

Natural Bridge Creek / Natural Bridge Creek Addition



**A Florida Forever Application to Add New Property
to an Existing Florida Forever Project**

**Submitted to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection,
Florida Forever Program**

By Conservation Advisors LLC



Application to Add New Property to an Existing Florida Forever Project

Boundary amendments must be less than \$2 million in tax assessed value, less than 10% of the size of the existing project boundary, and less than 1,000 acres in size. Boundary amendment proposals failing to meet these criteria must be submitted as new Florida Forever projects during the next Acquisition and Restoration Council evaluation cycle

Existing Florida Forever Project: Natural Bridge Creek
(project being proposed for modification)

Name of Property being Proposed for Addition (if applicable): Natural Bridge Creek Addition

Person Proposing Modification: Keith Fountain

Company Affiliation: Conservation Advisors LLC

Phone: () _____ FAX: () _____ Cell (407) 402-7091

E-Mail Address: keithrfountain@gmail.com

Address: PO Box 845 DeLand FL 32721

City State Zip Code

Please note: Contact Paula L. Allen for submittal deadline dates at (850) 245-2784. The application package shall include this completed application form, eighteen copies (unless otherwise requested) of the information requested on page two (outlined in Attachment A – C), and one standard size CD containing a single copy, in PDF format, of all the documents being submitted. Please submit paper copies on 8.5" x 11" paper and no larger than 11" x 17". All color maps provided with this form must be able to be copied legibly in black and white. Incomplete applications may be considered at a later meeting.

SUBMIT COPIES AND ATTACHMENTS TO:

The Office of Environmental Services Division of
State Lands
Department of Environmental Protection 3900
Commonwealth Blvd., Mail Station 140
Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000
PHONE: 850/245-2784 FAX: 850/245-2572
Attention: Paula L. Allen
Paula.L.Allen@dep.state.fl.us

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

(Date Stamp)

ATTACHMENT A

NATURAL BRIDGE CREEK / NATURAL BRIDGE CREEK ADDITION, WALTON COUNTY, FLORIDA

1. LOCATION, SIZE AND VALUE OF THE PROJECT.

The Natural Bridge Creek Addition in Walton County, Florida (the “project”), is an approximately 170-acre addition to the 1,797-acre Natural Bridge Creek Florida Forever site. This project is located near the Alabama state line less than five miles east of Florala, Alabama and almost 19 miles north/northwest from Defuniak Springs, Florida. The project has a 2019 market (just) value of \$259,083 as established by the Walton County Property Appraiser.

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT.

The project adds most of the lands owned by the Judith Holley Hester and Amos Benton Hester III that are not already included in the Natural Bridge Creek Florida Forever site. After approval of this addition, the Hester family will now own 1,967 acres within the Florida Forever site. The family’s holdings are listed for sale with Verdura Realty; the listing brochure is included with the application. An additional 1,527 acres located across Highway 181 to the north and into Alabama was sold by the family in 2019.

The project, together with the remaining Hester holdings, received a federal fiscal year 2019 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service, Forest Legacy Program in the amount of \$2,300,000 that is available to be applied to the acquisition of the site. The Forest Legacy project brief is attached.

The vast majority of the 170-acre project is forested and one parcel contains a small segment of Natural Bridge Creek, a sandy-bottomed seepage stream originating from the small springs and uplands of the Florida Forever site that winds over limestone outcrops before flowing into the upper Choctawhatchee River watershed. An area of about 40 acres is leased for farming but, with termination of the lease, could be replanted in longleaf pine as has been done with other farmed lands formerly owned by the Hesters.

The Florida Forever site stands as one of the best remaining privately managed sources of biodiversity and mature timber within the range of the longleaf ecosystem. With almost 2,000 acres of predominantly intact longleaf natural community, it is a model of longleaf management amid North America’s largest and most ambitious longleaf conservation effort. Groups including the E.O. Wilson Biodiversity Foundation envision a longleaf corridor over nearly a million acres connecting national forests in Alabama and Florida with state forests and private conservation lands. The site has never lost its longleaf canopy and, because of its exceptional diversity and intact longleaf communities, represents a superior seed bank for restoration efforts on other public and private lands. The site shelters some of the state's rarest and most beautiful plants, wildlife and water resources, while the northeastern portion of the site contains Natural Bridge sink/rise,

perhaps the westernmost spring fed by the Floridan Aquifer. The sandy soils of the project and site permit a high rate of recharge to the aquifer.

Natural Bridge Plantation

Overview

Taking its name from the disappearing act that Natural Bridge Creek plays as it dives under a limestone arch formation, Natural Bridge Plantation is a throwback to an earlier era when wildfires swept through large swaths of longleaf pine and wiregrass, creating a park-like appearance. For the past 50 years, the Hester family has mimicked Mother Nature by carrying out a prescribed burn program as part of a thoughtful timber and wildlife management program designed to distinguish itself from prototypical industrial timberlands. Their efforts have been rewarded with a beautiful and biologically diverse landscape that has all but vanished outside of high-end plantations and government owned forests. All this points to a rare opportunity for an astute investor to acquire this truly unique property and take pleasure in the innumerable benefits it will provide - **at a price that has been reduced by nearly Two Million Dollars!**

Diversity Creates Opportunities

Straddling the Florida - Alabama state line only 50 miles from the Gulf Coast's white sand beaches, Natural Bridge Plantation encompasses 3,535+/- acres, 2,250 acres of which are in Walton County, Florida with the remaining 1,315 acres in Covington County, Alabama. The property can be purchased in its entirety or in parcels ranging from 93 to 1,387 acres, each with excellent access due to the property's six miles of paved road frontage and 33 miles of internal roads. Because of the multi-faceted nature of Natural Bridge Plantation, there are several uses that present themselves to an investor including recreational, conservation, Ag conversion, and timber.

From a recreational and aesthetic standpoint, Natural Bridge Plantation delivers. The gently rolling topography contains beautiful stands of natural timber, punctuated by a 23-acre lake and four ponds in addition to three miles of Natural Bridge Creek that traverses the property. Part and parcel to Natural Bridge Plantation's land features is an abundance of wildlife including deer, turkey, duck, and quail. With different start and end dates for hunting in Alabama and Florida, the season is effectively extended for the sportsman. Improvements add to the enjoyment, functionality, and value of the property - they consist of a 19th century converted former railroad depot, a rustic World War II vintage board-and-batten home, three farm houses, a residential loft situated above former stables, a fully equipped maintenance shop, two pole barns, and a RV camp area with hook-ups. In addition, there is farm equipment, trailers/containers, an ATV, and support vehicles that are all part of the turnkey purchase price.

At a Glance:

Acreage:

3,535 +/- acres, subdividable

Asking Price:

\$2,995 - \$10,315 per acre

Location:

Walton County, Florida
Covington County, Alabama

Special Attributes:

- Turnkey operation including 5 dwellings
- Beautiful natural longleaf & slash stands
- 23-acre lake, 4 ponds, and 3 miles of creek
- Conservation opportunities
- Excellent soils & high usable land area



Arnie Rogers, Licensed Real Estate Broker

Verdura Realty, LLC • 254 East 6th Avenue • Tallahassee, FL 32303

Cell: 850.491.3288 • Email: arogers@verduraproperties.com

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Natural Bridge Plantation *continued*

Given the quality and breadth of Natural Bridge Plantation's natural features, it is coveted by naturalists and environmental organizations. Were it not for the recession and the resulting scarcity of funds, it is likely that a governmental or private conservation group would have already acquired it. With an improved economic outlook, it is anticipated those entities will once again show interest. Some of the possibilities for Natural Bridge Plantation include placing a conservation easement on the property, establishing an ecosystem mitigation bank, or laying the groundwork for a future sale to a conservation organization or the State of Florida/Alabama. As of 2015, Natural Bridge Plantation was listed as #21 on Florida Forever's priority list and has been nominated to receive a first appraisal for the State of Alabama's Forever Wild program. At the local level, Walton County made inroads in 2009 to purchase 19 acres (plus a 6-acre easement) surrounding the second magnitude spring for preservation and public areas. Appraised at \$690,000, the project's boundaries grew in scope and ultimately succumbed to a lack of funding despite the County's willingness to contribute a significant amount of preservation funds.

With excellent soils, a high percentage of usable land (82%), and multiple water sources, Natural Bridge Plantation sets up nicely for an Ag conversion. A considerable amount of soils are rated 'Prime Farmland' or 'Farmland of Local Importance' by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) and include Dothan, Floral, Fuquay, Malbis, and Troup. Not surprisingly, there are numerous farms in the immediate area. In addition to row crops, ranching is an excellent land use, particularly given the trends in worldwide beef consumption and prices. The characteristics of the property's plantation landscape may also lend itself to a silvopasture operation.

Because Natural Bridge Plantation possesses so many unique attributes, categorizing it as a timberland tract would sell it short. Still, it has very valuable timber, including many pines classified in the pole and plywood veneer category that brings premium pricing. Virtually all the pine is merchantable with natural longleaf and slash accounting for most of the volume. There are 100+/- acres of pre-merchantable longleaf planted in 2012/2013 that, along with another 70+ acres of merchantable loblolly, are part of the CRP program that generates approximately \$10,000 in annual income.

Due to increased fragmentation, large blocks of quality land are increasingly difficult to find and will only become more scarce. Make plans to visit Natural Bridge Plantation to see first-hand the exceptional qualities and potential that this special property has to offer.

