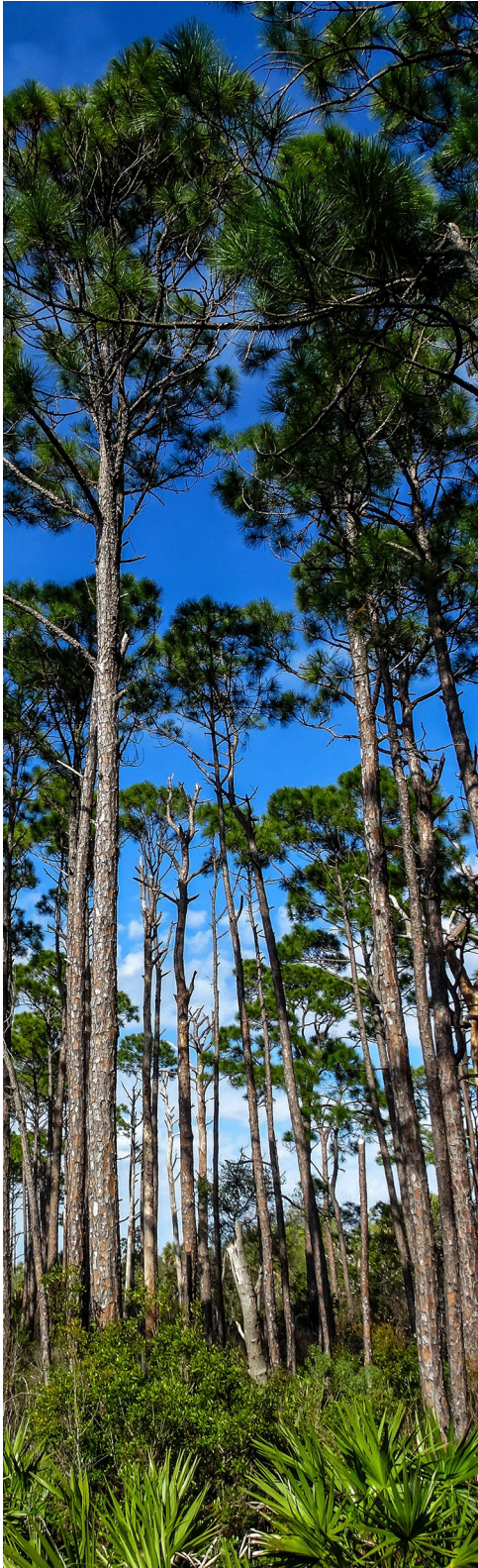




Proposed Southwest Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Area



Credit: Dr. Tom Hactor

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) proposes to establish a conservation area to protect land and water in Southwest Florida.

Building on partnership planning in the Southwest Florida landscape, the Service is proposing to establish a conservation area within a Southwest Florida Study Area which would enable the Service to protect environmentally sensitive lands by working with willing landowners through strategic acquisition and conservation easements. The unique natural communities and wildlife species of this area are under threat from rapid human population growth, land use changes, and effects of climate change.

Draft goals associated with this proposal include:

- Protect, restore, and manage habitats for fish and wildlife
 - 74 Threatened and Endangered species in this landscape
- Provide science-driven landscape-level conservation
 - Support regional scale wildlife corridor
- Conserve important lands and waters for the benefit of all people
 - Support protection for greater Everglades and Charlotte Harbor watersheds
 - Support large natural and working landscapes and ecological connections
 - Support biodiversity and water resource conservation goals of Southwest Florida
 - Consider opportunities for appropriate and compatible wildlife-dependent recreation
- Promote conservation partnerships working with flexible and adaptive tools and strategies

Planning process timeline:

Conduct Internal and External Scoping
March - April 2023

Develop Draft Land Protection Plan and NEPA Document
Spring - Late Summer 2023

Conduct Public Review and Comment on Proposal
Late Summer - Fall 2023

Evaluate the Comments and Develop Final Plan
Fall - December 2023

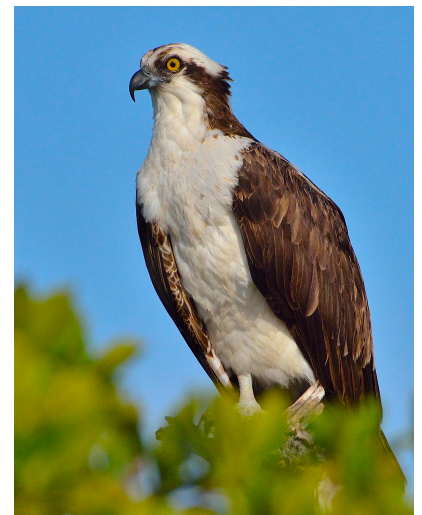
Visit our website for more information:

<https://www.fws.gov/project/proposed-southwest-florida-conservation-area>

How to submit comments (see website for comment deadlines):

Email: southeast_fws_planning@fws.gov

By Mail: USFWS/SWFL CA
P.O. Box 700188
Wabasso, FL 32970



Osprey:USFWS