

RE-EVALUATION FORM

1. GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION

A. Re-evaluation Type: Construction Advertisement, Design Change

B. Original approved Environmental Document:

Document Type: Type 2 CE

Date of Approval: 07/15/2016

Project Numbers:

12556

424501-1-22-01

N/A

ETDM (if applicable)

Financial Management

Federal-Aid

Project Name: I275 (SR93) FROM 54TH AVE S TO N OF 4TH ST NORTH

Project Location: FDOT District 7 (Pinellas County)

Project Limits: I-275 from south of 54th Avenue South to north of 4th Street North

C. Prior Re-evaluation(s):

FM Number	Type				Date District Approved	Date Lead Agency Consultation	Date Lead Agency Approved (if applicable)
	PE	DC	ROW	CON			
424501-1-22-01, 424501-2-52-01	☐	☒	☐	☐	04/18/2017		04/26/2017

Description of Approval:

This Design Change Re-evaluation proposed a repurposing of one of the two approved Type 2 CE express lanes in order to accommodate the provision of three general use through lanes, one auxiliary lane, and one express lane in each direction throughout the limits from south of Ulmerton Road to south of the Howard Frankland Bridge.

424501-22-01, 433880-1-52-01	☐	☒	☐	☐	06/20/2019	03/01/2019	N/A
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Description of Approval:

This re-evaluation assessed changes related to bridge lengthening to accommodate future widening of I-275:

- Lengthening of the general purpose lane bridge over I-275 connecting southbound I-275 with 4th Street North.
- Realignment and lengthening of the general purpose lane bridge (Ramp P) over I-275 connecting northbound I-275 to Roosevelt Boulevard.

This re-evaluation also assessed changes related to express lane connections between Gateway Express, I-275, and Roosevelt Boulevard:

- Realignment of general purpose lane and express lane bridges over I-275 and Roosevelt Boulevard connecting Gateway Express to I-275 north of Roosevelt Boulevard.
- Widening and construction of new I-275 bridges for express lanes (northbound and southbound) and general purpose lanes (northbound) over Roosevelt Boulevard.

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424501-1-52-01, 424501-4-31-01, 424501-5-43-01, 430500-1-31-01	☐	☒	☒	☐	04/23/2020		05/19/2020
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Description of Approval:

This re-evaluation assessed the impacts of adding a second express lane from south of Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street North, and the addition of two express lanes from north of I-375 to south of Gandy Boulevard. These proposed improvements would tie-in with planned improvements to the Howard Frankland Bridge (FPID 422904-2 and 422904-4).

This re-evaluation provided an initial analysis of the bridges on 4th Street North over Big Island Gap and the trail connections from the Howard Frankland Bridge to 4th Street North and Ulmerton Road, respectively, as well as evaluated ramp connection modifications at the Gandy Boulevard interchange area. To meet drainage and stormwater requirements, pond sites will be needed to accommodate runoff from additional impervious surface due to widening that accommodates express lanes. Several of these new pond site locations will be outside of the existing right-of-way (ROW).

430500-1-52-01	☐	☐	☐	☒	03/16/2021		03/23/2021
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Description of Approval:

This re-evaluation replaced the two 4th Street North bridges over Big Island Gap and provided trail connections from the Howard Frankland Bridge to 4th Street North.

D. Project or project segment(s) being evaluated

FAP Number	FM Number	Project/ Segment Name	Project/ Segment Location	Type				Project/ Segment Letting Type	Funding
				PE	DC	ROW	CON		
	449109-1-52-01	I-275 (SR 93) FROM N OF 38TH AVE N TO N OF 4TH ST N	District 7 - PINELLAS	☐	☒	☐	☒	Design-Bid-Build	State

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved a Type 2 Categorical Exclusion (CE) on July 15, 2016, for I-275 (State Road [SR] 93) from south of 54th Avenue South to north of 4th Street North for an approximate corridor length of 16.3 miles in Pinellas County, Florida. The Type 2 CE improvements included lane continuity from south of 54th Avenue South to south of Gandy Boulevard and express lane improvements from south of Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street North. The lane continuity improvements consisted of intermittent widening and restriping of existing lanes on I-275 to form two continuous lanes in each direction. The ultimate express lane configuration provided one express lane in each direction from south of Gandy Boulevard to 118th Avenue North/Roosevelt Boulevard and two express lanes in each direction of I-275 from 118th Avenue North/Roosevelt Boulevard to north of 4th Street North. A major Design Change Re-evaluation approved by the FDOT Office of Environmental Management (OEM) on May 19, 2020 extended the two express lanes from I-375 to 118th Avenue North/Roosevelt Boulevard.

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Currently, I-275 is a limited access urban interstate highway facility that runs in a north and south direction through Pinellas County. The posted speed limit is 65 miles per hour. Within the project limits, I-275 is a divided highway comprised of a six-lane divided typical section with auxiliary lanes from south of Gandy Boulevard to North of 4th Street North.

