

Mill Creek

Marion County

Less-Than-Fee

Purpose for State Acquisition

Public acquisition of this project in the form of a conservation easement will contribute to the following Florida Forever goals: (1) Increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels – a conservation easement will preserve a working Florida landscape and protect existing natural areas from conversion to alternative uses. Existing wetlands will be enhanced through the prohibition of future harvesting of timber. The use of prescribed fire will be continued and recommendations for fire-frequency and fireline character will be provided. Additional structures and facilities on the parcel will be controlled through the terms of the conservation easement. (2) Increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources – approximately 49 percent of this property is managed for forest resources. A conservation easement will allow for continued forest management with the use of Best Management Practices and the continuation of prescribed burning; (3) Ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state – due to its proximity to the Orange Creek Restoration area, protection of this property from conversion will enhance and protect water quantity and flow to Orange Lake.

Manager

The Office of Environmental Services (OES), or its successor, will monitor the conservation easement unless otherwise noted.

General Description

The Mill Creek proposal includes over 12,000 acres of land in northern Marion County. It is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition and is owned by four entities, but controlled by the Moxon family. Several conservation lands lie within five miles of the Mill Creek property including Orange Lake, Lochloosa Lake, Ocklawaha River, Orange Creek Restoration Area, Lochloosa Wildlife Conservation Area, Black Sink Prairie, Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway and the Ocala National Forest. The Mill Creek property has been impacted by cattle and timber operations, including conversion to pasture, pine plantation and cypress harvesting. Two rare plants and eight rare animals are documented to occur on the property.

