16. ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES: WETLANDS

A. How many acres of wetlands are found on the site? For these purposes, wetlands are described as areas which are subjected to permanent or prolonged periods of inundation or saturation (water is at the soil surface at least two to seven months, seven out of ten years), and/or which exhibit vegetative communities and/or soil types characteristic of this hydro-period. The Florida Land Use and Cover Classification System: A Technical Report, includes a detailed wetlands definition and is available from each regional planning council.

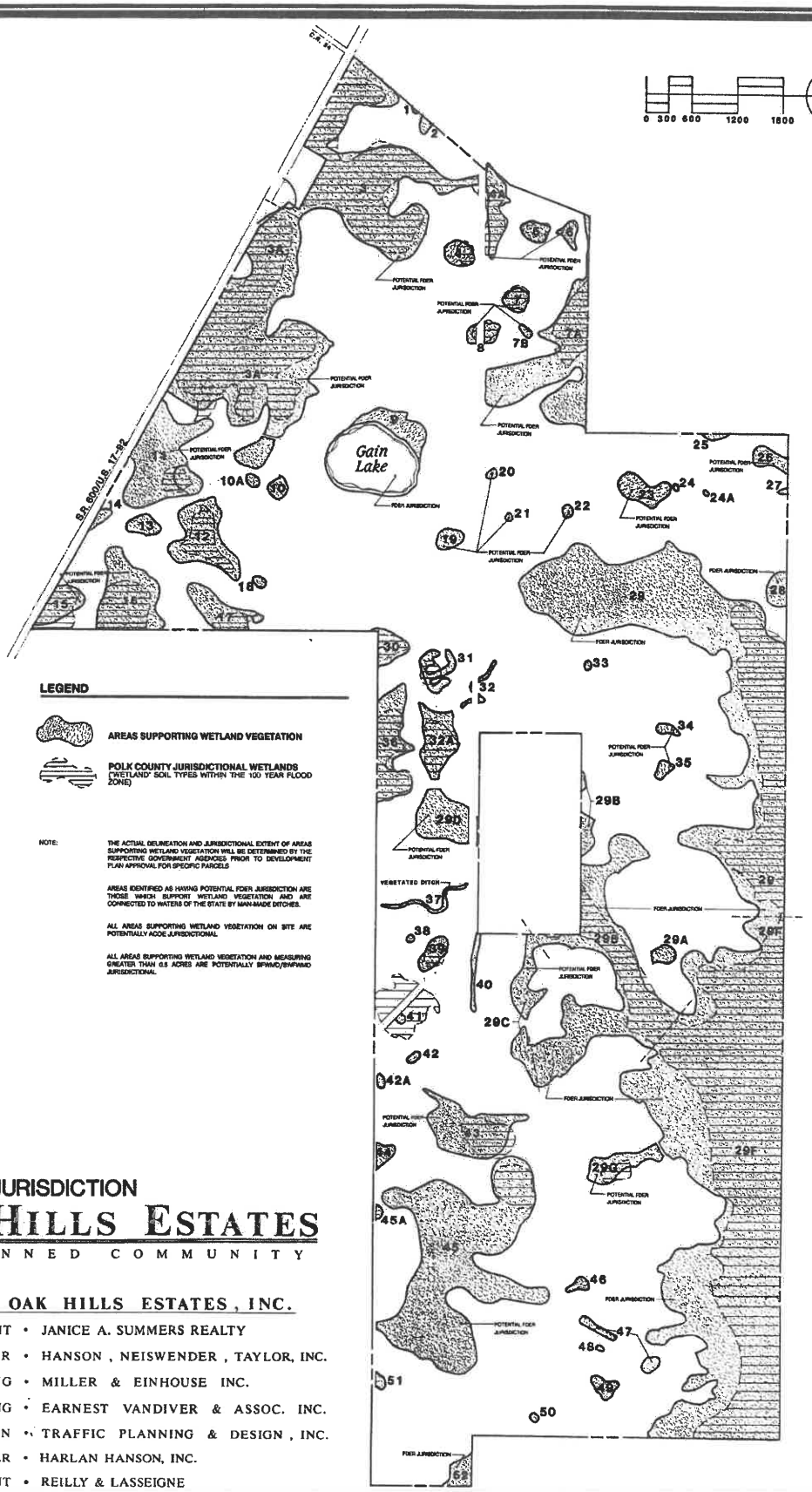
Oak Hills Estates contains approximately 812 acres of land which supports wetland vegetation. Several of these areas as well as other areas not dominated by wetland vegetation are considered jurisdictional by Polk County. Approximately 364.5 acres are considered Polk County Wetlands ("wetland" soils within the 100 yr. flood zone). The extent of other government agencies' jurisdiction as well as that of Polk County is depicted on Exhibit 16-1. Areas supporting wetland species consist of mixed wetland forests, freshwater marshes, and wet prairies which are delineated on Map F. The marshes support a variety of vegetation including rush, pickerelweed, St. Johns wort, arrowhead, spatterdock, maidencane, sawgrass and buttonbush. The dominant species varies between each marsh. The mixed forests support canopies which include maple, red bay, sweet gum, tupelo, sweet bay, cypress, black gum and cabbage palm. The wet prairies

