



**CEDAR KEY MUSEUM  
STATE PARK**  
Park Chapter

GULF COAST REGION





Cedar Key Channel #4



# CEDAR KEY MUSEUM STATE PARK

LEVY COUNTY, FLORIDA



Map area containing:

- SALT MARSH (top left)
- MANGROVES (middle left)
- SALT MARSH (middle left)
- Nature Trail (dashed green line)
- Whitman House (house icon)
- Storage (house icon)
- Parking (cross icon)
- Cedar Key Museum (cross icon)

SW 165th AVE

SW 165th TERR

SW 166th AVE

HODGES AVE

GULF BLVD

TO CEDAR KEY HISTORIC DISTRICT







## **INTRODUCTION**

### **LOCATION AND ACQUISITION HISTORY**

Cedar Key Museum State Park is located in the city of Cedar Key in Levy County. Access to the park is from Museum Drive, via Hodges Avenue, Gulf Boulevard, Whiddon Avenue and State Road 24. The Gulf Coast Region Vicinity Map also reflects significant land and water resources existing near the park.

Cedar Key Museum State Park was initially acquired on June 19, 1960, as a donation from Cedar Key Shores, Inc. Currently, the park comprises 18.63 acres. No new lands have been added to the park since acquisition. The Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (Trustees) hold fee simple title to the park. On Sept. 28, 1968, the Trustees leased (Lease No. 2324) the property to the Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) under a 99-year lease. A new lease (No. 3611) was assigned by the Trustees in 1988. No terms or conditions were modified upon execution. The current lease will expire on Jan. 22, 2067.

Cedar Key Museum State Park is designated as single-use to provide public outdoor recreation and conservation. There are no legislative or executive directives that constrain the use of this property (See Appendices). A legal description of the park property can be made available upon request to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

### **SECONDARY AND INCOMPATIBLE USES**

In accordance with 253.034(5) F.S., the potential of the park to accommodate secondary management purposes was analyzed. Secondary purposes were considered within the context of DRP's statutory responsibilities and resource values. This analysis considered the park's natural and cultural resources, management needs, aesthetic values, visitation, and visitor experiences. It was determined that no secondary purposes could be accommodated in a manner that would not interfere with the primary purpose of resource-based outdoor recreation and conservation.

DRP has determined that uses such as water resource development projects, water supply projects, stormwater management projects, linear facilities and sustainable agriculture and forestry (other than those management activities specifically identified in this plan) would not be consistent with the management purposes of the park.

In accordance with 253.034(5) F.S., the potential for generating revenue to enhance management was also analyzed. Visitor fees and charges are the principal source of revenue generated by the park. It was determined that multiple-use management activities would not be appropriate as a means of generating revenues for land management. Instead, techniques such as entrance fees, concessions and similar measures will be employed on a case-by-case basis as a means of supplementing park management funding. Generating revenue from consumptive uses or from activities that are not expressly related to resource management and conservation is under consideration.

## **PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PARK**

### **Park Purpose**

The purpose of Cedar Key Museum State Park is to protect and preserve museum grounds that interpret the history of the city of Cedar Key and its vicinity. This includes the life and collections of St. Clair Whitman and the indigenous and early inhabitants of the area.

### **Park Significance**

- The museum highlights the natural and cultural history of Cedar Key, an area of Florida's rich Native American and early European coastal communities. Its location is the Gulf Coast Region gateway to surrounding public lands including Cedar Key Scrub State Reserve, Waccasassa Bay Preserve State Park, and the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge
- The area inspired naturalists such as John Muir and local Cedar Key resident St. Clair Whitman whose collection of artifacts and shells are featured in the museum.
- The park features St. Clair Whitman's historic home. His life and interests shed light on life in the community in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- Museum exhibits represent some of the best and earliest work done by Florida's park service and the University of Florida from the 1950s and 1960s.
- The museum is included in the Cedar Keys Historic and Archaeological District, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Central Park Theme**

From the pencil industry to the waterways it now depends on, Cedar Key's history is told through the collections of one of its most interesting residents at Cedar Key Museum State Park.

Cedar Key Museum State Park is classified as a state museum in the DRP unit classification system. In the management of a state museum, the primary objective is to interpret the natural, historical, cultural or other significant characteristics important to the general vicinity or site on which the museums are located. The interpretive program theme may be derived from any appropriate subject matter within the general area of interest. Units should be maintained in a manner to support and enhance the interpretive and educational experience. Through appropriate development, the grounds may be made an extension or an integral part of the museum itself. Ancillary facilities for such compatible recreational activities as picnicking may be provided. Resource management priorities may be on museum collections, but other natural and cultural resources of the site may be significant.



## **OTHER DESIGNATIONS**

The unit is not within an Area of Critical State Concern as defined in section 380.05; Florida Statutes and is not presently under study for such designation. The park is a component of the Florida Greenways and Trails System, administered by the DEP Office of Greenways and Trails.

All waters within the park have been designated as Outstanding Florida Waters, pursuant to Chapter 62-302, Florida Administrative Code. Surface waters in this park are also classified as Class III waters by the Department. The park is adjacent to the Big Bend Seagrass Aquatic Preserve as designated under the Florida Aquatic Preserve Act of 1975 (Section 258.35, Florida Statutes).

## **PARK ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Met 100% of invasive species goals.
- Collaborated with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) on long-term bat monitoring study.
- Began working with district staff on a new Statewide Non-Personal App (SNAPP) interpretation project.

## **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMPONENT**

<b>Cedar Key Museum State Park Management Zones</b>			
<b>Management Zone</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Managed with Prescribed Fire</b>	<b>Contains Known Cultural Resources</b>
CKM-1	9.77	N	Y
CKM-2	8.86	N	N

