

LANDSCAPES

2016: OUR BIGGEST YEAR YET!

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

TOP DONORS THIS YEAR:

PRESERVE DONORS (\$5,000+)

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WAYNE AND PATRICIA HOGAN

THOMAS B. LENOBLE

IN MEMORY OF HIS FATHER, VICTOR LENOBLE

GENEVIEVE M. DELOACH

WE COULD NOT ACHIEVE OUR MISSION WITHOUT COMMITTED DONORS, SUPPORTERS AND VOLUNTEERS. YOU MAKE CONSERVATION POSSIBLE IN NORTH FLORIDA.

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- 3 LAND TRUST PRESERVES FORT
- 4 PRESERVING RURAL AND FAMILY LANDS
- 4 NFLT'S RIVER-FRIENDLY AND EDIBLE YARD
- 5 LANDS PROTECTED IN 2016
- 6 LAND AND WATER LEGACY AMENDMENT
- 6 UPCOMING EVENTS
- 7 STAFF SPOTLIGHT
- 7 FLORIDA COASTAL SCHOOL OF LAW EXTERNS: A HIGHLIGHT
- 8 FROM THE FIELD: TEAM TERRAPIN





FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PHOTO BY FERNANDINA BEACH NEWS-LEADER

This has been an incredibly exciting year for the Land Trust. With an exceedingly talented staff and your support, this year we will preserve an additional 12,000 plus acres of land in one of the fastest growing areas of Florida. That is twice what we preserved in the past 15 years of our existence. Two projects preserved land for its ecosystem services (Sixmile Creek Preserve and Cumer Family Preserve). Four projects not only provide ecosystem services but they also provided jobs for local residents (Meldrim Family Heritage Timberlands, Horse Creek Farm, Wetland Preserve and South Prong Plantation). We protected a national treasure and

piece of Florida’s history (Spanish-American War Fort). One project supports our military by buffering Camp Blanding (Triangle Parcel). We expanded a city park (McGirt’s Creek) and created a community garden (Dumas Community Garden at Gaitlin Preserve). We have developed Management Plans for all of our properties.

We facilitated DNA research on diamondback terrapins, while monitoring the nesting season and providing predator control to increase their population. In addition, we hosted researchers from several universities and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at

our Big Talbot Island Biological Field Station.

The Preservation Portfolio, released this year, identifies the 112,000 acres of land most in need of conservation in the seven county area where we focus our efforts and will guide our efforts into the future. Read about these projects and more in the pages ahead. There is much more to come in 2017. Thank you for your continued support.

Protecting the land, preserving our future!

**JIM MCCARTHY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



STAFF

Executive Director | Jim McCarthy
Land Protection Director | Marc Hudson
Land Protection Specialist | Aaron Glick
Stewardship Director | Elizabeth Guthrie
Stewardship Coordinator | Emily Dunn
Outreach Coordinator | Genevieve Fletcher
Operations Manager | Cassie Froeba
Conservation Advocate | Andrea Conover

LAW EXTERNS

Cassilda Dhanaraj | Florida Coastal School of Law
Connor Lunt | Florida Coastal School of Law

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Benjamin Ansbacher

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PHOTO CREDITS

Jenny Alvarado | Cover

Douglas J. Eng | Page 3

Keith Novosel | Page 4

SPECIAL THANKS TO VOLUNTEERS

Jenny Alvarado, Luis Benavides, Kathi Chalk, Douglas J. Eng, Greg Huggett, Lacy Lafferty, Garrett Llopiz, Keith Novosel, Beth Strawbridge,

And all our Team Terrapin volunteers!

DESIGN CREDITS

Lacy Lafferty | Volunteer

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LAND TRUST PRESERVES FORT



PHOTO BY DOUGLAS J ENG

"The Spanish-American Fort is a treasured piece of North Florida history, one that could not be duplicated if the land it sits upon were to be developed. So many people in our area want to protect the natural beauty we enjoy along our riverfront, and I believed that a challenge grant to encourage their generosity would pay off. I'm delighted that with the City of Jacksonville's help, and the willingness of other donors, the Spanish-American Fort will be preserved once and for all." - DELORES BARR WEAVER

After a year-long campaign to preserve the Spanish-American War Fort, we are proud to announce that we as a community have raised the funds needed to protect this resource. An important relic from the Spanish-American War in Jacksonville, the Fort is the only remaining original fort structure on St. John's Bluff, where four other forts flown under four separate flags, were built. The other forts have been lost to time and a changing landscape, but the Spanish-American War Fort still stands, and will now be preserved for all to enjoy.

