

**SR 29 from I-75 to Oil Well Road PD&E Study****FPID #: 434490-1-22-01****MINUTES:** Environmental Advisory Group Meeting #2**DATE:** October 1, 2020 **TIME:** 9:00 AM**LOCATION:** Virtual Meeting via GoTo Webinar**ATTENDEES:** Twenty-three (23) EAG members attended via GoToMeeting as did seventeen (17) members of the project team.

- EAG Members:
 - Adam Gelber, Director – US Department of the Interior/Office of Everglades Restoration Initiatives
 - Ananta Nath, Senior Project Manager – Collier County/Stormwater Management Unit
 - Bradley Cornell, Southwest Florida Expert - Audubon Florida
 - Brian Barnett, Transportation Biologist – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
 - Christine Raininger, Land Use Planning Biologist – Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission/ South Region
 - Cynthia Ovdenk – US Army Corps of Engineers
 - David Shindle, Florida Panther Coordinator – US Fish and Wildlife Service
 - Deborah Jansen, Biologist – National Park Service/Division of Resource Management
 - Elizabeth Fleming, Senior Florida Representative – Defenders of Wildlife
 - Jed Redwine, Ecologist – South Florida National Resource Center
 - Jerry Kurtz, Principal Project Manager – Collier County/Stormwater Management
 - Jobe Chakuchin, Environmental Protection Specialist/American Indian Affairs Liaison – Big Cypress National Preserve
 - Julianne Thomas, Senior Environmental Planner – Conservancy of Southwest Florida
 - Kevin Godsea, Project Leader of the South Florida Gulf Coast Refuge Complex – US Fish and Wildlife Service

- Mark Danaher, Supervisor of Wildlife Biologist - US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Melissa Roberts, Regulatory Service Center Administrator/Lower West Coast Service Center
- Meredith Budd, Regional Policy Director – Florida Wildlife Federation
- Robert V. Sobczak, Hydrologist – Big Cypress National Park Preserve
- Robert Wiley, Principal Project Manager – Collier County/Stormwater Management
- Shannon Estenoz, Vice President of Policy and Public Affairs/Chief Operating Officer – The Everglades Foundation
- Thomas Forsyth, Superintendent – Big Cypress National Preserve
- Tom Trotta, Past President - Friends of the Florida Panther Refuge
- Tony Pernas, Resource Management Chief – Big Cypress National Preserve

- Project Team:
 - Jennifer Marshall, District Environmental Administrator – FDOT District 1
 - Kimberly Warren, FDOT Project Manager – RK&K (FDOT D1 consultant)
 - Gwen Pipkin, Environmental Manager – FDOT District 1
 - Patrick Bateman, Engineer – FDOT District 1
 - Jennifer Dorning, Senior Public Involvement Specialist – Atkins (FDOT D1 consultant)
 - Siobhan Gale, Transportation Planner – RK&K (FDOT D1 consultant)
 - Gabriela Garcia, Project Manager– Metric Engineering
 - Robert Myers, Environmental Scientist - Metric Engineering
 - Alicia Gonzalez, Principal – Media Relations Group, LLC
 - Caitlin Hill, Environmental Scientist - Metric Engineering
 - Daniel Smith, Roadway Ecologist - UCF
 - Derek d’Adesky – Metric Engineering
 - Eunice Sanders, Assistant Community Outreach Specialist – Media Relations Group, LLC
 - Jorge Valens, Public Information Specialist – Media Relations Group, LLC
 - Mark Scott, Drainage – Metric Engineering
 - Michael Holt, Drainage– Metric Engineering
 - Paul Carballo, Project Engineer- Metric Engineering

WELCOME

FDOT District One Environmental Administrator, Jennifer Marshall, welcomed all the attendees to the second official virtual EAG meeting, after which each attendee briefly introduced themselves and the organizations they represent.

Jennifer explained that she will begin with a presentation which provides a brief overview of the project status. At the end of the presentation, she will move on to a focused discussion on specific items that FDOT is requesting input on. The focus discussion items have been marked with a star on the presentation. Then the EAG members will have the opportunity for open discussion.

SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION

I. Meeting Agenda (Slide 2)

Jennifer Marshall introduced the presentation portion of the meeting by noting that the PDF of the presentation slides, and note slides, were distributed to all of the EAG members. The presentation will also be available online on the project website. Meeting minutes will also be available on the project website thirty (30) calendar days following the meeting.

Jennifer discussed the purpose of the meeting, which was to review our preliminary analysis to date, project status and next steps. She explained that as we moved through the presentation, there will be stars in the areas that we wish to have focused discussion. Jennifer stated that these are specific areas that she would like to have feedback from the EAG members to help guide our analysis and considerations as we further develop the alternatives. She asked that the EAG members hold their comments until the focused discussion portion of the presentation. It was noted that if members of the public wished to speak, they would be provided an opportunity during the during the open discussion following the EAG member discussion.

Jennifer stated that we know that there are questions regarding how this project fits in with M-CORES. At this point we do not have this answer. M-CORES could be a potential funding source in the future and the project team is working closely with the M-CORES project team. The future of this PD&E study, whether it remains a stand-alone project or is absorbed into the M-CORES program, is unknown at this time.

The presentation by Jennifer continued with a discussion of the following:

II. EAG Goals and Previous EAG Coordination/Meeting (Slide 4)

Jennifer provided a brief description of the goals for the EAG and the role that EAG members have as part of the study, which is to share information and ideas that help achieve the project's purpose and need with the least overall harm to the environment, and to assist in the identification of environmental issues to be addressed within the scope of this PD&E Study.

Jennifer also provide a brief recap of previous EAG coordination during the first EAG Meeting held on May 9, 2019.

Jennifer discussed the August 16, 2019 letter received from the National Parks Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) following the first EAG meeting.

- Response is pending
- Included in this presentation, however, are points and recommendations made in the letter for discussion with the EAG.

III. Purpose and Need (Slide 5)

Jennifer stated that the project's current purpose and need was summarized on the slide. She referenced the letter from the National Parks Service and USFWS, which recommended a broader Purpose and Need for the project. At this time, we are focusing on the current Purpose and Need, but will update the EAG as changes occur throughout the life of the project.

IV. Existing State Road 29 (Slide 6)

Jennifer discussed the current footprint of State Road 29 from Oil Well Road to I-75. She pointed out that within the boundaries of the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge, USFWS currently leases the eastern 100 feet from the FDOT. The SR 29 existing 180-foot right-of-way includes that lease area that would be used for future roadway improvements.