are located in topographically low areas where water accumulates sufficiently long to allow sparse patches of maidencane and, occasionally, rushes to become established.

The marshes are scattered near the western property boundary. The wet prairies are located to the northeast and south of the central out parcel. The mixed forests occur as isolated domes and as large, non-isolated systems. Reedy Creek Swamp dominates the eastern property boundary.

Additionally, the site contains approximately 12 acres of ditches which convey water periodically. They typically support scattered patches of rush and, occasionally, maidencane, pickerelweed and wax myrtle. Typically, these ditches connect isolated wetlands and ultimately drain to Reedy Creek Swamp. Consequently, some of the smaller wetlands have become significantly drained and invaded by upland species.

Located in the northwest area of the site is Gain Lake measuring ±22 acres. The lake supports submerged vegetation as well as a mixed forest to the north and a fringe of wax myrtles to the east and south.



WETLAND JURISDICTION

OAK HILLS ESTATES

A PLANNED COMMUNITY

OWNER • OAK HILLS ESTATES, INC.

APPLICANT • JANICE A. SUMMERS REALTY
PLANNER • HANSON, NEISWENDER, TAYLOR, INC.
ENGINEERING • MILLER & EINHOUSE INC.
SURVEYING • EARNEST VANDIVER & ASSOC. INC.
TRANSPORTATION • TRAFFIC PLANNING & DESIGN, INC.
PROJECT MANAGER • HARLAN HANSON, INC.
LEGAL CONSULTANT • REILLY & LASSEIGNE

EXHIBIT 16-1

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Comprehensively, the site contains ±812 acres of land which supports wetland vegetation. This represents ±723.5 acres of mixed forests, ±75.5 acres of freshwater marshes and ±13 acres of wet prairies. Also on site are ±12 acres of man-made ditches with sporadic wetland vegetation and ±22 acres of open water.

B. What alterations or disturbances to the wetlands are proposed?

Of the ±812 acres of land supporting wetland vegetation on site, approximately 48 acres are proposed for impact. Additionally, all of the on-site ditches are proposed for impact (±12 acres) except for the large ditch (#37 Exhibit 16-1) which accepts and coveys off-site drainage. The proposed ±48 acres of impact consist of ±30 acres of mixed forest, ±12 acres of freshwater marshes and ±6 acres of wet prairies.

In regard to Polk County wetlands, approximately 28 acres of the ±364.5 acres on site are proposed for impact.

It should be noted that these acreages are based on planimetering only. On-site flagging and agency review will determine the final delineations and acreages of impact and preservation.

C. **What wetland areas will be preserved in their natural or existing state? Describe the planning approach that will be utilized to accomplish this preservation.**

Approximately 764 acres of land supporting wetland vegetation are proposed to remain in a natural state. In regard to Polk County wetlands, ±336.5 acres of the 364.5 acres currently onsite are proposed to remain.

The parcels depicted on Map H have been delineated to exclude wetland areas proposed to remain. Parcel acreages and development densities reflect a "net" amount of developable land which excludes these wetlands. Thus, through preliminary land planning, a mechanism has been established to ensure their preservation.

Additionally, wetlands to remain are typically included as a working part of the water management system such that their hydroperiod is maintained. Significant wetlands which appear to support protected animal species are further enhanced with the preservation of adjacent uplands.