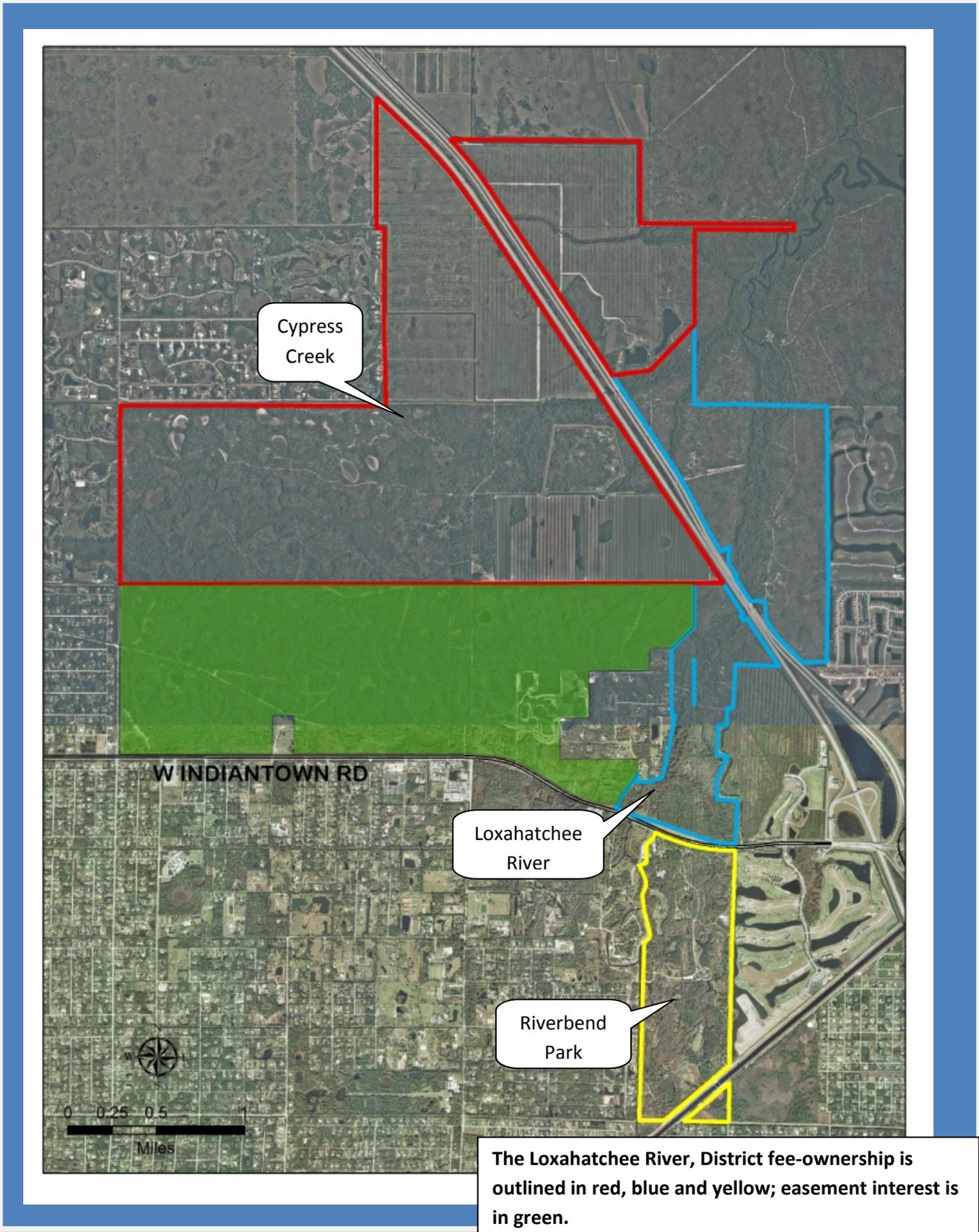


Loxahatchee River / Cypress Creek
Ownership Map



Loxahatchee River/ Cypress Creek

Management Area

Palm Beach and Martin Counties

- District fee-simple ownership ~ 4,958 acres
- Other public fee-simple ownership ~ 1,854 acres
- Area under other protective restriction (conservation easement, platted preserve area, etc.) ~ 0 acres

Site Overview

The land surrounding the upriver portions of the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River were acquired by the District under the Save Our Rivers land acquisition program. The river is notable for its designations as a Wild and Scenic River and as an Outstanding Florida Waterway. This site has been divided into two assessment units because the northern portion is managed by the District and the Southern portion is managed by Palm Beach County. The following values apply to both units:

Assessment Units

Loxahatchee River / Riverbend Park

The 997-acre area that lies north of the river is managed by the District and contains the portion of the River that carries the Wild and Scenic designation.

