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LA-3 Allocate new acquisitions to a management area at least annually. Until that is completed, manage the acquisition in a custodial fashion—providing basic public safety, protection, and status quo maintenance of the land, resources, and infrastructure. Newly acquired lands outside the existing Proclamation Boundary, and purchased under authority of the National Trails System Act will be managed in accordance with Management Area 4.6 Florida National Scenic Trail.

Management Area 4.6

Florida National Scenic Trail Outside Proclaimed Boundary

VQO = 50% Preservation & 50% Retention

ROS = 100% Semi-primitive, Non-motorized

All acres unsuitable for timber production

4.6Goal

To plan, construct and maintain the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) on newly acquired lands outside the National Forests in Florida proclaimed boundary in accordance with the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1241), the *Florida National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan*, and the *National Scenic Trail Study Environmental Assessment for the Florida Trail*.

4.6Desired Future Condition

The FNST provides trail users with a predominantly undisturbed environment that gives a strong feeling of remoteness, solitude and closeness with nature. Trail users have opportunities to practice wildland skills and feel self-reliant. The FNST also provides opportunities for trail users to experience the diverse cultural heritage, history and unique traditions of Florida.

There are a wide variety of vegetative communities present along the Florida Trail corridor. Natural communities found along the trail include most subcategories of xeric uplands, coastal uplands, mesic uplands, rocklands, mesic flatlands, wet flatlands, seepage wetlands, floodplain wetlands, basin wetlands, lacustrine and riverine habitats. The landscapes are predominantly natural, with little remaining evidence of human disturbance. Historic and archaeological evidence of human disturbance is protected to the extent practicable and serves to connect the trail user to Florida's history, folk life and culture. Vegetation patterns are shaped by natural processes such as floods, fires (including prescribed fire), storms, insects, and diseases. Timber harvest is limited to habitat restoration, safety (with emphasis on Wildland Urban Interface needs), or trail administration needs. Forested areas are generally in mature age classes. Snags and downed wood are common. The quality of soil, water, and air is high.

The Florida Trail is managed as a foot travel "hiking" only trail, and provides the primary access in the area. Corridor lands with easements or outstanding rights will be managed consistent with deed transfer language. Visitors are usually isolated from the sights and sounds of human activity. Facilities such as primitive (Development Level 1 or 2) camping areas, trail bridges and boardwalks may be encountered. A few interpretive signs and trailheads as appropriate may occur.

A few relict roads may exist in the area, but new road construction is prohibited except for management needs compatible with FNST objectives. Road use is limited to administrative or emergency purposes. Relict roads have native surfacing and are level with the surrounding ground. In low areas, roads may have ditches or be above the surrounding ground. A few low-drainage points (bay crossing, streams, etc.) may have primitive crossings designed for minimal resource impact.

4.6 Standards and Guidelines

Access

4.6-1 Restrict motorized vehicle use to administrative purposes as described in the FNST Comprehensive Plan and Certification Agreement.

4.6-2 Restrict access along the Florida National Scenic Trail to foot travel only.

Fire

4.6-3 Use minimal impact suppression techniques on all wildfires, when possible.

Infrastructure

4.6-4 Road construction is prohibited except for management needs of the FNST or other purposes as described in the FNST Comprehensive Plan.

4.6.5 Existing roads that are needed for management of the area should be maintained at traffic service level D where jurisdiction allows. Where roads are not needed, they should be obliterated and rehabilitated.

Range

4.6-6 Prohibit range allotments except in cases where such allotments contribute positively to the hiking experience or meet other resource management objectives.

Recreation

4.6-7 Allow for other nonmotorized trail development and uses in the area only if the primitive experience on the FNST is not adversely impacted.

4.6.8 Plan, construct and maintain the FNST in accordance with the Certification Agreement between the National Forests in Florida and the Florida Trail Association.

4.6.9 Prohibit developed recreational facilities except for those needed for trail management and use such as primitive camping sites, appropriately designed trailheads, boardwalks, bridges and informational kiosks.

4.6.10 Allow camping areas at development level 1 or 2.

4.6.11 Hunting is prohibited except for exotic species control and other cases where necessary to maintain healthy native ecosystems and habitats.

Vegetation

4.6-12 Prohibit salvaging of dead trees except where needed for public safety.

4.6-13 This area is unsuitable for timber production. Trees may be harvested for other resource objectives such as FNST trail construction, habitat restoration or

public safety.

4.6-14 Utilize only locally native species for restoration and other land management or visual quality enhancement projects.

Wildlife and Fish

4.6.15 Prohibit cultivated wildlife openings and artificial structures except for Federally listed or Proposed species.

4.6.16 Conduct activities designed to preserve and/or restore the integrity of native fish and wildlife populations and enhance the trail users experience.