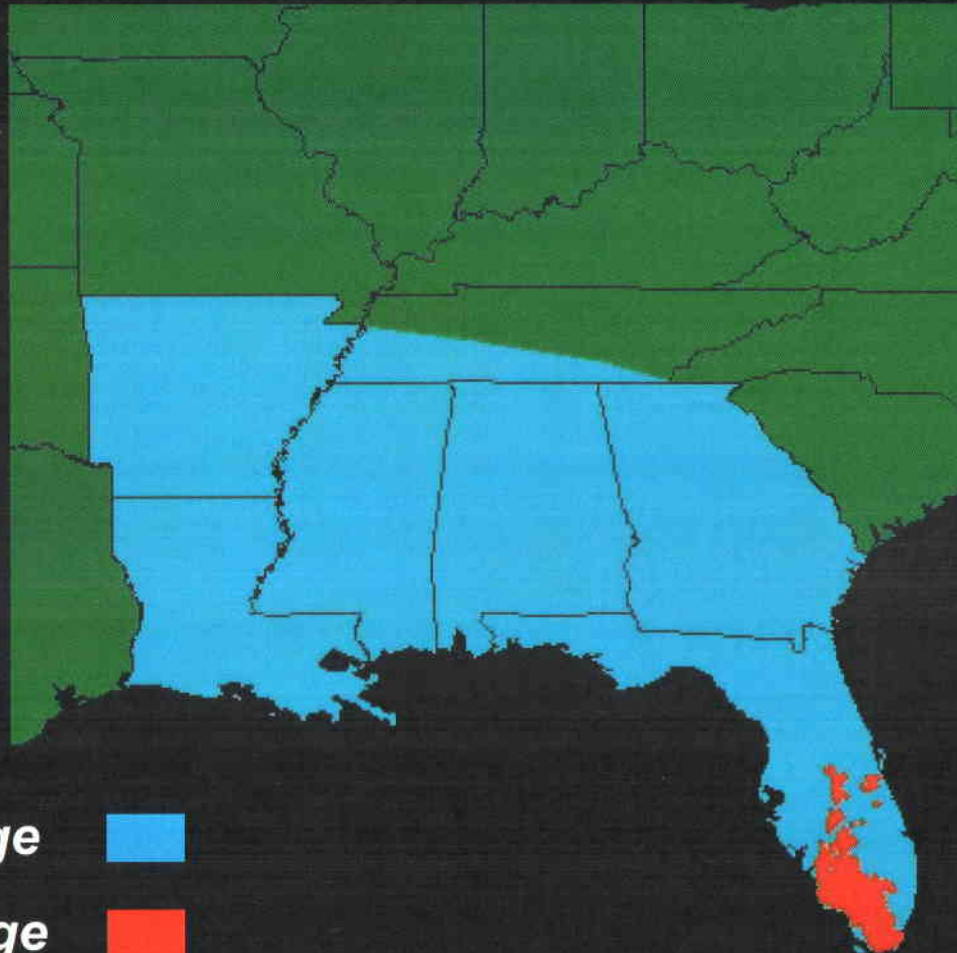


Rural Lands Stewardship – An Opportunity for Enhancing Florida Panther Conservation



Darrell Land, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Former and Current Range of Florida Panthers in the Southeastern United States



Population size
estimated to be
around 100
panthers

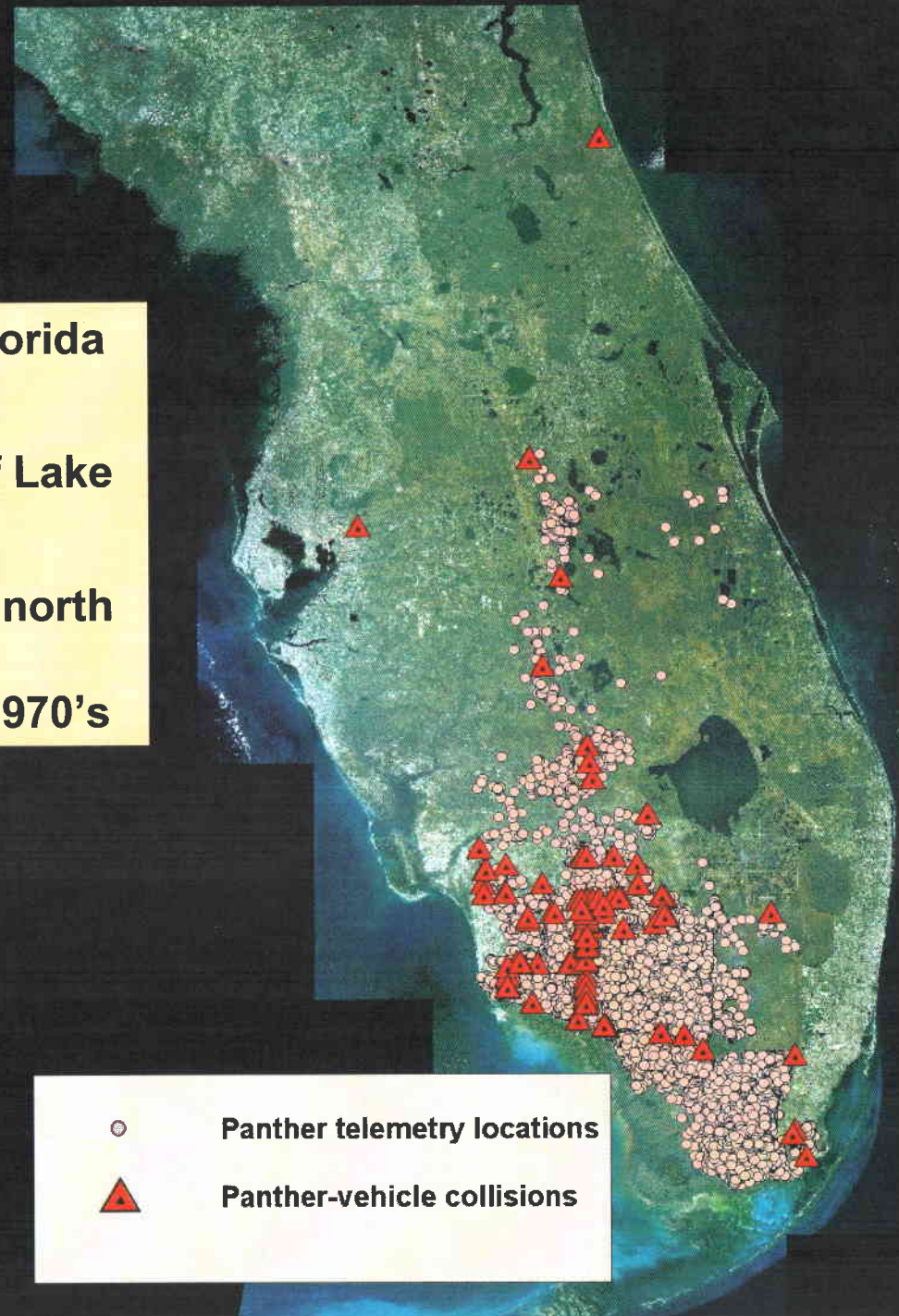
Former Range ■

Current Range ■

Panthers occur throughout the Florida peninsula

Most panthers are found south of Lake Okeechobee

No females have been confirmed north of Lake Okeechobee and the Caloosahatchee River since the 1970's



Panther telemetry locations



Panther-vehicle collisions

A photograph of a Florida Panther's paw prints in the sand. The prints are arranged in a line, with a dark shadow of the animal's body cast across the lower portion of the image. A light blue text box is overlaid in the center, containing the title and two bullet points.

