



HDR



St. Johns County

# **Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan**

November, 2003

*Prepared by*  
St. Johns County  
*In Collaboration with*  
HDR & National Park Service's  
Rivers Trails & Conservation Assistance Program

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## Acknowledgements

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The consulting team of HDR would like to thank the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners (BBC) for funding the County's Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan. We would like to acknowledge the dedicated efforts of Vickie Renna, Project Manager with St. Johns County Planning Division; Shorty Robbins, Administrative Manager with St. Johns County's Recreation and Parks Department; Tom Tibbitts, GIS Specialist with St. Johns County's GIS Department; and Stephen Bowes, Outdoor Recreational Planner with the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance who has provided technical assistance on this project. We at HDR would also like to thank these individuals for their dedicated efforts of furthering the goals and promoting the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan.

In addition, we would like to thank the St. Johns County LAMP Board; Ray Bunton, SJRWMD Land Acquisition Manager; J.B. Miller, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) District 3 Biologist; and Alexandra Weiss with DEP's Office of Greenways and Trails for providing invaluable greenway and blueway master plan information.

The Team would also like to acknowledge the citizens of St. Johns County who gave their time to attend and voice their support for the Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan effort.



**What is a Greenway Trail?** “Greenway” is defined in the Florida Statutes as a linear open space established along either a natural corridor, such as a riverfront, stream valley, or ridge-line, or over land along a railroad right-of-way converted to recreational use, a canal, a scenic road, or other route; any natural or landscaped course for pedestrian or bicycle passage; an open space connector linking parks, nature reserves, cultural features, or historic sites with each other and populated areas; or local strip or linear parks designated as a parkway or greenbelt.

The major functions of a linear greenway open space are to protect and enhance the remaining natural, cultural and historical resources. These resources are vitally important to human health, well-being, aesthetic values and for maintaining functional native ecosystems. Greenways also assist in maintaining connectivity

between conservation lands, federal, state and local parks, recreational areas, historical and cultural sites and surrounding neighborhoods and communities.

Known for his walkable community concepts, planner Dan Burden stated, “ *A trail offers its users awareness of their surroundings. Trails preserve vistas. Trails preserve ecosystems, which allow natural sounds to drown out urban sounds. Trails invite touch and discovery. Trails protect and preserve fragrance. The trail experience offers users feelings of bigness and connection with the earth. Trails unfold the mystery, offer surprise, and preserve the detail. In fact, well designed trails offer the hikers, bicyclists, skaters, or other adventurers new sensations each time they are used.*”

### **What is a Blueway?**

A Blueway is a navigable waterway, including its tributaries, lying adjacent to conservation areas, federal, state and local parks, open space, environmentally sensitive lands, wetlands and uplands are used by humans and wildlife alike.

### **What are the benefits of Greenways and Blueways?**

- Provides interconnectivity between humans and natural resources, green spaces, historical/archaeological resources, and cultural resources;
- Promotes awareness of the natural surroundings;
- Preserves and protects natural ecosystems;
- Provides ecological corridors between and among natural areas for wildlife;
- Promotes discovery, adventure and mystery;
- Promotes historical, cultural and environmental education;
- Promotes pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods and communities;
- Promotes social interaction;
- Promotes alternative modes of transportation by providing hiking, biking, boating and equestrian trails;
- Provides interconnectivity with surrounding towns, cities and counties;
- Promotes healthy physical activity;

- Promotes economic benefit to the local and regional economies
- Promotes eco-tourism;
- Promotes public/ private partnerships.

### **Environmental**

Nature trails provide opportunities to linearly connect federal, state and local parks. Nature trails provide the user diversified cultural, historical and environmental education opportunities; preserve natural ecosystems, wildlife corridors and scenic vistas; and provide respite and relief from the urban environment. Greenways also provide opportunities for the user to learn more about their natural surroundings and Florida's ecosystems through the use of interactive outdoor classrooms.

### **Historical/Archaeological**

Greenways give communities the opportunity to connect to local heritage by linking people to the past through the protection and preservation of archaeological/ historic sites. In a county like St Johns, which is rich in cultural and historical resources, greenways can serve to protect and preserve these resources in their natural setting, thereby enriching the user's experience. In addition, archaeological/ historic sites create a connection between people and the landscape by creating a sense of place and a sense of origin.

### **Social Interaction**

The Greenway/Blueway system can provide for healthy outdoor opportunities for people to interact and enjoy various activities located along a trail, including cultural, civic, school and service oriented activities. An effective Greenways and Blueways system can also connect the county's neighborhoods, providing an essential thread that connects cultural, historical and recreational facilities together.

### **Smart Growth**

An important need for greenways and trails is that they can be used as part of a growth management strategy. Not only do Greenways and Blueways provide alternative means of transportation, but greenways can also help shape the urban form by interconnecting neighborhoods and natural areas, functioning as greenbelts, agricultural reserves and/or to separate land use buffers. In addition, greenways can function as development buffers, water quality (stormwater) purifiers, air quality purifiers, scenic roadway buffers and/or conservation easements.

### **Alternative Transportation**

Greenways and Blueways provide an alternative means of transportation to school, neighborhoods, cultural resources and activities, to various parks/conservation areas and to local areas. Greenways encourage the use of non-polluting transportation alternatives by encouraging people in the community to travel by foot or by bike.

## **Economic Benefits**

The creation of greenways can also promote eco-tourism, which ultimately will attract new business, stimulate new jobs and increase local tax revenue. The Pinellas Trail, which travels through downtown Dunedin along the abandoned CSX rail corridor, is a very good example of an economic success story. The City of Dunedin was experiencing an economic decline in the early 1990's, which included a 35% storefront vacancy rate. In 1995, the City spent \$500,000 on beautification projects along the Pinellas Trail and an additional \$500,000 in 2000. After the improvements were made, the older establishments began to remodel their storefronts, new businesses opened and the storefront occupancy rate increased by 100%. The Pinellas Trail became so popular that the store owners turned their storefronts around to face the greenway instead of the street. The City reported that their tax base rose from \$37 million in 1997 to \$51 million in 2000.

## United States Greenway Perspective

In 1994, American Lives, Inc. conducted a poll of more than 800 homebuyers in the high growth states of California, Texas, North Carolina, Florida and Georgia. The poll showed a significant shift in the consumer wants over a 10-year period. Consumers now want features designed into planned communities that promote interaction with others, such as bike and walking paths. In addition, citizens place a high premium on the interaction with the environment through the inclusion of wooded tracts and nature trails. The study found homebuyers expect and will pay extra for features, which create this link to an “outdoor living room”.

Thousands of Americans have said “yes” to preserving open space, greenways, farmlands and other important habitats through their vote at the ballot box. During 1998 election, voters in 44 states approved over 150 conservation-related ballot initiatives. Trails and greenways provide opportunities many Americans seek: close-to-home recreational areas, community meeting places, historic preservation, educational experiences, natural landscapes and beautification. Both trails and greenways help communities build pride by ensuring that their neighborhoods are good places to live and their children can safely walk or bike to a park, a school, or to a neighbor’s home.

## Florida’s Greenway Perspective

In 1991, 1000 Friends of Florida and The Conservation Fund created the Florida Greenway Project. The project built a statewide constituency for greenways and initiated several greenway and trail prototype projects at the regional and community levels. In early 1993, Governor Lawton Chiles created the 40-member Florida Greenway Commission (FGC) to develop a coordinated approach for protecting, enhancing, and managing a statewide wide system of greenways. Members of this commission began to



realize the issues that traditional environmentalists, conservationists, recreational enthusiasts, agriculturalists and businessmen, generally did not agree upon (after meeting on a regular basis) revealed that they had common goals. In 1994, the Commission recommended to the Governor and Legislature that Florida create a statewide system of greenways. The system would link natural areas and open space and would conserve native landscapes and ecosystems while offering additional recreational opportunities across the state. In 1995, the Legislature created a 26-member Florida Greenways Coordinating Council (FGCC) comprised of

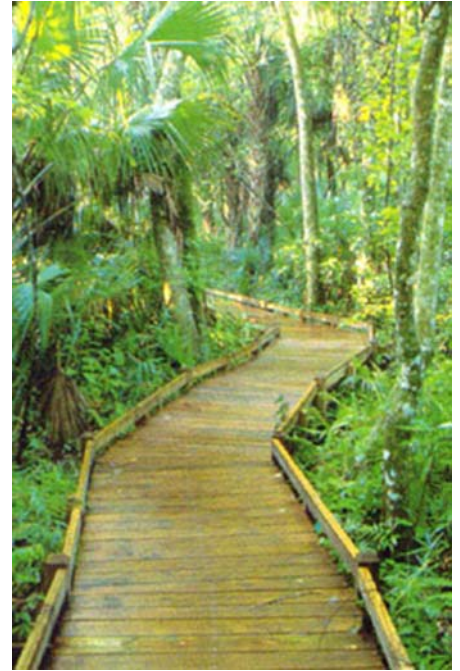
businessmen, conservationists, landowners, recreational interest and federal, state, regional and local governmental agencies. Their mission was to promote greenway initiatives throughout the state, educate the public, coordinate partnerships among various organizations, and provide technical support and leadership.

According to the Rails-to Trails Conservancy, as of September 1999, Florida had more than 31 trails sub-totaling 280 miles with an additional 37 trails being planned totaling an additional 506 miles.

Having these trails already developed provides an opportunity for St. Johns County to see what already works and provides a better idea of the true cost and benefits of greenways. According to the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Guidebook for Florida (funded by both DEP's Office of Greenways and Trails and the Rail-to-Trails Conservancy) the major Central Florida trails include Cady Way and West Orange Trails (Orange County); Cross Seminole Trail (Seminole County); Lake Minneola Scenic Trail/ Clermont Trail (Lake County); General James A. Van Fleet State Trail (Lake, Polk, and Sumter Counties); Pinellas Trail (Pinellas County); Withlacoochee State Trail (Citrus, Hernando and Pasco Counties); and South Florida trails include Cape Haze Pioneer Trail (Charlottee County) and Gasparilla Island Trail (Boca Grande, Lee and Charlottee Counties).

As of June 2003, several counties throughout the state of Florida have adopted their own Greenway Master Plans. These counties include Dade, Broward, Monroe, Manatee, Highland, St. Lucie, Hillsborough, Seminole, Orange, Brevard, Volusia and Duval Counties.

In 2000, DEP's Office of Greenways and Trails passed a Florida Statue (F.S.) Chapter 260 (Sections 260.011-260.018) cited as the "Florida Greenways and Trails Act". This Florida Statue addresses state policy and legislative intent; limitation on liability of private landowners whose property is designated as part of the statewide system of greenways and trails; definitions; greenways and trails system; greenways and trails program; greenways and trails council; composition; powers and duties; acquisition of land; general powers of the department; coordination with the Department of Transportation; restrictions; rules and agency recognition. Please see **Appendix B** for a copy of this Florida Statue, Chapter 260.



## Northeast Florida Regional Planning Council Greenway Directives

In 1997, the Northeast Florida Regional Planning Council (NEFRPC) adopted a Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP) which provides regional greenway directives as stated below:

- Policy 4.3.8. Protect functions of the Natural Resources of Regional Significance (NRRS) through the actions such as the best management practices, public education programs, less than fee-simple acquisition and other voluntary and innovative practices.
- Policy 4.3.9. Increase funds for the acquisition, protection, restoration and maintenance of NRRS in Northeast Florida.
- Policy 4.3.10. Develop a *regional greenway system* by acquisition of fee-simple, less than fee-simple (i.e., easements) or other incentive-based mechanisms which connect existing and future public conservation lands; provides for the protection and enhancement of natural, cultural and historical resources; and provides open space for compatible human uses.

Policy 4.3.11. Acquire areas designated as NRRS, which are not already in public ownership. Consider NRRS in the development of state and regional and local acquisition programs.

Policy 4.3.12. Support the State's Ecosystem Management initiative.

Policy 4.3.13. Develop partnerships that will efficiently, fairly and effectively implement natural resource protection.

Policy 5.1.5. Local government will coordinate with their adjacent communities in construction of bicycle paths and pedestrian ways which cross jurisdictional boundaries.

Policy 5.18. Local government and FDOT should accommodate bicycles and pedestrians in road design and construction whenever feasible and where not cost prohibitive.

## St. Johns County's Greenway and Blueway Directives

St. Johns County's Comprehensive Plan's Conservation/Coastal Management (CCM) policy E.2.2.23 specifically directed the preparation of the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map and report. This policy states that *"by December 2002 or sooner, the County shall establish a Greenways program in coordination with the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Office of Greenways. Such Greenways shall protect and enhance the natural, cultural and historical resources of the County while providing interconnecting access ways between public conservation and parklands. The established Greenways shall be coordinated with the surrounding counties and municipalities."*

Beyond the directives established by the Conservation/Coastal Management policy, there are other St. Johns County 2015 Comprehensive Plan Element's Goals, Objectives and Policies (GOP's) that indirectly further the Greenways/ Blueways initiatives as stated in the Future Land Use, Transportation, Conservation /Coastal Management, Recreation and Open Space and Intergovernmental Elements' GOPs.

Beyond the direct and indirect 2015 Comprehensive Plan GOPs, each of the county's Visioning Groups (District 4 Visioning (Ponte Vedra); Southern District 4 Visioning (Vilano); Mid-Anastasia Island Visioning (west of St. Augustine Beach); South Anastasia Visioning (Crescent Beach Area) and the Southeast Visioning area (west of the Intracoastal and east of US 1) identified the need and desire for Greenways and Blueways within their identified visioning boundary areas.



Both District 4 and the Southern District Visioning Groups clearly state, *"There is a strong sense of disconnection and fragmentation among developments that are isolated from one another and the surrounding land uses"*. Other visioning statements within their document clearly indicate there is a lack of "connectivity in the community, create meaningful open spaces by providing better definition and greater flexibility". Culture and leisure activities "contribute significantly to the common good, to

the general quality of life, to the expansion of horizons of the county's citizens, to the physical and spiritual well-being and to the acceptance of the diversity into our lives". Both of these Visioning Groups recognize that they choose the environment that they live in today because of its unusual natural beauty and wildlife and they realize, "the environmental aspects of the district is closely tied to the quality of life". There is a desire to preserve and protect the natural resources including coastal, wetland, uplands, their associated plant communities and wildlife habitats with a goal of saving these resources now and for future generations. Both Visioning Districts support greenways and wildlife corridors. Although there is a strong desire to support unpaved greenways and wildlife corridors, there is an equally important desire to create and implement a Bicycle and Sidewalk Master Plan and/or Multi-purpose Path in the Ponte Vedra and Vilano urban areas as stated in each Visioning District's documents and as stated further below:

## Objective

*Bicycle Path & Sidewalk Master Plan.* As mentioned in a previous objective, much of District 4 is dominated by developments, which do not interconnect or access more than one arterial. Advancing this development pattern is the north-south orientation of the District's boundaries, the Atlantic Ocean and the Intracoastal Waterway, and its major artery, State Road A1A. The result is a series of fractionalized developments isolated from one another and the surrounding land uses. Throughout the Visioning Process, there has been a recurring theme regarding the lack of connectivity in the community. Furthermore, as envisioned Action Statements are implemented, how will they be accessible by the community? The result of this situation has been an overwhelming desire to create and implement a Bicycle Path and Sidewalk Master Plan.

- Action 1. Create and implement a Bicycle Path and Sidewalk Master Plan for District 4 that addresses the following community concerns:
  - bicycle and pedestrian safety;
  - enhanced community cohesiveness;
  - utilization of existing and future resources;
  - convenience and accessibility to surrounding land uses;
  - adequate design guidelines for bicycle paths and sidewalks;
  - roadway congestion;
  - personal health and fitness.
- Action 2. Utilize the bicycle paths outlined in the Master Plan to connect the North Shores community with the Ponte Vedra and Palm Valley communities.
- Action 3. Construct, repair, or retrofit all existing sidewalk and bicycle path deficiencies in order to create a complete system.
- Action 4. Create a safe bicycle and pedestrian-friendly atmosphere along Roscoe Boulevard and County Road 210.
- Action 5. Ensure that safe bicycle and pedestrian access is provided to all schools and public buildings.

- Action 6. Ensure that all bicycle paths and sidewalks take into consideration the needs of the senior, youth, and handicapped populations. Measures should include, but are not limited to, accessibility ramps, crosswalk signals, appropriate road striping, shading, etc.



Both Mid-Anastasia and South Anastasia Island Visioning Groups' *vision* is to preserve and enhance a pedestrian friendly "Seaside Community that preserves open space and places a high value on the preservation and protection of wetlands, estuaries and other environmentally sensitive environments". Preservation and protection of the remaining resources of the Mid-Anastasia and the South Anastasia Island areas "including coastal, wetland and upland areas and their flora and fauna, is of paramount importance." "Maintain an acceptable balance between our developed and natural environments." "Public nature walkways are to be encouraged in any new developing residential and commercial areas." "Support construction of eco-recreational facilities such as nature trails, picnic areas, fishing docks and observation decks on newly acquired parklands."

The Southeast Visioning document clearly states a need for Greenway and Blueway trails in the Transportation section of this document, Objective 4, Action 2, as stated below:

#### *Objective Greenways / Blueways*

Establish an interconnected and diverse Comprehensive Greenway System throughout the SE Vision Area that will provide for multi-purpose pathways, hiking trails, linear green space, wildlife corridors.

Action 1: Establish and protect natural areas with blueways, greenways and natural trails to connect passive parks. Become the envy of entire state for our Greenway system, landscaping, conservation, and wildlife protection.

Action 2: Develop walkable and friendly parks and connections and establish nature trails.

Action 3: Initiate and coordinate efforts to create multi-use paths (bike paths, jogging trail, etc.) connecting the existing subdivisions throughout the SE Vision Area.

Action 4: Initiate a program to create a contiguous greenbelt from Vaill Point to Flagler County along the west shore of the Matanzas River.

Action 5: Encourage the County to establish Greenways adjacent to the west side of the SE Vision Area (west of Interstate 95) in the Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan.

For additional information on the St. Johns County's Visioning documents Greenway and Blueway directives please see **Appendix C**.

In addition to the St. Johns County's 2015 Comprehensive Plan Element's GOPs and the individual County Visioning documents Greenway and Blueway directives, there are several other existing programs previously established that directly or indirectly promote and enhance the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan. These programs include the following:

- A1A Scenic and Historic Coastal Highway (National Scenic Byway – NSB) and FDOT Scenic Highway
- East Coast Greenway Alliance
- Southern Passages Heritage Trail
- Vilano Greenway/Nature Trail
- Northeast Florida Blueway Phase II – Guana Tolomato and Matanzas Rivers Florida Forever Project
- The Great Florida Birding Trail – Painted Bunting Cluster
- The “Important Bird Areas” Program (Bird Life International)
- Pellicer Creek State Canoe Trail
- Guana Tolomato and Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTMNERR)
- Northern Coastal Basin Program
- Nocatee Development of Regional Impact Greenway Plan
- Northwest Sector Plan
- William Bartram Scenic Highway
- St. Johns River Blueway Florida Forever Project
- American Heritage River Initiative
- 1987 St. Johns River Water Management District's (SJRWMD) Surface Improvement Water Management (SWIM) Program
- SR 207 Rails-to-Trails
- St. Augustine to Lake City Rail Trail
- Nine Mile Road – Locally Designated Scenic Highway (formally called International Golf Parkway)
- Bartram/Durbin Creek Canoe Trail

The following St. Johns County's Existing Programs and Resources section will describe these existing county programs and are described further below.

## Existing Programs & Resources

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The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Office of Greenway and Trails in 1998 published a series of Greenway Maps identifying the conceptual location of equestrian trails, hiking trails, off-road bicycling trails, paddling trails, conservation and/or ecological corridors, and multi-use trails throughout the state of Florida. These series of maps have mainly identified trails along the Atlantic Ocean in St. Johns County, including the Florida Circumnavigational Trail, conservation/ecological corridor (running along both sides of the Intracoastal) and a multi-purpose path identified along SR A1A. St. Augustine's unique cultural and historic sites have also been identified on these series of greenway maps. The only other trail the state has identified is SR 207 multi-purpose corridor connecting St. Augustine with Putnam County.

In the Florida Greenway and Trail System – Canoe Trail brochure, published by DEP's Office of Greenways and Trails, Pellicer Creek was identified as one of 38 designated state recreational canoe trails. In 1979, the Florida Legislature, realizing Florida's unique natural beauty and incredible appeal to outdoor enthusiasts, passed the Florida Recreational Act which authorized the establishment of a network of recreational, scenic and historic trails. DEP's Office of Greenway and Trails administers this program to encourage bicycling, canoeing, hiking, horseback riding, skating and jogging. The canoe trails are publicly owned streams, often flowing through private property where the riverbanks are privately owned and are not open to public use.



As discussed in the previous section, there are many existing St. Johns County programs that either compliment or further implement the County's Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan. The programs that exist on the east coast include A1A Scenic and Historic National Coastal Byway, East Coast Greenway Alliance, Southern Passages Heritage Trail, Vilano Greenway/Nature Trail, Northeast Florida Blueway Phase II – Guana Tolomato and Matanzas Rivers Florida Forever project, Pellicer Creek State Canoe Trail, Guana Tolomato and Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTMNERR) and the Northern Coastal Basin Program. Presently, the only adopted development with an established greenway system is the Nocatee DRI. Within the Northwest Planning District and along the St. John River, the existing programs include Northwest Sector Plan policy directives, William Bartram Scenic Highway, St. Johns River Blueway Florida Forever project, the American Heritage River Initiative and the SJRWMD's St. Johns River SWIM program. Within the interior portion of the county, the existing programs include SR. 207 Rails-to-Trails, St. Augustine to Lake City Rail Trail and Nine Mile Road. The existing programs that directly implement the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan are shown on the map. The existing programs that either compliment or directly implement the County's Greenways, Blueways & Trails are described further below.

**“Scenic & Historic A1A”**, in early January 2002, was designated as a State (FDOT) Scenic Highway. “Scenic & Historic A1A” begins at the Duval / St. Johns County boundary line and ends at the Flagler / St. Johns boundary line, a total of 52 miles. In June 2002, both St. Johns and Flagler County's Scenic Highways became designated as a National Scenic Byway and adopted the official name *A1A Scenic*

*and Historic Coastal Highway.* This federally designated scenic byway boundary begins at the Duval/St. Johns County boundary line and ends at the Flagler/ Volusia boundary line, a total of 72 miles.

The **Florida Scenic Highway Program** as well as the **National Scenic Highway Program** is a grass roots initiative created to heighten the public's awareness about the region's history and intrinsic resources (i.e., historical, archaeological, cultural, recreational and natural scenic qualities) valued by Florida residents and millions of tourists who visit Florida each year. The mission of the Florida Scenic Highway Program and the National Scenic Highway Program is to protect, preserve, enhance and maintain the identified intrinsic resources within the corridor while allowing economic development. The scenic highway strives to educate the travelers by "*telling a story*" that represents Florida's lifestyles, from the past to the present.

As its name implies, "Scenic & Historic A1A" has many natural, historical/archaeological and cultural resources including State Parks (Guana River State Park, Anastasia Island State Park and Frank Butler Beach Park), St. Johns River Water Management District Acquisitions (Stokes Landing and Moses Creek Conservation Area), an Aquatic Preserve (Guana River Marsh), National Monuments (Castillo de



San Marcos and Ft. Matanzas), a Wildlife Management Area (Guana River Wildlife Management Area) and Local Parks/Cultural amenities (Mickler Landing, South Ponte Vedra, North Shores Park, Surf Side Park, Vilano Beach Fishing Pier, Vilano Boat Ramp, Fountain of Youth, St. Johns County Amphitheater, Davenport Park, Lighthouse Park/Museum, St. Johns County Fishing Pier, Crescent Beach Park, Southeast Intracoastal Waterway Park, Matanzas Inlet Fishing Bridge and Rattlesnake Island Park). Although the scenic highway interconnects all the federal, state and local parks/cultural amenities, it is the

desire of the "Scenic & Historic A1A" Corridor Management Council's (CMC's) to also interconnect all these resources through parallel open green space and to construct a continuous multi-purpose path from Duval/St. Johns county boundary line to the St. Johns/Flagler County boundary line. It is also the intent of the "Scenic & Historic A1A" – CMC to interconnect all the water access ways through the Intracoastal Waterway, thereby creating a parallel blue open space (blueway) that will support eco-tourism boat tours similar to the Rhine River scenic waterway in Germany.

**The East Coast Greenway Alliance** (ECGA) ideas began in November 1991 at the East Coast Bicycle Conference. This nationally organized 501(C) 3 non-profit corporation's *vision* is to connect all the major East Coast Cities (i.e. New York, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.) and youth hostels along the Atlantic Ocean. Over time, the East Coast Greenway Alliance multi-purpose path idea expanded from connecting nine eastern states into connecting fifteen states in an effort to tie Maine to Key West, Florida. It was envisioned that the multi-purpose path would be a hard surface trail varying in width from 10 ft. to 12 ft. The "Scenic & Historic A1A" - CMC's proposed Corridor Management Plan (CMP) identified the construction of the multi-purpose path through St. Johns County into Flagler County in the Action Plan, thereby directly implementing the East Coast Greenway Alliance's initiative. This "Scenic and Historic A1A" multi-purpose path is identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map.

**Southern Passages Heritage Trail** is a regional corridor that possesses unique natural, cultural and historical resources creating a special “*sense of place*”. The corridor includes historic downtowns, indigenous foods, historic sites, historic event, unique industries, historic businesses, and historic agriculture and industries. Heritage Corridors’ combine resource conservation, interpretation education and economic development (typically in the form of tourism).

This heritage trail runs parallel to SR A1A and US 17, along the east coast of the United States and provides the primary route from Charleston, South Carolina on the Northern end to Volusia County, Florida on the Southern end. Over the entire distance of the heritage trail, the trail crosses coastal marshes, rivers and passes through some of the most fragile environments and scenic areas along the Atlantic coast. Users can find diversity in forestry, natural resources, and plant and animal life that reflect ecological zones that define the natural character of the SR A1A/US 17 corridor. This corridor also passes through some of the most significant historic and architectural sites found in the United States, which is reflected in the variety of architectural styles of residential homes, government buildings, downtowns, and farm structures. Southern Passages Heritage Trail travels through 30 plus cities and towns and 18 counties representing numerous federal, state and regional geo-political, jurisdictions. Although the Southern Passages Heritage Trail has not officially been designated as a Heritage Trail to date, it will be designated as such in the near future. The Southern Passage’s Heritage Trail is not identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Map, but the initiatives compliment the *A1A Scenic and Historic National Coastal Byway*.

