

Chapter Three - Outdoor Recreation Programs and Supply

Florida's outdoor recreation program is the collaborative effort of many federal, state and local governments and private organizations, businesses and non-governmental organizations to fund, manage, and support opportunities for outdoor recreation. The following sections discuss the various roles in providing outdoor recreation, and describe how the multitude of outdoor recreation programs contribute to the overall supply of outdoor recreation in Florida.

ROLES IN PROVIDING OUTDOOR RECREATION

Some division of responsibility is needed if the state's diverse public outdoor recreation needs are to be efficiently met. It is not reasonable, for example, to expect that agencies charged with managing state parks, forests and wildlife or water management areas would also be responsible for local ball fields, tennis courts and neighborhood parks.

State government has the responsibility for promoting and coordinating all outdoor recreation efforts beneficial to the general public. It is the only level of government where this task can be accomplished effectively, especially when the resources on which the recreation is based crosses jurisdictional boundaries as in a regional or statewide trail. Thus, the state must try to ensure, either directly or indirectly, that the public's demand for outdoor recreation is brought into a reasonable balance, at least in a broad regional context, with the supply of opportunities. Rather than meet these needs entirely through state-level programs, the state should assume responsibility for ensuring that needs are met through the planned and coordinated efforts of state, federal and local governments and private interests.

As far as its direct programming efforts are concerned, the state's primary responsibility

is to provide resource-based outdoor recreation. It accomplishes this through the acquisition of lands and development of facilities necessary to make natural and cultural outdoor recreation resources of regional or statewide significance available to the public. The extensive land requirements, the typical location outside urban centers, and the higher costs of operation have led the state to assume this role as a bridge between the large, nationally significant parks managed by the federal government and the community playgrounds and recreational facilities traditionally provided by local governments. No other level of government can meet this vital responsibility.



Oak Grove Park Fitness Zone in Miami-Dade County, credit: Allana Wesley White/The Trust for Public Land

User-oriented outdoor recreation, like other local services, is largely the responsibility of local government. The need exists primarily in the urban areas and it increases in proportion to the degree of urbanization. Although local governments have focused primarily on user-oriented recreation, many counties have established excellent conservation and environmental land acquisition programs and have contributed to the provision of many types of resource-based recreation. In general, however,



Horseback riding at privately run R.O. Ranch Equestrian Park in Mayo, Florida

local governments are the primary entities responsible for user-oriented recreation.

All local governments, large or small, are faced with the task of providing the full range of recreational opportunities that are so important to the well-being of their citizens. These include everything from cultural arts programs to nature trails. Local governments are finding it increasingly difficult to accomplish this, particularly in light of escalating costs and the national economic downturn.

While the state's primary thrust in its outdoor recreation efforts is directed toward resource-based outdoor recreation, a substantial effort is made to assist local governments with financial support and technical assistance for meeting their needs for user-oriented recreation facilities. Three programs — the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program, the Florida Communities Trust Program and the

Florida Recreational Trails Program — provide local governments with funds in the form of matching grants for acquiring and developing recreational lands and facilities. The demonstrated priorities and needs of local governments are given full consideration in the allocation of funds from these programs.

Private recreation providers are a vital component of the state's outdoor recreation supply. Commercial providers meet a significant portion of the overall demand for both resource-based and user-oriented outdoor recreation in Florida, particularly tourist-generated demand. For example, commercial providers supply nearly 90 percent of the campsites in the state and meet a considerable portion of the overall demand for camping facilities by residents and visitors.

Non-profit organizations include private and quasi-public organizations such as the scouts, church groups and conservation organizations.

These groups provide land and facilities primarily for the use of their members, but in some cases for the public at large.

Clubs and other organizations not certified as non-profit by the Florida Department of State (DOS), such as hunt clubs, country clubs, yacht clubs and others, manage lands and facilities that are primarily available only to organization members and their guests. In doing so, they can relieve some of the pressure that is often placed on overcrowded public facilities. In addition, private industry lands (timber companies and other industries with extensive land holdings whose lands or portions thereof are open to the public) are used for resource-based recreation, although some forms of user-oriented facilities are also available. In recent years, however, many such areas have been withdrawn from use by the general public, particularly for hunting, and are now available only to leaseholders or others who have access to the lands.

OUTDOOR RECREATION PROGRAMS

In response to an ever-growing and ever-changing public demand, a variety of outdoor recreation programs have developed in Florida through the years. Although both private and public efforts have served this demand, most of the formal outdoor recreation programs have been instituted by various levels of government. Both state and federal agencies have been extensively involved, and practically every county and municipality in Florida conducts some outdoor recreation programs of its own. Many of these diverse programs have evolved more out of expediency than by careful design. As a result, there has been much duplication and overlap. Fortunately, however, most of the legitimate outdoor recreation needs in the state have been met in some fashion by concerted efforts to coordinate these governmental programs.

Florida's outdoor recreation providers can be classified into five categories: federal government, state government, county government, municipal government and

private sector providers. Both federal and state agencies are concerned with areas and facilities designed to accommodate the demand for resource-based outdoor recreation. County and municipal governments are the primary suppliers of the public facilities needed for user-oriented recreation, although some also provide areas and facilities to meet part of the need for resource-based outdoor recreation. Private recreation providers, non-profit organizations, clubs and other organizations not certified as non-profit by the Florida Department of State, such as hunt clubs, country clubs, yacht clubs and others, are a vital component of the state's outdoor recreation supply and meet a significant portion of the overall demand for both resource-based and user-oriented outdoor recreation in Florida.

The following describes the specific programs of the various categories of public and private recreation providers. Although the public agencies discussed in this section may have other responsibilities, only those related to outdoor recreation opportunities are addressed.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

The federal government has responsibility for developing recreational facilities and programs that provide public opportunities that are not, or cannot, be made available by state or local government.

Federal roles in outdoor recreation are broad in scope and run the gamut from dredging waterways, lock and levee construction and maintenance, endangered species protection and habitat preservation, and providing crucial funds for many programs through federal grants. Federal agencies coordinate and cooperate on resource protection efforts such as protecting wilderness areas, designating wild and scenic rivers, and implementing trail connectivity projects that require inter-jurisdictional management. The core mission of most of the federal agencies, with the exception of the National Park Service, is not recreation per se. However,

Spotlight *Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)*

The National Park Service administers the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a federal program that provides funding for park acquisition and development projects. The LWCF provided over \$16 million to local governments between 2004 and 2011, resulting in the establishment and improvement of over 80 different parks throughout Florida.

Bartlett Park, an urban park located in an economically disadvantaged neighborhood of St. Petersburg, received \$200,000 through the LWCF program. The grant helped add lighted soccer and football fields, water features, an observation deck, fishing docks, hiking trail extensions, and funded the renovation of basketball courts, tennis courts, and playground equipment.



by the nature of their settings - the national forests, wildlife refuges, military installations, dams and locks, waterways and estuaries of the state - these vast tracts of federal land are key locations for outdoor recreation and play a vital role in the state's outdoor recreation supply.

U.S. Department of the Interior

National Park Service

The National Park Service (NPS) has the specific mission to conserve the scenery and natural resources of national parks and provide a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities. Besides active land management for outdoor recreation, the federal agencies administer financial and

technical assistance programs to aid state and local agencies and private citizens.

In Florida, NPS's mission includes:

- Managing 11 areas comprising approximately 2.6 million acres of submerged and upland areas set aside for their natural or historic interest.
- Administering the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, which provided more than \$16 million to local governments between 2004 and 2011 to fund 87 park acquisition and development projects. These funds are awarded to meet recreation needs identified through an open selection process described in Appendix D.
- Maintaining the National Register of Historic Places pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 United States Code 470).
- Designating significant properties or landmarks of national historical or archaeological interest, as defined in the Historic Sites Act of 1936 (16 United States Code 461), including districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects of state and regional significance.



