

## Buck Bay Flatwoods

### Burnsed

7/27/2023

Project Score		Natural Community	Condition
7.13 of 10.00		Blackwater Stream	Excellent
Inspection Date		Seepage Stream	Excellent
7/13/2023		Floodplain Swamp	Excellent
Size		Bottomland Forest	Excellent
280 acres		Upland Hardwood Forest	Good
Parcel Number	Acreage	Mesic Flatwoods	Good
07588-000-000	120	Wet Flatwoods	Good
07613-000-000	120	Depression Marsh	Fair-poor
07616-000-000	40		
Section-Township-Range		Other	Condition
34-07-20 & 03-08-20		Pine Plantation	N/A
Buildings			
0 on ACPA, 0 on site			
Just Value	Just Value Per Acre	Archaeological Sites	
\$592,400	\$2,115.71	0 recorded on site, 0 in 1 mile	
Total Value (Just, Misc, Bldg)	Total Value Per Acre	Bald Eagle Nests	
\$592,400	\$2,115.71	0 on site, 0 in one mile	
Acquisition Type			
Fee Simple			
REPA Score		6.58 of 9.44 (Buck Bay Flatwoods)	
KBN Score		Ranked 20 of 47 projects (Monteocha Creek)	
Outstanding Florida Waters		39.3 acres of the Santa Fe River System OFW included on the property	

#### Overall Description:

The Burnsed property is located in the north-central part of the County, approximately 0.75 miles south of the Santa Fe River, near Co Rd 225. The nominated property is made up of three parcels totaling 280 acres in size, all under one ownership. The parcels, nominated for fee simple acquisition, include ACPA tax parcel numbers 07588-000-000 (120 ac), 07613-000-000 (120 ac), and 0716-000-000 (40 ac). The parcels are located entirely within the ACF Buck Bay Flatwoods Project Area, and nearly entirely within the Monteocha Creek Strategic Ecosystem. Three creeks come together on this property: Little Monteocha Creek, Monteocha Creek, and Deep Creek, all flowing north to the Santa Fe River. The property also includes 39.3 acres of The Santa Fe River System Outstanding Florida Waters boundary. Immediately to the north of the Burnsed parcels are the Monteocha Creek Conservation Easement – owned by Loncala with the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) holding the Conservation Easement, and the Graham Conservation Area owned and managed by SRWMD. Just over half of the property is wetlands which include blackwater stream, seepage stream, floodplain swamp,

bottomland forest, and depression marsh. The upland landcover types include upland hardwood forest, mesic flatwoods, wet flatwoods, and pine plantation.

There are three main blackwater stream channels flowing through the Burnsed parcels, each in excellent condition. Little Montechoa Creek flows in from the southwest, Montechoa Creek from the south, and Deep Creek from the southeast. The confluence of these creeks occurs within the wetland system spanning across the Burnsed parcels, and the adjacent land to the west. There appeared to be numerous side-channels associated with the creeks in the area where they come together, and it is expected that at times of high water this whole area likely floods into one contiguous floodplain. The main stream channels have sandy bottoms and are mostly devoid of vegetation, but did have golden club and lizard's tail in some areas. None of the channels observed during the evaluation appeared to have been impacted by human alterations or channelization.

In addition to the blackwater streams, at least two seepage streams were identified on the property, including one that had clear water flowing out of the ground during the site visit. These seasonally flowing seepage streams were located on the eastern edge of the main wetland system before the transition to the upland habitat types. They appear to be in excellent condition and support a plant community of buttonbush, red maple, jack-in-the-pulpit, lizard's tail, and various ferns.

Floodplain forest was present where the seepage streams and various tributaries for Montechoa Creek came together. These areas made up large portions of the wetland system and appeared to be in excellent condition. Some portions of these areas had hardwoods and cypress harvested around 2005, but these areas appear to be recovering well. There was an overstory of bald cypress, pond cypress, sweetbay magnolia, green ash, sweetgum, and swamp tupelo and an understory of buttonbush, lizard's tail, netted chainfern, royal fern, cinnamon fern, red maple, and Virginia sweetspire.

