

**Everglades National Park
Acquisition of FPL Land in EEEA EIS
Public Scoping Meeting**

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Everglades National Park
Florida



WELCOME!

Public Scoping Meeting

**Acquisition of FPL
Lands in the
East Everglades
Expansion Area
Environmental Impact
Statement**

June 22, 2011





Agenda and Meeting Objectives

Tonight's Agenda

- ❖ Open House
- ❖ Presentation
- ❖ Questions and Answers
- ❖ Verbal Statement
- ❖ Open House

The objective of this meeting is to get your input on:

- ❖ Purpose, Need, and Objectives of the project
- ❖ The range of proposed alternatives
- ❖ Issues the EIS will analyze

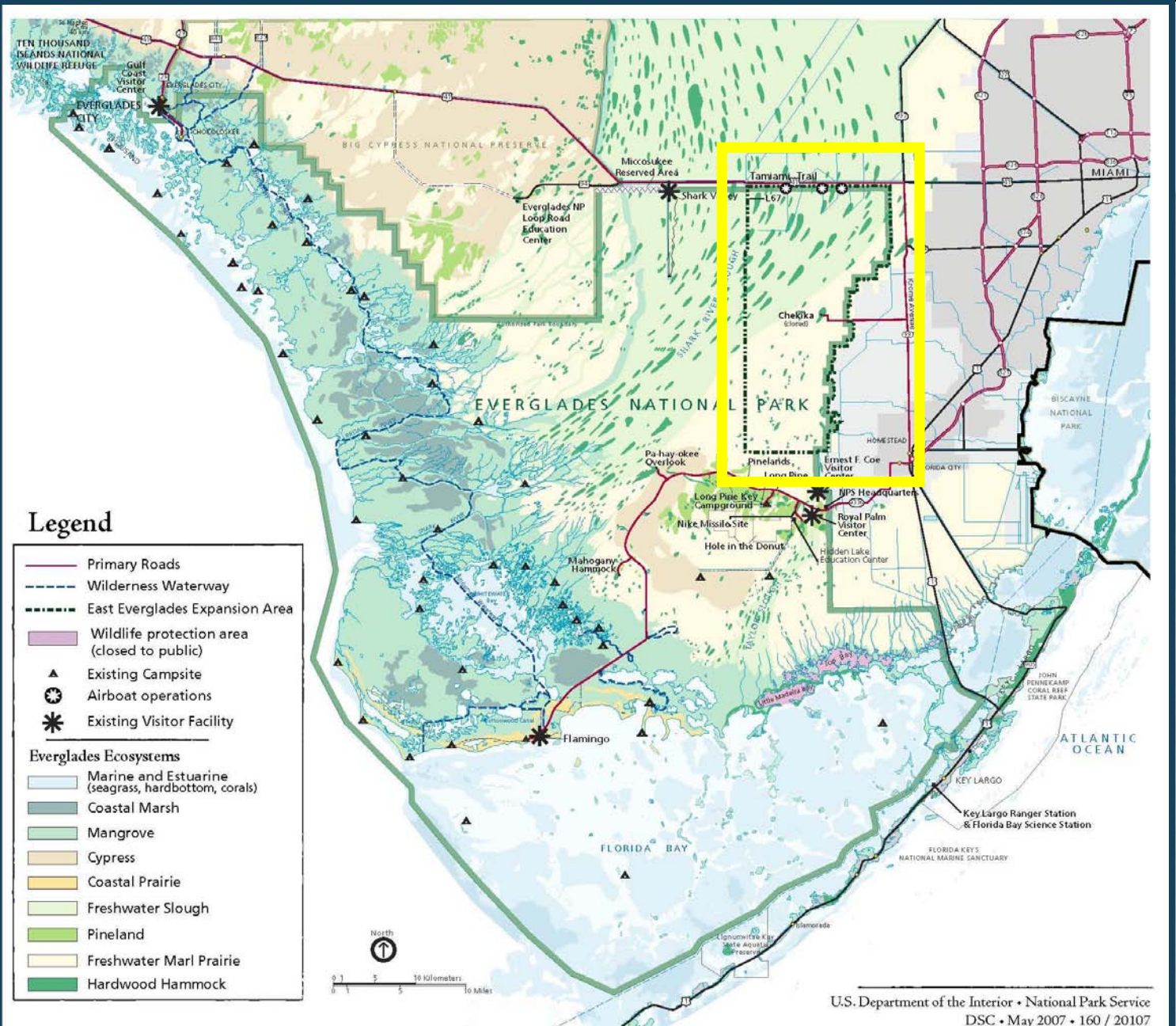
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Park Map