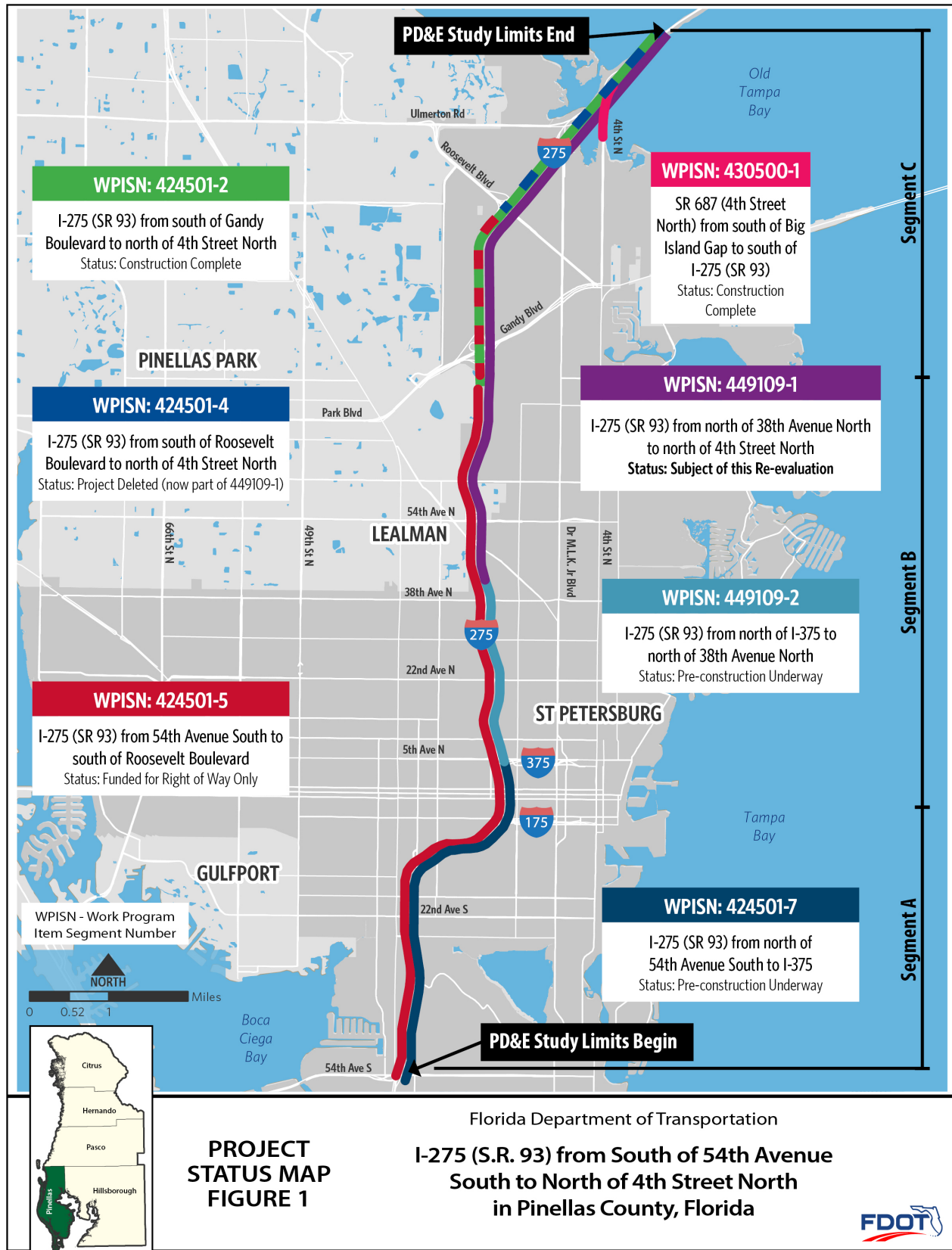
The segment being advanced with this Re-evaluation is located within segment B (from I-375 to south of Gandy Boulevard) and segment C (from south of Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street North), with limits from north of 38th Avenue North to north of 4th Street North. The improvements include:

- Adding a second Express Lane in each direction from south of Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street North.
- Providing two Express Lanes in each direction from north of 38th Avenue North to south of Gandy Boulevard.

Status of Design Segments within the original Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study Limits:

See Figure 1 for project status map.

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3. CHANGES IN APPLICABLE LAW OR REGULATION

Are there changes in federal or state laws, rules, regulations, or guidance that require consideration since the date of the original Environmental Document or subsequent Re-evaluation(s)? Yes

The following changes in the status of federal and state-protected species have occurred since the last re-evaluation, pursuant to *Chapter 68A-27, F.A.C. - Rules Relating to Endangered or Threatened Species* and *50 CFR 17.11 and 17.12. Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants*:

1. As of October 12, 2022, the United States Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) found that the status of the gopher tortoise populations in the eastern segment, which includes Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and most of Alabama, does not require protections under the *Endangered Species Act (ESA)* and will be withdrawn as a candidate for listing in accordance with *50 CFR 17* as published in the Federal Register as *87 FR 61834*.
2. As of November 9, 2020, the eastern black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis ssp. jamaicensis*) was listed as federally threatened under the *ESA*.
3. As of December 12, 2024, the USFWS is proposing to list the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) as federally threatened and designate critical habitat under the *ESA*. This proposed listing is currently under public review.
4. As of October 3, 2023, the USFWS is proposing to list the short-tailed snake (*Lampropeltis extenuata*) as federally threatened under the *ESA*. The USFWS has determined that the designation of critical habitat is prudent, but indeterminable at this time. This proposed listing is currently under public review.
1. On September 13, 2022, the USFWS announced a proposal to list the tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*) as an endangered species under the *ESA* (1973). The USFWS determined that the designation of critical habitat for the species is not prudent.
2. On January 22, 2018 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries listed the giant manta ray (*Mobula birostris*) as threatened under the *ESA*.

4. EVALUATION OF MAJOR DESIGN CHANGES AND REVISED DESIGN CRITERIA

Are there major design changes, including but not limited to changes in the alignment(s), typical section(s), drainage/stormwater requirements, design control and criteria, or temporary road or bridge? Yes

Changes that have occurred since the approval of the Design Change re-evaluation (May 2020), and based on the current design plans (June 2024) are noted as follows:

New Pond site locations:

1. New stormwater management facilities (SMF) SMF 15-1, SMF 15-2 and SMF 15-3 are proposed within existing ROW. PD&E SMF 15A and SMF 16A pond locations are eliminated (See figure 2).
2. New SMF 18-1, SMF 18-2, SMF 18A (relocated) and SMF 18-3 are proposed within existing ROW replacing the previously approved offsite SMF 18A site (See figure 3).

STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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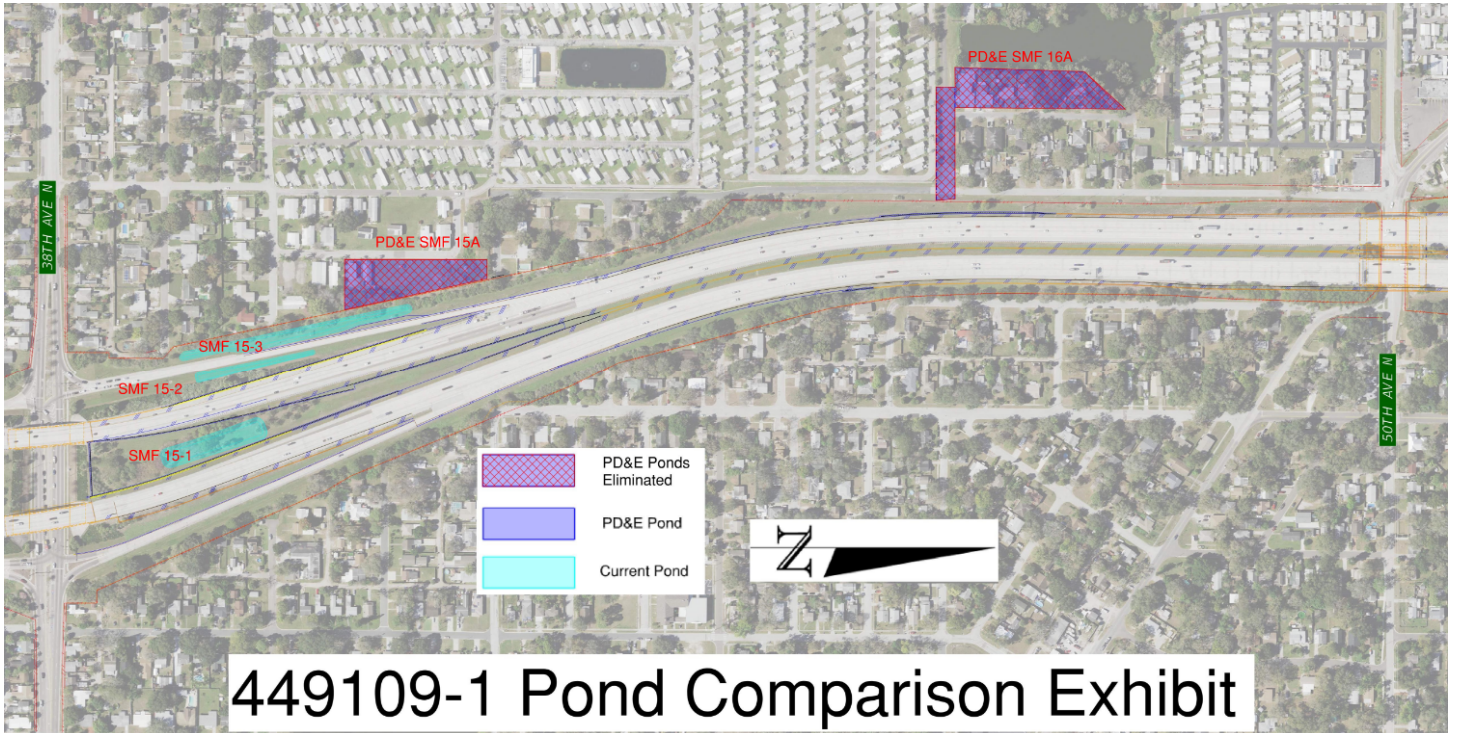


Figure 2: Changes to SMF sites 15A and 16A.

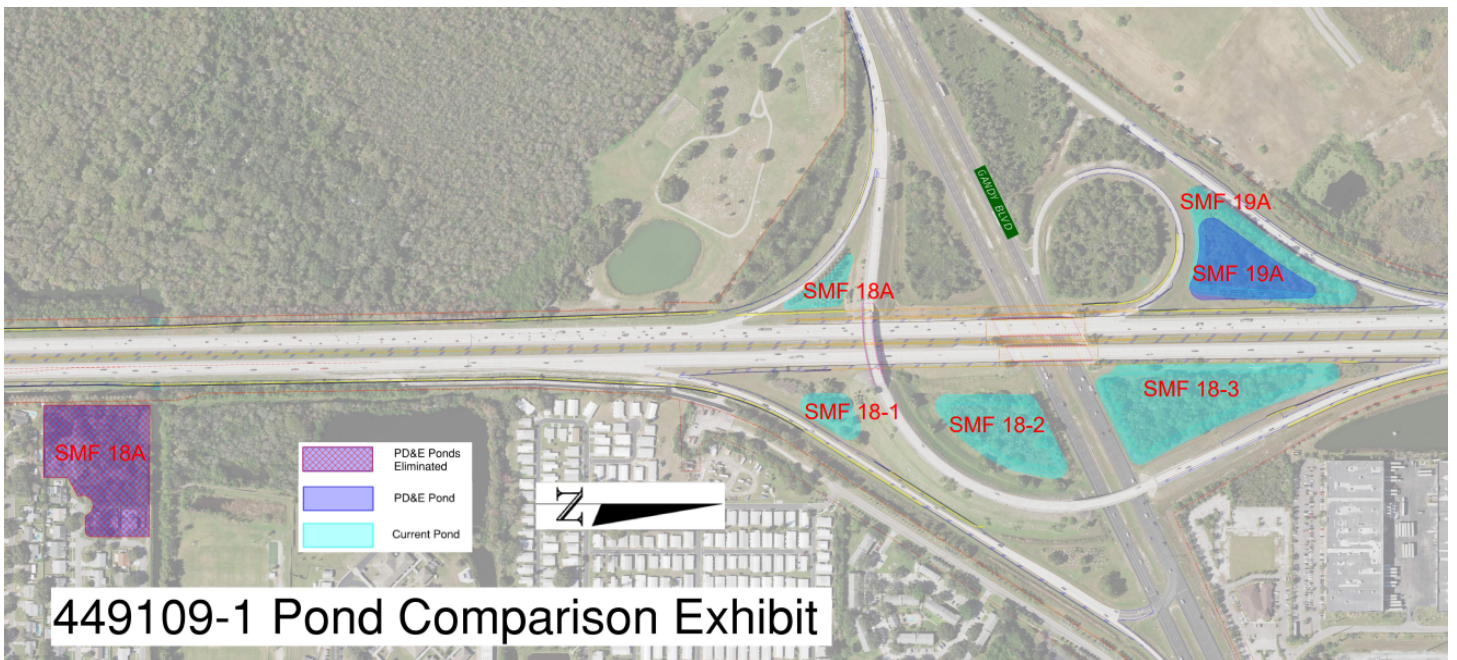


Figure 3: Changes to SMF site 18A.

