

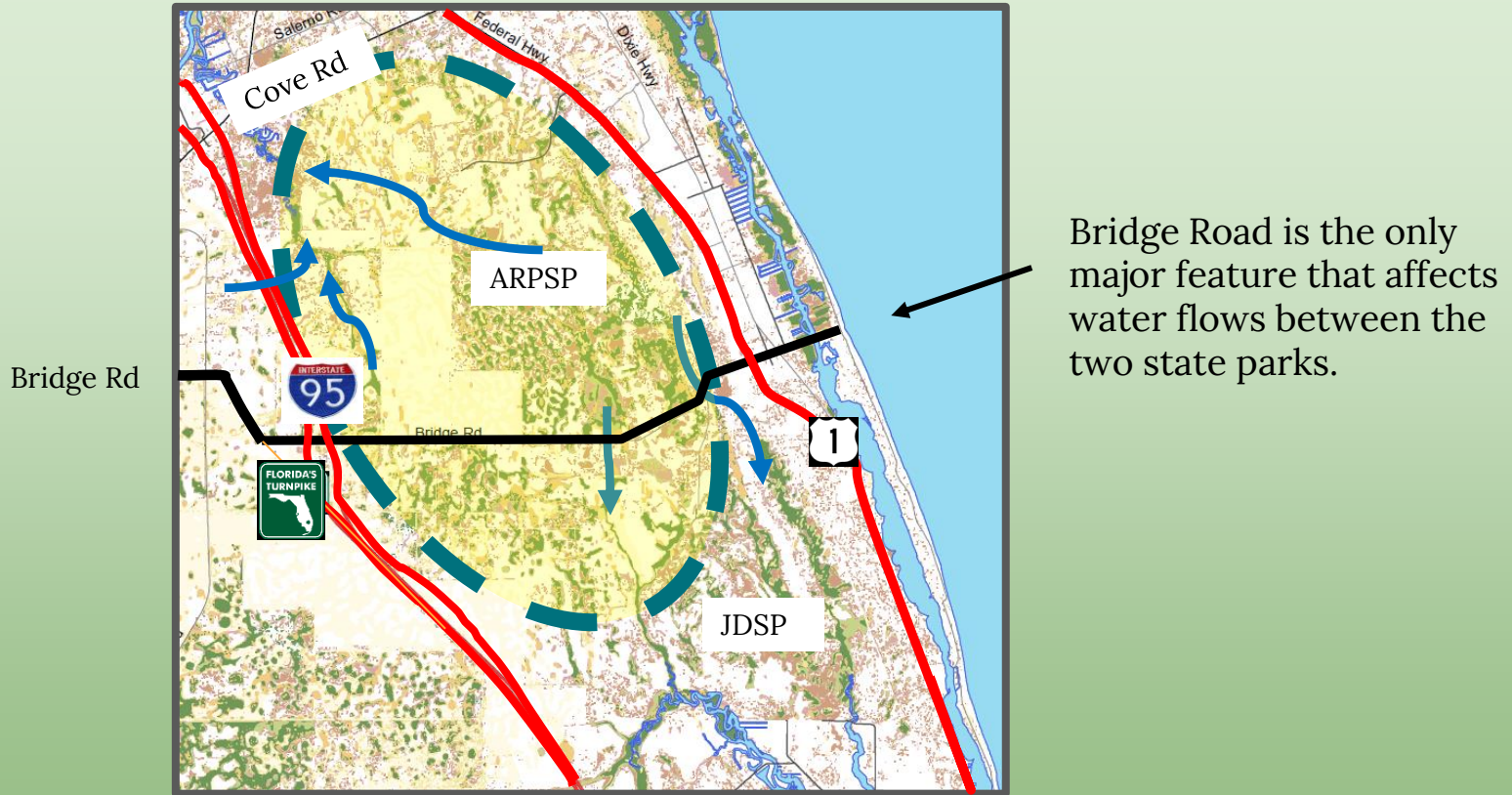
# The Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative



Photo by Geoffrey Smith

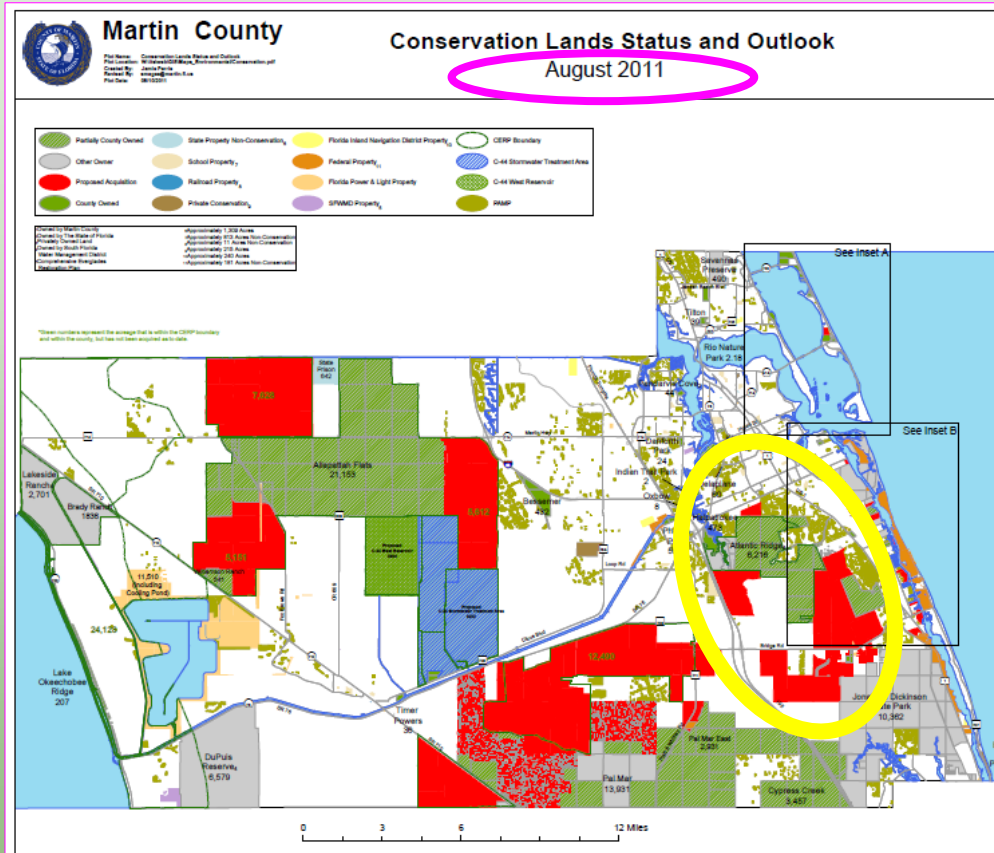
The Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative envisions a protected ecological corridor that will connect the sources of the Loxahatchee & St Lucie Rivers and form a preserve for native plants and wildlife connecting a land mass of nearly 70,000 acres.

## Loxa-Lucie Headwaters – Regional Context



The project is generally bounded on the west by the Florida Turnpike & I-95, and on the east by developed areas west of U.S. 1, between Atlantic Ridge Preserve State Park (ARPSP) and Jonathan Dickinson State Park (JDSP).

# Loxa-Lucie - County-wide Context

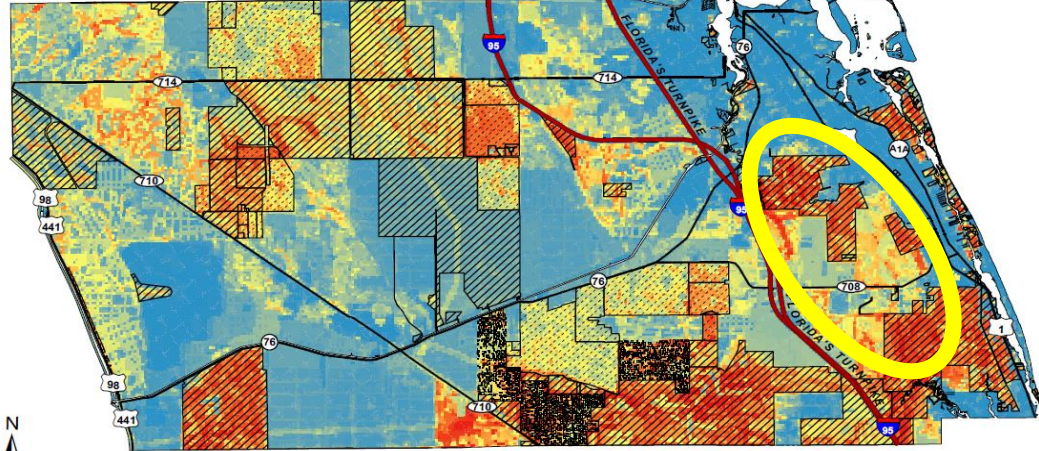
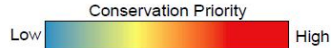


Green & gray = Publicly-owned conservation lands  
Red = Desirable to be acquired  
Blue = C-44 Reservoir & Stormwater Treatment Area

These properties were identified for conservation more than 10 years ago as part of a county-wide interconnected network of conservation lands.