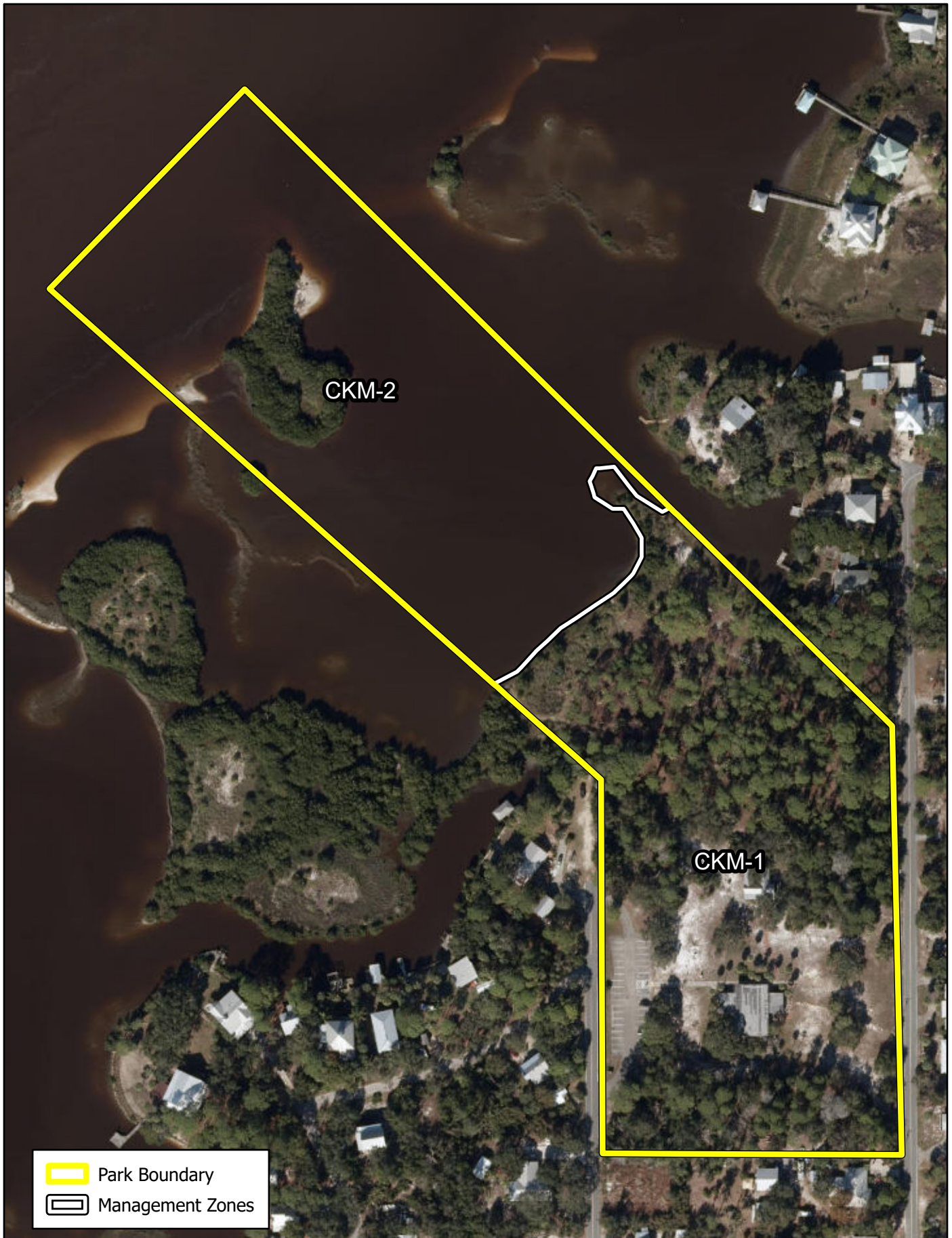
## **TOPOGRAPHY**



Cedar Key Museum State Park is located in the Gulf Coastal Lowlands on a low sandy ridge that gradually slopes downward to a narrow strip of salt marsh and an expanse of estuarine tidal flats (i.e., estuarine unconsolidated substrate natural community). The tidal flats extend northwest to the Number Four Channel, which provides boats with a navigable route to the Gulf of Mexico. Elevations within the park range from sea level to ten feet above mean sea level.

Based on interpretation of historic aerial photographs from 1961 and 1974, the park has experienced some major topographic disturbances, including the excavation of a rectangular basin in the tidal flats on the northwest side of the park and the dredging of a channel linking the basin with the Number Four Channel. Spoil from the dredging operations appears to have been deposited in various locations in the immediate area, creating spoil islands in the tidal flats and substantially increasing the mainland part of the park by filling what apparently at that time was salt marsh. Since then, salt marsh species have gradually reestablished themselves along the northwest edge of the filled marshland. The majority of







 Park Boundary  
 Management Zones



**CEDAR KEY MUSEUM STATE PARK**  
**Management Zones**

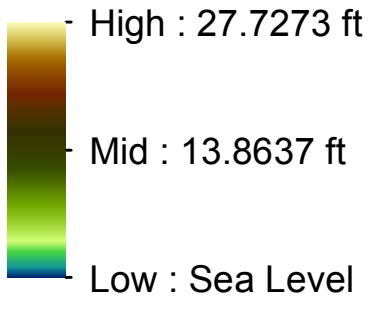


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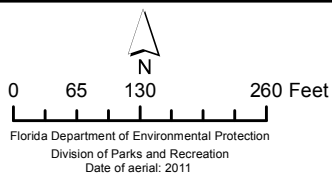




**Elevation Range**



CEDAR KEY MUSEUM STATE PARK



TOPOGRAPHIC MAP  
(contour intervals in feet)





the fill area, which continues to artificially extend the park's uplands past the original shoreline, is now vegetated with a variety of early successional species.

## **SOILS**

Cedar Key Museum State Park contains two soil types (see Soils Map). Orsino fine sand and Zolfo sand occur in the uplands. Both are sandy in composition, but the Orsino sand is moderately well drained, while the Zolfo sand is somewhat poorly drained (SCS 1991). Previously a third soil, Wulfort muck was mapped at the park. This area is now mapped as water and occurs in the estuarine unconsolidated Substrate natural community as discussed below. Wulfort muck, is very poorly drained, frequently floods, and occurs in the salt marsh and tidal flats.

Foot traffic from visitors, coupled with occasionally strong rainfall events, is causing some relatively minor runoff and soil erosion in three areas of the park. One problem area lies east of the museum in a former parking lot, another is located northwest of the museum in a sparsely vegetated area that drains to the current parking lot, while the third is adjacent to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ramp at the St. Clair Whitman House. Additional landscaping and possibly a new walkway may suffice to control the erosion. Management activities will follow generally accepted best management practices to prevent runoff and soil erosion and to conserve soil and water resources on site.

## **HYDROLOGY**

Cedar Key Museum State Park lies near the open waters of the Gulf of Mexico, with access to the gulf provided by the Number Four Channel. The waters adjacent to the property are closed to shellfish harvesting (DEP 1997) and are considered Class III waters, those classified for recreation. However, waters open to shellfish harvesting and propagation lie within 300 feet of the park boundary. Surface water quality is good (Hand 2000). Presently, there are no known concerns with surface water runoff from the park into adjacent waters of the Gulf of Mexico. There is, however, a growing concern about the potential impacts of saltwater intrusion on groundwater resources in the region (Hydrogeologic Inc. 2010). During the extreme drought of 2012, the Cedar Key Water and Sewer District declared the water supply for the city of Cedar Key to be "non-potable" due to saltwater intrusion (Cedar Key Water and Sewer District 2012). This was a significant event for Cedar Key Museum State Park because the city of Cedar Key is the sole provider of potable water to the park.

