Eco-tourism and the Natural Environment
Hamilton County, Florida
a [co]existence
Friday April 29th, 2009

authored by:
Tyler Salvatore Guettler

presented to:
Department of Landscape Architecture
College of Design, Construction, & Planning
University of Florida

prepared for:
Hamilton County and
The City of White Springs, FL

advised by:
Professor Tina Gurucharri
I dedicate this book to my family and soon to be wife for their unending support and love.

To the faculty, for their friendship, dedication, and inspiration. Without you all, where would we be?

To my advisor, Professor Tina Gurucharri, for her genuine love and passion for landscape architecture. May we all strive to achieve this level of dedication and appreciation.

To my friend Gavin, I could not have done it without him.

To the community of Hamilton County and their affiliates, especially Mr. Robert Townsend, Mrs. Lys Burden, and Mr. Allen Tyre, for their assistance throughout the course of this project.
I am primarily interested in human activity and the environmental implications associated with our existence. The opportunity to rethink and reinvent an outdated and inefficient way of life is an interesting matter for me. Unearthing a new way to live, one that views our surroundings as an asset rather than an obstacle is essential to our continuation as a species. Such advancement can be made possible through a strategic alliance between design, sciences, and the natural world, along with gaining the political leverage necessary to progress a project from its conception to completion. My goal for this proposal is to offer my design knowledge gained during my tenure here at the University of Florida as a part of that coalition to assist the community of Hamilton County in their efforts create a richer quality of life: socially, economically, culturally, and environmentally.
Hamilton County has long been sought after as a place for visitor’s to experience the many facets of Florida’s rich history and natural amenities. With more than 90 sites and structures on the National Register of Historic Places and 50 cemeteries, Hamilton County is a popular destination for historical and cultural enthusiasts. Along with being one of Florida’s historic and cultural riches, Hamilton County is equally valuable as one of the state’s premier destinations for nature-based tourism activities.

Currently, the city of White Springs has become the hub for most all nature-based tourism activities and presents its visitors with an opportunity to partake in a self-guided walking tour of more than 100 historic sites. White Springs is also host to numerous programmed events and festivals, drawing in hundreds, even thousands of visitors. Those seeking accommodations within White Springs have limited resources. There is currently a total of 86 rooms available within city limits.

The two towns north of White Springs, Jasper and Jennings, have seen limited economic success from this influx of visitors and have become communally disconnected from their sister city of White Springs, despite having numerous distinguishing historic and natural resources to offer.

This proposal seeks involvement at two scales of concern and has been broken down into two phases. Phase one aims to further explore the idea of nature-based tourism, in particular on-road biking and auto-touring, as a sustainable economic stimulator and a social/cultural/historic connector throughout the county. Phase two will address the current lodging issue within White Springs with the proposal of a 24-person eco-lodge. This design will serve as a prototype for future site development and further provide the county with recommendations and guidelines for future sustainable site design.

The fundamental principles of ecotourism were used to support the development of this project. “An approach based on ecologically sustainable economic development by which tourism is part of a strategy for sustainable development and in which sustainability is defined on the basis of the entire human/environmental system. From this perspective environmental conservation is a goal of equal importance to economic efficiency and social equity.”

1. Ecotourism is: “Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.” (TIES, 1990)
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism and the Natural Environment: A [co]existence
SITE DESCRIPTION & LOCATION: Hamilton County, Florida

The unincorporated area of the County is approximately 500 square miles or 318,180 acres. Hamilton County is located in the north central portion of the state of Florida and is bordered on the north by the state of Georgia with Lowndes and Echols Counties; on the east by Columbia County, on the south by Suwannee County and on the west by Madison County.
The Withlacoochee River forms a boundary on the west and the Suwannee River forms a boundary on the eastern and southern borders of the County.
A BRIEF HISTORY: Hamilton County, Florida

The early history of Hamilton County has few written records documenting the area and its people. It is known, however, that in its early years, the county was inhabited by various Native American tribes and was not explored nor populated by Spanish explorers due to its location inland.

Tradition tells us that following the acquisition of Florida by the United States in 1819, the first real pioneer settlers came to Hamilton County with the guidance of the Natives. Daniel Bell was one of those pioneers and is responsible for securing the land and first surveyed the Hamilton County lands. On December 26th, 1827 Hamilton County was created as the fifteenth county.

Daniel Bell first surveyed Hamilton County in 1825.

By 1915 Hamilton County’s population was peaking at 12,000, and its communities were marked by thriving farms, lumber mills, turpentine stills, basket and box mills, hotels, grocery stores, drygoods shops, hardware stores, drug stores, churches, livery stables, schools, gins, and commissaries.

Throughout the years Hamilton County had continued to grow despite the wars, the freezes, and rise and fall of the economy. However, with the introduction of the boll weevil, a cotton destroying beetle, WW1, the Depression of the 1930’s, and the bank failures, the county’s population declined to a low of 7,705 in 1960.

JENNINGS TRAIN DEPOT

GLADWELL DAIRY 1923
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Today, there are approximately 14,000 residents that live within the county. There are three primary towns within the county, Jennings, Jasper, and White Springs, each with their own unique economic, cultural, historical, and natural connections to the past. Hamilton County remains true to its roots and the driving economic producers are mining, agricultural, and tourism.

With more than 90 sites and structures on the National Register of Historic Places and 50 cemeteries, Hamilton County has become a popular destination for historical and cultural enthusiasts seeking connections to Florida’s diverse past. It is equally valuable as one of the state’s premier destinations for nature-based tourism activities, given its thousands of acres of undisturbed public lands and its pristine waterways.

Currently, the city of White Springs has become the hub for most all nature-based tourism activities and presents its visitors with an opportunity to partake in a self-guided walking tour of more than 100 historic sites. White Springs is also host to numerous programmed events and festivals, drawing in hundreds, even thousands of visitors. The two towns north of White Springs, Jasper and Jennings, have seen limited economic success from this influx of visitors and have become communally disconnected from their sister city of White Springs, despite having numerous distinguishing historic and natural resources to offer.

The question becomes, “How can we expand upon the success that White Springs has experienced within the tourism industry and utilize sustainable tourism activities and practices as an economic stimulator and social/cultural/historic connector within the communities of Jasper and Jennings?”

Phase one of this proposal seeks to further explore this idea of sustainable tourism, specifically on-road biking, as a medium for socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental advancement, as well as proposals for future tourism activities.

Given its position as a popular tourism destination, White Springs must deal with the issue of accommodating these visitors and provide them with an opportunity to experience the city for more than one day. This provides the visitor with a greater opportunity to learn and appreciate the community, its history and culture, and all its amenities, while generating a larger amount of locally generated revenue. The current dilemma is that, although White Springs has the ability to attract thousands of visitors per year, they have limited resources in terms of lodging.

Phase two aims to address the lack of accommodations within White Springs through the proposal of an eco-lodge destination for visitors and locals, one that will serve as a prototype for future sustainable growth and further provide the county with site assessment and development guidelines.
HAMILTON COUNTY TODAY: Town of Jennings

- INCORPORATED: 1900

- CURRENT POPULATION: 843 residents

- ECONOMY: Agricultural

- CULTURAL, NATURAL, & HISTORICAL POINTS OF INTEREST:
  - Upper Alapaha Conservation Area
  - Jennings Bluff Tract
  - Alapaha Sinks
  - Historical Structures: Please reference subsequent historical structures map page 38

![Highway 41 Downtown Jennings](image)

![Alapaha Sink](image)

![Church in Jennings](image)
HAMILTON COUNTY TODAY: Town of Jasper

• INCORPORATED: 1840

• CURRENT POPULATION: 2,000 residents

• ECONOMY: Institutional & Agricultural

• CULTURAL, NATURAL, & HISTORICAL POINTS OF INTEREST:
  - Jasper Rail Trail
  - Main Street
  - Historical Structures: Please reference subsequent historical structures map page 38.

