

Establishing Wildflower Areas

How to request a Wildflower Area on an FDOT-maintained road

First, your county or city commission must pass a Wildflower Resolution (see www.FlaWildflowers.org/protect). The adopted resolution must be sent to the FDOT District Wildflower Coordinator, along with a letter requesting Wildflower Areas. (A list of coordinators is at www.FlaWildflowers.org/resources/pdfs/DWC_Contacts.pdf).

The letter must be from an appropriate county official (i.e., Director of Public Works, County Administrator, etc.). It should include:

1. A list of state-maintained roads (including interstates and U.S. highways) to be designated as Wildflower Areas. The exact beginning and ending points of each Wildflower Area should be specified. For example, "State Road 71 from State Road 73 to County Road 392, 5 miles."
2. Requested maintenance for these Wildflower Areas, including:
 - a. Mowing width. This is typically 15 feet from the edge of the pavement, or 2 feet above the toe of the slope, whichever is less. In special cases, depending on the roadside conditions, 10 feet from the edge of the pavement also can be requested, but FDOT must approve all mowing widths to ensure public safety.
 - b. Mowing frequency. For example:
 - Begin annual mowing no earlier than May 1 each year.
 - Annual full right of way mowing between Dec. 1 and Jan. 31.
 - If the county determines that a full right-of-way mowing is desired in the summer because of heavy vegetation growth, that would be in July and we will make that request to you in writing.



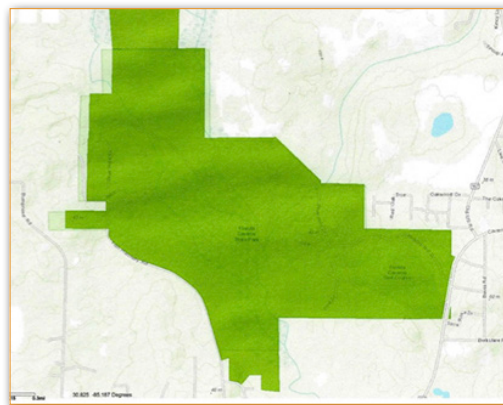
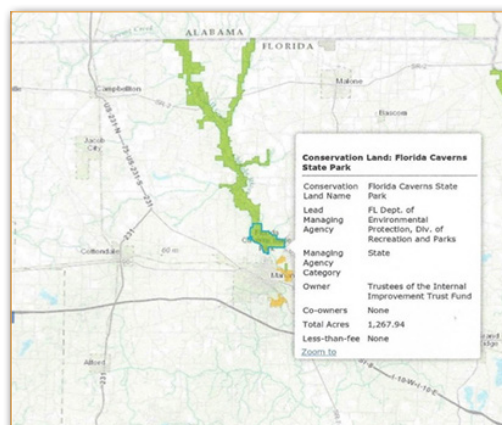
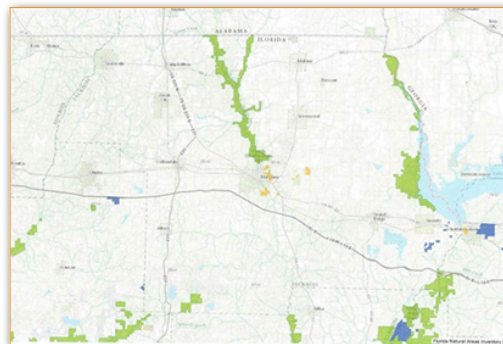
State Road 65. Photo by Eleanor Dietrich.

How to Find Your County's Conservation Areas

Roads adjacent to conservation areas are often good places to start looking for potential Wildflower Areas. That's because they are often in rural areas with wide rights-of-way that have existing roadside wildflowers that could be managed through reduced mowing.

Here's how to locate and review your county's conservation areas using the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (<http://www.fnai.org/webmaps/ConLandsMap/>):

1. Read "About this Map" for more information, and use the map legend to interpret the different types of conservation lands (federal lands are tan; state lands, green, etc.)
2. Type the county name and state (for instance: Jackson County, FL) in the map search box (upper left corner) to view your county.
(You can print a map by using your browser's Print function. Select the orientation and scale, and preview the area before printing. You can move the map by clicking and dragging to position it for printing. Once it's printed, you can scan it and save it as a JPEG to insert in documents. You can also use photo management software like Picasa to do some editing, such as cropping.)
3. Click on a conservation area of interest to get information about it.
4. There is a zoom tool in the information box. Click on that to enlarge the conservation area so you can see the names of adjacent roads. Or, use your mouse wheel to zoom in and out.
5. Alternately, to get a list of conservation lands by county, click the funnel-shaped Query icon and select "By Attribute," then select "Conservation Lands" and, from the Search Alias menu, "by County," and type the name of the county. When you click on the name of each property in the resulting list, the map zooms in on that property.
6. Prepare a report of candidate roads to be visited and assessed for Wildflower Areas. Keep a record of your findings of good areas and dates visited, including photographs; beginning and ending points; wildflower and weed species seen in spring, summer and fall; and any notes about pertinent items such as habitat type or concerns. From this analysis, you can develop a priority list of potential Wildflower Areas.



