



Draft Land Management Plan for McKissack Beach and Marsh

Completed by the Apalachee Regional Planning Council on Behalf of The City of Carrabelle



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A. General Information

1. Common Name of the Property:

McKissack Beach

2. Lease Number:

4579

3. Acres:

261 (GIS Derived)

4. Managing Agency:

City of Carrabelle

5. Provide an executive summary/description of this property that includes a brief description of the resources, uses and proposed uses, outstanding features etc.

This management plan for McKissack Beach and Marsh describes the setting, natural resources, and the intended management for the property. This management is guided by the purpose and intended use of the land described in the land acquisition process, which is for the conservation and protection of natural and historic resources, and for resource based public outdoor activities and education associated with the conservation and protection of public lands.

McKissack Beach is comprised of approximately 42 acres of beach and dune system, and McKissack Marsh approximately 219 acres of salt marsh and tidal flats. The goal of this management plan is to conserve and protect the natural and cultural resources at McKissack Beach and Marsh.

6. Attach a map showing the location and boundaries of the property including:

a) The location and structures or improvements currently on the property

b) The location and type of proposed improvements. Appendix A

7. Attach a map showing the proximity of this managed area to other conservation areas within 10 miles. Appendix A

8. Please attach a legal description of the property. Appendix B

9. Provide a physical description of the land including a quantitative data description of the land which includes an inventory of forest and other natural resource, exotic and invasive plants, hydrologic features, infrastructure including recreational facilities, and other significant land, cultural or historical features.

The McKissack Beach lease is comprised of two distinct habitat types. The first is a beach and dune system, with dune scrub uplands that comprise approximately 42 acres. The beach and dune system are adjacent to the Carrabelle River, a major sand source in the area. As a result, this beach is one of the few

accretionary areas in the panhandle. Species found throughout include sea oats, cordgrass, railroad vine, beach morning glory, Godfrey's blazing star, palmetto, beach rosemary, sand pine, and others.

The remaining approximately 216 acres consist of wetlands that are comprised primarily of black needle rush. As the Carrabelle River turns south, Postun Bayou forms, making it's way south before meeting the Carrabelle river again. This helps to feed Boggy Jordan Bayou. Both bayous have tidal creeks that inundate the marsh at high tides.

Off the east point of Mckissack beach is an important mudflat. It serves as forage ground for a variety of birds including willet, American oystercatcher, black skimmers, heron, snowy [lover, piping plover, red knot, and least tern.

Natural resource data on the land is available from Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI), Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC), Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and Audubon Florida. An updated, ground level, species and habitat survey would help in verifying habitat types and species present, including exotics.

There are limited physical improvements currently at the property. The biggest improvement that has been made to the property over the years is the grading of Gulf Beach drive and placement of crushed limerock to form a parking area. This parking area is prone to flooding and standing water pools after rains. Monopost structures help prevent driving over the dunes. There is interpretive signage on the seaward side of the dunes that provide an overview of some of the habitat and species that frequent McKissack Beach. FWC signage is also present that is meant to prevent driving through the dune system. There is a dune walkthrough at the terminus of Gulf Beach Drive. Ongoing discussions are being held to determine whether it would be best to continue this practice, or if funds were available, to install a dune walkover at the location.

Any improvements that might be made to the property would be done so in a way that is low-impact to native flora and fauna, as well as minimizes impacts to cultural resources that might be present.

10. A brief description of soil types, attaching USDA maps when available.

There are 8 soil types found within the boundary of McKissack Beach and Marsh. The four primary units are Bohickett and Tisonia soils (77.6%), Corolla sand (8.5%), unconsolidated Beaches (5.7%), and Mandarin fine sand (2%). Other types include Duckston sand (0.5%), Leon sand (0.4%), Resota fine sand (0.3%) and Udorthents (0%).

