

ALACHUA CONSERVATION TRUST

Gazetteer

MYSTIC SPRINGS BY JOHN MORAN

"SPRINGS ETERNAL: Florida's Fragile Fountains of Youth" -Learn more about this project on [page 3](#)

FALL 2012

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- 1 Oktoberfest
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- 3 Free Speech Forum: Bob Knight
- 3 Springs Eternal Project
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ACT: FACTS AT A GLANCE

- Created in 1988 as non-profit land trust
- Nominated for protection over 50,000 acres
- Directly participated in the purchase of 16,800 acres
- Currently owns 2200 acres, 3 historic buildings
- Perpetual conservation easements on more than 2700 acres
- Active land conservation projects in 7 counties of north central Florida
- Successfully led 4 public referenda, 2 for funding \$60 million, and 2 for creating Registry of Protected Public Places
- Over 500 active supporters who contribute at least once every 2 years
- Over 2000 volunteer and community service hrs. in the past 12 months
- 1 of only 4 nationally accredited land trusts in Florida
- Achieved 100% Board membership with Land Trust Alliance (3rd year)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 29, 2012

"Reptiles & Amphibians of Florida"- Walk led by Brian Block at Prairie Creek Preserve.

Oct. 2, 2012

Free Speech Forum- Talk by Bob Knight at Paramount Hotel. *Learn more on page 3.*

Oct. 6, 2012

"Herbs of Florida"- Walk led by Susan Marynowski at Prairie Creek Preserve.

Oct. 7, 2012

"Nature Adventure & Journaling"- Earth Scout outing led by Sandi Block at Prairie Creek Lodge.

Oct. 12, 2012

OKTOBERFEST- Prairie Creek Lodge. *Learn more at right.*

Oct. 17 & 18, 2012

TLC- "Tremendous Trees" *Learn more on page 9.*

Oct. 21, 2012

SANDHILL STAGE CONCERT- Jacob Johnson with Sam Pacetti

Oct. 27, 2012

"Intro to Tai Chi & Qigong"- Class led by Danielle Mastrogiavanni at Prairie Creek Lodge.

Oct. 28, 2012

PCCC Remembrance Day- Prairie Creek Lodge. *Learn more at right.*

Nov. 4, 2012

SANDHILL STAGE CONCERT- The Erasables

Nov. 7, 2012

"Birding Abroad"- Group presentation led by Adam Kent & Chris Burney.

Nov. 11, 2012

"Intro to Natural Burial & Prairie Creek Cemetery"- Freddie Johnson at Prairie Creek Lodge.

Nov. 14 & 15, 2012

TLC- "Things that Go Bump in the Night" *Learn more on page 9.*

Nov. 16, 2012

SANDHILL STAGE CONCERT- Jim Hurst

Nov. 17, 2012

"Fall Birding"- Walk led by Ivor Kincaide & Chris Burney, location TBA.

Dec. 2, 2012

SANDHILL STAGE CONCERT- Pierce Pettis

Dec. 12 & 13, 2012

TLC- "Winter in the Wild" *Learn more on page 9*

Jan. 13, 2013

SANDHILL STAGE CONCERT- Joe Crookston

Jan. 24, 2013

SANDHILL STAGE CONCERT- Lisa Aschmann & David Roth

Feb. 8, 2013

SANDHILL STAGE CONCERT- Cosy Sheridan

Info about these events can be found on ACT's website: www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org

*Featured Events:***PRAIRIE CREEK CONSERVATION CEMETERY REMEMBRANCE DAY**

October 28, 2012

Prairie Creek Lodge

Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery has been in operation for just over two years, during which nearly fifty people and pets have been interred. As Florida's second "green" cemetery, it has been recognized with the highest level of certification by the international Green Burial Council.

On Sunday, October 28th, our second annual "Remembrance Day" will be held at the cemetery and Prairie Creek Lodge. This is an opportunity for friends and family to gather to commemorate their loved ones, and for people who are interested in the cemetery or natural burial options to find out more. Tours of the cemetery will be provided, and there will be refreshments and music.

