

# Raiford to Osceola Greenway

Less-Than-Fee

Baker and Union Counties

<i>Year Added to Priority List</i>	2010
<i>Project Acres</i>	68,849
<i>Acquired Acres</i>	1,313
<i>Remaining Project Acres</i>	67,536
<i>2024 Assessed Value of Remaining Acres</i>	\$110,347,690

## Purpose for State Acquisition

The Raiford to Osceola Greenway project will provide a landscape connector between the Florida Forever projects to the east, Raiford Wildlife Management Area to the south and Osceola National Forest to the northwest. The project will contribute to the protection, restoration and maintenance of the state's waters by preserving four major blackwater streams from three major river basins, in addition to several headwaters and tributaries. The project will also increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources.

## General Description

The Camp Blanding-Osceola Greenway project was subdivided to create two projects: Camp Blanding to Raiford Greenway and Raiford to Osceola Greenway. The Raiford to Osceola Greenway project consists of land abutting the Camp Blanding to Raiford Greenway project on the east to the southeast boundary of the Osceola National Forest. It connects several managed areas in Baker and Union counties, resulting in a potential contiguous area of more than half a million acres of publicly owned, managed or planned to own/managed lands in north-central Florida. Physiographic features of interest include the Trail Ridge, the eastern portions of the Cody Scarp, and several large wetlands that have been ecologically devalued by silvicultural activities or mining. Approximately half of the project area consists of natural floodplain, basin swamp and baygall swamp.





FNAI Element Occurrence Summary

<b><u>FNAI Elements</u></b>	<b><u>Score</u></b>
Florida black bear	G5T4/S4
<i>Chapman's fringed orchid</i>	G2/S2
Eastern indigo snake	G3/S2?
Red-cockaded woodpecker	G3/S2
Gopher tortoise	G3/S3
<i>pineland scurfpea</i>	G1/S1
<i>Florida hartwrightia</i>	G2G3/S2S3
Many-lined salamander	G5/S1
Bachman's sparrow	G3/S3
Timber rattlesnake	G4/S3
Bald eagle	G5/S3
Osprey	G5/S3S4

**Public Use**

The project is proposed for less-than-fee acquisition and does not provide for public access. However, through discussion, representatives of the landowner have indicated that they will consider continuing the limited public uses that are allowed today. The Raiford to Osceola Greenway project is an expansive area that could have significant natural resource-based potential if portions of the project were available to the public. Particularly significant is the block of land west of State Road 231 containing Palestine Lake. All trails throughout the project have the potential for being multiple-use trails with hiking, horseback riding and bicycling. The corridor of the congressionally designated Florida National Scenic Trail, a cross-Florida hiking and non-motorized trail, crosses this project.

**Acquisition Planning**

**2003**

On December 5, 2003, the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) added the Camp Blanding-Osceola Greenway project to Group A of the 2004 Florida Forever Priority List. This fee-simple and less-than-fee project, sponsored by the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) and the Conservation Trust of Florida, consisted of approximately 153,000 acres, multiple ownerships and a taxable value of \$28,508,089. The essential parcels were identified as the Plum Creek and Wachovia ownerships.

**2006**

On October 13, 2006, ARC adopted a redesign of the essential parcels within the original project. The number and acreage of essential parcels were revised by removing 106 parcels (64,250 acres) and adding 52 parcels (10,180 acres); a total of 54,020 acres remaining within the boundary were no longer designated as essential. The new essential parcel configuration will connect Camp Blanding to the Raiford Wildlife Management Area, then to the Osceola National Forest.

**2010**

On June 11, 2010, ARC adopted a redesign of the Camp Blanding-Osceola Greenway project that identified 67,457 acres in the Raiford to Osceola Greenway project as well as 33,977 acres in the Camp





Blanding to Raiford Greenway project. After a project redesign in 2010, the project had an estimated tax-assessed value of \$193,255,020.

**2011**

On December 9, 2011, ARC placed the project in the Less-Than-Fee category in the Florida Forever Priority List.

**2022**

On April 8, 2022, ARC approved the South Prong of the St. Marys River (1,146 acres) project proposal and combined it with the Raiford to Osceola Greenway project.

**2024**

On August 2, 2024, DEP acquired a 201.86-acre conservation easement in Union County from FWF Acquisitions LLC.

Coordination

The Conservation Trust of Florida and DEP’s Office of Greenways and Trails are considered acquisition partners on this project.

