Project Name: Tate’s Hell Strategy 1 (Planning & Implementation)

Cost: Category 1: $7,000,000

Responsible Council Member: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Partnering Council Member: State of Florida

Project Details: This project will develop a landscape-scale hydrologic assessment, a Regional Restoration Decision Support System (RRDSS) and a Comprehensive Hydrologic Assessment and Restoration Plan (CHAR Plan) for planning restoration activities in the Lower Apalachicola River basin. This project will also provide funding for planning, engineering, design, and environmental compliance for implementation of hydrologic restoration work identified as high priority in the Tate’s Hell State Forest (THSF) Hydrologic Restoration Plan developed by the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWWMD) and the Florida Forest Service (FFS).

Activities: This project includes both planning and implementation categories. The planning activities include the development of three planning tools. The landscape-scale hydrologic assessment will be developed for watersheds adjacent to those being restored on THSF and adjacent watersheds on the Apalachicola National Forest (ANF). The Regional Restoration Decision Support System (RRDSS) will be developed from data currently under the management of separate agencies. The RRDSS will be used to build an effective framework of regional hydrologic priorities rather than focusing on specific agency needs bounded by real property lines. Once this decision tool is implemented in Florida, it can be utilized throughout the Gulf by adding in the unique data pertaining to each specific region. The landscape-scale hydrologic assessment results will be used in conjunction with the RRDSS to develop a CHAR Plan that identifies and prioritizes future restoration opportunities throughout the Lower Apalachicola River Basin and Apalachicola Regional Stewardship Alliance (ARSA) Region based on best available science.

Work identified as high priority in the THSF Hydrologic Restoration Plan, developed by NFWWMD and FFS as described in the planning component, will be implemented as a component of this project. The implementation will consist of installing low water crossings and ditch blocks, constructing bridges, installing/replacing culverts and surface stabilization of 65 miles of roads.

Environmental Benefits: The activities outlined would directly impact, and support restoration of 202,436 acres of forest restoration on Tate’s Hell State Forest property, including reestablishing the native hydrology and habitat condition.

Duration: This planning and implementation project is expected to take five years to complete.

More information on these activities can be found in Appendix H. Apalachicola Bay; Unique Identifier: USDA_RESTORE_002_001_Cat1.
Apalachicola Bay Watershed