

Honey Lake Plantation Sale Draws Interest

By TaMaryn Waters, Tallahassee Democrat

Several serious buyers are vying to purchase the Honey Lake Plantation Resort and Spa now on the market for an estimated \$22.24 million.

Located in Greenville, the 4,552-acre property is for sale as a whole or in parts. A 1,000-acre parcel, the Hooking Bull, can be sold separately for \$3.5 million.

"We have a stable full of buyers looking for rare and unique properties like Honey Lake and they're waiting for them to become available," said Jon Kohler, a real estate broker representing owner and entrepreneur Bob Williamson.

"He's ready to sell something sooner rather than later. If we have a buyer for the 1,000 acres, we'll sell that first," Kohler said.

The move to sell the property has changed operations, including staffing. There will be no Mother's Day brunch this Sunday. Honey Lake is now only open for private events on Friday, Saturday and half days on Sunday instead of seven days a week. Some exceptions apply.

Owners are still honoring existing contracts, pricing and events already booked and secured with deposits, all expected to be complete by Dec. 31. Some dates are still available for events.

"In the unlikely event that Honey Lake has not been sold by that date, we will cease operations entirely beginning Jan. 1, 2016, and it will remain closed until a new owner reopens it," Williamson said in an email to supporters a few months ago.



Bob Williamson, who developed the 4,700-acre Honey Lake Plantation Resort & Spa in Jefferson County, overcome many personal demons to build his resort and conference center. (Photo: Democrat files)

The scenic property — a venue for private events, weddings, hunting and a relaxation oasis — was first established by Elizabeth "Pansy" Ireland Poe, who used the property as her private getaway.

The grand "Selah" main house offers a host of amenities, including a pool, an elevator, heart pine and cypress millwork, a curved grand staircase and marble floors. The iconic 80-acre, spring-fed Honey Lake is steps away from the main house.

Williamson, a former drug addict who found God following a car accident at age 24, owned 19 companies in various industries, including manufacturing, distribution, consulting and real estate. He's selling the tranquil plantation property to pursue his Jesus Alliance (<http://thejesusalliance.org>) Christian ministry full time.

"I wanted to divest myself of all my business interests that require my time," Williamson said. "We'll hate to leave, but we're anxious to get going with the Lord's work."

Williamson, 68, purchased the property in 2008, spent roughly two years developing it and opened in 2010. After looking at 24 properties, Williams said Honey Lake was the last and he instantly fell in love with it.

"We've really enjoyed living there. It's a beautiful, gorgeous place with lots of wildlife out there," said Williamson, who lives on the land and added it's been visited by Gov. Rick Scott and former governors and celebrities. "It's meant a lot to a lot of people."