Adjacent to much of the floodplain forest was bottomland forest, which made up the other sizeable portion of the wetlands found onsite and is also in excellent condition. This area had similar species present in the floodplain forest with herbaceous grasses and ferns dominating the understory with the additional presence of swamp chestnut oak, water oak, and pinxter azalea in the midstory and overstory.

An isolated depression marsh was present near the central part of the property. It appears that this area was once forested, but during the harvest in the surrounding areas around 2005, this area was also clear cut. The current owner described highly fluctuating seasonal water levels here but during the site evaluation, this depression was holding water and was overgrown with dense buttonbush and an occasional red maple. Lizards tail, juncus sp., xyris sp., dog fennel, lyonia sp., beautyberry, gallberry, and horsesugar were all present along the margins of the depression transitioning to the surrounding uplands. Due to the overgrown, woody nature of the depression marsh in its current state and clear lack of recent fire history, it is in fair-poor condition.

Much of the transitional landcover from wetlands to uplands is Upland Hardwood Forest in good condition. A portion of this natural community in the northern half of the property has a band of exposed limestone features. This area is along the slope downhill from the pine plantations towards the seepage streams. There were signs of disturbance of unknown age that indicated there may have been historic digging in this area. The Upland Hardwood Forest had a wide range of overstory trees present including swamp chestnut oak, pignut hickory, southern magnolia, basswood, and sweetgum among others. The understory and midstory consisted of ironwood, hop hornbeam, red buckeye, dwarf palmetto, southern lady fern, and Florida milkvine.

Additional upland landcovers include mesic and wet flatwoods which each have a small area present in the south and southwest portions of the property. They are in good condition but have not had fire in many years and likely once occupied a larger footprint before human alteration over the past several decades. These communities had similar species composition including slash and loblolly pine overstory, and saw palmetto in the understory, with the wet flatwoods also having a large presence of fetterbush. Both had a degree of hardwood encroachment, including water oak and sweetgums.

The vast majority of the uplands have been converted to pine plantation. Historic aerial images show much more open canopied habitat from the 1930-s to 1950's before being logged and planted in dense pine rows beginning in the 50's and 60's. The current pine stand consists of unthinned slash pine, approximately 20 years old, with notable offsite hardwood encroachment. Based on historic aerial images and species observed on the site visit, it is likely that this area was once sandhill, upland pine, and/or a mix of other upland habitats. Staff identified persimmon, sparkleberry, deerberry, Chickasaw plum, turkey oak, and bluejack oak in the midstory and small patches of wiregrass, gopher apple, dog tongue buckwheat, and Florida Indian plantain – which is endemic to Florida – in the understory.

Overall, there were not many invasive species observed on the property. One small patch of Japanese climbing fern was observed adjacent to a trail, and a few mimosa and camphor trees were seen in various parts of the parcels. Several listed species were identified on the property including southern lady fern (state threatened), Florida milkvine (state endangered), and royal fern, cinnamon fern, and pinxter azalea (all listed as commercially exploited). Wildlife observed onsite by staff included swallow-tailed kite, wild turkey, barred owl, red-eyed vireo, white-tailed deer, coral snake, and red-bellied snake. Numerous active gopher tortoise burrows were also identified, which are listed as a state threatened species. The owner of the property shared that he has regularly seen eastern diamondbacks snakes, timber rattlesnakes, alligators, coyotes, black bears, river otters, and northern bob whites on the property.

Currently, the owner uses the site for hunting and recreating. There were several hunt stands, food plots, and feeders observed on the property, all located along trails and roads. There were no signs of solid waste found anywhere on the property. No archeological sites have been recorded onsite, or within one mile of the property, however staff did find an arrowhead and lithic flakes in a food plot. Access to the parcel is through a private road through other parcels owned by Mr. Burnsed; there is not direct access to the nominated property from a public road.

#### **Development Review:**

*This development analysis is based on a limited desk-top review and is founded upon current County Land Development Regulations and Comprehensive Plan policies. The Development Scenario is oversimplified and is meant only to convey a general sense of the potential of development intensity that could be possible based on land use and zoning conditions.*

The parcels have a Future Land Use of Rural Agricultural. In accordance with the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, Rural Agricultural areas are intended to be protected in a manner consistent with preservation of agriculture, open space, rural character, and the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas. Under the current land use and zoning the property may be developed at a maximum intensity of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres.