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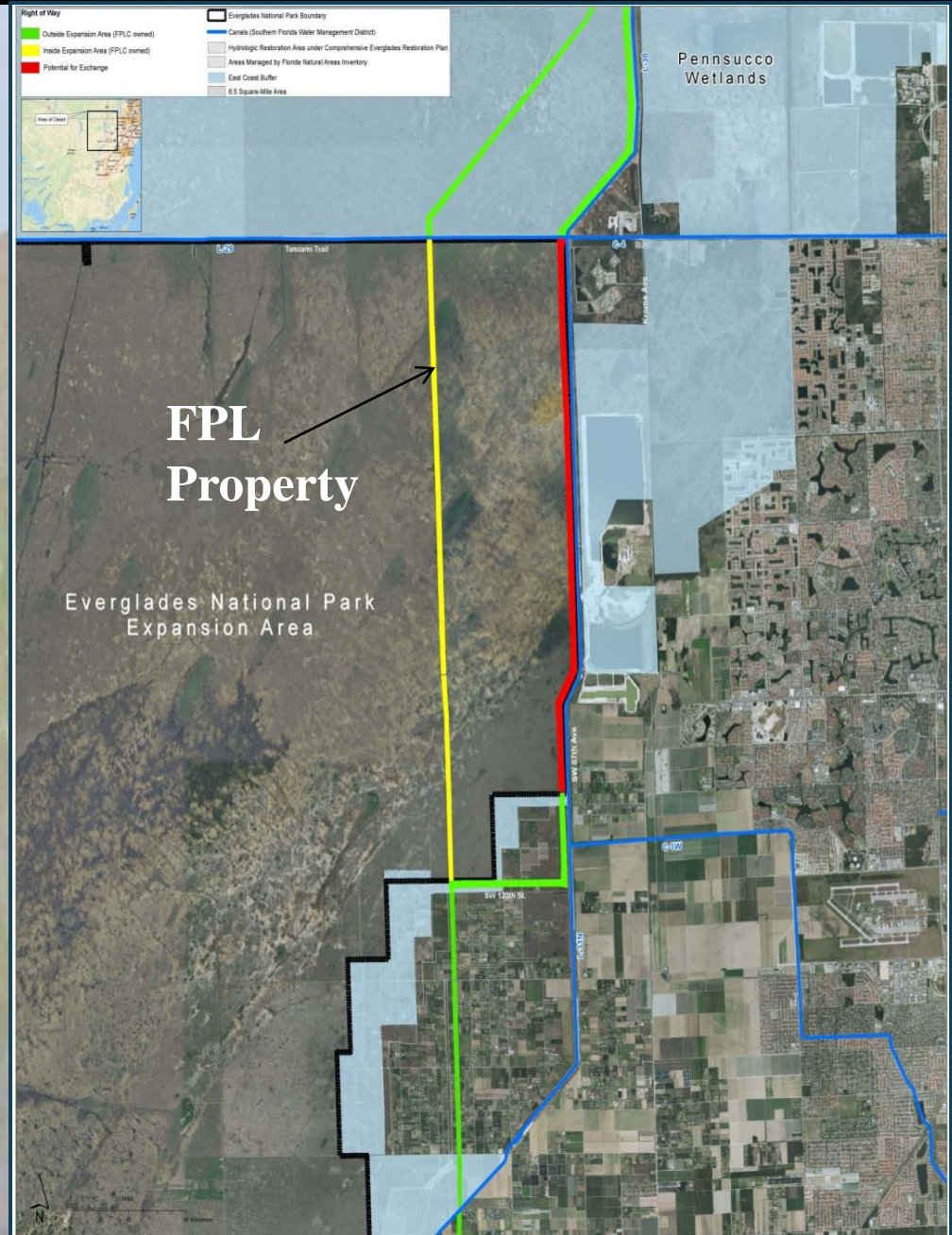
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Project Background

