North Central Florida Regional Planning Council

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2009 NW 67th Place, Gainesville, FL 32653-1603 • 352.955.2200

MEETING NOTICE

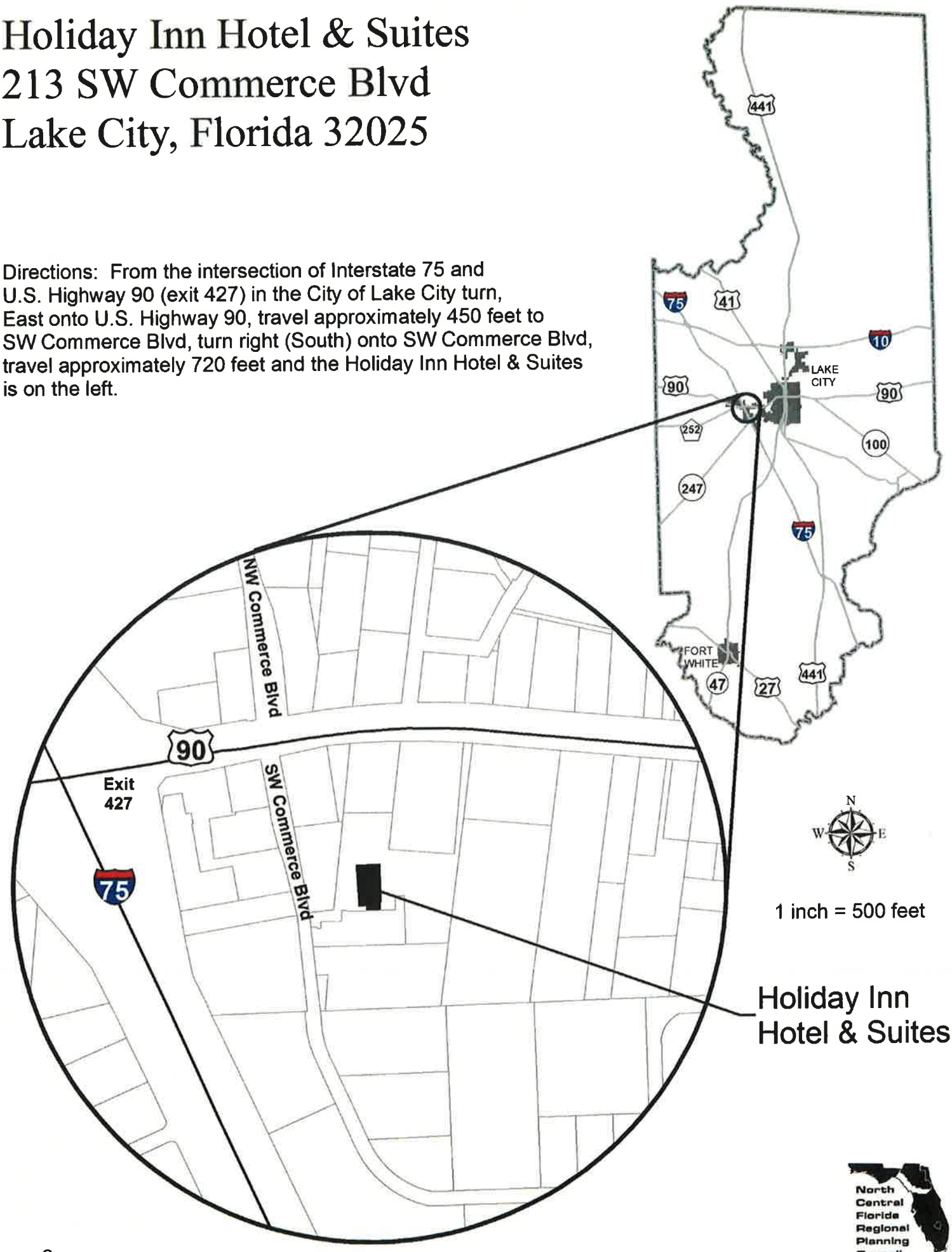
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

There will be a meeting of the Regional Planning Committee of the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council on **May 26, 2016**. The meeting will be held at the **Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites, 213 SW Commerce Boulevard, Lake City**, beginning at **6:30 p.m.**

(Location Map on Back)

Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites
213 SW Commerce Blvd
Lake City, Florida 32025

Directions: From the intersection of Interstate 75 and U.S. Highway 90 (exit 427) in the City of Lake City turn, East onto U.S. Highway 90, travel approximately 450 feet to SW Commerce Blvd, turn right (South) onto SW Commerce Blvd, travel approximately 720 feet and the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites is on the left.



