

# Spruce Creek

Substantially Complete

Volusia County

<i>Year Added to Priority List</i>	<i>1990</i>
<i>Project Acres</i>	<i>2,803</i>
<i>Acquired Acres</i>	<i>2,469</i>
<i>Remaining Project Acres</i>	<i>334</i>
<i>2024 Assessed Value of Remaining Acres</i>	<i>\$8,234,119</i>

## Purpose for State Acquisition

The Spruce Creek project will protect one of the largest tracts of undeveloped land left along the estuary of Spruce Creek, maintain the water quality of the surrounding creeks and bays and protect the fishery. Additionally, this project will protect what may be the site of Andrew Turnbull's 18<sup>th</sup>-century plantation and provide a recreation area for cultural and environmental education, hiking and fishing.

## General Description

The original Spruce Creek project area, north and west of Strickland Bay, contains good estuarine tidal swamps, hammocks, scrub and flatwoods. It protects habitat for endangered or threatened species such as bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), wood stork (*Mycteria americana*) and West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*). The addition, between U.S. 1 and Turnbull Bay, contains good maritime or xeric hammock, with live oaks, cabbage palms and several tropical shrubs near the northern limits. Flatwoods also cover a large part of the addition, and tidal marsh with remnants of black mangrove. Disturbed areas include a historic house at the north end and the remains of a fish camp and marina east of U.S. 1. The area is adjacent to several Outstanding Florida Waters, and the aquatic resources are important to both recreational and commercial fisheries. There are two archaeological sites recorded within the project area: Spruce Creek Mound site, a prehistoric and historic burial mound, and J.D. site, a prehistoric and historic shell midden and burial site. The project may also contain historic archaeological sites related to the British Colonial Period occupation in this area of Northeast Florida (ca. 1763 - 1783 A.D.). The area is experiencing significant growth and the land is threatened by development.

FNAI Element Occurrence Summary

<b><u>FNAI Elements</u></b>	<b><u>Score</u></b>
Florida scrub-jay	G1G2/S1S2
Gopher tortoise	G3/S3
Florida black bear	G5T4/S4
<i>sand butterfly pea</i>	G2Q/S2
<i>Florida beargrass</i>	G3/S3

**Public Use**

This project is designated as a recreation area with uses such as cultural and environmental education, hiking, fishing, camping and picnicking.

**Acquisition Planning****1989**

On December 1, 1989, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council added the original Spruce Creek project to the Conservation and Recreational Lands (CARL) Priority List. This fee-simple acquisition, sponsored by Volusia County, consisted of approximately 1,718 acres, nine owners and a 1989 taxable value of \$2,675,000.

**1990**

On December 7, 1990, an owner-sponsored 54-acre parcel was added to the boundary.

**1992**

The project was removed on December 10, 1992, due to unwilling sellers. At that time, it was less than 90 percent complete.

**1994**

On December 6, 1994, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council added the current Spruce Creek project to the 1995 CARL Priority List. This fee-simple proposal was sponsored by Volusia County, as the previous one had been, and had the same name, but consisted of 524 acres (a 208-acre portion of the original project and a 316-acre addition). The project boundary, as approved by the Land Acquisition Advisory Council, however, included portions of the 1989 project that had already been acquired. The resulting project acreage equaled 1,593 acres with a taxable value of \$3,406,991.

**1996**

In 1996, the Florida Audubon Society acquired Langford Sanctuary (16.4 acres), of which 14.3 acres are within the project boundary.

**2002**

On October 24, 2002, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) approved a fee-simple 648-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by Volusia County and consisted of five owners.





## **2009**

On October 9, 2009, ARC voted to remove six sites with 54 individual parcels (97 acres) containing residential and commercial buildings or infrastructure. The total acreage removed had a just value of \$9,166,381.

## **2011**

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Substantially Complete category of Florida Forever projects.

## **2023**

In October 2023, ARC voted to remove approximately 40 acres from the project that were deemed unsuitable for State acquisition.

### **Coordination**

Volusia County is a partner in the acquisition of this project as well as being identified as the manager. The St. Johns River Water Management District and the City of Port Orange are also acquisition partners.

### **Management Policy Statement**

The primary goals of management of the Spruce Creek project are to conserve, protect, manage or restore important ecosystems, landscapes and forests in order to enhance or protect significant surface water, coastal, recreation, timber, fish or wildlife resources that local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect; to provide areas, including recreation trails, for natural resource-based recreation; and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

### **Manager(s)**

Volusia County is the recommended manager.

### **Management Prospectus**

#### **Qualifications for State Designation**

The Spruce Creek project has the size, natural, cultural and recreational resources, and surrounding population density to qualify as a state recreation area.

#### **Conditions Affecting Intensity of Management**

The project includes moderate-need tracts requiring more than basic resource management and protection. These lands will contain more highly developed resource-related recreation facilities. Large portions of the property, however, would be considered low-need tracts requiring only basic resource management and protection. Recreational use will be incorporated but in a more dispersed and less intensive manner.





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

Within the first year after acquisition, management activities will concentrate on site security and resource inventory. Volusia County will provide appropriate access to the site to maintain existing and historic uses while protecting sensitive resources on the site. The site's natural resources and listed plants and animals will be inventoried, recreational opportunities and uses identified, and a management plan formulated. Long-range plans for Spruce Creek will be specified in the management plan and will generally be directed as follows: development of recreation facilities, a comprehensive trail management program, a comprehensive educational and interpretive program, and a comprehensive historic resource management program; restoration of disturbed areas; maintenance of natural communities through a program of selected harvest and fire management; and habitat enhancement for listed species.

