

Federal Highway Administration
Region Four

**ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

and

Florida Department of Transportation

State Project Number: 15150-1565
Federal Project Number: FFD-185-1(46)
Work Program Number: 7116860

U.S. Highway 19 (State Road 55) from Gandy Boulevard (State Road 694) in Pinellas County to Alternate U.S. 19 (State Road 595) in Pasco County, Florida.

This project consists of upgrading 24.6 miles of U.S. 19 from a 4- and 6-lane at-grade arterial to a 6- and 8-lane controlled access expressway. There are 12 major interchanges, 13 overpasses/minor interchanges, and 6 grade separations planned in this section of U.S. 19.

Submitted pursuant to 42 U.S.C.4332 (2)(c).

5/7/90
Date

Bobby D. Blackman
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

FHWA has determined that this project will not have any significant impact on the human environment. This Finding Of No Significant Impact is based on the attached Summary of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement which has been independently evaluated by FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the environmental issues and impacts of the proposed project. It provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and contents of the attached Summary of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

U.S. Highway 19 is the only continuous north-south general land service highway serving the populous west coast of the Pinellas/Pasco County area. The Florida Department of Transportation proposes to improve U.S. 19 (SR 55) from Gandy

The project corridor extends 24.6 miles from Gandy Boulevard (SR 694) in Pinellas County, Florida to Alternate U.S. 19 (SR 595) in Pasco County, Florida.

U.S. 19 is the major regional facility within the Pinellas/Pasco coastal corridor. It serves abutting retail, commercial, residential, service land uses and the established population concentrations of the two counties. As a result of accelerated population growth within Pinellas and Pasco Counties, and the resultant high cross road traffic volumes, many segments of U.S. 19 currently operate at unacceptable levels of service (LOS) during both peak and off-peak hours of the day. A great demand for additional transportation capacity presently exists within the general area of U.S. 19.

The recommended alternative involves multi-lane improvements including interchange designs and frontage road access to U.S. 19 (SR 55). U.S. 19 will be improved to a six-lane freeway mainline with two-lane, one-way frontage roads for the entire 24.6-mile length, with the exception of a varying six- and eight-lane mainline from north of Nursery Road to Coachman Road. Interchanges and overpasses will be provide at major cross streets.

Anticipated displacements for the recommended alternative include: 16 residential relocations, 9 business rentals, and 17 business owners. Neither non-profit organizations, handicapped persons nor minority families will be displaced. The estimated cost of relocation for the recommended alternative is approximately \$1.5 million, including on-premise advertising signs and other personal property moves.

FHWA, in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historical Preservation Act and in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer, has determined the recommended action will have no effect upon any properties protected under Section 106.

The recommended action will not use any properties as defined by Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act. FHWA has determined that Section 4(f) does not apply.

This project is in conformance with the State Implementation Plan because it will not cause violations of air quality standards and will not interfere with any transportation control measures. Air pollution may be temporarily increased during construction, however, potential construction air quality impacts and mitigation measures have been determined.

The recommended project is expected to increase the number of areas which receive noise levels in excess of FHWA Noise Abatement Criteria; however, the relative increase in noise level is not determined to be substantive. The existing corridor is predominantly commercial in nature, and the high level of access requirements associated with the U.S. 19 corridor does not make mitigation (in terms of barriers, for example) practical. Where open land presently occurs adjacent to the roadway, mitigation should result from zoning regulations and setbacks established by local officials.

Noise levels from construction equipment will temporarily increase during construction. Construction noise will be controlled on this project by adherence to the controls listed in the Supplemental Specifications to the Florida Department of Transportation Standard Specifications.

The recommended roadway project should not contribute significantly to an increase in the flood zone area, since the existing flood zone designations are a result of either coastal flooding due to tidal surge, or are inherent in the topography of the surrounding area. Pursuant to Executive Order 11988 "Floodplain Management", the proposed action was determined to be within the base floodplain associated with low areas and drainage ditches. Impacts associated with the encroachment have been evaluated and determined to be minimal. Therefore, the proposed action does not constitute a significant encroachment.

In accordance with Executive Order 11990 Protection of Wetlands, the project's involvement with wetlands was evaluated. An evaluation of alternative alignments has determined there is no practicable alternative to the proposed U.S. 19 improvements. All practicable measures to minimize harm to wetlands which may result from the improvements will be undertaken. Because the project development is located in a heavily urbanized area and is mainly confined within the existing right-of-way, substantial impacts to wetland areas are not anticipated.

Based upon the above consideration, it is determined that there is no practicable alternative to the proposed new construction in wetlands and the proposed action includes all practicable measures to minimize harm to wetlands which may result from such use.

Within the project study limits, only two water bodies which approximate their natural conditions, would receive encroachment; Allen's Creek and the Anclote River. Both sites have existing bridge crossings. Minimal impact to the aquatic preserve is anticipated from the construction of U.S. Highway 19 since these areas currently receive stormwater runoff from the highway. The project would provide treatment in accordance with applicable sections of Chapter 17-25 F.A.C. and Chapter 40D-4, F.A.C. prior to discharge into the preserves.

A review of relevant literature revealed that the occurrence of endangered and threatened species within the project corridor is limited since there is no designated critical habitat for endangered or threatened species within the vicinity of this project. A field review in August 1986 and March 1988 did not result in the sighting of any endangered or threatened species or other positive indicators of their presence (i.e., nests, burrows, etc.).

Through coordination with the Soil Conservation Service, it has been determined that the project area, which is located in the urbanized area of Pinellas and Pasco Counties, does not meet the definition of farmland as defined in 7 CFR 658. Therefore, the provisions of the Farmland Protection Policy act of 1984 do not apply to this project.

The recommended project has been determined to be consistent with the State of Florida's Coastal Management Program.

A Public Participation Program has been carried out as an integral part of the project development and environmental studies for the recommended improvements to U.S. 19 (see Sections 5.6 and 5.7). The purpose of this program was to maintain communication with individuals and agencies concerned with the project and includes both a public involvement and agency coordination effort. In addition, a Public Hearing was held on December 13, 1989. Public support of the refined recommended

alternatives A-1A, B-8D, C-2A and D-2B was unanimously agreed upon by the majority of people attending the public hearing.

The approved Draft Environmental Impact Statement addresses all of the viable alternatives that were studied during project development. The environmental effects of all alternatives under consideration were evaluated when preparing the statement. Even though the document was made available to the public before the public hearing, the Finding of No Significant Impact was made after consideration of all comments received as a result of public availability and the public hearing.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
List of Exhibits	vii
1.0 <u>DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION</u>	1
2.0 <u>NEED</u>	4
3.0 <u>ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED</u>	5
4.0 <u>IMPACTS</u>	7
4.1 SOCIOECONOMIC	7
4.1.1 Community Services	7
4.1.2 Community Cohesion	7
4.1.3 Land Use	7
4.1.4 Utilities and Railroads	8
4.1.5 Relocations	8
4.2 CULTURAL RESOURCES	10
4.2.1 Archaeological and Historical	10
4.2.2 Recreation/Parkland Resources	10
4.3 NATURAL AND PHYSICAL IMPACTS	10
4.3.1 Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities	10
4.3.2 Visual/Aesthetic	10
4.3.3 Air	11
4.3.4 Noise	11
4.3.5 Drainage	12
4.3.6 Wetlands	12
4.3.7 Water Quality	13
4.3.8 Aquatic Preserve	13
4.3.9 Outstanding Florida Waters	14
4.3.10 Hazardous Materials	15
4.3.11 Wild and Scenic Rivers	15
4.3.12 Floodplain	15
4.3.13 Coastal Zone Consistency	15
4.3.14 Threatened and Endangered Species	15
4.3.15 Farmlands	16
4.3.16 Energy	16
4.3.17 Construction	16
5.0 <u>COMMENTS AND COORDINATION</u>	18
5.1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM	18
5.2 ADVANCE NOTIFICATION	18

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
5.3 INTERAGENCY COORDINATION AND COMMENTS	19
5.4 COORDINATION WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS AND LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCIES	19
5.5 PROPERTY OWNER AND INTERESTED CITIZEN MAILING LIST	22
5.6 PUBLIC INFORMATION WORKSHOP AND CENTER	22
5.7 CONTINUING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT	23
5.7.1 Response to Elected Officials, Governing Body Staff and Interested Citizens	23
5.7.2 Coordination with Public and Private Emergency, Solid Waste and Community Services	23
5.8 PUBLIC HEARING	24
5.8.1 Public Hearing Comments Summary	24
5.8.2 Draft Environmental Impact Statement Agency Comments	30
6.0 <u>COMMITMENTS AND RECOMMENDATION</u>	35
6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS	35
6.1.1 Recommended Alignment Location	35
6.1.2 Recommended Design Features	35
6.2 COMMITMENTS	37
6.2.1 Wetland Mitigation	37
6.2.2 Threatened and Endangered Species	37
6.2.3 Other Commitments	40

APPENDIX

LIST OF EXHIBITS

<u>Exhibit No.</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Follows</u>
1	U.S. 19 Corridor Study Area	Page 1

SECTION 1

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION

U.S. Highway 19 is the only continuous north-south general land service highway serving the populous west coast of the Pinellas/Pasco County area. The Florida Department of Transportation proposes to improve U.S. 19 (SR 55) from Gandy Boulevard (SR 694) in Pinellas County to Alternate U.S. 19 (SR 595) in Pasco County. Exhibit 1 portrays the project limits in relation to major population centers of the region. The project corridor extends 24.6 miles from Gandy Boulevard (SR 694) in Pinellas County, Florida to Alternate U.S. 19 (SR 595) in Pasco County, Florida.

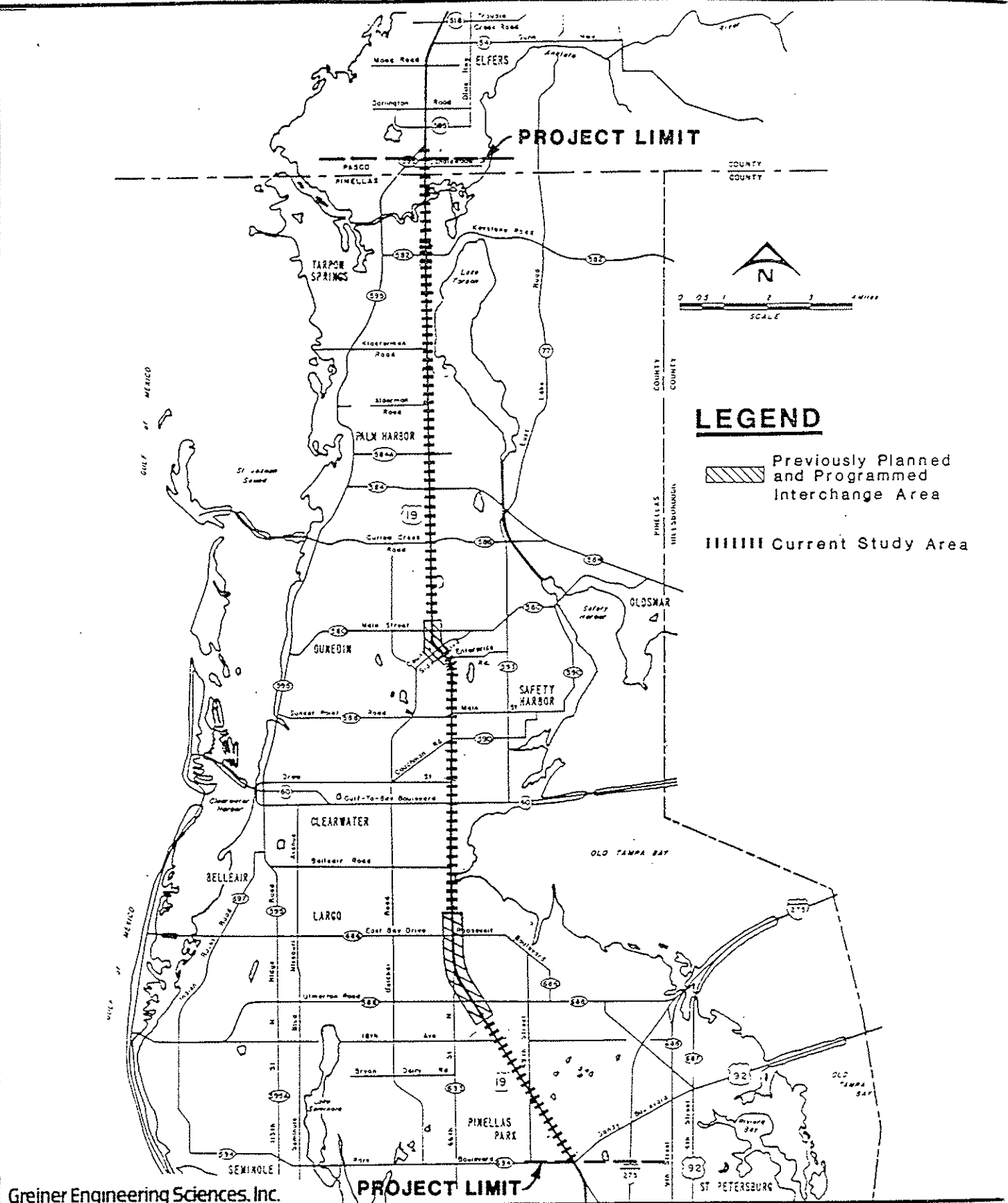
The existing U.S. 19 roadway, from the southern end of the project and proceeding north from Gandy Boulevard, is a four-lane, divided arterial section with 12-foot travel lanes and a raised median of varying width. The roadway transitions from a four-lane section to a six-lane section north of East Bay Drive (SR 686). Additional signalization and turn lanes are provided at major intersections within this segment. The U.S. 19 interchange with Gulf to Bay Boulevard (SR 60) is a four-lane, divided section with a GM-type median barrier. From 1,200 feet north of SR 60 to 4,800 feet north of Klosterman Road, U.S. 19 is currently a six-lane, divided section with 16- to 28-foot medians. Exclusive turn lanes and upgraded signalization are provided at all cross streets. From 4,800 feet north of Klosterman Road to the Pinellas/Pasco County line, U.S. 19 is a four-lane, divided rural section. U.S. 19, from the Pinellas/Pasco County line north to Alternate U.S. 19 (SR 595), is a six-lane facility with a 16- to 28-foot median and 12-foot travel lanes. Exclusive turn lanes and upgraded signalization have been provided at major intersections.

