds have also purchased environmentally significant lands in CARL projects, including CREW (Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed), Horsecreek Scrub, and the North Fork St. Lucie River.

P-2000 priorities for remaining years

The District's acquisition plan for use of the remaining P-2000 funds is based on five criteria: state and federal mandates to complete acquisition; probability that owners are willing to sell; threat of loss of resources; availability of matching funds, and potential for less-than-fee acquisition.

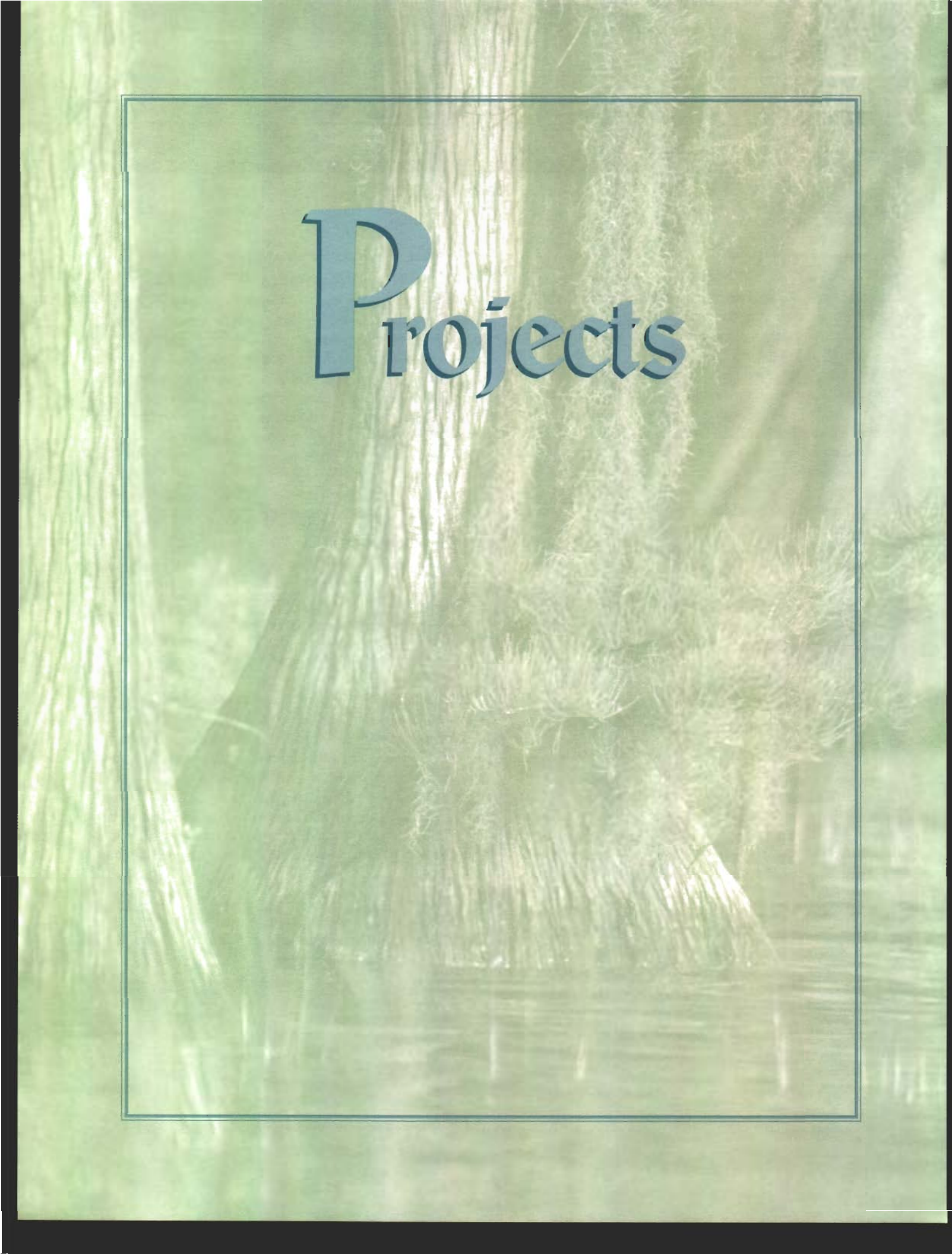
The *P-2000 Needs and Priorities Study* identified 491,000 acres of P-2000 priority projects. Available P-2000 funds, plus funds from other federal, state, and local programs, as well as mitigation funds, will allow the purchase of 316,000 of these acres, while 175,000 priority acres have no identified funding sources. Funded purchases will complete the stormwater treatment areas and the Florida Bay emergency interim plan and several other important ecological projects jointly purchased with CARL. This study recommends that 64,226 acres be acquired as less than fee and that 25,000 acres be deleted from the original project designs.

Remaining acquisition needs after P-2000

The unmet needs identified in the *P-2000 Needs and Priorities Study* include vitally important water-resource development projects and all or part of important natural resource projects. District planning studies have identified general land-acquisition needs for additional water-storage projects in the Kissimmee, Upper East Coast and Caloosahatchee basins.

District staff believes that water-conservation easements could be used to preserve or restore the functions of both pristine and/or altered wetlands. Local governments have also identified several new projects and additions to existing projects.

After the P-2000 program concludes in the year 2000, continued state support of land acquisition will still be required to assure the preservation and development of water and water-related natural resources for a sustainable South Florida.


Projects

Allapattah Ranch

General Description

The Allapattah Ranch SOR project covers 22,560 acres in western Martin County. This project was placed on the CARL acquisition list in 1996. The overall landform is very flat from east to west, with ground elevations from north to south varying from 27-30' NGVD. The site is dominated by poorly drained flatwoods soils which are saturated for much of the wet season. Historically, this area was a flatwoods matrix, interspersed with depression marshes and wet prairies. With the exception of the four northern sections that drain to Canal-23, the entire site drains slowly to the southeast to the South Fork St. Lucie River. Over the past 30 years the project area has undergone a change in land use from native range grazing to improved pasture, sod farms, and row crops. Most of the understory has been cleared and planted in non-native pasture grasses. The pine flatwoods that remain are open and sparse. Most of the depression marshes remain; however, most of the wet prairies have been drained and the depression marshes have been significantly impacted by drainage. An area of hydric hammock dominates the extreme western boundary. There is good species diversity and many large trees remain. A large canal borders the eastern edge of the hammock, and several smaller canals extend into the hammock, which have significantly lowered the water table and reduced the hydroperiod in this area.

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

Allapattah Ranch plays a key role in the District's effort to reduce flows from C-23 into the St. Lucie Estuary. Regional attenuation facilities, or Water Preserve Areas, have been proposed which would to store stormwater runoff from the agricultural areas of western St. Lucie County, which would reduce damaging peak discharges into the St. Lucie Estuary. If acquired, 8,000 acres of the project adjacent to C-23 would be converted to a reservoir to provide approximately 32,000 acre-feet of storage, which is estimated would reduce wet season stormwater flows into the estuary by 39%. It is estimated that an additional 14% reduction in discharge to the estuary could be achieved by not draining the property. Completely eliminating stormwater discharges is not possible; however, significant reductions could probably be made by blocking existing drainage ditches.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

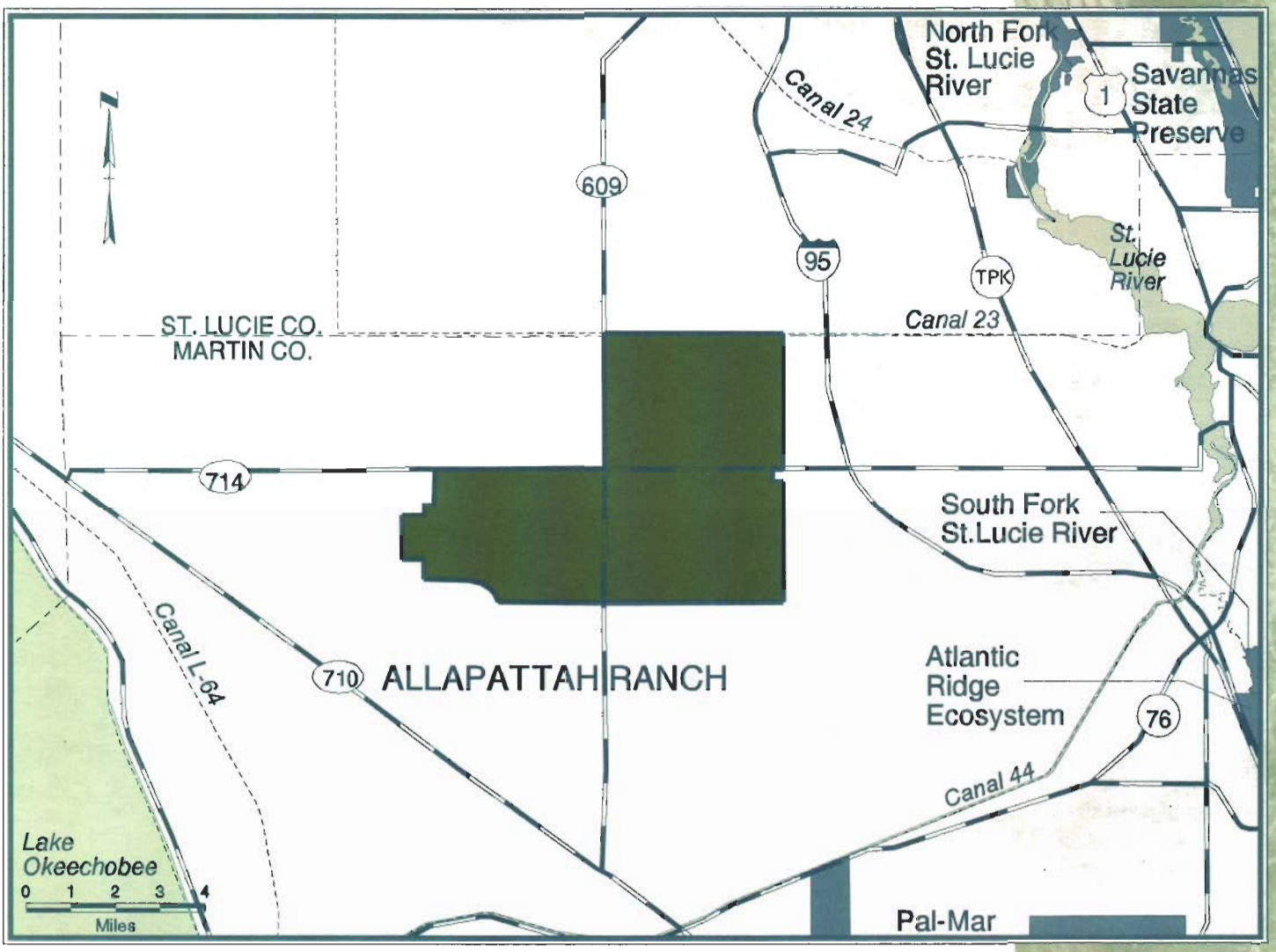
Most of the natural habitats on this tract are highly disturbed. Shallow swales and ditches have reduced the hydroperiod in the wet prairies and depression marshes. Clearing for improved pasture has removed most of the native shrubs and understory. Acquisition would enable most of the wetlands to be restored through the installation of earthen ditch plugs. If water control structures can be installed in the large ditches near the hydric hammock, restoration of that community is possible as well. Upland restoration of the mesic and xeric flatwoods will be much more difficult.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Sensitive Manner

The project area has been operated as a cattle ranch for many years. Most of the native shrub understory has been cleared and planted in bahia grass. The hydroperiod of most of the wetlands has been severely shortened. Heavy grazing has kept the site from becoming dominated with wax myrtle. Management of the project will be difficult, even with hydrologic restoration. If cattle are removed it is expected that wax myrtle will rapidly spread. The elimination of bahia grass pastures and restoration of the pone flatwoods communities will be time consuming and expensive. Exotic vegetation control will be a major task, although exotics are not presently a problem. Allapattah Ranch has been proposed to mitigate the loss of recreational hunting opportunities that will occur when Browns Farm Wildlife Management Area is converted into STA 2. As such, it is proposed that Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission be the lead manager for the non-reservoir areas. The District would retain responsibility for all hydrologic restoration.

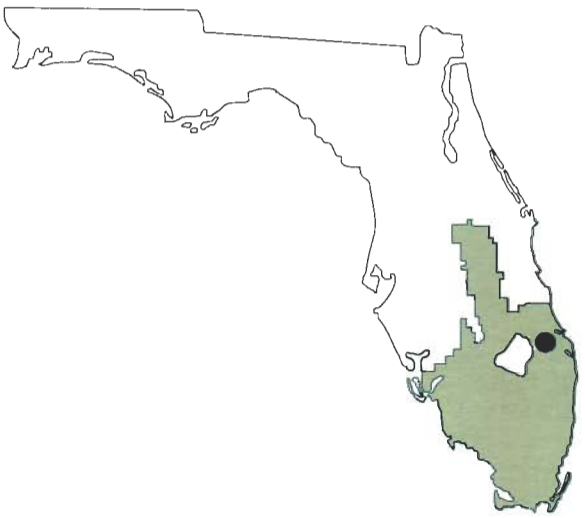
Recreation Potential

This tract is large enough to accommodate a variety of recreational uses, including hunting, hiking, camping, and horseback riding.



Counties:
Martin

Total Project Area:
22,500 acres



- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem

General Description

Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem is located in southern Martin County, between US 1 and Interstate 95. It covers 12,300 acres of diverse community types, including scrub, pine flatwoods, and forested sloughs. In 1997, Atlantic Ridge was ranked #2 on the CARL acquisition list. The current land use is mostly cattle grazing on unimproved pasture. Intense agricultural and residential development are occurring around the perimeter of the project.

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. In 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

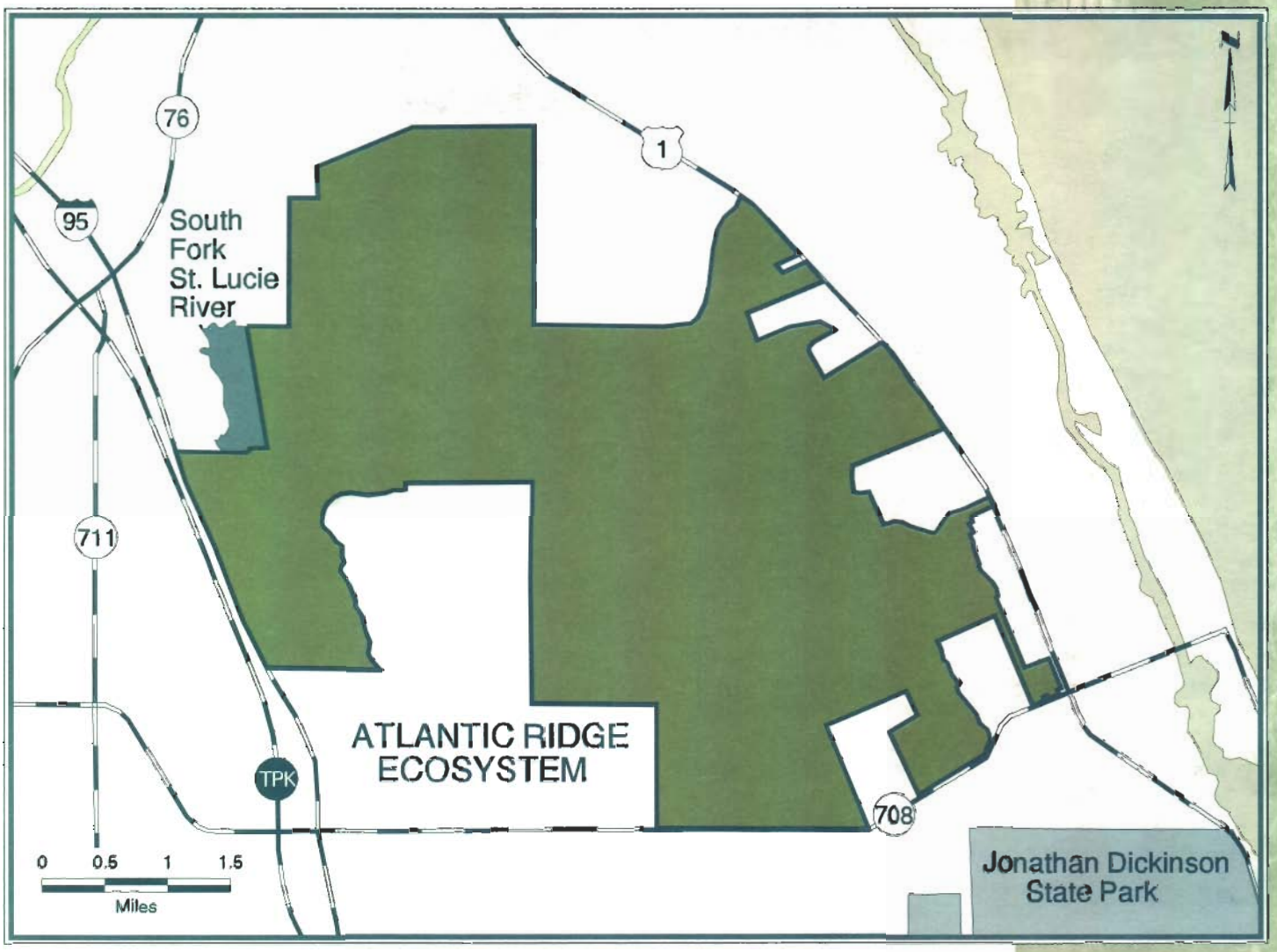
There are numerous abandoned farm fields in the north end which need to be restored. A ditch system connects wetlands in the northwest portion of the project, and drains to the South Fork. However, sheetpile weirs were installed in these ditches as the result of District enforcement action in the mid-1980's.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

Under the CARL proposal the project will be managed as a state park or preserve, by the Division of Recreation and Parks. No large exotic plant infestations are present, but exotic control will certainly be a management task, as will prescribed burning.

Recreation Potential

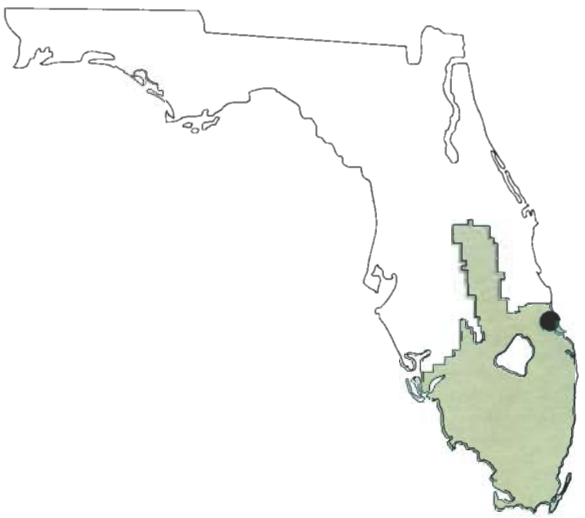
This site is large and very accessible to major population centers in south Florida. Public access points could be established along three sides of the project. The variety of community types would make interesting hiking and the area could be opened to fishing. Hunting might be possible under agreement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



County:
Martin

Total Project Area:
12,300 acres

Number of Owners:
Numerous



- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

Big Pine Key

General Description

The Big Pine Key project is designed to complement the existing Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge. The Nature Conservancy and District Governing Board initiated the land acquisitions, and the District's contribution was limited to $2 million.

In 1990, the District completed its land-acquisition commitment to the project. The District supports the ongoing acquisition efforts by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, CARL, and The Nature Conservancy to protect the remaining undeveloped parcels within the project boundaries. During 1995, The Nature Conservancy acquired 605 acres of mineral rights and transferred ownership to the District.

Land Stewardship Activities

The Nature Conservancy prepared a conceptual management plan to provide future managers with guidelines to protect and restore the unique vegetative communities and wildlife populations on Big Pine Key. The plan includes descriptions and maps of vegetative communities, as well as lists of observed wildlife, endangered plants and animals, and summaries of the island's fresh-water lenses and hydrogeology. The plan also discusses the needs and methodologies for activities that include prescribed burning, exotic plant removal and treatment, general cleanup work, natural resource inventory, and preparation of a land-management plan.

In May 1995, the District approved a 50-year management agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the Big Pine Key property. The agreement provides for all management needs as part of the Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge. After the District provided the first two years of funding, the federal government now provides these services at no cost to the District.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

All management and restoration activities are under way, including control of exotic plants, removal of fill from wetlands, backfilling drainage ditches and general property maintenance. Inventories of the natural resources are continuing, as are planning efforts to conduct additional prescribed burning.

Public Recreation

The Refuge staff works closely with the local office of The Nature Conservancy to carefully plan and analyze all management and outdoor recreation activities on these very sensitive resources.

All major borders of District lands are posted, and the general regulations of the Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge apply. These lands are open to daytime activities, such as hiking, nature study, and horseback riding. Most individual tracts are too small and scattered to sustain much public use.

Natural Resource Management

Activity	Acres	Proposed
Exotic Control	80	50
Fire Management	0	10
Mowing/Chopping	0	51
Restoration	5	

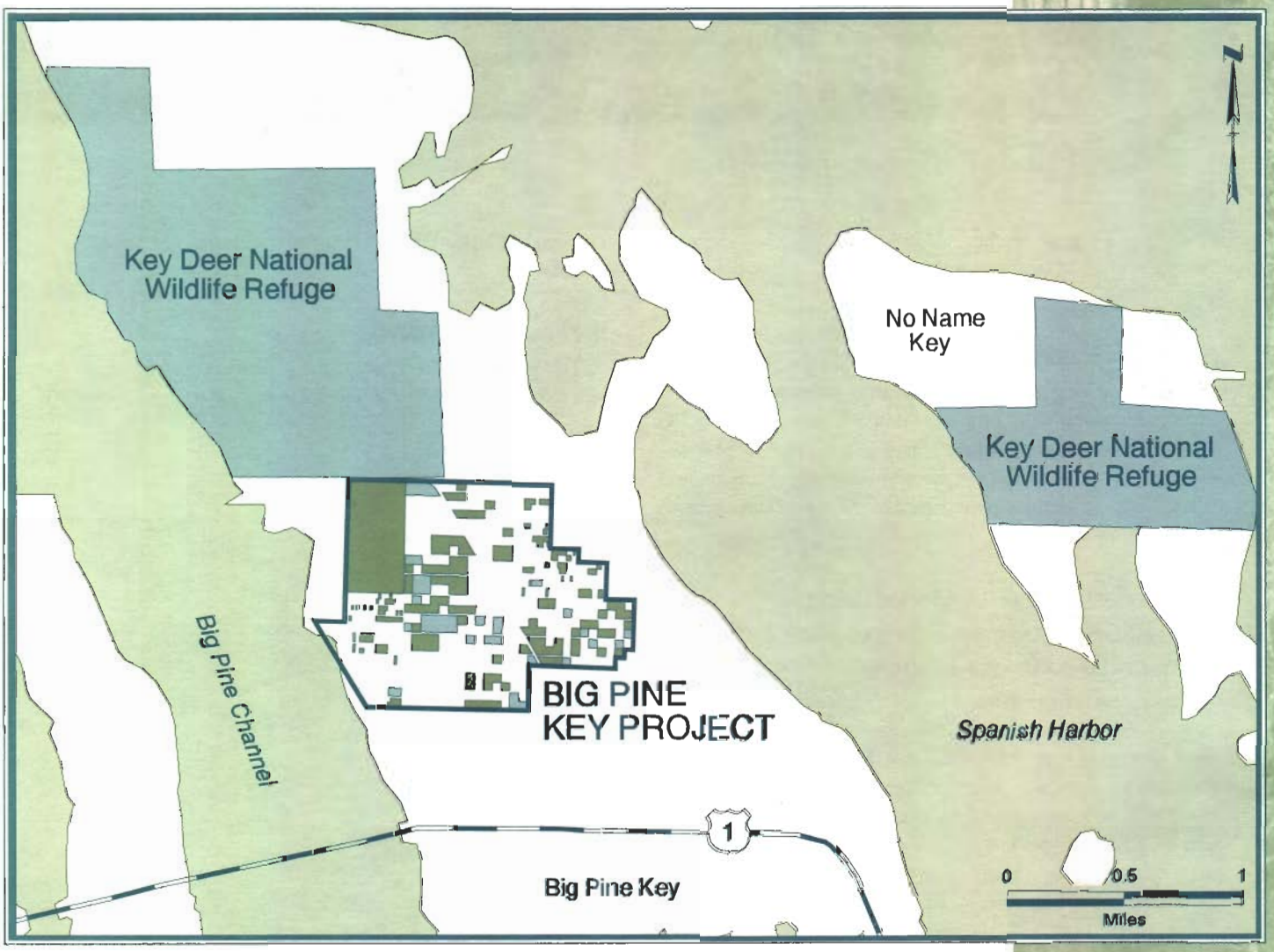
	Ongoing	Complete
General Clean-up	•	
Waste Removal		•
Fencing/Posting		•
Security		
USFW		

Public Use

	Yes	No
Fishing		•
Hunting		•
Hiking	•	
Horseback Riding		•
Bicycling		•
Camping		•
Airboating		•
Environmental Education	•	

Planning

	Ongoing	Complete
Conceptual Planning	•	
Hydrologic Restoration Plan		•

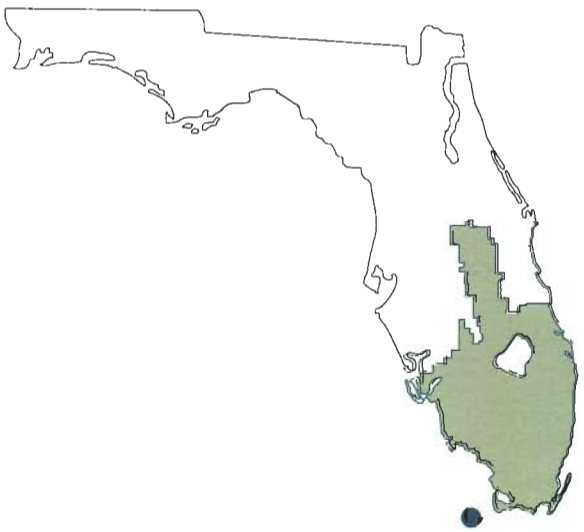


County:
Monroe

Total Acres Acquired:
189

Land Cost (SOR):
$1,999,900

Acres Remaining:
0



- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

Catfish Creek

General Description

Catfish Creek is located in Polk County. The project totals 5,000 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 Resource

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

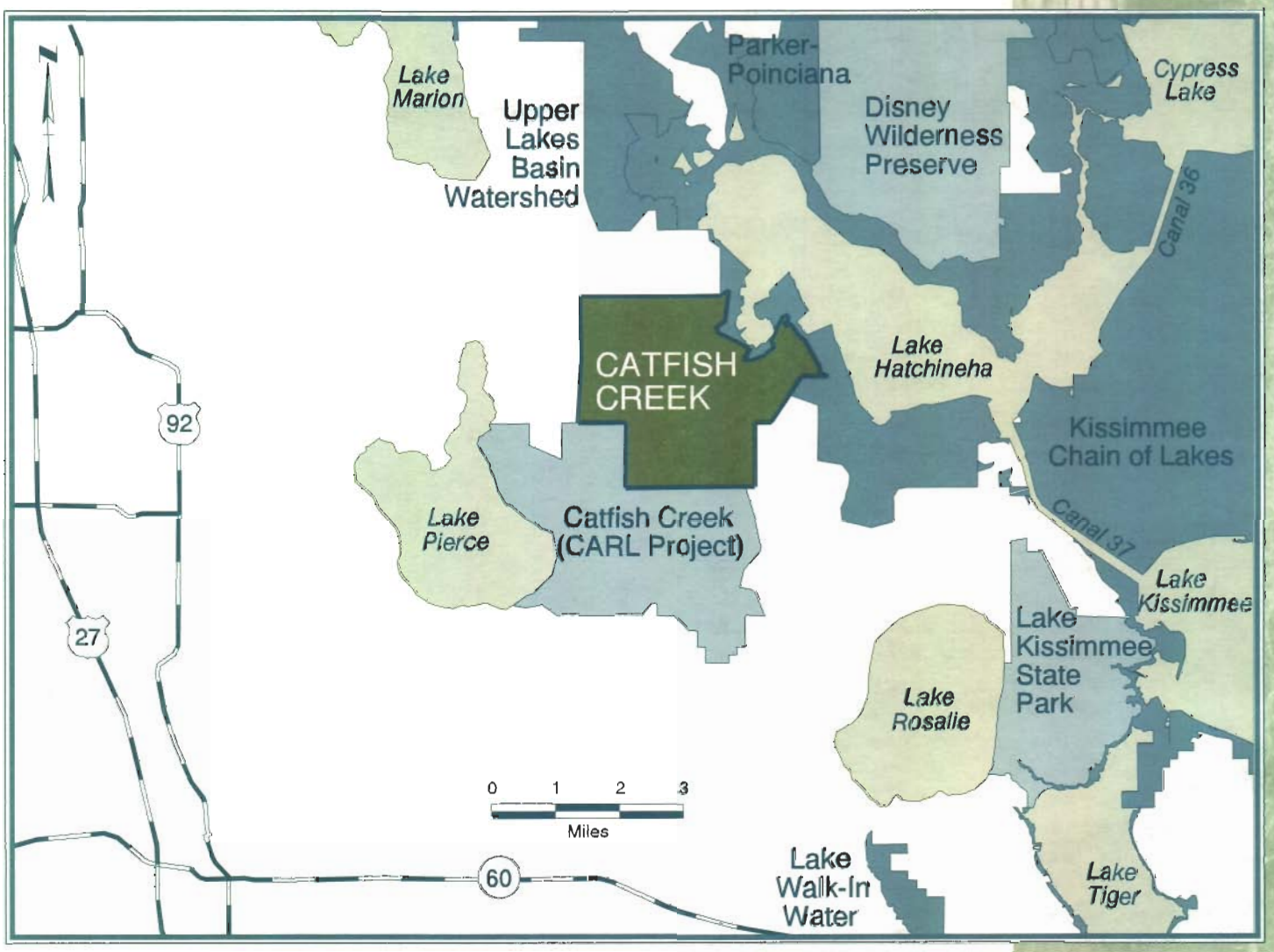
Numerous shallow ditches exist in the improved pastures, which drain to Lake Hatchineha. These ditches can be easily plugged, and the associated wetlands, restored. Upland restoration could be accomplished on the improved pastures. No stands of exotic vegetation were observed. The site contains several 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

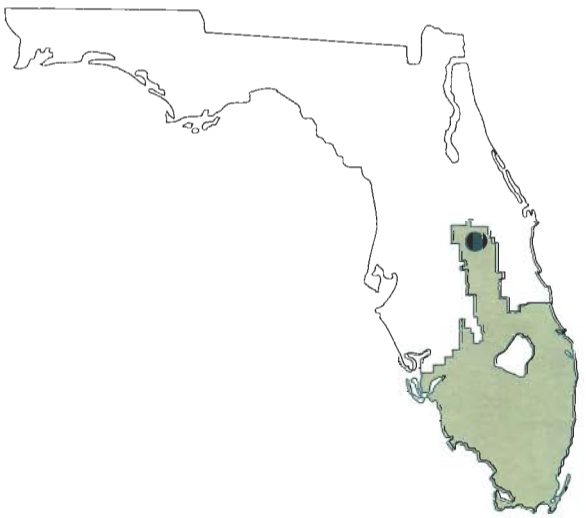
This site has excellent potential for passive recreational use, including hiking, horseback riding, camping, and nature appreciation.



County:
Polk

Total Project Area:
5,100 acres

Number of Owners:
One



- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

CREW

General Description

Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed, commonly called CREW, is a generic name for a vast project covering nearly 55,000 acres in Lee and Collier counties. The CREW lands surround the National Audubon Society's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary. However, the sanctuary is not included in the project boundary, nor will it be acquired.

Between July 1996 and June 1997, the District acquired 62 acres.

Project Vision

The vision for the future of the CREW lands is primarily hydrologic, but it also contains ecological and public-use components. CREW is at the northern tip of the western Big Cypress watershed. Water flows through CREW to private, state, and federally protected natural areas, including the Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge, Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve, Big Cypress National Preserve, and Everglades National Park.

In addition, surface water from the Flint Pen Strand and Bird Rookery Swamp runs off to Estero Bay and the Wiggins Pass/Cocohatchee River Estuarine System via the Imperial River, Spring Creek and the Cocohatchee canal. The District intends to maintain existing sheet flow and water quality within undisturbed portions of CREW and restore hydrologic conditions in Bird Rookery Swamp by installing water-control structures in existing canals.

The District plans to enhance natural communities degraded by human impact. Natural reestablishment of slash pine and cypress trees will be encouraged in areas that have been logged. The District has initiated chemical treatment, sometimes in combination with prescribed burning, which will continue until exotic-plant infestations are under control.

Natural Resource Management

Activity	Acres	Proposed
Exotic Control	10,000	
Fire Management	1,000	1,500
Mowing/Chopping	11 miles	10 miles
Restoration		

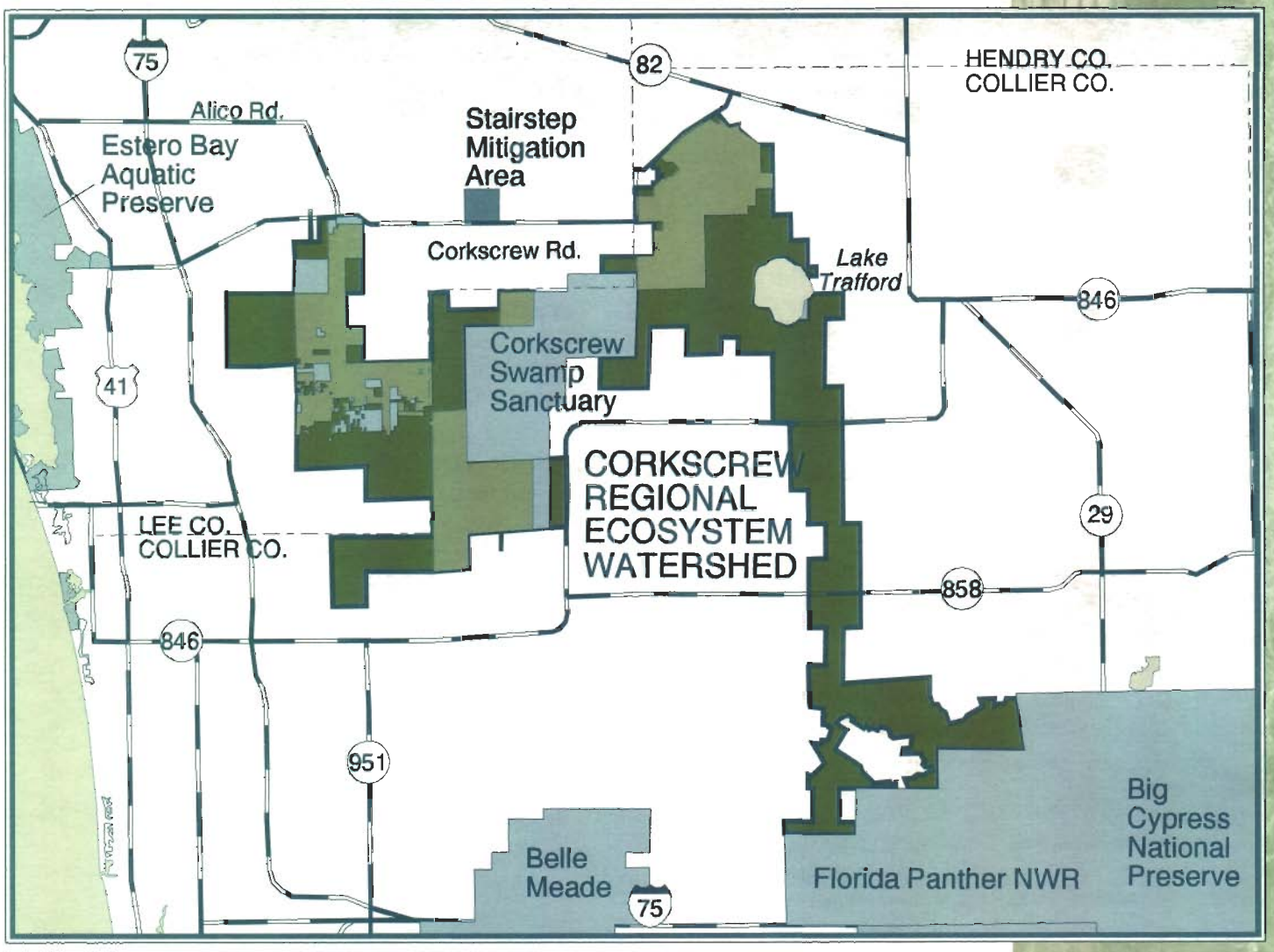
	Initiated	Ongoing
General Clean-up		•
Waste Removal		•
Fencing/Posting		•
Security		
GFC Reserve		
GFC		

Public Use

	Yes	No
Fishing	NA	
Hunting		•
Hiking	•	
Horseback Riding		•
Bicycling (roads only)		•
Camping	•	
Airboating		•
Environmental Education	•	
Greenway System		
CREW		

Planning

	Ongoing	Complete
Conceptual Planning	•	
Public Input		
CREW Trust		
Cooperative Management Agreement(s)		
County		
FTA		
CREW Trust		



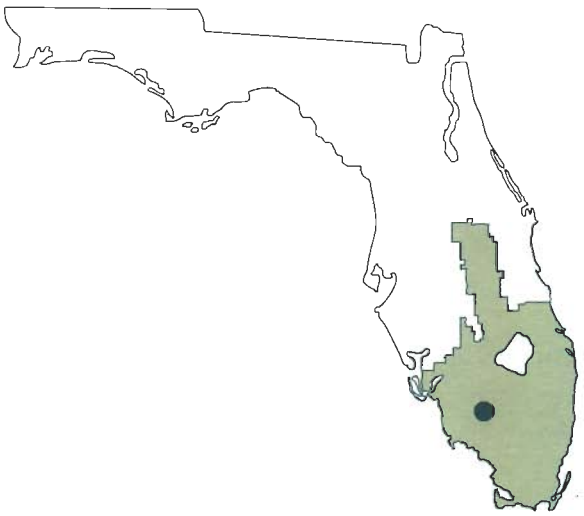
Counties:
Collier and Lee

Total Project Area:
55,968 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
18,856

Acres Remaining:
37,112

Acres Acquired by Others:
5



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Cypress Creek/Trail Ridge

General Description

Cypress Creek/Trail Ridge is a 15,500-acre project in southwestern St. Lucie County. It is divided into three major tracts that lie north and south of State Road 70. Two tracts (Cypress Creek portion) are contiguous; the third (Trail Ridge) is not.

The project gets its name from a large forested wetland system that once extended along the entire eastern edge of the Orlando Ridge south of Indian River County, through Allapattah Flats, and drained into the South Fork St. Lucie River. The Cypress Creek portion is also a CARL project.