### Revenue-generating Potential

This will be determined by the concepts in the management plan. Some revenue will probably be generated by user and concession fees at recreation sites. Some revenues may be generated through the sale of forest products, but any such revenues will be minimal. The use of small portions of the area as mitigation for development elsewhere would not only restore damaged areas on-site but would yield revenue as well. It will be several years before potential revenue sources could be fully developed.

### Cooperators in Management Activities

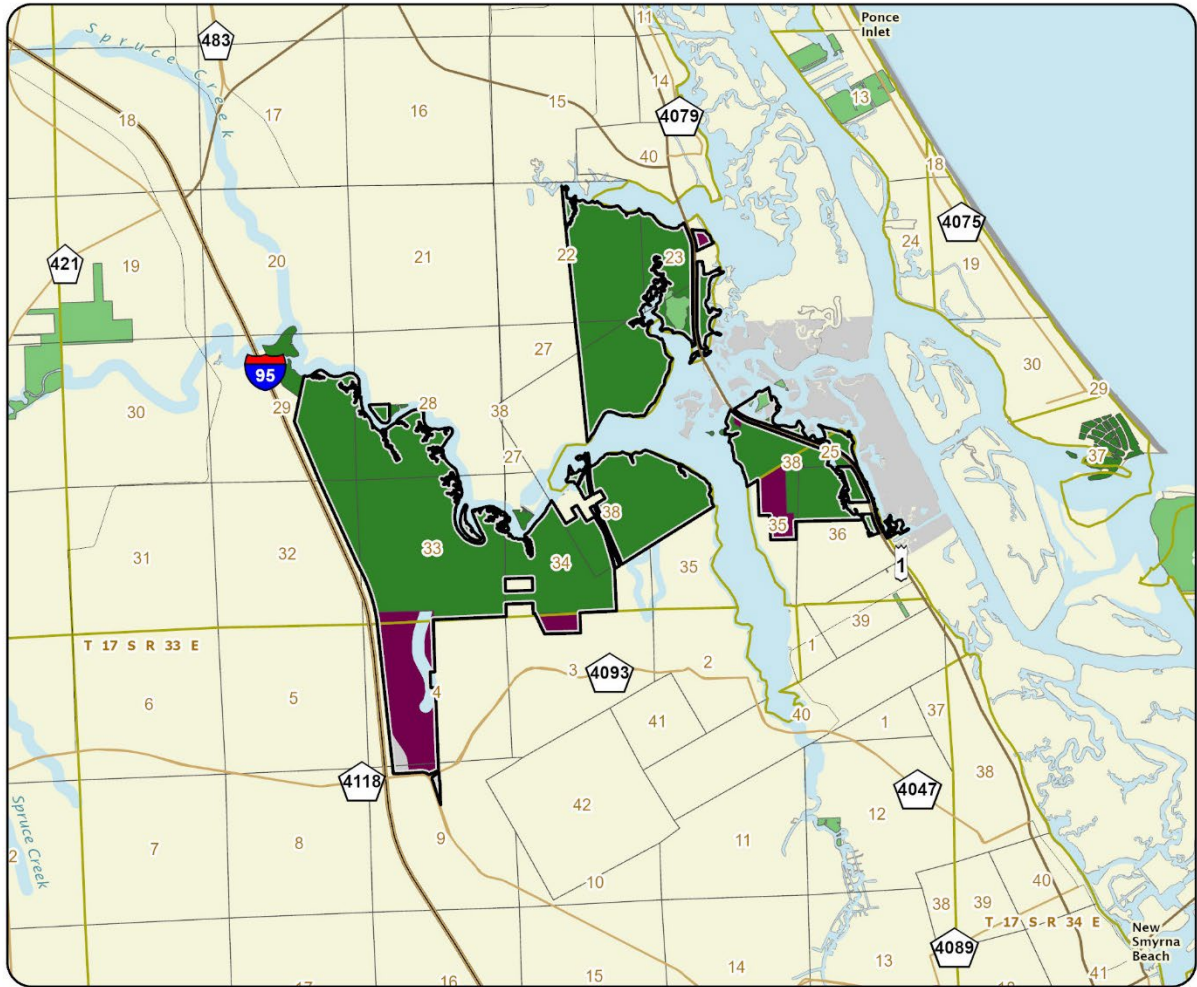
The City of Port Orange and the City of New Smyrna Beach will both be involved in the planning of the project. The Museum of Arts and Sciences and the Atlantic Center for the Arts may prove to be valuable partners in optimizing the educational and interpretive opportunities on this site. The Nature Conservancy still owns the 150 acres that are managed by the Museum of Arts and Sciences. The Environmental Council and Sierra Club have played important roles in the early protection of the creek, including sponsoring Outstanding Florida Waters status in 1986. The Southeast Volusia Historical Society and Volusia Anthropological Society have had a long-standing interest in the protection and interpretation of the cultural, historical and archaeological resources located on the project site. Volunteers will be invaluable in developing, managing and interpreting the site.

#### Management Cost Summary

Volusia County	1996/97	1997/98
Source of Funds	Volusia County	Volusia County
OPS	\$0	\$0
Expense	\$0	\$0
OCO	\$0	\$0
FCO	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$0	\$0

Source: Management Prospectus as originally submitted





## SPRUCE CREEK

### VOLUSIA COUNTY

- Florida Forever Project Boundary
- Essential Parcels Remaining
- State Conservation Lands
- Other Conservation Lands
- Other Public Lands

0 1.5 3 Miles

