



BABCOCK RANCH







PUNTA GORDA

Punta Gorda  
Airport

 PRESERVE

 TOWN

CAPE CORAL

FORT MYERS

BONITA SPRINGS

GULF  
OF  
MEXICO

Southwest Florida  
International Airport

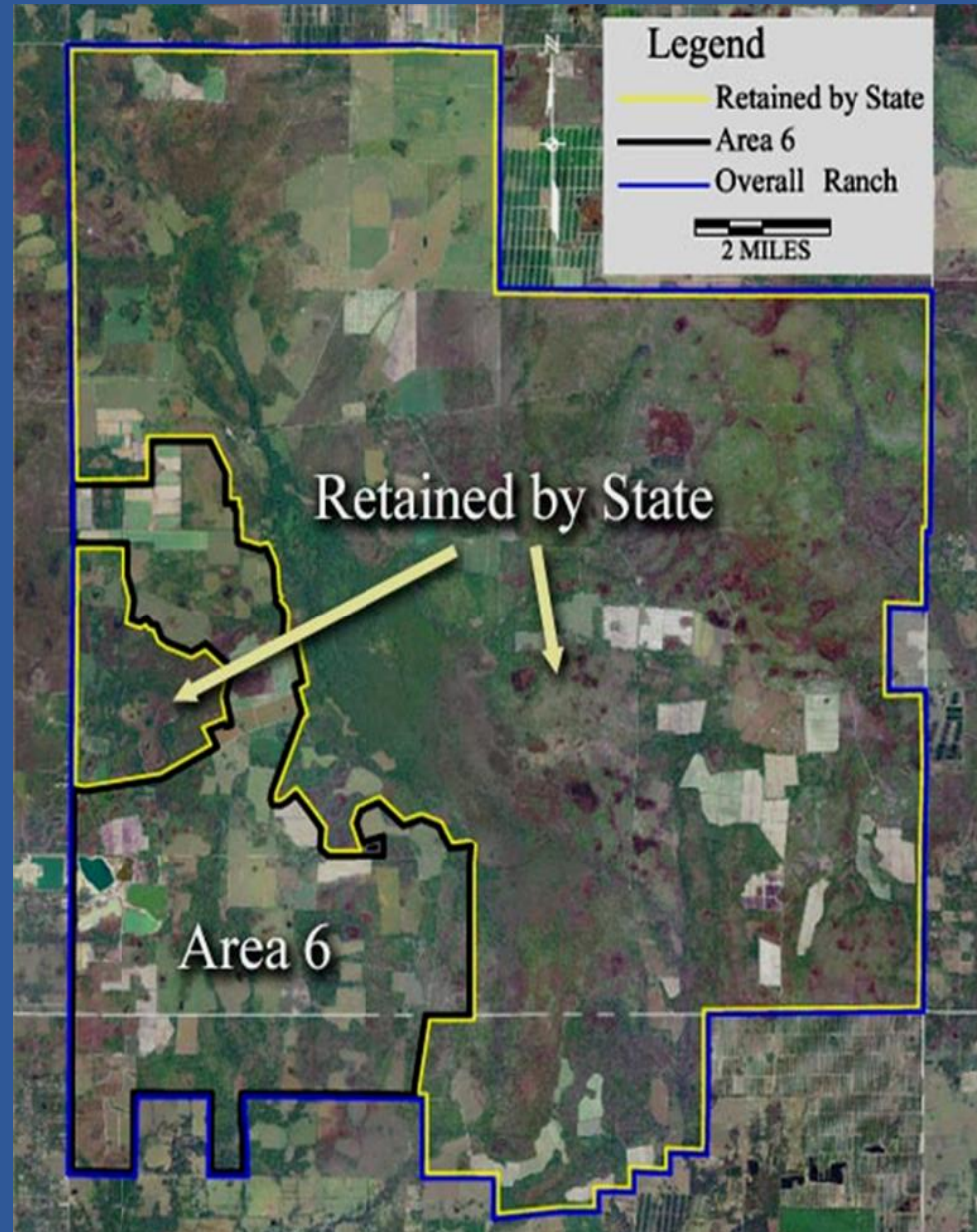
SOUTHWEST  
FLORIDA

NAPLES

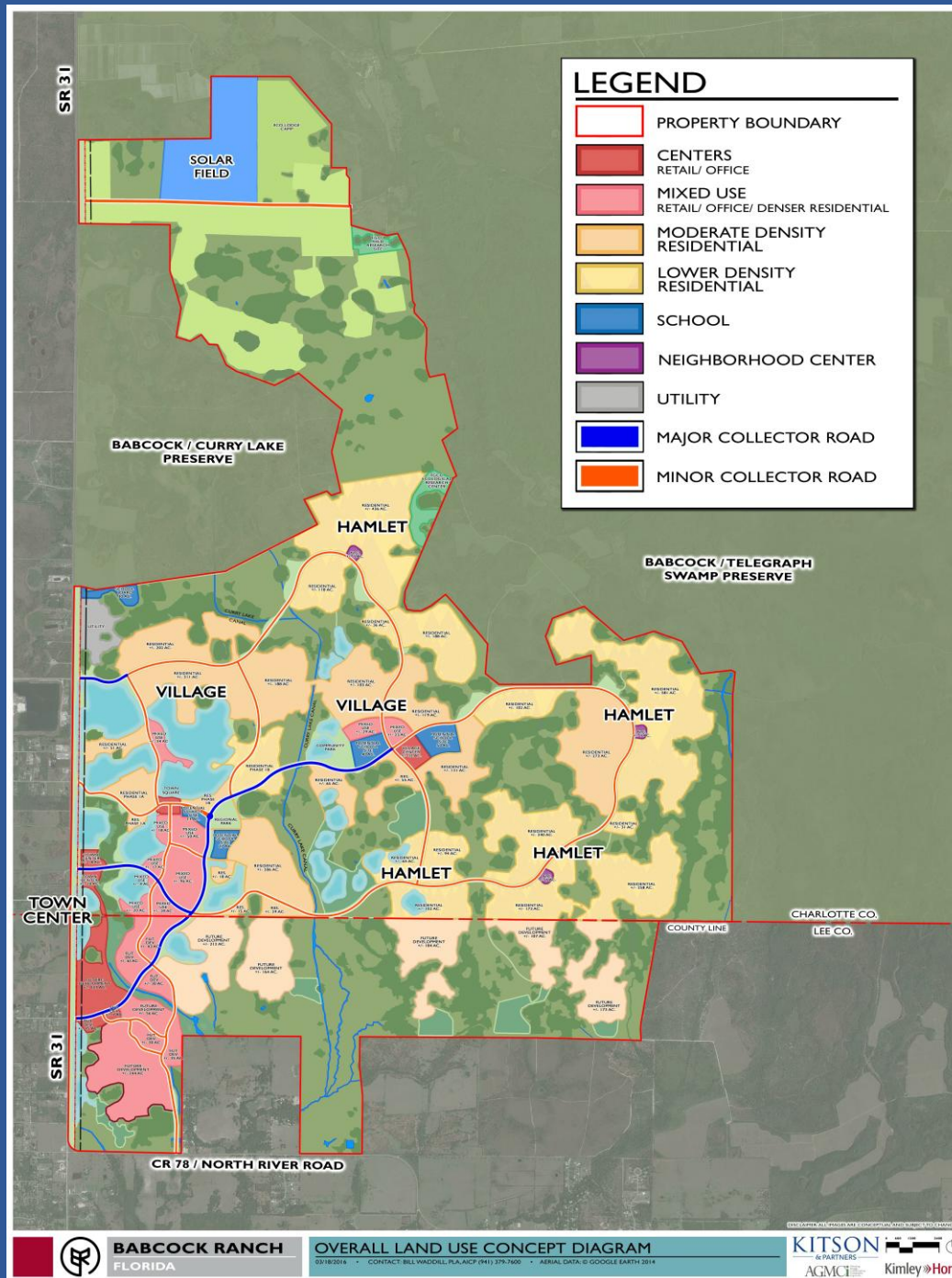


# HISTORIC FOUR-PARTY AGREEMENT

## LARGEST LAND PURCHASE IN FLORIDA'S