The proposed action involves multi-lane improvements including interchange designs and frontage road access to U.S. 19 (SR 55). U.S. 19 will be improved to a six-lane freeway mainline with two-lane, one-way frontage roads the entire 24.6-mile length, with the exception of a varying six- and eight-lane mainline from north of Nursery Road to Coachman Road. Interchanges and overpasses are provided at major cross streets.

The proposed action by design segment is summarized below:

Segment A:

- o 8-lane mainline without frontage roads beginning north of Gandy Boulevard



Greiner Engineering Sciences, Inc.

**U.S. 19 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT
AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES**
 Pinellas and Pasco Counties, Florida
 STATE PROJECT NO. 15150-1585

U.S. 19 CORRIDOR STUDY AREA

Florida Department of Transportation
EXHIBIT

- 6-lane mainline with 2-lane, one-way frontage roads beginning north of 78th Avenue
- Overpasses at 86th Avenue North, Mainlands Boulevard and 118th Avenue North
- Improved 49th Street Interchange
- Frontage road bridges at Cross Bayou Canal

Segment B:

- 6- and 8-lane mainline with 2-lane, one-way frontage roads
- Interchanges at Belleair Road, SR 60, Drew Street, Coachman Road and Sunset Point Road
- Overpasses at CSX Transportation Railroad, Nursery Road, Druid Road, Enterprise Road and proposed 3rd Avenue South
- Ramp reversal north and south of 3rd Avenue South
- Shift segment south of SR 60 to the west
- Shift segment north of SR 60 back to the existing centerline
- Parallel north-south local access road north of Drew Street and east of U.S. 19

Segment C:

- 6-lane mainline with 2-lane, one-way frontage roads
- Interchanges at Curlew Road, Tampa Road (depressed section), Nebraska Avenue, Alderman Road (depressed section) and Klosterman Road
- Overpasses at Michigan Boulevard Extension, Northside Drive, CR 39/95, Old Post Road and Meres Avenue
- New, two-way secondary frontage road connector between Highland Lakes entrance and Nebraska Avenue

Segment D:

- 6-lane mainline with 2-lane, one-way frontage roads north and south of the Anclote River
- Interchanges at Tarpon Avenue and Alternate U.S. 19 (SR 595)
- Railroad overpass south of Alternate U.S. 19 (SR 595)
- Railroad overpass north of Live Oak Street
- U-turns for northbound and southbound frontage road circulation north and south of railroad overpass north of Live Oak Street

- o Bridges at Anclote River
- o Overpasses at Live Oak Street and Flora Avenue

The Florida Department of Transportation has initiated a series of major improvement projects along U.S. 19 in Pinellas County. These projects include urban interchanges at Ulmerton Road (SR 688), East Bay Drive (SR 686), Countryside Boulevard, Main Street (SR 580), and Tarpon Avenue (SR 582). They also include interchange revisions at 66th Street and transition projects to connect the interchanges and frontage roads to the existing U.S. 19. These projects are scheduled as shown below:

East Bay Drive to north of Haines Bayshore Road
Under Construction

Cross Bayou to 126th Street
Under Construction

Ulmerton/66th Street
Under Construction

CR 588 to Countryside Boulevard
Letting: Spring, 1992
Estimated Beginning: Fall 1992
Estimated Construction Time: 1-1/2 Years

Countryside/SR 580
Letting: Spring 1989
Estimated Beginning: Fall 1989
Estimated Construction Time: 2 Years

SECTION 2

2.0 NEED

U.S. Highway 19 is the major regional facility within the Pinellas/Pasco coastal corridor. It serves abutting retail, commercial, residential, service land uses and the established population concentrations of the two counties.

Evaluation of the U.S. 19 corridor with Pinellas County's Year 2010 freeway concept improvements was conducted using a link analysis. The freeway base case analysis assumed a six-lane freeway with parallel two-lane, one-way frontage roads throughout the corridor. The combined laneage capacity was then compared to demand traffic volumes by direction and a level of service estimated based on the volume-to-capacity ratio. The conceptual base case analysis for the year 2010 traffic indicates levels of service on U.S. 19 would be at a level of D or better throughout the study area.

Year 2010 traffic demand was also utilized to evaluate the No-Project scenario for U.S. 19. The 2010 traffic was assigned to the existing U.S. 19 geometry and an analysis conducted to determine operational characteristics. The intersection LOS for a No-Action Alternative was computed by using existing intersection geometry. This reflects anticipated roadway conditions without any corridor improvements. There are no links operating above Level of Service F in 2010 without improvements.

As a result of accelerated population growth within Pinellas and Pasco Counties, and the resultant high cross road traffic volumes, many segments of U.S. 19 currently operate at unacceptable levels of service (LOS) during both peak and off peak hours of the day. A great demand for additional transportation capacity presently exists within the general area of U.S. 19.

SECTION 3

3.0 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Various alternatives were considered for improving U.S. 19, such as widening the existing roadway, alternative route locations, alternative transportation modes and facility types and the No-Project Alternative.

A previous environmental document, approved in 1980 identified interchanges and predicted for six laning of U.S. 19. This document was Phase I of the ultimate U.S. 19 improvements and allowed for Phase II staging which would provide consistency with the adopted Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan. Phase II improvements under this adopted plan provided additional interchanges along with frontage roads along a controlled access facility.

For these reasons only alternatives which involved converting the roadway to a controlled access roadway with frontage roads were considered feasible and compatible with adopted local comprehensive plans. For each design segment of the project alternative, interchange and overpass locations and differing frontage road access to the mainline were evaluated.

The Design Segment A evaluation included three other alternatives consisting of:

- o differing combinations of overpass and interchange locations
- o a two-way frontage road from 49th Street to 118th Avenue North
- o an interchange at 82nd Avenue

The evaluation of Design Segment B included eight other alternatives consisting of:

- o differing combinations of overpass and interchange locations
- o an interchange or overpass at Executive Center Drive
- o reduced right-of-way at Nursery Road
- o alignment shifts at SR 60 and Coachman Road
- o ramp reversal near Executive Center Drive
- o ramp reversal near the proposed 3rd Avenue South

The Segment C evaluation included five other alternatives consisting of:

- differing combinations of overpass and interchange locations
- an interchange at Republic Drive
- alignment shifts at Curlew Road and SR 584
- two-way frontage roads from Curlew Road to SR 584
- no overpass at Meres Avenue

Evaluation of Segment D included four other alternatives consisting of:

- differing combinations of overpass and interchange locations
- a three-level interchange at Alternate U.S. 19 (SR 595)
- two-way frontage roads throughout the entire segment

SECTION 4

4.0 IMPACTS

4.1 SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACTS

This section describes the potential impacts of constructing the proposed improvements to U.S. 19 in terms of community disruption, relocation, and economic losses and gains.

4.1.1 Community Services

Evaluation of the proposed improvements/effects upon community service indicates no negative impact, and with increased capacity and LOS, vehicles using U.S. 19 will experience benefits.

4.1.2 Community Cohesion

Construction of the preferred alternative may result in certain unavoidable short term social and economic impacts. Traffic delays would likely be more pronounced due to the dominant role U.S. 19 plays in Pinellas County's transportation network. However, conversion of U.S. 19 to a controlled access facility will increase accessibility to fronting commercial properties by decreasing the travel time required for medium to long range (regional) shopping and employment trips. This increased accessibility should positively influence property values.

4.1.3 Land Use Impacts

The proposed improvements to U.S. 19 will be beneficial to abutting properties and have positive land use impacts. The upgrading of U.S. 19 to a freeway with one way frontage roads and frequent U-turn movements will ensure that major office and retail centers will continue to remain viable. It will also encourage the redevelopment of more marginal land uses. The increased level of service resulting from the proposed improvements is expected to continue to contribute to the location of major employment centers on or near U.S. 19. It will also increase the accessibility of major regional retail centers on U.S. 19 for residents of Pinellas and Pasco Counties. The increased accessibility can be expected to provide increased employment opportunities and increased retail sales, thereby increasing tax revenues.

The proposed improvements to U.S. 19 are consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Pinellas County, the Year 2010 Long Range Highway Plan and the U.S. 19 Ultimate Design Concepts. The proposed action is also consistent with the land use and transportation elements of the Pasco County Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed action will accomplish the goals and objectives of the community. This support has been demonstrated by the communities along the corridor and the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization's resolutions endorsing the proposed action.

4.1.4 Utility and Railroads

The design phase of the project will determine the precise limits of utility relocation required. It is anticipated that most utilities within the corridor will require some relocation as part of the proposed project.

The estimated utility relocation cost for the entire study area is \$116,670,000 in 1987 dollars. Coordination with local utility companies has indicated that utility impacts will be encountered for any build alternative. The relative impacts are the same order of magnitude for all build alternatives and should not affect the selection of one alternative design over another.

The proposed project will have no impact on railroads. U.S. 19 crosses the tracks owned by CSX Transportation Railroads at two locations. North of Drew Street, U.S. 19 currently passes over tracks on a structure. This structure will not be changed in the proposed action. U.S. 19 also crosses the railroad south of the Anclote River. The proposed action includes an overpass with at-grade frontage roads at this location.

4.1.5 Relocations

Anticipated displacements for the proposed alternative include: 16 residential relocations, 9 business rentals, and 17 business owners. Neither non-profit organizations, handicapped persons nor minority families will be displaced. The estimated cost of relocation for the proposed alternative is approximately \$1.5 million, including on-premise advertising signs and other personal property moves.

Replacement sites are available for the successful and timely relocation of residential occupants within Pinellas County. Resources available are more than adequate to accommodate all displacements.

The displaced businesses were also researched to establish their replacement site needs. No unusual circumstances were observed which would prevent the relocation of any of these businesses. There are vacant commercial sites available along U.S. 19 and in the Pinellas County area to which many businesses can relocate. In addition, several industrial parks in each study area segment have available space. Many existing commercial buildings for both purchase and rent are also available.

Along U.S. 19, large shopping centers and numerous shopping marts/strips are being developed which would aid in the relocation of retail/service stores, specialty and/or sandwich shops. It is believed that all displaced businesses should be able to relocate within the respected segment areas, if they so desire.

Construction of this major project will have a minimum impact on neighborhood ties. In addition, no major shopping centers, hospitals, schools or other related establishments will be displaced.

In order to minimize the unavoidable affects of right-of-way acquisitions and displacement of people, the Florida Department of Transportation will carry out a Right-of-Way Acquisition and Relocation Assistance Program in accordance with Florida Statutes, Chapter 339.09 (5). The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646) establishes guidelines by which these programs are administered.

In summary, implementation of transportation improvements is a dynamic process which seeks to either install new or increase the capacity of selected roadways to better enhance their ability to meet the forecasted increased traffic needs. As a result, traffic will flow with greater ease and safety, and accessibility will be greatly enhanced by the installation of this much needed facility. Thus, the benefits derived from this improvement offset any inconveniences caused by the displaced homes and businesses.

4.2 CULTURAL RESOURCES

4.2.1 Archaeological and Historical Resources

No sites listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places are located within the corridor. No sites of state or local significance are known to exist within the corridor. The appendix contains a letter from the Florida Department of State, Division of Archives, History and Records Management, stating this information.

4.2.2 Recreation/Parkland Resources

The proposed project does not require the acquisition or alteration of any public recreation or historic resources. No national, state or local park properties will be required for project development; therefore, there will be no usage of Section 4(f) lands. The lands of local park which are adjacent to the roadway will not be affected by the project.

4.3 NATURAL AND PHYSICAL IMPACTS

4.3.1 Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities

The proposed action for U.S. 19 includes a service/frontage road design. This service road incorporates a continuous one-way, wide outside curb lane striped for bicycle use. This major regional bicycle travelway is included as a part of the "Preferred Action". This continuous bicycle route will form the "spine" of the Pinellas County bicycle route system. Adequate crossroad travelways for bicycles have been provided at interchanges and overpasses. The provision of bicycle facilities as a part of the proposed action meets the objectives of the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization Comprehensive Bicycle Plan and the Pasco County Comprehensive Plan - Transportation Element.

4.3.2 Visual/Aesthetic

The construction of the proposed improvements to U.S. 19 will have some visual impacts on the adjacent corridor. Integrating the freeway with proposed and existing

street patterns will create some areas where the roadway is at surface grade and others where it is elevated or depressed. This would require construction of retaining walls and other elements which tend to create visual barriers.

