

# **Treasure Coast Evaluation and Appraisal Reviews Workshop**

**Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River  
Counties**

**Florida Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Commission**



# Conservation Element Policies

Protect and Conserve:

- Native vegetative communities
- Natural functions of existing:
  - soils
  - wildlife habitats
  - fisheries
  - rivers
  - bays
  - lakes
  - floodplains
  - harbors
- Wetlands (estuarine marshes, freshwater beaches and shores, marine habitats) and wetland functions



Restrict activities that adversely affect endangered and threatened wildlife

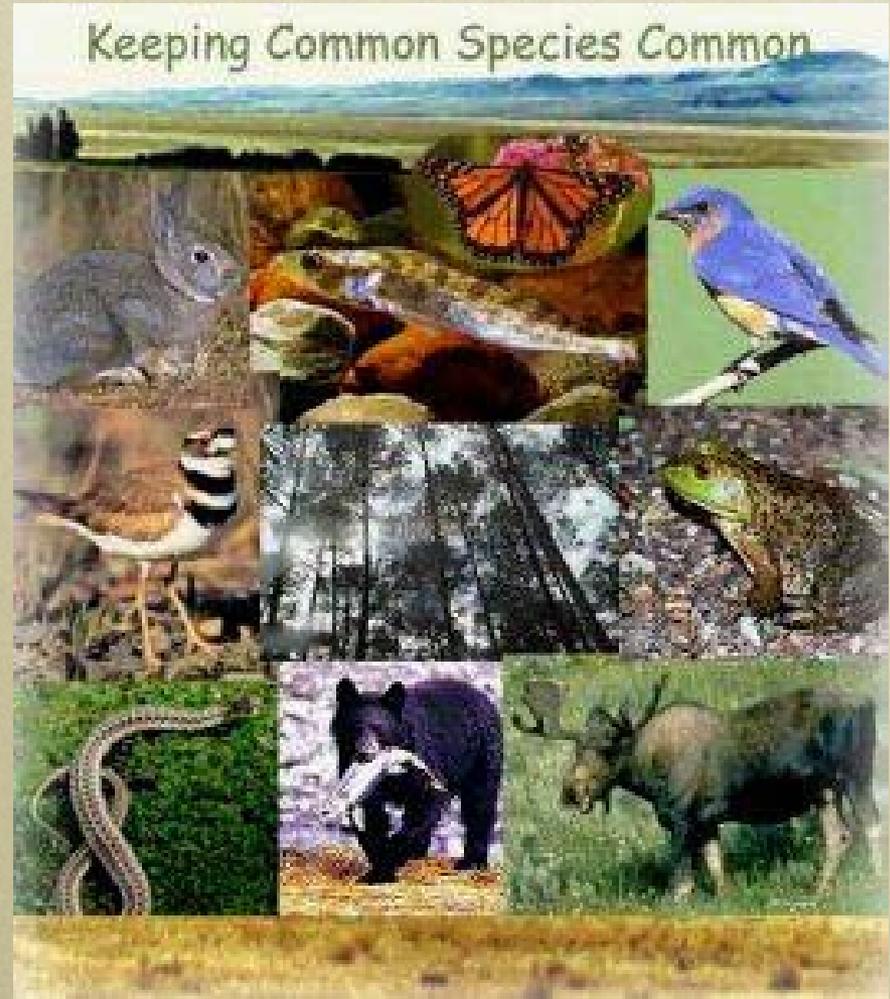
Designation of environmentally sensitive lands to further the goals of the conservation element