HISTORY



















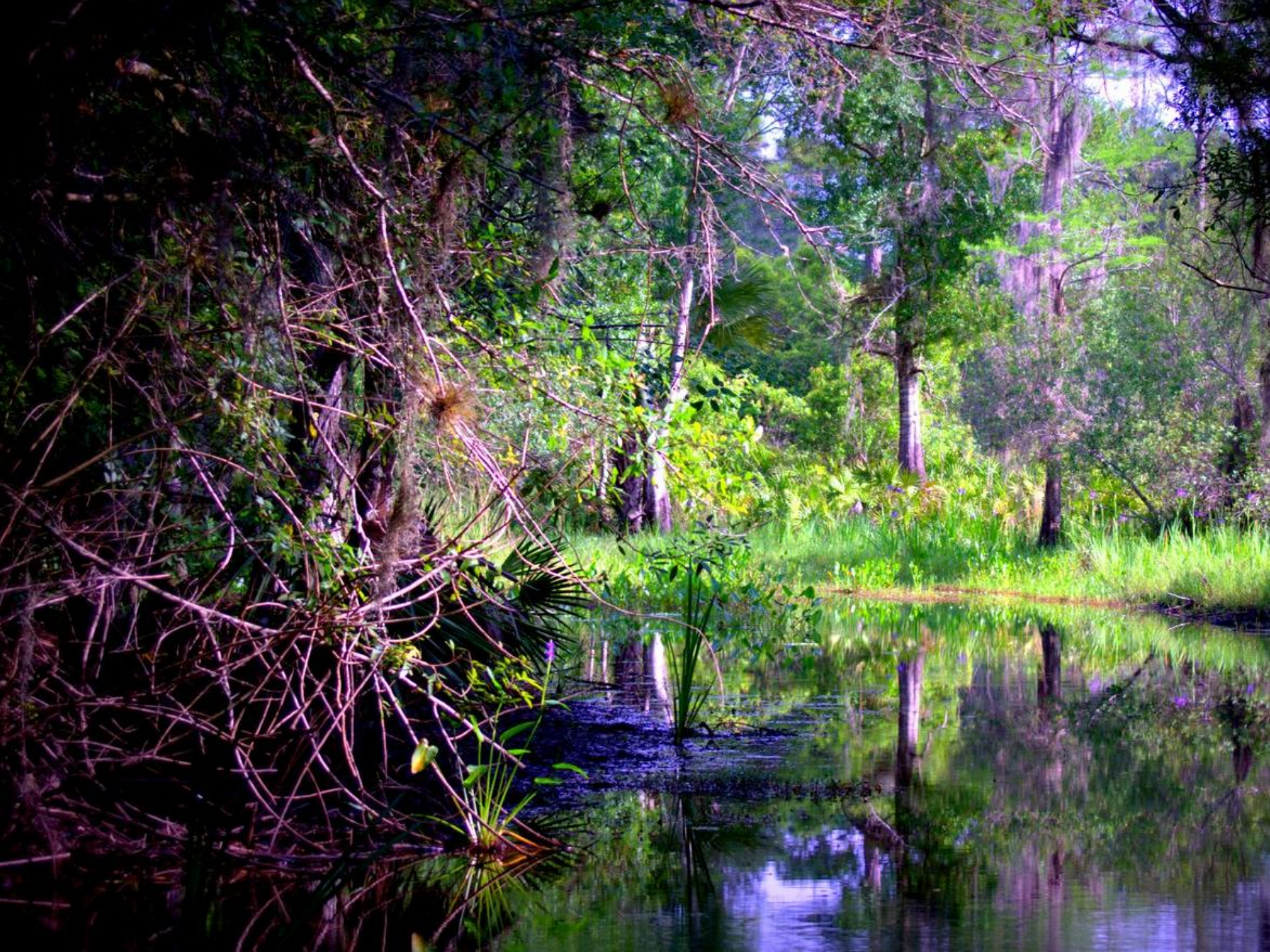
















### Autopsy: Illness didn't kill boy at boot camp

File: 110600017, page 115



### Credit scoring changes



See [Bibliography](#)

### Minnesota Vikings deal Culpepper to Dolphins

See SUBJECTS, INDEXES



# Charlotte Sun



WEDNESDAY MARCH 15, 2006

VOL. 114 NO. 74

#### ADDITION OF THE NAME

America's Best Community Daily

http://www.elsevier.com/locate/jmb

104-01807

Today in  
**Charlotte**

## TAX EXTENSION

San Mateo County decides whether to approve a property tax extension of 1 mill per year through 2010 for school district operating expenses. The referendum would raise between \$215 million and \$250 million, officials say.