**Vilano Beach Nature Boardwalk (Greenway)** - In 1999, Vilano Beach was designated a Waterfronts Florida Community by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The focal point of this proactive planning effort was to redevelop the Vilano Road Business District into a sustainable Town Center for the surrounding community and visitors alike. The underlying theme of the Town Center design is to make it pedestrian and bicycle friendly while incorporating environmental amenities into a design, thereby creating a “sense of place” for eco-tourism opportunities. In 2000, through a grant from the DCA’s Coastal Management Program, a nature boardwalk was built across a marsh ecosystem in order to connect the southern Town Center under the Usina Bridge with the residential area located to the north. The nature boardwalk is approximately 900 feet long and has several outlooks with benches. There are two pieces of public art (fast becoming landmarks) in the form of mosaic tile (fund-raising events) reflecting the surrounding marsh and marine ecosystem. The nature boardwalk has become a very popular place to walk and bike, and now residents can get to the Town Center without having to drive. It is the only public outlook to the marsh and it is the best place in the area to come watch Vilano's breathtaking sunsets over the Intracoastal Waterway. The final details on the nature boardwalk are in the process of being completed including solar paneled foot-lighting and environmental signage funded by the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND). The environmental signage will provide an educational opportunity for the community to come and learn about the importance and qualities of the surrounding marsh ecosystem. The Vilano Beach Nature



Boardwalk is an existing greenway identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map.

The **Florida Forever Program** is a Florida land acquisition program created to preserve and conserve the state's unique natural resources. In 2000, the Florida Legislature replaced the state's highly successful 10-year Preservation 2000 program, the largest program of its kind in the United States, with the Florida Forever Program. In 1998, the Florida voters amended the state constitution and re-authorized bonds for land acquisition. Under the Florida Forever Program, the state issues bonds for \$3 billion annually and distributes about \$300 million to various agencies -- the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Agriculture, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the state's five water management districts. The funds are used for land acquisition, environmental restoration and water resource development. Under the Florida Forever Program, lands are ***only acquired from willing sellers***. Within St. Johns County, there are two Florida Forever approved blueway projects; the Northeast Florida Blueway Phase II and the St. Johns River Blueway. Both of these projects are described further below.

**Northeast Florida Blueway Phase II** – Guana Tolomato and Matanzas Rivers Florida Forever project. The Northeast Florida Blueway Phase II (“Blue II”) project boundary was designated as a Category A project by Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) in 2001. Projects that are ranked as Category A projects are eligible for 100% state funding. This proposal included undeveloped lands on the east and west sides of the Intracoastal Waterway through St. Johns County. Within the “Blue II” project boundary area there is approximately 18,170 acres (1413 parcels) of private lands and 9985 acres (259 parcels) in public ownership.



Public ownership within the “Blue II” project boundary reflects the natural, ecological integrity and historic value of the region. Specifically the public lands are owned by various federal, state and local agencies including the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), Department of Forestry (DoF), United States Department of Interior National Park Service and St. Johns County. Many of these resources have previously been described in the “Scenic and Historic A1A” section above, except for five other publicly

managed areas located along the Intracoastal Waterway. These protected publicly managed areas include DEP's Favor Dykes State Park and Pellicer Creek Aquatic Preserve (one of the state's 38 designated recreational canoe trails), SJRWMD's Stokes Landing Conservation Area, DoF's Deep Creek State Forest and the state's historic Ft. Mose. In April 2003, the state acquired the largest tract of land within the “Blue II” project boundary area known as the Rayonier Tract. The 8,500-acre tract protects five miles of the Matanzas River shoreline (from SR 206 to Pellicer Creek) and creates 16,000 acres of contiguous conservation land between Favor Dykes State Park, Pellicer Creek Conservation Area and Princess Place.

Rich in eco-system diversity, the approved project boundary was identified for future acquisition and includes 17 types of natural communities, supporting 70 or more Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) listed species. This boundary is recognized by the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWCC) Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (SHCA). Through this program the ecological integrity of this area will be protected. In addition, this area is rich in historical and archaeological resources due to the Native Americans and European inhabitants, spanning over a wide period of time as identified by the Division of Historical Resources Master Site Files. The acquisition and protection of the remaining uplands will help ensure this area continues to provide a quality outdoor experience including opportunities for boating, canoeing, kayaking, birding, picnicking, hiking, dirt biking, horseback riding, fishing as well as environmental and historical/archaeological interpretative education (through signage). The Northeast Florida Blueway Phase II – Guana Tolomato and Matanzas Rivers blueway is identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map.

**The Great Florida Birding Trail** – The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWCC) designated the east coast of St. Johns County as the Great Florida Birding Trail. In St. Johns County, this trail is known as the **Painted Bunting Cluster**. The trail is marked with signs and it connects Guana River Wildlife Management Area, Guana River State Park, St. Augustine Alligator Farm, Anastasia State Park, Ft. Matanzas National Monument, Faver-Dykes, Princess Place Preserve and Washington Oaks State Gardens. The Great Florida Birding Trail promotes eco-tourism in the county.

Although the Great Florida Birding Trail is not identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map, this program has an indirect impact on the Intracoastal Blueways.

**The Important Birding Areas Program** - The "Important Birding Areas" (IBA) Program was developed by an International Consortium (Birdlife International) to protect migrating birds around the world. Sites are selected based on factors such as large or unusual bird rookeries; critical migratory spring and fall stop overs, rare bird nesting areas and unusually large numbers of species located in one place. The International Birding Community designated five IBA's in 2000-2002. The areas that have been designated as IBA's in St. Johns County include Guana River Wildlife Management Area, Guana River State Park, Ft. Matanzas National Monument, Faver-Dykes and Moses Creek Conservation Area. Similar to the Great Florida Birding Trail, the IBA's promote eco-tourism in the county.

Although the IBA is not identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map, this program has an indirect impact on the Intracoastal Blueways.

**Pellicer Creek State Canoe Trail** is an existing four-mile canoe trail that winds through the tidal marshes of southern St. Johns County. The waters of the canoe trail are slow flowing, allowing the traveler to paddle upstream. The trail begins at U.S Highway 1 Bridge (six miles west of Marineland) and ends at Faver Dykes State Park. In 1979, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), as authorized by the Florida Recreational Act, designated Pellicer Creek as one of 38 state canoe trails. The canoe trail is identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map.

### **Guana Tolomato and Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTMNERR)**

In 1999, the GTMNERR (the Reserve) was chosen as the nation's example of temperate Carolinian biogeography province and designated as the United States's 25<sup>th</sup> NERR. The boundaries lie perpendicular to the Guana River State Park/Wildlife Management Area boundary and traverses east into the Atlantic Ocean and west past the Tolomato River. The southern portion of the NERR boundary

begins just south of Moultrie Creek (less than a mile) and extends south along the Intracoastal Waterway into Flagler County past Washington Oaks Gardens State Park. The Reserve encompasses



approximately 55, 000 acres of salt marsh and mangrove tidal wetlands, oyster bars, estuarine lagoons, upland habitat and offshore sea. This estuarine ecological system produces a rich abundance of marine life including northern Atlantic right whale, manatees, dolphins, wood storks, roseate spoonbills, bald eagle and peregrine falcons.

The National Estuarine Research Reserve program is designed to sustain the environmental integrity of undisturbed estuarine ecosystems and to promote, implement and coordinate opportunities for scientific research, environmental education, public stewardship and nature appreciation on uplands and submerged lands. A couple of objectives of the GTMNERR are to provide access and acquire land to better protect and to manage the natural and cultural resources within the associated GTMNERR estuaries ecosystems that are consistent with the reserve's educational, research and management goals. The GTMNERR mission and goal compliments and promotes the protection of ecological natural systems by providing environmental and historical/archaeological interpretive education as well as promoting additional recreational access. Although the GTMNERR is not identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map, this program has an indirect impact on the Intracoastal blueways and the county's Greenway and Blueway initiatives.



The **Northern Coastal Basins Program** began in 1995 in response to the Intracoastal Waterway water quality issues in the region. The project boundary area is defined by the Intracoastal Watershed Area, beginning at Ponce Inlet in Volusia County and continuing north to Guana River Marsh in St. Johns County. The program addresses water quality concerns, estuarine ecosystems protection, stormwater management and coordinated joint ecosystem management strategies.

The SJRWMD hopes to maintain healthy estuarine ecosystems that support the economic, recreational and educational resources of the Intracoastal Watershed Area. The Northern Coastal Basins Program (NCBP) supports local land acquisition and greenway/blueway initiatives in an effort to maintain healthy estuarine ecosystems along the Intracoastal. Although the NCBP is not identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map, this program compliments the county's greenways/ blueways initiatives.

The major SR A1A and Intracoastal Waterway (east coast) federal, state and local recreational and conservational resources are located in **Appendix D**.

**Nocatee DRI** – The Nocatee DRI owner and developer have chosen to create a completely integrated greenway network within their development. The Nocatee Greenway is an interconnected network of upland and wetland corridors running through the Nocatee community. In relationship to the overall Nocatee land use pattern, the greenways serve as edges and greenbelts that define developed villages and emphasize their identity, as well as providing for non-vehicular travel corridors. The Nocatee Greenway preserves important wildlife habitat corridors and offers unique opportunities to the general public to enjoy activities such as hiking, bicycling, canoeing, equestrian activities, bird watching and environmental education. The final Nocatee Greenway Plan will include localized trail improvements consisting of trails and trailhead design, trail routing, structures and the overall passive recreational improvements. The St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) will review the final Greenway Master Plan before it is implemented.

The Greenway Master Plan will also help to connect valuable regional environmental corridors and areas ranging from the Atlantic Ocean to the St. Johns River. The Nocatee Greenway and Nocatee Preserve combine to form an integrated corridor connecting ecologically sensitive lands and landscape features including the Guana/Tolomato River Basin and Durbin Creek. The Nocatee Preserve is a separate but integral part of the Greenway, comprising an additional 2,400 acres, of which 1,630 acres are above mean high water line. The Preserve provides a critical link between the Greenway and the Tolomato River Basin. The contiguity of the Greenway and the Preserve provides significant protection from the habitat fragmentation protects regionally significant natural communities and creates a unique wildlife corridor.

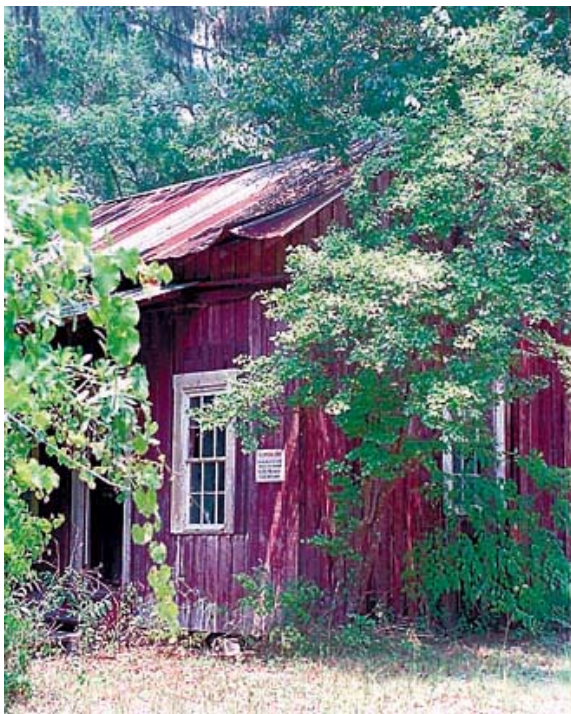
The **Northwest Sector Plan** boundary area is defined by Julington and Durbin Creeks to the north, SR16/CR 208 to the south and I-95 west to the St. Johns River. The Northwest Sector Plan (NSP) was prepared in combination with a North-South Corridor Plan, as required by FDOT due to rapid growth occurring in the area. In 2001, the county received a FDOT variance. The conditions of the variance were to improve the capacity of the existing roads between SR 16 and International Golf Parkway and to prepare a Sector Plan. The Sector Plan was required to address all the previously approved development plans (e.g., Plan Unit Developments (PUD's) and Developments of Regional Impact (DRI's)), the existing land uses, future land use, natural resources protection, public facilities, urban design needs of the area and other matters consistent with the state's comprehensive plan requirements.

In addition to FDOT's variance requirements, as an effort to address the directives established in the county's own adopted comprehensive plan (policy E.2.2.19.), the Northwest Sector Plan was required to address infrastructure, tree preservation, scenic, historic, archaeological, wildlife corridors and greenways needs of this area.

Included in the Sector Plan are a number of greenway policies, which directly affect the St. Johns Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan. The major Northwest Sector Plan greenway policies include A.2.1.3., A.2.1.4. (a), A.2.1.4. (b), A.2.1.5. and A.2.1.6.

Policy A.2.1.4. (a) Scenic Edges, briefly states that a 75-foot width area shall be located outside the right-of-way (ROW) for all major arterials, major collectors and proposed roads. The scenic edges and wildlife crossings have been identified on the County's Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map. Policy A.2.1.4. (b) states, trails and bikeways should connect to elementary schools. Policy A.2.1.5.

states, that the county shall initiate planning for the creation of a blueway system including river access. Policy A.2.1.6. states that the county shall initiate planning for a greenway system including wetlands, uplands, parks/open spaces, natural corridors, aesthetics and wildlife habitat.



**William Bartram Scenic Highway** – In 1980, the Florida Legislature (House Bill 987 (Chapter 80-427)) designated SR 13 as a scenic highway from the Julington Creek Bridge to SR 207. However, the Florida Legislature’s House Bill 987 scenic highway designation is a name only designation and regulatory protective techniques were not established at that time. Since that time, the William Bartram Scenic Highway Corridor Advocacy Group (CAG) has been participating in the FDOT Scenic Highway Program to address the issue. In 2002, William Bartram Scenic Highway was determined to be eligible to become a State Scenic Highway. Today, the William Bartram Scenic Highway CAG is in the process of completing their Corridor Management Plan (CMP) to officially become designated as a State (FDOT) Scenic Highway. It is anticipated that William Bartram Scenic Highway will become a designated State (FDOT) Scenic Highway in the Fall/Winter of 2003.

The William Bartram Scenic Highway corridor is 17.3 miles long and begins at the Julington/Durbin Creek bridge and continues to SR 16 at Wards Creek. The mission of the Florida Scenic Highway is to preserve, maintain, protect and enhance the identified intrinsic resources within the corridor while allowing economic development. This scenic highway strives to educate the traveler by “*telling a story*” that represents Florida’s lifestyles, from the past to the present.

William Bartram Scenic Highway has many natural, historical/ archaeological and cultural resources including majestic 200-300 year old Oak Trees, the Wesley Manor (now Westminster Woods) old Naval Store Operation, Horse Racing Road, 1870 AME Church, Theophilus Wilson Moore Plantation, prehistoric Indian Camp – Mill Creek, Lake Beluthahatchee and dam on Mill Creek, Amity Anchorage Marina, San Juan Del Rio Church, Mary Wood Retreat Center, 1893 Grove Bluff Plantation, Steel’s General Store and Post Office, Swiss Lane steamboat mail delivery area, the old Community Center, Hartley’s General Store and Post Office, Alpine Groves River Park, historic plaque state markers, 1869 Moreman Plantation, Switzerland Cemetery, Francis Fatio Plantation, Prehistoric



Native American Settlement, Vitality Springs, Kentucky Branch Saw Mill, Hallowes Cove, Orangedale Cemetery, Shands Bridge and Pier, William Bartram Plantation, Florence Cove, Jack Wright Island Conservation Area and Trout Creek Park. It is the desire of the William Bartram Scenic Highway Corridor Advocacy Group (CAG) to interconnect all these resources through parallel green open space and through the construction of a continuous multi-purpose path running parallel to SR/CR 13 as identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map.

**St. Johns River Blueway – Florida Forever Project** boundary was designated as a Category A project by Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) in 2002. Projects that are ranked as Category A projects are eligible for 100% state funding. The proposal included undeveloped properties along the St. Johns River in St. Johns County. Within the St. Johns River Blueway project boundary area there are approximately 28,174 acres of privately owned land and 494 acres of publicly owned lands. The publicly owned lands include Watson Island State Forest (managed by DoF), Julington/Durbin Creek Preserve, Trout Creek and Deep Creek Conservation Area (managed by SRWMD)). In addition to the state owned conservation lands, there are several County owned parks including Jack Wright Island, Trout Creek, Alpine Grove Park (Bennett), old Shands Bridge Fishing Pier, Riverdale Park and Switzerland Point School Park.

Rich in eco-system diversity, this approved project boundary identified for future acquisitions includes 12 types of natural communities and possibly 70 or more Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) listed species. These areas are recognized by the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWCC) Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (SHCA) map. Through this program, the ecological integrity (natural communities, wildlife and water quality) of the area will be protected. The Division of Historical Resources Master Site Files recognizes several archaeological sites in this area. This area



reflects a long settlement history and attests to more than 11 cultures including Orange, St. Johns, St. Johns, St. Johns IB, St. Johns II, Spanish, Spanish First Period, Spanish Second Period, American, Nineteenth Century American and Twentieth Century American. Site types include prehistoric burial mounds, prehistoric mounds, prehistoric campsite, a historic refuge, a historic fort (Fort Picolata), a mill (Deep Creek Sawmill) and the last remaining active turpentine operation in northeast Florida (on the Ms. Jo Meldrim property).

The acquisition will protect the last remaining uplands and wetlands along the river, ensuring that the area continues to provide quality outdoor experiences by increasing boat access and providing additional recreational opportunities for canoeing, kayaking, birding, picnicking, hiking, horseback riding, fishing as well as environmental and historical/archaeological interpretative education (through signage).

The St. Johns River Blueway furthers the initiatives of the 1987 SJRWMD's St. Johns River Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Program and the nationally recognized American Heritage River (AHR). Acquiring land within the St. Johns River Blueway project boundary area will

compliment the AHR Board of Directors (previous Steering Committee) and the Northeast Florida Regional Planning Council's (NEFRPC) efforts to identify the St. Johns River as an Eco-Heritage Corridor. The St. Johns River will soon be officially designated as the "St Johns, an American Heritage River" through the DEP's Office of Greenway and Trails. Both the St. Johns River Florida Forever boundaries and the "St Johns, an American Heritage River" are identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map.



**American Heritage River** - On July 30, 1998, the St. Johns River was officially designated an American Heritage River by President Clinton. This is the only river that received this designation in the State of Florida. This designation recognizes the river's ecological, historic, economic and cultural significance. It was mutually agreed upon by the signatory partners (federal agencies, state agencies, and the river community) that enter into this agreement to work together to preserve and enhance the water quality, ecological and cultural

resources while stimulating economic revitalization in cooperation with other partners in serving their common St. Johns River interests. The partners of the river community will foster appropriate action to enhance the St. Johns River and improve the quality of life in communities along the river's banks.

At the 2003 St. Johns River Summit, the St. Johns River community decided that they wanted to preserve the natural ecosystems along the river, restore water quality (through identification and improvement of point source pollution, non-point source pollution, aquatic/wildlife habitat restoration) and enhance the river by increasing recreational opportunities, river access, and greenway connections and provide archaeological/historical interpretive educational displays.

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) River Navigator is also in the process of seeking special blueway designation through the DEP's Office of Greenways and Trails for the "*St Johns, an American Heritage River*". "*St. Johns, an American Heritage River*" has been identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map. The American Heritage River greenway initiative compliments and further implements the William Bartram Scenic Highway, the county's St. Johns River Blueway Florida Forever project and the St. Johns County's Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan.

In 1987, the SJRWMD's **St. Johns River Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Program** was approved by the Florida Legislature. Its mission is to protect and restore the surface water and the associated natural systems. The program efforts focus on reducing point and non-point sources of pollution, restoring degraded aquatic habitat, improving interagency coordination and increasing awareness of the river issues. Although the St. Johns River 1987 SWIM



program is not identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map, the program compliments the county's greenways/ blueways initiatives.

**Bartram/Durbin Creek Canoe Trail** is a beautiful creek that begins in southeast Duval County and northern St. Johns County. Here the headwaters of the Julington/Durbin Creeks join and move westward under US 1, just south of CR 210. This rural area is known as Durbin. Durbin Creek is tidal water that flows northward under the large concrete bridge on Racetrack Road. As the stream meanders northward, it picks up another oncoming branch and then turns westward for about seven miles where it meets Julington Creek, then the creek continues west before it empties into the St. Johns River.

As with many of St. Johns County's canoe trails, the natural scenery is beautiful. This canoe trail, unlike any other, contains some of the largest remaining centennial cypress trees in the region. In this location, the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) has documented that it takes 7-8 people arm spans, with their fingers touching, to wrap around the trunk of many of the cypress trees in this area. There are many other documented flora and fauna that have been identified in this area depending on the season, such as but not limited to, cardinal flower, wild hibiscus, bartram ixia, fall asters, bear grass, pitcher plants, orchids, osprey, pileated woodpecker, wild turkeys, mergansers ducks, eagles, deer, fox squirrels, gophers, water turtles, manatees, otters and alligators.

There isn't any formal access to this canoe trail; however, the local citizens access this canoe trail on the north side of the bridge where there is a dirt road leading to the dirt parking area or access the canoe trail from Clark Restaurant's boat ramp. As the Julington-Durbin Creek Preserve Park is developed by the City of Jacksonville, there will be canoe access to the Julington/Durbin Creeks from this location in the future. The Boy Scouts and the Jacksonville Seabees have maintained this highly used local canoe trail over the years.

The major St. Johns River and SR 13 state and local recreational and conservational resources are located in **Appendix E**.



**SR 207 Rails-to-Trails** is a 21-mile Florida East Coast (FEC) Railroad Company abandoned right-of-way now owned by FDOT. This rails-to-trail corridor connects Putnam County to St. Augustine. Although FDOT still owns this right-of-way, the county can and is planning on developing 12 miles of SR. 207 into a greenway. Much of the SR 207 trail travels through the rural communities of Vermont Heights, Elkton, Armstrong, Spuds and Hastings. The development of the trail will offer the surrounding citizens an alternative safe means of transportation connecting parks, schools, churches, natural features, historic sites and retail centers while providing additional recreational

opportunities. Funding is being sought for significant greenway improvements and land acquisition. The SR 207 greenway has been identified on the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map.

**St Augustine to Lake City Rail Trail** is a multi-county effort (traveling through St. Johns, Putnam, Clay, Bradford, Union and Columbia counties) that connects the St. Johns SR 207 rails-to-trails project with neighboring Putnam County and beyond to Lake City. The SR 207 rail-to-trails project will serve as the anchor to the larger greenway/trail that will ultimately connect St. Augustine to Lake City. The St. Augustine to Lake City Rail-to-Trail's alignment will follow SR 100 from Putnam to Lake City. Currently in the planning stages, a representative from each County along the trail, as well as citizen volunteers meet quarterly to coordinate activities, plan the trail, pursue funding for development, establish management strategies and establish an official name for this rail-trail.

**Nine Mile Road** is a locally designated scenic road in St. Johns County.

A list of the major recreational and conservational park resources lying in the central portion of the county can be found in **Appendix F**.

Considering St. Johns County's 2015 Comprehensive Plan directives, the county has various Visioning documents directives and the previous county programs that promote and compliment greenway and blueway initiatives. What is the county's vision for greenway and blueway development?



Similar to the State of Florida's Greenway Concept, St. Johns County's Greenway and Blueway vision is to interconnect or link federal, state and local parks, cultural and historic sites, scenic highways, national scenic byway, designated county blueways, conservation areas and ecological natural reserves with each other. It also provides additional outdoor recreational opportunities for citizens and visitors of St. Johns County. The Greenway and Blueway initiatives provide additional access to land and water recreational opportunities while providing alternative types of intermodal transportation

opportunities including hiking, horse back riding, bicycling, roller blading, canoeing/kayaking and other boating activities that promote healthy physical activities for the betterment of the community.

Beyond the state of Florida's Greenway Concept, Greenways and Blueways provide alternative modes of transportation (intermodal) to various land uses and promote pedestrian friendly walkable neighborhoods and communities.

Finally, parallel to the state's Greenway initiatives, St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan promotes additional coordination and interconnectivity among the City of St. Augustine, City of St. Augustine Beach, Town of Hastings, the surrounding counties of Duval, Flagler and Putnam, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), Northeast Florida Regional Planning Council (NEFRPC), Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the United States National Park Service as well as the Federal Highway Administration (FDA) and eventually to the individual land owners and business owners located along the trail systems.

The Planning Process for determining lands suitable for Greenways and for determining desires of the residents of St. Johns County involved the following steps:

- Development of GIS Base map and data layers
- Review of existing and proposed cultural, planning and environmental features
- Public workshops and meetings
- Review of Comprehensive Plan Initiatives (Please see page 6 for additional information)
- Review of previously approved DRI's (This information was incorporated on the maps)
- Review of all previously approved planning special projects (Please see pages 10 – 19 for additional information)

The following is a brief discussion and description of some of the items identified above:

### **Development of GIS Maps and Data Layers**

The Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan for St. Johns County was developed from overlaying, in a GIS format, a combination of environmentally sensitive lands (wetlands); unique habitat area for wildlife and vegetation; proposed conservation lands (Florida Forever properties); and existing protected lands and community cultural features including schools, parks and roads. During the initial stages of the project, the consultant coordinated with the County's GIS Department for the purpose of obtaining existing shapefiles and any additional information that would assist in developing the greenways master plan. The data obtained included information on existing recreation and conservation lands, wetlands, trails, wildlife areas and crossings, scenic highways and byways, existing and proposed school sites, boat ramp locations, potential county land acquisitions, historic and cultural data, Northwest Sector Plan details and recent aerial photography. The consultant also collected data from the planning department regarding approved developments and their components, including information on proposed roads, schools and greenways.

### **Environmental Planning, Cultural Features, and Studies**

In addition to receiving GIS data from the county, the consultant collected additional information from several other sources. Data that was collected included:

- Existing and proposed Florida Forever acquisition lands
- Existing and proposed St. Johns Water Management District lands
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissions (FWCC) significant habitat areas including biodiversity "hot spots"
- Florida Natural Areas Inventory data (FNAI)
- Existing and proposed Greenway Master Plans from surrounding counties including, Flagler, Clay and Duval

The majority of data collected was in shapefile format. In cases where shapefiles could not be made available, information was digitized from hand drawn maps using ArcView. All data created throughout the master planning process followed national standards and used the following map projection parameters:

Projection: State Plane Coordinate System  
Units: Feet  
Datum: NAD83  
Spheroid: GRS1980  
Central Meridian: -81.0000  
False Easting: 656166.6666  
False Northing: 0.0000  
Latitude of Origin: 24.3333

Once the data collection and shapefile creation process was complete, all pertinent information was incorporated into ArcView for future use, creating workshop base maps and Greenway and Blueway master plan maps.