Parcel 1

Acreage:

1,049 +/- acres

Asking Price:

\$2,995 per acre

Location:

Walton County, Florida
Covington County, Alabama

Parcel 2

Acreage:

1,007 +/- acres

Asking Price:

\$3,095 per acre

Location:

Walton County, Florida
Covington County, Alabama



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Cell: 850.491.3288 • Email: arogers@verduraproperties.com

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Natural Bridge Plantation *continued*

Prices:

Entire Property	3,535 acres - \$2,995 per acre
Parcel 1	1,049 acres - \$2,995 per acre
Parcel 2	1,007 acres - \$3,095 per acre
Parcel 3	1,387 acres - \$2,995 per acre
Parcel 4	93 acres - \$10,315 per acre

Aerial, topographic, and soil maps along with an equipment list are available on our website www.VerduraProperties.com

Parcel 3

Acreage:
1,387 +/- acres

Asking Price:
\$2,995 per acre

Location:
Walton County, Florida

Parcel 4

Acreage:
93 +/- acres

Asking Price:
\$10,315 per acre

Location:
Walton County, Florida



The Longleaf Pine Forest stamps are the fourth in an educational series designed to promote appreciation of North America's major plant and animal communities. Although greatly reduced in size, the longleaf pine forest still occupies part of its natural range. Characterized by the longleaf pine, this unique ecosystem includes many plant communities that vary with soil type, moisture, and frequency of fire. This "forest built by fire" supports a rich diversity of 300 animal species.

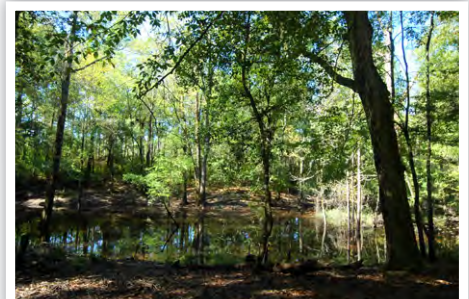
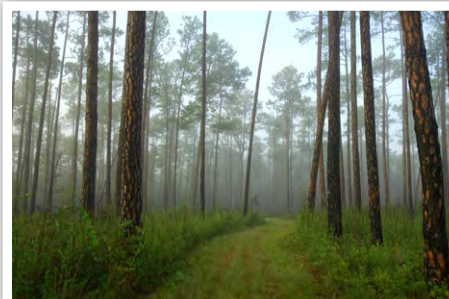
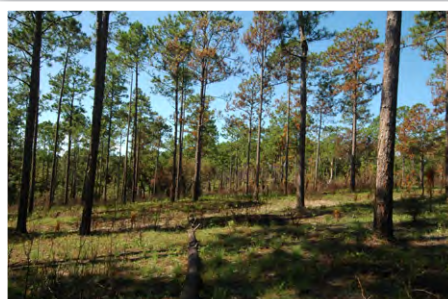
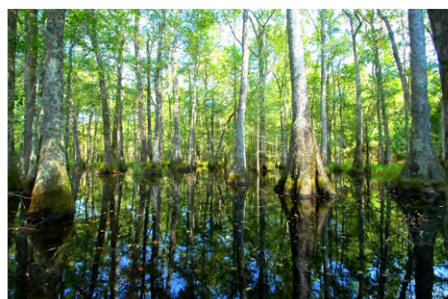
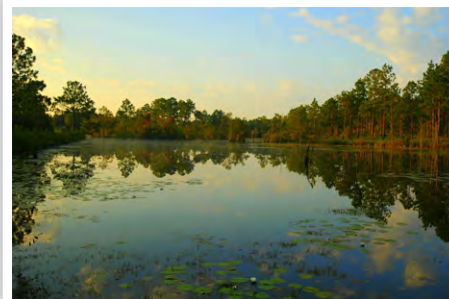


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Natural Bridge Plantation

Photos



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Natural Bridge Plantation

Farm Equipment

- John Deere 6410 4X4 Tractor
- Brown Heavy Duty rotary cutter
- Hydraulic Disc Harrow
- Hydraulic Box Blade
- Other Implements and Attachments

Trucks, Trailers and Equipment

- M-35A2 6x6 Dump Truck, Winch, (with several parts trucks)
- Dodge Diesel Pickup, Fuel Transfer Tank, Tool Box
- 12 Ton Econoline Gooseneck Equipment Trailer
- Dresser 520C Wheeled Loader, Bucket & Rake

ATV

- Kawasaki Mule 3010 Diesel Trans 4x4, 4 Seat Utility Vehicle

Storage Containers

- 40' Shipping Container
- 40' Freuhauf Semi Trailer (on blocks)
- 22' Truck Box (on blocks)

Equipment Shop Tools

- Industrial Air Compressor
- Two Post Lift
- Miller Welder w TIG Attachments
- Lincoln Wire Welder
- Cutting Torch Set
- Hydraulic Press
- Sheet Metal Brake/Roll/Shear
- Metal Band Saw
- Power Hack Saw
- Drill Press
- Mill/Drill Press
- Hydraulic Engine Hoists (x2)
- Portable Generator
- Sandblaster
- Portable Hydraulic Press/Puller Tools
- Pneumatic Sanders
- Extensive Mechanics Hand Tools, Air Tools & Supplies
- Welding Table, Racks, Work Tables and Cabinets

Wood Shop Tools

- Table Saw
- Portable Planer
- Extensive Hand Tools, Saws, Router, Drill, Levels
- Heavy Duty Carpentry Bench
- Vice Table

Supplies & Miscellaneous Equipment Tools

- Husqvarna Chainsaw
- Selection of Plumbing/Electrical/Building Supplies
- Wheelbarrow, Dollies, Shovels, Misc. Hand Tools
- Fencing, T-Posts, Gates, Corner-Posts
- Maintenance items and spares for equipment

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Forest Legacy Project

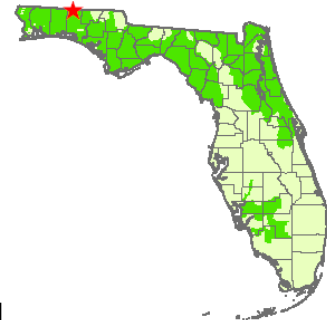
Natural Bridge Longleaf Preserve

Walton County, Florida



FUNDING HISTORY

FY 2016 Forest Legacy Program Funding	\$2,300,000
FY 2016 Non-Federal Cost Share	\$1,300,000
FY 2016 Project Costs	\$3,600,000
FY 2016 Project Acres	2,164
Forest Legacy Funding To Date	\$0
Total Project Costs	\$3,600,000
Total Project Acres	2,164



★ Project Location
Forest Legacy Areas

Tract Name	Size (ac)	Tract Cost	FLP Funding	Non-Fed Cost Share	Status
Creek	2,102	\$3,100,000	\$2,300,000	\$800,000	In Review 2016
Spring	62	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000	In Review 2016

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Lying in the largest longleaf pine landscape identified by America's Longleaf, the Natural Bridge Longleaf Preserve stands as one of the most intact remaining privately-owned and managed sources of biodiversity and mature timber within the ecosystem's range. The 2,102-acre project, with another 1,451 acres in Alabama, sits at the crossroads of the most ambitious longleaf conservation effort in the Southeast. Many have envisioned a longleaf corridor stretching from Alabama's largest state forest, just a few miles north of the project, westward across timberlands to the largest continuous longleaf forest in North America – some 700,000 acres of military, state forest and national forest lands. The project also contains karst features and a rare creek swallet/spring system reported to be the westernmost spring flowing from the Floridan Aquifer. Threatened by the owner's need to convert or sell this remnant of the Jackson Lumber Company assembled after World War II, a CONSERVATION EASEMENT will ensure the Creek tract remains as a source and shelter for some of North America's rarest and most beautiful plants, wildlife and unique water resources. FEE acquisition of the Spring tract will restore the spring to more historic conditions.



Multi-aged longleaf pine with intact wiregrass understory and species diversity (Photo by Keith Fountain)

PROJECT FEATURES

Important

- **ECONOMIC BENEFITS - TIMBER:** The project is enrolled in the Florida Forest Stewardship Program and managed pursuant to a certified forester's management plan that preserves the ecological

integrity of this intact longleaf pine landscape.

- The project supports the Pensacola region forest products industry that provides over 5,100 jobs and produces annual revenues exceeding \$1.0 billion by satisfying market demand with its sustainable harvests of high quality pole and saw timber.
- Since World War II, the project has been managed using the Stoddard-Neel methodology, which considers the health and beauty of the living longleaf pine forest while combining frequent prescribed fire, highly selective harvesting for sustainable management, and a commitment to woodland aesthetics.
- Managed with a frequent fire interval as a high-value, multi-aged longleaf forest with an intact understory, the project presents a sustainable resource of fine mature sawtimber, planking, poles, masts and other high grade and hard-to-find timbers sought by boatwrights and other fine builders.
- **ECONOMIC BENEFITS - NON-TIMBER:** The project is a highly sought hunting preserve that is leased annually for its burgeoning populations of deer, turkey and rabbit, and it offers some of the best remaining quail habitat in Florida.
- **THREATENED OR ENDANGERED SPECIES HABITAT:** The project advances the Florida State Wildlife Action Plan by preserving habitat for at least four Species of Greatest Conservation Need: the federally-listed Eastern indigo snake, gopher tortoise, Florida pine snake and Southeastern pocket gopher.
- Natural Bridge Creek is a priority watershed in the Bluenose Shiner Species Action Plan and, since most of the creek's principal drainage and adjacent uplands are in the project, its preservation will facilitate the strategy to establish conservation areas and implement best management practices.
- State-listed endangered species occurring on the project include the White-topped pitcher plant, Thread-leaf sundew, Panhandle lily and Florida flame azalea, and the state-threatened Spoon-leaved sundew is documented as well.
- Other species likely to occur on site include the federally-endangered Reticulated flatwoods salamander and state-special concern Alligator snapping turtle, Little blue heron and White ibis.
- **FISH, WILDLIFE, PLANTS, AND UNIQUE FOREST COMMUNITIES:** Two-thirds of the project is naturally regenerated longleaf pine in good condition with predominantly well-spaced second-growth longleaf pines and a diverse, intact herbaceous groundcover with wiregrass.
- The project has been on a two-year burn rotation for 15 years, trending toward growing season burns that are more effective for hardwood control, understory diversity, longleaf regeneration and wildlife. Low fuel loads and extensive fire breaks permit growing season burns on most of the project.
- Hillside seeps and pitcher plant bogs are common on the project and remain unplanted and fire managed, resulting in a naturally treeless state with extraordinary herbaceous diversity including at least four species of pitcher plants and other rare carnivorous plants.
- **WATER SUPPLY, AQUATIC HABITAT AND WATERSHED PROTECTION:** Over 2.75 miles of Natural Bridge Creek, a sandy-bottomed seepage stream originating from the small springs and uplands of the project, winds over limestone outcrops before flowing into the upper Choctawhatchee River watershed.
- The project's predominantly moderate to well-drained soils provide high recharge to the Floridan Aquifer, one of the most productive aquifers in the world. Protection of the project is important given its vulnerability to groundwater contamination only three miles from a public wellfield.
- The Spring tract contains a swallet and spring where Natural Bridge Creek flows under a natural limestone bridge. The spring west of the bridge also functions as a swallet when there is sufficient creek drainage from the west, while the spring "rises" to the east of the bridge into the creek.
- **PUBLIC ACCESS:** Acquisition of the Spring tract will allow for public recreation at the spring and



