

SURVEY NO.\* 485SURVEY LOG SHEET  
FLORIDA MASTER SITE FILEPlotted?\* Y N

Version 1.3: 10/89

TITLE Cultural Resource Assessment Survey SR 55 (US 19) Toucan Trail to SR 50  
Re-evaluation Project, Hernando County, Florida.

AUTHOR(S) Janus Research

ARCHAEOLOGIST HISTORIAN Estabrook, Richard W./Groover, Amy

AFFILIATION Janus Research

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KEY WORDS/PHRASES DESCRIBING SURVEY (max of 30 columns each)

Weeki Wachee Springs, Weeden Island Culture, lithic scatter, Berkeley

CORPORATION, GOVERNMENT UNIT, OR PERSON SPONSORING SURVEY

NAME Florida Department of Transportation, District Seven

ADDRESS 1201 N. Malcolm McKinley Drive, Tampa, Florida 33612

DESCRIPTION OF SURVEY: NUMBER OF DISTINCT AREAS SURVEYED 1  
MONTH/YEAR DATES FOR FIELD WORK: START 02/98 THRU 03/98  
TOTAL AREA        ha/ac IF CORRIDOR: WIDTH 60 m ft LENGTH 5.5 km mi  
TYPE OF SURVEY (Use as many as apply): X archaeological  
X architectural        underwater  
OTHER TYPE(S):       

METHODS EMPLOYED (Use as many as apply):        unknown X archival  
X pedestrian X shovel test        test excav.        posthole  
       extensive excav.        auger survey        coring X local informt  
       remote sensing X windshield X surf. exposrs        probing  
OTHER METHODS       

SCOPE/INTENSITY/PROCEDURES Ninety (90) round (.5 m diameter) systematically  
placed shovel tests, dug to a depth of at least 1 m; screened through 6.4 mm (1/4")  
hardware cloth. Surface inspection of areas of exposed ground within the SR 55 ROW.

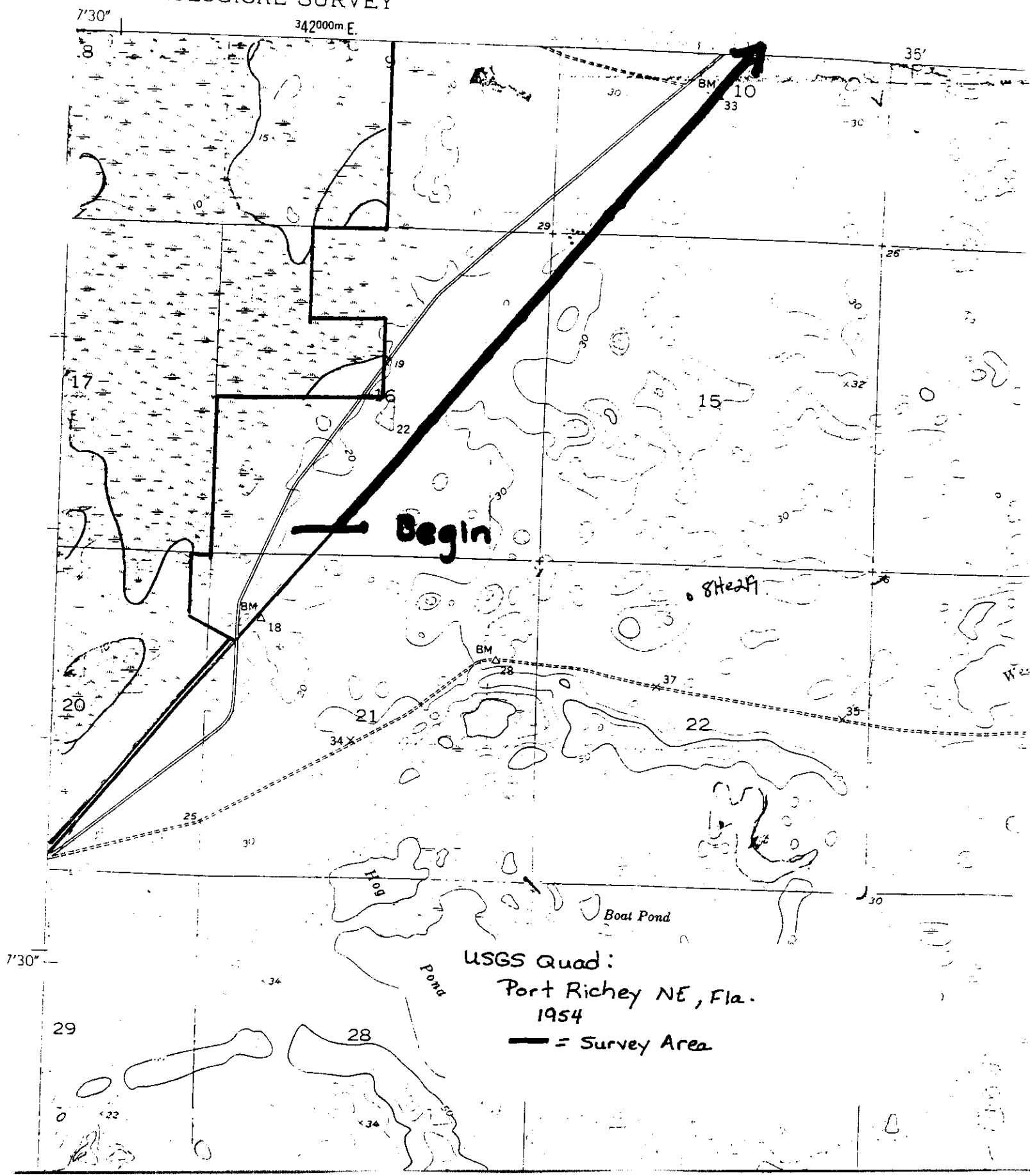
SITES Significance discussed? YX N Circle NR-elig/signif site nos:  
PREVIOUSLY RECORDED SITES : COUNT 2 LIST 8HE31, 8HE26

NEWLY RECORDED SITES : COUNT 2 LIST 8HE390, 8HE391COUNTIES: HernandoUSGS MAP(S) Weeki Wachee Springs; Port Richey NETOWNSHIP/RANGE (list all township/range combinations eg, 04S/29E)  
23S/17E

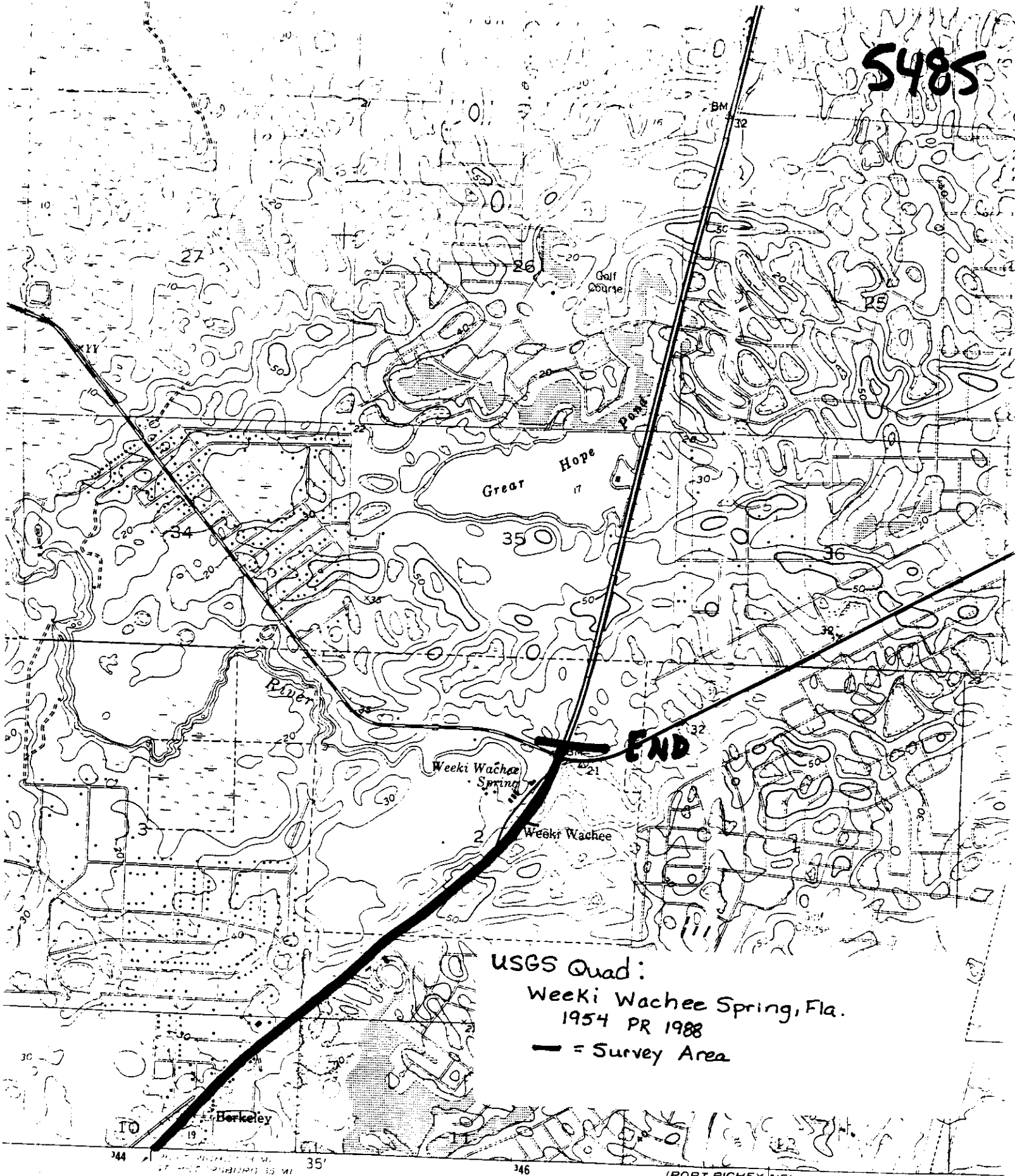
REMARKS (Use reverse if needed): State Project Number: 08020-1515  
Work Program Item Number: 7112107  
Financial Project Number: 254793-1-52-01

OUTLINE OR HIGHLIGHT SURVEY AREA ON FDOT COUNTY HWY. MAP.  
ATTACH OR PHOTOCOPY ONTO BACK OF FORM.

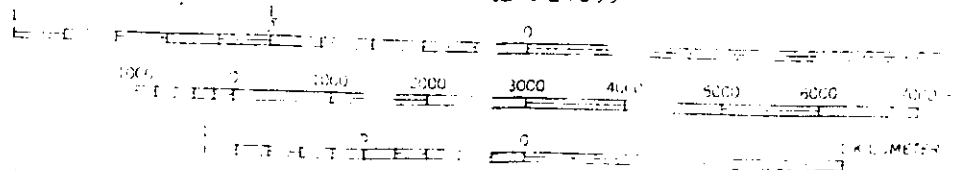
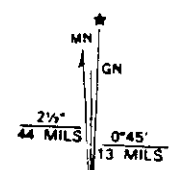
UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



5485



USGS Quad:  
Weeki Wachee Spring, Fla.  
1954 PR 1988  
— = Survey Area





5485

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
**Sandra B. Mortham**  
Secretary of State  
DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

December 22, 1998

Mr. James E. St. John  
Division Administrator  
Federal Highway Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
227 N. Bronough Street, Suite 2015  
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

RE: DHR Project File No. 988273  
Cultural Resource Assessment Review Request  
*Cultural Resource Assessment Survey for SR 55 (US 19) Toucan Trail to SR 50*  
*Re-evaluation Project, Hernando County, Florida* By Janus Research, July 1998.  
SPN: 08020-1515  
WPN: 7112107  
FPN: 254793-1-52-01

Dear Mr. St. John:

In accordance with the procedures contained in 36 C.F.R., Part 800 ("Protection of Historic Properties"), as well as the provisions contained in Chapter 267.061, *Florida Statutes*, we have reviewed the results of the field survey of the referenced project performed by Janus Research and find them to be complete and sufficient.

We note that two previously unrecorded historic structures, Kingsley Auto Service (8HE390) & Weeki Wachee Springs Mermaid Theater and Main Springs (8HE391) were recorded and one recorded archaeological site (8HE31) was revisited during the course of the survey. Based on the results of the survey, the properties were determined to be ineligible for listing in the National Register. We concur with the determinations. Therefore, it is the opinion of this office that the proposed undertaking will have no effect on historic properties listed or eligible for listing in the *National Register of Historic Places* or otherwise of historical or archaeological value.

Finally, this office notes that under section 'e', of the Sufficiency Checklist the following topic were not addressed: "*curation location of artifacts and project records.*" Please note that this should be included in all future survey reports in order for staff to complete our review in a timely manner.