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AGENDA

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites
Lake City, Florida

May 26, 2016
6:30 p.m.

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NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites
Lake City, Florida

March 24, 2016
6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Beth Burnam, Chair
Charles Chestnut, IV
William Hunter
James Montgomery
Deloris Roberts
Robert Wilford

MEMBERS ABSENT

Scarlet Frisina
Mike Williams
Stephen Witt

STAFF PRESENT

Steven Dopp
Dwayne Mundy

The meeting was called to order by Chair Burnam at 6:35 p.m.

I. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 25, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

ACTION: **It was moved by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Commissioner Roberts to amend the February 25, 2016 minutes by removing Commissioner Helen Warren from the list of Members Present to the list of Others Present and to approve the minutes as amended. The motion carried unanimously.**

II. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS ELEMENT

Dwayne Mundy, Public Safety and Regulatory Compliance Programs Director for the Council, presented proposed amendments to the Emergency Preparedness Element of the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan. The Committee reviewed and discussed the proposed amendments.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

_____
Beth Burnam, Chair

5/26/16
Date

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites
Lake City, Florida

April 28, 2016
6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Beth Burnam, Chair
Charles Chestnut, IV
Scarlet Frisina
William Hunter
James Montgomery
Robert Wilford, Vice-Chair
Stephen Witt

MEMBERS ABSENT

Deloris Roberts
Mike Williams

STAFF PRESENT

Steven Dopp

The meeting was called to order by Chair Burnam at 6:33 p.m.

I. APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 24, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

The Committee agreed by consensus to table the approval of the March 24, 2016 meeting minutes until the May 26, 2016 meeting.

II. NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE ELEMENT

Mr. Dopp presented proposed amendments to the Natural Resources of Regional Significance maps. The Committee reviewed and discussed the proposed amendments.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

_____
Beth Burnam, Chair

5/26/16
Date

Chapter IV
Natural Resources of Regional Significance

Adopted May 23, 1996, Amended August 28, 1997, February 27, 2003 and October 27, 2011

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Chapter IV: Natural Resources of Regional Significance

A. Conditions and Trends

1. Introduction

North central Florida is one of the largest planning districts in the state in terms of area yet one of the smallest in terms of population. As a result, the region has large expanses of undeveloped areas and unspoiled natural resources. The region consists of ~~6,813~~ 9,717 square miles, all of which is classified by the Council as a Natural Resource of Regional Significance.[1]

Natural resources of regional significance are natural resources or systems of interrelated natural resources, which due to their function, size, rarity, or endangerment, provide benefits of regional significance to the natural or human environment.[2] They consist of both coastal and inland wetlands, rivers and their associated floodplains, large forested areas, lakes, springs, the Floridan Aquifer, and land areas with the potential to adversely affect the water quality of the aquifer (stream-to-sink watersheds and high recharge areas). High priority habitat of listed species is also recognized as a Natural Resource of Regional Significance.[3]

Regionally significant natural resources play important roles in the region's economy and quality of life. Drinking water for most residents is drawn from the Floridan Aquifer. The Suwannee-Santa Fe river system and fresh water wetlands serve a valuable role in regulating surface water runoff and flooding. The salt marsh provides a valuable breeding ground for many varieties of commercial seafood. Commercial forest lands play an important role in the regional economy, while public lands provide valuable resource-based recreation for north central Florida residents. Both private and public lands provide important habitats for the survival of native plant and animal species. Nearly all identified Natural Resources of Regional Significance play, or can play, an important role in the region's budding ecotourism industry.

The mission of the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council is to improve the quality of life of the Region's citizens by coordinating growth management, protecting regional resources, promoting economic development and providing technical services to local governments. The North Central Florida Strategic

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[1]Includes the Floridan Aquifer, a Natural Resource of Regional Significance which underlies the entire region.

[2]North central Florida regionally significant facilities and resources, as defined in Rule 27E.005, Florida Administrative Code, consist of Regionally Significant Emergency Preparedness Facilities identified in Table 3.4, Natural Resources of Regional Significance identified in Table 4.1, Regionally Significant Transportation Facilities identified in Table 5.8, and Regionally Significant Facilities and Resources, identified in Section VI.

