

Exhibit F

Department of Environmental Protection, Outstanding
Florida Waters



**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

BOB MARTINEZ CENTER
2600 BLAIRSTONE ROAD
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-2400

RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

CARLOS LOPEZ-CANTERA
LT. GOVERNOR

HERSCHEL T. VINYARD JR.
SECRETARY

June 4, 2014

Ms. Jennifer Reed
Land Planning Coordinator
Florida Forestry Service
Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
The Conner Building
3125 Conner Boulevard - Room 237
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1650

RE: Land Use Plan for Babcock Ranch Preserve

Dear Ms. Reed:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the surface water quality classifications on and near Babcock Ranch Preserve in Charlotte and Lee Counties. There are no Outstanding Florida Waters located in or near the site (Rule 62-302.700, Florida Administrative Code (FAC)). Any surface waters on the site are classified as Class III waters (subparagraphs 62-302.400(16)(b)8. and 62-302.400(16)(b)36., FAC), which is the statewide default classification.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at the letterhead address (mail station 6511), by phone at 850/245-8429, or via E-mail at Eric.Shaw@dep.state.fl.us.

Sincerely,

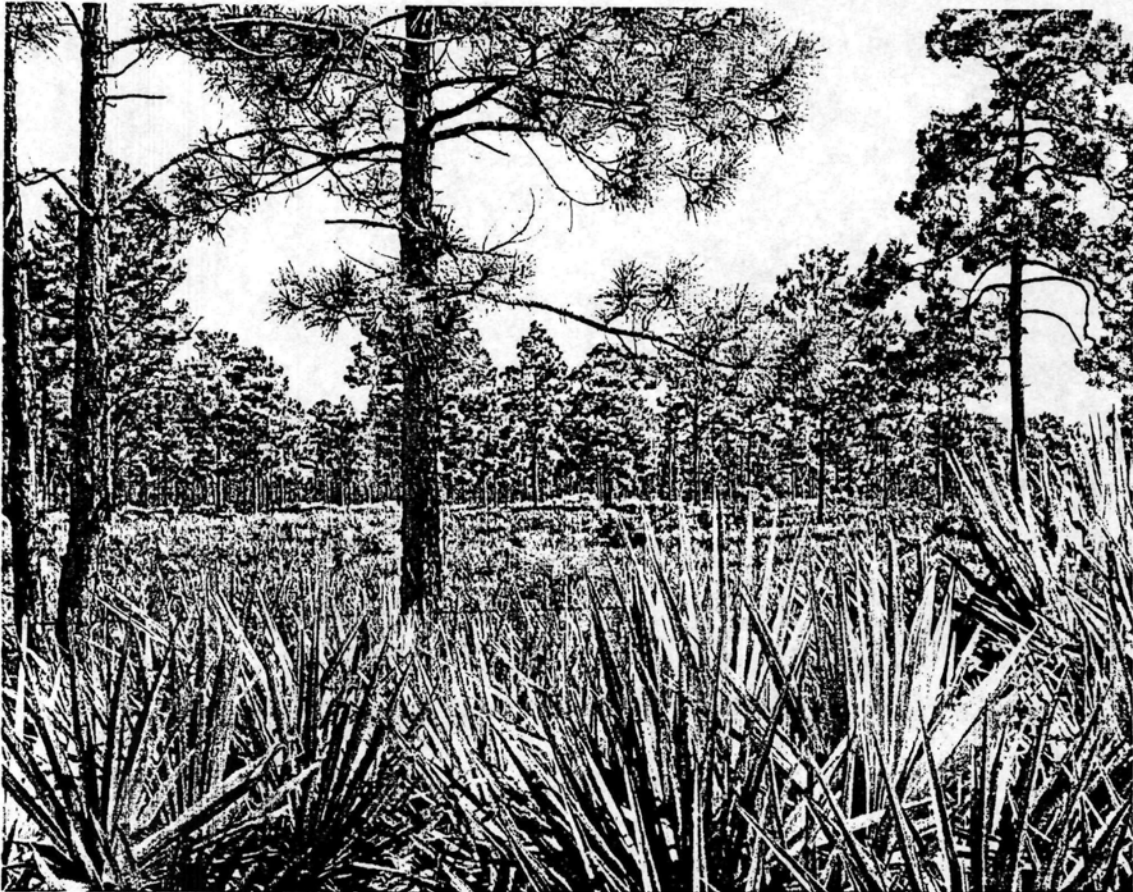
Eric R. Shaw
Environmental Manager
Standards Development Section

Exhibit G

Florida Forever Proposal and Evaluation Report; Management Prospectus

**BABCOCK RANCH
EVALUATION REPORT
Charlotte and Lee Counties**

FLORIDA FOREVER PROPOSAL



**Prepared By
Acquisition and Restoration Council Liaison Staff
And
Florida Natural Areas Inventory
December 2001**

BABCOCK RANCH EVALUATION REPORT CHARLOTTE and LEE COUNTIES

INTRODUCTION

General Description

The Babcock Ranch project consists of approximately 91,361 acres in Charlotte and Lee counties. Acquisition would assist in the creation of a wildlife corridor that would span from Lake Okeechobee to the Gulf of Mexico. The majority of the project area consists of mesic flatwoods with the center of the project dominated by Telegraph Swamp. This ten thousand acre swamp drains most of the project area. Portions of the project provide habitat for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker, crested caracara, and numerous other plants and animals. The project is proposed primarily as a less-than-fee simple acquisition a portion of the project will be acquired in full fee title. The evaluation team visited the project on September 25, 2001.

The majority of the Babcock Ranch project lies in southeastern Charlotte County; a small part extends into northeastern Lee County. It is contiguous with Fred C. Babcock-Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area (Babcock-Webb WMA) for approximately 6 miles (mostly Babcock Family Reserve portion; proposed Curry Lake conservation easement is contiguous for 0.75 mile) on the west, Fisheating Creek Florida Forever project for approximately 3 miles on the east, and Caloosahatchee Regional Park for approximately 1.5 miles on the south. Bright Hour Watershed conservation easement is situated approximately 12 miles to the north, Hall Ranch Florida Forever project (contiguous with Babcock-Webb WMA) is contiguous with the Babcock Family Reserve portion for approximately 3 miles (it is ca. 4 miles to the northwest of the proposed Curry Lake conservation easement), Hickey Creek Mitigation Park Wildlife and Environmental Area is located less than 1.5 miles to the south, Moya Sanctuary is located less than 1 mile east of the southeast boundary of the proposal, and the Caloosahatchee Ecoscape Florida Forever project and Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest lie 10.5 miles and 15 miles, respectively, to the southeast.

Purpose for Acquisition

The following goals and criteria for the project are the result of consensus approval of the ARC liaison staff, FNAI staff, and the staff of the Office of Environmental Services (DSL). The enumerated goals represent the acquisition objectives as set forth in Section 259.105(4), Florida Statutes. The criteria define resource concerns generally applicable to or known to be specific to this project and identify appropriate strategies for the management of those resources.

(a) Enhance the coordination and completion of land acquisition projects

1. All efforts need to be made, through the cooperation of the land buying State agencies, the federal government, and local governments to complete acquisitions projects begun prior to the Florida Forever program.

2. The use of fee simple acquisition as well as less than fee simple acquisition should be used to complete these projects.

(b) Increase the protection of Florida's biodiversity at the species, natural community, and landscape levels

1. To the greatest extent possible, the existing natural communities shall be managed to perpetuate (or restore if necessary) natural species composition and relative abundances, natural age structure, and natural processes. Areas of old growth forest shall be managed to retain old growth characteristics. Fire dependent communities have suffered from fire exclusion and will benefit from the re-introduction of fire, particularly growing-season fire. Native groundcover should not be disturbed by the construction of plow lines. Instead, natural fire breaks, existing roads, and black lines should be used to contain prescribed fires. When practical, natural fires (via lightning strikes) should be allowed to burn if they are within the parameters of a written prescription; burn plans should incorporate contingency plans for managing such fires.

2. To the greatest extent practical, facilities (such as buildings, parking lots, etc.) should be sited in already disturbed areas.

3. Although an exhaustive survey has not been conducted for vascular plants and animals, the project is known to harbor one FNAI-listed species of vascular flora and twenty rare animals. Occurrences of other listed species are probable. Special care will be necessary to insure that any facilities development is planned and that recreational uses are managed so as not to cause degradation of listed species habitat.

(c) Protect, restore, and maintain the quality and natural functions of land, water, and wetland systems of the state

1. Uses, public or private, which are incompatible or would interfere with the protection, restoration, or management of the natural resources for which this project is to be acquired shall be prohibited.

2. All management activities on Florida Forever land should include a monitoring component so that managers can judge the effectiveness of their actions. Management plans, which are required for all Florida Forever land, should indicate specifically how and when the results of management activities will be monitored and how that information will be used to improve subsequent management activities.

3. Approximately 12 percent of the land within the Resource Planning Boundary of the project is disturbed to the extent that FNAI does not classify it as natural community (majority in improved pasture and croplands). The majority of the disturbed areas were once flatwoods natural communities. These areas should be restored to their original natural character to the greatest extent possible. To the greatest extent practical, onsite plant germplasm (seeds and other propagules) should be used in restoration efforts.