Old Rail Corridor Jasper

Main Street Jasper

Jasper Jail
HAMILTON COUNTY TODAY: Town of White Springs

• INCORPORATED: 1885

• CURRENT POPULATION: 828 residents & a larger context population of 2500

• ECONOMY: Emphasis on nature-based tourism market

• CULTURAL, NATURAL, & HISTORICAL POINTS OF INTEREST:
  – Big Shoals
  – Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park
  – Stephen Foster Museum
  – Suwannee River
  – Florida Folk Festival
  – Nature and Heritage Tourism Center
  – Historic District Walking Tour
  – Historical Structures: Please reference subsequent historical structures map page 38
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**Stimulate Economic Growth and Foster Community Enhancement Utilizing Nature-Based Tourism Activities as the Means for Improvement.**

- Link historic, cultural, and natural amenities through a series of interconnected roadways
- Provide linkages to the natural and historic amenities within and around Jasper and Jennings through on-road bike loops
- Utilize the cultural and historical amenities of Jasper and Jennings to position them as viable trail heads for the proposed biking routes

**Minimize Environmental Impacts and Carbon Footprint**

- Assess what renewable energy sources are available
- Find suitable locations for alternative energy sources based on proximity to urban, fragility of landscape, and availability
- Provide the county with environmentally site assessment strategies and energy efficient design techniques.

To develop an eco-lodge that will serve as a model for sustainability, eco-tourism, conservation, and stewardship through the proper integration of humans and their environment.

- Ensure the scale is in harmony with its surroundings through the use of indigenous materials
- Minimize the environmental impact by utilizing and enhancing the existing standards provided by various sustainable tourism certification and improvement systems, so that it conforms to the local and environmental integrity of Hamilton County
- Encourage interaction and integration with the local community by incorporating job opportunities and local demonstrations/festivals utilizing the lodge’s amenities
- Utilize existing scenic and natural transportation/hiking/biking/canoeing corridors to connect unique historical & cultural elements
- Increase local expenditure through the expansion and interconnection of recreational related tourism activities throughout the county

Create a unique experience for the visitor by accentuating the history and culture of Florida/White Springs with the opportunity to experience nature in ways that lead to a greater understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment

- Raise sensitivity to local, political, environmental, and social climate through interpretation, preservation, and protection of the natural environment.
- Utilize existing trail and pedestrian corridors to create connections to surrounding historic, natural, and cultural features.

Ensure comfort, convenience, and security for all users

- Provide a design that complies with ADA Accessibility Standards
- Provide safe pedestrian oriented corridors within the site
- Provide safe transitions and linkages to surrounding amenities and land uses
EXISTING NATURE-BASED TOURISM ACTIVITIES: Hamilton County

**CANOEING/KAYAKING:**
The Suwannee River flows through areas of pristine river marshlands, bordered by low bluffs, wide sandy banks and ancient woodlands. There are numerous access points offering opportunities for river excursions of an hour, a day, or longer. It is wise to portage Big Shoals Rapids, the only natural “white water” in Florida.

**HIKING:**
White Springs is surrounded by natural preserves which are crisscrossed by maintained hiking trails. Popular trails include the “Bridge to Bridge” trail along the Suwannee River. Beginning at the roadside park at US 41 on the river bank and ending at the bridge on State Road 136, near the historic district. Big Shoals State Park, with modern facilities, is laced with trails suitable for family or offering challenging paths for experienced hikers.

**TRAIL BIKING & ROAD BICYCLING:**
The Suwannee River Bicycling Association is headquartered in White Springs. There are picturesque well paved country roads accessible from White Springs, Jasper, and Jennings. Most have little vehicle traffic and all offer a relaxing view of North Central Florida countryside. Big Shoals State Park offers fantastic trail biking paths and adjacent public lands offer challenging opportunities.

**CAMPING:**
The upper Suwannee River is one of the last undisturbed areas of Florida where outdoor enthusiasts can visit and enjoy. The natural area around White Springs is a magnet to many visitors who camp under the stars and combine their camping experience with canoeing, hiking or biking.
EXISTING NATURE-BASED TOURISM ACTIVITIES: Hamilton County

**FISHING/HUNTING:**
A large variety of fish, ranging from catfish to bass to trout, inhabit the upper Suwannee River. A sportsman’s best bet is to grab a canoe and a rod, then let the current take you down the river. Licensed hunters have many choices during the season in northern Florida, ranging from the internationally-known Bienville Plantation, eight miles north of White Springs, to the vast expanse of the Osceola National Forest.

**BIRDING SUWANEE:**
Bird watching in Florida’s Suwannee River Valley is very inexpensive and easy for anyone to get started. Bienville plantation also offers visitors a chance to get up close and personal with the migrating waterfowl.

**MCCULLEY FARMS:**
An operating farm since 1915 and home of the Withlacoochee Trail Ride, connecting visitors to Florida’s frontier days.

**SUWANNEE RIVER WILDERNESS TRAIL:**
The Suwannee River Wilderness Trail is a regional system of parks, forests, wildlife management areas and conservation lands. It provides miles of opportunity for a variety of tours along the river. Sleep under the stars or under a tent, in a cabin, at a local motel or bed and breakfast.

**THE FLORIDA TRAIL:**
Over 1,000 miles of trails connecting many of Florida’s natural habitats through a continuous wilderness corridor.
Hamilton County is generally flat in nature with slopes becoming steeper in relation to river banks. The towns of Jennings and Jasper experience very little topography change, while the town of White Springs is characterized by deep landscape cuts all leading to the Suwannee River. Overall, the slopes encountered in Hamilton County are very favorable for outdoor recreational activities with the majority of slope ranging from 0%-4%.
Interstate I–75 bisects Hamilton County, which allows for easy accessibility to each of the three towns from surrounding cities and southeastern states. This major highway also provides an opportunity for greater public awareness and marketing opportunities. There is a definite lack of arrival into the county when travelling on I–75 and an enhanced gateway or sense of entry would greatly behoove the county.

The majority of roads within the county are characteristically flat in nature with the occasional gently rolling hill. Highway 41 is a major thoroughfare and is largely travelled by large tractor trailers.
DISTURBED LANDS INVENTORY: Agricultural and Mining

Today, about 77,219 acres of cropland, range, and woodland in the county produces a gross income of $7,768,000. Another 228,055 acres of woodland produces a gross income of $12,498,215. Timber, dairy cattle, beef cattle, swine, poultry, and field crops, such as tobacco, watermelons, corn, peanuts, soybeans, peas, wheat, oats, and sorghum, are the major agricultural products. This vast amount of farmland provides ample opportunity for the expansion/incorporation of agritourism operations.

Mining is a vital economic driver within Hamilton County. 46%-47% of the County budget comes from phosphate tax. The opportunity to recover these lands and restore them or utilize them for recreational opportunities has been and should continue to be explored and implemented.
Much of Hamilton County is comprised of undeveloped, agricultural lands. The urban context is vastly contained within the city boundaries of Jasper, Jennings, and White Springs. This concentration of urban allows for a greater user experience of the surrounding environment and deeper interpretation in regards to ‘sense of place.’ The county should continue to grow by developing within these urban and developed zones before reaching out beyond their city limits. This method will ensure economic stability and bring about a greater sense of community and ownership within.
The rivers of Hamilton County provide numerous opportunities for recreational activities. The Suwannee River Wilderness Trail is just one adventure one can partake in. White Springs is the first hub to this trail, characterized by towering pines and high bluffs. The majority of public lands can be found adjacent to these blueways which provide great points of interest and recreation sites.
Hamilton county is home to 13 known lakes providing opportunities for various outdoor recreational activities. Each of the three towns have at least one lake within biking distance from the town center. The larger bodies of water are a result of the phosphate mining industry. These disturbed lands should be the highest priority for restoration, development, and tourism opportunities.
NATURAL FEATURES INVENTORY: Public, Managed, and Conservation Lands

