

ALACHUA CONSERVATION TRUST

Gazetteer



Telford Spring By Guy Bryant
Assisted by Andy Higgin, Amy Sturkey & Kate Swanson

FALL 2022/WINTER 2023 UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

24 - Young Leaders for Wild Florida Fall Fest! Featuring ACT & CBI Garage Sale
@ *Prairie Creek Lodge*
11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

26 - University of Florida Campaign for Charities (UFCC) general campaign begins

29 - Weekly Walk and Talk
@ *Santa Fe River Preserve*
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

29 - UFCC Kick-off luncheon
@ *UF Reitz Union*
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

OCTOBER

2 - Volunteer Workday
@ *Rock Bluff Spring*
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

6 - Weekly Walk and Talk
@ *Prairie Creek Preserve*
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

7 - Volunteer Workday
@ *Rockwood Park*
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

8 - Bird Banding at Tuscawilla Preserve
@ *Tuscawilla Preserve*
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

13 - Weekly Walk and Talk
@ *Santa Fe River Preserve*
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

14 - University of Florida Campaign for Charities (UFCC) ends

16 - Pride at Prairie Creek
@ *Prairie Creek Preserve*
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

20 - Weekly Walk and Talk
@ *Tuscawilla Preserve*
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

23 - Pumpkin Spice & Everything Nice
@ *Rockwood Park*
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

27 - Weekly Walk and Talk
@ *Blues Creek Ravine Preserve*
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

29-30 - Visit the ACT Booth
@ *The 47th Annual Micanopy Fall Festival*
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

NOVEMBER

3 - Weekly Walk and Talk
@ *Santa Fe River Preserve*
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

5 - Visit the ACT Booth
@ *The McIntosh 1890s Festival*
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

6 - Guided Lower Santa Fe River Paddle with Lars Andersen
@ *Lower Santa Fe*
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

10 - Weekly Walk and Talk
@ *Tuscawilla Preserve*
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

17 - Weekly Walk and Talk
@ *Tuscawilla Preserve*
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

18 - Volunteer Workday
@ *Tuscawilla Preserve*
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

19-20 - Visit the ACT Booth
@ *The Gainesville Downtown Festival & Art Show*
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

29 - Giving Tuesday

DECEMBER

1 - Weekly Walk and Talk
@ *Santa Fe River Preserve*
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

4 - Swamp Otter 5K, 10K & Fun Run
@ *Little Orange Creek Preserve & Nature Park*
7:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

8 - Weekly Walk and Talk
@ *Serenola Preserve*
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

10 - Holiday Tree Planting
@ *Prairie Creek Lodge*
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

11 - Holiday Mingle
@ *Prairie Creek Lodge*
2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

MARCH

25 - SAVE THE DATE: Conservation Stewards Awards
@ *Prairie Creek Lodge*
5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

All ACT events are subject to cancellation or rescheduling. Additional events may also be added as they are confirmed. Event updates are available at: AlachuaConservationTrust.org/upcoming-events



Photo By Tedd Greenwald

Doug Hornbeck and David Flagg reminisce.



Photos By Kim Davidson

CONSERVATION STEWARDS AWARDS

Thank YOU For Making the CSAs A Success!

At ACT's 2022 Conservation Stewards Awards on March 19, the sweet smells of local foods and flowers weren't the only things drifting through the air. The gentle hum of insects and bluegrass meandered between laughing attendees as waves of excitement rolled over those who perused the many unique items in the silent auction and drawing of chance. When we shared smiles and broke bread, soft, warm light shone off clinking cutlery and a pair of sandhill cranes flew overhead. And as the sun set on ACT's largest ever CSA event it was a feeling of deep gratitude that blanketed the annual celebration. At long last, we were together again.



Sidney Wade reads her poem
"The Hard Saving."



A heartfelt congratulations to our three conservation stewards, Judy Smith, Sara Eoff, and Kay Eoff whose devotion to conservation have ensured that Florida's environment will remain wild for generations to come.

A special thank to all of our attendees, sponsors, partners, and supporters who came together to make this year's Conservation Stewards Awards a smashing success. Together we celebrated our honorees alongside over 550 attendees, raised over \$2,220 in our drawing of chance, and received over \$10,000 from the silent auction alone! Thank you for making this year's Conservation Stewards Awards one of our most successful yet.

LEAVING A LEGACY OF LAND



On March 19, 2022, ACT honored Judy Smith and Sara & Kay Eoff at its 2022 Conservation Stewards Awards. The 2022 CSAs celebrated the legacies of Florida's current generation of landowners and land stewards. Through their devotion to preserving the undeveloped land they own, they have ensured that Florida's environment will remain wild for generations to come.

Painting By Linda Blondheim



SARA AND K.M. EOFF

Growing up in Florala, Alabama, Sara spent lots of time in the woods and working on the farm with her grandfather, Mack Tyner. Because her grandfather refused to allow any logging on the property, Sara's share of the acreage still has most of the native longleaf pines and their habitat.

Later, Sara met physicist K.M. Eoff and they married. The Eoffs share a love in preserving longleaf pines and their habitat. In 2018, the Eoffs donated a conservation easement to ACT on Sara's family land as well as their homestead on Newnan's Lake. A life estate granted to ACT by the Eoffs for their Newnan's Lake property will ensure that the land is protected forever and benefits conservation efforts. In 2021, Sara along with her cousin, Nell Tyner, donated a conservation easement on additional acreage in Okaloosa County, increasing the total land conserved there to over 900 acres.

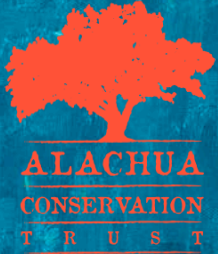


JUDY SMITH

Judy of Gum Slough, aka the Swamp Otter, is an eco-warrior, guardian, and ambassador deeply in love with the spring-run swamp ecosystem engulfing Gum Slough Run. Judy was instrumental in her family donating conservation easements to protect their 1,000 beautiful acres with more than 12 springs in Marion and Sumter Counties that feed the Withlacoochee River. Swimming in these crystal clear spring waters and roaming this vast landscape nurtured her innate connectedness, deep respect, and compassion for all wild creatures and nature itself.

2022 CONSERVATION STEWARDS AWARDS

LEAVING A LEGACY OF LAND



Live Oak



Longleaf Pine



Cypress



Magnolia



Tupelo



Wiregrass



WHY I DONATED LAND TO HELP THE SANTA FE RIVER

By Martha A. Strawn



Photograph By Alison Blakeslee

WATER. Elemental, dear folks, elemental! Source of life and lots of fun! Water can be disastrous at times, but is still of elemental importance.

Growing up in Lake Wales playing in and on that ridge area's lakes; going to Young Girl's Club Camp at O'Leno State Park and River Rise on the Santa Fe River; taking trips through Yeehaw Junction to Vero Beach in high school with friends for swimming, play and camaraderie on the Atlantic Ocean beaches; fishing with my dad and great-uncle Gaines in Lakes Weohyakapka and Okeechobee; and vacationing with my parents at Lido Beach on the Gulf of Mexico all meant that I grew up in and on the waters of Florida.

