

CONSERVATION TRUST FOR FLORIDA

THEPOST



Winter 2013

PROTECTING OUR RURAL LANDS

Main Photo by Trish Utter / Good Life Community Magazine

Santa Fe River Ranch



Photos by Matt Dube / Ten Speed Photography

Farm to Fork

An evening
to remember

Story Inside



CTF Past President Terry Zinn and CTF President David Pais at the Farm to Fork Gala 2013

Dear Friends of Conservation

There has never been a more important time to protect Florida's land and water resources. We all witnessed the changes that took place in the state government's approach to conserving land and water. Florida's environmental laws, previously hailed as the some of the most progressive in the country were dismantled, while funding for land acquisition and protection disappeared.

It is up to Floridians to care for Florida. Some of us are native born, multiple generation Floridians; to others, Florida is our adopted home. Regardless of our origins, we are all here because we love Florida's forests and fields; ocean, bays, and the gulf; streams, rivers, and springs; and, the great diversity of life it supports. It is up to us to be stewards of Florida's land and water. And, it is time to act.

The Conservation Trust for Florida has been working to protect our land and water since 1999. Our Florida-based Board of Directors and staff work with private landowners

and partners to protect Florida's wildlife corridors and natural areas and to provide ranchers and farmers with conservation options that provide long-term solutions. But, we can't do it without your support. We need Floridians to support conservation in Florida.

The goal of the campaign Connecting Wildlife, People and Place is to ensure that the conservation work we accomplish today will still be enjoyed 20 years from now. In supporting the Conservation Trust for Florida, you are protecting our state's precious resources: our water, wildlife, recreational resources, conservation lands, family farms, our cultural heritage, and quality of life.

Please support the Conservation Trust's campaign Connecting Wildlife, People and Place today.

Sincerely, *David Pais*
President



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CTF is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit land trust.

The mission of the Conservation Trust for Florida, Inc. is to protect the rural landscapes of Florida by preserving the farms, ranches, working forests, and natural areas that provide landscape connections.