A. Withlacoochee East Conservation Area
B. Twin Rivers State Forest
C. Suwannee River State Park
D. Lower Alapaha Conservation Area
E. Upper Alapaha Conservation Area
F. Jennings Bluff Tract
G. Suwannee Ridge Mitigation Park
H. Holton Creek Conservation Area
I. Sanders Conservation Easement
J. Camp Branch Conservation Easement
K. PCS Management Area
L. Swift Creek Conservation Area
M. Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park
N. Big Shoals
O. Belmont Conservation Area
P. Cypress Creek Conservation Area

LEGEND:
- County Boundary
- City Limit
- Public, Managed, & Conservation Lands

Scale: 1 Mile = 0.125 inches
The Great Florida Birding Trail (GFBT) is a program of the FWC. At its core is a network of 489 sites throughout Florida selected for their excellent bird watching or bird education opportunities. This 2000-mile, self-guided highway trail is designed to conserve and enhance Florida’s bird habitat by promoting bird watching activities, conservation education and economic opportunity. There are four sites within Hamilton County as part of the West Florida Section.
HERITAGE FEATURES INVENTORY: North Florida Black Heritage Trail Sites

Hampton County

Gulf of Mexico

IMAGE COURTESY OF ORIGINALFLORIDA.ORG
A. THE OLD JAIL MUSEUM: JASPER, FL  
The Old Jail in Jasper gives visitors an opportunity to walk through the area where prisoners were segregated and housed in Hamilton County 91 years ago. The museum features Jasper native and internationally acclaimed author, Lillian Smith’s 1944 book entitled “Strange Fruit.”

B. JASPER POST OFFICE: JASPER, FL  
On May 6, 1935, the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) was created to help provide economic relief to the citizens of the United States who were suffering through the Great Depression. This post office contains two murals created by Pietro Lazzari during the WPA project in the Great Depression.

C. STEPHEN FOSTER FOLK CULTURE CENTER STATE PARK: WHITE SPRINGS, FL  
The Florida Folk Festival is one of the largest folk festivals in the country and has historically featured many of these black crafters, as well as Gandy dancing, Southern cooking, gospel music and other important traditions.
Hamilton County is dotted with more than 50 country cemeteries, and what is believed to be one of the state’s oldest. The majority of the cemeteries rest outside the city limits. These sites will provide opportunities for visitors to connect with not only the cultural and historical aspects, but also the natural, utilizing a preferred routing system to connect these sites.
## CULTURAL FEATURES INVENTORY: Cemetery Directory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Cemetery Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Antioch Cemetery</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Barton Cemetery</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Bellville/Bethlehem/Herdon (Baptist) Cemetery</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Bellville (Methodist) Cemetery</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Bell/Tuten Pioneer Cemetery</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Bellflower Cemetery</td>
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<td>Bethel Cemetery</td>
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<td>Blair Cemetery</td>
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<td>Bumham Cemetery</td>
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<td>Byrd Cemetery</td>
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<td>Camp Branch Cemetery</td>
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<td>Clardy Cemetery</td>
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<td>Corinth Cemetery</td>
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<td>Dees/Deas Cemetery</td>
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<td>Dempsey Cemetery</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>Duncan Cemetery</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Eastside Memorial Cemetery</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>Evergreen Cemetery</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Friendship Cemetery (2)</td>
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<td>Frink Cemetery</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>Geiger Cemetery (2)</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>Hall Cemetery</td>
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<td>Hamilton Cemetery</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>Hebron Cemetery</td>
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<td>Herring Cemetery</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>Jennings Bluff Cemeteries</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>McCall Cemetery (2)</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>Marion Cemetery</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>Mt. Pisgah Cemetery</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>Mt. Pleasant Cemetery</td>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>Mitchell Cemetery</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>New Hope Cemetery</td>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>New Hope (Jasper) Cemetery</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>New Swift Creek Cemetery</td>
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<td>35.</td>
<td>Nunn Cemetery (2)</td>
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<td>36.</td>
<td>Oak Grove Cemetery</td>
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<td>37.</td>
<td>People’s Cemetery</td>
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<td>38.</td>
<td>Pool Pond Cemetery</td>
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<td>39.</td>
<td>Prospect Cemetery</td>
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<td>40.</td>
<td>Riverside Cemetery</td>
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<td>41.</td>
<td>Ross/Raux Cemetery</td>
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<td>42.</td>
<td>Sasser’s Landing Cemeteries</td>
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<td>Scaff Cemetery</td>
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<td>Sellars Cemetery</td>
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<td>Shaw Cemetery</td>
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<td>Smith Cemetery</td>
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<td>Spring Branch Cemetery</td>
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<td>48.</td>
<td>Swift Creek Cemeteries</td>
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<td>Sweet Home Cemetery</td>
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<td>50.</td>
<td>Taylor Cemetery</td>
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<td>51.</td>
<td>Wells Cemetery</td>
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<td>52.</td>
<td>West Lake Cemetery</td>
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<tr>
<td>53.</td>
<td>White Chimney Cemetery</td>
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CHAPTER 2 - PHASE 1 INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

Geiger Cemetery photo courtesy of Florida USGen Web Archives

Mt. Pisgah Cemetery photo courtesy of Florida USGen Web Archives
Many of the early pioneers coming to Hamilton County had been associated with churches in their previous communities. It did not take them long to establish religious groups that later became church organizations. As a result, Hamilton County boasts more than twenty different churches, adding to its rich cultural heritage.

LEGEND:
- City Limit
- Church
- For church name please reference church directory
CULTURAL FEATURES INVENTORY: Church Directory

HAMLTON COUNTY:

1. New Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church
2. Triumph Holiness Church
3. Mt. Olive Prim Baptist Church
4. Burnham Christian Church
5. Church of God West Lake
6. New Hope Baptist Church Pastorium
7. Corinth Christian Academy
8. Mt. Pleasant American Church
9. New Bethelhem American Church

CITY OF JENNINGS:

10. St. Mary’s Baptist Church
11. Jennings United Methodist Church

CITY OF JASPER:

12. Ressurection Thru Christ Ministeries
13. Greater Poplar Springs Outreach
14. First Presbyterian Church NW
15. First Presbyterian Church SW
16. New Bethelhem American Church Parsonage
17. First Baptist Church of Jasper
18. Latter Day Deliverance Church of Jesus Christ
19. Harvest Fellowship Church
20. First United Methodist Church [Historical]

CITY OF WHITE SPRINGS:

21. Church of God and Pentecosta
22. White Springs United Methodist Church
23. St. Luke’s Freewill Baptist Church
24. White Springs Christian Church
25. The Bethany House

[Left] Jennings Baptist Church. Photo courtesy of Hamilton County History Committee

[Right] Greater Poplar Springs Outreach. Photo courtesy of Hamilton County History Committee

[Left] White Springs Presbyterian Church

[Right] White Springs Christian Church
HISTORICAL FEATURES INVENTORY: Historical Structures

LEGEND:

- County Boundary
- City Limit
- Historical Structures

City of Jennings

City of Jasper

City of White Springs
HISTORICAL FEATURES INVENTORY: Historical Structures Directory

LEGEND

Historic Churches
SITENAME, YEARBUILT
- FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF WHITE SPRINGS, C1898
- LONG BRANCH METHODIST CHURCH, C1900
- ORIGINAL METHODIST CHURCH SITE, 1980–
- PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 1907
- SWIFT CREEK METHODIST CHURCH, C1880
- UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF WHITE SPRINGS, C1890
- UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, C1878

Historic Commercial
SITENAME, YEARBUILT
- 16945 SPRING STREET SOUTH, C1900
- ADAMS BROTHERS HOUSE, C1892
- BICYCLE TOURING COMPANY HEADQUARTERS, C1900
- BULLOCK’S SERVICE STATION, C1935
- CARVER SCHOOL, C1945
- DELEGAL SERVICE STATION, C1912
- HARDWARE STORE, C1900
- NUNN’S DRY GOODS STORE, 1910

