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Coastal Zone
Information
Center

Florida. South Florida Regional Planning Council

ANALYSIS OF COASTAL OWNERSHIP

FOR

BROWARD, DADE, MARTIN, PALM BEACH

AND ST. LUCIE COUNTIES

COASTAL ZONE
INFORMATION CENTER

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SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

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INTRODUCTION

The origins of title to ownership of Florida land date back several hundred years. During the first Spanish efforts at settlement in the 17th century, most of the land occupied was for military installations, but the few civilians did own some private properties.

The British enjoyed a brief period of control in Florida in the mid-18th century, and to encourage permanent settlement the Crown made two types of land grants available.

> The privy Council in England made grants up to 20,000 acres to be settled at the owner's expense with white Protestant families, at least one person to each one hundred acres. The governor and council in the colonies granted family or head rights, one hundred acres for the head of the family and fifty acres for each additional person. (Tebeau, 1971)

In eastern Florida, 1,440,000 acres were deeded to 114 persons. Holders of large grants often discouraged settlement by preempting large tracts and holding them for speculation.

An application for the survey and the acquisition process had to be made in person at the capital. Another aspect that discouraged some prospective settlers was the capital necessary to start a homesteading enterprise ($400-2,500). Lack of roads limited settlement to areas accessible by water, and fraud aimed at unwary immigrants was also a problem.

> The council for West Florida took a step most unusual in a frontier community at its first meeting at Pensacola in November 1764 by planning for the orderly settlement of towns in the colony. They began by declaring void all titles purchased from the departing Spaniards and ordered

> surveyor Elias Durnford to present a plan for a town. After setting aside sections for public buildings, he proposed to divide the remainder into town building lots 80 feet by 160 feet and assign each a garden bordering on a small stream flowing by the north side of the settlement. Purchasers of Spanish claims received first choice of lots, holders of government positions second, and others according to the likelihood that they could meet the requirements that the property be developed for use. (Tebeau, 1971)

After the American Revolution, the treaty of Paris returned Florida to Spain, but the Spanish were not as strong internationally, nor in their efforts to re-settle Florida as in the first Spanish Era. Their occupation was to last only about 40 years (1784-1821). On the eve of cession to the United States, the Spaniards made spectacularly large land grants in last minute efforts at strengthening their colonial presence. Some of these were close to 50,000 acres, and were to create title problems for the new Florida territory. Several of the larger Spanish land grants would remain in litigation for years.

> The establishment of private claims and locating them when the land had not been surveyed hampered orderly settlement, particularly in East Florida where such claims were more numerous. The treaty of cession provided that titles to land granted or conveyed to private ownership before January 24, 1818, were to be confirmed by the United States. This proved to be a gigantic task. Records were often nonexistent and usually were in Spanish when available. Some claims originated in the British period, were confirmed in the second Spanish era and recorded in that language, and another translation of the document might render it somewhat different from the original. The United States dealt reasonably with claimants, many of whose documents were fraudulent as to origin, location, and extent, a circumstance not unusual in the United States where land was so plentiful and claimants so few. (Tebeau, 1971)

The first official surveys in the Territory of Florida were begun in 1824, establishing base and meridian lines at Tallahassee from which a rectangular

system of surveys could be extended over all public lands. The Tallahassee area had the most new growth, and land sales there between 1825 and statehood, in 1845, totalled approximately 797,000 acres. (Tebeau, 1971)

The initial survey did not make land available in all areas where people desired to settle. A federal bill was passed in 1826 to grant a settler preemption on the purchase of public land on which he had established a home before it was surveyed and offered for sale. The settler could acquire the land at a price of $1.25 an acre, which the buyer would usually pay when the land would normally be offered for sale at a public auction; otherwise the pioneer might be forced to buy improvements he himself had already made in order to retain the property. (Tebeau, 1971)

The transitional zone along the coast, where land and sea meet, is of particular concern in terms of conflicting public interests and claims to private ownership. "In few areas is the pressure of so many actual and potential uses felt within such a constricted space. ...The main segment of the land-sea interface is the tideland, flushed daily by the ebb and flow of the tides." (Garretson, et al, 1968) The principle of state ownership of the tidelands is derived from English common law - these areas are held in trust for the people for certain purposes, basically navigation and fisheries. This concept has protected tidelands in the past and has been adapted to newer uses and public interests. It has worked as both a restriction on the powers of the states and as a means of public control over private owners.

In Florida, title to tideland areas was a "legislative giveaway" until 1957, when those not yet disposed of were given to the Trustees of the

Internal Improvement Fund. The Trustees were empowered to sell such land to the owner of the adjacent upland, down to a bulkhead line set by local authorities. Criteria for the location of bulkhead lines included conservation of marine life and natural resources, natural beauty, and recreational advantages. (Garretson, et al, 1968)

After a decade of excessive sales to development interests, the Florida Attorney-General's office established clearer and more consistent policies. The new guidelines for sale of tidelands, effective in July, 1967, required a determination, through biological, ecological and hydrographic studies, of the extent to which such sale

> ...would interfere with the conservation of fish, marine and wildlife or other natural resources, including beaches and shores, and would result in destruction of oyster beds, or marine productivity, including, but not limited to, destruction of marine habitats, grass flats suitable as nursery or feeding grounds for marine life, and established marine soils suitable for producing plant growth of a type useful as nursery or feeding grounds for marine life, and if so, in what respect and to what extent, and they shall consider any other factors affecting the public interests. (Section 253.12(2)(A), Florida Statutes)

The scale of property ownership and some of the problems involved have varied since the days of Florida's early settlement, but the basic issues remain very similar. These include the acquisition of public land for community purposes, questions of private versus public title, the responsibilities of land proprietorship, questions of just compensation for taking of land, and even speculation and resulting inflated land prices.

In the South Florida coastal zone today, understanding the existing patterns of land ownership is vital to planning for future development. Growth has

been rapid in recent dacades, and competition for land as a limited resource has been intense. There are few remaining undeveloped areas without environmental limitations. Those served by transportation access and other public facilities are even fewer. Large scale development, with its associated extensive impacts, has been a trend. Public access to the dwindling natural and recreational areas, such as beaches, has been an increasing issue.

Inventorying and mapping land ownership can identify areas of potential future growth as well as areas where there is little chance of large scale development. Tax assessment data may indicate directions of future growth as valuations change. Geographic patterns of ownership, when compared with current land uses and environmental quality information, can also show possible patterns and directions of future growth. Analysis of these indicators can guide planning for future public and private land use and programming of capital improvements.

METHODOLOGY

Land ownership in the South Florida coastal zone has been divided into four major categories: publicly owned land, platted land, unplatted land, and claimed submerged land. These categories were mapped at a scale of 1:24,000, on maps corresponding to U.S.G.S. 7 1/2" quadrangle sheets. The information was gathered by 20 and 40 acre grids, based on data from tax rolls in County assessor's offices.

Publicly owned land is further classified according to the level of government which controls it. Public ownership is usually constant over a long period of time, and present or future uses are generally planned for or

known. Examples of federally owned land are wildlife refuges and military sites. State lands include parks, highway construction borrow pits, and educational facilities; county-owned airports, parks, and sanitary landfills; city land generally includes park land and utilities. Government owned land is not likely to be sold in parcels large enough to affect ownership or land use patterns in the coastal zone, and can be considered to be permanently out of the private market.

Platted land is a parcel of land that has been subdivided into small units, surveyed for the determination of property lines, and recorded with the appropriate local authority. This category is further broken down according to whether or not it has been developed. Undeveloped platted land may have good potential for future growth, and can be an indicator of where development may already be planned to some degree, but not yet carried out. Much of the land subdivided in the past in South Florida, however, was never intended for immediate development, but was rather part of a speculative land sales operation. The subdivision of large parcels may introduce problems of land assembly under multiple owners if the subdivided lots are too small for a future developer's purpose. Ownership data for undeveloped platted land was not available for this study, so this land must be analyzed with the possible restrictions of multiple ownership in mind.

Developed platted land has already been altered for development. Alteration ranges from dirt roads or drainage canals with no buildings, to a completely urbanized area such as downtown Miami. It is important to take these areas into consideration when analyzing ownership patterns since undeveloped areas

must rely on support from, and interaction with, developed sections, especially in the initial phases of growth.

Unplatted land in the coastal zone, under 20 acres per parcel or in multiple ownership, is mapped according to the number of owners per 40 acre section, ranging from less than five owners to over 15 owners per 40 acres. Unplatted land loses potential for large-scale future development as parcel size falls below 20 acres and the number of owners increase. Small lots (under 20 acres) and multiple ownership of large tracts of unplatted land act as barriers to land assembly for large scale development. These smaller parcels of land generally do not precipitate growth, rather, they are developed after some growth has occurred near the area.

Individuals or companies owning over 20 contiguous acres are listed separately on the maps and on a corresponding computer printout listing the name of the owner, address, map location acreage, assessed and tax value of the land. Large single-owner parcels are generally easier to develop because these parcels have not been platted or subdivided. Large acreage (20+ acres) allows for more diversity in future development, and the problem of acquiring land from multiple owners is eliminated. Geographic patterns of large single-owner parcels can show, in conjunction with land use and environmental data, the pattern and direction that future growth is likely to take in the next decade.

Claimed submerged land includes portions of the coastal waterways or Atlantic Ocean that have been specifically purchased by a person or group. This land accounts for no more than 3 percent of the coastal zone in any county. The land is still underwater in most cases, but represents an interest in future development in that area. It is most often contiguous with land area in the coastal zone, the exception being places like stiltsville in Dade County, where claimed submerged land is a section isolated in deeper water just off the coast.

A brief analysis was made of tax assessment value from assessor's rolls and its correlation with factors such as location, access, and environmental conditions. The conclusions from this analysis are limited because tax and ownership data were only obtained for large single-owner parcels.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The geographic patterns of land ownership in the South Florida Region are characterized by linear configurations of development, characterized as developed platted land, along the coastline and along major north-south transportation corridors, primarily Interstate 95, the Sunshine State Parkway and U.S. 1. This linear strip of developed land extends almost uninterrupted from central Dade County north through Palm Beach County, with smaller nodes of development in Martin and St. Lucie counties. Tax assessment of large single-owner parcels in these areas reveals the development pressure on areas with transportation access, and those adjacent to the Atlantic Coast.

The western portions of the coastal zone exhibit much less development, with unplatted large single-owner parcels and undeveloped platted land - the categories with most growth potential - more concentrated in these areas. There are more acres of agricultural and natural lands in the western coastal zone, and tax values were generally lower in this area.

For the South Florida coastal zone as a whole, land in public ownership accounts for 30.8 percent of the coastal zone, as illustrated in Table 1. This public land includes many acres in parks and recreational facilities; especially in the category of federal ownership, which includes almost 400,000 acres of Everglades National Park in Dade County.

Private sector ownership for the coastal zone in the Region is approximately 69 percent of the total acreage. It includes undeveloped platted land, at 11.8

percent, and developed platted land totalling 27.9 percent. Unplatted land in large single-owner parcels, a category with much development potential, makes up 24.2 percent of the South Florida coastal zone.