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

R.A. Gray Building • 500 South Bronough Street • Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250 • (850) 488-1480  
FAX: (850) 488-3353 • WWW Address <http://www.dos.state.fl.us>

☐ ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH  
(850) 487-2299 • FAX: 414-2207

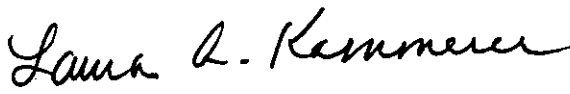
☒ HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
(850) 487-2333 • FAX: 922-0496

☐ HISTORICAL MUSEUMS  
(850) 488-1484 • FAX: 921-2503

Mr. St. John  
December 22, 1998  
Page 2

If you have any questions concerning our comments, please contact Scott Edwards, Historic Preservation Planner, at 850-487-2333 or 800-847-7278. Your interest in protecting Florida's historic properties is appreciated.

Sincerely,


George W. Percy, Director  
Division of Historical Resources  
and  
State Historic Preservation Officer

GWP/Ese

xc: C. L. Irwin, FDOT  
Rick Adair, FDOT, District 7



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Highway  
Administration**

5485  
Florida Division Office  
227 N. Bronough St., Suite 2015  
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

November 24, 1998

IN REPLY REFER TO: HPO-FL

Mr. George W. Percy  
Director  
Division of Historical Resources  
R. A. Gray Building  
500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Hernando  
SURREV-DOT 9  
988273

NOV 26 1998 11 2:15

Dear Mr. Percy:

Subject: Cultural Resource Assessment Survey  
Federal Project No. FFD-185-1(21)  
State FPN: 254793 1  
Hernando County

The Federal Highway Administration, in cooperation with the Florida Department of Transportation, is conducting an update of the original environmental study for the subject project. The proposed project consists of widening US-19 from Toucan trail to SR-50 in Hernando County.

Enclosed are a revised Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) Technical Memorandum, a set of Florida Site Files, and a Determination of Eligibility request for the Weeki Wachee Springs site.

During the review, the Weeki Wachee Springs historic site was identified, but it was concluded that it was not eligible for the *National Register of Historic Places* (NRHP). In addition, one other previously identified and one previously unrecorded historic site were reviewed in the CRAS, with neither of these determined to be eligible for the NHRP either.

In accordance with 36 CFR Part 800, we request your review and opinion of the Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Technical memorandum and the Determination of Eligibility for the Weeki Wachee Springs site. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact this office.

Sincerely yours,

*Mark D. Bartlett*

For: James E. St. John  
Division Administrator

Enclosures

cc: Mr. C. L. Irwin, FDOT, MS-37  
Mr. Jeraldo Comellas, FDOT, District 7, Tampa, FL

# SUFFICIENCY CHECKLIST

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORTS REVIEW

Chapter 1A-4A, Florida Administrative Code

Project File No.: 988273  
 Project Name: 3255 (0819)  
 Date Received: 3/22/01  
 Reviewer(s): 3/22/01  
 Consulted: \_\_\_\_\_

### Topics Reviewed for Sufficiency

#### (a) The description of the project shall address...

- Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐
- ☒ project location (including boundary map)
  - ☒ project description
  - ☒ purpose of project
  - ☒ pertinent laws and regulations

#### (b) Archival research shall address...

- Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐
- ☒ pertinent data in the Florida Master Site File
  - ☒ pertinent environmental and paleoenvironmental data
  - ☒ pertinent data in other studies appropriate for the research problem
  - ☒ pertinent information from informants

#### (c) The description of the research design shall address...

- Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐
- ☒ objectives
  - ☒ methods
  - ☒ expected results
  - ☒ procedures to deal with unexpected discoveries

#### (d) The description of fieldwork activities shall address...

- Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐
- ☒ kinds of sites looked for, evaluated or documented
  - ☒ boundaries of the area investigated
  - ☒ fieldwork methodology and the rationale for its selection
  - ☒ location of all tests or excavations, including maps depicting results used to establish site boundaries, site components, integrity of sites and portions of sites, and other relevant topics
  - ☒ Information on the location and appearance of features and artifacts, as well as the integrity and boundaries of sites and site components
  - ☒ Information on any portions of the project area and any portions of identified sites which were not investigated and a statement explaining the reason why investigation did not occur
  - ☒ photographs or illustrations representative of site areas or features, and formal excavation units

Page 1

- ☒ portions of the project area that were examined but that did not contain archaeological remains
- ☒ special survey techniques
- ☒ information on changes in research design or methodology

#### (e) The description of analysis and conclusions shall address...

- Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐
- ☒ methods used to analyze artifacts and other site materials collected during the project
  - ☒ curation location of artifacts and project records
  - ☒ findings in relation to the stated objectives of the project
  - ☒ how sites are disturbed and an assessment of their integrity
  - ☒ significance of evaluated sites, a discussion of the completeness of project efforts and the need for any additional identification, evaluation, or documentation efforts
  - ☒ conclusions and analysis of the findings, including a discussion on how the findings contribute to an understanding of archaeological resources
  - ☒ recommendations for further work or treatment of the site including preservation, excavation, or no action

#### (f) All identification, evaluation and documentation reports should include the following, either as part of the report or as accompanying documents:

- Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐
1. completed FMSF Survey Log Sheets with project boundaries depicted on an attached original or photocopy portion of a map (U.S. Geological Survey (1:24,000) 7.5 minutes quadrangle series) preferred, although the rule states a Florida Department of Transportation County Highway Map.
  2. completed FMSF site forms and supplement for site forms and photographs as appropriate, with original or photocopy portion of U.S. Geological Survey (1:24,000) 7.5 minutes quadrangle series maps for all identified sites showing site locations

*Complete / not suff need e, 2 i b*

*update the 31 - not el*

*new the 390 - not el / the 391 not el*

DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

P.A. Gray Building • 500 South Bronough Street • Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250 • (850) 487-2333

Version 1.1

Page 2

MS 054 85

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**CULTURAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT SURVEY**

**FOR**

SR 55 (US 19)  
Toucan Trail to SR 50 Re-evaluation Project  
Hernando County, Florida

Financial Project Number: 254793-1-52-01  
State Project Number: 08020-1515  
Work Program Item Number: 7112107

Prepared for

**THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
District Seven, Tampa

Prepared by

**JANUS RESEARCH**  
St. Petersburg, Florida

in Association with

**Tampa Bay Engineering, Inc.**  
Clearwater, Florida

**FINAL REPORT**

July 1998

CRA# 988273

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## INTRODUCTION

The SR 55 (US 19) Toucan Trail to SR 50 re-evaluation project in District Seven involves the preparation of construction plans for multi-lane improvements to SR 55 in Hernando County (Figure 1). The total project length is approximately 5.5 km (3.4 miles). The plans include widening the existing four (4) lane rural roadway to a six (6) lane rural roadway with paved outside shoulders. Stormwater management facilities will be handled within the right-of-way. No off-site storage will be necessary. A cultural resource assessment survey (CRAS) was performed in support of these efforts.

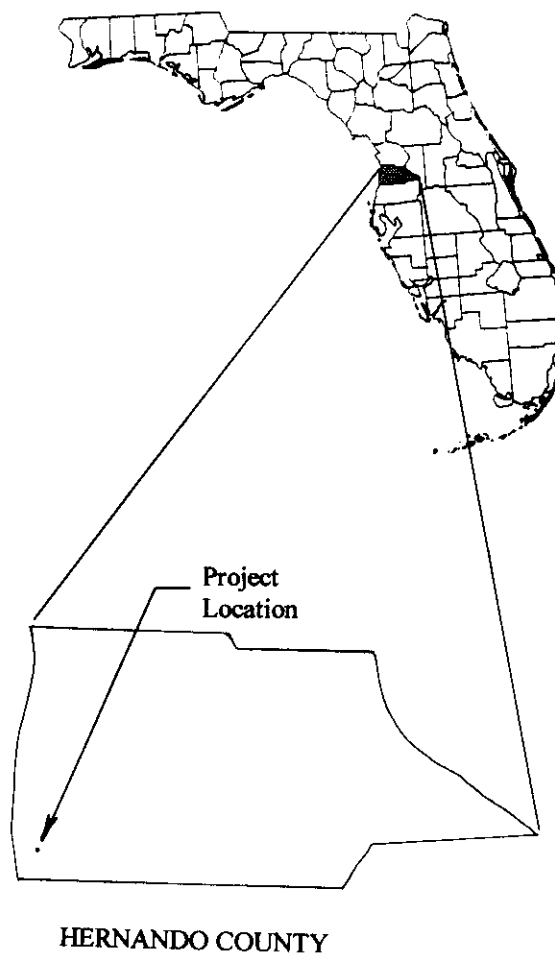
The project methodology is intended to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (Public Law 89-665, as amended), as implemented by 36 CFR 800 (*Protection of Historic Properties*), and Chapter 267 F.S., and the minimum field methods, data analysis, and reporting standards embodied in the Florida Division of Historical Resources' (FDHR) *Historic Preservation Compliance Review Program* (November 1990, final draft version).

The original survey for the SR 55 (US 19) project was performed by FDOT archaeologist William D. (Bill) Browning in the late 1970s. Two sites, 8HE31 and 8HE32, were recorded by Browning in 1979 during FDOT Project Number 08020-1510. However, the FMSF has no record of any cultural resource assessment surveys (CRAS) having been performed in this area (letter from Charles Branahm, FMSF, to Pamela Vojnovski dated October 28, 1997). It appears that the project report for this survey consisted of a verbal communication with FDHR staff.

An Area of Potential Effect (APE) has been defined for this cultural resource assessment. The APE is defined as the area 30 m (100 ft) on either side of the existing SR 55 right-of-way. The APE was determined by considering the kinds of improvements under study and the possible effects these improvements could have on historic resources. The proposed improvements project will increase the existing four-lane rural roadway to a six-lane rural roadway with paved outside shoulders. The potential effects from such an improvement include visual, noise, traffic, light, and vibration. Previous cultural resource assessment (CRA) studies have shown that potential visual effects are, among all the effects previously mentioned, the most far-reaching. The APE for this project is defined as the area within which potential visual effects for the improvement could be observed, once construction is complete.

Systematic subsurface testing of the project area revealed one (1) previously recorded archaeological site (8HE31). This site is considered not eligible for listing on the **National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)**. Two historic structures (8HE390 and 391) were identified and recorded within the project's Area of Potential Effect (APE). Neither of these resources is considered eligible for listing on the **NRHP**.

This brief report only provides limited background information and other data pertinent to this investigation.



**Figure 1: Map showing the location of the SR 55 (US 19) project area.**

**SR 55 (US 19)**  
**Toucan Trail to SR 50**  
**Re-evaluation Project**  
**Hernando County, Florida**  
**FP# 254793-1-52-01; SP# 08020-1515; WPI# 7112107**

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND SITE FILE SEARCH

An archaeological and historical literature and background information search update pertinent to the project area was performed. This research determined the types, chronological placement, and location patterning of cultural resources within the project area. This included a search of the Florida Master Site File (FMSF), county and local site inventories, books and journal articles, unpublished cultural resource management (CRM) reports, and other pertinent literature. Every effort has been made to solicit historic and site locational information from other professionals, amateur archaeologists and collectors, lay historians, and the local residents of the project area. A search of the FMSF did indicate that three previously recorded archaeological sites, 8HE12, 8HE31 and 8HE32, and one previously recorded structure, 8HE26, are located in the vicinity of the project. The Weeki Wachee Mound (8HE12) is located just west of the northern end of the project corridor. This site, excavated in 1970 by Robert R. Allen, yielded 63 burials (some containing more than one individual), and numerous Safety Harbor pottery types and other artifacts. In addition, the site yielded many Spanish glass beads which date to the early sixteenth century. The Berkeley 1 and Berkeley 2 (8HE31 and 8HE32) sites were recorded by Bill Browning and Louis Tesar in 1979. Site 8HE31 is a surface scatter. Site 8HE32 is a midden and surface scatter.

The previously recorded structure, 8HE26, is actually not historic. This unusual service station, constructed in 1962, is in the form of a brontosaurus dinosaur. It is located at the southwest corner of 51st Street and US 19. The building has three bays for servicing automobiles, the office is located in the neck of the dinosaur, and restrooms are found in the tail. "Dino" the dinosaur was the symbol of the Sinclair Oil Corporation which constructed these buildings to attract the attentions of passing motorists during the 1950s and 60s. According to previous research, the Weeki Wachee station is the only "Dino" building remaining in the United States. Although this building is an excellent representation of roadside commercial architecture and is the last remaining service station of its kind, the National Park Service has previously determined this building is not exceptionally significant. Resources which do not meet the age requirement of 50 years must be considered exceptionally significant in order to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places; therefore, Harold's Auto Center is still not eligible for the NRHP.

