

Pinhook Swamp

Critical Natural Lands

Baker and Columbia Counties

<i>Year Added to Priority List</i>	1992
<i>Project Acres</i>	186,873
<i>Acquired Acres</i>	147,886
<i>Cost of Acquired Acres</i>	\$65,600,376
<i>Remaining Project Acres</i>	38,987
<i>2023 Assessed Value of Remaining Acres</i>	\$61,812,714

Purpose for State Acquisition

The Pinhook Swamp project will protect and restore a natural area of pine flatwoods and swamps, linking the Osceola National Forest, Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge and Suwannee River. The project will conserve a huge unpopulated tract of land for wildlife such as the Florida black bear and sandhill crane. The project will help to maintain the water flows to the Okefenokee Swamp, Suwannee River and St. Marys River, and provide the public with a large, near-wilderness tract to enjoy recreational activities such as hunting and fishing.

General Description

The Pinhook Swamp project consists of a large tract of mostly wet flatwoods, floodplain swamp and floodplain forest between Osceola National Forest and Okefenokee Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. It provides a landscape linkage between these managed areas, increases protection for wetlands and flatwoods, and preserves habitat for numerous rare and imperiled species. The project is connected to the Suwannee River, St. Marys River and Okefenokee Swamp. The archaeological and historic value of the project is low to moderate. The greatest threats to the area are intensive silviculture and mining. The Deep Creek Drainage Tract protects buffer areas of four tributaries of the Suwannee River and much of the watershed of Deep Creek; it also serves as a corridor between the Osceola National Forest, Big Shoals State Park and Suwannee River Water Management District lands along the river.



FNAI Element Occurrence Summary

<u>FNAI Elements</u>	<u>Score</u>
Florida black bear	G5T4/S4
Florida sandhill crane	G5T2/S2
Gopher tortoise	G3/S3
Swallow-tailed kite	G5/S2
<i>large rosebud orchid</i>	G4/S1
<i>pondspice</i>	G3?/S2
Carpenter frog	G4/S1
Many-lined salamander	G5/S1
Gopher frog	G2G3/S3
Blackbanded sunfish	G3G4/S1S3
Spotted turtle	G5/S2S3

Public Use

The Pinhook Swamp project is designated as a forest with such uses as fishing, hunting, canoeing, camping and hiking. The Deep Creek site will be designated for use as a state park and a state forest with uses such as fishing, boating, hunting, camping, hiking and environmental education. Acquisition would also help complete the Florida National Scenic Trail, a statewide non-motorized trail that crosses several Florida Forever project sites.

Acquisition Planning

The large Rayonier tract connecting the Osceola National Forest to Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge was acquired by the state. It was used as the basis for a land-and-minerals exchange with the U.S. Forest Service. Pinhook Swamp remaining: Phase I (essential) consists of large tracts adjacent to Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge and Osceola National Forest—J.W. Langdale Woodlands, Inc. and Jefferson Smurfit Corp./Carnegie US Steel Pension Funds. Phase II is the “Impassable Bay” tract—ITT Rayonier/Sam Summers (acquired by the U.S. Forest Service through The Nature Conservancy) and all remaining owners.

1996

On July 16, 1996, the Land Acquisition and Management Advisory Council added 18,100 acres to the project boundary. Additionally, the Land Acquisition and Management Advisory Council approved the addition of federal mineral rights under state-owned lands to the Pinhook Swamp project for exchange purposes.

2000

On August 22, 2000, the Acquisition and Restoration Council added 25,000 acres to the Pinhook Swamp project boundary.

2001

On April 6, 2001, the Acquisition and Restoration Council combined the Suwannee Buffers, Deep Creek Site with the Pinhook Swamp project boundary.

On August 30, 2001, the Suwannee River Water Management District established the Deep Creek Plantation conservation easement (1,192 acres), of which approximately 667 acres are within the project boundary.





2002

On October 24, 2002, the Acquisition and Restoration Council added 4,585 acres to the project boundary.

2004

On June 4, 2004, the Acquisition and Restoration Council added 31,225 acres, which were previously assumed to be included as part of a 2000 boundary amendment, to the project boundary.

2005

In August 2005, the BOT acquired 8,311 acres through five conservation easements.

