

## **Gainesville Sensitive Lands Prioritization Project**

Undeveloped parcels within or near the City of Gainesville protect creeks and wetlands, provide habitat for wildlife and plants, and could provide recreational opportunities for the public. Despite the environmental value of these remaining vacant urban greenspaces, they generally are smaller and more expensive than vacant parcels in other parts of the county. For this reason, they often fall through the cracks of existing land purchasing programs such as Alachua County Forever. A City of Gainesville conservation land acquisition program would help to protect some of the remaining natural areas in and around the city. In addition, a land buying program would be viewed favorably by potential partners such as Alachua County Forever, and better enable the City of Gainesville to protect more land by leveraging funds from state land acquisition programs.

With assistance from City Planning staff, City of Gainesville Nature Operations Division staff identified over 3000 undeveloped parcels within the City which could potentially serve as conservation land. From these, a subset of parcels was prioritized as ecologically significant based upon multiple factors including:

- their size,
- their proximity and connection to existing conservation lands and greenway corridors,
- significant natural communities or features they are known to contain, and
- published reports recommending their conservation.

It should be noted that these recommendations were based on professional judgments derived from existing information, and not on a comprehensive evaluation of all 3000 parcels.

City staff also solicited comment from Alachua County Forever (ACF) and the Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT). Both entities expressed a strong interest in working with the City to obtain funds from the Florida Communities Trust and with negotiating with landowners. In addition, ACT recommended some additional parcels for consideration. These additional lands have not been evaluated by the City, but are included for reference on the attached Sensitive Lands Acquisition Priorities map.

The parcels recommended for acquisition are listed in the tables below, highlighted on the attached Sensitive Lands Acquisition Priorities map, and basic summaries with supporting digital aerial photography and natural community maps are provided in the Appendix. Both parcels that would be considered for purchase and those that would be candidates for protection through other means (conservation easements, interlocal agreements, etc.) are included.

Digital aerial photographs used in the summary maps are from the Land Boundary Information System (LABINS) 2004 digital ortho quarter quads. The natural community maps were made using the Alachua County soils data obtained from the Natural Resource

Conservation Service (NRCS). NRCS lists each soil series type into one of 26 ecological community types. From that listing, Nature Operations Division staff developed a matrix correlating the NRCS with the corresponding natural communities defined by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI). Because there are more FNAI community types than NRCS community types, there is a possibility that a soil type may support one or more habitats. Therefore, in order to be accurate, the natural community maps need to be ground-truthed to determine which of the specific communities actually occurs on the property from the potential communities that could occur. In order to understand the natural community codes used on these maps, the following key should be used.

Key to Natural Community Codes:

SA/XH/UPF = Sandhill/Xeric Hammock/Upland Pine Forest

UMF = Upland Mixed Forest

WF/MF/SCF = Wet Flatwoods/Mesic Flatwoods/Scrubby Flatwoods

WP/DM/BM = Wet Prairie/Depression Marsh/Basin Marsh

BF/HH = Bottomland Forest/Hydric Hammock

BS/DS = Basin Swamp/Dome Swamp

BS/DS/FS = Basin Swamp/Dome Swamp/Floodplain Swamp

FS = Floodplain Swamp

WA = Water

BP = Borrow Pits

RU = Ruderal

## Top Priority Parcels:

	Property	Size	Location	Comments	Parcels	Zoning
1	Johnson/ Demetree	87 acres	E. University Ave.	Swamp, flatwoods, sandhill, and creek directly across from Morningside.	10890-000-000 10889-000-000	R2/R1b* R2*
2	Barnes/ Kamlah	62 acres	Adjacent to I-75 (2314 SW 47 <sup>th</sup> St.)	Last remaining unprotected portion of Hogtown Prairie; adjacent to Split Rock Conservation Area.	06684-000-000 06684-001-000	Residential* R-2A*
3	Burch	40 acres	S. of Newberry Rd. Behind Creekside Mall (3663 SW 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ave.)	Hogtown Creek floodplain and important greenway connector; adjacent to Green Acres Park.	06514-000-000	
4	Jurecko	12 acres	1902 NW 45 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	Protection of approximately 700 feet of Hogtown Creek and its associated headwater wetlands	07901-000-000 07902-001-000	RSF-1 RSF-2
5	Barnes #2	44.5 acres	E of Lake Kana- paha near I-75	Upland woods adjacent to Hogtown Prairie; potential access point for Lake Kanapaha and Split Rock Conservation Area.	06828-000-000	Ag*
6	Rubric	17 acres	SW 62 <sup>nd</sup> Blvd. near Terwilliger Pond	Connector between existing greenway properties and SW 62 <sup>nd</sup> St.; nice hammock.	06566-000-000	PUD