Fort Jefferson Dry Tortugas National Park, credit: National Park Service

| Outdoor Recreation Resources and Facilities by Category of Provider, Statewide 2012 | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|---------|-----------|----------------|------------|
| Facilities | Federal | State | County | Municipal | Non-Government | Total |
| Outdoor Recreation Areas | 70 | 715 | 4,000 | 5,424 | 3,105 | 13,314 |
| Land (in Acres) | 4,600,730 | 4,697,593 | 422,331 | 113,022 | 410,594 | 10,244,270 |
| Water (in Acres) | 855,076 | 2,805,714 | 50,580 | 7,278 | 24,385 | 3,743,033 |
| Acres TOTAL | 5,455,806 | 7,503,307 | 472,911 | 120,300 | 434,979 | 13,987,303 |
| Cabins | 37 | 240 | 103 | 14 | 3,136 | 3,530 |
| Tent Campsites | 1,026 | 1,087 | 1,223 | 195 | 4,768 | 8,299 |
| RV Campsites | 2,138 | 4,778 | 3,531 | 1,451 | 118,750 | 130,648 |
| Historic Sites | 390 | 1,182 | 239 | 188 | 190 | 2,189 |
| Commemorative Structures | 9 | 26 | 33 | 148 | 38 | 254 |
| Museums | 25 | 103 | 136 | 116 | 163 | 543 |
| Picnic Tables | 1,966 | 9,345 | 26,375 | 24,060 | 56,373 | 118,119 |
| Hunting Areas (Acres) | 2,065,648 | 3,324,594 | 15,002 | 0 | 22,952 | 5,428,196 |
| Bike Trails (Miles Paved) | 73.5 | 358.5 | 600.8 | 439.6 | 63.5 | 1,536 |
| Bike Trails (Miles Unpaved) | 144 | 2,512.4 | 816.1 | 232.3 | 49.7 | 3,755 |
| Canoe Trails (Miles) | 517 | 997.6 | 247.6 | 136.6 | 309 | 2,208 |
| Hiking Trails (Miles) | 974 | 4,460.9 | 2,834.9 | 353.9 | 282.8 | 8,907 |
| Equestrian Trails (Miles) | 120.7 | 2,291.9 | 642.9 | 156.9 | 169.4 | 3,382 |
| Jogging Trails (Miles) | 71.4 | 312.1 | 638.3 | 263.7 | 71.3 | 1,357 |
| OHV Trails (Miles) | 401 | 286 | 0.2 | 0.7 | 0 | 688 |
| Nature Trails (Miles) | 310 | 278.5 | 707.5 | 375.9 | 208.2 | 1,880 |
| Freshwater Beach (Miles) | 0.7 | 4.1 | 17.4 | 6.7 | 9.3 | 38 |
| Freshwater Boat Ramps | 89 | 266 | 614 | 297 | 366 | 1,632 |
| Freshwater Boat Ramps (Lanes) | 98 | 288 | 756 | 362 | 417 | 1,921 |
| Freshwater Catwalks | 12 | 2,839 | 205 | 244 | 231 | 3,531 |
| Freshwater Catwalks (Feet) | 907 | 28,229 | 193,958 | 60,385 | 25,507 | 308,986 |
| Freshwater Jetties | 120 | 120 | 3,849 | 75,125 | 1,306 | 80,520 |
| Freshwater Marinas | 6 | 17 | 7 | 18 | 297 | 345 |
| Freshwater Marinas (Slips) | 51 | 86 | 234 | 682 | 10,218 | 11,271 |
| Freshwater Piers | 27 | 72 | 256 | 276 | 86 | 717 |
| Freshwater Piers (Feet) | 4,515 | 4,388 | 18,998 | 27,938 | 41,452 | 97,291 |
| Saltwater Beach (Miles) | 139 | 125 | 93.8 | 80.5 | 36.7 | 475 |
| Saltwater Boat Ramps | 35 | 45 | 278 | 258 | 314 | 930 |
| Saltwater Boat Ramps (Lanes) | 52 | 59 | 455 | 359 | 351 | 1,276 |
| Saltwater Catwalks | 53 | 52 | 363 | 192 | 145 | 805 |
| Saltwater Catwalks (Feet) | 23,044 | 20,541 | 72,542 | 54,857 | 42,161 | 213,145 |
| Saltwater Jetties | 10,120 | 11,603 | 14,389 | 26,769 | 9,964 | 72,845 |
| Saltwater Marinas | 11 | 32 | 22 | 65 | 618 | 748 |
| Saltwater Marinas (Slips) | 698 | 401 | 1,311 | 5,409 | 36,601 | 44,420 |
| Saltwater Piers | 17 | 41 | 148 | 155 | 102 | 463 |
| Saltwater Piers (Feet) | 7,506 | 20,032 | 37,509 | 50,905 | 19,703 | 135,655 |
| Baseball Fields | 51 | 66 | 2,609 | 2,804 | 181 | 5,711 |
| Basketball Goals | 55 | 103 | 3,791 | 3,507 | 647 | 8,103 |
| Equipped Play Areas | 52 | 92 | 1,889 | 2,746 | 449 | 5,228 |
| Football Fields | 18 | 48 | 1,043 | 936 | 91 | 2,136 |
| Golf Courses, 18-Hole | 8 | 3 | 14 | 63 | 800 | 888 |
| Golf Courses, 9-Hole | 5 | 2 | 13 | 20 | 138 | 178 |
| Golf Courses, Executive | 1 | 1 | 3 | 11 | 190 | 206 |
| Golf Holes Total | 207 | 75 | 399 | 1,459 | 16,884 | 19,024 |
| Multi-Use Courts | 6 | 12 | 406 | 375 | 159 | 958 |
| Multi-Use Fields | 9 | 56 | 980 | 810 | 235 | 2,090 |
| Outdoor Swimming Pools | 15 | 27 | 157 | 324 | 1,505 | 2,028 |
| Racquetball Courts | 19 | 187 | 644 | 733 | 265 | 1,848 |
| Shuffleboard Courts | 6 | 13 | 365 | 1,710 | 2,353 | 4,447 |
| Tennis Courts | 78 | 331 | 1,777 | 2,767 | 4,216 | 9,169 |
| Volleyball Courts | 1 | 50 | 355 | 331 | 46 | 783 |

Table 3.1

Federal Recreation Lands by Managing Agency

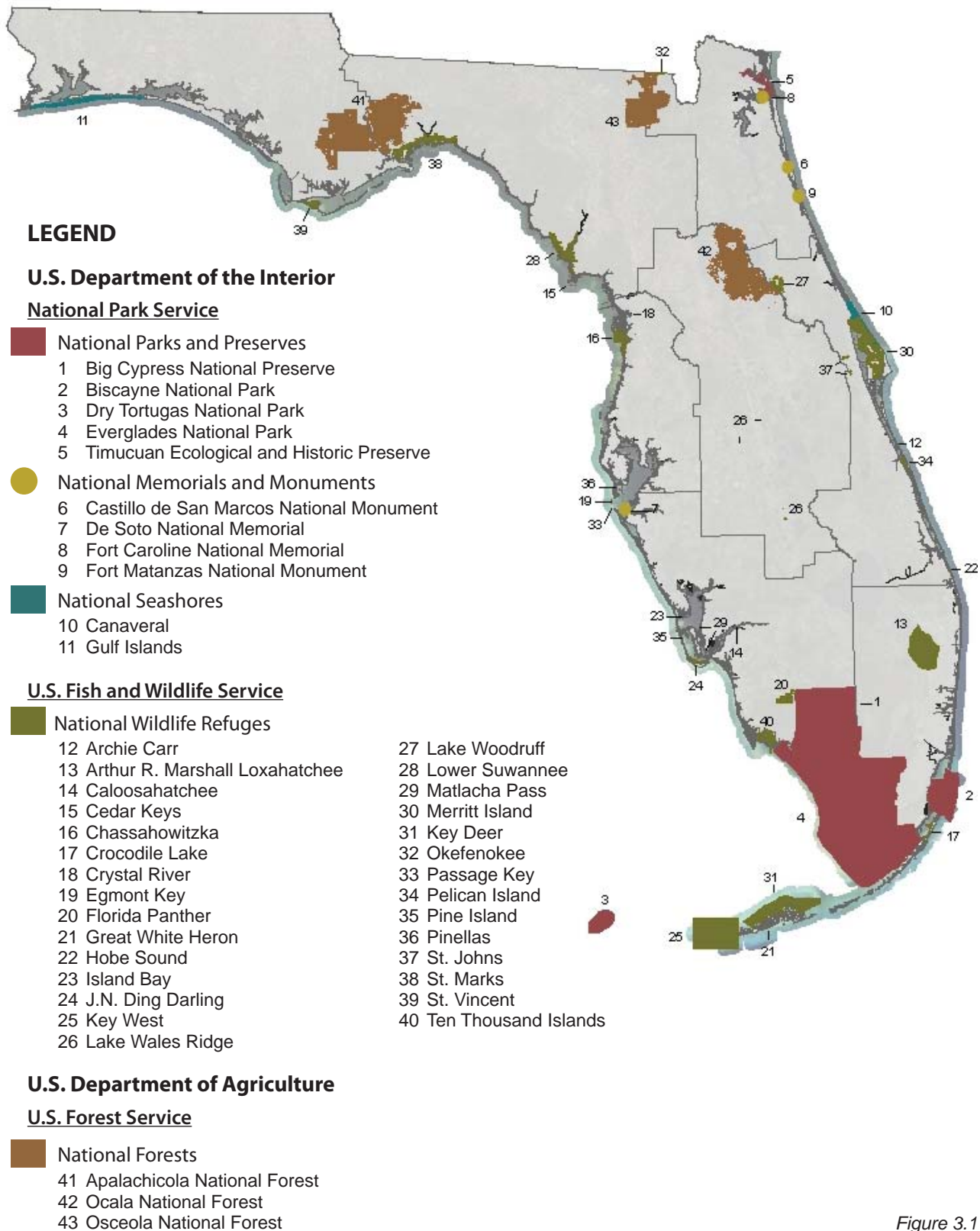


Figure 3.1

| Federal Agency Outdoor Recreation Resources | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Region | # of Recreation Areas | Land (in Acres) | Water (in Acres) | Acres Total |
| Northwest | 11 | 871,043 | 12,653 | 883,696 |
| North Central | 4 | 518,415 | 2,746 | 521,161 |
| Northeast | 9 | 132,764 | 405 | 133,169 |
| Central West | 6 | 24,605 | 10,007 | 34,612 |
| Central | 3 | 498,693 | 10,000 | 508,693 |
| Central East | 13 | 111,360 | 174,560 | 285,920 |
| Southwest | 14 | 610,253 | 22,052 | 632,305 |
| Southeast | 10 | 1,833,597 | 622,653 | 2,456,250 |
| Statewide | 70 | 4,600,730 | 855,076 | 5,455,806 |

Table 3.2

- Partnering with other federal agencies as well as state and local government programs designed to achieve national goals such as clean air, protection of wilderness areas, clean water and access to waterways and coastal areas under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the Water Resources Development Act.
- Providing matching grants through the Historic Preservation Grants-in-Aid Program, an expansion of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, to government, private groups and individuals for historic preservation surveys, planning activities and community education. These programs are administered in Florida by the Division of Historic Resources (DHR) within DOS.
- Administering the Federal Lands-to-Parks Program, which enables states and local governments to establish park and recreation areas on federal properties which are no longer needed for military or civilian uses by conveying lands for that purpose.
- Coordinating the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program

by providing planning assistance to communities for projects that are designed to protect rivers, trails and greenways on lands outside of the federal domain.

