

EXHIBIT F

2006 & 2011 Land Management Reviews

**Land Management Review of
Welaka State Forest
Lease No. 3979
June 15, 2006**

Prepared by Division of State Lands Staff

*Keith Singleton, Land Acquisition & Management Planner
Cindy Morris, Administrative Assistant*

For

Welaka State Forest Review Team

FINAL

September 15, 2006

Land Manager:	DOF
Area:	2287.11 acres
County:	Putnam
Mgmt. Plan Revised:	4/25/2002
Mgmt. Plan Due:	4/25/2012

Management Review Team Members

Agency Represented	Team member Appointed	Team member In attendance
DOF	Bill Korn	Bill Korn
DRP	Amy Copeland	Amy Copeland
FWC	Jimmy Conner	Jimmy Conner
PLM (Plum Creek)	Andy Hirko	Charlie Dunn
Native Plant Society	Lisa Modola	Lisa Modola
DEP, District	Jeremy Tyler	Jeremy Tyler
Putnam SWCD	Teddy Seihler	
Putnam County	Suzy Davis	Tess Yagecic
Observer (FNAI)	Carolyn Kindell	
DOF	Terry Dailey	

Process for Implementing Regional Management Review Teams

Legislative Intent and Guidance:

Chapter 259.036, F. S. was enacted in 1997 to determine whether conservation, preservation, and recreation lands owned by the state Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (Board) are being managed properly. It directs the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to establish land management review teams to evaluate the extent to which the existing management plan provides sufficient protection to threatened or endangered species, unique or important natural or physical features, geological or hydrological functions, and archaeological features. The teams also evaluate the extent to which the land is being managed for the purposes for which it was acquired and the degree to which actual management practices, including public access, are in compliance with the adopted management plan. If a land management plan has not been adopted, the review shall consider the extent to which the land is being managed for the purposes for which it was acquired and the degree to which actual management practices are in compliance with the management policy statement and management prospectus for that property. If the land management review team determines that reviewed lands are not being managed for the purposes for which they were acquired or in compliance with the adopted land management plan, management policy statement, or management prospectus, DEP shall provide the review findings to the Board, and the managing agency must report to the Board its reasons for managing the lands as it has. A report of the review team findings are given to the managing agency under review, the Acquisition and Restoration Council, and the Governor and Cabinet.

Review Site

The management review of Welaka State Forest considered approximately 2,287 acres in Putnam County that are managed by the Division of Forestry. The team evaluated the extent to which current management actions are sufficient, whether the land is being managed for the purpose for which it was acquired, and whether actual management practices, including public access, are in compliance with the management plan. The management plan update is due on April 25, 2012.

Review Team Determination

Is the land being managed for the purpose for which it was acquired?

After completing the checklist, team members were asked to answer "yes" or "no" to this question. All team members agreed Welaka State Forest is being managed for the purpose for which it was acquired.

- The forest is being restored to longleaf pine habitat and other communities are being maintained well.
- Beautiful trails, land management is in accordance with protecting wildlife, recreational trails and facilities are great.
- Excellent job providing recreational and training opportunities.
- Excellent job on the habitat restoration and management.

Are actual management practices, including public access, in compliance with the management plan?

After completing the checklist, team members were asked to answer "yes" or "no" to this question. All team members agreed Welaka State Forest is in compliance with the management plan.

- Public access is very good.

Commendations to the Managing Agency

1. The team commends the DOF for their restoration of the forest to improve the habitat for wildlife. (VOTE 7+, 0-)
2. The team commends the DOF for their protection of the many bald eagle nests on the forest while continuing to conduct needed resource management nearby. (VOTE: 7+, 0-)
3. The team commends the DOF for the dramatic improvement in the prescribed fire program in the past five years. (VOTE 7+, 0-)
4. The team commends the DOF on the outdoor recreational opportunities offered on the forest, and management of visitor impacts. (VOTE 7+, 0-)

Exceptional Management Actions

The following items received high scores on the review team checklist (see attachments), which indicates that management actions exceeded expectations.

Exceptional management actions:

- Management of the sandhill, xeric and mesic hammock, wet flatwoods, mesic flatwoods, baygall, floodplain swamp/floodplain forest, depression marsh/flatwood prairie lakes, spring run and floodplain marsh communities.
- Management and protection of the listed plants and animals.
- Area, frequency and quality of the prescribed burns.
- Restoration of the offsite slash plantation/sand pine (sandhill).
- Control of non-native invasive animals and plants.
- Monitoring of the ground water quality and quantity and surface water quality and quantity.
- Gates and fencing, boundary surveys, signage, and law enforcement presence.
- Public access including roads, parking, recreational opportunities, management of visitor impacts, interpretive facilities and signs.
- Environmental education and outreach programs.
- Waste disposal, sanitary facilities, building, equipment and funding.

Recommendations and Checklist Findings

The management plan must include responses to the recommendations and checklist items that are identified below.

Recommendations

The following recommendations resulted from a discussion and vote of review team members.

1. The team recommends that DOF develop and implement a plan to minimize the number of firebreaks in the forest in order to enhance vegetation quality and fire management in wetland ecotones. (VOTE: 7+, 0-)

Manager's Response:

Agree. Forestry staff will re-evaluate the need of all the existing fire lines, and close the ones that are not needed. All staff will be briefed on the importance of maintaining the integrity of all wetland/upland ecotones.

