WETLANDS EVALUATION AND BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT MEMORANDUM

I-75 (SR 93) PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT STUDY from north of SR 52 to south of CR 476B Pasco, Hernando, and Sumter Counties; Florida

Work Program Item Segment Number: 411014 1 Federal Aid Project Number: 0751-120I



Prepared for: **Florida Department of Transportation District Seven** 11201 North McKinley Drive Tampa, Florida 33612-6476

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June 2007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has conducted a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate capacity improvements along the segment of Interstate Highway I-75 -State Road (SR) 93- that extends from just north of SR 52 in Pasco County, through Hernando County, to just south of County Road (CR) 476B in Sumter County, Florida. The length of this segment is approximately 20.8 miles. The design year for the improvements is 2030.

The objectives of this *Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Memorandum* were to evaluate the potential effects of the project improvements on the existing wetlands and federal- and state-listed threatened and endangered species in the study area and to identify available avoidance, minimization, mitigation and/or compensation measures to address these effects.

I-75 will be widened within its current right-of-way. However, some of the upland and wetland habitats outside the current right-of-way will be affected due to the construction of the stormwater management facilities or –for the WSF – Croom Tract– the storage of stormwater in natural depression areas and the expansion of the interchanges at CR 41 and SR 50. All effects will be mitigated as not to have a net negative affect on wetlands and resources involved.

A total of 30 aquatic features (does not include swales) have been identified along the project corridor that have the potential to be impacted by the proposed improvements. All wetlands affected by the project have been grouped and classified according to the USFWS's Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States and the Florida Land Use/Cover and Forms Classification System. It is estimated that a total of 35.24 acres of wetlands will be affected by the proposed improvements.

It was determined that the proposed project will not likely have an adverse affect or jeopardize the existence of any federally- and/or state-listed threatened or endangered species, even though they are known or expected to occur in the study area. The project should have **no effect** on the bald eagle. The project **may affect** the wood stork as the

project is very close to a known rookery. The project is **not likely to adversely affect** the eastern indigo snake with use of the proposed construction conditions. Furthermore, the proposed project is not located in an area designated as critical habitat by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

This *Wetlands Evaluation and Biological Assessment Memorandum* has been reviewed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) which has concurred, in a letter dated December 7, 2006, that the planned action is not likely to adversely affect resources protected by the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). A copy of the USFWS letter is provided in **Appendix E** of this document.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has conducted a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate capacity improvements along the segment of Interstate 75 (I-75) -State Road (SR) 93- that extends from just north of SR 52 in Pasco County to just south of County Road (CR) 476B in Sumter County, Florida. The length of this segment is approximately 20.8 miles. The design year for the improvements is Year 2030. **Exhibit 1-1** illustrates the location and limits of this project.

1.1 Purpose

The objective of this PD&E Study is to document the engineering and environmental analyses that were performed for this project so that the FDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) can reach a decision on the type, location, and conceptual design of the necessary improvements of I-75 to accommodate future traffic demand in a safe and efficient manner. This study documents the need for the improvements as well as the procedures utilized to develop and evaluate various improvement alternatives. Information related to the engineering and environmental characteristics, which are essential for the alternatives analysis, was collected. Design criteria were established and preliminary alternatives were developed. The comparison of alternatives was based on a variety of parameters utilizing a matrix format. This process identified the alternative that would have minimal effects, while providing the necessary improvements.

The PD&E Study also satisfies all applicable requirements, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), in order for this project to qualify for federal-aid funding of subsequent development phases (design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction).

This *Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Memorandum* is among the various independent reports that were prepared as part of this PD&E study to assess the potential effects of the project improvements. The objectives of this document are to evaluate the potential effects of the project improvements on the existing wetlands and federal- and state-listed threatened and endangered species in the study area and to identify available



avoidance, minimization, mitigation and/or compensation measures to address these effects.

The *Wetlands Evaluation and Biological Assessment Memorandum* has been reviewed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) which has concurred, in a letter dated December 7, 2006, that the planned action is not likely to adversely affect resources protected by the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). A copy of the USFWS letter is provided in **Appendix E**.

1.2 Project Description

1.2.1 Project Background

I-75 is an interstate, limited access freeway. It is included in the State Highway System (SHS), designated as SR 93, the Florida Intrastate Highway System (FIHS), the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), and the Federal Aid Interstate System. I-75 also serves as a major evacuation route throughout the state. According to FIHS standards, all of the I-75 components (mainline, ramps, merge/diverge areas) should provide adequate capacity to operate at level of service (LOS) "C" or better.

1.2.2 The Study Area

As noted before, the study area for this project extends from just north of SR 52 in Pasco County to just south of County Road (CR) 476B in Sumter County, Florida; a distance of approximately 20.8 miles.

Presently, within the project limits, I-75 is a four-lane, divided, limited access, rural highway that generally occupies 300 feet of right of way. **Exhibit 1-2** displays the existing typical section of I-75. No major improvements have been made to this segment of I-75 since its original construction in the 1960s.

The study area includes two interchanges and two rest areas (one in each direction). More specifically, a partial cloverleaf interchange is currently provided at Blanton Road (CR 41) approximately 6.3 miles north of SR 52 in Pasco County and a diamond interchange is present at Cortez Road (US 98/SR 50), approximately 9.3 miles north of



CR 41 in Hernando County. The rest areas are located approximately 4.9 miles north of SR 50, in Sumter County.

From north of SR 50 to the northern terminus of the project, the Withlacoochee State Forest (WSF) abuts the entire western border of I-75 and most of its eastern border. At the Hernando/Sumter County Line, approximately 1.5 miles from the northern project terminus, I-75 crosses the Withlacoochee River.

To facilitate development and evaluation of the improvement alternatives, the project was divided into three segments:

- Segment 1: from north of SR 52 to the Pasco/ Hernando county line; 7.8 miles
- Segment 2: from the Pasco/Hernando county line to SR 50; 7.0 miles
- Segment 3: from SR 50 to just south of CR 476B; 6.0 miles.

1.2.3 <u>Need for the Project</u>

The need for improving I-75 within the project limits was established after consideration of the following factors:

- Evaluation of the current and future contribution of I-75 in accommodating regional travel and its importance in providing system-wide linkage within the overall roadway network.
- Review of the federal and state policies regarding I-75 and, where applicable, study of the comprehensive plans and the long-range transportation plans of the local governments involved in this project.
- Assessment of current and future social and economic demands.
- Study of the interrelationships of I-75 with other modes of transportation.
- Evaluation of the quality of traffic operations in the study area for the design year assuming that no capacity improvements will be implemented along this corridor (No-Build Alternative).
- Analyses of the traffic safety statistics for the period between 1999 and 2003.
- Comparison of the geometric characteristics of I-75 with current design standards as well as research of records for structural deficiencies along the project.

