



South MacDill 48 Preserve

General Description

Size: 48 acres. This site was purchased through the ELAP Program in 1992. Surrounded by residential development, it exists as an isolated island of natural habitat on Tampa's Interbay Peninsula. The property was proposed for rezoning in the late 1980's to allow townhouses and apartments. Local residents organized a grassroots campaign in opposition to the proposal, on the basis that the density would be incompatible with the surrounding single family neighborhood. This opposition, along with concerns related to the site's location within the runway flight path of nearby MacDill Air Force Base, resulted in the Tampa City Council's decision to deny the rezoning request. A few years later, the County was successful in its effort to acquire the property.

Location and Access

The site is located on the West side of MacDill Avenue, just south of Interbay Blvd. Access is available at the south end of Martindale Street, with parking at the adjacent Skyview Park.

Environmental Significance

This site is unique due to its location in an otherwise developed urban area. It is the last remaining significant tract of natural upland habitat on the Interbay Peninsula, other than lands within the nearby air base, that are off-limits to the public. As such, it provides a much needed refuge for native wildlife species with limited range requirements, especially small mammals, reptiles and amphibians. The site contains oak hammock, pine flatwoods, and shrub swamp habitat. The quality of the site's natural resources is slowly declining due to invasive exotic plants and natural succession in the absence of fire. With proper management, including exotic control, cautious prescribed burning, and good neighborhood relations, this site could become a real natural treasure for the local community.

Recreational Opportunities

There are only very limited opportunities for public access. The site is entirely enclosed by a chain link fence for security reasons, with a single gated access point at the end of Martindale Street. Trails that once crossed the site have become overgrown. The City of Tampa has plans to install minimal park facilities, including a trail system, picnic tables and a single picnic shelter.

Volunteer Opportunities

The site needs tender loving care in the form of trash removal and exotic plant control. This site would be an ideal candidate for adoption by a civic group or local business.

Contact Information

City of Tampa Parks and Recreation Department, 7525 North Boulevard, Tampa, FL 33604. (813) 274-8615.