4. Hydrology should be allowed to remain as natural as possible and water quality should be maintained or improved. Where necessary and practical, the natural, preexisting hydrology, should be restored by removing or cutting roads and filling or plugging any ditches.

(d) Ensure that sufficient quantities of water are available to meet the current and future needs of natural systems and the citizens of the state

1. As the demand for water statewide increases, protection and management of ground water recharge areas will have to increase so that natural systems and the citizens of the state will have sufficient quantities.

(e) Increase natural resource-based public recreational and educational opportunities

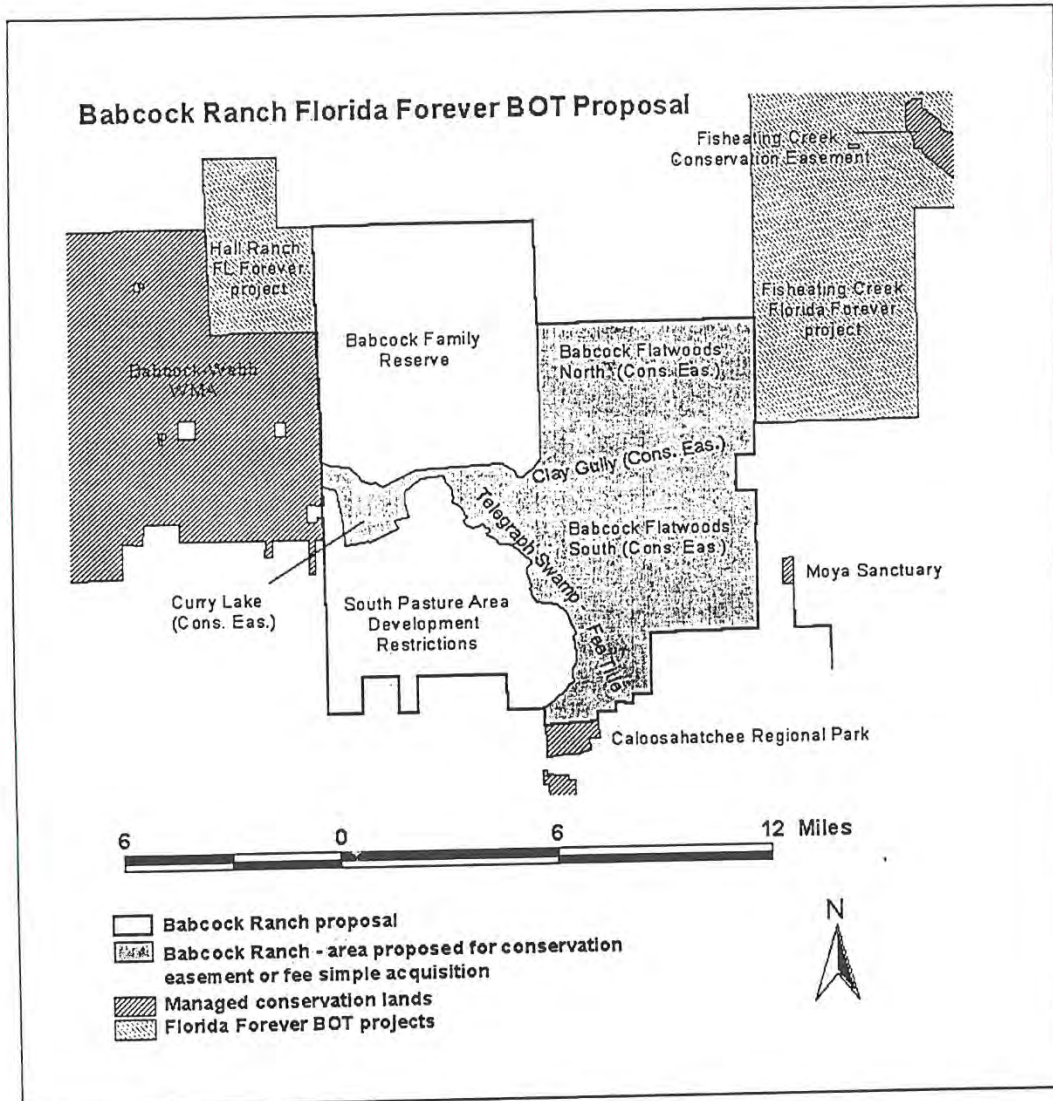
1. Management should provide for uses and recreational activities that are compatible with the protection of the rare and sensitive resources. Varied public recreational uses could include camping, picnicking, nature appreciation, hiking, and horseback riding.

(g) Increase the amount of forestland available for sustainable management of natural resources

1. To the greatest extent possible, the existing natural communities shall be managed to perpetuate (or restore if necessary) natural species composition and relative abundances, natural age structure, and natural processes. Areas of old growth forest shall be managed to retain old growth characteristics. Fire dependent communities have suffered from fire exclusion and will benefit from the re-introduction of fire, particularly growing-season fire. Native groundcover should not be disturbed by the construction of plow lines. Instead, natural fire breaks, existing roads, and black lines should be used to contain prescribed fires. When practical, natural fires (via lightning strikes) should be allowed to burn if they are within the parameters of a written prescription; burn plans should incorporate contingency plans for managing such fires.

RESOURCE DESCRIPTION

This assessment of Natural Communities is based on information provided in the proposal; data in the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) database; 1992 black and white aerial photographs; 1994/95 false-color, infrared U.S.G.S. Digital Ortho Quarter Quadrangles (DOQQs); Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) LANDSAT and Southwest Florida Water Management District land cover/land use data; and a site visit on September 25, 2001, by Carolyn Kindell (FNAI Managed Areas Biologist), Cathleen NeSmith (FNAI Zoologist), and ARC liaison staff. Kindell and NeSmith conducted an additional site visit on September 26, 2001.



The project consists of 91,361 acres, of which 43,621 acres is to be considered as less-than-fee acquisition (32,920 acres - Curry Lake, Babcock Flatwoods North, Clay Gully, and Babcock Flatwoods South) and fee simple acquisition (10,701 acres - Telegraph Swamp). The Babcock Family Reserve (27,801 acres) and the South Pasture Area (19,890 acres), which make up most of the western half of the Babcock ownership, are currently not part of property proposed for state acquisition. The Babcock Family wishes to retain the Babcock Family Reserve, which contains significant natural communities, in its current agriculture and protection usage. The South Pasture Area is under consideration for development. Portions of this area have high natural resource value and may be considered for conservation lands through negotiations.

The following discussion of natural resources (natural community descriptions and acreage and percentage estimates for each community) does not include the Babcock Family Reserve

and the South Pasture Area lands. However, all of the analyses based on Florida Forever Conservation Needs Assessment data (Appendix A), including the number of acres of highest priority conservation areas for Florida's rarest species incorporates the acreage for the entire Babcock Ranch (91,361 acres) project.

One of the principal purposes of the project is to protect significant natural habitat important to the Florida panther (*Puma concolor coryi*), red-cockaded woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*), and numerous other species of concern. This part of the state is rapidly being converted to agricultural and residential/commercial uses and Babcock Ranch contains a large mosaic of high quality uplands and wetlands representing some of the best remaining habitat in private ownership. Protection of the proposed property would also link existing conservation lands and conservation lands projects that stretch from Charlotte Harbor east to Lake Okeechobee.

The major natural communities present and their estimated size within the boundaries are Mesic Flatwoods/Wet Flatwoods, 55% (24,168 acres); Strand Swamp/Dome Swamp/Slough, 21% (9,051 ac); Wet Prairie, 7% (2,841 ac); and Depression Marsh/Basin Marsh, 5% (2,326 ac). Additionally, approximately 12% (5,235 ac) is land considered disturbed (e.g., improved pasture and croplands), and not assignable to any natural community.

Natural communities within Babcock Ranch delineated areas

Community	Acres	Percent of Proposal
mesic/wet flatwoods	24,168	55%
strand swamp/slough/dome swamp	9,051	21%
wet prairie	2,841	7%
depression marsh/basin marsh	2,326	5%
pasturelands/agriculture	5,235	12%
Total	43,621	100%

Mesic/Wet Flatwoods – The flatwoods present on the Babcock Ranch project are impressive in their extent and quality. Extensive acreages of high quality flatwoods occur throughout the property. The mesic flatwoods described in this assessment were primarily accessed from an east-west dirt road that runs through the center of Babcock Flatwoods North, approximately 6-9 miles east of Highway 31. This area consists of a mosaic of flatwoods interspersed with depression marshes and wet prairies, which have experienced very little disturbance, leaving high quality, intact ecotones (transition zones) between the different communities. Mesic flatwoods are predominantly found in the northern portion of the proposal (Babcock Flatwoods North), and consist of an open canopy of longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) with some south Florida slash pine (*Pinus elliotii* var. *densa*) and an intact groundcover. This area is frequently burned (average three-year fire return interval) and selectively logged. In some areas, especially to the west, thinning operations have resulted in an artificially sparse tree canopy. However most stands consist of trees of diverse ages, including occasional old growth flat tops and abundant regeneration. The midstory is practically nonexistent because of frequent fires. The understory is typically less than 1 m tall and consists of a relatively even mosaic of shrubs and herbs. The herbaceous layer is dominated by wiregrass (*Aristida beyrichiana*), with indiangrass (*Sorghastrum* sp.), and panic grasses (*Panicum* spp.). Dominant shrubs are saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*) and dwarf live oak (*Quercus minima*). Also common are wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), gallberry (*Ilex glabra*), rusty lyonia (*Lyonia ferruginea*), and huckleberry (*Gaylussacia dumosa*). Other plant taxa seen: St. John's-wort (*Hypericum*

reductum), yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris* spp.), paint brush (*Carphephorus corymbosus*), chalky bluestem (*Andropogon virginicus* var. *glaucus*), pawpaw (*Asimina reticulata*), bogbutton (*Lachnocaulon* sp.), gopher apple (*Licania michauxii*), and threeawn (*Aristida purpurascens*). Several game food plots (*Cassia* sp., brown-top millet) have been placed in these flatwoods.

