

Escribano Point

Santa Rosa County

Substantially Complete

Purpose for State Acquisition

Acquisition of this proposal would complete public land ownership of Escribano Point and the mouth of the Yellow River, thereby achieving the goals of the original 1994 Escribano Point CARL project. It encompasses three sets of parcels: a northern set at the mouth of the Yellow River that adjoins Yellow River Water Management Area (WMA) lands; a middle set around Catfish Basin adjoining Eglin Air Force Base lands on the east and Yellow River WMA lands on the north and south, and a southern set, encompassing Escribano Point, that adjoins Yellow River WMA lands on the north and Eglin lands on the north and east. If purchased, the proposal plus these public lands would provide recreation opportunities and natural resource protection for 10.4 miles of shoreline along East Bay and Blackwater Bay. Its purchase would contribute to the protection of the waters of Blackwater Bay along with that afforded by the Garcon Point Water Management Area, which borders 4.6 miles of the west shore. It would also help protect 37 miles of the Yellow River by adding to the public shoreline of the Yellow River Water Management Area. Uplands south of the river floodplain are protected as part of Eglin Air Force Base.

Manager

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is the recommended lead manager for the area.

General Description

The Escribano Point project is located in Santa Rosa County and is comprised of 3,049 acres. Located along the eastern shore of Pensacola Bay, Escribano Point is

by Eglin Air Force Base to the east, and provides an upland buffer for the Yellow River Marsh Aquatic Preserve to the west. The proposal contains relatively intact examples of wetland communities, hammocks, and wet prairies that provide habitat for numerous rare and threatened plants and animals. The project is also very rich in archaeological and historical resources, containing nine recorded archaeological sites and two historic structures.

Public Use

The project has potential to provide a varied recreation experience by offering opportunities such as saltwater swimming, bicycling, picnicking, camping, saltwater fishing, hiking, hunting, nature appreciation and natural resource education. Some of the several archaeological and historical sites known to exist on the project may have potential for viewing. The wetlands in this project limit the placement of facilities, dispersal of activities and the quantity of activities. As access is through Eglin Air Force Base, access itself may be a limiting factor.