[3]Listed species means an animal species designated as Endangered, Threatened, or Species of Special Concern in Chapter 68A-27.003-68A-27.005, Florida Administrative Code; a plant species designated as Endangered, Threatened, or Commercially Exploited as designated in Chapter 5B-40, Florida Administrative Code, or an animal or plant species designated as Endangered or Threatened in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 17.

Adopted May 23, 1996, Amended August 28, 1997, February 27, 2003 and October 27, 2011

Regional Policy Plan implements the mission statement by balancing sustainable economic development with the protection of Natural Resources of Regional Significance.

The regional plan balances economic development with the protection of Natural Resources of Regional Significance. It seeks the protection of the functions and qualities of Natural Resources of Regional Significance. Therefore, the plan allows development and economic activity within and near Natural Resources of Regional Significance to the extent that such development and economic activity does not significantly and adversely affect the functions of the resource.

Furthermore, the scope of the regional plan goals and policies is limited to Natural Resources of Regional Significance and regional facilities which are specifically identified and mapped in the regional plan, as well as the extent to which the plans of one local government effect other local governments. The type and extent of economic activity which can occur without significantly and adversely impacting a Natural Resource of Regional Significance is framed by the goals and policies of the regional plan.

Although mapped as discrete geographic units, Natural Resources of Regional Significance are really parts of an interconnected natural system extending across and beyond the region. Actions in one part of the system can have significant adverse consequences elsewhere. For example, the Big Bend Seagrass Beds and the fishery it supports are dependent upon fresh water flows from the Suwannee and other coastal rivers. The rivers are in turn dependent upon headwater swamps for their base flows of fresh water. Dredging and filling headwater swamps, such as the Okefenokee Swamp in Georgia and north central Florida's San Pedro Bay and Mallory Swamp, could have negative impacts upon the seagrass beds and coastal fishery. One purpose of the regional plan is to identify Natural Resources of Regional Significance and include strategies to minimize potential adverse impacts to these resources while promoting economic activities such as agriculture and silviculture within these areas, especially where such resources are in private ownership.

Natural resources of regional significance are grouped into five categories: Coastal and Marine Resources, Groundwater Resources, Natural Systems, Planning and Resource Management Areas, and Surface Water Systems. The text, maps, and policies of this element are organized around the five map layers.[4]

Natural resources of regional significance are listed in Table 4.1. The regional plan identifies 213 Natural Resources of Regional Significance. Quantifying the number of identified Natural Resources of Regional Significance is difficult. Several are listed multiple times. Some natural resources, such as Peacock Springs State Recreation Area, contain springs which are designated as Natural Resources of Regional Significance in their own right. Areas of High Recharge Potential to the Floridan Aquifer are listed only once. However, the Groundwater Resources map identifies over one million acres as potential high aquifer recharge area. Some resources defy counting. For example, approximately 1,331 parcels of land owned by the Suwannee and St. Johns water management districts are recognized as Natural Resources of Regional Significance. Many of these parcels are adjacent to one another, which could justify grouping them together for a lower parcel count. Instead, they are counted as one natural resource and classified as "Water Management District Lands." Similarly, local government-owned land is counted as one natural resource and classified as Local Government Conservation Areas.

[4]The Floridan Aquifer is not mapped since it underlies the entire region; the Florida Middle Ground and the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge are also not mapped as they are outside the region; the Big Bend Seagrass Beds are only partially mapped as much of the resource is located beyond the state's jurisdiction.

Maps of Natural Resources of Regional Significance included in the regional plan vary widely in terms of accuracy. Some coverages, such as the Suwannee River Corridor, were imported directly into the Council's computerized geographic information system from the Suwannee River Water Management District. Coverages (maps) which are directly imported from one geographic information system to another represent the most accurate coverages contained in the regional plan. ~~**However, most coverages depicted in the regional plan maps were hand-digitized by Council staff from paper maps. The Council's hand-digitized coverages vary widely in terms of detail and accuracy.**~~ While reasonably accurate for purposes of presentation in the regional plan, they should not be used as a substitute for the source maps from which they were derived.