When I came to live on the Santa Fe River, I fully appreciated the spring-fed waters and I learned how rare the large spring areas in North and Central Florida are. These springs are natural resources that are national treasures, whether so designated or not, and as an area they constitute a global wonder.

Studying photography with Evon Streetman at Florida State University started me on a career that has taken me all over the world. Visually, our springs are a mass of diamonds in the sands of the earth and streams and rivers are ribbons that intertwine through our landscape reaching for the seas. After also studying marine biology and oceanography, I have maintained an intense interest in the waters on Earth and how they are maintained — how, for example, cutting trees disrupts the water cycle by depleting the canopy of vegetation that enables the evaporation of water. Water is precious globally and we have an abundance of that resource to treasure, if only we will.

The lands around the springs and rivers, lakes and glades are of essential importance. I am constantly aware of what I put on the ground and how it will either run off or be filtered into the aquifer. That is why I gave land to the Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT).

Martha A. Strawn is a retired Professor Emerita of Art/Photography, photographer and author/editor of four books. She lives and works in High Springs, Florida, and Tryon, North Carolina, with her husband, William Latham. She has worked with conservation and arts non-profits for over 50 years. Her exhibition, "Across the Threshold of India," is at the Gregg Museum of Art and Design in Raleigh, North Carolina, from May 5 to November 12, 2022.

Gifts of land protect the waters. Waters in Florida are essential for residents and tourists alike, since we all use water in numerous ways. As residents, we depend on good water for drinking, cleaning, health, multiple pleasures, and our livelihoods. Tourists, who contribute to a large part of the state's economy, come to Florida for many reasons. Besides our wonderful sunshine and warmth, people come to kayak, canoe, paddleboard, fish, boat, swim, dive, walk on our clean beaches, study freshwater and marine life and biodiversity, and enjoy a myriad of other water-based activities.

Saving lands along Florida's rivers, in particular, is crucial. Making that donation to the Alachua Conservation Trust was an easy and joyful process for me, a process that ACT facilitated. All I had to do was have my deed, get an appraisal, and sign over the property.

Land trusts such as ACT can accept outright gifts or help you arrange for a conservation easement on your property. Conservation easements limit forever any land use that may be harmful to the aquifer beneath your land or along your waterway.

If you want to make a difference in the quality and quantity of water in Florida's waterways and springs so future generations can enjoy these marvels, please consider either creating an easement on your land or making a gift of your land to an organization such as the Alachua Conservation Trust. Such gifts matter and the result is so-o-o good for your soul!

MAKE (MORE) CONSERVATION HISTORY

With a Planned Gift to ACT

2021 was an historic year for conservation in our region. With phenomenal community support, ACT successfully completed 13 projects that conserved nearly 1,500 acres across seven Florida counties. The value of these lands was more than \$10 million. This was accomplished by purchasing property, through donated conservation easements, and lands donated outright to ACT.

Six of those properties were along the Santa Fe River, two along the Suwannee River, other projects added to lands that we already had on Dog Island in the Gulf, to Fox Pen Preserve in Hawthorne, to Serenola Forest in Gainesville, near Tuscawilla Preserve in Micanopy, and adjacent to an existing conservation easement ACT holds in Okaloosa County. ACT staff assisted in applying prescribed fire to 1,500 acres across the region of Santa Fe River Preserve and smaller numbers at various other preserves, and planted 110,000 longleaf in 2021 at ACT preserves.

While there was tremendous conservation success in 2021, ACT still has \$1.9M in outstanding loans for land acquisitions made last year. Your support will help retire these loans and ensure that ACT does not need to take additional loans to extend our loans or worse, sell a portion or all of one major conservation victory in 2021 – Little Awesome Preserve along the Santa Fe River in Columbia County. With your ongoing support, land and water conservation history will keep happening at a record pace. And there are many ways to give, including through estate planning.

With a planned gift made through your will, trust, or even a designation of a life insurance policy, you can help continue these historic saves and make more conservation happen for years to come. For more information about planned giving options or making a planned gift to ACT, call us at (352) 373-1078 or email us at act.tkay@gmail.com.

The OLO (pronounced oh-low) is an incredible wildlife corridor. There are eagles' nests all over the place. Every morning in the winter, the sandhill cranes use the hill as a runway.

- Sean Dowie



Photo By Sean Dowie

MARJORIE A. HOY MEMORIAL PARK

At Orange Lake Overlook, Now Open To The Public

On Saturday, May 21st, Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) held a dedication ceremony and ribbon cutting for the Marjorie A. Hoy Memorial Park at Orange Lake Overlook. More than a hundred guests gathered at the Park, including members of the McIntosh Town Council, Alachua County Commissioner Marihelen Wheeler, and Jim Hoy, husband of the late Marjorie A. Hoy. After the dedication ceremony, guests were able to explore the 1.3 miles of new hiking trails and take in the breathtaking view of Orange Lake.

Locally referred to as “OLO,” the 71-acre property was purchased by ACT in November 2019 from the Huff family with significant support from the local community. This conservation purchase was made possible thanks to a \$1 million bridge loan from The Conservation Fund, an additional bridge loan from a private supporter and \$300,000 in donations from individuals and organizations. In 2021, ACT paid off the \$1 million loan on the property thanks to a generous donation from the estate of Marjorie Hoy.

Marjorie A. Hoy was an American entomologist and geneticist internationally recognized for her groundbreaking research involving pest management and Florida citrus. She was also a professor and Eminent Scholar at the University of Florida, and was previously a professor at the University of California, Berkeley.

The remaining costs associated with the acquisition were paid off with grant support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s North American Wetlands Conservation Act

Program (NAWCA), which focuses on the protection of wetlands habitat for the benefit of birds. As a result, the property will remain protected as conservation land in perpetuity, and open for the public to enjoy.

Frequented by bald eagles, belted kingfishers, wood storks and sandhill cranes, the property also serves as a critical wildlife corridor for several of Florida’s endangered species. And because OLO is a significant source of food, as well as breeding and resting grounds for flocks, the area is humming with activity during migrating months.

For the past year, ACT has been working toward the goal of restoring OLO and opening it up for public recreation. ACT is now in the process of transforming the former packing shed and citrus shop into a community event space and museum highlighting the history of the area.

“ACT is grateful to the local community and the Hoy family for their unwavering support of the efforts to protect this important part of Florida history and make it a place for families and friends to explore and enjoy,” said ACT Executive Director Tom Kay. “We look forward to continuing to restore this site in a way that honors its history and creates opportunities for visitors to make new memories in nature for generations to come.”

ACT is honored to open the Marjorie A. Hoy Memorial Park at Orange Lake Overlook to the public as a nature preserve and community space that will continue to be cherished by locals and visitors alike.