Riverbend Park consists of the 485 acres of land that lies south of Indiantown Road. It is managed by the Palm Beach County Parks Department as a regional park under a lease from the District.

Core Mission Values

The Loxahatchee River is a beneficiary water body of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan’s Loxahatchee River Watershed Restoration Project which seeks to improve the water quality within the river and water supply to the river.

Other Resource Value

The river system contains significant historic and cultural resources. The area contains many natural community types including floodplain forests dominated by cypress, pine flatwoods with depression marshes, oak hammocks, and transitional plant communities that lie between them.

Management Issues

The portion of the site lying north of Indiantown road is managed by the District.

Public Use and Recreation Value

The upper stretch of the River has been a very popular destination for Canoeists and Kayakers for many years. The District has expanded the public use opportunities north of Indiantown Road with new trails. Palm Beach County has developed the portion south of Indiantown Road with miles of improved bicycle trails, chiki picnic shelters, equestrian trails, and an internal watercourse for canoeing and kayaking.

Cypress Creek

The northernmost 1400 acres of land in this unit is a former citrus grove. The District has a current lease with a pepper grower on 584 acres on the east side. The southwestern portion (2,000 acres) is a natural area that contains the old creek bed of the Cypress Creek, a tributary of the Loxahatchee River. Water that historically flowed through the Cypress Creek was diverted to the Cypress Creek Canal which bisects the property. The wetlands on the northern boundary have been significantly due to the low water levels in the Cypress Creek Canal

Core Mission Values

The area is planned to be part of the Loxahatchee River Watershed Restoration CERP Project which seeks to improve the water quality within the River and water supply to the River.

Other Resource Value

The area serves as a nexus that connects significant landscape-scale natural areas together: Jonathan Dickinson State Park and the Hobe Sound National Wildlife Area to the east, the Palm Beach County natural area and the Loxahatchee River to the south, and the Hungryland / Pal-Mar area to the northwest and west.