TABLE 1 - OWNERSHIP DATA - REGIONAL TOTALS

	Acres	Percentage
Federal	408,745	25.7
State	22,210	1.4
County	29,165	1.8
Municipal	30,792	1.9
Undeveloped platted	188,329	11.8
Developed platted	445,352	27.9
Less than 5 owners per 40 acres	27,381	1.7
5-15 owners	39,475	2.5
more than 15 owners	17,215	1.1
Large Single-owner parcels (20 + over)	385,180	24.2
TOTAL	1,593,844	100.0
Claimed submerged land	9,568	

In general, natural limitations to development, such as mangroves, flood prone characteristics, or marshes did not seem to significantly affect assessed land value unless the conditions were extreme. This is perhaps attributable to the fact that most of the land area of the Region where such limitations do not exist was previously developed. This consists primarily of the narrow coastal ridge which runs north-south through the South Florida Region. As referenced in this report, flood prone areas are those designated by the U.S. Geological Survey on its Maps of Flood Prone Areas. These were estimated from information on past floods, and indicate where there is, on the average, one chance in 100 that a designated area

will be inundated in any one year. These are areas where precautions in building design and elevation must be observed, but are not necessarily restrictive of development.

Developed land uses, such as residential, industrial and commercial uses, greatly increased land assessments, as did proximity to such development. Transportation access seemed to result in major land value increases. Vacant versus agricultural uses seemed to exhibit no pattern of differentiation; although in some cases, citrus groves were more highly valued than other agricultural uses. Therefore, the ability of agricultural lands to withstand development pressures cannot be predicted from this information.

Total assessed tax value for large single-owner parcels in the South Florida coastal zone is $1,227,749,762. Table 2 shows these assessment totals by county.

TABLE 2

County	Total Assessment
Broward	232,091,716
Dade	585,911,523
Martin	88,681,373
Palm Beach	267,763,325
St. Lucie	53,301,825

This compares to collected tax revenues from large single-owner parcels totalling approximately $13,000,000 annually.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The extent of existing urbanization and planned developments in Broward County results in a relative lack of unplatted land, specifically large

single-owner parcels; and in Dade County, urbanization limits unplatted land and large single-owner parcels to the far southern portions of the county. Palm Beach County has the highest percentage of large single-owner unplatted parcels in the Region. Martin and St. Lucie counties also have much less platted land than the more urban counties, and a relatively high percentage of large single-owner parcels. These patterns of large single-owner land parcels indicate the potential for extensive growth to move increasingly into the northern counties in the Region. As previously indicated, existing development patterns may increasingly force growth into the valuable agricultural land and natural areas of the western parts of the coastal zone where patterns of private land ownership, much unplatted and in large single-owner parcels, predominate.

Tax valuation information shows the strong competition for development of undeveloped areas along the coastline, particularly where large single-owner parcels occur. Development pressure on these areas with access to the water makes the problems of conservation of natural areas and public access to recreation and beaches even more serious concerns.

In discussions of land ownership at a meeting on February 18, 1976, members of the Coastal Areas Advisory Committee, debated the conflicts inherent in management and controls that would be adequate to ensure protection of both private and public property owners in the coastal zone. The general goals outlined by the Committee were concerned with preservation of natural systems, particularly beach and estuarine areas, with recognition of pertinent economic factors and rights of property owners.

A variety of possible development and conservation management mechanisms are available. Among the strongest recommendations was provision of flexibility for imaginative and environmentally compatible land uses, while providing consideration of the public interest in private ownership. The management techniques which might be utilized include zoning, tax structures, transfer of development rights, and more efficient permitting processes. Acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands by the public, through eminent domain power, or by private parties, for example, the Trust for the Public Lands or the Nature Conservancy, was recommended.

Broward County

There are 270,032 acres of coastal zone land in Broward County, as well as roughly 6,000 acres of submerged lands, and approximately 53,000 acres of coastal waters. Public or government ownership accounts for approximately 12,500 acres (4.7 percent) of the land total, and the remaining 95 percent is in private ownership. Table 3 shows the breakdown for all ownership categories. Approximately 47 percent of the land in the coastal zone is developed platted, and another 30 percent is undeveloped platted. Only 13.5 percent of the land area is unplatted large single-owner parcels, with the remaining 4.5 percent being unplatted parcels in multi-ownership.

TABLE 3: OWNERSHIP DATA

	Acres	Percentage
Federal	1,615	.6
State	1,205	.5
County	5,665	2.1
Municipal	4,070	1.5
Undeveloped platted	80,850	30.4
Developed platted	127,425	47.9
Less than 5 owners per 40 acres	4,250	1.6
5-15 owners	6,535	2.5
More than 15 owners	1,915	.7
Large single owners (20+ ac.)	36,502	13.7
Totals	270,032	100.0
Submerged	6,440	

These acreages do not include road rights-of-way.

Adjacent to Conservation Area 2A is a mix of undeveloped platted land and single-owner parcels of considerable size (in the 300-800 acre range). Current use is mainly cropland and pasture, with some vacant land. Most of the large owners are banks or development corporations, rather than either individuals or ranch and farm operations. Several very extensive developments are already planned in this area, covering approximately 23,000 acres. There are scattered marshes in this area which is flood prone.

In the north central portion of the County, along a strip abutting the Florida Turnpike, is an area of large single-owner parcels. There are roughly 2,500 acres adjacent to the Florida Turnpike, and another 1,600 acres just to the east. The area is largely agricultural and extractive, with some vacant land and single-family residential sections. It is a flood prone area with scattered marshes, but because of its adjacency to the Turnpike, proximity to the urbanized coastline, and advantages of the ownership patterns, it may be an area of development in the near future.

Developed platted land covers much of the coastal zone, beginning with a strip along the northeast coast, and expanding throughout the central portion of the County to the southern boundary. This urbanized area includes, among others, the cities of Lighthouse Point, Pompano Beach, Oakland Park, Ft. Lauderdale, Dania and Hollywood. Most of this development is in flood prone areas. The land uses include residential, commercial, industrial, transportation facilities, and open spaces. The Hugh Taylor Birch State Park is an area of 180 acres in State ownership within this urbanized area, just north of Port Everglades, on the Atlantic Ocean-front.

This park can be expected to remain a smaller public open space. Another significant open area is a dense, extensive mangrove forest just south of Port Everglades. It remains currently vacant, but has been platted. This privately owned tract is almost surrounded by development, and will probably be subject to extreme pressure for development in the near future.

The southwestern extension of the coastal zone (far to the west of the Florida Turnpike and S.R. 823) is a mix of mostly undeveloped platted land and large single-owner parcels. The uses of this flood prone area, which abuts Conservation Areas 2B and 2A, are mainly pasture and citrus groves. Several residential communities occur as relatively small developed platted portions within this area, including Plantation Acres and Rolling Oaks. To the west of Cooper City and Pembroke Pines the area remains largely agricultural and undeveloped. There are some major developments planned for this area despite its environmental constraints and far-westerly location.

The owners of large single-owner parcels in Broward County are almost totally from within the South Florida Region, with 50 percent from Broward County and another 40 percent from the rest of the Region. Only some 7.6 percent of this land is held by out-of-state individuals or corporations.

As shown in Table 5, the land held in large single ownership parcels generates approximately $2,500,000 in annual tax revenues for Broward County.

The land valuation patterns in Broward County do not exhibit a pattern which can be readily analyzed because of the relative lack of unplatted large single-owner parcels, for which tax data was available. Where data allowed examination of example parcels, the tax assessments were sometimes contradictory and inconsistent with what would be predicted from other factors, such as location, land use, transportation and natural environmental characteristics. This might be explained by unusually strong development pressure resulting in erratic assessed values; zoning patterns, which were not included in this analysis; or local variations in assessment of market value.

The urbanized area, mostly developed platted land, makes up a large portion of the coastal zone in Broward County. This area is along the coastline and through the central portions of the coastal zone. The undeveloped areas are vast acres of mixed undeveloped platted land and large single-owner parcels in the western portions of the coastal zone. Where platting has been done it appears in a checker-board alternating pattern.

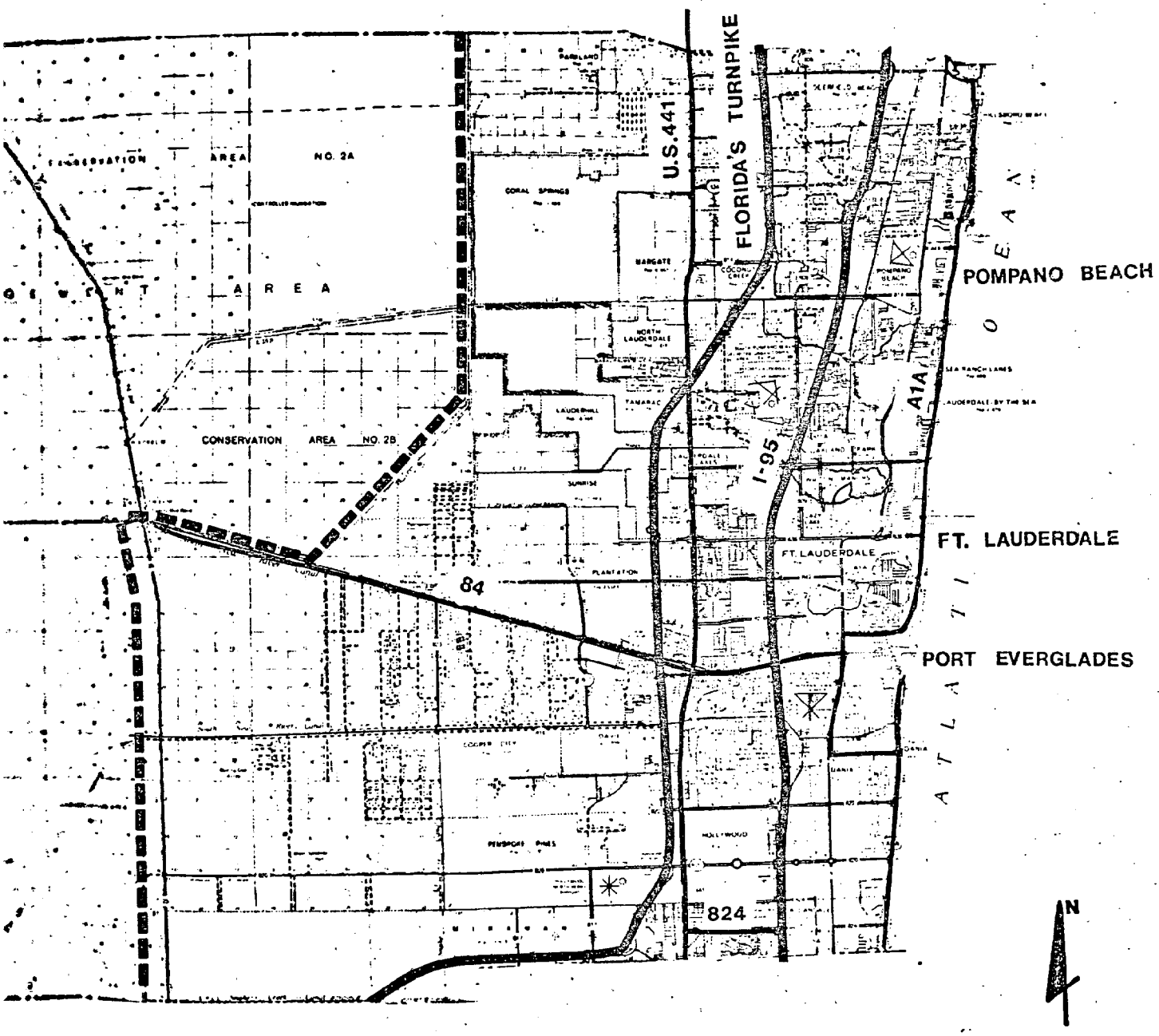
TABLE 4: LARGE SINGLE-OWNER PARCEL DATA

Location of Owner	# Owners	Acres	Percent of total land in large ownership	Percent of Coastal Zone land	Total Tax Revenue	Percent of Total
Within Broward County	129	18,406	50	6.8	$1,509,560	60.9
Within Region (Dade & Palm Beach)	39	14,604	40	5.4	689,076	27.8
Within State	7	697	2.0	0.2	50,064	2.0
Out of State	19	2,768	8.0	1.0	229,531	9.2
TOTAL	194	36,475	100.0	13.4	$2,478,233	100.0