Representatives from Final Friends will also be available to answer questions. This local community group of volunteers advise people on how to conduct "home funerals" including completing official paperwork, preparation of the body, and transport to the cemetery. Home funerals are a legal, affordable, and participatory choice, once commonplace in this country, that are seeing a resurgence of interest.

For more information about the schedule of Remembrance Day events, or to indicate your own Final Burial Wishes, or to discover answers to your questions about natural burial, please visit: www.ConservationBurialinc.org or call (352) 317-7307.

**OKTOBERFEST****OKTOBERFEST**

October 12, 2012

Prairie Creek Lodge

Join Alachua Conservation Trust and Civic Media Center as we celebrate our 3rd annual Oktoberfest on Friday, October 12th starting at 5:30 p.m. Once again, we will have plenty of your favorite locally brewed beverage, traditional German food, and music. The best fraulein outfit and best lederhosen (or other traditional Bavarian wardrobe) will win a valuable prize! Glasses (ACT mugs) will be provided with your \$15 donation. Oktoberfest will be at the Prairie Creek Lodge, 7204 SE CR 234 – for information or directions call (352) 373-1078.





RAISE THE (RE)ROOF AT HISTORIC HAILE HOMESTEAD

You know what they say about the weather in Florida... give it a minute to change! And oh, has it! Since the beginning of summer, our region has received over 25 inches of rainfall that has not only alleviated our drought, but exposed leaks in the roof of Historic Haile Homestead- and lots of them. Although, the damage so far has been minimal, the potential for further, more serious harm is real, particularly to the historically unique “Talking Walls”. Therefore, the roof must be replaced as soon as possible since the entire structure is currently huddled underneath a layer of tarps that only provide temporary protection.

Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) and Historic

Haile Homestead, Inc. (HHH) have explored what options make sense to replace the structure’s current shake-shingle roof, and have determined the total cost will be around \$50,000. To help pay for this project, ACT has initiated a “RAISE THE (RE)ROOF CAMPAIGN”, and are hoping to raise at least \$25,000.

If you would like to support preservation of one of Alachua County’s oldest and most historically significant structures – one visited by thousands each year – please send your contribution to ACT by mail, or visit our website at www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org, and click on the “Make A Contribution” tab to donate by credit card – and put “HHH” in the Comments box.

ACT LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

On October 1st, ACT’s website will have a new look. Aside from the new layout, the website will have many new resources to help you explore our properties, learn about upcoming events, and get more involved with ACT.

Visit
WWW.ALACHUACONSERVATIONTRUST.ORG



FREE SPEECH FORUM TALK BY BOB KNIGHT

Dr. Robert Knight is the featured speaker at the Florida Free Speech Forum for a speech titled “The Arithmetic of Florida’s Water”. His talk is on October 8th, 2012, and Alachua Conservation Trust is sponsoring this important address to encourage our supporters to attend.

Dr. Knight is the director of the H.T. Odum Florida Springs Institute which seeks to improve the understanding of springs ecology, develop science-based education, and the management needed to restore and protect Florida’s springs. He is a renowned researcher and engineer, working for decades on ecological solutions to wetlands and hydrological problems. In his semi-retirement, he has become Florida’s foremost spokesperson for our iconic springs.

The Florida Free Speech Forum is the state’s oldest bastion of free speech. Their monthly programs are at the Paramount Hotel south of Gainesville, and begin at 11:30 am. Programs are free and open to the public, however luncheons are available for \$19 if you make your reservation by October 3rd. To make reservations for lunch, please call (352) 335-3938 and leave your name and that of anyone who is accompanying you.



📷 Dr. Robert Knight of the H.T. Odum Florida Springs Institute

SPRINGS ETERNAL

FLORIDA’S FRAGILE FOUNTAINS OF
YOUTH – ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
THROUGH VISUAL IMAGERY

SPRINGS ETERNAL: FLORIDA'S FRAGILE FOUNTAINS OF YOUTH – ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION THROUGH VISUAL IMAGERY



On the eve of the 500th anniversary of Ponce de Leon's arrival in Florida and his search for the mythic Fountain of Youth, the disheartening reality is that our State's springs are now very much imperiled—due to pollution, neglect, and the groundwater demands of a thirsty populace. Some springs have stopped flowing and many are choked with algae, their blue waters turning murky and green. Once a source of awe, our springs are now a source of deep concern and their future is unclear.