LET'S GROW OLO

Marjorie A. Hoy Memorial Park at Orange Lake Overlook Expansion Fundraising Is Underway

In August, ACT put the 84 acres directly north of Orange Lake Overlook (OLO) under contract to purchase. With this latest acquisition set to close in February 2023, funds are needed to make this land available to the public via additional nature trails. Not only will this conservation project create a new recreational area to explore, but it will connect Marjorie A. Hoy Memorial Park to Marion County-owned lands to the East that provide access to the shores of Orange Lake.

\$530,000 is needed to complete the first expansion of Florida's Finest Vista. Contributions of any size will go a long way to growing OLO and preserving its scenic treasures.

With your generous support, we have the unique opportunity to add to this historic property and guarantee that generations to come will have opportunities to make new memories of their own at Orange Lake Overlook.

We are excited to announce that we have an opportunity to expand OLO to 155 acres by purchasing the 84-acre property directly to the North of the existing nature park!



Tom Kay with Jim Hoy

Photo By Kim Davidson



Standing atop the hill on U.S. 441 in Marion County, a living museum of 'Old Florida' unfolds before your eyes. Here, a land's rich history is whispered over the wind, rolling over sloping hills and skating over Orange Lake. With the creak of an old house and the soft scent of citrus in the air, remnants of the land's past quietly reveal themselves. It's a timeless glimpse into the cultural and historic properties of North Central Florida, and a source of magic and inspiration for many local artists. This is Orange Lake Overlook.

Orange Lake Overlook, or "OLO," is one of Florida's finest vistas. Before the area's agricultural boom in the 19th and 20th centuries, the site was used as a wintering village by Timucuan Indians. Afterward, it became the heart of O.D. "Buddy" Huff Jr.'s citrus groves, where the Ollie Huff Citrus Shop would draw in countless travelers, all looking for a taste of Florida's famous orange juice. But after a series of devastating freezes in the early 1980s, the shop closed, and the scent of citrus faded into memory.

Despite the peeling paint and fading framework, the old structures are brought back to life by the surrounding landscape and creatures that inhabit it. Sandhill cranes use the land's hill as a runway every winter, eagle nests populate the palm trees, and the hum of wildlife quietly declares the start of another chapter in OLO's story, starting now.



ACT'S MESSAGES FROM THE SPRINGS HEARTLAND

Photos By Alison Blakeslee

By Joanna Reilly-Brown

When we think of what we love about North Central Florida, many of us think of our area's iconic springs and springfed rivers. But now, as the land around those resources is being developed at a breakneck pace, and as our water is rapidly being pumped out of our aquifer, our beloved springs are in danger of being lost forever.

Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT), a local land trust that works to protect land in 16 counties across North Central Florida, has been working hard to conserve our springs and springfed rivers by protecting land along the Santa Fe and Suwannee Rivers. In fact, ACT is proud to have had our most successful year ever in 2021, protecting over 3,800 acres along these riverways through direct land purchases and private land conservation before development can occur.

The process of land conservation is complex, with many different tools, partners and potential sources of funding. It's also a proactive, ground-up approach that is flexible and responsive to the needs of individual landowners and their properties.

ACT protects land by finding a piece of important property and raising funds to buy it outright, or through landowners who contact us with offers to sell or donate their land for conservation. Sometimes, we even work with landowners to place conservation easements on their land through sale or donation. Conservation easements are a flexible tool that allows landowners to maintain private ownership of their property while giving up the right to develop it in the future, in order to preserve its ecological integrity.

In recent years, ACT has targeted much of our land conservation work toward the Santa Fe and Suwannee river basins. We have done outreach through letter campaigns, online webinars, workshops and events to connect with landowners who would like to understand the options for protecting their property to benefit our springs and rivers. We have reached out to farmers about potential funding opportunities to aid them in switching to farming practices that use less water and nutrients but still enable them to make a living.

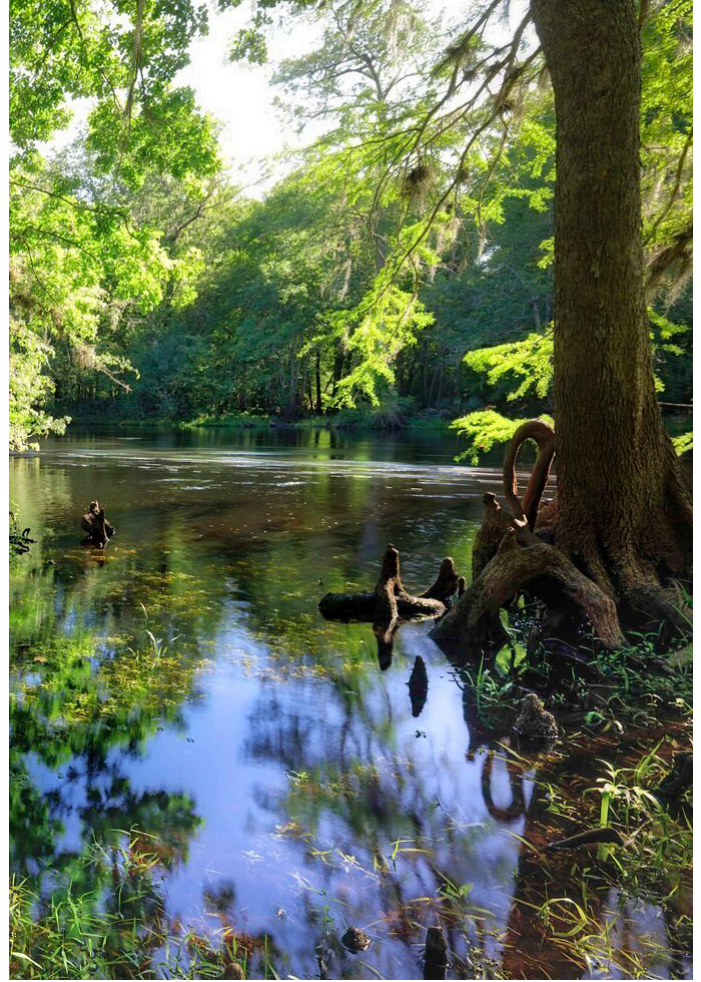
After finding a potential conservation property, we have a conversation with the landowner to understand their individual conservation goals and property uses. We also visit the property to assess its conservation value. We look at aspects like ecosystem, soil and habitat type, proximity to rivers, springs and other conservation lands, which plant and animal species are present, and whether there is potential for restoration.

Once we have a good understanding of the property and the landowner's goals, we work to identify conservation and funding options that are tailored to their individual situation. ACT also works with landowners and our partners to develop management plans for individual properties to ensure each property is managed and restored to its full ecological potential. In other instances, if ACT purchases a property outright or receives a land donation, we might sell the property to the state or a local government entity, or that property might become a public park or preserve.

