



TAMPA BAY EXPRESS

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I-275 (STATE ROAD 93) EXPRESS LANES

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT STUDY

**From north of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (SR 574)
to north of Bearss Avenue (SR 678/CR 582)**

ETDM Number: 13854

Work Program Item Segment Number: 431821-1

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA

WETLAND EVALUATION AND BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Prepared for:

**Florida Department
of Transportation
District Seven**

May 2015

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Florida**

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This project evaluates capacity and operational improvements along Interstate 275, within the study limits, including the addition of up to two express toll lanes in each direction.

Prepared For:

**Florida Department of Transportation
District Seven
Tampa, Florida**

**Parsons Brinckerhoff, Inc.
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May 2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District Seven, is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate capacity and operational improvements along State Road 93 (SR 93)/Interstate 275 (I-275) from north of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard/SR 574 (MLK Boulevard) to north of Bearss Avenue (SR 678/County Road (CR) 582) in Hillsborough County, Florida. The project length is 9.57 miles. The study involves analyzing multi-lane capacity improvements along I-275 that are a portion of the *Tampa Bay Express Lane Master Plan (TBX Master Plan)* proposed express lanes projects.

The project consists of adding tolled express lanes to I-275 to provide motorists an alternative to general use lanes, particularly during peak periods. It is anticipated that the majority of the proposed improvements will be within the existing right-of-way except for the Bearss Avenue interchange and for stormwater ponds. Due to funding limitations, and as identified in the *TBX Master Plan*, FDOT identified improvements to be implemented in phases where feasible as a Starter Project prior to implementation of the Ultimate Project.

The objective of the PD&E Study is to assist FDOT and the Federal Highway Administration in determining the type, location, and conceptual design of the I-275 improvements to accommodate future travel demand in a safe and efficient manner. This PD&E Study documents the need for the proposed improvements and the steps taken to develop and evaluate potential improvement alternatives along with proposed typical sections and interchange enhancement alternatives. The PD&E Study identifies the social, physical, and natural environmental effects and costs associated with the project. The PD&E Study satisfies applicable requirements, including the National Environmental Policy Act, to qualify this project for federal-aid funding of future phases (design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction).

The project was evaluated through FDOT's Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process. This project was designated as ETDM Project #13854. An ETDM Programming Screen Summary Report was republished on February 7, 2014, containing comments from the Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) on the project's effects on various natural, physical, and social resources. Based on ETAT comments, FHWA tentatively determined the Class of Action as a Type 2 Categorical Exclusion. If the bridge over the Hillsborough River needs to be widened and has significant impacts, the Class of Action may be elevated.

This *Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR)* has been prepared as part of this PD&E Study. This report summarizes the possible impacts to wetlands, federally and state protected species, and protected habitats. Identification of measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate for any potential impacts is also discussed.

Wetlands

Pursuant to Presidential Executive Order 11990 entitled "Protection of Wetlands," (May 23, 1977) the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) developed a policy, Preservation of the Nation's Wetlands (USDOT Order 5660.1A), dated August 24, 1978. In conjunction with this policy, as well as Part 2, Chapter 18 - Wetlands of the FDOT PD&E

Manual, two project alternatives were assessed to determine potential wetland impacts associated with construction of each alternative.

On July 15, 2014, 13.71 acres of wetlands and 3.22 acres of surface waters were identified and mapped along the project corridor which crosses the Hillsborough River. Four wetlands were identified within the project ROW. Surface waters consist primarily of ditches that are located within the existing ROW. They have been previously disturbed by roadway construction, maintenance activities, and the invasion of nuisance and exotic species. A description of the dominant floral species, soil types, land use, and other pertinent remarks are provided in subsequent sections of this report. The Uniform Mitigation Assessment Methodology (UMAM) analysis was completed for the identified wetlands. Final determination of jurisdictional boundaries, in addition to mitigation requirements will be coordinated between the FDOT and permitting agencies during the final design stage of the project.

The results of this PD&E study indicate there are no practicable alternatives to the proposed impacts due to the need to increase roadway capacity and safety considerations. Furthermore, all wetland impacts have been avoided and minimized to the greatest degree possible, and have been limited to those areas of previous disturbance and are required to meet minimum safety requirements.

Protected Species and Habitat

This project was evaluated for impacts to wildlife and habitat resources, including protected species, in accordance with 50 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 402 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended, Chapters 5B- 40: *Preservation of Native Flora of Florida* and 68A-27 Florida Administrative Code (FAC) *Rules Relating to Endangered or Threatened Species*, and *Part 2, Chapter 27 - Wildlife and Habitat Impacts of the FDOT PD&E Manual*.

Field surveys and database searches for protected species were conducted on July 15 and December 19, 2014. Three federally protected species, the wood stork (*Mycteria americana*), the eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*), and the West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*) were determined to have likelihood for using project habitats. The bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), which receives protection under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA), and the osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), which receives protection under the MBTA, also have the potential to occur within the project area. No listed species were observed within the project corridor. The FDOT has detailed commitments to protect the federally-threatened eastern indigo snake, the federally endangered West Indian manatee, and state-threatened gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*). No federally or state-listed plant species were observed or are documented in the project area.

The **wood stork** is designated as threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The project corridor is located within the Core Foraging Area (CFA) of eleven documented wood stork colonies. No wood storks were observed during field reviews; however, suitable foraging habitat exists within roadside ditches and wetlands along the corridor. A foraging habitat assessment procedure may be required to quantify impacts to suitable foraging habitat. However, because loss of these areas will either be mitigated or replaced, the project “may affect but is not likely to adversely affect” this species.

The **eastern indigo snake** is designated as threatened by the USFWS. This species typically inhabits a variety of natural areas including forested uplands and wetlands as well as wet and dry prairies. There is limited suitable habitat for this species near the highly urbanized project corridor and the FDOT will commit to the precaution measures described later in this report. Therefore the project “may affect but is not likely to adversely affect” this species.

The **Florida sandhill crane** (*Grus canadensis pratensis*) is listed as threatened by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). No sandhill cranes were observed in the project corridor. Current FWC protection measures provide protection for nesting sandhill cranes; no construction activities may occur within 125 meters of nest sites during the breeding season (January through August).

The **gopher tortoise** is listed as threatened by the FWC and is a candidate species for listing by the USFWS. Gopher tortoises thrive in xeric areas with sandy soils and open canopy with low groundcover. This habitat is largely absent from the project area. The FDOT will commit to conducting comprehensive surveys for gopher tortoises and their burrows during the project’s final design phase. Until field surveys indicate otherwise, it has been determined that the project “may affect but is not likely to affect” the gopher tortoise.

In addition to faunal surveys, appropriate habitats were surveyed for protected flora. No federal or state-listed plant species were observed within the project area. This project proposes minimal impacts to undisturbed natural habitat and the FDOT is committed to coordination with the Florida Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services (FDACS) if protected plant species are observed within the proposed impact areas during the design phase. Therefore, based on the results of the floral surveys, the project is not anticipated to adversely affect protected plant species.

Commitments to protect these species and habitat are provided and detailed in this report. These commitments include but are not limited to protection measures employed during design and construction phases. Standard operating measures such as providing compensatory mitigation measures for impacts to foraging habitat and resurveying of suitable habitat areas prior to construction will also provide protection for species and habitat. If protected species are identified, coordination with the USFWS, FWC and/or the FDACS - Division of Plant Industry (DPI) will be initiated to determine permit requirements or modifications to construction activities that may be required.

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1.0 SUMMARY OF PROJECT

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District Seven, is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate capacity and operational improvements along State Road 93 (SR 93)/Interstate 275 (I-275) from north of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard to north of Bearss Avenue in Hillsborough County, Florida. The project length is 9.57 miles and the design year is 2040. This includes the study of multi-lane capacity improvements along I-275 consistent with the Tampa Bay Express Lane Master Plan (TBX Master Plan) (January 2015) proposed express lane (a type of managed lane) projects.

The objective of the PD&E Study is to assist FDOT and the Federal Highway Administration in determining the type, location, and conceptual design of the I-275 improvements to accommodate future travel demand in a safe and efficient manner. This PD&E Study documents the need for the proposed improvements and the steps taken to develop and evaluate potential improvements along with proposed typical sections, and interchange enhancement alternatives. The PD&E Study identifies the social, physical, and natural environmental effects and costs associated with each alternative.

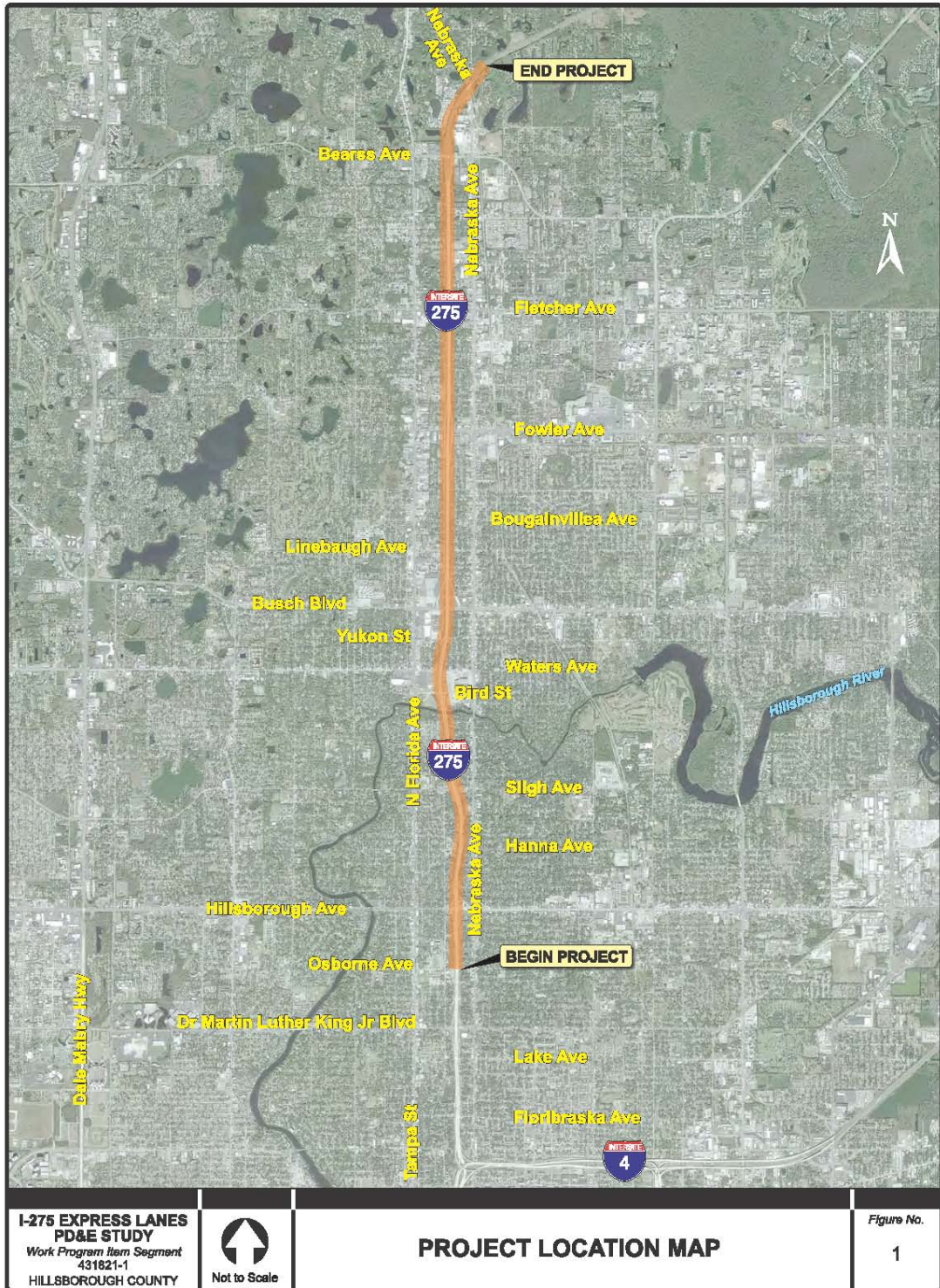
The PD&E Study satisfies applicable requirements, including FDOT's PD&E Manual and the National Environmental Policy Act, to qualify this project for federal-aid funding of future phases (design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction). The PD&E Study will also include coordination with the study of the proposed express lanes on I-275 south of MLK Boulevard and will be coordinated with the TBX Master Plan and the PD&E Studies with for adjacent interstate sections and corridors.

1.1 Project Description

This PD&E Study is evaluating capacity and operational improvements along I-275 from north of MLK Boulevard to north of Bearss Avenue, a distance of 9.57 miles (see **Figure 1**). The project is located in the sections, townships, and ranges shown in **Table 1**.

The Study evaluates adding tolled express lanes along I-275 to supplement the existing non-tolled general use lanes. The express lanes can be used by most vehicles, including Bus Rapid Transit or Express Bus service. The exceptions are vehicles with more than two axles, commercial buses, and vehicles towing trailers. The study includes an evaluation of multi-lane capacity improvements along I-275 that are a continuation of the *Tampa Interstate Study* (TIS) proposed managed lanes (noted as express lanes) from the I-275 downtown Tampa interchange area to the MLK Boulevard exit.

Figure 1 Project Location Map



**Table 1
Study Area Sections, Townships, and Ranges**

Section	Township	Range
1, 12	29S	18E
1, 12, 13, 24, 25, 36	28S	18E
36	27S	18E

Within the project limits, I-275 is currently a six-lane divided limited access urban interstate. Recent construction on I-275 from Floribraska Avenue to Yukon Street widened the shoulders and bridges and replaced the median guardrail with concrete barrier wall. The widened shoulders improve access for emergency vehicles responding to traffic incidents and can be incorporated into the express lane project.

The *TBX Master Plan* prepared by FDOT District Seven provides guidance for developing improvements to the Tampa Bay interstate system and identifies specific freeway segments where it would be cost feasible to implement express lanes. The intent of the *TBX Master Plan* is to evaluate the impacts of implementing express lanes on the Tampa Bay interstate system on a system-wide basis rather than treating each corridor as a stand-alone project. Since a portion of the I-275 PD&E Study involves evaluating the need to provide additional capacity to a State Highway System facility, the use of tolling is required in accordance with the FDOT Secretary’s policy directive (Topic No.: 525-030-020-a). Due to funding limitations for implementing the Ultimate Project, FDOT identified lower-cost projects (Starter Projects) as part of the *TBX Master Plan* that can be implemented earlier than the Ultimate Project.

1.1.1 TBX Ultimate Project

The limits of the I-275 PD&E Study Ultimate Project are from north of MLK Boulevard to north of Bearss Avenue. These capacity improvements are consistent with the *TBX Master Plan* proposed express lanes projects. The Ultimate Project includes two express lanes in each direction within the median area of I-275. Vehicles can enter or exit the express lanes in two locations, between Busch Boulevard and Fowler Avenue and at the northern project limit north of Bearss Avenue. This segment of I-275 would also have three general use lanes (non-tolled) in each direction separated from and operating adjacent to the express lanes with appropriate buffer separation.

It is anticipated that the majority of the improvements will be within the median from MLK Boulevard to north of Waters Avenue. North of Waters Avenue, additional improvements may have to occur to the outside since the existing median is narrower. Interchange improvements will be evaluated based on mainline improvements. The PD&E Study will evaluate retrofitting existing ponds when possible and some right-of-way may be needed for additional ponds. The Ultimate Project requires major reconstruction of the vertical geometry and involves widening to the outside in some areas of the existing interstate.

1.1.2 TBX Starter Project

The limits of the Starter Project for this segment of I-275 are from Jefferson Street/Orange Avenue to north of Bearss Avenue. The Starter Project includes one express lane in each direction within the median area of I-275. The Starter Project would be constructed on the existing alignment, on the same existing horizontal and vertical geometries, and would require no right-of-way acquisition with the exception of the Bearss Avenue interchange and stormwater management facilities.

1.2 Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of the project is to evaluate the use of tolled express lanes along I-275 from north of MLK Boulevard to north of Bearss Avenue, as an alternative to general use lanes during peak use period. These improvements are expected to enhance the capacity, overall safety, and operating conditions of the facility within the project limits. This report documents the engineering and environmental analysis performed to support decisions related to project alternatives. In addition, it summarizes existing conditions, documents the purpose of and need for the project, and documents other data related to preliminary design concepts. These preliminary design concepts establish the functional or conceptual requirements that will be the starting point for the final design phase.

This *Wetlands Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR)* is one of several documents being prepared as part of this PD&E Study. This report documents wetlands and protected species within the project corridor. Pursuant to Presidential Executive Order 11990 entitled "Protection of Wetlands," the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) has developed a policy, Preservation of the Nation's Wetlands (USDOT Order 5660.1A), dated August 24, 1978, which requires all federally-funded highway projects to protect wetlands to the fullest extent possible. In accordance with this policy, as well as *Part 2, Chapter 18 – Wetlands* of the FDOT *PD&E Manual*, two project alternatives were assessed to determine potential wetland impacts associated with construction of each alternative.

This report also documents existing wildlife resources and assesses existing habitat types found within the project area for potential occurrences of federal and state-listed protected plant and animal species in accordance with *Part 2, Chapter 27 - Wildlife and Habitat Impacts* of the FDOT *PD&E Manual*. Potential impacts to protected species and Critical Habitat (CH) that may support these species are also addressed in this report.

Statewide and regional transportation plans and studies by FDOT, the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA), and Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) identify the need for interstate improvements. Improvements include express lanes, a type of managed lane that responds to changing conditions with features such as dynamic pricing, managed accessibility, and vehicle eligibility. These features would assist in managing congestion on the Tampa Bay interstate system.

The need for improvements on this segment of I-275 is based on several factors. These factors include plan consistency, regional connectivity, improving safety and capacity, enhancing emergency evacuation, accommodating projected population and employment growth, supporting multi-modal service, and providing access to intermodal and freight centers. Each of these factors is discussed in more detail in the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER).

2.0 IMPROVEMENT ALTERNATIVE

2.1 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative assumes that the existing conditions would remain within the project limits for I-275 beyond the design year 2040, with only routine maintenance activities. The advantages of the No-Build Alternative are no relocations; no inconvenience to the traveling public during construction; no design, right-of-way, or construction costs; and no impacts to the natural, physical, and human environment. However, the No-Build Alternative would neither improve traffic congestion nor meet travelers' needs, resulting in increased user costs and travel times.

2.2 Build Alternative

The Build Alternative includes two express lanes and three general purpose lanes in each direction. The interchanges along the corridor will be reconstructed as part of the improvements, but the interchange configurations will not change, except for the Bearss Avenue interchange. All of the existing bridges will be replaced to meet vertical clearance and vertical alignment standards. Right-of-way will be required for the reconstruction of the Bearss Avenue interchange and to retrofit existing stormwater ponds and construct new ponds.

The proposed I-275 ten-lane typical section includes six general purpose lanes (three in each direction) on the outside, four express lanes (two in each direction) on the inside, a 2-foot buffer with plastic delineators separating the general use lanes and the express lanes, 10-foot outside shoulders, 9-foot inside shoulders, and a 2-foot concrete barrier separating the two directions of travel. The existing typical section is shown in **Figure 2**. The proposed I-275 mainline typical section is shown in **Figure 3**.

Figure 2 I-275 Existing Typical Sections

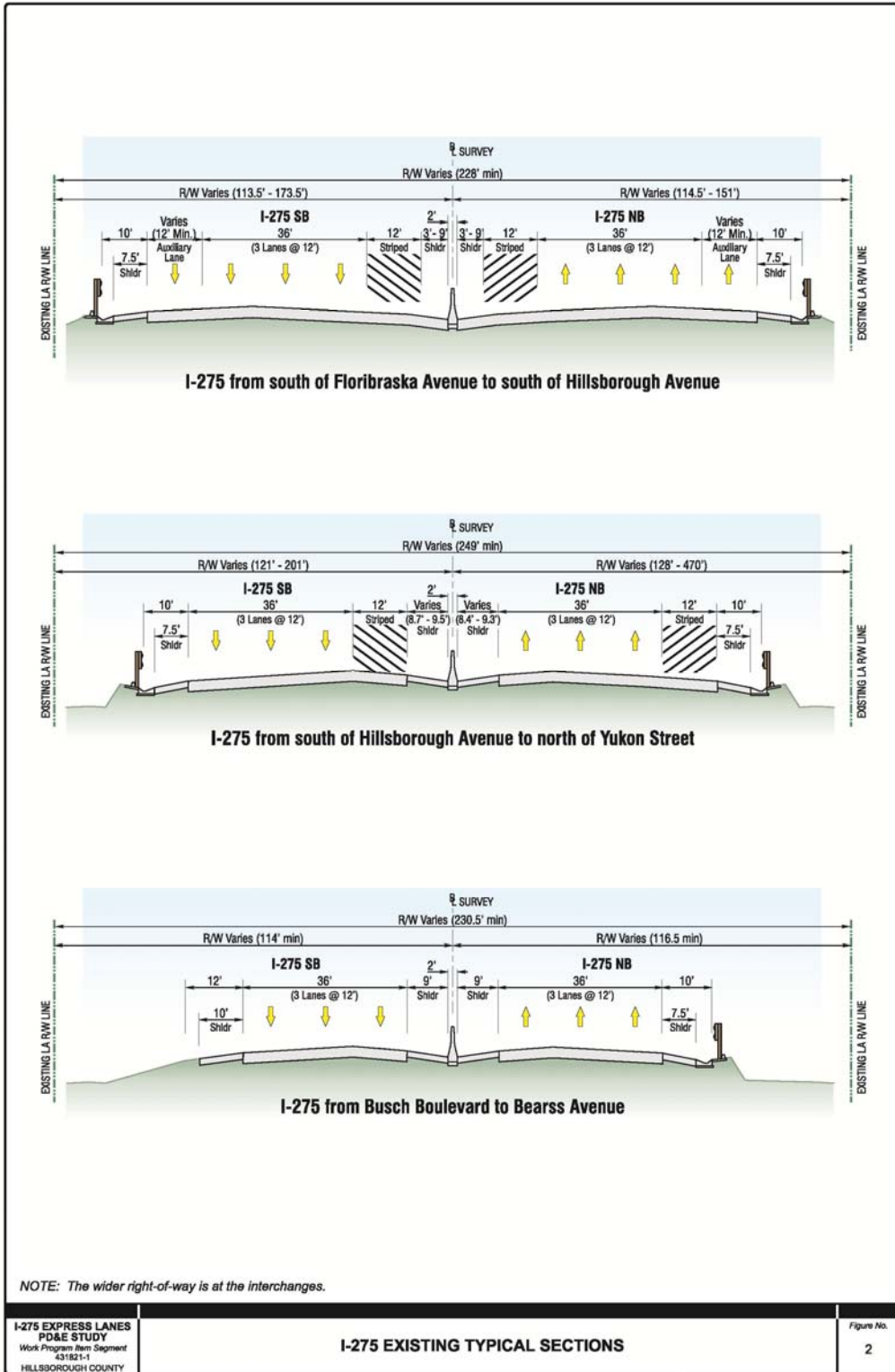
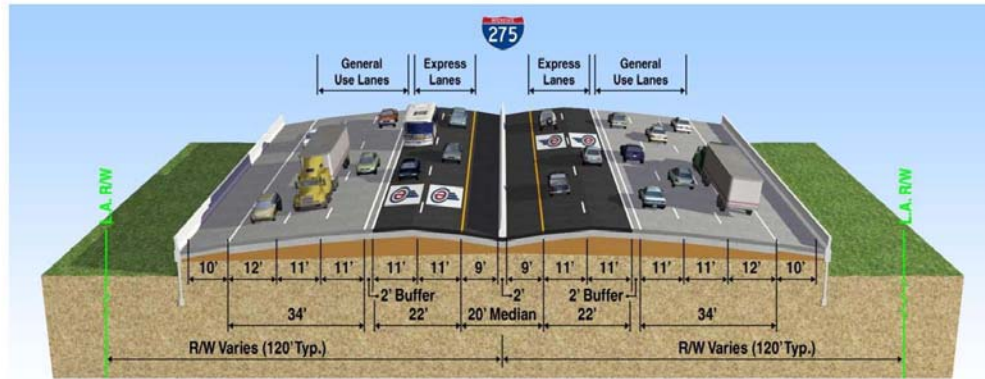


Figure 3 I-275 Proposed Typical Section



I-275 from north of MLK Boulevard to north of Bearss Avenue

I-275 EXPRESS LANES
 PD&E STUDY
 Work Program Item Segment
 431821-1
 HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

I-275 PROPOSED TYPICAL SECTION

Figure No.
 3

3.0 EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

3.1 Existing Land Use

Existing land use along the project corridor was determined utilizing a variety of resources including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), U.S Geological Survey (USGS) topographical maps, aerial photographs (2011), land use mapping from the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD, 2011), and field-verification during wetland and habitat reviews. **Figure 4** depicts the overview of existing land use types for the project corridor. Land use along the majority of the corridor is dominated by residential areas and commercial services.

Most upland habitats adjacent to the project corridor have been developed as residential or commercial and retail facilities. Most of these areas are not considered high quality for wildlife due to their proximity to the roadway and other adjacent development. Descriptions of upland and wetland communities are provided in **Sections 3.1.2** and **3.1.3**. **Table 2** provides a summary of land use cover types and prevalence within 300-feet of the project centerline; this analysis is based on field-verified Florida Land Use Cover Forms Classification System (FLUCFCS) and land use data obtained from the SWFWMD.

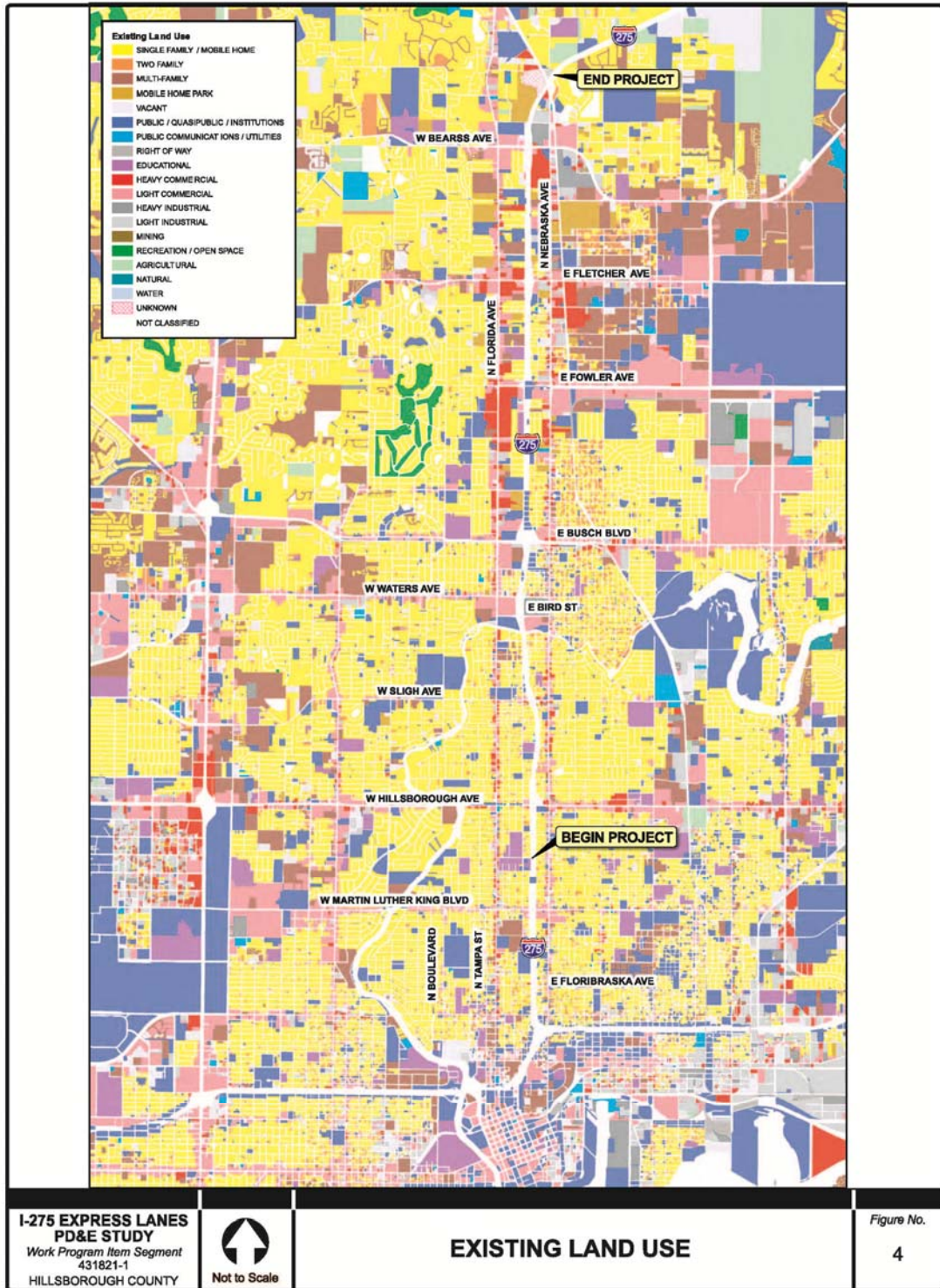
Table 2 Existing Land Use/Land Cover (FLUCFCS)

FLUCFCS Codes		Description	Acres	Percent Cover
100: Urban & Built-Up	110	RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY < 2 DWELLING UNITS	13.50	1.40%
	120	RESIDENTIAL MED DENSITY 2->5 DWELLING UNIT	34.97	3.63%
	130	RESIDENTIAL HIGH DENSITY	342.53	35.51%
	140	COMMERCIAL AND SERVICES	148.30	15.38%
	170	INSTITUTIONAL	24.59	2.55%
	180	RECREATIONAL	19.04	1.97%
	190	OPEN LAND	10.47	1.09%
			Total	593.39
400: Upland Forest	420	UPLAND HARDWOOD FORESTS	1.20	0.12%
	434	HARDWOOD CONIFER MIXED	5.89	0.61%
			Total	7.09
500: Water	510	STREAMS AND WATERWAYS	4.55	0.47%
	520	LAKES	3.43	0.36%
	530	RESERVOIRS	3.68	0.38%
	534	RESERVOIRS LESS THAN 10 ACRES	2.82	0.29%
			Total	14.48
600: Wetlands	534/ 610	RESERVOIRS LESS THAN 10 ACRES / WETLAND HARDWOOD FORESTS	5.78	0.60%
	534/ 641	RESERVOIRS LESS THAN 10 ACRES / FRESHWATER MARSH	7.29	0.76%
	631	WETLAND SCRUB	0.64	0.07%

Table 2 Existing Land Use/Land Cover (FLUCFCS)

FLUCFCS Codes		Description	Acres	Percent Cover
	641	FRESHWATER MARSH	6.95	0.72%
	644	EMERGENT AQUATIC VEGETATION	5.00	0.52%
	653	INTERMITTENT PONDS	0.35	0.04%
	Total		26.01	2.70%
800: Transportation, Communication, & Utilities	810	TRANSPORTATION	323.52	33.54%
	Total		323.52	33.54
Total			964.49	100%

Figure 4 Overview of Existing Land Use



3.1.1 Natural and Biological Features

Riverine systems provide travel corridors for wildlife through developed areas such as those that exist within the project corridor and undeveloped habitats. Additionally, these riverine systems provide habitats and foraging areas for wetland dependent species.

One major stream system, the Hillsborough River, intersects the project corridor. The Hillsborough River is bordered by Sulphur Springs Park (FLUCFCS 185) on the northern border of the stream bank and residential properties (FLUCFCS 131) on the southern stream bank, both east and west of the ROW.

3.1.2 Upland Vegetation Communities

The major upland vegetative communities within and directly adjacent to the project corridor are discussed in this section. These communities are classified according to the FLUCFCS (FDOT, 1999). During the field reviews, upland community types were visually inspected to verify community boundaries, dominant vegetation, and for the presence or potential for occurrence of threatened and endangered species. No federal or state protected species were observed in the following upland habitats during field surveys. Upland habitat in the project area, as a whole, is generally disturbed and/or has been developed for urban/commercial or residential purposes.

Hardwood Conifer Mixed (FLUCFCS 434)

This forest community is one in which neither upland conifers nor hardwoods achieve a 66 percent crown canopy dominance. This habitat is characterized by slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*), longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*), laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), and live oak (*Quercus virginiana*). Although this habitat type may provide cover and foraging opportunities for birds, mammals and reptiles, no protected species were observed during the field survey.

3.1.3 Wetlands and Surface Water Features

In accordance with Executive Order 11990, "Protection of Wetlands" (May 1977), the proposed project has been evaluated for potential effects to wetlands. Wetland locations and boundaries were identified and approximated using aerial interpretation and field reconnaissance on July 15 and December 19, 2014. Wetland boundaries were visually approximated using the USACE "Corps of Engineers' Wetlands Delineation Manual, Technical Report Y-87-10" (1987) and "Interim Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual: Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plain Region" (2008) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FDEP) "Delineation of the Landward Extent of Wetlands and Surface Waters" (1995) (Chapter 62-340, Florida Administrative Code [FAC]). Maps depicting all of the jurisdictional surface water and wetland features within the project ROW are provided in **Appendix A**.

3.1.3.1 Methodology

A variety of resources including NWI data, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) soils data, SWFWMD aerial photographs (2010), and field surveys were employed to identify the wetland and surface water communities that occur within the study area. All wetlands and surface water features within and immediately

adjacent to the project corridor were mapped, assigned a unique identification number and categorized in accordance with the FLUCFCS designation and NWI designation. These codes include whether each site is a wetland (WL) or surface water (SW). Wetlands and surface waters were labeled numerically and in sequence beginning at the southern end to the northern end and the eastern side to the western side.

To assist in the proper determination/classification of surface waters and wetlands, a number of data sources were examined including historic aerial photography, permitted stormwater management facilities, and the SWFWMD Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) boundaries on the SWFWMD E-Permitting District Permit Mapping system. Any systems documented as being located in a historic wetland (50% or more of the system was located within a historic wetland when analyzing historic aerial imagery), and not documented as a permitted stormwater management system via the SWFWMD permit data, was classified as a wetland. Shallow swale systems identified within the project corridor that were concrete lined and/or primarily composed of mowed bahia grass (*Paspalum notatum*) were not mapped during field surveys and were not evaluated for potential impacts. Representative photographs of wetlands and surface waters are provided in **Appendix B**.

3.1.3.2 Wetlands

Wetland Hardwood Forests/Reservoirs less than 10 acres (FLUCFCS 610/534)

One wetland, Wetland 1, classified as a split-class between Reservoirs less than 10 acres and Wetland Hardwood Forests was identified within the project ROW. This system is an existing stormwater pond that also functions as a wetland. This wetland is located on the east side of I-275 and south of Busch Boulevard. This forested system consists primarily of laurel oak, Carolina willow (*Salix caroliniana*), Peruvian primrose willow (*Ludwigia peruviana*), and wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*).

Freshwater Marsh/Reservoirs less than 10 acres (FLUCFCS 641/534)

Two wetlands classified as a split-class between Reservoirs less than 10 acres and Freshwater Marsh were identified within the project ROW. These systems are existing stormwater ponds that also function as wetlands. Wetland 2 is located on the east side of I-275 and south of Fowler Avenue. Wetland 4 is located on the west side of I-275 and south of Fowler Avenue. Both herbaceous systems primarily consist of cattail (*Typha* sp.) with Carolina willow on the edges.

Wetland Shrub (FLUCFCS 631)

One wetland, Wetland 3, classified as Wetland Shrub was identified within the project ROW. Wetland shrub is found in poorly drained soils and is composed of low shrub species. This wetland is located on the west side of I-275 and south of Bearss Avenue. Dominant vegetation within this shrub system consists primarily of Carolina willow, Peruvian primrose willow, and wax myrtle. This system is connected to a larger wetland system and lake that continues west outside of the ROW.

3.1.3.3 Surface Waters

Nine (9) surface waters are located within the FDOT ROW and one is located within adjacent City of Tampa ROW. These surface waters consist of man-made ditches excavated within uplands, reservoirs, and the Hillsborough River. These features have been labeled as “surface waters” (SW). The ditch features are associated with the stormwater management facilities currently in place to serve I-275 and adjacent roadways. Water regimes of the ditches generally consist of intermittent and seasonal flooding. The reservoirs consist of existing stormwater management facilities owned and maintained by FDOT. One stormwater management facility is owned and maintained by the City of Tampa. These facilities are located adjacent to the I-275 mainline. The Hillsborough River is defined as a surface water as per Chapter 62-340.600, Florida Statutes. Within the project area, the river does not support any wetland vegetation. All wetlands and surface waters identified within the existing FDOT ROW and their associated acreages are provided in **Tables 3** and **4** respectively.

Table 3 Total Wetland Acreages Within the Existing ROW

Wet ID	FLUCFCS	Total ROW Acreage
WL 1	534/610	5.77
WL 2	534/641	3.02
WL 3	631	0.64
WL 4	534/641	4.28
Total		13.71

Table 4 Total Surface Water Acreages Within the Existing ROW

SW ID	FLUCFCS	Additional Description	Total ROW Acreage
SW 1	510	Hillsborough River	1.27
SW 2	510	roadside ditch	0.04
SW 4	534	stormwater pond	0.09
SW 5	534	stormwater pond	0.41
SW 6	534	stormwater pond	0.54
SW 7	510	roadside ditch	0.14
SW 8	510	roadside ditch	0.10
SW 10	510	roadside ditch	0.15
SW 11	510	roadside ditch	0.48
Total			3.22

*SW 3 is not included as it is owned by the City of Tampa and not located within FDOT ROW.

3.1.3.4 Additional Drainage Features

Some previously-permitted dry stormwater management facilities were identified within the ROW, both within interchange infields and adjacent to the mainline. Additionally, some non-wetland, man-made, concrete lined swales are located along the ROW. These features tend to be associated with the stormwater management system currently in place to serve I-275 and adjacent roadways. These facilities are man-made conveyances and impoundments constructed within upland soil mapping units, and do not support a dominance of wetland vegetation. These systems do not meet wetland or surface water criteria and therefore were not mapped or quantified.

3.2 Soils

Review of the USDA NRCS soil survey for Hillsborough (HIL) County, Florida (2013) identified 18 soil types within the project corridor. Dominant soil types identified along the corridor and their identification numbers include Zolfo fine sand (HIL #61), Tavares-Urban land complex, 0 to 5 percent slopes (HIL#55), Candler-Urban land complex, 0 to 5 percent slopes (HIL #9), and Candler fine sand 0 to 5 percent slopes (HIL #7). The most common hydric soil types found within the project corridor include the following: Basinger, Holopaw and Samsula soils, depressional (HIL #5) and Malabar fine sand (HIL #27). Both of these state-listed hydric soils are also federally-listed with hydric classifications obtained from the NRCS website in September 2014.

