

Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge

Substantially Complete

Brevard and Indian River Counties

| | |
|---|---------------|
| <i>Year Added to Priority List</i> | 1991 |
| <i>Project Acres</i> | 890 |
| <i>Acquired Acres</i> | 779 |
| <i>Remaining Project Acres</i> | 111 |
| <i>2025 Assessed Value of Remaining Acres</i> | \$113,268,092 |

Purpose for State Acquisition

The Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge project will protect the most significant nesting area for loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*) in the world, the most significant nesting area for green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) in North America, and an occasional nesting area for leatherback sea turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*), the largest and one of the rarest sea turtles. For thousands of years, sea turtles have returned each year to these beaches to lay their eggs. The Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge project is designed to protect 20 miles of beach in Brevard and Indian River counties and will help assure the continued survival of these endangered marine turtles as well as other imperiled species.

General Description

The project will consolidate and expand several small public ownerships protecting almost 10 miles of undeveloped Atlantic Coast shoreline. Natural communities within the project area are in good condition and include beach, coastal strand and maritime hammock. However, the primary significance of this tract is its value as sea turtle nesting habitat. Stretches of quiet, undisturbed sandy beaches, with little or no artificial light, are essential to the reproductive success and survival of sea turtles. The project harbors several other rare plant and animal species and is of importance to unique offshore reefs (sabellariid “worm” and hard coral) that have been proposed for listing as the focus of a Florida Coral Grounds National Marine Sanctuary. At least 30 archaeological sites (primarily shell middens) are located near or within the refuge. It is threatened by intense development pressure, both commercial and residential.





Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) Element Occurrence Summary

| <u>FNAI Elements</u> | <u>Score</u> |
|--|---------------------|
| Leatherback sea turtle | G2G3/S2 |
| Loggerhead sea turtle | G2G4/S3 |
| Green sea turtle | G4/S2S3 |
| Florida scrub-jay | G2/S2 |
| Gopher tortoise | G3/S3 |
| Florida mouse | G3/S3 |
| Southeastern beach mouse | G5T1/S1 |
| <i>Atlantic Coast Florida lantana*</i> | G2T1T2/S1S2 |
| <i>Curtiss's hoary-pea*</i> | G2/S2 |
| <i>Simpson's prickly apple*</i> | G2/S2 |
| <i>Coastal vervain*</i> | G3/S3 |
| <i>Terrestrial peperomia*</i> | G5TNR/S2 |

**Plant species are in italics*

Public Use

The project is designated as a recreation area and a wildlife and environmental area. These designations will allow such uses as photography, swimming, fishing and nature appreciation.

Acquisition Planning

1994

On November 18, 1994, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council added 85 acres to the project boundary.

1995

On March 10, 1995, the Land Acquisition and Management Advisory Council approved the addition of 112 acres to the project boundary.

1997

In July 1997, 34.22 acres were donated to Brevard County for the site of the Barrier Island Ecosystem Center, of which 24.15 acres are within the project boundary.

2001

On January 25, 2001, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added 5 acres to the project.

On April 6, 2001, ARC transferred this project to the Full Fee group from the Negotiated Impasse group.

2009

In January 2009, the state was part of a multi-part exchange that resulted in the transfer of 1.34 acres inside the project boundary to Windsor Properties. The state originally paid \$245,000 for this parcel.

2010

On August 13, 2010, ARC decided to reduce the project boundary by 233 acres (a \$288,812,490





just value reduction) because of infrastructure and commercial buildings.

2011

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project into the Climate Change Lands category.

2017

In 2017, a total of 2.6 acres in this project were acquired using Florida Forever funding.

2021

In 2021, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) acquired 1.01 acres fee simple via donation from the Conservation Fund.

2023

In October 2023, ARC voted to remove approximately 159 acres from the project that were deemed unsuitable for State acquisition.

The Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge project is now more than 85 percent complete. It was moved into the Substantially Complete category.

Coordination

This project was developed in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). In 2000, the federal government approved \$2 million for the acquisition of parcels within the project. Indian River County is an acquisition partner on several tracts. The Richard King Mellon Foundation has made a substantial contribution to the overall protection and acquisition of the project area, having acquired several tracts within the project boundary.

In 1994, individuals representing 11 government agencies, conservation groups, non-profit organizations and the local community formed the Archie Carr Working Group to enhance coordination, cooperation and communication among the diverse interest groups involved in the protection of the refuge and barrier island ecosystem. This group was still active as of 2016.

Management Policy Statement

The primary management goals of the project are to conserve scarce, undeveloped Atlantic Coast shoreline that is a globally important nesting habitat for threatened and endangered sea turtles; to conserve this important ecosystem and its wildlife resources; and to provide areas for natural resource- based recreation.