2. The team recommends that DOF request from DHR a cultural resource survey of the site, and assistance with interpretation of historic buildings at the training center. (VOTE: 7+, 0-)

Manager's Response:

Agree. Forestry staff will contact the Division of Historical Resources to inquire if they are willing to conduct or assist in acquiring a cultural resource survey of the property. In

addition, staff will consult with DHR on appropriate steps to protect and interpret the historic buildings associated with the 1920's World War I veterans' camp.

3. The team recommends that DOF conduct post-fire gopher tortoise surveys west of Hwy. 309. (VOTE: 7+, 0-)

Manager's Response:

Agree. Forestry staff will initiate gopher tortoise surveys in the near future, and monitor other species as the need arises.

4. The team recommends that the DOF hydrologist review the site to determine where restoration work is needed, if any. Special attention should be given to roads, ditches and fire lines near wetlands. (VOTE: 7+, 0-)

Manager's Response:

Agree. Forestry staff will contact our hydrology section for a site visit in order to identify and assess any significant hydrological issues related to ditches, runoff, culvert construction and storm water flow under SR 309, as well as to identify and prioritize any appropriate restoration strategies.

Checklist findings

The following items received low scores on the review team checklist (see Attachment 1), which indicates that management actions, in the field, were insufficient (f) or that the issue was not sufficiently addressed in the management plan (p). These items need to be further addressed in the management plan update.

1. Discussion in the management plan to address the management issues related to the scrubby flatwoods, wet flatwoods, and floodplain marsh. (p)

Manager's Response:

Agree. Natural communities added to WeSF during the FNAI map revision will be added to future management plans, including scrubby flatwoods, wet flatwoods, floodplain marsh, wet prairie, and flatwoods lake.

2. Discussion in the management plan of the cultural resource survey. (f)

Manager's Response:

Agree. See response to Recommendation #2.

3. Discussion in the management plan of the uses proposed in the management plan including fishing platforms (on St Johns River) and a forest education building (additional building at old firetower proposed in plan). (p)

Manager's Response:

Agree. Forestry staff will reassess the need for new recreation facilities considering the review team's comments. Staff has already decided not to build a platform on the St. John's River and have redirected the funding. Also, the need for an additional education building is doubtful; the existing training facility is adequate for our needs.

Team Member's Comments

Natural Communities: protection and maintenance: (I.A)

- Management Plan needs to address desired future conditions for each community type. The plan will also have to be updated to reflect new FNAI community map. The historical communities will have to be modified in some cases to reflect current stage of succession (e.g. xeric hammock vs. sandhill). Sandhill restoration (removal of sand pine and growing season fire) has produced some pretty good looking ground cover. Disked fire lines along ecotones are too prevalent. These lines occur regularly between community types (sandhill vs. flatwoods; flatwoods vs. wetlands). Efforts are needed to reduce significantly the number of disked lines and their location throughout the forest. Incorporate floodplain marsh into any plans for aerial burning of adjacent flatwoods sites.
- Good fire restoration on sandhill, non disturbance of the soil by conscientious roller chopping pre-burn using non-heavy equipment (roller without water, so not too heavy). This is also good for the wildlife to open up the sandhill without disturbing the soil. Some turkey oaks and other oaks are being left among the pines for acorn mast for wildlife food. This is good practice.
- More xeric hammock than reported. Fire lines impeding or proper edge burning of baygalls. Aerial burns mentioned to clean up.
- Need to add FNAI mapped communities to management plan. Still a few sand pines (excluding the champion tree) to be removed from sandhill. Reduce fire lines around the baygall.

Listed Species: protection and preservation (I.B1, I.B.2)

- No stated protection plan listed in the plan.
- Increase gopher tortoise. Survey after burning.
- Excellent job managing a habitat that will support your listed species.

Cultural Resources: (II.A; II.B)

- No archeological survey has been completed. The site manager has been through the archeological site monitor class. The cultural significance of the 1920's veteran's camp buildings should be assessed and a protocol for protection established.
- Archaeological survey of forest is needed. State archaeologists could be asked to do the survey putting aside the fact that CARL funds were not used to purchase lands. Perhaps explore state grants and university projects to accomplish this. A good baseline study and inventory of cultural resources is needed and can be added to by the on-site archaeological resource monitor to maintain these records for the forest's history.
- Need to get a survey done.
- Needs surveys for historical importance of buildings. Keep track of various Indian Mounds, etc.

- Recommend further archaeological survey.
- Need to have an archaeological survey done.

Resource Management (III)

Prescribed Fire (Natural Community Maintenance): (III.A)

- Rollerchopping seems to have been an effective treatment to reduce heavier fuels in the flatwoods prior to initiating burning. Good efforts over the last several years to increase the amount of burning in both the sandhills and the mesic flatwoods. Most of the sandhills have now had at least one growing season fire. Continued efforts to reduce the fire interval in the flatwoods are necessary to get it into maintenance condition. Management plan should address shortening in return interval goals (2 years on sandhill, 2-4 years in flatwoods). Encourage DOF staff to continue to resolve habitat management issues with FWC regarding winter burning in areas of seven eagle nests.
- The forest overall looks good. The burning that is being done in a very conscientious and careful way to not lose many tree species not targeted for removal.
- Frequency would be better if he didn't have eagle nests and Hwy 309. (Consider Georgetown short cut road to reroute residents, now that it's paved).
- Review frequency plan.
- Excellent job initiating burn program, especially in the sandhill. Keep working toward frequent burning in flatwoods.