The portion of McKissack beach from Mean High Water and encompassing the beach berm to the dune line is composed of unconsolidated loose fine sands and broken shell. The dune system is comprised of Corolla sand Mandarin fine sands. Corolla soil supports dune and upland vegetation and is flat to sloping (0-5%), somewhat poorly drained. Mandarin fine sand supports upland vegetation and is flat to sloping (0-3%), somewhat poorly drained soil.

Bohickett and Tisonia soils are very poorly drained, nearly level soils in gulf coast tidal and estuarine marshes. They have a water table at or above the surface and are flooded daily by high tides. The top layer of Bohickett soil is very dark silty clay and beneath it is black silty clay. Tisonia soils are very dark grayish brown mucky peat at the surface, over dark grayish brown muck. The next layer is dark gray clay, and below that is gray loamy sand stratified with dark gray sandy clay loam. Bohickett soils primarily support

black needlerush, marshhay cordgrass, and smooth cordgrass. A small portion of the edges of the marshes are bordered by Leon sand and Duckston sand. These are poor drained and occasionally flooded.

11. Is the property adjacent to an aquatic preserve or designated area of critical state concern?

No.

12. Was the property acquired by a conservation land acquisition program? If YES, please identify.

The land was acquired by Warranty Deed by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund. It was deeded from McKissack Properties, Inc. to TIITF for the release of TIITF lands on Timber Island.

13. Do any agency-specific statute requirements or legislative/executive directives constrain the use of the property?

No.

14. Are there any reservations or encumbrances on the property?

There are none according to the Florida State Owned Lands and Records Information System.

B. Natural and Cultural Resources

15. Are there any archeological or historical sites on this property?

No. The Florida Department of State, through the Division of Historical Resources oversees the preservation of cultural and historical sites. No historical or cultural sites have been discovered on the property location, but any suggested improvements to the property will be coordinated with the Division of Historical Resources to ensure no sensitive site will be impacted by improvements to the property.

16. Are there any buildings on the property that are fifty or more years old?

No.

17. Please identify natural resources on the property that are listed in the Florida Natural Areas Inventory.

See Appendix C for the full FNAI report.

18. Are there any imperiled natural communities, unique natural features, or any State and federally listed endangered or threatened plant or animal species on site?

Yes.

If YES, please provide a specific description of how you plan to identify, locate, protect and preserve these species.

The beach and dune system and salt marsh that comprise the McKissack Beach and Marsh are supportive of a variety of plant and animal species. Three federally listed threatened animal species have been documented at or near the site, including red knot (*Calidrius canutus rufa*), loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), and piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*). State threatened animal species include the snowy plover (*Charadrius nivosus*), little blue heron (*Egretta caerulea*), American oystercatcher (*Haematopus Palliatus*), and least tern (*Sternula antillarum*). Three plants, the state endangered Godfrey's blazing star (*Liatris provincialis*) and state threatened Gulf Coast lupine (*Lupinus westianus*) and large-leaved jointweed (*Polygonella macrophylla*) have been documented at or near the site.

The marine turtle permit holder, operating under the authority of FWC, will continue to monitor the beach and document nesting activities, and mark the areas to help secure nests. With the help of Audubon, there is active monitoring of nesting and loafing shorebirds along McKissack Beach. FWC is responsible for the marking of shorebird nests and installs flagging material to help keep foot traffic off the nests. Beach and dune habitat can be better preserved by having a detailed natural communities and species survey. With this in place, and future improvements could rely on that data to make informed decisions about how development might progress. Limited improvements such as interpretive signage would also make visitors aware of the valuable habitat and encourage responsible use. It is important to note that due to the nature of the coastal environment, extreme natural changes can occur to the landscape which affect flora and fauna.

19. Please identify the water resources including swamps, marshes or other wetlands, on the property including the water quality classification for each water body and if the water body has been designated "Outstanding Florida Waters."

