

Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park

Planning Region: Suwannee River

County: Hamilton

Lease/Management Agreement Number: 3346

Overview

Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park memorializes the nineteenth-century American composer, Stephen Foster. A museum and working carillon tower showcase his prolific career. The park also preserves 12 natural communities which provide habitat for 23 imperiled species of plants and animals such as hooded pitcherplant, Gulf sturgeon, gopher tortoise and wood stork.

Total Acreage: 903.90

Natural Communities	Acres
Mesic Flatwoods	510.38
Upland Hardwood Forest	49.94
Upland Mixed Woodland	14.53
Alluvial Forest	50.5
Upland Pine	18.5
Basin Swamp	58.63
Floodplain Swamp	9.93
Blackwater Stream	0.36
Spring-Run Stream	0.01
Baygall	0.4
Bottomland Forest	43.76
Depression Marsh	3.14
Flatwoods/Prairie Lake	0.88
Seepage Stream	0.26

Altered Landcover	
Developed	90.92
Pine Plantation	31.3
Successional Hardwood Forest	20.45

Acquisition: Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park was initially acquired July 1, 1979 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 April 26, 1984, the Trustees leased (Lease Number 3346) the property to DRP under a 50-year lease. The current lease will expire on April 25, 2034. Additionally, the Suwannee River Water Management District currently leases 652.41 acres to DRP with a lease expiring on May 12, 2029.

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Resource Management Component Objectives

Hydrology

- Conduct/obtain an assessment of the park's hydrological restoration needs.
- Restore natural hydrological conditions and functions to approximately 0.3 acres of Seepage Stream natural community.
- Evaluate and mitigate the impacts of soil erosion in the park.

Natural Communities

- Maintain 100 acres within the optimum fire return interval.

Imperiled Species

- Update baseline imperiled species occurrence list.
- Continue existing monitoring protocols for 3 imperiled species (gopher frog, flatwoods salamander, and hooded pitcherplant).

Invasive and Nuisance Species

- Annually treat 5 gross acres equaling approximately 2.5 infested acres of invasive plant species in the park.
- Implement control measures on three nuisance and invasive animal species in the park.

Cultural Resources

- Assess and evaluate 21 of 26 recorded cultural resources.
- Compile reliable documentation for all recorded historic and archaeological resources.
- Bring 1 of 26 recorded cultural resources into good condition (Carillon Tower).

Land Use Component Objectives

Conceptual Land Use

Nature and Heritage Tourism Center

- Explore options for adaptive reuse.
- Consideration for concession use

Spring House

- Continue historic preservation of Spring House
- Update interpretive kiosk.

Delegal Service Station

- Consider adaptive reuse.
- Restore building for interpretive uses.

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Park Entrances

Southeast Entrance

- Remove or repurpose the large special events pavilion.
- Provide options for shade structures.

North Entrance

- Repave Park drive
- Improve stormwater handling features.

Carillon Tower

- Restore Carillon Tower to full functionality.

Craft Square

- Add additional benches.
- Mitigate flooding issues

Park Museum

- Update live displays.
- Explore concession opportunities within café.

Main Stage - Amphitheater

- Fully replace amphitheater.
- Improve seating options.

Campground

- Upgrade utilities at each campsite
- Mitigate flooding issues at select campsites.
- Add up to ten new campsites.
- Renovate bathhouses.

Cousins Thelma Boltins Gift Shop and Picnic Area

- Consider concession opportunities at Cousins Thelma Boltins Gift Shop
- Continue maintenance of picnic area.

Suwannee River Paddling Launch

- Redesign paddling launch
- Consider addition of a small concession building

Suwannee River Gazebo

- Continue maintenance of entire gazebo structure

Parkwide Support Facilities

- Improve Support Area
- Replace staff residences with permanent structures.
- Add one site-built home within the residence compound.
- Renovate support building as needed.

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Optimum Boundary

Over 250 acres of undeveloped or rural parcels around Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park have been identified as desirable for acquisition (see Optimum Boundary map). This includes a large portion of land between the park and County Road 25A. Parcels north of County Road 25A include land bordering existing park property up to U.S. 41. Property north of the park's south entrance is also included. The acquisition of these lands will add desirable natural resources and will enhance the unit's boundaries for management purposes.

Acquisition of these lands will provide opportunities for expanded public recreation use and will help to maintain an adequate buffer from future private development.