The visual impacts of the proposed action are similar throughout the corridor. Frontage roads are at-grade, causing little visual or aesthetic impact, with the exception of Tampa Road and Alderman Road where the mainline crosses under cross streets. The highway will be designed to be integrated in the urban fabric of the community. When possible, the roadway will be constructed on low landscape fills. Elevated structures could include architectural detailing or landscape trimmings for some structure elements pending final design plans.

4.3.3 Air

Based on the results of the microscale dispersion analyses conducted under simulated worst-case conditions, the planned improvements to U.S. 19 will not cause, nor contribute to, an exceedance of the one- and eight-hour air quality standards for CO. Furthermore, upon comparison with the results derived from the simulated conditions without the project, the findings show a reduction in CO concentrations with the improvements. No adverse comments were received from local and state agencies regarding air quality.

This project is in conformance with the State Implementation Plan because it will not cause violations of air quality standards and will not interfere with any transportation control measures. Air pollution may be temporarily increased during construction, however, potential construction air quality impacts and mitigation measures have been determined.

4.3.4 Noise

The proposed improvements to U.S. 19 are expected to result in increased traffic noise levels and increased noise impacts. Vehicular activity on the improved roadway during level of service C conditions is predicted to increase noise levels by 4 to 5 dBA. This increase is expected to widen the area of noise exposure along the corridor and is estimated to result in an increase in noise impacts. The existing U.S. 19 corridor is

predominantly commercial in nature. The continued urbanization of the corridor is expected to result in the natural displacement of many of the noise impacted areas.

The occurrence of additional future noise sensitive sites along the roadway depends upon the zoning and planning activities of local authorities. Local officials and planners can significantly prevent noise impacts through zoning regulations and construction setback requirements

There is no apparent way to mitigate the noise impacts at existing noise sensitive locations identified along the corridor. Noise mitigation measures such as traffic management, realignment and barriers are not compatible with the design and function of the existing highway or the project. Property acquisition and soundproofing are not considered effective or economically feasible measures.

4.3.5 Drainage

The proposed roadway project should not contribute significantly to an increase in the flood zone area, since the existing flood zone designations are a result of either coastal flooding due to tidal surge, or are inherent in the topography of the surrounding area. Since the U.S. 19 corridor is an existing, heavily developed roadway, the proposed roadway improvements should not contribute to development in the flood zone. The modifications to the roadway will improve the use of the facility for emergency services and evacuation.

4.3.6 Wetlands

Because the project development is located in a heavily urbanized area and is mainly confined within the existing right-of-way, substantial impacts to wetland areas are not anticipated.

Those wetlands which are anticipated to be affected by the project are not considered highly valuable in terms of wildlife, endangered species, recreation or agriculture. Their disturbance or displacement are not expected to substantially affect natural resources. Wetland impacts will be avoided to the greatest extent possible by roadway design.

Based upon the above consideration, it is determined that there is no practicable alternative to the proposed new construction in wetlands and the proposed action includes all practicable measures to minimize harm to wetlands which may result from such use.

4.3.7 Water Quality

Because of the "state-of-the-art" in highway stormwater research, it is not possible at this time to determine the impact of this discharge on the Cross Bayou Canal, Allen's Creek, Alligator Creek, Curlew Creek and Anclote River or any other surface water body in the corridor. The appropriate Best Management Practices will be used during the construction phase for erosion control and water quality considerations. Any additional stormwater treatment measures found necessary, over and above Best Management Practices, in order to obtain Chapter 17-25, F.A.C. compliance will be state funded.

The proposed improvements to U.S. 19 will include both open and closed drainage systems for the length of the project corridor. As part of recent improvements to U.S. 19, storm sewers were constructed between Druid Road and SR 590A (Coachman Road) and Lake Street to Live Oak Street in Tarpon Springs. The existing closed drainage system from Lake Street to Live Oak Street includes several easements and detention areas which will continue to function as stormwater detention and treatment facilities. Construction and modification of U.S. 19 is expected to have minimal impact upon groundwater resources within the project area.

4.3.8 Aquatic Preserve

Within the project study limits, only two waterbodies which approximate their natural conditions, would receive encroachment; Allen's Creek and the Anclote River. Both sites have existing bridge crossings.

Allen's Creek is tidally influenced at its intersection with U.S. Highway 19 where it is bordered by a vegetative community of marine species, including sea purslane, saltgrass, red and white mangroves. Construction of the proposed bridge would impact approximately 0.4 acres of submerged bottom and intertidal wetlands, some of which will be temporary during construction.

The Anclote River consists of 200-foot-wide navigable waterway which is tidally influenced at its intersection with U.S. Highway 19. The area is sparsely vegetated with marine species including red, white, and black mangroves and saltmarsh cordgrass. Brazilian pepper and wax myrtle are also common in the transitional zones. Construction of the bridge would impact approximately 0.4 acres of submerged bottom and intertidal wetlands, some of which will be temporary during construction.

Measures will be taken to minimize harm to the preserve, including the use of Best Management Practices during construction to minimize impacts on water quality. Such measures may include, but not be limited to straw bales, sodding side slopes to prevent erosion and the use of staked or floating siltation barriers (turbidity curtains).

Minimal impact to the aquatic preserve is anticipated from the construction of U.S. Highway 19 since these areas currently receive stormwater runoff from the highway. The proposed project would provide treatment in accordance with applicable sections of Chapter 17-25 F.A.C. and Chapter 40D-4, F.A.C. prior to discharge into the preserves.

Permits required would include the Florida Department of Natural Resources, Florida Department of Environmental Regulation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Coast Guard and the Southwest Florida Management District.

4.3.9 Outstanding Florida Waters

Florida Statutes, Chapter 403, Section 403.061, Subsection (27), grant powers to the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation (DER) to establish rules which provide for a special category of waterbodies within the state, to be referred to as Outstanding Florida Waters. The waters of Pinellas County are located within the Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve and therefore would be considered as outstanding Florida Waters.

Chapter 17-25 F.A.C. requires that projects discharging directly into Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW) shall be required to provide stormwater treatment for a volume 50 percent more than normally required.

4.3.10 Hazardous Waste

The State of Florida has evaluated the proposed right-of-way and has identified potential hazardous waste sites for the various proposed alternatives. Results of this evaluation will be utilized in the selection of a preferred alternative. When a specific alternative is selected for implementation, a site assessment will be performed to the degree necessary to determine levels of contamination and; if necessary, evaluate the options to remediate along with the associated costs. Resolution of problems associated with hazardous materials will be coordinated with appropriate regulatory agencies and, prior to right-of-way acquisition, action will be taken where applicable.

4.3.11 Wild and Scenic Rivers

No rivers which lie within the study corridor are included in or qualify for the National Wild and Scenic River System as established in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (PL-90-542) as amended.

4.3.12 Floodplain

Detailed description of the recommended improvements to drainage structures can be found in the Location Hydraulic Report for the project, August 1987.

Improvement to the structures crossing Alligator Creek and the Anclote River will meet the requirements for obstruction in regulatory floodways. It is recommended that the Alligator Creek structure be widened and the Anclote River structure be replaced.

4.3.13 Coastal Zone Consistency

The proposed project has been determined to be consistent with the State of Florida's Coastal Management Program.

4.3.14 Threatened and Endangered Species

A review of relevant literature revealed that the occurrence of endangered and threatened species within the project corridor is limited since there is no designated

critical habitat for endangered or threatened species within the vicinity of this project. A field review in August 1986 and March 1988 did not result in the sighting of any endangered or threatened species or other positive indicators of their presence (i.e., nests, burrows, etc.).

4.3.15 Farmlands

Prime and unique farmlands as defined in the Farmland Protection Policy Act (PL 97-98) are determined not to be present within the study corridor by the Soil Conservation Service. Additionally, no lands of significant local farmland value were identified in Pinellas and Pasco Counties by the State of Florida Department of Agriculture.

4.3.16 Energy

The Build Alternative is expected to result in less total energy utilization than the existing facility. Initially, construction of the facility would require energy and resources not necessary if the project were not developed. The additional energy utilization would be attributed to construction activities and the temporary reduction of the operating efficiency of the roadway during construction. However, once the facility is completed, the additional energy lost during construction would be more than compensated for by increased efficiency of the new facility.

The project is considered consistent with the Federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act.

4.3.17 Construction

The major short term impact which would occur during construction is the temporary disruption of local traffic and pedestrian circulation and access patterns. The Florida Department of Transportation will require that traffic in the corridor be maintained throughout the construction phase. With the exception of short-term diversion, two and three lanes of traffic would be maintained in both directions of U.S. 19. This should reduce adverse impacts on both businesses and the traveling public due to construction activities.

The short term impacts of construction of the proposed improvements will be mitigated by the phased scheduling improvements, maintenance of traffic during construction and adherence to the Florida Department of Transportation Standard Construction Specifications.

SECTION 5

5.0 COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

5.1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

A Public Participation Program is being carried out as an integral part of the project development and environmental studies for the proposed improvements to U.S. 19. The purpose of this program is to maintain communication with individuals and agencies concerned with the project and includes both a public involvement and agency coordination effort.

5.2 ADVANCE NOTIFICATION

The Florida Department of Transportation, through the Advance Notification Process, informed a number of Federal, State and local agencies of the existence of this project and its scope. The Florida Department of Transportation initiated the Advanced Notification on March 16, 1983.

The agencies which responded to the Advanced Notification are listed below. (Letters of response are found in the Appendix.)

- * U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- * Southwest Florida Water Management
- * Florida Department of Environmental

The National Marine Fisheries and Florida Department of Environmental Regulation noted concern for potential wetland impacts. The Florida Department of Community Affairs identified potential flood hazard areas. The Florida Department of Natural Resources assumes the project lies within the existing right-of-way. The Department of State determined the project will have no effect on any historic site resources. The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission had no comment. The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council found no local or regional concerns during its review. The project was found to be consistent with the Coastal Zone Management Plan.

5.3 INTERAGENCY COORDINATION AND COMMENTS

During the evaluation of alternatives and the preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, additional Federal and State agency contacts were initiated for data gathering, review and comments. A list of agencies contacted is contained below. Responses are contained in Section 5.8.2.

- | | |
|--|---|
| * U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Presence and Distribution of Endangered and Threatened Species. |
| * Southwest Florida Water Management District | Review of Conceptual Design |
| * Florida Department of Environmental Regulation | Review of Conceptual Design |

5.4 COORDINATION WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS AND LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCIES

Informational presentations were made to local governing bodies at the initiation of the study. A presentation was made to the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization on September 24, 1984. Presentations were also made to the Dunedin City Council on September 24, 1984; the Pinellas County Commission on October 2, 1984; the Largo City Commission on October 2, 1984; and the Pinellas Park City Council on September 13, 1984.

The Florida Department of Transportation held U.S. 19 Improvement Coordination meetings with local engineering, public works and planning staffs on September 27, 1984. Staff from the following municipalities attended the briefings: Clearwater, Dunedin, Largo, New Port Richey, Pinellas Park, Tarpon Springs, Port Richey; and Pasco and Pinellas Counties and the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council. The staff attending this and subsequent meetings were added to the computerized mailing list and notified of public workshops.

As the study progressed, coordination meetings were held with Pinellas Park City staff on November 30, 1984 and the Tarpon Springs City staff on December 18, 1984. On February 12 and 25, 1985 presentations were made to the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Upon approval of the Design Alternatives Report and development of recommended alternatives, a Public Information Workshop was held on July 1, 1986. This was followed by Public Information Center Open House for six consecutive Tuesdays. All elected officials and participating local staffs received notification of the availability of aerial photos with recommended alternatives displayed for review.

Comments received at the Public Workshop and the Public Information Center included responses from several local governments. Because of the comments and concerns received from local staffs and elected officials during the public comment phases, another series of meetings with local governments were held. These meetings are listed below:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Locality</u>	<u>Agency</u>
08-13-86	Tarpon Springs	City Manager, staff
08-28-86	Pinellas Park	Mayor, City Manager, staff
08-28-86	Clearwater	Public Works staff
08-28-86	Dunedin	City Manager, staff
08-29-86	Tarpon Springs	City Manager, staff
09-03-86	Clearwater	Asst. City Manager, staff
09-03-86	Pinellas County	Public Works staff
09-04-86	FDOT	FDOT/FHWA staff
09-17-86	Pinellas County	Transportation Coordinating Committee
10-31-86	Pinellas County	Public Works staff
09-23-87	Clearwater	Public Works staff

The meetings with local governments resulted in a number of issues being discussed and resolved. Alternatives were refined and presented to the public at the Public Workshop and Public Information Center.

The August 28, 1986 meeting with the City of Pinellas Park resulted in the refinement of Alternative A-1 to A-1A. This provides for an at-grade intersection at 78th Avenue and the relocation of an overpass from 82nd Avenue to 86th Avenue.

Meetings on August 28, 1986, September 3, 1986 and September 23, 1987 with the City of Clearwater focused on the provision of an interchange or overpass at Enterprise Road. As a result of the initial discussions, the study was expanded to include a re-examination of the traffic patterns at Enterprise Road and Countryside Drive. The issue was resolved through the development of Alternative B-8D. This Alternative provides for an interchange at Enterprise Road and an overpass at the proposed 3rd Avenue South.

The August 28, 1986 meeting with the City of Dunedin resulted in the refinement of Alternative C-2 to C-2A with the relocation of an overpass from Republic Drive to the proposed extension of Michigan Boulevard. The Northside Drive Overpass was included as proposed in C-2.

