



Dunns Creek State Park 2012 Master Plan



Prepared by Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks, Office of Park Planning

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Preserving the past while looking to the future.

Dunns Creek State Park

2012 Master Plan



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Steephead ravines are among the many unique and beautiful features that can be found at Dunns Creek State Park. (Cressler 2012)

Introduction

This park master plan is intended to bridge the gap between the land use and development concepts identified in the unit management plan and the detailed, more site-specific plans and designs that will be created later in the development process. It defines a common vision for the park's future, through design recommendations and an implementation strategy. The master plan is presented graphically in maps and drawings, in order to help people visualize the design recommendations for the park in a realistic setting.

The master plan provides guidance on implementing the concepts identified in the unit management plan and therefore can aid decision-making about future park improvements. The master plan lays out a potential work plan for the Division. It summarizes the park's current needs and assets, and targets particular projects. By clearly identifying capital projects, the master plan can provide the rationale and framework to raise funds for park needs and specific park projects and establish a basis for

fiscal planning that will support scheduled development.

The Dunns Creek Master Plan is based on input received from the Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) staff as well members of the surrounding community and other crucial stakeholders. Building staff interest and consensus through the master planning process can create or continue a level of active involvement and support for the park and the master plan. Broad based support for a single park vision will help to ensure the best possible outcome when the master plan is implemented.

Background

The Trustees leased Dunns Creek State Park to the DRP in 2001. The park's initial acreage was purchased from The Nature Conservancy under the P2000/CARL program and additional property was acquired through donation and exchange. The Acquisition and Restoration Council approved the current unit management plan in 2004.



The park's namesake, Dunns Creek, provides opportunities for many waterbased recreational activities.

The park is named after Dunns Creek a large tidally influenced blackwater stream that creates the park's northern and eastern boundary. Dunns Creek is a significant tributary of the St. Johns River and connects to Crescent Lake a large freshwater lake located at the park's southeastern corner. The park contains almost 10 square miles of contiguous property with highly variable topography and an intricate mosaic of some 21 natural communities that provide important habitat for unique and imperiled plant and animal species.

The park has seen limited development over the last ten years. The DRP has focused primarily on restoration of the park's unique scrub habitat and establishment of the park's prescribed fire program. The park is managed in conjunction with Ravine Gardens State Park and currently one full-time park ranger is assigned to the park. The park does have an active Citizen Support Organization that hosts an annual Open House event in the fall. Recreational access is primarily limited to a picnic area and trailhead located on U.S. 17, north of Pomona Park. Four marked shared use trails exist within the park. This includes a 1.5-mile hiking and bicycling trail that takes visitors to the pristine waters of



Piney Bluff Landing slopes abruptly at the shore of Dunns Creek.

Blue Pond. Hikers, bikers and equestrians can explore the park's sandhills, mesic flatwoods, baygall and seepage slope. The trails vary in length from a short 10-minute walk to a full two-hour hike. Ranger led hikes are also available through prior arrangement with park staff. Geocaching is supported by the park, and some geocaches are located within the park and along the trails. Piney Bluff Landing is the only area within the park with direct access to Dunns Creek. Locals have been coming to this portion of the park to fish and picnic for years.

The process of creating a new master plan for Dunns Creek State Park began in earnest in early 2011. Several key meetings and site visits were held with staff from the park, the District, the Bureau of Natural and Cultural Resources (BNCR), the Bureau of Design and Construction (BDC), the Office of Park Planning, and the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD). These meetings reviewed many factors in detail in order to identify the best possible location for potential development areas within the park. Site constraints including archaeological resources, wetlands, floodplain and imperiled species habitat were all identified and discussed. The planning team



The Blue Pond picnic area sits within the sand pine forest. The information kiosk contains a trail map and information for visitors.



Prescribed fire is just one tool used to management the natural resources at Dunns Creek.

established the location of a primary day-use area along with the location of family, equestrian, and primitive group camps, two trailheads and the primary alignment for the park drive. Office of Park Planning (OPP) staff developed the draft master plan document for review by DRP staff in 2012.

Regional Context

The park is located within Putnam County, about 60 miles south of Jacksonville and within close proximity of the cities of Palatka, Gainesville, St. Augustine and Daytona Beach. The park is situated within the North East Florida Region or as it is sometimes known, "Florida's First Coast." The Region is characterized by agricultural uses and an abundance of natural resources including its central feature the lower St. Johns River. The consolidated area of Duval County and the City of Jacksonville is considered the major urban center. Jacksonville supports a modern airport and a successful hospitality service industry that caters to a wide range of visitors. The remaining counties are more rural in nature, relying on agriculture and service sectors, and a limited industrial base. The region is, however, experiencing

increased urbanization and beginning to develop more economic diversity (NEFRC, 2011).

The area surrounding the park has been a recreational destination since the 19th century when paddleboats ferried tourists up the St. Johns River to enjoy leisure activities, such as rowing, hiking, fishing, and hunting. Today, undeveloped waterways and a moderate climate continue to define the landscape of the area. Yet, studies have found that only seven percent of Florida tourists visit this region compared to the other popular destinations, such as Orlando and the Tampa Bay area. Seasonal visitation rates are highest in the winter and lowest in the autumn. The region, which includes the St. Augustine area, has the highest statewide visitation to historic sites. (Visit Florida, 2010). In addition to the Jacksonville International Airport located approximately 1.5 hours from the park, AMTRAK stops daily in the nearby city of Palatka. Both the Silver Service (New York-Orlando-Tampa-Miami) and the Sunset Limited (Los Angeles-New Orleans-Orlando) utilize the Palatka station. However, the Sunset Limited service has been suspended east of New Orleans since Hurricane Katrina.



Musicians perform at the Annual Dunns Creek Open House.

In recent years, Putnam County has adopted policies to encourage development of a local ecotourism industry. Public lands within and adjacent to the county will support a developing trail network for hiking, biking, and equestrian uses. Regional recreation areas also provide for camping, boating, fishing, hunting and nature study. The Palatka area is considered the “bass capital” of Florida and local tournaments draw the sport’s top angling competitors. This includes the Bassmaster Elite fishing tournament that offers a \$100,000 first-place prize.