**(Chapter 9J-5, F.A.C. requirements)**



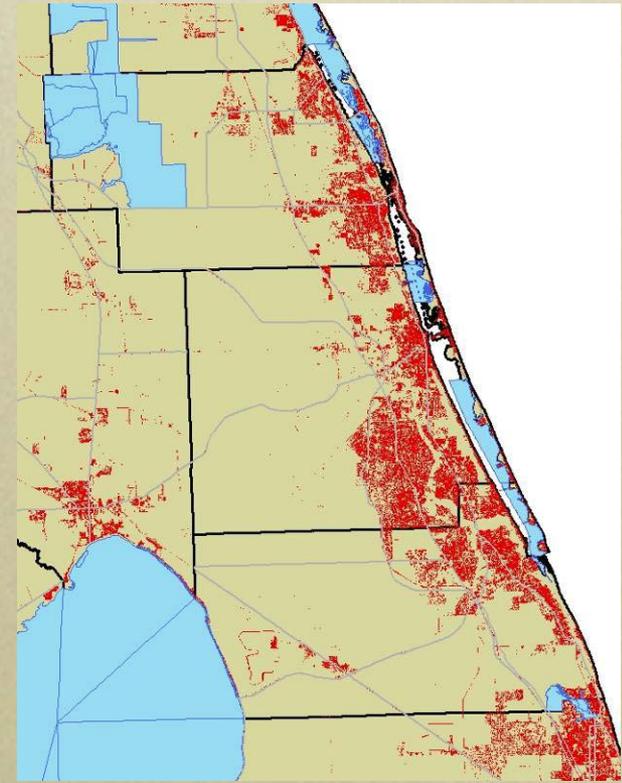
# FWC Priorities for Conservation

- State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy
  - highlights habitats & species of greatest conservation need
  - potential threats to habitats and species
  - identifies need to utilize interagency approach to conservation of species and habitats
  - 18 priority habitats found at: <http://myfwc.com/wildlifelegacy/takingaction.htm>



# FWC Approach & Planning Tools

- Assist counties in planning for conservation of habitat and species
- Visioning
  - Sustainable Treasure Coast: 2030
  - How about Defining “Build-Out”?
- Permitting
  - identify mitigation and conservation areas
- Work toward non-regulatory efforts to further conservation
- County/Landowner Incentives



# Conservation Planning Tools

**Both Public and Private Opportunities Exist**

- **Rural Land Stewardship Plans**
- **Sector Plans**
- **Conservation Corridors**
- **Habitat Conservation Plans**
- **“Safe Harbor” Agreements**
- **Voluntary Landowner Assistance Programs**



# Ecotourism

Wildlife viewing tourism – tourists come to see wildlife in its native habitat

In 2005, 46 million of Florida's 84 million tourists engaged in nature-based activities

Nature-based tourists spend more money and impact the community less.

Parks and Preserves are the 2<sup>nd</sup> major attraction for visitors arriving by air



# Ecotourism by County

County	Participants	Retail Sales	State Sales Tax	Jobs	Total Economic Impact
Indian River	36,539	\$21,442,111	\$1,383,820	624	\$43,125,923
St. Lucie	54,075	\$29,185,766	\$1,805,158	873	\$59,945,583
Martin	35,395	\$19,266,782	\$1,196,514	576	\$39,549,166



# How to Attract Ecotourists



1. Support and Promote the Great Florida Birding Trail
2. Partner with birding and wildlife viewing organizations
3. Conserve Habitat!!

***HEALTHY HABITAT***

***= ABUNDANT WILDLIFE***

***= ECONOMIC RETURN***



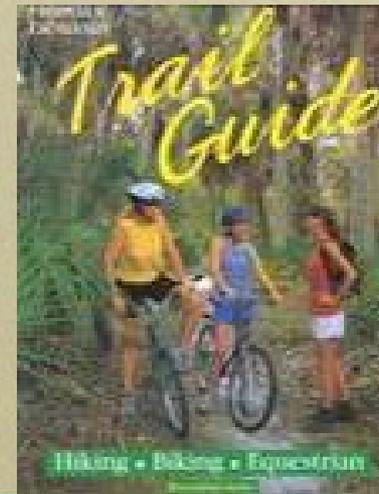
# Landscape Level Environmental Issues

Corridors for wildlife- fragmentation and isolation



Maintain Integrity of Public Conservation lands

Recreational Trails and Byways



# Recreation Trails and Public Lands



# Landscape Level Environmental Issues

Direct Impacts on T&E and Rare Aquatics due to:

- “Take” during construction**
- Road mortality**

Indirect (Secondary) and Cumulative Impacts due to:

- Loss of Habitat**
- Fragmentation of remaining habitat**
- Degradation of remaining habitat**

Caused by:

- Urban Sprawl**
- Inadequate Wetland and Riverine protection (buffer zones)**
- Inconsistent Upland Conservation regulation**
- Roads**