Page 4 of 100, Page 6



## Kitson unveils Babcock plan

Developer's blueprint shows 'many miles' of hiking trails

By ARNOLD BARTON  
STAFF WRITER

Children would be able to walk, ride their bikes and drive electric scooters on their own through both the fenced and unfenced areas to get to school.

Schwabauer draining from parking lots would first seep through manhole to filter out pollutants before flowing into creek.

And buildings would be  
factory checked into offices to

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There are some of the elements revealed in a master plan for the development of a city on Silver Creek Ranch. Kline & Johnson's plan was unveiled before the Charlotte County Commission Tuesday.

It represents a signal that people around the country will use the shift with its leader.

Page 22 SUPPLEMENT pages 4

## More inside

After Southwest Florida  
Highway Planning  
Committee gave a  
preliminary review  
with Robert E. Sawyer, head  
of county's economic  
development, who  
noted that the  
project would  
be a "total  
package" to  
attract  
business to  
the area.

—See **WISCONSIN**, page 1

## Funding for state land buy clears first legislative hurdle

By GARRY WILLIAMS  
Illustrations

TALLAHASSEE — With no dissent and a warm endorsement from one of the state's leading conservation organizations, a bill providing funding for the midsize portion of the Network Ranch purchase settled calmly through its initial hearing in the Senate on Tuesday.

If a Section 106 CH 1206 would affect full military

from the state's general revenues derived from the sale of documentary stamps on real estate transactions and funnel it into the Florida Forest and Acquisition Trust Fund for the purchase of the "Wabreck-Chester & Birch."

In an extremely approving tone, the magazine—known as a nonofficial substitute—the members of the Senate Environmental

Stacy PLUMMER, owner



# LOCAL & STATE

## TRANSIT AUTHORITY MAY REQUIRE HIGHER SALES TAX

■ Proposed organization would provide driving alternatives such as light rail **B4**

**B**  
SECTION

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2005 | THE NEWS-PRESS | news-press.com

# Charlotte backs Babcock plan

## State to review land-use changes

BY JAMIE PAGE  
jpage@news-press.com

Despite objections from some residents and staff members, Charlotte County leaders took another step Wednesday toward paving the way for a city on Babcock Ranch.

County commissioners voted 4-1 to have the state review Babcock-related amendments to the county's comprehensive

land-use plan.

Most of the people who showed up were concerned about traffic problems and urban sprawl, and asked commissioners to deny developer Syd Kitson's request to send the amendments to the Florida Department of Community Affairs.

Others came to urge officials to move forward on the project and jump on the opportunity before them.

Without approval, there was the risk of the land deal falling apart. Still, the action doesn't commit Charlotte to anything

but only authorizes sending the comprehensive plan amendments to the state department of community affairs for review, which is the next anticipated step in the process.

In October, Kitson of West Palm Beach, who has a contract to buy all 91,362 acres of Babcock Ranch, submitted amendments to Charlotte's comprehensive plan outlining what he hopes to amend to accommodate building a city for 50,000 from scratch.

"Charlotte's Community Development Department found 36 issues with Kitson's

application, and recommended against sending the amendments to the state. Those issues include incomplete information on the application and development conditions that weren't acceptable.

Commissioner Adam Cummings voted against the move, saying of the proposed development, "we've heard these promises before ... and look how that turned out. We hope we can learn from history."

Most commissioners said they still had concerns about the application and would continue to work with Kitson until it is to

their satisfaction, but they wanted to get it to the state to keep the process on track.

Meanwhile, a group of county officials and staff will attempt to work out the kinks with the 36 objectionable items with Kitson and his attorney.

Even with the 36 issues outstanding, Charlotte's Planning and Zoning Board last week recommended sending the changes to the state. But Community Development was against it for several reasons.