Restoration of Disturbed Natural Communities: (III.B)

- Good effort to remove all the offsite slash and sand pine from sandhills and reforest with longleaf pine.
- Only place mentioned restoration is page 23 under managing non-game wildlife species. The burns are being done for restoration of fire suppressed areas. Slash pine plantations are being restored to long leaf pine habitat.

Non-native Invasive and Problem Species: (III.D)

- Good documentation of invasive exotic plants and treatments have kept forest in a maintenance condition through spot treatments.

Hydrologic/Geologic Function (III.E)

- Recommend DOF hydrology section complete an assessment of all forest roads, low water crossings, culverts, ditches, etc. to determine the need for repairs, erosion prevention measures any hydrological restoration. Some culverts are in need of rework and armoring. Need to look at engineering issues of transporting storm water underneath Highway 309.

- DOF hydrology unit needs to come do an overall assessment of hydrological alterations and issues to suggest road/ditch management and possibly work with forest managers to contact county road department to correct county roads and culverts and drainage issues.
- Good to see the SJWMD using Welaka as a monitoring site.
- Recommend the culverts under Hwy 309 be cleaned out by the county to allow for better water flow.
- Get county involved in Hwy 309 culvert restoration. Monitored by SJWMD – exhibit L.
- Recommend county repair the culverts along Hwy 309 to move water across the highway.

Resource Protection: (III.F)

- Very nice gates at service road entrances.
- Need fence and signs stating no ATV's along the property line, the houses next to the property are where trespassers are bringing in ATV's onto the property.
- Trespassers and ATV's – problems near developing sides. Authorized vs. unauthorized entrance.
- Some areas need fencing.

Adjacent Property Concerns: (III.G)

- No progress has been made in acquiring any of the property additions associated with the identified optimum management boundary.
- There are problems with the neighbors.
- Some development surrounding the forest.

Public Access and Education: (IV.1; IV.2; IV.3; IV.4)

- Public tables are suggested at the day use areas and the primitive camp sites. Access is limited to three different trail heads along highway 309 and from the equestrian center. Good level of recreation opportunity, given the size of the property.
- Page 9 states the deed for the 20.5 acre parcel is actually a quit claim deed and requires that the property be used for educational purposes.
- 4-H, schools, boy scouts, girl scouts use the facilities. Although not so much with schools and FCATS.
- Could always use more equipment.

Management Resources: (V.2. V.3; V.4)

- Beautifully done office facility with historical highlights decorating the walls. Shop storage area is still under construction.
- Could always use equipment funding to provide resource management tools.
- Staff needs resource management personnel. A biologist on site would be great to help manage resources, inventory plants and animals and to help accomplish prescribed fire goals.

Managed Area Uses: (VI.A, VI.B)

- The "natural" appearances of the primitive camp sites are very impressive and well maintained and currently providing quality recreational experiences.
- Fishing platforms may encourage destructive use of the primitive camping areas and probably should not be put in.

Exceptional Management Actions

- Despite the small staff assigned to resource management here at Welaka, a lot of quality resource management is occurring here. Good job with the burn program and the dedication to continuing the burning for ecological maintenance.
- Good restoration projects.
- Exceptional use of fire to manage the forest.
- Staff does a very good job.
- Good forestry practices in place. The forest is being managed for wildlife and habitat restoration as well as multiple use low impact recreation, i.e. No motorized vehicle uses, no atv's. Good trail system for hikers and horseback riders.
- The managed areas are gorgeous! The entire park is notably well taken care of. Fire program is going great.
- Native habitat management.
- Recreational opportunities.

Areas of insufficient management

-

Recommendations for Improving Management of this Site:

- May need to have an archaeological and historic survey done.

PLAN REVIEW		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	AVERAGE
Natural Communities (I.A)									
Sandhill	I.A.1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Scrubby Flatwoods	I.A.2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0.43
Xeric Hammock	I.A.3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Mesic Flatwoods	I.A.4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Wet Flatwoods	I.A.5	0	0	1	0	1	x	0	0.33
Baygall	I.A.6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Floodplain Swamp/Floodplain forest	I.A.7	1	1	1	1	1	x	1	1.00
Depression Marsh/Flatwood prairie lakes	I.A.8	0	1	1	1	1	x	1	0.83
Spring Run	I.A.9	1	0	1	1	1	x	1	0.83
Floodplain Marsh	I.A.10	1	0	1	0	1	x	0	0.50
Listed species: Protection & Preservation (I.B)									
Animals	I.B.1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0.86
Eagle	I.B.1.a	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Gopher Tortoise	I.B.1.b	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0.71
Plants	I.B.2	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0.86
Cultural Resources (Archeological & Historic sites) (II.A,II.B)									
Cultural Res. Survey	II.A	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0.86
Protection and preservation	II.B	0	1	1	1	1	x	1	0.83
Resource Management, Prescribed Fire (III.A)									
Area Being Burned (no. acres)	III.A.1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Frequency	III.A.2	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0.86
Quality	III.A.3	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0.86
Restoration of Ruderal Areas (III.B)									
Offsite Slash plantation/sand pine (sandhill)	III.B.1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0.86
Non-Native Invasive & Problem Species (III.D)									
Animals	III.D.1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0.86
Plants	III.D.2	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0.86
Hydrologic/Geologic function Hydro-Alteration (III.E.1)									
Roads/culverts	III.E.1.a	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0.71
Ditches	III.E.1.b	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0.71
Hydro-period Alteration	III.E.1.c	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0.71
Water Level Alteration	III.E.1.d	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0.71