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Tolling Plazas:

The current Toll Facilities Plans shows two new express lane tolling equipment buildings that will be installed within the existing ROW as follows:

1. Toll Site 1 located north of 38th Avenue North located in the median around Station (STA) 2438+00.00.
2. Toll Site 2 located north of 62nd Avenue North adjacent to the northbound outside shoulder around STA 1523+50.00.

Design Variations:

The following design variations were approved:

1. Proposed Signal in median: (Approved on 08/23/2024) The intersection of westbound 54th Avenue North (County Road [CR] 202) and southbound I-275 (SR 93) off-ramp to 54th Avenue North (CR 202) (ramp 54TH-A) includes a signal in the median at the ramp terminus with 54th Avenue North. Per design criteria, no signal poles and controlled cabinets should be installed in medians. The proposed design will include a double mast arm in the median to avoid right-of-way impacts.
2. Ramp connection spacing: (Approved on 08/23/2024) I-275 from STA 1470+04 to STA 1478+58, between northbound I-275 (SR 93) off-ramp to eastbound 54th Avenue North (CR 202) (ramp 54TH-F) north to northbound I-275 (SR 93) off-ramp to westbound 54th Avenue North (CR 202) (partial clover leaf ramp 54TH-D). Design criteria require 854 feet maximum spacing between system interchange ramps. Proposed design shows 1,000 feet of spacing between ramps.

5. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Were there additional public involvement activities? No

6. PROJECT or SEGMENT(S) PLANNING CONSISTENCY

Segment FM Number: 449109-1-52-01

Currently Adopted CFP-LRTP	Comments				
Yes	This project segment is included in the Forward Pinellas - 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan, District 7 SIS Projects- 2045 Cost Feasible Plan Page V (date May 12, 2021). Limits: From south of Roosevelt Boulevard to north of 4th St N (424501-4) / South of 54th Avenue S to south of Roosevelt Boulevard (424501-5) (449109-1 is within the limits of both projects) Improvements: Lane continuity and 2 express toll lanes in each direction (from I-375) for 424501-5. Add 1 additional toll express lane in each direction for 424501-4. Funding: \$417,515,103 FY: 2021-2025 Current LRTP, TIP and STIP are attached and in the project file.				
Phase	TIP/STIP	Currently Approved	\$	FY	Comments
PE (Final Design)	TIP	Yes	\$22,424,022	<2025	PE Underway

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PE (Final Design)	STIP	Yes	\$23,102,363 \$1,570,918	<2025 2025	PE Underway
R/W	TIP	Yes			Complete
R/W	STIP	Yes			Complete
Construction	TIP	Yes	\$62,008 \$385,823,211 \$2,500,000 \$2,500,000	<2025 2025 2026 2027	
Construction	STIP	Yes	\$117,132 \$398,142,032 \$2,500,000 \$2,500,000	<2025 2025 2026 2027	

[\[3 - 449109-1_STIP_12-6-2024 \(1\)\]](#)

[\[4 - 449109-1_TIP_6-10-2024\]](#)

[\[5 - 449109-1_LRTP_5-21-2021\]](#)

7. EVALUATION OF CHANGES IN IMPACTS

a. SOCIAL & ECONOMIC

Are there changes in impacts to the social, economic, land use, mobility, and/or aesthetic effects? No

Are there changes in right-of-way needs? Yes

The original ROW acreage was 8.4 acres. The new ROW acreage is 2.1 acres due to elimination of SMFs 15A, 16A, and 18A.

Is there a change in anticipated relocation(s)? Yes

Originally there were 12 relocations anticipated but with the design change, there are no relocations because SMF 15A, 16A, and 18A have been eliminated.

Are there changes in impacts to Prime or Unique Farmlands? N/A

b. CULTURAL

Are there changes in impacts to cultural resources pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (historic sites/districts and archaeological sites)? No

A Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) Addendum was completed in September 2024 to identify any cultural resources within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) that were not previously surveyed, and to assess their significance in terms of eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). A copy of the CRAS Addendum dated September 2024 is in the project file.

Archaeological Sites

Archaeological testing focused on areas of ROW where design changes are proposed to occur that were not previously surveyed. Ponds 15-1, 15-2, and 15-3 and Ponds 18-A, 18-1, 18-2, and 18-3 have changed locations since the previous re-evaluation; however, all of these new locations are in existing ROW. The areas of the proposed new ponds were already tested as part of the March 2015 CRAS performed for the PD&E study (Florida Master Site File [FMSF] Survey

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Number [No.] 22658) and the August 2019 CRAS Technical Memo completed for the prior Design Change/ROW re-evaluation (FMSF Survey No. 26643).

Shovel tests were excavated in the areas of ROW at the cross streets of 38th Avenue North, 54th Avenue North, eastbound SR 694 (Gandy Boulevard), westbound and eastbound SR 686 (Roosevelt Boulevard North), where milling and resurfacing is proposed. No new archaeological sites within the APE were identified during the current survey. There are four (4) sites previously identified within or adjacent to the APE. These four (4) sites were found ineligible to be listed in the NRHP by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and/or no sufficient information for the SHPO to make a determination of eligibility.