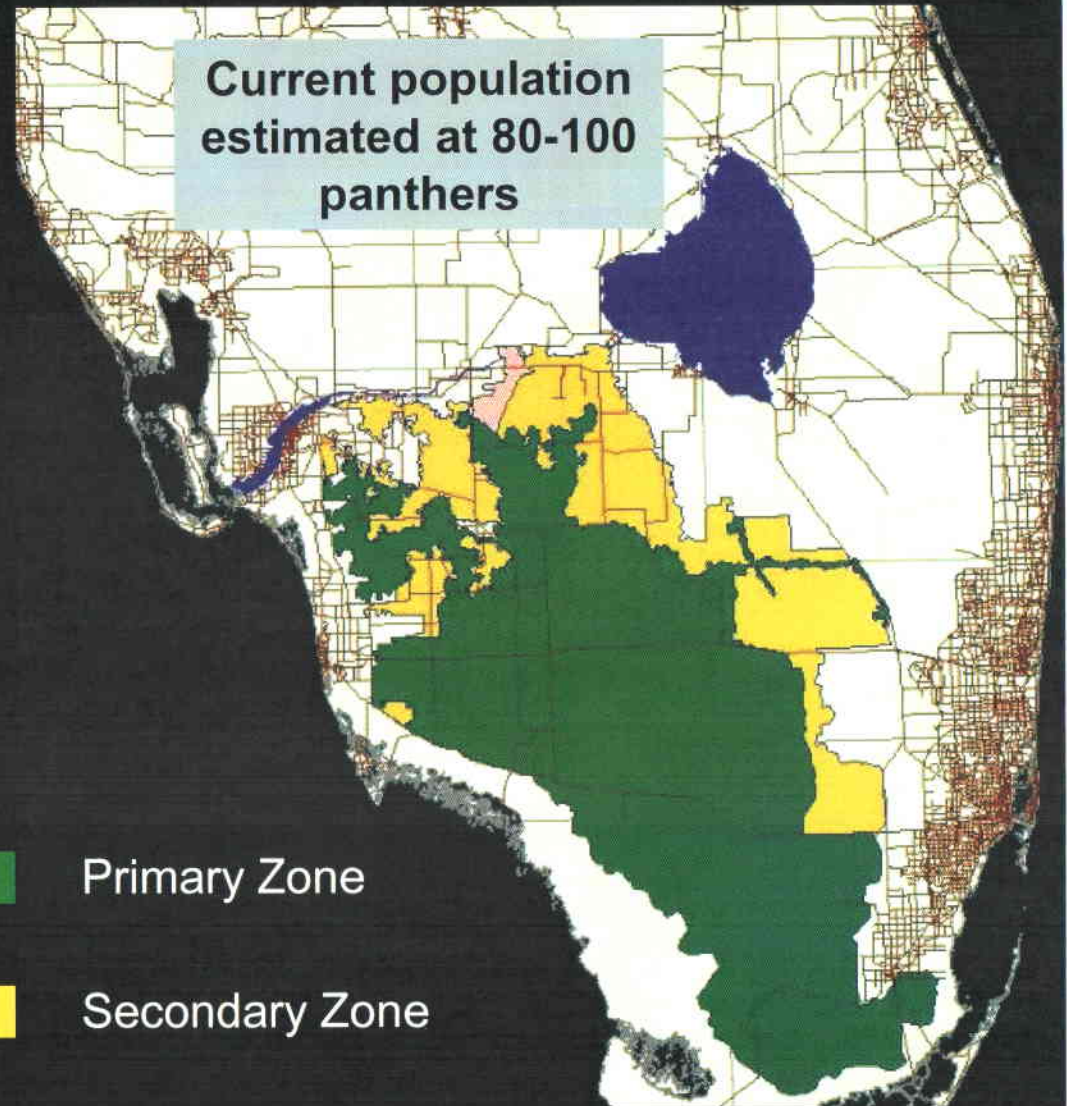
Long-term Florida Panther Conservation Needs