V. Preliminary Typical Section Analysis (Slides 7 & 8)

Jennifer mentioned the letter from the National Parks Service and USFWS requested the study provide "full and robust" alternatives for consideration. The study will continue to evaluate a four-lane typical section as well as the recommendations provided in the letter, although we are in the very preliminary stages of the study. Additional coordination with stakeholders and partner agencies will continue throughout the life of this project.

Jennifer briefly discussed the features of the four-lane typical section as the basis for each of the alternatives.

VI. Concept Development (Slides 9 & 10) ★

Jennifer then went through the widening and reconstruction alternatives, discussing specific features of each of the options.

VII. Constrained Areas (Slide 11) ★

Jennifer discussed the areas that have been identified by the study as constrained areas within the project limits. She also requested additional feedback during the focused discussion on the recommendation in the joint letter from the NPS and USFWS for a single bridge from Bear Island to Pistol Pond, and that a cost analysis would be required. Jennifer also requested additional feedback on the request for a single bridge at Henson Marsh.

VIII. Preliminary Drainage Concepts (Slides 12-14) ★

Jennifer discussed components of each of the preliminary drainage approaches, three in total. Approach #1, Offsite Ponds with Canal Conveyance; Approach #2, Offsite Ponds with Swale Conveyance; and Approach #3, Linear Swales. Jennifer mentioned the request for new culverts as part of the joint letter, but we are not at that step in the analysis yet. She noted that the project team will continue to review for future analysis. Jennifer requested feedback regarding the members' drainage concerns during focused discussion.

IX. Preliminary Environmental Evaluation (Slides 15 & 16)

Jennifer discussed areas identified in the preliminary environmental evaluation that we will be further analyzing and documenting as we move forward.

- OFW
- Federally protected species
- Wildlife crossings ★
 - Discuss more during focused discussion. Jennifer noted the NPS and USFWS request for additional crossings and wildlife shelving in their letter.
- Socio-Cultural
 - Continued coordination with Seminole and Miccosukee tribes
 - We do not anticipate impacts to historical and archeological resources as part of this project

- Potential Section 4(f) – evaluating how the project affects public recreational and conservation lands
 - The NPS and FWS made a recommendation to enhance existing and proposed public land access in their letter – still too early in the study, but the project team is requesting feedback during the focused discussion.
- Physical Environment
 - Noise
 - Contamination

X. Project Status

Jennifer gave a brief update on the status of the project.

- Future funding
 - Cost increase for extended/new bridges and structures
 - Discussions ongoing with:
 - Collier County MPO
 - Project teams/representatives for regional ongoing/upcoming/future projects
 - Revenue shortfalls from COVID
 - FDOT is evaluating priorities and SIS Plan
 - M-CORES is still a potential funding source, but this project needs to be able to be implemented independent of M-CORES, if needed
 - Schedule is being adjusted based upon the fact that funds are not currently available for future phases and the need for consistency with the MPO planning document
 - Allows more opportunities for continued coordination with stakeholders and agency partners
 - The project team will advise the EAG members by email of the next steps as they are determined.

FOCUSED DISCUSSION

Jennifer asked that members of the EAG provide comments related to each topic as they are called upon by agency. Jennifer also requested any additional comments be provided 7 -14 days following the meeting in order to be included in the minutes.

FOCUSED DISCUSSION - WIDENING VS. RECONSTRUCTION ALTERNATIVES (Slide 19):

Brad Cornell, Audubon Florida – Brad mentioned the FDOT project to widen I-75 in Charlotte County and the collaboration with DEP and Florida Forever Program to buy properties to accommodate drainage and water quality treatment mitigation in a Florida Forever project to restore the ranch. Brad believes this was a progressive idea from FDOT and a regionally aware strategy that should be considered as part of this project. Additionally, widening the drainage scope in each of the alternatives should be considered.

Jennifer provided additional clarification on M-CORES comments stating that the language in the statute for M-CORES provides more latitude for conservation activities. Roadway projects like this one for State Road 29 may require additional collaboration. These are opportunities the project team will continue to look at.

Bob Sobczak, Big Cypress National Preserve – Bob mentioned alternatives to include future conditions of the canal being filled in. Plans to fill in the canal in next 10 years are included in US Army Corps of Engineers and Collier County Watershed Plan. This study should include alternatives that are complimentary and compatible with those plans.

Jennifer mentioned we could discuss this more during the drainage discussion, but that the project has the flexibility to modify drainage.

Bob asked if widening the roadway takes away more of the stormwater swale along the east side of the road.

Jennifer responded that there are more opportunities to convey water within the right-of-way in swales if we widen the roadway. Widening and reconstruction comes down to cost. It is more expensive to reconstruct the roadway vs. widening and constructing new lanes; however, adding the recommended structures may be easier to accomplish in the reconstructing alternative vs. retrofitting later in the widening alternative.

Bob agreed it may be easier to accomplish in the reconstruction alternative.

Jennifer mentioned this is all part of the ongoing analysis.

Tony Pernas, Big Cypress National Preserve – Tony stated that at the last meeting, Big Cypress Preserve offered FDOT a lifetime easement for the canal/water quality aspects and for integrating sidewalk or trail features. This appears to have been left out of both alternatives.

Jennifer indicated that she would follow-up on that.

Jerry Kurtz, Collier County Stormwater – Jerry mentioned the thought of filling in the canal used to horrify him as Immokalee could potentially flood. Over time, and working with Bob, I understand filling-in the canal could be happening or at least a possibility. We need to do something with the water which needs to come down through a major drainage outlet. The water will need to go somewhere if the canal is filled in. As a general comment, it looks as though the project is being constrained along the east side of the road because of the canal. Use that to integrate into the project for water divergence. Embrace it and look at moving water east/west instead of north/south. There are issues currently, including maintenance of the canal.

Robert Wiley, Collier County Stormwater – The concept of using the canal for regional flow includes conveyance of water coming directly from State Road 29, an issue that needs to be resolved. We are not supportive of using the canal to convey water and then putting the entire canal slope into some type of treatment pond system because you have so much pollution going on that it may become ineffective. Moving water to the west should be considered. Collier County currently has drainage easements from Sunniland up to Immokalee, which we did not have at the time we first began discussing this project. However, we do not have easements on federal lands. Reconstruction may be better than widening because shifting the road to the east makes it even more difficult to get water quality out of the existing swale. We would like a system that is also maintainable.