Historic Banks
SITENAME, YEARBUILT
- OLD BANK OF JENNINGS, 1908

Historic Hotels
SITENAME, YEARBUILT
- ADAMS, SOPHIA JANE HOUSE, C1892
- COLONIAL HOTEL SITE, C1912
- HORN HOUSE SITE, C1900
- KENDRICK-LINSEY HOUSE, C1905
- PAXTON-SAUNDERS HOUSE, C1900
- SUWANEE RIVER LODGE SITE, C1914
- SUWANEE RIVER MOTEL, C1943
- TELFORD HOTEL, C1903

HISTORICAL FEATURES INVENTORY: Historical Structures Directory

CHAPTER 2 - PHASE 1 INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

Adams Brothers Store, White Springs

- 16811 SPRING STREET SOUTH, C1950
- ADAM STORE COTTON SCALE, C1908
- BULLOCK FIRE TOWER, C1930
- CARILLON TOWER, C1957
- FLORIDA NORMAL COLLEGE-HIGH SCHOOL SITE, C1890
- GERMAN PRISONER OF WAR CAMP SITE, 1950–
- HOMETOWN RESTAURANT, C1910
- LAKE ALCYON HUNTING CLUB, 1900
- MAIN POST OFFICE, 1941
- MUSEUM BUILDING, 1950
- NORTH HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 1927
- OLD HAMILTON COUNTY JAIL, 1893
- OLD POST OFFICE, C1943
- SOUTH HAMILTON COUNTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, C1936
- SOUTH PARK ENTRANCE, C1948
- SPRING HOUSE, C1973
- WHITE SPRINGS DEPOT SITE, C1890
- WHITE SPRINGS TOWN HALL, C1912

The Old Jail, Jasper
LEGEND

Historic Homes

SITENAME, YEARBUILT

- 12538 ROBERTS STREET EAST, C1950
- 16741 SPRING STREET SOUTH, C1940
- 16861 SPRING STREET SOUTH, C1950
- 7 ROBERTS STREET WEST, C1920
- 7 SPRING STREET SOUTH, C1920
- ADAMS- SAUNDERS HOUSE, C1920
- AMMONS- WILLIAMS HOUSE, C1915
- ANDERSON, PAULINE HOUSE, C1910
- BEAUCHAMP- GREENE HOUSE, C1905
- BEAUCHAMP- SISTRUNK HOUSE, C1930
- BELL, CHARLOTTE HOUSE, C1910
- BESS, DINAH HOUSE, C1910
- BLUNK, RICE HOUSE, C1890
- BROWN, SAM, SR HOUSE, C1920
- CAMP- DELLA PORTA HOUSE, C1907
- CARTER- WIGGINS HOUSE, C1905
- CARVER HOUSE, C1905
- CARVER HOUSE, C1906
- CARVER- RUFFING HOUSE, C1900
- CATE- WIGGINS HOUSE, C1900
- CONE, DR D N HOUSE, C1930
- CONE- ANDERSON HOUSE, C1900
- COX HOUSE, C1860
- DAVIS- HIERNS HOUSE, C1910
- DYE, ERNEST HOUSE, C1920
- EDGECOOD HOTEL SITE, C1910
- EDWARDS, JANIE HOUSE, C1920
- EDWARDS- SUTY LITTLE HOUSE, C1850
- EDWARDS- SUTY LITTLE HOUSE, C1900
- FEAGLE HOUSE, C1900
- FENN- FILLYAN HOUSE, C1905
- FREEMAN HOUSE, C1912
- GILDER- SLEEVE- LEE HOUSE, C1920
- GODWIN- NORWOOD HOUSE, C1945
- GRANT HOUSE, C1918
- HAMILTON, GRACE HOUSE, C1910
- HAMMOCK- BAXTER HOUSE, C1910
- HUTCHERSON HOUSE, C1900
- JAMES A BELL CABIN, C1830
- JOHNS HOUSE, C1892
- JOHNSON HOUSE, C1918
- JOHNSON HOUSE, C1925
- JOHNSON- DANIELS HOUSE, C1916
- JOHNSON- NEILL HOUSE, C1900
- KEMP, MOLLIE HOUSE, C1908
- KENDRICK- MCKENZIE HOUSE, C1905
- KENDRICK- WALDRON HOUSE, C1905
- KENDRICK- WATERS HOUSE, C1920
- KNIGHT- RIDLEY HOUSE, C1919
- KNOWLES- DEZENDORF HOUSE, C1906
- LINDSEY HOUSE, C1910
- MATTAIR ROOMING HOUSE, C1900
- MCCALLUM HOUSE, C1925
- MCCLURG, ADA HOUSE, C1918
- MCDONALD- SISTRUNK- SMITH HOUSE, C1840
- MCLEOD HOUSE, C1890
HISTORICAL FEATURES INVENTORY: Historical Structures Directory

LEGEND

Historic Homes

SITENAME, YEARBUILT

- McLeod-High House, C1900
- Melanese-Hunter House, C1920
- Methodist Parsonage-Larsen House, C1898
- Mitchell, Jessie House,
- Moore-Kendrick House, C1900
- Newsome, George House, C1920
- Newsome, Lonnie House, C1920
- Old AME Methodist Parsonage, C1910
- Old House, C1920
- Perkins-Griffin-Dolan House, C1910
- Plymel, J E House, C1870
- Pritchard’s Tea Room, C1910
- Register House, C1910
- Register House, C1920
- Riverhouse Apartments #2, C1950
- Riverhouse Apartments #3, C1950
- Riverhouse Apartments #4, C1950
- Riverhouse Apartments #5, C1950
- Riverhouse Apartments #6, C1950
- Roberts House, C1910
- Sandlin, Kirby L House, 1895
- Scarborough House, C1900
- Scippio, Mamie House, C1920
- Shaw House, C1930
- Smith House, C1890
- Smith House, C1900
- Spencer-Hillhouse House, C1930
- Spencer-Hyde House, C1925
- Sperry-Phillips House, C1910
- Stormant-Suty House, C1900
- Stormont House, C1930
- Thomas House, C1915
- Waldron House-Methodist Parsonage, C1860
- Walker, Mary House, C1900
- Warnbolt-Barnett-Phillips House, C1910
- Whitehurst, Louella House, C1920
- Wiggins-Morgan House, C1905
- Wiggins-Nye-Dunnaway House, C1915
- Williams, Annie House, C1910
- Williams-Graham House, C1930
- Williams-Turner House, C1930
- Worley House, 1895

NOTE:

This map calls out only those Historic Structures that have been documented. There is still a wealth of historic resources to be recorded and doing so would assist the county’s efforts in spurring economic growth. For more on historic resources, specifically within Jasper, please reference Gavin Cain’s thesis project “The Revitalization of Jasper Florida.”
CHAPTER 3:
PHASE 1 SYNTHESIS

Ecotourism and the Natural Environment: A [co]existence
This graphic showcases all previous inventory of Hamilton County’s historical, cultural/heritage, and natural amenities. This map assisted in the formulation of the auto-touring and on-road bicycling route proposals.
SYNTHESIS: Auto-Touring Route

This auto-touring route is one example of how Hamilton County can utilize all its resources to foster community connectivity and stimulate the local economy.
SYNTHESIS: A Biking Case Study, White Springs

Currently, White Springs serves as the hub for various recreational activities, on-road biking being one of those activities. They have utilized their surrounding natural, cultural, and historic amenities to position themselves as such. This progressive thinking has led to an increase in locally generated revenue. The following is a list of activities and events that take place within White Springs which attract thousands of visitors each year:

Other Events:
- Dog Days
- Fat Tire Festival
- Secret Santa
- Florida Folk Life Festival
- Historic District Walking Tour
- Various programmed events within the Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park

[top] The IDIDARIDE bicycle event starts in downtown White Springs at the Suwannee River Bicycle headquarters. It is an off-road endurance ride through woodlands along the Suwannee River. Approximately 50 miles of singletrack trails and woods roads have been linked to form a continuous route with minimum of pavement.

