



Alachua County Environmental Protection Department

Stephen Hofstetter, Director

October 17, 2024



Mission Statement

To support a community ethic of environmental resiliency and responsible environmental stewardship of the water, air, and living resources in Alachua County.





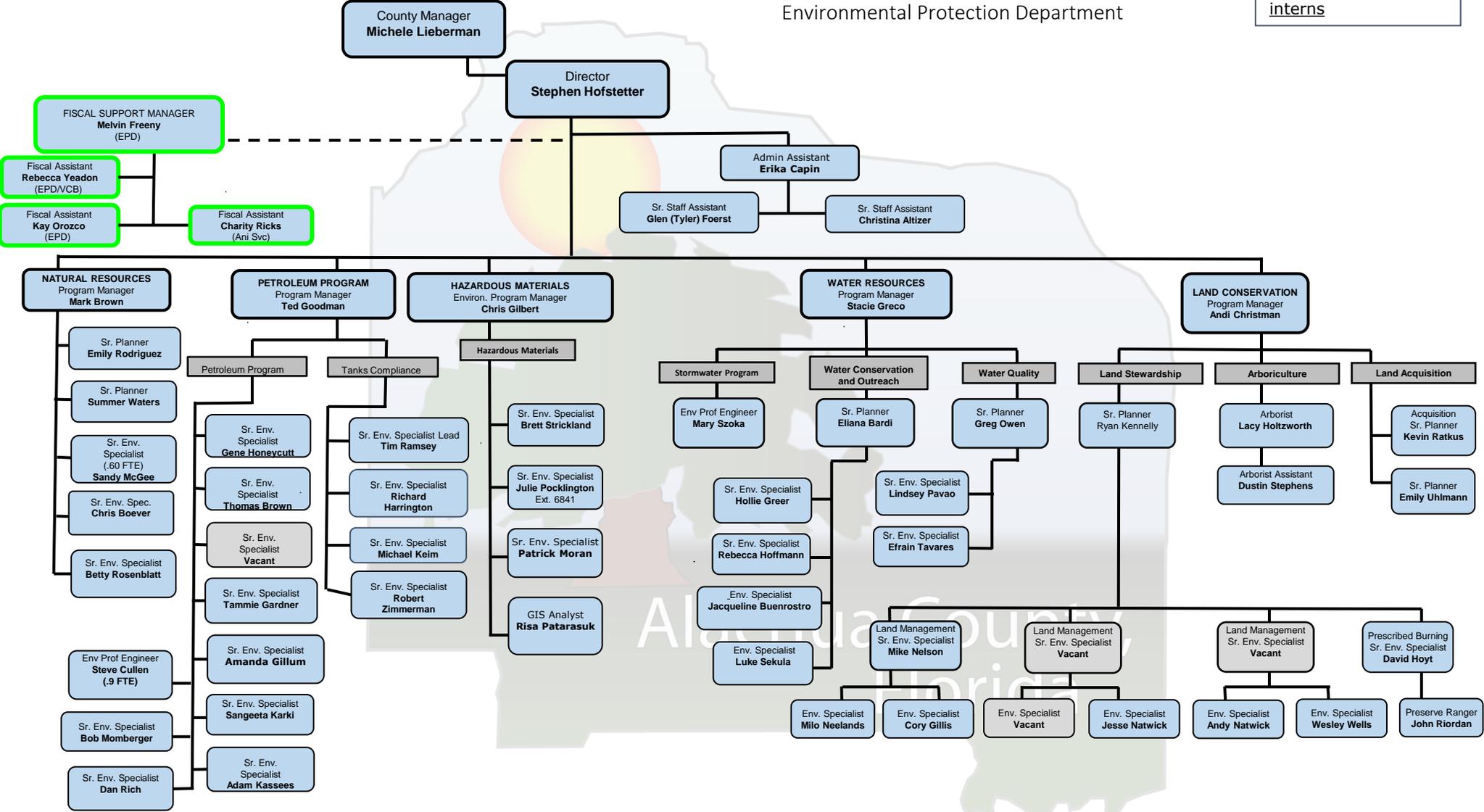
Citizen Advisory Boards

- Environmental Protection Advisory Board (EPAC)
 - 11 Member (and 1 alternate)
- Land Conservation Board (LCB)
 - 12 members
- Citizen Climate Advisory Committee (CCAC)
 - 9 members



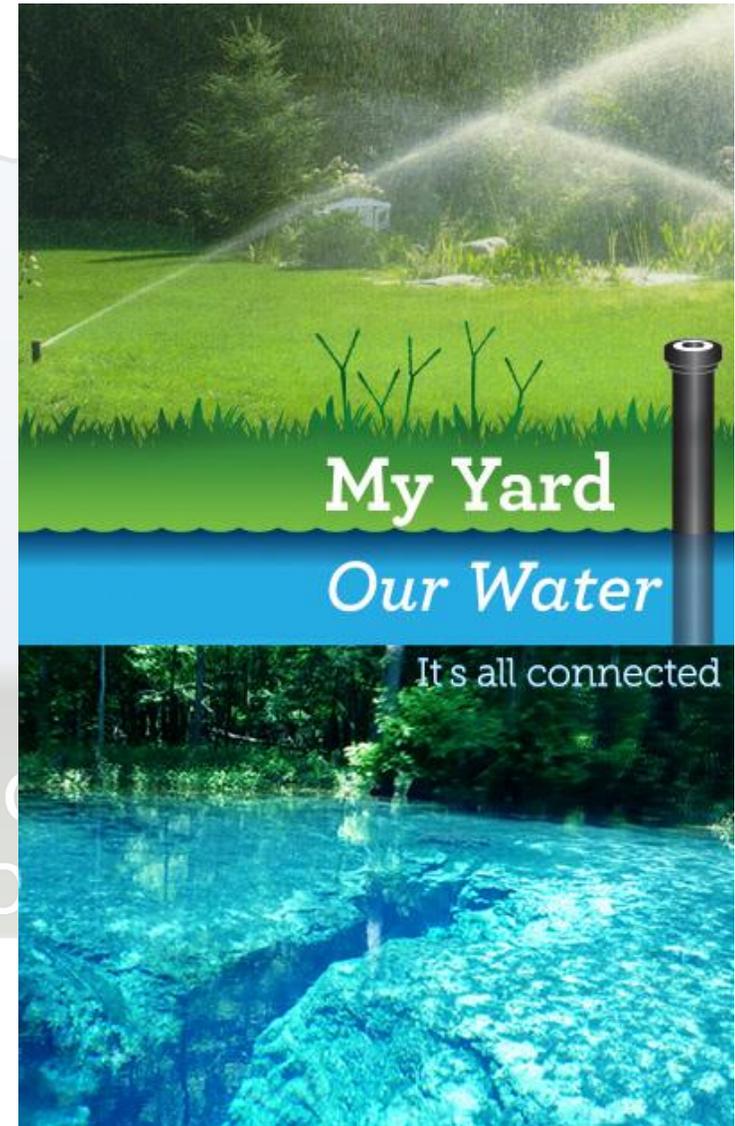
FY 24
Alachua County
Environmental Protection Department

