Forest Legacy Project

Mobile Tensaw Delta, Mobile (Mobile &Baldwin County), Alabama

FUNDING HISTORY

Forest Legacy Program FY 2004 Funding	***$ 2,963,412***
FY 2004 Non−Federal Cost Share	***$ 2,189,088***
FY 2004 Project Costs	***$ 5,152,500***
FY 2004 Project Acres	***1,145***
Forest Legacy Funding to Date	***$ 2,963,412***
Total Project Costs	***$ 7,352,500***
Total Project Acres	***1,829***

FUNDING DETAILS

Tract Name	*Size (acres)*	*Tract Cost*	*FLP Funding*	*Non−Fed Cost Share*	*Status*
Phase I − Jacintoport (FY 04)	1,145	$ 5,152,500	$ 2,963,412	$ 2,189,088	Funded 2004
Phase II − Bayou Sara (FY 05)	684	$ 2,200,000	$ 1,183,000	$ 1,017,000	Funded 2005
Total	1,829	$ 7,352,500	$ 4,146,412	$ 3,206,088	

General Description − The Mobile−Tensaw Delta (MTD) Phase II project, located within Baldwin and Mobile counties, contributes to the conservation of Alabama's largest and most ecologically significant forested wetland ecosystem, and our nation's second largest delta which is recognized as a National Natural Landmark. Recent state efforts have secured 54,000 acres of forested wetland habitat within the 280,000 acre system. This effort has recently identified one threatened tract, totaling 684 acres, available for protection through the Forest Legacy Program. This tract is readily manageable, strategically located and extremely important to the continued progress made through recent federal and state conservation efforts. This tract would be secured through fee simple title acquisition by the Alabama Forever Wild Land Trust, and managed by the State Lands Division, within the AL Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources. The state's match would be at a 60/40 ratio.

PROJECT FEATURES

Important:

- A 2002 National Coastal Wetlands proposal from the SLD to the USFWS, requesting $1 Million in federal funds for purchase of 3,160 acres of adjacent wetlands was recognized as the highest scoring proposal in the nation.

- A focus area in the Mobile County portion of the MTD has recently been documented as an important travel corridor and year long habitat for Alabama's largest remaining black bear population.

- Ecologically unique tracts include over 30 miles of waterfront, upland longleaf pine and forested wetland communities that offer habitat to over 50 listed and rare species.

- Prevents additional fragmentation of the MTD's riparian and peripheral upland forest corridor.

- Some of the species identified by ADCNR include the gopher tortoise, black bear, green−fly orchid and bald eagle.

- Supports regional conservation efforts to protect the biodiversity, longleaf pine uplands, Atlantic white cedar riparian forests, maritime and live oak habitats crucial to neo−tropical songbirds and the historical/cultural resources of coastal lowlands.

- These upland longleaf pine and adjacent wetland communities are extremely threatened by development and listed as a Strategic Focus Area within the Lower Southwest FLA.

Threatened:

- Tract is in a priority one county, parts of which have experienced population growth of up to 42.9%. (1990−2000).

- Tracts adjoin commercial properties with more than 1 million feet of warehouse space and are completely within the city limits of Mobile and Saraland.

- Upland habitats peripheral to the MTD's forested wetlands are under tremendous pressure from residential developments, and have not been eligible for acquisition through recent wetland grants.

Strategic:

- The acquisition of all potential tracts will buffer the adjacent public lands such as 20,000 acres of USACE Tennessee−Tombigbee Waterway mitigation lands, the EPA's Mobile Bay National Estuary Program, and ADCNR's conservation lands.

- The MTD Phase I proposal approved by the USFS during FY2003−04 was recognized as the highest ranking proposal in the nation. This adjacent MTD Phase II proposal represents a continuation of the unfunded portions of the previous year's proposal (MTD Phase I).

- The tract identified for acquisition in Mobile County offers a unique opportunity to modify the State's recent conservation emphasis in a manner that will now focus on threatened upland habitats surrounding the MTD. The 684 acre Bayou Sara tract in Mobile County adjoins the Jacintoport tract (Alabama's 2004 FLP award), and will allow for a more comprehensive approach to the conservation and management of this unique ecosystem.

- These ecologically unique tracts enhance federal interests within the MTD, and the lands are physically connected through USACE and ADCNR lands, and the Mobile−Tensaw Delta waterways, to three federal/state owned Conservation Areas totaling more than 104,000 acres, which provide significant new upland access for coastal Alabama's citizens.

Ready:

- Constitutionally protected state cash match through the Alabama Forever Wild Land Trust (source of funds are oil and gas royalties.) Approximately $10 M are annually available as matching funds for land acquisition through the Forever Wild Land Trust.

- Multiple partners willing to support projects.

- The State Lands Division has secured an option agreement and appraisal on the target tract.