1.2.4 Improvement Alternatives

According to the <u>Traffic Technical Memorandum</u> –prepared for this study under separate cover– the annual average daily traffic (AADT) volumes along I-75 during the design year 2030 should be expected to range from 90,000 to 107,400 vehicles per day (vpd). To accommodate this projected transportation demand at the SIS standard for this facility of LOS "C", I-75 will need to be widened to an eight-lane highway with four travel lanes in each direction. Also, improvements will be needed at the interchanges of I-75 with CR 41 and SR 50. **Appendix A** provides the conceptual plans for the I-75 improvements. A detailed description of the improvements is provided in Section 9.0 of the <u>Preliminary Engineering Report</u>, prepared for this study.

Based on the current FDOT design criteria, the widening of I-75 to provide eight through lanes –four in each direction– can be accommodated within its existing 300-foot-wide right-of-way. Additional right-of-way, however, would be required for interchange improvements and for stormwater management facilities (SMFs). Depending on where the additional through lanes will be placed in relation to the existing lanes, three typical section alternatives were developed. To minimize costs and effects to natural resources, the final recommendation for widening I-75 may consist of a combination of the alternatives described below:

- The "Inside" Widening Alternative: The "Inside" Widening Alternative proposes construction of the additional four lanes into the existing median. The existing 64.0-foot-wide median is not wide enough to accommodate the two additional lanes and standard shoulder widths. An additional narrow 5.0-foot widening would also be necessary on the outside of the existing lanes. The resulting median width would be 26.0 feet wide, 38.0 feet less that the standard minimum median width for this type of facility. Therefore, concrete median barrier would need to be placed along the center of the roadway and a design variation will be required. The border width would also be reduced from 94.0 feet to 89.0 feet which would require an additional design variation.
- The "Inside & Outside" Widening Alternative: The "Inside & Outside" Widening Alternative proposes, for each direction, the construction of one

additional lane within the median and one additional lane to the outside where the existing outside shoulder is presently located. Since the remaining median after the construction of the four new lanes would be 40.0 feet wide, 24.0 feet less than the standard minimum median width for this type of facility, guardrail would need to be placed along the median and a design variation would be required. The border width would also be reduced from 94.0 feet to 82.0 feet which would require an additional design variation.

• The "Outside" Widening Alternative: The "Outside" Widening Alternative proposes, for each direction, the placement of two additional lanes along the outside of the two existing lanes. The existing lanes would need to be overbuilt with additional asphalt to slope the inside lane into the median to alleviate having four travel lanes sloped in one direction. The remaining border after the construction of the two new lanes would be 70.0 feet wide, 24.0 feet less that the standard minimum border width for this type of facility. Therefore, a design variation and/or acquisition of additional right-of-way would be required.

After evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of each of these alternatives, the "Inside & Outside" widening alternative was selected as the most suitable for this project. **Exhibit 1-3** depicts the proposed typical section for the mainline of I-75 based on this alternative.

2.0 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

An <u>Alternative Stormwater Management Facility Report</u> has been prepared for this PD&E Study under separate cover. The drainage system for the planned I-75 improvements will be designed in accordance with standards contained in the FDOT Drainage Manual, including Chapter 14-86, and SWFWMD Rule criteria for open or closed basins, as applicable. Stormwater treatment and attenuation is anticipated to be accomplished through the use of detention/retention ponds and swales in accordance with SWFWMD/Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) rules (Chapters 40D-1, 40D-4, 40D-40, 40D-41, and 40D-400, F.A.C.). Natural depression areas are to be used for stormwater storage in the WSF -



Croom Tract. The applicable type of stormwater management facility is generally dependent upon topographic constraints, seasonal high water table depth, and soil types and permeability encountered. The overall direction of the groundwater potentiometric surface is from south to north.

The planned roadway improvements may require extensions to cross drains and roadside ditches will be utilized along the proposed alignment for conveyance toward the stormwater management facilities.

3.0 EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

In Pasco County, the Withlacoochee, Hillsborough, Pithlachascotee and Anclote Rivers are the major waterways (USDA 1982:5). In addition, over 190 lakes are located throughout Pasco County, including Lake Iola, Moody Lake, and Mud Lake near the I-75 corridor. Stanley Branch, Bee Tree Branch, and Cypress Creek also cross the project corridor. Hernando County is situated within the Middle Gulf Hydrologic System (Cherry et al. 1970). The major and permanent streams are the Withlacoochee, Little Withlacoochee, and Weeki Wachee Rivers (USDA 1977). Numerous small streams and creeks are located in the coastal areas. Springs are also common along the coast. Of the approximate 130 lakes scattered throughout Hernando County, those located proximate to the I-75 corridor include McClendon, Robinson, and Oriole Lakes. During the Late Pleistocene/Early Holocene, many of these water features were non-existent. The Withlacoochee and Little Withlacoochee Rivers also flow through part of Sumter County. The former forms the line dividing Hernando and Sumter Counties. Several waterways, including the Dead River, Outlet River, and Jumper Creek discharge into the Withlacoochee River (USDA 1988:2). Wild Cow Prairie, another wetland feature near the project area, is situated at the northern end of the project area. Elevations throughout the project corridor range from about 55 feet National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD) of 1929 at the northern end of the project to about 200 feet at the southern end.

4.0 WETLANDS

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 delineated in the fall of 2005 and spring of 2006. Habitat mapping for areas impacted by this project are provided in **Appendix A**.

4.1 Vegetative Communities

Upland and wetland communities that occur within the study area were identified using National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps, the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS (formerly the Soil Conservation Service)), Soil Surveys for Pasco, Hernando, and Sumter Counties, U.S Geological Survey (USGS) topographical maps, and aerial photographs. Field surveys to verify natural community types were conducted in the Fall of 2006. Several different plant communities were found, with many of them interspersed with each other. The plant communities are differentiated between upland and wetland communities. These include five upland categories and five wetland categories.

