



Florida Natural Areas Inventory

To: Diana Pepe, DEP/OES
From: Geoffrey Parks, FNAI
Date: September 3, 2026
Subject: Proposed Boundary Modification to Florida Forever BOT Project: Bombing Range Ridge– October Removals (Polk County)

The major goals of the Bombing Range Ridge Florida Forever Project are to conserve and protect significant and dwindling habitat for native species and endangered and threatened species. Representatives of the owners of 4 tracts totaling ca. 4.7 acres have requested that these properties be removed from the project. These parcels range from 0.3 acres to ca. 2.5 acres and are spread over an approximately 2-square-mile area. All of the parcels are located south of FL-60 in Polk County. In total, these removals represent less than 0.1% of the remaining unacquired acreage of the Bombing Range Ridge FFBOT project.

In addition to Lake Wales Ridge State Forest, which adjoins the BRR project to the north, other conservation areas to the north of BRR include Brahma Island Conservation Easement (CE) in Lake Kissimmee, Eagle Haven CE, Bombing Range Ridge/TNC CE, and Lake Kissimmee State Park. Kissimmee River lands (SFWMD; KICCO Wildlife Management Area) lie to the east, and Avon Park Air Force Range (AFR) to the south. Residential development (Indian Lake Estates) and undeveloped land south to Avon Park AFR are west of the project. Lake Wales is approximately 6 miles to the northwest on SR 60. None of the parcels proposed for removal are adjacent to existing conservation land. The parcels proposed for removal do not significantly affect the potential for connectivity between any existing conservation lands, although the additional fragmentation will complicate land management if any land is acquired in this project in the future.

Most of the parcels proposed for removal are in the Osceola Plain geomorphological province, although one is within the Bombing Range Ridge province. The Osceola Plain is characterized by a mosaic of mature to old-growth mesic flatwoods, wet flatwoods, cutthroatgrass-dominated wet prairie, and dry prairie, interspersed with depression marshes that extends east from the Bombing Range Ridge to the public lands along the Kissimmee River. None of the parcels in Osceola Plain are developed, although there are signs of off-road vehicle tracks on the two easternmost blocks, and one is crossed by unpaved roads.

The higher elevation Bombing Range Ridge geomorphological province is a prominent relict sand ridge in the western part of the current removal area that extends south through Avon Park AFR. Scrubby flatwoods and oak scrub occur on the ridge. The FFBOT project along the ridge is in a “campsite” area where many parcels are developed with at least temporary buildings. The parcel proposed for removal is mostly cleared and a structure is visible.

The properties are in an area where Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*) is considered occasional to common, so this species is presumed present on at least some tracts. Otherwise, no rare

species are documented from these parcels, but numerous rare species are known to occur in the general area. The dry prairie and various flatwoods are Under-represented Natural Communities.

The Florida Forever Measures Evaluation (FFME) below is based on the Florida Forever Conservation Needs Assessment developed by FNAI. The data used in that analysis represent a standardized, statewide perspective of natural resources. All or nearly all (97-100%) of the acreage proposed for removal contributes to Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (mostly priority 1), FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities (mostly priority 2), Ecological Greenways (priority 1), Surface Water Protection (mostly priority 4), and Aquifer Recharge (priorities 4-6). Slightly more than half contributes to Functional Wetlands (51%, priorities 1 and 2), and Sustainable Forestry (65%, priorities 2 and 3). Most (77%) of the acreage to be removed consists of Under-represented Natural Communities.

