

RE-EVALUATION FORM

1. GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION

A. Re-evaluation Type: Right of Way Phase, Design Change

B. Original approved Environmental Document:

Document Type: EA with FONSI

Date of Approval: 03/17/2017

Project Numbers:

11092

419344-2-21-01

N/A

ETDM (if applicable)

Financial Management

Federal-Aid

Project Name: SR 710 FROM US 441 TO MARTIN CO/L

Project Location: FDOT District 1 (Okeechobee County)

Project Limits: US 441 to Martin County Line

C. Prior Re-evaluation(s):

FM Number	Type				Date District Approved	Date Lead Agency Consultation	Date Lead Agency Approved (if applicable)
	PE	DC	ROW	CON			
419344-3-43-01	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	01/14/2019		02/07/2019

Description of Approval:

The prior re-evaluation documented the following changes:

- 1) conversion of the proposed single bridge over Taylor Creek to a 12-foot by 14-foot concrete box culvert
- 2) reduced design speed from US 441 to east of Taylor Creek to 40 miles per hour (mph),
- 3) various geometrical adjustments to the proposed roadway alignment within original Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Segments 1 and 2,
- 4) typical section dimensions including a wider roadway right-of-way (ROW) width (now 160 feet), a widened sidewalk (now 6 feet), and reduced shared use path width (now 10 feet),
- 5) channelized turn lanes for the westbound (WB) and eastbound (EB) right turns at the SR 710/SR 70 intersection,
- 6) various changes in adjacent property and side street access,
- 7) revisions in typical section dimensions for the proposed bridges over the L-63N Interceptor Canal
- 8) different stormwater treatment pond and floodplain compensation sites from the original PD&E recommended alternatives,
- 9) overall net reduction in project ROW needs of approximately 40.38 acres from the approved PD&E concept, with only one additional parcel impacted, and
- 10) reduction of one residential relocation within original PD&E Segment 2.

D. Project or project segment(s) being evaluated

FAP Number	FM Number	Project/ Segment Name	Project/ Segment Location	Type				Project/ Segment Letting Type	Funding
				PE	DC	ROW	CON		
	419344-3-43-01	SR 710 FROM US 441 TO L-63	District 1 - OKEECHOBEE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Design-Bid- Build	Federal

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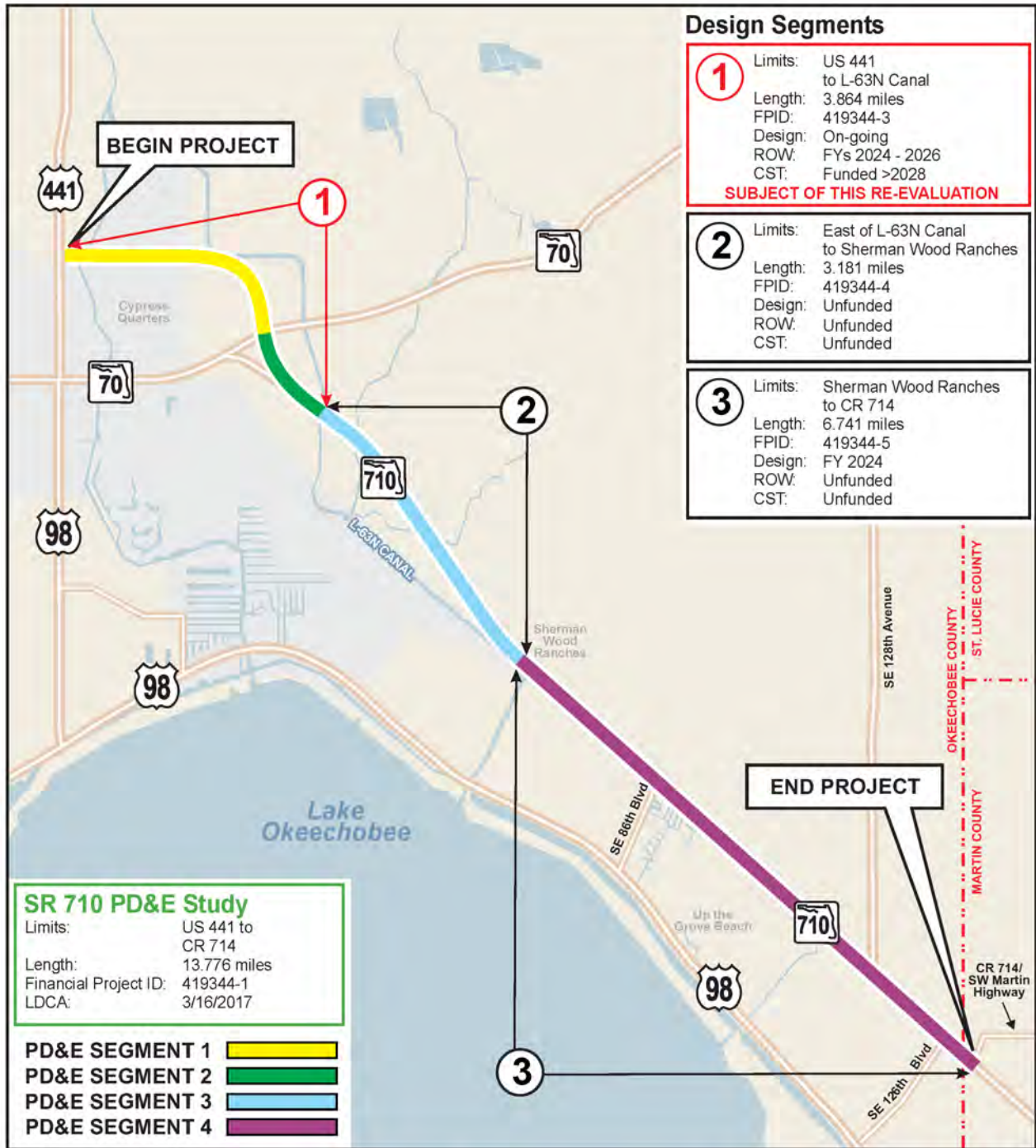
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2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) completed a PD&E study to evaluate improvement alternatives for State Road (SR) 710 between US 441 in Okeechobee County and County Road (CR) 714 in Martin County (see **Figure 1**), a distance of approximately 12.7 miles. The Preferred Alternative's proposed improvements consist of a four-lane roadway on new alignment from US 441 to SR 710 just west of the South Florida Water Management District's (SFWMD) L-63N Interceptor Canal and widening the existing two-lane SR 710 to a four-lane roadway from just west of the L-63N Interceptor Canal to CR 714. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved the Environmental Assessment/ Finding of No Significant Impacts (EA/FONSI) which documented the Preferred Alternative and associated impacts on March 16, 2017.

The original SR 710 PD&E study included four separate segments (1-4). However, the current project phasing of these four PD&E segments for Design, ROW and Construction is being carried forward under three project segments/Financial Project ID (FPID) #s (see **Figure 1**). PD&E Northern Segments 1 and 2 and the L-63N Interceptor Canal Bridge crossing (within PD&E Segment 3) are being completed under FPID# 419344-3 as Design Segment 1. Middle PD&E Segment 3 (Design Segment 2) is being completed under FPID# 419344-4. Southern PD&E Segment 4 (Design Segment 3) is being completed under FPID# 419344-5.

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State Road 710 PD&E Study
US 441 to CR 714 (Martin Highway)
Okeechobee/Martin Counties, Florida
Financial Project ID: 419344-2-22-01
Federal Project ID: N/A



Figure 1

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For Design Segment 1, the project Design phase is on-going, ROW acquisition is funded for FDOT fiscal years (FYs) 2024-2026, and the Construction phase is funded beginning in FY 2029. Design Segment 2 is not currently funded. The Design phase for Segment 3 is anticipated to begin in FY 2024, with no subsequent phases funded at this time.

Existing Conditions

The existing SR 710 is functionally classified by FDOT as an urban other principal arterial from SR 70 to the L-63N Interceptor Canal Bridge and as a rural principal arterial - other from the L-63N Interceptor Canal Bridge to the Martin County Line. The existing SR 710 roadway from SR 70 to CR 714 is classified by FDOT as Access Classification 4.

The existing SR 710 typical section is a two-lane rural section with four-foot paved shoulders along the outside and open drainage swales. There are turn lanes provided at some intersections along the corridor. The posted speed limit is 60 mph through most of the corridor; however, it reduces to 55 mph, 45 mph and then to 35 mph approaching the SR 70 intersection. There are no sidewalks or designated bicycle facilities; however, paved shoulders are provided along the entire existing project length.

There are five bridge structures (three bridges and two bridge culverts) within the original EA/FONSI limits. These are located at the L-63N Interceptor Canal, Mosquito Creek, Nubbin Slough, Henry Creek and Lettuce Creek. All bridges cross waterways and carry one lane of traffic in each direction.

2019 Re-evaluation

On August 30, 2018, the FDOT District One held a public hearing for Segment 1 of the original PD&E Study, extending from SR 710 at the L-63N Interceptor Canal north to the proposed intersection at US 441, a distance of approximately 3.8 miles. As stated during the PD&E study, PD&E Segments 1 and 2 (Design Segment 1) will serve as a bypass route to reduce traffic congestion at the existing US 441/SR 70 intersection and reduce semi/tractor-trailer traffic through the City of Okeechobee. This hearing was held to present changes in project design, ROW needs, and access management changes made since the original March 2017 EA/FONSI approval (see **Figure 2** attached). During this hearing, the public was provided an opportunity to review and provide comments on the project's potential impacts to the social, cultural, natural, and physical environment.

