

Sand Mountain

Bay and Washington Counties

Partnerships

Purpose for State Acquisition

Until the early part of this century, the country north of St. Andrews Bay was a high longleaf–pine sandhill interrupted by deep depressions holding shallow sand – bottomed lakes. The lakes still pock the area, but pine plantations and residential developments have replaced most of the sandhill. The Sand Mountain project will conserve and restore part of this land, still one of the largest tracts of sandhill in the Florida panhandle; protect the watersheds of the lakes and of Econfina Creek (the source of Panama City’s water); maintain habitat critical to the survival of several rare plants that grow only around these lakes; and provide a large scenic area where the public can enjoy many recreation activities, from hiking to hunting. This project may also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses a number of Florida Forever project sites.

Manager

Florida Forest Service/FFS, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

General Description

This project protects the largest remaining tract of high quality, natural xeric uplands of Florida’s New Hope Ridge and Fountain Slope physiographic regions. The high rolling pinelands drop down to classic examples of steephead ravines, unique Sandhill Upland Lakes, and a portion of a nearly pristine stream. Much of the

sandhills are of excellent quality, having a nearly intact ground cover of wiregrass and dropseed, but those owned by the Rosewood Timber Company have been cleared and planted in sand pine. At least 18 species of rare or endangered plants inhabit the project. The Slope Forests in the steepheads shelter several species, while around the Sandhill Upland Lakes are four globally imperiled plant species found nowhere else in the world. The project also contains a large part of the watershed of Econfina Creek, nearly pristine in terms of water quality. Three archaeological sites are known from the project and there is moderate potential for more. Development threatens the northern part and the lakes in the southern part.

Public Use

This project would be designated as a state forest with such uses as hiking, hunting, fishing, swimming, camping and environmental education.

Acquisition Planning

The larger longleaf pine sandhill tracts (essential) — Deltona, St. Joe and John Hancock Mutual Life Ins. Co.—should be acquired first. The Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) has acquired the Rosewood ownership in Phase II and a portion of the Deltona ownership.

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Partnerships category in the Florida Forever list.

