

Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem

Partnerships & Regional Incentives

Martin

<i>Year Added to Priority List</i>	1995
<i>Project Acres</i>	14,403
<i>Acquired Acres</i>	6,228
<i>Cost of Acquired Acres</i>	\$38,215,961
<i>Remaining Project Acres</i>	8,175
<i>2020 Assessed Value of Remaining Acres</i>	\$87,616,854

Purpose for State Acquisition

The Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem project will protect one of the largest patches of natural land left on the southeast coast by conserving important scrub, pine flatwoods, marshes, and South Fork's floodplain on the St. Lucie River. Cities spreading north from Miami and Fort Lauderdale have all but eliminated natural areas, such as coastal scrub along this coast. The project will also preserve the quality of water in the St. Lucie and Loxahatchee River basins and provide the public with the opportunity to enjoy the original landscape of this fast-growing area.

General Description

Mesic to Wet Flatwoods, which cover almost half (43 percent) of the project, extend from the floodplain forest along the South Fork St. Lucie River east to two ridges. One of the largest remaining islands of Atlantic Coastal Ridge scrub occupies these ridges. Most of the rare plants and animals known from the project inhabit the scrub, including the extremely rare and federally listed perforate reindeer lichen, and the Florida scrub jay. The area includes the headwaters of the South Fork St. Lucie River, which is part of the drainage basin of the Loxahatchee River (an Outstanding Florida Water) and is important for water supply to coastal Martin County. No archaeological sites are known from the project. The scrub and its resources are being lost to development.

FNAI Element Occurrence Summary

FNAI Elements	Score
Gopher tortoise	G3/S3
Florida sandhill crane	G5T2/S2
<i>perforate reindeer lichen</i>	G2G3/S2S3
<i>nodding pinweed</i>	G3/S3
<i> piedmont jointgrass</i>	G3/S3
Bald eagle	G5/S3

Public Use

This project is designated as a state park with uses such as picnicking, hiking, fishing and canoeing.

Acquisition Planning

This project consists of 28 ownerships; five relatively large ownerships. Essential parcels are those on the eastern project boundary including Davis, Shaw, and Commercial Bank Medalist (acquired under contract by SFWMD). Mobil-Seawind (acquired) is also an essential tract.

1995

On February 14, 1995, the Governor and Cabinet directed the LAMAC to hold a public workshop with Martin County, SFWMD, Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, interested environmental and economic development organizations, private landowners, and interested citizens to establish a workplan for this project. Further, the Governor and Cabinet directed that the “CARL committee report to the Cabinet with their determination prior to any purchases on that particular tract of land”. Public meetings were held on June 12, 1995 and October 5, 1995. Because of the public meetings, the LAMAC deleted about 480 acres from the project boundary. The tracts had been recently developed.

1996

On July 16, 1996, the LAMAC added 41 acres to the project boundary and about 2,118 acres were marked as the minimum acceptable acquisition boundary for the Mobil (Seawind) ownership within the project boundary.

1998

On October 15, 1998, the LAMAC designated the Phase II corridor to Jonathan Dickinson State Park as essential.

1999

On October 21, 1999, the Council added 598 acres to the project boundary as essential parcels. On August 22, 2000 the ARC added 1,920 acres to the project.

2005

On February 11, 2005, the ARC approved adding 304 acres in 16 parcels (Kitching Creek Addition) to the boundaries of the project.



2006

On December 8, 2006, the ARC approved moving the project from Group B to Group A of the Florida Forever Priority list.

2010

On February 19, 2010, the ARC approved removing 1,532 acres, disturbed by development and no longer desirable for state acquisition (just tax value of \$489,091,150), from the project boundary

2011

On December 9, 2011, the ARC placed this project in the Partnerships and Regional Incentives category of Florida Forever project.

Coordination

SFWMD is an acquisition partner.

Management Policy Statement

The goals of management of the Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem project are: to conserve and protect environmentally unique and irreplaceable lands that contain native, relatively unaltered flora and fauna representing a natural area unique to, or scarce within, a region of this state or a larger geographic area; 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, in order 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, including recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation.

Manager(s)

DRP is the recommended manager for this project.

Management Prospectus**Qualifications for state designation**

This project has the size and quality of resource desired for management under the state park system.

Conditions affecting intensity of management

The Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem is a high-need management area requiring intensive resource management and protection. Depending on the nature and extent of public use, there might be additional needs for management of public use activities and facilities.

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

After acquisition, management activities will concentrate on site security, natural resource protection, and efforts to develop a plan for long-term public use and resource management consistent with the stated goals and objectives of the approved Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem Project Assessment.



Revenue-generating potential

No significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. After the initial acquisition, it will probably be several years before any significant public-use facilities are developed. The degree of any future revenue generated would depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities. Revenue generated by the nearby Jonathan Dickinson State Park for Fiscal Year 1993-1994 was \$364,711.