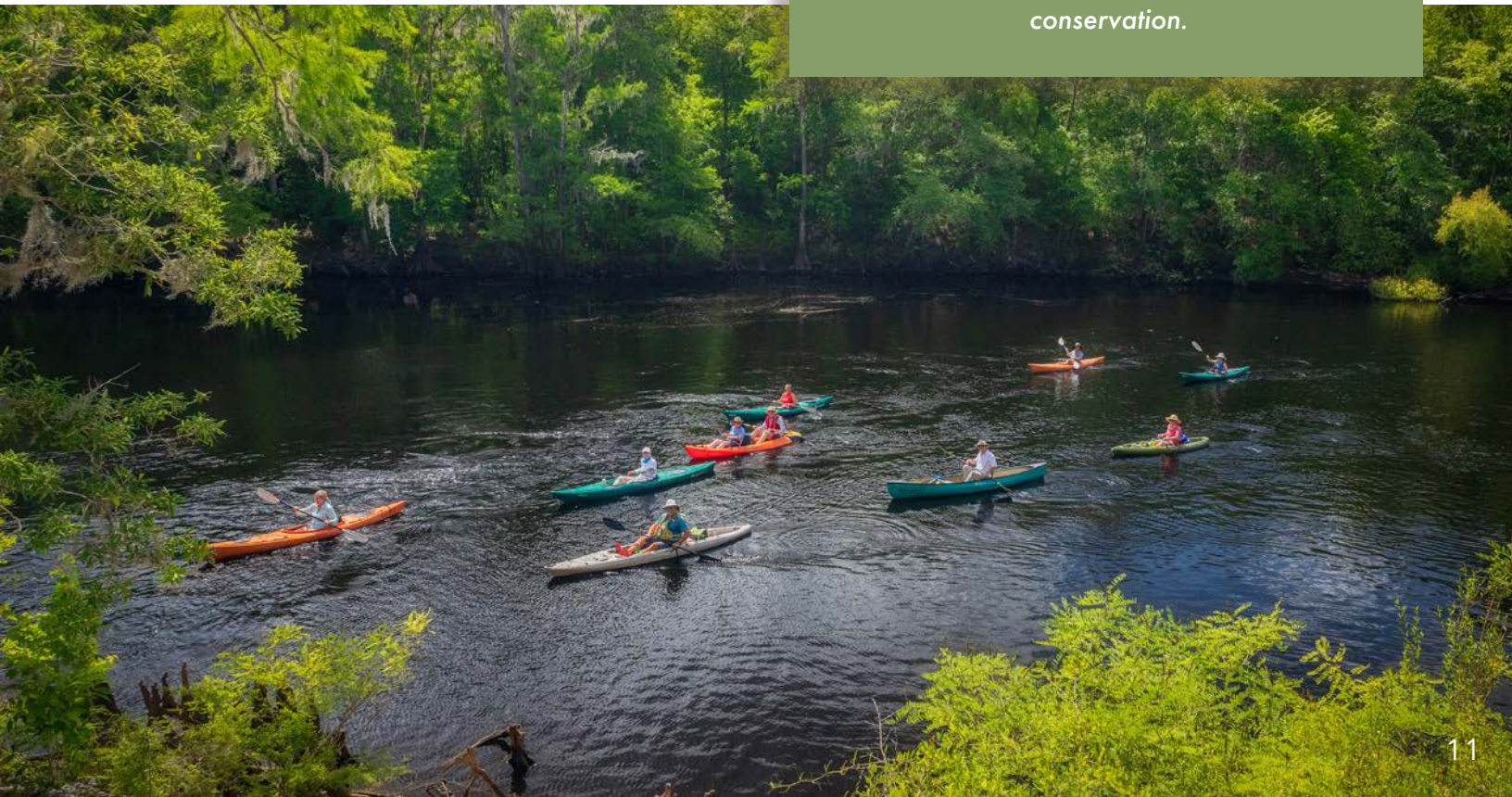
ACT's conservation work cannot be done without the support of others. From landowners contacting us directly, to local government, nonprofit and agency partners who help us find properties and leverage potential funding opportunities, to conservation-minded members of the community who enable us to do our work by donating their hard-earned time and money to ACT — our conservation work is truly a community effort.

Land prices have skyrocketed in recent years and the real estate market is very fast-paced. In order to quickly protect important properties, ACT often secures private bridge loans to ensure that our purchases can move forward with the hope of being reimbursed later by the state, grant programs or other fundraising efforts. This occurred for several properties ACT purchased last year, including Telford Springs (94 acres) on the Suwannee River and Little Awesome (195 acres) on the Santa Fe River, which will both become public preserves. In 2021 alone, ACT purchased \$8.5 million worth of land in the Santa Fe and Suwannee river basins through a combination of donations, grants and private bridge loans, the majority of which needs to be paid back.

ACT's work in springs protection and conservation benefits us all in myriad ways. If you would like to help protect our local springs and riverways, contact us at (352) 373-1078, visit our website www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org/donate, email info@alachuaconservationtrust.org, or mail a check to 7204 SE County Road 234, Gainesville, FL 32641.



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2021 - THE YEAR OF ACT ACQUISITIONS



SAWDUST SPRING

Photo By Alison Blakeslee

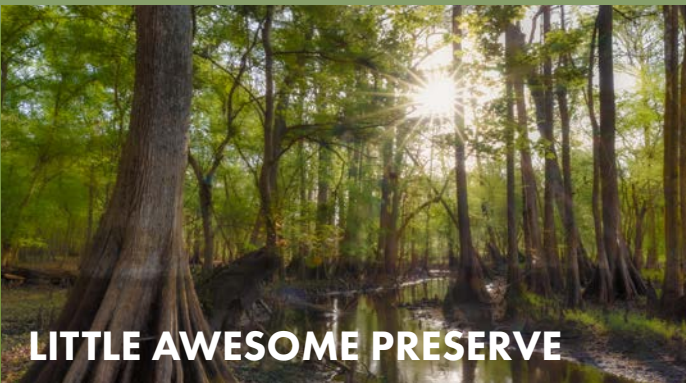
Located along the lower Santa Fe River, Sawdust Spring is a 3rd magnitude freshwater spring. The property includes 139 acres surrounding the spring and spring run, as well as one-mile of riverbank along the Santa Fe River. ACT closed on this property for \$1.5 million in December 2021 with the help of private bridge loans and donations. This project will receive \$617,000 in State Springs Funding and the remainder of the purchase price was paid off with additional donations and grants. ACT will own and manage this property as a public preserve in the future.



RIVER RISE INHOLDING

Photo By Alison Blakeslee

Where the Santa Fe River emerges after travelling underground for three miles, this 160-acre property located in Columbia County was a key inholding within the boundaries of River Rise Preserve State Park. The property had already been cleared for residential development when ACT stepped in to purchase it for almost \$1.3 million. Thanks to generous ACT supporters who donated and provided bridge loans, and to the sellers who also provided owner financing, ACT was able to close on the property in late September 2021. In July, the State of Florida purchased River Rise inholding from ACT for incorporation into the surrounding state park.