[left] The Suwanne Sweetheart Valentine’s weekend ride. Saturday and Sunday morning rides beginning at SBA headquarters.

[left] The Suwanee Bicycle and Paddle Festival is a multi-day event with food, music, and miles of trail riding and paddling.

Images courtesy of Suwannee River Bicycle Association
SYNTHESIS: A Biking Case Study, White Springs

Below are images from the Suwannee River Bicycle Association web site of some of the routes they have mapped out for on-road biking opportunities. There are a total of 8 different routes out of White Springs. Most of the routes utilize White Springs as the beginning and ending point. Some trails have destinations, others are simply good routes to ride based on user preference. I have taken this concept and have applied it to the towns of Jasper and Jennings illustrated in the maps beginning on page 15. The underlying theme is to strategically map out cultural, heritage, historical, and natural features within and around Jasper and Jennings, so that they too can enjoy the economic prosperity associated with natural, cultural, and heritage tourism. It is important to understand that each city has their own unique culture, character, and core values, which is why they will all prosper simultaneously.
The following routes are based on computer aided data information, personal inventory, and information acquired by a few avid Hamilton County cyclists.
JASPER LOOP 1:

DISTANCE: ~ 11 miles

DESCRIPTION: Generally flat with little to no traffic for the duration of the ride. The dominating feature was the roadside wildflowers. Route 6 is known for its wonderful rideability.
JASPER LOOP 2:

DISTANCE: ~ 13 miles

DESCRIPTION: 3.5 miles of compacted dirt road thru silviculture plots. There were a great number of butterflies during the ride and zero traffic on the dirt path.
SYNTHESIS: On-Road Bicycle Route

JASPER LOOP 3:

DISTANCE: ~ 16 miles

DESCRIPTION: This route had the greatest elevation change. A very scenic ride including amazing views of some very old growth live oaks.
SYNTHESIS: On-Road Bicycle Route

JENNINGS LOOP 1:

The Jennings loops were routed based solely on existing computer data and in speaking with a few avid SBA cyclists. Route 1 seeks to unite with loop 2 of the Jasper routing plan through spur routes.
JENNINGS LOOP 2:

Jennings loop 2 looks to take advantage of Lake Octahatchee and its aura. The loop has numerous turns and corners, which can make for a very interesting journey. Traffic on these roads has been said to be very minimal.
SYNTHESIS: Tourism Opportunities

Although Hamilton County is host to numerous tourism activities, much of the activity revolves around the waterways and their adjacent corridors. This results in the majority of visitor traffic to be concentrated on the peripheries of the county, which is why White Springs does well in the tourism industry. Jasper and Jennings do not have to become White Springs to see success and the incorporation of tourism related activities does not constitute a loss of cultural or historical integrity. If done as a holistic effort between the community, the city, the county, and all other third parties, it can actually enhance the character of the city and ensure its preservation. The following map depicts the most suitable locations for future tourism activities.
SYNTHESIS: Tourism Opportunity Examples

A. What others have done with abandoned railroads:

St. Marks Historic Rail Trail.
Photo Courtesy of FDEP.

B. What is agritourism?
- farm/ranch vacations
- farmers market
- festivals
- bed & breakfast
- farm operations
- educational activities
- arts, crafts, & product purchases
- horseback riding
- rural weddings

World famous pizza farm.
Photo Courtesy of pizzafarm.org

C. Mining restoration opportunities:

Santos Trail Ocala. Photo Courtesy of flickr.com

Neighborhood linear park.
Photo Courtesy of Bigelow Homes.

Indiana herb farm and winery.
Provides overnight stays.
Photo Courtesy of C. Bedford Crenshaw

Point Fraser restoration. Photo Courtesy of http://www.aila.org.au/
CHAPTER 4:
PHASE 2 INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism and the Natural Environment: A [co]existence
SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION: Eco-Lodge

White Springs First Florida Tourist Site

By Elizabeth Pittker
White Springs, Fla. - From Georgia, from far away as New York, the yogis and those afflicted with unrequited love, the bluesmen, the poor and humble brought their troubles to drink and bathe in the healing waters of the white sulphur spring here.

The waters which contained sulphuric acid, chlorine, lime, magnesium, organic matter, phosphoric acid, sodium, soda, and carbonic acid, was also said to cure gland and skin diseases, nervousness, insomnia, and "inspired" disease.

It was these healing qualities that attracted Bryant Sheffield to become one of the earliest known owners of the spring property in 1870. A native of Indiana told Sheffield, who lived in America, Ga., and had connections with the sulphur water. He came to White Springs and bought the property.

In 1877, a couple of a hundred people came to drink and bath in the water and was benighted so much, he bought the property.

After almost a century and a half, the spring was used and was one of the first tourist attractions in the state. Its waters were a constant 78 degrees, making it a popular year-round.

There were three springhouses built. The first, built by Sheffield, was a little, one-story building with dressing rooms.

The last springhouse was built by Minnie Mealer Jackson of Baltimore, Md., who was supposed a resident of Lord Baltimore.

Mrs. Jackson and her brother built a springhouse which contained 10,000 pounds of the sulfur water and four balconies around the water.

In these periods or seasons, they would sit playing cards, wash their hands, or others who, dived off the roof of the springhouse or on one of the balconies into the water.

The top porch had hot water, a hot tub, a small room and dressing rooms for the men and women.

There were "sugar-cups" which held the drinking glasses in the winter. A swimming pool could keep warm by baking under the 78 degree spring water.

In the summertime the men were said to go into the water. Those who were sick in the summer or in the spring, could stay all day and then take a long rest, which they could stay all night.

Those who visited the spring would come by rail or the first Southern trams each day and would stay a month longer or shorter here.

In the morning there was a train which ran from Miami, Fl., south to White Springs, which ran from Florida and the same is in existence.

As previously mentioned, phase two of my proposal will address the issue of limited accommodations within White Springs.

For centuries, the banks of the Suwannee River and the White Sulfur Springs have served as a place of refuge and restoration for its visitors and residents. The springs were once considered to possess healing and spiritual qualities, and became one of Florida’s first tourist destinations in the 19th century. Today, thousands of visitors come to White Springs for its natural beauty and to participate in its various cultural and historical events.

The driving force within White Springs is the Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park, home to the annual Florida Folk Festival which draws in up to 40,000 visitors in a single weekend. The Suwannee River Bike Association along with Big Shoals State Park generate their fair share of recreational tourists, many of whom must stay in nearby cities outside of Hamilton County due to a lack of accommodations.

The objective of phase two is to develop a lodging facility from which Hamilton County may extract ideas and principles about environmentally sensitive site selection, assessment, and development.
SITE SELECTION AND LOCATION: Eco-Lodge

PROJECT SITE:

**Boundaries:**
- SFFCCSP
- Oseola Street
- Jackson Street

**Size:**
- 6.25 acres

City Of White Springs

Hamilton County

Florida

The site selection was based on the availability and opportunity for development based on the City’s future growth plan and was discussed with town manager Robert Townsend. There is also a vested interest between White Springs and the Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park in creating a partnership to develop a lease agreement for a mid-priced range 50–60 bed lodge.