Ground Water Monitoring (III.E.2)									
Ground water quality	III.E.2.a	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0.71
Ground water quantity	III.E.2.b	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0.71
Surface Water Monitoring (III.E.3)									
Surface water quality	III.E.3.a	1	1	1	1	1	1	x	1.00
Surface water quantity	III.E.3.b	1	1	1	1	1	1	x	1.00
Resource Protection (III.F)									
Boundary survey	III.F.1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0.86
Gates & fencing	III.F.2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Signage	III.F.3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Law enforcement presence	III.F.4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Adjacent Property Concerns (III.G)									
Land Use									
Expanding development	III.G.1a	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0.86
Inholdings/additions	III.G.2	1	1	x	1	1	x	0	0.80
Public Access & Education									
Public Access-Maintenance									
Roads	IV.1a	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Parking	IV.1b	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0.86
Recreational Opportunities	IV.2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Management of Visitor Impacts	IV.3	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0.71
Interpretive facilities and signs	IV.4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Environmental education/outreach	IV.5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Managed Area Uses									
Existing Uses									
Horseback riding/Horse shows	VI.A.1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Off-road bicycling	VI.A.2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Horseback riding/Horse shows	VI.A.3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Primitive camping	VI.A.4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Fishing	VI.A.5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Bird watching	VI.A.6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Nature study	VI.A.7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Uses Proposed in Mgmt. Plan									
Fishing	VI.B.1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Observation Decks	VI.B.2	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0.57
Fishing Platforms	VI.B.3	0	0	0	0	1	x	1	0.33
Primitive Campsites	VI.B.4	1	x	1	x	1	1	1	1.00
Forest Education Building	VI.B.5	0	0	1	0	1	x	1	0.50

FIELD REVIEW		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	AVERAGE
Natural Communities (I.A)									
Sandhill	I.A.1	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4.57
Scrubby Flatwoods	I.A.2	3	2	3	3	4	3	3	3.00
Xeric Hammock	I.A.3	4	4	5	5	5	4	5	4.57
Mesic Flatwoods	I.A.4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3.86
Wet Flatwoods	I.A.5	2	4	5	5	4	4	4	4.00
Baygall	I.A.6	4	4	5	4	4	4	3	4.00
Floodplain Swamp/Floodplain forest	I.A.7	4	2	4	4	3	5	4	3.71
Depression Marsh/Flatwood prairie lakes	I.A.8	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	4.29
Spring Run	I.A.9	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	4.57
Floodplain Marsh	I.A.10	2	3	4	4	4	5	3	3.57
Listed species: Protection & Preservation (I.B)									
Animals	I.B.1	x	x	5	4	5	4	4	4.40
Eagle	I.B.1.a	4	x	5	4	5	5	5	4.67
Gopher Tortoise	I.B.1.b	3	3	5	2	4	4	4	3.57
Plants	I.B.2	3	3	5	3	5	4	5	4.00
Cultural Resources (Archeological & Historic sites) (II.A,II.B)									
Cultural Res. Survey	II.A	2	1	5	2	3	2	2	2.43
Protection and preservation	II.B	3	2	5	3	3	x	2	3.00
Resource Management, Prescribed Fire (III.A)									
Area Being Burned (no. acres)	III.A1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4.00
Frequency	III.A.2	2	4	5	4	4	3	4	3.71
Quality	III.A.3	3	4	5	4	5	5	5	4.43
Restoration of Ruderal Areas (III.B)									
Offsite Slash plantation/sand pine (sandhill)	III.B.1	4	4	5	4	4	5	5	4.43
Non-Native Invasive & Problem Species (III.D)									
Animals	III.D.1	4	4	5	4	4	5	5	4.43
Plants	III.D.2	4	4	5	4	4	5	5	4.43
Hydrologic/Geologic function Hydro-Alteration (III.E.1)									
Roads/culverts	III.E.1.a	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3.29
Ditches	III.E.1.b	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3.29
Hydro-period Alteration	III.E.1.c	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3.14
Water Level Alteration	III.E.1.d	3	3	3	3	5	3	4	3.43

Ground Water Monitoring (III.E.2)									
Ground water quality	III.E.2.a	3	4	5	4	5	4	5	4.29
Ground water quantity	III.E.2.b	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	4.43
Surface Water Monitoring (III.E.3)									
Surface water quality	III.E.3.a	3	4	5	4	5	4	x	4.17
Surface water quantity	III.E.3.b	3	4	5	4	5	4	x	4.17
Resource Protection (III.F)									
Boundary survey	III.F.1	4	4	5	4	5	5	4	4.43
Gates & fencing	III.F.2	4	4	5	3	5	5	3	4.14
Signage	III.F.3	4	3	5	3	5	4	x	4.00
Law enforcement presence	III.F.4	3	3	5	4	5	4	x	4.00
Adjacent Property Concerns (III.G)									
Land Use									
Expanding development	III.G.1a	3	3	5	2	3	2	5	3.29
Inholdings/additions	III.G.2	2	3	x	3	4	x	3	3.00
Public Access & Education									
Public Access-Maintenance									
Roads	IV.1a	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	4.71
Parking	IV.1b	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	4.71
Recreational Opportunities	IV.2	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.86
Management of Visitor Impacts	IV.3	4	4	5	4	3	4	4	4.00
Interpretive facilities and signs	IV.4	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	4.43
Environmental education/outreach	IV.5	4	3	5	3	5	4	5	4.14
Management Resources									
Maintenance									
Waste disposal	V.1a	3	4	5	3	5	4	5	4.14
Sanitary facilities	V.1b	3	4	5	3	5	4	5	4.14
Infrastructure									
Buildings	V.2a	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	4.57
Equipment	V.2b	4	3	5	3	4	3	3	3.57
Staff	V.3	3	2	5	4	4	3	3	3.43
Funding	V.4	3	x	4	4	4	4	4	3.83