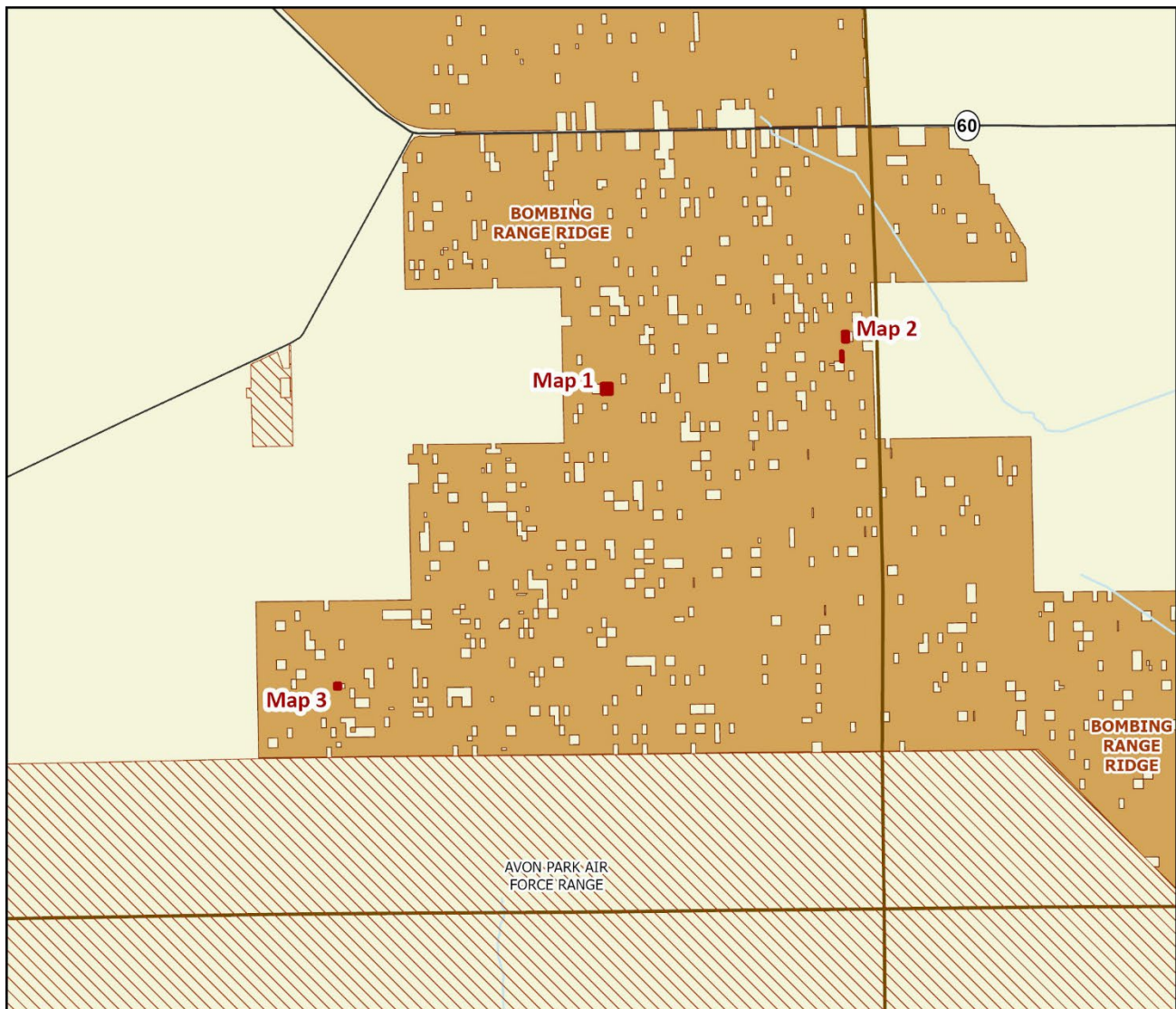
Bombing Range Ridge (Removals): Florida Forever Measures Evaluation 20260817