**Objective A:** Assess the park's hydrological restoration needs.

- Action 1 - Continue to cooperate with other agencies and independent researchers regarding hydrological research and monitoring programs.

The park has no freshwater wetland resources and restoration of the estuarine communities is neither practical nor desirable at this time. DRP will continue its tradition of close cooperation with state and federal agencies and independent researchers engaged in estuarine research and monitoring programs in the area. DRP will rely on agencies such as the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and DEP to keep it apprised of any local declines in surface water quality or increases in saltwater intrusion. DRP staff will continue to monitor Environmental Resource Permit and Water Use Permit requests for the region in order to provide timely and constructive comments that will promote protection of the park's hydrological resources.



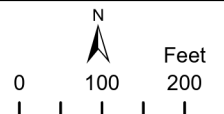


**Soils**

- 3 - Orsino fine sand, 0 to 8 percent slopes
- 23 - Zolfo sand
- 33 - Wulfert muck
- 100 - Waters of the Gulf of Mexico



## CEDAR KEY MUSEUM STATE PARK Soils



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**Objective B:** Restore hydrological conditions to three areas within the park.

- Action 1 - Mitigate three areas of the park experiencing erosion.
- Action 2 - Control erosion with techniques such as supplemental planting and landscaping, addition of footpaths with landscaping and possible reconfiguring of straight pathways.

Three areas of erosion needing attention include: 1) the east boundary of the park where a drive leading to the museum formerly existed, 2) the area northwest of the museum, sloping toward the parking lot and 3) the slope from the St. Clair Whitman House north to the outhouse. The first area needs supplemental plantings or landscaping to control erosion and vehicular access. Area 2 may need a footpath and additional plantings. Area 3 currently has a straight pathway that provides a channel for runoff. The erosion issue there could be resolved by reconfiguring the path. Only native plants should be used in the erosion control landscaping.

## **NATURAL COMMUNITIES**

The park contains two distinct natural communities and two altered landcover types (see Natural Communities Map). A list of plants and animals known to occur in the park is contained in the Appendix.

### Estuarine Unconsolidated Substrate

In the early 1960s, the northwest half of the park near the Gulf of Mexico apparently consisted of a narrow strip of salt marsh and a larger area of estuarine unconsolidated substrate (i.e., tidal flats) that extended westward of the marsh. Prior to 1974, a sizeable portion of the tidal flats was dredged to provide boat access to the gulf. Some of the spoil was deposited on spoil islands within the tidal flats, while some was used to fill the strip of salt marsh. The estuarine unconsolidated substrate, albeit dotted with several small spoil islands, is still present northwest of the fill area. The footprint of the dredged basin is still visible in current aerial photographs, but the disturbance is not readily detectable from the shore. Considering the amount of previous disturbance, the condition of the estuarine unconsolidated substrate community appears to be good.

Active restoration is not planned for the estuarine unconsolidated substrate. Dredged tidal areas tend to fill in gradually over time, and it is likely that infaunal and transient organisms have adapted to the local conditions. The area will be protected from future dredging, runoff, pollution and invasive plants.

### Salt Marsh (and Salt Flat Variant)





Most of the original salt marsh in the park was filled with dredge spoil between 1961 and 1974. Salt marsh species such as Carolina sea lavender, saltmarsh cordgrass, marshhay cord grass (*Spartina patens*), saltwater falsewillow, marshelder and others have since colonized the fringes of that spoil area. This vegetation is now well established. Several black mangroves (*Avicennia germinans*) have also taken hold in the salt marsh. A nature trail skirts the landward edge of the marsh, and two very short spur trails extend out to the low tide line.

Since the salt marsh appears to be recovering on its own over time, there are no plans to supplement its recovery with active restoration measures. However, the park will protect the salt marsh from future dredging activities, excessive runoff, sources of pollution and invasive plants.



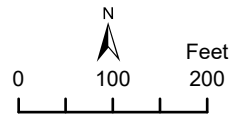


**Natural Communities (in Acres)**

	DV - Developed 7.38
	EUS - Estuarine Unconsolidated Substrate 8.15
	SA - Spoil Area 2.08
	SAM - Salt Marsh 1.01