Management Issues

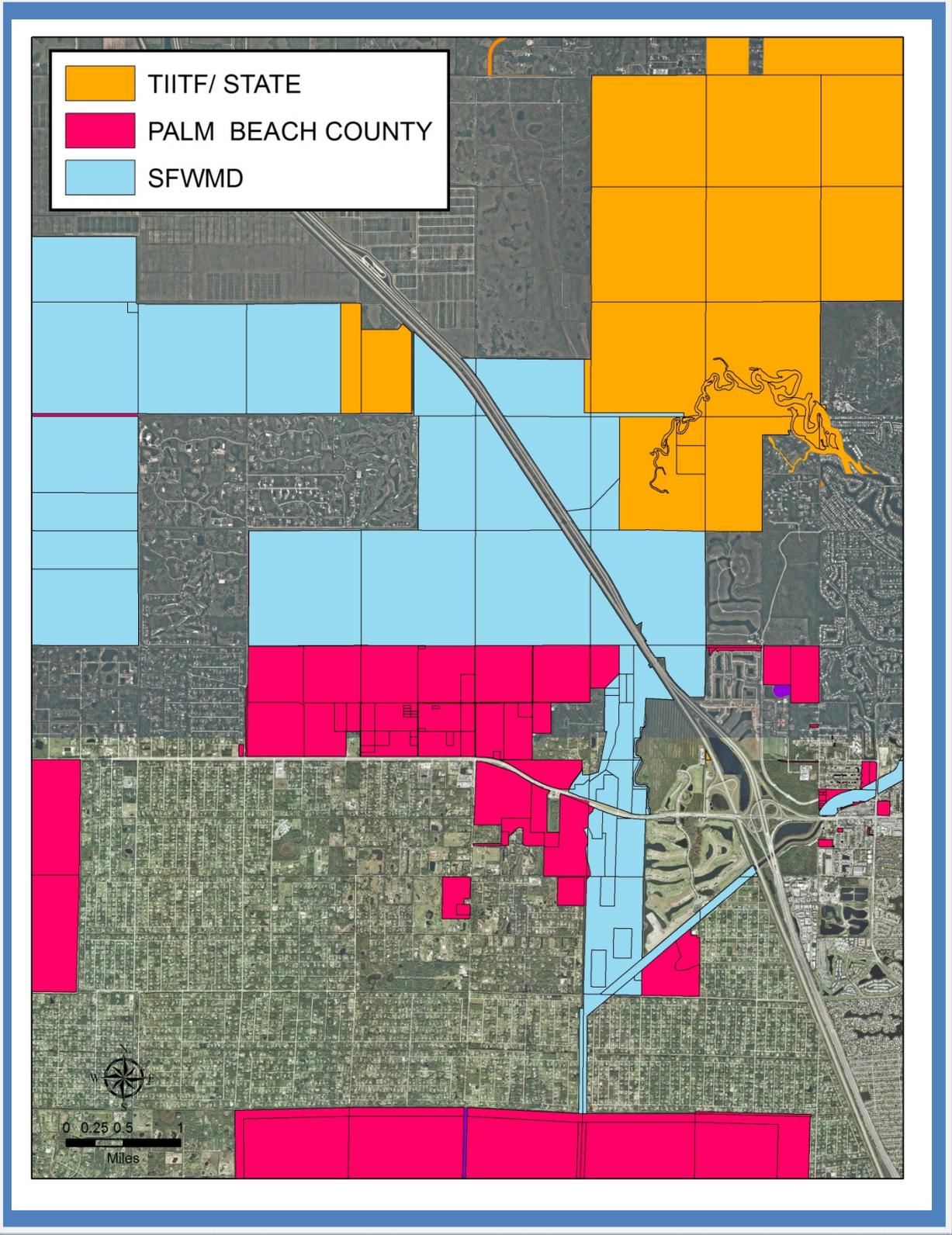
The District manages the portion of the property north of the Palm Beach – Martin County line, this area is jointly owned with Martin County. Palm Beach County manages the portion lying south of the county line as the Cypress Creek Natural Area. Exotic species control is a significant issue on the site. Yearly sweeps of exotic species are necessary to keep Downy Rose Myrtle and Old World Climbing Fern under control.

Public Use and Recreation Value

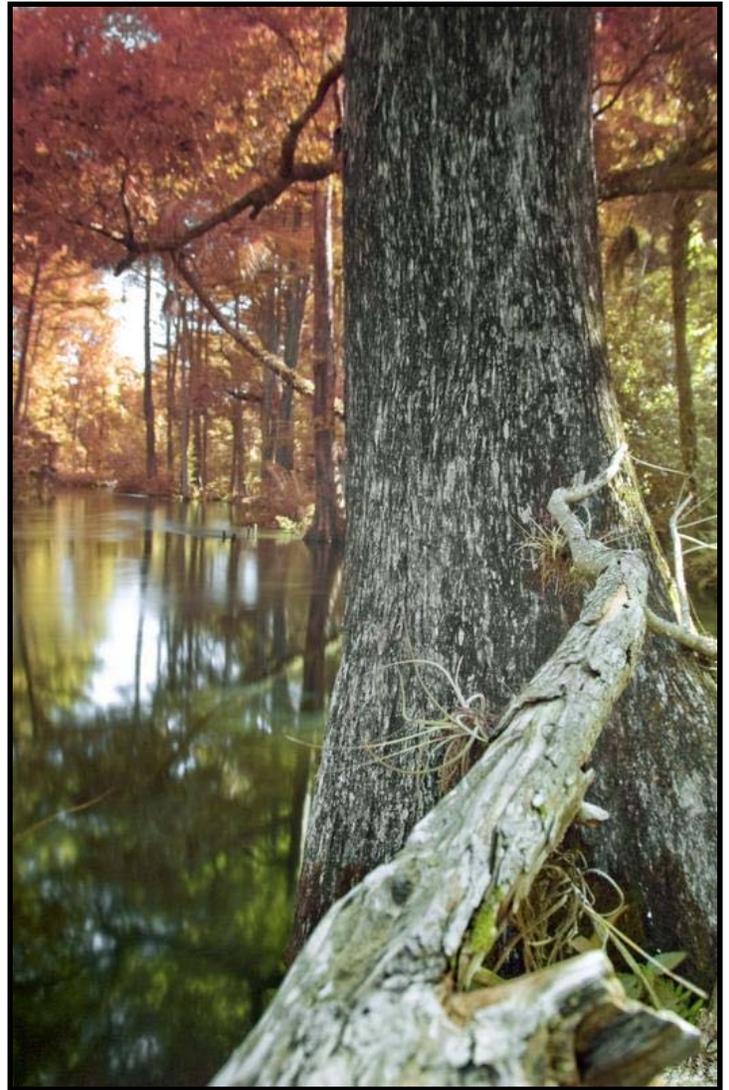
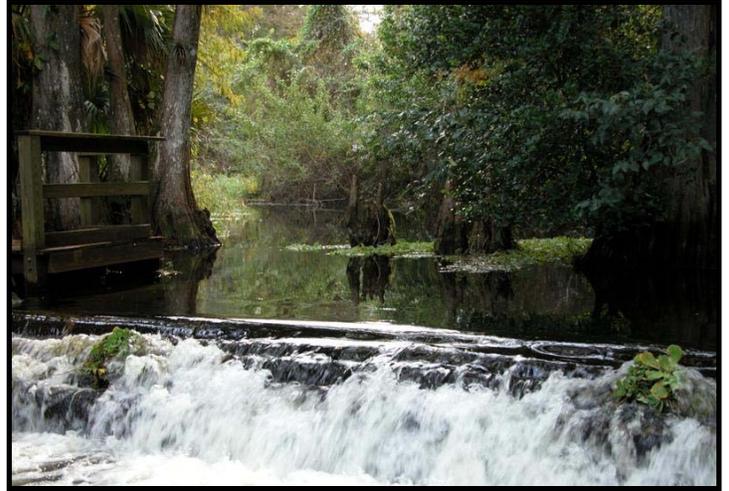
The area contains hiking and equestrian trails. It serves as an important connector for hiking between Jonathan Dickinson State Park and the PalMar lands to the west via the Indiantown Grade.