As with any act of preservation, we could not have accomplished this feat without the generosity of our community. We owe gratitude to the Delores Barr Weaver Fund, who, early on, presented a \$100,000 challenge grant to preserve the Fort. This challenge was not only matched but surpassed with the help of many individuals, including 100-year-old, Genevieve DeLoach, who raised \$5,000 from her friends and the community in lieu of gifts for her 100th birthday party. The City of Jacksonville, Jaguars Foundation, and

an anonymous donor contributed greatly to its success. In summary, local attorney and contributor, Wayne Hogan said it best, "Near Fort Caroline, and across the river from the important Civil War-era enclave of Pilot Town, the Spanish-American War Fort presents a key link in the military history of the St. Johns River as it reaches the Atlantic Ocean at Mayport. When it's history, and it's important, it should be preserved; I'm glad this will be."



PRESERVING RURAL AND FAMILY LANDS



PHOTOS BY KEITH NOVOSEL

ABOVE LEFT: Florida black bear footprint on Ben and Louann Williams' property
ABOVE RIGHT: Louann and Ben Williams stand on their Wetland Preserve property amid the wild goldenrod and recently reforested longleaf pines.

The Rural and Family Lands Protection Program (RFLPP) is a grant program, administered by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, which helps preserve our vital farming, forestry and ranching communities across the state. The program is targeted at family-owned working lands where landowners have done an outstanding job of stewarding their natural resources, especially where habitat and water quality are concerned.

Over the last couple of years the North Florida Land Trust has been working with two such families, the Moores and the Williamses, on their properties in Baker and Putnam Counties, respectively. NFLT guided them through

the conservation process and worked with them towards the drafting of their applications to the program. After both families went before the RFLPP committee, giving their testimonials as to why they want to preserve their lands, we are happy to announce both were ranked as "Tier 1" applications.

Being Tier 1 applications, the State of Florida is now able to acquire conservation easements on their property. Both properties are working forests, with the Williams family owning 3,705 acres in Putnam County, and the Moores owning 2,410 acres in Baker County. Though far apart, both properties share one feature in common - they're both part of the O2O corridor,

a planned wildlife corridor connecting Ocala National Forest to Osceola National Forest. The Moores' property, known as the South Prong Plantation, is significant as it possesses the headwater swamp for the South Prong of the St. Marys River, forever preserving that source of water for generations to come. The Williams' Wetland Preserve Property shares more than 7 miles of boundary with other preserved lands, such as the Rice Creek Conservation Area and Nine Mile Swamp Park, and also contains a section of the Florida Trail. We are proud to have assisted two conservation-minded families in preserving their pieces of North Florida.