**CEDAR KEY MUSEUM STATE PARK**  
**Natural Communities - Existing Conditions**

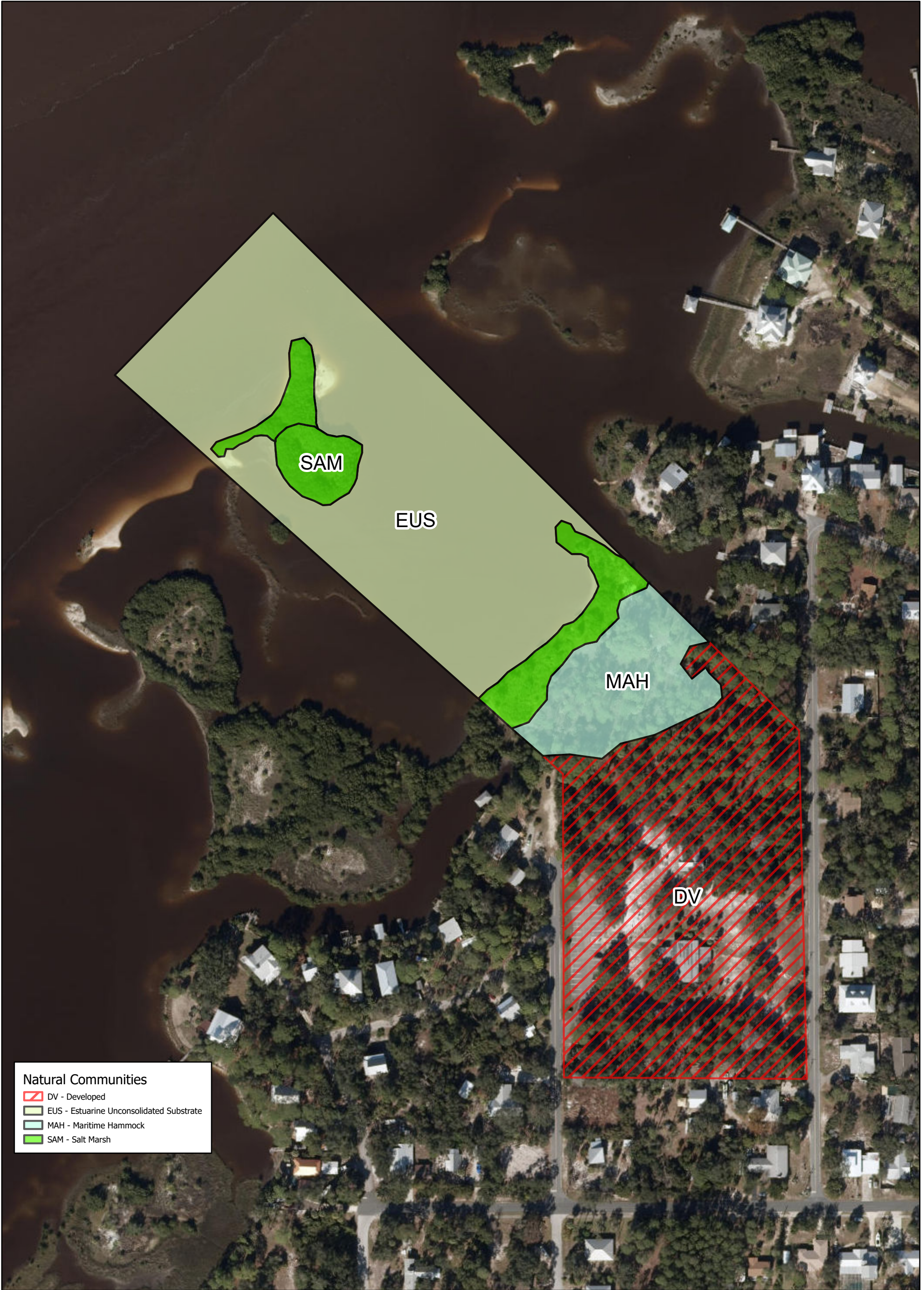


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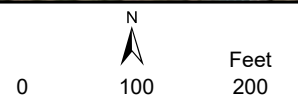


**Natural Communities**

-  DV - Developed
-  EUS - Estuarine Unconsolidated Substrate
-  MAH - Maritime Hammock
-  SAM - Salt Marsh



**CEDAR KEY MUSEUM STATE PARK**  
**Natural Communities - Desired Future Conditions**



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## **ALTERED LAND COVER**

### **Developed**

The area surrounding the Cedar Key Museum and the St. Clair Whitman House is developed. In addition to the footprints of the structures, the developed area includes sidewalks and parking areas.

Management of the developed area will include removal of all priority invasive plants (Florida Invasive Species Council (FISC) Category I and II species). Other measures will include proper stormwater management and ensuring future development design supports the protection of water quality in the adjacent Gulf of Mexico.

### **Spoil Area**

At some time between 1965 and 1974, the natural shoreline in the northwest half of the park was altered significantly. Much of the soil excavated during dredging of a channel and boat basin was deposited in this area of the park, filling a narrow band of salt marsh and creating additional upland acres. Other spoil was deposited within the estuarine unconsolidated substrate community, forming small islands. Black mangroves now occupy some of those islands. A portion of the salt marsh has recovered to the extent that it is now recognizable again as a distinct natural community. However, the upland spoil areas are still in various stages of revegetation. Pioneer species that have colonized the upland spoil areas include slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*), red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*), laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*) and red bay (*Persea borbonia*). Other species that have become established include wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), American beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*) and winged sumac (*Rhus copallinum*).

Management of the spoil areas will include removal of all high priority invasive plants (FISC Category I and II species) and any arrow bamboo (*Pseudosasa japonica*) present. Other measures will include proper stormwater management and designing future development to be compatible with protection of water quality in the adjacent Gulf of Mexico. The isolated spoil area in the Gulf of Mexico will naturally become salt marsh, which is the desired future condition. The spoil area adjacent to the developed area of the park will be allowed to regenerate naturally to the desired future condition of maritime hammock.

Currently there is not a need for natural community restoration or improvement at the park, and all natural community improvements can be accomplished with routine resource management practices such as erosion control, monitoring and removal of invasive exotic plants and animals. There are no fire-dependent natural communities at Cedar Key Museum State Park, so prescribed fire is not necessary for this small site.

## **IMPERILED SPECIES**

Gopher tortoises occur at Cedar Key Museum State Park. Park staff regularly monitors and protects them from disturbance. No imperiled plants or mammals occur in the park.

Several imperiled birds have been recorded at the park. The short-tailed hawk, swallow-tailed kite and magnificent frigatebird are species that are occasionally observed flying over the property. Imperiled wading and shore birds appear regularly in the tidal flats in the western half of the park. As a protective measure for the latter species, staff will regularly monitor the tidal flats for signs of hydrological disturbance.



Imperiled Species Inventory						
Common and Scientific Name	Imperiled Species Status				Management Actions	Monitoring Level
	FWC	USFWS	FDACS	FNAI		
<b>REPTILES</b>						
Gopher tortoise <i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>	ST			G3,S3	2,8,10,13	Tier1
<b>BIRDS</b>						
Short-tailed hawk <i>Buteo brachyurus</i>				G4G5,S1		Tier 1
Little blue heron <i>Egretta caerulea</i>	ST			G5,S4	4	Tier 1
Reddish egret <i>Egretta rufescens</i>	ST			G4,S2	4	Tier 1
Tricolored heron <i>Egretta tricolor</i>	ST			G5,S4	4	Tier 1
Swallow-tailed kite <i>Elanoides forficatus</i>				G5,S2		Tier 1
Magnificent frigatebird <i>Fregata magnificens</i>				G5,S1		Tier 1
Gull-billed tern <i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>				G5,S2	4	Tier 1
American oystercatcher <i>Haematopus palliatus</i>	ST			G5,S2	4	Tier 1
Wood stork <i>Mycteria americana</i>	FT	T		G4,S2		
Painted bunting <i>Passerina ciris</i>				G5T3Q,S1S2		
Roseate spoonbill <i>Platalea ajaja</i>	ST			G5,S2	4	Tier 1
American avocet <i>Recurvirostra americana</i>				G5,S2	4	Tier 1
Least tern <i>Sternula antillarum</i>	ST			G4,S3		Tier 1
Sandwich tern <i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>				G5,S2		Tier 1

Management Actions:

1. Prescribed Fire
2. Exotic Plant Removal
3. Population Translocation/Augmentation/Restocking
4. Hydrological Maintenance/Restoration
5. Nest Boxes/Artificial Cavities
6. Hardwood Removal

7. Mechanical Treatment
8. Predator Control
9. Erosion Control
10. Protection from visitor impacts (establish buffers)/law enforcement
11. Decoys (shorebirds)
12. Vegetation planting
13. Outreach and Education
14. Other

Monitoring Level:

Tier 1.