TABLE 5: SAMPLE LARGE SINGLY-OWNED PARCELS

ACREAGE	LOCATION	DISTINGUISHING FEATURE OR CHARACTERISTIC	LAND USE	TAX VALUATION	PER ACRE VALUATION
640	far northwestern section of coastal zone; near conservation area	location agricultural area (flood prone)	cropland (proposed residential development area)	$3,540,140	$ 5,531
81	on US 441 between I-95 & Florida Turnpike, west of Ft. Lauderdale	agricultural area, between major transportation networks (flood prone)	cropland	326,480	4,031
150	adjacent to turnpike north-central county	adjacent to turnpike (flood prone)	cropland	1,893,900	12,626
700	adjacent to turnpike north central county	turnpike access surrounded by vacant & agriculture (flood prone)	open and other	387,449	553
30	Central county on I-95 uncompleted corridor just outside developed area	near developed area, proposed transportation access (flood prone)	industrial and vacant	91,310	3,043
433	far western coastal zone on SR 84 near conservation area 2B	location, vacant area (flood prone)	vacant (proposed major development)	323,120	746
313	southwestern coastal zone just east of US 27; near conservation Area 3	location; agricultural area, undeveloped platted area (flood prone)	cropland and other agriculture	251,160	802

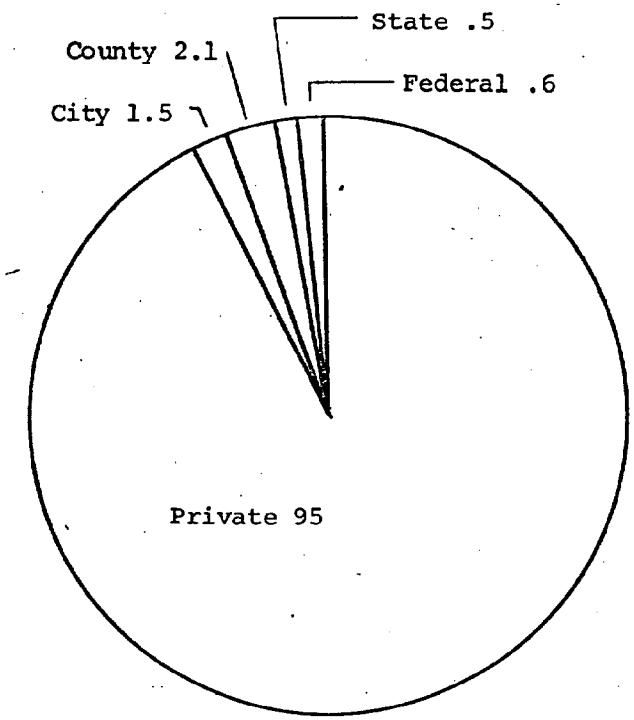
Broward County location map

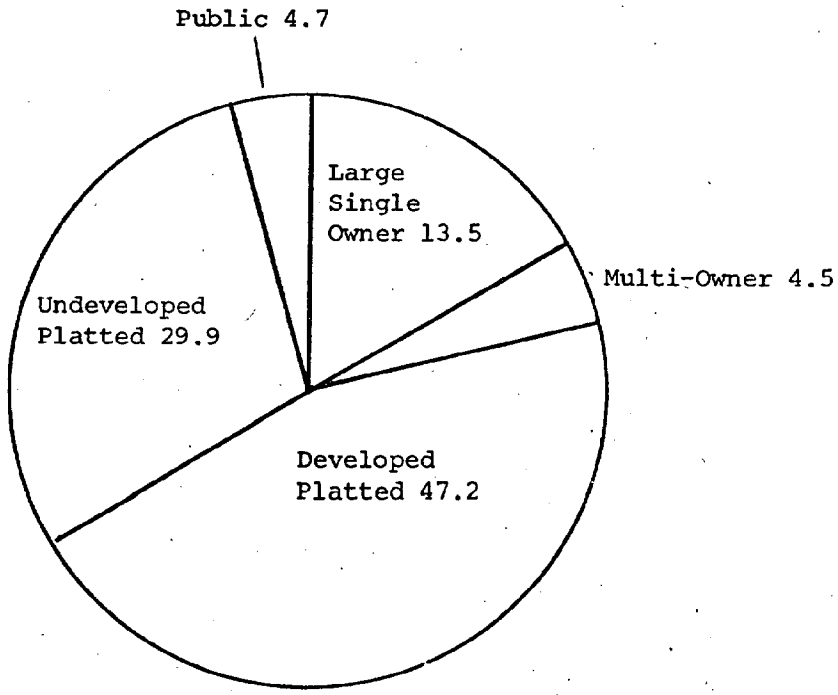


Coastal Zone Boundary

1:4mi.

BROWARD COUNTY
OWNERSHIP PERCENTAGES





Dade County

There are 762,240 acres of land in the coastal zone of Dade County, plus some 2,400 acres of claimed submerged land and roughly 277,000 acres of coastal water. Roughly 56 percent of this acreage is publicly owned, including part of Everglades National Park in the western extension of the coastal zone. The remaining 44 percent of the land is privately owned, with 18 percent developed platted land, 5 percent undeveloped platted and 16 percent in large single-owner unplatted parcels. Table 6 shows the breakdown for all ownership categories.

TABLE 6: OWNERSHIP DATA

	Acres	Percentage
Federal	404,500	53.07
State	8,545	1.12
County	11,740	1.54
City	4,065	.53
Undeveloped platted	38,530	5.05
Developed platted	136,790	17.95
Less than 5 owners per 40 acres	10,304	1.35
5-15 owners	19,780	2.59
Over 15 owners	6,040	.80
Large single owner (20+ acres)	121,946	16.00
Totals	762,240	100.00
Submerged	2,428	

Along the northern boundary between Dade and Broward counties is an area with several large single-owner and multi-owner parcels. The predominant pattern is developed platted land, extending throughout the central portion of Dade County, including the cities of North Miami, Miami, Hialeah,

Opa Locka, Coral Gables, and extending to the coastline, including the Miami Beach area. This urbanized area encompasses a mixture of land uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, some open spaces, transportation, and limited crop and pastureland north of the Palmetto Expressway. All of this lies in a flood prone area. Miami International Airport, a major county-owned facility, and federally-owned Opa Locka Airport are also located in this developed area.

Of special note within the urbanized area are the mangrove forest of the Interama site (on the inland waterway Biscayne Bay, U.S. 1 and S.R. 826) and, further south, a mangrove area in Matheson Hammock County Park in Coral Gables. Several large areas of park space and public beach - Crandon County Park, and Cape Florida State Park, including about 500 acres of submerged land - are located on Key Biscayne.

Beyond the urbanized area the west central portion of the coastal zone between the Palmetto Expressway (826) and SR 821 includes undeveloped platted land and large single-owner parcels. This is a flood prone area, and the uses are mainly agricultural, vacant, and mining. Just south of this, an urbanized area and its pattern of developed platted land extend to the western boundary of the coastal zone, in the West Miami area.

In the southeastern portions of Dade County, the Perrine and Goulds area, the ownership patterns begin to shift to much more unplatted lands, in multi-owned and large single-owner parcels. Land use in the area is extensively crop and pasture land and groves, with limited urban uses

near Perrine. Except for a few ridges, this area is flood prone. Along the coastal edge are extensive mangroves, which remain vacant and in relatively large single-owner parcels.

The Homestead Air Force Base is a large tract of Federally-owned land in this area. Adjacent to it is the city of Homestead, a small urban area of developed platted land. To the south, between US 1 and Biscayne Bay, are extensive acres of undeveloped platted land. All of this undeveloped platted area is flood prone, and most is vacant or agricultural land.

On the extreme southern edge of the Dade County coastal zone, and extending on to the western boundary with Everglades National Park, is a vast area of large single-owner parcels. The easterly portions of this area is held by Florida Power and Light Company in land adjoining its Turkey Point Power Plant. A large tract on the Bayfront is owned by the State of Florida. This flood prone area is all vacant, and most of it is covered by marshes.

The western extension of the coastal zone is the Federally-owned Everglades National Park, which is maintained as an open space, wildlife, and recreation area.

Large single-owner parcels are a smaller percentage of the Dade County coastal zone than in some other counties of the Region because of the extent of urbanization. Excluding for a moment the 404,500 acres of Federal lands (contained primarily in military facilities and National

Parks), about 34 percent of the remaining land area is large single-owner parcels. The distribution of this ownership category is noteworthy since almost all of it is concentrated in the western and southern portions of the coastal zone. Roughly 39 percent of the remaining coastal zone area (excluding Federal Parks) is developed platted land, most of it within the metropolitan Miami area in the northeastern and central parts of the County.

Land in large single-owner parcels is almost all owned by Dade County residents, with 89 percent held by owners from within the County. Only 1.4 percent is owned by residents from the rest of the Region, another 1.3 percent by owners from the rest of Florida, and about 8 percent by out-of-State residents.

The large single-owner parcels in Dade County generate approximately $6,036,942 of annual tax revenues to Dade County. An examination of some sample parcels throughout the County reveals informative differences in tax valuations in the different areas. Because of the relative lack of single-owner large parcels within the urbanized area, determination of tax value patterns was almost impossible for this area. Generally, transportation access seemed to increase valuation, as did proximity to developed area. Vacant parcels along the northern County boundary seemed to be more highly valued than those in the western portions (west of the Palmetto Expressway). In the southeastern portions of the County, the value of waterfront property

seemed relatively low, perhaps because of development limitations from mangroves, or perhaps due to limited access or lack of development pressure in the area. Agricultural and grove lands in the southern parts of Dade County seem relatively highly valued compared to such uses in other parts of the Region, perhaps due to their productivity as agricultural land or because of development pressure. The flood prone character of most of the area seemed to have little influence on valuations, unless there were extreme limitations due to extensive mangroves or marshes.