Historic structures can be considered significant for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, architectural style or association with an important historic personage or event. However, evaluations of the significance of prehistoric and historic archaeological sites are ultimately based on the potential of the site to contribute to the understanding of regional prehistory or history. Therefore, a consideration of archaeological sites and historic structures within the context of their respective regional settlement system is essential. A first step in observing settlement change through time can be made by reviewing information regarding the known sites and structures in the area.

The search of primary historic documents has shown that few events of historic interest occurred in the areas immediately surrounding the project corridor. The historic tract book records for

Sections 2 and 3 of Township 23 South, Range 17 East indicate that Lots 2, 3, and 4 of Section 2, and Lot 1 of Section 3 were deeded to John Parsons on August 12, 1850. These parcels are located immediately northwest of the existing right-of-way. The remaining properties surrounding the project were deeded to private individuals and investment companies between 1881 and 1903.

## **PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE LOCATION MODEL**

The designation of zones of archaeological site potential have been adapted from the Research Design prepared for the SR 55 cultural resource assessment. These zones were based on previous research conducted within the Gulf coast region and in conformance with the guidelines set forth in the FDOT Scope of Services for cultural resource assessment surveys. Considerable discussion about the validity of site predictive models and the various environmental variables that can be used abounds in the archaeological literature (i.e., Almy 1978; Grange et al. 1979; Grange and Williams 1979; Deming 1980; Piper et al. 1982; de Montmollin 1983). A brief synthesis of these works will be presented here; the reader is directed to any or all of these works for an extended background discussion on the variables employed in this study.

Four environmental factors are employed in predicting prehistoric site potential: soil type (soil drainage), distance to fresh (potable) water, distance to hardwood hammocks, and relative elevation. Soil type and relative elevation deal with the water drainage pattern found in a particular area. Soils with an organic pan, with underlying marl or clays, and with slow to moderate internal drainage tend to retain water or be inundated. Areas with a low elevation relative to perched water systems tend to be wet or inundated. Although wet areas can contain abundant wildlife and plant resources, they make poorer habitation areas when better drained locations are available.

Freshwater is an important resource for prehistoric aboriginals, as the need for water is universal. This variable would have been of greater importance during the Paleoindian and Early Archaic stages (14,000 to 6000 B.C.), when the perched water system was much more restricted. Access to water during these early periods would have been from sinkholes and aquifer-fed rivers.

Hardwood hammocks (hydric, mesic, or xeric) provide a variety of resources which would have been exploited by the aboriginal inhabitants of this region. Hydric hardwood hammocks can contain abundant animal and plant life, particularly a variety of tubers. Mesic hardwood hammocks contain hickory and cabbage palms which contain edible products. These hammocks also contain ash and elm, trees that are known to have been used for specific purposes, i.e., bows, canoes, mortars, dart shafts (Newsom and Purdy 1983). Often areas of higher relative elevation correspond with better drained soils or the presence of hardwood hammocks (xeric and mesic).

One general soil association has been identified within the project area. The Candler-Tavares-Paola consists of nearly level to sloping, excessively drained and moderately well drained soils that are sandy throughout, with some having thin lamellae of loamy sand and sandy loam at a depth of 1 to 2 m (40 to 80 inches) (Hyde et al. 1977). Soil drainage characteristics have been used successfully by numerous researchers in the development of site location predictive models. Those types likely to be found within the project area, or existing prior to extensive land disturbance, range from excessively drained to poorly drained. These include excessively drained Paola fine sand, 0-8% slopes, Candler fine sand 0-5% slopes, and Candler fine sand, 5-8% slopes, and poorly drained Myakka fine sand, and Basinger fine sand, depressional, soils.

## **HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE LOCATION MODEL**

On Florida's west-central coast, historic period sites frequently co-occur with prehistoric archaeological sites. This is often the result of environmental conditions found desirable by both groups: well-drained or better drained upland knolls near transportation routes (i.e., historic trails or military roads, major rivers, and coastal zones). Use of the SR 55 vicinity during the earliest historic periods (First Spanish, English, and Second Spanish) was sporadic, at best. Groups of individuals may have passed through or by the proposed pond locations, but none are known or suspected of having settled or camped within the project area. The most likely spots for the occurrence of artifacts would be along or adjacent to the historic trails that are known to have crossed the region.

During the Territorial, Civil War, and early Reconstruction periods, historic settlement in the project vicinity tended to follow the isolated homestead or farmstead pattern. Individual families, or groups of related families, often built homesteads on the better drained, hardwood oak hammocks. There were usually several miles between these settlements to allow room for farm fields and cattle. This trend continued until the railroads came, which provided transportation. During the 1880s, the areas between older homesteads were occupied, resulting in a "filling-in" of the available upland oak hammocks.

## **AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY**

High site potential zones are defined as those areas of extensively to moderately well-drained upland locales within 100 m (330 feet) of a wetland or body of freshwater (i.e., lake, stream, or sinkhole). These zones were surface inspected and subsurface testing was conducted at roughly 25 m (82 feet) intervals.

Moderate site potential zones are defined as those poorly-drained locales within 100 m (330 feet) of a wetland or body of freshwater and better-drained upland locales beyond 100 m (330 feet) from a wetland or water source. These zones were surface inspected and tested at roughly 50 m (165 foot) intervals; in areas within 100 m (330 feet) of water, this interval was shortened to 25 m (82 feet).

Low site potential zones are defined as those areas of poorly to very poorly drained upland locales beyond 100 m (330 feet) of a wetland or body of freshwater. Low site potential zones were surface examined and subjected to limited subsurface testing. Subsurface testing was conducted at roughly 100 m (330 feet) intervals within these designated areas.

Shovel tests were dug at the designated interval (i.e., 25, 50, or 100 m) within the defined probability area in all areas. This testing regime was augmented with judgmental shovel tests performed at any locale that, in the opinion of the Principal Investigator or Senior Archaeological Technician, was deemed a likely spot to find a site, irrespective of the area's site potential category.

## **FIELD METHODS - ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES**

During the archaeological portion of the field survey, surface inspection and subsurface testing techniques were employed to locate and evaluate archaeological sites. Subsurface tests were .5 m (20 inches) in diameter and dug to a minimum depth, subsurface conditions permitting, of one meter (3.3 ft). All excavated soils were sifted through a 6.4 mm (¼ inch) metal hardware cloth screen suspended from a portable wooden frame. A total of ninety (90) shovel tests were dug within the APE. Field notes on each test performed were recorded and the location of all tests were clearly marked on aerial photographs of the project area.

All artifacts discovered during the surface inspection were collected, bagged by area, and their location marked on the project aerial maps. In areas of minimal vegetation and/or upturned soil such as drainage ditches and recent clearing, a careful surface inspection was undertaken. All were carefully inspected for the presence of historic and prehistoric artifacts.

## **FIELD METHODS - HISTORIC STANDING STRUCTURES**

The historical structures survey for the project employed standard field methods used in identifying and recording historic above-ground cultural resources. All standing structures within the project received a preliminary visual reconnaissance. Any structure with features of World War II (1945) or earlier construction materials, methods, or architectural style was noted on aerial photographs. The historic structure inspection and survey included black and white photographs, taken with a 35 mm camera. The location of each site was marked on large scale aerial maps and USGS quadrangle maps in the field. In addition, FMSF data were recorded onto site forms in the field. Additional information was logged in field notebooks.

## RESULTS

The cultural resource assessment of the SR 55 project corridor resulted in the rediscovery of one (1) previously recorded prehistoric archaeological site (8HE31), and the identification of two (2) previously unrecorded historic structures (8HE390 and 8HE391) (Figure 2). A discussion of these resources is provided below.

### 8HE31      Berkeley 1

The Berkeley 1 site is located in Township 23 South, Range 17 East, Section 2, SW/SW/NE (USGS 7.5' Weeki Wachee Springs Quadrangle) in the northern portion of the project (Figure 2). The site extends along both sides of SR 55 just south of Weeki Wachee Springs, approximately from River Country Drive to roughly 400 m (1312 ft) north of Northcliffe Boulevard. The surface finds located during the current survey were found approximately 380 m (1247 ft) south of Northcliffe Boulevard, and roughly 400 m (1312 ft) north of River Country Drive in the eastern right-of-way of SR 55.

The site is situated within the maintained grass shoulders within the existing US 19 right-of-way. It is surrounded by sand pine and scrub oak. The upper .1 to 1.1 m of soil in all shovel tests shows that the area has been subjected to extensive ground disturbing activities. The principal soil type for this area is Paola fine sand, 0-8% slopes, considered an excessively drained soil (Hyde et al. 1977:38). The typical stratigraphic sequence for areas of Paola fine sand 0-8% slopes consists of about .07 m (3 inches) of gray fine sand underlain by about .58 m (23 inches) of white fine sand, followed by a brownish yellow fine sand. These are followed by very pale brown fine sand to a depth of about 2 m (80 inches), underlain by white fine sand to a depth of about 2.3 m (90 inches) or more (Hyde et al. 1977:38).

The soil stratigraphy encountered in the shovel tests was similar to the published accounts for this soil type, although it was heavily disturbed. No culturally significant stratigraphy or features were observed. This evidence indicates that this site locus should be considered majorly disturbed.

Elevation at the site is 9 m (30 ft) above mean sea level. The indigenous vegetation would have consisted of sand pine, scrub live oak, scattered turkey and bluejack oaks, and an undergrowth of scattered saw palmetto, creeping dodder, rosemary, cacti, mosses, and lichens (Hyde et al. 1977:30). Prior to road construction and residential development of this area, this area likely would have been sandhill upland.

The Berkeley 1 archaeological site was located and evaluated by subsurface testing and careful surface inspection. This site was evidenced by two waste flakes recovered from the ground surface within the eastern SR 55 right-of-way. Forty-three (43) tests were placed within the right-of-way in this area, but no additional artifacts were recovered. This site extends north-south along the right-of-way for roughly 800 m (2625 ft). The east and west boundaries could

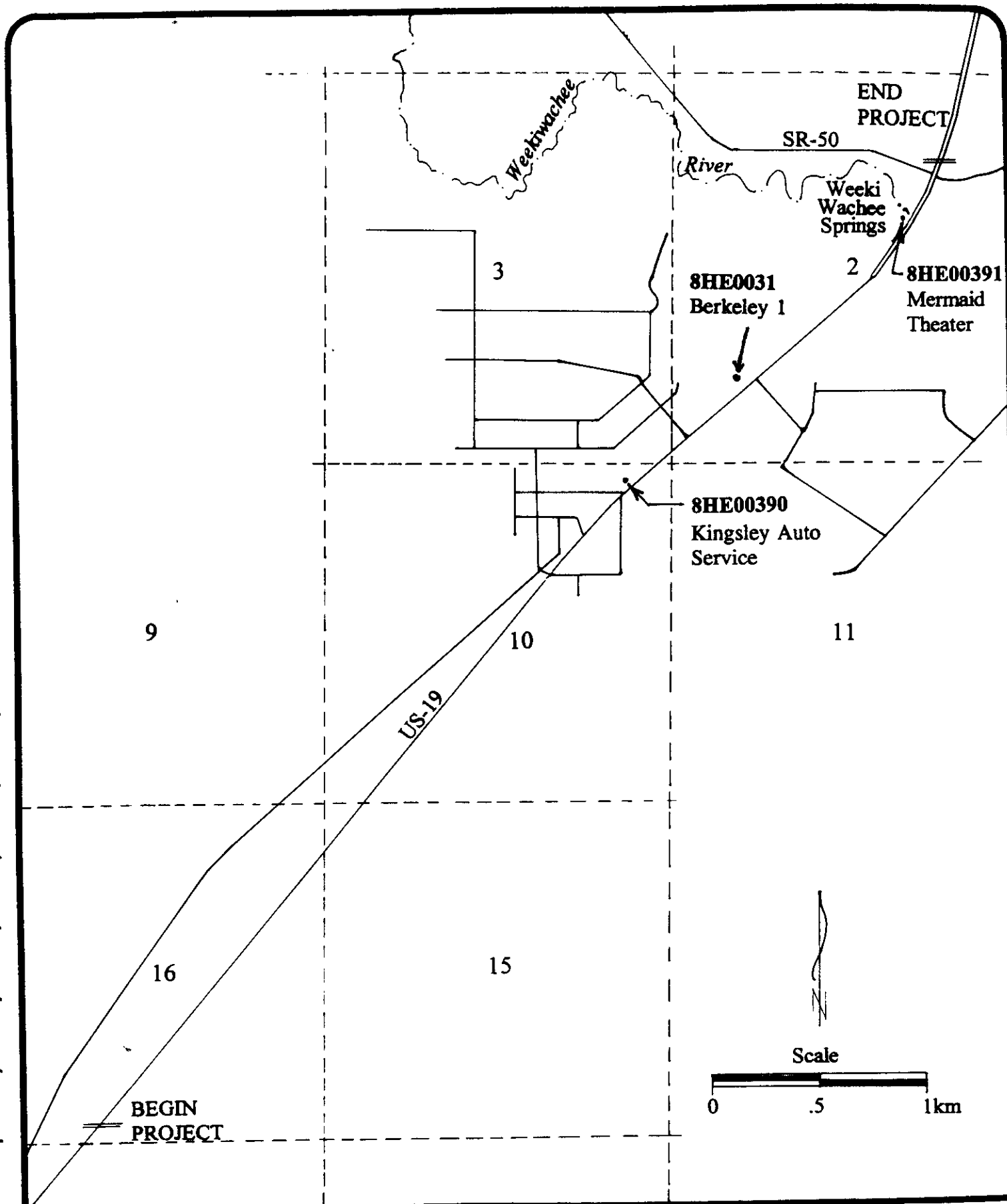


Figure 2: Map showing the locations of sites 8HE390, 8HE31 and 8HE391.

