

**Water Conservation Areas**

Palm Beach and Hendry Counties

Area within planning boundary footprint	~ 847,423 acres
District fee-simple ownership	~ 239,979 acres
Other public ownership	~ 607,444 acres

**Site Overview**

The Water Conservation Areas (WCA) were established in the early 1900s by the Everglades Drainage District on state lands that were patented to the State by President T. Roosevelt in 1904. The Central and South Florida Flood Control District expanded the size of these areas during the development of the Central and South Florida Flood control project in the 1950s and 1960s. The acquisition during this time was accomplished through both fee-simple and through easements. Additional lands were acquired in the 1990s as a Save Our Rivers project.

**Assessment Units**

None

**Core Mission Value**

This project supports all of the District’s mission functions. They are critical components of south Florida’s water management system, and a principal beneficiary of Everglades restoration.

**Other Resource Value**

The area is world renowned for its biodiversity and unique natural character.

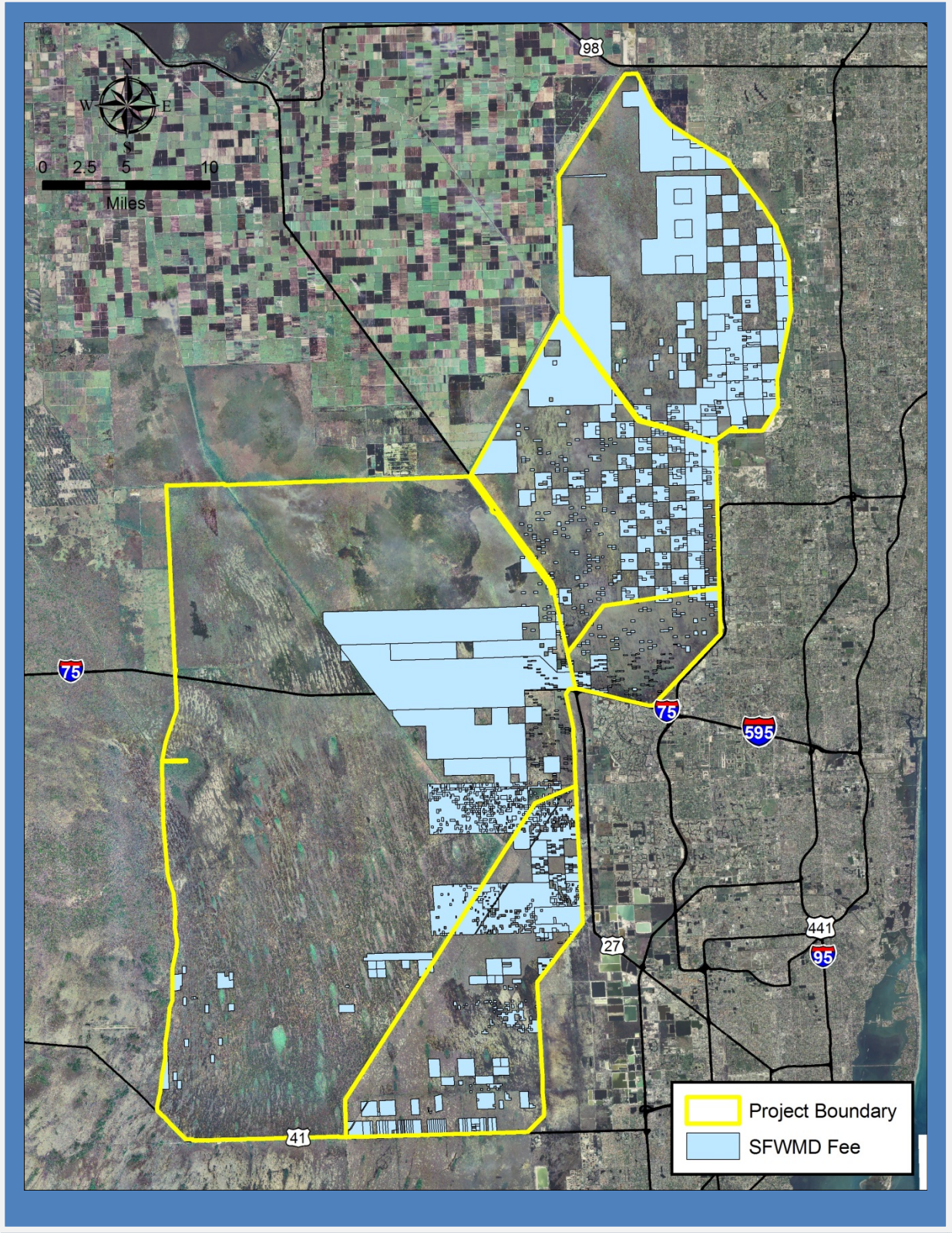
**Management Issues**

The northernmost portion is managed by the U.S. fish and Wildlife Service as a National Wildlife Refuge, the remainder is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

