

LANDS COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

August 14, 2018
Following Board Meeting

District Headquarters
Live Oak, Florida

1. Call to Order / Committee Roll Call
2. Public Comment

General Discussion / Updates

None

Land Acquisition / Property Offers

3. Chastain Property Offer, 7 Acres +/-, Columbia County

Easement Requests

4. Berniece Knight, Manatee Springs – South Tract, Levy County

Surplus Lands

5. Consideration of Surplus, R. O. Ranch, 707+/- Acres, Lafayette County
6. Announcements
7. Adjournment

A person may not lobby the District until such person has registered as a lobbyist with the Contracts and Procurement Coordinator by filing a registration form.

Definitions:

•*"Lobbies" is defined as seeking to influence a district policy or procurement decision or an attempt to obtain the goodwill of a district official or employee. (112.3261(1)(b), Florida Statutes [F.S.]*

•*"Lobbyist" is a person who is employed and receives payment, or who contracts for economic consideration, for the purpose of lobbying, or a person who is principally employed for governmental affairs by another person or governmental entity to lobby on behalf of that other person or governmental entity. (112.3215(1)(h), F.S.)*

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lands Committee
FROM: A. Keith Rowell, PSM
DATE: July 31, 2018
RE: Chastain Parcel

RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests Lands Committee approval to forward a recommendation to the Governing Board to authorize staff to commence detailed assessment and negotiations with Donald R. Chastain on the purchase of 7 Acres +/- in Columbia County.

BACKGROUND

The Chastain parcel has been offered to the District by the Chastain family in the 2016 and District staff would like to reconsider it for fee simple purchase. The Chastain parcel contains approximately seven +/- acres comprising of nine unrecorded subdivision lots. This parcel is located on the banks of the Suwannee River between the District-owned Falling Creek and Bell Springs tracts.

The Chastain parcel is adjacent to the District's 55-acre Bell Springs Tract, which contains Bell Springs, a second magnitude spring. Bell Springs is the first known Florida spring on the Suwannee River. The Bell Springs Tract is unique in that Bell Springs itself is located in the center of the District and contains the historic Morrell house that is leased to the Florida State Parks. The spring and spring run were dammed in the early 1960's. After the purchase of the Bell Springs Tract in 2007, the District partnered with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to drain the ponds, remove the dams, control erosion, revegetate both sides of the spring run and allowing the spring run to flow freely from its source. This project was successfully completed in 2014. Also, the tract is one of the trailheads for the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) and is a popular tourism destination as well as for those who want to view Big Shoals, which is a short hike up river.

The Falling Creek Tract is 502 acres purchased in two separate acquisitions in 1990 and 2005, and access to the tract is limited. The creek flows near the southern boundary of the tract before turning north and emptying into the Suwannee River. The creek is swift moving and banks are high and steeply sloped making equipment access impossible. In the past, an adjacent landowner had allowed access to the property from County Road 246 to salvage approximately 157 acres of mostly loblolly pine (Southern Pine Beetle). The current adjacent owners are not willing to allow the District the same type of access.

Staff recently visited the Falling Creek Tract and discovered the majority of the salvaged areas have regrown with dense loblolly pine with scrubby and thick vegetative conditions. Approximately 138 acres are in need of timber management, of which 13 acres need to be addressed as soon as possible, and 125 acres will require attention in about 10 years. The timber value of the tract is estimated at \$270,000.

If an agreement with Chastain family to purchase the parcel can be achieved, it would provide staff the necessary access to Falling Creek Tract for long-term management and constitute a meaningful revenue source. The District has existing road access to the edge of the Chastain parcel through the Bell Springs Tract and there is an existing private road through the Chastain parcel to the edge of the Falling Creek Tract. A road about 0.25-mile-long would need to be constructed through the Falling Creek Tract to gain access to the existing road network.

This access would also allow the District to begin the process of controlling the vegetation to reduce the risk of wildfire and improve the natural communities. Adjacent privately-owned parcels along the western, southern, and eastern boundaries of the Falling Creek Tract, and small lot subdivisions near the southern boundary present an offsite risk in the event of a wildfire. Also, a portion of the Falling Creek Tract is in a smoke sensitive zone and it is about 1.4 miles from the US 41 Bridge near the Town of White Springs.

Additionally, there would be recreational benefits as well. The FNST currently traverses through a privately-owned field along the southern boundary of the Chastain parcel. With the purchase of the parcel, the trail could be relocated along the river and improve visitor experience. Due to the size, configuration, and location of the Falling Creek Tract the property may also represent a good candidate for a FWC Wildlife Management Area and be made available for hunting.

Finally, the purchase of the Chastain parcel would further buffer the resources on the Bell Spring Tract and the Suwannee River. The parcel is along the banks of the Suwannee River, near Bell Springs, and the parcel can be sold in nine buildable lots.

Funding is available in the Fiscal Year 2019 budget under codes 10-5920-3-2100-19 and 13-5920-3-2100-19.

WVM/akr
Attachments
020-00015

PARCEL SUMMARY

TRACT: **Chastain Tract, 7 Acres +/- Columbia County**

SELLER: Donald R. Chastain

RIVER FRONTAGE: 950 LF +/- of Suwannee River frontage

ACREAGE: 7 acres ±

PARCEL DESCRIPTION: The property contains lots 1 – 9 in the unrecorded Bell Springs Subdivision and is located east of White Springs on the Suwannee River adjoining the District's Bell Springs and Falling Creek Tracts. The property is across the River from the Big Shoals Tract and near Big Shoals State Park. The property is located within the Upper Suwannee River Water Resource Caution Area. This parcel would significantly improve access to the District's Falling Creek Tract. The owners are offering the parcel as a Fee Simple Purchase

WATER RESOURCE GUIDELINE SCREENING:

Aquifer Recharge: 0%
Springshed: 0%
Floodplain Protection: 0%
Surface Water Protection: 0%

ACCESS: Easement access from NW Morrell Drive.

