

GOETHE STATE FOREST (Alachua/Levy County)

Initial State Acquisition: *September, 1992*

Area: *53,460 Acres*

Primary Basin(s): *Wacasassa*

FERI Database Listings: *4 Projects*

Previous Restoration Activities -

Restoration activities by the Division on Goethe State Forest were initiated as early as 1997 and involved major road improvements on approximately **8 miles of Cow Creek Road**, the primary North-South access road on the tract by the same name. Other than routine road enhancement projects that have improved drainage patterns on various parts of the forest there hasn't been much else initiated on the forest in terms of wetland restoration

Current/Planned/Proposed Restoration Activities –

A proposal and plan for the hydrological restoration of the **Deerpen Pond**, located in the northern part of the forest in the **Black Prong Tract**, was developed in 2002. The project goal is to restore the natural hydroperiod of the pond by plugging an existing drainage ditch west of the pond. With funding from their mitigation program,

the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) surveyed the project site for elevation determinations in May - June, 2006. No further work has been done on this project.



GSF Figure 1: Hard Surface Low Water Crossing combined with 2 earthen ditch plugs to restore hydrology of nearby wetland during a timber harvesting operation on Cow Creek Tract

A small road project to correct the hydrology of an isolated cypress pond just southeast of **Two Trail Road** on the **Cow Creek Tract** was developed in 2006 and implemented by the Goethe State Forest management team in 2007. The project facilitated access during a timber harvesting operation with minimal ecological impact to the site.

The project involved the installation of **two** earthen ditch plugs and woody debris into a deeply rutted woods road that diverted wetland drainage from its natural drainage pattern. Using limerock material for armoring, a hard-surface low-water crossing was also installed where the service/logging road crossed the natural drainage to protect site integrity and water quality (**see Figure 1**).

Wetland Restoration Needs Assessment –

Assessment work was conducted on the Daniels Island and Cow Creek Tracts in August, 2007. A total of **230 points** were established, **126** of which were considered as “priority” sites (see **Executive Summary, page iii**). Of these, **47** may be candidates for mitigation projects, depending on the permitting requirements. An additional **13** sites, while considered high priority, are enhancements that can be taken care of by the Goethe SF management team as time permits. The following observations made during the assessment are among the assessment findings. Additional information about the assessment is available upon request from the Division of Forestry.

1. Since the completion of the Cow Creek Road Improvement Project in 1999 several sections of the road have deteriorated and some of the culverts have become blocked with debris; also, now with a better understanding of the surface flow patterns, a few of the culverts should be moved to improve cross drainage.
2. Old firelines that are used as trails can be plugged to extend local hydroperiods.
3. An opportunity for restoration with significant ecological benefit exists on the Cow Creek Tract where wildfire suppression efforts in 2007 left a wide furrow and berm that may be affecting natural drainage patterns. The Goethe management team plans to re-habilitate the fireline in the spring of 2008 (see **Figure 2**).
4. Numerous unimproved at-grade roads on both tracts where timber has been marked for harvesting should be stabilized with the appropriate armoring materials prior to harvest operations.



GSF Figure 2: Fireline constructed during wildfire suppression efforts should be plugged and re-habilitated to restore wetland hydrology and plant community.