



Fall 2010

Alachua Conservation Trust Gazetteer

GET OUTSIDE!

FALL 2010

Practical Knots for Everyday Uses taught by Ben Thompson at Prairie Creek Lodge, September 4th, 10:30am
Learn basic knots and hitches to use at home and in the field.

Edible & Medicinal Plants taught by Susan Marynowski at Prairie Creek Preserve, September 12th, 9:00am

Birding for Kids at Tusawilla Preserve, taught by members of Alachua Audubon Society. This class is specially designed for children, but adults are definitely welcome. Date and time TBD.

Creepy Crawly Spiders at Tusawilla Preserve, October 9th, 10am
Golden Orb Spiders, Garden Spiders, and Orchard Spiders, come learn them all.

Birding with Alachua Audubon Society at Tusawilla Preserve taught by Ivor Kincaide, November 21st, 8:30am

For directions and more information please visit www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org or call (352) 373-1078.



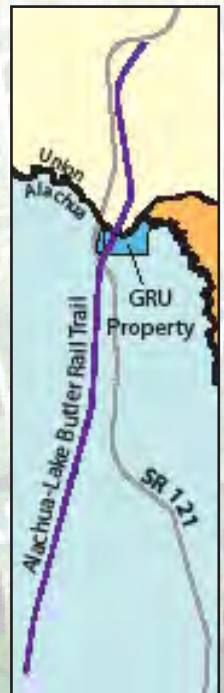
Photo by Dan Rountree.

SANTA FE-RIVER CREEK PRESERVE & ALACHUA-TO-LAKE BUTLER TRAIL PROJECT

In 2008, ACT applied for a Florida Communities Trust grant to protect nearly a square mile of land along the Santa Fe River. At the same time, we submitted an application to the Office of Greenways & Trails for funding to purchase a rail trail from just north of the City of Alachua to Lake Butler. Disappointingly, both projects narrowly missed being funded and were put on waiting lists.

The core lands in this project are owned by Gainesville Regional Utilities, which has declared them surplus. The City Commission indicated their interest in selling the land for public use. A few months ago, ACT was informed that the purchase of portions of these projects could now be funded, due in part to the lower costs of land for the projects above us on the list. Our funding partner, Florida Communities Trust, has been creative and flexible – now it is up to ACT to move quickly and raise a substantial cash match (more than \$300,000) before the end of the year.

The seven-mile rail trail will connect with a longer corridor, and will cross the river where it will also serve as an embarkation point for the Santa Fe River Paddling Trail. Regional trail network plans include extending the Lake Butler connection down to Palatka and up to Lake City. Ultimately, we envision Palatka's trail being connected to the Gainesville-Hawthorne Rail Trail. A 100-mile loop of completely off-road paved bike trails in north Florida would be a tourism attraction of incredible vision and value. Let us know how you can help!



PUTTING THE "TRUST" IN ALACHUA CONSERVATION TRUST

Part of the "trust" in a local land trust is counting on our supporters. Thank you to our hundreds of donors, and to these folks who contributed their special talents this past year:

Scores of people made our Conservation Stewards Awards at Haile Homestead a huge success: our honorees **J.D. Henry, Gladys Lane, and Tom Walker**, who brought lots of family and well-wishers; all the Haile docents in full regalia, led by the unflappable **Karen Kirkman**. **Gracy Castine** coordinated the evening, and **Steve Robitaille** debuted his historic play to a standing ovation. **Pete Theokisto of Everyman Sound** generously supplied the PA system, and **Tommy Clay** played **Paramore's** piano so sweetly. **Joe Courter** and the **Civic Media Center** and the **Sheriff's Explorers** made the traffic and parking flow safely and smoothly. Thanks to all our event volunteers: **Luke Hutchinson, Richard Vories, Darrell Hartman, Ben Thompson, David Trenor, Cat Gowan**, and the many bartenders and auction assistants.

Hats off to **Storm Roberts of WKTK** for wrangling a bunch of commercial time for ACT to help listeners better understand north Florida's environment, and to ACT board members **Eric Flagg** and **Bill Bryson** for producing our spots, and to **Tatiana McGarry** for all the research and writing.