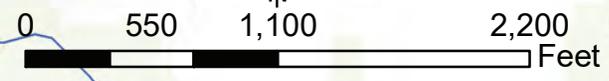
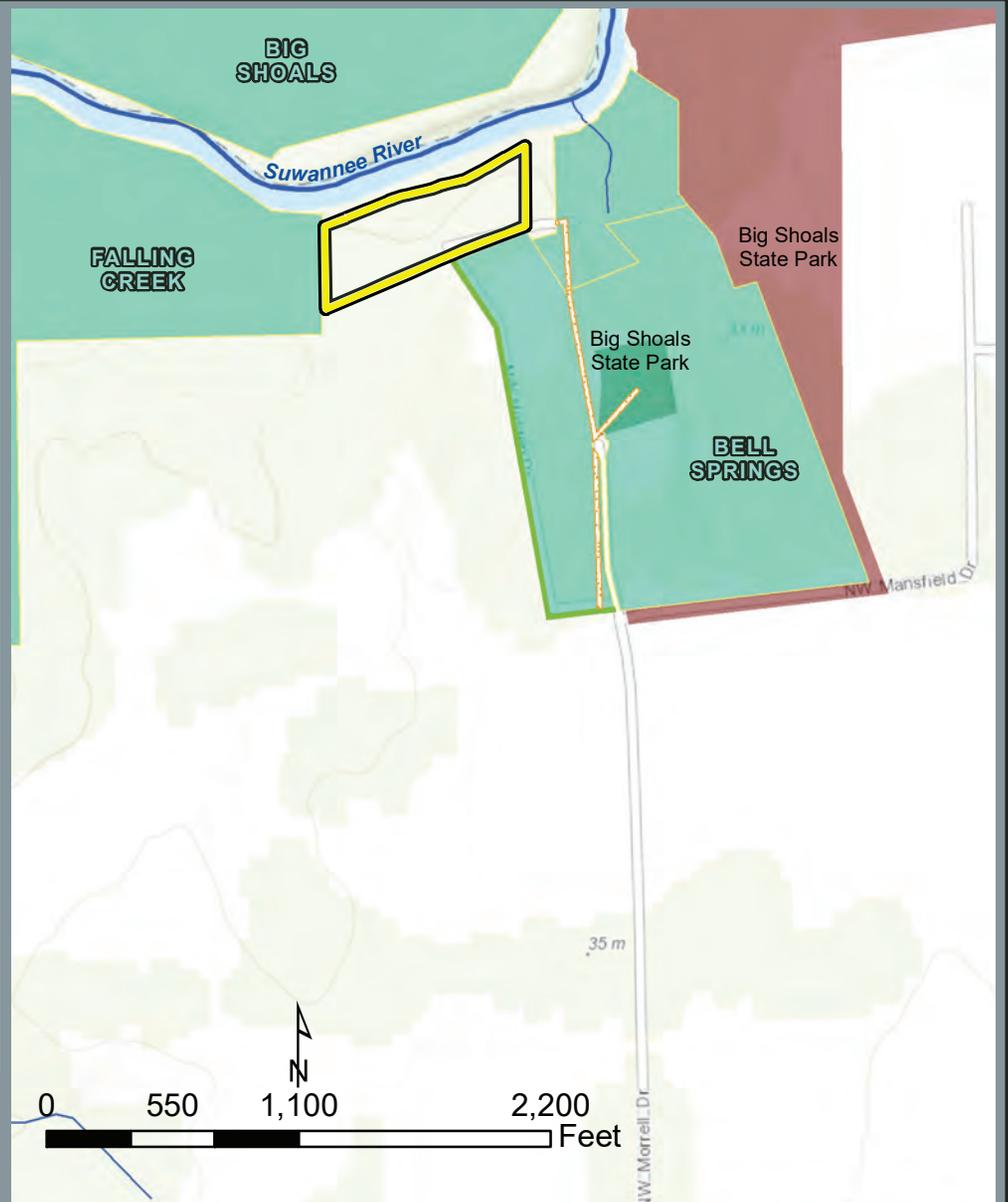
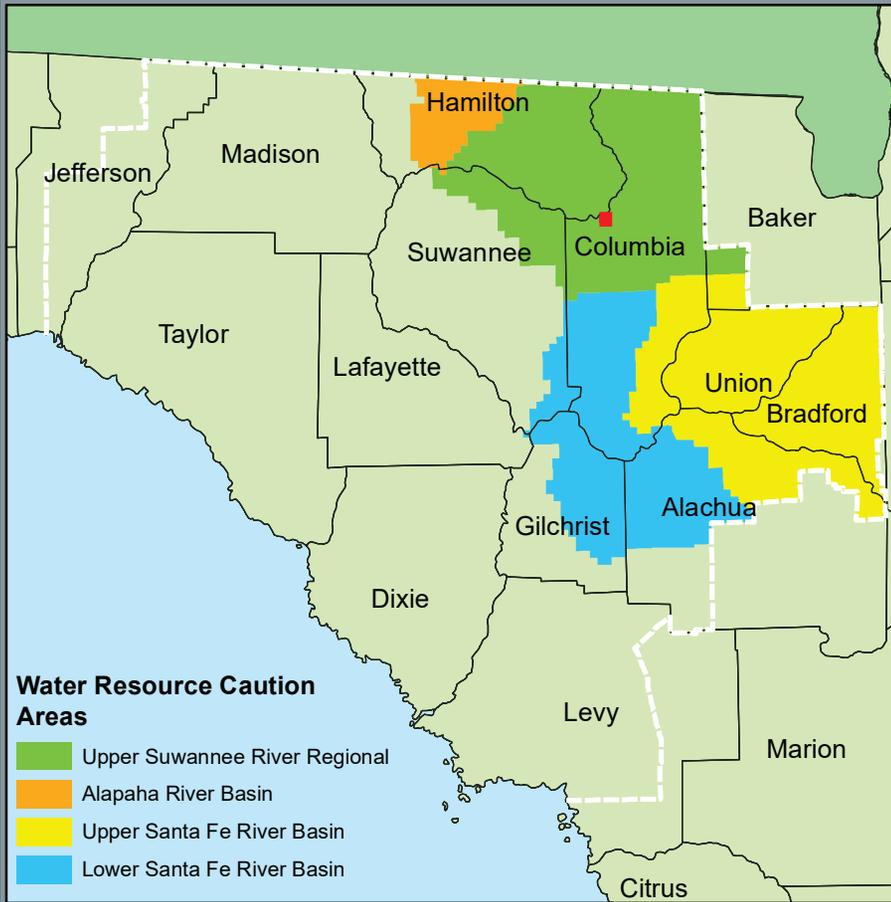
OUTSTANDING INTERESTS: To be determined by title search during detailed assessment.

CURRENT ASKING PRICE: The owner has indicated that they would sell the property for fair market value subject to District acquisition guidelines.

ASSESSMENT COSTS: Costs of detailed assessment are estimated to be from \$3,500 to \$6,000.

MANAGEMENT: The property would be managed by the District in conjunction with the Falling Creek and Bell Springs Tracts.

Chastain Property Property Offer Location Map



- Project Boundary
- SRWMD Ownership
- Conservation Easements
- Other Public Ownership
- Rivers and Streams



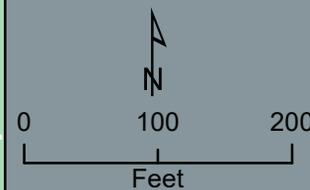
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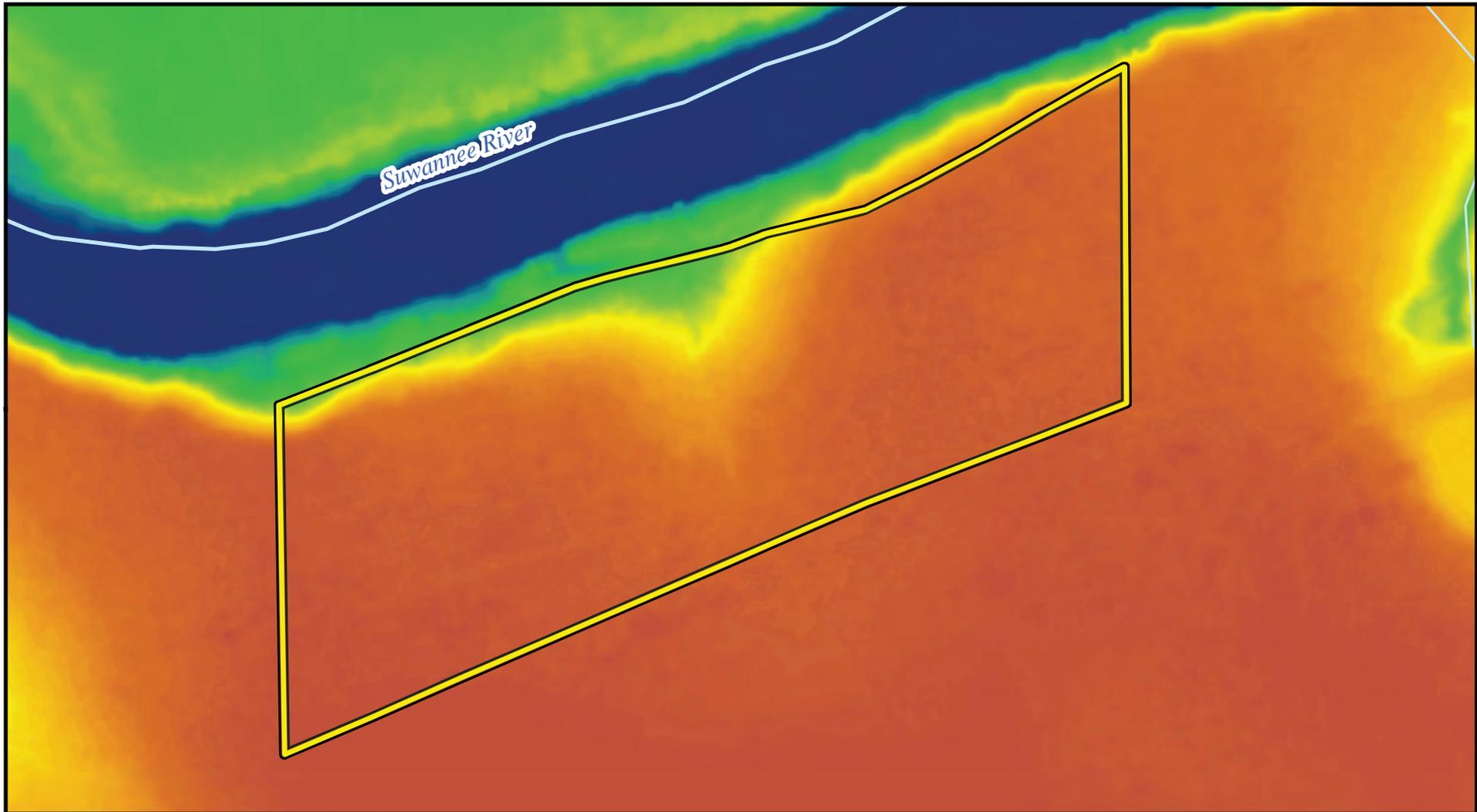
Chastain Property Property Offer Property Overview