Paddling trails along the St. Johns River, Dunns Creek and Crescent Lake have been developed by the county’s blueways program and link the park to other public lands and the city of Palatka’s historic waterfront. Paddling trails include the St. Johns Paddling Trail, Seven Sisters Paddling Trail and the Dunns Creek Paddling Trail. These waterways are also popular house boating destinations and vessels have been known to tie up to the park’s shoreline. The St. Johns River-to-Sea Loop is a 260-mile loop trail through five counties, in northeast and central Florida. The trail will be the longest multi-use loop in the American



Palatka, Florida is a destination for bass fishing tournaments and other events. (Rogers/Paraglide 2012)

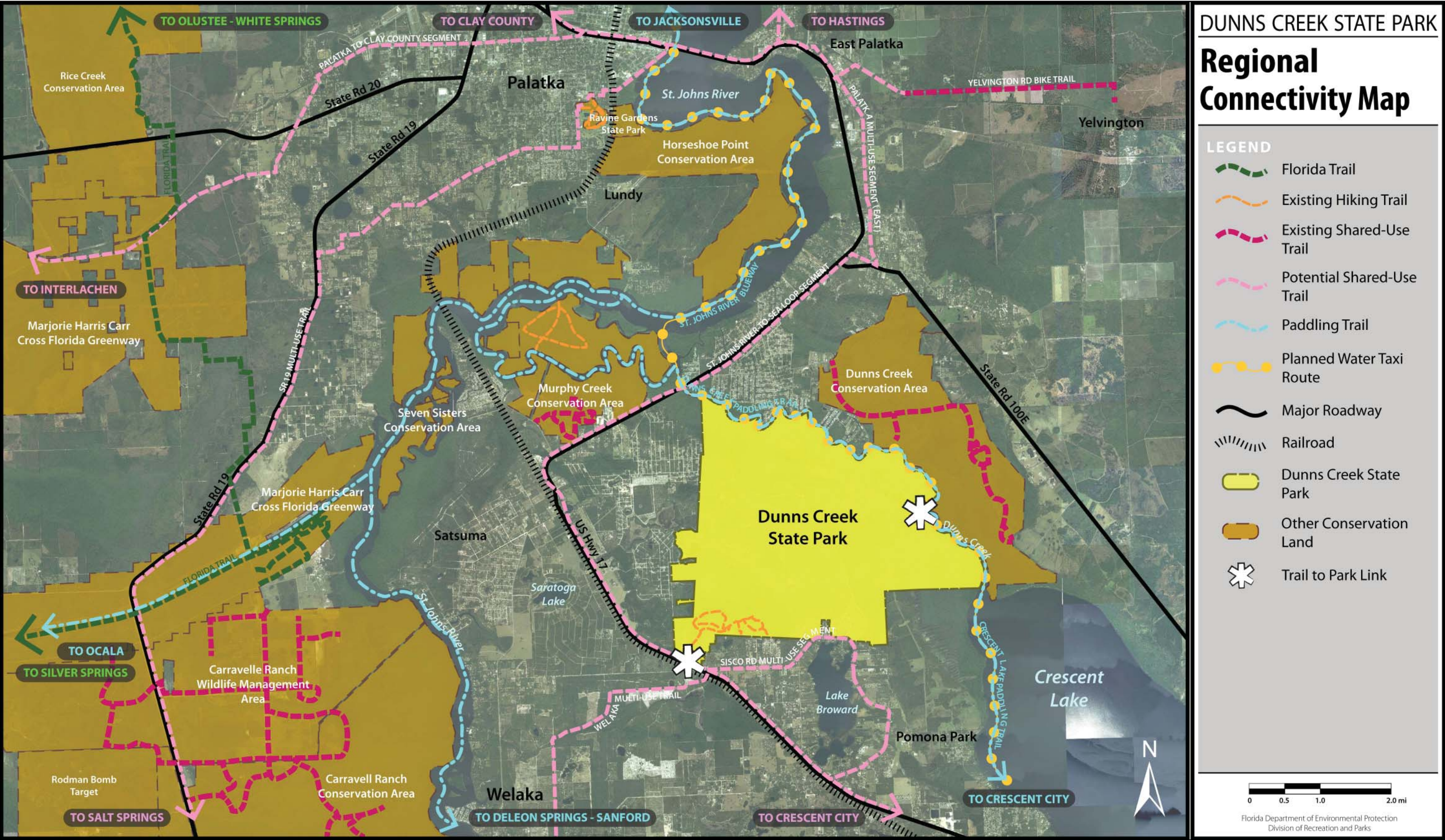


A water taxi connection is proposed from the Piney Bluff Landing to the nearby City of Palatka.

Southeast. The loop is being promoted as a major contributor to ecotourism in Northeast Florida and as a model for future trail projects nationally (ETM Inc, 2011).

The city of Palatka overlooks the expansive convergence of the upper and lower St. Johns River. Founded in 1821, Palatka maintains a significant amount of original brick roads and historic architecture, while actively redeveloping its riverfront and downtown areas. The city is home to St. Johns River State College, which also houses the Florida School of the Arts and a branch of St. Leo University. The local community supports a number of outdoor festivals and events, including the Florida Azalea Festival at Ravine Gardens State Park, the Blue Crab Festival, blues and bluegrass festivals, and arts and crafts festivals.

Palatka’s downtown revitalization is a collaborative effort involving citizens, businesses, and city staff. The project includes a riverfront redevelopment project that connects historic and downtown areas to the water. Program elements of the project include improved vehicular circulation, parking improvements, event areas,



BACK OF MAP



Cyclists are drawn to the St. Augustine-Palatka area for its country roads, gentle terrain, and beautiful scenery. (Rowe 2010)

pedestrian walks, additional boat launches, and canoe and kayak launches. The city recently established funding to support water taxi and ferryboat services. These services will promote area tourism and transport outdoor recreational users to nearby parks and conservation areas for activities like picnicking, hiking and camping.

Natural and Cultural Resources

The park's 6,300 acres preserve unique natural and cultural features that include biologically diverse steephead ravines, prairie lakes, and sandhill upland lakes as well as a culturally significant shell midden. The park's topography varies from a high elevation of 115 feet above sea level to elevations as low as two feet above sea level within the flatwoods, baygalls, swamps and marshes that comprise the wide floodplain of Dunns Creek.

Consideration of the park's natural and cultural resources, along with other site conditions such as slopes and views, was key in determining the best areas for development of public use facilities. The Site Analysis/Site Synthesis Map shows

how these elements correspond to the park property and illustrates which areas of the park were most and least suitable for development.

The park's steephead ravine system is significant. Normally found further north in Florida's panhandle, the slope forest and seepage streams at the park represent the southern extent of these features and are home to numerous unique plant and animal species. The park is also located on the northern terminus of the Crescent City-Deland Ridge. The xeric natural communities found along the ridge provide critical habitat



Etonia rosemary (upper) and gopher tortoises (lower) are two imperiled species that can be found at the park.

to a number of imperiled plant and animal species including the Etonia false rosemary.