## Public Workshops and Meetings

During the planning process, three public meetings were held in January and February 2003 to solicit feedback from county residents and special interest groups. These meetings were held in the Northwest Planning District, the Northeast Planning District (Ponte Vedra) and the southern portion of the county. In addition, meetings were held with the LAMP Board and recreation providers to obtain information and identify major concerns.

Attendees of these meetings were asked to fill out an informal questionnaire identifying public interest and potential areas for greenway and blueway trails. A tabulation of questionnaire results can be found in **Appendix A**. In general, participants expressed interest in canoeing, kayaking, horse back riding, horse-cart riding, fishing, bicycling, hiking, walking, roller-blading, bird watching and general nature appreciation.

Five maps were created for the workshops identifying five different opportunities: bicycling, paddling, equestrian, multi-use and ecological. During each public meeting, attendees marked their comments and suggestions on the appropriate opportunities maps. At the completion of each meeting, shapefiles were created based on the public input and incorporated onto the maps for use at the following public meeting. Once all four meetings were complete, a composite shapefile reflecting all comments were finalized and used towards determining and evaluating the recommendations for potential greenway opportunities. The following maps and abbreviated public feedback summary reflect the comprehensive results from all four public workshops.

ST. JOHNS COUNTY  
**Greenway / Blueway  
Master Plan**

PLANNING FOR GREENWAYS AND BLUEWAYS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT NEW MOVEMENTS IN OUTDOOR RECREATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT. GREENWAYS (STREAMS, RIDGE LINES, ABANDONED RAIL LINES, OR SCENIC ROADS) PROVIDE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPORTANT ECOLOGICAL SERVICES SUCH AS HABITAT, WATER QUALITY BENEFITS, OR SCENIC VIEWS. GREENWAYS TYPICALLY PROVIDE PUBLIC ACCESS FOR WALKING, HIKING, JOGGING, BICYCLING, HORSEBACK RIDING, AND OTHER ACTIVE OR PASSIVE RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

IN WHAT AREA OF THE COUNTY DO YOU LIVE?

WHAT OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES DO YOU ENJOY?

HIKING    JOGGING    BIKING    OFF-ROAD BIKING

HORSEBACK RIDING    BIRD WATCHING    FISHING

IN-LINE SKATING    PADDLING    NATURE APPRECIATION

OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, TRAILS, ETC...DO YOU CURRENTLY UTILIZE IN YOUR AREA?

\_\_\_\_\_

IDENTIFY A POTENTIAL AREA, TRAIL OR SCENIC VISTA FOR INCLUSION ON A GREENWAY/BUEWAY MASTER PLAN.

\_\_\_\_\_

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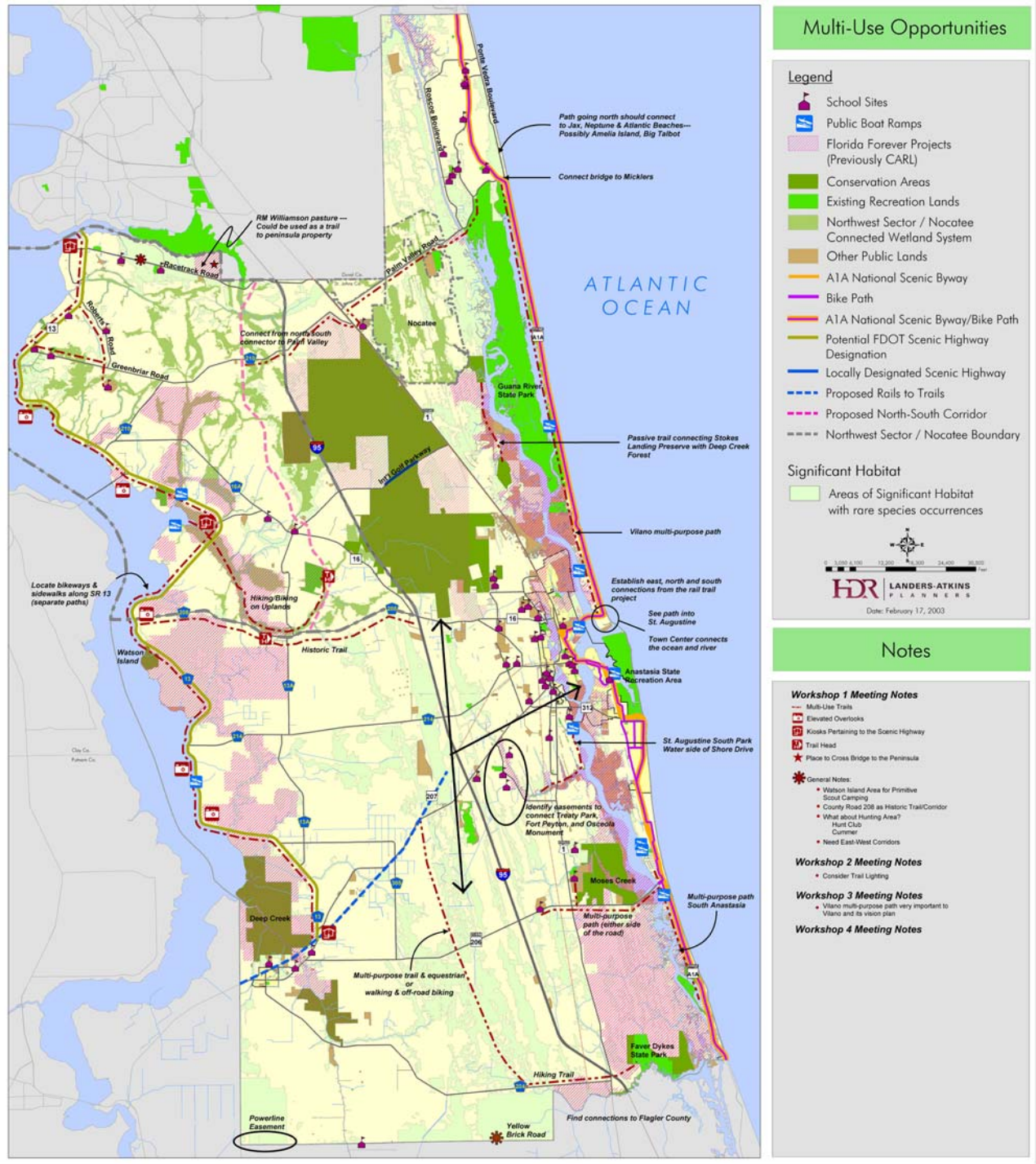
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PLEASE WRITE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON BACK.

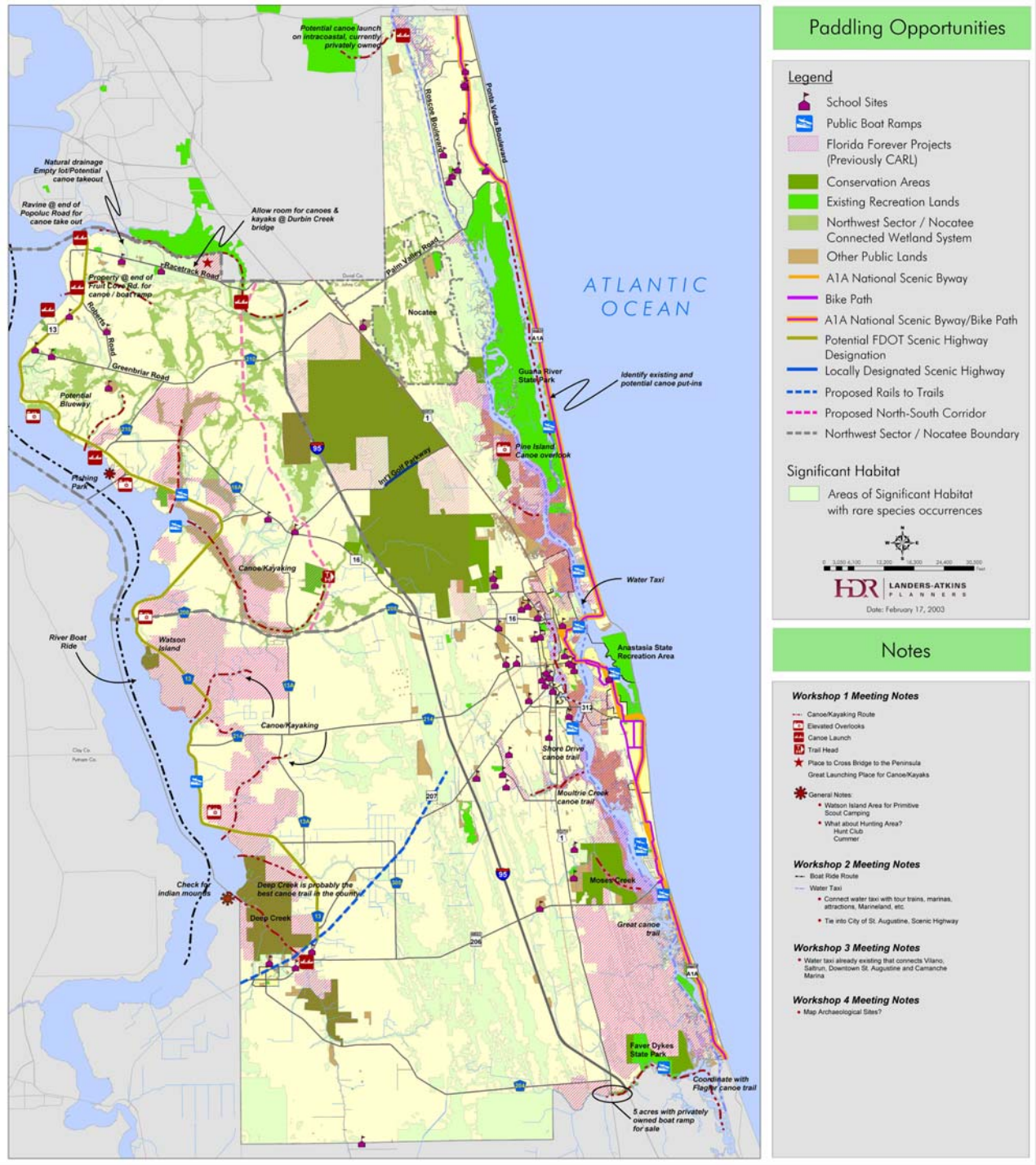
Multi-Use Opportunities

ST. JOHNS COUNTY GREENWAYS/BLUEWAYS MASTER PLAN



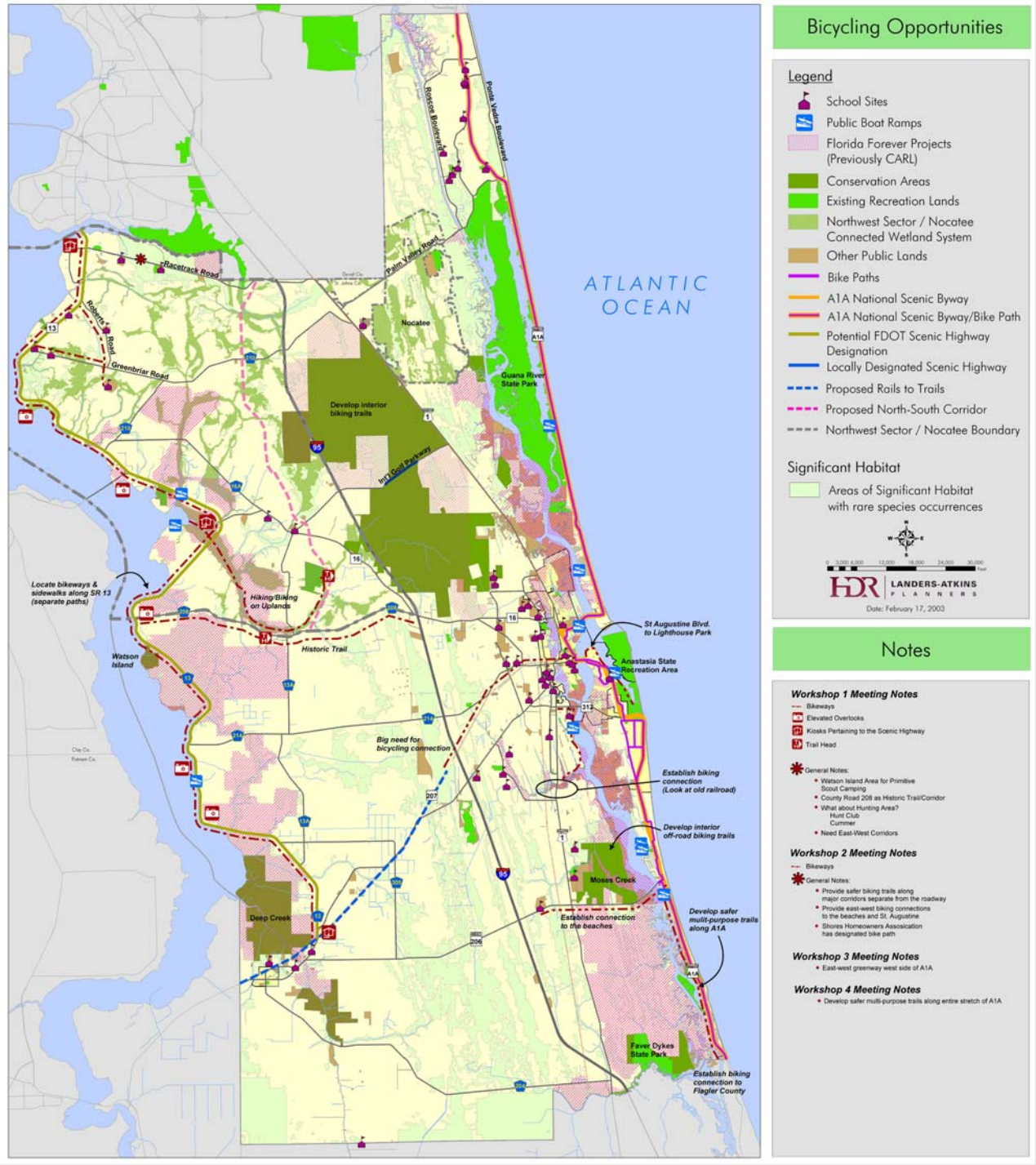
Paddling Opportunities

ST. JOHNS COUNTY GREENWAYS/BUEWAYS MASTER PLAN



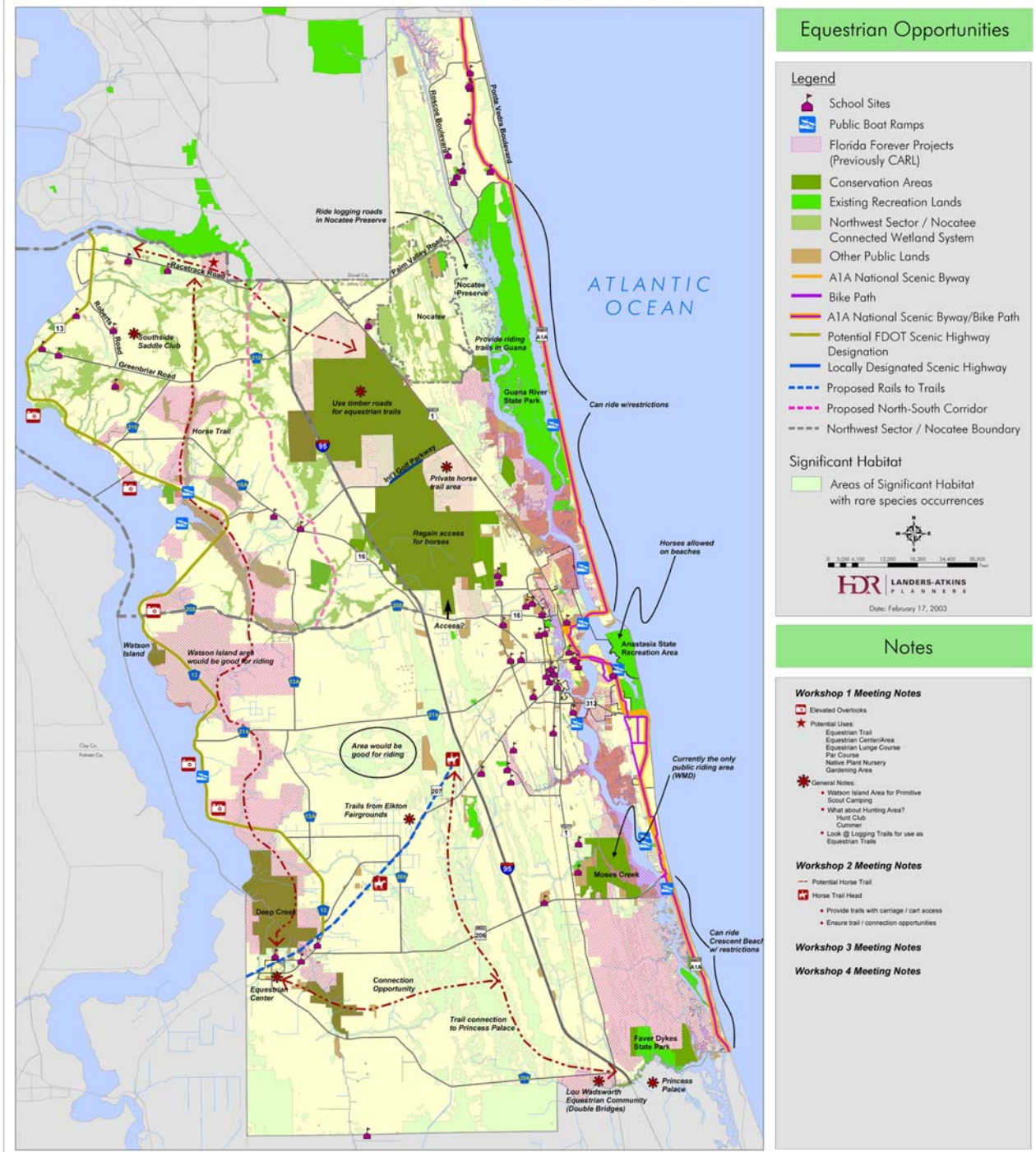
# Bicycling Opportunities

## ST. JOHNS COUNTY GREENWAYS/BLEWAYS MASTER PLAN



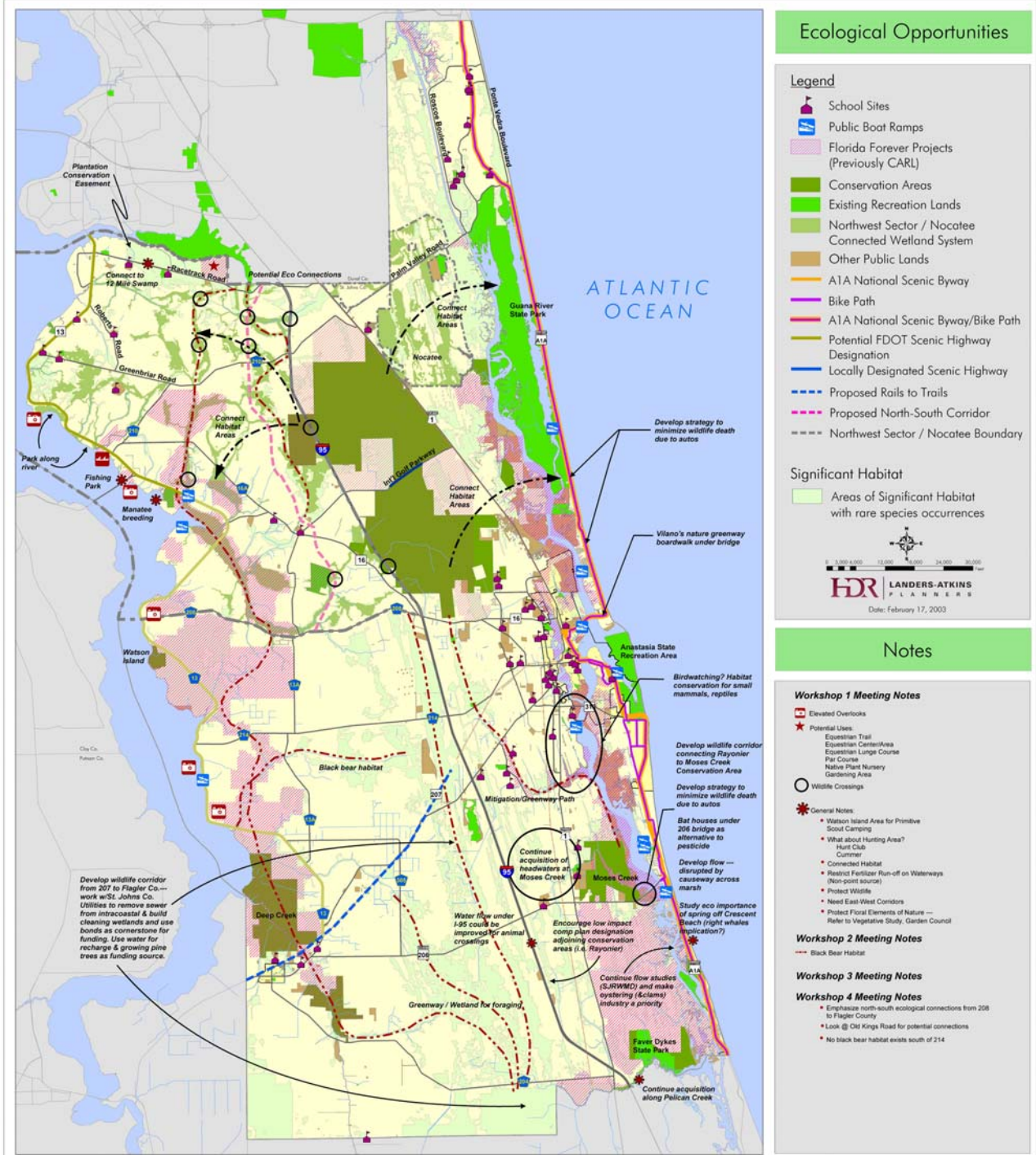
## Equestrian Opportunities

# ST. JOHNS COUNTY GREENWAYS/BLEWAYS MASTER PLAN



## Ecological Opportunities

# ST. JOHNS COUNTY GREENWAYS/BLEWAYS MASTER PLAN



## **Multi-Use Opportunities Summary**

- Establish southwest and northwest connections from St. Augustine to Putnam County along the FDOT proposed rails-to-trails project.
- Develop a north-south multi-use paved connection parallel to the North-South Corridor, portions of CR 207 or CR 204.
- Establish a south multi-use unpaved connection to Flagler County and a north paved connection to Jacksonville, Neptune and Atlantic Beaches.
- Identify easements to connect Treaty Park, Fort Payton and the Osceola monument.
- Develop a multi-use paved path between the Intracoastal Waterway and Pedro Menendez High School running parallel to SR 206.
- Continue developing connections to existing multi-use paved paths including those located in Vilano Beach and St. Augustine Shores.
- Develop a multi-use paved path along Palm Valley Road between the proposed north-south corridor and Mickler's Landing.

## **Paddling Opportunities Summary**

- Establish a canoe / paddling trail connecting Stokes Landing and Deep Creek Forest
- Designate canoeing trails along Deep Creek, Six Mile Creek, Moultrie Creek, Trout Creek, McCullough Creek and Julington-Durbin Creek.
- Identify and establish canoe launches along the Intracoastal and St. Johns River.
- Continue developing water taxi connections along the Intracoastal Waterway from Ponte Vedra to Marineland.
- Establish boat ride routes along the St. Johns River and the Intracoastal Waterway.

## **Bicycling Opportunities Summary**

- Create separate bike paths running parallel to all major roadways.
- Provide east-west biking connections to the St. Johns County beaches and the City of St. Augustine.
- Develop safer cycling paths along SR A1A.
- Establish biking connections to surrounding counties.
- Establish a biking connection from the terminus of the rails-to-trails corridor to the City of St. Augustine.
- Create separate bike paths along SR 13.

## **Equestrian Opportunities Summary**

- Establish an equestrian trail connection between the Hastings Equestrian Center and Princess Place and the Florida Agricultural Museum off US 1 in Flagler County.
- Provide interior riding trails at Guana River State Park and the Nocatee Preserve.
- Establish a north-south equestrian connection between Princess Palace and the Elkton Fairgrounds.
- Consider creating riding trails in the area south of CR 214 as well as the area surrounding Watson Island.
- Establish a north-south riding trail between the Hastings Equestrian Center and the Julington-Durbin Creek Preserve.
- Consider developing equestrian trails that would allow for carriage/cart access.

## Ecological Opportunities Summary

- Consider developing a wildlife corridor between CR 207 and Flagler County.
- Continue land acquisition along Pellicer Creek and at the headwaters of Moses Creek.
- Encourage low impact trail designations for lands adjoining conservation areas.
- Consider establishing linear ecological corridors between Deep Creek and Julington-Durbin Creek, 12 Mile Swamp and Guana River State Park, and 12 Mile Swamp and Trout Creek Park.
- Strategically locate wildlife crossings throughout the county to minimize wildlife deaths.
- Consider creating an ecological corridor parallel to the proposed north-south corridor.

Based upon community input and evaluation of potential greenway corridors, there are several general recommendations that the county should consider in order to provide the best recreational opportunities for its citizens. The following recommendations provide a general outline for Greenway and Blueway development, but each opportunity in the county as it is presented should be studied in detail before design or construction is considered:

### Location

- Locate trail corridors in areas that limit extensive construction or major land acquisition efforts. Consider selecting sites where greenways can be accommodated in existing transportation corridors, rights-of-way, and easements or within proposed roadway corridors.
- Select sites that will have the least impact on the surrounding environment including wetlands, floodplains and significant habitats. To limit impact, paved multi-purpose paths should be limited to urban environments and unpaved multi-purpose paths should exist in more rural, natural areas.
- Provide sufficient buffers in areas where trails are parallel to the roadway or are adjacent to residential uses.