❖ Since the 1960's & 1970's, FPL has owned about 320 acres of land, mostly in fee title, which are now located within Everglades National Park

❖ Property is a strip of land 330 to 370 feet wide, approximately 7.5 miles in length



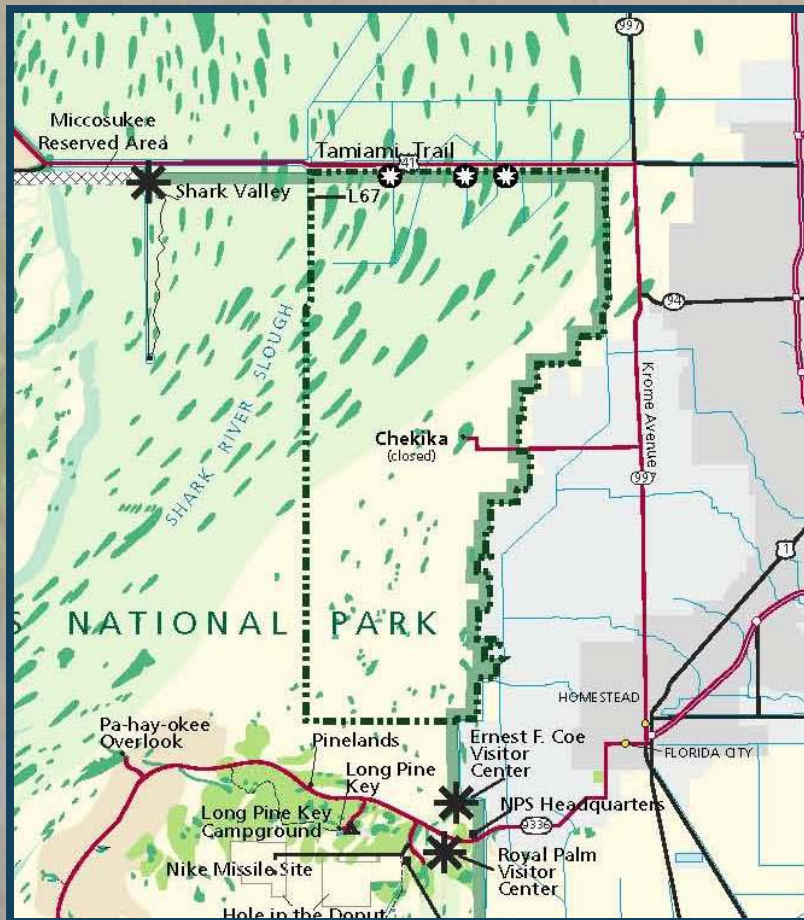
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Everglades National Park Protection and Expansion Act (1989)



In order to, “increase the level of protection...and to enhance the ecological values, natural hydrologic conditions and public enjoyment...”

- ❖ Expanded park boundary by about 109,600 acres
- ❖ Authorized the Secretary to acquire lands and interests in lands within the expanded Park boundaries