Management Policy Statement

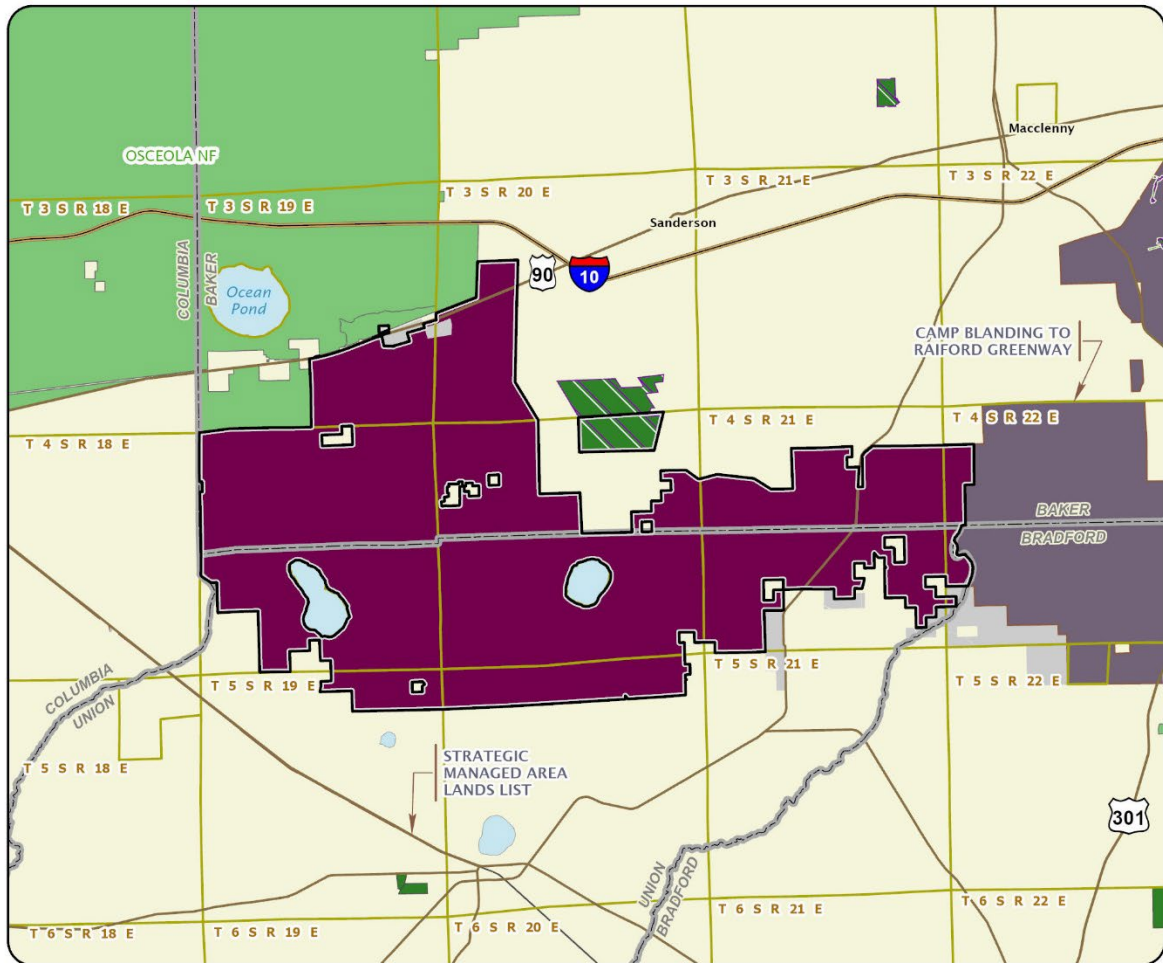
As a less-than-fee acquisition, the Raiford to Osceola Greenway project would be managed by the landowner as outlined in the conservation easement.

Manager(s)

If acquired as less-than-fee, management responsibility of the Raiford to Osceola Greenway project would remain with the landowner. Periodic monitoring of the site’s management to confirm continued conservation easement compliance would be coordinated by DEP’s Division of State Lands.

Management Prospectus

DEP’s Division of State Lands will periodically monitor the conservation easement, while the management will be conducted by the property owner.



### RAIFORD TO OSCEOLA GREENWAY

#### BAKER AND UNION COUNTIES