GIS ACRES = 4.7

MEASURES	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
B1: Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas		
Priority 1	3.0	58%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	1.5	29%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0.5	10%
Total Acres	5.0	97%
B2: FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities		
Priority 1	0.6	12%
Priority 2	3.8	74%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0.7	13%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	5.1	99%
B3: Ecological Greenways		
Priority 1	5.2	100%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Total Acres	5.2	100%
B4: Under-represented Natural Communities		
Upland Glade (G1)	0	0%
Pine Rockland (G1)	0	0%
Scrub and Scrubby Flatwoods (G2)	0.6	12%
Rockland Hammock (G2)	0	0%
Dry Prairie (G2)	0.7	13%
Seepage Slope (G2)	0	0%
Sandhill (G3)	0	0%
Sandhill Upland Lake (G3)	0	0%
Upland Pine (G3)	0	0%
Mesic/Wet Flatwoods (G4)	2.7	53%
Upland Hardwood Forest (G5)	0	0%
Total Acres	4.0	77%
B6: Occurrences of FNAI Tracked Species		
G1	0	
G2	0	
G3	0	
G4	1	
G5	0	
Total	1	
C4: Natural Floodplain Function		
Priority 1	1.3	25%
Priority 2	1.3	26%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	2.6	51%

MEASURES (continued)	Resource Acres ^a	% of project
C5: Surface Water Protection		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	1.1	20%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	3.4	67%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0.7	13%
Priority 7	0	0%
Total Acres	5.2	100%
C7: Fragile Coastal Resources		
Fragile Coastal Uplands	0	0%
Imperiled Coastal Lakes	0	0%
Coastal Wetlands	0	0%
Total Acres	0	0%
C8: Functional Wetlands		
Priority 1	1.1	22%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Priority 6	0	0%
Total Acres	1.1	22%
D3: Aquifer Recharge		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	0	0%
Priority 3	0	0%
Priority 4	2.7	53%
Priority 5	0.7	13%
Priority 6	1.8	34%
Total Acres	5.2	100%
E2: Recreational Trails (miles)		
(prioritized trail opportunities from Office of Greenways and Trails & Univ. Florida)		
Land Trail Priorities	0.0	
Land Trail Opportunities	0.0	
Total Miles	0.0	
F2: Arch. & Historical Sites (number)		
	0 sites	
G1: Sustainable Forestry		
Priority 1	0	0%
Priority 2	1.6	30%
Priority 3	1.8	34%
Priority 4	0	0%
Priority 5	0	0%
Total Acres	3.3	65%
G3: Forestland for Recharge		
	0	0%

^aAcres of each resource in the project and percentage of project represented by each resource are listed except where noted. This analysis converts site boundary into pixels, which causes slight differences from GIS acres; this effect is most noticeable on small sites.



BOMBING RANGE RIDGE FLORIDA FOREVER PROJECT REQUESTED REMOVAL BOUNDARY AMENDMENT

POLK COUNTY

- Florida Forever Proposed Removal
- Florida Forever BOT Projects
- Other Conservation Lands



0 1.5 3 Miles

A horizontal scale bar with markings at 0, 1.5, and 3 miles.



MAP BY FL NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY AUGUST 2026

BOMBING RANGE RIDGE FLORIDA FOREVER PROJECT REMOVALS: MAP 1

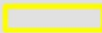
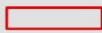
FLORIDA FOREVER BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROJECT PROPOSED ADDITION AS OF AUGUST 2026

