

# Community of Royal Cultural Resources Assessment Survey



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Project Description and Purpose

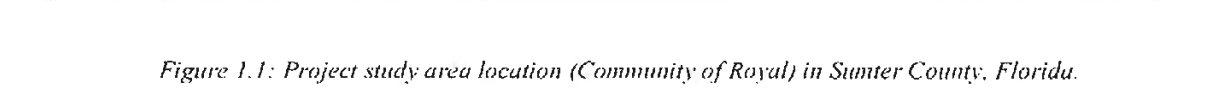
The purpose of this cultural resources assessment survey (CRAS) is to document and evaluate historical sites and structures associated with the community of Royal in Sumter County, Florida (Figure 1.1). Initially, the project predicted that thirty new or updated FMSF forms would be created as part of this work. At present, thirty-one new structures have been identified and new FMSF forms generated. These include private residences, commercial structures, and agricultural remains. Previous surveys have identified thirty-six archaeological sites, six historical structures, and two cemeteries within one mile of the project area (see chapter three for more details).

Royal is an African American community founded by free Blacks in the years following the Civil War, during Reconstruction. The first confirmed African Americans to own land in the area date to the 1870s, and it is likely that free Blacks lived in the area much early as part of the region's maroon and Black Seminole populations (Millett 2013). This project utilizes archival research, windshield surveys, and informant interviews to document this unique history.

The project area and the community of Royal are located approximately three miles west of The Villages and border the town of Wildwood, Florida. This area of Sumter County continues to transition from a rural to urban setting. Sumter County's population has been rapidly growing since the 1970s, a rate that continues to expand today. The population of Sumter County in 1990 was 31,577 and by 2000 had risen to 53,554 (US Census). The population then reached 94,287 in 2010, and recent estimates from the US Census Bureau (July 2016) list the population at 123,996. This population growth is centered in the northeastern portion of the county. As such, threats from development may potentially affect the cultural fabric of historical communities in this area. This report delineates some of those resources in the historic community of Royal, Florida, and advises that future development be tempered with a respect for the unique heritage found here.

This survey was undertaken for Young Performing Artists, Inc. (YPAs, Inc.), and funded through a Florida Department of State Division of Historic Preservation Small Matching Grant (Grant S1731). The goal of this survey is to better determine the full extent of cultural resources in the study area as they relate to the community's African American heritage. Many of these resources represent a continuous cultural tradition regarding Black life in the state, particularly as it relates to agricultural life.

This investigation was conducted to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (as amended) and its implementing regulation 36 CFR 800 (Protection of Historic Properties). All work performed is consistent with the FDHR recommendations for such projects as stipulated in the FDHR's *Cultural Resource Management Standards & Operations Manual, Module Three: Guidelines for Use by Historic Preservation Professionals*. This study complies with Chapter 267 of the Florida Statutes and Rule Chapter 1A-46, Florida Administration Code.





## 1.2 Environmental Context

The environmental factors associated with Royal illustrate the agricultural nature of the community through time. They are also useful in predicting the location of prehistoric cultural features, although investigating such was outside the scope of this project. Since subsurface prospecting is not within the scope, no prehistoric archaeological sites were located.

Environmental variables often influence cultural choices associated with the settlement of an area. In the case of historical settlements, particularly African American communities, these factors may be reduced since minority communities were often prohibited from settling desirable land. Another unique aspect of Royal's history is when African Americans began purchasing property. Blacks in Royal began purchasing property in the 1870s, and most likely choose areas that were previously known for their agricultural productivity. As such, a brief overview of the recent environment is included. Since the scope of this project focuses on the historic period (1800s – present), no discussion of the paleo environmental conditions is included.

The project's study area (Figure 1.1) encompasses approximately 3,752 square acres. It intersects portions of Sections 21, 22, 23, 28, 27, 26, 33, and 34 in Township 18 Range 22. The study area's southwestern corner is at the intersection of County Road 475 and Highway 44 near Wildwood, Florida. From this point, the study area's boundary roughly moves east along Highway 44 and turns north at County Road 229 until the intersection with County Road 465, at which point it turns east until intersecting County Road 223. From this point, the boundary continues north along County Road 223 until intersecting County Road 216A and turns westward. This northern line of the boundary extends west to County Road 475, at which point the boundary turns south and intersects the southwest corner. The study area includes open pastures, agricultural fields, wetlands, and wooded swamplands (Figures 1.2 and 1.3).

The study area is located within the Sumter Upland physiographic region (White 1970). The topography in this region is characterized by gently rolling hills near the study area, and low hills and valleys becoming more common as one moves away from the study area and towards the center of the state. The Sumter Upland is made up of a limestone core with clayey sediments over it, which has retarded the dissolution of limestone resulting in higher elevations.

Elevation in the project area ranges between 13 meters (42 feet) in the southern extents and 29 meters (95 feet) in the central, higher areas (Figure 1.4). According to the USDA (1988), agriculture is the main enterprise. The climate is characterized by warm and relatively humid summers with mild and dry winters. Approximately half of the annual rainfall occurs between June and September. Extended periods of dry weather or droughts are not uncommon and soils do not store enough water to support agricultural operation. As such, irrigation systems are required throughout the year to maintain crops. Farms in the county are diverse owing to the variety of suitable soils, which are well-represented in the project's study area (Table 1.1).



*Figure 1.2: View of project area from northwest corner looking southeast, with power corridor.*



*Figure 1.3: View of agricultural field near southeastern corner of study area, looking southeast.*

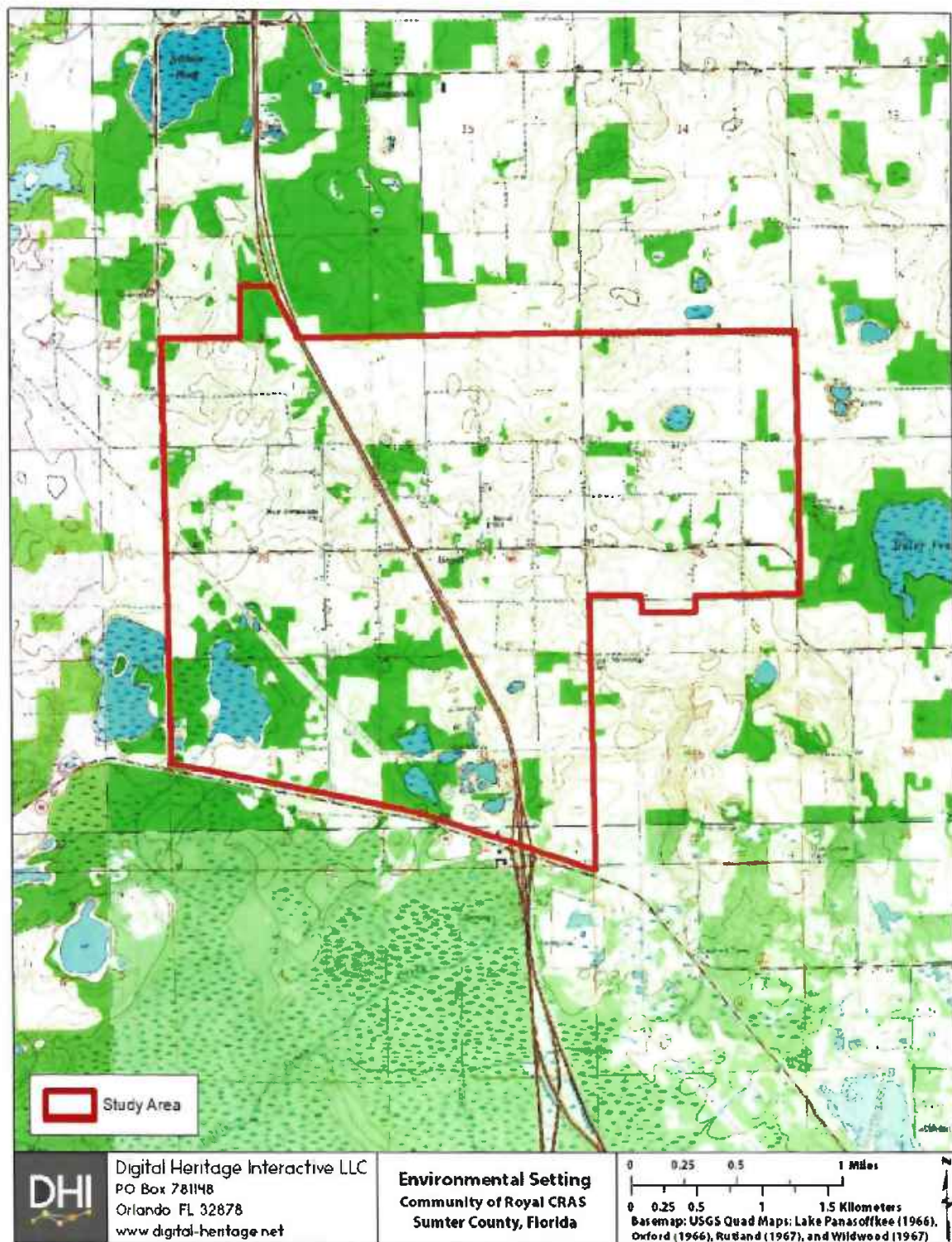


Figure 1.4: Environmental setting of project study area.



<b>Soil Type</b>	<b>Drainage</b>	<b>Environmental Setting</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Arredondo	well drained	nearly level to gently sloping, uploads	420
Candler	excessively drained	nearly level to strongly sloping, ridges and knolls	548
Floridana	very poorly drained	nearly level, depressional areas	67
Ft. Green	poorly drained	nearly level to gently sloping, low ridges and small knolls	40
Gator	very poorly drained	nearly level, large marshes and swamps	44
Immokalee	poorly drained	nearly level, broad flatwood	41
Kendrick	well drained	nearly level to gently sloping, uplands	258
Lake	excessively drained	nearly level to gently sloping, low hills	200
Mabel	somewhat poorly drained	nearly level to gently sloping, uplands	65
Millhopper	moderately well drained	nearly level to gently sloping, broad uplands	714
Paisley	poorly drained	nearly level, broad flats and small knolls	42
Placid	very poorly drained	nearly level, depressional areas and low drainages	44
Pompano	poorly drained	nearly level, flatwoods and drainages	44
Sparr	somewhat poorly drained	nearly level to gently sloping, low ridges and small knolls	476
Sumterville	somewhat poorly drained	nearly level to gently sloping, broad flats and low knolls	166
Tavares	moderately well drained	nearly level to gently sloping, low ridges and knolls	342

*Table 1 1: Principle soil types in the project study area, with characteristics relating to drainage and environmental setting, and approximate number of acres for each type. Source: USDA Web Soil Survey.*

Crops which are commonly grown in the area include watermelons, tomatoes, cucumbers, bell peppers, and squash. Historically this has also included the cultivation and processing of tobacco and sugar cane within the study area. Several informants reported growing, pressing, and boiling cane as recently as a few years ago. Beef production remains one of the leading income producers, and most beef is sold through livestock auction in Webster (USDA 1988:2-3). Additionally, in recent years, manure production and fruit tree production has also emerged. The recent opening of Agromillora in the southeastern portion of the study area demonstrates that high tech agricultural firms are also taking an interest in the area's agricultural potentials.

Approximately 1/3 of the study area (1,096 acres) is covered by poorly, somewhat poorly, or very poorly drained soils. This corresponds to the many low lying, depressional, and swampy areas. The other 2/3 of the study area (2,256 acres) is covered by moderately well drained, well drained, and excessively drained areas. These correspond to the agriculturally active areas that have been used historically and in many cases, continue to be used as such today. Figure 1.5 shows these soil drainage types in relation to the project study area.

This environmental context has been offered to situate the following historical overview. Farming has been and remains a crucial component of Sumter County's economy. The continuity of agricultural traditions such as tobacco farming and sugar cane cultivation is a vital aspect of Royal's significance for a period extending to at least the late-1800s, if not earlier.

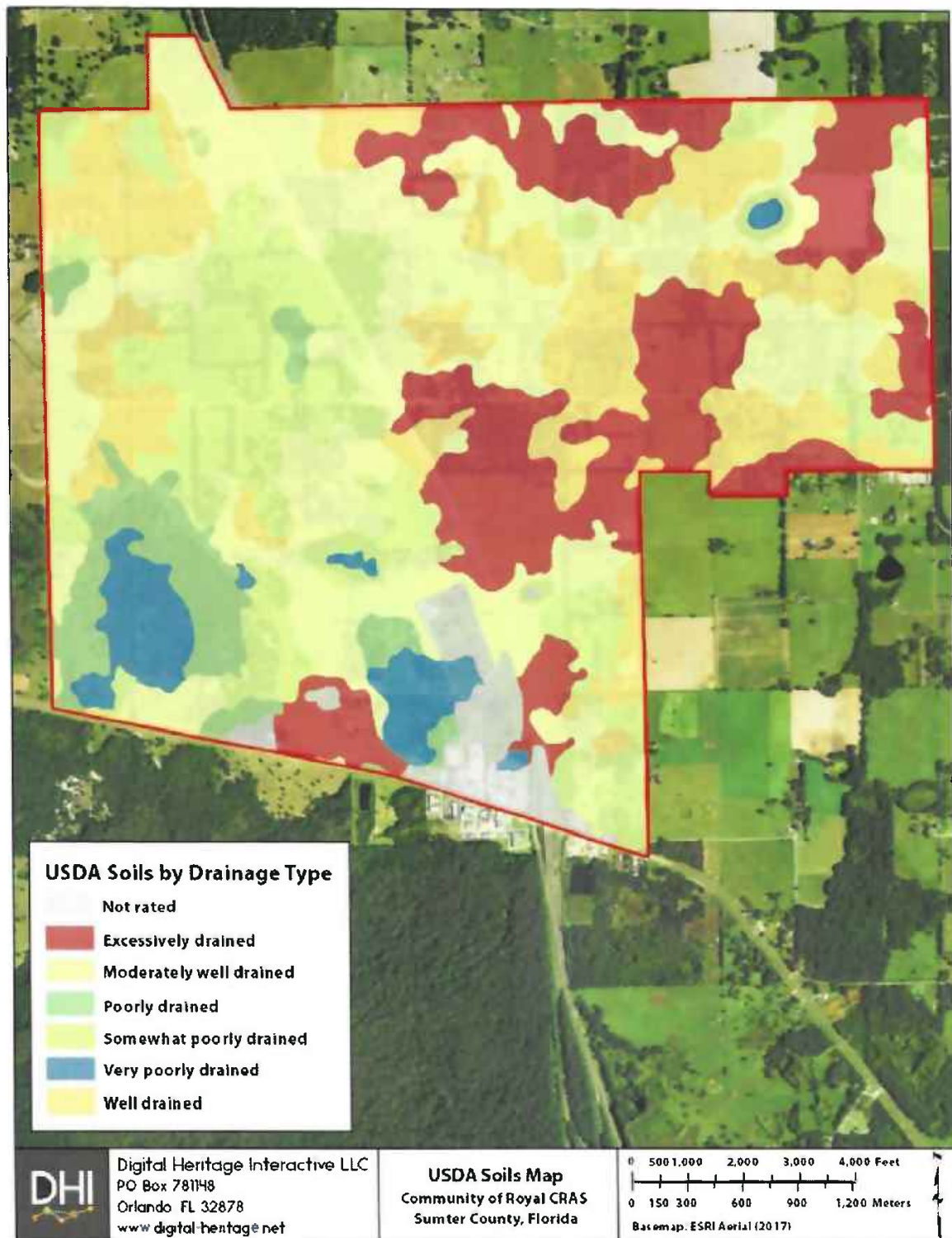


Figure 1.5: USDA soils map of project study area. Source: Web Soil Survey.

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## 2.0 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### 2.1 Introduction

The community of Royal is part of a much broader history of people of African descent in the state of Florida. The following pages first offer a brief introduction to this history beginning in the 1500s until the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. The goal of this broader history is to frame the uniqueness of Royal in terms of the state's remarkable African American history. This is followed by a history of Sumter County to frame Royal within its local context. Sumter County was established in 1853 and was the state's 29<sup>th</sup> county, although its current boundaries were not set until the 1880s. The final section provides an introductory history of Royal itself, drawn from the work of local historians and community activists like Beverly Steele. In this final section, we provide additional information for contextualizing the results of this CRAS, presented in chapter four.

### 2.2 The African American Experience in Florida History

Peoples of African descent have been an integral part of Florida's history since the first European explorers visited the area. Free Africans were crew members – often vital ones – who assisted early explorers like Pedro Menéndez de Avilés and Hernando de Soto. In the following five centuries peoples of African descent have faced numerous struggles. The institution of slavery is perhaps the most well-known example, although Jim Crow and various institutional assaults on Black suffrage and opportunity continued until the late-20<sup>th</sup> century. Today, African Americans in Florida are active in all walks of life, although they continue to face unique challenges.

#### 2.2.1 Spanish and British Rule: 1513-1821

Peoples of African descent have been a part of Florida's history since the initial discovery of the lands referred to by the Spanish as *La Florida*. Free Africans were among the crews of the first European explorers to reach this area. Two individuals of African descent, Juan Gárrido and Juan González de León, accompanied Juan Ponce de León when he “discovered” the North American continent in 1513. The expeditions of other explorers such as Lucas Vázquez de Ayllón, Pánfilo de Narváez, and Hernando de Soto included unknown numbers of Africans, both free and enslaved (Landers 2000:19; Rivers 2000:3; Landers 2013:180-181). While many of these expeditions proved disastrous for their leaders, numerous persons of African descent escaped during the first half of the 1500s, learned native customs and languages, and remained in Florida for years (Rivers 2000:1-2; Landers 2000, 2013).

Many of those Africans who stayed in Florida would meet later explorers. In some cases, they even returned to living among the Spanish. This was the case with a man named Luis who Pedro Menéndez de Avilés met when he settled St. Augustine in 1565. Luis was a mulatto man who had shipwrecked near the site years prior and learned the local Ais language. He returned to Spanish life and served as translator for Menéndez (Landers 2013:182). In several locations, these

early populations of free Africans would eventually give rise to self-governing groups such as the free Black militias that formed in the late-1600s. Service in these militias allowed free Blacks to acquire titles, own property, and earn military privileges (Landers 2013:183). Throughout the late-1600s and early 1700s enslaved Africans from nearby locations continued to seek sanctuary in St. Augustine, which would grant it if one converted to Catholicism.

A large number of runaway slaves were granted sanctuary and eventually received a town unto their own in 1738. Located just two miles north of St. Augustine (Figure 2.1), this new town was named Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mosé. The town was abandoned for more than a decade following the attack by British forces from Georgia in 1740. Eventually, the town was fortified and reoccupied until Spain lost Florida to the British in 1763 (Landers 1995; Deagan and MacMahon 1995), which coincided with the end of the First Spanish Period in Florida (1513-1763).