As shown at the prior public hearing and discussed in the 2019 Re-evaluation, the SR 710 new alignment portion from US 441 to SE 40th Avenue will consist of a four-lane divided urban and high-speed urban roadway, with two 12-foot travel lanes in each direction, a 30-foot median and curb along both the median and outside lanes. The project will also include 6.5-foot bicycle lanes along the outside roadway shoulder in both directions, a 10-foot shared use path along the north side of the roadway, and a 6-foot sidewalk along the south side. The required ROW width is 160 feet. The design speed will be 40 mph between the new intersection at US 441 and Taylor Creek and 50 mph elsewhere. The new alignment portion will include the construction of a new triple 12-foot x 14-foot concrete box culvert at Taylor Creek (0.2-mile east of the new SR 710/US 441 intersection). The SR 710 new alignment portion will construct new signalized intersections with US 441, SR 70, and SE 40th Avenue. A new intersection will be created at NE 32nd Avenue just north of NE 11th Lane. In addition, an intersection will be created within the existing SR 710 ROW at Center Street.

This project will also widen existing SR 710 from SE 40th Avenue to the project segment's southern terminus, approximately 0.26-mile south of the L-63N Interceptor Canal. The existing SR 710 typical section is a two-lane rural section with four-foot paved shoulders along the outside and open drainage swales. This portion will be widened to a four-lane divided high-speed urban roadway having the same dimensions as discussed above. A new two-lane bridge will be constructed over the L-63N Interceptor Canal to the north of the existing bridge to convey the future SR 710 northbound

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traffic. The design speed will range from 50 mph to 65 mph (south of the canal only).

Within the Design Segment 1 limits, the project will also construct five offsite stormwater retention ponds (Ponds 1-5) and one offsite floodplain compensation site (FPC 5).

The FDOT is completing another PD&E re-evaluation to document additional minor changes in design and ROW acquisition within Design Segment 1 associated with a partial alignment shift to avoid Okeechobee Utility Authority (OUA) wellfield protection area. The proposed improvements being advanced within this re-evaluation are consistent with those documented in the February 2019 re-evaluation, with differences discussed further in Section 4 of this document.

3. CHANGES IN APPLICABLE LAW OR REGULATION

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

The following changes in the status of federal and state-protected species have occurred since the prior 2019 Re-evaluation approval:

1. The gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*) was included on the federal list of candidate species at the time of the 2019 re-evaluation. As of October 12, 2022, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) found that the status of the gopher tortoise populations in the eastern segment, which includes Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and most of Alabama, does not require protections under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) and will be withdrawn as a candidate for listing in accordance with 50 CFR 17 as published in the Federal Register as 87 CFR 61834.
2. The USFWS updated their Consultation Key for the Florida Bonneted Bat (*Eumops floridanus*) on October 22, 2019. Critical habitat was designated for the species as of November 22, 2022; however, none occurs in the vicinity of the segment being advanced.
3. As of November 9, 2020, the Eastern black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis jamaicensis*) was listed as federally "threatened" under the federal ESA, as amended. Critical habitat has not yet been designated for the species.
4. As of December 17, 2020, the USFWS is considering the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) as a candidate species, warranted for federal listing but precluded at this time due to higher priority listing actions.
5. The USFWS's *Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake* (*Drymarchon couperi*) were most recently updated on March 23, 2021.
6. As of September 13, 2022, the USFWS is considering the tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*) as a candidate species, warranted for federal listing but precluded at this time due to higher priority listing actions.
7. As of February 14, 2023, the USFWS has determined that the U.S. breeding population of wood storks (*Mycteria americana*) no longer faces the imminent threat of extinction and is proposing to remove the species from the endangered species list.
8. As of July 31, 2023, the scientific name for the federally-threatened Audubon's crested caracara was changed to *Caracara plancus*.
9. The Sherman's fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger shermani*) has been renamed to the Southern fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger niger*). The species remains protected as a State Species of Special Concern.

4. EVALUATION OF MAJOR DESIGN CHANGES AND REVISED DESIGN CRITERIA

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

Approximately one mile of the proposed SR 710 extension is being realigned to avoid and minimize impacts to the OUA wellfield protection area, generally within a 400-foot radius around each local well head. Starting approximately 150 feet east of Taylor Creek, the centerline of the road shifts north of the prior 2019 Re-evaluation alignment, before converging

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with the prior alignment east of the proposed Pond 2 site. There is no change in the proposed roadway typical section. The maximum difference between the two alignments is 275 feet, occurring near Station 536+00. Refer to **Figure 3** (attached) for a comparison of the original and realigned roadway design. The changes in roadway alignment acreage for the current design requires approximately one acre more of ROW acquisition than the 2019 Re-evaluation design.

As a result of the northern shift of the roadway alignment, the proposed location of Pond 2 required re-design. The footprint for Pond 2 was shifted slightly and its acreage was reduced. A 9.51-acre parcel acquisition (affecting two parcels with one property owner) was required for the 2019 Pond 2 design. For the updated Pond 2, approximately 9.32 acres of parcel acquisition is now required. The same parcels and property owner are affected with the Pond 2 redesign as was originally affected in the 2019 Re-evaluation. The parcel area being acquired includes the entire pond footprint, area necessary to tie down to existing ground and the outfall swale west of the pond site. The actual pond footprint, as measured from the outside top of berm, decreased from 8.25 acres (2019 Re-evaluation design) to 7.43 acres (current design).

[\[1 - 419344-3 Full Alignment Figure 2\]](#)

[\[2 - 419344-3 Okeechobee Utility Authority Realignment Figure 3\]](#)

5. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Were there additional public involvement activities? Yes

An opportunity for a public hearing is being provided from **Month XX, through Month YY, 2024. Comments received from the public will be included, when received.**

6. PROJECT or SEGMENT(S) PLANNING CONSISTENCY

Segment FM Number: 419344-3-43-01

Currently Adopted CFP-LRTP	Comments				
Yes	<p>The Heartland Transportation Planning Organization's (TPO) <i>2045 Long Range Transportation Plan</i> (LRTP) was adopted in March 2021. This project is included in their Cost Feasible Plan, Section 10.2- Funding Plan.</p> <p>The latest Heartland TPO <i>Transportation Improvement Program</i> (TIP) for FY2024/25 - FY2028/29 was adopted June 19, 2024. This project is included in the TIP.</p>				
Phase	TIP/STIP	Currently Approved	\$	FY	Comments
PE (Final Design)	TIP	Yes	\$5,376,110	All years.	
PE (Final Design)	STIP	Yes	\$5,380,555	All years.	
R/W	TIP	Yes	\$7,744,914 \$5,969,475 \$14,830,144	2025 2026 All years.	Cost estimates between the TIP and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) are consistent.

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R/W	STIP	Yes	\$7,794,536 \$5,969,475 \$14,830,144	2025 2026 All years.	Cost estimates between the TIP and STIP are consistent.
Construction	TIP	Yes	\$95,730,178 \$95,767,759	2029 All years	Cost estimates between the TIP and STIP are consistent.
Construction	STIP	Yes	\$107,683,184 \$107,720,765	>2027 All years	Cost estimates between the TIP and STIP are consistent.

[\[3 - 419344-3_PlanningConsistencyDocumentation-7_24_24\]](#)

7. EVALUATION OF CHANGES IN IMPACTS

a. SOCIAL & ECONOMIC

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

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

The proposed northern shift of the roadway alignment to avoid impacts to the OUA wellfield will require an additional 1.084 acres of roadway ROW than the alignment documented in the 2019 Re-evaluation.

As a result of the northern shift of the roadway alignment, the proposed location of Pond 2 also required redesign. A 9.51-acre parcel acquisition with one property owner was required for the 2019 Pond 2 design. For the updated Pond 2, approximately 9.32 acres of parcel acquisition is now required. This ROW need includes the entire pond footprint (7.43 acres), as well as additional required area necessary to tie down to existing ground and the outfall swale west of the pond site.

These changes impact two parcels that were previously impacted by the previous 2019 Re-evaluation design. The same property owner is affected with the roadway and Pond 2 re-design.

Is there a change in anticipated relocation(s)? No

Are there changes in impacts to Prime or Unique Farmlands? Yes

Due to the passage of time and potential reclassification of soil units within Okeechobee County, Prime Farmlands consultation, pursuant to 7 CFR Part 658, was reinitiated with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Through coordination with the NRCS, it was determined that Prime Farmlands are located in the project vicinity and within the project's proposed construction footprint. Pursuant to the completed Form NRCS-CPA-106 (dated October 2023) attached, there are nearly 110 acres of Prime Farmlands soils mapped in the project corridor. The proposed SR 710 extension will impact/directly convert approximately 21.53 acres of Prime Farmlands soils. Based on the Relative Value of Farmland scoring completed by the NRCS, and the Total Corridor Assessment scoring completed by the FDOT (as the lead federal agency), the total site assessment scoring (addition of both the NRCS and FDOT scoring values) resulted in a cumulative score of 92.5 points. Per the Farmlands chapter of the PD&E Manual, corridors receiving a total score of less than 160 points need not be given further consideration, and no additional corridors need to be evaluated. Therefore, the FDOT has determined that the proposed improvements will have no significant involvement with or significant impacts to Prime or Unique Farmlands soils, as regulated under the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) of 1981, 7 CFR Part 658.

[\[4 - 419344-3 SR 710 PDE NRCS-CPA-106\]](#)

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Are there changes in impacts to cultural resources pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (historic sites/districts and archaeological sites)? Yes

The State Historical Preservation Officer (SHPO) provided their concurrence that the improvements associated with 2019 Re-evaluation design are anticipated to have no adverse effect on any historical resources on November 14, 2018.

Changes in project design and proposed ROW for the 2023 Realignment resulted in the need for updated archaeological and historical resource surveys, including additional field review and judgmental shovel testing. This updated evaluation, documented in the *Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Update* (June 2024) identifies, records, and evaluates historic resources within the APE that were not 50 years of age at time of the previous surveys. It includes the entire 419344-3 design segment, not just the realignment portion. This document is included in the project file as a support document for this re-evaluation.