TABLE 7: LARGE SINGLE-OWNER PARCEL DATA

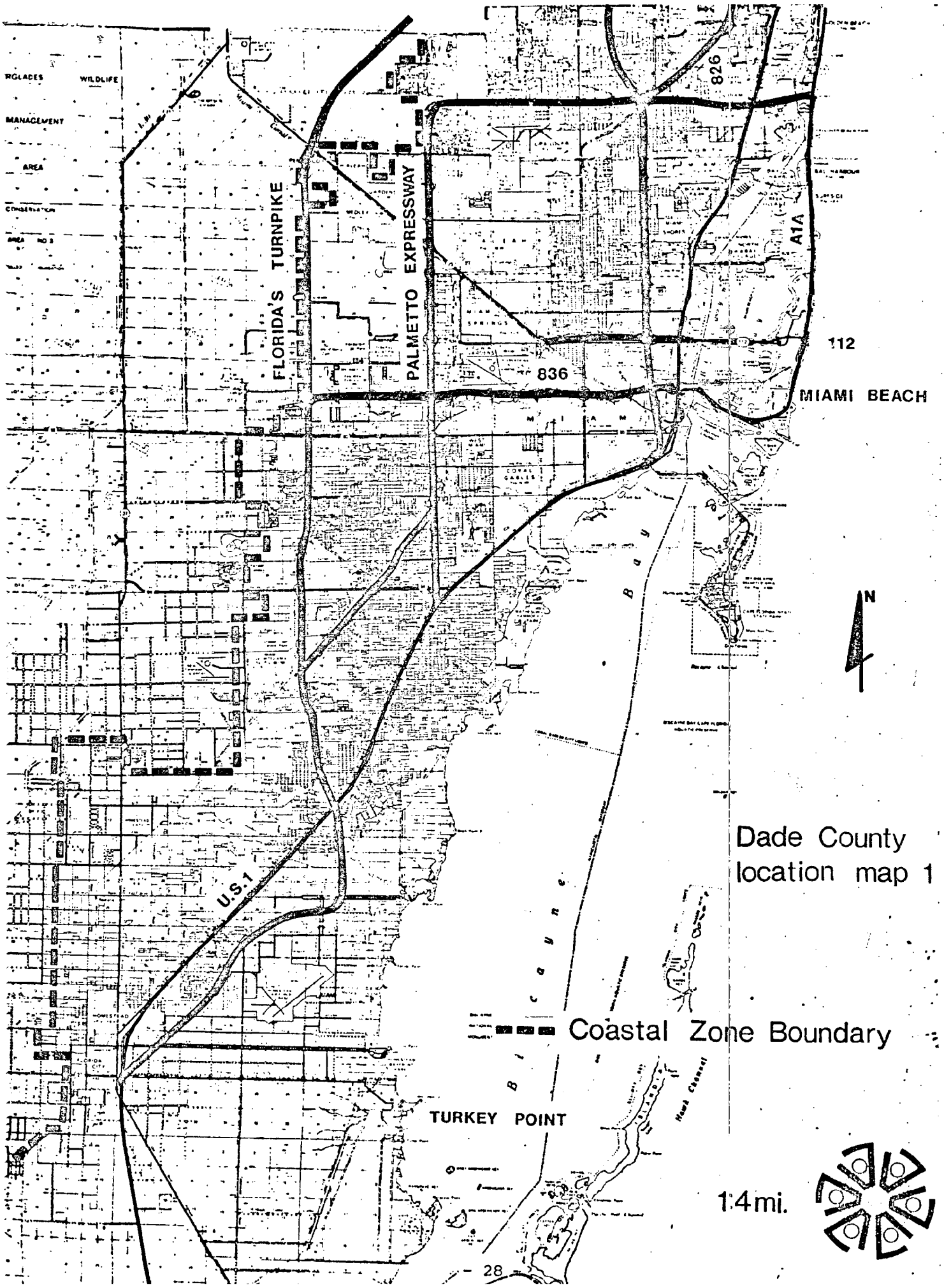
Location of Owner	# Owners	Acres	Percent of total land in large Ownership	Percent of coastal zone land	Total Tax revenues	Percent of Total
Within Dade County	538	108,907	89	14	4,924,633	81.6
Within Region	15	1,810	1.5	0.2	162,992	3
(Broward)	(10)					
Within State	11	1,594	1.5	0.2	24,187	0.4
Out of State	67	9,635	8.0	1.2	925,130	15
TOTAL	631	121,946	100	15.6	6,036,942	100

Assessed Valuation:

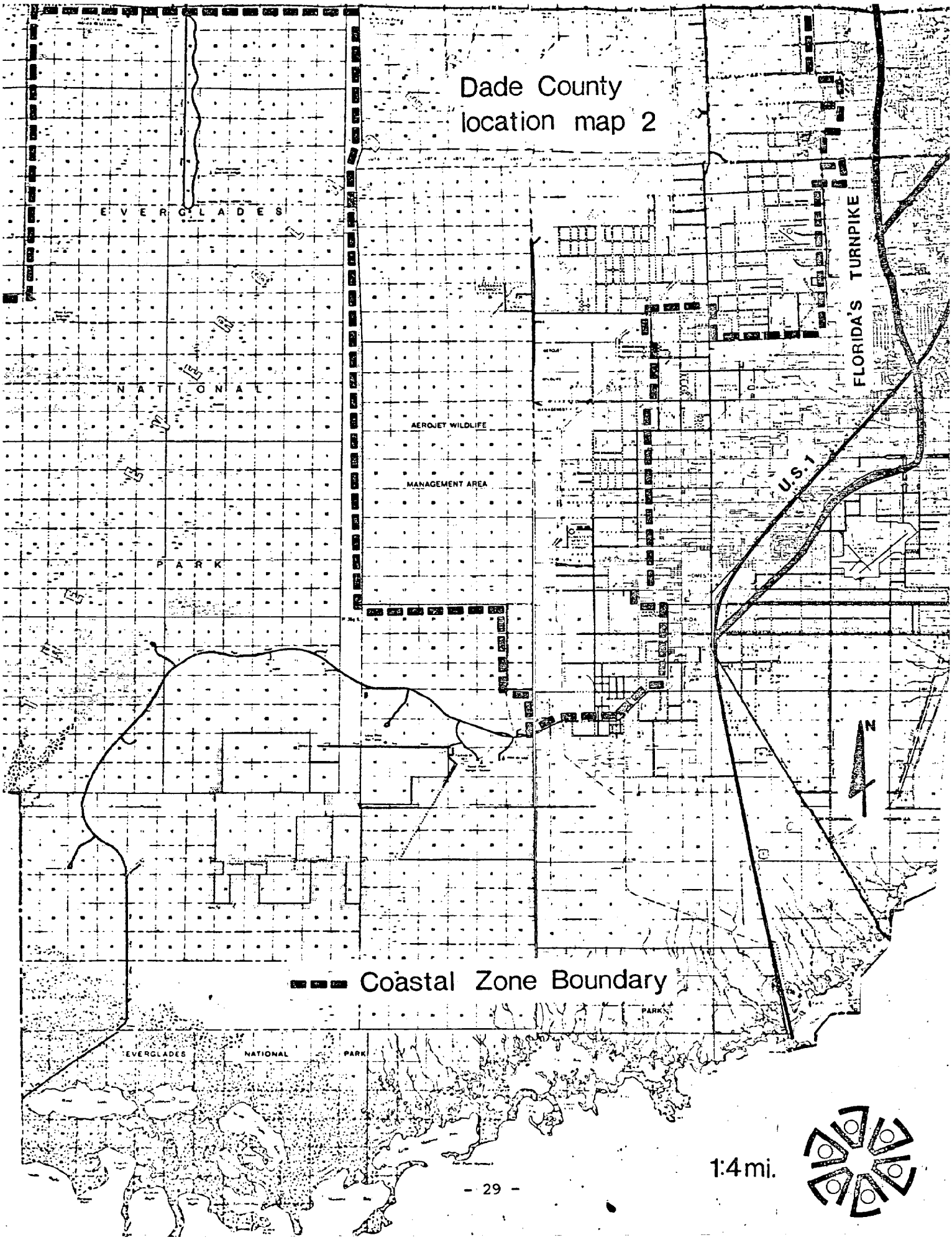
TABLE 8

SAMPLE LARGE SINGLE-OWNER PARCELS

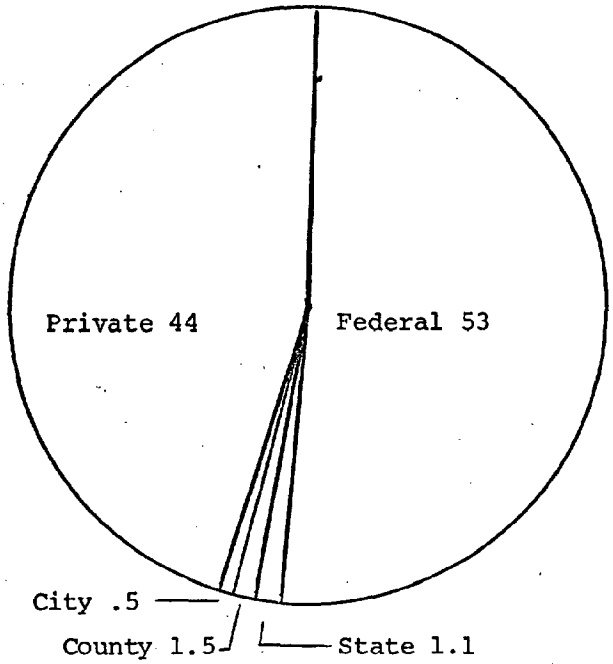
ACREAGE	LOCATION	DISTINGUISHING FEATURE OR CHARACTERISTIC	LAND USE	TAX VALUATION	PER ACRE VALUATION
188	Northern Dade County on Florida Turnpike	Turnpike access; surrounded by single-family residential and open (flood prone)	Open and other	$1,598,680	$ 8,504
616	West-central portion (West of Palmetto Exp.)	Western location; surrounded by extractive and agricultural uses (flood prone)	Vacant	3,695,640	5,999
35	Central Miami area on Rt. 9	Within developed area (flood prone)	Commercial	11,458,510	327,386
20	S. Miami/Kendall area	Location; within developed area (flood rone)	Single-family resid.	403,200	20,160
140	Perrine area; waterfront	Water access; southeastern location (flood prone; mangroves)	Vacant	840,000	6,000
22	Southern coastal zone, in Goulds/Perrine area adjacent to US 1	Adjacent to US 1; agricultural and grove area (flood prone)	Vacant	277,430	12,610
36	Southwestern coastal zone. Goulds area	Location; agricultural area (flood prone)	Mixed cropland and citrus groves	207,383	5,184
158	Extreme southern coastal zone, on US 1	Marsh area, very limited access (flood prone)	Vacant	137,926	872

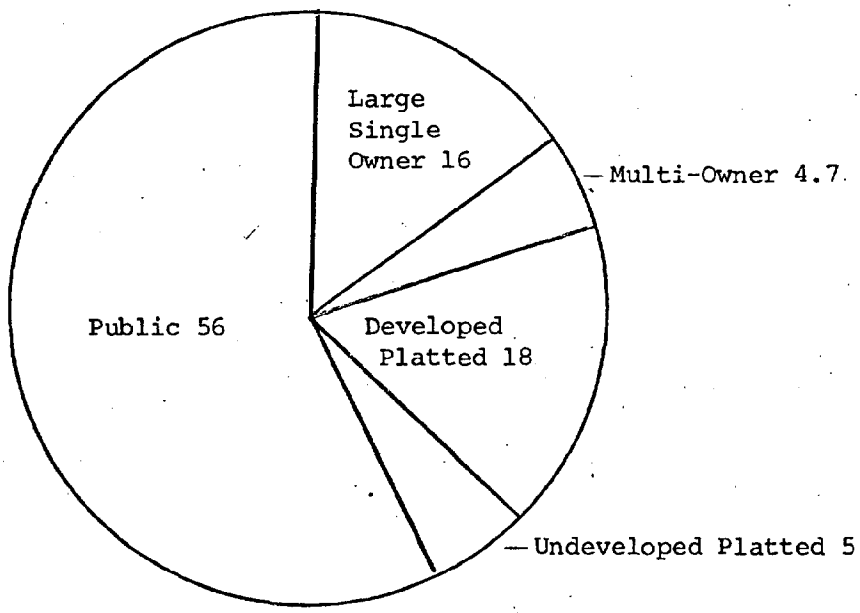


Dade County
location map 1


Dade County
location map 2
EVERGLADES
NATIONAL
PARK
AEROJET WILDLIFE
MANAGEMENT AREA
U.S. 1
FLORIDA'S TURNPIKE
N
Coastal Zone Boundary
EVERGLADES
NATIONAL
PARK
1:4mi.