-  Project Boundary
7 Acres +/-
-  General
-  Rivers and Streams
-  SRWMD Ownership
-  SRWMD Proposed Acquisitions

-  SRWMD Conservation Ownership



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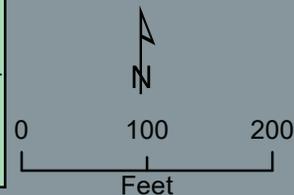
-  Project Boundary
-  Rivers and Streams

Land Surface Elevation

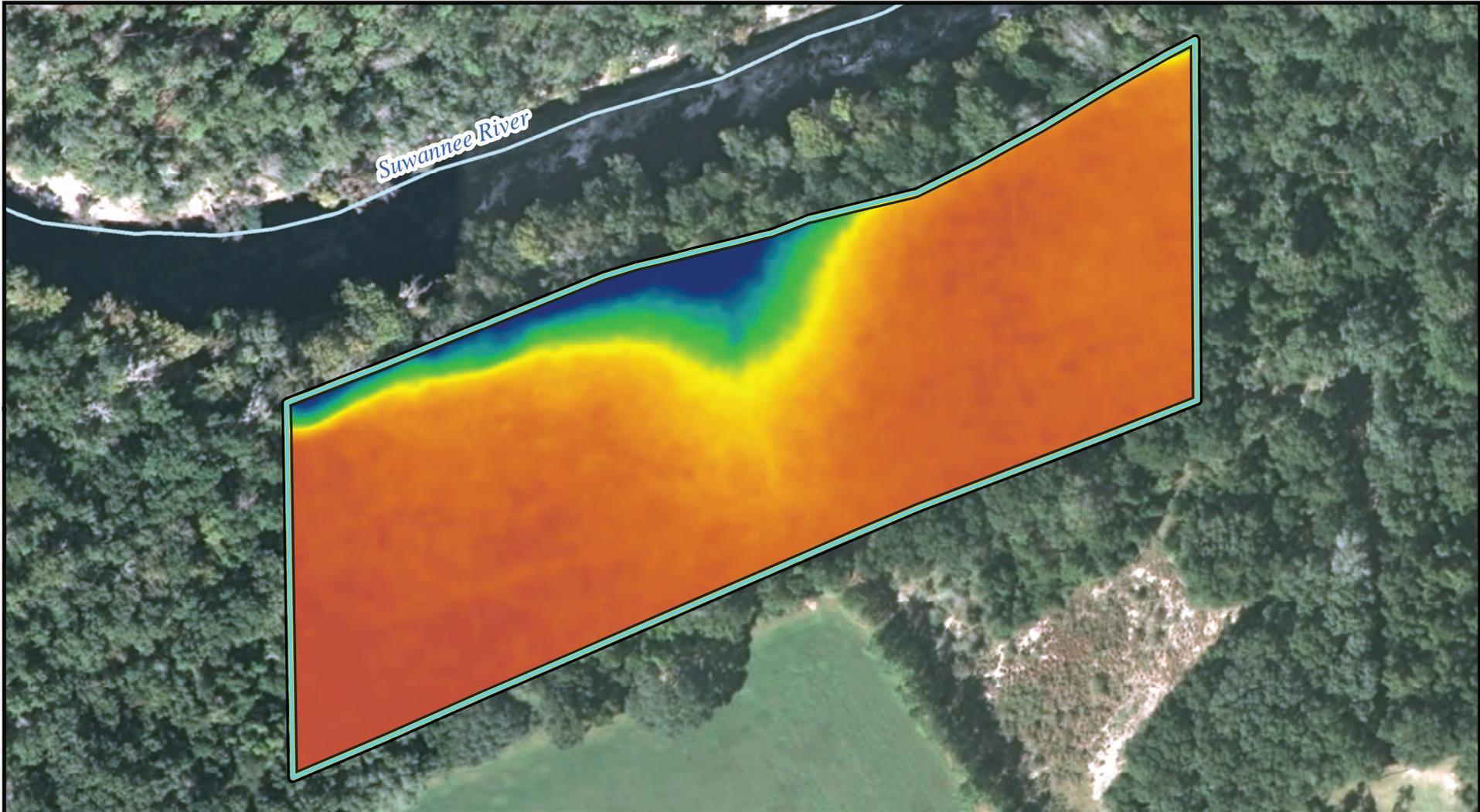


(Vertical Datum NAVD88-
Units US Feet)
Note: Elevations displayed are
derived from LiDAR Data.

**Chastain Property
Property Offer
LiDAR Overview**



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-  Project Boundary
-  Rivers and Streams

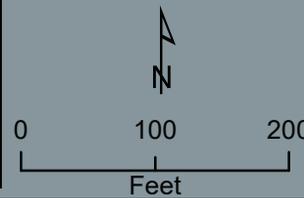
Land Surface Elevation



(Vertical Datum NAVD88-
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**Chastain Property
Property Offer
LiDAR DEM Property**



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Bell Springs S/D

W. E. Bishop

BELL SPRINGS SUBDIVISION

A SUBDIVISION OF A PART OF THE NW1/4 OF THE SW1/4, AND THE S1/2 OF THE NW1/4, SECTION 11, TOWNSHIP 2 SOUTH, RANGE 16 EAST, COLUMBIA COUNTY, FLA.