SR 55 (US 19)

Toucan Trail to SR 50

Re-evaluation Project

Hernando County, Florida

FP# 254793-1-52-01; SP# 08020-1515; WPI# 7112107

not be accurately determined because of the limited testing area. No shovel tests were placed outside of the existing right-of-way, so it remains possible that the site may extend east and/or west into the wetland.

The site consists of two waste flakes from the manufacture or modification of stone tools. The two flakes recovered include one complete flake, and one medial/distal flake fragment. One is composed of unaltered silicified limestone, and one is composed of unaltered silicified coral. One of the flakes falls within the 10-20 mm size class, and the other falls within the 20-30 mm size class.

The portion of this site which lies within the SR 55 right-of-way was intensively tested and surface inspected. The portions of the site outside the SR 55 right-of-way lie on private property and could not be tested. The current testing failed to locate any significant intact deposits within the SR 55 right-of-way.

Although the recorded location of this site constitutes useful data for regional settlement pattern studies, the sparse and relatively unexceptional nature of the artifact assemblage and the degree of site disturbance indicate that the potential for the recovery of additional important data from this location is low. Further archaeological investigation or preservation of this site within the SR 55 right-of-way is not recommended. The portion of site 8HE31 expressed within the SR 55 project corridor is not considered to be regionally significant and, therefore, is considered to be not eligible for listing on the NRHP.

#### 8HE390      Kingsley Auto Service

Kingsley Auto Service is located at 5319 US 19 on the west side, just north of Balm Street in Township 23 South, Range 17 East, Section 10 in Berkeley (Figure 2). This circa 1948, one-story Masonry Vernacular structure was formerly a private residence (Figure 3). The concrete block rectangular exterior sits on a continuous concrete block foundation. The front-gabled roof is sheathed in composition shingles. A large concrete block chimney spans the ridge and most of the north slope of the roof. The original metal casement windows are still extant. Exposed rafter tails are evident under the roof eaves and metal ornamentation can be found around the replacement sliding glass doors. A large addition was attached to the west elevation of the building. This structure is in fair condition and serves as the sales office for a used car lot. Due to a common late-1940s era Masonry Vernacular design and the alterations, this building is considered to be not eligible for listing on the NRHP.



Figure 3. Photograph of Kingsley Auto Service (8HE390) facing west.

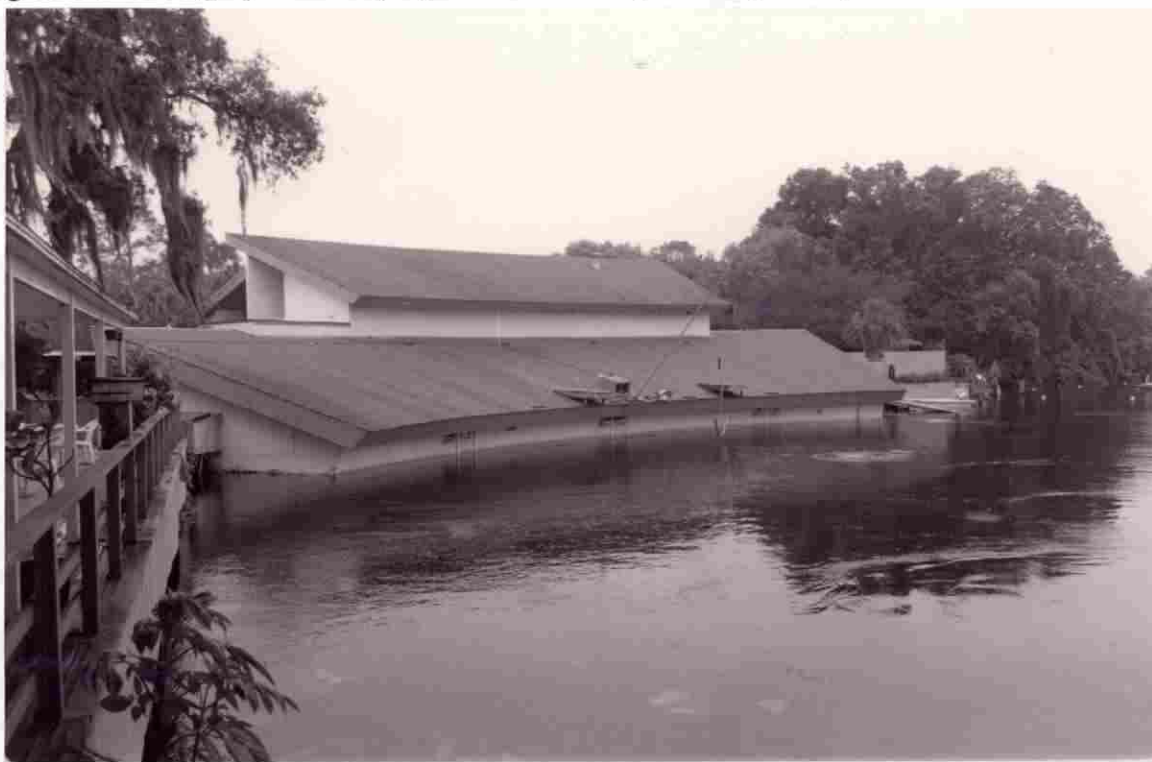


Figure 4. Photograph of the Weeki Wachee Spring Mermaid Theater and Main Spring (8HE391) facing northwest.

8HE391      The Weeki Wachee Spring Mermaid Theater and Main Spring

The Weeki Wachee Spring Mermaid Theater and Main Spring are located on the west side of US 19 at the intersection of SR 50 in Township 23 South, Range 17 East, Section 2, in Weeki Wachee (Figure 2). The Mermaid Theater (Figure 4) was first constructed in 1947 and consisted of a tank with a canvas cover. Small, round porthole windows were located below the surface of the water through which visitors would view the underwater show. According to the attraction's general manager, the wood frame and support pilings from the original building have been incorporated within the present theater building; this is the only extant historic fabric. The current Mermaid Theater is the result of various renovations over the last 50 years. The modern building has a stucco exterior. It possesses an offset gable roof as well as a shed roof covered in tar paper. Small diving platforms are located on the eastern roof portion facing the Weeki Wachee Spring. On the west elevation, fixed single pane windows are evident in a dormer-like structure. The only other windows present are also fixed single pane types located beneath the surface of the water. Visitors enter the building from an entrance located at the south elevation.

The Mermaid Theater is associated with Weeki Wachee Spring which is also identified as the Main Spring. Weeki Wachee Spring, measuring 100 feet across, is the surfacing point of an underground river that pumps out 170 million gallons of water each day. According to local history, Indians throughout the area would come to the Spring for its clear water. In the 19th century, the Spring was only accessible by sand roads, but people traveled to the site for picnicking and swimming. In 1946, Newton Perry, a former frogman and swimming instructor for the U.S. Navy, leased the property, then owned by the City of St. Petersburg, and built the first theater for the underwater shows. The first show took place on October 13, 1947, and performances continue to be held through the present day. The rock formations underneath the surface of the water remain in their natural form. Located at a depth of 65 feet is an airlock used by the mermaids; this was installed around 1947 and has not been altered since. The edges of the Spring have been slightly altered over time. Besides the Mermaid Theater, a nonhistoric concrete wall is also located on the western edge of the Spring. To the north of the water is a grassy area; adjacent to the grass is a roadway which leads to Weeki Wachee's parking lot. The eastern part of the Spring is fenced off where a water-slide park, Buccaneer Bay, can be found. Although the Weeki Wachee tourist attraction is 50 years old, both resources' historic physical integrity is compromised due to the extensive modifications to the theater building and the minor additions to the Weeki Wachee Spring. Based on the lack of significance, these resources are not considered to be eligible for listing on the NRHP.

## CONCLUSIONS

The cultural resource assessment survey for the SR 55 (US 19) Toucan Trail to SR 50 re-evaluation project resulted in the identification and evaluation of one (1) previously recorded archaeological site (8HE31) and two previously unrecorded historic structures (8HE390 and 391). None of these resources are considered to be eligible for listing on the NRHP.

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Weeki Wachee Spring

other names/site number MS# 5485

**2. Location**

street & number 6131 Commercial Way (US 19)

☐ not for publication

city or town Weeki Wachee Spring

☐ vicinity

state FLORIDA code FL county Hernando code 053 zip code 34606

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☐ nomination ☒ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Florida State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- ☐ entered in the National Register  
☐ See continuation sheet

- ☒ determined eligible for the  
National Register  
☐ See continuation sheet.

- ☒ determined not eligible for the  
National Register  
☐ See continuation sheet.

- ☐ removed from the National  
Register.

- ☐ other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Weeki Wachee Spring  
Name of Property

Hernando County, Florida  
County and State

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☐ buildings  
☒ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 0            | 28              | buildings  |
|              |                 | sites      |
|              |                 | structures |
|              |                 | objects    |
|              |                 | total      |

### Name of related multiple property listings

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/auditorium

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/auditorium

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete slab  
walls wood siding, stucco, concrete

roof composition shingle, wood shingle  
other

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
# \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

### Period of Significance

1947-present

### Significant Dates

1947

### Significant Person

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

unknown/unknown

### Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of Repository

City of St. Petersburg library, Janus Research library, Weeki

# Wachee Spring archives, USF library

Weeki Wachee Spring  
Name of Property

Hernando County, Florida  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 50

### UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

|      |         |   |          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|------|---------|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1    | 1       | 7 | 3        | 4 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 0 |
| Zone | Easting |   | Northing |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2    |         |   |          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

|      |         |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------|---------|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 3    |         |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Zone | Easting |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4    |         |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Tiffany Luxon and Amy Groover, Architectural Historians

organization Janus Research date November 13, 1998

street & number P.O. Box 919 telephone (727) 821-7600

city or town St. Petersburg state Florida zip code 33713

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Florida Leisure Attractions

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1 Weeki Wachee Spring  
Hernando County, Florida

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SECTION 7: DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY

Weeki Wachee Spring is located on the west side of US 19 at the intersection of US 19 and SR 50 in Weeki Wachee Spring, Florida. This post-World War II tourist attraction consists of several buildings placed along the Weeki Wachee Spring, also known as the Main Spring. The main attraction, an underwater theatre featuring swimmers called Mermaids, is located on the banks of the clear spring and under the water (Photograph 1). To the north of the water is a grassy area; adjacent to the grass is a roadway, which leads to Weeki Wachee's parking lot. The eastern part of the spring is fenced off where a sandy beach and water-slide park, Buccaneer Bay, can be found (Photograph 2). The original 1947 Underwater Theatre was demolished and the existing Mermaid Theatre was constructed in 1959 at a different location than the original building. The second building was significantly altered in 1975. The only remaining feature of the 1947 Weeki Wachee tourist attraction is the underwater airlock, a space where the Mermaids can breathe air and change clothes. Weeki Wachee's historical associations with Florida's post-World War II tourism boom and roadside attractions are significant; however, no historic fabric or buildings remain to convey its significance. The original 1947 Underwater Theatre was demolished and extant buildings were constructed in 1959 or later; therefore, they do not meet the age requirement for listing in the **National Register of Historic Places**.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Weeki Wachee Spring is an approximately 50-acre tourist attraction located along the Weeki Wachee Spring and River. The Main Spring measures 100 feet across, and is the surfacing point of an underground river that pumps over 170 million gallons of water each day. The rock formations underneath the surface of the water remain in their natural form.

Weeki Wachee Spring's buildings are a collection of nonhistoric wood frame buildings serving different uses (Photograph 3, 4). Building materials include vertical cedar siding, wood shingle roofing, thatched roofs, and fixed metal-framed windows and metal-framed doors. The buildings are placed along a meandering concrete path surrounded by lush tropical landscaping (Photograph 5). Large birdcages containing hawks, eagles, and parrots are scattered throughout the park. Buildings include the Gift Locker, c. 1965; Treasure Chest gift shop, c. 1965; an entrance kiosk, c. 1960s; and employee cottages, c. 1960s or 1970s. Originally, Mermaids lived in the cottages, but now park personnel live there and others are occupied by renters (Photograph 6). In 1973, the park was expanded with the Birds of Prey outdoor concrete arena and the Exotic Birds outdoor concrete auditorium (Photograph 7). Later buildings include an administrative office, c. 1972; the Mermaid Museum, c. 1975; the boat dock, c. 1975; the Spring Overlook pavilion, c. 1980s; and the Mermaid Galley Restaurant c. 1980s (Photograph 8). There are several additional nonhistoric buildings used for storage located in the west portion of the park. Building materials include wood siding, compositions shingle roofs, metal siding, and

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metal roofs. These buildings generally are in poor condition and some have been moved from other places in the park (Photograph 9).

