

Hillsborough County's E.L.A.P.P Program

What is E.L.A.P.P ?

Environmental Lands Acquisition and Protection Program



Hillsborough
County

Parks, Recreation and
Conservation Department

Conservation Area

Foot Traffic Only - No Motorized Vehicles
Admittance Through Approved Access Points Only

Open Daylight Hours Only

Dogs Must Be On Hand-Held Leash

All Plants And Animals Are Protected
Hunting/Trapping/Firearms Prohibited

Park Ordinance #97-14 In Effect
All Violators Will Be Prosecuted

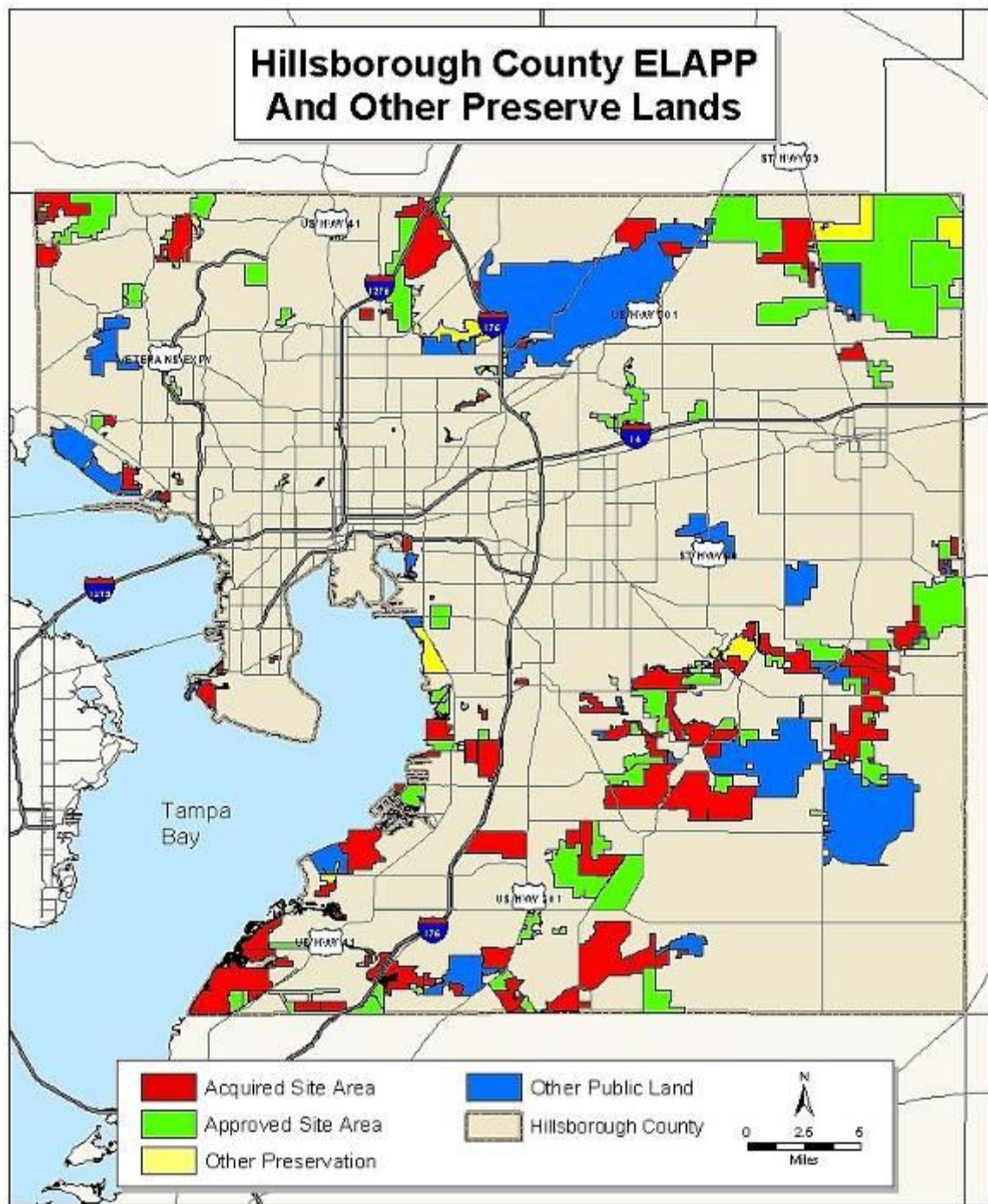
Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department
1101 E. River Cove Street
Tampa, FL 33604-3257

History of E.L.A.P.P.

