



**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING
COURTHOUSE ANNEX, COMMISSION MEETING ROOM**

JANUARY 07, 2020

9:00 AM

AGENDA

The Board of County Commissioners asks that all cell phones are turned off or placed on silent (vibrate) mode. Any handouts (information) for distribution to the Commission must be submitted to the Board Secretary (Clerk's Office) or to the County Coordinator on or before the Thursday prior to that Tuesday's meeting. Failure to do so will result in your removal from the agenda or a delay of any action relating to your request until a future meeting.

Call to Order

Prayer and Pledge

Approval of Minutes

1. Minutes-December 17, 2019

Payment of County Bills

2. Bill List for Payment

Public Comments

This is an opportunity for the public to comment on agenda or non-agenda items. When you are recognized to be heard by the Chairman, please sign the speaker's log and adhere to the time limit. An individual will be allowed to speak for three minutes whereas a designated representative of a group or faction will be allowed to speak for five minutes.

Department Directors Report

Superintendent of Public Works – Howard Nabors

3. Report

Action Items:

None

Information Items:

- A. Work Performed/Material Hauled Report (Agenda Packet)

Solid Waste Director – Fonda Davis

4. Report

Action Items:

None

Information Items:

- A. Debris Pickup/Recycle Material Hauled Report (Agenda Packet)

Emergency Management Director – Pam Brownell

- 5. Report

Action Items:

None

Information Item:

A. Staff worked on updating the LMS (local mitigation strategy).

B. FCEM Staff continues to work on FEMA reimbursement claims from Hurricane Michael. This includes working with FEMA staff regarding mitigation of damaged parks, roads, etc. Mitigation takes some time but EOC Staff continue to work diligently with FEMA Staff on the most beneficial repairs for Franklin County.

C. Please see attached update on FEMA Reimbursement for Hurricane Michael

Extension Office Director – Erik Lovstrand

- 6. County Extension Activities December 18, 2019 – January 7, 2020

General Extension Activities:

Extension office assisted clientele with issues related to soil samples, palm tree seedling control, pine tree deaths, oyster farming issues, injured wildlife, and citrus tree health.

Staff has begun moving more things to the new office location as the final floor work is being completed in early January. Plans for an open house event will be started as we get closer to being fully operational in the building.

Overall Extension Advisory Committee met for their second meeting of the year to discuss work during 2019 and plans for 2020.

Sea Grant Extension:

Extension Director participated in second Apalachicola Bay System Initiative meeting as part of the Community Advisory Board for the FSU-led Bay Restoration Effort.

Discussions continue with Sea Grant colleagues regarding a publication aimed at providing lessons learned by shellfish growers during Hurricane Michael preparation and aftermath. This will assist them with using best farm management practices to minimize losses and speed recovery following extreme weather events.

4-H Youth Development:

Apalachicola's 4-H Elite club participated in a service project with local seniors by donating blankets, socks and crocheted hats to help keep people warm this winter.

They also coordinated a "hidden book challenge" for the local community to encourage youth to read and share the books with others.

Family Consumer Sciences:

Family Nutrition Program (FNP) Assistant teaching hands-on cooking skills with pre-K youth to 8th grade with "Kids in the Kitchen curriculum. Includes kitchen safety, cooking skills, how to follow recipes and, always the favorite part, taste testing.

FNP Program Assistant has engaged a new pre-K site to be involved with the FNP program. This will involve youth in the Head Start program in Apalachicola with nutrition education.

Franklin County Educational Team

Erik Lovestrand, County Extension Director/Sea Grant Regional Specialized Agent

Michelle Huber, Office Manager/Program Assistant, Franklin County

Kayle Mears, Family Nutrition Program Assistant

Samantha Kennedy, Wakulla County Family and Consumer Sciences

Rachel Pienta, Ph.D., Wakulla County 4-H Youth Development

RFP / RFQ / Bids Opening

7. The Franklin County Board of County Commissioners will open and read aloud received sealed bids for constructing C.R. 67/ Tallahassee Street Sidewalk Improvements.

The project is located in Franklin County, Florida and consists of approximately 11,558 linear feet of sidewalk construction on CR 67/Tallahassee Street in Carrabelle, Florida.

Request: Board action to send the bids to the engineer for review and a recommendation.

SHIP Program – Lori Switzer – Report

8. Report

Hurricane Housing Recovery Program (HHRP)

Just to recap, the County has been granted disaster funds in the amount of \$1,235,000 through Florida Housing, due to Hurricane Michael.

Approximately half of the funds have been released to the county which has enabled me to really move forward.

We ran the ad in the August 29th issue of the times. The application period ran for two weeks, from Oct 1 through the 16th. We received 46 applications which consist of:

7 houses

35 mobile homes

3 campers- referred to Angela Webster w/Capital Area Community Action

1 renter who is now homeless-we are currently in the process of helping with down payment assistance.

The SHIP inspector Michael McWilliams and I went to each of the mobile homes, took pictures and assessed the damage. Priority was given to actual hurricane damage, special needs and low to very low-income applicants.

At this point we will definitely be able to assist at least 19 applicants. 7 house repairs, 8 new mobile homes and 4 with mobile home repairs. The goal is to assist more applicants, but that will depend on how much is actually spent on the repairs and new mobile homes.

I am currently in the process of getting the applicants paperwork in order and getting contractors involved in starting on the repairs. In the meantime, we are working on the bid package and advertisement for the new mobile homes.

State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP)

For the FY 2018-2019 funds we have been able to assist 31 applicants.

5 with down payment assistance

8 with Rehabilitation and emergency repairs

18 with Disaster funds (\$10,000 grants-mostly assisted with roofing)

We ran the ad for applications for FY 2019-2020 this past September and accepted applications in the month of October.

We received 12 applications for the rehabilitation and emergency repair programs. We should be able to assist all of the applicants on the waiting list. We also have funds for Down Payment Assistance. We do not have a deadline for that program and have funds available until they are spent.

Community Action Agency – Angela Webster – Request

9. Request

I received a call from the family at 579 Ridge Road requesting assistance with repairs to their home – damages caused by Limerock Fire. I was able to confirm from the list provided by EOC vinyl siding was damaged. The family residing at the above named address do not meet the income criteria for CDBG.

I have collected all required documentation for proof of identity and proof of income to confirm the family is in fact ineligible due to income.

The family informed me they were unable to arrange to have the home assessed as no local contractors were available. I reached out to a few local contractors to include:

- Oxendine Construction Services (No answer, left several messages)
- Greg Prickett Builders (No answer, voicemail box full – unable to leave message)
- Poloronis Construction (Agreed to assess home, but not available until first of the year)

I spoke with Tress (EOC) about the challenges of securing a contractor for this case. Tress referred me to Budget Remodeling & Solutions out of Bay County. I reached out to the company and they were on site within a week. During the assessment of the outside damage, survivor informed the contractor there was damage to the inside wall and flooring. It appears that over time the damages have caused leakage, so the quote includes the cost to repair the outside damage as well as inside.

I have attached the estimate from Budget Remodeling & Solutions for a total of \$4063.64. They are asking for \$2000 down and the remainder once the job is complete.

Request: Board action to approve use of fire relief funds to pay for the cost to repair damages to vinyl siding at 579 Ridge Road as the survivors do not qualify for CDBG?

Clerk of Courts – Marcia M. Johnson – Report

RESTORE Coordinator – Alan Pierce – Report

County Coordinator – Michael Morón – Report

Action Items

10. FDEM Weems: At your December 3rd meeting, Mr. Pierce presented an amendment that he sent to the Florida Department of Emergency Management (FDEM) regarding the loss of

revenue at Weems Memorial Hospital due to Hurricane Michael. Staff received the FDEM agreement, allocating some \$266,000, for Weems loss of revenue claim for expenses. FDEM is asking that the County sign and return the agreement prior to January 17 as the state would like to pay these funds as expeditiously as possible.

Request: Board action to approve and authorize the Chairman's signature on the FDEM agreement allocating \$266,578.78 to Weems Memorial as part of the Hurricane Michael Recovery Grant Program.

11. Library Director: At your last meeting I was directed to have a meeting with the Library Director, the second meeting in his first sixty days, regarding on going complaints and problems received by Commissioners and county staff about his treatment of library staff members, library program volunteers, and patrons and the continued neglect of his daily responsibilities as Director. I met with Mr. Corey Bard on January 2nd to discuss these matters. Mr. Bard agreed that he needed to do a better job with his day to day responsibilities, however, he felt that any complaints about the way he treated staff, volunteers, and patrons had to be "made up" because he got along with everyone he came in contact with here in the county. I reminded Mr. Bard that he was on a probationary period and could be dismissed by the Board with or without cause. I further explained that based on the comments made by the Board at the December 17th meeting, I wasn't sure how the Board would react to my update of our meeting. I made an offer to Mr. Bard, allowing him to resign with a severance pay option if he thought this job was no longer a fit for him; Mr. Bard refused that offer. At the end of our meeting, I advised Mr. Bard that I would update the Board on the results of the meeting.

On Saturday, January 4, 2020 at 4:26 pm (ET) I received the following message from Mr. Bard:

"Just a warning, if I am fired, I will build a legal team, interview the directors going back a decade and present a case of an environment of intimidation, harassment and I have the resources to file lawsuits for the rest of your life"

I remind the Board that Mr. Bard is slightly 2 months into his 6-month probation period and even though he has a master's in library science and work experience, based on his threat and drastic reaction to our meeting, I believe improvement is unlikely.

Although Mr. Bard is a probationary employee without a property interest in his employment, he has a liberty interest in his employment. If the Board decides to take adverse employment action against Mr. Bard, he must be permitted, at his request, to appear before the Board to tell his side of the story.

Request: Board action to take disciplinary action regarding Mr. Corey Bard's employment as the county's Director of Library Services.

12. Timber Island Road: The county has received the Florida Department of Transportation signed agreement for the work on Timber Island Road. This \$800,000 project includes repaving Timber Island Road from Highway 98 to the Carrabelle River and building guardrails on the Timber Island Bridge. Board authorization to start negotiations with the county's engineering firm, Dewberry Engineers, Inc. to design the improvements for this project.

Request: Board action to authorize county staff to start negotiations with Dewberry Engineers, Inc. for the project design.

13. Pastor David Walker, Weems Interim CEO, informed me that Weems was selected to participate in a Technical Assistance Program with Texas A & M University. They will have representatives in the county on January 21st and 22nd to conduct a site visit at Weems. Those representatives would like to be on the January 21st meeting agenda to explain the grant and do a brief presentation entitled "The State of Rural Health Care". The Weems Board Chairman and Interim CEO are both expected to be on the January 21st agenda to give an update and discuss the Healthcare proposals.

Request: Board action to add Texas A & M to the January 21st agenda.

14. Genesis Halff, Inc. the engineers for County Road 30A project, has finalized the merger with Halff Associates, Inc. They would like the Board to authorize a consent assigning the county's contract with Genesis Halff, Inc. to Halff Associates, Inc. Attorney Shuler will need to review the Contract Assignment Agreement. I have included a progress report (agenda packet) from Halff on the County Road 30A project.

Request: Board action to authorize the Chairman's signature on the Contract Assignment Agreement assigning the county contract from Genesis Halff, Inc. to Halff Associates, Inc. contingent on the county attorney's review and approval.

Information Items

15. DEO Quarterly Report: Mr. Pierce has submitted the Agreement DL012 Quarterly Report for period ending December 31, 2019 to the Department of Economic Opportunity. This agreement is for the \$750,000 that the county plans to use as a match for the FEMA Alligator Drive restoration project. The county is waiting for FEMA to approve Alligator Drive's scope of work.
16. Tate's Hell Ten-Year Land Management Plan: Attached to my report (Agenda Packet) is the Tate's Hell Ten-Year Land Management Plan for your review. The plan was approved on October 18, 2019.
17. "Buddy" Ward Reef: The county has received a fully executed permit for the "Buddy" Ward Artificial Reef project. Mr. Grayson Shepard will appear at a future meeting to discuss the next steps with the Board.
18. 2020 TRIP Sidewalk Project: Based on Commissioner Parrish's request at the last meeting, Mr. Curenton was able to verify that the sidewalk walk project, from around the NAPA store to Burger King here in Apalachicola, was not selected for funding. FDOT will send some guidance and instructions for re-applying for 2020 TRIP funding.
19. Extension Services Office Contract Amendment: At a previous meeting Mr. Erik Lovestrand, Extension Services Director, stated that there was a possibility that the county would request a contract extension for his new office renovation project. Due to some flooring issues, staff did request and receive the contract amendment to extend the contract date. The flooring issues has been resolved and as soon as the contractor completes the work, we will close out the contract.

- 20. Building Inspector:** On December 18, 2019, Mr. Patterson, your Building Inspector, was issued a Provisional 1 and 2 Family Dwelling Inspector license which allows him to perform all duties of a 1 and 2 Family Dwelling Inspector. He has one year from December 18 to pass all Building Inspector examinations but anticipates completion of these exams in 6 months. After that, Mr. Patterson will pursue his Building Official license which will take an additional six months to a year.

County Attorney - Michael Shuler - Report

Commissioners' Comments

Adjournment

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
COURTHOUSE ANNEX – COMMISSION MEETING ROOM
REGULAR MEETING, DECEMBER 17, 2019 9:00 A.M.
MINUTES**

Commissioners Present: Noah Lockley – Chairman, Ricky Jones-Vice-Chairman, Joseph Parrish, William Massey, Bert B. Boldt, II

Others Present: Marcia M. Johnson-Clerk of Court, Erin Griffith-Assistant Finance Director, Michael Moron-County Coordinator, Michael Shuler – County Attorney, Alan Pierce-RESTORE Coordinator, Lori P. Hines-Deputy Clerk to the Board.

Call to Order

Chairman Lockley called the meeting to Order.

Prayer and Pledge

There was a prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

1. 1. Minutes-November 19, 2019
 - o [Minutes-November 19, 2019.pdf](#) (1.17 MB)
2. 2. Minutes-December 3, 2019
 - o [Minutes-December 3, 2019.pdf](#) (1.00 MB)

On motion by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Massey, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to approve the minutes.

Payment of County Bills

1. 3. Bill List for Payment

On motion by Commissioner Massey, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to approve payment of the County's bills.

Public Comments

Mr. Moron announced the application for Alligator Point has been withdrawn so the public hearing will not occur today.

Mr. Moron reported there are also people here about the proposed Dollar General in Lanark Village but there is not a public hearing scheduled today. He stated the Board will decide today if they will schedule a public hearing. He said there is no other time to be heard about the Lanark Village application so individuals need to speak during Public Comments.

Mr. Shawn Oxedine, a resident of Carrabelle, said he is a builder in the county and he addressed a situation with a friend of his in relation to the 50 ft. setback in the Critical Habitat Zone (CHZ). He asked the Board to consider looking into the 50 ft. CHZ ruling as the rule was made in the 1980's and things have changed since then. Mr. Oxendine stated his friend has 3 lots and they combined the lots and cannot get a house on the property within being in the CHZ. He explained the setback for the City of Carrabelle and the City of Apalachicola are 20 ft. Mr. Oxendine pointed out Wakulla County has recently deleted their setback but they cannot get in the wetlands. Mr. Oxendine stated the setback was taking away from the tax base in Wakulla County and people were not able to build because of the regulations. He reported Liberty County has a 35 ft. setback. Mr. Oxendine questioned why both cities are one way and the county's requirement is different. He said they have a pending item at the Board of Adjustment now and they will be before this Board in the future. Attorney Shuler stated this item was at the last Board of Adjustment meeting and the acreage as configured has the house slightly into the CHZ so according to the county's rule the home would be reduced to 1,000 sq. ft. He reported this matter was tabled at the last meeting and is still being looked at by the Board of Adjustment. He stated since the Board of Adjustment has not made a decision there is nothing for this Board's consideration yet. He said this Board does not take action under public comment. Attorney Shuler reported the item is being looked at and according to the property owner there are some new facts that may possibly provide an exemption to the rule which reduces the square footage. Attorney Shuler was not sure if the building plans had been turned in yet but said they are waiting on information. He recommended the Board wait until the Board of Adjustment makes a decision and then the item will return to this Board. Chairman Lockley said they will get back in touch with Mr. Oxendine.

Mr. Michael McLoad, a resident of Franklin County, discussed the rezoning in Lanark Village and said he wants to go on the record as objecting. He said everyone received the long letter he sent objecting to this rezoning. He presented a question for the applicant's attorney about the language in Chapter 163. He said the application does not include the exhibits posted and he would like to see the exhibits. He stated it is the responsibility of the Commission to protect the peaceful enjoyment of the resident's lifestyle and of their residential property. He reported Lanark Village is one of the prettiest areas and doing the rezoning will negatively impact the quality of life in Lanark Village. He said the Department of Transportation has approved the traffic flow in the area but he thinks it will be dangerous not to have a center turn lane particularly east bound because there is not a shoulder. He explained the Putnal Station property is zoned commercial and would allow this use. Mr. McLoad said the Board should let the free market decide if the people who own the Putnal's Station property want to sell or not but that is not a reason to add more retail zoning. Mr. McLoad stated there is no need for

another Dollar General Store when there is a store 5 miles away in Carrabelle. He asked the Board to think a long time about this decision.

Ms. Christina Saunders, a resident of Franklin County, stated she owns the property that Dollar General is looking at and progress is needed for the county to grow. She said the Dollar General Store in Carrabelle is nice and this store will be too. She reported this store will be convenient to the elderly so they do not have to travel. She requested the Board approve a public hearing for this matter.

Mr. Bill Michler, a resident of Lanark Village, said his property is across the street from the proposed Dollar Store property. He discussed the impact on his quality of life and how he will have to endure 100+ days of construction if this project moves forward. He reported in the presentation he has not seen anything about the 7 residences that surround this existing commercial property. He stated the property that they are attempting to join up to has not been operated as a commercial site for 57 years and there is no commercial activity within 1 mile in either direction of the proposed site. He expressed concern about the process and said it has been going on since July but they have not known about it. Mr. Michler said they have heard that this project is going to be approved but if they are following the process how do they know it will be approved. Mr. Michler explained going to Carrabelle to shop is a ritual and they ask their neighbors if they want to go. He suggested they may need a rideshare program in the Village which also encourages the spirit of a village. He stated commerce goes on when they travel from Lanark Village to Carrabelle and shop. He reported Lanark Village has existed over 100 years without a commercial property existing. He said the land use and rezoning are the biggest issues.

Mr. Chris West, present with the developer on the project, said they will have another meeting with time just to address public comments on this project. He asked that they hold the rest of the comments until the next meeting as they were not going to address them today but he will leave it to the Board's discretion. Chairman Lockley stated they have a right to present public comments.

Mr. Mark Hopkins, a property owner in Lanark Village, said his property is across from the item being discussed. He stated there is a list of reasons why they do not want commercial development but if this property is developed then the lights will shine in his house when anyone leaves the store and that will destroy some of their peace and quiet. He explained he bought the property to retire and the property is residential and needs to stay residential. He said they discussed the Putnal property and said they are using that property to allow the rezoning but he is against it. Mr. Hopkins stated nothing in this area has been commercial for half a century and the existing landowners do not want it to be commercial. Mr. Hopkins reported if they rezone in a residential area then it will open up the area for other development. He explained they cannot disallow other requests if they approve this one. He requested the Board reject this project today. He said he has no objection to the store but not in this place.

Mr. James B. Putnal, a property owner in Lanark Village, stated he and his children inherited the property where the Putnal Station was. He said the property is half residential and half commercial but he does not have plans to start a business or bring it back to commercial status because of stipulations from the county's rules. He explained they want him to destroy the existing buildings and build new and his grandfather would not have wanted that. Mr. Putnal said he has lived on this property all of his life except for 10 years when he was out of state. He reported he does not have plans to develop the property. He stated this is a large commercial piece of property but he was never approached by a developer to do any building.

Mr. Jaime Larks, Teramore Development, stated his family owns property down from this site. He reported there is a lot of support for this project but people are too intimidated to speak out about the project. He said they started the process in July but had to make strategic steps to be able to be here today. Mr. Larks commented he held a community meeting and it was informative for the community. He said over 150 letters were sent out to people in the community according to the Tax Assessor's website. Mr. Larks stated he has answered every phone call and email about the project. He said his family and people adjacent to the property are in favor of the project. He stated they will make improvements and it will be a nice store. He explained they are also property owners in Franklin County.

Mayor Kevin Begos - City of Apalachicola – Comments

Mayor Begos thanked Mr. Fonda Davis, Mrs. Erin Griffith, Mr. Michael Moron and Attorney Shuler for helping over the last few months. He apologized for some things that happened in the past between the City of Apalachicola and the county. He stated the City Commission unanimously passed a Resolution endorsing a full hospital in Apalachicola but not some kind of emergency room. He explained they are not specifying which company the Board chooses but believe there should be a full service hospital in Apalachicola to honor the interlocal agreement.

Mayor Begos stated he has some individual comments that are not something the City of Apalachicola has addressed yet. He said in relation to the water wars decision the last ruling that sent this matter to a Special Master was a 5-4 vote but one of those votes to keep considering this item has retired so whether or not the Supreme Court keeps hearing this issue may come down to this change.

Mayor Begos reported everyone is trying to help the bay recover but there are concerns from local oyster dealers about the FSU/Triumph Grant. He said they should give more feedback to FSU in the future about what they are doing because there are concerns about how the project is moving forward.

Mayor Begos stated he will be glad to work with the county on anything and if they need more guidance on the Weems Memorial Hospital issue please let them know.

Department Directors Report

Superintendent of Public Works – Howard Nabors

1. 4. Report

Action Items

No Action Items

Information Items

Mr. Nabors stated he does not have a report for the Board. Commissioner Jones asked if they have done anything about the trees on the south side near where the building will be constructed for the Road Department. Mr. Nabors answered no, not until they know the exact location of the building and then they will remove the trees. Commissioner Jones said they do not want any trees near the new building.

Chairman Lockley asked about the holidays for the Road Department. Mr. Nabors responded they will work on Monday and are off Tuesday-Thursday unless there is an emergency.

Work Performed/Material Hauled Report (Agenda Packet)

- [RD Work Performed Material Hauled Report.pdf](#) (0.15 MB)
- [RD report form.pdf](#) (0.04 MB)

Solid Waste Director – Fonda Davis

1. 5. Report

Action Items

No Action Items

Mr. Davis stated the recycling bins from the Carrabelle site have been pulled in temporarily to slow down illegal dumping. He said they plan to put the bins back out for the holidays. Commissioner Massey asked if Mr. Davis has considered putting up a camera. Mr. Davis stated he has been in contact with the Sheriff's Department about a camera. Commissioner Boldt said they should consider a mobile recycling service and he would like to work with Mr. Davis on this item. Mr. Davis agreed that sounds good. Chairman Lockley reported they had to do this in Apalachicola also. Mr. Davis said they did and the illegal dumping slowed down but then picked up again and this is the second time in Carrabelle also. Chairman Lockley asked him to keep the Board informed of what is going on with the recycling bins. Mr. Davis reported the landfill is closed Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday but open Monday and Friday of next week.

Information Items

A. Debris Pickup/Recycle Material Hauled Report (Agenda Packet)

- o [SW report form.pdf](#) (0.04 MB)
- o [Debris Pickup/Recycle Material Hauled Report.pdf](#) (0.06 MB)

Emergency Management Director – Pam Brownell

1. 6. Report

Action Items

No Action Items

Information Items

A. Franklin County Emergency Management attended the Region 2 Quarterly meeting.

B. Franklin County Emergency Management is diligently working on completing all paperwork for FEMA reimbursement.

C. Franklin County Emergency Management Staff is organizing and compiling care boxes for St James Rehab Center.

D. Franklin County CEMP has been approved and the resolution signed.

E. Franklin County Emergency Management is accepting applications for Hurricane Loss Mitigation Program. Criteria and Applications are available at Franklin Emergency Management's website.

F. FCEM is completing the annual NIMS survey for the state. It is a requirement to ensure the county is eligible for FEMA reimbursement.

G. FCEM is reviewing and rewriting the Local Mitigation Strategy Plan for the county.

- o [EM report form.pdf](#) (0.04 MB)

Mrs. Brownell stated FEMA called yesterday and a FEMA person will come down today and work through some projects with them. Commissioner Jones asked if they are close to doing any of the projects that are outstanding from Hurricane Michael. Mrs. Brownell explained they are working on them. She explained they tell them to submit the projects without the paperwork but then they say they cannot be processed because they did not put the documents in. She reported they are working on uploading the documentation. She stated they are being pushed to sign off on projects that they prefer departments review so they can determine if the figures are correct before they sign off on the projects. Mrs. Brownell stated the reason for this is they are not the department working in that area. Commissioner Jones

said it has been 14 months since the storm and some things are in the same dilapidated state they were to begin with. Mrs. Brownell reported some of these items are mitigation projects and they are working on them. Commissioner Jones said they either are going to do the projects or not so they just need to tell them if they are not going to do the projects.

Extension Office Director – Erik Lovstrand

Mr. Moron reported Mr. Lovstrand is at a University of Florida (UF) meeting today. He said if there are any questions about his report they can let him know.

1. 7. Report

Action Items

No Action Items

Information Items

General Extension Activities:

A. Extension office assisted clientele with issues related to citrus greening in Franklin County, soil samples, and local gardening.

B. Work continues on end of year reporting, as required by UF/IFAS and Florida Sea Grant each year.

C. Extension Director participated in ACF Stakeholders (Apalachicola Caucus) conference planning call to discuss hosing the next in-person ACFS Governing Board meeting in Apalachicola during January possibly.

D. Staff has begun moving a few things to the new office location. Non-carpeted floor work still being completed.

Sea Grant Extension:

E. Extension Director returned turtle lighting supplies leftover from grant to FWC in Tallahassee.

4-H Youth Development:

F. Registering youth for upcoming 4-H Day at the Capitol in Tallahassee.

Family Consumer Sciences:

G. Family Nutrition Program (FNP) Assistant teaching hands-on cooking skills with pre-K youth to 8th grade with “Kids in the Kitchen curriculum. Includes kitchen safety, cooking skills, how to follow recipes and, always the favorite part, taste testing.

H. FNP Program Assistant has begun teaching with adult senior group at First Baptist.

- o [IFAS report form.pdf](#) (0.04 MB)

TDC Administrator – John Solomon – Report

Mr. Solomon stated this is just an informational report as the TDC did not have a meeting in December. Mr. Solomon read the information items for the Board.

1. 8. Report

Action Items

No action items

Information Items

A. Collections Report: The September (2019) collections were \$90,051.57. This is a \$19,918.75 (27.88%) increase over September (2018).

B. Fiscal Year Collections: The 2018-2019 Fiscal Year Collections are \$1,401,731.72 compared to \$1,304,397.10. Which is a 7.46% increase.

Mr. Solomon reported this is the largest increase they have had in the last 2-3 years.

C. Web Site Activity: We had 27,889 web hits in the month of November (2019) an increase of 37% over last November of last year.

D. Visitor Center Numbers: The Visitor Centers welcomed 2,225 visitors in the month of November. The total for January-November of 2019 is 36,646 Visitors that have visited our centers. The total for 2018 calendar year was 31,398.

E. Meetings: The next scheduled board meeting is January 8th, 2020 @ 2:00pm at the Eastpoint Visitor Center

- o [TDC Collection Report 2018-19.pdf](#) (0.58 MB)
- o [TDC report agenda form.pdf](#) (0.04 MB)

Chairman Lockley asked when their fiscal year is. Mr. Solomon replied October-September. Commissioner Boldt thanked Mr. Solomon for his special work and he appreciates his

enthusiasm and advocacy for volunteerism. Mr. Solomon responded they have a great team and county so it is easy.

Commissioner Jones asked Mr. Solomon to inform the Board of the upcoming conference. Mr. Solomon explained Visit Florida would like to hold an adventure tourism training course here in Apalachicola. He reported this is rare because the county does not normally get conferences this large. He stated the conference will be within the first 2 weeks of April and they will start working the first of the year on accommodations. Mr. Solomon said the Armory will be used as the conference site.

The meeting recessed at 9:38 a.m.

The meeting reconvened at 9:51 a.m.

Board of Adjustment – Amy Ham-Kelly – Report

Mrs. Ham-Kelly read the following request:

1. 9. Consideration of a request to construct an addition 5 feet into the east side setback on property described as 4402 St. Teresa Avenue, St. Teresa, Franklin County, Florida. Request submitted by Jay McDaniel, agent for Jerry and Nora McDaniel, applicant. ABOA recommended approval by unanimous vote.

Board Action: Motion to approve, Table or Deny.

Mrs. Ham-Kelly provided images of the property. She stated there are letters of support from the adjacent property owners. **On motion by Commissioner Boldt, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to approve this request.**

- o [McDaniel Back Up File.pdf](#) (1.58 MB)

Planning and Zoning – Amy Ham-Kelly – Report

Mrs. Ham-Kelly presented the following report:

Commercial Site Plan Application

1. 10. THIS ITEM HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN BY THE APPLICANT.

Consideration of a request for Commercial Site Plan Review of two new aquaculture production buildings on property described as 125 Harbor Circle, Alligator Point, Franklin County, Florida. Property lying in Section 6, Township 7 South, Range 1 West. Request submitted by Garlick Environmental Associates, agent for Paul Parker et al. (PZ Commission: 3/1 Vote to approve with John Murphy recusing himself)

This item was tabled at the November 19, 2019 regular meeting pending a decision on the public hearing that is before the Board today.

Recommended Action: No Action Necessary, This Item Has Been Withdrawn By The Applicant.

- o [Paul Parker .pdf](#) (1.01 MB)

Mrs. Ham-Kelly explained they left this item for informational purposes so the public would know the request had been withdrawn. Commissioner Boldt said he represents this district and has received a huge amount of emails about this request. He stated he was impressed with the process that Mr. Parker and his representative went through and that it was well thought out. He complimented the parties and the energy expressed by the people at Alligator Point. Commissioner Boldt stated this was one of the most controversial requests in his tenure and he thought the process went well and the county staff are to be complimented on this issue.

Critical Shore Line Applications

1. 11. Consideration of a request to construct a Multi-Family Dock located at 2832 US Highway 98 East, St. James, Franklin County, Florida. The Dock will be 150' x 4' with an 8' x 16' kayak launch and 8' x 12' terminal platform. This application has all State and Federal Permits. Request submitted by Larry Joe Colson, agent for St. James PUD (Armand Evans), applicant. (PZ Commission: Unanimous Vote to approve)

Board Action: Motion to Approve, Table or Deny

- o [Armand Evans Dock.pdf](#) (0.62 MB)

Mrs. Ham-Kelly presented a map of the area. **On motion by Commissioner Massey, seconded by Commissioner Parrish, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to approve this request.**

2. 12. Consideration of a request to modify an existing dock by adding a 4' x 18' finger pier and a 12' x 20' covered boatlift on property described as Lot 4, Block 76, Unit 5, 363 Cook Street, St. George Island, Franklin County, Florida. This item has State Permit will be contingent upon receiving Federal Permits. Request submitted by Garlick Environmental Associates, Inc., agent for James Slacky and Andree Grogan, applicants. (PZ Commission: Unanimous Vote to approve)

Board Action: Motion to Approve, Table or Deny.

- o [SLACKY GROGAN FILE updated.pdf](#) (2.47 MB)
- o [SLACK PERMIT.pdf](#) (5.57 MB)

Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve this request contingent upon receiving the federal permits. Commissioner Massey seconded the request. Commissioner Jones inquired if there are any problems with the canal. Mrs. Ham-Kelly replied they will not go any farther than the existing dock. She explained the original application showed it extending out farther into the canal and she showed a diagram of what the pier will look like now. She said they had submitted another plan but DEP did not approve it because it extended farther out so they approved it further east. **Motion carried; 5-0.**

3. 13. Consideration of a request to construct a Single Family Private Dock on property described as Lot 34 Alligator Point Subdivision, 1617 Alligator Drive, Alligator Point, Franklin County, Florida. The dock will be 359' x 4' and have (2) 12' x 20' boatlifts and a covered 10' x 16' terminal platform. This application will be contingent upon State and Federal Permits. Request submitted by Garlick Environmental Associates, Inc., agent for Jim Sweat, applicant. (House has been permitted) (PZ Commission: Unanimous Vote to approve)

Board Action: Motion to Approve, Table or Deny.

- o [Sweat Dock Application20191126_08323312.pdf](#) (1.17 MB)

On motion by Commissioner Boldt, seconded by Commissioner Massey, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to approve this request.

Final Plat Application

1. 14. Consideration of a request for Final Plat approval of a 5 unit subdivision names Black Bear Bayou II a replat of Lots 1 and 7 of Black Bear Bayou, lying in Section 8, Township 7 South, Range 4 West, Carrabelle, Franklin County, Florida. Request submitted by Thurman Roddenberry and Associates, agent for John Johnson, applicant. (PZ Recommended Approval: Unanimous Vote)

Board Action: Motion to Approve, Table or Deny.

- o [Black Bear Bayou Final.pdf](#) (1.56 MB)

On motion by Commissioner Massey, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to approve this request.

Land Use/Re-Zoning Application

1. 15. Consideration of a request for a Public Hearing for a Land Use change of 5.88 acre parcel from Residential to Commercial and Re-Zoning from R-1 Single Family Residential to C-4 Mixed Use Residential on property lying in Section 7, Township 7 South, Range 3 West, 2619 US Highway 98 East, Lanark, Franklin County, Florida. Request submitted by Clayton Studstill, The Studstill Law Firm, PLLC, agent for

Timothy Saunders and Christina Saunders, applicants. (PZ Commission: Motion to Deny- Died for a lack of a second. 2nd Motion to Approve- Died for a lack of a second. No Recommendation from the Planning & Zoning Board)

Board Action: Motion to Approve, Table or Deny Public Hearing Request.

- o [Saunders ReZoning Land Use Documents.pdf](#) (1.68 MB)

Commissioner Jones asked if the Planning & Zoning Commission discussed the Comprehensive Plan or other county documents and this going to a public hearing. Mrs. Ham-Kelly reported they discussed the adjacent property zoning and land use. She said they also talked about some flood and traffic issues but did not address the Comprehensive Plan. Chairman Lockley stated they must give them a public hearing. Commissioner Boldt agreed. He asked if staff could provide an analysis of the Comprehensive Plan relative to this property. Mrs. Ham-Kelly asked if he would like this presented at the hearing. Commissioner Boldt stated if it is appropriate she could email the information prior to the public hearing. **On motion by Commissioner Massey, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to approve a public hearing for this request.** Commissioner Boldt said this is a special time for everyone at Gulf Terrace and Lanark Village to develop their facts and figures and provide the information to the Board at the public hearing. Attorney Shuler reported when they go to the public hearing, he in conjunction with Mr. Mark Curenton, County Planner, will prepare a presentation. He explained the staff does not produce any written report in advance of the public hearing. He stated he will call each Commissioner so they have a report from him in advance of the public hearing. He stated this will be a quasi-judicial hearing. Attorney Shuler said if the Commissioners have questions they can call him. He explained Commissioner Boldt will have more questions since this request is in his district.

