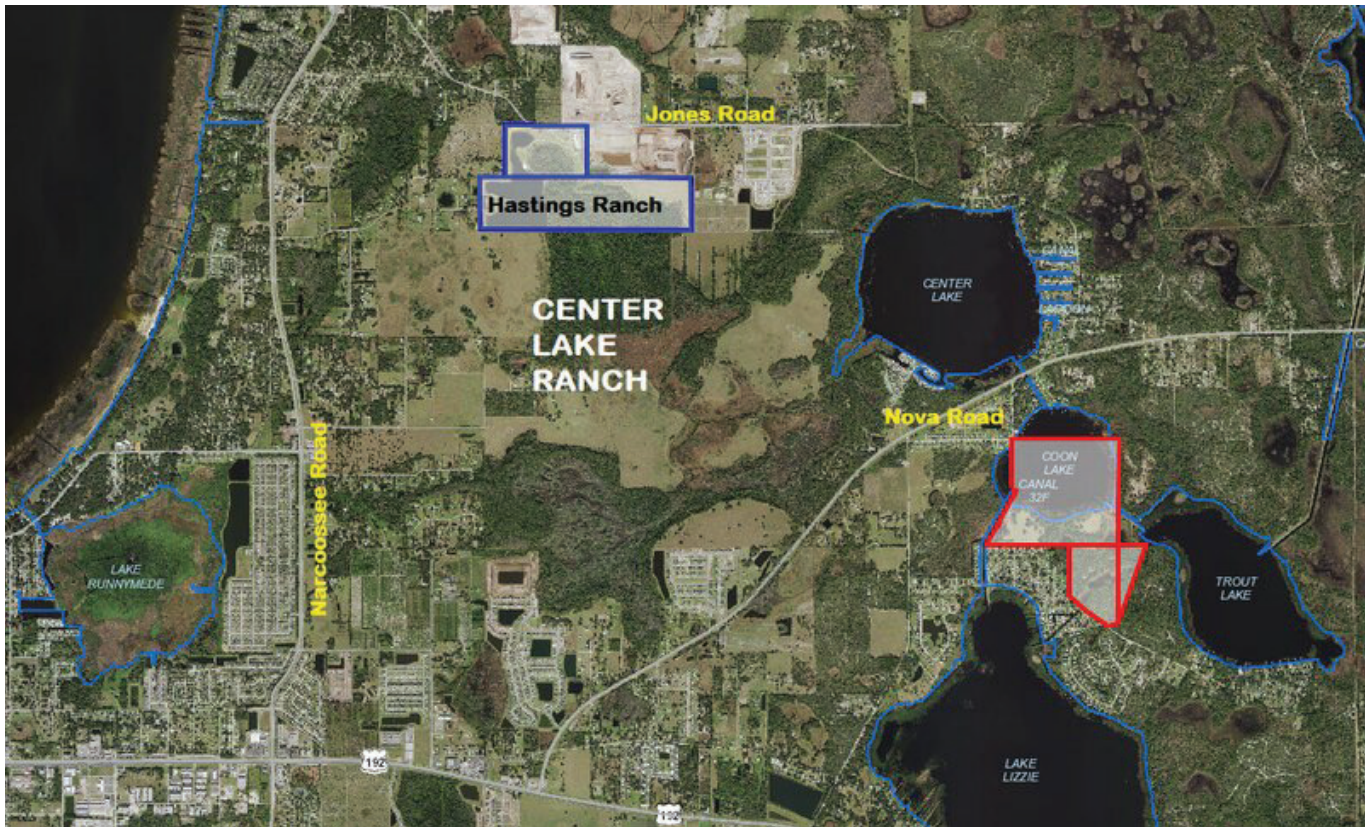


# Couple who sold ranch to St. Cloud for future park reinvest in Osceola

By LAURA KINSLER  
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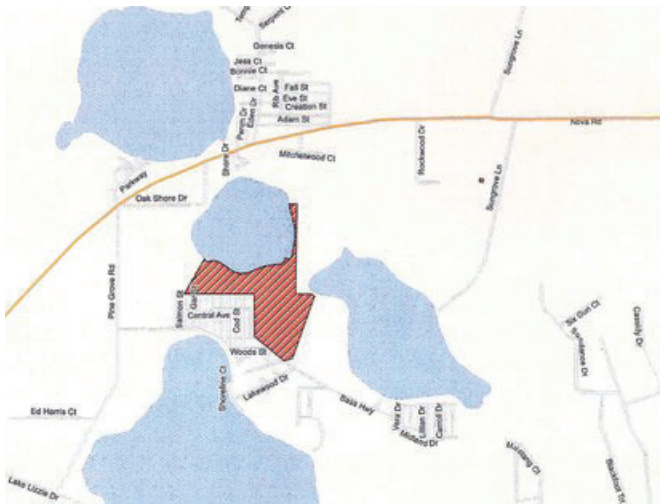


George and Debbie Hastings told their ranch and wedding venue on Jones Road to the City of St. Cloud for a future city park. They plan to relocate their cattle and build a new home on Coon Lake. (Osceola County Property Appraiser)

George and Debbie Hastings, who sold their beloved ranch on Jones Road to the City of St. Cloud this month, have found another slice of paradise to preserve in Osceola County.

The city paid \$5.75 million for the **Hastings Ranch & Farm** property, which is surrounded by new residential development. Debbie Hastings told **GrowthSpotter** they had originally bought the land as a place to raise cattle and horses, and to camp and fish. Over the years, the compound evolved into a popular wedding and event venue and fall festival business.

The city had been pursuing the 219.4 acres for more than a year before voting in September to approve the purchase, which closed on Dec. 14.



#### OSCEOLA COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS

Daryl Carter-led investment group buys Osceola lakefront property for \$1.3M

AUG 16, 2016 AT 5:56 PM

group bought a three-parcel assemblage on Coon Lake in 2016 for \$1.3 million. He sold it to the Hastings this week for \$3.5 million.

“Anytime we can take \$1.3 million and turn it into \$3.5 million in four years, I’ll do that deal,” Carter said.

Located just east of Pine Grove Road, the land is on the Alligator Chain of Lakes and has canals linking it to Center Lake, Trout Lake and Lake Lizzie. The total sale involved 236.5 acres, though only 100 acres is usable. The property already has an agricultural exemption.

