

# Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie

Critical Natural Lands

Escambia County

<i>Year Added to Priority List</i>	1995
<i>Project Acres</i>	6,880
<i>Acquired Acres</i>	4,660
<i>Remaining Project Acres</i>	2,220
<i>2024 Assessed Value of Remaining Acres</i>	\$38,709,791

## Purpose for State Acquisition

The Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie project will conserve some of the last remnants of a landscape of wet grassy prairies, pine flatwoods and swamps found in the western Panhandle of Florida and unique to the northern Gulf Coast. The project will protect important habitat for imperiled pitcher plants and protect the water quality of Perdido Bay and Big Lagoon and provide the public with opportunities to learn about this unique ecosystem. Acquisition of this project is also essential to the U.S. Navy's base-buffering initiative.

## General Description

The project covers a large undeveloped area where low ridges of ancient dune lines alternate with slightly lower intervening swales. The project also includes over two miles of frontage on Perdido Bay. The wet prairies in this area are some of the last examples of one of the most diverse plant communities in the Southeast. They support one of the largest stands of white-topped pitcher plants (*Sarracenia leucophylla*) in Florida, along with almost 100 other plant species. The prairies have intact ecotones of basin swamp, scrub, sandhill and mesic flatwood communities. The large expanses of flatwoods and basin swamps on the site provide habitat for many species. However, the site's uplands are vulnerable to development (particularly in the Tarkiln Bayou area). No archaeological sites are known in the project.

## FNAI Element Occurrence Summary

<b><u>FNAI Elements</u></b>	<b><u>Score</u></b>
<i>Wherry's redflower pitcherplant</i>	G3T1?/S1
Escambia crayfish	G2/S1S2
<i>large-leaved jointweed</i>	G3/S3

## Public Use

This project is designated for use as a state park, providing opportunities for swimming, fishing, boating, camping, hiking and nature appreciation.

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## Acquisition Planning

### **1994**

On December 7, 1994, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council added the Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie project to the Conservation and Recreational Lands Priority List. This fee-simple acquisition proposal, sponsored by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory, consisted of approximately 5,515 acres, multiple owners and had a taxable value of \$3,210,940.

### **1998**

On October 15, 1998, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council redefined the essential parcels.

On December 3, 1998, the Land Acquisition Advisory Council approved a fee-simple, 385-acre addition to the project boundary. It was sponsored by the Friends of the Prairie group, consisting of 23 owners and had a taxable value of \$380,371.

Acquisition work is proceeding on the important resource areas and in areas needed for connectivity and optimum management. Two large ownerships within the project boundary remain to be acquired, along with several smaller parcels. Significant pitcher plant prairies in sections 11, 12, 20 and 21 and the area surrounding Tarkiln Bayou and Garcon Swamp are important first priorities.

### **2010**

In April 2010, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) voted to remove 658 acres because of existing residential, commercial and infrastructure development.

### **2011**

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed this project in the Critical Natural Lands category.

### **2023**

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) acquired, in fee, 23.85 acres in Escambia County from Pleasant Gove Investments LLC.

### **2024**

On December 5, 2024, DEP acquired, in fee, 6.68 acres in Escambia County from Sue Anne Spychala.

## Coordination

The Nature Conservancy, as an intermediary in this project, is considered a partner as well as the Northwest Florida Water Management District.

## Management Policy Statement

The primary management goals of the Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie project are to conserve and protect environmentally unique and irreplaceable lands that contain native flora and fauna representing a natural area unique to, or scarce within, a region of this state; to conserve and protect significant habitat for native and imperiled species; and to conserve, protect, manage or restore important ecosystems and landscapes to enhance or protect significant natural resources which local or state regulatory programs cannot adequately protect. Secondary goals are to provide areas, including





recreational trails, for natural-resource-based recreation and to preserve significant archaeological or historical sites.

**Manager(s)**

DEP’s Division of Recreation and Parks is the recommended manager. Lands acquired within the project boundary are being managed as Tarkiln Bayou Preserve State Park.

**Management Prospectus**

**Qualifications for State Designation**

The project will enhance the protection of rare and sensitive resources. The project will also contribute to providing the public with natural resource-based activities and critical open space.

**Conditions Affecting Intensity of Management**

The Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie project is a high-need management area requiring intensive resource management and protection. Depending on the nature and extent of public use, there may be additional needs for management of activities and facilities.

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

Within the first year after acquisition, management activities will concentrate on site security, natural and cultural resource protection, and development of a plan for long-term public use and resource management consistent with the stated goals and objectives of the approved Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie Project Assessment.