Public Hearing(s) 10:30 am & 11:00 am

1. 16. THIS ITEM HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN BY THE APPLICANT.

10:30 am - Consideration of a request for a land use change of 1.04 Acres from Commercial Recreation to Commercial Fishing and a re-zoning change from C-3 Commercial Recreation to C-1 Commercial Fishing. Property lying in Section 6, Township 7 South, Range 1 West, 127 Harbor Circle, Alligator Point, Franklin County, Florida. Request submitted by Paul and Stephanie Parker, applicants. The county has received opposition.

This public hearing is a continuation from the November 19, 2019 regular meeting.

Board Action: No Action Necessary, The Applicant Has Withdrawn The Request

- o [REZONING ORDINANCE 127 Harbor Circle.pdf](#) (0.01 MB)
- o [PARKER LEGAL EXHIBIT A20191016_16211600.pdf](#) (0.27 MB)
- o [Parker EXHIBIT B Map.pdf](#) (0.05 MB)

- [Parker LU Map.pdf](#) (0.20 MB)
 - [Parker Area Zoning Map.pdf](#) (0.09 MB)
2. 17. 11:00 am (ET) - (First of Two Public Hearings) The Franklin County Local Planning Agency will meet at 11:00 am (ET) to accept public comments on a proposed ordinance to amend the St. George Island Corridor Overlay District by removing the prohibition against single family residential uses on the ground floor for property located within a 2,100-foot radius of the center point of the intersection of Franklin Boulevard and Gulf Beach Drive, on St. George Island, Florida, as described in Plat Book 2, page 7, Franklin County, Florida, excluding the area east of the east boundary of Third Street East and west of the west boundary of Third Street West; providing for exemptions; providing for severability; and providing for an effective date.
- No vote shall occur at the public hearings held on December 17, 2019.*
- [SGI Overlay-Advertisement and Ordinance.pdf](#) (0.65 MB)
3. 18. 11:05 am (ET) - (First of Two Public Hearings) The Franklin County Board of County Commissioners will meet at 11:05 am (ET), or as soon thereafter as is possible to accept public comments on a proposed ordinance to amend the St. George Island Corridor Overlay District by removing the prohibition against single family residential uses on the ground floor for property located within a 2,100-foot radius of the center point of the intersection of Franklin Boulevard and Gulf Beach Drive, on St. George Island, Florida, as described in Plat Book 2, page 7, Franklin County, Florida, excluding the area east of the east boundary of Third Street East and west of the west boundary of Third Street West; providing for exemptions; providing for severability; and providing for an effective date.
- No vote shall occur at the public hearings held on December 17, 2019.*
- [SGI Overlay-Advertisement and Ordinance.pdf](#) (0.65 MB)

Commissioner Jones asked if the public hearing will be held at 11:00 a.m. Mrs. Ham-Kelley answered yes, for the St. George Island Overlay. Attorney Shuler stated this will be the first of 2 public hearings.

Clerk of Courts – Marcia M. Johnson – Report

Clerk Johnson said she does not have a report. She thanked the Board for how well they work with her office and coordinate with Mrs. Griffith on finance items. She stated she is thankful her office and the Board have a great relationship. Clerk Johnson wished the Board a Merry Christmas. The Board wished Clerk Johnson and her staff a Merry Christmas.

RESTORE Coordinator – Alan Pierce – Report

Mr. Piece read his report for the Board, as follows:

Information Items

1. 19. Alligator Drive rebuilding update- Clay Kennedy and I met with FEMA inspectors on Alligator Point on Dec. 4 to explain the reconstruction project to a new set of inspectors who said they would be writing up the FEMA assessment. The good news is that they did not have any issues with the design we have already bid out. The only bad news is they could not give me a concrete time when FEMA funds would be obligated. The inspectors did have a Dec. 12 date to get their work done so there now appears to be some internal deadlines that someone in FEMA is setting. Based upon what I understand remains to be done in the FEMA system I do believe it is realistic to think Anderson Columbia could begin work by March 1.
2. 20. Rep. Shoaf has scheduled a meeting with FDOT, the Federal Highway Safety Administration staff, and FEMA to discuss the ownership of Alligator Drive. Commissioner Boldt and I will attend the meeting and promote the idea of the state taking over the road.

(Addendum added at 8AM, 12-17-2019- The meeting did occur at 3 PM on Dec. 16 at Rep. Shoaf's office in Tallahassee. Commissioner Boldt and I represented Franklin County. At least 15 other people were there representing FDOT, FDEM, and FEMA.

The 3 highlights of the meeting were:

- A) The FDOT will not take over Alligator Drive as it does not meet the needs of the state. The best that will happen is that FDOT will research the opportunity for the state to say Alligator Drive meets a definition for the Federal Highway Safety Administration (FHSA) as an evacuation route, and if that happens then Alligator Drive would become eligible for FHSA funds after a disaster. It seems on the surface that Alligator Drive would meet the definition of an evacuation route as it is the only access for the Point, but FDOT pointed out that there is a specific FHSA definition of what an evacuation route is, and FHSA has to agree with the application. FDOT will report back to Rep. Shoaf on that matter.

Mr. Pierce said they do not know what the outcome will be. Commissioner Boldt stated there were about 19 people at the meeting representing all the state agencies and he asked for the state to take back the road. He explained Mr. Pierce talked about the money spent on the road and they talked about all the issues with the road. He said this was an important meeting and the Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary was present. Mr. Pierce clarified the DOT District Secretary was present. Commissioner Boldt reported the road does not qualify as a main artery but it is a small collector road. Commissioner Boldt explained the State does not have a legal precedent to take the road back but they did take one road back in another county. Mr. Pierce reported the state took back Stump Hole in Gulf County. Commissioner Boldt said the state seemed resentful about taking back the road. Mr. Pierce agreed. Commissioner Boldt explained they asked if there was any road like this in Florida and no one could think of a road that is worse than this one. He reported that is what brought about the possibility that Alligator Drive might become designated if it meets the criteria of a FHSA evacuation road and might have privileges for more money for its protection and its support. Mr. Pierce said he

appreciates Commissioner Boldt's enthusiasm but this is a very expensive road and he does not think anyone wants the road.

B) FEMA staff was asked on the status of the Project Worksheet (PW) for the \$4.7M reconstruction costs, and we were all informed that FEMA has initially found some \$1M of construction costs that they thought would be not be reimbursable. Those costs relate to the stormwater treatment system for the road that was not in place before the storm. FEMA staff said their responsibility is to build the road back to pre-storm conditions, and if there was not a stormwater system in place before the storm then someone else should pay the costs of that improvement. The county and FDEM both said the stormwater was a requirement of FDEP and had to be installed. FEMA staff agreed that if the stormwater system was a requirement then it would be eligible for FEMA reimbursement. FEMA staff, Dewberry, and FDEM staff are going to go over the stormwater system and requirements and get that issue resolved.

Mr. Pierce stated he talked with Mr. Clay Kennedy, Dewberry, and they will send questions on the cost components and try to resolve it. He reported it was apparent the state is on the county's side in this issue and hopefully this will get resolved. He reported this is a \$1 million problem in a \$4.7 million project and the county knew nothing about it. Commissioner Boldt said if they had not had the meeting then they might not have known.

C) Rep. Shoaf strongly encouraged the county to expedite additional road protection so that this \$4.7M reconstruction is not damaged as it is so close to the Gulf of Mexico.

Mr. Pierce stated the county's total Road Department budget is \$1.6 million. He explained this 2,000 ft. road is a \$4.7 million project and they must work with FEMA or this project could bankrupt this county. He reported Representative Shoaf does not want to support this project if the county is not going to do some extra work to protect this road. Mr. Pierce said he asked him several times what is going to happen at the next storm and he told him the road could easily wash out at either end because FEMA can only spend money on the section of road that was damaged and not sections that are going to be damaged. Mr. Pierce explained the solution is to put a beach out there because the State of Florida funds beach renourishment and the county would have a partner in protecting the road. He reported if the county does anything on their own then they bear the entire costs.

To that end, I have contacted Dewberry and MRD Associates to see if the county's current \$200K beach renourishment design request to FDEP can be expanded to include design and \$5M of construction funds in 2020.

Mr. Pierce explained if they can get \$5 million from DEP and \$5 million from RESTORE then they can do a \$10 million project. He stated there has been some criticism that they have not worked more aggressively on RESTORE projects but this is a onetime pot of money that they

must use very carefully because they will not get this money again unless there is a disaster like the BP oil spill. He explained they have been slow to review projects to make sure these funds are well spent. Mr. Pierce pointed out if they did not have the Restore money and had to do beach renourishment then the \$5 million would have come out of an additional assessment on the property owners at Alligator Point. He explained this \$5 million in RESTORE funds is critical to keeping the beach renourishment costs down for the residents of Alligator Point. Mr. Pierce said they did not have these funds when they talked about beach renourishment in the past and the residents would have paid all the costs. Mr. Pierce stated the assessment would have been much higher than they will be this time because now the county will be absorbing all of the constructions costs for the beach renourishment. Commissioner Massey asked if \$15 million has been spent on this road since Mr. Pierce has been here. Mr. Pierce reported he can document \$8 million but there may be more.

Normally, FDEP authorizes design funds, and then in a following year would provide construction funds.

Mr. Pierce said if they only got design funds in 2020 then it would be 2021 before they got construction funds and that is a risk Representative Shoaf does not want them to have.

If FDEP will support the inclusion of construction funds, and if Rep. Shoaf is successful in getting legislative funding for the FDEP beach renourishment program so that Franklin County gets funded, then beach renourishment to protect this 1.1 mile segment of Alligator Drive could occur shortly after the road construction is completed,. It is possible, then, that it would only be the 2020 hurricane season where the road would not be fully protected. If FDEP does not fund construction funds this year then the road would be exposed to the Gulf of Mexico during the 2020, and 2021 hurricane seasons.

If FDEP does support construction funds this year then the county will need to move expeditiously on the creation of the MSTU so that there is a source of funds to maintain the beach.

There are other untested design ideas that could be used in lieu of beach protection but none of them have the matching funds available for construction that the state provides for beach renourishment. Every structure to hold back the Gulf is going to cost millions of dollars, so if the county and the residents of Alligator Point want to minimize their costs, and again we are talking about millions of dollars, then the most cost effective road protection that can be built is a beach renourishment project that can receive a 50% cost share with the state.)

Mr. Pierce explained they are trying to minimize the cost to the residents of Alligator Point and the people of the county by sharing the costs with the state. He reported there are other options but none of the other options have a program to share costs. He reported they must use the programs that are available. Commissioner Boldt agreed they are trying to minimize the costs to the taxpayer by taking advantage of the state and federal resources that are available. Mr. Pierce said if they get \$5 million from DEP and use \$5 million in RESTORE funds

then that is \$10 million in costs that will not be passed on to the residents. He stated there will be criticism of the beach renourishment because in order to maximum the \$5 million in state revenue sharing the county must have a parking lot for 100 cars and a bathroom. Mr. Pierce reported those are requirements to get the matching funds. Commissioner Boldt stated if they focus this into a concentrated area then it can be built as a good asset for the people at Alligator Point. Mr. Pierce agreed if it is done properly then the residential complaints could be minimized because cars would be in a parking lot and not scattered in various locations. Commissioner Boldt reported the beach renourishment to protect the road will also provide a 1 mile beach opportunity for the parking area. Mr. Pierce agreed and said if the beach is damaged by a hurricane then the beach would become an eligible expense. Commissioner Boldt said he is looking forward to the input from the people at Alligator Point. Chairman Lockley questioned if it is better to build the beach first. Mr. Pierce stated this is also Representative Shoaf's question and if they are doing this backwards. He explained if they had the money they would put the beach in first. He reported they have FEMA funds and want to have the road constructed and then a beach shortly after. He stated they have a contractor, plans for the road and hopefully FEMA approval to put the road in. Mr. Pierce said if they wait for the beach it could take 2 years. He stated it is the Board's decision and they are responsible for public safety and welfare and he thinks they need to get a paved road for the citizens and then come in later with a beach. Mr. Pierce pointed out the worst happened in Gulf County because they started a beach renourishment project and assessed the property owners and before they could finish the project the hurricane came and washed the sand away. Commissioner Parrish said Gulf County did not get any reimbursement from FEMA because they did not have a certified beach. Commissioner Parrish stated they are waiting on DEP to see if they will fund the design money and if there is money in the beach renourishment program and the whole time they would not have a road. He agreed they need to go ahead with the road because they cannot wait for 2-3 years for the funding. He said they are doing it backwards but they must follow protocol and do not know if they will have money in the beach renourishment program. Mr. Pierce reported FEMA could give a time extension because they really want construction projects to be done within 3 years after the storm event. He said it is not an issue with FEMA to build the road without a beach. He reported they were reminded the county was given \$2.6 million after Hurricane Hermine and did not spend the money but the reason the county did not build the road was they did not have a permit from the state. Mr. Pierce stated now they have a permit and they need to construct a road. Commissioner Boldt said having the road there might give them a better strategy for what a good beach protection project looks like.

3. 21. Board discussion of development of potential MSTU for Alligator Point Road Protection project. In 2006, the Board developed an MSTU for a 3-mile-long beach restoration project on Alligator Point by utilizing the services of Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson Law firm, and a planning group called Government Services Group (GSG). We were advised that these two groups, who often worked together, were the experts in developing MSTUs around the state.

1.

In consideration of a new MSTU I have asked Mike Dombrowski, MRD, to lead this effort because the protection of the road through the installation of a beach has not been completely designed, and therefore I imagine there will be some interface between the team designing the beach project, being MRD, and the team developing a funding source for the maintenance of the project, being the law firm and GSG. MRD has provided me with a scope of work that utilizes the Nabors, Giblin law firm and GSG, to develop the boundaries of an MSTU, and a preliminary millage rate. MRD has worked with both firms on MSTU projects in the past. The proposed fee is not to exceed \$27,500.

I am not asking the Board to enter into this contract at this time but I want to bring up the subject as it was discussed at the last Board meeting. This proposed MSTU has two significant differences from the last one- an evaluation on the number of parcels involved, and an evaluation of whether only one rate is appropriate. I have said publically that this project is designed to protect approximately 1 mile of Alligator Drive, and thus there would only be one rate applied to all those deemed to benefit from the protection of the road. At a minimum there might only be some 400 property owners west of the washout that would meet the legal requirement of needing the road protected, and at a maximum there might be as many as 1400 parcels, if all of Alligator Point and Bald Point met the legal requirement of benefiting from the road protection. The argument for the larger boundary is that the current fire station and water district office are both west of the washout so everyone benefiting from those two services might have a legal connection to the protection of the road. This is a swing of some 1000 parcels and would have a significant impact on a proposed rate.

In the previous MSTU there were 3 assessment rates depending on a parcel's proximity to the beach, but now I am proposing there only be one rate. The legal basis for utilizing one rate also needs to be researched, as it might be that there is still a benefit to owners in the immediate area that cannot be discounted.

Franklin County is requesting \$200K of design funds from the FDEP Beach Renourishment Program. Our proposal has not yet been ranked by FDEP and of course the legislature has yet to approve any budget. If we get the design funds this year, then Mike Dombrowski and I will recommend the Board begin the process of developing a funding source for maintaining the project, as neither the Board nor FDEP will probably fund a construction project without the maintenance worked out. The earliest construction funds could become available would be after the 2020 legislative session.

I bring all this up now so that the Board and the public are aware of what still needs to happen to protect the road. I realize other funding mechanisms have been discussed, such as parking fees, and those certainly might contribute to the funding of this project, but I believe the creation of an MSTU is fundamental to the maintenance of any road protection. The MSTU is an assessment that would be collected as part of a parcel's property taxes, and all other forms of funding are untested.

Mr. Pierce said they do not need to act on the MSTU until they know if they will get design and construction money. He stated if they get funds then in January they will start talking about the

structure. Chairman Lockley reported that will be money to keep it going. Mr. Pierce answered yes, and said the risk is even without a hurricane this section of shoreline is a highly eroding area and every 8 years the sand must be put back. He explained someone must pay to put the sand back there and FEMA will not pay for normal erosion. He pointed out they know this sand is sacrificial but it will wash away instead of the road washing away. Chairman Lockley reported this road and C.R. 30 will wash out any time the county gets a big storm. Mr. Pierce stated in the case of Tropical Storm Nestor the county paid \$35,000 in repairs and FEMA is not involved. Commissioner Parrish said that is another reason for the MSTU is if the whole beach is washed away in a storm event FEMA will only pay for 50% to put the sand back so they need a mechanism to match the FEMA funds. Mr. Pierce reported sometimes the amount FEMA provides changes based on the severity of the storm but they never pay 100%. Commissioner Boldt said they are building information from many different sources and making wholesome decisions. He stated the outcome and suggestions will be well taken.

4. 22. Board update on TRIUMPH funds. I attended a TRIUMPH staff meeting on Friday, December 6, to hear an update on the expenditure of funds throughout the TRIUMPH area. Chairman Gaetz was at the meeting and encouraged the counties to continue to develop economic development projects. Chairman Gaetz told the meeting that the Governor has informed him that he, the Governor, is directing some \$25M worth of interest generated from unspent TRIUMPH funds to be sent to the Dept. of Economic Opportunity (DEO) to help those counties impacted by Hurricane Michael. Along with the funds TRIUMPH staff sent over a list of projects to FDEO that they think should be funded, and one of those projects is the \$1.1M fuel farm and back-up generator for the airport. As the Board is aware, we have spent over six months working and re-working this generator project to get it in line with TRIUMPH guidelines. It is my opinion that the county is better off having FDEO fund the airport project because there will not be any job creation requirements, or any claw-back provisions.

Mr. Pierce said he spoke with Representative Shoaf's Office and informed them of the funding opportunity from FDEO and asked them to promote the airport project with FDEO. He reported Representative Shoaf has submitted a bill to the Legislature to fund the county EOC but if FDEO is getting funding then maybe the county may not have to wait for the Legislature.

County Coordinator – Michael Morón – Report

Mr. Moron presented his report, as follows:

Action Items

1. 23. Weems CEO Agreement: At your August 13th meeting the Board authorized an agreement with Pastor David Walker to serve as Weems Hospital Interim Chief Executive Officer for a period of three months, with an option to extend an additional three months on a month to month basis for a salary of \$10,416.67 per month. We are now into the second month of the month to month extension, so I am recommending that the Board renew the agreement with the Interim CEO and guarantee three more months

with another three-month option. This would guarantee his position until March 17, 2020. April, May, and June 2020 would be based on a month to month basis.

Request: Board action to renew the agreement with Pastor David Walker as Weems CEO from December 17, 2019 to March 17, 2020 along with a three-month extension on a month to month basis (April, May, June 2020).

Chairman Lockley said Mr. Walker is doing a good job and he questioned why they cannot make this agreement for a year so they are not going back and forth every few months. He explained if they get to a decision on the hospital they will need someone there. Commissioner Boldt agreed they would have consistency if they keep Mr. Walker on and he thinks they should consider a year extension. **Commissioner Boldt made a motion to extend the contract for a year contingent upon making sure Mr. Walker is okay with the future extension.** Mr. Moron said he did it for 3 months because he was renewing what they did before. Commissioner Boldt reported the hospital departments are harmonious now and there is a positive environment for the first time in a long time at the hospital. Commissioner Parrish questioned what will happen if they engage another entity to come in and manage the hospital and they have Mr. Walker there on a 1 year basis. He asked if the entity wants to bring in their own CEO then is the Board obligated to pay Mr. Walker for a year. Commissioner Parrish said that is the dilemma and why he has not seconded the motion and not because of anything against Mr. Walker. He stated one of the groups says they are willing to work with them and the other probably is not but they have not made a decision on which entity they are going with. Commissioner Boldt said he cannot remember if both of the entities will work with the people they had in place. Commissioner Parrish was not sure but said he is more in favor of what Mr. Moron proposed until they know where they are going with the hospital. Mr. Walker stated he is fine with whatever decision the Board makes but he will not be paid if the company wants to move in another direction. He said there is not going to be severance pay for him and he thinks the money needs to be in the hospital. **Commissioner Parrish seconded the motion.** Attorney Shuler recommended the Board resolve this by having a longer term contract with a termination of convenience provision stating in writing what Mr. Walker said which is no severance package is. He stated he can draft a letter agreement reflecting the Board's directions and Mr. Walker's comments this morning. **Commissioner Boldt amended his motion to include Attorney Shuler drafting a letter agreement. Commissioner Parrish amended his second. Motion carried; 5-0.** Commissioner Boldt said this was a vote of confidence for Mr. Walker and they appreciate him.

2. 24. Timber Island Road: Mr. Curenton has received a new SCOP agreement from DOT for repaving Timber Island Road from Highway 98 to the Carrabelle River and building guardrails on the Timber Island Bridge. The total contract for the surveying, design, permitting and construction is \$819,740. The work will have to be completed by June 2021.

Request: Board action to approve the resolution that authorizes the chairman's signature on the SCOP agreement.

On motion by Commissioner Massey, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to approve the Resolution and authorize the Chairman's signature on the SCOP agreement.

3. 25. FDOT 2020 Application Cycle: Mr. Mark Curenton was notified yesterday morning that the application cycle for FDOT's Small County Outreach Program (SCOP), Small County Road Assistance Program (SCRAP), and County Incentive Grant Program (CIGP) grants are now open. The application window for these grants closes on March 20, 2020. Franklin County is eligible to apply for three (3) SCOP projects, two (2) SCRAP projects and one (1) CIGP project. The two cities are also eligible to submit a possible CIGP project to the Board of County Commissioners for their decision on which CIGP project to submit to FDOT for consideration. Contact Mr. Curenton as soon as possible to discuss the specifics of these grants as it applies to possible projects in your district.

Request: Board discussion.

Commissioner Parrish asked Mr. Kennedy to come forward. He asked if CIGP funds are used for sidewalks. Mr. Kennedy was not sure which funds could be used for sidewalks. Mr. Moron said he thinks it is the LAP Program. Mr. Pierce said the county does projects for the City of Carrabelle because they are not LAP certified. Commissioner Parrish stated he has asked for sidewalks from the NAPA Store to the IGA Store in Apalachicola. He explained people are walking on the sides of the road day and night and he requested they apply for grant funds and nothing has happened. Mr. Moron said they applied and the project was not funded so they can submit it again to DOT. Mr. Kennedy reported it would not have been one of these programs but DOT has other programs that deal with sidewalks or multi-use paths. Mr. Moron stated the project was submitted. Commissioner Parrish said it needs to be re-submitted. Chairman Lockley asked if these are for evacuation routes. Commissioner Jones pointed out some of the funds are for resurfacing and some are for different things but none are for paving an unimproved road. Mr. Pierce agreed unimproved roads are the lowest priority. He said everything else will be funded before they consider paving a new road. Commissioner Parrish stated there are roads in Eastpoint that need to be resurfaced and he would like to see some of the funds spent there. Commissioner Jones explained they applied 3 years in a row and have not been funded. Mr. Moron said they have re-applied and done plans and direction routes. Commissioner Parrish asked if they can direct the engineer to do some things to get more points to score better and then reapply. Mr. Moron said there is 1 road that is caving in. Commissioner Jones said it is Hickory Dip Road. Chairman Lockley asked if they get points for an evacuation route and said some people use this road to evacuate. Commissioner Jones agreed some people use this road to evacuate but not a lot of people. **On motion by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Parrish, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to direct the engineer of record to work with Mr. Curenton and someone in that office to see if they can get some of these projects to move forward and get the points necessary for approval.** Mr. Moron asked the Board to let them know if they have other projects as background work will need to be done.

4. 26. Old Ferry Dock Road: The FWC grant for designing improvements to the Old Ferry Dock Boat Ramp is set to expire on December 31. DEP has asked for a hydrographic analysis before they issue the permit for the boat ramp. This will take several months to accomplish, so Mr. Mark Curenton has asked FWC for a six-month time extension. FWC approved the extension.

Request: Board action to authorize the Chairman signature on the necessary documents for the time extension.

On motion by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Massey, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to authorize the Chairman's signature on the necessary documents for the time extension.

5. 27. Buddy Ward Reef: The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers has sent the first-time out letter and the initial proffered authorization for the Buddy Ward Memorial Artificial Reef project. This project has been in the works since January 16, 2018 when Mr. Grayson Shepard appeared before the Board seeking approval to create the artificial reef. The first-time out letter states that the Corps has completed the review and evaluation of the permit application and is requiring the applicant to review the terms and conditions prior to the Department of Army's final signature. There are special conditions that apply specifically to this project along with instructions to accept or object to any of the permit terms and conditions. In order to proceed with this project, the Chairman's signature is required on the permit which will be submitted to the Department of Army for the final signature.

Request: Board action to authorize the Chairman's signature on the permit and the submittal to the Department of Army for the final signature.

- o [20191210 First Time Out Letter.pdf](#) (0.17 MB)
- o [20191210 Franklin Co Buddy Ward pkg.pdf](#) (1.48 MB)

Commissioner Parrish made a motion to approve contingent upon Attorney Shuler's review of the special conditions. Attorney Shuler stated he reviewed the permit and there are no legal items that are objectionable. He said he did recommend Mr. Moron forward the permit to Mr. Sheppard, Mr. Pierce and Mr. Curenton for a planning point of view. Attorney Shuler said Mr. Sheppard does not have any problems with the conditions of the permit. He reported there were no objections from Mr. Pierce and Mr. Curenton from a planning standpoint. He recommended authorizing the Chairman's signature on the permit. **Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. Chairman Lockley said the motion does not have a contingency now. Commissioner Parrish and Commissioner Jones agreed. Motion carried; 5-0**

28. FDOT Beautification Grant: The county received notification from the Florida Department of Transportation that Franklin County has been awarded the Beautification Grant in the amount of \$97, 385. At your July 16th meeting the Board authorized Mike and Pat O'Connell of the St. George Island Civic Club to team with Mr. Mark Curenton, County Planner, to apply for this

grant. The grant funding will be used to improve the landscape, for the state-owned, land between the exit of Bryant Patton Bridge to Bayshore Drive. Mr. Fonda Davis, Parks and Recreation Director, has also been instrumental with this grant as his department is going to maintain the landscaped area. As with other FDOT grant projects, the County is responsible for the grant and will manage this project.

Request: Board action to accept this grant and proceed with the project.

On motion by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Parrish, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to accept this grant and proceed with the project.

Commissioner Jones left the meeting at this time.

6. 29. CareerSource Agreement Modification: At your last meeting the Board authorized the Chairman's signature on a Modification to Worksite Agreement which allows for the placement of CareerSource workers within different county departments to assist with Hurricane Michael recovery. I indicated that the original agreement expired so to continue the program it was necessary to approve this agreement. What was unknown at the time, due to an oversight at CareerSource, is that the agreement expired on September 30, 2019 so the agreement requires a date prior to the expiration date, not the December 3rd meeting date when it was approved by this Board. The modification extends the agreement to September 30, 2020 unless available funding ends before that date.

Request: Board action to authorize September 30, 2019 as the date on the CareerSource Modification to Worksite Agreement. The Chairman's signature was authorized at the December 3rd meeting for this same agreement.

Commissioner Parrish made a motion to authorize September 30, 2019 as the date on the CareerSource Modification to the Worksite Agreement. Commissioner Massey seconded the motion. Attorney Shuler said he needs to work with Mr. Moron on how this needs to be worded on the agreement. **Commissioner Parrish amended his motion to direct the County Attorney to work with Mr. Moron on this agreement. Commissioner Massey amended his second. Motion carried; 4-0.**

Commissioner Jones returned to the meeting.

7. 30. 2020 Census: At your December 3rd meeting while informing the Board of the first Census Complete Count Committee meeting, a small advertising and promotional budget was discussed. The Census Bureau states that each person counted brings at least \$14,000 to the county, therefore each local government should contribute \$0.50 (11,000 x .50 = \$5,500) per resident to the Census Committee to assist with awareness and other phases of the 2020 Census. The Census Committee is in the awareness phase of the 2020 Census and would like to order a couple of banners and a tablecloth that would be used during County events to promote the 2020 Census. Mr. Rick Watson, Tax Collector and a member of the Census Committee, will loan the committee a tent during these

events. With that in mind, I am asking the Board to consider a budget of up to \$4,500 for the Census Committee. In addition, the committee is still seeking representatives from the community, in unincorporated Franklin County, to volunteer and assist with reaching those in their neighborhoods that may have questions or need guidance regarding the 2020 Census.

Request: Board action to authorize up to \$4,500 for advertising and promotions for the county's 2020 Census CCC. I will authorize all purchases for the CCC.

On motion by Commissioner Boldt, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to authorize up to \$4,500 for advertising and promotions for the county's 2020 Census CCC.

8. 31. 911 PSAP Agreements: Sheriff Smith forwarded me an email sent to him that based on HB441 each Sheriff is to develop and file with FDLE an inter-local agreement, also known as a Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) agreement by January 1, 2020. "The Sheriff is required to engage all the stakeholders in his/her county to establish the protocols under which each PSAP can directly communicate with all first responder agencies". Since time is of the essence, would the Board consider authorizing Attorney Shuler to work with the Sheriff on creating this inter-local agreement and authorizing the Chairman's signature on this agreement after Attorney Shuler has approved it.

Request: Board action to authorize Attorney Shuler to work with the Sheriff on creating this document and authorize the Chairman signature once the document is completed and approved by Attorney Shuler.

Mr. Moron said he thinks they already do this but need to put it in writing. **On motion by Commissioner Parrish, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to authorize Attorney Shuler to work with the Sheriff on creating this document and authorize the Chairman's signature once the document is completed and approved by Attorney Shuler.**

9. 32. Sheriff's Letter of Support: The Sheriff, in his quest to seek funding for the proposed county's drug rehabilitation center (Bay City Wellness Center), is asking the Board to authorize a letter of support for the project. The Sheriff is seeking Legislative funding for this project and would like to add a letter of support, from the County, to the application.

Request: Board action to authorize the Chairman's signature on a letter of support for Bay City Wellness Center project.

Commissioner Boldt made a motion to authorize the Chairman's signature on a letter of support for the Bay City Wellness Project. Mr. Moron said there is no commitment on funding or anything like that he just wants a letter that the county supports the project. Commissioner Parrish reported he has no problem with the letter of support but it needs to be stated that the Board has allowed the Sheriff to take over the Bay City Work Camp as a place to house this but

the county is financially unable to support this project. He said the county does support the Sheriff in his endeavors. Commissioner Parrish stated the building is the county's contribution. Commissioner Parrish explained the county does not have the financial resources for this project. **Commissioner Boldt amended his motion to include the language suggested by Commissioner Parrish. Commissioner Parrish seconded the motion with the stipulations.** Chairman Lockley said if this facility will be for people from anywhere then they should ask the surrounding counties for letters of support. Commissioner Parrish stated the Sheriff may have already asked for their support. Attorney Shuler agreed the request will not hurt. Mr. Moron said he will suggest the Sheriff reach out to other counties for support. **Motion carried; 5-0.**

10. 33. Attorney General Opioid Task Force: The county received a letter from the Attorney General Ashley Moody office stating that she has been appointed as Chair of the Statewide Task Force on Opioid Abuse by Governor DeSantis. As part of the task force's role in developing a statewide strategy to address this crisis, the state is asking for the county's input "on what programs would most effectively abate the opioid crisis in your community". The state is trying to develop a strategy in advance of any settlement of the ongoing negotiations in the opioid litigation. With that said, Attorney General Moody is hosting a meeting on January 13, 2020 from 9-11 AM (EST) for an open-table discussion to identify each community's input. There are space limitations, so they are asking the county to send only one representative.

Request: Board discussion and action on sending a county representative to the Task Force on Opioid meeting.

Commissioner Parrish made a motion to send Sheriff Smith to this meeting. Commissioner Boldt seconded the motion. Commissioner Jones said in talking with the Sheriff he said he would be glad to represent the county on this issue. Commissioner Jones stated he does not think anyone would be better to address this issue than the Sheriff. **Motion carried; 5-0.**

- o [Letter-Office of the Attorney General.pdf](#) (0.14 MB)
11. 34. DACS Aquaculture Use Zone: Mrs. Portia Sapp, Director at the Division of Aquaculture, has sent a package for your review for a new Aquaculture Use Zone. After reviewing the package, the County has until January 11, 2020 to comment on and or to concur with or object to the proposed project. Your comments will be used in the department's evaluation of the proposed Aquaculture Use Zone and activities. The department will consider the following preferences when issuing leases: applicants that are Franklin County residents, applicants that have attended a pre-application meeting (which will be held in Franklin County to provide an overview of the aquaculture leasing process and requirements), applicants that have not previously held a 10-year renewable aquaculture submerged land lease, applicants that have held a Saltwater Products License (SPL) for at least three of the last five years, and applicants that have held a SPL with an oyster endorsement for at least three of the last 10 years. I sent the package to Mr. Josh Adams (ARPC) to verify that there are no conflicts with the Franklin 98 Living Shoreline project. He verified that there are no conflicts. You may send your comments to me or to Mrs. Sapp (Portia.Sapp@fdacs.gov) directly.

Request: Board discussion regarding the preferences and overall project.

- o [Four Mile AUZ agency review.pdf](#) (1.14 MB)

Mr. Moron said the most important thing is the requirements and preferences they are offering because that will determine the order of how people get the leases. He explained they will be flooded with applications and will apply the preferences. He asked the Board to let him know as soon as they can if they have any issues with the preferences. Chairman Lockley reported a lot of people did not get a license in the last 2-3 years because there was nothing out there. Commissioner Jones said he thinks that is why it is 3 of the last 5 years. Commissioner Parrish reported one of the issues that was brought up at the meetings at the Armory with Ms. Sapp is getting them to entertain preferences for Franklin County residents because people are out of work. Chairman Lockley stated people from out of state did not have a license.

Information Items

1. 35. P&Z Office Christmas Week Schedule: The Planning and Zoning Office schedule will deviate slightly from the other County Offices during the week of Christmas. To better serve the contractors, our office will be open on Monday, December 23rd and Tuesday, December 24th (Christmas Eve) and will be closed on Wednesday, December 25, Thursday, December 26th, and Friday, December 27th with the exception of the Building Official. He will do inspections on Monday (12/24) and Friday (12/27). Staff will recommend to all contractors/builders (website and media advertising) that if construction project inspections are needed that week, to schedule the inspections on Monday or Tuesday so the Building Official can do them on Friday, December 27th.

