

Santa Fe River

Bell

5/26/2022

Project Score		Buildings	
7.0 of 10.00		1 on ACPA, 3 on site (1915 house, barn,outbuilding)	
Inspection Date		Just Value	Just Value Per Acre
5/17/2022		\$179,112	\$1,735
Size (ACPA)		Total Value (Just, Misc, Bldg)	Total Value Per Acre
103.22 acres		\$212,812	\$2,062
Parcel Number	Acreage (ACPA)	Acquisition Type	
16905-001-000	66.84	Fee Simple	
16905-002-001	13.34	Natural Community	Condition
16905-002-000	5.1	Major River	Excellent
16901-001-000	17.94	Floodplain Forest	Excellent
		Mesic Flatwoods	Good
		Dome Swamp	Good
Section-Township-Range		Archaeological Sites	
35-07-21		0 recorded on site, 0 in 1 mile	
		Bald Eagle Nests	
		0 on site, 1 in one+ mile	
REPA Score	8.96 of 9.44 (Santa Fe River ACF Project Area)		
KBN Score	Ranked 1st of 47 projects (Santa Fe River Strategic Ecosystem)		
Outstanding Florida Waters	Santa Fe River frontage- approximately 1 mile		

The Santa Fe River - Bell property consists of four parcels in Alachua County under one ownership with approximately 1 mile of river frontage on the Santa Fe River. Also under the same ownership is one parcel in Bradford County, which includes the river frontage on the opposite side of the river as well. The property is north of Waldo, and just west of Highway 301. The Alachua County Property Appraiser acreage for all four parcel is 103.22 acres. The property falls with the Alachua County Forever Santa Fe River Project Area, which is the highest priority project area for the ACF program, and the Santa Fe River Strategic Ecosystem, which is the highest ranked strategic ecosystem for protection. There is an old homesite in the southeast corner of the property which is excluded from the strategic ecosystem. The south boundary of all 4 parcels is County Road 225, totaling 4,491 feet of road frontage on CR225. The property is north of Waldo, and just west of Hwy 301. The ACPA acreage is 103.22. There is one 1930's home on the easternmost parcel, near CR 225. All but the 1.7 acre homesite falls within the Santa Fe River Strategic Ecosystem.

Natural communities on the property include a major river, the Santa Fe River, the associated floodplain forest, a dome swamp, and mesic flatwoods. The property consists of approximately 58 acres of wetlands (floodplain forest and dome swamp) and 45 acres of uplands.

The floodplain forest is in excellent condition, with a diverse overstory of hardwood species and braided channel of the Santa Fe River. Species include tupelo, water oak, laurel oak, diamond leaf oak, sweet bay, swamp chestnut oak, southern magnolia, and red maple with an understory of fetterbush, chain fern, cinnamon fern, royal fern, marsh fern, wood oats, bluestem palmetto, and multiple grasses and sedges. The river channel could be crossed on downed logs in a few locations. The health and condition of the floodplain forest is a highlight of this property.

The cypress overstory of the dome swamp was harvested at some point decades ago, creating a mixed overstory of cypress and gum trees and other wetland hardwoods, and leaving cypress stumps of significant diameter as indicators of historic condition. The dome swamp natural community is in good condition with an overstory of loblolly pines, cypress, red maple, diamond leaf oak, Florida elm and tupelo. Groundcover is sparse and includes several fern species and rushes. A natural, possibly seasonal stream connecting the dome swamp with the floodplain forest is visible in the 1939 aerial imagery, and appears to have been deepened in the 1940's or 1950's as a part of more recent human use of the property. This deepened channel still meanders to some degree, and seems to mimic a natural channel.

The mesic flatwoods underwent a pine harvest in 2009 or 2010. Limited pine canopy remains in this community, but portions of the flatwoods retain notable groundcover diversity, especially along the southern boundary of the property, adjacent to CR 225. Species observed include multiple species of *Aristida*, including wiregrass, *Berlandiera*, *Licnia*, *Vaccinium*, *Pityopsis*, *Hypericum*, *Andropogon*, *Eryngium*, *Rhexia*, *Yucca*, *Pteris*, and others. Restoration of the pine canopy would contribute to the ability to restore fire to the natural community and further enhance the health of the mesic flatwoods. In some areas, gallberry has become fairly dominant, not as an impenetrable wall, due to mowing by the landowner reducing the stature of the gallberry.

Wildlife observed on site included 17 species of birds including warblers, raptors, wood ducks, and others. In addition, tracks from 4 mammal species were noted in the floodplain, and landowner game cameras have documented use of the property by Florida Black bear. Three species of frog were noted during the site visit, and one water moccasin was observed.

One historic resource is documented on the property, the residence in the SE corner of the property, which is listed on the Florida Master Site File as a historic structure. The file record indicates a wood frame house, built in 1915, ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places. No cultural sites have been documented on the property, with the exception of the homesite. No solid waste was observed, excepting limited amounts near the camper trailer used by the landowner for hunting visits. Limited occurrence of non-native invasive plants was observed. Some scattered Japanese climbing fern was noted in the floodplain, scattered camphor trees and Chinese tallow trees were observed near the old homesite.