2011

On December 9, 2011, the Acquisition and Restoration Council placed the project in the Critical Natural Lands category.

2020

On December 11, 2020, the Acquisition and Restoration Council approved the addition of 147.5 acres in Hamilton County to the project boundary.

2022

On October 14, 2002, the Acquisition and Restoration Council approved the addition of three parcels totaling approximately 950.5 acres in Columbia County with a tax assessed market value of \$889,668 (Greene Addition).

DEP acquired, in fee, 141.96 acres in Hamilton County that will be managed as part of Big Shoals State Forest.

2023

In October 2023, the Acquisition and Restoration Council approved two amendments to the project boundary. The first boundary amendment added six parcels with approximately 523 acres in Columbia County and the second amendment added four parcels with 456 in acres also in Columbia County.

In December 2023, the Acquisition and Restoration Council approved the addition of three parcels totaling approximately 996.5 acres in Columbia County.

Coordination

Pinhook Swamp project has been a partnership project with the U.S. Forest Service. The Nature Conservancy was an intermediary in the purchase of some tracts for the federal government. The Deep Creek site is on the Suwannee River Water Management District's five-year plan for land acquisition. The St. Johns River Water Management District is also a partner as is the Conservation Fund.

Management Policy Statement

The primary goals of management of the Pinhook Swamp project are to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species or endangered and threatened species; to conserve, protect, manage or restore important ecosystems, landscapes and forests to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources; and to provide areas for nature-based recreation.





The primary goals of management of the Suwannee Buffers (Deep Creek) portion of the project are to conserve and protect lands that contain native, relatively unaltered flora and fauna representing a natural area unique to, or scarce within, a region of the state or a larger geographic area; to conserve, protect, manage or restore important ecosystems, landscapes and forests to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreational, timber, fish or wildlife resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; and to provide areas for nature-based recreation.

Manager(s)

The Florida Forest Service, Division of Recreation and Parks and U.S. Forest Service are the recommended managers.

Management Prospectus: Pinhook Swamp

Qualifications for State Designation

Pinhook Swamp is a large area of timbered flatwoods and swamps between the Osceola National Forest and Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. Its large size, strategic location and natural resources qualify it as a state forest, state park and state wildlife management area.

Conditions Affecting Intensity of Management

Pinhook Swamp is a low-to-moderate-need tract.

Management Implementation, Public Access, Site Security and Protection of Infrastructure

A portion of the site would be managed under National Forests in Florida's Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) and a portion would be managed by the state. Management activities will focus on site security, resource inventory and management, and prescribed fire.

Revenue-generating Potential

In cooperation with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the area may provide revenues from quota hunts. The Florida Forest Service will soon be working with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to obtain a projected revenue. State and national forest user fees are an additional sources of revenue.

Cooperators in Management Activities

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be cooperators in managing the area.

Management Prospectus: Suwannee Buffers

Qualifications for State Designation

The southern part of the Deep Creek Drainage tract has unique resources that qualify it as a unit of the state park system. The project's size and diversity make it highly desirable for use and management as a state forest.

Conditions Affecting Intensity of Management

The southern portion of the Deep Creek Drainage tract is a high-need management area including public recreational use and development compatible with resource management. Areas to be managed by the





Florida Forest Service have no known major disturbances. The management intensity is expected to be typical for a state forest.

Management Implementation, Public Access, Site Security and Protection of Infrastructure

Within the first year after acquisition of the areas to be managed by the Division of Recreation and Parks, management activities will concentrate on site security, natural and cultural resource protection and efforts toward the development of a plan for long-term public use and resource management. The Florida Forest Service will provide public access for low-intensity, non-facilities-related outdoor recreation. Initial activities will include securing the site, providing public and fire management access, inventorying resources and removing trash. The Florida Forest Service will provide access to the public while protecting sensitive resources. The project’s natural resources and threatened and endangered species will be inventoried to provide the basis for a management plan.

Long-range plans of the Florida Forest Service will generally be directed toward restoring disturbed areas to their original conditions as well as protecting threatened and endangered species. An all-season burning program will use existing roads, black lines, foam lines and natural breaks to contain fires when possible. Timber management will include improving thinning and regeneration harvests. Plantations will be thinned and reforested with appropriate species. Stands will not have a targeted rotation age. Infrastructure will primarily be in disturbed areas and will be the minimum required for management and public access. The Florida Forest Service will promote environmental education.