Adjacent Property Concerns (III.G)							
Land Use							
Expanding development	III.H.1.a	3	4	3	4	4	3.60
Inholdings/additions	III.H.2	3	4	3	5	3	3.60
Public Access & Education							
Public Access							
Roads	IV.1.a	4	5	4	5	4	4.40
Parking	IV.1.b	4	5	4	5	4	4.40
Environmental Education & Outreach							
Wildlife	IV.2.a	2	5	2	3	3	3.00
Invasive Species	IV.2.b	1	4	2	3	3	2.60
Habitat Management Activities	IV.2.c	2	5	2	5	3	3.40
Interpretive facilities and signs	IV.3	3	5	4	5	3	4.00
Recreational Opportunities	IV.4	4	5	4	5	3	4.20
Management of Visitor Impacts	IV.5		5	1	5	3	3.50
Management Resources							
Maintenance							
Waste disposal	V.1.a	4	4	3	5	3	3.80
Sanitary facilities	V.1.b	4	4	3	5	3	3.80
Infrastructure							
Buildings	V.2.a	2	4	2	5	3	3.20
Equipment	V.2.b	4	4	4	5	3	4.00
Staff	V.3	1	3	2	4	2	2.40
Funding	V.4	2	3	1	2	2	2.00

Division of Forestry Manager and Key Staff Present:

- Scott Crosby, Manager
- Ernie Ash
- Terry Sheehan
-

Name of Site: Welaka SF

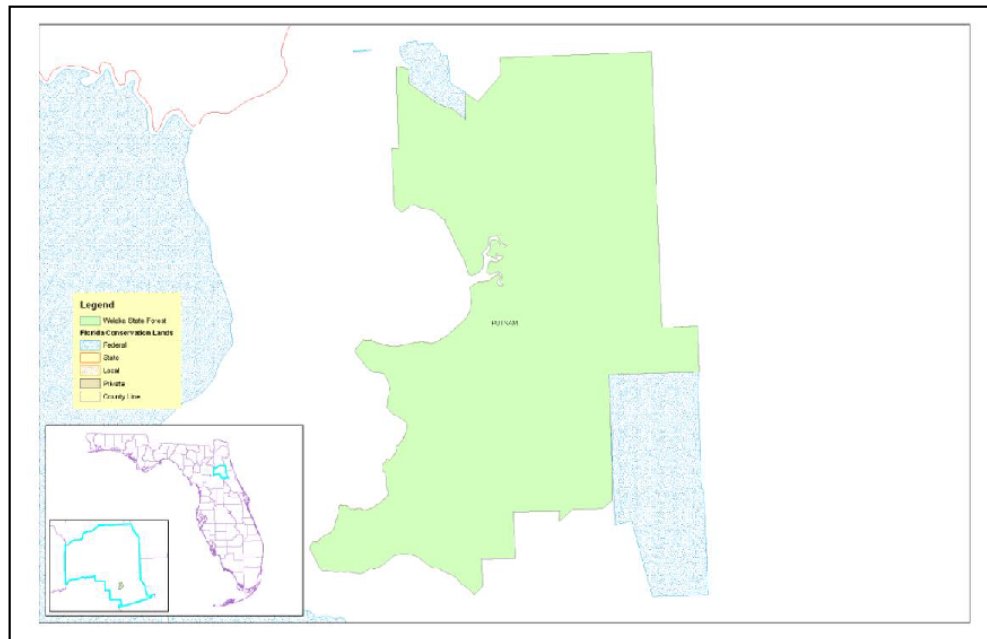
County: Putnam County

Managed by: Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Division of Forestry

Acres: 2,287.11
Area Reviewed: Entire tract

Review Date: 5/18-19/11

Management Plan Approval Date: 4/25/02



Review Team Determination

Managed in accordance with
Acquisition purpose? Yes =5, No = 0



Management practices, including public access,
in compliance with the management plan? Yes =5, No = 0



Categories	Management Plan Review	Field Review
Natural Communities	0.69	3.19
Listed Species	0.70	4.13
Natural Resource Survey	0.40	2.68
Cultural Resources	0.80	3.20
Prescribed Fire	0.80	2.47
Exotic Species	0.30	3.50
Hydrology	0.60	3.80
Groundwater Monitoring	0.20	3.80
Surface Water Monitoring	0.20	3.80
Resource Protection	1.00	3.50
Adjacent Property Concerns	0.70	3.60
Public Access & Education	0.78	3.69
Management Resources	N/A	3.80
Managed Area Uses	1.00	N/A
Buildings, Equipment, Staff & Funding	N/A	2.90

Consensus Commendations to the Managing Agency

The following commendations resulted from discussion and vote of the review team members.