Approximately 219 acres of marsh is present on the McKissack property. Running through the marsh are various tidal creeks. Potsum Bayou encompasses the northern part of the property and Boggy Jordan Bayou on the western side of the property. Dickerman Cut and the Carrabelle River are east of the property. The area opens up to St. George Sound and the Gulf of Mexico, classified as Class 2. There are no Outstanding Florida Waters present on or near the property.

20. Are any known mineral resources, such as oil, gas and phosphates, or any unique natural features, such as coral reefs, beaches, dunes, natural springs, caverns, large sinkholes, virgin timber stands, scenic vistas, and natural rivers and streams, and outstanding native landscapes containing relatively unaltered flora, fauna, and geological features on site?

Yes. There is a beach and dune system, although it is somewhat disturbed. Within the marsh area there are a number of natural streams. See Appendix F.

21. Are there fish or wildlife resources (both game and non-game) on the property?

Yes, please see Appendix C for a list of documented, likely, and potential occurrences on and around the property. Further surveys would help to verify existing data.

C. Use of the Property

22. Please provide a statement of the purpose for which the lands were acquired, the projected use or uses as defined in Chapter 253.034, Florida Statutes, and the statutory authority you have for such uses.

The lands were leased to the City of Carrabelle for the conservation and protection of natural and historical resources and for resource based public outdoor activities and education which are compatible with the conservation and protection of these lands, as set forth in subsection 259.032(11).

23. Please state the desired outcome for this property, and key management activities necessary to achieve the desired outcome, including public access.

The McKissack Beach and Marsh continue to be maintained in its native state. Current techniques including invasive species management and prescribed fire will continue to be used to restore natural communities and original ecosystem functions. It is essential to conserve and protect the natural and any cultural resources on the property. Any development of the property will be done so carefully, with specific attention directed at detecting and preserving native species and landscaping, and cultural and historical resources. Public visitation, environmental education, and scientific research are encouraged as long as such activities are consistent with protection of natural and cultural resources. The portion of the property that receives the most use is the sandy beach. It is a popular local amenity that should be marketed to visitors outside the area. Desired outcomes for the property include: restoration of natural communities; supporting native species; improved water quality by reducing runoff; stabilization of the beach and dune system and related vegetation.

24. Please state the single or multiple uses currently made of the property and if the property is single use, please provide an analysis of its potential for multiple-use.

Currently, the property has two uses. The first is conservation and protection of natural and historical resources on the property. The second is for resource based public outdoor activities and education, which are compatible with conservation and protection. The City of Carrabelle is the primary manager of the land. FDEP and FWC has jurisdiction over threatened and endangered plant and animal species. The Forestry Service will be contacted in the event of a wildfire or prescribed burning as needed. The harvesting of tress on the leased lands is not considered an appropriate use, considering the sensitivity of the lands.

25. Were multiple uses considered but not adopted?

The lands are currently multiple use. Considering the property's natural and cultural resources, aesthetic values, and visitor experiences, there are no other secondary purposes which would not interfere with the primary purposes of the property.

26. Please provide an analysis of the potential use of private land managers to facilitate the restoration or management of these lands.

Using a private land manager would benefit management of the property by ensuring the protection of natural and historical resources. A private land manager would be able to help identify native and exotic

species, and develop a plan to either remove or protect as necessary. For any development that may be considered for the area, a land manager would be expected to communicate with the Florida Department of State Historical Resources Division to be sure no cultural or historical resources would be at risk from potential development.

27. Please provide an analysis of the potential of the property to generate revenues to enhance the management of the property.

There are few opportunities to generate revenues to enhance the management of the property. This stems from the lease area being marsh, and beach and dune system, neither of which lend themselves readily to improved development or commerce. On certain portions of the property, recreation activities such as kayaking, fishing, and traditional low impact beach activities are present. It is unclear if these activities could support revenues that would enhance the management of the property. Techniques such as entrance fees, donations, promotional events, and similar measures could be employed on a case-by-case basis as a means of supplementing management funding.