High water prevented crossing Jack's Branch to the very northeastern corner of the property. From aerial photos this area appears to consist of high quality flatwoods with a higher canopy density than areas west of Jack's Branch. Red-cockaded woodpeckers occur in the flatwoods east and west of Jack's Branch (observed during site visit and information from Ben Breedlove), although the number and breeding status of colonies is not known at this time. Managing for this species should be paramount in any easement developed for this property.

Wet flatwoods that occur in the more northern areas of the property generally provide a transition zone between mesic flatwoods and forested wetlands. At the slightly lower elevations in the southeastern portion of the proposal (south of Clay Gully, east of Telegraph Swamp) wet flatwoods are more extensive. They are dominated by slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) and to a lesser extent south Florida slash pine (*Pinus elliottii* var. *densa*) in some areas. Areas observed were generally open, with a low (<1 m tall) understory comprised of wiregrass, beakrushes (*Rhynchospora* spp.), gallberry, saw palmetto, and wax myrtle. Other species noted include bachelor's buttons (*Polygala lutea*), pawpaw, foxglove (*Agalinis* sp.), yellow-eyed grass, and paint brush. Chocolateweed (*Melochia corchorifolia*), a non-native species found in disturbed sites, is found mainly along roadsides.

Strand Swamp/ Slough/Dome Swamp – A dominating feature of the Babcock Ranch property is Telegraph Swamp, which is oriented northwest to southeast through the center of the entire ranch. A large portion (ca. 10,700 acres) forms most of the western boundary of the area that is proposed for conservation easement and fee title purchase. Jack's Branch is a smaller system running from northwest to southeast through the northeastern corner of the proposal. These strand swamps are dominated by bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*). There are also open slough areas within Telegraph Swamp. Telegraph Swamp contains three weir systems to control water flow. Dome swamps are present to a lesser extent, often being surrounded by or adjacent to wet prairie communities.

High water levels prevented adequate inspection of the interior of these extensive communities. Canopy and sub-canopy species found in fringe areas include bald cypress, cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), dahoon (*Ilex cassine*), pond apple (*Annona glabra*), and pop ash (*Fraxinus caroliniana*). Bromeliads (*Tillandsia* spp.) are common epiphytes as well as golden polypody and resurrection fern (*Polypodium polypodioides*). Blechnum (*Blechnum serrulatum*) is common in the groundcover. One open water slough area observed near the periphery of Telegraph Swamp had an abundance of floating duckweed (*Lemna minor*), and patches of vegetation consisting of duck potato (*Sagittaria* sp.), arrowroot (*Thalia geniculata*), Carolina willow (*Salix caroliniana*), and buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*). Old World climbing fern (*Lygodium microphyllum*) was observed on the east edge of Telegraph Swamp. The extent of spread of this highly invasive non-native fern into the swamp and along its edge is not known at this time.

At the south end of Telegraph Swamp the large contiguous block of swamp breaks into

fingers of strands and domes that make up much of the south-central portion of the proposal. Some of these wetlands are extensive and appear to be relatively undisturbed. In others, evidence of fairly widespread cypress harvesting can be seen (1992 aerial photographs) and poses a threat to their quality. In some areas hog rootings were observed adjacent to the swamp along the roadside.

Wet Prairie – The wet prairie natural community is well represented within the proposal and often forms ecotonal bands between the cypress wetlands and adjacent flatwoods. It also occurs as open, grassy areas within the wet flatwoods and between depression marshes. These broad areas of low, herbaceous vegetation are dominated by wiregrass, wirey beakrushes (*Rhynchospora chapmanii*), and panic grasses. Other characteristic species include sedges (*Cyperus* sp., *Dichromena* sp.), meadow beauty (*Rhexia nutallii*), musky mint (*Hyptis alata*), blazing star (*Liatris garberii*), lovegrass (*Eragrostis* sp.), toothache grass (*Ctenium aromaticum*), pipeworts (*Eriocaulon* spp.), nutrushes (*Scleria* spp.), *Bigelovia* (*Bigelovia nudata*), and corkwood (*Stillingia aquatica*). Overall, the prairies appear to be of high quality and exhibit little invasion by woody species, especially within Babcock Flatwoods North. On the east side of Telegraph Swamp we observed large areas of shrub swamp consisting of tall wax myrtle and St. John's-wort (*Hypericum* sp.). These communities presumably represent fire-suppressed wet prairie systems.

Depression Marsh/Basin Marsh - Depression marsh/basin marsh and wet prairie systems occur throughout the property within a matrix of mesic and wet flatwoods. Many are high quality wetlands with little disturbance. Fire has helped maintain an essentially non-woody edge around many of the depressions observed; in a few depressions the surrounding shrub cover was rather dense indicating a lack of fire through this ecotonal region. A large freshwater marsh occurs in the Curry Lake area that forms the westernmost part of the proposal. This marsh and several associated with Clay Gully Branch (east-west drainage on the east side of Telegraph Swamp) have been disturbed by shallow ditch systems, which are used in maintenance of the pasture and cropland areas. Others have signs of trails through them indicating buggy or other vehicle use during dryer periods.

The marshes range from very small depressions with little or no woody vegetation in their centers to rather large areas having deeper, wetter centers that support Carolina willow, wax myrtle, buttonbush, sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*) and duck potato; rushes (*Juncus* sp.), St. John's-wort (*Hypericum* sp.), beakrushes, and nutrushes generally occupy the outer rims of these marshes in shallower areas.

Other - Small areas of xeric oak hammock were observed within Babcock Flatwoods North. Review of aerial photographs and DOQQs indicate patches of scrub or scrubby flatwoods along the southern boundary of the proposal. The Florida scrub-jay is known from the southwest portion of the ranch; surveys are needed to help determine the current status of the jay on Babcock lands and the extent and quality of suitable habitat.

Disturbance - Agricultural lands, pastures, and other disturbed areas (abandoned fields or areas that have been cleared, groundcover not intact) make up approximately 5,235 acres within the area currently delineated for state acquisition. These lands could be restored to native vegetation where feasible. Restoration of these areas to a high quality species composition of wet and mesic flatwoods or wet prairie may be difficult or very long term, as

restoration of wiregrass over large areas is difficult. However, the groundcover vegetation of these areas can be restored to native pyrogenic grasses so that fire, an important ecological function, can be restored to the system. In addition, the natural communities within which the agricultural lands are located are high quality (although fragmented) and could provide seed source for restoration of the agricultural lands. Significant acreage (ca. 2,771 ac) in Babcock Flatwoods South has been converted to farm fields or pasture and the very southeast corner appears (from aerial photography) to have been logged or consists of a very open tree canopy. Construction of a new farm field was taking place in this area during the field assessment; a washed out road prevented access farther south so the extent of conversion of natural habitat to agricultural fields in this area is unknown.

Dams across Telegraph Swamp presently function to lengthen the hydroperiod in the northern portion of the swamp. If the landowner agrees, these dams could be removed to allow for more natural drainage flow patterns in the swamp. However, at this time, it is understood that the seller wishes to retain the dams.

Aerial photography (1992) indicates an extensive road/trail network associated with farm fields, timbering, and cypress harvesting. Vehicle use through some of the marshes is also evident from aerial photography interpretation. However, because of an extremely low level of use on the smaller trails, their impact on the natural communities seems minimal. Aerial photography also indicates cypress harvesting was conducted in the smaller strand swamps in the Babcock Flatwoods South region and the southern portion of Telegraph Swamp South. It is unknown to what extent harvesting continues to take place. Shallow ditch systems, which are used in maintenance of the pasture and cropland areas, occur in some of the marshes throughout the proposal area. Clay Gully, running east-west between Telegraph Swamp and Jack's Branch has been channelized.