Although a soil may be listed as hydric based on hydric soil criteria, nullifying factors include the inclusion of other non-hydric soil types, drainage activities and landscape position. Hydric soil identifications will be finalized during the permitting and design stage of this project.

The NRCS soils for the project corridor are presented in **Appendix A**. Detailed descriptions of the dominant soil types follow.

- **Zolfo fine sand (HIL #61)** – This soil is nearly level and slightly poorly drained. The slope is zero to two percent and the soil is found on low ridges on flatwoods. The surface layer is typically very dark gray fine sand and is about three inches thick. The subsoil layer is dark brown fine sand. In typical years the seasonal high water table is 24 to 60 inches below the soil surface during the rainy season.
- **Tavares-Urban land complex, 0 to 5 percent slopes (HIL#55)** – This soil is nearly level to gently sloping, moderately well drained, and in areas of urban land. This complex is in low lying areas in the uplands and on low ridges on the flatwoods. In most areas, these soils are artificially drained by sewer systems, gutters, tile drains, and surface ditches. The undrained areas have a seasonal high water table at a depth of 40 to 80 inches for more than 6 months.
- **Candler-Urban land complex, 0 to 5 percent slopes (HIL #9)** - This soil is nearly level to gently sloping, excessively drained, and of areas of urban land. Typically the surface layer of Candler soil is dark gray fine sand about 6 inches thick. The urban land part of this complex is typically covered by concrete, asphalt, buildings, or other impervious surfaces that obscure or alter the soils so that their identification is not feasible. A seasonal high water table is at a depth of more than 80 inches. The permeability of this soil is rapid and the available water capacity is low.

- **Candler fine sand 0 to 5 percent slopes (HIL #7)** – This soil is level to gently sloping and found in uplands. The soil typically has a surface layer that is composed of dark gray fine sand approximately six inches thick and below that is a layer of yellowish brown fine sand that stretches to a depth of approximately 35 inches. The seasonal high water table is at a depth of more than 80 inches.

3.3 Significant Waters and Protection Areas

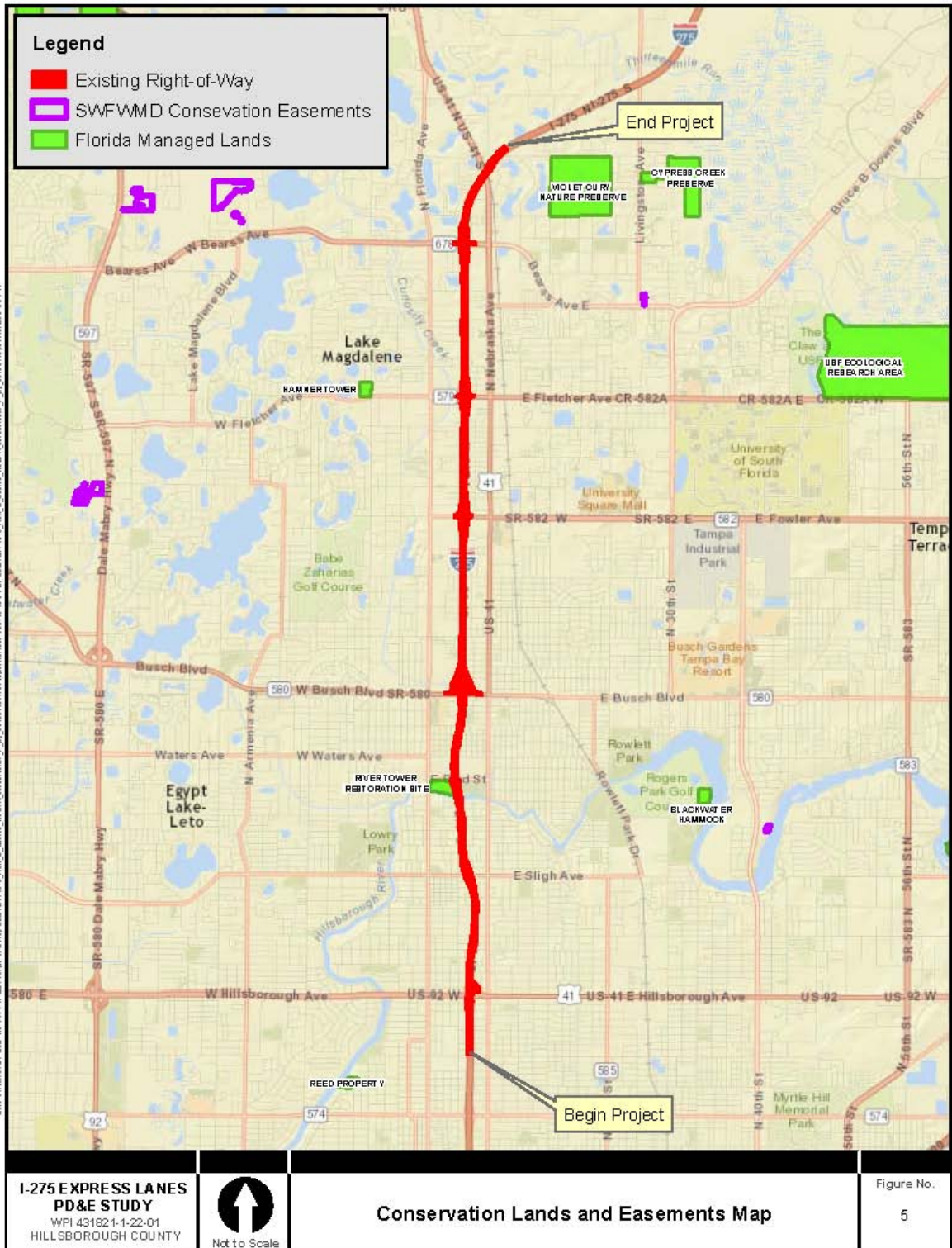
3.3.1 Outstanding Florida Waters

Portions of the Hillsborough River are verified by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) as an Outstanding Florida Water (OFW).

3.3.2 Protection Areas

The River Tower Restoration site is located immediately adjacent to the project corridor on the west side of I-275, north of the Hillsborough River. Other conservation lands within the vicinity consist of a conservation easement occurring approximately 1.4 miles to the east; Hamner Tower, a Hillsborough County Park occurring approximately 0.7 miles to the west of the corridor; and Violet Cury Nature Preserve, approximately 0.6 miles to the east of the corridor. All conservation lands within the vicinity of the project corridor are shown in **Figure 5**.

Figure 5 Conservation Lands and Easements Map



3.3.3 Essential Fish Habitat

In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1996 (50 CFR Section 600.920), as amended through January 12, 2007 and as administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), federal agencies must consult with NMFS regarding any of their actions authorized, funded, or undertaken, or proposed to be authorized, funded, or undertaken that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). EFH is defined in the Magnuson-Stevens Act as "those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity". The word "fish" includes finfish, mollusks, crustaceans, and all other forms of marine animal and plant life other than marine mammals and birds.

During the initial agency coordination and data collection for this project through Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM), NMFS commented on August 12, 2013 that their staff conducted a site inspection of the project area on August 9, 2013 to assess potential concerns related to living marine resources within the mouth of the Hillsborough River and in Hillsborough Bay. Their conclusion was that the lands adjacent to the proposed project are principally residential and commercial properties and it does not appear that the project will directly impact any NMFS trust resources. However, the project crosses the Hillsborough River, and the mouth of the river and Hillsborough Bay contain estuarine habitats (e.g. seagrass, salt marsh, mangrove) used by federally-managed fish species and their prey. Increased use of the corridor could result in an increase in the amount of sediment, oil and grease, metals, and other pollutants reaching downstream estuarine habitats utilized by marine fishery resources. Therefore, NMFS recommends that stormwater treatment systems be upgraded to prevent degraded water from reaching estuarine habitats within the mouth of the Hillsborough River and in Hillsborough Bay. In addition, best management practices (BMPs) should be employed during roadway construction to prevent siltation of these habitats.

Since this project does not directly affect EFH resources, a detailed EFH assessment is not required. However, the following provides a summary of the water quality considerations that have been evaluated for this project, which are anticipated to have an effect on the downstream estuarine and marine habitats.

Degradation of water quality resulting from construction of the project or excess pollutant loading of stormwater runoff from the project has the potential to adversely affect wetlands and EFH in the Hillsborough River and downstream in Hillsborough Bay. Impacts to water quality from construction activities will be avoided and minimized through the use of BMPs. BMPs generally include phased construction, turbidity screens, silt fences, hay bales, cofferdams, and other construction techniques approved by the regulatory agencies.

As part of the project, stormwater treatment will be provided within roadside ditches, existing, off-site stormwater management facilities, and new off-site stormwater management facilities as needed. The proposed stormwater facility design will include, at a minimum, the water quantity requirements for water quality impacts as required by the SWFWMD in Rules 40D-4, 40D-40, and 40D-41, FAC.

4.0 WETLAND IMPACTS

4.1 Design Alternatives

Wetland and surface water impacts were calculated based on one design alternative, the proposed I-275 design. Therefore, impacts were calculated assuming complete involvement of wetlands and surface waters within the ROW limits. However, several existing stormwater facilities that are considered to also function as wetlands or surface waters will not be impacted as a result of the proposed roadway improvements. For example, wetlands 1 and 2 are existing wet stormwater facilities that will not be modified as a result to proposed roadway improvements to I-275. The project is proposing stormwater management facilities located immediately north of these existing ponds. The proposed ponds will discharge to the existing ponds through an outfall pipe. Construction of the outfall pipe will create temporary impact approximately 30 feet wide by 50 feet long and no permanent impacts are anticipated. Wetland 4 is an existing stormwater facility and proposed improvements will not affect this facility nor will proposed ponds discharge into this facility. Surface water 5 is a stormwater facility that currently provides treatment and attenuation for runoff from I-275. The proposed improvements to I-275 will not impact the existing pond nor will proposed ponds discharge to the existing facility. The system will remain unaffected by the proposed improvements and will continue to function as originally designed.

Impacts proposed to jurisdictional wetlands and surface waters include 0.64 acres of wetlands and 2.81 acres of surface waters (**Table 5**). The impacted wetland type that would be determined as jurisdictional by the permitting agencies is Wetland Scrub (Wetland 3). Two surface water types present within the project ROW and proposed for impact include Streams and Waterways (SW1, SW2, SW7, SW8, SW10, and SW11) and Reservoirs less than 10 acres (SW4 and SW 6). These are of limited habitat value and contain moderate to high coverage of nuisance and exotic species.

Surface water 1 is the Hillsborough River and is considered a sovereign submerged land and a jurisdictional water of the U.S. If the proposed bridge work over the Hillsborough River does not consist of any fill associated with piling or embankments, no mitigation is anticipated to be required for either agency.

Surface waters 4 and 6 are not jurisdictional by the SWFWMD as these are previously permitted stormwater management facilities and will not require mitigation. These stormwater management facilities may be deemed jurisdictional by the USACE if not previously permitted with that agency. However, they will not require mitigation and do not provide suitable wood stork foraging habitat as water levels are typically greater than 15 inches.

Surface waters 2, 7, 8, 10, and 11 are roadside ditches that provide suitable foraging habitat for the wood stork. These surface waters are considered SWFWMD jurisdictional but will not require mitigation for SWFWMD since they are man-made ditches excavated within uplands. These surface waters are also anticipated to be USACE jurisdictional; mitigation would be anticipated due to their habitat value for the wood stork. A total of 0.64 acres of wetlands and 0.91 acres of surface waters are may require mitigation.

Table 5 Jurisdictional Wetland and Surface Water Impacts

Side	Wet ID	Impact Area (acres)	
		Alternative 1	No Build
Right/East	WL1	0.00	0.00
	WL 2	0.00	0.00
	SW 1 (Hillsborough River)	1.27	0.00
	SW 2	0.04	0.00
	SW 5	0.00	0.00
Left/West	WL 3	0.64	0.00
	WL 4	0.00	0.00
	SW 4	0.09	0.00
	SW 6	0.54	0.00
	SW 7	0.14	0.00
	SW 8	0.10	0.00
	SW 10	0.15	0.00
	SW 11	0.48	0.00
	Total	3.45	0.00

4.2 Results of Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM) Analysis

Uniform Mitigation Assessment Methodology (UMAM) analyses were conducted to evaluate the wetland function and values for representative wetlands for each type of wetland that may be affected by the project. UMAM values range from 0 to 1, with a value of “0” indicating the lowest quality wetlands and a value of “1” indicating the highest quality wetlands.

The value (Delta in the UMAM calculation) for wetlands that may be impacted for the project range is 0.40 for Wetland Shrub. Functional loss is calculated based on the UMAM value (Delta) multiplied by the acreage of the wetland. The UMAM data sheets for each wetland type are provided in **Appendix C**.

The total functional loss for all wetland impacts is 0.26 units. The following is the value and functional loss for each wetland type:

- Wetland Scrub (FLUCFCS 631)
 - Wetland Scrub with a UMAM value of 0.40 total 0.64 impact acres resulting in a functional loss of 0.26 units.

4.3 Wetland Impact Mitigation

Project constraints and ROW limits provide no practicable alternatives that would result in complete avoidance of impacts to the wetlands and surface waters. Whenever possible, permanent impacts will be limited to the smallest degree possible through design

modification. Temporary impacts, if any, to the surface waters will be conducted utilizing BMPs and FDOT's "*Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*".

Compensation for wetland impacts will likely be addressed pursuant to Florida Statutes (F.S.) Chapter 373.4137 in order to satisfy all mitigation requirements of Part IV, Chapter 373, F.S. and 33 United States Code (U.S.C.) 1344. A number of mitigation options are potentially available to mitigate for impacts to wetlands including public or private wetland mitigation banks; inclusion of the project into the FDOT Wetland Mitigation Plan; and wetland creation, restoration, or enhancement within watersheds in the project area. Mitigation options will be investigated further during the final design phase of the project.

4.4 Coordination with the Permitting Agencies

This project was recently evaluated through the FDOT's ETDM process (ETDM project #13854). An ETDM *Programming Screen Summary Report* was published on February 7, 2014, containing comments from the Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) on the project's effects on various natural, physical, and social resources. Relevant sections of this report are included in **Appendix D**.

Environmental permits, coordination and authorizations will likely be required for this project from the following agencies:

- USACE – Section 404 Wetland Dredge and Fill Permit
- USFWS – Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Informal Coordination for impacts to wood stork suitable foraging habitat
- SWFWMD – ERP
- FDEP – National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) – Bridge Permit if bridge work over the Hillsborough River is proposed

5.0 PROTECTED SPECIES AND HABITAT

The project corridor was assessed for the presence of suitable habitat for federal- and/or state-listed protected species in accordance with 50 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 402 of the ESA of 1973, as amended, Chapters 5B-40 and 68A-27 FAC, and *Part 2, Chapter 27 - Wildlife and Habitat Impacts* of the FDOT PD&E Manual.

5.1 Methodology

Literature reviews, agency database searches, and preliminary field reviews of potential habitat areas were conducted to identify state and federally protected species occurring or potentially occurring within the project area. The Hillsborough County Soil Survey and recent aerial photographs (2010) were reviewed to determine habitat types occurring within and adjacent to the project corridor. Information sources and databases include the following:

- USFWS Databases
- Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Databases
- Hillsborough County Soil Survey
- FWC - Eagle Nest Locator for Hillsborough County (2012-2013 nesting season data) (1 mile radius)
- FWC - Waterbird Colony Locator (1999) (1 mile radius)
- FWC - Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas (SHCA) (1994) (10 mile radius)
- USFWS - CH for Threatened and Endangered Species
- USFWS - Wood Stork Rookeries Core Foraging Areas (CFA) (15 mile radius)

Figure 6 provides historic species occurrence results from the database searches, based on a 1-mile radius from the project corridor. **Figure 7** depicts the 15-mile wood stork CFA's that overlap the corridor.

Based on the results of database searches, preliminary field reviews and review of aerial photographs and soil surveys, field survey methods for specific habitat types and lists of target species were developed. Additionally, environmental concerns expressed by the ETAT members in the ETDM Programming Screen Summary Report were considered when identifying target species and survey methods. Field reviews consisted of vehicular surveys, roadside observations and detailed pedestrian surveys through natural areas and altered habitats with the potential to support protected species. In the absence of physical evidence of a protected species, evaluation of the appropriate habitat was conducted to determine the likelihood of a species being present.

Figure 6 Historic Listed Species and Field Observations of Listed Species Map

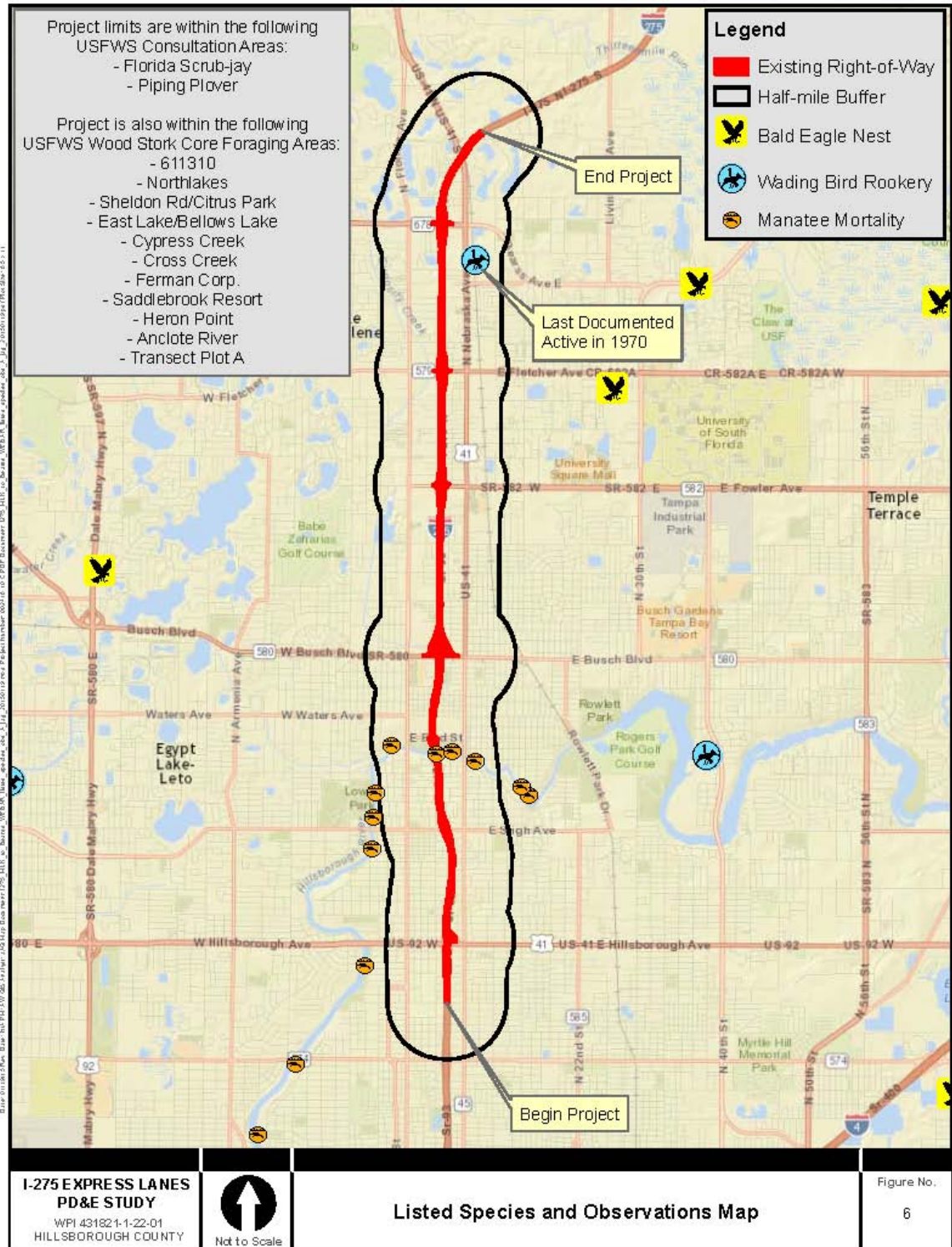


Figure 7 Wood Stork Colonies and Core Foraging Areas Map



Surveys were performed July 15 and December 19, 2014. Surveys took place within the existing ROW of I-275, with visual observations conducted on adjacent lands. Any observations of protected plant and wildlife species or indicators of their presence (i.e., vocalizations, tracks, scat, burrows, etc.) within or immediately adjacent to the study area were documented.

Based on the above methods, a list of potentially occurring protected species was developed, and each species was assigned a low, moderate or high likelihood for occurrence within habitats found on the project corridor. If a species or species indicator was observed during field reviews it is identified as present. **Table 6** lists the federal and state protected wildlife species with the potential to occur within the project corridor, based on potential availability of suitable habitat and known ranges. **Table 7** provides the same information for federal and state protected plant species. Definitions for likelihood of occurrence are provided below:

Low - Species with a low likelihood of occurrence within the project corridor are defined as those species that are known to occur in Hillsborough County or the bio-region, but preferred habitat is limited on the project corridor, or the species is rare or has been extirpated.

Moderate - Species with a moderate likelihood for occurrence are those species known to occur in Hillsborough or nearby counties, and for which suitable habitat is well represented on the project corridor, but no observations or positive indications exist to verify their presence.

High - Species with a high likelihood for occurrence are suspected within the project corridor based on known ranges and existence of sufficient preferred habitat on the corridor; are known to occur adjacent to the corridor; or have been previously observed or documented in the vicinity.

Table 6 Potentially Occurring and Observed Listed Wildlife Species

Species	Common Name	FWC	USFWS	Habitat	Habitat Occurrence in Relation to Project Footprint	Probability of Species Presence or Occurrence
AMPHIBIANS						
<i>Rana capito</i>	gopher frog	SSC (1,2)	-	Associated with gopher tortoise burrows, high-dry sandy areas	Near	Low
REPTILES						
<i>Drymarchon corais couperi</i>	eastern indigo snake	-	T	Hydric hammock, palustrine, sandhill scrub, upland pine forest, mangrove swamp	Near	Low
<i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>	gopher tortoise	T	T (1)	Old field, sandhill, scrub, xeric hammock, ruderal, dry prairie, pine flatwood	Near	Low
<i>Lampropeltis extenuata</i>	short-tailed snake	T	-	Longleaf pine-turkey oak, upland hammock, sand pine scrub	Near	Low
<i>Pituophis melanoleucus mugitus</i>	pine snake	SSC (2)	-	Sandhill, scrubby flatwoods, xeric hammock, pine flatwoods, ruderal	Near	Low
BIRDS						
<i>Aramus guarana</i>	limpkin	SSC (1)	-	Floodplain swamp, floodplain marsh, rivers, streams, sloughs, lakes	Contiguous	High
<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	little blue heron	SSC (1,4)	-	Estuarine, lacustrine, riverine, tidal marsh, tidal swamp	Contiguous	High
<i>Egretta thula</i>	snowy egret	SSC (1)	-	Estuarine, lacustrine, riverine, tidal marsh, tidal swamp	Contiguous	High
<i>Egretta tricolor</i>	tricolored heron	SSC (1,4)	-	Estuarine, lacustrine, riverine, tidal marsh, tidal swamp	Contiguous	High
<i>Eudocimus albus</i>	white ibis	SSC (2)	-	Estuarine, lacustrine, riverine, tidal marsh, tidal swamp	Contiguous	High

Table 6 Potentially Occurring and Observed Listed Wildlife Species

Species	Common Name	FWC	USFWS	Habitat	Habitat Occurrence in Relation to Project Footprint	Probability of Species Presence or Occurrence
<i>Falco sparverius paulus</i>	southeastern American kestrel	T	-	Sandhill, mesic flatwoods, ruderal, dry prairie	Near	Low
<i>Grus canadensis pratensis</i>	Florida sandhill crane	T	-	Basin marsh, depression marsh, dry prairies, marl prairie, pastures	Contiguous	Medium
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	bald eagle		(2)	Estuarine, lacustrine, riverine, tidal marsh, tidal swamp	Contiguous	Medium
<i>Mycteria americana</i>	wood stork	-	T	Estuarine tidal swamps/marshes, lacustrine, seepage stream, ditches, ruderal	Contiguous	High
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	osprey	SSC (5)	-	Open water; areas of cypress, mangrove, pine and swamp hardwoods for nesting	Contiguous	Medium
<i>Platalea ajaia</i>	roseate spoonbill	T	-	Estuarine, lacustrine, riverine, tidal marsh, tidal swamp	Contiguous	High
MAMMALS						
<i>Podomys floridanus</i>	Florida mouse	SSC	-	xeric uplands, sand pine scrub, coastal scrub, scrubby flatwoods, longleaf pine-turkey oak, south Florida slash pine-turkey oak, upland hammock, live oak hammock, drier pine flatwoods	Near	Low
<i>Trichechus manatus latirostris</i>	West Indian Manatee	-	E	Coastal, estuarine, some riverine, sheltered bays, coves, canals	Contiguous*	Low

* I-275 crosses the Hillsborough River

Sources: 1. USFWS - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service status, Official lists of Threatened and Endangered species, 50 CFR 17.11 updated on 6/3/2014. Accessed through Legal Information Institute.

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/50/17.11>

[ranking: E - endangered, T - threatened] [X - not present on Federal lists]

USFWS Notations:

(1) The Gopher Tortoise is afforded Federal protection where ever found west of Mobile and Tombigbedd Rivers in AL, MS, LA.

(2) The Bald Eagle is afforded federal protection through the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA).

FWC Notations:

(1) Has a significant vulnerability to habitat modification, environmental alteration, human disturbance, or human exploitation which, in the foreseeable future may result in becoming a threatened species unless appropriate protective/management techniques are initiated/maintained;

(2) May already meet certain criteria for designation as a threatened species but for which conclusive data are limited or lacking;

(3) May occupy such an unusually vital or essential ecological niche that should it decline significantly in numbers or distribution other species would be adversely affected to a significant degree.

(4) Has not sufficiently recovered from past population depletion, and

(5) The osprey is afforded status in Florida as a State Species of Special Concern (only in Monroe County) (FWC)

Table 7 Potentially Occurring and Observed Listed Plant Species

Species	Common Name	FDACS - DPI	USFWS	Hillsborough County	Habitat	Probability of Presence or Occurrence
<i>Asclepias curtissii</i>	Curtiss milkweed	E	E	E	scrub, scrubby flatwoods	Low
<i>Asplenium auritum</i>	auricled spleenwort	E	E	E	dry hammocks, scrub, flatwoods	Low
<i>Bonamia grandiflora</i>	Florida bonamia	E	T	E	sand pine scrub with evergreen scrub oaks	Low
<i>Centrosema arenicola</i>	sand butterfly pea	E	-	E	mixed woodlands, pine thickets	Low
<i>Chionanthus pygmaeus</i>	pygmy fringe tree	E	E	E	scrub, high pineland, dry hammocks, transitional habitats	Low
<i>Chrysopsis floridana</i>	Florida golden aster	E	E	E	sand pine scrub with evergreen scrub oaks	Low
<i>Erigonium floridarium</i> / <i>Eriogonum longifolium</i>	scrub buckwheat	T	T	E	scrub and sandhills, turkey oak barrens	Low
<i>Glandularia tampensis</i>	Tampa vervain	E	-	E	remnants of live oak (<i>Q. virginiana</i>), grassy openings	Low
<i>Lechea cernua</i>	nodding pinweed	T	-	E	scrub, scrubby flatwoods	Low
<i>Lechea divaricata</i>	spreading pinweed	-	-	E	flatwoods	Low
<i>Ophioglossum palmatum</i>	hand fern	E	-	E	hammocks and cypress swamps; epiphytic, usually on cabbage palm (<i>Sabal palmetto</i>)	Low
<i>Polygala lewtonii</i>	scrub milkwort	E	E	E		Low
<i>Schwalbea americana</i>	chaff-seed	-	E	E	open hammocks and flatwoods	Low
<i>Zephyranthes simpsonii</i>	rain lily	T	-	E	wet pinelands and pastures,	Low

Table 7 Potentially Occurring and Observed Listed Plant Species

Species	Common Name	FDACS - DPI	USFWS	Hillsborough County	Habitat	Probability of Presence or Occurrence
					wet roadsides	
<i>Andropogon arctatus</i>	pinewoods bluestem	T	-	T	dry to wet flatwoods and sand pine scrub	Low
<i>Pteroglossaspis ecristata</i>	giant orchid	T	-	T	sandhill, scrub, pine flatwoods, pine rocklands	Low
<i>Sarracenia rubra</i>	red pitcher plant	T	-	T	openings in thickets along spring-fed streams, wet prairies, bogs	Low

Sources:

1. FNAI - Florida Natural Areas Inventory; Matrix of habitats and distribution by county of rare/endangered species in Florida, published April, 1990
2. FDACS. Notes on Florida's Endangered and Threatened Plants. 2010. Patti J Anderson and Richard E Weaver
3. FWS Species Reports, Listings and Occurrences for Florida
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/pub/stateListingAndOccurrenceIndividual.jsp?state=FL.
4. FWS Endangered Species Search
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/countySearch!speciesByCountyReport.action?fips=12057
5. Habitats described by: Hansen, B.F. and Wunderlin, R.P. 2003. Guide to the vascular plants of Florida. University Press of Florida. Gainesville.
6. Hillsborough County listed species
<http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/DocumentCenter/Home/View/2288>

5.2 Survey Results

Land use along the corridor is dominated by commercial and residential properties. Relatively little undeveloped land exists along the project corridor and, where it does, is isolated from other natural areas. Undeveloped lands provide habitat to many wildlife and plant species, some of which are protected, while the more developed areas provide limited habitat value.

No state or federally-listed wildlife or plant species were observed during surveys. Descriptions are provided below for those species which have potential to occur within habitats identified on the corridor.

5.3 Federally Protected Species

Federally protected wildlife species which have been identified as having a high probability for occurrence in the vicinity of the corridor include the wood stork (*Mycteria americana*). The eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*), and West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*) were identified as having a low probability for occurrence

near the project area. No federally-listed plant species were observed or are documented for the corridor.

5.3.1 Wood Stork

The wood stork is listed as threatened by the USFWS. Wood storks are known to use freshwater marshes, swamps, lagoons, ponds, flooded fields, depressions in marshes and brackish wetlands, open pine-cypress wetlands, and man-made wetlands (i.e., ditches, canals, and stormwater retention ponds). Wood storks are typically colonial nesters and construct their nests in medium to tall trees located within wetlands or on island. Wood storks are known to forage a large distance, up to 40 miles, from the colony. No wood storks were observed during field surveys.

For central Florida, the USFWS has defined the CFA for a wood stork colony as the area within a 15-mile radius from the colony location. The project corridor is located within, completely or in part, the CFA of 11 wood stork colonies (Figure 5-2). Suitable foraging habitat (SFH) is provided by the roadside ditches and wetlands along the corridor. As defined by the USFWS, SFH includes wetlands and surface waters which have areas of water that are relatively calm, uncluttered by dense thickets of aquatic vegetation, and have permanent or seasonal water depth between 2 and 15 inches. Suitable foraging habitat within the project corridor will be re-evaluated during final permitting of the project as vegetative structure of wetlands will change over time and as a result of surface water management systems maintenance activities.

UMAM will be used to calculate functional loss for unavoidable surface water impacts and impacts will be mitigated as appropriate, if needed. As per the May 2010 Wood Stork Key criteria: (a) the project is more than 2,500 feet from a colony site; (b) the project impacts SFH; (c) the project impacts are estimated to be greater than 0.5 acre; (d) the project impacts to SFH are within the CFA of a colony site; and (e) the project will provide SFH compensation within the Service Area of a USFWS-approved wetland mitigation bank or wood stork conservation bank within the CFA. As a result, the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the wood stork.

5.3.2 Eastern Indigo Snake

Eastern indigo snakes are large, black, non-venomous snakes which are distributed throughout the southeastern United States. The eastern indigo snake occurs in a wide variety of habitats, including forested uplands and wetlands as well as wet and dry prairies. This species feeds on snakes, frogs, salamanders, toads, small mammals, birds and young turtles. Eastern indigo snakes are listed as threatened by the USFWS.

No individuals were observed during the field surveys, and there are minimal areas of suitable habitat for this species within and adjacent to the project corridor. The probability of occurrence for this species within the corridor is therefore low.

Pursuant to the August 2013 Eastern Indigo Snake Effect Determination Key: (a) the project is not located in open water or salt marsh; (b) the Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake will be implemented (**Appendix E**) to ensure protection when the species is most likely to be affected; (c) there are gopher tortoise burrow, holes, cavities, or other refugia where a snake could be buried or trapped and injured during project activities;

(d) the project will impact less than 25 acres of xeric habitat supporting less than 25 potential occupied gopher tortoise burrows; and (e) any permit will be conditioned such that (1) all gopher tortoise burrows, active or inactive, will be evacuated prior to site manipulation in the vicinity of the burrows; (2) if an indigo snake is encountered, the snake must be allowed to vacate the area prior to additional site manipulation in the vicinity; (3) the permittee must inspect all holes, cavities, and snake refugia other than gopher tortoise burrows each morning before planned site manipulation of a particular area, and, if occupied by an indigo snake, no work will commence until the snake has vacated the vicinity of proposed work. It is therefore anticipated that this project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the eastern indigo snake.

5.3.3 West Indian Manatee

This species is listed by the USFWS as endangered. Coastal waters, bays, and rivers are most commonly utilized by the species. During cooler months, manatees seek warmer waters including springs or cooling effluent areas. The project area does not fall within the USFWS CA critical habitat, or protection zones for the species. However, a portion of the project corridor crosses the Hillsborough River. Manatees have been documented in the project corridor where I-275 crosses the Hillsborough River, however the last recorded observation was in 2006. The standard manatee conditions for in-water work will be implemented if bridge construction over the Hillsborough River is necessary. No manatees were observed during field reviews. Based on this information, it is anticipated that this project may affect, but will not adversely affect the West Indian manatee.

5.4 State-Protected Species

State-listed wildlife species which have been identified as having a high probability for occurrence in the vicinity of the corridor include several species of wetland-dependent birds. The gopher tortoise was identified as having a low probability of occurrence but a gopher tortoise survey may be necessary as explained in **Section 5.4.1**. The Florida sandhill crane was identified as having a medium probability of occurrence based on the presence of sub-optimal foraging and nesting habitat. No state-listed plant species were observed or recorded in the project area.

5.4.1 Gopher Tortoise

Gopher tortoises (*Gopherus polyphemus*) reach reproductive maturity at 16-21 years of age. Gopher tortoises nest in late April to mid-July. Preferred habitats include xeric areas with sandy soils and open canopy with low groundcover. The gopher tortoise feeds primarily on new shoots of grasses and broad-leaf herbs, but may also consume mushrooms, fleshy fruits and some animal matter.

The gopher tortoise is listed by the FWC as threatened, and is currently a candidate for listing by the USFWS. No individuals or burrows were observed during preliminary field surveys of appropriate habitat. Comprehensive surveys for tortoises and their burrows will be conducted during the final design phase of the project. Per FWC requirements, gopher tortoise burrows located within 25 feet of proposed impact areas must be excavated and tortoises relocated to an approved recipient site. Commensal species that may utilize the

burrows, such as the gopher frog (*Rana capito*) and Florida mouse (*Podomys floridanus*) will also be relocated if encountered.

Unless the future gopher tortoise surveys undertaken during the project's design phase determine otherwise, it has been determined that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the gopher tortoise.

5.4.2 Florida Sandhill Crane

The Florida sandhill crane is a large wading bird listed as threatened by the FWC. The range of this Florida subspecies extends from southeastern Georgia through peninsular Florida. The Florida sandhill crane subspecies is non-migratory and becomes a permanent resident wherever it nests. This bird inhabits freshwater marshes, prairies, low-lying improved pastures, and shallow flooded open areas. It typically nests from January to June in the shallow waters of lakes, ponds, and open marshes where maidencane, arrowhead, and pickerelweed are present.

Potential foraging habitat is present within the project limits; however, minimal nesting habitat exists due to the limitation of wetlands present. Given the general lack of nesting habitat within the proposed project design alternative alignments, and the abundance of foraging habitat adjacent to the project, it is anticipated that the project will not adversely affect the Florida sandhill crane.

5.4.3 Wetland-Dependent Avian Species

This category includes state-listed wetland-dependent avian species that have a potential to occur on the project corridor. This includes: limpkin (*Aramus guarana*), little blue heron (*Egretta caerulea*), roseate spoonbill (*Ajaia ajaia*), snowy egret (*Egretta thula*), tricolored heron (*Egretta tricolor*), and white ibis (*Eudocimus albus*). These species are listed as species of special concern by the FWC.

No wetland-dependent bird species were observed during field surveys, and a search of the Florida Atlas of Breeding Sites for Herons and their Allies showed that the nearest recorded wading bird rookery (Atlas #611168) is located 0.3 miles to the east of the project corridor. It is not believed that construction within the proposed area will impact the aforementioned bird rookery as this rookery was last documented active in 1970.

Wetlands and surface waters that provide foraging potential for the wetland dependent avian species include ditches/swales, ponds, and riverine systems. Any required mitigation for the wood stork will also address these species. The project therefore may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect these wetland-dependent avian species.

5.5 Protected, Non-Listed Species

5.5.1 Osprey

The osprey (*Pandion haliaeetus*) is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 U.S.C. 703-712) and state-protected by Chapter 68A of the FAC. Ospreys inhabit areas near the coast, lakes, rivers, or swamps in Florida and feed on fish. Ospreys are known to

nest on tall trees and manmade structures such as nesting platforms, utility poles, and channel markers. Ospreys require nest sites in open surroundings for easy approaches that are safe from ground predators such as raccoons.

Field surveys included searches for osprey nests however no ospreys or nests were identified. Because no nests were found and the FDOT will adhere to the MBTA during construction, it is anticipated that this project will have no effect on the osprey.

5.5.2 Bald Eagle

The bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) is no longer listed as a federally-threatened species but is protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) (16 USC 668-668d), as amended, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 USC 703-712). The USFWS will still regulate activities if an active eagle nest is within 660 feet of a proposed activity. Bald eagles are also no longer listed by the FWC but monitoring may be required pursuant to the FWC Eagle Management Guidelines.