FTE= 54.5
Includes vacant
positions
Does not include
interns



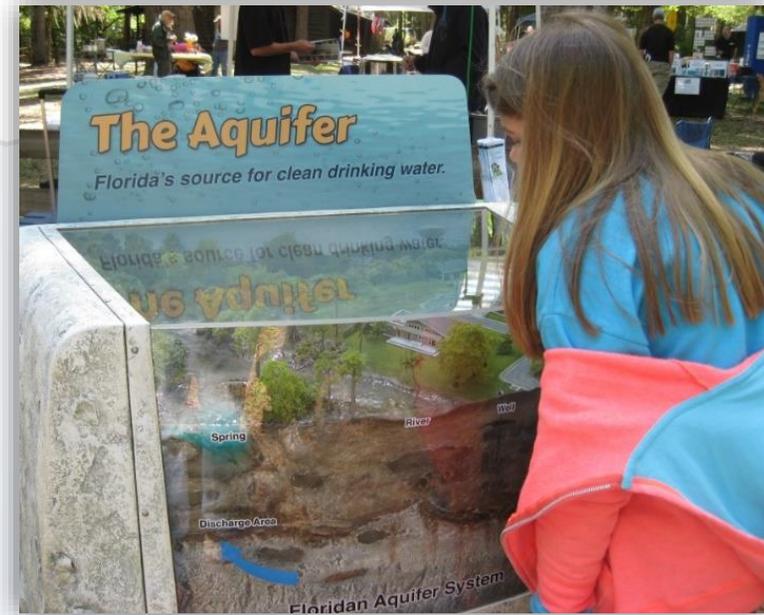
Water Resources Division

- Water quality monitoring
- Complaints/illegal discharge response
- Outreach
- Water conservation
 - Irrigation
- Stormwater water quality
- Largely funded through grants and contracts



Education and Outreach (typical annual metrics)

- Interactive presentations in schools
 - 110 events to reach ~2,800
- Public events
 - 51 events to reach ~112,000
- MyYardourWater.org and AlachuaCountyWater.org websites
 - ~25,000 visits



New Activities for 2024

- Rebates for upgrading existing septic systems
- “Decriminalize Weeds” Landscaping Education Campaign
- Irrigation tune ups and rebates
- Pesticide/herbicide sampling of the Santa Fe River and springs
- Nutrient sampling along Hogtown Creek

Alachua County,
Florida

Protecting the **Natural Resources** of Alachua County

- Public Inquiries
- Review applications for building activities
- Development project reviews - zoning, design plans, construction inspections and long-term compliance.
- Enforcement & Compliance
- Environmental Planning
- Multi-Agency & Municipality Collaboration



What are Alachua County's *natural resources*?



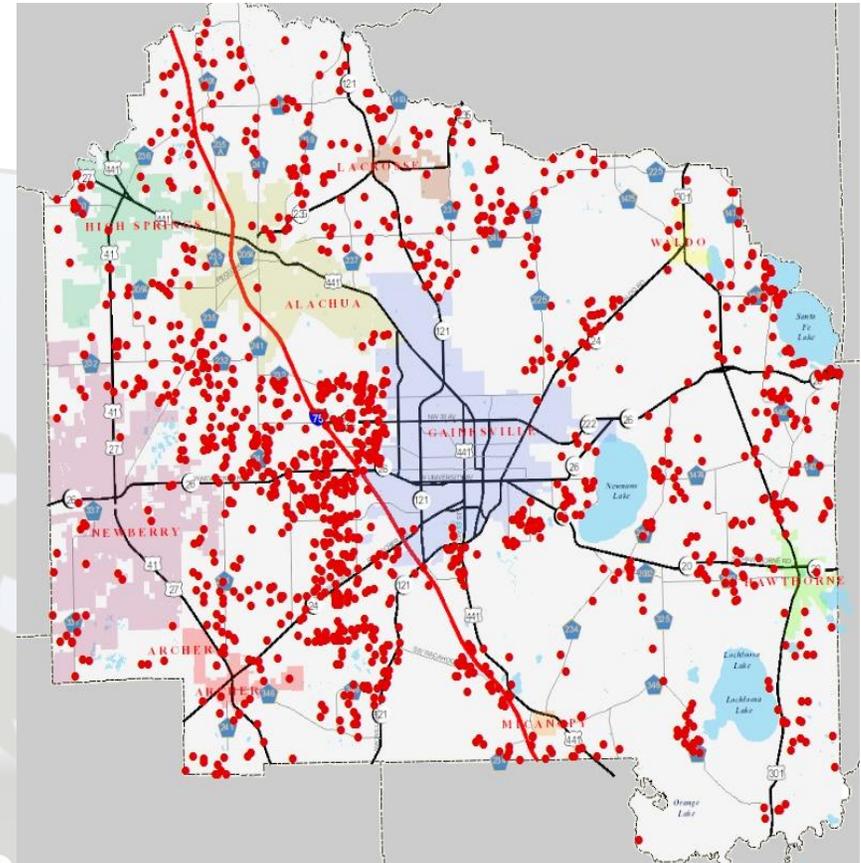
What are Alachua County's *historical resources*?



Natural Resources Division

2023 – Inquiries, Site Evaluations,
Permit Application Reviews

- **774** inquiries
- **621** site evaluations
- **1369** building permits
- **79** development projects
- **42** projects in municipalities
- **18** enforcement cases



Building permit sites in unincorporated Alachua County with natural resources issues (red dots).

Natural Resources Division

Additional Activities FY24 & FY25:

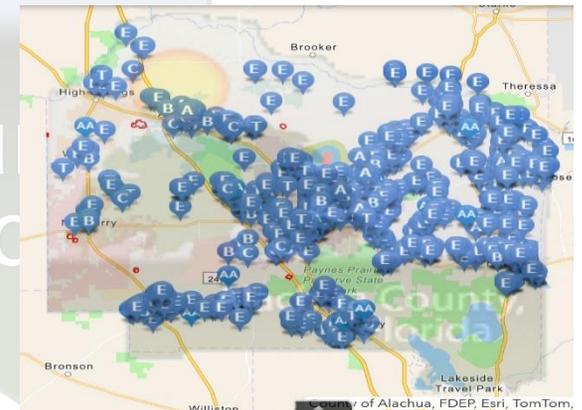
- **Evaluation - Comp Plan Update**
- **Climate Vulnerability Analysis**
- **Conduct Environmental Resource Assessments (ERA'S) - County-Sponsored Project Sites:**
 - *Cuscowilla Fire Station*
 - *Alachua Conservation (Office & Facilities Compound)*
 - *Archer Braid Trail – Kanapaha*
 - *Disaster Debris Management Site*
- **Outreach**
 - **Environmental Protection Advisory Committee**
 - **World Wetlands Day**
 - **Art Contest**
 - **School & Camp Presentations**



Hazardous Materials Management

Facility Inspections

- 1190 regulated facilities
- 400 inspections per year
- Compliance assistance
- Complaint investigations and response
- Enforcement of County, State & Federal regulations



Protecting people, property and the environment



Hazardous Materials 24/7 Emergency Response to all Hazardous Materials Releases, Spills and Fires

Monitor Remediation of 64 Contaminated Sites and 1 Superfund site

Pollution Prevention Division – Storage Tanks Compliance



- **State-funded petroleum storage tank compliance inspection program.**
- **Prevent groundwater contamination.**
- **Sixteen-county service area managed by Alachua County.**
- **1,815 registered petroleum storage tank facilities.**
- **4 inspectors conduct 555 routine compliance inspections annually.**
- **Installation, closure, discharge, and complaint inspections.**
- **Funds 5 local jobs with a \$506,849 budget.**