Non-Targeted Observation/Documentation: includes documentation of species presence through casual/passive observation during routine park activities (i.e., not conducting species-specific searches). Documentation may be in the form of Wildlife Observation Forms, or other district specific methods used to communicate observations.

Tier 2.

Targeted Presence/Absence: includes monitoring methods/activities that are specifically intended to document presence/absence of a particular species or suite of species.

Tier 3.

Population Estimate/Index: an approximation of the true population size or population index based on a widely accepted method of sampling.

Tier 4.

Population Census: A complete count of an entire population with demographic analysis, including mortality, reproduction, emigration, and immigration.

Tier 5.

Other: may include habitat assessments for a particular species or suite of species or any other specific methods used as indicators to gather information about a particular species.

**Objective A:** Update baseline imperiled species occurrence inventory lists for plants and animals.

Staff will continue to document imperiled species and other species that occur in the park. DRP will enlist the assistance of academic researchers and staff from other agencies during development of species occurrence inventory lists, especially where necessary for certain taxonomic groups. Currently there are no imperiled plant species that occur in the park.

**Objective B:** Monitor one imperiled animal species in the park.

- Action 1 - Develop and implement a monitoring protocol for gopher tortoises that inhabit the park.

Although staff will continue to document imperiled species when seen within the park, one species in particular, the gopher tortoise, will be monitored regularly to ensure that burrows are protected from disturbance.

## **INVASIVE SPECIES**

Cedar Key Museum has only a few invasive plant species. Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*) and asparagus fern (*Asparagus aethiopicus*) are two regularly reoccurring species. Both are likely regularly reintroduced by birds and possibly by tides.

The park annually treats all invasives within its boundaries. In addition to the species mentioned above, arrow bamboo (*Pseudosasa japonica*) presents a big challenge. This is not a species categorized by the FISC as a Category I or II species, but nevertheless, it is aggressively invading the park. It will require several years of consistent, repeated treatments to remove this species. Other invasive species in the park that occur on a more incidental basis are regularly treated.

Generally, there are few invasive animals found in the park. However, the park is an important migratory bird stop and, if circumstances warrant, the staff will protect the property from feral cats, dogs, and hogs in accordance with DRP policy.

FISC Category I and II Invasive Plant Species			
Species Name Scientific Name - Common Name	FLEPPC Category	Distribution	Zone ID
<i>Nephrolepis cordifolia</i> - Tuberous sword fern	I	Single Plant or Clump	CKM-1
<i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i> - Brazilian pepper	I	Single Plant or Clump	CKM-1

Table 2 contains a list of the FISC Category I and II invasive plant species found within the park (FISC 2019). The table also identifies relative distribution for each species and the management zones in which they are known to occur.

**Objective A:** Annually treat 9 gross acres equal to approximately 0.29 infested acres of invasive plant species in the park.

- Action 1 - Annually update the invasive plant management work plan.
- Action 2 - Implement the annual work plan by treating 9 gross acres annually and continuing maintenance and follow-up treatments.

Park staff will work toward annual treatment of all invasive plants. The park should be surveyed for invasives every two years. Arrow bamboo, Brazilian pepper and asparagus fern in particular need annual removal.

**Objective B:** Implement control measures on invasive animal species in the park.

- Action 1 - Monitor invasive animals in the park and remove them according to DRP policy.

DRP actively removes invasive animals from state parks, with priority being given to those species causing the greatest ecological damage. There are currently no invasive animal species in the park. When encountered, invasive animal species will be removed from the park in accordance with DRP policy.

## **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### **Prehistoric and Historic Archaeological Sites**

Cedar Key Museum State Park is located within the Cedar Keys Historic and Archaeological District (LV00244), which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in October 1989. This mixed resource group recognizes the rich history of Cedar Key and the neighboring keys from prehistoric times through the 1960s. This includes Native American sites and numerous historic archaeological sites from the “boom time” of Cedar Key in the 1870s. During this time, the town had fiber and timber mills and was an important shipping port on the Gulf of Mexico. The town was connected to rail lines and had a military post located on a neighboring key. These sites provide historic context that are important for understanding the settlement, transportation, and military history of this area, as well as throughout Florida and the eastern Gulf of Mexico.

The cultural resources at Cedar Key Museum State Park include historic and prehistoric elements. The Florida Master Site File (FMSF) lists site LV00286 and site LV00510 as the two archaeological sites within the park. The remains of a destroyed burial mound (site LV00286) may be partially located on park property near the museum building. According to Borremans and Moseley (1990), this site was disturbed in the 1970s. Consequently, neither its exact nature nor its cultural affiliation can be determined. The former site is reputedly located where the museum now stands. A predictive model recently developed for the park showed that the FMSF location matches the aerial LIDAR elevation difference (Collins 2012). The authors feel this is suggestive of a mound location. The other known site (LV00510) is an artifact scatter. Both prehistoric sites are of unknown cultural affiliation.

No known but unrecorded sites exist within the park. A predictive model for the park was completed in 2012 (Collins 2012).

The condition of mound site LV00286 is poor. It reportedly was destroyed prior to state acquisition (Borremans and Moseley 1990). Very little is known about LV00510. It is primarily a lithic scatter. The recorder of the site did not evaluate its condition. The primary threat to these sites may be foot traffic from visitors.

Neither the Museum Mound (LV00286) nor the Cedar Key Museum (LV00510) archaeological sites have been evaluated for potential eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places as individual sites by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). In addition, neither site has been evaluated for potential inclusion as a contributing site to the Cedar Keys Historic and Archaeological District (LV00244).

Since so little of the mound site (LV00286) remains, it will not be possible to improve its condition. The other site, Cedar Key Museum (LV00510), has not been professionally evaluated. Currently, it is not experiencing any disturbance. Museum Mound (LV00286) was reported to contain human remains. This should be taken into consideration if there is any disturbance in this area. Staff should continue to protect both sites from disturbance.

### **Historic Structures**

There are two historic structures within the park, the St. Clair Whitman House (LV00193) and the Cedar Key Museum (LV00831). The St. Clair Whitman House was originally located on the west side of Sixth Street and was listed as a contributing structure to the Cedar Keys Historic and Archaeological District



(LV00244). Whitman, a resident of Cedar Key from 1882 until his death in 1959, purchased the house in 1921. During this time, he was employed by two major industries in the area, the Eagle Pencil Company and the Standard Manufacturing Company (palm fiber industry). He became a leading authority on Cedar Key history. During his life in Cedar Key, he amassed a collection of shells, butterflies, insects, prehistoric artifacts, and rare documents.

Whitman's house became known as Cedar Key's first museum. He would display his collection in the "Museum Room" and give tours to visitors. Upon his death, he donated his collection to the people of Cedar Key. Portions of the collection are now housed in exhibit cases in the museum building at Cedar Key Museum State Park.

