

# Lafayette Forest

## Partnerships & Regional Incentives

### Lafayette

<i>Year Added to Priority List</i>	2004
<i>Project Acres</i>	13,176
<i>Acquired Acres</i>	2,923
<i>Cost of Acquired Acres</i>	\$1,312,224
<i>Remaining Project Acres</i>	10,253
<i>2020 Assessed Value of Remaining Acres</i>	\$9,210,036

### Purpose for State Acquisition

The Lafayette Forest project create a significant corridor connection between state and private conservation lands. As such, it will create a 70,000-acre block of conservation lands. The project will increase the protection of biodiversity because the project area is known to support rare species of plants and animals. The project will protect and restore the natural function of land and water by restoring, where necessary, the natural, pre-existing hydrology and preserving wetlands that aid surface retention of water. The Lafayette Forest project will increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management by managing existing natural communities to perpetuate natural species.

### General Description

The Lafayette Forest proposal consists of approximately 13,168 acres in Lafayette County. This landscape consists of basin swamps, wet prairies, floodplain swamps, interspersed between pine silviculture plantations established on disturbed mesic and hydric flatwoods and sandhill community types. The property is in eastern Lafayette County on the western side of the Suwannee River and extends south to the Levy County line.

### **FNAI Element Occurrence Summary**

<b>FNAI Elements</b>	<b>Score</b>
Gopher tortoise	G3/S3
Florida mouse	G3/S3
<i>giant orchid</i>	G2G3/S2
Little blue heron	G5/S4
White ibis	G5/S4

### Public Use

The primary land management goals for the management of the tract are to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; to integrate compatible human use; and to ensure long-term

viability of populations and species considered rare. Development of facilities would be kept to the minimum level necessary to assure a high-quality recreational experience and any such development would be confined to areas of previous disturbance. This ecosystem and multiple use approach will guide the management activities on this project. Protection and restoration of the sensitive wetlands on this project will be a priority. Public use will be limited to activities that will have little or no impact to these areas.

### Acquisition Planning

#### **2004**

On June 4, 2004, the ARC added the Lafayette Forest project to Group B of the Florida Forever 2004 Priority list. This fee-simple project, sponsored by the Conservation Fund (TCF) and FFS, consisted of approximately 13,176 acres with a single owner, International Paper Co., and a 2003 taxable value of \$1,706,933. The essential parcels were identified as the International Paper Company ownership.

#### **2005**

On January 25, 2005, the ARC moved this project to Group A of the Florida Forever 2005 Priority List.

#### **2011**

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

### Coordination

SRWMD acquired 820 acres in 2007.

### Management Policy Statement

The primary land management goals for managing the tract are to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; integrate compatible human use; and ensure long-term viability of populations and species that are considered rare. This ecosystem and multiple use approach will guide the management activities on this project. Multiple use is defined as a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that considers the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural scenic, scientific, and historic values; harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment.

### Manager(s)

FFS is recommended as the lead manager.

### Management Prospectus

#### **Qualifications for state designation**

Much of the acreage of this project consists of planted mesic and wet flatwoods. The project primarily consists of slash and loblolly pine plantations, and it is estimated that approximately 62 percent of the



project area has been converted to planted pines. The tract has been managed for silviculture production for several years. The current silviculture objectives are pulpwood and chip-n-saw production, and range in age from 1 to 25 years. With thinning, introducing prescribed fire, and sustainable forestry management practices, the project could be quickly transformed from management for silviculture to and area managed for its ecological and recreational benefits.

### **Conditions affecting intensity of management**

Much of the project's flatwoods, mesic hammock and upland mixed forest areas have been disturbed by silviculture operations and will require restoration. Areas where timber species are off-site may require thinning or removal to promote the re-generation of native ground covers and canopy.

### **Management implementation, Public access, Site security and Protection of infrastructure**

Once the project area is acquired and assigned to FFS, public access will be immediately provided for low intensity outdoor recreation activities such as hunting and fishing. FFS proposes to manage the site as a State Forest and will manage activities and coordinate public access and use. Initial and intermediate management will concentrate on resource inventory, restoration and reforestation of areas where harvesting has occurred, hydrological restoration, providing site security, and assessing public and fire management access. Inventories of the site's natural resources, its threatened and endangered flora and fauna, will be conducted to provide a basis for the formulation of a management plan. The numerous roads throughout the property necessitate the development of a road plan to identify those roads to be utilized for vehicular access by the public, those roads that are required for administrative use, and roads that are determined to be unnecessary for management or access should be closed. Steps will be taken so the public is provided appropriate access while simultaneously affording protection of sensitive resources.

### **Revenue-generating potential**

As mentioned above, timber sales will be conducted as needed to improve or maintain desirable ecosystem conditions. These sales will primarily take place in planted pine stands and will provide a variable source of revenue dependent upon a variety of factors. Due to the existing condition and volume of the timber resources on the property, revenue generating potential of this project is expected to be moderate. Some revenues might be realized in the future from recreational user fees and ecotourism activities if such projects could be economically developed. Capital Project Expenditures Florida Forever capital project expenditures are going to be needed on this parcel for prescribed fire, vegetative and hydrologic restoration, improved public access/use, and facilities, both public and administrative. It is anticipated that some the existing roads and trails may be used as multi-use trails for hiking, horseback riding and biking. This Management Prospectus is not intended to be an application for capital project funding; however, as more information is gathered, and an analysis of the site is completed, FFS intends to apply for capital project funds.



### Management Cost Summary

<u>FFS</u>	<u>Startup</u>	<u>Recurring</u>
Source of Funds	CARL	not provided
Salary (3 FTE)	\$77,035	not provided
Expense	\$123,300	not provided
OCO	\$423,725	not provided
TOTAL	\$624,060	not provided

*Source: Management Prospectus as originally submitted*