Julianne Thomas, Conservancy of Southwest Florida – It is difficult at this time to discuss widening vs. reconstruction since everything is interconnected. Preference given to the alternative that provides better hydrology and wildlife crossings but being presented alternatives in this format is difficult. I do appreciate other's comments that FDOT be creative and look broadly at the project for hydrology and to move wildlife effectively.

Jennifer responded that it is not necessary to have a preference at this time and that FDOT is taking a holistic approach to the project. The meeting format is simply to make it easier for the minutes to be prepared, but please feel free to provide comments throughout the discussion.

Elizabeth Fleming, Defenders of Wildlife – Echo comments offered by the Conservancy and, in addition, since this is the EAG, we should have an overall approach or criteria that however this road is configured, it does the least amount of damage to the environment. It should also undo previous damage created prior to there being this much information about hydrology and wildlife connectivity. Please keep that in mind for overall broad planning and take notes from the EAG as we continue these discussions.

Brain Barnett, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission – If we are able to accommodate longer bridges/structures as part of this project, would either alternative be better suited for that?

Jennifer explained that one alternative is not necessarily better than the other. As mentioned earlier, it may be simpler if we reconstruct the road instead of retrofitting structures in the widening alternative. Either alternative can accommodate bridges/structures though.

Meredith Budd, Florida Wildlife Federation – Echo comments previously made. It is difficult to discuss alternatives until there is more information on hydrology and where the water will go. Taking the footprint of the roadway into consideration, will the reconstruction alternative leave a smaller footprint than the widening alternative? We need to look at the best ways to enhance hydrology and wildlife habitat connectivity. At this time, I cannot say the Federation prefers one alternative over the other. There are components still to be addressed: are we enhancing hydrology in the region? Reconnecting wildlife habitat? Minimizing and avoiding impacts to the environment?

Jennifer expressed she does not want any agency to feel like we are asking for an official position at this time. Feedback is simply for discussion and record keeping. To address the comments made concerning the footprint, there are no substantial changes in the roadway footprint, more so how to incorporate changes within the right-of-way.

Kevin Godsea, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Project Leader of the South Florida Gulf Coast Refuge Complex – No preference on alternatives yet as more information is needed. For the reconstruction alternative, where are the swales and canal draining to? Is water being re-directed away from the refuge? Removing the shoulder of the roadway removes recreational access for fisherman who use the canal to fish. Please take that into consideration for the reconstruction alternative.

Jennifer clarified that each of the alternatives includes minimum five (5) foot shoulders. Some areas may be wider to accommodate guardrail, etc....

Kevin also mentioned the need for wider clear-out zones for the Crested Caracara which is advantageous to their foraging efforts.

Jed Redwine, South Florida National Resource Center – Echo and support comments made by Big Cypress National Preserve. May need subtle combinations of both alternatives. Alternatives that maintain run-off within swales are desirable to reduce sediment effects. Prefer to keep run-off as isolated from the canal/watershed as much as possible. To reduce regional flood concerns, Big Cypress and others have suggested bridges and improvements at Okaloacoochee Slough to positively impact watershed by allowing water to flow, reduce peak flooding events. Appears to be positives and negatives to both alternatives, but reconstruction may offer opportunities to correct mistakes made in the past because we had less knowledge and information at the time. Hard to say one alternative is better than the other until we are closer to a tentatively selected alternative. Real and practical alternatives with concrete characteristics that can be measured against the project objectives.

Dave Shindle, US Fish and Wildlife Service South Florida Ecological Services Field, Florida Panther Coordinator – Attending this meeting on behalf of John Wrublik. Echo comments that we hold on suggesting a preference until more information/details are available. Initial preference would be reconstruction, but that depends on where off-site ponds would be located. Expressed concerns that a five (5) foot shoulder will not accommodate ongoing recreational activities. We also need a better understanding of how this project could be associated/impacted by M-CORES.

Jennifer reiterated that we are still in the very preliminary stages of the project and that more detailed information will of course be available as we progress in this project. Simply seeking feedback at this time, and to see whether any of the agencies note flaws in the preliminary alternatives or potential flaws we can hopefully address now.

Melissa Roberts, South Florida Water Management District – From a regulatory standpoint, the district does not have a preference at this time. We will continue to review/permit preferred alternative once FDOT is ready to move forward.

Shannon Estenoz, The Everglades Foundation – Can you elaborate on what you meant by budget shortfalls earlier in the presentation?

Jennifer clarified that the State of Florida relies heavily on gas tax for revenue. During COVID, the reduced driving and tourism impacted revenue availability. FDOT will align projects, including this study, for when future funding could be available. FDOT will pace the project schedule as needed.

Shannon followed up asking if FDOT was still operating as this project paying for itself outside of potential M-CORES funding.

Jennifer confirmed and further noted that we do not yet know how the project could potentially tie-in with M-CORES. The project team continues discussions with the M-CORES project team, but is also moving forward with the PD&E.

Cynthia Ovdenk, US Army Corps of Engineers – Prefers to reserve comments for when she has had more time to review information and presentation. As she is new to this project, Cynthia also wanted to know if the previous EAG member had comments in 2019. Agrees avoidance and minimization will be key.

Jennifer offered to follow-up with Cynthia to help her get up to speed on this project and provide meeting minutes from the first EAG meeting held in 2019.

John Wrublik, US Fish and Wildlife Service (provided after the meeting) – Stated that he does not have conflicts with the alternatives. Emphasized minimization of impacts by staying within the existing right-of-way as much as possible. Within the existing right-of-way, minimize the footprint of the typical section. Cited the use of jersey barriers within the median on projects in Dade and Monroe Counties that reduced the overall typical section width by minimizing the median and is a potential safety improvement.

FOCUSED DISCUSSION – CONSTRAINED AREAS (Slide 20)

Jennifer indicated bridge and wildlife crossing comments can also be included in this topic.

Brad Cornell, Audubon Florida – Nothing more to add in addition to what has already been addressed in the letter from the National Parks Service and USFWS.

Bob Sobczak, Big Cypress National Preserve – Supports the two-mile long bridge over Okaloacoochee Slough recommendation from the National Parks Service and USFWS letter. Ensure road widening is compatible with future fixes. The bridge will be an essential component of that.

