

Battle of Wahoo Swamp

Critical Historical Resources

Sumter

<i>Year Added to Priority List</i>	2002
<i>Project Acres</i>	853
<i>Acquired Acres</i>	0
<i>Cost of Acquired Acres</i>	\$0
<i>Remaining Project Acres</i>	853
<i>2020 Assessed Value of Remaining Acres</i>	\$2,778,008

Purpose for State Acquisition

The Battle of Wahoo Swamp project will preserve a Second Seminole War battle site and protect habitat for several rare plant species. This battlefield may represent the best-preserved site of its kind and would offer opportunities to increase public awareness of Florida history during the Second Seminole War (1835-1842). The battle that occurred here November 21, 1836 was in response to the 1835 ambush and annihilation by Seminole warriors of 100 men under the command of Major Francis Dade, now memorialized at the Dade Battlefield, which is about 10 miles from Wahoo Swamp.

General Description

The Battle of Wahoo Swamp site consists of 853 acres in eastern Sumter County, four miles east of the Withlacoochee River and six miles west of I-75 and Bushnell. The northeast corner of the site that extends across CR 48 lies only 0.2 mile from the extreme southwest corner of the Jumper Creek Tract of Withlacoochee State Forest. Dade Battlefield, a historical site managed by DRP, lies about five miles southeast of Wahoo Swamp. The natural communities on the Wahoo site largely include “islands” of hardwood hammock, or upland mixed forest, scattered throughout an extensive wetland matrix of freshwater marsh and cypress swamp.

The project consists of a fee-simple acquisition of the battlefield area and less-than-fee acquisition over the remainder of the project.

FNAI Element Occurrence Summary

FNAI Elements	Score
<i>Craighead's nodding-caps</i>	G1/S1
<i>modest spleenwort</i>	G1/S1
<i>Rickett's nodding-caps</i>	G1/S1
<i>ruffled spleenwort</i>	G1Q/S1
<i>Florida spiny-pod</i>	G2/S2
<i>Curtiss' spleenwort</i>	GNA/S1
<i>Peters' bristle fern</i>	G4G5/S1S2
<i>comb polypody</i>	G5?TNR/S2
<i>plume polypody</i>	G5/S2
Eastern diamondback rattlesnake	G3/S3

Public Use

The property has diversity for limited quantities of resource-based recreational pursuits. The project's most important resource is cultural as a Seminole war battle site. Primary emphasis will be on interpretation of the historic elements of this site to the public. Varied public recreational uses could include camping, picnicking, nature appreciation, hiking, and battle re-enactments. The project also provides opportunities for wildlife viewing and nature study.

Acquisition Planning

2002

The Battle of Wahoo Swamp project was added to the 2003 Florida Forever project list at the December 5, 2002 meeting of ARC. The essential parcel is identified as the Hamilton ownership. This is a single-owner project, with five parcels that total 833 acres. The fee-simple portion of the project should be mapped and appraised before proceeding with the less-than-fee portion of the project.

2010

On December 10, 2010, ARC voted to move this project from the Critical Natural Lands category to a new category, "Critical Historical Resources."

Coordination

Sumter County Historical Society is considered an acquisition partner. No partnership funding sources were known at the time this project was added to the priority list.

Management Policy Statement

Although proposed originally for its archaeological values, the Battle of Wahoo Swamp site also supports many rare plant and animal species and examples of intact natural communities. The rocky hardwood hammocks and surrounding wetlands on this proposal represent high quality examples of a landscape that has been heavily altered throughout central Florida by conversion to pasture and residential development. This site is one of the few remaining in Florida that support the suite of rare ferns and orchids associated with limestone outcrops and grottoes.

Manager(s)

DEP's Division of Recreation and Parks proposes to manage the property.

Management Prospectus

Qualifications for state designation

Although the project evidences past uses, its present condition is good quality hardwood hammock, freshwater slough and marsh. The greater significance of the site is in the location of a battle between forces and Seminole Indians during the Second Seminole War. The battle was fought within the project and complements the history of two nearby state parks, Dade Battlefield Historic State Park and Fort Cooper Historic State Park. It is the complementary aspect of this property that makes the project desirable as a unit of the state park system. Management of the project as a unit of the state park system is based on acquiring fee title.



Conditions affecting intensity of management

Management is generally expected to entail basic resource management, such as securing and protecting the property, until a management plan is completed. As the project is in a relatively natural state, there will not be a need for any high-level resource restoration as can be the case with many projects. Prudent control of public access will be needed to protect and preserve any historic elements of the site.

Management should provide for uses and recreational activities that are compatible with the protection of the rare and sensitive resources.

Management goals and implementation

Once the project is acquired and assigned to DRP, the acquired lands will be secured, and management planning implemented. There is no infrastructure on the site. Access for low intensity, resource-based recreation will be initially accommodated and may include the installation of a starter kit at an appropriate time and location. At some future date, historic reenactment of the battle may be included in the interpretive element of the site.