For example, Charlotte County planners wanted Kitson to show that the community won't

## news-press.com

■ From our archives: Video, photos and past coverage from Babcock Ranch

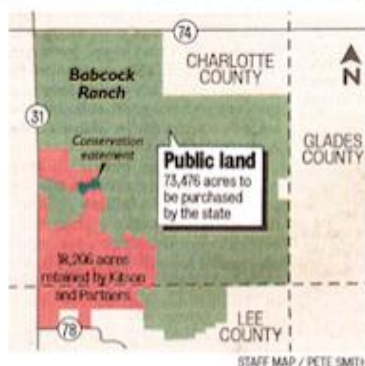
create urban sprawl. Community Development Director Mike Konefal said Kitson hasn't shown that yet.

Allie Boyd, a member of Babcock Preservation Partnership, which has made it their mission to fight for preserving as much of the land as possible, said she was against the move partly

■ See **BABCOCK B2**

# CABINET OKS BABCOCK DEAL

State will buy 73,000 acres for \$350 million; developer's next step is approval of adjacent city



By LLOYD DUNKELBERGER  
CAPITAL BUREAU

TALLAHASSEE — Florida officials approved the largest environmental land purchase in state history on Tuesday, agreeing to pay \$350 million to buy more than 73,000 acres of the Babcock Ranch, home to the Florida panther and other endangered species.

While endorsing the purchase, Gov. Jeb Bush and Cabinet members said they hope the state Legislature agrees to use cash to close the deal, saving the state millions of dollars in interest and keeping enough money in the state's Florida Forever program to buy other environmental land projects around the state.

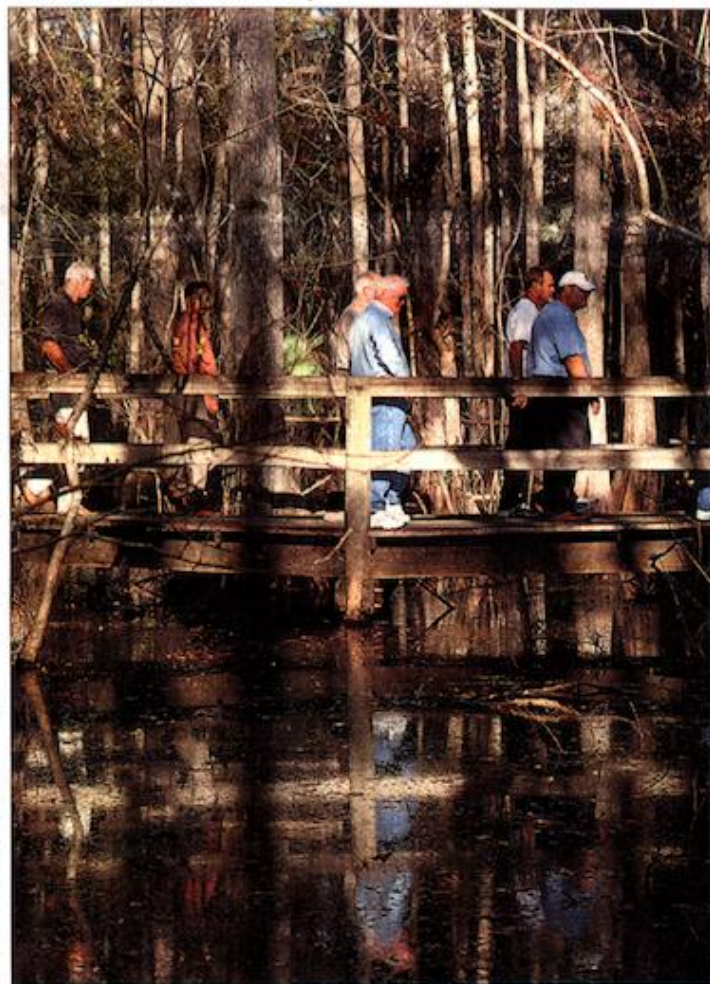
"This is historic," said Attorney General Charlie Crist. "Teddy Roosevelt would certainly be proud of what Florida is doing to preserve this land for future generations. It's the right thing to do."

A majority of environmental groups praised the purchase.

"We're going to protect a piece of Old Florida that's rapidly vanishing," said Preston Robertson of the Florida Wildlife Federation.

The purchase of the land in Charlotte and Lee counties is considered environmentally critical because it will simultaneously protect endangered animals, preserve the Telegraph Swamp and provide a vital link in a natural land corridor stretching from Lake Okeechobee to Charlotte Harbor.