Cooperators in management activities

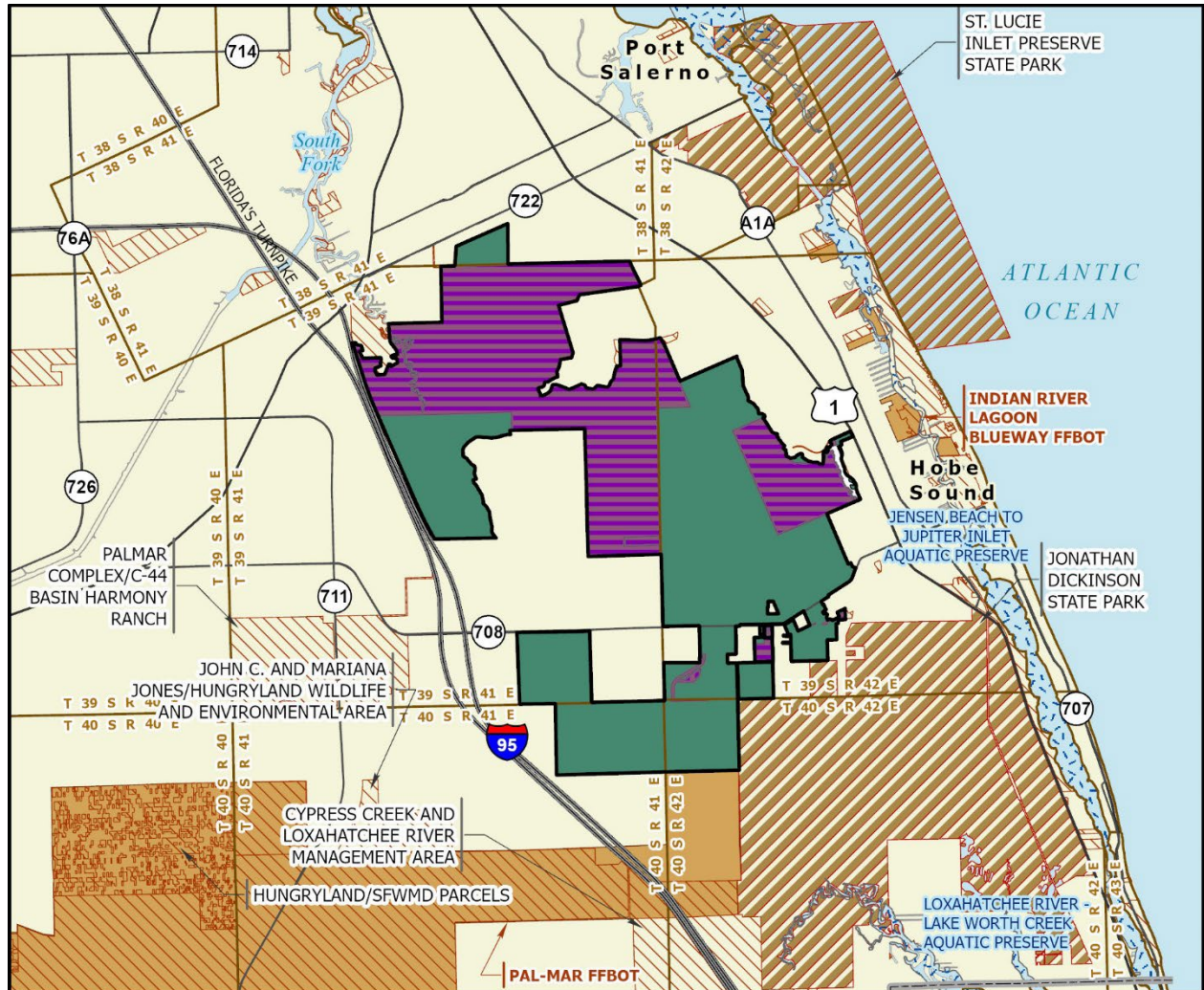
No local governments or others are recommended for management of this project.

Management Cost Summary

<u>DRP</u>	<u>Startup</u>	<u>Recurring</u>
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$52,994	\$52,994
OPS	\$8,000	\$8,000
Expense	\$26,307	\$26,307
OCO	\$129,212	\$129,212
FCO	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$216,132	\$88,301

Source: Management Prospectus as originally submitted

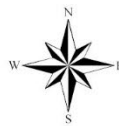
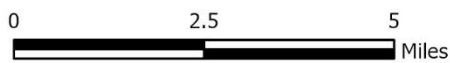




ATLANTIC RIDGE ECOSYSTEM

MARTIN COUNTY

-  Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
-  Acquired for Conservation (Fee Simple)
-  Acquired for Conservation (Less-Than-Fee)
-  Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
-  State Owned Conservation Lands
-  Other Conservation Lands
-  Other Florida Forever BOT Projects
-  State Aquatic Preserve



FEBRUARY 2022

Map 1: FNAI, February 2022