**Public Use and Recreation Value**

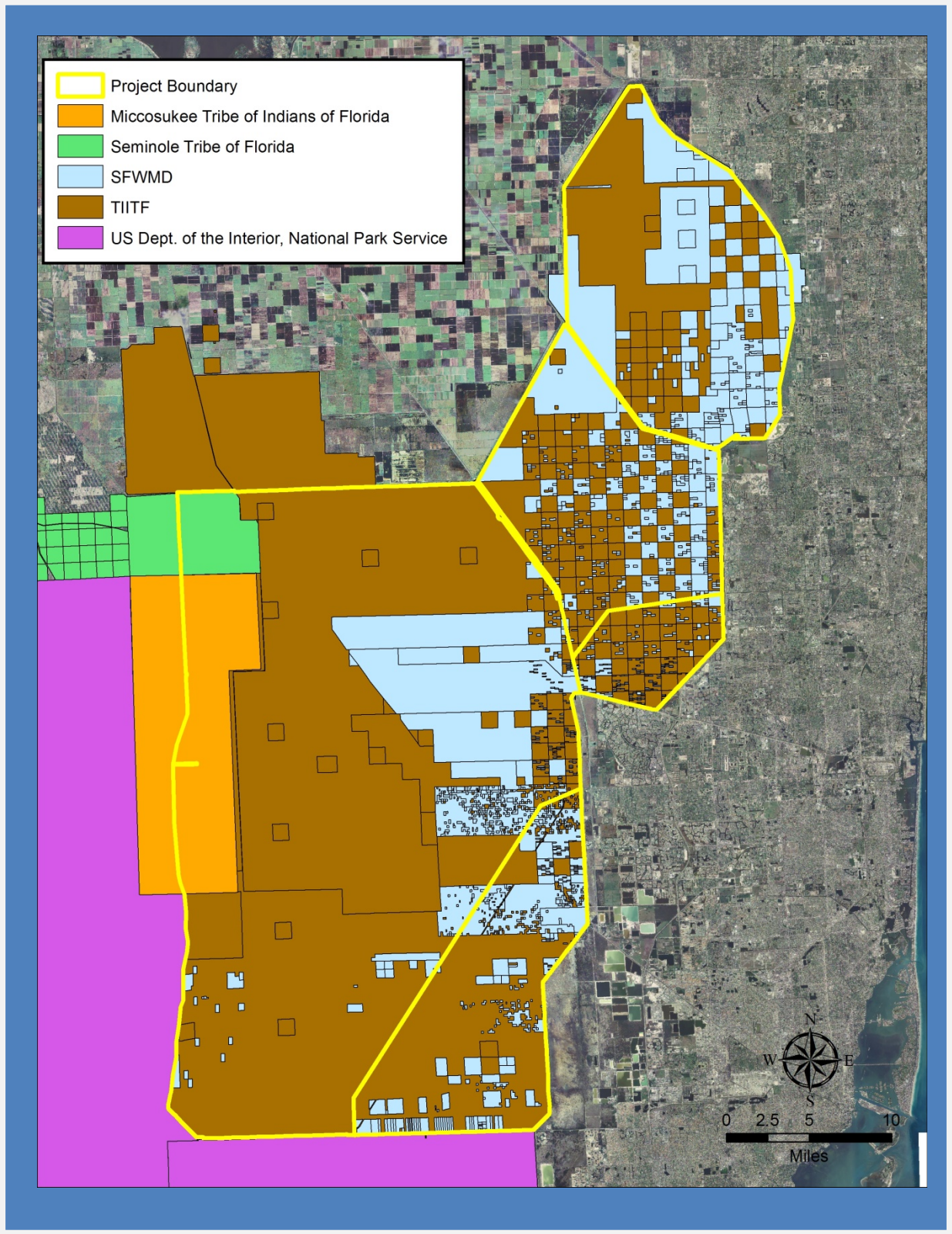
These areas are highly valued for their recreation opportunities. Airboating, hunting, and fishing are popular uses in the area.