Revenue-generating potential

No significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. As public use is increased and interpretive programs, particularly reenactment programs, are implemented, revenue is expected to be generated. The degree of any future revenue generated would depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities placed on the land.

Cooperators in management activities

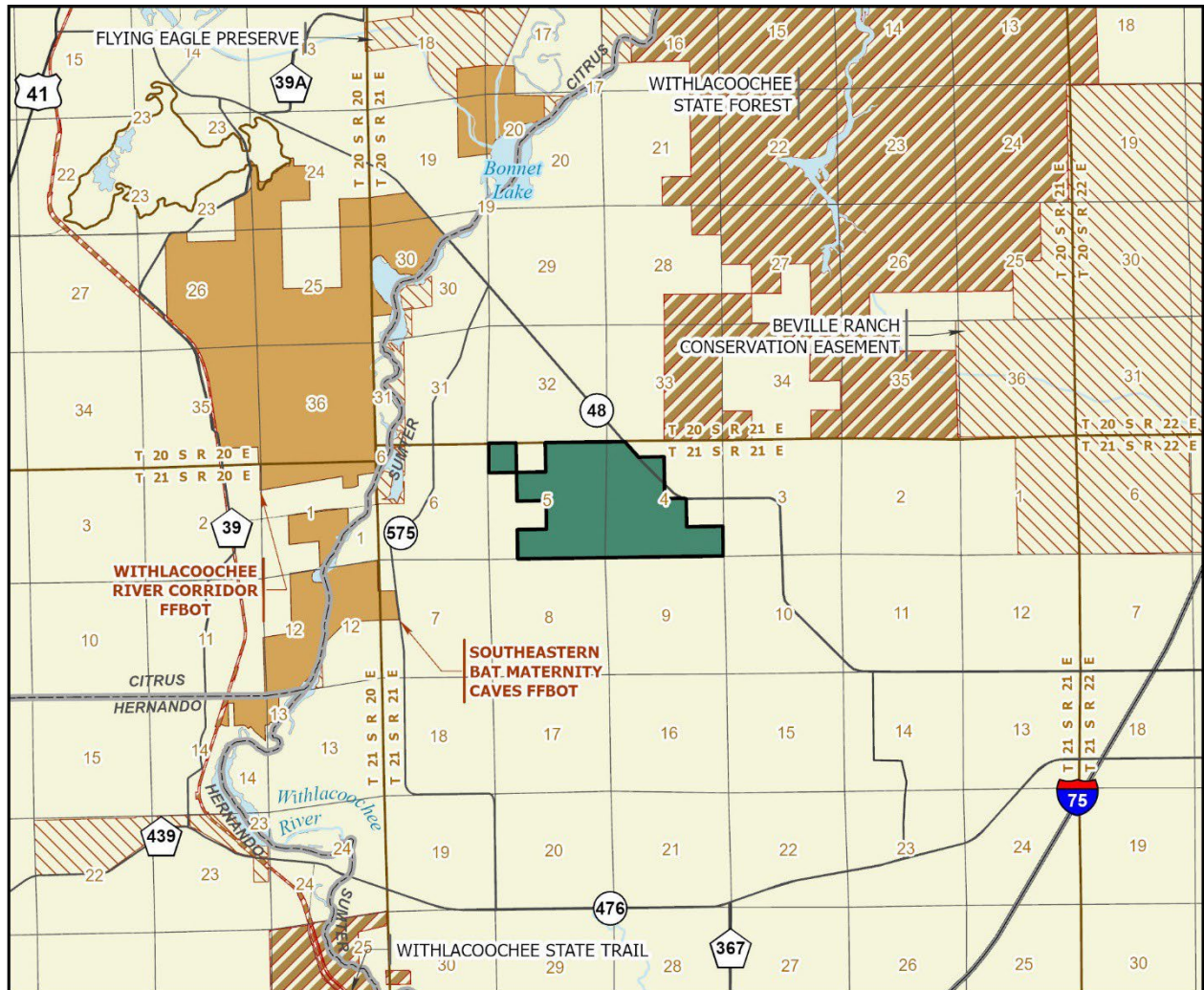
No local governments or others are recommended for management of this project. DRP will cooperate with and seek the advice of other state agencies, local government entities and interested parties as appropriate.

Management Cost Summary

<u>DRP</u>	<u>Startup</u>	<u>Recurring</u>
Source of Funds	CARL Trust Fund	not provided
Salary (1 FTE)	\$28,000	not provided
Expense	\$30,000	not provided
OCO	\$60,000	not provided
FCO	\$350,000	not provided
TOTAL	\$468,000	not provided

Source: Management Prospectus as originally submitted





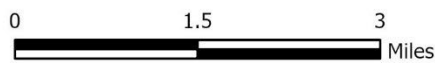
BATTLE OF WAHOO SWAMP

SUMTER COUNTY

-  Florida Forever BOT Project Boundary
-  Essential Parcel(s) Remaining
-  State Owned Conservation Lands
-  Other Conservation Lands
-  Other Florida Forever BOT Projects



MARCH 2021



Map 1: FNAI, March 2021