DADE COUNTY
OWNERSHIP PERCENTAGES





Martin County

Land ownership patterns in Martin County demonstrate a relatively large proportion of large (20 acres or more) single owner parcels. This category comprises approximately 35 percent of the total 84,000 acres in the coastal zone. There are 202,000 acres of coastal water in Martin County. Table 9 shows the breakdown of all the ownership categories.

TABLE 9: OWNERSHIP DATA

	Acres	Percentage
Federal	850	1.0
State	9,820	11.7
County	1,770	2.1
Municipal	255	.3
Undeveloped platted	13,415	15.9
Developed platted	22,655	26.9
Less than 5 owners per 40 acres	1,565	1.9
5-15 owners	3,080	3.6
More than 15 owners	770	.9
Large single owner (20 + acres)	30,112	35.7
TOTALS	84,292	100.0
SUBMERGED	90	

The State of Florida owns 11.6 percent of the coastal zone land, with approximately 9,800 acres in two parks - St. Lucie Inlet Park (as yet unopened) and Jonathan Dickinson State Park. About 27 percent of the land area is developed platted, which includes the city of Stuart. Much of the remainder of this category is limited in its current developed status, with roadways extended and some housing built, but

largely remaining vacant or in agricultural use. These portions could absorb some of the development pressure of immediate future growth.

Sixteen percent of the land area is undeveloped platted land. These 13,400 acres, which are currently vacant or used for crop land and pasture, should also be considered as exhibiting strong development potential, and may indicate patterns of growth which are already planned.

The southern end of Hutchinson Island, just north of St. Lucie Inlet, has several large single-owner parcels, at least two of which have residential communities currently planned. There are also some multi-owner parcels, but presently all remain vacant. There are some mangroves in this area.

North of the St. Lucie River, on the western edge of the coastal zone, a large undeveloped platted tract lies adjacent to U.S. Highway 1. Approximately 220 acres are part of the Port St. Lucie development, currently planned in Martin and St. Lucie counties.

To the south of this, are several large single-owner parcels, with a contiguous area of approximately 1,200 acres, currently remaining vacant. Some of the area is flood prone and in marginal lands, as classified by the Coastal Zone Management Atlas (CCC, 1972). To the east, along the Indian River, the area is a mixture of developed and undeveloped platted land in single family residential use.

The city of Stuart, with its adjacent airport, is primarily an area of developed platted land. A majority is in single-family residential use, with some commercial use and some remaining open. Development is

concentrated along the edge of the inlet and the forks of the St. Lucie River, taking advantage of the waterfront.

West of the St. Lucie River South Fork and the city of Stuart, abutting the Sunshine State Parkway, an area of approximately 6,500 acres is in large single-owner parcels, currently vacant or crop land. Just to the south, a large developed platted area remains mostly in crop land and pasture. South of these areas, and adjacent to the turnpike, is an area of approximately 2,450 acres of large single-owner parcels, currently vacant and crop land. Much of this acreage is flood prone.

Just outside of the urbanized area of the City of Stuart to the southwest is a large vacant undeveloped platted area. South of the City of Stuart are vast areas of large single-owner parcels. Currently vacant, scattered with numerous lakes and marshes, and largely classified as flood prone and marginal land, this area contains approximately 17,800 acres of land in large single-owner parcels. This very significant area, which may feel growth pressure from both Stuart and from Palm Beach County to the south, comprises almost 20 percent of the total coastal zone land in the County. While the natural physical limitations might raise costs, they would probably not prohibit development.

The developed platted, residential area of Hobe Sound lies just north of Jonathan Dickinson State Park. To the east, on Jupiter Island, is a stretch of already developed platted land, mostly single-family residential.

Just west of the Turnpike in this area are approximately 3,200 acres of undeveloped platted land currently in agricultural use. A relatively small stretch on the southeastern County border, just south of the State park, contains several large single-ownership parcels as well as developed platted land. This area remains mostly vacant or in agricultural use, with only limited single-family residences.

The 30,000 acres of unplatted large single-owner parcels in the Martin County coastal zone are especially significant in terms of future growth, because the parcel size allows more diversity in type and scale of development, without problems of assembly due to multiple-ownership.

Approximately twenty percent of the land in large single-owner parcels is controlled by residents from outside the Region and some eighteen percent is owned by non-Florida residents. Thirty-three percent is owned by Martin County residents and approximately forty-seven percent by residents from the rest of the Region.

Large parcel single-owner land in Martin County accounts for $958,000 in taxes annually, or roughly thirty-two dollars per acre as shown in Table 11.

TABLE 10: LARGE SINGLE-OWNER PARCEL DATA

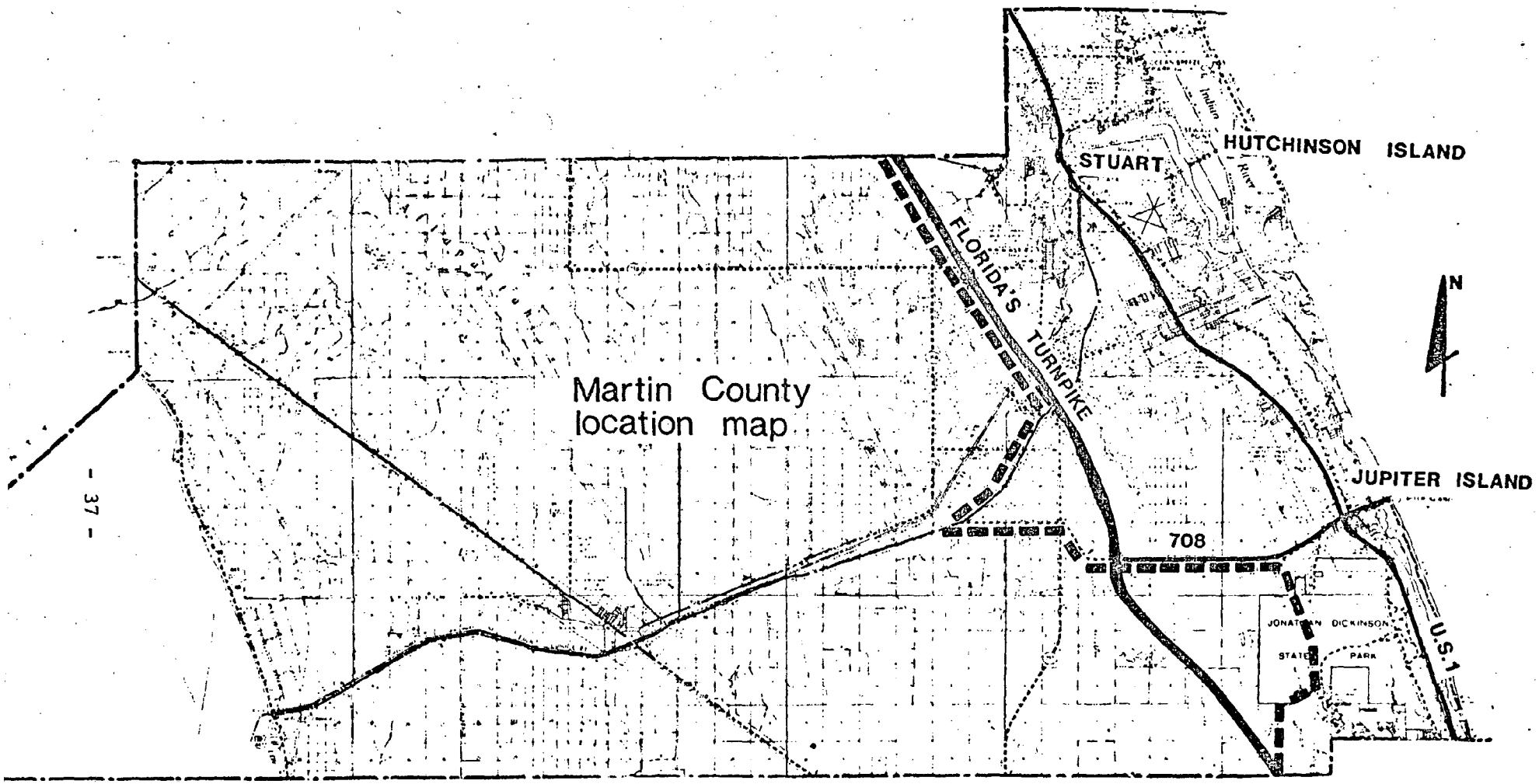
Location of Owner	# Owners	Acres	Percent of Large Owner Total	Percent of Coastal Zone Land	Total Tax Value	Percent of Total
Within Martin County	57	10,001	33.2	11.9	$360,126	37.6
Within Region	45	14,274	47.4	16.9	392,706	40.9
(Dade & Broward)	(30)					
(Palm Beach)	(14)					
Within State	4	371	1.2	0.4	20,680	2.2
Out of State	21	5,466	18.2	6.5	184,666	19.3
TOTAL	127	30,112	100.0	35.7	$958,180	100.0

TABLE 11:

Assessed Valuation:

SAMPLE LARGE SINGLE-OWNER PARCELS

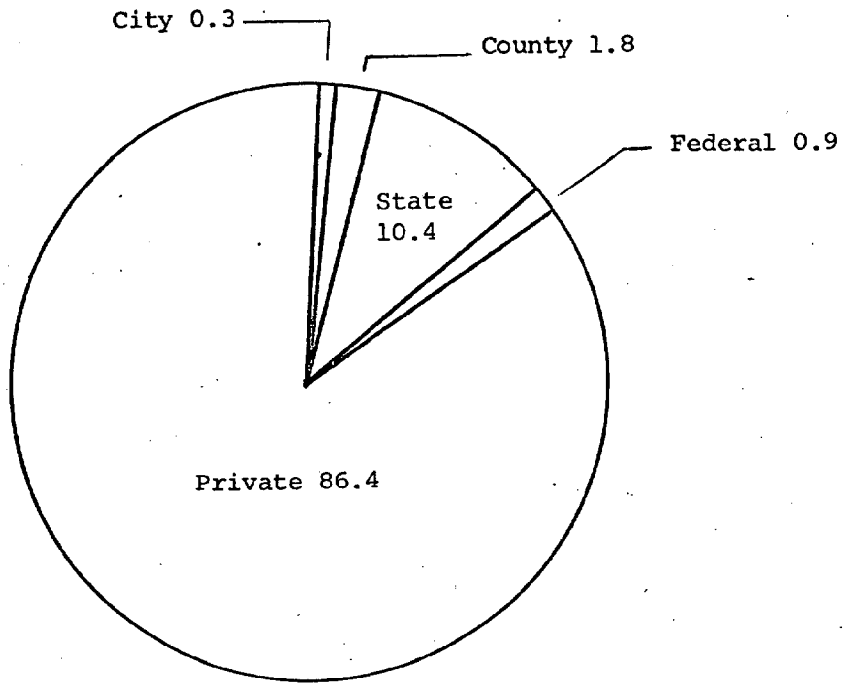
Acres	Location	Distinguishing Feature or Characteristic	Land Use	Total Assessment	Per Acre Assessment
71	South of and adjacent to Stuart (US 1)	Location adjacent to developed area	Vacant-single family residential	$ 286,820	$ 4,039
63	North of St. Lucie River on SR 707	Small coastline on inland waterway	Mixed: open & other; feed-lot; ltd. single-family residential	1,127,722	17,900
67	Northern part of County on St. Lucie County line; abutting turnpike	Turnpike access; in platted area (part of major planned development)	Vacant	646,900	9,655
145	Northwestern portion of County	Agriculture use; NW location	Crop and pasture land	217,836	1,504
640	Southwestern portion of coastal zone	Agriculture use; SW location parcel size	Crop and pasture land	120,000	750
58	Adjacent to Hobe Sound; SE part of coastal zone	Coastline on inland waterway	Vacant	887,294	15,298