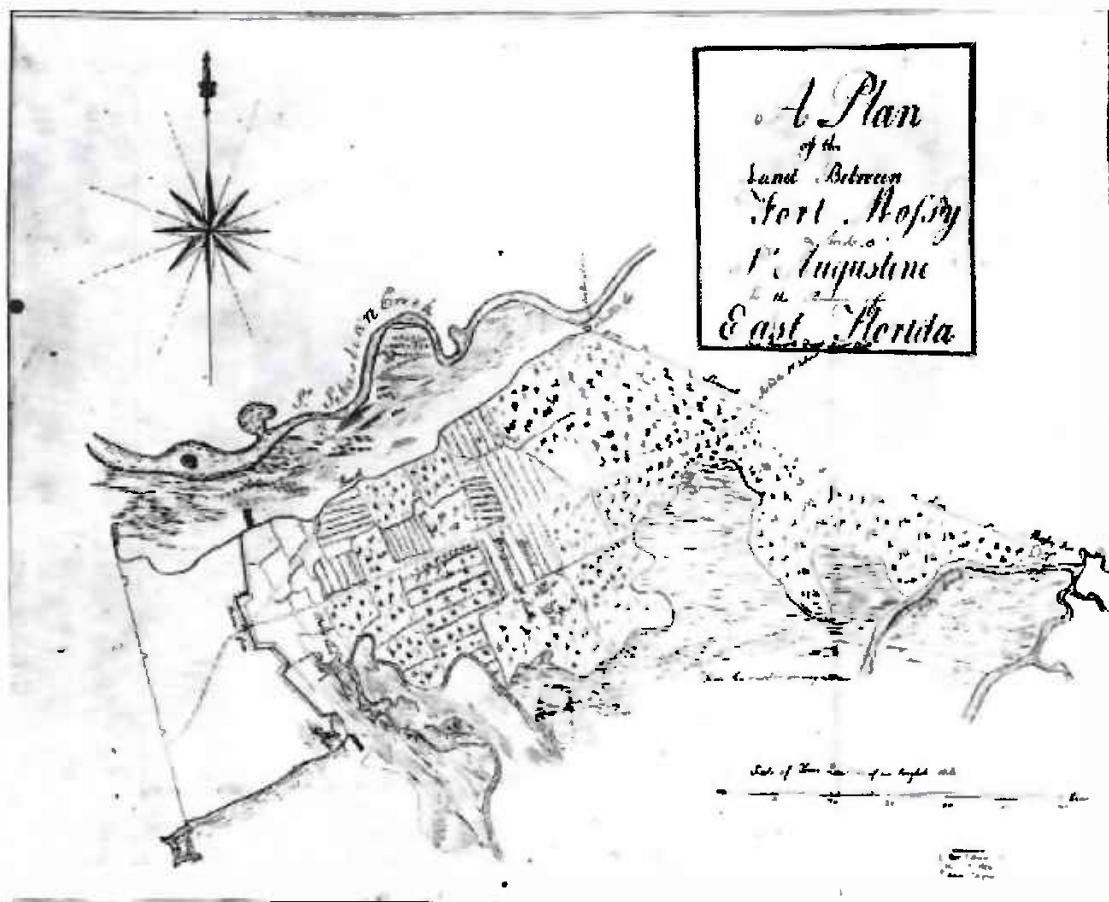


Figure 2.1: Map of area between Fort Mossy (Mosé) and St. Augustine, dating to between 1765 and 1775.  
Source: Florida Memory Image Number RC12824.

Although slavery remained a feature of the First Spanish Period, people of African descent had many paths towards freedom, including purchasing their way out of slavery. These paths mostly vanished under British rule. For two decades (1763-1783) the British instituted the same plantation economy as elsewhere in their colonies. Within several years, Africans became the largest segment of Florida's population (Schafer 1995; Landers 2013). The beginning of the American Revolution (1775) exacerbated this trend and Loyalists flooded into East Florida (Figure 2.2). Under British rule White Floridians restricted the movement of both enslaved and free Blacks, adopted Slave Codes similar to those in South Carolina, and increasingly subjected slaves to inhumane treatment (Landers 2013:186-187).



*Figure 2.2: 1805 map by John Cary showing East and West Florida.  
Source: Geographicus Map NCSCGAFL-cary-1806.*

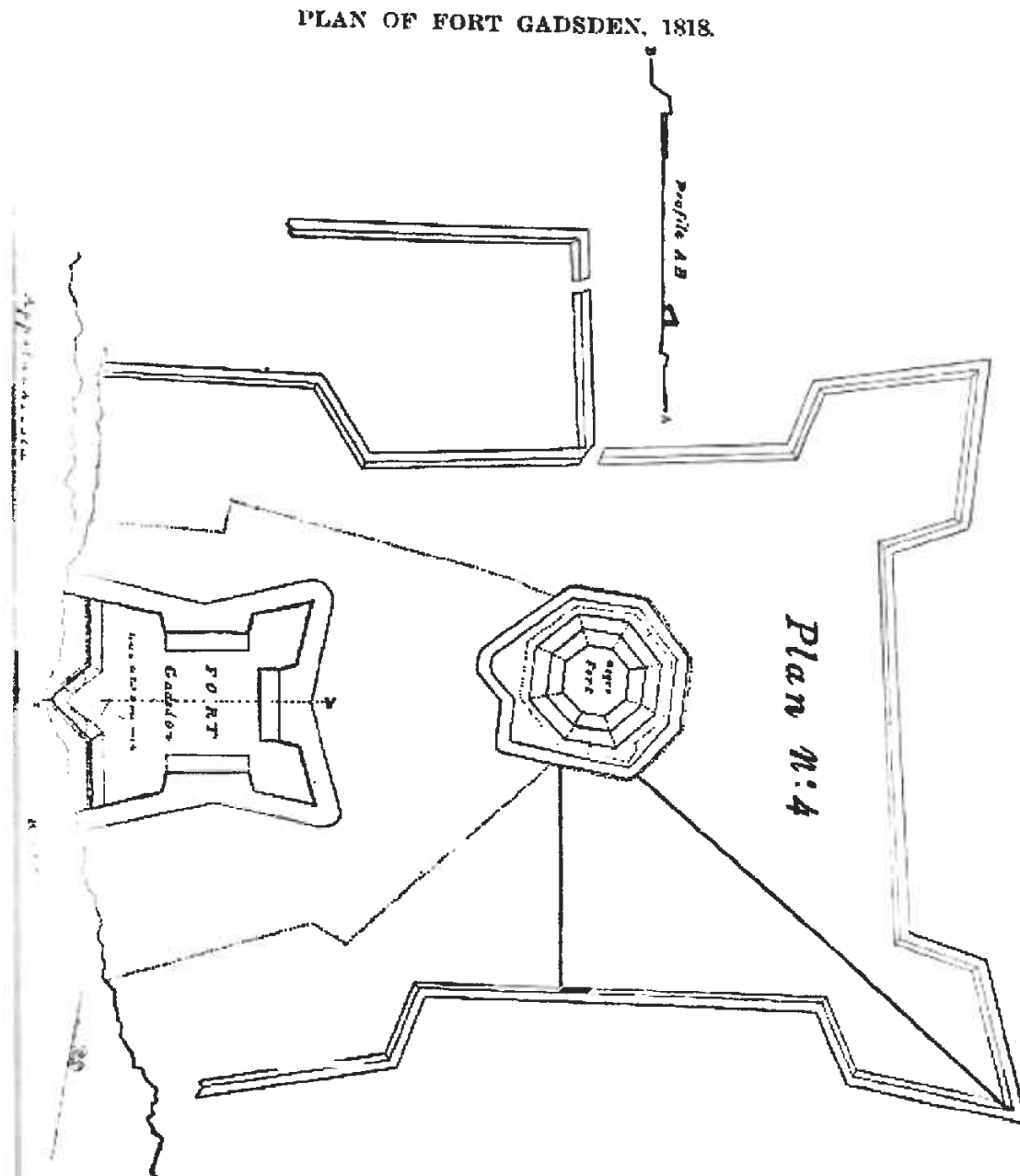
After the Revolution, British Loyalists fled Florida and the Second Spanish Period commenced (1783-1821). Enslaved Blacks once again sought sanctuary in Florida, and the population of free Blacks continued to grow. They worked for the Spanish government as laborers, guards, and skilled craftsmen. While laws in the newly formed United States of America forbade Africans from competing with Whites, no such laws existed in Spanish Florida. Free Blacks could own land and operate businesses of their choosing. The lives of Prince and Judy Witten, escaped slaves from Georgia, offer a compelling example (Landers 1995:32). Prince successfully applied for sanctuary and a land grant. He and Judy became respected members of St. Augustine's community, served as godparents to dozens of Black children, and even owned slaves of their own (Landers 2013:188-189). Prince and Judy's lives provide a harsh reminder that both free and enslaved African populations grew during this time.

The increasing power of the young USA signaled the first impediment to free Black life in Spanish Florida. Spain relented to growing pressure from the nation's Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, and revoked sanctuary in 1790. The intervening decades saw increased pressure from the USA to curb the freedom of free Blacks in Spanish Florida, whom White planters in nearby states feared would incite their slaves to rebel. In response to this perceived threat, numerous raids by Americans (covertly supported by the government) were launched into Florida in the following years (Landers 2013:191-192).

During this time, Britain worked closely with their allies in the former colony of West Florida. This included the construction and provisioning of a large fort along the Apalachicola River, known as Prospect Bluff. The site today is known as Fort Gadsden and is named for a later fortification built at the same location. The original fort was built in 1814 during the War of 1812, which began in part because of America's protesting of Britain's support for Native Americans fighting against American expansion. In 1815, the British withdrew from the fort, and the remaining population consisted of several hundred free Blacks and Seminoles. The fort was home to a mixed community of maroons and Black Seminoles, the result of ongoing interactions between free Blacks, runaway slaves, and Seminole Indians in the preceding years (Millet 2013). In 1816, a battle initiated by US forces under the leadership of Brigadier General Edmund Gaines resulted in the complete destruction of the fort and most of its inhabitants (Millet 2013; Weisman 2013:204). Dozens, if not hundreds, of nearby maroons fled the area and moved southwards. These maroons would settle in numerous locations, including Angola along the Manatee River near Bradenton, portions of Central Florida, and eventually reaching Miami and the Bahamas (Baram 2012; Howard 2013).

The destruction of Prospect Bluff set into motion a series of migrations that would fundamentally transform relations between peoples of African descent and Florida's Seminole Indians (see next section). In addition to galvanizing both groups, it also further cemented relations between these groups, who had been intermarrying and living together since the 1500s.





Drawing by Captain J. Gadsden accompanying his report to General Jackson on the defenses of the Floridas (see *Quarterly XV*, p. 242) from files of Intelligence Division, Engineer's Corps, War Department, Washington. Shows plan of the fort on the site of the so-called Negro Fort destroyed in 1816, as well as outline of a larger entrenchment. The Negro Fort and the entrenchments were constructed by Colonel Nichols of the British Army in 1814.

Figure 2.3: Plan of Fort Gadsden and the Negro Fort by Captain J. Gadsden, 1818.  
Source: Florida Memory Image Number RC13493

Among those injured at Prospect Bluff were relatives of Neamathla, the nearby Seminole chief of Fowltown (Figure 2.4). Neamathla threatened Americans not to advance further. Galled by the threat, Gaines took 250 soldiers to attack Fowltown and Neamathla's retaliation is often credited by many as the start of the First Seminole War lasting between 1817 and 1818 (Mahon 1998; Weisman: 2013: 203-204). Neamathla would eventually serve as the elected representative of the Seminoles in 1823 when negotiating the Treaty of Moultrie Creek with the US government (Mahon 1998). This treaty granted the Seminoles a large reservation running down the center of the state. However, the treaty would not last as the terms were violated by the USA ten years later.



Figure 2.4: Portrait of Neamathla. Source: Florida Memory Image Number DB02038.



### 2.2.2 Territorial Period and Reconstruction: 1821 - 1877

The change of government signaled by the US taking possession of Florida deeply affected the state's African American population. Although the US agreed to honor the rights of free Blacks as part of their treaty with Spain, it increasingly instituted a system of slavery similar to other areas in the southern states (Rivers 1995). In the following decades, a growing number of enslaved Africans in the state hailed from the low country of Georgia and South Carolina as planters moved south into the new territory. The increasing restrictions during this time also drove free Blacks to migrate to Cuba and elsewhere in the Caribbean (Landers 2013:191-193).

Deepening ties between free Blacks and the Seminoles continued during this period. This is certainly the case at several settlements throughout the state where Black Seminoles and maroons lived in the years following the destruction of Prospect Bluff. Several researchers have suggested that the growing connections between Seminoles and Africans represented a key reason the Second Seminole War began in 1835 (which ended in 1842). These researchers argue that Whites, and particularly planters, became increasingly outraged by what they saw as the intentional harboring of escaped slaves by Seminole groups, which Seminoles would do after allowing runaways to prove themselves through a system of vassalage (Klos 1995). This has led several researchers to interpret the Second Seminole War as one of the largest slave rebellions in our nation's history (Rivers 2000). Across the state during these years, maroons settled numerous sites only to relocate later as American forces attempted to capture and relocate them to the Indian Territories further west. The places they relocated to included sites like Pilaklikaha within Paynes Prairie in Alachua County (Weik 2012), Angola along the Manatee River Sarasota County (Baram 2012; Howard 2013), various locations in the Everglades and around Miami, and ultimately The Bahamas as many eventually left the US altogether and where their descendants remain to this day (Howard 2002).

Initially, the character of African American life as it related to slavery displayed two general patterns following 1821. In East and West Florida, a pattern centered on the cultivation of indigo and a task system similar to that under the Spanish. For instance, African Americans in these areas were able to hold various occupations, a holdover from the Spanish period. In between these areas, referred to as Middle Florida, a plantation system centered around cotton emerged, and a system of slavery flourished that mirrored other areas in the Old South (Rivers 2000). Middle Florida refers to an area between the Suwannee and Apalachicola Rivers, and today consists of Franklin, Liberty, Gadsden, Wakulla, Leon, Jefferson, Madison, Taylor, Dixie, Lafayette, and Hamilton counties. Although some planters would eventually own hundreds of slaves, most enslaved Africans during this time lived on small farms and plantations. As such, stable family relationships were difficult for Blacks to maintain. Rivers' (2000) research shows that only 16 percent of plantations had enough slaves to form family units in the 1820s, a number that only rose to 29 percent by 1860. A small number of slave owners, such as Zephaniah Kingsley, held large

numbers of slaves. Kingsley is a well-known planter and slave trader who married one of his slaves when she was 13 years old. He and his wife, Anna (Anta) eventually owned upwards of 300 slaves across their many plantations in northeast Florida, including his largest plantation on Fort George Island (Figure 2.5), which is today a national park bearing his name (Schafer 1995, 2003, 2013).



*Figure 2.5: Ruins of tabby cabin at Kingsley Plantation, 1890s.  
Source: Florida Memory Image Number RC20285.*

By 1861 the population of Florida included 104,424 Whites and 61,745 African American slaves, most of whom resided in the state's northern counties, particularly in Middle Florida where slave labor provided the majority of raw materials such as cotton (Solomon and Erhart 1999:320). Early in the Civil War several port cities fell to Union control. Between 1861 and 1862 Apalachicola, Fernandina, St. Augustine, and Jacksonville (which would change hands several times) joined Pensacola and Key West as Union ports. These areas as well as news from Union raids alerted enslaved Africans to the possibility of emancipation. Upwards of 1,000 slaves escaped Florida and enlisted in the Union. As such, the experience of most of Florida's enslaved African American population changed little during this time (Rivers 2000).

Some slaves did experience a disruption to their daily lives following the massive salt works boom which emerged to support the Confederate Army (Taylor 2013: 249). These slaves were relocated to new areas, primarily in the panhandle, to work large and small salt works. Elsewhere, slaves were impressed into service with the Confederate government. They toiled at building fortifications, collecting food supplies, and other jobs to support the rebels. In South Florida, where Black and White populations were still low, many African Americans found themselves near Union forces or ports. Due to the lower population density in this area, slaves had worked at a more diverse set of skills, and thus were able to find employment with the Union beyond becoming soldiers (Solomon and Erhart 1999).

Only one major Civil War battle occurred in Florida (at Olustee in 1864), which meant that Florida emerged from the conflict in much better shape than other southern States. However, negative feelings towards African Americans were exacerbated with Black suffrage, causing significant social strain. In many parts of Middle Florida, White planters simply left and relocated to more central counties like Brevard, Orange, Hillsborough and elsewhere (Shofner 2013:264). In other areas, African Americans who exercised their newly won right to vote found themselves outnumbering their White neighbors, and numerous African Americans entered political office.

This occurred in both cities and rural locations. Such was the case in 1874 when African Americans in Cedar Key, Levy County elected a Black mayor, marshal, and three aldermen (McCarthy 2007: 37). Perhaps the most prominent example of a burgeoning Black political class was the life of Josiah T. Walls. Walls was born a slave in Virginia who served in the Union army and settled in Florida following the Civil War. He was initially elected to the Florida Senate in 1869 and went on to become the Florida's first African American member of the US House of Representatives in 1871 (Shofner 2013:267). During his time in office he sponsored bills to establish a national education fund and aid veterans of the First Seminole War. The next time an African American would be elected to the US House of Representatives in the state of Florida would not occur until 1993 with the simultaneous election of Corrine Brown to Florida's 3<sup>rd</sup>, Carrie Meek to Florida's 17<sup>th</sup>, and Alcee Hastings to Florida's 23<sup>rd</sup> Districts.



*Figure 2.6. Portrait of Josiah T. Walls. Florida Memory Image Number RC00831.*

During Reconstruction conservative planters, merchants, and bankers coerced freed Blacks to vote against their own interests by denying them credit and land rentals. More violent means of Black repression emerged as well. The Ku Klux Klan and other racist groups violently discouraged African Americans from exercising their new rights. Black leaders and their allies were beaten or

killed. The racial unrest this caused around the state contributed to mounting tensions which reemerged in later years. The rise of violent interpersonal attacks against African Americans would reach its nadir in the early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Lynching, dynamite bombings, and race riots would eventually cast a dark shadow across the state (Ortiz 2005).

Various reports during this time encouraged large-scale settlement of peninsular Florida. This included the journal of George Franklin, who undertook a tour of South Florida for the Freedmen's Bureau. His and other accounts encouraged both Blacks and Whites to migrate to these sparsely populated areas of the state (Kenney 1995; Rivers 2013). The election of several Conservative democrats at local, state, and national levels in the 1870s signaled the end of Reconstruction-era progress for African Americans, just at a time when large portions of the state were opening. Still, in the years that followed, African Americans settled in these new areas, expanded their businesses, continued to support educational causes, and even incorporated majority Black towns. This occurred in spite of increasing segregation, and deeply affected the tapestry of Florida's multiracial landscape for generations to come.