**Water Conservation Areas - District  
Ownership**



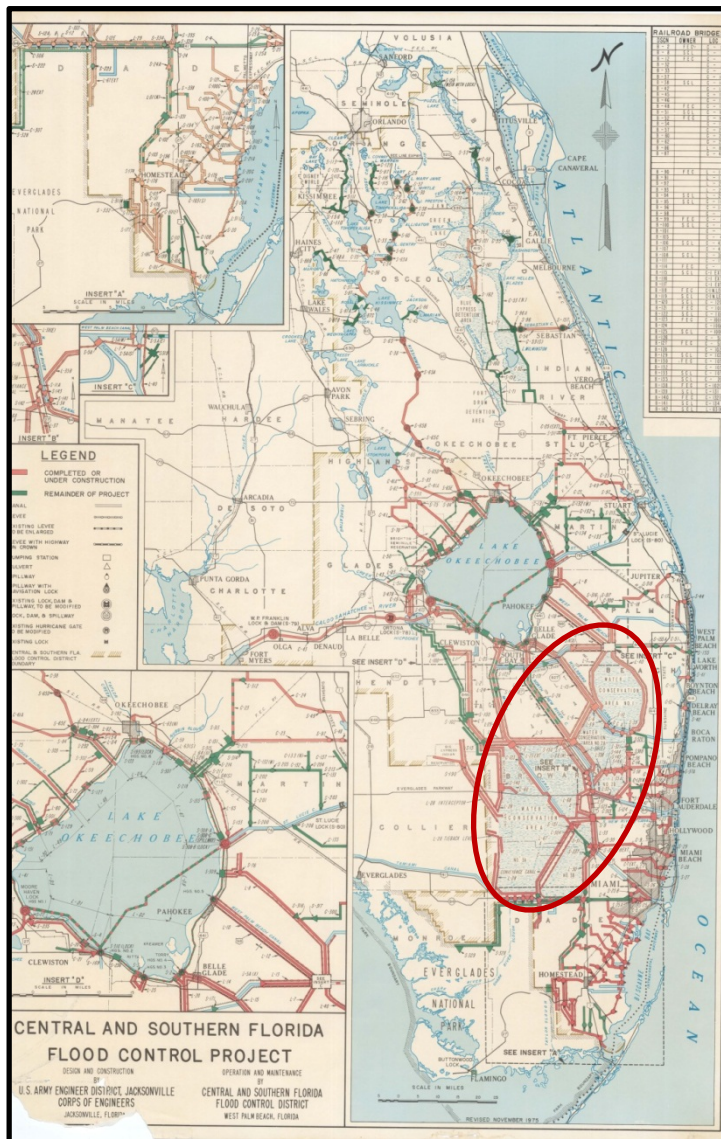
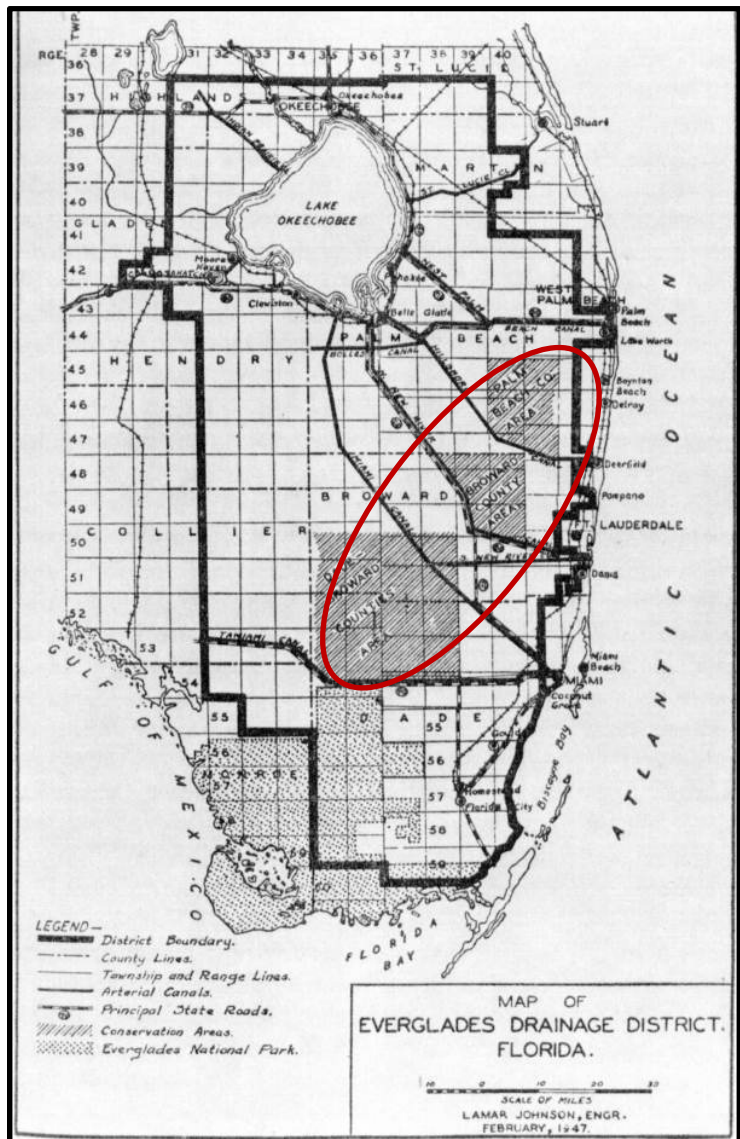