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

The lands in this proposal include a major portion of the largest remaining wetland system in western St. Lucie County. The area north of SR 70 is a mixture of hydric hammock, basin swamps, and improved pasture. Much of the cypress and pine north of SR 70 has been logged.

Flows from Cypress Creek, which historically passed under SR 70 have been routed west through a ditch along the north side of the highway. The ditch passes under SR 70 and into a ditch along the west side of Bluefield Road. The canal turns east and forms the southern property boundary of the Cypress Creek portion and empties into C-23 Canal. Most of the historic slough remains intact south of SR 70. Very little logging has occurred. Some minor ditching has taken place, but the greatest impact to hydroperiod appears to be the rerouting of Cypress Creek.

The Trail Ridge portion is separated from Cypress Creek and lies along the west side of Bluefield Road. It still contains remnant bay and cypress heads, and a narrow band of hydric hammock, known as Van Swearingen Creek. Two large areas of sand pine scrub are the most significant natural features.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

The SOR application proposed that only the portion north of SR 70 be acquired fee title. The remaining lands south of SR 70 would be purchased as conservation easements. The southern Cypress Creek portion needs some hydrologic restoration. However, that depends on restoring flows under SR 70 and reaching an acceptable agreement with the landowner regarding additional water on his property.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

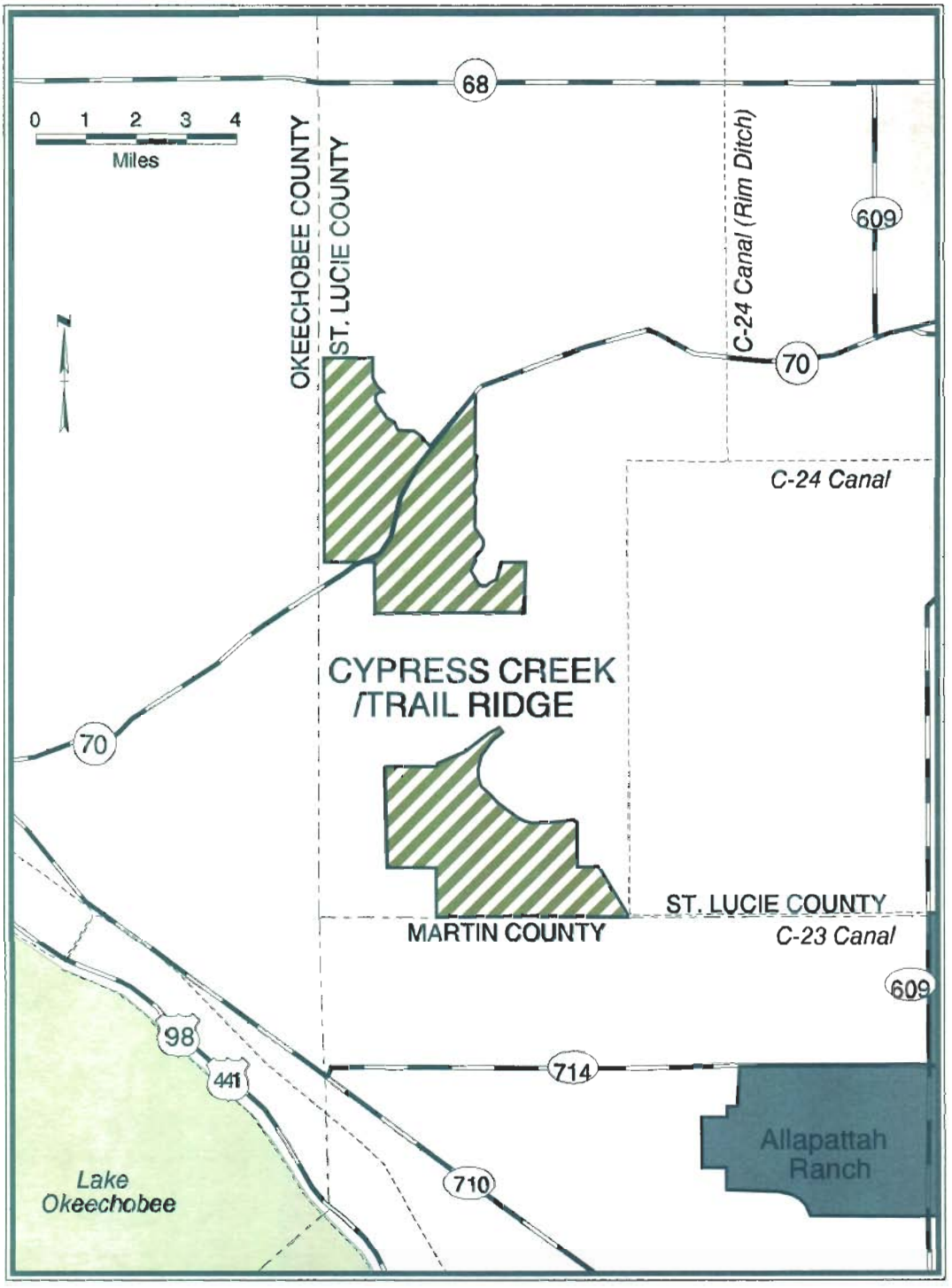
Prescribed burning would be required over much of the site. The Catfish Creek CARL project is being managed as a State Preserve by Florida DEP. That management would likely be extended onto this tract as well.

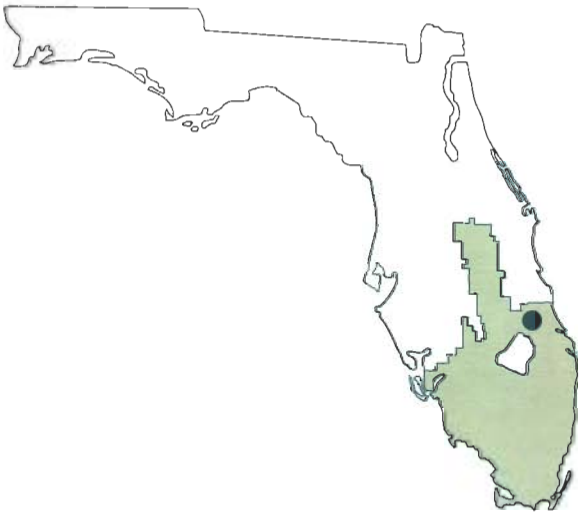
Recreation Potential

Since only the lands north of SR 70 will be acquired in fee, that is the only area where public use will be allowed. There is good mixture of community types where hiking trails and wilderness campsites could be developed. It is possible that suitable areas exist for equestrian trails, as well.

Counties:
St. Lucie

Total Project Area:
13,788 acres





SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

DuPuis Reserve

General Description

The DuPuis Reserve 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.

Project Vision

The DuPuis Reserve will be a mixture of community types, characteristic of the diverse ecosystem that existed before the impacts which increased drainage and reduced sheetflow Plant communities will include wet flatwoods, mesic flatwoods, wet prairies, depression marshes, cypress dominated basin swamps and restored Everglades. Water and fire will be the major natural elements that drive ecological succession. Hydrologic management, prescribed burning and exotic species control will be the primary tools used to restore and manage these communities. Wetland restoration efforts will restore the functional values of water storage and water quality provided by the DuPuis Reserve.

Natural Resource Management

Activity	Acres	Proposed
Exotic Control	13,000	10,000
Fire Management	5,705	9,000
Mowing/Chopping	600	1,000
Restoration	2,000	2,500

	Ongoing	Complete
General Clean-up	•	
Waste Removal	•	
Fencing/Posting	•	

Security
GFC

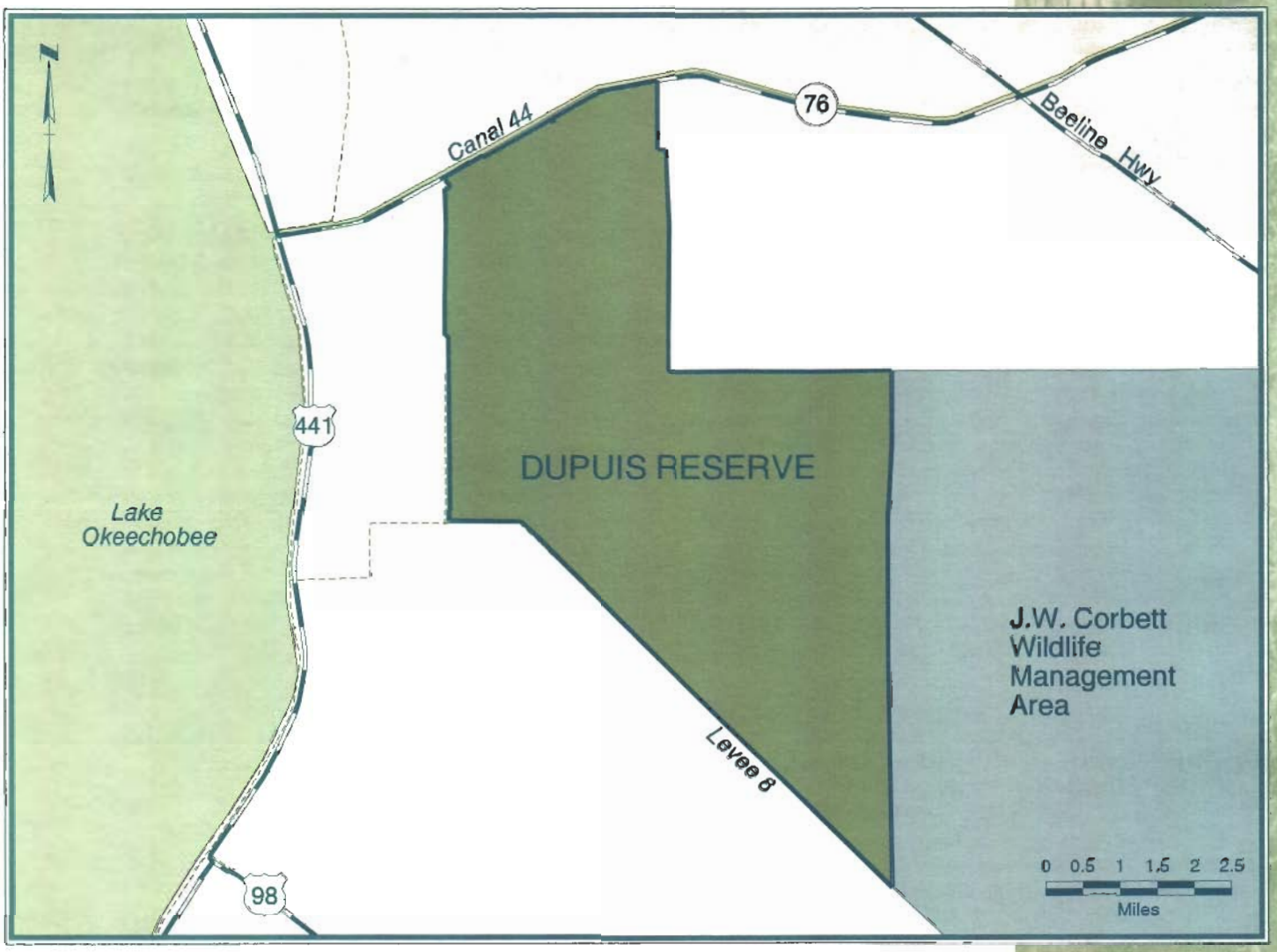
Public Use

	Yes	No
Fishing	•	
Hunting	•	
Hiking	•	
Horseback Riding	•	
Bicycling	•	
Camping	•	
Airboating		•
Environmental Education	•	

Greenway System
Lake Okeechobee to Atlantic Ocean

Planning

	Ongoing	Complete
Conceptual Planning	•	
Hydrologic Restoration Plan	•	

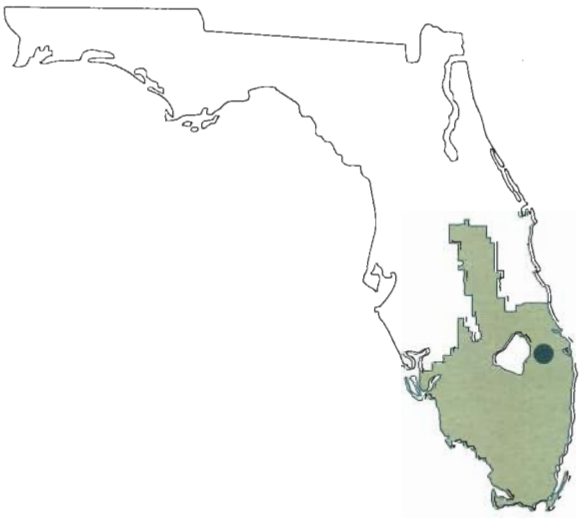


Counties:
Martin and Palm Beach

Total Project Area:
21,875 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
21,875

Land Cost:
$23 Million



- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

East Coast Buffer

General Description

The East Coast Buffer consists of approximately 66,400 acres of marshes, reservoirs, and groundwater recharge areas in Palm Beach, Broward and Dade counties. The conceptual plan is to locate these areas on undeveloped lands abutting the East Coast Protective Levee, which separates the water conservation areas from developed lands to the east. A detailed description of these lands is available from District staff in either the land stewardship or lower east coast planning divisions.

The East Coast Buffer incorporates lands within three previously designated Save Our Rivers projects — the Dade-Broward Levee, Everglades Buffer Strip North, and Strazzulla. The acreage of these projects is included within the total area shown for the East Coast Buffer Project.

In June 1997, the District's Governing Board approved the expansion of the project by 5,657 acres. Between July 1, 1996, and September 30, 1997, the District acquired 4,271.6 acres within the project area.

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

Serving as a barrier, the East Coast Buffer will reduce the impacts of development to the Everglades, reduce levee seepage from the Everglades, increase groundwater recharge, enhance drinking-water supplies, improve the Everglade's water supply, and enhance the thousands of acres of remaining wetlands that once comprised the Everglades.

The project involves using excess stormwater to reduce the seepage loss from the East Coast Protective Levee. Management activities proposed for the marshes include hydroperiod restoration and removal of exotic vegetation to enhance, preserve, and maintain the wetlands.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Most of the land within the boundary delineated for the East Coast Buffer is undeveloped. Current land uses include very low-intensity development, pasture, and limestone mining. A significant portion also contains viable wetland habitat.

An important consideration in the development of the buffer is preserving and enhancing these wetlands. The District carefully studied improving the hydrologic patterns associated with them. Facilities such as pump stations, canals, and levees and associated operational criteria would be developed to enhance these valuable wetlands.

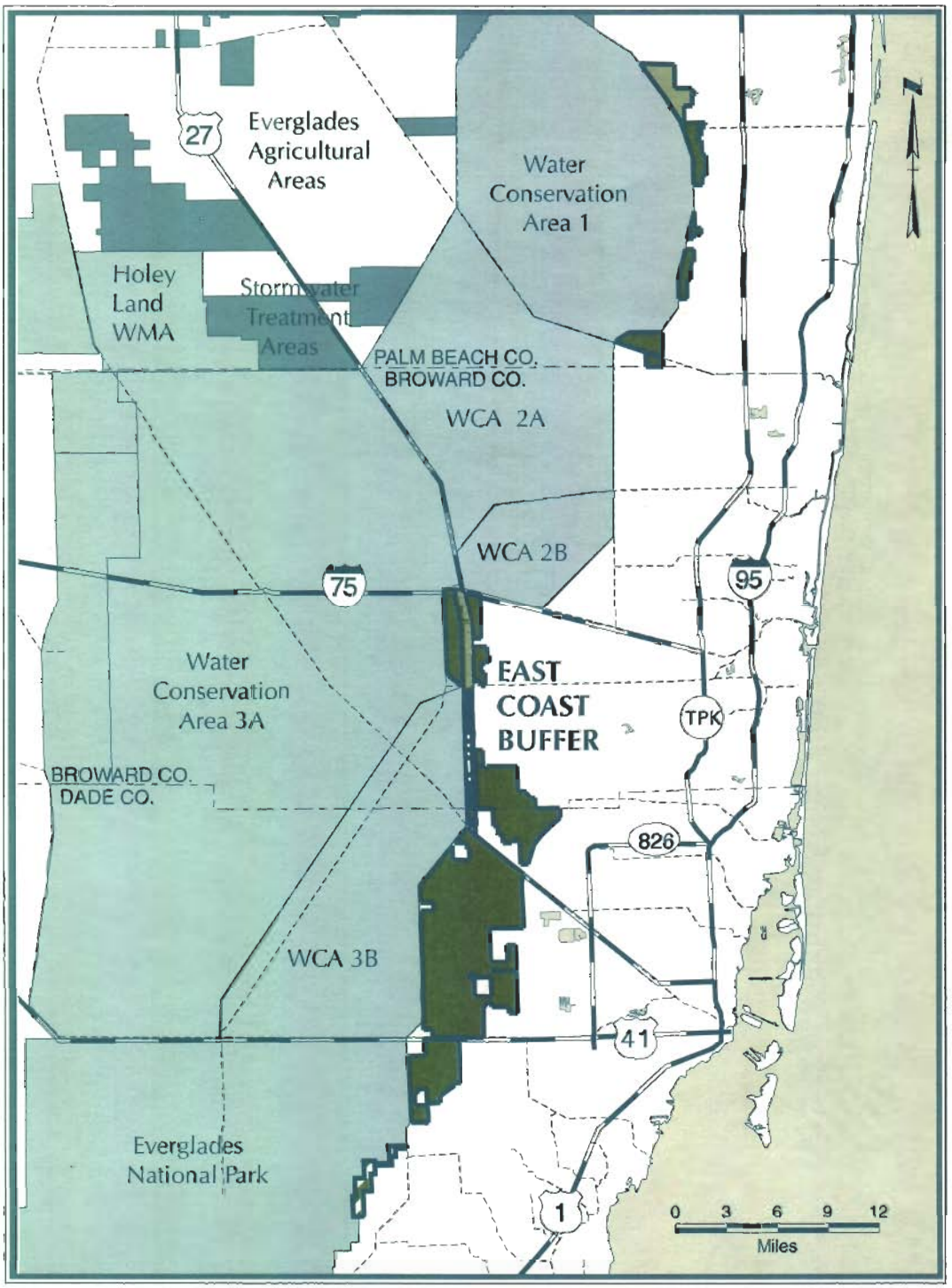
Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the East Coast Buffer is its role in restoring the Everglades. In 1992, Congress authorized the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to conduct the Central and Southern Florida Project Comprehensive Review Study. The reconnaissance report for this restudy was completed in November 1994. The Corps incorporated the East Coast Buffer in its analysis, referring to the area as the "Water Preserve Areas."

The reconnaissance report identified the need to restore more natural hydrologic conditions to the Everglades. The ability of the Water Preserve Areas to capture and store water currently released to the ocean is an essential component in any comprehensive plan to restore the Everglades. The Corps and the District are jointly conducting the second phase — the feasibility report — of the restudy, which specifically includes the East Coast Buffer or Water Preserve Areas.

Recreation Potential

Recreational activities could include fishing, canoe trails, environmental education, and interpretive facilities.



Counties:
Palm Beach, Broward and Dade

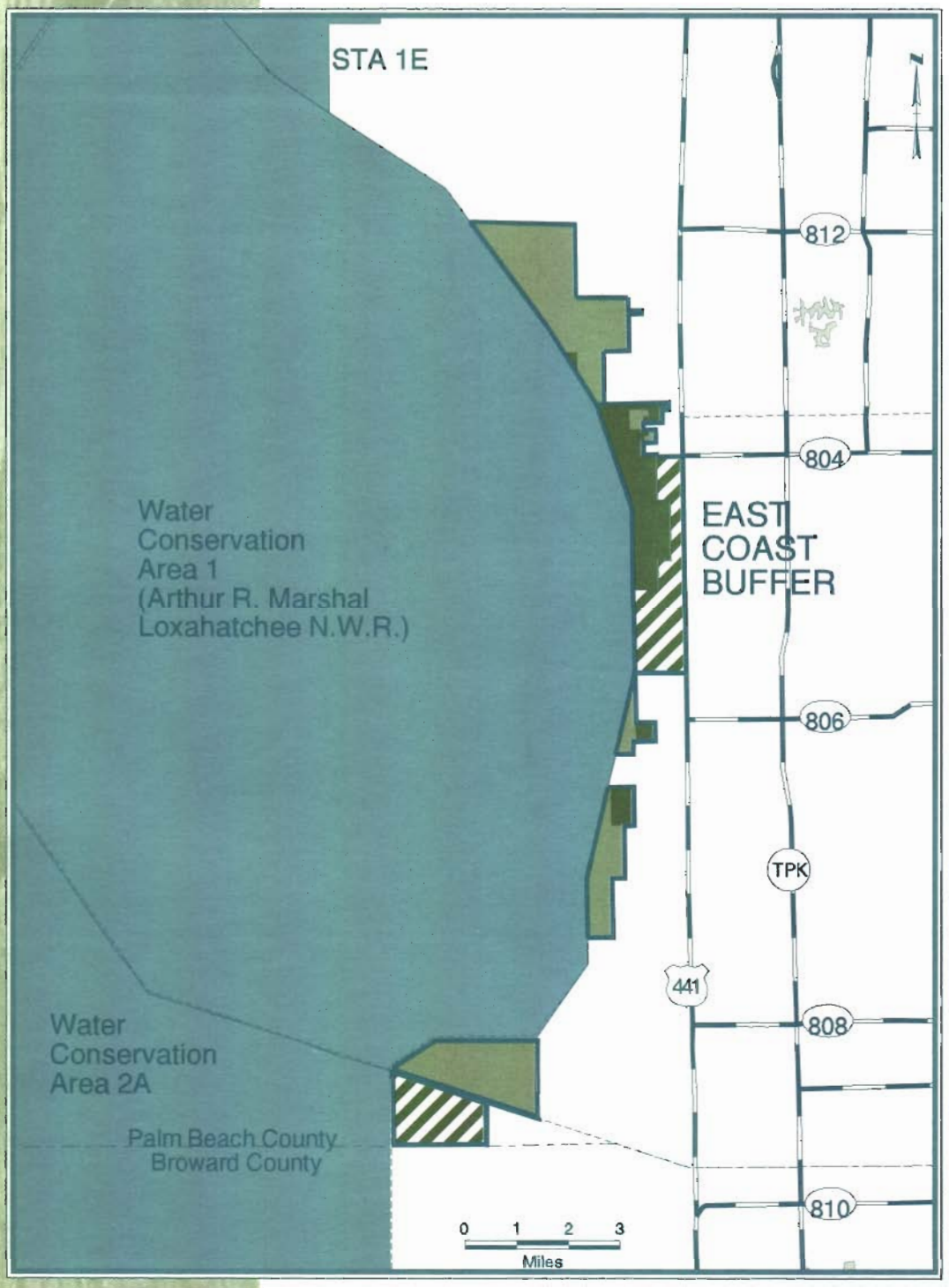
Total Project Area:
70,883

Total Acres Acquired:
15,164

Acres Remaining:
***55,537**

*Project area includes previously acquired lands.

SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary



Counties:
Palm Beach

Total Project Area:
70,883

Total Acres Acquired:
15,164

Acres Remaining:
***55,537**

*Project area includes previously acquired lands.

SOR Lands Acquired to Date

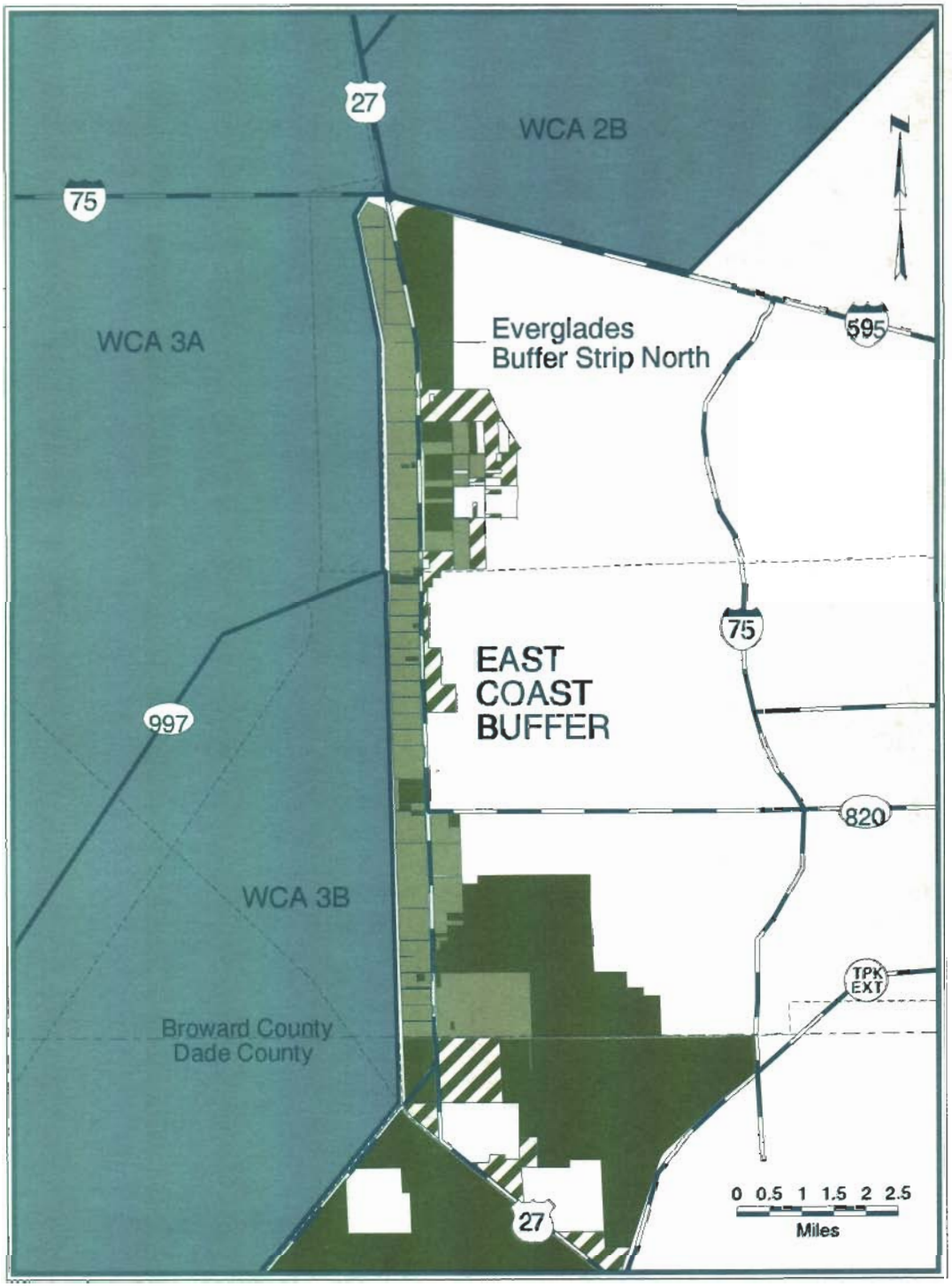
Potential Acquisition Areas

Other Conservation Areas

Other SOR Projects

1997 Project Additions

SOR Project Boundary



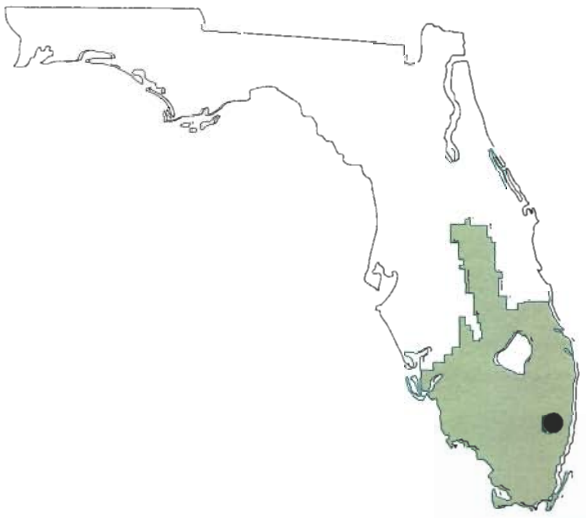
Counties:
Broward

Total Project Area:
69,412

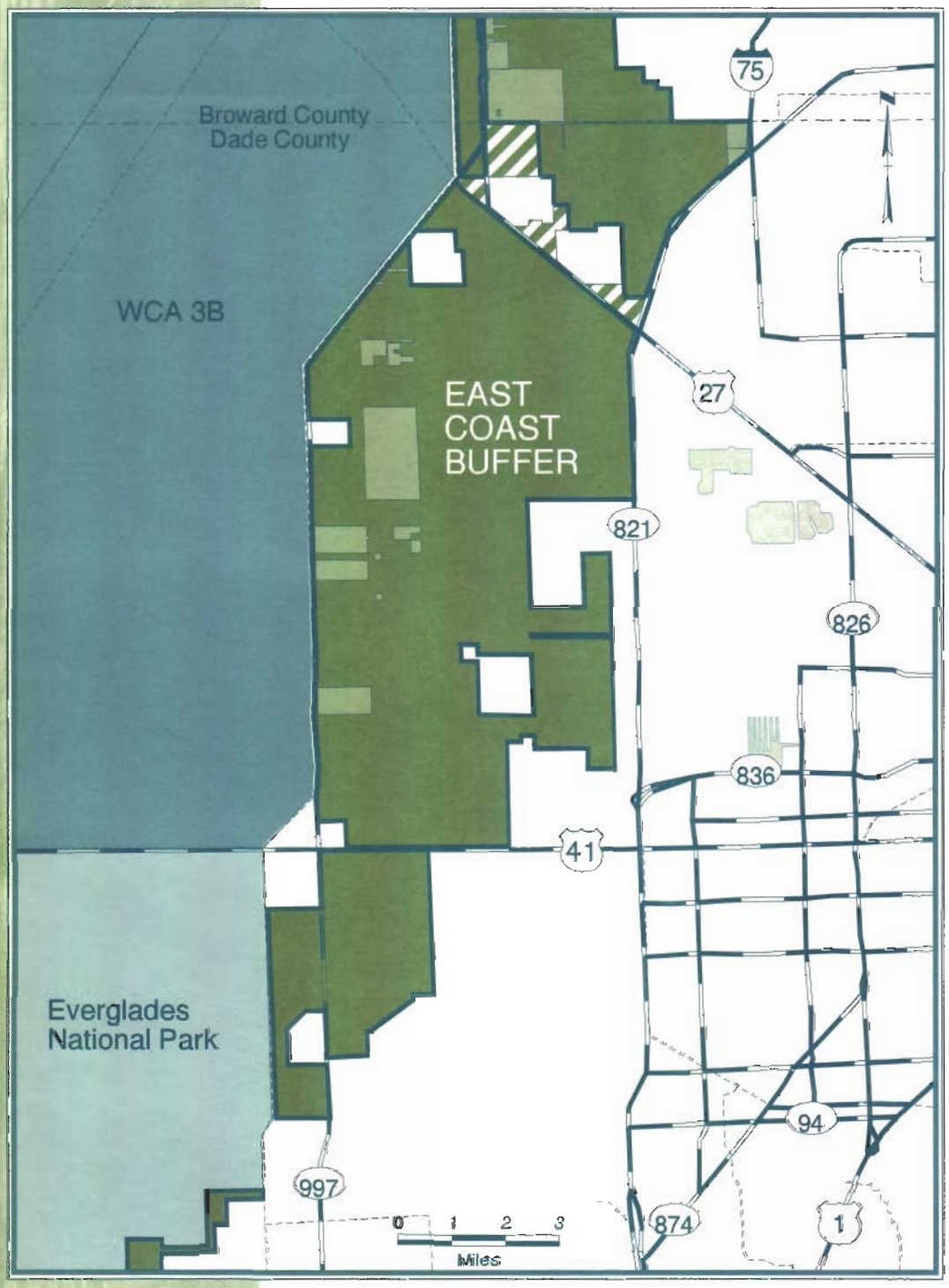
Total Acres Acquired:
5,601.6

Acres Remaining:
***55,537**

*Project area includes previously acquired lands.



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary



Counties:
Dade

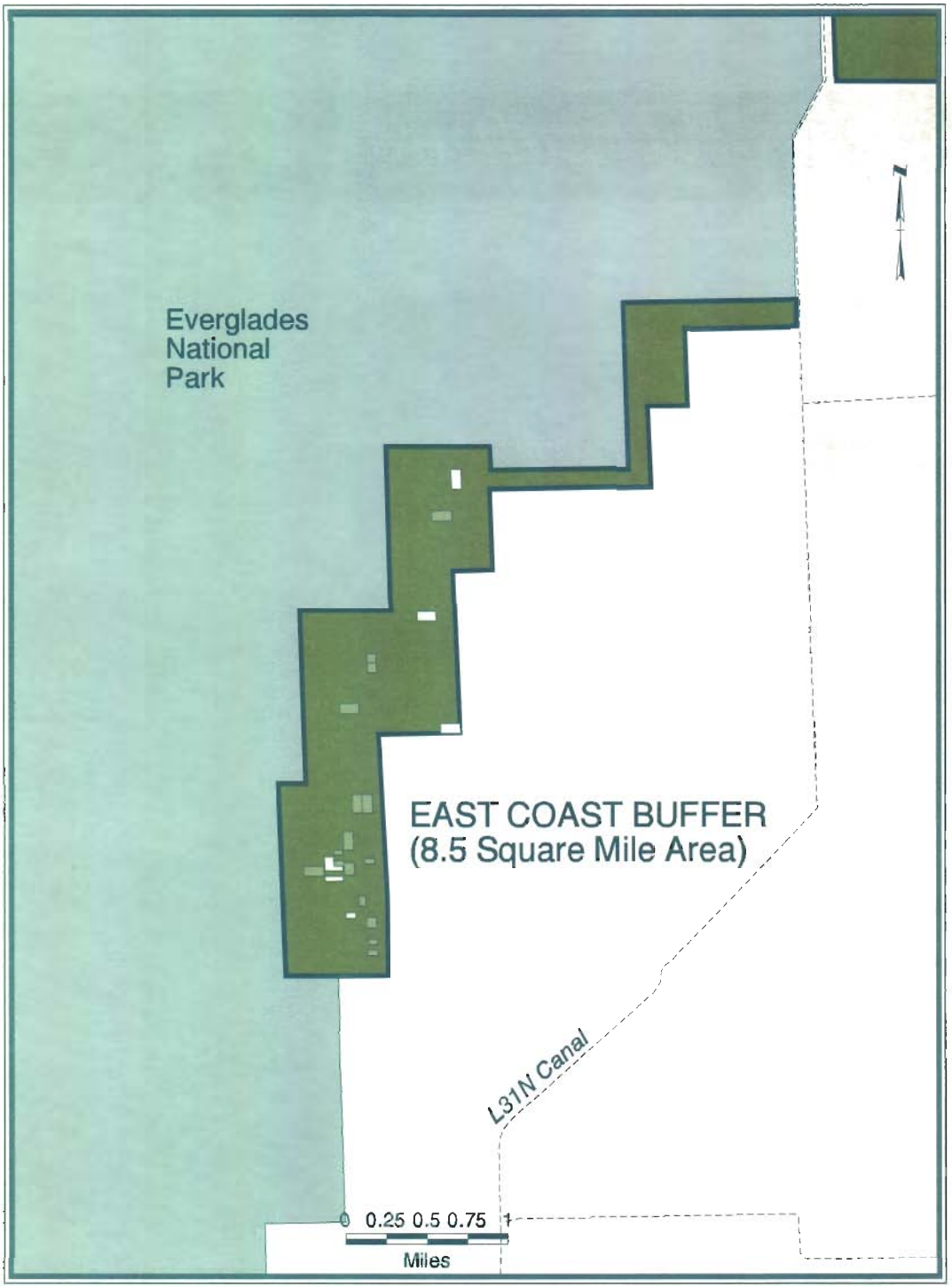
Total Project Area:
69,412

Total Acres Acquired:
5,601.6

Acres Remaining:
***55,537**

*Project area includes previously acquired lands.

SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary



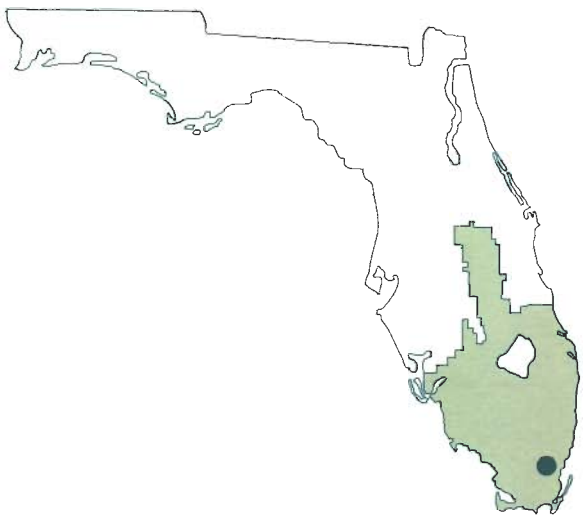
Counties:
Dade

Total Project Area:
69,412

Total Acres Acquired:
5,601.6

Acres Remaining:
*55,537

*Project area includes previously acquired lands.



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Everglades Agricultural Area

General Description:

The EAA Lands consist of real estate holdings of the Talisman Sugar Corporation Inc. These lands lie in the southern portion of the "Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) between the Miami Canal and North New River Canal in the S-7 and S-8 drainage basins. This area is south of Lake Okeechobee and west of the Water Conservation Areas. Between July 1, 1996-September 30, 1997, the District acquired 1,233 acres in the project.