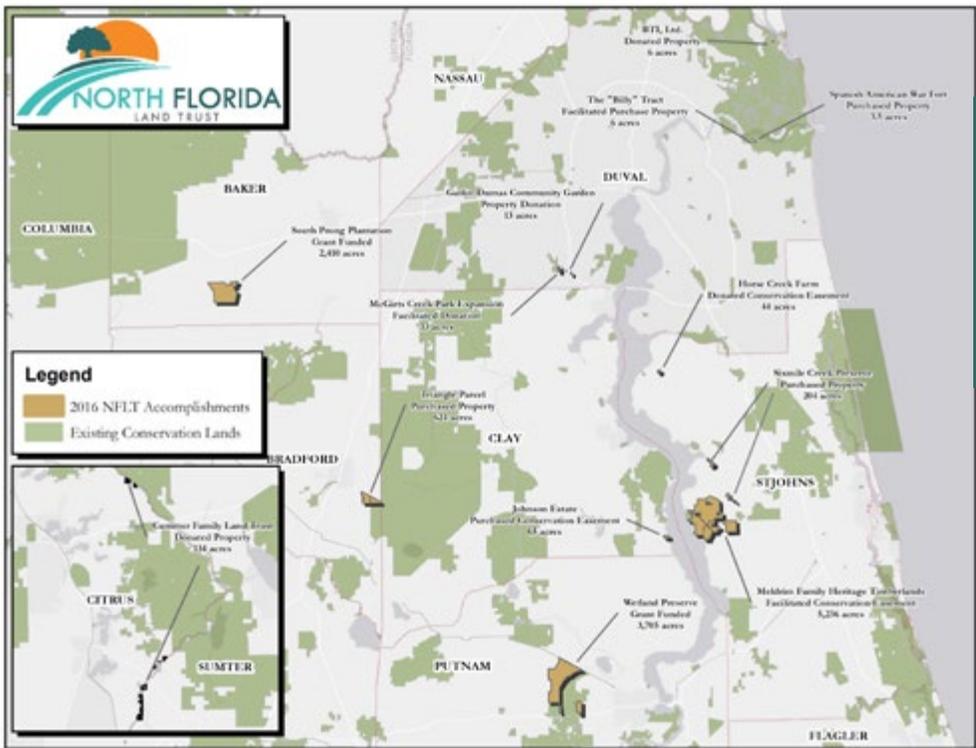
NFLT'S RIVER-FRIENDLY AND EDIBLE YARD GARDENING FOR CONSERVATION

The attendees to our Wine and Vines workday this past September hold up their sweet potato harvest behind a newly planted tree.

It may not look like your typical garden. It's messy and can appear unkempt, and, well, wild. But, as Garrett Llopiz of Ecodesign Solutions pointed out while giving an instructive tour of NFLT Award-Winning garden in front of our Jacksonville office: This method of gardening, which uses native plants

and permaculture techniques, is beneficial for pollinating insects, soil protection, food growth, and water conservation. NFLT has been caring for this small permaculture oasis at the office for over a year now. With the help of community experts and volunteers, we have hosted educational garden

socials and workdays encouraging neighbors to implement River-Friendly garden practices in their own yards. We've also harvested Meyer lemons, persimmons, tomatoes, peppers, basil, mint, sweet potatoes, squash, flowers, and more for volunteers, staff, and Board Members to enjoy.



PROJECTED PRESERVED PROPERTIES FOR 2016

These last few months before year's end are the busiest time for land trusts as we work to close on our projects by December 31st. North Florida Land Trust will preserve 12,403 acres by the end of 2016!

LANDS PROTECTED IN 2016

BY MARC HUDSON, LAND PROTECTION DIRECTOR

Writing this at the beginning of November, as Land Protection Director, I am proud to report above all else, this single accomplishment:

In 2016 alone, we have already accomplished more land protection than in the 16 years prior, since our founding.

Already this year, we have preserved or facilitated the preservation of 11,518 acres of natural and historic lands in 5 different projects. Looking at the remaining projects with closing dates in 2016, there is another 954 acres across 6 more projects. That makes for 12,472 acres, tripling our total amount of conserved land from where we started this year.

Our accomplishments in Land Protection are not just limited to conserved acreage however. We also unveiled our strategic conservation vision in our Preservation Portfolio, which maps out the land NFLT

intends to preserve going forward, and explains the benefits of doing so to our community. We are pursuing 112,000 acres across our region, with real ecosystem benefits being returned in excess of \$400 million per year. You can find out more at our website.

LANDS LARGE . . .

At NFLT we care about good conservation lands both big and small. On the large acreage side was the Meltrim Family Heritage Timberlands. A 5,236-acre working timber property in central St. Johns County, this land truly is a gem. Operated by the family for more than a century, it was one of the last turpentine operations in Northeast Florida. When we heard the land might be considered for a conservation easement under Florida Forever, we did the only thing we could do, which was go to Tallahassee and advocate for the project, and help with the field work

in getting the conservation easement towards a close. We look forward to working with the family in helping assure its preservation now that the conservation easement has come to a close.

AND SMALL

Smaller in size, but no less so in intent, we expect to close on a conservation easement on Horse Creek Farm before year end. This property, owned by Charles and Mary Farr, is a prime example of a working forest and horse farm property right next to Lake Beluthahatchee. At 44 acres, it's not our largest project this year, but context matters. Sitting as it does in Northern St. Johns County, it is at the epicentre for development in one of the top 10 fastest developing counties in the nation. Seeing this, the Farris decided the best thing they could do was try and protect their acres, ensuring that at least their farm will be there for years to come.