Jerry Kurtz, Collier County Stormwater – The movement of water in constrained/unconstrained areas is important. If the canal is filled in, determine flow ways to solve ongoing issues. Use the landscape to manage the water, if possible.

Robert Wiley, Collier County Stormwater – Echo comments made by Jerry. A series of bridges/wildlife crossings or a series of box culverts would help pass the flow.

Julianne Thomas, Conservancy of Southwest Florida – The Conservancy supports the letter and recommendations from the National Parks Service and USFWS. No additional comments at this time.

Elizabeth Fleming, Defenders of Wildlife – Mentioned previous I-75 project that included improvements to State Road 29 and the subsequent wildlife crossings that followed as part of that project. Recalls recommendation at the time from FFWCC that wider shoulders would be more beneficial specifically for the Florida Panther population. Does not want this project and roadway improvements to undermine previous recommendations.

Jennifer asked for clarification on the five (5) foot shoulders, asking if Elizabeth thought the shoulders should be wider than five (5) feet or just to ensure there are shoulders included?

Elizabeth responded saying she did not know what the correct amount of space would be and deferred to other agency experts/panther experts. Elizabeth does not want to reduce the effectiveness of what is already there, though that is not always as effective as it should be.

Brain Barnett, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission – No additional comments at this time.

Meredith Budd, Florida Wildlife Federation – No additional comments at this time. Appreciates agency input and considerations being suggested.

Kevin Godsea, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Project Leader of the South Florida Gulf Coast Refuge Complex – Kevin stated he did not want the project to impact future hydrology fixes. Hydrology has been a huge issue to the refuge in terms of bridges in the Okaloacoochee Slough area. Maximizing wildlife crossings and hydrologic flow reduces the need for fencing in those areas. More bridges = less fencing and less fencing = better aesthetics for travelers along the road as well. Future planning is underway for additional public access to the refuge. These plans include maps of potential access points. This should be available for public review in February/March

2021. This project has the potential to also impact Pistol Pond access, as well as several access points along State Road 29.

Jennifer stated that the project team has a copy of the map, it was included in the letter from the National Parks Service and USFWS, but it would be helpful to have updated copies as they become available.

Mark Danaher, US Fish and Wildlife Service – Cannot stress enough how important the bridges are. Historically, water would have flowed through Okaloacoochee Slough, across what is now Big Cypress and into what is now the Panther Refuge to form the headwaters of the Fakahatchee Strand, likely the most biodiverse forest and wetland we have in the entire State of Florida, it supports the highest amount of orchids, including Ghost Orchids. The strand flows approximately 35 kilometers through Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve and State Park, discharging into 10,000 islands. Currently, State Road 29 and Barron River Canal jaunt and divert a lot of water that would historically flow into Fakahatchee Strand, instead points discharges into Everglades City. He indicated that he cannot stress the importance of having this infrastructure in place because if we don't do it now, it is highly unlikely it will happen in the future. Existing plans in the Southwest Florida Comprehensive Watershed Plan which state and federal agencies have spent millions of dollars developing. Two projects currently in the plan: State Road 29 and Barron River Canal flow-way and the Okaloacoochee Slough Functional Group that already addresses a lot of the issues and concerns we share with this State Road 29 widening project. Plans are already in place so, hopefully, these bridges will allow us to get to a point of doing meaningful hydrologic restoration. But if we don't have the bridges in place the likelihood of that happening is probably non-existent once new widening occurs. To highlight the importance of these bridges, in addition to minimizing the need for fencing, there has been previous roadkill research conducted on State Road 29 in 2017 by University of Kent Master Student, Mark Spicer. Mark drove State Road 29 corridor from LaBelle to Ochopee daily recording roadkill. In particular, the East Henson Marsh and Okaloacoochee Slough intersection with State Road 29 was one of the highest roadkill hotspots that he identified. The refuge did intermittent roadkill research, but ultimately stopped because it became unsafe due to traffic and highway speeds on State Road 29. The recommended bridges would serve multiple objectives.

Jennifer stated that the project team is noticing a theme between comments. There is a lot of ongoing work in this area to address hydrology concerns. What we are hearing from the EAG is that the bridges, in particular, will be a great step forward for this project in addressing that and for setting up for future improvements that may not come directly out of this project.

Jed Redwine, South Florida National Resource Center – I-75 is a good example as it is hydrologically invisible in our regional models and that is where we would like for this road to be as well, hydrologically invisible and also in regards to animals being able to cross. The road will never be invisible in terms of sound effects, as improvements which increase traffic and sound, but reflecting on and mitigating that is a desirable feature. Sound does have an impact on wildlife, hard to perceive and document sometimes. I am in agreement with the general theme being laid out and continuing to evaluate precise options that emerge from these discussions. This roadway is a very important piece in the regional puzzle and needs to be designed in harmony with that regional puzzle.

Melissa Roberts, South Florida Water Management District – No comments at this time.

Shannon Estenoz, The Everglades Foundation – Generally speaking, on behalf of the Foundation with regards to restoring hydrology to this part of the system, we have a tremendous amount of confidence in the US Department of Interior and its agencies. I would like to echo previous comments about taking the opportunity to improve hydrology where we can, but also to ensure nothing else in this project precludes/constrains or limits our efforts intended to restore both hydrology and wildlife populations. I would also like to express support for the point made by Jed about noise impacts and, that in a landscape like this, we should not ignore the importance of that on road expansion projects. This concern is also shared by the Foundation.

John Wrublik, US Fish and Wildlife Service (provided after the meeting) – No additional comments at this time.

FOCUSED DISCUSSION – PRELIMINARY DRAINAGE CONCEPTS (Slide 21)

Brad Cornell, Audubon Florida – Comments before are aligned with letter and recommendations from the National Parks Service and USFWS.

Jennifer briefly summarized Brad’s previous comments concerning the past I-75 project and broadening the drainage scope.

Brad mentioned making the best possible project we can, whether the project continues as a standalone PD&E or is absorbed under M-CORES.

Bob Sobczak, Big Cypress National Preserve

Jennifer briefly summarized previous drainage comments made by Big Cypress including plans to fill-in the canal and potential easements with FDOT.