To trust
4 1/4 W 1/2 to S 1/2
4 1/4 W 2 7/8 to S 1/4



DESCRIPTION:
 COMMENCE AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF NW1/4, SECTION 11, TOWNSHIP 2 SOUTH, RANGE 16 EAST, AND RUN THENCE N0°45'W, ALONG THE WEST LINE OF SAID SECTION 11, 65.33 FEET FOR A POINT OF BEGINNING, THENCE RUN N67°49'E, 950.0 FEET, THENCE RUN S32°36'E, 350.0 FEET, THENCE RUN N67°49'E 346.0 FEET MORE OR LESS TO THE CENTERLINE OF A CREEK, THENCE RUN S47°58'E ALONG SAID CENTERLINE, 102.31 FEET MORE OR LESS, THENCE RUN S21°57'E, ALONG SAID CENTERLINE, 138.57 FEET MORE OR LESS, THENCE RUN S7°51'E, ALONG SAID CENTERLINE, 185.73 FEET MORE OR LESS, THENCE RUN N74°04'30"E, 338.0 FEET MORE OR LESS, THENCE RUN N19°45'30"W, 440.0 FEET, THENCE RUN N30°14'W, 250.0 FEET, THENCE RUN N1°10'E 400.0 FEET, THENCE RUN N55°00'W, 220.0 FEET TO THE SOUTHERLY EDGE OF SUWANNEE RIVER, THENCE RUN APPROXIMATELY S33°30'W, ALONG SAID EDGE OF RIVER, 160 FEET MORE OR LESS, THENCE RUN APPROXIMATELY S65°58'W, ALONG SAID EDGE OF RIVER 1398.71 FEET MORE OR LESS TO A POINT ON SAID WEST LINE OF SECTION 11, THENCE RUN S0°45'E ALONG SAID WEST LINE 330.0 FEET, TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, SAID LAND LYING IN THE NW1/4 OF SW1/4, AND THE S1/2 OF NW1/4, SECTION 11, TOWNSHIP 2 SOUTH, RANGE 16 EAST, AND CONTAINING 22.07 ACRES MORE OR LESS.

DEDICATION:
 KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENT THAT W. E. BISHOP AND VIRGINIA H. BISHOP HAVE CAUSED THE LANDS HEREON DESCRIBED TO BE SURVEYED, LAID OUT, SUBDIVIDED, AND PLATTED TO BE KNOWN AS "BELL SPRINGS SUBDIVISION"

WITNESS _____ SIGNED _____
 WITNESS _____ SIGNED _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:
 STATE OF FLORIDA:
 COUNTY OF COLUMBIA:
 ON THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 1965,
 PERSONALLY APPEARED BEFORE ME
 W. E. BISHOP, AND VIRGINIA H. BISHOP, HIS
 WIFE, TO ME WELL KNOWN AND KNOWN TO
 ME TO BE THE PERSONS DESCRIBED IN AND
 WHO EXECUTED THE FOREGOING DEDICATION
 FOR THE PURPOSES THEREIN EXPRESSED.

WITNESS MY HAND AND OFFICIAL SEAL AT _____, STATE OF FLORIDA THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 1965.

SURVEYORS CERTIFICATE:
 I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I AM A DULY QUALIFIED LAND SURVEYOR AND THAT THE LAND HEREON DESCRIBED HAS BEEN SURVEYED, LAID OUT, SUBDIVIDED, AND PLATTED AS SHOWN ON THIS PLAT UNDER MY DIRECTION AND P.R.M.'S HAVE BEEN SET.
 NOV. 22, 1965

SIGNED _____
 B.G. MOORE, LAND SURVEYOR
 FLA. CERT. NO. 439

APPROVED BY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
 COLUMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

SIGNED _____ CHAIRMAN
 ATTEST _____ CLERK
 DATE _____

SIGNED _____
 NOTARY PUBLIC, MY
 COMMISSION EXPIRES _____

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lands Committee
FROM: A. Keith Rowell, PSM
DATE: July 27, 2018
RE: Approval of an Easement Request from Berniece Knight over the District's Manatee South Tract, Levy County

RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests that the Lands Committee recommend approval of an ingress/egress easement request by Berniece Knight in Levy County to the Governing Board.

BACKGROUND

Mrs. Knight owns a 10-acre parcel in Levy County (Parcel No. 0010300000) which is landlocked and located approximately 450 feet east of the District's Manatee Springs South Tract (see Attachment A).

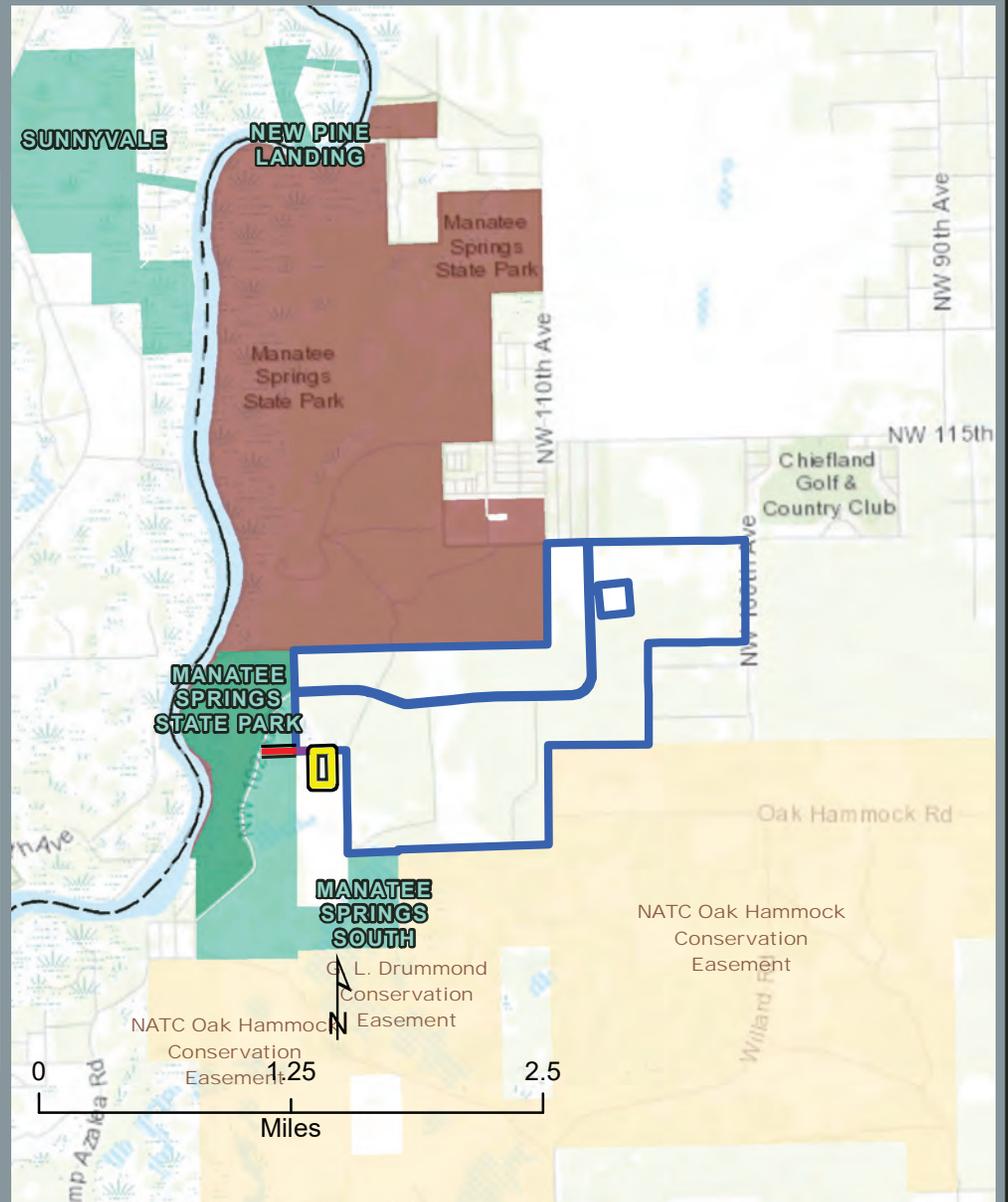
Mrs. Knight is requesting a 30-foot easement from NW 102nd Place/Camp Azalea Road across approximately 900 feet of District lands to the common boundary (see Attachment B). Mrs. Knight has an agreement with North American Timber Company to provide an easement from their common boundary with the District's Manatee South Tract to her property.