In addition, it will save some of Florida's agrarian



STAFF PHOTO / ARMANDO SOLARES / armando.solares@heraldtribune.com



# It's official: Florida owns most of Babcock



Syd Kitson will develop nearly 15,000 acres of the property, creating a new city in Charlotte and Lee counties.

"I can't begin to describe how great this feels."

**EVA ARMSTRONG,**  
director of Division  
of State Lands for  
the FDEP

## The road to protection for 74,000 acres of rare ranch property not an easy one

By JOE FOLLUCK  
H-T CAPITAL BUREAU

**TALLAHASSEE** — The state sealed the deal Monday for the purchase of 74,000 acres of Babcock Ranch, ending a six-year process that resulted in the state's largest purchase of land for environmental protection.

"I can't begin to describe how great this feels," said an emotional Eva Armstrong, director of the Division of State Lands for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Armstrong grabbed the deed from the hands of Syd Kitson at a press conference in the Capitol on Monday marking the official close of the purchase. Kitson will develop nearly 15,000 acres of the property, creating a new city in Charlotte and Lee counties.

The \$350 million purchase provides an almost uninterrupted corridor of protected land from Lake Okeechobee to the Gulf of Mexico. The land, which will continue as a work-

ing ranch, is home to the Florida panther, the Florida black bear and Telegraph Swamp.

"Babcock Ranch is probably the most important, and certainly the largest, investment Florida's ever made to protect our environmental lands," said Eric Draper, Audubon of Florida vice president.

The road to the purchase was not smooth. Persuading the Florida Cabinet and the Legislature to spend \$350 million was not a hard sell. But a lawsuit filed by

the Sierra Club threatened the plan until an agreement was reached last month.

The agreement requires more than 1,600 homes to be shifted toward less environmentally sensitive land, and requires all homes in the development to be 10 percent more energy efficient than ordinary houses.

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[joe.follick@heraldtribune.com](mailto:joe.follick@heraldtribune.com).



The land — home to the Florida panther, the Florida black bear and Telegraph Swamp — will continue as a working ranch.



HERALD-TRIBUNE ARCHIVE







# Babcock Ranch





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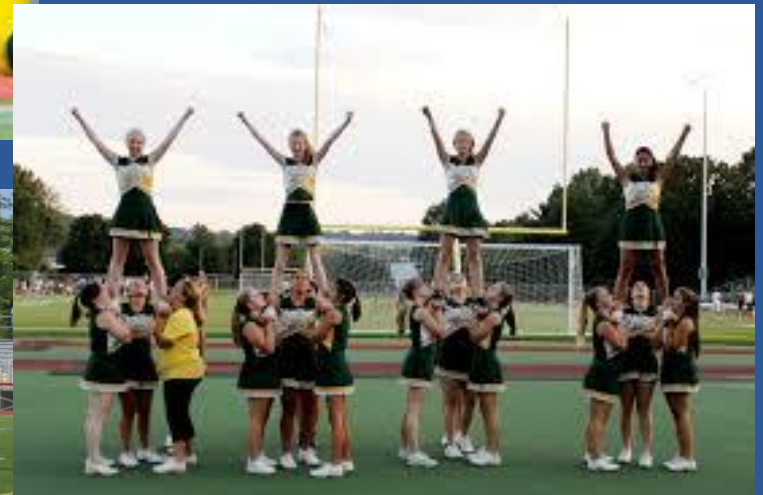