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

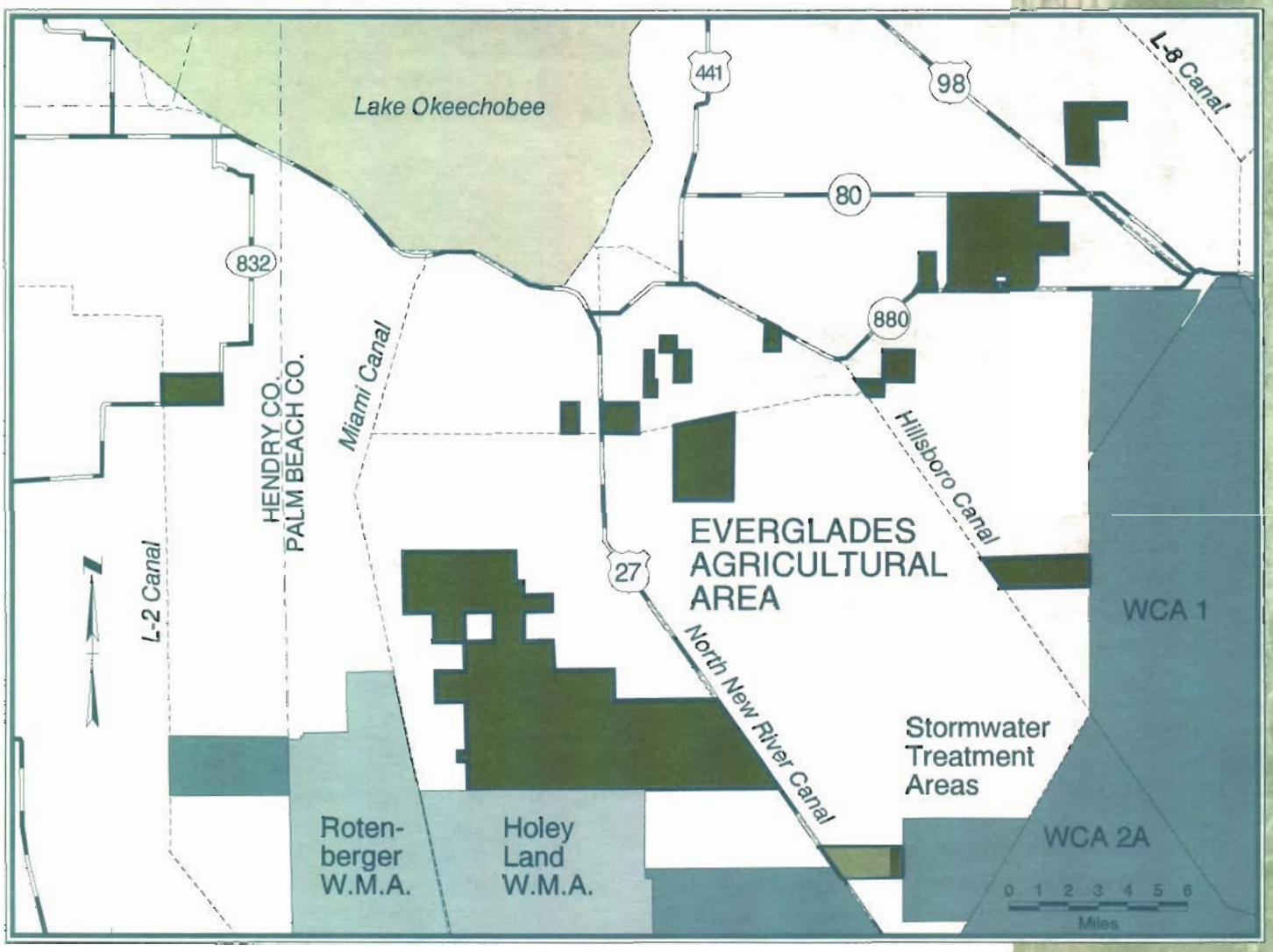
The Everglades Agricultural Areas would serve as a barrier to reduce the impacts of development to the Everglades, reduce levee seepage from the Everglades, increase groundwater recharge, enhance drinking water supplies, improve the Everglade's water supply, and enhance thousands of acres of wetlands that once comprised the Everglades. The project involves using excess stormwater to reduce the seepage loss from the East Coast Protective Levee. Management activities proposed for the marshes propose hydroperiod restoration and the removal of exotic vegetation for the enhancement, preservation and maintenance of the wetlands.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Another possibility for the lands would be restoration of the "historic" Everglade's ecosystem that once existed in that area. This would require restoration of pre-drainage hydrology in reestablishing the natural temporal and spatial distribution of flows and water depths that contributed to the sustainability of the pre-development ecosystem. The Natural System Model simulations of the pre-development hydrology indicate that the lands near the Holey Land experienced inundation approximately 80-90 percent of the time with an average depth of just over one-half foot.

Recreation Potential

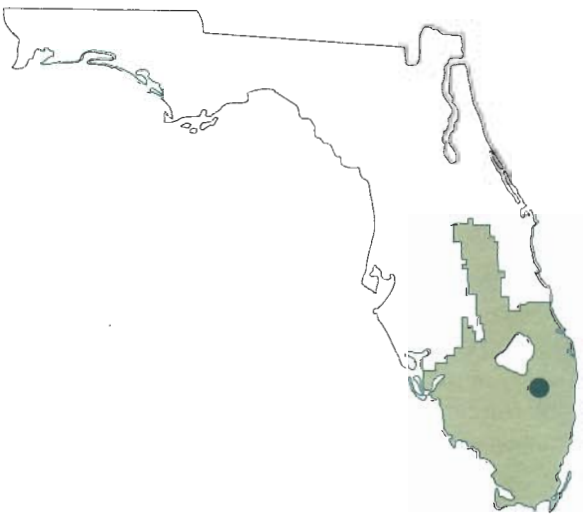
Recreational activities could include fishing, canoe trails, environmental education and possibly some interpretive sites.



Counties:
Palm Beach

Total Project Area:
48,570 acres

Total Areas Acquired
1,233 acres



- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

Fisheating Creek

General Description

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

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

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

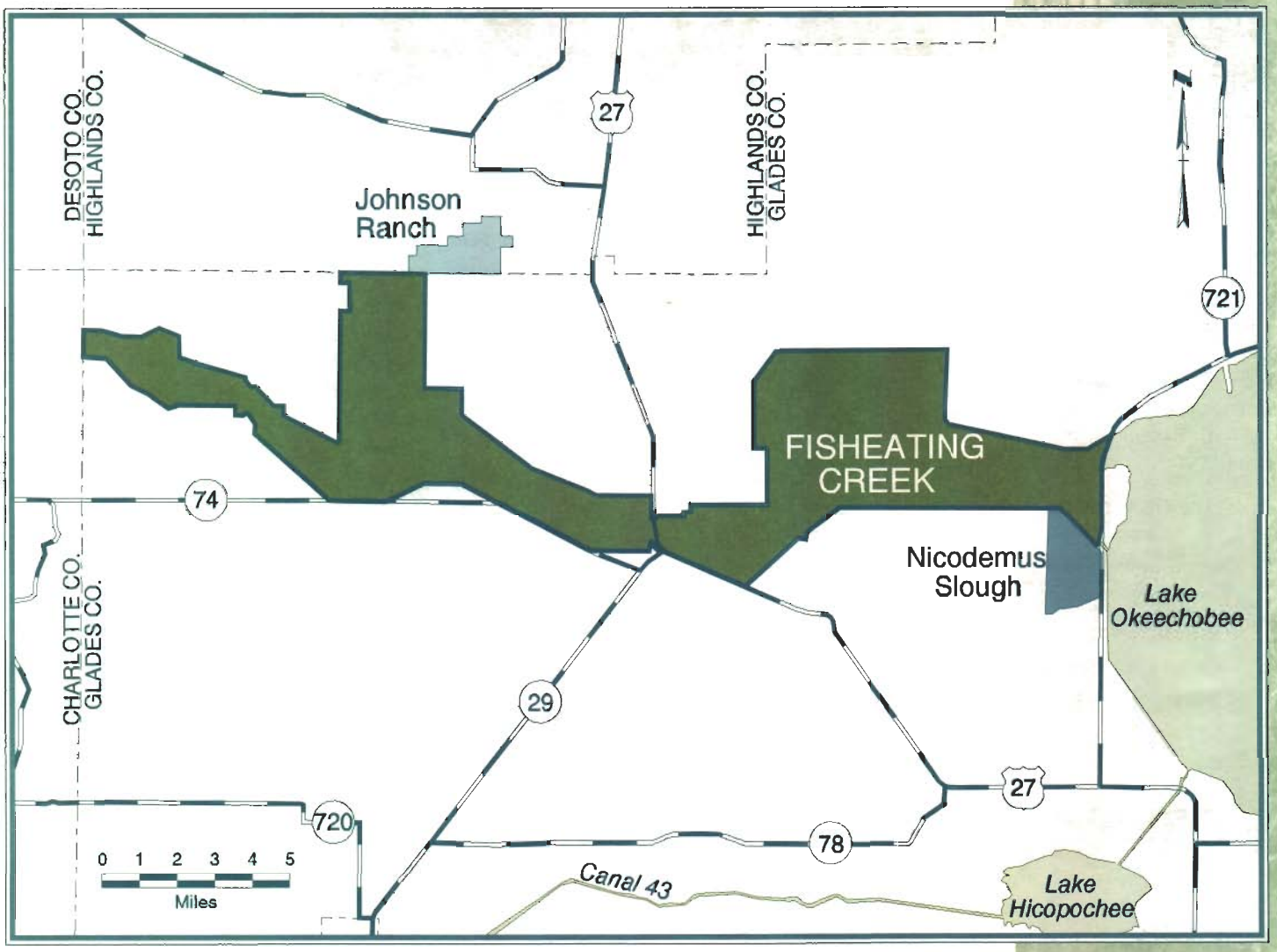
Much of the uplands and wetlands defined by the limits of this project remain in a relatively undisturbed state. Habitat types include cypress sloughs/mixed hardwood swamp forest, emergent marshes, willow thickets and openwater ponds and runs. Land-use in and around the flood plain is mostly native range.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

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

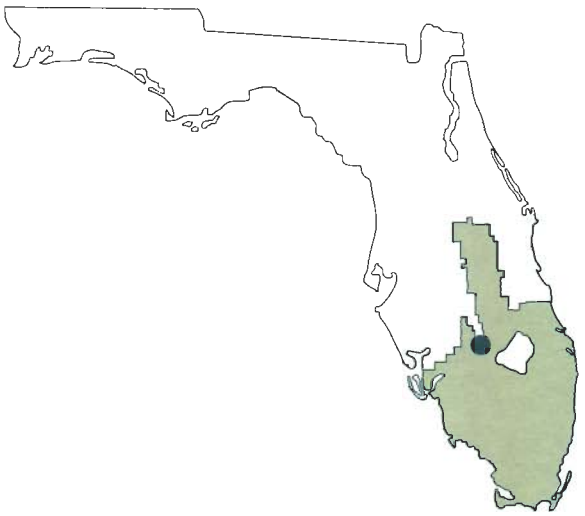
Acquisition and protection of Fisheating Creek, its floodplain and suitable upland corridor, could provide the public with opportunities for a variety of outdoor recreational activities. The reach of the creek upstream of Palmdale has been a popular canoe run for many years and is famous for its scenic 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.



County:
Glades

Total Project Area:
43,872 acres

Number of Owners:
One



- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

Frog Pond

General Description

The Frog Pond and L-31N Transition Lands cover approximately 10,450 acres and are located in south 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. It also contains 5,250 acres of "transitional lands," 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 in the L-31N transition area. During 1997, the District acquired 391 acres.

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

The purpose of the project is to increase the hydropattern 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 District's preferred plan under the U.S Army Corps of Engineers' C-111 General Re-evaluation Report calls for a floodway to be located in the Frog Pond agricultural area. This area will:

1. Simulate the natural hydrograph for delivery of water into Taylor Slough;

2. Use natural vegetation and microbial soil processes to cleanse runoff before discharge into Everglades National Park, and

3. 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 the Corps' C-111 General Re-evaluation Report project, both of which would result in restoration of natural freshwater hydropatterns to Florida Bay. Observations of seagrass die-offs, mangrove losses, reduced fisheries, and algal blooms provide strong evidence that Florida Bay is declining under current water-management practices.

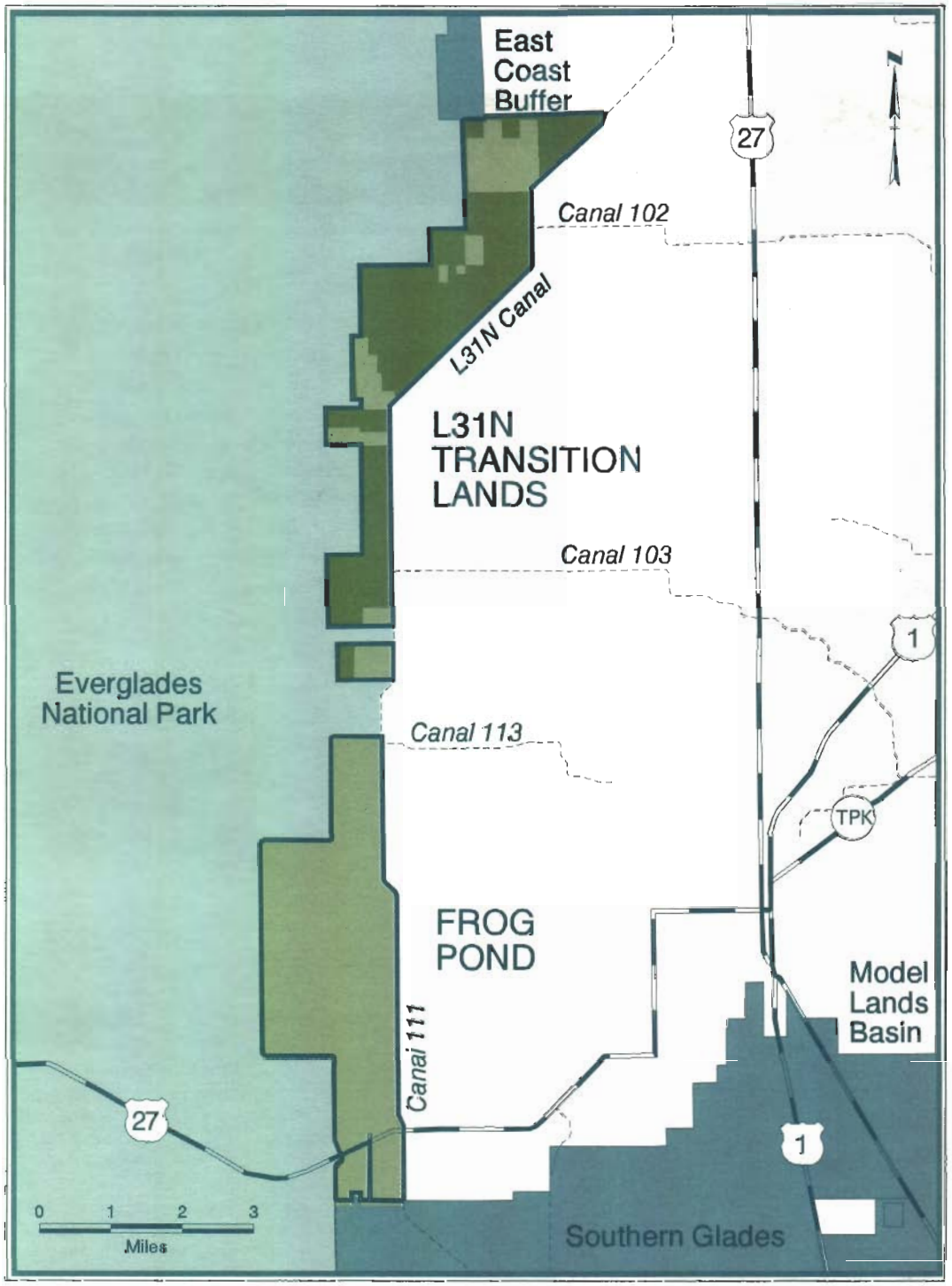
Current deliveries of fresh water to the bay differ in volume, timing and distribution from its pre-managed conditions. In addition, Taylor Slough in Everglades National Park will be enhanced through the improved hydropatterns and reestablishment of sheetflow over existing wetlands under this project.

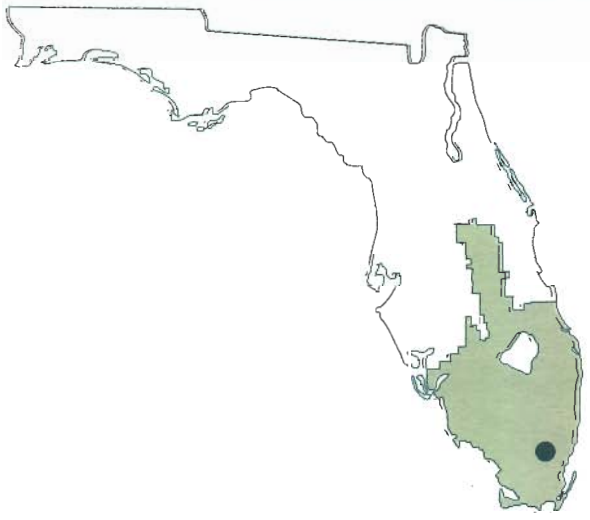
Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Capital improvements, such as canals, levees, weirs, and pumps will be limited to those necessary to achieve the proposed water-resource 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 General Re-evaluation Report alternative. The area will be managed in accordance with plans to restore Taylor Slough and Florida Bay. The District, Corps, and the National Park Service will develop these plans.

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

1997 Project Additions

SOR Project Boundary

County:
Dade

Total Project Area:
10,600 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
***6,853**

Acres Remaining:
***3,782**

Number of Owners:
Numerous

(*Nic Lands Acquired by CARL)

Indian River Lagoon

General Description

The Indian River Lagoon project consists of two tracts on Hutchinson Island in St. Lucie County totaling 535 acres. These are mosquito impoundments located between State Road A1A and the Indian River. The lands represent the only undeveloped parcels along the Indian River in St. Lucie County not in public ownership or for which no attempts for acquisition have been made.

In 1997 the District added approximately 1,015 acres to the project, bringing it to a total of 1,550 acres.

All remaining impoundment marshes along the St. Lucie County portion of the Indian River are either publicly owned or have been proposed for acquisition through various grant programs. Public ownership allows the county mosquito-control program to manage the lands together with Florida DEP permits and best management practices prescribed in the Indian River Lagoon SWIM Plan.

Best management practices include installation of operable water-control structures that allow flushing of the mosquito impoundments during most of the year (eight months) and the application of only biorational compounds to control mosquitoes. If these areas remain private and not under county management, mosquitoes are controlled with aerial applications of chemical pesticides. These private areas are also not connected with the Indian River, which deprives the estuary of an important source of mangrove detrital matter.

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

These areas are critical to the water management of the Indian River Lagoon. If they remain in private hands, water-control structures to allow flushing of the impoundments cannot be installed. Connection with the lagoon to allow mangrove leaves and the juvenile marine life produced in these areas is critical to the health of the estuary.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

The shallow waters of the impoundments are important nursery areas for approximately 80 percent of the commercial and sport fishery species in the lagoon. Following construction of the dikes and the separation of the marshes from the estuary, most of the estuarine-related habitat functions of the marsh were lost. Under county management, water-control structures would be left open for seven to eight months each year, allowing daily flushing and reflooding of the impoundments. Besides mangrove and salt-marsh wetlands, the sites contain approximately 15 percent tropical hammocks and freshwater wetlands.

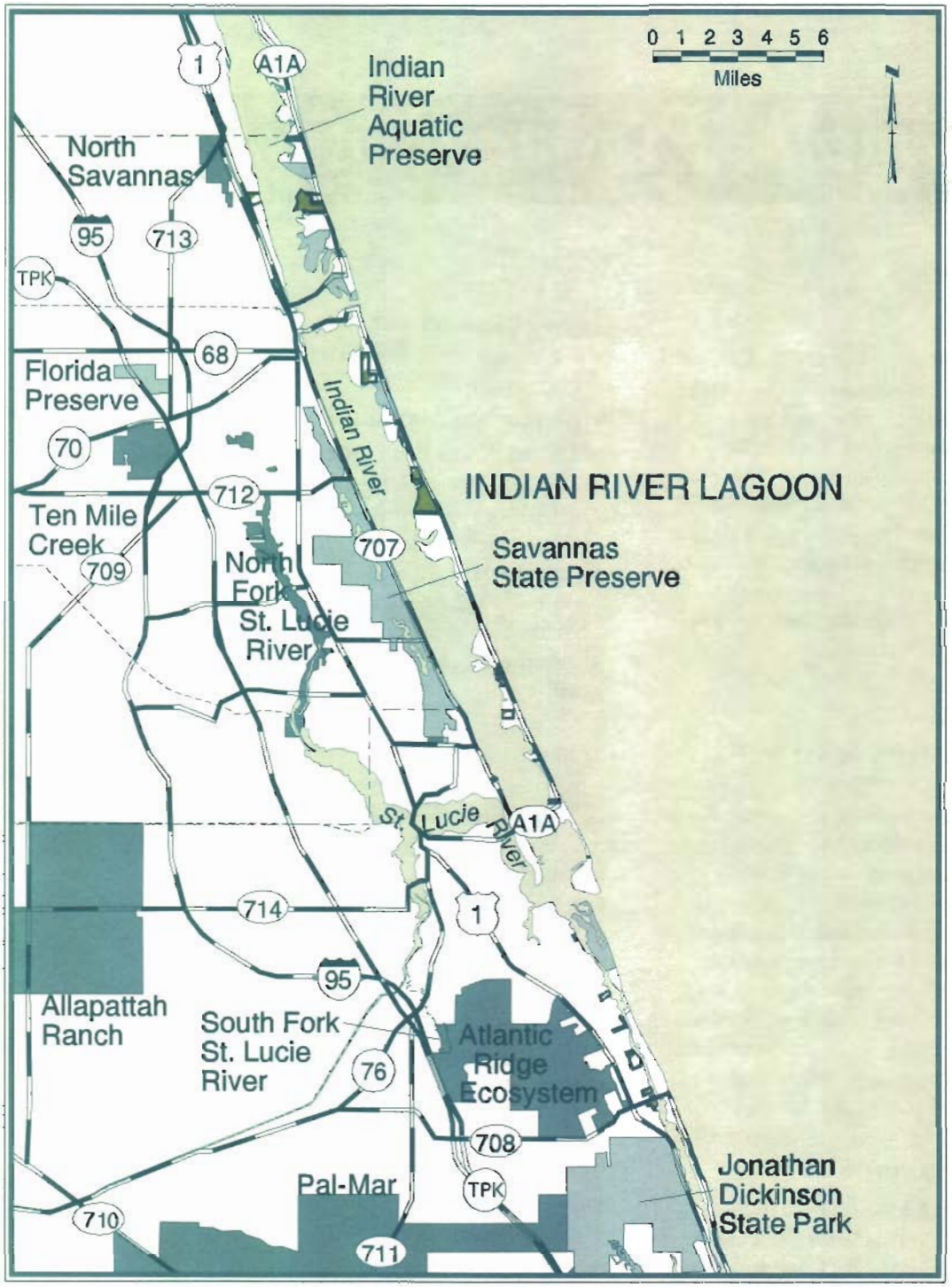
Research conducted on mosquito impoundments reports a reduction in transient fish species use in the impoundments from 16 species to 5, following construction of impoundment dikes. The installation of culverts to allow regular tidal flushing improves species diversity dramatically.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Management of both tracts would be the responsibility of St. Lucie County Mosquito Control. Its current management practices promote environmental and hydrologic restoration and non-chemical control methods for mosquitoes. Control of exotic vegetation will be necessary.

Recreation Potential

These sites may have some use as bird watching and fishing sites, and hiking trails could be constructed along the impoundment dikes, but it is unlikely that extensive recreational development would ever take place.



- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

County:
St. Lucie

Total Project Area:
1,550 acres

Number of Owners:
Numerous

Kissimmee Prairie Ecosystem

General Description

The Kissimmee Prairie Ecosystem is in Okeechobee County, east of the C-38 canal, and totals approximately 46,000 acres. In 1997, the District and CARL purchased of the entire tract.

Approximately 7,000 acres of the purchase lie within the boundary of the Kissimmee River restoration project. The remaining 39,000 acres form one of the most unique land mosaics in the state. The dominant community type is dry prairie and, according to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory, is endangered at the state and global levels. Because of the conversion of similar lands to citrus and improved pasture, this tract is likely the largest and best example of its type remaining in the world.

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

Four major tributaries to the Kissimmee River have their headwaters on the property and discharge into the river (Pool B) along the western project boundary. Land elevations drop from 70' NGVD near the eastern boundary to 42' at the river, across a distance of 9-12 miles. Although the dominant land feature is dry prairie, there are extensive wetlands scattered throughout. Basin and depression marshes, and wet prairies vary in size from less than one acre to more than 500 acres, and all are in excellent condition. There are ten separate community types, all of which are mostly undisturbed, and the size and quality of the communities provide breeding habitat for a number of listed wildlife species.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

This project has been identified by the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission as a Strategic Habitat Conservation Area in their 1994 publication *Closing the Gaps in Florida's Wildlife Habitat Conservation System*. National Audubon's 7,400 acre Kissimmee Prairie Sanctuary lies immediately west of the project and has a 3.5 mile long common boundary. The Audubon property is dominated by dry prairie, as well, which expands the coverage of that community type and its associated wildlife. This project forms an integral connection with the Kissimmee River acquisition lands. To the west of the river lies the 100,000+ acres Avon Park Bombing Range, much of which is managed as a natural area.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Overall, the property is in excellent condition. For the past 60 years, it has been operated as a cattle ranch, with no improved pasture. Most of Seven Mile Slough has been channelized, but restoration could probably be accomplished relatively easy with a series of earthen plugs. The major management tool will be prescribed fire. The dry prairie community is likely maintained with a high fire frequency, so annual burning of large tracts will be required.

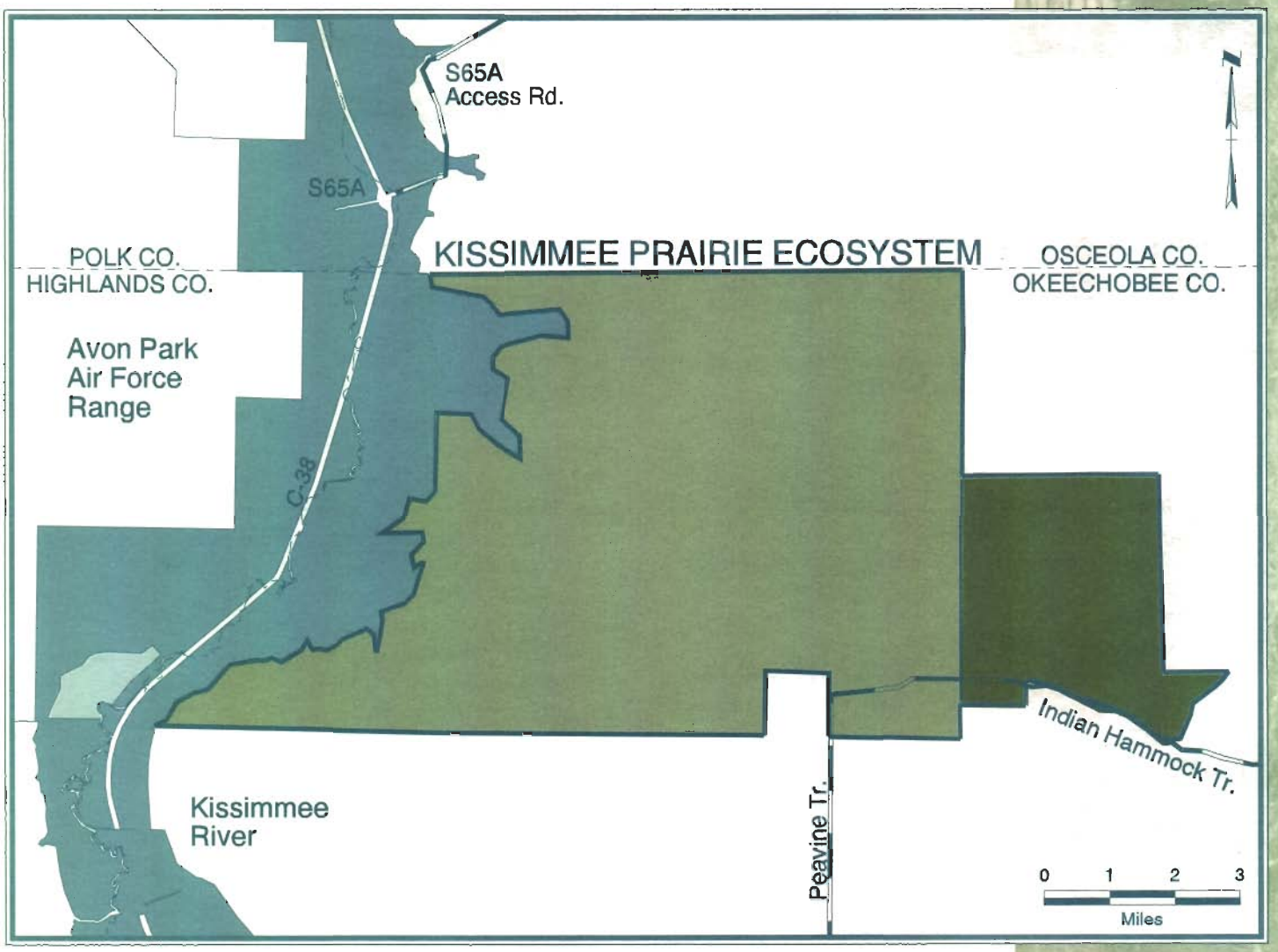
Recreation Potential

This tract has excellent recreational and educational opportunities. The property's size, diversity, and accessibility lend it to a variety of passive uses. Hiking and equestrian trails, including wilderness camping areas for both are possible. There are extensive educational and research opportunities.

Project Vision

The property will be managed as a state park, under the name Kissimmee Prairie State Preserve. At this time, the project is still in the planning phase. An on-site preserve manager has been assigned to the project, and biological, environmental, and public-use assessments are under way.

The preserve is presently open to walk-in recreation only. Eventually, a series of hiking trails with wilderness camping and equestrian trails will be developed, as well as a preserve headquarters and information center. Vehicle access to the property is a limiting factor at this time.



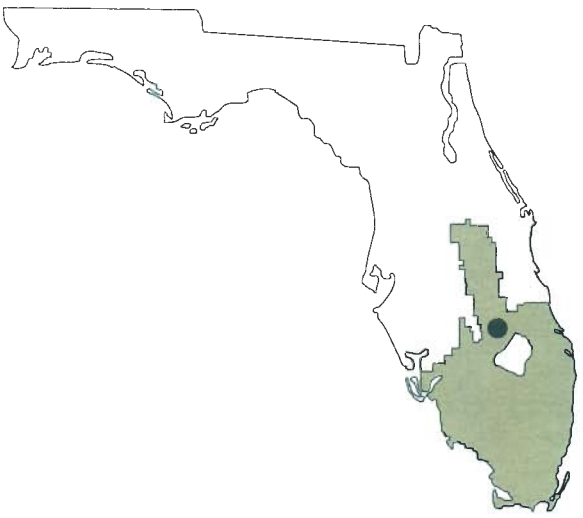
County:
Okeechobee

Total Project Area:
45,631 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
38,315 acres

Lands within Audobon Sanctuary:
7,315

Number of Owners:
One



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Kissimmee River (Lower Basin)

General Description

The entire Kissimmee River Save Our Rivers Project includes lands in the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes and along the Kissimmee River. The SOR project also contains the Kissimmee River restoration project, which encompasses land in the upper and lower basins and covers an estimated 88,000 acres.

The District's objective is to acquire lands necessary to accomplish this restoration. This figure and the project map will be adjusted as surveys of the required areas are completed. In some areas, lands beyond the restoration project have characteristics that match Save Our Rivers criteria. The Five-Year Plan includes these lands. There are areas the District owns that are excess to the project needs. These lands are not shown on the project map.

The Kissimmee River, or lower basin, comprises the area required for the restoration under the governor's Save Our Everglades program. More than 57,000 acres in the basin represent the river's historic floodplain. In the lower basin, The District has acquired real property interests in more than 30,000 acres.

Between July 1,1996, to June 30 1997, the District acquired 13,288 acres. The Governing Board approved acquisition of an additional 2,687 acres.

The District's rule governing public use of SOR and other District lands (Chapter 40E-7, Part V) became effective in 1994 after more than a year of public discussion and review. The District developed a public-use guide — which outlines the rule, the designated land-management areas, and the special applicable provisions — to assist those interested in reaching these lands. The guide contains more detailed maps of Kissimmee River properties and specific information about public use on each management area. Copies of the public-use guide are available at the District's headquarters and area offices.

Project Vision

The Kissimmee River once meandered 98 miles between Lake Kissimmee and Lake Okeechobee. After construction of the C-38 canal, the river became a nearly straight 56-mile-long, 300-foot-wide, 30-foot-deep channel. A few remnant oxbows, or old meanders, remain along the canal. The construction altered more than 47,000 acres of wetlands. The restoration will reestablish pre-channelization hydrologic characteristics along 52 miles of the original river channel and in 24,000 acres of floodplain.

Additional potential exists in portions of the river other than the targeted restoration. The project vision includes hydrologic restoration and enhancement of areas other than the river restoration. The Kissimmee River valley may offer many opportunities for public use. The strategy is to allow public use to occur at a level that does not impact upon the natural resources of the land.

Natural Resource Management

Activity	Acres	Proposed
Exotic Control	700	500
Fire Management	500	2,500
Mowing/Chopping	1,000	400
Restoration	300	200

	Ongoing	Complete
General Clean-up	•	
Waste Removal	•	
Fencing/Posting	•	

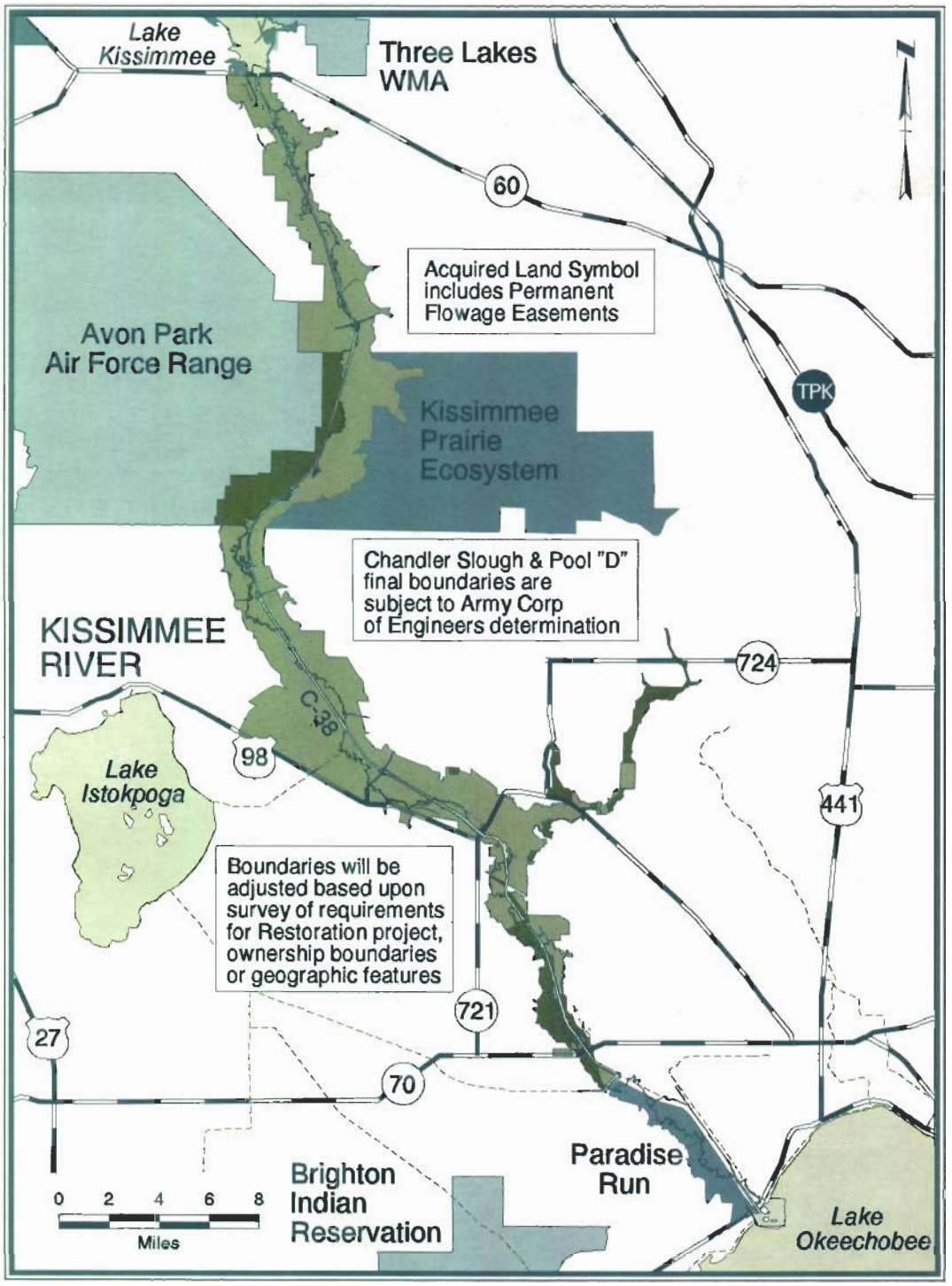
Security	
GFC	8,000
Private	22,500
On-site Caretakers	17,000

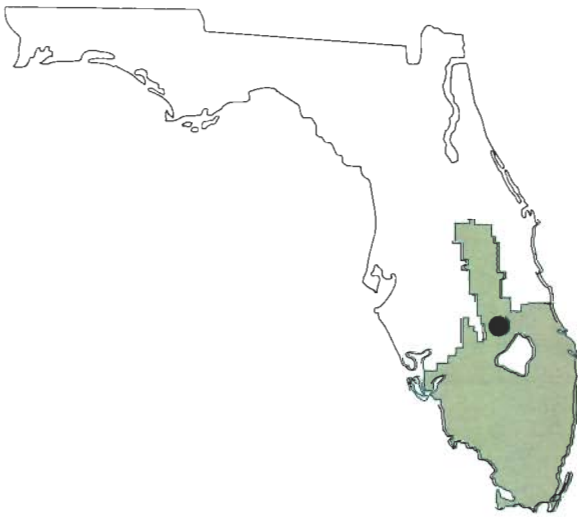
Public Use

	Yes	No
Fishing	•	
Hunting	•	
Hiking	•	
Horseback Riding		•
Bicycling	•	
Camping	•	
Airboating	•	
Environmental Education	•	

Planning

	Ongoing	Complete
Conceptual Planning	•	
Hydrologic Restoration Plan	•	
Public Input		
Public Information Meetings		
Other		
Cooperative Management Agreement(s)		
County		
GFC		
FTA		





SOR Lands Acquired to Date

Potential Acquisition Areas

Other Conservation Areas

Other SOR Projects

1997 Project Additions

SOR Project Boundary

Counties:
Osceola, Polk and Okeechobee

Total Project Area:
62,628

Total Acres Acquired (SOR):
43,921

Acres Remaining:
334

Acres Acquired by Others:
5,510

Acres Acquired Prior to SOR:
12,843

Kissimmee River (Upper Basin)

General Description

The entire Kissimmee River Save Our Rivers Project includes lands in the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes and along the Kissimmee River. The SOR project also contains the Kissimmee River restoration project, which encompasses land in the upper and lower basins and covers an estimated 88,000 acres.

The District's objective is to acquire lands necessary to accomplish this restoration. This figure and the project map will be adjusted as surveys of the required areas are completed.

In 1991, the District expanded the Kissimmee Upper Chain of Lakes project to include 24,000 acres of the shoreline in the upper basin. This includes 6,933 acres that meet the qualifications of the SOR program and are not part of the Kissimmee River restoration project.