National Trail System

The National Trail System Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-543), authorized creation of a national trail system comprised of National Recreation Trails, National Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails. While National Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails may only be designated by congressional act, National Recreation Trails may be designated by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture to recognize exemplary trails of local and regional significance, upon application from the trail managing agency or organization. When designated, these trails are recognized as part of the National Trail System.

In order to be certified as a National Scenic Trail, a trail must contain outstanding recreation opportunities and encompass more than 100 miles of a continuous, primarily non-motorized trail. Eleven National Scenic Trails have been designated across the nation. A total of 1,400 miles of hiking trails across

Florida were designated as the Florida National Scenic Trail in 1983. The Florida National Scenic Trail is further discussed under the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) on page 25.

National Historic Trails commemorate historic and prehistoric routes of travel that are significant to the nation. Throughout the United States, there are 19 National Historic Trails made up of 33,002 miles of designated trails. These trails provide user experiences through a series of interpretive facilities along trails and signed automobile routes. There are currently no National Historic Trails in Florida.

National Recreation Trails provide outdoor recreation opportunities in a variety of urban, rural and remote settings. A total of 30 trails including more than 550 miles of land-based trails and 1,700 miles of paddling trails have been designated in Florida. These trails are managed by federal, state, county and municipal agencies and run the spectrum from urban jogging and bicycling in St. Petersburg to wilderness canoeing in the Everglades.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), an agency within the U.S. Department of the Interior, is to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. This mission is accomplished by enforcing federal wildlife laws, protecting endangered species, managing migratory birds, restoring nationally significant fisheries and conserving and restoring wildlife habitat including wetlands. USFWS also distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies across the nation. The activities of USFWS in Florida include:

- Management of 28 national wildlife refuges, comprising nearly one million acres of land and water. Most of the refuges are limited-purpose outdoor recreation areas that provide bird watching, wildlife observation, fishing,

environmental education and interpretation and at some refuges, public hunting. In addition, the Service manages a national fish hatchery in Welaka and maintains law enforcement facilities at six locations.

- Administration of federal aid programs, including Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration (commonly referred to as the Dingell-Johnson Act and Wallop-Breaux Act), Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (commonly referred to as the Pittman-Robertson Act) and Wildlife Partnership Act (conservation of non-game species). These grant programs are managed in Florida by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Grants to Florida under the Clean Vessel Act (clean boating programs) are managed by the Clean Marina Program in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of External Affairs.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

U.S. Forest Service

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) provides leadership in the management, protection and use of the nation's forests and rangelands. The agency is dedicated to multiple-use management of these lands for sustained yields of renewable resources such as wood, water, forage, wildlife and recreation to meet the diverse needs of people. The responsibility of USFS in the field of outdoor recreation is to fully develop the recreational potential of national forests and protect landscape aesthetics. USFS also cooperates with other federal, state and local agencies in planning and developing recreational resources on other federal, state, local and private lands.

In Florida, USFS administers three national forests: the Apalachicola, the Ocala and the Osceola. Together these areas contain approximately 1.2 million acres of land and water, thus making a major contribution to the state's recreational resources. They contain some of Florida's most pristine lands including extensive woodlands, springs

and streams. Within the national forests, USFS manages numerous designated public recreation sites. Some of the sites are managed exclusively for dispersed recreational purposes, such as hiking, hunting, fishing and primitive camping.

Florida National Scenic Trail

USFS is the federal administering agency for the Florida National Scenic Trail. The Florida National Scenic Trail, designated by Congress in 1983, extends from the Big Cypress National Preserve north to the Gulf Islands National Seashore in the Florida Panhandle. Along the way, the Florida Trail passes through lands managed by more than two dozen public land managing agencies in more than 40 separate management units. USFS acts as a partner with state land management agencies and private landowners to obtain through-trail access for the project. The non-profit Florida Trail Association, Inc., through its volunteer membership of hiker-volunteers, provides nearly 70,000 hours of manpower each year to build and maintain the Florida National Scenic Trail and other hiking trails throughout Florida.

U.S. Department of Defense

The U.S. Department of Defense (USDOD) includes the Departments of the Army, Navy and Air Force. Each provides outdoor

recreation opportunities in Florida. USDOD has 17 military installations in Florida that make lands available for recreational purposes. Although public outdoor recreation is not a primary function of USDOD, its contributions in this regard are nevertheless important to Florida's overall outdoor recreation program. Generally, all military installations offer some degree of outdoor recreation programs for military personnel, dependents and their guests. However, access to their resources for recreational use by the general public is usually limited.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Along with its primary responsibilities for navigation, flood risk management, environmental restoration and beach renourishment, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has made considerable efforts to provide recreational facilities. It is the policy of USACE to plan for and provide outdoor recreation resources and facilities at all of its water resources projects. For information of the Corps Recreational Opportunities visit www.corpslakes.us

USACE's general authority for recreational development stems from the Flood Control Act of 1944, which was later expanded by the Federal Water Project Recreation Act of 1965 (16 United States Code 460). The latter act directs that each project give full



A scene from the Florida National Scenic Trail, credit: USFS



Dock fishing at Lake Okeechobee, credit: US Army Corps of Engineers

consideration to opportunities for outdoor recreation and fish and wildlife enhancement, and it establishes outdoor recreation and preservation of wildlife and fish as a full project purpose.

Florida is divided into two USACE districts. The Mobile District manages recreation sites at the Jim Woodruff Lock and Dam on Lake Seminole, a 37,500 acre impoundment in southern Georgia and Jackson County, Florida. Excellent opportunities for camping, hiking, fishing, hunting and boating are available.

The Jacksonville District manages Lake Okeechobee and the Okeechobee Waterway in southern Florida. Not only does this managed area provide extensive outdoor recreation opportunities, but its series of locks and canals provides a cross-Florida waterway that is popular among pleasure boaters and connects the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico via the lake and the Caloosahatchee River. A few of the outdoor recreation opportunities include three full-facility campgrounds along the Okeechobee waterway and the 110 mile Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail that runs along the top of the Herbert Hoover Dike.

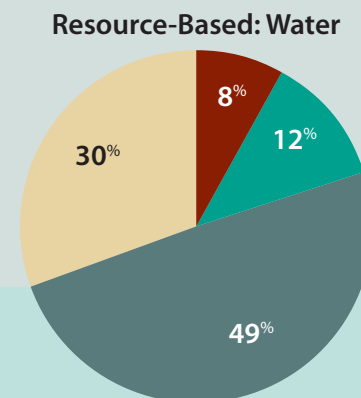
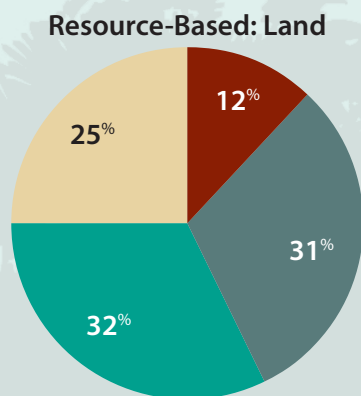
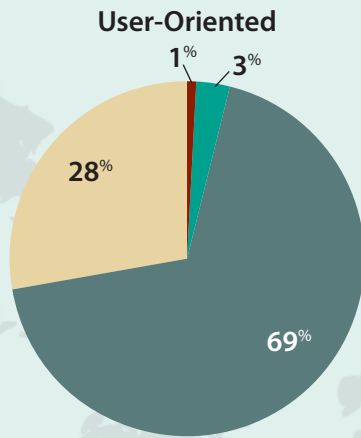
In partnership with the South Florida Water Management District, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and other federal, state, local and tribal agencies, the USACE is implementing the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), one of the world's largest wetland restoration projects. The project covers 16 counties and over 18,000 square miles. The Plan was approved by Congress in the Water Resources Development Act of 2000, which was reauthorized by Congress in November 2007. It includes more than 60 elements and will require more than 30 years to construct at an estimated cost of \$10.9 billion. The CERP Master Recreation Plan will provide guidance to assist recreation planning within CERP project fee title lands, and will help provide recreation opportunities that are compatible with the restoration purposes of the project.

U.S. Department of Transportation

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) within the U.S. Department of Transportation provides grants to state and local governments for various recreational trail projects, including bicycle and

Supply Distribution

The distribution of recreational facilities and resources by level of provider in the state is illustrated in these charts.



pedestrian facilities, and scenic highways. The Recreational Trails Program provides funds to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized trail uses. The Office of Greenways and Trails in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation and Parks administers the financial assistance program in coordination with the FHWA.