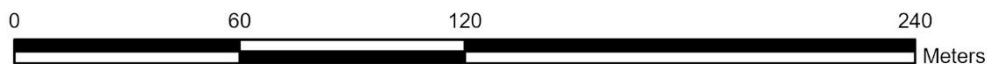


Map Produced by: FL Natural Areas Inventory, N. Pasco, August 2026

Background: ESRI World Imagery

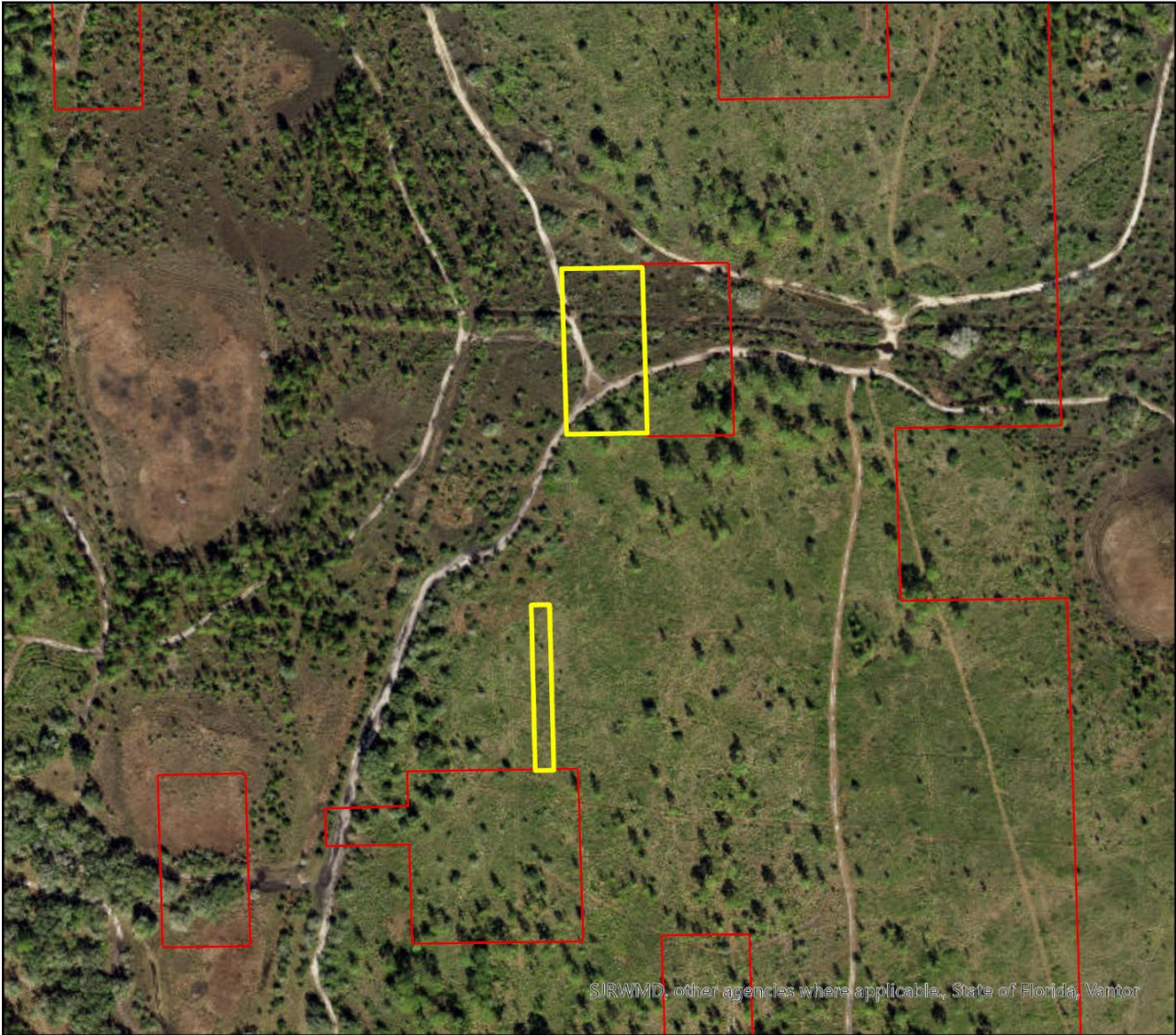


-  Florida Forever Proposed Removal
-  Florida Forever BOT Projects



BOMBING RANGE RIDGE FLORIDA FOREVER PROJECT REMOVALS: MAP 2

FLORIDA FOREVER BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROJECT PROPOSED ADDITION AS OF AUGUST 2026

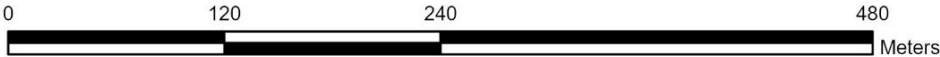


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BOMBING RANGE RIDGE FLORIDA FOREVER PROJECT REMOVALS: MAP 3

FLORIDA FOREVER BOARD OF TRUSTEES PROJECT PROPOSED ADDITION AS OF AUGUST 2026



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