TABLE 4.1

NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Map Layer	Classification	Name	Acreage
Coastal and Marine Resources	**Big Bend Salt Marsh**	**Big Bend Salt Marsh**	~~48,190.00~~ 72,641.34
Coastal and Marine Resources	**Big Bend Seagrass Beds**	**Big Bend Seagrass Beds**	~~486,657.00~~ 902,381.62
Coastal and Marine Resources	Florida Middle Ground	Florida Middle Ground	132,000.00
Groundwater Resources	**Areas of High Recharge Potential to the Floridan Aquifer**	**Areas of High Recharge Potential to the Floridan Aquifer**	~~968,600.90~~ 1,936,754.33
Groundwater Resources	**Floridan Aquifer**	**Floridan Aquifer**	~~4,415,998.00~~ 6,218,906.18
Groundwater Resources	Ichetucknee Trace	Ichetucknee Trace	10,767.00
Groundwater Resources	Sinks	Alachua Sink	1.00
Groundwater Resources	Sinks	Aucilla River Sinks	2,000.00
Groundwater Resources	Sinks	Brooks Sink	1.00
Groundwater Resources	Sinks	Clay Sink	1.00
Groundwater Resources	Sinks	Devil's Millhopper	1.00
Groundwater Resources	Sinks	O'leno Sink	1.00
Groundwater Resources	Sinks	Rose Sink	1.00
Groundwater Resources	Sinks	Saylor Sink	1.00
Groundwater Resources	Stream-to-Sink Watershed	Sinking Branch	1,596.00
Groundwater Resources	Stream-to-Sink Watershed	Cannon Creek/Columbia Rose Creek/ Clay Hole Creek	34,303.00

Adopted May 23, 1996, Amended August 28, 1997, February 27, 2003 and October 27, 2011

TABLE 4.1

NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Map Layer	Classification	Name	Acreage
Groundwater Resources	Stream-to-Sink Watershed	Indian Mound Swamp/ South Falling Creek/ Turkey Prairie	30,759.00
Groundwater Resources	Stream-to-Sink Watershed	Little River	35,639.00
Groundwater Resources	Stream-to-Sink Watershed	Norton Creek	9,337.00
Groundwater Resources	Stream-to-Sink Watershed	Alachua Slough/Blues Creek/Burnett Lake/Mill Creek Sink/Hammock Branch/North Alachua/Pareners Branch/Turkey Creek	41,954.00
Groundwater Resources	Stream-to-Sink Watershed	Big Jones Creek	78,836.91
Groundwater Resources	Stream-to-Sink Watershed	Unnamed basin on Marion-Levy border	142,327.21
Groundwater Resources	Stream-to-Sink Watershed	Silver River	111,599.9545
Groundwater Resources	Stream-to-Sink Watershed	Priest Prairie Drain	79,001.38
Natural Systems	**State Ecological Greenways Network**	**Regional Ecological Greenways Network**	~~1,316,360.00~~ 2,084,205.08
Planning & Resource Management Areas	**Private Lands**	**n/a**	~~2,640.00~~ 5,962.39
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Aucilla River Sinks~~	~~1,097.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Austin Cary Memorial Forest~~	~~2,076.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Big Bend Coastal Tracts~~	~~70,949.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Big Gum Swamp National Wilderness Area~~	~~3,374.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Big Shoals State Forest~~	~~1,636.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Blue Springs State Forest~~	~~2,004.00~~
Planning & Resource Management Areas	**Public Lands**	**Local Government Conservation Areas**	~~16,229.00~~ 22,471.42
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Devil's Millhopper Geologic State Park~~	~~67.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Econfina River State Park~~	~~4,389.00~~

Adopted May 23, 1996, Amended August 28, 1997, February 27, 2003 and October 27, 2011

TABLE 4.1

NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Map Layer	Classification	Name	Acreage
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Gum Root Park~~	~~370.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Ichetucknee Springs State Park~~	~~2,525.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Lake Alto Preserve~~	~~672.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Lochloosa Wildlife Conservation Area~~	~~10,352.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Lower Suwannee River National Wildlife Refuge~~	~~28,634.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge~~	~~0.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~O'leno State Park~~	~~1,720.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Osceola National Forest~~	~~109,247.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park~~	~~21,657.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Peacock Springs Conservation Area~~	~~1,115.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~River Rise State Preserve~~	~~4,480.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge~~	~~1284.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~San Felasco Hammock State Preserve~~	~~7,129.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Santa Fe Swamp Conservation Area~~	~~7,403.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Steven Foster State Folk Cultural Center~~	~~895.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Suwannee River State Park~~	~~1,994.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Public Lands~~	~~Upper Alapaha Conservation Area~~	~~2,245.00~~
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Public Lands	Water Management District Easements	~~93,064.00~~ 145,513.16

