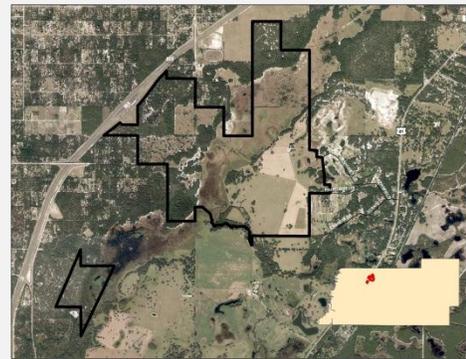




## Jumping Gully Conservation Area

### At A Glance...

- 1289 acres
- Purchased 2009-2015
- Located in Spring Hill, FL
- Supports marshes, wet prairies, and pasture to be restored

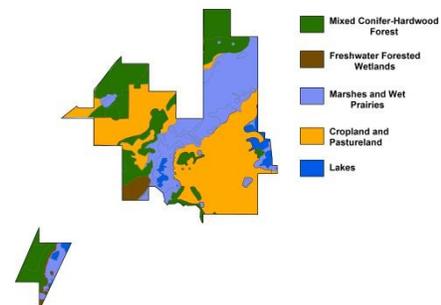


### Background

The Jumping Gully Conservation Area lies in north-central Pasco County, near Highway 41, and in the Crossbar-to-Starkey ecological corridor. It shares part of its western border with Crews Lake Park. The property is a notable example of conservation which began with an easement over a working ranch. The remaining property rights were then purchased, and the ranch became a core land to which we have added ten parcels. Jumping Gully Conservation Area is managed by Pasco County Natural Resources Division.

### Characteristics

Historical natural communities consisted of sandhill, scrub and flatwoods. The site now contains few upland natural communities. Ranchers in the 1940's cleared much of the natural vegetation, converting it to Bahia and Bermuda grass for cattle. Restoration of the pastures has begun. The most significant natural communities that remain form a mosaic of wet prairie and basin and depression marshes.



Dominant natural communities of Jumping Gully Conservation Area

# Jumping Gully Conservation Area

**R**anching has established exotic invasive species on site, such as tropical soda apple. The property also supports wildlife such as southern toads, green treefrogs, hognose snakes, gopher tortoises, six-lined racerunners, bluebirds, meadowlarks, swallow-tailed kites, Florida sandhill cranes, southeastern American kestrels, evening bats and Sherman's fox squirrels.

## Management



**S**ince assuming management, the County has placed a 5-year cattle lease on much of the pasture land. Cattle ranching will be phased out and restoration increased over time. The Natural Resources Division has been actively restoring 40 acres of pasture to native upland plant species, increasing gopher tortoise habitat and providing potential burrowing owl habitat. Dozens of donated longleaf pines have been planted, and kestrel boxes have been installed on utility poles.

## Value

**J**umping Gully Conservation Area has allowed staff to showcase the County's main natural resource objectives outlined in the County's regional conservation strategy. The objectives include protecting, connecting, conserving, enhancing and expanding habitats, uplands, wetlands, listed species, water resources, natural linkages, outdoor recreation, and viable populations of native plants and animals.

The area helps protect Crews Lake, the headwaters of the Pithlachascotee River, and the river's watershed. Deer, fox, and coyotes can be seen moving through the ecological corridor planned to connect Crossbar Ranch to Starkey Wilderness Preserve. Both the site and larger corridor provide habitat for numerous species, including grassland obligate wildlife.



### For more information:

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