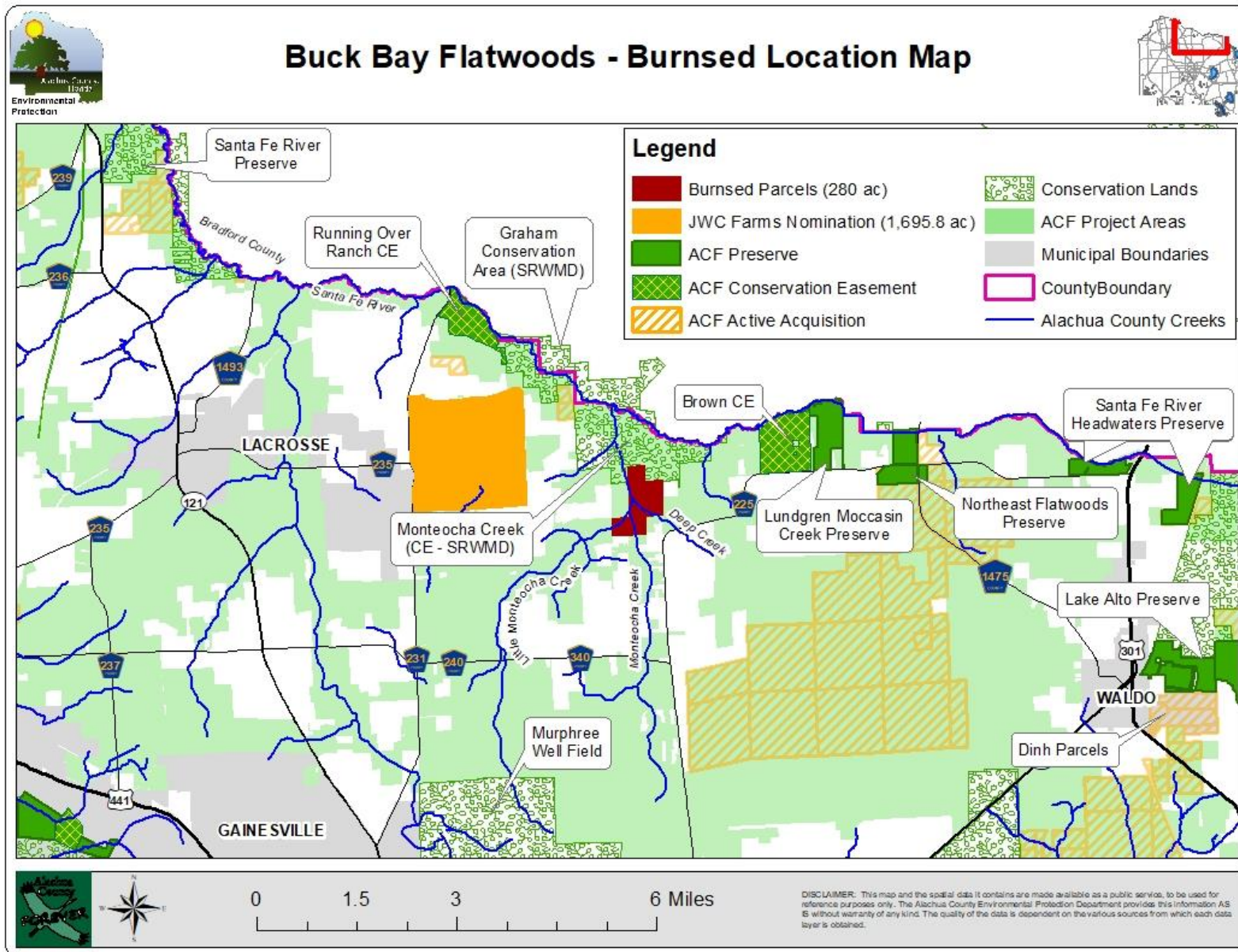
There are some natural features on the parcels that would have protection from development activities under current regulations. There are a combined total of 143 acres of wetlands on the properties. There are also 39.3 acres included within the Santa Fe River System Outstanding Florida

Waters (OFW) System boundary. As per Alachua County ULDC, the wetlands on site would be protected along with an upland buffer. For wetlands not adjacent to OFW a 50-ft minimum, 75-ft average width buffer would be required. If the wetlands are associated with the Santa Fe River OFW, a 200-ft buffer (150-ft minimum) will be required. The bulk of the property (279.22 acres) is located within the Montechoa Creek Strategic Ecosystem which requires preservation of up to 50% of the upland area; inclusive of wetland buffers.