Historic Sites

A historic resources survey update (HRSU) was conducted to identify structures that have become historic (50 years of age or older) since the April 2019 CRAS Technical Memo (FMSF Survey No. 26643), which identified historic structures through 1969. The purpose of the HRSU was to identify, record, and evaluate historic resources that were built between 1970 and 1975. Fifty-five (55) newly identified historic resources were recorded within the APE including: 52 buildings constructed between 1971 and 1974, one building complex resource group, and two linear resources. Of the 55 newly identified historic resources, all appear ineligible for listing in the NRHP. Forty-five (45) of the resources represented Masonry Vernacular style buildings including single-family residences and one hotel. Seven resources were mobile (manufactured) homes from the Village Green Mobile Home Park (8PI16425) which is a common example of a post-World War II era style. The two linear resources serve as drainage canals and are not significant embodiments of a type, period or method of construction.

The CRAS Addendum was submitted to the SHPO with a finding of No Historic Properties Affected. The SHPO concurred with this finding on October 21, 2024.

[\[6 - SHPO Concurrence Letter 10-21-24\]](#)

Are there changes in effects to Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act protected resources or other protected public lands? Yes

The following evaluation was conducted pursuant to *Section 4(f)* of the *U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966*, as amended, and *23 CFR Part 774*. The project is located adjacent to the Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve between the Howard Frankland Bridge Causeway and Ulmerton Road. Although the Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve may qualify as a protected recreational resource under Section 4(f), all improvements in this area are within the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund of the State of Florida Perpetual Easement for State Road Right of Way issued to the State Road Department of Florida on August 18, 1958 (Easement No. 21876), included in the project file. There will be no acquisition or occupation of land from the protected properties, on either a temporary or permanent basis. Additionally, there are no meaningful proximity impacts to the protected properties, and there will be no impacts to the access and usage of the protected properties. The Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve will not be used for construction, staging, storing, stockpiling, or any other purpose. Therefore, the project will have *No Use* of this recreational Section 4(f) resource.

Are there changes in impacts to lands purchased under Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act? No

Are there changes in impacts to recreational areas or protected lands? No

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c. NATURAL

Are there changes in impacts to protected species and habitat, wetlands and other surface waters, and/or essential fish habitat? Yes

A Natural Resources Evaluation (NRE) Addendum was completed in November 2024. A field review was conducted to identify changes to wetland, other surface waters, protected species and habitat impacts due to the proposed improvements. A Biological Assessment (BA) was completed in October 2024 and included in the project file to evaluate potential effects of the proposed improvements to ESA listed species that are under the NMFS purview and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). The study area was assessed for Critical Habitat designated by Congress in *50 CFR Part 17*. The project area does not include USFWS designated Critical Habitat for any species within Old Tampa Bay. Therefore, the project will have no adverse modifications of Critical Habitat.

Protected Species and Habitat

The following changes and updates in the protected species occurrence, status, and/or agency coordination have occurred since the last re-evaluation:

National Marine and Fisheries Services (NMFS) Jurisdictional Species:

- Giant manta ray (*Mobula birostris*) - The federally threatened giant manta ray was identified by the NMFS as having the potential to occur within the project area since the last re-evaluation. The giant manta ray was not observed within the project area during field surveys and potential for the giant manta ray is considered low in the project area. However, the FDOT will adhere to the *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Southeast Regional Office (SERO) Protected Species Construction Conditions* in addition to the *Vessel Strike Avoidance Measures* to avoid potential impacts during construction. Therefore, the project "*may affect but not likely to adversely affect*" the giant manta ray.
- Smalltooth sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*) - The smalltooth sawfish is federally listed as endangered and was included in the last re-evaluation. The smalltooth sawfish was not observed in the area, and their presence in Tampa Bay is rare. Improvements with the potential to impact the smalltooth sawfish include pile driving for the bridge widening and trestle placement, sheet pile driving for seawall relocations, riprap placement for stabilization at the abutments, barge movements, and other in-water activities associated with the I-275 bridge widening over Big Island Gap. However, based on the unlikelihood of the species, pile driving restrictions, and with implementation of the *NOAA Fisheries SERO Protected Species Construction Conditions and Vessel Strike Avoidance Measures*, the previous "*may affect, not likely to adversely affect*" determination for the smalltooth sawfish remains valid.
- Loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*), green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*), Kemp's ridley sea turtles (*Lepidochelys kempii*) - Swimming sea turtles have the potential to be in the action area near the I-275 crossing over Big Island Gap and were previously assessed in the last re-evaluation. The green sea turtle and loggerhead are both federally listed as threatened. The Kemp's ridley sea turtle is federally listed as endangered. Nesting beaches for any of the sea turtle species are not located within or near the project action area. Therefore, only swimming turtles may be present. The FDOT will implement the *NOAA Fisheries SERO Protected Species Construction Conditions and Vessel Avoidance Measures* during construction. With these conservation measures in place, the previous "*may affect, not likely to adversely affect*" determinations for swimming sea turtles remains valid.

NMFS Agency Coordination- A letter of reasonable assurance from NMFS was issued on September 5, 2019, regarding the effect determinations for the federally listed smalltooth sawfish and swimming loggerhead, green, and Kemp's ridley

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sea turtles. The giant manta ray was not considered previously but was evaluated in the BA submitted to the NMFS as part of this re-evaluation. The 2019 NRE Addendum concluded that the proposed action " *may affect but is not likely to adversely affect*" the smalltooth sawfish and swimming loggerhead, green, and Kemp's ridley sea turtles. Based on the evaluation in the BA and conservation measures to be implemented during construction, the effect determinations remain " *may affect, not likely to adversely affect*" for the smalltooth sawfish and swimming loggerhead, green, and Kemp's ridley sea turtles. The project also " *may affect, not likely to adversely affect*" the giant manta ray. The NMFS concurred with these effect determinations on November 22, 2024 (attached).