The Transportation Enhancement Program provides funding for improvements that are not provided as part of the features routinely provided in transportation projects. Enhancements such as bicycle and pedestrian facilities, preservation and conversion of abandoned railroad corridors to trails, landscaping and other scenic beautification projects have been provided in Florida through this program. Since 2008, a total of approximately \$207.1 million in enhancement funds have been apportioned to Florida through the program.

The National Scenic Byways Program recognizes roads having outstanding scenic, historic, cultural, natural, recreational and archaeological qualities by designating them as National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads, America's Byways or State Scenic Byways. Grants and technical assistance are provided to the states to implement projects on designated byways, and to plan, design and develop a state scenic byway program. The Florida Department of Transportation (DOT), in cooperation with FHWA, is the administering agency for the Florida Scenic Highway Program.

U.S. Department of Commerce

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is a scientific and technical organization that works to preserve and enhance the nation's coastal resources and ecosystems. Its mission is to provide products, services and information that promote safe navigation, support coastal



Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

communities, sustain marine ecosystems and mitigate coastal hazards. The National Ocean Service provides assistance to Florida in observing, understanding and managing coastal and marine resources. Florida is an active partner in several programs that directly affect resource protection in Florida's coastal areas.

National Estuarine Research Reserves

The National Estuarine Research Reserve System is a network of estuarine areas across the nation established for long-term stewardship, research and education. Each reserve has developed an organized ecological research program containing extensive teacher training, education, research and monitoring. Findings are communicated to coastal managers and other decision makers, as well as local citizens. Florida contains three of these reserves: Apalachicola, Guana Tolomato Matanzas and Rookery Bay.

National Marine Sanctuaries

The National Marine Sanctuary Program designates and manages areas of the marine environment with special national significance due to their conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, scientific, cultural, archaeological, educational or aesthetic qualities. The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, one of 13 in the National Marine Sanctuaries System, covers 3,926 square miles and encompasses part of the most extensive living coral reef system in the nation.

National Coastal Zone Management Program

The National Coastal Zone Management Program fosters an effective partnership

among federal, state and local governments. By leveraging federal and state matching funds, the program strengthens the capabilities of each partner to address coastal issues while giving states the flexibility to design a program that accommodates their unique coastal challenges.

The Florida Coastal Management program is administered by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Intergovernmental Programs. The state program serves as the lead coordinator with eight other state agencies and five water management districts in enforcing 23 statutes and implementing several coastal zone management programs in cooperation with NOAA. The program works to protect coastal resources, build and maintain vital communities, enhance coastal access, protect remarkable places and revitalize working waterfronts.

In 2002, the National Coastal Zone program initiated the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program. The program is aimed at protecting important coastal and estuarine areas that have significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical or aesthetic values and that are threatened by conversion from their natural or recreational state to other uses. The Florida Coastal Management Program manages this grant program, which provides up to \$3 million for each eligible project.

STATE PROGRAMS

The State of Florida's responsibilities for providing public recreation are fulfilled through a variety of facilities and programs, each unique to the mission of nine separate entities.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is charged with the protection, administration, management, supervision, development and conservation of Florida's natural and cultural resources.

This broad mandate is accomplished by direct acquisition and management of public outdoor recreation and conservation areas, as well as through major initiatives and agency priorities which contribute to a healthy ecosystem. DEP's functions include protecting and conserving Florida's water supply and its quality, protecting springs and oceans, restoring America's Everglades, acquiring, conserving and managing conservation and recreation lands, enforcing environmental laws and regulations, investing in cleaner sources of energy and protecting the health of Florida's communities.

Division of Recreation and Parks

DEP's Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) develops and operates Florida's state park system and state greenways and trails for the benefit and enjoyment of Florida's citizens and visitors. The state park system contains many of the best remaining examples of Florida's original domain and cultural heritage. Units in the state park system are classified for management according to the natural and cultural resources they contain and the desired balance between resource preservation and public use.

Besides providing hundreds of thousands of acres for public recreational use, the state park system is the largest steward of public historic properties in the state. More than 83 parks contain significant historic resources, including almost 300 historic structures and more than 1,500 archaeological sites. These resources provide a broad array of unique interpretive and educational opportunities

for residents and visitors. In addition to administering Florida's state park system, DRP also administers the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program and the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. The Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program provides financial assistance to eligible local governments, including the 67 county general governments and 412 incorporated municipalities of Florida. Funding from the program is awarded on a competitive basis that considers the total project costs and the economic status of the applicants among other evaluation criteria. Pursuant to Section 375.075, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 62D-5, Part V, Florida Administrative Code, DEP recommends to the Legislature each year that an appropriation of not less than five percent of the total amount credited annually to the Land Acquisition Trust Fund be authorized for the program.

Since 2001, the program has also received two percent of the bond proceeds made available through the Florida Forever program. Funding for the program has been awarded to approximately 1,031 projects for the last 10 fiscal year funding cycles.

Office of Greenways and Trails

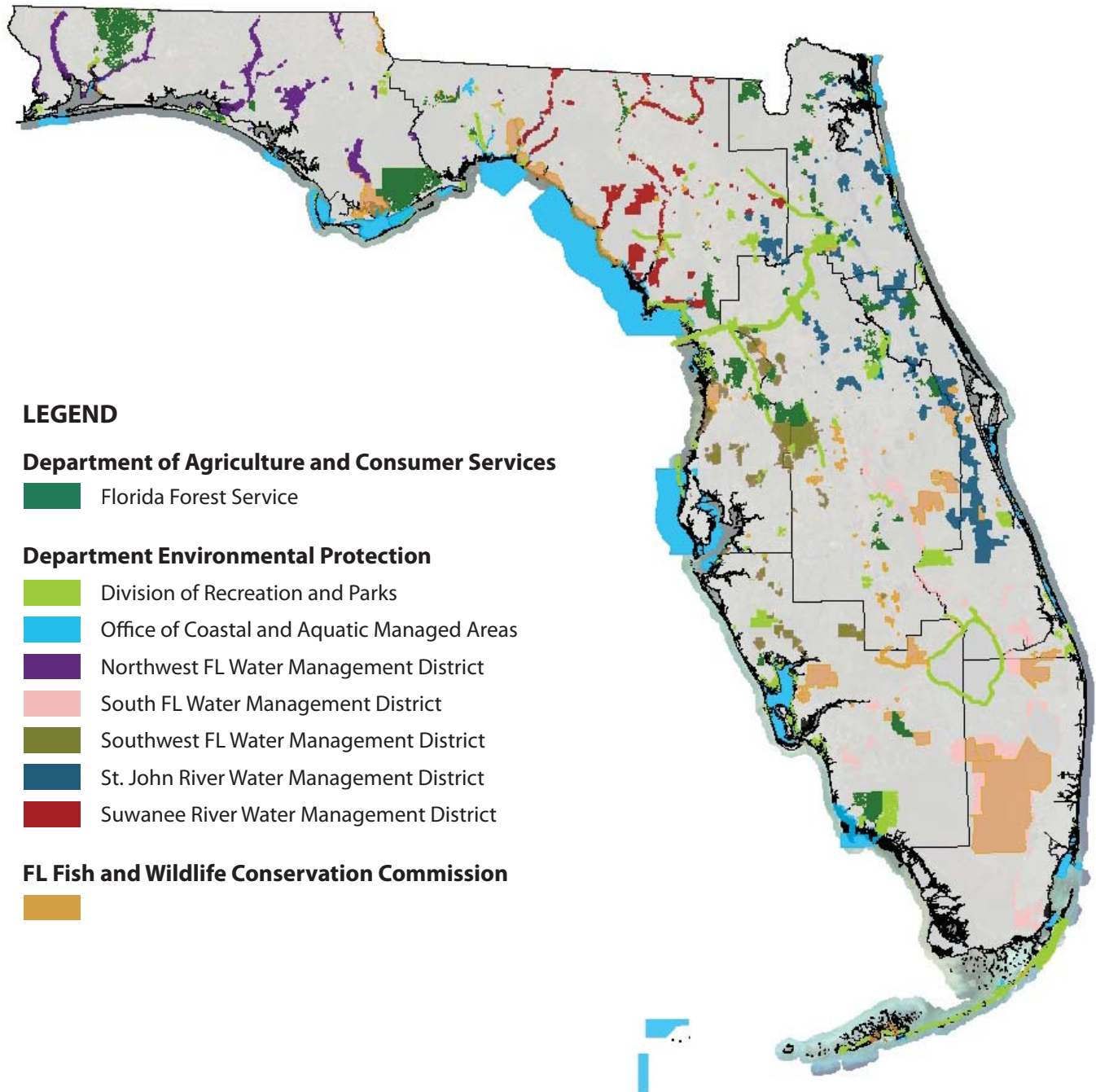
The Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) within the Division of Recreation and Parks provides statewide leadership and coordination to establish, expand and promote the Florida Greenways and Trails System. To fulfill its mission under the Florida Greenways and Trails Act (Chapter 260, F. S.), OGT coordinates and implements

Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)

The Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) is a state competitive grant program that provides financial assistance to local governments to develop and/or acquire land for public outdoor recreational purposes. Funding for the program has been awarded to approximately 1,031 projects for the last 10 fiscal year funding cycles.

