

*Burnette Lake
Pinkoson
2/18/05*

Inspection Date: February 18, 2005
Parcel Numbers: 05949-005-000
Size: 400 acres
S-T-R: 0-8-19
Buildings: 0 in property appraiser database, 3 dilapidated structures
Just Value: \$1,600,000 or \$4,000 / acre
Project Score: 6.07 of 10.0

Overall Description:

The Pinkoson & Pinkoson Trustees & Pinkoson & Upshaw property (Pinkoson) lies within the Burnette Lake Alachua County Forever Project. It consists of 400 acres on the south side of US 441 within the Alachua city limits. It is adjacent to San Felasco Hammock State Preserve Park. Cellon Creek flows through the property before it enters the Preserve and ends in a sinkhole with connectivity to the Floridan aquifer. Protection of the Pinkoson tract would aid in the protection of water quality in Cellon Creek and provide a buffer to San Felasco Hammock Preserve. The property is on the State Parks Acquisitions and Inholdings List as part of the Optimum Park Boundary for San Felasco Hammock Preserve.

The Pinkoson property contains approximately 250 acres of improved pasture or fallow row crops. The remainder of the site is upland mixed forest, floodplain forest and depression marsh natural communities that are associated with the Cellon Creek corridor.

The Burnette Lake Project scored 6.93 of 9.44 on the Rapid Ecological Project Assessment (REPA) and is ranked 18th of 33 projects evaluated to date. The Pinkoson parcel is also included in the North San Felasco Hammock Alachua County Ecological Inventory Project (KBN Study) where it ranked 23rd of 47 projects evaluated, and is described as an average priority. The KBN study summarizes the North San Felasco Hammock project as, "This is an area of creeks, ponds, hardwood forest, pine plantation, and pasture on the north side of San Felasco Hammock State Preserve. The two creeks both flow into the preserve from this area" (KBN 1996).

Natural Communities:

<u>Type</u>	<u>Quality</u>
Depression Marsh	Fair
Floodplain Forest	Fair-Good
Seepage Stream	Fair-Good
Sinkhole Lake	Fair
Upland Mixed Forest	Fair

Other

Row Crops
Improved Pasture

Key Species:

The Pinkoson tract contains habitats that were deemed potentially significant for 14 animal species modeled by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC), including bald eagle, Sherman's fox squirrel and eastern indigo snake. There is one bald eagle nest within half a mile of the property. No listed species were observed during the staff visit. The floodplain of Cellon Creek provides potential wildlife habitat, although it has been heavily grazed by cattle and thus has little forage or cover.

Key Features:

The Pinkoson Tract is adjacent to San Felasco Hammock Preserve State Park on both its south and west sides. Fee Simple acquisition or a conservation easement on the property would provide a buffer to the Preserve. The property is included within the State Parks Acquisitions and Inholdings List. It also protects a portion of the Cellon Creek stream corridor before it enters the Preserve, where it then flows into a sinkhole with direct connectivity to the Floridan aquifer.

On a landscape level scale, the Pinkoson property is included in a potential corridor that has the goal of linking San Felasco Hammock to the Santa Fe River through various creek corridors and undeveloped land.

Approximately a third of the property is in natural but impacted condition. These natural areas are primarily associated with the Cellon Creek corridor. The creek itself is in good condition; it has not been channelized, with the exception of a culvert under a road crossing. There is evidence of erosion occurring in areas. The surrounding forested area is impacted by cattle grazing, resulting in little groundcover and little to no regeneration.

Species seen along the creek include sweetgum, laurel oak, live oak, musclewood, American holly, spruce pine, Florida maple, southern magnolia, hophornbeam, ebony spleenwort, woodoats, smilax spp., Walter's violet, and switchcane. The understory has been impacted by cattle grazing.

The sinkhole lake is surrounded by hardwood trees including live oak, laurel oak and sugarberry. Water was present in the lake at the time of the site visit.

The depression marsh contains a forested fringe of red maple, laurel oak, sweetgum, wax myrtle, sweetbay, live oak and loblolly pine. Shrubs and small trees, primarily red maple, were growing in the marsh. A portion of the marsh has been dug out and is surrounded by a small berm.

The remainder of the site is either in improved pasture or fallow fields. Bahia grass is the dominant grass in the pasture. There are scattered small areas of hammock within the pasture comprised primarily of live and laurel oak. The entire area is heavily grazed by cattle.

Management:

Several invasive species were observed on the property including camphortree, tropical soda apple, and hardy orange. The property, especially areas adjacent to the creek, should be monitored for invasive plant infestations.

The removal of cattle from the natural areas of the site would greatly enhance their resource value, as it would allow for natural regeneration and an increase in species diversity and improve water quality in Cellon Creek. Restoration of the pasture areas would take much effort and would require plantings of native species and prescribed fire. Removal of the bahia grass would be a challenge. The property also contains a significant amount of solid waste including old buildings and building debris.

The Pinkoson property, if acquired, will likely be managed as part of San Felasco Hammock Preserve State Park by the Florida Park Service.

Recreation:

Recreational opportunities on the Pinkoson property would likely be developed in association with those existing on the adjacent state preserve.

Parcel Data:

The 2005 Alachua County Property Appraiser's (ACPA) just or land value for the property is \$1,600,000 or \$4,000 per acre. These figures are for comparative purposes between nominated properties and are not necessarily an accurate reflection of the true cost of the property if acquired by the ACF program. Although there are no buildings on the parcel according to the property appraiser, three dilapidated buildings were observed onsite.

This property is in the City of Alachua where there is a strong demand for single-family residential and commercial uses. The property has commercial, industrial and agricultural zoning. The adjacent property to the north, on US 441, is zoned MP (Manufacturing and Processing Industrial), and is within the City of Alachua's urban reserve area. Properties to the east and west are zoned Agricultural. The property to the south is zoned conservation and owned by the University of Florida and is managed as part of San Felasco. Many commercial and urban and rural subdivisions are within one mile of this site.

The majority of the site has been cleared for pasture and is currently in agricultural use. Under the city's land use categories of Commercial, Industrial and Agricultural and under their current zoning, the site is likely to be developed for commercial, industrial and residential uses. There are a few natural features on the subject area (approximately 75 acres of floodplain and 20 acres of wetlands) that would have increased protection from development activities under current regulations. These natural features would not restrict development on this parcel. The subject property has approximately 3,950 linear feet of road frontage on US 441.

This development review is based on a limited desk-top review and relates to the current regulation (1991 Comp Plan and Land Development Regulations) as well as policies in the new updated 2002 Comp Plan, which is expected to take effect in early 2005.

The landowner has indicated that he is not looking to develop the property in the near term, and will look to his heirs, which have part ownership in the property, to determine its fate. At this time it is unclear whether the owners will participate in the program, and if so, whether they would be interested in a full fee acquisition or a conservation easement on all or parts of the property.

Other:

There are two Division of Historical Resources Master Site File locations on the property, both of which contain lithic scatter.

Literature Cited:

KBN, a Golder Associates Company. 1996. Alachua County Ecological Inventory Project.

Prepared for Alachua County Department of Growth Management, Gainesville, Florida.