The bald eagle prefers riparian habitat associated with coastal areas, lakeshores, and rivers. It nests near water bodies which provide a dependable source of food. Data obtained from the 2012-2013 FWC Eagle Nest Locator Database indicate that the nearest bald eagle nest to the project corridor is nest HL046 (**Figure 5-1**). This nest was last surveyed in 2013, was not active at that time, and is well beyond 660 feet from the project limits. Bald eagle nests are considered to be active for five consecutive years of no documented nesting activity. After five years they are considered to be abandoned and protection measures no longer apply. Given that the FDOT will adhere to the BGEPA and MBTA during construction should the species be involved with the project, this project is anticipated to have no effect on the bald eagle.

5.6 Critical Habitat

The project corridor was assessed for Critical Habitat (CH) designated by Congress in 17 CFR 35.1532. Review of the USFWS' available GIS data for CH resulted in the identification of no CH within the project area.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND COMMITMENTS

6.1 Wetlands

The design alternative for the I-275 project provides for widening to occur within the current ROW limits. A total of 0.64 acres of wetlands and 2.81 acres of surface waters are potentially affected by the design alternative. Surface waters consist of primarily roadside ditches, excavated within non-hydric soils, which maintain hydrology sufficient to support wetland vegetation. The majority of the surface waters that are proposed for impact generally are of limited habitat value and support moderate to high coverage of nuisance and exotic species.

The FDOT is committed to the following measures to address wetland and surface water impacts for this project:

- Practicable measures to avoid or minimize wetland impacts will be addressed during final design for the project;
- Provide a more detailed wetland delineation during the design phase to determine actual unavoidable wetland impacts and to then determine the resulting functional loss;
- Best Management Practices will be incorporated during construction to minimize surface water impacts to any off-site wetlands and surface waters that are affected by the proposed project; and
- Unavoidable wetland and surface water impacts will be mitigated pursuant to S. 373.4137 F.S. to satisfy all mitigation requirements of Part IV, Chapter 373 F.S. and 33 U.S.C.s 1344 which includes purchase of mitigation bank credits or use of the FDOT wetland mitigation inventory program.

6.2 Protected Species and Habitat

The project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect federally and state protected wildlife species. Federally-listed species which may be affected but are not likely to be adversely affected by the project include the wood stork and eastern indigo snake. The project crosses the Hillsborough River; however it is anticipated to have no effect on the West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*) as standard manatee conditions for in-water work will be followed should any bridge construction occur. State protected species which may but are not likely to be adversely affected by the project include the gopher tortoise and its commensal species, Florida sandhill crane, and wetland dependent avian species. The project is anticipated to have no effect on the short-tailed snake (*Lampropeltis extenuata*), pine snake (*Pituophis melanoleucus mugitus*), and southeastern American kestrel (*Falco sparverius paulus*) due to lack of appropriate habitat. The project is anticipated to have no effect on the osprey and bald eagle which are both offered federal protection however remain non-listed species.

Multiple avenues of protection will be employed to negate and minimize any potential affects to these species. Some of the measures employed will include detailed surveys and agency coordination during the project design phase, best management practices during

construction, adherence to FDOT's "*Standard Specification for Road and Bridge Construction*," relocation of potentially affected gopher tortoises and commensal species, and utilization of standard construction precautions for species such as the eastern indigo snake and West Indian manatee.

Based upon findings of the preliminary data collection, general corridor surveys, and ongoing coordination with the USFWS and FWC, the FDOT will consider the following commitments:

1. Gopher tortoise: Surveys for potentially affected gopher tortoise burrows will be conducted prior to construction, and permits to relocate tortoises and commensals as appropriate will be obtained from the FWC.
2. Eastern indigo snake: The Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake (**Appendix E**) will be adhered to during construction of the project.
3. Osprey: Surveys to update locations of active osprey nest sites will be conducted prior to construction, and permits will be acquired if impacts during construction are unavoidable. Coordination with FWC will take place, and a replacement nesting structure will be located in the immediate vicinity as appropriate.
4. Wood stork: Impacts to potential wood stork suitable foraging habitat will be evaluated during the design phase, and mitigation for unavoidable impacts will be provided as appropriate.
5. West Indian manatee: The FDOT will follow the standard manatee conditions for in-water work should bridge construction be required. (**Appendix F**).

7.0 REFERENCES

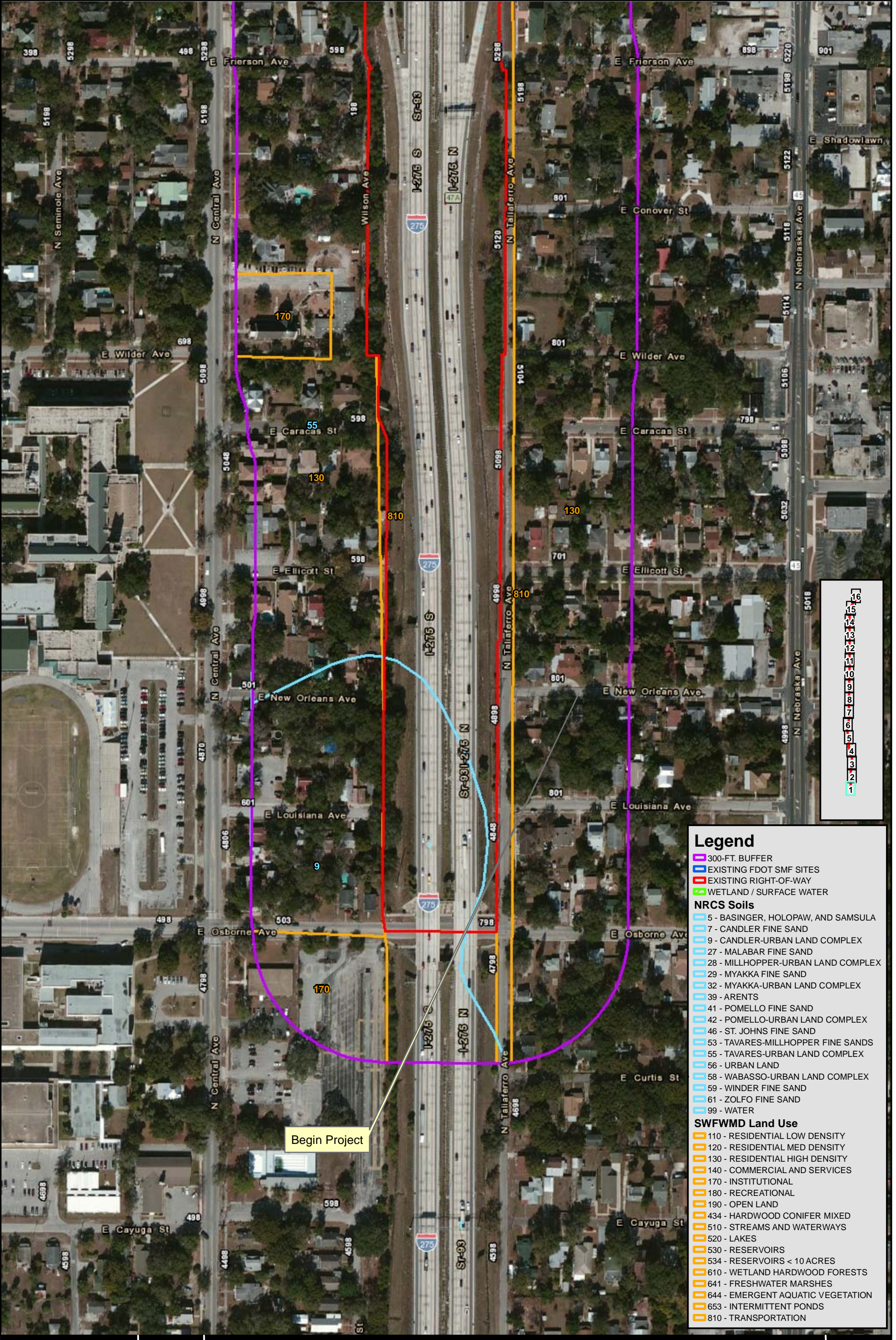
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Appendix A

Existing Land Use, NRCS Soils, Wetland and Surface Waters Locations Map

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Legend

- 300-FT. BUFFER
- EXISTING FDOT SMF SITES
- EXISTING RIGHT-OF-WAY
- WETLAND / SURFACE WATER

NRCS Soils

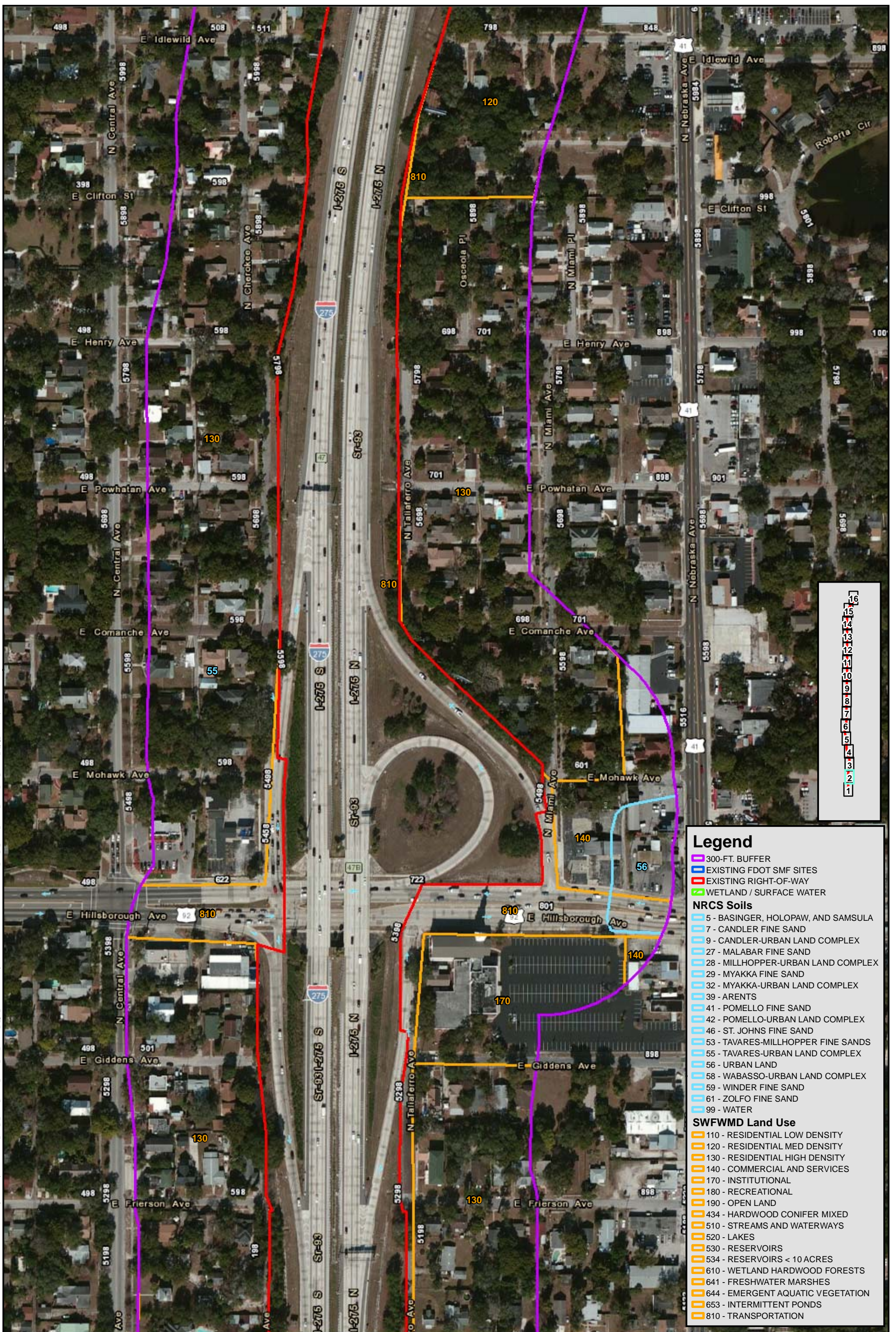
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- 7 - CANDLER FINE SAND
- 9 - CANDLER-URBAN LAND COMPLEX
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- 99 - WATER

SWFWMD Land Use

- 110 - RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY
- 120 - RESIDENTIAL MED DENSITY
- 130 - RESIDENTIAL HIGH DENSITY
- 140 - COMMERCIAL AND SERVICES
- 170 - INSTITUTIONAL
- 180 - RECREATIONAL
- 190 - OPEN LAND
- 434 - HARDWOOD CONIFER MIXED
- 510 - STREAMS AND WATERWAYS
- 520 - LAKES
- 530 - RESERVOIRS
- 534 - RESERVOIRS < 10 ACRES
- 610 - WETLAND HARDWOOD FORESTS
- 641 - FRESHWATER MARSHES
- 644 - EMERGENT AQUATIC VEGETATION
- 653 - INTERMITTENT PONDS
- 810 - TRANSPORTATION



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Legend

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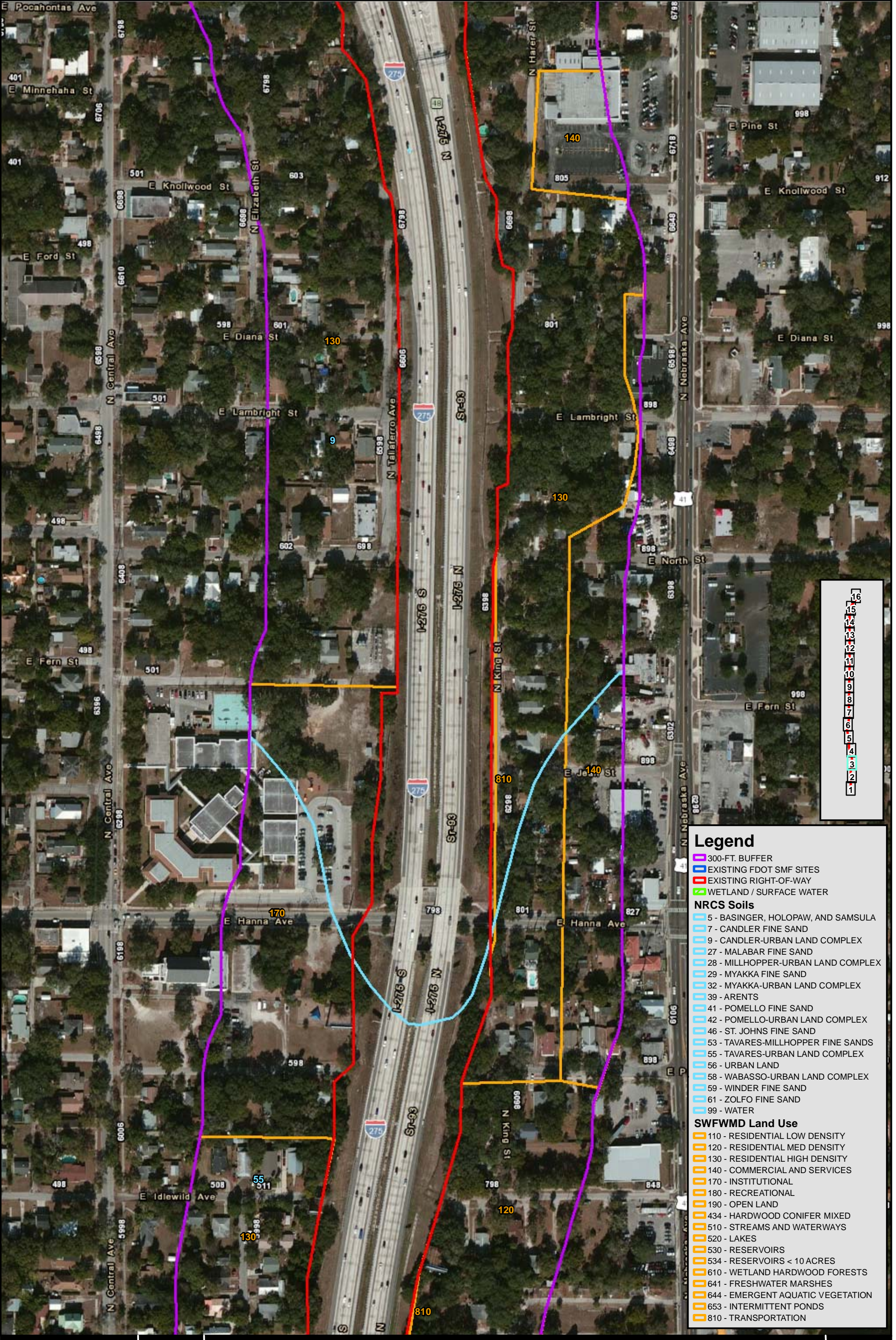
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HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY



Not to Scale

Existing Land Use, NRCS Soils, Wetland and Surface Water Locations Map

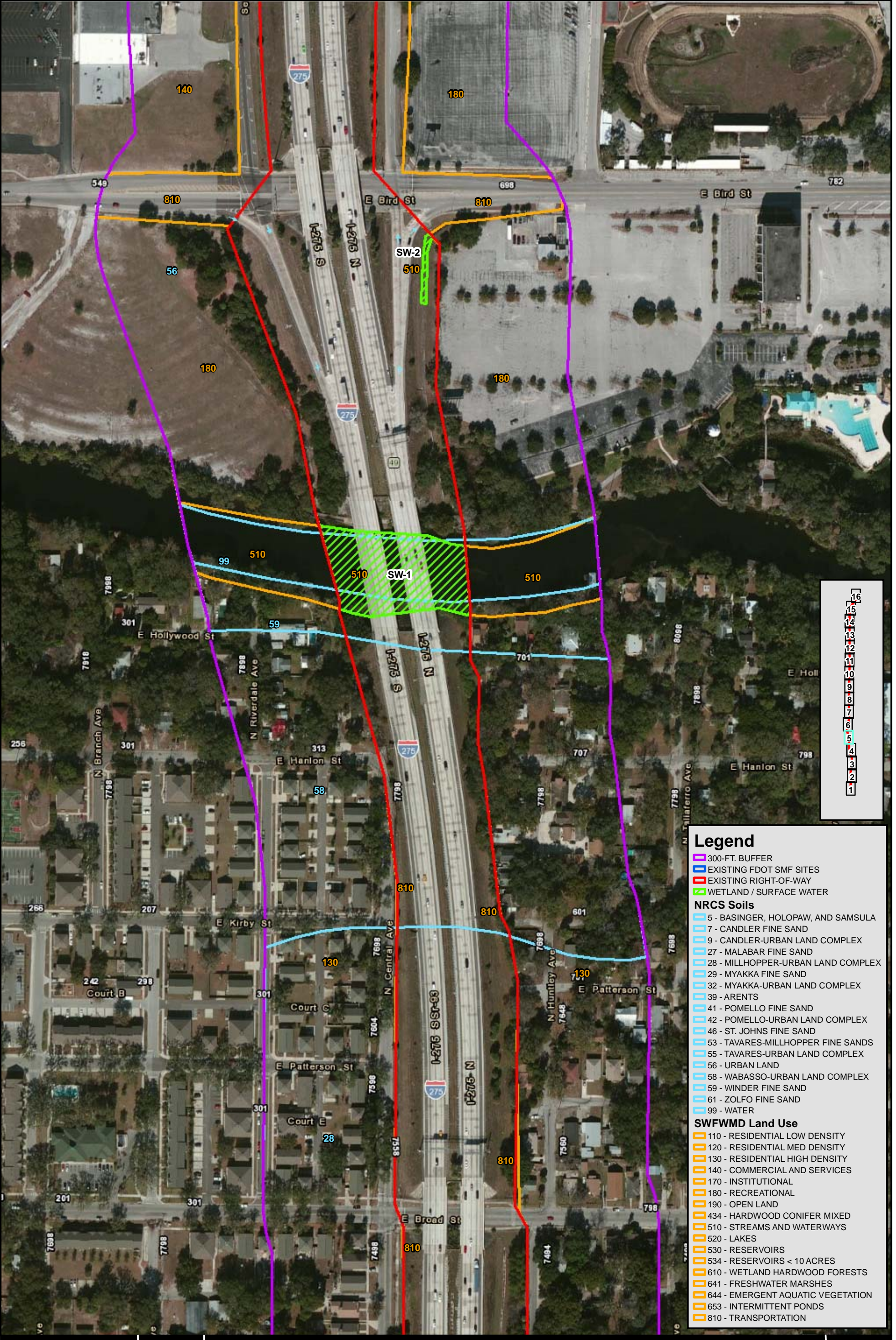
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NRCS Soils

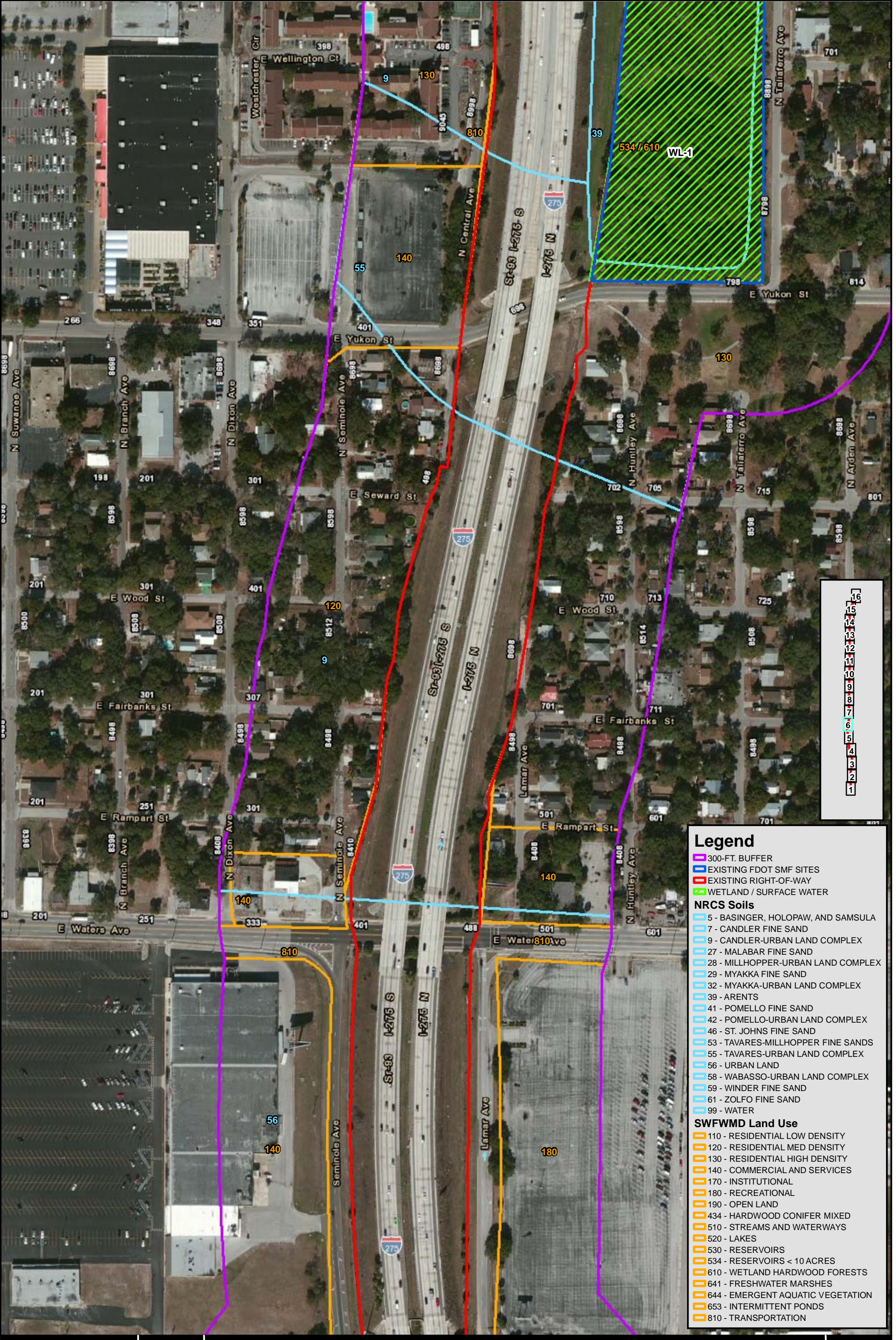
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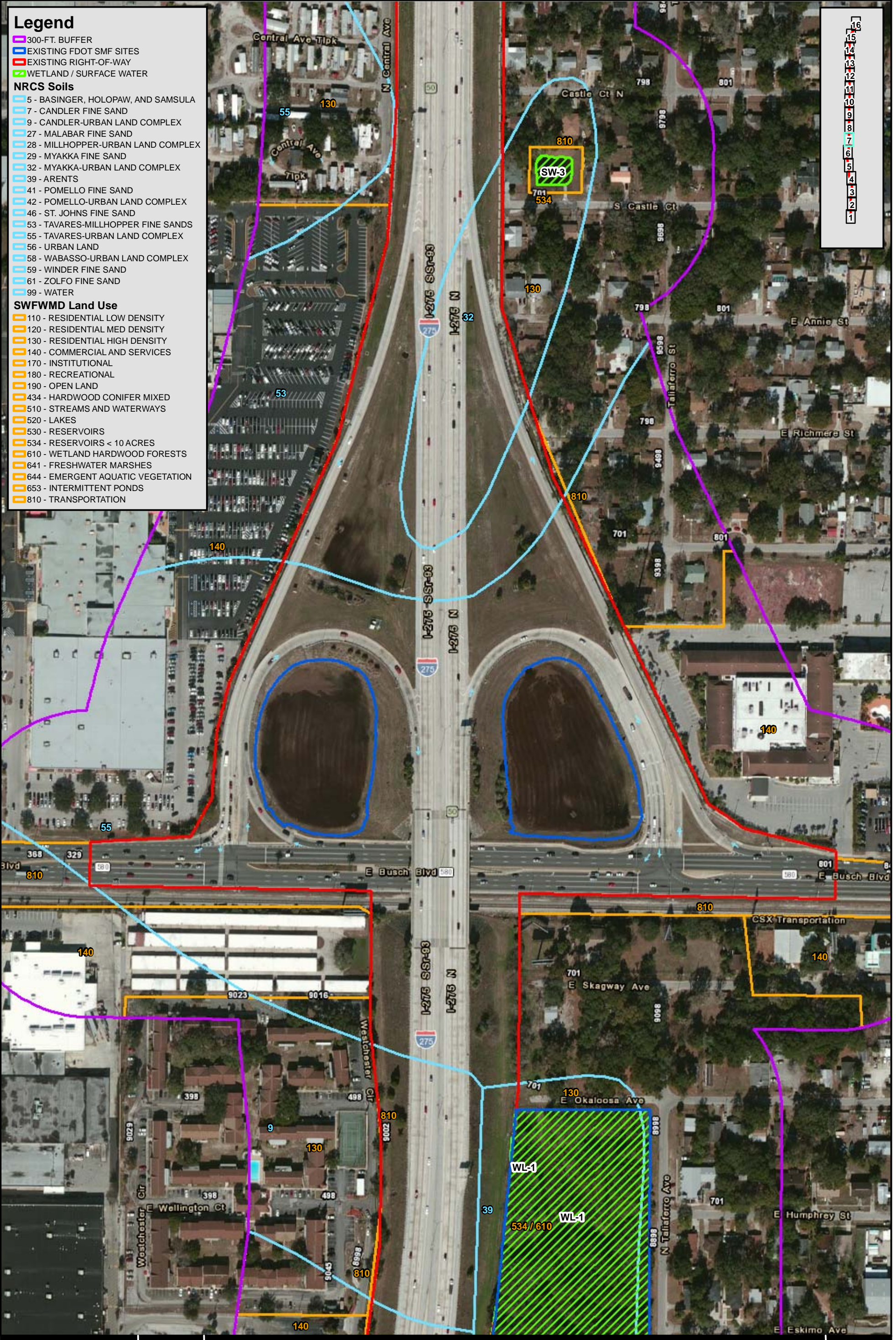
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- 653 - INTERMITTENT PONDS
- 810 - TRANSPORTATION