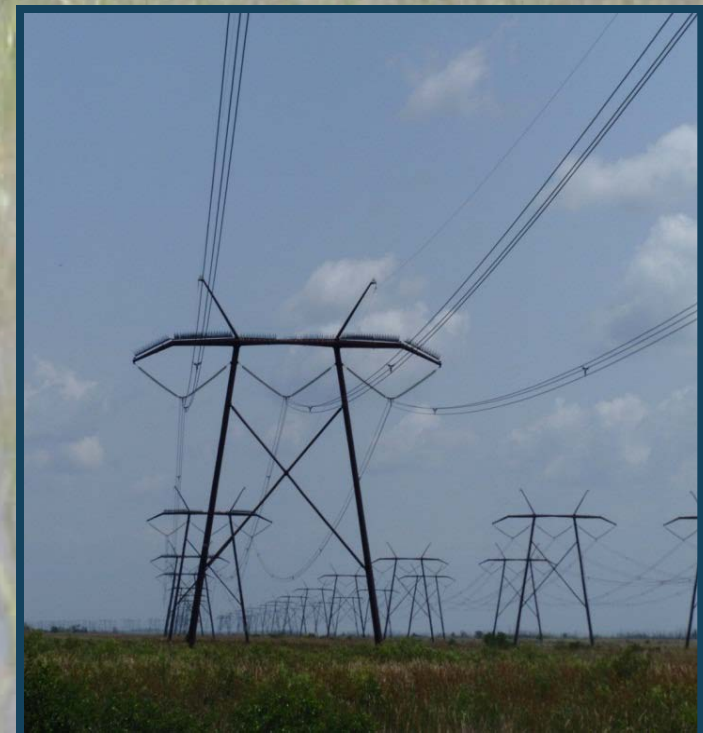
East Everglades Land Protection Plan and EA (1991)

- ❖ Identified land protection strategies and priorities to assure the restoration and enhancement of the Everglades ecosystem and restore natural hydrologic conditions in the addition and existing park.
- ❖ Determined that acquisition of all lands within the addition is essential for ecosystem restoration
- ❖ Acquisition options include donation, purchase, exchange, and condemnation



NPS Acquisition of FPL Lands

- ❖ In 1996, NPS began negotiations with FPL for properties in the East Everglades addition
- ❖ To date, NPS and FPL have been unable to reach an agreement on the direct acquisition of FPL's property by the United States
- ❖ FPL needs this property, or alternate replacement property, for placement of high voltage transmission lines



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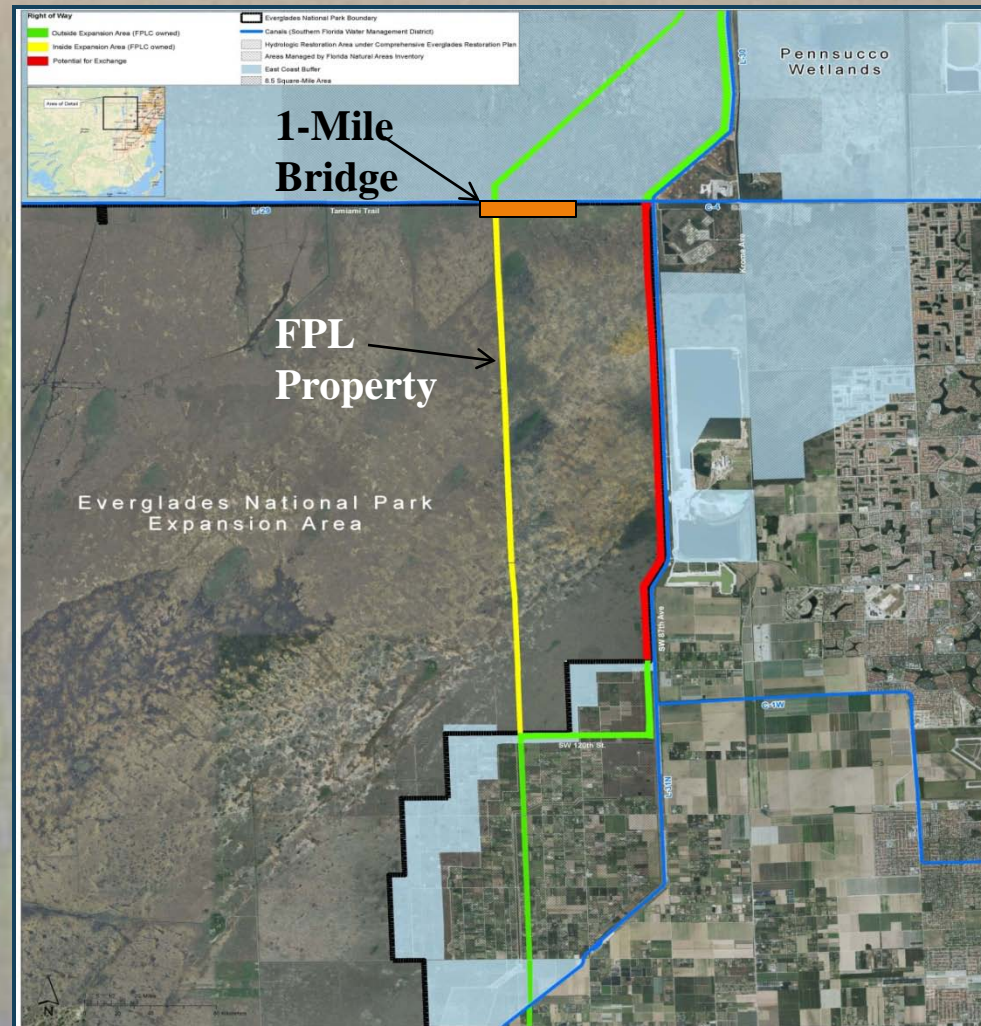
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NPS Acquisition of FPL Lands