During 1997, the District acquired 2,135 acres. Real property interests have been acquired in more than 23,000 acres. The state owns an additional 1,700 acres.

Project Vision

The District wants to acquire real property interests to allow stages in these lakes to be raised from 52.5' NGVD to 54' NGVD. The Kissimmee River restoration project needs this additional water for year-round flows.

The District is working with an advisory committee, assisted by a professional facilitator, to establish goals for management and public use of this project. The main objectives 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 are available for appropriate outdoor recreational activities consistent with their environmental sensitivity.

Natural Resource Management

Activity	Acres	Proposed
Exotic Control	180	1,000
Fire Management	35	3,000
Mowing/Chopping		200
Grazing Lease Mgmt	12,300	

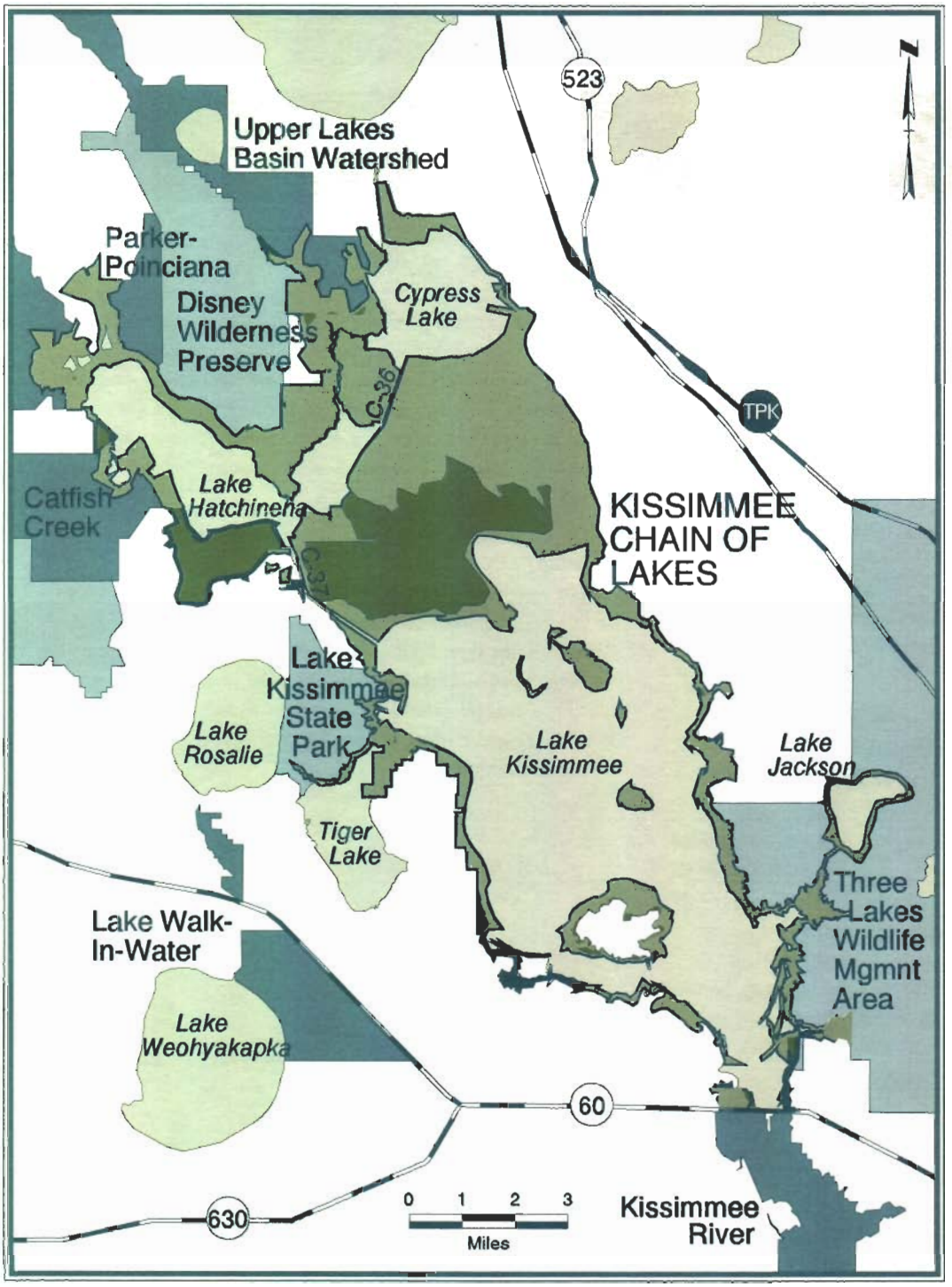
	Ongoing	Complete
General Clean-up	•	
Waste Removal		
Fencing/Posting	•	
Security		
Private	•	

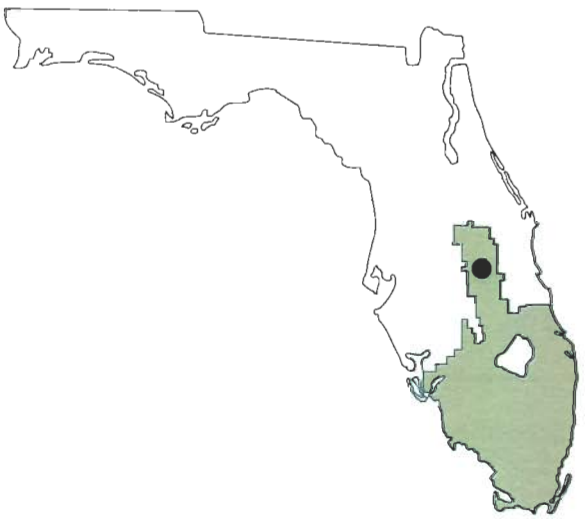
Public Use

	Yes	No
Fishing	•	
Hunting	•	
Hiking	•	
Horseback Riding	•	
Bicycling	•	
Camping	•	
Airboating	•	
Environmental Education		•

Planning

	Ongoing	Complete
Conceptual Planning	•	
Hydrologic Restoration Plan		
Public Input		
Area-wide Committee		
Public Information Meetings		





SOR Lands Acquired to Date

Potential Acquisition Areas

Other Conservation Areas

Other SOR Projects

1997 Project Additions

SOR Project Boundary

Counties:
Osceola, Polk and Okeechobee

Total Project Area:
31,637 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
26,715

Acres Remaining:
3,222

Acres Acquired by Others:
1,700

Note: Acquired symbol includes easements

Lake Lizzie

General Description

The Lake Lizzie project covers 1,082 acres in Osceola County, east of the town of St. Cloud. The project has frontage on three lakes Lizzie, Trout, and Bay. It also has road frontage along U.S. 192/441. The SOR tract lies at the extreme south end of a much larger CARL project, known as the Upper Econ Mosaic, which covers 31,343 acres.

In 1995, Osceola County applied to the Florida Communities Trust to purchase approximately 950 acres within the SOR portion of the Lake Lizzie project. Florida Communities Trust approved funding for the project, which means the property will be acquired if an agreement can be reached with the landowner.

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

Large basin marshes/wet prairies connect directly with Lake Lizzie and Trout Lake that provide important water management functions by containing storm runoff and slowly releasing it to the lakes. There is good species diversity in the plant communities. Scrub areas are present, but they have been disturbed. This site alone is too small and cut up to provide extensive habitat for terrestrial wildlife. When combined with the CARL project, however, large, contiguous tracts provide excellent habitat.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

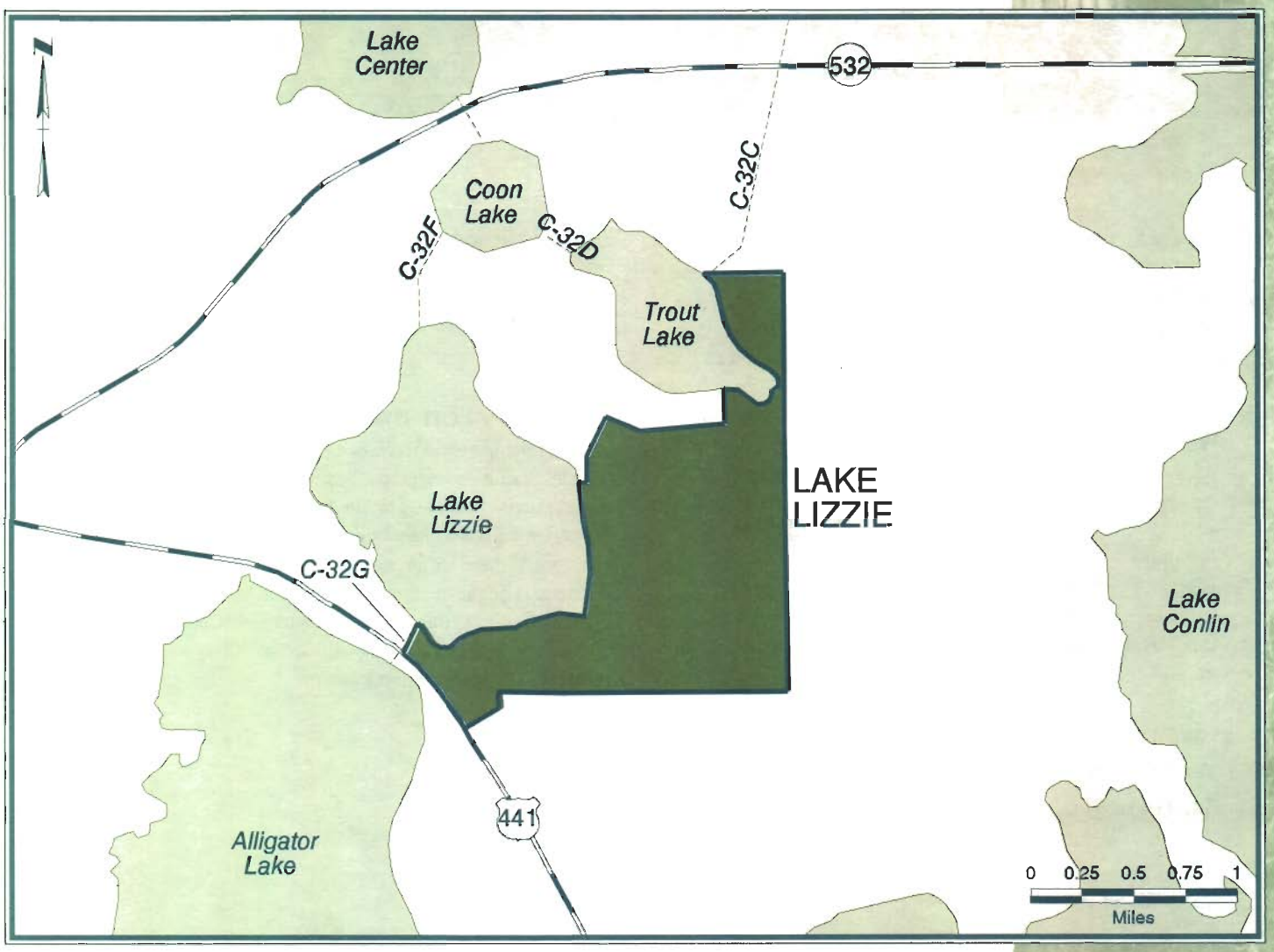
The hydraulic connection of a large portion of the Trout Lake marsh has been severed by an electric transmission line access road that also serves as the project's eastern boundary. Re-establishment of sheetflow could probably be accomplished relatively easily if stabilized swale crossings were installed. The Lake Lizzie tract is cut up and urban development is encroaching all around, both of which will make prescribed burning difficult. The understories in the upland communities have grown up and are in need of burning. Some disturbance has occurred in the scrub and other upland sites. Bahia grass has been planted in most of the flatwoods areas.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

The tract has highway frontage on US 192, and urban development is encroaching on several sides of the site. The eastern shoreline of Lake Lizzie is particularly vulnerable since it is mostly scrub. Much of the lake shoreline and uplands is developable, and similar adjacent lands have been sold or are planned for residential development. Conducting prescribed burns on this tract will be difficult, given the proximity of nearby residential development and a major roadway. This site should be managed as part of the overall CARL project.

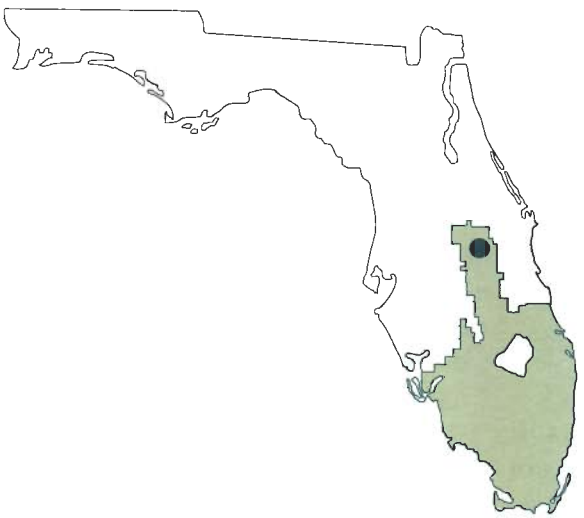
Recreation Potential

The recreational value of this tract on its own would probably be limited. The major vehicular access is through a residential subdivision. Some short hiking trails could probably be developed through the upland areas, but the site is too small for equestrian use. There may be some use of the site by boaters on Lake Lizzie. Public use could increase dramatically if it were part of a larger CARL acquisition.



County:
Osceola

Total Project Area:
1,100 acres



- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

Lake Walk-in-Water

General Description

The Lake Walk-in-Water project covers 4,109 acres between the northeast shore of Lake Weohyakapka (Walk-in-Water) and SR 60. The retirement communities of Nalcrest and Fedhaven border the property to the west and the community of Indian Lake Estates lies to the south. In September 1996, the Governing Board approved a 643 acre boundary modification which allows Walk-in-Water Creek to be included. The project has extensive frontage along SR 60 and Lake Walk-in-Water. The site has a large expanse of dry prairie, interspersed with small, isolated depression marshes, as well as a very large basin marsh along the highway. The property is in very good condition. Most of the disturbance is associated with the logging operation that took place in the Sumica settlement, which was in place on the property in the 1920's. Polk County will participate as a 50% acquisition partner, and will assist with management, as well.

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

Walk-in-Water Creek lies along the western boundary. It flows north toward Lake Rosalie. The large central basin marsh appears to flow off site, under SR 60, toward Lake Kissimmee. The project has more than four miles of shoreline along Lake Walk-in-Water. The site is very diverse; it contains floodplain forest along the banks of the creek; hydric hammock along the lake shoreline; scrub; and a diverse mixture of dry prairie, mesic and wet flatwoods, and basin marsh/wet prairies containing isolated dome swamps.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

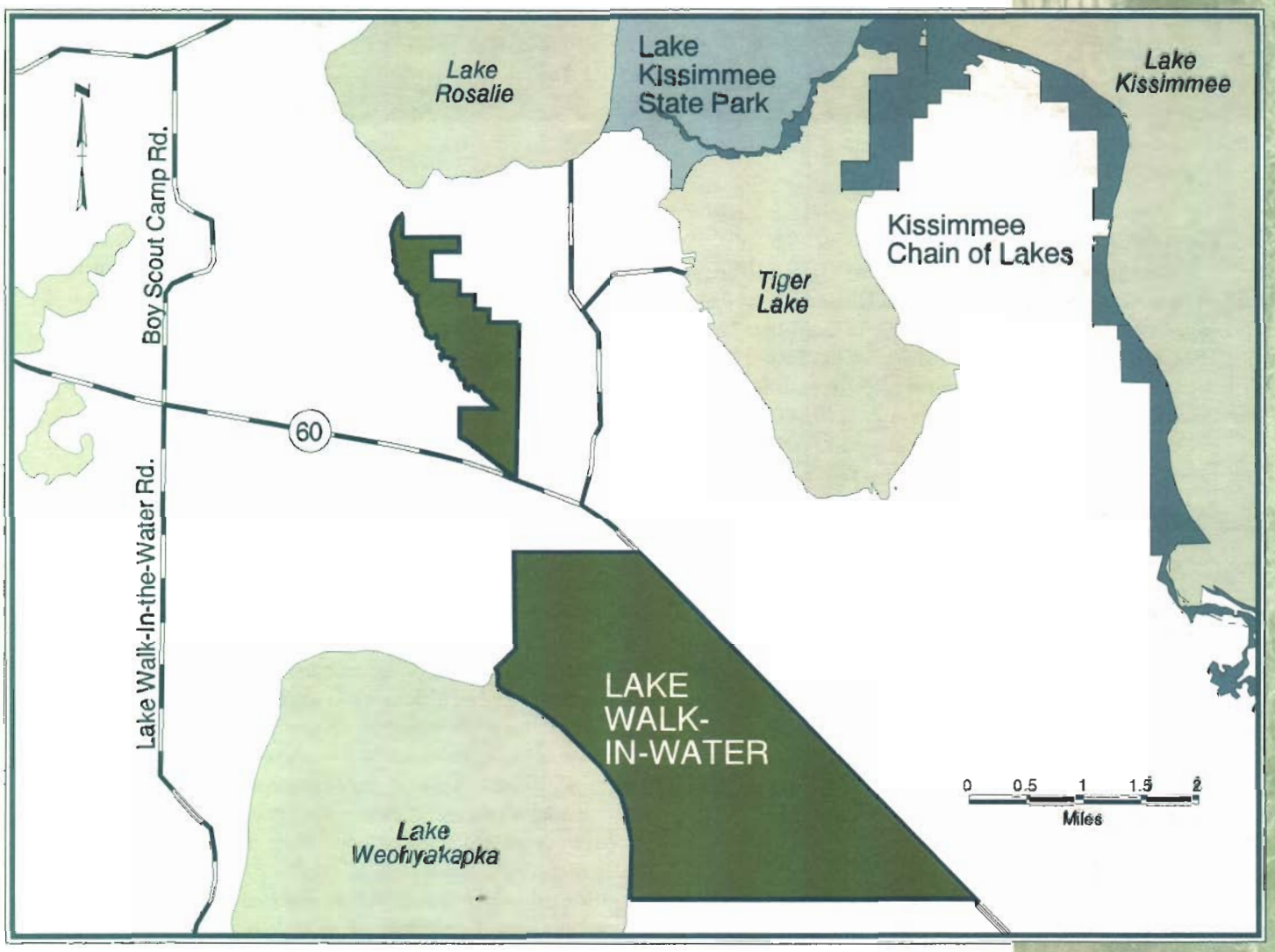
This tract is relatively undisturbed. It has been well maintained by the current owners. Maintaining the property in its existing condition will require diligent management, but the site does not need extensive restoration.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

The major management needs will center on prescribed burning. A large portion of the tract is dry prairie, which requires more frequent burning than other community types. Hydrologic restoration will be limited to a few ditch plugs. Several ranch roads provide good management access to most of the site. A cattle dip vat is located on the property that will require special care. Polk County has indicated a willingness to participate as a management partner.

Recreation Potential

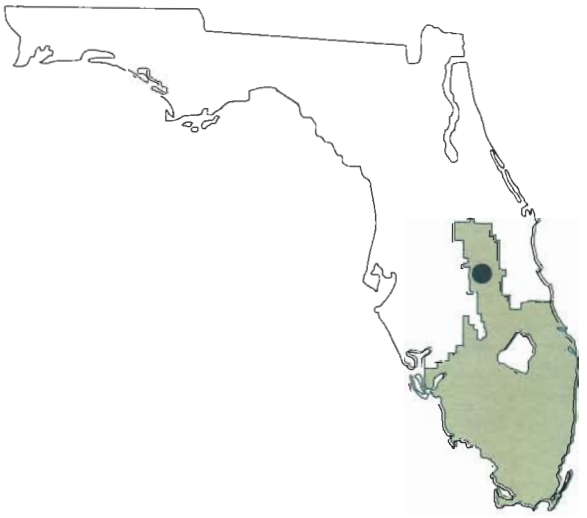
This tract has great recreation potential. Its long frontage on SR 60 would facilitate several public access points. Water access from the lake is also possible. The site contains enough uplands that equestrian trails can likely be developed. The variety of community types would make for interesting hiking trails and wilderness camping. A public hunting program could be developed together with the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. Polk County has indicated that they will accept full responsibility for any public use program development.



County:
Polk

Total Project Area:
4,114 acres

Number of Owners:
One



- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

Loxahatchee River

General Description

This project is in Palm Beach and Martin Counties. This property is south of and adjacent to Jonathan Dickinson State Park and continues south along the river floodplain to Canal 18 in Jupiter. The Florida Turnpike, I-95 and Indiantown Road bisect this property in two places. The portion of the property south of Indiantown road is east and adjacent to River Bend County Park. The property includes the historic flood plain of the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River, a National Wild and Scenic River.

The District and DEP are working to implement the Loxahatchee River Wild and Scenic River Management Plan, which was prepared in 1985 (revised 1997) as a requirement for inclusion of this portion of the river in the National Wild and Scenic River System. Lands north of Indiantown Road (State Road 706) are managed by DEP, with Jonathan Dickinson State Park. Lands south of the highway are managed by Palm Beach County under a separate agreement with the District. Management activities include law enforcement, prescribed burning, exotic species control, public-use regulation, development of hiking trails, interpretive programs and supervision of mitigation projects.

Project Vision

Preservation and enhancement of the outstanding natural and cultural values of Florida's only federally designated Wild and Scenic River are the primary goals of the management program. Permanent protection and enhancement of the river will be accomplished through land acquisition, effective resource management, regulation of the river corridor, a law enforcement presence, local government land use controls and volunteer support. Effective resource management of the river corridor must account for activities within the whole Loxahatchee River Basin, and adjacent uplands.

The District's vision for the water resources of the river includes: 1) maintaining surface water and groundwater flows to the Northwest Fork, 2) increasing minimum flows to the river as much as possible to affect downstream movement of the saltwater wedge during dry conditions, and 3) maintaining existing water quality in the River by eliminating identified water quality problems when possible.

The Federally designated wild and scenic river contains three designations: wild, scenic and recreational. The section of the river containing the "wild," designation will be managed less intensively than the "scenic" or "recreational" segments. The "wild" designation implies primitive shorelines, unpolluted water, river accessibility only by trail, and no alterations to the river bed itself. "Scenic" is defined as river areas free of impoundments with shorelines, largely primitive and undeveloped. These areas may be accessible by roads. "Recreational" river segments are readily accessible by roads; the river bed may have been impounded or diverted in the past and some development may exist along the shoreline.

Natural Resource Management

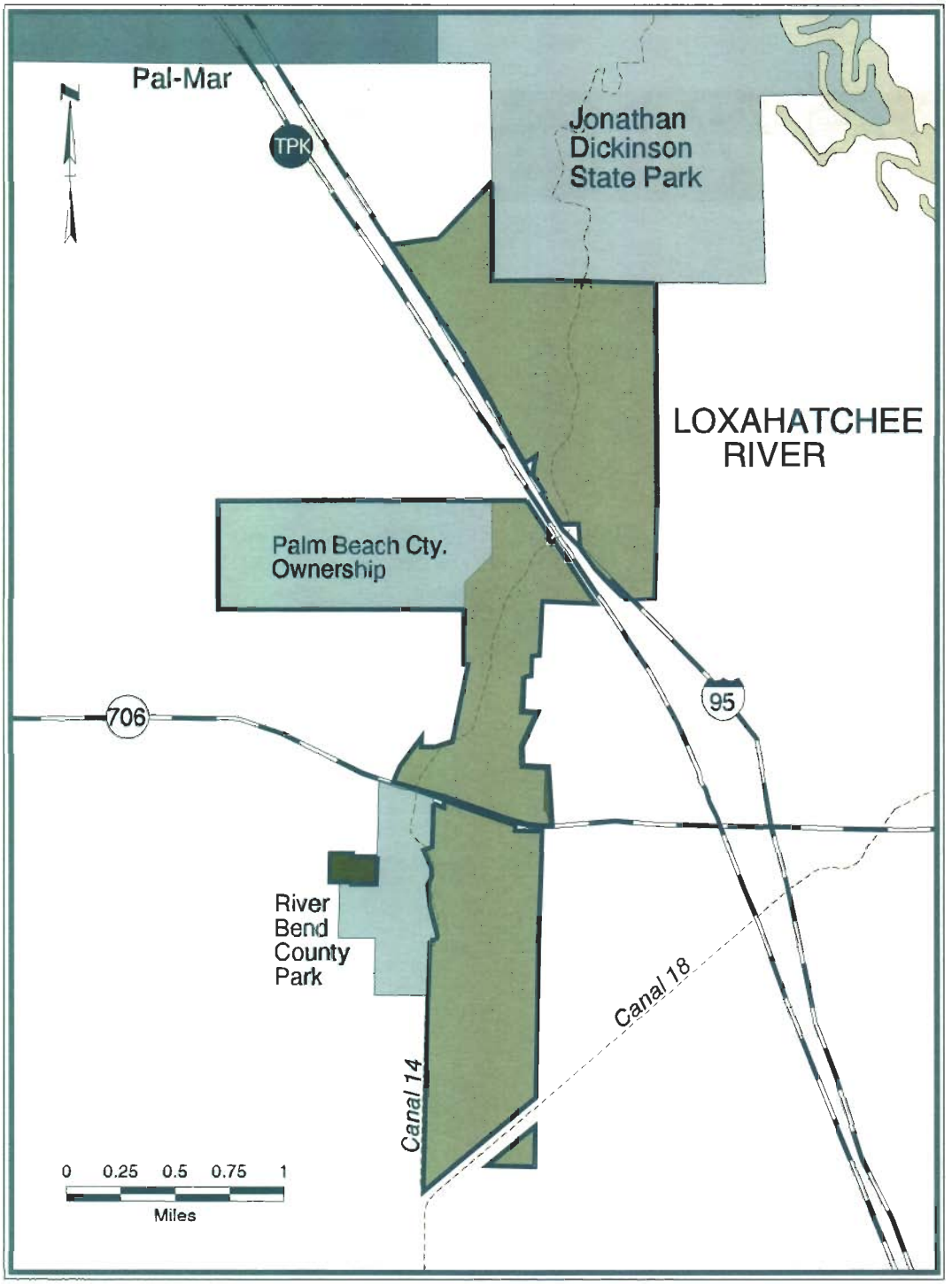
Activity	Acres	Proposed
Exotic Control	200	987
Fire Management		1,000
Mowing/Chopping	200	200
Restoration		1,200
	Ongoing	**Complete**
General Clean-up		•
Waste Removal		•
Fencing/Posting	•	
Security		
County	•	
DEP - State Park	•	

Public Use

	Yes	No
Fishing	•	
Hunting		•
Hiking	•	
Horseback Riding		•
Bicycling		•
Camping		•
Airboating		•
Environmental Education	•	
Greenway System		
Loxahatchee River		
Lake Okeechobee to Atlantic Ocean		

Planning

	Ongoing	Complete
Conceptual Planning	•	
Hydrologic Restoration Plan	•	
Public Input		
Public Information Meetings		
Loxahatchee River Coordinating Council		
Cooperative Management Agreement(s)		
Palm Beach County		
DEP		



SOR Lands Acquired to Date

Potential Acquisition Areas

Other Conservation Areas

Other SOR Projects

1997 Project Additions

SOR Project Boundary

Counties:
Martin and Palm Beach

Total Project Area:
1,936 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
1,926

Acres Remaining:
10

Acres Acquired by Others:
379

Loxahatchee Slough

General Description

The Loxahatchee Slough is in Palm Beach County and covers more than 14,000 acres. It contains a mixture of habitats, including pine flatwoods, cypress forest, and wet prairie. The present land use is native range.

In 1996, Palm Beach County purchased the major portion of the slough — more than 10,400 acres. In 1997, the District amended the boundaries and added approximately 1,300 acres to the project. The addition, known as the "Sandhill Tract," contains a number of sandhill crane nests within the isolated wetlands. Agricultural use has impacted the site over the years. It has been in row crops, but is now mostly unimproved pasture, which is heavily infested with exotic vegetation.

Acquisition of this site has important hydrologic considerations that would help relieve operational problems with the C-18 canal and allow more water to be directed to the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River.

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

The additional lands border the property that Palm Beach County recently acquired. Purchasing the Sandhill Tract would allow important hydrologic restoration to take place, benefiting not only the on-site wetlands, but providing the Southwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River with much needed fresh water.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

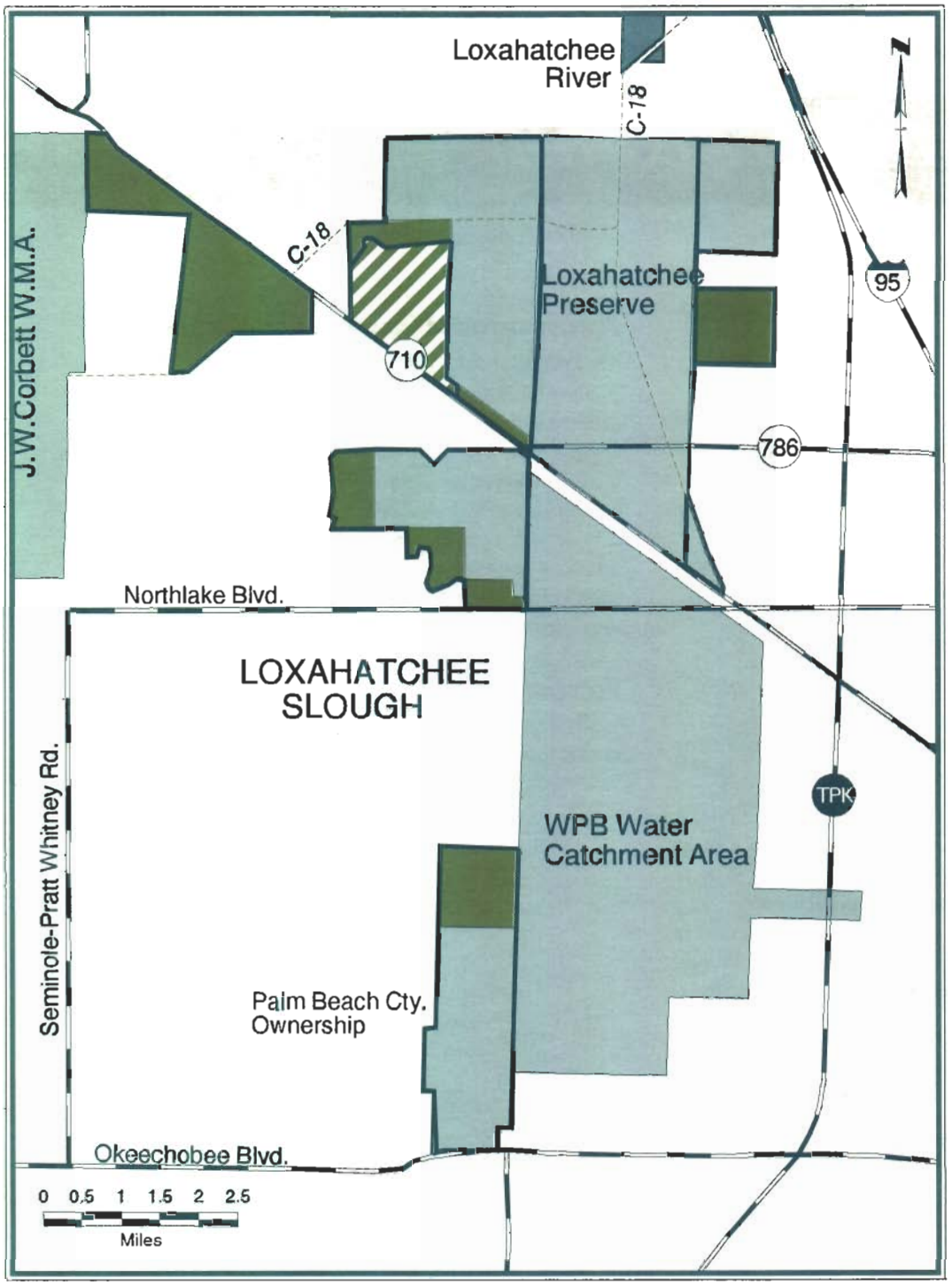
The sandhill crane site presently drains to the north and into the West Leg of the C-18 canal. During heavy rains, runoff entering C-18 from the Loxahatchee Slough causes drainage problems for the Caloosa subdivision. This, in turn, requires the District to open water-control structures in C-18 that divert water to the ocean rather than into the Southwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River. Acquisition of this site will allow the District restore historic sheetflow conditions to the east, which will relieve the flooding problems in Caloosa and allow water to go the river.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Since Palm Beach County has already acquired the majority of the project and will be the lead manager, we anticipate turning over management responsibility of the Sandhill Tract to them as well. It is likely, however, that the District will retain responsibility for hydrologic restoration.

Recreation Potential

The Sandhill Tract is heavily infested with exotic vegetation. However, this site will likely be incorporated into the overall public-use component for the entire Loxahatchee Slough project, which will include hiking and equestrian trails, as well as through hiking and wilderness camping opportunities along an extension of the Florida Trail.



County:
Palm Beach

Total Project Area:
15,200 acres

Number of Owners:
Numerous

SOR Lands Acquired to Date

Potential Acquisition Areas

Other Conservation Areas

Other SOR Projects

1997 Project Additions

SOR Project Boundary

McDaniel Ranch

General Description

McDaniel Ranch covers nearly 23,000 acres in southeastern Hendry County. However, the area under consideration as an SOR project is 5,000-6,000 acres. The property owners have approached the District about selling a conservation easement in conjunction with an application for a surface water management permit. As proposed, the conservation easement would include only those lands not required for the surface water management system. The easement would grant the McDaniel family the following rights: timber management, cattle grazing, lease hunting, and eco-tourism.

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

McDaniel Ranch lies in the District's L-3/L-4 Basin and drains south onto lands owned by the Seminole Tribe of Florida and into the Big Cypress National Preserve. Protecting the quality of the water leaving McDaniel Ranch is vitally important to the health of adjacent ecosystems. Much of the ranch has been converted to improved pasture, and over the next 15-20 years, most of the pasture will be converted to sugar cane. In spite of agricultural use, the preserve areas within the easement consist of deep cypress swamps, hydric hammocks, and large expanses of broadleaf marsh and wet prairie.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

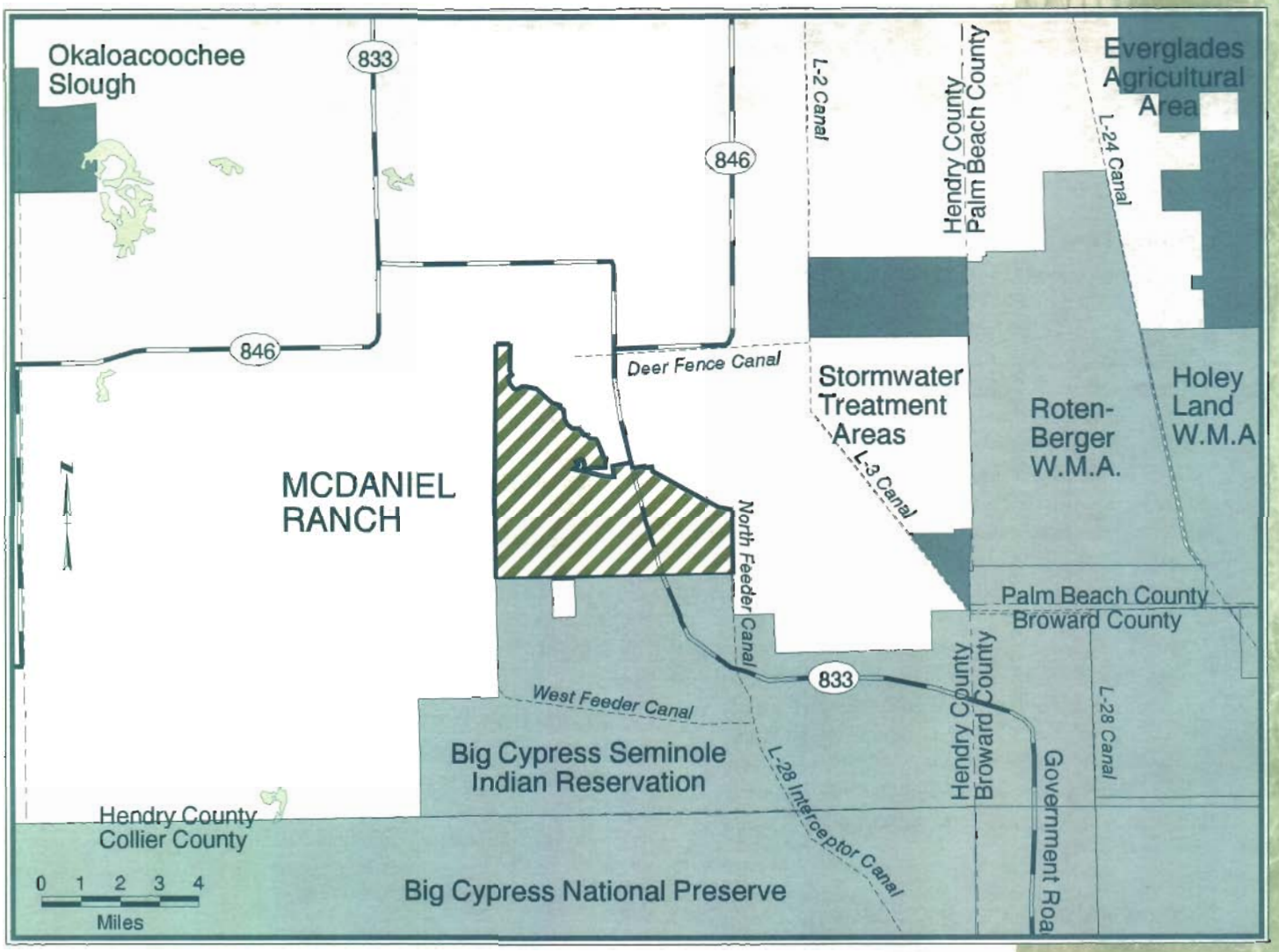
Restrictions in the conservation easement will prevent the owners from clearing additional land for pasture or silviculture, excavation, or fertilization of areas other than existing improved pastures. The greatest expanses of natural area are concentrated along the western and southern edges of the ranch. The Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has identified this area as critical habitat for the Florida panther and black bear. Incorporation of the preserve areas into the diked detention areas for the surface water management system will enable some overdrained wetlands to be inundated again.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Since the property will be sold as a conservation easement rather than fee title, the landowners will retain management responsibility. The ranch has been family-owned and managed for more than 60 years, and the natural areas are in very good condition. The landowner will be responsible for continued treatment of exotic vegetation and prescribed burning. The District will conduct a baseline environmental assessment to establish current environmental conditions so the agency can evaluate the management program.

