



## Florida Wildlife Care, Inc.

3400 SE 15 Street, Gainesville, Florida 32641-1405 ☐ (352)371-4443  
[www.floridawildlifecare.org](http://www.floridawildlifecare.org)

January 6, 2020

Alachua County Board of County Commissioners  
Gina Peebles, Assistant County Manager  
Gainesville, Florida

There are a large number of gaps in Alachua County in environmental education, recreation, cultural, social and professional areas. I have spoken with many professionals and organizations in this community recently, including those in government, nonprofit and private sectors, about this and there is a lot of agreement and interest in the utilization of Camp McConnell to address these issues.

Camp McConnell is unique to offer a venue with the size, location, natural surroundings and amenities that would be able to provide for the proposed activities. This would no longer be just a camp or even a park. It is a central hub of exploration, discovery, learning, connections, and restoration that is intentionally planned to reach out to all parts of our community. It should be renamed as an Outdoor Learning Center. I will be sending in a report shortly that will go into more detail.

Florida Wildlife Care (FWC) is offering to partner with Alachua County to develop a fully equipped wildlife rehabilitation center, an environmental education center, a 30 acre wildlife exhibit sanctuary and nature trail. This Center would be providing environmental education on site and specialized programs for activities on the property. We are requesting the north 50 acres to develop as a separate facility that would be run by FWC in close partnership with Alachua County. This will allow us to better serve our wildlife, Alachua County and the surrounding counties better. This will also allow for partnerships in the community for career mentoring, career training and statewide wildlife training. We are in the process of developing the full proposal for your review.

Thank you for giving us this opportunity. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact me on my cell 352-318-8443 or by email [lesliestraub@floridawildlifecare.org](mailto:lesliestraub@floridawildlifecare.org).

Sincerely,

Leslie E Straub  
Executive Director