LITTLE AWESOME PRESERVE

Photo By Kim Davidson

This 195-acre property along the Lower Santa Fe River features significant karst geography including springs, sinks and swallets throughout. In July 2021, ACT outbid a real-estate developer from Jacksonville after receiving a call from a local supporter that the property was up for auction. With a \$1.3 million bridge loan from The Conservation Fund, as well as bridge loans from private individuals, ACT was able to mobilize quickly to purchase the property. Once the loans are paid back, the undeveloped uplands and 6,000-foot of riverbank will become a public preserve for hiking, biking, fishing, and wildlife observation.



TELFORD SPRING

Photo By PDL Photography

Located in Suwannee County within the Florida Wildlife Corridor, Telford Spring is a 2nd magnitude freshwater spring with a shallow spring run that flows for 75-feet into the Suwannee River. The property has over 6,000 feet of river frontage. ACT closed on this property in December 2021 for \$1,065,000 with private bridge loans and donations. The land is now owned by the State of Florida and will be incorporated into Peacock Springs Conservation Area.



Photos By Kim Davidson

This property is located adjacent to Manatee Springs State Park and has a direct hydrologic connection from the property to the first-magnitude Manatee Springs headspring. The Manatee Springs Cave System twists and turns beneath the property and at least two sinkholes connect to the cave system at surface level. In December 2021, ACT closed on these 288 acres for \$1.55 million with private bridge loans, owner financing, and donations. In April, ACT's application to amend the Florida Forever boundary to include this property was approved by the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) Board. The project will now be ranked and ultimately purchased by the State of Florida to be incorporated into the existing state park.



BURNING WITH GRATITUDE

Founding Board Member, Fire Guy, Richard Hamann

Richard Hamann was born in Gainesville, but raised in the swamps of South Florida, right on the edge of the Everglades. Always close to nature, he spent his childhood fishing, hunting, boating and biking in the wildest parts of the Sunshine State. Through hunting trips in Fakahatchee Strand and Boy Scout excursions into "Wild Florida," a love, respect and confidence to protect our untamed landscapes was born.

After falling in love with Florida and being one of the first people who advocated for the creation of a local land trust, Richard served on ACT's formative board. Over the course of 32 years of service, he understood both the power of opportunism and moving quickly, as well as the necessity of a more quiet, patient view of land conservation. Throughout his career, he conducted research on a wide variety of environmental, land use and water management

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issues; taught several courses and seminars on environmental law, water law and comparative environmental law; served on the board of multiple environmental organizations and won a multitude of awards; and has received significant grant funding for research and development of improved water resource policy.

"When I first joined the board of ACT at the organization's inception, none of us ever envisioned that ACT would grow to play such a large and vital role in regional land conservation. Congratulations to everyone who has contributed."

- Richard Hamann

Richard now spends his days working on the natural areas of Flamingo Hammock, the intentional community near the north rim of Paynes Prairie that he co-founded forty years ago. He has a comprehensive understanding of how to restore natural systems through patient subtraction of offsite and exotic plants and the careful addition of rare natives. Richard's love of Florida's historical landscapes is profound, and he has done more than virtually anybody in passing on some part of it in better shape for the generations to come.

We here at Alachua Conservation Trust are deeply grateful to Richard for his support of ACT and its mission these past few decades!

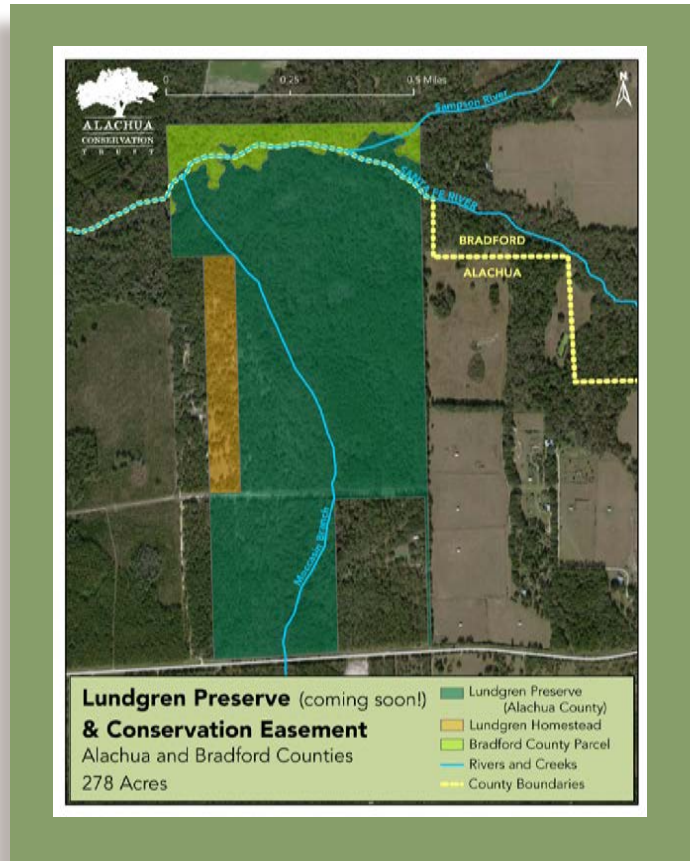
SANTA FE CORRIDOR EXPANDS

Lundgrens' Gift

Dale and Helen Lundgren's home is nestled under sprawling, ancient live oaks overlooking a pastoral clearing on a sandhill rise. Just beyond, the upper Santa Fe River traverses the landscape and collects the contributions of two streams within the half mile that it flows through the property. The 20-acre homestead lies along the western edge of Alachua County's newest conservation land, the 236-acre Lundgren Preserve. The land was donated to the County by the Lundgrens in May 2021, with a conservation easement held by ACT as the primary easement holder. Also included in the conservation easement is the homestead parcel and the 22-acre parcel north of the Santa Fe River, which is located in Bradford County, totaling 278 acres preserved.

Tall, burly pines tower above, and moss-laden oak limbs shade a pathway that leads from the home to the bank of the Upper Santa Fe. Here, the dark waters are a narrow, barely navigable stream, winding across the northern portion of the property. Along the banks, wild pinxter azaleas and sparkleberries with gnarled maroon trunks emerge amid bright green clumps of wood oats and bluestem palms. A terracotta Herty cup remains firmly affixed to an old loblolly pine near the river, betraying the shockingly recent existence of a turpentine operation that persisted in these woods well into the 1960s. The rich soils near the river are inhabited by plants and trees that have evolved to tolerate periodic flooding. The habitat is pristine and the woods are serenely quiet but palpably full of life.

The Lundgrens purchased this land in 1980, after moving to Gainesville in 1972 from their home state of Minnesota for Dr. Lundgren to teach environmental engineering at the University of Florida. They have shared their love of this land with their children and grandchildren over the years, and now several of them live in close proximity. One daughter, who lives a few miles down the road, keeps her horses in a pasture on the homestead. The Lundgrens will



keep owning this 20-acre parcel, on the edge of the 258-acre Lundgren Preserve, to live on for the rest of their lives.

