

‘A Private National Park’: Florida, Georgia Plantation Land Hits Market for About \$20M Each



By TaMaryn Waters, *Tallahassee Democrat*

Two large riverfront plantation properties roughly 90 miles apart in two states – both among the largest private land holdings in years – have hit the market.

In Gadsden County, the River Ridge West is three miles west of Tall Timbers and is known for its quail hunting. It spans more than 3,690 acres along the western half of the Red Hills Plantation Belt, an area that stretches across the south and includes more than 150 plantations and 300,000 acres. River Ridge West is listed for \$19.5 million.

Jon Kohler, owner of Kohler & Associates and a plantation property broker, said it stretches from North Meridian Road near Orchard Pond Road to State Road 12.

He describes it as a “private national park but better managed” since it’s been used mainly for

recreation, aesthetics, wildlife and timber.

It is owned by entrepreneur and philanthropist Jim Dahl, the founder and former chairman of Rock Creek Capital in Jacksonville which offers investment services related to land management and acquisition. The Florida State University alum also served as the executive vice president of investment bank Drexel Burnham Lambert in the 1980s.

Kohler said that Dahl spent 40 years amassing properties to a centralized block of land.

“As life progresses and changes, he’s decided to sell the entire western half at this time,” Kohler said.

Located roughly 15 miles from Tallahassee, the property includes about 3 miles of direct access to the Ochlocknee River, a 33-acre lake and 8.5-acre lake for bass fishing and an 18-acre natural duck

pond with wood and ring-necked ducks.

The property hits the market at the same time that another large swath of undeveloped land is drawing interest statewide. In December, the “St. Marks Package” and its \$23.7 million price tag, drew headlines.

The 6,870-acre property in Wakulla, Gadsden and Calhoun counties includes several water-based features, including springs, sinks and waterfalls and is described as one of the last areas that reflect “old Florida.”

When asked if there’s been an uptick large plantation-style property listings, Kohler said the demand comes in cycles. He’s managing three listings in the North Florida and South Georgia region that all hover around \$20 million.

“We’ve been closing for the last three years an average of just shy of a half million dollars a day, seven days a week,” Kohler said. “Land like this is really becoming nationally and internationally renowned.”

Magnolia Hall Plantation property between Valdosta and Thomasville, Georgia



Across the state line between Valdosta and Thomasville, Georgia, Kohler said the Magnolia Hall Plantation property includes 3,500 acres and an 1850’s five-column Antebellum Greek Revival home designed by architect John Wind. It has about a mile of frontage on the Withlacoochee River.

It’s listed for \$22.7 million. Magnolia Hall is owned by entrepreneur and philanthropist Virgil Williams, who owns 1,000-acre Lake Lanier Islands north of Atlanta.

“The difference in the two is the one has the home and the structures and the history,” Kohler said, regarding the two listings. “The other one is an open canvas for someone to build their own home and finish it the way they’d like it to.”