- Protect current breeding range**

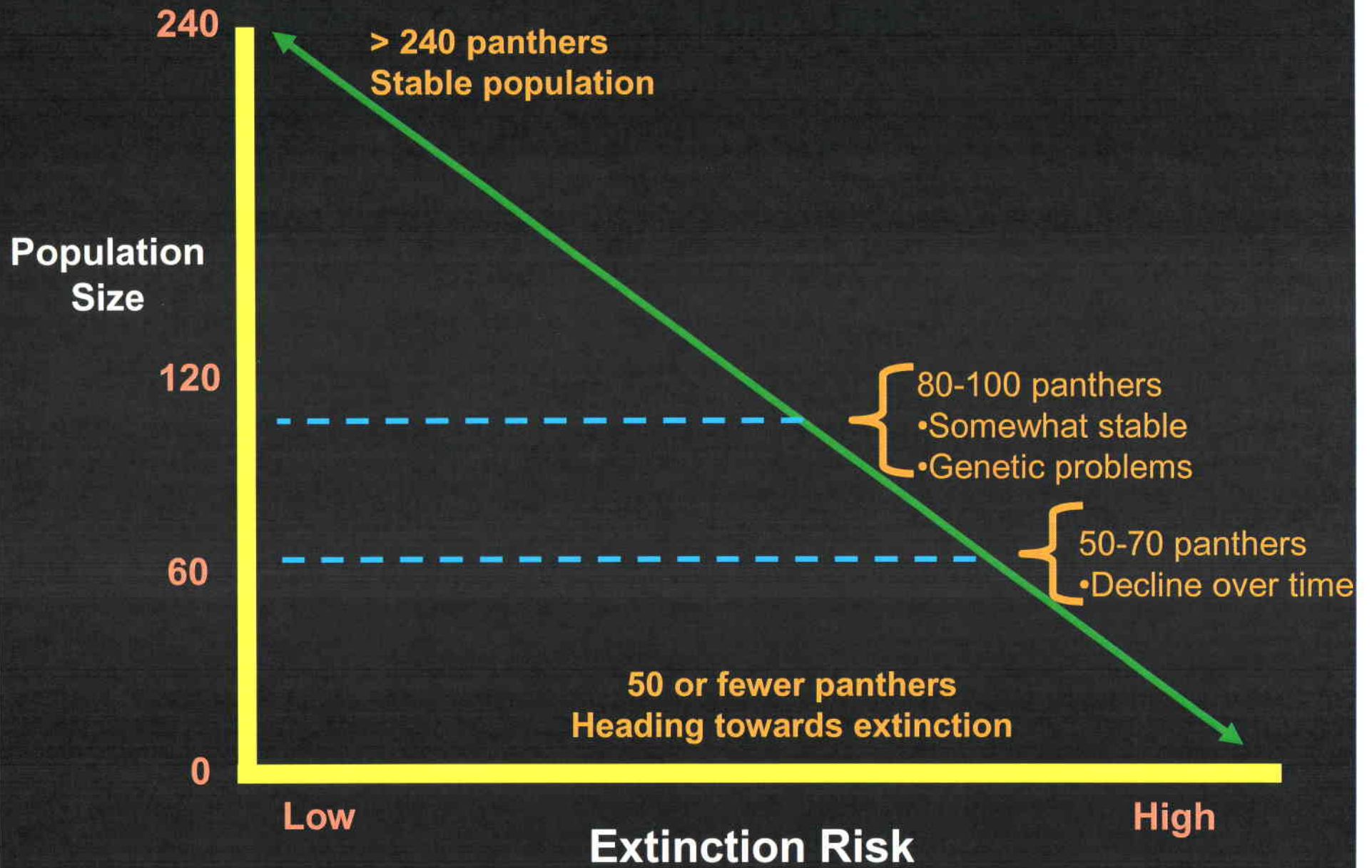
- Expand breeding range northward**



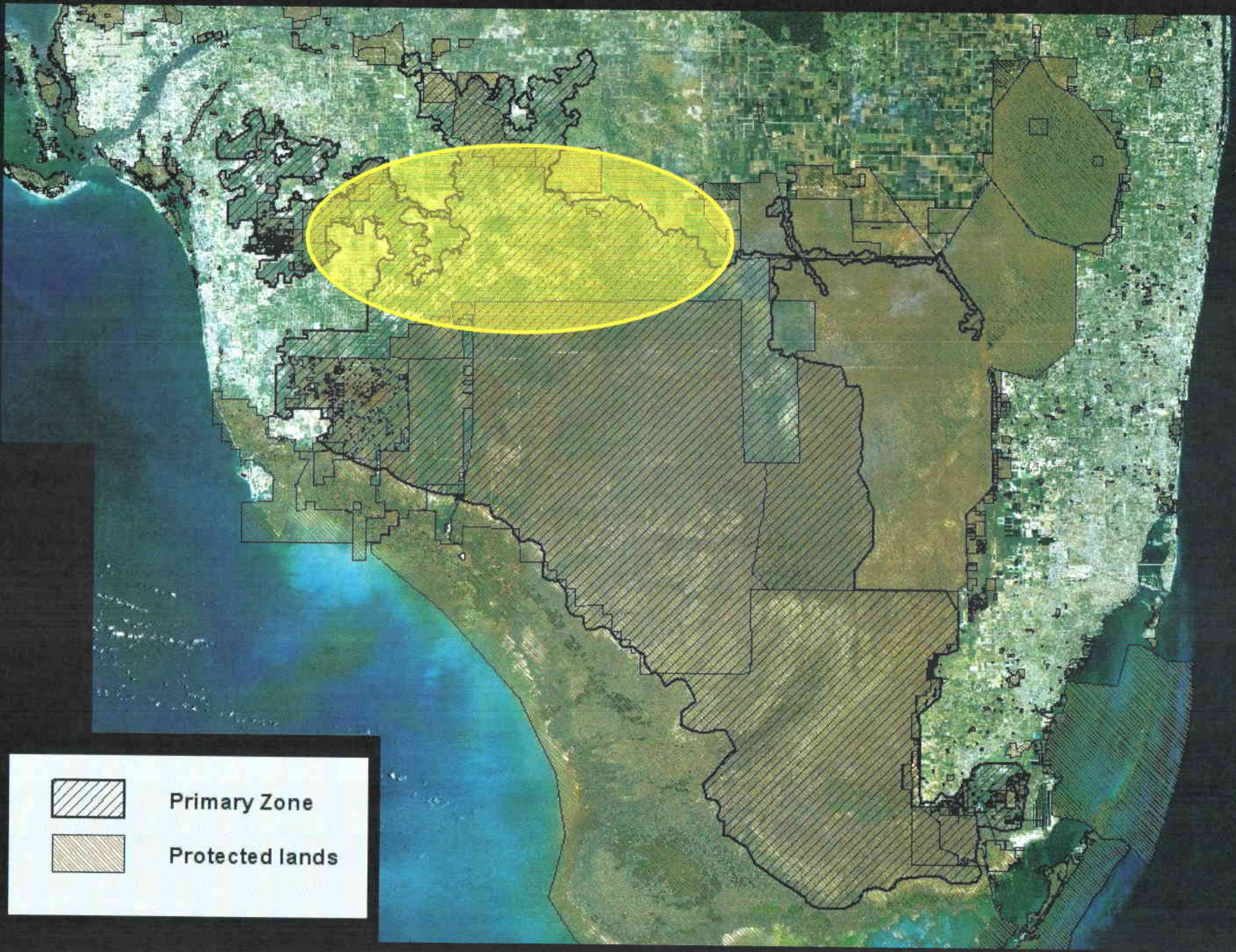
Kautz et al. 2006. How much is enough? Landscape scale conservation for the Florida panther. *Biological Conservation* 130: 118-133.