“We wish to show our appreciation for the opportunity this Country has provided us by contributing this beautiful piece of property along the Santa Fe River, in Alachua and Bradford counties,” said Dale Lundgren, speaking on behalf of himself and his wife, Helen. They have worked for years to negotiate permanent protections for this land that means so much to them and their family. The protection offered by the final arrangement, which closed in May of 2021, will ensure that the land will be forever enjoyed by local residents and visitors to the area, provide refuge for wildlife and native plant communities, and contribute to the ongoing health of the Santa Fe watershed.





WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE LAND!

It's been a busy year pummeling through the hump of Covid, and our land management team has been hard at work with your outdoor adventures in mind. Feeling up to hiking Prairie Creek Preserve and getting the urge for stealthy bird watching? Check out our new bird blind off the Yellow Trail! Want to enjoy the peacefully magnetic views of a healthy sandhill understory? Take a walk through our grassland restoration site at Fox Pen Preserve! Oh... and did we mention there's now a half mile loop trail at J.H. Anderson, Jr. Memorial Park, more commonly known as Rock Bluff Springs?

For the avid birders, wannabe birders, or curious hiker and biker enthusiasts: our land management team has built just the observation point for you! Along the main Yellow Trail at Prairie Creek Preserve, you can now walk down a ramp that leads you to a 3-foot-tall vantage point overlooking a modest marsh wetland. Lately, spotted species have predominantly been wading birds such as sandhill cranes, great blue herons, great egrets, snowy egrets, and little blue herons — with the exception of red shouldered hawks, wood ducks, and bald eagles. If you happen to be visiting the bird blind and have a wilderness encounter, please don't hesitate to let us know what new species you see!

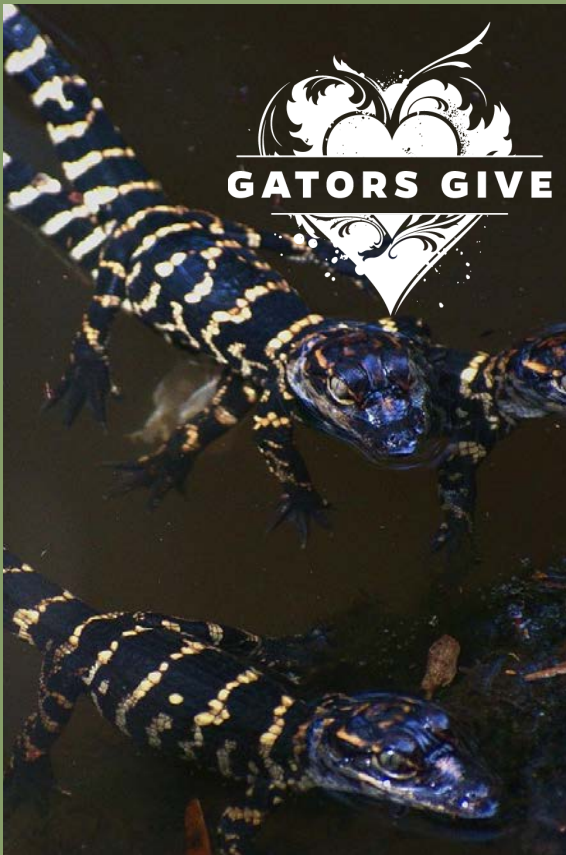
A skip and a throw away from Prairie Creek Preserve, you'll find ACT's newer Fox Pen Preserve located in Hawthorne, FL. Of Fox Pen's 578 acres, 83 are currently dedicated to

For the avid birders, wannabe birders, or curious hiker and biker enthusiasts: our land management team has built just the observation point for you!

grassland restoration. Rather than instantly jumping on the pine plantation train, our management plan is to keep up with the luscious, biodiverse sandhill understory while slowly restoring the surrounding woods. As the wooded areas at Fox Pen become more healthy, we will collect the native grassland seeds and work to restore the understory across the total 578 acres. As you can imagine, this will be a long-term process, but if you're interested in what a healthy sandhill groundcover really looks like, take a peek at Fox Pen's restoration site!

Assuming you've already seen the birds at Prairie Creek Preserve, recovered from the awestruck beauty of Fox Pen's restoration area, and are now looking for more outdoor adventures in North Central Florida, why not venture to the Suwannee River for a fun-filled day at Rock Bluff Springs? With a newly established 0.5 mile loop trail through magnolia tree thickets and sinkhole topography, there's plenty to do after an icy dip in the 72° spring.

Whether you prefer listening to the songs of birds, watching tall grasses sway in the wind, or feeling a sudden chill from diving into cold spring water after a rewarding hike in the woods, the ACT land management crew has been hard at work just for you! With plenty of outdoor adventures to choose from, it's our goal to make sure the natural beauty follows you no matter which preserve you visit next.



UF CAMPAIGN FOR CHARITIES

Kick off in September!

Gator Nation, you are amazing! Over the past 12 years, University of Florida staff members have donated over \$300,000 to ACT through the university's employee payroll deduction program known as the Campaign for Charities (UFCC). This year, the UFCC Leadership Campaign begins on September 6th and the General Campaign takes place from September 26th through October 14th. If you are a UF staffer, please consider selecting ACT as your designated agency during the 2022 campaign. If you are a UF Department leader, please reach out to us about speaking to your staff on ACT's local conservation efforts and how their support helps us protect thousands of acres of land, multiple springs, and many miles of riverways each year!

ACT will have a table at the UFCC Luncheon on September 29th from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Reitz Union. Stop by and see us!



PARTNERING TO PROTECT PLANTS:

Clasping Warea (Warea Amplexifolia)

By Rachel Townsend

The ACT natural resources interns recently assisted on an exciting multi-agency project. Organized by Cheryl Peterson at Bok Tower, a small group of nature lovers powered together to plant the federally endangered Clasping Warea (*Warea amplexifolia*) on St. Johns River Water Management District property. Along with the help of the Florida Forest Service and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) volunteers, we were able to plant over 100 germinated Warea plants with the hopes of establishing a new community.

We all know the phrases “it takes a village” and “many hands make light work,” but my oh my does land management truly lean on the efforts of one another to accomplish our mutual goals. It took our Clasping Warea team of ten about three hours to establish irrigation lines and to plant 110 plants. We all joked as the afternoon summer sunshine began to lift our collective energy how it would have taken an entire day for Cheryl to complete the project on her own. With the help of others, land managers are able to cover much more ground in a quicker timeline, which, in our world, makes all the difference.

Clasping Warea is endemic to Florida and has only been known to grow on the northern third of the Lake Wales Ridge. Due to the annual wildflower's sensitivity and the degradation of xeric sandhills in the region, it has found itself a spot on the federally endangered list. One of the causes of these declining populations is a lack of fire on the landscape. Sandhills are a pyrogenic natural community, meaning they depend upon fire to thrive: the longleaf pine overstory, diverse herbaceous understory, and the multitude of wildlife from gopher tortoise to bobwhite quail all require regular fire in order to maintain their equilibrium. Despite a lack of fire – whether it be due to a decrease in proper weather parameters, an increase in smoke sensitive areas, or a need for additional resources – there is still hope for restoring groundcover species with the seedbank they've left behind.