### Connections

- Establish connections with existing trails, conservation areas, parks and boating facilities to promote trail use and activities. Also consider links to other facilities such as schools, community centers and any historical features that may provide a unique opportunity to users.
- Establish linear east-west and north-south greenway corridors that will help link the county's resources to one another.
- Provide connections to surrounding counties and create linkages to existing trails wherever possible.
- Establish a wetland connection system that will protect the existing environment and promote the migration of wildlife.

### Acquisition

- Continue to identify easements throughout the county that can be used as connections for the Greenway and Blueway system, including utility and conservation easements.

- Consider promoting an effort with the county's major landowners, both collectively and individually, on ways to enhance and implement the Greenway and Blueway plan.
- Continue purchasing lands for conservation and preservation that can be used for trail systems, trail heads or canoe launches.

In addition to these general recommendations, several specific recommendations have been noted, as outlined in the report, that relates to trail design, trail maintenance, greenway management, comprehensive plan changes, and greenways implementation.

The existing Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map will be updated periodically as new information becomes available (i.e., greenways are adopted as part of the new development plans and as St. Johns County GIS Department completes there own county owned land map).

# Final Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan



The St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan map illustrates two categories of trails; greenways and blueways. Each type is described in the following section.

### Greenway Trail Types

The Master Plan map illustrates two types of greenway trails: paved multi-purpose paths and unpaved multi-purpose paths. Paved multi-purpose paths are generally located in urbanized areas within or along side the road right-of-way. The users of paved multi-purpose paths generally are walkers, runners, local bike riders, roller bladers and parents with strollers. Unpaved multi-purpose paths are generally located in rural areas and are utilized by hikers, runners and non-motorized dirt-bikes. Unpaved multi-purpose paths may be designed to accommodate equestrian users as well. Although only two types of greenway trails have been described, there are other variations of greenways trails including rails-to-trails, separate unpaved equestrian trails, major connected wetland systems, wildlife crossings and scenic edges.

Beyond the greenway trails themselves, there are trail destination points commonly referred to as trail heads. Trailheads are destination points or trail connectors allowing safe access in and out of the trail. Trailheads may include parking facilities, restrooms, information kiosks (containing trail maps and brochures), drinking fountains, interpretive signs and other recreational amenities. The design guidelines for greenway trails and trail types are further described below.

### Overall Design Objectives

Design criteria for the different types of greenway trails will vary according to the expected volume, type of trail, location of the trail and abilities of the trail users. In addition to the recommended design standards described in the following section, the county should establish and review various design guidelines on a regular basis. The Florida Greenways and Trails Council (FGTC) is currently working on a set of design standards and will be developed in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

As a general note, trails should be developed with an awareness of codes and/or regulations and environmentally sensitive resources. Construction techniques should cause minimal or no impact and should strive to protect the surrounding environment, wildlife, vegetation and waterways. Where feasible, trails should be routed to minimize contact with motorized vehicles, and should be utilized and promoted as alternative modes of transportation. Efforts should be made to consider historical and archaeological sites and to make interpretation of these sites an integral part of the trail system. Furthermore, trails with intensive use should accommodate users where appropriate and conform to ADA guidelines. Low volume trails should consider accessibility to diverse natural areas and cultural experiences.

## Design Guidelines

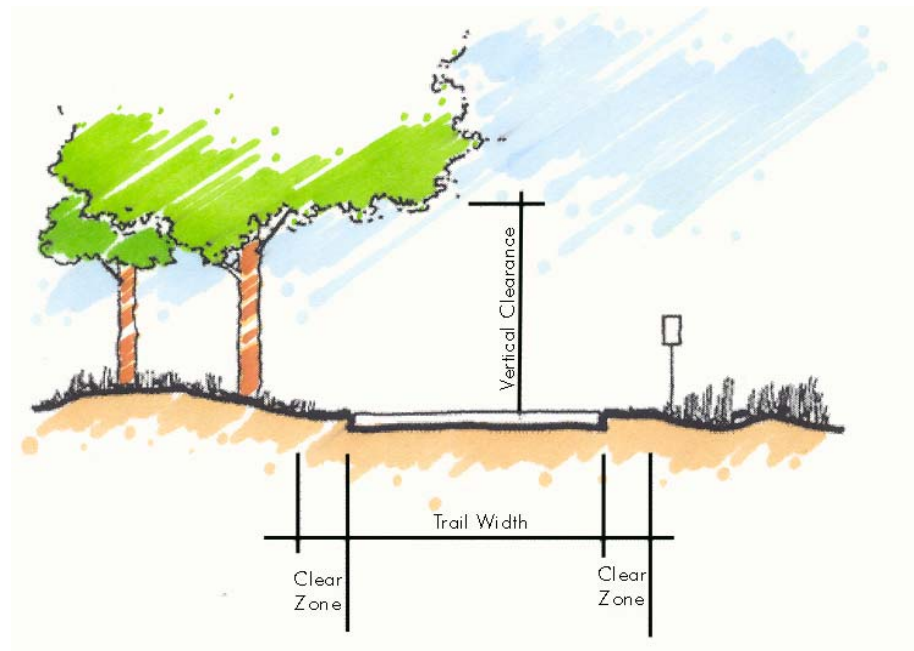
Guidelines for paved and unpaved multi-purpose paths and equestrian trails are set forth relating to the following design considerations.

*Clear Trail Width* refers to the width of the traveled part of the trail that is free of protruding objects and obstacles, such as trees and overgrown vegetation

*Clear Zones* refer to the area on each side of the trail between the traveled surface and any obstructions, such as trees, walls, or fences

*Vertical Clearance* refers to the height above the trail, which is free from protruding objects and overhead obstructions, such as tree branches or bridges

*Trail surface* refers to the type of surface on the traveled part of the trail, such as asphalt, concrete, granular, or alternative. Surface quality is affected by tread obstacles, such as roots or rocks, and by any openings such as gaps and grates located within the trail surface.



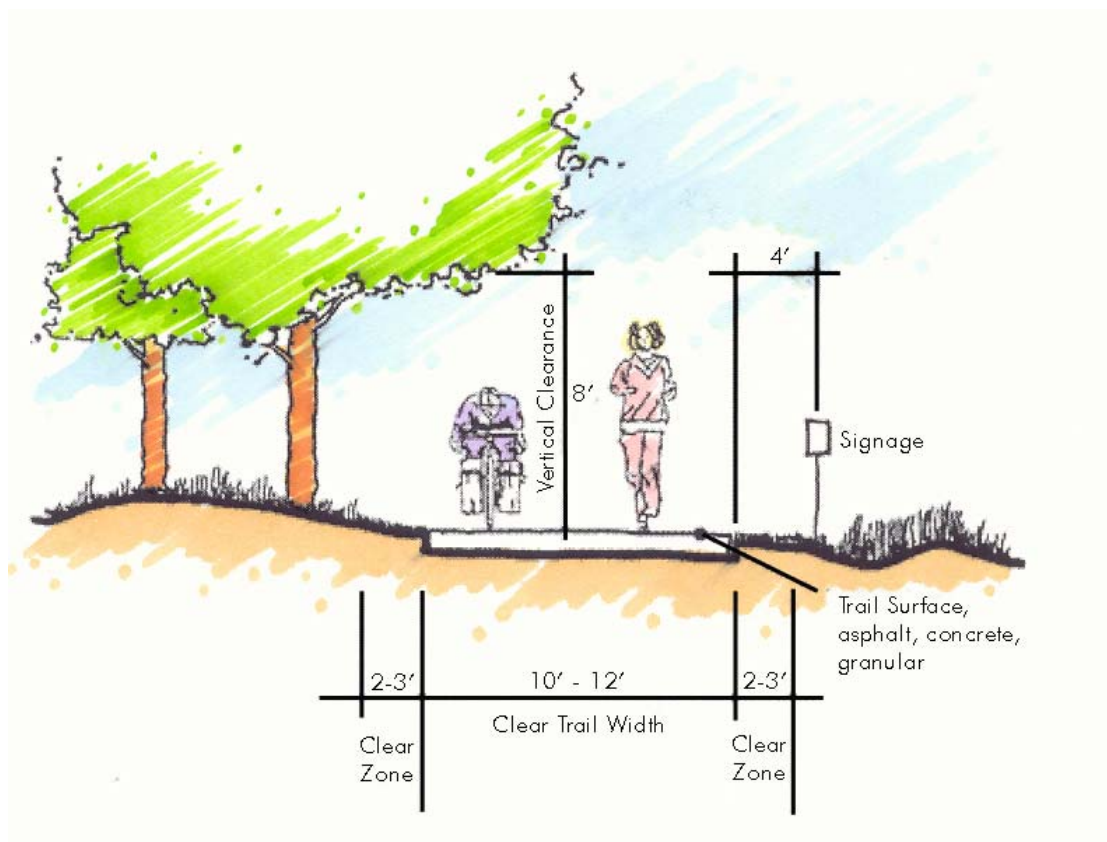
**Paved multi-purpose paths** include paved trails of asphalt or concrete for walking, running, cycling, and in-line skating. In some cases, a paved multi-purpose path may incorporate a segregated equestrian trail. Also included in this trail type are bikeways, which are striped or marked on roadways as bike routes for commuting. Bike lanes alone are not shown on the Greenways, Blueways & Trails Master Plan map. It is recommended that each separate bikeway be evaluated as to the safety and cost effectiveness before designation and construction. Paved multi-purpose paths should be designed for a more formalized trail experience and should be accessible to a variety of people with a broad range of abilities, skill levels and desired experiences. Paved multi-purpose paths should be considered in more urbanized areas and should follow existing and proposed transportation corridors.

*Clear Trail Width* – recommended trail width is 10-12' feet but may increase depending on intensity of use and trail location. In urban or suburban locations, trails should be set back at least 10 feet from any roadway curb or edge of pavement.

*Clear Zones* - should maintain a minimum 1-foot buffer zone between the edge of the graded clear zone and any fixed objects such as signs or trees

*Vertical Clearance* – should maintain a 8-foot minimum vertical clearance

*Trail Surface* – asphalt or concrete are the preferred surfaces but it is very important that the paved areas are well drained because standing water on the trail will adversely affect the trail surface and decrease the life and quality of the trail. The paved trail should not exceed a uniform cross slope of 2 percent and disturbed areas should be sodded or mulched to prevent erosion.



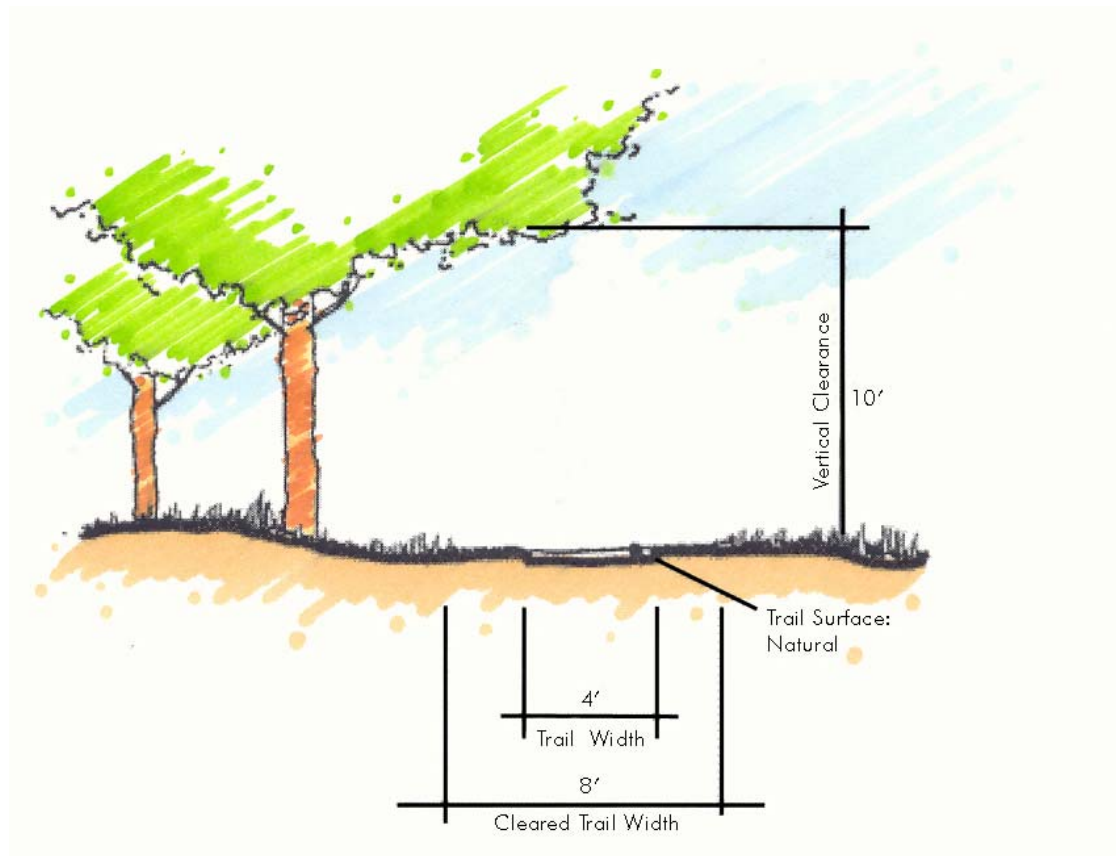
**Unpaved multi-purpose paths** include hiking, walking, biking and may include equestrian uses as well. New and reconstructed trails should be made as accessible as possible while maintaining the character of the resource and natural environment. Because of the rustic nature, the guidelines for unpaved multi-purpose paths are general and trail design will be primarily determined by site conditions and intended use. Unpaved multi-purpose paths should be considered in rural, undeveloped areas of the county.

*Clear Trail Width* – recommended clear trail width is 4' width and 8' clear trail width but may fluctuate based on site conditions and desired trail experience

*Clear Zones* – this type of trail does not typically require clear zones, since users are moving at relatively slow speeds. In natural areas, underbrush should be trimmed so that it does not hang over the trail edge or obstruct the traveled way.

*Vertical Clearance* – trails should maintain a 10-foot minimum vertical clearance in order to accommodate equestrian users

*Trail Surface* - trails may be surfaced with wood chips, crushed stone or shell, or may be made of compacted earth. In any case, the surface should be firm and stable.



## Additional Greenway Elements

In addition to the various greenway trail types depicted on the master plan, there are a number of other elements that have been identified as relatively important in establishing an effective greenway system. Each of these elements is briefly described below:

**Rails-to-Trails** corridor identified on the master plan is a previously abandoned 21-mile Florida East Coast rail-line purchased by the Florida DOT. The rail-line extends in a southwesterly direction along the S.R. corridor from I-95/S.R. 207 to the St. Johns/Putnam County boundary. The trail will be a source of connectivity between St. Johns County, Putnam County and Gainesville's Lake Butler Trail.

**Major connected wetland systems** include greenway open spaces that encompass large environmentally sensitive lands such as continuous wetland systems and lands managed by the Water Management District, Division of Forestry or the Florida Wildlife Commission. Within the major connected system, recreational multi-use and unpaved trails may be located as long as there is adequate protection of the resources. Additionally, these lands may encompass specific lands that are available and targeted for acquisition through Florida Forever projects or other acquisition programs.

- **Florida Forever Lands**, a land acquisition program designed to preserve and conserve Florida's natural resources, were an important part of determining the proposed county greenway system. As shown on the master plan, Florida Forever Lands offer vital links and destinations for the proposed trail systems and offer large natural resources for users.
- The **Conservation Lands** depicted on the master plan include Guana River State Park, Faver-Dykes State Park, Deep Creek Conservation Area, Moses Creek Conservation Area, Anastasia State Recreation Area, Watson Island, Julington-Durbin Creek Preserve, Cedar Swamp and Pellicer Creek Aquatic Preserve. As with the Florida Forever Lands, the conservation areas are important elements of the greenway system and will continue to be an important resource to the county as the greenway plan moves into its implementation stages. Although some of the conservation areas are managed by other agencies, the county should work closely with those organizations by trying to link any existing interior trails with the proposed trail system.

**Wildlife Crossings** are displayed on the mater plan map and have been established as part of the Northwest Sector Plan. Wildlife crossings have been identified in areas wherever a road, lane, path or bridge impacts the movement of wildlife, especially on or over streams, ravines, wetlands, preservation areas and buffers. The goal of the wildlife crossings are to allow room for wildlife to pass without being interfered with, injured or threatened by vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Currently, wildlife crossings have only been identified in the northwest part of the county but it is recommended that the county identify additional sites in conjunction with greenway and trail construction.

**Scenic Edges** are also depicted as part of the greenway system. The primary purpose of scenic edges is to screen development and create natural edges between the development and the roadway through the use of native canopy trees, understory trees, bushes, shrubs, and ground cover. Scenic edges are also an integral part of the development edges and recreational trail system because they provide areas where trails and sidewalks can be located. Scenic edges have been identified only on the Northwest Sector Plan

and are provided along all arterials, collectors and proposed roads within the Northwest Overlay. The average width of the scenic edges is 75 outside the road right-of-way but the specific width and extent will vary with the proposed development.

**Trailheads** and access points refer to parcels specifically designed as primary means of accessing a trail. They may include restrooms, maps, parking, picnic facilities, and other recreational amenities. Access points refer to minor connections between the trail and nearby parks, communities, or roadways. Access points are important because many trails will run for long stretches surrounded by private property, and access should be provided wherever possible, but controlled so that ad hoc trails do not occur on private land. Some access points are automatic, such as when a trail crosses a roadway, and others may be carefully planned and implemented, such as a connection to a trail that would require a railroad crossing. The following guidelines relate to the development and placement of trailheads and access points.

- Trailheads should be placed at each terminus of a trail corridor, and any place where a large concentration of trail users is expected, such as at towns or major parks along the trail.
- An accessible pathway should be developed that connects parking and other accessible elements to the trailhead.
- Trailheads should at least include parking and a trail map, but may also include restrooms, drinking water, picnic facilities, horse tie-ups, and other recreational amenities.
- Trailheads associated with equestrian and off road biking trails should provide parking and turn-around space for trailers.
- Trail access points should be placed wherever trail access is expected, such as at adjacent communities, schools, commercial areas, and parks.

Trail access points should include signage identifying the trail and may include a map and drinking water.



## Blueway Trail Types

The Master Plan map also illustrates two types of blueway trails: canoe/kayak trails and boating trails. Canoe/Kayak trails are generally identified in the county's streams and tributaries and are usually associated with slower traveling speeds. Boating trails are identified on well-traveled water routes including the St. Johns River and Intracoastal Waterway and are generally associated with faster traveling speeds and motorized vessels.

**Canoe/paddling routes** represent areas identified along the St. Johns County's waterways and coastline appropriate for use by non-motorized vessels such as canoes and kayaks. Canoe/paddling routes should be designed to offer the safe and reliable passage of a canoe or kayak and should offer trips of varying length. The primary considerations in the designation of canoe/paddling routes include adequate signage and support facilities, and the reasonable expectation that the waterway can accommodate small

watercraft most of the time. The following guidelines describe the minimum level of development of a canoe/paddling route to accommodate the needs of canoe and kayak use:

- Access points (landings) should be situated at maximum intervals of 5 miles.
- Camping and sanitary facilities should be situated at maximum intervals of 20 miles.
- Portages should be kept to a minimum, but, where required, should consist of established landings and a well-drained, natural surface trail that is free from branches, brush, or other obstacles.
- Accurate information on the route should be available, including river maps, mileage between services, level of difficulty, and current water levels. This information should be updated frequently.
- Signage should be included to direct users to the river, and to inform users on the river. Uniform directional signage should be placed on nearby roadways to advertise landing locations. Uniform signage should be installed along the river to advertise landings, camping facilities, portages, and hazards.



**Boating trail** opportunities identified on the Greenways, Blueways & Trails Master Plan are limited to navigable waterways suitable for motorized vessels. The primary areas identified for boat use are along the Intracoastal Waterway and the St. Johns River. Boating trails may refer to private recreational activities such as skiing, tubing and fishing but may also incorporate organized public activities such as the establishment of riverboat rides/tours or the use of water taxis. For private boating use, the county should continue to identify and construct boat ramps and related facilities to ensure access to the county's waterways. For public use, the county should identify areas for use of riverboats and water taxis and promote them as part of the county's tourism industry.

**Public Boat Ramps** are also an important element of the Greenways, Blueways & Trails Master Plan because they act as access points to the county's waterways and as destination points for existing and proposed trails. The county currently operates 13 boat ramps at 11 locations throughout the county. The county should continue to identify areas for potential construction of boat ramps in order to continue providing adequate access to the county's waterways.

## Signage

The inclusion of signage on trails is an important element that can help increase safety and comfort on trails. Signs may assist in the navigation of a trail or trail system, warn of approaching roadway crossings, regulate trail use, or interpret natural features. There are five basic types of signs that the county should consider incorporating into the greenway system.

- *Directional signs* give trail names, direction arrows, mileage to points of interest, and other navigational information.
- *Cautionary signs* warn of upcoming roadway crossings, steep grades, blind curves, and other potential trail hazards.
- *Regulatory signs* tell the "rules of the trail" by prohibiting certain uses or controlling direction of travel.
- *Interpretive signs* offer educational information on the trail environment such as identification of ecosystems and its community types, flora, fauna and history of the area.
- *Objective signs* provide information about the actual trail conditions, including grade, cross slope, surface, clear trail width and obstacle height.

The inclusion of signage in a trail project should be planned from the outset, but each project is vastly different, and signage should be considered on a case-by-case basis. By establishing a design standard, signage can also bring uniformity to trail system. The following guidelines relate to the general placement and design of trail signage.

- Signs should be placed where they will be clearly visible. Placement is dependent on the sight lines (relative to user speed) of each trail.
- Signs should be placed at a constant distance from the trail edge, 3 feet is preferred.
- Lettering less than two inches in height is not recommended for directional signs.
- Text should be avoided on regulatory or cautionary signs wherever possible.



Multiple signs may be mounted on the same post, but the primary message should be in the top position on the post.

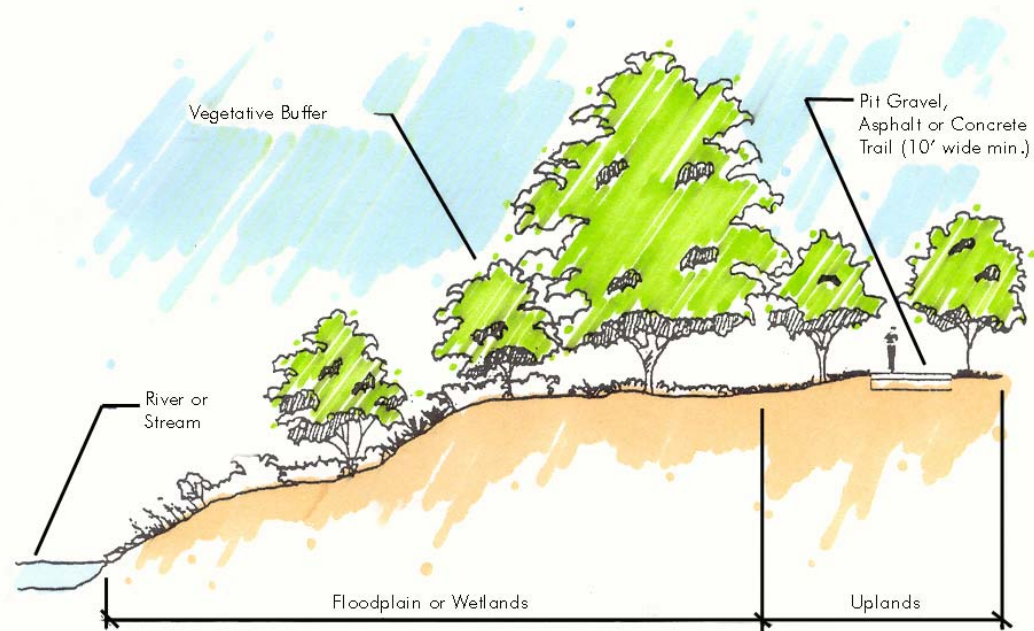
## Minimizing Use Conflicts

To fully appreciate the design considerations related to greenways, it is important to keep in mind what greenways are – linear open space with or without trails, and having natural resources and/or recreational functions. Given this definition, there are a number of situations where use conflicts can arise and where design can play an important role in minimizing those conflicts.

Natural resource functions include such functions as flood control, movement corridors for wildlife, habitat for rare and endangered plants and animals, and aquifer recharge areas. In areas where natural resource functions are important, consideration must be given to restricting access to incompatible recreational activities or, in case of critical habitat such as nesting areas, allowing no access for recreational use.

Natural resource areas can be public or private land. Examples of privately owned natural areas that could be part of a greenway are tracts designated as Conservation Areas within development projects. Designing a greenway system to include these or other private natural lands and allowing public access to them should be dependent upon not only the sensitivity of the area but also the landowner's desire to allow such use.

Greenways with primarily recreational functions can be located in urban or rural areas and are typically narrow, man-made corridors. Activities such as jogging, bicycling, skating, as well as alternative transportation require paved trails. These kinds of uses can all occur on the same trail if appropriately designed as a multi-use trail. Recreational greenways, in both urban and rural settings, also can provide some natural functions and benefits, such as nature study where the greenway corridor passes through or adjacent to a natural area.



More rural settings are appropriate for such recreational activities as hiking, horseback riding, and off-road bicycling. Each of these activities requires its own unpaved trail, or conflicts between users will occur.

Another type of conflict can occur between recreational uses and natural resource functions when the two are not compatible, such as “mountain” biking in natural areas. The natural resources of the area suffer when off-road bicyclists break new trails destroying vegetation and causing erosion and adverse impacts to wildlife.

Local trail user ordinances have been adopted which authorize citations and fines for violators. Educational programs also have been developed which target and inform user groups about the environmental damage caused by mountain bikes in sensitive areas.

The National Recreational Trails Advisory Committee has produced a helpful report, titled ***Conflicts on Multi-Use Trails***, which is a synthesis of the literature and summary of the state of the practice in reducing conflicts. This document would be useful to greenway designers and managers in developing ways to address the issue in St. Johns County.

Each of the three features, which comprise a recreational greenway, provide possible areas of conflict. The three features are the trail, trail head and the crossings (intersections with roads, etc.). Along the multi-purpose path (paved), bollards or other structures are needed to prevent vehicular access. On multi-purpose (unpaved), where private property owners adjacent to the trail desire more privacy, fencing or a landscaped buffer can be used to address that concern. At trailheads, design considerations would be the same as in a park. Adequate parking spaces, trash receptacles, educational and directional signage, and possibly restrooms, depending on anticipated usage, would be appropriate facilities.