USFWS Jurisdictional Species:

- American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*)- The federally listed American crocodile is identified as having the potential to occur within the project area by the USFWS and was not previously evaluated. This species utilizes coastal estuarine marshes, tidal swamps, and creeks along edges of mainland and islands, though is typically associated with mangroves. The American crocodile is rare in Pinellas County and was not observed during field reviews; therefore, the probability of occurrence is low. Mangroves, which could be considered suitable habitat, are present within the 12' SUP alignment being reviewed as part of this re-evaluation. However, potential impacts would occur at the wetland edge alongside disturbed FDOT right of way which is not likely to be utilized by this species and unavoidable mangrove impacts will be mitigated. Therefore, the project will have "no effect" on the American crocodile.
- Leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*) - The federally endangered leatherback sea turtle was identified as having the potential to occur within the project area by the USFWS and was not previously evaluated. The USFWS and NMFS share Federal jurisdiction for sea turtles with USFWS having lead responsibility on nesting beaches and NMFS the marine environment. Since the leatherback sea turtles were only identified by the USFWS as having the potential to occur within the project area, the re-evaluation assessed nesting beaches only. Swimming leatherback sea turtles do not have the potential to occur within the project action area and were therefore not assessed as part of this re-evaluation per correspondence from the NMFS saved to the project file. Suitable nesting habitat for the leatherback sea turtle is not present within the study area and no nests have been documented within the project area. Therefore, the probability of occurrence is none and the project will have "no effect" on nesting leatherback sea turtles.
- Eastern black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis ssp. jamaicensis*) - During the updated review of the USFWS Information and Planning Consultation (IPaC) database, the federally threatened eastern black rail was identified as having the potential to occur within the project area. However, no suitable habitat for this species is within the project action area and no individuals were observed during field reconnaissance. Therefore, the probability of occurrence is none and the project will have "no effect" on the eastern black rail.
- Everglade snail kite (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) - During the updated review of the USFWS IPaC database, the federally threatened eastern black rail was identified as having the potential to occur within the project area. However, no suitable habitat nor its primary food source, the apple snail, were observed during field reconnaissance. Therefore, the probability of occurrence is none and the project will have "no effect" on the Everglade snail kite.
- Tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*) - The tricolored bat is proposed to be federally listed as endangered by the USFWS and was identified as potentially occurring within the project area according to the IPaC. Although there is suitable roosting and foraging habitat for the tricolored bat available within the project limits, no observations or evidence of roosting were found during field reviews. Therefore, the probability of occurrence is low. If the tricolored bat is listed by USFWS as Threatened or Endangered and the project may affect the species, FDOT commits to re-initiate consultation with USFWS to determine appropriate avoidance and minimization measures for protection of the newly listed species.
- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) - The monarch butterfly is proposed to be federally listed as threatened under the ESA by the USFWS. Mowed right-of-way can contain milkweed and/or nectar producing plants which are considered suitable habitat for the monarch butterfly. No milkweed was identified during field reviews and no

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individuals were observed within the study area; therefore, the probability of occurrence is low. If the monarch butterfly is listed by USFWS as threatened or endangered and the project may affect the species, FDOT commits to re-initiating consultation with USFWS to determine appropriate avoidance and minimization measures for protection of the newly listed species.

- Whooping crane (*Grus americana*) - The whooping crane in Florida is a federally designated non-essential experimental population which is defined as a population that has been established within its historical range under *Section 10(j)* of the *ESA* to aid in its recovery. There are no historical observations of the whooping crane in Pinellas County. The probability of whooping cranes being within the project action area is considered none. As per USFWS IPaC, for the purpose of consultation, non-essential experimental populations are treated as threatened species on National Wildlife Refuge and National Park land, requiring consultation under *Section 7(a)(2)* of the *ESA*. However, for non-federal lands, they are treated as proposed species that do not require consultation. Therefore, consultation of the whooping crane is not required at this time based on their status and lack presence in the project action area.
- Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) - The bald eagle continues to receive protections through the *Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act*, 16 U.S.C. 668-668d (BGEPA), as amended, and the *Migratory Bird Treaty Act* (MBTA). The project was surveyed for the presence of bald eagle on October 15, 2024. The survey confirmed that no nests are within 660 feet of the proposed improvements. Therefore, no impacts to the bald eagle are anticipated.

USFWS Agency Coordination- Concurrence from the USFWS regarding effect determinations for the federally listed Gulf sturgeon, eastern indigo snake, wood stork, piping plover, rufa red knot, and West Indian manatee was received on September 19, 2019. The " *may affect, not likely to adversely affect*" determinations for these species remain valid and no additional *ESA* Section 7 consultation is required. Further, since the project will have " *no effect*" on the federally listed leatherback sea turtle (nesting), American crocodile, eastern black rail, and Everglade snail kite, no additional consultation with the USFWS regarding these species is required.

Wetland and Other Surface Waters:

Wetlands and surface waters were identified pursuant to 62-340, *F.A.C.*, *Section 373.019, Florida Statutes (F.S.)*, the 1987 *Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual with Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plain Region*, and *Executive Order (EO) 11990- Protection of Wetlands*, as part of this re-evaluation to quantify impacts due to changes associated with the current plans. An NRE Addendum was prepared and is included in the project file. Wetland impacts were avoided and minimized to the greatest extent practicable during design and permitting. Impacts to freshwater wetlands and surface waters for the preferred pond sites were reduced by resizing or relocating the pond sites from areas outside of the ROW to within the ROW. Field verification of areas previously classified as saltwater marsh confirmed these areas are now mangrove swamp. Updated seagrass delineation surveys also confirmed that less seagrasses will be impacted by the proposed improvements due to avoidance of impacts along the Howard Frankland Bridge (HFB) Causeway. A summary of impacts associated with the project areas reviewed as part of this reevaluation are outlined in Table 1 below.