The upland and wetland communities were classified according to the Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System (FLUCFCS) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Classification in accordance with the "Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States" (Cowardin, et al., 1979). Descriptions of these communities are provided below:

4.2 Upland Communities

4.2.1 <u>Upland Hardwood Forests</u>

This upland community commonly has a variety of oak species in the overstory including live oak (*Quercus virginiana*), laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*) and water oak (*Quercus nigra*). Other hardwoods found in this community are sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), hickory (*Carya* sp.), and sugarberry (*Celtis laevigata*). Cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*) can also be found in the mixed hardwoods. Ground cover and midstory species include young of the overstory, tree sparkleberry (*Vaccinium arboreum*), saw

palmetto (*Serenoa repens*), American beautyberry (*Calicarpa virginiana*), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), skunkvine (*Paederia foetida*), greenbriar (*Smilax* sp.), and muscadine grape (*Vitis rotundifolia*). The FLUCFCS code is 420.

4.2.2 <u>Hardwood/Conifer Mixed</u>

This community type is an upland forest co-dominated by hardwoods and conifers. This community includes the hardwoods and groundcover mentioned above (Upland Hardwood Forests) but also includes conifer species such as slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) and long leaf pine (*Pinus palustrus*). The FLUCFCS Code is 434.

4.2.3 <u>Coniferous Plantation</u>

Two types of trees are associated with this cover type along the project: Slash pine and sand pine (*Pinus clausa*). Groundcover includes saw palmetto, prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia* sp.), blackberry (*Rubus* sp.) and greenbriar. The FLUCFCS Code is 441.

4.2.4 <u>Improved Pasture</u>

This category is composed of land that has been cleared, tilled, re-seeded with specific grass types such as bahia grass (*Paspalum notatum*) and periodically improved with brush control. The FLUCFCS Code is 211.

4.2.5 <u>Unimproved Pasture</u>

This category includes cleared land with major stands of trees and brush where native grasses have been allowed to develop. Species include broomsedge (*Andropogon* sp.), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), saltbush (*Baccharis* sp.) and bahia grass. The FLUCFCS Code is 212.

4.3 Wetland Communities

4.3.1 <u>Freshwater Marsh</u>

This community, along the project limits, has water regimes that range from temporarily flooded to permanently flooded. The freshwater marshes have a variety of emergent

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species which include water primrose (*Ludwigia peruviana*), cattail (*Typha* sp.), duck potato (*Sagittaria latifolia*), soft rush (*Juncus effuses*), panic grass (*Panicum* sp.), and American lotus (*Nelumbo lutea*). Some of the freshwater marshes are associated with lakes in the area but the open water portions of the lakes are outside the impact areas of this project. The FLUCFCS Code is 641. The National Wetlands Inventory Classification is Palustrine Emergent (PEM).

4.3.2 Forested Wetland

This community has a variety of hardwood species adapted to life in wet environments and has water regimes that are mostly controlled by seasonal rain events. The species include laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), sweetgum, blackgum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), cypress (*Taxodium sp.*), and Carolina willow (*Salix caroliniana*) with a good component of vines such as greenbriar. The FLUCFCS Code is 610. The National Wetlands Inventory Classification is Palustrine Forested (PFO).

4.3.3 <u>Riverine</u>

This community includes streams, creeks, and rivers. Water regimes range from temporarily flooded to permanently flooded. Some of the streams have marsh species such as water primrose, especially in the right of way. The FLUCFCS Code is 510. The National Wetlands Inventory Classification is Palustrine Unconsolidated Bottom (PUB).

4.3.4 <u>Scrub/Shrub</u>

This community has a water regime that is mostly controlled by seasonal rain events and ranges from seasonally flooded to permanently flooded. Some of the scrub/shrub wetlands are associated with lakes in the area but the open water portions of the lakes are outside the impact areas of this project. The dominant species in this wetland type along the project is Carolina willow with some buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*). Some emergent marsh species such as cattail and soft rush can also be found in this community. The FLUCFCS Code is 631. The National Wetlands Inventory Classification is

Palustrine Scrub Shrub (PSS).

4.3.5 <u>Man Made (Swale)</u>

This community is associated with stormwater management facilities currently in place to serve the I-75 corridor. It includes swales, ditches and wet retention areas. The vegetation in these areas mostly resembles the emergent vegetation found in freshwater marshes such as cattail and duck potato. The FLUCFCS Code is 641. The National Wetlands Inventory Classification is Palustrine Emergent (PEMx). Note: x denotes excavated.

4.4 Wetland Effects

A total of 30 aquatic features (does not include swales) have been identified along the project corridor that have the potential to be impacted by the proposed improvements. All wetlands affected by the project have been grouped and classified according to the USFWS's Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States and the Florida Land Use/Cover and Forms Classification System.

4.5 **Proposed Conditions**

It is anticipated that all widening will occur within the current right-of-way for the I-75 corridor. However, some of the upland and wetland habitats outside the current right-of-way will be affected due to the construction of the stormwater management facilities or, for the WSF – Croom Tract, the storage of stormwater in natural depression areas. **Table 1** quantifies the wetland effects per wetland type. All effects will be mitigated.

Wetland Type	NWI	FLUCFCS	Impact (acres)
Freshwater Marsh	PEM	641	3.34
Forested Wetland	PFO	610	23.90
Riverine	PUB	510	3.17
Wetland Scrub	PSS	631	2.32
Man-Made Swale & Wet Retention	PEMx	641	2.51
		Total	35.24

 Table 1 - Wetland Effects (Acres) by Wetland Type

4.6 Functional Analysis

The Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM) analyses were conducted to assess wetland functions and values for the representative wetlands within the study corridor. The final rating is expressed numerically with a number between 0 and 1, with 1 representing the highest quality wetland; 0 reflecting low quality.

Four UMAMs were performed on representative wetland types. Scores reflect current conditions only. The scores were 0.4 for the stream, 0.7 for the scrub/shrub, 0.3 for the freshwater marsh, and 0.6 for the forested wetland. The UMAM data sheets are included in **Appendix B**.

4.7 Coordination with the Permitting Agencies

Environmental permits will be required from the following agencies:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE)
- Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD)
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)
- National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (EPA)

4.8 Wetland Effects Mitigation

There are no practical alternatives to this construction in wetlands. All practicable measures will be used to reduce harm to wetlands. Short term construction related effects will be minimized by the adherence to FDOT's "Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction."