Mermaid Theatre

The Mermaid Theatre is Weeki Wachee Spring's main attraction (Photograph 10). The two-story building has an irregular plan with a shed roof and offset gable dormer. Its concrete and steel structural system is mostly underwater; however, the aboveground exterior is clad in smooth stucco. The main building has a shed roof covered in composition shingles while the second floor has an offset gable roof. On the west elevation, fixed single pane windows are evident in a dormer-like structure (Photograph 11). The only other windows present are 15 fixed single pane types located beneath the surface of the water (Photograph 12). Visitors enter the building from an entrance located at the south elevation. The second floor contains a locker room, costume room, and shower for the performers. The theatre's main interior space has five sections of wood benches placed in auditorium style on a downward slope. A small fiberglass stage has been built underwater and props such as the existing castle change periodically. Located at a depth of 65 feet is an airlock used by the mermaids; this was installed around 1947, but moved in 1959.

The original theatre, now demolished, was built in 1947. Named the Underwater Theatre, the building was a rectangular tank with a canvas cover and small rectangular windows located under water (Photograph 13 - 15). The original building was one-story and had a flat roof. There were two flat roofed structures on the main roof, one on each end. The roofs were painted in stripes and the above-water portion of the building had a painted sign that read "The Underwater Theatre." There was an open shed structure to the east of the building with a sign that said "Aquatic Zoo." Originally, there had been a Frame Vernacular building with screened southern facing porch to the west of the theatre. Following the completion of the Mermaid Theatre in 1962, the Underwater Theatre was demolished (Photograph 16).

The Mermaid Theatre was built in 1959-62 to the east of the original Underwater Theatre. It was a larger building than the previous theatre and able to seat 450 people (Photograph 17). The one-story building had a steel structure and a stucco exterior aboveground. The shed roof was clad in curved concrete panels. Much larger single-paned fixed windows to view the Mermaid show were installed (Photograph 18). Plastic auditorium seating was divided into five sections and angled on several levels down to the glass. A mosaic-tiled wall was below the windows and solid panels above the windows. The ceiling featured curved insets. A tube room from which the Mermaids swim 15 feet down and 50 feet out to enter the underwater stage was located in the theatre building and still remains.

The 1959 building exists today, but was notably altered in 1975 (Photograph 19). The concrete roof was removed, a second story added, and the roofs were sheathed in composition shingles. The interior has been significantly altered as well. Wood bench seating replaced the plastic auditorium chairs and an acoustic tile

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ceiling has replaced or covered the original inset panel ceiling. The tiled wall under the windows was removed. A fiberglass stage was built in the spring on top of the airlock. The Mermaids enter the airlock where they can breath air and change clothes between numbers. Natural rock formations remain; however, props are added for performances. Attached to the theatre, a technical booth controls bubble curtains along the glass, perimeter, and deep hole of the underwater theatre.

**SECTION 8: SIGNIFICANCE**

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Weeki Wachee Spring tourist attraction is considered to be not eligible for the **National Register of Historic Places**. Under Criteria A, in the areas of Entertainment and Recreation, Weeki Wachee Spring maintains significant historical associations with Florida's post-World War II tourism boom and roadside attractions. However, no extant buildings or structures remain which convey these historical associations. All historic fabric or historic buildings that convey its historical significance have been replaced by newer construction. The original Underwater Theatre was demolished in 1962 and the extant buildings were constructed in 1959 or later. Therefore, they do not meet the age requirement for listing in the **National Register of Historic Places**. Because the original buildings associated with the founding of the roadside attraction have been replaced with modern buildings, Weeki Wachee Spring is not exceptionally important as required for properties under 50 years old to be listed on the **National Register of Historic Places**.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Entertainment/Recreation (Criterion A)

From side-of-the-road amusements advertised miles ahead to the great theme parks of Walt Disney World and Sea World, tourist attractions were a growing trade in Florida after World War II (Hatton 1987: 183). The post-World War II tourist attraction had its roots in early automobile vacations. Before automobiles, hotels had been the vacation destination where tourists arrived by rail, enjoyed the hotel, and then left by rail. With the invention and ensuing popularity of the automobile, travelers did not have to remain in one place. Two factors led to the popularity of car travel and vacations: headlights and roads. The invention of carbide-gas headlights enabled motorists to travel at night. At the same time, highways were created that bisected the country from east to west and north to south. Florida's main north-south highway, the Dixie Highway, brought tourists to Florida. Early 20<sup>th</sup> century auto vacationers camped on farmlands. As cars became widely available to everyone and car driving became the national pastime, municipalities established free campgrounds in the 1920s. In turn, automobile travel spurred eating and sleeping establishments along the roadways (Hatton 1987:

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175; Margolies 1981: 14). Florida took the lead in establishing camps after World War I (Hatton 1987: 175-176) during the burgeoning economy of the prosperous Land Boom times.

These free camps soon earned a reputation as places of corruption populated with "flivver bums" and "white gypsies." In response to the needs of family travelers, private camps were established. They charged fees, but offered better facilities such as cabins, indoor plumbing, and kitchenettes. Car travelers did not have to bring stoves or tents. The early camps were built around themes such as fairy tales or teepees. Over the next four decades, these private camps evolved into the motel, a string of rooms in one building. From 1948 through 1960 the number of motels doubled in response to increased automobile travel after World War II (Hatton 1987: 176-77). The post-World War II economic boom and end of gasoline rations led to increased tourism. Roadside attractions appeared all over Florida (Anderson 1995: 50). Weeki Wachee Spring is an example of this type of roadside attraction born for the automobile traveler.

The automobile traveler started a trend of roadside businesses competing for tourist dollars (Hatton 1987: 181). Florida's early attractions were pre-existing natural features such as a spring, flora, or fauna. Aimed at families, the main tourists of Florida, the sites operated year round because of the mild weather (Hatton 1987: 184). The early roadside attractions captured motorists' attention with catchy names, giant statues, and signs that promised incredible things (Hatton 1987: 183). An early brochure promoting Weeki Wachee Spring used catchy phrases such as, "Spring of the Mermaids," "Featuring the World's only Underwater Theatre," "Weekiwachee is acclaimed by motion picture companies as the underwater film capital of the world!" and "No one has been disappointed." (Photograph 20) Besides Weeki Wachee Spring, examples of other roadside attractions that enticed tourists with signs and unbelievable sights are Gatorland Zoo, with an alligator jaw entrance in Kissamee; Sunken Gardens, with large billboard signage in St. Petersburg; and Cypress Gardens' Florida-shaped pool.

<sup>1970s</sup>  
In the 1950s, the construction of Walt Disney World affected all small roadside attractions. It was grander than previous attractions and major interstate highways took the tourist to it. Generally, once an attraction was cut off from the main travel route by an Interstate Highway, it would close down. Smaller attractions survived when their location remained along a heavily traveled roadway or when large corporations took them over. For example, today Cypress Gardens survives because it was bought by Sea World's parent corporation which advertises the two attractions together (Hatton 1987: 187). Likewise, Weeki Wachee Spring survives because it is owned by Florida Leisure, a corporation that owns Silver Springs as well.

Weeki Wachee Spring, part of the Weeki Wachee River, means Little Spring (Bloodworth 1978: 192). Indians used the spring and river as a source of food, water, and transportation. Later, it was used in the logging industry to float logs to the Gulf of Mexico (History of Weeki Wachee). The first known owners of the spring are the father, uncle and aunt of Ella Wilder Metcalf and Doctor McClure. In 1883, they purchased 500 acres for \$5,000 (Stanaback 1976: 231). At the turn-of-the-century, locals used Weeki Wachee as a picnic ground

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and a swimming hole. During this period, glass-bottom boat tours were offered to view the underwater terrain and wildlife (History of Weeki Wachee) (Photograph 21, 22). Developers J.M. Rogers, Frank P. Bentley, and L.L. Buchanan spurred by the Land Boom of the 1920s, purchased the property in 1925 for \$100,000. Unfortunately, the financial collapse of 1927 ended development plans for a tourist attraction. However following World War II promoters were again interested in Weeki Wachee Spring (Stanaback 1976: 222, 231).

In the meantime, the City of St. Petersburg bought the spring in 1940 to provide an auxiliary source of water in case of future need (History of Weeki Wachee) (SPT 5/9/83 1B). In 1946, after witnessing the success of Cypress Gardens and Silver Springs, Newton Perry began plans for Weeki Wachee Spring (Anderson 1995: 74). A former U.S. Navy frogman and swimming instructor, Perry conceived the idea of staying under water and breathing through an air hose fueled by an air compressor. After searching for a body of water to conduct experiments, he discovered Weeki Wachee Spring and perfected hose breathing. Perry saw the possibilities of producing an underwater show due to the spring's clarity and beautiful cavern, rock formations, and plant life. He enlisted an enthusiastic supporter and pioneer skin-diver, Hall Smith, who shared his vision of an underwater show (History of Weeki Wachee). Together they secured financial backing by a group of Kansas City men and formed a St. Petersburg Corporation. This company leased 526 acres from the city of St. Petersburg and promised \$100,000 to \$500,000 in development of landscaping, tourist cabins, and construction of the first underwater theatre in the world. The first theatre was a tank with small viewing windows and a canvas cover. Only a two-lane hard-surfaced road led to the spring and there was no electrical power. The developers enticed the local R.E.A. Power Company to run a power line to the area. The theatre was set six feet below the water's surface and was ready for the attraction's first show on October 13, 1947 (History of Weeki Wachee; Stanaback 1976: 231-32).

The Underwater Theatre featured a Mermaid show consisting of several women in Mermaid costumes complete with tails that performed underwater ballet, fed the fish, and ate apples under the water. The City of Mermaids was 15 feet underwater and featured choreographed performances that required stamina, grace, and dramatics. The attraction received worldwide acclaim and served as the location for movies and television shows. Two movies, "Mr. Peabody and the Mermaid" (1948) with William Powell and "Cross Winds" (1951) with Rhonda Fleming were filmed at the site. Episodes of Route 66 and Sea Quest and a live television show "Minnie the Mermaid" with Arthur Godfrey, were filmed at the spring (SPT 9/30/97 6D; Kimberlie Burch interview). To appeal to all tourists, Mr. Perry expanded Weeki Wachee with attractions such as an orchid garden, a wild jungle cruise, and animals. However, the Mermaids remained the most popular feature (Anderson 1995: 74-75, Stanaback 1976: 232).

In 1959, the American Broadcasting Companies, Inc. bought Weeki Wachee from Perry and spent \$1 million building a new underwater theatre that seated 450 people (Florida Trend 59). The new theatre with a wave-like concrete roof was located east of the existing theatre and took several years to complete. It featured larger

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windows, an extended underwater view and plastic auditorium seating. The original Underwater Theatre was demolished once the new theatre was completed.

Now named the Mermaid Theatre, the theatre building was remodeled around 1975. The concrete roof was removed, a second story for a locker room and a costume room was added, and plastic seating was replaced with bench seating.

In 1973, ABC added two open-air arenas for the Birds of Prey and Exotic Birds shows. A river cruise was opened in 1978, and Buccaneer Bay, a \$1 million water park with flume, spring swimming and picnic areas, was added in 1982. In 1984, ABC sold Weeki Wachee to Florida Leisure Attractions, a group of former ABC executives. At that time, they spent \$25 million to buy Weeki Wachee Spring and Silver Springs outside of Orlando (Florida Trend 60).

When US 19 was replaced by I-75 as the primary north-south thoroughfare, Weeki Wachee Spring was located 25 miles away from tourist traffic (Florida Trend 61). ABC requested a city charter from the City of St. Petersburg to keep the attraction's name on state maps. In January 1966, the City of Weeki Wachee Spring was incorporated. The attraction's name appeared on Florida maps because it was a Florida city. As a city, signs to Weeki Wachee went up on I-75. Today, the attraction remains popular as an attraction for Florida residents and out-of-state travelers.