Manager(s)

USFWS will manage most of the project as a national wildlife refuge. Primary management partners include DEP, Brevard County and Indian River County. The portion of the project immediately north of Sebastian Inlet State Park and west of State Road A1A will be added to the state park.





Management Prospectus

Qualifications for State Designation

The Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge project contains the most important sea turtle nesting sites in the United States and qualifies as a wildlife and environmental area.

Conditions Affecting Intensity of Management

The project includes low, moderate and high need tracts as defined by section 259.032(7)(c), Florida Statutes. About 30 percent of the tracts are low need, 50 percent are moderate need and 20 percent are high need properties.

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

Within the first year after acquisition, activities will concentrate on site security, providing public access, inventorying resources and removing trash. A management plan will be formulated. Brevard County plans to develop an innovative environmental education program for the area. Long-range plans for the properties, beginning one year after acquisition, will be directed toward protecting the nesting beach, restoring disturbed areas, resource inventory, and perpetuating natural communities and listed species. To the greatest extent practical, parking lots and dune crossovers will be confined to already disturbed sites.

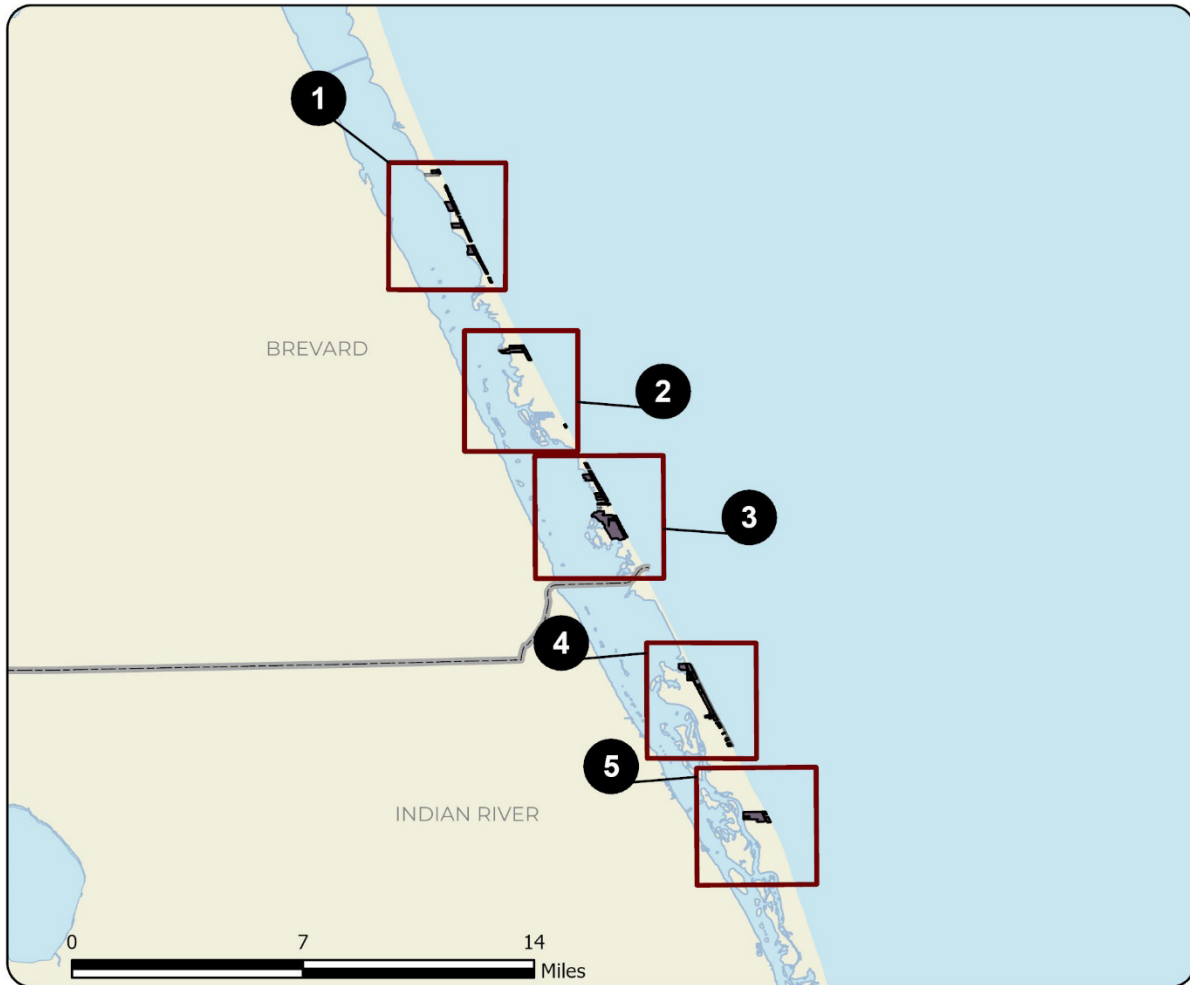
Revenue-generating Potential

Collecting parking or access fees is the only means of generating revenue from the tracts to be managed by USFWS and by local governments. DEP's Division of Recreation and Parks expects no significant revenue to be initially generated from the tracts to be added to the state park.