Natural Bridge Spring east of the natural limestone bridge (Photo by Keith Fountain)

surrounding longleaf forest, removal of Natural Bridge Road from the limestone natural bridge and clearing of the debris and sedimentation from the road that impair the spring.

- **HISTORIC/CULTURAL:** There are three historic buildings on site and the swallet/spring was used by both Native American and 19th century historic cultures, with evidence including arrowheads and pottery fragments, and the remains of a grist mill and turpentine still.

Threatened

- **LACK OF PROTECTION:** Walton County will allow the subdivision of the project into 210 residential units on lots as small as one-half acre in size.
- Walton County permits many agricultural, forestry and residential uses of the project. There are no local, state or federal restrictions on the conversion of any of the project to more intensive forest or non-forest uses that would destroy the understory of this special, intact longleaf habitat.
- **LAND AND LANDOWNER'S CIRCUMSTANCE:** The project will help satisfy the financial and family needs of the owners, Judith Hester and her son Benton Hester, that require the project be sold or alternative land uses that destroy habitat, such as pine plantation, be implemented.
- Judith Hester listed the project for sale in April 2012 for the first time since World War II to provide for her financial retirement needs rather than continuing her 95% ownership interest in land located more than 500 miles from her home in Naples, Florida.
- Benton Hester's family obligations require that he divest ownership and responsibility for the project that he has managed since the mid-1980s so that he can spend more time at his home in Punta Gorda, Florida.
- As the family entertains purchase offers, Benton Hester seeks a buyer that will continue the Stoddard-Neel management ideal and maintain the ecological integrity of this flagship longleaf tract that he has almost single-handedly managed for almost three decades.
- **ADJACENT LAND USE:** The project is surrounded and bordered by increasing conversion of natural forests with native groundcover elements to intensive pine plantation with groundcover absent, farmland and rural residential development.
- **ABILITY TO DEVELOP:** The project contains more than 80% uplands with an unique creek amenity, stunning forest vistas and over ten miles of road frontage with electrical utilities, making residential development or agricultural conversion of the project very feasible and attractive.



Seepage slope community with state-endangered White-topped pitcher plants (Photo by Beth Young)

Strategic

- **CONSERVATION INITIATIVE, STRATEGY OR PLAN:** The project is in the largest longleaf pine Significant Geographic Area defined by America's Longleaf and furthers the 15-year goal to increase acreage from 3.4 to 8.0 million acres, with over half occurring in these areas. It furthers the private lands strategy and avoids restoration costs by protecting intact understory with a conservation easement.
- The project's intact longleaf habitat supports efforts of the Presidential Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators and the U.S. Forest Service International Program to address threats to the migration of the Monarch butterfly across the range of its migration by maintaining habitat used by the Monarch in its southeast U.S. migration corridor.
- The project exemplifies three goals of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative: support community-based recreational access, conserve rural working forests and protect community waters. Forest

Legacy Program funding complements coalition efforts to protect an 800,000-acre working longleaf landscape, while supporting local acquisition of the Spring tract for restoration and recreation.

- The project serves as a flagship for the America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative, the collaborative efforts of more than 20 state and federal agencies, stakeholders and organizations, by engaging federal, state and nonprofit partners in the protection of a large, intact, managed longleaf pine woodland that will advance longleaf conservation and market-based strategies in the South.
- The project enables implementation of the Northwest Florida Water Management District's Spring Stabilization Alternatives Report by acquiring the 62-acre Spring tract for removal of Natural Bridge Road from the limestone natural bridge, removal of the sedimentation and debris impairing spring flow, and restoration of the spring habitats for an improved public recreation experience.
- The Florida Springs Initiative seeks to effectuate springs preservation by acquiring lands in the springshed to be left in its natural state. The project advances this Governor-led initiative by acquiring the spring itself for restoration and protecting over 2,000 acres of the Natural Bridge Creek watershed and springshed recharge area.
- The project supports an initiative of the Northwest Florida Water Management District to maximize aquifer recharge through private landowner groundcover restoration. The project protects an open longleaf woodland with intact groundcover and frequent fire in an area of high aquifer recharge and a public wellfield without the significant costs associated with groundcover restoration.
- The project supports Forest Action Plan elements related to enhancement of economic opportunities for landowners, particularly as related to uneven-aged management and premium timber products; maintenance of longleaf pine forests with intact ground cover; and protection of valuable working forests by preserving a single large tract of intact longleaf habitat while maintaining sustainable forestry.
- **COMPLEMENT PROTECTED LANDS:** The project is six miles from Geneva State Forest and 12 miles from Conecuh National Forest, and linked to both public lands through more than 60,000 acres of timberlands owned and managed by Rayonier. Protection of the project and Rayonier lands can result in a continuous forest landscape with longleaf pine prevalent exceeding 800,000 acres across Alabama and Florida.
- The project is adjacent to the Hester family's Alabama ownership that is within the original 1939 Conecuh National Forest proclamation boundary. Acquisition of a conservation easement will complement Alabama's efforts to protect the 1,431 acres that is an acquisition priority in that state's Forever Wild Program, which has initiated efforts to appraise the property.



Farmland bounded by the project on two sides indicative of adjacent land uses (Photo by Keith Fountain)

Readiness

Pre-Appraisal/Market Analysis	1
Easement or Fee Conditions	1
Non-Federal Cost Share Commitment	0
Signed Purchase Agreement	1
Title Search	0
Mineral Determination	0
Stewardship Plan (or equivalent)*	1
Readiness Total Tally Score	4

Supporting Parties

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Forest Service; Florida Department of Environmental Protection; Northwest Florida Water Management District; Conecuh National Forest; Walton County; Conservation Trust for Florida; Longleaf Alliance; Nokuse Plantation; and Gulf Coast Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit.

For more information on the Forest Legacy Program, please contact:

Scott Stewart

*National Forest Legacy
Program Coordinator*

USDA Forest Service

1400 Independence Avenue,
4SE

Washington, DC 20250

202-205-1618

sstewart@fs.fed.us

Michael W Murphy

*Forest Legacy Program
Coordinator*

USDA Forest Service

1720 Peachtree Road, NW
Suite 700

Atlanta, GA 30309

404-347-5214

mwmurphy@fs.fed.us

Larame C Ferry

Forest Legacy Coordinator

Florida Forest Service

3125 Conner Blvd.

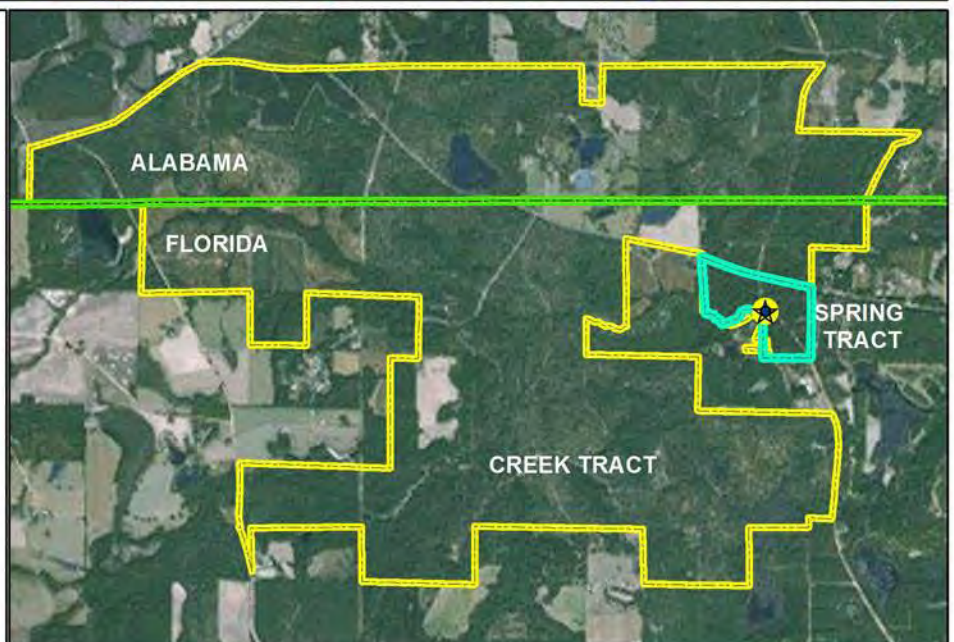
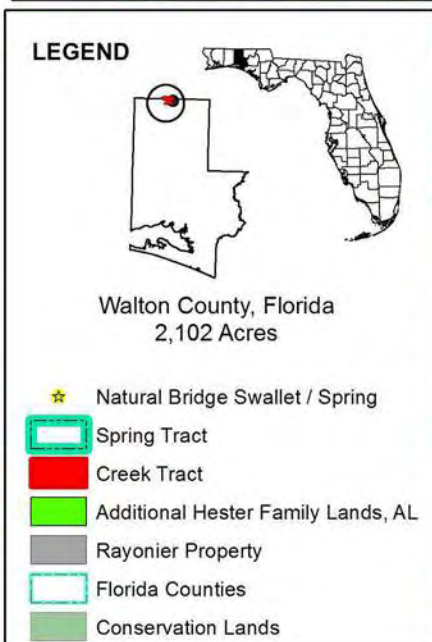
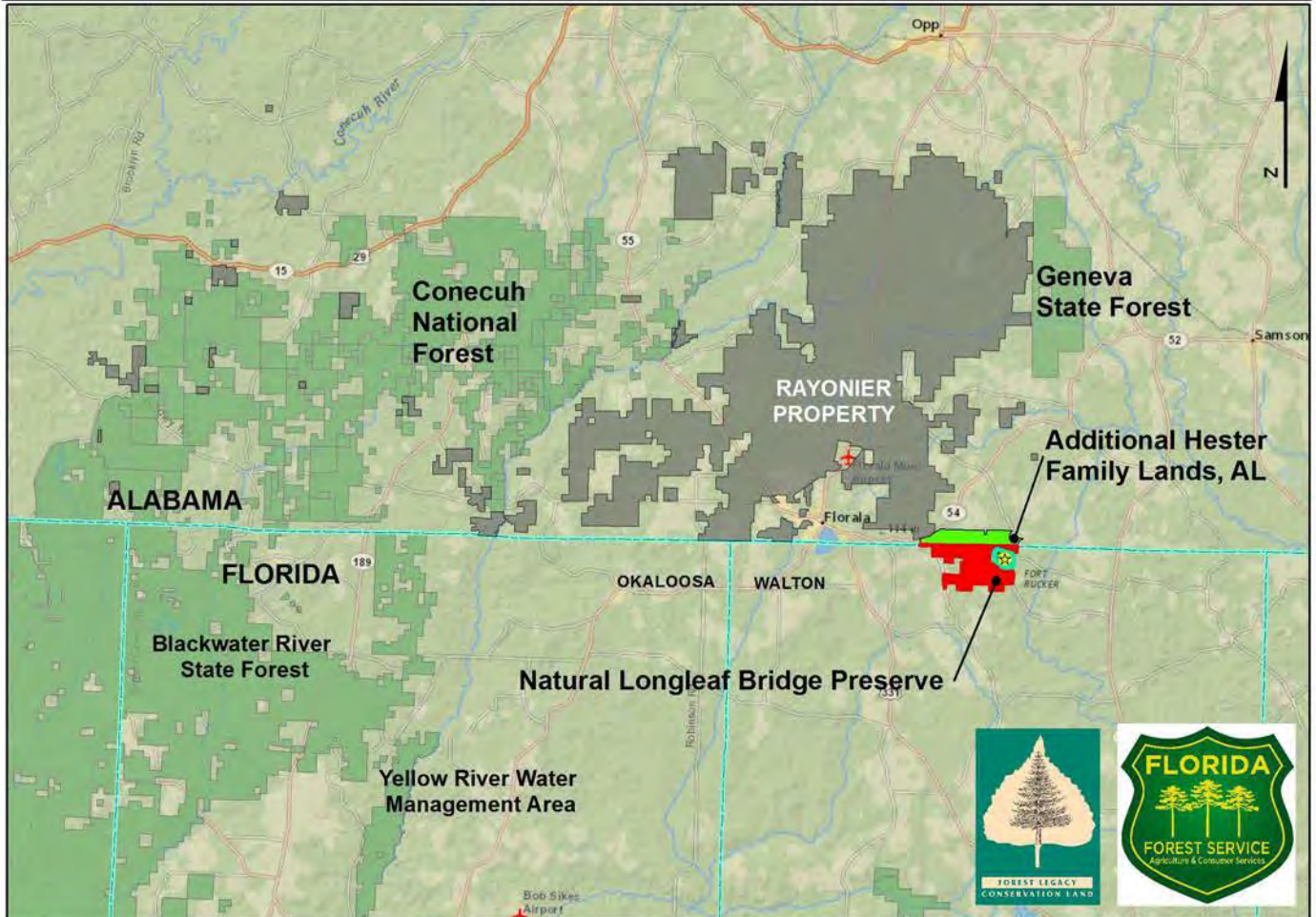
Room DOJ 240

Tallahassee, FL 32399-1650

850-681-5816

Larame.Ferry@freshfromflorida.com





3. POTENTIAL RECREATION AND PUBLIC USES.

The Florida Forever site presents an excellent opportunity for outdoor recreation and resource study in a near pristine example of the native longleaf pine ecosystem. The portion of the site containing the sink/rise formation has been suggested for management by Walton County and restoration of the limestone sink/rise structure by the Northwest Florida Water Management District.

4. KNOWN THREATS TO THE PROJECT.

Surrounding forest lands are being gradually converted to more intensive agricultural uses. The 1,527 acres sold by the Hester family in 2019 has already reportedly suffered damage to the longleaf resources, which included an intact understory in most areas with high biodiversity.

5. LOCAL RESOLUTIONS.

None.

6. GOALS AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES; FLORIDA FOREVER CRITERIA.

The project, as summarized in this application and in conjunction with the lands already contained within the Natural Bridge Creek Florida Forever site, appears to further the following goals and performance measures outlined in Section 259.105(4), Florida Statutes:

Goal A: Enhance the Coordination and Completion of Land Acquisition Projects

- Measure A1: The number of acres acquired through the state's land acquisition programs that contribute to the enhancement of essential natural resources, ecosystem service parcels, and connecting linkage corridors as identified and developed by the best available scientific analysis.
- Measure A3: The number of shared acquisition projects among Florida Forever funding partners and partners with other funding sources, including local governments and the Federal Government.

Goal B: Increase the Protection of Florida's Biodiversity at the Species, Natural Community, and Landscape Levels

- Measure B1: The number of acres acquired of significant strategic habitat conservation areas.
- Measure B2: The number of acres acquired of highest priority conservation areas for Florida's rarest species.

- Measure B4: The number of acres acquired of underrepresented native ecosystems.
- Measure B6: The percentage increase in the number of occurrences of imperiled species on publicly managed conservation areas.

Goal C: Protect, Restore, and Maintain the Quality and Natural Functions of Land, Water and Wetland Systems of the State

- Measure 1: The number of acres of publicly owned land identified as needing restoration, enhancement, and management, acres undergoing restoration or enhancement, acres with restoration activities completed, and acres managed to maintain such restored or enhanced conditions; the number of acres which represent actual or potential imperiled species habitat; the number of acres which are available pursuant to a management plan to restore, enhance, repopulate, and manage imperiled species habitat; and the number of acres of imperiled species habitat managed, restored, enhanced, repopulated, or acquired.
- Measure 11: The number of acres of public conservation lands in which upland invasive, exotic plants are under maintenance control.

Goal D: Ensure That Sufficient Quantities of Water are Available to Meet the Current and Future Needs of Natural Systems and the Citizens of the State

- Measure 3: The number of acres acquired of groundwater recharge areas critical to springs, sinks, aquifers, other natural systems, or water supply.

Goal E: Increase Natural Resource-Based Public Recreation or Educational Opportunities

- Measure 1: The number of acres acquired that are available for natural resource-based public recreation or education.
- Measure 2: The miles of trails that are available for public recreation, giving priority to those that provide significant connections including those that will assist in completing the Florida National Scenic Trail.

Goal G: Increase the Amount of Forestland Available for Sustainable Management of Natural Resources

- Measure 1: The number of acres acquired that are available for sustainable forest management.
- Measure 3: The number of acres of forestland acquired that will serve to maintain natural groundwater recharge functions.

Furthermore, as summarized in this application, the project and site address the following Florida Forever criteria as outlined in Section 259.105(9) and (10), Florida Statutes:

(9)

(a) The project meets multiple goals described in subsection (4).

(b) The project is part of an ongoing governmental effort to restore, protect, or develop land areas or water resources.

(c) The project has funding sources that are identified and assured through at least the first 2 years of the project.

(d) The project contributes to the solution of water resource problems on a regional basis.

(e) The project has a significant portion of its land area in imminent danger of development, in imminent danger of losing its significant natural attributes or recreational open space, or in imminent danger of subdivision which would result in multiple ownership and make acquisition of the project costly or less likely to be accomplished.

(f) The project implements an element from a plan developed by an ecosystem management team.

(g) The project is a joint acquisition, either among public agencies, nonprofit organizations, or private entities, or by a public-private partnership.

7. STATEMENT OF INTEREST TO BE ACQUIRED.

The project is proposed for fee simple acquisition.

8. PROPOSED MANAGER.

Florida Forest Service.

ATTACHMENT B

Tax parcel cards from the Walton County Property Appraiser's office are attached. The following table summarizes the tax parcel information.

Natural Bridge Creek Boundary Modification				
<u>Parcel ID</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>PA Acres</u>	<u>GIS Acres</u>	<u>Just Value</u>
27-6N-20-31000-004-0000	Amos Benton Hester III	40	38.74	\$52,000
29-6N-20-31000-002-0021	Judith Holley Hester	2	1.71	\$4,000
33-6N-20-31000-005-0020	Judith Holley Hester & Amos Benton Hester III	10	8.47	\$18,000
34-6N-20-31000-004-0000	Amos Benton Hester III	20	20.98	\$36,000
34-6N-20-31000-002-0020	Amos Benton Hester III	18	16.75	\$32,400
34-6N-20-31000-002-0000	Judith Holley Hester & Amos Benton Hester III	80	83.58	\$116,683
		170	170.23	\$259,083

The landowners have consented to this application and their signed authorization is attached.