Their new neighbor will be Preston Tyson, who already sold his property on the west side of Pine Grove Road for a new subdivision and has filed preliminary plans for another 296 homes on the 92-acres across from his homestead.

The Hastings said they feel grateful to have been able to save two Narcoossee area ranches for future generations to enjoy and to have a site where they can continue their agritourism business and philanthropic work.

“That area is so hot right now. You’ve got all the big builders looking in that general area,” George Hastings said. “I’m pretty sure they were looking at the Coon Lake property, too. I felt like Daryl wanted to do the right thing, too.”

“There’s a lot of growth happening in the Narcoossee area, and that’s great because it creates jobs,” Debbie Hastings said. “But there has to be a balance. That’s why we chose to go the route of selling it for a park instead of a housing development.”

George Hastings said they wanted to find another ranch property nearby where they could build a home and move the animals. “There’s not a lot of options left within the Urban Growth Boundary of Osceola County,” he said. “That’s where we wanted to be. All of our family members live in close vicinity.”

It just so happened, broker Daryl Carter — who sold them the Jones Road property — had a listing that met their requirements. A Carter-led investment

Laura Kinsler



Laura Kinsler is the editor of GrowthSpotter. She joined the company in 2015 as Osceola County reporter after a 15-year career at the Tampa Tribune. A proud graduate of the University of Georgia’s Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication, Laura follows the Georgia Bulldogs religiously.