Mr. Moron discussed the changes to their Christmas schedule and said it will be advertised.

2. 36. FAC 2020 Legislative Day: Remind the Board that Wednesday, January 29, 2020 is the Florida Association of Counties Legislative Day. This will be an opportunity to discuss some of the priorities that affect Franklin County as well as all Florida counties. FAC, in an effort to centralize the day's activities will try and schedule most of the events at the Challenger Learning Center which is steps away from the Capitol Building. Contact Cheyenne as soon as possible about any arrangements for that day.

Commissioner Massey inquired about the issue with the new Library Director and the emails. Mr. Moron said he has received a lot of emails about the new Library Director. He said he met with the new Library Director and received emails after. Mr. Moron expressed his opinion that there is a personality clash with the library staff, patrons and people that use the library for programs. Commissioner Parrish asked if they have ever had a good Library Director. He said no matter who it is there is always a problem. Mr. Moron stated they usually have problems with the Carrabelle Branch but now he is receiving calls from both branches. Commissioner Massey said he is getting calls that people are going to be written up. He stated they have never hired anyone local and the Library Director has always been someone away from here. He said the current situation cannot keep going on. Commissioner Jones explained he has not

had any issues at the Eastpoint Library until recently. He said he is around the library and there has never been an issue until now. Commissioner Parrish questioned what they should do. Commissioner Jones said if something does not change they will need to make a decision. Commissioner Massey reported the new Library Director is on a 90 day probation period and if something does not change then he will make a motion to do something different. Mr. Moron said they are about 45 days into the 90 days and he will meet with him again and renew some of the issues he told him to work on. Chairman Lockley asked Mr. Moron to talk with him and tell him they are receiving complaints. He said to give them a status on the time. Chairman Lockley said the Library Advisory Committee needs to come to the next meeting because they hired this individual. Commissioner Massey agreed the new Library Director and Mrs. Kate Aguiar, Library Advisory Board, need to be at the next meeting. Commissioner Boldt said to let him know the time they spent on this and that they are concerned. Commissioner Massey stated some of them are not hearing about this but he and Commissioner Jones are hearing about it. Commissioner Jones said it is not really about them but about the library and people trying to use the services. He reported if someone feels they must complain to a County Commissioner then it is outside the scope of a public library. Chairman Lockley advised Mr. Moron to meet with him and if things do not get better then he needs to come before the Board. Attorney Shuler suggested Mr. Moron work with the outside labor law attorney first before they go any further. Mr. Moron agreed to contact him. **On motion by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Boldt, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to direct Mr. Moron to contact the outside labor law attorney but not to go past the 90 days to hear back from the attorney.**

- [SGI Overlay-Advertisement and Ordinance.pdf](#) (0.65 MB)
- 4. 18. 11:05 am (ET) - (First of Two Public Hearings) The Franklin County Board of County Commissioners will meet at 11:05 am (ET), or as soon thereafter as is possible to accept public comments on a proposed ordinance to amend the St. George Island Corridor Overlay District by removing the prohibition against single family residential uses on the ground floor for property located within a 2,100-foot radius of the center point of the intersection of Franklin Boulevard and Gulf Beach Drive, on St. George Island, Florida, as described in Plat Book 2, page 7, Franklin County, Florida, excluding the area east of the east boundary of Third Street East and west of the west boundary of Third Street West; providing for exemptions; providing for severability; and providing for an effective date.

No vote shall occur at the public hearings held on December 17, 2019.

- [SGI Overlay-Advertisement and Ordinance.pdf](#) (0.65 MB)

Attorney Shuler explained this is the first of two public hearings on a proposed amendment to the St. George Island Overlay Ordinance. He said the hearing will take place in two components and the first step is to recess the Board of County Commissioners meeting and reconvene as the Local Planning Agency (LPA). He explained the LPA will consider an Ordinance and he read the caption of the Ordinance. Attorney Shuler reported in February, 2018 the Board adopted a

corridor district with provisions for development restrictions and standards. He explained it became apparent when items in the corridor district were being reported as creating problems for certain property owners within the overlay district specifically the C-4 residential properties. He stated C-4 has historically been mixed use development and they could have a purely residential component and residential use or a mixed use of commercial and residential uses. Attorney Shuler explained they were receiving complaints because within the business district based on a number of factors people were having a strictly residential component instead of building a business. Attorney Shuler said that is what they had subsequent to the overlay which then imposed a requirement mandating commercial use on the first floor of C-4 properties. He reported approximately 65-70 of these C-4 residential units within the district came to the County Planner initially and then to his office. He explained the concern is that they want to be able to rebuild as a purely C-4 residential use. Attorney Shuler reported there are also concerns that there are certain lots within the overlay district which cannot meet the parking standards if they are required to have a commercial business on the first floor and residential use on the second floor and above. Attorney Shuler reported the Board directed him earlier this year to schedule a public hearing to consider this matter. He explained the way it was advertised it includes not only the C-4 residential properties but also the C-4 vacant lots. He said the Board is in a procedural position to conduct this hearing as the LPA. He asked if there are questions from the Board on how they proceed. Commissioner Jones said he understands about this unintended consequence because he made the motion for C-4 on the Island to be true C-4. He questioned if it is possible to take care of the immediate need to grandfather in all the existing residences in that district and at some point in the future address something like the parking situation because it is based on potential because there is not a plan being submitted for the lots. He said based on the fact that the lots are vacant they should be able to address them at a later date and take care of the existing problem now. Commissioner Jones stated this came up because of Hurricane Michael and if the structures had been destroyed under this overlay they could not have rebuilt the units but would have had to build a commercial business. He asked if they can proceed in this fashion. Attorney Shuler responded yes, the Board can limit this draft to the existing C-4 developed properties that have a purely residential component and wait to address the approximately 65 vacant C-4 lots in the future. Attorney Shuler asked if the Board has any other questions. The Board did not have any additional questions. Chairman Lockley recessed the Board of County Commissioners' meeting and opened the LPA meeting. Attorney Shuler read the caption of the Ordinance. Chairman Lockley asked for public comment.

Mr. Mason Bean, a resident of St. George Island, said he knows the Commission had great intentions but the way this ordinance was initially thought of was the existing buildings would be grandfathered in and if anything happened they would be able to rebuild. He explained the way the amendment was written they are opening up all the commercial lots to allow a residential property. Mr. Bean stated commercial buildings must provide a plan for stormwater, parking, signage and access and there are safeguards built in. He reported this would allow shot gun houses to take over the commercial area. He reported his vision is St. George Island could have a commercial area and downtown but this ordinance as written would waive that. He asked the Board to deny this and fix the ordinance.

Ms. Angela Troy, a property owner on St. George Island, presented the situation with her property and said she could not have a commercial venture because she could not meet the parking requirement without giving up one of her lots. She said in the past the lots running along the bay and along the beach were prime lots and have the majority of homes and something could be added that they remain homes. She suggested the center of the island retain its commercial district.

Mr. Jim Waddell reported he is representing property owners, Roger & Patty Crawford that own a gulf front personal residence at 112 Gorrie Drive. He explained this is a 25 ft. lot in the C-4 in the overlay district. He stated Mr. Crawford asked him to review the requirements of the overlay district as he has been involved in representing him as this issue moves forward to today's hearing. He said there are a number of things in the overlay district that are problematic for an existing homeowner such as parking for the residences and if there is a commercial component there are other state and federal requirements that are imposed such as accessibility for handicapped people. He pointed out it is nearly impossible for a single residential lot to provide both parking for a resident and parking if there is a commercial component. He stated the issue of what to do with wastewater is also a concern. Mr. Waddell reported Mr. Crawford's residence is served by a remote drain field which is regulated by the Department of Health. He stated expanding the capacity to support a commercial component would be nearly impossible and would require collaboration with multiple property owners to provide the capacity. He said the waste storage for receptacles has a 20 ft. setback requirement that is also problematic. Mr. Waddell requested the Board either exempt or grandfather his client and the other existing homes from the standards imposed by the district. He said grandfathering or a blanket exemption for the existing homes is the level of assurance his client is seeking.

Mr. Danny Grimarul, a resident of Ft. Myers, said they went through the same thing in Naples and they are making plans for what benefits the future. He stated a mixed use plan does not take commercial property and convert it to residential because they will only get a return one time. He said at some time in the future a lot of these lots will be built and occupied with full time residents and they will pay their taxes. He explained if there is a vibrant commercial district it will generate property taxes, personal taxes, create jobs and build a foundation. Commissioner Parrish left the meeting. Mr. Grimarul encouraged the Board to move with the flow of what is going to happen and set the precedent.

Mrs. Marilyn Bean, a resident of St. George Island, stated at the last public hearing when former Commissioner Cheryl Sanders made a motion for no new residences in the commercial area she was clear that there were no new permits and it did not affect the existing homes and they would be grandfathered in. Mrs. Bean said they must be careful in planning for the future and that their commercial is from 3rd Street to 3rd Street. She stated in the future they will need more businesses and retail and they need to keep the commercial area zoned commercial for any new construction.

Ms. Rose Drye, a resident of St. George Island, said they refer to the existing homes as grandfathered in and she asked if they would still be a non-conforming use and subject to those rules. Attorney Shuler stated if they are grandfathered in and an exception from the ordinance and they are destroyed by more than 50% then they could rebuild as a purely residential function. Mrs. Drye questioned if both elements grandfathering in and having an exception for the property would be in the proposed change. Attorney Shuler responded yes, he thinks they are one in the same. Mrs. Drye questioned if grandfathering in is an excepted use. Attorney Shuler explained they will be allowed as a non-conforming use which they are now and presently if they were destroyed more than 50% would have to rebuild as commercial on the ground floor and residential on the second and above floors and what is being discussed is how to address it. He said if what is passed at the final hearing is what is being discussed then the existing C-4 residential properties would be allowed to rebuild with a purely residential component. He explained they will not be non-conforming if the ordinance is amended to allow for it. Ms. Drye said that would be good because they are talking about over 50 existing single family residences. Attorney Shuler reported he was told it affects 65-70 properties.

Attorney Shuler said Mr. Moron is displaying a map Mr. Curenton prepared that was presented in July when the Board authorized this public hearing. He explained this map shows the C-4 residences within the business district. He stated there are approximately 65 C-4 residential properties within the commercial district that they would consider grandfathering in and allowing them to rebuild as a strictly residential use if they were destroyed by more than 50%. Attorney Shuler reported there are also approximately 60-65 vacant C-4 properties within the business district that would have these potential parking issues and they are talking about not dealing with those until later. He reported this is a fairly large issue and the reason the ordinance was drafted this way was to clarify the discussion about the number of units that would be grandfathered in and the number of vacant lots that may have future issues that need to be dealt with. Chairman called for public comment again. Attorney Shuler said the Board can now have discussions as the LPA. Commissioner Jones stated he is for doing their best to create an ordinance for a more vibrant future for the business district on St. George Island. He reported if they can move forward to grandfather in the residences that were already in existence in this district before this act they created and move forward and give space for there to be more businesses on the island and not just purely residential. He said if the businesses are going to exist they must have a place to be and that is his intent. Commissioner Jones stated when they first started talking about the overlay district it was to give businesses a place to be. Chairman Lockley agreed but said he is concerned about the parking. Commissioner Jones said it is hard to address potential parking when they do not know what will be requested. Attorney Shuler presented the map and showed the lots that would have a parking problem. He explained the 25 ft. lots do not front on a public road and have an alley so they have a hard time meeting the 3 minimum parking spaces that would be required for a mixed use development. He said the minimum parking for an individual lot that has the mixed use component is 2 parking spaces for a residence and 1 parking space for every 200 ft. of commercial space. He explained the areas that will have a problem. Attorney Shuler stated there is nothing wrong with identifying the existing C-4 properties and dealing with that

problem now. He reported he has talked with Mr. Curenton about finding a path forward for the other lots that are zoned C-4 but are going to have these parking problems. He explained all of these items do not have to be solved at one time and the Board can deal with one issue now and another one in the future. Attorney Shuler addressed the lots on the map and said the Villas of St. George is not a C-4 property and he was told were developed under another development order from the county. Attorney Shuler reported he is not envisioning a grandfathering of the Villas of St. George. Attorney Shuler identified the properties on the map that the Board would consider grandfathering in and said they would create an exception from the overlay district to allow them to rebuild as C-4 residential with purely residential and no commercial component. Commissioner Boldt asked about the other properties in that district that are not highlighted on the map. Attorney Shuler stated under the current proposal those lots would have to be rebuilt with commercial on the ground floor and residential up top. Attorney Shuler advised the Board if they are finished with their discussions then they can close the LPA meeting and reconvene as the Board of County Commissioners meeting and conduct a public hearing. He stated the Board will not take a vote today. Commissioner Massey questioned if the property where the skinny minis are was commercial. Attorney Shuler said they were all commercial and C-2 properties that were rezoned to C-4 along the bay and then rezoned for the purpose of constructing the C-4 residences that he described. He explained the C-4 residences mean it is a commercially zoned C-4 property but has a purely residential component. He reported with a private overlay that is how the C-4 district was implemented with a pure commercial use, a pure residential use or mixed use mixing commercial and residential. Attorney Shuler said that is how the market forces had worked until recently and there was not much mixed use. He explained for the most part it has been purely residential uses in the commercial district which is why people in the community came forward and asked the Board to protect the business district. Commissioner Parrish reported if they do a commercial venture they would need 2 lots to provide for an aerobic system and parking because the lots are skinny. He asked when the lots were platted. Attorney Shuler responded in the 1950's or 1960's. Commissioner Boldt asked if the intention is to consider restoring the use of the property to the way the original buyer intended it to be when it was bought. Attorney Shuler said he is referring to when the individuals received the rezoning from C-2 to C-4 and the approval to build the purely residential use of the property and that is the intent of Commissioner Jones' comments. Chairman Lockley closed the LPA meeting and reconvened the Board of County Commissioners meeting. Attorney Shuler read the caption of the ordinance. Chairman Lockley asked for public comment.

Ms. Troy pointed out her lots on the map and said this provides an example of what they are discussing. She said with the 1 lot she can meet the requirements if she builds a home but cannot meet the requirements if she must put commercial on the first floor. She explained she also has a business but it is on 2 lots and set back 50 ft. to meet the parking requirements. She said her lot is a prime example and if they do not grandfather these lots then she cannot use her 1 lot. She suggested they consider a change to the lots on the bay and the gulf.

Mr. Grimarul said they are talking about how to implement this and what the problems are now but there are ways to resolve it. He reported parking is an issue in every city but they can overcome the problem. He stated they need to preserve what they have so they have the opportunity to face the problem when it occurs.

Mr. Bean reported Ms. Troy's was a good example to continue the residential use but the intent was to preserve. He pointed out in C-2 residential was a prohibited use. He stated once they started the C-4 everyone is going to want to rezone and that is the threat and he hopes they can compromise along the water. Mr. Bean encouraged the board to keep the downtown future.

Mr. Paul Riegelmayr, a resident of St. George Island, said he agreed with Mr. Bean's suggestion of a compromise and allowing C-4 along the water (bay and gulf) and keep the rest commercial because they need a commercial district.

Attorney Shuler stated the Board can discuss this matter but voting will be at the second public hearing. He requested the Board take action to authorize the second public hearing occur at a time prior to 5:00 p.m. He said if the Board does not take action then the meeting would be after 5:00 p.m. Commissioner Massey referenced Ms. Troy's property and asked if years ago they could build a house on this property. Attorney Shuler explained C-4 zoned properties prior to February, 2018 did not have the same parking question because as site plans were being submitted people were making the economic decisions to have purely residential uses and they were able to meet the parking requirements for a residence which is 2. He reported they were able to build the skinny minis and use common drain fields. He explained they have come up with creative ways and the Board has assisted them by providing access across the right-of-ways with drain fields and things of this nature. Attorney Shuler said when the overlay was adopted in February, 2018 it required and mandated the commercial component on the first floor of C-4 properties and it changed the parking component to a minimum of 3. He reported the requirement is 2 parking spaces for the residence and 1 parking space for every 200 sq. ft. of commercial development. Attorney Shuler said for those units that front the water and have 1 public road they cannot meet the requirements. He stated some areas do not let you use the right-of-way for parking calculations but Franklin County has been generous in allowing this. He said the reason there is a parking problem now is the ordinance changed. Attorney Shuler stated they are working their way through addressing the issues and if they are not going to address the whole district then they may limit solving the issue for the C-4 residences and saving for a future date the other C-4 vacant properties. Commissioner Massey reported he understands they want a commercial district but does not want Ms. Troy not being able to use her 1 lot when she has paid taxes for years. Attorney Shuler said he asked the County Planner to come up with a plan for the Board to consider. He explained they may not be able to come up with an immediately solution other than to keep working on it and develop site plans as projects come in. Attorney Shuler reported there are many options and there could be variances for hardships. Chairman Lockley asked for the size of the lot and how many parking spaces there are. Attorney Shuler pointed out on the map the lots that are affected. He explained all of the lots are not C-4 some of them are C-2. He said the parking problems are

only occurring when a lot fronts 1 road. Chairman Lockley closed the public hearing. **On motion by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Boldt, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to authorize the second public hearing the second meeting in January at 11 a.m.**

County Attorney – Michael Shuler – Report

Attorney Shuler requested authorization for the Chairman to sign the closing statement where the county purchased the right-of-way from Mr. Steve Brown at Alligator Point. **On motion by Commissioner Parrish, seconded by Commissioner Jones, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to authorize Chairman Lockley to sign the closing statement for the property of Mr. Steve Brown.** Attorney Shuler clarified this is a right-of-way near Alan Drive providing some alternative access.

Attorney Shuler reported on the Hurricane Housing Recovery Program (HHRP) contract they approved at the last Board meeting there was some discussion concerning how to make sure the contract provider, Ms. Lori Switzer, was paid according to the 15% allowed under the contract. He explained part of the issue was the state in the grant has mixed in administrative costs and with the salary to be paid to Ms. Switzer. He suggested she receive the entire 15% and out of that 15% Ms. Switzer would be responsible to make sure all the costs are paid out of the grant and provide documentation to the Finance Office that the costs are paid. Attorney Shuler reported the county will not be responsible for the payment of any of the costs for the HHRP. He stated the 15% is approximately \$185,000 and Ms. Switzer will be paid in 34 equal payments beginning September 1st as she has already been providing contract services. He said they will need to approve the contract retroactive to September 1, 2019. Attorney Shuler pointed out the contract the county signed with the state was dated July, 2019. **Commissioner Massey made a motion to approve the contract retroactive to September 1, 2019. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion.** Commissioner Boldt asked if Ms. Switzer will give an accounting of her expenses. Attorney Shuler agreed she will provide invoices and paid checks to the Finance Department. **Motion carried; 5-0.**

Attorney Shuler requested permission to conduct a public hearing for the Board to consider amending the ordinance to address overnight parking in county parks. He explained the original ordinance was adopted in 2005 but there was an exception for people to park that were crabbing and floundering. He reported there are a number of additional parks that have been added since 2005 and he is requesting the Board allow him to schedule a public hearing to consider some refinement to the provision that would allow an exception for people that are crabbing and floundering. Attorney Shuler stated the Sheriff might have some issues with enforcement of the current ordinance. **On motion by Commissioner Parrish, seconded by Commissioner Massey, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to authorize Attorney Shuler to schedule this public hearing.**

Commissioner Jones said since Ms. Switzer is doing her regular duties and the Hurricane Michael program he would like Ms. Switzer to start appearing at the Board meetings in January

and every other month with a report. **On motion by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Massey, and by unanimous vote of the Board present, it was agreed to request Ms. Switzer to start appearing at the Board meetings in January and every other month to provide a report.**

Commissioners' Comments

The Board wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Jones said there will be a Seahawks' district basketball game on Friday night at the high school at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

Noah Lockley - Chairman

Attest:

Marcia M. Johnson - Clerk of Courts

January 7, 2020
 Franklin County Road Department
 Detail of Work Performed and Material Hauled by District
 Detail from 12/12/2019 - 12/31/2019

District 1

Work Performed:

<u>Work Performed:</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>
Weed Eat & Cut Grass around signs & Culverts, Cut grass in ditches	12/12/2019	S Franklin Street
Weed Eat & Cut Grass around signs & Culverts, Cut grass in ditches	12/12/2019	Creamer Street
Sign Maintenance	12/12/2019	Gibson Street
Sign Maintenance	12/12/2019	Shadow Bay Drive
Litter Pickup	12/12/2019	Carroll Street
Litter Pickup	12/12/2019	Sago Drive
Cut bushes back	12/16/2019	W Pine Avenue
Cut bushes back	12/16/2019	W 8th Street
Cut bushes back	12/16/2019	W 9th Street
Cut bushes back	12/16/2019	W 11th Street
Cut bushes back	12/16/2019	W Gulf Beach Drive
Litter Pickup	12/16/2019	Otterslide Road
Cut bushes back	12/16/2019	W 10th Street
Trim Trees	12/17/2019	W Gulf Beach Drive
Cut bushes back	12/17/2019	W 7th Street
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way, Litter Pickup	12/17/2019	Daisey Drive
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way, Litter Pickup	12/17/2019	Old Ferry Dock Road
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way, Litter Pickup	12/17/2019	Hickory Dip
Trim Trees	12/17/2019	W 10th Street
Trim Trees	12/17/2019	W 8th Street
Trim Trees	12/17/2019	W Gulf Beach Drive
Cut bushes back	12/17/2019	W 6th Street
Cut bushes back	12/17/2019	W 5th Street
Cut bushes back	12/17/2019	W 3rd Street
Cut bushes back	12/17/2019	W Pine Avenue
Trim Trees	12/17/2019	W 10th Street
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way, Litter Pickup	12/17/2019	Bull Street
Trim Trees	12/17/2019	W 10th Street
Trim Trees	12/17/2019	W 8th Street
Trim Trees	12/17/2019	W Gulf Beach Drive
Trim Trees	12/17/2019	W 8th Street
Cut bushes back	12/18/2019	E 6th Street
Cut bushes back	12/18/2019	W Pine Avenue
Cut bushes back	12/18/2019	E 9th Street
Cut bushes back	12/18/2019	E 7th Street
Cut bushes back	12/18/2019	E 5th Street
Cut bushes back	12/18/2019	E 4th Street
Cut bushes back, Trim Trees	12/18/2019	Brown Street
Cut bushes back, Trim Trees	12/18/2019	Patton Street
Cut bushes back, Trim Trees	12/18/2019	Gander Street
Cut bushes back, Trim Trees	12/18/2019	W 8th Street

District 1

Work Performed:

<u>Work Performed:</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>
Cut bushes back, Trim Trees	12/18/2019	W Bay Shore Drive
Cut bushes back, Trim Trees	12/18/2019	Palmer Street
Cut bushes back	12/18/2019	E 8th Street
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/19/2019	David Street
Trim Trees	12/19/2019	Land Street
Trim Trees	12/19/2019	W Bay Shore Drive
Trim Trees	12/19/2019	W 4th Street
Trim Trees, Cut bushes back	12/19/2019	Palmer Street
Trim Trees, Cut bushes back	12/19/2019	W Bay Shore Drive
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/19/2019	Washington Street
Trim Trees, Cut bushes back	12/19/2019	Land Street
Trim Trees, Cut bushes back	12/19/2019	E 4th Street
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/19/2019	Jefferson Street
Cut bushes back	12/19/2019	W Bay Shore Drive
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/19/2019	Adams Street
Cut bushes back	12/19/2019	W 10th Street
Cut bushes back	12/19/2019	Gander Street
Travel	12/19/2019	Jefferson Street
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/19/2019	Apple Way
Cut bushes back	12/19/2019	W Pine Avenue
Litter Pickup	12/23/2019	Otterslide Road
Litter Pickup	12/23/2019	Avenue A

0

Material HAUL From:

<u>Material HAUL From:</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>	<u>Cubic Yards</u>	<u>Tons</u>
Litter	12/12/2019	Sago Drive	1	0
Litter	12/12/2019	Carroll Street	1	0
Litter	12/16/2019	Otterslide Road	1	0
Litter	12/17/2019	Daisey Drive	1	0
Litter	12/17/2019	Bull Street	1	0
Litter	12/17/2019	Hickory Dip	1	0
Litter	12/17/2019	Old Ferry Dock Road	1	0
Litter	12/23/2019	Otterslide Road	1	0

Litter TOTAL

8 0

Trees	12/17/2019	W Gulf Beach Drive	6	0
Trees	12/17/2019	W 10th Street	6	0
Trees	12/17/2019	W 8th Street	6	0
Trees	12/18/2019	W Bay Shore Drive	3	0
Trees	12/18/2019	W 8th Street	3	0
Trees	12/18/2019	Gander Street	3	0
Trees	12/18/2019	Brown Street	3	0
Trees	12/18/2019	Patton Street	3	0
Trees	12/18/2019	Palmer Street	3	0
Trees	12/19/2019	W 4th Street	9	0
Trees	12/19/2019	W Bay Shore Drive	6	0
Trees	12/19/2019	W Bay Shore Drive	9	0
Trees		E 4th Street	6	0
Trees		Palmer Street	6	0
Trees	12/19/2019	Land Street	6	0

District 1

Material HAUL From:

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>	<u>Cubic Yards</u>	<u>Tons</u>
Trees	12/3/19	Land Street	9	0
Trees		TOTAL	87	0

District 2

Work Performed:

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>		
Litter Pickup	12/12/2019	CR67		
Box drag	12/16/2019	Lakeview Drive		
Box drag	12/16/2019	Fernway Road		
Box drag	12/16/2019	Magnolia Street		
Box drag	12/16/2019	Alligator Drive (Temporary Road)		
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/16/2019	Putnal Street		
Box drag	12/16/2019	Harbor Circle		
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/16/2019	Hinton Street		
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/16/2019	Franklin Street		
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/16/2019	Gulf Court		
Box drag	12/16/2019	Harry Morrison		
Box drag	12/16/2019	Bay Front Drive		
Cleaned ditches, Cut grass in ditches	12/16/2019	Apalachee Street		
Box drag	12/16/2019	Cypress Street		
Box drag	12/16/2019	St Teresa Ave		
Box drag	12/16/2019	Sun N Sands Blvd		
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/16/2019	Apalachee Street		
Litter Pickup	12/16/2019	Lake Morality Road		
Litter Pickup	12/16/2019	CR67		
Box drag	12/16/2019	Donax Place		
Litter Pickup	12/18/2019	CR67		
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/18/2019	Oak Street		
Litter Pickup	12/18/2019	Baywood Drive		
Litter Pickup	12/19/2019	Rio Vista Drive		
Driveway repair	12/19/2019	CR67		
Trim Trees	12/19/2019	Florida Avenue		
Trim Trees	12/19/2019	Hinton Street		
Litter Pickup	12/19/2019	McIntyre Road		
Litter Pickup	12/19/2019	Crooked River Road		
Litter Pickup	12/19/2019	Oak Street		
Litter Pickup	12/19/2019	CR67		
Box drag	12/19/2019	Jeff Sanders Road		
Road Repair	12/23/2019	Alligator Drive (Temporary Road)		
Flagged	12/23/2019	Alligator Drive (Temporary Road)		
Graded Road(s)	12/31/2019	Alligator Drive (Temporary Road)		
Box drag	12/31/2019	McIntyre Road		
Box drag	12/31/2019	Jeff Sanders Road		
Travel	12/31/2019	Jeff Sanders Road		
Box drag	12/31/2019	Duvall Road		
Graded Road(s)	12/31/2019	Harbor Circle		
			0	

Material HAUL From:

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>	<u>Cubic Yards</u>	<u>Tons</u>
Sand		Stock Pile, CR 370 - Alligator Drive - Alligator	18	0

District 2**Material HAUL From:**

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>	<u>Cubic Yards</u>	<u>Tons</u>
Sand	3.	TOTAL	18	0
Trees	12/19/2019	Florida Avenue	18	0
Trees	12/19/2019	Hinton Street	9	0
Trees		TOTAL	27	0

Material HAUL To:

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>	<u>Cubic Yards</u>	<u>Tons</u>
Dirty 89 Lime Rock	12/19/2019	CR67	3	0
Dirty 89 Lime Rock	12/23/2019	Stock Pile, CR 370 - Alligator Drive - Alligator	18	0
Dirty 89 Lime Rock	12/23/2019	Stock Pile, CR 370 - Alligator Drive - Alligator	18	0
Dirty 89 Lime Rock	12/23/2019	Alligator Drive (Temporary Road)	36	0
Dirty 89 Lime Rock	12/30/2019	Stock Pile, CR 370 - Alligator Drive - Alligator	36	0
Dirty 89 Lime Rock	12/31/2019	Stock Pile, CR 370 - Alligator Drive - Alligator	18	0
Dirty 89 Lime Rock		TOTAL	129	0
Sand	12/23/2019	Alligator Drive (Temporary Road)	18	0
Sand	12/23/2019	Alligator Drive (Temporary Road)	72	0
Sand		TOTAL	90	0

District 4**Work Performed:**

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>		
Driveway repair	12/12/2019	Linden Road		
Culvert Misc, Driveway repair	12/12/2019	Bluff Road		
Culvert Misc, Driveway repair	12/12/2019	Linden Road		
Driveway repair	12/12/2019	Bluff Road		
Culvert repair	12/16/2019	Bayview Drive		
Litter Pickup	12/16/2019	Peachtree Road		
Litter Pickup	12/16/2019	Squire Road		
Litter Pickup	12/16/2019	Long Road		
Litter Pickup	12/23/2019	Bluff Road		
Pot hole Repair (Fill)	12/30/2019	CR30A		
Litter Pickup	12/30/2019	CR30A		
Litter Pickup	12/30/2019	26th Avenue		
Litter Pickup	12/30/2019	Pal Rivers Road		
Litter Pickup	12/30/2019	8 Mile		
Litter Pickup	12/30/2019	Bluff Road		
Litter Pickup	12/30/2019	10 Mile		
Litter Pickup	12/31/2019	Bluff Road		
Litter Pickup	12/31/2019	Brownsville Road		
Litter Pickup	12/31/2019	Bluff Road		
Litter Pickup	12/31/2019	Brownsville Road		
			0	

Material HAUL From:

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>	<u>Cubic Yards</u>	<u>Tons</u>
Litter	12/16/2019	Peachtree Road	3	0
Litter	12/16/2019	Squire Road	3	0
Litter	12/16/2019	Long Road	4	0
Litter	12/23/2019	Bluff Road	1	0
Litter	12/30/2019	Pal Rivers Road	1	0
Litter		Bluff Road	1	0
Litter		26th Avenue	1	0

District 4**Material HAUL From:**

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>	<u>Cubic Yards</u>	<u>Tons</u>
Litter	3.	TOTAL	14	0

Material HAUL To:

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>	<u>Cubic Yards</u>	<u>Tons</u>
Milled Asphalt	12/30/2019	CR30A	9	0
Milled Asphalt		TOTAL	9	0
Rip Rap	12/12/2019	Bluff Road	3	0
Rip Rap	12/12/2019	Linden Road	3	0
Rip Rap	12/16/2019	Bayview Drive	9	0
Rip Rap		TOTAL	15	0

District 5**Work Performed:**

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>
Graded Road(s)	12/12/2019	Bloody Bluff Road
Litter Pickup	12/12/2019	Smith Creek
Graded Road(s)	12/12/2019	Brick Yard Road
Graded Road(s)	12/12/2019	Hickory Landing
Graded Road(s)	12/12/2019	Wright Lake Road
Sign Maintenance	12/12/2019	Gardners Landing Road
Weed Eat & Cut Grass around signs & Culverts, Cut grass in ditches	12/12/2019	State Street
Litter Pickup	12/16/2019	CC Land
Shoulder Work, Road Repair	12/16/2019	Ridge Road
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/18/2019	Sheriff's Office (Jail)
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/18/2019	CC Land
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/19/2019	Plum Street
Box drag	12/19/2019	Mill Road
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/19/2019	Moore Street
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/19/2019	Varnes Street
Cut grass along shoulders of road on county right of way	12/19/2019	Smith Street
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Bloody Bluff Road
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Brick Yard Road
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Bloody Bluff Road
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Power Line Drive
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Mill Road
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	North Road
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Sand Beach Road
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Brick Yard Road
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Ashley Landing
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Ashley Landing
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Hickory Landing
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Wright Lake Road
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	River Road
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	North Road
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Power Line Drive
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Hickory Landing
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Wright Lake Road
Checked county roads for safety of traveling for public	12/30/2019	Sand Beach Road
Litter Pickup	12/31/2019	CC Land

Material HAUL From:

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>	<u>Cubic Yards</u>	<u>Tons</u>
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District 5

Material HAUL From:

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>	<u>Cubic Yards</u>	<u>Tons</u>
Litter	12/3/19	Smith Creek	1	0
Litter	12/16/2019	CC Land	1	0
Litter		TOTAL	2	0

Material HAUL To:

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Road</u>	<u>Cubic Yards</u>	<u>Tons</u>
Black Dirt	12/16/2019	Ridge Road	3	0
Black Dirt		TOTAL	3	0
Dirty 89 Lime Rock	12/12/2019	Bloody Bluff Road	18	0
Dirty 89 Lime Rock		TOTAL	18	0
Sand	12/12/2019	Bloody Bluff Road	18	0
Sand		TOTAL	18	0



FRANKLIN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF

Solid Waste & Recycling ❖ Animal Control ❖ Parks & Recreation
 210 State Road 65
 Eastpoint, Florida 32328
 Tel.: 850-670-8167
 Fax: 850-670-5716
 Email: fcswd@fairpoint.net

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

DATE January 7, 2020

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

SUBJECT(S): FOR BOARD INFORMATION:

Right-of-Way Debris Pickup/Recycle Material Hauled December 11, 2019-December 30, 2019

RIGHT-OF-WAY DEBRIS PICKUP

Apalachicola	Eastpoint	St George Island	Carrabelle	Lanark	Alligator Point
27.67TONS	25.63 TONS	50.05 TONS	58.81 TONS	10.57 TONS	-0- TONS

RECYCLE MATERIAL HAULED

	Apalachicola	Eastpoint	St George Island	Carrabelle	Lanark	Alligator Point	St James
Cardboard	3.14 TONS	6.81 TONS	4.26 TONS	.58 TONS	-0- TONS	-0- TONS	-0- TONS
Plastic,Paper, Glass, Aluminum	4.03 TONS	1.79 TONS	2.26 TONS	-0- TONS	-0- TONS	-0- TONS	.67 TONS



28 Airport Road
Apalachicola, Florida 32320
(850) 653-8977, Fax (850) 653-3643
Em3frank@gtcom.net

Report to Board of County Commissioners

Date: January 7, 2020

Action Items:

None

Information Item:

1. Staff worked on updating the LMS (local mitigation strategy).
2. FCEM Staff continues to work on FEMA reimbursement claims from Hurricane Michael. This includes working with FEMA staff regarding mitigation of damaged parks, roads, etc. Mitigation takes some time but EOC Staff continue to work diligently with FEMA Staff on the most beneficial repairs for Franklin County.
3. Please see attached update on FEMA Reimbursement for Hurricane Michael

Pamela Brownell

Pamela Brownell
Director

Project #	Category	Title	Process Step	Federal Share	Non-Federal Share
76276	B - Emergency Protective Measures	EPM; County Wide Oct 7-9 and/or Nov 25th and beyond	Obligated	\$2,138.18	\$237.57
79146	C - Roads and Bridges	App CERT Franklin County Road Damages 8 roads	Obligated	\$28,998.02	\$9,666.01
79153	C - Roads and Bridges	APP CERT Franklin County Patton Drive, Timber Island Bridge, and Lombardi Landing Fence	Obligated	\$12,483.43	\$4,161.14
79481	C - Roads and Bridges	App Cert Sm Proj: Franklin County Road Damages 11 roads	Obligated	\$14,507.66	\$4,835.89
79483	C - Roads and Bridges	App Cert Sm Proj: Franklin County Road Repairs Carrabelle Area	Obligated	\$24,978.92	\$8,326.31
79486	C - Roads and Bridges	App Certt: 5 FC Roads E BAY - Millender- Sand Beach - Sawyer - W Pine	Obligated	\$7,574.69	\$2,524.89
80598	G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	APP CERT: DW Wilson Ball Park	Obligated	\$25,373.27	\$8,457.76
5371	B - Emergency Protective Measures	Franklin County EPM	Obligated	\$11,230.76	\$0.00
81682	C - Roads and Bridges	App Cert Sm Proj.: C-30 A West	Obligated	\$32,440.51	\$10,813.50
82497	C - Roads and Bridges	App Cert Sm Proj: 8 Mile and 10 Mile Roads	Obligated	\$9,564.11	\$3,188.04
85814	B - Emergency Protective Measures	EPM - Alligator Drive Temp Road	Obligated	\$69,446.68	\$0.00
79187	C - Roads and Bridges	Franklin County Roadsigns and Traffic Signals	Obligated	\$48,578.32	\$16,192.77

Project #	Category	Title	Process Step	Federal Share	Non-Federal Share
81939	E - Buildings and Equipment	Old Jail House - Solid Waste - Scale House	Obligated	\$7,776.00	\$2,592.00
80593	C - Roads and Bridges	Franklin County Roads C30 & Gulf Ave	Pending Applicant DDD Approval		
76268	B - Emergency Protective Measures	App CERT EPM; State Identified 45 days (October 10 to November 24, 2018)	Pending Applicant Project Review	\$123,752.53	\$0.00
79189	C - Roads and Bridges	C30 Road Projects Sections 1 & 2	Pending CRC Project Development		
83668	E - Buildings and Equipment	Weems Hospital Oxygen- Admin Trailer and CT Buildings	Pending CRC Project Development		
79475	A - Debris Removal	Franklin County Debris Removal 45 days	Pending CRC Project Development	\$126,978.71	\$0.00
76655	C - Roads and Bridges	Alligator Point Road Damage; Combined Michael & Hermine	Pending CRC Project Development		
81691	G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	East Point Fishing Pier: Parking area/ ADA/ Restroom	Pending CRC Project Development		
81936	B - Emergency Work Donated Resources	Donated Resources	Pending EEI Completion	\$0.00	\$0.00
82656	G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	APP CERT: Live Oak St and Indian Creek Fences	Pending EEI Completion	\$6,780.20	\$2,260.07
80602	E - Buildings and Equipment	Courthouse - Annex - Pub Def. Office - 2 gen. lids	Pending EEI Completion		

Project #	Category	Title	Process Step	Federal Share	Non-Federal Share
80606	E - Buildings and Equipment	Franklin County Buildings	Pending EEI Completion		
81066	E - Buildings and Equipment	Health Dept Building damages	Pending EEI Completion		
80595	G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	App CERT Kendrick Complex and Vrooman park	Pending EMMIE Submission	\$5,644.40	\$1,881.47
79200	E - Buildings and Equipment	SGI Lighthouse Park Damages	Pending EMMIE Submission	\$4,226.76	\$1,408.92
80596	G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	Carrabelle Beach Park	Pending Final FEMA Review	\$8,738.11	\$2,912.70
83669	G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	SGI Park - BB Court and Fishing Pier	Pending PDMG Scope & Cost Routing		
79199	G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	Alligator Point Dunes Walkovers	Pending PDMG Scope & Cost Routing		
79185	G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	SGI Parks and Piers and Roads	Pending PDMG Scope & Cost Routing		
81067	E - Buildings and Equipment	FC Landfill Buildings	Pending PDMG Scope & Cost Routing		
81069	E - Buildings and Equipment	WEEMS Hosp Bldg	Pending PDMG Scope & Cost Routing		
81073	G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	Island View Park E of Carrabelle	Pending PDMG Scope & Cost Routing		

Project #	Category	Title	Process Step	Federal Share	Non-Federal Share
81074	G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	Patton-Ochoocknee damages	Pending PDMG Scope & Cost Routing		
79156	G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	App CERT St George Island Parks Walk overs	Pending Recipient Final Review	\$13,370.28	\$4,456.76

**FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
NOTICE TO RECEIVE SEALED BIDS
FPID #433567-1-58-01**

The Franklin County Board of County Commissioners will receive sealed bids from any qualified person, company or corporation interested in constructing:

C.R. 67/TALLAHASSEE STREET SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

Project is located in Franklin County, Florida and consists of approximately 11,558 linear feet of sidewalk construction on CR 67/Tallahassee Street in Carrabelle, Florida.

Plans and specifications can be obtained by contacting Mark Curenton, Franklin County Planner, at markc@franklincountyflorida.com or 850-653-9783 x-160. The bid must conform to Section 287.133(3) Florida Statutes, on public entity crimes.

This project is federally funded with assistance from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). By submitting a bid, the company certifies that no principal (which includes officers, directors, or executives) is presently suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation on this transaction by any Federal Department of Agency.

All bidders shall be FDOT qualified per Section 2-1 of the FDOT Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction, latest edition in the following work classes: Sidewalk.

Completion date for this project will be 120 days from the date of the Notice to Proceed presented to the successful bidder.

A 5% bid bond will be required from any firm submitting a proposal in excess of \$150,000. For contracts of \$250,000 or more, a performance and payment bond for 100% of the contract amount will be required to be maintained and in effect throughout the life of the contract.

Liquidated damages for failure to complete the project on the specified date will be set according to Section 8-10.2 of the specifications package in the bid documents.

Bids will be received until 4:30 p.m. (EST), on Monday, January 6, 2020, at the Franklin County Clerk's Office, Franklin County Courthouse, 33 Market Street, Suite 203, Apalachicola, Florida 32320, and will be opened and read aloud on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, at the County Commission meeting beginning at 9:00 a.m. (EST) at 34 Forbes Street, Apalachicola, Florida. The outside of the envelope should be marked "**Sealed Bid – C.R. 67/TALLAHASSEE STREET SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS**".

The Board of County Commissioners reserves the right to waive informalities in any bid, to accept and/or reject any and all bids. If the contract is to be awarded, it will be awarded to the lowest responsive bidder. All bids shall remain firm for a period of sixty days after the opening.

All bidders shall comply with all applicable State and local laws concerning licensing, registration and regulation of contractors doing business in the State of Florida.

All technical questions must be addressed in writing and emailed to Mark Curenton at markc@franklincountyflorida.com.



CONTRACT SERVICE



Budget Remodeling And Solutions LLC
 budgetremodelingandsolutions@hotmail.com
 438 Harrison Ave
 Panama City Fl 32401
 (850-215-0556)
Name of the Contractor : Alexander Del Riego
Phone : 786 501 6918 and 850-215-0556
 L18000281837. G18000130358

Customer: Angela Webster
Home address: 579 Ridge Road East point 32328
E-mail: angela.webster@cacaainc.org
Phone: 850 653 8056

Descriptions of Project :
Demo
Siding
interior wall plywood
Floor Plywood

LABOR

QUAN	SQUARE FEET	DESCRIPTION	Materials	PRICE
	1,156	Demo		\$350.00
	770	Siding Installation	Vinyl	\$1,800.00
7	200	Wall Plywood		\$558.00
6	186	Floor Plywood materi		\$352.00
			Sub Total	\$3,060.00
				1,003.64
			TOTAL	\$4,063.64

Note:

TIME FOR COMPLETION : The work to be performed by Contractor pursuant to this Agreement shall be commenced within () days from this date or approximately on date : _____ & shall be substantially completed within () days from this date or approximately on (Date): _____ commencement of work shall be defined as

Contractor's failure to substantially commence work without lawful excuse , within twenty () day from the date specified above is a violation of The Contractor's Licence law.

Payment : Owner agrees to pay contractor a Total cash price of \$ 4,063.64

Down payment(if any) \$ 2,000.00

Whichever is lesser) Should contract call for a salesman's commission to be paid out of contractor price ,said payment shall be made by disbursing party to the contractor.

Payment schedule as follows :

A surcharge will be charged for late payment of up to 80% of the labor value. After 15 days of late payment will be Lien on the project.

Your , the home owner (buyer) or tenant have the right to require the contractor to furnish you with a performance bond. Your , the buyer , may cancel this transactions at any time prior to midnight of the third business day after the date of this transaction. See attached Notice of cancellations form for an explanation of this right . Cancellation by the right to rescind has passed , shall be deemed breach of this contractor & entitles the contractor to damages.

Name : _____ Date: _____
contractor's fir name if any

Name & state registration Number of any salesman who solicited or negotiated this contract :

Customer : _____

Signature : _____

Date: _____

From: Mark Curenton markc@franklincountyflorida.com
Subject: FW: CR 30A Thirteen Mile Road to US 98 - Progress Report
Date: January 6, 2020 at 10:24 AM
To: Michael Moron michael@franklincountyflorida.com

Dear Michael,

Here is the update from Halff about the CR 30A project.

Sincerely,
Mark C. Curenton

From: Sullivan, James P. [mailto:jsullivan@Halff.com]
Sent: Monday, January 06, 2020 9:11 AM
To: Mark Curenton
Subject: CR 30A Thirteen Mile Road to US 98 - Progress Report

Hello Mark,

Hope you had a wonderful holiday time. I thought it might be time for you to send a progress report to FDOT so I wanted to give you a quick update.

Environmental – Wetlands have been flagged and mapped (see attached).
Survey – Control points have been established. Topographic data collection is approximately 30% complete.
Geotechnical – Utility locates and MOT have been completed. Field work to begin next week.
Design – 3R safety analysis, no-passing zone evaluation and pavement design are nearing completion. Construction plan preparation has been initiated.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Jim

James P. Sullivan, PE
Senior Project Manager

O: (850) 848-9406
C: (850) 556-5914

Halff Associates, Inc.
2507 Callaway Road, Suite 100
Tallahassee, FL 32303



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Virus-free. www.avg.com



Wetlands Field
Map.pdf



16.
**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
Environmental Protection**

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Jeanette Nuñez
Lt. Governor

Noah Valenstein
Secretary

October 21, 2019

Mr. Keith Rowell
Florida Forest Service
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
3125 Conner Boulevard, Room 236
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1650

RE: Tate's Hell State Forest – Lease No. 4041

Dear Mr. Rowell:

On **October 18, 2019**, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) recommended approval of the **Tate's Hell State Forest** management plan. Therefore, Division of State Lands, Office of Environmental Services (OES), acting as agent for the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, hereby approves the **Tate's Hell State Forest** management plan. The next management plan update is due October 18, 2029.

Pursuant to s. 253.034(5)(a), F.S., each management plan is required to describe both short-term and long-term management goals and include measurable objectives to achieve those goals. Short-term goals shall be achievable within a 2-year planning period, and long-term goals shall be achievable within a 10-year planning period. Upon completion of short-term goals, please submit a signed letter identifying categories, goals, and results with attached methodology to the Division of State Lands, Office of Environmental Services.

Pursuant to s. 259.032(8)(g), F.S., by July 1 of each year, each governmental agency and each private entity designated to manage lands shall report to the Secretary of Environmental Protection, via the Division of State Lands, on the progress of funding, staffing, and resource management of every project for which the agency or entity is responsible.

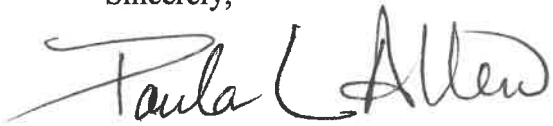
Pursuant to s. 259.036(2), F.S., management areas that exceed 1,000 acres in size, shall be scheduled for a land management review at least every 5 years.

Pursuant to s. 259.032, F.S., and Chapter 18-2.021, F.A.C., management plans for areas less than 160 acres may be handled in accordance with the negative response process. This process requires small management plans and management plan amendments be submitted to the Division of State Lands for review, and the Acquisition and Restoration

Council (ARC) for public notification. The Division of State Lands will approve these plans or plan amendments submitted for review through delegated authority unless three or more ARC members request the division place the item on a future council meeting agenda for review. To create better efficiency, improve customer service, and assist members of the ARC, the Division of State Lands will notice negative response items on Thursdays except for weeks that have State or Federal holidays that fall on Thursday or Friday. The Division of State Lands will contact you on the appropriate Friday to inform you if the item is approved via delegated authority or if it will be placed on a future ARC agenda by request of the ARC members.

Conditional approval of this land management plan does not waive the authority or jurisdiction of any governmental entity that may have an interest in this project. Implementation of any upland activities proposed by this management plan may require a permit or other authorization from federal and state agencies having regulatory jurisdiction over those particular activities. Pursuant to the conditions of your lease, please forward copies of all permits to this office upon issuance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paula L. Allen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "P" and "A".

Paula L. Allen
Office of Environmental Services
Division of State Lands
Department of Environmental Protection

TEN-YEAR LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR THE
TATE'S HELL STATE FOREST
FRANKLIN AND LIBERTY COUNTIES



PREPARED BY THE
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES
FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE

APPROVED ON
October 18, 2019

TEN-YEAR LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR THE
TATE'S HELL STATE FOREST



Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Karels", is written over a horizontal line.

Jim Karels, Director
Florida Forest Service

10.29.19
Date

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Roberts", is written over a horizontal line.

James Roberts, Chief
Forest Management Bureau

10-21-19
Date

TEN-YEAR LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN
TATE’S HELL STATE FOREST
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TATE’S HELL STATE FOREST
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LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LEAD AGENCY: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Forest Service
 COMMON NAME: Tate’s Hell State Forest
 LOCATION: Franklin County and Liberty County
 ACREAGE TOTAL: 202,436.58 acres

Historic Natural Communities	Approximate Acreage
Basin Marsh	77
Baygall	13,580
Bottomland Forest	1,961
Dome Swamp	2,500
Floodplain Swamp	6,517
Sandhill	495
Scrubby Flatwoods	926
Swamp Lake	29
Wet Prairie	24,908

Historic Natural Communities	Approximate Acreage
Basin Swamp	36,415
Blackwater Stream	304
Depression Marsh	140
Floodplain Marsh	1,788
Mesic Flatwoods	39,883
Scrub	658
Shrub Bog	25,342
Wet Flatwoods	48,895

TIITF LEASE AGREEMENT NUMBER: 4041
 USE: Single___ Multiple X

MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Florida DACS, Florida Forest Service
 Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
 Northwest Florida Water Management District
 Department of State, Division of Historical Resources

RESPONSIBILITY

General Forest Resource Management
 Wildlife Resources & Laws
 Water Resource Protection & Restoration
 Historical & Archaeological Resource Management

DESIGNATED LAND USE: Multiple-Use State Forest

SUBLEASES: None

ENCUMBRANCES: Various ingress/egress easements, utility easements, and outstanding oil, gas and mineral interests on portions of the property

TYPE ACQUISITION: Preservation 2000, Conservation and Recreation Lands, and Florida Forever programs

UNIQUE FEATURES: Dwarf Cypress Areas, Miles of River Frontage, Coastal Land, Large Freshwater Recharge Area

ARCHAEOLOGICAL / HISTORICAL: Forty-one (41) Sites

MANAGEMENT NEEDS: Adequate funding to implement Hydrological Restoration Plan, Ground Cover Restoration and Reforestation

ACQUISITION NEEDS: Various In-holdings and adjacent lands in Optimal Management Boundary

SURPLUS ACREAGE: None

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: 2012 and 2017 Land Management Reviews, Management Plan Advisory Group and Public Hearing, and DEP Acquisition and Restoration Council Public Hearing.

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE (FOR DIVISION OF STATE LANDS USE ONLY)

ARC Approval Date: _____ TIITF Approval Date: _____

Comments: _____

I. **Introduction**

Tate's Hell State Forest (THSF) is 202,436 contiguous acres occurring in the lower coastal plain along the Gulf Coast of Florida's Big Bend region. Currently situated between the Ochlockonee and Apalachicola Rivers and bisected by the New River, THSF is a rich and complicated mosaic of timberland, savannah, and swamp holding distinctive native habitats that interconnect. THSF is a working forest with thousands of acres of planted slash pine, a legacy of former industrial forest land, gridded by roads built by digging ditches on either side.

Tate's Hell State Forest occupies most of the interior of Franklin County (54% of the land), with 91% of the forest in Franklin and 9% in Liberty County. It's divided into ten management tracts ranging from 13,000 to 24,000 acres. Natural communities include wet and mesic flatwoods, basin and dome swamp, wet prairie, shrub bog, baygall, floodplain swamp, bottomland forest, scrub forest, sandhill, and various marsh types. There are over 100,000 acres of THSF in planted slash pine and over 800 miles of mostly dirt roads that lead to abundant space and solitude increasingly rare in Florida.

Tate's Hell State Forest is home to all the common north Florida wildlife, and many threatened and endangered species. Among Florida's rare and listed species are 31 animals and 24 plants that occur on THSF. The red cockaded woodpecker and gopher tortoise are the more widely recognized. One of the most valuable resources on THSF is clean water that flows and seeps into the wetlands, marshes, and estuaries vital to Gulf fish stocks, oysters, and other shellfish.

Tate's Hell State Forest is managed under a multiple use concept where timber, wildlife, recreation, water, and aesthetics are resources for the public good. Long term sustainability is the guiding principle. Since 2015, Tate's Hell has been independently certified by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). The primary management operations include prescribed burning, timber thinning, and hydrologic restoration. Each operation affects change in different temporal and spatial scales but in a linked and integrated way.

Tate's Hell State Forest is a landscape that bears a heavy record of historical uses from early settlement, through the forest industry years, to the return to the public domain. Restoration of native habitats with adaptive management are part of the long-term stewardship and sustainability written into this Ten-Year Plan. The local community is the first beneficiary and Tate's Hell management with wildfire protection and recreation opportunities. Timber harvest generates revenue for Florida, and is important to employment and commerce in the region.

A. **General Mission and Management Plan Direction**

The primary mission of the Florida Forest Service (FFS) is to "protect Florida and its people from the dangers of wildland fire and manage the forest resources through a stewardship ethic to assure they are available for future generations".

Management strategies for THSF center on the multiple-use concept, as defined in sections 589.04(3) and 253.034(2)(a) F.S. Implementation of this concept will utilize and conserve state forest resources in a harmonious and coordinated combination that will best serve the people of the state of Florida, and that is consistent with the purpose for which the forest

was acquired. Multiple-use management for THSF will be accomplished with the following strategies:

- Practice sustainable forest management for the efficient generation of revenue and in support of state forest management objectives;
- Provide for resource-based outdoor recreation opportunities for multiple interests;
- Restore and manage healthy forests and native ecosystems ensuring the long-term viability of populations and species listed as endangered, threatened or rare, and other components of biological diversity including game and non-game wildlife and plants;
- Protect known archaeological, historical, and cultural resources;
- Restore, maintain, and protect hydrological functions related water resources and the health of associated wetland and aquatic communities;
- Provide research and educational opportunities related to natural resource management.

This management plan is provided according to requirements of Sections 253.034, 259.032 and 373, Florida Statutes, and was prepared utilizing guidelines outlined in Section 18-2.021 of the Florida Administrative Code. It is not an annual work plan or detailed operational plan but provides general guidance for the management of THSF for the next ten-year period and outlines the major concepts that will guide management activities on the forest.

B. Past Accomplishments

A compilation of management activities and public use on THSF has been completed monthly and is available from the forest manager. A table has been prepared for this plan that summarizes the accomplishments for each of the past ten years [Exhibit A]. The table does not attempt to account for all activities on the forest but summarizes major activities. It does not list the multitude of daily activities and public interactions involved in managing the forest.

There have been many events, developments, and accomplishments since the 2007 Ten Year Land Management Plan was approved. Some noteworthy accomplishments include:

- Prescribed fire applied to 411,571 acres
- 41,196 acres of pine plantations were thinned
- 1,550,121 tons of timber were harvested
- 2,020,877 bare root slash pine seedlings were planted on 2,780 acres
- 885,437 containerized longleaf seedlings were planted on 1,137 acres
- 6,000 hardwood seedlings were planted on 20 acres
- 1,097 acres were treated for invasive plants
- 8,235 miles of roads graded
- 501 miles of roads rebuilt and stabilized
- 42 bridges repaired
- One (1) bridge built
- 209 culverts installed
- 15 low water crossings installed
- 2,257,201 estimated day use visitation
- 31 interpretive programs or tours on the forest

- 562 miles of forest boundary marked or maintained

C. **Goals / Objectives for the Next Ten-Year Period**

The following goals and objectives provide direction and focus management resources for the next ten-year planning period. Funding, agency program priorities, and the potential for wildfire during the planning period will determine the degree to which these objectives can be met. Management activities on THSF during this management period must serve to conserve, protect, utilize, and enhance the natural and historical resources and manage resource-based public outdoor recreation, which is compatible with the conservation and protection of this forest. The majority of the management operations will be conducted by the FFS, although appropriate activities will be contracted to private sector vendors or completed with the cooperation of other agencies. All activities will enhance the property's natural resource or public recreational value.

The management activities listed below will be addressed within the ten-year management period and are defined as short-term goals, long-term goals, or ongoing goals. Short-term goals are goals that are achievable within a two-year planning period, and long-term goals are achievable within a ten-year planning period. Objectives are listed in priority order for each goal. Other activities will be completed with minimal overhead expense and existing staff.

➤ **GOAL 1: Sustainable Forest Management**

Objective 1: Continue to update and implement the Five-Year Silviculture Management Plan including reforestation, harvesting, prescribed burning, restoration, and timber stand improvement activities and goals. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measures:

- Annual updates of the Five-Year Silviculture Management Plan completed.
- Continued implementation of the Five-Year Silviculture Management Plan (acres treated).

Objective 2: Continue to implement the FFS process for conducting stand descriptions and forest inventory including a GIS database containing forest stands, roads, and other attributes (including but not limited to: rare, threatened, and endangered species, archaeological resources, non-native invasive species locations, and historical areas). (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measures:

- Complete GIS database and re-inventory all attributes as required by FFS procedures.
- Number of acres inventoried.

➤ **GOAL 2: Public Access and Recreational Opportunities**

Objective 1: Continue to implement the THSF Five-Year Outdoor Recreation Plan and update annually. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measures:

- Continued implementation of the Five-Year Outdoor Recreation Plan.
- Annual updates of the Five-Year Outdoor Recreation Plan completed.

Objective 2: Maintain public access and recreational opportunities for all recreational users. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measure: Number of visitor opportunities per day.

Objective 3: Assess additional public access and recreational opportunities. (Short Term Goal)

Performance Measure: Number of additional visitor opportunities.

Objective 4: Continue to involve and meet with the liaison panel. The panel consists of a mix of local residents, community leaders and special interest group representatives (canoe vendors, hunters, trail hikers, military, organized equestrian groups, etc.), environmental groups, and other public / private entities to establish communication and seek constructive feedback regarding the management of THSF. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measures:

- Liaison group remains organized.
- Meetings continue.

Objective 5: Maintain cooperation with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to develop specific hunting season quotas; bag limits and address hunting issues to be agreed upon at annual cooperators meeting between FFS and FWC. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measures:

- Annual letter on agreed hunting issues.
- Updated rules posted and WMA brochures available online at MyFWC.com.

Objective 6: Enlist volunteers and volunteer organizations to assist with recreation and/or resource management. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measure: Number of volunteer hours.

➤ **GOAL 3: Habitat Restoration and Improvement**

Objective 1: Utilize prescribed fire to enhance restoration of native groundcover. Evaluate areas where native groundcover has been eliminated or heavily impacted from historical land use and evaluate feasibility for alternative methods for reestablishment of native groundcover plants. Restore native groundcover where it has been eliminated or heavily impacted from historical land use. (Long Term Goal)

Performance Measure: Number of acres restored.

➤ **GOAL 4: Fire Management**

Objective 1: The THSF currently contains approximately 116,000 acres which are available to burn. THSF staff will conduct habitat / natural community improvement on the forest annually. To achieve an average fire return interval of two (2) to five (5) years across the forest, approximately 25,000 to 42,000 acres will be prescribed burned annually. Currently, FFS staff estimates 100,000 acres at THSF are within the desired fire rotation. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measures:

- Number of acres burned during the dormant and growing seasons, and number of acres burned within target fire return interval.
- Number of acres with restoration underway. This restoration would include prescribed burning

Objective 2: Continue to annually update and implement the Five-Year Prescribed Burning Management Plan and the prescribed burning goals. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measures:

- Annual updates of the Five-Year Prescribed Burning Management Plan completed.
- Continued implementation of the Five-Year Prescribed Burning Management Plan (acres treated).

Objective 3: Reduce the threat of wildfire within the Wildland Urban Interface on THSF and the surrounding community through a comprehensive mitigation strategy that includes evaluating vegetative fuels near residential areas and identifying potential fuel reduction projects. (Long Term Goal)

Performance Measures:

- Evaluation complete.
- Should the evaluation determine that fuel reduction is necessary, number of projects underway.

➤ **GOAL 5: Listed and Rare Species Habitat Maintenance, Enhancement, Restoration, or Population Restoration**

Objective 1: In cooperation with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, develop a Wildlife Management Strategy that addresses fish and wildlife species for THSF, including imperiled species and associated management prescriptions for their habitats. (Long Term Goal)

Performance Measures:

- Imperiled species management strategy completed.
- Baseline listed and rare species list completed for THSF.

Objective 2: In cooperation with FWC, develop appropriate imperiled species survey and monitoring protocols based on site-specific occurrences, population data, and sustainability potential where survey protocols do not already exist. The extent and success of these efforts will be dependent on availability of specific contract funding, assistance from FWC biologists, and/or support on non-profit or volunteer organizations. (Long Term Goal)

Performance Measure: Number of listed and rare species for which survey plans and monitoring protocols are developed.

Objective 3: In consultation with FWC, implement surveys and monitoring protocols, where feasible, for listed and rare species. (Long Term Goal)

Performance Measure: Number of species for which monitoring is ongoing.

Objective 4: In coordination with FWC, continue to actively manage red-cockaded woodpeckers on THSF using the guidelines established in the THSF 10-year RCW management plan (March 2019), including monitoring, habitat improvement, cavity tree

protection, identification of potential breeding groups, and translocation (if applicable).
(Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measure:

- Number of clusters managed.
- Number of potential breeding groups.
- Acres of habitat improved.

➤ **GOAL 6: Non-Native Invasive Species Maintenance and Control**

Objective 1: Continue to follow and annually update the Five-Year Ecological Plan for THSF, to locate, identify, and control non-native invasive species. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measures:

- Total number of acres identified and successfully treated.
- Annual updates of the Five-Year Ecological Plan completed.
- Continue to maintain and update the THSF non-native invasive species database information annually.

➤ **GOAL 7: Cultural and Historical Resources**

Objective 1: Ensure all known sites are recorded in the Department of State, Division of Historical Resources (DHR) Florida Master Site file. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measure: Number of recorded sites.

Objective 2: Monitor recorded sites and send updates to the DHR Florida Master Site File as needed. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measure: Number of sites monitored. Reports submitted to DHR.

Objective 3: Maintain at least one qualified staff member as an archaeological site monitor. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measure: Number of local staff trained.

➤ **GOAL 8: Hydrological Preservation and Restoration**

Objective 1: As funding becomes available, continue implementation of the Tate's Hell Hydrologic Restoration Plan. (Ongoing/Long term Goal)

Performance Measure:

- Hydrologic basins restored.

Objective 2: Protect water resources during management activities through the implementation of Silviculture Best Management Practices (BMPs). (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measure: Percent compliance with Silvicultural BMPs.

➤ **GOAL 9: Capital Facilities and Infrastructure**

Objective 1: THSF staff, along with inmate crews, volunteers, and/or user groups, will continue maintenance of nine (9) parking areas and two (2) trailheads, 47 miles of trails, eight (8) boat launches, and 850 miles of primary, secondary, and tertiary roads. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measure: The number of existing facilities, miles of roads, and miles of trails maintained.

Objective 2: Continue to follow the Five-Year Roads and Bridges Management Plan and update annually. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measures:

- Continued implementation of the Five-Year Roads and Bridges Management Plan.
- Annual updates of the Five-Year Roads and Bridges Management Plan completed.

Objective 3: Continue to implement the Five-Year Boundary Survey and Maintenance Management Plan and update annually. The entire boundary will be reworked at minimum every five years including harrowing, reposting signage, and repainting boundary trees. (Ongoing Goal)

Performance Measures:

- Continued implementation of the Five-Year Boundary Survey and Maintenance Management Plan.
- Percentage of forest boundary maintained each year.
- Annual updates of the Five-Year Boundary Survey and Maintenance Management Plan completed.

II. Administration Section

A. Descriptive Information

1. Common Name of Property

The common name of the property is the Tate's Hell State Forest (THSF).

2. Legal Description and Acreage

The THSF is comprised 202,436.58 acres, more or less.

Tate's Hell State Forest is located in Franklin County, between the Apalachicola and Ochlocknee Rivers. The forest extends into the southeast corner of Liberty County, south of the Apalachicola National Forest and 1.5 miles northwest of the town of Carrabelle. Access THSF from U.S. Hwy. 98, County Rd. 67, or State Hwy. 65.

The boundaries and the major parcels are identified in [Exhibit B]. The THSF is located in all or part of:

- Township 5 South, Range 3 West; Sections 19, 20, and 28-34
- Township 5 South, Range 4 West; Sections 13-15, and 19-36, 15
- Township 5 South, Range 5 West; Sections 19-36
- Township 5 South, Range 6 West; Sections 19-36
- Township 5 South, Range 7 West; Sections 22-27, and Sections 34-36
- Township 6 South, Range 3 West; Sections 3-9, 14-23, and 27-31
- Township 6 South, Range 4 West; Sections 1-36
- Township 6 South, Range 5 West; Sections 1-36
- Township 6 South, Range 6 West; Sections 1-36
- Township 6 South, Range 7 West; Sections 1-3, 10-15, 22-27, and 34-36
- Township 7 South, Range 4 West; Sections 1-10, and 17 & 18
- Township 7 South, Range 5 West; Sections 1-34

- Township 7 South, Range 6 West; Sections 1-30, and 32-36
- Township 7 South, Range 7 West; Sections 1-18, and 23-26 & 35
- Township 8 South, Range 5 West; Sections 3-9, and 18
- Township 8 South, Range 6 West; Sections 1-5, 7-18 and 20 & 21

Table 1. THSF Acreage by Funding Source

	FUNDING SOURCE	ACRES
CARL	Conservation and Recreation Lands	136,013.60
P2000	Preservation 2000	11,908.5
FF	Florida Forever	54,514.48

*Funding Source totals do not reconcile due to multiple programs used to purchase the same acreage within the THSF.

A complete legal description of lands owned by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (TIITF) is on record at the THSF Forestry Station Office, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and the FFS State Office in Tallahassee.

3. Proximity to Other Public Resources

Lands managed by state, federal, or local government for conservation of natural or cultural resources that are located within approximately 25 miles of the THSF are included in [Exhibit G] as well as the table below:

Table 2. Nearby Significant Public Conservation Lands

Apalachicola National Forest	USFS	Adjacent north
Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve	DEP	Adjacent south
Tate's Hell Wildlife Management Area	FWC	Adjacent west
Apalachicola River Wildlife and Environmental Area	FWC	Adjacent west
St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge	USFWS	1 mile east
Ochlockonee River State Park	DRP	2 miles east
Dr. Julian G. Bruce St. George Island State Park	DRP	4 miles south
Jeff Lewis Wilderness Preserve	TNC	5 miles southeast
Apalachicola River Water Management Area	NFWMD	5 miles west
John S. Phipps Preserve	TNC	8 miles southeast
Box-R Wildlife Management Area	FWC	10 miles southwest
Bald Point State Park	DRP	12 miles southeast
Cape St. George State Reserve	DRP	12 miles southwest

St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge	USFWS	15 miles southwest
St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve	DEP	20 miles southwest
Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park	DRP	21 miles northeast
Tallahassee-St. Marks Historic Railroad State Trail	DRP	22 miles north
Wakulla State Forest	FFS	22 miles northeast
Lake Talquin State Forest	FFS	24 miles north

DRP – Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation and Parks
 DEP – Florida Department of Environmental Protection FFS – Florida Forest Service
 USFS – United States Forest Service USFWS – United States Fish & Wildlife Service
 FWC – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission TNC – The Nature Conservancy
 NFWFMD – Northwest Florida Water Management District

4. Property Acquisition and Land Use Considerations

The majority of the property was purchased under the Conservation and Recreation Lands Program (CARL), beginning with the first purchase on February 8, 1994, and continuing to the present. The NFWFMD, through the Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Program, initiated interest in the Tate’s Hell property. Protection and improvement of the water quality and aquatic habitat of East Bay drove the decision to include THSF as a priority project under the Save Our Rivers Land Acquisition Program. Ultimately, the DEP led the acquisition effort under the CARL Program, utilizing some funds transferred from the NFWFMD for acquisition of approximately 24,706 acres. Subsequent to that purchase, the DEP acquired an additional 165,822.08 acres, under the CARL and Florida Forever Programs. FFS purchased an additional 11,908.50 acres with its Preservation 2000 and Florida Forever in-holdings and addition funds. Efforts to acquire additional lands in the area continue. Table 3 summarizes the acquisition history of the present state forest boundaries. These parcels are assigned to the FFS for management under Lease Agreement #4041.