Loxahatchee River/Cypress Creek area Public Land

(based on county ownership records)



Loxahatchee River, Photos



Top: The historic Lainhart dam in the 1940s and today. Bottom: seasonal foliage on the cypress of the River.

Loxahatchee River, Photos



Riverbend Park, Photos



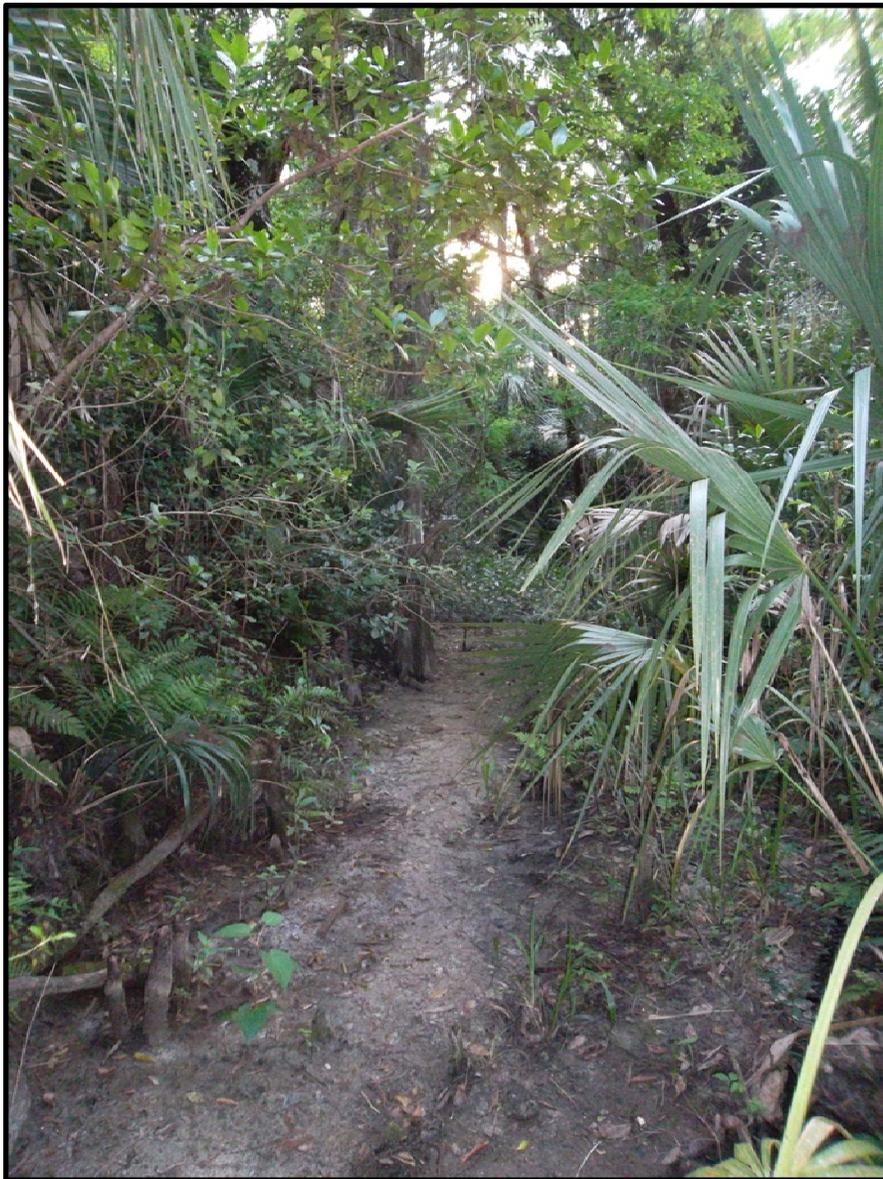
Cypress Creek Unit: Natural Area, Photos