There are several options available for FDOT to compensate for the anticipated wetland effects. FDOT may participate in a public or private mitigation bank provided wetland credits are available for use on this project during the permitting and final design phase. Another option would be to create, restore, enhance, or preserve wetlands in the project's watershed. Depending on the type or combination of types employed, the offsetting ratios will vary considerably. Adhering to SWFWMD's Environmental Resource Permitting Information Manual, mitigation ratio guidelines will be 2:1 to 5:1 (created/restored) for forested effects and 1.5:1 to 4:1 for non-forested effects. The

estimated ratio for enhancement will range from 4:1 to 20:1 and the ratio for wetland preservation will be in the range of 10:1 to 60:1.

Another option available to the FDOT would be to utilize Chapter 373.4137 of the Florida Statutes. This legislation allows the Department to offset wetland effects with a monetary payment through the Department of Environmental Protection to the Southwest Florida Water Management District. The Water Management District will then provide a regional wetland mitigation plan on an annual basis to be approved by the Florida State Legislature, which will include mitigation for specific FDOT project effects.

The above options will be explored and utilized during the final design phase during the permitting negotiations.

4.9 Essential Fish Habitat

There is no Essential Fish Habitat associated with this project.

4.10 Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW)

The Withlacoochee River system is an OFW.

5.0 WILDLIFE AND HABITAT

Suitable habitat for federally listed species was investigated for presence or absence by FDOT staff. Surveys were then conducted in each habitat type for species known to occur or utilize the classified habitats. These surveys were performed in the Fall of 2005 and Spring of 2006. In addition, random surveys were performed along the corridor throughout the duration of the study to obtain data on resident and transient species. Habitat mapping can be found in the appendix for all areas impacted by this project.

5.1 Threatened and Endangered Species

This project occurs through a predominantly rural part of the state. Agriculture land, forested uplands, and wetlands –which make up the majority of the study area– are home to a variety of common wildlife as well as having the potential for rare and listed species. The species described in the following sections were either observed by project

biologists, have historic occurrences in the area as gleaned from the State's listed species database, or possibly occur because their preferred habitat is present. **Table 2** presents the state- and federally-listed species with the potential to occur in the study area. A map provided in **Appendix C** depicts the location of the listed species in the study area.

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	USFWS	FWC	OBSERVED
AVIAN				
Aramus guarauna	Limpkin		SSC	
Mycteria americana	Wood stork	Е	Е	
Egretta caerulea	Little blue heron		SSC	
Egretta rufescens	Reddish egret		SSC	
Egretta thula	Snowy egret		SSC	
Egretta tricolor	Tricolored heron		SSC	
Eudocimus albus	White ibis		SSC	
Grus canadensis	Florida sandhill crane		Т	Х
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald Eagle	Т	Т	Х
Atiene cunicularia	Florida burrowing owl		SSC	
floridana				
Falco sparverius paulus	Southeastern American		Т	
	kestrel			
MAMMALS				
Podomys floridanus	Florida mouse		SSC	
Sciurus niger shermanii	Sherman's fox squirrel		SSC	
	REPTILES & AMPHIBL	ANS		
Drymarchon corais	Eastern indigo snake	Т	Т	
couperi				
Gopherus polyphemus	Gopher tortoise		SSC	Х
Alligátor mississippiensis	American alligator		SSC	Х
Rana capito	Gopher frog		SSC	
Pituophis melanoleucus	Florida pine snake		SSC	
mugitus	_			

 Table 2 - Federally and State Listed Species Potentially Occurring in the Study Area

USFWS - United States Fish and Wildlife Service

FWC - Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

E - Endangered

T - Threatened

SSC - Species of Special Concern

5.1.1 Federally Listed Species

No federally threatened or endangered floral species were observed or are known to occur within the project corridor. The entire corridor was surveyed on numerous occasions, strongly indicating the absence of these species. Faunal species federally classified as threatened or endangered that are present or have the potential to be present include the American bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), wood stork (*Mycteria Americana*) and eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*). It should be noted that the federally listed species are also listed by the State.

A description of the federally listed species with the potential to occur in the study area follows below:

• American Bald Eagle: The bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) is a threatened species with a preferred habitat that is primarily riparian, either associated with the coast or with lake and river shores, usually nesting along open bodies of water where they feed. There is one active bald eagle nest (HN012) located approximately 1000 feet east of the I-75 right-of-way in the vicinity of Oriole Lake in the northern portion of Hernando County (see Sheet 34 in Appendix A).

The project is not expected to impact any existing foraging areas or any potential nesting trees in or adjacent to the corridor. Per recent guidelines from the USFWS the nest is located greater than 660 feet from the proposed action, therefore, the proposed action will have no effect on this nest.

Conclusion: No Effect.

• Wood Stork: The wood stork is primarily associated with freshwater and estuarine habitats for nesting, roosting, and foraging. Wood storks typically construct their nests in medium to tall trees that occur in stands located either in swamps or on islands surrounded by relatively broad expanses of open water.

According to the <u>Florida Atlas Of Breeding Sites For Herons And Their Allies</u> there are nine historic wood stork rookeries within 20 miles of this project. One is within one mile in Pasco County at the beginning of the project.

Foraging habitat for this species is available depending on the existing water levels in ditches, swales, and other wetlands. Wetland mitigation will replace any lost wetlands and the creation of wet stormwater management facilities may increase the amount of foraging areas available to this species in the project area. Mitigation will occur within the core foraging area of the wood stork rookery adjacent to this project. This species could possible be affected as wetlands in the area will be affected.

Conclusion: May affect.

• Eastern Indigo Snake: The eastern indigo snake is a large, black, non-venomous snake found in the southeastern U.S. It is widely distributed throughout central and South Florida, but primarily occurs in sandhill habitats in northern Florida and southern Georgia.

Although indigo snakes in the project area could be unintentionally killed during construction, their secretive habits confound capture, so no effort would be made to relocate indigo snakes prior to construction. The construction contract will include special provisions for supplying construction personnel with a species description and a warning of the penalties for intentional harm. Contact with any individuals discovered during construction will be discouraged. If eastern indigo snakes are discovered, the FDOT will be notified immediately and will coordinate, as necessary, with the USFWS and FWC in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended through 1982. Through adhering to these precautions, the proposed project will not have a significant impact on the eastern indigo snake. **Appendix D** provides FDOT Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake.

Conclusion: Not Likely To Adversely Affect.