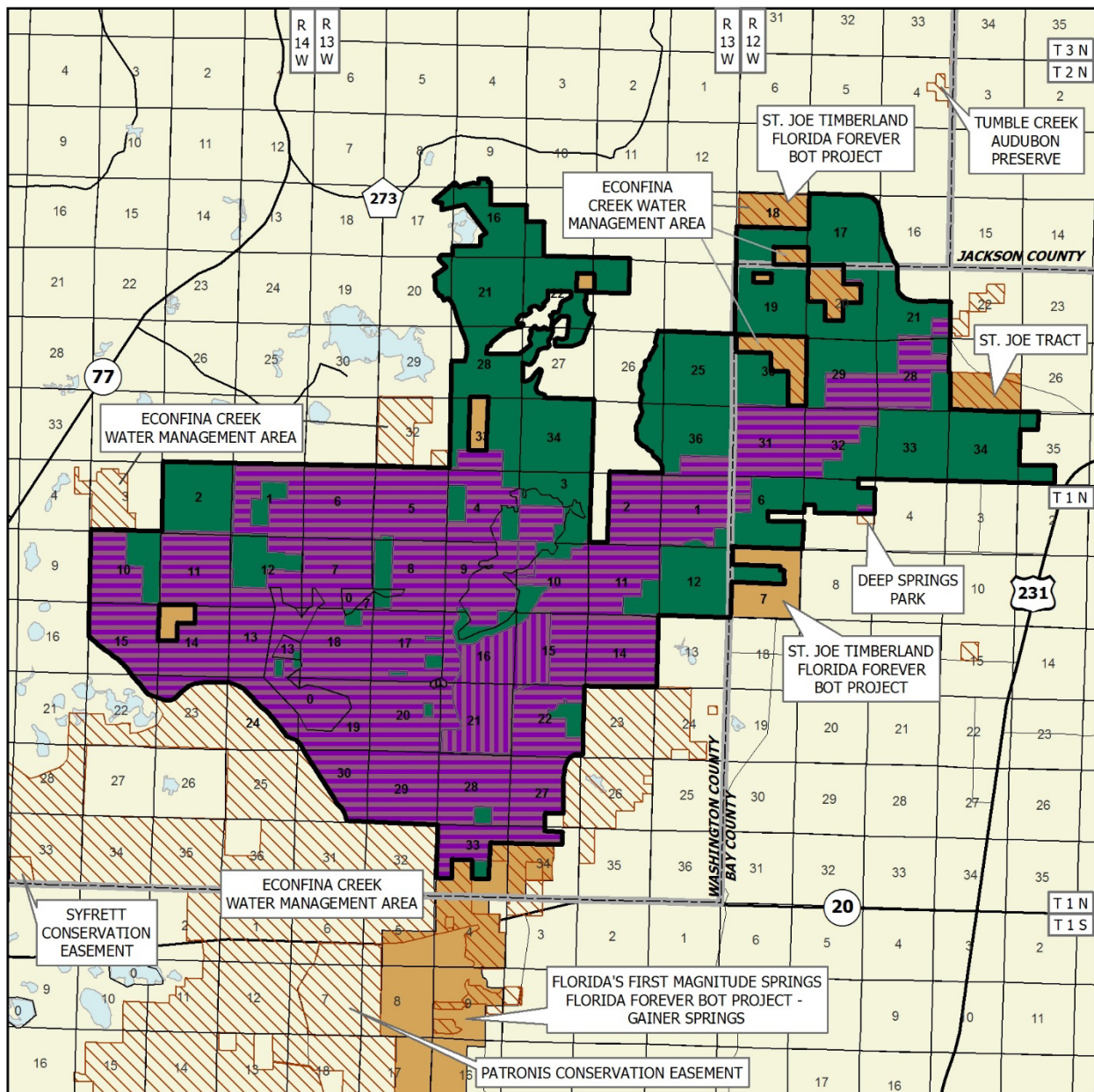
Coordination

The NFWFMD is an acquisition partner.

Sand Mountain FNAI Elements	
Gopher Tortoise	G3/S3
Econfina Springs Cave Isopod	G1/S1
Quillwort Yellow-eyed Grass	G1/S1
Shaggy Ghostsnail	G1/S1
Crystal Lake Nailwort	G3T1/S1
Oval Pigtoe	G2/S1S2
Panhandle Meadowbeauty	G2/S2
Say's Spiketail	G2/S2
Smoothbark St. John's wort	G2/S2
Apalachicola Alligator Snapping Turtle	G2G3/S2
Thread-leaf Sundew	G4/S1
Karst Pond Xyris	G2G3/S2S3
29 rare species are associated with the project	

Placed on List	1994
Project Area (GIS Acres)	33,843
Acres Acquired (GIS)	19,399
at a Cost of	\$26,637,412*
Acres Remaining (GIS)	14,445
Estimated (Tax Assessed) Value of	\$10,363,475

*By the Northwest Florida Water Mgt. District

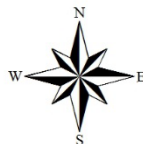


SAND MOUNTAIN

WASHINGTON AND BAY COUNTIES

-  Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
-  Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
-  Acquired for Conservation (Less-Than-Fee)
-  Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
-  Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
-  Other Conservation Lands

0 1 2 4
Miles



DECEMBER 2015

Management Policy Statement

The primary goals of management of the Sand Mountain project are: to conserve and protect environmentally unique and irreplaceable lands that contain native, relatively unaltered flora and fauna representing a natural area unique to, or scarce within, a region of this state or larger geographic area; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage, or restore important ecosystems, landscapes, and forests, in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; and to provide areas, including trails, for natural-resource-based recreation.

Management Prospectus

Qualifications for state designation The large areas of natural longleaf pine sandhills and restorable pine plantations in the project make it desirable for management as a state forest.

Manager The FFS is recommended as the lead manager.

Conditions affecting intensity of management The pine plantations in the project will require restoration. Other than this, there are no known disturbances that will require extraordinary attention so management intensity is expected to be typical for a state forest.

Timetable for implementing management and provisions for security and protection of infrastructure Once the core area is acquired, the FFS will provide public access for low-intensity, non-facilities-related outdoor recreation. Initial activities will include securing the site, providing public and fire management accesses, inventorying resources, and removing trash. The FFS will provide access to the public while protecting sensitive resources. The project's natural resources and threatened and endangered plants and animals will be inventoried to provide the basis for a management plan. Long-range plans for this project will generally be directed toward

restoring disturbed areas to their original conditions, as far as possible, as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. Much of the pinelands has been cleared and planted in sand pine and requires restoration. An all-season burning program will use, whenever possible, existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks to contain fires. Timber management will mostly involve improvement thinnings and regeneration harvests. Plantations will be thinned and, where appropriate, reforested with species found in natural ecosystems. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age. Infrastructures will primarily be located in disturbed areas and will be the minimum required for management and public access. The FFS will promote environmental education.

Revenue-generating potential The FFS will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will provide variable amounts of revenue, but the revenue-generating potential for this project is expected to be low.

Cooperators in management activities The NFWFMD has purchased land along Econfina Creek within the project boundary. The District will cooperate with the FFS in the management of this corridor. The FFS will also cooperate with and seek the assistance of other state agencies, local government entities and other interested parties as appropriate.

Updated 2/2/2016

Management Cost Summary/FFS

Category	Startup	Recurring
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$148,370	\$148,370
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$70,000	\$50,000
OCO	\$234,900	\$15,000
FCO	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$453,270	\$213,370

Management Cost Summary/NFWFMD

Category	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99
Source of Funds	WMLTF	WMLTF	WMLTF
Salary	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
OPS	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Expense	\$39,222	\$49,028	\$61,284
OCO	\$27,838	\$34,798	\$43,498
FCO	\$36,000	\$34,750	\$43,438
TOTAL	\$143,060	\$183,576	\$213,220