**Water Conservation Areas and Surrounding Land**





## Water Conservation Areas, history of acquisition



The Water Conservation Areas were established in the early 1900s by the Everglades Drainage District (left). The Central and South Florida Flood Control District expanded the size of the areas in the 1950s and 1960s (right).



**Water Conservation Areas, Photos**



**Deer and alligators in the Water Conservation Areas**





**Water Conservation Areas, Photos**



A sea of grass in WCA 3B (above), and a view of tree Islands in WCA 1 (below).

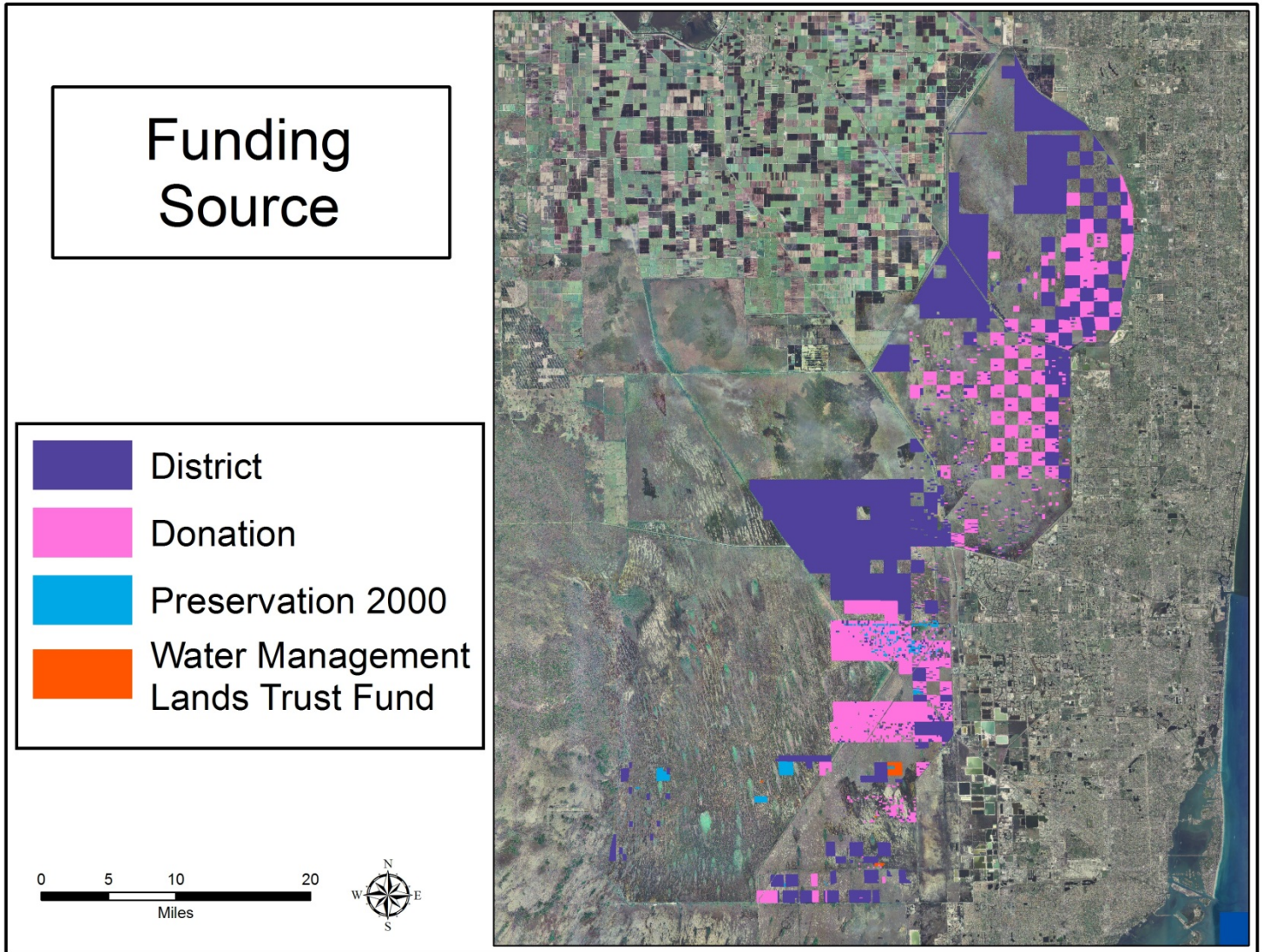




**Water Conservation Areas, Photos**

**Lygodium is an invasive vine that threatens tree islands in the Water Conservation Areas, here both new growth and formerly treated lygodium is visible. Lygodium quickly re-establishes and requires regular treatment to keep under control.**