Parcel Summary

Parcel ID 27-6N-20-31000-004-0000
 Location Address CHRISTIAN LIFE RD
 DEFUNIAK SPRINGS 32433
 Brief Tax Description* SE4 OF SW4
 *The Description above is not to be used on legal documents. Exact descriptions should be obtained from the recorded deed.
 Property Use Code TIMBERLAND (005400)
 Sec/Twp/Rng 27-6N-20
 Tax District County (District 5)
 Millage Rate 9.1822
 Acreage 40.000
 Homestead N

[View Map](#)

Owner Information

Hester Amos Benton III
 210 Bangsberg Rd
 Port Charlotte, FL 33952

Property Value

	2019
Building Value	\$0
Extra Features Value	\$0
Land Value	\$0
Land Agricultural Value	\$5,080
Agricultural (Market) Value	\$52,000
Just (Market) Value	\$52,000
Assessed Value	\$5,080
Exempt Value	\$0
Taxable Value	\$5,080
Maximum Save Our Homes Portability	\$0

"Just (Market) Value" description - This is the value established by the Property Appraiser for ad valorem purposes. This value does not represent anticipated selling price.

Land Information

Code	Land Use	Number of Units	Unit Type	Acres	Frontage	Depth
005401	TIMBER 1A	35.00	AC	35.000	0	0
009530	POND/LAKE	1.00	UT	0.600	0	0
005910	HARDWD HI	4.40	AC	4.400	0	0
009911	MKT.VALAG <40	39.40	AC	39.400	0	0

Sales

Multi Parcel	Sale Date	Sale Price	Instrument	Book	Page	Qualification	Vacant/Improved	Grantor	Grantee
N	03/14/1988	\$21,000	WD	491	263	Unqualified (U)	Vacant	FED LAND BANK OF COL	HESTER AMOS B III
N	05/19/1987	\$27,000	CT	420	126	Unqualified (U)	Vacant	EDWARDS STEVE O	FED LAND BANK OF COL
N	03/01/1981	\$18,000	WD	206	307	Qualified (Q)	Vacant		

Map



No data available for the following modules: Buildings, Sketches, Extra Features, Photos.



Parcel Summary

Parcel ID 29-6N-20-31000-002-0021
Location Address SANDY RAMP RD
 DEFUNIAK SPRINGS 32433
Brief Tax Description* THAT PORTION OF GOV LOT 1 LYING E OF CENTERLINE OF SANDY RAMP ROAD ALL IN FRACTIONAL SEC 29-6N-20W OR 2909-3317
 *The Description above is not to be used on legal documents. Exact descriptions should be obtained from the recorded deed.
Property Use Code VACANT (000000)
Sec/Twp/Rng 29-6N-20
Tax District County (District 5)
Millage Rate 9.1822
Acreage 2.000
Homestead N

[View Map](#)

Owner Information

Hester Judith Holley
 345 Galleon Dr
 Naples, FL 34102

Property Value

	2019
Building Value	\$0
Extra Features Value	\$0
Land Value	\$4,000
Land Agricultural Value	\$0
Agricultural (Market) Value	\$0
Just (Market) Value	\$4,000
Assessed Value	\$4,000
Exempt Value	\$0
Taxable Value	\$4,000
Maximum Save Our Homes Portability	\$0

"Just (Market) Value" description - This is the value established by the Property Appraiser for ad valorem purposes. This value does not represent anticipated selling price.

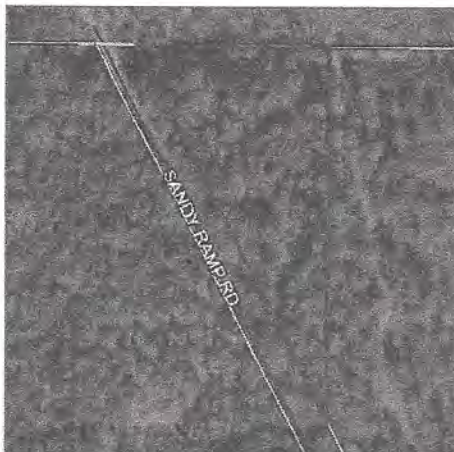
Land Information

Code	Land Use	Number of Units	Unit Type	Acres	Frontage	Depth
000000	VAC RES	1.00	AC	1.000	0	0
000000	VAC RES	1.00	AC	1.000	0	0

Sales

Multi Parcel	Sale Date	Sale Price	Instrument	Book	Page	Qualification	Vacant/Improved	Grantor	Grantee
N	01/11/2013	\$100	WD	2909	3317	Unqualified (U)	Vacant	SOUTHLAND STRUCTURAL SPECIALISTS	HESTER JUDITH HOLLEY

Map



No data available for the following modules: Buildings, Sketches, Extra Features, Photos.



qPublic.net™

Walton County Property Appraiser

Parcel Summary

Parcel ID 33-6N-20-31000-005-0020
Location Address APLIN RD
 DEFUNIAK SPRINGS 32433
Brief Tax Description* THAT PORTION OF NE1/4 OF SW1/4 LYING E OF CENTER LINE SANDY RAMP RD. OR 2864-586
 *The Description above is not to be used on legal documents. Exact descriptions should be obtained from the recorded deed.
Property Use Code TIMBERLAND (005400)
Sec/Twp/Rng 33-6N-20
Tax District County (District 5)
Millage Rate 9.1822
Acreage 10.000
Homestead N

[View Map](#)

Owner Information

[Hester Judith Holley &](#)
 Amos Benton Hester III
 210 Bangsberg Rd SE
 Port Charlotte, FL 339529707

Property Value

	2019
Building Value	\$0
Extra Features Value	\$0
Land Value	\$0
Land Agricultural Value	\$1,379
Agricultural (Market) Value	\$18,000
Just (Market) Value	\$18,000
Assessed Value	\$1,379
Exempt Value	\$0
Taxable Value	\$1,379
Maximum Save Our Homes Portability	\$0

"Just (Market) Value" description - This is the value established by the Property Appraiser for ad valorem purposes. This value does not represent anticipated selling price.

Land Information

Code	Land Use	Number of Units	Unit Type	Acres	Frontage	Depth
005401	TIMBER 1A	8.77	AC	8.770	0	0
009911	MKTVALAG <40	10.00	AC	10.000	0	0
006100	PASTURE 2	1.23	AC	1.230	0	0

Sales

Multi Parcel	Sale Date	Sale Price	Instrument	Book	Page	Qualification	Vacant/Improved	Grantor	Grantee
N	04/15/2011	\$26,500	WD	2864	586	Qualified (Q)	Vacant	NOBLES EDDIE	HESTER JUDITH HOLLEY & AMOS BENTON HOLLEY III

Map



No data available for the following modules: Buildings, Sketches, Extra Features, Photos.

**qPublic.net****Walton County Property Appraiser****Parcel Summary**

Parcel ID 34-6N-20-31000-004-0000
Location Address DEFUNIAK SPRINGS 32433
Brief Tax Description* E1/2 OF SW1/4 OF NW1/4 OR 723-128 OR 1025-079
 *The Description above is not to be used on legal documents. Exact descriptions should be obtained from the recorded deed.
Property Use Code TIMBERLAND (005400)
Sec/Twp/Rng 34-6N-20
Tax District County (District 5)
Millage Rate 9.1822
Acreage 20.000
Homestead N

[View Map](#)**Owner Information**

[Hester Amos Benton III](#)
 210 Bangsberg Rd
 Port Charlotte, FL 33952

Property Value

	2019
Building Value	\$0
Extra Features Value	\$0
Land Value	\$0
Land Agricultural Value	\$1,859
Agricultural (Market) Value	\$36,000
Just (Market) Value	\$36,000
Assessed Value	\$1,859
Exempt Value	\$0
Taxable Value	\$1,859
Maximum Save Our Homes Portability	\$0

Just (Market) Value description - This is the value established by the Property Appraiser for ad valorem purposes. This value does not represent anticipated selling price.

Land Information

Code	Land Use	Number of Units	Unit Type	Acres	Frontage	Depth
005401	TIMBER 1A	9.77	AC	9.770	0	0
005910	HARDWD HI	10.23	AC	10.230	0	0
009911	MKT.VAL.AG <40	20.00	AC	20.000	0	0

Sales

Multi Parcel	Sale Date	Sale Price	Instrument	Book	Page	Qualification	Vacant/Improved	Grantor	Grantee
N	09/02/1993	\$100	MD	<u>1025</u>	<u>79</u>	Unqualified (U)	Vacant	MARSHAL'S DEED (A HESTER)	HERRINGTON MICHELLE (CORRECTED FOR '94;THIS P
N	01/07/1991	\$6,000	WD	<u>723</u>	<u>128</u>	Qualified (Q)	Vacant	WILLIAMS W F	HESTER AMOS B III
N	08/20/1990	\$100	QC	<u>697</u>	<u>5</u>	Unqualified (U)	Vacant	TIDWELL FAYE	WILLIAMS W F
N	02/17/1982	\$100	WD	<u>512</u>	<u>152</u>	Unqualified (U)	Vacant	WILLIAMS W F	TIDWELL FAYE



Parcel Summary

Parcel ID 34-6N-20-31000-002-0020
 Location Address DEFUNIAK SPRINGS 32433
 Brief Tax Description* S 18 AC OF E2 OF NW4 OF NW4 OR 1025-79
 *The Description above is not to be used on legal documents. Exact descriptions should be obtained from the recorded deed.
 Property Use Code TIMBERLAND (005400)
 Sec/Twp/Rng 34-6N-20
 Tax District County (District 5)
 Millage Rate 9.1822
 Acreage 18.000
 Homestead N

[View Map](#)

Owner Information

Hester Amos Benton III
 210 Bangsberg Rd
 Port Charlotte, FL 33952

Property Value

	2019
Building Value	\$0
Extra Features Value	\$0
Land Value	\$0
Land Agricultural Value	\$2,484
Agricultural (Market) Value	\$32,400
Just (Market) Value	\$32,400
Assessed Value	\$2,484
Exempt Value	\$0
Taxable Value	\$2,484
Maximum Save Our Homes Portability	\$0

"Just (Market) Value" description - This is the value established by the Property Appraiser for ad valorem purposes. This value does not represent anticipated selling price.