Wildflower Area Signs

1. Signs are used to designate Wildflower Areas' beginning and end points to aid mowers maintaining the area and advertise their locations to the public.

2. FDOT install standard Wildflower Area signs on state-maintained roads.



3. Counties may use their own signs along county roads, and are responsible for their design, purchase and installation. A consistent design helps brand wildflower areas statewide. Here are two examples of county signs.

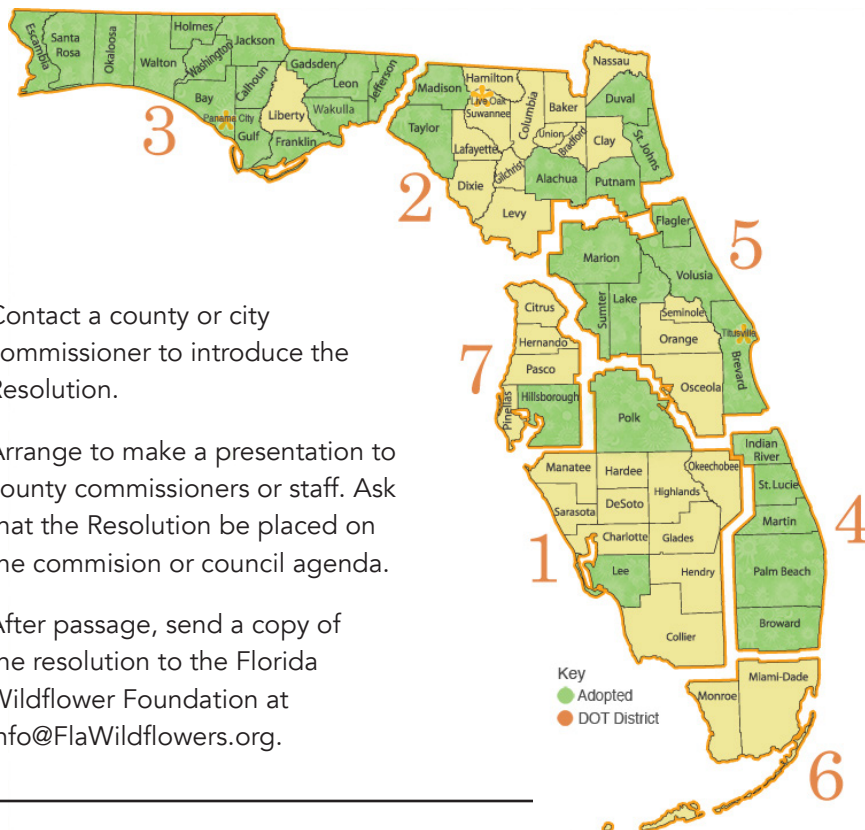


4. In the case of Calhoun County (right), the Chamber of Commerce funded the purchase of the signs (two per Wildflower Area) and the County Operations office supplied stakes and installation.

Resolve to Protect Wildflowers

Turn Florida green
with wildflowers.
Here's how to ask your
county or city to adopt a
Wildflower Resolution.

- Go to www.FlaWildflowers.org/protect to download the Model Resolution and to read how it was introduced and adopted elsewhere.
- Enlist the help of your FNPS, Sierra Club or Audubon chapter, Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists or Garden Club. Then consult with your local FDOT or county roadside maintenance staff to pinpoint possible sites for wildflower planting or management.
- Contact a county or city commissioner to introduce the Resolution.
- Arrange to make a presentation to county commissioners or staff. Ask that the Resolution be placed on the commission or council agenda.
- After passage, send a copy of the resolution to the Florida Wildflower Foundation at info@FlaWildflowers.org.



Present Resolutions

Counties — Alachua, Bay, Brevard, Broward, Calhoun, Duval, Escambia, Flagler, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Hillsborough, Holmes, Indian River, Jackson, Jefferson, Lake, Leon, Lee, Madison, Marion, Martin, Okaloosa, Palm Beach, Polk, Putnam, Santa Rosa, St. Lucie, St. Johns, Sumter, Taylor, Volusia, Wakulla, Walton, Washington

Cities — Live Oak, Pensacola, Titusville

See the most recent list at
www.FlaWildflowers.org/protect.

Model resolution

WHEREAS, the natural beauty of native wildflowers in _____ County can be enjoyed by everyone; can attract guests, and benefit commerce, environmental health, and public well-being; and

WHEREAS, enjoyment of native wildflowers is an occasion for all County and community leaders to unite for the benefit of everyone; and

WHEREAS, many naturally beautiful species of native wildflowers, including Coreopsis, the state wildflower, as depicted upon the State Wildflower license tag, are already prominently displayed along _____ County's state and county roadways; and

WHEREAS, increasing the visibility of native wildflowers in _____ County is consistent with the vision of the Comprehensive Plan, and goals of many individuals, businesses, and community-based organizations...

Read the entire model resolution at www.FlaWildflowers.org/protect.