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Wilson, Elizabeth

August 1987

*Growth Gushes at Weeki Wachee. Florida Trend.*

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Hernando County, Florida

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**INVENTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHS**

1. Weeki Wachee Spring
2. Hernando County, Florida
3. November 1998
4. Janus Research
5. Amy Groover
6. Facing southwest
7. Photograph 1 of 23 (Roll 9871-1, Exp 21)

**Items 1-5 are the same for the remaining photographs 1 – 12.**

6. Facing North
7. Photograph 2 of 23 (Roll 9871-1, Exp 22)
  
6. Facing northwest
7. Photograph 3 of 23 (Roll 9871-1, Exp 18)
  
6. Facing northwest
7. Photograph 4 of 23 (Roll 9871-1, Exp 1)
  
6. Facing southwest
7. Photograph 5 of 23 (Roll 9871-1, Exp 24)
  
6. Facing southwest
7. Photograph 6 of 23 (Roll 9871-1, Exp 15)
  
6. Facing West
7. Photograph 7 of 23 (Roll 9871-1, Exp 10)
  
6. Facing southeast
7. Photograph 8 of 23 (Roll 9871-1, Exp 14)
  
6. Facing northwest
7. Photograph 9 of 23 (Roll 9871-1, Exp 11)
  
6. Facing West
7. Photograph 10 of 23 (Roll 9871-1, Exp 19)

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 10 Weeki Wachee Spring  
Hernando County, Florida

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- 6. Facing southwest
- 7. Photograph 11 of 23 (Roll 9871-1, Exp 6)
  
- 6. Facing northeast
- 7. Photograph 12 of 23 (Roll 9871-1, Exp 4)
  
- 1. Weeki Wachee Spring
- 2. Hernando County, Florida
- 3. C. 1950
- 4. Florida State Archives Photographic Collection
- 5. Facing South
- 6. Photograph 13 of 23

Items 1-2 are the same for the remaining photographs.

- 3. 1952
- 4. Florida State Archives Photographic Collection
- 5. Facing East
- 6. Photograph 14 of 23
  
- 3. c. 1950s
- 4. Weeki Wachee Spring Archives
- 5. Facing northwest
- 6. Photograph 15 of 23
  
- 3. c. 1959
- 4. Weeki Wachee Spring Archives
- 5. Facing southeast
- 6. Photograph 16 of 23
  
- 3. c. 1958
- 4. Weeki Wachee Spring Archives
- 5. Facing West
- 6. Photograph 17a of 23
  
- 3. c. 1958
- 4. Weeki Wachee Spring Archives

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 11 Weeki Wachee Spring  
Hernando County, Florida

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- 5. Facing northwest
- 6. Photograph 17b of 23
  
- 3. c. 1960
- 4. Florida State Archives Photographic Collection
- 5. Facing southeast
- 6. Photograph 18 of 23
  
- 3. c. 1975
- 4. Weeki Wachee Spring Archives
- 5. Facing East
- 6. Photograph 19 of 23
  
- 3. c. 1950
- 4. Weeki Wachee Spring Archives
- 5. Photograph 20 of 23
  
- 3. c. 1920
- 4. Florida State Archives Photographic Collection
- 5. Photograph 21 of 23
  
- 3. 1933
- 4. Florida State Archives Photographic Collection
- 5. Photograph 22 of 23
  
- 3. c. 1960s
- 4. Weeki Wachee Spring Archives
- 5. Aerial
- 6. Photograph 23 of 23

## Weeki Wachee Spring



Photograph 1  
Mermaid Theatre and Overlook Pavilion  
Roll 9871-1, #21; Facing southwest

## Weeki Wachee Spring



Photograph 2  
Buccaneer Bay Water Park  
Roll 9871-1, #22; Facing North

## Weeki Wachee Spring



Photograph 3  
Entrance Kiosk  
Roll 9871-1, #18; Facing northwest

## Weeki Wachee Spring



Photograph 4  
Gift Locker  
Roll 9871-1, #1; Facing northwest

## Weeki Wachee Spring



Photograph 5  
Landscaping  
Roll 9871-1, #24; Facing southwest

## Weeki Wachee Spring



Photograph 6  
Employee Housing  
Roll 9871-1, #15; Facing southwest

## Weeki Wachee Spring



Photograph 7  
Birds of Prey Arena  
Roll 9871-1, #10; Facing West

## Weeki Wachee Spring



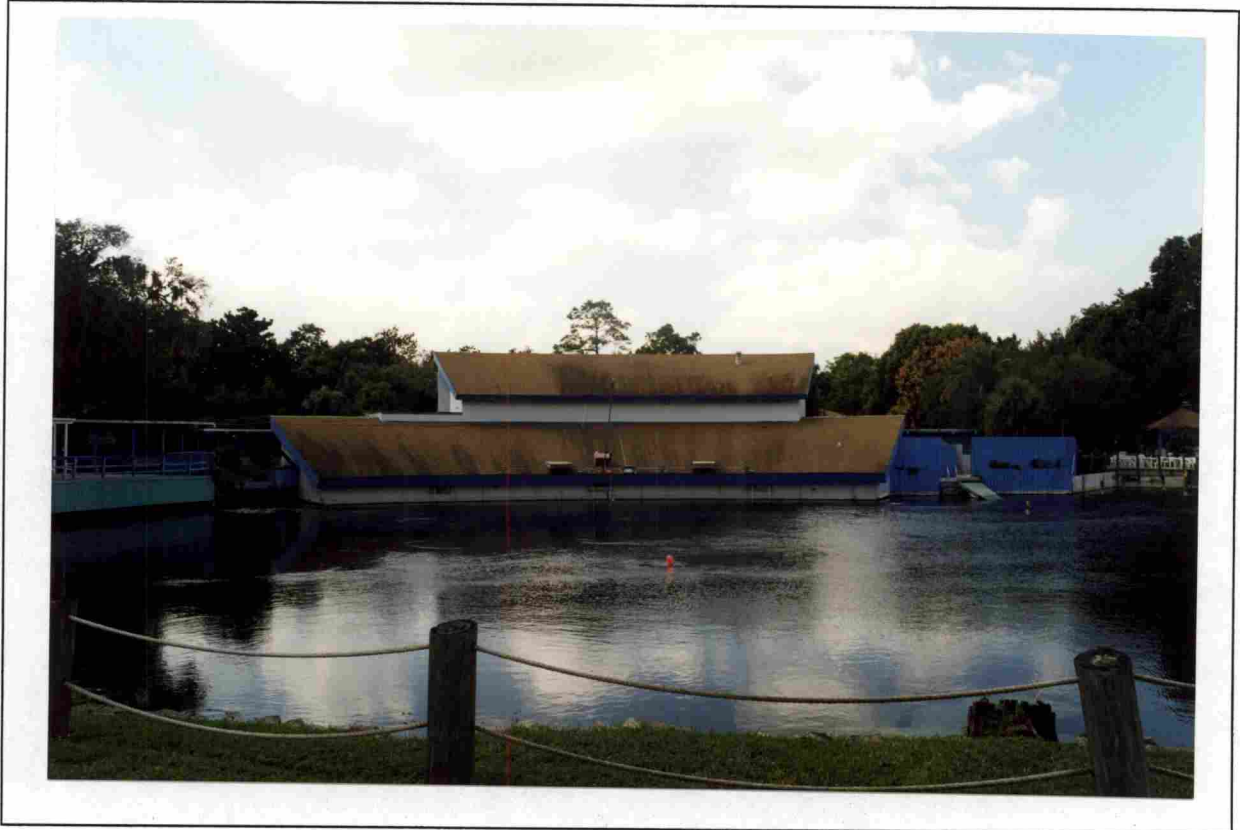
Photograph 8  
Administration Building  
Roll 9871-1, #14; Facing southeast

## Weeki Wachee Spring



Photograph 9  
Maintenance Building  
Roll 9871-1, #11; Facing northwest

## Weeki Wachee Spring



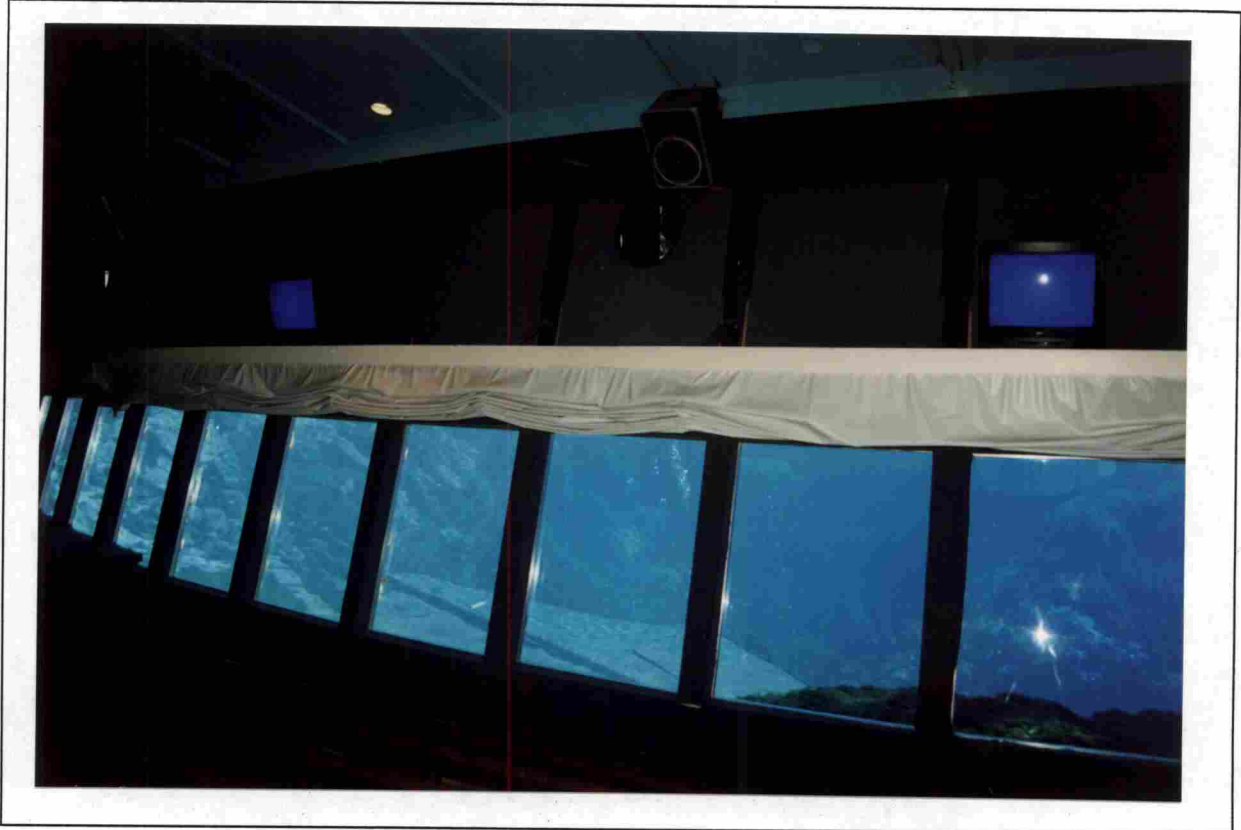
Photograph 10  
Mermaid Theatre exterior  
Roll 9871-1, #19; Facing West