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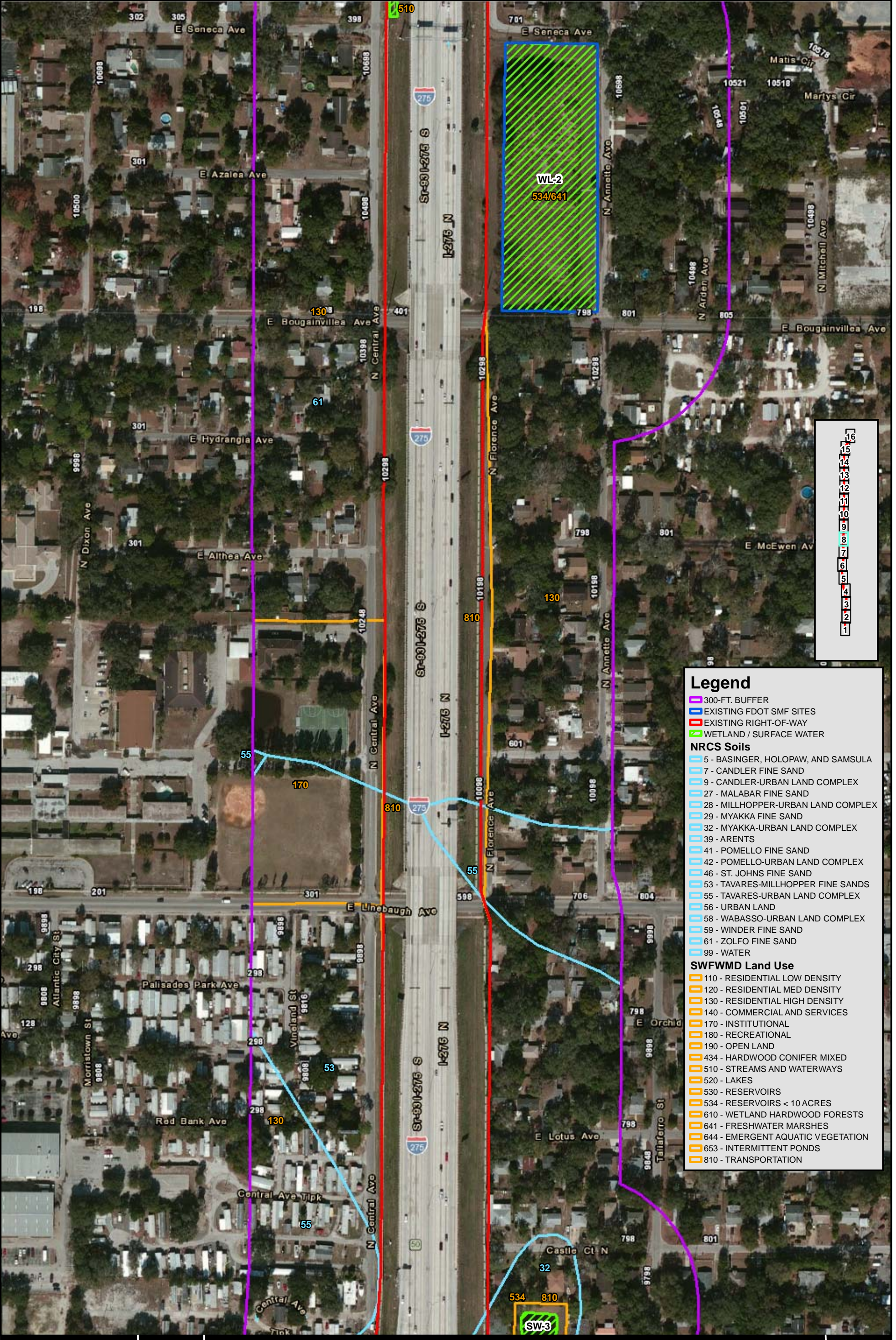
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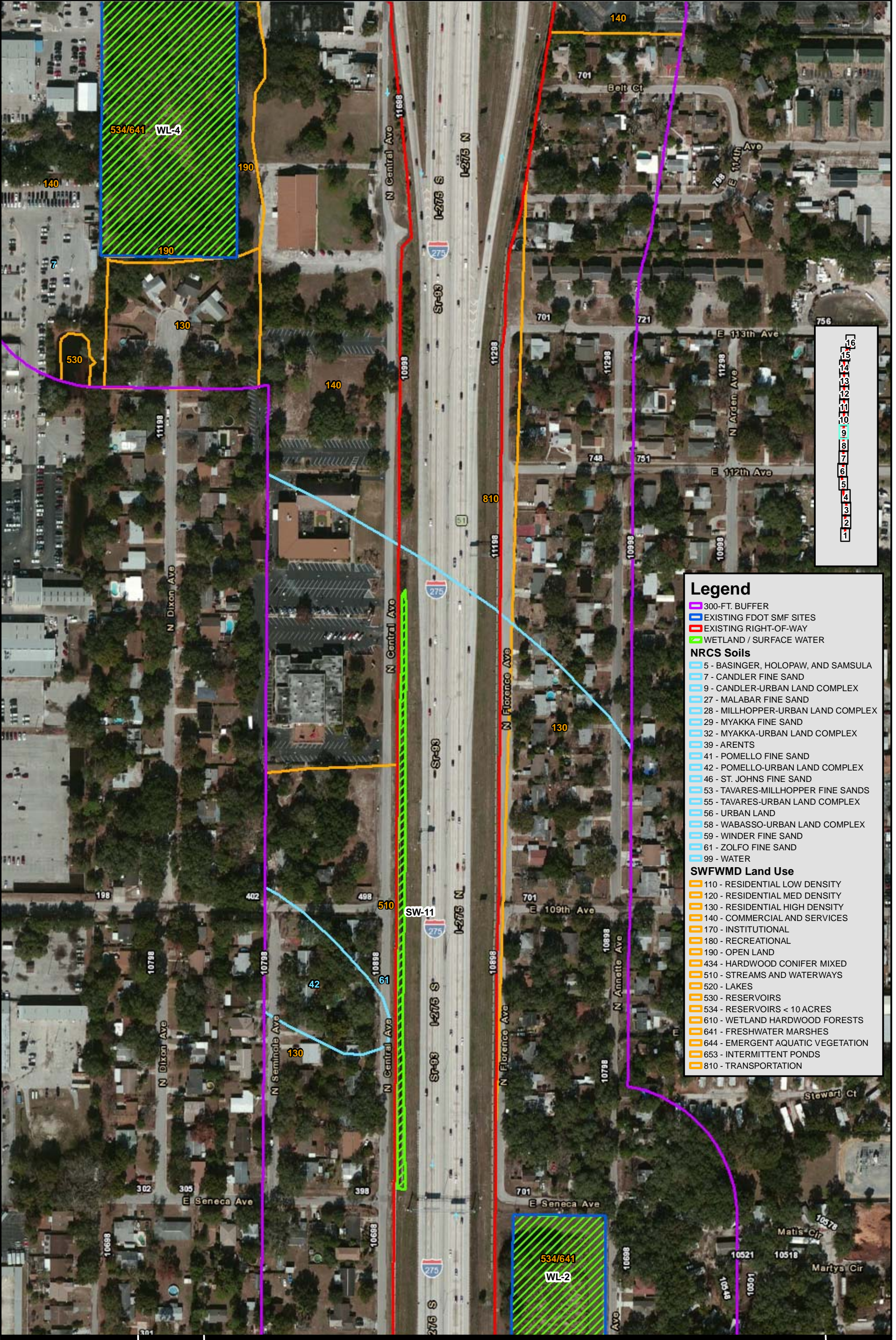
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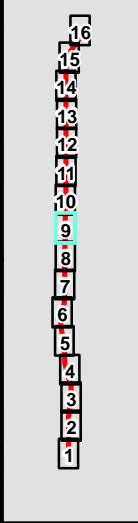
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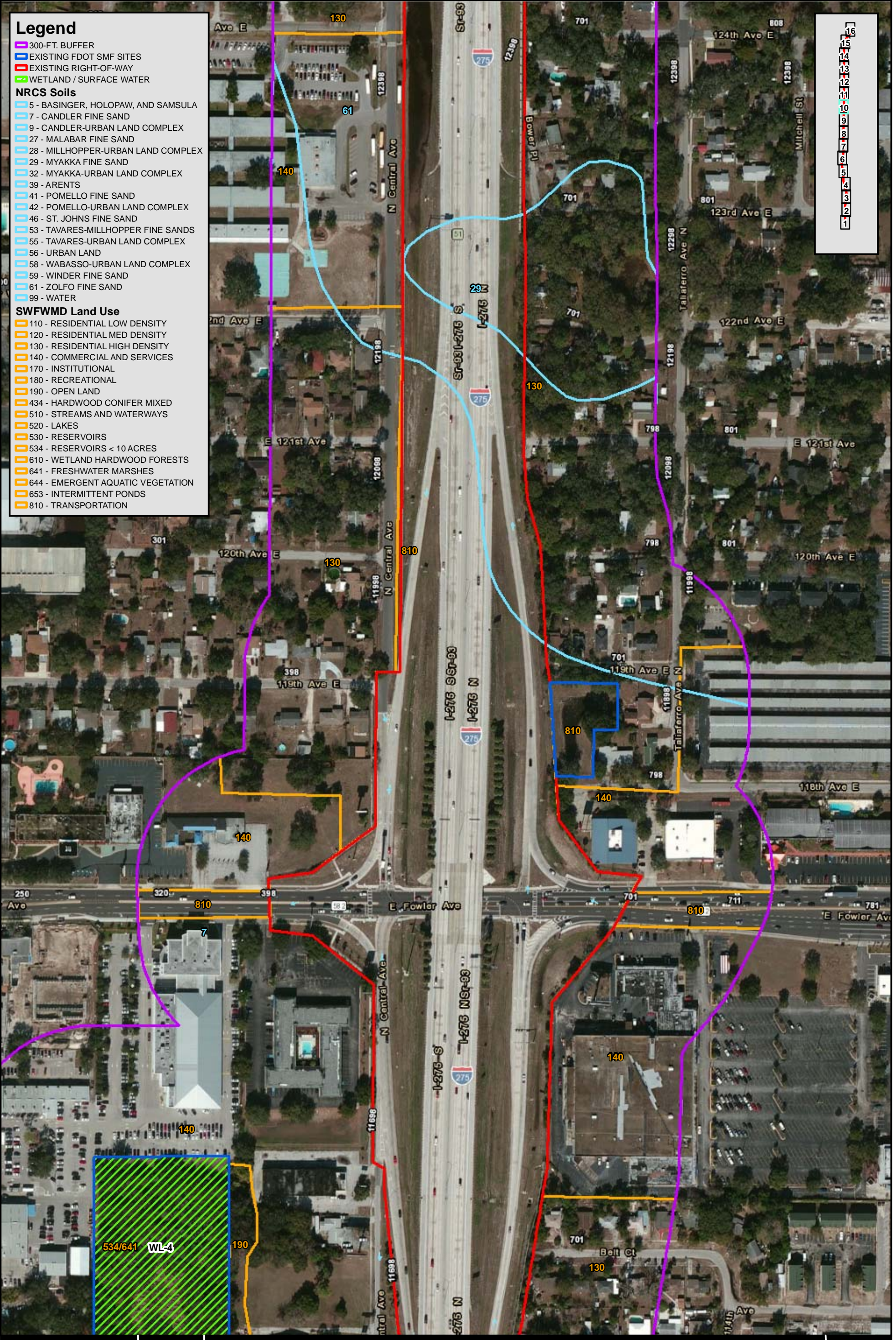
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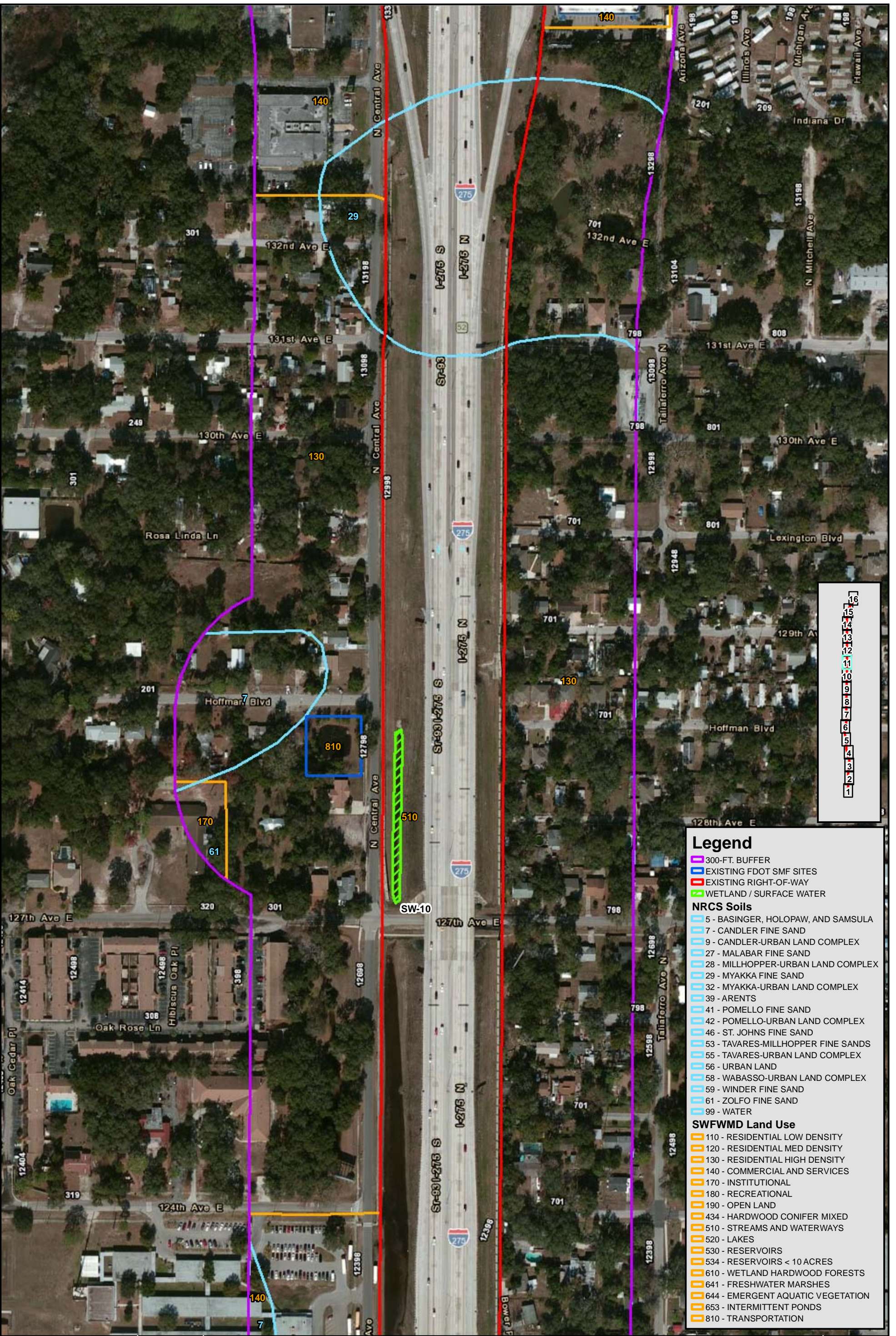
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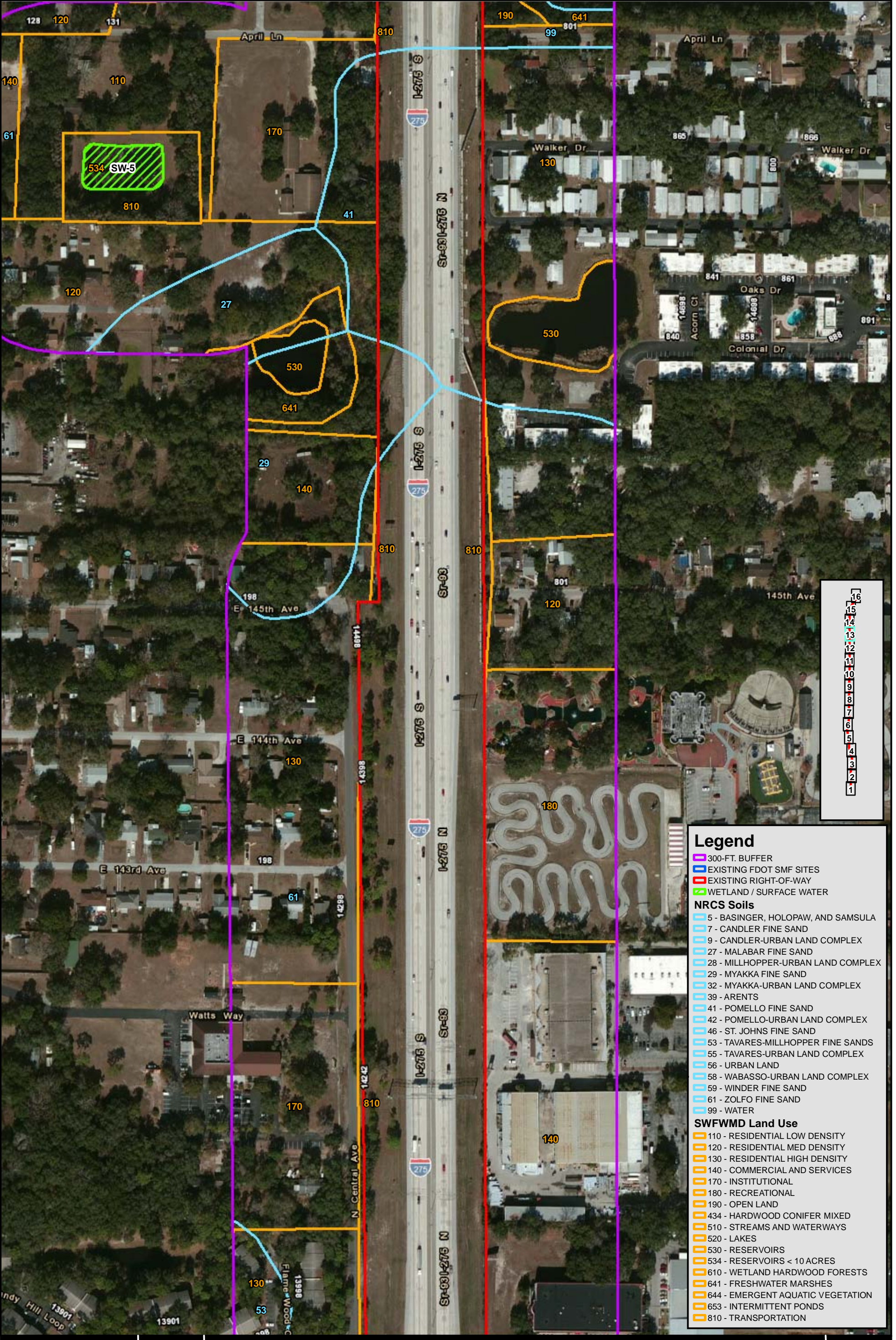
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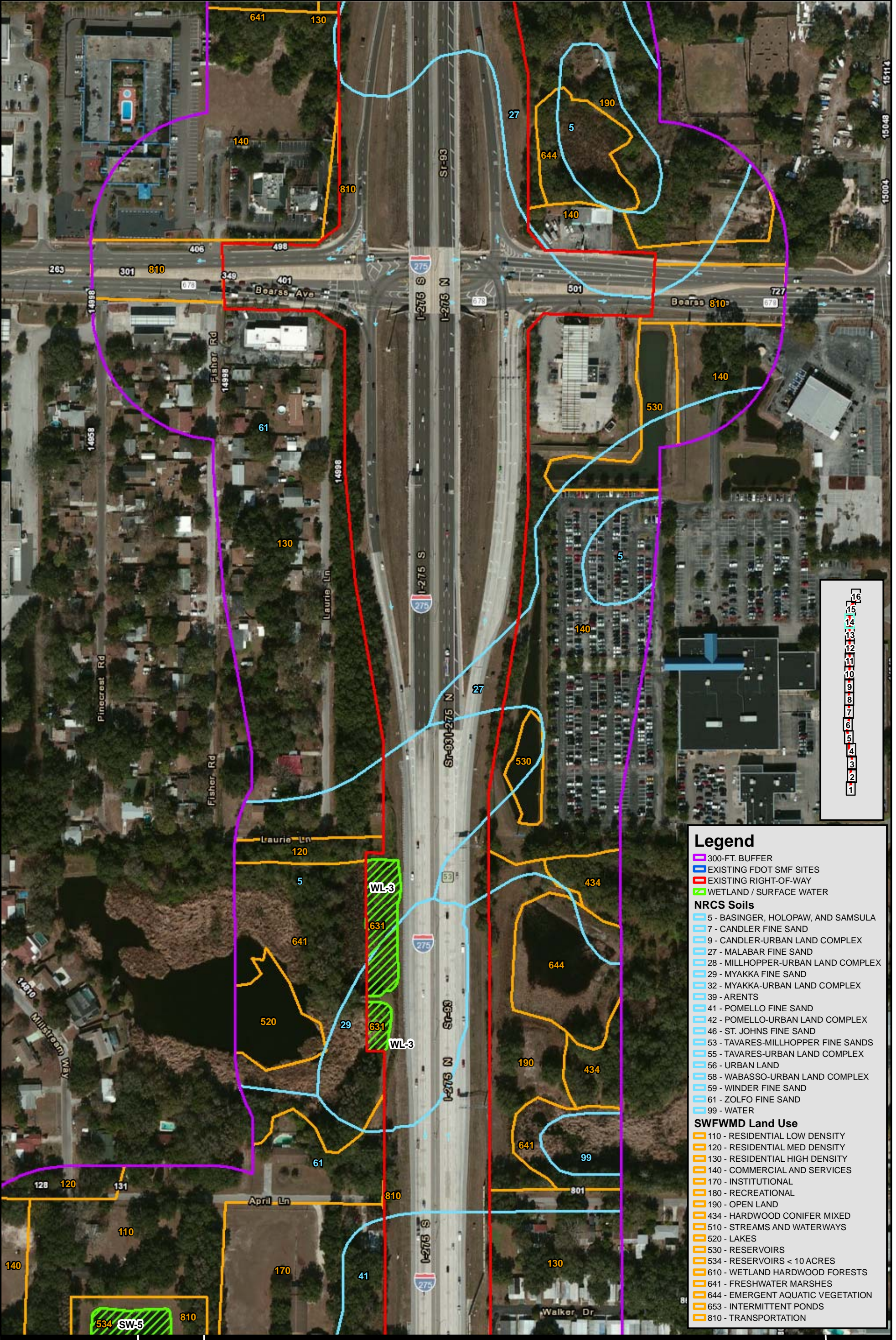
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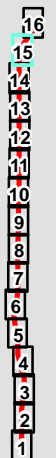
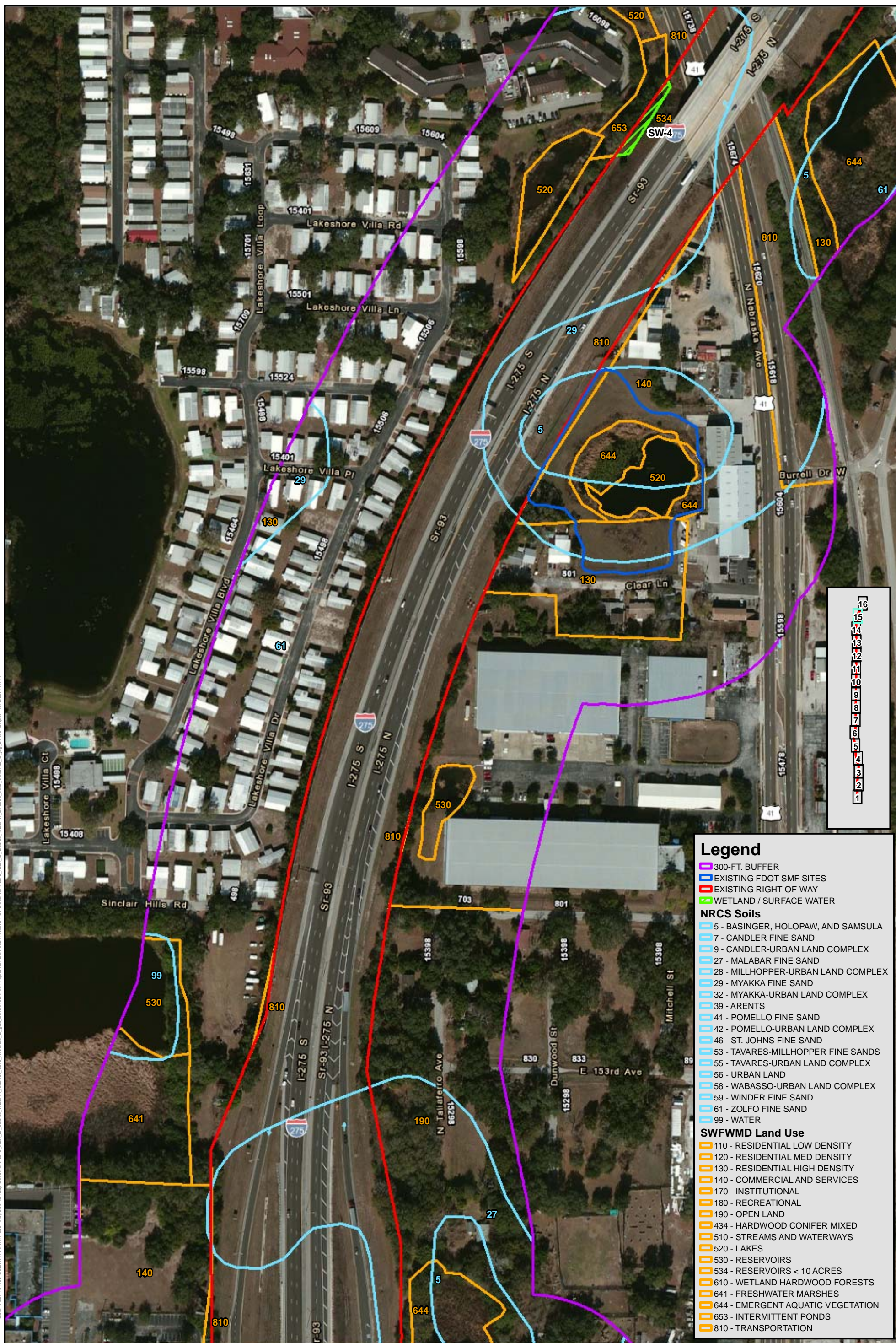
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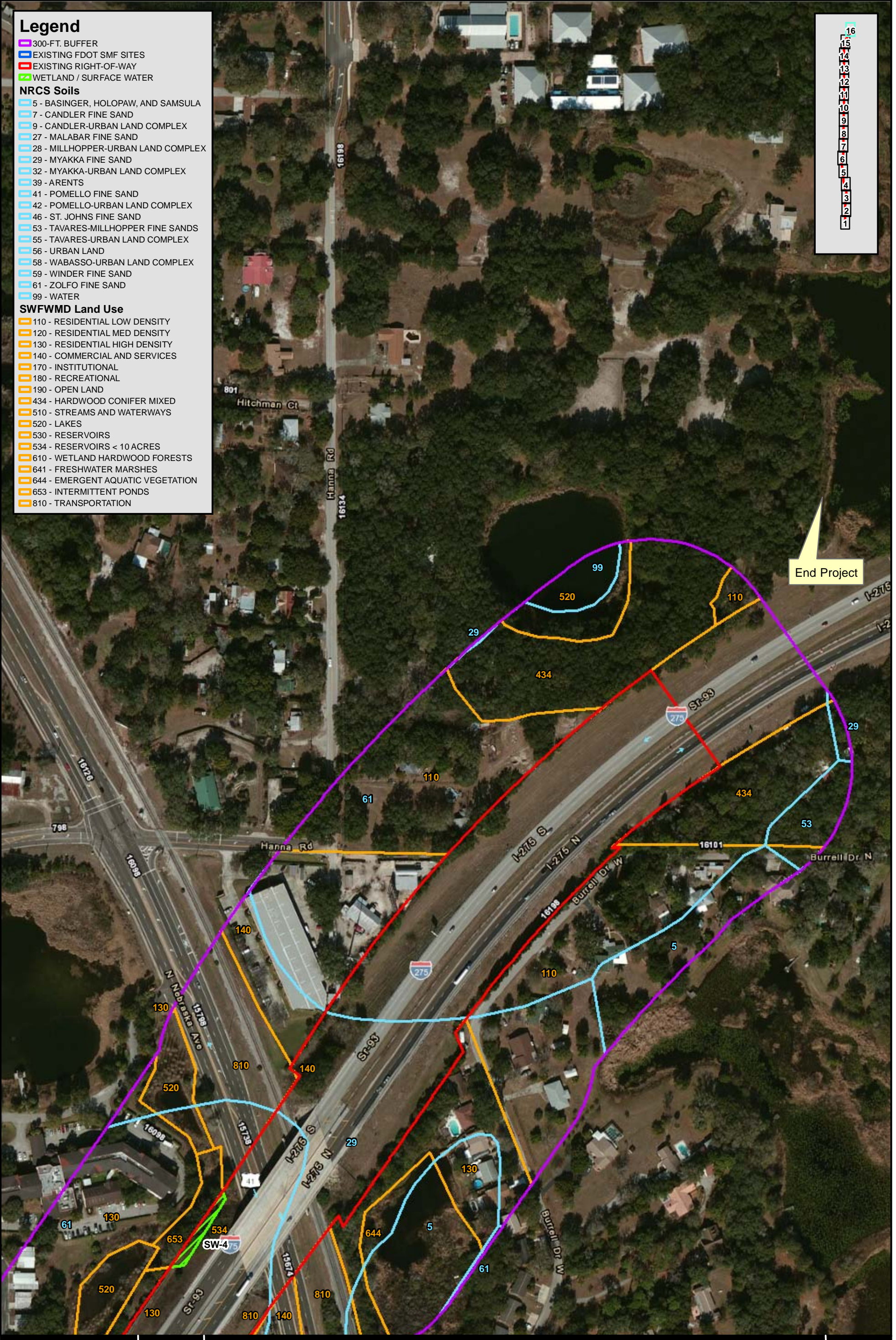


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Appendix B

Representative Photographs



Photo 1. Wetland 1



Photo 2. Wetland 2



Photo 3. Wetland 3



Photo 4. Typical surface water with nuisance exotic vegetation

Appendix C

UMAM Data Sheets

**PART I – Qualitative Description
(See Section 62-345.400, F.A.C.)**

Site/Project Name I-275 PD&E Study from MLK Boulevard to North of Bearss Avenue		Application Number	Assessment Area Name or Number WL 3
FLUCCs code 631 - Wetland Shrub	Further classification (optional) PSS1	Impact or Mitigation Site? Impact	Assessment Area Size 0.64 acres
Basin/Watershed Name/Number Hillsborough River	Affected Waterbody (Class) Class III	Special Classification (i.e.OFW, AP, other local/state/federal designation of importance) N/A	
Geographic relationship to and hydrologic connection with wetlands, other surface water, uplands This wetland is adjacent to I-275 and is connected to a larger system that continues to the west. This wetland receives roadway runoff from I-275. Surrounding upland habitat primarily consists of residential properties.			
Assessment area description This system consists primarily of Carolina willow (<i>Salix caroliniana</i>), Peruvian primrose willow (<i>Ludwigia peruviana</i>) and wax myrtle (<i>Myrica cerifera</i>).			
Significant nearby features I-275	Uniqueness (considering the relative rarity in relation to the regional landscape.) None		
Functions Water filtration and conveyance, limited forage and cover for birds and mammals.	Mitigation for previous permit/other historic use N/A		
Anticipated Wildlife Utilization Based on Literature Review (List of species that are representative of the assessment area and reasonably expected to be found) small mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and wading birds	Anticipated Utilization by Listed Species (List species, their legal classification (E, T, SSC), type of use, and intensity of use of the assessment area) wading birds (SSC) and wood stork (E) for foraging		
Observed Evidence of Wildlife Utilization (List species directly observed, or other signs such as tracks, droppings, casings, nests, etc.): None observed.			
Additional relevant factors: None observed.			
Assessment conducted by: Angel Wynn & Robert Mrykalo		Assessment date(s): 15-Jul-14	

PART II – Quantification of Assessment Area (impact or mitigation)
(See Sections 62-345.500 and .600, F.A.C.)

Site/Project Name I-275 PD&E Study from MLK Boulevard to North of Bearss Avenue	Application Number	Assessment Area Name or Number WL 3
Impact or Mitigation Impact 0.64 acres	Assessment conducted by: Angel Wynn & Robert Mrykalo	Assessment date: 15-Jul-14

Scoring Guidance
The scoring of each indicator is based on what would be suitable for the type of wetland or surface water assessed

Optimal (10)	Moderate(7)	Minimal (4)	Not Present (0)
Condition is optimal and fully supports wetland/surface water functions	Condition is less than optimal, but sufficient to maintain most wetland/surface waterfunctions	Minimal level of support of wetland/surface water functions	Condition is insufficient to provide wetland/surface water functions

.500(6)(a) Location and Landscape Support w/o pres or current 3 with 0	This wetland is adjacent to I-275 and is connected to a larger system that continues to the west. This wetland receives roadway runoff from I-275. Surrounding upland habitat primarily consists of residential properties. Wetland access to outside habitats limited by nearby roadways, residential properties, and fenced right-of-way.
.500(6)(b)Water Environment (n/a for uplands) w/o pres or current 4 with 0	Hydrologic indicators present such as standing water. Surface water present and level was appropriate for time of year. Minor amounts of trash in wetland. Poor water clarity.
.500(6)(c)Community structure 1. Vegetation and/or 2. Benthic Community w/o pres or current 5 with 0	This system consists primarily of Carolina willow (<i>Salix caroliniana</i>), Peruvian primrose willow (<i>Ludwigia peruviana</i>) and wax myrtle (<i>Myrica cerifera</i>). Condition of natural vegetation was good. Invasive/exotic vegetation was observed in moderate quantities. Plant community moderately disturbed. Wetlands may provide moderate wildlfie habitat.

Score = sum of above scores/30 (if uplands, divide by 20) current or w/o pres 0.40 with 0

If preservation as mitigation, Preservation adjustment factor = Adjusted mitigation delta =

For impact assessment areas FL = delta x acres = = 0.26

Delta = [with-current] 0.40

If mitigation Time lag (t-factor) = Risk factor =

For mitigation assessment areas RFG = delta/(t-factor x risk) =

Appendix D

ETDM Programming Screen Summary Report

Agency Environmental Comments

#13854 I-275 from north of MLK Jr. Blvd. to north of Bearss Ave.

District: District 7

County: Hillsborough

Planning Organization: FDOT District 7

Plan ID: Not Available

Federal Involvement: Maintain Federal Eligibility Federal Permit Federal Action Federal Funding

Phase: Programming Screen

From: north of MLK Jr Blvd (SR 574)

To: north of Bearss Ave (SR 678)

Financial Management No.: 43182112201

Contact Information: Kirk Bogen (813) 975-6448 kirk.bogen@dot.state.fl.us

Snapshot Data From: Project Re-Published 2/07/2014

Alternative #1 - Alternative 1

Project Effects Overview for Alternative #1 - Alternative 1

Issue	Degree of Effect	Organization	Date Reviewed
Social and Economic			
Land Use Changes	3 Moderate	Hillsborough County MPO	09/15/2013
Land Use Changes	1 Enhanced	FDOT District 7	09/13/2013
Land Use Changes	0 None	FL Department of Economic Opportunity	09/13/2013
Social	3 Moderate	US Environmental Protection Agency	09/15/2013
Social	3 Moderate	FDOT District 7	09/13/2013
Social	3 Moderate	Hillsborough County MPO	09/15/2013
Social	3 Moderate	Federal Highway Administration	09/12/2013
Relocation Potential	2 Minimal	FDOT District 7	09/13/2013
Relocation Potential	3 Moderate	Federal Highway Administration	09/12/2013
Farmlands	2 Minimal	Natural Resources Conservation Service	08/13/2013
Aesthetic Effects	2 Minimal	FDOT District 7	09/13/2013
Economic	3 Moderate	Hillsborough County MPO	09/15/2013
Economic	1 Enhanced	FL Department of Economic Opportunity	09/13/2013
Economic	1 Enhanced	FDOT District 7	09/13/2013
Mobility	1 Enhanced	FDOT District 7	09/13/2013
Mobility	3 Moderate	Hillsborough County MPO	09/15/2013
Cultural			
Section 4(f) Potential	3 Moderate	Federal Highway Administration	09/12/2013
Historic and Archaeological Sites	3 Moderate	FL Department of State	09/13/2013
Historic and Archaeological Sites	3 Moderate	Federal Highway Administration	09/12/2013
Recreation Areas	2 Minimal	US Environmental Protection Agency	09/14/2013
Recreation Areas	2 Minimal	FL Department of Environmental Protection	09/11/2013
Recreation Areas	0 None	Southwest Florida Water Management District	09/09/2013
Recreation Areas	3 Moderate	Federal Highway Administration	09/12/2013
Natural			
Wetlands	2 Minimal	National Marine Fisheries Service	08/12/2013
Wetlands	2 Minimal	US Environmental Protection Agency	09/15/2013
Wetlands	2 Minimal	FL Department of Environmental Protection	09/11/2013

Wetlands	2	Minimal	Southwest Florida Water Management District	09/09/2013
Wetlands	3	Moderate	US Army Corps of Engineers	09/05/2013
Water Quality and Quantity	2	Minimal	FL Department of Environmental Protection	09/11/2013
Water Quality and Quantity	3	Moderate	US Environmental Protection Agency	09/15/2013
Water Quality and Quantity	3	Moderate	Southwest Florida Water Management District	09/09/2013
Floodplains	3	Moderate	Southwest Florida Water Management District	09/09/2013
Floodplains	2	Minimal	US Environmental Protection Agency	09/15/2013
Wildlife and Habitat	2	Minimal	FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	08/26/2013
Wildlife and Habitat	2	Minimal	Southwest Florida Water Management District	09/09/2013
Coastal and Marine	2	Minimal	National Marine Fisheries Service	08/12/2013
Coastal and Marine	2	Minimal	Southwest Florida Water Management District	09/09/2013
Physical				
Noise	3	Moderate	Federal Highway Administration	09/12/2013
Air Quality	2	Minimal	US Environmental Protection Agency	09/15/2013
Contamination	2	Minimal	FL Department of Environmental Protection	09/11/2013
Contamination	2	Minimal	Southwest Florida Water Management District	09/09/2013
Contamination	2	Minimal	US Environmental Protection Agency	09/15/2013
Infrastructure	2	Minimal	Southwest Florida Water Management District	09/09/2013
Navigation	2	Minimal	US Army Corps of Engineers	09/05/2013
Navigation	2	Minimal	US Coast Guard	10/29/2013
Special Designations				
Special Designations	2	Minimal	US Environmental Protection Agency	09/15/2013
Special Designations	2	Minimal	Southwest Florida Water Management District	09/09/2013

ETAT Reviews: Social and Economic

Land Use Changes

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), and FDOT Community Liaison Coordinator (CLC), and recommends a Degree of Effect (DOE) of Moderate.

The EST GIS analysis identified high density residential, transportation, commercial and services, and medium density residential as the four major existing land uses within the 500-foot buffer distance. The City of Tampa Adopted 2025 Future Land Use Map (FLUM) effective July 29, 2012 shows land use from north of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) to Fowler Avenue. The future land use within these limits is categorized as Residential 10 & 20, Urban Mixed Use, Public/ Semi-Public, Recreational/ Open Space, and Community Commercial. The Unincorporated Hillsborough County Adopted 2025 FLUM effective March 12, 2012 shows land use from Fowler Avenue to north of Bearss Avenue. The future land use within these limits is categorized as Residential 1, 4, and 12 and Office Commercial. There are four Census Designated Places, Tampa, Lake Magdalene, Lutz, and

University, within the project area. This project is being conducted in order to be consistent with other managed lane/express lane studies being conducted along I-275 to the south and other interstates within the Tampa Bay region.

The Hillsborough County MPO stated the Tampa Comprehensive Plan identifies Nebraska Avenue as an Urban Redevelopment Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) and Florida Avenue as a mixed-use corridor village. Studies of both of these roads have been conducted by the MPO, City of Tampa, and the FDOT which should be considered during development of this project. The future land use categories surrounding the project are mostly residential with some mixed-use parcels. This project runs through several neighborhoods now protected under the Executive Order on Environmental Justice and impacts should be evaluated during the PD&E. The City of Tampa recently completed the InVision Tampa Master Plan, which focuses on Downtown, the western bank of the Hillsborough River and Nebraska Avenue. The plan proposed Center City streets are neighborhood-focused, connected and calm, creating the environment for new businesses, residential investment, and safe pedestrian and bicycle access around town. This project could attract new development in the Downtown core and reduce congestion for motorists traveling long distances into reach Downtown. Study of the I-275 corridor should include the potential for future Transit Oriented Development sites that have currently been identified by the MPO and The Planning Commission.

The Florida DEO stated the project is compatible with the community's development goals and the Comprehensive Plan for Hillsborough County and the City of Tampa. The City wants to better understand the entrances and exits for the managed lanes, ensure the managed lanes will not preclude a transit corridor within the interstate right-of-way, and ensure the managed lane study will consider the study to convert Tampa and Florida Avenues to two-way street in line with the City's In-Vision Tampa Center City Plan. The project is not within an area of critical state concern (ACSC), does not encroach a military base, and is not within a coastal high hazard area (CHHA).

The FDOT CLC identified four Census Designated Places, Tampa, Lake Magdalene, Lutz, and University, within the project area. The City of Tampa Adopted 2025 Future Land Use Map (FLUM), effective July 29, 2012, identifies future land uses from MLK Jr. Blvd. to Fowler Ave. categorized as Residential 10 & 20, Urban Mixed Use, Public/Semi-Public, Recreational/Open Space, and Community Commercial. The Unincorporated Hillsborough County Adopted 2025 FLUM, effective March 12, 2012, shows future land uses from Fowler Ave. to north of Bearss Ave. categorized as Residential 1, 4 & 12 and Office Commercial. A Degree of Effect of Enhanced was selected because the project supports the future land use designations by providing access and connectivity to the areas that are designated as residential, neighborhood activity centers, employment centers and commercial areas.

The project supports the future land use designations by providing access and connectivity to the areas that are designated as residential, neighborhood activity centers, employment centers and commercial areas.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 09/15/2013 by Wally Blain, Hillsborough County MPO

Coordination Document: PD&E Support Document As Per PD&E Manual

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Enterprise Zones, parallel corridors of Florida and Nebraska Avenue

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The Tampa Comprehensive Plan identifies Nebraska Avenue as an Urban Redevelopment CRA and Florida Avenue as a mixed-use corridor village. The impact of the proposed project on the economic viability of these corridors should be considered during the PD&E phase. The proposed project could potentially be a benefit if implemented in coordination with "road-diet" treatments on Nebraska and Florida or the two-way conversion of Tampa and Florida. Studies of both roadways have been conducted by the MPO, City of Tampa, and the Florida Department of Transportation which should be considered during development of this project.

The future land use categories surrounding this project are mostly residential with some mixed-use parcels. This project runs through several neighborhoods impacted by the Interstate's original construction in 1962 and are now protected under the Executive Order on Environmental Justice. The impact of this project on the viability of these neighborhoods should be considered during the PD&E

Additionally, HART routes operating on Florida Avenue and Nebraska Avenue are two of the highest ridership routes in the county. Study recommendations should be coordinated with HART in ensuring transit access for local trip making and options for regional commuters. HART has recently begun operation of a BRT line- known as MetroRapid - running on Nebraska Avenue from Fletcher Avenue to Downtown Tampa with plans for an east/west route running on Hillsborough Avenue and intersecting with the existing MetroRapid line on Nebraska Avenue.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 1 *Enhanced* assigned 09/13/2013 by Wendy Lasher, FDOT District 7

Coordination Document: No Involvement

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Identified Resources:

Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO's) 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
Adopted 2025 Future Land Use Map - Unincorporated Hillsborough County (effective March 12, 2012)
Adopted 2025 Future Land Use Map - City of Tampa (effective July 29, 2012)

100-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Planned Unit Developments (12)

Census Designated Places:

Tampa
Lake Magdalene
Lutz
University

200-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Planned Unit Developments (15)

Census Designated Places:

Tampa
Lake Magdalene
Lutz
University

500-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Planned Unit Developments (22)

Census Designated Places:

Tampa
Lake Magdalene
Lutz
University

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Existing Land Uses within the 200-foot project buffer area include:

Description	Acres	Percentage
Transportation	304.6	65.23%
Residential High Density	85.9	18.39%
Commercial and Services	18.3	3.91%
Residential Medium Density	10.3	2.2%
Residential Low Density	8.4	1.79%
Other Open Lands (Rural)	7.0	1.5%
Hardwood Conifer Mixed	6.6	1.41%
Freshwater Marshes	6.3	1.35%
Open Land	5.4	1.16%
Recreational	5.2	1.11%

Institutional, Emergent Aquatic Vegetation, Intermittent Ponds, Lakes, Reservoirs, Streams and Lake Swamps (Bottomland), and Streams and Waterways are the majority of the remaining land uses with less than 1% each.

Source: 2009 SWFWMD Florida Land Use and Land Cover

The City of Tampa Adopted 2025 Future Land Use Map (FLUM) effective July 29, 2012 shows land use from north of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) to Fowler Avenue. The future land use within these limits is categorized as Residential 10 & 20, Urban Mixed Use, Public/ Semi-Public, Recreational/ Open Space, and Community Commercial. The Unincorporated Hillsborough County Adopted 2025 FLUM effective March 12, 2012 shows land use from Fowler Avenue to north of Bearss Avenue. The future land use within these limits is categorized as Residential 1, 4, and 12 and Office Commercial.

The project is not included in the FDOT's Approved Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Highway Component 2035 Cost Feasible Plan, dated December 2009. The project is not identified as Cost Feasible in the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO's) 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), adopted in December 2009 (with amendments in 2010, 2011, and 2012). However, much of the corridor is identified in the LRTP as an unfunded need. This includes the following segments:

I-275 - south of Osborne to north of Fowler - 8 lanes to 10 lanes + 2 special use lanes
I-275 - north of Fowler to north of Fletcher - 6 lanes to 8 lanes + 2 special use lanes

I-275 - north of Fletcher to I-75 - 6 lanes to 8 lanes + 2 special use lanes

The project is being evaluated as part of several other managed lane projects within the Tampa Bay region along the majority of I-275, I-75, and I-4 within District 7.

As an SIS facility and part of the regional roadway network, I-275 is included in the Regional 2035 LRTP developed by the West Central Florida MPO's Chairs' Coordinating Committee (CCC) and adopted in January 2010. If the managed lanes are found to be feasible, FDOT will work with the Hillsborough County MPO to amend the 2035 Cost Feasible LRTP to include this project and make sure it is consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan.

A Degree of Effect of Enhanced was selected because this project supports the future land use designations by providing access and connectivity to the areas that are designated as residential, neighborhood activity centers, employment centers, and commercial areas. The project is anticipated to accommodate increased travel demand resulting from area population and employment growth.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 0 None assigned 09/13/2013 by Chris Wiglesworth, FL Department of Economic Opportunity

Coordination Document: No Involvement

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Comprehensive Plan for Unincorporated Hillsborough County, effective August 2008 and the City of Tampa Comprehensive Plan, effective February 2009

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The Project is compatible with community s development goals and the Comprehensive Plan for Hillsborough County and the City of Tampa.

The City of Tampa has the following comments: The City recognizes that the Ultimate Build Out Plan for the Tampa Interstate includes additional lanes and that managed lanes may be included in that expansion. The City wants to play an active role in understanding the design and implications of the project. In particular, the City wants to better understand the entrances and exits for the managed lanes project. Also, the City wants to ensure that the managed lanes concept will not preclude a transit corridor within the interstate ROW, if in the future a transit study shows that it is to be a cost-effective solution. These are considerations that can be brought forward into the study, and they highlight the City s interest in participating. Finally, the City is continuing to move forward on a study to convert Tampa & Florida Avenues to two-way streets, in line with recommendations of the City s In-Vision Tampa Center City Plan. The City of Tampa wants to ensure the managed lanes study will take this proposed improvement into consideration.

The project is consistent with the Future Transportation Map for the City of Tampa and Hillsborough County because the project is consistent with the MPO s TIP Future Needs Plan. The MPO TIP Plan is adopted by reference in the City and County Comprehensive Plans.

The following Future Land Use Map categories surround the project: City of Tampa: Residential-35; Residential-10; Community Mixed Use-35; Community Commercial; Public/Semi-Public; Recreation/Open Space. Hillsborough County: Office-Commercial; Residential-12; Residential-2. There are seven parks are within mile of the project. These projects include the following parks: Cheney Park, Sulfur Springs Pool Park, Seminole Garden Center, Riverview Terrace Playground, River Tower Park, American Legions Seminole Center, Angus Goss Memorial Pol. FDOT should analyze impacts to these 4(f) resources.