# Loxa-Lucie – Ecological Context

## Treasured Lands Foundation Merged Priorities Map Martin County



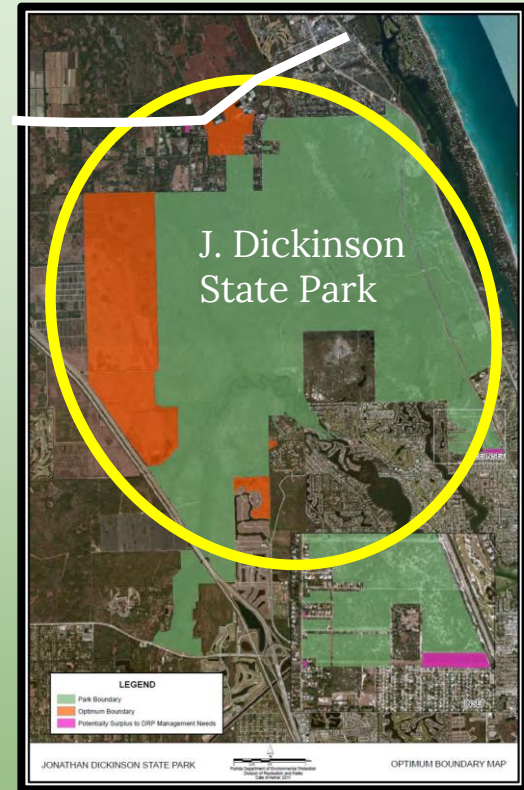
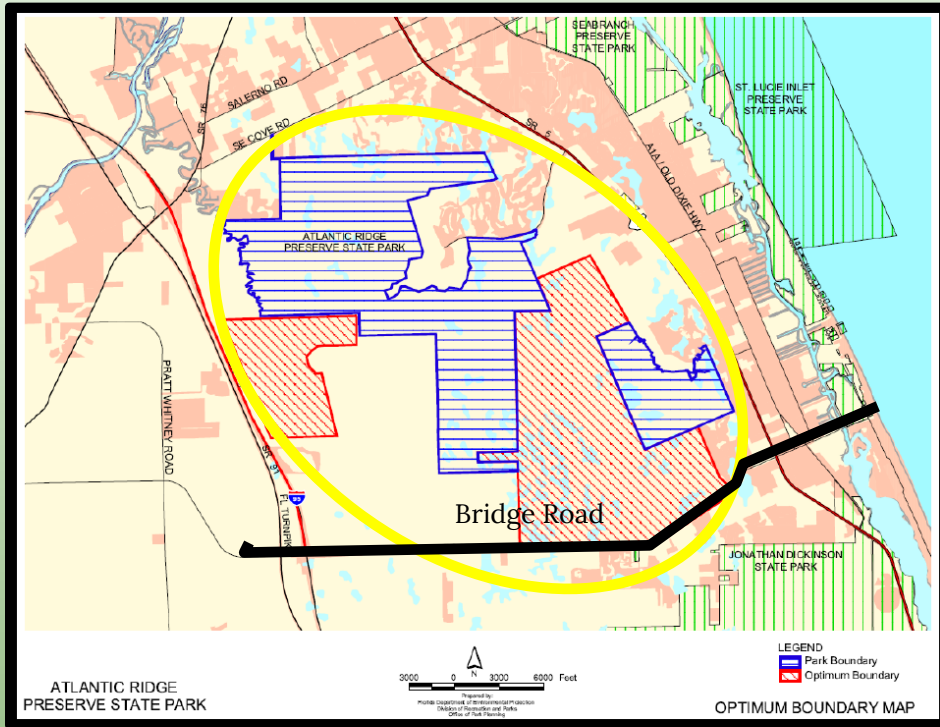
North Florida  
Land Trust INC

## Parameters Considered

- Rare Species Habitat
- Verified Impaired Waters
- Priority Natural Communities
- Aquifer Recharge
- CERP – Everglades Restoration
- Loxahatchee River Watershed
- Wetlands
- Freshwater Habitat Threats
- Blueways and Greenways
- Potential Habitat Richness
- Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas
- Fla Ecological Greenways Network
- Fla Forever Approved Projects
- Park Buffering
- Landscape Integrity Index
- Nationally-Registered Historic Sites
- Optimal Park Boundaries
- Scenic Byways
- Flood Risk
- Prime & Statewide Unique Soils
- Forest Soils

This “Environmental Priorities” Figure shows the most environmentally valuable properties in Martin County in the brightest colors, which include the Loxa-Lucie headwaters complex.