Desired Outcome: Clean Water

***1 gallon of
gasoline can
contaminate
1,000,000
gallons of water***

Pollution Prevention Division – Storage Tanks Compliance 16-County Service Area



Pollution Prevention Division - Petroleum Cleanup

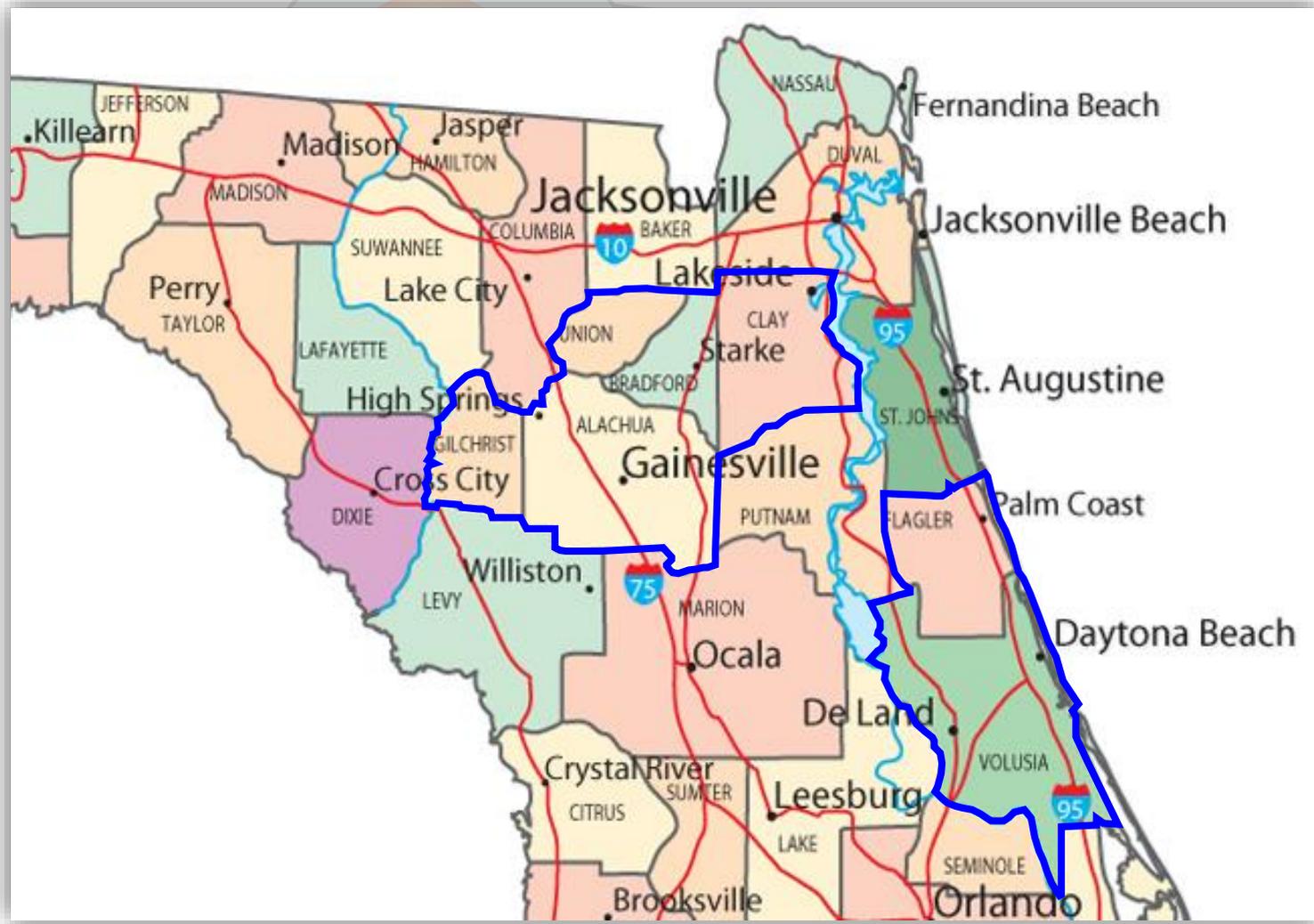


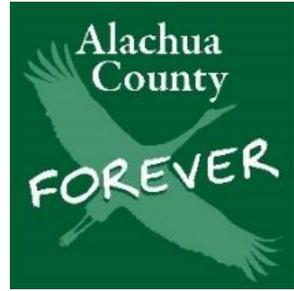
- **State-funded cleanup of petroleum hydrocarbon contaminated sites.**
- **Performance-based contract with FDEP.**
- **Clean up petroleum-impacted soil & groundwater.**
- **Seven-county service area managed by ACEPD.**
- **Technical and financial oversight of environmental contractors.**
- **324 petroleum contaminated sites.**
- **Average cost of clean-up is ~ \$400,000 per site.**
- **Funds 11 local jobs with a \$954,394 budget.**



Desired Outcome: Clean Water

Pollution Prevention Division – Petroleum Cleanup 7-County Service Area



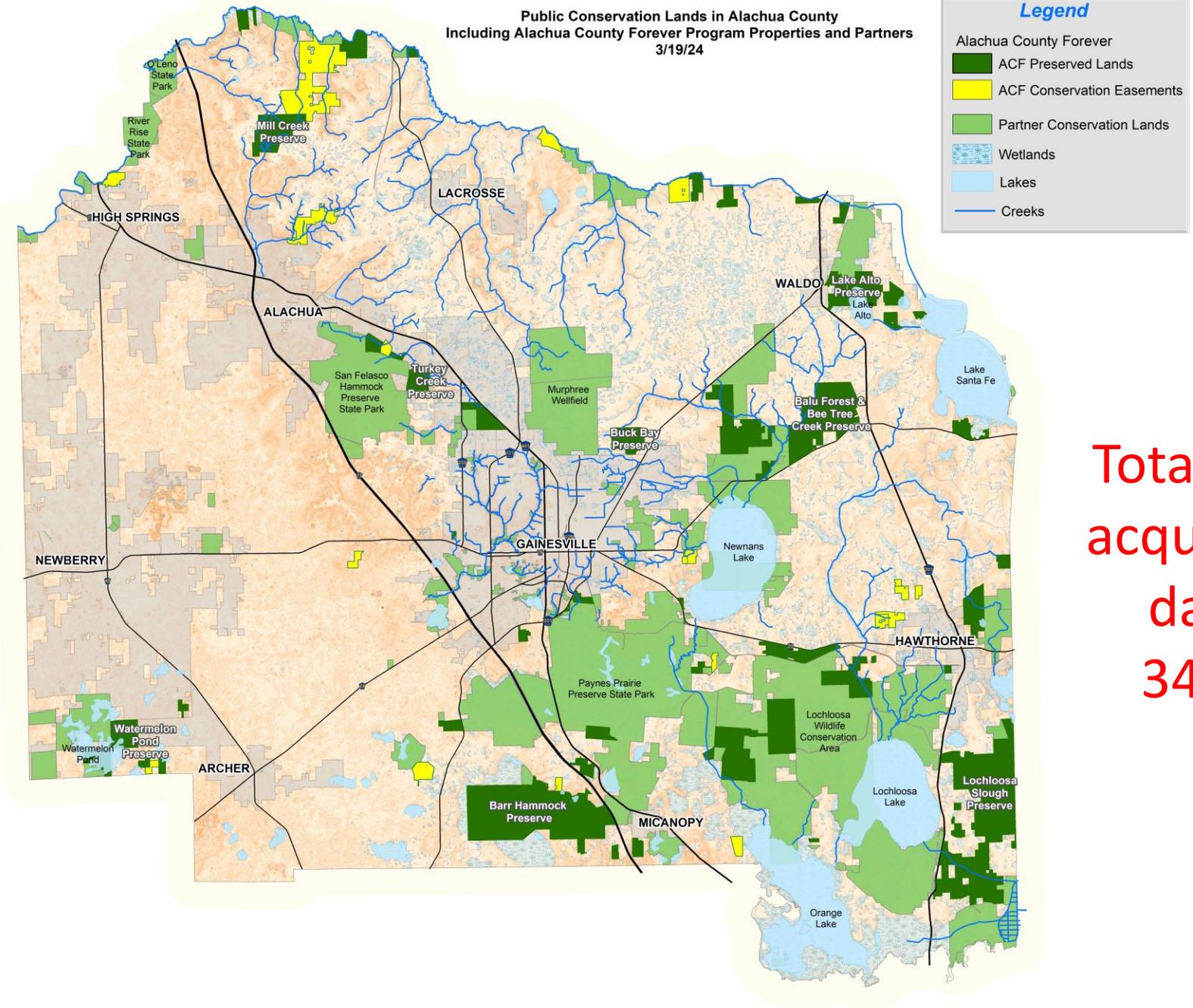


Alachua County Forever: The Land Conservation and Management Program:

*24 years and over 34,000
acres protected*

Andi Christman
Land Conservation and Management Program

CONSERVATION SUCCESSES



Total Acres
acquired to
date =
34,317

Longleaf Flatwoods Preserve



© alison blakeslee

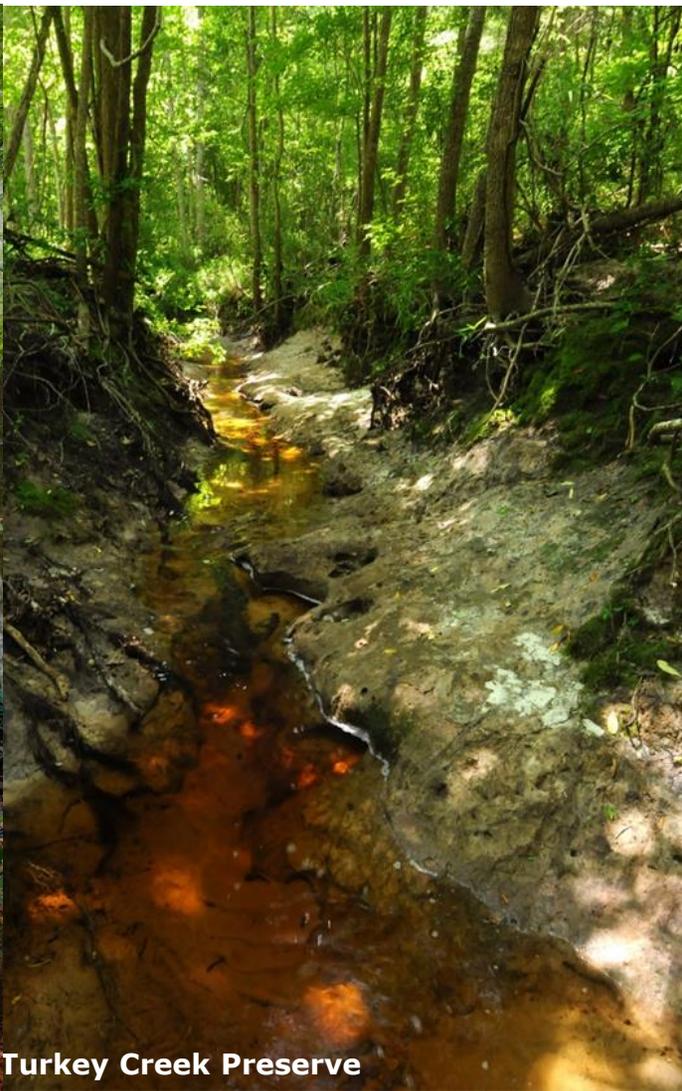


Barr Hammock Preserve



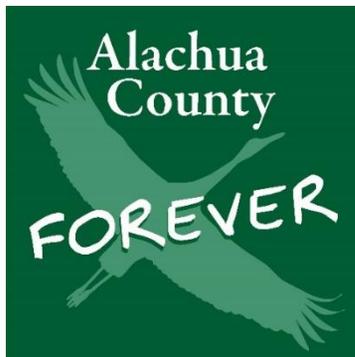
Mill Creek Preserve

© Alison Blakeslee



Turkey Creek Preserve

Funded by Four Voter-Supported Initiatives

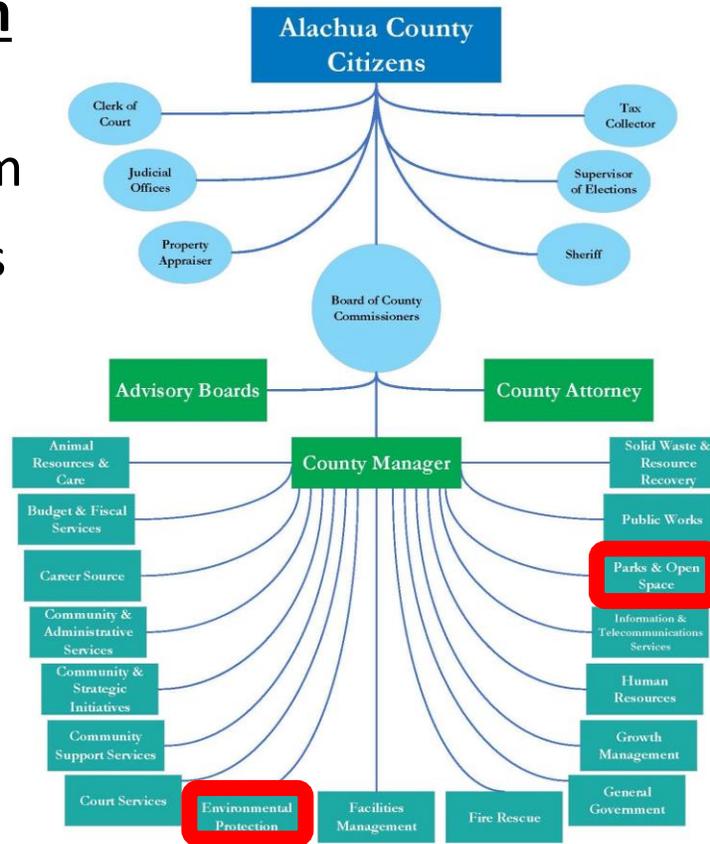


Alachua County Forever	Wild Spaces Public Places 1	Wild Spaces Public Places 2	Wild Spaces Public Places 3
Approved in 2000	Approved in 2008	Approved in 2016	Approved in 2022
\$29 million	~\$15 million	~\$90 million	~\$150 million**
20-year Property tax	2-year $\frac{1}{2}$ cent sales tax	8-year* $\frac{1}{2}$ cent sales tax	10-year $\frac{1}{2}$ cent sales tax***