Other planning items that would be affected or be enhanced by the project is that the project may facilitate improved interstate access to the Port of Tampa, which is located approximately five miles from the project.

The project is not within an area of critical state concern (ACSC); does not encroach a military base; and is not within a coastal high hazard area (CHHA).

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Social

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 3 Moderate assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), FDOT Community Liaison Coordinator (CLC), and Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and recommends a Degree of Effect (DOE) of Moderate.

The EST GIS analysis also identified one religious center, three social service facilities, and two mobile home and RV parks within the 200-foot buffer distance, and one community center, one fire station, one health care facility, nine additional religious centers, seven additional social service facilities, and three additional mobile home and RV parks within the 500-foot buffer distance. There is a paved trail that connects the Sulphur Springs Park to the River Tower Park. The two parks are owned by the City of Tampa and are adjacent to the project. The parks are part of the Tampa Beautification Program and SWFWMD Shoreline Restoration Project, and have ongoing restoration projects involving the park facilities.

The EST GIS analysis identified one Census Block group that has a median family income below \$25,000. Within the 500-ft. buffer area, the median family income is between \$19, 336 - \$138,214 and there are 547 households with public assistance. There are 36 Census Block group with a minority population over 40% within the 100-foot buffer distance, 43 additional within the 200-foot buffer distance, and 102 additional within the 500-foot buffer distance.

According to the GIS data, the racial and ethnic characteristics are slightly different in the project area than Hillsborough County as a whole. The project area contains a higher percentage of African-American and Other races compared to the county, and a lower percentage of the White race category. Also, the Hispanic ethnic group percentage is higher than the county. Additional demographic data can be found in the GIS analysis and FDOT CLC comment.

Within the 500-foot buffer area, there are 1,336 people (4.38 percent) who speak English "not well" and 653 people (2.14 percent) that speak English "not at all"; therefore, written translation obligations are expected for this project since the eligible Limited English Proficiency (LEP) language group threshold did constitute 5 percent or more in a project area speaking a language other than English per the FDOT PD&E Manual, Part 1, Chapter 11, Section 11-1.2.4.

Within the 500-foot buffer area, 85% of the households have at least one vehicle available and 364 people take public transportation to work.

The USEPA identified the social elements provided by the EST GIS analysis as well as in the Preliminary Environmental Discussion (PED). The USEPA stated that a noise analysis should be conducted if any noise-sensitive receptors will be impacted and also recommended that public involvement be a key component of project development. The USEPA recommended that the PD&E study include a sociocultural effects analysis study and impacts to residents and the local business community should be avoided or minimized to the extent practicable.

The FHWA identified many of the results of the GIS analyses from the EST. The statistics within the project area identified by the EST indicate that there is substantial presence of individuals with low income or minority status living adjacent to the project area of potential effect (APE). Federal law prohibits disproportionate transportation project impacts (can involve a few individuals or a community) to individuals with low income or minority status.

The FDOT CLC identified several social resources from the EST GIS tool within the 100-foot, 200-foot, and 500-foot buffer areas. According to the GIS data, the racial and ethnic characteristics are slightly different in the project area than Hillsborough County as a whole. The project area contains a higher percentage of African-American and Other races compared to the county, and a lower percentage of the White race category. Also, the Hispanic ethnic group percentage is higher than the county. There are 138 census blocks with 8,339 people within the 500-foot buffer area that contain a minority population greater than 40 percent. Within the 500-foot buffer area, there are 1,336 people (4.38 percent) who speak English "not well" and 653 people (2.14 percent) that speak English "not at all"; therefore, written translation obligations are expected for this project since the eligible Limited English Proficiency (LEP) language group threshold did constitute 5 percent or more in a project area speaking a language other than English per the FDOT PD&E Manual, Part 1, Chapter 11, Section 11-1.2.4. There are numerous community facilities, churches, schools and parks throughout the project area. There are also five mobile home parks/trailer parks within the project area. There is a paved trail that connects the Sulphur Springs Park to the River Tower Park. The two parks are owned by the City of Tampa and are adjacent to the project. The parks are part of the Tampa Beautification Program and SWFWMD Shoreline Restoration Project, and have ongoing restoration projects involving the park facilities.

As stated in the land use issue, the Hillsborough County MPO noted that the Tampa Comprehensive Plan identifies Nebraska Avenue as an Urban Redevelopment Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) and Florida Avenue as a mixed-use corridor village. The City of Tampa recently completed the InVision Tampa Master Plan, which focuses on Downtown, the western bank of the Hillsborough River and Nebraska Avenue. The plan proposed Center City streets are neighborhood-focused, connected and calm, creating the environment for new businesses, residential investment, and safe pedestrian and bicycle access around town. This project could attract new development in the Downtown core and reduce congestion for motorists traveling long distances into reach Downtown. Study of the I-275 corridor should include the potential for future Transit Oriented Development sites that have currently been identified by the MPO and The Planning Commission.

Minor impacts to social cohesion and community character are anticipated since the I-275 corridor already exists and no splitting of neighborhoods or isolated areas is expected to occur since the majority of the project will be located within the existing right of way. The facility will improve accessibility to residential, employment, regional activity centers and tourist destinations in Hillsborough County and within the Tampa metropolitan area. The project

will be developed in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Civil Rights Act of 1968, and Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice). The FDOT will avoid, minimize or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse impacts (DHAI) on minority and low-income communities. The FDOT will conduct public outreach to residents and businesses in the area to solicit impact. Public involvement efforts will include information in Spanish and interpretation at public involvement events and will consider populations that are possibly illiterate. An Environmental Justice analysis, including LEP, will also be further analyzed in Project Development as part of the Sociocultural Effects Evaluation.

Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 09/15/2013 by Madolyn Sanchez, US Environmental Protection Agency

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Resources: Social impacts to residential populations, residential communities, minority or low-income populations, disadvantaged populations, commercial businesses, and other cultural resources such as social, economic, mobility, land use, and aesthetics.

Level of Importance: These resources are of a high level of importance for the proposed project. EPA is assigning a moderate degree of effect for social issues for the proposed project (ETDM #13854).

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The preliminary environmental discussion comments state that the EST GIS analysis identified one 2010 Census Blockgroup that has a median family income below \$25,000 and several 2010 Census Blockgroups that have a minority population over 40% within the 500-foot buffer distance, according to the 2010 Census data. The EST GIS analysis also identified one community center, 10 religious centers, 10 social service facilities, and five mobile home and RV parks within the 500-foot buffer distance. While additional right-of-way may be required depending on the pond site locations and interchange improvements, the project will be designed to avoid/minimize potential impacts to the community fabric/social cohesion to the greatest extent practicable. This project will be developed in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Civil Rights Act of 1968, along with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice), which ensures that minority and/or low-income households are neither disproportionately adversely impacted by major transportation projects, nor denied reasonable access to them by excessive costs or physical barriers (Environmental Protection Agency [EPA], 1994). The proposed project is expected to result in moderate involvement with social resources.

EPA provides the following social comments based upon its review of the project at the programming screen phase: The social impacts listed about must be considered during the PD&E study. In addition, a noise analysis study should be conducted if the project is expected to impact any sensitive receptors. It is recommended that public involvement be a key component of project development. The PD&E study should include a sociocultural effects analysis study which considers all potential social issues and facilities that may be affected by the project. Impact to residents and the local and business community should be avoided or minimized to the best extent practicable.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 09/13/2013 by Wendy Lasher, FDOT District 7

Coordination Document: No Involvement

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Identified Resources:

100-foot Project Buffer Area

Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)

City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)

Planned Unit Developments (12)

Hillsborough River Trail

Greenways Ecological Priority Linkage (Moderate - Low)

Captain William Parker Jackson House (HI11581) - National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) - listed

Associated Outdoor Clubs Inc. (Tampa Greyhound Track)

Cultural Centers (1) - CNL Income FEC Tampa LLC (tourist attraction)

Resource Groups (1) - Sulphur Springs Park

List of Florida Site File Archeological or Historic Sites (5)

200-foot Project Buffer Area

Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)

City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)

Planned Unit Developments (15)

Hillsborough River Trail

Greenways Ecological Priority Linkage (Moderate - Low)

Captain William Parker Jackson House (HI11581) - National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) - listed

Associated Outdoor Clubs Inc. (Tampa Greyhound Track)
Cultural Centers (1) - CNL Income FEC Tampa LLC (tourist attraction)
Resource Groups (2) - Sulphur Springs Park and Riverview Terrace
List of Florida Site File Archeological or Historic Sites (8)
City of Tampa Park
Private Soccer Field on N. Central Ave. just north of Sligh Ave.
St. Clement's Episcopal Church
Diocese of St. Petersburg
University Church of God of Tampa
Iglesia De Dios Pentecostal
Word of Life Tabernacle
Seminole Heights Baptist Church
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Seminole Heights United Methodist Church
Gridiron Properties, LLC.
Tampa Baptist Church
Social Service Facilities (3)
Individual and Family Services (2)
Group Care Facilities (4)
North Central Park (Mobile Home Park) - located on Central Ave. north of Busch Blvd.
Central Trailer Park - located on Central Ave. north of Busch Blvd.
River Tower Restoration Site
HART Transfer Center and School Drop-off Location
Brooks Debartolo Collegiate High School
Most Holy Redeemer School
Gateway Christian Academy
List of Florida Site File Historic Standing Structures (13)
The Salvation Army

500-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Tower Property - Development of Regional Impact (ADA No. 1988-026)
Planned Unit Developments (22)
Hillsborough River Trail
Greenways Ecological Priority Linkage (Moderate - Low)
Associated Outdoor Clubs Inc. (Tampa Greyhound Track)
Cultural Centers (1) - CNL Income FEC Tampa LLC (tourist attraction)
Resource Groups (3) - Sulphur Springs Park, Riverview Terrace and Seminole Heights Historic District
List of Florida Site File Archeological or Historic Sites (11)
City of Tampa Park
Private Soccer Field on N. Central Ave. just north of Sligh Ave.
Boy Scouts of America
Tampa Fire Department and Rescue Station No. 11
US Post Office - Sulphur Springs
Seminole Elementary School
Cleveland Elementary School
Miles Elementary School
University Preschool Academy
Community Charter School of Excellence
Children's Medical Clinic
Angus Goss Pool
St. Clement's Episcopal Church
Diocese of St. Petersburg
University Church of God of Tampa
Iglesia De Dios Pentecostal
Word of Life Tabernacle
Seminole Heights United Methodist Church
North Street Church of Christ
Seminole Heights Baptist Church
Unity Church of Today
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Seminole Presbyterian Church
University Church of God
Word of Life Tabernacle
Most Holy Redeemer Parish
Christian Growth Fellowship
Tampa Baptist Church
Voice of the Seventh Angel Tabernacle
Tampa Evangelical Temple
Metropolitan Community Church of Tampa
Christ Favor Ministry
Individual and Family Services (4)
Tampa Bay Christian Counseling Center

Riverside Senior Center
The Salvation Army
Office of Greenways and Trails - Multi-use Trails Priority (Low)
Group Care Facility (11)
North Central Park (Mobile Home Park) - located on Central Ave. north of Busch Blvd.
Central Trailer Park - located on Central Ave. north of Busch Blvd.
Hidden Oaks Mobile Home Park - located on 138th Ave. E, just east of I-275
Lakeshore Villa, Inc. (Mobile Home Park) - located just west of I-275 just north of Bearss Ave.
Annette Trailer Park - located on N. Annette Ave. just south of 109th Ave.
Captain William Parker Jackson House (HI11581) - National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) - listed
William E. Curtis House (HI03279) - National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) - listed
Seminole Heights Residential District (HI03294) - National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) - listed
List of Florida Site File Historic Standing Structures (122)
River Tower Restoration Site
HART Transfer Center and School Drop-off Location
Brooks Debartolo Collegiate High School
Most Holy Redeemer School
Gateway Christian Academy
Social Service Facilities (7)

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Comments on Effects to Resources:

It should be noted that the Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis indicates 20 Census Block Groups with households that have public assistance income, one Census Block Group with a median family income less than \$25,000, 138 Census Block Groups with a minority population greater than 40%, and a population that speaks English "Not Well" or "Not at All" within the 500-foot project buffer area. These communities are not concentrated in one area, but are throughout the entire project corridor.

The first table below presents the demographic in the 500-foot project buffer area and in Hillsborough County. According to the EST GIS analysis results, the racial and ethnic characteristics are slightly different in the project area than Hillsborough County as a whole. The project area contains a higher percentage of the African-American and Other races compared to the county, and a lower percentage of the White race category. Similarly, the Hispanic ethnic group percentage is higher than that of Hillsborough County.

The second table below presents the income statistics of households in the 500-foot project buffer area and shows that some households have fallen below poverty level within the past 12 months and/or have public assistance income.

Demographic/500-foot Buffer Area/ Hillsborough County

White (Race) / 40% / 71%

African-American (Race) / 22% / 17%

"Other" (Race) / 9% / 5%

Hispanic (Ethnic Group) / 28% / 25%

Source: US Census Bureau (2010 US Census)

**"Other" includes Asian, Native American, Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander Alone & Other Race.

Income/500-foot Buffer Area

Median Family Income / \$19,336 - \$138,214

Households in the past 12 months below poverty level / 2,369

Households with Public Assistance Income / 547

Source: US Census Bureau (2010 ACS)

Minority Population Greater than 40%:

There are 138 census blocks with 8,339 people within the 500-foot buffer area that contain a minority population greater than 40%. These census blocks are located throughout the entire length of the project.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Accommodations:

Based on 2010 American Community Survey data, within the project area (500-foot buffer area) there are 1,336 people (4.38 percent) who speak English "not well" and 653 people (2.14 percent) that speak English "not at all." Therefore, written translation obligations are expected for this project since the eligible Limited English Proficiency (LEP) language group threshold did constitute 5 percent or more in a project area speaking a language other than English per the FDOT PD&E Manual, Part 1, Chapter 11, Section 11-1.2.4. The project also has 1,000 persons or more in the project area that speak a language other than English.

This project is located in the communities of Lake Magdalene, Lutz, Tampa, and University. A field review was conducted on December 18, 2012, where social resources were verified. There are numerous community facilities, churches, schools, and parks throughout the entire project area. There are also five mobile home parks (MHP)/ trailer parks located within the project area. The Lakeshore Villa MHP is adjacent to I-275 on the west side of the road just north of Bearss Avenue. This MHP has a higher population of elderly persons and those who speak English "not well". The Seminole Heights National Historic District abuts I-275 on the west side north and south of Hillsborough Avenue between Osborne Avenue and Hannah Avenue.

The Hillsborough River Trail is listed in the EST within the 100-ft. buffer area, but according to the FDEP website, the Hillsborough River Paddling Trail ends east of the project area at Rowlett Park (River Mile 30) so this part of the River is not a designated paddling trail.

There is a paved trail that connects the Sulphur Springs Park (east of I-275 where the gazebo and Springs Pool are located) to the River Tower Park (west of I-275 where the Sulphur Spring Water Tower is located). This is a short trail that runs along the river under I-275. Both parks are owned by the City of Tampa and are adjacent to this project. These parks are part of the Tampa Beautification Program, Southwest Florida Water Management District Shoreline Restoration Project, and have ongoing restoration projects involving the park facilities.

Minor impacts to social cohesion and community character are anticipated since the I-275 corridor already exists and no splitting of neighborhoods or isolated areas is expected to occur as a result of this project. Additionally, the project will be constructed primarily within the right-of-way, although there may be some effects from noise, altered air quality, and vibration. The FDOT will conduct both noise and air quality surveys. Within the 500-foot buffer area, 85% of the households have at least one vehicle available and 364 people take public transportation to work. The facility will improve accessibility to residential, employment, and other regional activity centers as well as tourist destinations in Hillsborough County and within the Tampa metropolitan area. It will also provide additional access to the Enterprise Zone within the project area. A Degree of Effect of Moderate has been chosen because there are numerous low income, LEP language groups, and minority populations that need to be considered and included in the public involvement process.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: **3** *Moderate* assigned 09/15/2013 by Wally Blain, Hillsborough County MPO

Coordination Document: PD&E Support Document As Per PD&E Manual

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Enterprise Zones, parallel corridors of Florida and Nebraska Avenue

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The Tampa Comprehensive Plan identifies Nebraska Avenue as an Urban Redevelopment CRA and Florida Avenue as a mixed-use corridor village. The impact of the proposed project on the economic viability of these corridors should be considered during the PD&E phase. The proposed project could potentially be a benefit if implemented in coordination with "road-diet" treatments on Nebraska and Florida or the two-way conversion of Tampa and Florida. Studies of both roadways have been conducted by the MPO, City of Tampa, and the Florida Department of Transportation which should be considered during development of this project.

The future land use categories surrounding this project are mostly residential with some mixed-use parcels. This project runs through several neighborhoods impacted by the Interstate's original construction in 1962 and are now protected under the Executive Order on Environmental Justice. The impact of this project on the viability of these neighborhoods should be considered during the PD&E

Additionally, HART routes operating on Florida Avenue and Nebraska Avenue are two of the highest ridership routes in the county. Study recommendations should be coordinated with HART in ensuring transit access for local trip making and options for regional commuters. HART has recently begun operation of a BRT line- known as MetroRapid - running on Nebraska Avenue from Fletcher Avenue to Downtown Tampa with plans for an east/west route running on Hillsborough Avenue and intersecting with the existing MetroRapid line on Nebraska Avenue.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: **3** *Moderate* assigned 09/12/2013 by Linda Anderson, Federal Highway Administration

Coordination Document: PD&E Support Document As Per PD&E Manual

Coordination Document Comments:For this project, a Socio-Cultural Effects analysis will be required that includes an analysis of Environmental Justice impacts.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

According to the 2010 American Community Survey, within the census block groups that overlap the 100' buffer:

1. Median income ranges from \$19,336-101,797.
2. Households below poverty level ranges from 13-246.
3. Households receiving public assistance range from 0-41.
4. Percentage of residents speaking no English is 0-19.62% and speaking English not well ranges from 0-26.70%
5. Housing units with no vehicle range from 0-82.
6. There are 2 mobile home parks within the 200' buffer
7. 57 acres of Enterprise Zones, including the Hillsborough County and Tampa EZ's.

According to the 2010 Census Block Data, within the block groups overlapping the 100' buffer, depending on the block group:

1. The minority population ranges from 40.6-100%
2. African Americans constitute 5.5-59.7% of residents, Hispanic/Latinos 10-58.2%, Asians 0.4-6.4%, American Indian/Alaska Natives 0-4.3%, and Other race 0.9-10.9%.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The statistics quoted in the resources box above indicate that there is a substantial presence of individuals with low income or minority status living adjacent to the project APE.

Federal law prohibits disproportionate transportation project impacts to individuals with low income or minority status. Disproportionate impacts can involve just a few individuals or a community.

Disproportionate impacts may include impacts to community cohesion, safety, economic development, and access to jobs, as well as relocation, ROW takes; noise; pollution; vibration, etc.

Additional Comments (optional):

For this project, a Socio-Cultural Effects analysis will be required that includes an analysis of Environmental Justice impacts.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Relocation Potential**Project Effects**

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the FDOT Community Liaison Coordinator (CLC) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Moderate.

The EST GIS analysis identified high density residential, transportation, commercial and services, and medium density residential as the four major existing land uses within the 500-foot buffer distance. Residential land uses within the 100-foot, 200-foot and 500-foot buffer distances account for 0.78%, 10.1% and 26.67%, respectively, of the project corridor.

The FDOT CLC listed the resources identified in the EST GIS analysis within the 100-foot, 200-foot, and 500-foot project buffer distances that supports the summary of the GIS analysis shown above. The project is expected to have minimal impact to residential and business relocations, since the majority of the project will use the existing right-of-way; however, additional right-of-way is anticipated for offsite stormwater ponds.

The FHWA identified the residential dwellings and other potential relocation resources within the 100-foot and 200-foot buffer distances from the EST GIS analysis. A degree of effect of moderate was assigned based on FHWA's comment that it was unknown whether additional right-of-way would be needed for lanes or ponds and there is potential for relocations.

It is anticipated that the project will utilize the existing right-of-way with the exception of the necessary stormwater management facilities (ponds). The FDOT will evaluate relocation potential once information becomes available for the need of additional right-of-way. A Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan (CSRP) will be developed as part of the proposed project. Relocations will be evaluated to avoid disproportionate adverse impacts to any distinct minority, ethnic, elderly, handicapped, or low-income groups.

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 09/13/2013 by Wendy Lasher, FDOT District 7

Coordination Document: No Involvement

Direct Effects**Identified Resources and Level of Importance:**

Identified Resources:

100-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Planned Unit Developments (12)

Residential Land Uses:

Residential High Density - 6.9 acres
Residential Medium Density - 0.4 acre
Residential Low Density - 2.0 acres

Commercial and Services Land Use - 1.0 acre

Census Designated Places:

Tampa
Lake Magdalene
Lutz
University

200-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Planned Unit Developments (15)
Mobile Home and RV Parks (2)

Residential Land Uses:
Residential High Density - 85.9 acres
Residential Medium Density - 10.3 acres
Residential Low Density - 8.4 acres

Commercial and Services Land Use - 18.3 acres

Census Designated Places:
Tampa
Lake Magdalene
Lutz
University

500-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Planned Unit Developments (22)
Mobile Home and RV Parks (5)

Residential Land Uses:
Residential High Density - 431.1 acres
Residential Medium Density - 74.8 acres
Residential Low Density - 30.2 acres

Commercial and Services Land Use - 131.7 acres

Census Designated Places:
Tampa
Lake Magdalene
Lutz
University

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Existing Land Uses within the 200-foot project buffer area include:

Description	Acres	Percentage
Transportation	304.6	65.23%
Residential High Density	85.9	18.39%
Commercial and Services	18.3	3.91%
Residential Medium Density	10.3	2.2%
Residential Low Density	8.4	1.79%
Other Open Lands (Rural)	7.0	1.5%
Hardwood Conifer Mixed	6.6	1.41%
Freshwater Marshes	6.3	1.35%
Open Land	5.4	1.16%
Recreational	5.2	1.11%

Institutional, Emergent Aquatic Vegetation, Intermittent Ponds, Lakes, Reservoirs, Steams and Lake Swamps (Bottomland), and streams and Waterways are the majority of the remaining land uses with less than 1% each.
Source: 2009 SWFWMD Florida Land Use and Land Cover

The project is an interstate corridor and will utilize the existing right-of-way (ROW), but additional ROW is anticipated for offsite ponds.

A Degree of Effect of Minimal has been assigned because residential, commercial, and business relocations are expected to be minimal since the majority of the project will use the existing ROW.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 09/12/2013 by Linda Anderson, Federal Highway Administration

Coordination Document: PD&E Support Document As Per PD&E Manual

Coordination Document Comments: If relocations are planned, a conceptual relocation plan will be required. Relocations and purchases of ROW must occur in accordance with the Uniform Act and related legislation.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Within 100' buffer:

1. 9.3 acres of residential dwellings
2. 1 cultural center
3. NRHP-eligible Jackson House
4. Sulfur Springs Park Resource Group

Within 200' buffer:

1. 104.6 acres of residential dwellings
2. 4 group care facilities
3. 14 religious centers
4. Community Charter School of Excellence (public)

Comments on Effects to Resources:

I am assigning a DOE of Moderate here because it is unknown whether additional ROW will be required for lanes or ponds. If so, relocations may occur.

Additional Comments (optional):

If relocations are planned, a conceptual relocation plan will be required. Relocations and purchases of ROW must occur in accordance with the Uniform Act and related legislation.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Farmlands

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Minimal.

The EST GIS analysis identified 112.22 acres, 222.72 acres and 539.46 acres of prime farmlands within the 100-foot, 200-foot and 500-foot buffer distance, respectively.

The NRCS stated that due to the vintage of soil maps (1980's) and the rapid urbanization of Hillsborough County, many areas denoted as Farmland of Unique Importance have been converted to urban use. Therefore, these areas would no longer meet the criteria for this Farmland designation. The extreme northeastern part of the project still has a small amount of open, rural land. It is recommended the project minimize the project effects by using the existing right-of-way.

No farmlands have been identified along the project corridor, and no impacts to farmlands are anticipated by the proposed project. The FDOT will review the project area and identify any potential impacts to farmlands as part of the PD&E study and coordinate with the NCRS as needed. No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 08/13/2013 by Rick Allen Robbins, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Coordination Document: No Involvement

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

The USDA-NRCS considers soil map units with important soil properties for agricultural uses to be Prime Farmland. In addition, the USDA-NRCS considers any soils with important soil properties and have significant acreages that are used in the production of commodity crops (such as, cotton, citrus, row crops, specialty crops, nuts, etc.) to be considered as Farmlands of Unique Importance or Farmlands of Local Importance. Nationally, there

has been a reduction in the overall amount of Prime and Unique Farmlands through conversion to non-farm uses. This trend has the possibility of impacting the nation's food supply and exporting capabilities.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Conducting GIS analysis of Prime Farmland and Important Farmlands (using USDA-NRCS 2010 SSURGO data) and Agricultural land use data (using 2009 SWFWMD data) has resulted in the determination that there are Farmland of Unique Importance at all buffer widths for this project. The amounts range from 112.2 acres at the 100' buffer width and 539.5 acres at the 500' buffer width. In addition, there is between 2.5 acres (100 ft width) and 19.0 acres (500 ft width) of open rural lands.

However, due to the vintage of soil maps (1980's) and the rapid urbanization of Hillsborough County during the past 30 years, many areas that were denoted as Farmland of Unique Importance have been converted to Urban Use. Therefore, these areas would no longer meet the criteria for this Farmland Designation.

Due to the project design (widening) and change in land use within most of the project area, we are assigning a Minimal Degree of Effect to Important Farmlands.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Aesthetic Effects

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 2 Minimal assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from FDOT Community Liaison Coordinator (CLC) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Minimal.

The EST GIS analysis identified 431.1 acres (36.59%) of Residential High Density, 74.8 acres (6.35%) of Residential Medium Density, and 30.2 acres (2.56%) of Residential Low Density within the 500-foot buffer distance. Residences along the project corridor could be impacted by traffic noise. There are 11 existing FDOT noise barriers along I-275 identified within portions of the project 100-foot buffer distance.

The FDOT CLC stated the project is an interstate corridor and will utilize the existing right-of-way, but additional right-of-way will likely be needed for offsite stormwater ponds. A field review was conducted to verify that there are 11 noise barriers along I-275 within the project area. The project was assigned a minimal degree of effect since there are no anticipated effects to the viewshed or established aesthetic features in the area because the Interstate currently exists and the roadway improvements will be located within the existing right-of-way.

During Project Development the FDOT will conduct a noise evaluation for I-275. The FDOT will consider incorporating aesthetic enhancements such as landscaping or bridge embellishments, into the project plans. The FDOT will also conduct public outreach to solicit opinions and preferences from residents and businesses on potential project effects and general design concepts related to aesthetics.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: 2 Minimal assigned 09/13/2013 by Wendy Lasher, FDOT District 7

Coordination Document: No Involvement

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Identified Resources:

100-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Noise Barriers (11)
Residential Area (17)

200-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Noise Barriers (11)
Residential Area (38)

500-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Noise Barriers (11)
Residential Area (38)

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The project corridor is an interstate corridor and will utilize the existing right-of-way (ROW), but additional ROW is anticipated for offsite ponds. Within the 500-foot project buffer area the existing land use is primarily residential high density (36.59%), transportation (28.61%), and commercial and services (11.18%) completing the majority of the classifications present.

Existing Residential Land Uses within the 500-foot Project Buffer Area (source: 2009 SWFWMD Florida Land Use and Land Cover):

Description Acres Percent

Residential High Density 431.1 36.59%
Residential Medium Density 74.8 6.35%
Residential Low Density 30.2 2.56%
Residential Total 536.1 45.5%

Residential areas in the project area may be affected by traffic noise. A field review was conducted on December 18, 2012, where noise barriers were verified. The EST states there are 16 FDOT noise barriers located within the 200-foot buffer distance from north of Busch Blvd. on both sides of the roadway to north of Bearss Ave. A field review was conducted on December 18, 2012, where noise barriers were verified. Based on the field review information, there are only 11 noise barriers within the 200-foot buffer area. Some of these barriers start in the 100-ft. buffer area, but encroach into the 200-ft. buffer area causing it to be counted twice in the EST.

The Sulpher Springs Water Tower is located just outside of the 500-foot buffer distance. A Degree of Effect of Minimal has been assigned because there are no anticipated affects to the viewshed or established aesthetic features in the project area since the Interstate currently exists and the project will utilize the existing ROW for the roadway.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Economic

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), FDOT Community Liaison Coordinator (CLC) and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Moderate.

The EST GIS analysis identified 12 Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) within the 100-foot buffer distance, three additional PUDs within the 200-foot buffer distance, and seven additional PUDs and one additional Development of Regional Impact (DRI) within the 500-foot buffer distance. Two Enterprise Zones, Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902) and City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ-2901), are within the project area. EZ-2902 is located east of I-275 and west of Bruce B. Downs Boulevard between Fowler Avenue and Bearss Avenue, and EZ-2901 is located on the east and west sides of I-275 south of Fowler Avenue.

As noted under previous issues the Hillsborough County MPO stated the Tampa Comprehensive Plan identifies Nebraska Avenue as an Urban Redevelopment Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) and Florida Avenue as a mixed-use corridor village. The City of Tampa recently completed the InVision Tampa Master Plan, which focuses on Downtown, the western bank of the Hillsborough River and Nebraska Avenue. The plan proposed Center City streets are neighborhood-focused, connected and calm, creating the environment for new businesses, residential investment, and safe pedestrian and bicycle access around town. This project could attract new development in the Downtown core and reduce congestion for motorists traveling long distances into reach Downtown.

The FDOT CLC identified the economic resources within the 100-foot, 200-foot and 500-foot buffer areas from the EST GIS analysis. According to the Hillsborough County MPO's 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the population of Hillsborough County was 1,173,360 and anticipated to increase to 1,729,300 (47% increase) by 2035. Based on the 2035 LRTP, the employment in 2006 was 759,300 and projected to be 1,175,920 (55% increase) in 2035. Most of the anticipated growth is projected to occur within the urban service area. The greatest increases in employment are expected in Westshore and near the University of South Florida; however, substantial increases are expected for areas surrounding the central Downtown and the Brandon area. Future population will be primarily concentrated in neighborhoods surrounding Tampa's Downtown urban core and

University of South Florida. I-275 is an important link for travelers in the Tampa Bay area as it provides regional accessibility to area tourist and recreational destinations, major employment/activity centers, and is a popular and convenient route for commuters and other work-related travel both north and south of the area. I-275 is part of the highway network that provides access to regional intermodal facilities/freight activity centers such as the Dome Industrial Center, South Central CSXT Corridor, Saint Petersburg Seaport, Gateway Triangle, Tampa International Airport, the Port of Tampa, and Saint Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport. Improvements to I-275 within the project limits will enhance access to activity centers in the area, and movement of goods and freight in the greater Tampa Bay region. Within the project area, I-275 directly services eight of Hillsborough County's largest employers; School District of Hillsborough County, University of South Florida, JP Morgan Chase & Company, St. Joseph's Hospital, H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center, TECO Energy, and Humana.

The Florida DEO stated the project is not in a Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC). The I-275 Managed Lanes project has the potential to attract new development in the Downtown Core and reduce congestion for those motorists traveling longer distances to reach Downtown. The project has the potential to create jobs by attracting new development in the downtown core.

The proposed improvements should alleviate congestion along I-275 and enhance access to activity centers in the area, and movement of goods and freight in the greater Tampa Bay region. This project will also provide improved regional accessibility to area tourist and recreational destinations and major employment/activity centers, and improve transportation for commuters and other work-related travel both north and south of the area. The FDOT will conduct public outreach to solicit community opinions and preferences, including the transportation disadvantaged population.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 09/15/2013 by Wally Blain, Hillsborough County MPO

Coordination Document: PD&E Support Document As Per PD&E Manual

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Enterprise Zones, parallel corridors of Florida and Nebraska Avenue

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The Tampa Comprehensive Plan identifies Nebraska Avenue as an Urban Redevelopment CRA and Florida Avenue as a mixed-use corridor village. The impact of the proposed project on the economic viability of these corridors should be considered during the PD&E phase. The proposed project could potentially be a benefit if implemented in coordination with "road-diet" treatments on Nebraska and Florida or the two-way conversion of Tampa and Florida. Studies of both roadways have been conducted by the MPO, City of Tampa, and the Florida Department of Transportation which should be considered during development of this project.

The future land use categories surrounding this project are mostly residential with some mixed-use parcels. This project runs through several neighborhoods impacted by the Interstate's original construction in 1962 and are now protected under the Executive Order on Environmental Justice. The impact of this project on the viability of these neighborhoods should be considered during the PD&E

Additionally, HART routes operating on Florida Avenue and Nebraska Avenue are two of the highest ridership routes in the county. Study recommendations should be coordinated with HART in ensuring transit access for local trip making and options for regional commuters. HART has recently begun operation of a BRT line- known as MetroRapid - running on Nebraska Avenue from Fletcher Avenue to Downtown Tampa with plans for an east/west route running on Hillsborough Avenue and intersecting with the existing MetroRapid line on Nebraska Avenue.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 1 *Enhanced* assigned 09/13/2013 by Chris Wiglesworth, FL Department of Economic Opportunity

Coordination Document: No Involvement

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Comprehensive Plan for Unincorporated Hillsborough County, effective August 2008 and the City of Tampa Comprehensive Plan, effective February 2009

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The project is not in a Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC)

The I-275 Managed Lanes project has the potential to attract new development in the Downtown Core and reduce congestion for those motorists traveling longer distances to reach Downtown. With careful planning and design, as described above, the project could also mitigate negative impacts of highway traffic on Tampa's central communities, or even provide benefits to those communities.

The project has the potential to create jobs by attracting new development in the downtown core.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 1 *Enhanced* assigned 09/13/2013 by Wendy Lasher, FDOT District 7

Coordination Document: No Involvement

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Identified Resources:

100-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Planned Unit Developments (12)
Bus Routes (13)

200-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Planned Unit Developments (15)
Bus Routes (13)
Mobile Home and RV Parks (2)

500-foot Project Buffer Area
Tower Property - Development of Regional Impact (ADA No. 1988-026)
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Tower Property - Development of Regional Impact (ADA No. 1988-026)
Planned Unit Developments (22)
Bus Routes (16)
Mobile Home and RV Parks (5)

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Comments on Effects to Resources:

According to the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO's) 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), adopted in December 2009, the 2006 population of Hillsborough County was 1,173,360 and was anticipated to increase to 1,729,300 by 2035. This reflected a population growth of 555,940 (47%), an average annual increase of about 1.3 percent per year from the 2006 estimate. Based on the above source, employment in 2006 was 759,300 and is projected to be 1,175,920 in 2035. This reflects an increase of 416,620 (55%) and an average annual increase of about 1.5 percent per year from the 2006 estimate. These socioeconomic projections are used in the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Model (TBRPM) to estimate travel demand in the future.

According to the Hillsborough County MPO's 2035 LRTP, most of the anticipated growth is projected to occur within the urban service area. Although the greatest increases in total employment will take place in Westshore and around the University of South Florida, substantial gains are expected for areas surrounding the central Downtown and in the Brandon area. Future residential and employment densities are still expected to be highest in existing urban centers. Future population will be primarily concentrated within the neighborhoods surrounding Tampa's Downtown urban core and University of South Florida. Major employment concentrations are found within activity centers including downtown Tampa, the Westshore Business District and the University of South Florida.

I-275 is an important link for travelers in the Tampa Bay area as it provides regional accessibility to area tourist and recreational destinations, major employment/activity centers, and is a popular and convenient route for commuters and other work-related travel both north and south of the area. Normal traffic growth associated with increasing population in the Tampa Bay region, as well as traffic growth from increased development activity in downtown Tampa, further reinforce the need for improvements in the I-275 corridor.

I-275 is part of the highway network that provides access to regional intermodal facilities/freight activity centers such as the Dome Industrial Center, South Central CSXT Corridor, Saint Petersburg Seaport, Gateway Triangle, Tampa International Airport, the Port of Tampa, and Saint Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport. As such, I-275 has been designated as an Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) corridor. Improvements to I-275 within the project limits will enhance access to activity centers in the area, and movement of goods and freight in the greater Tampa Bay region.

The Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis identified several populations, properties, and resources within the 500-foot project buffer area including 22 Planned Unit Developments and the Tower Property Development of Regional Impact (ADA No. 1988-026). I-275 provides access to the East Tampa Community, Tampa Heights Riverfront, Central Park, Channelside District, and Ybor City Community Redevelopment Areas. There are also five Mobile Home/ Trailer Parks within the 500-foot project buffer. Improvements to I-275 will enhance access to the businesses and provide enhanced mobility to residents in this area.

Two Enterprise Zones, Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902) and City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ-2901), are within the project area. EZ-2902 is located east of I-275 and west of Bruce B. Downs Boulevard between Fowler Avenue and Bearss Avenue, and EZ-2901 is located on the east and west sides of I-275 south of Fowler Avenue. Boundary maps are located at:
http://www.tampagov.net/dept_economic_and_urban_development/files/Ezone/EZ_Brochure.pdf

Within the project area, I-275 directly services eight of Hillsborough County's largest employers; School District of Hillsborough County, University of

South Florida, JP Morgan Chase & Company, St. Joseph's Hospital, H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center, TECO Energy, and Humana.

Overall, the project is expected to enhance economic activity within Hillsborough County and support the future land uses identified.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Mobility

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the FDOT Community Liaison Coordinator and recommends a Degree of Effect of Moderate.

The EST GIS analysis identified 13 Bus Transit Routes, one Existing Recreational Trail, two railways, and two Transportation Disadvantaged Service Providers (TDSP) (MMG Transportation, Inc. and Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners) within the 100-foot buffer distance. The Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART) currently operates three commuter express routes that travel on I-275 within the project limits for a portion of their service, routes 20X, 50X and 51X. There are two sets of railroad tracks that I-275 spans over. The first is located along Busch Boulevard and the second is north of the Bearss Avenue interchange.

The Hillsborough County MPO stated that the Study of the I-275 corridor should include the potential for future Transit Oriented Development sites that have currently been identified by the MPO and The Planning Commission.

The FDOT CLC identified the economic resources within the 100-foot, 200-foot and 500-foot buffer areas from the EST GIS analysis. Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART) currently operates three commuter express routes that travel on I-275 within the project limits for a portion of their service, routes 20X, 50X and 51X. The project area is serviced by two transportation service providers, MMG Transportation, Inc. and Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners, with the goal of improving quality of life for the elderly, those with physical or mental disabilities, children at risk, and the economically disadvantaged.