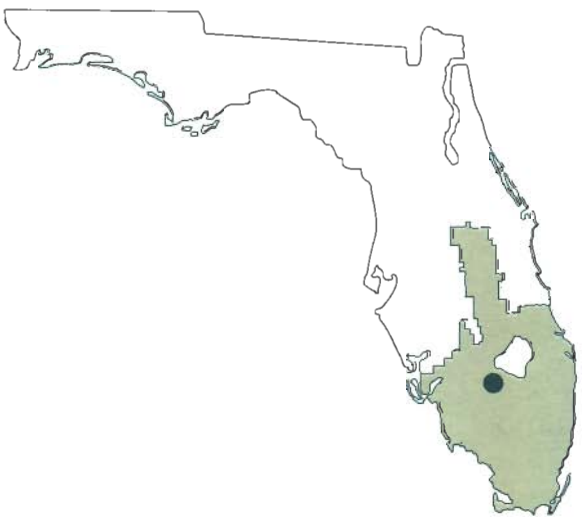
Recreation Potential

The District is not acquiring public-access rights as part of the easement, so there will be no opportunities for public use.



Counties:
Hendry

Total Project Area:
7,000 acres



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Model Lands Basin

General Description

This project is located primarily in Dade County, with a very small portion on the edge of Monroe County. The cooling ponds at the Florida Power & Light 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 buttonbush 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.

Between July 1996 and September 1997, the District acquired 1,270 acres. The Board approverd the acquisition of additional 25 acres.

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. With the shoreline of Biscayne National Park, this area forms the longest undeveloped strip of red mangroves on the east coast of Florida. The National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Dade County support the project.

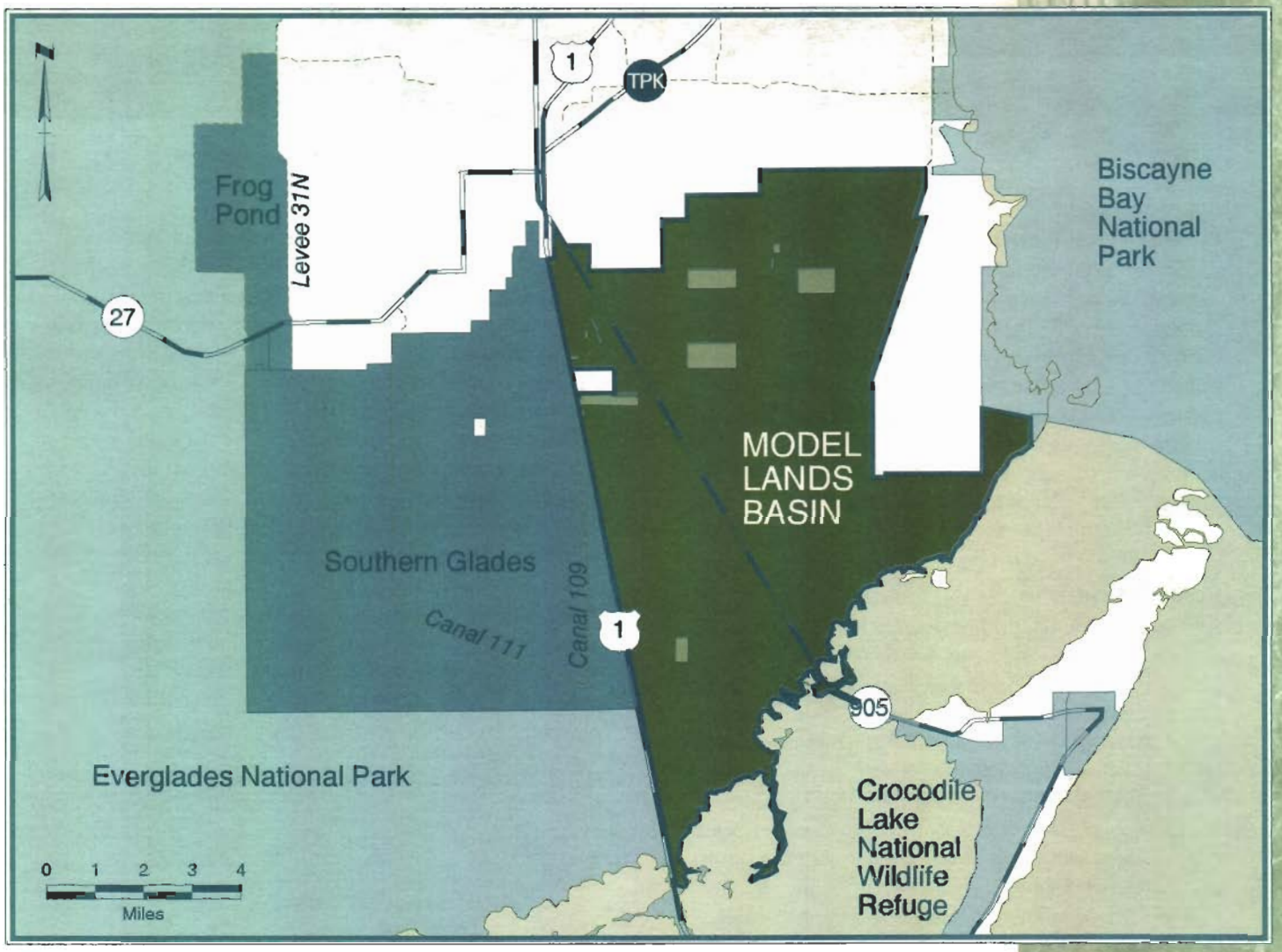
Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Exotic plant invasions in the northwest corner, and in the additional lands is severe. Dade County has indicated that this site would be a high priority area for treatment of exotics as part of its 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..



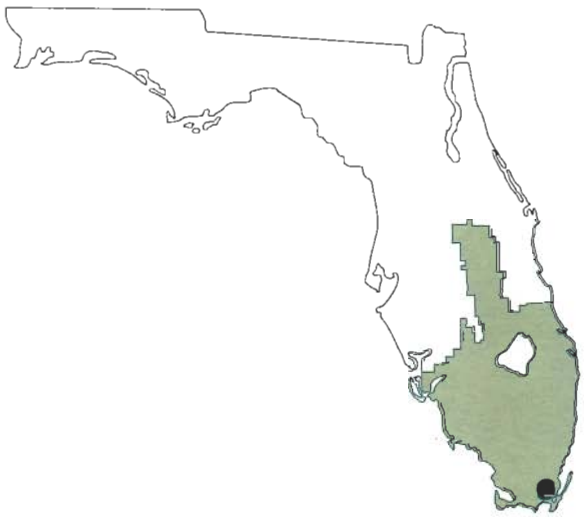
Counties:
Dade and Monroe

Total Project Area:
42,138 acres

Total Project Acquired:
1,270 acres

Acres Remaining:
40,868 acres

Number of Owners:
Numerous



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Nicodemus Slough

General Description

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. 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 allowed the spread of transitional and upland species.

Project Vision

The original SOR legislation specified Nicodemus Slough for purchase because the land floods periodically under the higher regulation stages of Lake Okeechobee. The installation of new water control structures along the south and east boundaries and associated improvements to the Canal 19/Levee-41/42 system, now completed, is intended to improve the retention and manipulation of flood waters on the property. One of the District's objectives for Nicodemus Slough is to restore the mix of community types that existed prior to human influences, while providing flood control to adjacent land owners.

A series of proposed hydrologic improvements should increase the coverage of the open water slough and depression marsh and improve the quality of the remaining wet prairie. A recent hydrologic study recommended removing the north-south berm located on the western edge of the property and filling in the associated ditch. This action will augment overland water flow from higher lands to the west and should help in increasing the hydroperiod on Nicodemus Slough.

Water and fire will be the major elements used to mold future successional vegetation patterns. Land management tools will be applied directly to assist natural functions (fire and water) in operating as freely as possible within the property boundaries. Direct management intervention will be limited to protecting the property from exotics, human induced fires, damaging wildfires and disturbances to cultural resources.

The District staff envisions making Nicodemus Slough available for fishing, picnicking, canoeing, hiking, nature observation, limited volume airboating and photography. Prohibited uses are hunting, power boating and the use of off-road vehicles.

During 1997, the District executed an agreement with AIM Engineering for management of Nicodemus Slough.

Natural Resource Management

Activity	Acres	Proposed
Exotic Control	2,000	2,000
Fire Management	400	800
Mowing/Chopping	200	200
Restoration		0

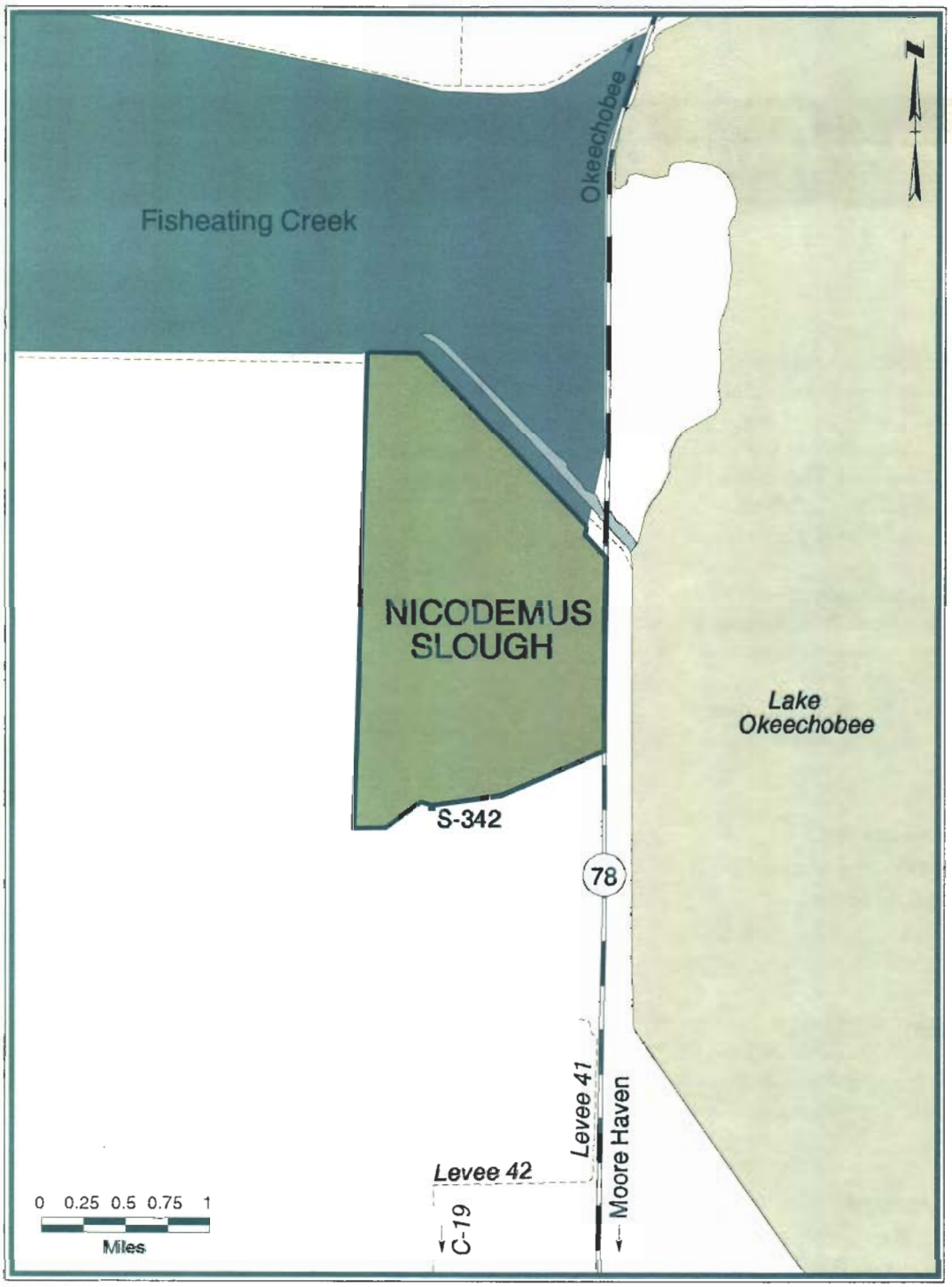
	Ongoing	Complete
General Clean-up		•
Waste Removal		•
Fencing/Posting		•
Security		
Glades County	•	

Public Use

	Yes	No
Fishing	•	
Hunting		•
Hiking	•	
Horseback Riding		•
Bicycling	•	
Camping		•
Airboating	•	
Boating	•	
Canoeing	•	
Environmental Education		

Planning

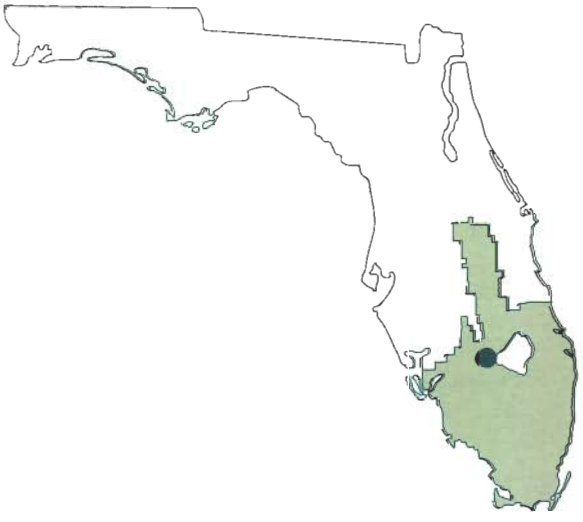
	Ongoing	Complete
Conceptual Planning		•
Hydrologic Restoration Plan	•	



County:
Glades

Acres Acquired (SOR):
2,219 acres

Acres Acquired (District):
10.4 acres



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

North Fork St. Lucie River

General Description

The stretch of North Fork of the St. Lucie River under consideration is approximately six miles long and extends from the White City bridge to the C-24 canal.

In 1995, the Governing Board modified the boundary, which added approximately 1,000 acres to the project. The additional acreage is scattered among several parcels along both sides of the river. Most of the additional lands are adjacent to tracts the state already owns.

The environmental quality of these tracts varies. Some are relatively undisturbed and dominated by large pines and mixtures of oak and cabbage palm, while other sites are heavily infested with exotic vegetation.

Between July 1996 and September 1997, the District acquired 292 acres. The board approved the acquisition of an additional 21 acres.

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

More than 80 percent of the project covers wetlands within the river floodplain. The wetlands include hardwood swamp, low hammock, sawgrass marsh, and mangrove forest. The mangroves are limited to approximately the lower third of the project.

The floodplain wetlands reduce current velocities in the river, thereby spreading out and gradually releasing flood waters. This action also allows recharge of the surficial aquifer and filters nutrients, pollutants and suspended solids.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

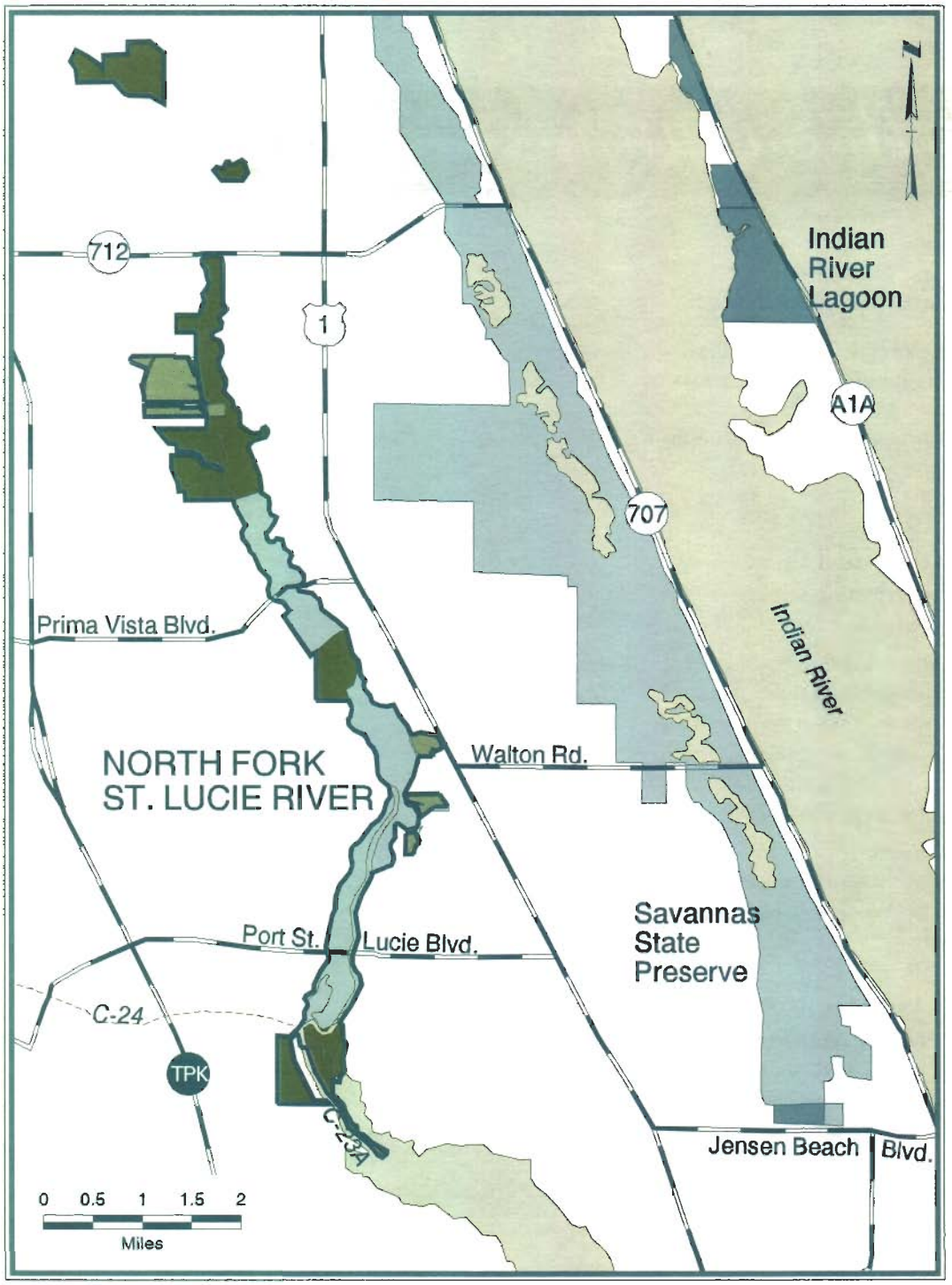
This stretch is included within the North Fork St. Lucie River Aquatic Preserve and is classified as Outstanding Florida Water. In addition to the river floodplain, the project includes approximately 175 acres of high quality uplands, such as high hammock, pine flatwoods and sand pine scrub.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

Encroaching urban development is the project's greatest threat. No floodplain 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 if it is acquired.

Recreation Potential

Because of 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. The willingness of local government to participate in management increases the likelihood of riverfront parks and other passive recreational facilities.



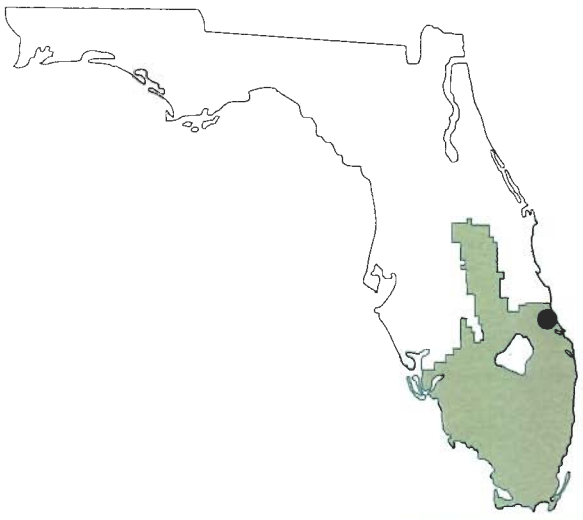
County:
St. Lucie

Total Project Area:
2,800 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
292 acres

Acreas Remaining:
2,508 acres

Number of Owners:
Numerous



SOR Lands Acquired to Date

Potential Acquisition Areas

Other Conservation Areas

Other SOR Projects

1997 Project Additions

SOR Project Boundary

North Savannas

General Description

The site contains a 930 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

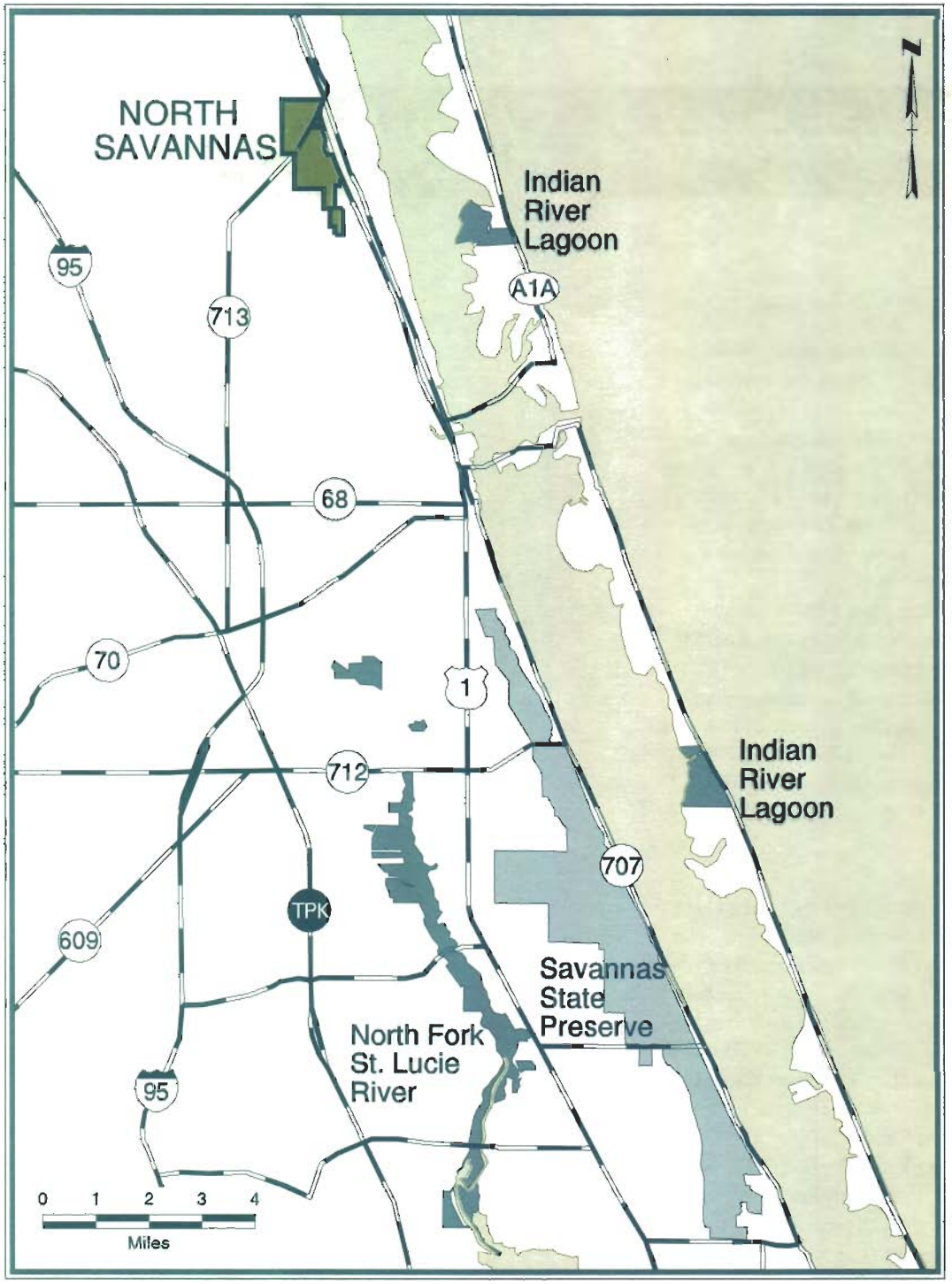
The site is in relatively good condition; however, numerous shellrock roads cross an old platted portion Removal of the old roads would probably benefit sheetflow.

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.



County:
St. Lucie

Total Project Area:
930 acres

Number of Owners:
Numerous

SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Okaloacoochee Slough

General Description

In 1996, the District purchased 21,000 contiguous acres in the project. It is anticipated that CARL will acquire the remaining 8,000 acres.

In 1997, the District amended the SOR project boundary to include 1,920 acres that are the primary flowway for water moving from District-owned land in Okaloacoochee Slough to other private land in Collier County. Sawgrass slough in the deep water areas, with a fringe of hydric hammock and wet flatwoods dominate the three sections under consideration.

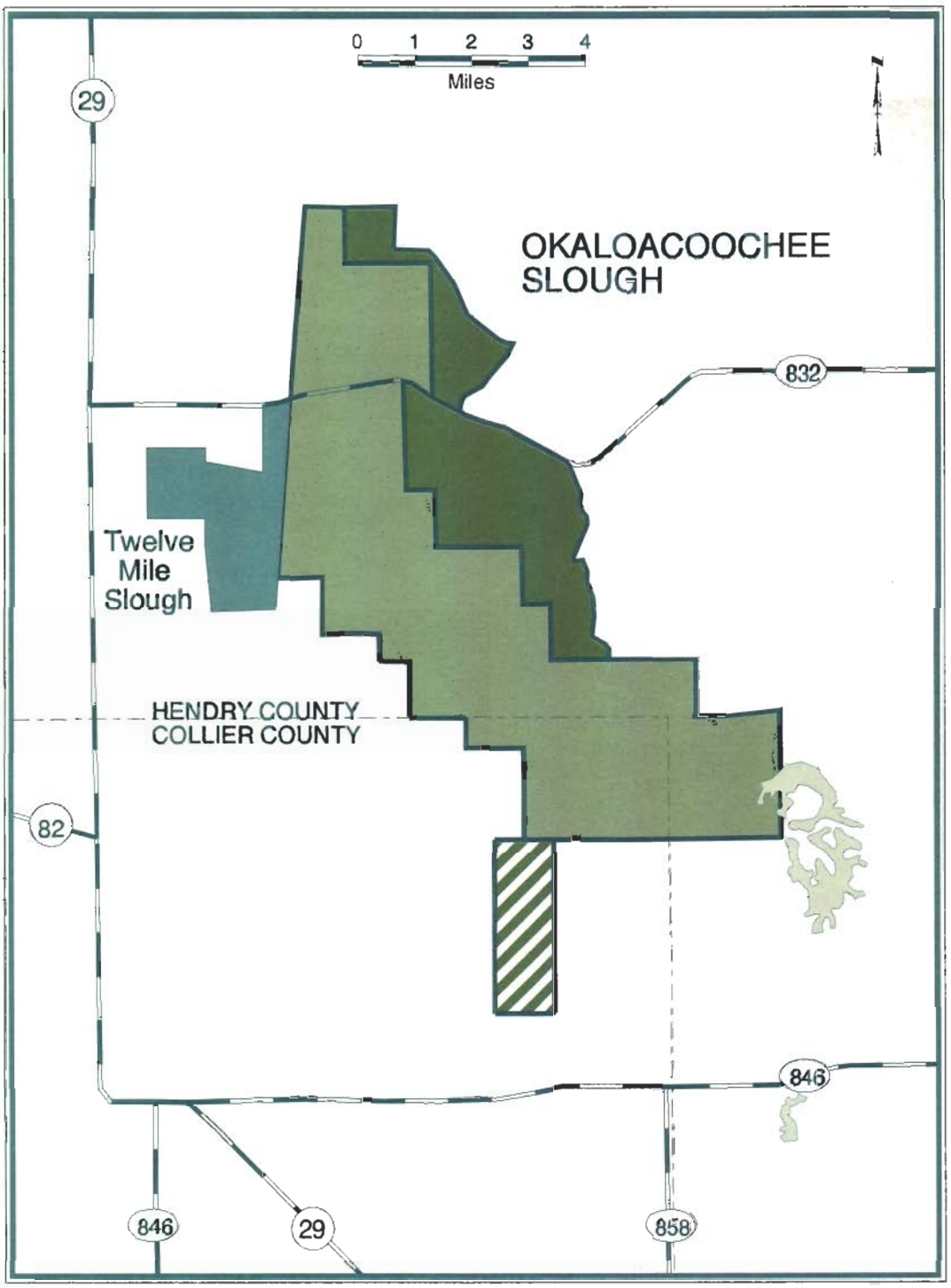
The property is used as native range pasture and is very well managed. These lands would be acquired only as a conservation easement. Under the proposed conditions of the lease, the landowners would be allowed to continue native range grazing, with no pasture improvement or fertilization allowed. They would be permitted to continue leasing the property for hunting. Continued prescribed burning and exotic treatment programs will be requirements of the lease.

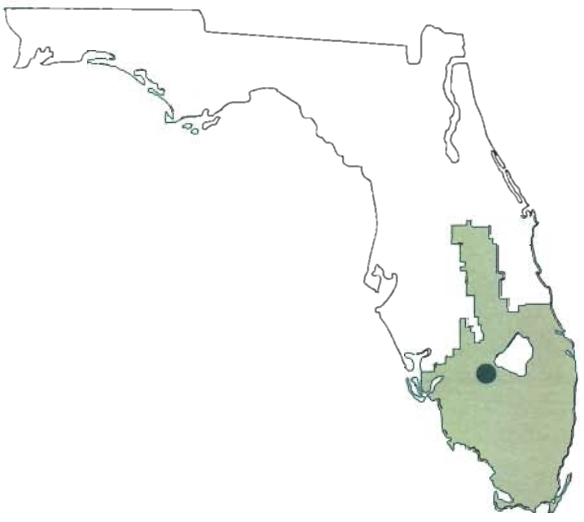
Project Vision

The vision for Okaloacoochee Slough is that it continues to be managed for its important water and natural resource values. Okaloacoochee Slough is a major headwater for Fakahatchee Strand and Big Cypress National Preserve. Its extensive network of sloughs and isolated wetlands store wet-season runoff from the surrounding uplands and provide year-round base flow to downstream natural areas. The entire project contains more than 12,000 acres of largely undisturbed wetlands, which are surrounded by oak and cabbage palm-dominated hydric hammocks.

The District anticipates that the Florida Division of Forestry will be he lead manager of the site. Preliminary discussions have been held with the Division of Forestry and preparation of a management plan will take place over the next one to two years.

Public access is very limited because of the deep sloughs that dominate the property. There are still 8,000 acres remaining to be acquired through the CARL program. If that occurs, much more upland acreage will become available for public use.





SOR Lands Acquired to Date

Potential Acquisition Areas

Other Conservation Areas

Other SOR Projects

1997 Project Additions

SOR Project Boundary

County:
Hendry

Total Project Area:
31,720 acres

Total Acreas Acquired:
21,702 acres

Acres Remaining:
10,018 acres

Number of Owners:
One

Pal-Mar

General Description

Pal-Mar is in northern Palm Beach and southern Martin Counties, east of the J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area. Pal-Mar is also a CARL project and, in 1997, was ranked number one on its bargain-shared list. Pal-Mar contains the largest contiguous complex of depression marsh, wet flatwoods and natural communities in the two counties. Acquisition of the entire project would form an unbroken 125,000 acre greenbelt extending from the DuPuis Reserve near Lake Okeechobee, across the Corbett Wildlife Management Area, and connecting with Jonathan Dickinson State Park.

In 1997, the District acquired another 630 acres, bringing the total acquisition area to more than 2,500 acres. Also in 1997, the District and Palm Beach County's Environmentally Sensitive Lands program agreed that the county and CARL would acquire the Palm Beach County portion, while the District and CARL would purchase the lands in Martin County.

Project Vision

Pal-Mar is a vast complex of pine flatwood, wet prairie and depression marsh. This land is stable ecologically and among the highest quality pine flatwoods in South Florida. The District's objective is to maintain its existing ecological quality through land acquisition, and by applying land management tools such as regular prescribed fires, exotic plant control and security.

The District will conduct an environmental inventory which will be used to guide the land management activities. Because federally endangered bird species use these lands to feed and/or nest, the District would follow standard state and federal management procedures to protect the nesting areas. Recreational use would probably be high, particularly if used as a wildlife management area. Several deepwater canals remain from earlier attempts to drain the property. Since these canals have no positive outfall, they provide good fishing.

Natural Resource Management

Activity	Acres	Proposed
Exotic Control	300	2,000
Fire Management		500
Mowing/Chopping	2	2
Restoration		•

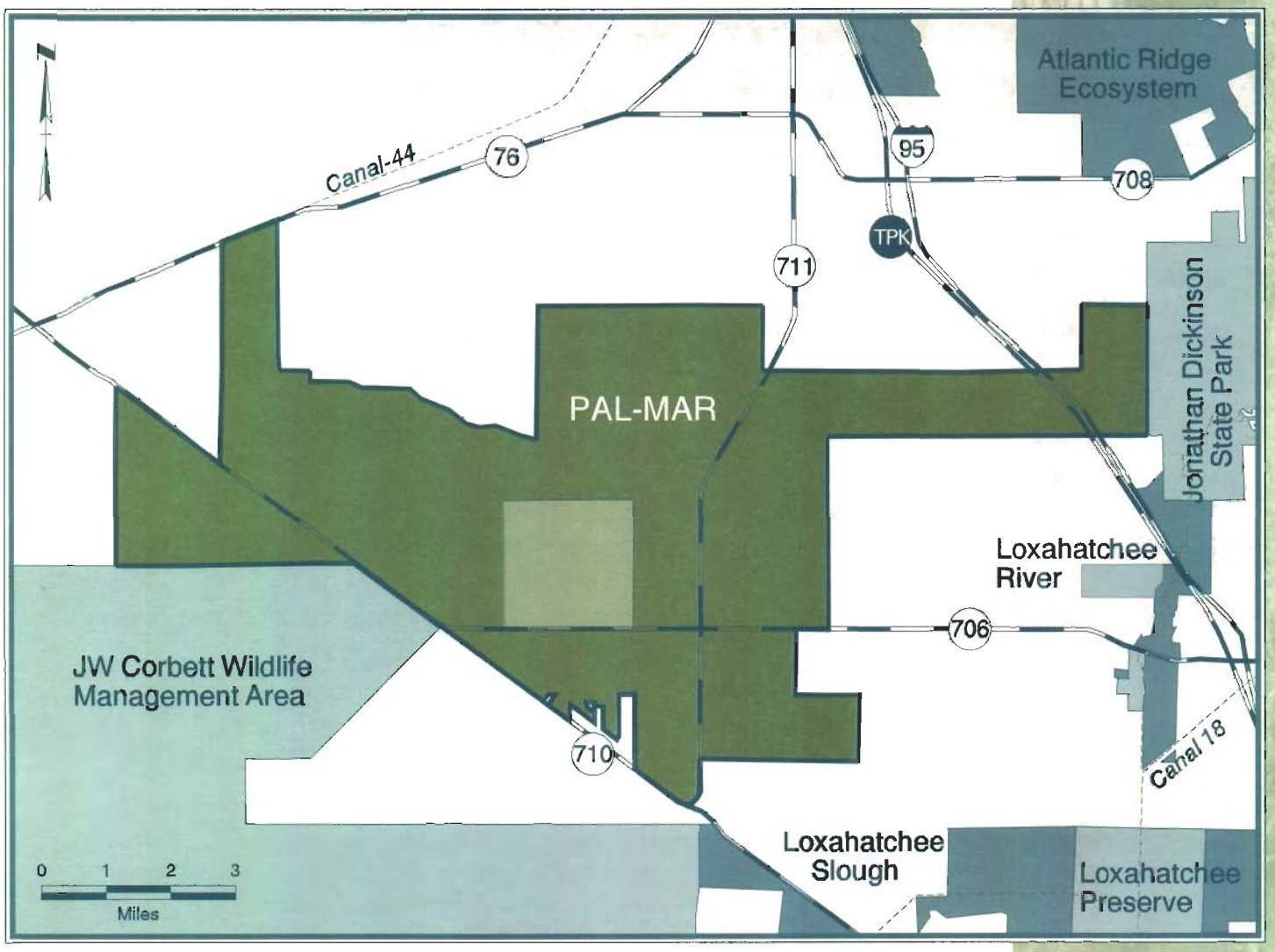
	Ongoing	Complete
General Clean-up	•	
Waste Removal	•	
Fencing/Posting	•	
Security		
Private	•	

Public Use

	Yes	No
Fishing	•	
Hunting		•
Hiking	•	
Horseback Riding		•
Bicycling		•
Camping	•	
Airboating		•
Environmental Education	•	

Planning

	Ongoing	Complete
Conceptual Planning	•	
Hydrologic Restoration Plan		

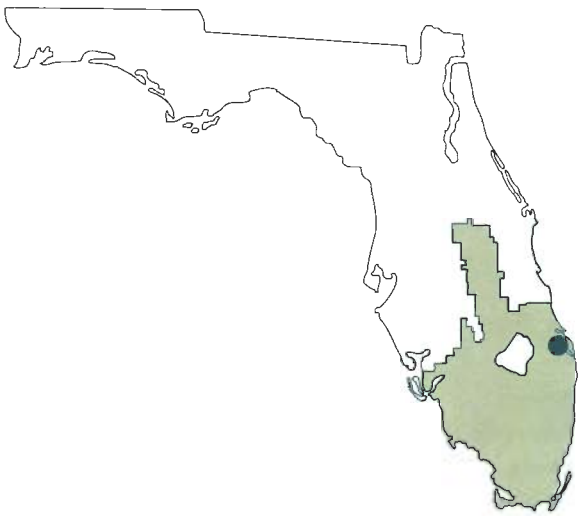


Counties:
Martin and Palm Beach

Total Project Area:
35,435 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
2,552 acres

Acres Remaining:
32,883



- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

Paradise Run

General Description

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

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

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

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

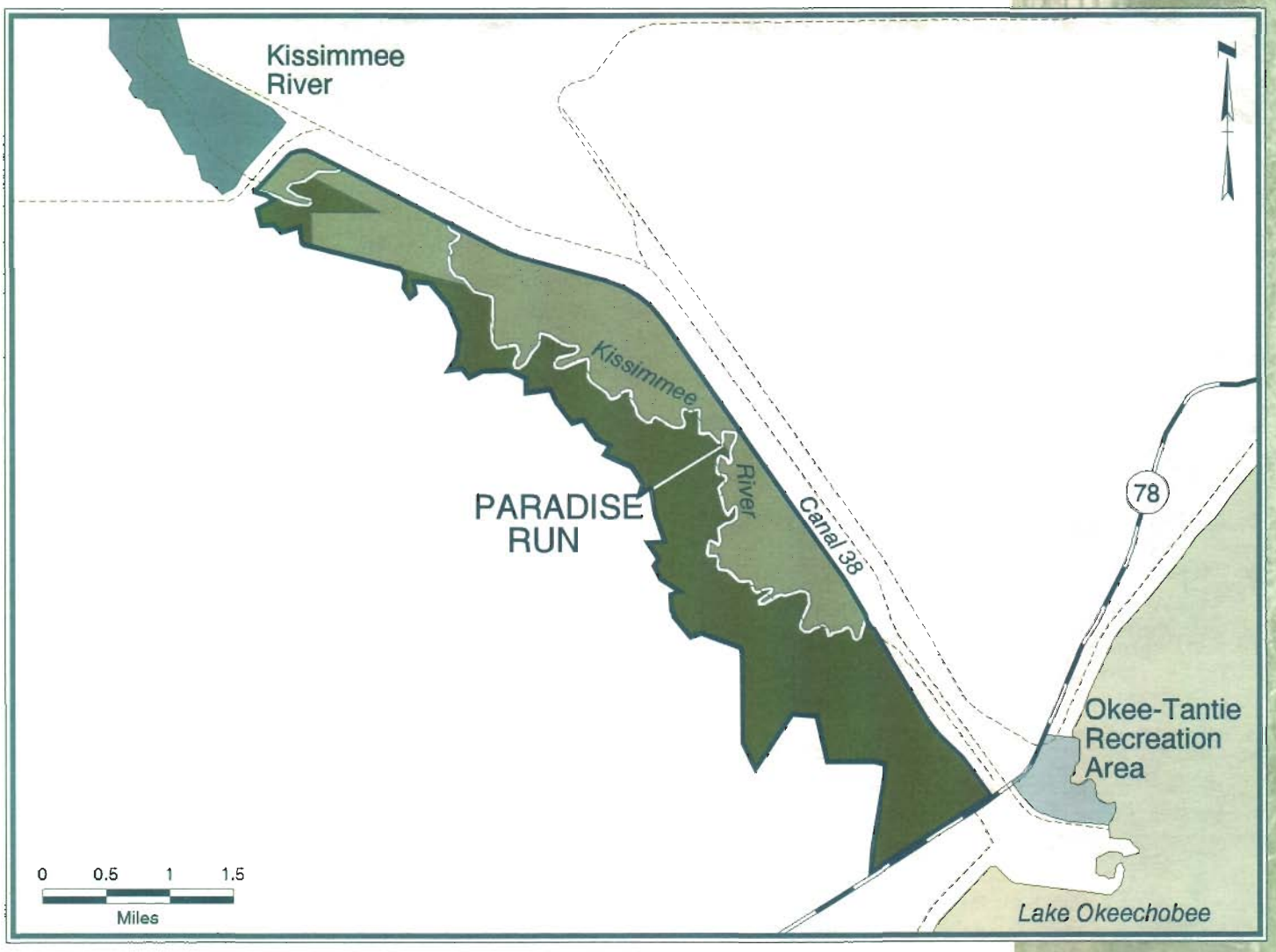
Since water levels in Paradise Run will not be affected by Kissimmee River restoration, other structural methods will have to be employed to provide a continuous flow of water to the reach. It appears that several engineering solutions exist. To date, time and funds have not been available to explore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

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.