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TABLE 4.1

NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Map Layer	Classification	Name	Acreage
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Public Lands	Water Management District Lands	~~153,756.47~~ 191,139.20
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Public Lands	State Lands	331,780.72
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Public Lands	Federal Lands	445,454.20
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies~~	~~Alapaha River~~	~~218.00~~
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies	Alligator Lake	968.00
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies	Aucilla River	509.00
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies	Econfina River	212.00
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies	Fenholloway River	212.00
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies~~	~~Hampton Lake~~	~~816.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies~~	~~Lake Alto~~	~~548.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies~~	~~Lake Crosby~~	~~534.00~~
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies	Lochloosa Lake	5,629.00
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies~~	~~Lake Rowell~~	~~357.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies~~	~~Lake Sampson~~	~~2,013.00~~

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TABLE 4.1

NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Map Layer	Classification	Name	Acreage
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies~~	~~Lake Santa Fe~~	~~4,211.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies~~	~~Little Santa Fe Lake~~	~~1,096.00~~
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies~~	~~New River~~	~~182.00~~
Planning & Resource Management Areas	**Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies**	**Newnans Lake**	**6,019.00**
~~Planning & Resource Management Areas~~	~~Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies~~	~~Olustee Creek~~	~~121.00~~
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies	Orange Lake	9,533.00
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies	Santa Fe River	836.40
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies	Steinhatchee River	170.00
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies	Suwannee River	3,764.00
Planning & Resource Management Areas	**Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies**	**Waccasassa River**	**200.00**
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies	Withlacoochee River	376.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Bee Haven Bay	7,125.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	California Swamp	21,786.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Dixie County Coastal Fresh Water Wetlands	155,642.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Gum Root Swamp	1,448.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Hixtown Swamp	10,289.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Lake Alto Swamp	1,405.00

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TABLE 4.1

NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Map Layer	Classification	Name	Acreage
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Lake Kerr	3,383.56
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Lochloosa Forest	28,451.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Mallory Swamp	210,399.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Ocala National Forest	68,789.57
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Ocklawaha-Ocala National Forest	305,919.99
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Osceola National Forest/Pinhook Swamp	184,350.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Paynes Prairie	21,657.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	San Pedro Bay	305,375.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Santa Fe Swamp	7,403.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Spring Warrior Swamp	16,039.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Taylor County Coastal Fresh Water Wetlands	51,731.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Tide Swamp	15,236.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Wacassassa Flats	61,653.00
Surface Water Systems	Fresh Water Wetlands	Wacassassa/Gulf Hammock/Goethe	275,817.32
Surface Water Systems	Lakes	Alligator Lake	968.00
Surface Water Systems	Lakes	Chunky Pond	647.13
Surface Water Systems	Lakes	Lake Butler	436.00
Surface Water Systems	Lakes	Lake Geneva	57.76
Surface Water Systems	Lakes	Lake Sampson	2,013.00
Surface Water Systems	Lakes	Lake Santa Fe	4,211.00
Planning & Resource Management Areas	Surface Water Improvement Management Waterbodies	Lake Weir	6,268.34
Surface Water Systems	Lakes	Little Santa Fe Lake	1,096.00
Surface Water Systems	Lakes	Lochloosa Lake	5,629.00
Surface Water Systems	Lakes	Newnans Lake	6,019.00
Surface Water Systems	Lakes	Orange Lake	9,533.00
Surface Water Systems	Lakes	Watermelon Pond	989.00
Surface Water Systems	River Corridors	Alapaha River	9,069.00
Surface Water Systems	River Corridors	Aucilla River	4,059.00