# Localized Environmental Issues

## T&E Species:

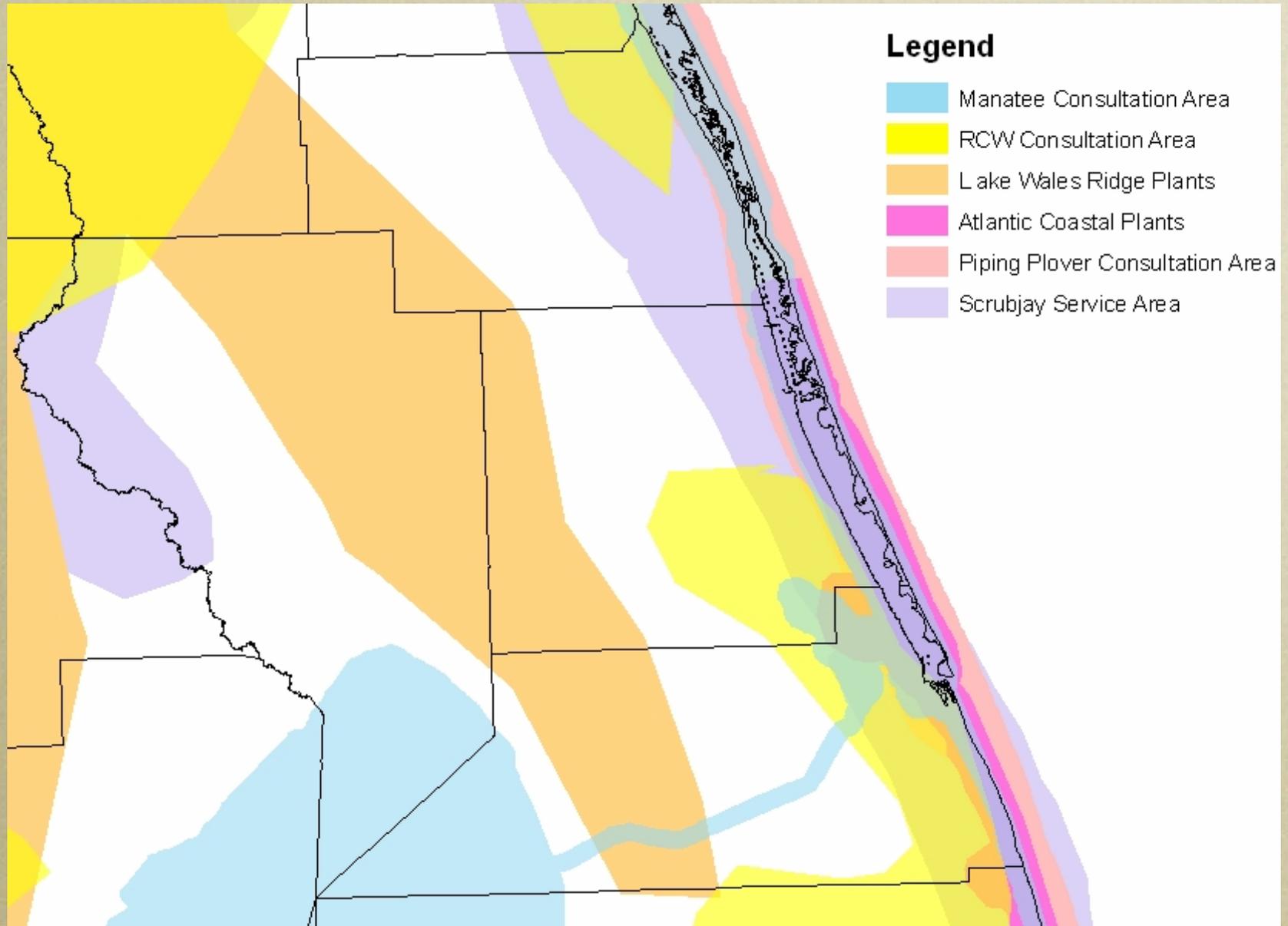
- Gopher Tortoise
- Red-cockaded Woodpeckers
- Scrub jays
- Bald Eagles
- Sea Turtles
- Manatees