When the District first acquired the site there were major infestations of Downy Rose Myrtle (left) invading the prairies and flatwoods, and Old World Climbing Fern (*Lygodium*) (right) choking the cypress. Control of both of these aggressive species on the property is an ongoing effort (below).



Cypress Creek Unit: Natural Area, Photos



Cypress Creek Unit: Pepper Farm, Photos



The pepper farm lease (top) and its water quality treatment cell (below)



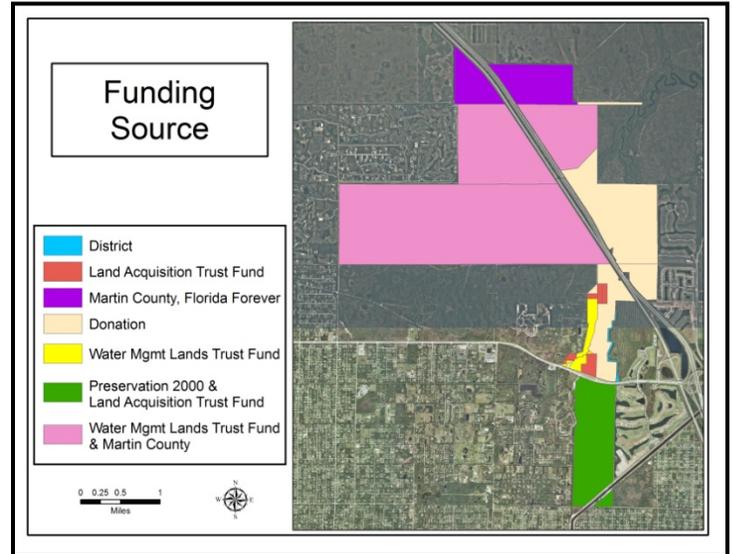
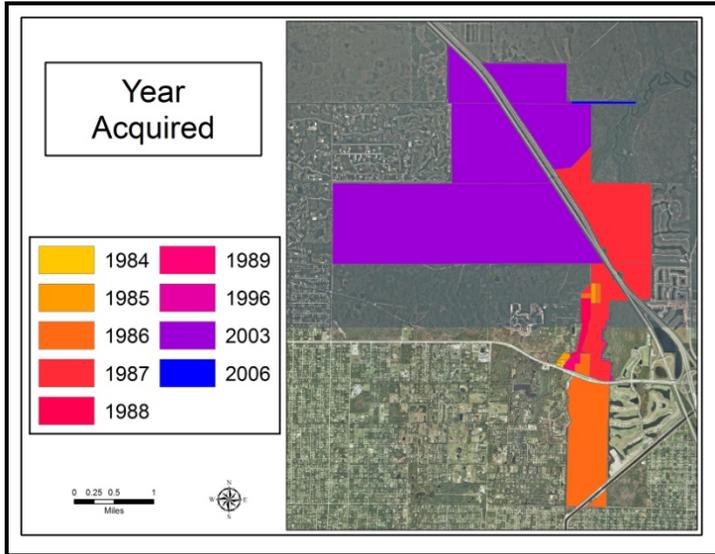
**Cypress Creek Unit: Former Citrus Grove,
Photos**