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TABLE 4.1

NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Map Layer	Classification	Name	Acreage
Surface Water Systems	River Corridors	Cross Creek	530.00
Surface Water Systems	River Corridors	Econfina River	11,743.00
Surface Water Systems	River Corridors	Ichetucknee River	451.00
Surface Water Systems	River Corridors	Prairie Creek	873.00
Surface Water Systems	River Corridors	Rainbow River	1,250.95
Surface Water Systems	River Corridors	River Styx	1,772.00
Surface Water Systems	River Corridors	Santa Fe River	17,868.00
Surface Water Systems	River Corridors	Steinhatchee River	8,983.00
Surface Water Systems	River Corridors	Suwannee River	~~133,924.00~~ 139,931.12
Surface Water Systems	River Corridors	Withlacoochee River	~~12,880.00~~ 16,977.36
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Abyss Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	ALA112971	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	ALA930971	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	ALA930972	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Alapaha Rise	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Allen Mill Pond	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Alligator Hole Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Anderson Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Bathtub	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Blue Grotto Spring (Marion)	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Blue Hole	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Blue Sink	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Blue Spring Near Mayo	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Bonnet	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Branford Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Bridal Chamber Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Catfish Convention Hall Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Catfish Hotel Spring (Marion)	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Cedar Head	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Charles Spring	1.00

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TABLE 4.1

NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Map Layer	Classification	Name	Acreage
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Christmas Tree Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Citrus Blue Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	COL61981	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	COL928972	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	COL930971	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	COL1012971	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	COL101974	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Columbia Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Copper Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Darby	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Devil's Ear	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Devil's Eye Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Devils Kitchen A Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Devils Kitchen B Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	DIX625993	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Dogwood	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Ellaville Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Falmouth Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Fanning Springs	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Fern Hammock Springs	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	GIL84971	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	GIL94972	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	GIL107971	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	GIL107972	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	GIL729971	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	GIL1012971	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	GIL1012973	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Ginnie Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Grassy Hole	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Guaranto Spring	1.00

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TABLE 4.1

NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Map Layer	Classification	Name	Acreage
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Gum Spring #1	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Gum Spring #2	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Gum Spring #3	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Gum Spring #4	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Gum Spring Main	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	HAM610981	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	HAM610982	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	HAM610983	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	HAM610984	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	HAM612981	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	HAM1023971	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	HAM1023974	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Hart Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Holton Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Hornsby Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	ICH001C1	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	ICH001C2	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	ICH001C3	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	ICH001C4	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	ICH001C5	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	ICH001C6	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	ICH001C7	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	ICH001C8	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Ichetucknee Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	July Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	LAF718971	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	LAF718972	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	LAF924971	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	LAF929973	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Lev719991 (Levy)	1.00

Adopted May 23, 1996, Amended August 28, 1997, February 27, 2003 and October 27, 2011

TABLE 4.1

NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Map Layer	Classification	Name	Acreage
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Lilly Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Lime	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Lime Run Sink	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Little Fanning Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Little River Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Log Spring (Marion)	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	MAD610982	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	MAD612981	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	MAD612982	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	MAD922977	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Manatee Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Marion Blue Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Mearson Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Mill Pond	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Mission	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Morgan's Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Nutall Rise	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Orange Grove	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Otter Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Owens Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Peacock Springs	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Perry	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Pickard	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Poe Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Pot	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Pothole	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Rainbow Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Rock Bluff Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Rock Sink	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Rum Island	1.00

Adopted May 23, 1996, Amended August 28, 1997, February 27, 2003 and October 27, 2011

TABLE 4.1

NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Map Layer	Classification	Name	Acreage
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Running Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Ruth Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Salt Springs (Marion)	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Santa Fe Blue Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Santa Fe Rise	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Shingle	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Silver Glen Springs	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Silver Glen Springs Natural Well	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Silver Spring Main	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Steinhatchee Rise	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Sunbeam	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	SUW107971	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	SUW923973	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	SUW925971	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	SUW1017972	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Suwanacoochee Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Suwannee Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Suwannee Blue Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Sweetwater Springs	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	TAY625992	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	TAY730991	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Telford Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Trail Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Troy Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Turtle Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Twin	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Waterfall Springs	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Wekiva Springs (Levy)	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	White Spring	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Wilson	1.00
Surface Water Systems	Springs	Withlacoochee Blue Spring	1.00

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n/a = Not Applicable. An identification name or number is not provided as the natural resource is either located beyond the jurisdiction of the region, covers the entire region, or is adequately identified on the associated map without the need of a map identification name/number.

Source: North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, ~~2009~~ 2016.