I-275 is part of the Florida Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), which is comprised of facilities and services of statewide and interregional significance. I-275 is part of the highway network that provides access to regional intermodal facilities/freight activity centers such as Anderson Road/Tampa International Airport, Port Tampa, Hooker's Point (Port of Tampa), Rockport/Port Sutton/Pendola Point (Port of Tampa), Big Bend/Port Redwing (Port of Tampa), Sabal Park Industrial Area, Southeast Tampa Industrial Area, North US 301 Industrial Area, and East Central Tampa Industrial Area. I-275 connects with multiple other SIS facilities, including Interstate 4 and Interstate 75. Enhancing the capacity and preserving the operational integrity and regional functionality of I-275 is critical to mobility, since I-275 connects the Tampa Bay region to the remainder of the state. I-275 is a critical evacuation route shown on the Florida Division of Emergency Management's evacuation route network.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: 1 *Enhanced* assigned 09/13/2013 by Wendy Lasher, FDOT District 7

Coordination Document: No Involvement

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Identified Resources:

100-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Greenways Ecological Priority Linkages - Moderate Low (1)
Hillsborough River Trail
Planned Unit Developments (12)
Bus Routes (13)
Railroad (2)
Transportation Disadvantage Service Provider Areas (2)

200-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Greenways Ecological Priority Linkages - Moderate Low (1)
Hillsborough River Trail
Planned Unit Developments (15)

Bus Routes (13)
Mobile Home and RV Parks (3)
Group Care Facilities (4)
Railroad (2)
Transportation Disadvantage Service Provider Areas (2)

500-foot Project Buffer Area
Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902)
City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ- 2901)
Greenways Ecological Priority Linkages - Moderate Low (1)
Hillsborough River Trail
Tower Property - Development of Regional Impact (ADA No. 1988-026)
Planned Unit Developments (22)
Bus Routes (16)
Mobile Home and RV Parks (5)
Community Charter School of Excellence
Group Care Facilities (11)
Railroad (2)
Transportation Disadvantage Service Provider Areas (2)

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Existing transit service in Hillsborough County within the project limits is operated by the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART). HART currently operates three Commuter Express routes that travel on I-275 within the project limits for a portion of their service. The express routes operate in the AM and PM peak hours. Within and/or near the project limits, Route 20X (Pasco / Lutz Express) travels from the Marion Transit Center (MTC) to Fletcher Avenue, Route 50X (Citrus Park / Carrollwood Express) travels from the MTC to Busch Boulevard, and Route 51X (New Tampa / Pasco Express) operates from MTC to Bearss Avenue. Future transit service (express routes) within and adjacent to the project limits is listed in the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO's) 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and the HART Transit Development Plan (FY2012 - FY2021). This area is serviced by two transportation disadvantaged service providers; MMG Transportation, Inc. and Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners. These services are provided with the goal of improving quality of life for the elderly, those who have physical or mental disabilities, children at risk, and the economically disadvantaged. More information can be found at <http://www.hillsboroughmpo.org/areas>.

I-275 is a north-south interstate highway that is a major trade and tourism corridor. I-275 is part of the Florida Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), which is comprised of facilities and services of statewide and interregional significance. The SIS is a statewide network of highways, railways, waterways and transportation hubs that handle the bulk of Florida's passenger and freight traffic. This section of I-275 is in close proximity to the I-275 connection with I-4, and to the north of the project limits, I-275 connects with I-75. Enhancing the capacity and preserving the operational integrity and regional functionality of I-275 is critical to mobility, as it is a vital link in the transportation network that connects the Tampa Bay region to the remainder of the state and the nation.

I-275 is also a critical evacuation route and is shown on the Florida Division of Emergency Management's evacuation route network.

Two Enterprise Zones, Hillsborough County Enterprise Zone (EZ-2902) and City of Tampa Enterprise Zone (EZ-2901), are within the project area. EZ-2902 is located east of I-275 and west of Bruce B. Downs Boulevard between Fowler Avenue and Bearss Avenue, and EZ-2901 is located on the east and west sides of I-275 south of Fowler Avenue. Boundary maps are located at:

http://www.tampagov.net/dept_economic_and_urban_development/files/Ezone/EZ_Brochure.pdf Improvements to I-275 will enhance access to the businesses and provide enhanced mobility to residents in this area.

The Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis identifies the Hillsborough River Trail, but based on maps from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) website the designated Hillsborough River Paddling Trail ends east of the project area (outside of the 5,280 ft buffer) at Rowlett Park. There is a walking trail that is under I-275 that connects the City of Tampa River Tower Park with Sulpher Springs Park. If it is determined in Project Development that there are any potential impacts, the FDOT will coordinate with the overseeing resource agency.

It should be noted that there are two CSX Railroad lines that I-275 crosses over; one at Busch Blvd. and the other at N. Nebraska Ave. at the north end of the project area.

A Degree of Effect of Enhanced has been assigned because the proposed improvement would improve mobility to the area and region.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 09/15/2013 by Wally Blain, Hillsborough County MPO

Coordination Document: PD&E Support Document As Per PD&E Manual

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Enterprise Zones, parallel corridors of Florida and Nebraska Avenue

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The Tampa Comprehensive Plan identifies Nebraska Avenue as an Urban Redevelopment CRA and Florida Avenue as a mixed-use corridor village. The impact of the proposed project on the economic viability of these corridors should be considered during the PD&E phase. The proposed project could

potentially be a benefit if implemented in coordination with "road-diet" treatments on Nebraska and Florida or the two-way conversion of Tampa and Florida. Studies of both roadways have been conducted by the MPO, City of Tampa, and the Florida Department of Transportation which should be considered during development of this project.

The future land use categories surrounding this project are mostly residential with some mixed-use parcels. This project runs through several neighborhoods impacted by the Interstate's original construction in 1962 and are now protected under the Executive Order on Environmental Justice. The impact of this project on the viability of these neighborhoods should be considered during the PD&E

Additionally, HART routes operating on Florida Avenue and Nebraska Avenue are two of the highest ridership routes in the county. Study recommendations should be coordinated with HART in ensuring transit access for local trip making and options for regional commuters. HART has recently begun operation of a BRT line- known as MetroRapid - running on Nebraska Avenue from Fletcher Avenue to Downtown Tampa with plans for an east/west route running on Hillsborough Avenue and intersecting with the existing MetroRapid line on Nebraska Avenue.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

ETAT Reviews: Cultural

Section 4(f) Potential

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Moderate.

The EST GIS analysis identified one Existing Recreational Trails (Hillsborough River Trail), one moderate low Greenways Ecological Priority Linkage, and one low priority OGT: Multi-Use Trails Priority within the 100-foot buffer distance, one Florida Managed Area and public land (River Tower Restoration Site), one Geocoded Park (City of Tampa Park) within the 200-foot buffer distance, and one additional Geocoded Park (Angus Goss Pool) within the 500-foot buffer distance. The GIS Analysis identifies the Hillsborough River Trail, but based on maps from the DEP website the Hillsborough River Paddling Trail ends east of the project area at Rowlett Park. There is a paved trail that connects the Sulphur Springs Park (east of I-275 where the gazebo and Springs Pool are located) to the River Tower Park (west of I-275 where the Sulphur Spring Water Tower is located). This is a short trail that runs along the river under I-275. Both parks are owned by the City of Tampa and are adjacent to this project. These parks are part of the Tampa Beautification Program, Southwest Florida Water Management District Shoreline Restoration Project, and have ongoing restoration projects involving the park facilities.

The FHWA identified the Section 4(f) resources within the 100-foot and 200-foot buffers from the EST GIS analysis. Section 106 resources determined or potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), public school recreation areas open to the public, and publicly owned, accessible, significant parks and trails may be Section 4(f) resources. A Section 4(f) Determination of Applicability (DOA) may be required if additional right-of-way is needed. Section 4(f) resources should be avoided if at all possible and, if not, the impacts should be minimized and mitigated.

The FDOT will evaluate the applicability and any potential impacts to Section 4(f) resources within the project area during the PD&E study. Additional right-of-way (ROW) may be needed for offsite stormwater treatment facilities and interchange improvements. It is anticipated that Section 4(f) resources will be avoided, but coordination will occur with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) during Project Development as additional ROW location needs are determined.

Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 09/12/2013 by Linda Anderson, Federal Highway Administration

Coordination Document: PD&E Support Document As Per PD&E Manual

Coordination Document Comments: If additional ROW is required for lanes and ponds, a Section 4(f) Determination of Applicability (DOA) may be required.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Within 100' buffer:

1. Sulfur Springs Park (recreation) and Section 106 Resource Group
2. River Tower Park
3. Hillsborough River Recreational Trail
4. 3 archeological/historic sites that have not been evaluated by SHPO for NRHP eligibility

5. NRHP-eligible Jackson House
6. 233 acres Ecological Greenways Critical Linkages
7. 1.68 acres Greenways Ecological Priority Linkages
- 8.92 acres of Multi-Use Trails Priorities

Within 200' buffer:

1. 8 archaeological/historic sites that have not been evaluated by SHPO for NRHP eligibility
2. 185 acres of Multi-Use Trails Priorities
3. Community Charter School of Excellence (public).
4. 467 acres of Ecological Greenways Critical Linkages
5. 3.6 acres of Greenways Ecological Priority Linkages

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Section 106 resources determined or potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places may be Section 4(f) properties.

Public school recreational areas that are open to the public may be Section 4(f) properties.

Publicly owned, accessible, significant parks and trails may be Section 4(f) properties.

With regard to the Ecological Greenways Critical Linkages, Greenways Ecological Priority Linkages, and Multi-Use Trails Priorities: parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and water fowl refuges that are as yet unbuilt, but are designated in a master plan may be Section 4(f) resources.

The "use" of Section 4(f) properties in a transportation project constitutes a Section 4(f) impact.

If additional ROW is required for lanes or ponds, Section 4(f) resources should be avoided if at all possible and, if not, the impacts should be minimized and mitigated.

Additional Comments (optional):

If additional ROW is required for lanes and ponds, a Section 4(f) Determination of Applicability (DOA) may be required.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Historic and Archaeological Sites

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Florida Department of State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Moderate.

The EST GIS analysis identified 13 Florida Site File (FSF) Historic Standing Structures within the 200-foot buffer distance and 109 additional Historic Standing Structures within the 500-foot buffer distance. There are five FSF Archaeological or Historic Sites within the 100-foot buffer distance, three additional FSF Archaeological or Historic Sites within the 200-foot buffer distance and three additional FSF Archaeological or Historic Sites within the 500-foot buffer distance. There is one NRHP listed resource within the 100-foot buffer distance and two additional NRHP listed resources within the 500-foot buffer distance. There was one Resource Group within the 100-foot buffer distance, one additional Resource Group in the 200-foot buffer distance and one additional Resource Group within the 500-foot buffer distance. Based on local knowledge of the area and preliminary background research, some of the significant known resources are described below. The CRAS for this project will evaluate these resources and identify/evaluate any other cultural resources located within the project APE.

- Seminole Heights Historic District (8HI3294), NRHP-listed and City of Tampa historic district, located adjacent to the west side of I-275 for approximately 15 blocks between Osborne Avenue on the south and Hanna Avenue on the north. Also local historic district on east side of I-275 for three blocks north of Hillsborough Avenue. One of the three resource groups.
- Hampton Terrace Historic District (8HI6821), NRHP-listed, located approximately two and a half blocks east of I-275 just north of Hillsborough Avenue, for approximately 7 1/2 blocks. Outside of 200 foot buffer. Not a local historic district. One of the three resource groups.
- Captain William Parker Jackson House (8HI11581), NRHP-listed, located adjacent to east side of I-275 at 800 East Lambright Street. Also City of Tampa local landmark.
- Sulpher Springs Park (8HI609), one of three resource groups, this one has not been evaluated by FHWA or the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Located at northwest and northeast quadrants of I-275 and Hillsborough River.
- William E. Curtis House (8HI3279), NRHP-listed, located approximately 4 lots east of I-275 at 808 East Curtis Street.
- Tampa Fire House #7, located on Seminole Heights Baptist Church property adjacent to east side of I-275, just south of Hillsborough Avenue. Apparently not previously recorded in the FSF.

The FHWA stated that a Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) will be required. The DOE of moderate was assigned based on potential for additional right-of-way, and there is potential for the project to impact NRHP-eligible resources.

The SHPO stated that the project area traverses through and adjacent to significant and/or unevaluated resources. Consultation with SHPO should be undertaken to explore avoidance and minimization of impacts.

Several Cultural Resource Assessment Surveys (CRAS) have been prepared which overlap and are adjacent to this project corridor; however, a CRAS has not yet been prepared specifically for this project corridor. The FDOT will complete a CRAS as part of the PD&E study, the results of which will be coordinated with SHPO and FHWA. When the CRAS is prepared, it will reflect the results of performing a systematic archaeological field survey and a historic resources survey for the project's APE which includes the bridges, project corridor, interchange improvements, and stormwater management facilities. If applicable, Section 106 Consultation will be conducted to assess potential project impacts to any cultural resources that are determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The proposed project will primarily be contained within the existing limited access right-of-way. FDOT District Seven is aware of significant cultural resources within the project study area and anticipates avoiding or minimizing impacts to these significant resources. The FDOT will avoid and/or minimize impacts to historic and archaeological resources.

No comments were received from the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

Degree of Effect: 3 Moderate assigned 09/13/2013 by Alyssa McManus, FL Department of State

Coordination Document: PD&E Support Document As Per PD&E Manual

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

As described in the preliminary review comments above, this project area traverses through and adjacent to significant and/or unevaluated resources.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

We look forward to reviewing the CRAS for this project. Upon receipt of the completed report, this office will be better able to comment regarding the effects to significant resources. Project activities will occur within the current right of way. Initial concerns include installation of additional signage, or changes to contributing elements of the districts such as sidewalks, historic landscape/plantings, light posts, etc...Steps should be taken to avoid these contributing elements.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 3 Moderate assigned 09/12/2013 by Linda Anderson, Federal Highway Administration

Coordination Document: PD&E Support Document As Per PD&E Manual

Coordination Document Comments:

A CRAS will be required.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Within 100' buffer:

1. NRHP-eligible Jackson house
2. Sulfur Springs Park Resource Group, not evaluated by SHPO
3. 5 archaeological/historic sites, 2 of which are ineligible for the NRHP, and 3 not evaluated by SHPO.

Within 200' buffer:

1. 13 historic standing structure, 5 of which are ineligible for the NRHP, and 8 not evaluated by SHPO.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

I am assigning a degree of effect of moderate because it is not know at this time whether ROW will be required for lanes and ponds. In addition, a number of historic resources lie within the 100' and 200' buffers that have not been evaluated by SHPO. Also, the NRHP-eligible Jackson House lies within the 100' buffer. There is potential for the project to impact NRHP-eligible resources.

Additional Comments (optional):

A CRAS will be required.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Recreation Areas

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), and Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Moderate.

The EST GIS analysis identified one Existing Recreational Trails (Hillsborough River Trail), one moderate low Greenways Ecological Priority Linkage, and one low priority OGT: Multi-Use Trails Priority within the 100-foot buffer distance, one Florida Managed Area and public land (River Tower Restoration Site), one Geocoded Park (City of Tampa Park) within the 200-foot buffer distance, and one additional Geocoded Park (Angus Goss Pool) within the 500-foot buffer distance. The GIS Analysis identifies the Hillsborough River Trail, but based on maps from the DEP website the Hillsborough River Paddling Trail ends east of the project area at Rowlett Park. There is a paved trail that connects the Sulphur Springs Park (east of I-275 where the gazebo and Springs Pool are located) to the River Tower Park (west of I-275 where the Sulphur Spring Water Tower is located). This is a short trail that runs along the river under I-275. Both parks are owned by the City of Tampa and are adjacent to this project. These parks are part of the Tampa Beautification Program, Southwest Florida Water Management District Shoreline Restoration Project, and have ongoing restoration projects involving the park facilities.

The FHWA listed the Sulfur Springs Park and River Tower Park within the 100-foot buffer distance. Potential impacts to these resources include increased noise, emissions, dust, and possibly right-of-way takes if additional right-of-way is needed.

The USEPA listed the recreational resources from the EST GIS analysis within the 100-foot, 200-foot, and 500-foot buffer distances. It is recommended that FDOT evaluate direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to recreation areas within the project vicinity. Opportunities to avoid and or minimize impacts and fragmentation to recreational resources should be evaluated and considered to the greatest extent practicable.

The FDEP listed the River Tower Restoration Site and Hillsborough River Trail within the 500-foot buffer distance. Documentation should include an evaluation of the primary, secondary and cumulative impacts of interstate widening on public lands and any proposed acquisition sites.

The SWFWMD stated there are no SWFWMD-owned or controlled lands within one mile of the I-275 from north of MLK Jr. Boulevard to north of Bearss Avenue. Impacts to all recreation area should be evaluated for application of an Environmental Resource Permit.

The FDOT will evaluate potential impacts to recreational resources along the project corridor during the PD&E study.

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 09/14/2013 by Madolyn Sanchez, US Environmental Protection Agency

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Resources: Recreation and conservation areas such as Recreational Trails, Florida Managed Areas, Parks, Schools (with parks)

Level of Importance: These resources are of a high level of importance in the State of Florida and in Hillsborough County. The proposed project has some potential to impact these resources; however, a minimal degree of effect is being assigned to this issue.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The following features are identified within proximity of the proposed project and are likely to be impacted as a result of construction and operation of the roadway:

Existing Recreational Trails (100, 200 and 500-foot buffer distance)
HILLSBOROUGH RIVER TRAIL

Florida Managed Areas (100, 200, and 500-foot buffer distance):
RIVER TOWER RESTORATION SITE

Parks
ANGUS GOSS POOL (500-foot buffer distance)
CITY OF TAMPA PARK (200-foot buffer distance)

Schools
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD SCHOOLS (2 within 200-foot buffer distance)

EPA is assigning a minimal degree of effect to this issue. However, FDOT should evaluate direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to recreation areas features such as the ones listed and any other public or private parks within the vicinity. The PD&E study should include a survey of the area to identify if any recreation areas which would require a Section 4(f) review are present in the project area. Opportunities to avoid and or minimize impacts and fragmentation to recreational resources should be evaluated and considered to the greatest extent practicable. Also, substantial future development in the area could have significant indirect and cumulative impacts on these resources.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: **2** *Minimal* assigned 09/11/2013 by Lauren P. Milligan, FL Department of Environmental Protection

Coordination Document: No Involvement

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

The River Tower Restoration Site and the Hillsborough River Trail occur within the 500-foot buffer of the proposed project.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The Department is interested in preserving the area's natural communities, wildlife corridor functions, natural flood control, stormwater runoff filtering capabilities, aquifer recharge potential and recreational trail opportunities. Therefore, future environmental documentation should include an evaluation of the primary, secondary and cumulative impacts of interstate widening on the above public lands and any proposed acquisition sites.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: **0** *None* assigned 09/09/2013 by Monte Ritter, Southwest Florida Water Management District

Coordination Document: No Involvement

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

SWFWMD s responsibility in the ETDM review process is to identify only those recreational areas located on District owned/controlled lands. From the SWFWMD s Geographic Information System (GIS), there are no District owned / controlled lands within one (1) mile of I-275 from North of MLK Jr. Boulevard to north of Bearss Avenue. It should be noted, however, that impacts to all recreation areas shall be considered in evaluation of the application for an environmental resource permit.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: **3** *Moderate* assigned 09/12/2013 by Linda Anderson, Federal Highway Administration

Coordination Document: PD&E Support Document As Per PD&E Manual

Coordination Document Comments:Publicly owned, accessible, significant parks may be Section 4(f) resources. Incorporation of part or all of such parks into a transportation project may be a Section 4(f) impact.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Sulfur Springs Park and River Tower Park within 100' buffer.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Increased noise, emissions, dust, and possibly ROW takes if additional ROW is needed for lanes and ponds.

Additional Comments (optional):

Publicly owned, accessible, significant parks may be Section 4(f) resources. Incorporation of part or all of such parks into a transportation project may be a Section 4(f) impact.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

ETAT Reviews: Natural

Wetlands

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: **3** *Moderate* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), and Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Moderate.

The EST GIS analysis National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) identified 1.6 acres (0.67%), 9.5 acres (2.04%) and 53.5 acres (4.54%) of Palustrine wetlands within the 100-foot, 200-foot and 500-foot buffer distances, respectively. There were 0.8 acre (0.35%), 1.6 acres (0.35%) and 4 acres (0.34%) of Riverine wetlands identified within the 100-foot, 200-foot and 500-foot buffer distances, respectively. The Palustrine wetlands are mostly north of Fowler Avenue and the Riverine wetlands are at the Hillsborough River.

The USACE listed the wetland resources within the 500-foot buffer distance identified in the EST GIS analysis. The areas adjacent to the corridor have residential, commercial, and undeveloped lands with both uplands and wetlands. Widening the existing roadway is likely to require filling wetlands and waters. The Wetland report should identify and assess all potential waters including wetlands, and provide the total wetland acreage and the anticipated impact acreage. The summary should also include a summary of all potential waters of the United States including canals, ditches, or other conveyances. The USACE recommends the project be designed to avoid impacting all waters of the United States. The USACE will only authorize a project that is supported by evidence that the preferred alternative is the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA). The USACE recommends the PD&E team review the 404(B)(1) Guidelines to ensure the appropriate factors are considered so that the USACE may utilize the results of the alternatives analysis during any future permit application review and evaluation. If unavoidable wetland impacts are anticipated, then the current preference for compensatory mitigation is purchasing mitigation bank credits from a federally approved mitigation bank.

The USEPA identified the wetlands within the EST GIS analysis. Wetlands within the project area most likely have a reduced functional value; however, they continue to provide species habitat and other stormwater runoff and capacity functions. The project may have direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on wetlands, wetland habitat and water quality, which will be dependent on the right-of-way needs. Impacts include loss of wetland function, loss of wildlife habitat, degradation of water quality in wetlands and surface waters, reduction of flood storage, and increased stormwater runoff into wetlands and surface waters. Indirect and cumulative effects on wetlands should be evaluated to identify and quantify incremental and cumulative impacts on natural resources (wetlands) as a result of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions, including the proposed project and other land use actions.

The NMFS stated the project is located in a highly urbanized area of Tampa. The lands adjacent to the proposed project are principally residential and commercial properties, and disturbed palustrine wetlands and uplands. It does not appear that the project will directly impact any NMFS trust resources; however, the road crosses the Hillsborough River. Increased use of the road could result in an increase in the amount of sediment, oil and grease, metals, and other pollutants reaching downstream estuarine habitats utilized by marine fishery resources. NMFS recommends treatment systems be upgraded to prevent degraded water from reaching estuarine habitats within the mouth of the Hillsborough River and in Hillsborough Bay and best management practices should be employed during road construction to prevent siltation of these habitats.

The FDEP stated the NWI GIS report indicates 53.5 acres of palustrine and four acres of riverine wetlands in the 500-foot buffer distance. An Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) will be required from the SWFWMD - the ERP applicant will be required to eliminate or reduce the proposed wetland resource impacts of interstate widening to the greatest extent practicable.

The SWFWMD will require a delineation of the landward extent of wetland and surface water features. The SWFWMD recommends that the FDOT submit a Formal Wetland Determination Petition prior to the ERP application submittal. For the wetland impacts and the impacts to the creeks and analysis utilizing the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM) to determine the wetland mitigation required to offset the wetland impacts. This project is located within the Hillsborough River Basin watershed so mitigation banks located within this basin can be used to offset wetland impacts. An ERP will be required for this project. For ETDM #13854, the District has assigned a pre-application file (PA# 400401) for the purpose of tracking its participation in the ETDM review of this project. File PA# 400401 is maintained at the Tampa Service Office of the SWFWMD.

The FDOT will prepare a WEBAR as part of the PD&E study. The WEBAR will assess locations and function of existing wetlands and the potential for impacts to these resources. Permitting will be conducted with the appropriate regulatory agencies during any future design and prior to construction. The FDOT will take measures to minimize and/or avoid impacts to wetlands, existing conservation easements, mitigation areas or other environmentally sensitive areas.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 08/12/2013 by David A. Rydene, National Marine Fisheries Service

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Direct Effects**Identified Resources and Level of Importance:**

The mouth of the Hillsborough River and Hillsborough Bay, which contain estuarine habitats used by federally-managed fish species and their prey.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed the information contained in the Environmental Screening Tool for ETDM Project #

13854. The Florida Department of Transportation District Seven proposes capacity and operational improvements to I-275 from north of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to north of Bearss Avenue in Hillsborough County, Florida.

NMFS staff conducted a site inspection of the project area on August 9, 2013, to assess potential concerns related to living marine resources within the mouth of the Hillsborough River, and in Hillsborough Bay. The project is located in a highly urbanized area of Tampa. The lands adjacent to the proposed project are principally residential and commercial properties, and disturbed palustrine wetlands and uplands. It does not appear that the project will directly impact any NMFS trust resources. However, the road crosses the Hillsborough River. The Hillsborough River empties to Hillsborough Bay. The mouth of the Hillsborough River and Hillsborough Bay contain estuarine habitats (e.g. seagrass, salt marsh, mangrove) used by federally-managed fish species and their prey. Increased use of the road could result in an increase in the amount of sediment, oil and grease, metals, and other pollutants reaching downstream estuarine habitats utilized by marine fishery resources. Therefore, NMFS recommends that stormwater treatment systems be upgraded to prevent degraded water from reaching estuarine habitats within the mouth of the Hillsborough River, and in Hillsborough Bay. In addition, best management practices should be employed during road construction to prevent siltation of these habitats.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 2 Minimal assigned 09/15/2013 by Madolyn Sanchez, US Environmental Protection Agency

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Resources: Wetlands, wetlands habitat, water quality

Level of Importance: These resources are of a high level of importance in the State of Florida and within the project area. A minimal degree of effect is being assigned to the wetlands issue for the proposed project (ETDM #13854).

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The GIS analysis data at the programming screen phase of the project indicates that approximately 2.4 acres of wetlands (palustrine and riverine) wetlands are located within the 100-foot buffer distance, 11.1 acres within the 200-foot buffer distance, and 57.5 acres are located within the 500-foot buffer distance. The project description states that it is anticipated that additional right-of-way would only be needed for stormwater treatment areas and interchange improvements. It is indicated that the majority of the project will take place within existing right-of-way. Wetlands which are located within the project area most likely have a reduced functional value. However, these wetlands continue to provide species habitat and other stormwater runoff and capacity functions. The wetlands associated with water bodies are of a higher value and function and should be avoided to the greatest extent practicable.

The proposed project may have direct, indirect, and cumulative effects on wetlands, wetlands habitat and water quality in the area. The degree of direct wetlands impacts associated with the project will be dependent upon the right-of-way needs for the entire project. Potential impacts include, but are not limited to, loss of wetlands function, loss of wildlife habitat, degradation of water quality in wetlands, degradation of water quality in surface waters, and reduction in flood storage and capacity.

Other issues of concern include increased stormwater runoff and the increase of pollutants into surface waters and wetlands as a result of the project and other point and nonpoint sources. Every effort should be made to maximize the collection and treatment of stormwater. Stormwater collection and treatment mechanisms should be designed to protect the function of surrounding wetlands, floodplains, and surface water features.

The PD&E study should focus on identifying wetlands areas to be potentially impacted by the project. The PD&E study should include a delineation of wetlands; functional analysis of wetlands to determine their value and function; an evaluation of stormwater pond sites to determine their impact on wetlands; avoidance and minimization strategies for wetlands; and mitigation plans to compensate for adverse impacts.

Indirect and cumulative effects on wetlands should be evaluated to identify and quantify incremental and cumulative impacts on natural resources (wetlands) as a result of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions, including the proposed project and other land use actions.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 2 Minimal assigned 09/11/2013 by Lauren P. Milligan, FL Department of Environmental Protection

Coordination Document: Permit Required

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

The National Wetlands Inventory GIS report indicates that a total of 53.5 acres of palustrine and 4 acres of riverine wetlands occur within the 500-ft. project buffer zone.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

An Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) will be required from the Southwest Florida Water Management District - the ERP applicant will be required to eliminate or reduce the proposed wetland resource impacts of interstate widening to the greatest extent practicable:

- Minimization should emphasize avoidance-oriented corridor alignments, wetland fill reductions via pile bridging and steep/vertically retained side slopes, and median width reductions within safety limits.
- Wetlands should not be displaced by the installation of stormwater conveyance and treatment swales; compensatory treatment in adjacent uplands is the preferred alternative.
- After avoidance and minimization have been exhausted, mitigation must be proposed to offset the adverse impacts of the project to existing wetland functions and values. Significant attention is given to forested wetland systems, which are difficult to mitigate.
- The cumulative impacts of concurrent and future transportation improvement projects in the vicinity of the subject project should also be addressed.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 09/09/2013 by Monte Ritter, Southwest Florida Water Management District

Coordination Document: Permit Required

Coordination Document Comments:

The SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect based on the potential need for increased coordination or effort associated with the SWFWMD's proprietary or regulatory interests and obligations. For this project, a DOE of Minimal was assigned to this issue due to the fact the vegetated ditch and wetlands will need to be delineated, quantified, and labeled on the construction plans as part of the permit review. However, the expected permitting effort by FDOT should be straight forward and a normal effort is expected on the part of SWFWMD's regulatory staff. Wetland mitigation may be required to offset the potential impacts to the wetlands located within the proposed ROW. In addition, water quality will need to be addressed to offset the impacts to the existing vegetation.

The District will require a delineation of the landward extent of wetland and surface water features by a qualified environmental scientist, pursuant to Chapter 62-340, F.A.C. The District recommends that the FDOT submit a Formal Wetland Determination Petition prior to the ERP application submittal.

The majority of the surface water impacts will have a de minimis impact on fish and wildlife habitat; therefore, wetland mitigation would not be required to offset the impacts. For the wetland impacts and the impacts to the creeks and analysis utilizing the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM) to determine the wetland mitigation required to offset the wetland impacts. This project is located within the Hillsborough River Basin watershed so mitigation banks located within this basin can be used to offset wetland impacts.

An Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) will be required for this project. However, the final determination of the type of permit will depend upon the final design configuration.

For ETDM #13854, the District has assigned a pre-application file (**PA# 400401**) for the purpose of tracking its participation in the ETDM review of this project. File **PA# 400401** is maintained at the Tampa Service Office of the SWFWMD. Please refer to this pre-application file whenever contacting District regulatory staff regarding this project.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

According to the SWFWMD Wetlands 2009 layer of the EST there are 8.57 acres of wetlands located within the 200 foot buffer of the proposed limits of I-275 from north of MLK Jr. Blvd. to north of Bearss Ave. [Analysis run on April 18, 2013]. An analysis of SWFWMD ArcMap GIS shows there are wetlands located within the proposed route are wetlands that are historically disturbed. Many of the wetland/surface water systems appear to be borrow pits from the construction of I-275. The quality of individual wetlands and surface waters will need to be further evaluated during the permitting phase of the project.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The widening of the existing sections of I-275 from north of MLK Jr. Blvd to north of Bearss Avenue is anticipated to result in minor wetland, both herbaceous and forested, and surface water impacts.

Several of the wetlands located within the proposed roadway widening and extension have existing delineations associated with them. Review of the File of Record (FOR) located in the corresponding District Service Office is recommended to determine what wetland lines may still be considered valid and can be utilized during the permitting process associated with this roadway project.

Additional Comments (optional):

The SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect based on the potential need for increased coordination or effort associated with the SWFWMD's proprietary or regulatory interests and obligations. For this project, a DOE of Minimal was assigned to this issue due to the fact the vegetated ditch and

wetlands will need to be delineated, quantified, and labeled on the construction plans as part of the permit review. However, the expected permitting effort by FDOT should be straight forward and a normal effort is expected on the part of SWFWMD's regulatory staff. Wetland mitigation may be required to offset the potential impacts to the wetlands located within the proposed ROW. In addition, water quality will need to be addressed to offset the impacts to the existing vegetation.

The District will require a delineation of the landward extent of wetland and surface water features by a qualified environmental scientist, pursuant to Chapter 62-340, F.A.C. The District recommends that the FDOT submit a Formal Wetland Determination Petition prior to the ERP application submittal.

The majority of the surface water impacts will have a de minimis impact on fish and wildlife habitat; therefore, wetland mitigation would not be required to offset the impacts. For the wetland impacts and the impacts to the creeks and analysis utilizing the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM) to determine the wetland mitigation required to offset the wetland impacts. This project is located within the Hillsborough River Basin watershed so mitigation banks located within this basin can be used to offset wetland impacts.

An Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) will be required for this project. However, the final determination of the type of permit will depend upon the final design configuration.

For ETDM #13854, the District has assigned a pre-application file (**PA# 400401**) for the purpose of tracking its participation in the ETDM review of this project. File **PA# 400401** is maintained at the Tampa Service Office of the SWFWMD. Please refer to this pre-application file whenever contacting District regulatory staff regarding this project.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: **3** *Moderate* assigned 09/05/2013 by Garrett Lips, US Army Corps of Engineers

Coordination Document: Permit Required

Coordination Document Comments: depending on extent of proposed fill impacts, either a Nationwide permit or standard permit

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

The EST GIS analysis National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) identified 1.1 acres (0.1%) of Lacustrine, 46.4 acres (3.94%) of Palustrine, and 3.4 acres (0.29%) of Riverine wetlands within the 500-foot buffer distance. The Palustrine wetlands are mostly north of Fowler Avenue and the Riverine wetlands are at the Hillsborough River.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The areas adjacent to the corridor have residential, commercial, and undeveloped lands with both uplands and wetlands. Widening the existing roadway is likely to require filling wetlands and waters. Filling wetlands reduces the ability of the natural environment to provide: sustainable habitat for wildlife, aquifer recharge, natural filters for pollutants, essential carbon export/import functions, flood water attenuation and storage, and contributions to the ecosystem through food-web productivity, among many other functions.

Additional Comments (optional):

depending on extent of proposed fill impacts, either a Nationwide permit or standard permit

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Water Quality and Quantity

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: **3** *Moderate* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD), and Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Moderate.

The EST GIS analysis identified two 303(D) 1998 Impaired Waters, nine Verified Impaired Florida Waters: Cycle 1 Group 1-5 Basins and Cycle 2 Group 1-3 Basins (2010), and two Recharge Areas of the Floridan Aquifer within the 100-foot, 200-foot and 500-foot buffer distances. There were six Flood Hazard Zones, 12 EPA Water Quality Data Monitoring Stations and two Super Act Wells within the 100-foot buffer distance, five additional Flood Hazard Zones, 18 additional EPA Water Quality Data Monitoring Stations and 12 additional Super Act Wells within the 200-foot buffer distance and 12 additional Flood Hazard Zones, 36 additional EPA Water Quality Data Monitoring Stations and 62 additional Super Act Wells within the 500-foot buffer distance. There are 642.1 acres (54.5%) of Fair, and 432.2 acres (36.38%) of Good Watershed Conditions 305(B) within the 500-foot buffer distance.

The USEPA identified the project is located within the Hillsborough River, Thirteen Mile Creek, Chapman Lake Outlet, Hillsborough Reservoir, Curiosity Creek, Sulphur Springs Drain, and Cypress Creek drainage basins. Hillsborough River (WBID #1443E) is listed on the 303(d) list of impaired waters for

nutrients and mercury, and Cypress Creek (WBID #1402) is listed for dissolved oxygen, coliforms, and nutrients. Three Verified Impaired Waters are also within the project area: Hillsborough River (WBID #1443E) is on the list for mercury (fish tissue), dissolved oxygen, and nutrients (chlorophyll-A), Cypress Creek (WBID #1402) is on the list for fecal coliforms, dissolved oxygen, and nutrients (chlorophyll-A), and Hillsborough Reservoir (WBID #1443E1) is on the list for nutrients (TSI), mercury (fish tissue) and dissolved oxygen. These water bodies fail to meet water quality criteria and require that a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) be developed for the pollutant. It is recommended that FDOT consult with the FDEP water quality program. Increase in traffic volumes as a result of the roadway project could potentially have both direct and indirect impacts to water quality in surface water bodies, including Hillsborough River, Tampa Bay and their tributaries.

The SWFWMD assigned the degree of effect based on potential impacts to existing Zone A & AE floodplains and potential impacts to verified impaired waters within three of seven WBIDs within the project area. Water quantity concerns must be addressed for the project in accordance with Chapter 4 of the District's Basis of Review. The SWFWMD recommends that the FDOT consider providing a pond siting report that addresses the above referenced design approaches and criteria. For those improvements that may affect existing cross drainage facilities, an updated bridge hydraulics report should be prepared and submitted with the ERP application. As applicable, the SWFWMD will require that stormwater management systems that discharge directly or indirectly into waters not meeting standards, including impaired waters, provide a net improvement condition in the water body in terms of the pollutants that contribute to the water body's impairment. It is recommended that the FDOT consider stormwater quality treatment together with water quality impacts to wetlands and other surface waters when designing the stormwater water management components of this project. For ETDM #13854, the District has assigned a pre-application file (PA #400401) for the purpose of tracking its participation in the ETDM review of this project.

The FDEP stated stormwater runoff from the additional highway surface may alter adjacent wetlands and surface waters through increased pollutant loading. Additional runoff carrying oils, greases, metals, sediment and other pollutants from the increased impervious surface will be of concern. Stormwater treatment should be designed to maintain the natural predevelopment hydroperiod and water quality, as well as to protect the natural functions of adjacent wetlands. The FDEP recommends the PD&E study include an evaluation of existing stormwater treatment adequacy and details on the future stormwater treatment facilities.

The project will be designed to meet state water quality and quantity requirements. The FDOT will create a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) and erosion and sediment control plan during any future design phase of this project. Proper best management practices (BMPs) will be used during construction. The FDOT will coordinate with SWFWMD for water quality and will adhere to state water quality standards during permitting of the proposed project. The FDOT will evaluate the project for pond sites during the Design phase and an ERP permit will be obtained from SWFWMD during any future design of this project and prior to construction.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 09/11/2013 by Lauren P. Milligan, FL Department of Environmental Protection

Coordination Document: Permit Required

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Stormwater runoff from the additional highway surface may alter adjacent wetlands and surface waters through increased pollutant loading. Additional runoff carrying oils, greases, metals, sediment and other pollutants from the increased impervious surface will be of concern.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Every effort should be made to maximize the treatment of stormwater runoff from the proposed interstate project to prevent ground and surface water contamination. Stormwater treatment should be designed to maintain the natural predevelopment hydroperiod and water quality, as well as to protect the natural functions of adjacent wetlands. We recommend that the PD&E study include an evaluation of existing stormwater treatment adequacy and details on the future stormwater treatment facilities. Retro-fitting of stormwater conveyance systems would help reduce impacts to water quality.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 09/15/2013 by Madolyn Sanchez, US Environmental Protection Agency

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Resources: Water quality, surface water, groundwater

Level of Importance: These resources are of a high level of importance in the State of Florida. A moderate degree of effect is being assigned to this issue for the proposed project (ETDM #13854).