### 2.2.3 Modern Florida: 1877 - Present

The final quarter of the nineteenth century proved a paradoxical one for Florida's African American population. Reconstruction ended in 1877 and the conservative Democratic party ran several successful campaigns across the state, beginning with the elections of George Drew in 1876 and Bloxham in 1880. Drew instituted the convict lease system (Figure 2.7) which leased state penitentiary inmates to private business, a system which disproportionately affected the state's African American population (Miller 2000; 2012). African Americans began to see their newly won political power dwindle and largely vanish by the end of the 1880s. The passage of a poll tax in 1885 was a serious blow to African American suffrage (Ortiz 2005). While the poll tax affected



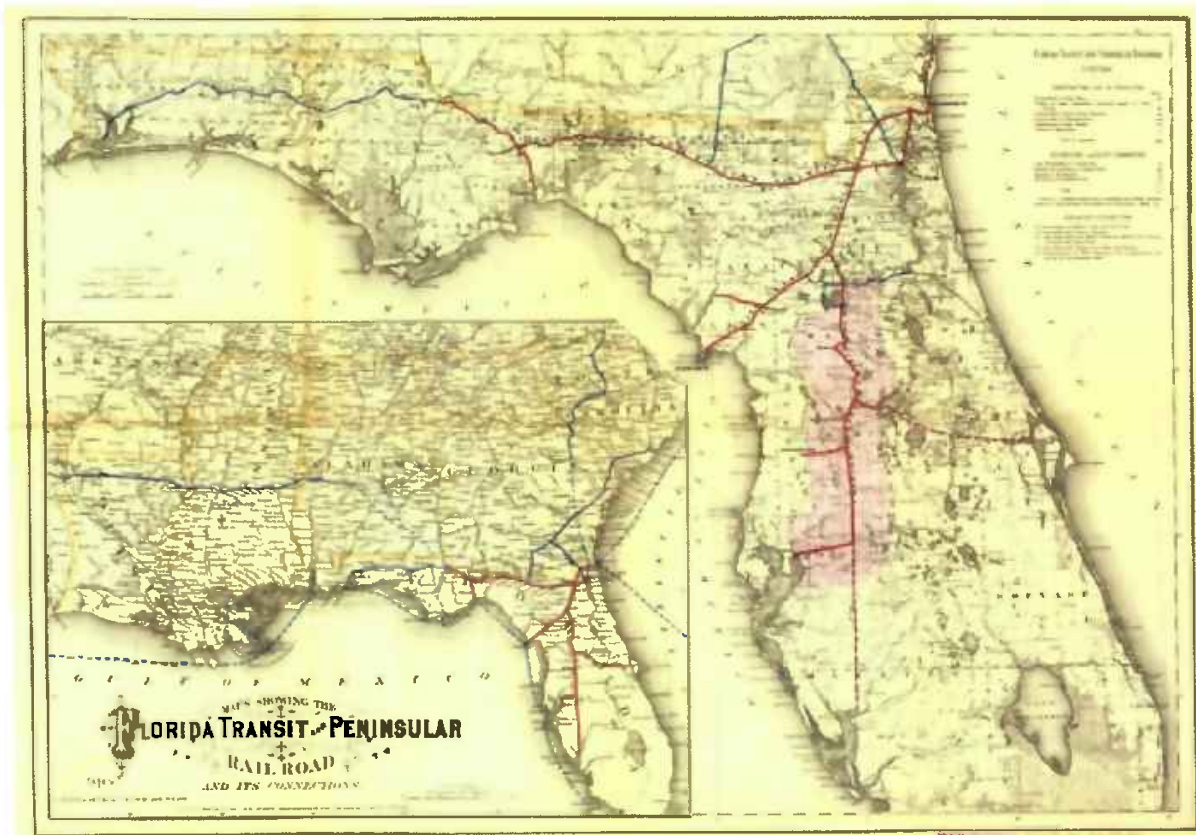
*Figure 2.7: Convicts leased to harvest timber.  
Florida Memory Image Number RC12880.*

both African American and poor White voters, its intended impact on Black voter turnout became quickly apparent. White voter turnout between 1888 and 1892 dropped from 86 percent to 59 percent, and Black voter turnout plummeted from 62 percent to just 11 percent during the same period (Graham 2013:284). The poll tax, in combination with various forms of interpersonal and structural violence, effectively disenfranchised African Americans from participation in the state's political arena. In 1887, only two years after the poll tax was initiated, a state law was passed that



required separate train cars for Black and White passengers. Within a decade of the end of Reconstruction, legislated segregation had taken root in Florida.

Settlement of peninsular Florida continued during this time with the establishment of numerous railroads by Henry Plant, William Chipley, and Henry Flagler. These railroads first linked cities like Jacksonville and Pensacola to a developing national network, and were quickly extended to Kissimmee, Tampa, Palm Beach and eventually reaching Miami in 1896 (Turner 2008). The growing rail lines opened vast areas of the state to new economic and industrial ventures (Figure 2.8). This included phosphate mining, expanded cattle ranching, a burgeoning lumber industry, turpentine and naval stores manufacturing, tobacco, fishing, and the cultivation of oranges. Several of these industries either employed African Americans or allowed them the opportunity to develop self-sufficiency. Although Blacks were increasingly cut off from political representation, several state schools catering to them began operating during this time. These included the establishment of the State Normal School for Negroes in 1887, later changed to the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College in 1905 (and later becoming a university in 1953).



*Figure 2.8: Map showing the Florida Transit and Peninsula Railroad and its connections, 1882.  
Source: Library of Congress Call Number G3931 P3 1882 G15.*

Several Black towns were settled across the state during this time. Well-known examples include Eatonville and Rosewood. Rosewood is remembered because of the 1923 race riot which destroyed the town (Figure 2.9) and scattered its community across the state and country (González-Tennant 2016). Although never incorporated, Rosewood nonetheless became a prosperous African American community in the decades following statehood, and transitioned to a majority African American community by 1900. This transition occurred in part because local Whites were willing to sell land to African Americans. Another rural location with a similar, although less violent history is the community of Santos near Ocala. This community was settled in the late 1880s and received a post office in 1883. It would eventually be displaced through development associated with the failed Cross Florida Barge Canal (Nelson 2011). Eatonville, incorporated in 1887, is one of the oldest surviving African American communities in the nation. It also transitioned into an African American community because a White landowner was willing to sell land to African Americans. Eatonville is also remembered for several notable African Americans who lived or were born there, including the anthropologist and folklorist Zora Neale Hurston. In other locations across the state significant African American population centers emerged. By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, most of the rural Black settlements had dissolved as younger generations migrated to cities for educational and economic opportunities.



*Figure 2.9: Ruins of a burned African American home in Rosewood, Florida, 1923.  
Source: Florida Memory Image Number RC12408.*

Younger generations of African Americans migrated into cities in part due to the continued growth of the state's African American population, which reached 92,000 in 1870 and had grown to more than 265,000 by 1900 (Rivers 2013:445-446). African Americans outnumbered Whites in many of the state's cities, including Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Daytona, Palatka, Sanford, and Marianna. This population growth was also the result of migration from other southern States, with large numbers of African Americans moving to the state during this time from Georgia and South Carolina. A vibrant Black middle class arose during these years, concentrated in many ways in Jacksonville and Duval County. Elsewhere, successful Black businessmen, farmers, and growers



either dominated local markets or proved crucial to the success of their White neighbors who relied on Black skills to successfully explore these new industries (Rivers 2013:450-451). Across the state educated and skilled African Americans developed networks that supported educational institutions, business ventures, and recreational activities (e.g., American Beach near Fernandina).

These professional and social networks were vital during a time when Jim Crow laws and racism emerged as paramount issues for the state. Beginning in the early twentieth century Black prosperity in urban areas was seized upon by rural Whites (and more often rural white elites) to justify interpersonal violence against African American individuals and communities. Florida led the nation in lynching deaths per capita for the fifty-year period beginning in 1880 (Tolnay and Beck 1995). Attempts to exercise economic and political rights by Blacks were violently repressed across the state. Such was the case in Ocoee when African Americans attempted to vote, and the Klan and local Whites lynched one of those attempting vote, most likely killed another, burned a portion of the Black neighborhood, and violently displaced the African American population (Ortiz 2005). The violence at Rosewood was similarly a reaction to African American prosperity, where at least six African Americans were killed during a week-long episode of violence in 1923.

These and similar events drove a reversal of the population growth which had characterized the state's African American population in previous centuries. The mass exodus of Florida's Black population coincided with a larger migration of southern African Americans to northern cities, where equal or greater levels of prejudice and racism would continue to work against Black achievement. This Great Migration deeply impacted the state of Florida (Adler 1995). In 1900, African Americans constituted 45 percent of the state's population, a number which dropped to 25 percent by 1945. In many places, the local Black population was reduced by one-third, as in Live Oak and Lakeland. Elsewhere, larger percentages migrated; about half left from Palatka, Miami, and DeLand. Many of these places boasted significant and successful African American populations prior to this migration (Figure 2.10). Larger cities experienced similar or greater migrations with 3,000 to 5,000 leaving Tampa and 6,000 to 8,000 leaving Jacksonville's historically successful Black community (Rivers 2013: 454).



Figure 2.10: African American couple near Lake Winnemissett, DeLand. Florida Memory Image Number: RC10537.

The subsequent brain and talent drain weakened Florida's African American population, but brave citizens stepped forward to lead the community through the remainder of the twentieth century. Black newspapers like Pensacola's *Florida Sentinel* and the *Tampa Bulletin* circulated news of interest to the community. New chapters of the NAACP were formed across the state and fought for equal access to education and fair representation under the law. Greater segments of Florida's white population stood alongside their black neighbors during this time. In 1937 Governor Ernest Graham (father of future governor Bob Graham) successfully repealed the poll tax. Unfortunately, White support for African American rights were uneven, to say the least. Violence erupted in Groveland in 1949 following the torture of four African Americans (and murder of two of them) by Lake County sheriff Willis McCall, who falsely accused them of raping a white woman. Lake County voters would go on to reelect McCall every four years until 1972 (Rivers 2013: 463). Two years later the Ku Klux Klan dynamited the home of Harry T. and Harriette V. Moore, who were instrumental in the fight for equal rights in the state.

The Civil Rights Movement in Florida during the 1950s and 1960s followed similar trends in other southern states. Sit-ins, beach wade-ins, and bus boycotts occurred across the state. African Americans participating in these events were often met with violence. Police officers stood by as African Americans were attacked with baseball bats in Jacksonville's Hemming Park during a protest in 1960, and the violent reaction by St. Augustine citizens in 1964, televised nationally, is credited with contributing to the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act (Rivers 2013:464). The threat of violence began to recede and African Americans and their allies succeeded in securing basic civil liberties.

The 1960s began a new trend in the state wherein African Americans entered public service (outside of local educational institutions). The brutal suppression of Black suffrage and political representation that began after Reconstruction and grew throughout the twentieth century began to turn. Frank Cunningham became a city commissioner in Riviera Beach in 1962, and African Americans began winning other local elections. In 1982 Joe Lang Kershaw became the first Black state legislator since 1889. This was followed by Gwendolyn Cherry who became the first Black woman elected to the Florida House of Representatives, and within two decades Carrie Meek, Corrine Brown, and Alcee Hasting would all be elected to the US Congress, something that had not happened in the state since 1876 (Rivers 2013:465).

Although Jim Crow and Ku Klux Klan intimidation have largely receded into the state's past, new challenges face Florida's African American communities. The economic hardships affecting the state in the 2000s and later means that Black communities have been especially hard hit. Defaulted mortgages and similar predatory tactics have mean lost homes and new challenges. Development and gentrification continue to threaten historic Black neighborhoods across the state. African American representation at the state level has waned since the 1990s. Although enormous advances have been made across the state in stemming the tide of racial discrimination, much work remains to preserve Florida's African American past and support this community's future growth. A crucial step for this type of work is accurately documenting the full range of experiences characterizing a community that has been central to the state's history for more than five centuries.

### **2.3 History of Sumter County**

The above history provided a broad overview of Florida's African American heritage to better contextualize the history of Royal presented in following sections. This section provides a more local context by offering a brief introduction to Sumter County, where Royal is located. This section is not focused on any particularly ethnic or racial population, and instead describes the history of this rural county from statehood to the present.

The land that would become Sumter County was, for the first decade of the US territorial period, a part of the Seminole Reservation created by the Treaty of Moultrie Creek in 1824 (Figure 2.11). As a result, many events associated with the Second Seminole War took place in or around Sumter County. The Second Seminole War began when Seminoles disputed a treaty they were cajoled into signing. The US ignored these requests and ratified the Treaty of Payne's Landing in 1834. This treaty provided the Seminoles with three years to move west of the Mississippi River, and marked 1832 as the beginning of that time period. By 1835, mounting pressure between Seminoles and the US military reached a head.

Instead of attempting to reach a peaceful solution, the US military began to prepare for war with the Seminoles. In the intervening years, numerous treaty violations had continued to upset the Seminoles. These included white settlers moving onto the lands reserved by the 1824 treaty,

trespassing slave hunters who attempted to capture Black Seminoles, and the ongoing attempts to force Seminoles to leave their lands (Mahon 1967; Covington 1993). In response to these violations, the Seminoles, led by Chief Micanopy, attacked Major Francis Dade and 107 men as they traveled between Ft. Brooke (near Tampa) to Ft. King (today's Ocala). Half of the US soldiers were killed in the first volley, and over the next six hours all but three of Dade's troops were killed. This battle, along with the Battle of the Withlacoochee (Bittle 1966), are the two events credited with beginning the Second Seminole War.

Interestingly, one of the survivors of the Dade Massacre as it became known, was a person of African descent named Luis Pacheco (McCarthy 2007:263-264). Pacheco was born a slave near Jacksonville; he learned to read and write, spoke Seminole, and was eventually sold to Dade and served as his interpreter with the Seminoles. The Indians spared Pacheco's life and he joined them, eventually traveling with a large group when they settled on a reservation further west. Today, the site of the Dade Battlefield is a state historic site and reenactments are held here every December commemorating the events of 1835. After the Second Seminole War, many of the remaining Seminoles were either pushed further south in the state or removed to reservations further west.

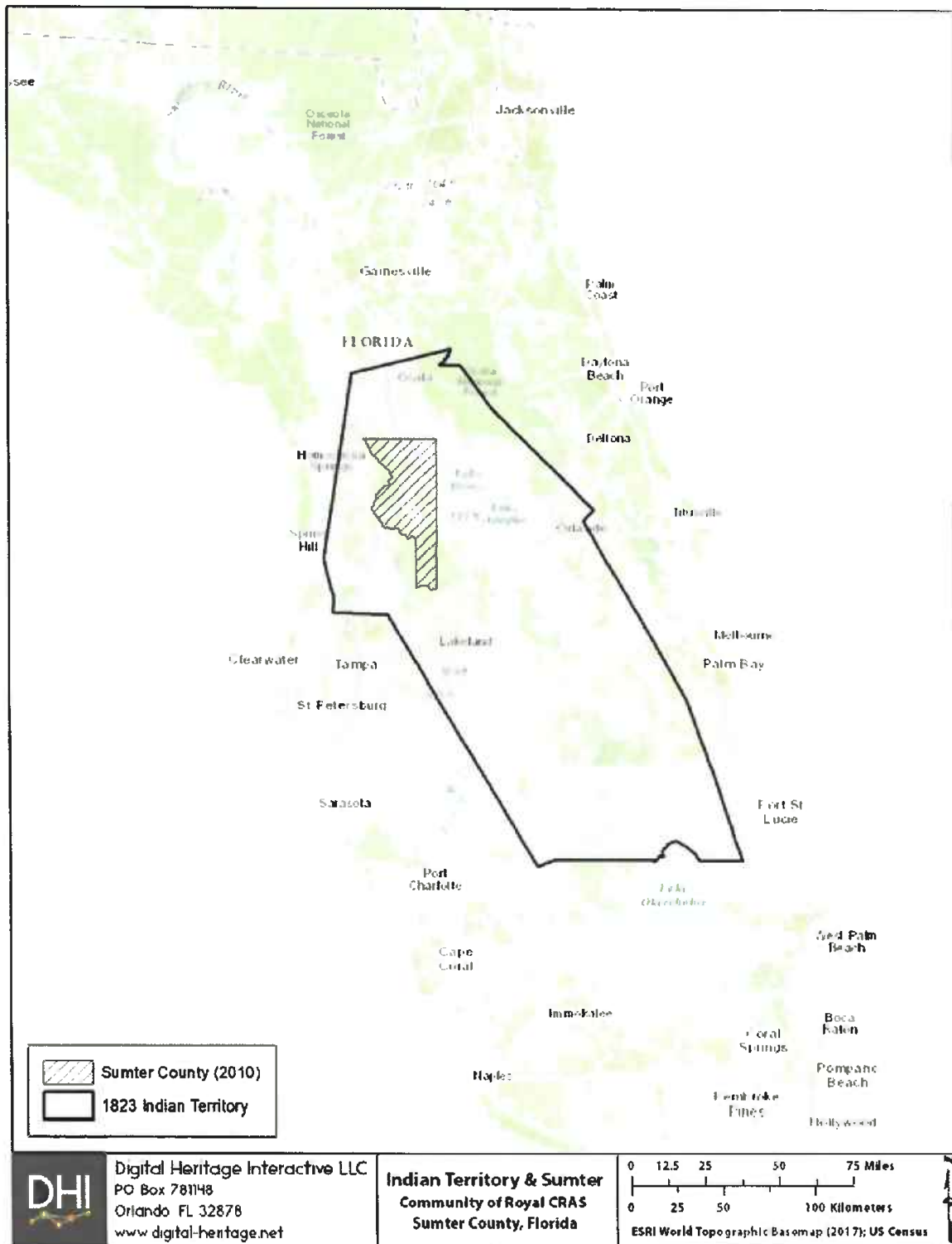
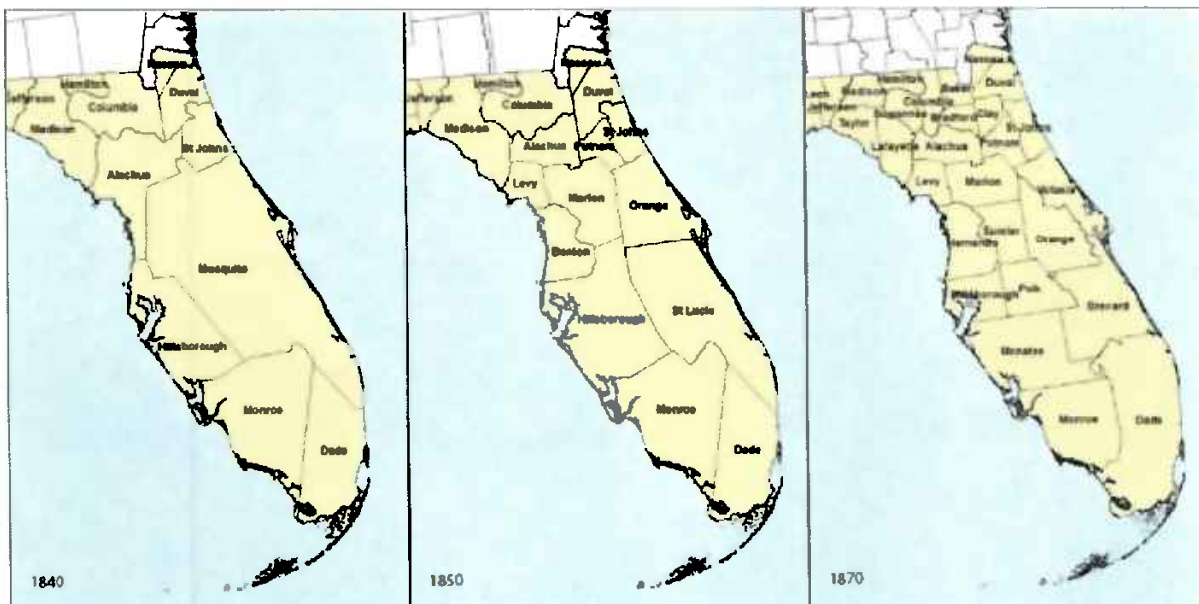


Figure 2.11: Extent of Seminole reservation as established in 1824 with modern Sumter superimposed.

