

Lower Perdido River Buffer

Less-Than-Fee

Escambia

<i>Year Added to Priority List</i>	2002
<i>Project Acres</i>	7,728
<i>Acquired Acres</i>	5,390
<i>Cost of Acquired Acres</i>	\$12,085,069
<i>Remaining Project Acres</i>	2,338
<i>2020 Assessed Value of Remaining Acres</i>	\$7,689,795

Purpose for State Acquisition

The Lower Perdido River Buffer project will preserve a riverine area along one of the state's "Outstanding Florida Waters" that has low levels of development, while providing recreational access points for canoeing and kayaking. The access points will be acquired in fee simple and provide recreational access to the river where none exist today. This project will increase natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities by enhancing access to the Perdido River. The project will preserve forest land for sustainable management of natural resources.,

General Description

The Perdido River is a medium-size sand-bottom blackwater stream that starts in southern Alabama. It has a low relief that is typical of many rivers in the lower Gulf Coastal Plain. The river has no first-magnitude or second-magnitude springs but depends on rainfall for most of its water, as a result, its flow has substantial fluctuations. The high flows have caused erosion bends upstream that created large and medium-size sandbars, suitable for camping, along many of the river's inner upstream of State Road 184. The river is exceptionally winding, with few straight stretches of more than 200 yards. There are numerous fallen trees, generally Atlantic white cedar, but below Barrineau Park most of the fallen trees have been cut to allow small boats to pass. The river is about 100 yards wide at the mouth on Perdido Bay but is only about 30 yards wide near Barrineau Park. The Lower Perdido River Buffer includes land on the eastern Florida-side of the river from roughly the center of Escambia County (near the Barrineau Park community) downstream to the river's mouth on Perdido Bay. This project has approximately 5,053 acres of functional wetlands that will be protected through acquisition. Approximately 2,094 acres have been identified that provide groundwater recharge, and approximately 1,056 acres of forest have been identified that maintain natural groundwater recharge functions.

FNAI Element Occurrence Summary

FNAI Elements	Score
<i>Louisiana yellow-eyed grass</i>	G2G3/S1
Escambia crayfish	G2/S2
<i>West Florida cowlily</i>	G5T2/S2
<i>Curtiss' sandgrass</i>	G3/S3
Rusty grave digger	G3/S3
<i>primrose-flowered butterwort</i>	G3G4/S3

Public Use

The Lower Perdido River Buffer is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition and does not provide for public access. However, the owner is willing to sell limited access points to the Perdido River. This would allow river access for launching and landing canoes and small boats.

Acquisition Planning

2002

The Lower Perdido River Buffer Florida Forever project was added to the 2002 Florida Forever project list at the June 6, 2002 ARC meeting as a Group A project. At that time, the project had an estimated tax assessed value of \$217,336.

The project property was entirely owned by International Paper when the project was added to the list. The specific locations of the small access sites along the river for fee-simple will be determined during the negotiation process.

2006

On May 31, 2006, the NFWFMD purchased 5,456 acres within the Florida Forever project boundary.

2011

The project was designated a less-than-fee project in 2002 and was placed in the Less-Than-Fee category of Florida Forever projects on December 9, 2011.

Coordination

The Office of Environmental Services (OES) will oversee monitoring of the easement. Escambia County will manage the access points on fee-simple portions of the project once they are determined. The acquisition partnership is expected to include local, state and NFWFMD funding sources. Contribution funding percentages have not been determined.

Management Policy Statement

As a less-than-fee acquisition, the Lower Perdido River Buffer would be managed for conservation purposes by the landowner as outlined in the conservation easement.



Manager(s)

If acquired as less-than-fee, management responsibility of the Lower Perdido River Buffer would remain with the landowner. Periodic monitoring of the site's management to confirm continued compliance with the conditions of the conservation easement would be coordinated by OES. Escambia County will manage the access points once they are determined.

Management Prospectus

OES will periodically monitor the conservation easement, while the management will be conducted by the property owner.

Qualifications for state designation

Protecting the Lower Perdido River Buffer with a combination of a conservation easement and the outright purchase of select access points will benefit the public in several major ways:

- 1) This project will keep wetland and marsh habitats located within a major metropolitan statistical area free from the pressures of development;
- 2) The use of the conservation easement for the project will keep the majority of the land in private hands;
- 3) This project will allow, at selected points, riverine access for the public for boating and fishing.