SPRINGS ETERNAL: FLORIDA'S FRAGILE FOUNTAINS OF YOUTH is a visually-delivered environmental education project that will assemble springs-related photographs

from renowned local photographer John Moran's personal collection, current work, and state historical archives in a compelling "then-and-now" narrative of the changes many of us have already recognized. John's belief is that exposure to such dramatic imagery will inspire the community as a whole to rethink, re-envision, and actively engage with the future of our springs and our state.

The Springs Eternal project – sponsored by Alachua Conservation Trust - consists of three parts:

- A. CORE - a Florida Museum of Natural History exhibit set for debut in the Spring of 2013
- B. EVENT, THE URBAN AQUIFER - a mobile public art project utilizing RTS buses as mobile billboards; and
- C. LEGACY - an ongoing springs-related education & information website.

Artistic contributors to this project include Moran, Lesley Gamble, and Rick Kilby - all with the goal of publicizing the plight of and inspiring solutions to the declining health of our fresh-water springs.

If you would like to learn more about Springs Eternal and how you can help make it a successful reality, visit the Springs Eternal page on ACT's website, or else visit John Moran's website at www.johnmoranphoto.com.

ICHETUCKNEE SPRINGS: THEN & NOW

I have stood on the banks of the Ichetucknee and I have grieved for my loss - our loss - as I consider with each passing year that my collection of springs photographs seems less a reflection of the real Florida than a catalog of what once was.

- John Moran

📷 Photographs made by John Moran: (right) both photos taken at the identical location (Devil's Eye Spring) at Ichetucknee Springs State Park, Florida, in 1995 and 2006; (top) Ginnie Springs; (left) Cypress Springs.





PHOTO: JOHN MORAN

FLORIDA WATER AND LAND LEGACY: AMENDMENT TO PROTECT FLORIDA'S MOST CHERISHED WATERS AND NATURAL AREAS

Florida has a proud legacy of conserving the water quality of our lakes, rivers, and springs and acquiring lands necessary to protect drinking water sources that has historically transcended party politics. For the past four decades every Governor, including Governors Graham, Martinez, Chiles, Bush, and Crist, has made it a priority. Thanks to their leadership, popular programs like Florida Forever and its predecessor Preservation 2000 have successfully protected over 2.4 million acres of critical water resources, natural areas, wildlife habitat, parks, greenways, and trails throughout Florida.

Yet since 2009, funding for the Florida Forever program has been essentially eliminated, being slashed by 97.5 percent. This year the legislature allocated only \$8.5 million to protect important water protection areas and conservation lands. Compared to the state budget of \$60 billion, that means that for every dollar the state spends in 2012, less than two-hundredths of a penny went to the Florida Forever program. That's less than \$1 for every Floridian.

An effort is now underway to restore Florida's leadership on water and land conservation. Florida's Water and Land Legacy, a coalition of the state's leading conservation organizations including Alachua Conservation Trust, The Trust for Public Land, Audubon Florida, Florida Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club and many others, has launched a campaign to place the Florida Water and Land Conservation Amendment on the November 2014 ballot.

Through a constitutional amendment, Floridians can assure that adequate funding is dedicated solely to restoring critical natural areas, like the Everglades, and protecting Florida's magnificent waters and lands for future

generations. We understand the value of clean and abundant water for people and wildlife, and cherish the natural areas that make Florida special. That's why the amendment would ensure that these values have a place in our state's constitution.

For decades, the documentary stamp tax (a fee on real estate transactions) has been assessed in Florida to pay for important programs including land conservation and affordable housing. Through a state constitutional amendment one-third of the existing "Doc stamps" would be directed to fund water and land conservation, management, and restoration, providing an estimated \$5 billion for conservation in Florida over the next ten years and \$10 billion over the twenty-year life of the amendment. This is our best hope to create a stable and long-term funding for conservation and restoration.