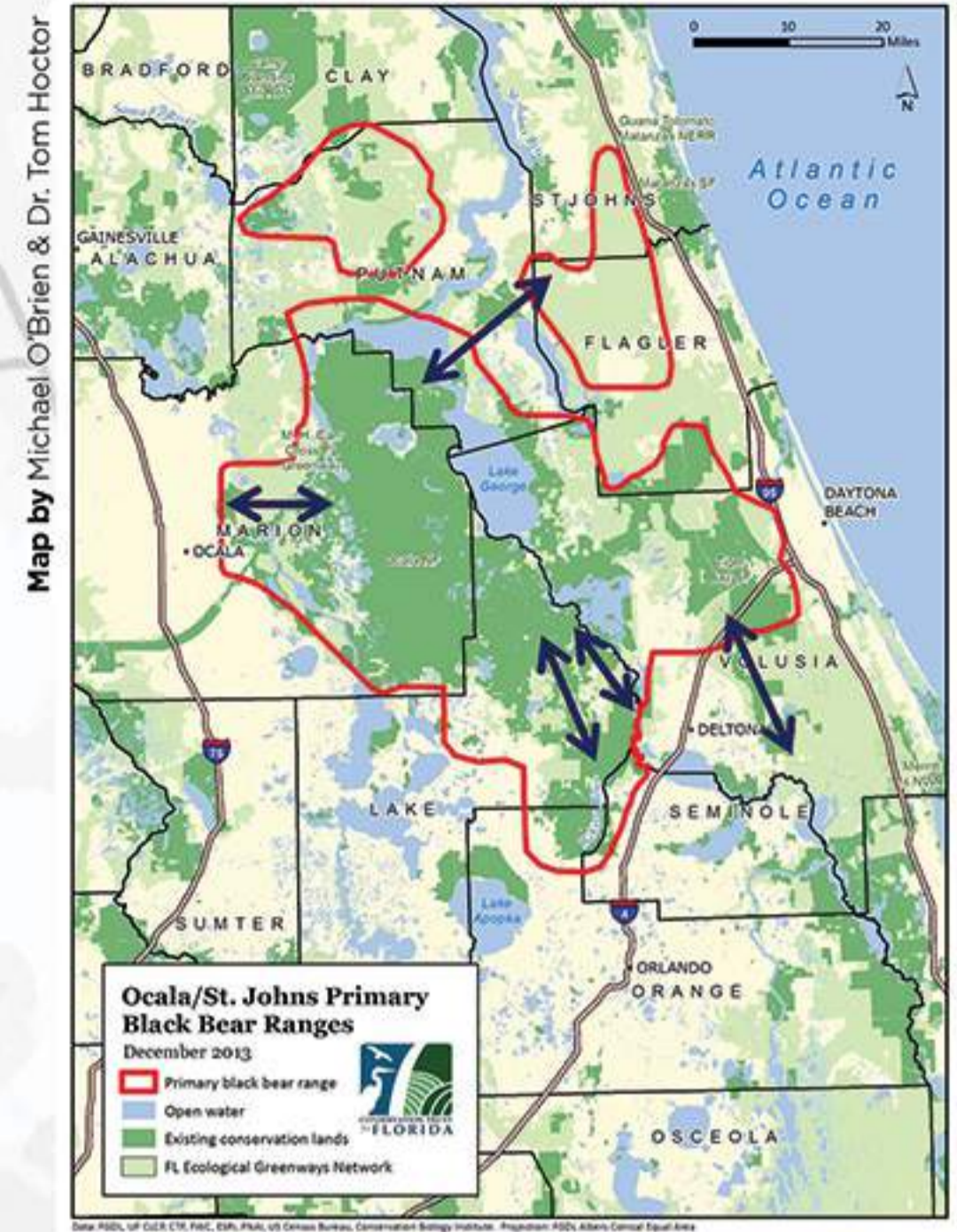
Land Conservation PROJECTS

Connecting Wildlife, People and Place



Photo by Carlton Ward, Jr.

The forested lands of North Central Florida shelter Florida black bears and protect the waters of hundreds of lakes, springs, and rivers critical to the state's supply of fresh water. This critical habitat stretches across the Ocala National Forest and other public lands as well as many private lands under threat of development. In 2013, the Conservation Trust for Florida collaborated with key landowners as well as national and state agencies to lay the groundwork for ambitious projects that when realized will lead to the long-term sustainability of this great landscape.



We continued to work with agency partners and a ranch owner to protect land that will anchor a wildlife corridor connecting the forests in southeast Volusia/northern Brevard counties to the Ocala National Forest. The St. Johns River and a major tributary also run through this ranch, and its protection may assist with efforts to improve the water quality of the St. Johns River.

In Lake County, we are working with two landowners whose property lies within a critical wildlife corridor where Florida black bears and other animals roam between the Wekiva River basin and the Ocala National Forest. This land is also home to threatened Florida scrub-jays.

We've joined forces with agency partners seeking to safeguard Florida black bear habitat as well as water recharge lands around Silver Springs in Marion County. Lands protected here may also one day be open to the public for expanded recreational opportunities at this popular destination.

Closer to the coast in Flagler and St. Johns counties, we have started working with local governments and private landowners to design a project that will protect forests critical to sustaining wildlife, local groundwater supplies and coastal estuaries, and will provide for additional public recreational activities.

In addition, the Conservation Trust for Florida has also launched protection efforts in the Northern Everglades, where we are working with agency partners and a fourth-generation ranching family to protect imperiled habitats that harbor an array of listed species, link public conservation lands in the Florida Wildlife Corridor, and sustain the ranching way of life. Once protected, this ranch may become part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 150,000-acre Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area.

In all of these projects we have encountered willing partners who want to also see these lands protected. In 2014, we will work with our members and donors to raise the funds needed to keep these projects moving forward and will use funds raised to leverage needed resources from public and private funding organizations.