Exotics - Hog rootings were observed infrequently and were not particularly extensive. Old World climbing fern (*Lygodium microphyllum*) was observed on the central east side of Telegraph Swamp. This invasive fern formed a curtain of vegetation on the cypress edge where one of the dam systems was located. Two small patches (<5 acres) of melaleuca (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*) were observed. One was located on the edge of a pasture in the central part of the property and the other was east of the main north-south road in the southeastern portion of the proposal. From aerial photography and information in the proposal, melaleuca may be more prevalent near and along the southern boundary (adjacent to Caloosahatchee Regional Park) of the proposal. The managers of Babcock Ranch are actively controlling the spread of melaleuca on the ranch property. Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*) appears to be principally along the edges and unused portions of farm fields on the east side of Telegraph Swamp in Babcock Flatwoods South. It was also observed along the road that runs along the west side of the swamp within the South Pasture Area. Cogon grass (*Imperata cylindrica*) was observed along an east-west road just inside the western boundary of Babcock Flatwoods North, and also along another road running south through the west-central part of Babcock Flatwoods South. Neither occurrence appeared to have spread significantly from the roadside.

The proposed fee title and conservation easement areas of the Babcock Ranch project contain land of high biological and ecological value, especially when considered in conjunction with adjacent public lands and lands proposed for acquisition. Overall, the natural areas on

Babcock Ranch are well maintained with current management practices. Little soil disturbance was seen in the natural areas visited. Burning typically takes place in winter, every three years according to the land manager. If acquired, it is recommended that early warm season (March - June) burning be implemented and that management strategies reflect the diverse requirements of the many species of concern that inhabit the site.

BIODIVERSITY

Strategic Habitat Conservation Area

Nearly the entire Babcock Ranch consists of lands identified as Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (SHCAs) for the Florida panther, red-cockaded woodpecker, American swallow-tailed kite, Florida sandhill crane, short-tailed hawk, and/or wading birds. The largest area of SHCA, which extends over large expanses of the ranch, is for the Florida panther, and includes almost all of the major habitat types on the property. This is consistent and largely congruent with the Priority 1 panther habitat designation covering much of the property. Virtually all of the Telegraph Swamp wetland system on the property is an SHCA for swallow-tailed kite (as well as for panther). Wading bird SHCAs exist in patches around the ranch with the major concentration being within Telegraph Swamp. The area designated as "Babcock Flatwoods North" at the northeast corner of the ranch contains considerable acreage of SHCA for the red-cockaded woodpecker, which is documented in this area. Small areas of SHCA for the Florida sandhill crane exist in patches, predominantly in the southwest quadrant of the ranch, with the largest acreage being within the southern half of Telegraph Swamp. Finally, short-tailed hawk SHCA is concentrated at the southern end of Telegraph Swamp, between the swamp and the southern property line on both sides of the Charlotte/Lee county line. Overall, there is great overlap between these SHCAs, which demonstrates the species diversity and conservation importance of the Babcock Ranch.

FNAI Priority Conservation Area

An analysis of priority conservation areas based on Florida Forever Conservation Needs Assessment data may be found in Appendix A. Habitat conservation priorities for 265 of Florida's rarest species were mapped and divided into five priority classes. Appendix A shows the acres for each priority class found on Babcock Ranch. Overall the site contains approximately 44,000 acres (48%) of rare species habitat. Most of the habitat (25% of site) is Priority 5 habitat, followed by Priority 4 (15% of site) and Priority 3 (7% of site); twenty-two acres is Priority 2 habitat. The following table lists the acres of habitat for each species that may be found on the site, based on the FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities. Please note that habitat for these species may overlap so that the sum total of habitat for all species may be more than the total acreage of the priority conservation areas.

Rare species habitat on the Babcock Ranch site based on FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities for 265 species with the greatest conservation need.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Global Rank	Acres
<i>Deeringothamnus pulchellus</i>	beautiful pawpaw	G1	4,454
<i>Drymarchon corais couperi</i>	Eastern indigo snake	G4T3	15,370
<i>Aphelocoma coerulescens</i>	Florida scrub-jay	G3	508
<i>Caracara cheriway</i>	crested caracara	G5	38,832
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	bald eagle	G4	47
<i>Mycteria americana</i>	wood stork	G4	14,798

<i>Picoides borealis</i>	red-cockaded woodpecker	G3	48,149
<i>Ursus americanus floridana</i>	Florida black bear	G5T2	3,988

Under-represented Natural Communities

The Florida Forever natural communities analysis includes only those communities that are under-represented on existing conservation lands. This analysis provides a conservative estimate of the extent of these communities, because it identifies only relatively undisturbed portions of these communities that occur within their historic range. Appendix A lists the acreages of under-represented natural communities found on the site. Based on this analysis, Babcock Ranch contains approximately 30,000 acres of pine flatwoods (33% of site) and 538 acres of scrub (<1% of site).

OGT Significant Landscapes, Linkages, Corridors

The Babcock Ranch lies largely within the Big Cypress/Avon Park Ecological Greenway as identified through the Florida Greenways Mapping Project. Big Cypress/Avon Park is a Class 1 priority ecological greenway, the highest level of priority for acquisition within the proposed statewide ecological greenways system. This and other high priority ecological greenways represent the best opportunities to maintain large, connected landscapes that will best conserve biological diversity over the long term and maintain essential ecological processes and services including water quality and quantity protection, protection from storms, clean air, nature recreation, etc. The Office of Greenways & Trails concurs with its importance to the Florida Forever Program and fully supports acquisition of the property.

Natural Communities Mosaic & Large Landscape Component

The Babcock Ranch, along with the Fisheating Creek Ecosystem Florida Forever project and existing conservation lands, would contribute to a large landscape-sized protection area of more than 500,000 acres. This site is part of a Priority 2 landscape based on the Florida Forever analysis (Appendix A).

FNAI Element Occurrences

Appendix A lists the number of Element Occurrences by Global Rank (G-rank) that are found on the proposal. Note that the number of occurrences does not necessarily match the number of species in the following table because a) some species may have more than one occurrence on the proposal site, or b) some species observed on site lack sufficient data to justify addition to the FNAI database at this time. The table contains species falling into any of these observational categories, as well as species gleaned from other sources (e.g., Florida Breeding Bird Atlas) with different degrees of locational precision.

Rare plants and animals on Babcock Ranch Florida Forever proposal

Scientific Name	Common Name	Global Rank	State Rank	Federal Status	State Status
rare plants documented on site					
<i>Deeringothamnus pulchellus</i> (historical record)	beautiful pawpaw	G1	S1	LE	LE
rare plants potentially on site					
<i>Ophioglossum palmatum</i>	hand fern	G4	S2	N	LE
rare animals documented on site					

<i>Alligator mississippiensis</i>	American alligator	G5	S4	T(S/A)	LS
<i>Drymarchon corais couperi</i>	eastern indigo snake	G4T3	S3	LT	LT
<i>Gopherus polyphenus</i>	gopher tortoise	G3	S2	N	LS
<i>Aimophila aestivalis</i>	Bachman's sparrow	G5	S3	N	N
<i>Aphelocoma coerulescens</i>	Florida scrub-jay	G3	S3	LT	LT
<i>Aramus guarauna</i>	limpkin	G5	S3	N	LS
<i>Ardea alba</i>	great egret	G5	S4	N	N
<i>Athene cunicularia floridana</i>	Florida burrowing owl	G4T3	S3	N	LS
<i>Buteo brachyurus</i>	short-tailed hawk	G4G5	S1	N	N
<i>Caracara cheriway</i>	crested caracara	G5	S2	LT	LT
<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	little blue heron	G5	S4	N	LS
<i>Egretta thula</i>	snowy egret	G5	S3	N	LS
<i>Egretta tricolor</i>	tricolored heron	G5	S4	N	LS
<i>Elanoides forficatus</i>	swallow-tailed kite	G5	S2	N	N
<i>Eudocimus albus</i>	white ibis	G5	S4	N	LS
<i>Grus canadensis pratensis</i>	Florida sandhill crane	G5T2 T3	S2S3	N	LT
<i>Mycteria Americana</i>	wood stork	G4	S2	LE	LE
<i>Picoides borealis</i>	red-cockaded woodpecker	G3	S2	LE	LT
<i>Puma concolor coryi</i>	Florida panther	G5T1	S1	LE	LE
<i>Ursus americanus floridanus</i>	Florida black bear	G5T2	S2	N	LT
rare animals reported on site					
<i>Falco sparverius paulus</i>	southeastern American kestrel	G5T3 T4	S3	N	LT
<i>Sciurus niger shermani</i>	Sherman's fox squirrel	G5T3	S3	N	LS
rare animals near site					
<i>Crotalus adamanteus</i>	eastern diamondback rattlesnake	G4	S3	N	N
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	bald eagle	G4	S3	LT	LT

Beautiful pawpaw is known from Babcock-Webb WMA and an historic record (1928) from Babcock Ranch across SR 31 from Babcock-Webb WMA. It very likely occurs within the Babcock Ranch proposal today. It is found in open flatwoods habitat with a low shrub layer alternating with grasses. This species flowers only after fire or mechanical disturbance. It is most easily distinguished from similar species by its flowers. No flowering pawpaws were observed during the time of our survey making identification difficult. There is an abundance of suitable habitat and surveys conducted in March and April would likely reveal this species.

American alligators are abundant in the wetlands within Babcock Ranch proposal.

Eastern indigo snake is recorded near the western edge of Babcock Ranch. This species requires large areas (>5000 ac) and a broad range of habitats such as that found on Babcock Ranch.