	Wetland or Surface Water Type	2019 NRE Addendum Impact Area (acres)	Design Change Impact Area (acres)	Impact Area Change (acres)
Proposed Pond Sites	Forested freshwater wetlands	4.10	2.43	-1.67
	Surface waters (freshwater)	5.80	1.25	-4.55
Pedestrian Trail/12' Shared Use Path	Forested saltwater wetlands	1.29	0.94	-0.35
	Herbaceous saltwater wetlands	0.21	0.00	-0.21
	Surface waters (freshwater)	0.03	0.34	0.31

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	Surface waters (tidal)	0.34	0.10	-0.24
Howard Frankland Bridge Causeway	Seagrasses	1.42	0.00	-1.42
Big Island Gap	Seagrasses	0.004	0.05	0.046
Total impacts (acres)	Forested freshwater wetlands	4.10	2.43	-1.67
	Surface waters (freshwater)	5.83	1.59	-4.24
	Forested saltwater wetlands	1.29	0.94	-0.35
	Herbaceous saltwater wetlands	0.21	0.00	-0.21
	Seagrasses	1.42	0.04	-1.38
	Surface waters (tidal)	0.34	0.10	-0.24

Table 1: Wetland and Surface Impacts

Freshwater forested wetland credits within the Tampa Bay/Anclole River Watershed Area are currently only available through Big Bullfrog Creek Mitigation Bank. Mitigation for seagrass impacts is proposed to be provided through the functional gain units obtained through the Old Tampa Bay Water Quality Improvement Project (OTB WQIP). Mangrove mitigation is proposed to be provided through purchase of mitigation bank credits from the Mangrove Point Mitigation Bank.

Essential Fish Habitat

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consisting of seagrasses, mangroves and tidal surface waters are within the project area along the I-275 Causeway, at the Big Island Gap bridge, and north of Ulmerton Road. Mitigation credits from the Old Tampa Bay Water Quality Improvement Project (OTB WQIP) and Mangrove Point Mitigation Bank will be used to offset unavoidable impacts to seagrasses and mangroves, respectively. Changes in impacts based on the current design plans are listed in Table 2:

Essential Fish Habitat Type	2019 NRE Addendum Impact Area (acres)	Design Change Impact Area (acres)	Impact Area Change (acres)
Seagrasses (north of HFB Causeway)	1.42	0	-1.42
Seagrasses (south of HFB Causeway)	0	0	0
Seagrasses (Big Island Gap)	0.004	0.05	0.046
Forested saltwater wetlands	1.29	0.94	-0.35
Herbaceous saltwater wetlands	0.21	0	-0.21
Surface waters (tidal)	0.34	0.10	-0.24

Table 2: Essential Fish Habitat Impacts

EFH Agency Coordination

The NMFS reviewed the EFH Assessment included in the 2019 NRE Addendum and indicated that the preliminary assessment of impacts to estuarine wetlands and other NMFS trust resources comprising EFH is accurate in a letter dated September 5, 2019. The NMFS agreed that if appropriate compensatory mitigation is provided for unavoidable wetland impacts, the project would not have any adverse impact to EFH. They requested additional coordination to identify appropriate mitigation, especially for seagrasses, saltmarsh, and mangroves. Impacts to EFH were avoided and minimized to the greatest extent practicable as detailed in the Wetland and Other Surface Waters section above. Compensatory mitigation for unavoidable impacts to mangroves and seagrasses will be provided via credits from the Mangrove Point Mitigation Bank and OTB WQIP, respectively. The updated EFH Assessment for the proposed

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improvement included in the BA concluded the impacts to EFH are "more than minimal but less than substantial". The NMFS concurred with this determination on October 31, 2024 (attached).

[\[2 - 424501-1_I-275_EFH_NMSF_Determination Letter_102024\]](#)

Are there changes in impacts to designated Aquatic Preserves, Coastal Barrier resources, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Nationwide Rivers Inventory Rivers, and/or Outstanding Florida Waters? Yes

All improvements are within the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund of the State of Florida Perpetual Easement for State Road Right of Way issued to the State Road Department of Florida on August 18, 1958 (Easement No. 21876), included in the project file. Coordination with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Aquatic Preserve is being completed as part of the permitting process pursuant to Chapter 253, F.S. and Chapter 18-21, F.A.C.

The approved 2020 Design Change Re-evaluation included 3.26 acres of impacts to the Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve (0.34 acres of impacts to tidal surface waters, 1.42 acres of impacts to seagrasses, 1.29 acres of impacts to forested saltwater wetland, 0.21 acres of impacts to herbaceous saltwater wetland). Due to the avoidance of seagrass impacts along the I-275 Causeway, seagrass impacts within the Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve decreased by 1.38 acres to 0.04 acres. Tidal surface water impacts also decreased by 0.24 acres to 0.10 acres. Although the 2024 field surveys confirmed the conversion of herbaceous saltwater wetlands to forested saltwater wetlands, forested saltwater wetland impacts decreased 0.35 acres due to the reduction of impacts from the 12-foot SUP design. Overall, impacts to the Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve decreased by 2.18 acres.

Are there changes in impacts to Floodplains or Water Resources? Yes

Current design plans show new SMF 15-1, SMF 15-2, SMF 15-3, SMF 18-1, SMF 18-2, and SMF 18A site locations within existing ROW. Previously approved SMF sites 15A, 16A and 18A, located outside the ROW are eliminated from the current design.

Floodplain impacts were reduced by the elimination of off-site SMF 18A. Current design plans shows no floodplain impacts.

d. PHYSICAL

Are there changes in Air Quality? No

What is the status of Highway Traffic Noise?

The Noise Study Report Addendum (NSRA) dated October 2024 was based on the review of the current design plans and using the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Traffic Noise Model (TNM) version 2.5. A copy of the NSRA is included in the project file.

Of the 639 residences evaluated, 557 were predicted to be impacted by highway traffic noise by approaching or exceeding the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC). Of the 557 impacted residences, the construction of noise barriers would benefit (i.e., reduce traffic noise by at least 5 decibels) 475 of those residences and be considered a reasonable and feasible noise abatement measure. The locations where noise barriers are proposed to be constructed also underwent an engineering review and a property owner survey; the results of both are included in the NSRA.