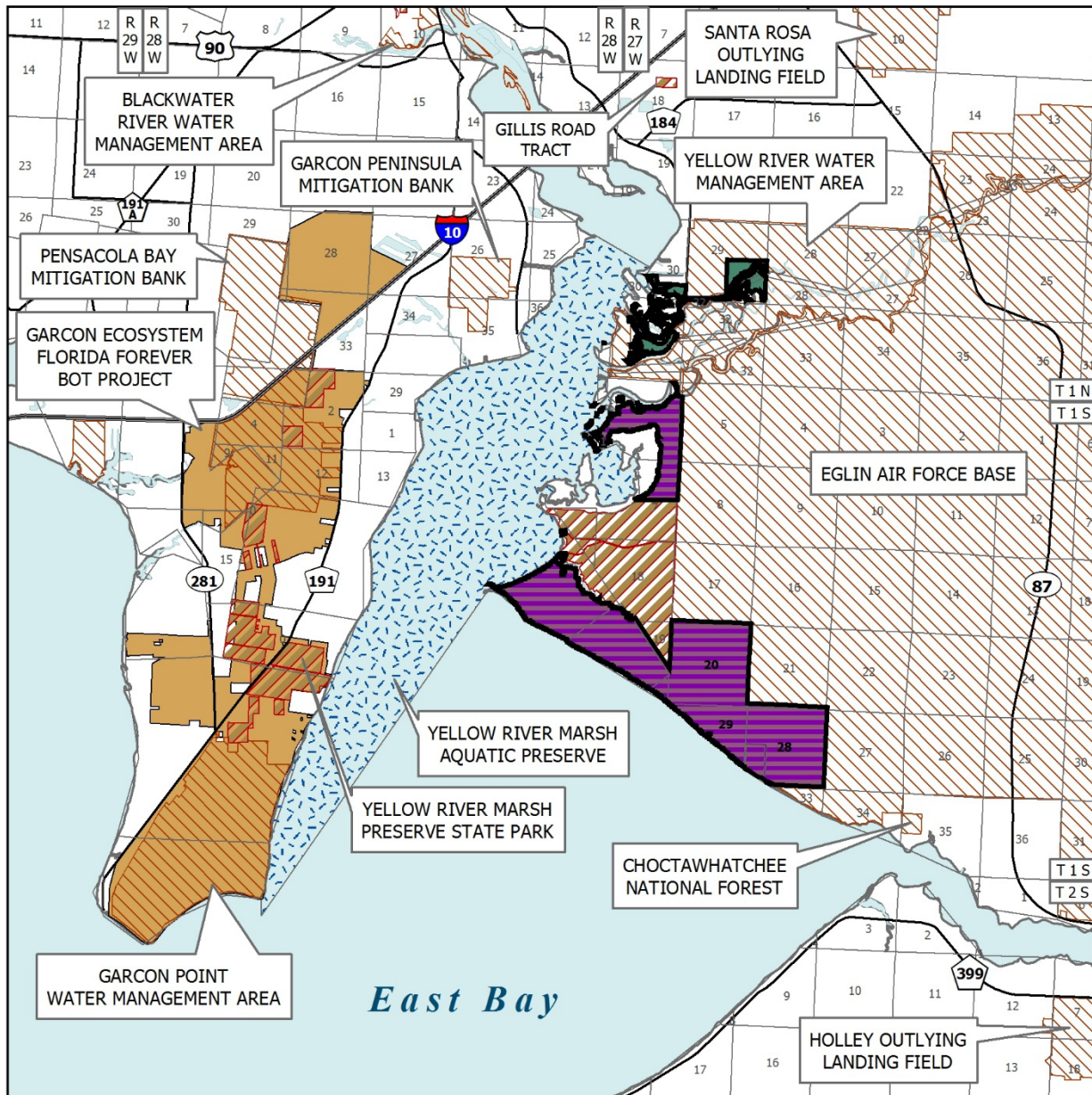
Acquisition Planning

On February 25, 2003, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) added the Escribano Point project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2003 Priority list. This fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by the Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the NFWFMD, consisted of approximately 2,914 acres, 10 owners, and a 2001 taxable value of \$1,337,730. The entire proposal was identified as essential.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Substantially Complete category of projects.

Escribano Point FNAI Elements	
Florida Black Bear	G5T2/S2
<i>Panhandle Lily</i>	G2/S2
Alligator Snapping Turtle	G3G4/S2
Spiny Softshell	G5/S3
4 rare species are associated with the project	

Placed on List	2002
Project Area (GIS Acres)	3,048
Acres Acquired (GIS)	2,750
at a Cost of	\$1,590,000
Acres Remaining (GIS)	298
Estimated 2001 (Tax Assessed) Value of	\$802,454



ESCRIBANO POINT

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

-  Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
-  Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
-  Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
-  Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
-  State Owned Lands
-  Other Conservation Lands
-  State Aquatic Preserves



JANUARY 2015

On April 20, 2012 the ARC added 63.4 acres to the project that had been authorized for sale from the US Forest Service.

In December 2012 1,541 acres were acquired by a donation from the Trust for Public Land.

Coordination

The Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) is an acquisition partner. The US Air Force, through a Memorandum of Agreement, is also an acquisition partner to help buffer and prevent encroachment of Eglin Air Force Base.

Management Policy Statement

Priority will be given to conserving and protecting environmentally unique native habitats, and threatened and endangered species. Management programs will be designed to conserve, protect, manage and/or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, wildlife populations, forests and water resources. The tract will also be managed to provide opportunities for camping, environmental and cultural resource education, fishing, hiking, hunting, and wildlife viewing.

