

FLORIDA GULF OF MEXICO RESTORATION PROJECT SUBMITTAL FORM

Form Purpose and Instructions:

- To assist the project proposal and review process, please complete this Submittal Form. Completion of the Form will contribute to the appropriate information being completely and accurately submitted for each project.
- Take as much space as needed for each question, but please keep responses as focused as possible. It may assist you to review all the questions before addressing any one question.
- Please submit one Form per project, if you have multiple projects - please submit one Form for each project.
- Please submit completed Forms to Restoration.Projects@dep.state.fl.us. Once your Form is successfully submitted, you will receive a confirmation email from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Project Name:

**EDWARD BALL WAKULLA SPRINGS STATE PARK
PHASED ECOSYSTEM RESTORATIONS**

Contact Information *(Include at least one name, phone number, email address, and organization name if applicable):*

Pete Scalco, Park Manager, Wakulla Springs State Park, 850-561-7279
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Project Location *(Include a map, if possible, and the city, county, longitude/latitude, and watershed):*

Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park, St. Marks Watershed

A) Cherokee Sink Tract Uplands:

30°12'45.58"N 84°18' 15.47"W, Wakulla Springs Protection Zone
Closed section of Wakulla-Arran Road within Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park

B) River Sinks Northwest Tract Uplands:

30°17'54"N 84°20'51"W
South of C.J. Spears Road, east of S.R. 319, Wakulla Springs Protection Zone

Project Description *(Describe all aspects of the project):*

A) Cherokee Sink Tract Uplands:

HABITAT RESTORATION

We wish to reverse habitat fragmentation of this highly disturbed and clear-cut mixed upland hardwood pine forest with a sinkhole lake, within the Wakulla Springs Basin. Its cave system connects the main Wakulla spring to Spring Creek springs in Apalachee Bay, Gulf of Mexico.

Funding to maximize conservation benefits is sought to implement phased, or segments of on-the-ground management. This landscape restoration project will include measurable conservation benefits.

Through a natural successional process, the community is dominated by a dense variety of shrubs and tree saplings. The land surrounds a large sinkhole lake (Cherokee Sink), a natural recreational resource that is closed to the community due to health concerns.

Some progress has been made to restore 155 acres of the Cherokee Sink tract to a longleaf pine community. This process will take another generation to complete when and if funding becomes available.

An extensive karst cave system (Woodville Karst) funnels water to the main Wakulla spring. It is clear from scientific dye-trace studies that this spring's tunnels connect the groundwater to the springs at Spring Creek. The tract, although heavily disturbed, was purchased in 2000 to protect groundwater quality from development above the mapped cave system.

Scientific research and exploration of the Wakulla Springs Basin cave system is ongoing. Management of this imperiled upland ecosystem has lacked attention to sustain ecosystem function and diversity, due to budgetary constraints.

The Cherokee Sink tract of Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park (with a total of more than 6,000 acres) fits into a park-specific restoration plan **(Attached)**. Given the logistical and economic constraints faced by managers the resulting habitat structure and composition do not afford a sufficient restoration regime to sustain biodiversity.

SECURITY

1) Another downside to budgetary constraints is a lack of security. Poachers and vandals access Cherokee Sink tract. We seek funding to install perimeter fencing and a full-time park specialist position.

2) To protect this tract (degradation of the sinkhole lake and damage by poachers and vandals) it is beneficial to have a park ranger residence on site. Hook-up to the existing sewer and water is possible. We seek funding for both.

B) River Sinks Northwest Tract

This restoration process anticipates protection of the adjacent basin swamp and sinkhole areas. The goal is to reverse the current loblolly pine plantation to a longleaf pine upland forest. **(See Attached Park Restoration Plan.)** The areas are connected to the Wakulla Spring and Spring Creek locations through an extensive, mapped cave system. **(Attached.)**

Estimated Project Costs *(Describe the estimated costs of the project, including any assumptions for contingency and ongoing operations/maintenance. Identify other secured funding sources such as matching funds, in-kind contributions or state/federal dollars. In addition, if possible, complete and submit the Cost Appendix Sheet associated with this Form):*

Planning: Bid preparation \$1,000.00; Restoration \$3,000.00; Administration \$1,000.00

Contracts: Gyro-Trac, Herbicide, Tree Planting, Seedlings est. \$300/acre; construction of residence \$150,000; perimeter fencing, 10 miles: \$80,000; Administration \$2,000.00

Monitoring: Data collection \$2,000; Administration 1,000.00

Project supervision: \$40,000; Contingency \$10,000

Other Funding *(Indicate if the project is submitted for any potential funding or if it may be used to leverage additional funding, if so please describe the funding source [e.g. State/Federal Grants]):*

For the Cherokee Sink Tract we also are seeking funding to reopen the facility to the public with restrooms, boardwalks, interpretive kiosks. Source: RESTORE Act, pot one, through Wakulla County, when and if that becomes available.