SATCH SQUARED

Round Up For Charity

A big thanks to Satch Squared which raised over \$4,000 for Alachua Conservation Trust's Internship programs through their Round Up For Charity (RUFC) fundraiser in 2021!

These funds will go toward ACT's Nonprofit Operations Internship program, ACT's Natural Resource Management Intern Program, as well as our Women In The Woods Internship Program.

To learn more about ACT's different Internship Programs, visit: www.alachuaconservationtrust.org/internships.

"My time at ACT developed my ability to plan for a work day efficiently and effectively. Once we learned the location and protocol for tool gathering, use, and care, we coordinated fluidly to set up everything we needed each day before heading into the field. This has greatly influenced how I approach every task in every job I have obtained since [my internship], and has made me a more valuable asset on teams."

- Megan Ellis, Natural Resource Management Intern and Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Major



TREE FEST 2022

Reaches Big Milestone

On April 23rd, beer enthusiasts, conservationists, and local businesses came together to celebrate the 7th annual Tree Fest event at Swamp Head Brewery. We are excited to announce that this year, we reached the milestone of over half a million trees planted since the inaugural Tree Fest in 2015! A big thank you to Swamp Head Brewery, Solar Impact, and the many Tree Fest sponsors for helping ACT plant trees at Little Orange Creek Nature Preserve.





VOLUNTEERS MAKE MEANINGFUL IMPACTS

With Cleanup Efforts at ACT Preserves

Photos By Alison Blakeslee

Old tractor tires, mattresses, teapots, cassette tapes, and even half of a 1950s muscle car.

These are just some of the items recovered by volunteers assisting ACT with cleaning up conservation lands managed by the trust. Each month, new and regular volunteers come together at one of ACT's nature preserves to remove remnants of its former uses and perform regular maintenance activities. Working diligently while surrounded by other nature lovers, these volunteers are giving back, while gaining meaningful experiences in the outdoors.

James Lasley is one of those volunteers who has participated in monthly preserve cleanups over the last year. He was drawn to ACT's cleanup events because of his love for Florida's waterways and springs, which ACT works to protect. Participating in these workdays has allowed James and many other volunteers to visit natural areas that are not yet open to the public, such as Santa Fe Springs Preserve and Little Awesome Preserve along the Santa Fe River.

ACT's volunteer program also provides a meaningful way to engage with the local community and gain service hours for school or provide employees with community service opportunities. Alex Saavedra got involved with ACT through her love of the environment and interest in sustainability. After participating in a few volunteer events with ACT and

becoming a Conservation 365 monthly donor, Alex organized her co-workers from Gainesville Health & Fitness for a community service day at Rockwood Park, where they could see the outdoor fitness equipment that their company had donated and help provide new mulched trails for the park.

With the exception of a few months in the summer, ACT plans and hosts at least one cleanup event per month. The work can often be difficult, but the outcome is so rewarding that volunteers often return the next month to provide their assistance to ACT staff.

Learn more about upcoming workdays and how you can participate on our website at www.AlachuaConservation-Trust.org/upcoming-events.





HELPING HANDS

Volunteer Spotlight: Dr. Jim Grantham

ACT's volunteers are one-of-kind and always up for a new adventure; helping out on volunteer work days is one of the best parts of my job, allowing me to get to know the community and the conservation issues that they are passionate about. Getting your hands dirty and working together to help a good cause is a powerful bonding experience for all of our volunteers and staff."

*-Heather Obara, Associate Director
Alachua Conservation Trust*

Jim grew up in various suburbs of NYC, Chicago and Montreal, the son of "Mad Men." Jim's first experiences with the outdoors were climbing (and falling out of) trees. Jim went to a camp in Maine for three summers and really got out into the wild, hiking mountains and canoeing the rivers and lakes. Many years later, Jim met his wife in Virginia where their dates consisted of quarry exploration, hiking off the Blue Ridge Parkway, and finding great places to watch the sunset.

They moved to Gainesville to continue Jim's training as a radiologist, which was their introduction to Florida. Jim quickly grew to love hiking in palmetto scrub, swimming in the springs, kayaking the Santa Fe River and "mountain" biking many state parks. When ACT was born, Jim recognized it as the perfect organization to preserve the land he had come to love.

Jim has been one of ACT's most dedicated volunteers, and he says he feels most fortunate to have these opportunities and meet the many wonderful people involved with ACT.





It was such a pleasure assisting however and whenever I could for the Pride at Prairie Creek event. Creating spaces for others in or outside the LGBTQIA community to enjoy some downtime in nature amongst like-minded individuals is beneficial in so many ways. Thank you Alachua Conservation Trust!

*-Kane Barr (he/him/they/them) Secretary
Pride Community Center of North Central Florida*

PRIDE AT PRAIRIE CREEK

On Oct. 24, 2021, Alachua Conservation Trust hosted its first celebration of Pride at Prairie Creek, where LGBTQ+ community members and conservation organizations came together to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community. It was a beautiful sunny day, slightly cooled with the first cold fronts of the Florida fall. The event began with early birders meeting to band and track birds on Prairie Creek Preserve with Alachua Audubon at the Prairie Creek Banding Lab. Main event goers started arriving at noon to learn and talk about the amazing work being done by our 12 wonderful partnering organizations both from the LGBTQ+ and conservation communities. Tours of Prairie Creek Preserve, the Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery, and a native flower planting were among the activities enjoyed by attendees.

Those not on tours enjoyed food from the EIM Thai food truck and lounged in the grass, soaking in the joy of the gathering. The event closed with incredible performances by Clay Dixon and the Picadillies and the Front Porch Backsteppers, whose tunes matched the celebratory energy of the day.

For ACT, Pride at Prairie Creek was an opportunity to celebrate and actively show the community that we are committed to creating safe spaces in nature for all. In order to be of better service to all, we are starting to identify the part we can play to eliminate inequity in access to nature, and to start a dialogue with our community on how we can break down barriers of access to our preserves, events, and organizations. ACT is excited to continue the work to create safe and accessible outdoor spaces for everyone in our community to enjoy!

Join us on **October 16th, 2022** for the next Pride at Prairie Creek!

"Pride at Prairie Creek was a tremendous opportunity to connect with younger and diverse conservation-minded people, many of whom knew little about Ocklawaha River restoration. I applaud ACT for creating this new and innovative event."

*-Margaret Spontak, Chair (she/her)
Free the Ocklawaha River Coalition for Everyone*





JESS MOSES
2021 Scholarship Recipient

Meet Jess, one of our four incredible Florida Wild for All Scholarship recipients. Jess is a student at The University of Florida majoring in Natural Resource Conservation and pursuing a career in environmental education and outreach. As a South Florida native, Jess grew up visiting coastal areas where they fostered a relationship with the environment. Since receiving the Florida Wild for All scholarship, Jess joined ACT for the fall semester outreach internship where we have had the pleasure of working with them on outreach projects. Check out ACT's blog to read Jess' post "Experiencing a New Florida" and "Fall 2021 Internship Recap" about their experiences while interning. Congratulations to Jess and the other recipients!