Gopher tortoise burrows were observed in mesic flatwoods habitat in the Babcock Flatwoods North region of the proposal. Only two burrows were observed (one active). Tortoises are likely to occur within the dryer areas of the flatwoods and more thorough surveys are needed to adequately determine their status within the proposal.

Bachman's sparrow breeding bird atlas records are known from Babcock Ranch. Suitable habitat is abundant within the proposed property. No sparrows were observed during the survey period in late September but this is not unusual given the time of year. Field visits during spring would be more appropriate.

Florida scrub-jays are known (1993) from the southern portion of the proposal. There are small patches of scrub or scrubby flatwoods along or near the southern boundary. Surveys are necessary to determine the current status of the jay in this area and the extent and quality of suitable habitat for this species.

Wading birds (including limpkin, great egret, little blue heron, snowy egret, tricolored heron, white ibis, and wood stork). Two bird rookeries (nesting great egrets, white ibis, and wood storks) were documented in the late seventies, although these sites were vacant in later surveys conducted in the late eighties. It is unknown if there are active rookery sites today. The limpkin is known from a breeding bird atlas record; Telegraph Swamp provides significant habitat for this species. The other wading birds were observed foraging and loafing in various marshes and pastures within the proposal. The water level was exceptionally high at the time of the survey and many wading birds were making use of flooded pastures. Long-term restoration of hydrology would almost certainly improve the wading bird habitat.

Florida burrowing owl is known from breeding bird atlas records. These ground-dwelling owls make extensive use of ruderal areas such as pastures. Surveys could help determine their current status on Babcock Ranch.

Florida sandhill crane breeding bird atlas records are known from Babcock Ranch. The freshwater marshes, pasturelands, and prairies in the proposal provide suitable habitat for foraging and nesting.

Swallow-tailed kites have nested in the very southern portion of the proposal area. Kites require a mosaic of communities, with tall, accessible trees (preferably pine or cypress) for nesting and open areas for foraging. Babcock Ranch proposal provides important habitat for this species that is threatened by habitat alteration (including logging of cypress) and loss because of urban development and conversion to large-scale agriculture. Fire management is necessary to maintain habitat heterogeneity.

Short-tailed hawk has been observed in the southern portion of Telegraph Swamp. Like the swallow-tailed kite, significant habitat for short-tailed hawks is found within the proposal. Threats and management strategies are also similar to the swallow-tailed kite.

Audubon's Crested caracaras, two adults and one immature were observed on the edge of pasture and flatwoods in the central portion of the proposal. Ranch personnel indicated regular sightings of caracaras on the ranch. The open habitats (wet prairie, pasturelands) and availability of cabbage palms within the proposal provide suitable habitat.

Red-cockaded woodpeckers (RCWs) occur in the North Babcock Flatwoods portion of the proposal. Two active cavity trees, one inactive, and one active start hole were observed, presumably part of one colony. No birds were observed in this area. One bird was observed

as it flew across a road approximately 0.65 mile to the southwest. More birds reportedly occur on the other side of Jack's Branch to the east. This area was not visited because of high water at Jack's Branch. The flatwoods within the proposal are extensive and a thorough inventory for RCWs should be conducted. Known locations of RCWs within the Babcock Ranch proposal are approximately 14 km east of RCW locations on Babcock-Webb WMA, with potentially suitable habitat existing in between (Babcock Family Reserve). RCWs are also known to occur on Fisheating Creek Florida Forever BOT project, approximately 30 km from the RCWs on Babcock Ranch. The part of the Fisheating Creek project in between appears to have been heavily timbered and the status of RCWs in this area is unknown.

The Babcock Ranch project forms a critical link with other RCW populations to the west and northeast. This population, if properly managed, may be a key part of a larger regional population of great significance.

Florida panthers require very large home ranges and consequently the current population is not adequately represented on conservation lands in southwest Florida. The FWC has identified eastern Charlotte and western Glades counties as part of proposed Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas critical to maintaining the south Florida panther population. Radio tracking data collected by FWC shows recent use by panther. Protection of lands encompassed by the Babcock Ranch proposal would greatly help in the effort to protect panthers.

Florida black bear is known from Babcock Ranch from several reports to FWC of sightings and signs around 1982. In addition to providing suitable habitat for the Florida black bear, Babcock Ranch links bear habitat to the west and east on Babcock-Webb WMA and Fisheating Creek lands.

NATURAL FUNCTIONS

Ecological Restoration Needs

Telegraph Swamp comprises most of the fee simple portion of the proposal. Dams currently controlling the hydroperiod in the swamp could be removed to allow for more natural drainage flow patterns to take place. However, at this time, it is understood that the seller wishes to retain the dams. Removal of the Old World climbing fern from the strand swamp is vital in maintaining the quality of the swamp and to prevent further spread of this harmful invasive. Hydrological restoration (removal of many of the drainage ditches) could be implemented where feasible throughout the proposal.

Agricultural lands, pastures, and other disturbed areas make up approximately 5,235 acres (within the area proposed for state acquisition) and could be restored to native vegetation where possible. Restoration of these areas to a high quality species composition of wet and mesic flatwoods or wet prairie would be a long-term commitment because of the difficulties in restoring wiregrass over large areas.

The wetland communities would benefit from disuse and restoration of the roads and trails that intersect them. This applies mainly to the already little used roads that cross them and not necessarily to the main roads on the property. Cessation of cypress harvesting would help to

restore those communities affected and improve their value for wildlife.

Removal of exotic species (particularly melaleuca, Brazilian pepper, cogon grass, and Old World climbing fern) is crucial and should be a top priority. The extent of these invasive plants on the proposal appears manageable, largely because of the awareness and actions of the Babcock Ranch personnel.

Water Quality Assessment

The Babcock Ranch project contains two water bodies that are included in the 2000 Water Quality Assessment 305 (b) report, Telegraph Creek and Telegraph Swamp. According to the information provided both water bodies have good water quality, and meet the designated use in the Water Quality Assessment 305 (b) report.

Natural Floodplains

The project contains approximately 1,269 acres of land that would protect natural floodplain functions.

Coastal Resources

The project does not contain or protect fragile coastal resources.

Beach Erosion

The project does not contain critically eroding beaches contiguous with existing restored and protected public lands.

Functional Wetlands

The project contains approximately 20,373 acres of functional wetlands that will be protected by acquisition.

Invasive Plants

Based on this report and other available information, we would anticipate no major invasive exotic plant management problems. We agree entirely with the FNAI recommendation that control of the Old World climbing fern (*Lygodium microphyllum*) in and near Telegraph Swamp is critical to preservation of that and other habitats in the project area. Control of the fern in the fee-simple portion of the acquisition (10,701 acres – Telegraph Swamp) would be an immediate top priority upon acquisition. On the easements, we would recommend, for instance, control as soon as possible of the cogon grass (*Imperata cylindrica*) patches (Flatwoods North & South) to prevent further inadvertent spread along roadsides and thus further opportunity for this species to move on its own into natural areas. I was pleased to hear that ranch staff is already working on the control of melaleuca (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*). Melaleuca and Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*) would also be priorities for management at Telegraph Swamp, and their control should continue to be an important consideration on the easements. The exotic chocolateweed (*Melochia corchorifolia*) seen along certain roadsides in the flatwoods tends to follow disturbance. I would also recommend that no more “game food plots” be planted in the project area. The seed mixes almost invariably are of exotic species, such as the cassia and millet mentioned in the FNAI report, and they bring in as seed contaminants other weedy exotics such as Mexican clover (*Richardia* spp.). If the desire for such plots becomes irresistible, I would strongly suggest planting only native species, such as partridge pea (*Chamaecrista*

fasciculata), which is now available on the seed market. We would recommend monitoring in this project area particularly for torpedo grass (*Panicum repens*) and Mexican petunia (*Ruellia brittoniana*). Both are known for their ability to infest and disrupt marshes, prairies, and other wetlands. Please refer to the table below for indications of invasives documented for conservation lands and public waters in portions of Charlotte, Lee, and Hardee Counties.

Documented invasive plants in public and NGO conservation lands/waters, portions of Charlotte, Lee, and Hardee Counties. This information is drawn from aquatic and upland databases and staff observations. Coastal and barrier-island parks or preserves of Charlotte and Lee Counties, which have some invasive species not likely to occur inland, are not included here.