2023-2032 WSPP SURTAX FUNDS SUPPORTING CONSERVATION LANDS & ACTIVE PARKS

Environmental Protection

- Alachua County Forever Land Acquisition Program
- County Nature Preserves



Parks and Open Space

- County Active Parks



A CORRIDOR-BASED STRATEGY

Santa Fe River Corridor

- Santa Fe River
- Hornsby Springshed

Florida Wildlife Corridor

- Lakes Santa Fe and Alto
- Austin Cary Flatwoods
- Lochloosa Creek & Slough

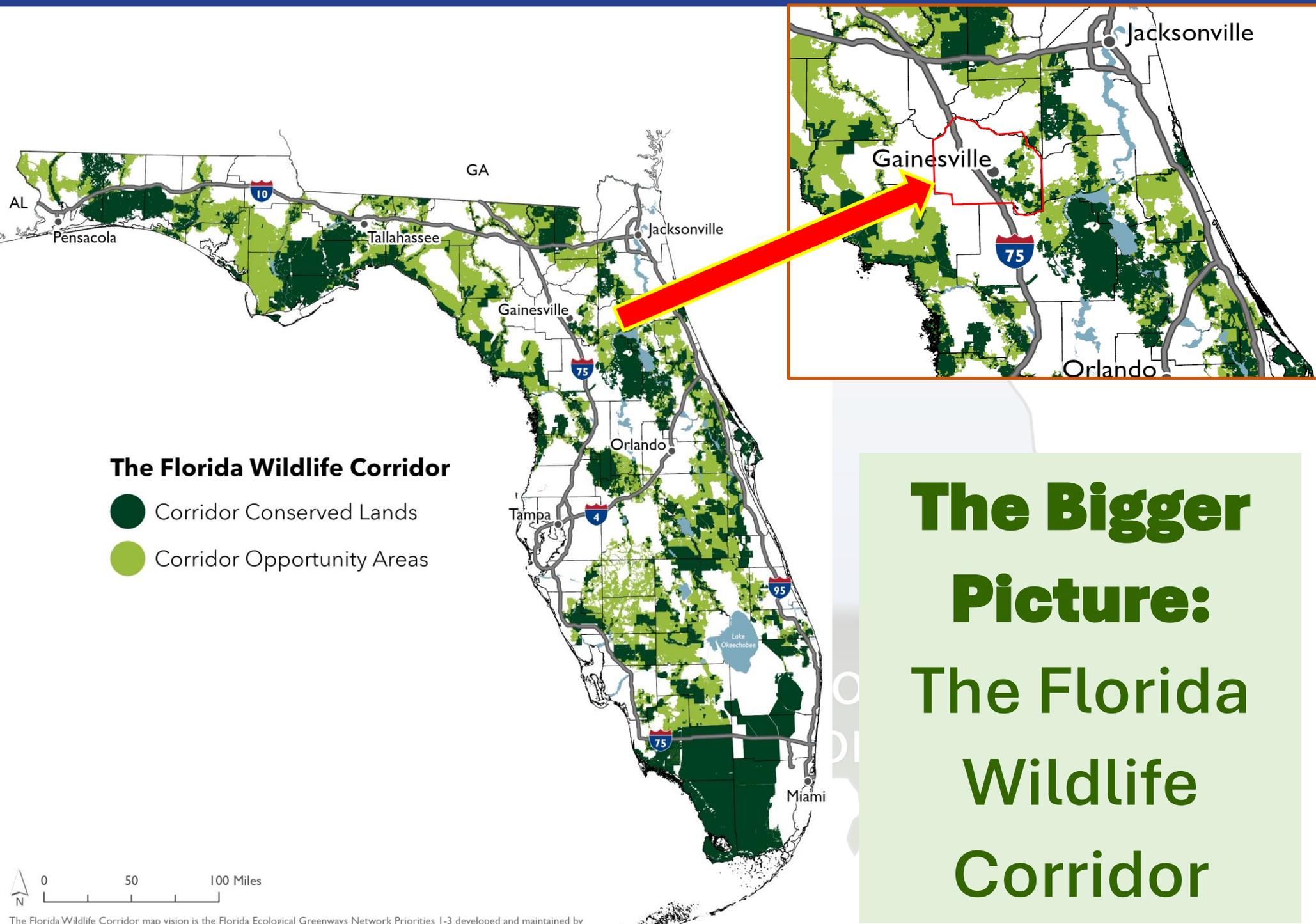
Southern Corridor

- Barr Hammock
- Watermelon Pond

Agriculture Protection Program

- Strengthening all Corridors
- Water Quality & Recharge
- Local Food Production

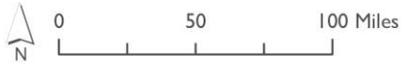




The Florida Wildlife Corridor

- Corridor Conserved Lands
- Corridor Opportunity Areas

**The Bigger Picture:
The Florida Wildlife Corridor**



The Florida Wildlife Corridor map vision is the Florida Ecological Greenways Network Priorities 1-3 developed and maintained by the University of Florida Center for Landscape Conservation Planning; Conserved Lands, Florida Natural Areas Inventory, 12/22. Map by Archbold Biological Station, A. Meeks, 4/23

PRESERVE OPERATIONS/STEWARDSHIP



- **22 Distinct Preserves Managed by Staff = 24,022 acres**
- **Lands Managed by Partners = 4,545 acres**
- **15 Conservation Easements Managed/Monitored = 5,331 acres**
- **22 ACF-acquired Properties with Public Access (County and Partners)**
- **13 Public Trailheads & 58 miles of Public Trails (on County Preserves)**
- **1,200+ Acres Prescribe Burned Annually**
- **3,000+ Acres Invasive Plant Management Annually**



Aachua County, O

Tree Planting Program

- Funded through the Tree Mitigation fund
- Inventory/confirmation of planting sites
- Tree establishment and care for 3 years
- Technical assistance to partners and sponsors
- Outreach and volunteer engagement

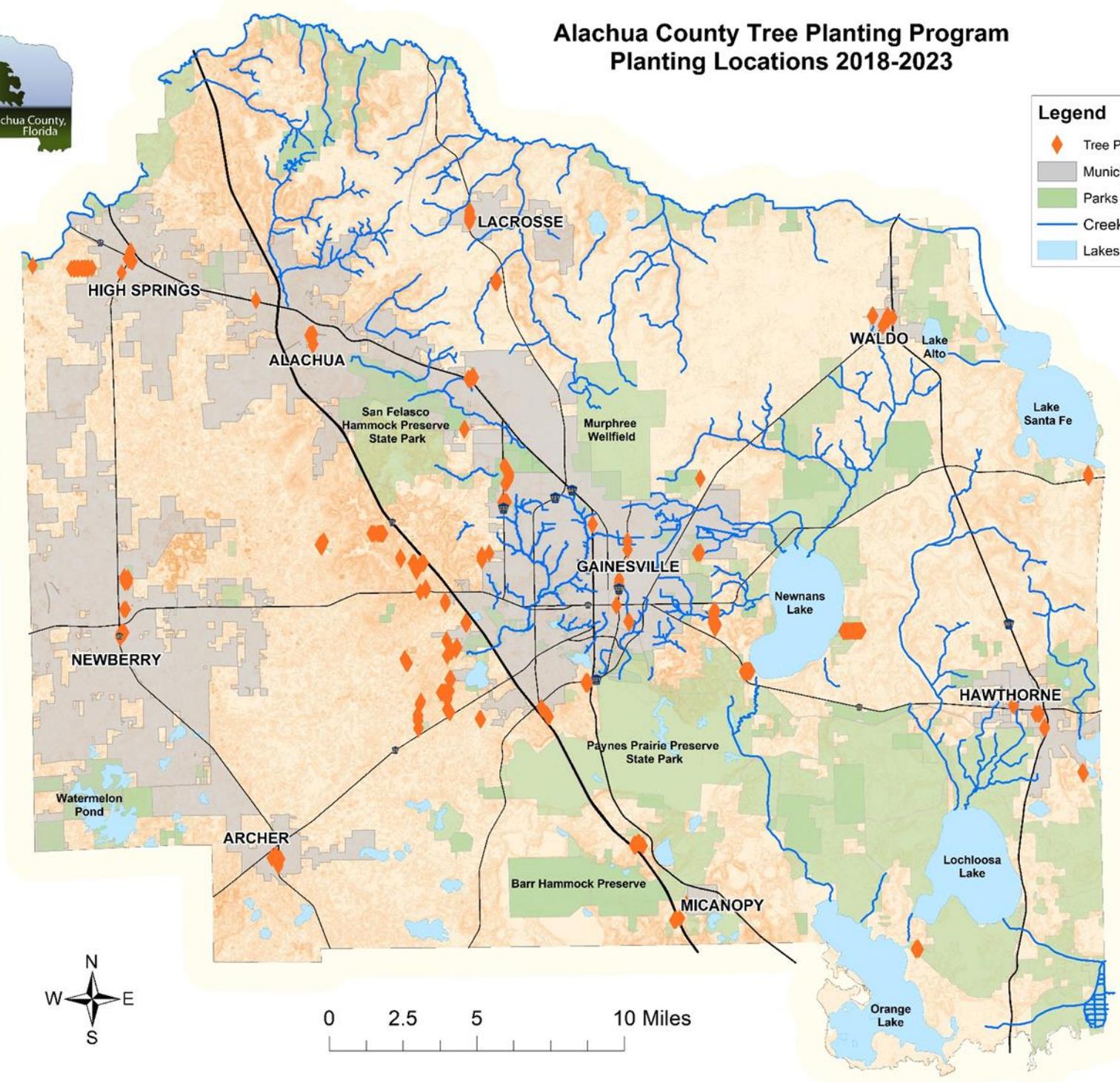




Alachua County Tree Planting Program Planting Locations 2018-2023

Legend

- ◆ Tree Planting Locations
- ▭ Municipal Boundaries
- ▭ Parks and Conservation Lands
- Creeks
- ▭ Lakes