-  Primary Zone
-  Secondary Zone
-  Dispersal Zone



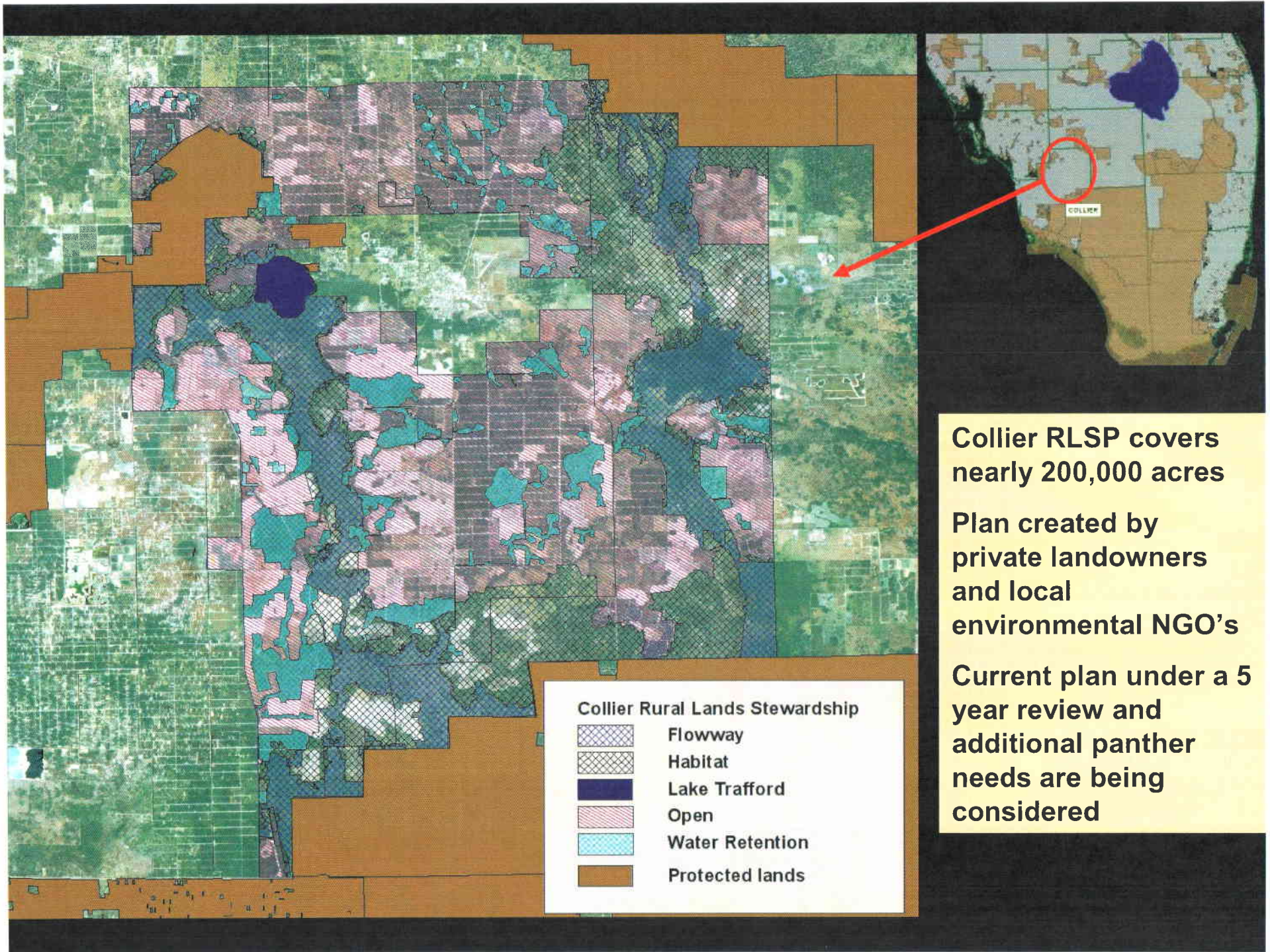




Primary Zone



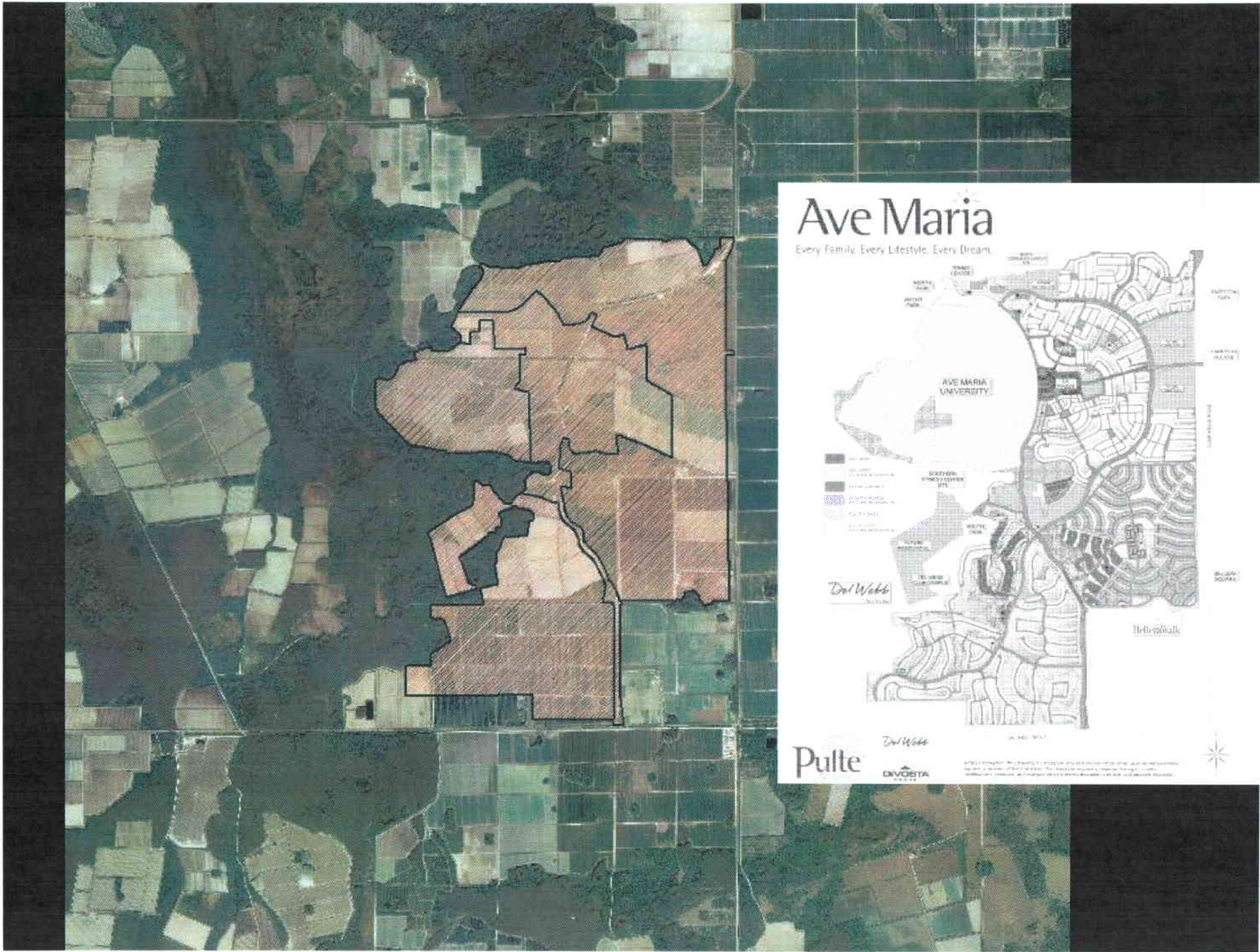
Protected lands



Collier RLSP covers nearly 200,000 acres

Plan created by private landowners and local environmental NGO's

Current plan under a 5 year review and additional panther needs are being considered



Ave Maria

Every Family. Every Lifestyle. Every Dream.

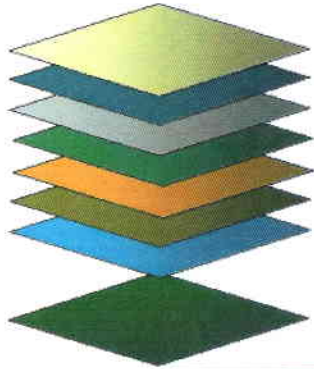


Pulte
Del Webb
DIVORSA

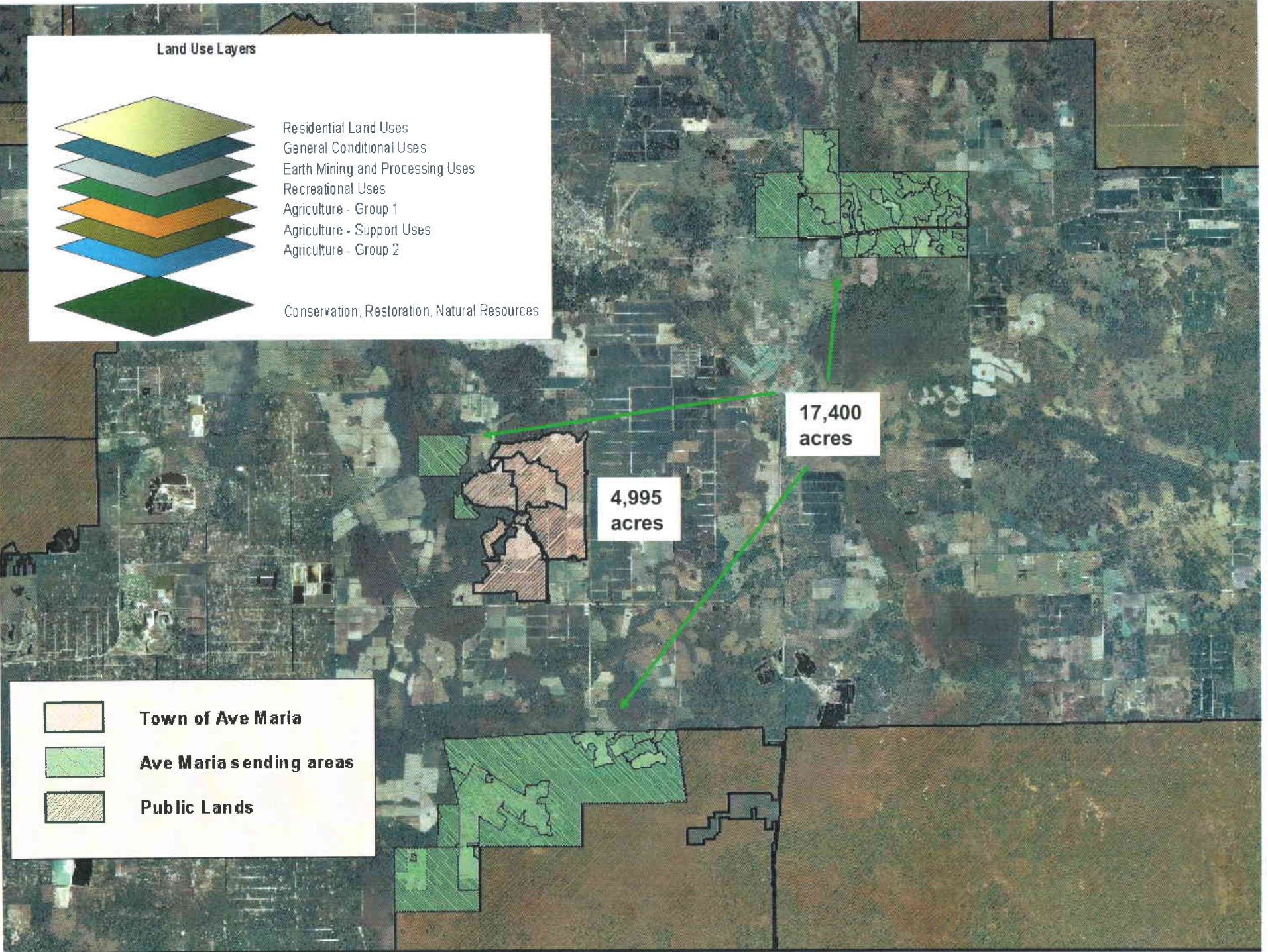
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Land Use Layers



- Residential Land Uses
- General Conditional Uses
- Earth Mining and Processing Uses
- Recreational Uses
- Agriculture - Group 1
- Agriculture - Support Uses
- Agriculture - Group 2
- Conservation, Restoration, Natural Resources