INVASIVE SPECIES	COMMON NAME	EPPC CATEGORY	PUBLIC LANDS/WATERS
<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	rosary pea	I	Caloosahatchee RP, Koreshan SP
<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	ear-leaf acacia	I	6-Mile Slough Preserve
<i>Albizia lebeck</i>	woman's tongue	I	Caloosahatchee RP, Koreshan SP
<i>Alternanthera philoxeroides</i>	alligator weed	I	Peace River, Prairie & Shell Creeks
<i>Ardisia elliptica</i>	shoebutton ardisia	I	Caloosahatchee RP
<i>Bischofia javanica</i>	bischofia	I	Hickey Creek MP, Caloosahatchee RP, 6-Mile Slough Preserve
<i>Casuarina equisetifolia</i>	Australian pine	I	Koreshan SP
<i>Cinnamomum camphora</i>	camphor tree	I	Cow Slough/Deep Lagoon CP
<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	taro	I	Peace River, Prairie & Shell Creeks
<i>Cupaniopsis anacardioides</i>	carrotwood	I	6-Mile Slough Preserve
<i>Dalbergia sissoo</i>	Indian rosewood	II	Caloosahatchee RP, Hickey Creek MP
<i>Dioscorea bulbifera</i>	air potato	I	Koreshan SP
<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>	water-hyacinth	I	Caloosahatchee & Peace Rivers, Prairie & Shell Creeks
<i>Eugenia uniflora</i>	Surinam-cherry	I	6-Mile Slough Preserve
<i>Ficus microcarpa</i>	laurel fig	I	6-Mile Slough Preserve
<i>Hydrilla verticillata</i>	hydrilla	I	Caloosahatchee River, Shell Creek
<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>	cogon grass	I	Caloosahatchee RP, Koreshan SP, 6-Mile Slough Preserve
<i>Lantana camara</i>	lantana, shrub verbena	I	Persimmon Ridge Preserve
<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>	lead tree	II	Koreshan SP
<i>Lygodium microphyllum</i>	Old World climbing fern	I	Caloosahatchee RP, Hickey Creek MP, Shell Creek RP, 6-Mile Slough Preserve
<i>Melaleuca quinquenervia</i>	melaleuca	I	Caloosahatchee RP, Cow Slough Pr., Flint Pen Strand, Greenbriar Pr., Hickey Creek MP, Koreshan SP, 6-Mile Slough Pr.
<i>Melia azederach</i>	Chinaberry	I	Koreshan SP
<i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>	parrot's-feather		Peace River
<i>Neyraudia reynaudiana</i>	Burma reed	I	Koreshan SP
<i>Panicum repens</i>	torpedo grass	I	Caloosahatchee River, Koreshan SP, Peace River, Prairie & Shell Creeks, 6-Mile Slough Preserve
<i>Pistia stratiotes</i>	water-lettuce	I	Hickey Creek MP, Peace River, Prairie & Shell Creeks, 6-Mile Slough Preserve
<i>Rhodomyrtus tomentosa</i>	downy rose-myrtle	I	Flint Pen Strand, Koreshan SP
<i>Ruellia brittoniana</i>	Mexican petunia	I	Babcock-Webb WMA

<i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i>	Brazilian pepper	I	Caloosahatchee RP, Flint Pen Strand, Hickey Creek MP, Koreshan SP, 6-Mile Slough
<i>Senna pendula</i>	Christmas senna	I	6-Mile Slough Preserve
<i>Solanum tampicense</i>	wetland nightshade	I	6-Mile Slough Preserve
<i>Solanum viarum</i>	tropical soda apple	I	Caloosahatchee RP, Hickey Creek MP, Corkscrew Swamp, 6-Mile Slough Preserve
<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	Java plum	I	Hickey Creek MP, 6-Mile Slough Preserve
<i>Urena lobata</i>	Caesar's weed	II	Koreshan SP
<i>Urochloa mutica</i>	Pará grass	I	Peace River, Prairie & Shell Creeks
<i>Wedelia trilobata</i>	wedelia	II	Koreshan SP

WATER RESOURCES

SWIM or Water Supply Plan Component

The project is not currently part of a Surface Water Improvement Management Plan (SWIM). The project contains water bodies that flow into the Caloosahatchee River, and the Caloosahatchee is a Class I potable water supply.

Surface Water Protection

There are approximately 4,733 acres that have been identified within the project area that would protect surface waters of the State.

Structures for Retention & Storage of Surface Waters

Telegraph Swamp contains a dam and weir that are used to control upstream water for ranch management purposes.

Water Quantity

The project area is not directly addressed by a regional water supply plan therefore; it is not possible to quantify the amount of water made available at this time.

Water Recharge

The project does not contain significant ground water recharge areas, nor does it contain forestlands that serve to maintain natural groundwater recharge functions.

Contribution towards Solving Regional Water Resource Problems

The project contains approximately 20,373 acres of wetlands that provide water retention and storage, but it is unknown whether they are consistent with the maintenance of water resources or water supplies and consistent with district water supply plans.

Due to the connectivity with the Fisheating Creek Florida Forever project, Babcock-Cecil M. Webb WMA, and the Caloosahatchee Regional Park the project contributes to ongoing governmental efforts to protect and restore the regional land and water resources.

RESOURCE-BASED RECREATION

Resource-based recreation potential of this project is severely limited due to the wet nature of the fee lands (all being swamp) and the indicated unwillingness of the owners to allow general public access to the conservation easement portions of the project. There are no public paved or graded roads adjacent to the fee purchase areas. The project abuts Lee County's Caloosahatchee Regional Park and may provide some limited trail activities during drier times. The project is near the Fort Myers urban area. The 2000 population census for this area is approximately 50,000.

The project does not satisfy any of the year 2005 needs reflected in the draft 2000 Florida Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for the region in which the property is located.

The resource-based recreation potential for the project, as proposed, is low.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL RESOURCES

The Babcock story begins in 1889, in the logging town of Ashtala, Pennsylvania, where Mr. Edward Vose (E.V.) Babcock founded Babcock Lumber Company. The company has since grown to be one of the largest lumber companies in the country. In 1914, E.V. Babcock founded Babcock Florida Company and purchased 156,000 acres in Florida. His son, Mr. F.C. Babcock transferred 65,000 acres of this land to the state in the 1940s. Today, this state land is called Fred C. Babcock/Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area. The remainder of the property, some 90,000 acres is known today as the Crescent B. Ranch.

Originally the Babcock land was bought for its stands of longleaf pine and cypress, and logging was the main activity during the early part of its history. What is now Ranch headquarters was at one time the logging town of Rouxville with a population of approximately 200. The railroad ran through the ranch to provide shipping for the logging trade. Railway boxcars with the wheels removed provided homes for many residents.

The original Ranch Commissary, still used today, included the office and family residence for the manager and the company store where employees purchased clothing and other necessities. The Commissary also included a doctor's office. An apartment for the schoolteacher, who drove the children of Rouxville to the Punta Gorda town school each day, was located in the Commissary.

As for field impressions, this area comprised primarily of cypress domes and swamps, extensive mesic flatwoods (some of which have been converted to pasture) and wet prairies, has a low potential for producing any significant archaeological sites. On the other hand, some of the low rises abutting Jack's Branch and Telegraph Swamp may have been used by Florida's aboriginal inhabitants. In particular, an oak hammock near Jack's Branch appeared to be the highest probability area of any of the places that the assessment team visited. It should be noted that Babcock Ranch holds no sites or properties currently listed in the Florida Master Site File and is unlikely to hold any statewide or nationally significant unrecorded historical sites or properties.

FOREST RESOURCES

The natural communities section of this assessment provides a general description of the forest resources of this project. This section will not repeat that description but will address the forest resources from a multiple-use and ecosystem management perspective. This will be a fee simple project, which primarily consists of Telegraph Swamp and a conservation easement or some lesser interest along the balance of the property. Several areas of the property appear to be not clearly identified which could have an affect on future management planning for the land.

Overall, a majority of the project consists of pine flatwoods, cypress swamps, isolated wetlands, and agricultural land. The ground vegetation in the flatwoods areas consists of palmetto and wiregrass with South Florida Slash Pine and Longleaf Pine overstory. Based on the brief site observations, the pine timber represents various age classes and product classes, and stocking is variable ranging from 30-50 square feet per acre. Forested wetland areas including isolated wetlands contain mainly cypress trees and these areas appear to have been harvested in the past. Presently, pre-merchantable cypress occupies these wetland areas but sawtimber size trees were observed in areas along creeks where access could be limited. Approximately 25% of the total project area consists of agricultural land and improved pasture surrounded by a small levee to control flooding. Access throughout the property was good due to an extensive road system and proper management of controlling storm water runoff by the use of culverts and bridges. Where practical, the forest acreage could be increased by re-establishing the appropriate upland pine type on portions of the agricultural land and pastureland. It was noted that a few pine flatwoods areas have been selectively harvested leaving a residual stand of approximately 30 square feet of basal area per acre and the only clearcut areas observed were sites salvaged due to wildfires, which was followed by natural regeneration and appear to have low to fair trees per acre. A minimum number of acreage was in 6-year-old south Florida slash pine plantations.

Telegraph swamp exhibits desirable forested watershed characteristics and if acquired could serve to maintain natural hydrological functions.

The less-than-fee area also provides important economic and social benefits. For those agricultural or forested areas, protection through conservation easements will enable the property owners to maintain the economic benefits from growing and utilizing the agricultural and forest products, and maintain these economic and resource characteristics.

MANAGEMENT

See Appendix B

ACQUISITION COORDINATION

Contribution to Completing Projects begun under Previous Programs

This project (91,361 acres) is adjacent to the Fisheating Creek Ecosystem - Florida Forever project (176,760 acres). The Fisheating Creek project was evaluated under the CARL and

P2000 program in 2000. A conservation easement purchase over Phase I is complete. Acquisition of Phase II is underway.