With almost 2 million acres of important water protection areas, beaches, springs and other vital natural areas that remain vulnerable to unwise development decisions and deep funding cuts, this amendment is our best hope to create a stable and long-term funding for conservation and restoration. It will take one million signatures to place the amendment on the ballot. To meet this challenge, we will need an army of volunteers throughout the state gathering signatures in their community. Join the campaign and get involved by signing up to volunteer at www.FloridaWaterLandLegacy.org/volunteer.

To learn more about Florida's Water and Land Legacy campaign visit www.FloridaWaterLandLegacy.org and 'like' them on Facebook.

New! SANTE FE RIVER PRESERVE

This September, Alachua Conservation Trust completed the purchase of 96 acres on the banks of the Santa Fe River near Worthington Springs, including 8 miles of abandoned rail corridor. The land includes high bluffs along the banks of this river and an interesting tangle of floodplain forest where the New River converges with the Santa Fe.



📷 Santa Fe River Preserve (A)

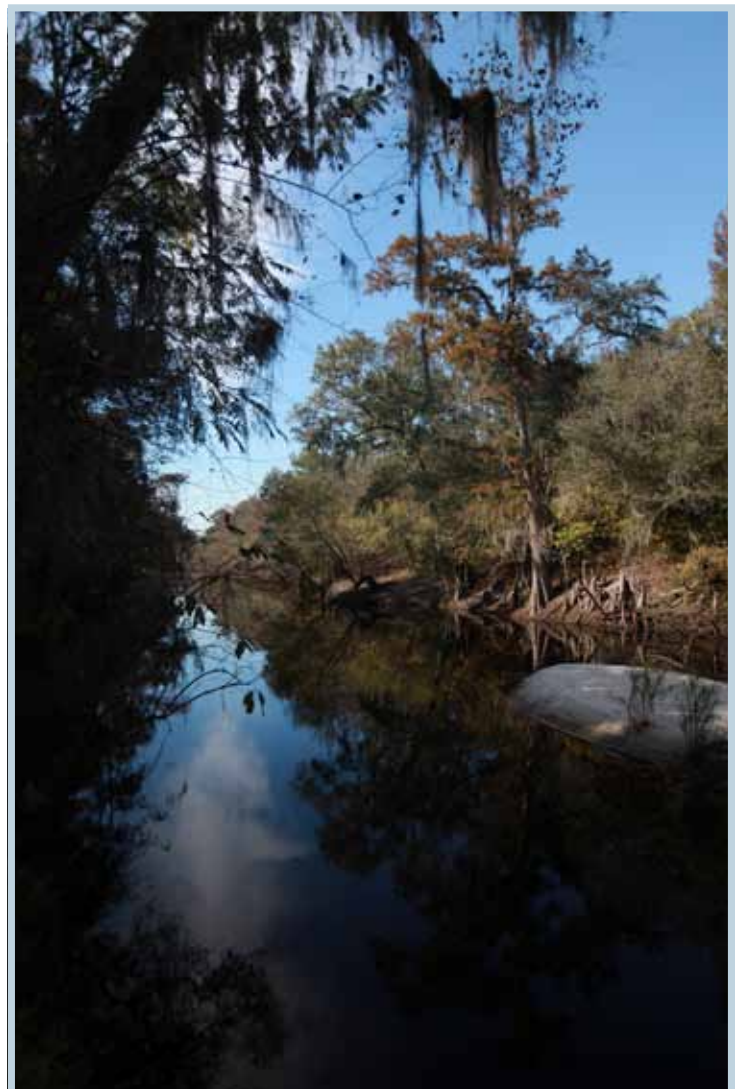
The project is another great public-private partnership, with two-thirds of the funding from Florida Communities Trust, and one-third being donated by two family foundations. The trail will be named the “Luther Columbus Gracy and Margaret Stephens Gracy Trail”, and will eventually connect the City of Alachua with the City of Lake Butler. The land was purchased from Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU), which had originally acquired the property two decades ago for a rail spur that was never built.

ACT will begin immediately to develop hiking trails, an overlook, and other amenities on the Santa Fe River Preserve property. We will be soliciting funds for the engineering and bid documents for the development of the bike trail, the entire length of which is expected to be 17 miles. The paving of this bike trail is expected to require both public and private funds to complete. ACT has established an initial endowment of \$90,000 for this project, which we hope to increase ten-fold to pay for its perpetual maintenance once fully developed.