5.1.2 <u>State Listed Species</u>

A description of the state listed species with the potential to occur in the study area follows below:

• Gopher Tortoise: The gopher tortoise is a medium sized tortoise with a broad muscular head, short tail, and flattened, clawed forelimbs used for digging. A tortoise's diet consists of large amounts of grasses and leaves, fruits, and insects. Gopher tortoises live on well-drained, sandy soils generally in the ecotones between broad-leafed woodland and grasslands where they construct burrows. The burrow is also used for protection from fire and predation and is important habitat to many other species of wildlife, some that are wholly dependent on the gopher tortoise's burrow. Gopher tortoises were observed in the northern reaches of the project. See Sheet 41 in the appendix for this location. These tortoises are located within the current right-of-way and may be affected by this project. Coordination with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) regarding these tortoises will be required during construction of this project.

Conclusion: May Affect.

• Sandhill Crane: Sandhill cranes are gray or brown in color and the adults have a red crown. Florida populations of this species are nonmigratory and are found in Florida year round. Migrant cranes come from the Midwest to winter in Florida. Nesting takes place from January through June. Large nests are constructed in patches of marsh vegetation, such as pickerelweed and maidencane. Nests contain two large brown-spotted buff eggs. Sandhill cranes feed on a variety of plants and invertebrates. The Florida sandhill crane prefers wet prairies, marshy lake margins, sparsely vegetated marshes and shallow flooded open areas. It avoids forests and deep marshlands. This subspecies is listed as threatened by the FWC. The migratory species is not a listed species, but is conferred protection under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

One sandhill crane nest was found in the project area (see Sheet 8 in **Appendix A**). This nest was inside a potential pond site. The pond site has since been moved so as not to impact this nest.

Conclusion: Not Likely To Adversely Affect.

• Sherman's Fox Squirell: Sherman's fox squirrel is quite different in size and appearance from the gray squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*). The fox squirrel is considerable larger, and the top of the head is typically black, with white nose and ears. The rest of the pelage is variable in color ranging from agouti to black, light agouti to tan, or dark over tan, or tan over dark. Fox squirrels utilize large leaf nests, most build in large oaks. Habitat dependent, the fox squirrel may skip a breeding season, depending on resource abundance. This species depends on a variety of food sources for its survival. Major food resources include turkey oak acorns, longleaf pine seeds, and live oak acorns. Other acorns and nuts, fungi, bulbs, vegetative buds, insects and staminate pinecones also are eaten.

To accommodate the squirrel's large home range and varied food resources, suitable habitat must be fairly extensive. The mature, fire-maintained longleaf pine-turkey oak sandhills and flatwoods are the optimal habitat for Sherman's fox squirrel.

No fox squirrels were observed during field surveys, however, there is habitat located in the WSF and other areas. It is not anticipated that there will be negative effects to this species due to the limits of construction.

Conclusion: No Effect.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

I-75 will be widened within its current right-of-way. However, some of the upland and wetland habitats outside the current right-of-way will be affected due to the construction of the stormwater management facilities or –for the WSF – Croom Tract– the storage of stormwater in natural depression areas and the expansion of the interchanges at CR 41 and SR 50. All effects will be mitigated as not to have a net negative affect on wetlands and resources involved.

A total of 30 aquatic features (does not include swales) have been identified along the project corridor as having the potential to be impacted by the proposed improvements. All wetlands affected by the project have been grouped and classified according to the USFWS's Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States and the Florida Land Use/Cover and Forms Classification System. It is estimated that a total of 35.24 acres of wetlands will be affected by the proposed project improvements.

The project has been evaluated for effects on state and federally protected threatened and endangered species. A literature review was conducted to determine those possible threatened or endangered species which may inhabit the project area.

The federally protected eastern indigo snake may occur in wetland and upland habitats along the project corridor, although the prevalence of open rangeland and residential areas within the region probably restricts utilization of habitat by this species except in the area of the WSF. To minimize effects to individual indigo snakes during construction, a special provision will be included in the contract to advise the contractor of the potential presence of this species and its protected status (see **Appendix D**). If an indigo snake is sighted during construction, the contractor will be required to cease any operations(s) that might cause harm to the snake. If the snake does not move away from the construction area, FWC will be contacted to capture and relocate it to other suitable habitat.

Effects to the state-listed (SSC) gopher tortoise populations are unavoidable, since the occurrence of these tortoises occurs in the current right of way. Gopher tortoises are common in upland areas of the region and the loss of gopher tortoise habitat due to the

I-75 (SR 93) PD&E STUDY WETLANDS EVALUATION AND BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT MEMORANDUM

project would be insignificant on a regional scale. Coordination with the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission (FWC) will continue throughout final design stages of the project. Relocations of any affected tortoises may be recommended. This relocation should take place immediately prior to the clearing of areas for roadway construction.

During the field review state-listed Florida sandhill cranes were observed foraging and nesting in the study area. The habitat was determined to be insufficient for the federally protected red cockaded woodpecker. The state-listed (SSC) Sherman's fox squirrel likely utilizes portions of the study area, although none were observed.

Based on the previously mentioned data collection efforts, it has been determined that the proposed project will not likely have an adverse affect or jeopardize the existence of any federally- and/or state-listed threatened or endangered species, even though they are known or expected to occur in the study area. The project should have **no effect** on the bald eagle. The project **may affect** the wood stork as the project is very close to a known rookery. The project is **not likely to adversely affect** the eastern indigo snake with use of the proposed construction conditions. Furthermore, the proposed project is not located in an area designated as critical habitat by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Table 3 summarizes the wetland and species involvement at each of the recommended stormwater management facility locations as well as the natural depression areas of the WSF will be used for this purpose.

I-75 (SR 93) PD&E STUDY WETLANDS EVALUATION AND BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT MEMORANDUM

Drainage	Recomn	nended	Location	SMF S	Wetland Ir	ivolvement	Species In	volvement
Dasill No.	Altern	ur ative	c/-I guong (station)	SIZE (acres)	Type	Size (acres)	Federally Listed	State Listed
2	SMF ¹	2A	1252+00 RT	2.7	PEM	0.17	Close to wood stork rookery	Close to wood stork rookery
3	SMF	3C	1279+00 RT	2.2	PFO	0.12	IN	IN
7	SMF	4B	1296+00 RT	4.1	PFO	0.03	IN	IN
5	SMF	5C	1333+00 RT	4.3	PEM/R	0.03	IN	IN
9	SMF	6C	1379+00 LT	3.1	IN	IN	IN	IN
L	SMF	7C	1403+00 LT	1.5	IN	IN	IN	IN
8	SMF	8A	1419+00 LT	2.2	IN	IN	IN	IN
6	SMF	9A	1425+00 LT	2.2	IN	IN	IN	IN
10	SMF	10B	1451+00 LT	4.1	PEM	IN	IN	IN
11	SMF	11B	1481+00 RT	1.7	IN	IN	IN	IN
12	SMF	12A	1497+00 LT	1.7	IN	IN	IN	IN
13	SMF	13C	1543+00 LT	5.1	PFO	0.53	IN	IN