Bob stated that he wanted to discuss the stretch of canal owned by Big Cypress National Preserve, which is an OFW. Previously mentioned by Jed, it is a regional puzzle piece and that we would like for it to be invisible hydrologically. From a water quality stand- point it is currently very visible and has phosphorus levels in the range of 50-100 parts per billion, in exceedance of DEP's numeric interpretation of the standard for an OFW. This is something that needs to be seriously considered. Ideally, there would be 225 feet of width to keep drainage within the footprint of the roadway and we only have 180 feet, as it currently stands, without touching the canal. In the stretch of road that runs between the Preserve and the Refuge, we are potentially running the risk of not addressing that very visible water quality issue, but also potentially making it worse. That goes back to the canal discussion and making the project complimentary to the "Big Fix", but we have to get the "Big Fix" moving parallel with the road project, which is where we need wider access to solve the drainage issues associated with this widening project.

Jennifer responded indicating that the project team is still in the very preliminary stages for drainage concepts and that FDOT Drainage staff will evaluate and add input, along with everyone else with an interest in this area, before going to a preferred alternative to ensure we are taking a holistic approach, not only as it relates to drainage/stormwater management but also a greater hydrological stand-point as well. The project team appreciates the feedback as it certainly helps shape future coordination.

Jerry Kurtz, Collier County Stormwater

Jennifer briefly summarized previous comments from Collier County including looking at the canal as part of the roadway and not as a constraint. If the canal is separate that we treat our off-site water before impacting the canal.

Jerry noted the maintenance on the canal as being an issue for the county's stormwater/surface-water management due to the current design and access. Linear systems are easy to maintain with mowing. As we look at a new design, please be sure to include future maintenance needs and access as part of that design. Collier County is painted into a corner at times because they cannot easily access the canal to perform maintenance for flood protection level of service.

Jennifer thanked Jerry for bringing up maintenance and told the group how the project team is actively engaging with FDOT Maintenance staff as well and these comments help shape those conversations and help determine what the needs of the maintaining agency are moving forward.

Robert Wiley, Collier County Stormwater – Treating stormwater run-off before it gets to the canal is definitely our preference. As road design goes forward, we need to include provisions to accommodate Collier County maintenance activities in the canal which is outside FDOT right-of-way. The county needs fairly spaced points of access. The county does not want to see the canal used for water quality treatment. If combined treatment off-site with canal water to meet Water Management District requirements, that would be fine, but we do not want straight water going directly into the canal.

Julianne Thomas, Conservancy of Southwest Florida – Regardless of how the road is being widened, this increases run-off into already impaired waters, so we need to be sure we aren't making the problem worse. Whatever the transportation solution is, it cannot come at the cost of decreased water quality. I hope FDOT is looking at options to reduce drainage, treat run-off, and how to construct the road so that it is quieter and less of a nuisance.

Elizabeth Fleming, Defenders of Wildlife – No additional comments at time, waiting to see how discussion progresses. I do hope all the concerns and comments being discussed relating to this project are being relayed to the M-CORES project team so that this input feeds into other program discussions.

Jennifer stated that is the project team's intention and that, even though they are two separate projects, we are one FDOT and continue to discuss the project with M-CORES project team. All of the comments/concerns are being shared with M-CORES project team. Criteria for OFW will be included, not quite there yet but will be included.

Brain Barnett, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission – With the uncertainty of the project's future, it is unwise to make the drainage of this road dependent upon it. Seems as though if you could keep water out of there you would be better off. Why not plan for a separate system that doesn't rely on the canal for conveyance.

Jennifer clarified that the project will not use the canal for water treatment, simply using it for conveyance.

Meredith Budd, Florida Wildlife Federation – We are looking at a very discreet segment and water does not know boundaries. I would like to flag and ask how this project will address how water that moves through the canal coming from along the entire stretch of State Road 29 from Immokalee Road down to I-75, and to look at this segment for treatment and conveyance options for regional impacts.

Jennifer noted that there are ongoing discussions with PD&E and design project teams for projects to the north of this one to look at State Road 29 as a whole from State Road 82 to I-75 to be consistent throughout the region.

Kevin Godsea, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Project Leader of the South Florida Gulf Coast Refuge Complex – Where will the off-site ponds be located? This is critical information for us to be able to make insightful comments. Water quality is an ongoing issue and, although you may not be legally responsible for cleaning that current problem up, it would be nice if we could start making progress to address existing issues. This is critical to the overall objectives to the project, not just safety of travelers, but a water quality/quantity delivering and timing issue as well.

Mark Danaher, US Fish and Wildlife Service – Avoid, minimize, mitigate would be the #1 priority and, at the same time, I ask that whatever drainage design is ultimately decided upon that we ensure those drainage designs don't dewater the adjacent conservation lands more than they already are. It has been shown these major canals have the potential to alter water tables up to two miles away. Any additional dewatering is only going to amplify issues we face from an ecological and biological standpoint. For instance, aeriels of the Refuge where we have documented upwards of 1200 Cabbage Palms per acre which is primarily the result of hydrologic alterations that have already occurred across the landscape. I would ask that whatever design is chosen that it does not dewater adjacent conservation lands anymore than already are, and (2) I would note we spent upwards of \$4 million over the last 20 years to treat exotic and invasive species. The design and maintenance should minimize potential spread of exotic and invasive species as much as practical because, depending on where you send polluted water, it is going to change vegetation dynamics adjacent to the roadway. We already see that now at the Refuge. Lastly, I would ask that with mitigation, if possible, utilize off-site mitigation as much as possible in order to provide onsite benefits to adjacent conservation lands to help with issues both the Refuge and Preserve face.

Jed Redwine, South Florida National Resource Center – In agreement with Kevin and Mark's comments. The key issue when talking about drainage concepts, it is very clear Approach #3 with linear swales is highly desirable because it does not connect road run-off to regional run-off. Second issue, given the water quality concerns we have in

this area, though we are happy to hear there is coordination with projects to the north, you are basically the entire access of Ok Slough, which is very important regionally for drainage. Ideally, isolate road run-off as much as possible. Looks like the most important water quality buffer, because much of the canal problems are from upstream contributions, for this system is at the interface of the roadway at the northern limit of Big Cypress National Preserve. Positioning and STA there would be very desirable so we can divert polluted water coming from upstream to a treatment system prior to it getting to the natural system and allowing the natural system to flow. Effective throughout region to reduce concentrations in canals. The development of the road is an intensification of land use in the basins, and one of the first expressions of the intensification in and use is a flashy basin, you get flashy run-off that tends to be higher in nutrients as land use increases. The road is an intuitive place to begin to address/mitigate/compensate for that challenge because the road is intended to serve growing populations. We need two drainage concepts, one that is local road based and the other that fits regional drainage needs for the system.