We anticipate an opening of the nature preserve in time for the early spring bloom of wild azaleas and rain lilies, which abound on the banks. There are also large birch trees, cypresses, and gums in the bottomlands, and a ridge of live oaks and pines in the uplands with lots of

sparkleberry in the understory. Bears frequent the river corridor, and there is a rare and endangered mussel in this watershed.

The project would not have been possible without the support of the 1923 Fund (thank you Sam Goforth, Mary Ann Cofrin, and the entire board), and Paul Huisking of the Huisking Foundation. We especially thank the staff of Florida Communities Trust: Ken Reecy, Grant Gelhardt, Delbert Harvey, and Kristin Coons for bringing this to fruition through many twists and turns; and to the staff of GRU, especially Ann Mullins, for their patience. Hutch conceived the project a decade ago and has worked on it ever since, Julieanne Tabone wrote the original grant proposal, Liz Binford did much of the mapping and amendments, Ivor Kincaide completed the negotiations with adjacent landowners, and Melissa Murphy sorted out the title work – thank you to a great team!



📷 Bluffs overlooking the Santa Fe River

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**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA CAMPAIGN FOR CHARITIES**

Alachua Conservation Trust greatly appreciates the generous support provided by the University of Florida Campaign for Charities (UFCC). Each year, the UFCC raises money for nonprofit organizations in Gainesville and surrounding areas. *The 2012 campaign kicks off soon- if you are a UF employee, please consider making Alachua Conservation Trust your charity this year.*

TUSCAWILLA LEARNING CENTER – IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR

Over the last month, summer rains filled Tuscawilla Lake. Alligators, frogs, and wading birds have returned to enrich Tuscawilla Learning Center's beautiful outdoor classroom. TLC also has a new interpretive trail through the woods that ends with a vista of the lake. This meandering trail highlights the significant shifts in forest type and elevation along the Prairie's margins. We are excited to put the trail to use as the learning center awakes from summer hibernation, and we begin TLC's fall classes.

We begin this fall with a tribute to the Tremendous Trees around us. In October, children and families will come out to the glorious Tuscawilla Prairie in Micanopy for an introduction to our local forest. They will be introduced to tree leaf vocabulary and try out their new knowledge playing such games as a leaf relay and leaf shape scavenger hunt. By the end of this activity-filled day of crafts and exploration, the kids will have a whole new relationship with their tall neighbors, the trees.

November will be an exciting time for the Tuscawilla Learning Center as we offer a brand new lesson... "Did you hear that? What was that sound?" TLC's November program will focus on Things that go Bump in the Night. As winter approaches and daylight hours shorten, we will

explore the mysterious creatures that sleep while we play and forage while we dream. Who are they and how do they do what they do? Be prepared to put your imaginary night goggles on as we explore nature's nightlife and the quiet-time chorus.

As the chill of North Central Florida's December weather settles us cozily indoors, TLC will be exploring Winter in the Wild. How do local plants and animals make it through the cold without a warm fire to sleep by? Children will learn about the different adaptations and behaviors that seasonal changes bring out in the best of us. Our outdoor learning space facilitates a deep connection with the environment that gets kids brainstorming, dancing, and singing about winter in the wild.

Upcoming TLC program schedules are listed on ACT's website: www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org, for more information, e-mail: TuscawillaLC@gmail.com or call (352) 466-0204. Pre-registration is required.




