



THE POST

PROTECTING OUR RURAL LANDS

APRIL 2008

FALL ROUND UP!

What better location to celebrate the preservation of working rural landscapes than at the Whitehurst Horse Prairie Lodge – with its rustic ranch gateway to the expansive view of Horse Prairie, to the live oak canopy that sheltered the Lodge.

The Conservation Trust for Florida held our Awards Ceremony and annual fund raiser on November 18, 2007 to honor Ed Montgomery of Rayonier Forest Resources for his role in protecting the 2,303-acre Barr Hammock Preserve.

Guests were treated to a slide show and keynote address by Carlton Ward, Jr., the acclaimed photographer and conservationist and an authentic demonstration of “cow hunting” by the Florida Cow Hunters who rode Cracker horses and herded Cracker cattle, along with their faithful cow dogs.

The fall Awards Ceremony was our opportunity to get to know everyone better, build a strong community base, and give a little bit back to all of you who make this great work of land stewardship possible. We raised nearly \$28,000 to support our land conservation programs and operating budget.

Ed Montgomery’s commitment to land conservation and protecting Barr Hammock for the public to enjoy was a key element in the effort to protect this magnificent tract for acquisition to the Alachua County Forever (ACF) land conservation program. One of CTF’s Board Members Mike Campbell initially put the project together with Ed and other partners. Ed’s dedication to the ACF program and process, the expertise of Ramesh Buch of the Alachua County Forever

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Jack Gillen “hunts” cracker cows with cow dogs. Photo by Matt Dube’.



Donald Cavanaugh, framing expert at Central Florida Office Plus, Bernie Machen, UF President, and Edward Blue of the Gainesville Chamber of Commerce at the CTF Awards Ceremony on November 18, 2007. Photo by Matt Dube’.

Back in the Saddle Again

Dear CTF Members,

In January at the annual meeting I was elected President of the Board along with Bill Schlitzkus as Vice President, Mike Campbell as Treasurer, and Steve Nesbitt as Secretary. This is my second time as President, thus: the title of my letter. Many thanks are due to David Carr who stepped down as President and to John Hendrix who stepped down as Secretary. After three years, Hugh Popenoe stepped down to become an Advisory Board member. Hugh along with David Carr and Kathleen Williams have been the driving force to move CTF to reach out to the ranchers and farmers in Florida. The success of that effort was demonstrated in the great work done by Ellen Huntley Dubé in our workshops in a number of counties and the continuing interest by the ranch and farming community in conservation easements. I am grateful that Hugh has agreed to stay involved despite his busy schedule because he brings much wisdom and connection to the ranching community.

Last November, we had a great Awards Ceremony and fund raiser at the Whitehurst Ranch, and we are indebted to the Whitehurst family for their support. For those of you not there, you missed a true Florida evening as we were treated to Cracker Cowboys, Florida Cracker horses and real cow dogs herding Florida Scrub cows. Another highlight was the exceptional photography and narration by Carlton Ward, Jr. about working ranches in Florida. Thanks to Busy and staff, volunteers, and numerous donations; the fall event was the best ever.

CTF is looking to the future and is changing because the funding to protect Florida lands is changing. The state's Florida Forever program is just about empty. Likewise, limitations in state budgets have hampered state efforts to fund and process conservation land projects. CTF held a long-range planning retreat in February to shape the mission of CTF over the next five years. The retreat was held in Fort McCoy at The Griffin Ranch; a wonderful 30-acre retreat with several cabins, a small café, and the wonderful Griffin family. The site is where Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings used to visit her doctor and friend. We were lucky to have Advisory Board member Fay Baird lead the retreat sessions. It is a pleasure to work with people who have strong beliefs, opinions, and who respect others and enjoy crafting a course for CTF.

CTF will continue to do the hard work of conserving Florida's working farms, ranches, and timberlands. We welcome your thoughts and input. Please contact us by phone or e-mail and let us know how we are doing.

A special thank you to the Educational Foundation of America and Progress Energy for their support of the Land Conservation Outreach project!

Sincerely,



Terry L. Zinn, President of the Board

Our O2O brochure that describes the Ocala to Osceola National Forests Greenway has been finalized and we thank our partners for their support: Florida Wildlife Federation, Defenders of Wildlife, The Nature Conservancy, and the Legacy Institute for Nature and Culture.