Jennifer asked a follow-up question, if there is a drainage concept that is for the regional area that falls out of the purview of our roadway project, who would be the lead for that?

Jed responded that the Southwest Florida Comprehensive Watershed Plan is a provisionally authorized study which can be federally funded and is driven through US Army Corps of Engineers. When we do regional stuff, the Department of the Interior, US Army Corps of Engineers, Water Management District and counties become partners since it implicates all our lands.

Melissa Roberts, South Florida Water Management District – Nothing more to add at this time.

John Wrublik, US Fish and Wildlife Service (provided after the meeting) – No specific drainage comments. Deferred to the FPNWR and BCNP staff to provide input on drainage issues and what will be best for the Florida panther and habitat.

FOCUSED DISCUSSION - WILDLIFE CROSSINGS (Slide 22):

Brad Cornell, Audubon Florida – No additional comments at this time.

Tony Pernas, Big Cypress National Preserve – (inaudible)

Jennifer indicated the team was not able to hear Tony's comments, but that we assume some of the comments being made included the larger bridge and wildlife shelving. Jennifer mentioned Tony was welcome to try connecting again or can e-mail comments to be included in the minutes.

Robert Wiley, Collier County Stormwater – (inaudible)

Julianne Thomas, Conservancy of Southwest Florida – As Brad mentioned, this is an important issue, and we need to make sure we have enough crossings that are appropriate size for larger mammal movement. This is a deadly stretch of road and we need to ensure we reduce wildlife and vehicle interactions.

Elizabeth Fleming, Defenders of Wildlife – As far as panther is concerned, obviously you have people in this group - the Refuge, USFWS Panther coordinator, FWC – and all of their input is essential. The Florida Panther Recovery Implementation Team and Transportation sub-team lists hot spots and some of these areas on the list are some of the most dangerous spots in Florida to the panther in terms of panther mortality. There are other species besides the panther though to be aware of. You have Federally listed species, but there are also State listed species and smaller animals that also use wildlife crossings, and their habitat is sometimes fragmented by roads and fencing. Keep an eye on those species as well in this biodiverse area. Opportunities and construction parameters to accommodate smaller species as well. There are issues on Oil Well Road, for instance where turtle/tortoise cannot climb over the curb and are killed along the roadway. Use this as an opportunity to look more broadly at how the impacts can be reduced.

Jennifer thanked Elizabeth for the additional data sources the project team can reference. Jennifer also clarified that the project team is looking at data and research for both large and small animals to ensure we are providing the appropriate accommodations for the region.

Brain Barnett, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission – We look forward to and anticipate continuing our great working relationship with District One on locations of wildlife crossings in this area. We have real needs here for new crossings particularly south of Sunniland Mine. We now have the opportunity to improve existing crossings in this area and evaluate new ones.

Meredith Budd, Florida Wildlife Federation – In addition to noise, I would also like to flag lighting as the project moves forward. Please ensure lighting is compatible with county land use plans and will be better for wildlife as they approach and use crossings. There are several hotspots north of the Refuge with large amounts of

panther deaths where there is a need for wildlife crossing structures. Existing structures would need improvements to accommodate larger animals.

Kevin Godsea, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Project Leader of the South Florida Gulf Coast Refuge Complex – Echo needs for additional crossings. The focus of this project is between Oil Well Road and I-75, but there are significant needs to the north as well, from both a watershed perspective and wildlife perspective. It would be nice if the projects were connected a bit more from a planning perspective. Plan this section and north to Immokalee together.

Jennifer Indicated that if the group found it helpful at the next meeting, the project team can provide updated information for projects to the north as part of our discussion.

Mark Danaher, US Fish and Wildlife Service – Echo comments made by others. I would also note hotspots and impacts to smaller animals as well, as Elizabeth mentioned. I ask that FDOT take smaller animals into consideration as well. Based on observations made, I am concerned about the design of wildlife crossings, especially for their compatibility with multiple species. Concerned about the sustainability of White Tail Deer that are prey for the panther. I would ask that FDOT consider utilizing bridging as much as possible because bridging allows us to accomplish multiple objectives. For existing bridges, look at opportunities to incorporate shelving to improve wildlife crossings. I cannot stress enough the importance of bridges/crossings on this project. It seems where right-of-way is more open (less vegetation) along the shoulders means less opportunity for wildlife mortality, especially Avian mortality, because where there is a wall of vegetation seems to include highest Avian mortality. This is based on my observations and I am in the unique position of driving this section of roadway at least two times per day.

Jennifer responded that if there is an updated roadkill study, the project team would like to have that information as well to reference. Jennifer asked if the observations were summarized somewhere/maps and if Mark would be willing to meet with the project team or share the information with the project team.

Mark stated that he would share the preliminary/short-term study his staff completed last year that also corroborates the Kent Study findings. Mark was also receptive to meeting in the field to discuss the findings and observations.

Jennifer noted having plenty of time in this process and that boots-on-the-ground data is invaluable.

Jed Redwine, South Florida National Resource Center – Very important to reduce wildlife mortality along the roadway, eliminate it ideally. Mark makes a great point to take prey of larger/protected species into consideration. This road between the Refuge and National Park contributes to the recovery path of the panther. It is important to also recognize the use of bridges is complimentary to both hydrology and wildlife corridors and the more road is converted into bridging, the less fencing for wildlife crossings is needed. This is important insight for us to keep in mind to achieve objectives in complimentary fashion.

John Wrublik, US Fish and Wildlife Service (provided after the meeting) – Anticipates at least two new wildlife crossings will be needed. If possible, include wildlife shelves. Noted that a more expensive, entirely new purpose-built crossing may not be needed if we can add shelving to bridges to create additional crossings. The new crossings would be needed somewhere between Oil Well Road and the 1st wildlife crossing to the south, which is within the area of the FPNWR. Recommends fencing to panther criteria from Oil Well Road to I-75.

Jennifer responded that she understands from the group that hydrology and wildlife are intimately connected.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Jennifer opened the meeting to members of the public to make comment and thanked them for their patience.