In accordance with Program Directive 90-2, Mrs. Knight will provide a survey and legal description of the easement, provide an appraisal of the easement, and pay the District the value of the easement as determined by the appraisal. Upon receipt of the survey, appraisal, and payment staff will prepare an easement document for signatures and recording. Mrs. Knight will be responsible for recording fees.

Staff has reviewed the proposed easement location and is requesting that the Lands Committee recommend approval of Mrs. Knight's request to the Governing Board.

/kr
Attachments

Berniece Knight Easement Request Levy County Location Map



-  Berniece_Knight_Ownership
-  Knight_Easement_Request
-  NALC_Easement
-  North_American_Land_Company_Ownership
-  SRWMD Ownership
-  Other Public Ownership
-  SRWMD Boundary
-  Conservation Easements



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Map Created 7/19/2018



-  NALC_Easement
-  Knight_Easement_Request
-  Berniece_Knight_Ownership
-  North_American_Land_Company_Ownership

Berniece Knight Easement Request Levy County Property Overview



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Lands Committee
FROM: A. Keith Rowell, PSM
DATE: July 16, 2018
RE: RO Ranch Tract Surplus

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Land Committee approve the surplus of 707 acres of the RO Ranch Tract that includes the original Equestrian Park and Life Estate.

BACKGROUND

During July 2006, the District purchased the 2,437-acre RO Ranch Tract along with a 47-acre Life Estate for \$6,500,000. The Frank & Olive Schulte Charitable Remainder Trust was paid \$3,000,000 and \$3,500,000 was held in escrow by the District to help form a non-profit organization known as RO Ranch, Inc., which operated under a management agreement and management plan.

Approximately 1,186 acres was turned over to RO Ranch, Inc., to manage as an Equestrian Park. From 2006 to 2011 the District staff managed the RO Ranch, Inc. The District also funded building projects in the Equestrian Park to advance the concept of a fully operational Equestrian Park in Lafayette County.

In Fiscal Year 2012, the District turned over all operations to RO Ranch Inc. The trustees of the trust directed how the funds would be appropriated every year for the management of the Equestrian Park.

In November 2016, RO Ranch, Inc., ceased management of the Equestrian Park. Staff responded immediately to the closing of the Equestrian Park by securing the property and facilities. Within a few months staff re-opened an old entrance in the southern portion of the property for equestrian visitors but closed the areas where the bulk of the facilities and structures were located.

At its November 2016 Lands Committee Meeting, staff presented an update on the RO Ranch Equestrian Park that include potential management costs. Staff is currently maintaining the grounds and buildings on a budget of \$35,000.

District staff explored options with Lafayette County, Florida State Parks, and Florida Forest Service in an effort to take over or manage the Equestrian Park. Lafayette County and State Parks both declined. District staff and the Forest Service negotiated some potential management options but was unable to reach acceptable terms favorable for the District.

In March of 2018, District staff pursued a private vendor option to manage the Equestrian Park and released a Request for Proposal. After the selection committee reviewed the submitted proposals, the committee members determined not to bring a recommendation to the Lands Committee because of several concerns regarding each of the proposals.

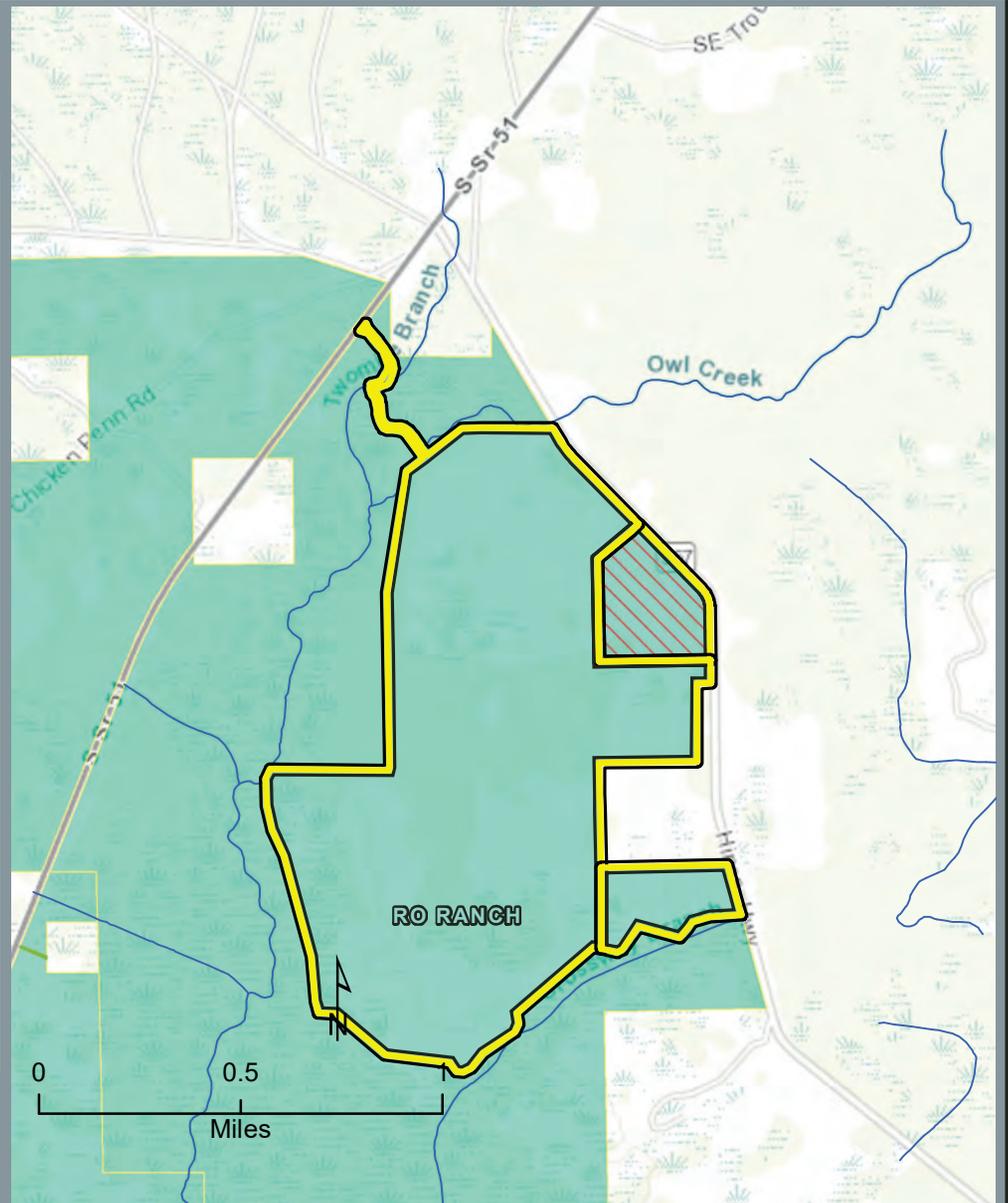
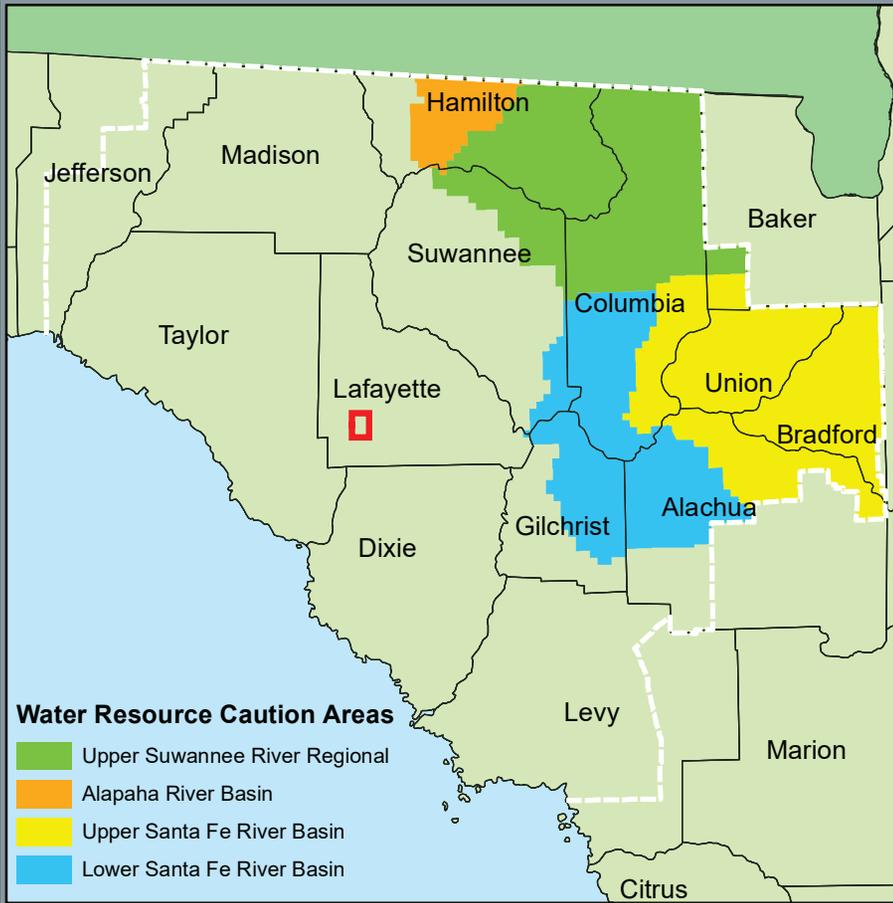
Staff believes a solution that would fully reopen the Equestrian Park and its facilities cannot be found that would be beneficial to the District's taxpayers. Therefore, staff is recommending to surplus that portion of the RO Ranch tract include advertising the 707 acres in two separate sales;