As previously stated, the Second Seminole War was partly fought in response to the treatment of Black Seminoles during this time. There is archaeological evidence at the site of Kettle Island (SM00056) that Black Seminole populations pushed into Sumter County during this time. This site is located along the Withlacoochee River west of the southern portion of Lake Panasoffkee, approximately 8 miles southwest of the community Royal. Historical accounts from the 1830s suggest that this group of free Blacks (most likely Black Seminoles) were successful horticulturalists who supported local groups of Seminoles during this time (Mitchem and Weisman 1987; McCarthy 2007). Family historians in and around Royal have passed down oral histories suggesting that free Blacks were possibly present in northern Sumter County as early as the 1840s or 1850s (Nichols 2002). It is likely that these oral traditions are referencing earlier populations of Black Seminoles in the area.

After the Second Seminole War, many of the remaining Seminoles were either pushed further south in the state or removed to reservations in the west. Prior to statehood, the area of Sumter County was a part of Mosquito County in 1840. By 1850 this had divided multiple times and the area of Sumter County was a part of Marion and Hillsborough counties (Figure 2.12). Sumter County was established in 1853 and named after the Revolutionary War General Thomas Sumter. Sumter County, South Carolina is also named after him, reflecting the migration from South Carolina to peninsular Florida that took place during the mid-1800s. The modern boundaries of Sumter County were defined when it was further divided when Lake County was formed 1887.



*Figure 2.12: Political boundaries and Sumter County through time.*

The first town established in Sumter County was Adamsville, which remains an unincorporated community. A one-room courthouse was built there in 1839. Other early towns



include Sumterville and Center Hill (formerly Tuckeho, settled in 1840). Later towns followed including Wildwood, Bushnell, Oxford, Coleman, and Webster. Although many of these areas were settled earlier, most towns in the county associated their founding with the establishment of their first post office. Sumterville's first post office began operation in 1854. Wildwood did not receive a post office until 1881 and Bushnell's post office began operation in 1885. In 1861, the county seat was moved to Sumterville where a new courthouse was constructed (Figure 2.13). This courthouse burned in 1909 and the county seat subsequently moved to Bushnell (Sprinkle 1939).



Figure 2.13: Drawing of Sumter County Courthouse, 1885. Florida Memory Image Number PR02151.

The first railroad arrived at Wildwood from Jacksonville in 1850, and was extended to Tampa in 1884 (Sprinkle 1939; Turner 2008). Improved roads and railroad service, coupled with the Homestead Act of 1862 (and its impact following the Civil War), helped grow the county's population. During this time, John Tompkins and Granville Beville brought the first enslaved African Americans to the county from Georgia, to assist with their gristmill operation near Bushnell (Sprinkle 1939). In 1860, the first US census after the establishment of the county showed a population of 1,549, of which 549 were listed as enslaved Blacks or Mulattos (8<sup>th</sup> US Decennial Census). The county's population nearly doubled in the following ten years, reaching 2,952 by 1870, of which 980 were African Americans. Total population in 1880 was 4,686 (3,501 White and 1,185 Black), and by 1890 the population was 5,363 (3,864 White, 1,498 Black, and 1 Indian). Population growth appears to slow between 1880 and 1890, but this artificially lowered due to the separation of Lake County in 1887.

Most of the early settlers raised citrus, grazed cattle, or otherwise engaged in agricultural work (Reeves 1989:98). Much of this earlier production was for the benefit of those living in the county. That changed with new railroads crossing the county in the 1880s. Although rail service had reached Wildwood relatively early in the county's history, it was the establishment of additional rail lines in the 1880s that boosted the county's economy. This provided new ways of exporting citrus and other products. Bushnell was established as a rail stop in 1885, the same year that postal service arrived there. The town of Coleman was established in 1882 and became known as the "cabbage capital of the world" (Reeves 1988:98). Beginning in the late 1800s, Sumter County became one of the leading vegetable producing counties in the US. This ended with the Great Depression in the 1930s, and economic growth has never fully rebounded.

The Florida Turnpike and I-75 were established in the 1950s and 1970s, respectively, and have done little to change the economic fortune for most of the county. The single largest development in the county's history is undoubtedly the construction of The Villages, a retirement (age 55+) community located in northeastern Sumter County that borders Wildwood (Figure 2.14). The location was originally home to a mobile home park called the Orange Blossom Gardens. Developers took a different route in the 1980s and modeled their new development on nearby Del Webb community Sun City. Sales began to improve and by 1992 the development was officially named The Villages. The community boasted a population of only 8,333 people in 2000 (US Census). In the last two decades, the population has skyrocketed to an estimated 157,000 people in 2016, which is similar or even larger than the entire population of Sumter County. This is possible because a densely-populated portion of The Villages is located in Marion County.

The rapid growth of The Villages has caused concern among neighboring communities. Many residents of neighboring communities in northeastern portion of Sumter County have expressed concerns about the ways that the growth of The Villages, and related growth in the City of Wildwood, may impact the historical integrity of these communities, including Royal.

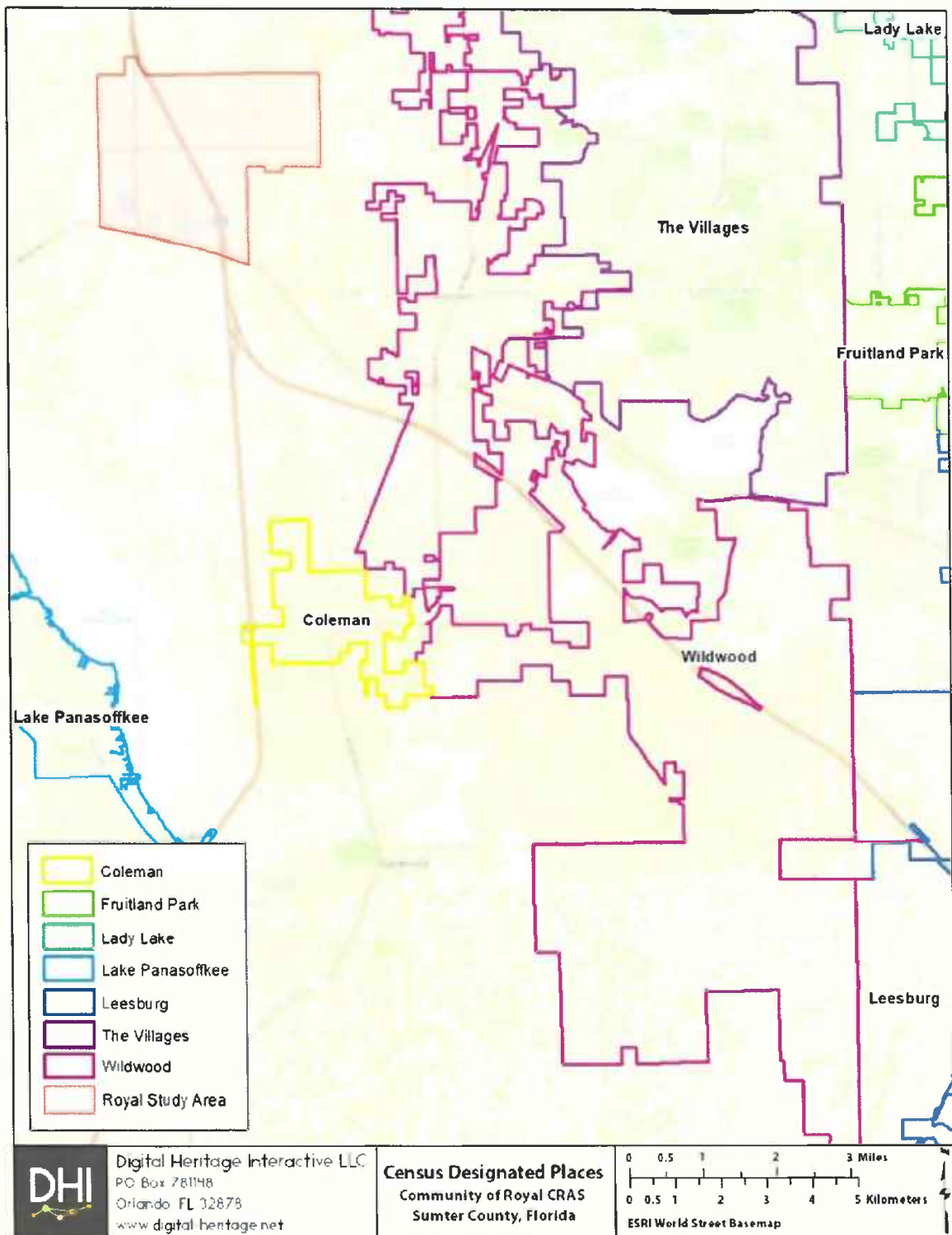


Figure 2.14: Location of Royal Study Area in relation to nearby census designated places.

The growth of this portion of Sumter County, largely centered in the northeastern corner of the county, has increased economic opportunities for local residents and provided significantly increased income for the county. This prosperity is partly evidenced by the fact that Sumter County is no longer listed as a Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) community. The prosperity that comes with this transition provides local residents with new job prospects. These new economic opportunities may help curb the trend of locals leaving to find employment elsewhere, a trend that continued throughout much of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The population growth and accompanying development is seen as a positive thing by many local residents. However, this may impact nearby communities when development threatens the historical integrity of potentially NRHP eligible properties, sites, and districts, as in the case of Royal.

Recently, the county government in Sumter have approved an expanded Urban Development Boundary (UDB) that designates areas throughout the county where development is encouraged. Again, a generally positive step for this historically rural area, but one that may impact the unique cultural resources in Royal. Figure 2.15 shows the area around Royal and this recently updated UDB, which is publicly available from the Sumter County GIS Department website at <http://sumtercountyfl.gov/238/Downloadable-Maps>. Practically the entire project study area for the Community of Royal CRAS falls within this boundary. The possible impact of development on the historical resources within Royal increases in likelihood with each passing year.



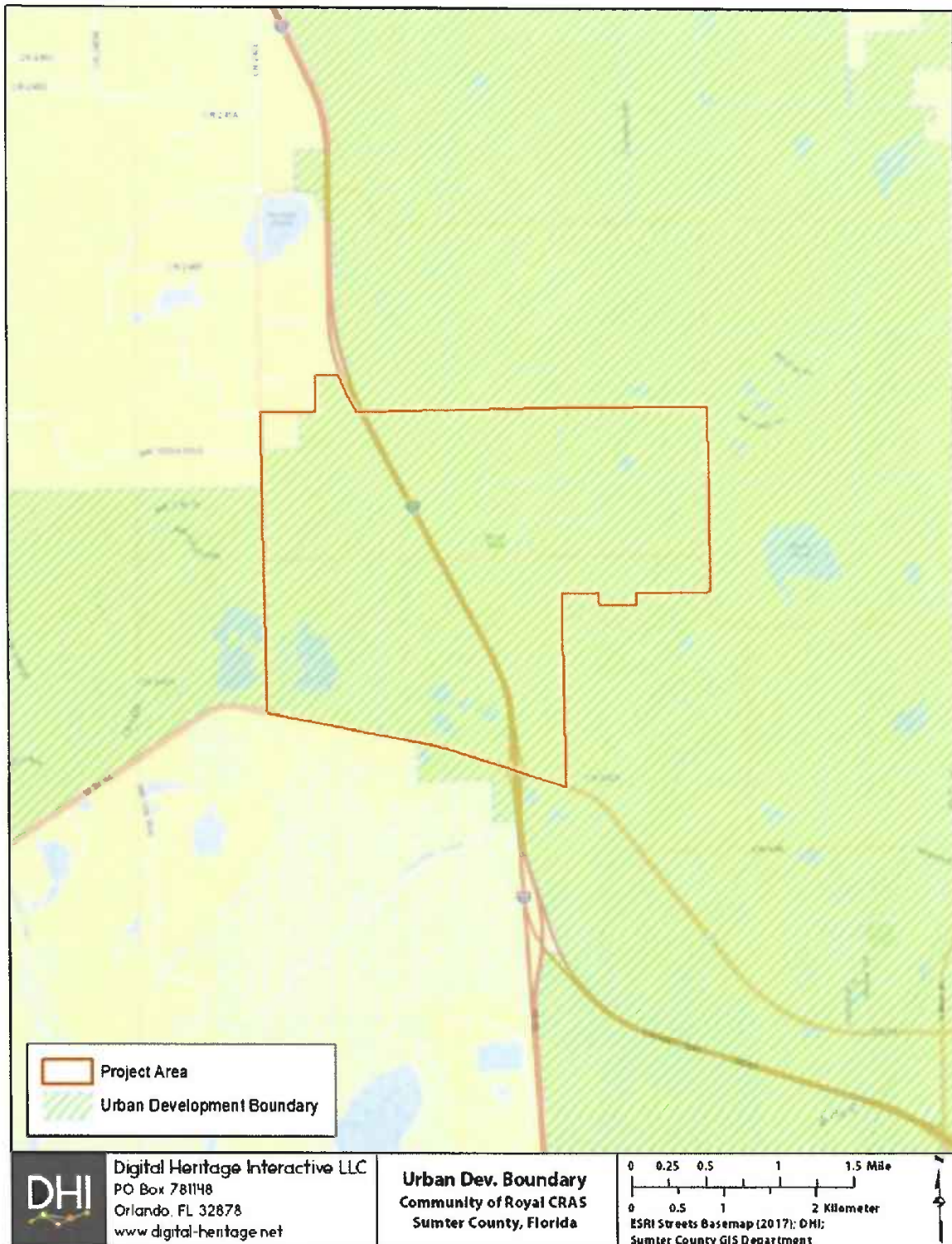


Figure 2.15: Sumter County Urban Development Boundary (UDB) in relation to study area.

### 3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Project Objectives and Expected Results

The purpose of this survey is to record cultural resources as they relate to the history of the Community of Royal, Florida. This research is undertaken at the request of Young Performing Artists (YPAs) Inc., and funded through the Department of State Historic Preservation Department Small Matching Grants (Grant S1731). The principle deliverable of this grant is the completion of 30 new or updated FMSF forms be completed (delivered in one batch of 10 forms and a second batch of 20 forms). In the course of our research we have successfully identified and recorded 31 new resources (see Appendix A for completed FMSF files). This project required archival work and non-invasive field survey (e.g., windshield survey) to document these resources.

DHI's archival work expands on YPAs, Inc.'s earlier research with a systematic review of historic property deeds held in the Sumter Courthouse. The metes and bounds of relevant historical properties were reconstructed with geographic information systems (GIS), and compared with a range of data (e.g., historical quad maps, aerial photographs) to identify the locations of standing, ruined, and destroyed structures, potential archaeological sites, and boundaries related to the community and individual properties. This property work was restricted to the project's study area, which is in Sections 21, 22, 23, 28, 27, 26, 33, and 34 in Township 18 Range 22.

This GIS analysis assisted in locating destroyed and ruined structures, as well as providing information required for submission and updating of FMSF forms. Following the property and GIS work, pedestrian and windshield surveys of relevant locations were conducted, and a small number of property owners engaged as local informants. Locations surveyed included the Royal school, agricultural structures, collapsed historic homes or dwelling foundations, and additional resources as revealed through archival research.

Historical remains encountered in these surveys were recorded in the FMSF regardless of their relationship to the community of Royal, per the requirements of the grant as set forth by the Florida Department of Historical Resources (DHR). Also, per the grant guidelines, no subsurface investigations were undertaken. No shovel test pits or excavation units were included in this work.

The naming of sites and structures is based on oral histories and property owner interviews conducted by DHI and Young Performing Artists (YPAs), Inc. Historical deeds (held at the Sumter County Courthouse in Bushnell) and census records (accessible through Ancestry.com) provided additional information. Each FMSF record indicates whether a structure is individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), or as part of a NRHP district or site. Given the unique history of Royal as one of the few continuously occupied, majority African American communities in the state of Florida, most resources are either eligible individually or as part of a group. This historic occupation by African Americans in the area means that agricultural structures represent an eligible resource as they relate to the continuation of a pre-1900s African American

traditional way of life. Residences and other structures are similarly eligible. Our assessment of a resource's eligibility is based on assessing their age, association with original African American settlers in the area, their descendants, and/or association with agricultural practices that date to the late 1800s.

### 3.2 Florida Master Site File Review

DHI undertook a review of previous surveys and FMSF resources located within 1 mile of the project's study area. Several previous surveys have taken place within this area, with most of them located in the western half of the study area. The FMSF survey numbers for these projects are 8143, 11923, 10691, 2243, 22762, 10383, 9367, 20820, 18503, 3326, 21901, 2848, 21431, 2227, 18329, 21991, and 12820. The majority of these surveys date to the 1990s or 2000s and related to either road improvements along Florida's Turnpike, I-75, CR 475, and SR 44 or proposed tower locations. Recent surveys specifically relate to the widening of the Florida Turnpike in 2011 (Survey 18329), a ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey of the Oak Hill Cemetery also in 2011 (Survey 18503), CRAS along I-75 in 2014 (Survey 20820), and two surveys regarding the Sabal Trail Pipeline in 2014 (Survey 21431) and 2015 (Survey 21991).

This review of the FMSF records (using late-2016 GIS files) reveals 36 archaeological sites, two cemeteries, and six historical structures within 1 mile of the project's study area (Table 3.1). Of those within the project area, that have not been evaluated as ineligible for the NRHP, the Royal Cemetery (SM00084) and the Royal Community Center (SM00503) are of direct relevance to this project.

The Royal Cemetery site (SM00084) was recorded by Piper Archaeological Research in 1988 as part of a survey for the Florida Turnpike Extension. The original report did not make a recommendation about Royal Cemetery's eligibility for the NHRP. An updated form was completed in 2011 by the Sumter County Historical Society in which they recommend the cemetery as eligible for listing on the NRHP individually with insufficient information to nominate as part of a district. The SHPO has not evaluated the cemetery's eligibility. A 2011 GPR survey (Estabrook 2001) found potential evidence for unmarked graves, although the results were inconclusive.