Revenue-generating Potential

The Division of Recreation and Parks expects no significant revenue to be generated initially. After acquisition, it will be several years before any significant public facilities are developed. The amount of any future revenue generated would depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities. The Florida Forest Service will sell timber as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will provide a variable source of revenue, but the revenue-generating potential for the project is expected to be low.

Management Cost Summary

<u>DRP</u>	<u>Startup</u>	<u>Recurring</u>
Source of Funds	LATF	LATF
Salary	\$22,167	\$22,167
OPS	\$14,560	\$14,560
Expense	\$11,400	\$11,400
OCO	\$55,000	\$1,000
FCO	\$85,000	\$0
TOTAL	\$188,127	\$49,127

Source: Management Prospectus as originally submitted



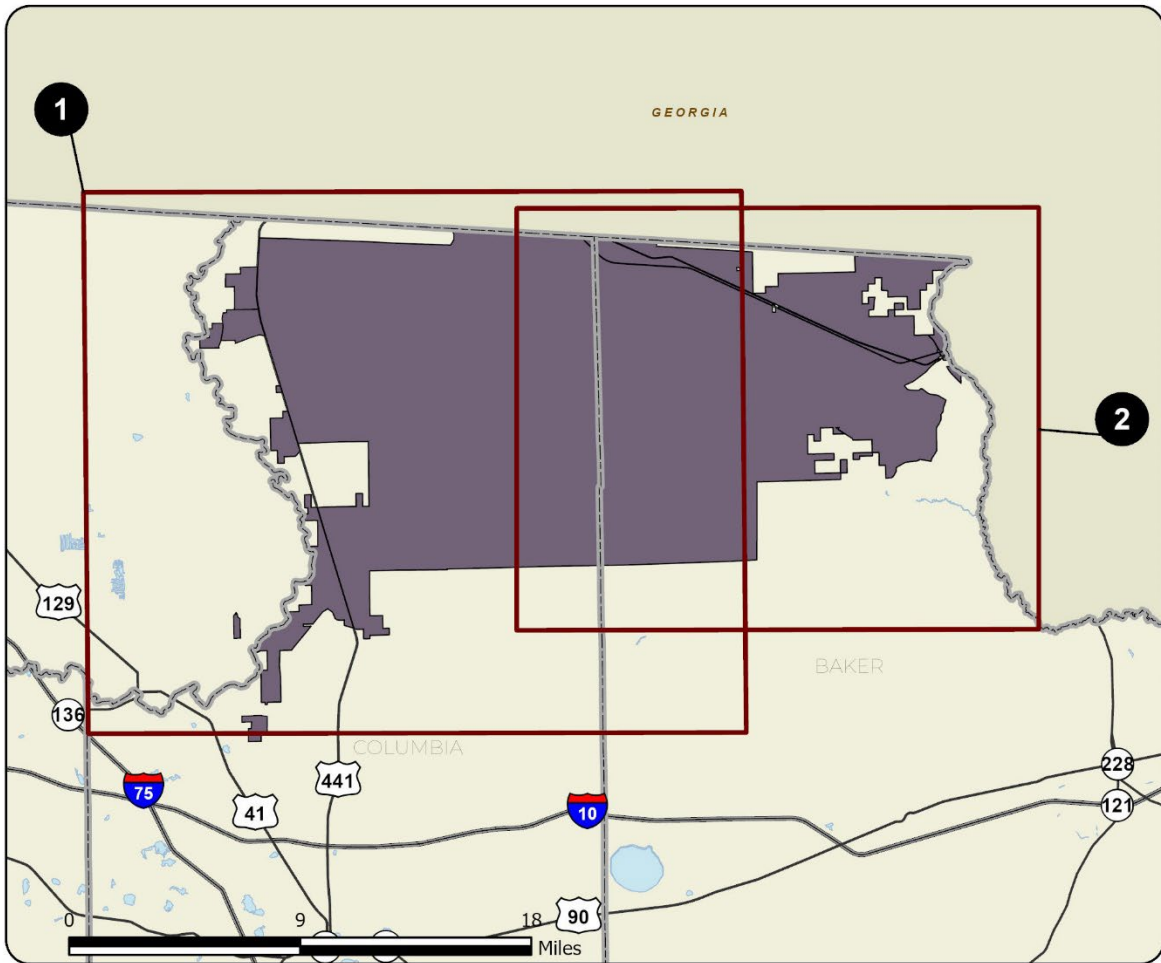


Management Cost Summary

<u>FFS</u>	<u>Startup</u>	<u>Recurring</u>
Source of Funds	LATF	LATF
Salary	\$28,140	\$28,140
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$13,000	\$5,000
OCO	\$81,100	\$2,000
FCO	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$122,240	\$35,140

