

**Land Management Review of Hilochee Wildlife Management Area  
Lake County (Lease No. 4066): September 21, 2000**

*Prepared by Division of State Lands Staff*

William Howell, OMC Manager  
Jennifer Leff, Administrative Assistant

*for  
the Hilochee Wildlife Management Area Review Team*

***FINAL January 4, 2001***

Land Manager:	<u>FWCC</u>
Area:	<u>4,350 Acres</u>
County:	<u>Lake County</u>
Mngt. Plan Revised:	9/1997
Mngt. Plan Update Due:	9/30/2002

### Management Review Team Members

Agency Represented	Team member Appointed	Team member in attendance
DEP/DRP	Chuck McIntire	Chuck McIntire
DEP	Terry Riordan	Terry Riordan
DACS/DOF	Bill Korn	Bill Korn
FWCC	Victor Eshaves	Victor Eshaves
Soil and Water Conservation	Mike Powers	Mike Powers
County Commission	John Bringard	John Bringard
Conservation Organization	Marian Ryan	Marian Ryan
Private Land Manager	Mark Oswald	Mark Oswald

### Process for Implementing Regional Management Review Teams

***Legislative Intent and Guidance:***

Chapter 259.036, F. S. was enacted in 1997 to determine whether conservation, preservation, and recreation lands owned by the state Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (Board) are being managed properly. It directs the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to establish land management review teams to evaluate the extent to which the existing management plan provides sufficient protection to threatened or endangered species, unique or important natural or physical features, geological or hydrological functions, and archaeological features. The teams also evaluate the extent to which the land is being managed for the purposes for which it was acquired and the degree to which actual management practices, including public access, are in compliance with the adopted management plan. If a land management plan has not been adopted, the review shall consider the extent to which the land is being managed for the purposes for which it was acquired and the degree to which actual management practices are in compliance with the management policy statement and management prospectus for that property. If the land management review team determines that reviewed lands are not being managed for the purposes for which they were acquired or in compliance with the adopted land management plan, management policy statement, or management prospectus, DEP shall provide the review findings to the Board, and the managing agency must report to the Board its reasons for managing the lands as it has. A report of the review findings are given to the managing agency under review, the Land Acquisition and Management Advisory Council (LAMAC), and to the Division of State Lands. Also, DEP shall report the annual review findings of its land management review teams to the Board no later than the second board meeting in October of each year.

### Review Site

The management review of Hilochee Wildlife Management Area considered approximately 4,350 acres in Lake County that are managed by the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The team evaluated the extent to which current management actions are sufficient, whether the land is being managed for the purpose for which it was acquired, and whether actual management practices, including public access, are in compliance with the management plan. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission revised the management plan on September 1997, and the management plan update is due on September 30, 2002.

## Review Team Determination

### ***Is the land being managed for the purpose for which it was acquired?***

After completing the checklist, team members were asked to answer “yes” or “no” to this question. All team members agreed that Hilochee Wildlife Management Area is being managed for the purpose for which it was acquired.

### ***Are actual management practices, including public access, in compliance with the management plan?***

After completing the checklist, team members were asked to answer “yes” or “no” to this question. All team members agreed that actual management practices, including public access, were in compliance with the management plan for this site.

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## Commendations to the Managing Agency

1. The team commends the manager and staff for their overall accomplishments and for their work to remove tropical soda apple and cogon grass. (Vote: 8+, 0-)

## Exceptional Management Actions

The following items received high scores on the review team checklist (see attachment 1), which indicates that management actions exceeded expectations

1. Hunting/Fishing Quality
2. Listed Plants Protection and Preservation
3. Management of Citrus Groves

## Recommendations and Checklist Findings

The management plan must include responses to the recommendations and checklist items that are identified below.

1. The team recommends that a survey of listed flora and fauna be a high priority. (Vote: 8+, 0-)

*We agree that surveys of listed flora and fauna are a high priority for Hilochee WMA, and we will clarify this objective in the management plan update.*

2. The team encourages the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to investigate providing high quality wildlife viewing opportunities. (Vote: 6+, 2-)

*Current habitat management activities on Hilochee WMA include, but are not limited to prescribed burning, mowing WMA roads and openings, restoration of pasture lands and planting of wildlife food plots. We believe that these activities, which maintain and enhance the WMA's habitats, currently provide wildlife viewing opportunities for all wildlife species, quality and non-listed. We will continue with our habitat management activities, which we believe benefit all wildlife species. Numerous parking areas have been established for the public and WMA roads are maintained for hiking, biking and wildlife viewing.*

3. The team recommends that the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission make the completion of a hydrological survey a high priority. (Vote: 8+,0-)

*We agree to include a strategy in the management plan update to procure alternative sources for funding of this project will be investigated so that we may move forward with our restoration projects.*

#### **Checklist findings**

The following items received low scores on the review team checklist (see Attachment 1), which indicates that management actions, in the field, were insufficient (*f*) or that the issue was not sufficiently addressed in the management plan (*p*). These items need to be addressed in the management plan update.

##### **1.Survey of Plants (p)**

*Response:*

The updated management plan for Hilochee WMA, to be prepared in 2002, will contain objectives for the implementation of new flora survey projects, if deemed necessary, and the continuation of current flora species/natural community surveys..

##### **2. Survey of Animals (p)**

*Response:*

The updated management plan for Hilochee WMA, to be prepared in 2002, will contain objectives for the implementation of new fauna survey projects, if deemed necessary, and the continuation of current fauna surveys.





Quantity	III.E.3.b	3	3	3	3	3		4	3	3.14
Boundary Survey	III.F.1	3	4	5	3	3	3	4	5	3.75
Gates & Fencing	III.F.2	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	5	3.75
Signage	III.F.3	3	3	3	3	4	2	3	4	3.13
Law Enforcement Presence	III.F.4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	5	3.88
Inholdings/Additions	III.G.2	3		4	3	3		3	3	3.16
Citrus Groves	III.H.1	4	5	3	3	4	5	4	5	4.13
Pine Plantations	III.H.3	4	3	3	3	3	5	4	3	3.5
Roads	IV.1.A	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	3.38
Parking	IV.1.B	3	4	2	3	4	3	3	4	3.25
Water Access	IV.1.C	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	2.63
Recreational Opportunities	IV.2	3	4	3	3	3	2	3	4	3.13
Interpretive Facilities and Signs	IV.3	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	2.63
Environmental Education/Outreach	IV.4	2	1	3	3	3	2	3	3	2.5
Waste Disposal	V.1.A	3	3	3	3	3		3	4	3.14
Sanitary Facilities	V.1.B	3	3	3	3	3		3	3	3
Buildings	V.2.A	4	3	4	3	4		3	4	3.57
Equipment	V.2.B	4	3	4	3	4		3	4	3.57
Staff	V.3.A	3	4	4	3	3		3	4	3.57
Funding	V.4.B	3	4	4	3	3		3	4	3.57