



Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve

Management Plan • July 2009 - June 2014
Amendment 1 • Multi-Purpose Path



Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas
3900 Commonwealth Blvd., MS #235, Tallahassee, FL 32399
www.FloridaCoasts.org

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Multi-Purpose Path at Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve

Narrative

The management team of Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve (GTM Research Reserve) amended its management plan to allow the following project:

GTMNERR identified the need to establish a multi-purpose path within the coastal strand habitat parallel to State Road (SR) A1A near the GTM Research Reserve's Environmental Education Center. The project site is located within the GTM Research Reserve and the uplands of the Guana River Marsh Aquatic Preserve in St. John's County, Florida. The path will be approximately 500 feet long and 8 feet wide. This path will serve several needs related to improved safety of staff, school children, workshop participants, volunteers, and other visitors when traveling between the GTM Research Reserve's Environmental Education Center, trails and beaches.

Currently, staff, school children, workshop participants, volunteers, and other visitors accessing the beach for sea turtle patrol, beach clean ups, and other resource management and educational activities must walk or ride an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) along the west shoulder of SR A1A within a few feet of vehicle traffic. Such close proximity to highway traffic places these individuals at some risk of injury. This access occurs daily throughout the April – November sea turtle monitoring efforts, and throughout the year for other resource management and educational activities.

Additionally, the GTM Research Reserve provides a popular destination for visitors, including equestrian users, on its recreational upland trails and its seven miles of Atlantic beaches. Currently these visitors accessing the beach from the GTM Research Reserve's Guana Dam parking lot must also use the west shoulder of SR A1A for 500 feet



Figure 1 | Location Map

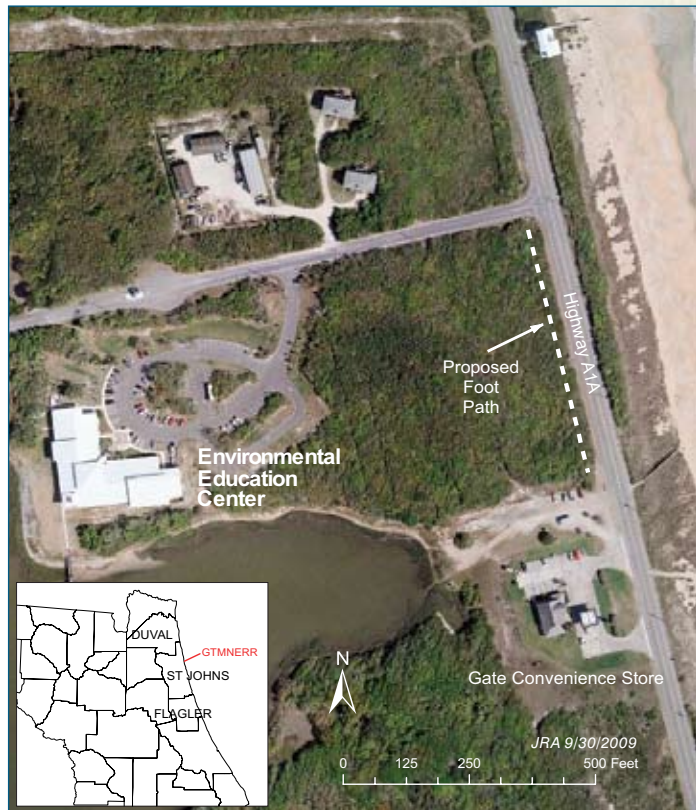


Figure 2 | Aerial Map

to reach the beach access path that is on the east side of the highway. This situation places these visitors within a few feet of highway traffic, which presents some risk to these individuals.


The management team of GTM Research Reserve determined that the most practical solution to this safety concern was to establish the multi-purpose path within the coastal strand approximately 25 feet west of the existing shoulder, as illustrated in figures 1 and 2. The pathway will be mowed and mulched to provide a safe and uniform surface for pedestrians, staff on ATVs, and equestrians.

The portion of coastal strand used for this project is a small and fragmented portion of habitat that is isolated by roads and public infrastructure from the remaining 677 acres of coastal strand habitat that has been identified for restoration within the GTM Research Reserve's prescribed fire plan. Establishment of the path will require no ground disturbance. The location of the path is not near any known archaeological sites. Once established, the path will be maintained by GTM Research Reserve staff as needed.



Looking south from the GTM Research Reserve entrance road toward the proposed path.

Internet Posting of Proposed Minor Plan Amendment



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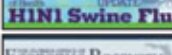


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Governor Crist's Initiatives



Small Management Plans and Minor Plan Amendments

Management Plans for Properties Smaller than 160 acres

The Office Of Environmental Services has received the following land management plans for properties smaller than 160 acres in size. Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) members who wish to have any of these plans placed on a formal ARC agenda for discussion should contact [Jim Farr](mailto:jim.farr@dep.state.fl.us) (jim.farr@dep.state.fl.us), ARC Staff Director, prior to the date indicated below. Please note that at least three ARC members must make the request for a plan for a property smaller than 160 acres in size to be scheduled for an ARC agenda. If we do not receive three requests by the stated deadline to schedule a plan for consideration at an ARC meeting, the plan will be approved.

No Management Plans at this time

Minor Amendments to Management Plans

The Office Of Environmental Services has received the following requests for minor changes to land management plans not covered in the [Interim Management Guidelines](#). Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) members who wish to have a plan amendment placed on a formal ARC agenda for discussion should contact [Jim Farr](mailto:jim.farr@dep.state.fl.us) (jim.farr@dep.state.fl.us), ARC Staff Director, prior to the date indicated below. Please note that at least three ARC members must make the request for a plan amendment to be scheduled for an ARC agenda. If we do not receive three requests by the stated deadline to schedule a plan amendment for consideration at an ARC meeting, the plan amendment will be approved.

Amendment to the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve management plan to add a multi-purpose path.

The Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (CAMA) has requested an amendment to the Guana-Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve management plan to allow a multi-purpose path parallel to U. S. Highway A1A. The link below contains a brief explanation of the request and maps showing the location of the trail. The amendment will be approved by the Division of State Lands unless three ARC members

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<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/SmPlan.htm>[10/27/2009 8:07:54 AM]

request that it be placed on an agenda for consideration at a future Council meeting. The deadline for requesting that it be considered by ARC is Friday, November 13, 2009.

[Amendment to GTMNERR management plan](#) (St. Johns County)

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact [Forrest Penny](#), GTMNERR Stewardship Coordinator.

Last updated: October 27, 2009

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Division of State Lands Approval Letter



Florida Department of Environmental Protection

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Charlie Crist
Governor

Jeff Kottkamp
Lt. Governor

Michael W. Sole
Secretary

November 17, 2009

Ms. Penny Isom
Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas
3900 Commonwealth Blvd., M.S. 235
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

RE: Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve

Dear Ms. Isom:

The Division of State Lands (DSL), Office of Environmental Services, acting as agent for the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, approves an addition to the management plan allowing an eight foot wide trail parallel to the A1A at the **Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve**. The next management plan update is due April 15, 2019.

Approval of this land management plan amendment does not waive the authority or jurisdiction of any governmental entity that may have an interest in this project. Implementation of any upland activities proposed by this management plan may require a permit or other authorization from federal and state agencies having regulatory jurisdiction over those particular activities. Pursuant to the conditions of your lease, please forward copies of all permits to this office upon issuance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Paula L. Allen'.

Paula L. Allen
Office of Environmental Services
Division of State Lands
Department of Environmental Protection

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National Estuarine Research Reserve**
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