Town of Ave Maria



Ave Maria sending areas



Public Lands

Collier Rural Lands Stewardship



Flowway



Habitat



Lake Trafford



Open



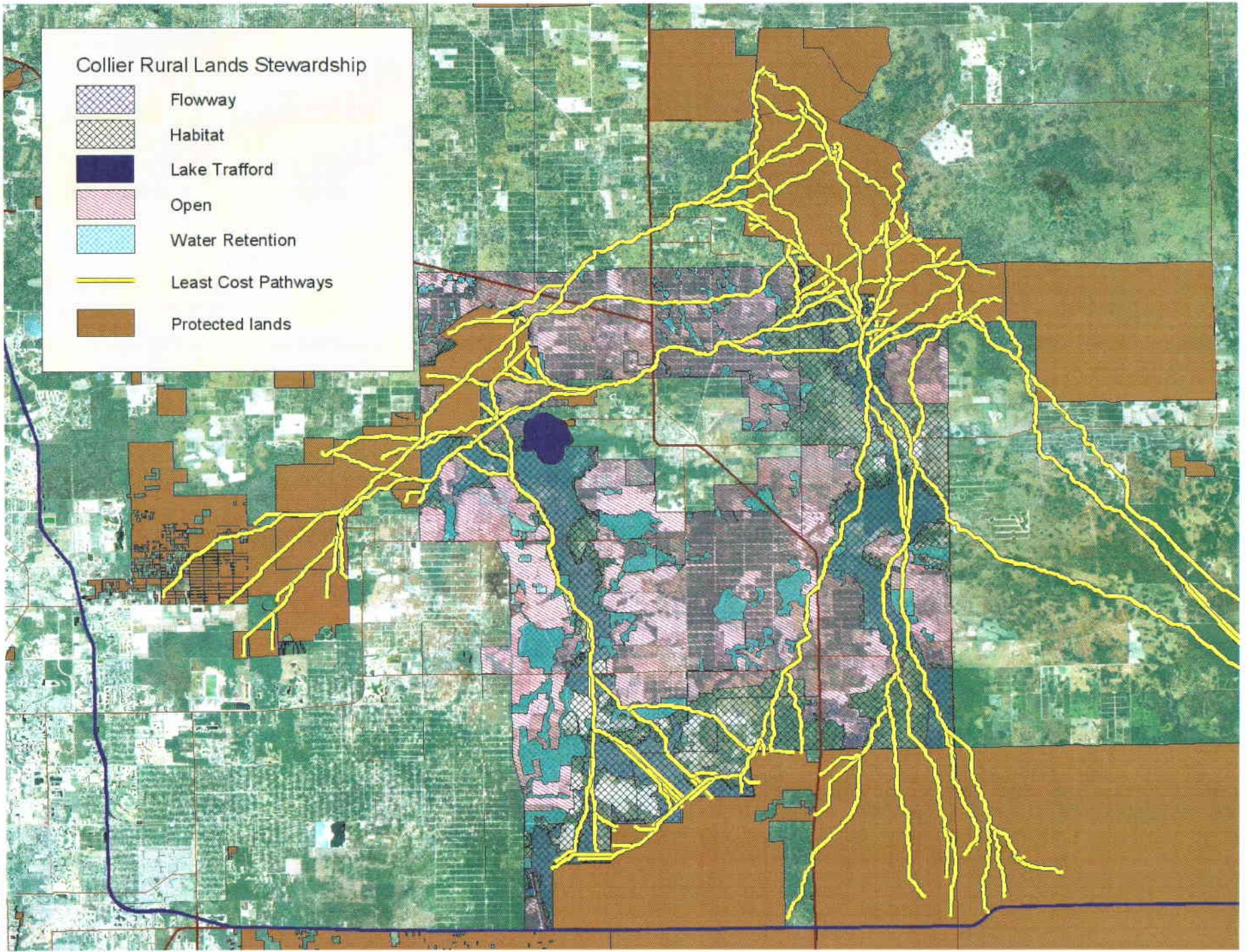
Water Retention



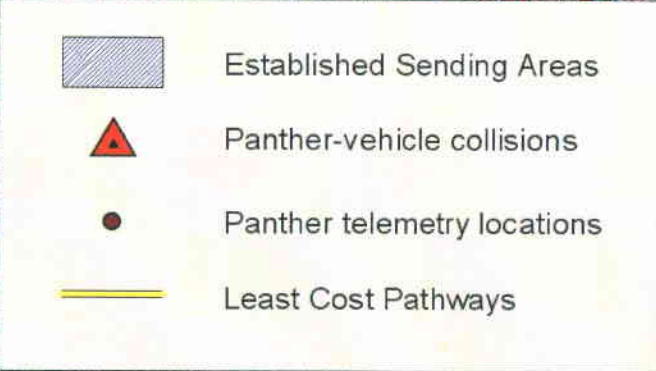
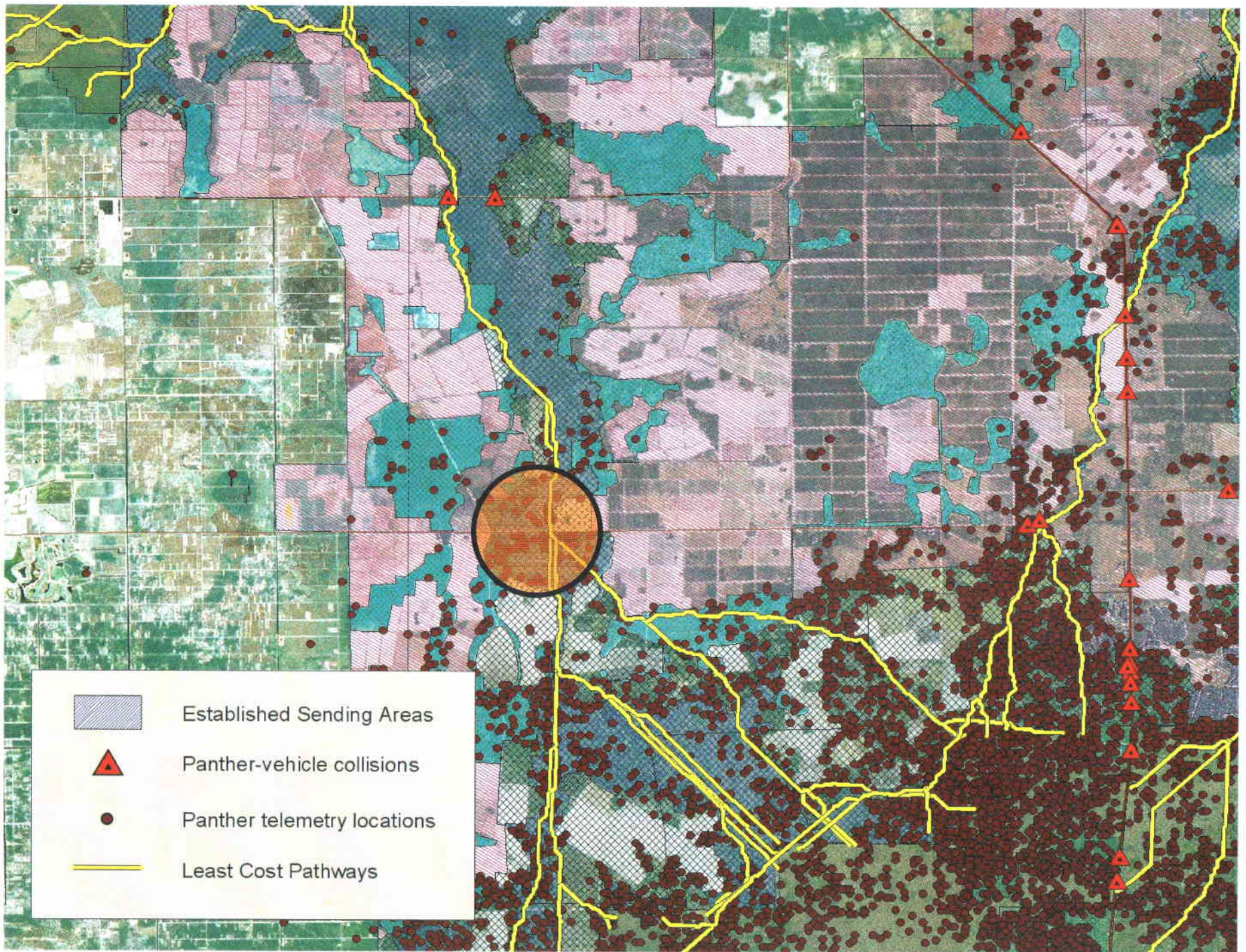
Least Cost Pathways