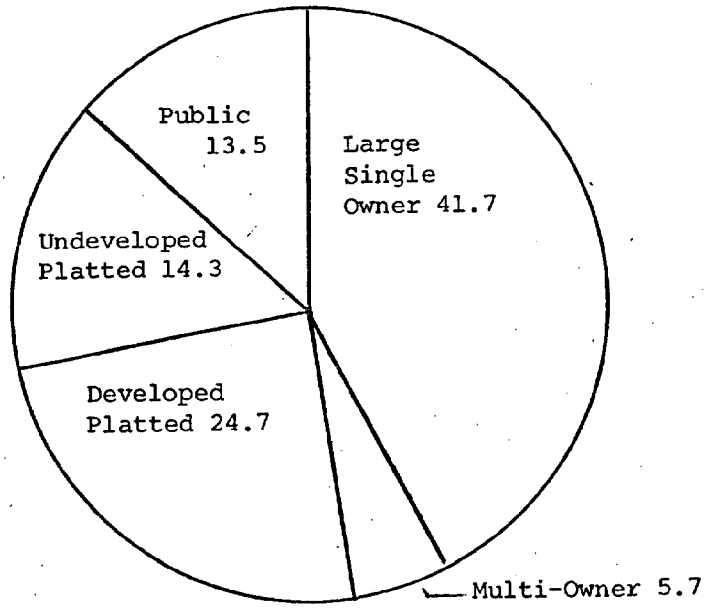


Coastal Zone Boundary

1:4 mi.

MARTIN COUNTY
OWNERSHIP PERCENTAGES





Palm Beach

Approximately six percent of the 380,350 acre coastal zone in Palm Beach County is in public ownership; and the remaining 94 percent is privately owned, as illustrated in Table 12. Developed platted land accounts for about 33 percent of this privately owned acreage, and undeveloped platted land another 7 percent. Coastal waters in Palm Beach County occupy an additional 109,570 acres. Approximately 45 percent of the coastal zone land area is unplatted and in large parcels (20 acres or more) held by one owner - the category with the most development potential. Approximately 6 percent is in multi-owned parcels.

TABLE 12: OWNERSHIP DATA

	Acres	Percentage
Federal	1,740	.46
State	780	.20
County	8,050	2.12
City	21,292	5.60
Undeveloped platted	30,854	8.11
Developed platted	126,517	33.27
Less than 5 owners per 40 acres	5,722	1.50
5-15 owners	6,210	1.63
More than 15 owners	7,560	1.99
Large single-owner (20+ acres)	171,625	45.12
TOTALS	380,350	100

In the northern portions of the County, developed platted land is concentrated around the Loxahatchee River - Lake Worth Creek area, which is a State aquatic preserve. Most of this is single-family residential development, including the southern tip of Jupiter Island, which is a mangrove area.

Just adjacent, to the south (south of S.R. 706), is an area of mostly large single-owner parcels encompassing more than 60,000 acres. It extends to the west, beyond the turnpike to the edge of the coastal zone boundary. Mostly vacant, with some scattered agricultural use, this land is almost all flood prone and includes the northern portions of the Loxahatchee Slough. The owners in this area are predominately companies or corporations rather than private individuals. Because of this ownership pattern, the area may face development pressure in the future, although some limitations will be imposed by its marginal and flood prone characteristics.

One particularly interesting feature in the Loxahatchee Slough, which extends through the north central part of the County, is a tract of more than 12,000 acres owned by the City of West Palm Beach as a water catchment area. This area will probably be maintained as a conservation and open use area.

Beginning in the Lake Worth, North Palm Beach area, a strip of developed platted land extends along the coast southward to the County boundary. With a mix of uses (single-family and multi-family residential, and commercial) this strip is on the coastal ridge and the oceanfront. peninsula. For the most part, it is above the level of flood prone areas (the eastern-most edge is in the hurricane zone). There are a very few small mangrove areas scattered in this coastal section.

Another strip of developed platted land extends along the Florida Turnpike from around Lake Worth to the County line. This is still largely

agricultural and mostly in a flood prone area, but there are large single-family and multi-family residential developments recently constructed or now being developed. Access to the turnpike is probably a major attractive feature of this area.

Between the turnpike and the urbanized area on the coast are scattered large single-owner parcels. Agriculture and citrus groves (with some vacant land) are the current uses, but the owners are primarily real estate and land development corporations. This area might be expected to face very strong growth pressure because of the ownership advantages and the development advancing from both sides. There will be some restrictions to development, probably in the form of increased costs, due to the flood prone characteristics and the presence of some marsh areas.

To the west of the turnpike and Highway 441, an extensive unplatted area is in large single-owner parcels. This land, adjacent to the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge, is currently used for pasture and crop land, and is flood prone, characterized by marshes. The owners tend to be ranch operators or private individuals.

More than half of the land in large single-owner parcels is held by companies or individuals from within the County. Another 34 percent is owned by people from the rest of the Region, and 12 percent by out-of-state owners. Only 2 percent is held by owners from the rest of the state. Table 13 shows the data for large single-owner parcels. This land generates more than three million dollars in annual tax revenues for Palm Beach County.

TABLE 13: LARGE SINGLE-OWNER PARCEL DATA

Location of Owner	No. of Owners	Acres	Percent of total land in large Ownership	Percent of coastal zone land	Total Tax Revenues	Percent of Total
Within Palm Beach County	331	87,570	51	23	$1,686,751	53.6
Within Region	118	59,506	34.7	15.6	999,221	31.7
Within State	11	2,993	1.7	0.8	80,587	2.6
Out of State	86	21,556	12.6	5.6	381,724	12.1
TOTAL	546	171,625	100.0	45.0	$3,148,284	100.0

A look at sample parcels from different areas in the County reveals some informative patterns of assessed tax value. In general, the highest valued properties are in or adjacent to the urbanized area, especially near the coastline. The northern and western portions of the County exhibit generally lower assessed values. The differences between agricultural and vacant uses show no definite pattern, but citrus grove areas seem to be assessed more highly than other crop land. One interesting point is the fact that the developed strip along the turnpike has not seemed to significantly raise the assessed values of adjacent large single-owner parcels to any appreciable extent. (See Table 14)

In summary, coastal zone ownership patterns in Palm Beach County are characterized by areas of developed platted land in linear extensions along the coastline and along the Florida Turnpike (south from around the city of Palm Beach to the County boundary) and by a large percentage (45%) of large single-owner parcels between these areas and in the far western portions of the coastal zone. A notable characteristic is the relative lack of undeveloped platted land, indicating versatility in terms of the types and sizes of developments which may be initiated in the future.

The pressures on lands with access to water (river, waterway, or oceanfront) and those with transportation access is exhibited in the ownership patterns of Palm Beach County, and also in the assessed tax values of the several sample parcels.

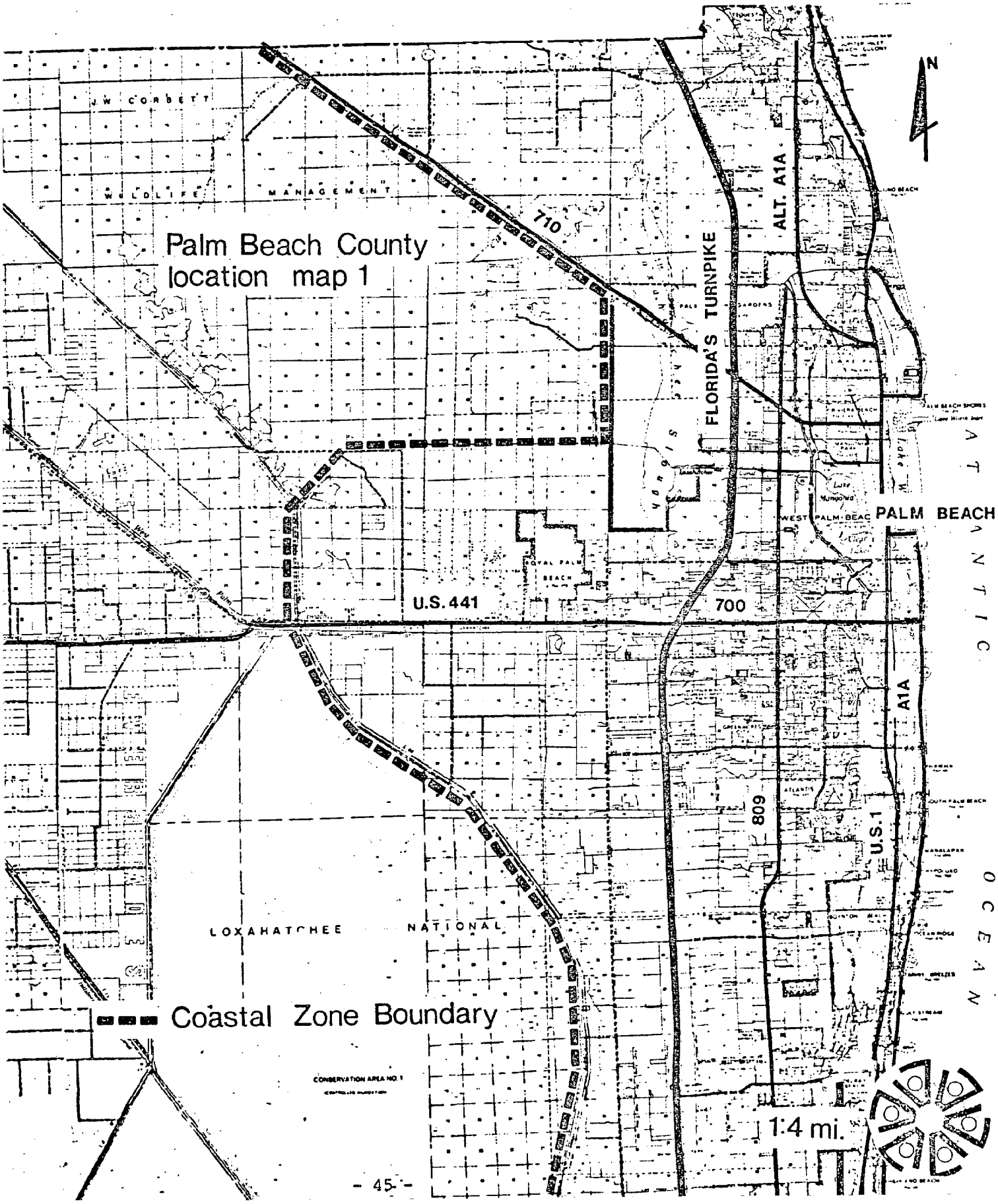
The vast majority of the land remaining unplatted and undeveloped is marginal land, flood prone, or in marsh areas. Therefore, if future growth demands expansion beyond the developed area, it will have to extend into these more environmentally sensitive areas.