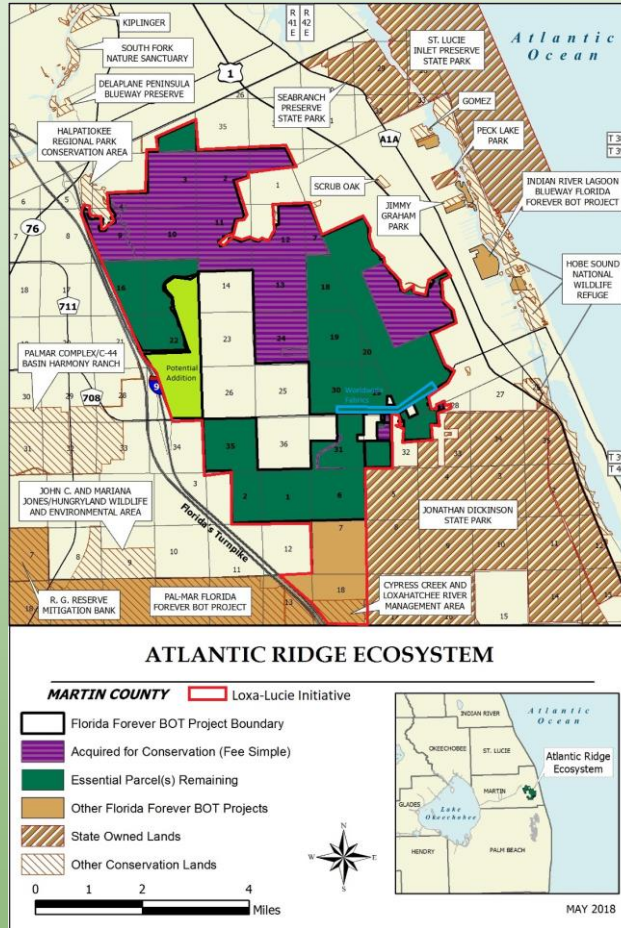
# Loxa-Lucie - Optimal Park Boundaries north of Bridge Road



These Figures taken from the Management Plans for the Atlantic Ridge Preserve State Park and JDSP identify parcels that the State has designated as being desirable additions to the parks.