Where a trail intersects a road, a pedestrian crossing will be needed. The design will depend on the type of road. To cross a high volume or major road, a pedestrian crossing light or overpass would be needed; to cross less used roads, striping and signage are adequate. Sidewalks and bike lanes along roadways or low volume roads with bike signs can serve as neighborhood connectors to a greenway facility. Where trails follow along stream channels and must cross, a bridge structure, or bridge under-crossing is preferred. Opportunities are lost when bridges are built without considering heights needed to accommodate an under-crossing for pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists.

### Land Acquisition Options

The first step towards implementing the greenway program is a sustained long-term commitment towards land acquisition. Substantial tracts of land and easements are essential to the success of this program. This section represents a composite of various implementation strategies used by other jurisdictions around the country. Some are currently in use in St. Johns County, while others are restricted at this juncture. Should these strategy restrictions change in the future, it will enhance the ability to implement the Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan. Five methods of acquiring and dedicating lands include: fee-simple purchases, multi-objective properties, donations, easements and regulatory means.

#### *Fee Simple Purchases*

Fee simple ownership of land gives the County clear title to property. It provides the simplest, and sometimes the most feasible, approach towards acquiring land. Greenway lands are often marginally developable and unsuitable for most development activity. The liability of these lands from a real estate tax perspective creates an opportunity for some developers to reduce their tax burden by selling or deeding the property to the County. Some fee simple purchase options are detailed below:

- **Purchase/Lease Back** - These public land acquisitions are leased back to the seller, or another party, for use during a specific period of time or until it is needed. Properties may be purchased well in advance of their need as a park or greenway and may contain restrictions regarding the use and development of the property.
- **Bargain Sale** - A property owner can sell property at a price less than the appraised fair market value of the land. Sometimes the seller can derive the same benefits as if the property were donated. Bargain sales are attractive to sellers when the seller wants cash for the property, the seller paid a low cash price and thus is not liable for high capital gains tax, and/or the seller has a fairly high current income and could benefit from a donation of the property as an income tax deduction. The lost capital gain, which is the appraised value less the sales price, is taken as a tax deduction.
- **Option/First Right of Refusal** - A local government agency or private organization establishes an agreement with a public agency or private property owner to provide the right of first refusal on a parcel of land that is scheduled to be sold. This form of agreement can be used in conjunction with other techniques, such as an easement, to protect the land in the short term. An option would provide the agency with sufficient time to obtain capital to purchase the property or successfully negotiate some other means of conserving the greenway resource.
- **Easement Purchase** - This mechanism is the fee simple purchase of an easement. Full title to the land is not purchased, only those rights granted in the easement agreement. Therefore the easement purchase price is less than full title value.
- **Tax Foreclosures** - Occasionally lands suitable for parkland, greenways and open space may be foreclosed due to failure of the private landowner to pay property taxes, enabling the County to purchase the land at a very low price.

## *Multi-Objective Properties*

Opportunities to implement greenway and trail facilities on existing public lands should be examined as the first alternative prior to acquiring property. Recreational greenways can be accommodated on many schools, parks, water and sewer easements, utility corridors, railroad and highway right-of-ways, and other public facilities without compromising their original purpose. The benefit of integrating multiple programs and objectives on the same land is environmentally beneficial and fiscally responsible. When practical, newly acquired lands should be surveyed with multi-objective programs in mind.

## *Donations*

Donations typically include full transferal of property to a municipality or land trust for a specific use or purpose that may be simple or complicated by extensive conditions. Financial incentives in the form of tax credits are available in most cases. A local government agency agrees to receive full title to a parcel of land at virtually no cost. In most cases, the donor is eligible to receive federal and state deductions on personal income, as described under conservation easements. In addition, property owners may be able to avoid inheritance taxes, capital gains taxes, and recurring property taxes. Other gift methods include:

- *Reserved Life Estate*- are gifts of land that provide the donor with a tax benefit plus the use of the property during the remainder of their lifetime.
- *Partial Donations*- gives the owner some compensation as well as limited tax benefits.
- *Right-of-Way or Easement Donations*- are where the owner receives a tax benefit by allowing a limited use of the land.
- *Estate Donations*- includes wills, estates, and trusts that may be dedicated to the appropriate agency for use in developing and/or operating the greenway system.

## *Easements*

The purpose of greenway easements is to establish legally binding contracts for the conveyance of interest in land based on a mutual understanding of the specific use, treatment, and protection that greenway lands will receive. Property owners who grant easements retain all rights to the property except those that have been granted by the easement. The property owner is responsible for all taxes associated with the property, less the value of the easement granted. Easements are generally restricted to certain portions of property, although in some cases an easement can be applied to an entire parcel. Easements are usually transferable through title transactions, thus the easement can remain in effect in perpetuity. Three types of greenway easements, which may be appropriate for use in St Johns County, are:

- **Conservation Easements** - One technique for preserving private land other than fee simple acquisition is through establishing a conservation easement. This type of easement generally prevents development and establishes permanent limits on the use and development of land in order to protect the natural resources of that land. Dedicated conservation easements usually qualify for both federal income tax deductions and state tax credits. Conservation easements, depending on how they are written, may or may not grant the public the right-of-access to the property.

Conservation easements have been successfully used to protect a variety of environmentally sensitive lands, including barrier islands along our coasts, mountain canyons in the Rockies, hunting preserves along river corridors and prairie grasslands of our central states. They may be used as the sole preservation technique or they may be adapted to provide protection of a buffer area around the core of a preserve where the central area is held by a conservation owner in fee title. Conservation easements can also accommodate low impact outdoor recreation.

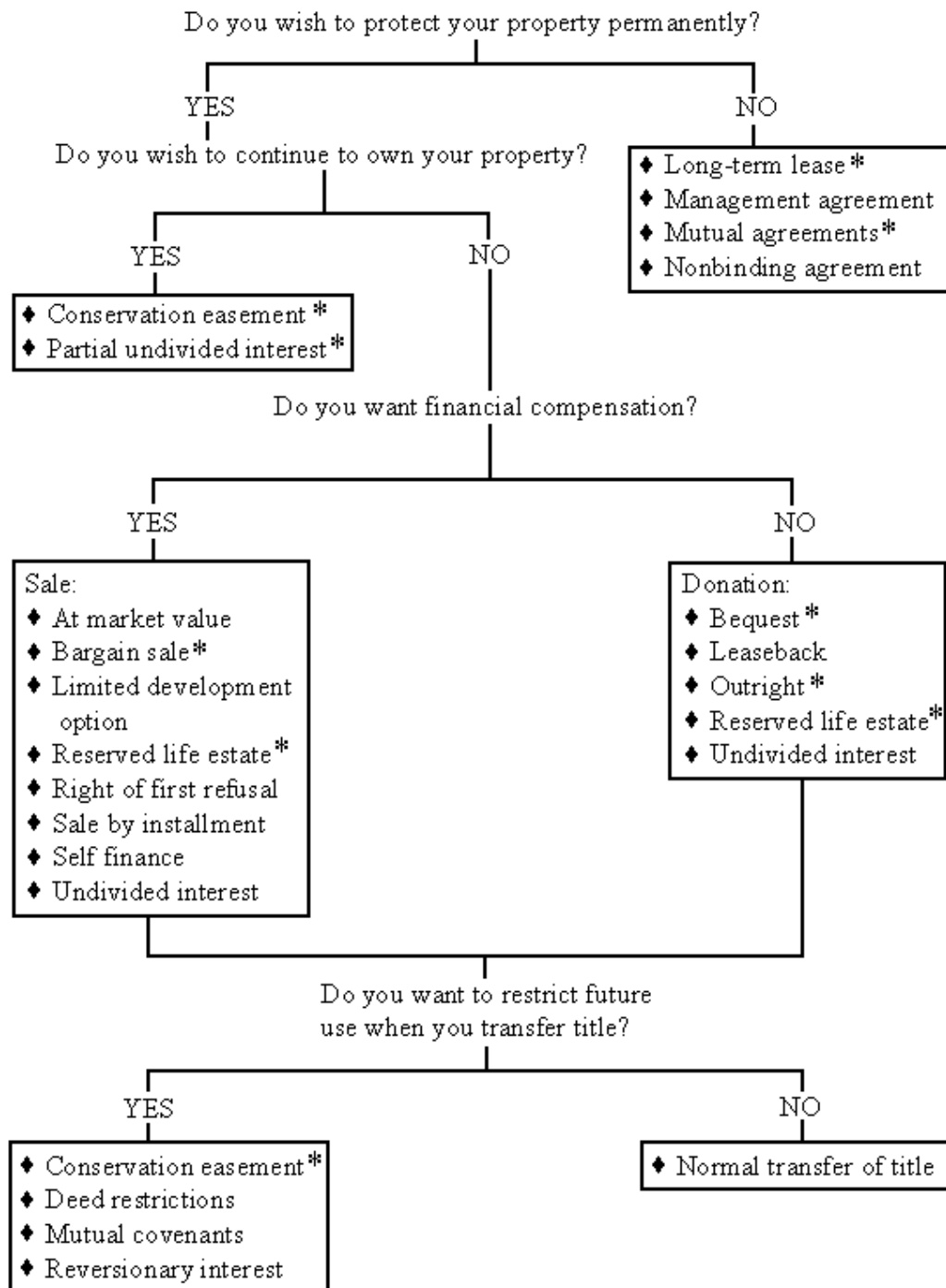
With a conservation easement, the landowner gives up certain uses and developmental rights to the land by way of a series of restrictions. It also grants certain affirmative rights, including the right to enforce these restrictions, to a second party, usually a non-profit conservation organization or a government agency involved in park or natural area protection.

A conservation easement is similar in effect to restrictive covenants in a subdivision, which also restricts land use, but differs in several significant ways. First, a conservation easement is intended to provide benefits to the public at large, not just the individual landowners within a private subdivision. Second, subdivision restrictions set forth a framework for future development of the property. Conservation easements, on the other hand, are designed to preserve property primarily in its natural, undeveloped condition. Like subdivision restrictions, conservation easements are tailored to the particular characteristics of the land. Prior to drafting the easement, a complete natural resource inventory including maps, photographs of existing improvements, species lists, etc. should be undertaken. Properly done, the inventory will identify sensitive areas, land use patterns, and those areas where limited development may occur, and thus will provide the conceptual framework for drafting the easement itself.

While all of these easements specifically provide for public access and use of the land, conservation easements may also be placed on private land to protect a viewshed or open space. Easements are very flexible tools and do not require public access, therefore allowing a private owner to permanently protect their property without necessitating either public ownership or access. Such use of easements could allow continued private ownership and enjoyment while increasing the protected viewshed.

- Cooperative Agreements - A less official but effective way to protect land is through a cooperative agreement or memorandum of understanding. This is less complicated and most effective when the landowners are public agencies with similar missions. This is a less permanent solution since these types of agreements usually contain an escape clause that will allow any or all of the signatories to pull out with reasonable notice.
- Preservation Easements - This type of easement is intended to protect the historical integrity of a structure or important elements of the landscape by sound management practices. Preservation easements may qualify for the same federal tax deductions and state tax credits as conservation easements.
- Public Access Easements - Right-of-public-access easements provide the general public with the right to use a specific parcel of property.

When considering land acquisition options (fee-simple vs. non fee-simple) the following questions should be considered.



\* In most cases. The amounts of income tax and estate tax reduction depend on a number of factors. Note: For property best kept in private ownership, the land trust may place a conservation easement on the property to protect it, and sell it to an appropriate buyer. For non-conservation property donated to generate income to the land trust, the land trust will sell the property. Cash from the sale in either case will be used to support the land trust's conservation programs. Source: *Land Protection, A Washington State Handbook*, 1992, Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation.

## Funding Mechanisms

The most common method for funding greenways is to combine local, public-sector, and private-sector funds with state and federal resources. Many communities involved with greenway implementation are choosing to leverage local money as a match for outside funding sources, in essence multiplying their resources. In future greenway development, the County should rely on local advocates and government staff to pursue a variety of funding sources for land acquisition and greenway construction. A greenway program that relies on limited funding sources may one day come to a grinding halt should these funding sources dry up. The funding sources cited below represent a few of the major greenway funding opportunities that have been pursued by other communities. This list provides an outline to help organize various means of funding for greenway and trail implementation.

### Federal Funding Sources

Several federal programs offer financial aid for projects that aim to improve community infrastructure, transportation, housing and recreation programs. Some of the federal programs that can be used to fund greenways include the following:

#### Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)

The primary source of federal funding for greenways is through the Transportation Equity Act of 1998 (TEA-21), formerly the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). ISTEA provided millions of dollars in funding for bicycle and pedestrian transportation projects across the Country, and will provide millions more as TEA-21. There are many sections of TEA-21 that support the development of greenways, bicycle and pedestrian transportation corridors.

Contact: Local FDOT Representative for additional information.

#### Recreational Trails Program

A component of TEA-21, the Recreational Trails Program is a funding source for the development of non-motorized and motorized recreational trails. The Program uses funds generated from fees on non-highway recreational fuel used by off-road vehicles. Program money can be spent on easement acquisition, property acquisition, trail development, construction and maintenance. Local government or a non-profit entity can be a project sponsor. This competitive grant program requires a 100 percent match, and the maximum grant award is \$50,000.

Contact: Local FDOT Representative for additional information.

#### Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants

This federal funding source was established in 1965 to provide park and recreation opportunities to residents throughout the United States. Money for the fund comes from the sale or lease of nonrenewable resources, primarily federal offshore oil and gas leases and surplus federal land sales. LWCF funds are used by federal agencies to acquire additions to National Parks, Forests, and Wildlife Refuges. In the past, Congress has also appropriated LWCF moneys for so-called "state-side" projects. These "state-side" LWCF grants can be used by communities to acquire and build a variety of park and recreation facilities, including trails and greenways. The program requires a 100 percent match of non-federal funds or in-kind match, and project sponsors must be

a local unit of government. Appropriations vary from year to year. The maximum grant award is currently \$75,000, which may change with increased funding levels.

Contact: collier.clark@dep.state.fl.us  
Web: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/bdrs>  
Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS 795  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

#### Conservation Reserve Program

The USDA, through its Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, provides payments to farm owners and operators to place highly erodible or environmentally sensitive landscapes into a 10-15 year conservation contract. The participant, in return for annual payments during this period, agrees to implement a conservation plan (approved by the local conservation district) for converting these sensitive lands to a less intensive use. Individuals, associations, corporations, estates, trusts, cities, counties and other entities are eligible for this program. This program can be used to fund the maintenance of open space and non-public use greenways along water bodies and ridge lines.

Contact: USDA  
Malcolm Henning, National Program Manager  
202.720.1872

#### Historic Landscape Initiative

The Historic Landscape Initiative promotes responsible preservation practices that protect historic landscapes, including farms, parks, gardens, rural villages and industrial sites. Preserving these landscapes provides scenic, economic, ecological, social, recreational, and educational opportunities to understand ourselves as a nation. The program provides technical assistance, workshops, and publications to professional planners, landscape architects, historic property managers, homeowners, academics, and students to help communities preserve historical landscapes.

Contact: Charles Birnbaum  
National Park Service  
Heritage Preservation Services, NC330  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240  
202.343.9597

#### American Greenways DuPont Awards Program

The Conservation Fund in partnership with DuPont and National Geographic provides small grants to stimulate the planning and design of greenways at the community level. Awards are selected based on their importance to community efforts.

Contact: The Conservation Fund  
1800 North Kent Street, Suite 1120  
Arlington, VA 22209  
705.525.6300  
[www.conservationfund.org](http://www.conservationfund.org)

### The Kodak American Greenways Awards

A partnership project of Kodak, The Conservation Fund, and the National Geographic Society, provides small grants to stimulate the planning and design of greenways in communities throughout America. The annual awards program was instituted in response to the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors recommendation to establish a national network of greenways. Made possible by a generous grant from Eastman Kodak, the program also honors groups and individuals whose ingenuity and creativity foster the creation of greenways.

- Develop new, action-oriented greenway projects
- Assist grassroots greenway organizations.
- Leverage additional money for conservation and greenway development
- Recognize and encourage greenway proponents and organizations

Contact: Denise Swol, Coordinator  
American Greenways Program  
The Conservation Fund  
1800 North Kent Street, Suite 1120  
Arlington, VA 22209  
705.525.6300  
[www.conservationfund.org](http://www.conservationfund.org)

### Phillips Petroleum Environmental Partnership Awards

This program gives grants between \$500-\$5,000 to community organizations doing environmental projects like stream restorations. Grants tend to be given to educational projects with schools or groups working with schools. Matching funds are required.

Contact: Patricia Marshall, 918.661.5139

### Coors Pure Water 2000

They provide non-profit groups nationwide with small grants for water quality improvement projects such as river cleanups, restoration projects and educational programs.

Contact: Coors Pure Water 2000  
Dave Taylor  
311 Tenth Street  
Golden, CO 80401  
800.642.6116

### Compton Foundation

This program offers grants for public education, fish habitat, and public policy in natural resource management, with a focus on watershed protection and long-term habitat and ecosystem preservation and restoration. These grants are awarded to incorporated 501(c)(3) organizations only.

Contact: 415.328.0101

### The Harder Foundation

This program is a small foundation that funds environmental action projects in support of habitat protection, especially prime habitat areas facing immediate threats on public lands. Some of the

Harder Foundation's grants involve acquisition of natural areas, especially when they are of regional biological significance. 40% of their grants in aggregate are made to grantees in the states of Washington and Oregon. Write for "Guidelines for Grant Proposals."

Contact: Del Langbauer, President  
401 Broadway  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
253.593.2121  
HARDERFNDN@aol.com

#### Give to the Earth Foundation

This program funds a variety of small environmental projects. Applicant organizations must have minimal administrative overhead and results must be tangible. Typical grant size is \$2,500.

Contact: Ellen Liberatori, 800.933.9628

#### The Bikes Belong Coalition

This program awards grants of up to \$10,000 each to assist local organizations, agencies, and citizens in developing bicycle facilities projects that will be funded by TEA-21, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Contact: Bikes Belong Coalition  
1368 Beacon Street, Suite 116  
Brookline, MA 02446  
617.734.2800  
[mail@bikesbelong.org](mailto:mail@bikesbelong.org).

### *Florida Funding Sources*

#### Florida Forever (formally Conservation and Recreation Lands) Program

The Florida Forever Program is administered by the Department of Environmental Protection's Division of State Lands and is designed to protect large land parcels identified as having statewide or regional significance. Lands that may be acquired for conservation purposes and lands that would provide non-consumptive outdoor recreation opportunities are also eligible through this program.

Contact: Mark Glisson 850.487.1750

#### Florida Communities Trust Program

The purpose of the Florida Communities Trust's Program is to assist local governments to implement the conservation, recreation and open space, and coastal management elements of local comprehensive plans through grant awards to local governments for land acquisition for the purposes of natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation.

The Florida Legislature requires the Florida Communities Trust Florida Forever Program to:

- Emphasize funding projects in low-income or otherwise disadvantaged communities

- Direct at least 30 percent of its funding to projects in Metropolitan Areas and half of that amount within the built-up urban area
- Use no less than 5 percent to acquire lands for recreational trail systems

Contact: Florida Department of Community Affairs  
 Florida Communities Trust  
 2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
 Tallahassee, FL 32399-2100  
 850.922.2207  
<http://www.dca.state.fl.us/ffct>

#### Florida Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a federally funded competitive grant program that provides financial assistance to agencies of city, county, state or federal governments, and organizations, approved by the State, or state and federally recognized Indian tribal governments, for the development of recreational trails, trailheads and trailside facilities.

RTP is a competitive program which provides grants for projects that provide, renovate or maintain recreational trails, trailhead and trailside facilities. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 included the National Recreational Trails Fund Act (NRTFA) and established the National Recreational Trails Funding Program (NRTFP). The National Highway System Designation Act (NHS Act) of 1995 amended and revived the NRTFA. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) amended the previous legislation and provided for six years of funding.

Contact: FDEP Office of Greenways and Trails  
 3900 Commonwealth Blvd., MS 795  
 Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000  
 850.488.3701  
[Alexandra.weiss@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:Alexandra.weiss@dep.state.fl.us)  
<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt>

#### Greenways and Trails Acquisition Program:

In 1979, the Florida Recreational Trails Act (Chapter 260, Florida Statutes) created the Florida Recreational Trails System to establish a network that allows responsible public access for recreation, scenic and historic trails connecting state, federal and local parks, forests, recreation areas and historic sites. Abandoned railroad corridors and additions to the Florida National Scenic Trail could be purchased through this program. In 1996, the act was amended to include the acquisition of other linear facilities and open space connectors. Approximately \$3.9 million is available each year for greenway acquisitions.

Contact: FDEP Office of Greenways and Trails  
 3900 Commonwealth Blvd., MS 795  
 Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000  
 850.488.3701  
[Alexandra.weiss@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:Alexandra.weiss@dep.state.fl.us)  
<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt>

#### Florida Boating Improvement Program

These funds are targeted for channel marking, boat launching facilities, other public boating-related activities, and manatee protection and recovery projects.

Contact: Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
Division of Fresh Water Fisheries  
620 South Meridian Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1600  
950.488.0331  
Roberts@gfc.state.fl.us

#### National Recreational Trails Funding Program

The Federal Highway Administration provides funds for projects that provide or maintain motorized and non-motorized trails, or mixed use projects. Funds are also available for trail user education. The grant is implemented through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation and Parks.

Contact: FDEP  
Division of Recreation and Parks  
850.488.5372

#### Florida Department of State Division of Historical Resources

The Division of Historical Resources provides grants to support the preservation of important historic/archaeological sites as well as the creation of historic and cultural trails. The Division can provide technical assistance and information about sites and areas that could be incorporated into greenways and trails. The National Register of Historic Places Program, administered by the National Park Service and the State Historic Preservation Officer with the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, assists local governments and nonprofit organizations in preparing nominations and provides funding for protecting historic and cultural resources through the Florida Historic Preservation Grants Program.

Contact: [www.flheritage.com](http://www.flheritage.com)  
850.245.6300

#### Florida Coastal Management Program Grants

The Florida Coastal Management Program (FCMP) receives a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) each year to support coastal management activities. Since the statutes of the FCMP are already administered by each of the networked agencies, much of the grant is passed on to local governments and state and regional agencies for the Coastal Partnerships Initiative. These projects develop, plan or implement specific improvements to manage natural or cultural resources

The Florida Coastal Management Program intends for the Coastal Partnerships Initiative to inspire community action and to promote the protection and effective management of Florida's coastal resources.

This initiative is designed to support innovative local-level coastal management projects in four program areas: public access, remarkable coastal places, working waterfronts, and community stewardship. Governmental, educational, and non-profit entities can apply, and the Florida

Coastal Management Program offers technical assistance and training along with the more traditional funding support. Projects can be extremely diverse, ranging from dune revegetation projects to citizen water quality monitoring efforts to community-wide waterfront revitalization projects.

Contact: Florida Coastal Management Program  
Department of Community Affairs  
2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2100  
850.922.5438

#### Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program

FRDAP is a competitive program that provides grants for acquisition or development of land for public outdoor recreation use or to construct or renovate recreational trails. Florida's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) administers the program according to Florida Statute and Administrative Code. The Bureau of Design and Recreation Services in DEP's Division of Recreation and Parks has direct responsibility for FRDAP.

Contact: FDEP Office of Greenways and Trails  
3900 Commonwealth Blvd., MS 795  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000  
850.488.3701  
[terri.messler@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:terri.messler@dep.state.fl.us)  
<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt>

#### Florida Inland Navigation District Grant Program

The Florida Inland Navigational District Program offers two assistance grant programs --- the Cooperative Assistance Program and the Waterway Assistance Program. Each program is a grant program established by the Florida Legislature and the District for the purpose of cooperating with local governments to alleviate problems associated with the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and associated waterways within the District.

Eligible projects include navigation channel dredging, channel markers, navigation signs or buoys, boat ramps, docking facilities, fishing & viewing piers, waterfront boardwalks, inlet management, environmental education, law enforcement equipment, boating safety programs, beach re-nourishment, dredge material management, environmental mitigation, and shoreline stabilization

Contact: Mark Crosley, Assistant Executive Director  
Florida Inland Navigation District  
1314 Marcinski Road  
Jupiter, Florida 33477-9498  
561.627.3386

## Other ways to supplement funding

### Potential Uses

Other potential uses for the greenway trail system can be money savers for St. Johns County and a potential revenue source to help support the overall trail system. As the trail system is planned, consideration will be given to utilizing publicly owned corridors including drainage easements, telephone cable easements, fiber-optic communication cable easements, gas pipeline easements, parking areas, storage areas, private trail connectors, mitigation sites, subdivision buffer areas and open space; sanitary sewer and water transmission lines; overhead electric transmission and distribution lines; low traffic volumes access ways (i.e. driveways and /or agricultural access); and existing road crossings. Each of these publicly owned corridors must be considered on a case-by-case basis for their dual anticipated usage. These potential uses may not be compatible in all situations and under all environmental conditions. When considering additional potential uses for trail corridors, the character of the trail (rural vs. urban) will be considered along with the principal objective of the trail system as a recreation corridor. The environmental sensitivity will be given the highest priority in balancing all dual usage for trails.

### In-Kind Contributions

Many grant programs require a local match to help demonstrate the community's commitment to the project. Often this 'match' requirement can be met with what is referred to as an 'in-kind' contribution. In-kind contributions are non-monetary donations of labor, equipment and materials to the overall cost of completing a project that can be translated to a dollar value used to meet the matching requirement. Volunteer labor for tasks such as clearing, grading, and construction can go a long way towards meeting local match requirements when applying for grants.

Business leaders must also be recruited to support this plan. Businesses may be able to provide in-kind support through trail building, financial contributions or possibly adopting sections of trail. Businesses are a key part of the community fabric and should be included in building and maintaining the greenways and blueways trail system. Trails add to desirability of a community and can enhance a business' ability to attract customers to an area.

### Interdepartmental and Intergovernmental Coordination

There are several aspects to the initial identification of the long-term management of Greenways throughout the County.

The initial effort of the greenways planning and identification has been the responsibility of the St. Johns County Planning Division. First, through the 2015 Comprehensive Plan's Conservation/Coastal Management Policy E.2.2.23 which states, *"the County shall establish a Greenways Program in coordination with DEP's Greenway Office by December of 2002. The greenways shall protect and enhance natural, cultural and historical resources of the County while providing interconnecting access ways between public conservation areas and parklands."*

The Planning Division has been the primary agency of the county responsible for helping guide the preservation of greenways. First through their role as reviewers and coordinators of all development in the County, especially the Development Regional Impact (DRI) process, and secondly, the Sector Planning efforts in the Northwest portion of the County.