**1,200+
Trees
Planted
in 6 years!**

Climate Action Planning

- Climate Vulnerability Assessment and associated Reports are available on the County website:

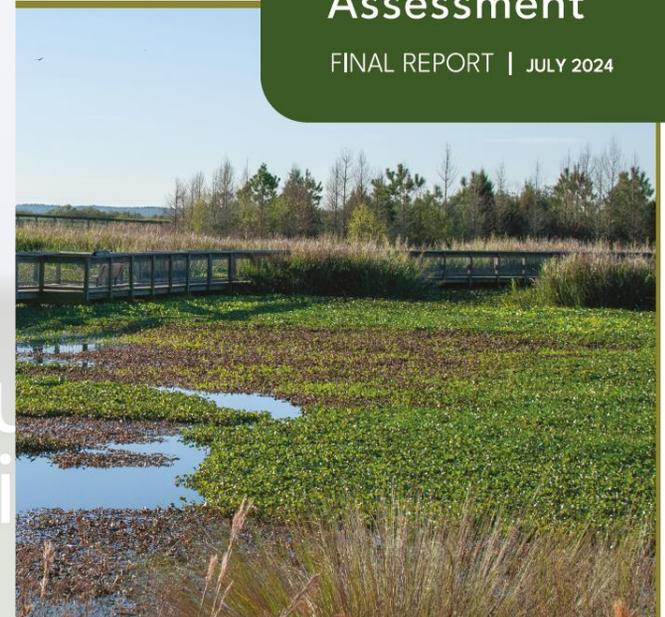
- <https://alachuacounty.us/Depts/epd/Pages/Climate-Initiatives.aspx>

- Click on 'Climate Initiatives'



Climate Vulnerability Assessment

FINAL REPORT | JULY 2024





ALACHUA COUNTY

SAVE THE DATE



CLIMATE SUMMIT

NOVEMBER 16

BLOUNT
CENTER

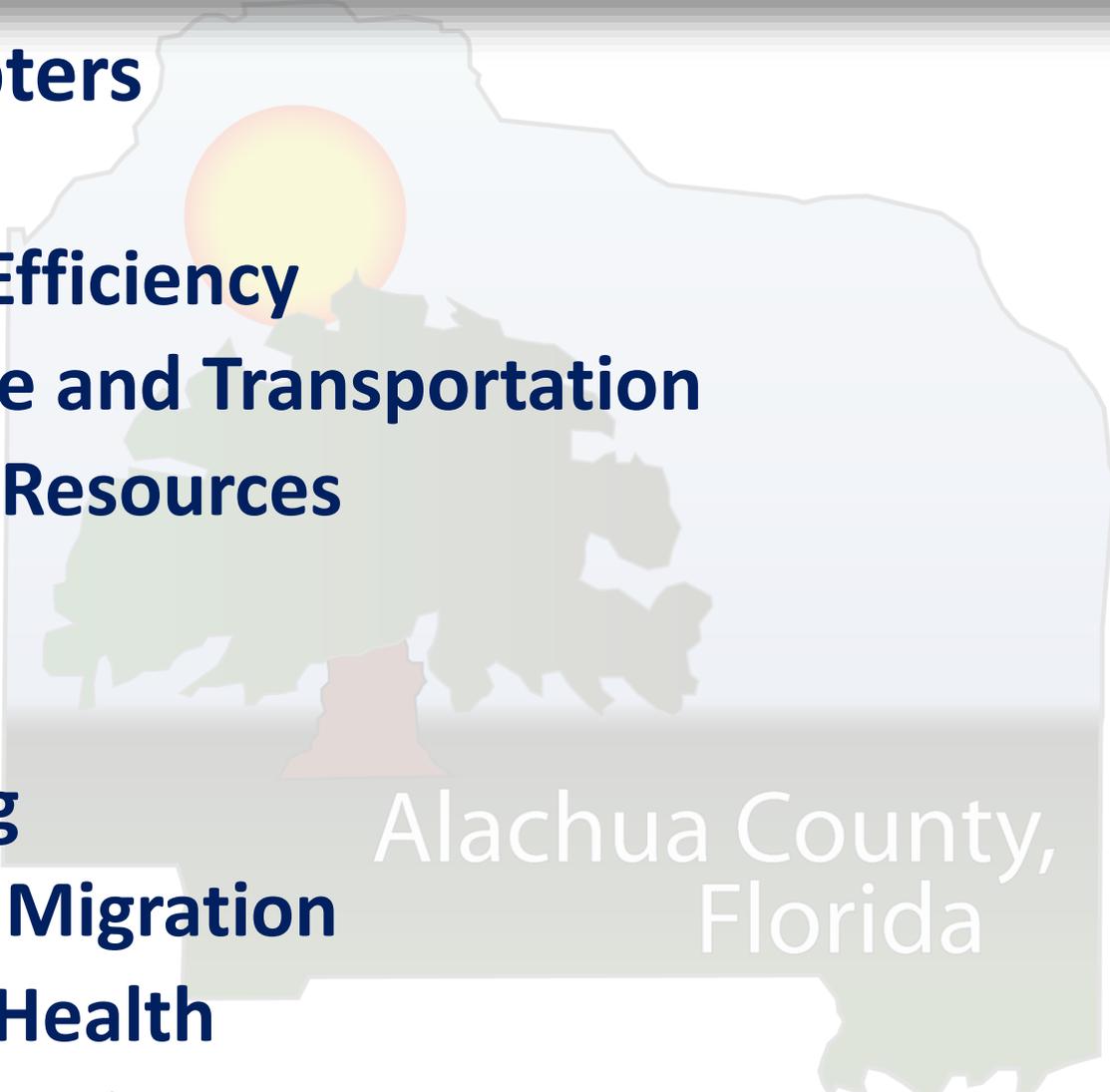
401 NW 6TH ST, GAINESVILLE, FL 32601

Climate Action Plan Outline



Major Chapters

1. Energy Efficiency
2. Land Use and Transportation
3. Natural Resources
4. Water
5. Waste
6. Flooding
7. Climate Migration
8. Mental Health
9. Food Security



Alachua County,
Florida

Climate Action Plan Outline



Themes

- 1. Equity**
- 2. Baseline and Targets**
- 3. Past and Current Efforts**
- 4. Future Strategies and Action Items**