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Conservation Trust for Florida, Inc.
P.O. Box 134, Micanopy, FL 32667
Phone & Fax: 352-466-1178
www.conserveflorida.org
info@conserveflorida.org

ONLINE *Art Sale* & *Gallery*

You will find the finest original art from some of the top landscape painters and photographer in Florida! All the artists are generously contributing 40% percent of the retail value to support CTF's land conservation programs.

Forty percent of the retail value is tax-deductible!

This is not an auction, so there are set prices for the artwork. You can pay by credit card with PayPal or by sending a check and a buyer form, which is a downloadable form on the CTF web site at www.conserveflorida.org.

Please contact Busy Shires Byerly at busy@conserveflorida.org or (352) 466-1178 for more information about the art sale.

The sale will be open until June 1, 2008.

CTF is planning to host a *Art Show* the early fall.

The art is so beautiful

and we hope you will be inspired to support land conservation by purchasing a beautiful piece of art for your home. Stay tuned!

Featured Artists: Kate Barnes, Linda K. Blondheim, Gary Borse, Peter Carolin, Charles Dean, Heidi Edwards, Diane Farris, Ellen Fischer, Brenda Hofreiter, Harriet Huss, Mike Kemp, John Moran, Nancy Moskovitz, Michael H. Myers, Laura NeSmith, Linda Pence, Melanie Peter, Robin Popp, Jeff Ripple, Jacquelyn Schindehette, Regina Stahl Briskey, Carlton Ward, Jr., and Eric Zamora

"Evinston Palm," fine art painting by Nancy Moskovitz (right). "Evinston Shoreline of Orange Lake," fine art painting by Harriet Huss (below).



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FCT Funds Levy Prairie Project

On November 2, the Florida Communities Trust (FCT) Governing Board funded 20 of the record 118 applications submitted in 2007. The Conservation Trust for Florida (CTF) and Alachua County submitted a grant for matching funds to purchase Levy Prairie, a 3,317-acre project, which was one of the largest ever funded by FCT. The State's \$3 million will match the County's \$1.2 million and the seller's donation to acquire this critical property. The County and the landowner are currently working to finalize the contract. FCT awarded this project the maximum 10 Project Excellence points, making the total score 180 (out of 190), which made it one of top ranked projects.

"We are excited about our success and grateful for our strong partnerships," said Ramesh Buch, Program Manager of Alachua County Forever. "The County is keeping its commitment to leveraging local investment. Alachua County Forever has successfully applied for over \$18 million from FCT alone since 2002. It brings the total in partnership funding to \$43 million to match our local investment of \$23 million."

Alachua County Forever submitted three applications; two of which were funded. The 675-acre Phifer Flatwoods project was submitted in partnership with Alachua Conservation Trust. FCT is awarding Alachua County \$1.2 million to reimburse the nearly \$3 million purchase price. The third application, Lake Alto, was not selected.

For final scores, project information and photo contest winners go to the Alachua County Forever web site at <http://www.alachuacounty.us/government/depts/epd/land/> or for more information contact Ramesh Buch, Program Manager of Alachua County Forever, at 352-264-6800.

CTF Board Member David Carr, Alachua County Commissioner Mike Byerly, Willie the Losen (Putnam Land Conservancy), George Edwards (Friends of Paynes Prairie), and CTF Board Member John Hendrix travelled to Tallahassee on November 2nd to speak in support of the Levy Prairie project. Photo by Busy Shires Byerly.



CTF Advisory Board Member Kathleen S. Williams, CTF Board Member David Carr and Jennifer Rex at the Fall Round Up! Photo by Matt Dube.

WELCOME New Board Members!

CTF's Board would like to welcome two new members, K. Marlene Conaway and Hans Tanzler, III to the Board of Directors and four new Advisory Board members: Larry D. Harris, Jennifer B. Springfield, Carlton Ward, Jr., and Richard White.

We look forward to working with you!

K. Marlene Conaway: Marlene served as the Chief of Comprehensive Planning for the Department of Community Affairs, Florida State Government from 2005 to 2006. She served as the Deputy Director, Department of Planning and Development for Carroll County, Maryland and as a program administrator for a Maryland county, she worked with farmers to help them understand the benefits of selling agricultural land preservation easements to the State. A major accomplishment was designing the "Critical Farms" program to prevent agricultural lands from being converted to development when a farmer retires. Easement funding is provided by the County, as bridge financing, to help individuals who want to farm purchase the land. The program has preserved fifty farms in the last twenty years and received a national award in 2005.