28. Describe the projected, current and recent past uses of the property, and any unauthorized uses, if known.

Historically, the property has been used as a recreational resource. The area around the property has been used primarily for recreational and commercial seafood and shellfish harvesting. Portions of the property, specifically the terminus of Gulf Beach Drive, on the beach portion of the property, has been used for launching and retrieving small watercraft. This is a historic, unauthorized use.

If through the public participation process it is found that the need for stormwater management is needed at the site, a statement from the board of trustees will be sought to validate that use under Ch. 253.034(9). A statement regarding incompatible use under 253.034(10) is not applicable to this plan.

29. Do the planned uses impact renewable and non-renewable resources on the property?

No.

If YES, please describe what specific activities will be taken to protect or enhance and conserve those resources and to compensate/mitigate the damage that is caused by the impacting use.

While the planned uses on the property have relatively little impact on the resources at the property, some of the non-prescribed uses do have the potential to impact the property. The biggest use impacting the property is beach driving, both on the dunes and on the beach. Sea turtles are known to nest at the location, and continued access to the beach prohibits dune formation at the entrance of the property. To curtail this, more interpretive signage could be posted at the site that detail impacts to dunes, vegetation, and turtles. Additionally, drainage improvements will be assessed as part of the public participation process.

30. Should any parcels of land within or adjacent to the property be purchased because they are essential to management of the property?

No.

31. Are there any portions of this property no longer needed for your use?

No. All of the lands within the McKissack Beach and Marsh are suitable for and necessary for the stated management objectives and none should be considered or declared surplus.

32. Please describe what public uses and public access that would be consistent with the purpose for which this property was acquired.

The lands were leased to the City of Carrabelle for the conservation and protection of natural and historical resources and for resource based public outdoor activities and education which are compatible with the conservation and protection. Passive and active recreation including hiking, wildlife viewing, boating, and fishing are uses that would be consistent with the purpose for which the property was acquired. The public use and access represent balanced public utilization on the property.

D. Management Activities

33. If more than one agency manages this property, describe the management responsibilities of each agency and how such responsibilities will be coordinated.

The City of Carrabelle is the primary manager of the land. FDEP and FWC has jurisdiction over threatened and endangered plant and animal species. The Forestry Service will be contacted in the event of a wildfire or prescribed burning as needed. The harvesting of tress on the leased lands is not considered an appropriate use, considering the sensitivity of the lands. The Florida Department of State, through the Division of Historical Resources oversees the preservation of cultural and historical sites. No historical or cultural sites have been discovered on the property location, but any suggested improvements to the property will be coordinated with the Division of Historical Resources to ensure no sensitive site will be impacted by improvements to the property.

34. Please discuss management needs and problems on the property including conservation of soil and water resources and control and prevention of soil erosion and water and soil contamination.

The primary management need and problem for the property pertains to the entrance to the property. The entrance is a fragmented dune that is susceptible to erosion during periods of heavy rainfall. The lack of parking facilities and associated stormwater control facility coupled with using the entrance to trailer boats to the water (historic use) has led to erosion issues. *Public workshops will be utilized to determine what might be done to address this issue.*

35. Identify adjacent land uses that will conflict with the planned use of this property, if any.

The surrounding land uses are not very intensive. Directly north of the beach property is the McKissack subdivision. These are single family residential homes. It is not anticipated that the planned use conflicts with the property. To the east of the marsh are lands zoned commercial. Currently this area is vacant, and considering the nature of the marsh, little impact would result to the property.

The management plan is being developed in compliance with the local comprehensive plan. A letter of compliance will be supplied with the complete plan, once all public participation requirements are completed.

36. Please describe measures used to prevent/control invasive, non-native plants.

A survey of the natural communities will need to be conducted on the property in order to determine baseline conditions. Once this is done, management techniques can be assessed. These could include physical removal or chemical applications to invasive and non-native plants.