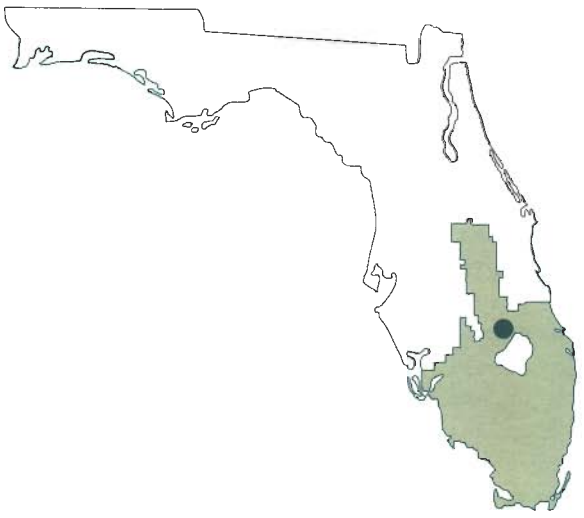


Counties:
Glades and Okeechobee

Total Project Area:
4,265 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
1,406

Acres Remaining:
2,859



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Parker-Poinciana

General Description

Parker-Poinciana covers approximately 1,970 acres in Osceola and Polk Counties. It lies between the Disney Wilderness Preserve and District-owned lands already acquired as part of the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes SOR project along the north shore of Lake Hatchineha. It contains a variety of community types, including mesic flatwoods, a large cypress/bay head, logged-over flatwoods, and hydric hammock along the Lake Hatchineha shoreline. This tract has been permitted by the District and DEP for residential development. The present land use is cattle grazing.

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

The project drains south to Lake Hatchineha via London Creek. The property contains numerous small cypress domes, as well as one large dome of several hundred acres. Shallow ditches and swales have been excavated to drain the wetlands and increase the amount of grazable pasture. Several of these ditches extend to the edge of Disney Wilderness Preserve and impact that site. Acquisition would enable these drainages to be blocked. This property contains a variety of upland and wetland communities, and is directly connected with other protected lands. Land previously purchased by the District that connects with this tract includes more than one mile of shoreline on Lake Hatchineha.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Many of the wetlands on site have been connected with shallow ditches and swales, but most of these areas should be easily restorable with earthen ditch plugs, which would also stop the overdrainage of Disney Wilderness Preserve. Exotic vegetation does not appear to be a problem. There are several hunting cabins and campsites, but no permanent residences. The site has been regularly burned, but probably on a cycle to promote the growth of non-native pasture grasses. The implementation of growing season prescribed fires at the Disney Wilderness Preserve is transforming many former pastures into wiregrass-dominated understories.

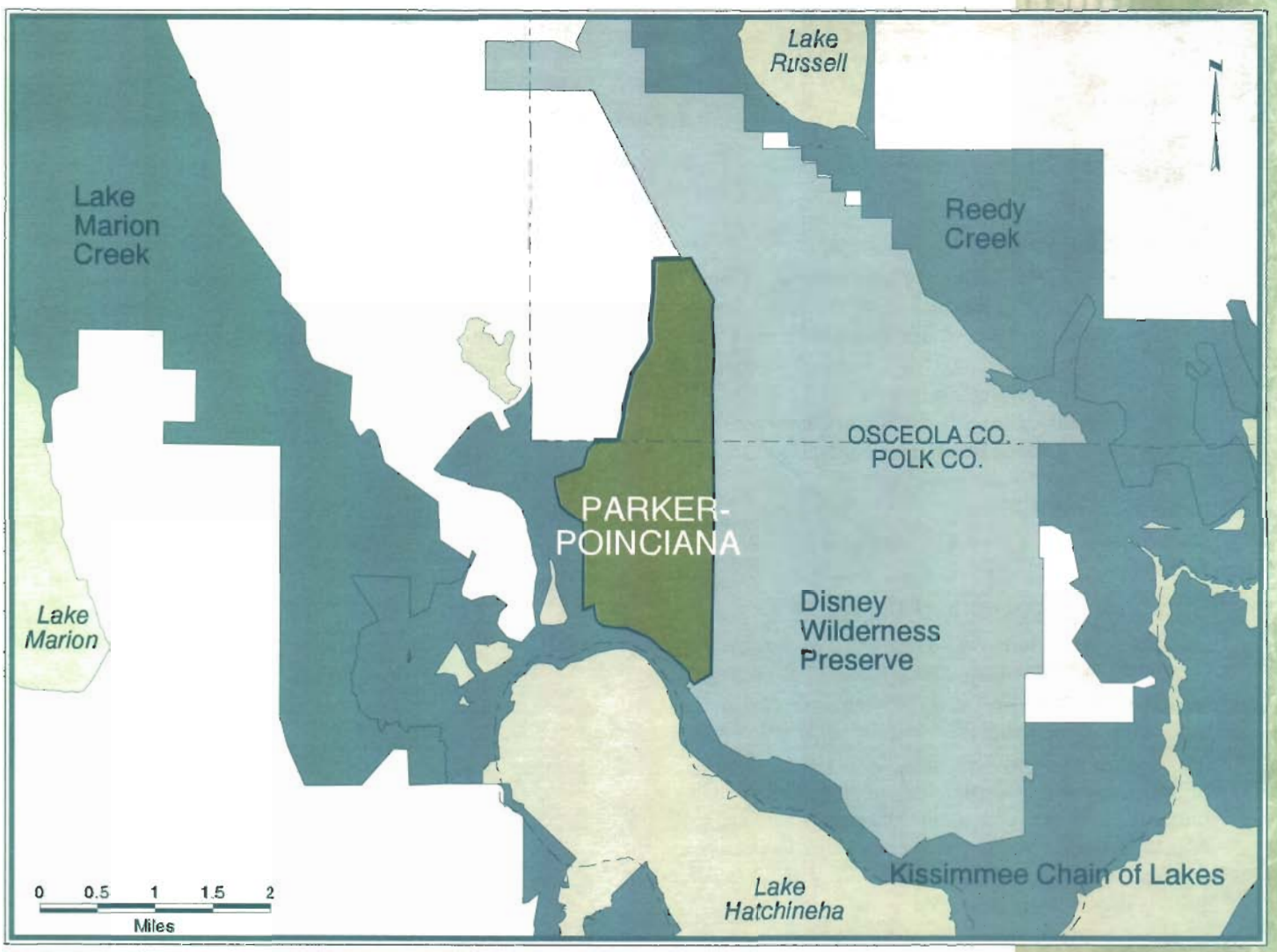
The diversity of community types and proximity to other large, undisturbed tracts of land creates excellent habitat for a wide variety of game and non-game wildlife species. Deer, turkey, sandhill cranes, Sherman's fox squirrel, scrub jays, gopher tortoises, and many species of wading birds have all been observed.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

It is proposed that the property be managed by The Nature Conservancy, in conjunction with their management of Disney Wilderness Preserve. The project would be developed as a mitigation bank by TNC. Hydrologic restoration and reestablishment of a longleaf pine/wiregrass community would be the major management goals.

Recreation Potential

An access road runs north-south through the property, with numerous arterial woods roads. The property has excellent public use potential. It is very accessible, and contains a variety of habitats where hiking, wilderness camping, and horseback riding are possible.



Counties:
Osceola/Polk

Total Project Area:
1,970 acres

Number of Owners:
One

- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

Savannas

General Description

The Savannas is in St. Lucie and Martin counties. It forms a chain of marshes and lakes that separate the inland pine flatwoods from the coastal scrub on the Atlantic Ridge. It is also a CARL project, and ranked number five on its "substantially complete" list. The CARL program has acquired nearly all the 4,800 acres. The District has purchased 77 acres in the Martin County portion.

The project is quite biologically diverse and includes scrub, mesic flatwoods, and depression marshes.

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

The freshwater aquifer, which underlies the Savannas, is not productive enough for municipal uses. However, the recharge that occurs along the coastal ridge holds back the saltwater wedge, thereby reducing the danger of saltwater intrusion.

Habitat types are diverse and include sand pine scrub, open water sloughs, emergent marshes, and low pine flatwoods. The wetlands are important feeding and nesting sites for wading birds whose habitat has been lost to urban development in St. Lucie and Martin counties. The Savannas is under heavy development pressure on both the east and west sides.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

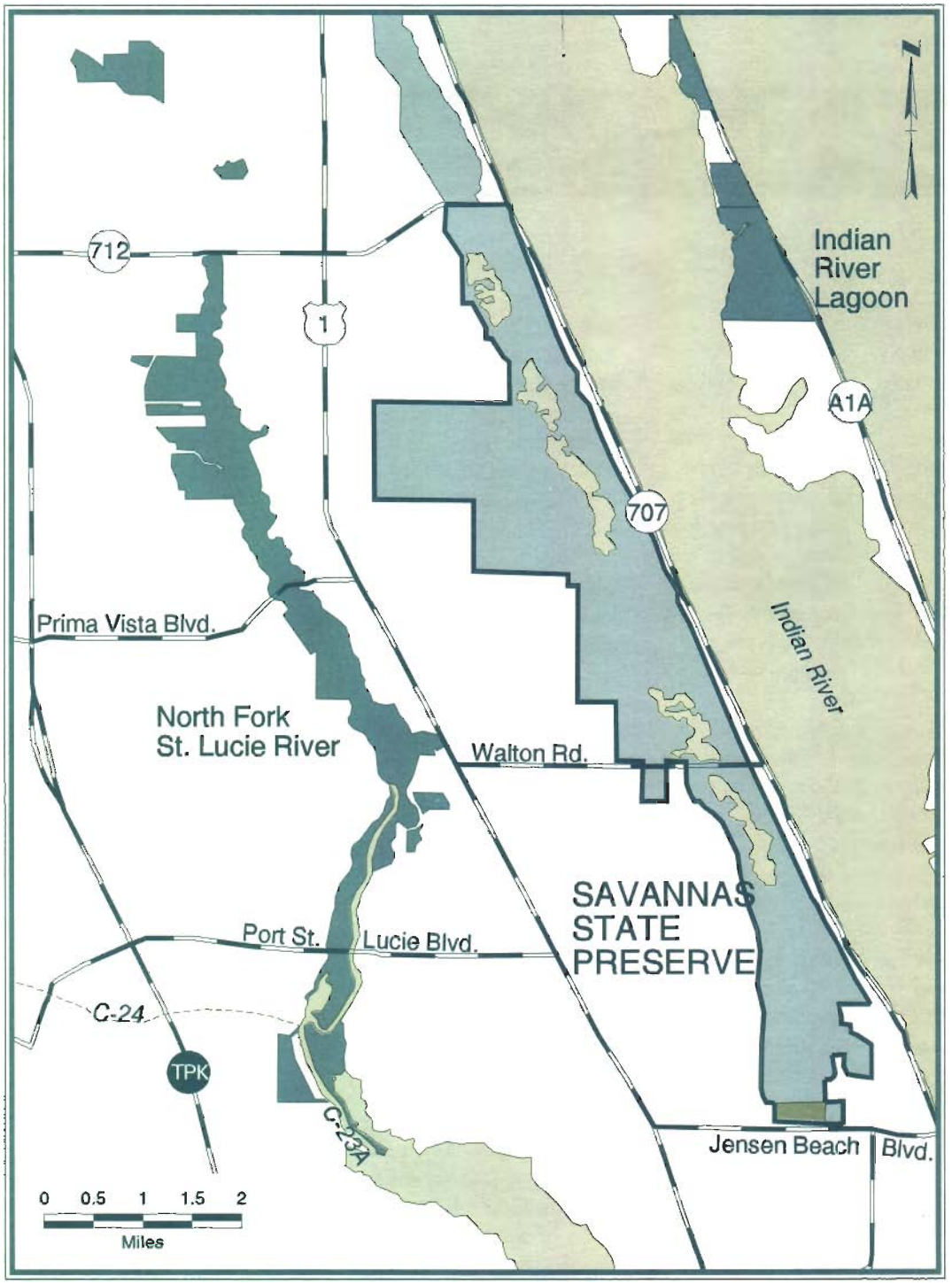
The Savannas is one of the most unique and endangered natural systems in the District. It is a remnant coastal wetland system, which historically extended along most of the Southeast Florida coast. Most of the area is in its natural state, thus eliminating the need for restoration. The wetlands are highly 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. The Division of Recreation and Parks of the Department of Environmental Protection manages it as the Savannas State Preserve.

Recreation Potential

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



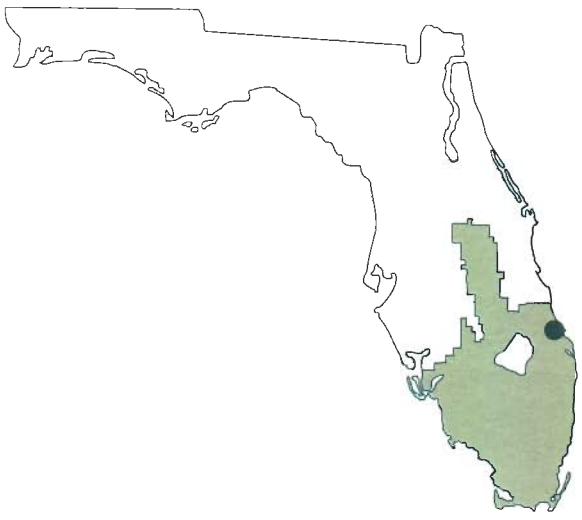
Counties:
Martin and St. Lucie

Total Project Area:
5,900 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
77

Land Cost:
$3,100,000

Number of Owners:
Numerous



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Shingle Creek

General Description

Shingle Creek Swamp covers more than 7,000 acres in southern Orange and northern Osceola Counties. It is a major receiving body for storm water runoff from areas south and southwest of Orlando. The Orange County portion of the swamp is more than 1.5 miles wide, and is dominated by cypress, loblolly bay, and red maple. Water depths of 24" during much of the year are common. The swamp is bisected in the north-south and east-west directions by an Orlando Utility Authority transmission line and access road. Shingle Creek itself was channelized in the 1920's and it borders the eastern edge of the swamp. Most of the floodplain in Osceola County is intact, but adjacent uplands, which historically were wiregrass/longleaf pine-dominated systems, have been cleared and planted as improved pasture.

As mitigation for the Orlando Beltway Southern Connector, a hydrologic restoration plan was implemented in 1995 which will equalize water levels and sheetflow across the Orange County portion of Shingle Creek Swamp. A 100' long stabilized swale was cut across the Orlando Utility Authority powerline access road to equalize water levels and improve sheetflow. Prior to construction of the swale, water levels on the upstream side of the road were as much as 1.5' higher.

The District currently owns more than 1,100 acres in Orange County, and nearly half of that was obtained at no cost through the mitigation process. It is likely that the remaining lands in Orange County, east of the powerline, will also come through mitigation. The western portion of the project was platted into more than 1,000 individual lots many years ago. The District has no plans to actively pursue acquisition in this area due to the number of landowners and small lot sizes.

Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

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.

Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

The University of Florida College of Landscape Architecture is working with the District to develop a plan which will address public use for the project as a whole. Orange and Osceola Counties, the City of Kissimmee, and the District are also working cooperatively to establish a "greenbelt" along Shingle Creek which will link common areas.

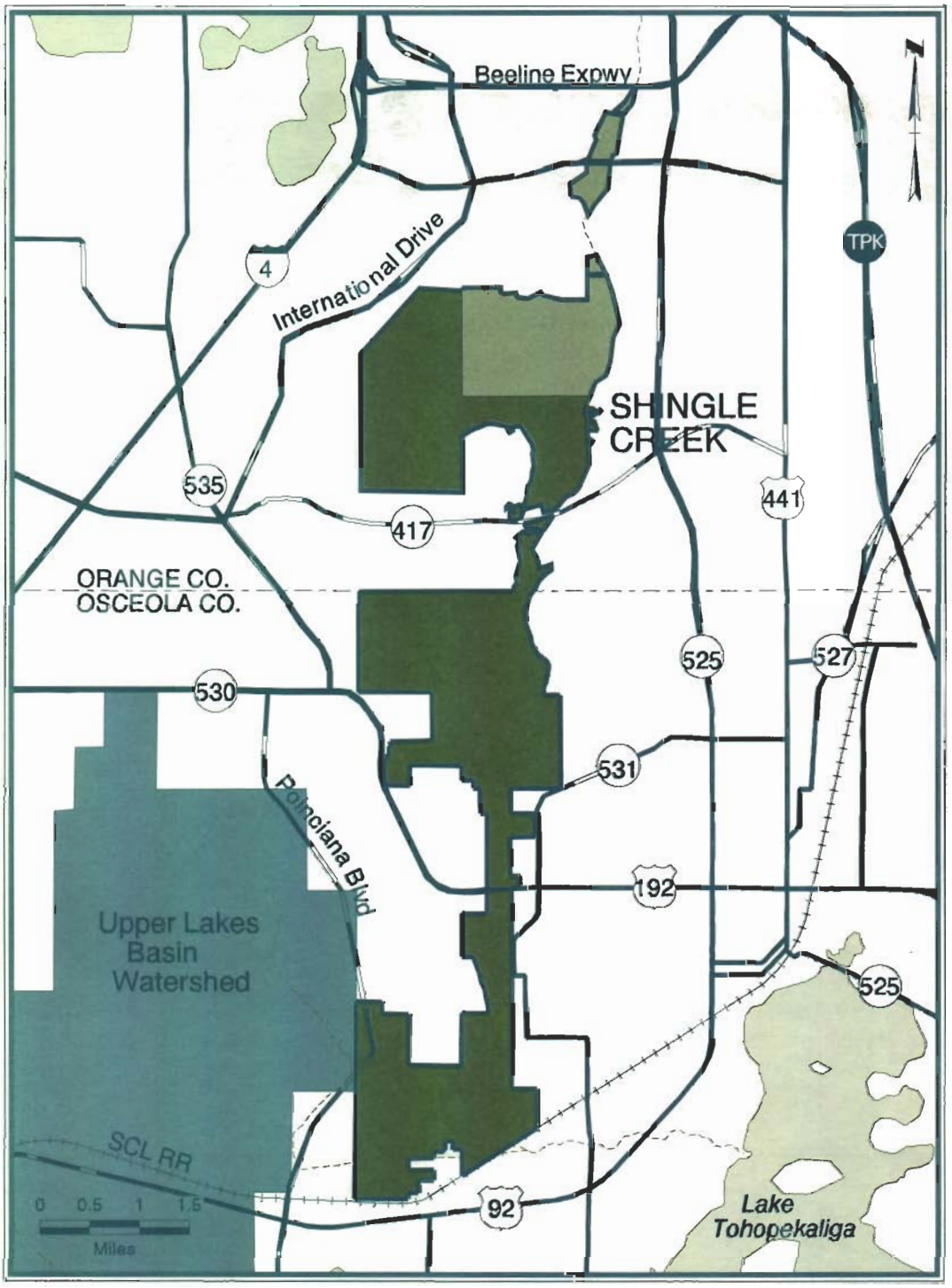
District-owned lands are dominated by forested wetlands, which are not fire dependent communities. If additional uplands are acquired in the future, fire management plans will be developed. Primrose willow appears to be the only nuisance exotic present on District-owned lands. The majority is along rights-of-way maintained by Orlando Utility Authority.

Construction of the powerline road swale will greatly improve water movement in the northern part of Shingle Creek Swamp. There may be opportunities for the installation of two additional swales to further facilitate sheet flow.

The lands adjacent to the floodplain in Osceola County have been cleared and planted as improved pasture. It is the District's intent to reestablish the native wiregrass groundcover and longleaf pine canopy layer, as well as block numerous shallow swales and ditches which have altered the hydrology.

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. As mitigation for wetland impacts associated with commercial development, the District will gain title to a small tract in the northwest corner of the Orange County portion of the project which will provide public access to the interior of the swamp. In addition, the developer will donate land for the construction of a small public parking area and trailhead.



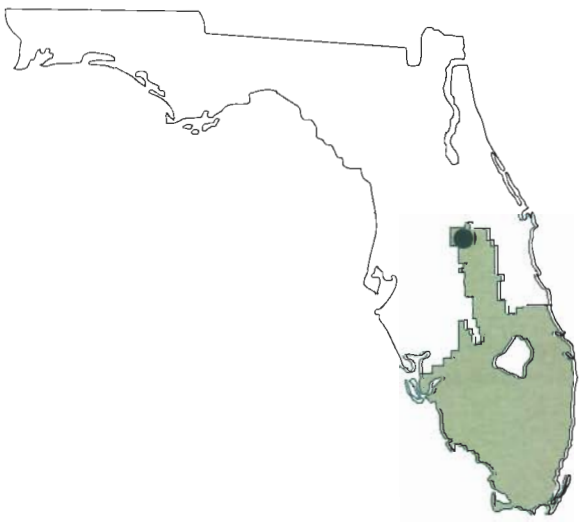
Counties:
Orange and Osceola

Total Project Area:
7,655 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
1,132

Land Cost:
$1,344,400

Acres Remaining:
6,523



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Six Mile Cypress

General Description

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. The Slough consists of cypress swamp, interspersed with numerous open ponds. It is fringed with pine flatwoods, transitional hardwoods, wet prairies, and stands of Melaleuca. During the 1996 plan period the District acquired twenty acres of the project lands.

Project Vision

South Florida Water Management District has an agreement with Lee County for county management of Six Mile Cypress Preserve. One of the primary goals of the county is to provide an optimum hydroperiod for the continued health and establishment of cypress and associated vegetation types through hydroperiod management. In 1991, a water control structure near 10 mile canal was modified to provide higher water stages in the slough. Another county goal is protecting surface water quality to maintain optimum biological productivity

The vision for this project includes eradication and control of exotic pest plants and reforestation in areas where exotic plants are thick. Developing habitat for wildlife through maintaining a productive ecological system is an objective of the program.

An environmental education center has been developed. Associated trails introduce people to the Preserve. Public use includes hiking, picnicking, nature study and fishing. Lee County schools use the Slough extensively for outdoor classroom field visits.

Natural Resource Management

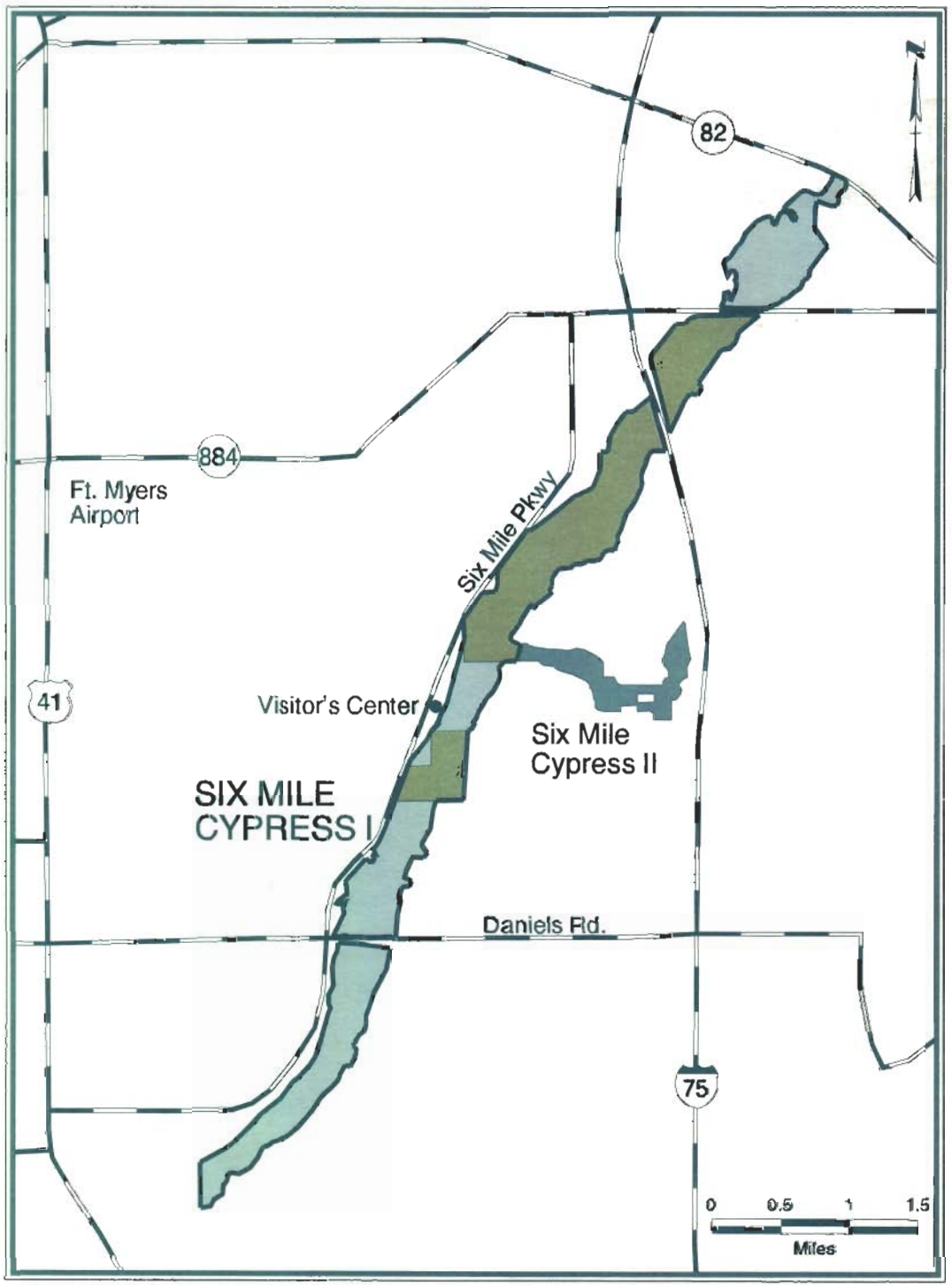
Activity	Ongoing	Proposed
Exotic Control	•	
Fire Management	•	
Mowing/Chopping	•	
Restoration	•	
	Ongoing	**Complete**
General Clean-up		•
Waste Removal		•
Fencing/Posting		•
Security		
County	•	

Public Use

	Yes	No
Fishing	•	
Hunting		•
Hiking	•	
Horseback Riding		•
Bicycling		•
Camping		•
Airboating		•
Environmental Education	•	

Planning

	Ongoing	Complete
Conceptual Planning		
Hydrologic Restoration Plan		
Public Input		
County Committee		
Cooperative Management Agreement(s)		
Lee County		



County:
Lee

Total Project Area:
1,741 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
839

Land Cost (SOR):
$1,975,321

Acres Acquired by Others:
966.73

SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Six Mile Cypress II

General Description

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.

Potential for 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.

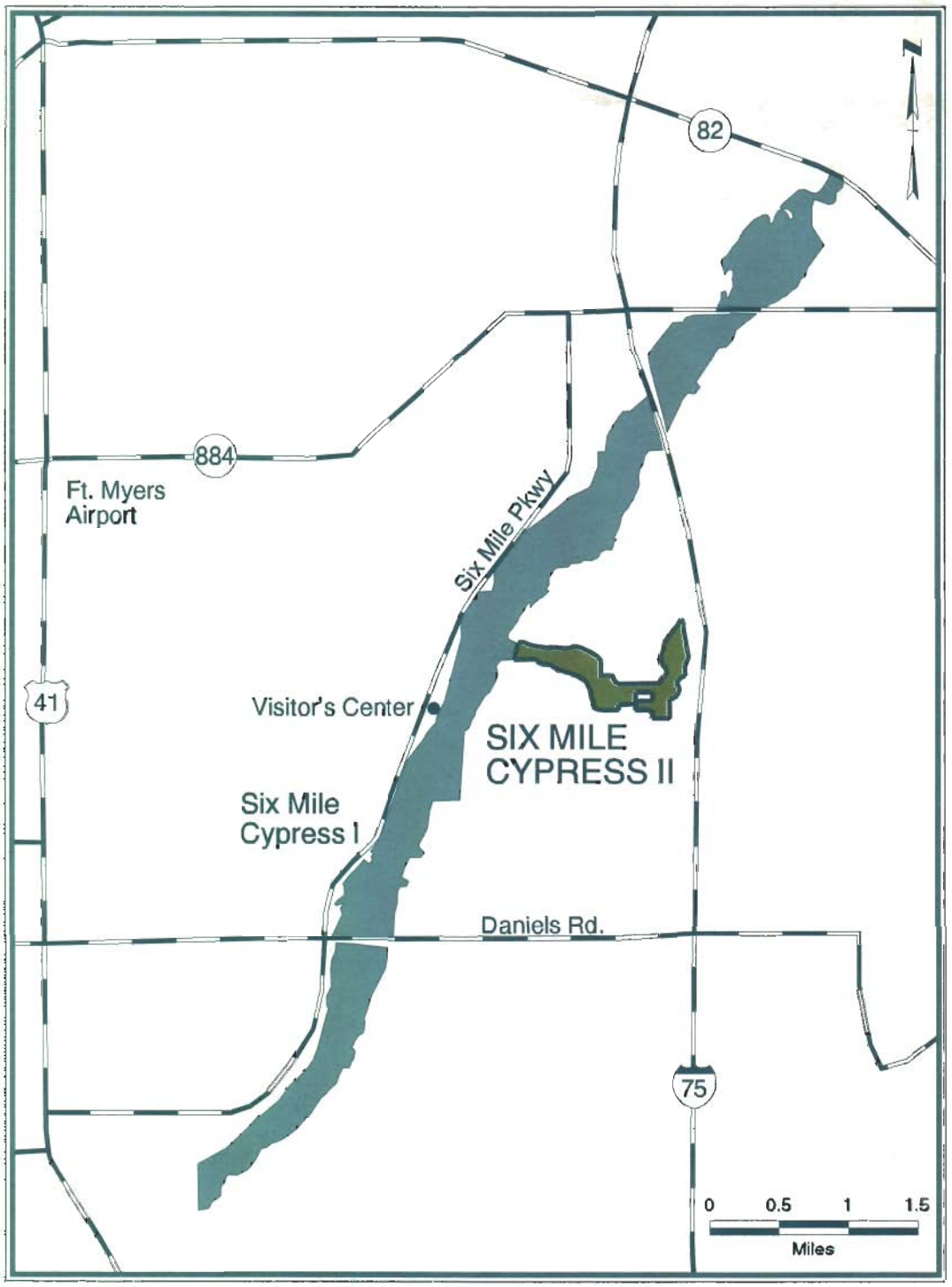
Recreation Potential

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.

County:
Lee

Total Project Area:
225 acres

Number of Owners:
Numerous



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

South Fork St. Lucie River

General Description

The project containing the South Fork of the St. Lucie River extends along both sides of the river for approximately 1.25 miles. The South Fork is one of South Florida's few remaining freeflowing blackwater streams. It is characterized by numerous curves with an overhanging canopy of cabbage palms, oaks, and maples.

District-owned property along the west bank of the river includes scrub, pine flatwoods, and floodplain hammock. A hiking trail runs parallel to the river and crosses through each of the community types. Lands along the east bank consist of floodplain swamp and mesic flatwoods.

In 1996, Martin County, in conjunction with Florida Communities Trust, acquired an additional 39 acres along the west bank, which also includes an island in the river, immediately north of the District-owned land. It is anticipated that Martin County will purchase an additional 150 acres to the west of the lands owned by the District and the county for an active recreation park, which would provide the South Fork natural area with better public access and parking.

Project Vision

The District envisions working with Martin County to expand public-use opportunities and to develop access and parking on the property owned by the county and Florida Communities Trust. District-owned land on the east side of the river connects with the Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem SOR/CARL project.

The District hopes that a major purchase of more than 2,500 acres of that project in 1998 will protect a large expanse of mesic flatwoods and depression marshes that are the primary watershed to the South Fork.

Prescribed burning and control of exotic vegetation are ongoing management requirements on both sides of the river. Upland restoration is needed in former pastures on District- and county-owned portions.

Natural Resource Management

Activity	Acres	Proposed
Exotic Control	20	30
Fire Management	52	
Mowing/Chopping	50	100
Restoration		

	Ongoing	Complete
General Clean-up	•	
Waste Removal		•
Fencing/Posting		•
Security		
Private	•	

Public Use

	Yes	No
Fishing	•	
Hunting		•
Hiking	•	
Horseback Riding		•
Bicycling		•
Camping	•	
Airboating		•
Boating	•	
Canoeing	•	
Environmental Education	•	

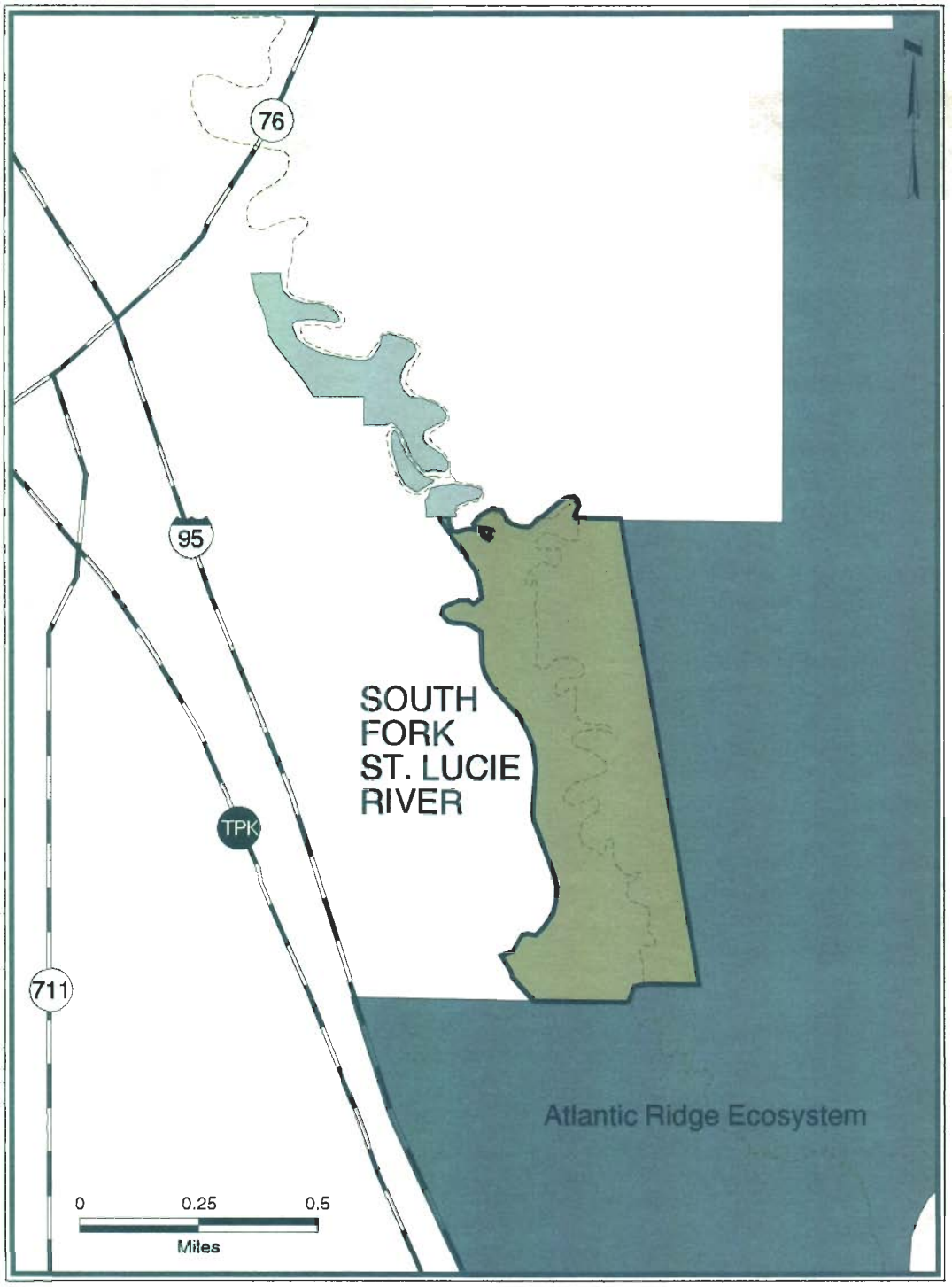
Planning

	Ongoing	Complete
Conceptual Planning		
Hydrologic Restoration Plan		
Public Input		
Public Information Meetings		
Cooperative Management Agreement(s)		
FTA		

County:
Martin

Total Project Area:
184 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
184



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Southern Glades

General Description

The lands in this project are adjacent to the C-111 canal, east of Everglades National Park, west of U.S. 1, and south of State Road 27. The project will benefit the flow of water into Everglades National Park and Northeast Florida Bay. During 1997, the District acquired 164 acres within the project.