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Florida

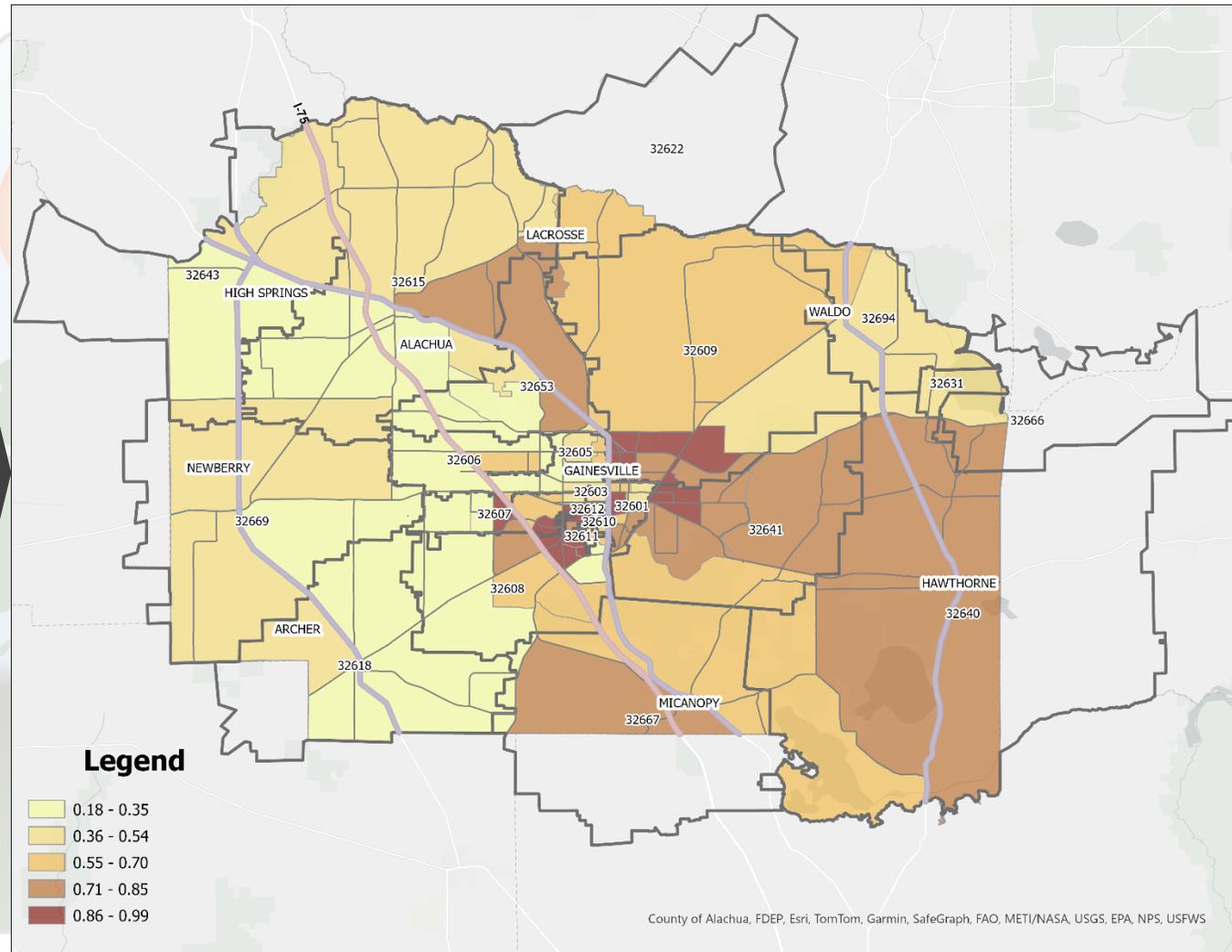
Climate Action Plan Timeline



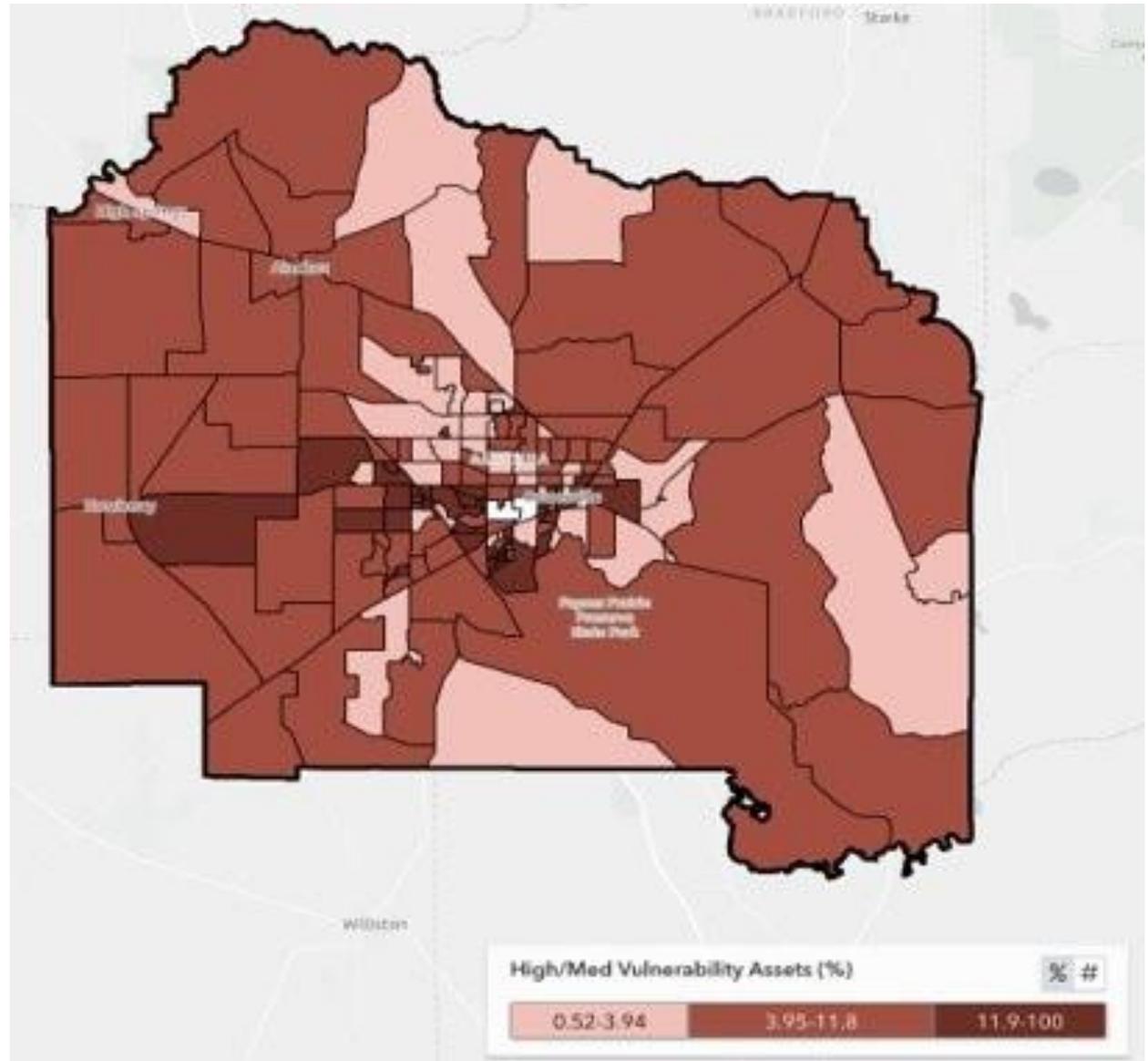
- **Alachua County EPD will hire Resiliency/Climate Position fall of 2024**
- **Stakeholder feedback will be received at the Climate Summit**
- **Ongoing Surveys**
- **Draft CAP will be released late 2024/early 2025**
- **Dashboard to be released with draft CAP**