2. Coastal and Marine Resources

The region's coastline bordering the Gulf of Mexico extends approximately ~~80~~ **120** miles from the Aucilla River, separating Taylor and Jefferson Counties, south to the ~~Suwannee~~ **Withlacoochee** River which forms the boundary between ~~Dixie~~ **Citrus** and Levy counties. The environmental quality of the Gulf coast in Dixie**, Levy,** and Taylor counties is generally excellent with few problems of regional significance. Salt marsh, broken only by rivers and their estuaries as well as a very few areas of beach, extends nearly the entire length of the coastline of Dixie**, Levy,** and Taylor counties. Seaward of the salt marsh are the Big Bend Seagrass Beds. The seagrass beds provide an attractive environment for many commercially valuable fish and invertebrates. The Suwannee River is the largest coastal river in the region and forms a large estuary which supports large, commercially-viable, oyster beds.

The salt marsh, estuaries, coastal fresh water wetlands, as well as the Gulf itself all interact to provide fish and wildlife species with the elements required for their propagation, growth, and survival.[5] Identified coastal and marine natural resources of regional significance are the Big Bend Salt Marsh, the Big Bend Seagrass Beds, and the Florida Middle Ground.

a. Big Bend Salt Marsh

Nearly the entire length of the Dixie**, Levy,** and Taylor county coastline consists of salt marsh. The Big Bend Salt Marsh averages between one-half and one mile in width while penetrating several miles inland in some places, most notably at Shired Island and Horseshoe Cove where waters from the Suwannee River and California Swamp enter the Gulf.

Nutrients from the land and sea combine in the salt marsh to produce more biomass than some of the most intensively managed farms. It is a rich breeding ground for plant and animal life and is a primary nursery for commercially-valuable fish. Spotted sea trout, mullet, redfish and others spend much of their lives in the salt marsh. In addition, crabs, oysters, clams, shrimp, and other Gulf marine life depend on the salt marsh for food, protection, and propagation.

Other animal species found in the salt marsh include birds such as rails, egrets, gulls, terns, and seaside sparrows, all of which depend upon the salt marsh for food. The bald eagle breeds in several areas of salt marsh habitat. Besides the bald eagle, other listed species found in the Big Bend Salt Marsh include the diamond-back terrapin, salt marsh snake, mink, otter, and raccoon.[6]

The salt marsh is dependent for its existence upon an unrestricted flow of fresh water and sediments from coastal estuaries and sheet-flow runoff from fresh water coastal wetlands. Sand is an important ingredient in wetland building as it provides a stable platform in shallow water areas for marsh plant communities to develop. Once the flow of sand to the marsh is shut off, the forces of erosion and submergence take over.

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[5]Coastal fresh water wetlands are addressed under Surface Water Systems, beginning on page IV-47.

[6]Listed species means an animal species designated as Endangered, Threatened, or Species of Special Concern in Chapter 68A-27.003-68A-27.005, Florida Administrative Code; a plant species designated as Endangered, Threatened, or Commercially Exploited as designated in Chapter 5B-40, Florida Administrative Code, or an animal or plant species designated as Endangered or Threatened in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 17.

b. Big Bend Seagrass Beds

Three marine leagues seaward of land's end lies the limits of the jurisdiction of the state.[7] The area between land's end and the state's jurisdictional limit consists of salt marsh, oyster bars, as well as part of the Big Bend Seagrass Beds, which extend approximately 30 miles westward from land's end into the Gulf of Mexico to depths of 33 feet.[8] The seagrasses are comprised predominantly of Thalassia testudinum, Halodule wrightii, Syringodium filiforme, and Halophilla eugolmannii.

Similar to the salt marsh, the seagrass beds are an important community in terms of basic productivity. They provide habitat for many species of commercially-valuable invertebrate and fish. Submerged grass beds supply food to grazing animals, provide nutrients to the water, add oxygen, and stabilize sediments on the sea floor. The Big Bend Seagrass Beds are designated as both a State Aquatic Preserve and an Outstanding Florida Water. The beds are part of the second-largest area of continuous seagrasses in the eastern Gulf of Mexico.

The region has several small but growing coastal communities where development could, if not properly managed, adversely affect coastal resources. These include the town of Horseshoe Beach and the unincorporated communities of Steinhatchee, Suwannee, Keaton Beach, Cedar Island, and Dekle Beach. Population growth in coastal communities is likely to increase demand for access to coastal areas and resources.