Potential for Alternatives to Fee-Simple (<Fee Conservation Easement)

The project is proposed for both fee simple and less-than-fee acquisition. The purchase of development rights and the prohibition of any further conversion of existing natural areas to agricultural uses will likely be the primary focus of the conservation easement.

Note: These acreages will be adjusted as negotiations proceed

Approximately 10,701 acres to be acquired in fee

Approximately 32,920 acres to be acquired less-than-fee

Approximately 27,801 acres will be retained as the family reserve in its current agricultural and conservation use. The remaining approximately 19,890 acres in the Southwest portion of the property is proposed for future development.

Acquisition Partnerships

It is anticipated that this will be a shared acquisition.

Funding Sources

The acquisition partnership is expected to include local, state and federal funding sources. Contribution percentages have not been determined.

Funding for Mapping, Appraisal, Negotiations & Closing

There may be alternative funding sources available for acquisition costs.

Resolutions in Support

None

Title Vesting Issues (shared or joint title)

Shared or joint title is not contemplated at this time.

OWNERSHIP PATTERN & ACQUISITION PLANNING

The project consists of approximately 91,360, 153 parcels, and one owner. The 2001 tax assessed value is estimated at \$52,527,237. There are several structures located on the tract.

Landowner:

Babcock Florida Co.

P. O. Box 8348

Pittsburgh, PA 15218

Tax information is on file with the Office of Environmental Services.

Willingness to sell at or below 80% of appraised value

The landowner is not willing to consider a sale of land at 80 percent or less of appraised

value.

Title & Legal Access Issues

There do not appear to be any title or legal access issues.

Sovereignty Lands Issues

There are several named creeks and streams located throughout the project. Appraisal mapping will determine the extent of potential sovereignty lands issues, if any exist.

Known Encumbrances (easements, long-term leases, restrictive covenants, etc.)

There do not appear to be any long term leases or easements associated with the property.

Legal issues (lawsuits, administrative actions, etc.)

There do not appear to be any ongoing legal issues associated with this property.

Acquisition Phases

There is no acquisition phasing contemplated. The essential parcel is identified as the Babcock ownership.

Acquisition Strategy

It is anticipated that appraisal mapping would take place over the fee and less-than-fee areas simultaneously.

Funding for the purchase of this project will likely be distributed over a period of several years. Funding allocation in any one year will not likely exceed \$15,000,000.

It should be noted that the exact areas for fee and less-than-fee purchase have not been finalized with the landowner. As maps are obtained and close coordination and negotiation with the landowner, land manager and the Division is maintained, this will evolve.

GOVERNMENT PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

The family has proposed to redesignate approximately 19,000 acres in the southwest corner of the ranch to 1 unit per acre. Currently the entire ranch is designated for 1 unit per 10 acres. No infrastructure is in place or readily available. No recent development has taken place on the property, however, development in Lee County is occurring within the ranch's proximity. The property is a working ranch and timber operation.

The 91,000 acre ranch is habitat to numerous rare and endangered species, including the Florida Panther and the Florida Black Bear. The ranch is part of an existing a greenway of public and private lands extending from Lake Okeechobee to Charlotte Harbor. The ranch also contains Telegraph Swamp, which ultimately feeds into both the Caloosahatchee and Peace River.

The family would like to eventually develop and subdivide the southwestern corner of the ranch, approximately 19,000 acres.

The ranch is not close to either Lee County's or Charlotte County's Urban Service Areas, and the current and proposed land use in the local government comprehensive plans are:

Lee County: Conservation = 1du/10 ac.
Wetland = no development

Charlotte County: Agriculture = 1du/10 ac.
Resource Conservation = 1 du/40 ac.

Transportation Corridors

This project is included within Florida Department of Transportation (DOT) District one. There are no planned or budgeted road improvements contemplated by DOT in the area.

Ongoing Governmental Efforts:

This project does not implement elements from a plan developed by an ecosystem management team.

The project is not a component of the Everglades Restoration Plan.

PROJECT BOUNDARIES

FNAI Resource Planning Boundary

See Appendix C

Recommended Modifications

There were no recommended modifications from, managing agencies, local governments or the landowner.

Final Project Map

See Appendix D

SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE MEASURES

See Appendix A

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

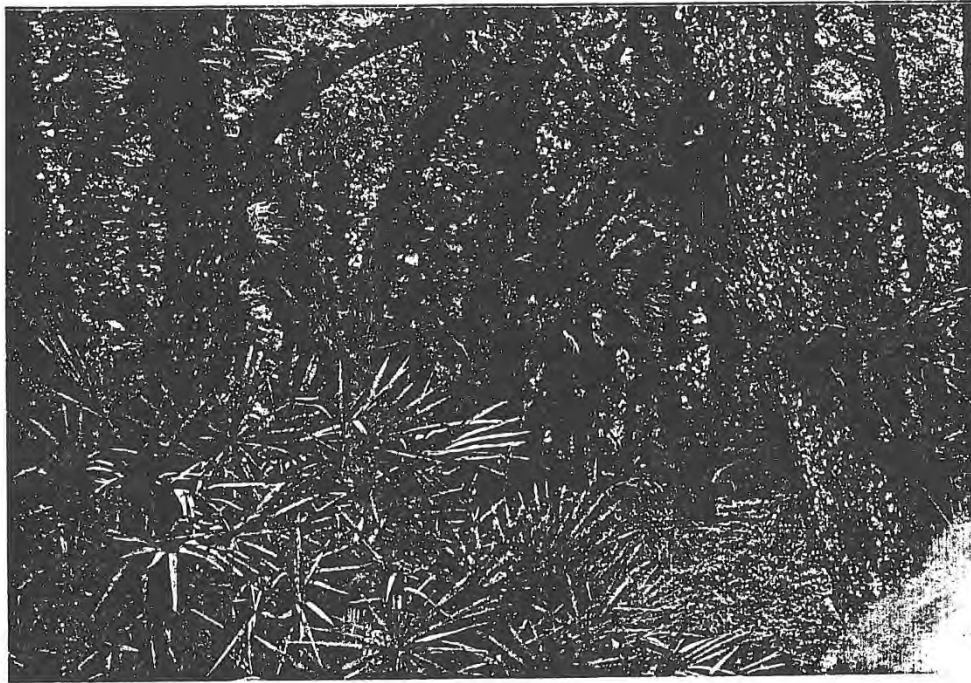
Consensus among the FNAI, ARC Liaison staff, and the staff of the Division of State Lands (DSL) determined the final project recommendations. John Barrow and Callie DeHaven, Office of Environmental Services, were responsible for the overall coordination of this report.

Contributors

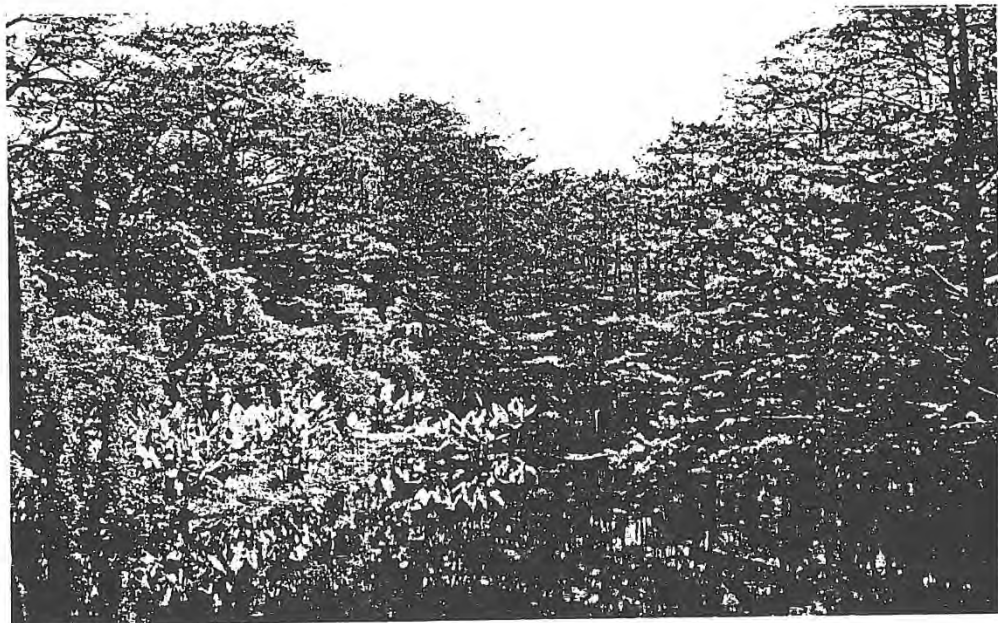
Archaeological and Historical – Mike Wisenbaker, Division of Historical Resources
Recreation – David Buchanan, Division of Recreation and Parks

Forestry – Steve Bohl, Division of Forestry
Invasive Plants – William Torres, Bureau of Invasive Plant Management
Government Planning – Grant Gelhardt, Department of Community Affairs
Government Efforts – John Outland, Office of Ecosystem Management
Biodiversity – Doug Bailey, Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
Biodiversity – Carolyn Kindell and Cathleen NeSmith, FNAI
Biodiversity – Rick Halvorson, Office of Greenways and Trails
Water Resources – Pat Fricano, Office of Watershed and Planning
Water Resources – Tom Swihart, Office of Water Policy