LAND MANAGEMENT UPDATE

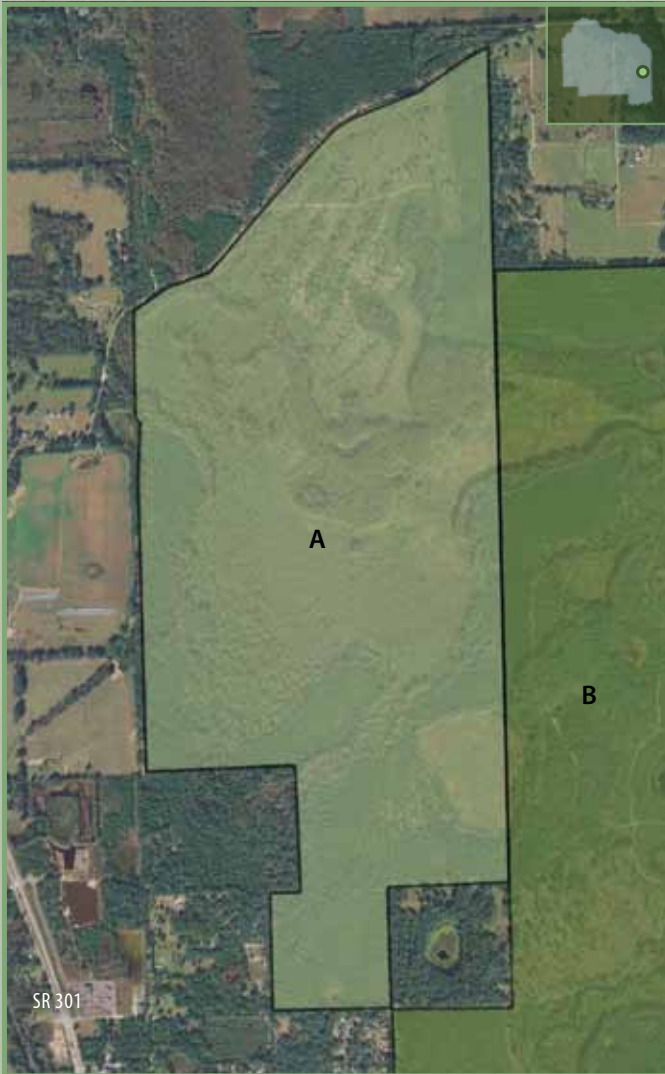
Recently, ACT conducted the last prescribed burn of the year- 19 acres of pine plantation at Prairie Creek Preserve. Volunteers will soon be planting native grasses and longleaf pines to take advantage of the brief window following a burn when dense undergrowth is absent and these plants can flourish. In two years, the burn will be repeated to give them another chance to spread and grow. The lessons learned here, reverting a pine plantation to native pineland, will soon be applied on a much larger scale at ACT's new Little Orange Creek Preserve (see pg.10) in Hawthorne.

In addition to restoration, there is considerable work ahead to make ACT's new acquisitions available for public recreation (e.g. designing and building trails and parking areas), particularly the rail trail from Alachua to Lake Butler. Eventually, we hope to provide many new places in Alachua County for hiking, biking, riding horses, or simply relaxing under the shade of a big hickory tree- listening to the cicadas and songbirds signal another end to the summer. We are looking forward to seeing you out there!