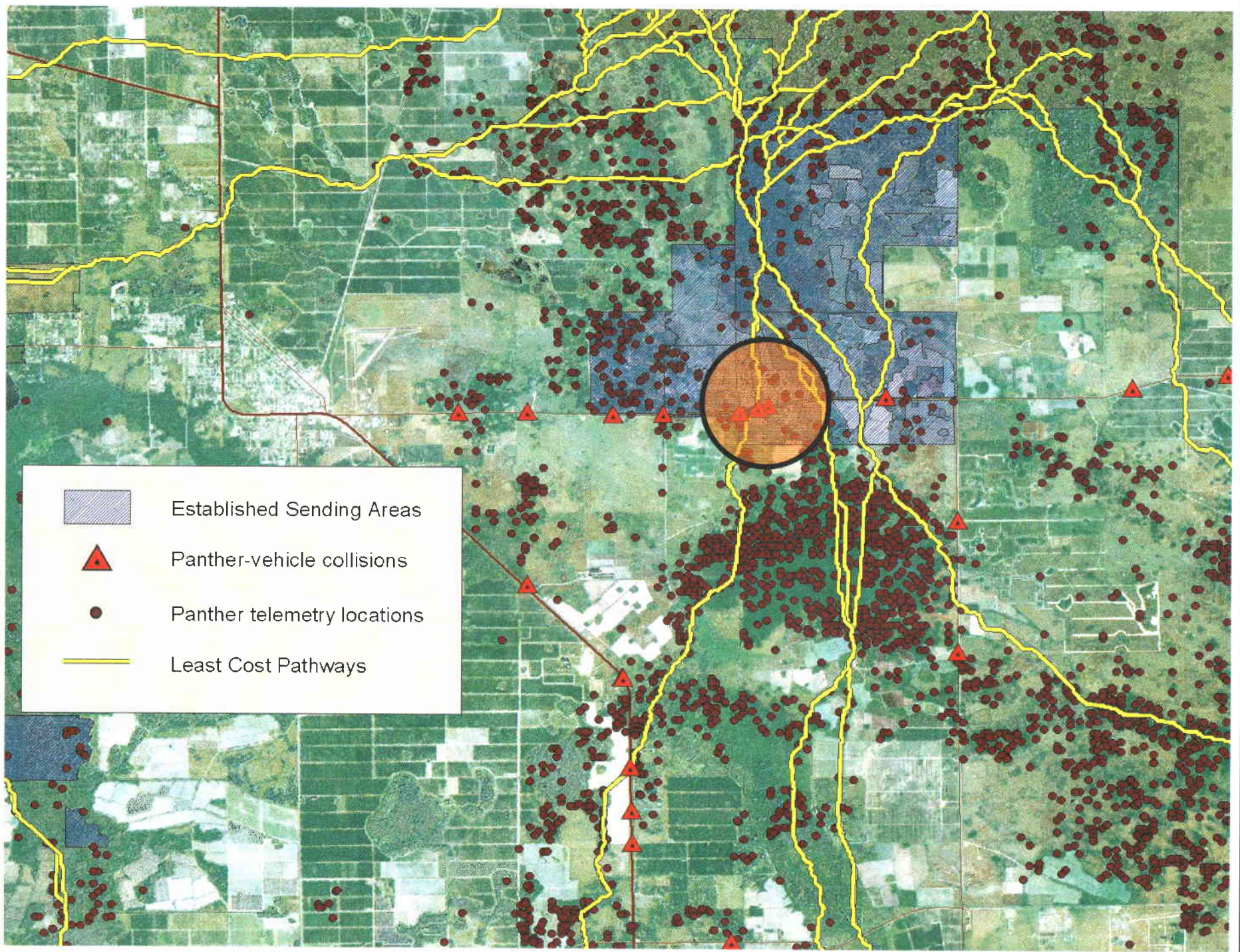


Protected lands

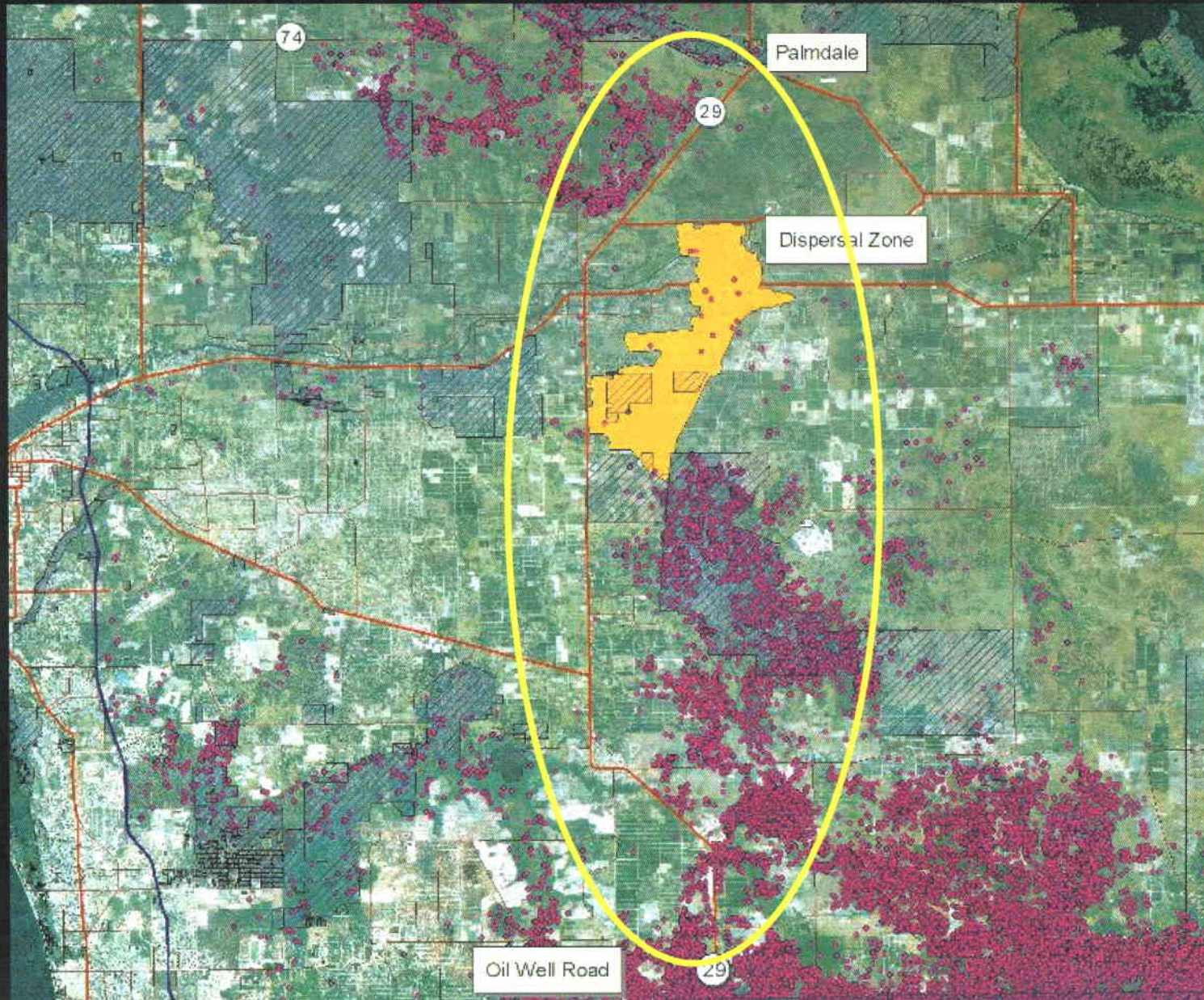


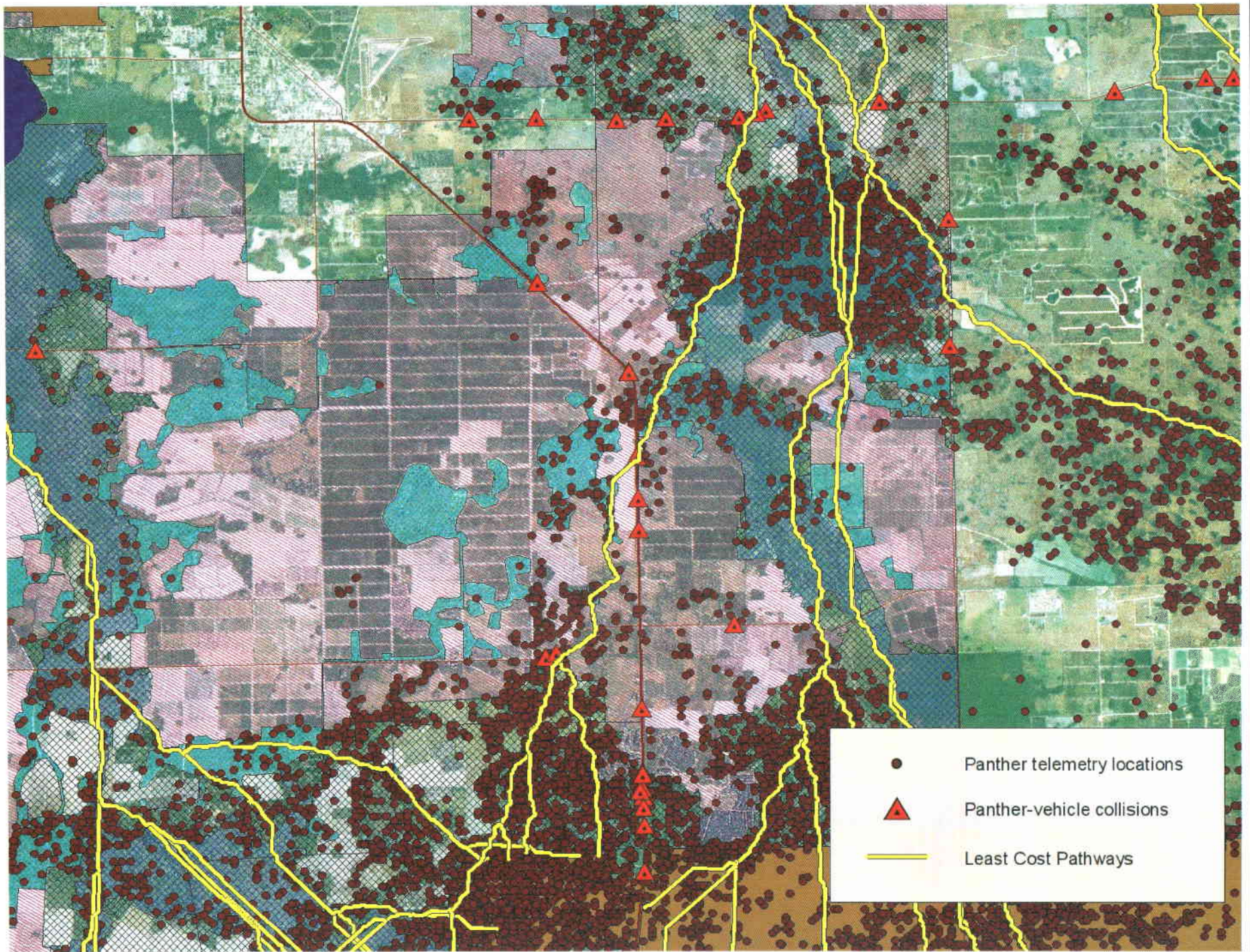


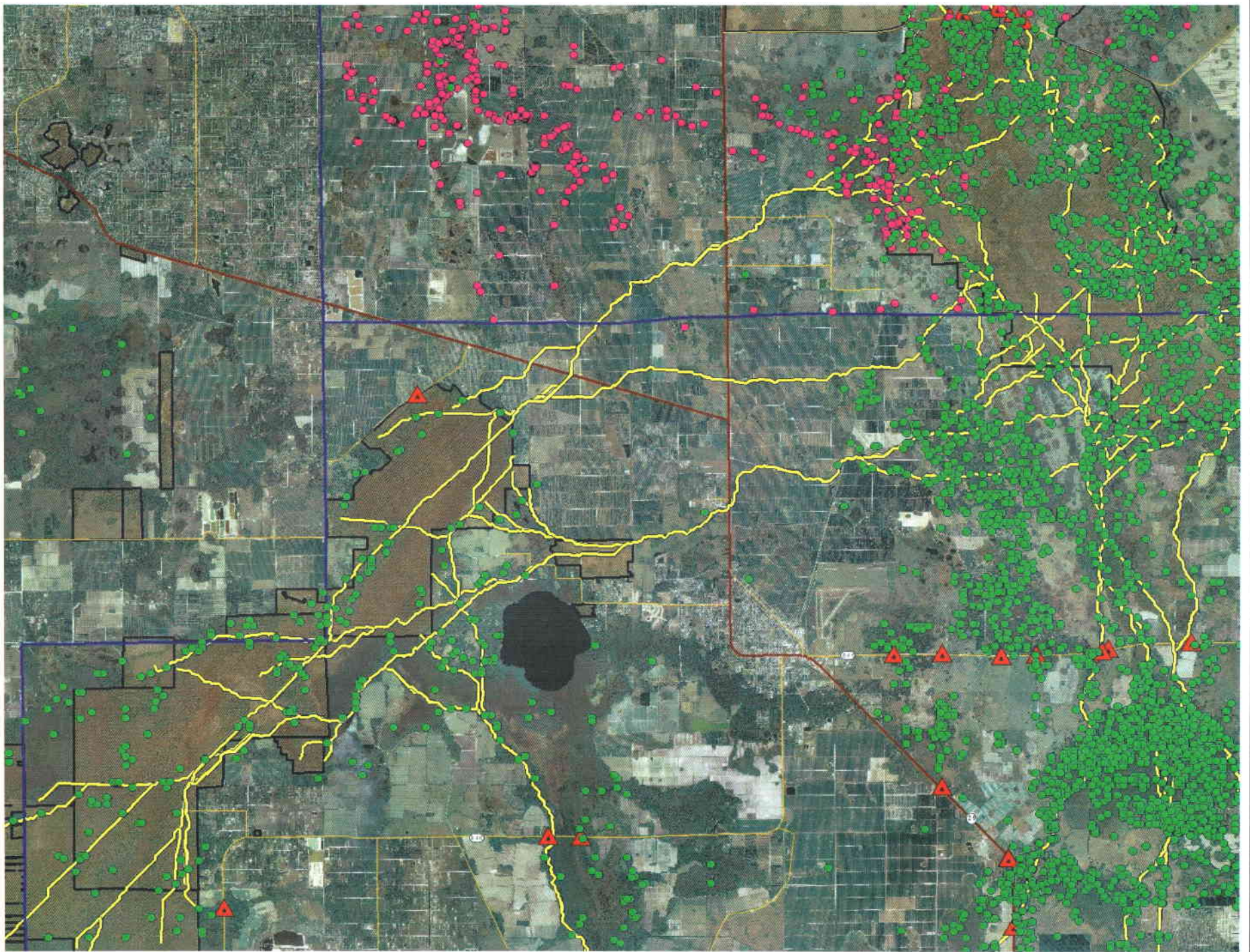