Mike Elfenbine, Representing the Everglades Coordinating Council – The council represents 17 conservation and recreation groups in South Florida. I do not often participate in FDOT meetings, but this has been one of the most efficient and enjoyable meetings I have attended. I am extremely impressed by the unity in messaging by everyone involved, especially, and including, Elizabeth and the Conservancy's comments, which we do not always agree on everything.

Mike reemphasized invasive plant management along the right-of-way as often roadways are vectors for invasive plants which would have the opportunity to spread to adjacent conservation lands. I would like to highlight the comment concerning boots-on-the-ground information and how important that is. I would also like to mention that, as a guy who spends 100's of hours in trees observing wildlife adjacent to this roadway and others nearby, my experience has been wildlife has very little negative reaction to roadways. The roads have been there for so long and have

become a part of those animals' lives that they have grown accustomed to it. Quite the contrary to where you hunt or recreate along I-75, it isn't until traffic stops or slows that wildlife will even look away to see if something is wrong. I don't know what changes you will make to your planning in relation to those comments being made about wildlife being negatively impacted, but I wanted to contribute that might not always be the case. I appreciate the work you all are doing, and I look forward to seeing where this goes. It appears you have a great group of stakeholders represented in this group. Thank you for the opportunity to share my comments.

Jennifer instructed that once the minutes go out for Mike to review his comments as we did lose him partially during the call. The project team wants to be sure we capture all of Mike's comments.

Julianne Thomas, Conservancy of Southwest Florida – I would like to echo Meredith's comments about maintaining dark skies. Light pollution is a problem. This is a dark area right now, and we would like for it to continue to be. In relation to M-CORES, I want to be sure this section of State Road 29 does not become a toll road. A tolled facility would be problematic. There has been conflicting information whether M-CORES corridors will be tolled or not. Given the lack of options going to/from I-75 and through Immokalee, I think having a tolled facility would be a negative for this portion of State Road 29.

Jennifer asked Julianne if she was opposed to the improvements we have discussed as part of this project, or just to a toll facility.

Julianne stated that it is unclear what M-CORES is going to look like. I do not want to see this portion of roadway become a toll facility. Toll roads are wrong for Florida and this part of Florida. If that means we need to come up with different funding for this project outside of M-CORES, that is what needs to be done. There have been some M-CORES discussions that not all facilities will be tolled. If tolled, I understand the financial feasibility would be a part of that and the collection of tolls is problematic. There has been discussion about how this project could potentially intersect with M-CORES and I think we can look at this project holistically and come up with holistic solutions without M-CORES. I want to be sure if M-CORES does get involved it is on the record the Conservancy believes a tolled facility would be problematic.

Jennifer indicated that these comments will be passed along to the M-CORES project team.

Brad Cornell, Audubon Florida – I would like to reiterate the need for FDOT to collaborate with other agencies and stakeholders on the "Big Fix" as there have been

several comments about setting the stage for ultimately solving the problem of getting the Okaloacoochee Slough flow-way restored through Fakahatchee Strand to the Refuge and solving water quality issues as a follow-up to State Road 29 widening and bridging. I would like to advocate that we should not wait 10 years to start pre-requisite process. This is something that has already waited 80 years and we have a mess out there hydrologically that has had severe consequences. Further support for Mark and Kevin's comments about millions of dollars being spent on exotics control and invasive species control, including Cabbage Palms, but also millions of dollars spent on fighting wildfires. The catastrophic wildfire risk of over-drained landscape we all know is a real risk. We had 8500 acres of Golden Gate Estates catch fire last winter with evacuations and damage to structures. Even though there is not a lot of development this way, there is still a big risk to facilities and habitat because of an over-drained landscape. We need to solve that problem as soon as possible, that is not something we can wait on. Build the bridges, but also build infrastructure with drainage and water quality improvements.

Robert Wiley, Collier County Stormwater – When you talk about wildlife crossings, typically there is a crossing over the canal. I would like to reiterate the importance of having enough space to perform maintenance activities. The county uses watercraft as much as possible and boat ramp access will also be needed.

Jennifer asked who the point of contact at Collier County would be for additional information on the county's maintenance needs.

Robert suggested working with him and Jerry Kurtz. Though they do not work in the maintenance department, they coordinate with them frequently.

Jed Redwine, South Florida National Resource Center – I agree with what has been said about night skies. This is an area right between two refuges and the roadway lighting is very relevant to how it affects organisms in surrounding landscapes. Half of the organisms are nocturnal and are ecologically important. Depending on the lighting design there is a broad range of potential issues, but the appropriate design can still allow us to have a safe roadway. We have a recent summary of monitoring effects of sound along roadways to Big Cypress as well as water quality in the basins in Okaloacoochee Slough basin and what the challenges are with respect to night skies, water quality and habitat in general, and use of key organisms and their prey. I hope we can get to a place where we are talking about being clear about our objectives and not just that we want better water quality but that we know what design features we can put into the roadway that mitigate for that specific type of challenge. We need to be at that level in discussion before we can discuss preferred options and best roadway design through sensitive areas. I look forward to continued discussions.

Remain aware of other projects to the north up to State Road 80 and south to US 1 that are relevant to this project, at least indirectly. If the entire stretch is designed elegantly it may reduce the needs/pressure on this project for moving water. If we don't plan for the "Big Fix" that puts us at risk for overcompensating challenges or underrepresenting challenges. Holistic approach is essential. What we found on Tamiami Trail is ground level is at about 6-8 feet and bridges have clearance of about 13.7 feet, six to seven feet above ground surface, with routinely flowing water and preparing a system to flow water 3 feet above ground level at 9.7 feet for 10 linear miles. This gives you a sense of what is needed. Often, we need 2-3 feet of headspace between the road and where the water table is likely to be so it can flow at maximum velocity at peak delivery moments. Peak delivery moments of high rainfall are when you must spread the water out and a key driver at ecological responses for all Fakahatchee Strand and parts of Big Cypress.

Jennifer requested that any information the EAG feels would be beneficial for the project team to have to please send.