Our support from Gainesville's vibrant arts community continues, with the **Melrose Open Air Arts** celebration selecting ACT to be their charitable recipient – thank you **Harriet Huss**. Many enjoyed **Margaret Ross Tolbert's** book-signing for *Aquiferous* at Prairie Creek Lodge. **Ana Varela** and the **Micanopy Artist Co-op** again raised funds for Tusawilla Preserve at their annual Christmas art sale. **Brophy's Pub** hosted **Weeds of Eden, Waiting on Brian**, and **Lars Din** for ACT's musical 21st birthday party.

The **Florida Works** crew - **Angela Pate, Joe Johnson, Kim Tesch-Vaught**, and **Tempforce** - helped ACT bring on five workers this year, who we were happy to train and employ. These folks worked hard on indoor and outdoor projects – and we know they valued their time with us.

Thanks to the dudes who worked chest-deep in Prairie Creek clearing snags and out-witting alligators: **Doug Hornbeck, Brack Barker, Ben Thompson, Tony Davanzo, Ivor Kincaide, and Hutch**. We appreciate **Florence Recycling** for all your help with really big clean-up projects that were only possible with your cheerful crew, big machines, and can-do attitude. To **Nick Paradis**, bridgebuilder at Blues Creek Ravine, thank you for seeing a need and making it happen.

We appreciate the strategy of **Jeannette Peters**, who facilitated ACT's corporate planning retreat. Thank you to **Steve Kattell** and **Kim Ball** for their second year of completing ACT's audit and annual financial report. To our banker **Sam Goforth of Wells Fargo** - we appreciate your valuable insights into our fiscal performance and fundraising needs.

We appreciate **Jacob Cravey** and **Earth Givers** and **Laura Avila** for coordinating volunteers from 26 countries to plant 2,000 Longleaf Pine seedlings at Prairie Creek Preserve.

Thanks to the students of **Florida Alternative Breaks** for planting trees, UF's **Young Entrepreneurs for Leadership and Sustainability** for de-fencing and planting, and the UF Law School's freshmen class for tearing down the wall. And thanks to **Kate Causeman** and **Joanna Reilly-Brown** of UF's Conservation Clinic for waiver research and drafting and wetlands mitigation research. **Bryan Basinger** provided great assistance with our rezoning project.

ACT has newish computers, thanks to **David Dykes at UF Surplus Property**. Thank you **Google, ESRI, and TechSoup** for the free and discounted software. And without **Charles Thompson**, the Computer King, none of this stuff would run.

Kudos to **Joni Ellis** for coordinating ACT's environmental class schedule for spring and summer. The volunteer faculty included: **Linda Tyson, Ben Thompson, Meg Niederhofer, Mark Stowe, Jon Reiskind, Mark Garland, Rex Rowan, Brack Barker** and **Lars Anderson**, and the ACT staff.

Thank you **Florida Native Plant Society** for making possible the Alice Tyler Bluebird Trail at Tusawilla Preserve. And to our BioBlitz leaders: **Jack Putz, Bob Simons, Erick Smith, and Anne Barkdoll**, thanks for intrepid botanizing and for not losing anybody in the swamp.

So many professionals and businesses help ACT on a regular basis that it's hard to list them all – but here's a shot: **David Menet** our faithful real estate attorney, **Simon Cordery at Water & Air Research, Al Haaker**, our surveyor, and **Harold Wise** for additional help, **John Barrow** for drafting, **GeoHazards** for subsurface explorations, and **Candler Appraisal Services, Alonzo Perkins**, and **Emerson Appraisals**.

We are inspired by **Florida Communities Trust**, a creative and purpose-driven land conservation funding agency. And **Alachua County Forever's** staff – **Ramesh Buch, Brian Block, and Sandra Vardaman**, who always make saving our special places look easy.

Thanks to **Ralf Brooks, Esq.** for sorting out a complicated conservation easement amendment, to **Bob Rowe** for remembering ACT's role in protecting the Turkey Creek watershed, and to **Ed Crapo** for continuing to recognize conservation lands in an increasingly difficult tax environment.

We value the **Gainesville City Parks** chain-of-command: **Stefani Nagid, Michelle Parks, Paul Folkers, Steve Phillips, and Russ Blackburn** – for approving and administering the Wild Spaces-Public Places program for the City.

