

## PEPPER RANCH DEER POPULATION SURVEY



### **Project Description**

Scheda Ecological Associates, Inc. (Scheda) has completed a white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) study on the Conservation Collier Preserve known as Pepper Ranch (2,512 acres) to provide an indice of the deer density and population.

A variety of methods can be utilized to census white-tailed deer including track counts, spotlight transect surveys, aerial surveys, infrared camera surveys (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission 2006) and thermal imaging (Haroldson et al. 2003). Scheda's biologists determined that spotlight transect surveys was the preferred method to census white-tailed deer due to the large acreage of open habitat within the Preserve, density of forested habitat, and the available roads and trails. A desktop Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis was performed to determine the suitability of the roads and trails within the Preserve for spotlight surveys. Field surveys were then conducted to further examine the roads and trails. Scheda provided a memorandum that documented the methodology, results of the study, conclusions, and recommendations with regard to future deer population control on the preserve.