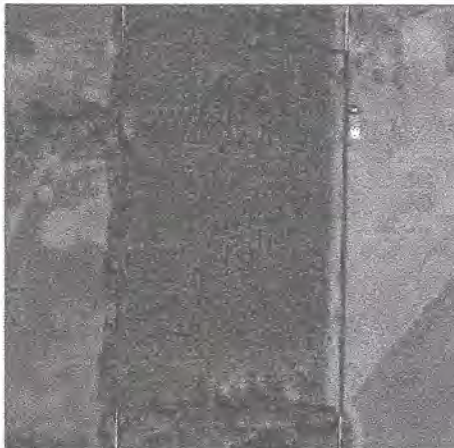
Land Information

Code	Land Use	Number of Units	Unit Type	Acres	Frontage	Depth
005401	TIMBER 1A	18.00	AC	18.000	0	0
009911	MKT.VALAG <40	18.00	AC	18.000	0	0

Sales

Multi Parcel	Sale Date	Sale Price	Instrument	Book	Page	Qualification	Vacant/Improved	Grantor	Grantee
N	02/27/1995	\$100	DI	1247	223	Unqualified (U)	Vacant	HERRINGTON MICHELLE	HESTER
N	09/02/1993	\$100	MD	1025	79	Unqualified (U)	Vacant	MARSHAL'S DEED (A HESTER)	HERRINGTON MICHELLE
N	03/14/1988	\$21,000	WD	491	263	Unqualified (U)	Vacant	FED LAND BANK OF COL	HESTER AMOS B III
N	05/19/1987	\$27,000	CT	420	126	Unqualified (U)	Vacant		

Map



No data available for the following modules: Buildings, Sketches, Extra Features, Photos.



Parcel Summary

Parcel ID 34-6N-20-31000-002-0000
 Location Address 1020 CHRISTIAN LIFE RD
 DEFUNIAK SPRINGS 32433
 Brief (TRACT 1):THE NE1/4 OF THE NW1/4 OF SEC 34-6N-20W AND (TRACT 2):THE SE1/4 OF THE NW1/4 OF SEC 34-6N-20W OR 227-645 OR 508-166 OR 2862-4191
 Tax Description* *The Description above is not to be used on legal documents. Exact descriptions should be obtained from the recorded deed.
 Property Use Code IMPROVED A (005000)
 Sec/Twp/Rng 34-6N-20
 Tax District County (District 5)
 Millage Rate 9.1822
 Acreage 80.000
 Homestead N

[View Map](#)

Owner Information

Hester Judith Holley &
 Hester Amos Benton III
 345 Galleon Dr
 Naples, FL 34102

Property Value

	2019
Building Value	\$8,333
Extra Features Value	\$1,650
Land Value	\$4,000
Land Agricultural Value	\$10,110
Agricultural (Market) Value	\$102,700
Just (Market) Value	\$116,683
Assessed Value	\$24,093
Exempt Value	\$0
Taxable Value	\$24,093
Maximum Save Our Homes Portability	\$0

"Just (Market) Value" description - This is the value established by the Property Appraiser for ad valorem purposes. This value does not represent anticipated selling price.

Land Information

Code	Land Use	Number of Units	Unit Type	Acres	Frontage	Depth
005000	RURAL HOME	1.00	AC	1.000	0	0
005200	CROPLAND2	35.00	AC	35.000	0	0
005401	TIMBER 1A	35.00	AC	35.000	0	0
005910	HARDWD HI	9.00	AC	9.000	0	0
009910	MKT.VALAG 40+	79.00	AC	79.000	0	0

Buildings

Building 1
 Type SINGLE FAM
 Total Area 1,218
 Heated Area 864
 Exterior Walls AVERAGE
 Roof Cover COMP LIGHT
 Interior Walls MINIMUM
 Frame Type N/A
 Floor Cover PINE WOOD
 Heat CONVECTION
 Air Conditioning WINDOW
 Bathrooms 1
 Bedrooms 2
 Stories 1
 Year Built 1954

Sketches



Extra Features

Code	Description	Number of Items	Length x Width x Height	Units	Unit Type	Year Built
0410	FIREPLACE	1	0 x 0 x 0	1	UT	0
0040	BARN,POLE	1	0 x 0 x 0	1	UT	0

Sales

Multi Parcel	Sale Date	Sale Price	Instrument	Book	Page	Qualification	Vacant/Improved	Grantor	Grantee
N	03/30/2011	\$200,000	WD	2862	4191	Qualified (Q)	Improved	ROBINSON JANICE M,DIETERICH SUE E & EDWARDS	HESTER JUDITH HOLLEY & HESTER AMOS BENTON III
N	04/22/1988	\$100	WD	508	166	Unqualified (U)	Improved	EDWARDS JOE E (1/4 INT)	ROBINSON JANICE M,DIETERICH SUE E & EDWARDS
N	01/05/1982	\$100	WD	227	645	Unqualified (U)	Improved	EDWARDS ESTELL B	ROBINSON JANICE M,EDWARDS JOE E & DIETERICH

Authorized Point of Contact Information

In accordance with the Florida Forever application process, this is to advise that the individual named below is the primary point of contact to receive and convey information on behalf of the owner(s) of the real property described below, which is located in Walton County, Florida, for all matters concerning this application.

Project Name/Property Name: Natural Bridge Creek Addition

Contact Person: Keith Fountain

Company Affiliation: Conservation Advisors LLC

Phone: () FAX: () Cell (407) 402-7091

E-Mail Address: keithrfountain@gmail.com

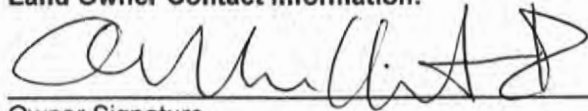
Address: <u>PO Box 845</u>	<u>DeLand</u>	<u>FL</u>	<u>32721</u>
	City	State	Zip Code

Legal description of Property: Section 27, 29, Township 6 N, and Range 20 W. Acres 170.
33, 34

Tax I.D. Number(s): 27-6N-20-31000-004-0000, 29-6N-20-31000-002-0021, 33-6N-20-31000-005-0020

34-6N-20-31000-002-0020, 34-6N-20-31000-002-0000, 34-6N-20-31000-004-0000

Land Owner Contact Information:



Owner Signature

May 11, 2020

Date

Amos Benton Hester III

Print Owner Name

Address: <u>210 Bangsberg Road</u>	<u>Port Charlotte</u>	<u>FL</u>	<u>33952</u>
	City	State	Zip Code

Phone: () FAX: () Cell (850) 598-0489

E-Mail Address: bentonhester@gmail.com

PLEASE NOTE:

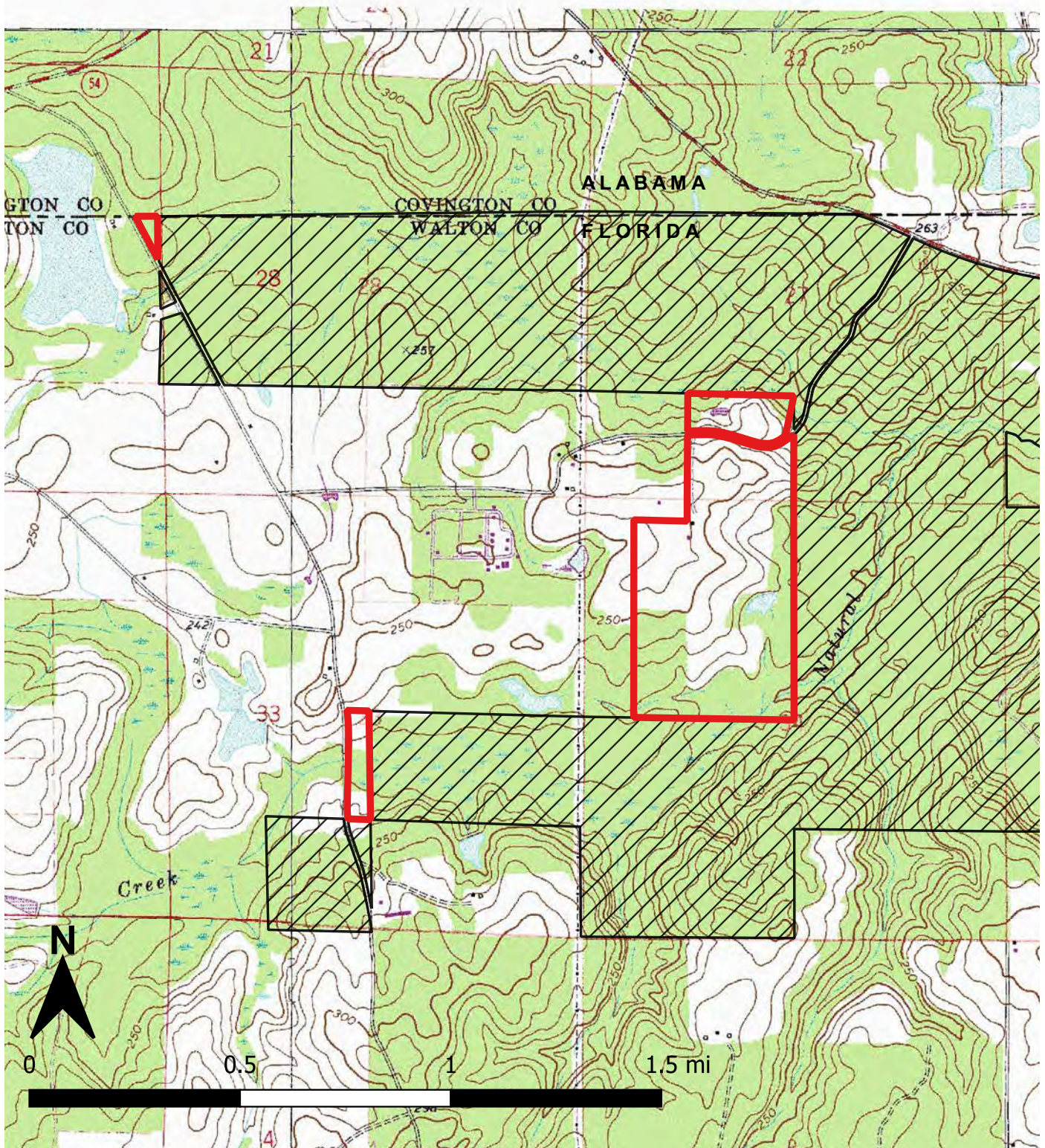
The land owner's signature above is not intended to preclude any representative of the Department of Environmental Protection, Division of State Lands (DSL), from contacting the property owner(s) directly concerning the property. This form is not intended to create or acknowledge an exclusive property listing agreement or any business relationship between the owner(s) of the property and the individual(s) named above. Owner understands that any commission or fee charged by the person named above in connection with the property is the sole responsibility of the land owner. This authorization will remain in effect through out the application process unless written notice of rescission by the owner(s), named above, is received by the DSL.