1. The team commends the DOF for the high quality driving experience, and the ADA compliant accessibility at the forest. (VOTE: 5+, 0-)



2. The team commends the DOF for their progress towards ideal conditions in the sandhill communities. (VOTE: 5+, 0-)



3. The team commends the DOF for their creative use of forest harvested timber to repair the horse corrals on the property and other structures. (VOTE: 5+, 0-)



4. The team commends the DOF on the pleasant outdoor recreational opportunities on the forest and the management of visitor impacts. (VOTE: 5+, 0-)



Consensus Recommendations to the Managing Agency

The following recommendations resulted from a discussion and vote of review team members. The management plan must include responses to the recommendations identified below.

1. The team recommends that DOF conduct biological surveys at the forest, including surveys from the river side. (VOTE: 5+, 0-)



Managing Agency Response:

Field Review Checklist Findings

The following items received high scores on the review team checklist, which indicates that management actions exceeded expectations.

- Natural Communities, regarding xeric hammock, baygall, floodplain swamp/floodplain forest, depression marsh/flatwood prairie lake and spring run.
- Listed Species, regarding animal and bald eagle.
- Natural Resources, regarding fire effects monitoring.
- Resource Management, regarding the quality of the burns.
- Non-native, Invasive and Problem Species, regarding the control of plants, animals and pests/pathogens.
- Hydrologic/Geologic Function, regarding roads/culverts.
- Ground/Surface Water Monitoring, regarding the water quality and quantity.
- Resource Protection, regarding boundary surveys, gates/fencing, and signage.
- Adjacent Property Concerns, regarding expanding development, inholdings and additions.
- Public Access & Education, regarding roads, parking, interpretive facilities and signs, recreational opportunities, and the management of visitor impacts.
- Management Resources, regarding waste disposal, sanitary facilities, and equipment.

Items Requiring Improvement Actions in the Management Plan

The following items received low scores on the review team checklist, which indicates that the text noted in the Management Plan Review does not sufficiently address this issue (less than .5 score on average.). Please note that overall good scores do not preclude specific recommendations by the review team requiring remediation. The management plan must include responses to the checklist items identified below:

1. Management of natural communities, specifically scrubby flatwoods, wet flatwoods, floodplain marsh, and wet prairie, with documentation in the management plan.

Managing Agency Response: The currently approved plan was written almost 10 years ago, and the format has changed considerably since then. A new plan is currently being drafted, and will include more emphasis on management of natural communities, including a better description of desired future conditions.

2. Discussion regarding the deficiencies relating to natural resource survey, specifically listed species or habitat monitoring, other non-game species or habitat monitoring, other management effects monitoring and invasive species survey/monitoring, with documentation in the management plan.

Managing Agency Response: The Florida Forest Service (FFS) generally avoids single species management and extensive species monitoring. FFS believes that properly managed ecosystems will attract desired species and allow them to thrive. As staffing and funding allow, FFS will continue to monitor some of the important "keystone species" such as the gopher tortoise.

3. Concerns regarding deficiencies with non-native, invasive and problem species, more specifically the prevention and control of plants, animals, pets/pathogens, with documentation in the management plan.

Managing Agency Response: The new plan, currently being drafted, will include more emphasis on exotic species control.

4. Hydrologic/geologic function, specifically dams, reservoirs or other impoundments, with documentation in the management plan.

Managing Agency Response: The new plan, currently being drafted, will include more emphasis on hydrologic and geologic features.

5. The need for ground and surface water monitoring, specifically the quality and quantity of the water, with documentation in the management plan.

Managing Agency Response: The FFS relies on the St Johns Water Management District for ground and surface water monitoring. We have data from past surveys, and will include it in the new plan.

6. Adjacent property concerns, particularly the discussion of surplus land determination, with documentation in the management plan.

Managing Agency Response: The FFS does not recommend surplus any portion of Welaka State Forest. The new plan will discuss how and why that determination was made.

7. Discussion regarding public access and education, specifically invasive species, with documentation in the management plan.

Managing Agency Response: I don't see any relationship between these three topics, but the new plan will address all three in better detail.