- 1) 673-acres would include the vast majority of what is designated as the Equestrian Park and Life Estate including all structures, facilities and buildings inside contents and;
- 2) 34-acres would include a 3-bedroom, 2 bath house with detached outside structures and the contents inside the house.

The District would retain an access easement on an existing road and approximately 1,777 acres of the RO Ranch Tract which primarily consist of upland pine flatwoods, forested wetlands, and tributaries of the Steinhatchee River.

WVM/akr
Attachments
05-009

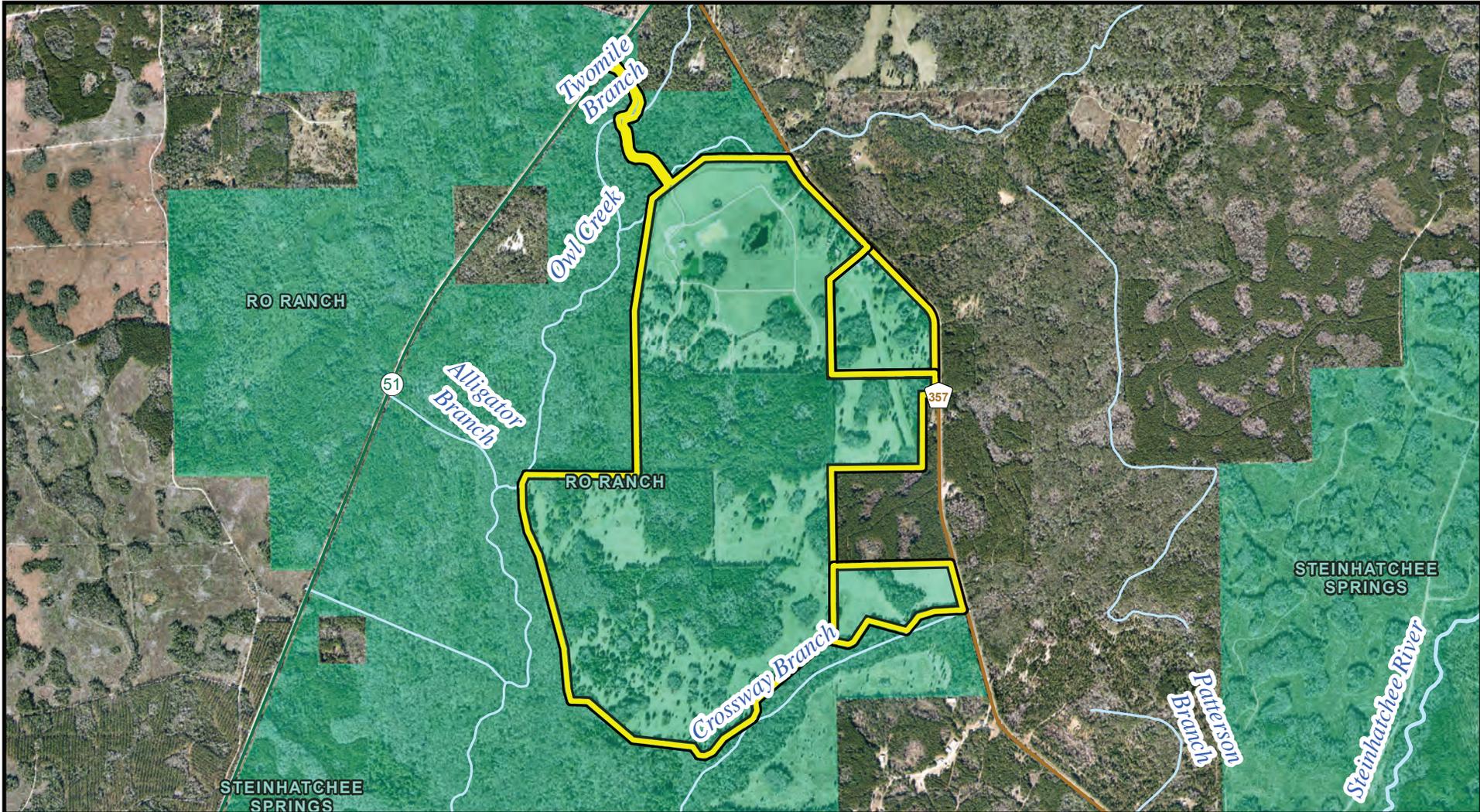
RO Ranch Surplus Proposal Location Map



- Project_Boundary
- SRWMD Ownership
- SRWMD Boundary