In January 1991, the St. Clair Whitman House was donated to the state of Florida by Whitman's granddaughter-in-law, Elizabeth Griffis, and her three daughters. Prior to the donation of the house, the structure was in danger of being demolished. After the state accepted the house and relocated it to the Cedar Key Museum State Park site in March 1991, the house was removed from the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing structure to the Cedar Keys Historic and Archaeological District (LV00244). However, Cedar Key Museum State Park is located within the overall boundary of the Cedar Keys Historic and Archaeological District (LV00244), and the St. Clair Whitman House is treated and interpreted as an historic structure.

The Cedar Key Museum (LV00831) was built in 1961, in part to house the St. Clair Whitman collection. It is an excellent example of mid-20th century modern architecture. The structure is in its original configuration apart from the exterior block decorative walls, which were replaced with wooden louvers. The museum houses a collection of natural and cultural artifacts that represent life in Cedar Key and the surrounding Gulf Coast.

The St. Clair Whitman House (LV00193) is in fair condition. However, ongoing attention is needed to avoid decay. Wood rot and mold are regular concerns.

Overall, Cedar Key Museum (LV00831) is in good condition, but it does have some issues that need attention to prevent deterioration. It will need a new roof in the next few years. Also, there are several areas on the building exterior where the roof contacts the walls on the north and south sides of the restrooms. These areas need attention. The large windows that face the gulf also have caulking which needs to be replaced due to dry rot.

At some point, the decorative exterior block walls of the museum were replaced with wooden louvers. The concrete support structures that remain between the louvers are beginning to crack. It appears that the decorative concrete blocks may have provided some additional structural support. The structural integrity of the museum without the blocks needs to be evaluated. Regardless, the decorative block should be replaced to return the building to its original design. No historic structures in the park are planned for demolition.

The St. Claire Whitman House (LV00193) is not considered individually eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It was listed as a contributing building to the Cedar Keys Historic and Archaeological District (LV00244), however since it has been moved to the park and reoriented, it is no longer considered a contributing structure and therefore is no longer listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The relocation of the building from its original setting and environment to the park is the

main reason it is no longer considered eligible under Criterion A, B or C of the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.

Cedar Key Museum (LV00831) is considered potentially eligible for listing in the National Register. Its construction falls outside of the period of significance for the Cedar Keys Historic and Archaeological District (LV00244) and thus could not be added as a contributing structure to that district. However, it is a good example of mid-century modern architecture. The State Historic Preservation Officer has determined that it could qualify for eligibility for the National Register.

The museum property has a deed restriction that indicates there will be no campers, picnic tables or trailers for housing placed in the park. It further states that “nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit the construction, use and occupancy on said premises of custodial housing facilities for the use of the permanent and transient personnel.”

The St. Clair Whitman House (LV00193) needs ongoing preventative maintenance and repairs to ensure its continued preservation. Areas with wood rot in the house need to have the wood replaced, and annual ongoing funding for maintenance is also a must for a structure of this nature.

While Cedar Key Museum (LV00831) is generally in good condition, the structural integrity of the concrete supports by the exterior wood louvers needs evaluation. Gutters, or some other solution, are necessary to prevent the continued ponding of water near the museum entrance. The roof should be replaced, and the picture windows caulked during this plan cycle.

### **Collections**

With the exception of a few items displayed on the museum grounds, the park’s collections are housed in the Cedar Key Museum and the St. Clair Whitman House. The foundation of the original collection is Whitman’s objects accumulated during his life in Cedar Key, which range from prehistoric items to natural history objects from the region. In addition, the St. Clair Whitman House contains personal items from Whitman’s life, as well as furnishings and display items that the park’s citizen support organization (CSO) acquired or donated to the house. Cedar Key Museum contains exhibits developed by the University of Florida in the 1960s depicting life and history in the Cedar Keys. The museum also houses some of Mr. Whitman’s personal collection. The museum grounds also contain two 18-pound cannons, a fire wagon, a salt kettle and a historic marker commemorating John Muir’s visit to Cedar Key. The cannons were originally from Sea Horse Key.

Many of the items in the St. Clair Whitman House accumulated by the CSO are of a decorative nature and not related specifically to Whitman’s life. These include shells, furniture and other household items, not all of which belong to the era of Whitman's life. Only items pertinent to that era should be used to furnish the house.

Some of Whitman's original collection is also currently housed in the Cedar Key Museum. Collection items include shells, artifacts of aboriginal life and objects from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century period of lumber and fiber production in the Cedar Key area. Ownership of the salt kettle needs to be verified. The museum exhibits themselves are now vintage examples (1950s-60s) of the University of Florida exhibits shop that developed displays for state parks during those years. As such, they have historic and interpretive value. The displays in the museum are excellent examples and generally are in good condition.

The park's ownership records for the items in the Cedar Key Museum still needs some updating. If items have been removed for curation they should be recorded as such. All items in the St. Clair Whitman House belong to the park and have been recorded in PastPerfect museum software. Ownership of all items previously donated or purchased by the CSO were transferred to the park in 2015. The collection items in the museum are still on loan from the Florida Museum of Natural History (formerly Florida State Museum) (Loan No. 1983.38). The loan agreement needs to be renewed annually.

In general, the condition of the items in the Cedar Key Museum are good. However, there are a few exceptions. Some of the shells are affected by Bynesian decay, a chemical reaction which if not treated causes permanent damage. Other types of items can be susceptible to the same decay. The UF exhibits shop displays from the 1950s and 1960s are in good condition and warrant preservation.

The park does not currently have a formal scope of collections, but all items have been documented. If any additional objects are needed for the collection, they should be identified. Items should not be accepted into the collection without specified need or family provenance.

The museum's overall interpretation would benefit from an update and an expansion of its interpretive themes. Care should be taken to preserve existing UF exhibits during any updates or modifications to the museum's displays.

Cedar Key has become gateway to many public conservation lands in the area, and the museum could provide additional interpretation of these places to the public. Since the museum was originally established, much more is known about the archaeology of the area. Archaeological and environmental contexts are intimately linked and could provide the basis for an updated display of collections and interpretation as well as an introduction to conservation lands along the Gulf of Mexico.

The museum currently has space that could accommodate additional exhibits and small rotating or traveling exhibits. The lobby is a potential exhibit space. However, the integrity of the museum architecture would need to be preserved if there is any addition of exhibits.

The security of the collections at the St. Clair Whitman House needs to be evaluated and the best method of protecting the contents needs to be determined. All of the Whitman-related artifacts should be displayed in a secure manner or removed for protection if adequate security cannot be provided. Both the house and museum are climate controlled.