## 2nd Priority Parcels:

	Property	Size	Location	Comments	Parcels	Zoning
7	Hogtown Creek Floodplain	191+ acres	West of SW 34 <sup>th</sup> St., south of Green Acres Park	Several undeveloped parcels containing large portions of the Hogtown Creek floodplain. Adjacent to Green Acres Park, UF conservation areas, and the city's Pinkoson property. These parcels join Pinkoson, Green Acres, and Sugarfoot Prairie conservation areas seamlessly.	06745-000-000 06743-005-000 06743-004-000 06738-000-000 06724-002-000 06724-000-000 06715-001-000 06715-000-000 06712-000-000 06695-000-000 06538-031-000	Ag* Ag* Ag* Ag* RSF1* Ag, R-3* Ag* Ag R3 Ag Ag

<b>8</b>	Cone Park Southwest	75 acres	Between SR 26 and SR 20, East of SE 24 <sup>th</sup> St.	Several undeveloped parcels containing the convergence of Lake Forest Creek tributaries; degraded but contains remnant flatwoods.	11243-000-000 11283-000-000 11284-000-000 11286-000-000 11287-000-000 11356-000-000 16073-000-000 16146-000-000	RMF RSF 4 RMF RSF 1 RSF 1 RSF 1 Residential BR*
<b>9</b>	Henderson	23 acres	South side of SW 20 <sup>th</sup> Ave.	Adjacent to Split Rock Conservation Area; contains high quality hammock. Partial of 06677 and 06676, all of 06680-004.	06677-000-000 06676-000-000 06680-004-000	Residential* R2A* Residential*
<b>10</b>	Crawford	40 acres	N. of Lofton School, at end of NE 11 <sup>th</sup> Place	Separated from Morningside by undeveloped SBAC and State lands; contains extensive wetlands and flatwoods, with some sandhill-like uplands.	10860-000-000	Residential*

## Possible less-than-fee acquisitions:

	Property	Size	Location	Comments	Parcels	Zoning
<b>A</b>	Wacahoota	200 acres	SW Williston Rd.	Already owned by City of Gainesville. Contains large area of remnant sandhill and upland pine forest, hammock in excellent condition, and has importance as a wildlife corridor between Paynes Prairie and Kanapaha Prairie.	07341-000-000	Ag*
<b>B</b>	Morning-side Buffers	1,236 acres	North and East of Morningside Nature Center	State-owned, undeveloped lands, not currently classified as conservation. Could potentially be protected through inter-governmental agreement; the possibility of acquiring Crawford (#9 above) and exchanging with State for lands adjacent to Morningside should be explored.	10862-000-000 10863-000-000 10885-000-000	Ag* Ag*
<b>C</b>	Hogtown Creek Headwaters	12.5 acres	NW 19 <sup>th</sup> St. north of 45 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	Protection of natural values on these properties adjacent to the FCT-funded Hogtown Creek Headwaters Nature Park would allow better protection of the natural	07900-000-000 07900-001-000 07893-000-000	RSF 1 RSF 1 RSF 1

	Easements (Grant/ Everett)			resources in the park. It is recommended that the City pursue conservation easements with the owners.		
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\*Property outside the Gainesville city limits.

#### Additional properties recommended by ACT (Not evaluated)

	Property	Size	Location	Comments	Parcels	Zoning
<b>D</b>	Newnan's Lake Southwest Corridor	172 ac. 287 ac. 15 ac. 12 ac. 16 ac.	South of Palm Point park	Several large undeveloped parcels potentially connecting the west shore of Newnan's Lake (and Palm Point park) to private conservation land (Santa Fe Land Trust), and in turn to Paynes Prairie.	17942-000-000 17944-000-000 17944-500-000 17944-500-001 17944-050-000	Ag RE-1/A, Resid. Ag Ag Ag
<b>E</b>	Serenola Forest	96 acres	South of SW Williston Rd., east of Oak Hammock	One large undeveloped parcel potentially connected to Paynes Prairie through several parcels of active agriculture.	07176-020-000	Planned Development
<b>F</b>	Blues Creek Ravine Access	48 acres	N. of Millhopper Rd. and West of NW 43 <sup>rd</sup> St.	Owned by University of Florida. ACT and ACF have pursued a lease for access to the Blues Creek Preserve (ACT) through a portion of this property. The State is asking approximately \$120,000 for a 50-year lease.	06005-000-000	Ag