

Avalon

Critical Natural Lands

Jefferson County

<i>Year Added to Priority List</i>	2022
<i>Project Acres</i>	14,683
<i>Acquired Acres</i>	11,726
<i>Remaining Project Acres</i>	2,957
<i>2025 Assessed Value of Remaining Acres</i>	\$7,938,110

Purpose for State Acquisition

The Avalon project will provide a substantial contribution to the long-term protection of forestland and wetland systems characteristic of the Red Hills region of Florida. The project will protect high-quality ecological communities that provide critical habitat for the region’s rare and imperiled species and contribute to a contiguous corridor of conservation lands to provide important ecological connectivity in a rapidly growing region of the state.

General Description

The Avalon project contains 55 parcels totaling 13,270 acres in Jefferson County. The project is bisected by U.S. Highway 27 and U.S. Highway 19/State Road 57, extending from County Road 59 to the town of Lamont. The project largely falls within the Red Hills region, with eastern portions of the Turner-Avalon amendment located in the Aucilla lowlands.

Most of the uplands in Avalon are “old field” pine community (dominated by loblolly pine) with occasional longleaf pines and groundcover that exhibits some native components. Pine plantation is very common, and some portions of the project area have been impacted by past agricultural activities including cotton and tung oil production.

Large areas of good quality upland hardwood forest and bottomland forest are present in the project area. These forests often support a mature tree canopy and include small seepage streams. Currently, all properties are managed to support silviculture and hunting activities for game such as northern bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) and white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) and are regularly managed with prescribed fire. Because the land is in good condition, several rare species of plants and animals have been recorded in the project area.





The project is located within the Northwest Florida Sentinel Landscape, a component of the U.S. Department of Defense’s Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program.

Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) Element Occurrence Summary

<u>FNAI Elements</u>	<u>Score</u>
Gopher tortoise	G3/S3
Florida black bear	G5T4/S4
Red-cockaded woodpecker	G3/S2
<i>Florida mountain-mint*</i>	G3/S3
<i>Fever tree*</i>	G4/S2
Bachman's sparrow	G3/S3
White-breasted nuthatch	G5/S2
<i>Little brown jug*</i>	G5/S3
One-toed amphiuma	G4/S3
Bald eagle	G5/S3
Southeastern fox squirrel	G5T5/S3
Little blue heron	G5/S4

**Plant species are in italics*

Public Use

The Avalon project is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition with no public access.

Acquisition Planning

2022

On October 14, 2022, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) voted to add the Avalon project to the 2023 Florida Forever Priority List.

2023

On April 14, 2023, ARC approved adding the 1,384-acre Avalon Phase II project in Jefferson County to the 2024 Florida Forever Priority List. Avalon Phase II was proposed as a less-than-fee acquisition and had a tax-assessed value of \$3,158,220. After its approval, ARC added it to the existing Avalon project.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) acquired conservation easements over 11,692 acres in Jefferson County from Avalon Plantation, LLC.

Management Policy Statement

As a less-than-fee acquisition, the project would be managed by the landowner as outlined in the conservation easement.

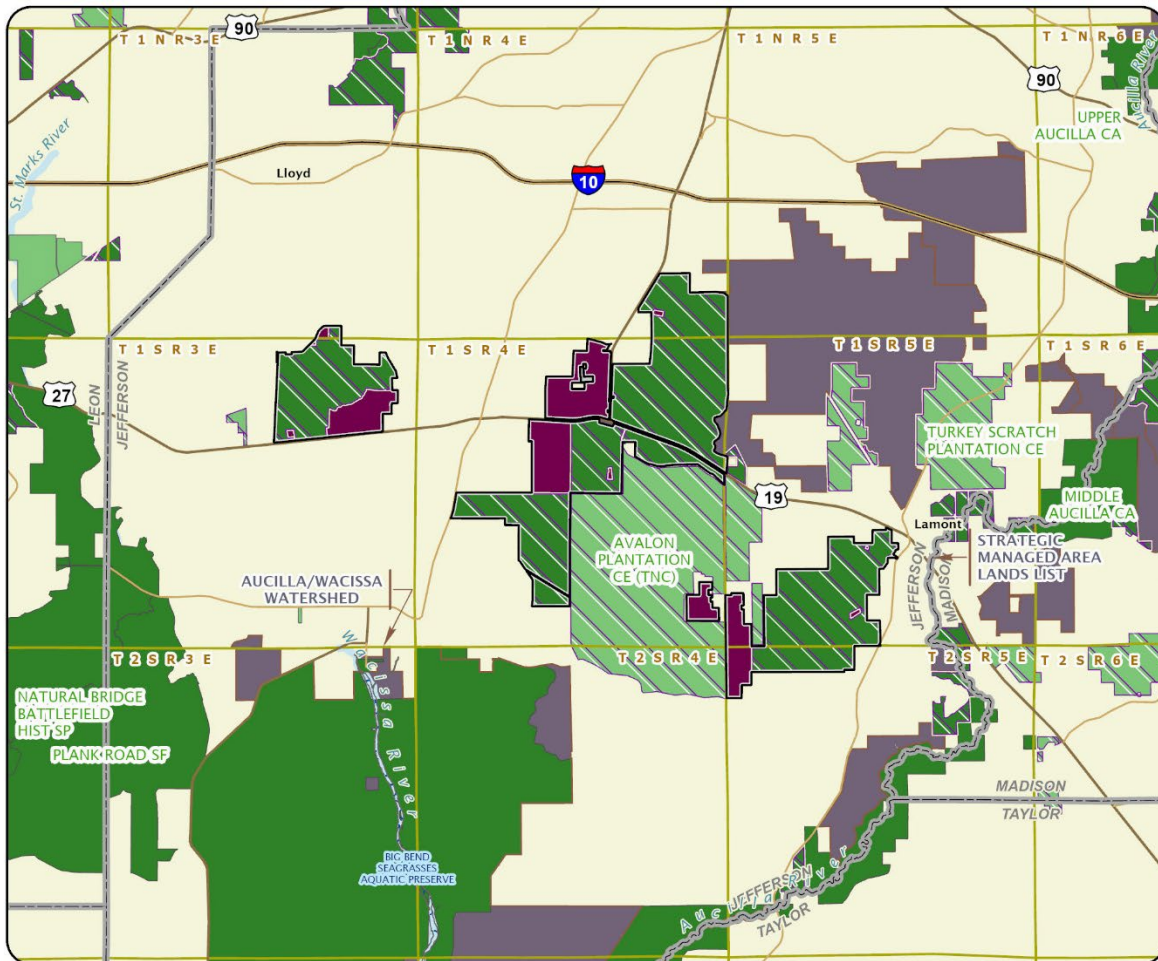




Manager(s)

If acquired as less-than-fee, management responsibility of the Avalon project would remain with the landowner. Periodic monitoring to confirm continued conservation easement compliance would be coordinated by DEP's Division of State Lands.





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