Pasco County matched a \$100,000 FRDAP grant to enhance access to Pithlachascotee River Preserve, using the funds to develop an interpretive boardwalk, playground, restrooms, parking and landscaping.

State Recreation Lands by Managing Agency



Source: Florida Natural Areas Inventory

Figure 3.2

| State Agency Outdoor Recreation Resources | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Region | # of Recreation Areas | Land (in Acres) | Water (in Acres) | Acres Total |
| Northwest | 83 | 835,357 | 359,030 | 1,194,387 |
| North Central | 168 | 565,149 | 1,028,469 | 1,593,618 |
| Northeast | 80 | 342,118 | 171,364 | 513,482 |
| Central West | 63 | 349,959 | 492,253 | 842,212 |
| Central | 108 | 656,916 | 103,374 | 760,290 |
| Central East | 88 | 479,219 | 113,589 | 592,808 |
| Southwest | 65 | 525,907 | 382,257 | 908,164 |
| Southeast | 68 | 942,968 | 155,378 | 1,098,346 |
| Statewide | 715 | 4,697,593 | 2,805,714 | 7,503,307 |

Table 3.3

the Plan for the Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS) in partnership with communities, businesses, agencies, the Florida Greenways and Trails Council and many other stakeholders. OGT also maintains and updates the vision maps that are a companion to the FGTS Plan, encompassing land-based trails, paddling trails and ecological greenways. The vision maps for land and paddling trails are included in Appendix C. OGT establishes the vision for the FGTS by identifying and coordinating greenways and trails planning efforts throughout Florida. OGT expands the statewide system through the acquisition of eligible projects under the Greenways and Trails component of the Florida Forever Program, and has partnerships with nearly 30 communities that develop and manage state acquired greenways and trails on behalf of OGT.

OGT coordinates with and provides technical assistance regarding the acquisition, development, designation and management of greenways and trails projects that fulfill the FGTS plan and vision. OGT administers the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), a federally funded competitive grant program that provides financial assistance to local

RTP and OGT Acquisition Program

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and the Greenways and Trails Acquisition Program have worked with over 70 communities across the state to develop and expand recreational trails.

RTP

The City of Chattahoochee developed the Chattahoochee Nature Trails, improving recreation opportunities by adding and improving more than three miles of trails and boardwalks, as well as parking, kiosk and a water fountain as support facilities. This recently completed project enhanced recreational opportunities in a "Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern" and was awarded the 2012 Recreation Trails Program Achievement Award.

Greenways and Trails Acquisition Program

The East Central Regional Rail Trail is the longest rail-to-trail acquisition in State of Florida history, stretching almost 51 miles between Volusia and Brevard Counties. The trail will connect three major tourism destinations in the state: the greater Orlando area, Kennedy Space Center, and Daytona's beaches. The trail corridor was purchased by the state through the Greenways and Trails Acquisition Program, with Brevard and Volusia Counties responsible for construction and management of the trail. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held for the first completed section of the trail in February 2012.

communities for the development of trails. Since inception, RTP has assisted communities in 42 Florida counties to establish and expand their trails.

OGT disseminates information about the many benefits that greenways and trails provide to Florida residents and visitors. OGT provides information to residents and visitors about greenways and trails recreational opportunities through publications, e-newsletters, FloridaGreenwaysAndTrails.com and VisitFlorida.com/trails.

Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas

The Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA) is the principal manager of submerged lands and their associated marine and aquatic resources in Florida. The Florida Aquatic Preserve Act of 1975 (Chapter 258, Part II, Florida Statutes), authorizes the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund to maintain state owned submerged lands with exceptional biological, aesthetic and scientific value as aquatic preserves. These areas offer prime opportunities for fishing, boating, swimming, paddling, snorkeling, diving and other water-related types of recreation. CAMA manages Florida's 41 aquatic preserves, including 37 saltwater and four freshwater sites, encompassing more than two million acres of sovereign submerged lands of the state. In cooperation with NOAA, CAMA manages approximately 240,000 acres of submerged land and coastal uplands in three national estuarine research reserves: Apalachicola, Guana Tolomato Matanzas and Rookery Bay. In addition, CAMA partners with NOAA to manage the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. The sanctuary contains 3,926 square miles of submerged lands around the 126 mile long Florida Keys, and encompasses the most extensive living coral reef system in the nation. Through the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative and the Coral Reef Conservation

Program, CAMA supports Florida's membership in the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force and the U.S. All Islands Committee. These programs coordinate research and monitoring, develop management strategies, and promote partnerships to protect the coral reefs, hard bottom communities and associated reef resources of southeast Florida.

Division of State Lands

Since 1968, Florida has invested approximately \$7.8 billion through successive land acquisition programs to conserve approximately 3.8 million acres of land for environmental preservation, conservation and outdoor recreation purposes. The Division of State Lands (DSL) administers these land acquisition programs on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund and DEP. DSL also provides administrative oversight for approximately 11 million acres of state owned lands, including 700 freshwater springs, 4,510 islands of ten acres or more and 7,000 lakes.

Florida Forever

DSL administers the Florida Forever program, which was created by the 1999 Florida Legislature as the successor program to the Florida Preservation 2000 program established in 1990. Florida Forever supports a variety of land acquisition purposes, including the preservation of environmental, conservation, and water management lands and to provide grants to local governments. Since Florida Forever's inception, 683,003 acres of land and water have been acquired, reflecting an investment of more than \$2.9 billion.

In 2008, Florida Forever was extended for another decade by the Florida Legislature. As part of the program's re-authorization, several important changes were made to the original program that was established in 1999. Two new land acquisition programs were created. The Rural and Family Lands Protection Act was established in the Department of Agriculture and Consumer

Services for the acquisition of agricultural lands through perpetual easements and other less-than-fee techniques. The Stan Mayfield Working Waterfronts Program was created in the Department of Community Affairs, Florida Communities Trust, to preserve and restore working waterfronts and provide public access to Florida's waters. In 2011, the Florida Communities Trust and Stan Mayfield Working Waterfronts programs were transferred to the Division of State Lands.

In addition to these new programs, greater emphasis was placed on providing public access to conservation lands, increasing accountability of public land management, protecting listed plant and animal species, and addressing climate change.

Florida Communities Trust

The Florida Communities Trust (FCT), established in 1989 to help local governments preserve parks, open space, beaches and

natural areas, has created more livable communities throughout Florida. The FCT program was transferred to DSL in 2011. Matching and full grants for conservation and recreation land acquisition projects are provided to communities, as well as to non-profit environmental organizations, through an annual competitive application process. FCT receives 21 percent of annual proceeds from Florida Forever.

As of April 2012, more than 90,450 acres were acquired through the program. FCT has provided nearly \$826 million of the \$1.5 billion spent to acquire these lands, while local government partners have provided matching funds in excess of \$695 million.

Division of Water Resource Management

The Division of Water Resource Management (DWRM) is responsible for protecting the quality of Florida's drinking water as well as its rivers, lakes and wetlands, and for reclaiming lands after they have been

Florida Communities Trust (FCT)

Florida Communities Trust provides matching and full grants for conservation and recreation land acquisition projects.

- *More than 90,450 acres acquired as of April 2012*
- *Nearly \$826 million in project funding provided*
- *More than \$695 million in matching funds from local government partners*

Acreage Pines Natural Area, a 123 acre parcel, was acquired by Palm Beach County with matching funds from FCT. Since the 2001 acquisition, restoration efforts have focused on removing exotic nonnative vegetation, introducing prescribed burns, and restoring hydrology to historic wetland levels. Additionally, public-use facilities were developed including an educational kiosk, a bicycle rack, an accessible nature trail and boardwalk spanning through a restored wetland to a wildlife observation platform, and 1,400 feet of natural-surface hiking trails.

The Acreage Pines Natural Area is within the footprint of the Northeast Everglades Natural Area, a multi-agency system of 165,000 acres of conservation lands and activity and education centers in northern Palm Beach County and southern Martin County that provide a wide-range of nature-based outdoor recreational opportunities.



Acreage Pines Natural Area



Acreage Pines Trail

Spotlight

mined for phosphate and other minerals. Its programs establish the technical basis for setting the state's surface water and ground water quality standards, which are critical to maintaining the viability of water resources for public outdoor recreational use. By 2030, Floridians are expected to use about two billion gallons more fresh water each day. The Water Protection and Sustainability Program, created in 2005, has the task of increasing alternative water supplies to meet existing and future water supply needs. DEP's 2011 Annual Report on Regional Water Supply Planning describes the highlights and accomplishments of this program. The report also describes the progress of the state's five water management districts in meeting Florida's future demands for water.

Coastal protection and restoration are vital in preserving one of Florida's most valuable natural resources - its 825 miles of sandy shoreline fronting the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico and the Straits of Florida. As of 2011, more than 222 miles of beach have been restored as a result of the Beach Erosion Control Program, working in concert with other agencies and local governments to protect, preserve and restore coastal sandy beaches. Financial assistance in an amount up to 50 percent of project costs is available to county and municipal governments, community development districts and special taxing districts for shore protection and preservation. In addition to beach restoration and nourishment, funds are also available for construction of dune walkovers and parking facilities for public access. Through 2011, more than \$739.5 million has been appropriated by the Florida Legislature for beach erosion control activities and hurricane damage recovery.