Sugarbowl Lake is a prairie lake located along the western park boundary, and is a popular location for breeding sandhill cranes. All of the lakes at Dunns Creek State Park are significant for their connection to the aquifer and their role in water quality and aquifer recharge. Many of these lakes also provide critical breeding areas for terrestrial amphibians such as the gopher frog. In addition to Etonia false rosemary, gopher frogs, and sandhill cranes the wide range of unique and interconnected natural communities, at the park provides significant habitat for twenty-two more imperiled animal species and eight more imperiled plant species including the gopher tortoise, Sherman's fox squirrel, and the Florida black bear.

Dunns Creek has sustained Pre-Columbian Native Americans from the Paleo-Indian through the St. Johns Periods. The one-recorded prehistoric archaeological site within the boundaries of the park is a shell midden located along the edge of Dunns Creek just north of the area of the park, referred to as Piney Bluff Landing.



Gopher frogs breed in the ponds and wet areas found in the park.

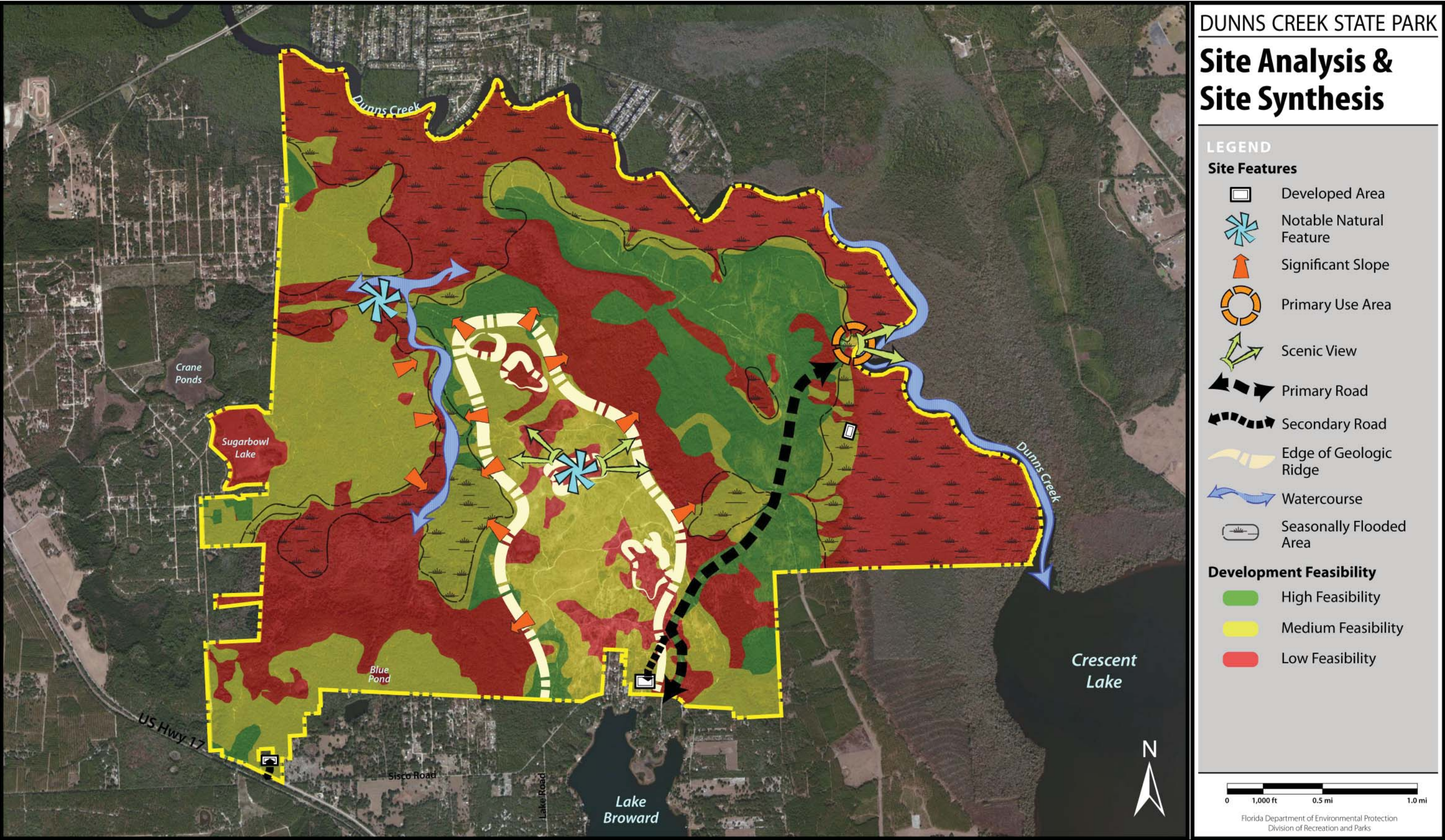
The lands that now include the park were claimed and explored by the Spanish, French and British, respectively. From the times of Spanish exploration until the mid to late 1800s, the area was most likely part of a larger plantation that produced cash crops such as sugar, molasses, rum, rice and indigo. In the 1880s, the Dunns Creek property was an economic hub along the Jacksonville, Tampa, and Key West Railroad and important in the development of the Palatka area. The pioneering developer, Mr. Henry W. Sisco, established the town of Sisco, which supported a railroad station, post office, express office, general store and lodging facility that facilitated early industries, including farming, timbering and turpentine production.

Planning/Zoning/Regulatory Issues

The park is within an "Agriculture" (AG) zoning district, and its future land use (FLU) category is "Conservation" (CN) as established by the Putnam County Planning and Zoning Division. The AG zoning district provides for a wider range of development



Turpentine activities produce the "catface" scarring on the trunks of pines. (Graeber 1927)



BACK OF MAP



The park's network of shared-use trails will provide opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, primitive camping, and other activities.

than is permitted in the CN future land use category.

The land uses and development activities typical to state parks are classified under the "Recreation: Resource-based" use category, as described in the Putnam County Land Development Code (LDC) (2009). Uses under this category are permitted in an AG zoning district with a special use permit. In addition, certain individual uses require a special use permit, including overnight recreational parks and primitive campgrounds. The LDC outlines minimum development standards for an AG district, including building setbacks, lot dimensions, percent allowable impervious surface, and other standards. Additional permits, such as those required for building construction and demolition, may also be required from Putnam County.