**Revenue-generating Potential**

No significant revenue is expected to be generated initially. After the initial acquisition, it will likely be several years before any significant public-use facilities are developed. The amount of any future revenue generated would depend on the nature and extent of public use and facilities.

**Cooperators in Management Activities**

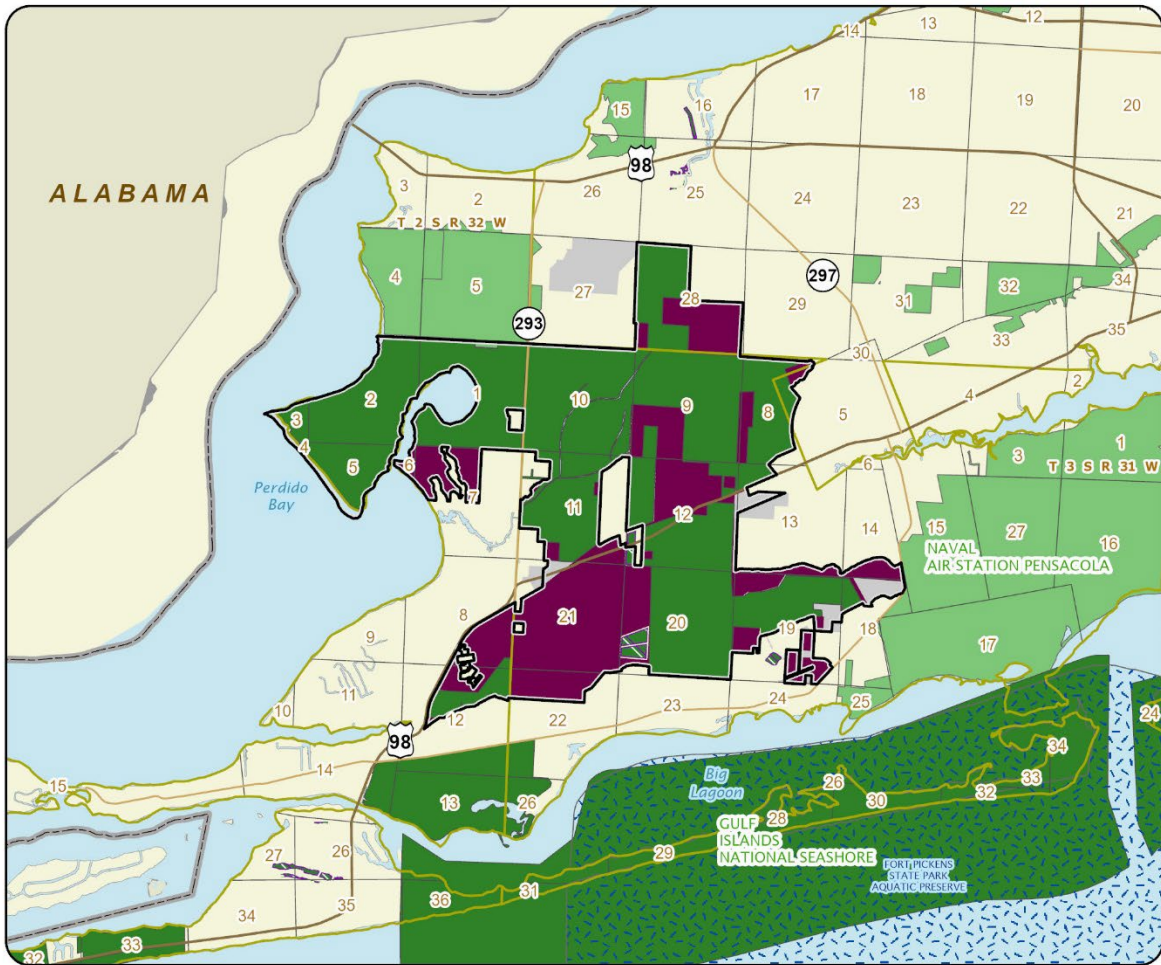
No other agencies are recommended for management of this project.

Management Cost Summary

<u>DRP</u>	<u>Startup</u>	<u>Recurring</u>
Source of Funds	CARL	CARL
Salary	\$50,515	\$50,515
OPS	\$10,000	\$10,000
Expense	\$61,307	\$61,307
OCO	\$106,000	\$1,000
FCO	\$178,000	\$0
TOTAL	\$405,822	\$122,822

Source: Management Prospectus as originally submitted





### PERDIDO PITCHER PLANT PRAIRIE

#### ESCAMBIA COUNTY