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Oak Hammock near Jack's Branch



Telegraph Creek

Babcock Ranch: Florida Forever Measures Evaluation

ACRES = 91,637

MEASURES	Acres*	% of project	MEASURES (continued)	Acres*	% of project
B1: Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas			B6: Listed Species (# occurrences)		
Priority 1	0	0	G1	1	1
Priority 2	8,628	9	G2	1	1
Priority 3	2,100	2	G3	4	4
Priority 4	7,680	8	G4	3	3
Priority 5	57,870	63	G5	6	6
Priority 6	0	0	Total Occurrences	15	
Total Acres	76,278	83	C4: Natural Floodplain Function	1,269	1
B2: FNAI Habitat Conservation Priorities			C5: Surface Water Protection		
Priority 1	0	0	Priority 1	0	0
Priority 2	22	<1	Priority 2	0	0
Priority 3	6,835	7	Priority 3	0	0
Priority 4	14,147	15	Priority 4	0	0
Priority 5	22,923	25	Priority 5	3,202	3
Total Acres	43,927	48	Priority 6	1,531	2
B3: Ecological Greenways			Total Acres	4,733	5
Priority 1	69,706	76	C7: Fragile Coastal Resources		
Priority 2	0	0	Uplands	0	0
Priority 3	0	0	Wetlands	0	0
Priority 4	0	0	Total Acres	0	0
Priority 5	0	0	C8: Functional Wetlands		
Priority 6	1,316	1	Priority 1 (MA, CARL/SOR or PNA*)	16,987	19
Total Acres	71,022	78	Priority 2 (outside MA, CARL/SOR or PNA*)	3,386	4
B4: Under-represented Natural Communities			Total Acres	20,373	22
Pine rockland	0	0	D3: Aquifer Recharge		
Upland glade	0	0	Floridan	0	0
Bog/seepage slope	0	0	Other	0	0
Tropical hammock	0	0	Total Acres	0	0
Sandhill	0	0	E1: Natural Resource-based Recreation		
Scrub	538	<1	Priority 1	0	0
Upland hardwood	0	0	Priority 2	59,377	65
Pine flatwoods	30,173	33	Priority 3	4,996	5
Total Acres	30,208	33	Priority 4	371	0
B5: Landscape-sized Protection Area (Yes/No)			Priority 5	1,317	1
Priority 1	no		Total Acres	66,061	72
Priority 2	yes		F2: Archaeological Sites	2 sites listed by DHR	
Priority 3	no		G1: Sustainable Forestry		
			Existing Pineland	37,237	41
			Potential Pineland	19,401	21
			Total Acres	56,638	62
			G3: Forestland for Recharge	0	0

*Number of acres of each resource in the project and percentage of project represented by each resource are listed except where noted.

*Wetlands were assumed to be high quality, thus higher priority, if they occurred on a conservation land (MA), within an acquisition project boundary (CARL, SOR), or within an FNAI Potential Natural Area (PNA).

MANAGEMENT PROSPECTUS

Babcock Ranch

INTRODUCTION

The Babcock Ranch Florida Forever project comprises approximately 91,361 acres located in Charlotte and Lee counties, in a strategic location that closes a habitat gap between Fred C. Babcock- Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area and the Fisheating Creek Florida Forever project. This project is proposed as a complex acquisition involving approximately 10,701 acres for purchase in fee simple and approximately 32,920 acres as conservation easement. Another 27,850 acres are to be left in Family Preserve, and 19,890 acres are to be designated for development restrictions.

The land proposed for purchase by the Board of Trustees (Trustees) in this project is important habitat, within Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (SHCAs) in some cases, for a high number of listed mammal and bird species. Among confirmed and recorded sightings of animals using Babcock Ranch habitats are: Florida Panther, wood stork, Florida sandhill crane, red-cockaded woodpecker, Sherman's fox squirrel, Southeastern American kestrel and great white heron. SHCAs for some of these species comprise a large percentage of the project lands, with species diversity overlays showing a range of from 7 to 15 important plant and animal species present on most of the lands in this project.

Acquisition and management of the lands in this project are particularly important to the long-term welfare of the Florida panther and red-cockaded woodpecker, and are very probably important for the South Florida bear population. The project also serves as habitat conservation areas for southern mink, Bachman's sparrow and at least 6 other listed species probably found on the area. There are at least 20 species of birds or mammals known to be either present or probably present on the lands comprising the project.

The project consists of mesic and wet pine flatwoods (55%), strand swamp, sloughs and dome swamp (21% collectively), wet prairie (7%), depression and basin marshes (5%), and developed/disturbed acreage (12%). The mesic flatwoods are among the best examples left in South Florida of this fast-disappearing forested community. At least two rare plants have been identified on the property proposed for acquisition, with the possibility of more being identified later. Beautiful paw-paw (*Deeringothamnus pulchellus*) was recorded in 1928, and is likely still present. This species flowers following fire or mechanical disturbance. Another rare plant, hand fern (*Ophioglossum palmatum*) has also been recorded on site.

The Babcock Ranch project has the resource diversity to qualify as a wildlife management area, and will provide the public with natural resource-based recreation

americanus floridanus). In addition, much of the area is within a SHCA for wading birds including wood stork (*Mycteria americana*), white ibis (*Eudocimus albus*), little blue heron (*Egretta caerulea*), tricolored heron (*Egretta tricolor*), snowy egret (*Egretta thula*), and great egret (*Ardea alba*). Special management accommodation for protection of these species, and all other listed species, will be made as necessary on a case-by-case basis, with very intentional management actions targeted to habitat protection and improvement for the panther, red-cockaded woodpecker, wood stork and black bear.

TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTING MANAGEMENT PROVISIONS

During the first year after acquisition, emphasis will be placed on site security, posting boundaries, public access, fire management, resource inventory exotic species control and removal of refuse. A conceptual management plan will be developed by the FWC describing the management goals and specific objectives necessary to implement future resource management.

Long-range plans will stress management to restore and maintain native ecosystems, and the protection and management of threatened and endangered species. Essential roads will be stabilized to provide all weather public access and management operations. Programs providing multiple recreational uses will also be implemented. An all-season prescribed burning management plan will be developed and implemented using conventional and biologically acceptable guidelines. Management activities will be implemented to promote native plant and animal communities.

Pine timber resources of mesic flatwoods contain both Longleaf pine and South Florida Slash pine in the overstory. Where appropriate, practical, and in pursuit of wildlife habitat objectives, these resources will be managed using acceptable silvicultural practices in consultation with the Division of Forestry. Wetlands associated with Telegraph Swamp are dominated by bald cypress, and water levels are controlled to a great extent by a three-weir water control system.

Environmentally sensitive areas will be identified, and appropriate protective measures will be implemented on those areas. Unnecessary roads, fire lanes and hydrological disturbances will be abandoned or restored as practical. Minimal infrastructure development will be required to allow public access, provide facilities for the public, and provide security and management of the property.

ESTIMATE OF REVENUE-GENERATING POTENTIAL

If managers' assessments indicate it would be appropriate, some revenues might be generated from grazing contracts in flatwoods or pastured areas not restored in the interest of habitat diversity or due to lack of funding. Significant revenues might be generated from thinning of pine overstories in flatwoods communities, while additional

revenue would be generated from sales of hunting licenses, fishing licenses, wildlife management area stamps and other special hunting stamps. Some revenues might be realized in the future from continuation of ecotourism activities begun by the Babcock family, if such projects can be practically and economically developed.

RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

The FWC will cooperate with other state and local governmental agencies, including the DOF and the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

REVENUE SOURCES, MANAGEMENT COSTS AND EMPLOYEES NEEDED

WLD 8-5-2

BWMPROSPPECTUS\Babcock Ranch.doc

FWC Prospectus: Projected Budget

Maximum expected single-year expenditure

Area/Project:

Babcock Ranch

Acreage: 10,701

Resource Management

Exotic Species Control	\$42,804	\$85,608
Prescribed Burning	\$6,529	\$13,057
Hydrological Management	\$40,000	\$4,475
Other	\$80,707	\$80,707

Subtotal \$170,039 \$183,847

Administration

Central Office/Headquarters	\$57,642	\$23,151
Districts/Regions	\$24,704	\$9,922

Subtotal \$82,345 \$33,072

Support

Land Management Planning	\$25,000	\$0
Land Management Reviews	\$0	\$500
Training/Staff Development	\$0	\$1,000
Vehicle Purchase	\$110,850	\$15,836
Vehicle Operation/Maintenance	\$13,230	\$13,230

Subtotal \$149,080 \$30,566

Capital Improvements

New Facility Construction	\$526,665	\$0
Facility Maintenance	\$0	\$113,106

Subtotal \$526,665 \$113,106

Visitor Services/Recreation

Operations	\$1,780	\$178
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Subtotal \$1,780 \$178

Law Enforcement

All Activities	\$7,491	\$7,491
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TOTAL \$937,401 \$368,259

Figures include salary for 3 FTEs.

Type of Expenditure:

Nonrecurring: Startup

Recurring

The FNAI Resource Protection Boundary memo was not done since the project was evaluated as a late application.