Water Conservation Areas: Land Acquisition



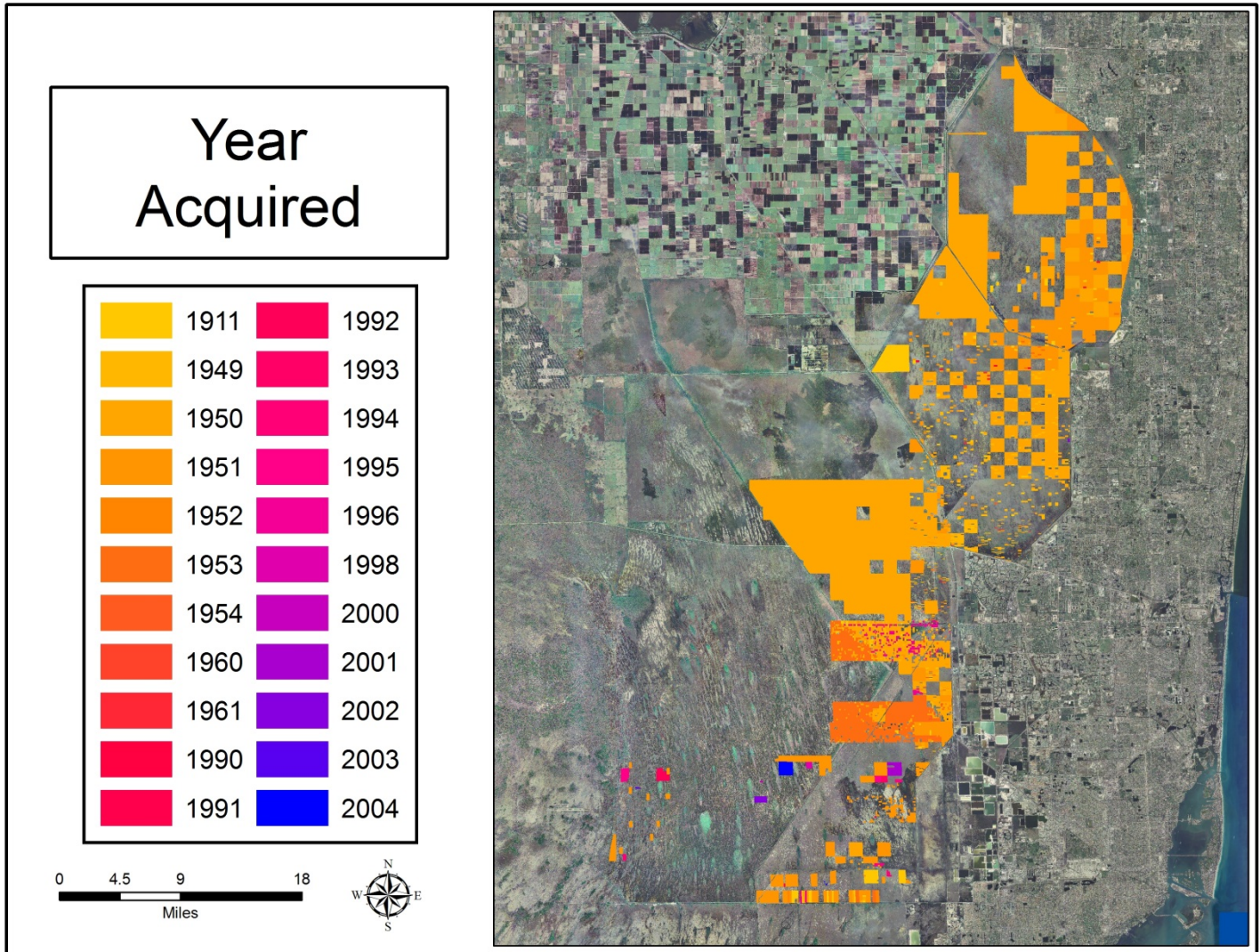
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For more information on the data layers used in the assessment, please refer to the Land Assessment Study Process and Methodology document available here:

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**Water Conservation Areas: Land Acquisition**  
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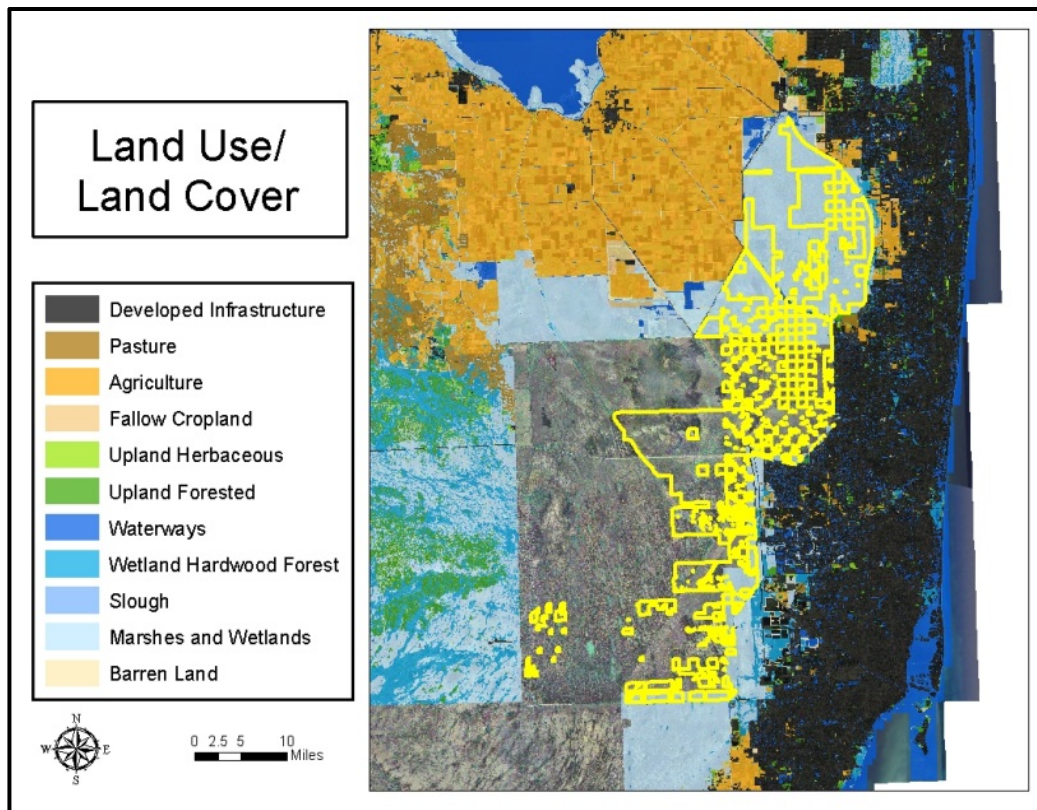
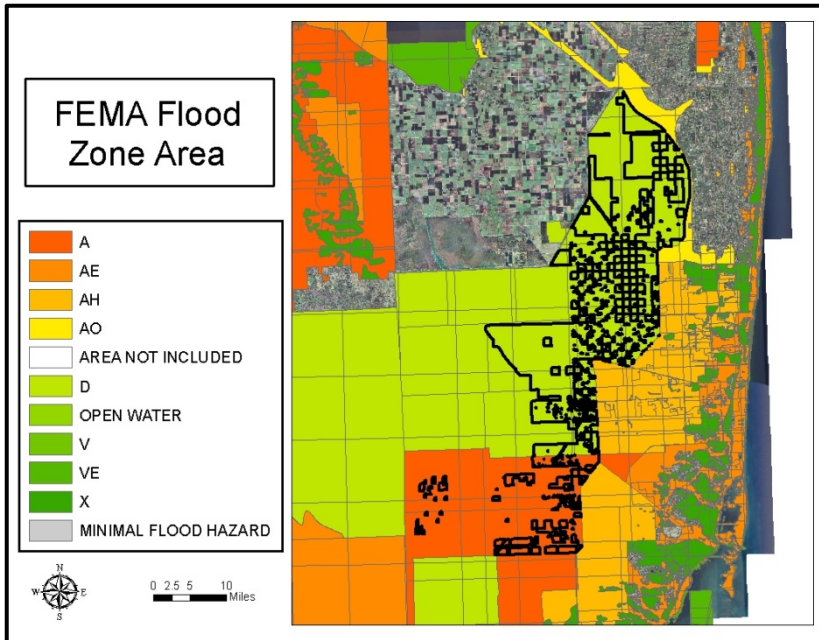


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Water Conservation Areas: Land Character