The connection and proximity of this proposed project to other conservation lands, as well as its diversity of natural community types, provide important habitats for wildlife populations. Since the principal purposes of the proposal are to protect habitat for wildlife, management goals will be oriented to conservation and protection of these species, and to carefully control public uses.

Management Prospectus

Qualifications for state designation This project meets the Goals and Measures for significant corridors, landscape linkages, for preserving archeological and historic sites, and to increase nature-based recreation.

Manager The high wildlife resource value of this project indicates that the FWC is the suitable lead manager for the area. The FWC should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies in managing the area.

Conditions affecting intensity of management Much of the Escribano Point proposal includes lands that are relatively undisturbed and representative of the natural ecology of the area. Such areas may require basic resource management practices, such as the use of prescribed fire, maintenance of natural hydrology, and control of access where appropriate. Biotic surveys should be a priority, since there are potentially many taxa of rare or listed species. In addition, the Escribano

Point project may need some specific management measures to promote survival of listed species and other species of wildlife. As with all wildlife management areas, minimal infrastructure development will be required to provide for public access and use, site, security, and management. Any such development will be confined to areas of previous disturbance.

Timetable for implementing management, and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure

After acquisition, emphasis will be placed on site security, posting boundaries, public access, fire management, resource inventory, exotic species control and removing refuse. A conceptual management plan will be developed by the FWC describing management goals and objectives necessary for resource management. Long-range plans will emphasize restoring and maintaining ecosystem functions; restoring native wildlife populations and wildlife diversity, including protecting and managing threatened and endangered species; and managing sustainable public use of game wildlife populations balanced with other wildlife oriented recreational activities. Essential roads will be stabilized to provide all weather public access and management operations. An all-season prescribed burning management plan will be developed and implemented to improve the habitat quality of native fire-dependent plant communities and wildlife habitats. Where appropriate, practical and in pursuit of wildlife habitat objectives, forest resources will be managed using acceptable silvicultural practices.

Revenue-generating potential Revenue will be generated from sales of hunting and fishing licenses, wildlife management area stamps and possibly other special hunting stamps. Some revenues might be realized from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities.

Cooperators in management activities The FWC should cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies in managing the area. These agencies might include the Department of Defense (Eglin AFB), the Department of Environmental Protection, the Division of Forestry, and the Northwest Florida Water Management District.

Management costs and sources of revenue The proposal, when acquired by the State, will require one FTE position to manage the project area, although certain activities may be privatized which would reduce the number of FTEs required. Funding for natural resource management and public use administration

would come from the CARL Trust Fund. Please see the attached table for anticipated costs. Revenue sources could include public use fees and timber harvests.

FWC Prospectus: Projected Budget

Maximum expected single-year expenditure:	<u>Startup</u>	<u>Recurring</u>
<u>Resource Management</u>		
Exotic Species Control	\$14,329	\$28,658
Prescribed Burning	\$2,186	\$4,371
Hydrological Management	\$40,000	\$4,475
Other	\$34,435	\$34,435
Subtotal	\$90,950	\$71,939
<u>Administration</u>		
Central Office/Headquarters	\$52,845	\$17,593
Districts/Regions	\$22,648	\$7,540
Subtotal	\$75,494	\$25,133
<u>Support</u>		
Land Management Planning	\$25,000	\$1,000
Land Management Reviews	\$0	\$500
Training/Staff Development	\$0	\$1,000
Vehicle Purchase	\$110,850	\$15,836
Vehicle Operation/Maintenance	\$13,230	\$13,230
Subtotal	\$149,080	\$31,566
<u>Capital Improvements</u>		
New Facility Construction	\$447,064	\$0
Facility Maintenance	\$0	\$32,702
Subtotal	\$447,064	\$32,702
<u>Visitor Services/Recreation</u>		
Operations	\$1,668	\$141
Subtotal	\$1,668	\$141
<u>Law Enforcement</u>		
All Activities	\$2,508	\$2,508
TOTAL	\$766,763	\$163,988
Figures include salary for 3 FTEs.		

Updated February 8, 2016