Now that the six-month long scrum is over regarding the renewal of Wild Spaces – Public Places: thank you **Barry Rutenberg, Brent Christianson, David Coffey, Pegeen Hanrahan, Jack Hughes, Will Abberger**, and others – we'll continue the conversation in the near future.

And to **Kathy Cantwell, Wes Skiles, David Anthony, Larry Harris, and Dale Habeck** – we can't believe you're gone so soon. Despite all that you did, we've still got plenty of work to do.



THE REVOLVING TREE FUND: A NEW CYCLE OF SUSTAINABILITY

On June 5th, 2010, a group of volunteers planted 2,000 Longleaf Pine seedlings at Prairie Creek Preserve to help offset carbon emissions. This project was possible thanks to the Revolving Tree Fund, a new initiative by Earth Givers, Inc. to raise money for investment in carbon offset strategies. Earth Givers is a local nonprofit organization whose mission is to “help people create more sustainable lifestyles by reducing CO2 emission through energy conservation, alternative energy development, and carbon sequestration projects.”

The idea behind the Revolving Tree Fund is that revenues collected to offset carbon use will be used to plant trees in the same community. To meet the challenge of planting trees without owning or leasing land, Earth Givers partnered with Alachua Conservation Trust to plant trees at ACT preserves. Earth Givers establishes verification and certification for the trees planted, sells the carbon offsets, and replenishes the fund that provides money to purchase trees. ACT has the land management and stewardship capacity to ensure that planted trees remain healthy and live long enough to satisfy their full ecologic and carbon-offset potential. The goal is to create a model for a carbon offset system that can be implemented around the country in communities already investing in conservation and protection of the land.

To contribute to the Revolving Tree Fund, go to www.NeutralGator.org.

Another initiative of Earth Givers, Neutral Gator educates people about carbon consumption. Visitors to Gator football games and other events can calculate their carbon footprint for specific trips and the monetary value of offsetting the carbon they generate. Now you can root for the home team *and* support local conservation efforts, two of the biggest reasons we choose to call Gainesville home.



Photo by Jacob Cravey

PLANT PROFILE

Latin Name: *Vernonia angustifolia*

Common Name: Ironweed



The rich purple of Ironweed flowers and its tall straight stems make this plant easy to spot throughout the state of Florida in meadows and fallow fields. This native perennial plant is 2 to 4 feet tall and unbranched. The central stem is round, hairless, and white, light green, or reddish purple. Leaves are alternate and the flower cluster is quite dense. Ironweed blooms from summer to early fall, and butterflies love them, especially the Gulf Fritillary. You can see them along the banks of Camps Canal where it meets County Road 234 or at Tusawilla Preserve, both in southeastern Alachua County. Photo by Hutch.



On Earth Day families from Noah's Endeavor explored the trails at Prairie Creek Preserve. Noah's Endeavor is a program that facilitates adapted and inclusive community recreation for young people with and without disabilities. To find out more information about Noah's Endeavor visit endeavorrecreation.wetpaint.com. Photo by Cat Gowan.

In April, over thirty creative and inspiring minds attended a Planning Charrette at Prairie Creek Lodge. Participants developed plans for scenarios that the Lodge could be used for, such as horse boarding, environmental education, or special events. Photo by Liz Binford.



WES SKILES,

HERO TO THE SPRINGS

Wes Skiles, after a life of adventure and no small amount of danger, passed away on July 21st doing what he loved best - scuba diving. A crowd of hundreds gathered at the Celebration of Life held in his memory July 28th at Ginnie Springs to tell stories of his exploration of underwater frontiers. Wes was honored by ACT as a Conservation Steward in 2005.

Wes started scuba diving at 13. As a teenager he spent weekends at Ginnie Springs, ultimately working with the owner, Bob Wray, to clean out the spring and create the recreation area. Wes worked at Ginnie Springs in the 1980s to promote and ensure the safety of diving in the springs. Starting in 1999, Wes served on the Florida Springs Task Force, with the attitude that every spring should be protected.

A pioneer underwater cinematographer and still photographer, Wes worked frequently with National Geographic and research teams in deep diving explorations. He frequently showed his films at area schools and spoke to students about the importance of Florida's springs. His passion is inspiring people to preserve the water systems of the world, from the springs in North Florida to the seas in Antarctica.

