



# THE RIVER ACCORD

A PARTNERSHIP FOR THE ST. JOHNS

## City of Jacksonville Improving River Access

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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Past studies have shown that while Jacksonville is deserving of its moniker, *The River City*, there are currently inadequate opportunities for residents to enjoy the river and its tributaries. To address these needs, *The River Accord*, along with its Preservation Project partners, proposes weekend access, park improvements, additional boat ramps, a visitor center and marina retention, where possible.

### **Status of proposals:**

- Pelotes Island Nature Preserve on Clapboard Creek
  - Proposal: Open the preserve to the public on weekends
  - Status: Discussions ongoing
- Huguenot Memorial Park
  - Proposal: \$1.3 million to improve one of the city's busiest parks
  - Status: Final negotiations are underway to acquire contiguous 10 acres to buffer creek, river, and marsh from development while preserving traditional public access to Haulover Creek
- Cedar Point Preserve on the Northside
  - Proposal: New boat ramp, visitor center, trails, and an overlook at Machaba Balu, the Nature Conservancy's 9,000-acre preserve.
  - Status: Cedar Point boat ramp is currently in permitting phase with National Park Service. Finalizing plans in cooperation with Florida Park Service for phase 1 construction to establish trailhead access to more than five miles of hiking trails on the COJ Cedar Point property. Parking area and trail access should be established by fall 2008.
- Marinas
  - Proposal: Partner with private businesses and non-profits to keep marinas open and available to the public.
  - Status: Discussions ongoing.
- Palms Fish Camp on Heckscher Drive
  - Proposal: Make improvements to Palms Fish camp
  - Status: Restaurant is currently under construction and additional boat trailer parking is under design.
- Pumpkin Hill Creek Florida Forever project
  - Proposal: Acquire critical pieces of land for water quality and improved access to the river's tributaries.
  - Status: Florida's Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) approved the expansion. The Pumpkin Hill Creek project has been re-ranked by ARC as a Priority B, meaning no state funds will be available for acquisitions in the area until 2010. However, the North Florida Land Trust has agreed to try to acquire some of the properties in the most critical watersheds until state funds are available.
- Reddie Point Preserve in Arlington
  - Proposal: Build a fishing pier and dock that will allow boaters to tie up and tour the property.

- Status: Fishing pier and dock construction is underway. Completion is expected by fall 2008. Upland development of parking, restrooms and trail system is under design.
- River Taxi
  - From Kingsley to Ft Caroline
    - Proposal: Open a river taxi service that will run from Ft. Caroline National Memorial on the St. Johns River to Sister's Creek Marina to Kingsley Plantation.
    - Status: City is currently working with National Park Service to put out a request for proposals to provide the service. City/National Park Service agreement in process of execution.
  - River Taxi from Ft. Caroline to Palms Fish Camp to Pelotes Island.
    - Proposal: Open a river taxi service that will run from Ft. Caroline National Memorial on the St. Johns River to Palm's Fish Camp to Pelotes Island.
    - Status: Discussions ongoing.
  - River taxi on the Fort George River
    - Proposal: Develop a water taxi location on the Fort George River at Alimacani Boat Ramp utilizing grant funds from Florida Department of Transportation.
    - Status: A feasibility study is complete. Legislation has been filed for funding appropriation of design and construction.
- Dutton Island Preserve
  - Proposal: Recreational amenity development
  - Status: The recreational amenity development was completed in spring 2008. Amenities include parking area, hiking trails, picnic tables, and estuary overlooks.
- Betz Tiger Point Preserve (adjacent to Pumpkin Hill Creek).
  - Proposal: Recreational amenity development
  - Status: Design is complete for phase I amenities to include parking area, walking trail, boardwalk and canoe/kayak tie-ups. The design is to be submitted for construction contract bidding.
- Timucuan Multi-Use Trail:
  - Proposal: eventually this will be a 15 mile multi-use/ multi-partnership trail linking Hanna, Huguenot, Kingsley, and the Talbot Islands State Parks all the way up to Amelia Island.
  - Status: Phase I (Little Talbot segment) completed in 2005; second phase (Big Talbot segment) design is complete and should go to construction contract bid in fall 2008. Remaining segments in various stages of design.
- Sister's Creek kayak/canoe launch
  - Proposal: Improve existing boat ramps to enhance river access and the visitor experience.
  - Status: Under design; boat ramp resurfacing completed.
- Wade B. Stevens Boat Ramp
  - Proposal: Improve existing boat ramps to enhance river access and the visitor experience.
  - Status: Resurfacing to commence July 2008.
- Castaway island Preserve
  - Proposal: Expand trail and estuary overlooks.
  - Status: Design is complete and is to be submitted for construction contract bidding.
- Julington-Durbin Creeks Preserve in Mandarin
  - Proposal: Construct parking, trails, an overlook and a restroom.
  - Status: Parking and trails are open. Restroom to be provided by developer as part of DRI.
- Ribault River Preserve (Expansion):
  - Proposal: Acquire and expand a neighborhood preserve to provide recreational amenities and buffer protection for the Ribault River.
  - Status: 2.2 acres have been acquired on the south bank of the Ribault River utilizing a grant from Florida Communities Trust. The site has been extensively cleaned-up, under brushed and opened as a park in June 2007. Restoration of the fishing pier and development of additional amenities are in design.

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