Table 3 - Natural Environment Effects at the Recommended Stormwater Management Sites

¹ SMF: stormwater management facility NI: No Involvement

June 2007

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I-75 (SR 93) PD&E STUDY WETLANDS EVALUATION AND BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT MEMORANDUM

Listed State **Species Involvement** E E Ē E E E E E E E E Z Federally Listed Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z Z E E Z Wetland Involvement Size (acres) 0.35 0.38 0.03 5.820.040.21 Z Z Z E Z E Type PEMx PFO PFO PFO PFO PSS Z Z Z Z E E (acres) SMF Size 7.8 7.5 7.8 4.8 2.1 7.9 8.7 4.7 6.7 7.1 7.1 5.1 1590+00 LT 1607+00 LT 1689+00 LT 1933+00 LT 1988+00 LT along I-75 1578+00 RT 1704+00 RT 1763+00 LT 1795+00 LT 1825+00 RT 1860+00 LT 1896+00 RT Location (station) & RT & RT Recommended 14C 15A 17B 20B 21B22A 23A 24B25C Alternative 16A 18B 19B SMF SMF¹ SMF Drainage Basin No. 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 53 33 4 25

Table 3 - Natural Environment Effects at the Recommended Stormwater Management Sites (continued)

¹ SMF: stormwater management facility NI: No Involvement

June 2007

24

WETLANDS EVALUATION AND BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT MEMORANDUM I-75 (SR 93) PD&E STUDY

Drainage	Recomn	nended	Location	SMF	Wetland In	volvement	Species In	volvement
Basin No.	SN. Altern	1F native	along I-75 (station)	Size (acres)	Type	Size (acres)	Federally Listed	State Listed
26	SMF^{1}	26C	2006+00 RT	5.2	IN	IN	IN	IN
27	SMF	27C	2027+00 RT	3.7	IN	IN	IN	IN
29	SMF	29C	2068+00 RT	7.6	IN	IN	IN	IN
30	SMF	30B	2162+00 RT	15.0	IN	IN	IN	NI
31	COMB ¹ SMF DDA ¹	31D 4b(e)C 4b(w)C	2200+00 RT 2233+00 RT 2233+00 RT	6.7 4.7 2.5 ²	IN	IN	IN	IN
32	DDA	5aC 5bC	2252+00 LT 2265+00 LT	6.8 5.2	IN	IN	IN	IN
33	DDA	6a/bC 6cC	2300+00 RT 2339+00 RT	3.7 5.7	PEM	3	IN	IN
34	DDA	7C	2345+00 LT	7.4	PSS	3	IN	NI
		Total.	Area of Wetlan	ids Involven	nent in SMF's	7.71		

Table 3 - Natural Environment Effects at the Recommended Stormwater Management Sites (continued)

SMF: stormwater management facility; DDA: discharge to a depression area; COMB: combined use of SMF and DDA.

For DDAs, the reported area represents the new area of water level increase caused by the additional stormwater runoff from the project. No dredge/fill effects, just increased hydrologic input. e 2

NI: No Involvement

7.0 **REFERENCES**

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Conceptual Plans of the Proposed Improvements for I-75


























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PFO SS R PEM PEMx UMAM	PROP. LA RAW Vetlands Legend Palustrine Forested Scrub / Shrub Riverine Freshwater Marsh Manmade (Swales, Retention and Ditches Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method	
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		NO.

CONCEPT PLANS

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WETLANDS

ULTIMATE 8-LANE WIDENING

PASCO, HERNANDO AND SUMTER











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Withlacoochee State Forest (Croom Motorcycle Area)

La Rose Rd.

2160



2155

2150

2/45 2


Withlacoochee State Forest (Croom Motorcycle Area)

2185



La Rose Rd.

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Withlacoochee State Forest



12 76	Wetlands Legend
PFO	Palustrine Forested
SS	Scrub / Shrub
R	Riverine
PEM	Freshwater Marsh
PEMx	Manmade (Swales, Retention and Ditches
UMAM	Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method

Withlacoochee State Forest 66CC

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APPENDIX B

UMAM Data Sheets

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

Site/Project Name	Application Numb	er	Assessment Area Nan	ne or Number
I.75		÷	PFO1	
FLUCCs code	Further classification (optional)		Impact or Mitigation Site?	Assessment Area Size
610			Impact	
Basin/Watershed Name/Number	Affected Waterbody (Class)	Special Classificati	On (i.e.OFW, AP, other local/state/fed	aral designation of importance)
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Doserved Evidence of Wildlife Utiliz None	ation (List species directly observed, or o	L ther signs such as	tracks, droppings, casings,	nests, etc.):
dditional relevant factors:				
ssessment conducted by:		Assessment date(5):	
DAVID Peta	1	10/010	6	

Form 62-345.900(1), F.A.C. [effective date 02-04-2004]

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Close

Introduction:

This report provides the general public and local governments access to a geographic information systems (GIS) analysis of jurisdictional boundaries and environmental resources of interest to the <u>environmental resource permitting</u> process. The purpose of this report to improve this process by providing permit applicants with information and interpretation of the <u>Florida Department of Environmental Protection's</u> role and concerns in this process.

Key:

Two different types of analysis are available

Pinpoint Analysis - reports resources intersected by analysis point

Buffer Analysis - reports resources within a 1 mile buffer around selected anlysis point

Unaffected data layers ...

Unaffected - data layers reporting "Unaffected" means no data was found within the analysis area. This may be the result of the analysis area not having been surveyed for a particular resource. Therefore, receiving "Unaffected" in this analysis does not necessarily mean resources are lacking from the area.