Source: Management Prospectus as originally submitted



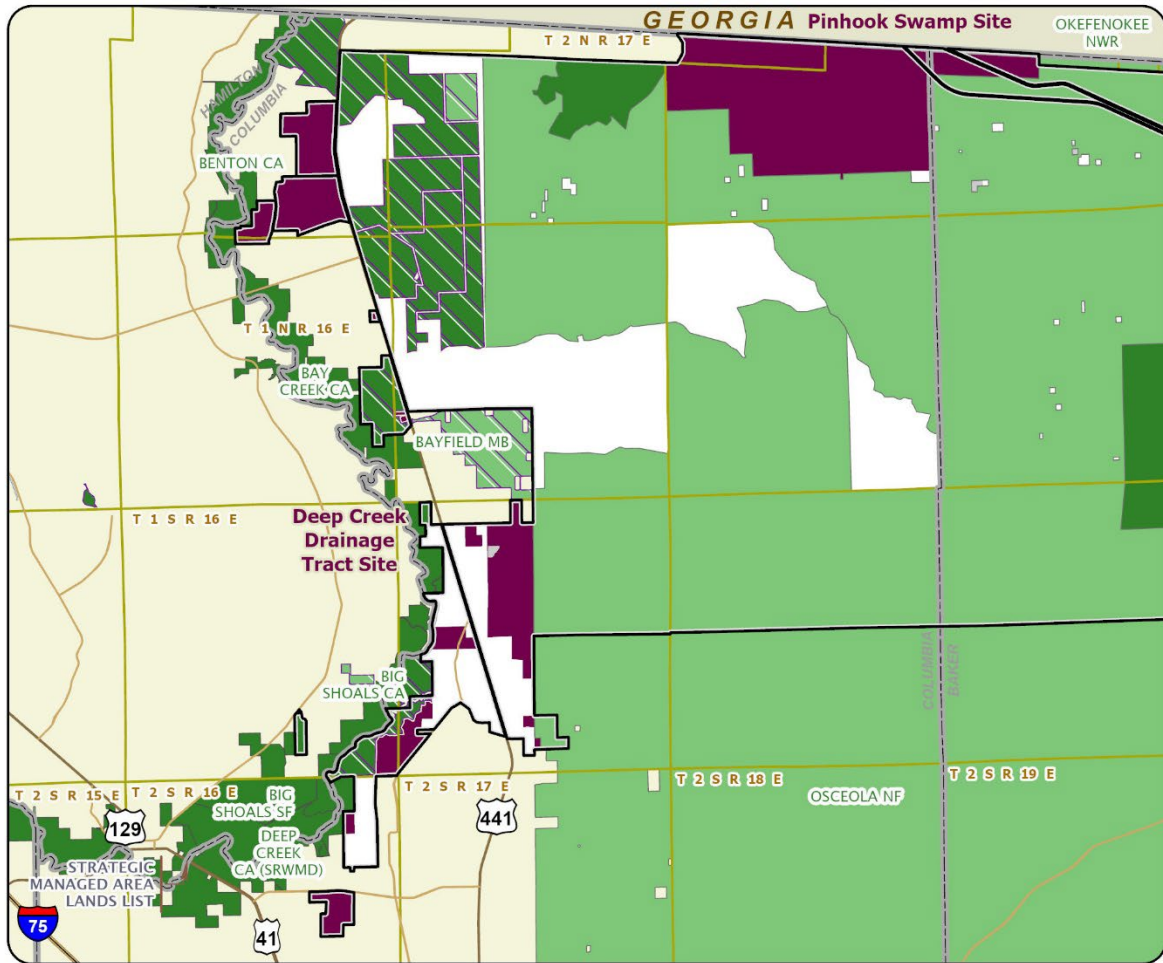


PINHOOK SWAMP: OVERVIEW

BAKER AND COLUMBIA COUNTIES

- Map 1 Deep Creek Drainage Tract Site
- Map 1 Pinhook Swamp Site
- Map 2 Pinhook Swamp Site