Hans Tanzler III: Hans is an attorney with a legal masters degree in taxation. He is also a CPA, financial executive and valuation analyst with broad based experience over the last ten years in various industries including manufacturing, real estate and

computer technology. Hans is currently managing Cypress Grove Farm, a container nursery of Florida native trees and scrubs located in Waldo, Florida (www.cypressgrovefarm.com). He formerly practiced fifteen years as an attorney/CPA tax attorney in Jacksonville and five years with the IRS and Department of Justice in Miami. He is a current member of the St. Johns River Water Management District Board, the University of Florida Foundation Board of Governors and former Chairman of the Jacksonville zoological society. He and his wife, Deborah, are both alums of the University of Florida, and reside in Jacksonville, Florida.

Larry D. Harris: During the 1960's he became a natural historian and worked for the US Fish and Wildlife Service doing things such as prescribed burning (c.1963); TX Parks and Wildlife in Gulf coastal ecology and Tanzania Game Division implementing Conservation reserves (750,000 acres was his domain). In the 1970's he worked at the UF School of Forest Resources and Conservation, imagining that UF, too, could be an international leader in Biodiversity understanding, conservation, and management.

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program and Brian Block of The Nature Conservancy, along with the support of CTF, kept the project on track during the four years of negotiations.

In 2006, the 2,303-acre Barr Hammock property was purchased with funds from the ACF



program. The Southwest Florida Water Management District also contributed mitigation funds. A Florida Communities Trust grant, co-submitted by CTF and Alachua County and received in 2007, reimbursed the ACF program with 60% of the purchase price.

Barr Hammock is truly a “crown jewel” in Alachua County’s “Emerald Necklace.” This unique upland is a “land bridge” that connects two of the largest wetlands in the county - Ledwith Prairie and Levy Prairie. Barr Hammock helps create a wildlife corridor that connects the Ocala National Forest to Goethe State Forest and several listed species such as sandhill cranes and the Southern Bald Eagle can be seen on Barr Hammock.

The property also has a long history of settlement by Native Americans and 19th century settlers and up until recently was logged for timber, but much of the site was managed as a natural area. Over 14 miles of trails will be open to the public for hiking, bird watching, and for people to simply enjoy the beautiful landscape. ☞

Ed Montgomery, Director of Rural Properties, TerraPoint Services for Rayonier Forest Resources, was honored with a Land Conservation Award for his role protecting the 2,303-acre Barr Hammock Preserve at the November 18th Awards Ceremony. Ed fondly recalled exploring Old Florida as a young boy and he described the transforming moment - a spring day where Ledwith Lake was filled with blooming blue flowers - that inspired him to continue the long-term negotiations to protect Barr Hammock and its magnificent beauty for future generations. Photo by Matt Dube’.

(continued from pg. 5 - Welcome New Board Members)

In the 1980’s Larry Harris helped promulgate new conservation programming here at home (e.g. FL’s Nongame Wildlife Program; Pinhook Swamp linkage programming, FL Greenways programming and ‘WHIP’, the USDA/Farm Bill for Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program.

Larry committed the 1990’s to developing and teaching wildlife conservation ‘Issues’ for UF non-majors and advised Nationally and Internationally on issues of biodiversity conservation. He retired c. 1996.

Carlton Ward, Jr.: Carlton is an environmental photojournalist

from Clearwater, Florida. Through his photographs, he promotes conservation of natural environments and cultural legacies. Carlton’s passion for nature was born from the Florida landscape, where eight generations of family history ground his perspective.

As a leading proponent of conservation photography, Carlton founded the Legacy Institute for Nature & Culture (LINC).

LINC’s mission is to raise awareness for natural environments and cultural legacies, educate about important connections between human societies and natural ecosystems, and promote conservation of natural heritage.

Learn more at www.LINC.us and www.carltonward.com

Jennifer B. Springfield: Practicing Gainesville attorney with 20 years experience, primarily in environmental/land use law and certified mediator.