Conditions affecting intensity of management

The Perdido River itself appears to be free of major structural alterations and point sources of pollution that substantially affect either flow or water quality. Hence, no major restoration efforts along the immediate river corridor are necessary. Nonetheless, all areas of minor structural alterations (e.g., houses, boat ramps, highway crossings) should be examined in the future to determine whether any of them are contributing erosion, siltation, or pollution.

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

Management of the property would depend on the nature and the provisions of the conservation easement that would be used to secure riverine access in this project.

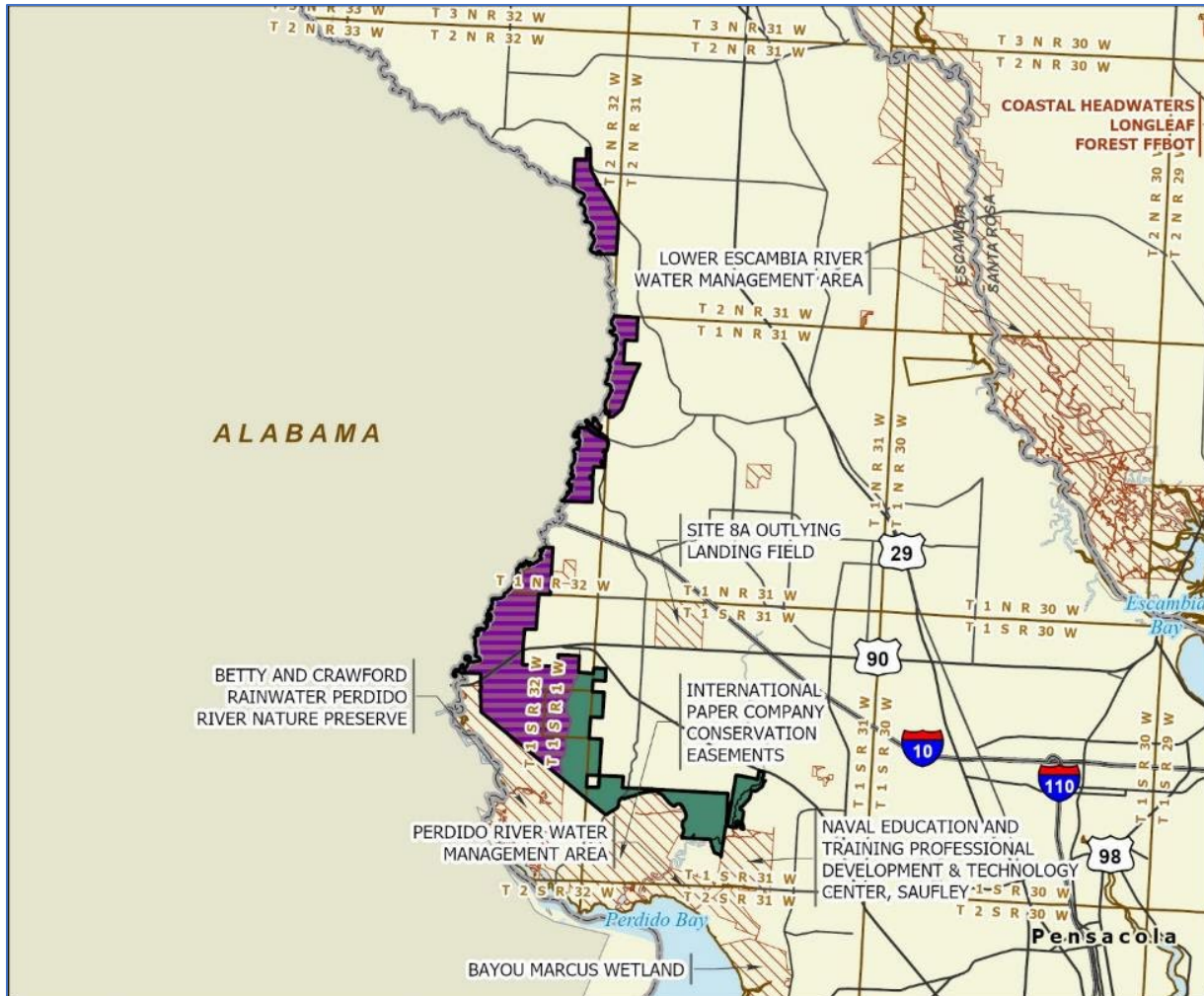
Revenue-generating potential

Revenue generation potential is minimal since the Lower Perdido River Buffer project is for a conservation easement. The small areas for river access to be acquired in fee simple would not be expected to generate revenue.

Cooperators in management activities

Escambia County would manage the access points to the river.





LOWER PERDIDO RIVER BUFFER

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

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



JANUARY 2020



Map 1: FNAI, January 2020