## Weeki Wachee Spring



Photograph 11  
Mermaid Theatre exterior  
Roll 9871-1, #6; Facing southwest

## Weeki Wachee Spring



Photograph 12  
Mermaid Theatre interior  
Roll 9871-1, #4; Facing northeast



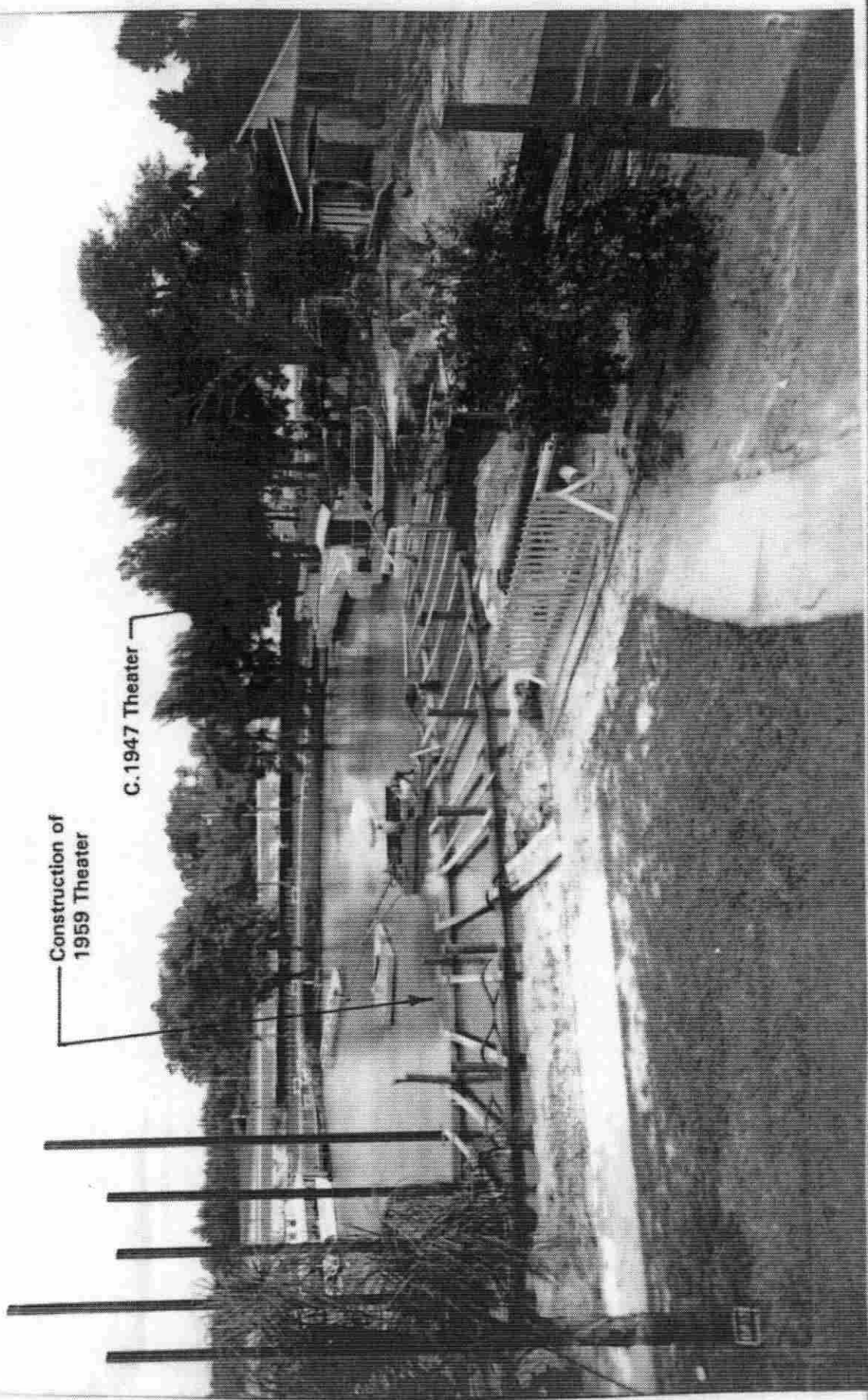
Photograph 13  
Weeki Wachee Postcard c. 1950  
Facing South  
Florida State Archives Photographic Collection



Photograph 14  
Underwater Theatre in 1952  
Facing East  
Florida State Archives Photographic Collection



Photograph 15  
Underwater Theatre and Mermaid c1950s  
Facing Northwest  
Weeki Wachi Spring Archives



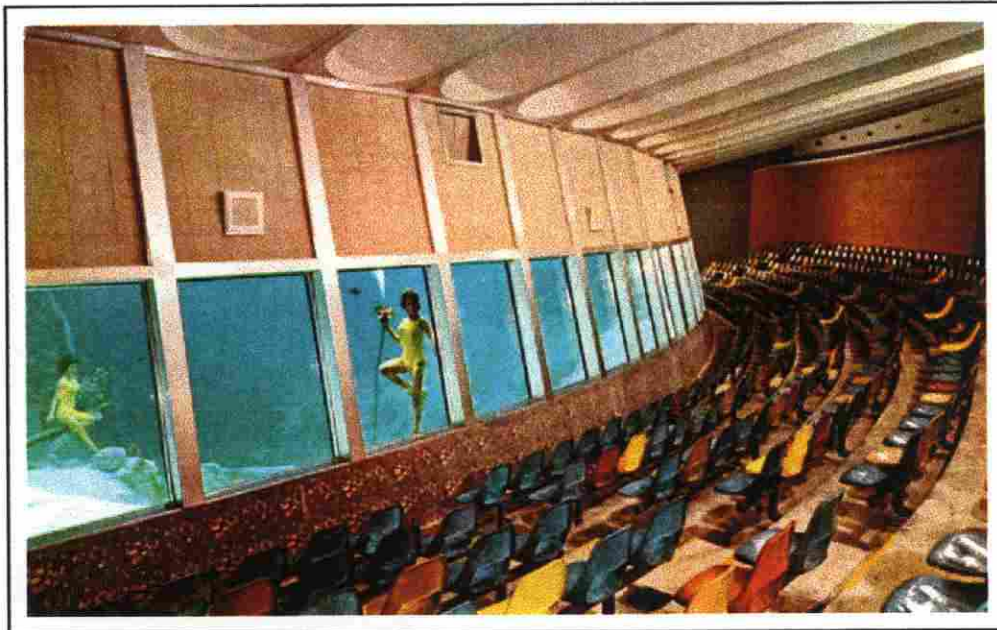
Photograph 16  
Construction of new theatre  
adjacent to original theatre  
Weeki Wachi Springs Archives



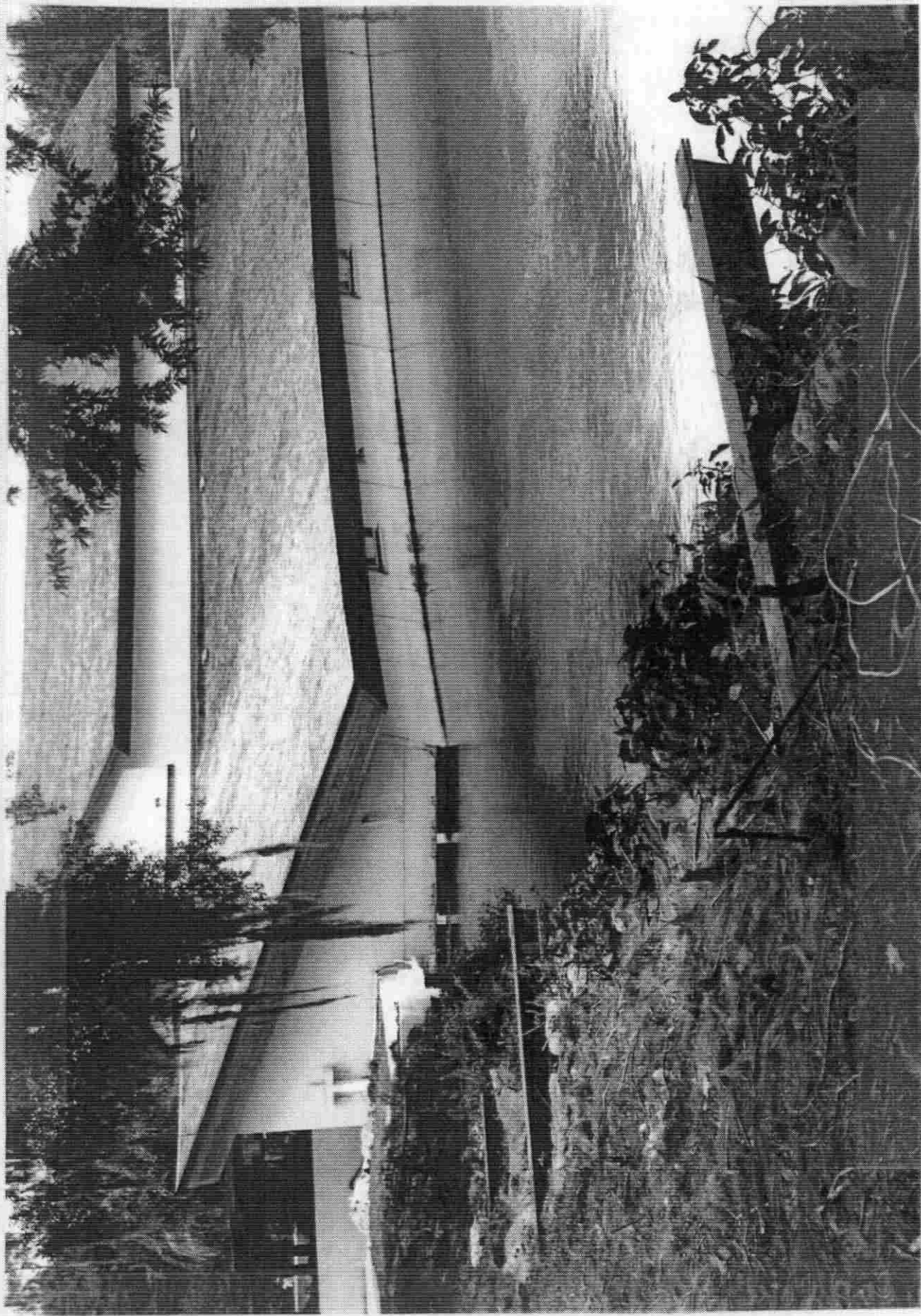
Photograph 17a  
Construction of new theatre c1958  
Facing West  
Weeki Wachi Spring Archives



Photograph 17b  
Underwater construction of new  
theater c1958  
Weeki Wachi Spring Archives



Photograph 18  
Mermaid Theatre interior c. 1960  
Facing southeast  
Florida State Archives Photographic Collection



Photograph 19  
Mermaid Theatre c1975  
Facing East  
Weeki Wachi Spring Archives



WEEKIWACHEE SPRING is directly on U.S. 19, the New Gulf Coast Highway, 12 miles West of Brooksville, Florida. Easily reached from any point in northern states or Florida. Free parking space for 1,000 automobiles!

PLAN NOW to spend a happy fascinating day at Weeki-wachee . . . seeing the spectacular underwater shows . . . the thrilling Aquatic Zoo Jungle Excursion . . . swimming, picnicking and having a really grand time.

Leading journalists, world travelers, motion picture camera men and directors, artists and Florida visitors from all over the world say Weekiwachee is the MOST UNUSUAL ATTRACTION of all!

**NO ONE HAS BEEN DISAPPOINTED**

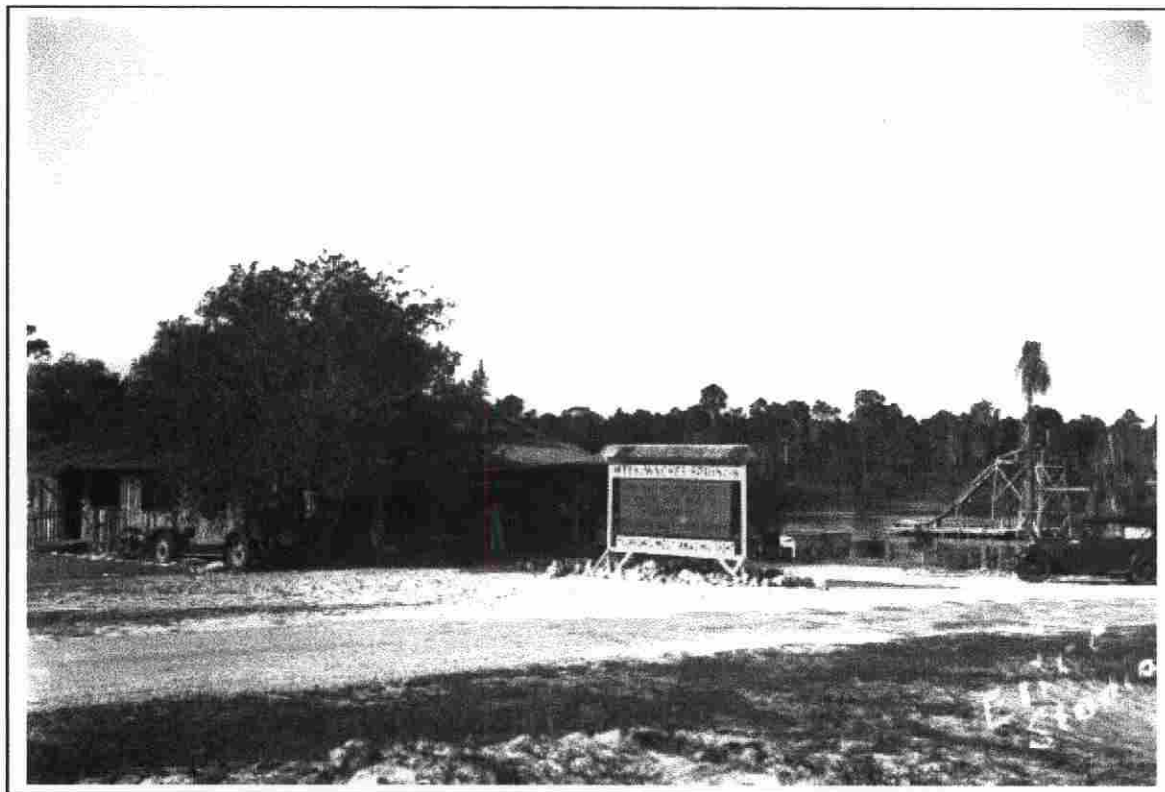
For information, write Weekiwachee Spring  
P. O. Box 97, Brooksville, Florida.  
Phone 343, Brooksville, Florida.