Climate Action Plan – Energy Burden

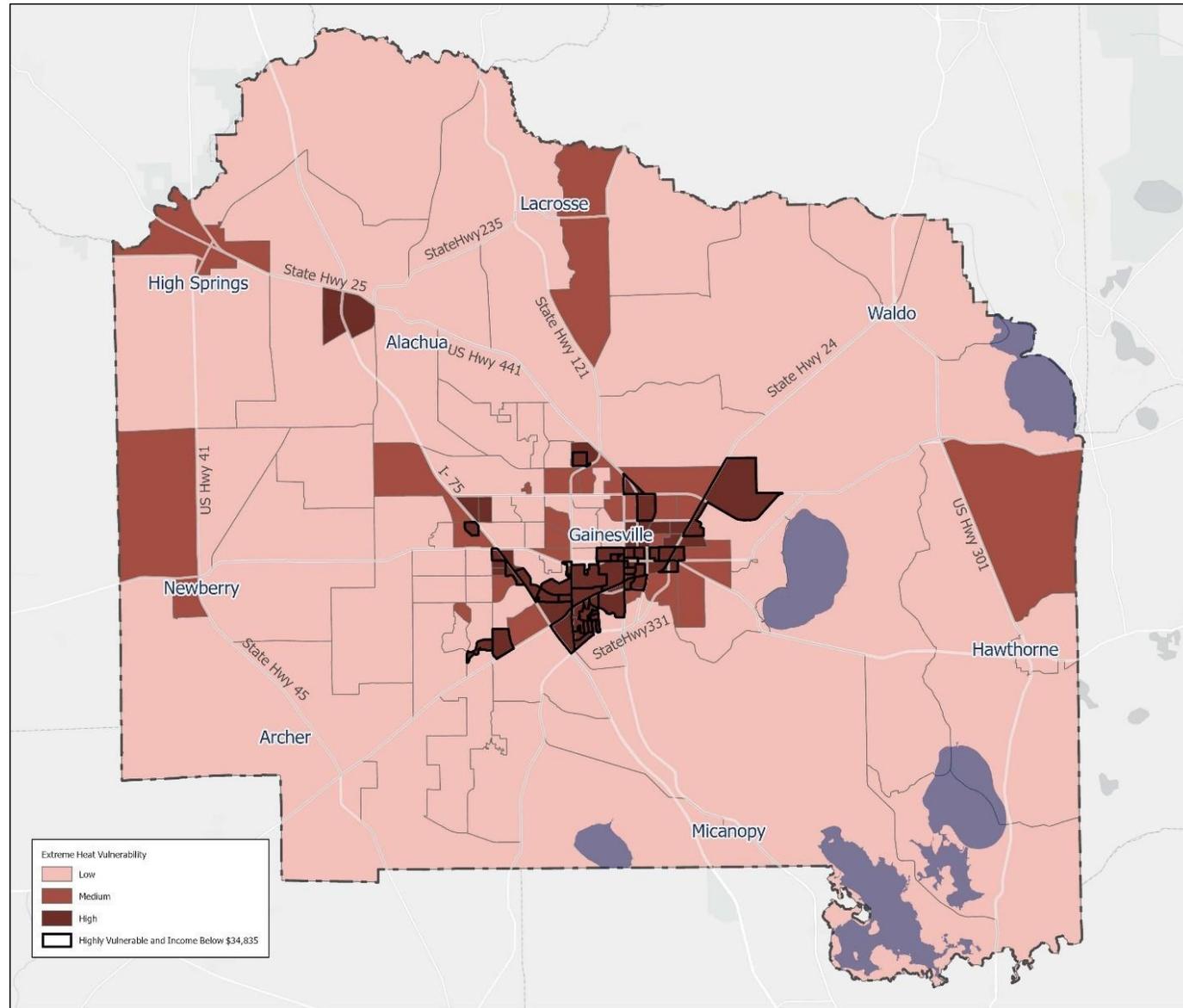
Based on census blocks



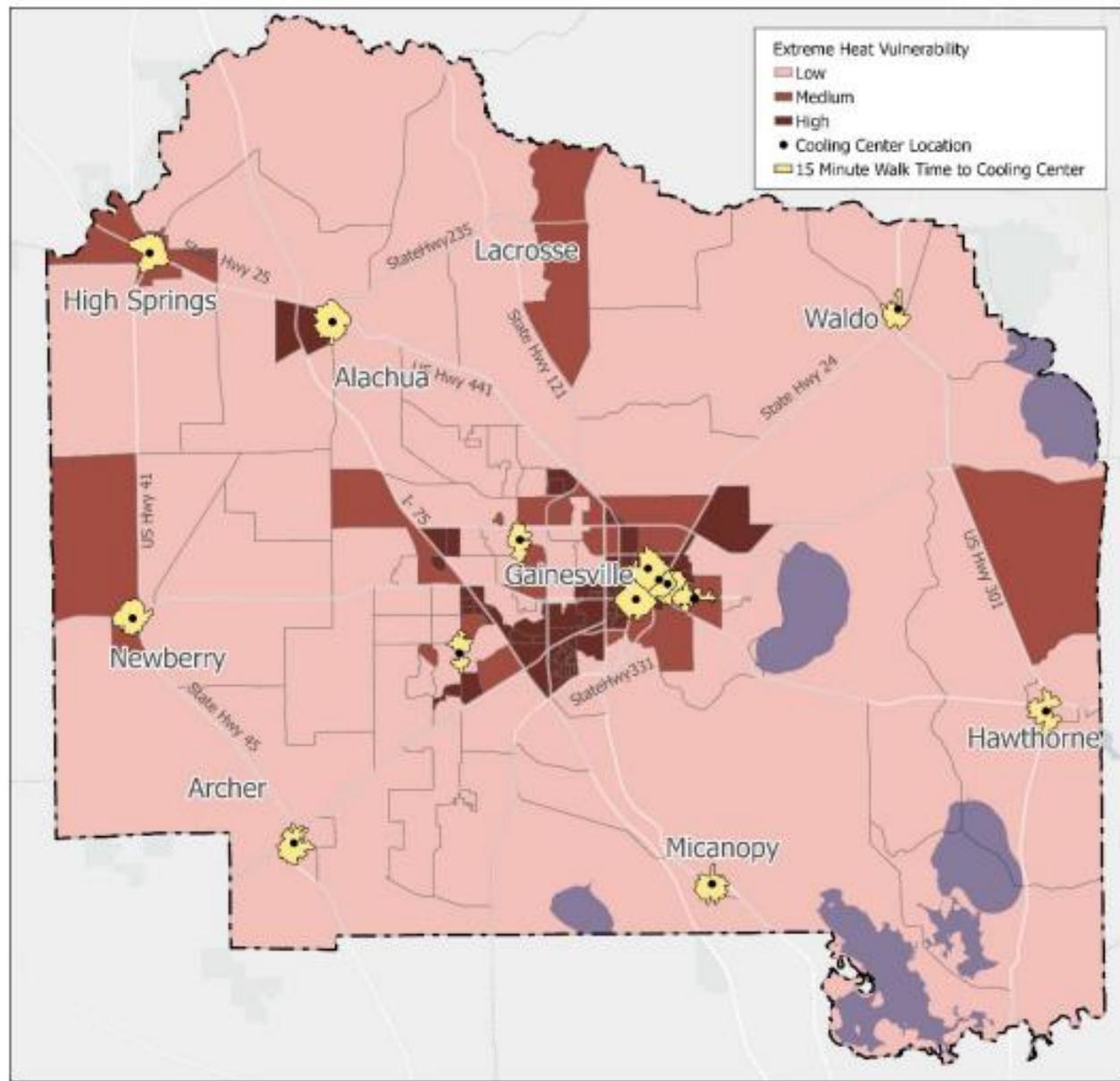
Climate Action Plan – Vulnerability to Flooding



Climate Action Plan — Vulnerability to Extreme Heat



Climate Action Plan – Vulnerability to Extreme Heat





Thank you!