FALL INTO A SPRING THIS SUMMER

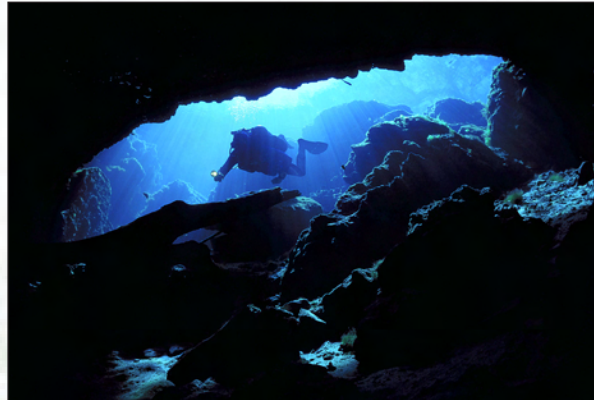
Springs are the site of our earliest ancestral settlements, they captivated the imagination of European explorers, and today they are our finest respite from Florida's summer sauna. As windows into the aquifer, springs focus our attention on the water cycle that sustains us.

While we have managed to protect some of our Florida springs, all of them show degrees of impact from groundwater pollution, primarily nutrients from residential and agricultural runoff. People are the source of eutrophication.

ACT's mission of purchasing land and accepting conservation easements has preserved thousands of acres of valuable recharge area. This is ultimately how we will save our springs.

Today, two springs that feed the Santa Fe River are for sale. One is a first magnitude spring, and the other is a second magnitude. In both cases, ACT is working with the landowners and agencies to find funding and arrive at a price that is fair. But with the low funding of Florida Forever, and with Alachua County's funds not available outside the county (both springs are just over the county line), ACT is focusing on private philanthropy to save them.

Springs are to geology what flowers are to plants. North Florida doesn't have rocky mountains or grand canyons or great lakes - but we have something every bit as awe-inspiring and worthy of protection. If you'd like to find out



more about our springs, visit the Florida Museum of Natural History's new exhibit 'The Blue Path: Protecting Florida's Springs.' Or better yet, just jump in the nearest spring and think about how you can help protect these geological wonders. Photo by Wes Skiles.

IN MEMORIAM OF WES SKILES



Donald & Margot Alexander
Rick Allen
Francine Alvarez
Stephen Alvarez
Kim Anway-Anastasia
Applied Technology & Mangement
Aquatic Education Group
Suzanne Arpin

Julie Barber
Tony Barr
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Randall Brown
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Sarah Whitaker
Laurie Wilson
Sue Wilson
James Wolfe
Jill Yager
James Edward York
Anonymous

PRAIRIE CREEK CONSERVATION CEMETERY OPEN IN EASTERN ALACHUA COUNTY

Green cemeteries are for those who want to reunite people with the land. These natural cemeteries have been a common end-of-life option in most other countries and in most other centuries. More recently, the green burial movement has been gaining popularity in the United States.

Alachua Conservation Trust and the newly formed Conservation Burial, Inc. (CBI) have opened a green cemetery in Alachua County. "Green burial" uses only biodegradable materials instead of concrete vaults and caskets made of metal, valuable woods, and synthetic materials. "Conservation burial" takes this a step further by putting revenue back into the land, either for restoration or for further acquisition of conservation lands. Pet remains and cremated remains are also accepted at the cemetery.



The new cemetery is a 78-acre tract of rolling meadows and forest nestled between Paynes Prairie Preserve, Lochloosa Wildlife Management Area, and ACT's Prairie Creek Preserve about seven miles east of downtown Gainesville. It is also linked to the Gainesville-Hawthorne State Trail through hiking, biking, and horseback riding trails. A memorial wall for listing the names of deceased loved ones and a pavilion are in the planning stages.

Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery has met the Conservation Burial

Ground standard, the highest level of certification offered by the non-profit Green Burial Council. The property will also be further protected by a perpetual conservation easement.

Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery is registered with the state as an exempt cemetery. The UF's Conservation Clinic at the Levin College of Law was instrumental in early research and registration of the cemetery with the state of Florida.

The cemetery's exempt status means that plots may not be pre-sold, but must be purchased at the time of need. It is important for people interested in a green or conservation burial to communicate their final wishes to family members and consider creating a savings account specifically for end-of-life costs.