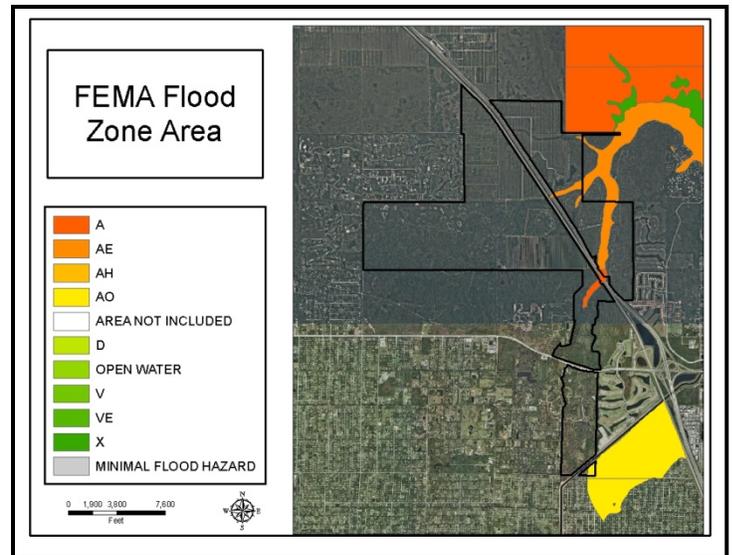
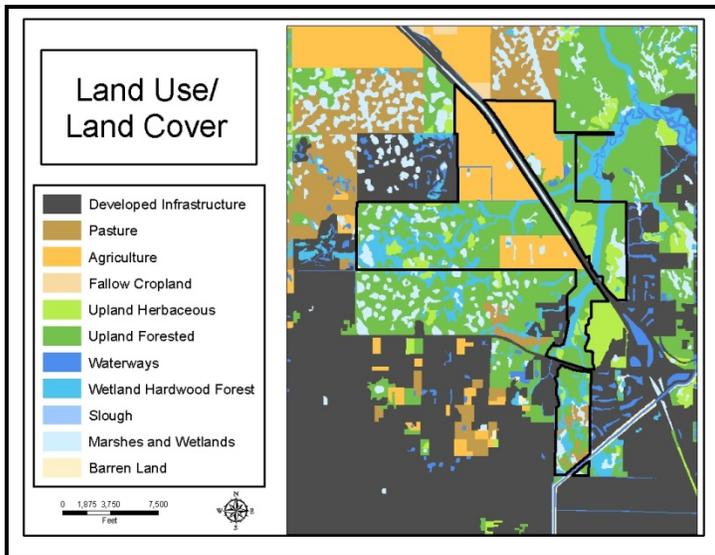
The former citrus grove on the northern half of the property. The former grove is separated from the natural area by the Cypress Creek canal (above right). The former grove contains two small pine-bordered lakes adjacent to the canal (below)