ATTACHMENT C

The following maps are attached:

1. Topographic map
2. Aerial photograph with tax parcels
3. Florida Department of Transportation map
4. Map of surrounding conservation lands
5. Land cover map

C.1 Project Boundary on USGS Topographic Map



USGS Topographic Survey Natural Bridge Creek Addition Walton County, Florida

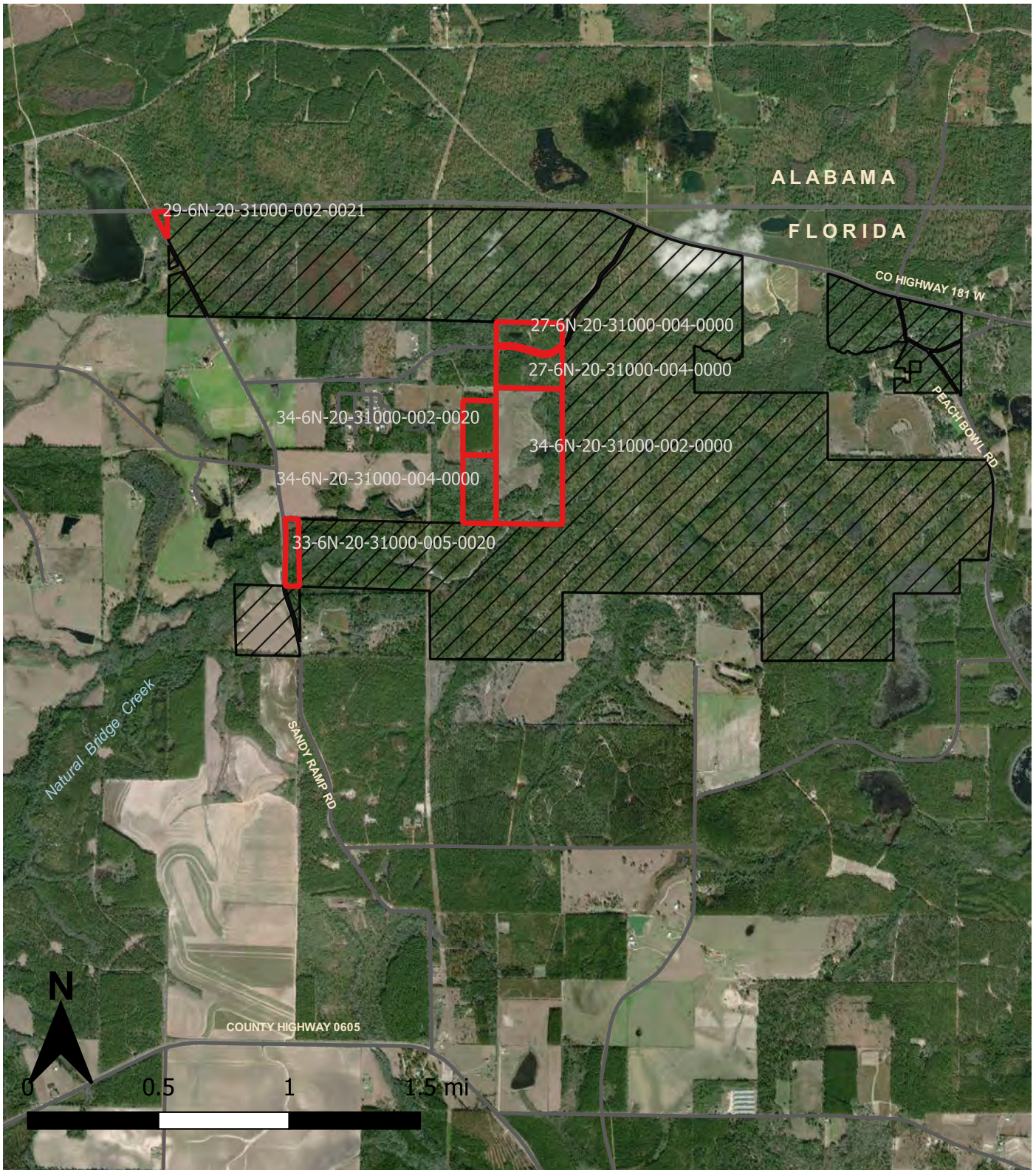
Legend

-  Project Boundary
-  Natural Bridge Creek Florida Forever Project
-  State Line



Conservation Advisors, LLC
Data: Parcels:Walton Co. GIS
FNAI FFBOT 12/19
Basemap: USDA Topo

C.2 Tax Parcels on Aerial Photograph



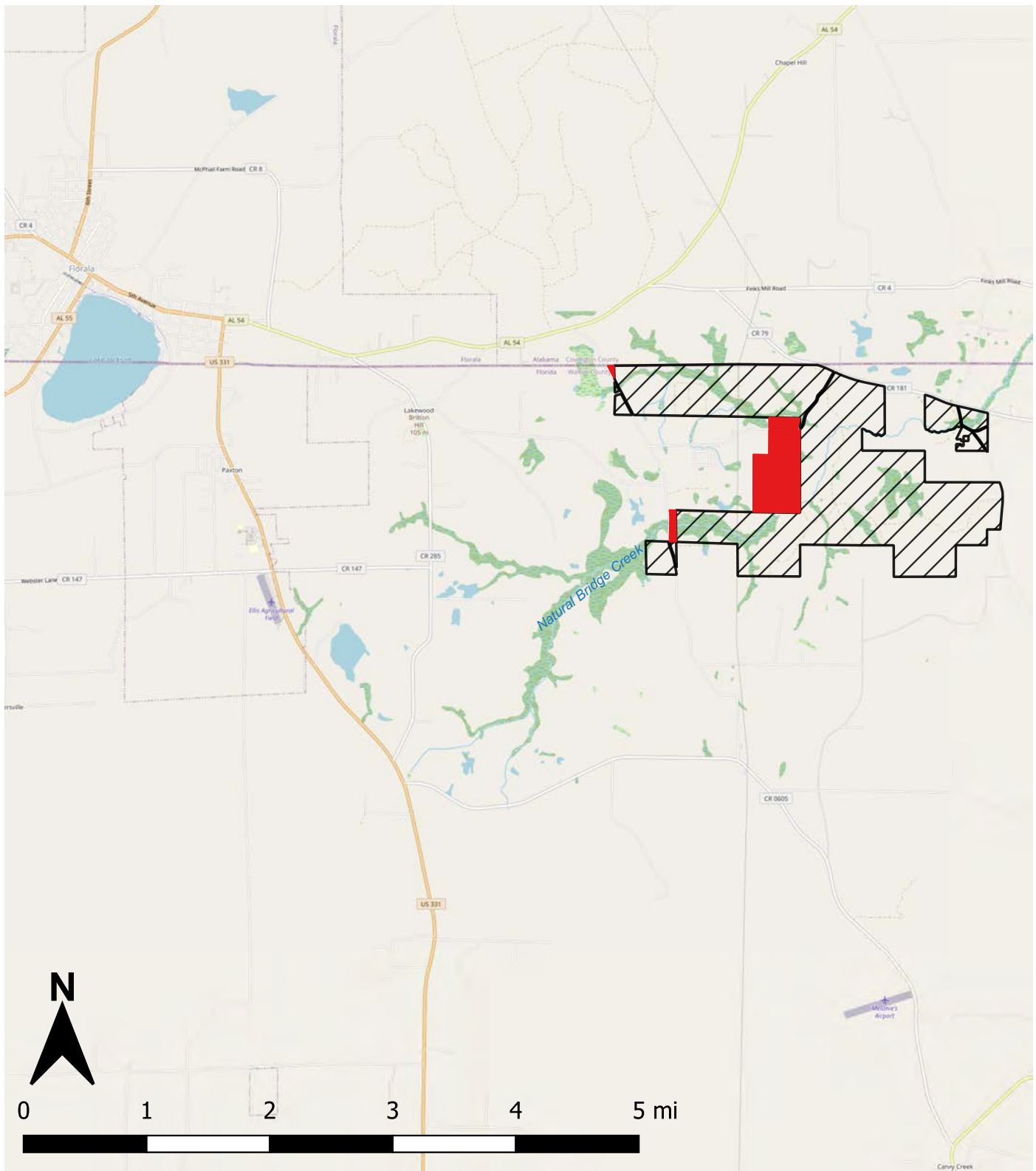
Aerial Photograph Natural Bridge Creek Addition Walton County, Florida