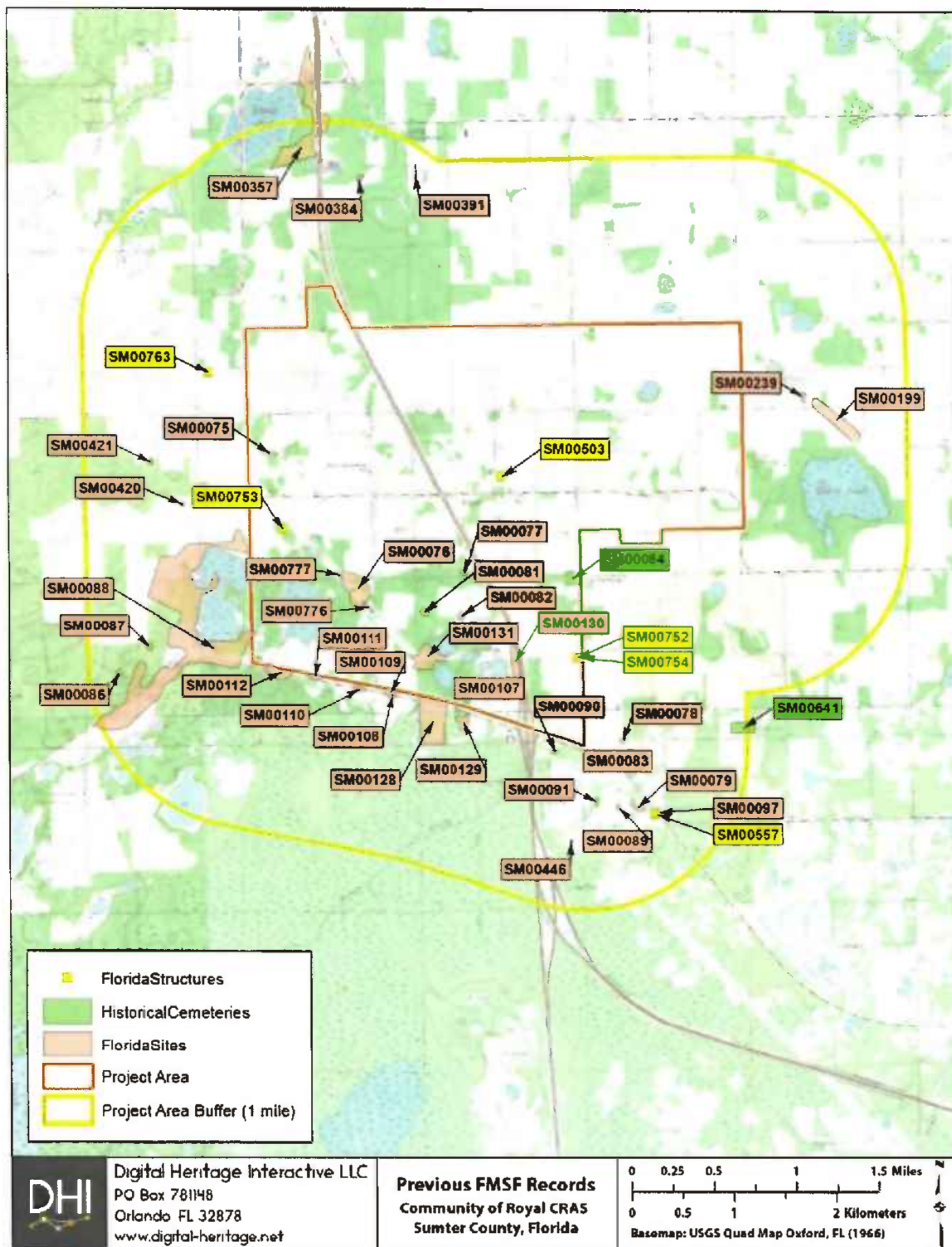
The Royal Community Center site (SM00503) was recorded in 1998 by Young Performing Artists (YPAs), Inc., and recommended as eligible for the NHRP. This site commemorates the legacy of the early African American settlers in the area, particularly as it relates to the centrality of education (and the original location of the Black Schoolhouse in Royal) common to many African American communities (see chapter 2 for more details on this importance). The FMSF form for this site include many historical photographs of individuals and structures dating to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in Royal.

Table 3.1: Previously recorded cultural resources within one mile of the project area.

Archaeological Sites				
FMSF No.	Site Name	Site Type	Culture	SHPO Evaluation
SM00111	Flying Crane	Campsite (prehistoric)	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00112	Eddie Brady	Campsite (prehistoric)	St. Johns, 700 B.C.-A.D. 1500	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00075	FPC Substation	Historic earthworks	Twentieth century American, 1900-present	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00076	Royal Spring	Habitation (prehistoric)	Paleoindian, 10,000 B.C.-8500 B.C.	Insufficient Information
SM00077	Cattle Path	Lithic scatter/quarry (prehistoric: no ceramics)	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00078	Small Rise	Lithic scatter/quarry (prehistoric: no ceramics)	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00079	Single Flake	Campsite (prehistoric)	Twentieth century American, 1900-present	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00081	Small Sink	Artifact scatter-low density (< 2 per sq meter)	Prehistoric with pottery	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00082	Fill Dirt	Lithic scatter/quarry (prehistoric: no ceramics)	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00083	Redeposited	Redeposited site (to this location)	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00086	Cul-de-sac	Prehistoric lithics only, but not quarry	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Not Evaluated by Recorder
SM00087	Joe's Hill	Prehistoric lithics only, but not quarry	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Not Evaluated by Recorder
SM00088	Hanover Shoes Farm Site	Campsite (prehistoric)	Early Archaic	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00089	Single Flake II	Single artifact or isolated find	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Not Evaluated by Recorder
SM00090	Sand Pit North	Campsite (prehistoric)	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Not Evaluated by Recorder
SM00091	Sand Pit East	Prehistoric lithics only, but not quarry	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Not Evaluated by Recorder
SM00097	Bleach Bottle	Prehistoric lithics only, but not quarry	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Not Evaluated by Recorder
SM00107	Wildwood	Campsite (prehistoric)	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00108	D H		Prehistoric with pottery	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00109	John Simpson	Campsite (prehistoric)	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00110	Shy Cow	Campsite (prehistoric)	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00128	West Pasture	Habitation (prehistoric)	Archaic, 8500 B.C.-1000 B.C.	Eligible for NRHP
SM00129	East Pasture	Campsite (prehistoric)	Middle Archaic	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00130	Muldrew's		Safety Harbor, A.D. 1000-1500	Insufficient Information



SM00131	Edward's	Campsite (prehistoric)	Mississippian	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00199	Gator Pond Site	Campsite (prehistoric)	Prehistoric	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00239	PF. Net Royal	Campsite (prehistoric)	Prehistoric	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00357	Nichols Pond Site	Campsite (prehistoric)	Archaic, 8500 B.C.-1000 B.C.	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00391	Black Gold 2	Specialized site for procurement of raw materials	Twentieth century American, 1900-present	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00420	Anderson 1	Land-terrestrial	Prehistoric	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00421	Anderson 2	Land-terrestrial	Prehistoric	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00384	Black Gold 1	Specialized site for procurement of raw materials	Middle Archaic	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00446	Sumter II	Campsite (prehistoric)	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Not Evaluated by Recorder
SM00775	FL-94	Land-terrestrial	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00776	FL-95	Land-terrestrial	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00777	FL-96	Land-terrestrial	Prehistoric lacking pottery	Ineligible for NRHP
<b>Cemeteries</b>				
<b>FMSF No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Year Established</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>SHPO Evaluation</b>
SM00084	Royal Cemetery	1926	Well maintained	Not Evaluated by SHPO
SM00641	Oak Grove Cemetery	1860	Well maintained	Not Evaluated by SHPO
<b>Historic Structures</b>				
<b>FMSF No.</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Style</b>	<b>Use</b>	<b>SHPO Evaluation</b>
SM00503	Royal Community Center	Unspecified by Surveyor	School, University, College	Not Evaluated by Recorder
SM00557	1403 State Rd 44 E	Frame Vernacular	Private residence	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00752	Mobile Home	No style	Mobile Home/Trailer Home	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00753	Pole Barn	Frame Vernacular	Barn	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00754	Mobile Home	No style	Mobile Home/Trailer Home	Ineligible for NRHP
SM00763	1231 NW 102nd Boulevard	Masonry vernacular	Private residence	Ineligible for NRHP



*Figure 3.1: Map of previously recorded cultural resources within one mile of the project area.*

### 3.3 Historical Map and Aerial Review

Historical maps and aerial photographs were examined to identify past land use and historic structures within the project area. The earliest maps consulted were General Land Office (GLO) survey maps. The GLO maps were created by government land surveyors during the nineteenth century as part of the surveying, platting, and sale of public lands. In Florida, these maps characteristically show landscape features such as vegetation, bodies of water, roads, and Spanish land grants. GLO survey maps consulted for this project are from Sections 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 33, and 34 in Township 18 South Range 22 East and Section 3 in Township 19 South Range 22 (Figure 3.2).

These maps show little evidence of settlement within the project area. Three roads run through the project area. The first roughly corresponds to the modern path of Hwy 44 and runs along the southern boundary of the project's study area. The other two roads are located in the eastern portion of the study area and do not appear to correspond to modern roads. There are no structures present in these maps. A single feature Section 36 of Township 18 South Range 22 East appears to be a cultivated field, but is located outside the current study area. No structures are visible on the maps. The area is recorded as consisting of mostly hammocks and ponds.

In addition, land grants/patents for these areas were consulted and mapped (Figure 3.3). Appendix B includes PDF scans of original GLO documents gathered for this research. Land patents list the property's description based on the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) and information regarding the grantee. Many of the earliest land patents were cross-referenced with census records for the area. According to this combination of historical records, the first verifiable African American settler in Royal was William Harley, who was a recipient of a land patent June 1, 1875 (Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.3 also represents the results of mapping all GLO land patents for the area. A total of 74 records were mapped, and the metes and bounds of these properties reconstructed using GIS software. These patents typically granted land in 40-acre and 80-acre plots. A total of 6 patents were granted in the 1850s, none in the 1860s, only three in 1875, and then the area saw a burst of activity in the 1880s. Between the years of 1883 and 1888 a total of 47 land patents were granted. Another 16 patents were granted between 1890 and 1898, and two final patents granted in 1919.

It is likely that African Americans from elsewhere in the state or South learned of Royal through familial networks. Royal quickly became known as a location where African Americans could own property and engage in various business activities. Faced with increasing restrictions elsewhere, it is likely that Royal became very attractive in the years following the end of Reconstruction. The increased access to the county made possible by rail travel may have also played a role, although a railroad never passed through the heart of Royal or the project's study area.

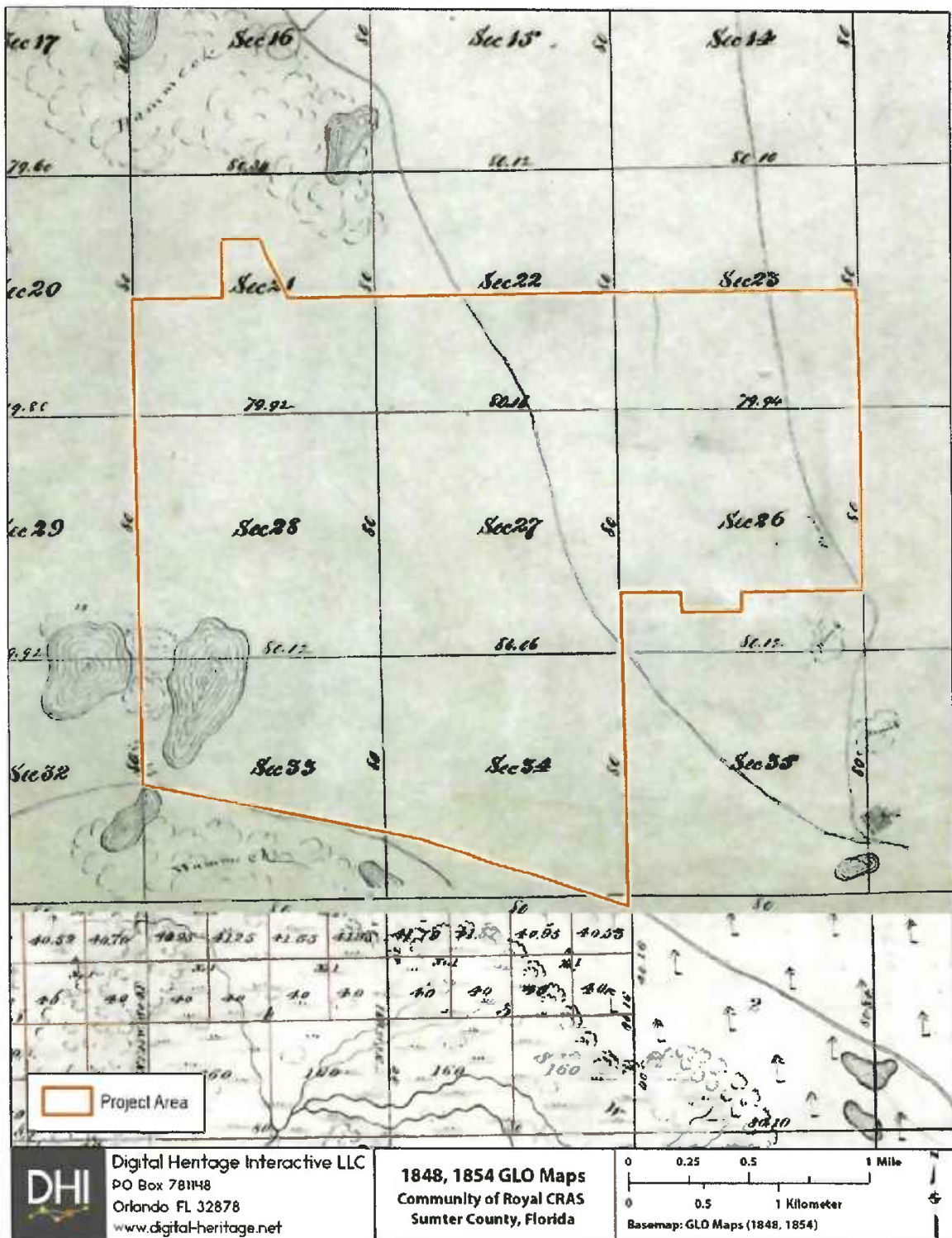


Figure 3.2: Project study area in relation to GLO maps for T18SR22E and T19SR22E.



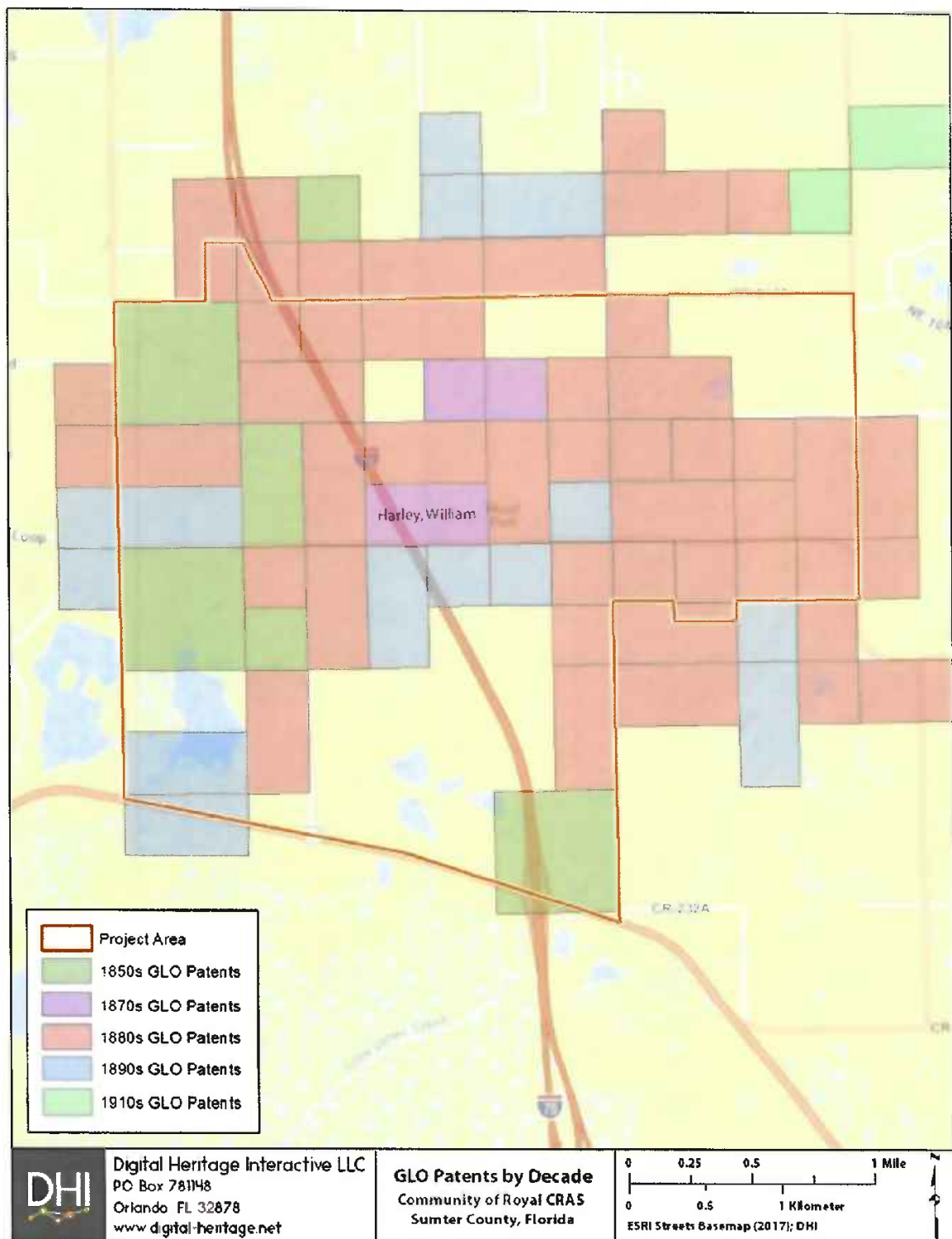


Figure 3.3: Mapping of GLO patents in project study area.



Homestead Certificate No. 5681  
Application 2217

Whereas, there has been deposited in the General Land Office of the United States a CERTIFICATE of the Register of the Land Office at *Tomsville Florida*, whereby it appears that, pursuant to the Act of Congress approved 20th May, 1862, "To secure Homesteads to actual settlers on the public domain" and the acts supplemental thereto, the claim of *William Harley*

has been established and duly consummated in conformity to law for the south half of the north west quarter of Section Twenty five, in Township eight from south of Range Twenty two east, in the District of Land subject to sale at *Tomsville Florida* containing eighty acres, and more bounded 1/4 of an acre

according to the Official Plat of the Survey of the said Land returned to the General Land Office by the SURVEYOR GENERAL.

Now know ye, That there is thereby granted by the UNITED STATES unto the said *William Harley* the tract of Land above described: To Have and to Hold the said tract of Land, with the appurtenances thereto, unto the said *William Harley* and to his heirs and assigns forever

In testimony whereof, *Ulysses S. Grant*, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA have caused these letters to be made Patent, and the Seal of the General Land Office to be hereunto affixed

Given under my hand, at the CITY OF WASHINGTON, the

L.S.

*Frederick J. Graham*, on the part of me  
Land and thousand eight hundred and *eighty seven*, and of the  
Independence of the United States the *thirteenth*

BY THE PRESIDENT

Figure 3.4: GLO land patent to William Harley, 1875.

By the 1890s historical topo maps from USGS show a developing community in Royal (Figure 3.5). Several roads crisscross the area, some corresponding to roads marked on the GLO maps (e.g., Hwy 44). In addition, a concentration of structures and intersection are visible at the center of the project's study area, corresponding to the historical downtown area of Royal. This map also details the wetlands in the southwestern portion of the study area, which remained relatively undeveloped until the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century when cell towers and energy corridors were placed there.

