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GIFT CREATES PARK AND HELPS ESTABLISH \$2 MILLION UF ENDOWMENT

Gainesville, Fla. - A creative approach to protecting environmentally sensitive land in north central Florida will also help establish a \$2 million endowment for the University of Florida's Warrington College of Business and the Florida Museum of Natural History.

Ken and Linda McGurn, of Gainesville, Fla., have donated 216 acres of land around Lake Tuscawilla, just south of Micanopy, Fla., to the University of Florida Foundation. The McGurns also donated a conservation easement on an adjacent parcel to the Foundation. The land and easement, appraised at over \$1 million, is being purchased by Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) with funds from the State of Florida's Florida Communities Trust program. The Foundation will then apply for \$750,000 in matching funds from the State of Florida Major Gifts Trust Fund and \$250,000 in matching funds from UF President Bernie Machen's Faculty Challenge Initiative.

Alachua County Commissioner Mike Byerly and his wife Busy, the Executive Director of the Conservation Trust for Florida are also contributing the proceeds from the sale of a conservation easement on their 37-acre property to ACT as part of the overall transaction. The proceeds of the Byerly sale, in addition to a gift from the McGurns to ACT, made the purchase of additional lands possible from the Thrasher family, and will also fund a management endowment for the entire 379 acre park.

Former Alachua County Commissioner Robert "Hutch" Hutchinson, then the Development Director for the Florida Museum of Natural History, facilitated the combination of transactions that protected the land from development. ACT Executive Director, Lauren Day, designed and prepared the application to the Florida Communities Trust. ACT will own and manage the land after the sales close on September 29, 2006.

“Our original intent was solely to preserve the land,” said Ken McGurn, “but thanks to Hutch and ACT we were able to combine our land with others, create a wonderful nature preserve, and establish an endowment for the University of Florida.”

The McGurns previously donated buildings and land to several non-profit organizations including Catholic Charities, YMCA and the Alachua County Child Care Agency.

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