As a result of the historical/architectural field survey, ten historic resources were identified within the APE. These include four buildings (Florida Master Site File #'s 8OB00304, 8OB00305, 8OB00415, and 8OB00416) constructed between circa (ca.) 1947 and ca. 1974, one bridge (#8OB00417), and five linear resources (#'s 8OB00269, 8OB00381, 8OB00388, 8OB00418, and 8OB00419). Of the ten historic resources within the APE, nine appear ineligible for listing in the NRHP (#'s 8OB00269, 8OB00304, 8OB00305, 8OB00381, 8OB00388, 8OB00415, 8OB00416, 8OB00417, and 8OB00418). The buildings are common examples of their respective architectural style that have been altered and lack sufficient architectural features. The existing SR 710 bridge over the L-63N Interceptor Canal (FDOT bridge No. 910065) is a common post-1945 concrete bridge found throughout Florida and therefore is excluded from individual Section 106 consideration by the Program Comment for Common Post-1945 Concrete and Steel Bridges (Federal Register 2012:68793). Three linear resources, US 441/SR 15 (#8OB00381), Taylor Creek Canal (#8OB00388), and Okeechobee County Airport Canal (#8OB00418), are common examples of drainage canals or a federal highway found throughout Okeechobee County and Florida as a whole. As such, none appear eligible for listing in the NRHP, either individually or as a part of a historic district.

The segment of L-63N Interceptor Canal (#8OB00419) within the APE appears eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Agriculture. The segment within the APE represents a later component of the Central and South Florida Flood Control Project to improve and modify the Lake Okeechobee drainage system. The canal was developed within a rural setting as an ongoing process of draining the land for agricultural development and habitable settlement. However, the segment of the L-63N Interceptor Canal (#8OB00419) within the APE, does not appear eligible under Criterion C in the area of Engineering. The portion within the APE does not contain any water control structures and is only a fragment of the whole L-63N Interceptor Canal system that lacks unique design attributes and innovative engineering features. The proposed roadway improvements at the two locations include widening the existing SR 710 bridge over the L-63N Interceptor Canal (FDOT Bridge No. 910065) and the new SR 710 realignment to avoid impacts to the OUA wellfield. The roadway realignment will shift the outer ROW of the proposed SR 710 north, approximately 230-feet from the L-63N Interceptor Canal; however, the roadway will not intersect or impact the canal at this location. The southern segment of the L-63N Interceptor Canal is where the existing SR 710 bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910065) will be widened. The proposed improvement at this location will leave the existing bridge in place and widen the northbound portion of the bridge. By widening the bridge, two northbound lanes will be added, and the existing bridge will be converted into two southbound lanes. The substructure of the bridge expansion

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will include four new concrete bents with five squared concrete columns that will be located within the canal. The material and design will remain in keeping with the existing substructure materials. The existing bridge has four concrete bents containing five squared concrete columns located within the canal and the embankments are lined with concrete. In addition, other bridges are located within the vicinity, such as the two bridges for SR 70 to the north, which are also supported by several columns located within the canal and have embankments lined with rubble riprap. The scope of work at this location remains in keeping with the existing bridge design and will not result in further physical destruction, damage, or alteration of all or part of the canal for which it appears eligible for listing in the NRHP. Therefore, it is the FDOT's understanding that the proposed undertaking will have *no adverse effect* to the L-63N Interceptor Canal (#8OB00419).

The FDOT has determined that the proposed improvements will have no adverse effect on any resources listed or eligible for listing in the NRHP. The *Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Update* was submitted to the SHPO on (*insert DATE*). The SHPO provided their concurrence with these findings on (*insert DATE*). The SHPO concurrence letter will be attached, when received.

Are there changes in effects to Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act protected resources or other protected public lands? No

Within the segment being advanced, the FHWA made the finding on February 19, 2014, that the "use" of the SFWMD L-63 Interceptor Canal ROW constitutes a *de minimis* impact, as defined in 23 CFR 774.17.

As documented in the 2019 Re-evaluation, the current design proposes two separate two-lane bridge structures that includes widening of the existing bridge and construction of a new northbound bridge. The out-to-out bridge widths for the bridges are 66'-10" and 52'-10", respectively, and the bridges are separated by a 10'-8" open median (i.e., a 130'-4" total out-to-out distance). The FDOT will not acquire any L-63N Interceptor Canal ROW. However, the FDOT will coordinate with the SFWMD for a ROW Occupancy permit, due to the need to use approximately 0.83 acre of the L-63N Interceptor Canal ROW. Therefore, based on impact reduction and a lack of ROW acquisition, the prior Section 4(f) *de minimis* determination made during the PD&E study for the use of the SFWMD L-63N Interceptor Canal ROW remains applicable.

Are there changes in impacts to lands purchased under Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act? N/A

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

c. NATURAL

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

Protected Species and Habitat

As documented in the 2019 Re-evaluation, based on desktop reviews and field surveys conducted between September 2013 and May 2017, the FDOT determined that the construction of the proposed roadway, stormwater management pond and floodplain compensation facility improvements "may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect" the crested caracara, Eastern indigo snake, Everglade snail kite (*Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus*), wood stork, Florida bonneted bat and West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*) and have "no effect" on the Okeechobee gourd (*Cucurbita okeechobeensis*) and Florida grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum floridanus*). The FDOT also determined that the proposed improvements would have no adverse effect for the gopher tortoise, Florida pine snake (*Pituophis melanoleucus mugitus*

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), Florida burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia floridana*), little blue heron (*Egretta caerulea*), tricolored heron (*Egretta tricolor*), Florida sandhill crane (*Antigone canadensis pratensis*), Southeastern American kestrel (*Falco sparverius paulus*), Sherman's (now Southern) fox squirrel, bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), and osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*). No federal or state listed plants were noted during field surveys. Commitments (discussed further in Section 8 of this document) were made for the gopher tortoise, eastern indigo snake, bald eagle, wood stork, crested caracara, West Indian manatee and for general listed species resurveys. At the time the 2019 Re-evaluation was completed, coordination with the resource agencies was pending the submittal of environmental resource permit applications, which have since been delayed.

Updated desktop reviews and field survey efforts were completed from January through May 2023 in support of the revised design changes discussed in this re-evaluation. The results of these evaluations are documented in the Natural Resources Evaluation (NRE, dated July 2024) included in the project file. Based on the evaluations conducted and field observations, the NRE maintained "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" (MANLAA) determinations for the Eastern indigo snake, wood stork, crested caracara (observed), Everglade snail kite (observed), and West Indian manatee. "No effect" (NE) determinations were maintained for the Florida grasshopper sparrow and Okeechobee gourd. The active caracara nest observed in the original PD&E study (resulting in a potential jeopardy determination) are not adjacent to the 419344-3 segment being advanced and no active caracara nests were observed adjacent to this segment during prior field surveys conducted in 2018 or 2023.

The effect determination for the Florida bonneted bat is being revised from "MANLAA" to "NE" since a full acoustic/roost field survey was conducted and the results show no Florida bonneted bat activity.

The Eastern black rail was also evaluated as not previously listed during the 2019 Re-evaluation. The species has not been observed within suitable wetland/surface water habitats during field surveys conducted to date for other species. However, methodology-based surveys will be completed for the species prior to project construction in support of the federal wetland dredge and fill permit application package. The purchase of compensatory mitigation credits and creation of stormwater management features (shallow ditches and pond littoral areas) are anticipated to offset wetland habitat impacts for both the Eastern black rail and the wood stork. Therefore, a "MANLAA" determination is anticipated for the Eastern black rail. The final USFWS consultation outcome for this species will be updated within the future Construction Advertisement Re-evaluation.

The monarch butterfly and tricolored bat were also addressed as both are proposed for federal listing but have not been officially listed under the federal ESA. If the listing status of either species is elevated by USFWS to Threatened or Endangered prior to project construction and the proposed improvements are located within the consultation area, the FDOT will re-initiate consultation with the USFWS to determine the appropriate survey methodology and address USFWS regulations regarding these species as applicable.

The NRE generally maintains a "no adverse effect anticipated" determination for the species addressed in the 2019 Re-evaluation, with minor exceptions. There is no effect anticipated for the bald eagle as no nests were observed or are otherwise documented within 660 feet of the project limits. Effect determinations were also provided for two new species, the roseate spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*) and reddish egret (*Egretta rufescens*) based on the extent of wetland habitat present and other wading bird species noted during field surveys. "No adverse effect anticipated" determinations were provided for both species, as the combination of compensatory mitigation credit purchase and creation of stormwater management features (shallow ditches and pond littoral areas) are anticipated to offset wetland habitat impacts.

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The NRE (including the aforementioned species effects determinations) was sent to the USFWS and FWC on (**insert DATE**). These agencies provided their concurrence with the FDOT's determinations via correspondence dated (**insert DATE**) and (**insert DATE**), respectively. Copies of the agency concurrence letters will be attached, when received.

Wetlands and Other Surface Waters

The 2019 Re-evaluation identified direct impacts to approximately 5.28 acres of wetlands and 1.13 acres of other surface waters, and secondary impacts to 1.34 acres of wetlands (within a 25-foot buffer extending from the edge-of-ROW). The Wetland Rapid Assessment Procedure (WRAP) functional loss assessment completed for these impacts estimated that 2.57 state and 2.21 federal mitigation credits were needed to offset wetland impacts.

The proposed design changes documented in this re-evaluation will directly impact approximately 6.68 acres of wetlands and 1.73 acres of other surface waters, and secondarily impact 2.12 acres of wetlands. The WRAP functional loss assessment completed for these updated impacts estimates that 3.81 state mitigation credits (consisting of 2.08 forested credits and 1.73 herbaceous credits) will be necessary. However, based on recent changes in federal regulations, specifically with regards to federal wetland jurisdiction and regulatory authority following the Supreme Court's Sackett v. EPA, 2023 ruling and conforming Waters of the US (WOTUS) rule, all wetlands within the proposed project limits are anticipated to no longer be federally jurisdictional. This will be confirmed with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as part of the future environmental permitting process and updated as needed in the project's Construction Advertisement Re-evaluation.

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

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

Floodplains

As found in the 2018 design used for the 2019 Re-evaluation, the 100-year floodplain will not be subject to encroachment impacts as significantly as depicted in the original PD&E Location Hydraulics Report (LHR).