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The current design plans show the following adjusted barrier locations:

Northbound direction:

1. Noise barrier on structure in addition to planned noise barrier on ROW from north of 38th Avenue North to south of 41st Avenue North for a total length of 683.60 feet.
2. Noise barrier on structure to replace previously planned noise barrier on ROW from north of 47th Avenue North to north of 50th Avenue North for a total length of 1,355.96 feet.
3. Noise barrier on structure to replace previously planned noise barrier on ROW from south of 62nd Avenue North to 64th Place North with a total length of 991.44 feet.

Southbound direction:

1. Noise barrier on structure from the north end of the bridge over 38th Avenue North to north of 38th Avenue North for a total length of 124.00 feet.
2. Noise barrier on structure to replace previously planned noise barrier on ROW from south of 50th Avenue North to north of 50th Avenue North for a total length of 951.68 feet.
3. Noise barrier on ROW to replace previously planned noise barrier on structure from north of 54th Avenue North to north of 58th Avenue North for a total length of 1,740.00 feet.

For noise barriers located at the ROW, a maximum height of 22 feet was recommended as an abatement measure. For barriers located on the structures, a maximum height of 8 feet was recommended to avoid abrupt changes in barrier height while being acoustically sufficient.

698 surveys were sent to 592 properties and a total of 290 responded. Of the 290 owners/tenants that responded, 261 (193 owners and 68 tenants) are in favor of constructing the noise barrier and 29 (21 owners and 8 tenants) are opposed. A summary of the survey results is included in the NSRA.

What is the status of Contamination?

Soil delineation and groundwater sampling was performed for the Level II Contamination Assessment (July 25, 2022) and the results are presented below and in the project file. Three (3) low ranking sites and three (3) ranking medium site were identified with no high-ranking sites identified. The Department also performed testing on the Pond 20A (Ranked No) because of its proximity to known contamination sites and the extent of excavation proposed.

Site ID	Property Owner	Address	Ranking	2022 Level II Contamination Assessment
			2016 PD&E/ 2020 Re-eval	
88 (PD&E #9)	Suitle Service Center	5001 Haines Road North, St. Petersburg, FL 33714	Medium/ Medium	No further assessment is required.
10	Landhill, Inc.	1950 102nd Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33716	Low/Medium	Arsenic, copper, and alpha-BHC in groundwater exceeded the GCTL, SWCTL and/or NPDES permit limits. Additional assessment and/or remedial action will be completed during construction.
95 (PD&E Site #14)	GBS Real Estate Investment	1615 118th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33716	Medium/ Low	No further assessment is required.
12	Bridgeway Acres Landfill	10901 28th Street, St. Petersburg, FL 33716	Medium/ Medium	No further assessment is required.

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Pond 20A	FDOT	West site of I-275, north of Gandy Boulevard	No/ Low	Additional assessment and/or remedial action will be completed during construction.
Site 15 (Site 92, 94)	FDOT	NW ROW of SB Entrance Ramp from I-275 to Gandy Boulevard	Medium/ Low	No further assessment is required.

Table 3: Status of Contamination

Current plans show seven new SMF sites within the existing ROW. None of the SMFs are adjacent to the previously identified contamination sites: therefore, no potential for contamination.

Are there changes in impacts to Utilities and Railroads? No

Are there changes in impacts to Navigation? No

8. COMMITMENT STATUS

Are there prior commitments from the Environmental Document or previously approved re-evaluation(s)? Yes

Are there new environmental commitments? Yes

The following new commitments are included on the attached Project Commitment Record (PCR) and in the project file:

1. If the tricolored bat is listed by USFWS as Threatened or Endangered and the project may affect the species, FDOT commits to re-initiating consultation with USFWS to determine appropriate avoidance and minimization measures for protection of the newly listed species.
2. If the monarch butterfly is listed by USFWS as Threatened or Endangered and the project may affect the species, FDOT commits to re-initiating consultation with USFWS to determine appropriate avoidance and minimization measures for protection of the newly listed species.

[\[7 - 424501-1_ProjectCommitmentRecordReport_01162024\]](#)

9. STATUS OF PERMITS

Federal

Segment	Name	Descriptor	Status	Date
449109-1-52-01	USACE Section 10 or Section 404 Permit	Application No. SAJ-2022-02192	Applied For	

State

Segment	Name	Descriptor	Status	Date
449109-1-52-01	DEP or WMD Environmental Resource Permit (ERP)	Application No. 885044	Applied For	
449109-1-52-01	DEP National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit		Needed	

Local

None anticipated.

Other

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None anticipated.

10. CONCLUSION

- ☒ The project has been re-evaluated pursuant to 23 CFR § 771.129. The FDOT has determined that no changes to the project affect the original decision. Therefore, the Administrative Action remains valid and the project can advance.

11. DISTRICT REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Name and title of FDOT Preparer: Robin Rhinesmith

The Environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by the the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 26, 2022, and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

Robin Rhinesmith

January 8, 2025

District approving authority or designee

Date



Electronically signed within SWEPT
on January 8, 2025 9:39:11 AM EST
(electronic signature on file)

12. OEM CONCURRENCE

Jennifer Marshall, P.E.

January 19, 2025

Print Name

Date

Director of the Office of Environmental Management or Designee



Electronically signed within SWEPT
on January 19, 2025 8:49:04 PM EST
(electronic signature on file)

13. Links to Supporting Documentation

RE-EVALUATION FORM

- 1 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-42450112201-CE2-D7-SERO-2024-02831_Expedited_Abbreviated_LOC_PRDCleared-2024-1203_\(2\)-2024-1212.pdf](#)
- 2 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-424501-1_I-275_EFH_NMSF_Determination_Letter_102024-2025-0106.pdf](#)
- 3 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-449109-1_STIP_12-6-2024_\(1\)-2024-1206.pdf](#)
- 4 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-449109-1_TIP_6-10-2024-2024-0716.pdf](#)
- 5 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-449109-1_LRTP_5-21-2021-2024-0716.pdf](#)
- 6 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-SHPO_Concurrence_Letter_10-21-24-2024-1022.pdf](#)
- 7 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-424501-1_ProjectCommitmentRecordReport_01162024-2025-0116.pdf](#)