

State to preserve Triple N Ranch

The Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission approved the purchase Thursday of 8,972 acres of the Triple N Ranch near Holopaw for preservation.

If Gov. Lawton Chiles and the Cabinet approve the use of Preservation 2000 funds for the project, the commission will manage the land as part of the Bull Creek Wildlife Management Area, a spokesman said. The \$8.3 million purchase is a joint project with the St. Johns River Water Management District.

Scientists say the Osceola County land is precious because it is home to such rare species as crested caracaras, swallow-tailed kites and various carnivorous plants. The ranch will provide a wildlife corridor to the Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area, biologists say.

Water Management District officials said the land is important to them because it includes the headwaters of Crabgrass Creek, which is the headwaters of the St. Johns River.