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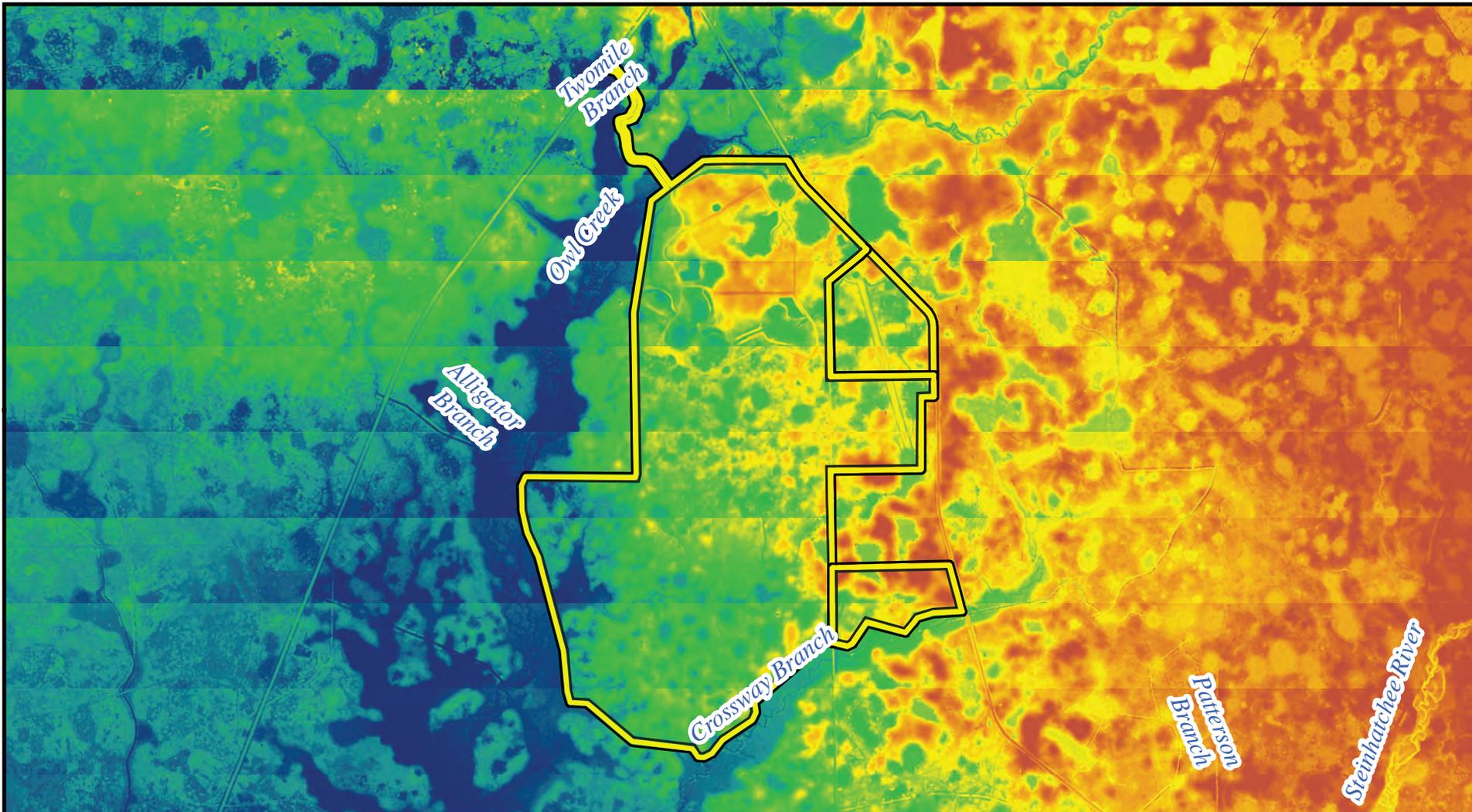


RO Ranch Surplus Proposal Property Overview

-  Project Boundary - 707 acres +/-
-  State HWY
-  County Roads
-  Rivers and Streams
-  SRWMD Conservation Ownership



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RO Ranch Surplus Proposal LiDAR Overview

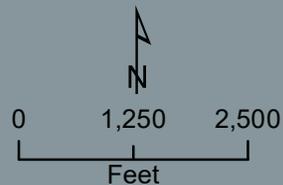
 Project Boundary - 707 acres +/-

Land Elevation

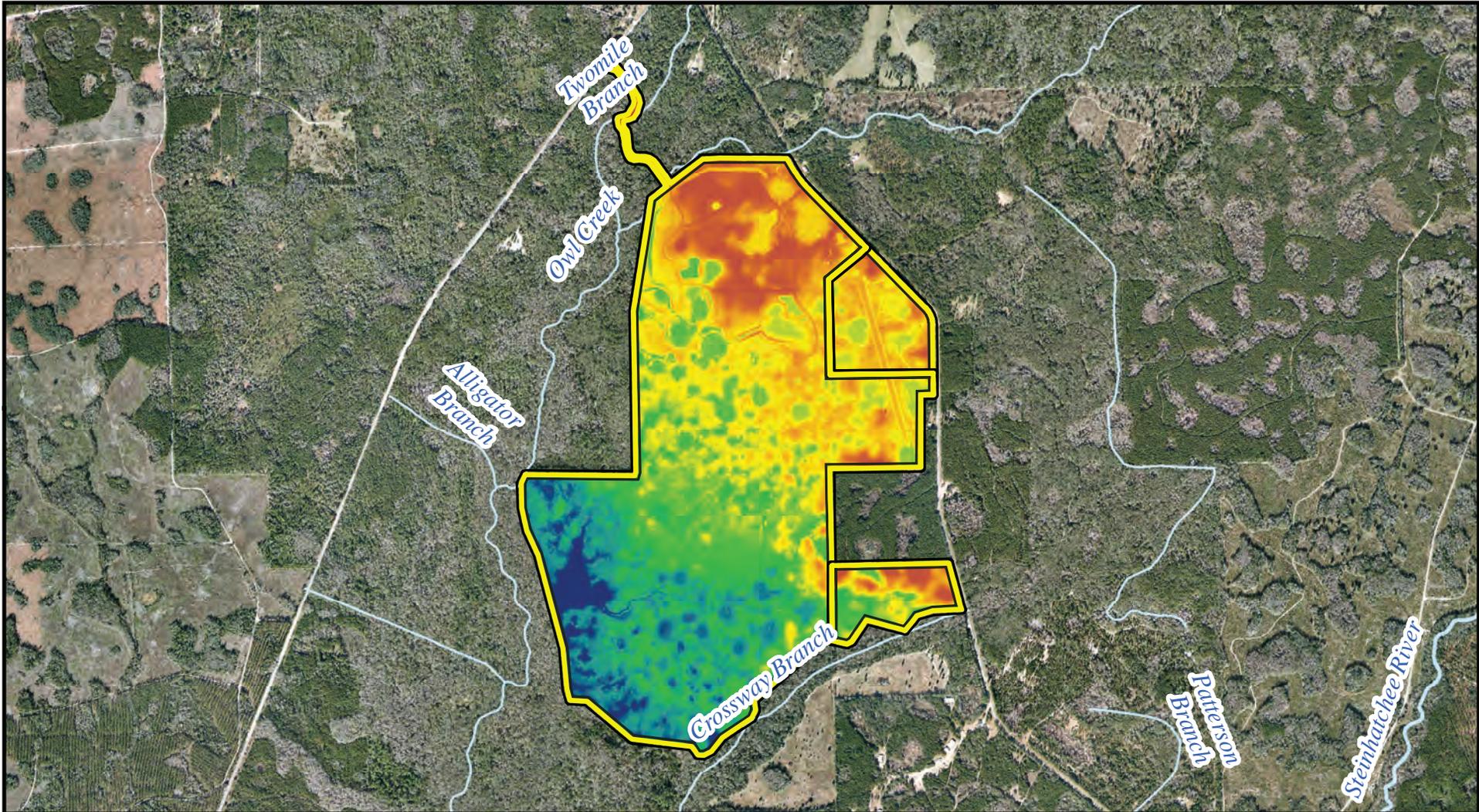
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Low : 33.3609

(Vertical Datum NAVD88-
Units US Feet)
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 Project Boundary - 707 acres +/-