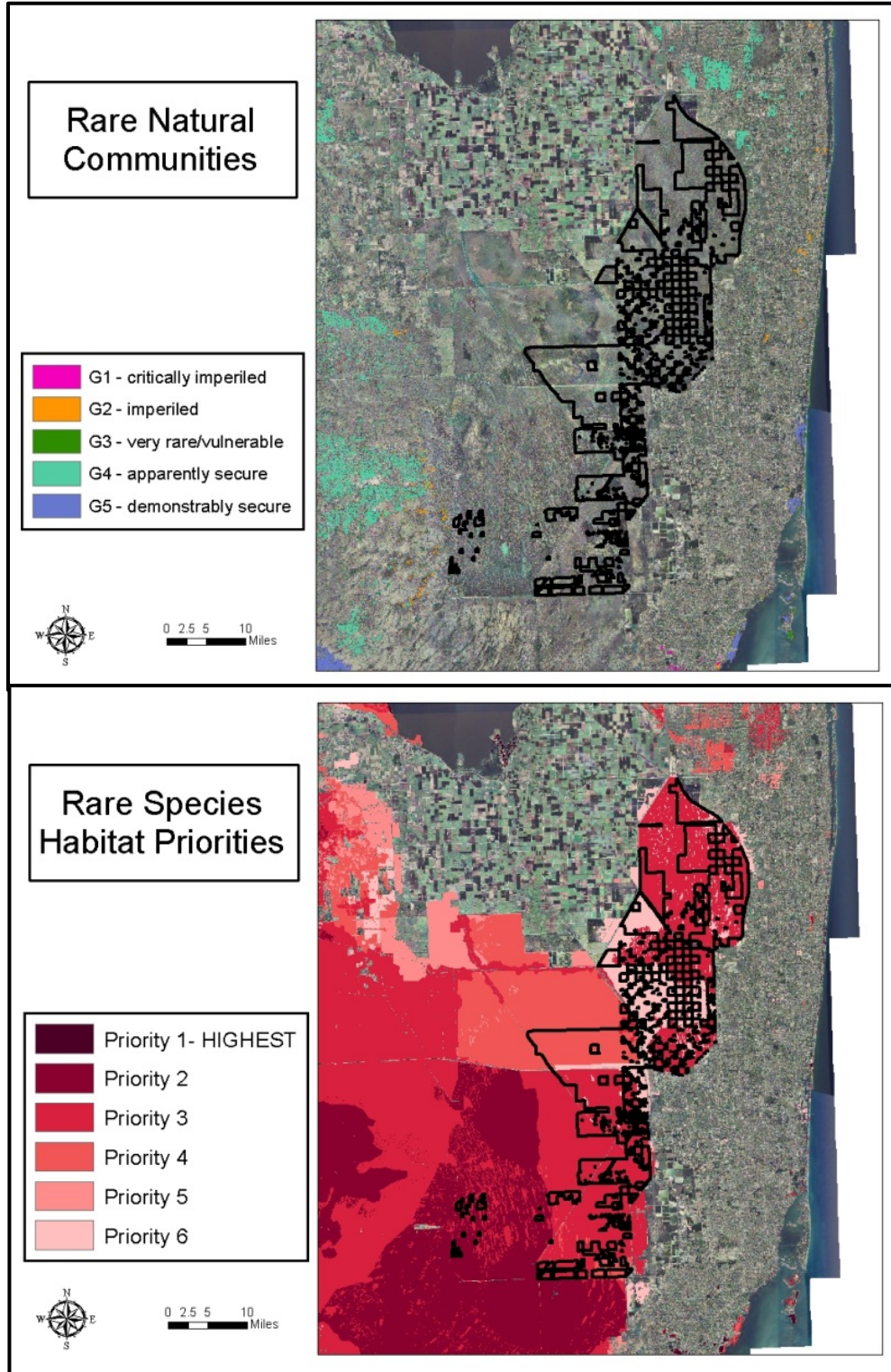
**NOTE: The Land Use / Land cover dataset lacked data for most of Everglades National Park and the southern Water Conservation Areas.**