Bureau of Mine Reclamation

DWRM's Mine Reclamation Program regulates surface mine reclamation through a review and monitoring process. Originally established in the late 1980s to regulate, restore and reclaim phosphate-mined land, the program has evolved into a habitat and

wildlife management program. The Bureau periodically funds reclamation of phosphate lands mined before mid-1975 and develops, as well as manages, extensive habitat corridors in Florida's mining areas. To date, 46,524 acres have been reclaimed through the funding program, with 6,835 acres under active reclamation; \$127 million has been disbursed to landowners reclaiming mined lands with nearly \$27 million more committed to ongoing reclamation. Today, the program is responsible for managing 23 state-owned parcels along the Peace and Alafia Rivers and in the Green Swamp to implement long-term management activities needed for protection of these greenways, wildlife corridors and riparian buffers.

Office of Sustainable Initiatives

Clean Marina Program

In 1992, Congress enacted the Clean Vessel Act, which established a federal grant program administered by USFWS to reduce pollution from vessel sewage discharges. Funding comes from the Sport Fishing Restoration Program account made up of revenues from excise taxes on fishing equipment, boats and motorboat fuels. The Clean Marina Program is a cooperative effort by the Office of Sustainable Initiatives, the Marine Industries Association of Florida, Florida Sea Grant Program, International Marina Institute, U.S. Coast Guard and public and private marinas throughout the state. Clean boater programs educate recreational boaters, marinas, boat yards and marine retailers about pollution control and enhance recreational boating through brochures and workshops that emphasize protecting aquatic resources.

Water Management Districts

The Office of Water Policy in DEP addresses statewide water management issues in coordination with Florida's water management districts and other agencies. Chapter 373, Florida Statutes, created five water management districts for the purpose of managing and conserving the state's water resources. The five districts were organized around major drainage basins in the state:

Northwest Florida, Suwannee River, St. Johns River, Southwest Florida and South Florida. Land acquisition is one of the districts' primary tools for carrying out their mission of flood control, water storage and management, water resource development, and preservation of wetlands, streams and lakes.

The districts play a key role in providing public outdoor recreation opportunities on lands under their ownership. The water management districts acquire land and construct water resource-related capital improvements, including water resource or water supply development and restorations projects. The districts are required to make their lands available for compatible public outdoor recreation uses whenever practicable. Numerous public access sites and recreational facilities have been developed on district owned lands throughout the state in cooperation with other state agencies, the federal government, counties, municipalities and the private sector. Examples of the recreational opportunities provided on district lands include hiking, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, bicycling, canoeing, primitive camping and wildlife viewing.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) was established by a 1998 amendment to the Florida Constitution that consolidated the responsibility for conserving the state's freshwater and saltwater aquatic life and wildlife into a single agency. FWC operates under a mission of "managing fish and wildlife for their long-term well-being and benefit of the people." The Commission is composed of seven members appointed by the governor, subject to confirmation by the Senate, for staggered terms of five years. FWC exercises regulatory and executive powers of the state over marine life and is charged with exercising all the non-judicial powers of the state with respect to wild animals, freshwater aquatic life and marine life. Central to FWC's role in outdoor recreation is the management

of hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities. FWC receives federal funds for preservation, restoration and enhancement of Florida's sport fishing resources, including boating access facilities, from the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration (sometimes referred to as Dingell-Johnson or Wallop-Breaux) program. The FWC also receives funds for protection of endangered species from the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (commonly referred to as Pittman-Robertson) Trust Fund. These programs are administered at the federal level by United States Fish and

Spotlight

Florida Boating Improvement Program

The Florida Boating Improvement Program provides funding through competitive grants for boating access projects and other boating-related activities on coastal and/or inland waters of Florida. Eligible program participants include county governments, municipalities and other governmental entities of the State of Florida.

- Over \$3 million awarded in FY 2011/12
- 32 projects funded in FY 2011/12



Gulf County received funding from the Florida Boating Improvement Program to help renovate the White City Boat Ramp. Improvements made to the facility included 20 new mooring spots, renovation of the docks and bulkhead, improved parking, lighting, signage, and a picnic area.



Florida has more than 200 freshwater boat ramps constructed by FWC using Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration funds, credit: FWC

Wildlife Service, which provide grants and technical assistance to the states.

Division of Habitat and Species Conservation

This division is responsible for the state's Wildlife Management Area system, which includes 158 tracts totaling approximately 5.7 million acres in public and private ownership, one of the nation's largest. FWC is the lead manager of 54 areas that cover 1.4 million acres and is a co-manager of 104 areas that cover an additional 4.3 million acres. This system is vital to sustaining the fish and wildlife resources of the state and also provides an expansive and rugged setting for a range of outdoor recreation opportunities. Some of FWC's cooperating agreements are short-term arrangements, particularly on private lands. As a result, the amount of hunting land available to the public on these areas fluctuates from year to year. In 2001, Congress created the State Wildlife Grants Program and required each state to develop a comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy in order to continue receiving federal wildlife grants. FWC

created Florida's Wildlife Legacy Initiative in 2004 to serve the agency's long-term commitment to conserve native wildlife. The initiative crafts a statewide vision for the future of wildlife in Florida, in coordination with other state, federal and local agencies, universities, conservation organizations, recreation groups, businesses and the public. Species range from those which are common throughout the southeastern United States to some which are virtually unknown elsewhere in the country, such as the Florida panther, the Florida manatee and the Florida scrub jay. The initiative supports various forms of outdoor recreation including hunting, fishing, bird watching and nature study.

Division of Freshwater Fisheries Management

The Division of Freshwater Fisheries Management (DFFM) provides expertise on freshwater fish populations, angler use and other aspects of freshwater fisheries to ensure high quality fishing in Florida lakes, rivers and streams. Florida has over 3 million acres of fresh water comprising 7,700

named lakes, and 12,000 miles of fishable rivers, streams and canals. More than 200 species of freshwater fishes inhabit these waters and include many highly sought after sportfish species. DFFM provides the public with information on freshwater fisheries management issues, fishing opportunities, aquatic education and outreach, and other matters aimed at promoting responsible life-long participation in sport fishing. Additionally, freshwater fish production facilities provide a dependable supply of the specific size, quantity and quality of freshwater fish to meet specific freshwater fisheries management objectives.

Division of Marine Fisheries Management

The Division of Marine Fisheries Management (DMFM) develops sustainable management recommendations for consideration by the FWC Commissioners for more than 500 saltwater species in Florida. These management plans ensure the long-term conservation of Florida's valuable marine fisheries resources while balancing the needs of the fishermen with the needs of the marine species. More than 2.7 million saltwater anglers fish Florida's 2,276 miles of tidal shoreline, creating an economic impact of more than \$5.7 billion and more than 54,000 jobs. MFM staff also work with federal agencies on marine issues and represent the state on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. The DMFM outreach and education team provides the public with opportunities to learn more about saltwater fishing, from learning basic fishing skills and fish identification to sustainable habits such as the best ways to catch and release a fish. DMFM's other programs include the planning and deploying artificial reefs; reaching out to commercial, recreational and charter fishermen; ensuring seafood dealers are selling safe and quality products; removing derelict traps from the water through the trap retrieval program; and making public comment on issues that may affect Florida anglers.

Division of Law Enforcement

FWC's Division of Law Enforcement officers provide protection to residents and visitors who enjoy Florida's natural resources, and enforce resource protection and boating safety regulations in the state's woods and waters. The Boating and Waterways Section is responsible for educating boaters about boating safety, ensuring boat access, installing and maintaining waterway signage, and identifying derelict vessels.

The Boating and Waterways Section administers several grant programs, including the Florida Boating Improvement Program and the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program. The Federal Sport Fish Restoration Program (commonly referred to as the Dingell-Johnson Act and Wallop-Breaux Act) is a "user pays, user benefits" program that is aimed at improving sport fishing and boating opportunities. Federal funds are collected from taxes on fishing tackle, motor fuels and import duties on tackle and yachts. The money is returned to appropriate state agencies for research, management, education and facility development related to sport fishing. These three programs funded over 200 grants around the state, totaling more than \$31 million, to provide for construction of boat ramps and related access facilities.

Division of Hunting and Game Management

The Division of Hunting and Game Management (DHGM) facilitates sustainable responsible use of Florida's game wildlife resources by providing scientific expertise on game wildlife species, including alligators, deer, small game, waterfowl and wild turkeys and developing sound management recommendations based upon scientific information. With a cadre of volunteer instructors DHGM delivers hunter safety training and certification and manages public shooting ranges; DHGM coordinates and develops rules, regulations, and information for the public pertaining public hunting throughout the state. Through these activities, DHGM strives to accomplish a high level of



A family at the L. Kirk Edwards Wildlife and Environmental Area (WEA) in eastern Leon County, credit: FWC

satisfaction among those who use and depend on healthy game wildlife resources.