The Expansion Act also authorized the Modified Water Deliveries Project (Mod Waters) with Congressional direction to implement:

- ❖ Limited Reevaluation Report for Tamiami Trail (2008)
- ❖ 1-mile bridge & road raising
- ❖ 4 easements obtained from FPL
- ❖ Construction underway
- ❖ Expected completion of the Tamiami Trail road modifications and Combined Operations Plan in 2013





NPS Acquisition of FPL Lands

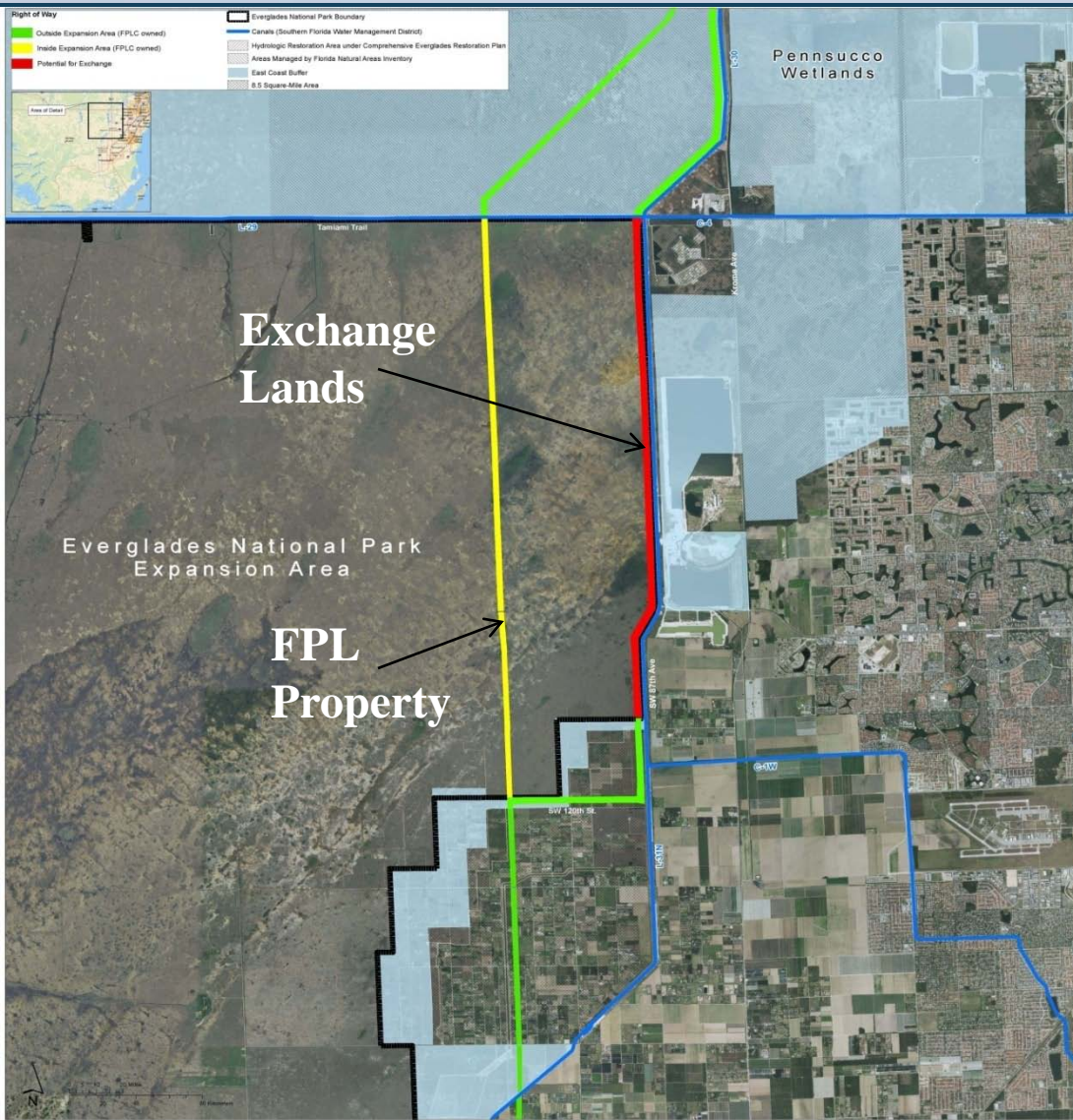
- ❖ Therefore, there is the need for a timely resolution of FPL lands issue to restore water flows to Everglades National Park