- Voter-approved program initiated in 1987; extended in 1990 and 2008
- Through January 2011, Hillsborough County has acquired 60,506 acres through the program
- 55,706 acres are managed by County staff through the Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department
- Remaining 4,800 acres are managed by State and Local agencies

History of E.L.A.P.P.

- **Between Dec. 1987 and Jan. 2011, \$247 million spent to acquire 60,506 acres**
- **Of this, \$171 million has come from the ELAP Program, while \$86 million has come from partnering agencies**
- **Florida Communities Trust, Southwest Florida Water Management District**
- **Land management plans are drafted for each acquired ELAPP site and presented to an ELAPP management committee and the general public for review and comment**



Ecosystems on ELAPP Lands



Pine Flatwoods



Pine Flatwoods (late 1800's)



Pine Lily



Lopsided Indiangrass

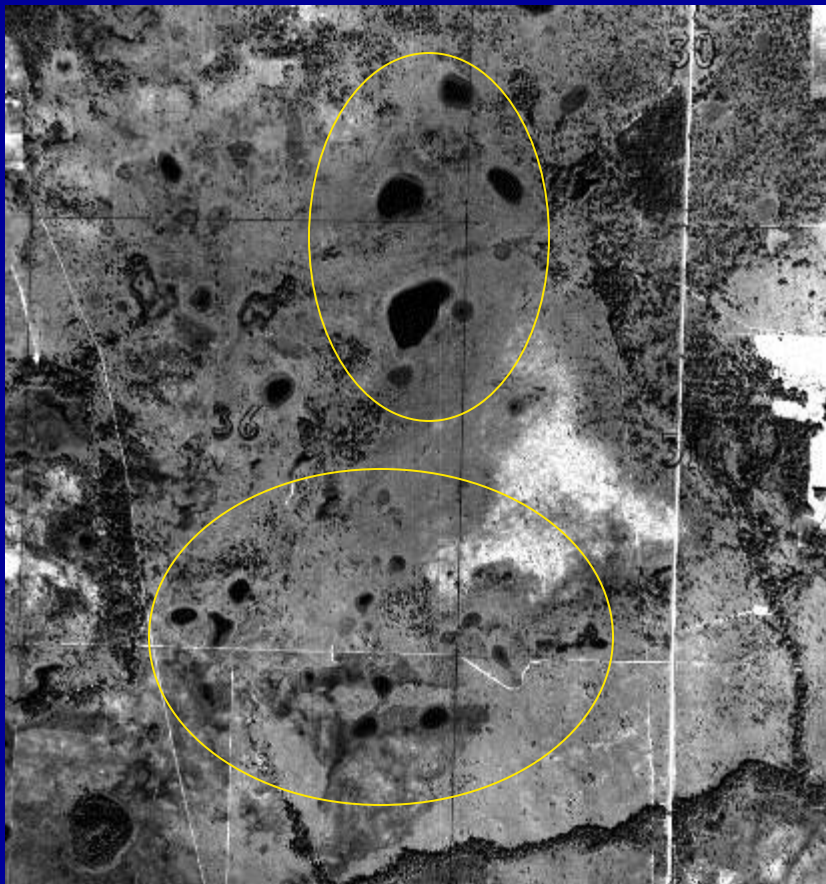


Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake

Ecosystems on ELAPP Lands



Depression Marsh



Depression Marshes in Lithia, FL (1938)



Gopher Frog



Pickerel Weed



Great Egret

Ecosystems on ELAPP Lands



Sandhill



Historic Sandhill (c 1900)



