

Wes Skiles Peacock Springs State Park

Planning Region: Suwannee River

County: Suwannee

Lease/Management Agreement Number: 3504

Overview

Wes Skiles Peacock Springs State Park protects two distinct aquatic cave systems, including 8.5-mile Peacock Springs System and 1.5-mile Bonnet Spring system which provide habitat for four imperiled species of cave dwelling invertebrates. The park was acquired to protect and preserve a representative example of natural karst topography, aquatic cave environments, second growth and old growth forests, and water resources with direct hydrological linkages to the Suwannee River and the artesian limestone aquifer.

Total Acreage: 761

Natural Communities	Acres
Sandhill	0.29
Upland Hardwood Forest	100.28
Sinkhole	1.29
Alluvial Forest	13.15
Floodplain Swamp	20.51
Spring-Run Stream	6.34
Bottomland Forest	67.64
Sinkhole Lake	0.61
Upland Pine	58.32
Altered Landcover	
Developed	4.00
Abandoned Field	8.84
Abandoned Pasture	15.35
Successional Hardwood Forest	72.17
Clearcut Pine Plantation	242.44
Impoundment/Artificial Pond	0.32
Pine Plantation	220.87
Road	0.76

Acquisition: Wes Skiles Peacock Springs was initially acquired on June 11, 1986 with funds from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund (LATF). The Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (Trustees) hold fee simple title to the park and on June 15, 1987, the Trustees leased (Lease Number 3504) the property to DRP under a 50-year lease. The current lease will expire on June 15, 2037.

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Resource Management Component Objectives

Hydrology

- Assess the park's hydrological restoration needs.
- Restore hydrological conditions to approximately 200 acres of aquatic cave natural community.
- Monitor impacts of visitor use on the cave system.

Natural Communities

- Maintain 350 acres within the optimum fire return interval.
- Conduct natural community restoration activities on 146 acres of pine plantation and 242 acres of clear-cut pine plantation.

Imperiled Species

- Update baseline imperiled species occurrence list
- Monitor and document 4 imperiled animal species in the park (cave-dwelling invertebrates).
- Monitor and document 2 imperiled plant species in the park (Chapman's sedge and rain Lilly)

Invasive and Nuisance Species

- Annually treat 100 gross or 4 infested acres of invasive plant species.
- Remove any feral cats, dogs, or hogs that are encountered.

Cultural Resources

- Assess and evaluate 21 of 21 recorded cultural resources in the park.
- Compile reliable documentation for all recorded historic and archaeological resources.
- Bring 21 of 21 recorded cultural resources into good condition.

Land Use Component Objectives

Conceptual Land Use

Orange Grove Sink

- Maintain spring stairs and boardwalk.
- Update interpretation

Olsen Sink

- Conduct structural assessment on observation platform – modify as necessary to ensure protection of the sink and visitor safety.
- Update Interpretation

Peacock One

- Add two ADA parking spots.
- Replace boardwalk within existing footprint.
- Update interpretation along nature trail

Peacock Two

- Improve shoreline access.
- Add one small picnic pavilion.

North Tract

- Continue restoration of pine plantation
- Develop plans for nature trails once restoration is complete.
- Prioritize fencing of the entire northern boundary.

Southwest Portion

- Consider the expansion of hiking trails.

Support Area

- Add a two-bay shop building.
- Add a small administrative office.

Optimum Boundary

Nearly 2,600 acres of land are identified in the optimum boundary for Peacock Springs State Park, extending south to the Suwannee River. The optimum boundary includes much of the river floodplain and significant portions of Peacock Slough and Irving Slough. Several parcels within the optimum boundary are currently owned and managed by the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD). This plan recommends that DRP pursue an agreement with SRWMD to manage these lands as part of the park. At this time, no lands are identified as potentially surplus to DRP management needs.