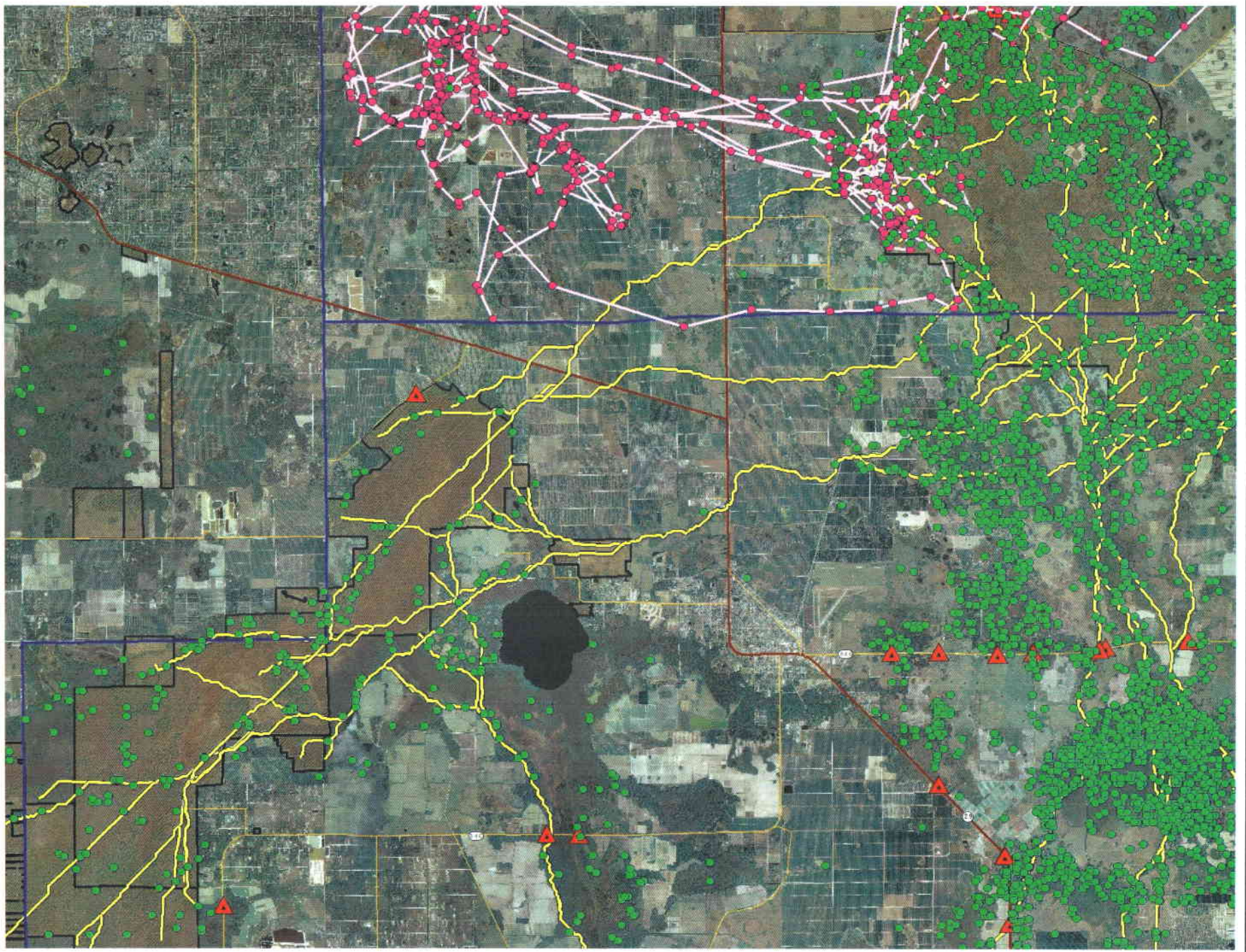


Planning is underway to add new lanes to the 2-lane SR 29 from Oil Well Road to Palmdale. FWC and FWS have consulted with FDOT about the need for wildlife crossings and fencing.