Information for Permit Application

[®] USGS Quad Map

SAN ANTONIO

Township/Range/Section

25S20E8

Jurisdictional Boundaries

* FDEP Regulatory District

Southwest District

Water Management District Southwest Florida WMD

[®] US Army Corps of Engineers

WEST PERMITS SECTION

County

PASCO

% City

Unaffected

Coastal Construction Control Line

Water Resources

Aquatic Preserves

Unaffected

🚱 Outstanding Florida Waters

Name

Unaffected

Type

😯 Surface Water Body Classification

Name Unaffected

Class

Fish and Wildlife Resources

FNAI Bird Aggregation Areas BIRD ROOKERY FNAI Rare Animals

Unaffected

FNAI Rare Plants

Unaffected

S FNAI Manatee Aggregation Areas

Unaffected

G FWCC Manatee Protection Zones

Unaffected

FWCC Biodiversity Hotspots Unaffected

FWCC Priority Wetlands

Unaffected

G FWCC Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas

Priority Habitat

Sea Turtle Nesting

Habitats

FMRI Mangroves
 Unaffected
 FNAI Rare Habitats
 Unaffected
 FMRI Salt Marshes
 Unaffected
 FMRI Seagrasses
 Unaffected
 FMRI Tidal Flats
 Unaffected

Mitigation and Restoration Opportunities

Florida Ecological Restoration Inventory
 Unaffected
 Mitigation Bank Service Areas
 Unaffected

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

Site/Project Name	Application Number	Assessment Area Nan	ne or Number
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Impact or Mitigation	Assessment conducted	PFO 1	
P. O. T			
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1-1

Form 62-345.900(2), F.A.C. [effective date 02-04-2004]

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

Impact or Miligation Site? PEM FLUCCs code [Further classification (optional) Impact or Miligation Site? Assessment / Basin/Watershed Name/Number [MPAct] [MPAct] IMPAct Basin/Watershed Name/Number Affected Waterbody (Class) Special Classification (a orw, AP, ener locarsume/neuron designation of reg Geographic relationship to and hydrologic connection with wetlands, other surface water, uplands wet + (a wd 15 T sole Y in Hish way Row, Surfact water Statewater Uplands wet + (a wd 15 T sole Y in Hish way Row, Surfact water Statewater Uplands wet + (a wd 15 T sole Y in Hish way Row, Surfact water Statewater Uplands wet + (a wd 15 T sole Y in Hish way Row, Surfact water Statewater uplands wet + (a wd 15 T sole Y in Hish way Row, Surfact water Statewater uplands wet + (a wd 15 T sole Hish Y Distributed Site State Model State Significant nearby features Uniqueness (considering the relative rarity in relation to the landscape.) Nork t Functions water States and intensity of use of mother states and intensity of use of landscape.) Nork t Anticipated Wildlife Utilization Based on Literature Review (List of species) Anticipated Utilization by Listed Species, their le classification (E, T, SSC), type of use, and intensity of use of asasessment area)	Site/Project Name	Application Num	Application Number		Assessment Area Name or Number	
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$\Lambda/\sigma_{ m e}$	adjacent to Pas	,+ur~				
	N いっそ	ation (List species directly observed, or	other signs such as tra	cks, droppings, casings,	nests, etc.):	
	Additional relevant factors:					
	Additional relevant factors:					
ssessment conducted by:	Additional relevant factors:					

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

Site/Project Name		Application Number	Assessment Area	Name or Number
T-7	5		PG	\sim
Impact or Mitigation	<u>,</u>	Assessment conducted by:	Assessment date	1.1
TMPO	CT	DAVID Red	++i 1012	101
<u>+/// -</u>		11212000	11 10/2	100
Scoring Guidance	Optimal (10)	Moderate(7)	Minimal (4)	Not Present (0)
I he sconng of each	Condition is optimal and fully	Condition is less than	Minimal lowel of support of	Condition in incut Fair at the
would be suitable for the	supports wetland/surface	maintain most	wetland/surface water	provide wetland/surface
type of welland or surface	water functions	wetland/surface	functions	water functions
water assessed		waterfunctions	L.	
.500(6)(a) Location and Landscape Support w/o pres or <u>current</u> with 3 .500(6)(b)Water Environment (n/a for uplands)	In Row, Periodie Compone Domin In Row High nu Livest	period mai clearing, nT uted By Lu , swalt a trien T ing ocle	Heavy exo duista pero duista pero duista pero duista pero duista pero duista pero	ly tic viana (JucenT
w/o pres or current with 3			300	
.500(6)(c)Community structure 1. Vegetation and/or 2. Benthic Community w/o pres or current with	Heavy n (Distur pdjan Y	nuasives, e bed) untuplands Livestock	are Rood w	u Y
Score = sum of above scores/30 (if	If preservation as mitigal	tion,	For impact assess	ment areas
uplands, divide by 20)	Processition adjusters	factor =		
current pr w/o pres with	Adjusted mitigation delta		FL = delta x acres =	
	If mitigation		For mitigation asses	ssment areas
Delta = [with-current]	Time lag (t-factor) =			
	Risk factor =		RFG = delta/(t-factor x r	isk) =

Form 62-345.900(2), F.A.C. [effective date 02-04-2004]

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

Site/Project Name	Application Number	Assessment Area Name or Number
1.13		551
FLUCCs code FL	urther classification (optional)	Impact or Mitigation Site? Assessment Ar
631		Impact
BasinM/stersbed Name/Number Afforded	Malachadu (Class)	
Withlacoochic R.	MUD (ote	al Classification (i.e. OFW, AP, other local/state/federal designation of impo
Withlucoocher R. S.	71015 2422	None
Geographic relationship to and hydrologic ca Mudlate Rigt	connection with wellands, other surface nT $next$ To $I-7$	water, uplands on Edge of 5
Assessment area description		
Scru	B shrub wetla	nd pominated by
5411	* Caroliniana	
Significant nearby features	Uniq	ueness (considering the relative rarity in relation to the
Mud	La (ce lands	scape.) NOT UNIGUE
		,
Functions Provides Caused	Mitig	ation for previous permit/other historic use
Newsday		UNKNOWN ILISTORIC US
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		except for the Highw
Anticipated Wildlife Utilization Based on Liter	ature Review (List of species Antici	ipated Utilization by Listed Species (List species, their le
that are representative of the assessment are	ea and reasonably expected to classi	ification (E, T, SSC), type of use, and intensity of use of
be round) probably used	By a host asses	esmentarea) PossiBly used B.
ot aquatic speci	*s and u	and star 155 & allestar
wading Birds a	nd heras	- oug stories + angetor
,, ,	4	other wading Birds
Observed Evidence of Wildlife Utilization (Lis	species directly observed, or other si	gns such as tracks, droppings, casings, nests, etc.):
No wildlife o	Bserved	
Additional relevant factors:		
n - na ang mga ng		
ssessment conducted bur		
	Asses	sment date(s):
DAVID Nett	1	10/2/06

Form 62-345.900(1), F.A.C. [effective date 02-04-2004]