Cooperators in Management Activities

USFWS will collaborate with local governments, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, DEP and non-profit organizations with active management and education interests.





ARCHIE CARR SEA TURTLE REFUGE: OVERVIEW

BREVARD AND INDIAN RIVER COUNTIES

- Map 1 ACNWR - Core Segment I
- Map 1 Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge (ACNWR) Northern Boundary
- Map 2 ACNWR - Core Segment II
- Map 3 ACNWR - Core Segment III
- Map 4 ACNWR - Core Segment IV - Southern Boundary
- Map 5 Archie Carr Sea Turtle Refuge Site





ARCHIE CARR SEA TURTLE REFUGE: MAP 1

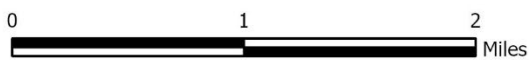
BREVARD COUNTY

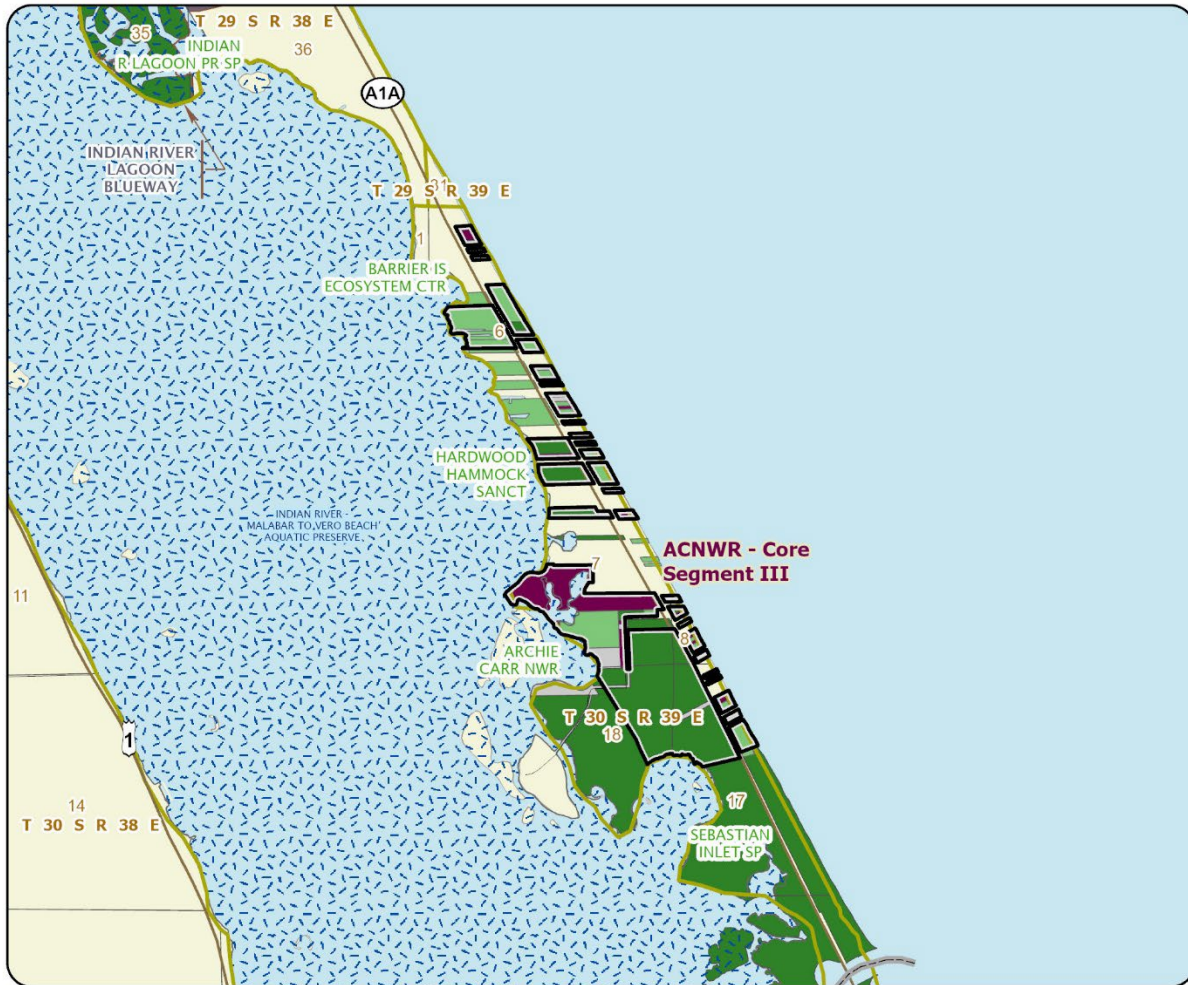




ARCHIE CARR SEA TURTLE REFUGE: MAP 2

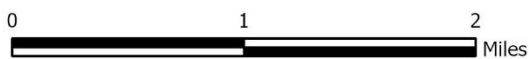