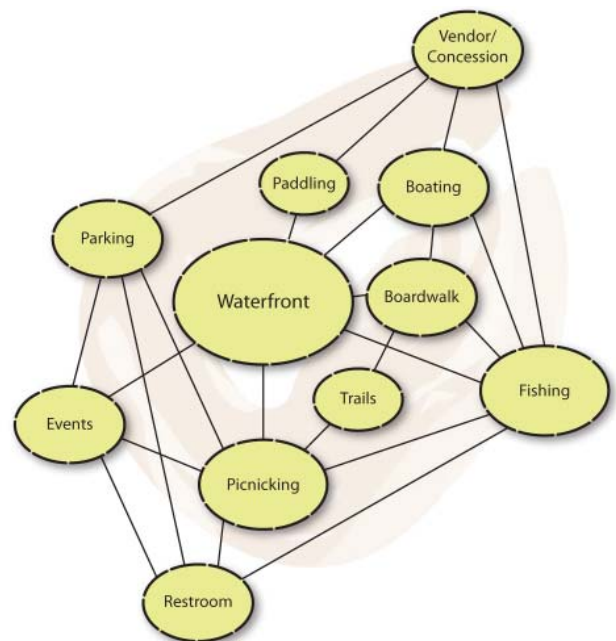
The park is located within the SJRWMD. Additional development permits, such as those regarding environmental resource impacts, and boardwalk, dock, and well construction, may be required from the SJRWMD. The water management district may also require a formal wetland delineation survey of the development

area. Impacts to certain environmental resources may be under the authority of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC). The presence of eagle nests or gopher tortoise burrows within the development area will require consultation with the FFWCC and cooperation with established FFWCC rules and protocols.

Conceptual Land Use Plan

Located within an hour drive of nearly 2.2 million people, Dunns Creek State Park has the potential to become a premier resource-based recreation destination in north central Florida. The park's proximity to Crescent Lake to the south and the City of Palatka on the St. John's River to the north, establishes the park as a destination for locals and visitors alike.

As indicated by the Site Synthesis/Site Analysis Map areas with the highest feasibility for the development of facilities are located in the eastern half of the park. The majority of the parks most sensitive



This functional diagram illustrates the relationship between planned uses and activities at Piney Bluff Landing.

natural features are found along the central ridge, and in the parks western region. In response to this analysis, the Conceptual Land Use Plan concentrates future use areas in the parks eastern half. This also allows future use areas to be located in proximity to Dunns Creek and maximizes the potential to maintain the existing alignment of the park road. The park's sensitive central and western regions are dedicated to passive recreational pursuits such as hiking and horseback riding along a network of trails. Specific destinations are incorporated into the trail network to take advantage of scenic views and to provide opportunities for interpretation of the park's unique resources. Primitive campsites are also proposed as part of the trail network to facilitate multi-day hikes or rides and provide more remote camping experiences.

Recreational Opportunities

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) indicates that in Northeast Florida resident participation rates for hiking, freshwater boat fishing, and freshwater shoreline fishing are some of the highest in the state. Freshwater boat fishing also has significant tourist



The proposed shared use trail network will provide hiking opportunities ranging from short interpretive walks to multi-day treks. (Van Hochman 2011)

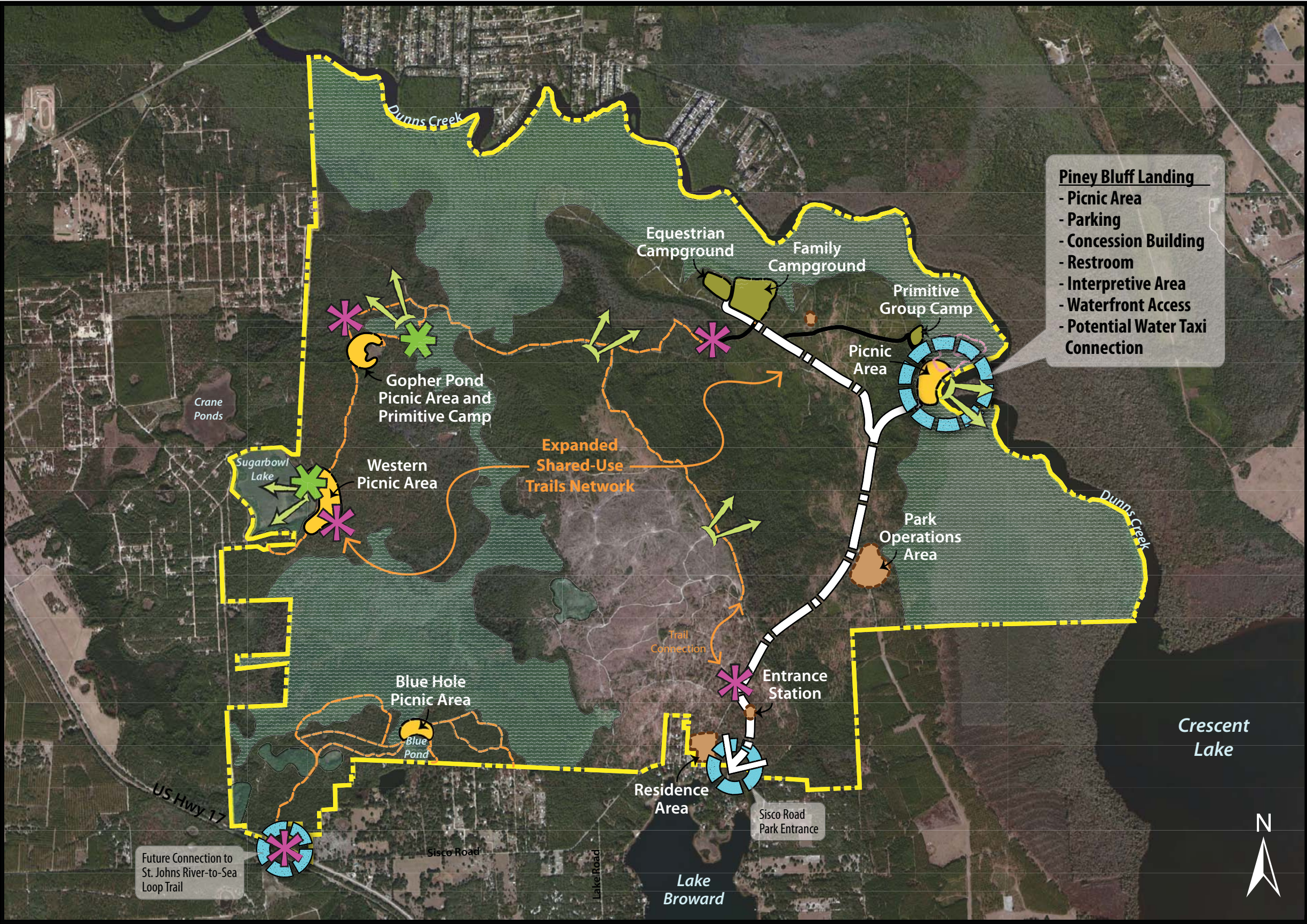


The Piney Bluff Day-use Area will provide a designated launching for canoes and kayaks.

participation rates in this region, where many waterways are known for their excellent stock of trophy large-mouth bass. Freshwater shoreline fishing is also a traditional activity common among residents of Florida's rural communities. For these reasons, freshwater fishing has become a major theme of nature-based tourism marketing efforts in the region.