Seagrass beds and coastal marshes can be adversely affected by channel dredging and associated spoils. Spoil deposition as well as the dredging process can deposit bottom muds on oyster beds and seagrass beds, causing their death through suffocation. Two areas of particular concern are the Keaton Beach - Cedar Island Channel near the mouth of Blue Creek and the Alligator Pass-Shark Channel at the mouth of the Suwannee River. The estuary at the mouth of the Suwannee provides a very important summer feeding and resting habitat for the endangered West Indian manatee. As a result, dredging activities have been confined to maintenance of existing channels only in West Pass.

Drilling activities have the potential for very high impacts on the seagrass beds.[9] Live bottoms, oyster beds, and seagrass beds may be at risk from drilling muds and cuttings discharge during drilling operations. Muds and cuttings deposited on top of coral, oysters, and seagrass can deprive these species of oxygen, causing them to suffocate. In addition, the ecology of the salt marsh may be severely disrupted by oil spills reaching such areas.

A study of the sensitivity of Florida's coastal environment corroborates these concerns. The study ranked the region's coastline as among the most environmentally sensitive in the state.[10] Environmentally

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[7]Chapter 258.395, Florida Statutes.

[8]U.S. Department of the Interior, Minerals Management Service, Proposed 5-Year Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program, January 1987 - December 1991 Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Vol. 2, (1968), pp. IV.B.6.-31 and 32.

[9]Proposed 5-Year Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program January 1987- December 1991 Draft Environmental Impact Statement, pg. IV.B.6.-19.

[10]The Sensitivity of Coastal Environments and Wildlife to Spilled Oil in the North-Central Florida Region, Adopted May 23, 1996, Amended August 28, 1997, February 27, 2003 and October 27, 2011

sensitive fish and benthic invertebrate species found along the north central Florida coast include the eastern blue oyster, blue crab, stone crab, bay scallop, pink shrimp, white shrimp, rock shrimp, spotted sea trout, red drum, mullet, sheepshead, Atlantic sturgeon, Spanish mackerel, bluefish, spotfish, and pompano.

c. Florida Middle Ground

The Florida Middle Ground is found between 47 and 66 miles southwest of the mouth of the Steinhatchee River in water depths of up to 125 feet. It consists of approximately 132,000 acres of coral reefs similar to those found in the Caribbean and represents the northernmost extent of coral reefs in the eastern Gulf of Mexico. Live bottom areas such as the Florida Middle Ground are of concern because of their biological productivity and their use as fish habitats.[11] The Florida Middle Ground is probably the best known and most biologically developed of the live bottom areas of the Gulf and has been designated as a Habitat Area of Particular Concern by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council.

Its considerable distance from shore and moderating currents attract fish normally found in the Caribbean-west Indies. The middle ground's transparent waters, shallow reef crests, irregular bottom topography, well-defined currents, and carbonate sediments attract many reef fishes which are either rare or absent at other west Florida shelf reefs. The dominant stony corals of the middle ground include Madracis decactis, Porites divaricata, Dichochocoencia stellaris, and Dichochcenia stokesii. Octocorals, a minor component of other Gulf reefs, are prominent. Dominant forms include Muricea elongata (orange Muricea), Muricea laxa (Dekucate muricea), Eunicea calyculata (warty Eunicea), and Plexaura flexuosa (sea rod).

Sport fishermen and recreational divers frequent the area despite its distance from the coast. Commercial fishermen also frequent the middle grounds since it is inhabited by red snapper and grouper. Although recognized by the regional plan as a Natural Resource of Regional Significance, the Florida Middle Ground is not mapped due to its location beyond the state's jurisdiction. Despite its location, the Council has commented, and will likely continue to comment, on environmental impact statements produced for proposed activities which could affect the Florida Middle Ground.

3. Groundwater Resources

Groundwater Natural Resources of Regional Significance consist of the Floridan Aquifer, sinks with direct connection to the Floridan Aquifer, stream-to-sink watersheds, and high recharge areas of the Floridan Aquifer.

a. Floridan Aquifer

Three different aquifers underlie north central Florida, a surficial water table aquifer, an intermediate artesian aquifer, and the Floridan Aquifer. Of the three, only the Floridan Aquifer is recognized in the

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Research Planning Institute, Inc., Columbia, S.C., 1984.

[11]Proposed 5-Year Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program, January 1987 - December 1991 Draft Environmental Impact Statement, pp. IV.B.6.-31 and 32.