Bob Sobczak, Big Cypress National Preserve – Echo what so many have said, most recently Brad, we need to make improvements to this road that are compatible and complimentary to the "Big Fix" including filling-in the canal and installing a pump station. This is articulated in the Southwest Florida Comprehensive Watershed Plan. For as long as I've been here State Road 29 has been the edge of the universe and ignored for a long time, but now it is becoming the center of the universe. State Road 29 is a nexus of growth for Collier County. We also need to be thinking about how M-CORES interconnects with Eastern Collier HCP, with the Southwest Florida Watershed Plan and with the Barron River Canal. Between jurisdictional boundaries is often times where you end up with cracks. Let's not let the water quality and water supply of the Okaloacoochee Slough fall through the cracks. State Road 29 has the opportunity to be a beautiful gateway into the Everglades. Let's find a way to meet all the needs upstream and downstream of public and private lands. Thank you for bringing us all together, to work together to so all these elements are connected to achieve an excellent solution.

Jerry Kurtz, Collier County Stormwater – To elaborate more on Collier County's role and who Robert and I are...we are two engineers in water management for Collier County and have been here for many years. We work closely with Collier County maintenance staff and with FDOT Maintenance and DBI. We are deeply embedded in the canal operations from north of Oil Well Road towards Immokalee. We manage the entire canal during the summer, all 37 miles from US 41 up to Immokalee. We received the calls from the public concerning canals being clogged and potential flooding. We then coordinate with our maintenance team to clear debris, etc.... We also manage

derelict structures in the canal south of I-75 to US 41, and we manage waterflow in the canal at Sunniland Mine. We are very interested in the future improvements which will, hopefully, correct water quality issues. The project should also focus on moving water and preventing the environment from flooding. Remain cognizant of water quality issues and downstream sensitive receiving areas.

Jennifer thanked Jerry for his comments and for, again, bringing maintenance to the forefront.

Jerry also noted the working relationship with the Southwest Florida Water Management District and their three stage recorders that monitors canal levels, including this area.

Mark Danaher, US Fish and Wildlife Service – Thank you for such an efficient virtual meeting, and for taking all our issues and concerns into consideration. The open dialogue and communication go a long way. I did want to mention the importance of safety as part of this project. Again, I am in the unique position of driving this section of State Rod 29 daily and I may see things others do not. Almost on a weekly basis I experience or witness some type of near miss. Just this morning another near miss when a car had to, after passing multiple vehicles, quickly cut in front of me to avoid a head-on collision. Safety needs to be taken seriously, especially at the intersection of Oil Well Road and State Road 29. I worry how traffic will be managed at that intersection once this section becomes a four-lane facility and with the speed limit, which people are driving in excess of now. We also need to take into consideration existing access points to the conservation lands but also the adjacent private lands. We are proposing, and hopeful it will be approved, additional public access into the Refuge. We also need to consider how the wildlife crossings impacts access points in terms of safety. The crossings should be spaced to ensure visibility at the access points is not hindered. I am specifically concerned with the crossing near the Bear Island access point. State Road 29 also has adjacent agricultural land and we need to keep in mind the farmer's access points and for them to safely move tractors or pull machines along the roadway. Again, I cannot emphasize more the need for meaningful safety improvements. Fire and hydrology are two critical components of our ecological community. I would ask FDOT to minimize impacts to our prescribed burns usage with respect to future improvements. I am not sure what can be done, implemented, but we do ask you take into consideration because we cannot impact our ability for prescribed burns more than we already do.

WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED

Below is a list of comments received through the “chat” and “questions” panes.

From	Comment	Response
PUBLIC- Mike Elemicin - Everglades Coordinating Council -	Will you accept public comment today?	Yes, there will be time for public comments during the open discussion at the end.
Tony Pernas	9:57 AM: Thanks for letting me know, will try to correct. Big Cypress NP had proposed at the first EAG meeting to provide FDOT with a lifetime easement to the SR 29 canal. This would allow FDOT a wider footprint to allow for hydrologic improvements, recreational access, and provide for sidewalk/trail; features along the road.	
ANANTA K NATH D. WRE	10:02 AM: This is Ananta Nath from Collier County Stormwater Management. Although plugging of segments of the canal has been proposed in several environmental studies earlier, this may not be a viable alternative in view of the need for maintaining the canal as the regional historic drainage to Barron River. The need for enhancing the dry season hydroperiods of BCNP and FPWLR may be built in structurally while maintaining/enlarging the canal.	
Julianne Thomas	10:14 AM: If it goes through the M-CORES program, would it have to be a tolled facility?	Julianne, we are not able to answer that question at this time. We do not know where this project will go and what type of alternatives M-CORES will come up with and if that will include this specific segment.

<p>Shannon Estenoz</p>	<p>10:22 AM: Can the Interior letter be distributed to everyone on the call please? Thanks much.</p>	<p>10:29 AM: The letter has been included in the "Handouts" section on your control panel</p>
<p>PUBLIC- Mike Elfenbein - Everglades Coordinating Council -</p>	<p>10:40 Everyone on this panel is being paid to be there. Folks like myself in the general public take time out of our day and productivity for an opportunity to provide comment. Providing an opportunity at the beginning gives us a fair opportunity. As agency people leave the meeting, they miss the opportunity to hear our contributions. We don't all have the opportunity to sit next to a phone all day.</p>	<p>We apologize for the inconvenience. The purpose of this meeting is an Environmental Advisory Group for agency input and response to the study, so we must reserve public comment for the end. However, we are happy to meet and discuss with you separately at your convenience.</p>
<p>Kevin Godsea</p>	<p>11:40 AM: Yes, Big Cypress NP is an International Dark Sky Place and Florida Panther NWR is currently under consideration to be added as an IDSP.</p>	
<p>ANANTA K NATH D. WRE</p>	<p>Maintenance of the Canal : Although not specifically mentioned in the EAG agenda, please note that the maintenance of this segment(and beyond) of the canal, particularly vegetation control, has always been a bone of contention, not demarcated which agency (SFWMD/BCB, Collier County, DOT..) is responsible for performing the vegetation control. Identification of the agency responsible for vegetation control and management of the canal should be addressed beginning from the PD&E stage.</p>	

XI. Closing

Jennifer thanked all the attendees for their participation and comments. Those comments will shape the analysis moving forward. Jennifer also thanked Metric Engineering and Media Relations Group for setting up this successful virtual meeting. Jennifer went on to thank Kim Warren and Gwen Pipkin for their support throughout the meeting. The last slide of the presentation included Jennifer's contact information.

FOLLOW UP WITH USFWS

Mr. John Wrublik was not able to attend the main EAG meeting. A separate meeting with him was held on October 7, 2020 where the same presentation was given. He provided comments, which are included in the Focused Discussion topics.