With the updated alignment, floodplain impacts were evaluated in an LHR Memo (dated July 2024), available in the project file. There are FEMA Zone AE and Zone A floodplains within the project limits. Zone AE floodplains are located at the Taylor Creek and L-63N crossing and Taylor Creek is a Regulatory Floodway. There is a Zone A floodplain in the vicinity of proposed Pond 5. The proposed improvements impact only the Zone AE floodplain associated with Taylor Creek. There is still encroachment into the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 100-year floodplain due to the roadway fill at Station 518+00 within Basin 2 (as part of the Taylor Creek crossing), as was found with the 2018 design. However, the floodplain impacts associated with the Taylor Creek crossing have been evaluated through hydraulic analysis to estimate the existing and proposed flow behavior. As no additional fill is being proposed, the encroachment is the same and occurring in a minor section of the floodplain further north. The proposed roadway encroaches into the FEMA 100-year floodplain slightly more (5.44 acres) than the 2018 alignment (4.70 acres) near Taylor Creek. However, the No-Rise Analysis previously performed will be investigated to determine if any updates are needed in order to demonstrate criteria is being met. The floodplain encroachment and provided compensation in Basin 5 remains unchanged with the updated 2023 alignment. The extent of floodplain involvement and offset/compensation of potential impacts will be confirmed with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) within the future State Environmental Resource Permit application.

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FORM****Water Resources**

Involvement with water resources was evaluated within the LHR Memo and a Pond Siting Report (PSR) Memo (dated June 2024), available in the project file.

The 2023 modified Pond 2 design provides a comparable pond shape to the 2018 design and meets freeboard and treatment volume requirements. Water quality treatment and attenuation criteria are still met with the new pond shape. Due to changes in the roadway alignment and profile, the Pond 2 basin area increased, which required a control structure modification to raise the pond's treatment volume weir elevation by 0.1 feet. All other control structure design and geometry remained unchanged. A slight reduction in required ROW (0.19 acre) is achieved with the updated Pond 2 shape. Pond 2 is outside of the City-defined wellfield protection area and therefore, specific pre-treatment as a result of the wellfield is not required.

One (1) cross drain, located at Station 551+20, was affected by the 2023 OUA wellfield avoidance realignment, with its location moving 252 feet northeast. However, its size, length and invert elevations remained unchanged. The peak stages were analyzed at all off-site locations to ensure the post-development peak stages are at or below the predevelopment peak stages and that no adverse impacts are associated with the proposed improvements. Stages and flows of the updated Interconnected Channel and Pond Routing (ICPR) modeling indicate conditions that are similar to and generally improved from the 2018 design which supported the 2019 Re-evaluation.

The design of project stormwater treatment and conveyance facilities will be confirmed with the SFWMD within the future State Environmental Resource Permit application.

Sole Source Aquifer

The entire project limits are located over the Biscayne Aquifer Sole Source Aquifer (SSA) Streamflows and Recharge Sources Zone (SSA# 34b). There are seven (7) wells operated by the OUA adjacent to the south side of the northern portion of the SR 710 extension (new alignment portion), east of US 441 and Taylor Creek. Based on coordination with the OUA and in accordance with the City of Okeechobee's Comprehensive Plan and Section 6.02 of Okeechobee County's Land Development Regulations, approximately 1 mile of the proposed SR 710 extension alignment is being relocated to occur outside of the 400-foot wellfield protection radius to the maximum possible extent. This change is being implemented to avoid and minimize potential water quality impacts. The Sole Source Aquifer Checklist and updated Water Quality Impact Evaluation (WQIE) Checklist, both dated December 2023 and available in the project file, were sent to the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Regional 4 representatives on May 10, 2024. Following their review of these materials, the USEPA Region 4's Water Division Manager provided their July 10, 2024 concurrence letter stating that, pending the implementation of various best management practices and adherence to state and federal permitting requirements (outlined in the attached letter), the proposed improvements should have no significant impacts to the aquifer system.

[\[5 - 419344-3 USEPA Sole Source Aquifer Concurrence Ltr_7_10_24\]](#)

d. PHYSICAL

Are there changes in Air Quality? No

**RE-EVALUATION
FORM****What is the status of Highway Traffic Noise?**

An updated traffic noise evaluation has been performed to reflect the 2023 realignment and proposed design changes. This evaluation is documented in the Noise Study Report Addendum No. 2 (dated June 2024), available in the project file. The noise study was performed in accordance with 23 CFR 772, Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise (July 2010) and the FDOT PD&E Manual (July 2023).

With the latest design, the predicted design year (2051) noise levels at the Okeechobee Health Care (OHC) Facility exterior areas of use (10 receptors) range from 48.8 dB(A) to 60.0 dB(A), below the FDOT approach criteria of the NAC of 66 dB(A) for Activity Category C. Therefore, these receptors are not considered impacted by the project and do not require the consideration of noise abatement measures. The predicted interior noise levels at the OHC Facility (4 receptors) range from 34.1 dB(A) to 38.3 dB(A), below the FDOT approach criteria of the NAC of 51 dB(A) for Activity Category D. Therefore, these receptors are not considered impacted by the project and do not require the consideration of noise abatement measures. The predicted design year (2051) noise levels at the remaining single-family residences along the project corridor (10 receptors) range from 49.0 dB(A) to 62.3 dB(A), below the FDOT approach criteria of the NAC of 66.0 dB(A) for Activity Category B. Therefore, these receptors are not considered impacted by the project and do not require the consideration of noise abatement measures. No substantial noise increases are anticipated at any location along the project.

Based on these findings, design year (2051) traffic noise levels for the 2023 realignment alternative are not predicted to approach or exceed the NAC at any noise sensitive sites or result in substantial noise impacts along the project corridor. Therefore, the consideration of noise abatement measures is not warranted for any properties along the project limits. The findings presented in the prior PD&E *Noise Study Report* and the 2018 *Design Phase Traffic Noise Study Technical Memorandum* remain valid.

What is the status of Contamination?

A *Contamination Technical Memorandum* (dated December 2023), available in the project file, was prepared as part of the current re-evaluation for the 2023 Realignment design. The *Contamination Technical Memorandum* re-evaluated the status of potential contamination involvement for the entire 419344-3 design segment, not just the realignment portion. This document update reaffirmed the 5 "Low"-risk and 3 "Medium"-risk determinations (Raulerson Hospital, Townstar #40 gas station and Florida Power and Light Okeechobee Service Center) made for the 2019 Re-evaluation. Two additional potential contamination sites were identified during this re-evaluation effort. These included "Low"-risk ratings for Boral Roofing (1289 NE 9th Avenue) and the existing SR 710 Bridge (#910065) over the L-63N Interceptor Canal.

The *Contamination Technical Memorandum* also provides updated risk ratings for the five proposed pond sites (#s 1-5). This technical memorandum maintains the "No" -risk ratings for Ponds 1, 3 and 5 as provided in the 2018 *Final Level II Field Screening Report-Preferred Ponds*. However, risk determinations were updated for Ponds 2 and 4. Pond 2 was updated from "No" to "Low"-risk due to the minor geometrical changes proposed. Pond 4 was revised from "No" to "Medium"-risk due to the potential for buried debris preliminarily noted from borings in the south-central portion of Pond 4.

No additional action is recommended for the sites that are assigned a risk rating of "No" or "Low". The four sites receiving a "Medium"-risk rating will be reviewed once final construction plans are available to determine if additional testing is necessary.

Are there changes in impacts to Utilities and Railroads? No

RE-EVALUATION FORM

Are there changes in impacts to Navigation? N/A

8. COMMITMENT STATUS

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

Are there new environmental commitments? No

[\[6 - 419344-3 ProjectCommitmentRecordReport_12_13_23\]](#)

9. STATUS OF PERMITS

Federal

Segment	Name	Descriptor	Status	Date
419344-3-43-01	USACE Section 10 or Section 404 Permit		Needed	
419344-3-43-01	USACE Section 408		Needed	

State

Segment	Name	Descriptor	Status	Date
419344-3-43-01	DEP or WMD Environmental Resource Permit (ERP)		Needed	
419344-3-43-01	WMD Right of Way Permits		Needed	
419344-3-43-01	FWC Gopher Tortoise Relocation Permit		Needed	
419344-3-43-01	DEP National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit		Needed	

Local

None anticipated.

Other

None anticipated.

Comment/explanation if permit listed in original Environmental Document is no longer required.

As Taylor Creek remains a federally-retained water, project Section 404 permitting will be coordinated further with the USACE. The status of federal and state permits will be updated as needed in the project's Construction Advertisement Re-evaluation.

The project's need for a Sovereign Submerged Land (SSL) easement and USACE Section 408 Civil Works Permit at Taylor Creek will be confirmed as part of the future environmental permitting process.

