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# The Post

A Newsletter to Update

Members and Friends of the Conservation Trust for Florida

Protecting Our Rural Lands

Issue #5 March 2004

## Ocala to Goethe Corridor *Lochloosa parcel protected*

CTF helped protect a second parcel in the Ocala National Forest to Goethe State Forest Corridor, which brings the total acreage protected to about 2,500 acres. The 952-acre Price's Scrub (see newsletter #3) was the first and the Lochloosa Nature Preserve is the second parcel to be protected.

Formerly owned by the Lybass family, and now renamed the Lochloosa Longleaf Nature Preserve, the parcel boasts some of the best remaining longleaf pine flatwoods and sandhill habitat in the county. SJRWMD provided 33% of the approximately \$2 million acquisition cost.

In September 2003, Alachua County and the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) jointly acquired the 1,388-acre nature preserve within the Lochloosa Wildlife Conservation Area in southeastern Alachua County.

Several additional large parcels totaling over 11,000 acres, were also nominated by CTF to the Alachua County Forever program. The Rayonier tract, a 2,000-acre upland hammock is undergoing acquisition negotiations.

CTF nominated the tract for acquisition by the Alachua County Forever land conservation program. CTF also worked collaboratively with the landowner, county staff, and the Land Conservation Board to protect the property after the initial nomination.

Some 27,000 acres of surrounding land are already protected from development through easements and public ownership, but not the Lybass tract itself. Such "in-holdings" are often prime candidates for residential development.

## Design Center Exhibit

### Camp Blanding to Osceola NF Placed on Acquisition List

The Camp Blanding to Osceola National Forest Ecological Greenway project was exhibited at the Florida Community Design Center during the months of January and February.

In February, the Governor and the Cabinet added the 153,000-acre Greenway, to the state's Florida Forever land acquisition list. The Greenway is just one portion of the Ocala National Forest to Osceola National Forest Corridor project that CTF is working collaboratively with the Office of Greenways and Trails, the Florida National Scenic Trail Association, and the University of Florida's GeoPlan Center to protect. The objective is to create a functional landscape corridor for wide-ranging species such as the Florida black bear.

The Lake Santa Fe Florida Forever Project, which was also added to the state's Florida Forever land acquisition list, was one of the exhibits at the Design Center.

*The mission of the Conservation Trust for Florida is to protect the rural landscapes of Florida. We focus on farms, ranches, working forests, and natural areas that provide landscape connections.*  
**Florida loses 150,000 acres of rural lands to development every year. Your support will help CTF work to slow this trend.**

**THANK YOU!** to all the members who renewed their membership; to David and Peggy Carr, owners of the Pearl Country Store for catering CTF's Annual Meeting; to Progress Energy for their generous support of The Farmlands Project; to David Chiappini of Chiappini Farm Native Nursery for his support; to Fantastic Graphics! for printing CTF's window decals; and to CTF President Terry Zinn for donating native wildflower seed.

**Wish list:** Color and B&W toner cartridges (HP Office Jet All in One), GPS Unit, and a digital camera.

**E-Mail Newsletter Subscription:** If you would like to add or remove your e-mail address to the electronic newsletter subscription list, send an e-mail to newsletter@conserveflorida.org or call 352-466-1178.

### Membership Form

**YES!** I support the goals of the *Conservation Trust for Florida* and enclose my tax-deductible membership dues of:

\_\_\_ \$15 Student    \_\_\_ \$25 Individual    \_\_\_ \$40 Family    \_\_\_ \$100 Sustaining  
\_\_\_ \$250 Patron    \_\_\_ \$500 Founder    \_\_\_ \$1,000 Benefactor    \_\_\_ Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

I have time and talents to contribute as well! Please contact me. \_\_\_\_\_

I am a landowner and would like more information on conservation easements. \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to the Conservation Trust for Florida & send to: P.O. Box 134, Micanopy, FL 32667

**Also in this issue:**

\* President's Message

\* The Farmlands Project Update

- grant received from Progress Energy

\* Matanzas Conservation Area

\* Country Gathering in Evinston

## A Letter from the President

Dear CTF members:

On March 4, the Board of Directors elected me President of the Conservation Trust for Florida. At that meeting, the Board also elected Michael Campbell as Vice-President, Nancy Peterson as Secretary, and Kathleen Williams as Treasurer. I am honored by the Board's selection of me as President because the preservation of rural lands and working agricultural lands is a personal cause for me. I live on 40 acres in northern Alachua County, which was bought to keep as a working rural farm. I am pleased to have Michael, Nancy, and Kathleen as my fellow officers because they passionately care about preserving rural lands.