Technical Feasibility *(Describe the technologies involved and any relevant past experience or proven success with similar projects):*

Florida Park Service land managers will oversee the project. See attachments for updated uplands restoration report for Cherokee Sink Tract, and the plan for River Sinks Northwest Tract restoration.

Park management estimates that proper funding will enable a phased restoration of 100 acres annually. Total acreage in both tracts to be restored: 1,500 acres, for a project that will last well over a decade.

Technologies include:

Gyro-Trac Work to control hardwood growth and promote herbaceous plant growth.

Prescribed burns.

Florida Park Service land managers will oversee the project. See attachments for

updated uplands restoration report for **Cherokee Sink Tract**, and the plan for **River Sinks Northwest Tract** restoration.

Environmental Benefits *(Describe the nature, magnitude, and timing of any environmental benefits attributable to the project. If possible, describe potential environmental performance measures [e.g. pollutant reduction]. Please address any potential environmental impacts associated with implementing or maintaining the project [e.g. loss of a habitat or conversion of habitat from one type to another during implementation]):*

The conversion of Cherokee Sink's disturbed habitat to the natural upland habitat will provide food and cover for upland wildlife species, keep the natural resources plentiful, restore the hydrological cycle for the protection of groundwater, slow erosion around the sinkhole lake.

Economic and Social Benefits *(Describe the economic and social benefits including those related to the project's improved ecosystem services and any estimates on jobs created or preserved):*

Ongoing monitoring of the Woodville Karst system's water qualities will provide a better picture of why, on occasion, the springs at Spring Creek (not within the park system), either dry up or flow dark. It is anticipated that the uplands restoration will provide jobs to local foresters, land managers, and contractors. The presence of workers on these tracts will act as a deterrent to vandals, providing the community with a sense that the lands are no longer "out of site, out of mind." Because of their remoteness, both tracts continue to be attractive to illegal pleasure seekers and partying. The improvements, over the next few years, will have a beneficial effect on the community's consciousness, and save money in exotics removal.

Community Resilience *(Describe if the project assists Florida's ability to anticipate, withstand, or recover from hazards or threats [e.g. hurricane preparedness, establishing living shorelines]):*

N/A

Conflicts or Complements to Existing Efforts *(Describe any ongoing activities in the project implementation area, if the project is part of another plan, and why the project does or does not interfere with that work. Please consider how the project may complement existing local, regional, and state efforts/plans/objectives):*

This project complements an ongoing budget-dependent effort outlined in the park's Unit Management Plan, accepted 2007.

Complies with Federal, State, Local, and Tribal Laws/Regulations *(Describe any concerns or potential conflicts):*

There are no conflicts.

Readiness for Implementation *(Describe if the project has had any design or permitting work started or completed [attach permits or design work]. Please address any issues that may delay start or finish of the project):*

No permits for connection to sewer/water, or residential construction have been applied for.

Public Acceptance

Unit Management Plan accepted and approved with public input in 2007.

Additional Information you wish to provide *(Please include any maps, designs, drawings, photos, or background resources that may assist in completely and accurately understanding the project):*

Maps are attached.

Cost Appendix Sheet	
Cost Item	Cost Estimate
Planning	
Contracts	
Feasibility	
Engineering, Design, Land Rights, & Bid Prep	\$1,000.00
Restoration Plan	\$2,000.00
Site Visits & Cost of Site Selection	
Administration, Overhead, and Indirect	\$1,000.00
Other	
Planning Subtotal:	\$4,000.00
Construction	
Contracts	650,000.00
Administration & Mobilization/Demobilization	2,000.00
Other	
Construction Subtotal:	652,000.00
Monitoring	
Contracts	20,000.00
Data Collection	2,000.00
Monitoring Administration	1,000.00
Other	
Monitoring Subtotal:	23,000.00
Project Cost	
Supervision	40,000.00
Subtotal:	725,000.00
Contingency	10,000.00
TOTAL:	725,000.00

Estimated Costs by Year	
Year 1	200,000.00
Year 2	105,000.00
Year 3	105,000.00
Year 4	105,000.00
Year 5	105,000.00
Year 6	105,000.00