Office of Public Access

The Office of Public Access and Wildlife Viewing (PAWV) plans and develops public use enhancements on FWC-managed areas such as trails, fishing docks and viewing blinds. Among the trails managed by the office is the nationally recognized 105 mile Big Bend Saltwater Paddling Trail, an open-water route along Florida's coast from the Aucilla to Suwannee rivers. PAWV coordinates FWC's volunteer programs, delivers wildlife viewing information to the public and assists local communities to provide sustainable wildlife viewing opportunities. The Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail, managed by this office, is a collection of nearly 500 sites throughout the state selected for their excellent wildlife viewing. The trail uses special highway signs identifying designated sites, guidebooks and maps, a website and social media to showcase Florida's birding and wildlife viewing opportunities.

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Florida Forest Service

The Florida Forest Service (FFS) is a major contributor to Florida's total outdoor recreation supply. The primary outdoor recreation objective is to maximize compatible

recreational use of state forest lands. Florida's state forest system consists of 35 areas totaling more than 1,058,700 acres, most of which provide abundant opportunities for many popular outdoor recreation activities. Resource-based recreation opportunities offered by FFS include camping, swimming, hiking, horseback riding, bicycling, off-highway vehicle use, hunting, fishing, paddling and nature study.

Hunting is allowed on most properties managed by FFS, and is administered in cooperation with FWC as part of that agency's wildlife management program. Section 589.19 (4), Florida Statutes states that the FFS shall designate areas of state forest as an Operation Outdoor Freedom Special Hunt Area to honor wounded veterans and service members in order for them to have a valuable hunting experience.

FFS is also responsible for administering the Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Program established by the T. Mark Schmidt Off-Highway Vehicle Safety and Recreation Act (Chapter 261, Florida Statutes) in 2002. The Act provides a set of guidelines for providing and maintaining state lands for off-highway motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle (ATV), two-rider ATV, recreational off-highway vehicle use, collectively referred to as off-highway vehicles.



Riding at the Croom Motorcycle Area in the Withlacoochee State Forest, credit: FFS



Mission San Luis, Tallahassee, credit: Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources

Besides directly providing resources and facilities for outdoor recreation, FFS assists private landowners in developing forest management plans that often include a recreation component. At the landowner's request, FFS will assess the land's potential for hunting, fishing, wildlife management, water access facilities, camping and related activities. FFS may also assist landowners in designing facilities such as campgrounds, boat ramps and hiking trails to make the land available for recreational purposes.

Florida Department of State

Division of Historical Resources

The Division of Historical Resources (DHR), is responsible for preserving and promoting Florida's historical, archaeological, and folk culture resources. DHR directs historic preservation efforts throughout the state in cooperation with state and federal agencies, local governments, private organizations, and individuals. The director of DHR serves as the State Historic Preservation Officer, acting as a liaison with the national historic preservation program's conducted by the National Park Service. Chapter 267, Florida Statutes,

directs DHR to develop a statewide historic preservation plan. Its primary purpose is to guide the implementation of sound planning procedures for the location, identification, and protection of the state's archaeological and historical resources.

The Bureau of Historic Preservation (BHP) conducts programs aimed at identifying, evaluating, preserving and interpreting historic and cultural resources of the state. Programs include the Florida Main Street Program, Historic Preservation Grants-in-Aid Program, National Register of Historic Places/ National Historic Landmark Program, Historical Markers Program, Certified Local Government Program and Florida Folklife Program. BHP also reviews federal or state undertakings that may affect historical or cultural resources, and maintains the Florida Master Site File, the state's inventory of known historical and archaeological resources.

The Bureau of Archaeological Research (BAR) is responsible for the protection of archaeological and historical resources on state-owned and state-controlled lands, including sovereignty submerged lands.

Bureau archaeologists conduct archaeological surveys and excavations throughout the state. The state's underwater archaeology program includes pre-Columbian sites and underwater archaeological preserves established to protect and interpret shipwreck sites to the public. BAR also manages Mission San Luis, the 17th century capital of Spanish Florida, and Florida's Apalachee-Spanish Living History Museum.

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) offers technical and financial assistance to local governments in a wide range of functional areas. As the state planning agency, DEO's Office of Comprehensive Planning is charged with coordinating state-level review of local government comprehensive plans required by Chapter 163, Florida Statutes. DEO has also assisted local governments and regional agencies concerning a variety of land use planning issues.

Waterfronts Florida Partnership Program

The Waterfronts Florida Partnership Program was originally established in 1997. In 2005, the program received statutory authorization to be administered in coordination with DEP and NOAA under Chapter 342, Florida Statutes. The program helps communities revitalize and promote interest in their waterfront districts by providing technical assistance, support, training and financial assistance. Waterfront revitalization may target environmental resource protection, public access, retention of viable traditional waterfront economies and hazard mitigation. Since 1997, a total of 23 communities have received designation as Waterfronts Florida Partnership communities. In 2009, two new communities were designated: Fort Myers and the community of Millville in Panama City.

Rural Land Stewardship Area Program

Chapter 2011-139, Laws of Florida, substantially amended the Rural Land



San Carlos Island Community is one of the communities benefitting from the Waterfronts Florida program

Stewardship Area program. Now at Section 163.3248, Florida Statutes, the law provides that one or more landowners may request that the local government designate their lands as a rural land stewardship area. The program allows local governments to adopt a future land use overlay to designate all or portions of the lands as a rural land stewardship area if the properties currently are classified as predominantly agricultural, rural, open, open-rural, or a substantively equivalent land use. Rural Land Stewardship Areas are areas within which planning and economic incentives are applied to encourage the implementation of innovative and flexible planning and development strategies and the use of creative land use planning techniques to support a diverse economic and employment base.

Rural land stewardship areas must be at least 10,000 acres or greater and located outside of municipalities and established urban service areas. This program, among other things, helps preserve inherent qualities provided by rural areas, including the protection of natural resources, ecosystems, and habitats while controlling urban sprawl.

Florida Department of Transportation

In providing for the state's transportation needs, Florida Department of Transportation (DOT), under Chapter 334, Florida Statutes, gives consideration to the preservation and enhancement of the environment and the conservation of natural resources, including scenic, historic and recreational assets. Florida's highway system affords a vast number of scenic recreational opportunities, but perhaps its most significant contribution to outdoor recreation is providing access to Florida's recreation resources. DOT constructs and maintains rest areas for public use and provides opportunities for water-based recreation on causeways and bridges. Additionally, DOT administers the State Pedestrian and Bicycle Program, the Florida Scenic Highway Program and the Transportation Enhancement Program.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Program



Bicyclists ride the St. John's River to Sea loop, credit John Moran, courtesy of the Florida Wildflower Foundation

DOT developed the State Pedestrian and Bicycle Program in Florida as a means of promoting alternative transportation modes and recreational bicycling in Florida. DOT develops initiatives and programs to improve the environment for safe, comfortable and convenient walking and bicycling trips and to improve the performance and interaction among motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. As part of this program, the state pedestrian and bicycle coordinator and district pedestrian and bicycle coordinators in each of DOT's seven field operations regions work with municipal pedestrian and bicycle coordinators to develop and update design, maintenance and operation guidelines for all state, municipal and local bicycle facilities.

Florida Scenic Highway Program

The Florida Scenic Highway Program is a grass-roots effort to showcase and heighten awareness of Florida's intrinsic resources - cultural, historical, archaeological, recreational, natural and scenic - which collectively enhance the overall traveling experience. Designated highways tell a story that is representative of Florida's past and present lifestyles. Participation in the program is voluntary and benefits the communities along the routes in matters such as resource enhancement and protection. Proposed projects are reviewed based on criteria established by FHWA. Each designated corridor is managed by a corridor management entity made up of interested

citizens. As of June 2012, there were 23 designated scenic highways in Florida.

State University System of Florida

The State University System of Florida consists of 11 institutions that serve 321,503 students and contain almost 14,000 acres of land. Each university has an approved master plan that addresses the issue of outdoor recreation space. Recreational facilities maintained by each university provide opportunities for participation in a variety of athletic activities such as tennis, basketball, baseball, softball, soccer and football. Many state universities also operate resource-based recreation areas detached from the main campus for use by students, alumni and in some instances, the general public. These areas provide opportunities for both active and passive outdoor recreation activities, such as golfing, swimming, canoeing, hiking, camping, nature study and picnicking.