As you consider your 2013 gift to the Conservation Trust for Florida, please think about what Florida's rural lands mean to you, your quality of life, the wildlife roaming our great landscapes and the farmers and ranchers that nurture these lands for food and other products for our daily lives. The scope, geographic range, and increased level of leadership and agency partnerships in our land protection projects is very exciting and will leave a lasting legacy for future generations.

Whether \$50, \$100, \$250 or \$1,000, your gift can be a part of our efforts to protect these rural lands and a way of life forever.



FARM TO FORK

A Gala Featuring Celebrity Chefs and Local Food

Photography by

Matt Dube' / Ten Speed Photography

Thank you to all our sponsors, farmers, chefs, and volunteers who put in a phenomenal effort to make the Farm to Fork Gala a grand success! Because of everyone's support, we were able to reach many new members and to make the compelling case for the urgent need for conserving our family farms, rural working landscapes, and wildlife corridors.

Photo by Trish Utter



A special thank you to Alan and Cathy Hitchcock, owners of the Santa Fe River Ranch, for generously hosting the event!

We raised about \$36,000 at the event to support our land conservation projects and landowner outreach workshops. These funds will help protect critical parcels of land in four projects that will benefit the greater Ocala National Forest landscape by securing lands that are critical to 1) the Florida Wildlife Corridor, 2) regional Florida black bear conservation efforts, and 3) protection of Silver Springs and the Ocklawaha River Aquatic Preserve.

Over 250 guests enjoyed the beautiful evening on Sunday, October 27th, which kicked off with an exclusive VIP Reception at the Santa Fe River Ranch Lodge. Alan Hitchcock treated guests to a hayride around the grounds of the ranch and he shared stories about the ranch's rich and deep history.

The Main Event at the ranch's restored show barn featured dinner prepared by celebrity chefs Bert Gill of Mildred's Big City Food, Mark Newman of Leonardo's 706, Bridgette Connolly at Sweetwater Branch Inn, and Kris and Teresa Callen of LiV Foods. Fresh ingredients were provided by local farms including Swallowtail Farm, Frog Song Organics, beef from Solterra Farm and Tracy Lee Farms, The Family Garden, and Siembra Farm, as well as locally made beer, wine, and desserts.

Dr. and Mrs. K.C. and Marybeth Nayfield were honored with the 2013 Land Conservation Award for protecting their magnificent property near the Suwannee River.

The Conservation Trust has held 9 benefits since its inception in 1999, and by far this was the best organized, best attended, and most professional event that we have ever produced. This was largely due to the unequalled dedication, passion, and commitment made by our volunteers and by the Hitchcock family.

Special thanks to Alan, Cathy, and Jake Hitchcock for generously donating the use of the ranch for the evening and making everything look perfect! Special thanks to CTF Board Members Celeste



L to R: Amy Stern, Cory Nayfield, Dr. and Mrs. K.C. and Marybeth Nayfield, and CTF President David Pais.

Dr. and Mrs. K.C. and Marybeth Nayfield were presented with the 2013 Land Conservation Award for protecting their magnificent property near the Suwannee River.

Shitama and David Pais, CTF Advisory Board Member Lisa Gearen, Susan Emerson of Beyond Expectations Event Planning and Robin Frey, the Event Director for the Farm to Fork Gala.

Thank you to everyone and please know that your support is appreciated and that you have helped to make a lasting impact on protecting the special places that make Florida the special place that we all love.



Seminar:
Conservation
Easements

from all angles

*The Conservation Trust was proud to sponsor the seminar
Conservation Easements – From All Angles...*

on June 25, 2013 at the Marion County Extension Office in Ocala, Florida. The seminar was targeted toward landowner advisors; tax and real estate attorneys, CPAs, and appraisers that have landowners as clients in the surrounding area.

Although many professionals are aware of using conservation easements as a potential estate planning tool, they probably have not had the opportunity to study the subject in depth or understand all the “angles” that must be considered when determining if a conservation easement is an appropriate tool for their clients. This workshop helped inform attorneys and professional advisors about the income, estate, and property tax benefits of conservation easements and helped the Conservation Trust expand our network too.