In addition, the Planning staff has had a key role in identifying suitable tracts for acquisition by the County as well as several state agencies including the St. Johns River Water Management District and the Department of Environmental Protection's. The Planning Division's staff liaison has also worked with several of the other county departments (Recreation and Parks, GIS and Real Estate) in the preparation of the Florida Communities Trust (FCT) Grant Applications.

The Planning Division is also responsible for administering the County's Land Development Code, the County's 2015 Comprehensive Plan, the County's various Community Interest Boards (LAMP), "Scenic and Historic A1A" Corridor Management Council (CMC), William Bartram Scenic Highway Corridor Advocacy Group (CAG), Ponte Vedra Overlay District Architectural Review Board, South Anastasia District Architectural Review Board, Mid Anastasia Overlay District Design Review Board, Northern Coastal Corridor Overlay District Design Review Board, Coastal and Mainland Visioning Groups, Historic Resource Review Board and the Waterfronts Revitalization Initiative) in addition to initiating and implementing various projects such as, but not limited to, the Northeast Florida Blueway Phase II, the St. Johns River Blueway Phase I, the St. Johns County Wildlife and Vegetation Survey; the Scenic Highways Eligibility Applications and Corridor Management Plans; the Northwest Sector Plan, the Wetland Buffer Study, the Historic/Archaeological Surveys Studies, the North South Corridor Study, the Affordable Housing Market Study, the West Augustine Redevelopment and Tax Incentive Program, the Coastal Habitat Conservation Plan, the Coastal Area Plan, the Water Dependent Uses and Marine Study and the St. Johns County Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan.

Because the Planning Division is intimately involved in reviewing various land use comprehensive plan changes and future development proposals according to the land development code regulations, they will continue to play an important role in the planning, management and implementation of the County's Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan.

The Recreation and Parks Department has also had a significant role in furthering recreational opportunities in the county and they actively participate with the LAMP Board members in identifying future lands the county needs to acquire for future recreational purposes. In addition, the Recreation and Parks Department has played a significant role in working with other departments in the preparation of the FCT grant applications. They were also responsible for the preparation of the SR 207 Rails to Trails Plan and coordination with other agencies. Together these existing local agencies will continue to play an important role in the further development of the County's Greenways, Blueway & Trails Master Plan.

Currently, the Planning Division initiates and coordinates with the Development Services Group in the review of all development proposals for consistency with the land development code and concurrency. In the early stages of a land development review, (i.e.: land use plan amendment, PUD / PSD rezoning or DRI pre- applications) several county staff persons from different departments need to be assigned the task of reviewing all the development proposals for consistency with the County's Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan to insure provision of adequate consideration.

It is recommended that the greenway committee consist of the following county staff members:

- Environmental Manager- Planning Division, Growth Management Services Dept.
- Land Use Planner - Planning Division, Growth Management Services Dept.
- Land Management Coordinator- Real Estate Division, Public Works Dept.
- Environmental Coordinator - Engineering Division, Public Works Dept
- Recreation and Parks Manager- Recreation and Parks Dept.

Although it is recommended that several county staff members review development projects for greenways suitability and consistency with the County's Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan, it is also recommended that one division/department take the lead in coordinating the county's Greenway, Blueway & Trails Master Plan with the surrounding cities, counties (local) as well as various other state (including but not limited to SJRWMD and DEP), federal agencies and private developments.

The county's Land Acquisition and Management Program (LAMP) Board members play an important role in promoting public awareness of land acquisition needs (including Greenways and Blueways) and pursuing federal and state grant funds. This board makes recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) on lands the county should acquire in the future; however according to the adopted ordinance 99-3 this board is not involved in the reviewing developers development proposals. The LAMP Board is strictly an advisory board to the BCC and its function is to assist the BCC and other agencies in identifying, reviewing, evaluating and ranking lands to be acquired for conservation, preservation, green corridors, water resources, outdoor recreation, historical and educational/scientific activities.

## **Recommended GOP Changes**

After establishing land acquisition techniques and identifying various funding sources, implementing the long-term recommendations of the plan may be accomplished in several ways. First, through the development review process where projects are evaluated with respect to their impact on the environment and their furtherance of the goals, objectives and policies of the county's Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Code. Secondly, through implementing grants for construction and development.

The proposed Comprehensive Plan's Greenway, Blueway and Trails Master Plan objectives and policies will be handed out separately at the Board of County Commissioners meeting. These proposed objectives and policies (with recommended changes) will be included within the St. Johns County Comprehensive amendment package, occurring twice this year.

## Operations

The operation of a trail consists of the day-to-day management of trail use. These tasks includes law enforcement, marketing, special events, fee collection, map and brochure updates, and other functional considerations. The specific policies regarding the operation of a trail, such as permitted uses and user cost (if any), will most likely be decided in advance of trail construction. After construction, a large part of trail operation consists of the day-to-day execution of those policies.

## Maintenance

The maintenance of a trail includes the various activities involved in keeping the trail in a safe, usable condition. This includes numerous efforts ranging from mowing and brush removal to replacement of damaged signs or benches to reconstruction of the trail. Lifetime trail maintenance will place ongoing costs on the operating agency, and this should be considered during the trail planning and funding process.

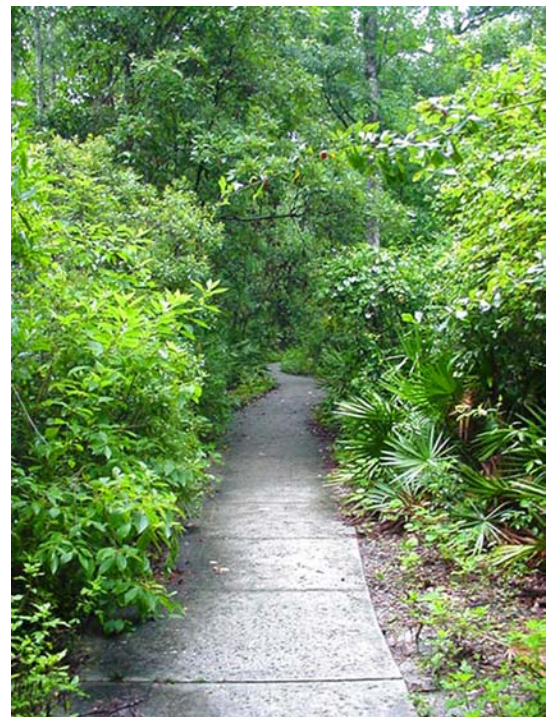
Before a trail or greenway opens, the implementing group should set forth a policy document outlining specific rules pertaining to the greenway. The Operations and Maintenance Policy may cover a wide range of issues. The following items should be major considerations in the policy:

Permitted uses on the trail - Conflicts between different trail users can be minimized through proper trail design and trail user education. By defining the particular uses allowed in certain parts of the system and user education on the matter conflicts will be minimized.

Issues related to crossings of the trail - This may apply to agricultural accesses, new residential driveways, connections to easements and linkages to the trail. It should be determined whether new crossings will be allowed, whether a permitting process will exist, who maintains such crossings, and who assumes responsibility or liability associated with such crossings.

Public outreach – The public can be involved through the development of brochures, events, volunteer demonstration projects, clean-ups, etc.

Volunteer opportunities -The use of volunteer citizen groups will be strongly encouraged for a variety of activities. This includes; trail construction and maintenance, trash and litter control, exotic vegetation removal, safety patrols, and educational outreach. They can work with the municipalities and other stakeholders to promote collaborative management of the greenway and blueway systems and make



development decisions. By implementing this type of organized volunteer program it will allow people, organizations and business to get involved with implementation and up-keep of the greenway/blueway trails. Individuals, community organizations, civic groups, corporations and businesses are a good source of volunteers for trail development and maintenance. A few examples of volunteer opportunities that could be pursued are as follows:

- Civic groups, youth organizations, or businesses might want to adopt a section of trail and assume responsibility for litter patrol and light maintenance.
- Youth corps can provide assistance either free of charge or at significantly reduced costs and can support a variety of labor-intensive projects including trail construction, streambank restoration, habitat improvement, and tree planting.
- Volunteer business work parties could help build, install and maintain signs and benches (according to standard design – haphazard development should not be allowed).
- Prison crews and juvenile and adult offenders required to perform community service are another potential source of assistance at significantly reduced costs. This can be a win/win situation because many social workers believe that positive work experiences involving conservation and recreation projects play an important role in juvenile rehabilitation programs.
- Schools and historical societies could help create and manage web pages, interpretive materials, curriculum guide, etc.
- High school and college students seeking recreation or conservation internships could be recruited to provide a somewhat longer-term commitment.
- Law enforcement agencies could train volunteer ‘trail stewards’ to serve as their eyes and ears while assisting in educating the public about rules and policies.

Cooperative maintenance agreements - In some cases, trail owners may wish to explore the possibility of partnering with other government entities or private organizations in the operation and maintenance of a trail. Any operations or maintenance agreements should be articulated in the operations and maintenance policy.

Evaluation of trail condition - Every trail should be evaluated on a regular schedule to identify the need for major and minor repairs. The operations and maintenance policy should delineate how often trail evaluations take place, preferably once per year.

Encroachment - Some local agencies may take ownership of a corridor that is being encroached upon by adjacent landowners. This is particularly true of railroad corridors bounded by agricultural uses. The implementing agency should set forth definitive policies relating to existing and future encroachments.

Liability – Liability issues are addressed in the 2000 Florida State Statutes Chapter 260 which generally state, “Any private landowner who consents to designation of his or her land as part of the statewide system of greenways and trails pursuant to s 260.016(2)(d) without compensation shall be considered a volunteer, as defined in s 110.501, and shall be covered by state liability protection pursuant to s 768.28

including s 768.28 (9)". For further information on liability issues, see **Appendix B** included in this document. As a safety measure the public operating agency should fully understand the liability associated with the trail and verify that insurance is adequate. By creating an undeveloped buffer of land between trails and private property St Johns County can minimize liability concerns. Designating private property buffers can be utilized as a tool to help keep trail users off of private land. This can be done through the use of signage, vegetative screening, or fencing.

The following are techniques that can be employed to limit liability issues:

- Limit trails to non-motorized use only.
- Implementation of a volunteer 'trail steward' program.
- Education about private property rights including signs, brochures, and outreach.
- Keeping the lines of communication open between managers and adjacent landowners
- Establish a private property buffer zone
- Notify all adjacent landowners of any development plans or changes in policy.

**Law Enforcement** -Law enforcement within the greenway and blueway systems should be dealt with in the same manner as on any other public or private lands in the county. One way to expand law enforcement along newly designated portions of trails would be to establish a volunteer 'trail stewards' program. These volunteers can monitor the trails and work in conjunction with local, county and state law enforcement agencies. People who recreate along greenway and blueway trails generally inspire a peaceful, safe, and attractive environment.

In conjunction with the design and construction of the trail system, it is also recommended that the county should develop a maintenance manual outlining specific tasks that need to be performed for the trail operation and maintenance. The manual should be updated annually and should be used as a guide to administer the trail as an on-going process. The trail maintenance manual should address the uniqueness of each route relative to its particular surfacing, signage, railings, trash removal, tree and shrub pruning, mowing of vegetation and edging, drainage control and re-vegetation needs. Several of the issues that need to be addressed on a scheduled or as-needed basis include the following:

#### *Performed on a Scheduled Basis*

**Trail user safety.** Safety is essential to all maintenance operations and is the single most important trail maintenance concern. Items for consideration include scheduling and documentation of inspections, the condition of railings, bridges and trail surfaces, proper and adequate signage, removal of debris, and coordination with others who may be associated with trail maintenance.

**Trail inspection.** Trail inspections are also an integral task to all trail maintenance operations. Inspections should occur on a regularly scheduled basis, the frequency of which will depend on the amount of trail use, location, age, and the type of construction. It is recommended that all trail inspections be documented.

**Trail sweeping.** Trail sweeping is one of the most important aspects of trail maintenance, helping ensure trail user safety. The type of sweeping to be performed depends on trail design and location. Sweeping should be performed on a regular schedule.

**Trash removal.** Trash removal from trail corridors is important from both a safety and an aesthetic viewpoint and includes the removal of ground debris and emptying of trash containers. Trash removal should take place on a regularly scheduled basis, the frequency of which will depend on trail use and location.

**Tree and shrub pruning.** Tree and shrub pruning should be performed for the safety of trail users. Pruning should be performed to established specifications on a scheduled and as-needed basis.

**Mowing of vegetation.** Trail maintenance personnel should mow vegetation along trail corridors on a scheduled basis.

**Scheduling maintenance tasks.** Inspections, maintenance and repair of trail-related concerns should be regularly scheduled. Inspection and repair priorities should be dictated by trail use, location, and design. Scheduling maintenance tasks is a key item towards the goal of consistently clean and safe trails.

#### *Performed on an As-Needed Basis*

**Trail Repair.** Repair of asphalt or concrete trails should be closely tied to the inspection schedule. Setting priorities for repairs is part of the process. The time between observation and repair of a trail will depend on whether the needed repair is deemed a hazard, to what degree the needed repair will affect the safety of the trail user, and whether the needed repair can be performed by the trail maintenance crew or if it is so extensive that it needs to be repaired by contracted services.

**Trail Replacement.** The decision to replace a trail and the type of replacement depends on many factors. These factors include the age of the trail and the money available for replacement. Replacement involves a new crushed limestone surface, completely overlaying a crushed limestone or asphalt trail with a new asphalt surface, or replacement of an asphalt trail with a concrete trail.

**Weed Control.** Weed control along trails can be limited to areas in which certain weeds create a hazard to users. Environmentally safe weed removal methods should be used, especially along waterways.



**Trail Edging.** Trail edging maintains trail width and improves drainage. Problem areas include trail edges where berms tend to build up and where uphill slopes erode onto the trails. Removal

of this material will allow proper draining of the trail surface, allow the flowing action of the water to clean the trail and limit standing water on trail surfaces.

**Trail Drainage Control.** In places where low spots on the trail catch water, trail surfaces should be raised, or drains built, to carry water away. Some trail drainage control can be achieved through the proper edging of trails. If trail drainage is corrected near steep slopes, the possibility of erosion must be considered.

**Trail Signage.** Trail signs fall into two categories: safety and information. Trail users should be informed of their location, where they are going, and how to safely use trails. Signs related to safety are most important, thus they should receive the highest priority. Information signage can enhance the trail users experience. A system of trail information signage should also be a high priority.

**Re-vegetation.** Areas adjacent to trails that have been disturbed for any reason should be re-vegetated to minimize erosion.

**Habitat Enhancement and Control.** Habitat enhancement is achieved by planting vegetation along trails - mainly trees and shrubs. This can improve the aesthetics of the trail, help prevent erosion and provide habitat for wildlife. Habitat control also involves mitigation of damage caused by wildlife.

## Maintenance Costs

Maintenance costs will vary greatly depending on the type of trail, amount of volunteer labor use, available services, and geographic location of the trail. These costs, however, must be considered during the trail planning process, to ensure that trail owners can pay for the ongoing maintenance of the trails they develop. Maintenance costs are rarely broken down into specific tasks such as those above. Most trails will be maintained by an existing agency, such as a local or state park, public works, or maintenance department. Estimated costs, therefore, are broken down by the type of maintenance performed. Maintenance can be viewed as three different types:

- *Routine maintenance* includes all the general activities stated earlier -- such as brush clearing, trash collection, and sweeping — that may take place on a regular basis throughout a season.
- *Minor Repairs* refer to activities that can be expected every five years or so, such as amenity replacement, trail seal-coating, repainting, or restriping.
- *Major Reconstruction* refers to significant expenditures involving resurfacing or reconstruction. These activities are the most costly trail maintenance activities and should be planned for in advance.

### *Routine Maintenance*

An existing agency or a volunteer group should perform most of the routine maintenance procedures of a trail facility. Local trail owners should be well equipped to include trail

maintenance into their parks or public works maintenance budgets and activities. Activities that should be considered as routine maintenance include:

- Yearly facility evaluation to determine the need for minor repairs
- Tree/brush clearing
- Mowing
- Map/signage updates
- Trash removal/litter clean-up
- Repair flood damage: silt clean-up, culvert clean-out, etc.
- Patching, minor regrading, or concrete panel replacement
- Planting, pruning, and general beautification
- Installation and removal of seasonal signage

The yearly cost for routine maintenance depends on the maintenance capabilities already in place and the amount of volunteer labor used. In general, yearly routine maintenance costs can be estimated at \$1,500 per mile for performing the tasks described above. This figure will vary depending on the location of the trail, materials used and intensity of its use.

### *Minor Repairs*

The need for minor repairs should be determined by a yearly facility evaluation (see routine maintenance above). Minor repairs may include the following activities:

- Replacement, repair, or repainting of trail support amenities, such as restrooms, signage, benches, trash receptacles, or hitching posts
- Replacement of a portion of the trail
- Restriping of trails
- Sealcoating of asphalt trails

The cost for replacement, repair, or repainting of trail amenities is based on the initial cost of those amenities. Trail operators should maintain records of the general costs of trail amenities as a means of estimating future repair and replacement costs. If custom elements, such as lighting, decorative railings, or benches, are used in trail design, the trail owner should consider ordering extra elements at the time of construction and storing them for future use, thereby defraying the cost of single-runs later.

Replacement of a portion of a trail may be necessary if severe flooding, continual erosion, or weak soils cause periodic difficulties with trail maintenance.

Restriping of trails will cost the same as the original striping. The trail owner should keep a record of the original bid to determine the price of restriping a trail using contracted labor. In many cases, it is cost effective to perform restriping along with other trail or highway maintenance. In such instances, the trail owner itself will be the best source of costing information.

Sealcoating of asphalt trails should take place approximately every five years. This will increase the longevity of the trail and provide a quality riding surface. When performed, sealcoating will cost approximately \$3,500 per mile for a 6-foot pedestrian trail and approximately \$5,800 per mile for a 10-foot multi-use trail. A periodic cost such as this should be included in the trail owner's Capital Improvement Program, in order to ensure that adequate funding is available.

### *Major Reconstruction*

There are essentially two activities that are considered to be major reconstructions:

- Resurfacing of asphalt trails
- Complete replacement, regrading, and resurfacing of all trails

Asphalt trails will need to be resurfaced approximately every 10 years, depending on how well they have been maintained. A resurfacing typically involves placing an asphalt overlay on an existing asphalt surface in order to erase cracks and bumps. It is not a perfect solution, as weak underlying soils or tree root penetration will eventually affect this top layer, but it does offer a lower cost means of extending a trail's life. Asphalt surfacing costs approximately \$1 per square foot for a 4-inch depth. Asphalt overlays should have a depth of 1 to 2 inches. The table below offers some sample costs for asphalt resurfacing.

| Trail Type              | 1-inch overlay    | 2-inch overlay    |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 6-foot pedestrian trail | \$7,920 per mile  | \$15,840 per mile |
| 10-foot multi-use trail | \$13,200 per mile | \$26,400 per mile |

Complete replacement of a trail involves removing the existing trail, regrading the trail base, and resurfacing the facility. This kind of comprehensive maintenance will be necessary approximately every 20 years, regardless of trail type. Even natural surface trails may need to be fully regraded after 20 years of use. Trail costs for reconstructions are the same as the cost of a new trail plus the cost of demolishing the existing trail. As with any major trail project, however, a detailed cost estimate should be performed during the project planning stages. The best guide for estimating the replacement cost of a trail is to consider the original construction cost.

A major cost such as trail replacement should be considered well in advance. It may be more difficult to secure large state or federal grants for trail reconstruction. Therefore, a trail owner should consider the eventual cost of trail replacement and work to "save up" for that significant maintenance activity.

## Management

In most cases, the agency or group that constructed the trail will have primary responsibility for its operation and maintenance. Because the trail system will be viewed as an important resource to the citizens, county and state, the groups should coordinate as much as possible in order to maintain the quality of the overall system. Potential partners in maintaining the county's trail system and the responsibilities and roles they should incur as part of the management component of the plan are listed below:

- Local communities are the primary operating agents of the trails they implement. They remain close to the trail, both physically and functionally, and are best equipped to market, improve, maintain, and evaluate the trail. They also typically have full ownership of the trail and access to local police, fire, and public works departments, thereby allowing easy policing and maintenance of the trail. Trail owners should provide annual funding for the basic maintenance needs of their trails.
- Local non-profit or private organizations may implement trails through partnerships with local communities. When this is the case, such groups may also take a role in the operation and maintenance of trails. In addition, these groups may be a source of volunteers for trail maintenance.
- The Division of Planning and the Division of Recreation & Parks may offer guidance and expertise on trail operation and maintenance.
- Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) should be involved in the operation and maintenance of trails constructed within FDOT along highway rights-of-ways and/or future roadway corridors.
- The St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) maintains, operates and improves several miles of trails within its recreation and conservation areas. The SJRWMD should work with the local communities to create, operate and maintain trail links from their areas.

## Safety and Liability Issues

**Safety.** The owner of a greenway, whether a public or private owner, must provide a safe facility for those who use it. The publication titled, *Greenways: A Guide to Planning, Design, and Development*, provides minimum standards for the design and development of greenway facilities and identifies the basic components of a risk management program. These components include:

- 1) *Identification* – identifying potential risk through regular inspections and noting where hazardous situations may occur, the type of hazard, and the most likely user group;
- 2) *Evaluation* – evaluating the risk to determine the likelihood of an accident due to the age of the facility, amount of use, or poor design;
- 3) *Treatment* – treating the risk or notifying the user. Treating the risk can entail prohibiting the use of the area or reducing or eliminating the risk through repair, redesign, increased maintenance, or lowering the intensity of use. Notifying the user can be accomplished by posting signs which

notify the user of the problem, or obtaining waivers from greenways users. Implementation of such risk management program minimizes safety problems.

One of the objectives of the St. Johns County's Park and Recreation Department is minimizing safety problems through risk identification, evaluation, and treatment. A County program to develop greenways will need to include this same commitment to safety.

**Liability.** Of Concern to local government and private landowners who wish to provide public access to greenways for recreational pursuits is the liability of the landowner for an injury or death sustained while using the greenway. Understanding the extent to which the landowner is liable is important to a discussion of safety and liability issues, particularly to private landowners interested in providing access to greenway users.

The Florida Legislature has waived, by statute, sovereign immunity for the state and its political subdivisions (which include the counties). The waiver applies to claims that arise in connection with personal injury, injury or loss of property, or death, caused by the wrongful act or omission of an employee who is acting within the scope of his office or employment. The waiver only applies to situations where the County, if it were a private person, could be held liable for the injury.

Generally, the determination of whether the County or private person can be held liable for negligence turns on whether there is a "duty of care" owed to the injured party. There are two main considerations in determining whether a duty of care exists:

1. The legal status of the greenway user, and
2. Whether the County's act or omission is one for which liability can legally attach.

As to the legal status of the greenway user, most users will be classified as invitees or invited licensees, which receive a highest duty of care. The landowner's duty to such persons is to keep the property reasonably safe, and to protect the visitor from dangers of which the landowner is, or should be, aware.

### *County's Liability*

As to whether the act or omission on the part of the County is one for which liability can attach, the courts have separated government functions into two categories:

1. Planning or policy-making functions, and
2. Operational functions.

There is no duty of care associated with planning and policy-making functions, and hence no liability. Examples of these functions include the decisions of the Board of County Commissioners to adopt or not adopt an ordinance, or the decision to build and operate a recreational facility such as a greenway. Once a government decides to build a park or greenway, it enters into the operational arena and assumes a duty to:

1. Properly construct the improvements;
2. Maintain the land and improvements in a reasonable safe condition; and
3. Warn of or correct any known dangerous conditions.

Past cases provide specific examples of the standard of care to which counties have been held to by the Florida courts. Those cases touch upon the concepts of unforeseeable and causation, which are often the key issues in personal injury litigation. If an accident is completely unforeseeable based on a standard of

reasonableness, or if the County's act or omission did not cause or contribute to the injury, then a finding of negligence would be improper. Such determinations are fact specific.

#### *Private Landowners Liability*

As to the liability of private landowners who donate the use of their land for greenway purposes, the Florida Legislature has adopted Sec. 375.251, F.S., which limits liability. The purpose of the act is to encourage citizens to make land, water areas, and park areas available to the public for outdoor recreational use by limiting their liability to people going on the property and to third persons who may be damaged by the acts of people going on the property.

The protection extends to situations where the private owner has leased the recreational property to the government. However, the liability protection does not apply if admission is charged, or any other profit-making activity is conducted on the property, or if the owner deliberately, willfully, or maliciously causes the injury. The courts have declared that this statute is not intended to and does not protect the state or its political subdivisions from liability.