One parcel, of approximately 25 acres, lies on the Bradford County side of the Santa Fe River. While this portion of the property is not eligible for acquisition through the Alachua County Forever program, staff crossed the river channel and evaluated the condition of the Bradford County parcel. This is the method utilized by the landowner for access to the Bradford County parcel for recreational (hunting) purposes.

The parcel includes a band of floodplain forest along the river channel, and an area of planted pines which has not been managed in 30+/- years, which generally functions as mesic flatwoods.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

This development analysis is based on a limited desk-top review and is founded upon current County Land Development Regulations and Comprehensive Plan policies. The Development Scenario is oversimplified and is meant only to convey a general sense of the potential of development intensity that could be possible based on land use and zoning conditions.

The parcels have a Future Land Use of Rural Agricultural. In accordance with the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, Rural Agricultural areas are intended to be protected in a manner consistent with preservation of agriculture, open space, rural character and the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas. Under the current land use and zoning the property may be developed at a maximum intensity of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres.

There are extensive wetlands on the parcels that would have protection from development activities under current regulations. As per Alachua County ULDC, the wetlands on site would be protected as well as an upland buffer surrounding the wetlands that will be required to maintain a 50' minimum width and 75' average width. These parcels are also located within a strategic ecosystem which requires 50% of the upland area to be preserved.

The parcels are surrounded by undeveloped lands and agricultural uses with some commercial development nearby on Hwy 301. There is an extensive system of wetlands and floodplains on the properties. In accordance with Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Policy 3.1.1, wetlands and 100-year flood zones shall be designated as conservation areas requiring stringent protective measures to sustain their ecological integrity. The area within the 100-year floodplain (Zone AE) would also need to comply with federal regulations in addition to local regulations

REPA - Santa Fe River - Bell - 5/26/22					
CATEGORY	Criterion	WEIGHTING	Enter Criteria Value Based on Site Inspection	Average Criteria Score	Average Criteria Score Multiplied by Relative Importance
(I-1) PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES	A. Whether the property has geologic/hydrologic conditions that would easily enable contamination of vulnerable aquifers that have value as drinking water sources;		2		
	B. Whether the property serves an important groundwater recharge function;		4		
	C. Whether the property contains or has direct connections to lakes, creeks, rivers, springs, sinkholes, or wetlands for which conservation of the property will protect or improve surface water quality;		5		
	D. Whether the property serves an important flood management function.		5		
(I-2) PROTECTION OF NATURAL COMMUNITIES AND LANDSCAPES	A. Whether the property contains a diversity of natural communities;		2		
	B. Whether the natural communities present on the property are rare;		5		
	C. Whether there is ecological quality in the communities present on the property;		4		
	D. Whether the property is functionally connected to other natural communities;		3		
	E. Whether the property is adjacent to properties that are in public ownership or have other environmental protections such as conservation easements;		2		
	F. Whether the property is large enough to contribute substantially to conservation efforts;		4		
	G. Whether the property contains important, Florida-specific geologic features such as caves or springs;		2		
	H. Whether the property is relatively free from internal fragmentation from roads, power lines, and other features that create barriers and edge effects.		4		
(I-3) PROTECTION OF PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES	A. Whether the property serves as documented or potential habitat for rare, threatened, or endangered species or species of special concern;		3		
	B. Whether the property serves as documented or potential habitat for species with large home ranges;		4		
	C. Whether the property contains plants or animals that are endemic or near-endemic to Florida or Alachua County;		2		
	D. Whether the property serves as a special wildlife migration or aggregation site for activities such as breeding, roosting, colonial nesting, or over-wintering;		4		
	E. Whether the property offers high vegetation quality and species diversity;		4		
	F. Whether the property has low incidence of non-native invasive species.		4		
(I-4) SOCIAL AND HUMAN VALUES	A. Whether the property offers opportunities for compatible resource-based recreation, if appropriate;		4		
	B. Whether the property contributes to urban green space, provides a municipal defining greenbelt, provides scenic vistas, or has other value from an urban and regional planning perspective.		4		
	AVERAGE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND HUMAN VALUES			3.55	
	RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THIS CRITERIA SET IN THE OVERALL SCORE	1.333			4.73
(II-1) MANAGEMENT ISSUES	A. Whether it will be practical to manage the property to protect its environmental, social and other values (examples include controlled burning, exotics removal, maintaining hydro-period, and so on);		4		
	B. Whether this management can be completed in a cost-effective manner.		4		
(II-2) ECONOMIC AND ACQUISITION ISSUES	A. Whether there is potential for purchasing the property with matching funds from municipal, state, federal, or private contributions;		3		
	B. Whether the overall resource values justifies the potential cost of acquisition;		4		
	C. Whether there is imminent threat of losing the environmental, social or other values of the property through development and/or lack of sufficient legislative protections (this requires analysis of current land use, zoning, owner intent, location and		2		
	AVERAGE FOR ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT VALUES			3.40	
	RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THIS CRITERIA SET IN THE OVERALL SCORE	0.667			2.27
	TOTAL SCORE				7.00
NOTES					
	General Criteria Scoring Guidelines				
	1 = Least beneficial, 2 = Less Beneficial than Average, 3 = Average, 4 = More Beneficial than Average, 5 = Most Beneficial				