

\$14 million deal adds to Volusia holdings

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An Orlando-area developer recently bought more than 1,300 acres on State Road 415, expanding his already massive landholdings along a rural highway in an area of southwest Volusia facing tremendous growth pressures.

Daryl Carter, a real-estate developer and speculator who rubs elbows with Central Florida's most powerful politicians, plunked down \$14 million last month for the property west of S.R. 415 known as the Akers Quail Ranch.

The county had been eyeing the ranch to preserve it. It lies east of Deltona and is mostly pine flatwoods.

It's unclear what Carter has planned for his new acquisition along



CARTER: He paid \$14 million for 1,300 acres in Volusia.

S.R. 415, a two-lane road linking Daytona Beach to the north and Seminole County to the south.

He declined to comment last week.

The entity that sold it to Carter, Luthra Properties, spent \$6.8 million for the property in 2004, records show.

Administrators for the county and Deltona said Carter had not approached them with any plans for the 1,300-acre site, which abuts a larger tract of nearly 5,000 acres proposed for a mega-development in Deltona.

One resident along busy S.R. 415 said she starts to worry when developers buy up swaths of property.

"The obvious question is: What are his plans going to be?" said Wanda Van Dam, a retired medical-equipment saleswoman who lives on 50 acres in Osteen near S.R. 415.

"It obviously remains to be seen," she said, "whether it's going to be good news or bad news."

Both of Carter's large parcels have agricultural or low-density zonings.

"I'm guessing that the out-of-town owner thinks he's going to get a potential annexation — I think that's the only way they would develop it," County Council member Pat Northey said. "I don't think it's something the council would allow."

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