PLAN REVIEW		1	2	3	4	5	AVERAGE
Natural Communities (I.A)							
Sandhill	I.A.1	1	1	1	1	0	0.80
Scrubby Flatwoods	I.A.2	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
Xeric Hammock	I.A.3	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Mesic Flatwoods	I.A.4	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Wet Flatwoods	I.A.5	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
Baygall	I.A.6	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Floodplain Swamp/Floodplain Forest	I.A.7	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Depression Marsh/Flatwood Prairie Lake	I.A.8	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Spring Run	I.A.9	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Floodplain Marsh	I.A.10	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
Wet Prairie	I.A.11	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
Listed species:Protection & Preservation (I.B)							
Animal Inventory	I.B.1	0	1	0	1	1	0.60
Bald Eagle	I.B.1.a	0	1	1	1	1	0.80
Natural Resources Survey/Management Resources (I.C)							
Listed species or habitat monitoring	I.C.2	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
Other non-game species or habitat monitoring	I.C.3	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
Fire effects monitoring	I.C.4	1	1	1	1	0	0.80
Other habitat management effects monitoring	I.C.5	0	1	1	0	0	0.40
Invasive species survey / monitoring	I.C.6	0	1	0	1	0	0.40
Cultural Resources (Archeological & Historic sites) (II.A,II.B)							
Cultural Res. Survey	II.A	0	1	1	1	1	0.80
Protection and preservation	II.B	0	1	1	1	1	0.80
Resource Management, Prescribed Fire (III.A)							
Area Being Burned (no. acres)	III.A.1	1	1	1	1	0	0.80
Frequency	III.A.2	1	1	1	1	0	0.80
Quality	III.A.3	1	1	1	1	0	0.80
Non-Native, Invasive & Problem Species (III.E)							
Prevention							
prevention - plants	III.E.1.a	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
prevention - animals	III.E.1.b	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
prevention - pests/pathogens	III.E.1.c	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
Control							
control - plants	III.E.2.a	0	1	0	0	1	0.40
control - animals	III.E.2.b	0	1	0	0	1	0.40
control - pest/pathogens	III.E.2.c	0	1	0	0	1	0.40
Hydrologic/Geologic function Hydro-Alteration (III.F.1)							

Roads/culverts	III.F.1.a	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Dams, Reservoirs or other impoundments	III.F.1.b	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
Ground Water Monitoring (III.F.2)							
Ground water quality	III.F.2.a	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
Ground water quantity	III.F.2.b	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
Surface Water Monitoring (III.F.3)							
Surface water quality	III.F.3.a	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
Surface water quantity	III.F.3.b	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
Resource Protection (III.G)							
Boundary survey	III.G.1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Gates & fencing	III.G.2	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Signage	III.G.3	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Law enforcement presence	III.G.4	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Adjacent Property Concerns (III.H)							
Land Use							
Expanding development	III.H.1.a	1	1	1	0	0	0.60
Inholdings/additions	III.H.2	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Discussion of Potential Surplus Land Determination	III.H.3	0	1	0	0	0	0.20
Surplus Lands Identified?	III.H.4	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Public Access & Education							
Public Access							
Roads	IV.1.a	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Parking	IV.1.b	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Environmental Education & Outreach							
Wildlife	IV.2.a	0	1	0	1	1	0.60
Invasive Species	IV.2.b	0	1	0	0	1	0.40
Habitat Management Activities	IV.2.c	0	1	0	1	1	0.60
Interpretive facilities and signs	IV.3	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Recreational Opportunities	IV.4	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Management of Visitor Impacts	IV.5	0	1	0	1	1	0.60
Managed Area Uses							
Existing Uses							
Horseback Riding/Horse Shows	VI.A.1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Off-Road Bicycling	VI.A.2	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Primitive Camping	VI.A.3	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Fishing	VI.A.4	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Bird Watching	VI.A.5	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Nature Study	VI.A.6	1	1	1	1	1	1.00
Proposed Uses							
Observation Decks	VI.B.1	1	1	1	1	0	0.80
Fishing Platforms	VI.B.2	1	1	1	1	0	0.80
Campsites	VI.B.3	1	1	1	1	0	0.80
Forest Education Building	VI.B.4	1	1	1	1	0	0.80

Items Requiring Improvement Actions in the Field

The following items received low scores on the review team checklist, which indicates that management actions noted during the Field Review were not considered sufficient (less than 2.5 score on average). Please note that overall good scores do not preclude specific recommendations by the review team requiring remediation. The management plan must include responses to the checklist items identified below:

1. Management of natural communities, specifically scrubby flatwoods, mesic flatwoods, wet flatwoods and wet prairie, with documentation in the management plan.

Managing Agency Response: Other than increased burning frequencies addressed in #3 below, it is not clear what management actions the review team is requesting.

2. Discussion regarding the deficiencies relating to natural resources survey, specifically listed species or habitat monitoring, other non-game species or habitat monitoring, with documentation in the management plan.

Managing Agency Response: See the answer #2 above.

3. Increased resource management activities relating to prescribed fire, specifically the areas being burned and the frequency at which they are burned, with documentation in the management plan.

Managing Agency Response: As funding, staffing and weather conditions allow, the FFS will attempt to increase the frequency of prescribed fire in fire dependent communities and allow fire to burn into the wetter communities. This will be documented in the new plan.

4. Issues with resource protection regarding law enforcement presence, with documentation in the management plan.

Managing Agency Response: Especially in light of the current statewide budget limitations the FFS feels that law enforcement is adequate on Welaka State Forest. There may be some flexibility in managing the current staff schedules to get better FFS presence on the weekends. The new plan, currently being drafted, will include a description of present law enforcement measures.

5. The need for management resources, specifically staff and funding, with documentation in the management plan.

Managing Agency Response: Currently funding for additional staff is very unlikely, but the new management plan will identify additional staffing needs which may be achievable in the next ten years.