Loxahatchee River/Cypress Creek (Both Units): Land Acquisition



Loxahatchee River/Cypress Creek (Both Units): Land Character

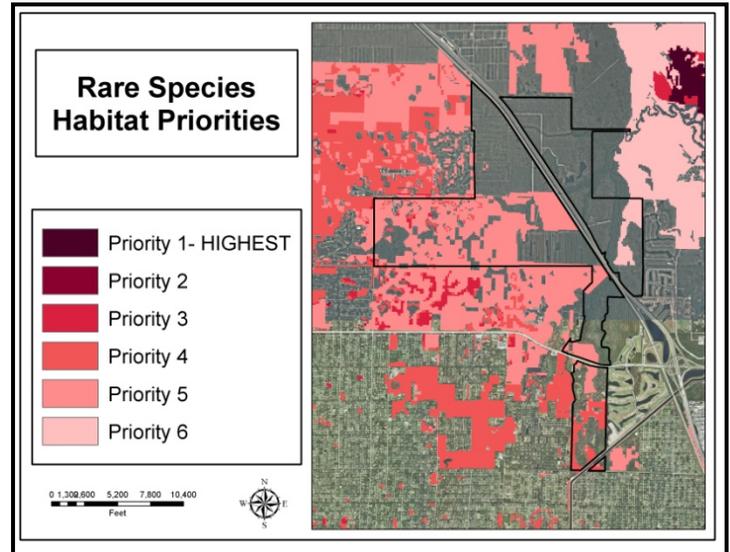
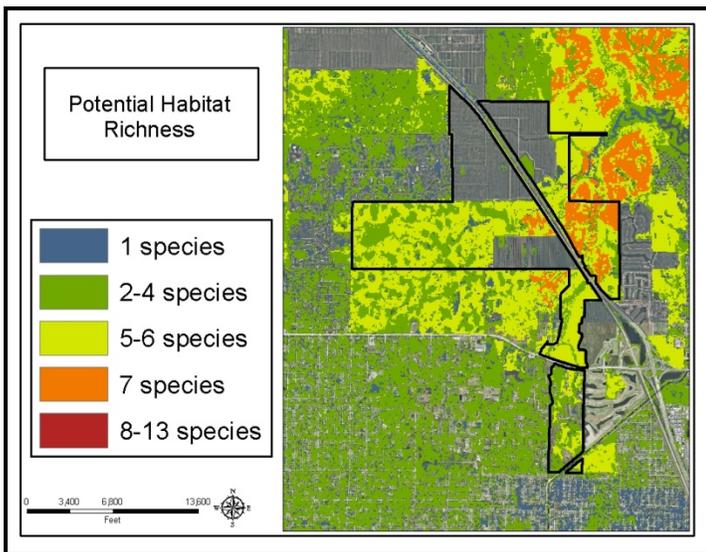
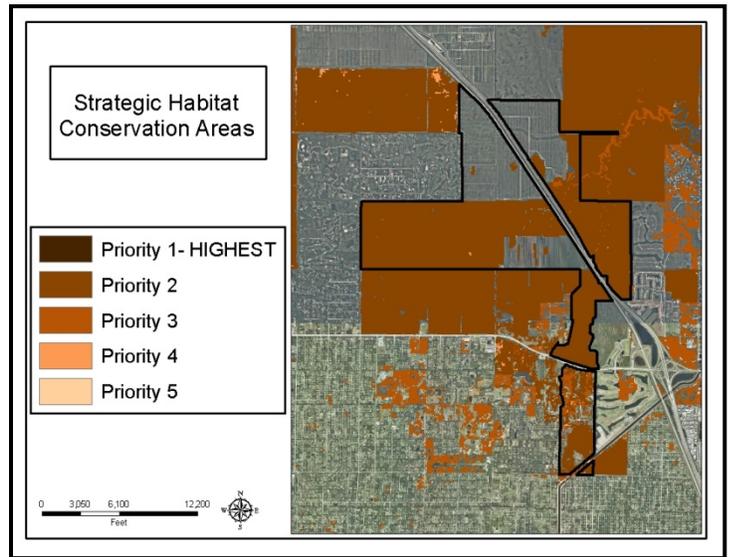
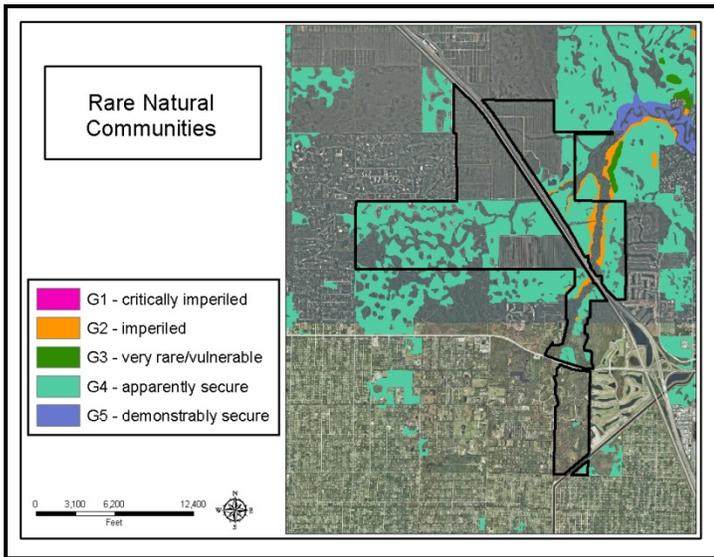


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For more information on the data layers used in the assessment, please refer to the Land Assessment Study Process and Methodology document available here:

http://www.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/xrepository/sfwmd_repository_pdf/land_assessment_study_process.pdf

Loxahatchee River/Cypress Creek (Both Units): Land Character (Continued)



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