10. CONCLUSION

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

11. DISTRICT REVIEW AND APPROVAL

**RE-EVALUATION
FORM****Name and title of FDOT Preparer:** Jeffrey W. James, Environmental Manager

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

 District approving authority or designee

Date

12. OEM CONCURRENCE

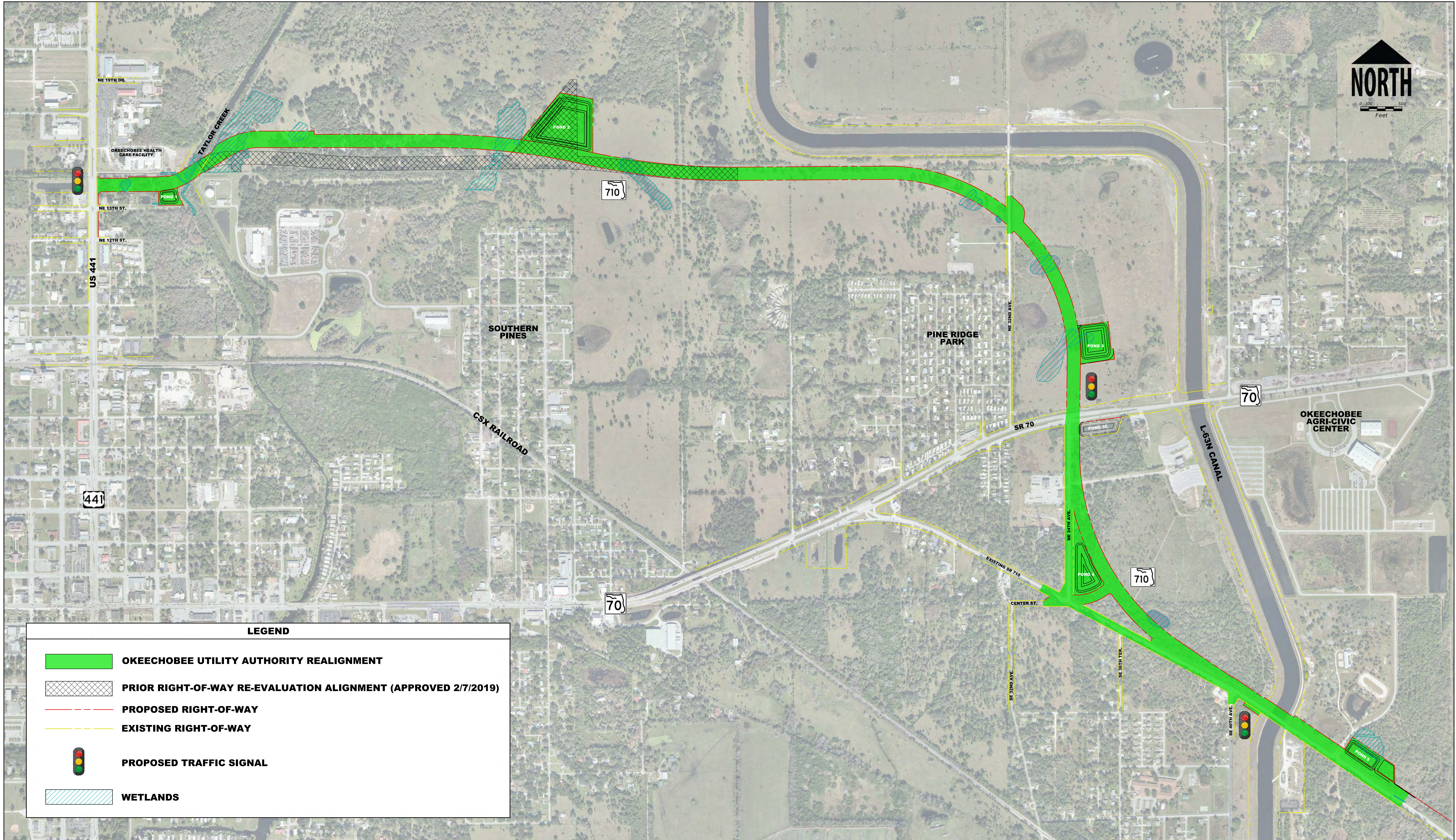
 Print Name

Date






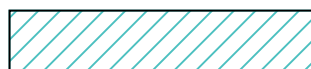
Director of the Office of Environmental Management or Designee

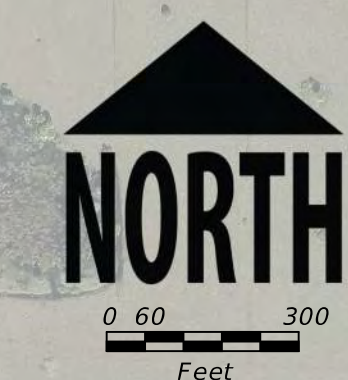
13. Links to Supporting Documentation

- 1 - [41934422101-EA-D1-419344-3_Full_Alignment_Figure_2-2023-1204.pdf](#)
- 2 - [41934422101-EA-D1-419344-3_Okeechobee_UTILITY_Authority_Realignment_Figure_3-2023-1204.pdf](#)
- 3 - [41934422101-EA-D1-419344-3_PlanningConsistencyDocumentation-7_24_24-2024-0723.pdf](#)
- 4 - [41934422101-EA-D1-419344-3_SR_710_PDE_NRCS-CPA-106-2023-1108.pdf](#)
- 5 - [41934422101-EA-D1-419344-3_USEPA_SSA_Concurrence_Ltr_7_10_24-2024-0710.pdf](#)
- 6 - [41934422101-EA-D1-419344-3_ProjectCommitmentRecordReport_12_13_23-2023-1213.pdf](#)



LEGEND

-  **OKEECHOBEE UTILITY AUTHORITY REALIGNMENT**
-  **PRIOR RIGHT-OF-WAY RE-EVALUATION ALIGNMENT (APPROVED 2/7/2019)**
-  **PROPOSED RIGHT-OF-WAY**
-  **EXISTING RIGHT-OF-WAY**
-  **PROPOSED TRAFFIC SIGNAL**
-  **WETLANDS**



TAYLOR CREEK

441

710

POND 2

L-63N CANAL





POND 1

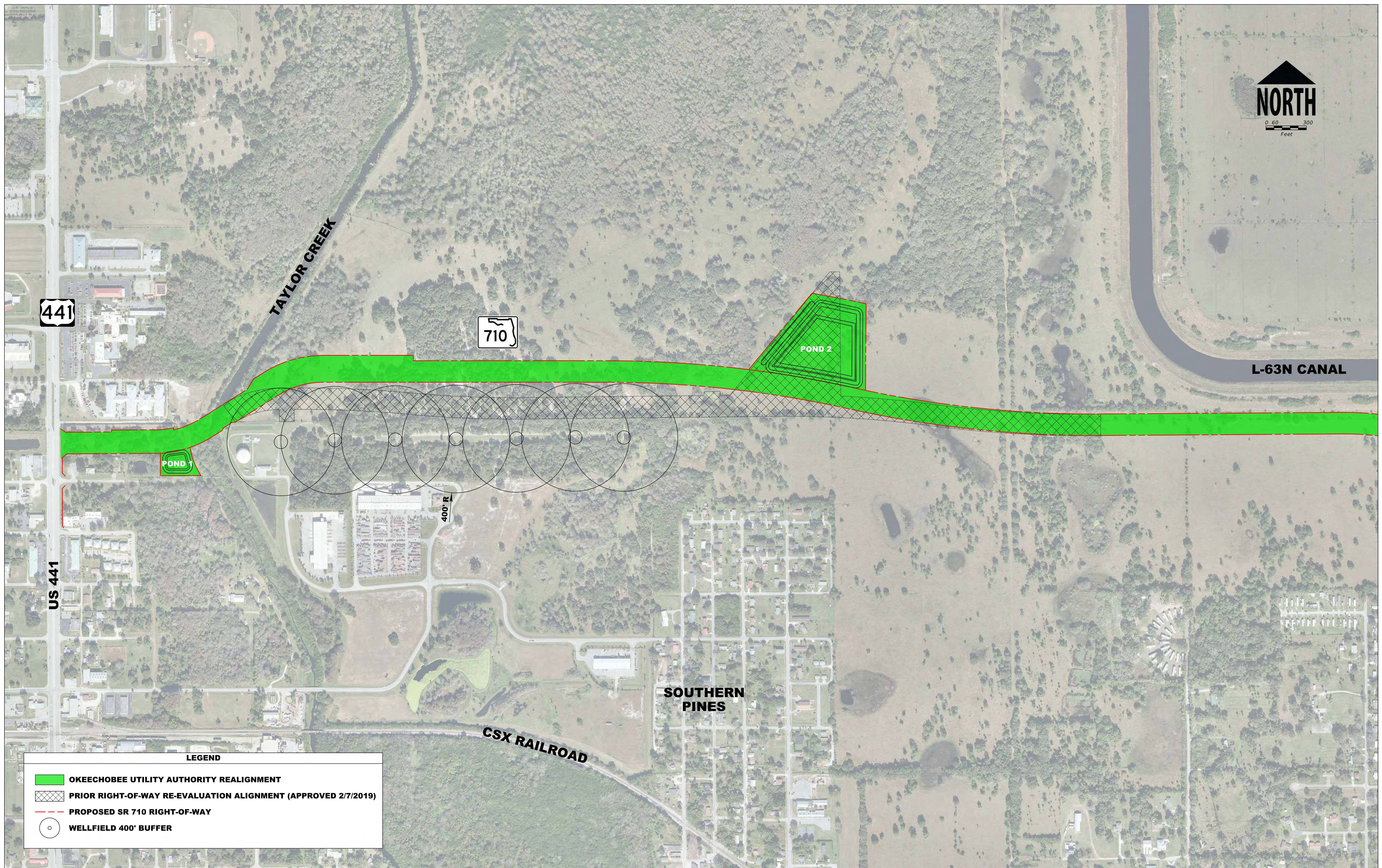
400' R

SOUTHERN PINES

CSX RAILROAD

LEGEND

-  OKEECHOBEE UTILITY AUTHORITY REALIGNMENT
-  PRIOR RIGHT-OF-WAY RE-EVALUATION ALIGNMENT (APPROVED 2/7/2019)
-  PROPOSED SR 710 RIGHT-OF-WAY
-  WELLFIELD 400' BUFFER