An aerial photograph from the USDA dating to 1941 (Figure 3.6) shows a well-developed downtown area in the center of the study's project area. This is surrounded by rectangular agricultural fields in a well-kept condition. By this time roads had become oriented east-west or north-south and a network of trails and footpaths are clearly visible throughout the study area. The northern area of the study area remains wooded and the southern portion is still dominated by ponds and wetlands. This aerial pre-dates the construction of the Florida Turnpike and I-75. All other roads mentioned elsewhere in the report are visible, and a closer inspection of the aerial reveals that most are apparently well-maintained dirt roads.

By the late 1960s, highways were being built and extended across Florida. A 1966 USGS Quad map (Figure 3.7) includes I-75 and illustrates how this road bisected the historical community of Royal. A number of other features are also visible on this map. The Royal Memorial Cemetery, Royal School, and New Jerusalem Church are all clearly labeled. Also, several roads have been improved during this time and are marked as paved. The wetlands and ponds in the project's study area remain prominent. Interestingly, evidence of prior industrial operations are visibly labeled as sandpits, although much of this area today has been developed into a series of truck stops servicing travelers on I-75.

Many of the roads in the study area follow the original GLO land patents discussed previously, and numerous structures are recorded across the area. Several of these structures are still standing and were recorded in the FMSF records as a part of this survey or previous ones.

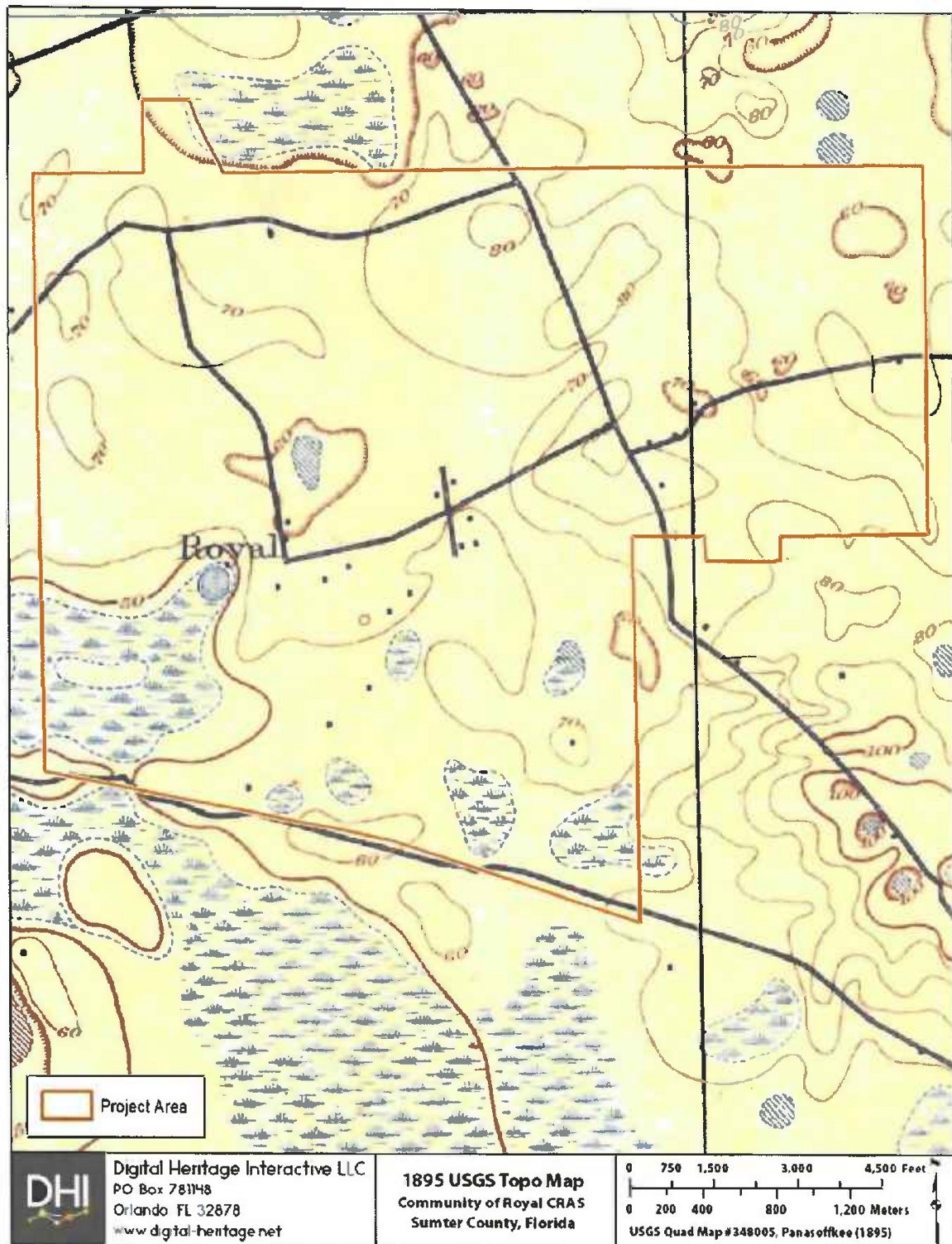


Figure 3.5: 1895 USGS topographic map showing project study area.



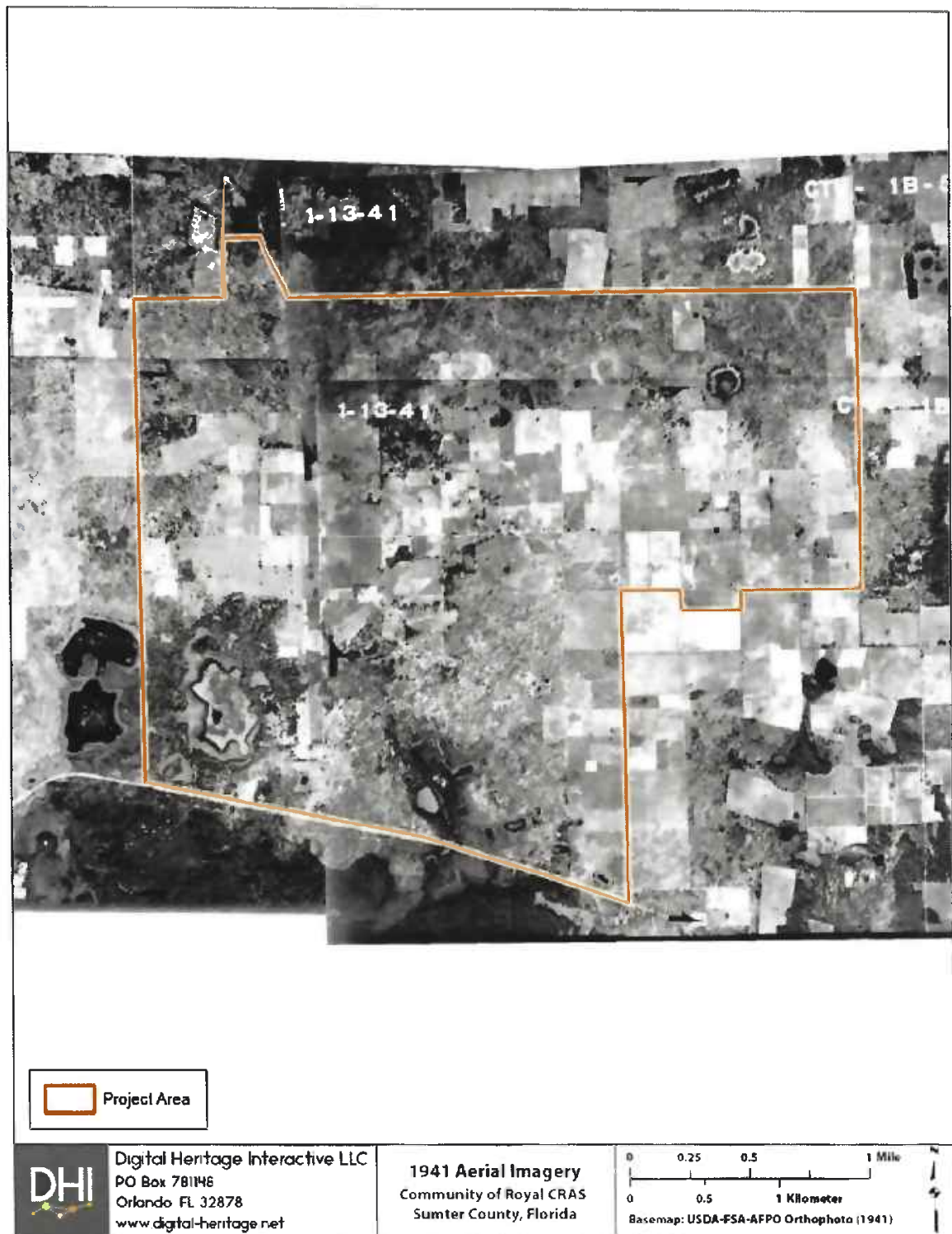


Figure 3.6: 1941 USDA aerial photography and the Royal project study area.

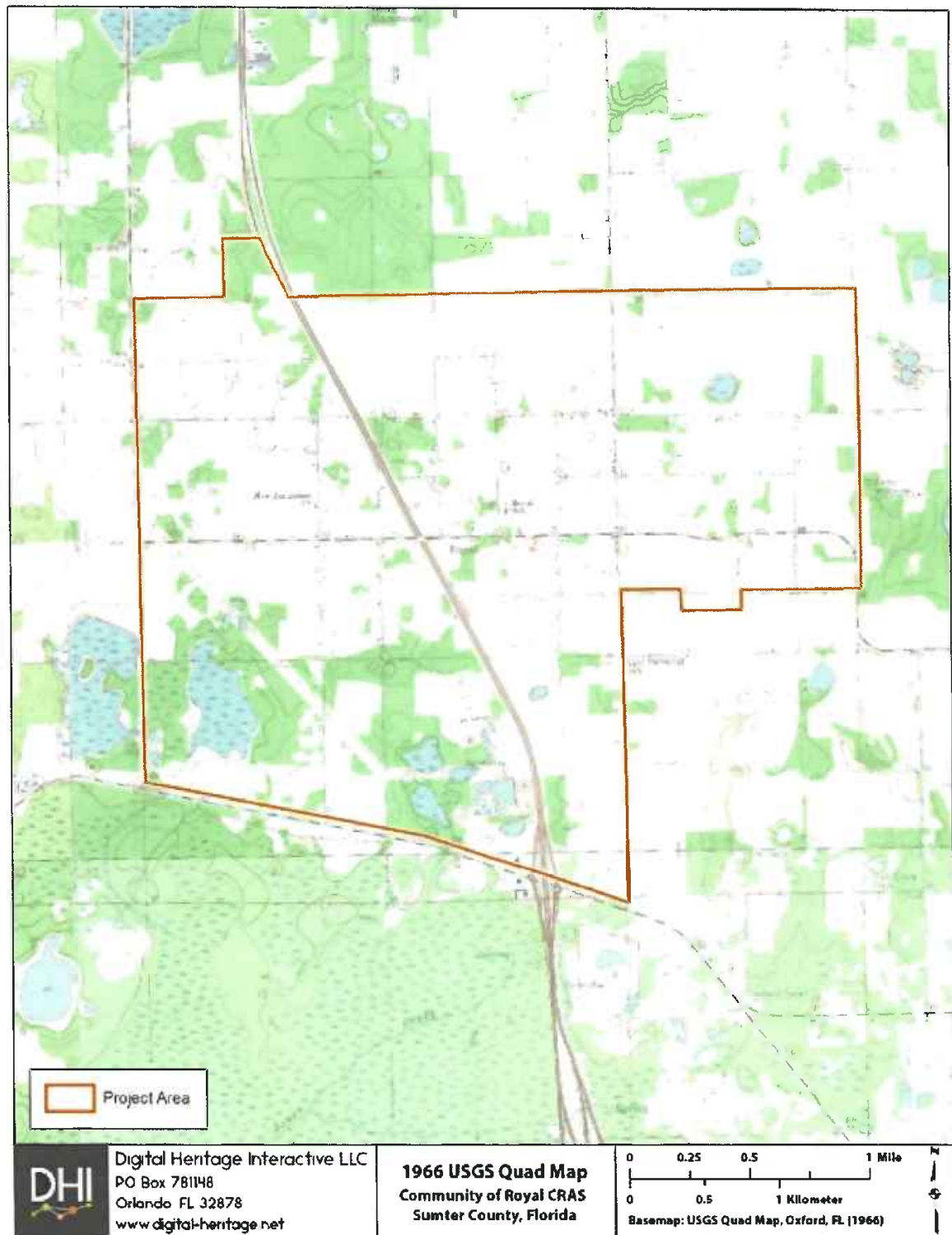


Figure 3.7: 1966 USGS quad map and the project study area.

### **3.4 Informant Interviews**

Informant interviews (e.g., oral histories) and discussions with property owners were also consulted during this project. Access to oral histories was graciously provided by Beverly Steele of Young Performing Artists (YPAs) Inc. Several of these interviews proved invaluable when naming properties. In addition, DHI spoke with a handful of property owners while surveying sites in the field. These also helped to establish the last date of use for structures on the landscape as many who currently live in Royal live on properties owned by ancestors and parents.

### **3.5 Field Methodology**

The principal field methodology for this project was windshield survey of structures and properties identified via archival methods. This included photographing structures and identifying any ruined or demolished remains from the roadside. Since subsurface investigations were not approved as part of this project, no archaeological testing took place.

### **3.6 Procedures to Deal with Unexpected Discoveries**

Although no subsurface investigations were a part of this project, field researchers did keep an eye out for surface scatters. None were located. It is unlikely that significant surface deposits exist in the project's study area given the long-term agricultural activity that has taken place over the past 150 or so years. This is not to say that archaeological sites do not exist, and both prehistoric and historical archaeological sites are likely located in the study area. However, to locate these, a dedicated program of exploratory investigations (e.g., shovel test pit grid, test units) is required.

### **3.7 Lab Methods and Curation**

No archaeological materials were recovered as part of this project. FMSF forms, maps, photographs, and GIS data associated with the 31 newly recorded features have been submitted to the Florida Department of State Division of Historical Resources. Supplementary data used to write this report is maintained by Digital Heritage Interactive, LLC.

## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the results of the Community of Royal CRAS. This includes 31 new structures added to the FMSF files. All structures dating to 1967 or earlier (50 years prior to 2017), have been recorded to meet Section 106 guidelines for potential significance, which also corresponds to the requirements of the grant as set forth by the Florida Department of Historical Resources (DHR). The structures have been organized into four categories based on their general use: agricultural, commercial, residential, and miscellaneous. One resource (SM00981) – the Plas Lewis Residence, which was the site of a private residence and dry cleaners – has been listed in both the commercial and residential categories.

### 4.2 Historical/Architectural Results

The following 31 resources were documented and recorded between December 1, 2016 and March 31, 2017. Previous chapters discuss the supporting archival and informant work drawn upon to evaluate these structures.

*Table 4.1: Newly recorded FMSF structures.*

Historic Structures				
FMSF No.	Site Name	Style	Use	NRHP Evaluation
SM00976	Primas & Mary Massey Residence	Minimal Traditional	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible as part of district
SM00977	George & Polly Wideman Tobacco Barn	Masonry Vernacular	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible
SM00978	Polly Wideman Childhood Home	Frame Vernacular	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible
SM00979	Jannie Jackson Residence	Minimal Traditional	Abandoned/Vacant	Insufficient Information
SM00980	Leola James Residence	Minimal Traditional	Abandoned/Vacant	Insufficient Information
SM00981	Plas Lewis Residence	Masonry Vernacular	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible as part of district
SM00982	Rev. Robert Simmons Residence	Bungalow	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible as part of district
SM00983	Rev. Robert Simmons' Tobacco Barn	Masonry Vernacular	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible
SM00984	Royal Masonic Hall	No Style	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible
SM00985	Primus Massey Tobacco Barn	Masonry Vernacular	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible
SM00990	Zettie Williams Pole Barn Shed	Frame Vernacular	Agricultural Storage	Eligible
SM00991	Howard Patterson Homestead Outbuilding	Frame Vernacular	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible
SM00992	Howard Patterson Residence	Bungalow	Residence	Eligible as part of district



SM00993	Paels & Molly Lewis Homestead	Minimal Traditional	Residence	Eligible as part of district
SM00994	Barney Lewis Homestead	Ranch	Residence	Eligible as part of district
SM00995	Mae Ollie Mosley Homestead	Minimal Traditional	Residence	Eligible as part of district
SM00996	Rev. Robert Simmons Homestead	Ranch	Residence	Eligible as part of district
SM00997	Elliot & Beatrice Mathews Homestead	Ranch	Residence	Eligible as part of district
SM00998	Mother Melba Keiler Homestead	Bungalow	Residence	Eligible as part of district
SM00999	Nelson Brooks, Sr. Homestead	Minimal Traditional	Residence	Eligible as part of district
SM01000	Nelson Brooks, Sr. Cane Boiler and Press	Other	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible
SM01001	Sylvester Erving Tobacco Barn	Masonry Vernacular	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible
SM01002	Lens Patterson Tobacco Barn	Masonry Vernacular	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible
SM01003	Lens Patterson Homestead	Masonry Vernacular	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible as part of district
SM01004	Sutton James Cane Press	Other	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible
SM01005	Zettie Williams Cane Press	Other	Other	Eligible
SM01006	Royal Elem. & Middle School Cafeteria	Masonry Vernacular	Community Library	Eligible
SM01007	A.W. Lee Tobacco Barn	Masonry Vernacular	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible
SM01008	Royal's 1st Gas Station/Convenience Store	No Style	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible
SM01009	Willard James Tobacco Barn	Masonry Vernacular	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible
SM01010	Willie Smith Tobacco Barn	Masonry Vernacular	Abandoned/Vacant	Eligible

The following section lists each of these resources independently and provides detailed information regarding their history and current eligibility for inclusion on the NRHP.

#### 4.2.1 Agricultural Structures

##### Structure SM00977 (George & Polly Wideman Tobacco Barn)

*Name:* George & Polly Wideman Tobacco Barn

*Address:* 309 CR 226, Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C28-008

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 28 (NE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* Mid-20<sup>th</sup> century

*Type:* Masonry Vernacular

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of district

Structure SM00977 is a one-story masonry vernacular tobacco barn. It is made primarily of concrete block, with various blocks along the ground level on their side (holes exposed) for ventilation. Oral histories with residents suggest construction date was the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The side gabled roof is covered with 5V crimp sheet metal, and there are no windows or porches. The entrance faces east. It is associated with neighboring structures on various properties tied to the Patterson family and their descendants.

Structure SM00977 is an example of a masonry tobacco barn found throughout Royal, and represents a continuation of traditional African American life dating to the mid or late 1800s. Because of the ties to the continuing agricultural legacy of the African American community of Royal, Structure SM00977 is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district.