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Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009

- ❖ Public Law 111-11 authorized the Secretary of the Interior, under terms and conditions acceptable to the Secretary, to exchange lands within and along the eastern boundary of Everglades National Park, together with a contiguous perpetual easement for vegetation management, for the FPL property.



Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009

The authorized exchange is subject to the following:

- ❖ “if the Company offers to convey to the Secretary...and the offer is acceptable to the Secretary...”
- ❖ The land exchange “shall be subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary may require.”
- ❖ Appraisals will be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions (UASFLA) and the Uniform Standards for Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP)
- ❖ If the values of the parcels to be exchanged are unequal, the values may be equalized by donation, payment using donated or appropriated funds, or conveyance of additional parcels of land



Purpose and Need

The proposed federal action that will be evaluated in this EIS is the NPS acquisition of existing FPL lands within the park.

- ❖ The **purpose** of the proposed action is to facilitate hydrologic and ecological restoration of the Park and the Everglades Ecosystem
- ❖ This action is **needed** to eliminate uncertainty regarding future use of lands within the authorized boundary of Everglades National Park

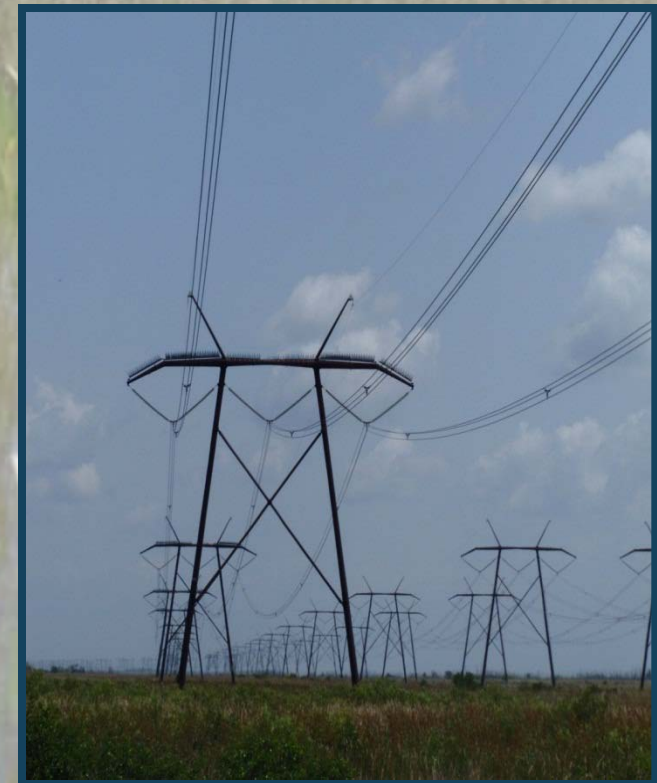


Preliminary Alternatives

The EIS will evaluate the possible environmental effects of the potential exchange of lands authorized in the Omnibus Land Management Act of 2009 and other reasonable alternatives.