2045

Long Range Transportation Plan

HRTPO 2045 Cost Feasible Plan

							Project Cost in Year of Expenditures (in thousands)											
							Committed Funding 2021-2025			Future Funding 2026-2030			Future Funding 2031-2035			Future Funding 2036-2045		
County	Facility	From	To	Description	Full Project Cost in PDC	Funding Source	Design	ROW	CST	Design	ROW	CST	Design	ROW	CST	Design	ROW	CST
Other Arterials (OA) Funded Projects (Now known as Other Roads Construction & ROW)																		
DeSoto	CR 769 (Kings Hwy)	Charlotte CL	Peace River Street	Widen to 4 lanes	\$39,717	State and Federal	\$3,250				\$3,945	\$41,555						
DeSoto	SR 31	SR 70	US 17	New Roadway (2 lanes)	\$33,218	State and Federal	\$4,350				\$7,280				\$31,479			
Highlands	SR 70 ¹	US 27	CR 29	Widen to 4 lanes	\$28,009	State and Federal				\$5,940				\$6,200				\$37,925
Highlands	SR 70 ¹	CR 29	Lonesome Island Rd	Widen to 4 lanes	\$45,798	State and Federal				\$6,600				\$6,200				\$71,750
Highlands	US 98	US 27	Airport Rd	Widen to 4 lanes	\$53,219	State and Federal		\$8,340			\$7,176	\$47,509						
Highlands	W College Dr	Memorial Dr	US 27	Add Lanes and Reconstruct	\$7,851	State and Federal			\$7,851									
Okeechobee	SR 710	US 98	US 441	New Roadway (4 lanes)	\$47,390	State and Federal	\$2,080			\$9,082				\$9,424	\$53,367			
Okeechobee	SR 710	US 70	SR 98	New Roadway (4 lanes)	\$51,130	State and Federal				\$8,908				\$11,284				\$74,743
Okeechobee	CR 714/Martin Hwy ²	E of SR 710	Okeechobee County	Roadway Realignment	\$9,332	State and Federal				\$4,145	\$5,987	\$3,592						
Set aside for Congestion Management					\$12,000	State and Federal				\$1,320			\$1,550					\$20,500
Set aside for Complete Streets & Trails					\$12,000	State and Federal				\$1,320			\$1,550					\$20,500
Set aside for SR 70 E of Lonesome Island to NW 38th Terrace Safety and/or PD&E in Select Locations ³					\$4,000	State and Federal							\$6,200					
Fully Funded Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Projects																		
Hendry	SR 29	CR 80A (Cowboy Way)	CR 731 (Whidden Rd)	Widen to 4 lanes	\$138,108	State and Federal		\$9,812										\$232,540
Highlands	SR 70	Jefferson Ave	US 27	Widen to 4 lanes	\$36,509	State and Federal				\$8,580				\$6,200				\$39,588
Okeechobee	SR 710	US 441	L-63 Canal	New Roadway (4 lanes)	\$62,326	State and Federal		\$7,055			\$9,313				\$77,674			
Okeechobee	SR 710	E. of L-63 Canal	Sherman Woods Ranches	Widen to 4 lanes	\$33,288	State and Federal	\$50				\$9,313				\$39,588			
Okeechobee	SR 710	Sherman Woods Ranches	Okeechobee / Martin CL	Widen to 4 lanes	\$57,974	State and Federal	\$6,550							\$13,831				\$85,811

PDC: Present Day Cost
YOE: Year of Expenditure
Design: Includes Project Development and Environment (PD&E) and Preliminary Engineering (PE)
ROW: Right-of-Way
CST: Construction
CL: County Line

Full Investment Costs in Year of Expenditure Dollars in the Heartland Region (in thousands)				
Other Arterials (OA) Total	\$25,871	\$155,916	\$127,408	\$225,418
Allocated Transit Total	\$25,500	\$32,220	\$35,220	\$73,300
Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Total	\$23,467	\$27,205	\$137,293	\$369,600
Total	\$74,838	\$215,341	\$299,921	\$668,318

Other Arterials (OA) Revenue Forecast and LRTP Funded Projects					
	2021-2025	2026-2030	2031-2035	2036-2045	All Years
OA ROW and CST LRTP Funded Phases⁴	\$16,191	\$111,531	\$121,208	\$225,418	\$527,880
OA ROW and CST Revenue Forecast⁵	\$84,430	\$102,560	\$110,650	\$230,240	\$474,348
Balance	\$68,239	(\$8,971)	(\$10,558)	\$4,822	\$53,532

¹The HRTPO will use OA funds to ensure the continued funding of priority SR 70 projects. If SIS funds become available in a future SIS plan for these priority projects, the HRTPO will reprogram the OA funds.

²CR-714/Martin Highway realignment project to enhance safety is one of top priority projects (Tier 1) for Martin MPO and shown as funded in 2026-2030 in the Martin in Motion, 2045 LRTP.



Transportation Improvement PROGRAM

DESOTO • GLADES • HARDEE • HENDRY • HIGHLANDS • OKEECHOBEE



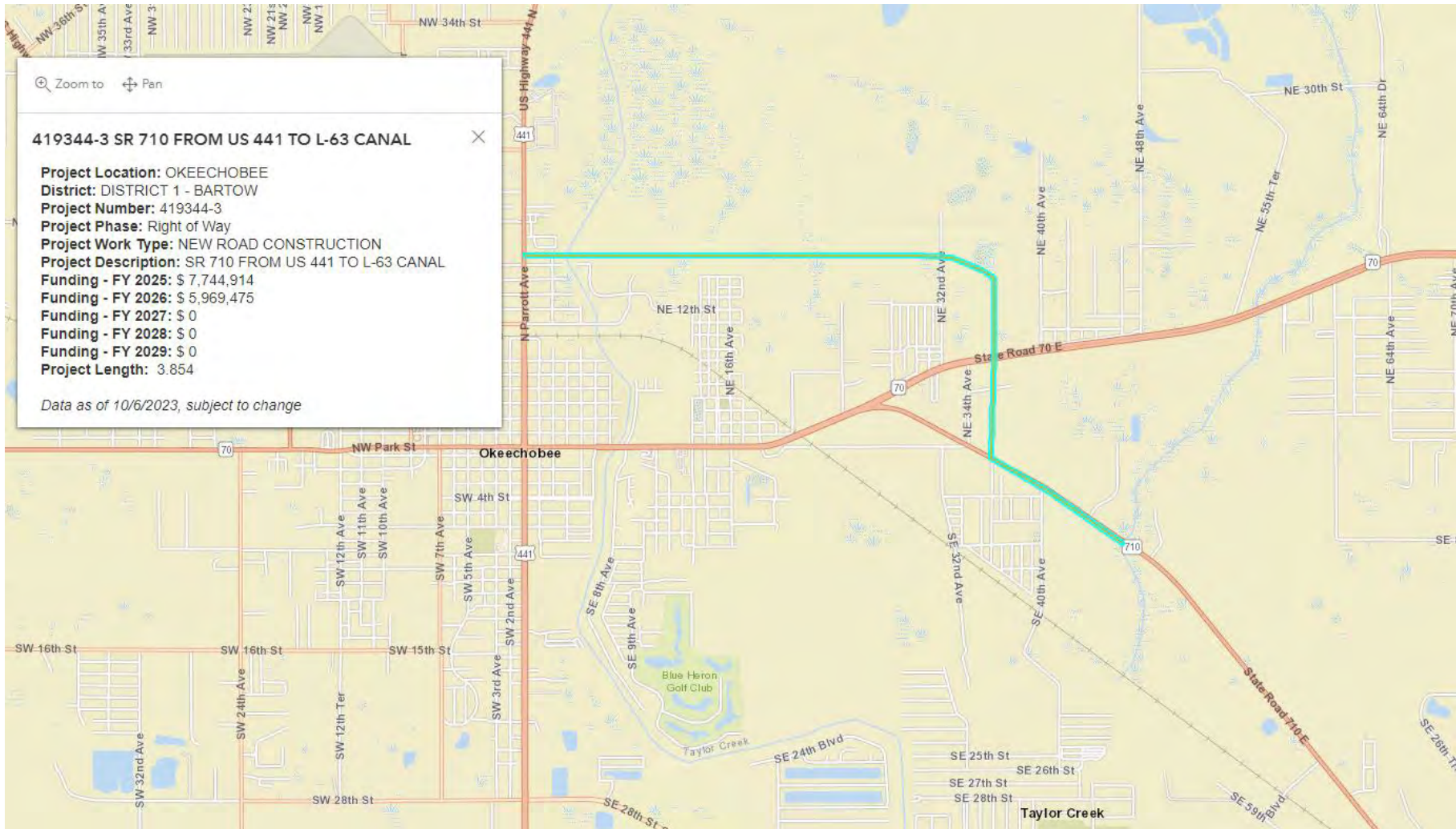
FISCAL YEARS 2024/25 - 2028/29

Adopted 6/19/24

heartlandregionaltpo.org

Okeechobee County SR-710 Current Projects

Currently, there is a major new road extension project that is funded for construction in 2029. **(FM# 419344-3 SR 710 FROM US 441 TO L-63 CANAL)** Upon completion, the SR 710 extension from US 441 to the L-63N Interceptor Canal will consist of two travel lanes in each direction with curb along both the median and outside lanes. The posted speed will be 45 mph. The posted speed will reduce to 40 mph near the new intersection at US 441. The SR 710 extension will include bicycle lanes, sidewalk along the south side of the roadway, and a shared use path along the north side of the roadway. The SR 710 extension will have new signals at the intersections with US 441, SR 70, and SE 40th Avenue.



