

## HEATHER ISLAND MITIGATION BANK

### PROJECT FEATURES

The Heather Island Mitigation Bank is located in Marion County, Florida. The bank site is approximately 980 acres and is located within the Ocklawaha River Drainage Basin. Significant habitat within the project site is suitable for: the Florida black bear, Florida panther, Sherman's fox squirrel, gopher tortoise, Eastern indigo snake, as well as an extensive wading bird population and other various mammals and reptiles.

The project site is located adjacent to two conservation easement areas: the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway State Recreation and Conservation Area and the Ocklawaha Prairie Restoration Project. Additionally, Heather Island Mitigation Bank is hydrologically and ecologically connected to the Ocklawaha River, which is an Outstanding Florida Water.

The location site is regionally significant, as demonstrated by its Group B (very high priority) level of importance assigned by the February 2008 Florida Forever Acquisition because of outstanding natural resources, opportunity for natural resource-based recreation or historical and archeological resources.

### HIMB RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN

Four major activities: 1) conservation easement recordation; 2) hydrologic enhancement through ditch-blocks, constructing low water crossings, thereby re-establishing direct hydrologic connection within wetland systems both onsite and offsite; 3) removal of silviculture activities; enhancement of vegetation within areas utilized for timber production, and, 4) implementation of a native/historic prescribed fire program. As a result, the subject area, as well as the adjacent conservation areas and the Florida Aquifer, will receive hydrologic and vegetative enhancement.

Removal of ditches and roadways within the central portion of the site (i.e. "Horseshoe Road") will reverse drawdown conditions where surface and shallow groundwater flows were diverted and reduced from historic levels.