The site for the proposed eco-lodge is located in the City of White Springs and lies within the boundaries of the Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park. The site is approximately 6.25 acres. It is bounded on the north by Oseola Street and on the east by Jackson Street. The area is characteristically flat and brushy and access into the site is by foot travel.
CASE STUDIES: Study 1

MONTEVERDE, COSTA RICA: UGA CAMPUS

The UGA Costa Rica Campus is managed for multiple uses. The 153-acre UGA Costa Rica property was acquired in 2001 by The University of Georgia and is the University’s first full-service international campus. Sixty percent of the 62 hectares are maintained in protected forest reserve as part of Costa Rica’s National Network of Private Reserves. Thirty percent of the property is managed for sustainable agricultural production. The remaining ten percent is managed as “built space” which includes facilities for academic instruction, research, food service, residences, recreation, and maintenance/housekeeping.
CASE STUDIES: Study 1

MONTEVERDE, COSTA RICA: UGA CAMPUS

The goal of this campus is to become a holistic sustainable operation that minimizes its environmental impact; and provides comfort, convenience, and security for students and other campus visitors. The campus also integrates the surrounding community of the San Luis valley into its operation through tourism, farming, education, housing, and encourages their input for the future vision of the community.

This particular eco-lodge serves as a very good model when examining the sustainable opportunities and constraints. Reclaimed water, integrated farming systems, waste composting, limited electricity, community housing, public transportation system, sustainable tourism, cultural & historical integrity, and education have all been successfully implemented with their outfit. The functionality of the buildings serves as a good reference, although the scale and measure may be larger than I intend. These buildings consist of residential, academic, a student union, & educational and recreational facilities.

Although a very successful operation, there is potential for problems, particularly with the economic transformation from a predominantly agricultural town to a Mecca for eco-tourism. This case is similar in Hamilton County where their main source of income is generated through agriculture and mining. As Lara Martin points out in Tourist Expansion and Development of Rural Community, “effective information management at multiple levels is a key element, required both for analysis of the present situation and for modifying administrative policies to promote social relations, with the aim of integrating the community into decision-making processes.”
RAINFOREST RETREAT: ASIA

The Rainforest Retreat was established in 1999 by Drs Anurag and Sujata Goel. The sole purpose of their establishment was to raise environmental awareness and develop sustainable means of agriculture. The Rainforest Retreat is a unique project that combines sustainable tourism with sustainable agriculture and environmental education. The retreat organizes and hosts workshops and educational programs with emphasis on organic farming, sustainable living, rainforest ecology and biodiversity for students and special interest groups such as organic farmers.

The importance of this particular case study is how they have incorporated the lodging facilities into their overall goal of developing sustainable agricultural practices and environmental education. The ideas and experiences are foremost, whereas the lodging facilities are secondary to nature. Users come solely to experience a harmonious existence with nature and farmers and students come solely for the knowledge of sustainable farming.

This brings up a very important issue of how the lodge will function. I prefer it exist secondary to the natural environment, a vehicle into the natural world.

IMAGE COURTESY OF RAINFORESTOURS.COM
ANDERSON RANCH: Colorado

Anderson Ranch is an arts center designed to be a world leader in the growth and development of visual arts field, in the international dialogue that inspires common humanity through art making, and in the creation of a campus imbued with a spirit of community, challenge, support, exploration, innovation and discovery.

Formerly a turn-of-the-century sheep ranch, Anderson Ranch was transformed into an artist’s community some 40 years ago. In 1966, a handful of artists from Aspen and the Roaring Fork Valley cleared out the historic barns for studios, set up a gallery and inaugurated an informal workshop program. The ranch has 14 buildings on a 4.5 acre campus.

Anderson Ranch has gone beyond that of an artist retreat and has reached out beyond its borders with the purpose of serving the local geographic community of artists and non-artist through accessible, sustained programming, and area partnerships.
CASE STUDIES: Study 4

CROSSWATERS ECO-LODGE: CHINA

The Crosswaters Ecolodge is located within the Nankunshan National Park. The area is filled with hundreds of diverse plant and animal species, along with a long history of Hakka heritage. The lodge is situated at the junction of the Gankangmei and Sumaoping rivers. The resort occupies a total area of 1.5 kilometers, utilizing the local bamboo in various ways throughout its construction.

The design and construction of the lodge complied with standards laid out by Green Globe 21, a global certification and improvement system for sustainable travel and tourism.

Some of the requirements are as follows:

1) Ecotourism requires a direct, personal experience of nature
2) Ecotourism provides opportunities to experience nature and culture in ways that lead to greater understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment
3) Ecotourism operations are developed appropriately on the basis of ecological sustainability and an understanding of potential environmental impact
4) Ecotourism shall provide a tangible contribution to conservation
5) Ecotourism shall provide ongoing contributions to the local community
6) An ecotourism product in both its development and operation phases must be respectful of, and sensitive to, the local culture. To ensure cultural values are treated appropriately there is a need to consult with local people so that their legitimate aspirations are met and to allow presentation of authentic cultural values

IMAGES COURTESY OF EDSA
CASE STUDIES: Study 4

CROSSWATERS ECO-LODGE: CHINA

As seen in every project, site selection plays a major role in the realization of the goals at hand. In this particular case, the structures embraced their surroundings and were designed with respect and sensitivity towards the environment amidst hundreds of acres of sub-tropical forest. It is evident that solidarity and tranquility are primary concerns for certain user groups; therefore, user analysis will play a key role in site selection along with flora and fauna analyses. The requirements with which the designers abided by throughout the conceptual stages and into the construction phases could be a good idea for developing standards and guidelines for this particular project and future green development. This is the first time I have heard of this system (Green Globe 21). I am familiar with the organization, TIES, a similar program interested in developing standards and green practices. Also, there are various publications, including ‘Ecotourism and Certification: Setting Standards in Practice’ a good resource.
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT: User Analysis

The targeted users are the independent and group travelers who are seeking authentic natural and cultural experiences, along with the local population of humans and wildlife. The proposed site and its connections must provide these users with those experiences and an understanding of their surroundings through proper integration of building to site and site to surrounding context.

These users seek to experience nature in its purest form, away from the urban fields. Recreational activities, canoeing/kayaking, hiking, biking, etc. and their connection to the establishment are of key concerns for these users. Eco-tourists seek the promotion and implementation of ‘green’ practices: recycling, composting, preservation, water conservation, organic farming and energy efficiency. Environmental education is also at the forefront of the users expectations. The expected stay for this particular user group ranges from 2 days to 1 week.

While it is important to cater to the tourist and increase visitor traffic for economic purposes, maintaining the integrity of the surrounding environment is critical. Incorporating the community into the development, utilization, and operation of all tourism activities is a major step towards the preservation of Hamilton County. Providing for the locals means job opportunities, possibly housing on site, and the continuation and expansion of existing cultural and heritage expositions presented by various local artists.

Other users may include students, farmers, and institutions and organizations dependent upon the given programming. This offers the opportunity for the retreat to host various workshops and educational tours with emphasis on the most current ‘green’ technologies. This user group plays a very important role in the continuation and progression of the sustainability of the operation.
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT: Goals Revisited/Program

TO DEVELOP AN ECO-LODGE THAT WILL SERVE AS A MODEL FOR SUSTAINABILITY, ECO-TOURISM, CONSERVATION, AND STEWARDSHIP THROUGH THE PROPER INTEGRATION OF HUMANS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT.

• Ensure the scale is in harmony with its surroundings through the use of indigenous materials

• Minimize the environmental impact by utilizing and enhancing the existing standards provided by various sustainable tourism certification and improvement systems, so that it conforms to the local and environmental integrity of Hamilton County

• Encourage interaction and integration with the local community by incorporating job opportunities and local demonstrations/festivals utilizing the lodge’s amenities

• Utilize existing scenic and natural transportation/hiking/biking/canoeing corridors to connect unique historical & cultural elements

• Increase local expenditure through the expansion and interconnection of recreational related tourism activities throughout the county

CREATE A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE FOR THE VISITOR BY ACCENTUATING THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF FLORIDA/WHTIE SPRINGS WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE NATURE IN WAYS THAT LEAD TO A GREATER UNDERSTANDING, APPRECIATION, AND ENJOYMENT

• Raise sensitivity to local, political, environmental, and social climate through interpretation, preservation, and protection of the natural environment.