Source: <https://www.swflroads.com/project/419344-3>

Item Number: 419344 3		Project Description: SR 710 FROM US 441 TO L-63 CANAL							*SIS*	
County: OKEECHOBEE		District: 01								
Type of Work: NEW ROAD CONSTRUCTION										
Project Length: 3.854MI				Fiscal Year						
Phase / Responsible Agency L RTP Page B.2		<2025	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	>2029	All Years	
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING / MANAGED BY FDOT										
Fund Code:	DDR-DISTRICT DEDICATED REVENUE	4,710,508							4,710,508	
	DIH-STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT	192,670							192,670	
	DS-STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAYS & PTO	472,932							472,932	
Phase: PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING Totals		5,376,110							5,376,110	
RIGHT OF WAY / MANAGED BY FDOT										
Fund Code:	BNIR-INTRASTATE R/W & BRIDGE BONDS	51,500	6,245,162	5,969,475					12,266,137	
	DDR-DISTRICT DEDICATED REVENUE	868,225	376,313						1,244,538	
	DI-ST. - S/W INTER/INTRASTATE HWY		947,396						947,396	
	DIH-STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT	135,960	176,043						312,003	
	DS-STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAYS & PTO	60,070							60,070	
Phase: RIGHT OF WAY Totals		1,115,755	7,744,914	5,969,475					14,830,144	
RAILROAD & UTILITIES / MANAGED BY FDOT										
Fund Code:	ACNP-ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION NHPP							1,901,000	1,901,000	
	LF-LOCAL FUNDS							525,000	525,000	
Phase: RAILROAD & UTILITIES Totals								2,426,000	2,426,000	
CONSTRUCTION / MANAGED BY FDOT										
Fund Code:	ACNP-ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION NHPP						38,299,107		38,299,107	
	DDR-DISTRICT DEDICATED REVENUE	197							197	
	DS-STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAYS & PTO	37,384							37,384	
	LF-LOCAL FUNDS						30,581		30,581	
	STED-2012 SB1998-STRATEGIC ECON COR						57,400,490		57,400,490	
Phase: CONSTRUCTION Totals		37,581					95,730,178		95,767,759	
Item: 419344 3 Totals		6,529,446	7,744,914	5,969,475			95,730,178	2,426,000	118,400,013	



Florida Department of

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Web Application

Federal Aid Management David Williams - Manager

STIP Project Detail and Summaries Online Report

**** Repayment Phases are not included in the Totals ****

Selection Criteria	
Current STIP Financial Project: 419344 3 County/MPO Area: Heartland Regional TPO	Detail Related Items Shown As Of: 7/23/2024

HIGHWAYS							
Item Number: 419344 2		Project Description: SR 710 FROM US 441 TO MARTIN CO/L					*SIS*
District: 01	County: OKEECHOBEE	Type of Work: PD&E/EMO STUDY			Project Length: 9.922MI		
		Fiscal Year					
Phase / Responsible Agency	<2024	2024	2025	2026	2027	>2027	All Years
P D & E / MANAGED BY FDOT							
Fund Code:	DDR-DISTRICT DEDICATED REVENUE	4,710,508	1,607				4,712,115
	DIH-STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT	182,537	4,342	5,791			192,670
	DS-STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAYS & PTO	472,932	2,838				475,770
Phase: PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING Totals		5,365,977	8,787	5,791			5,380,555
		Fiscal Year					
Phase / Responsible Agency	<2024	2024	2025	2026	2027	>2027	All Years
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING / MANAGED BY FDOT							
Fund Code:	DDR-DISTRICT DEDICATED REVENUE	4,710,508	1,607				4,712,115
	DIH-STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT	182,537	4,342	5,791			192,670
	DS-STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAYS & PTO	472,932	2,838				475,770
Phase: PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING Totals		5,365,977	8,787	5,791			5,380,555

RIGHT OF WAY / MANAGED BY FDOT									
Fund Code:	BNIR-INTRASTATE R/W & BRIDGE BONDS	50,102		6,246,560	5,969,475			12,266,137	
	DDR-DISTRICT DEDICATED REVENUE	868,225		376,313				1,244,538	
	DI-ST. - S/W INTER/INTRASTATE HWY			947,396				947,396	
	DIH-STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT	88,674	62	223,267				312,003	
	DS-STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAYS & PTO	59,070		1,000				60,070	
Phase: RIGHT OF WAY Totals		1,066,071		62 7,794,536	5,969,475			14,830,144	
RAILROAD & UTILITIES / MANAGED BY FDOT									
Fund Code:	ACNP-ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION NHPP						1,901,000	1,901,000	
	LF-LOCAL FUNDS						525,000	525,000	
Phase: RAILROAD & UTILITIES Totals							2,426,000	2,426,000	
CONSTRUCTION / MANAGED BY FDOT									
Fund Code:	ACNP-ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION NHPP						51,878,915	51,878,915	
	DDR-DISTRICT DEDICATED REVENUE	197						197	
	DS-STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAYS & PTO	37,384						37,384	
	LF-LOCAL FUNDS						29,715	29,715	
	STED-2012 SB1998-STRATEGIC ECON COR						55,774,554	55,774,554	
Phase: CONSTRUCTION Totals		37,581					107,683,184	107,720,765	
Item: 419344 3 Totals		6,469,629		8,849 7,800,327	5,969,475		110,109,184	130,357,464	
Item Number:	419344 5						Project Description:	SR 710 FROM SHERMAN WOOD RANCHES TO CR 714 (MARTIN C/L) *SIS*	
District:	01		County:	OKEECHOBEE		Type of Work:	ADD LANES & RECONSTRUCT		
Extra Description:					Project Length:	6.741MI			
					R/W NOT NEEDED				
Fiscal Year									
Phase / Responsible Agency	<2024	2024	2025	2026	2027	>2027	All Years		
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING / MANAGED BY FDOT									
Fund Code:	ACNP-ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION NHPP			84,000				84,000	
Item: 419344 5 Totals				84,000				84,000	
Project Totals		8,396,221	8,849 7,884,327	5,969,475		110,109,184	132,368,056		
Grand Total		8,396,221	8,849 7,884,327	5,969,475		110,109,184	132,368,056		

This site is maintained by the Office of Work Program and Budget, located at 605 Suwannee Street, MS 21, Tallahassee, Florida 32399.

For additional information please e-mail questions or comments to:
 Federal Aid Management
 David Williams: David.Williams@dot.state.fl.us Or call 850-414-4449
 Or
 Denise Strickland: Denise.Strickland@dot.state.fl.us Or call 850-414-4491

[Reload STIP Selection Page](#)

Office Home: [Office of Work Program](#)

**FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING
FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS**

PART I (To be completed by Federal Agency)	3. Date of Land Evaluation Request	4. Sheet 1 of _____
---	------------------------------------	---------------------

1. Name of Project	5. Federal Agency Involved
--------------------	----------------------------

2. Type of Project	6. County and State
--------------------	---------------------

PART II (To be completed by NRCS)	1. Date Request Received by NRCS	2. Person Completing Form
--	----------------------------------	---------------------------

3. Does the corridor contain prime, unique statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form). YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	4. Acres Irrigated Average Farm Size
---	--

5. Major Crop(s)	6. Farmable Land in Government Jurisdiction Acres: _____ %	7. Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: _____ %
------------------	---	--

8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used	9. Name of Local Site Assessment System	10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS
--	---	---

PART III (To be completed by Federal Agency)	Alternative Corridor For Segment			
---	---	--	--	--

	Corridor A	Corridor B	Corridor C	Corridor D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly				
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly, Or To Receive Services				
C. Total Acres In Corridor				

PART IV (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information	
--	--

A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland				
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland				
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted				
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value				

PART V (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative value of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)	
--	--

PART VI (To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))	Maximum Points			
1. Area in Nonurban Use	15			
2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use	10			
3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed	20			
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20			
5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10			
6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	25			
7. Availability Of Farm Support Services	5			
8. On-Farm Investments	20			
9. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	25			
10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10			
TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS	160			

PART VII (To be completed by Federal Agency)	
---	--

Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)	100			
Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160			
TOTAL POINTS (Total of above 2 lines)	260			

1. Corridor Selected:	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project:	3. Date Of Selection:	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
-----------------------	---	-----------------------	--

5. Reason For Selection:

Signature of Person Completing this Part:	DATE
---	------

NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor

CORRIDOR - TYPE SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The following criteria are to be used for projects that have a linear or corridor - type site configuration connecting two distant points, and crossing several different tracts of land. These include utility lines, highways, railroads, stream improvements, and flood control systems. Federal agencies are to assess the suitability of each corridor - type site or design alternative for protection as farmland along with the land evaluation information.

(1) How much land is in nonurban use within a radius of 1.0 mile from where the project is intended?

More than 90 percent - 15 points
90 to 20 percent - 14 to 1 point(s)
Less than 20 percent - 0 points

(2) How much of the perimeter of the site borders on land in nonurban use?

More than 90 percent - 10 points
90 to 20 percent - 9 to 1 point(s)
Less than 20 percent - 0 points

(3) How much of the site has been farmed (managed for a scheduled harvest or timber activity) more than five of the last 10 years?

More than 90 percent - 20 points
90 to 20 percent - 19 to 1 point(s)
Less than 20 percent - 0 points

(4) Is the site subject to state or unit of local government policies or programs to protect farmland or covered by private programs to protect farmland?

Site is protected - 20 points
Site is not protected - 0 points

(5) Is the farm unit(s) containing the site (before the project) as large as the average - size farming unit in the County ?

(Average farm sizes in each county are available from the NRCS field offices in each state. Data are from the latest available Census of Agriculture, Acreage or Farm Units in Operation with \$1,000 or more in sales.)

As large or larger - 10 points
Below average - deduct 1 point for each 5 percent below the average, down to 0 points if 50 percent or more below average - 9 to 0 points

(6) If the site is chosen for the project, how much of the remaining land on the farm will become non-farmable because of interference with land patterns?

Acreage equal to more than 25 percent of acres directly converted by the project - 25 points
Acreage equal to between 25 and 5 percent of the acres directly converted by the project - 1 to 24 point(s)
Acreage equal to less than 5 percent of the acres directly converted by the project - 0 points

(7) Does the site have available adequate supply of farm support services and markets, i.e., farm suppliers, equipment dealers, processing and storage facilities and farmer's markets?

All required services are available - 5 points
Some required services are available - 4 to 1 point(s)
No required services are available - 0 points

(8) Does the site have substantial and well-maintained on-farm investments such as barns, other storage building, fruit trees and vines, field terraces, drainage, irrigation, waterways, or other soil and water conservation measures?

High amount of on-farm investment - 20 points
Moderate amount of on-farm investment - 19 to 1 point(s)
No on-farm investment - 0 points

(9) Would the project at this site, by converting farmland to nonagricultural use, reduce the demand for farm support services so as to jeopardize the continued existence of these support services and thus, the viability of the farms remaining in the area?

Substantial reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted - 25 points
Some reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted - 1 to 24 point(s)
No significant reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted - 0 points

(10) Is the kind and intensity of the proposed use of the site sufficiently incompatible with agriculture that it is likely to contribute to the eventual conversion of surrounding farmland to nonagricultural use?