37. Was there any public or local government involvement / participation in the development of this plan? YES NO If YES, please describe:

38. If an arthropod control plan has been established for this property, please include it as an attachment. If one does not exist, provide a statement as to what arrangement exists between the local mosquito control district and the managing agency. See Chapter 388.4111 regarding mosquito control on public lands.

No arthropod control plan exists for this property. The Franklin County Mosquito Control periodically manages the areas adjacent to McKissack Beach.

39. Management Goals – The following 8 goals may not all be applicable to your site. Write N/A where appropriate. Also, please add as many goals, objectives, and measures as you wish.

1. Habitat restoration and improvement:

Goal: Allow the land to continue to progress in it's current state.

Measurable Objective: Increased species occurrences, flora and fauna.

Policy: Continue to utilize law enforcement to enforce state and local laws.

Cost: Currently there is no budget associated with this goal, but the city will pursue grants as they become available to accomplish this goal.

Goal: Where feasible, allow for cost-effect improvements to natural area.

Measurable Objective: Specific project improvement numbers such as number of sea oats planted.

Cost: Currently there is no budget associated with this goal, but the city will pursue grants as they become available to accomplish this goal. This Goal could be supplemented by volunteer groups and donations.

2. Public access and recreational opportunities:

Goal: Ensure continued access to McKissack Beach

Measurable Objective: Maintain access point(s) along the property.

Cost: Currently there is no budget associated with this goal, but the city will pursue grants as they become available to accomplish this goal.

Goal: Construct a dune walkover at the terminus of South Beach Drive.

Cost: Currently there is no budget associated with this goal, but the city will pursue grants as they become available to accomplish this goal.

Goal: Improve the parking area at the terminus of South Beach Drive so there is reduced flooding.

Measurable Objective: Complete a parking improvement project at South Beach Drive.

Cost: Currently there is no budget associated with this goal, but the city will pursue grants as they become available to accomplish this goal.

3. Hydrological preservation and restoration: N/A

4. Sustainable forest management:

Goal: Develop an agreement with the Florida Forest service for the management of forest resources.

Measurable Objective: Number of agreements in place.

Cost: Currently there is no budget associated with this goal, but the city will pursue grants as they become available to accomplish this goal.

5. Exotic and Invasive species maintenance and control:

Goal: Reduce the amount of invasive and exotic species at McKissack Beach.

Measurable Objective: Number of exotic and invasive species reduced.

Measurable Objective: Approximate area of the exotic and invasive species reduction

Cost: Currently there is no budget associated with this goal, but the city will pursue grants as they become available to accomplish this goal. Costs can be offset by encouraging volunteer exotic and invasive species removal.

6. Capital facilities and infrastructure: N/A

7. Cultural and historical resources description:

Goal: Preserve cultural and historical resources

Measurable Objective: Any cultural or historical resources discovered at the site will be reported to the Department of State division of Historical resources.

Cost: Currently there is no budget associated with this goal, but the city will pursue grants as they become available to accomplish this goal.

8. Imperiled species habitat maintenance, enhancement, restoration, or population restoration:

Goal: Ensure that habitat valuable to imperiled species is maintained in its current state.

Measurable Objective: Amount of habitat type gained or lost.

Cost: Currently there is no budget associated with this goal, but the city will pursue grants as they become available to accomplish this goal.

40. Costs

Resource management: N/A

Administration: N/A

Support: N/A

Capital Improvements: N/A

Recreation Visitor Services: N/A

Law Enforcement Activities: N/A

41. A finding regarding whether each planned use conforms to the appropriate policies and guidelines of the State Lands Management Plan is required. The Plan can be found at <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/oes/slmp.pdf>, by writing to the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of State Lands, Office of Environmental Services, 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, Mail Station 140, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000, or by calling (850) 245-2784. Does this plan conform to the State Lands Management Plan?

42. Please provide the following contact information below:

Appendix A
Location Maps

Appendix B
Legal Description

Appendix C
FNAI Report

Appendix D
Soil Maps

Appendix E
Historic and Cultural Resources

Appendix F
Physical Resource Map