If you would like to know more about Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery or would like to fill out a Final Wishes Form please visit the cemetery's website: www.ConservationBurialInc.com

KATHY CANTWELL, ENVIRONMENTALIST AND SMARTH GROWTH ADVOCATE

On July 20th, North Florida lost a devoted and tenacious environmentalist, Dr. Kathy Cantwell, who left behind a legacy of activism and support for the green spaces of Florida.

Kathy started her career as a physician, graduating from UF and completing her residency in pediatrics in 1979. After a bicycling accident resulted in partial paralysis, she closed her practice and began campaigning tirelessly for environmental conservation.

Kathy was one of the founding members of the citizen's committee that created Alachua County Forever and was a member of the Clean Air and Water Political Action Committee. She remained on the Alachua County Land Conservation Board, which recommends lands to the county for purchase. Kathy headed the Suwannee-St. Johns chapter of the Sierra Club for two years and served on the board of Women for Wise Growth. Kathy was also honored by ACT as a Conservation Steward in 2002.

Kathy co-founded the Putnam Land Conservancy, ACT's neighboring land trust to the east. Projects she spearheaded include the preservation of 1200 acres surrounding Little Orange Creek. Kathy spent decades fighting for the wild spaces of North Florida, and due to her efforts, our waters are less polluted, our air is cleaner, and development has been prevented in significant natural areas.

Kathy was interred as the first burial in Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery under a magnolia tree – the flowers of which symbolize perseverance and love of nature. Her birthday will be celebrated with an informal party at Prairie Creek Lodge on the evening of September 10th.



Kathy Cantwell (middle) canoeing with Lauren Day and Meg Niederhofer in Putnam County. Photo by Hutch.



The Florida Native Plant Society visited Tuscowilla Preserve with Mark Garland who focused on grasses, reeds, and rushes (right). They also toured the newest addition to Paynes Prairie and Prairie Creek Preserve safari-style (above). Photos by Hutch.



**WOULD YOU LIKE TO
BE A DOCENT AT
HISTORIC HAILE HOMESTEAD?**



The Historic Haile Homestead (HHH) in southwestern Alachua County relies on volunteer docents to educate visitors about the house and its treasures. Docents volunteer once a month for four hours to give tours of the Homestead and interpret what life was like for the Haile family.

Please join us in November at HHH for an open house and orientation for those interested in being docents. The date and time will be announced soon.

To learn more about HHH and the Haile family, visit www.HaileHomestead.org. For more information or to register for the open house, please visit our website or call (352) 373-1078.

Photo courtesy HHH.

**UPCOMING EVENTS
FALL 2010**

A Celebration for Kathy Cantwell at Prairie Creek Lodge
September 10th, 5:00-10:00pm

Tour the Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetery and the newest addition to the Preserve. Refreshments will be provided and a donation requested. Please RSVP on Facebook or email Info@AlachuaConservationTrust.org.

Florida-Friendly Yard Tour & Seminar
September 18th, 9:00-11:30am

“Florida-Friendly” represents nine principles for the homeowner designed to protect the ecology of Florida by promoting, efficient, economical, and environmentally sound landscaping practices. The tour is free, but you need to register to get the map and locations of display homes and yards. To register or receive more information Contact Peggy Vanyo at (352) 995-2402 or email mvanyo@alachuacounty.us.

Holiday Wreath-Making with Natural Materials taught by Meg Niederhofer, December 4th, 1pm at Prairie Creek Ranch. Learn to use grapevines and other native vegetation to create beautiful and environmentally-friendly holiday decorations. RSVPs required: Info@AlachuaConservationTrust.org

For directions to ACT properties and Preserves or for more information please visit www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org or call (352) 373-1078.



Volunteers planted 2000 Longleaf Pine seedlings at Prairie Creek Preserve for the Revolving Tree Fund. Photo by Jacob Cravey.

Again this year, ACT had the help of the Young Entrepreneurs for Leadership & Sustainability, a summer program for high school students. This program is run by the University of Florida's Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation in the Warrington College of Business. Students helped rake fire lines for prescribed fire (above), removed fencing, and planted longleaf pine seedlings. Photo by Ivor Kincaide.



HAVE YOU HEARD THIS ONE?

Q: What did the judge say when a skunk walked in to her courtroom?

A: Odor in the court!