Meetings with Pinellas County on September 3 and October 31 resulted in the addition of an off ramp south of 118th Avenue in Design Segment A, and the relocation of a parallel access road north of Drew Street in Design Segment B. The access road change resulted in better access for the county's highway maintenance garage and refinement of Alternative B-8 to B-8C.

Tarpon Springs access issues were first addressed in the Phase I U.S. 19 Final Environmental Impact Statement. The request for additional study by the City resulted in a supplement to the Phase II contract and the extension of the project limits of Design Segments C and D. Meetings with local staff and completion of additional analysis provided for overpasses at the Meres Avenue Extension and Live Oak Street, and improved U-turn capability north of CSX Railroad.

As the recommended alternatives were refined to meet the issues and concerns of local staffs, presentations were made to the following local governments.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Locality</u>	<u>Governing Body</u>
09-09-86	Tarpon Springs	City Council
10-09-86	Pinellas Park	City Council
11-13-86	Dunedin	City Council

Resolutions supporting the refined alternatives described in the "Proposed Action" were adopted by the following local governing bodies:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Governmental Unit</u>
September 9, 1986	City of Tarpon Springs
September 26, 1986	Pinellas County MPO
October 9, 1986	City of Pinellas Park
November 13, 1986	City of Dunedin
February 5, 1987	City of Clearwater
April 9, 1987	Pinellas County

Copies of these resolutions are attached in the Appendix.

5.5 PROPERTY OWNER AND INTERESTED CITIZEN MAILING LIST

Names of all property owners within 300 feet of the centerline of U.S. 19 and other interested persons were compiled in a computerized mailing list. This list also contained elected officials and local governing staffs. Letters were sent to elected officials, property owners and interested citizens notifying them of the Public Workshop and Public Information Center. This list contained approximately 2,360 persons as of December 1988.

5.6 PUBLIC INFORMATION WORKSHOP AND CENTER

On July 1, 1986 a Public Information Workshop was conducted at Ruth Eckerd Hall in Clearwater. One inch to 100 feet aerial photographs of the entire corridor were displayed with the recommended alternatives. Typical interchange and roadway sections, maps and charts presenting other pertinent information were also displayed. Consultant and Department of Transportation representatives were present to respond to questions and receive comments. Approximately 200 persons attended the workshop. The major issues identified at the Public Workshop are:

- * An additional interchange or overpass at U.S. 19 and Enterprise Road
- * Relocation of the 82nd Avenue Overpass to 86th Avenue extension
- * Addition of an overpass at 78th Avenue
- * Additional access to the City of Tarpon Springs
- * Two-way frontage roads
- * Alternative corridors
- * Access to corner property owners at proposed interchange and overpass locations.

Following the Workshop, a Project Information Center was established at the Florida Department of Transportation Construction Office in Clearwater. The center was open six consecutive Tuesdays from July 22nd until August 26th, 1986. This enabled individuals unable to attend the workshop to be able to obtain information about the proposed improvements. The center was staffed by the consultant for 4 hours, one day a week. No additional major issues were identified during the Public Information Center. The public comments received addressed the same issues as those identified during the Public Workshop.

5.7 CONTINUING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

In addition to the public involvement activities noted above, informal meetings were held with property owners, developers and realtors whenever requested by the Florida Department of Transportation. These meetings generally concerned specific properties within the corridor and the impact of alternatives on these properties.

5.7.1 Responses to Elected Officials, Governing Body Staff and Interested Citizens

The Appendices contain summaries of the issues and concerns identified during the public involvement process. Resolution of the issues identified during the public review phase of the recommended alignments resulted in major refinements to each design segment. The revisions can be summarized in examination of the differences between Alternative A-1 and Alternative A-1A in Design Segment A, Alternative B-8 and Alternative B-C in Design Segment B, Alternative C-2 and Alternative C-2A in Design Segment C, and Alternative D-2 and Alternative D-2B in Design Segment D. The second or refined alternative in each design segment resolves the issues identified during the public involvement process. Public support of the refinements is indicated by the resolutions supporting the refined recommended Alternatives A-1A, B-8D, C-2A, and D-2B.

5.7.2 Coordination with Public and Private Emergency, Solid Waste and Community Services

Twice during the study process, information was requested to analyze the effect of a limited access roadway on public and private services. The first letter was sent in November 1984 and the second in August 1986. A utility coordination meeting was held with the various public and private utility companies operating in the U.S. 19 corridor on December 12, 1984. Comments on the U.S. 19 project were solicited from the utilities and coordination established.

All comments received were included in the evaluation and recommended design process. The Proposed Action does not conflict with any responses received.

5.8 PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was held Tuesday, December 13, 1989, at Ruth Eckerd Hall located at 1111 McMullen Booth Road, North. The four hour hearing began at 4:00 P.M. and ended promptly at 8:00 P.M.

The public hearing presented citizens with a final opportunity to review and comment on the results of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for U.S. 19. Comments were accepted from the public in both oral and written form. Of the 153 people that attended the public hearing, six chose to have their statements recorded by the public hearing reporter. In addition to the six oral comments, twenty-eight written comments were received at the public hearing. During the extended comment period which ended December 28, 1988, fourteen comments were received. All comments related to the public hearing are summarized in Section 5.8.1.

5.8.1 Public Hearing Comments Summary

COMMENT 1. According to the map, you will be taking 30 feet of depth from my rental property. As this is a used car business, they will probably not stay and I will lose my livelihood. (2574 Belleair Road, Clearwater, Florida 34624).

RESPONSE The FDOT appraisers will take into consideration the impact of the taking on the leasehold interest in determining the value of the taking the the remainder.

COMMENT 2. Consideration should be given to the addition of north and south frontage roads that would provide access to Beckett Way. Beckett Way is the only connector between U.S. 19 and U.S. 19-A in Pinellas County north of Tarpon Avenue.

RESPONSE While it is true that Beckett Way/Dixie Avenue represents the only existing connection immediately north of Tarpon Avenue, the proposed plans show Live Oak Street being extended to connect U.S. 19 and Alt. 19 south of Tarpon Avenue. Meres Avenue will be extended to connect U.S. 19 and Alt. 19. Both street extensions are

proposed by Pinellas County and the City of Tarpon Springs to provide the necessary access to U.S. 19.

COMMENT 3. I object to the proposed extension of Michigan Avenue on the proposed U.S. 19 project. The city (Dunedin) negated their acceptance of this extension 6 months ago. Yet, I see it is still on the plans. Mr. Combs and Ms. Phillips recommended the City of Dunedin officially send a resolution to the DOT requesting the Michigan extension be considered as part of the improvement to U.S. Highway 19.

RESPONSE Resolution #86-23 by the City of Dunedin and comments by Dunedin's opposition is to the extension of Michigan Avenue from County Road 1, which is not part of the U.S. 19 project. The City's opposition to the eastern extension is outlined in Resolution 89-4 and will have no effect on these plans to improve U.S. 19.

COMMENT 4. The City of Dunedin endorses Phase II as it is consistent with and furthers the present Dunedin 2000 Comprehensive Plan and the MPO 2010 Plan. The City strongly emphasizes the need to coordinate timetables...with Pinellas County.

RESPONSE Coordination between affected cities, Pinellas County, private utilities and public agencies will be a top priority.

COMMENT 5. The City of Tarpon Springs and North Pinellas County needs a major east/west connector rather than dumping all the traffic onto 19.

RESPONSE The Pinellas County 2010 Long Range Transportation Plan provides for several east-west improvements in North Pinellas, such as the new Meres Avenue and Live Oak Street extensions from U.S. 19 to Alt. U.S. 19 in the Tarpon Springs area. The use of parallel frontage roads will provide significant relief to U.S. 19 long distance travellers.

COMMENT 6. I am concerned about Harbor Square Shopping Center at Main Street and U.S. 19. If a median is planned on Main Street, a cut must be allowed for access into the center for cars coming from the west.

RESPONSE Eastbound access to Harbor Square is provided by the northbound lane of the east side frontage road. Determination of access on Main Street for eastbound traffic turning left across westbound traffic will be made in the design phase of the improvement program.

COMMENT 7. Why is there no overpass planned at Republic and U.S. 19? This is a critical financial/commercial node and was slated for an overpass in the previous long range plan.

RESPONSE Previous alternate plans for Segment C provided for an overpass at Republic Drive. Based upon recommendations from the cities of Tarpon Springs and Clearwater, and Pinellas County; the Republic Drive overpass was removed and replaced with an interchange at the proposed Michigan Avenue extension, approximately 2,400 feet north of Republic Drive.

COMMENT 8. The intersection of Haines and Bayshore Road must be addressed for the southbound traffic to enter on to U.S. 19.

RESPONSE Southbound U.S. 19 traffic will access the area currently served by Bayshore/Haines Road at Whitney Road. Whitney Road has an overpass for all traffic movements to and from the east.

COMMENT 9. Make clearer markup of detours with bigger signs. Timing signals need longer green lights at Eastbay north and southbound during construction on U.S. 19 overpass.

RESPONSE These comments relate to current construction on East Bay and U.S. 19 and were therefore forwarded to FDOT for their use. The comments will however be taken into account when the construction management plan for this project is developed.

COMMENT 10. Can an underpass be constructed so people may go from Highland Lakes to Highland Lakes?

RESPONSE An overpass at Highlands Lakes would geometrically conflict with the proposed interchange at Nebraska Avenue (S.R. 584). Access from Highlands Lakes (east side) to Highlands Lakes Square (west side) can be made via the proposed north-south local access road from Highlands Lakes to Nebraska Avenue.

COMMENT 11. I oppose a 4 or 6 lane expansion of S.R. 584 with no median break at the entrance of Oaklake Medical Center. Current plans do not provide for left turns in or out of the center.

RESPONSE Specific median lengths and median cuts for the arterial streets will be determined during the final design phase of this project. Depending upon the specifics involved, access may be possible.

COMMENT 12. The Pinellas Area Coalition of Environmentalists oppose the proposed 49th Street bridge over the Tampa Bay and urges the FDOT and the Pinellas County Commissioners to commission a new study of an alternative. We advocate double-decking with a flaired pier which would fit on the present median. We estimate this pier cost of \$38/sq.ft. using the spine-wing concept.

RESPONSE The Florida Department of Transportation commissioned a study of "double decking" the U.S. 19 corridor.

COMMENT 13. We need a turning lane and direct access to 3310 U.S. Highway 19 North. This property is contiguous to the County Court annexation. A connector should be put between the two properties.

RESPONSE Access for this property is provided to all direction on U.S. 19 via the Northside Drive Overpass and the associated parallel frontage roads. These frontage roads function as a "connector" for all the U.S. 19 frontage properties within the area.

COMMENT 14. An elevated roadway could be build from I-275 and Roosevelt north to the Pasco County line for approximately the same dollars.

RESPONSE The proposed 49th Street toll road and McMullen Booth Road corridor improvements will serve this purpose. The 49th Street and McMullen Booth improvements are assumed to be in place along with the U.S. 19 improvements.

COMMENT 15. We are pleased with the proposed changes to U.S. 19 and hope that construction will begin soon.

RESPONSE No response necessary.

COMMENT 16. It is believed that the proposed improvements to U.S. 19 will create a roller coaster effect on the roadway thereby reducing sight distances for stopping.

RESPONSE All stopping sight distances are adequate for the U.S. 19 mainline based upon a design speed of 55 mph which is in compliance with AASTO and FDOT Guidelines

COMMENT 17. The proposed overpass at Mainlands Boulevard would have a considerable effect on the access to Bill Jackson, Inc., Sun Care Center, Days Inn and other area businesses. It is suggested that the overpass be reconsidered.

RESPONSE The overpass was provided to ease travel on Mainlands Boulevard; removal of this overpass would produce more circuitous travel patterns.

COMMENT 18. I object to the conversion of U.S. 19 to a limited access facility for the following reasons:

- exorbitant cost of construction
- the project will not provide an immediate solution to the existing congestion
- commercial development along U.S. 19 will suffer drastically.

RESPONSE The cost of reconstructing U.S. 19 is considerably less than either the development of a new travel corridor, which would run through area neighborhoods and businesses, or allowing U.S. 19 to remain "as is," thereby causing user costs such as vehicle travel time rise dramatically.

- The proposed project will provide a long-term solution to the existing congestion problems along U.S. 19. Neither short-term or long-term congestion problems can be solved with a normal access solution.
- Commercial development will not suffer from the U.S. 19 improvement in the long-term because access will be maintained protecting the viability of the business.

COMMENT 19. The suggested solution is to increase the number of lanes within the existing 200 ft. of right-of-way, synchronize all traffic signals, lengthen turning lanes and close all unsignalized crossovers.

RESPONSE Signalized alternatives will not provide an adequate Level of Service for U.S. 19.

COMMENT 20. The proposed improvements to U.S. 19 will cause a substantial impact to the Holiday Square Shopping Center located at the corner of U.S. 19 and Candlewood Drive. The current U.S. 19 improvement plans do not show a median cut at this location. Without such access there will be a disastrous economic effect to the shopping center.

RESPONSE Specific median cuts for the arterial streets will be determined during the design phase of the project.

5.8.2 Draft Environmental Impact Statement Agency Comments

Summaries of the agency comments to the DEIS, as well as the responses to those comments are contained in this section. Copies of the letters detailing agencies' comments are located in the Appendix of this report.