## **Appendix A**

**QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES:**

Meeting 1-Northwest Region

1/15/2003

| Area of Residence          | Preferred Activities                                                                                                                    | Current Areas & Parks Utilized                                                                                                | Suggested Areas and Trails to include on Greenway/Blueway Master Plan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Colee Cove/Fruit Cove      | Fishing, Paddling, Nature Appreciation                                                                                                  | St Johns River, Trout Creek Park                                                                                              | CR 208 to old road from St. Augustine to River and points west<br>Entire St. Johns River<br>Area from Colee Cove to Picolotta                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                            |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Switzerland                | Bird Watching, Paddling                                                                                                                 | Trout, 6-Mile, Durbin, Deep and Pellicer Creeks                                                                               | Refer to the Recreation Guide put out by the SJRWMD                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                            |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| South of Palencia          | Hiking, Bird Watching, Fishing, Nature Appreciation, Horseback riding and carts, watching and painting sunsets, wild flower photography | Trout Creek, Matanzas, St. Johns River Park Davis Park                                                                        | Pope Point, Hallowes Cove, both sides of International Golf Parkway east of 95, Pine Island Fish Camp                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|                            |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Northwest                  | Bird Watching, Nature Appreciation                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                               | Alpine Grove Park, Bike paths and walkways on edge of SR 13 off hwy at edge of property owned by the road                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|                            |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Northwest                  | Hiking, Biking, Bird Watching, Fishing, Paddling, Nature appreciation, Sailing, Small Boating                                           |                                                                                                                               | SR 13 greenway w/multi-purpose trail east side of road<br>River & beach access, small boat access (sail/canoe/kayak), Bike Paths                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                            |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Fruit Cove                 | Hiking, Nature Appreciation                                                                                                             | Mandarin Park                                                                                                                 | Along St. Johns River--walking trails----along scenic highway                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                            |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Switzerland                | Hiking, Biking, Off-Road Biking, Bird Watching, Fishing, In-line Skating, Paddling, Nature Appreciation Equestrians, Swimming           | Julington Creek Plantation                                                                                                    | Wm. Bartram Scenic & historic Highway                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|                            |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Northwest                  | Hiking, Biking, Bird Watching, Nature Appreciation Assuring animal habitat                                                              | Mills Field, Eagerly awaiting Bennett Park                                                                                    | Durbin Creek "Headwaters"-public conservation land with canoe launch plus hiking, jogging and biking trails--bird watching and nature appreciation.<br>Additional adjoining land to Twelve-Mile Swamp--conservation land--allows equestrian trails, hiking/jogging/biking trails, bird watching, nature appreciation, habitat protection for animals.<br>Old Green Cove Springs Bridge-SR 13 & 16a: 1.extend pier for fishing and boat launch.<br>2. Extend pier for fishing, canoe launching only, picnic facilities, nature appreciation.            |
|                            |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Northwest                  | Hiking, Biking, Horseback Riding, Bird Watching Fishing, Paddling, Nature Appreciation, Sitting in woods.                               | Mandarin Park, Walter Jones Park, St. Johns Park (Bennett Tract), Bayard Point, Ravine Gardens, Princess Place, Welatka Park. | R.M. Williams property on Race Track Road would make an excellent Durbin Creek canoe/kayak launch area, a native plant nursery, and tree nursery.. Room for all three. Also, equestrians arena and large pen and riding trail and water monitoring station on Durbin Creek. Need to connect this trail to Bayard Points.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                            |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Northwest                  | Off-Road Biking, Bird Watching, Nature Appreciation                                                                                     | Mallard Landing has homeowners park, Julington Creek bike path                                                                | Keep Bartram Scenic Trail from expansion.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|                            |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Julington Creek Plantation | Fishing, Paddling, Nature Appreciation, Athletic Facilities for children.                                                               | Mills Field, Julington Creek Athletic Facilities                                                                              | Durbin Creek headwaters for hiking, biking, canoe launching and equestrians.<br>Old Green Cove Springs Bridge SR 13 & 166A for fishing, canoeing, fishing, picnic, etc.<br>Land connection to 12 mile swamp conservation, hiking, biking, equestrian activities.<br>Greenbelts around schools, walking & biking parks.<br>Don't forget active recreation requirements for our children!!!<br>Beach Access and parking at the ocean.<br>Greenways should border SR 13 Scenic Hwy.<br>Please email a jpeg file for master plan map: tmanuel505@attbi.com |
|                            |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Northwest                  | Biking                                                                                                                                  | neighborhood                                                                                                                  | Around old fire station, at Shands Bridge, Back in the Sheffield area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

**QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES:**

Meeting 2-South Region

1/22/2003

| Area of Residence       | Preferred Activities                                                                                         | Current Areas & Parks Utilized                                                                                                   | Suggested Areas and Trails to include on Greenway/Blueway Master Plan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| S.t Augustine/Anastasia | Hiking, Biking, Bird Watching, Paddling, Nature Appr.                                                        | Anastasia, Quana, Moses Creek, Lighthouse Prk<br>Deep Creek (207), Moultrie Creek, 6 mile Creek<br>pellicier Creek, Durbin Creek | Contact Paddling club for identifying canoe/kayak trails. (Coastal Outdoors Kayak Club)<br>Van Hemmen? T. 810-5688..paddling info. Safe bikepaths, not bike lanes. Include<br>bikes fro transportation when possible...I.e.-kids on Anastasia biking to school.<br>Continuous paths and smooth paths, accessible to children carriages and wheelchairs.<br>Paddling trails: indicate when trails are tidal. |
|                         |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| South                   | Bird Watching, Fishing, Paddling, Nature Appreciation<br>Surfing                                             | Pellicier Creek, Moses Creek, Beaches,<br>Matanzas Inlet                                                                         | West of I-95 from SR 207, south to Flagler County Line, Boar Habitat tried to Ocala<br>National Forest, Water Taxi running this countyi.e.--shands to Marineland tying into<br>garages, trains and trolleys.                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                         |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Southeast (US 1/206)    | Hiking, Bird Watching, Nature Appreciation                                                                   | Matanzas Park, Anastasia Park, Guana State<br>Park                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                         |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| West Augustine          | Fishing, Golf                                                                                                | Treaty Park                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                         |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Southwest               | Horseback Riding                                                                                             | Private trails, Beaches, Moses Creek, Princess<br>Place Preserve, Welaka State Forest, Bayard<br>Point, Etionach                 | Rial-to-trails project (207)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                         |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| SR207 east of I-95      | Horseback Riding, Nature Appreciation                                                                        | Moses Creek, treaty Park, Private Timber Lease                                                                                   | Twelve Mile Swamp                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                         |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Elkton                  | Horseback Riding, Paddling, Carraige Driving                                                                 | Moses Creek, Welaka, Bayard, Princess Place<br>Twelve Mile Swamp                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                         |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Southwest               | Horseback Riding, Bird Watching, Fishing, Nature Appr.                                                       | Moses Creek, Welaka State Park, Bayard Pnt.<br>Princess Place, Guana State Park                                                  | Deep Creek---Nocatee---12 mile swamp. Link Princess Place-wildlife bridge ove I-95 to<br>trails coming out of 204 (13) toward Hastings.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|                         |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Cresent Beach           | Hiking, Biking, Nature Appreciation                                                                          | Flagler County Bike Path                                                                                                         | A1A Scenic Highway                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                         |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Cresent Beach           | Hiking, Biking, Nature Appreciation                                                                          | Flagler County Bike Path                                                                                                         | Multi-use trail along scenic highway A1A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                         |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| St. Augustine South     | Hiking, Biking, Off-Road Biking, Horseback Riding,<br>Bird Watching, Fishing, Paddling, Nature Appreciation. | St. Augustine South-Shore Drive, Beach,<br>Waterways                                                                             | Multi-purpose trail in St Augustine South along Shore Drive.<br>Connection to the beach from Rail Trail.<br>Connectionto South and Noprth from Rail Trail                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

**QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES:**

Meeting 3-Northeast Region Region

1/29/2003

| Area of Residence | Preferred Activities                                                                                                | Current Areas & Parks Utilized        | Suggested Areas and Trails to include on Greenway/Blueway Master Plan                      |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Palm Valley       | Hiking, Biking, Off-Road Biking, Bird Watching, Fishing, In-Line Skating, Paddling & Nature Appreciation            | Guana, North Wildlife Management Area | Bike Path from 210 Bridge (Roscoe area) to Mickler Beach Access through Guana WMA.         |
|                   |                                                                                                                     |                                       |                                                                                            |
| Vilano Beach      | Nature Appreciation                                                                                                 | Vilano area                           | We need sidewalks and bike paths along A1A in the Vilano, north beach area.                |
|                   |                                                                                                                     |                                       |                                                                                            |
| St Johns          | Hiking, Jogging, Biking, Off-Road Biking, Bird Watching, Fishing, In-line skating, Paddling and Nature Appreciation | Guana, Hanna Park                     | Old A1A (Ponte Vedra Blvd.) needs bike path to connect to Duval CR 210 to Mickler Landing. |

**QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES:**

Meeting 4-BCC Chambers St Johns County Auditorium  
2/12/2003

| Area of Residence   | Preferred Activities                                                                                    | Current Areas & Parks Utilized                                                                | Suggested Areas and Trails to include on Greenway/Blueway Master Plan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| East/Central        | Bird Watching, Fishing, paddling, Nature Appreciation<br>Wildlife photography, Native plant photography | Trout Creek Park & Nature Trail, St. Johns River<br>(Bennett) Park, Guana, Davis Park         | Hallowes Cove & Pope Point, 6 Mile Creeek, Upper portion of Trout Creek at 16A,<br>Pine Island, Trail along International Gold Parkway connecting County Scenic Roadway<br>area with endangered species wildflower area.<br>We need some overlook areas (2-5) cars) along the ocean and the St. Johns River.<br>A horse trail from N.W. St. Johns to Shands Bridge & a staging area at each end.<br>A preserved area in Flagler Estates where the Pitcher Plants grow. This should include<br>the area where the county lines meet.<br>A passive park along the west side of the Intracoastal Waterway between Palencia<br>and Nocatee.<br>More public access to the river and major creeks.<br>Wildlife underpasses along US 1 and the Railroad. Also under 95, 210 & 207. |
|                     |                                                                                                         |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Northwest           | Hiking, Biking, Horseback Riding, Bird Watching,<br>Fishing, Paddling, Nature Appreciation, Boating     | Mills Field, Trout Creek, Benntt Park, Plantation<br>Park                                     | Walking-Biking River Trail, Batram Canoe Trail outlet, Wildlife corridors from Ddot Ranch<br>south through Nocatee through Durbin Creek under highway to Julington/Durbin Creeks<br>Pennisula, through to Twelve Mile swamp.<br>the Middle section of Nocatee low areas across Hwy 1 bridgeways or under 95 to other<br>large land acquisitions in various sections of St. Johns County.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                     |                                                                                                         |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| St Augustine South  | Hiking, Biking, fishing, Paddling, Nature Appreciation                                                  | St. Augustine South, treaty Park, Ron Parker<br>Park, Moultrie Creek                          | St Augustine South Conservation/Park area-all property waterward of Shore Drive is<br>preserved-it needs a trail/path.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|                     |                                                                                                         |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Vilano Beach        | Hiking, Biking, Off-Raod Biking, Horseback Riding,<br>Nature Appreciation                               | Guana River State Park                                                                        | West side of A1A from Vilano Town Center (Usina Bridge) to Guana River SP to<br>Ponte Vedra.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                     |                                                                                                         |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| NW-Julington Creek  | Biking, Bird-Watching, Fishing,Nature Appreciation                                                      | Mills field, Julington/Durbin Creeks, Davis Park<br>Alpine Park (When Open), Trout Creek Park | Helping William Bartram Scenic & Historic Highway Corridor Group-will need biking/<br>hiking trail along highway.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                     |                                                                                                         |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| North Beach         | Off-Road Biking, Nature Appreciation                                                                    |                                                                                               | East Coast Greenway between Vilano Beach and Ponte Vedra.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                     |                                                                                                         |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| St. Augustine South | Hiking, Bird Watching, Nature Appreciation                                                              | St. Augustine South Park (Shore Drive)                                                        | Matanzas, Moultrie Creek, St. Augustine South Park area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                     |                                                                                                         |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| St. Augustine South | Hiking, Biking, Paddling, Nature Appreciation, Walking,<br>Canoeing                                     | St Augustine South Park                                                                       | Matanzas River-Moultrie Creek Greenway (St. Augustine South Park) Sidewalk or path<br>along Shore Drive.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                     |                                                                                                         |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| St. Augustine South | Hiking, Bird Watching, Paddling, Nature Appreciation<br>Walking                                         | St. Augustine South Park                                                                      | Matanzas River-Moiultrie Creek Greenway/Blueway (St. Augustine South Park)<br>Approximately 3.9 miles of paths (sidewalks) on water side of Shore Drive on border<br>or right-of-way in park area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

## **Appendix B**

## **Appendix C**

## List of major Recreational / Conservational Park Resources lying along SR A1A and the Intracoastal Waterway include the following:

### Federal

#### Historical

St. Augustine is the oldest city in the United States; it was founded in 1565 by Spanish explorers who used the City as a military station. The City remained a military post for most of the Colonial Period. Since it's founding, Spanish, French, British, and American societies have occupied the City (St. Augustine Preservation Board). It is because of this diversity the City and County has a variety of historical sites, structures, and markers. These historical sites provide recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Historical sites contribute to passive recreation and enhance the open space of the County.

*Castillo De San Marcos National Monument* is located in the City of St. Augustine on the Matanzas River. The area comprises approximately 21 acres. The Monument is a National Historic Site and is located on the National Register of Historic Places. It provides passive recreation, a museum, walking trails, and sight-seeing as the primary activities.

*Fort Matanzas National Monument* is located on the Matanzas River and A1A. This historical area comprises approximately 300 acres. The Monument is located on the National Register of Historic Places. Primary activities include a beach walking area, walking trails, a museum, sight-seeing, and a boat shuttle to the fort.

#### State Parks and Conservation Areas

*Guana State Park/Wildlife Management Area* is located north of St. Augustine on the Tolomato River and the Atlantic Ocean. The area comprises 11,500 acres and includes over four miles of undeveloped oceanfront. The Department of Environmental Protection as part of the State Park System manages approximately 3,000; the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission as a Wildlife Management Area manage the remaining 8,500 acres. There are approximately 6,000 acres of wetlands, the largest wetland area being Guana Lake with about 2,200 acres. Wildlife Management Areas provide open space and passive recreational activities while preserving the natural setting of the environment. Primary activities include both passive and active, including fishing, crabbing, swimming, and nature study while preserving the natural setting of the environment. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission opens sections of the Park and Wildlife Management Area for hunting during certain seasons.

Part of Guana State Park is an Aquatic Preserve, referred to as the *Guana River Marsh Aquatic Preserve*. This area has a Management Plan and contains approximately 40,000 acres. In addition, Guana State Park/Wildlife Management Area was officially

designated as a National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) in November of 1999. This includes all of Guana River Aquatic Preserve consisting of water in the Tolomato and Guana River estuaries and 25,000 acres of Atlantic Ocean.

*Anastasia State Park* is located south of St. Augustine in the eastern part of the County. SR A1A bound it on the east by the Atlantic Ocean and on the west. The park comprises 1,535 acres with approximately three miles of ocean beach. The primary activities are ocean related, including both active and passive. These activities include picnicking, nature study, camping, fishing, and swimming.

*Rayonier Tract* lies between SR 206 and the St. Johns/ Flagler County boundary line and lies between US 1 and the Intracoastal Waterway. The Rayonier Tract is the largest parcel of land located within the designated Northeast Florida Blueway Phase II – Guana Tolomato Matanzas Rivers and is total of 8,465 acre. This parcel of land protects five miles of Intracoastal Waterway lying adjacent to Class II Shellfish Harvesting waters and creates 16,000 acres of contiguous conservation land between Faver Dykes State Park, Pellicer Creek Conservation Area and Princess Place Preserve. This parcel of land protects four tributaries that directly contribute to the Matanzas River and one tributary that flows into the Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW) of Pellicer Creek Aquatic and Faver-Dykes State Park Preserve. There are 12 types of natural communities and more than 30 state and federally listed species.

Using the Florida Natural Areas Inventory classification scheme, the following natural communities occur on the site: maritime hammock, sand pine scrub, scrubby flatwoods, pine flatwoods, sandhill, upland mixed forest, baygall, depression marsh, dome (cypress), floodplain swamp, blackwater stream, estuarine tidal marsh, and estuarine unconsolidated substrate (tidal flat). A large portion of the property is in silviculture (mostly slash pine).

The significant wildlife resources include, but are not limited to, two eagle nests, large wood stork colony, breeding painted buntings and large aggregations of wading and shorebirds foraging in the freshwater and estuarine wetlands.

In addition there are five documented cultural sites exist on the property (Master Site Files SJ3152-3156). Probably two others could be added. The sites are all pre-historic St. Johns Culture (and possibly earlier) and several contain historic components. There also at least 5 documented farms, or plantations that utilized the site during the Second Spanish and Territorial Periods.

This site was acquired with Florida Forever and St. Johns River Water Management District funds. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Division of Recreation and the Division of Forestry each manage fifty percent of the Rayonier Tract.

*Faver-Dykes State Park* is located in the southeast portion of the County and encompasses approximately 725 acres. Pellicer Creek forms the south boundary. Pellicer Creek is the primary water body but there are several smaller creeks and streams which transverse the park, all of which have been designated a National Estuarine

Research Reserve (NERR). A portion of the Pellicer Creek Aquatic Preserve is located the park and continues into Flagler County. Popular activities are water related, such as, swimming, fishing, and boating. The adjacent marshland provides excellent open space for passive activities.

*Pellicer Creek Aquatic Preserve* is located approximately 16 miles south of the City of St. Augustine and the creek borders the St. Johns and Flagler County boundary lines. This 505-acre preserve borders U.S. 1 and extends approximately 4 miles eastward to the Matanzas River. Boundaries of the Pellicer Creek Aquatic Preserve include only state-owned (sovereign) submerged lands that occur below the mean high water line (MHWL). In 1970, when Pellicer Creek was designated as an Aquatic Preserve, its salt-water marsh habitat was considered one of the most pristine estuarine/riverain systems along Florida's east coast. As such, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) designated *Pellicer Creek as a State-Canoe-Trail*. The boundaries of the state-owned preserve include all tidal lands and islands, sandbars, shallow banks, submerged bottoms and lands waterward of the mean high water line (MHWL). The estuarine marsh provides important habitat for a diversity of bird life and functions as a nursery area for juvenile species of fish and invertebrates. The boundaries of this aquatic preserve are located within the soon to be officially designated NERR. This site is located adjacent to Faver Dykes State Park and the preserve also serves as a prime recreational area for fishing and passive boating opportunities. Due to the preserve's location to the surrounding existing and proposed residential communities, protecting the upland communities and the resources will be critical for maintaining the long term character of Pellicer Creek.

*Frank Butler State Park (East and West)* is located south of St. Augustine and includes approximately 54 acres adjacent to the Atlantic Ocean and the Matanzas River. The Frank Butler Recreation/Park area is owned by the State. Waters of the Matanzas River adjacent to Frank Butler State Park (western boundary lies adjacent to the designated NERR boundaries of the Matanzas River. The St. Johns County Recreation Department leases this park from DEP but the County still pays for improvements at this park site and manages the upkeep of the park. This lease is expected to continue in the future; therefore, this site is included in the County's level of service when computing the recreation needs for the residents. Primary activities include fishing, swimming, picnicking, and other ocean related activities. There is a playground and boat launching facility also located at the park.

*Stokes Landing Conservation Area* is located north of St. Augustine and west of Guana State Park. The property contains approximately 274 acres with access from US 1 and Lakeshore Drive. SJRWMD acquired this site in order to protect the water resources, wetland functions, ecological functions and enhance the fish and wildlife functions. This property is one of the last few remaining undeveloped areas adjacent to tidal marshes in the region and is adjacent to the Guana River Aquatic Preserve. This represents the Water Management District's first acquisition within the coastal Tolomato River basin. This site encompasses four different natural communities such as tidal marsh, depression marsh, upland mixed forest and pine flatwoods. Uplands comprise approximately 63% of the property and wetlands occupy approximately 37% of the site, which supports a

number of wildlife species. The wildlife species include wood storks, wading birds, shorebirds, red-tailed hawks, several frog species, black racer and otter. There is a Neder Midden site, which covers almost 100 acres, which is relatively undisturbed and has the potential of being eligible for National Register designation. This site is managed by the SJRWMD and the County and is used by Nease High School as an outdoor environmental classroom.

*Moses Creek Conservation Area* is located east of U.S. 1, north of S.R. 206 and west of the Matanzas River. St. Augustine is 8.5 miles north, Faver Dykes State Park is 7.5 miles south and Anastasia Island State Park is about 8.5 miles northeast of this site. Moses Creek is within the proposed National Estuarine Research Reserve boundary, which is important in protecting the Class II waters of the Matanzas River south of SR. 206. The tract has significant value in buffering the adjacent salt marsh community from the shoreline and near shoreline development that would ultimately lead to water quality degradation. The natural communities consist of scrub, upland mixed forest, freshwater tidal swamp, mesic flatwoods, depression marsh, estuarine tidal marsh and dome swamp. The diversity of natural communities supports numerous terrestrial, aquatic and wetland-dependent wildlife by providing nesting, feeding and resting habitats for wading birds (i.e., blue heron rookery and ospreys) and gopher tortoise. Limited primitive camping will be allowed with a special permit after evaluation. This site offers an excellent opportunity for Gamble Rogers Middle School and Hartley Elementary Schools, located within a half a mile of the property, to provide an outstanding outdoor laboratory for conducting environmental education. Recreational opportunities will include fishing, nature study, canoeing, hiking, biking and horseback riding.

## Local

The *South Ponte Vedra Park* includes a parking lot with beach access, and picnic areas. The park is located off SR A1A in South Ponte Vedra.

Many locals of the area are currently using the Shands Pier as a fishing pier. The Bridge comprises approximately one acre. The County has the development is into Ocean Front Park.

*Southeast Intracoastal Waterway Park* contains 114 acres and is located between Crescent Beach and Marineland on Anastasia Island all lying in the far southeastern region of St. Johns County and on the east by S.R. A1A and on the west by the Matanzas River. This project is made up of three parcels Boyd (112 acres) and Roth tract (2 acres). These parcels are relatively rare and rapidly diminishing coastal ecosystems and are pristine areas of the basin very rich in bi-diversity and contain 43 to 82 natural communities. Through this acquisition, the County will be able to prevent any further threats to these natural systems, which include habitat loss, and degradation of nursery productive estuarine waters of the Matanzas River recently designated within the NERR boundary area. In addition, the County will be able to redirect the population away from the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) and the 100-year floodplain. The Management

Plan is designed to protect and educate the public on the following issues: protecting the environment, protecting archaeological sites, provides resource-based recreational activities and promotes the education of the environment and archaeological history. Physical improvements will include facilities such as hiking trails, nature interpretation, picnicking, fishing, restrooms/visitor center, entrance road/parking, security, historic restoration and a playground.

*Fort Mose National Historic Landmark* is a valuable one of a kind unique historic and cultural site. This 2.5-acre site has been identified through archaeological investigations as being located on a tree-covered rise along the banks of Robinson Creek, a tributary creek that flows into the Tolomato River. The rise consists of prehistoric and historic occupational debris and the site is bounded on the south and east by Robinson Creek and on the north and west by marshlands. Fort Mose was established as part of the northern defense line for the Spanish colonial town of St. Augustine during the mid-eighteenth century and served as the earliest known free Black community in the United States.

## **APPENDIX D**

## **List of major Recreational / Conservational Park Resources lying along SR/CR 13 and St. Johns River include the following:**

The *Julington Creek/Durbin Creek* area comprises approximately 3,280 acres, located in both St. Johns County and Duval County. The area located in St. Johns is approximately 70 acres. This project has been on the CARL priority list since 1982. According to the 1996 Carl Annual Report, the Julington/Durbin peninsula ranked 44 out of a total of 44 projects listed. This site is located adjacent to the St. Johns River, Julington Creek, Durbin Creek and Mill Creek. In addition, this site provides habitat for many plant and animal species. There is a high potential for several types of recreational activities, such as horseback riding, canoeing, fishing, swimming, hiking, camping, and hunting. The Julington/Durbin site would provide a good site for urban park development. However, in 1997 this site was removed from the CARL list.

In 1996, the City of Jacksonville received Florida Communities Trust funds to purchase the Julington Creek Headwaters Park and Preserve consisting of 210 acres (northern section) and 400 acres (southern section) equaling a total of 610 acres. This site runs along the western portions of both properties where the headwaters for Julington Creek and Big Davis Creek are located. Also, the Julington Creek tributary enters near the southern property boundary.

*Deep Creek* is located in west St. Johns County, west of SR. 207, just north of the Town of Hastings. The SJRWMD has acquired land in this area in sections during 1988 and 1989 totaling 3,758 acres. This property is three miles long (north-south) and two miles wide, with over two miles of frontage on the St. Johns River. Deep Creek bisects the property from the southeast. Deep Creek Conservation Area was acquired by the District in order to protect important water resources and ecological functions including floodplain protection, restore natural hydrology and restore native ecological communities and enhance species diversity for fish and wildlife. Existing communities are extremely important to improve water quality in the creek, which is impacted by agricultural run-off from the nearby farms. This property provides important habitat for a number of wildlife species including bald eagles, ospreys, wading birds waterfowl and black bear. Proposed potential recreational uses include fishing, boating, canoeing, bird watching and nature study, however; the only access at this time is by water via the St. Johns River. There is a potential for a Rails-to-Trails connection on the edge of the property.

*Alpine Groves River Park* contains 54.5 acres and is located in the northwest district of the County in the Switzerland area bordered on the west by the St. Johns River and on the east by the William Bartram Scenic Historic (SR 13). Access to this site is available through Swiss Lane. This site contains many outstanding centennial oak trees and the topography varies from the bluff, which allows for gorgeous vista views of the St. Johns River to lower elevations where a creek bisects the site. This site also contains three distinct historic structures that were built during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and are representative of this region's rich history. One of these structures, the County is

proposing to turn into a museum. The Management Plan is designed to protect and educate the public on the following issues: protect the environment, protect historic structures, provide resource-based recreational activities and promote the education of the environment and the history of this region. Physical improvements will include facilities such as hiking trails, nature interpretation, picnicking, fishing, restrooms/visitor center, entrance road /parking, security, historic restoration and a playground.

## **APPENDIX E**

**List of major Recreational / Conservational Park Resources lying in the central portion of the County include the following:**

*Twelve Mile Swamp* is located in the north central area of the County, between U.S. 1 and Interstate 95. This area comprises approximately 24,000 acres, consisting of mixed hardwoods and swamp. Twelve Mile Swamp eventually drains into the St. Johns River and serves as the headwaters for Sampson Creek, a tributary of Durbin Creek. The Water Management District has expressed an interest in this area because of its hydrological significance. Acquisition of the Twelve Mile Swamp was proposed through the CARL program. If this land were acquired by the State through the CARL program, the area would be managed as a Wildlife Management Area in association with the Guana River Wildlife Management District east of Twelve Mile Swamp.

*Rails-to-Trails* A previously abandoned 21-mile FEC rail-line near S.R. 207 was purchased by Florida DOT purchase. The rail-line travels in a southwesterly direction along the S.R. 207 corridor from I-95/S.R. 207 to the St. Johns County/Putnam County boundary. The Trail will be a source of connectivity between the County, Putnam and Gainesville's Lake Butler Trail.

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## Florida Statutes 2000 / Chapter 260

### CHAPTER 260 RECREATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM

- 260.011 Short title.
- 260.012 Declaration of policy and legislative intent.
- 260.0125 Limitation on liability of private landowners whose property is designated as part of the statewide system of greenways and trails.
- 260.013 Definitions.
- 260.014 Florida Greenways and Trails System.
- 260.0141 Greenways and Trails Program.
- 260.0142 Florida Greenways and Trails Council; composition; powers and duties.
- 260.015 Acquisition of land.
- 260.016 General powers of the department.
- 260.0161 Coordination with Department of Transportation.
- 260.017 Restrictions; rules.
- 260.018 Agency recognition.