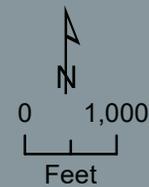
Land Surface Elevation



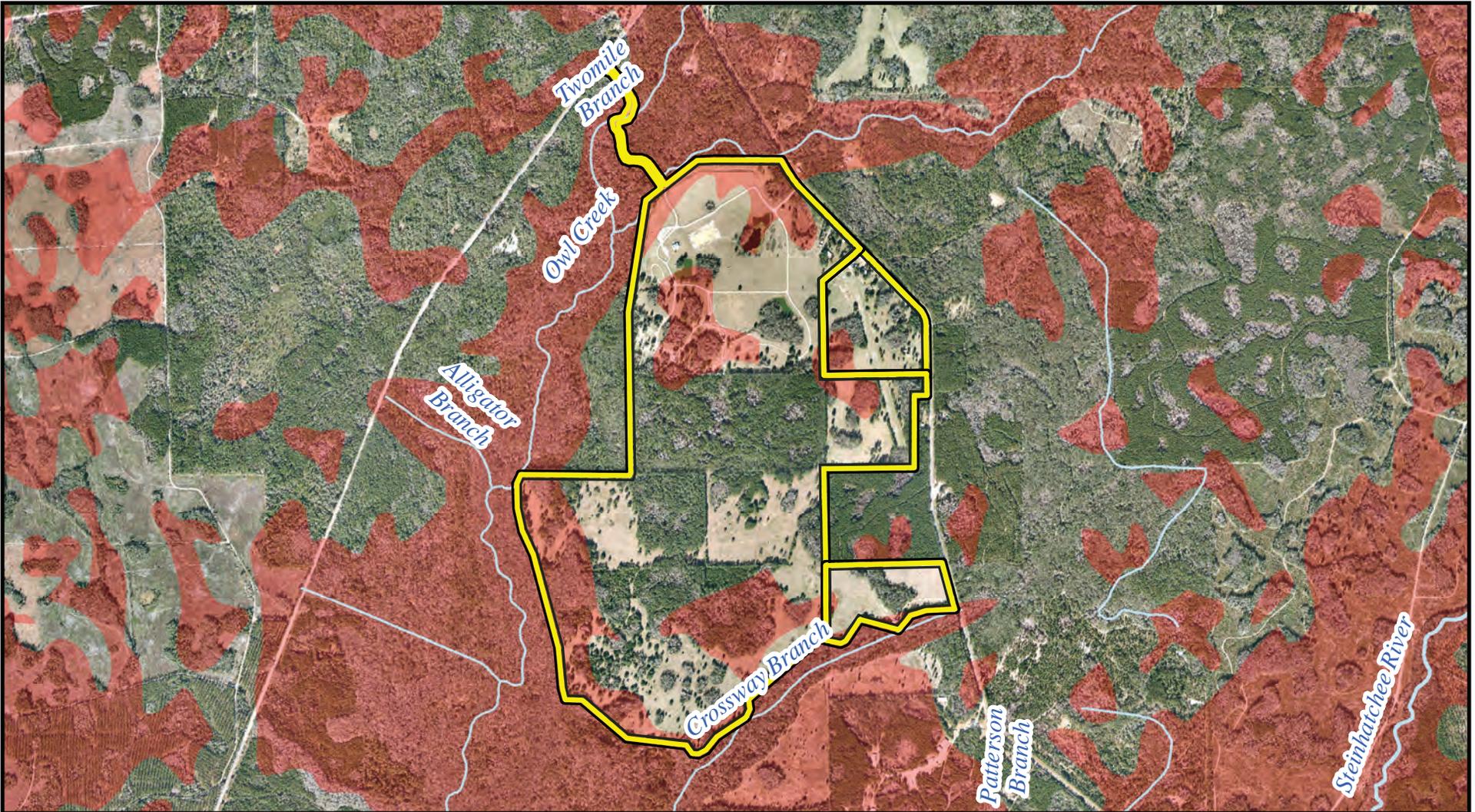
 Rivers and Streams

(Vertical Datum NAVD88-
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**RO Ranch
Surplus Proposal
LiDAR DEM Property**

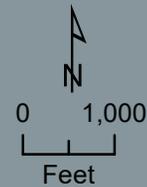


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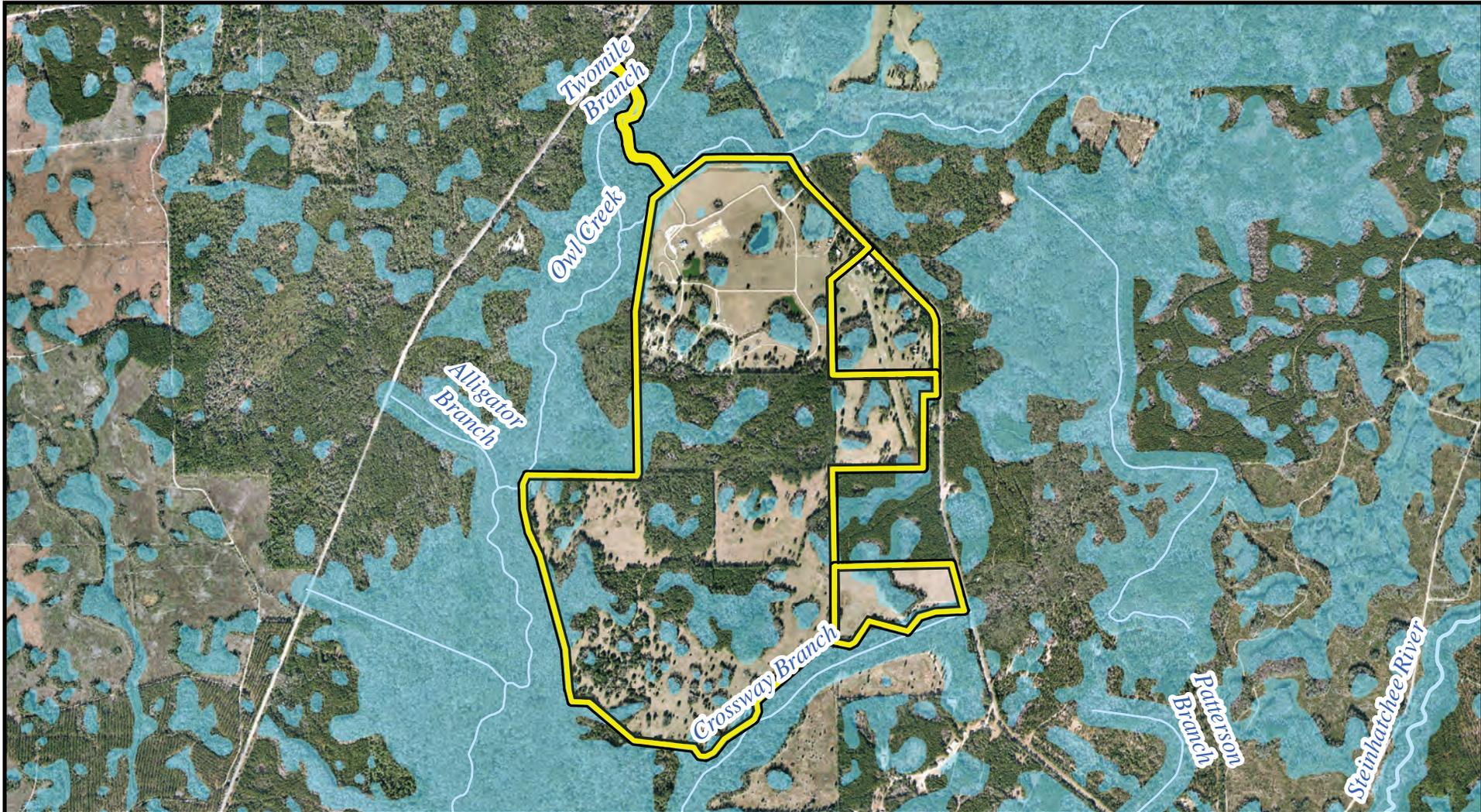


-  Project Boundary - 707 acres +/-
-  Rivers and Streams
-  Floodplain Protection

RO Ranch Surplus Proposal Floodplain Protection

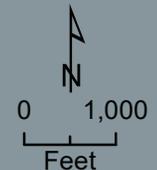


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-  Project Boundary - 707 acres +/-
-  Surface Water Protection
-  Rivers and Streams

**RO Ranch
Surplus Proposal
Surface Water Protection**



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