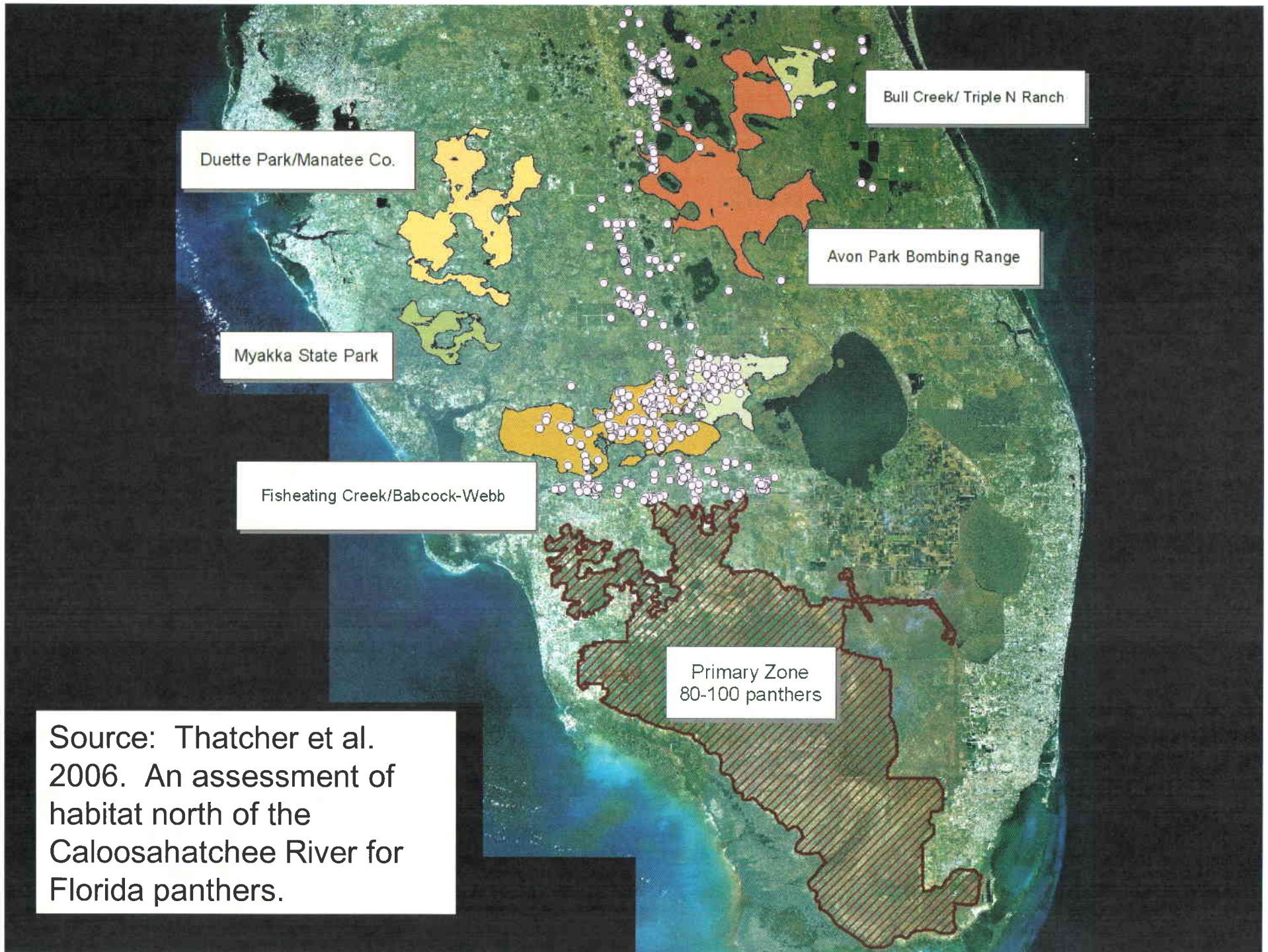
**The USFWS
commissioned a study to
map potential panther
habitat north of the
Caloosahatchee River.**

The draft Recovery Plan
concludes that a population needs
240 panthers to be viable without
intervention



**Primary Zone
80-100 panthers**

The image shows a satellite-style map of a coastal region. A large, irregularly shaped area is highlighted with a brown diagonal hatching pattern, representing the 'Primary Zone' for panther habitat. This zone is located inland from the coast, roughly between the 26th and 30th parallels. The surrounding area is shown in natural colors, with green for land and blue for water. A white text box is overlaid on the hatched area, providing the name and panther population estimate for this zone.



Source: Thatcher et al. 2006. An assessment of habitat north of the Caloosahatchee River for Florida panthers.

Florida Forever program spends \$300 million per year to buy lands for conservation

Since 2001, Florida Forever has spent over \$2 billion to purchase > 600,000 acres

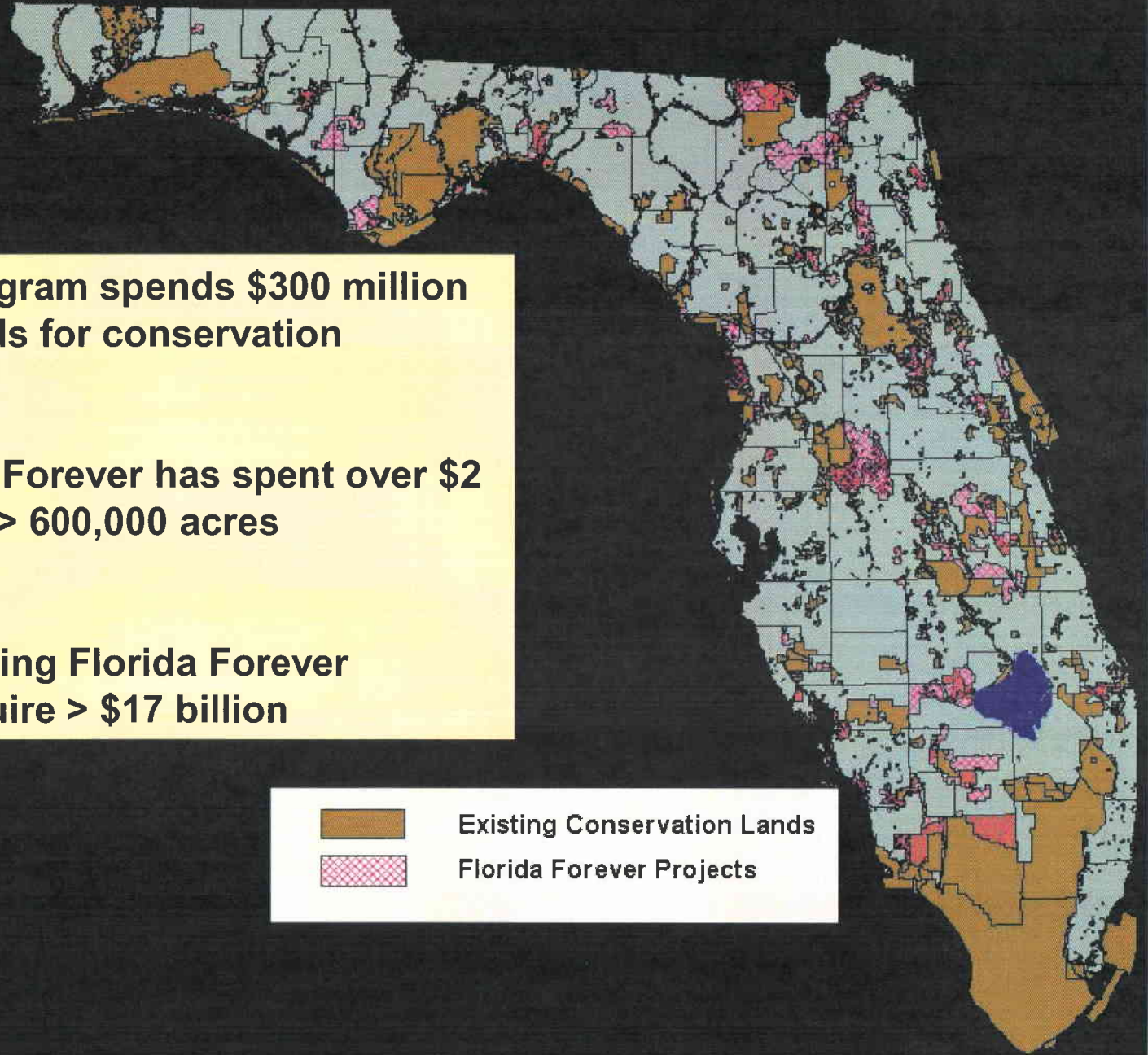
Purchase of remaining Florida Forever projects would require > \$17 billion



Existing Conservation Lands



Florida Forever Projects



Florida' Rural Lands Stewardship Act - 2001

Restoration and maintenance of rural land's economic value

Control of urban sprawl

Protection of ecosystems, habitats and natural resources

Promote rural economic activity

Maintain viability of Florida agriculture

Protect Florida's rural character

Participation in a RLSP is voluntary and is credit based

Transfer of credits from stewardship areas to areas that can be developed

Stewardship areas are protected with permanent easements