The workshop drew over 25 attorneys, appraisers, accountants, and other conservation professionals. The Florida Bar approved the workshop for 6 Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credits and 2.5 ethics credits, as well as 6 CLE credits for City, County, and Local Government Law and 6 credits for Real Estate. In addition, 3 hours met MAI Conservation Easement standards, and the seminar qualified for technical business CPE credit for Florida CPAs.



Heidi Horak

Speakers at the workshop included: CTF Advisor and Attorney Heidi Horak; Keith Fountain, Conservation Advisors, LLC; Brad Gould, Attorney and CPA, Dean Mead law firm; Richard Withers, Dean Mead law firm, and Zac Ryan, Zac Ryan Appraisal Services.

Special thanks to the USA Equestrian Trust and the Quail Roost Foundation for their generous financial support of the workshop. Thank you to Mark Shuffitt and Jamie Cohen of the University of Florida/IFAS Marion County Extension Service.



Photo by Kerry Heubeck



Thank you Sponsors

Special thanks to Alan, Cathy, and Jake Hitchcock for their support!

SANTA FE RIVER RANCH



Celebrity Chefs

Bert Gill of Mildred's Big City Food, Mark Newman of Leonardo's 706, Bridget Connolly of Sweetwater Branch Inn, and Kris and Teresa Callen of LiV Foods



Kris & Teresa Callen LiV Foods

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Amitec Digital, Campus USA Credit Union, Josh and Sally Dickinson, center piece designs by Lorelei Esser, Bill Hutchinson as the MC for the evening, Environmental Consulting & Design, Fine, Farkash & Parlapano, P.A., F&W Forestry Services, Gainesville Health and Fitness Center, award boxes from Goodwin Lumber Company, Erik and Claire Lewis, Perry and Noel McGriff, Micanopy Animal Hospital, Mimi Moreno, Jeff and Erna Rubin, Emory and Jennifer Springfield, Jane West Law, P.L., and Terry L. Zinn, P.A.

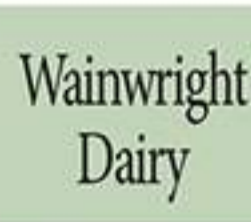
Fine Local Food & Beverage

Fire-roasted oysters from Cooks Seafood in Cedar Key, beer from Swamp Head brewery, wine from Bluefield Estate Winery, chocolate truffles from Goodness Snows Artisanal Truffles and Chocolates, coffee from Sweetwater Organic Coffee, fresh baked pasta and bread from The Vine, gourmet jams and mustards from Oak Hollow Cottage, produce and supplies from Ward's Supermarket, and "Farm to Fork" gourmet cookies by LisaMarie Jensen.

Music by Nook & Cranny

Local Farms

Cypress Point Creamery, Frog Song Organics, flowers from Forage, Glades Ridge Goat Dairy, Swallowtail Farm, The Family Garden, beef from Tracy Lee Farms, beef from Solterra Natural Meats, Siembra Farm, and Wainwright Dairy



Thank you to our volunteers

CTF Advisory Board Member Lisa M. Gearen, Peter Gearen, CTF Board Member Celeste Shitama, CTF President David Pais, Robin Frey, Susan Emerson, June Macaulay, Karen Arrington, Andrea Levy, Hali Lindsay, Roselyn Bird, Mimi Moreno, Bettina Angela, Tiffany Williams, Carol Hinton, Elizabeth Fooks, Jane Windsor, Randi Cameon, Julie Thaler, Vicki Vander Laan, Carol Hinton, Libby Flechas, Hershel Flechas, Scott Frey, Brock Frey, as well as 12 College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Ambassadors: Kaley Mialki, Linsey Clark, Amy Emery, Deirdre Hilliard, Kellee Britt, Kendra Harmon, Dinah Delhomme, Rebecca Lee, Shawn Brown, Ana Luiza Fraise, Soha Afzal, and Adam Midgett.

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FARM TO FORK

A Gala Featuring Celebrity Chefs and Local Food

Photos by Matt Dube / Ten Speed Photography