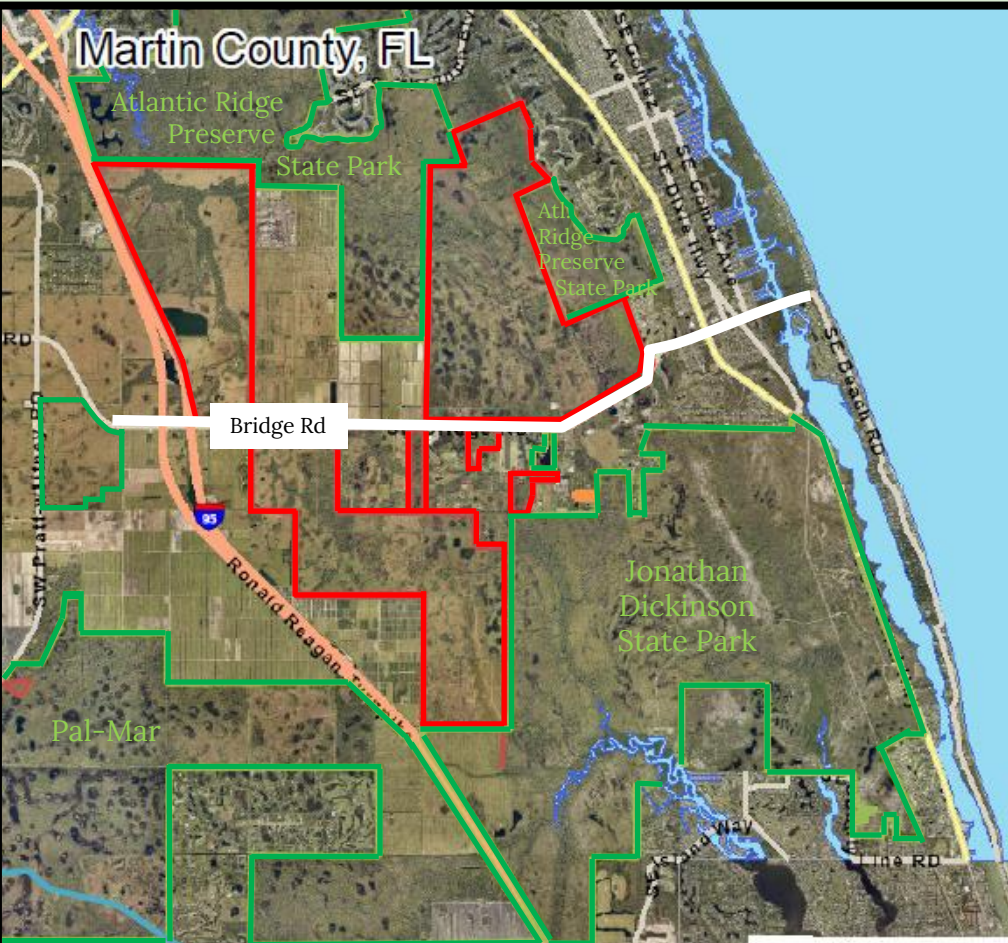
# Loxa-Lucie Headwaters

Existing Florida Forever Atlantic Ridge Ecosystem project map.



Dark green parcels are proposed to be acquired if owners are willing sellers.

# Loxa-Lucie Headwaters



- Several large tracts are already in public ownership (outlined in green)
  - J. Dickinson State Park
  - Atlantic Ridge Preserve State Park
  - Halpatiokee Regional Park
  - Pal-Mar
- Several privately-owned tracts (outlined in red) are in substantially natural condition
- Most tracts are outside Martin County's Urban Services Boundary
- Development pressure is present due to zoning for development

# Here's why it is so important to preserve the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters now

**This? or This?**

Bridge Rd  
Gateway to Hobe Sound

East of I-95  
View looking east

Date of Photo: 1/14/19  
Source: Google Earth

(Most of the Bridge Road corridor is in natural or restorable condition)

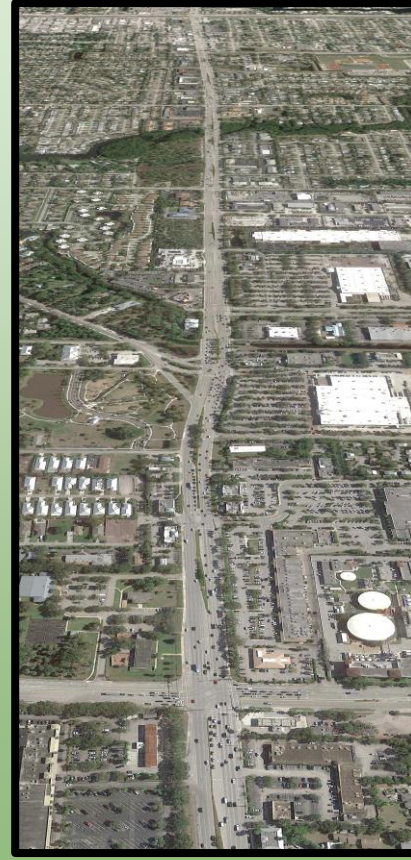


Indiantown Rd  
Gateway to Jupiter

East of I-95  
View looking east from  
intersection with  
Central Blvd

Date of Photo: 1/13/19  
Source: Google Earth

(It is too late to protect  
natural communities  
and watersheds)





## Loxa-Lucie Headwaters - Goal



To permanently restore historical water flows and protect existing natural lands in an ecological corridor for native endangered plants and wildlife

# Loxa-Lucie Headwaters – Phase 1 Acquisition(s)

The first phase involves acquisition of properties actively “For Sale”



- Should contain environmentally valuable habitats
- Restorable hydrology
- Permanently protect the corridor between Jonathan Dickinson & Atlantic Ridge State Parks
- Prevent urban sprawl
- Restore natural water flows
- Help prevent recurring flooding
- Improve water quality
- Address saltwater intrusion
- Enhance recreational opportunities
- Reduce wildlife mortality

## Loxa-Lucie Headwaters



## Water Management

- Restore hydrology
- Manage water to reduce likelihood of regional flooding
- Increase flow to Kitching Creek & Loxahatchee River

## Recreational Opportunities

- Hiking Trails
- Wildlife Viewing
- Equestrian trails, with eventual connections to Jonathan Dickinson and Atlantic Ridge State Parks

# Loxa-Lucie Headwaters

## Projected Time Line

### Schedule

- ✓ Nov 2019      Approved by Guardians Board of Directors
- ✓ Nov 2019      Approved by Treasured Lands Foundation Board of Directors
- ✓ Dec 2019      Engage The Conservation Fund
- ✓ Dec 2019      Launch Campaign
- ✓ April 2020    Initiate fund raising for Phase 1 acquisition (\$250,000)
- ✓ Spring 2020 -              Begin outreach to governmental & NGO entities
- Fall 2020 - May 2021    Complete fund raising for Phase 1 acquisition costs
- 2021 -                      Advocate re-ranking of Atlantic Ridge Fl. Forever project

# Loxa-Lucie Headwaters

## Endorsements:

- The Town of Jupiter Island
- Loxahatchee River Mgmt Council
- The Rivers Coalition
- Martin County Chapter of the FL Native Plant Society
- Hobe Sound Golf Club
- Friends of Jonathan Dickinson
- Others pending ...