Regional Planning Councils

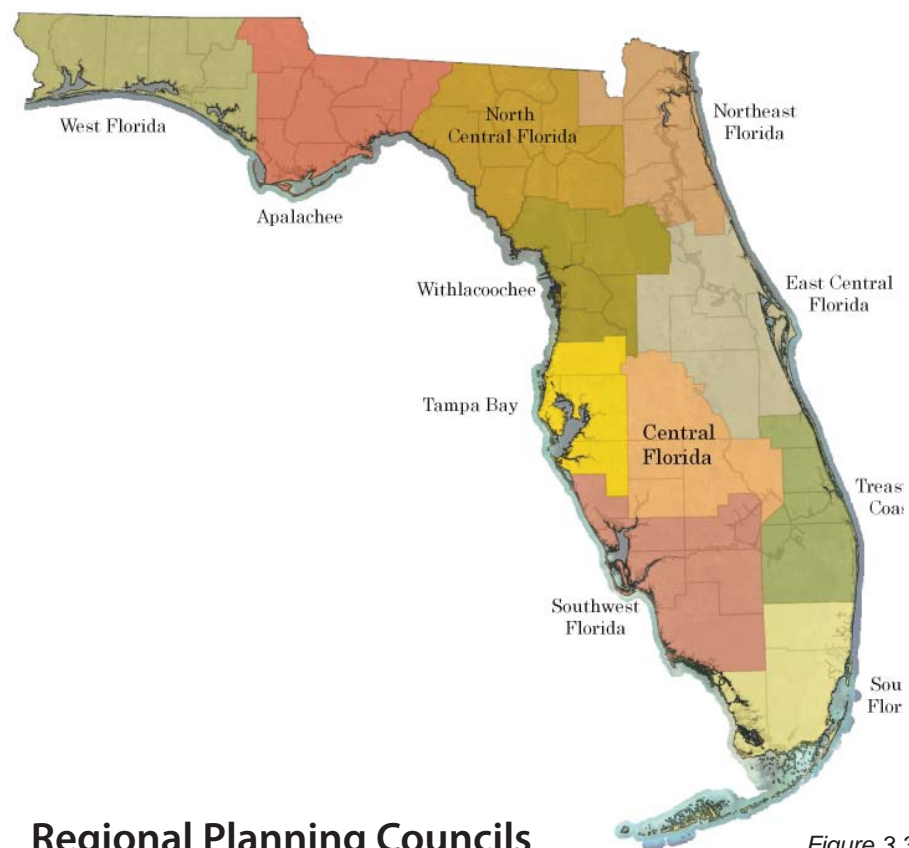
Section 186.501, Florida Statutes, also known as the Regional Planning Council Act, divides the state into eleven regional planning councils. Each council provides a link between local and state governments, and is comprised of two-thirds county and municipal officials and one-third gubernatorial appointees. Additionally, the council includes ex-officio members from FDOT, FDEP, the corresponding Water Management District and a nominee from FDEO.

One of the primary functions of each council is the preparation and

adoption of a strategic regional policy plan, providing goals and policies which guide the economic, physical and social development of the region. Using this plan as a guideline, the councils review local strategic and development plans, link planning efforts of various entities to ensure regional consistency, and facilitate planning or growth management disputes.

Special Districts

Chapter 189, Florida Statutes, also known as the Uniform Special District Accountability Act of 1989, addresses the operation of special districts in Florida. Over 1,600 special districts exist statewide, providing infrastructure and services in a wide range of areas including fire control, libraries, ports and inlets, mosquito control, water control, community development, roads and hospitals. In some cases, special districts play an expanded role in providing outdoor recreation opportunities, conservation and resource management services.



Regional Planning Councils

Figure 3.3

| Local Agency Outdoor Recreation Resources | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Region | # of Recreation Areas | Land (in Acres) | Water (in Acres) | Acres Total |
| Northwest | 875 | 9,505 | 962 | 10,467 |
| North Central | 709 | 31,710 | 1,663 | 33,373 |
| Northeast | 934 | 43,700 | 475 | 44,175 |
| Central West | 1,406 | 115,508 | 2,582 | 118,090 |
| Central | 1,407 | 55,717 | 34,947 | 90,664 |
| Central East | 1,283 | 65,561 | 9,914 | 75,475 |
| Southwest | 1,017 | 138,044 | 3,208 | 141,252 |
| Southeast | 2,032 | 75,539 | 3,618 | 79,157 |
| Statewide | 9,663 | 535,284 | 57,369 | 592,653 |

Table 3.4

Navigation districts in the state play a particularly important role in outdoor recreation. The Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) and the West Coast Inland Navigation District (WCIND) provide assistance programs that develop waterway access projects such as boat ramps, marinas, boardwalks, fishing piers, waterfront parks, navigation channels, shoreline stabilization and environmental restoration projects. FIND is the state sponsor of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway from the Georgia border to the southern end of Miami-Dade County. WCIND stretches from the northern border of Manatee County to the southern border of Lee County and contains the 152 mile long Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVIDERS

Besides being the main provider of user-oriented recreation facilities and programs, local governments are pursuing opportunities to acquire open space and conservation areas for their communities, often in partnerships with state agencies or non-profit conservation groups. Although the size of the properties acquired under these programs may not be as large as the properties acquired for conservation by state and federal agencies, they can be critically important in achieving

a community's goals for environmental preservation, recreation and open space, or growth management.

Much of the success of the state's land acquisition programs is the result of the cooperative partnerships between federal, state and local governments and national and local land trusts. Many of the projects have been sponsored jointly by partnering arrangements and such partnerships with local governments have increased in recent years. Of Florida's 67 counties, 29 have implemented land acquisition programs as have several cities and regional authorities. Such programs have generated nearly \$2 billion to acquire conservation and recreation lands.

County Roles

Florida's counties vary in character from densely populated metropolitan areas such as Miami-Dade and Pinellas, to sparsely populated rural areas like Glades and Liberty. County governments are key components of Florida's recreation and park system. All counties do not have the same outdoor recreation needs nor have they all been able to fund responsive programs to the same degree, but every county in the

state has an officially established outdoor recreation program. In some counties, user-oriented recreation programming is limited, but resource-based facilities such as roadside picnic areas or boat ramps are common amenities. In some counties, user-oriented facilities may be available only at public schools and municipal parks. More than half of Florida's counties, however, have undertaken sophisticated recreation programs involving the administration of numerous and diverse parks, facilities and program activities.

Counties are primarily concerned with the local outdoor recreation needs generated by extra-municipal populations and as a rule are the ideal level of government to provide regional or large community parks. Unlike cities, the larger acreage of counties provides a wider range of resources and a greater variety of outdoor recreation venues. As a result, the typical county outdoor recreation program in Florida may offer a combination of resource-based and user-oriented activities. Beaches, swimming areas, boating access sites, picnic sites, scenic areas and, occasionally, campgrounds are among the more popular types of resource-based areas and facilities provided.

Municipal Roles

Virtually all of Florida's 412 municipalities have recreation programs and facilities of one type or another. Many cities have developed park and recreation programs with trained staff involved in the administration of parks, facilities and programs. Smaller cities may have only limited facilities and rely on the county government, local school system, private organizations or non-profit groups to carry out athletic programs.

Because of population densities and the lack of large open space areas that support resource-based recreation opportunities, municipal recreation systems tend to concentrate on providing more intensive user-oriented facilities that require relatively little space. Typical municipal outdoor recreation facilities include playgrounds, swimming pools, ball fields,

tennis courts and golf courses. Because of the near total reliance on user-oriented facilities, municipal programs have only a limited bearing on the statewide resource-based outdoor recreation program. There are some exceptions, however, especially in the cases of cities located on bodies of water. For example, Atlantic and Gulf coastal communities provide many excellent public beach facilities, while those located on navigable waters (coastal or inland) operate marinas, boat ramps, mooring fields and other boating facilities.

Although little in the way of resource-based outdoor recreation facilities is provided by the typical municipal outdoor recreation program, municipal programs play a primary role in the provision of user-oriented recreation opportunities in Florida. The importance of the role of municipal programs will grow as increased public emphasis is placed on close-to-home recreation. Since municipal recreation agencies are the recreation system closest to the people, they are usually the first to feel the pressures to establish programs for meeting the added demands of new residents.

NON-GOVERNMENT ROLES

In addition to the more conventional forms of outdoor recreation provided by all levels of government, a wide array of recreational opportunities is afforded by the private sector. Private programs range from for-profit recreational enterprises such as campgrounds, golf courses, marinas and attractions of all kinds to non-profit conservation organizations. Industries with extensive land holdings, notably the forest products industry in Florida, provide vast recreation resources and excellent facilities on their lands for the use of the public often at only a nominal fee. However, this resource is quickly disappearing in many parts of the state as timber lands are being converted to private access leases or developed for residential and commercial purposes.

Private outdoor recreation, because of its size, complexity and the fact that it undergoes rapid and frequent change, is extremely difficult to inventory in a comprehensive manner.



Golfing at one of Florida's private recreation providers

In addition to its direct delivery of outdoor recreation opportunities, the private sector can respond quickly to opportunities for acquiring property for subsequent donation or resale. This capability makes the private sector a valuable partner with public agencies in the provision of resource-based outdoor recreation. During the past decade, private companies and non-profit organizations have transferred thousands of acres to state government for recreation and conservation purposes. Those transfers represent a substantial contribution to the overall supply of outdoor recreational opportunities in Florida.

Commercial Providers

Florida's commercial outdoor recreation providers are a vital component of the state's economy. Commercial providers meet a significant portion of the overall demand for both resource-based and user-oriented outdoor recreation in Florida, particularly tourist-generated demand. Because of their capabilities and further potential for fulfilling demand, the private commercial sector must bear a large share of the responsibility for meeting demand for both resource-based and user-oriented recreation.

Private Organizations

This category includes private and quasi-public organizations such as the YMCA, 4-H, scouting organizations, faith-based groups and a

myriad of conservation organizations such as The Nature Conservancy, Audubon Society, Archbold Biological Station and Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy. In many cases these organizations not only acquire and manage conservation land, but they also conduct preservation, restoration and research programs and public educational activities. These groups provide land and facilities primarily for the use of members, but in some cases for the public at large.

Clubs

This category includes hunt clubs, country clubs, tennis clubs, yacht clubs and others. These groups manage land or facilities that are primarily available only to organization members or their guests. In addition, private industry lands are included (timber companies and other industries with extensive land holdings whose lands or portions thereof are open to the public). The majority of these lands are used for resource-based recreation, although some forms of user-oriented facilities are also available.