# WEEKIWACHEE

## SPRING OF THE MERMAIDS

ON  
**U.S. 19** FLORIDA'S MAIN  
GULF COAST HIGHWAY

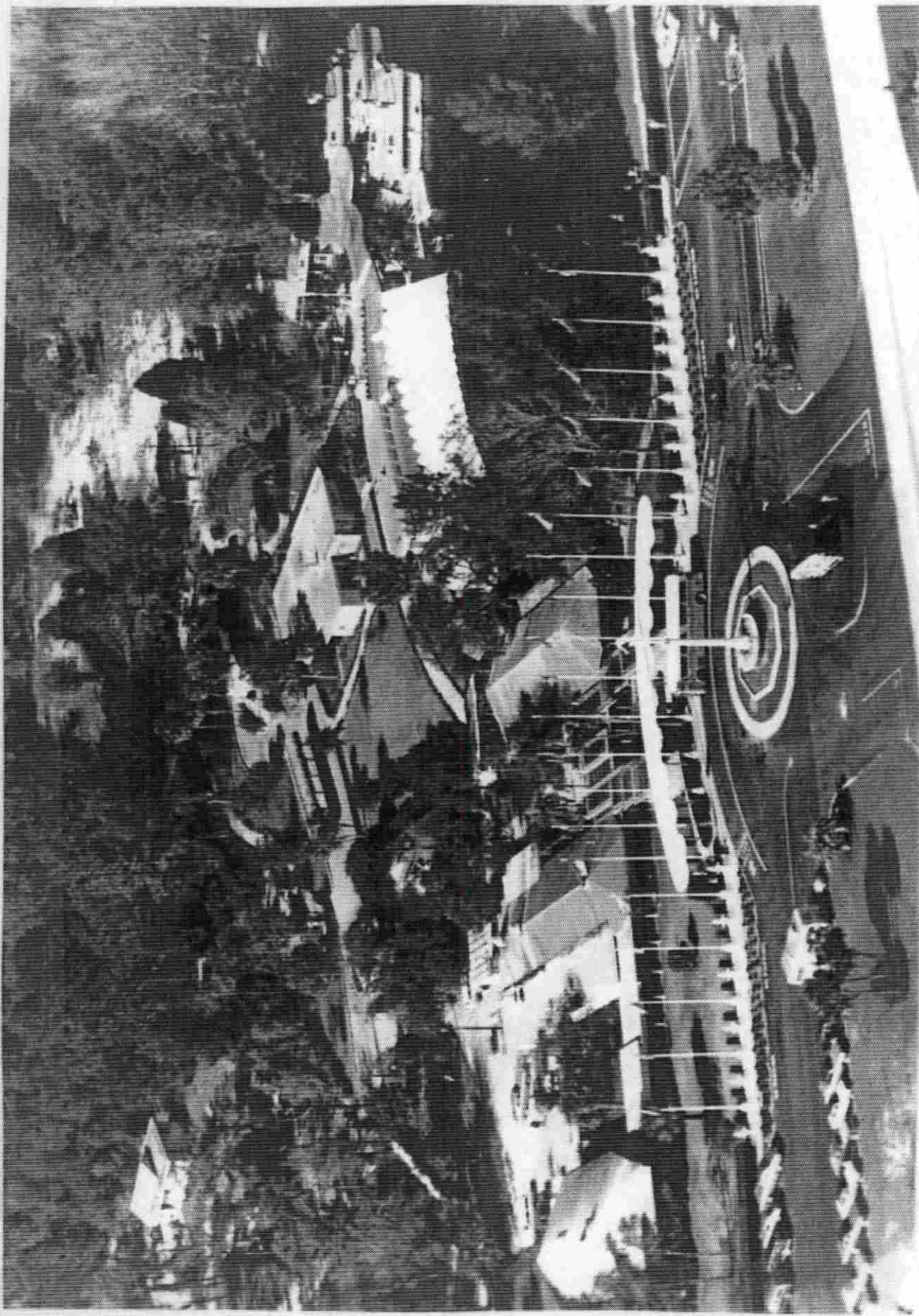
 In all the world there is nothing else like  
**WEEKIWACHEE!**



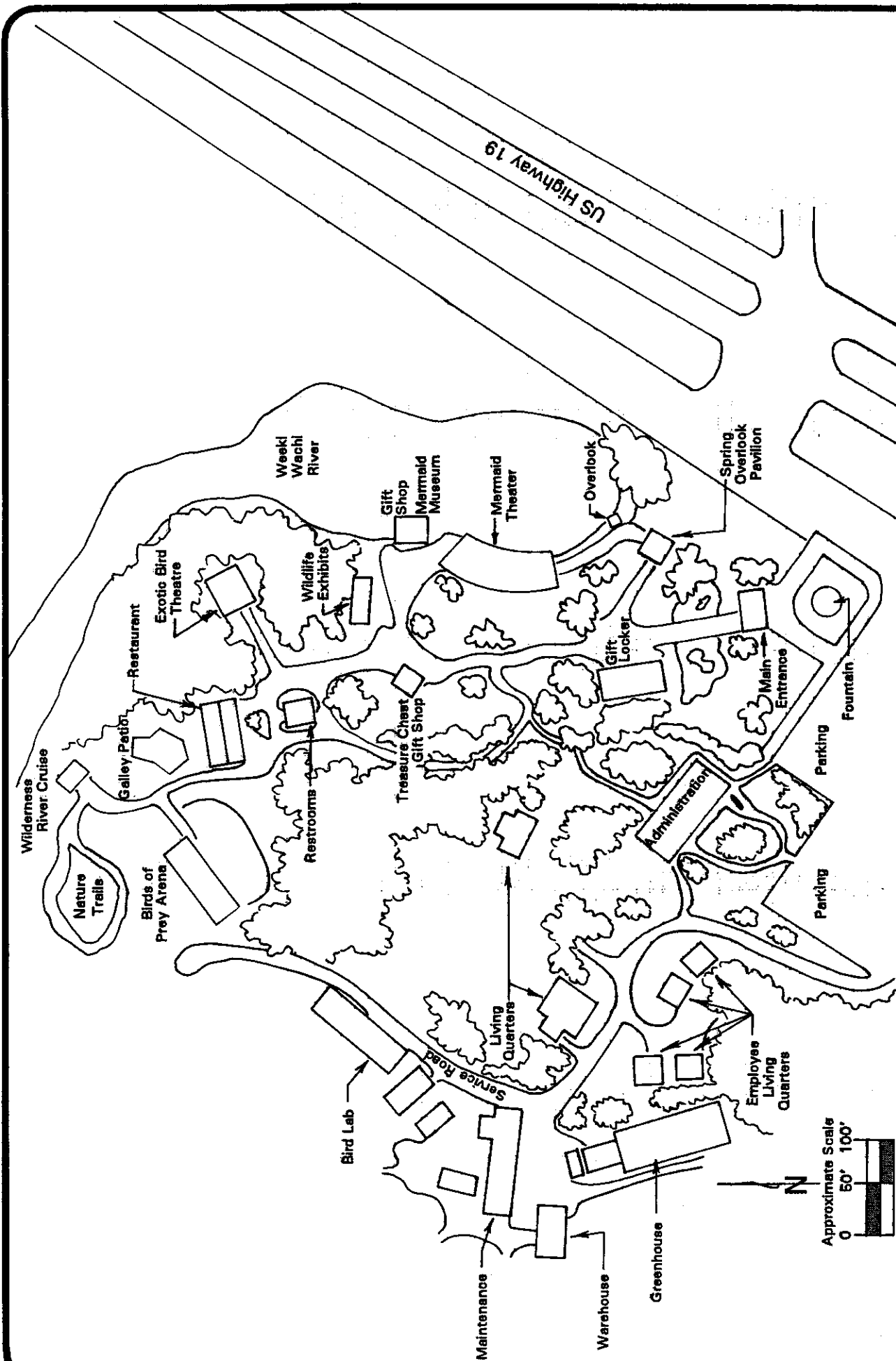
Photograph 21  
Weeki Wachee c. 1920  
Sign advertises "You can never believe it until you  
see it through the glassbottomed boat"  
Florida State Archives Photographic Collection



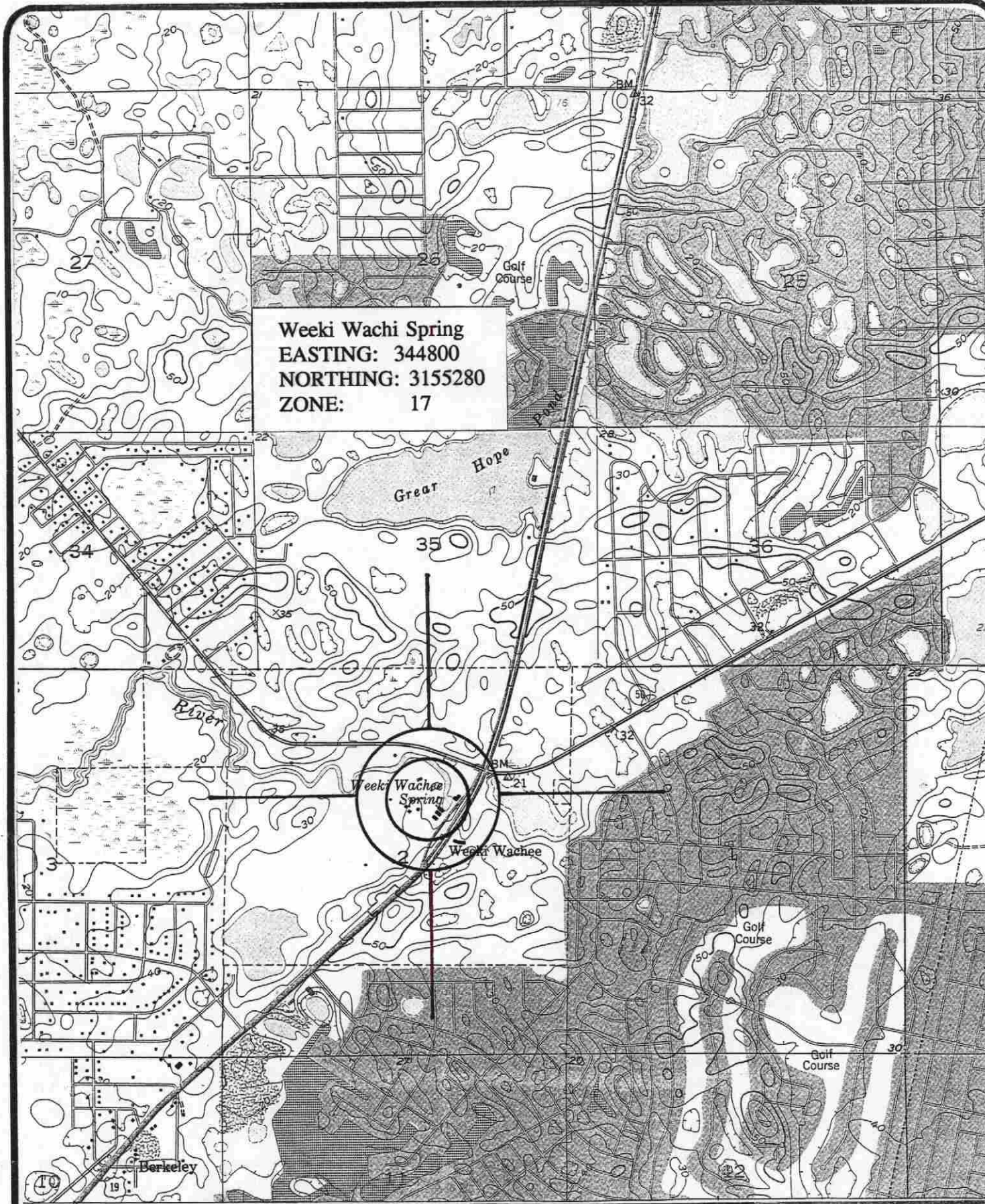
Photograph 22  
Glass bottom boat on Weeki Wachee Spring  
1933  
Florida State Archives Photographic Collection



Photograph 23  
Aerial of Weeki Wachee Spring c1960  
Weeki Wachee Spring Archives



Site Sketch of Weeki Wachee Spring



Weeki Wachee Spring  
EASTING: 344800  
NORTHING: 3155280  
ZONE: 17

The map is a topographic representation of the Weeki Wachee Spring area in Florida. It features a grid system with Easting and Northing coordinates. Contour lines are drawn at 10-foot intervals, with labels such as 20, 30, 40, and 50. A prominent road, likely US Highway 19, runs diagonally from the bottom left towards the center. To the left of the road, a river is depicted with a wavy line and labeled 'River'. In the upper center, a large, irregularly shaped area is labeled 'Great Hope'. Several golf courses are indicated by shaded regions and labeled 'Golf Course'. A specific location, 'Weeki Wachee Spring', is circled in the center of the map. Other labels include 'Berkeley' in the bottom left and 'Point' near the top center. The map is overlaid with a coordinate grid, with Easting values 34, 35, and 36 visible, and Northing values 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31 visible.

Weeki Wachee Spring, FLA  
USGS 7.5' Series (Topographic)  
1956 Photorevised 1988  
Scale 1:24,000