AGENCY Southwest Florida Water Management District
 Brooksville, Florida
 Phil A. Davidson, P.E.
 Surface Water Permitting Supervisor

COMMENT 1. Proposed wetland impacts and compensation as noted in the EIS will be considered during permit application evaluation. All wetland impacts may require compensation and could be at a higher ratio than noted in your report. This would depend on the type of wetland being impacted. Encroachment into the 100-year floodplain volume (floodplain established by a 100-year, 24-hour rainfall event) will require 1 to 1 compensation. Water quality treatment volumes will be established on a case by case basis and depends on the type of treatment system proposed. As noted in the report, direct discharge into Outstanding Florida Waters shall be required to provide stormwater treatment for a volume 50 percent more than normally required. Water quantity is based on the 25-year, 24-hour storm event. As noted previously, District records should be reviewed to determine potential impact to previously permitted facilities along U.S. 19. Please call me to schedule a pre-application conference to discuss specific criteria at that time.

RESPONSE No response necessary.

AGENCY U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
 Region IV
 Atlanta, Georgia
 Heinze J. Mueller, Acting Chief

COMMENT 1. We recommend the FDOT reconsider soundproofing of residential houses and/or monetary compensation for property value depreciation.

RESPONSE Soundproofing may be accomplished with Federal funds only for impacted structures which are either public use or nonprofit in nature (23 CFR Part 772). The only qualifying structure impacted along the corridor is a church which has closed since the evaluation was performed. This does not apply to private residences.

Florida State Law does not allow the use of Gas Tax funds for any non-transportation purpose (FS 339.09). This does not make it possible for the state to fund soundproofing for properties when no right-of-way acquisition is involved.

The costs of soundproofing an impacted home are part of the negotiation process between the owner and the Department when right-of-way acquisition is necessary and the structure remains. The property owner has the opportunity to negotiate with the department regarding the effects of the project upon the property (including those related to noise), but if compensated, does not necessarily have to use the money for a specific purpose.

COMMENT 2. We suggest that FDOT undertake an active noise information program with all affected residents to inform them of the impacts and to solicit potential solutions from these citizens directly. Feedback from this program should be include in the F.E.I.S.

RESPONSE The public was afforded the opportunity to review and comment on the environmental impact statement during the public hearing process in December 1988. No comments were received, either written or orally regarding noise. It is the responsibility of local planning jurisdictions to take appropriate actions to minimize future noise impacts through such mechanisms as zoning, setback requirements, and building codes. Local jurisdictions within the study area will be sent information from the Department regarding this project in order to accomplish this.

COMMENT 3. The F.E.I.S. should contain sufficient detail on the proposed wetlands mitigation to allow for reasonable review of the plan.

RESPONSE Mitigation for anticipated impacts to wetland habitat is proposed at a minimum of 1:1 ratio. Applicable mitigation measures will be discussed with the permitting agencies and determined during the permitting process when project plans are more specific. Mitigation measures may include the following:

- * Minimization through design considerations, such as steep-ended side slopes or the use of retaining walls to reduce/eliminate wetland encroachment;
- * Preservation of existing wetland systems through maintaining requisite hydro-periods and possible commitment of the land to be preserved as a wetland;
- * Restoration of existing wetlands through restoring historical hydro-period or through the planting of additional hydrophitic vegetation and removing exotic or invader species;
- * Creation of new wetlands to compensate for area of impacted wetlands; and
- * Replacement of existing wetlands with one of greater habitat value.

AGENCY U. S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Washington, D.C.
David Cottingham, Director, Ecology and Environmental Conservation
Office

COMMENT 1. Due to the net loss of wetlands productivity and the probability of less than a 100 percent survival rate of planted species, we recommend mitigation on a 1.54:1.0 basis. We also recommend a monitoring plan with replanting if at least 70 percent minimum survival is not achieved.

The following comment is made in reference to the summary of the wetlands section. Planting vegetation in a mudflat area would not replace the net productivity lost as a result of the project; it would merely change the character of the mudflat, possibly resulting in further improvement to the system. Consequently, we do not recommend vegetating mudflats for mitigation.

RESPONSE No response necessary.

AGENCY U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Jacksonville District Office
Henry Beachamp, District Manager

COMMENT 1. There are no anticipated impact to Public Domain Land or Federal mineral ownership in the State of Florida.

RESPONSE No response necessary.

AGENCY United States Department of the Interior
Office of Environmental Project Review
Atlanta, Georgia
James H. Lee, Regional Environmental Officer

COMMENT 1. Prior to final design of highway and drainage systems, a detailed site-specific geologic and geotechnical assessment should be conducted to assure safety of the project structures from possible collapse as a result of underground solution features.

RESPONSE No response necessary.

AGENCY Florida Department of State
Division of Historical Resources
George W. Percy, Director

COMMENT 1. It is the Department's opinion that the proposed project will have no effect on any sites listed or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places, or otherwise of national, state or local significance.

RESPONSE No response necessary.

COMMENT 2. A review of the Master Site file indicated that no significant archaeological or historical sites are considered to be present within the project area.

RESPONSE No response necessary.

AGENCY U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary of Transportation
Joseph Canny, Director

COMMENT 1. We suggest that the final EIS reflect consideration of incentives to increased ridersharing and transit use, such as HOV lanes, and that the project include appropriate design elements.

RESPONSE In accordance with the Pinellas Area Transportation Study) PATS and the Pinellas Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) long range plan, the proposed improvements to U.S. 19 provide adequate capacity and geometric design for express bus service. HOV lanes on U.S. 19 were not an adopted part of the PATS or MPO plan largely because the 2010 projections show the proposed six-lane facility operation at Level of Service D or better.

SECTION 6

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMITMENTS

The U.S. 19 Recommended Alignment has been developed in accordance with current federal and state policies and procedures governing the development of transportation facilities. This process produced a considerable amount of technical data concerning the traffic service, engineering, social and environmental consequences of the alternatives considered. Through an extensive public and agency involvement program, pursuant to federal and state regulations, valuable input was obtained. After careful evaluation of all the information and input generated on this project from the public and agencies, the following recommendations are made concerning the U.S. 19 location, design features, and mitigative measures for environmental impacts.

6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1.1. Recommended Alignment Location

The Recommended Alignment was selected based on its ability to minimize environmental impacts while maximizing future capacity needs. In addition, the Recommended Alignment is consistent with Pinellas County's Long-Range Highway Plan and with the 1988 Florida Strategic Transportation Plan.

The alignment begins at S.R. 694/Gandy Boulevard in Pinellas County and proceeds north to Alternate U.S. 19 in Pasco County and consists of a six- and eight-lane freeway/expressway for a distance of 24.6 miles.

6.1.2 Recommended Design Features

The proposed mainline expressway section will have six- and eight-lanes with frontage roads. Based on information developed through the public hearing process and public agency comments, additional modifications were made to the recommended design features. These modifications were considered to improve traffic capacity and circulation at interchanges and intersections and are discussed in Section 2.0, Segments A through D. More specifically, the recommended design features are as follows:

Segment A

An eight-lane mainline without frontage roads beginning north of Gandy Boulevard to north of 78th Avenue. North of 78th Avenue is a six-lane mainline with two-lane frontage roads. Overpasses will be incorporated at 86th Avenue North, Mainlands Boulevard and 118th Avenue North. Improvements will be made to the existing 99th Street interchange and frontage road bridges will be provided over the Cross Bayou Canal. Segment A ends near the Cross Bayou Canal south of Ulmerton Road (S.R. 688).

Segment B

The limits of Segment B extend from Whitney Road north to Enterprise Road. Recommended design features in this section include a six- and eight-lane mainline with two-lane one-way frontage roads. Overpasses will be provided at the CSX Transportation Railroad, Nursery Road, Druid/Seville Road, Enterprise Road and the proposed 3rd Avenue South. New interchanges will be provided at Bellair Road, Gulf to Bay Boulevard (S.R. 60), Drew Street, Coachman Road and Sunset Point Road. A parallel north-south local access road north of Drew Street and east of U.S. 19 will be provided. New bridges over Allens Creek will be provided.

Segment C

Segment C extends from Evans Road to south of Meres Avenue. A six-lane mainline with two-lane one-way frontage roads are recommended. Overpasses will be provided at the Michigan Boulevard Extension, Northside Drive, C.R. 39/95, Old Post Road and Meres Avenue. New interchanges will be provided at Curlew Road, Tampa Road, Nebraska Avenue, Alderman Road and Klosterman Road. A new two-way secondary frontage road connector between the Highland Lakes entrance and Nebraska Avenue is recommended.

Segment D

Segment D extends from South of Tarpon Avenue to the end of the project north of Alternate U.S. 19 (S.R. 595) in Pasco County. A six-lane mainline with two-lane one-

way frontage road north and south of the Anclote River is recommended in Segment D. Overpasses include one south of Alternate 19 (S.R. 595) over the CSX railroad line as well as one at Live Oak Street and Flora Avenue. New interchanges are recommended at Tarpon Avenue and Alternate U.S. 19 (S.R. 595). Additional design features in the section include U-turns for northbound and southbound frontage road circulation north and south of the railroad overpass and new bridges over the Anclote River.

6.2 COMMITMENTS

6.2.1 Wetland Mitigation

The bottomland hardwood forest and cypress wetland communities are anticipated to provide flood control and habitat for a variety of wildlife including marsh birds and mammals. Valuable habitats are limited along the corridor due to the urban nature of the existing facility. Some of these wetlands are dominated by invader species along the edges, i.e. willow shrub and saltbush.

These communities are anticipated to require less mitigation than the more valuable wetlands. All mitigation is proposed at a 1:1 ratio for a total of 4.10 acres. The existing communities have been impacted by previous road construction, and the minimal acreage required for the proposed improvements is not anticipated to significantly impact these wetlands.

6.2.2 Threatened and Endangered Species

Due to the suitable habitat and potential for manatee involvement, the following mitigation measures will be implemented as a part of the recommended action:

1. Construction personnel shall be advised as to the potential presence of the manatee and their endangered status and of the need to avoid any action that would jeopardize the existence of the species.

2. Construction personnel shall be advised of the civil and criminal penalties for harming, harassing or killing manatees.
 - a. The Florida Manatee Act states: It shall be unlawful for any person at any time, by any means, or in any manner intentionally or negligently to annoy, molest, harass, or disturb any manatee; capture or collect any manatee; or possess literally or constructively, any manatee or any part of any manatee. Any person violating the provisions of this paragraph shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree.
 - b. Additional penalties and fines up to \$20,000 and one year imprisonment, or both, are provided for under the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1978, as amended, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. The contractor shall be held responsible for any manatees harassed or killed as a result of the project's construction.
3. Appropriate work shift personnel shall be instructed in the appearance, habits, biology, migratory patterns and preservation of the manatee. At least one of these trained personnel will be present on-site during construction activities to maintain a constant surveillance for manatees and to assure the cessation of activities that may endanger the animals (such as dredging, excessive turbidity and construction barge activity) and assure that uninhibited passage for the animals is provided.
4. Signs shall be posted on-site warning of the presence of manatees, their endangered status and precautions needed.
5. The manatee hot-line number (800/342-1821) shall be posted at an on-site telephone to be used as a source of information or help in dealing with any problems involving the manatee. Telephone reports must be made in the event of any injury, collision with or killing of manatees.

6. Operators of watercraft will be responsible for any collisions with manatees. Vessels associated with the project shall operate at slow (no wake) speed while in shallow water, especially where the draft of the boat provides less than three feet of clearance with the bottom. Work boats shall load and off-load at designated sites. Vessels used to transport personnel shall be shallow-draft vessels of the light displacement category and shall follow routes of deep water to the maximum extent possible, where navigation safety permits.
7. Turbidity from construction activities will be adequately controlled to prevent degradation of the quality and transparency of the water. When manatees are present, turbidity curtains of appropriate dimensions will be used to restrict the animal's access to work areas. Pollution booms and turbidity curtains should use tangle resistant or hemp rope when anchoring or employ safe anchors, to prevent entangling manatees. Continuous surveillance will be maintained in order to free animals which may become trapped in silt or turbidity barriers.
8. Construction debris shall not be discarded into the water.
9. The contractor shall keep a log detailing all sightings, injuries or killings of manatees occurring during the contract period. Following project completion, a report summarizing these incidents shall be submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
10. Blasting probably will be used for the removal of the existing bridge piers and associated footings. If blasting is used, a danger zone will be established within an arc defined by a radius equal to $(26000_w^{1/3})/64.7$, where W=weight of the explosive charge in pounds. Prior to blasting, the zone will be surveyed by boat for the presence of manatees. No blasting will occur until the zone is clear. As long as the above precautions are observed, no effects on the manatee are anticipated.

6.2.3. Other Commitments

Maintenance of traffic throughout the project will be given special consideration. Good access to major traffic generators such as businesses and residences will be provided.

Any hazardous waste site discovered during design or construction will be investigated by the State of Florida, Department of Environmental Regulation and appropriate clean up measures taken prior to continuation of work in the area.

Any historic or archaeological remains encountered will cause stoppage of contractors operations until the proper action is taken by the State Division of Archives, History and Records Management, Bureau of Historic Sites and Properties.

Construction noise will be controlled as specified in Section 4.0.

The development of a stormwater management plan will be a major element of the final design of this project. The plan will be developed during the preliminary engineering stage of the final design contracts and provided to the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation (FDER) and to the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) for conceptual approval. Permits will be obtained from the SWFWMD, FDER and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for approval and monitoring of stormwater and dredge and fill activities.