High levels of both resident and tourist participation in RV/Trailer camping and high levels of resident participation in tent camping are also characteristic of the region. Horseback riding has high resident participation rates and equestrians in Florida often suggest that "horse tourism" is a niche outdoor recreational activity that could be economically beneficial for rural communities (FDEP, 2008). Although resident and tourist rates of participation in these activities are high, the numbers of opportunities provided in this region to participate in these activities are some of the lowest in the state.

Fortunately, the vast land area of Dunns Creek State Park is well suited for the development of recreational pursuits including hiking, fishing, horseback riding, camping, nature trails and wildlife study.

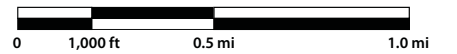


DUNNS CREEK STATE PARK

Conceptual Land Use Plan

LEGEND

- Proposed Paved Roadway
- Proposed Unpaved Road/Shared-Use Trail
- Existing Shared-Use Trail
- Proposed Interpretive Trail
- Day-use Area
- Overnight Use Area
- 100-Year Floodplain
- Support Facilities
- Trailhead
- Scenic Overlook
- Proposed Public Access
- Scenic View
- Park Boundary



Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks

BACK OF MAP

An extensive trail system for hikers and equestrians can provide access to the park's 6,300 acres. At Piney Bluff Landing, approximately a half mile of the Dunns Creek shoreline is accessible for water based recreation activities, including boating, canoeing, kayaking, and fishing. Overnight accommodations ranging from remote primitive camping, to equestrian camping to a full facility family camping area are all well suited to the park.

Park Character

A well-defined space has a distinct character, identity or "sense of place" that is anchored in the landscape, history and culture of a particular area. It is the result of relationships between people, their landscape, and their built environment. It can be created with a careful approach to site layout and design, which includes respect for the historical influences of an area, and the promotion of environmental quality. At Dunns Creek State Park, a set of general design principles is required to ensure that park facilities are compatible in scale and style, that the character of the existing landscape and tree canopy is preserved and enhanced, and that sustainable, environmentally sensitive building practices are promoted.

From the outset, the planning team established a set of design principles to guide the master planning process:

- Provide a range of recreation opportunities based on the park's unique resource base.
- Protect and enhance the aesthetic quality of each site,
- Integrate interpretive and recreational opportunities to create a tangible Florida State Parks' sense of place



The entrance station at Wakulla Springs State Park (upper) is styled in the same Mediterranean architectural style as the historic Wakulla Lodge (Ebyabe 2010). This vignette (lower) illustrates how elements like native landscaping and scribing can be applied to the entrance sign to frame and define the character of Dunns Creek State Park.

- Minimize impact to existing vegetation, hydrology, imperiled species and cultural resources.
- Maximize safety, efficiency, and convenience of circulation (vehicular and pedestrian) while minimizing impervious surface area.
- Provide universal access with equivalent experiences for all visitors.

These principles are reflected in each of the conceptual site plans prepared for the master plan. Truly establishing a "sense of place" will require adherence to these principles

throughout schematic design and project implementation. Particularly close attention should be paid to the architecture of park facilities, the selection of landscape materials and careful design and placement of required infrastructure.

Architecture

The architecture of park facilities can help to create a sense of place and even underscore the park's connection to regional history. Perhaps the most significant period in establishing the region's architectural identity was the recreational tourism boom that occurred in the mid-1800s. Paddleboats traveled the St. Johns and Ocklawaha Rivers, stopping at port destinations that offered opportunities for leisure sports and activities, like nearby Palatka. Many notable structures, such as the Larkin and Putnam hotels, employed Victorian architecture forms, such as dormers and columns, or featured "gingerbread" adornments on gables and porticos. A number of historic buildings and brick streets remain in Palatka, contributing to the city's distinct visual character.

The park facilities and structures proposed for Dunns Creek should reference the region's unique architectural style. This can



The history and character of the Dunns Creek landscape has been shaped in large part by its pinelands. (Photo by D. Copps)

be accomplished through specific designs for individual facilities or through selective implementation of Victorian design elements on standard structures or signage. However, even standard park facilities can establish park identity by careful repetition of building materials, and exterior colors.

Landscape

Interesting visual details, textures and even fragrances will also establish park character. At Dunns Creek State Park, more than half of the landscape is composed of pineland habitats that support a rich groundcover of native grasses, and wildflowers. Florida's



The Putnam Hotel (left) featured many elements of Victorian architectural style. This view from the balcony of the Larkin Hotel shows detailed Victorian embellishments on the columns, portico, and balustrade (right). (Florida Memory Project 188-, 187- a, and 1884, respectively)



Native grasses and wildflowers that are adapted to alternating wet and dry conditions are good choices for rain gardens and bioretention areas. (Photo by D. Copps)

pinelands have contributed significantly to the state's cultural history. In this region, generations of Floridians have worked in the pinelands, and made a living from cattle ranching, timbering and turpentine. Landscape plantings should be composed of native plants found within the park in aesthetically appealing, community-like groupings, or give consideration to species that were used by Native Americans and early settlers for food, medicine and shelter. Diverse plantings enhance the aesthetic qualities of the landscape. The ever-changing forms, colors, and textures of the wildflowers, grasses and other native plants create dynamic landscape patterns will create visual interest in all seasons. Additionally landscape structures such as signs, fencing, and hardscape can incorporate products and patterns that evoke the working landscape of the past.

Integrated Stormwater Management

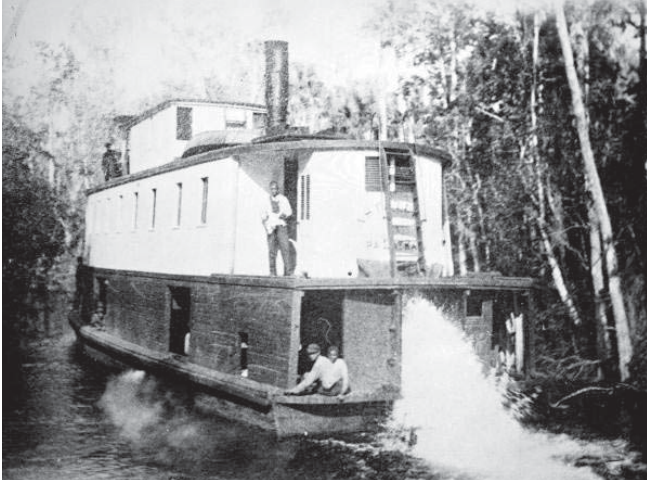
Most development in Florida, including that within state parks, must provide stormwater facilities to mitigate the negative impacts of increased stormwater runoff from the construction of roads, parking lots, buildings and other impervious surfaces. Many times

these facilities consume valuable land, are fenced, planted with turf grass and managed with the single-use of stormwater retention in mind. However, with careful design and planning these areas can be integrated with other site elements and transformed from single-use facilities into dynamic landscape features that provide a number of conservation benefits.