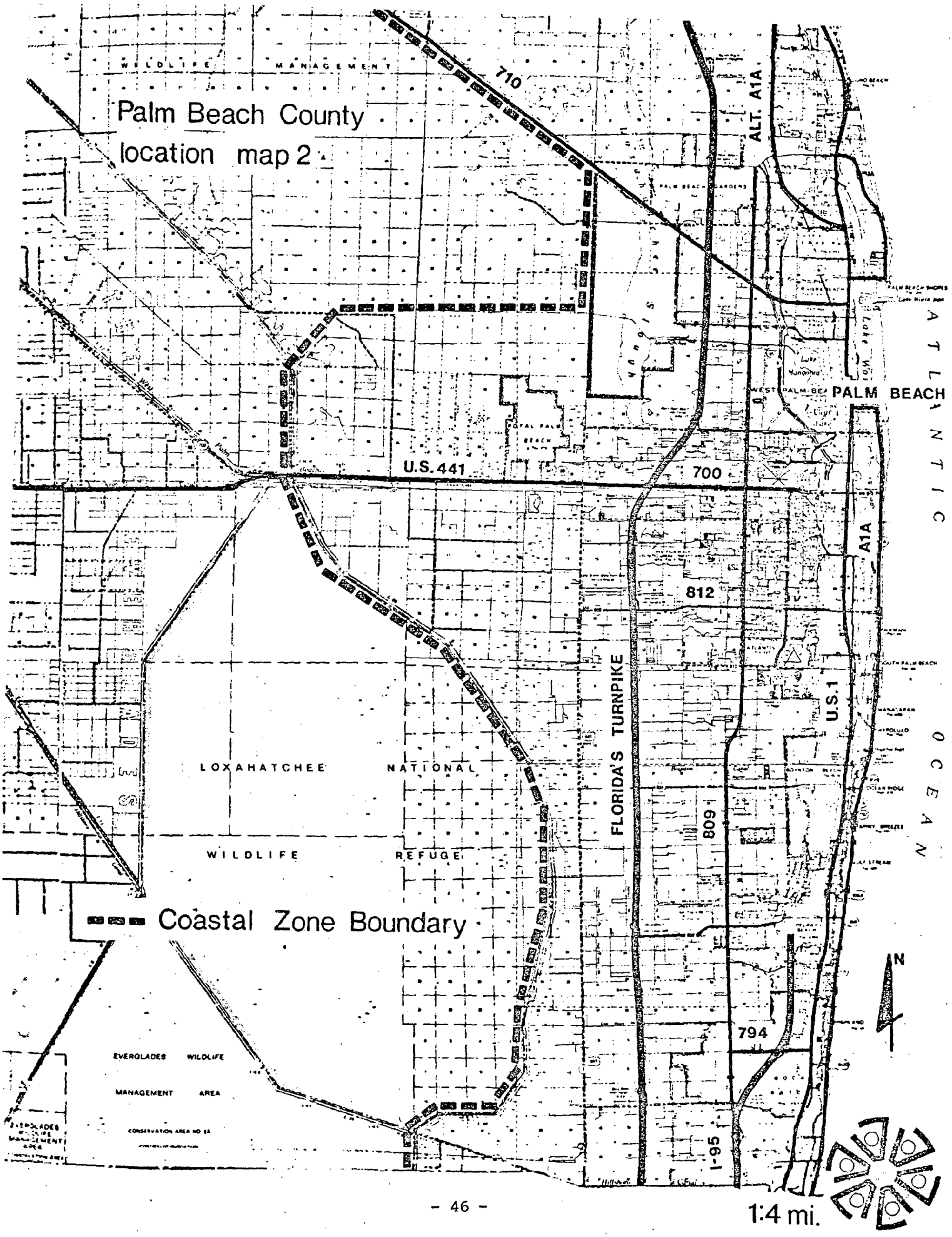
TABLE 14:

Assessed Valuation:

SAMPLE LARGE SINGLE-OWNER PARCELS

Acreage	Location	Distinguishing Feature of Characteristic	Land Use	Total Assessed Value	Per Acre Assessment
80	Far NW corner of coastal zone	Limited access; extreme NW location (flood prone)	Vacant	$ 24,000	$ 300
40	Northern part of County; on Loxahatchee River	Adjacent to developed area, surrounded by single-family residential; river-front (flood-prone)	Vacant	160,000	4,000
81	Northern part of County on A1A; Atlantic Ocean	Ocean-front; surrounded by mostly vacant areas	vacant	994,649	12,279
596	Far western part of coastal zone	Parcel size; surrounded by agriculture; western location	Citrus groves	357,534	599
418	Far western part of coastal zone	Parcel size; surrounded by agriculture; western location	Crop land & pasture	125,400	300
50	West Palm Beach developed area	Location in developed area	Vacant	191,910	3,838
20	Palm Beach area, on A1A; Atlantic Ocean	Oceanfront; developed area	Single-family residential	1,763,353	88,167
640	Southcentral Country; adjacent to Turnpike	Surrounded by developed platted area (in agricultural use); Turnpike (flood prone)	Agriculture	238,000	371
105	South of Boca Raton, in developed area on Broward County line	Surrounded by single-family residential development (flood prone; marshes)	Open + other category	1,320,000	12,571
49	South of Boynton Beach, west of U.S. 1	Surrounded by developed platted	Single-family residential and open	247,500	5,000


Palm Beach County
location map 1
J.W. CORBETT
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT
710
FLORIDA'S TURNPIKE
ALT. A1A
N
PALM BEACH
WEST PALM BEACH
U.S. 441
700
A1A
809
U.S. 1
LOXAHATCHEE NATIONAL
Coastal Zone Boundary
CONSERVATION AREA NO. 1
1:4 mi.
ATLANTIC OCEAN


Palm Beach County
location map 2
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT
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ALT. A1A
PALM BEACH
ATLANTIC
OCEAN
U.S. 441
700
A1A
812
FLORIDA'S TURNPIKE
U.S. 1
LOXAHATCHEE NATIONAL
WILDLIFE REFUGE
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Coastal Zone Boundary
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EVERGLADES WILDLIFE
MANAGEMENT AREA
I-95
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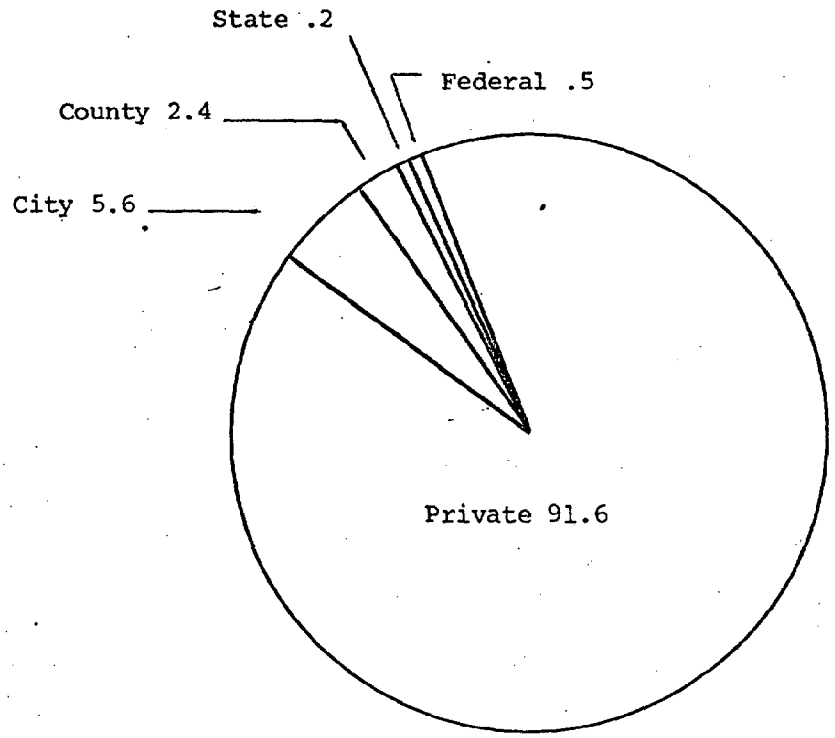
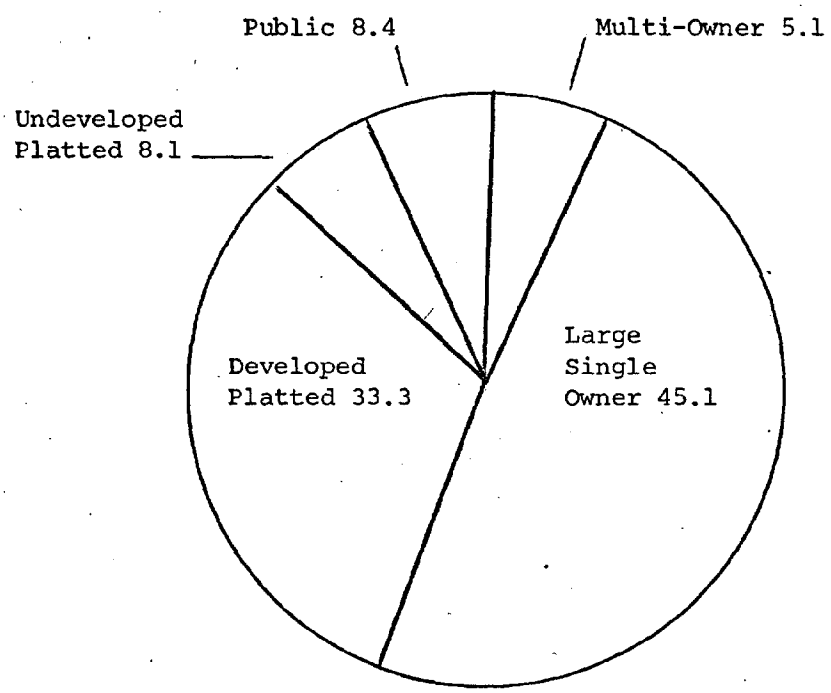
PALM BEACH COUNTY
OWNERSHIP PERCENTAGES





St. Lucie County

St. Lucie County land ownership patterns are strongly dominated by large single-owner parcels and undeveloped platted land, each comprising approximately 25 percent of the land area in the coastal zone. These two categories are very important in determining the availability and distribution of land for future growth. The coastal zone includes 97,540 acres of land area (26 percent of the total land area of the County), as well as 67,780 acres of coastal water.

Table 15 shows the breakdown of ownership categories. Government owned lands account for approximately 5,000 acres, or 5 percent of the coastal zone. Another .6 percent (610 acres) is reclaimed submerged land; the remaining 94 percent is in private ownership.

TABLE 15: OWNERSHIP DATA

	Acres	Percentage
Federal	40	.04
State	1,860	1.92
County	1,940	2.00
City	1,110	1.15
Undeveloped Platted	24,680	25.46
Developed Platted	31,965	32.98
Less than 5 owners per 40 acres	5,540	5.72
5 - 15	3,870	3.99
More than 15 owners	930	.95
Large single-owner (20+ acres)	24,995	25.79
TOTALS	96,930	100.00
SUBMERGED	610	

North of the city of Ft. Pierce, privately-owned land is mostly in parcels of 20 acres or more in single-ownership. This land is currently in groves or other agricultural uses, with some vacant areas. Hutchinson Island, north of the inlet, is in unplatted multiple ownership parcels. These lands are in the hurricane flood zone, and the western edge of the island contains mangrove areas which combined with the ownership patterns, could be significant restrictions on large scale development.

The area adjacent to the airport is in vacant large single-owner parcels, and therefore has strong development potential. The Ft. Pierce urbanized area is classified as developed platted land, extending roughly 2.5 miles north and south, and 2 miles east and west.