Table 3. Parcel Acquisition

	Parcel Name	Deed Date	Lease Date	Acres (County)
1	Glawson	2/8/1994	3/13/1995	24,706.00 (Franklin)
2	MacDonald	6/14/1995	11/20/1995	42,727.28 (Franklin)
3	TPL/Glawson	1/27/1995	6/4/1996	1,308.90 (Franklin)
4	Coastal Timber	6/13/1996	8/8/1997	17,972.60 (Franklin)
5	Southern Pine Planation of Georgia	7/2/1996	8/8/1997	7,358.50 (Franklin)
6	Southern Pine Planation of Georgia	7/2/1996	8/8/1997	7,598.10 (Liberty)
7	Christian/Wooten	9/12/1996	8/8/1997	1,316.10 (Franklin)
8	Christian/Wooten	9/12/1996	8/8/1997	213.50 (Franklin)

9	New River (TNC/Dennis)	10/25/1996	8/8/1997	2,089.00 (Franklin)
10	New River (TNC/Dennis)	10/25/1996	8/8/1997	540.00 (Liberty)
11	Rex Lumber	10/28/1996	8/8/1997	20,691.00 (Franklin)
12	Rex Lumber	10/28/1996	8/8/1997	3,229.00 (Liberty)
13	H.K. Johnson	12/30/1996	8/8/1997	112.60 (Franklin)
14	J.E. Corry/UF	12/30/1996	8/8/1997	1,030.10 (Franklin)
15	Yent Bayou	2/14/1997	8/8/1997	363.00 (Franklin)
16	St. Joe	7/19/1999	1/21/2000	3,742.47 (Franklin)
17	St. Joe	7/19/1999	1/21/2000	2,971.68 (Franklin)
18	St. Joe	7/19/1999	1/21/2000	2,893.85 (Liberty)
19	St. Joe	7/19/1999	1/21/2000	3,644.45 (Liberty)
20	St. Joe	9/25/2001	3/11/2003	3,413.97 (Franklin)
21	Profundus Holdings INC.	6/16/2003	11/17/2003	503.00 (Liberty)
22	Profundus Holdings INC.	6/16/2003	11/17/2003	36,750.70 (Franklin)
23	St. Joe – Crooked River	12/24/2003	4/20/2004	13,260.10 (Franklin)
24	New River	4/5/2005	6/12/2018	4,000.68 (Franklin & Liberty)

DOF P2000	11,908.50
CARL/P2000	136,013.60
FLORIDA FOREVER	54,514.48
TOTAL ACRES	202,436.58

B. Management Authority, Purpose, and Constraints

1. Purpose for Acquisition / Management Prospectus

Acquisition of THSF began in 1994 and continued, utilizing funding from Preservation 2000, Conservation and Recreation Lands, and Florida Forever. The goals and objectives defined by these acquisitions include:

- Conservation of lands supporting native, relatively unaltered flora or fauna representing a natural area unique to, or scarce within, a region of Florida or larger geographical area,
- Conservation of lands supporting habitat critical to providing significant protection for an endangered or threatened species of plant or animal,
- Prevention of future degradation of the waters of the Apalachicola Bay Aquatic Preserve by preventing future commercial and residential development that might degrade water quality in the streams emptying into Apalachicola Bay,
- Provision of opportunities for recreational activities that are compatible with the protection of the rare and sensitive resources, and

- Restoration of altered ecosystems to correct environmental damage that has already occurred.
- Conservation of critical forest habitats.

2. **Degree of Title Interest Held by the Board**

The Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (TIITF) holds fee simple title.

3. **Designated Single or Multiple-Use Management**

THSF is managed under a multiple-use concept by the FFS, under the authority of Chapters 253 and 589, Florida Statutes. The FFS is the lead managing agency as stated in TIITF Management Lease Numbers 4041.

Multiple use is the harmonious and coordinated management of timber, recreation, conservation of fish and wildlife, forage, archaeological and historic sites, habitat and other biological resources, or water resources so that they are utilized in the combination that will best serve the people of the state, making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources and giving consideration to the relative values of the various resources. Local demands, acquisition objectives, and other factors influence the array of uses that are compatible with and allowed on any specific area of the forest. This management approach is believed to provide for the greatest public benefit, by allowing compatible uses while protecting overall forest health, native ecosystems and the functions and values associated with them.

4. **Revenue Producing Activities**

Numerous activities on THSF provide for multiple-use, as well as generate revenue, to offset management costs. Revenue producing activities will be considered when they have been determined to be financially feasible and will not adversely impact management of the forest. Current and potential revenue producing activities for the THSF include, but are not limited to:

- *Timber Harvests* – Timber harvests on THSF will be conducted on a regular basis to improve forest health, promote wildlife habitat, restore plant communities, and provide other benefits.
- *Recreation Fees* – Fees are currently collected for day use, camping (both walk-up and through online reservation system), annual hunt camps, off-highway vehicle trail use, and miscellaneous commercial vendor permits.
- *Apiaries* – Annual fees are currently collected for 79 apiaries on the forest.
- *Other miscellaneous* – Other miscellaneous forest products including but not limited to worm harvesting (grunting), and firewood permits are sold each year on the forest, and other miscellaneous forest products may be considered.

5. **Conformation to State Lands Management Plan**

Management of the forest under the multiple-use concept complies with the State Lands Management Plan and provides optimum balanced public utilization of the property.

Specific authority for the FFS's management of public land is derived from Chapters 589, 259 and 253, Florida Statutes.

6. Legislative or Executive Constraints

There are no known legislative or executive constraints specifically directed toward THSF.

FFS makes every effort to comply with applicable statutes, rules, and ordinances when managing the forest. For example, when public facilities are developed on state forests, every effort is made to comply with Public Law 101-336, the Americans with Disabilities Act. As new facilities are developed, the universal access requirements of this law are followed in all cases except where the law allows reasonable exceptions (e.g., where handicap access is structurally impractical or where providing such access would change the fundamental character of the facility being provided).

7. Aquatic Preserve / Area of Critical State Concern

The majority (91%) of THSF is located in Franklin County, with a smaller percentage (9%) located in Liberty County. Franklin County was designated an Area of Critical State Concern from 1985-1994 and continues to be monitored by the Department of Community Affairs for post designation implementation. Apalachicola Bay, including East Bay, is designated as a State Aquatic Preserve. Water from within the current THSF boundary drains into East Bay, St. George Sound, and the Apalachicola River, with the majority of the discharge into East Bay, the primary nursery area of Apalachicola Bay.

C. Capital Facilities and Infrastructure

1. Property Boundaries Establishment and Preservation

THSF boundary lines, 187 miles total, are managed by state forest personnel in accordance with the guidelines of the State Forest Handbook (Exhibit B).

2. Improvements

Major FFS facilities on THSF include the state forest headquarters/Carrabelle Forestry Station office, and equipment maintenance shop. Major recreation facilities include the Womack Creek Campground Bathhouse and multiple picnic pavilions. A complete list of facilities is attached to this plan [Exhibit E]

3. On-Site Housing

There are no residences located on THSF.

FFS may establish on-site housing (mobile / manufactured home) on THSF if deemed necessary to alleviate security and management issues. The need and feasibility specific for the state forest will be evaluated and established if considered appropriate by the Center Manager and approved by the FFS Director. Prior to the occurrence of any ground disturbing activity for the purpose of establishing on-site housing, a notification will be sent to the DHR and Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) for review and recommendations. This type of housing will not exceed three homes per

location with the possibility of more than one on-site housing location occurring if considered necessary by the Center Manager and approved by the Director.

4. Operations Infrastructure

a. Operations Budget

For Fiscal Year 2017-2018, the total annual budget for THSF was \$3,651,955.00. This amount includes salaries, expenses, contractual services, OPS, etc. A summary budget for THSF is contained in [Exhibit X]. Implementation of any of the activities within this management plan is contingent on availability of available funding, other resources, and other statewide priorities.

b. Equipment

To carry out the mission of the FFS, THSF maintains a diverse range of equipment such as road graders, loaders and backhoes, medium and heavy dozers, transports, two and four-wheel drive pickups, all-terrain vehicles, mowers, farm tractors, and a skiff. Additional equipment can be used from other resources throughout the Tallahassee Forestry Center, when needed, for management activities on THSF.

c. Staffing

Thirty (30) staff members are funded for THSF including an Operations Administrator, two (2) Forest Area Supervisors, two (2) Forestry Supervisor II's, three (3) Foresters, three (3) Forestry Technicians, three (3) Senior Forest Rangers and Forest Rangers, Park Rangers, and Equipment Maintenance Mechanics. THSF also currently employs two (2) OPS Park Ranger positions.

The Inmate Program plays a large part in many THSF projects. This cooperative effort is in conjunction with the Florida Department of Corrections, Franklin Correctional Institution. This four - to six-person crew is supervised by a Department Corrections Officer and is an effective way to achieve many of the objectives outlined in this plan.

D. Additional Acquisitions and Land Use Considerations

1. Alternate Uses Considered

No alternate uses are being considered at this time. Alternate uses will be considered as requests are made and will be accommodated as appropriate if they are determined to be compatible with existing uses and with the management goals and objectives of the forest. Uses determined as incompatible include but are not limited to: water resource development projects, water supply projects, storm-water management projects, sewage treatment facilities, linear facilities, off highway vehicle use, communication towers and antennas, dumping, mining, and oil well stimulation (e.g. hydraulic fracturing/fracking), or as determined by law, regulation or other incompatible uses as described elsewhere in the management plan.

2. Additional Land Needs

The acquisition of additional land within the optimal management boundary would facilitate restoration, maintenance, and management of the resources on THSF, and

would help ensure the protection of Apalachicola Bay, East Bay, St. George Sound, Ochlockonee Bay, and surrounding waters. [Exhibit C]

3. Surplus Land Assessment

On conservation lands where FFS is the lead manager, FFS assesses and identifies areas for potential surplus land. This consists of an examination of: resource and operational management needs, public access and recreational use, and GIS modeling and analysis.

It is the assessment of FFS staff that, at this time, all of the property within THSF is suitable and necessary for the management of THSF and none should be declared surplus.

4. Adjacent Conflicting Uses

There are two inholdings on the eastern side of the state forest that have been used, or are intended to be used, as either lime rock mines or for the mining of fossilized oyster shells. Potential conflicts include the effects of mining operations on the water and wetlands adjacent to the state forest.

Residential development of adjacent property and adjoining state roads may hinder prescribed burning due to smoke management concerns.

FFS will cooperate with adjacent property owners, prospective owners, or prospective developers to discuss methods to minimize negative impacts on management, resources, facilities, roads, recreation, etc., and discuss ways to minimize encroachment onto the forest.

5. Compliance with Comprehensive Plan

This plan was submitted to the Board of County Commissioners in Franklin County and Liberty County for review and compliance with their local comprehensive plans. [Exhibit V]

6. Utility Corridors and Easements

There are currently three (3) entities that have easements on THSF. Duke Energy has several powerline right-of-way easements, Franklin County has a non-exclusive easement for ingress/egress on West River Road and a short portion of Gully Branch, and Carrabelle Rock has an ingress/egress easement located on SFR 16, Burnt Shanty Tram, and SFR 21 to access their property within THSF.

FFS does not favor the fragmentation of natural communities with linear facilities. Consequently, easements for such uses will be discouraged to the greatest extent practical. FFS does not consider THSF suitable for any new linear facilities.

When such encroachments are unavoidable, previously disturbed sites will be the preferred location. The objectives, when identifying possible locations for new linear facilities, will be to minimize damage to sensitive resources (e.g., listed species and archaeological sites), to minimize habitat fragmentation, to limit disruption of

management activities, including prescribed burns, and to limit disruption of resource-based multiple use activities such as recreation.

Collocation of new linear facilities with existing corridors will be considered, but will be used only where expansion of existing corridors does not increase the level of habitat fragmentation and disruption of management and multiple-use activities. FFS will further encourage the use of underground cable where scenic considerations are desirable. Easements for such utilities are subject to the review and approval of the BOT. Requests for linear facility uses will be handled according to the Governor and the Cabinet's linear facilities policy.

E. Agency & Public Involvement

1. Responsibilities of Managing Agencies

The FFS is the lead agency responsible for the overall management of THSF. FWC has law enforcement responsibilities, enforces hunting regulations, cooperatively sets hunting season dates with FFS, and conducts other wildlife management activities with input from FFS.

FFS will cooperate with the DHR regarding appropriate management practices on historical or archaeological sites on the property as stated in Section 267.061, Florida Statutes. DHR will be notified prior to the initiation of any ground disturbing activities by the FFS or any other agency involved with the forest.

The NFWFMD will be consulted and involved in matters relating to water resources as appropriate.

2. Law Enforcement

Primary law enforcement responsibilities will be handled by law enforcement officers from FWC. Rules governing the use of THSF are stated in Chapter 5I-4 of the Florida Administrative Code. FWC will enforce fish and wildlife regulations and provide assistance in enforcing state forest rules. The FWC has an officer dedicated to patrol of and enforcement on THSF.

The Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement (OALE) will assist with open burning and wildfire investigations as needed. Additional assistance is provided by the Franklin County and Liberty County Sheriff's Offices as needed. In light of the current statewide budget limitations, FFS feels that law enforcement is adequate on THSF.

Special rules under Chapter 5I-4 of the Florida Administrative Code were promulgated for Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Forest Service, to manage the use of state lands and better control traffic, camping, and other uses in THSF.

3. Wildland Fire

The FFS has the primary responsibility for prevention, detection, and suppression of wildfires wherever they may occur. The FFS shall provide leadership and direction in

the evaluation, coordination, allocation of resources, and monitoring of wildfire management and protection (Florida Statute 590.01). The FFS also has the responsibility of authorizing prescribed burns (F.S. 590.02 (1i)).

4. Public and Local Government Involvement

This plan has been prepared by FFS and will be carried out primarily by that agency. FFS responds to public involvement through liaison panels, management plan advisory groups, public hearings, and through ongoing direct contact with user groups. Land Management Review Teams as coordinated by the Division of State Lands have conducted two reviews of management plan implementation in 2012 and 2017 [Exhibit U]. The review teams' recommendations were addressed in this plan, as appropriate.

The plan was developed with input from the THSF Management Plan Advisory Group and was reviewed at a public hearing on March 07, 2019. A summary of the advisory group's meetings and discussions, as well as written comments received on the plan, are included in [Exhibit W]. The Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) public hearing and meeting serve as an additional forum for public input and review of the plan.

5. Volunteers

Volunteers are important assets to THSF. Depending upon the type of volunteer service needed, volunteer activities may be one-time events or long-term recurring projects and routine maintenance. Additional volunteer recruitment will be encouraged to assist with other activities to further the FFS's mission.

6. Friends of Florida State Forest

Friends of Florida State Forests Inc. (FFSF) is a Direct Support Organization (DSO) of the Florida Forest Service. FFSF supports management activities and projects on Florida's state forests. FFSF is an organization established by Florida statute that supports programs within Florida's state forests and is governed by a board of directors representing all areas of the state. Through community support, FFSF assists the Florida Forest Service to expand opportunities for recreation, environmental education, fire prevention, and forest management within Florida's state forests.

The Friends of Florida State Forests program is referenced in Chapter 589.012 of the Florida Statutes. For more information visit: www.floridastateforests.org.

III. Archaeological/Cultural Resources and Protection

A. Past Uses

Little commercial development occurred in the Tate's Hell area in the early 1800's with selective timber cutting and cattle grazing important to homesteaders. The present-day city of Carrabelle was essentially a hunting and fishing camp. By 1877, the town of Carrabelle was founded and catering to the growing timber industry which by the 1890s included turpentine extraction. From the early 1900's onward to the 1950's, cattle grazing, turpentine, and lumbering continued as major drivers of the local economy. In the 1920s, Harbeson City, north of Carrabelle, was the site of the county's largest sawmill with a peak capacity at 40,000 board feet per day. Tram lines reached out to blocks of old growth

longleaf and slash pine, but also included cypress and Atlantic white cedar to keep the mill supplied. Across the area, there were six (6) other small mills, but by 1939 the mills were operating at half capacity due to far fewer and more widely scattered blocks of old growth trees. Cattlemen continued to use pine savannahs for grazing, setting spring fires in the grassy understory to improve forage. About this time, the seafood industry developed commercial importance following improvements to refrigeration and transport.

In the early 1940’s Camp Gordon Johnson was established in the locale as a sprawling U.S. Amphibious Training Center and became an important source of revenue and jobs during WWII. From the mid 1950's until state acquisition, forest industry owned and managed this land for timber production. During the 1960's and 1970's, the hydrology was substantially altered in an attempt to establish extensive tracts of pine plantations and to enhance the production of pine timber. These alterations involved the construction of roads and associated ditches, followed by planting of large dense stands of slash pine that were fertilized with phosphorus and nitrogen. Aerial photos from 1953 through 1999 illustrate the land alterations. Historic documents, aerial photographs, maps, and testimonies depict the Tate’s Hell landscape prior to the 1950’s as more open and grassy than at present. The network of roads established by forest industry has done much to increase public access to the area, making it a popular location for local residents to hunt and fish (FNAI, 2017).

B. Archaeological and Historical Resources

A review of information contained in the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Florida Master Site file has determined there are 37 previously recorded archeological sites, one (1) bridge, two (2) historic cemeteries, and one (1) resource group on THSF. Currently, none of the known sites on THSF are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Table 4. Historical Sites on THSF

SITE ID	SITE NAME	SITE TYPE
FR00885	PILE OF CUPS	AR
FR00886	NORTH BEVERLY	AR
FR00887	BURNT BRIDGE DIPPING VAT	AR
FR00007	TOPSAIL BLUFF	AR
FR00751	PITCHER PLANT	AR
FR00753	WHISKEY GEORGE CREEK	AR
FR00785	DOT’S LANDING	AR
FR00827	USFS 90-3 APA/BUZZING WIRES	AR
FR00862	HIGH BLUFF HOMESTEAD	AR
FR00865	OXBOW BLUFF	AR
FR00866	OYSTER CAMP	AR
FR00869	TURTLE KILL	AR
FR00870	JOHN ALLEN RIDGE	AR
FR00871	POWERLINE RIDGE	AR
FR00872	CINDER PALACE	AR
FR00873	THOMPSON CEMETERY	CM
FR00874	APIARY POINT	AR
FR00875	LAURA’S CATTLE DIP	AR
FR00879	HARBESON CITY BRIDGE	AR

FR00880	AIRSTRIP	AR
FR00900	CAMP GORDON JOHNSTON	RG
FR00920	GATOR CREEK BRIDGE	AR
FR00921	SPARKY'S GRAVE	AR
FR00923	BUCK SIDING	AR
FR00924	POPE PLACE	AR
FR00925	PARKER PLACE	AR
FR00926	DEEP CREEK STILL	AR
FR00927	LEWIS BLUFF BRIDGE REMAINS	AR
FR00929	NERO CREEK HOMESITE	AR
FR00930	OLD SCHOOL	AR
FR00931	GULLY BRANCH	AR
FR00932	ROCK LANDING	AR
FR00933	SQUIRREL ROAD DIPPING VAT	AR
FR00934	DEW DROP INN	AR
FR00935	MORGAN STILL	AR
LI00433	HIGH POINT HOMESTEAD	AR
LI00434	LOBLOLLY LANDING	AR
LI00435	COACHMAN LANDING	AR
LI00436	#97-02 APA	AR
FR01283	RIVER ROAD/TROUT CREEK	BR
FR01378	HISTORIC ROADS	RG
LI00456	HENRY J. BROWN GRAVE SITE 1902	CM

See [Exhibit I] for a complete list of all archeological sites on THSF.

C. Ground Disturbing Activities

Representatives of DHR and Florida Natural Areas Inventory will be consulted prior to the initiation of any proposed significant ground disturbing activity, not listed in this plan, by FFS or any other public agency. FFS will make every effort to protect known archaeological and historical resources. FFS will follow the “Management Procedures for Archaeological and Historical Sites and Properties on State Owned or Controlled Lands” [Exhibit J] and will comply with all appropriate provisions of Section 267.061(2) Florida Statutes. Ground disturbing activities not specifically covered by this plan will be conducted under the parameters of the “List of ARC / Division of State Lands Approved Interim Management Activities”.

D. Survey and Monitoring

Currently, four (4) THSF staff are trained by DHR as archaeological resource monitors. FFS will pursue opportunities for getting additional personnel trained. All archaeological and historical sites within the state forest will be monitored at least annually. FFS field staff will monitor the listed sites to note condition and any existing or potential threats. FFS will consult with public lands archaeologists at DHR to determine any protection measures that may be required for sites with existing or potential threats.

Any known archaeological and historical sites will be identified on maps to aid state forest and law enforcement personnel in patrolling and protecting sites. Applicable surveys will be conducted by FFS staff or others during the process of planning and implementing multiple-use management activities. FFS personnel will remain alert for any environmentally significant resources and protective actions will be taken as necessary. In

addition, FFS will seek the advice and recommendations of DHR regarding any additional archaeological survey needs. Trained monitors may oversee limited types of ground disturbing activities in which DHR recommends monitoring. FFS will utilize the services of DHR Public Lands archaeologists, when available, to locate and evaluate unknown resources, and to make recommendations in the management of known resources.

IV. Natural Resources and Protection

A. Soils and Geologic Resources

1. Resources

Soil information for THSF was obtained from the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The THSF lies within the boundaries of Franklin and Liberty Counties, which was surveyed by the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service:

- Franklin County Survey Area Data – Version 13, Sep. 28, 2016
- Liberty County Survey Area Data – Version 21, Sep. 28, 2016

THSF consists of 71 different soils [Exhibit K]. The predominant soils listed by the NRCS include: Scranton fine sand, (Scranton sand, slough), and Rutledge fine sand.

2. Soil Protection

Currently, the only known soil erosion problem at THSF occurs on the bank of the Ochlockonee River at the Womack Creek Campground. This type of river bank erosion is common along the outside bends of significant rivers during major flood stage events and is not a direct result of management activities. Since this erosion is a potential threat to recreational infrastructure, it is discussed in the Public Recreation Section of this plan.

Management activities will be executed in a manner to minimize soil erosion. As problems arise, corrective action will be implemented by FFS staff under the direction of the FFS Forest Hydrology section in conjunction with recommendations as contained in the most current version of the Silviculture Best Management Practices Manual.

B. Water Resources

The water resources on THSF perform essential roles in the protection of water quality, groundwater recharge, flood control, and aquatic habitat preservation. In the interest of maintaining these valuable resource functions, state forest management personnel will work with the FFS Hydrology Section to incorporate wetland restoration into the overall resource management program as opportunities arise, particularly where wetland systems have been impaired or negatively impacted by previous management activities or natural disasters.

See [Exhibit M] for a map of the water resources at THSF.

1. **Resources**

The predominant hydrologic feature within the state forest is Tate's Hell Swamp, which drains into Apalachicola River and Bay. The New, Ochlockonee, and Crooked Rivers are the remaining major rivers that adjoin THSF. Numerous other creeks and drainages exist throughout the forest including such named creeks as: Alligator, Bear, Cow, Deep, Fish, Gully Branch, Graham, Sunday Rollaway, Pine Log, Roberts, Sanborn, Sandbank, Trout, Womack, and two Juniper Creeks.

There is only one natural lake on THSF, and the state property is actually only part of the bottom and a small piece of shoreline. Lake McKissack is located ½ mile east of the THSF Headquarters just north of Airport Road. Several ponds are scattered throughout the forest. Large, shallow ponds are found on the High Bluff Tract just inland from the old dunes. These ponds dry up completely during dry periods. Other smaller, but similar, ponds are found throughout the forest.

2. **Water Classification**

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Standards Development Section reports the Apalachicola River and Bay are designated as Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW's) and are the highest priority water bodies under the NFWFMD's SWIM Program. The Apalachicola River is classified as Class-III waterway with designated uses for recreation and propagation and maintenance of a healthy, well balanced population of fish and wildlife. Apalachicola Bay is a State Aquatic Preserve and Class II water with designated uses such as shellfish propagation and harvesting.

The tributaries to East Bay are designated as Class II waters. These include Cash Creek, High Bluff Creek, Rake Creek, Whiskey George Creek, Juniper Creek and Doyle Creek. All the other waters of the forest are designated as Class III waters. The main tributaries carrying water from the Tate's Hell Swamp to Apalachicola River include Graham Creek, Deep Creek, and Fort Gadsden Creek. [Exhibit L]

3. **Water Protection**

Water resource protection measures, at a minimum, will be accomplished through the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) as described in the most current version of Silviculture Best Management Practices Manual. In addition, if future soil and water resource problems should arise, they will be immediately assessed, and the appropriate action will be proposed and implemented under the direction of the FFS's Forest Hydrologist and/or Watershed Specialist.

The THSF falls within the jurisdiction of the NFWFMD. The FFS, through its Forest Management Bureau, may work with the NFWFMD district to monitor levels and quality of ground and surface water resources. Any activities requiring water management district permits will be handled accordingly.

4. **Swamps, Marshes, and Other Wetlands**

The THSF contains approximately 153,754 acres of hydric communities such as wet prairie, basin, dome, and floodplain swamps, bottomland forest, baygall, floodplain and

depression marsh, and blackwater stream. Tate's Hell Swamp plays an important role in the function of the marshes found in the upper bays south of the forest. These marshes serve as nursery areas for Apalachicola Bay. The quality and quantity of freshwater discharged from the swamp to these marshes is critical to maintain conditions that sustain the larval and juvenile aquatic and estuarine organisms utilizing these areas. Impacts documented by Dr. Skip Livingston during the 1970's and 1980's indicate the close connection between land management activities and survival of the juvenile and larval species utilizing the marshes of the upper bay.

5. Wetlands Restoration

Wetland restoration objectives on the state forest include erosion control, restoration of hydrology and/or hydroperiod, and restoration of wetland plant and animal communities. To achieve these objectives, restoration activities may involve road and soil stabilization, water level control structure removal or installation, non-native invasive species control, site preparation and re-vegetation with native wetland species, and project monitoring. These activities may be conducted individually or concurrently; implemented by FFS personnel or by non-FFS personnel under mitigation or grant contractual agreements. Wetland restoration projects should be conducted in conjunction with other restoration activities indicated elsewhere in this plan.

Where applicable, THSF, with assistance from the FFS Forest Management Bureau, may pursue funding to develop and implement wetland restoration projects. Additionally, cooperative research among FFS, other state agencies, and the federal government will provide valuable information in determining future management objectives of wetland restoration.

6. Florida Department of Environmental Protection Basin Management Action Plans (BMAP)

Currently, THSF does not reside in an active BMAP zone.

A Basin Management Action Plan is a "blueprint" for restoring impaired waters by reducing pollutant loadings to meet the allowable loadings established in a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). It represents a comprehensive set of strategies, including, but not limited to: permit limits on wastewater facilities, urban and agricultural best management practices, conservation programs, financial assistance and revenue generating activities, all designed to implement the pollutant reductions established by the TMDL. These broad-based plans are developed with local stakeholders, as they rely on local input and local commitment, and are adopted by Secretarial Order to be enforceable.

A BMAP is developed as part of the Department's TMDL Program, and represents the collaborative efforts of stakeholders to identify current and planned management actions to achieve pollutant load reductions required by the TMDL.

The BMAP provides for phased implementation under Subparagraph 403.067(7)(a)1, F.S. The phased BMAP approach allows for the implementation of projects designed to achieve incremental reductions, while simultaneously monitoring and conducting studies to better understand the water quality dynamics (sources and response variables) in the watershed.

7. Tate’s Hell Hydrologic Restoration Plan

In 2010, the FFS and NFWFMD completed the Tate’s Hell State Forest Hydrologic Restoration Plan. Depending on funding, this comprehensive plan is intended to be implemented over a 10-20-year period, and outlines the work needed to accomplish the following overall goals:

- Improve the water quality of surface water flows and runoff discharged to East Bay, Apalachicola Bay, and surrounding waters
- Restore historical surface water drainage patterns
- Enhance wetland hydrology and function
- Restore a mix of native ecological communities

And with the following objectives:

- Prioritize areas within THSF for hydrologic restoration
- Develop hydrologic restoration plans for each surface water drainage basin, including locations for proposed hydrologic improvements and estimates of construction costs
- Develop guidelines for environmental monitoring and long-term management of restoration areas
- Improve interagency communication and coordination related to hydrologic restoration activities

To date, nine (9) hydrologic restoration projects have been completed, and funding has been awarded through the RESTORE Council for the restoration of an additional 13 high priority basins over the next five (5) years.

C. Wildlife Resources

1. Threatened and Endangered Species

The intent of FFS is to manage THSF in a fashion that will minimize the potential for wildlife species to become imperiled. FFS employees continually monitor the forest for threatened or endangered species while conducting management activities. Specialized management techniques will be used, as necessary, to protect or increase rare, threatened, and endangered species, as applicable for both plants and animals.

Table 5. Endangered, Threatened, or Rare Species Documented on THSF

Scientific Name	Common Name	FNAI Global Rank	FNAI State Rank	Federal Status	State Status
AMPHIBIANS					

<i>Ambystoma cingulatum</i>	Frosted flatwoods salamander	G2	S2	T	FT
<i>Ambystoma tigrinum</i>	Tiger salamander	G5	S3	PS	N
<i>Desmognathus auriculatus</i>	Southern dusky salamander	G4	S1S2	N	N
<i>Lithobates capito</i>	Gopher frog	G3	S3	N	N
REPTILES					
<i>Alligator mississippiensis</i>	American alligator	G5	S2	N	FT(S/A)
<i>Crotalus adamanteus</i>	Eastern diamondback rattlesnake	G4	S3	N	N
<i>Drymarchon couperi</i>	Eastern indigo snake	G3Q	S3	T	FT
<i>Eumeces anthracinus pluvialis</i>	Southern coal skink	G5	S3	N	N
<i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>	Gopher tortoise	G3	S3	C	ST
<i>Lampropeltis getula meansi</i>	Apalachicola kingsnake	G5T2Q	S2	N	N
<i>Macrochelys temminckii</i>	Alligator snapping turtle	G3G4	S2	N	N
MAMMALS					
<i>Corynorhinus rafinesquii</i>	Southeastern big-eared bat	G3G4	S2	N	N
<i>Myotis austroriparius</i>	Southeastern bat	G4	S3	N	N
<i>Neovison vison halilimnetes</i>	Gulf salt marsh mink	G5T3	S3	N	N
<i>Podomys floridanus</i>	Florida mouse	G3	S3	N	N
<i>Sciurus niger niger</i>	Southeastern fox squirrel	G5T3	S3	N	N
<i>Ursus americanus floridanus</i>	Florida black bear	G5T2	S2	RT	N
BIRDS					
<i>Peucaea aestivalis</i>	Bachman's sparrow	G3	S3	N	N
<i>Ammodramus maritimus peninsulae</i>	Scott's seaside sparrow	G4T3Q	S3	N	ST
<i>Aramus guarauna</i>	Limpkin	G5	S3	N	N
<i>Cistothorus palustris marianae</i>	Marian's marsh wren	G5T3	S3	N	ST
<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	Little blue heron	G5	S4	N	ST
<i>Egretta rufescens</i>	Reddish egret	G4	S2	N	ST
<i>Egretta thula</i>	Snowy egret	G5	S3	N	N
<i>Egretta tricolor</i>	Tricolored heron	G5	S4	N	ST
<i>Elanoides forficatus</i>	Swallow-tailed kite	G5	S2	N	N
<i>Eudocimus albus</i>	White ibis	G5	S4	N	N
<i>Falco sparverius paulus</i>	Southeastern American kestrel	G5T4	S3	N	ST
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald eagle	G5	S3	N	N
<i>Mycteria americana</i>	Wood stork	G4	S2	N	FT
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Osprey	G5	S3S4	N	N

<i>Picoides borealis</i>	Red-cockaded woodpecker	G3	S2	E	FE
FISH					
<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi</i>	Gulf sturgeon	G3T2	S2	LT	FT
<i>Micropterus cataractae</i>	Shoal bass	G3	S1	N	N
PLANTS					
<i>Andropogon arctatus</i>	Pine-woods bluestem	G3	S3	N	T
<i>Asclepias viridula</i>	Southern milkweed	G2	S2	N	T
<i>Baptisia simplicifolia</i>	Scare weed	G3	S3	N	T
<i>Gentiana pennelliana</i>	Wiregrass gentian	G3	S3	N	E
<i>Harperocallis flava</i>	Harper's beauty	G1	S1	LE	E
<i>Hymenocallis henryae</i>	Henry's spider lily	G2	S2	N	E
<i>Ilex amelanchier</i>	Serviseberry holly	G4	S2	N	T
<i>Justicia crassifolia</i>	Thick-leaved water willow	G3	S3	N	E
<i>Liatris provincialis</i>	Godfrey's blazing star	G2	S2	N	E
<i>Linum westii</i>	West's flax	G1	S1	N	E
<i>Lupinus westianus</i> var. <i>westianus</i>	Gulf coast lupine	G3T3	S3	N	T
<i>Lythrum curtissii</i>	Curtiss loosestrife	G1	S1	N	E
<i>Macbridea alba</i>	White birds-in-a-nest	G2	S2	T	E
<i>Macranthera flammea</i>	Hummingbird flower	G3	S2	N	E
<i>Nolina autopocarpa</i>	Florida beargrass	G3	S3	N	T
<i>Nyssa ursina</i>	Bog tupelo	G2	S2	N	N
<i>Parnassia caroliniana</i>	Carolina grass-of-parnassus	G3	S2	N	E
<i>Pheobanthus tenuifolius</i>	Narrow-leaved phoebanthus	G3	S3	N	T
<i>Physotegia godfreyi</i>	Apalachicola dragon-head	G3	S3	N	T
<i>Pinguicula ionantha</i>	Godfrey's butterwort	G2	S2	T	E
<i>Platanthera chapmanii</i>	Chapman's fringed orchid		SNR	N	N
<i>Platanthera integra</i>	Yellow fringeless orchid	G3G4	S3	N	E
<i>Polygonella macrophylla</i>	Large-leaved jointweed	G3	S3	N	T
<i>Rhexia parviflora</i>	Small flowered meadow beauty	G2	S2	N	E
<i>Rhynchospora stenophylla</i>	Narrow-leaved beakrush	G4	S2S3	N	LT
<i>Ruellia noctiflora</i>	Night flowering petunia	G3?	S2	N	E
<i>Sarracenia leucophylla</i>	White-top pitcher plant	G3	S3	N	LE
<i>Scutellaria floridana</i>	Florida skullcap	G2	S2	T	E

*** STATUS/RANK KEY**

Federal Status (USFWS): LE= Listed Endangered, LT= Listed Threatened, N= Not currently listed, C = Candidate species for which federal listing agencies have sufficient information on biological vulnerability and threats to support proposing to list the species as Endangered or Threatened. SAT, T(S/A) = threatened due to similarity of appearance. A species that is threatened due to similarity of appearance with another listed species and is listed for its protection. Species listed as T(S/A) are not biologically endangered or threatened and are not subject to Section 7 consultation

State Status (FWC): Animals: FE = Listed as Endangered Species at the Federal level by the USFWS, FT = Listed as Threatened Species at the Federal level by the USFWS, F(XN) = Federal listed on an experimental population in Florida, FT(S/A) = Federal Threatened due to similarity of appearance, ST = State p

Special Concern by the FWC, N = Not currently listed, nor currently being considered for listing.