Given the current zoning and future land use there is some development potential on the property. However, the extensive coverage of wetlands, floodplains, and the location within Strategic Ecosystem would significantly limit the development. In addition, the remote location, limited infrastructure and associated higher construction costs diminishes the prospects and potential for development activities.

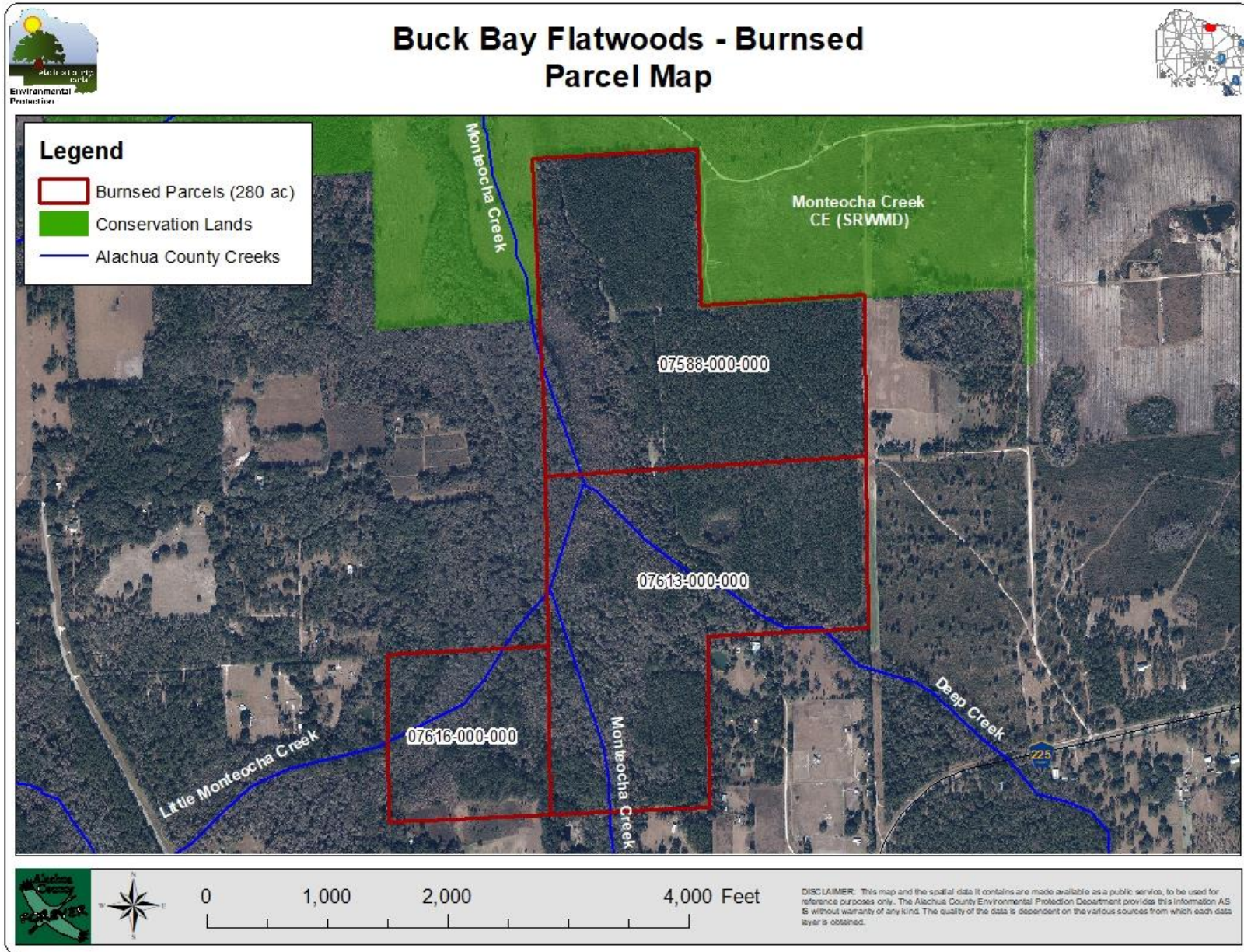
REPA - Project Name - Project Element - Date								
CATEGORY	Criterion	WEIGHTING	Enter Criteria Value Based on Site Inspection	Average Criteria Score	Average Criteria Score Multiplied by Relative Importance			
(I-1) PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES	A. Whether the property has geologic/hydrologic conditions that would easily enable contamination of vulnerable aquifers that have value as drinking water sources;		3					
	B. Whether the property serves an important groundwater recharge function;		3					
	C. Whether the property contains or has direct connections to lakes, creeks, rivers, springs, sinkholes, or wetlands for which conservation of the property will protect or improve surface water quality;		4					
	D. Whether the property serves an important flood management function.		4					
(I-2) PROTECTION OF NATURAL COMMUNITIES AND LANDSCAPES	A. Whether the property contains a diversity of natural communities;		3					
	B. Whether the natural communities present on the property are rare;		3					
	C. Whether there is ecological quality in the communities present on the property;		3					
	D. Whether the property is functionally connected to other natural communities;		3					
	E. Whether the property is adjacent to properties that are in public ownership or have other environmental protections such as conservation easements;		3					
	F. Whether the property is large enough to contribute substantially to conservation efforts;		4					
	G. Whether the property contains important, Florida-specific geologic features such as caves or springs;		3					
	H. Whether the property is relatively free from internal fragmentation from roads, power lines, and other features that create barriers and edge effects.		4					
(I-3) PROTECTION OF PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES	A. Whether the property serves as documented or potential habitat for rare, threatened, or endangered species or species of special concern;		4					