• Utilize existing trail and pedestrian corridors to create connections to surrounding historic, natural, and cultural features.

ENSURE COMFORT, CONVENIENCE, AND SECURITY FOR ALL USERS

• Provide a design that complies with ADA Accessibility Standards

• Provide safe pedestrian oriented corridors within the site

• Provide safe transitions and linkages to surrounding amenities and land uses

PROGRAM:

• Enhanced Sal Marie Branch stream corridor

• 24-person capacity

• Provide a variety of seating areas

• Provide a variety of interpretive opportunities

• Public/Private gathering spaces

• Eating facility

• Suwannee River link/Kayak & Canoe storage

• Rainwater harvesting

• Passive energy techniques
CHAPTER 5:
PHASE 2 INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

Ecotourism and the Natural Environment: A [co]existence
There are several vacant parcels within the city of White Springs which can be taken advantage of for lodging purposes and recreational outfitters. The vacant land within the immediate downtown should be developed first, followed by development near existing infrastructure and disturbed lands.
RESEDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL LAND USE: White Springs

The location of my site is adjacent to single family residential properties on the northern and eastern boundaries. The downfall to this is the potential for noise and traffic. The location does allow for a better integration within the community if it were to be adaptively re-used as a multi-family complex or community park. The southern and western sides provide direct access into the Stephen Foster State Park.
CIVIC/EDUCATIONAL/INSTITUTIONAL LAND USE: White Springs

Opportunities should be sought out for the involvement of surrounding schools and institutions with the proposed eco-lodge. The site could possibly serve as a classroom to demonstrate environmental conservation and understanding and respect for indigenous cultures and resources.
AGRICULTURAL/PUBLIC LAND LAND USE: White Springs

White Springs is enveloped by public lands, which is why it is a very popular destination for visitors seeking outdoor recreational activities. The proposed site for the eco-lodge resides within the Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park providing the users with direct access to miles of land and water trails.
The road infrastructure of White Springs is mainly characterized by narrow, secondary city streets. Highway 41 forms the main street and is very often travelled on by large commercial trucks and tractor trailers.
The location of the proposed eco-lodge provides direct access to miles of hiking and biking trails, and the opportunity for wildlife viewing throughout the park.
In the late 1800’s, White Springs began to see an influx of visitors and residents, known for its hospitality and accommodations. It became known as a vacation retreat that was the forerunner of many of the state’s famous resort hotels.
HISTORICAL WHITE SPRINGS

White Sulphur Springs Bath House  
W.C. Johnson in front of Cootie’s Hardware Store  
Gladwell Dairy on woodpecker route about 1925. This was just outside of White Springs and supplied milk for the town

Suwannee Souvenirs on the Suwannee River  
Camp House, White Springs  
The Springhouse 1908. Built as a health sanitorium around the sulphur spring

Photos courtesy of Hamilton County Historic Committee
By 1910 there were at least thirteen hotels and boarding houses in White Springs, as indicated by the map of the town compiled from the 1908 Sanborn Maps, found in Murray D. Laurie’s report of historic White Springs. It was evident, that by this date, White Springs was indeed the “coming resort of the south.” White Springs continued to attract tourists, and other hotels and motels were built. However, leisure patterns changed in America; new resorts drew people to the coast and to the posh vacation destinations in South Florida.

Today, the city has reclaimed its eminence as the jewel of the Suwannee, and would greatly benefit from the incorporation of an additional sustainable lodging operation.
HISTORICAL WHITE SPRINGS: Hotels & Lodging Photographs

Colonial Cotel, White Springs, Florida 1912–1973

Jackson Hotel – 1924 Lilian and Mrs. Jackson and Staff

Jackson (Telford) Hotel about 1915

The Telford Hotel Staff

Suwannee River Lodge

The tea room run by Mrs. Lou Richards

Photos courtesy of Hamilton County Historic Committee
As previously mentioned, White Springs provides the visitor with limited options in regards to lodging. Jasper and Jennings are also limited in their resources, resulting in many guests leaving the county and driving to nearby Live Oak or Lake City. The following graphic illustrates this dilemma. Detailed information can be found on the subsequent page.
REGIONAL LODGING INVENTORY

JENNINGS:
- 32 miles from White Springs
- 136 rooms available
- Scottish Inns
- Budget Lodge
- North Florida Inn

JASPER:
- 20 miles from White Springs
- 111 rooms available
- Days Inn Jasper Motel
- Scottish Inn
- Days Inn
- Triangle Motel
- Motel 8

LIVE OAK:
- 16.5 miles from White Springs
- 214 rooms available
- Holiday Inn Express and Suite
- Econo Lodge
- Best Western
- Royal Inn

LAKE CITY:
- 13 miles from white springs
- 870 rooms available
- Holiday Inn and Suites
- Red Roof Inn
- Ramada Inn
- Country Inn and Suites
- Best Western
- Econo Lodge South
- Hampton Inn and Suites
- Days Inn
- Comfort Inn and Suites
- Country Inn Lake City
- Roadway Inn
- America’s Best Inn

WHITE SPRINGS:
- 113 rooms available
- Telford Hotel
- Suwannee River Motel
- Adams House
- White Springs B & B
- River Cabins
- America’s Best Inn
The proposed eco-lodge site is centrally located to all recreational and tourism activities within White Springs. Just a short walk to downtown, the Suwannee River, and steps away from miles of multi-use trails.

This site would function as a vehicle into the natural, cultural, and historic world of White Springs.
WHITE SPRINGS TODAY: Photographs

Adams Brother Store, Downtown

Nature and Heritage Tourism Center, Downtown

Suwannee River Diner, Downtown

Outfront of American Canoe Adventures, Downtown

White Sulphur Springs Bath House

Stage, Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park
There are currently five available lodging operations within the city limits of White Springs with a total number of 81 rooms and five cabins.

The proposed eco-lodge would accommodate an additional 24-persons. It would function similar to the existing hotels in regards to services provided, but allow for a much more naturalistic, secluded experience that would allow for deeper connections to the surrounding environment.
A. Sophia Jane Adams House B & B, Downtown

B. White Springs B & B, Downtown

C. Historic Telford Inn, Downtown

D. Suwannee River Motel, Downtown

E. River Cabin, Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park. Image courtesy of Floridastatepark.org
With more than 100 architectural and historic resources combined, White Springs is a mecca for cultural and historical enthusiasts.

Locating the eco-lodge within the boundaries of the state park aids in maintaining the historic character and sense of place of the city, while still providing the visitor with direct access to these amenities.
WHITE SPRINGS TODAY: Historic Structures Photographs

Newer construction house, vernacular I-house style, Downtown

The Johns House, wood frame vernacular

Camp Residence

Historic Home, White Springs

Nature and Heritage Tourism Center

Historic Home, White Springs
One objective of my proposal for an eco-lodge is to minimize the environmental impacts associated with developing and constructing the eco-lodge. Limiting the site to pedestrian only access would alleviate a significant amount of site disturbance.

This can be achieved by utilizing existing parking structures within close proximity to the site. There are currently approximately 98 parking spots available between the Nature and Heritage Tourism Center and sites within the state park. Guests would be transported to the site via golf cart which has been factored in to the circulation design of the proposed site.
During each of my trips to White Springs the majority of the parking stalls were unoccupied but would require a more in depth analysis of user frequency and duration. Utilization of these spaces would drastically decrease site disturbance and could help draw the visitors into the downtown.