A grassroots initiative is underway to permanently conserve these lands.

## You can help to:

- Permanently protect the corridor between Jonathan Dickinson & Atlantic Ridge State Pks
- Prevent urban sprawl
- Restore natural water flows
- Help prevent recurring flooding
- Improve water quality
- Address saltwater intrusion
- Enhance recreational opportunities
- Reduce wildlife mortality

# Loxa-Lucie Headwaters



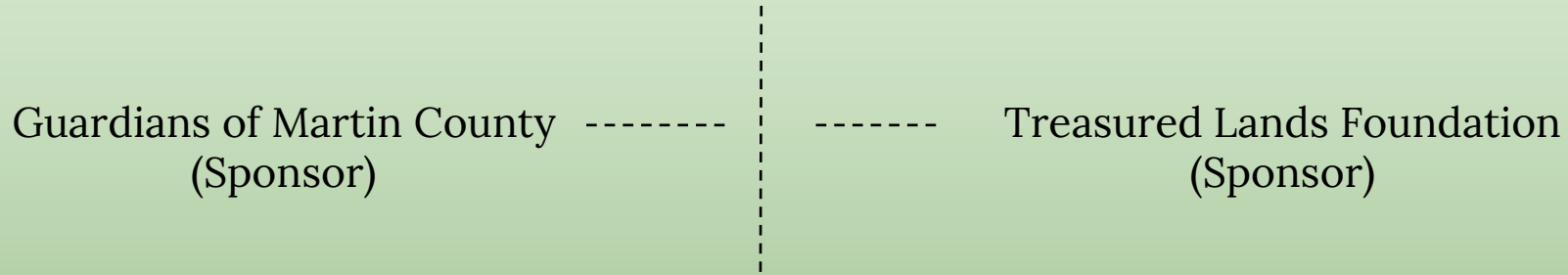
Questions?

For more information, see: [www.LoxaLucieHeadwaters.org](http://www.LoxaLucieHeadwaters.org)

# Loxa-Lucie Headwaters

## Organizational Chart for Acquisition

The Conservation Fund



For this initiative, The Guardians of Martin County and the Treasured Lands Foundation have engaged The Conservation Fund (a nationwide land stewardship organization) to manage the Phase 1 land acquisition program.

Completion of additional acquisitions will likely require state, federal and/or county funds, for which the Loxa-Lucie team intends to pursue modifying the boundaries of Florida Forever projects and advocating for the implementation of the natural lands hydrologic restoration called for in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan.