	B. Whether the property serves as documented or potential habitat for species with large home ranges;		4					
	C. Whether the property contains plants or animals that are endemic or near-endemic to Florida or Alachua County;		5					
	D. Whether the property serves as a special wildlife migration or aggregation site for activities such as breeding, roosting, colonial nesting, or over-wintering;		5					
	E. Whether the property offers high vegetation quality and species diversity;		4					
	F. Whether the property has low incidence of non-native invasive species.		4					
(I-4) SOCIAL AND HUMAN VALUES	A. Whether the property offers opportunities for compatible resource-based recreation, if appropriate;		2					
	B. Whether the property contributes to urban green space, provides a municipal defining greenbelt, provides scenic vistas, or has other value from an urban and regional planning perspective.		5					
	AVERAGE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND HUMAN VALUES					3.65		
	RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THIS CRITERIA SET IN THE OVERALL SCORE	1.333			4.87			
(II-1) MANAGEMENT ISSUES	A. Whether it will be practical to manage the property to protect its environmental, social and other values (examples include controlled burning, exotics removal, maintaining hydro-period, and so on);		4					
	B. Whether this management can be completed in a cost-effective manner.		4					
(II-2) ECONOMIC AND ACQUISITION ISSUES	A. Whether there is potential for purchasing the property with matching funds from municipal, state, federal, or private contributions;		3					
	B. Whether the overall resource values justifies the potential cost of acquisition;		4					
	C. Whether there is imminent threat of losing the environmental, social or other values of the property through development and/or lack of sufficient legislative protections (this requires analysis of current land use, zoning, owner intent, location and		2					
	AVERAGE FOR ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT VALUES						3.40	
	RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THIS CRITERIA SET IN THE OVERALL SCORE		0.667					2.26
TOTAL SCORE					7.13			

Evaluation prepared by: Ryan Kennelly, July 27, 2023 File Location: I:\Land Conservation\Land Conservation Matrix\Buck Bay\BBF site specific evaluations\Burnsed.



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