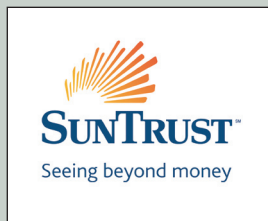
Richard White: B.A. University of Florida ‘72, J.D. Florida State University ‘75, LL.M. (Estate Planning) University of Miami ‘77 Board Certified Wills, Trusts & Estates Attorney Member, Professional Advisory Board, Dade Community Foundation Member, Board of Directors, Gainesville Community Foundation.

Thank you Event Sponsors

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Rocking with the Rolling Stones

Chuck Leavell, keyboardist for the Rolling Stones (for the past 20 years) was the keynote speaker at the outreach event on Saturday, January 19th at the Clay County Fairgrounds near Green Cove Springs. Photo by Busy Shires Byerly.



CTF was privileged to share part of the stage with Chuck Leavell, keyboardist for the Rolling Stones (for the past 20 years), at an outreach event on Saturday, January 19th at the Clay County Fairgrounds near Green Cove Springs. The event was held in partnership with the North Florida Hunter Jumper Association and the North Florida Land Trust (NFLT). Mr. Leavell was the keynote speaker at the Saturday night dinner and he even played a few tunes for the crowd of nearly 500 people who clapped along to his songs. After Mr. Leavell's speech and dinner, international show jumpers wowed the crowd in the internationally sanctioned Grand Prix show jumping event with a \$75,000 purse!

In addition to being a famous rock and roll star, Mr. Leavell, is also a tree farmer and owns a 1,200-acre plantation called Charlane Plantation in Georgia. He placed a conservation easement on a portion of his farm in 2006 with the assistance of The Conservation Fund and the State of Georgia. He talked about how fast the southeast is growing and how private landowners can work with groups like CTF and NFLT to protect their land. He also talked about how the IRS tax regulations allowed him to deduct the fair market value of that conservation easement from his federal income taxes at 50% of his adjusted gross income and allowed him to use that deduction over a period of 16 years.

"In simple English, as a private landowner I was compensated for protecting the natural resources on my privately owned land, which is what I planned to do anyway," Mr. Leavell said.

He concluded his speech with a wonderful analogy.

"It doesn't matter if you are a doctor, a teacher, a truck driver...whatever your calling in life, there is an art to it. And what fascinates me is that the canvas we use to perform the art of land management is the landscape of our own back yards...the landscape of our communities...our states, this wonderful country that we call America. This is the canvas we have to work on. So let's be careful how we mix the colors on our palate...and let's be careful of the brush strokes we make on that canvas...because one thing for sure...we will have to look at the picture we paint for a long, long time. And one thing I know is that all of us that love the land want the picture that we paint to be nothing less than...a masterpiece!" For more of his speech go to www.conserveflorida.org. It will online until May 31, 2008.

A very special thank you to Susan Rindal for organizing the event and to Bob O'Toole of Toyota of Jacksonville for sponsoring the event. Thank you also to Tony Weight, President of the Board of the North Florida Hunter Jumper Association for his support. The CTF and NFLT banners and signs were generously donated by Giglio Signs.

LAND CONSERVATION OUTREACH

The goal of the Land Conservation Outreach Project over the next two years is to educate landowners about land conservation and estate planning options through workshops which will be hosted throughout an expanded geographic area in Florida, increasing outreach from 10 counties to a total of 45 counties. The main objective is to increase the amount of land in permanent conservation easement in strategic locations maximizing ecosystem connectivity.

Through our education efforts CTF will serve as “matchmaker” to connect landowners with the resources and information that can help them conserve their land in perpetuity and continue to work their land in an economically and environmentally sound way.

This Project consists of workshops held throughout the state of Florida which address the detailed aspects of conservation easements. Experts in these areas (including real estate appraisers, conservation managers, planners, and landowners with first hand experience in conservation) are enlisted as educators.

We have conducted education and outreach

workshops in 10 counties: Alachua, Marion, Putnam, Osceola, Lake, Volusia, Levy, Bradford, St. Johns and Flagler Counties.

In April of 2008 we will host another workshop in Lake County, targeting the counties of Lake, Levy, Marion, Orange, Seminole and Volusia.

