



Alachua County

Alachua County Forever Watermelon Pond Project — Williams Tract



Forested wetlands
Photo taken by Diana Gijsselaers

Program Notes

- <> Alachua County Forever responds to public nominations.
- <> Property owners must be willing. Condemnation of property is not permitted under Alachua County Forever.
- <> Projects evaluated by staff and the Land Conservation Board.
- <> Criteria include protection of water resources, habitats, species, social value, manageability, and the economics of the acquisition.
- <> The County Commission approves acquisition projects.
- <> County can acquire property outright or certain rights through less-than-fee mechanisms such as conservation easements.
- <> Offers are made based on independent, private appraisals.
- <> Program funded through a \$29 million in voter-approved bonds.
- <> Program actively seeks state, federal and private grants.
- <> Properties are managed as preserves.
- <> Resource-compatible, passive recreation is encouraged on sites where appropriate.



Sandhill
Photo taken by Diana Gijsselaers

Sellers: Williams

Purchase Price: \$7,500/acre

Size: 40 acres

- This project is adjacent to the Florida Forever Watermelon Pond Project as well as three properties that are currently on the Alachua County Forever Active Acquisition List.
- This property composed of sandhill, scrubby flatwoods, xeric hammock, bog, and seepage stream all in good to excellent condition.
- The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission identified nineteen animal species to which the habitats on this property could be potentially significant, including central Florida crowned snake, Florida mouse, peninsula mole skink, Sherman's fox squirrel, striped newt, short-tailed snake, and turkey.
- Within one mile, there are FNAI occurrences for ten species, including gopher tortoise, Florida pine snake, eastern indigo snake, Florida sandhill crane, and bald eagle
- The key features of the management plan would include treatment of exotic invasive species and introduction of prescribed fire. These elements will be relatively easy to implement because of the remote nature of the property and also the fact that the neighboring properties regularly burn their properties.
- This property is well suited for such passive recreation activities as hiking and nature viewing.



ALACHUA COUNTY FOREVER REFERENDUM

Approved in November 2000 by the voters, to acquire, improve and manage the county's environmentally sensitive lands to protect water resources, wildlife habitats and natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation.

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