Red-headed Woodpecker



Wire Grass



Turkey Oak



Indigo Snake

Ecosystems on ELAPP Lands



Xeric Scrub



Florida Scrub-Jay



Gopher Tortoise



Florida Mouse



Florida Golden Aster

Ecosystems on ELAPP Lands



Floodplain Forest



Bald Cypress



Florida Maple



Barred Owl



Butterfly Orchid

Ecosystems on ELAPP Lands



Saltern/Coastal



Grasses (*Spartina*), Rush (*Juncus*), and Cabbage Palm



Osprey



Saltwort



Fiddler Crabs

Threatened & Endangered Animals



Scrub Jay



Gopher Tortoise



Burrowing Owl

Threatened and Endangered Plants



Pine Lily



Florida Golden Aster

Management of E.L.A.P.P. Sites

- a) Habitat Restoration
- b) Prescribed Burning
- c) Exotic Plant Control
- d) Feral Animal Control
- e) Public Access & Recreation



Southern Blue Flag

Habitat Restoration



**Native Plant Nursery at the
Cockroach Bay Field Office.**

**After site preparation,
plants raised in the nursery
are transplanted onto the
preserve sites.**

**Large scale restorations are
bid out to contract or
managed by other agencies**

Restoring the Scrub



Optimal scrub height is <3 meters. The vegetation height of this scrub is 10 meters

Restoring the Scrub



Dozer with Roller Chopper

Mechanical reduction of scrub vegetation is the quickest way to restore optimal height/density. This method also allows for safer prescribed burns.

Overgrown scrub vegetation is difficult to reduce with prescribed fire due to the high fuel loads and extreme conditions required (windy/dry).



Hydro-axe

Restoring the Scrub



Notice the treated portion left of the trail vs the untreated portion to the right.
This photo was taken 1 month after treatment

Restoring the Scrub

Even with mechanical treatment, fire is necessary to restore habitat value to the scrub.

Fire consumes cut vegetation and opens bare, sandy ground. These open sand patches are vital to wildlife and plants alike.



These pictures show prescribed burns being conducted 6 months after mechanical treatment.

Restoring the Scrub



This photo was taken approximately 1.5 years after the prescribed burn.
Notice the open sand patches.



Prescribed Burning

- a) Is necessary for healthy native Florida ecosystems
- b) Protects neighboring properties from wildfires

Was Smokey the Bear right??

“Only you can prevent forest fires”



Heavy fuel load causes tall flame lengths.



All fuels are consumed by the fire leaving behind bare mineral soil.

Post Burn



6 Months after prescribed burn

Exotic Plant Control



Cogon Grass



Identification is easy due to the off center mid vein.

- Exotic invasive plants out compete native plants for space, thus altering native ecosystems.
- Exotic plants generally offer poor habitat and food sources for animals.

Common Herbicides & Additives used in Natural Areas



Basal Spaying of Brazilian Pepper



Feral Animal Control



Why are these escaped/wild pigs such a problem ?

Reasons why feral hogs are bad for native Florida lands:

- They compete with native wildlife for food.
- Hogs destroy sensitive lands with their feeding activities (rooting)
- They help introduce non-native plants through:
 - a) Droppings
 - b) Disturbing to soil



Tropical Soda Apple

Hog Hunting & Trapping



Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve



Boundaries are south of the Little Manatee River to the Hillsborough – Manatee County line.

Large scale restoration efforts are underway in partnership with the SWFWMD - SWIM

Marsh Restoration Efforts at Cockroach Bay



Black-necked Stilts

Before restoration efforts began, the uplands consisted of farm fields and shell pit quarries.

Fields and quarries have been transformed into fresh and saltwater marshes.



Black-crowned Night Heron

Mangrove Communities



Black Mangrove



Red Mangrove

Seagrass Communities



Thalassia testudinum

- Grasses provide nursery areas for fish and other animals
- Stabilize the bottom
- Filter nutrients and suspended particles out of the water column

Recreational Activities at Cockroach Bay



- Fishing
- Canoeing



- Hiking
- Birding

Canoeing

Coastal Preserves – Tampa Bay



Mountain Biking

Balm-Boyette Preserve