Plants: LE = Endangered: species of plants native to Florida that are in imminent danger of extinction within the state, the survival of which is unlikely if the causes of a decline in the number of plants continue; includes all species determined to be endangered

or threatened pursuant to the U.S. Endangered Species Act; LT = Threatened: species native to the state that are in rapid decline in the number of plants within the state, but which have not so decreased in number as to cause them to be Endangered; N = Not currently listed, nor currently being considered for listing.

FNAI Global Rank: G1= Critically Imperiled, G2 = Imperiled, G3= Very Rare, G4= Apparently Secure, G5= Demonstrably Secure, GNR = Element not yet ranked (temporary), G#? = Tentative rank, T#= Taxonomic Subgroup; numbers have same definition as G#’s.

FNAI State Rank: S1= Critically Imperiled, S2= Imperiled, S3= Very Rare, S4= Apparently Secure, S5 = Demonstrably secure in Florida, S#?= Tentative Rank.

2. Florida Natural Areas Inventory

The Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) is the single most comprehensive source of information available on the locations of rare species and significant ecological resources. FNAI has reported the following:

a. Element Occurrences

The Florida Natural Inventories reports several documented Element Occurrences of rare or endangered species within the vicinity of the property. [Exhibit N]
Documented species are listed in Table 5.

b. Likely and Potential Habitat for Rare Species

In addition to documented occurrences, other rare species and natural communities may be identified on or near the THSF. See [Exhibit N] for more information.

c. Land Acquisition Projects

THSF is located within the St. Joe Timberland – Tate’s Hell/Carrabelle Tract and the Dickerson Bay/Bald Point Florida Forever BOT Projects, which are part of the State of Florida’s Conservation and Recreation Lands land acquisition program. [Exhibit H]

Other Florida Forever Projects within Franklin County include: Pierce Mound Complex. Within Liberty County: Apalachicola River; Hosford Chapman’s Rhododendron Protection Zone, however, the additional Florida Forever projects in Franklin and Liberty Counties are not within the same Section, Township, and Range as THSF.

FNAI recommends that professionals familiar with Florida's flora and fauna conduct a site-specific survey to determine the current presence or absence of rare, threatened, or endangered species before any expansions or alterations are made to any facilities.

3. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) reports numerous records of listed species occurrences or critical habitats within the confines of the property. This includes state and federally listed endangered or threatened species. [Exhibit O]

Other findings by the FWC include:

- a.** The property is located adjacent to and within multiple Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas.
- b.** THSF is located within an area of Species Richness.

- c. Multiple Priority Wetlands are located on and near THSF.
- d. FWC's response includes a map indicating multiple species locations.

These data represent only those occurrences recorded by FWC staff and other affiliated researchers. The database does not necessarily contain records of all listed species that may occur in a given area. Also, data on certain species are not entered into the database on a site-specific basis. Therefore, one should not assume that an absence of occurrences in their database indicates that species of significance do not occur in the area. [Exhibit O]

The FWC recommends the review of management guidelines in the published FWC Gopher Tortoise Species Management Plan to guide management actions for the gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*) on the area. The FWC Gopher Tortoise Species Management Plan provides beneficial resource guidelines for habitat management and monitoring of the gopher tortoise. For reference, the FWC Gopher Tortoise Species Management Plan can be accessed at this web address:
<http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/managed/gopher-tortoise/management-plan/>

The FWC recommends the review of management guidelines in FWC's published Species Action Plans for the management of imperiled, rare, and focal species. The FWC Species Action Plans provide beneficial resource guidelines for habitat management and monitoring of the respective species. For reference, the FWC Species Action Plans can be accessed at this web address:
<http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/imperiled/species-action-plans/>

4. Game Species and Other Wildlife

Wildlife management will play an important role in the management of resources on THSF. Most of the state forest is part of the Tate's Hell Wildlife Management Area (THWMA), with the Womack Creek Tract a separate unit within the THWMA. About 3,900 acres of THSF lies within the Apalachicola River Wildlife and Environmental Area. FWC provides cooperative technical assistance in managing the wildlife and fish populations, setting hunting seasons, establishing bag and season limits, and overall wildlife and fish law enforcement.

Tate's Hell State Forest provides habitat for many different species of wildlife. More common species include: white tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), beaver (*Castor canadensis*), Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus*), bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*), as well as numerous species of wading birds, snakes, and turtles.

FFS and FWC cooperatively maintain approximately 105 acres of permanent wildlife openings and planted food plots on the THSF. Wildlife openings and food plots will be established and maintained in accordance with the FFS State Forest Handbook.

Non-game species will be managed and protected through the restoration and maintenance of native ecosystems found on the forest. The current State Forest Handbook gives additional details for such things as snag management and retention.

5. Survey and Monitoring

Species-specific surveys for state or federally listed wildlife species may be developed when necessary, with assistance from FWC. Such plans will be consistent with rule and statute promulgated for the management of such species. Continued biological surveys will be conducted to determine locations of these species. FFS may seek assistance from universities, FWC, FNAI, and other agencies to conduct surveys.

While no species-specific monitoring plans have been developed, information gathered has been used to prioritize stands for habitat improvement projects. Future species-specific management plans and monitoring protocols will be developed by the FFS Forest Management Bureau and/or State Forest Ecologist, with input from the NFWFMD and FWC, as needed.

a. Red-cockaded woodpecker

RCW clusters exist on portions of Tate's Hell and are believed to have colonized from the Apalachicola National Forest (ANF) population, though many clusters on the forest have formed around old, residual longleaf pines that were never cut by forest industry. Although a distinct population from those at ANF, the birds move freely between the THSF and ANF populations, thus reducing the potential for a genetic bottleneck of the THSF population. This population is managed in cooperation with FWC according to the THSF RCW Management Plan, which provides guidance and direction for the program on the forest. For additional details on RCW management, please see the THSF RCW Management Plan (Exhibit Z).

b. Gopher Tortoises

Surveys for gopher tortoise burrows have been done by FFS and FWC staff intermittently, as needed. All surveys are done in cooperation with FWC. Surveys have been completed in upcoming timber sale areas. A recent belt-transect survey on THSF yielded low numbers of tortoises in some of the more appropriate upland habitat along the coast (FNAI 2017). Future surveys will be conducted in appropriate habitat, as needed, with a specific focus on re-surveying areas after completion of restoration activities. However, given the location and hydrology of the forest in greater Florida landscape, gopher tortoises are likely always going to be a very low density species on THSF.

c. Frosted flatwoods salamander

Surveys of ephemeral ponds have been conducted to detect breeding activity. Additional frosted flatwoods salamander and larval amphibian dip net surveys may be planned in cooperation with FWC as staffing allows.

d. Listed Plant Species

All known locations of listed or rare flora are GIS mapped and location data are shared with FNAI.

e. Other Biota Surveys

Surveys are done as time and staffing allow. High quality plant communities continue to have ad hoc surveys for both invasive weeds and listed plants.

Other surveys that have been conducted and may continue include; secretive marsh bird surveys in the breeding season (potential for identifying black rails), herpetofauna drift fence surveys in different habitat types, breeding bird point count surveys (trend data especially Bachman's sparrow), and white-tailed deer spotlight surveys.

During routine management activities, incidental sightings of rare animals and plants are GIS mapped by FFS staff. All rare species data is collected and sent to FNAI.

D. Sustainable Forest Resources

FFS practices sustainable multiple-use forestry to meet the forest resource needs and values of the present without compromising the similar capability of the future. Sustainable forestry involves practicing a land stewardship ethic that integrates the reforestation, managing, growing, nurturing, and harvesting of trees for useful products with the conservation of soil, air and water quality, wildlife and fish habitat, and aesthetics. This is accomplished by maintaining and updating accurate estimates of standing timber in order to assure that the timber resources retain their sustainability. Forest inventories will be updated on a continual basis according to guidelines established by the FFS Forest Management Bureau.

E. Beaches and Dune Resources

No beaches and 0.90 acre of beach dune occur on the THSF.

F. Mineral Resources

There are outstanding mineral interests on portions of THSF. Mineral resources within this forest include sand and lime rock. No estimate of their quality and quantity is currently available. As indicated by the Franklin County Soil Survey, more than 3,000 acres of THSF have lime rock within five (5) feet of the surface.

G. Unique Natural Features and Outstanding Native Landscapes

There are at least ten (10) artesian wells within the state forest.

Dwarf Cypress – The Dwarf Cypress are one of the most unique features of this area. These are known as Dwarf, Bonsai, or Hat-Rack Cypress. Many of these trees are more than 250 years old, although they typically grow to a height of only 15 feet. No one is exactly sure what causes the cypress in this area to be dwarfed. The trees are not genetically different from other pond-cypress trees in the area, and seeds from these trees will grow to normal heights when planted on other sites. There are similar stands of cypress in southern Florida that are dwarfed due to a layer of bedrock close to the surface that does not allow the trees to grow properly. The soil in this area is very deep before hitting bedrock, but there is a layer of hard clay that may prevent the cypress roots from growing deeper. The soil here is also very low in nutrients, as evidenced by the many carnivorous plants in the area. This site is generally thought to have historically been flooded for the majority of the year, further reducing the ability of these trees to grow.

Scrub (Ancient Dunes) – There are 683 acres of scrub on the High Bluff Tract of THSF. These old dunes are sometimes as tall as 60’ above sea level, making them some of the highest points in Franklin County. These dunes contain a wide variety of rare plants. Some of these plants are found only on the scrub of Franklin and Gulf Counties. Most of the scrub sites have been excluded from fire for many years. These areas have dense stands of sand pines that lean away from the coast. This is a result of the weak root system of the sand pines combined with the storms that hit the area every few years.

New River Headwaters – The headwaters of the New River are a spectacular and largely undisturbed landscape. The river meanders through areas of dwarf cypress, and along high banks with large old growth pines. Large areas of intact wet savannas are present in many areas just off of the banks of the river. There are very few access points to this section of river, and little, if any, sign of civilization is visible. The New River experiences drastic changes in water level depending on local rainfall. In dry periods, the river is a small trickle or a series of pools; however, after large rain events, it can expand to several hundred feet wide. The riverbed makes for an excellent hiking trail during dry periods and a good canoe trail during times of moderate flow.

Wet Savannas – The wet savannas of the southeastern Coastal Plain are one of the most biologically diverse plant communities in the world. These areas are dominated by thick wiregrass and pitcher plants. In the spring and fall, they are full of a wide variety of wildflowers. Walker and Peet (1983) stated that “savannas are remarkably species-rich with up to 42 species/0.25 m².” Draining and conversion to pine plantations have heavily damaged most of the wet savannas on the forest, but a few intact areas still remain. These areas are overgrown, but the repeated use of growing season fire and eventual restoration of natural hydrology will make these areas much like they were hundreds of years ago. As timber harvests have occurred in former savannah areas, they are being restored back to their previous condition.

Riverine Forests – The Ochlockonee and Crooked Rivers make up much of the east boundary of THSF. These rivers are primarily fresh water, but they do get slightly saltier during dry periods or extreme tides. The forests along these rivers extend as much as a mile inland. There has been very little human influence in these areas other than limited timber removal in the late 1800’s. These riverine forests consist of dense stands of oaks, hickories, and other hardwoods. Some of these trees have diameters exceeding three feet. The understory is open in most areas except for where the older trees have been killed by storms or disease. Travel through these areas is difficult due to the very deep mud and the many meandering streams.

H. Research Projects / Specimen Collection

Research projects may be performed on the forest on a temporary or permanent basis for the purpose of obtaining information that furthers the knowledge of forestry and related fields. FFS cooperates with other governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, and

educational institutions, whenever feasible, on this type of research. FFS will consider assisting with research projects when funds and manpower are available.

All research to be considered on THSF must be considered in accordance with the guidelines stated in the State Forest Handbook. Any requests for research should be submitted in writing to the appropriate field staff to be forwarded to the Forest Management Bureau for approval. Requests must include: a letter outlining the purpose, scope, methodology, and location of the proposed research. Requests are subject to review by FFS Foresters, Biologists, the Forest Health Section, and the Forest Hydrology Section, as appropriate. Authorization to conduct research will require that the investigator provide copies of any reports or studies generated from any research to the FFS and the THSF staff. Other special conditions may be applicable, and the authorization may be terminated at any point if the study is not in compliance.

Research projects / specimen collections that have been initiated on the property include:

- Ortegren, Maxwell, & Masson, University of West Florida - Atlantic white cedar research May - December 2012
 - Gerson & team, University of Massachusetts, Amherst – annual migratory bird surveys March 2016 - 2018
 - Klassen & team, University of Connecticut – fungus growing ant research May - October 2016
 - Fishbein & Ksepka, Oklahoma State University - Asclepias (milkweeds) sampling May - October 2016
 - Kaplan & Team, University of Florida/Environmental Engineering - EPA wetland sampling May - October 2016
 - McCown & team, FWC Research - Florida black bear demographic survey April 2016 - 2018
 - Burkett-Cadena, University of Florida/IFAS – biting midges research June - November 2017
 - Howell & McAlpin, FWC – alligator hatchlings collection September - November 2017
 - King & team, Louisiana F&WL Research Unit, USGS – dwarf cypress site visit October 2017
 - Miller & Gott, Florida Museum of Natural History – Florida Duskywings (Lepidoptera/butterflies) March - November 2018
 - Weakley & team, North Carolina Botanical Garden, Chapel Hill - Trichostema (aromatic herb) March - November 2018
- CFEOR Cooperative:
- Conserved Forests Ecosystems: Outreach & Research, University of Florida, FFS perennial member

I. Ground Disturbing Activities

Although the FFS's approach to handling ground disturbing activities is identified in other sections of this plan, the FFS's overall approach to this issue is summarized here. FFS recognizes the importance of managing and protecting sensitive resources and will take steps to ensure that such resources are not adversely impacted by ground disturbing

activities. This includes areas such as known sensitive species locations; archaeological, fossil, and historical sites; ecotones, and wetlands.

When new pre-suppression firelines, recreational trails, or other low-impact recreational site enhancements are necessary, their placement will be reviewed by state forest field staff to avoid sensitive areas. For ground disturbing activities such as construction of buildings, parking lots, and new roads, the FFS will consult with FNAI, DHR, NWFWMDC and the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC), as appropriate.

V. Public Access and Recreation

The primary recreation objective is to provide the public with dispersed outdoor recreational activities that are dependent on the natural environment. FFS will continue to promote and encourage public access and recreational use by the public while protecting resources and practicing multiple-use management. Recreation activities available on THSF include hunting, fishing, birding, nature study, picnicking, hiking, biking, horseback riding, and camping.

Periodic evaluations will be conducted by FFS staff to monitor recreational impacts on resources. Modifications to recreational uses will be implemented should significant negative impacts be identified. New recreation opportunities and facilities, which are compatible with the primary goals and responsibilities of the FFS, will be considered only after FFS determines their compatibility with other forest uses and forest resources. Assessment of visitor impacts, outdoor recreation opportunities and facilities, and proposed changes will all be addressed in the Five-Year Outdoor Recreation Plan updates.

A. Existing Recreational Opportunities

THSF provides public access via CR 67, SR 65 and US 98. There is also access to THSF from the north through the Apalachicola National Forest. There are a wide variety of recreational opportunities that are available at THSF. Hiking, horseback riding, biking, picnicking, birding, nature study, fishing, boating, and hunting can be enjoyed using existing service roads, old road beds, and established trails. THSF is part of the Big Bend Scenic Byway, and the FFS Trailwalker Program. See Exhibit E for a map of the Facilities and Improvements.

1. THSF currently has over 850 miles of non-paved roads.
2. Hunting on over 200,000 acres.
3. Fishing along seemingly endless miles of river and stream systems.
4. Numerous maintained boat launches for motorized or non-motorized entry.
5. Self-guided paddling opportunities.
6. The High Bluff Hiking trail runs along a set of ancient dunes paralleling the coast of St. George Sound. The trail has been expanded to create one (1) large (9.2 mile) or two (2) small (5.5 and 3.7 mile) loops and has multiple trailheads with parking at each end and can be accessed from US 98.
7. The Dwarf Cypress Boardwalk offers visitors a unique view of the rare dwarf cypress; some estimated to be over 250 years old. The boardwalk is approximately 300 ft. long with a covered deck that rises 30 ft. above the stand of dwarf cypress. The site also has a kiosk that provides information about dwarf cypress and local hydrology. The boardwalk is easily accessible off Dry Bridge Road from either SR 65 or US 98.

8. The Cash Creek Day Use Area / Campground is a popular destination for many local visitors and is directly off SR 65. This area offers three (3) primitive campsites, a boat ramp and dock with access to East Bay and the Apalachicola River. ADA accessible parking and a double-vault restroom are also available.
9. Womack Creek Recreation Area/Campground offers eight (8) primitive camping sites and three (3) electric RV accessible sites. The area has boat ramp access to the Ochlockonee River, and facilities include a bathhouse and picnic pavilion.
10. Miller Landing Day Use Area located at the end of Bear Creek Road offers a canoe launch to East Bay and the adjacent marsh, which is an excellent area for seasonal birding.
11. The Gully Branch Day Use Area is located on the New River and Gully Branch Road, off CR 67. This site contains a large pavilion with picnic tables, several sheltered picnic tables, a vaulted restroom, and a boat ramp.
12. There are currently 54 sites designated for primitive camping in THSF [Exhibit E]. Each campsite contains a picnic table, free standing grill, and campfire ring. Primitive campsites are located throughout the forest. Most are located on rivers or streams. Most campsites have canoe-launching areas. Twenty-nine of these campsites are leased as hunt camps during hunting season.
13. THSF has 150 miles of forest roads that are open to Off-highway Vehicles (OHV). The OHV trail, camp ground, and trail head were funded through the T. Mark Schmidt Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Grant Program. This area is on the east/central portion of the forest and is accessible from Highway 67 north of Carrabelle. Riders may purchase annual permits or a three-day pass to ride in this area. Trail users are predominately UTV and enduro-motorcycles. Both prefer the open road systems and scenic vistas.

B. Planned Recreational Opportunities

FFS will continue to assess plans for additional recreational opportunities based on demand, carrying capacity, demographics, and impact to the resources on the forest. All planned improvements may be completed as staff and funding permits. Both terrestrial and aquatic resources and related activities will be evaluated. Any specific plans will be incorporated into the Five-Year Outdoor Recreational Plan on file at THSF.

Erosion to the bank of the Ochlockonee River at the Womack Creek Campground near the bathhouse will be monitored and evaluated for possible solutions. Options may include river bank stabilization or removal of the bathhouse and construction of a new facility in a more stable location.

Installing a vaulted restroom at the Vinard's Place Day Use Area may be considered depending on assessed needs and funding availability.

A wildlife and scenic viewing platform is being considered at the Billy's Road savannah site in the New River Tract.

A one-mile nature trail is planned along Cash Creek with trailhead at the Cash Creek Recreation Area. The trail will feature lookout vistas, benches, and potential fishing spots.

Further assessment, public interest, and funding availability will determine the addition of primitive camping at Miller's Landing on East Bay in the High Bluff Tract. Future plans may include improving the boat ramp.

Additional primitive campsites are planned at the Cash Creek Recreation Area. Electric hookups for RV's may be considered based on demand and depending on funding.

C. Hunter Access

Hunting is an important recreational activity on 100% of THSF. THSF is open to regulated hunting. The FWC recommends hunting season dates for FFS approval. The FWC is responsible for establishing bag and possession limits in consultation with FFS. There are three established Wildlife Management Areas on the forest; Tate's Hell WMA, Tate's Hell Womack Creek Unit WMA, and Apalachicola River WEA.

D. Education

FFS may create partnerships with local K-12 schools and/or universities for the purpose of development and implementation of educational opportunities on THSF. Additionally, FFS intends to establish an educational program for the public which will highlight to visitors the natural environment and the conservation of THSF.

FFS works with Franklin County Consolidated Schools offering forestry internships and mentoring programs for juniors and seniors. Students participate in various forest management activities during the summer, benefiting from hands-on experience and can earn credits on scholarship applications.

Recently, Franklin County Schools began offering scholarships for students interested in a forestry career, to earn a forestry degree from a Florida University, and start a career in Franklin County. Portions of THSF annual revenue that is returned to Franklin County Schools in lieu of taxes, is the funding source for this scholarship.

VI. Forest Management Practices

A. Prescribed Fire

Forest management practices on THSF are important in the restoration and maintenance of forest ecosystems and provide a variety of socio-economic benefits to Floridians. Management practices on THSF include a prescribed fire program which is an effective tool in controlling the encroachment of shrubs and off-site hardwoods, stimulating the recovery of native herbaceous groundcover, and promoting the regeneration of native pines.

FFS utilizes a fire management program on state forests that includes wildfire prevention, detection and suppression, and prescribed burning. This program is the responsibility of FFS's Tallahassee Forestry Center and is detailed in the Five-Year Prescribed Burning Management Plan. Emphasis will be placed on prescribed burning, wildfire prevention, and education to help reduce wildfire occurrence on the forest.

A Fire History spreadsheet detailing the recent history of prescribed burns and wildfires at THSF is available in [Exhibit P].

Personnel and equipment stationed at THSF will be used for pre-suppression practices, establishment of firebreaks, rehabilitation of existing firelines, construction of new firelines, maintenance of perimeter firebreaks, and prescribed burning.

The annual forest prescribed burning program produces multiple benefits. The purposes of prescribed burning on THSF are to facilitate forest management operations; enhance wildlife and listed species habitat; decrease fuel loading; enhance public safety; and restore, maintain, and protect all native ecosystems, ecotones, and their ecological processes. FFS personnel are responsible for planning and implementing the annual prescribed burn program for THSF, which will consist of growing and dormant season burns. An update to the Five-Year Prescribed Burning Management Plan is developed each year by FFS staff. All burns conducted on THSF are executed by Florida Certified Prescribed Burn Managers in accordance with F. S. 590.125 and F.A.C. 5I-2.

According to FNAI, historic, fire dependent natural communities on THSF are estimated to have occupied approximately 115,000 acres and to have burned at approximately 2 to 35-year intervals. Currently, there are approximately 116,000 acres available to burn. Based on current conditions and management objectives, THSF will plan for 25,000 to 42,000 acres to be prescribed burned annually. Meeting prescribed fire goals will be largely dependent on weather conditions, available personnel, and statewide emergency situations such as wildfires, hurricanes, and other natural disaster response and relief.

1. Fire Management

FFS will develop a fire management plan that will serve as a working tool and an informational document for THSF. The plan will provide guidelines in regard to wildfire suppression and prescribed fire management. It will specify burn units, burn unit prescriptions, appropriate fire return intervals, and fire suppression planning. The plan may be reviewed and amended as necessary.

The use of prescribed fire in the management of timber, wildlife, and ecological resources on THSF is necessary if the FFS is to fulfill the goals and objectives stated in this plan including: enhancing and restoring native plant communities, managing protected species, managing timber, recreation, historical, and other resource values. The fire management plan and its objectives shall reflect and incorporate these multiple-resource objectives.

- a. Prescribed Fire:** Prescribed fire is the most important land management tool, both ecologically and economically, for managing vegetation and natural communities, and perpetuating existing wildlife populations in Florida. Forest Operation records and staff experience should be combined with the FNAI inventory and assessment (2017) to identify areas that may require mechanical/chemical treatments in conjunction with prescribed fire to restore a more natural vegetative structure.

- b. Burn Unit Plans:** Each prescribed fire will be conducted in accordance with FFS regulations and state law (Rule Chapter 5I-2 F.A.C., Chapter 590 F.S.) and have a burn unit plan (or prescription). Each prescription will contain, at a minimum, the information, as required by Section 590.125(3), F.S., needed to complete the FFS Prescribed Burn Plan Form FDACS 11461.

Aerial ignition may be considered for large burn units where this tactic can be cost effective for higher burn acreages. Consideration should be given to rotating burn units between dormant and growing season burns over time. Fire return intervals for a burn unit are recommended to fall within the natural, historic range for the dominant natural community or communities within a given burn unit.

Based upon available species survey data, burn units within a prescription that have listed wildlife species shall explicitly state their presence and any restrictions or requirements relative to prescribed burning in proximity to these species or habitats. These may include time of year, pre-burn preparation, fire return intervals, and other burn parameters.

B. Wildfires, Prevention, Fire / Prescribed Fire Strategies

FFS utilizes a comprehensive wildfire management approach on state forests that includes an ongoing program of wildfire prevention, detection and suppression, and prescribed burning. Implementation of this program is the responsibility of FFS's Tallahassee Forestry Center. Emphasis will be placed on consistent accomplishment of prescribed burning goals and community outreach to increase public understanding of wildfire prevention and the benefits of prescribed fire.

FFS has three (3) paramount considerations regarding wildfires, and these are listed in priority order:

- 1) Protection of human lives
- 2) Protection of improvements
- 3) Protection of natural resources

All procedures regarding wildfire will follow the State Forest Handbook and the THSF Fire Management Plan.

1. Suppression Strategies

If a wildfire occurs on THSF there are two (2) alternative suppression strategies as defined below:

- a. Contain** is defined as a suppression strategy where a fire is restricted to a certain area by using existing natural or constructed barriers that stop the fires spread under the prevailing and forecasted weather until it is out. This strategy allows the use of

environmentally sensitive tactics based on fuels, fire behavior, and weather conditions that keep a wildfire from burning a large area or for a long duration.

- b. **Control** is defined as a suppression strategy where aggressive suppression tactics are used to establish firelines around a fire to halt its spread and to extinguish all hotspots. This alternative is used whenever there is a threat to human life, property, private lands, and/or critical natural or cultural resources. This strategy should also be used when the total district fire load dictates that crews not be involved with individual fires for any longer than absolutely necessary.

Appropriate suppression action will be that which provides for the most reasonable probability of minimizing fire suppression cost and critical resource damage, consistent with probable fire behavior, total fire load, potential resource and environmental impacts, safety, and smoke management considerations. The Incident Command System (ICS) will be used for all suppression actions.

2. **Smoke Management**

Caution will be exercised to prevent a public safety or health hazard from the smoke of any prescribed burn or wildfire. Prescribed burns must pass the smoke screening procedure and be conducted by a certified burner. If smoke threatens to cause a safety hazard, then direct immediate suppression action will be taken.

3. **Fire Breaks and Firelines**

A system of permanent fire breaks will be developed and maintained around and within the boundaries of THSF to guard against fires escaping from and entering the forest. Such fire breaks will consist of natural barriers, roads, trails, permanent grass strips and where appropriate, well maintained harrowed lines. All pre-suppression fire breaks will meet the established Silvicultural Best Management Practices (BMP) criteria.

During wildfire suppression, the use of water and foam, permanent fire breaks, natural barriers and existing roads and trails for firelines can be used when human life safety, property, and resource considerations allow. Plowed and/or bulldozed lines will be used for initial installation of firelines in heavy fuels and in cases where it's considered necessary to protect life, property, or resources and/or to minimize threats to firefighters. Plow and bulldozed lines will be rehabilitated and BMPs implemented as soon as practical after the fire is suppressed.

4. **Sensitive Areas**

THSF has on file in the state forest headquarters an Environmentally Sensitive Area Map that identifies protected sites such as critical wetlands and archaeological and historical sites known to occur on the state forest. FFS personnel are aware of these areas in the event of a wildfire. Special precautions will be followed when prescribed burning in sensitive areas on THSF. When possible, fire staff will avoid line construction in wetland ecotones throughout the forest.

5. Firewise Communities

FFS has implemented a Firewise community approach for prevention statewide. Specifically, in the area adjacent to or nearby THSF, efforts in this regard will continue to identify communities at risk and to make contact with their representatives.

6. Adjacent Neighbor Contacts

The staff at THSF maintains a list of neighbors that have requested they be notified in advance of prescribed burns. These families are contacted by telephone or email with potential sites and dates of anticipated prescribed burns.

7. Post-Burn Evaluations

A post-burn evaluation is required for each wildfire and prescribed burn on the state forests to assess impacts on timber and habitat. Based on the evaluations, decisions will be made on timber salvage operations. An historical fire record for all fires and prescribed burns will be maintained. This will be accomplished using the burn plans in the Forester's files and through the maintenance of GIS data. These records are intended to provide data for future management decisions.

C. Sustainable Forestry & Silviculture

Timber is a valuable economic and ecological resource, and timber harvesting for the purposes of generating revenue, improving stand viability, forest health, wildlife, and ecological restoration and maintenance is critical to the silvicultural objectives on the state forest.

1. Strategies

The following silvicultural strategies will apply to silvicultural practices on THSF:

- a. To restore and maintain forest health and vigor through timber harvesting, prescribed burning, and reforestation, both naturally and artificially, with species native to the site.
- b. To create, through natural or artificial regeneration, uneven-aged, and even-aged management, a forest with both young and old growth components that yields sustainable economic, ecological, and social benefits.

2. Silvicultural Operations

Silvicultural operations on THSF will be directed toward improving forest health, wildlife habitat, ecological and economical sustainability, as well as toward recovery from past management practices that are not in accordance with the objectives of this plan. Stands of off-site species with merchantable volume will be scheduled for harvest, followed by reforestation with the appropriate tree species. Herbicide applications may be necessary to control woody competition and to re-establish desired natural species of both overstory and groundcover. Site preparation methods may include prescribed fire, mechanical vegetation control, and/or herbicide applications. Herbicides used will be registered for forestry use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and will not adversely affect water resources.

Prescribed fire is the most desirable method of vegetation control in fire dependent ecosystems. However, due to the existence of areas where fuel loads have reached

dangerous levels or urban interface dictates prescribed fire is not suitable, mechanical or chemical vegetation control may be used. Mechanical and / or chemical vegetation control will be utilized where appropriate as determined by FFS staff for wildlife enhancement, fuel mitigation, and reforestation.

Maintenance and restoration of timber stands and natural communities through timber harvesting will include thinning for maintenance, regeneration harvests applicable to the species present, and clear-cutting to remove off-site species.

All silvicultural activities, including timber harvesting and reforestation, will meet or exceed the standards in FFS's Silviculture Best Management Practices (BMPs) and the State Forest Handbook, and will follow the Five-Year Silviculture Management Plan.

3. Forest Inventory

The purpose of a forest inventory is to provide FFS resource managers with information and tools for short and long-range resource management and planning. Ten percent of THSF forest will be re-inventoried annually to provide an accurate estimation of the standing timber and to ensure that stands will be managed sustainably.

Timber / forestry resources available on the property include commercially important pine species such as slash, longleaf, loblolly, pond, and sand pines, as well as other significant species such as cypress, cedar, and mixed hardwoods.

4. Timber Sales

Timber sales are generally advertised for competitive bids and sold on a per unit or lump sum basis. All timber sales are conducted according to guidelines specified in the State Forest Handbook and in accordance with Forestry Policy and Procedures.

5. Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI)

The SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard promotes sustainable forestry practices based on 13 Principles, 15 Objectives, 37 Performance Measures and 101 Indicators. These requirements include measures to protect water quality, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, species at risk, and forests with exceptional conservation value. The SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard applies to any organization in the United States or Canada that owns or manages forestlands.

The SFI program is committed to continuously improve responsible forest management. SFI Program Participants must meet or exceed applicable water quality laws and regulations, with measures to manage and protect water wetlands and riparian zones on certified lands. Participants must continually evaluate habitat and biodiversity impacts from forest activities – which leads to improved habitat quality and protection of imperiled or critically imperiled species.

D. Non-Native Invasive Species Control

FFS employees continually monitor the forest for non-native invasive species while conducting management activities. FFS will locate, identify, and apply control measures with the intent to eradicate or control non-native invasive species. (Table 6, Exhibit Q)

On-going maintenance and monitoring strategies are outlined in the Five-Year Ecological Management Plan which is developed to locate, identify, and control non-native invasive plant species. Occurrences of non-native invasive species are recorded in the THSF GIS database and are monitored and treated annually as funding permits. The GIS database is updated as new infestations are discovered.

Adjacent landowners who are known to have these species on their property will be approached in an effort to cooperate on control measures. FFS works to control the spread of non-native invasive species by decontaminating agency equipment and equipment used by private contractors according to the State Forest Handbook.

FFS will enlist support from FWC in efforts to control non-native invasive animals. Feral hogs (*Sus scrofa*) have been present on some tracts of THSF in the past but are not known to occur in any substantial numbers at this time. FWC has issued a feral hog control permit to FFS for all state forests and FFS will allow for hog removal on THSF through trapping and hunting if necessary

Training in the identification and control of invasive species will be scheduled for personnel as time and resources permit. Training concerning non-native invasive plants will be coordinated with the Forest Management Bureau’s Forest Health Section. Control of non-native invasive species will be target specific and use a variety of methods including appropriately labeled and efficacious herbicides.

Table 6. Non-Native Invasive Plant Species Occurring on THSF

Scientific Name	Common Name	Treatment Strategy	Acres Impacted	Increasing /Decreasing
<i>Albizia julibrissin</i>	Mimosa	Hack/squirt & Foliar	Minimal	Decreasing
<i>Sapium sebiferum</i>	Chinese tallow tree	Hack/squirt & Foliar	Minimal	Decreasing
<i>Lygodium japonicum</i>	Japanese climbing fern	Foliar	200	Stable
<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>	Cogon grass	Foliar	5	Stable
<i>Panicum repens</i>	Torpedo grass	Foliar	Minimal	Stable
<i>Sorghum halepense</i>	Johnson grass	Foliar	Minimal	Stable
<i>Dioscorea bulbifera</i>	Air potato	Foliar/cut or pull-up	Minimal	Decreasing
<i>Melia azedarach</i>	Chinaberry	Hack/squirt & Foliar	Minimal	Decreasing
<i>Cinnamomum camphora</i>	Camphor tree	Hack/squirt & Foliar	Minimal	Decreasing

E. Insects, Disease and Forest Health

Currently, there are no insect or disease problems on THSF. State forest staff also monitors incidental outbreaks of *Ips* bark beetles throughout the forest. These outbreaks generally run their course without involving more than a couple acres. Aerial surveys are conducted every June for southern pine beetle outbreaks. In the event of an outbreak of any disease or insects, consultation with the Forest Management Bureau's Forest Health Section will be sought to formulate an appropriate and effective response.

