

THE BUSINESS JOURNALS

1,000-acre plantation next to Ted Turner's in Florida hits market for \$10.7M (Photos)



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41 photos

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A nearly 1,000-acre hunting plantation in the Red Hills area of the Florida Panhandle has just hit the market for \$10.7 million.

It's adjacent on at least two sides to Avalon Plantation owned by Atlanta media magnate and philanthropist Ted Turner. In addition to abundant deer, turkey, dove and quail populations, the 984-acre plantation includes a 8,000-square-foot home, a 15-acre spring-fed lake and 200- to 300-year-old live oaks. The listing is [here](#). [Check out a video here](#).

Oak Hill Plantation is located 30 miles from Thomasville, Ga., and about 30 miles from Tallahassee, Fla.

The plantation is owned by T.K. and Virginia Wetherell, retired Florida legislators and public servants who are in their 70s.

T.K. Wetherell, the former president of Florida State University, is in his 16th year battling cancer. He continues to teach classes at FSU. T.K. Wetherell also served in the Florida House of Representatives from 1980 to 1992 and was its speaker from 1990-1992.

Virginia “Ginger” Wetherell was secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection from 1991 to 1998 and served in the Florida House of Representatives from 1982-1988.

After their three children left home, the Wetherells moved out to Oak Hill Plantation full-time. As they have gotten older, they have retained more help to keep it up, but the time has come to move on, Ginger Wetherell said.

“It is very hard to think about giving this place up. It could take years to sell. We are not really in that big a hurry to sell,” she said.

The five-bedroom, four-bath Greek Revival main house was built by Skip Sheffield of Tallahassee and includes reclaimed wood, windows, fixtures and flooring from two historic Florida hotels and the Florida state Capitol.

The property had not been formally on the market since the 1820s, according to the listing broker, Jon Kohler of Jon Kohler & Associates LLC.

The Wetherells were looking for property and a friend took Ginger Wetherell to see Oak Hill Plantation, which had no home or significant structures on it at the time. It was about 27 miles from Tallahassee, where the couple lived then. The owner at the time used it for hunting, and it was not on the market, she said.

There is a conservation easement on the property held by Tall Timbers Research Station & Land Conservatory based in Tallahassee, Fla. The easement includes some flexibility “within an envelope” to allow for changes in the types of recreational use on the property, but protects it from subdivision for development, Ginger Wetherell said.

It's true there are tax benefits to having a conservation easement, she said, “but it is a wonderful feeling knowing your property will remain as you have it.”

In addition to the other buildings, Oak Hill Plantation includes a 1,600-square-foot guest house/manager's house, and a gathering lodge with living room, kitchen, a loft bedroom with workshop and a three-stall equipment barn attached.

The property offers rich and diverse ground cover quail habitat with beautiful rolling topography. It's part of the Red Hills quail belt around Thomasville, about 50 miles south-southwest of Albany.

Oak Hill has not been managed for quail exclusively, which was the Wetherell's choice, Ginger Wetherell said. There are quail on the property, but the couple were too busy to spend the time and resources for quail hunting the entire quail season, which runs from November to February, she said.

T.K. "loves all kinds of hunting, mostly birds — turkey, dove, quail," and his brother and nephews love deer hunting, she said. "I just enjoy seeing all kinds of critters."

The couple had pledged to leave the plantation to Florida State. The family members changed the plan around 2012 or 2013, Ginger Wetherell said.