 Prescribed burn at Prairie Creek Preserve

PRESERVE PROFILE: LITTLE ORANGE CREEK




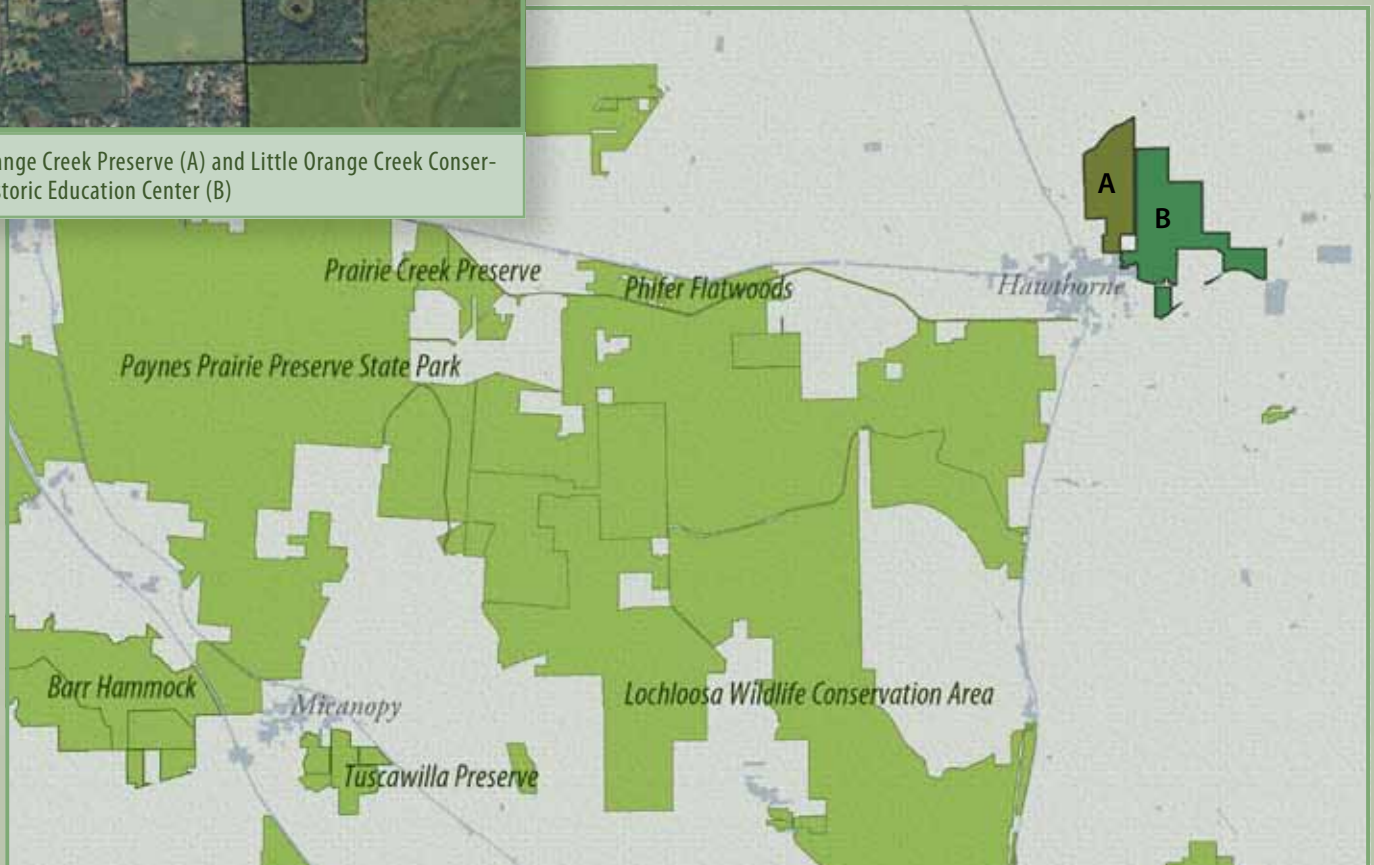
Little Orange Creek Preserve (700 acres) is one of ACT's newest acquisitions- the purchase was finalized earlier this spring using a grant from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and Alachua County Forever.

Eventually, the preserve will include a network of trails that connect with the City of Hawthorne's Little Orange Creek Conservation and Historic Education Center (1200 acres), another relatively new park that was championed by the late Dr. Kathy Cantwell and the Putnam Land Conservancy.

There is considerable work ahead to return these lands to a more natural state, and the management of the two properties will be closely coordinated between the various government and non-profit organizations involved. Large parts of Little Orange Creek Preserve are basin swamp with a mix of cypress, tupelo, and red maple. The uplands were historically a mix of sandhill and flatwoods that were steadily converted to pine plantations many years ago. Restoration will involve thinning, prescribed burns, and replanting. In addition, ACT is working with adjacent landowners and exploring the possibility of expanding the preserve in the near future.

The rich variety of habitats supports a wonderful diversity of plants and animals. Bears regularly travel through the area, and have been photographed numerous times using trail cameras. Other large mammals include deer, coyotes, bobcats, and otters. The freshwater marshes and swamps provide excellent habitat for many species of wading birds and other wetland-dependent species.

 Little Orange Creek Preserve (A) and Little Orange Creek Conservation and Historic Education Center (B)





ALACHUA CONSERVATION TRUST

7204 SE County Road 234
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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 Alachua County, Florida. ACT protects land through purchase, donation, and conservation easement.

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.

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