#### Florida Statutes 2000 / Chapter 260 / 260.011 Short title.

**260.011 Short title.**—Sections 260.011-260.018 shall be known and may be cited as the "Florida Greenways and Trails Act."

**History.**—s. 1, ch. 79-110; s. 7, ch. 96-389.

#### Florida Statutes 2000 / Chapter 260 / 260.012 Declaration of policy and legislative intent.

##### **260.012 Declaration of policy and legislative intent.**—

(1) In order to recognize the benefits of the outdoor areas of Florida, and in order to conserve, develop, and use the natural resources of this state for healthful and recreational purposes, it is declared to be the public policy of this state and the purpose of ss. 260.011-260.018 to provide the means and procedures for establishing and expanding a statewide system of greenways and trails for recreational and conservation purposes which shall be designated as the "Florida Greenways and Trails System." The standards by which the greenways and trails system shall be acquired, designated, administered, maintained, used, and expanded shall be consistent with the provisions of ss. 260.011-260.018. It is the intent of the Legislature that these greenways and trails will serve to implement the concepts of ecosystems management while providing, where appropriate, recreational opportunities, including, but not limited to, horseback riding, hiking, bicycling, canoeing, jogging, and historical and archaeological interpretation, thereby improving the health and welfare of the people.

(2) It is the intent of the Legislature that a statewide system of greenways and trails be established to provide open space benefiting environmentally sensitive lands and wildlife and providing people with access to healthful outdoor activities. It is also the intent of the Legislature to acquire or designate lands and waterways to facilitate the establishment of a statewide system of greenways and trails; to encourage the multiple use of public rights-of-way and use to the fullest extent existing and future scenic roads, highways, park roads, parkways, greenways,

trails, and national recreational trails; to encourage the development of greenways and trails by counties, cities, and special districts and to assist in such development by any means available; to coordinate greenway and trail plans and development by local governments with one another and with the state government and Federal Government; to encourage, whenever possible, the development of greenways and trails on federal lands by the Federal Government; and to encourage the owners of private lands to protect the existing ecological, historical, and cultural values of their lands, including those values derived from working landscapes.

(3) It is the intent of the Legislature that designated greenways and trails be located on public lands and waterways and, subject to the written agreement of the private landowner, on private lands. Designated greenways and trails located on public lands or waterways or on private lands may or may not provide public access, as agreed by the department or the landowner, respectively.

(4) It is the intent of the Legislature that information produced for the purpose of the identification of lands and waterways, both public and private, that are suitable for greenways and trails be used only for the purposes of:

(a) Setting priorities for acquisition, planning, and management of public lands and waterways for use as greenways and trails; and

(b) Identification of private lands which are eligible for designation as part of the greenways and trails system and are thereby eligible for incentives.

(5) The planning, development, operation, and maintenance of the Florida Greenways and Trails System authorized by ss. 260.011-260.018 is declared to be a public purpose, and the Department of Environmental Protection, together with other agencies of this state and all counties, municipalities, and special districts of this state, is authorized to spend public funds for such purposes and to accept gifts and grants of funds, property, or property rights from public or private sources to be used for such purposes.

(6) It is the intent of the Legislature to officially recognize the Florida National Scenic Trail as Florida's official statewide trail from the Florida Panhandle to the Everglades. It is also the intent of the Legislature to encourage all state, regional, and local agencies who acquire lands to include in their land-buying efforts the acquisition of sufficient legal interest in the lands over which the trail passes to ensure its continued existence in a permanent location.

**History.**—s. 2, ch. 79-110; s. 1, ch. 87-328; s. 3, ch. 91-62; s. 105, ch. 94-356; s. 8, ch. 96-389; s. 3, ch. 98-336; s. 22, ch. 99-247.

## **Florida Statutes 2000 / Chapter 260 / 260.0125 Limitation on liability of private landowners whose property is designated as part of the statewide system of greenways and trails.**

### **260.0125 Limitation on liability of private landowners whose property is designated as part of the statewide system of greenways and trails.—**

(1)(a) A private landowner whose land is designated as part of the statewide system of greenways and trails pursuant to s. 260.016(2)(d), including a person holding a subservient interest, owes no duty of care to keep that land safe for entry or use by others or to give warning to persons entering that land of any hazardous conditions, structures, or activities thereon. Such landowner shall not:

1. Be presumed to extend any assurance that such land is safe for any purpose;
2. Incur any duty of care toward a person who goes on the land; or
3. Become liable or responsible for any injury to persons or property caused by the act or omission of a person who goes on the land.

(b) The provisions of paragraph (a) apply whether the person going on the designated greenway or trail is an invitee, licensee, trespasser, or otherwise.

(2) Any private landowner who consents to designation of his or her land as part of the statewide system of greenways and trails pursuant to s. 260.016(2)(d) without compensation shall be considered a volunteer, as defined in s. 110.501, and shall be covered by state liability protection pursuant to s. 768.28, including s. 768.28(9).

(3)(a) The provisions of subsection (1) shall not apply if there is any charge made or usually made by the landowner for entering or using the land designated as a greenway or trail, or any part thereof, or if any commercial or other activity whereby profit is derived by the landowner from the patronage of the general public is conducted on the land so designated or any part thereof.

(b) Incentives granted by any unit of government to the private landowner, including tax incentives, grants, or other financial consideration specific to the development or management of designated greenways and trails, shall not be construed as a charge for use or profit derived from patronage for purposes of this subsection and shall not be construed as monetary or material compensation for purposes of subsection (2).

(4) The provisions of subsection (1) shall also apply to adjacent land owned by the private landowner who consents to designation of a greenway or trail where such adjacent land is accessed through the land so designated.

(5)(a) When a private landowner agrees to make his or her land available for public use as a designated greenway or trail, the department or its designee shall post notices along the boundary of the designated greenway or trail which inform the public that the land adjacent to the greenway or trail is private property upon which unauthorized entry for any purpose is prohibited and constitutes trespassing.

(b) Such notices must comply with s. 810.011(5) and shall constitute a warning to unauthorized persons to remain off the private property and not to depart from the designated greenway or trail. Any person who commits such an unauthorized entry commits a trespass as provided in s. 810.09.

(6) If agreed to by the department and the landowner in the designation agreement, a landowner whose land is designated as part of the statewide system of greenways and trails pursuant to s. 260.016(2)(d) shall be indemnified for:

(a) Any injury or damage incurred by a third party arising out of the use of the designated greenway or trail;

(b) Any injury or damage incurred by a third party on lands adjacent to and accessed through the designated greenway or trail; and

(c) Any damage to the landowner's property, including land adjacent to and accessed through the designated greenway or trail, caused by the act or omission of a third person resulting from any use of the land so designated.

(7) This section does not relieve any person of liability that would otherwise exist for deliberate, willful, or malicious injury to persons or property. The provisions of this section shall not be deemed to create or increase the liability of any person.

History.—s. 4, ch. 98-336.

## Florida Statutes 2000 / Chapter 260 / 260.013 Definitions.

**260.013 Definitions.**—As used in ss. 260.011-260.018, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1) "Board" means the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund.

(2) "Department" means the Department of Environmental Protection.

(3) "Designation" means the identification and inclusion of specific lands and waterways as part of the statewide system of greenways and trails pursuant to a formal public process, including the specific written consent of the landowner. When the department determines that

public access is appropriate for greenways and trails, written authorization must be granted by the landowner to the department permitting public access to all or a specified part of the landowner's property. The department's determination shall be noticed pursuant to s. 120.525, and the department shall also notify the landowner by certified mail at least 7 days before any public meeting regarding the intent to designate.

(4) "Greenway" means a linear open space established along either a natural corridor, such as a riverfront, stream valley, or ridgeline, or over land along a railroad right-of-way converted to recreational use, a canal, a scenic road, or other route; any natural or landscaped course for pedestrian or bicycle passage; an open space connector linking parks, nature reserves, cultural features, or historic sites with each other and populated areas; or a local strip or linear park designated as a parkway or greenbelt.

(5) "Trails" means linear corridors and any adjacent support parcels on land or water providing public access for recreation or authorized alternative modes of transportation.

**History.**—s. 3, ch. 79-110; s. 2, ch. 87-328; s. 4, ch. 91-62; s. 106, ch. 94-356; s. 9, ch. 96-389; s. 5, ch. 98-336; s. 23, ch. 99-247.

## **Florida Statutes 2000 / Chapter 260 / 260.014 Florida Greenways and Trails System.**

**260.014 Florida Greenways and Trails System.**—The Florida Greenways and Trails System shall be a statewide system of greenways and trails which shall consist of individual greenways and trails and networks of greenways and trails which may be designated as a part of the statewide system by the department. Mapping or other forms of identification of lands and waterways as suitable for inclusion in the system of greenways and trails, mapping of ecological characteristics for any purpose, or development of information for planning purposes shall not constitute designation. No lands or waterways may be designated as a part of the statewide system of greenways and trails without the specific written consent of the landowner.

**History.**—s. 4, ch. 79-110; s. 10, ch. 96-389; s. 6, ch. 98-336; s. 24, ch. 99-247.

## **Florida Statutes 2000 / Chapter 260 / 260.0141 Greenways and Trails Program.**

**260.0141 Greenways and Trails Program.**—There is established within the department the "Florida Greenways and Trails Program," the purpose of which is to facilitate the establishment of a statewide system of greenways and trails. Such greenways and trails shall be acquired pursuant to this act. Planning materials, maps, data, and other information developed or used in the program shall not be construed as designation of lands as part of the statewide system of greenways and trails. Identification of lands in such information shall not:

(1) Require or empower any unit of local or regional government, or any state agency, to impose additional or more restrictive environmental, land-use, or zoning regulations;

(2) Be construed or cited as authority to adopt, enforce, or amend any environmental rule or regulation; comprehensive plan goals, policies, or objectives; or zoning or land-use ordinance;

(3) Be used as the basis for permit denial; imposition of any permit condition; or application of any rule, regulation, or ordinance by any subdivision of local, regional, or state government; or

(4) Be construed or cited as authority by any governmental agency to reduce or restrict the rights of owners of lands so identified.

**History.**—s. 3, ch. 87-328; s. 11, ch. 96-389; s. 7, ch. 98-336.

## **Florida Statutes 2000 / Chapter 260 / 260.0142 Florida Greenways and Trails Council; composition; powers and duties.**

**260.0142 Florida Greenways and Trails Council; composition; powers and duties.—**

(1) There is hereby created within the Department of Environmental Protection the Florida Greenways and Trails Council which shall advise the department in the execution of the department's powers and duties under this chapter. The council shall be composed of 21 members, consisting of:

(a) Five members appointed by the Governor, with two members representing the trail user community, two members representing the greenway user community, and one member representing private landowners. Of the initial appointments, two shall be appointed for 2-year terms and three shall be appointed for 1-year terms. Subsequent appointments shall be for 2-year terms.

(b) Three members appointed by the President of the Senate, with one member representing the trail user community and two members representing the greenway user community. Of the initial appointments, two shall be appointed for 2-year terms and one shall be appointed for a 1-year term. Subsequent appointments shall be for 2-year terms.

(c) Three members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, with two members representing the trail user community and one member representing the greenway user community. Of the initial appointments, two shall be appointed for 2-year terms and one shall be appointed for a 1-year term. Subsequent appointments shall be for 2-year terms.

Those eligible to represent the trail user community shall be chosen from, but not be limited to, paved trail users, hikers, off-road bicyclists, paddlers, equestrians, disabled outdoor recreational users, and commercial recreational interests. Those eligible to represent the greenway user community shall be chosen from, but not be limited to, conservation organizations, nature study organizations, and scientists and university experts.

(d) The 10 remaining members shall include:

1. The Secretary of Environmental Protection or a designee;
2. The executive director of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission or a designee;
3. The Secretary of Community Affairs or a designee;
4. The Secretary of Transportation or a designee;
5. The Director of the Division of Forestry of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services or a designee;
6. The director of the Division of Historical Resources of the Department of State or a designee;
7. A representative of the water management districts who shall serve for 1 year. Membership on the council shall rotate among the five districts. The districts shall determine the order of rotation;
8. A representative of a federal land management agency. The Secretary of Environmental Protection shall identify the appropriate federal agency and request designation of a representative from the agency to serve on the council;
9. A representative of the regional planning councils to be appointed by the Secretary of Environmental Protection, in consultation with the Secretary of Community Affairs, for a single 2-year term. The representative shall not be selected from the same regional planning council for successive terms; and
10. A representative of local governments to be appointed by the Secretary of Environmental Protection, in consultation with the Secretary of Community Affairs, for a single 2-year term. Membership shall alternate between a county representative and a municipal representative.

nonmembers as appropriate.

(6) A vacancy on the council shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment. Members whose terms have expired may continue to serve until replaced or reappointed. No member shall serve on the council for more than two consecutive terms.

(7) Members of the council shall not receive any compensation for their services but shall be entitled to receive reimbursement for per diem and travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, as provided in s. 112.061.

**History.**—s. 25, ch. 99-247.

## **Florida Statutes 2000 / Chapter 260 / 260.015 Acquisition of land.**

### **260.015 Acquisition of land.—**

(1) The department is authorized to acquire by gift or purchase the fee simple absolute title or any lesser interest in land, including easements, for the purposes of ss. 260.011-260.018 pursuant to the provisions of chapter 375, except that:

(a) The department's power of eminent domain shall be limited to curing defects in title accepted by the board pursuant to subsection (2).

(b) Lists of proposed acquisitions for the Florida Greenways and Trails Program shall be prepared according to procedures adopted by the department.

(c) Projects acquired under this chapter shall not be subject to the evaluation and selection procedures of s. 259.035, regardless of the estimated value of such projects. All projects shall be acquired in accordance with the acquisition procedures of chapter 259, except that the department may use the appraisal procedure used by the Department of Transportation to acquire transportation rights-of-way. When a parcel is estimated to be valued at \$100,000 or less and the department finds that the costs of obtaining an outside appraisal are not justified, an appraisal prepared by the department may be used.

(2) For purposes of the Florida Greenways and Trails Program, the board may:

(a) Accept fee simple title or any lesser interest in lands through methods, including, but not limited to, purchase, donation, grant, dedication, lease, easement, license, or other agreement, to facilitate the establishment of a statewide system of greenways and trails.

(b) Accept title to abandoned railroad rights-of-way which is conveyed by quitclaim deed through purchase, dedication, gift, grant, or settlement, notwithstanding s. 259.041(1).

(c) Enter into an agreement or, upon delegation, the department may enter into an agreement, with a nonprofit corporation, as defined in s. 259.041(7)(e), to assume responsibility for acquisition of lands pursuant to this section. The agreement may transfer responsibility for all matters which may be delegated or waived pursuant to s. 259.041(1).

(3) Easements, licenses, and use agreements upon, over, under, across, or along any land, the fee title of which has been acquired for the purposes of ss. 260.011-260.018, may be granted by the department so long as the use of the easement, license, or use agreement does not interfere with the purposes of ss. 260.011-260.018.

**History.**—s. 5, ch. 79-110; s. 4, ch. 87-328; s. 5, ch. 89-174; s. 8, ch. 92-288; s. 18, ch. 94-240; s. 12, ch. 96-389; s. 11, ch. 97-164.

## **Florida Statutes 2000 / Chapter 260 / 260.016 General powers of the department.**

### **260.016 General powers of the department.—**

(1) The department may:

- (2) The department shall provide necessary staff assistance to the council.
- (3) The council is authorized to contract for and to accept gifts, grants, or other aid from the United States Government or any person or corporation.
- (4) The duties of the council shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - (a) Advise the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Community Affairs, the Department of Transportation, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Division of Forestry of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the water management districts, and the regional planning councils on policies relating to the Florida Greenways and Trails System, and promote intergovernmental cooperation;
  - (b) Facilitate a statewide system of interconnected landscape linkages, conservation corridors, greenbelts, recreational corridors and trails, scenic corridors, utilitarian corridors, reserves, regional parks and preserves, ecological sites, and cultural/historic/recreational sites;
  - (c) Facilitate a statewide system of interconnected land-based trails that connect urban, suburban, and rural areas of the state and facilitate expansion of the statewide system of freshwater and saltwater paddling trails;
  - (d) Recommend priorities for critical links in the Florida Greenways and Trails System;
  - (e) Review applications for acquisition funding under the Florida Greenways and Trails Program and recommend to the Secretary of Environmental Protection which projects should be acquired;
  - (f) Provide funding recommendations to agencies and organizations regarding the acquisition, development, and management of greenways and trails, including the promotion of private landowner incentives;
  - (g) Review designation proposals for inclusion in the Florida Greenways and Trails System;
  - (h) Provide advocacy and education to benefit the statewide system of greenways and trails by encouraging communication and conferencing;
  - (i) Encourage public-private partnerships to develop and manage greenways and trails;
  - (j) Review progress toward meeting established benchmarks and recommend appropriate action;
  - (k) Make recommendations for updating and revising the implementation plan for the Florida Greenways and Trails System;
  - (l) Advise the Land Acquisition and Management Advisory Council or its successor to ensure the incorporation of greenways and trails in land management plans on lands managed by the Department of Environmental Protection, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Division of Historical Resources of the Department of State, and the Division of Forestry of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services;
  - (m) Provide advice and assistance to the Department of Transportation and the water management districts regarding the incorporation of greenways and trails into their planning efforts;
  - (n) Encourage land use, environmental, and coordinated linear infrastructure planning to facilitate the implementation of local, regional, and statewide greenways and trails systems;
  - (o) Promote greenways and trails support organizations; and
  - (p) Support the Florida Greenways and Trails System in any other appropriate way.
- (5) The council shall establish procedures for conducting its affairs in execution of the duties and responsibilities stated in this section, which operating procedures shall include determination of a council chair and other appropriate operational guidelines. The council shall meet at the call of the chair, or at such times as may be prescribed by its operating procedures. The council may establish committees to conduct the work of the council and the committees may include

1. The importance and function of such corridors within the statewide system.
2. Potential for local sharing in the acquisition, development, operation, or maintenance of greenway and trail corridors.

3. Costs of acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance.

(b) Maintain an updated list of abandoned and to-be-abandoned railroad rights-of-way.

(c) Provide information to public and private agencies and organizations on abandoned rail corridors which are or will be available for acquisition from the railroads or for lease for interim recreational use from the Department of Transportation.

(d) Develop and implement a process for designation of lands and waterways as a part of the statewide system of greenways and trails, which shall include:

1. Development and dissemination of criteria for designation.

2. Development and dissemination of criteria for changes in the terms or conditions of designation, including withdrawal or termination of designation. A landowner may have his or her lands removed from designation by providing the department with a written request that contains an adequate description of such lands to be removed. Provisions shall be made in the designation agreement for disposition of any future improvements made to the land by the department.

3. Compilation of available information on and field verification of the characteristics of the lands and waterways as they relate to the developed criteria.

4. Public notice pursuant to s. 120.525 in all phases of the process.

5. Actual notice to the landowner by certified mail at least 7 days before any public meeting regarding the department's intent to designate.

6. Written authorization from the landowner in the form of a lease or other instrument for the designation and granting of public access, if appropriate, to a landowner's property.

7. Development of a greenway or trail use plan as a part of the designation agreement. In any particular segment of a greenway or trail, the plan components must be compatible with connecting segments and, at a minimum, describe the types and intensities of uses of the property.

(e) Implement the plan for the Florida Greenways and Trails System as adopted by the Florida Greenways Coordinating Council on September 11, 1998.

(3) The department or its designee is authorized to negotiate with potentially affected private landowners as to the terms under which such landowners would consent to the public use of their lands as part of the greenways and trails system. The department shall be authorized to agree to incentives for a private landowner who consents to this public use of his or her lands for conservation or recreational purposes, including, but not limited to, the following:

(a) Retention by the landowner of certain specific rights in his or her lands, including, but not limited to, the right to farm, hunt, graze, harvest timber, or use the lands for other purposes which are consistent with use as greenways or trails.

(b) Agreement to exchange, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund or other applicable unit of government, ownership or other rights of use of public lands for the ownership or other rights of use of privately owned lands. Any exchange of state-owned lands, title to which is vested in the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, for privately owned lands shall be subject to the requirements of s. 259.041.

(c) Contracting with the landowner to provide management or other services on the lands.

(d) At the option of the landowner, acceleration of the acquisition process or higher consideration in the ranking process when any lands owned by the landowner are under consideration for acquisition by the state or other unit of government.

(e) At the option of the landowner, removal of any lands owned by the landowner from

(a) Publish and distribute appropriate maps of designated greenways and trails. The description shall include a generalized map delineating the area designated, location of suitable ingress and egress sites, as well as other points of interest to enhance the recreational opportunities of the public.

(b) Establish access routes and related public-use facilities along greenways and trails which will not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the greenway or trail.

(c) Adopt appropriate rules to implement or interpret this act and portions of chapter 253 relating to greenways and trails, which may include, but are not limited to, rules for the following:

1. Establishing a designation process.
2. Negotiating and executing agreements with private landowners.
3. Establishing prohibited activities or restrictions on activities to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.
4. Charging fees for use.
5. Providing public access.
6. Providing for maintenance.
7. Any matter necessary to the evaluation, selection, operation, and maintenance of greenways and trails.

Any person who violates or otherwise fails to comply with the rules adopted pursuant to subparagraph 3. commits a noncriminal infraction for which a fine of up to \$500 may be imposed.

(d) Coordinate the activities of all governmental units and bodies and special districts that desire to participate in the development and implementation of the Florida Greenways and Trails System.

(e) Establish, develop, and publicize greenways and trails in a manner that will permit public recreation when appropriate without damaging natural resources. The Big Bend Historic Saltwater Paddling Trail from the St. Marks River to the Suwannee River is hereby designated as part of the Florida Greenways and Trails System. Additions to this trail may be added by the department from time to time as part of a statewide saltwater circumnavigation trail.

(f) Enter into agreements with any federal, state, or local governmental agency, or any other entity for the management of greenways and trails for recreation and conservation purposes consistent with the intent of this chapter. Such entities must demonstrate their capabilities of management for the purposes defined in ss. 260.011-260.018.

(g) Charge reasonable fees or rentals for the use or operation of facilities and concessions. All such fees, rentals, or other charges collected shall be deposited in the account or trust fund of the managing entity.

(h) Receive or accept from any legal source, grants for the purpose of providing or improving public greenways and trails, and the department is authorized to disburse funds as pass-through grants to federal, state, or local government agencies, recognized tribal units, or to nonprofit entities created for this purpose. The department has authority to adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement the provisions of this subsection. Such rules shall provide, but are not limited to, the following: procedures for grant administration and accountability; eligibility, selection criteria; maximum grant amounts and number of pending grants; dedication requirements; and conversion procedures and requirements.

(2) The department shall:

(a) Evaluate lands for the acquisition of greenways and trails and compile a list of suitable corridors, greenways, and trails, ranking them in order of priority for proposed acquisition. The department shall devise a method of evaluation which includes, but is not limited to, the consideration of:

consideration for acquisition by the state or other unit of government.

(f) Execution of patrol and protection agreements.

(g) Where applicable and appropriate, providing lease fees, not to exceed fair market value of the leasehold interest.

**History.**—s. 6, ch. 79-110; ss. 5, 8, ch. 87-328; s. 6, ch. 88-303; s. 5, ch. 91-62; s. 5, ch. 91-429; s. 13, ch. 96-389; s. 8, ch. 98-336; s. 36, ch. 99-13; s. 26, ch. 99-247; s. 31, ch. 2000-197.

## **Florida Statutes 2000 / Chapter 260 / 260.0161 Coordination with Department of Transportation.**

### **260.0161 Coordination with Department of Transportation.—**

(1) Upon the request of the department, the Department of Transportation shall provide information to the department on abandoned and to-be-abandoned railroad rights-of-way.

(2) The Department of Transportation and the department shall coordinate their evaluations of potential acquisitions and their acquisition priorities with respect to abandoned railroad rights-of-way in order to avoid competing for the same corridors.

(3) After the Department of Transportation acquires abandoned railroad rights-of-way for future transportation purposes, the Department of Transportation shall lease such rights-of-way to a public agency or private organization for interim public greenway or trail use if:

(a) The public agency or private organization has requested use of the right-of-way for interim public recreational trail use;

(b) The public agency or private organization agrees in writing to assume all liability and management responsibilities as defined by the Department of Transportation; and

(c) The use of the right-of-way as a recreational trail does not interfere with the ultimate transportation purposes of the property as determined by the secretary of the Department of Transportation.

(4) If the Department of Transportation determines that an abandoned railroad right-of-way which has been leased for interim recreational trail use is needed for transportation purposes, the Department of Transportation shall work with the leasing agency to accommodate, when feasible, the existing trail use in conjunction with the use of the right-of-way for transportation.

**History.**—s. 6, ch. 87-328; s. 107, ch. 94-356; s. 14, ch. 96-389.

## **Florida Statutes 2000 / Chapter 260 / 260.017 Restrictions; rules.**

**260.017 Restrictions; rules.**—The department may establish restrictions on the use of motorized watercraft within any defined canoe trail necessary to ensure the safe use of a water body for canoes. Restrictions established pursuant to this section must be adopted as a rule pursuant to s. 120.54, after proper notice and hearing, and may be enforced by any state or local law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the area within which the trail is designated.

**History.**—s. 7, ch. 79-110.

## **Florida Statutes 2000 / Chapter 260 / 260.018 Agency recognition.**

**260.018 Agency recognition.**—All agencies of the state, regional planning councils through their comprehensive plans, and local governments through their local comprehensive planning process pursuant to chapter 163 shall recognize the special character of publicly owned lands and waters designated by the state as greenways and trails and shall not take any action which will impair their use as designated. Identification of lands or waterways in planning materials, maps, data, and other information developed or used in the greenways and trails program shall

not be cause for such lands or waterways to be subject to this section, unless such lands or waterways have been designated as a part of the statewide system of greenways and trails pursuant to s. 260.016(2)(d).

**History.**—s. 8, ch. 79-110; s. 6, ch. 91-62; s. 15, ch. 96-389; s. 9, ch. 98-336; s. 27, ch. 99-247; s. 12, ch. 2000-170.