A. Parking alongside the North Entrance into Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park.

B. Parking within the Nature and Heritage Tourism Center parking lot was readily available.

B. Nature and Heritage Tourism Center Parking Lot
A. Single Family Residential, Osceola Street

B. Single Family Residential, Jackson Street

C. Stephen Foster Museum

D. The 97-bell crillon tower, Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park

E. Craft square

F. This boardwalk detail allows for water, air, and wildlife to flow under. This concept will be utilized for proposed walkways.
There are two entry ways into the park. The east entry has a guard on staff who is in charge of allowing access to the park. The north entrance is opened up for large events that take place within the park.
A. Sal Marie Branch Stream Corridor

B. View Looking South

C. View looking south. Typical vegetative make-up of property

D. View looking northeast toward Jackson Street. The proposed site is dominated by old-growth laurel oaks. There is a significant amount of understory and duff matter that could be eliminated and composted for use elsewhere. The construction of the lodge would seek to limit the loss of any large caliber trees and the proposed structures would quietly inhabit the space and work themselves around the existing forest in a way that limits disruption.
WATERSHED & TOPOGRAPHY

The site gently slopes from its high point of to the lowest point of with an average slope of. The banks of the Sal Marie Branch Stream Corridor range in steepness of 10%-38% and are mildly eroded. All of the runoff on site drains into the Sal Marie Branch Stream Corridor which eventually meets the Suwannee River. The current natural drainage patterns are ideal and are not to be disturbed, only enhanced by utilizing native plants for water cleansing and to increase soil stability.
Sun Angles are a vital part to reduce energy consumption. Knowing the sun’s angle of incidence will assist in the positioning and architecture of proposed structures so that the sun’s heat will be utilized in the winter months and avoided in the summer months.
MONTHLY WIND PATTERNS

Similar to sun angles, knowing the characteristics of the wind directions on site play a crucial role in the orientation of buildings and passive cooling techniques. Utilizing operable windows and sliding facades helps channel wind throughout the building. On this site, the predominant wind during summer months come from the southeast and western directions. Windows should be strategically placed based on this information.
The most suitable soil for development on site is the Foxworth Sand. It is a very deep, somewhat excessively drained soil.
The synthesis diagram combines the opportunities and constraints of the previous analysis to determine the most suitable sites to locate the eco-lodge.

**OPPORTUNITIES:**
- Utilize stream corridor to cleanse runoff
- Micro climate, large shade trees
- Natural Drainage
- Rainwater capturing
- Education/Interpretation of the natural environment
- Composting/Reuse of waste products for energy

**CONSTRAINTS:**
- Noise from road
- Feasibility of solar energy
- Heavily vegetated
Ecotourism and the Natural Environment: A [co]existence
PRELIMINARY CONCEPT 1: Interact

OPPORTUNITIES:
- Clustered style limits site disturbance
- Views of the Sal Marie Branch Stream corridor
- Foster social interaction
PRELIMINARY CONCEPT 2: Inhabit

OPPORTUNITIES:
- Privacy of units
- Minimal site disturbance due to small footprints
- Views from units on high point of site
- Secondary circulation
PRELIMINARY CONCEPT 3: Conform

OPPORTUNITIES:
- Allows for phasing opportunities
- Very small developed area
- Opportunity for larger groups
- Use more of the site for trail systems
The final concept was a combination of all three preliminary concepts with its primary function similar to that of the second. Here privacy is a key characteristic of the layout and adds to the overall experience. Transparency is a key theme in this iteration. Allow nature to penetrate and envelop the design. Achieve a [co]existence where humans and nature may live, provide, and prosper.
CHAPTER 7:
PHASE 2 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Ecotourism and the Natural Environment: A [co]existence
MASTERPLAN

A. Golf Cart Turnaround/Seating
B. 2-Story Eco-Lodge Unit
C. 10' Wide Boardwalk
D. 5' Wide Boardwalk
E. Seating/Interpretation
F. Stream Corridor Enhancement
G. Dining
H. Outdoor Gathering Space
I. Canoe/Kayak Check-in

To Suwannee River/I. Canoe & Kayak Check-in
CHAPTER 7 - PHASE 2 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

BIRDSEYE

Outdoor Gathering Space
Dining
Stream Corridor
Eco-Lodge, Typ.
LEGEND:

▲ A Perspective Key

▲ ▲ ▲ Section Key
CHAPTER 7 - PHASE 2 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

PERSPECTIVE A: Outdoor Room/Gathering Space
PERSPECTIVE B: Primary Walk
The native landscape remains intact throughout the design, revealing the history, culture, and ecology of the site.

The design has been lifted above the ground, creating space for water, wildlife, and wind to flow thru.

The layout of the dwelling units allow for maximum views of the site and into the Sal Marie Stream Corridor.
Space between the public space and the dwelling units is important to ensure maximum privacy and allows for a deeper connection with the surroundings.

The eating area and outdoor room become the gateway between the site and the Suwannee River and should allow for the inclusion of various local events and demonstrations.
SECTION B: Main Boardwalk

The boardwalks react to its environment in a manner that seeks minimal site clearing.

A 10' foot wide boardwalk allows for guests and service carts to interact comfortably.

Scale: 1" = 5'
Native boulders help direct and slow water so that it may be naturally filtered before reaching the lips of the Suwannee River.

Planted native switch grass allows for water cleansing and soil stabilization. It is also a major bio-fuel contributor.

The boardwalk paths limit site disturbance by allowing nature, water, and air to flow through.

The pedestrian walk provides views into the corridor while allowing enough space for wildlife travel.
SECTION D: Seating/Interpretation Amenity

Interpretive signage helps inform the visitor about how the design works within the natural system to protect and enhance our resources.

Incorporating views of Sal Marie Stream Corridor provide opportunities for contemplation, relaxation, and appreciation.

Educating the user about the native wildlife will enhance their understanding and appreciation for them and the threats to them.
CHAPTER 7 - PHASE 2 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

RIVER CHECK IN/CONOE & KAYAK STORAGE
DWELLING UNIT LAYOUT, TYPICAL

FIRST FLOOR
- 220 square feet of living space
- 320 square feet of screen enclosed porch
- 1 bathroom/shower/toilet/sink
- Two twin beds
- Primarily for the individual traveler
- ADA accessible

SECOND FLOOR
- 220 square feet of living space
- 320 square feet of screen enclosed porch
- 1 bathroom/shower/toilet/sink
- One king bed
- Green roof amenity
[LEFT] NORTH FACING: Allows for maximum daylighting. A rain catching cistern is located below.

[BELOW] SOUTH FACING: Provide overhangs to shade in summer but allow sunlight to heat during the winter months.

[ABOVE] WEST FACING: Shade west side as much as possible to reduce afternoon heat gain. Here the covered porch overhang shades the entire western side.

[RIGHT] EAST FACING: Movable windows take advantage of prevailing breezes during hot, humid months.
The following architecture is a result of my research on how to build structures utilizing passive cooling and heating techniques. The underlying theme was transparency. Allow nature to flood into and through the structure, as if they were never there.

Southwest corner. The design allows for maximum shading of the western side during the afternoon and views toward the Sal Marie Stream Corridor. Movable doors and windows allow for cross-ventilation brought about by the prevailing breezes.
Northwest corner. Maximizing transparency on the north side allows for adequate daylighting, limiting the need for grided power.
Northeast corner. The eastern facade has 1 large movable window, maximizing views and daylighting.
Southeast corner. Once again, the facade becomes a wall of windows which provide panoramic views of the site and provide a great amount of light. The greenroof amenity acts as a shade structure for the first floor and a natural water filtration system.
CONCLUSION AND WORKS CITED

Ecotourism and the Natural Environment: A [co]existence
Throughout this project I have been educated on the vast amount of historical, cultural/heritage, and natural resources within Hamilton County, of which I was previously unaware. As my project began to take form, so did my understanding of the type of place this was. This place is Florida. It is about small town America, its land, its history, its culture, and its people. Seldom does one get to experience what the old south once was, in all its beauty and character. Places like this are the foundation from which our country has been built upon and today, have become the places we aspire to create. It is our responsibility to preserve these historical, cultural, and natural riches, and provide the communities with the knowledge of how to maintain their native integrity while sustainably planning for future growth and development.
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