The collection items belonging to Whitman, his house and personal items, and the museum collection and collection displays designed by the Florida Museum of Natural History, are all very significant to the park and to the community of Cedar Key. Whitman's collection, house and life in Cedar Key are the foundation of the state park museum. They offer opportunities for research into the community during the late 1880s and first half of the 1900s. The museum displays are excellent examples of the work done by the University of Florida museum display shop in the 1950s and 1960s.

All collection items that were donated to the CSO have been photographed and documented. The museum collection items are annually inventoried. The Florida Museum of Natural History and the Museum of Florida History should be contacted to gather any records pertaining to the collection located in the Cedar Key Museum. Climate control and housekeeping conditions designed to prevent and/or treat Bynesian decay need to be established.

Site Name and FMSF #	Culture/Period	Description	Significance	Condition	Treatment
LV00193 St. Clair Whitman House	1880s	Historic Structure	NE	F	P
LV00244 Cedar Keys Historic & Archaeological District	500 B.C. to 1932 A.D.	Resource Group Mixed District	NR	G	P
LV00286 Museum Mound	Prehistoric	Archaeological Site	NE	P	P
LV00510 Cedar Key State Museum	Historic and Prehistoric	Archaeological Site	NE	NE	P
LV00831 Cedar Key Museum	Mid-Century Modern	Historic Structure	NE	G	RH

**Objective A:** Assess and evaluate four of five recorded cultural resources in the park.

- Action 1 - Consult with the Bureau of Natural and Cultural Resources (BNCR) to determine if Historic Structures Reports (HSR) are needed for historic buildings.
- Action 2 – Continue to assess archaeological sites on a regular basis to ensure there is no erosion or disturbance.
- Action 3- Restore the salt kettle at the museum.

All archaeological sites should be assessed regularly to ensure there is no erosion or other disturbance. The park should consult with BNCR to determine if a Historic Structures Report is needed for either structure in the park. The resource group mixed district (LV00244) does not require evaluation.

**Objective B:** Compile reliable documentation for all recorded historic and archaeological resources.

- Action 1 - Develop a formal Scope of Collections Statement to determine what additional items related to the Whitman family or period of St. Clair Whitman’s life will be accepted for display in the park.

All known archaeological sites and historic structures have been recorded with the FMSF. A predictive model for the park is complete.



The park has an informal scope of collections statement. It needs to be formalized and updated to indicate what other items, if any, will be accepted in the park collection. Only items directly related to the family should be accepted, or those specifically identified items of the period of St. Clair Whitman's life in Cedar Key that are needed to furnish the house. In addition, the park needs to identify those items that are inappropriate to the era being interpreted and remove them from the collection.

**Objective C:** Bring two of five recorded cultural resources into good condition.

- Action 1 - Create a written maintenance plan for both the St. Clair Whitman House and the Cedar Key Museum based on current preventative maintenance practices.
- Action 2 - Implement an ongoing plan for the St. Clair Whitman House that addresses prevention of wood rot and mold and promotes structural integrity.
- Action 3 - Continue preventative maintenance of the museum building by evaluating the integrity of the concrete supports, replacing wooden louvers with decorative block to restore the original building, reroofing the structure and caulking the picture windows.

Both the St. Clair Whitman House (LV00193) and the Cedar Key Museum (LV00831) need some repairs or maintenance. Repairs on the St. Clair Whitman House are the most critical. All locations with exterior wood rot need to be repaired and the cause of the rot corrected. Interior window frames need repair.

The Cedar Key Museum (LV00831) needs work to avoid deterioration. The structural integrity of the concrete supports by the exterior wood louvers needs to be evaluated. This evaluation should occur prior to replacing the exterior decorative block, which will return the building to its original design. Gutters, or some other solution, are necessary to prevent the continued ponding of water near the museum entrance.

A cyclical maintenance program needs to be developed and documented for both historic structures. The archaeological sites in the park should be monitored for additional disturbance and maintained with a goal of no further deterioration.

## LAND USE COMPONENT

### VISITATION

Cedar Key Museum State Park is comprised of a small patch of conservation land surrounded by a residential neighborhood in the historic island town of Cedar Key. Visitor amenities and experiences include a short hiking trail, two museum structures and a natural-surface kayak launch point.

The Cedar Key Museum complex includes the historic St. Clair Whitman House and the Cedar Key Museum. The historic Whitman house was once inhabited by Cedar Key naturalist and archivist St. Clair Whitman. Today, it contains historical furnishings and replicas of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century household goods. The Cedar Key Museum houses Whitman's shell collections and includes several handcrafted dioramas depicting life in Cedar Key at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The quarter-mile Whitman Trail connects the museum and the Whitman house to a natural-shoreline waterfront where visitors can view one of the northernmost stands of mangrove on the Florida Gulf Coast. Short trail spurs reach the shoreline, which allows for views of the surrounding islands. The trail also leads to a natural-surface kayak launch situated in a gap in the mangroves.

#### Visitation Trends

Cedar Key Museum State Park generally experiences its highest visitation in the month of March. Visitation totals are generally higher between January and August, then fall to lower levels between September and December.

### EXISTING FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing facilities at Cedar Key Museum State Park are concentrated in the southern section of the park near the parking lot, comprising the park's sole use area. The museum and historic St. Clair Whitman House are accompanied by two small support structures. A quarter-mile trail allows visitors to access the waterfront, while paved parking is accessible from Southwest 166<sup>th</sup> Court.

#### Facilities Inventory

<i>Main Day Use Area</i>	
Museum	1
Historic Home	1
Historic Outhouse	1
Pumphouse	1
Storage Shed	1
Restrooms	1
Nature Trail (miles)	0.25
Paved Road (miles)	0.07
Parking Lot	1
Parking Spaces	32

## **CONCEPTUAL LAND USE PLAN**

### **Detailed Conceptual Land Use Plan Objectives**

The use areas at Cedar Key Museum State Park listed below detail specific objectives and action items to be implemented within the 10-year planning cycle.

#### **Parkwide**

**Objective: Create and implement an interpretive plan.**

Cedar Key Museum State Park encompasses a rich history of the area. Interpretive planning is needed to determine the most effective way to connect visitors to the meaningful and relevant themes at the museum and park grounds. The type, quantity, design and placement of interpretive elements to deepen understanding will be specified during this additional planning process.

#### **West Entrance**

**Objective: Preclude unauthorized vehicular access and increase revenue.**

Visitors continue to drive golf carts onto the property. This is a violation of park regulations. To prevent golf carts from entering the property, access should be directed towards a specific ingress point, where entrance and payment will be enforced. Creating a specific entrance point would lead to an increase in revenue and would prevent unsightly tire tracks on the park lawn.