FIELD REVIEW		1	2	3	4	5	AVERAGE
Natural Communities (I.A)							
Sandhill	I.A.1	2	4	2	3	2	2.60
Scrubby Flatwoods	I.A.2	1	3	1	1	2	1.60
Xeric Hammock	I.A.3	5	5	5	5	4	4.80
Mesic Flatwoods	I.A.4	1	3	2	2	2	2.00
Wet Flatwoods	I.A.5	1	3	3	1	2	2.00
Baygall	I.A.6	5	5	4	5	5	4.80
Floodplain Swamp/Floodplain Forest	I.A.7	5	4	X	4	5	4.50
Depression Marsh/Flatwood Prairie Lake	I.A.8	2	5	4	5	4	4.00
Spring Run	I.A.9	5	5	4	5	5	4.80
Floodplain Marsh	I.A.10	1	4	X	4	2	2.75

Wet Prairie	I.A.11	1	2	1	1	1	1.20
Listed species:Protection & Preservation (I.B)							
Animal Inventory	I.B.1	2	5	2	5		3.50
Bald Eagle	I.B.1.a	4	5	5	5		4.75
Natural Resources Survey/Manages Resources (I.C)							
Listed species or habitat monitoring	I.C.2	2	4	1	1	1	1.80
Other non-game species or habitat monitoring	I.C.3	1	4	1	1	1	1.60
Fire effects monitoring	I.C.4	3	5	4	5	2	3.80
Other habitat management effects monitoring	I.C.5	2	4	4	5	2	3.40
Invasive species survey / monitoring	I.C.6	3	4	1	4	2	2.80
Cultural Resources (Archeological & Historic sites) (II.A,II.B)							
Cultural Res. Survey	II.A	3	4	4	4	2	3.40
Protection and preservation	II.B	3	4	2	4	2	3.00
Resource Management, Prescribed Fire (III.A)							
Area Being Burned (no. acres)	III.A1	1	3	1	1	1	1.40
Frequency	III.A.2	1	3	1	1	1	1.40
Quality	III.A.3	5	4	4	5	5	4.60
Non-Native, Invasive & Problem Species (III.E)							
Prevention							
prevention - plants	III.E.1.a	3	4	3	4	3	3.40
prevention - animals	III.E.1.b	3	4	3	4	3	3.40
prevention - pests/pathogens	III.E.1.c	3	4	3	4	3	3.40
Control							
control - plants	III.E.2.a	3	4	4	4	3	3.60
control - animals	III.E.2.b	3	4	4	4	3	3.60
control - pest/pathogens	III.E.2.c	3	4	4	4	3	3.60
Hydrologic/Geologic function Hydro-Alteration (III.E.1)							
Roads/culverts	III.F.1.a	4	4	3	5	5	4.20
Dams, Reservoirs or other impoundments	III.F.1.b	2	4	3	5	3	3.40
Ground Water Monitoring (III.F.2)							
Ground water quality	III.F.2.a	3	4	4	4	4	3.80
Ground water quantity	III.F.2.b	3	4	4	4	4	3.80
Surface Water Monitoring (III.E.3)							
Surface water quality	III.F.3.a	3	4	4	4	4	3.80
Surface water quantity	III.F.3.b	3	4	4	4	4	3.80
Resource Protection (III.F)							
Boundary survey	III.G.1	4	4	4	5	4	4.20
Gates & fencing	III.G.2	4	4	2	5	4	3.80
Signage	III.G.3	3	4	3	5	4	3.80
Law enforcement presence	III.G.4	2	3	3	1	2	2.20

APPENDIX:

The following comments represent individual comments, and may not represent the consensus of the land management review team.

I.A. Natural Communities

- UMP should include desired future conditions for each community type (as well as how to get there). Good progress towards maintenance (sandhill and flatwoods)... just not there yet. Most of the communities need fire and at a higher frequency.
- Sandhill communities need to be 2-year rotation burns. Use boats to survey floodplain and check for invasive exotics.
- Desired future conditions are missing in this plan. Some communities are not addressed in management plan.

I.B. Listed Species

- More burns in Sandhill communities may benefit gopher tortoises.

I.C. Natural Resource Survey/Monitoring Resources

- An attempt should be made to conduct listed species surveys (especially gopher tortoises) as well as general wildlife surveys.
- Listed species should be monitored. Invasive species should be surveyed.
- Need current animal and plant surveys performed. Need exotics survey from shoreline performed. Need upland exotics survey. Look for wading bird rookeries.

II.A.B. Cultural Resources

- Sites need to be checked on periodically and the site file updated.
- Site review should be done for any and all unknown archaeologically significant areas. Existing sites aren't being impacted artificially.

III.A. Resource Management

- The forest must increase the burn frequency in order to reach their desired future conditions.
- Need to go to 2-year interval. Increase growing season burns.

III.E. Non-native, Invasive & Problem Species

- Needs a more regular survey (especially for plants).
- Invasive species survey should be done more regularly.
- Like to see more monitoring of exotics – plants. Like to see no mineral disked firelines along highway. Address disposal of horse manure.

III.F. Hydrologic/Geologic Function

- Should look into any work done by St. Johns WMD and obtain copies/annual reports.

III.G. Resource Protection

- Need to work on getting more law enforcement presence.

III.H. Adjacent Property Concerns

- Highway through the middle of forest affects ability to use prescribed fire. Also it may provide in road for exotics.

IV. Public Access and Education

- An attempt should be made to conduct more interpretive (trail walks/talks) programs.
- This is a gem for education and as a scenic by-way.

V. Infrastructure/ Management Resources

- In need of upgrades to some facilities (roof, fencing, etc.). Surveys and monitoring need to occur on a regular basis. Need staff biologist dedicated to Welaka (or a forester).

Management Review Determination

- The land is beautiful and with more frequent fire, it will be even better.
-