Plantings should be selected that can thrive in wet conditions during and immediately after rain storms while surviving the dry conditions in between. Native plants that thrive in floodplains, flatwoods, and depression marshes are often the best



Bioswales, like the ones shown, are designed to capture and treat stormwater runoff. Native vegetation and design principles can be used to add color, texture, and form to bioretention features. (top: Cornell Plantations 2012, bottom: Pinehurst Seattle 2008)



The paddleboat, Astatula, on the Oklawaha River. (Florida Memory Project 18--)

choices, particularly in the State Park system where native plants and habitats are emphasized. Native plantings make the most of bioretention areas by creating ecologically diverse, aesthetically pleasing and educationally rich environments. Last but not least is the ability of such a feature to excite and inspire park visitors. When combined with creative interpretive signs and materials, visitors can learn about the many benefits and values of stormwater management.

Conceptual Master Plan

The conceptual Master Plan for Dunns Creek State Park envisions a series of recreational use areas along a central spine created by a primary park drive. Visual elements, such as the park sign at the park entrance and the architecture and landscape of the park ranger station should begin to establish the park's character. Two shared use trailheads, one located just past the ranger station and another located in the northern portion of the park, near the campgrounds, provide access to the trail network within the western

portion of the park. Visitors can enjoy the park's varied topography and experience a range of natural communities along the meandering park drive on their way to both the Piney Bluff Day-use Area and the campgrounds. Visitors can access beautiful Dunns Creek at the Piney Bluff Day-use Area, providing opportunities for picnicking, fishing, and other waterbased recreation activities. Finally, an equestrian campground and a large family campground located at the terminus of the park drive will provide overnight accommodations for a range of park users.

Conceptual Site Plans

Following are conceptual site plan drawings of each primary use area proposed in this master plan. The conceptual site plans are illustrative in nature and are designed to depict the overall vision for each area. These drawings, along with the narrative description and the discussion of park character, are intended to provide inspiration and guidance during the implementation phases.



The park's natural communities and rolling terrain provides stunning scenic views.



DUNNS CREEK STATE PARK: Conceptual Master Plan Detail

0 500 1,000 2,000 feet

0 0.5 1.5 miles

N

BACK OF MAP



An example of rustic style fencing that could be featured in the entrance, trailheads, and use areas.

Park Entrance and Ranger Station

The main entrance to the park is located on Sisco Road just north of Lake Broward. A turnaround located just outside of the gate will provide an easy exit when the park is closed. The ranger station is approximately 1,200 feet to the north of the entrance gate. It is sited on a relatively level area in the sandhill with good sight lines in either direction for the safety of visitors as they enter and exit the park. Two turnarounds are provided, one on the south side of the ranger station and one on the north side of the ranger station that is incorporated within a small staff and visitor parking lot. The turnarounds should accommodate large recreational vehicles and trucks with horse trailers. The small parking lot is buffered with native plantings. For visitor convenience, parking pull-offs are provided along the entry and exit lanes. Crosswalks are well marked and accessible. The ranger station is often the first point of contact for park visitors. Therefore, it is especially important that the architectural style of the ranger station and the selection of landscape plantings here and at the entrance establish the desired park character.

Trailheads

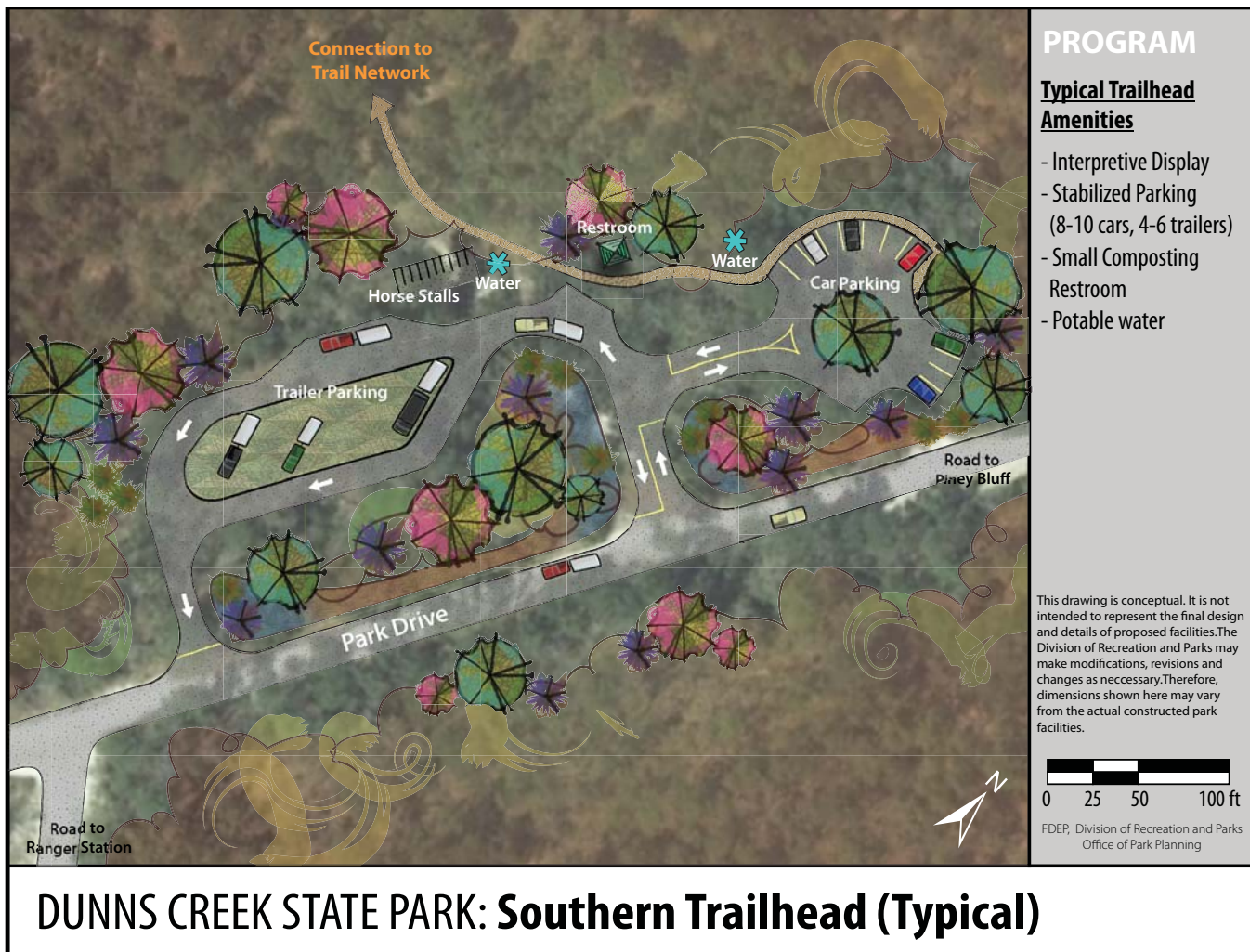
The park's trailheads will provide critical connections to shared use trails and park amenities. Two separate stabilized parking areas are designed to accommodate equestrians and hikers. Up to 10 parking spaces are incorporated within a circular parking design for hikers. The circular layout conserves land area and native vegetation. Equestrian parking is provided in a large open area that will accommodate up to six horse trailers and a drop-off area adjacent to the corral staging area. The large open area provides easy navigation, conserves existing vegetation, and limits the amount of impervious surface area. Each parking area has a connecting trail with direct access to the main trail. Both groups of users are provided with two-way parking access from the main trailhead entrance road, and equestrian users have an additional separate exit to further accommodate trailers. Each trailhead would feature a composting restroom, potable drinking water and interpretive and wayfinding information.