# The Conservation Fund

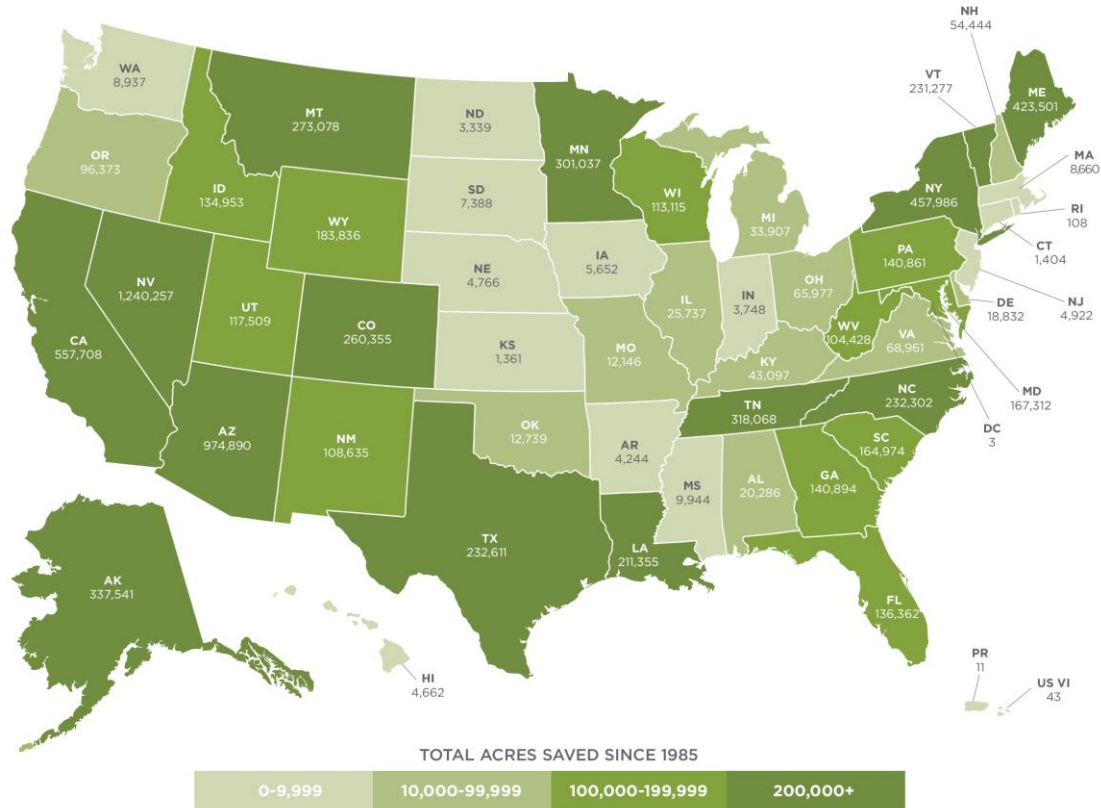


The professional land conservation group The Conservation Fund is providing assistance with the Loxa-Lucie Headwaters Initiative. The following two slides provide information about this organization, their nationwide and state-wide experience and their role in the project.