BREVARD COUNTY

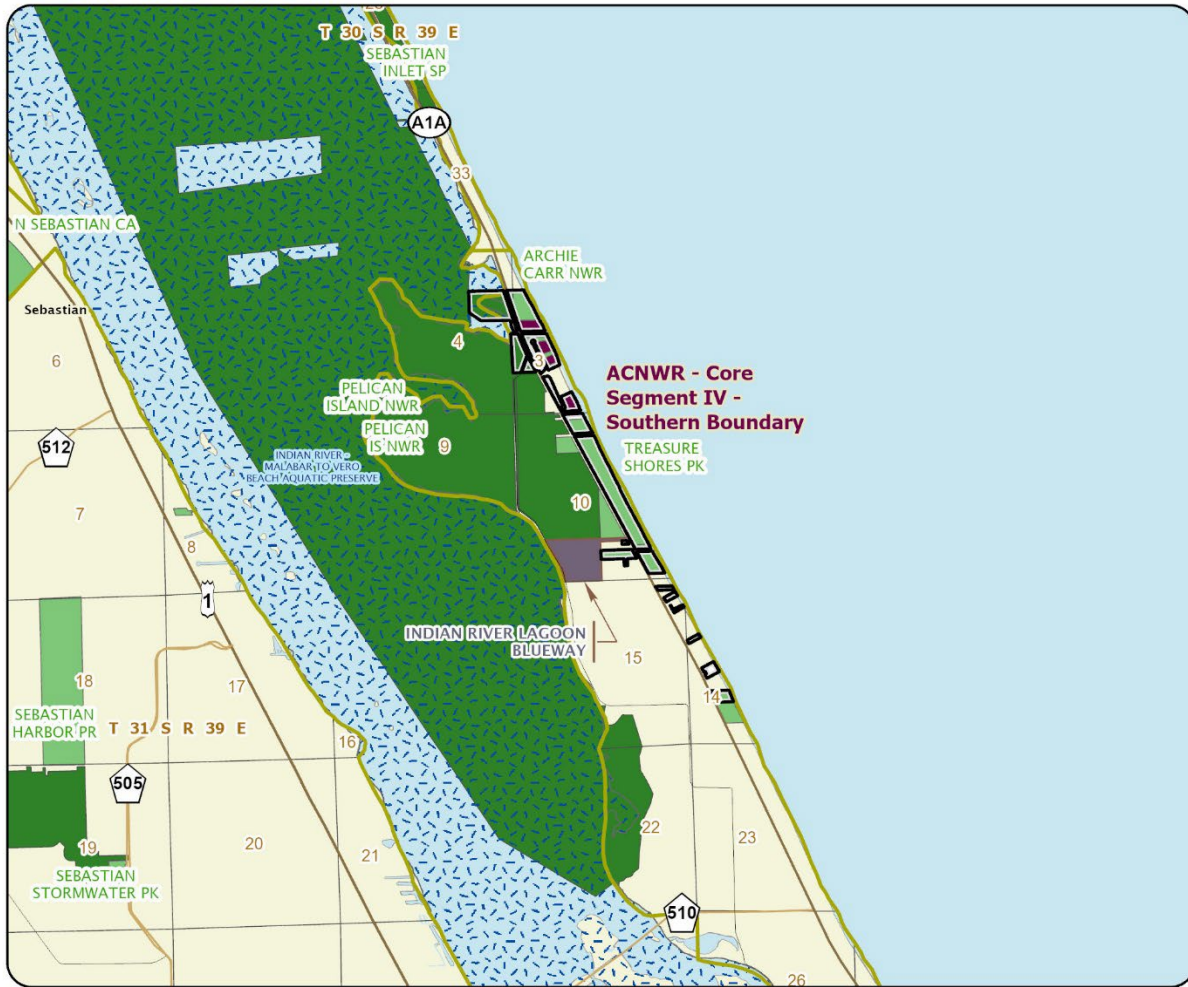




ARCHIE CARR SEA TURTLE REFUGE: MAP 3

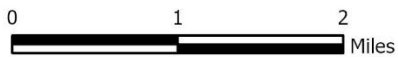
BREVARD COUNTY

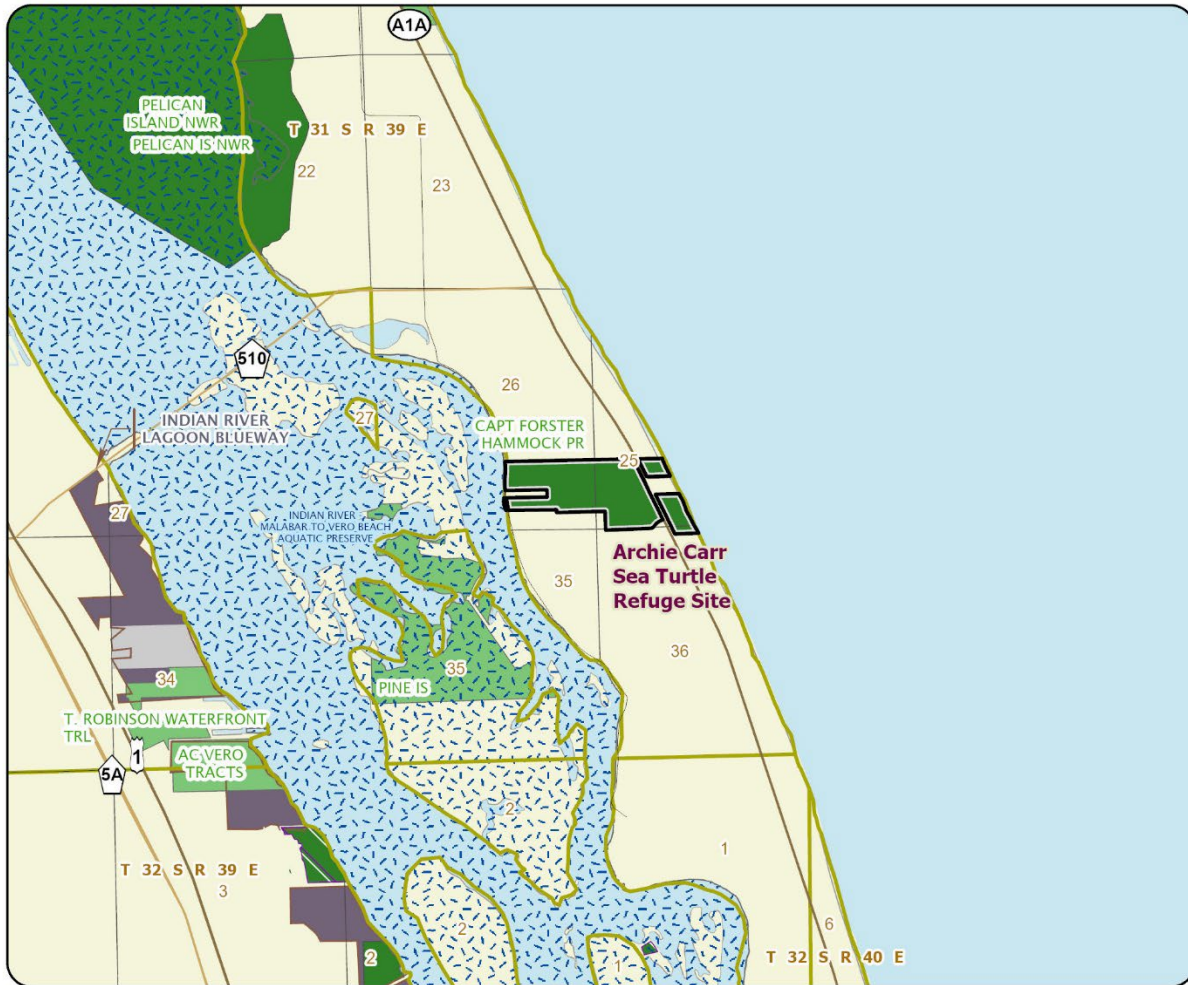




ARCHIE CARR SEA TURTLE REFUGE: MAP 4

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY





ARCHIE CARR SEA TURTLE REFUGE: MAP 5

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