❖ Construction of transmission lines within FPL lands would be considered a reasonably foreseeable action that must be analyzed in the EIS as part of the cumulative impact scenario (West Preferred Corridor/West Secondary Corridor).

❖ The potential impacts of transmission lines on a variety of resources, identified in a 2010 EA process, led to the decision to convert from an EA to an EIS.



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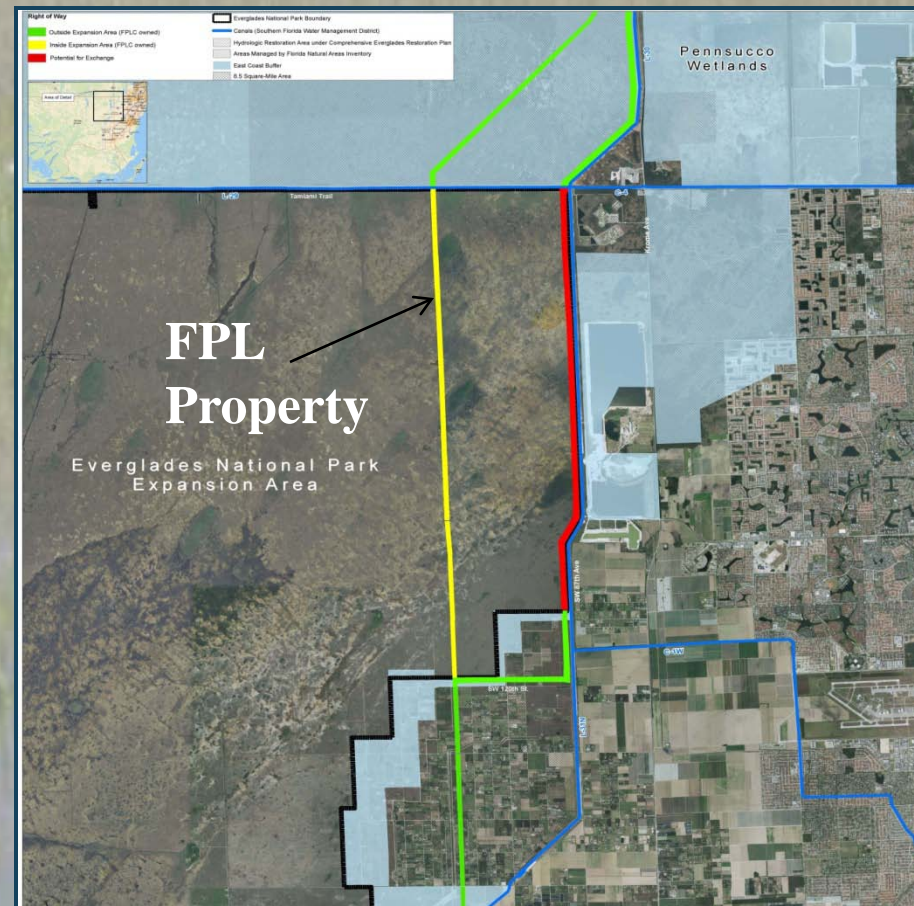


Alternative 1: No Action Alternative

No land acquisition or exchange would occur; evaluation of the effects assuming no change in ownership of the FPL property.