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**Water Conservation Areas: Land Character**  
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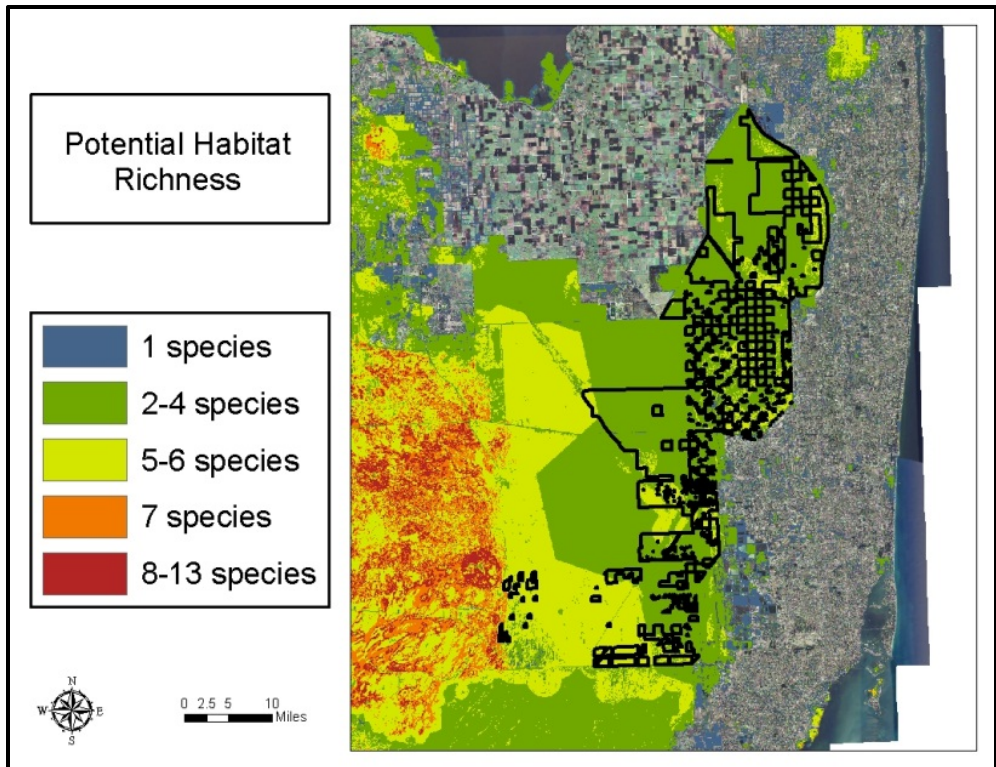
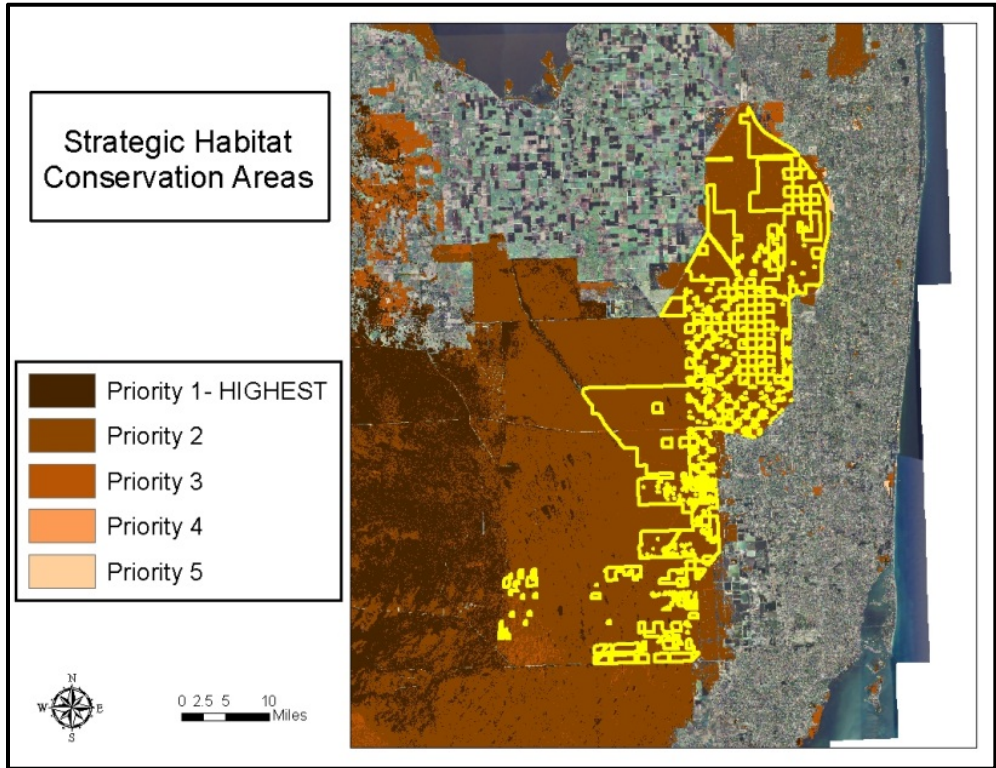


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**Water Conservation Areas: Land Character**  
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