Legend

- Project Boundary
- Natural Bridge Creek Florida Forever Project
- State Line



C.3 Project Boundary on FDOT County General Highway Map



Department of Transportation Map Natural Bridge Creek Addition Walton County, Florida

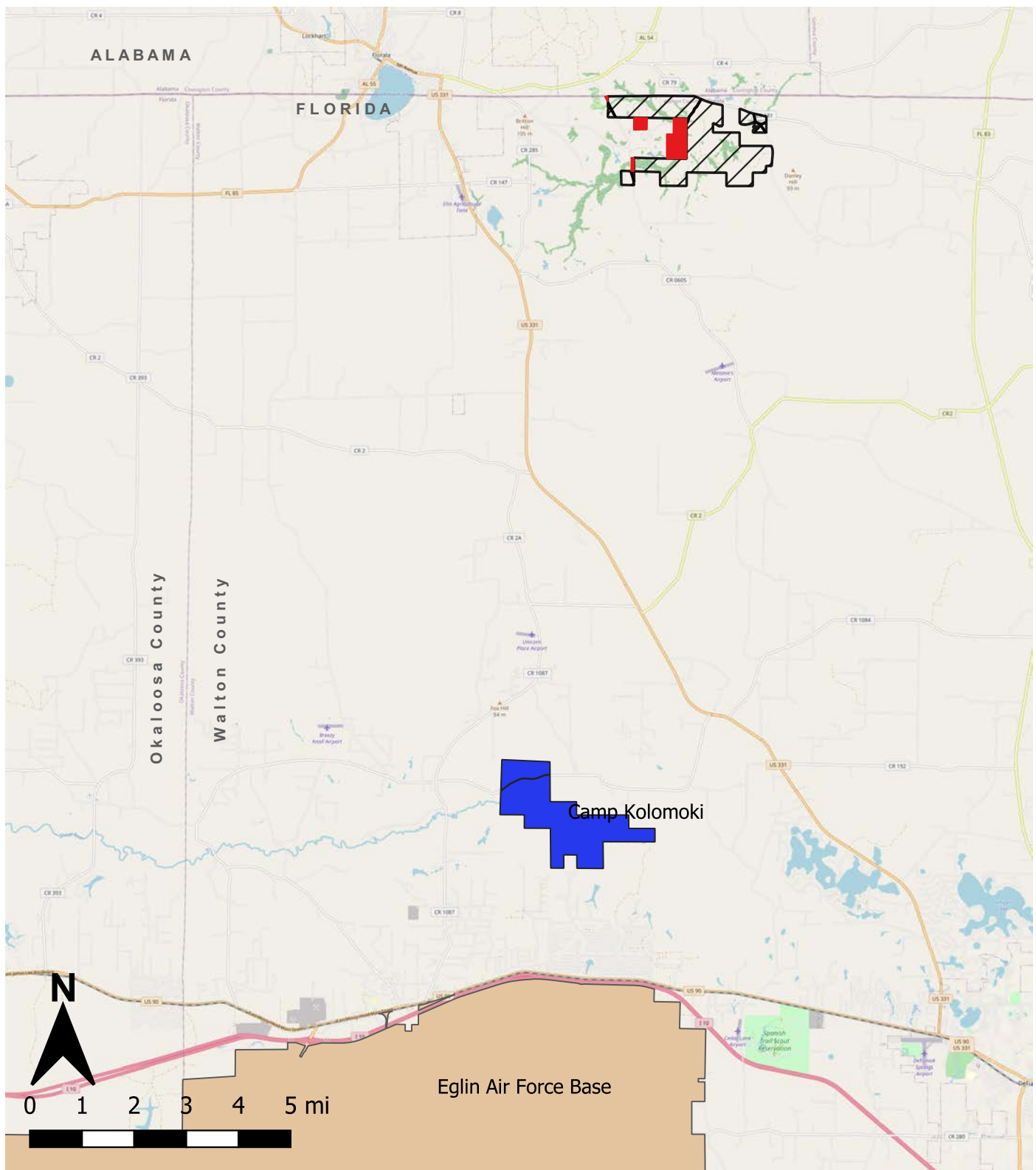
Legend

- Project Boundary
- Natural Bridge Creek Florida Forever Project



Conservation Advisors, LLC
Data: Parcels:Walton Co. GIS
FNAI FFBOT 12/19
Basemap: ESRI Street map

C.4 Project Boundary on Florida Conservation Lands Map



Florida Conservation Lands Map Natural Bridge Creek Addition Walton County, Florida

Legend

-  Project Boundary **Walton**
-  Natural Bridge Creek Florida Forever Project

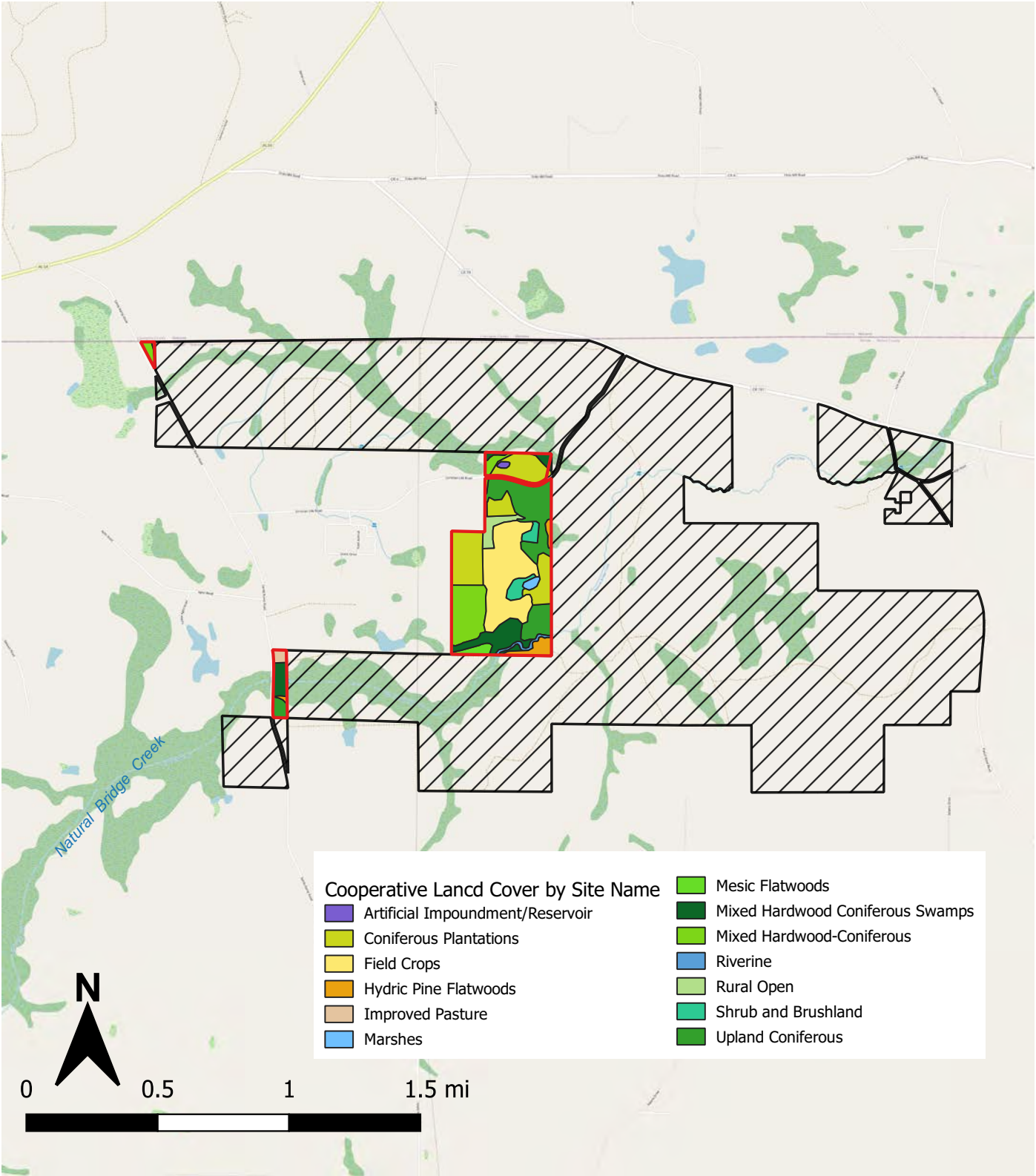
Florida Conservation Lands

-  Federal
-  Private



Conservation Advisors, LLC
Data: Parcels:Walton Co. GIS
FNAI: FFBOT 12/19, FLMA 3/20
Basemap: ESRI Street map

C.5 Project Boundary on FNAI Land Cover Map



Cooperative Land Cover by Site Name

Artificial Impoundment/Reservoir	Mesic Flatwoods
Coniferous Plantations	Mixed Hardwood Coniferous Swamps
Field Crops	Mixed Hardwood-Coniferous
Hydric Pine Flatwoods	Riverine
Improved Pasture	Rural Open
Marshes	Shrub and Brushland
	Upland Coniferous

FNAI Cooperative Land Cover Map
Natural Bridge Creek Addition
Walton County, Florida

Legend

Project Boundary

Project Boundary

Natural Bridge Creek Florida Forever Project



Conservation Advisors, LLC
Data: Parcels:Walton Co. GIS
FNAI: CLCv3.3, FFBOT 12/19
Basemap:Esri Street