Over the course of the next two years (2008-2010) CTF and other partners will hold 6 more workshops:

* May/June 2008: (Hillsborough, Polk, Pasco, Sumter, Hernando, Citrus, Pinellas, Manatee)

* Sept/Oct 2008: (Duval, Clay, Nassau, St. Johns, Flagler County)

* Jan/Feb 2009: (Hamilton, Suwannee, Gilchrist, Union, Baker, Columbia)

* May/June 2009: (Dixie, Lafayette, Wakulla, Gulf, Franklin, Taylor, Leon, Gadsden, Liberty, Jefferson, Madison)

* Sept/Oct 2009: (Hardee, Glades, Highland, Desoto, Okeechobee)

* Jan/Feb 2010: CTF Statewide Workshop

The Conservation Trust for Florida (CTF), the Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT), and Putnam Land Conservancy (PLC) and the Putnam County, St. Johns County, and Flagler County Extension Services co-sponsored a workshop on September 28, 2007 at the Putnam County Extension Office in Palatka. Approximately 80 landowners attended.

The highlight of the event was a heartfelt presentation by two landowners Freddie Wood and Sean Sexton. They both talked about why they made the decision to protect their family farms. The workshop included several well-known attorneys including Ernie Cox and Frank Yong, who presented information about the tax benefits of conservation easements. Michael Candler from Candler Appraisal Services, presented information on how an easement is appraised. Sarah Owen, a planner from the Florida Wildlife Federation, presented information about the USDA/NRCS Farm Bill programs. Hillsborough County Agriculture Economic Director, Stephen Gran, discussed a Hillsborough County property tax incentive program for landowners to create ten-year easements. ☺



Frank Yong, Ernie Cox, and Michael Candler at the Landowner Outreach Workshop on September 28 at the Palatka Extension Office in Starke.

Photo by Busy Shires Byerly.

Thank you Volunteers and Cow Hunters

A very special thank you to Whitey Markle for playing music at the event and to the Florida Cow Hunters for a great performance! Frank Batey, Mark Carpenter, Jerome Feaster, Jack Gillen, Billy Ray Hunter, Tony Morell, and Kevin Sheffield.

Thank you to our volunteers Karen Arrington, Amy Geer, Ed Geers, Emily Humphreys-Beher, Diane Johnson, Erik & Claire Lewis, Celeste Shitama, and Jennifer B. Springfield.

Thank you to the CTF Development and Outreach Committee for all their hard work on the event! John Hendrix, Chair, David Carr, Keith Glynn, David Pais, Nancy J. Peterson, and Kathleen S. Williams.

More information about Carlton Ward, Jr., acclaimed photographer and conservationist, can be found at www.carltonward.com.

Cracker - The Last Cowboys of Florida



CTF Land Conservation Outreach Director, Ellen Huntley Dube' was featured in a documentary by Victor Milt called "Cracker - The Last Cowboys of Florida." This documentary tells the story of how to save the ranches of Florida. It also "explores every aspect of cowboy life - from prairie to rodeo to small town existence - it also confronts the crisis of the "urbanization" of the prairie and subsequent loss of wilderness areas. But it not only presents the problems - it offers solutions - ones that have worked. If you care about ranching or the last remaining wilderness in southeastern USA, you must own this movie," states the documentary's summary. The documentary is an expansion of the multi-award winning movie, "Cowboys of Florida," which premiered at the Palm Beach International Film Festival in April 2006.

Victor Milt is a world renowned fashion photographer, videographer, writer, and lighting specialist. In the early 60's, he was shooting regular features for Glamour, Ingénue, McCall's and Vogue, as well as serving as a director/cameraman for TV commercials.

You can purchase copies for \$20 directly from CTF or you can purchase one online at <http://victormilt.com/store/page2.html>. Thank you to CTF Advisory Board member Larry Harris for purchasing 15 copies for CTF!

Ag Guidelines Revised

CTF Executive Director Busy Shires Byerly was a member of the Alachua County Property Appraiser's Agricultural Advisory Committee, which made recommendations on how to revise the agricultural guidelines for lands classified for agricultural uses. The law is commonly called the "Greenbelt" and allows the property to be valued based upon its use rather than the market value.

The Committee, made of representatives from the farming, ranching, and timber industry, recommended changes to all the agricultural classifications including timber, field crops (includes hay

fields), specialty crops, orchards & groves, and the pasture-livestock stocking rates.

Since Busy's family has a horse farm, she was asked to provide recommendations on the horse stocking rate. The old guidelines for horse farms would only allow a horse farm owner to qualify if the owner had three brood mares producing a foal annually on a minimum of 10 acres. For many horse farm owners who generate legitimate horse farm income from boarding and training, this requirement was unrealistic.