1. Advance Notification Process

The Advance Notification package was processed through the State Planning and Development Clearinghouse on March 16, 1983. The following local, state and federal agencies received the notification process.

- * Florida Department of Community Affairs
- * Florida Department of Environmental Regulation
- * Florida Department of Natural Resources
- * Florida Department of State
- * Florida Department of Game and Fresh water Commission
- * The Governor's Natural Resources Policy Unit
- * State Conservationist
- * U.S. Federal Highway Administration
- * U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- * U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- * National Marine Fisheries Service
- * Department of the Army
- * National Park Services
- * U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- * U.S. Coast Guard

Responses were received from the following agencies:

- * State Planning and Development Clearinghouse
- * Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council



March 16, 1983

Mr. Ron Fahs, Director
Intergovernmental Coordination
State Planning & Development
Clearinghouse
Executive Office of the Governor
Room 302, Carlton Building
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Dear Mr. Fahs:

Subject: Advance Notification
State Project Numbers 15150-1559
and 14030-1549
Work Program Numbers 1116860 & 1115864
Federal Aid Project Number F-8888-(26)
Pinellas & Pasco Counties, Florida

The attached "Advance Notification" package is forwarded for further processing through appropriate State agencies. Distribution to local and Federal agencies is being made as noted.

Please forward your responses as soon as possible, referring to our State and Federal Aid Project Numbers.

Sincerely,

C. L. Irwin

C. L. Irwin, Administrator
Environmental Impact Review

CLI:jh

Attachment

cc: Federal Highway Administration
Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
National Marine Fisheries Service
Area Supervisor-National Marine Fisheries
Department of the Army
National Park Service
State Conservationist
Assistant Director of Operations-H.U.D.
Commander (oan)-Seventh Coast Guard District
Mr. A. B. Burke
Mr. D. C. Bullard
Mr. C. W. Monts De Oca
Mr. J. G. Kennedy

ADDENDUM
FOR STATE AGENCIES ONLY
Pursuant to Section 216.212 Florida Statutes

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

At least sixty (60) days prior to the anticipated application filing date, submit five (5) completed copies of the Federal A-95 Multipurpose Facesheet, Standard Form 424, with Addendum, additional project narratives if necessary, and project location, if applicable to the Bureau of Intergovernmental Relations, 660 Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee, Florida 32304. In addition, five (5) completed copies should be submitted to the appropriate Regional and/or Metropolitan Clearinghouse if the project is local in nature. Allow thirty (30) days for processing and an additional thirty (30) days if a full application is requested to be reviewed. The form must be completely filled out before the review can begin. If any section is not applicable, designate with "N/A". If further elaboration is required on any item, attach additional sheets, with reference to item number. If you have any questions call BGR at (904) 488-2371 (Both local and Suncom).

1. Budget Entity Title:		2. State Program Structure No. and Title:		12. Total Proposed Funding Multi-Year Projects (Dates) From 1982 To 1983	
3. Project included in: (a) Legislative Budget Request Yes <input type="checkbox"/> FY _____ No <input type="checkbox"/> (b) Approved Budget Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> (c) Governor's Budget Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				Federal \$313,500.00	
4. Project included in Federally Required "State Plan": Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Agency:			5. Legal Authority:		Applicant
					State 16,500.00
6. A-95 Review: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		7. Change in Plan Operation: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		8. Commit State Funding: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
				Local	
				Other	
9. New Position Required: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Number _____		10. Matching Requirements: Federal 95% State 5% Local/Other _____%		Total \$330,000.00	
11. Indirect Cost Proposal (Overhead): Department and/or Unit Overhead \$ _____ Amount _____% Statewide Allocated Overhead _____ Amount _____% Total _____ Amount _____% If No Explain: _____					13. Type of State Match Cash <input type="checkbox"/> In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Explain: _____

Item 1—Enter the title of the budget entity as defined by Section 216.011 (1) (d), F. S., and as included in the General Appropriations Act for the current fiscal year.

Item 2—Enter the number and title of the appropriate state reporting level program component as currently approved by the Division of Budget.

Item 3—Mark appropriate block:

3a—If yes, enter the fiscal year (FY) of the Legislative Budget Request in which the project is included.

3b—This item is applicable only to the state's current fiscal year.

3c—This item is applicable only after publication of the Governor's Budget for the particular fiscal year for which project funds are requested.

Item 4—Mark appropriate block. If yes, enter the Federal agency for which the plan is prepared.

Item 5—Enter the section of the Florida Statutes or Laws of Florida which authorizes the state agency to carry out the activities proposed in this project.

Item 6—Mark appropriate block to

indicate if OMB Circular A-95 review is required.

Item 7—Mark appropriate block. Does the project alter the plan of operation from that included in the approved budget for the budget entity?

Item 8—Mark appropriate block. Does the project proposal commit the state to assume funding after Federal funding expires?

Item 9—Enter the number of new positions (above that included in the appropriations for the new budget entity) required to carry out the project.

Item 10—Indicate in percentage terms the Federal/State/Local matching requirements specified by Federal law or regulation. If non-Federal match is not required in such specific terms, explain the basis for the distribution of funding.

Item 11—If the application includes overhead for which you are to receive reimbursement from the Federal Grantor agency in accordance with FMC 74d, OASC-10, or other Federal provisions, enter the amounts included in the indirect cost rate proposal (1) for intra-agency, department and/or unit overhead and (2)

for central governmental services distributed project. Also, enter the total overhead percentage of each of the above and overhead to the federal share of the project cost.

The amount allocated to the project for state governmental services must be in Florida's Approved Statewide Cost Allocation for the project period.

If none is claimed, check the "No" box; an explanation must be given or the amount will be returned without action.

Item 12—Enter the dates the total project cover if more than one (1) year. This item only to multi-year projects. Information in Section 1, Item 13 of Standard Form 424 provides information for projects with a term of one year or less. Complete this information here as required for item 12 of Standard Form 424.

On occasion local match is derived from funds allocated to local units. If this is the case, indicate and specify the source of funding.

Item 13—in the case of state match, indicate the appropriation from which match is to be provided. For mixed match, indicate types of expenditures to be utilized.

- b. State Project Number 14030-1549 is located on SR 55 entirely in Pasco County. The limits of this segment of the proposed study extend from SR 595 northerly to SR 52 (Fivay Road), a length of approximately 13.2 miles:
4. The Florida Department of Transportation will apply to the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration under the Federal Highway Planning and Construction Program for Federal Assistance on the subject projects.
 5. The Florida Department of Transportation expects to formally apply for federal assistance during the 1982/83 fiscal year. The funding for these studies will be 95% federal and 5% state money, with the total cost estimated to be \$330,000.00.
 6. The corridor to be studied contains wetlands and areas within the base floodplain. The Anclote River and Allen's Creek are designated as aquatic preserve by Pinellas County. The environmental analysis portion of this study will include discussions regarding potential impacts on wetlands, floodplains, outstanding Florida waters, endangered species, archeological and historical sites, land-use, displaced persons and businesses, air quality, projected noise levels, and parks and recreation.

Please reply within 30 days concerning this matter to:

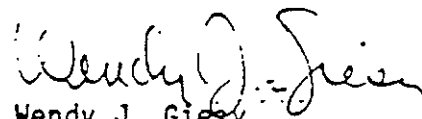
Mr. J. C. Kraft, Chief
Bureau of Environment
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street, MS 37
Tallahassee, FL 32304

with a carbon copy to:

Ms. Wendy J. Giesy
District Environmental Administrator
Florida Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 1249
Bartow, FL 33830

Your expeditious handling of this notice will be appreciated.

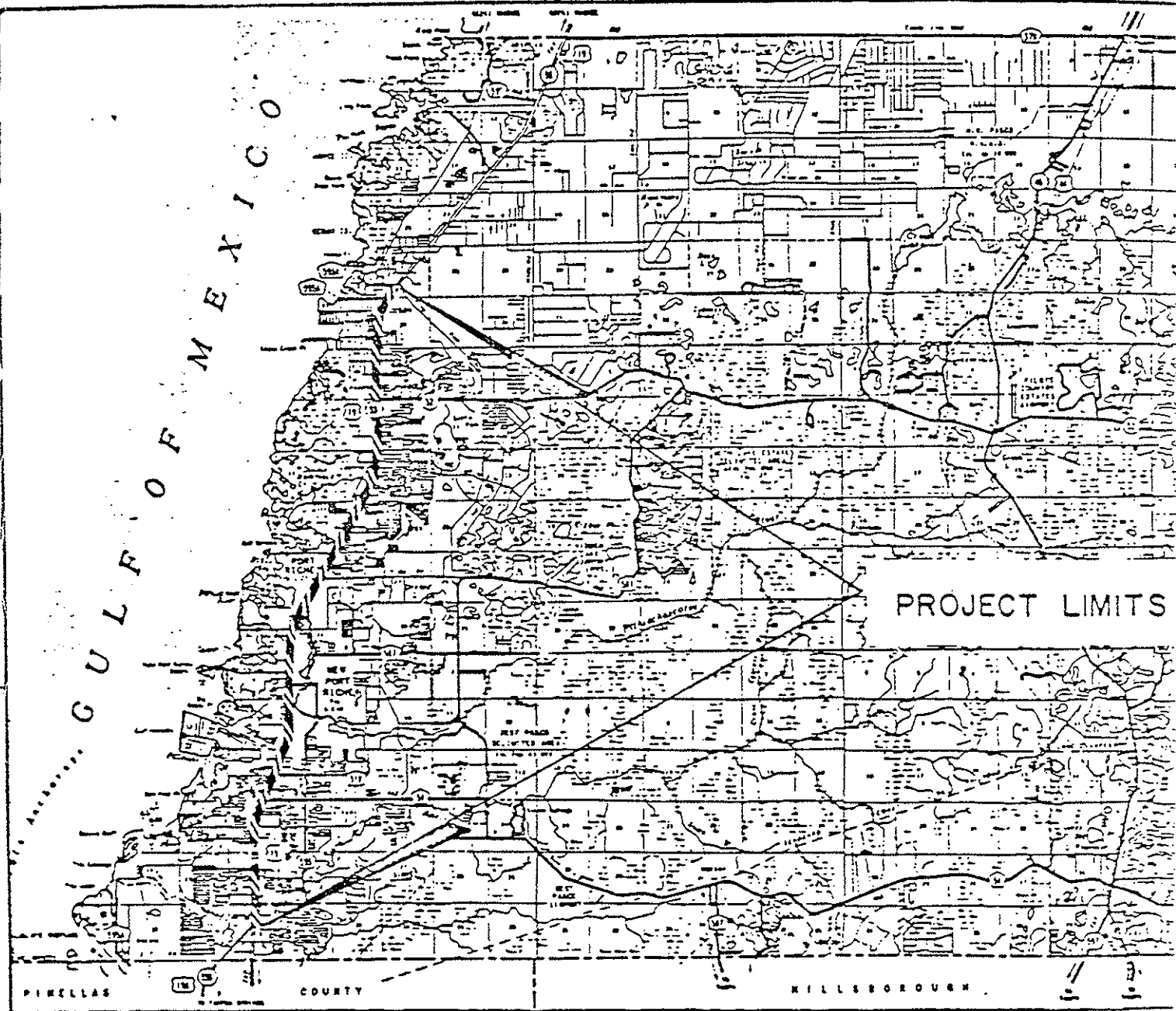
Sincerely,



Wendy J. Giesy
District Environmental Administrator

WJG/bjm

Project Location Map
State Project No. 14030-1549
Alt. 19 to Fivay Rd.
Work Item No. 1115864





BOB GRAHAM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF FLORIDA

Office of the Governor

THE CAPITOL
TALLAHASSEE 32301

RECEIVED

AUG 8 1983

August 2, 1983

Mr. J. C. Kraft, Chief
Bureau of Environment
Department of Transportation
Burns Building
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

RE: State Project #15150-1559 & 14030-1549 - BI # 1116860 & 1115864
Pinellas and Pasco Counties

SAI: FL8303180852

Dear Mr. Kraft:

The State Planning and Development Clearinghouse, in compliance with U. S. Office of Management and Budget Circular A-95, has provided a review of your notification of intent to apply for federal assistance in the amount of \$313,500.

During the review process we submitted the project to the Departments of Community Affairs, Environmental Regulation, Natural Resources, State, Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, and the Governor's Natural Resources Policy Unit. The Department of Community Affairs indicates portions of U. S. 19 which has been chosen for upgrading intersects and parallels a number of areas identified as flood hazard. (See attached letter.) The Department of Environmental Regulation also has concerns about numerous wetlands along the corridor and recommends that an environmental impact statement be prepared, if the project is to be undertaken. Permits will also be required for any construction activities. (See attached letter.) The Department of Natural Resources assumes the project lies within the existing right-of-way. If that is not the case, please advise this office and the Department of Natural Resources. The Department of State has determined that the project will have no effect on any site resources and can proceed without any further involvement from that office. The Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has no comment to offer on the project.

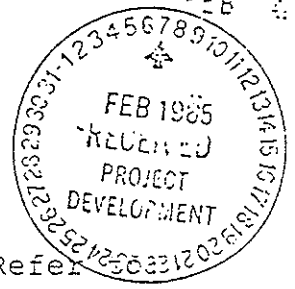
The project will be in accord with State plans, programs, procedures, and objectives when action has been taken and consideration given to the comments and requirements as indicated by our reviewing agencies.