## Maintenance of Compatible Uses next to:

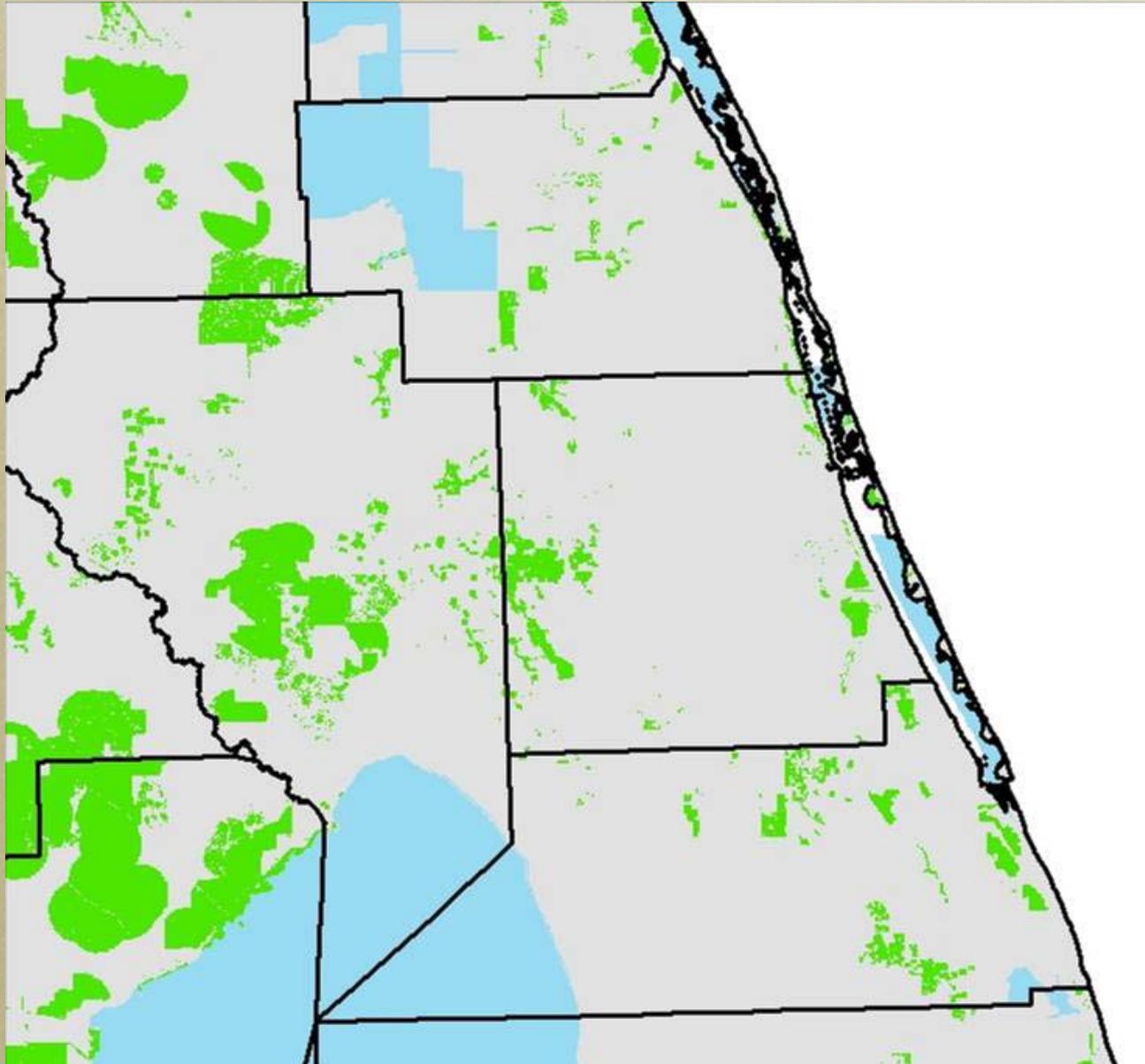
- Public Conservation Lands
- Aquatic Preserves
- Agricultural Lands