The Committee approved a new horse farm guideline by including boarding and training along with

the old requirement of three brood mares. The property appraiser will require documentation to include training and boarding as a bona fide use. The minimum acreage will remain at 10 acres. The barns and buildings will be assessed as buildings and will not be included in the agricultural assessment on the land. Fences will not be assessed.

To sign up for the horse farm classification, or another category, contact the Property Appraiser's office at 352-374-5235.

Special thanks to Property Appraiser Ed Crapo for taking the lead on revising the agricultural guidelines. ☺

Kids in the Woods

On Saturday September 8, eight children from the Alachua County Sheriff's Youth Crime prevention program went on a tour of Alachua County Forever's Barr Hammock Preserve. The tour was coordinated by the Women for Wise Growth (WWG), Conservation Trust for Florida (CTF) and Alachua County Environmental Protection department (EPD).

The children are a part of the Alachua County Sheriff's Office Neighborhood Services Section and hailed from the Tower Oaks Subdivision and the Majestic Oaks Apartment Complex. According to Leesha London, program specialist, the Youth Crime Prevention program "provides these kids with supervised activities and gives them something productive to do that they like." Ms. London, Gladys Lane, Beverly Hill, Sally Dickinson all from the WWG, CTF's Ellen Huntley Dube', Volunteers Dan Roundtree and Josh Dickinson, and EPD's Ramesh Buch and his family accompanied the kids.

The 2,303-acre Barr Hammock Ledwith Prairie property, which includes important wetland and prairie habitats, is the largest parcel acquired by the Alachua County Forever land conservation program. Barr Hammock has a long history of human use, starting with prehistoric American Indian cultures, and more recently as a cattle ranch and timber farm.

Barr Hammock Preserve is open for private tours and will be open soon to the general public. CTF



has coordinated tours with other groups including the Audubon Society, Sierra Club, the Florida Native Plant Society, and a group of high school students from Eastside High School.

To schedule a private tour, interested parties should contact CTF at 352-466-1178. For more information about Barr Hammock Ledwith Prairie Preserve, visit the Alachua County Forever web site: www.alachuacounty.us/government/depts/epd/land/ or call 352-264-6800.

by Ramesh Buch, Land Conservation Program Manager, Alachua County Forever

Dan Roundtree, Ramesh Buch and a group of kids look at a map of Barr Hammock. Photo by Ellen Huntley Dube.



Conservation Trust for Florida, Inc.
P.O. Box 134
Micanopy, FL 32667
Phone & Fax: 352-466-1178
www.conserveflorida.org
info@conserveflorida.org

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The Post is a publication of the Conservation Trust for Florida, Inc. a non-profit 501(c)(3) land trust.

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. We have successfully protected approximately 5,000 acres of rural landscapes through publicly funded land conservation programs and privately donated conservation easements.

CTF, in conjunction with the Office of Greenways & Trails, has also helped begin and facilitate the protection of a 153,000-acre project, the Camp Blanding to Osceola National Forest Ecological Greenway.

We work on a regional basis to protect working rural landscapes and wildlife corridors through educational workshops and direct protection through voluntarily donated conservation easements and acquisition by publicly funded land conservation programs.

Lake Palestine © Erik Lewis

CTF's Accreditation Application Public Comments Requested

CTF is applying for accreditation through the Land Trust Alliance Accreditation Commission, which recognizes the need for public accountability for accredited land trusts. Accreditation will provide the assurance of the quality and permanence of land conservation and will publicly recognize CTF's ability to protect important natural places and working lands forever.

The Commission is currently accepting comments and to submit a comment on behalf of CTF, you may use the form at <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/current-applicants/action-public-comment> or you may send a comment directly to info@landtrustaccreditation.org. There are several guidelines for the public comment process.

Only written comments will be accepted.

All comments must be attributed.

Comments must relate to the applicant's compliance with national quality standards from Land Trust Standards and Practices. Accreditation applicants are evaluated against specific indicator practices within these standards that address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. Deadline is June 15, 2008. Contact CTF at 352-466-1178 or busy@conserveflorida.org

*Save the Date for the
Fifth Annual*

Fall Round UP!

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2008
WHITEHURST RANCH**