In addition, the State of Florida has determined that allocation of federal funds for the above referenced project is consistent with Florida's Coastal Management Program. This consistency determination is based on information contained in the advanced notification and State agency comments thereon.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE
George Firestone
Secretary of State

DIVISION OF ARCHIVES,
HISTORY AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT
The Capitol, Tallahassee, Florida 32301-8020
(904) 488-1480



January 23, 1985

In Reply Refer

Mr. J.C. Kraft, Chief
Bureau of Environment
Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Ms. Juanita Whiddon
Historic Sites Specialist
(904) 487-2333

RE: Cultural Resource Assessment Request
State Project Nos. 15150-1559 and 14030-1549; Federal Aid Project
No. F-8888-(26); Proposed Improvements to SR 55 (U.S. Highway 19)
from Gandy Boulevard to Alternate 19, Pinellas and Pasco
Counties, Florida

Dear Mr. Kraft:

In accordance with the procedures contained in 36 C.F.R., Part 300 ("Procedures for the Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties"), we have reviewed the above referenced project for possible impact to archaeological and historical sites and properties listed, or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The authorities for these procedures are the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665) as amended by P.L. 91-243, P.L. 93-54, P.L. 94-422, P.L. 94-458 and P.L. 96-515, and Presidential Executive Order 11593 ("Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment").

We have reviewed the results of site assessment surveys of the above referenced project area performed by Mr. William Browning, an archaeologist and Ms. Melissa Wiedenfeld, an historic sites specialist, both employed by the Florida Department of Transportation. No sites listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places, or otherwise of national, state or local significance were encountered during the surveys. Therefore, it is the determination of this office that this project will have no effect on any such resources, and that the project may proceed without further involvement with this office.

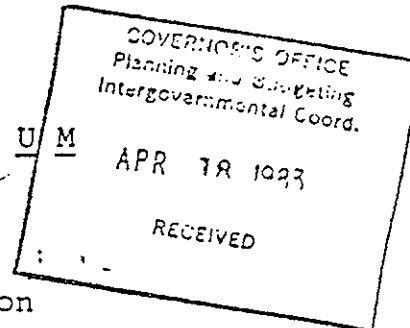


STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN
AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

BOB GRAHAM
Governor

JOAN M. HEGGEN
Secretary

M E M O R A N D U M



TO: Ron Fahs, Director
Intergovernmental Coordination

FROM: John Burke
Acting Secretary

SUBJ: A-95 Review, Study at U.S. 19 from SR 52 to SR 700
(FL 8303180852)

DATE: April 1, 1983

That portion of U.S. 19 which has been chosen for upgrading intersects and parallels a number of areas of identified flood hazard. Comparing the maps supplied by the Department of Transportation with the Flood Insurance Rate Maps, the following general areas of flood hazard have been identified:

1. The area from the intersection at U.S. 19 and SR 694 to the City limits of Clearwater contains an area of Zone A5 and A7, respective base flood elevation of 8 and 9 feet.
2. From Clearwater to Tarpon Springs U.S. 19 enters two Flood Hazard Zones (Zone A). The longest of which extends for 4,300 feet.
3. Tarpon Springs north to the county line has U.S. 19 running through two more areas of flood hazard, both zones are A16 with base flood elevations of 13 feet.
4. From the City of New Port Richey, at Lemon Street, through the City of Port Richey to Butch Street, U.S. 19 is continually in Flood Hazard Zone A 11 (base flood elevation: 12 feet). This is a substantial flood hazard area and should be given serious consideration in the study.

State of Florida
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

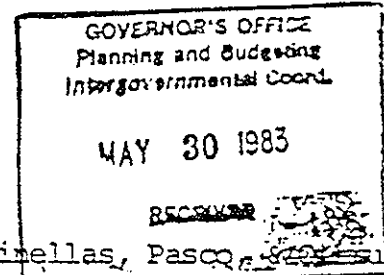
For Routing To District Offices And/Or To Other Than The Addressee		
To: _____	Locn.: _____	
To: _____	Locn.: _____	
To: _____	Locn.: _____	
From: _____	Date: _____	
Reply Optional ()	Reply Required ()	Info. C
Date Due: _____	Date Due: _____	

TO: John Outland

FROM: Larry Devroy *LD 132*

DATE: May 25, 1983

SUBJECT: Proposed Improvements to U.S. 19, Pinellas, Pasco, ~~and~~ *Volusia* Counties, D.E.R. Dredge and Fill/Stormwater Permitting.
State Job Numbers 15150-1559, 14030-1549, 14120-1518.



All segments of this proposed project will involve waters of the state at several points along U.S. 19. Consequently, dredge and fill and storm-water permits (or exemptions) will be necessary before work is undertaken.

Specific plans submitted to the Tampa D.E.R. dredge and fill section as they are developed will elicit jurisdictional determinations and preliminary comments on project permitability.

If you have any comments or questions please contact Larry Devroy, Allen Burdett or Bill Kutash of this office.

LD/dmp

cc: Rick Smith (Governor's Office) ✓

Mr. Ron Fahs
Page Two
July 5, 1983

significant water quality problems as large amounts of stormwater are shunted downstream without receiving adequate treatment by adjacent wetlands.

Federal assistance to the proposed study to determine the feasibility of providing full access control and upgrading alternatives is not considered inconsistent with this department's statutory authority in Florida's Coastal Management Program. This consistency decision is not intended to bias future consistency reviews of these projects at subsequent stages of environmental assessment, design and funding. Future consistency decisions will be predicated, in part, on an adequate responsiveness to recommendations offered in this review and subsequent reviews.

Sincerely, .

John B. Outland
Intergovernmental Programs
Review Section

JBO/jb

Attachment

cc: Bill Kutash
Larry Devroy



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southeast Region
9450 Koger Boulevard
St. Petersburg, FL 33702

March 21, 1983

F/SER113/EJK
(904)234-5061

Mr. C.L. Irwin
Florida Department of Transportation
Haydon Burns Building
605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32301-8064



Dear Mr. Irwin:

The National Marine Fisheries Service has reviewed Advance Notification Packages numbered 15150-1559, 14030-1549, 14030-1550, 08020-1511 and 02030-1525. The projects involve the upgrading of SR (US 19) through Pinellas, Pasco, Hernando and Citrus Counties, Florida.

Based upon our initial review of the projects, we recommend that, in your planning process, you consider avoiding fill in wetland areas as much as possible. Where fill is required in wetland areas, we recommend that you consider bridging the wetland areas or mitigate the wetland losses by creating wetland areas in the project area.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these preliminary comments.

Sincerely yours,

Richard J. Hoogland
Chief, Environmental Assessment Branch



SEP 21

DEVELOP



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

Address reply to:
COMMANDER (oan)
Seventh Coast Guard District
51 S.W. 1st Avenue
Miami, Fla. 33130
Phone: (305) 350-4108
16591/3298
Serial: 1201
18 September 1980

Mr. James R. Wilt, Jr.
District Permit Coordinator
Florida Department of Transportation
Bartow, Florida 33930

Dear Mr. Wilt:

Reference is made to your permit application of 24 January 1980 for proposed modification of the existing twin fixed highway bridges across Allen Creek, mile 0.35, on U.S. Highway 19 (State Road 55) near Clearwater, Pinellas County, Florida.

Bridge Permit 87-80 is enclosed authorizing construction of the modification to the existing twin fixed highway bridges across Allen Creek, mile 0.35, on U.S. Highway 19 (State Road 55), near Clearwater, Pinellas County, Florida, subject to the conditions stated therein. Please advise this office immediately of the date of commencement. Upon completion of construction execute the enclosed "Certification of Bridge Completion" form and return promptly to this office.

In order to address the City of St. Petersburg Engineering Director concerns relative to the close proximity of a 48-inch subaqueous water transmission main on the east side of the proposed modification which may have to be relocated, coordination should be initiated with the Engineering Department prior to commencing construction.

Exemption is granted from the requirement for installation of navigational lights; however, if future navigation warrants, the owner will be required to install and maintain lights at no expense to the government, upon due notice from the Coast Guard.

Sincerely,

J. R. KRETSCHEMER
Bridge Administrator
Aids to Navigation Branch
By direction of the District Commander

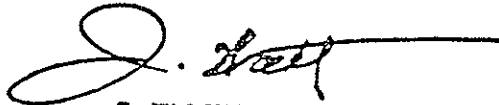
Encl: (1) Bridge Permit 87-80
(2) Certification of Bridge Completion Form

Copy: Coast Guard Group, St. Petersburg, Florida

BRIDGE PERMIT:
(87-80)

AUG 25 1980
Bridge project across Allen Creek near Clearwater, Florida

3. Issuance of this permit does not relieve the permittee of the obligation or responsibility for compliance with the provisions of any other law or regulation as may be under the jurisdiction of the State of Florida, Department of Environmental Regulation; Pinellas County Water and Navigational Control Authority, or any other federal, state or local authority having cognizance of any aspect of the location, modification or maintenance of said bridge project.
4. When the existing to be modified bridge project is no longer used for transportation purposes, it shall be removed in its entirety and the waterway cleared to the satisfaction of the District Commander. Such removal and clearance shall be completed by and at the expense of the owner of the bridge project upon due notice from the District Commander.
5. The approval hereby granted shall cease and be null and void unless modification of the bridge project is commenced within 3 years and completed within 5 years after the date of this permit.



J. WATT
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Chief, Bridge Administration Division
By direction of the Commandant

3. Public Services Contact List

Local governmental agencies and firms which provide services such as solid waste collection, fire and public protection, emergency medical service, and sewer and water service were contacted by mail in November, 1984 and August, 1986. Those agencies and firms are listed below:

<u>Service</u>	<u>Firm/Agency</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Social Services	Florida Dept. of Health and Rehabilitative Services	Elaine Fernandez
	Florida Dept. of Health and Rehabilitative Services	Theodore Rost
	St. Petersburg-United Way of Pinellas County	Curtis West
	Florida-Dept. of Health Education & Welfare	Richard Hamel
	Pinellas County-Community Development Department	Jimmy W. Carrell
Schools	Pinellas County School Administration	George Wajdowicz
Solid Waste	Clearwater-Sanitation Division	James V. Maglio
	Indian Rocks Beach-Public Works Department	Virgil Sawyer
	Largo-Sanitation Department	Mike DeMarco
	St. Petersburg-Sanitation Dept.	Benjamin Shirley
		Jerry Moore
	Madeira Beach-Public Works Dept.	Daryl G. Wilson
	Dunedin-Sanitation Division	Joe Umholtz
	Belleair-Public Services Dept.	Bill Sliger
	Gulfport-Public Works Dept.	William F. Brown
	Safety Harbor-Engineering Dept.	Jamal Nagamia
Police	Treasure Island-Public Works Department	Ron Owen
	Pinellas Park-Wells Bros., Inc.	John P. Mitchell
	Pinellas County Sheriff's Dept.	Sgt. Scott Stiner
	Clearwater-Dept. of Police	Sgt. Michael Egger
	Tarpon Springs-Planning Dept.	David Edwards
	Dunedin-Planning Department	David Walker
	Pinellas Park-Planning Department	Paula Cohen

4. Request for List of Endangered and Threatened Species

Greiner

Greiner, Inc.
P.O. Box 23646
5601 Mariner Street
Tampa, Florida 33609-3416
(813) 236-1711
FAX: (813) 287-8591

P8903.00
October 16, 1987

Ms. Linda Walker
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
3100 University Boulevard South
Suite 120
Jacksonville, Florida 32216

Dear Ms. Walker:

I am requesting information on the presence and distribution of Endangered and Threatened Species located within the proposed U.S. 19 project boundaries in Pinellas and Pasco Counties, Florida. I would appreciate a list of species and any information regarding their habitat requirements, etc. that you could forward to us. I have enclosed a map with the project boundary limits. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

GREINER, INC.

Trudy M. Killeen

Trudy M. Killeen

TMK:mz
Enclosure

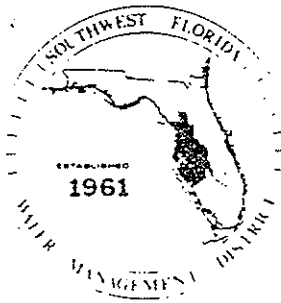
Federally Listed Species by StateFLORIDA

(E=Endangered; T=Threatened; CH=Critical Habitat determined)

<u>Mammals</u>	<u>General Distribution</u>
Bat, gray (<u>Myotis grisescens</u>) - E	Panhandle
Bat, Indiana (<u>Myotis sodalis</u>) - E	Panhandle
Deer, Key (<u>Odocoileus virginianus clavium</u>) - E	Lower Keys
Manatee, West Indian (<u>Trichechus manatus</u>) - E, CH	Coastal waters and streams
Mouse, Choctawhatchee Beach (<u>Peromyscus polionotus allopshys</u>) - E, CH	Coastal; Walton & Bay Counties
Mouse, Key Largo cotton (<u>Peromyscus gossypinus allapaticola</u>) - E	N. Key Largo, Lignum Vitae Key *
Mouse, Perdido Key beach (<u>Peromyscus polionotus trissyllepsis</u>) - E, CH	Perdido Key **
Panther, Florida (<u>Felis concolor coryi</u>) - E	Entire state
Whale, finback (<u>Balaenoptera physalus</u>) - E	Coastal waters
Whale, humpback (<u>Megaptera novaeangliae</u>) - E	Coastal waters
Whale, right (<u>Eubalaena glacialis</u>) - E	Coastal waters
Whale, sei (<u>Balaenoptera borealis</u>) - E	Coastal waters
Whale, sperm (<u>Physeter catodon</u>) - E	Coastal waters
Woodrat, Key Largo (<u>Neotoma floridana smalli</u>) - E	N. Key Largo, Lignum Vitae Key *

<u>Birds</u>	
Eagle, bald (<u>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</u>) - E	Entire state
Falcon, Arctic peregrine (<u>Falco peregrinus tundrius</u>) - T	Coast
Kite, Everglade (<u>Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus</u>) - E, CH	South
Florida Scrub Jay (<u>Aphelocoma coerulescens coerulescens</u>)	* Introduced 1970 ** Recently extirpated; may eventually be reintroduced.
Audubon's Crested Cacara (<u>Polyborus plicatus audubonii</u>)	Glades, DeSoto, Highlands, Cheek, Osceola, Charlottee, Hardee, etc.