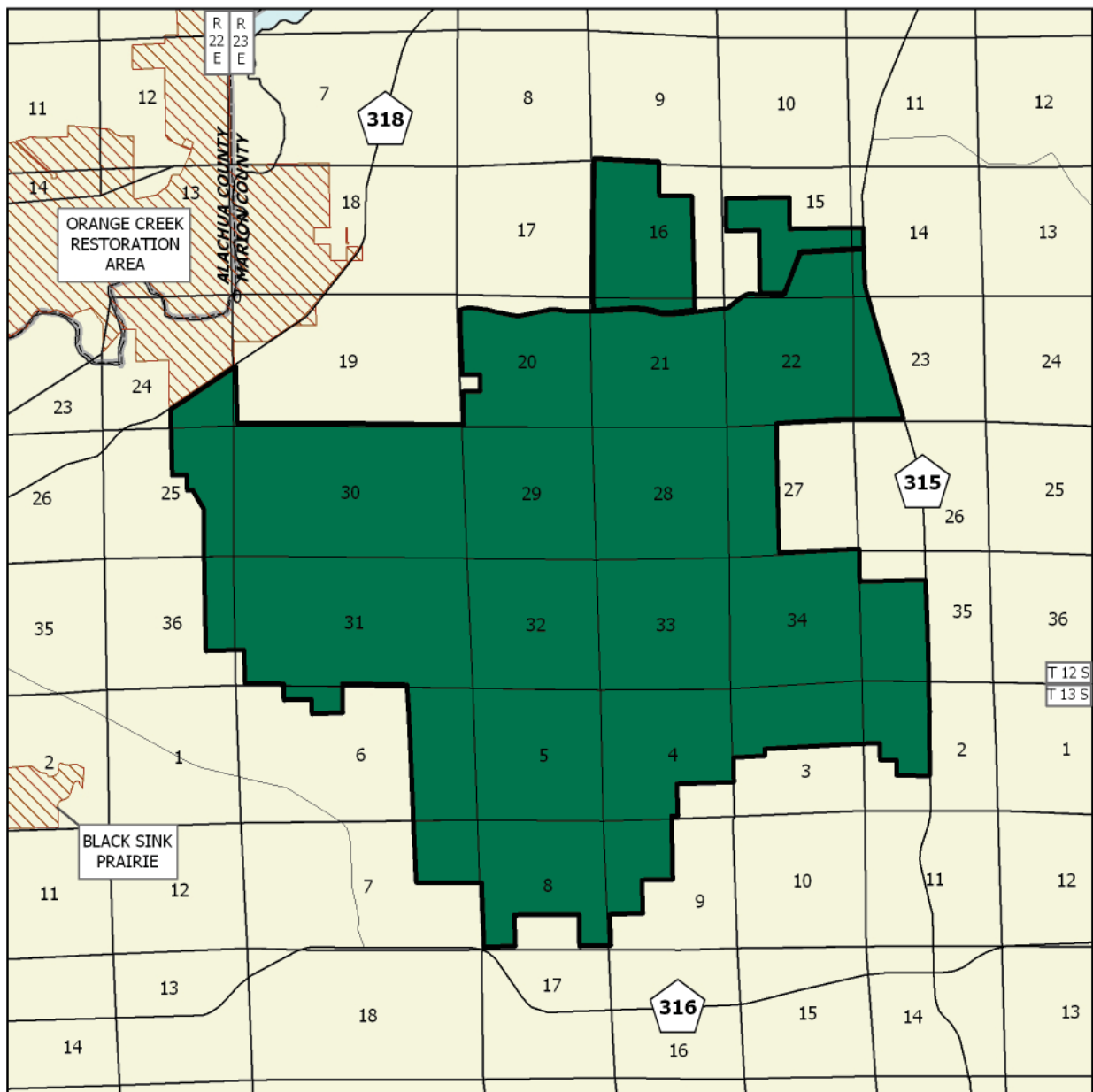
Public Use

As a less-than-fee project, public resource-based recreation potential is severely limited. However, the eastern portion of the property is leased for hunting. There was no indication at the time of the field investigation that the owners would allow hunting by the general public. Willingness for other public uses was also not indicated.

The project, as offered, does not satisfy any of the year 2005 needs reflected in the 2000 Florida Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for the region. The resource-based recreation potential for the project, as offered, is low. However, it could potentially increase significantly, should public access and use of the land be allowed. Due to an indicated lack of general public access for hunting, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) advises that the hunting potential for this project is low.

Mill Creek FNAI Elements	
Florida Black Bear	G5T2/S2
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Snowy Egret	G5/S3
Little Blue Heron	G5/S4
Tricolored Heron	G5/S4
White Ibis	G5/S4
6 rare species are associated with the project	

Placed on List	2003
Projects Area (GIS Acres)	12,293
Acres Acquired (GIS)	0
At a Cost Of	\$0
Acres Remaining (GIS)	12,293
Estimated (Tax Assessed) Value of	\$13,694,672



MILL CREEK

MARION COUNTY

-  Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
-  Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
-  Other Conservation Lands



MAY 2006

Acquisition Planning

On December 5, 2003, the Acquisition & Restoration Council (ARC) added the Mill Creek project to Group A of the Florida Forever (FF) 2004 Priority list. This less-than-fee acquisition, sponsored by the Conservation Real Estate Group, consisted of approximately 12,285 acres, multiple owners, and a 2002 taxable value of \$13,694,672.

On January 27, 2005, ARC moved this project to Group B of the 2005 FF Annual Priority list. On June 3, 2005, ARC moved this project to Group A of the 2005 FF Interim Priority list.

On December 14, 2007 ARC voted to move the Mill Creek project to Group B of the 2008 Florida Forever priority list.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed the Mill Creek project in the Less-than-Fee category of projects.

Coordination

There are no acquisition partners at this time.

Management Policy Statement

As a conservation easement or less-than-fee interest, this project will be managed by the private landowner or landowners with restrictions. The purchase of the development rights, the prohibition of the further conversion of the existing natural areas to more intensive uses and limited public access will likely be the primary focus of the conservation easement.

Management Prospectus

The OES, or its successor, is to ensure oversight of the conservation easement on this project.

Updated February 9, 2016