#### **Museum/Visitor Center**

**Objective: Enhance and stabilize the museum.**

##### **Actions:**

- *Repair and improve facility structure and exhibits.*
- *Make displays ADA accessible.*
- *Review and update the Scope of Collections*

The exhibits in the Cedar Key Museum currently focus on the economic and natural history of Cedar Key, including local industry, the historic railroad line, local marine life and St. Clair Whitman's shell collection. The museum is notable for several high-quality, hand-crafted dioramas depicting life in Cedar Key in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Due to the high volume of historic items housed within the park grounds, there is a need to review and update the Scope of Collections.

Additionally, exterior structures and interior exhibits are facing issues due to aging materials and outdated displays. For example, the exterior bathroom wing of the museum structure is exhibiting cracks in the block building materials. These cracks should be assessed and repaired. Facility improvements should include identifying and repairing structural imperfections as necessary. Additionally, multiple exhibits, including the handcrafted dioramas, cannot be viewed by persons with disabilities. These exhibits should be set lower in the interior wooden walls to make them accessible. In the process of any height readjustment, care should be taken to preserve the character of the attractive wooden wall inside the museum.

### **St. Clair Whitman House**

**Objective: Enhance and stabilize the historic structure.**

Recent construction projects on the St. Clair Whitman House created new structural vulnerabilities resulting in water entering the structure during periods of heavy wind-driven rain. Special care should be taken to waterproof the structure to prevent future damage and mold growth.

### **Whitman Trail Waterfront**

**Objective: Expand interpretive opportunities within the park.**

**Actions:**

- *Build a boardwalk and viewing platform.*

A dock and observation platform and supporting interpretive elements should be considered along the waterfront. The natural-surface kayak launch is already being utilized, but the addition of a dock and platform and interpretive elements would allow visitors to walk out into the channel and experience immersion in the littoral environment, as well as making paddle launch efforts from this point more accessible. An observation platform incorporated into the structure would allow for a panoramic view of the surrounding islands. The height of the observation platform should be limited to allow for the privacy of adjacent residents.

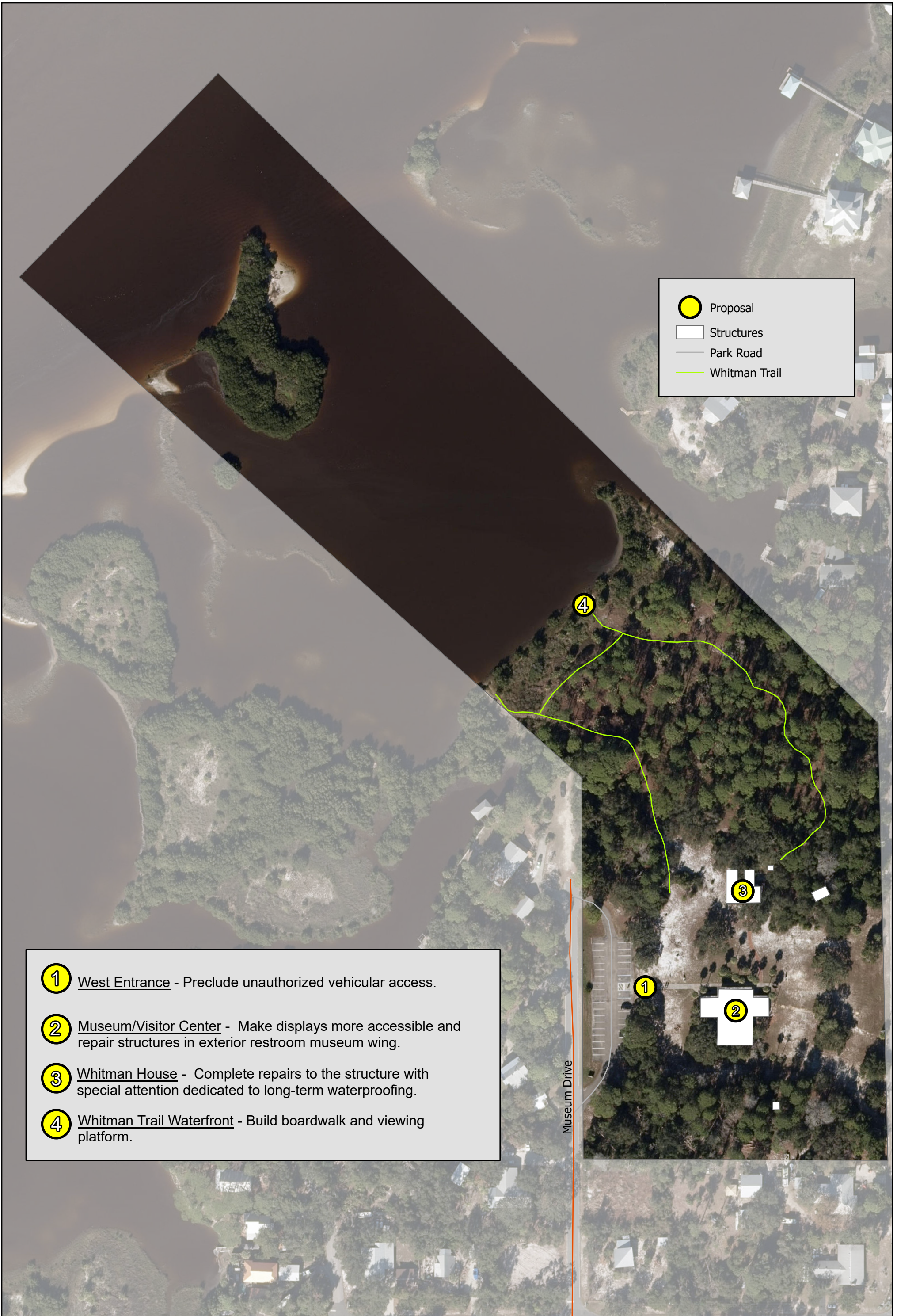
### **OPTIMUM BOUNDARY**





Currently, no additional property is needed to support the resources or operations of the park. There are no lands considered surplus.









 Proposal  
 Structures  
 Park Road  
 Whitman Trail

- 1** West Entrance - Preclude unauthorized vehicular access.
- 2** Museum/Visitor Center - Make displays more accessible and repair structures in exterior restroom museum wing.
- 3** Whitman House - Complete repairs to the structure with special attention dedicated to long-term waterproofing.
- 4** Whitman Trail Waterfront - Build boardwalk and viewing platform.

Museum Drive



**Cedar Key Museum State Park**  
 Conceptual Land Use Plan