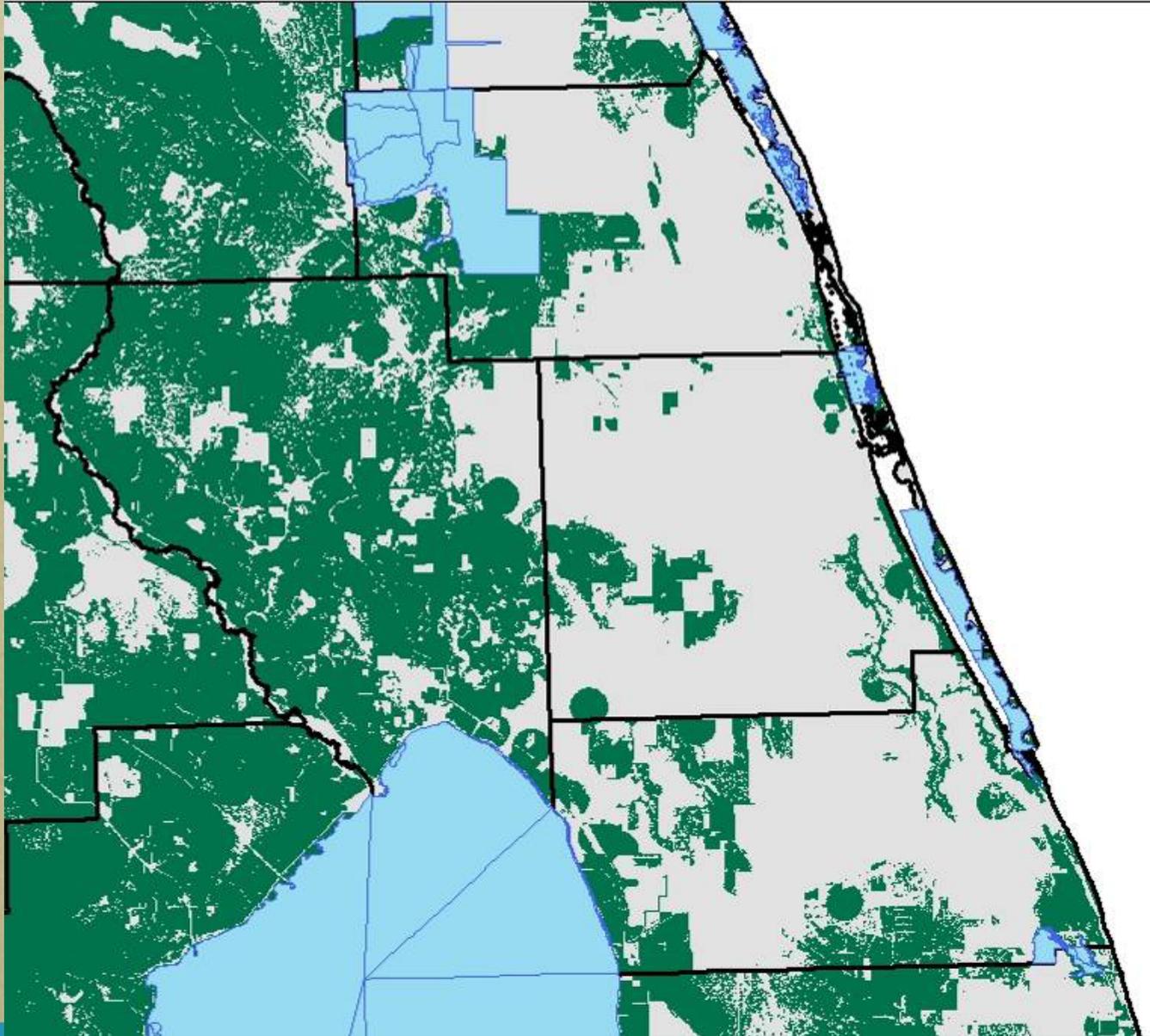
# USFWS Critical Habitat



# Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas



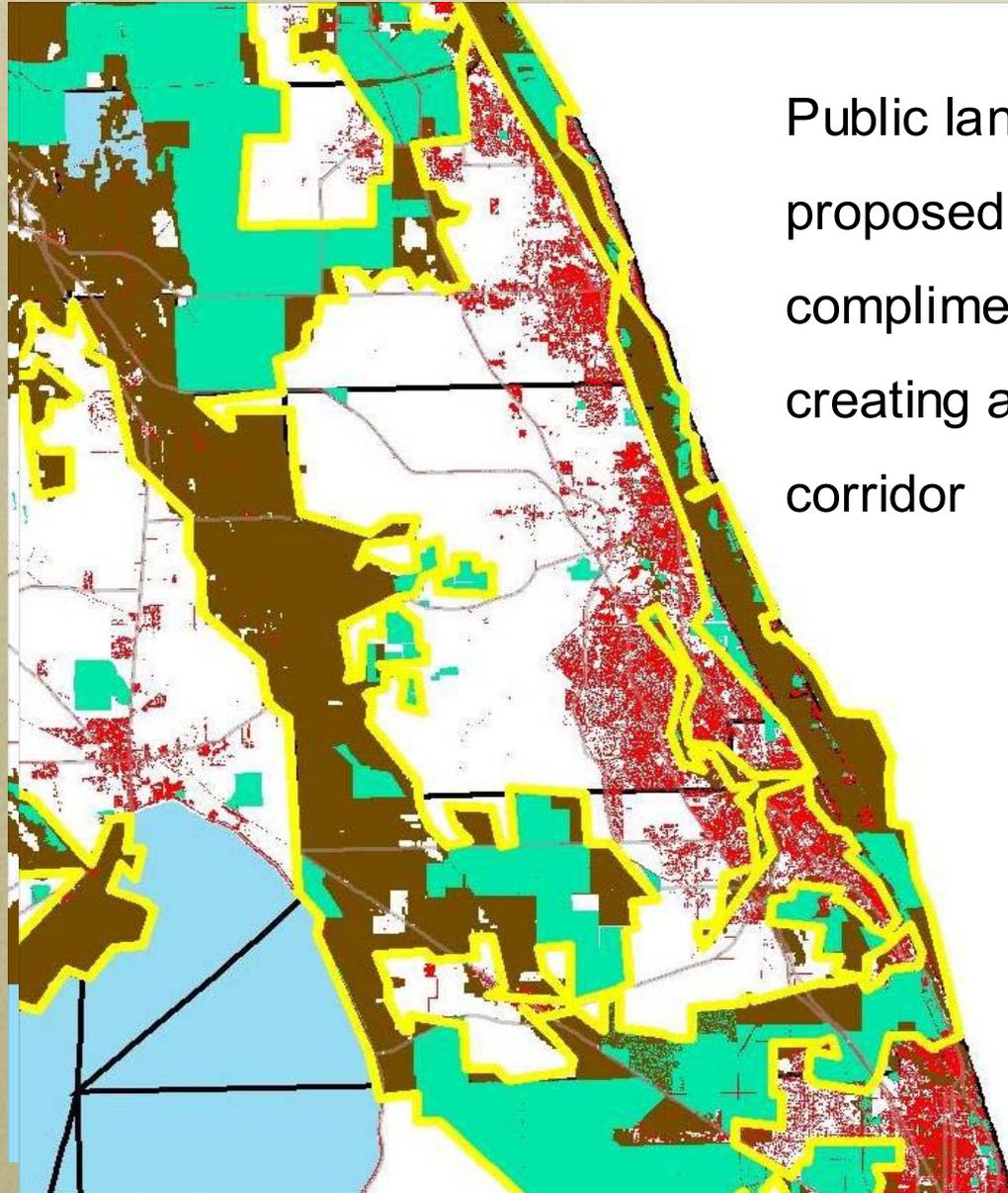
# FNAI Potential Habitat



# Proposed Ecological Greenway

Public  
Lands as of  
2006 are in  
green

The proposed  
ecological  
greenway is in  
brown



Public lands and the  
proposed greenway  
compliment each other  
creating an interconnected  
corridor



# Information Sources

- **GIS DATA Sets**
- **Florida Geographic Data Library**  
<http://www.fgdl.org/>
- **Florida Natural Areas Inventory**  
[www.fnai.org](http://www.fnai.org)
- **FWC GIS Data Sets and Habitat Issues**
- **Steve Lau (772-778-5094)**  
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- **USFWS-Vero Beach (772-562-3909)**
- **Recreational Development**
- **Anne Glick (850-922-0664)**  
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# Future Coordination

- FWC ready to provide assistance to individual Counties during the EAR planning and evaluation process
  - **Follow up with Amendments and LDC**
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