*Figure 4 1: Structure SM00977, front elevation, view facing west.*

**Structure SM00983 (Reverend Robert Simmons' Tobacco Barn)**

*Name:* Reverend Robert Simmons' Tobacco Barn

*Address:* 478 E C-462, Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C27-017

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (NW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* Mid-20<sup>th</sup> century

*Type:* Masonry Vernacular

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of district

Structure SM00983 is a one-story masonry vernacular tobacco barn. It is made primarily of concrete block, with various blocks along the ground level on their side (holes exposed) for ventilation. Oral histories with residents suggest construction date was the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The side gabled roof is covered with 5V crimp sheet metal, and there are no windows or porches. The entrance faces east and is boarded up. It is associated with the Reverend Robert Simmons Residence (SM00982). The structure is facing severe structural damage as evidenced by blocks separating along the front elevation.

Structure SM00983 is an example of a masonry tobacco barn found throughout Royal, and represents a continuation of traditional African American life dating to the mid or late 1800s. Because of the ties to the continuing agricultural legacy of the African American community of Royal, Structure SM00983 is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district.



*Figure 4.2: Structure SM00983, front elevation, view facing west.*

**Structure SM00985 (Primus Massey Tobacco Barn)**

**Name:** Primus Massey Tobacco Barn

**Address:** 407 W C-462, Wildwood, Florida

**County Parcel Number:** C28-014

**Quadrangle:** Oxford 1966

**Township / Range / Section:** 18S 22E Section 28 (SE ¼)

**Date of Construction:** Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century

**Type:** Masonry Vernacular

**Current Use:** Abandoned/Vacant

**NRHP Evaluation:** Eligible individually and as part of district

Structure SM00985 is a one-story masonry vernacular tobacco barn. It is made primarily of concrete block, with various blocks along the ground level on their side (holes exposed) for ventilation. Oral histories with residents suggest construction date was the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The side gabled roof is covered with 5V crimp sheet metal, and there are no windows or porches. The entrance faces north. It is associated with the Primas & Mary Massey Residence (SM00976). The roofing is partially visible but is mostly caved in.

Structure SM00985 is an example of a masonry tobacco barn found throughout Royal, and represents a continuation of traditional African American life dating to the mid or late 1800s. Because of the ties to the continuing agricultural legacy of the African American community of Royal, Structure SM00985 is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district.



*Figure 4.3: Structure SM00985, front elevation, view facing south.*



**Structure SM00990 (Zettie Williams Pole Barn Shed)**

*Name:* Zettie Williams Pole Barn Shed

*Address:* 566 W C-462, Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C28-206

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 28 (NW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1941 or later

*Type:* Frame Vernacular

*Current Use:* Agricultural storage

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of district

Structure SM00990 is a one-and-a-half story frame vernacular pole barn shed. Construction date is estimated at mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. It has a gabled roof covered with 5V crimp sheet metal. Windows are gable end wooden casement and appear to be original to the structure. Exterior fabric is board and batten siding, which extends onto the enclosed southern portion of the structure. Original door was replaced with a new metal door to the enclosed section.

Structure SM00990 represents a continuation of traditional African American life and agriculture dating to the late 1800s, and is therefore recommended as eligible.



*Figure 4.4: Structure SM00990, side and rear elevation, view facing north.*

**Structure SM01000 (Nelson Brooks, Sr. Cane Boiler and Press)**

*Name:* Nelson Brooks, Sr. Cane Boiler and Press

*Address:* 9744 NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Dr. Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C27-061

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (NW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* Approximately 1940

*Type:* Other

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of district

Structure SM01000 is a simple pole barn with a gable roof supported by wooden posts, which has collapsed to the north. Beneath the pole barn is a cane boiler constructed of brick with a concrete overlay. One copper sits adjacent to the furnace and chimney.

The cane press used on the property sits atop wooden posts. Owner interview indicates the press was moved onto those posts recently (approximately last 10 years). The press was made by Golden's Foundry and Machine Company, and was produced by the company until the early 1940s. The current owner of the property indicated that cane processing has occurred as recently as 2007.

Structure SM01000 is an example of a boiler house in Royal. Oral histories indicate that cane growing and processing in Royal started with its original African American settlers and continues to this day. Because it represents a continuation of traditional African American life dating to the mid or late 1800s, structure SM01000 is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district.



*Figure 4.5: Structure SM01000, front elevation, view facing east.*



*Figure 4.6: Structure SM01000, interior, view facing south.*



Figure 4.7: SM01000 Cane Press showing manufacturer information, view facing south.

**Goldens' NEW MODEL Three-Roller Horse Power X Cane Mills.**

PATENTED  
**LONG BARREL MILLS.**



SHOWING FEED BOX AND DISCHARGE SPOUT.



SHOWING STEEL SCRAPER AND DISCHARGE SPOUT.

—10—

Figure 4.8: Goldens' 1916 catalog showing similar cane press model as SM01000



### **Structure SM01001 (Sylvester Erving Tobacco Barn)**

*Name:* Sylvester Erving Tobacco Barn

*Address:* 9852 NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Dr.

*County Parcel Number:* C27-025

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (NW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century

*Type:* Masonry Vernacular

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of a district

Structure SM01001 is a one-story masonry vernacular tobacco barn. It is made primarily of concrete block, with two blocks along the ground level on their side (holes exposed) for ventilation. Oral histories with residents suggest construction date was the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The side gabled roof is covered with 5V crimp sheet metal, and there are no windows or porches. The front façade has a crack from the top of the doorway to the roofline.

Structure SM01001 is an example of a masonry tobacco barn found throughout Royal, and represents a continuation of traditional African American life dating to the mid or late 1800s. Because of the ties to the continuing agricultural legacy of the African American community of Royal, Structure SM01001 is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district.



*Figure 4.9: Structure SM01001, front elevation, view facing west.*



**Structure SM01002 (Lens Patterson Tobacco Barn)**

*Name:* Lens Patterson Tobacco Barn

*Address:* 10005 CR 237 Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C22-007

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 22 (SW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century

*Type:* Masonry Vernacular

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of a district

Structure SM01002 is a one-story masonry vernacular tobacco barn. It is made primarily of concrete block, with two blocks along the ground level on their side (holes exposed) for ventilation. Oral histories with residents suggest construction date was the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The roof has collapsed completely. There are no windows or porches. The front façade has “TOBACCO” painted in an arch over the doorway, as well as a tobacco pipe, tobacco plant, and a leaf. The side façade has some faded and indistinguishable artwork painted in red.

Structure SM01002 is an example of a masonry tobacco barn found throughout Royal, and represents a continuation of traditional African American life dating to the mid or late 1800s. Because of the ties to the continuing agricultural legacy of the African American community of Royal, Structure SM01002 is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district.



*Figure 4.10: Structure SM01002, front and side elevation, view facing north east.*

**Structure SM01004 (Sutton James Cane Press)**

**Name:** Sutton James Cane Press

**Address:** 9019 CR 231 Wildwood, Florida

**County Parcel Number:** C28-210

**Quadrangle:** Oxford 1966

**Township / Range / Section:** 18S 22E Section 28 (SE ¼)

**Date of Construction:** Early to Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century

**Type:** Other

**Current Use:** Historical/Decorative

**NRHP Evaluation:** Eligible individually and as part of a district

Structure SM01004 is a sugar cane press made by Goldens' Foundry and Machine Company, and was produced until the early 1940s. It is made of cast iron and mounted on a masonry pedestal.

Oral histories indicate that cane growing and processing in Royal started with its original African American settlers and continues to this day. Because it represents a continuation of traditional African American life dating to the mid or late 1800s, structure SM01004 is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district. However, further documentation is recommended in the area as a boiler house and other cane processing structures and equipment may be in the vicinity.



*Figure 4.11: SM01004, view of cane press on masonry pedestal, view facing east.*



*Figure 4.12: SM01004, close-up of text on cane press, view facing east.*

**Structure SM01005 (Zettie Williams Cane Press)**

*Name:* Zettie Williams Cane Press

*Address:* 374 W C-462

*County Parcel Number:* C28-032

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 28 (NE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* Early to Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century

*Type:* Other

*Current Use:* Other

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of a district

Structure SM01005 is a sugar cane press made by Chattanooga Plow Company, and was produced until the early 1940s. It is made of cast iron and mounted on a masonry pedestal. The arm has been replaced with a metal pole, weighted with concrete block.

Oral histories indicate that cane growing and processing in Royal started with its original African American settlers and continues to this day. Because it represents a continuation of traditional African American life dating to the mid or late 1800s, structure SM01005 is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district. However, further documentation is recommended in the area as a boiler house and other cane processing structures and equipment may be in the vicinity. Structure SM01005 is also associated with structure SM0090 (Zettie Williams Polebarn Shed).



*Figure 4.13: Structure SM01005, view facing north.*

**Structure SM01007 (A.W. Lee Tobacco Barn)**

*Name:* A.W. Lee Tobacco Barn

*Address:* 8763 CR 231 Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C33-008

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 33 (NE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century

*Type:* Masonry Vernacular

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of a district

Structure SM01007 is a one-story masonry vernacular tobacco barn. It is made primarily of concrete block, with two blocks along the ground level on their side (holes exposed) for ventilation. Oral histories with residents suggest construction date was the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The roof has collapsed completely. There are no windows or porches.

Structure SM01007 is an example of a masonry tobacco barn found throughout Royal, and represents a continuation of traditional African American life dating to the mid or late 1800s. Because of the ties to the continuing agricultural legacy of the African American community of Royal, Structure SM01007 is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district.



*Figure 4.14: Structure SM01007, front elevation, view facing east.*



**Structure SM01009 (Willard James Tobacco Barn)**

*Name:* Willard James Tobacco Barn

*Address:* 9005 CR 231 Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C28-028

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 28 (SE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century

*Type:* Masonry Vernacular

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of a district

SM01009 Structure SM01007 is a one-story masonry vernacular tobacco barn. It is made primarily of concrete block, with two blocks along the ground level on their side (holes exposed) for ventilation. Oral histories with residents suggest construction date was the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The roof has collapsed completely. There are no windows or porches.

Structure SM01007 is an example of a masonry tobacco barn found throughout Royal, and represents a continuation of traditional African American life dating to the mid or late 1800s. Because of the ties to the continuing agricultural legacy of the African American community of Royal, Structure SM01007 is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district.



*Figure 4.15: Structure SM01009, front and side elevation, view facing east.*

**Structure SM01010 (Willie Smith Tobacco Barn)**

*Name:* Willie Smith Tobacco Barn

*Address:* 9783 CR 235 Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C28-027

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (NE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century

*Type:* Masonry Vernacular

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of a district

Structure SM01007 is a one-story masonry vernacular tobacco barn. It is made primarily of concrete block, with two blocks along the ground level on their side (holes exposed) for ventilation. Oral histories with residents suggest construction date was the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The roof has collapsed completely. There are no windows or porches.

Structure SM01007 is an example of a masonry tobacco barn found throughout Royal, and represents a continuation of traditional African American life dating to the mid or late 1800s. Because of the ties to the continuing agricultural legacy of the African American community of Royal, Structure SM01007 is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district.



*Figure 4.16: Structure SM01010, side elevation, view facing east.*

#### 4.2.2 Commercial Structures

##### Structure SM01008 (Royal's 1<sup>st</sup> Gas Station/Convenience Store)

*Name:* Royal's 1<sup>st</sup> Gas Station/Convenience Store

*Address:* No physical address

*County Parcel Number:* C28-036

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 28 (SE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century

*Type:* No style

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of a district

Structure SM01008 is a one-story gas station/convenience store without a style. Neighbor interview suggests this gas station/convenience store was constructed in the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Exterior fabric is concrete block with asphalt shingles on a mansard roof. The structure has metal awning windows. The entrance faces west; immediately south of the structure is a paved area that has been grown over. The roof has partially collapsed and vines are growing over much of the building, including through the roof and inside the structure.

Structure SM01008 is a mid-century African American owned gas station. Oral histories indicate that it was the first one in Royal. Because it is tied to the historic development and growth of the community, it is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district.



*Figure 4.17: 1Structure SM01008, front and side elevation, portion of overgrown pavement right foreground, view facing north east.*

**Structure SM00981 (Plas Lewis Residence)**

*Name:* Plas Lewis Residence

*Address:* 9437 CR 241, Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C27-183

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (SW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* Mid-20<sup>th</sup> century

*Type:* Masonry Vernacular

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible as part of district; insufficient information to nominate individually

Structure SM00981 is a one-story masonry vernacular residence turned commercial building that is now abandoned. Based on the construction style and its similarity to other masonry vernacular structures, it is estimated that the structure was built in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The front gable roof is covered with 5V crimp sheet metal and covers most the structure; the northern and front section of wall and roofing are missing, so it is unclear whether the front gable extended to the front elevation of the structure or not. Windows are boarded, and plants are growing throughout the interior.

Neighbor interview suggests the structure was initially home to Plas Lewis (1892-1971), then later became the first Dry Cleaners in Royal. Structure SM00981 was owned by a descendant of the original settlers of Royal and later evidence of a growing local economy, and is therefore recommended as eligible as part of a district. Further documentation is recommended to determine individual eligibility.



*Figure 4.18: Structure SM00981, front and side elevation, view facing south.*



### 4.2.3 Residential Structures

#### Structure SM00976 (Primas & Mary Massey Residence)

*Name:* Primas & Mary Massey Residence

*Address:* 407 W C-462, Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C28-014

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 28 (SE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* c.1946

*Type:* Minimal Traditional

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible as part of district; insufficient information to nominate individually

Structure SM00976 is a one-story concrete block mixed minimal traditional and bungalow style residence. County property records indicate that the structure was built ca. 1946. The front gable roof is covered with 5V crimp sheet metal. Windows are boarded over and not visible. The front porch is closed, incised, and north-facing. Structure 8SM00976 is adjacent to a tobacco barn which is associated with the same owners.

Structure SM00976 is on property that was initially owned by Hampton Anderson (1885), who was one of the founders of Pickettsville (later Royal). It is currently owned by descendants of the original settlers of Royal, and as such is recommended as eligible as part of a district.



*Figure 4.19: 2 Structure SM00976, front elevation, view facing south.*

**Structure SM00978 (Polly Wideman Childhood Home)**

*Name:* Polly Wideman Childhood Home

*Address:* 434 CR 226, Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C28-217

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 28 (NE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1912

*Type:* Frame Vernacular

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of a district

Structure SM00978 is a one-story frame vernacular residence. County property records indicate it was built in 1912. The side gabled roof is covered with 5V crimp sheet metal. Exterior fabric is board-and-batten. Windows are single hung sash wooden windows; however, some windows are missing. The front entry porch is south facing, projecting, and open with a flat roof that is also covered with 5V crimp sheet metal.

Structure SM00978 is associated with other nearby houses and agricultural structures associated with the Patterson family and their descendants. The Pattersons are descendants of some of the original settlers of Royal. Oral history suggests that Polly Patterson Wideman grew up in this house. She was Royal's second oldest resident (b. 1903, d. 2012), and is considered an important cultural figure in the community. Because of the historical associations and age of Structure SM00978, it is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district.



*Figure 4.20: Structure SM00978, front elevation, view facing north.*

**Structure SM00979 (Jannie Jackson Residence)**

*Name:* Jannie Jackson Residence

*Address:* 434 CR 226, Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C28-216

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 28 (NE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1958

*Type:* Minimal Traditional

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Insufficient information

Structure SM00979 is a one-story concrete block minimal traditional residence. According to county property records, it was built in 1958. It is a front gabled structure covered in asphalt shingles. There are no porches and windows are boarded up.

Structure SM00979 does not appear to meet the minimum criteria for listing on the NRHP, but it is adjacent to and associated with neighboring historically significant residences and agricultural structures, and may be owned by descendants of the original settlers of Royal. As such, further documentation is recommended to determine eligibility.



*Figure 4.21: Structure SM00979, front elevation, view facing north.*



**Structure SM00980 (Leola James Residence)**

*Name:* Leola James Residence

*Address:* 9812 CR 231, Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C28-007

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 28 (NE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1959

*Type:* Minimal Traditional

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Insufficient Information

Structure SM00980 is a one-story minimal traditional residence. It was constructed in 1959 according to county property records. It is a side gabled roof covered in asphalt shingles. Exterior fabric is concrete block and vertical siding. Some windows are boarded up; those that are exposed are wooden single hung sash, and likely original to the residence. The foundation appears to have shifted and has left a visible crack along the NE corner of the structure.

Structure SM00979 does not appear to meet the minimum criteria for listing on the NRHP, but it is adjacent to and associated with neighboring historically significant residences and agricultural structures, and may be owned by descendants of the original settlers of Royal. As such, further documentation is recommended to determine eligibility.



*Figure 4.22: Structure SM00980, front and side elevation, view facing south.*



**Structure SM00981 (Plas Lewis Residence)**

*Name:* Plas Lewis Residence

*Address:* 9437 CR 241, Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C27-183

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (SW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* mid-20<sup>th</sup> century

*Type:* Masonry Vernacular

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible as part of district; insufficient information to nominate individually

Structure SM00981 is a one-story masonry vernacular residence turned commercial building that is now abandoned. Based on the construction style and its similarity to other masonry vernacular structures, it is estimated that the structure was built in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The front gable roof is covered with 5V crimp sheet metal and covers most the structure; the northern and front section of wall and roofing are missing, so it is unclear whether the front gable extended to the front elevation of the structure or not. Windows are boarded, and plants are growing throughout the interior.

Neighbor interview suggests the structure was initially home to Plas Lewis (1892-1971), then later became the first Dry Cleaners in Royal. Structure SM00981 was owned by a descendant of the original settlers of Royal and later evidence of a growing local economy, and is therefore recommended as eligible as part of a district. Further documentation is recommended to determine individual eligibility.



*Figure 4.23: Structure SM00981, front and side elevation, view facing south.*

**Structure SM00982 (Reverend Robert Simmons Residence)**

*Name:* Reverend Robert Simmons Residence

*Address:* 478 E C-462

*County Parcel Number:* C27-017

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (NW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1946

*Type:* Bungalow

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible as part of district; insufficient information to nominate individually

Structure SM00982 is a one-story bungalow residence. County property records state the structure was constructed in 1946. It is a front gabled structure covered with 5V crimp sheet metal. Windows are wooden single hung sash. The front porch is south facing, open, and projecting. The whole house is elevated with a concrete wall foundation.

According to neighbor interview, Structure SM00982 belonged to Reverend Robert Simmons. There is also a tobacco barn on this property associated with the same owner (SM00983). This structure is recommended as eligible as part of a district, however further documentation is required to determine its individual eligibility.



*Figure 4.24: Structure SM00982, front elevation, view facing north.*

**Structure SM00992 (Howard Patterson Residence)**

*Name:* Howard Patterson Residence

*Address:* 539 CR 231, Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C28-051

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 28 (NW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1955

*Type:* Bungalow/Minimal Traditional

*Current Use:* Residence

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible as part of district; insufficient information to nominate individually

Structure SM00992 is a one-story mixed bungalow/minimal traditional style residence. Property records indicate it was constructed in 1955. It is a front gabled structure covered in 5V crimp sheet metal. Windows are single hung sash metal which appear to be later additions. The porch is open and incised, and its windows have decorative corrugated metal awnings. The exterior fabrics are asphalt shingles and tar paper which cover the original wood siding and brick.