- This tract belongs to the Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation and proceeds will benefit the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

- Supporting parties include: Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources., Alabama Forest Resources Center, Alabama NGO's:The Alabama Wildlife Federation, The Nature Conservancy of Alabama, Alabama NGO's:The Coastal Land Trust, and the Alabama Black Bear Alliance., EPA supported Mobile Bay NEP &NOAA supported Weeks Bay Nat. Estuarine Reserve., NAWCC Gulf Coast Joint Venture Mobile Bay Initiative under the NA Waterfowl Plan, The US Army Corps of Engineer's MTDwetland for the Tennessee−Tombigbee Waterway. and US FishService through funding from National Coastal Wetlands program

For more information on the Forest Legacy Program, contact:

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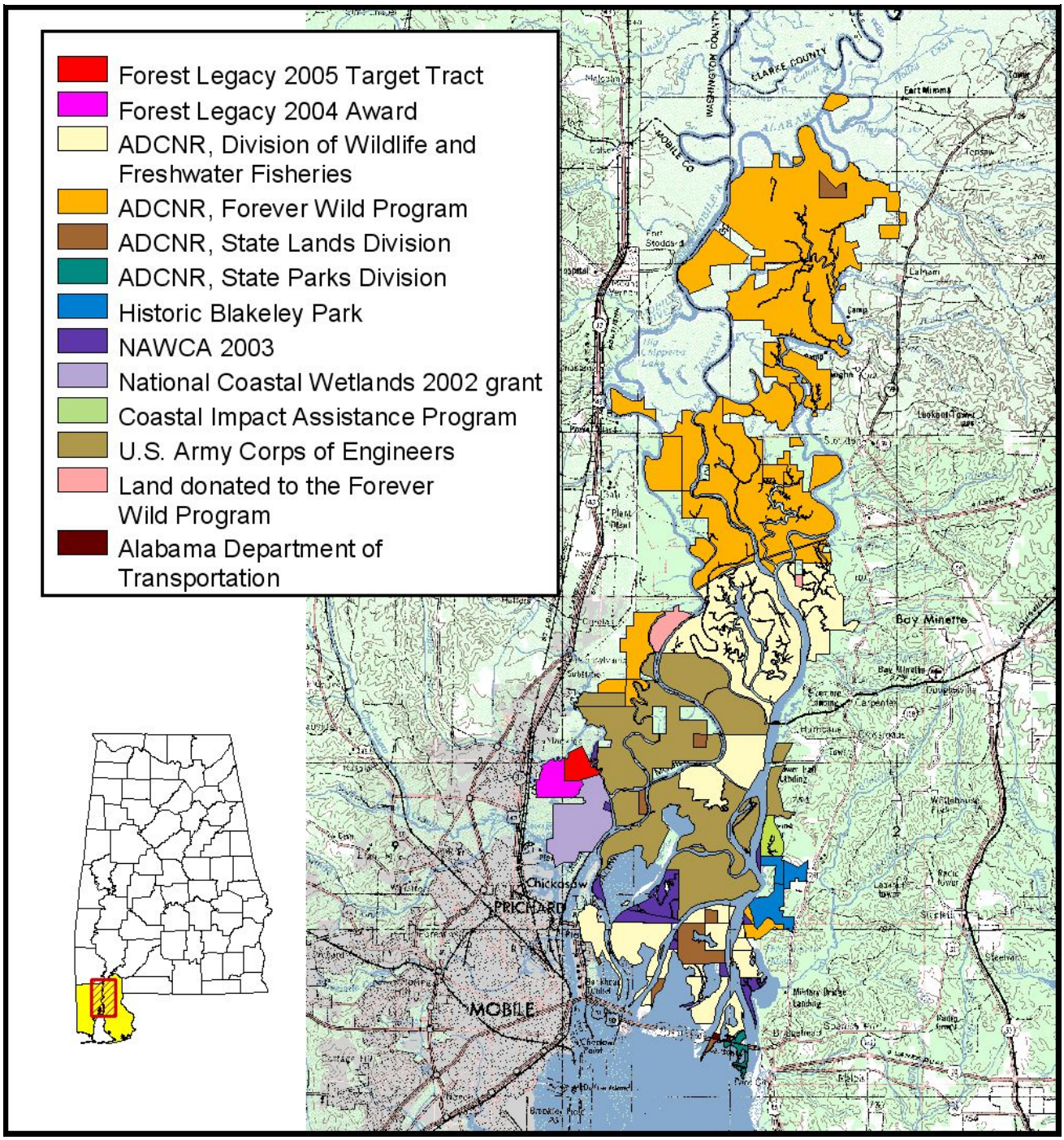
Forest Legacy 2005 Target Tract
Forest Legacy 2004 Award
ADCNR, Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries
ADCNR, Forever Wild Program
ADCNR, State Lands Division
ADCNR, State Parks Division
Historic Blakeley Park
NAWCA 2003
National Coastal Wetlands 2002 grant
Coastal Impact Assistance Program
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Land donated to the Forever Wild Program
Alabama Department of Transportation
Bay Minette
Chickasaw
PRICHARD
MOBILE