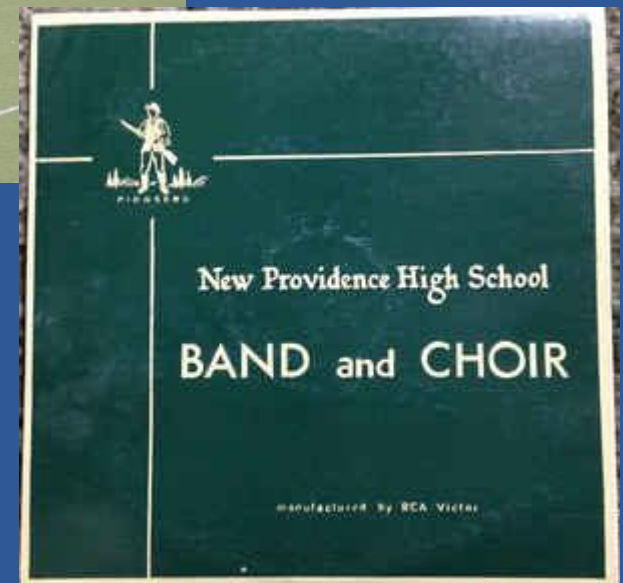
































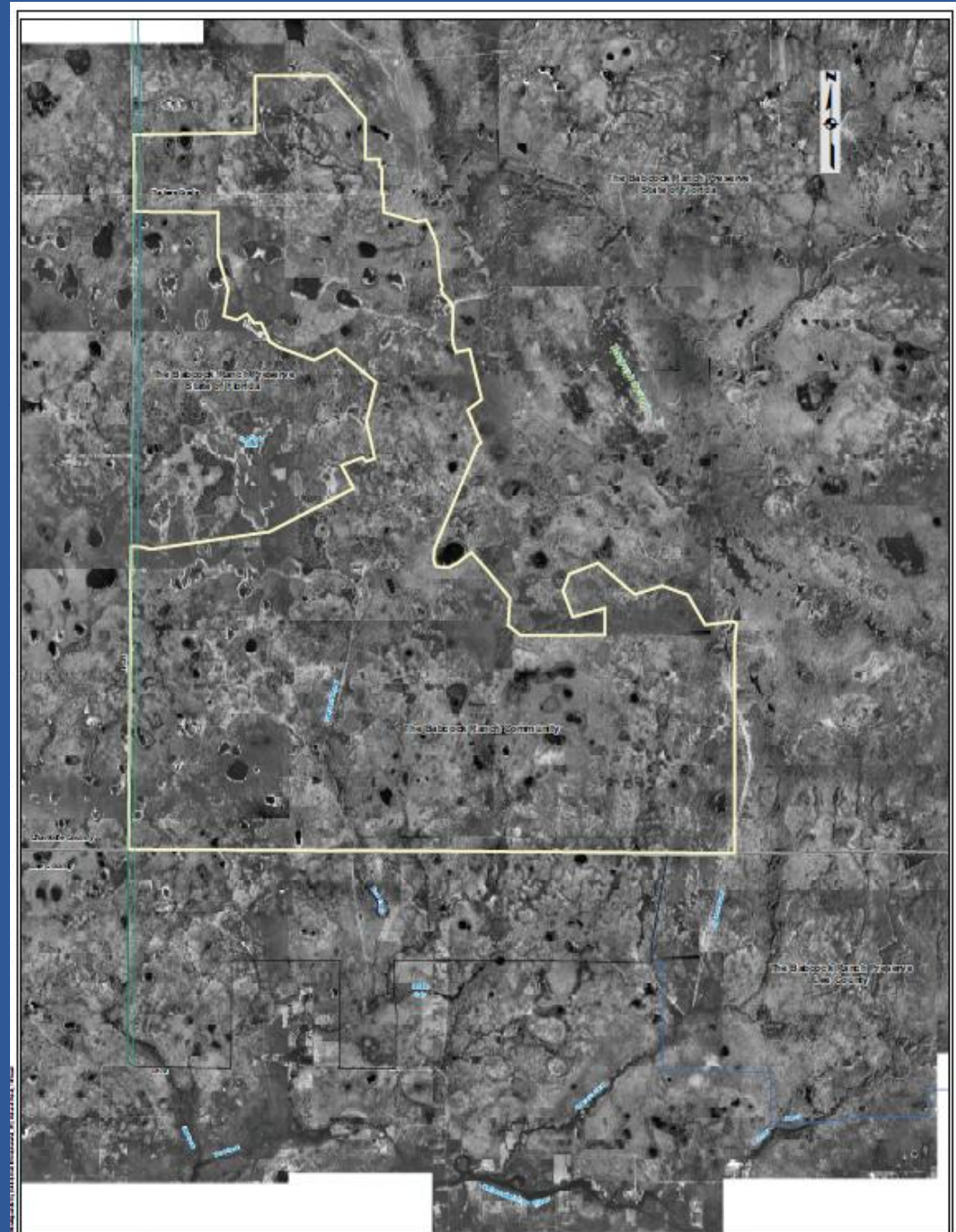


# Babcock Ranch





# Babcock Ranch Historic Aerial – 1940s



















**Environment**

**Energy**

**Education**

**Health**