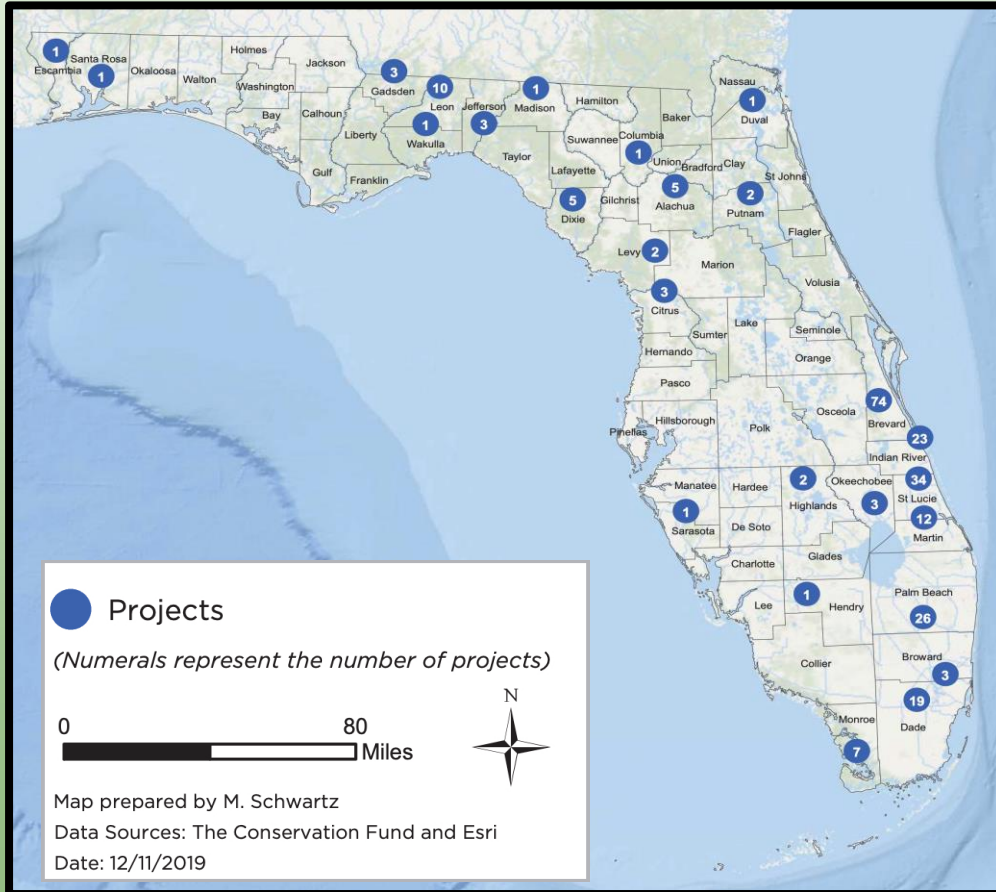


# The Conservation Fund – Where we Work

Over 8 Million Acres Protected Since 1985



# The Conservation Fund - Florida Projects (1985-2019)

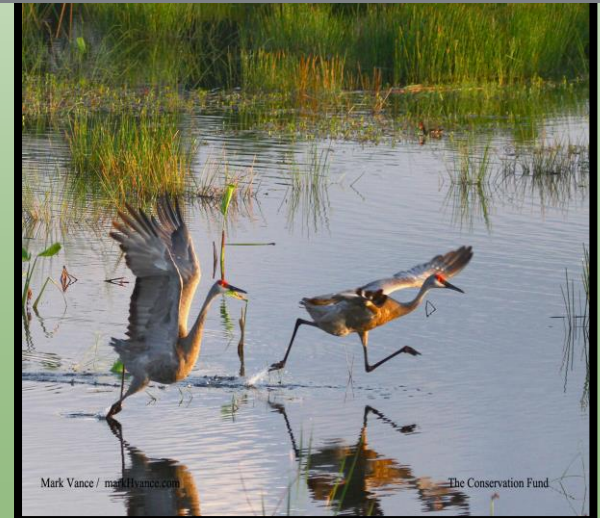


Number of Projects: 244

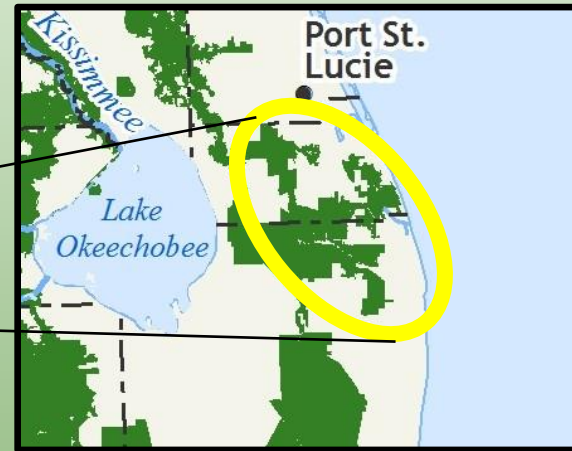
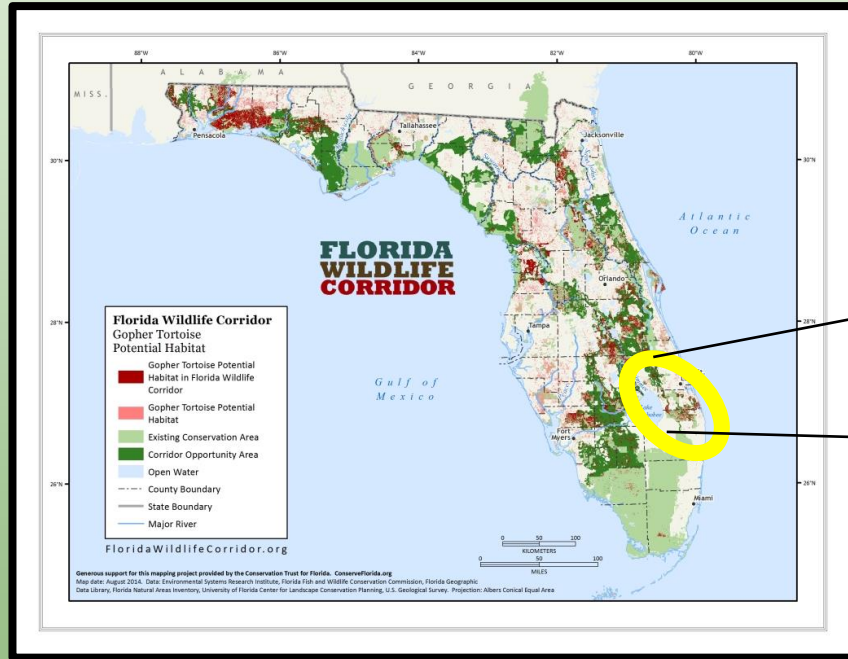
Acres Protected: 136,433

Fair Market Value: \$665,901,391

Acquisition Cost: \$529,975,978



# Loxa-Lucie – Part of a designated state-wide Wildlife Corridor



This area has been identified as the easternmost portion of the Florida Wildlife Corridor east of Lake O.

# Bridge Rd Wildlife Mortality

- More than **650** animal mortalities have been documented since January 2020, **including 9 species of mammals, 18 species of birds, 26 species of reptiles and 6 species of amphibians.**
- Once/wk Jan- Jun, twice/wk July – present, being coordinated and funded primarily by the Pegasus Foundation & donations.
- Have met with County and Water Mgmt District staff to discuss potential corrective actions to reduce wildlife mortality, and they have agreed to consider a variety of options.
- Unfortunately, the mortality is not concentrated at specific locations, but rather spread out all the way from I-95 to HS Golf Club. There is no easy solution.