In compliance with Section 388.4111, Florida Statutes and in Section 5E-13.042, F.A.C., all lands have been evaluated and subsequently designated as environmentally sensitive and biologically highly productive. Such designation is appropriate and consistent with the previously documented natural resources and ecosystem values and affords the appropriate protection for these resources from arthropod control practices that would impose a potential hazard to fish, wildlife, and other natural resources existing on this property. The local arthropod control agencies in Franklin County and Liberty County will be notified of the approval of this plan documenting this designation. See [Exhibit Y].

As a result, prior to conducting any arthropod control activities on THSF, the local agency must prepare a public lands control plan that addresses all concerns that FFS may have for protecting the natural resources and ecosystem values on the state forest. In this regard, FFS will provide the local agency details on the management objectives for THSF. This public land control plan must be in compliance with DACS guidelines and using the appropriate DACS form. The plan must then be approved and mutually adopted by the county, FFS, and DACS, prior to initiation of any mosquito control work. Should the local mosquito control district not propose any mosquito control operations on the property, no arthropod control plan is required. See [Exhibit Y].

F. Use of Private Land Contractors

The forest manager makes ongoing evaluations of the use of private contractors and consultants to facilitate the total resource management activities of this state forest. The opportunities for outsourcing land management work include, or are anticipated to include:

1. Herbicide applications
2. Restoration activities
3. Mechanical site preparation
4. Tree planting
5. Timber harvesting
6. Biological assessments and mapping
7. Contractors for fixed capital and infrastructure improvements

VII. Proposed Management Activities for Natural Communities

In 2017, FNAI completed a natural community mapping project on THSF and a historic natural community type map was created [Exhibits R and S].

For the purposes of this management plan, restoration is defined as the process of returning ecosystems to the appropriate structure and species composition, based on soil type. Strategies may include thinning of pine plantations, mowing, or chopping in areas of heavy fuel buildup, application of both dormant and growing season fires, removal of off-site species, reforestation, the use of site preparation methods, both mechanically and/or the use of herbicides to control encroachment of the woody shrub component as appropriate. Fire return intervals are included as a guide (Table 7) and may vary depending upon specific conditions. The intention is to use prescribed fire in a manner and frequency that will attain the desired goals. Prescribed fire frequency and timing is generally adjusted depending upon the conditions of the specific area.

Table 7. Prescribed Fire Interval Guide on THSF

Habitat Type	Historic Fire Return Intervals**	THSF Fire Frequency Goal (Local)	Comments
Basin Marsh	N/A	N/A	
Basin Swamp	2-20 years	2-20 years	Dependent on adjacent pyrogenic habitat
Baygall	N/A	N/A	
Blackwater Stream	N/A	N/A	
Bottomland Forest	N/A	N/A	
Depression Marsh	N/A	N/A	
Dome Swamp	3-5 years	3-5 years	Dependent on adjacent pyrogenic habitat
Floodplain Marsh	3-5 years	3-5 years	Dependent on adjacent pyrogenic habitat
Floodplain Swamp	N/A	N/A	
Mesic Flatwoods	2-4 years	2-4 years	
Sandhill	1-3 years	2-4 years	
Scrub	6-19 years	3-19 years	
Scrubby Flatwoods	5-15 years	3-15 years	
Shrub Bog	10-20 years	N/A	
Swamp Lake	N/A	N/A	
Wet Flatwoods	3-10 years	2-5 years	
Wet Prairie	2-3 years	2-4 years	

** As determined by FNAI

The following community descriptions, existing condition descriptions, and management recommendations are taken from a 2017 FNAI mapping project report and the Guide to the Natural Communities of Florida (FNAI 2010), as well as from the knowledge and experience gained by FFS during forest inventory efforts and routine field work on THSF.

To achieve the objectives outlined in this plan, the following management activities will be performed in the natural communities at THSF during the next ten-year planning period. Goals, desired conditions, standards, and guidelines provide management area direction. These goals and desired conditions may take many planning cycles to attain.

**A. Basin Marsh
Description:**

Basin marshes are regularly inundated freshwater herbaceous wetlands that may occur in a variety of situations but, in contrast to depression marshes, are not small or shallow inclusions within a fire-maintained matrix community.

Species composition is heterogeneous both within and between marshes but can generally be divided into submersed, floating-leaved, emergent, and grassy zones from deepest to shallowest portions; shrub patches may be present within any of these zones. Common species found in the floating leaved zone of basin marshes include white waterlily (*Nymphaea odorata*), American lotus (*Nelumbo lutea*), and yellow pondlily (*Nuphar advena*); the emergent zone may have pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*), bulltongue arrowhead (*Sagittaria lancifolia*), southern cattail (*Typha domingensis*), sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*), and softstem bulrush (*Scirpus tabernaemontani*); the grassy zone is typically characterized by maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*), smooth beggarticks (*Bidens laevis*), dotted smartweed (*Polygonum punctatum*), and sand cordgrass (*Spartina bakeri*), accompanied by a diverse mixture of less common forbs such as sweetscent (*Pluchea odorata*), spadeleaf (*Centella asiatica*), and lemon bacopa (*Bacopa caroliniana*). Coastalplain willow (*Salix caroliniana*), common buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *canadensis*), and wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*) are common shrubby components.

Current Conditions:

The few basin marshes on THSF are either small inclusions in non-pyrogenic communities such as basin swamps or baygall, or large deep inclusions in flatwoods. Most of these basin marshes are in good condition.

Dominant shrub species in basin marshes include groundsel tree (*Baccharis halimifolia*) and yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*). Sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*) and rushes (*Juncus* spp.) are common herbaceous species.

Fire Regimes:

Historically, natural fires likely burned basin marshes occasionally during dry conditions. Dense sawgrass and maidencane marshes can burn even when there is standing water. Frequency of fire varies depending on the hydrology of the marsh and its exposure to fire from surrounding areas.

Management Needs:

Restoring historic hydrological regimes and applying fire to adjacent uplands (where appropriate) is a recommended focus for forest management. Occasional fires within the basin marshes are necessary to remove encroaching woody vegetation and reduce the buildup of organic soils.

B. Basin Swamp

Description:

Typically, basin swamps are forested depressions that are large and/or embedded in a non-pyrogenic community and thus are not heavily influenced by frequent fires from the surrounding landscape. The soils are generally acidic, nutrient-poor peats overlying an impervious soil layer. This community type is dominated by hydrophytic trees and shrubs that can withstand inundation for most or all of the year, including bald (or pond) cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), swamp tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica* var. *biflora*), and fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*). Slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) may infrequently be found on hummocks within the

swamp. Atlantic white cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*) and pond pine (*Pinus serotina*) are occasional. Basin swamps have variable shrub layers and sparse to dense herbaceous species cover. A mature canopy is usually closed and dominated by pond cypress, swamp tupelo, slash pine, and to a lesser extent, red maple (*Acer rubrum*), green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanicus*), loblolly bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*), swamp bay (*Persea palustris*), and sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*). In most cases, shrubs do not form a dense layer below the canopy or in the ecotones of the swamps. Shrubs are typically scattered throughout the swamp, although some areas may have heavier concentrations. Subcanopy tree and shrub species primarily include black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*), titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*), fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*), large gallberry (*Ilex coriacea*), sweetbay, bayberry (*Myrica heterophylla*), common buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), and swamp dogwood (*Cornus foemina*), as well as canopy and subcanopy saplings. In densely forested portions of basin swamps, herbs are sparse and consist mostly of netted chain fern (*Woodwardia areolata*), Virginia chain fern (*W. virginica*), royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*), cinnamon fern (*O. cinnamomea*), and lizard's tail (*Saururus cernuus*). Epiphytes and vines may be common and include Spanish moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*), resurrection fern (*Pleopeltis polypodioides*), poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), laurel greenbrier (*Smilax laurifolia*), and climbing hydrangea (*Decumaria barbara*).

On the 1953 aerial photographs, basin wetlands in THSF appear to be a complex mosaic of shrub bog (titi shrubs lacking a hardwood canopy), baygall (bay tree dominated), and basin swamp (cypress/tupelo dominated). The distinction between these communities is difficult to delineate, and the pattern has shifted over the last century due to changing hydrology and fire patterns. Basin swamp was primarily identified through current photographs. The distinction between basin swamp and floodplain swamp is somewhat arbitrarily drawn to separate swamps that are mainly in collection basins versus swamps that are more heavily influenced by seasonal upstream flooding events. Many of the historic basin swamps at THSF are large, irregularly shaped communities in a matrix of baygall and shrub bog, while others are linear features that resemble narrow floodplain swamps or cypress stringers.

Current Conditions:

Many of the THSF basin swamps have been converted to pine plantation. In general, these have an overstory of slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) above a variable mid-story of wetland trees and shrubs, often with herbaceous weeds. In addition, large sections of these pine plantations that were former basin swamps have been cleared of all pines. These areas that were former basin swamps have little to no canopy of remnant cypress (*Taxodium* spp.), a weedy shrub layer of black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*), titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*), St. John's wort (*Hypericum* spp.), and blackberry (*Rubus* spp.), and a moderate, and often weedy herb layer with bluestems (*Andropogon* spp.), Carolina redroot (*Lachnanthes carolina*), beaksedges (*Rhynchospora* spp.), and yellow-eyed grasses (*Xyris* spp.).

Most of the current basin swamps in THSF are large irregularly shaped matrices that include baygalls and shrub bogs. Smaller, linear portions of basin swamps occur as pure stands of cypress, including dwarf cypress swamps. In general, basin swamps are dominated by a mixture of wetland trees, particularly pond cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*),

bald cypress (*T. distichum*), slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*), sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*), Atlantic white cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*), and tupelo (*Nyssa* spp.). The understory consists of smaller canopy species plus red maple (*Acer rubrum*), black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*), titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*), sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*), and swampbay (*Persea palustris*). The shrub layer is usually sparse and includes wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), peelbark St. John's wort (*Hypericum fasciculatum*), myrtle leaved holly (*Ilex cassine* var. *myrtifolia*), large gallberry (*I. coriacea*), fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*), and evergreen bayberry (*Myrica caroliniensis*). Climbing fetterbush (*Pieris phyllyreifolia*) is often found growing on cypress trunks in linear swamps.

Herbs are usually sparse and include beaksedges (*Rhynchospora* spp.), narrowfruit horned beaksedge (*R. inundata*), yellow eyed grass (*Xyris* spp.), clustered sedge (*Carex glaucescens*), flatsedge (*Cyperus* spp.), witchgrass (*Dicanthelium* spp.), tenangle pipewort (*Eriocaulon decangulare*), Carolina redroot (*Lachnanthes caroliana*), royal fern (*Osmunda regalis* var. *spectabilis*), netted chain fern (*Woodwardia areolata*), bog white violet (*Viola lanceolata*), and common arrowhead (*Sagittaria latifolia*).

Vines are sparse to common and include yellow jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), greenbrier (*Smilax* spp.), laurel greenbrier (*S. laurifolia*), bristly greenbrier (*S. tamnoides*), and muscadine (*Vitis rotundifolia*).

There is some variation across the landscape of Tate's Hell in the structure and species composition of basin swamps. Smaller, linear stands of almost pure cypress occur in the central area of the forest including some stand of dwarf cypress. A second variation that does not fit classically into the above definition but occurs throughout the forest in large areas are regularly inundated swamps that have a mixed open canopy/shrub layer of scattered hydrophilic trees and shrubs and a fairly diverse and more prominent herbaceous layer than classic basin swamp. These more open canopied swamps are difficult to distinguish from and grade into the more typical closed canopied swamps as well as the much more open "cypress savanna" type of wet prairies.

Fire Regimes:

Fire intervals in basin swamps are highly variable. The lowest portions of basin swamps rarely, if ever, burn. Graminoid-dominated ecotones and the more open-canopied variation burn in conjunction with the adjacent uplands, and these may burn as frequently as every 2 to 5 years.

Fire is more frequent in cypress dominated swamps and may be absent or rare in hardwood swamps. Slash pine, pond pine, and cypress can establish in these areas immediately after a fire, benefiting from ample sunlight and available bare mineral soils; they are also tolerant of moderate fires once past a certain size, thus systems dominated by these species may have been subjected to fires every 10-20 years.

Often there is a successional interplay between shrub bogs, baygall, and basin swamp dependent on fire patterns; shrub wetlands may, if the hydrology is wet enough, succeed into basin swamps if unburned for long periods of time.

Management Needs:

Past silvicultural operations, particularly those including “bedding,” have severely altered many of the basin swamps. Bedding raised the root zone of pine seedlings above periodically flooded stands but the practice altered the hydrology and structure of the swamp habitat impacted. Historic basin swamps that have been planted in slash pine should be thinned, prescribed fire applied, and left for natural succession. Monitoring and control measures for non-native invasive plants should continue as planned. Removing feral hogs (*Sus scrofa*) is desirable in areas where these animals are impacting basin swamps and other wetlands.

For basin swamps in relatively good condition in THSF, management should focus on maintaining or restoring natural hydrology.

Prescribed fires in the flatwoods should be allowed to burn and extinguish naturally at or within the wetlands and encouraged to “push” into shrub wetlands in ecotones. Fires should be encouraged to burn completely smaller, isolated wetlands under dry conditions, when safety considerations allow.

Prior to state acquisition, cypress trees were harvested in many of the basin swamps in THSF. Although cypress is capable of resprouting from cut stumps, cypress regeneration is usually from seed. It is therefore important that at least a few seed trees be left in place for canopy regeneration.

C. Baygall

Description:

Baygall is a dense canopy evergreen forest that can develop at the bases of slopes with seepage from surrounding uplands or in basins where high water tables maintain saturated conditions. Soils are acidic and generally composed of peat.

Characteristic canopy trees include loblolly bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*), sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*), swamp bay (*Persea palustris*), pond pine (*Pinus serotina*), and slash pine (*P. elliottii*). Common shrubs and small trees include fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), large gallberry (*Ilex coriacea*), and highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*). A dense overstory and low light levels typically restrict development of herbaceous plants. However, herbs such as Virginia chain fern (*Woodwardia virginica*), beaksedges (*Rhynchospora* spp.), sedges (*Carex* spp.), sphagnum moss (*Sphagnum* spp.), Carolina redroot (*Lachnanthes caroliniana*), and cinnamon fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*) may be present. Epiphytes are infrequent to absent. Vines are found occasionally and may include laurel greenbrier (*Smilax laurifolia*) and muscadine (*Vitis rotundifolia*).

On the 1953 aerial photographs, basin wetlands in THSF appear to be a complex mosaic of shrub bog (titi shrubs lacking a hardwood canopy), baygall (bay tree dominated), and

basin swamp (cypress/tupelo dominated). The distinction between these communities is difficult to delineate, and the pattern has shifted over the last century due to changing hydrology and fire patterns. Most of the historic baygalls in THSF are irregularly shaped communities in a matrix of basin swamp, shrub bog, and wet flatwoods, but others are linear features along narrow drainages.

Current Conditions:

Significant portions of historic baygall in THSF have been converted to pine plantation. There also appears to have been some successional shifts between wetland community types (basin swamp/baygall/shrub bog) that have occurred over the last century due to intensive silviculture and resulting changes in hydrology and fire frequency.

Current baygalls are dominated by a hardwood canopy of sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*), Atlantic white cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*), loblolly bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*), and swamp bay (*Persea palustris*). Cypress (*Taxodium* spp.), slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*), and swamp laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*) may also be present in the canopy. The understory may be sparse to dense and consists of smaller canopy species plus red maple (*Acer rubrum*), water oak (*Quercus nigra*), black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*), titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*), and large gallberry (*Ilex coriacea*). Smaller shrubs include peelbark St. John's wort (*Hypericum fasciculatum*), sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), and gallberry (*Ilex glabra*).

The sparse herbaceous layer includes bluestem (*Andropogon* spp.), beaksedge (*Rhynchospora* spp.), clustered sedge (*Carex glaucescens*), witchgrass (*Dicanthelium* spp.), yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris* spp.), Carolina redroot (*Lacnathes caroliniana*), bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), and Virginia chain fern (*Woodwardia virginica*). Vines include laurel greenbrier (*Smilax laurifolia*), earleaf greenbrier (*S. auriculata*), and muscadine (*Vitis rotundifolia*).

Fire Regimes:

Baygall burns infrequently, perhaps only a few times each century in the deepest baygalls. Although the saturated soils and humid conditions within baygalls typically inhibit fire, droughts may create conditions that allow them to burn catastrophically. These fires not only destroy the canopy, but also may ignite the deep peat layers that can smolder for weeks, or even months. Caution is advised to avoid prescribed fire in baygall when insufficient soil moisture is available to keep fire in the ecotone areas when baygall occurs within larger burn blocks.

Management Needs:

Management activities for baygall in THSF should focus on maintaining historically occurring baygall. Avoid any further hydrologic alterations, such as the creation of ditches or roads. Where practical, restore natural hydrology and limit mechanical soil disturbance in ecotones between baygall and the adjacent uplands.

D. Blackwater Stream

Description:

Blackwater streams are watercourses that typically flow through forested communities. Tannins derived from swamps and marshes cause the water to be dark brown and often acidic. Blackwater streams are mostly free of vegetation except for occasional emergent herbs, submersed macrophytes, and algae. The adjacent canopy is dominated by baygall and swamp species.

On the 1953 geo-rectified photographs, some blackwater streams cannot be delineated under the dense canopy cover. The stream is identified as inclusions of the adjacent forested system.

Current Conditions:

The blackwater streams in THSF are generally in desired future conditions. Disturbances are limited to the conversion of adjacent land to agriculture and pine plantations and development that impact water quality.

Common canopy and subcanopy species include cypress (*Taxodium* spp.), sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*), swamp bay (*Persea palustris*), slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*), water oak (*Quercus nigra*), and red maple (*Acer rubrum*).

Fire Regimes:

Fire is not a component of this community.

Management Needs:

Management activities for blackwater streams in THSF should focus on following silvicultural BMP's, maintaining natural hydrologic patterns, and monitoring water quality.

E. Bottomland Forest

Description:

Bottomland forest is a deciduous, or mixed deciduous/evergreen, closed canopy forest on terraces and levees within riverine floodplains and in shallow depressions. Found in situations intermediate between swamps (which are flooded most of the time) and uplands, the canopy may be quite diverse with both deciduous and evergreen hydrophytic to mesophytic trees. Characteristic canopy species of bottomland forests include water oak (*Quercus nigra*), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), swamp laurel oak (*Q. laurifolia*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*), and spruce pine (*P. glabra*).

More flood tolerant species that are often present include American elm (*Ulmus americana*) and red maple (*Acer rubrum*), as well as occasional swamp tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica* var. *biflora*) and bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*). Evergreen bay species such as loblolly bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*), and sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*) are often mixed in the canopy and understory in acidic or seepage systems. Smaller trees and shrubs often include American hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), swamp dogwood (*Cornus foemina*), possumhaw (*Ilex decidua*), dahoon (*I. cassine*), dwarf palmetto (*Sabal minor*), swamp bay (*Persea palustris*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), and highbush blueberry

(*Vaccinium corymbosum*). The understory is either dense shrubs with little ground cover, or open, with few shrubs and a groundcover of ferns, herbs, and grasses. In the drier forests of this type, American holly (*Ilex opaca*), Gulf Sebastian bush (*Sebastiania fruticosa*), and sparkleberry (*Vaccinium arboreum*) may be frequent. Ground cover is also variable in composition and abundance, often with species overlap between herbs suited to either mesic or hydric conditions. Characteristic species include witchgrasses (*Dichanthelium* spp.), slender woodoats (*Chasmanthium laxum*), and sedges (*Carex* spp.).

Current Conditions:

Bottomland forest within THSF occurs along the New and Ochlockonee River drainages. It grades into floodplain swamp, flatwoods, and wet prairie. Most of the bottomland forest communities on Tate's Hell are in good condition, though some were disturbed by planted pines prior to state acquisition.

Current bottomland forests are dominated by sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*), southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), swamp laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), water oak (*Q. nigra*), and tupelo (*Nyssa* spp.). Common understory species include red maple (*Acer rubrum*), spruce pine (*Pinus glabra*), slash pine (*P. elliottii*), and cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*). The shrub layer is usually sparse and includes saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*), horse sugar (*Symplocos tinctoria*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*), rusty staggerbush (*Lyonia ferruginea*), large gallberry (*Ilex coriacea*), gallberry (*I. glabra*), American holly (*I. opaca*), American hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), St. Andrew's cross (*Hypericum hypercoides*), and sparkleberry (*Vaccinium arboreum*). Common herbs include bluestem (*Andropogon* spp.), longleaf woodoats (*Chasmanthium laxum* var. *sessiliflorum*), (*Dicanthelium* spp.), and sedges (*Carex* spp.). Vines are occasional and include yellow jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), earleaf greenbrier (*Smilax auriculata*), and bristly greenbrier (*S. tamnoides*).

Fire Regimes:

Fire is not a significant factor in bottomland forest and is primarily limited to individual trees affected by lightning strikes.

Management Needs:

Conversion to pine plantations prior to state acquisition has altered species composition in some areas. Activities that alter the surrounding hydrology, including ditches and canals, are highly detrimental to bottomland forest. Restoration projects should focus on restoring historic hydrologic flow pathways in conjunction with timber harvesting to favor a mixed pine, cypress, hardwood canopy where possible.

F. Depression Marsh

Description:

Depression marshes are isolated, non-forested wetland basins that are imbedded in a pyrogenic matrix community such as pine flatwoods or sandhill. These marshes typically have concentric zones of vegetation related to the length of hydroperiod and depth of

flooding. Depression marshes are distinguished from basin marshes principally by their landscape position which subjects them to more frequent fires.

Trees and shrubs are generally sparse or absent. The herbaceous layer is moderate to dense, especially where fire frequency and woody plant mortality is high. Typical species include graminoids such as maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*), Walter's sedge (*Carex striata*), rushes (*Juncus* spp.), beakrushes (*Rhynchospora* spp., especially *R. inundata*), wool grass (*Scirpus cyperinus*), and sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*); flag species such as pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*) and bulltongue arrowhead (*Sagittaria lancifolia*); and floating aquatics such as white waterlily (*Nymphaea odorata*). Peelbark St. John's wort (*Hypericum fasciculatum*) frequently forms a zone around the edge of the marsh along with herbs such as beaksedges (*Rhynchospora* spp.), Elliott's yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris elliotii*), blue maidencane (*Amphicarpum muhlenbergianum*), fringed yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris fimbriata*), pipeworts (*Eriocaulon* spp.), and Baldwin's spikerush (*Eleocharis baldwinii*). The depression marshes within the flatwoods in the southwestern portion of the forest, near the tidally influenced floodplain marshes, tend to be composed of almost entirely sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*).

Current Conditions:

Most depression marshes at THSF occur on the High Bluff Tract. Most of the mesic and scrubby flatwoods communities surrounding these marshes have been planted with pines, causing some disturbance along the marsh edges, allowing the marsh to be surrounded by a ring of shrubs.

Canopy species are usually absent, but slash pine (*Pinus elliotii*) was often present at marsh edges, due to surrounding uplands being pine plantation. The herb layer includes sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*), flattened pipewort (*Eriocaulon compressum*), rushes (*Juncus* spp.), big floatingheart (*Nymphoides aquatica*), maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*), pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*), and beaksedges (*Rhynchospora* spp.).

Fire Regimes:

Frequency of fire in depression marshes is dependent on the fire return interval of the surrounding community. Fire is important in limiting hardwood encroachment and peat buildup, while encouraging herbaceous growth in depression marshes.

Management Needs:

Management of the depression marshes in THSF should focus on allowing fires from the surrounding landscape to burn into the marsh and extinguish naturally. Firebreaks should be avoided as they damage the herbaceous ecotone between the marsh and upland. Hydrology projects should focus on monitoring water quality parameters.

G. Dome Swamp

Description:

Dome swamps are isolated, shallow, forested wetland basins that are imbedded in a pyrogenic matrix community such as pine flatwoods. These swamps have domed profiles resulting from smaller trees growing around the edges and larger trees growing in the

interior. Dome swamps have peat soils that are thickest toward the center and are generally underlain with acidic soils and a limestone layer. Dome swamps are distinguished from basin swamps principally by their often more circular shape, smaller size, and higher historical fire frequency due to landscape position.

The mature canopy is dominated by pond cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*), swamp tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica* var. *biflora*), and/or ogeechee tupelo (*Nyssa ogeche*), along with other hydrophytic trees such as red maple (*Acer rubrum*). The subcanopy and shrub layers are sparse. Typical dominant shrubs include Virginia willow (*Itea virginica*), fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*), common buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), coastalplain willow (*Salix caroliniana*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*), and St. John's wort (*Hypericum* spp.). The herbaceous layer is sparse to dense, especially where fire frequency and woody plant mortality is high.

Dome swamps usually have a diverse herbaceous ecotone with the surrounding pine dominated community, created through frequent fires that extinguish naturally along the edge of the dome.

Current Conditions:

Numerous dome swamps are scattered throughout THSF. Most of these isolated depressions are embedded in historic mesic or wet flatwoods. Many of these dome swamps have now been planted through with slash pines or have been reduced in size due to their edges being converted to pine plantation.

The canopy is composed of cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*), tupelo (*Nyssa* spp.), and slash pine (*Pinus elliotii*). Subcanopy species include red maple (*Acer rubrum*), sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*), and swamp bay (*Persea palustris*). Shrubs may be dense at swamp edges and include black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*), titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*), myrtle-leaved holly (*Ilex cassine* var. *myrtifolia*), large gallberry (*I. coriacea*), Virginia willow (*Itea virginica*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), and St. John's wort (*Hypericum* spp.). Herbs are generally sparse and include purple bluestem (*Andropogon glomeratus* var. *glaucopsis*), bluestem (*A.* spp.), smallfruit beggarticks (*Bidens mitis*), clustered sedge (*Carex glaucescens*), sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*), witchgrass (*Dichanthelium* spp.), warty panicgrass (*Panicum verrucosum*), beaksedge (*Rhynchospora* spp.), and Virginia chain fern (*Woodwardia virginica*).

Fire Regimes:

Fire is important in limiting hardwood encroachment and peat buildup, while encouraging herbaceous growth in dome swamps. Fire frequency is greatest at the periphery of a dome swamp, where a normal fire cycle might be as short as 3 to 5 years.

Management Needs:

Past silvicultural operations, particularly those including “bedding,” have altered many of the dome swamps. This practice alters the hydrology and structure of the swamp; unnaturally raising the root above any standing water. It is important to maintain natural hydroperiods and natural (both seasonal and long term) fluctuations in water level in dome

swamps. Extended hydroperiods can limit tree growth and prevent reproduction. Shortened hydroperiods can permit the invasion of mesophytic species, which can change the character of the understory and eventually allow hardwoods to replace cypress.

Management of dome swamps in THSF should focus on the restoration of surrounding pine communities, primarily through thinning of planted pines and the reestablishment of a frequent fire return interval to be determined by the needs of the surrounding community. Hydrologic restoration may further aid in the re-establishment of cypress or tupelo stands.

H. Floodplain Marsh

Description:

Floodplain marshes are freshwater, non-forested wetlands that occur along river floodplains. These marshes are directly influenced by river flooding on an annual or semi-annual basis, and may also be tidally influenced.

Trees are generally sparse or absent, although shrubs such as coastalplain willow (*Salix caroliniana*) may form thickets. The herbaceous layer is moderate to dense, with species composition varying by flooding depth and duration. Typical species include graminoids such as sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*) and maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*), flag species such as pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*) and bulltongue arrowhead (*Sagittaria lancifolia*), and floating aquatics such as yellow pondlily (*Nuphar advena*).

Floodplain marshes are typically underlain by sand or a thin to thick organic layer over sand and may be saturated for most of the year.

Current Conditions:

Floodplain marshes at THSF fall into the freshwater tidal marsh variant of floodplain marsh as they have some elements of salt marsh but are mostly dominated by sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*). Salt and freshwater marsh species intermingle as salt water is diluted by freshwater inflow and tidal fluctuation is damped (Thompson 1977; Clewell 1997). These marshes are occasionally influenced by salt water during storms, seasonal high tides, and periods of low river flow. Sawgrass is dominant, forming large stands either directly adjacent to the river, or just behind slightly raised levees of floodplain swamp or flatwoods vegetation.

Most floodplain marshes at THSF are in good condition. Canopy species are restricted to marsh edges and include slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) and pond cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*). Shrubs are sparse and include groundsel tree (*Baccharis halimifolia*), yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*), St. John's wort (*Hypericum* spp.), water toothleaf (*Stillingia aquatica*), and wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*). Herbs are dense and include sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*), cordgrass (*Spartina* spp.), needle rush (*Juncus roemerianus*), primrosewillow (*Ludwigia* spp.), pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*), beaksedge (*Rhynchospora* spp.), and yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris* spp.).

Fire Regimes:

The natural fire return interval in floodplain marshes may vary widely from one situation to the next, but fire has been shown to be a useful tool for improving wildlife habitat and reducing fuel loads. Floodplain marshes may burn as frequently as every 3 years. Frequent fires in tidally influenced floodplain marshes maintain sawgrass dominance.

Management Needs:

When conducting prescribed burns, it may be beneficial to leave a patchwork of unburned habitat to provide shelter for wildlife. Although succession of marshes into forested wetlands is likely a natural phenomenon, if maintenance of the current sawgrass marshes is desired, then prescribed fire is recommended.

I. Floodplain Swamp**Description:**

Floodplain swamp is a forest of hydrophytic trees occurring on frequently or permanently flooded hydric soils adjacent to stream and river channels and in depressions and oxbows within floodplains. The canopy is typically dominated by pond cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*) and/or bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), with occasional red maple (*Acer rubrum*), water hickory (*Carya aquatica*), swamp tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica* var. *biflora*), swamp laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), and American elm (*Ulmus americana*). Sub-canopy species often include younger canopy species as well as Carolina ash (*Fraxinus caroliniana*), water locust (*Gleditsia aquatica*), and coastalplain willow (*Salix caroliniana*). Shrubs can be infrequent to dense and include common buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) and wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*). Herb species may include spiderlily (*Hymenocallis* spp.), royal fern (*Osmunda regalis* var. *spectabilis*), pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*), common arrowhead (*Sagittaria latifolia*), lizard's tail (*Saururus cernuus*), climbing aster (*Symphotrichum carolinianum*), and Virginia chain fern (*Woodwardia virginica*).

Floodplain swamp is often associated with and grades into floodplain marsh, bottomland forest, basin swamp, and occasionally baygall. Floodplain swamp is often found in a mosaic with bottomland forest where the ridge and swale topography of the floodplain creates a mixture of habitats including low depressions that hold water most of the year.

In floodplain swamps located within tidal influence, flooding patterns, tidal range, and storm events are major driving factors. These swamps are subject to daily freshwater inundation associated with tidal fluctuations. As a river approaches the coast, increasing stresses from daily tidal-driven inundation and occasional saltwater intrusion gradually influence vegetation structure. At the lower end of this gradient, cypress becomes much less dominant, replaced by water hickory, swamp tupelo, and American elm.

The distinction between basin swamp and floodplain swamp is somewhat arbitrarily drawn to separate swamps that are mainly in collection basins versus swamps that are more heavily influenced by seasonal upstream flooding events.

Current Conditions:

Floodplain swamps at THSF occur along the Ochlockonee, New, and Crooked River floodplains and the Pine Log Creek floodplain. Most floodplain swamps are in good condition, with the exception of some edge loss due to planted pines in adjacent uplands, especially along the New River floodplain.

Floodplain swamps at Tate's Hell have a canopy and subcanopy of swamp tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica* var. *biflora*) and pond cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*). Less frequent hydrophytic trees include red maple (*Acer rubrum*), slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), and sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*). Shrubs are sparse and usually limited to raised areas around cypress knees. Common shrubs include black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), St. John's wort (*Hypericum* spp.) and fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*). Herbs are patchy and include switchcane (*Arundinaria gigantea*), clustered sedge (*Carex glaucescens*), sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*), woolly witchgrass (*Dichanthelium scabriusculum*), royal fern (*Osmunda regalis* var. *spectabilis*), camphorweed (*Pluchea* spp.), beaksedge (*Rhynchospora* spp.), sugarcane plumegrass (*Saccharum giganteum*), netted chain fern (*Woodwardia areolata*), and Virginia chain fern (*W. virginica*). Vines are infrequent and include laurel greenbrier (*Smilax laurifolia*).

Fire Regimes:

Fire is not necessary to maintain floodplain swamp. This community is typically too wet to carry a fire. If floodplain swamps experience drought, fires may occur and cause damage to the understory.

Management Needs:

The maintenance of natural hydrologic regimes is critical to the health of floodplain swamps and to the downstream systems with which they are connected. Species composition and the functional relationship throughout a river system are negatively impacted by hydrological alterations such as artificial impoundments, river diversion projects, and other high-intensity land use operations.

J. Mesic Flatwoods**Description:**

Mesic flatwoods are forests of southern pine species with even and uneven-aged structure. There is little or no subcanopy and very few tall shrubs, but a dense ground cover of herbs and short shrubs is typically present. The latter help maintain community structure by fueling growing-season fires. Common shrubs include saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*), coastalplain staggerbush (*Lyonia fruticosa*), gallberry (*Ilex glabra*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), tarflower (*Bejaria racemosa*), dwarf huckleberry (*Gaylussacia dumosa*), blue huckleberry (*G. frondosa* var. *tomentosa*), shiny blueberry (*Vaccinium myrsinites*), running oak (*Quercus elliottii*), and dwarf live oak (*Q. minima*). Mesic flatwoods are noted for their herbaceous diversity, including many rare species. Herbaceous species include wiregrass (*Aristida stricta* var. *beyrichiana*), arrowfeather threeawn (*A. purpurascens*), bottlebrush threeawn (*A. spiciformis*), lopsided Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum secundum*), witchgrasses (*Dichanthelium* spp.), beaksedges (*Rhynchospora* spp.), queensdelight

(*Stillingia sylvatica*), narrowleaf silkgrass (*Pityopsis graminifolia*), and Curtiss' dropseed (*Sporobolus curtissii*).

The ecotone between mesic flatwoods and wetland communities is an important area for many rare species and is maintained with frequent, low-intensity fires, typically every 2-4 years. Soils are mainly in the spodosol family, bearing a spodic horizon (i.e., a clay hardpan) that develops under poorly drained conditions. These low pH soils are characterized by low levels of nutrients and organic matter.

Current Conditions:

Most historic mesic flatwoods in THSF have been planted with slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) and managed as pine plantations with varying degrees of disturbance from site preparation (bedding, herbicides, etc.). Stands mapped as current mesic flatwoods have been significantly thinned, retain a mostly natural understory composition, and are managed with prescribed fire. These are in fair to good condition. Stands that have received some thinning and fire, but that remain highly disturbed, indicate that management is moving the community towards a more natural structure. Mesic flatwoods in THSF are often intermixed with historical wet flatwoods, wet prairies, and scrubby flatwoods.