LAND AND WATER LEGACY AMENDMENT

AN UPDATE FROM CONSERVATION ADVOCATE, ANDREA CONOVER

PHOTO (LEFT) Camp Milton Historic Preserve in Duval County was funded through Florida Forever and the Florida Communities Trust, two programs kept alive through Amendment 1 funds. It was also the site of this year's Speak Up for Florida Festival to rally support for fully funding Florida Forever.

Now that the election is over, it's time for you to contact your state representative and senator to let them know that conserving natural, historic and agricultural lands in Northeast Florida is important to you. In 2014, voters overwhelmingly approved the "Land and Water Legacy" Amendment, which dedicates 33% of the existing document stamp taxes for land acquisition and management. North Florida Land Trust is meeting our region's legislators but we need individual voices, too.

North Florida Land Trust is also working with county and city commissioners to pass resolutions for the legislature to use the funds in the Land Acquisition Trust Fund for land acquisition and management, not salaries and other agency expenses. So far, Flagler, St. Johns and Putnam Counties are likely to move forward with the resolution. Please let your county commissioners or city council know that you support this resolution. Most northeast Florida counties' populations are growing and

local governments would appreciate state funds in acquiring parks and natural lands for residents and visitors. Andrea has spoken to citizens' groups throughout NE Florida, encouraging residents to get involved by contacting elected officials and writing letters to the editor. If your local group is interested in learning more, please contact NFLT Conservation Advocate, Andrea Conover to schedule a presentation.

Separately, Circuit Judge Charles Dodson announced recently that he will hear arguments on December 5 in the lawsuit filed by Florida Wildlife Federation and other conservation groups alleging the legislature misappropriated funds meant for acquiring conservation lands.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

To find out more, visit our website or contact Genevieve Fletcher at gletcher@northfloridalandtrust.org.

November 19, 2016
Salt Marsh Brewgrass Festival, 11:00 am - 6:00 pm, Big Talbot Island

December 10, 2016
Clean-up on Big Talbot Island 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

December 10, 2016
Hogans Creek Biodiversity Festival, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm, Klutho Park in Springfield, Jacksonville

January 20, 2017
NFLT's Legacy Luncheon and Report to the Community 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm, Location TBD

Speak Up for Florida Forever Trainings: Contact us to schedule a training and to learn more about the Florida Water and Land Conservation Initiative and how to better advocate for the issues YOU care about.



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR, BEN ANSBACHER!

North Florida Land Trust is proud to recognize Benjamin (Ben) Ansbacher as our 2016 Volunteer of the Year. Since beginning volunteering with NFLT over a year ago, Ben has gone above and beyond to help the Stewardship team with property monitoring

and scouting of potential conservation properties. He is also a member of our Team Terrapin volunteer program, helping to monitor diamondback terrapins during their nesting season on Big Talbot Island. Ben has always been willing to lend a hand in the field, as well as at Land Trust events. Whether knee deep in the swamp, or helping to survey hundreds of acres in sweltering heat, Ben has always kept an upbeat and positive attitude and is a great asset to our team. Thank you Ben!

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



AARON GLICK
LAND PROTECTION SPECIALIST

Aaron Glick joined the North Florida Land Trust in September of 2016 as a Land Protection Specialist. He is responsible for initiating, planning, and implementing conservation projects and land acquisition, and supports the Land Protection Director in providing outreach to the planning and development community.

Aaron previously worked for nine years as a historic zoning overlay planner for the City of Jacksonville, collaborating on various infill projects throughout the urban core. Aaron earned his Bachelor's degree in Urban Planning from the University of Cincinnati in Ohio. When not working, he enjoys exploring regional parks

and trails, travelling to other cities and the experiencing local culture and food, cycling, photography, and enjoying the unique environs of northeast Florida.

A resident of Springfield, Aaron has a dual passion for urban living and sustainability. Aaron is a co-Founder of the think-tank TransForm Jax, and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the SPAR Council and is an organizer of Jacksonville PorchFest. Aaron is excited to work for the North Florida Land Trust where he combines his passion for the outdoors with helping to reduce the human impact on land and resources.



EMILY DUNN
STEWARDSHIP COORDINATOR

Emily Dunn joined North Florida Land Trust in March of 2016 as Resource Specialist, a seasonal position on Big Talbot Island. There, she monitored the nesting diamondback terrapin population and developed Team Terrapin, a volunteer program to support conservation efforts on the island.

