

State Purchases Conservation Lands in Washington County

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The Florida Department of Environmental Protection closed on the acquisition of 348 acres of conservation lands in Washington County within Florida's First Magnitude Springs Florida Forever project.

The project, which cost \$781,545, was ranked No. 1 in the Florida Forever Partnerships and Regional Incentives project category, and contains a third Holmes Creek is primarily a spring-fed creek containing a total of 51 springs within a 25-mile radius. The acquisition will ensure greater spring protection, while maintaining the current public access for fishing, hunting, canoeing, kayaking, boating and hiking. The Choctawhatchee River Water Management Area and Glover Conservation Easement are adjacent publicly-owned properties.

"Acquiring this land will help to protect the natural resources and water quality of Holmes Creek and the more than 50 springs that feed it," said DEP Secretary Jon Steverson.

"The District is proud to be a partner with the department and FWC toward the shared goal of protecting this important resource for Florida and its visitors," said Brett Cyphers, the executive director of the Northwest Florida Water Management District.

The Northwest Florida Water Management District will manage the property as part of the Choctawhatchee River Water Management Area in cooperation with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.