This alternative could result in two possible scenarios:

- ❖ FPL is able to complete the permitting process and construct transmission lines
- ❖ FPL is unable or unwilling to complete the permitting process, and there is no construction of transmission lines



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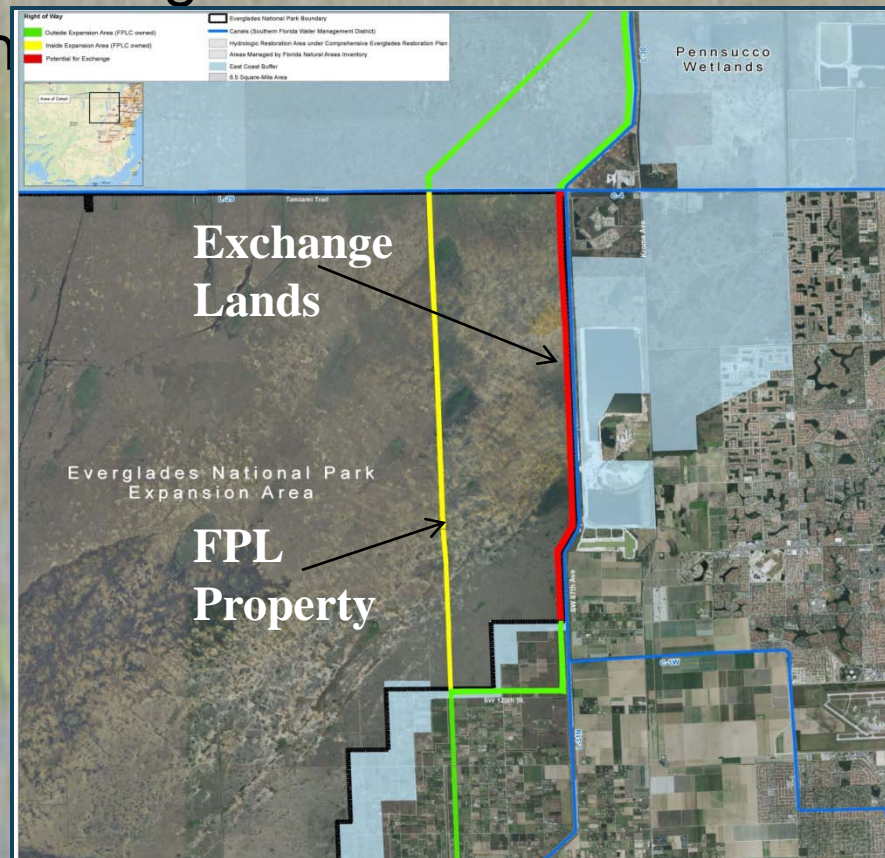


Alternative 2: Land Exchange with Conditional Requirements

NPS would exchange, with terms & conditions, park property along its eastern boundary for FPL lands in the park & grant a perpetual easement to FPL on lands contiguous to the exchange lands for exotic vegetation management.

This alternative could result in two possible scenarios:

- ❖ FPL is able to complete the permitting process and construct transmission lines
- ❖ FPL is unable or unwilling to complete the permitting process, and there is no construction of transmission lines.



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Alternative 3: Acquisition

NPS would acquire the FPL property by direct purchase or condemnation. Lands would remain in a natural/undeveloped condition.





Issues

❖ The EIS will analyze the potential impacts each alternative could have on the environment. Topics could include:

- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Hydrology
- Visitor Use and Experience
- Wildlife and Wildlife habitat
- Unique Ecosystems
- Wetlands
- Visual Resources
- Wilderness
- Surrounding Land Use
- Park Operations and Management



Have we missed any issues?



EIS Schedule

Public Scoping (we are here) *Comments due by July 10

**Alternatives Development and Impact Analysis
Prepare Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Summer 2011 – Early 2012**

**Public Review and Comment on Draft EIS
Public Meeting**

Early 2012 (60-day Public Review of Draft EIS)

**Final EIS/Record of Decision
Autumn 2012**



Providing Comments



When providing your comments, please let us know:

- ❖ Have we properly defined the purpose, need, and objectives of the project?
- ❖ Have we considered all feasible alternatives?
- ❖ Are there any other issues that should be evaluated?



There are many ways you can comment.

Provide verbal or written comments tonight

- ❖ At the discussion stations
- ❖ On the comment forms (on tables in back of room)
- ❖ To court reporter
- ❖ Make a verbal statement

Submit written comments

- ❖ On the project web site: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ever>
(address on handout and newsletter)
- ❖ By mail (address on handout and newsletter)

Comment period closes July 10, 2011

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Thank you for your time and your involvement!

Questions?