**Transportation**

**Technology**

**Public Safety**

**Fun**







# EDUCATION BUILDING





# WELLNESS CENTER



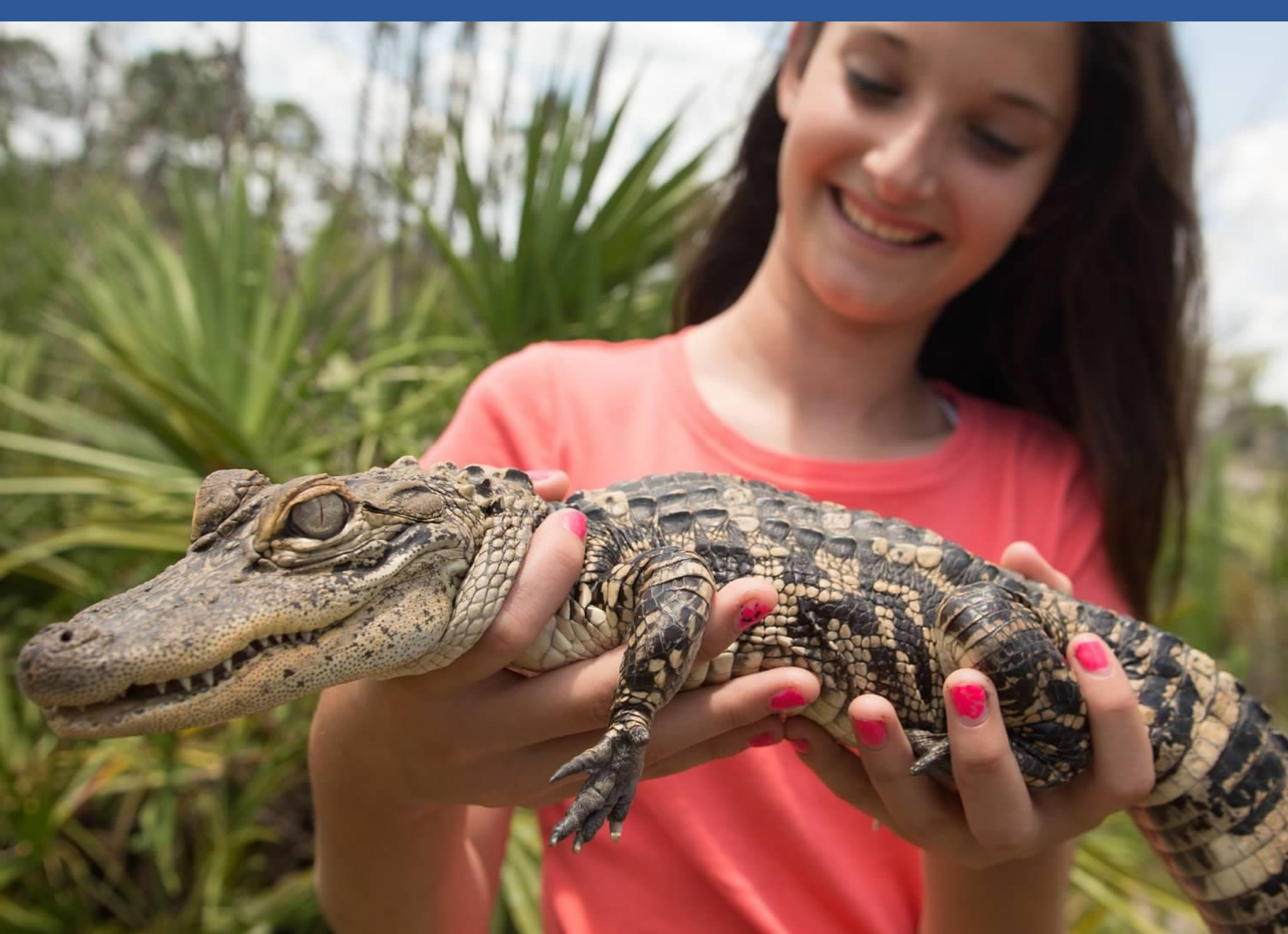




























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# Babcock Ranch