This November, the Land Trust is excited to welcome Emily into a full time position as Stewardship Coordinator. Her new roles and responsibilities will include her current duties, and will expand to include conservation easement and fee lands stewardship, volunteer program development and grant writing.

Emily received her Bachelor of Science degree in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Rochester, and her Master of Science degree in Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware. She worked in education and volunteer management throughout her academic career, as well as a variety of ecological research projects, and looks forward to combining those experiences with NFLT.

In her free time, Emily enjoys exploring the outdoors by hiking, birding, and nature watching and enjoys all that North Florida has to offer.



WORKING WITH FLORIDA COASTAL SCHOOL OF LAW EXTERNS A HIGHLIGHT OF THEIR WORK FOR NFLT

Over the last year we've been blessed with help from two outstanding externs from the Florida Coastal School of Law, **Cassilda Dhanaraj** and **Connor Lunt**. **Cassilda** and Connor have been working with us on everything from researching and drafting tax, water quality,

and aquifer protection policy proposals, helping us with due diligence and legal drafting for our conservation easements and much more. Both are leaving us to pursue careers in law, and we look forward to hearing about their exploits later on down the road.

FROM THE FIELD: A GREAT FIRST SEASON FOR TEAM TERRAPIN!



Team Terrapin poses for a group photo at their end-of-season celebration cookout on Big Talbot Island over the Summer.

As the diamondback terrapin nesting season comes to a close, we would like to share our gratitude for our incredible Team Terrapin volunteers! The team monitored daily for more than six months in 2016, working through the summer heat and storms to learn as much as possible about these special turtles. The work of Team Terrapin will help to promote the protection and conservation of diamondback

terrappins in Florida, as they face habitat loss, predation, and threats from the pet trade. Through all of those days out on the sand together, we strengthened as a team, and look forward to growing even more next year! If you are interested in joining Team Terrapin, contact Emily Dunn (edunn@northfloridalandtrust.org) for more information.

JOIN US! HOW YOU CAN HELP

DONATE!

Indeed, land is expensive. To compete with the cost of development, we need citizens who care about the quality of life in our region to preserve it with a donation. Every dollar counts. Will you join us? To donate before the end of the year, please fill out and return the envelope insert before December 31st. You may also donate online through our website, or contact Jim McCarthy at jmccarthy@northfloridalandtrust.org, (904) 479-1962. Thank you for your support of our work to protect the natural, historic and rural integrity of North Florida.

VOLUNTEER

From clean-ups to events to our Team Terrapin and Land Steward Programs, we always have fun volunteering. We have met the most wonderful people volunteering together for conservation in North Florida. Email Genevieve at gletcher@northfloridalandtrust.org to get involved!

ADVOCATE

After the Land and Water Legacy Amendment (Amendment 1) passed, the legislature failed to uphold its promise to the citizens of Florida in fully funding land conservation. We need you to let them know conservation is important to you. Contact our Conservation Advocate to learn more at aconover@northfloridalandtrust.org.

VISIT OUR REGISTRY

We have created a 'wish list' of items we could use to better accomplish our goals. If you'd like to peruse our current needs and pitch in to purchase an item, visit the link below.

<https://www.myregistry.com/public/northfloridalandtrust>

SHOP AMAZON SMILE THIS HOLIDAY

While you shop this holiday, consider using AmazonSmile to benefit North Florida Land Trust. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to North Florida Land Trust whenever you shop on AmazonSmile at this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/59-3609167>.

SUPPORT REBUILDING OUR FIELD STATION AFTER STORM

Those of you who have been out to North Florida Land Trust's Big Talbot Island Biological Field Station know the 300-foot dock on site that provided critical water access for researchers, educators and visitors, and a perch for many birds. During Hurricane Matthew this Fall, the dock was twisted and destroyed in the storm.

In addition to the research work, the dock was the kayak launch during annual fundraisers, like the upcoming Salt Marsh Brewgrass Festival on Nov. 19. We hope to rebuild this asset to our Field Station, if we can raise the funds. Please donate to assist with the rebuilding of our dock!

BEFORE



AFTER



SIGN UP

FOR OUR MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER TO GET MORE NEWS AND UPDATES FROM US!

You can sign up on our website under the **CONNECT** tab:
<http://www.northfloridalandtrust.org/>