MIRANDA JACKSON
2021 Scholarship Recipient

On top of her full-time job, Miranda is also a master's student in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences at the University of Florida. Her research on zooplankton, such as ciliates in the Indian River and Piney Point Lagoons, examines impacts and ecological cascades in estuaries. She is driven by resource protection and is interested in advocacy and policy. Already a published author in the journal *Scientific Reports*, Miranda will work to publish her research in the journal *Estuaries and Coasts*. Aside from weightlifting and scuba diving, Miranda loves theme parks and hopes to pursue opportunities with the Sustainability Group of Disney's Imagineering Sector.



JHETT HILL
2021 Scholarship Recipient

After graduating from Buchholz High School in 2021, Jhett Hill went on to Vanderbilt University, where he is pursuing an undergraduate degree in environmental sociology. He was inspired to pursue the environmental field by his AP Environmental Science teacher. Jhett grew up in Gainesville after moving here from Virginia when he was four years-old, and spent much of his youth enjoying our local springs and rivers with his family. He has fond memories of floating down the Ichetucknee with his older brother. Jhett loves hanging out with his cat, Storm, when he is home from school. He also enjoys traveling, playing basketball and golf, and exploring local trails. Jhett hopes to attend law school and focus on environmental law.



CAYMAN LANZONE
2021 Scholarship Recipient

Cayman graduated from UF with a BA in Sustainability Studies in the Spring of 2021 and plans to continue with a masters in Environmental Planning after gaining some work experience. He completed an internship with ACT's Natural Resource Management program in the fall of 2019 and enjoyed learning about land management and ecology. He is interested in taking a holistic approach to the design and planning of sustainable landscapes, communities, and regions that benefit the people and the planet. He values integrating ecological and environmental health with economic welfare and social justice. Cayman loves staying fit by playing soccer and enjoying outdoor activities like camping and herping.



SUSAN CARR, *Strategic Conservation Manager*

Born in Gainesville Florida, Susan spent most of her life living in and studying North Florida's natural areas and ecology. Susan joined ACT in late 2021, and works to accelerate land conservation by matching conservation opportunities with conservation minded landowners. Susan's work history is long and varied, including previous positions with nonprofit organizations (land trusts, The Nature Conservancy), academia and the Federal government (U.S. Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service). Susan has three degrees in various ecological study: a B.S. in Botany from the University of Florida, a M.S. in Plant Biology from Louisiana State University, then later a Ph.D. in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation from the University of Florida. Her graduate research focused on floristic diversity of fire-maintained pinelands across Florida, and fostered a deep appreciation for Florida's natural landscapes. Susan serves on several nonprofit Boards of Directors, including the Florida Native Plant Society and Jacksonville Arboretum and Gardens.

JUSTICE DIAMOND, *Agricultural Conservation Specialist*

Justice was born and raised in Tallahassee, FL. After graduating high school, Justice attended the University of Florida where he earned a Bachelor of Science in agricultural operations management with a concentration in sustainable crop production. During his time as an undergraduate, he worked on a research project that focused on maximizing terpene yields in slash pine. In addition, he worked in the precision agriculture lab and helped develop tools for early detection of citrus greening as well as methods to determine citrus and strawberry yields through the use of machine learning. Justice received his master's degree in agricultural and biological engineering in the spring of 2019 where he focused on improving irrigation scheduling methods through the use of a smartphone application for evapotranspiration-based irrigation scheduling of field corn.



DANNY ROHAN, *Land Management Specialist*

Danny grew up exploring natural areas in and around Alachua County. He attended the University of Florida where he received his bachelor's degree in Natural Resources Recreation Management and his master's degree in Forest Resources and Conservation with a Graduate Certificate in Environmental Education. After college, Danny spent a year serving in the Florida State Parks Americorps program where he worked and camped in 39 state parks. After a short stint as a certified firefighter and paramedic, Danny spent 6 years with the City of Gainesville, first as a park ranger at Sweetwater Wetlands Park and then as an environmental educator. Danny is interested in how prescribed fire shapes and maintains many of our ecosystems and is looking forward to further help protect our natural areas. He enjoys birdwatching, nature photography, and exploring with his family.



JOANNA REILLY-BROWN, Springs Project Coordinator

Joanna Reilly-Brown is an Alachua County native and lifelong nature lover. She holds a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Anthropology from the University of Florida and a Juris Doctor and Certificate in Environmental Law from the University of Florida Levin College of Law. Joanna's passion for conservation began as a child exploring cypress domes and paddling waterways all over North Central Florida. An avid traveler, she has spent her career researching the complex interplay between people, development, and natural resources both at home in Florida and abroad with the people and ecosystems of Mexico, Belize, and Costa Rica. She has published book chapters and peer reviewed literature on pesticides and Farm Bill programs, cultural impacts of natural disasters in Florida, and strategies for adapting agricultural systems to climate change. In her free time, Joanna enjoys caring for her many houseplants and exploring Florida's native waterways with her two young children, whom she is raising to appreciate and respect the incredible natural beauty inherent in their Floridian home.



JESSE FRAZIER, Land Management Specialist

Jesse is a New Jersey native but has happily found himself living in and exploring Florida for much of his adult life. He attended the University of Florida where he received his Bachelor of Science in Natural Resource Management. During his undergraduate studies Jesse pursued opportunities with the university, including spending two summers studying forest ecology in Belize under a USDA grant. Upon graduation Jesse pursued a Master of Science degree in Forest Resource Conservation where his research focused on silvicultural methods aimed at restoring disturbed pine forests. Jesse has experience presenting research at varying national conferences and publishing in peer-reviewed journals. Prior to joining ACT Jesse has worked with county, state and private consulting agencies. During his free time Jesse is often enjoying time outside with his dog, exploring north Florida waterways and attending local events in and around Gainesville.



TAYLOR WHITE, Rock Bluff Springs Park Specialist

Taylor White is a life-long Alachua County native, with family roots that run deep within Florida. He holds an Associate of Arts in Forestry from Santa Fe College and is currently striving for a Bachelors in Forest Resources and Conservation at the University of Florida. Taylor also holds a Firefighter Type II certification for wildfire response and prescribed burn training. Taylor's love and passion for everything outdoors has to do with spending his life in the Ocala National Forest, taking care of his family property within the forest. In addition, he devoted his pre-college time to interning with the City of Gainesville at Sweetwater Wetlands Park and with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, collecting alligator data. In his free time he enjoys all outdoor extracurricular activities, from yard work to kayaking, fishing, and more.





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Since 1988, the mission of Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) has been to protect the natural, historic, scenic, and recreational resources in and around North Central Florida. ACT protects land through purchase, donation, and conservation easements.

ACT is a 501(c)3 non-profit charity and receives no government grants for general operating support; we rely on contributions from private individuals, corporations, and foundations. Donations may be tax deductible, however ACT does not provide tax advice.

Alachua Conservation Trust's charitable solicitation number is CH12693. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free (800) 435-7352. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the State.