Q: What kind of luggage did the turkey vulture take on his airplane trip?

A: Carrion.

Q: Why didn't the tree want to play checkers?

A: Because he was a chestnut.

Q: What do you call two young married spiders?

A: Newly webs.

Q: What did the father buffalo say to the boy buffalo when he left for school?

A: Bison!

Q: What do you get when you cross a four leaf clover and poison ivy?

A: A rash of good luck.

Q: What kind of tree do fingers grow on?

A: A palm tree.

Q: What do you get if you divide the circumference of a pumpkin by its diameter?

A: Pumpkin pi.

Q: What do you call a mushroom who buys everyone drinks and is the life of the party?

A: A fun-gi.

Got a good nature joke? Email it to ACT:
Info@AlachuaConservationTrust.org



The Longleaf Ecology and Forestry Society (LEAFS) has launched its new website at longleafs.info to promote Longleaf Pines in reforestation. Photo by John Winn.

Brian Block plays at the Didgeridoo Jam in August at Prairie Creek Lodge. Photo by Hutch.



After an afternoon of chain sawing, the Potano Paddling Trail has been cleared of snags and Prairie Creek is passable from Newnans Lake to County Road 234. Thanks to those who helped: Brack Barker, Doug Hornbeck, Ben Thompson, Tony Davanzo, and ACT staff. Photo by Hutch.

Thanks to our generous donors!

\$10,000 +

Bob Rowe
Wilson Smith
Tom Walker
United Way Campaign
Anonymous

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FLORIDA BACK-TO-WORK PROGRAM: FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDS IN ACTION

Early this year, Alachua Conservation Trust was invited to participate in the Florida Back-to-Work program. This resulted in three additional full-time employees who were supported by a federal stimulus grant and matched by ACT funds. Through this program – which thus far has benefited ACT with over 2000 hours of labor at a savings of nearly \$63,000 -- ACT was able to hire two natural resource technicians and a computer programmer.

The work that these three amazing folks have contributed to ACT – including assistance with much-needed prescribed burns, exotics removal, land management activities, and enhanced mapping features on the website – would not have been possible this year but for the Back-to-Work program.

OVER 2000 MAN-HOURS
OF LABOR AT A SAVINGS OF
NEARLY \$63,000

Many thanks to Damien, Tony, and Andrew, and to all those at the Gainesville Chamber of Commerce, FloridaWorks and TempForce Gainesville for in making this program available to non-profit agencies.

ACT STAFF!

From left: Damien Rockwood, Tony Davanzo, Liz Binford, Ivor Kincaide, Lesa Holder, Robert Hutchinson, Andrew Bloss, Darise Middleton, Elena Powell. Photos by Liz Binford and Annabelle Anderson.



Have you heard us on the radio?

Thanks to a grant from KTK and SKY radio stations, ACT now has several radio ads playing every day. Tune into 98.5 KTK or The SKY 97.3 and listen for the cranes!

2010 CORPORATE SPONSORS

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ALACHUA CONSERVATION TRUST IS LOOKING FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS AND STORYTELLERS!

Have you kayaked the Potano Paddling Trail recently? Or hiked to the cypress swamp at Prairie Creek Preserve? Or spied the wildlife at Tuscawilla Preserve? ACT would love to hear your stories and see your pictures. We may even use them in future newsletters, on our website, or on Facebook. If you would like to help spread the word about ACT by sending us your stories and photos, please email us at Info@AlachuaConservationTrust.org, and let us know that we have permission to use your material. Thank you for your support, and for getting outdoors to enjoy our incredible natural environment.



Canoers on the Potano Paddling Trail in Newnans Lake.
Photo by Julie Anspach.

IN MEMORIUM OF DALE HABECK



Thank you to Barbara Rotundo for her donation in memory of Patricia Rotundo

Thank you to Robert & Mary Ellen Hanrahan for their donation in memory of David Anthony

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In August, over 30 incoming first-year law students helped remove fencing near Prairie Creek Lodge. Before ACT purchased this 750-acre property in 2009, it was used as an exotic game ranch. Photos by Liz Binford.



The Alliance of Florida Land Trusts, with member organizations from the panhandle to South Florida, met in February at Prairie Creek Lodge to discuss the future of conservation in Florida. Photo by Liz Binford.

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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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