Project Vision

The District plans to use this property to provide sufficient good quality water to support interagency plans to restore the ecological functions of Everglades National Park and Florida Bay. Southern Glades functions as a recharge area for the Biscayne Aquifer and is important in maintaining a barrier to saltwater intrusion.

In an attempt to improve sheetflow conditions to Everglades National Park, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently modified the C-111, C-109 and C-108 canals.

The natural communities within this property are in good condition, except the transitional area adjacent to the agricultural fields. That area is heavily infested with exotic vegetation. The District intends to maintain the quality of these communities by continuing with the prescribed burn, exotic plant control, and security programs.

Natural Resource Management

Activity	Acres	Proposed
Exotic Control	8,357 trees	yearly
Fire Management	0	2,500
Mowing/Chopping		
Restoration	4.25 miles	

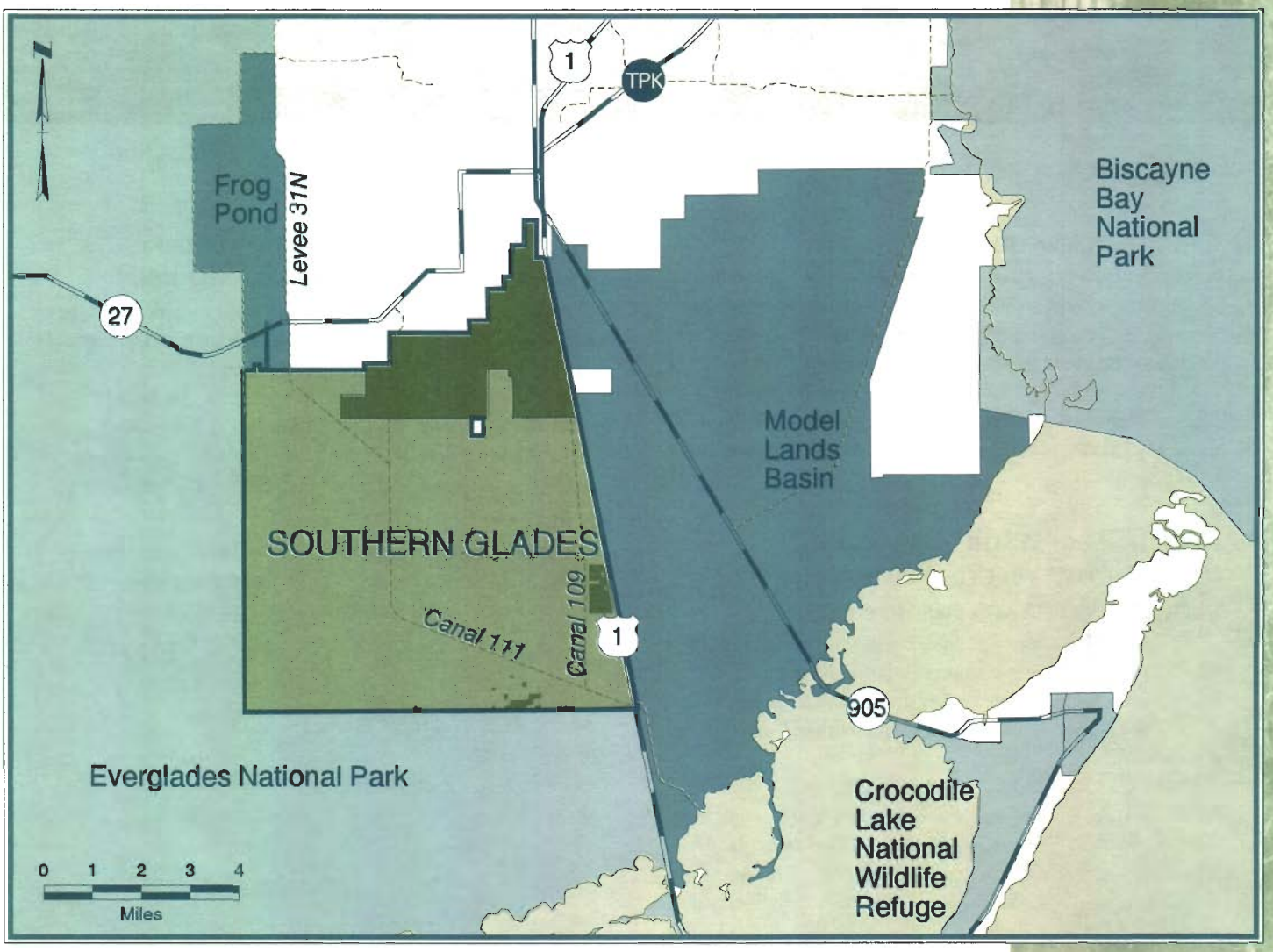
	Ongoing	Complete
General Clean-up	•	
Waste Removal	•	
Fencing/Posting	•	
Security		
GFC	•	

Public Use

	Yes	No
Fishing	•	
Hunting	•	
Hiking	•	
Horseback Riding	•	
Bicycling	•	
Camping		•
Airboating	•	
Environmental Education		•
Greenway System		
South Dade Greenway		

Planning

	Ongoing	Complete
Conceptual Planning	•	
Hydrologic Restoration Plan	•	
Cooperative Management Agreement(s)		
GFC		



County:
Dade

Total Project Area:
37,620 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
30,722

Acres Remaining:
7,244

SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Stairstep Mitigation Area

General Description

The Stairstep project, or Corkscrew mitigation bank, is located off Corkscrew Road in southern Lee County, approximately 4.75 miles east of the junction with Alico Road and 7.5 miles east of Interstate 75. The northern boundary is next to an area established as mitigation for impacts associated with the Southwest Florida International Airport, the Stairstep mitigation project. From July 1, 1996, to September 30, 1997, the District acquired 632.6 acres.

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

The project lands are adjacent to the headwater's basin of the Flint Pen Strand, known as Imperial Marsh. Runoff from the southern two-thirds of the property drains via ditches and swales directly to the upper portion of the strand south of Corkscrew Road.

Preservation of existing wetlands and restoration of degraded wetlands on the property would maintain wet-season runoff near the headwaters of the strand to the north of Corkscrew Road. These headwaters have been identified as a possible location for public water-supply wellfields, and several existing wellfields are located in the vicinity.

Retention of additional surface water in this area would improve recharge to the surficial aquifer supplying those wellfields and would provide additional flood control benefits downstream. Restoring wetlands on the property would contribute to improved water quality of surface runoff flowing into the strand and eventually to Estero Bay.

Potential for Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

The property is next to one of the highest quality ecosystems and wildlife corridors in eastern Lee Country. The goal of the restoration plan is to reclaim the historic natural system existing on the site before drainage, development, agriculture or other human-induced activities.

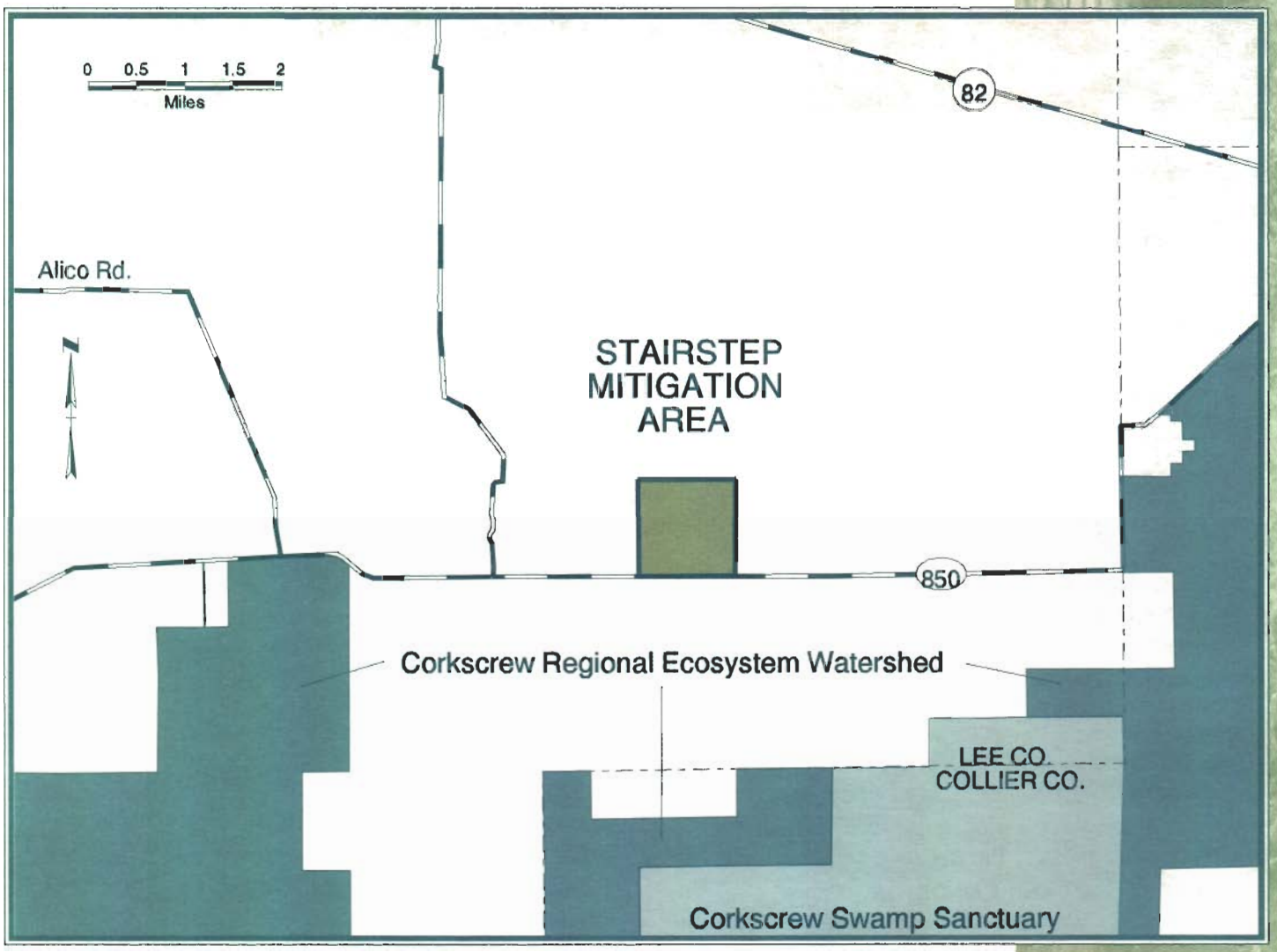
Through hydrologic restoration, removal of exotic plant species, regeneration of plant species indigenous to the natural system and fire management, the historic ecological communities can be restored. The benefit of undertaking such an effort is improved wildlife habitat value to the site and region, improved water quality, and flood protection.

Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

The management mission is to restore and maintain the ecological functions and values of the site. Fire management and exotic plant control are the primary land-management challenges on the Stairstep project. Additional management issues that must be considered include cattle grazing, fencing, endangered species protection, public use development, and road and trail maintenance.

Recreation Potential

This site offers opportunity for a trailhead to serve a hiking system that could tie into the larger mitigation project to the north. The lands may offer opportunity for environmental education.



Counties:
Lee

Total Project Area:
632.6 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
632.6

SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Stormwater Treatment Areas

General Description

The Stormwater Treatment Areas are filter marshes that will naturally remove nutrients from stormwater runoff flowing from the Everglades Agricultural Area before the water enters the Everglades Protection Area. The 1994 Everglades Forever Act mandated construction of the STAs. The large manmade marshes are key to improving the water quality in the Everglades.

Five STAs are currently proposed under the Everglades cleanup plan, with each serving the area that feeds the primary agricultural drainage canals of the EAA — the West Palm Beach (STA-1), Hillsboro (STA-2), North New River (STA-3 and 4) and Miami canals (STA-5).

The District selected the sites for the STAs so it could efficiently use the existing network of canals and water-control structures to intercept the nutrient-laden stormwater flows. The exact size and location of STAs are continuing to be refined, according to the needs of the restoration plan.

During 1997, the District acquired 11,052 acres within the project area. The Governing Board approved an additional 2,461 acres for acquisition.

Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

The District will design, operate, and manage the STAs to filter 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

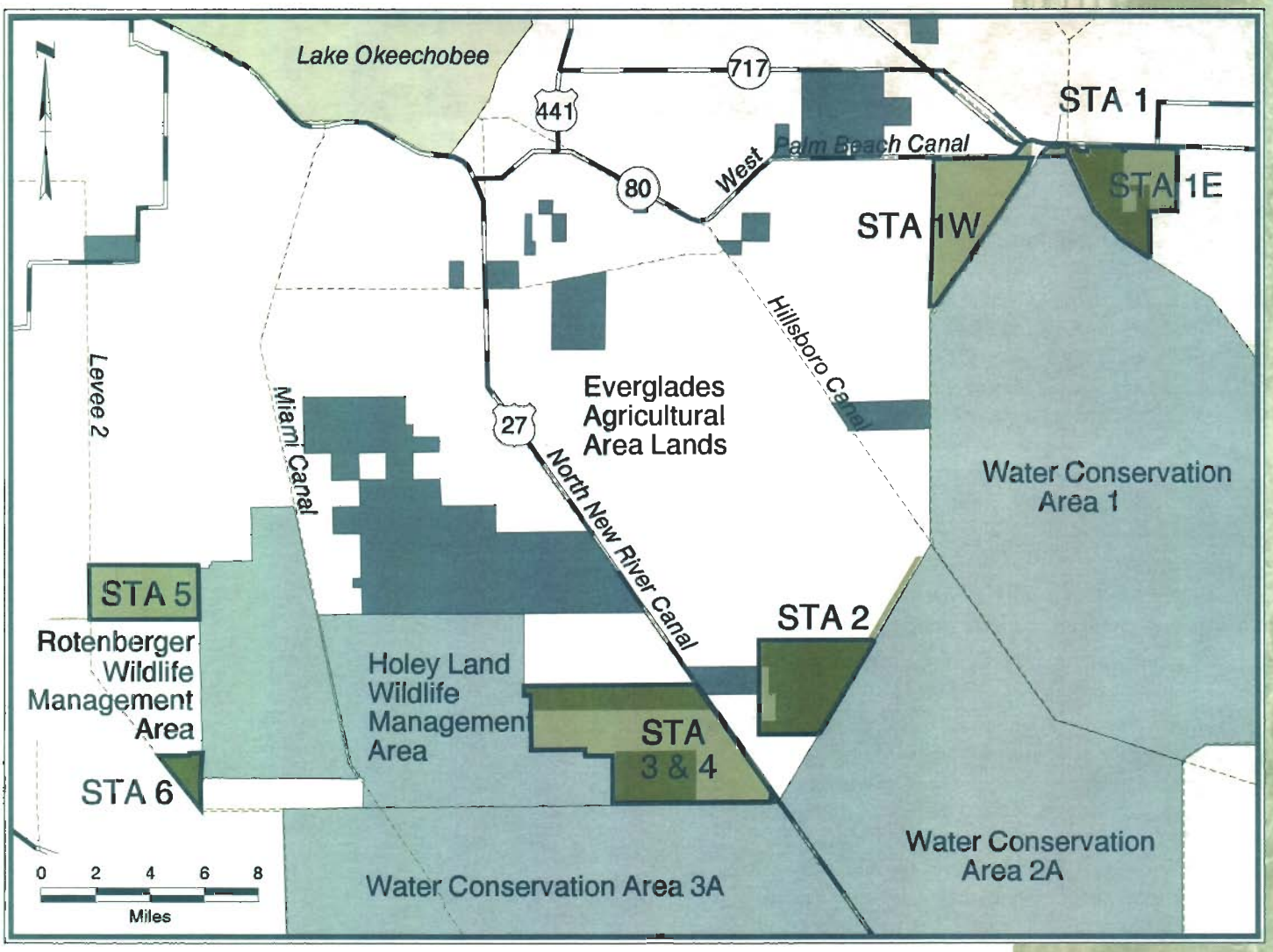
The STAs will be subject to intense management and monitoring to get the best nutrient-removal performance. Additionally, the District is considering various options to prevent unauthorized entry and trespassing.

Interim Management

Construction of the treatment cells within the STAs varies. In 1995, the District entered an agreement with Pride of Florida to manage an existing citrus grove in STA-1East. Under a similar agreement with the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, waterfowl hunting will be available in STA-3/4. The District is preparing for the construction of STA-1 West and recovering some acquisition costs by selling the trees on a large tree farm that presently occupies the property.

Public Recreation

The District will examine public use and recreation on the STA lands in the planning and design process. Staff will evaluate parcels 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:
47,630 acres*

Total Acres Acquired:
33,856

Acres Remaining:
13,774

Number of Owners:
Numerous

*Acreage is inclusive of the Everglades Nutrient Removal Project

- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

Ten Mile Creek

General Description

Ten Mile Creek is a 1,266-acre project in St. Lucie County, just south of the creek and west of Florida's Turnpike. Ten Mile Creek is a major tributary to the North Fork of the St. Lucie River, and it contributes nearly 25 percent of the river's flow. The site presently consists of an old citrus grove and some creek floodplain. The District would develop this water-resource project into a regional stormwater attenuation reservoir to restore more natural hydroperiods to the St. Lucie Estuary and Indian River Lagoon. The Governing approved this project and added it to the Five-Year Plan in January 1997.

Importance of water management, water supply, and the conservation and protection of water resources

The Indian River Lagoon SWIM Plan identifies excess freshwater as a major pollutant to the St. Lucie Estuary and Indian River Lagoon. Construction and improvement of the C-23, 24, 25, and 44 canals and smaller secondary drainage features have hastened the delivery of excess freshwater to these saline water bodies.

Construction of canals enlarged the basin areas draining to the estuary, and simultaneously, the canals greatly increased the land's drainage efficiency. Additional land and efficient drainage causes too much fresh water in the wet season and too little fresh water draining to the estuary in the dry season.

The altered freshwater delivery changes the salinity concentration of the estuary and lagoon. The changed salinity is frequently retards the growth of sea grasses and benthic organisms, such as oysters, that are the base of the estuary's food chain.

Potential for restoring and/or protecting natural state and condition

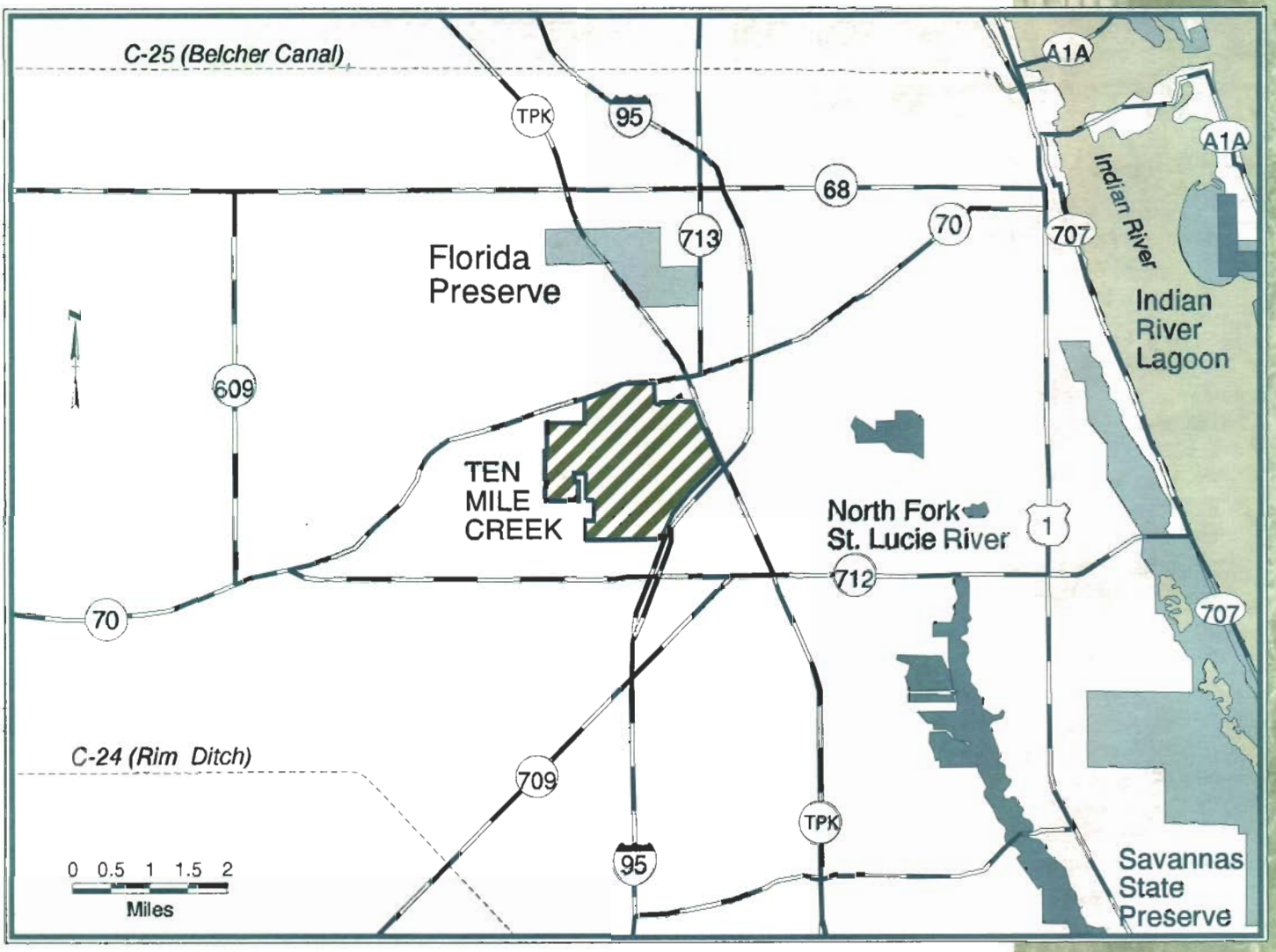
The District would use this property to construct facilities to restore a more natural hydroperiod to the St. Lucie Estuary and Indian River Lagoon. This site alone will not be sufficient to meet that goal, but it is an excellent start toward meeting the freshwater delivery targets developed through the Indian River Lagoon SWIM Plan.

Potential for managing and maintaining in an environmentally acceptable manner

The District proposes developing this site into a deep-water reservoir, so most of the typical needs of natural-areas management will not apply. Control of exotics around the perimeter will still be necessary.

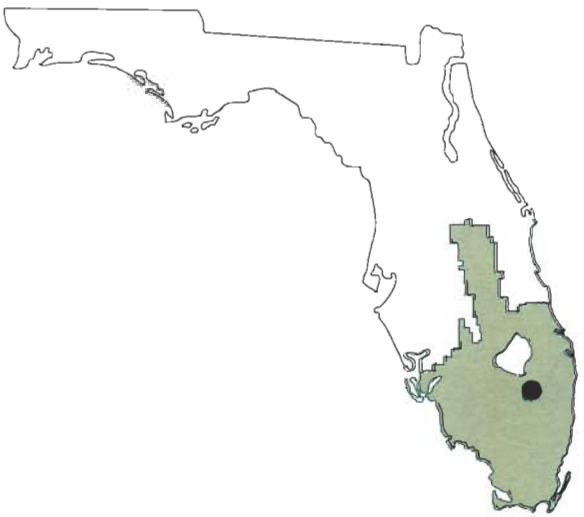
Recreation potential

Excellent opportunities for fishing and waterfowl hunting may exist once reservoir development is complete.



County:
St. Lucie

Total Project Area:
1,266 acres



- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

Tibet Butler Preserve

(Previously Lake Forest Preserve)

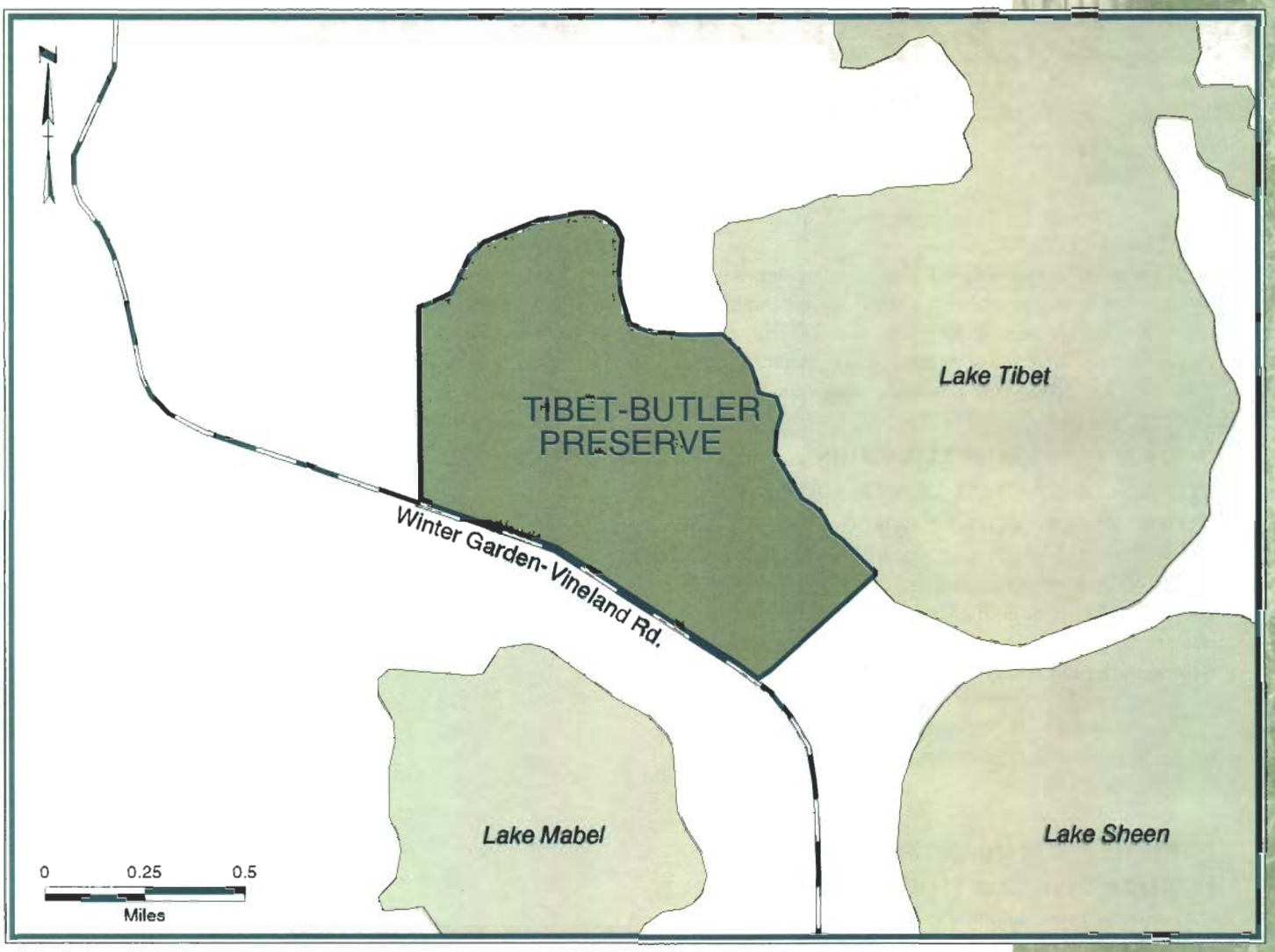
General Description

The Preserve covers 439 acres along the southwest shore of Lake Tibet-Butler in Orange County. 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.

Project Vision

Orange County staff considers the Tibet-Butler Preserve site to be ideal for passive recreation and public education. The preserve contains diverse natural features and a mosaic of habitats typical to central Florida. The location allows access from major roadways in the Orange County area. The County planned and constructed a nature center and the first one and one-half miles of trails. They used field design adjustments to maximize environmentally sensitive siting. The County plans extensive resource enhancement and preservation programs including: fire management, exotic control, forest management and habitat management for endangered species.

The master plan concentrates the nature center and related uses within the pine flatwood community next 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 will extend in short runs from the main trail loops to observation blinds. More than nine miles of trails are planned. Other facilities include controlled primitive group camping areas as well as group and individual picnic areas.



County:
Orange

Total Project Area:
439 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
439

- SOR Lands Acquired to Date
- Potential Acquisition Areas
- Other Conservation Areas
- Other SOR Projects
- 1997 Project Additions
- SOR Project Boundary

Twelve Mile Slough

General Description

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 3,300 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.

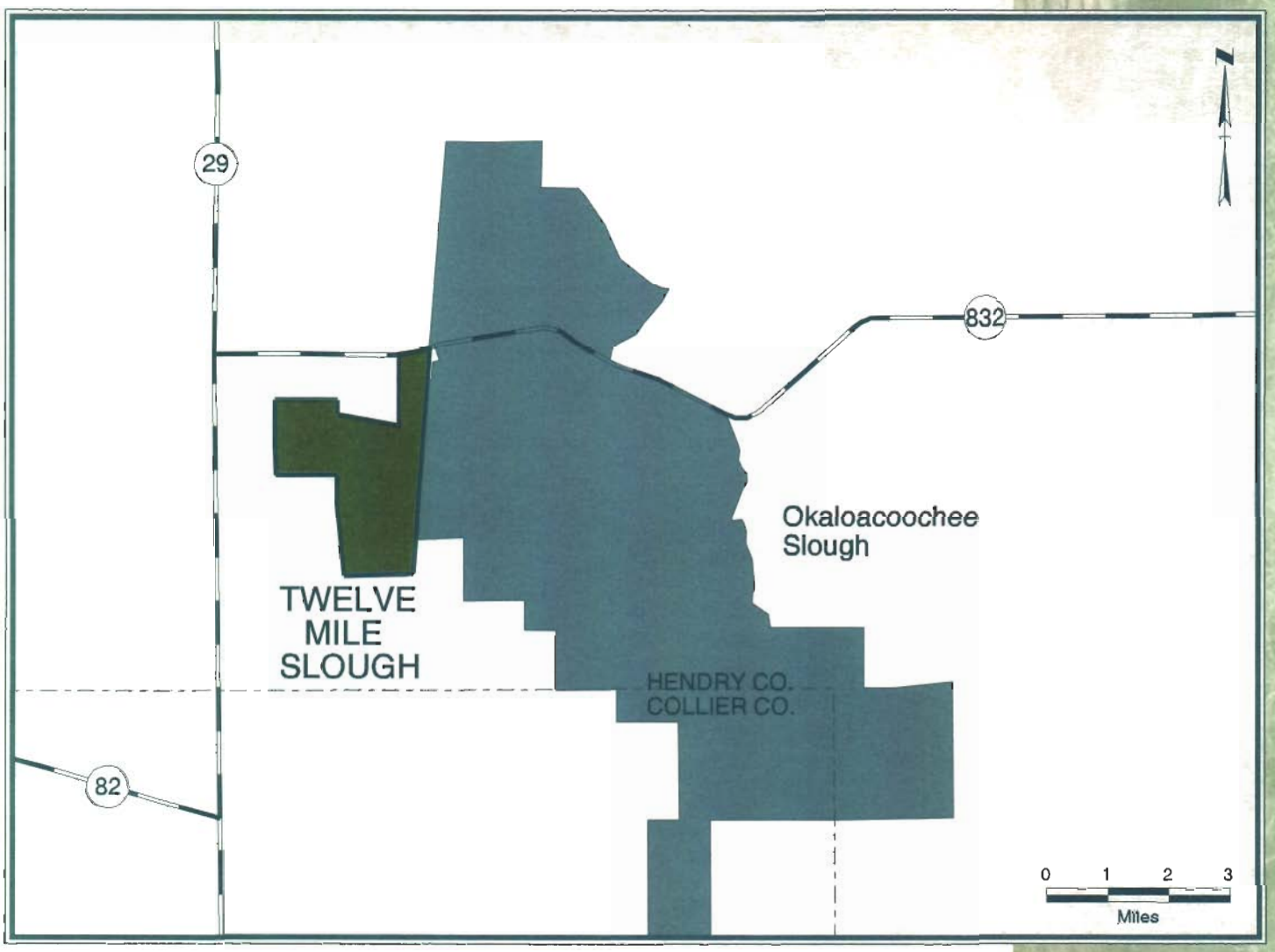
Potential for Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

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

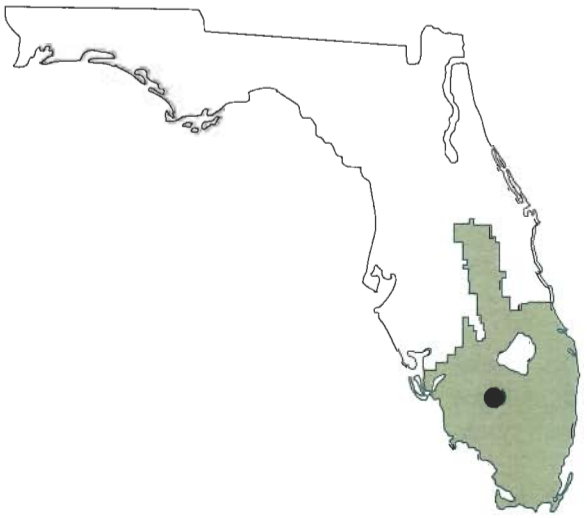
The mixture of habitat types would make this an interesting area for hiking trail development. However, its remoteness would probably make its use limited. An abandoned CSX Railroad grade runs adjacent to the property and lends opportunities for a "Rails to Trails" conversion, which could connect with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



County:
Hendry

Total Project Area:
3,300 acres

Number of Owners:
One



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Upper Lakes Basin Watershed

General Description

The Upper Lakes Basin Watershed project area includes a substantial portion of the Reedy Creek and Lake Marion Creek drainage basins. This project is the headwaters for the entire Kissimmee-Lake Okeechobee-Everglades ecosystem.

Protection of this watershed is a critical link in the restoration of this entire system. Contained within the project are large expanses of scrub. mesic and wet flatwoods, hydric hammock, and floodplain forest.

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 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. It includes the 1,324-acre Horse Creek Scrub, designated for acquisition under the CARL program, and the Snell Creek Drainage Basin.

The District envisions the lands in this project being acquired with assistance from Southwest Florida Water Management District and the state (CARL). Lands acquired in the Upper Lakes Basin Watershed will connect with other properties being purchased as part of the Kissimmee River restoration.

Most of the project is forested swamp and needs no restoration; however, the project also contains parcels of scrub that have been highly disturbed. Between July 1996 and September 1997, the District acquired 1,282 acres.

(Note: The map symbol for "SOR Acquired Lands to date" includes easements as well as lands owned in fee.)

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 storms are modified and stored within the swamp and provide year-round base flow for downstream lakes.

Wetlands comprise approximately 50 percent of the Lake Marion Creek portion of the project, and most are within the 100-year flood plain. The area is very important to the recharge of the Floridan Aquifer because the deep sands of the Lake Wales Ridge allow water to infiltrate, rather than run off.

Lake Marion serves as the headwaters for Lake Marion Creek, which combines with Snell and Horse creeks to 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.

Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

Reedy Creek Swamp has been fairly well protected because of its large size and inaccessibility. Unless high-density urban encroachments or damaging silviculture operations are permitted in the future, the swamp should be able to buffer itself. Exotic vegetation is not a problem, and it does not appear that hydrologic restoration will be necessary.

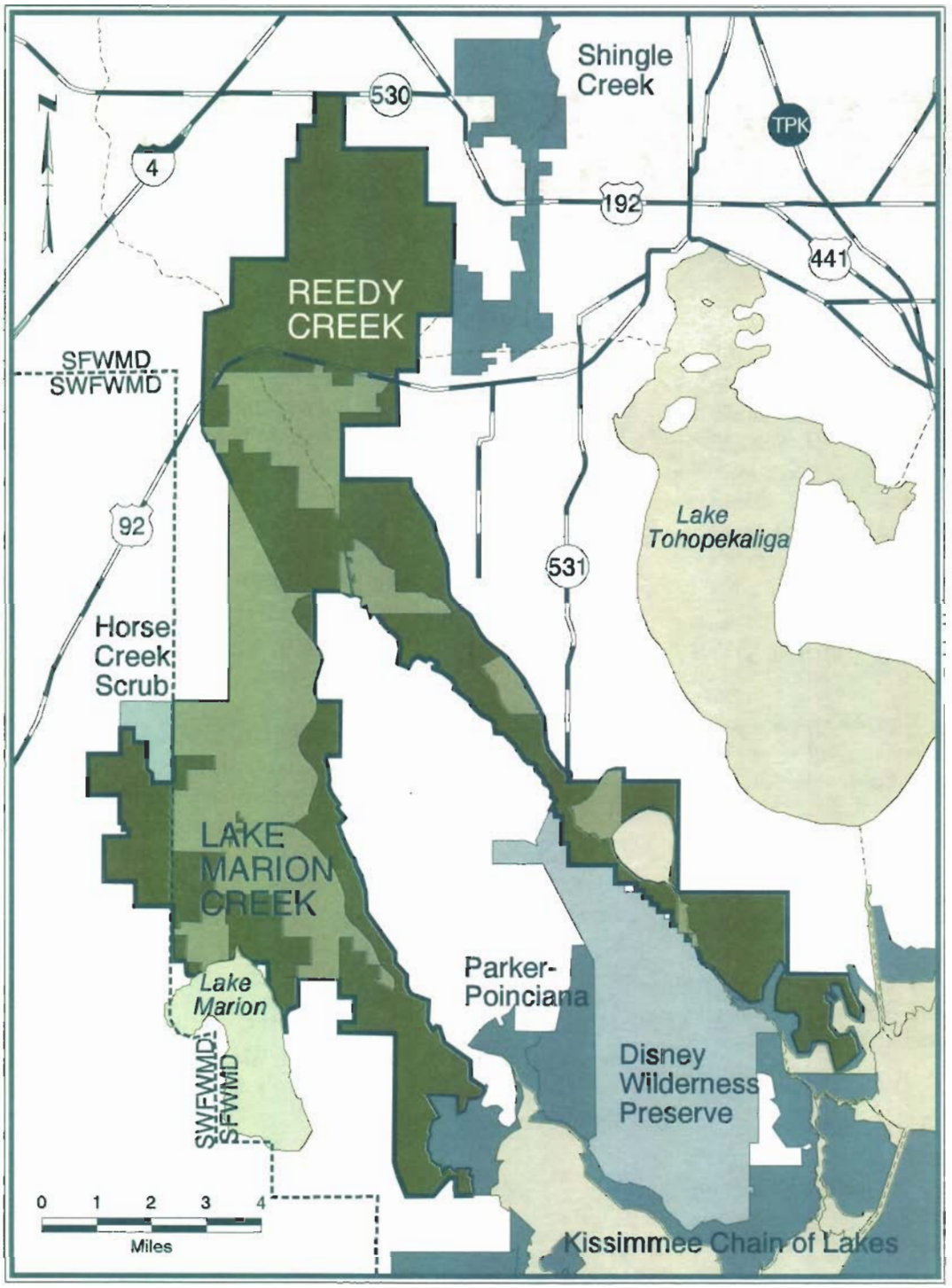
The natural habitats within the Lake Marion Creek area are generally in good condition, although development has destroyed some scrub areas. The size of the property and the deep swamps allows the interior portions to remain buffered from activities along the ridge.

Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

The District prepared a conceptual management plan for the Lake Marion/Reedy Creek portions of the project before acquisition. Information generated from a detailed environmental assessment, including plant community maps, locations of listed species, and wildlife information, will guide development of operational management plans.

Public Recreation

The District anticipates that recreation will be centered on passive uses, such as hiking and canoeing. Opportunities for both uses on newly acquired lands will be explored.



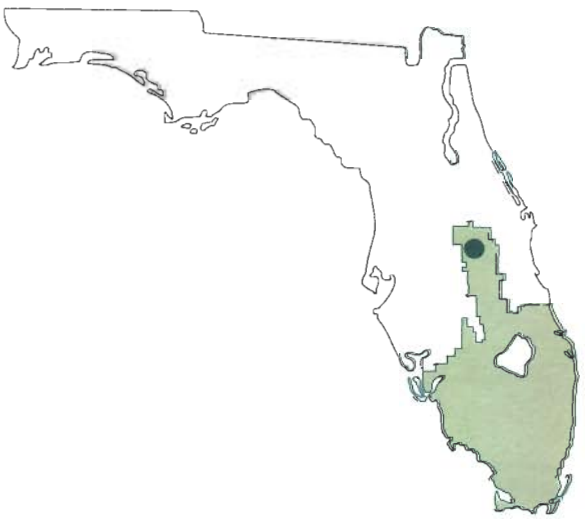
Counties:
Osceola and Polk

Total Project Area:
43,500 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
12,545 acres

Acres Remaining:
30,955 acres

Number of Owners:
Numerous



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Water Conservation Areas

General Description

The three water conservation areas are part of the original Central and Southern Florida Flood Control Project. The large areas of remnant Everglades surrounded by levees and canals were created to provide water supply and flood control to South Florida.

The SOR project is designed to complete the public acquisition of outstanding land interests to protect this area's role in long-term water-resource management. The original legislation for the Save Our Rivers program mandated this acquisition. Between July 1996 and June 1997, the District acquired 1,730 acres.

Restoring and/or Protecting Natural State and Condition

The District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulate water levels in the three WCAs in accordance with criteria originally established in the 1950s and modified over the years to meet changing conditions.

The general purpose of the "regulation schedules" is to store floodwaters from developed areas adjacent to the WCAs for later use during the dry season. In establishing the schedules, the Corps considered the needs of wildlife indigenous to the WCAs and the requirements of emergent vegetation.

Water releases from the WCAs during the dry season and particularly during drought conditions are vital to maintaining adequate water levels in coastal canals and wellfields and to preventing 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 delivery system that most closely approximates historical patterns (See C-111 SOR project discussions).

Managing and Maintaining in an Environmentally Acceptable Manner

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manage WCA-1 as the Arthur R. Marshal Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. The Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission manage WCA-2 and WCA-3 as the Everglades Wildlife Management Area 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.

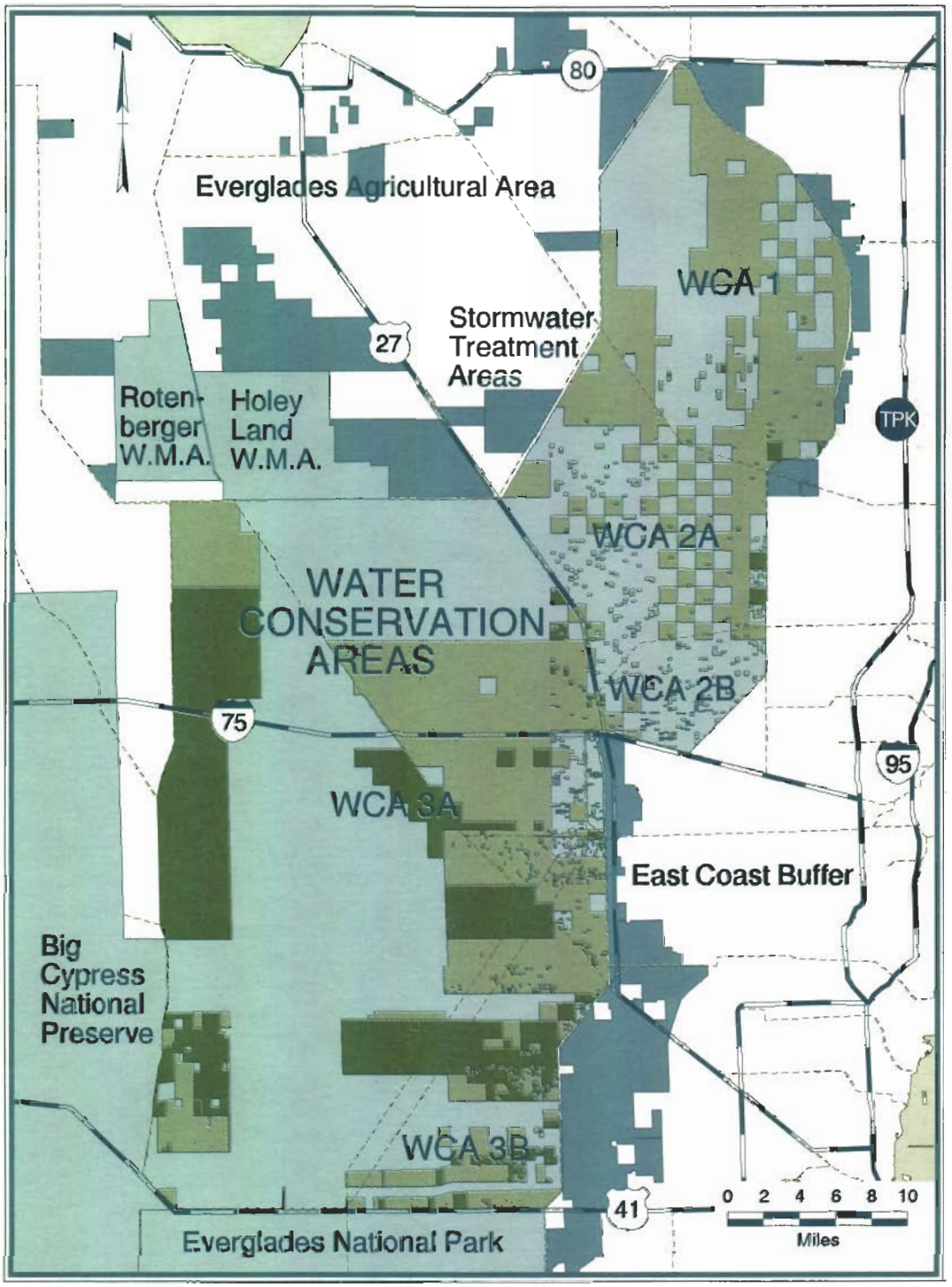
The District has conducted environmental research in the WCAs for many years, concentrating on the effects of water quantity and quality on the plants and animals. In recent years, efforts to halt backpumping into Lake Okeechobee have resulted in increased water flows from the Everglades Agricultural Area south into WCA-3. Because of the high amounts of nutrients in the farm runoff, this action in turn appears to have triggered certain vegetative changes in WCA-3.

Officials at Everglades National Park are concerned that water-quality problems appearing in WCA-3 will move on to the park 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 for 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 and the Five-Year Plan 1973-1978, prepared in 1974 by the Everglades Recreational Planning Board. Both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission have established rules and regulations governing public use of these areas.

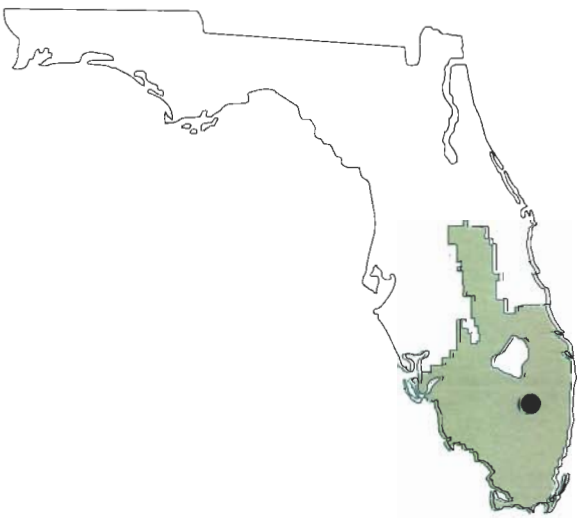


Counties:
Broward, Dade and Palm Beach

Total Project Area:
103,635 acres

Total Acres Acquired:
60,089

Acres Remaining:
43,546



SOR Lands Acquired to Date
Potential Acquisition Areas
Other Conservation Areas
Other SOR Projects
1997 Project Additions
SOR Project Boundary

Appendices

04.10001 Contents

04.10002 Scope

This policy will apply to all proposed projects for the Save Our Rivers (SOR) program.

04.10003 Purpose

The objective of SOR is to acquire necessary interests in lands for water management, water supply or the conservation and protection of water resources. The purpose of this policy is to identify District management principles and direction regarding SOR project evaluation and selection criteria.

04.10004 References

SFWMD Policy:	
Real Estate Property Acquisitions	04.600
Real Estate Appraisal	04.301
Land Management	05.001
Florida Statutes:	
Water Management Lands Trust Fund	
Florida Resources River Act	§373.59
Florida Preservation 2000 Act	§259.101
Florida Administrative Code:	
Water Management Lands Trust Fund	17-42
Miscellaneous Provisions	40E-7
Save Our Rivers Five Year Plan	40E-7

04.10005 Definitions

Acquisition	Acquiring title to land in fee; or in the discretion of the District, such other legal interest necessary for water management, water supply, or the conservation and protection of water resources.
Board	The Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District.
Department	The Florida Department of Environmental Protection.
District	The South Florida Water Management District.
Plan	The Five Year Plan as approved by the Board.
Secretary	The secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection.
Selection	The process of identifying and evaluating proposed projects for the inclusion in the Five Year Plan.

SOR	The Save Our Rivers program as provided under Section 373.59, Florida Statutes.
SOR Project	A geographical area possessing unique features necessary for water management, water supply, and the conservation and protection of water resources.
Florida Preservation 2000	Section 259.101, Florida Statutes, providing for the proceeds of bonds deposited in the Florida Preservation 2000 Trust Fund and for criteria for certain projects financed by such proceeds.
Water Management Lands Trust Fund	(WMLTF), Section 373.59, Florida Statutes, providing revenue from the Documentary Tax Stamp to acquire and manage authorized SOR projects.

04.10007 History

This document originally included policy statements regarding the preparation and review of appraisals and acquiring real estate. This information may be found in the Real Estate Appraisal Policy (04.301) and the Real Estate Property Acquisitions Policy (04.600).

Revision 2 of this policy included project selection guidelines and priority project criteria. This information may be found in the Save Our Rivers Guidelines (04.101). SOR procedural items may be found in Save Our Rivers Procedures (04.102). Information on the preparation of the Five Year Plan is outlined in the Save Our Rivers Method (04.103). All policy statements embedded in material cut from this document have been added to the Statement of Policy section (04.10010) of this policy.

04.1010 Statement of Policy

1. The Governing Board recognizes a need to provide guidelines for selecting projects to be considered under the Resource Rivers Act (Section 373.59, Florida Statutes), which is also known as the Save Our Rivers (SOR) program. These guidelines include procedures for project selection and land acquisition and are intended as an additional and complementary to Rule 40E-7, Florida Administrative Code.

2. It is the Governing Board's intention to implement SOR in a manner that will provide long-term benefit to the citizens living within the District as well as the water resources of the District.

3. It is the goal of this program to identify, prioritize, and acquire necessary interests in lands for water management, water supply and the conservation and protection of water resources.

4. In compliance with Section 373.59, Florida Statutes, the District will file an annual Five Year Plan with the Department of Environmental Protection and the Florida Legislature.

5. Funding for SOR is derived from revenue and Preservation 2000 Bond proceeds collected from the documentary stamp tax, and it is administered by the Department of Environmental Protection as provided for by Rule 17-402, Florida Administrative Code.

6. To most effectively administer SOR, the District will closely coordinate with all other public land acquisition programs.

7. Through its regulatory programs, the District shall apply the same regulatory criteria to lands being considered for acquisition/protection under SOR, as it does to similar lands not being considered for acquisition/protection.

8. The District's regulatory program shall not be used for the purpose of controlling or valuing of lands to be considered for acquisition/protection under the SOR program, notwithstanding normal effects of regulations on land values.

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

10. Projects eligible for selection include, but are not limited to:

    - River and stream flood plains and flood ways
    - River and stream flood hazard areas
    - Littoral zones
    - Springs and lakes
    - Aquifer recharge areas
    - Wetlands
    - Wellfields
    - Unique water features
    - Appropriate buffer zones
    - Lands needed to retain or store water

11. Legislatively mandated projects for the South Florida Water Management District, funded by monies from the Water Management Lands Trust Fund include:

    A. Water Conservation Areas
    B. Nicodemus Slough
    C. Savannas

12. The Land Evaluation Matrix or the SOR Selection Criteria for Water Resources Projects shall be used to screen and categorize prospective additions to the Five Year Plan. Any land acquisition will require prior Governing Board approval of the subject Plan with the exception of any boundary modifications less than five (5) percent of the project area, not to exceed 100 acres. These boundary modifications will be presented to the Governing Board as part of the annual reports.

13. An Acquisition Plan and Status Report, as required by Section 373.59, Florida Statutes, shall be prepared by the Construction and Land Management Department (CLM) and presented to the Governing Board annually, or more frequently, if considered necessary by the Board or CLM.

14. The Board shall annually adopt an update on the Five Year Plan and after adoption, the projects approved shall be incorporated in a report and it will be made available to the public.

04.10020 Responsibilities

CLM shall be responsible for receiving and evaluating all suggestions for selection of projects under SOR. CLM will consult with the Planning Department and the Regulation Department in evaluating proposals using SOR project evaluation and selection criteria.

CLM shall circulate for comment to each Department within the District the SOR project applications with the Land Stewardship technical evaluations prior to holding public meetings.

To obtain public comment, CLM shall schedule regular and widely publicized public meetings on all proposed projects prior to making recommendations to the Governing Board.

04.1097 Delegation of Authority

Delegation of Authority		Type of Authority
From	To	
Governing Board	Director, Construction and Land Management Department	1. Authority to receive and evaluate all suggestions for selection of projects under SOR program. 2. Authority to approve suggested projects for consideration. 3. Authority to provide direction to the SOR Program for the development of policies. 4. Authority to incorporate and prioritize projects currently on District Strategic Plan with SOR Five Year Plan. 5. Authority to direct the administration of Preservation 2000 requirements. 6. Authority to present proposals for selection of projects to include in Five Year Plan to Governing Board. 7. Authority to prepare the Acquisition Plan and Status Report annually, or more frequently, if necessary.

04.10100 SAVE OUR RIVERS PROJECT EVALUATION AND SELECTION

04.10101 Contents

04.10102 Scope

This guideline will apply to all proposed projects for the Save Our Rivers (SOR) Program.

04.10103 Purpose

The objective of SOR is to acquire necessary interests in lands for water management, water supply, conservation and protection of water resources. The purpose of this guideline is to provide criteria to establish SOR project eligibility, selection and general acquisition priority.

04.10104 References

SFWMD Policy:

Save Our Rivers	04.100
Real Estate Property Acquisitions	04.600
Real Estate Appraisal	04.301
Land Management	05.001

Florida Statutes:

Water Management Lands Trust Fund	
Florida Resources River Act	§373.59
Florida Preservation 2000 Act	§259.101

Florida Administrative Code:

Water Management Lands Trust Fund	17-42
Miscellaneous Provisions	40E-7
Save Our Rivers Five Year Plan	40E-7

04.10105 Definitions

Acquisition	Acquiring title to land in fee; or in the discretion of the District, such other legal interest necessary for water management, water supply, or the conservation and protection of water resources.
District	The South Florida Water Management District.
Plan	The Five Year Plan as approved by the Board.
Selection	The process of identifying and evaluating proposed projects for the inclusion in the Five Year Plan.
SOR	The Save Our Rivers Program as provided under Section 373.59, Florida Statutes.
SOR Project	A geographical area possessing unique features necessary for water management, water supply, and the conservation and protection of water resources.

04.10109 Introduction

Section 373.59, Florida Statutes specifies monies from the Water Management Lands Trust Fund (WMLTF) 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.

Manageability, surface and ground water systems and the formation of corridors for the critical interaction of wildlife populations are major considerations in this land acquisition process.

04.10110 Project Selection Guidelines

1. Types of Projects

Projects considered necessary for water management, water supply, and the conservation and protection of water resources and thus eligible for selection include, but are not limited to:

A. River and stream flood plains
B. River and stream flood ways
C. River and stream flood hazard areas
D. River and stream littoral areas
E. Springs
F. Lakes including littoral zones
G. Aquifer recharge area
H. Wetlands
I. Well fields
J. Unique water features
K. Appropriate buffer zones qualifying for A-J
L Lands needed to retain or store water
M. Remainders of land ownerships included in A-L

2. Land Evaluation Matrix

The Land Evaluation Matrix is one of two methods used to screen and categorize prospective additions to the Five Year Plan. The first phase of the Land Evaluation Matrix, or Category I, reviews parcels for water resource related values (Water Management, Water Supply and Conservation and Protection of Water Resources). Then consideration is given to natural resource related criteria in the second phase, or Category II.

3. SOR Selection Criteria for Water Resource Projects

The second method used to screen prospective land candidates for the Five Year Plan is the SOR Selection Criteria for Water Resource Projects. This system applies to projects designed primarily to supply off-site water resource benefits. Evaluation is performed not on the lands' resource values but considers the way these lands will be utilized within the described project. This benefits criteria system addresses 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. These projects are included in order to reverse the decline in the ecological, aesthetic, recreational and economic value of the State's water resources.

A. Application

1) Distribution systems to stimulate sheet flow inputs into wetlands systems.

2) Retention systems operated to stimulate the natural hydrograph for delivery of water into natural wetlands, lakes or estuaries.

3) Water quality treatment systems utilizing managed or unmanaged wetlands/marsh vegetation processes.

4) Groundwater recharge and/or water table control to facilitate recharge to aquifers or retain seepage from water storage facilities.

5) 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.

B. Criteria

Please see Save Our Rivers Method (04.103), Section 04.10310, SOR Selection Criteria for Water Resources Projects, Criteria.

C. Notification of Owners

A release is prepared by the District identifying the general boundaries of new or expanded SOR projects prior to initiating the project review and approval process. This release is published in a newspaper of general circulation within the vicinity of the project and provides information as to location, date, and time of all meetings concerning the review of the project. Concerned owners within the project will be invited to contact the District for more information regarding the SOR program, the project approval process, and the land acquisition process.

Notices of the Construction and Land Management Department (CLM) public meetings are published in the Florida Administrative Weekly. Meeting notices for projects involving less than one hundred (100) landowners are directly mailed to the landowners.

04.10200 SAVE OUR RIVERS

04.10201 Contents

04.10202 Scope

This procedure will apply to all proposed projects for the Save Our Rivers (SOR) Program.

04.10203 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the action steps of the SOR project evaluation and selection process.

04.10204 References

SFWMD Policy:	
Save Our Rivers	04.100
Real Estate Property Acquisitions	04.600
Real Estate Appraisal	04.301
Land Management	05.001
SFWMD Related Documents:	
Save Our Rivers Guidelines	04.101
Save Our Rivers Methods	04.103
Florida Statutes:	
Water Management Lands Trust Fund	
Florida Resources River Act	§373.59
Florida Preservation 2000 Act	§259.101

Florida Administrative Code:

Water Management Lands Trust Fund	17-42
Miscellaneous Provisions	40E-7
Save Our Rivers Five Year Plan	40E-7

04.10205 Definitions

Acquisition	Acquiring title to land in fee; or in the discretion of the District, such other legal interest necessary for water management, water supply, or the conservation and protection of water resources.
Board	The Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District.
District	The South Florida Water Management District.
Florida Preservation 2000	Section 259.101, Florida Statutes, providing for the proceeds of bonds deposited in the Florida Preservation 2000 Trust Fund and for criteria for certain projects financed by such projects.
Plan	The Five Year Plan as approved by the Board.
Selection	The process of identifying and evaluating proposed projects for the inclusion in the Five Year Plan.
SOR	The Save Our Rivers Program as provided under Section 373.59, Florida Statutes.
SOR Project	A geographical area possessing unique features necessary for water management, water supply, and the conservation and protection of water resources.

04.10209 Introduction

Applications from private and public groups are reviewed. The SFWMD identifies lands within the District that may be suitable as candidates for acquisition under SOR. The Land Evaluation Matrix or the SOR Selection Criteria for Water Resource Projects are used to address the water and natural resource values of each parcel.

Proposals are reviewed internally by each Department and public comment is acquired at public meetings conducted by the Construction and Land Management Department (CLM). Recommendations including public comment are presented to the Governing Board for approval at the Governing Board Public Hearings.

04.10210 Procedures

Performed By	**Step/Action/Responsibility**
Submitter of Proposed Project	For SOR project consideration, the SOR Project Proposal Form is completed and submitted to the District. The submitter of a proposed project can be any individual, private or public group or District staff.
Director, CLM	Scheduled Updates of Acquisition Plan Accepts proposals at any time or delays action on proposals until the annual update conducted during the March - August time frame. Ensures the Acquisition Plan is updated annually prior to January 15th of each year.

Performed By	Step/Action/Responsibility
Senior Technical Staff	Land Evaluation Matrix Following on-site or aerial inspections of each tract, the water resource value of each project, with regard to matrix parameters, is determined by a team of senior technical staff. See Save Our Rivers Method (04.103) for details on the Land Evaluation Matrix criteria. Staff recommendations are presented to the Director, CLM.
Senior Technical Staff	SOR Selection Criteria for Water Resource Projects Following consultation with District and other appropriate agencies and review of technical plans and specifications for the proposed project by senior technical staff, the merits of the proposal are determined based on the selection criteria. See the Save Our Rivers Method (04.103) for details on the SOR Selection Criteria for Water Resources Projects. Staff recommendations are presented to the Director, CLM.
Director, CLM	Internal Review and Comments Project proposals and technical staff evaluations are circulated to all Departments of the District for comment. Review time is not to exceed 30 days.

Public	Public Comment CLM will hold public meetings on all SOR project proposals before final agency actions are recommended. The public meetings will be noticed in the Florida Administrative Weekly and in newspapers of local circulation. Meetings will be held at times and locations convenient to the public most affected. For projects affecting less than 100 land owners, owners will be notified by direct mail. For large projects, owners will be notified by legal notice in newspapers of local circulation.
Director, CLM	Presentation to Governing Board Following proposed project evaluation, internal evaluation and public comment, an Acquisition Plan and Status Report are prepared. These recommendations are presented to the Governing Board for final approval at a properly noticed public hearing of the Board.
Governing Board	Adoption of Update to Five Year Plan All proposed projects and current projects are reviewed on an annual basis. The Board annually adopts an update to the Five Year Plan and after adoption, the projects approved are incorporated in a report which is made available to the public. All projects included in the Five Year Plan are not necessarily acquired.

04.10300 SAVE OUR RIVERS

04.10301 Contents

04.10302 Scope

This method will apply to all proposed projects for the Save Our Rivers (SOR) Program.

04.10303 Purpose

This method outlines the use of the Evaluation Matrix and the Water Resources Project Criteria to screen and categorize prospective additions to the Five Year Plan. It details the actions necessary to prepare the Five Year Plan.

04.10304 References

SFWMD Policy:	
Save Our Rivers	04.100
Real Estate Property Acquisitions	04.600
Real Estate Appraisal	04.301
Land Management	05.001
SFWMD Related Documents:	
Save Our Rivers Guidelines	04.101
Save Our Rivers Procedures	04.102
Florida Statutes:	
Water Management Lands Trust Fund	
Florida Resources River Act	§373.59
Florida Preservation 2000 Act	§259.101
Florida Administrative Code:	
Water Management Lands Trust Fund	17-42
Miscellaneous Provisions	40E-7
Save Our Rivers Five Year Plan	40E-7

04.10305 Definitions

Acquisition	Acquiring title to land in fee; or in the discretion of the District, such other legal interest necessary for water management, water supply, or the conservation and protection of water resources.
Board	The Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District.
District	The South Florida Water Management District.
Plan	The Five Year Plan as approved by the Board.
SOR	The Save Our Rivers Program as provided under Section 373.59, Florida Statutes.
SOR Project	A geographical area possessing unique features necessary for water management, water supply, and the conservation and protection of water

resources.

04.10310 Method

Performed By: Submitter of Proposed Project

SOR Project Proposal

For SOR project consideration, the SOR Project Proposal Form is completed and submitted to the District. See Exhibit Section (04.10399) for SOR Project Proposal Form.

Performed By: Senior Technical Staff

Land Evaluation Matrix for Natural Resource Projects

Each project is screened by the parameters in Category I first.

Category I.	
Parameter	Weighing Factor
1. Water Management	5
2. Water Supply	5
3. Conservation and Protection of Water Resources	5

After the initial screening is complete, seven additional factors in Category II are evaluated. These include:

Category II.	
Parameter	Weighing Factor
4. Manageability	2
5. Habitat Diversity	2
6. Species Diversity	1
7. Connectedness	2
8. Rarity	1
9. Vulnerability	1
10. Nature Oriented Human Use	1

It is intended that project scoring is conducted by a team of reviewers, each of whom is familiar with all the projects.

Performed By: Senior Technical Staff

SOR Selection Criteria for Water Resource Projects

Criteria

Any land acquisition requires prior Governing Board approval of the subject Plan.

1) Proposed project lands are identified in a District Plan such as WUMP or SWIM, and

2) Subject lands can be utilized to provide simulated or naturally functioning water resource quality/quantity benefits, and

3) Lands can be part of the project resulting in net increase of natural resource value, when considering both on site losses and off site gains, and

4) Capital improvements, such as canals, levees, weirs, and pumps are limited to only those necessary to achieve the proposed water resource benefits, and

5) All appropriate funding sources for acquisition are identified.

Performed By: Director, Construction and Land Management (CLM)

Project Boundary Modifications

Criteria

Boundary modification to any approved project that is less than five (5) percent of the project area and does not exceed one hundred (100) acres do not require prior Governing Board approval. These modifications are presented to the Governing Board as part of the annual reports.

Performed By: Director, CLM

Preparation of the Five Year Plan

An Acquisition Plan and Status Report are prepared by CLM and presented to the Governing Board annually, or more frequently, if considered necessary by the Board or CLM.

1. The Acquisition Plan includes a written report of the favorable and unfavorable merits of each project selected for acquisition consideration and considers and evaluates in writing:

   a. An assessment of the project's water management, water supply and conservation values including ecological values, vulnerability, endangerment, and any other related environmental information.

b. The public purpose of the project, including the statutory authority.

c. An assessment of management cost, utilization, ownership, and appraised value estimates.

d. The determination whether the project conforms with local and state comprehensive plans or any other adopted governmental plans.

e. The determination whether the project meets one or more of the six criteria for Preservation 2000:

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

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

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

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

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

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

f. Potential management options

The Plan identifies land needed to protect or recharge groundwater and establishes a plan for the acquisition as necessary to protect potable water supplies. These lands also serve to protect other valuable resources or provide space for natural resource-based recreation. The Five Year Plan report includes a detailed summary of acquisition activity, modification, or additions to the Acquisition Plan and a description of all land management activity.

2. Board Consideration of the Five Year Plan

As a minimum, the Board reviews all proposed projects and current projects on an annual basis. The Board annually adopts an update on the Five Year Plans and after adoption, the projects approved are incorporated in a report which is made available to the public. The Board recognizes that the Five Year Plan is a list of projects that qualify for the program. Projects included on the Five Year Plan are not necessarily acquired.

Exhibit 04.10399(1)

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.

A. General Information

1. Name and Location

   Property Name (commonly known as)

   _____

   County (or counties)

   _____

   Within Municipal Boundaries - Yes __ No __. Please attach a location map (82 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 product.

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(s) and the contact address and telephone number (if available).

   _____

   _____

Exhibit 04.10399(1)

5. Survey Information

Are surveys and/or legal descriptions available? _____
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. Buildings

Describe types and occupancy, if any: _____

8. 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).

9. 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?

B. Evaluation Data/Information: For projects to be evaluated on natural and water resources attributes.

1. 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 unique geological features, etc.

Exhibit 04.10399(1)

2. Provide information on reports prepared by any other agencies on the physical and ecological characteristics of the property; if possible, attach a copy of the report.

_____

3. Describe the water resources of the project in terms of:
   a) Flood storage management/watershed function
   b) Water supply protection
   c) Conservation and protection of water resources for environmental uses

4. Provide comments/information on the following additional areas:
   a) Manageability - access, exotics, infrastructure, maintenance
   b) Habitat diversity - number, extent and quality of habitat type
   c) Species diversity
   d) Connectedness - part of larger system; other existing/planned project
   e) Rarity - uniqueness of property
   f) Vulnerability - threat of development

5. Are funds available from other sources for land acquisition? Please list source and amount

_____

_____

6. Who are the proposed mangers? What will be the source and level of management funding?

_____

_____

C. Evaluation Data/Information: For projects to be evaluated on water resource benefits.

1. General Description of how proposed project land will be used to benefit water resources of the area/region.

_____

_____

2. Describe how proposed design features utilize natural functions to protect/preserve water resources, directly or indirectly.

_____

_____

3. Show net increase of natural resource benefits by any capital improvement planned for the project such as canals, levees, or water control structures.

_____

_____

4. How are any such capital improvements being limited? Show use of natural functions in place of structural solutions.

_____

_____

Exhibit 04.10399(1)

5. What specific studies or plans have been completed to support this project? Where these studies/plans approved? By whom? When?

_____

_____

6. What are the sources and levels of funding for this project?

Design _____

Land Acquisition _____

Construction _____

Operation _____

D. Attachments

Identify and label each attachment (with boundaries notes). Suggested attachments may include: zoning maps, soil maps, ownership maps, aerial photographs, vegetative maps, water resource maps, endangered specifies 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.

E. Form Completed by:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: (___) _____

Please state affiliation to owner(s): _____

_____

_____

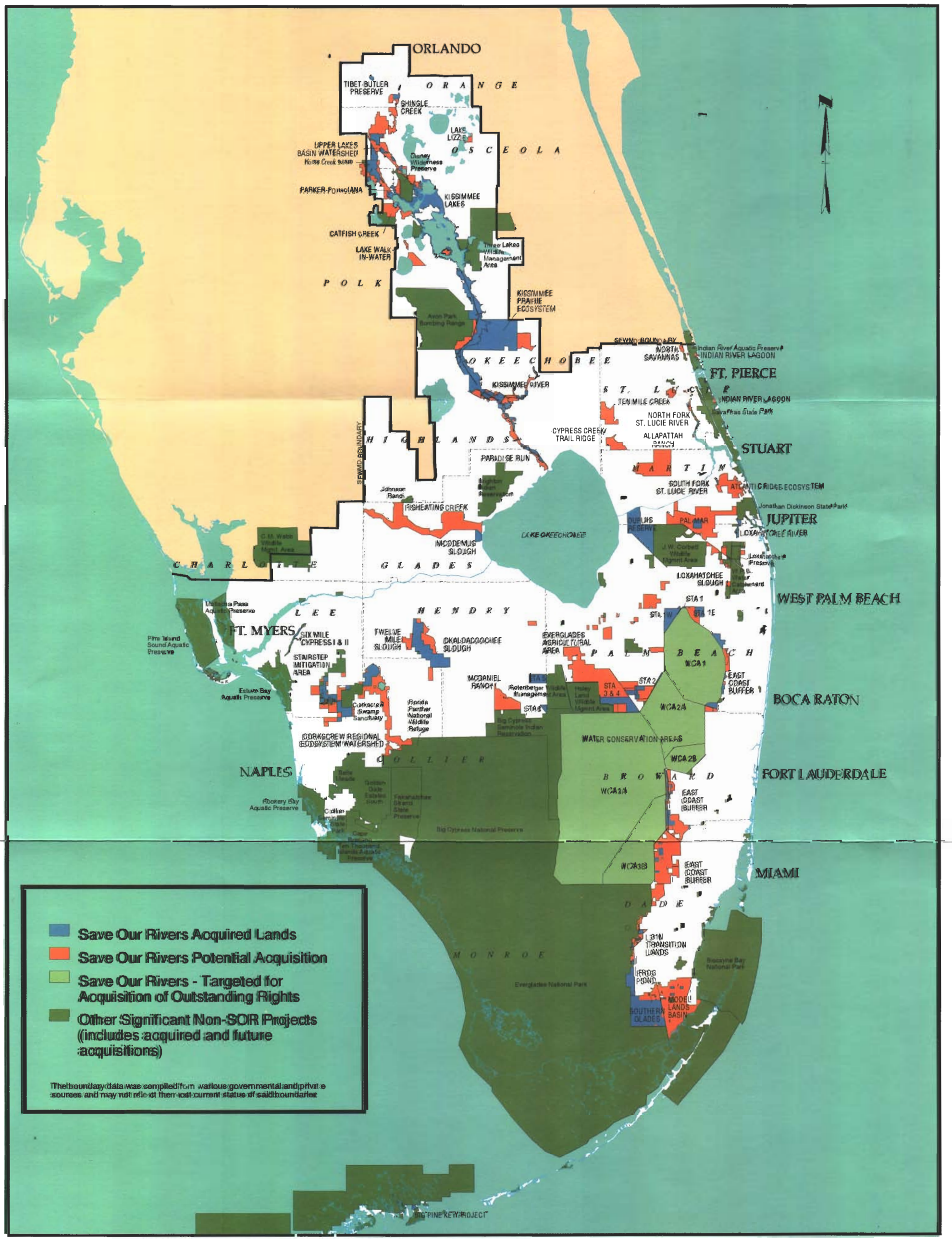
Save Our Rivers

Land For Waters' Sake

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Save Our Rivers Status Map



South Florida Water Management District

Save Our Rivers Five Year Plan

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Deputy Executive Director
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Front Cover
Natural vegetation drapes across the gently flowing North Fork of the St. Lucie River.

Save Our Rivers
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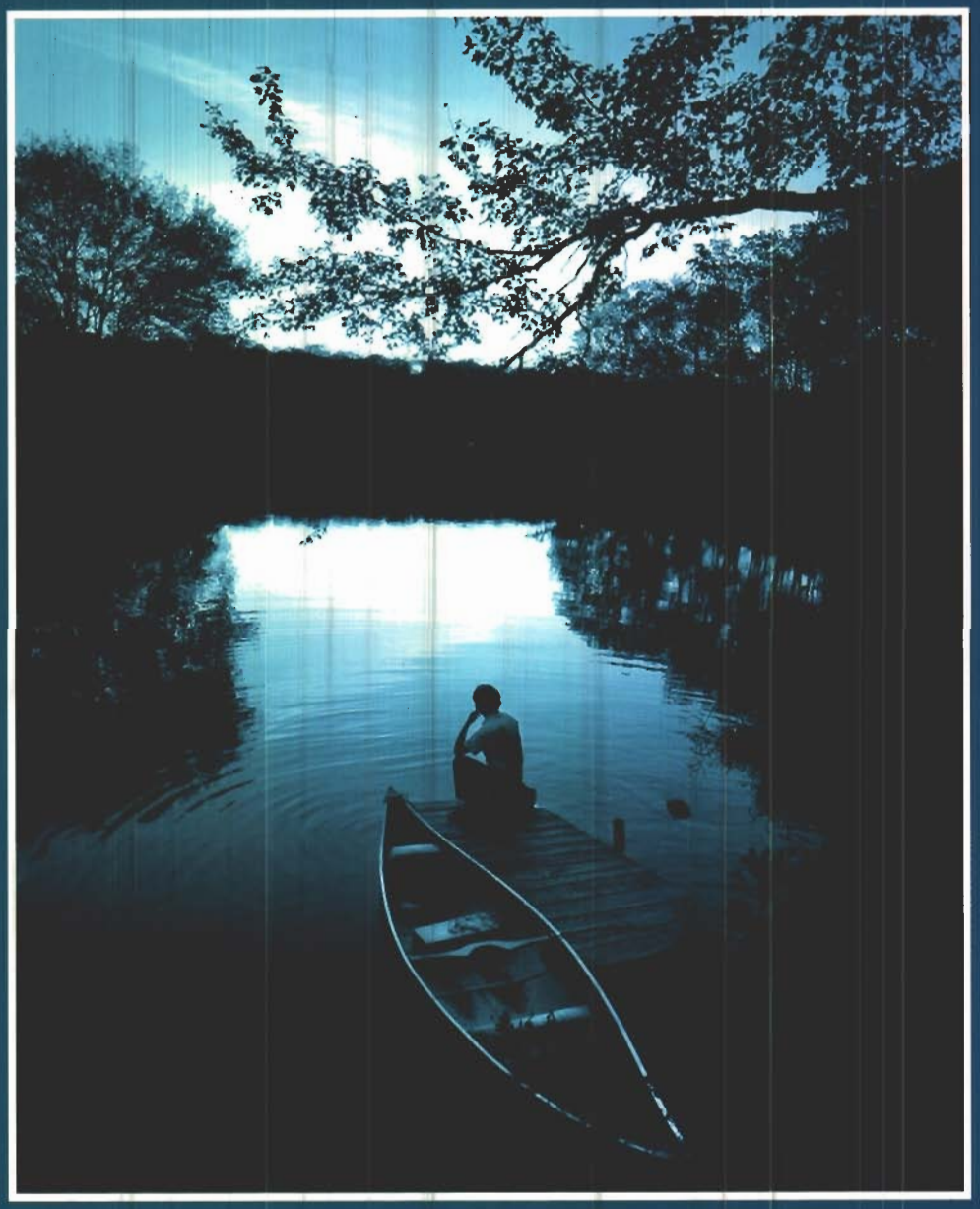

Save Our Rivers
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SOUTH FLORIDA
WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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