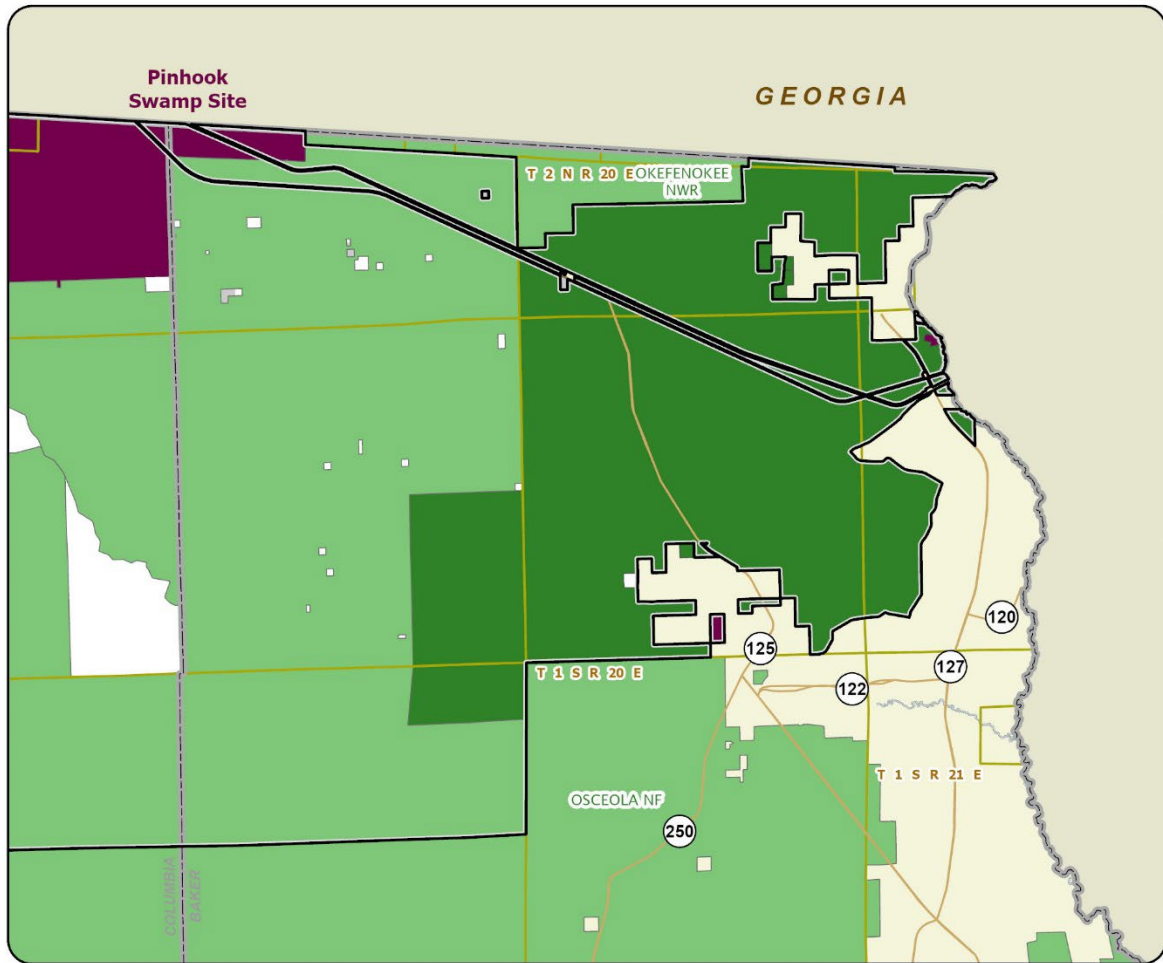




PINHOOK SWAMP: MAP 1

BAKER AND COLUMBIA COUNTIES





PINHOOK SWAMP: MAP 2

BAKER AND COLUMBIA COUNTIES