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The project area encompasses several drainage basins within the Hillsborough River and Tampa Bay watersheds. Drainage basins include Hillsborough River, Thirteen Mile Creek, Chapman Lake Outlet, Hillsborough Reservoir, Curiosity Creek, Sulphur Springs Drain, and Cypress Creek.

Hillsborough River (WBID #1443E) is listed on the Clean Water Act 303(d) list of impaired waters for nutrients and mercury (fish consumption advisory). Cypress Creek (WBID #1402) is listed for dissolved oxygen, coliforms, and nutrients.

Three Verified Impaired Waters are also within the project area. Hillsborough River (WBID #1443E) is on the list for mercury (fish tissue), dissolved oxygen, and nutrients (chlorophyll-A), Cypress Creek (WBID #1402) is on the list for fecal coliforms, dissolved oxygen, and nutrients (chlorophyll-A), and Hillsborough Reservoir (WBID #1443E1) is on the list for nutrients (TSI), mercury (fish tissue) and dissolved oxygen. These water bodies fail to meet water quality criteria and require that a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) be developed for the pollutant. Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) have been proposed or developed for these impairments.

The PD&E study should include a review of water quality standards in the 303(d) listed water bodies or water body segments (Hillsborough River and Tampa Bay), sources of water quality impairments, and TMDL requirements and how these regulations and/or requirements may affect the proposed project and environmental resource permits. It is recommended that FDOT consult with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection water quality program on this issue.

Any construction, modifications, or widening of the I-275 bridge could have direct impacts to water quality in the Hillsborough River and should be assessed during the PD&E study.

The project area is also located within a sensitive karst area with the potential for sinkholes. A review of data within the Florida Geological Survey databases and/or a review of the project area should be conducted by a licensed professional geologist to evaluate the potential for sinkholes along the project corridor.

Potential pollutant sources to surface water quality from roadways include stormwater runoff into nearby surface water bodies via drainage ditches or other conveyance systems. Stormwater runoff from urban sources, including roadways, carries pollutants such as volatile organics, petroleum hydrocarbons, heavy metals, and pesticides/herbicides. Proper stormwater conveyance, containment, and treatment will be required in accordance with state and federal regulations and guidelines. Engineering design features and hydrological drainage structures should be such that stormwater transport, flow, and discharge meet or exceed requirements.

Increase in traffic volumes as a result of the roadway project could potentially have both direct and indirect impacts to water quality in surface water bodies, including Hillsborough River, Tampa Bay and their tributaries.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: **3** *Moderate* assigned 09/09/2013 by Monte Ritter, Southwest Florida Water Management District

Coordination Document: Permit Required

Coordination Document Comments:

The SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect based on the potential need for increased coordination or effort associated with the SWFWMD's proprietary or regulatory interests and obligations. For the I-275 Improvement project, a DOE of Moderate was assigned to this issue due to the present belief that future ERP permitting is expected to be non-routine for:

- Potential impacts to existing Zone A & AE floodplains within the proposed project area.
- Potential impacts to verified impaired waters within three (3) of the seven (7) WBIDs noted previously.

However, the expected permitting effort by FDOT should be straight forward and a normal effort is expected on the part of SWFWMD's regulatory staff.

Specific studies that contain useful water quality and hydrologic information have been done by Hillsborough County, the SWFWMD and the USGS. These reports can be accessed through the District's Library at <http://www15.swfwmd.state.fl.us/dbtw-wpd/mywebqbe/librarybasic.htm>. Type in the water body of interest, click on Submit query then click on the pull-down menu in the upper left and select Record Display Web.

Impacts to existing permitted stormwater management systems may decrease performance in terms of flood management and stormwater treatment. Information on Environmental Resource Permits (ERPs), Storm Water Permits, Dredge & Fill Permits and Works of the District Permits is now available in the EST under Water Quality & Quantity > Permits. Useful (but limited) information includes the permit number, a short description of the project, name of the permittee, project acreage and an approximate location of the project (shown graphically).

As of August, 2013, the EST indicated forty-one (41) ERP's and one (1) Storm Water Permit have been applied for within 200 feet of this project. Similar information can be obtained from the SWFWMD's Permits Map Viewer and Environmental Resource Permit Search web sites as follows:

<http://www8.swfwmd.state.fl.us/ExternalPermitting/>

<http://www18.swfwmd.state.fl.us/erp/erp/search/ERPSearch.aspx>

Previous ERP's within the existing right of way of I-275 that may be of interest to FDOT in the future PD&E and design phases are as follows:

121.021 HILLS CO E 121ST ST & TALIAFERRO AVE DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS

11959.000 DOT-US 41 FLETCHER TO APEX#10040-3534
11959.001 DOT - S 41 N/FLORIDA AVENUE TO APRIL LANE
17641.000 DOT - INTERSTATE I-275/BUSCH 10320-3465
17641.001 DOT I275/S OF FOWLER-FLETCHER 10320-1466
17641.002 HILLS CO - 127th AVE DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT
17978.000 DOT I-275 FLETCHER/N US 41 #10320-3467
17978.003 DOT I-275 FLETCHER/N US 41 #10320-3476
19802.002 DOT SR 678 (BEARSS)/FL TO NEBRASKA AVE
21942.000 HILLS CO - W LK BURRELL DR & LK ST CLAIR
24189.000 HILLS CO - 132ND AND TALIAFERRO AVE DRG
24189.001 HILLS CO CURIOSITY CREEK PH III
24745.004 FDOT-SR 93 FROM N OF US 41 TO S OF R 56
25084.000 - DOT-I275 REHAB FLORIBRASKA AVE TO YUKON
40292.000 FDOT I-275 (STATE ROAD 93) SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Water quantity concerns must be addressed for the project in accordance with Chapter 4 of the District's Basis of Review. This includes making provisions to allow runoff from up-gradient areas to be conveyed to down-gradient areas without adversely affecting the stage point or manner of discharge and without degrading water quality (refer to Section 4.8 of the District's Basis of Review, available at <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/permits/rules/>).

The District's Basis of Review document describes design approaches and criteria that will provide reasonable assurances that the proposed surface water management systems will meet the conditions for issuance of an Environmental Resource Permit (ERP). Parameters frequently over or under estimated include: seasonal high water levels, seasonal high groundwater table elevations, soil vertical & horizontal hydraulic conductivity, depth to the soil confining units, historic basin storage, floodplain storage, conveyance way hydraulic capacity, peak discharge rates and timing, tailwater conditions in the receiving system, total discharged volume, and off-site hydrograph timing impacts. Site-specific design data is preferable to book values.

The District recommends that the FDOT consider providing a pond siting report that addresses the above referenced design approaches and criteria. For those improvements that may affect existing cross drainage facilities, an updated bridge hydraulics report(s) should be prepared and submitted with the ERP application.

If this project will require the acquisition of new right-of-way areas, the current rule for eminent domain noticing is 40D-1.603(9), FAC and requires the applicant to provide the noticing to the affected property owners. Additionally, any issued permit may include special conditions prohibiting construction until the FDOT provides evidence of ownership and control.

For ETDM #13854, the District has assigned a pre-application file (**PA #400401**) for the purpose of tracking its participation in the ETDM review of this project. File **PA #400401** is maintained at the Tampa Service Office of the SWFWMD. Please refer to this pre-application file whenever contacting District regulatory staff regarding this project.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Water Quality:

From south to north, the project occupies seven drainage basins: Hillsborough River (WBID 1443E), Sulphur Springs Drain (WBID 1555), Curiosity Creek (WBID 1523), Chapman lake Outlet (WBID 1502), Hillsborough Reservoir (WBID 1443E1), Cypress Creek (WBID 1402), and Thirteen Mile Creek (WBID 1499). WBIDs 1555, 1523, 1502 and 1499 are NOT classified as impaired by the FDEP (as of August 2013). The following information was obtained from the FDEP regarding Verified Impaired Waters along this project's alignment:

1. Hillsborough River, Assessment Category 5, (WBID 1443E) Verified impairments (as of 05/14/09) include Dissolved Oxygen, Mercury (in fish tissue) and Nutrients (Chlorophyll-a). One (1) TMDL document is available at the following FDEP web site:

<http://webapps.dep.state.fl.us/DearTmdl/dashboardAction.do?method=tmdlPermitDetailsAction&srcWbid=1443E>

This (3/27/05) DEP Adopted EPA Approved document is entitled *Total and Fecal TMDLs for Hillsborough River, WBID 1443E*

2. Hillsborough Reservoir, Assessment Category 5, (WBID 1443E) Verified impairments (as of 05/14/09) include Dissolved Oxygen, Mercury (in fish tissue) and Nutrients (TSI). A TMDL was not available.

3. Cypress Creek, Assessment Category 5, (WBID 1402) Verified impairments (as of 05/14/09) include Dissolved Oxygen, Fecal Coliform, Nutrients (Chlorophyll-a) and Nutrients (Historic Chlorophyll-a). One (1) TMDL document is available at the following FDEP web site:

<http://webapps.dep.state.fl.us/DearTmdl/dashboardAction.do?method=tmdlPermitDetailsAction&srcWbid=1402>
This (03/23/05) DEP Adopted EPA Approved document is entitled *Total Coliform TMDL for Cypress Creek (WBID 1402)*

The above impaired waters information was obtained from the Permits tab of the FDEP s TMDL.

Water Quantity:

Floodplain issues for the I-275 Improvement project were addressed in a previous section of this document.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Water Quality:

Untreated or under-treated runoff generated by the I-275 Improvement project could impact the seven (7) watersheds (WBIDs) identified in the previous section. As of August, 2013, four (4) of these watersheds are not currently classified as Verified impaired (Assessment Category 5) by the FDEP for nutrient related pollutants. However, this could change in the future as development activities increase within these respective WBIDs. The SWFWMD recommends that FDOT participate as a stakeholder in future TMDL and BMAP activities by the FDEP.

Water Quantity:

Potential impacts from the I-275 Improvement project will depend upon the required filling, encroachment or alteration of existing Zone A & AE Floodplains, Historic Basin Storage areas and (if applicable) Floodways. Un-attenuated or under-attenuated runoff could cause flooding impacts to existing off-site stormwater management systems and drainage conveyance facilities.

Additional Comments (optional):

The SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect based on the potential need for increased coordination or effort associated with the SWFWMD s proprietary or regulatory interests and obligations. For the I-275 Improvement project, a DOE of Moderate was assigned to this issue due to the present belief that future ERP permitting is expected to be non-routine for:

- Potential impacts to existing Zone A & AE floodplains within the proposed project area.
- Potential impacts to verified impaired waters within three (3) of the seven (7) WBIDs noted previously.

However, the expected permitting effort by FDOT should be straight forward and a normal effort is expected on the part of SWFWMD s regulatory staff.

Specific studies that contain useful water quality and hydrologic information have been done by Hillsborough County, the SWFWMD and the USGS. These reports can be accessed through the District s Library at <http://www15.swfwmd.state.fl.us/dbtw-wpd/mywebqbe/librarybasic.htm>. Type in the water body of interest, click on Submit query then click on the pull-down menu in the upper left and select Record Display Web.

Impacts to existing permitted stormwater management systems may decrease performance in terms of flood management and stormwater treatment. Information on Environmental Resource Permits (ERPs), Storm Water Permits, Dredge & Fill Permits and Works of the District Permits is now available in the EST under Water Quality & Quantity > Permits. Useful (but limited) information includes the permit number, a short description of the project, name of the permittee, project acreage and an approximate location of the project (shown graphically).

As of August, 2013, the EST indicated forty-one (41) ERP s and one (1) Storm Water Permit have been applied for within 200 feet of this project. Similar information can be obtained from the SWFWMD s Permits Map Viewer and Environmental Resource Permit Search web sites as follows:

<http://www8.swfwmd.state.fl.us/ExternalPermitting/>
<http://www18.swfwmd.state.fl.us/erp/erp/search/ERPSearch.aspx>

Previous ERP s within the existing right of way of I-275 that may be of interest to FDOT in the future PD&E and design phases are as follows:

121.021 HILLS CO E 121ST ST & TALIAFERRO AVE DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS
11959.000 DOT-US 41 FLETCHER TO APEX#10040-3534
11959.001 DOT - S 41 N/FLORIDA AVENUE TO APRIL LANE
17641.000 DOT - INTERSTATE I-275/BUSCH 10320-3465
17641.001 DOT I275/S OF FOWLER-FLETCHER 10320-1466
17641.002 HILLS CO - 127th AVE DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT
17978.000 DOT I-275 FLETCHER/N US 41 #10320-3467
17978.003 DOT I-275 FLETCHER/N US 41 #10320-3476
19802.002 DOT SR 678 (BEARSS)/FL TO NEBRASKA AVE
21942.000 HILLS CO - W LK BURRELL DR & LK ST CLAIR
24189.000 HILLS CO - 132ND AND TALIAFERRO AVE DRG
24189.001 HILLS CO CURIOSITY CREEK PH III
24745.004 FDOT-SR 93 FROM N OF US 41 TO S OF R 56
25084.000 - DOT-I275 REHAB FLORIBRASKA AVE TO YUKON

Water quantity concerns must be addressed for the project in accordance with Chapter 4 of the District's Basis of Review. This includes making provisions to allow runoff from up-gradient areas to be conveyed to down-gradient areas without adversely affecting the stage point or manner of discharge and without degrading water quality (refer to Section 4.8 of the District's Basis of Review, available at <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/permits/rules/>).

The District's Basis of Review document describes design approaches and criteria that will provide reasonable assurances that the proposed surface water management systems will meet the conditions for issuance of an Environmental Resource Permit (ERP). Parameters frequently over or under estimated include: seasonal high water levels, seasonal high groundwater table elevations, soil vertical & horizontal hydraulic conductivity, depth to the soil confining units, historic basin storage, floodplain storage, conveyance way hydraulic capacity, peak discharge rates and timing, tailwater conditions in the receiving system, total discharged volume, and off-site hydrograph timing impacts. Site-specific design data is preferable to book values.

The District recommends that the FDOT consider providing a pond siting report that addresses the above referenced design approaches and criteria. For those improvements that may affect existing cross drainage facilities, an updated bridge hydraulics report(s) should be prepared and submitted with the ERP application.

If this project will require the acquisition of new right-of-way areas, the current rule for eminent domain noticing is 40D-1.603(9), FAC and requires the applicant to provide the noticing to the affected property owners. Additionally, any issued permit may include special conditions prohibiting construction until the FDOT provides evidence of ownership and control.

For ETDM #13854, the District has assigned a pre-application file (**PA #400401**) for the purpose of tracking its participation in the ETDM review of this project. File **PA #400401** is maintained at the Tampa Service Office of the SWFWMD. Please refer to this pre-application file whenever contacting District regulatory staff regarding this project.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Floodplains

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 3 *Moderate* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Moderate.

The EST GIS analysis Special Flood Hazard Areas identified 2.4 acres (1.02%) of Zone A and 1.7 acres (0.74%) of Zone AE within 100-foot buffer distance, 11.1 acres (2.39%) of Zone A and 4.7 acres (1%) of Zone AE within the 200-foot buffer distance, and 56.1 acres (4.76%) of Zone A and 16.6 acres (1.41%) of Zone AE within the 500-foot buffer distance.

SWFWMD supported Watershed Management Models are generally based on more recent land cover and topographic information. The SWFWMD recommends that the FDOT utilize data from these flood studies in preference to generalized information on flows and stages. FDOT should coordinate with District Engineering & Watershed Management Section staff in Brooksville regarding the status & data availability of these Watershed Management Models. Filling within any floodplain, floodway or historic basin storage area may decrease stormwater storage which could increase flooding depth and duration. The SWFWMD will require compensation for fill (or other encroachments) into floodplains, floodways and historic basin storage areas up to the 100-year event if such encroachment(s) will adversely affect conveyance, storage, water quality or adjacent lands. The FDOT may reduce the degree of effect for flooding by restricting the filling/encroachment into floodplain, floodway and historic basin storage areas to only those areas that are necessary, constructing stormwater treatment ponds outside floodplain, floodway and historic basin storage areas, and providing equivalent compensation for lost floodplain, floodway and historic basin storage.

The USEPA identified the Zone A and AE floodplains within the project area from the EST GIS analysis. Floodplain impacts associated with the project will be dependent upon the amount of right-of-way needed for the project and how much natural environment will be impacted by the project. USEPA recommends that any studies for this project should focus on identifying the types of special flood hazard areas to be potentially impacted. Efforts should be made to avoid or minimize impacts to floodplain resources and functions. Any development within the 100-year floodplain has the potential for placing citizens and property at risk of flooding and producing changes in floodplain elevations and plan view extent. Development within floodplains increases the potential for flooding by limiting flood storage capacity and exposing people and property to flood hazards.

The FDOT will evaluate floodplain impacts and compensation opportunities for any floodplain encroachment and lost floodplain storage. Compensatory

mitigation will be provided if mitigation is deemed necessary by regulatory agencies. A Location Hydraulics Memorandum (LHM) will be prepared in Project Development. An evaluation of floodplain impacts and alternatives to avoid adverse effects and incompatible development in the floodplains will also be undertaken. Effort will be made to avoid or minimize impacts to floodplain resources and functions. Engineering design features and hydrological drainage structures will be intended such that stormwater transport, flow and discharge meet or exceed flood control requirements. The proposed project is expected to result in moderate involvement with floodplain resources.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: **3** *Moderate* assigned 09/09/2013 by Monte Ritter, Southwest Florida Water Management District

Coordination Document: Permit Required

Coordination Document Comments:

The SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect based on the potential need for increased coordination or effort associated with the SWFWMD's proprietary or regulatory interests and obligations. For this project, a DOE of Moderate was assigned to this issue due to the present belief that future ERP permitting is expected to be non-routine for expected impacts to existing (or future) Zone A & AE floodplains and historic basin storage areas within the proposed areas of:

- New stormwater management ponds.
- Roadway widening.
- Alterations of existing cross drains.

However, the expected permitting effort by FDOT should be straight forward and a normal effort is expected on the part of SWFWMD's regulatory staff.

SWFWMD supported Watershed Management Models are generally based on more recent land cover and topographic information. The SWFWMD recommends that the FDOT utilize data from these flood studies in preference to generalized information on flows and stages. FDOT should coordinate with District Engineering & Watershed Management Section staff in Brooksville regarding the status & data availability of these Watershed Management Models. Completed SWFWMD studies encompassing the I-275 Improvement project that may be helpful in the PD&E and design phase include the following:

Project Number: B126

Project Name: Hillsborough County Model Review

Area(s) of Responsibility: Flood Protection / Floodplain Management

Project Status: **Complete**

Project Manager: Ms. Robin Bailey

Project Number: L099

Project Name: Hillsborough Watershed Model Update

Area(s) of Responsibility: Flood Protection / Floodplain Management

Project Status: **Ongoing**

Project Manager: Ms. Robin Bailey

If available, floodplain information developed through these studies can be viewed through the SWFWMD's Floodplain Map Viewer at <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/projects/wmp/>. As of August, 2013, no information was available the Floodplain Map Viewer. Proposed stormwater management systems by FDOT may necessitate updates to the current or proposed Watershed Management Models.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

The following information was obtained from the FDOT's Environmental Screening Tool (EST) and supplemented with information from the SWFWMD's Geographic Information System (GIS):

Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) areas of interest include the following:

- Zone A: representing less than one (1) % of I-275 within the 200 foot buffer.
- Zone AE: representing less than two (2) % of I-275 within the 200 foot buffer.
- Zone X: representing less than ninety eight (98) % of I-275 within the 200 foot buffer.

Approximate locations of these DFIRM Zones can be viewed within the EST under the Floodplains map and > *Water Resource > DFIRM Flood Hazard Zones* layer. Graphically, the greatest concentration of floodplains appear at the Hillsborough River and from approximately 1500 feet north of North Nebraska Avenue to the end of the project. Of particular interest are the following:

- Wetlands & water bodies within the Hillsborough River (WBID 1443E).
- Wetlands & water bodies within Curiosity Creek (WBID 1523)
- Wetlands & water bodies within Cypress Creek (WBID 1402)
- Wetlands & water bodies within Thirteen Mile Creek (WBID 1499)

As of August, 2013, the following DFIRM Panel Number for the I-275 Improvement project can be obtained from the FEMA Map Service Center at:

Panel # 12057C: Effective Date 08/28/08

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Potential impacts for the I-275 Improvement project will depend upon the required filling, encroachment or alteration of existing (or future) Zone A & AE Floodplains, Historic Basin Storage areas and (if applicable) Floodways.

Additional Comments (optional):

The SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect based on the potential need for increased coordination or effort associated with the SWFWMD s proprietary or regulatory interests and obligations. For this project, a DOE of Moderate was assigned to this issue due to the present belief that future ERP permitting is expected to be non-routine for expected impacts to existing (or future) Zone A & AE floodplains and historic basin storage areas within the proposed areas of:

- New stormwater management ponds.
- Roadway widening.
- Alterations of existing cross drains.

However, the expected permitting effort by FDOT should be straight forward and a normal effort is expected on the part of SWFWMD s regulatory staff.

SWFWMD supported Watershed Management Models are generally based on more recent land cover and topographic information. The SWFWMD recommends that the FDOT utilize data from these flood studies in preference to generalized information on flows and stages. FDOT should coordinate with District Engineering & Watershed Management Section staff in Brooksville regarding the status & data availability of these Watershed Management Models. Completed SWFWMD studies encompassing the I-275 Improvement project that may be helpful in the PD&E and design phase include the following:

Project Number: B126

Project Name: Hillsborough County Model Review

Area(s) of Responsibility: Flood Protection / Floodplain Management

Project Status: **Complete**

Project Manager: Ms. Robin Bailey

Project Number: L099

Project Name: Hillsborough Watershed Model Update

Area(s) of Responsibility: Flood Protection / Floodplain Management

Project Status: **Ongoing**

Project Manager: Ms. Robin Bailey

If available, floodplain information developed through these studies can be viewed through the SWFWMD s Floodplain Map Viewer at <http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/projects/wmp/>. As of August, 2013, no information was available the Floodplain Map Viewer . Proposed stormwater management systems by FDOT may necessitate updates to the current or proposed Watershed Management Models.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 09/15/2013 by Madolyn Sanchez, US Environmental Protection Agency

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Resources: Floodplains

Level of Importance: Development within the 100-year floodplain is of a high level of importance. Development and construction may occur within the Special Flood Hazard Area, provided that development complies with floodplain management ordinances and/or local, state, and federal requirements. EPA is assigning a minimal degree of effect to the floodplains issue for ETDM Project #13854.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

A review of GIS analysis data (Special Flood Hazard Areas) in the EST at the programming screen phase of the project indicates that approximately 4 acres of land within the 100-foot buffer distance, 16 acres within the 200-foot buffer distance, and 73 acres within the 500-foot buffer distance of the proposed project lies within the 100-year floodplain, as designated by Zones A and AE of the FEMA flood hazard designations.

EPA is assigning a minimal degree of effect to the floodplain issue for this project. The project description states that the only additional right-of-way

(ROW) anticipated would be for stormwater treatment areas and/or interchange improvements. Floodplain impacts associated with the project will be dependent upon the amount of right-of-way needed for the project and how much natural environment will be impacted by the project. EPA recommends that any studies for this project should focus on identifying the types of special flood hazard areas to be potentially impacted and what type of additional analyses, if any, will be needed. FDOT should consider alternatives to avoid adverse effects and incompatible development in the floodplains. Efforts should be made to avoid or minimize impacts to floodplain resources and functions.

General comments relating to floodplains include the fact that any development within the 100-year floodplain has the potential for placing citizens and property at risk of flooding and producing changes in floodplain elevations and plan view extent. Development (such as roadways, housing developments, strip malls and other commercial facilities) within floodplains increases the potential for flooding by limiting flood storage capacity and exposing people and property to flood hazards. Development also reduces vegetated buffers that protect water quality and destroys important habitats for fish and wildlife.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Wildlife and Habitat

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC) and Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Minimal.

The EST GIS analysis identified the Greater Tampa Bay Ecosystem Management Area (EMA) and one Rare and Imperiled Fish (Ironcolor Shiner) within the 100-foot, 200-foot and 500-foot buffer distance. There was one Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) Element Occurrence (Giant Orchid), one Florida Managed Area and Public Land (River Tower Restoration Site), and one Threatened or Endangered Species (Giant Orchid) within the 200-foot and 500-foot buffer distance. The project is located within the 15-mile radius core foraging area for nine wood stork colonies. The project crosses the Hillsborough River as well as a few other natural areas, but the majority of the project is located in a highly developed portion of Hillsborough County.

The FFWCC noted that their assessment revealed that the project area is dominated by High and Low Impact Urban land use, comprising 80.23% (945.2 acres) of the study area. Also, based on range and preferred habitat type, the following species listed by the Federal Endangered Species Act and the State of Florida as Federally Endangered (FE), Federally Threatened (FT), State-Threatened (ST), or State Species of Special Concern (SSC) may occur along the project area: gopher frog (SSC), American alligator (FT due to similarity in appearance to the American crocodile), Eastern indigo snake (FT), Florida pine snake (SSC), short-tailed snake (ST), gopher tortoise (ST), Florida burrowing owl (SSC), Southeastern American kestrel (ST), Florida sandhill crane (ST), least tern (ST), limpkin (SSC), little blue heron (SSC), tricolored heron (SSC), snowy egret (SSC), roseate spoonbill (SSC), white ibis (SSC), wood stork (FE), Florida mouse (SSC), and Sherman's fox squirrel (SSC).

The FFWCC commented that the GIS analysis revealed several specific characteristics associated with lands along the project alignment that provide an indication of potential habitat quality or sensitivity that will require field studies to verify the presence or absence of listed wildlife species and the quality of wildlife habitat resources. In the FWCs Integrated Wildlife Habitat Ranking System, 43.6 acres (3.70%) of the assessment area is ranked Moderately High or Medium. Primary wildlife issues associated with this project include: potential loss of wildlife habitat from new roadway and drainage retention area (DRA) construction; potential adverse effects to a moderate number of species listed by the Federal Endangered Species Act as Endangered or Threatened, or by the State of Florida as Threatened or Species of Special Concern; and potential water quality degradation as a result of additional stormwater runoff from the new roadway surface draining into adjacent wetlands or the Hillsborough River.

The FFWCC concluded that based on the project information provided, we believe the direct and indirect effects of this project could be minimal, provided that new construction is primarily confined to the existing median, any new DRAs are sited in previously disturbed habitats, and degradation of adjacent or downstream water quality is avoided via inclusion of Best Management Practices in the project design. The FFWCC also included measures for conserving fish and wildlife and habitat resources that may occur within and adjacent to the project area.

The SWFWMD stated an Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) will be required for this project; however, the final determination of the type of permit will depend upon the final design configuration. For ETDM #13854, the District has assigned a pre-application file (PA# 400401) for the purpose of tracking its participation in the ETDM review of this project. According to the FFWCC Strategic Habitat Conservation Area Richness report from 2009 the proposed site has a low ranking for species richness over the majority of the site. The project 100- and 200-foot buffer is within the Caracara, Piping Plover, Red Cockaded Woodpecker, and Scrub Jay Consultation Area as analyzed on December 6, 2012. The entire 200 foot buffer is within a defined skink consultation area. Other potential species within the project area include the gopher frog, little blue heron, American alligator, and Florida sandhill crane. Coordination with FFWCC for potential sandhill crane nesting sites and other threatened or endangered species may also be required after a

wildlife survey of the proposed site is completed at the time of design.

USFWS noted in their review of the Purpose and Need Statement that if existing lanes are being converted from general use to designated use lanes such as toll road or multi-passenger vehicles there would be no involvement from our agency. If the project involves adding additional lanes and there might be impacts to adjacent ecosystems then we would like to comment further.

The FDOT will prepare a Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR) during the PD&E study. This report will assess potential species and existing habitat within the project area. This report and the FDOT's findings will be coordinated with the USFWS and FFWCC.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: 2 Minimal assigned 08/26/2013 by Scott Sanders, FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

The Office of Conservation Planning Services of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has coordinated an agency review of ETDM #13854, Hillsborough County, and provides the following comments related to potential effects to fish and wildlife resources on this Programming Phase project.

The Project Description Summary states that this project involves the evaluation of capacity and operational improvements along Interstate 275 (I-275) from north of Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Boulevard (SR 574) to north of Bearss Avenue (SR 678), a distance of approximately 9.57 miles in the Tampa metropolitan area. The existing 6-lane freeway would be expanded to 8 lanes by adding express lanes in each direction. It is estimated that the majority of the improvements will be located within the median from MLK Blvd. to north of Waters Avenue. North of Waters Ave., improvements may have to occur outside the roadway because the median is narrower, however all mainline improvements should occur within the existing Right-of-way (ROW). Interchange operational improvements will also be evaluated, and new ROW may be required for new or expanded Drainage Retention Areas (DRAs).

The project area was evaluated for potential fish, wildlife, and habitat resources within 500 feet of the proposed alignment. Our assessment reveals that the project area is dominated by High and Low Impact Urban land use, comprising 80.23% (945.2 acres) of the study area. Other landcover types include: Pinelands (5.74%, 67.6 acres), Dry Prairies (4.47%, 52.7 acres), Mixed Wetland Forest (2.43%, 28.7 acres), Row Field Crops (1.55%, 18.2 acres), Hardwood Hammocks and Forests (1.49%, 17.6 acres), Open Water (1.19%, 14.0 acres), Shrub Swamp (0.98%, 11.6 acres), Cypress Swamp (0.57%, 6.7 acres), Hardwood Swamp (0.53%, 6.2 acres), Freshwater Marsh (0.40%, 4.7 acres), Improved Pasture (0.19%, 2.2 acres), Mixed Hardwood-Pine Forests (0.11%, 1.3 acres), Shrub and Brushland (0.06%, 0.7 acres), Bare Soil (0.06%, 0.7 acres), and Exotic Plants (0.02%, 0.2 acres).

Based on range and preferred habitat type, the following species listed by the Federal Endangered Species Act and the State of Florida as Federally Endangered (FE), Federally Threatened (FT), State-Threatened (ST), or State Species of Special Concern (SSC) may occur along the project area: gopher frog (SSC), American alligator (FT due to similarity in appearance to the American crocodile), Eastern indigo snake (FT), Florida pine snake (SSC), short-tailed snake (ST), gopher tortoise (ST), Florida burrowing owl (SSC), Southeastern American kestrel (ST), Florida sandhill crane (ST), least tern (ST), limpkin (SSC), little blue heron (SSC), tri-colored heron (SSC), snowy egret (SSC), roseate spoonbill (SSC), white ibis (SSC), wood stork (FE), Florida mouse (SSC), and Sherman s fox squirrel (SSC).

The GIS analysis revealed several specific characteristics associated with lands along the project alignment that provide an indication of potential habitat quality or sensitivity that will require field studies to verify the presence or absence of listed wildlife species and the quality of wildlife habitat resources. In the FWC s Integrated Wildlife Habitat Ranking System, 43.6 acres (3.70%) of the assessment area is ranked Moderately High or Medium. In the FWC s Strategic Habitat Conservation Area Priority Rankings, 6.9 acres are ranked High for Cooper s hawk and short-tailed hawk. FWC s Priority Wetlands Classification predicts 7 to 9 focal species in 14 acres of wetlands, 4 to 6 focal species in 55.8 wetland acres, 1 to 3 focal species in 2 acres of wetlands, and 1 to 3 focal species within 91.4 acres of upland areas. In the Florida Natural Areas Inventory Critical Lands and Waters Identification Project (CLIP), 5.6 acres of the assessment area is Priority 2 (high) for Biodiversity Resources. Also in CLIP, 91.4 acres of the area ranks High, Moderately High, or Moderate for Rare Species Habitat Conservation Priorities. The Cypress Creek drainage area, at the north end of this project, contains the ironcolor shiner, a Rare and Imperiled Fish Species. The project is within the core foraging area of nine wood stork colonies. The 12.8-acre River Tower Restoration Site, owned and managed by the City of Tampa, is adjacent to the I-275 ROW northwest of the Hillsborough River crossing.

Primary wildlife issues associated with this project include: potential loss of wildlife habitat from new roadway and DRA construction; potential adverse effects to a moderate number of species listed by the Federal Endangered Species Act as Endangered or Threatened, or by the State of Florida as Threatened or Species of Special Concern; and potential water quality degradation as a result of additional stormwater runoff from the new roadway surface draining into adjacent wetlands or the Hillsborough River.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Based on the project information provided, we believe the direct and indirect effects of this project could be minimal, provided that new construction is primarily confined to the existing median, any new DRAs are sited in previously disturbed habitats, and degradation of adjacent or downstream water quality is avoided via inclusion of Best Management Practices in the project design.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 09/09/2013 by Monte Ritter, Southwest Florida Water Management District

Coordination Document: Permit Required

Coordination Document Comments:

A Degree of Effect of Minimal was assigned to this issue due to the fact there may need to be some additional coordination with FFWCC.

An Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) will be required for this project. However, the final determination of the type of permit will depend upon the final design configuration.

For ETDM #13854, the District has assigned a pre-application file (**PA# 400401**) for the purpose of tracking its participation in the ETDM review of this project. File **PA# 400401** is maintained at the Tampa Service Office of the SWFWMD. Please refer to this pre-application file whenever contacting District regulatory staff regarding this project.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

According to the FFWCC Strategic Habitat Conservation Area Richness report from 2009 the proposed site has a low ranking for species richness over the majority of the site. Both the 100 foot buffer and the 200 foot buffer fall within the Caracara, Piping Plover, Red Cockaded Woodpecker, and Scrub Jay Consultation Area as analyzed on December 6, 2012. The entire 200 foot buffers falls within a defined skink consultation area.

According to the Priority Wetland Habitat Species layer on the SWFWMD ArcMap there are strategic habitats and conservation areas located within the 100 foot, 200 foot, and 500 foot buffer from the designated road widening project for species including the gopher frog, little blue heron, and the American alligator. Additionally there are upland habitats which have characteristics indicative of Florida Sandhill Cranes.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Coordination with FFWCC for potential sandhill crane nesting sites and other threatened or endangered species may also be required after a wildlife survey of the proposed site is completed at the time of design.

Additional Comments (optional):

A Degree of Effect of Minimal was assigned to this issue due to the fact there may need to be some additional coordination with FFWCC.

An Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) will be required for this project. However, the final determination of the type of permit will depend upon the final design configuration.

For ETDM #13854, the District has assigned a pre-application file (**PA# 400401**) for the purpose of tracking its participation in the ETDM review of this project. File **PA# 400401** is maintained at the Tampa Service Office of the SWFWMD. Please refer to this pre-application file whenever contacting District regulatory staff regarding this project.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Coastal and Marine

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Minimal.

The EST GIS analysis identified no coastal and marine resources within the 500-foot project buffer distance; however, the project does cross the Hillsborough River with direct connection to Hillsborough Bay. This portion of the river is approximately 7.5 miles upstream of Hillsborough Bay.

The NMFS stated the mouth of the Hillsborough River and Hillsborough Bay, which contain estuarine habitats used by federally-managed fish species

and their prey. The project is located in a highly urbanized area of Tampa. The lands adjacent to the proposed project are principally residential and commercial properties, and disturbed palustrine wetlands and uplands. It does not appear that the project will directly impact any NMFS trust resources; however, the road crosses the Hillsborough River. Increased use of the road could result in an increase in the amount of sediment, oil and grease, metals, and other pollutants reaching downstream estuarine habitats utilized by marine fishery resources. NMFS recommends treatment systems be upgraded to prevent degraded water from reaching estuarine habitats within the mouth of the Hillsborough River and in Hillsborough Bay and best management practices should be employed during road construction to prevent siltation of these habitats.

SWFWMD stated that Hillsborough County is listed as a coastal county under the Coastal Zone Management (CMZ) Act. Since Hillsborough County is listed as a coastal county, prior to the issuance of the permit, an additional CZM Noticing period will be required for all wetland and surface water impacts associated with the construction. Depending on the type of permit requested, the CZM Noticing period is either 10 days (General) or 30 days (Individual) with an additional 5 day mailing timeframe added to each.

The FDOT will assess any potential coastal and marine resource impacts as part of the Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR) during the PD&E study. This report will assess potential species and existing habitat within the project area. This report and the FDOT's findings will be coordinated with the appropriate regulatory agencies.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 08/12/2013 by David A. Rydene, National Marine Fisheries Service

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

The mouth of the Hillsborough River and Hillsborough Bay, which contain estuarine habitats used by federally-managed fish species and their prey.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed the information contained in the Environmental Screening Tool for ETDM Project # 13854. The Florida Department of Transportation District Seven proposes capacity and operational improvements to I-275 from north of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to north of Bearss Avenue in Hillsborough County, Florida.

NMFS staff conducted a site inspection of the project area on August 9, 2013, to assess potential concerns related to living marine resources within the mouth of the Hillsborough River, and in Hillsborough Bay. The project is located in a highly urbanized area of Tampa. The lands adjacent to the proposed project are principally residential and commercial properties, and disturbed palustrine wetlands and uplands. It does not appear that the project will directly impact any NMFS trust resources. However, the road crosses the Hillsborough River. The Hillsborough River empties to Hillsborough Bay. The mouth of the Hillsborough River and Hillsborough Bay contain estuarine habitats (e.g. seagrass, salt marsh, mangrove) used by federally-managed fish species and their prey. Increased use of the road could result in an increase in the amount of sediment, oil and grease, metals, and other pollutants reaching downstream estuarine habitats utilized by marine fishery resources. Therefore, NMFS recommends that stormwater treatment systems be upgraded to prevent degraded water from reaching estuarine habitats within the mouth of the Hillsborough River, and in Hillsborough Bay. In addition, best management practices should be employed during road construction to prevent siltation of these habitats.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 09/09/2013 by Monte Ritter, Southwest Florida Water Management District

Coordination Document: Permit Required

Coordination Document Comments:

SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect (DOE) of Minimal based upon the routine nature associated with permitting requirements for the proposed roadway widening and extension construction activity.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Hillsborough County is listed as a coastal county under the Coastal Zone Management Act.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Since Hillsborough County is listed as a coastal county, prior to the issuance of the permit, an additional CZM Noticing period will be required for all wetland and surface water impacts associated with the construction. Depending on the type of permit requested, the CZM Noticing period is either 10 days (General) or 30 days (Individual) with an additional 5 day mailing timeframe added to each.