Piney Bluff Day-use Area

A small intermittent creek bisects the area into two distinct components, a broad



Day-use areas will provide opportunities for picnicking in a natural setting.



wooded area with an open understory and a large open field. There are excellent views of the creek from several locations. The conceptual site plan carefully locates the proposed facilities in order to emphasize views of the creek and provide universal access for recreational activities. A restroom, picnic pavilions, and a connection to interpretive trails are all located within a short walking distance from two parking areas. A large picnic pavilion is included for group picnics and special events and one parking area includes a drop-off area for canoes and kayaks. A walking path provides universally accessible connections to each amenity. The proposed boardwalk would span much of the length of the waters edge,

providing scenic views of Dunns Creek and protecting the vulnerable shoreline. The boardwalk, offers areas for boat docking, canoe and kayak launching, picnicking and fishing. The boardwalk also provides the opportunity to connect to the City of Palatka's proposed water taxi service. A proposed multipurpose structure for possible use as a concession and visitor center is sited on an elevated location with clear visibility from the creek. As a focal point within Piney Bluff and along Dunns Creek, the structure provides an ideal opportunity to emphasize the parks desired architectural style.



DUNNS CREEK STATE PARK

Park Entrance & Ranger Station

PROGRAM

Park Entrance

- Entrance Sign and Gate
- Landscaping and Bioretention

Ranger Station

- Ranger Station (with Restroom and Offices)
- Camper Check-in Parking
- Staff Parking
- Landscaping and Bioretention

The main entrance to the park is located on Sisco Road. A turnaround located just outside of the gate will provide an easy exit when the park is closed. The ranger station is approximately 1,200 feet to the north of the entrance gate. It is sited on a relatively level area in the sandhill with good sight lines in either direction for the safety of visitors as they enter and exit the park. Two turnarounds that will accommodate large recreational vehicles and trucks with horse trailers are provided, one on the south side of the ranger station and one on the north side of the ranger station that is incorporated within a small staff and visitor parking lot. The small parking lot is buffered with native plantings. For visitor convenience, parking pull-offs are provided along the entry and exit lanes. Crosswalks are well marked and accessible. The ranger station is often the first point of contact for park visitors. Therefore, it is especially important that the architectural style of the ranger station and the selection of landscape plantings here and at the entrance establish the desired park character.



Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks

BACK OF MAP



DUNNS CREEK STATE PARK

Piney Bluff Landing Day-use Area

- PROGRAM**
- Picnic Pavilions (3 Medium, 1 Large)
 - Medium Restroom
 - Multipurpose Building
 - Boardwalk and Fishing Deck (Shoreline Protection)
 - Boat Docking (4 Boats)
 - Canoe and Kayak Launch
 - Parking (55 Standard)
 - Overflow/Oversized Parking
 - Landscaping and Bioretention

The conceptual site plan carefully locates the proposed facilities in order to emphasize views of the creek and provide universal access for recreational activities. A restroom, picnic pavilions, and a connection to interpretive trails are all located within a short walking distance from two parking areas. A large picnic pavilion is included for group picnics and special events and one parking area includes a drop-off area for canoes and kayaks. A walking path provides universally accessible connections to each amenity. The proposed boardwalk would span much of the length of the waters edge, provide access to Dunns Creek and protect the vulnerable shoreline. The boardwalk offers areas for boat docking, canoe and kayak launching, picnicking and fishing. A proposed multipurpose structure for possible use as a concession and visitor center is sited on an elevated location with clear visibility from the creek and from points within Piney Bluff. As a focal point, this structure should emphasize the parks desired architectural style.

These drawings are conceptual only and are for the convenience of reference. They should not be relied upon as representations, of the final detail of facility construction. The Division of Recreation and Parks may make modifications, revisions, and changes. Dimensions and square footages are approximate and may vary with actual construction.

BACK OF MAP



DUNNS CREEK STATE PARK

Family & Equestrian
Camping Areas
Conceptual Plan

PROGRAM

Standard Camping Area

- Standard Campsites (3 Loops)
- Tent-Only Campsites (1 Loop)
- Camping Area Bathhouses (2)

Equestrian Camping Area

- Equestrian Campsites (1 Loop)
- Highline Tethering Poles
- Camping Area Bathhouse
- Potential Corral (24-30 Horses)

The Equestrian and Family Camping Areas are located in the northwestern region of the park in a dry, transitional area between the high scrub ridge and floodplain of Dunns Creek. The campgrounds are located and designed in order to minimize impact and provide easy access to the park's extensive trail system. The Family Camping Area features four camping loops that are served by two bathhouses. The southernmost camping loop is dedicated to tent and pop-up campers only. Each loop provides universally accessible campsites. Each campsite should be sited sensitively, to protect existing vegetation and provide screening. The Equestrian Camping Area contains 11 pull-thru sites, with personal high-line tethering poles and utility hookups at each site. The layout of the camping area is designed to facilitate camping by larger groups, with the potential for expansion to include a corral. The Equestrian Camping Area features a centrally located bathhouse and a manure shed.



Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Recreation and Parks

These drawings are conceptual only and are for the convenience of reference. They should not be relied upon as representations of the final detail of facility construction. The Division of Recreation and Parks may make modifications, revisions, and changes. Dimensions and square footages are approximate and may vary with actual construction.

BACK OF MAP

Equestrian and Family Camping Areas

The Equestrian and Family Camping Areas are located in the northwestern region of the park. The proposed camping areas are sited in a dry, transitional area between the high scrub ridge and floodplain of Dunns Creek. The campgrounds are located and designed in order to minimize impact and provide easy access to the park's extensive trail system.

The Family Camping Area is within a shady 40 acre area dominated by large live oaks and containing very little understory. It features four camping loops, with three of them being full service, with a majority of pull-thru sites and full utility hookups capable of serving modern recreational vehicles. The southernmost camping loop is dedicated to tent and pop-up campers only. All 60 campsites are within a short walk of a full service bathhouse, and all four loops contain universally accessible campsites. Each site would be sited sensitively, to protect as many specimen trees as possible and provide visitor privacy.

The Equestrian Camping Area contains 11 pull-thru sites, with personal high-line



The southernmost campground loop will be designed for tents and pop-up campers.



The proposed campground will include a designated equestrian camping loop. (LCRVHC, no date)

tethering poles and utility hookups at each site. The layout of the camping area is designed to facilitate camping by larger groups, with the potential for expansion to include a corral. The Equestrian Camping Area features a centrally located bathhouse and a manure shed. Substantial buffering is provided from the Family Camping Area.

Project Implementation

The proposed master plan should be implemented in logical phases that ensure sustained public access and provide a high-quality recreational experience that is typical of Florida state parks. By phasing the proposed improvements, the master plan concept can be broken into succinct parts and implemented as funding and resources become available.

The first phase should establish initial public access and provide the facilities necessary for basic park operations, such as an entrance gate and sign. Construction that is proposed in the first phase will facilitate better access to the recreational resources that are already

present on the park property, including the waterfront and shared use trails. Recreational opportunities offered in the first phase should include day-use activities, such as hiking and picnicking, and select overnight uses that require minimal development, such as primitive camping.

Subsequent phases of development would enrich and expand the existing recreational uses, while adding additional facilities for recreation and park operations, such the family campground and ranger station. The proposed phasing includes partial completion of the overall projects along with complementary construction of park support facilities. For example, construction of the first camping loop coincides with construction of the park's shop building needed to support its operation.

Phasing Plan

Phase 1. Initial Recreational and Support Facilities

- Park Entrance
 - Entrance sign, gate, honor box, landscaping



Unpaved roads throughout the park are also used for walking, hiking, and horseback riding.



Seepage streams are unique communities found only in northern and peninsular Florida.

- Piney Bluff Landing Day-use Area
 - Restroom, medium
 - Partial Boardwalk and fishing deck
 - Boat dock
 - Floating canoe and kayak launch
 - Parking
 - Landscaping
- Southern Entrance Trailhead (hiking)
- Primitive Group Camp
- Primitive Campsites
- Support Facilities
 - Shop Building (4-bay)
 - Flammable Storage Building
 - Equipment shelter (4-bay)
- Partial Roads and Utilities

Phase 2. Expanded Recreational and Support Facilities

- Piney Bluff Day-use Area
 - Completed Boardwalk and fishing deck
 - Boat dock
 - Picnic pavilions, large
 - Picnic pavilions, medium
- Family Camping Area
 - Tent and pop-up camping loop (15 sites)
- Equestrian Camping Area (15 sites)

- Southern Entrance Trailhead (equestrian)
- Terminal Trailhead
- Ranger Station
- Utilities and Roads as required

Phase 3. Additional Support Facilities

- Ranger residence

Phase 4. Master Plan Completion

- Piney Bluff Day-use Area
 - Concession Building
- Family Camping Area
 - Full-facility camping loops (45 sites)
 - Completed Utilities and Roads



Many native plant species, such as these rain lilies (top), swamp sunflowers (middle), and spider lilies (bottom), produce beautiful blooms that can be seen throughout the park's many natural communities.

Cost Estimates

Master Plan - Development Program		Proposed Units	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Phase 1	Initial Recreational and Support Facilities			
	Park Entrance and Support Facilities			
	Entrance sign, gate, honor box, landscaping	1 each	Lump sum	\$47,750
	Piney Bluff Landing Day Use Area			
	Restroom, medium	1 each	Lump sum	\$216,000
	Partial boardwalk and fishing deck	350 linear feet	\$338	\$236,250
	Floating canoe and kayak launch	1 each	Lump sum	\$87,750
	Parking Areas	50 cars	\$35,000	\$236,250
	Landscaping	1 each	Lump sum	\$150,000
	Southern Entrance Trailhead (hiking)	1 each	Lump sum	\$91,125
	Primitive Group Camp	1 each	Lump sum	\$303,750
	Primitive Campsites	7 each	\$1,200	\$8,400
	Support Facilities			
	Shop building (4-bay)	1 each	Lump sum	\$488,700
	Flammable storage building	1 each	Lump sum	\$20,655
	Equipment shelter (4-bay)	1 each	Lump sum	\$193,050
	Partial Utilities and Roads	~1.82 miles	Lump sum	\$1,115,220
	Phase 1 Estimated Total Cost		\$3,194,610	
Phase 2	Expanded Recreational and Support Facilities			
	Piney Bluff Landing Day Use Area			
	Picnic pavilion, large	1 each	\$101,250	\$101,250
	Picnic pavilions, medium	3 each	\$54,000	\$162,000
	Boat dock	4 slips	\$19,170	\$76,680
	Family Camping Area			
	Tent and pop-up camping loop (15 sites)	1 each	Lump sum	\$455,625
	Equestrian Camping Area (15 sites)	1 each	Lump sum	\$480,938
	Southern Entrance Trailhead (equestrian)	1 each	Lump sum	\$91,125
	Northern Terminal Trailhead	1 each	Lump sum	\$182,250
	Ranger Station	1 each	Lump sum	\$53,760
	Completed Utilities and Roads	~0.91 miles	Lump sum	\$582,610
	Phase 2 Estimated Total Cost		\$2,186,438	
Phase 3	Additional Support Facilities			
	Ranger residence	1 each	Lump sum	\$270,000
	Phase 3 Estimated Total Cost		\$270,000	
Phase 4	Program Completion			
	Piney Bluff Landing Day Use Area			
	Concession building	1 each	\$567,000	\$567,000
	Family Camping Area			
	Full-facility camping loops (45 sites)	3 loops	Lump sum	\$4,455,000
	Phase 4 Estimated Total Cost		\$5,022,000	
	Estimated Total Project Cost		\$9,557,918	

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Preserving the past while looking to the future.



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