Neighbor interview suggests this structure was Howard Patterson's residence as an adult. An outbuilding on his homestead is listed as SM00991. Howard Patterson was one of James Patterson and Ellen Bloom Patterson's children, and brother to Polly Patterson Wideman. Because of its association with original settler families and descendants of Royal as well as the association with African American life and agriculture structure SM00991 is recommended as eligible as part of a district. Further documentation is required to determine individual eligibility.



*Figure 4.25: Structure SM00992, front elevation, view facing north west.*



**Structure SM00993 (Paels & Molly Lewis Homestead)**

*Name:* Paels & Molly Lewis Homestead

*Address:* 133 E C-462 Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C27-055

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (SW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1962

*Type:* Minimal Traditional

*Current Use:* Residence

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible as part of district; insufficient information to nominate individually

Structure SM00993 is a one-story minimal traditional residence. Property records indicate it was constructed in 1962. Exterior fabric is concrete block. Ground plan is a front-facing “U” and the roofing is cross gable, however the western extension is hip. Roofing is 5V crimp sheet metal. Windows have been removed.

Structure SM00993 is adjacent to and associated with neighboring historically significant residences and agricultural structures, and may be owned by descendants of the original settlers of Royal. As such, it is recommended as eligible as part of a district. Further documentation is required to determine individual eligibility.



*Figure 4.26: Structure SM00993, front elevation, view facing south.*



### **Structure SM00994 (Barney Lewis Homestead)**

*Name:* Barney Lewis Homestead

*Address:* 245 W C-462, Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C27-033

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (SW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1963

*Type:* Ranch

*Current Use:* Residence

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible as part of district; insufficient information to nominate individually

Structure SM00994 is a one-story ranch residence. Property records demonstrate it was built in 1963. It has an L shaped ground plan with a cross gable roof covered in asphalt shingles. Exterior fabric is vertical wood siding. Windows are metal awning with a couple altered when window air conditioning units were installed.

Structure SM00994 is adjacent to and associated with neighboring historically significant residences and agricultural structures, and may be owned by descendants of the original settlers of Royal. As such, it is recommended as eligible as part of a district. Further documentation is required to determine individual eligibility.



*Figure 4.27: Structure SM00994, front elevation, view facing south.*

**Structure SM00995 (Mae Ollie Mosley Homestead)**

*Name:* Mae Ollie Mosley Homestead

*Address:* 407 E C-462 Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C27-039

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (SW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1962

*Type:* Minimal Traditional

*Current Use:* Residence

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible as part of district; insufficient information to nominate individually

Structure SM00995 is a one-story minimal traditional residence. Property records indicate it was constructed in 1962. It is a side gable structure with a rear extension with a flat roof, which is covered with asphalt shingles. It has a combination of single hung sash and horizontal sliding metal windows. The porch is an open incised north facing porch with metal columns which has had lattice installed as a railing. The home sits on masonry piers, and appears to have had an extension removed, as the dropped gable roofline is visible on the eastern side of the house.

Neighbor interview suggests that Structure SM00995 was the first Jim Walter kit home constructed in Royal. Because it is adjacent to and associated with neighboring historically significant residences and agricultural structures, and may be owned by descendants of the original settlers of Royal, it is recommended as eligible as part of a district. Further documentation is required to determine individual eligibility.



*Figure 4.28: Structure SM00995, front and side elevation, view facing southwest.*

**Structure SM00996 (Reverend Robert Simmons Homestead)**

*Name:* Reverend Robert Simmons Homestead

*Address:* 420 E C-462 Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C27-085

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section (NW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1951

*Type:* Ranch

*Current Use:* Residence

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible as part of district; insufficient information to nominate individually

Structure SM00996 is a one-story concrete block ranch style residence. According to property records it was built in 1951. Roofing is side gable covered with asphalt shingles. Windows are single hung sash metal. The front porch is an open (bottom half is enclosed; top half is screened) projecting porch. The eastern side of the structure includes an incised carport.

Neighbor interview suggests this property was part of Reverend Robert Simmons' Homestead, associated with structure SM00982 and SM00983. Because it is adjacent to and associated with neighboring historically significant residences and agricultural structures, and may be owned by descendants of the original settlers of Royal, it is recommended as eligible as part of a district. Further documentation is required to determine individual eligibility.



*Figure 4.29: Structure SM00996, front and side elevations, view facing north west.*

**Structure SM00997 (Elliot & Beatrice Mathews Homestead)**

*Name:* Elliot & Beatrice Mathews Homestead

*Address:* 601 E C-462 Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C27-041

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (SE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1962

*Type:* Ranch

*Current Use:* Residence

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible as part of district; insufficient information to nominate individually

Structure SM00997 is a one-story concrete block ranch residence. Property records indicate it was constructed in 1962. Exterior fabrics are concrete block, stone veneer, and wood siding. The roof is side gabled, with a centered gable with incised porch. The eastern side of the structure has an incised carport. Windows are single hung sash metal.

Neighbor interview suggests this property was part of the Elliot & Beatrice Mathews Homestead. Because it is adjacent to and associated with neighboring historically significant residences and agricultural structures, and may be owned by descendants of the original settlers of Royal, it is recommended as eligible as part of a district. Further documentation is required to determine individual eligibility.



*Figure 4.30: Structure SM00997, front and side elevation, view facing south east.*



**Structure SM00998 (Mother Melba Keiler Homestead)**

*Name:* Mother Melba Keiler Homestead

*Address:* 563 E C-462 Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C27-068

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section (SE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1941

*Type:* Bungalow

*Current Use:* Residence

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible as part of district; insufficient information to nominate individually

Structure SM00998 is a single-story bungalow style residence. Exterior fabric is wood siding. Property records indicate it was constructed in 1941. The roof types are front gable with a hip roof porch, covered with 5V crimp sheet metal. The windows are wood single hung sash. The front porch is open and projecting.

Neighbor interview suggests this property was part of the Mother Melba Keiler Homestead. Because Structure SM00998 adjacent to and associated with neighboring historically significant residences and agricultural structures, and may be owned by descendants of the original settlers of Royal, it is recommended as eligible as part of a district. Further documentation is required to determine individual eligibility.



*Figure 4.31: Structure SM00998, front and side elevation, view facing south west.*

**Structure SM00999 (Nelson Brooks, Sr. Homestead)**

*Name:* Nelson Brooks, Sr. Homestead

*Address:* 9744 NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Dr. Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C27-061

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (NW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1946

*Type:* Minimal Traditional

*Current Use:* Residence

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible as part of district; insufficient information to nominate individually

Structure SM00999 is a one-story minimal traditional residence. It was constructed in 1946 according to the county property appraiser. Windows are a combination of original wooden single hung sash and metal awning replacements. The roof is front gable and the eaves have brackets. The front porch is open, projecting, screened in, with a flat roof. The roofing is a combination of 5V crimp sheet metal and corrugated metal, presumably used as a repair.

Structure SM00999 is adjacent to SM01000 (Nelson Brooks, Sr. Cane Boiler and Press) and associated with neighboring historically significant residences and agricultural structures, and is owned by descendants of the original settlers of Royal. As such, it is recommended as eligible as part of a district. Further documentation is required to determine individual eligibility.



*Figure 4.32: Structure SM00999, front elevation, view facing south.*

**Structure SM01003 (Lens Patterson Homestead)**

*Name:* Lens Patterson Homestead

*Address:* 10005 CR 237

*County Parcel Number:* C27-007

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section (SW ¼)

*Date of Construction:* Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century

*Type:* Masonry Vernacular

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible as part of district; insufficient information to nominate individually

Structure SM01003 is a masonry vernacular building, likely once a residence. Its age is estimated based on its construction, as being the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Structure has no roof or windows; south-facing wall remains. It appears that the concrete blocks have been salvaged and repurposed in an unknown location.

Structure SM01003 is adjacent to the Lens Patterson Tobacco Barn (SM01002). Neighbor interviews also associate the structure and the property as belonging to the Lens Patterson Homestead. Lens Patterson was brother to Polly Patterson Wideman (see SM00977 and SM00978) and Howard Patterson (see SM00991 and SM00992) and a descendant of the first settlers of Royal. Because of its association with original settler families and descendants of Royal as well as the association with African American life and agriculture structure SM01003 is recommended as eligible as part of a district. Further documentation is required to determine individual eligibility.



*Figure 4.33: Structure SM01003, side elevation, view facing south east.*

#### 4.2.4 Miscellaneous Structures

##### Structure SM00984 (Royal Masonic Hall)

*Name:* Royal Masonic Hall

*Address:* 515 E C-462

*County Parcel Number:* C27-040

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (SE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1958

*Type:* No Style

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of district

Structure SM00984 is a two-story concrete block Masonic Lodge, and is reminiscent of other masonic lodges. According to the county property appraiser, the date of construction was 1958. The windows are single pane aluminum awning. The main part of the structure has a rectangular exterior plan, but there is a small protruding single story room with a shed roof type on the western side of the structure. It appears to be the main entrance, which faces north.

Property research indicates that the Lodge is F&AM #129, and was built in 1958. The property records also demonstrate that the property was sold Nov. 8, 1944 by N. Mathews to the Trustees of F&AM #129, who were "SD Pickett, Wm. Anerson [sic], and Toney Brooks".

Grantor and Grantees appear in census records as an original settler or descendants of original settlers. N. Mathews was likely a descendant of the original owner of the property, James Mathews, who registered a land patent in Royal on December 26, 1891. Toney Brooks was one of the original settlers and recipient of a land patent in Royal on August 8, 1885. Wm. Anerson [sic] (William Anderson) appears on a 1900 census living in a home adjacent to (and likely a relative of) Hampton Anderson, whose land patent was registered August 20, 1885. Because of structure SM00984's close ties to the original settlers of Royal, it is recommended as eligible.



*Figure 4.34: Structure SM00984, front elevation, view facing south.*



**Structure SM00991 (Howard Patterson Homestead Outbuilding)**

*Name:* Howard Patterson Homestead Outbuilding

*Address:* 9938 CR 231, Wildwood, Florida

*County Parcel Number:* C28-009

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 28 (NE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* 1941 or later

*Type:* Frame Vernacular

*Current Use:* Abandoned/Vacant

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of district

Structure SM00991 is a one-story frame vernacular outbuilding, constructed in 1941 or later based on aerial photography and property records. It is a front gabled structure covered with 5V crimp sheet metal. The door is simply framed with sheet metal covering. The structure is in ruinous condition and near complete collapse.

Structure SM00991 is near other Patterson family owned structures and in a similar style (see SM00978). According to neighbor interview, this structure was part of the Howard Patterson homestead. Howard Patterson was one of James Patterson and Ellen Bloom Patterson's children, and brother to Polly Patterson Wideman. Because of its association with original settler families and descendants of Royal as well as the association with African American life and agriculture structure SM00991 is recommended as eligible.



*Figure 4.35: Structure SM00991, front elevation, view facing north.*

**Structure SM01006 (Royal Elementary School & Middle School Cafeteria)**

*Name:* Royal Elementary School & Middle School Cafeteria

*Address:* 9567 CR 235

*County Parcel Number:* C27-265

*Quadrangle:* Oxford 1966

*Township / Range / Section:* 18S 22E Section 27 (NE ¼)

*Date of Construction:* Approximately 1950

*Type:* Masonry Vernacular

*Current Use:* ~~Community library~~ [Historical & Enrichment Center](#)

*NRHP Evaluation:* Eligible individually and as part of a district

Structure SM01006 is a one-story masonry vernacular school lunchroom turned cultural education center. It was built in approximately 1950. Exterior fabric is stucco over concrete block. The roof is hipped and covered with asphalt shingles. Windows are fixed glass blocks group horizontally in two rows. They are placed above door height.

Oral histories indicate that the school has existed in one form or another on this parcel. Reverend Alfred Brown built the first church and school in Royal in approximately 1874. The school was initially a one-room wooden structure without a lunchroom.

A later incarnation of the school was built with permission of Sumter County by school trustees Perman E. Williams, Sal Rich, McAurthur Woods, C.C. Dunlap, Richard Smith and Mitchell Steele during the 1930s. Oral histories describe this school as a three-room wooden school house that repurposed lumber from the previous school structure.

Sumter County furnished the building materials for the final version of the Royal School. Richard Smith donated land for the ten-room schoolhouse. Oral histories indicate that the materials from the previous schoolhouse were used to build a lunchroom for the newly constructed school. That wooden lunchroom was used until 1945, after which the current standing concrete block lunchroom was built in its place.

The school was deeded from the District School Board of Sumter County to the County, and torn down in the 1980s to make way for a fire station and community center. The 1945 lunchroom (Structure SM01006) remains and is now a ~~community library~~ [run by Young Performing Artists \(YPAs\), Inc.](#) [Historical & Enrichment Center](#)

Structure SM01006 represents a continuation of traditional African American life dating to the late 1800s, and is recommended as eligible individually and as part of a district.



*Figure 4.36: Structure SM01006, front and side elevation, view facing south east.*



*Figure 4.37: Structure SM01006, front elevation, view facing south.*

## 5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

### 5.1 Project Summary

Royal is a unique African American community formed in the late 1800s in Sumter County, Florida. While a handful of similar sites were founded during this time, few have survived to the present. Similar rural African American towns, such as Rosewood and Santos were either directly destroyed through racial violence or displaced through development. As such, Royal is one of the most compelling examples of a rural, historically African American town found anywhere in the state of Florida, if not the nation.

Why has Royal survived when other communities did not? There are numerous potential answers to this question. Primary among them is the community that lives in Royal today. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century it became increasingly difficult for African Americans to live in rural locations throughout the state. The perseverance of those who live in Royal is a central reason it has survived into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Efforts to commemorate this history, by individuals like Beverly Steele and organizations like Young Performing Artists (YPAs) Inc. also play a significant role. Educating the next generation is crucial to understanding the uniqueness of places like Royal.

Another reason Royal has survived may be a result of geography. Rosewood and Santos were both located along railroads, and were the location of train depots. The railroad never arrived in Royal. While this caused the residents inconvenience when hauling their agricultural products to market, it may have also served to insulate the town. Although the area around Royal is good agricultural land, its geophysical characteristics do require considerable effort to maintain throughout the year. As such, the combination of geography and geology surely played a significant role in protecting the community from destruction and development.

Today, Royal faces new challenges. As with African American communities across the state, economic pressures continue to draw young generations towards the cities. Developers have also begun to push into the areas and communities around Royal. This includes new housing developments to the east and energy corridors and transportations projects along the southern and western boundaries. With the possible exception of I-75, these threats have not directly impacted the community, although that is likely to change if efforts are not taken to commemorate and preserve some aspect of Royal's cultural and historical integrity.

It is our opinion that Royal represents a nationally significant place regarding African American history. Royal was never incorporated, but neither were many other early communities in Sumter County (e.g., Adamsville). Historical records document the arrival of African Americans during Reconstruction, with land grants being awarded to early black settlers in the 1770s and 1780s. Oral histories with elderly informants in recent decades suggest the potential that many of these early residents interacted with free African Americans who arrived in



previous decades. Historical documents and archaeological evidence already notes the existence of free Blacks in the area during the 1830s. These groups lived relatively close to Royal, and at a time when a distance of a few miles was still close enough to think of folks as neighbors.

The possibility that early residents of Royal interacted with these earlier black communities is tantalizing. However, without the discovery of specific documentary work, this question will have to rely on archaeological investigations in the area to confirm. Regardless, what is known now still defines a period of significance for Royal stretching backwards from the present to the late 1800s, within a few decades of this fascinating history.

Royal's documentable period of significance begins during Florida's frontier days. In the 1870s the peninsula of the state remained sparsely populated. This did not change significantly until major railroad travel was established and expanded during the 1880s and 1890s. Royal was occupied by African Americans during both of these times. The 20<sup>th</sup> century was a time of turmoil and disenfranchisement of African Americans across the state of Florida, and yet Royal persisted. The late 20<sup>th</sup> century has seen much of this reverse, and African American entering local and state governments. The first African American to hold office in the government of Sumter County was Robert "Tom" Dixon. He was elected as a County Commissioner of District 1 in 1984. He was a resident of Royal.

The history of Royal, and the architectural evidence standing today, offers a thread connecting all of these times. The concrete tobacco barns are unique resources, with similar examples existing in South Carolina, where they date as early as 1925 (Ingram 2015). In Royal, they offer a direct connection to local tobacco production in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The sugar cane processing facilities in Royal are a key representative aspect of frontier life often associated with Florida, one which has continued right up to the present day. Numerous community structures have not survived, but are recorded in historical documents. This includes churches, schools, and government buildings. The post office was established in 1891 (Bradbury and Hallock 1891), at the same time as many of the surrounding white communities. Today, the post office has been relocated to Wildwood.

The structures that do survive offer insights into everyday aspects of African American lives that are not always afforded the attention they deserve. The commercial buildings that still stand in Royal may have served as community centers, where community members met to visit and chat local happenings. The masonic hall may have served a similar purpose as a community center, a secondary function held by many black masonic lodges in the state.

## **5.2 Recommendations for Future Work**

Based on the findings of this report, several recommendations for future work present themselves. The first centers on archaeological work. The creation of a community archaeology program will reveal additional aspects of African American life between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>

centuries. The property research, historical maps, and aerial photographs all indicate that such features likely exist in several locations. The ability to archaeologically explore a continuous African American community in the United States represents an increasingly rare opportunity. Those few sites that are like Royal in time and duration are very rare, and many face threats from development or abandonment.

In addition, a dedicated oral history project to collect stories from elderly and young residents alike is encouraged. Young Performing Artists (YPAs) Inc. has already begun this work, and have engaged the University of Central Florida in the process. It is recommended that additional cooperative work be undertaken, perhaps with the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program at the University of Florida.

Regardless of whether the above two recommendations are carried out, future work should explore the possibility of nominating the community of Royal to the National Register of Historic Places. Many of the individual architectural resources in this report may not be eligible on their own, but may be as part of a site or district. We specifically encourage future research to concentrate on registering Royal as Rural Historic Landscape.

Rural Historic Landscapes (RHL) are typically defined as a geographical place that has been historically used by a group of people, shaped by that use, or offer an example of continuity of land use patterns. The continued agricultural use of lands in Royal neatly conform to this NRHP category. RHLs differ from Designed Historic Landscapes in that they are not the work of a professional designer, nor are they natural areas either, hence the need for the special category. RHLs may contain more than one historic landscape, and other kinds of historically significant properties, such as post offices, rail depots, schools, and so forth.

Determining significance for RHLs is based on several characteristics. They include evidence of the historic period of development linking it to broader, important historical trends. The nomination also needs to take into account whether the property is unique or representative. In the case of Royal, its African American heritage is unique and connection to earlier agricultural traditions are representative. The contents of this report should provide most or all the required information for this or another NRHP nomination.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

In closing, the community of Royal offers a unique and fascinating example of African American life in Florida. It is representative of agricultural trends beginning during the frontier times of the state's history and extending into the present. Its existence as a black town is also unique, particularly in light of the fact that similar towns elsewhere in the state have not survived to the present, or have been greatly altered through violence or development. We recommend that future work explore the potential of archaeology to uncover additional data, utility of oral testimony, and prepare a national register nomination as a RHL or site.

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