Additional Comments (optional):

SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect (DOE) of Minimal based upon the routine nature associated with permitting requirements for the proposed roadway widening and extension construction activity.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

ETAT Reviews: Physical

Noise

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: **3** *Moderate* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Moderate.

The EST GIS analysis identified one existing recreational trail within the 100-foot buffer distance. There was one park, one religious center, and four group care facilities within the 200-foot buffer, and one community center, one health care facility, one school, one additional park, nine additional religious centers, and seven additional group care facilities within the 500-foot buffer distance. High density residential, transportation, commercial and services, and medium density residential are the four major existing land uses identified within the 500-foot buffer distance. Residential land uses within the 100-foot, 200-foot and 500-foot buffer distances account for 0.78%, 10.1% and 26.67%, respectively, of the project corridor. A field review was conducted in December 2012 to verify that there are 11 FDOT Noise Barriers located within the 100-foot buffer distance from north of Busch Blvd. on both sides of the roadway to north of Bearss Ave.

The FHWA identified the noise-sensitive receptors within the 100-foot and 200-foot buffers from the EST GIS analysis. Additional travel lanes would result in additional traffic noise, and there are residences, a recreational trail, group care facilities, churches, several parks, etc. within the 100' buffer that will be exposed to this additional noise.

Noise resources will be analyzed in detail during Project Development. FDOT will prepare a Noise Study Report for this project.

Degree of Effect: **3** *Moderate* assigned 09/12/2013 by Linda Anderson, Federal Highway Administration

Coordination Document: PD&E Support Document As Per PD&E Manual

Coordination Document Comments:A Noise Study Review will be required.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Within the 100' buffer:

1. The Hillsborough River Recreational Trail
2. 12 PUD's
3. 1 cultural center
4. 9.38 acres of residential dwellings
5. Sulfur Springs Park
6. River Tower Park
7. NRHP-eligible Jackson House

Within the 200' buffer:

1. A number of "religious centers"
2. 4 group care facilities
3. 3 additional PUDs
4. 104.6 acres of residential dwellings

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Additional travel lanes mean additional noise. There are residences, a recreational trail, group care facilities, churches, several parks, etc. within the 100' buffer that will be exposed to this additional noise.

Additional Comments (optional):

A Noise Study Review will be required.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Air Quality

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Minimal.

The USEPA stated this portion of Hillsborough County and the area surrounding the proposed project have not been designated non-attainment or maintenance for ozone, carbon monoxide (CO) or particulate matter (PM) in accordance with the Clean Air Act. USEPA recommends that the environmental review phase of this project consider the need for additional air impact analyses, including documenting the current pollutant concentrations recorded at the nearest air quality monitors, an evaluation of anticipated emissions, and air quality trend analyses. Environmental reviews of the project should include hot spot analyses at the points in time and places where congestion are expected to be greatest or in areas of sensitive receptors. Air quality modeling using an approved software program could be used as a means to determine whether any conformity issues or violations of air quality standards are anticipated within the project area and/or county. The number and types of vehicles traveling along this roadway should be considered and evaluated with regards to air quality conformity and mobile source air toxics. Current and proposed air quality requirements and standards should be used in modeling software programs.

The FDOT will conduct an air quality screening test for this project during the PD&E study.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 09/15/2013 by Madolyn Sanchez, US Environmental Protection Agency

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Resources: Air Quality

Level of Importance: Low, due to minimal degree of effect. A minimal degree of effect is being assigned to the air quality issue for the proposed project (ETDM#13854).

Comments on Effects to Resources:

This portion of Hillsborough County and the area surrounding the proposed project have not been designated non-attainment or maintenance for ozone, carbon monoxide (CO) or particulate matter (PM) in accordance with the Clean Air Act. The proposed project is expected to have minimal impact on air quality.

Generally for transportation projects within the State of Florida, EPA recommends that the environmental review phase of this project consider the need for additional air impact analyses. These types of analyses would include documenting the current pollutant concentrations recorded at the nearest air quality monitors, an evaluation of anticipated emissions, and air quality trend analyses. It is also recommended that environmental reviews of the project include hot spot analyses at the points in time and places where congestion are expected to be greatest or in areas of sensitive receptors. Air quality modeling using an approved software program could be used as a means to determine whether any conformity issues or violations of air quality standards are anticipated within the project area and/or county. The number and types of vehicles traveling along this roadway should be considered and evaluated with regards to air quality conformity and mobile source air toxics. Current and proposed air quality requirements and standards should be used in modeling software programs.

As population growth and vehicle volumes increase, there is the potential to have air quality conformity and non-attainment issues in the future. FDOT, MPOs, municipalities, and regional planning agencies should conduct air quality modeling as traffic forecasts increase.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Contamination

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Florida

Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Minimal.

The EST GIS analysis identified the following contamination resources:

100-ft Buffer Distance:

Super Act Wells (2)

Additional Resources within the 200-ft Buffer Distance:

Biomedical Waste (1)

Compliance and Enforcement Tracking Facilities (2)

Storage Tank Contamination Monitoring (1)

Super Act Wells (12)

Additional Resources within 500-ft Buffer Distance:

Biomedical Waste (1)

Compliance and Enforcement Tracking Facilities (2)

Hazardous Waste Facilities (11)

Petroleum Contamination Monitoring Sites (18)

Storage Tank Contamination Monitoring (18)

Super Act Risk Sources (8)

Super Act Wells (62)

USEPA Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (8)

There are also numerous gas stations and other potential contamination sites located at the interchanges and along the project corridor.

The USEPA identified the potential contamination sites listed in the EST GIS analysis. The USEPA commented that additional ROW is needed, there is the potential for additional impacts to these types of facilities and an evaluation of these impacts would need to be considered. It is recommended that a Contamination Screening Evaluation Report (CSER) be completed during the PD&E phase of the project. If any contaminated sites are to be impacted or removed during the construction phase of the project, sampling and analysis should be conducted to determine if pollutants are present above regulatory levels. If high levels of pollutants are identified, remediation may be required prior to commencement of construction of the project. Any anticipated remedial, removal, or cleanup activities should be discussed and outlined in the CSER.

The FDEP also identified the potential contamination sites listed in the EST GIS analysis. The FDEP recommended that the CSER outline specific procedures that would be followed by the applicant in the event drums, wastes, tanks or potentially contaminated soils are encountered during construction. Special attention should be made in the CSER to historical land uses (such as solid waste disposal) that may have an effect on the proposed project, including stormwater retention and treatment areas.

The SWFWMD assigned a DOE of minimal due to the present belief that little or no adverse impacts from contaminated sites are expected. The project is located in a Sensitive Karst Area from approximately 2,700 feet north of Sligh Avenue to approximately 800 feet south of Fowler Avenue, and one reported sinkhole was identified within the 200-foot buffer distance. To minimize groundwater and surface water pollution potential, the FDOT should consider the following: identify specific facilities of interest and develop a plan for proper removal or abandonment; coordinate with FDEP and USEPA and prepare a CSER; avoid known contaminated sites where possible in the selection of the alignment; avoid/minimize construction activity in the proximity to known sinkholes; confirm the presence or absence of existing potable supply wells; evaluate potential stormwater treatment pond sites for the presence of contamination and eliminate contaminated sites as potential pond sites; design and construct stormwater management facilities to avoid breaching the upper confining unit; and consider temporary drainage and erosion control through areas of potential contamination.

The FDOT will prepare a CSER as part of the PD&E study. Any potential contamination source identified will be assessed further during any future design of the project in order to determine the need for remediation during construction.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 09/11/2013 by Lauren P. Milligan, FL Department of Environmental Protection

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

GIS data indicates that there are 11 hazardous waste facilities, 18 petroleum contamination monitoring sites, 19 storage tank contamination monitoring sites and 8 RCRA regulated facilities within the 500-ft. project buffer zone.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

A Contamination Screening Evaluation (similar to Phase I and Phase II Audits) may need to be conducted along the project right-of-way, considering the proximity to potential petroleum and hazardous material handling facilities. The Contamination Screening Evaluation should outline specific procedures that would be followed by the applicant in the event drums, wastes, tanks or potentially contaminated soils are encountered during construction. Special attention should be made in the screening evaluation to historical land uses (such as solid waste disposal) that may have an affect on the proposed project, including stormwater retention and treatment areas.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 2 Minimal assigned 09/09/2013 by Monte Ritter, Southwest Florida Water Management District

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Coordination Document Comments:

The SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect (DOE) based on the potential need for increased coordination or effort associated with the SWFWMD's proprietary or regulatory interests and obligations. For this project, a DOE of minimal was assigned to these issues due to the present belief that little or no adverse impacts from contaminated sites are expected. Future permitting should involve routine interaction with the SWFWMD's regulatory staff.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Information regarding proposed off-site stormwater management facilities will not be available until after the subsequent PD&E and design phases of this project. Therefore, the SWFWMD utilized the FDOT's Environmental Screening Tool (EST) (supplemented with information from the SWFWMD's Geographic Information System (GIS) for identifying potential contaminated sites that may affect subsequent Environmental Resource Permits (ERPs) for the FDOT. The facilities of concern within 200 feet of this I-275 project include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Brownfield Locations: No reported locations.
- Hazardous Waste Facilities: No reported facilities.
- Petroleum Contamination Monitoring Sites: No reported sites.
- Storage Tank Contamination Monitoring: One (1) reported facilities.
- Super Act Risk Sources: No reported facilities.
- Super Act Wells: Fourteen (14) reported facilities.
- Toxic Release Inventory Sites: No reported facilities.
- Sensitive Karst Areas: One (1) area (details noted below).
- Subsidence Incident Reports: One (1) report (details noted below).

Detailed information regarding known contaminated sites can be obtained from the appropriate GIS themes / layers in the EST. In view of the current / past land uses in the project area, there may be other (unknown) contaminated sites.

Contamination sites (or potential contamination sites) of particular interest to the SWFWMD include the following:

- The fourteen (14) Super Act Wells.

Both the SWFWMD's GIS and the FDOT's EST clearly show the project lies within a Sensitive Karst Area (SKA) from approximately 2700 feet north of Sligh Avenue to approximately 800 feet south of Fowler Avenue. (reference: the FDOT's EST Contamination Map and > *Geology* > *SWFWMD Sensitive Karst Areas* layer).

From the SWFWMD's GIS, one (1) reported sinkhole was identified within the 200 foot buffer of the project as follows:

- Old Sink ID #10-034, Sink date 07/12/1991, 520 132nd Avenue 1050 feet south of Fletcher Avenue, Latitude 28-03-59, Longitude 82-27-15

One (1) Subsidence Incident Report was also identified on the FDOT's EST within the 200 foot buffer. Within the one (1) mile buffer, the EST reported a total of twenty nine (29) Subsidence Incident Reports (reference: The FDOT's EST Contamination Map and > *Geology* > *Subsidence Incident Reports* layer).

From the SWFWMD's GIS and the FDOT's EST, the project area is characterized by a two-aquifer system that includes the Surficial and Floridan aquifers.

Within a 200 foot buffer of I-275, the pollution potential of the intact Surficial Aquifer is high as indicated by DRASTIC weighted indexes between 181 and 186. The pollution potential of the Floridan Aquifer is lower as indicated by DRASTIC weighted indexes between 151 and 191.

FAVA Surficial Aquifer System:

Classified as More Vulnerable within the 200 foot buffer for 58 + / - % of the project length and Unknown Description for 42 + / - % of the project length. Graphical locations of the Surficial FAVA can be viewed within the FDOT's EST under the Contamination map and > *Water Resource* > *Surficial Aquifer System Response* layer.

FAVA Floridan Aquifer System:

Classified as More Vulnerable within the 200 foot buffer for 99 + / - % of the project length and Vulnerable" for the remaining 1 + / - %. Graphical locations of the Floridan FAVA can be viewed within the FDOT's EST under the Contamination map and > *Water Resource* > *Floridan Aquifer System Response* layer.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

If encountered and disturbed during construction along the segment route, any contaminated site could result in surface and / or groundwater water pollution, particularly at the location of the fourteen (14) Super Act Wells.

Additional Comments (optional):

The SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect (DOE) based on the potential need for increased coordination or effort associated with the SWFWMD s proprietary or regulatory interests and obligations. For this project, a DOE of minimal was assigned to these issues due to the present belief that little or no adverse impacts from contaminated sites are expected. Future permitting should involve routine interaction with the SWFWMD s regulatory staff.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 2 Minimal assigned 09/15/2013 by Madolyn Sanchez, US Environmental Protection Agency

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Resources: Soils, groundwater, surface water which have the potential to be negatively affected by contaminated site features such as underground petroleum storage tanks, industrial or commercial facilities with onsite storage of hazardous materials, solid waste facilities, hazardous waste facilities, USEPA RCRA facilities, etc.

Level of Importance: A minimal degree of effect is being assigned to this issue for the proposed project (ETDM #13854).

Comments on Effects to Resources:

EPA is assigning a minimal degree of effect to the contamination issue. There are 4 compliance and enforcement tracking facilities, 11 hazardous waste facilities, 18 petroleum contamination monitoring sites, 19 storage tank contamination monitoring sites, and 8 RCRA regulated facilities within the 500-foot buffer distance. There are few contaminated site features within the 200-foot buffer distance. The project description states that the only additional right-of-way (ROW) needed would be for stormwater treatment areas and interchange improvements. If additional ROW is needed, there is the potential for additional impacts to these types of facilities and an evaluation of these impacts would need to be considered.

EPA is recommending that a Contamination Screening Evaluation be conducted during the environmental review (PD&E) phase of the project. This type of study should include a survey of the area to confirm the location of current listed contaminated site features, along with other contaminated site features which may have been previously located in the area. Documentation of environmental impacts associated with contaminated sites or contaminated facilities should be included in the report.

If any contaminated sites features (e.g., petroleum storage tanks) are to be impacted or removed during the construction phase of the project, sampling and analysis should be conducted to determine if pollutants are present above regulatory levels. If high levels of pollutants are identified, remediation may be required prior to commencement of construction of the project. Any anticipated remedial, removal, or cleanup activities should be discussed and outlined in the Contamination Evaluation Screening report.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Infrastructure

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 2 Minimal assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Minimal.

The EST GIS analysis identified two Railways within the 100-foot, 200-foot and 500-foot buffer distance, and one Federal Aviation Administration Obstruction (Tower) and one Wireless Antenna Structure Location within the 500-foot buffer distance. The railways are two sets of tracks that I-275 spans over. The first is located along Busch Boulevard and the second is north of the Bearss Avenue interchange.

The SWFWMD assigned a degree of effect of minimal based on the belief that little or no adverse impacts to SWFWMD-owned/controlled infrastructure

are expected. It is requested that FDOT avoid disturbing data collection facilities or adjacent survey benchmarks. Coordination with SWFWMD's Data Collection Bureau in Brooksville will be helpful in protecting these infrastructure components. For ETDM #13854, the District has assigned a pre-application file (PA# 400401) for the purpose of tracking its participation in the ETDM review of this project.

The FDOT will assess potential impacts to existing infrastructure and take measures to minimize any project related impacts.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 09/09/2013 by Monte Ritter, Southwest Florida Water Management District

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Coordination Document Comments:

The SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect (DOE) based on the potential need for increased coordination or effort associated with the SWFWMD's proprietary or regulatory interests and obligations. A DOE of minimal was assigned to these issues due to the present belief that little or no adverse impacts to infrastructure (owned or controlled by the SWFWMD) are expected.

The SWFWMD requests that FDOT avoid disturbing data collection facilities or adjacent survey benchmarks. Coordination with the District's Data Collection Bureau in Brooksville will be helpful in protecting these infrastructure components.

For ETDM #13854, the District has assigned a pre-application file (**PA# 400401**) for the purpose of tracking its participation in the ETDM review of this project. File **PA# 400401** is maintained at the Tampa Service Office of the SWFWMD. Please refer to this pre-application file whenever contacting District regulatory staff regarding this project.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

The following information (regarding SWFWMD owned / controlled / cooperative data collection sites) was obtained from the SWFWMD's GIS system, and was analyzed for information within 500 feet of the I-275 Improvement Project:

SITE_ID: 670754
SITE_NAME: FDOT 4 FLDN
SITE_TYPE_DESC: Well
STATUS_DESC: Active
AGENCY: SWFWMD
APPROX_LAT: 28 03 03.00
APPROX_LONG: 82 27 16.61

SITE_ID: 670755
SITE_NAME: FDOT 1 FLDN
SITE_TYPE_DESC: Well
STATUS_DESC: Active
AGENCY: SWFWMD
APPROX_LAT: 28 03 09.35
APPROX_LONG: 82 27 21.98

SITE_ID: 19236
SITE_NAME: HILLSBOROUGH RIVER AT I-275 BRIDGE
SITE_TYPE_DESC: River/Stream
STATUS_DESC: Active
AGENCY: US Geological Survey
APPROX_LAT: 28 01 13.06
APPROX_LONG: 82 27 17.33

The SWFWMD has cooperative programs with NGS, FDEP and other local agencies to establish and maintain benchmarks throughout the District. The following Benchmarks are located within 500 feet of this proposed I-275 Improvement project:

Site_Name: 2818S13-M-08-046-04
Site Type: Disc in concrete
STR: 13-28-18

Site_Name: 2818S13-M-08-046-01
Site Type: Disc in concrete
STR: 13-28-18

Site_Name: 2818S13-M-08-047-01
Site Type: Disc in concrete
STR: 13-28-18

Beginning on 09/04/12, the SWFWMD revised its website to provide benchmark data that is searchable by section, township and range, or by interactive map. The URL for this website is as follows:
<http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/data/surveycontrol/>

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Construction activities related to the project and associated surface water management facilities have the potential to damage the District's data collection stations or to impair their collection functions. Of heightened concern are the benchmarks noted previously.

Additional Comments (optional):

The SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect (DOE) based on the potential need for increased coordination or effort associated with the SWFWMD's proprietary or regulatory interests and obligations. A DOE of minimal was assigned to these issues due to the present belief that little or no adverse impacts to infrastructure (owned or controlled by the SWFWMD) are expected.

The SWFWMD requests that FDOT avoid disturbing data collection facilities or adjacent survey benchmarks. Coordination with the District's Data Collection Bureau in Brooksville will be helpful in protecting these infrastructure components.

For ETDM #13854, the District has assigned a pre-application file (**PA# 400401**) for the purpose of tracking its participation in the ETDM review of this project. File **PA# 400401** is maintained at the Tampa Service Office of the SWFWMD. Please refer to this pre-application file whenever contacting District regulatory staff regarding this project.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Navigation

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Minimal.

No navigable waterways or waterway crossings were identified by the EST GIS analysis; however, the project crosses the Hillsborough River.

The USCG stated that the bridge over the Hillsborough River is a USCG permitted bridge. A USCG permit will be required for any modification of the I-275 bridge over the Hillsborough River at mile 7.7. The current navigability of this river must be preserved.

The USACE stated the project crosses the Hillsborough River, a traditionally navigable waterway. The project is not anticipated to affect navigation within the Hillsborough River; however, the USCG would be anticipated to provide authorization for any proposed bridges or modifications to existing bridges. Any temporary work platforms, structures, or other obstructions needed for construction, within the river, and not included in the USCG authorization may need authorization from the USACE. The USACE recommends the FDOT identify any structures or work within the river and have the appropriate agency review the proposal.

The FDOT will evaluate horizontal and vertical clearance of the existing and proposed bridges over potential navigable waterways. Coordination will be conducted with USCG and the appropriate permits will be acquired during design and prior to construction.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 09/05/2013 by Garrett Lips, US Army Corps of Engineers

Coordination Document: Permit Required

Coordination Document Comments: Work in, on, over, or under (Utility lines, cables, dredging, filling, shoreline stabilization etc) the Hillsborough River may require a permit, such as a letter of permission, nationwide or standard permit.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Project crosses Hillsborough River, a traditionally navigable waterway.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

Project is not anticipated to affect navigation within the Hillsborough River, however the USCG would be anticipated to provide authorization for any proposed bridges or modifications of existing bridges; however, any temporary work platforms, structures, or other obstructions needed for construction, within the river, and not included in the USCG authorization may need authorization from the Department of the Army. Please be sure to identify any structures or work within the river and have the appropriate agency review the proposal.

Additional Comments (optional):

Work in, on, over, or under (Utility lines, cables, dredging, filling, shoreline stabilization etc) the Hillsborough River may require a permit, such as a letter of permission, nationwide or standard permit.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 10/29/2013 by Gene Stratton, US Coast Guard

Coordination Document: Permit Required

Coordination Document Comments: A Coast Guard Permit will be required for any modification of the I-275 Bridge over the Hillsborough River at mile 7.7.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

The bridge over the Hillsborough River is a Coast Guard Permitted bridge.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

The current navigability of this river must be preserved

Additional Comments (optional):

A Coast Guard Permit will be required for any modification of the I-275 Bridge over the Hillsborough River at mile 7.7.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

ETAT Reviews: Special Designations

Special Designations

Project Effects

Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 12/23/2013 by FDOT District 7

Comments:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has evaluated comments from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and recommends a Degree of Effect of Minimal.

The EST GIS analysis identified no Outstanding Florida Waters (OFWs), Aquatic Preserves, Scenic Highways, and Wild and Scenic Rivers within the 500-foot buffer distance. The northern portion of the Hillsborough River and associated wetlands and tributaries are identified as an OFW. A portion of the OFW crosses I-275 just north of the proposed project, but is not within the project limits. The proposed project is expected to have no involvement with Outstanding Florida Waters.

The USEPA stated that features identified as Special Designations include Special Flood Hazard Areas, Prime Farm Land, Public Lands, Sensitive Karst Areas (SKA), and Subsidence Incident Reports for the State of Florida. USEPA concurs with the information in the Preliminary Environmental Discussion (PED), but offers the following general comments relating to prime farm lands: The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) (PL 97-98; 7 U.S.C. 4201 et seq.) was enacted to protect the amount of open farmland which has substantially decreased as a result of land use changes. In order to satisfy the requirements of the FPPA, FDOT must determine if prime or unique farmland is in an area that may be affected by the proposed action. FDOT should consult with the appropriate Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State office or USDA State Land Use Committee chairperson for technical data and assistance. The GIS analysis data indicates that there are several acres (between 57 and 284 acres) of property within the 100-foot to 500-foot buffer distance of the proposed project defined as SKAs. There are also three Subsidence Incident Reports listed within close proximity of the project. Consultation with the Florida Geological Survey may be required to determine impact to areas with a high potential for sinkhole activity.

In response to EPA's comment it should be noted that the NRCS stated under the Farmlands issue that due to the vintage of soil maps (1980's) and the rapid urbanization of Hillsborough County, many areas denoted as Farmland of Unique Importance have been converted to urban use. Therefore, these areas would no longer meet the criteria for this Farmland designation. The extreme northeastern part of the project still has a small amount of open, rural land. It is recommended the project minimize the project effects by using the existing right-of-way.

The SWFWMD noted the SKA mentioned previously in the contamination section as well as the Subsidence Incident Reports within the project area. It is recommended that the stormwater facilities be designed as shallow as practical and that geotechnical evaluations of specific pond sites be conducted to determine the potential for sinkhole development and direct entry of runoff to the underlying Intermediate and Floridan Aquifers. The EST indicates the northern terminus of this project is within one mile of OFWs identified as Hillsborough River. However, the improvement project does not directly discharge into the OFW portion of the Hillsborough River. A Drainage or Pond Siting Report, incorporating area-specific geotechnical information on the

basin, will be necessary.

The FDOT will evaluate potential impacts to special designations as part of the PD&E study. The FDOT will design the project to meet SWFWMD water quality standards pursuant to state rules and statutes and the ERP Basis of Review (BOR), as well as criteria set forth by other regulatory agencies.

No comments were received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 09/15/2013 by Madolyn Sanchez, US Environmental Protection Agency

Coordination Document: To Be Determined: Further Coordination Required

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

Resources: Features identified as Special Designations (Special Flood Hazard Areas, Prime Farm Land, Public Lands, Sensitive Karst Areas, and Subsidence Incident Reports for the State of Florida).

Level of Importance: These special designation features are of a high level of importance in the State of Florida. The project description states that the only additional right-of-way (ROW) anticipated would be for stormwater treatment areas and interchange improvements. Impacts to Special Designation features associated with the project will be dependent upon the amount of right-of-way needed for the project and how much natural environment will be impacted by the project. A minimal degree of effect is being assigned to this issue for the proposed project (ETDM#13854).

Comments on Effects to Resources:

A review of GIS analysis data at the programming screen phase of the project indicates that there are 100-Year Floodplain Special Flood Hazard Areas, Prime Farm Land, Public Lands, Sensitive Karst Areas, and Subsidence Incident Reports for the State of Florida within proximity of the proposed project.

See Floodplains issue for information relating to floodplains (Special Flood Hazard Areas).

See Recreation Areas issue for information relating to public lands.

The GIS analysis data indicates that there are between 112 and 539 acres of prime farm land within the 100- to 500-foot buffer distances. These prime farm lands within the project area are classified as Farmland of Unique Importance.

The preliminary environmental discussion comments state that even though there is Prime Farmland and agricultural cropland acreage at all buffer widths the proposed project is anticipated to have no involvement with farmland resources., based on 4 factors: (1) the project is within an urbanized area, (2) the project will mainly be constructed within the right-of-way; (3) the agricultural resources along this portion of I-275 are now urban lands or are trending towards conversion to urban lands; and (4) based on recent reviews in Hillsborough County, USDA-NRCS has indicated that "mapping of Hillsborough County was completed in 1983". It is anticipated that if these areas were re-mapped today, many of the map units would be correlated as "Soil-Urban land complexes" and would not be considered as Farmlands of Prime, Unique, or Local importance.

EPA concurs with the above information, but offers the following general comments relating to prime farm lands: The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) (PL 97-98; 7 U.S.C. 4201 et seq.) was enacted to protect the amount of open farmland which has substantially decreased as a result of land use changes. It states that Federal programs which contribute to the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses will be minimized. It also states that Federal programs shall be administered in a manner that, as practicable, will be compatible with state and local government and private programs and policies to protect farmland. The subsequent Farmland Protection Policy Act regulations (7 CFR Part 658) set criteria to identify and take into account the adverse effects of their activities on the preservation of farmland. Agencies are also to consider alternative actions and ensure that their programs are compatible with state and local government programs.

In order to satisfy the requirements of the Farmland Protection Policy Act, FDOT must determine if prime or unique farmland is in an area that may be affected by the proposed action. FDOT should consult with the appropriate Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State office or USDA State Land Use Committee chairperson for technical data and assistance.

The GIS analysis data indicates that there are several acres (between 57 and 284 acres) of property within the 100- to 500-foot buffer distance of the proposed project defined as sensitive karst areas. There are also three Subsidence Incident Reports listed within close proximity of the project. Subsidence Incident Reports relate to sinkholes. When a sinkhole or surface depression occurs and the cause of the subsidence is not verified or known, it is referred to as a subsidence incident. Consultation with the Florida Geological Survey may be required to determine impact to areas with a high potential for sinkhole activity.

Direct and indirect impact to areas or features identified as "Special Designations" such as the ones listed above should be avoided or minimized to the best extent practicable.

Additional Comments (optional):

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Degree of Effect: 2 *Minimal* assigned 09/09/2013 by Monte Ritter, Southwest Florida Water Management District

Coordination Document: Permit Required

Coordination Document Comments:

The SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect (DOE) based on the potential need for increased coordination or effort associated with the SWFWMD's proprietary or regulatory interests and obligations. For this I-275 Improvement project, a DOE of minimal was assigned to this issue due to the present belief that little or no adverse impacts to Sensitive Karst Areas are expected. Future permitting should involve routine interaction with the SWFWMD's regulatory staff.

Direct Effects

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:

As previously noted in the Contaminated Sites section of the EST, the central portion of this I-275 Improvement project lies within a Sensitive Karst Area (SKA) from approximately 2700 feet north of Sligh Avenue to approximately 800 feet south of Fowler Avenue. Also, One (1) Subsidence Incident Report was identified on the EST within the 200 foot buffer. Within the one (1) mile buffer, the EST reported a total of twenty nine (29) Subsidence Incident Reports (reference: the FDOT's EST Contamination Map and > *Geology > SWFWMD Sensitive Karst Areas* layer).

In addition, the EST indicates the northern terminus of this project is within one mile of Outstanding Florida Waters identified as Hillsborough River. However, the improvement project does not directly discharge into the OFW portion of the Hillsborough River.

Comments on Effects to Resources:

As portions of the I-275 Improvement project are located within a Sensitive Karst Area, potential sinkhole development is a concern, especially if FDOT proposes deep stormwater management ponds that could potentially breach a confining unit or encroach into any underlying limestone formation.

Additional Comments (optional):

The SWFWMD has assigned a Degree of Effect (DOE) based on the potential need for increased coordination or effort associated with the SWFWMD's proprietary or regulatory interests and obligations. For this I-275 Improvement project, a DOE of minimal was assigned to this issue due to the present belief that little or no adverse impacts to Sensitive Karst Areas are expected. Future permitting should involve routine interaction with the SWFWMD's regulatory staff.

CLC Commitments and Recommendations:

Appendix E

Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake

STANDARD PROTECTION MEASURES FOR THE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
August 12, 2013

The eastern indigo snake protection/education plan (Plan) below has been developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in Florida for use by applicants and their construction personnel. At least **30 days prior** to any clearing/land alteration activities, the applicant shall notify the appropriate USFWS Field Office via e-mail that the Plan will be implemented as described below (North Florida Field Office: jaxregs@fws.gov; South Florida Field Office: verobeach@fws.gov; Panama City Field Office: panamacity@fws.gov). As long as the signatory of the e-mail certifies compliance with the below Plan (including use of the attached poster and brochure), no further written confirmation or “approval” from the USFWS is needed and the applicant may move forward with the project.

If the applicant decides to use an eastern indigo snake protection/education plan other than the approved Plan below, written confirmation or “approval” from the USFWS that the plan is adequate must be obtained. At least 30 days prior to any clearing/land alteration activities, the applicant shall submit their unique plan for review and approval. The USFWS will respond via e-mail, typically within 30 days of receiving the plan, either concurring that the plan is adequate or requesting additional information. A concurrence e-mail from the appropriate USFWS Field Office will fulfill approval requirements.

The Plan materials should consist of: 1) a combination of posters and pamphlets (see **Poster Information** section below); and 2) verbal educational instructions to construction personnel by supervisory or management personnel before any clearing/land alteration activities are initiated (see **Pre-Construction Activities** and **During Construction Activities** sections below).

POSTER INFORMATION

Posters with the following information shall be placed at strategic locations on the construction site and along any proposed access roads (a final poster for Plan compliance, to be printed on 11” x 17” or larger paper and laminated, is attached):

DESCRIPTION: The eastern indigo snake is one of the largest non-venomous snakes in North America, with individuals often reaching up to 8 feet in length. They derive their name from the glossy, blue-black color of their scales above and uniformly slate blue below. Frequently, they have orange to coral reddish coloration in the throat area, yet some specimens have been reported to only have cream coloration on the throat. These snakes are not typically aggressive and will attempt to crawl away when disturbed. Though indigo snakes rarely bite, they should NOT be handled.

SIMILAR SNAKES: The black racer is the only other solid black snake resembling the eastern indigo snake. However, black racers have a white or cream chin, thinner bodies, and WILL BITE if handled.

LIFE HISTORY: The eastern indigo snake occurs in a wide variety of terrestrial habitat types throughout Florida. Although they have a preference for uplands, they also utilize some wetlands

and agricultural areas. Eastern indigo snakes will often seek shelter inside gopher tortoise burrows and other below- and above-ground refugia, such as other animal burrows, stumps, roots, and debris piles. Females may lay from 4 - 12 white eggs as early as April through June, with young hatching in late July through October.

PROTECTION UNDER FEDERAL AND STATE LAW: The eastern indigo snake is classified as a Threatened species by both the USFWS and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. “Taking” of eastern indigo snakes is prohibited by the Endangered Species Act without a permit. “Take” is defined by the USFWS as an attempt to kill, harm, harass, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, trap, capture, collect, or engage in any such conduct. Penalties include a maximum fine of \$25,000 for civil violations and up to \$50,000 and/or imprisonment for criminal offenses, if convicted.

Only individuals currently authorized through an issued Incidental Take Statement in association with a USFWS Biological Opinion, or by a Section 10(a)(1)(A) permit issued by the USFWS, to handle an eastern indigo snake are allowed to do so.

IF YOU SEE A LIVE EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE ON THE SITE:

- Cease clearing activities and allow the live eastern indigo snake sufficient time to move away from the site without interference;
- Personnel must NOT attempt to touch or handle snake due to protected status.
- Take photographs of the snake, if possible, for identification and documentation purposes.
- Immediately notify supervisor or the applicant’s designated agent, **and** the appropriate USFWS office, with the location information and condition of the snake.
- If the snake is located in a vicinity where continuation of the clearing or construction activities will cause harm to the snake, the activities must halt until such time that a representative of the USFWS returns the call (within one day) with further guidance as to when activities may resume.

IF YOU SEE A DEAD EASTERN INDIGO SNAKE ON THE SITE:

- Cease clearing activities and immediately notify supervisor or the applicant’s designated agent, **and** the appropriate USFWS office, with the location information and condition of the snake.
- Take photographs of the snake, if possible, for identification and documentation purposes.
- Thoroughly soak the dead snake in water and then freeze the specimen. The appropriate wildlife agency will retrieve the dead snake.

Telephone numbers of USFWS Florida Field Offices to be contacted if a live or dead eastern indigo snake is encountered:

North Florida Field Office – (904) 731-3336
Panama City Field Office – (850) 769-0552
South Florida Field Office – (772) 562-3909

PRE-CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

1. The applicant or designated agent will post educational posters in the construction office and throughout the construction site, including any access roads. The posters must be clearly visible to all construction staff. A sample poster is attached.
2. Prior to the onset of construction activities, the applicant/designated agent will conduct a meeting with all construction staff (annually for multi-year projects) to discuss identification of the snake, its protected status, what to do if a snake is observed within the project area, and applicable penalties that may be imposed if state and/or federal regulations are violated. An educational brochure including color photographs of the snake will be given to each staff member in attendance and additional copies will be provided to the construction superintendent to make available in the onsite construction office (a final brochure for Plan compliance, to be printed double-sided on 8.5" x 11" paper and then properly folded, is attached). Photos of eastern indigo snakes may be accessed on USFWS and/or FWC websites.
3. Construction staff will be informed that in the event that an eastern indigo snake (live or dead) is observed on the project site during construction activities, all such activities are to cease until the established procedures are implemented according to the Plan, which includes notification of the appropriate USFWS Field Office. The contact information for the USFWS is provided on the referenced posters and brochures.

DURING CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

1. During initial site clearing activities, an onsite observer may be utilized to determine whether habitat conditions suggest a reasonable probability of an eastern indigo snake sighting (example: discovery of snake sheds, tracks, lots of refugia and cavities present in the area of clearing activities, and presence of gopher tortoises and burrows).
2. If an eastern indigo snake is discovered during gopher tortoise relocation activities (i.e. burrow excavation), the USFWS shall be contacted within one business day to obtain further guidance which may result in further project consultation.
3. Periodically during construction activities, the applicant's designated agent should visit the project area to observe the condition of the posters and Plan materials, and replace them as needed. Construction personnel should be reminded of the instructions (above) as to what is expected if any eastern indigo snakes are seen.

POST CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

Whether or not eastern indigo snakes are observed during construction activities, a monitoring report should be submitted to the appropriate USFWS Field Office within 60 days of project completion. The report can be sent electronically to the appropriate USFWS e-mail address listed on page one of this Plan.

Appendix F

Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work

STANDARD MANATEE CONDITIONS FOR IN-WATER WORK

2011

The permittee shall comply with the following conditions intended to protect manatees from direct project effects:

- a. All personnel associated with the project shall be instructed about the presence of manatees and manatee speed zones, and the need to avoid collisions with and injury to manatees. The permittee shall advise all construction personnel that there are civil and criminal penalties for harming, harassing, or killing manatees which are protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the Florida Manatee Sanctuary Act.
- b. All vessels associated with the construction project shall operate at "Idle Speed/No Wake" at all times while in the immediate area and while in water where the draft of the vessel provides less than a four-foot clearance from the bottom. All vessels will follow routes of deep water whenever possible.
- c. Siltation or turbidity barriers shall be made of material in which manatees cannot become entangled, shall be properly secured, and shall be regularly monitored to avoid manatee entanglement or entrapment. Barriers must not impede manatee movement.
- d. All on-site project personnel are responsible for observing water-related activities for the presence of manatee(s). All in-water operations, including vessels, must be shutdown if a manatee(s) comes within 50 feet of the operation. Activities will not resume until the manatee(s) has moved beyond the 50-foot radius of the project operation, or until 30 minutes elapses if the manatee(s) has not reappeared within 50 feet of the operation. Animals must not be herded away or harassed into leaving.
- e. Any collision with or injury to a manatee shall be reported immediately to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Hotline at 1-888-404-3922. Collision and/or injury should also be reported to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Jacksonville (1-904-731-3336) for north Florida or Vero Beach (1-772-562-3909) for south Florida, and to FWC at ImperiledSpecies@myFWC.com
- f. Temporary signs concerning manatees shall be posted prior to and during all in-water project activities. All signs are to be removed by the permittee upon completion of the project. Temporary signs that have already been approved for this use by the FWC must be used. One sign which reads *Caution: Boaters* must be posted. A second sign measuring at least 8 ½" by 11" explaining the requirements for "Idle Speed/No Wake" and the shut down of in-water operations must be posted in a location prominently visible to all personnel engaged in water-related activities. These signs can be viewed at MyFWC.com/manatee. Questions concerning these signs can be sent to the email address listed above.

CAUTION: MANATEE HABITAT

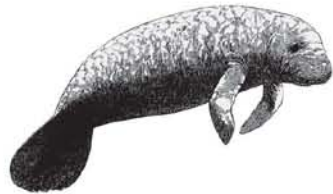
All project vessels

IDLE SPEED / NO WAKE

When a manatee is within 50 feet of work
all in-water activities must

SHUT DOWN

Report any collision with or injury to a manatee:



Wildlife Alert:

1-888-404-FWCC(3922)

cell *FWC or #FWC