A significant pattern of large single-owner parcels is scattered in a crescent-shape, ringing the western side of the city of Ft. Pierce. There is a total of approximately 3000 acres in the area remaining primarily in citrus groves and other agricultural uses. Platting has not yet extended beyond the residential areas of the city, but because of this ownership pattern and the adjacency to the already urbanized area, this section provides a natural extension of development.

State-owned Pepper Park (including Jack Island), east of Ft. Pierce on Hutchinson Island, comprises about 675 acres. South of the Ft. Pierce Inlet, Hutchinson Island is largely unplatted, vacant and in mangroves. Just due east of the urbanized area there is a predominance of large single-owner parcels, totalling about 1500 acres.

In the south central portion of the County are large concentrations of platted land, both developed and undeveloped.

South of Ft. Pierce and east of U.S. 1, a large area of approximately 2500 acres is categorized developed platted, but remains mostly vacant with only scattered single-family residences. This is part of the Indian River Estates development, ultimately planned to encompass 7900 acres.

To the southwest, bordering the Turnpike, is an extremely large tract of developed platted land, which as yet remains largely vacant. This area is part of the Port St. Lucie development, planned to have a total of 46,300 acres in St. Lucie County, with a very small portion beyond the coastal zone boundary. This total comprises almost one half the land area of the coastal zone in St. Lucie County.

There are 24,995 acres of land held in parcels of 20 acres or larger by single owners, and over 75 percent of this land is owned by persons or companies located outside St. Lucie County. Over 13,000 acres, or half of this land in large single ownerships is owned by persons who live outside the County, but within the Region. Approximately 14 percent (3464 acres) of the acreage in large single ownerships is held by people from outside Florida, as shown in Table 16.

A brief analysis of tax assessment values in St. Lucie County indicates higher values of land with waterfront access. Assessed values on agricultural land are relatively low and decrease with distance from Ft. Pierce. (See Table 17)

The significant percentages of large single-owner and undeveloped platted parcels shows the relative lack of current development or subdivision in St. Lucie County, but at the same time indicates the potential for growth because of ownership characteristics. The distribution of these ownership patterns surrounding the urbanized Ft. Pierce area and along the coastal edge extending to the south is significant, as the developed strip along the South Florida Region's eastern side begins to close into a continuous urbanized corridor.

TABLE 16: LARGE SINGLE-OWNER PARCEL DATA

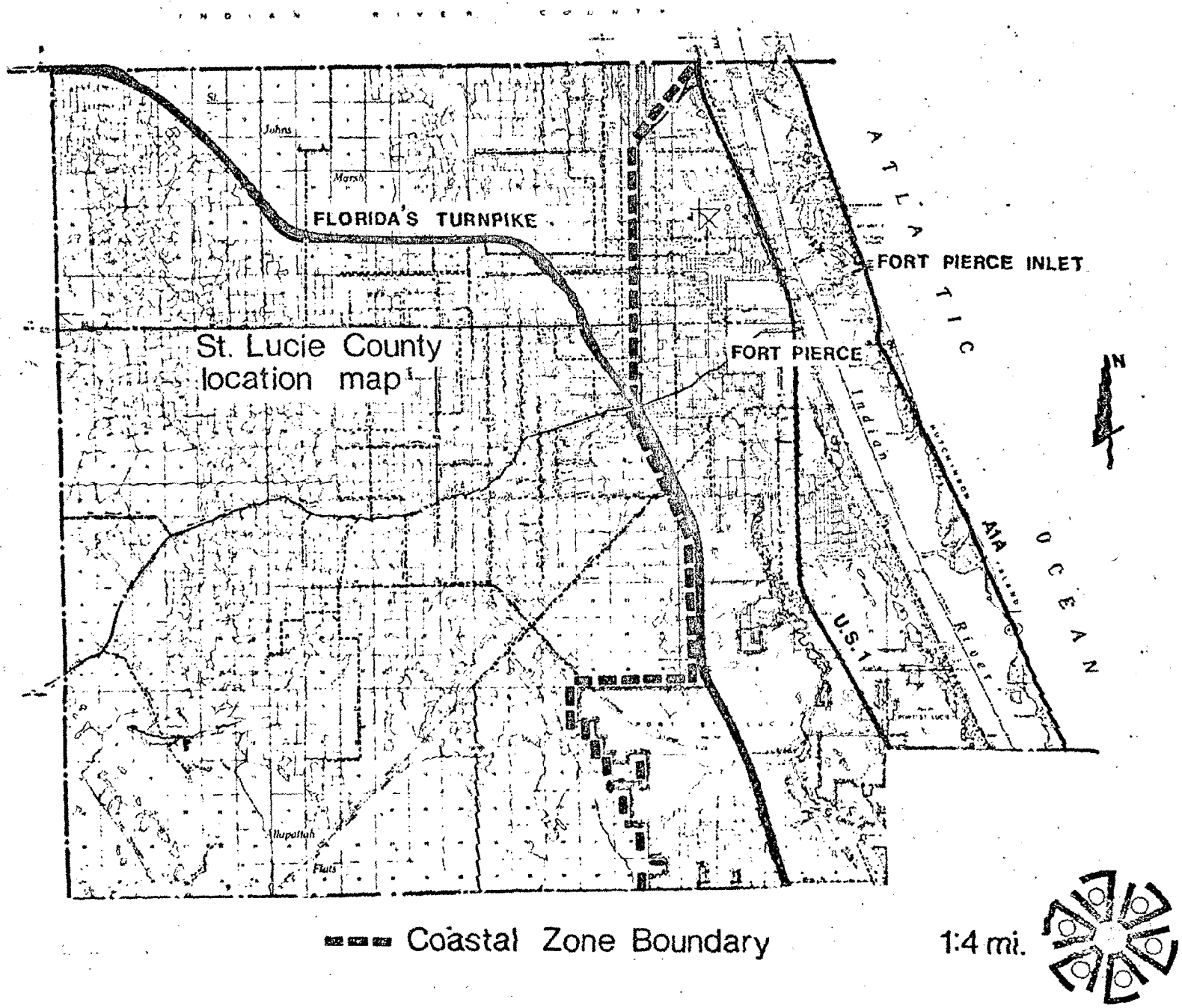
Location of Owner	# Owners	Acres	Percent of total land in large ownership	Percent of of coastal zone land	Total tax value	Percent of total
Within St. Lucie County	101	6,107.08	24.4	6.3	$189,049	26.2
Within Region (Dade and Broward)	60	13,072.67	52.3	13.3	297,746	41.2
	(39)	(10,813.39)	(43.3)	(11.1)	(235,874)	(32.6)
Within State	23	2,351.88	9.4	2.5	44,961	6.2
Out of State	33	3,463.54	13.9	3.6	191,302	26.5
TOTAL	217	24,995.17	100	25.6	$723,060	100

TABLE 17:

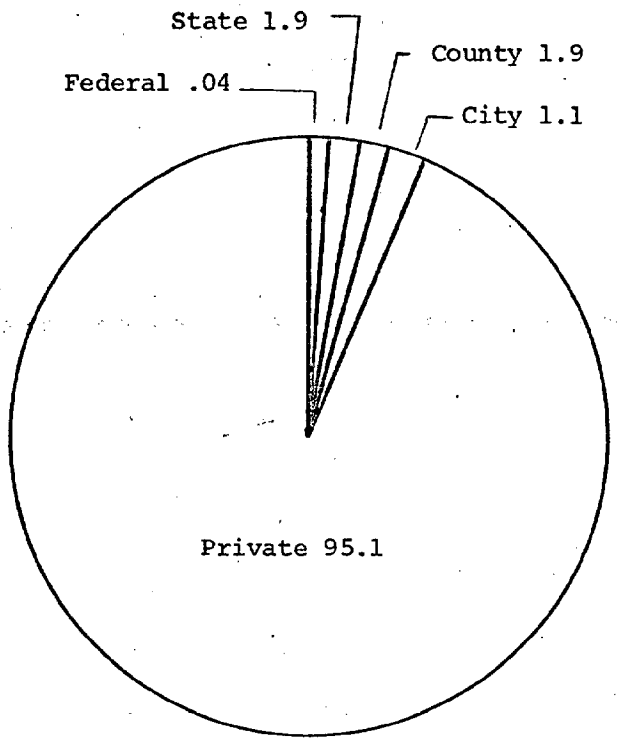
Assessed Valuation:

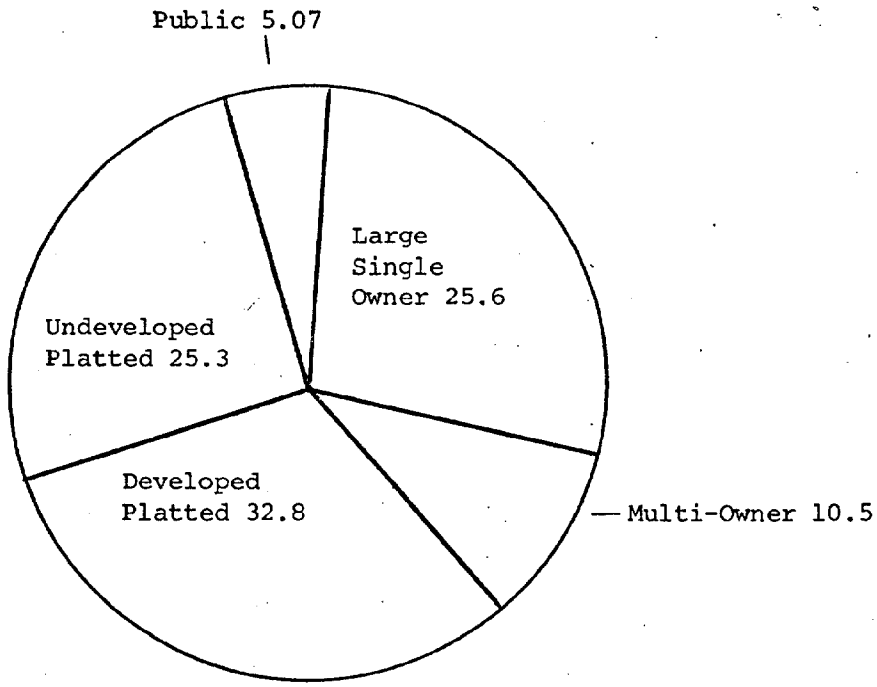
SAMPLE LARGE SINGLE-OWNER PARCELS

Acres	Location	Distinguishing Feature or Characteristic	Land Use	Total Assessment	Per Acre Assessment
97	North of Ft. Pierce	Adjacent to developed area	Vacant	$ 217,650	$ 2,244
88	Hutchinson Island coastline on A1A	Coastline location (mangrove area)	Vacant	3,203,250	36,819
99	West of Ft. Pierce, Route 70	Agriculture use; west of developed area	Crop land & pasture	377,520	3,783
121	Southern part of County on Martin County line; abutting turnpike	Turnpike access; in platted area (part of major planned development)	Vacant	52,620	435
281	Central portion of County adjacent to turnpike	Location; turnpike access (flood prone)	Agriculture	490,490	1,745
180	West of current single family residential area, central portion	Surrounded by development	Agriculture	261,100	1,450


INDIAN RIVER COUNTY
St. Johns Marsh
FLORIDA'S TURNPIKE
FORT PIERCE INLET
FORT PIERCE
St. Lucie County
location map
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Indian River
A1A
U.S. 1
N
Allapattah Flats
Coastal Zone Boundary
1:4 mi.

ST. LUCIE COUNTY
OWNERSHIP PERCENTAGES





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Statutes

Title to Tidal Lands Vested in State. Section 253.12(2)(A), Florida Statutes.

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