In recently disturbed sites and restoration areas, weedy species, primarily broomsedge (*Andropogon* spp.) are prevalent. Gallberry (*Ilex glabra*), large gallberry (*I. coriacea*), titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*), and black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*) are likely to dominate the understory and make a dense subcanopy when factors such as fire suppression, soil compaction, silvicultural beds, and proximity to shrub bogs have promoted the encroachment of these wetland shrubs.

The canopy layer of the mesic flatwoods community is dominated by slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*). Sand pine (*Pinus clausa*), and longleaf pine (*P. palustris*) are less frequent canopy species. The sub-canopy may include red maple (*Acer rubrum*), Atlantic white cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*), black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*), swamp bay (*Persea palustris*), swamp laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), and water oak (*Q. nigra*).

Shrubs are generally shorter than 3 feet in well-burned areas. The shrub layer may be moderate to dense and includes saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*), gallberry (*Ilex glabra*), large gallberry (*I. coriacea*), black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*), titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*), rusty staggerbush (*Lyonia ferruginea*), coastalplain staggerbush (*L. fruticosa*), fetterbush (*L. lucida*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), myrtle oak (*Quercus myrtifolia*), dwarf huckleberry (*Gaylussacia dumosa*), blue huckleberry (*G. frondosa* var. *tomentosa*), woolly huckleberry (*G. mosieri*), peelbark St. John's wort (*Hypericum fasciculatum*), flatwoods St. John's wort (*H. microsepalum*), myrtle-leaved holly (*Ilex cassine* var. *myrtifolia*), yaupon (*I. vomitoria*), hairy wicky (*Kalmia hirsuta*), evergreen bayberry (*Myrica caroliniensis*), red chokeberry (*Photinia pyrifolia*), October flower (*Polygonella polygama*), dwarf live oak (*Quercus minima*), runner oak (*Q. pumila*), sand blackberry (*Rubus cuneifolius*), horse sugar (*Symplocos tinctoria*), highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*), Darrow's blueberry (*V. darrowii*), and shiny blueberry (*V. myrsinites*). In

drier areas that are transitional to scrubby flatwoods and sandhill, xeric species such as sand live oak (*Quercus geminata*), bluejack oak (*Q. incana*), Chapman's oak (*Q. chapmanii*), and turkey oak (*Q. laevis*) may be occasional.

The herbaceous layer is generally sparse, although higher quality areas may have a significant cover of wiregrass (*Aristida stricta* var. *beyrichiana*). Common herbs include bluestems (*Andropogon* spp.), bottlebrush threeawn (*Aristida spiciformis*), coastalplain chaffhead (*Carphephorus corymbosus*), vanillaleaf (*C. odoratissimus*), toothache grass (*Ctenium aromaticum*), witchgrass (*Dichantheium* spp.), pink sundew (*Drosera capillaris*), flattop goldenrod (*Euthamia graminifolia* var. *hirtipes*), yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*), rush (*Juncus* spp.), whitehead bogbutton (*Lachnocaulon anceps*), blazing star (*Liatris* spp.), primrosewillow (*Ludwigia* spp.), foxtail club-moss (*Lycopodiella alopecuroides*), clustered mille grains (*Oldenlandia uniflora*), warty panicgrass (*Panicum verrucosum*), narrowleaf silkgrass (*Pityopsis graminifolia*), drumheads (*Polygala cruciata*), orange milkwort (*P. lutea*), bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), blackroot (*Pterocaulon pycnostachyum*), savannah meadowbeauty (*Rhexia alifanus*), beaksedges (*Rhynchospora* spp.), whip nutrush (*Scleria triglomerata*), Florida dropseed (*Sporobolus floridanus*), Virginia chain fern (*Woodwardia virginica*), and yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris* spp.). Vines are occasional and include yellow jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), earleaf greenbrier (*Smilax auriculata*), saw greenbrier (*S. bona-nox*), cat greenbrier (*S. glauca*), laurel greenbrier (*S. laurifolia*), bristly greenbrier (*S. tamnoides*), eastern poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), and muscadine (*Vitis rotundifolia*).

Fire Regimes:

Mesic flatwoods require repeated applications of prescribed fires on a 2-4-year cycle.

Management Needs:

A prescribed fire return interval of every 2-4 years is recommended. Past silvicultural activities and lack of frequent prescribed fires have damaged native groundcover and allowed for woody encroachment in many areas. It may be necessary to apply fire more frequently in flatwoods where fuel levels are high due to a history of fire exclusion. Herbaceous plant flowering responses and growth are greatest if fires are applied in the late spring and early summer (March - June), however winter burning will be necessary for initial fuel reduction. During all stages of growth, pine canopies should be open enough to allow abundant light to reach the forest floor, to support a lush groundcover of shrubs, oaks, and grasses that can be burned every 2-4 years.

Priority should be given to burning areas of higher quality groundcover using both dormant and growing-season fires to encourage herbaceous species, especially wiregrass, to reproduce naturally. Groundcover plants may need to be seeded in areas of heavy disturbance.

K. Sandhill

Description:

Sandhill occurs on crests and slopes of rolling hills and ridges with steep or gentle topography. Soils are deep, marine-deposited, often yellowish sands that are well-drained

and relatively infertile. Sandhill is important for aquifer recharge because the porous sands allow water to percolate rapidly with little runoff and minimal evaporation. The deep, sandy soils and a lack of near surface hardpan or water table contribute to a xeric environment. Sandhills are forests consisting of longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) trees, typically with a sparse subcanopy of turkey oak (*Quercus laevis*), bluejack oak (*Q. incana*) and/or sand post oak (*Q. margaretta*), and a fairly dense groundcover of herbs, particularly wiregrass (*Aristida stricta*). The greatest plant diversity within sandhill is in the herbaceous groundcover. Dominant grasses, in addition to wiregrass, include other three-awns (*Aristida* spp.), pineywoods dropseed (*Sporobolus junceus*), lopsided indiagrass (*Sorghastrum secundum*), several species of bluestems (*Andropogon* spp.), and little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*). Sandhills are fire-maintained communities that occur on relatively well-drained, deep sands.

Tate's Hell State Forest contains a few areas of historic sandhill occupying sandy rises predominantly within the High Bluff Tract. Some of these areas are intermediate with scrubby flatwoods and have a shrubbier understory with sometimes dense scrub oaks such as sand live oak (*Quercus geminata*), Chapman's oak (*Q. chapmanii*), myrtle oak (*Q. myrtifolia*), and less herbaceous groundcover than typical sandhill communities.

Current Conditions:

Most of the historic sandhills in THSF are in good condition. Though most sandhills were planted with slash pine (*Pinus elliotti*), thinning and prescribed fire has allowed many of these communities to recover and retain a mostly natural understory composition and structure. Stands classified as sandhill in the current map have had significant thinning of the slash pine, retain a mostly natural understory composition, and are managed with frequent prescribed fire. Stands mapped as restoration sandhills are similar to the natural condition, but with a denser canopy of slash pines that will likely need to be thinned.

Current sandhills in THSF have a canopy of slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*), sand pine (*P. clausa*), and less frequently, longleaf pine (*P. palustris*). The subcanopy consists of smaller canopy species, turkey oak (*Quercus laevis*), and bluejack oak (*Q. incana*). The relatively open shrub layer is mostly less than 3 feet tall and includes sand live oak (*Quercus geminata*), Chapman's oak (*Q. chapmanii*), myrtle oak (*Q. myrtifolia*), yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*), false rosemary (*Conradina canescens*), woolly huckleberry (*Gaylussacia mosieri*), St. Andrew's cross (*Hypericum hypericoides*), gopher apple (*Licania michauxii*), fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*), rusty staggerbush (*L. ferruginea*), pricklypear (*Opuntia humifusa*), dwarf live oak (*Quercus minima*), runner oak (*Q. pumila*), saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*), and Adam's needle (*Yucca filamentosa*). Herbs are common but form a sparse cover. Species observed include bluestems (*Andropogon* spp.), wiregrass (*Aristida stricta* var. *beyrichiana*), vanillaleaf (*Carphephorus odoratissimus*), witchgrass (*Dichanthelium* spp.), blazing star (*Liatris* spp.), lupine (*Lupinus* spp.), narrowleaf silkgrass (*Pityopsis graminifolia*), October flower (*Polygonella polygama*), and sandyfield beaksedge (*Rhynchospora megalocarpa*).

Fire Regimes:

Sandhill requires fire to maintain open structure. Fire should be applied to this community every 1-3 years during both dormant and growing seasons. Variability in the season, frequency, and intensity of fire is important for preserving species diversity, since different species in the community flourish under different fire regimes.

Management Needs:

Groundcover restoration projects should focus on practices that will increase wiregrass abundance. Seasonal burns at a 1-3-year interval will be the most effective at accomplishing this. During all management activities, every effort should be made to minimize any detrimental effects to the gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*) population (and its burrows) within this community, as this species is considered a keystone ecosystem component.

L. Scrub**Description:**

Scrub is a community composed of evergreen shrubs, with or without a canopy of pines, and is found on dry, infertile, sandy ridges. Signature scrub species include three species of shrub oaks: myrtle oak (*Quercus myrtifolia*), sand live oak (*Q. geminata*), and Chapman's oak (*Q. chapmanii*), Florida rosemary (*Ceratiola ericoides*), and sand pine (*Pinus clausa*). The oaks form a dense cover interspersed with patchy openings that consist of bare sand with a sparse cover of herbs, particularly threeawns (*Aristida* spp.), hairsedges (*Bulbostylis* spp.), and sandyfield beaksedge (*Rhynchospora megalocarpa*), as well as subshrubs such as pinweeds (*Lechea* spp.) and jointweeds (*Polygonella* spp.), and ground lichens (*Cladonia leporina*, *C. prostrata*, *Cladina subtenuis*, and *C. evansii*).

Scrubs occur on either white or yellow low-nutrient, acid sands with little organic matter. The dry ridges where scrub occurs often marks the location of former Plio-Pleistocene shorelines.

Current Conditions:

Scrub on THSF primarily occupies ancient high sand dunes along the mainland coast of Franklin County. These relict dunes formed during a dry period in the late Pleistocene when deposits of river sand were exposed by lower sea levels and then shaped by wind into low, often crescent or U-shaped dunes. Also known as eolian dunes, similar formations are also found near Cedar Key but are otherwise rare along the Florida coastline, since most dune formation occurs on beaches where sand is collected by marine processes and then built up by sea oats into linear features oriented parallel to the shore.

Scrub and scrubby flatwoods communities on relict dunes at THSF harbor several rare coastal plant species including Godfrey's blazing star (*Liatris provincialis*), Gulf Coast lupine (*Lupinus westianus*), and large-leaved jointweed (*Polygonella macrophylla*). Godfrey's blazing star is listed by the state of Florida as endangered. Gulf Coast lupine and large-leaved jointweed are listed as threatened. The large-leaved jointweed plants on the Tate's Hell dunes are unique in that they have deep scarlet flowers. All other large-leaved jointweeds have white or pinkish flowers and are found only west of the

Apalachicola River, separated by a 70-mile wide gap from the red-flowered Tate's Hell plants. Tate's Hell State Forest supports by far the largest population of the red-flowered form, consisting of approximately 150 plants at 17 sites.

Much of the historic scrub in THSF has been planted with slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) in the past. Areas classified as scrub in the current map retain a mostly natural understory composition. Current scrubs are in fair to good condition.

The canopy consists of sand pine (*Pinus clausa*), slash pine (*P. elliottii*), and less frequently longleaf pine (*P. palustris*). Tall and short shrubs are moderate to dense and dominated by scrub oaks: Chapman's oak (*Quercus chapmanii*), sand live oak (*Q. geminata*), and myrtle oak (*Q. myrtifolia*). Other shrubs include Florida rosemary (*Ceratiola ericoides*), false rosemary (*Conradina canescens*), gopher apple (*Licania michauxii*), rusty staggerbush (*Lyonia ferruginea*), fetterbush (*L. lucida*), pricklypear (*Opuntia humifusa*) and saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*). Herbs are sparse with capillary hairsedge (*Bulbostylis ciliatifolia*), frostweed (*Helianthemum* spp.), Gulf Coast lupine (*Lupinus westianus*), narrowleaf silkgrass (*Pityopsis graminifolia*), tall jointweed (*Polygonella gracilis*), and beaksedge (*Rhynchospora* spp.). Vines are infrequent and include earleaf greenbrier (*Smilax auriculata*) and sarsaparilla vine (*S. pumila*).

Fire Regimes:

Scrub fire regimes are highly variable, depending on landscape settings and dominant vegetation. Current scientific research suggests oak-dominated scrub would have naturally burned every 3 to 19 years. Scrub fires are often high intensity and require careful application.

Management Needs:

A mosaic of scrub of varying shrub heights is desirable. Encourage fires from adjacent flatwoods to burn into the scrub. A fire prescription targeting scrub should be used if shrub height or density, or bare soil percentage are outside of desired ranges. Mechanical treatments should be used only if necessary to burn safely or achieve desired conditions. Chopping may reduce shrub cover in problem areas.

M. Scrubby Flatwoods

Description:

Scrubby flatwoods are a well-drained, pine-dominated community intermediate between scrub and mesic flatwoods. Good quality scrubby flatwoods have a canopy of longleaf pines (*Pinus palustris*) or slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) and a low, shrubby understory dominated by scrub oaks and saw palmetto, often interspersed with areas of barren white sand. The shrub layer consists of a variety of mesophytic and xerophytic species, including rusty staggerbush (*Lyonia ferruginea*), coastalplain staggerbush (*L. fruticosa*), fetterbush (*L. lucida*), Chapman's oak (*Quercus chapmanii*), sand live oak (*Q. geminata*), myrtle oak (*Q. myrtifolia*), winged sumac (*Rhus copallinum*), saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*), and shiny blueberry (*Vaccinium myrsinites*). Unlike scrub, a herbaceous layer dominated by wiregrass (*Aristida stricta* var. *beyrichiana*) is present and helps to carry fire through the community more regularly than in scrub. Typical herbs include witchgrass (*Dichanthelium*

spp.), tall elephantsfoot (*Elephantopus elatus*), narrowleaf silkgrass (*Pityopsis graminifolia*), blackroot (*Pterocaulon pycnostachyum*), and lopsided indiagrass (*Sorghastrum secundum*).

Scrubby flatwoods occur on slight rises within mesic flatwoods and in transitional areas between scrub and mesic flatwoods. Soils of scrubby flatwoods are moderately well-drained sands with or without a spodic horizon.

Current Conditions:

The majority of scrubby flatwoods at THSF have been converted to pine plantation in the past. Most of these stands are now mapped as scrubby flatwoods, due to significant thinning, retention of a mostly natural understory composition, and management with prescribed fire. Restoration scrubby flatwoods are similar to the natural condition, but with a denser canopy of slash pines that will likely need to be thinned. The condition for all of these sites is fair to good, partly because the xeric soils were not deeply bedded for site preparation.

At THSF the canopy is composed of sand pine (*Pinus clausa*) and slash pine (*P. elliotii*) with occasional longleaf pine (*P. palustris*) and loblolly pine (*P. taeda*). The sparse subcanopy may include southern red oak (*Quercus falcata*), sand live oak (*Q. geminata*), and bluejack oak (*Q. incana*). Small inclusions of sandhill with a subcanopy of turkey oak (*Quercus laevis*) are common on THSF, especially in the High Bluff Tract. The shrub understory is diverse with Florida rosemary (*Ceratiola ericoides*), false rosemary (*Conradina canescens*), large gallberry (*Ilex coriacea*), gallberry (*I. glabra*), rusty staggerbush (*Lyonia ferruginea*), coastalplain staggerbush (*L. fruticosa*), fetterbush (*L. lucida*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), Chapman's oak (*Quercus chapmanii*), sand live oak (*Q. geminata*), dwarf live oak (*Q. minima*), myrtle oak (*Q. myrtifolia*), saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*), sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), dwarf huckleberry (*Gaylussacia dumosa*), woolly huckleberry (*G. mosieri*), American holly (*Ilex opaca*), and pricklypear (*Opuntia humifusa*).

Herbs are diverse, but typically sparse with Elliott's bluestem (*Andropogon gyrans*), wiregrass (*Aristida stricta* var. *beyrichiana*), coastalplain chaffhead (*Carphephorus corymbosus*), vanillaleaf (*Carphephorus odoratissimus*), witchgrass (*Dichantheium* spp.), blazing star (*Liatris* spp.), Gulf Coast lupine (*Lupinus westianus*), maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*), narrowleaf silkgrass (*Pityopsis graminifolia*), tall jointweed (*Polygonella gracilis*), October flower (*Polygonella polygama*), bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), sandyfield beaksedge (*Rhynchospora megalocarpa*), and lopsided indiagrass (*Sorghastrum secundum*). Vines are infrequent with earleaf greenbrier (*Smilax auriculata*) and sarsaparilla vine (*S. pumila*).

Fire Regimes:

A fire return interval of 3 - 5 years is generally recommended for scrubby flatwoods. However, scrubby flatwoods within THSF are mostly smaller patch communities embedded in mesic flatwoods and have vegetation intermediate with sandhill communities. It is likely that these flatwoods burned more frequently with the surrounding landscape.

Variability in season and frequency of prescribed fires should produce a mosaic of burned and unburned patches desirable for maintaining high biotic diversity in this community.

Management Needs:

Maintain a fire interval between 3 - 5 years with more fires toward the shorter end of the range. Encourage fires from adjacent flatwoods to burn into the scrubby flatwoods. A fire prescription targeting the scrubby flatwoods should be used if shrub height or density, or bare soil percentage are outside of desired ranges.

N. Shrub Bog

Description:

Shrub bogs are dense stands of broadleaved evergreen shrubs, vines, and short trees, one to five meters tall depending on time since fire, with or without an overstory of scattered pine or bay trees, growing in mucky soil where water is usually less than a foot deep. Characteristic shrubs include titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*), black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*), fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*), large gallberry (*Ilex coriacea*), gallberry (*I. glabra*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), and sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), often laced together with laurel greenbrier (*Smilax laurifolia*). Taller pines, either pond (*Pinus serotina*), slash (*P. elliotii*), or loblolly (*P. taeda*), may be present and in some cases of long unburned stands, form dense clumps. Other occasional trees that may extend above the shrub layer are loblolly bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*), sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*), swamp bay (*Persea palustris*), pond cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*), and stunted red maple (*Acer rubrum*). Herbs are sparse and patchy, confined to sunny openings, and often include tenangle pipewort (*Eriocaulon decangulare*), Virginia chain fern (*Woodwardia virginica*), and pitcher plants (*Sarracenia* spp.). Soils of shrub bogs frequently have an organic muck layer of varying depth at the surface underlain by sand or loamy sands. Sphagnum moss (*Sphagnum* spp.) is common on the ground surface.

On the 1953 aerial photographs, basin wetlands in THSF appear to be a complex mosaic of shrub bog (titi shrubs lacking a hardwood canopy), baygall (bay tree dominated), and basin swamp (cypress/tupelo dominated). The distinction between these communities is difficult to delineate, and the pattern has shifted over the last century due to changing hydrology and fire patterns. Basin wetlands with a smooth grey signature were assumed to be historic shrub bogs. Many are rounded to irregularly shaped communities in a matrix of basin swamp, baygall, and wet flatwoods, but others are linear features along narrow drainages. This community is common throughout THSF.

Current Conditions:

The pattern of shrub bogs at THSF has changed substantially over the past several decades due to intensive silviculture that has converted large areas to planted slash pine stands. At the same time, shrub bog vegetation has expanded into former pine flatwoods following site preparation and hydrology alteration. Some basin swamps, baygalls, wet flatwoods, and wet prairies appear to have shifted to shrub bog vegetation, possibly due to either logging or a shift in fire pattern and hydrology.

Many shrub bogs that were converted to pine stands have been thinned and burned recently, and somewhat resemble wet flatwoods. These areas are mapped as pine plantations, but may regenerate a shrub bog understory over time. Current shrub bogs have a dense shrub layer of black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*) and/or titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*). Other shrubs include sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), woolly huckleberry (*Gaylussacia mosieri*), peelbark St. John's wort (*Hypericum fasciculatum*), myrtle-leaved holly (*Ilex cassine* var. *myrtifolia*), large gallberry (*I. coriacea*), gallberry (*I. glabra*), yaupon (*I. vomitoria*), coastal doghobble (*Leucothoe axillaris*), swamp doghobble (*L. racemosa*), fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*), evergreen bayberry (*Myrica caroliniensis*), wax myrtle (*M. cerifera*), groundsel tree (*Baccharis halimifolia*), and red chokeberry (*Photinia pyrifolia*).

Herbs are patchy, usually occurring in openings where a road or other disturbance intersects the bog. Common herbs include bluestems (*Andropogon* spp.), clustered sedge (*Carex glaucescens*), witchgrass (*Dichanthelium* spp.), pink sundew (*Drosera capillaris*), pipewort (*Eriocaulon* spp.), slender flattop goldenrod (*Euthamia caroliniana*), Carolina redroot (*Lachnanthes caroliniana*), primrosewillow (*Ludwigia* spp.), foxtail club-moss (*Lycopodiella alopecuroides*), beaksedge (*Rhynchospora* spp.), yellow hatpins (*Syngonanthus flavidulus*), netted chain fern (*Woodwardia areolata*), Virginia chain fern (*W. virginica*), and yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris* spp.). Sphagnum moss commonly occurs in these openings among herbs. Vines are moderate to dense with yellow jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), earleaf greenbrier (*Smilax auriculata*), laurel greenbrier (*S. laurifolia*), and muscadine (*Vitis rotundifolia*).

Fire Regimes:

Fires starting in the surrounding pinelands burn to the edges of shrub bogs, but burn through them only during drought periods, probably on the order of every 10-20 years. The shrubs and bay trees respond to fire by re-sprouting, either from root crowns or rhizomes. During droughts, the peat may become dry enough to burn completely.

Management Needs:

Management should focus on hydrology restoration. Remaining planted pines in shrub bogs could be clearcut but will likely not be detrimental to the bog over time. If possible, fires should be allowed to burn into shrub bog edges to limit titi encroachment into surrounding communities.

O. Swamp Lake

Description:

Swamp lakes are generally characterized as shallow open water zones, with or without floating and submerged aquatic plants that are surrounded by swamp. They are generally permanent water bodies, although water levels often fluctuate substantially, and they may become completely dry during extreme droughts. They are typically lentic water bodies occurring in confined basins or depressions. However, during floods or following heavy rains, they may exhibit decidedly lotic characteristics, flowing with the flood water or overflowing their banks into lower topographic areas. Some may even exhibit a slow perennial sheet flow, but water movement is generally so slow that lentic conditions prevail.

Except for the fringe of hydrophytic trees, shrubs, and scattered emergents, plants may be absent altogether, or they may almost completely cover the water surface. Scattered emergent plants may also occur.

One area of open water embedded in a basin swamp is mapped as a swamp lake on the High Bluff Tract.

Current Conditions:

Currently, the swamp lake mapped on THSF appears similar to the 1953 aerial photographs.

Fire Regimes:

Fire is not required to maintain this community.

Management Needs:

Management should focus on restricting hydrological manipulations and avoiding land clearing within the surrounding swamp.

P. Wet Flatwoods

Description:

Wet flatwoods are characterized by a canopy of pines with a thick shrubby understory and very sparse ground cover, or a fire-maintained, sparse understory and dense ground cover of hydrophytic herbs. Wet flatwoods exist on relatively flat, poorly drained land. The soils are generally 0.3 to 1 m (ca. 1 to 3 ft.) of acidic sands overlying an organic hardpan or clay layer. The hardpan substantially reduces the percolation of water below and above its surface, and therefore wet flatwoods can be inundated for 1 or more months per year. Wet flatwoods often grade into basin swamps, shrub bogs, and mesic flatwoods.

Although the forest structure of wet flatwoods is similar to mesic flatwoods, species composition in wet flatwoods has more hydrophytic species. Shrub species that tend to occupy wet flatwoods are gallberry (*Ilex glabra*), myrtle dahoon (*I. cassine* var. *myrtifolia*), fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*), saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*), loblolly bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*), and titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*). As in mesic flatwoods, the herbaceous layer in wet flatwoods includes species that help to maintain community structure by fueling growing-season fires; wiregrass (*Aristida stricta* var. *beyrichiana*) is dominant in herb-dominated understories. Other typical species include meadowbeauties (*Rhexia* spp.), yellow-eyed grasses (*Xyris* spp.), and several species of beak-sedges (*Rhynchospora* spp.). Shrubby wet flatwoods may have a more continuous cover of hydrophytic shrubs and may be very similar to shrub bogs. However, the slightly drier conditions and more frequent fire regime should limit the height of these shrubs.

On the 1953 geo-rectified photographs, wet flatwoods appear similar to mesic flatwoods. The distinction between the two is difficult to make on the historic aerials. All of the wet and mesic flatwoods areas should be treated similarly for desired future conditions. Flatwoods imbedded in shrub bogs or adjacent to them are also very difficult to delineate.

Current Conditions:

Most historic wet flatwoods in THSF have been planted with slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) and managed as pine plantations with varying degrees of disturbance from site preparation. Stands mapped as current wet flatwoods have been significantly thinned, retain a mostly natural understory composition, and are managed with prescribed fire. Wet flatwoods with a history of silviculture activities and lack of prescribed fire are extremely susceptible to woody encroachment, particularly by black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*) and titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*). These areas need frequent prescribed fire to decrease shrub abundance and increase herbaceous diversity. In recently disturbed sites, weedy species, primarily broomsedge (*Andropogon* spp.) and Carolina redroot (*Lachnanthes caroliana*) are prevalent. Silvicultural beds are common. Dense, unthinned planted pine stands on historic wet flatwoods also exist but are mapped as pine plantations.

The dominant canopy species in wet flatwoods is slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*). Some large portions of wet flatwoods at THSF contain a significant cover of pond cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*) and/or bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) in the canopy and understory (visible on historic aerials). Other common subcanopy species include red maple (*Acer rubrum*), Atlantic white cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*), sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*), swamp laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), and water oak (*Q. nigra*). Shrubs are moderate to dense with black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*), titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*), large gallberry (*Ilex coriacea*), gallberry (*I. glabra*), yaupon (*I. vomitoria*), sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), woolly huckleberry (*Gaylussacia mosieri*), peelbark St. John's wort (*Hypericum fasciculatum*), myrtle-leaved holly (*Ilex cassine* var. *myrtifolia*), coastalplain staggerbush (*Lyonia fruticosa*), fetterbush (*L. lucida*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), swamp bay (*Persea palustris*), sparkleberry (*Vaccinium arboreum*), dwarf huckleberry (*Gaylussacia dumosa*), coastal doghobble (*Leucothoe axillaris*), swamp doghobble (*L. racemosa*), evergreen bayberry (*Myrica caroliniensis*), and highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*).

Herbs are sparse to moderate with bluestems (*Andropogon* spp.), smallfruit beggarticks (*Bidens mitis*), clustered sedge (*Carex glaucescens*), spadeleaf (*Centella asiatica*), woolly witchgrass (*Dichanthelium scabriusculum*), dogfennel (*Eupatorium capillifolium*), flattop goldenrod (*Euthamia graminifolia* var. *hirtipes*), Carolina redroot (*Lachnanthes caroliana*), whitehead bogbutton (*Lachnocaulon anceps*), golden crest (*Lophiola aurea*), primrosewillow (*Ludwigia* spp.), camphorweed (*Pluchea* spp.), bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), meadowbeauty (*Rhexia* spp.), beaksedge (*Rhynchospora* spp.), sugarcane plumegrass (*Saccharum giganteum*), Florida dropseed (*Sporobolus floridanus*), yellow hatpins (*Syngonanthus flavidulus*), netted chain fern (*Woodwardia areolata*), Virginia chain fern (*W. virginica*), and yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris* spp.). Some areas of wet flatwoods that border marsh communities contain a significant groundcover of sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*). Higher quality portions of wet flatwoods and restoration wet flatwoods contain a diversity of herbs such as wiregrass (*Aristida stricta* var. *beyrichiana*), yellow colic-root (*Aletris lutea*), pink sundew (*Drosera capillaris*), tenangle pipewort (*Eriocaulon decangulare*), and foxtail club-moss (*Lycopodiella alopecuroides*). Vines are infrequent to dense with earleaf greenbrier (*Smilax auriculata*), saw greenbrier (*S. bona-nox*), cat

greenbrier (*S. glauca*), laurel greenbrier (*S. laurifolia*), eastern poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), and muscadine (*Vitis rotundifolia*).

Fire Regimes:

Historically, the fire return interval in wet flatwoods is 3 to 10 years. However, in areas of heavy fire exclusion and/or densely planted slash pine, mechanical vegetation removal and/or a more frequent fire interval may need to be applied for initial restoration.

Management Needs:

Management of the wet flatwoods at THSF should focus on returning a more natural fire regime to historic wet flatwoods. Areas with remnant or restored herbaceous vegetation should be high priorities for burning and burned with late spring/early summer fires to stimulate wiregrass flowering and seed viability. Dense slash pine canopies may be thinned to promote a more herbaceous understory.

Prescribed burning should be applied to pine plantations in historical wet flatwoods on a 2-5-year cycle, with growing season burns increasing with fuel reduction. This will reduce woody encroachment, sustain herbaceous species, and aid in prevention of catastrophic wildfires.

Q. Wet Prairie

Description:

Wet prairie is a herbaceous community found on continuously wet, but not inundated, soils on somewhat flat or gentle slopes between lower lying depression marshes, shrub bogs, or dome swamps and slightly higher wet or mesic flatwoods. Trees and shrubs are absent or very sparse. It is typically dominated by dense wiregrass (*Aristida stricta* var. *beyrichiana*) in the drier portions, along with foxtail club-moss (*Lycopodiella alopecuroides*), cutover muhly (*Muhlenbergia expansa*), yellow butterwort (*Pinguicula lutea*), and savannah meadowbeauty (*Rhexia alifanus*). In the wetter portions, wiregrass may occur with, or be replaced by, species in the sedge family, such as plumed beaksedge (*Rhynchospora plumosa*), featherbristle beaksedge (*R. oligantha*), Baldwin's nutrush (*Scleria baldwinii*), or slenderfruit nutrush (*S. georgiana*), plus longleaved threeawn (*Aristida palustris*). Also, common in wetter areas are carnivorous species, such as pitcher plants (*Sarracenia* spp.), sundews (*Drosera* spp.), butterworts (*Pinguicula* spp.), and bladderworts (*Utricularia* spp.). Other characteristic species in this community include toothache grass (*Ctenium aromaticum*), pineland rayless goldenrod (*Bigelovia nudata*), flattened pipewort (*Eriocaulon compressum*), water cowbane (*Oxypolis filifolia*), and coastalplain yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris ambigua*).

Historically at Tate's Hell, wet prairies commonly occurred as both small, linear ecotones between uplands (flatwoods) and forested wetlands and large flat basins covering significant acreage. In the 1953 aerial photographs, large portions of historic wet prairie at THSF appear to contain scattered cypress trees (*Taxodium* spp.) in the canopy. These areas were groundtruthed and classified as wet prairie in the maps and have "cypress savanna" noted in the comments.

Current Conditions:

Most of the historic wet prairies at THSF have been bedded and planted with commercial stands of slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*). In recent years, some of these stands have been thinned and prescribed fire has been returned to the community, promoting an increase in native groundcover. However, weedy species are still common, and soil disturbance is continuing to disrupt natural processes.

The canopy of intact and restoration contain a sparse to moderate canopy of slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*). Pond (or bald) cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*) is scattered in the canopy and subcanopy of wet prairie cypress savannas. Tall shrubs are sparse to moderate and include black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*), titi (*Cyrilla racemiflora*), large gallberry (*Ilex coriacea*), gallberry (*I. glabra*), fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*), sweetbay (*Magnolia virginiana*), and wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*). Common short shrubs include sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), woolly huckleberry (*Gaylussacia mosieri*), St. John's wort (*Hypericum* spp.), evergreen bayberry (*Myrica caroliniensis*), and bog tupelo (*Nyssa ursina*).

Herbs are often dense and diverse, with typical species including wiregrass (*Aristida stricta* var. *beyrichiana*), toothache grass (*Ctenium aromaticum*), flattened pipewort (*Eriocaulon compressum*), tenangle pipewort (*Eriocaulon decangulare*), meadowbeauty (*Rhexia* spp.), beaksedges (*Rhynchospora* spp.), yellow pitcherplant (*Sarracenia flava*), white-top pitcherplant (*Sarracenia leucophylla*), parrot pitcherplant (*Sarracenia psittacina*), yellow hatpins (*Syngonanthus flavidulus*), yellow-eyed grasses (*Xyris* spp.).

The state endangered wiregrass gentian (*Gentiana pennelliana*) was found in several higher quality, large open wet prairies. Godfrey's butterwort (*Pinguicula ionantha*, federally threatened, state endangered) and Chapman's butterwort (*Pinguicula planifolia*, state threatened) were occasionally found in sections of intact wet prairie often bordering basin swamps.

Fire Regimes:

Historically, the fire return interval in wet prairie is 2 to 3 years. These frequent fires prevent the invasion of weedy shrubs and trees that shade out the herbaceous species.

Management Needs:

Management of the restoration wet prairie in THSF should focus on returning a more natural fire regime to historic wet prairie and restoring hydrology. Pine stands could potentially be thinned further. Pine needle drape may also assist with carrying fire through the silviculture furrows and areas of sparse herbaceous cover.

Prescribed burning should be applied to historic wet prairie on a 2-3-year cycle, with frequent growing season burns when possible. This will reduce woody encroachment, sustain herbaceous species, and aid in prevention of catastrophic wildfires.

VIII. References

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IX. Glossary of Abbreviations

- ARCAcquisition and Restoration Council
- BMPBest Management Practice
- CARL.....Conservation and Recreation Lands
- DACS.....Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- DEP.....Department of Environmental Protection
- DHR.....Division of Historical Resources
- DRP.....Division of Recreation and Parks
- FCT.....Florida Communities Trust
- FFS.....Florida Forest Service
- FNAI.....Florida Natural Areas Inventory
- FWC.....Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- NRCS.....Natural Resources Conservation Service
- NFWFMD.....Northwest Florida Water Management District
- OALE.....DACS Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement
- OFW.....Outstanding Florida Water
- OGT.....DEP Office of Greenways & Trails
- P2000.....Preservation 2000
- TIITF.....Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund
- USFS.....United States Forest Service
- USFWS.....United States Fish and Wildlife Service
- THSF.....Tate’s Hell State Forest
- TNC.....The Nature Conservancy
- WMA.....Wildlife Management Area