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

Site/Designt Mag				
I-75		Application Number	Assessment Are	Name or Number
Impact or Mitigation		Assessment conducted by:	Assessment dat	
T. D. T		\square \cap \cap \cap		
Impaci		DAVID Ve	++1 10/2	106
Scoring Guidance	Optimal (10)	Moderate(7)	Minimal (4)	Net Base is the late
The scoring of each		Condition is less than	Minmai (4)	Not Present (0)
ndicator is based on what	Condition is optimal and fully	optimal, but sufficient to	Minimal level of support of	Condition is insufficient to
would be suitable for the	supports wetland/surface	maintain most	wetland/surface water	provide wetland/surface
water assessed	water functions	wettand/surface	functions	water functions
		Hordinalogia		
.500(6)(a) Location and Landscape Support fo pres or	Goud B Edje	of mud	3 sides Lalee	
7 .500(6)(b)Water Environment (n/a for uplands)	Levels ; edge y 15 stre Basin	tre impacto fennel so ssed. (ots impacting	d Dead tr iming in of Livest Quality 1	erson so veg ocie in Rodd impact
pres or urrent with	Seval Pra	quality +	short flor	~
500(6)(c)Community structure 1. Vegetation and/or 2. Benthic Community	In Row Activiti	Arta Dist es an alt	LUXBED BY	maintenon Do to
pres or urrent with	Koadway	l Construc	+11-	,
	canopy	tracs sta	rssrd + Dr	ad
ore = sum of above scores/30 (if uplands, divide by 20)	If preservation as mitigation	on,	For impact assess	ment areas
urrent	Preservation adjustment f	factor =		
7 with	Adjusted mitigation delta	-	FL = delta x acres =	
	If mitigation			
Delta = [with-current]	Time lag (t-factor) =		For mitigation asses	sment areas
	Risk factor =		RFG = delta/(t-factor x ri	sk) =

Form 62-345.900(2), F.A.C. [effective date 02-04-2004]

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

Image: Second	Site/Project Name	Application Nur	nber	Assessment Area Nam	e or Number
FLUCCs code Further classification (optional) Impact or Mitigation Site? Assessment A 510 Impact or Mitigation Site? Assessment A Basin/Watershed Name/Number Affected Waterbody (Class) Special Classification (e Orw, AP, other bodystate/rederal designation of type Basin/Watershed Name/Number Affected Waterbody (Class) Special Classification (e Orw, AP, other bodystate/rederal designation of type Basin/Watershed Name/Number BeeTRee Branch Special Classification (e Orw, AP, other bodystate/rederal designation of type Basin/Watershed Name/Number BeeTRee Branch Special Classification (e Orw, AP, other bodystate/rederal designation of type Geographic relationship to and hydrologic connection with wetlands, other surface water, uplands Beer Branch 15 Connected to Cypress creek Some Lodwissic Perovians 16 the Hills Boro River Some Lodwissic Perovians 17 the traintant Stream Some Lodwissic Perovians 18 there are yout it and the traintant stream type Some Lodwissic Perovians 19 there is the traintant stream type Mitigation for previous permit/other historic use 19 there is the traintant Rever (List of species) Mitigation for previous permit/other historic use 19 there is the traintant Rever (List of species) Anticipated Utilization by Listed Specie	I.75			(R2)	BeeBr
510 Basin/Wetershed Name/Number BetTRee Branch Hills Boro River BetTRee Branch BetTRee Br	FLUCCs code	Further classification (optional)	Impa	act or Mitigation Site?	Assessment A
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Form 62-345.900(1), F.A.C. [effective date 02-04-2004]

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



Form 62-345.900(2), F.A.C. [effective date 02-04-2004]

APPENDIX C

Map of Historic Listed Species Occurrences (FNAI)





I-75 PD&E STUDY FROM N. OF SR 52 TO S. OF CR 476B PASCO, HERNANDO & SUMTER COUNTIES

WPI SEG. NO.: 411014 1 FAP NO: 0751-120I

HISTORIC LISTED SPECIES OCCURRANCES

DATA SOURCES: UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, GEOPLAN CENTER, 2002 FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY, LABINS, 2004

APPENDIX D

FDOT Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake

FDOT Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake

The Eastern Indigo Snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*) could be present in the project area. To minimize harm to this species, the FDOT will implement the following protection measures:

- A. Provide Eastern Indigo Snake educational information to employees prior to the initiation of any clearing or construction. An educational exhibit that has been approved by USFWS shall be posted conspicuously at a site accessible to all employees and a handout will be distributed to employees.
- B. The Contractor shall post and distribute educational information to all its workers. The exhibit and brochure shall include photographs of the Eastern Indigo Snake, information on life history, and legal protection of the species in Florida, and how to avoid effects to the species. This material shall be supplied to the Contractor.
- C. All Construction activities shall cease if live Indigo Snakes are found within the project area. Work may resume after the snake or snakes are allowed to leave the area on their own.
- D. Location of live sightings shall be reported to the FDOT.
- E. If a dead Eastern Indigo Snake is found on the project site, the snake shall be frozen as soon as possible and the FDOT shall be notified immediately for further instructions.

APPENDIX E

USFWS Letter

JEB BUSH GOVERNOR

December 6, 2006

41910-2007-I-0136 FWS Log No

The proposed action is not likely to adversely affect resources protected by the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) This finding fulfills the requirements of the Act.

Mr. Todd Mecklenborg U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 9720 Executive Center Drive, Suite 101 St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

12/7/06 David L. Hankla Field Supervisor

RE: WPI Segment No: 411014 1; FAP No. 0751-120I, I-75 PD&E Study from N. of SR 52 to S. of CR 476B Pasco, Hernando, and Sumter Counties, Florida

Dear Mr. Mecklenborg:

The Florida Department of Transportation is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to address proposed improvements within the limits noted above to accommodate future traffic demands.

As part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) the Department is initiating informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In order to fulfill the requirements of the NEPA process, the Department solicits comments from federal, state, and local agencies. A Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report has been prepared for the study corridor.

This proposed project has been evaluated for impacts on federally protected threatened and endangered species. Based on the results of the literature review and field surveys conducted, the Department has determined that the proposed project will not likely have an adverse affect or jeopardize the existence of any federally threatened or endangered species, even though they are known or expected to occur in the study area. Furthermore, the proposed project is not located in an area designated as Critical Habitat by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

If your office concurs with this determination, please respond to the Department by January 8, 2007. Please feel free to call me at (813) 975-6173 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Manuel E. Santos

Manuel E. Santos Project Manager

cc: John Kenty, P.E.