CTF is at a critical stage now and your participation and contribution, whether in time or money is important. With the assistance of Charles E. Roe, Director of the Southeast Land Trust Alliance, the Board developed and adopted a three-year strategic plan with specific goals for CTF. Our efforts will be to see that the plan is implemented. To that end, we will be calling on our Advisory Board and our members to assist us in reaching our goals. Our plan can be found on the CTF website at [www.conserveflorida.org](http://www.conserveflorida.org).

In January, Judy Greenberg stepped down as Executive Director to run for a seat on the Marion County Commission. Busy Kislig Shires, Program Assistant, was appointed as Interim Executive Director.

Through the great efforts of our staff and with the assistance of Advisory Board member Dr. Gary Meffe, CTF has begun a concerted grant application effort to provide more secure funding for CTF. Other fundraising efforts include selling wildflower seed packets, which were donated by my company Wildflowers of Florida, Inc. Native flower species include *Coreopsis basalis*, *Coreopsis lanceolata*, *Coreopsis leavenworthii*, *Ipomopsis rubra*, *Phlox drummondii*, and *Rudbeckia mollis*.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not thank Michael Campbell for the excellent job he has done leading CTF as President of the Board. Michael has devoted a wealth of time and sweat equity into CTF and will remain involved. As Vice-President, he will be there for me to lean on as I begin my tenure as President.

**Terry L. Zinn**  
**President of the Board**

### Board of Directors

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Jack Putz  
Tom Saunders  
Freddie Wood

### Staff

Busy Kislig Shires  
*Interim Executive Director*  
Erik Lewis  
*Projects Director*

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## Country Gathering in Evinston

In November, CTF hosted a day in the country at the Evinston Memorial Park. The event was held to thank CTF's major donors for their generous support. Lifetime resident and farmer Freddie Wood took members and friends on a hayride through the picturesque countryside of Evinston. As Pedro Patterson drove the tractor with two hay wagons hitched to the back through the pastures, past historic homes and churches, and along the edge of Orange Lake, Freddie interpreted their history.

Freddie's family has a rich history in Evinston. The Wood & Swink Store, which is also the town's post office, has been in the Wood family since 1906 and still serves as a post office and general store. A flock of sandhill cranes were sited roosting in a palm hammock near the edge of Orange Lake as well as an active bald eagle's nest in a nearby pine tree.

Vice-President Michael Campbell presented Dr. Gary Meffe and his wife Nancy with a framed photograph



CTF members and friends ride through the picturesque Evinston countryside in a hay wagon. Shown standing are Board Member David Carr (on the left) and his uncle, Tom Carr. Photo by Vic Ramey

of Orange Lake as a token of CTF's appreciation for their dedication to the organization. Nature photographer Sean Dowie took the photo.

## Matanzas Conservation Area

The goal of the project is to protect a functional landscape linkage/corridor between the Ocala National Forest (over 500,000 acres) in Central Florida and the Matanzas State Forest/Faver-Dykes State Park/Pellicer Creek Conservation Corridor. This group of protected areas is approximately 15,000 acres in size and is located on the East Coast of Florida. The path of this proposed linkage would transverse the remaining undeveloped timberlands/wetlands between Federal and State protected areas. The objective is to place a large landscape-

scale corridor connecting the Matanzas State Forest to the Ocala National Forest on the State of Florida's proposed acquisition list and apply for other funding from both local and federal sources to acquire all the land within the project boundary.

Rapid urbanization taking place to the north in nearby Jacksonville and to the south moving up from Palm Coast threatens the corridor. Flagler County is the fastest growing County in the State. These developments to the north and south are leaving a small window of time to create a manageable corridor that provides habitat for wildlife and protects connections.

*Erik Lewis, Projects Director*

## The Farmlands Project Progress Energy Grant Received



CTF recently received a \$5,000 grant from Progress Energy to complete the strategic planning phase for The Farmlands Project. The American Farmland Trust, a national organization that has protected over 1 million acres of prime agricultural land, also endorsed the project. The goal of the project is to inform landowners in a five-county area (Alachua, Marion, Levy, Gilchrist, and Columbia Counties) about land conservation options with the goal of protecting agricultural land with conservation easements.