5. Interagency Coordination



Southwest Florida Water Management District

MICHAEL DAGORAC, JR. Chairman, Belleair; WALTER H. HARKALA, Vice Chairman, Plant City;
ANNE M. BISHOP, Secretary, Sarasota; HORACE F. HERNDON, Treasurer, Lake Wales;
ROY G. HARRELL, JR., St. Petersburg; ROBERT L. BRAMSON, M.D., Tampa;
ALFRED H. WILCOX, Ph.D., Port Charlotte; MARY ANN HOGAN, Brooksville; CHARLES A. BLACK, Crystal River;
BART A. KUM, Executive Director; DANIEL P. FERNANDEZ, General Counsel;
ALLAN A. HENNESSEY, PETER G. HUBBELL, JERRY L. SIMPSON, Deputy Executive Directors

February 8, 1988



Ms. Caron B. Henderson, Environmental Specialist
Florida Department of Transportation
Project Development
P.O. Box 1249
Bartow, Florida 33830-1249

Subject: Upgrading US 19 from SR 694 to SR 595

Dear Ms. Henderson:

The staff of the Southwest Florida Water Management District has reviewed your preliminary submittal for the project referenced above. Please be advised that the project design must demonstrate compliance with Chapter 40D-4, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), Management and Storage of Surface Waters.

Proposed wetland impacts and compensation measures will be considered during permit application evaluation. Justification for proposed wetland impacts must be provided as part of a MSSW permit application. Alternative designs which minimize wetland impacts are encouraged.

Over 80 surface water management systems have been permitted by SWFWMD along the 25 mile length of US 19 from SR 595 to SR 694. District records should be reviewed to determine potential impacts to these permitted facilities. You are encouraged to contact Paul O'Neil, Surface Water Permitting Supervisor in our Tampa Permitting Division [(813) 985-7481], to schedule a pre-application conference. Specific criteria pertaining to this project can be discussed at that time.

Sincerely,

H. Clark Hull, Jr.
Senior Environmental Scientist
Resource Regulation Department

HCH:plm

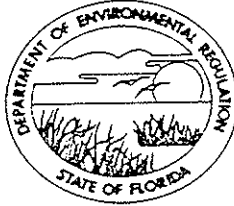
cc: C.H. Miller
J.M. Post
A.P. Desmarais

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION

SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

4520 OAK FAIR BLVD.
TAMPA, FLORIDA 33610-7347

813-623-5561
Suncom--552-7612



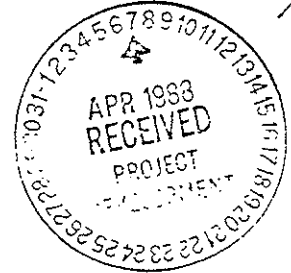
BOB MARTINEZ
GOVERNOR

DALE TWACHTMANN
SECRETARY

DR. RICHARD D. GARRITY
DISTRICT MANAGER

April 5, 1988

Ms. Caron B. Henderson
Florida Department of Transportation
Post Office Box 1249
Bartow, FL 33830-1249



Dear Ms. Henderson:

Re: State Project Number: 1515-1565
Work Program Item Number: 7116860
Federal Aid Project Number: FED-185-1(46)
Upgrading of US 19 to a limited access
expressway from SR 694 (Gandy Blvd.) in
Pinellas County to SR 595 (Alt. US 19)
in Pasco County

This office has completed our review of the preliminary coordination package received by this office on December 31, 1987.

Due to the lack of specifics, the following comments concerning the proposed locations of the stormwater system must be general in nature:

1. Allen's Creek Crossing -
Extend bridge maximum distance to protect the mangroves (sheet 13).
2. Proposed retention area north of Drew St. on west side of 19 is already a stormwater pond; can it provide additional storage/treatment volume (sheet 17)?
3. Proposed retention area north of Moccasin Lake on east side of 19 is located within a maple swamp. This is not an appropriate site for treatment pond and does not comply with Chapter 17-25 (sheet 18).

Willow/Bay swamp north of C.R. 95 on east side of 19; need to minimize encroachment into swamp (sheet 19).

Cypress strand north of Dolly Bay Condos on east side of 19 and shortly north of that on west side of 19 (sheets 32, 33); need to minimize encroachment.

MEMORANDUM

State of Florida Department of Transportation

DATE April 19, 1988

TO L. Carrol Bryant, Environmental Specialist

FROM Fawzi K. Bitar, Transportation Planning Liaison *FB*

COPIES TO James Edwards, Dick Combs

SUBJECT WPI #7116860
State Project No. 15150-1565
Description: US 19

In response to your letter dated April 14, 1988, the Department certifies that the above referenced project is in conformance with the Pinellas County Transportation Improvement Plan Fiscal year 1978/88 through 1991/92.

FKB:ejg

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APR 20 1988

GREINER, INC.; TAMPA, FL

6. Draft Environmental Impact Agency Comments



Southwest Florida Water Management District

2379 Broad Street (U.S.41 South) Brooksville, Florida 34609-6899
Phone (904) 796-7211 or 1-800-423-1476 SUNCOM 628-4097

RECEIVED DEC 27 1988

RECEIVED

DEC 22 1988

December 19, 1988

Mr. C. L. Irwin
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement (E.I.S.)
- U.S. 19 (From State Road 694 to State Road
595) - Hillsborough and Pasco Counties

Dear Mr. Irwin:

The staff of the Southwest Florida Water Management District has reviewed your "Draft E.I.S." for the above referenced project. Please be advised that the project design must demonstrate compliance with the Chapter 40D-4, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), Management and Storage of Surface Waters. Please note the following preliminary comments.

Proposed wetland impacts and compensation as noted in the E.I.S. will be considered during permit application evaluation. All wetland impacts may require compensation and could be at a higher ratio than noted in your report. This would depend on the type of wetland being impacted. Encroachment into the 100-year floodplain volume (floodplain established by a 100-year, 24-hour rainfall event) will require 1 to 1 compensation. Water quality treatment volumes will be established on a case by case basis and depends on the type of treatment system proposed. As noted in the report direct discharge into Outstanding Florida Waters shall be required to provide stormwater treatment for a volume 50 percent more than normally required. Water quantity is based on the 25-year, 24-hour storm event.

Michael Zagorac, Jr.
Chairman, Belleair
Walter H. Harkala
Vice Chairman, Plant City
Anne Bishopric Sager
Secretary, Venice
Roy G. Harrell, Jr.
Treasurer, St. Petersburg
William H. Wilcox, Ph.D.
Port Charlotte
Mary Ann Hogan
Brooksville
Charles A. Black
Crystal River
Joseph S. Casper
Tampa
Samuel D. Updike
Lake Wales

Peter G. Hubbell
Executive Director
Daniel P. Fernandez
General Counsel
Mark D. Farrell
Deputy Executive Director
Resource Management
William K. Hennessey
Deputy Executive Director
Community Affairs
Richard V. McLean
Deputy Executive Director
Resource Regulation
Jerry I. Simpson
Deputy Executive Director
Administration and Support



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION IV

345 COURTLAND STREET
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30365

JAN 17 1989

4PM-EA/AML

Mr. James G. Kennedy, P.E.
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Florida Department of
Transportation
4950 W. Kennedy Boulevard
P.O. Box 1249
Tampa, Florida 33609

Mr. J.R. Skinner, P.E.
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
227 North Bronough Street/Room 2015
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

✓	ENV. AGEN.	
✓	STATE AGEN.	
	FED. AGEN.	
	OTHER	
	ENV. MFG.	
✓	APPROV.	
✓	REVIEW	
✓	DESIGN	
✓	CONSTR.	
✓	ENG. COORD.	
✓	SEC. COORD.	

Dick Gendle

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FEB 15 1989

GREINER, INC., TAMPA, FL
(TAMPA IN-ERS ATE STUDY)

SUBJECT: U.S. Highway 19 (State Road 55) from State Road 694 (Gandy Boulevard) in Pinellas County to State Road 595 (Alternate US 19) in Pasco County, Florida
EPA Log No.: D-FHW-E40717-FL

Gentlemen:

Pursuant to Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the above-referenced project. Our review of this project has concentrated on the potential impacts to air quality, noise levels, water quality and wetlands.

The proposed project involves upgrading approximately 24.6 miles of U.S. 19 (SR 55) in Pinellas and Pasco Counties to a six and eight lane limited access expressway along a corridor which has been developed predominantly for commercial use. The upgraded highway will generally follow the alignment of existing U.S. 19. Few natural areas remain in the corridor.

A large number of residences are projected to be impacted by noise levels exceeding the 67 dBA FHWA Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC). At present 96 mobile homes, 5 single family residences and 7 multi-family housing complexes are affected by noise levels exceeding NAC along the project corridor. After upgrading, an additional 207 mobile homes, 15 single family residences and 5 multi-family housing complexes will be subjected to noise levels ranging from 67 dBA to 77 dBA. Noise at these levels can cause daytime activity annoyances, sleep disturbance, health problems, property value decreases and may compromise safety.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Washington, D.C. 20230

Office of the Chief Scientist

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JAN 17 1989

January 13, 1989

Mr. J. C. Kraft, Chief
Bureau of Environment
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwanee Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Dear Mr. Kraft:

This is in reference to your Draft Environmental Impact Statement
for the proposed expansion of U.S. Highway 19, Florida.

We hope our comments will assist you. Thank you for giving us an
opportunity to review the document.

Sincerely,

David Cottingham
Director
Ecology and Environmental
Conservation Office

Enclosures



JAN 30 1989



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT REVIEW
EDWARD B. RUSSELL FEDERAL BUILDING, SUITE 1320
75 SPRING STREET, S.W.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303



ER 88/1040

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JAN 10 1989

JAN 13 1989

Mr. Jennings R. Skinner
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
22/ N. Bronough Street, Rm 2015
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Dear Mr. Skinner:

We have reviewed the draft environmental statement for US-19 (from SR-694 to SR-595), Pinellas and Pasco Counties, Florida, and have the following comments.

The statement adequately addresses the resources of concern to this Department. However, the site is one of known major karstic features. Therefore, detailed site-specific geologic and geotechnical assessments should be conducted to assure safety of the project structures from possible collapse as a result of underground solution features. This would also avoid locating the drainage detention and treatment ponds and ditches above or near solution features.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this report.

Sincerely yours,

James H. Lee
Regional Environmental Officer

cc: Mr. J. C. Kraft
Chief, Bureau of Environment
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32301



U.S. Department of
Transportation

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

Memorandum

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement
U.S. 19, Gandy Blvd. to Alt. U.S. 19
Pinellas County, Florida
FHWA-FL-EIS-88-02-D

Date: JAN 4 1989

From: Joseph Canny, Director
Office of Transportation
Regulatory Affairs

To: Eugene W. Cleckley, Chief
Environmental Operations Division, HEV-10

Reply to
Attn of

We have reviewed the draft environmental impact statement for the proposed improvement of U.S. 19 in Pinellas County, Florida. The proposed project would upgrade existing U.S. 19, a major arterial highway, to a six to eight-lane freeway with two-way frontage roads in each direction.

We note that there is little transit use or ridesharing in the area. With the exception of frontage road curb lanes planned to accommodate bicycles, the project as proposed is totally oriented to automobile use, and may further the area's dependence upon automobile travel. We suggest that the final EIS reflect consideration of incentives to increased ridesharing and transit use, such as HOV lanes, and that the project include appropriate design elements.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this draft EIS.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Shelley Du Puy of our Panama City Area Office at 904/234-5061.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "And Mager, Jr.", written in dark ink.

Andreas Mager, Jr.
Acting Assistant Regional Director
Habitat Conservation Division

Some information on the ozone modeling for this project was not included in the FEIS or in the Air Quality Report which was sent to us recently. This information is being sent to us by your consultant. We do not anticipate that this will be a problem but may forward comments to you on this issue at a later date. In the future, we request that one copy of the Air Quality Report be sent to us at the beginning of the EIS comment period to allow us to adequately review potential air impacts during that time period.

Based on our review, we rate the DEIS EC-2; that is we have environmental concerns associated with potential impacts resulting from this project as described above, and we believe additional information on these impacts and/or on mitigation is needed in the FEIS.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this document. If you have any questions concerning our comments, please contact me or Al Lucas of my staff at 404/347-7109 or FTS 257-7109.

Sincerely yours,



Heinz J. Mueller, Acting Chief
NEPA Review Staff
Environmental Assessment Branch