Proposed project is incompatible to existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland - 10 points
Proposed project is tolerable to existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland - 9 to 1 point(s)
Proposed project is fully compatible with existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland - 0 points



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
South Florida Ecological Services Office
1339 20th Street
Vero Beach, Florida 32960
October 22, 2019

Shawn Zinszer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Post Office Box 4970
Jacksonville, Florida 32232-0019

Subject: Consultation Key for the Florida bonneted bat; 04EF2000-2014-I-0320-R001

Dear Mr. Zinszer:

This letter replaces the December 2013, Florida bonneted bat guidelines provided to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to assist your agency with effect determinations within the range of the Florida bonneted bat (*Eumops floridanus*). This October 2019 revision supersedes all prior versions. The enclosed *Florida Bonneted Bat Consultation Guidelines* and incorporated *Florida Bonneted Bat Consultation Key* (Key) are provided pursuant to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) authorities under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act) (87 Stat. 884; 16 U.S.C.1531 *et seq.*). This letter, guidelines, and Key have been assigned Service Consultation Code: 41420- 04EF2000-2014-I-0320-R001.

The purpose of the guidelines and Key is to aid the Corps (or other Federal action agency) in making appropriate effect determinations for the Florida bonneted bat under section 7 of the Act, and streamline informal consultation with the Service for the Florida bonneted bat when the proposed action is consistent with the Key. There is no requirement to use the Key. There will be cases when the use of the Key is not appropriate. These include, but are not limited to: where project specific information is outside of the scope of the Key, applicants do not wish to implement the identified survey or best management practices, or if there is new biological information about the species. In these cases, we recommend the Corps (or other Federal action agency) initiate traditional consultation pursuant to section 7 of the Act, and identify that consultation is being requested outside of the Key.

This Key uses type of habitat (*i.e.*, roosting or foraging), survey results, and project size as the basis for making determinations of "may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect" (MANLAA) and "may affect, and is likely to adversely affect" (LAA). The Key is structured to focus on the type(s) of habitat that will be affected by a project. When proposed project areas provide features that could support roosting of Florida bonneted bats, it is considered roosting habitat. If evaluation of roosting habitat determines that roosting is not likely, then the area is subsequently evaluated for its value to the species as foraging habitat.

Roosting habitat

The guidelines describe the features of roosting habitat. When a project is proposed in roosting habitat, the likelihood that roosting is occurring is evaluated through surveys (*i.e.*, full acoustic or limited roost). When a roost is expected and the proposed activity will affect that roost, formal consultation is required. This is because the proposed activity is expected to take individuals through the destruction of the roost and the appropriate determination is that the project may affect, and is likely to adversely affect (LAA) the species. When roosting is expected, but all impacts to the roost can be avoided, and only foraging habitat (without roost structure) will be affected, the Service finds that it is reasonable to conclude that the proposed action is not likely to impair feeding, breeding, or sheltering. Thus, the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to affect the Florida bonneted bat (MANLAA).

The exception to this logic path is if the proposed action will affect more than 50 acres of foraging habitat in proximity to the roost. Under this scenario, we anticipate that the loss of the larger amount of foraging habitat near the roost could significantly impair feeding of young and overall breeding (*i.e.*, LAA). Consequently, these projects would require formal consultation to analyze the effect of the incidental take.

If the roost surveys demonstrate that roosting is not likely, the project is then evaluated for its effects to foraging habitat. Our evaluation of these actions is described below. The exception is for projects less than or equal to 5 acres if a limited roost survey is conducted. Limited roost surveys rely on peeping and visual surveys to determine whether roosting is likely. On these small projects, this survey strategy is believed to be more economical and is considered a reasonable effort to evaluate the potential for roosting. The Service acknowledges that this approach is less reliable in evaluating the likelihood of roosting when it is not combined with acoustic surveys. Therefore, when limited roost surveys are conducted for projects that are less than or equal to 5 acres in size and the determination is that roosting is not likely, we conclude that the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the species (MANLAA).

Foraging habitat

The guidelines describe the features of foraging habitat. Data informing the home range size of the Florida bonneted bats is limited. Global Positioning System (GPS) and radio-telemetry data for Florida bonneted bats documents that they move large distances and likely have large home ranges. Data from recovered GPS satellite tags on Florida bonneted bats tagged at Babcock-Webb Wildlife Management Area (BWWMA) found the maximum distance detected from a capture site was 24.2 mi (38.9 km); the greatest path length travelled in a single night was 56.3 mi (90.6 km) (Ober 2016; Webb 2018a-b). At BWWMA, researchers found that most individual locations were within one mile of the roost (point of capture) (Ober 2015). Additional data collected during the month of December documented the mean maximum distance Florida bonneted bats (n=8) with tags traveled from the roost was 9.5 mi (Webb 2018b).

The Service recognizes that the movement information comes from only one site (BWWMA and vicinity), and data are from small numbers (n=20) of tagged individuals for only short periods of time (Webb 2018a-b). We expect that across the Florida bonneted bat's range differences in

habitat quality, prey availability, and other factors will result in variable habitat use and home range sizes between locations. Foraging distances and home range sizes in high quality habitats are expected to be smaller while foraging distances and home range sizes in low quality habitat would be expected to be larger. Regardless, we use these studies as our best available information to evaluate when changes to foraging habitat may have an effect on the species ability to feed, breed, and shelter and subsequently result in incidental take. When considering where most of the nightly activity was observed, we calculate a foraging area centered on a roost with a 1 mile radius would include approximately 2,000 acres, and a foraging area centered on a 9.5 mile radius would encompass approximately 181,000 acres, on any given night.

Given the Service's limited understanding of how the Florida bonneted bat moves throughout its home range and selects foraging areas, we choose to use 50 acres of habitat as a conservative estimate to when loss of foraging habitat may affect the fitness of an individual to the extent that it would impair feeding and breeding. Projects that would remove, destroy or convert less than 50 acres of Florida bonneted bat foraging habitat are expected to result in a loss of foraging opportunities; however, this decrease is not expected to significantly impair the ability of the individual to feed and breed. Consequently, projects impacting less than 50 acres of foraging habitat that implement the identified best management practices in the Key would be expected to avoid take, and the appropriate determination is that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the species (MANLAA).

Next, the Service incorporated the level of bat activity into our Key to evaluate when a foraging area may have greater value to the species. When surveys document high bat activity, we deduce that this area has increased value and importance to the species. Thus, when high bat activity is detected in parcels with greater than 50 acres of foraging habitat, we anticipate that the loss, destruction, or conversion of this habitat could significantly impair the ability of an individual to feed and breed (*i.e.*, LAA); thus formal consultation is warranted.

If surveys do not indicate high bat activity, we anticipate that loss of this additional foraging habitat may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the species (MANLAA). This is because although the acreage is large, the area does not appear to be important at the landscape scale of nightly foraging. Therefore, its loss is not anticipated to significantly impair the ability of an individual to feed or breed.

The exception to this approach is for projects greater than 50 acres when they occur in potential roosting habitat that is not found to support roosting or high bat activity. Under this scenario, the Service concludes that the loss of the large acreage of suitable roosting habitat has the potential to significantly impair the ability of an individual to breed or shelter (*i.e.*, LAA) because the species is cavities for roosting are expected to be limited range wide and the project will impair these limited opportunities for roosting.

Determinations

The Corps (or other Federal action agency) may reach one of several determinations when using this Key. Regardless of the determination, when acoustic bat surveys have been conducted, the Service requests that these survey results are provided to our office to increase our knowledge of

the species and improve our consultation process. Survey results and reports should be transmitted to the Service at FBBsurveyreport@fws.gov or mail electronic file to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Attention Florida bonneted bat surveys, 1339 20th Street, Vero Beach, Florida 32960. When formal consultation is requested, survey results and reports should be submitted with the consultation request to verobeach@fws.gov.

No effect: If the use of the Key results in a determination of “no effect,” no further consultation is necessary with the Service. The Service recommends that the Corps (or other Federal action agency) documents the pathway used to reach the determination in the project record and proceeds with other species analyses as warranted.

May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect (MANLAA): In this Key we have identified two ways that consultation can conclude informally, MANLAA-P and MANLAA-C.

MANLAA-P: If the use of the Key results in a determination of “MANLAA- P,” the Service concurs with this determination based on the rationale provide above, and no further consultation is necessary for the effects of the proposed action on the Florida bonneted bat. The Service recommends that the Corps (or other Federal action agency) documents the pathway used to reach the determination in the project record and proceeds with other species analyses as warranted.

MANLAA-C: If the use of the Key results in a determination of MANLAA-C, further consultation with the Service is required to confirm that the Key has been used properly, and the Service concurs with the evaluation of the survey results. Survey results should be submitted with the consultation request.

May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect (LAA) - When the determination in the Key is “LAA” technical assistance with the Service and modifications to the proposed action may enable the project to be reevaluated and conclude with a MANLAA-C determination. Under other circumstance, “LAA” determinations will require formal consultation.

Working with the Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida, the Service has established a fund to support conservation and recovery for the Florida bonneted bat. Any project that has the potential to affect the Florida bonneted bat and/or its habitat is encouraged to make a voluntary contribution to this fund. If you would like additional information about how to make a contribution and how these monies are used to support Florida bonneted bat recovery please contact Ashleigh Blackford, Connie Cassler, or José Rivera at 772-562-3909.

This revised Key is effective immediately upon receipt by the Corps. Should circumstances change or new information become available regarding the Florida bonneted bat and/or implementation of the Key, the determinations herein may be reconsidered and this Key further revised or amended. We have established an email address to collect comments on the Key and the survey protocols at: FBBguidelines@fws.gov.

Thank you for your continued cooperation in the effort to conserve fish and wildlife resources. If you have any questions regarding this Key, please contact the South Florida Ecological Services Office at 772-562-3909.

Sincerely,



Roxanna Hinzman
Field Supervisor
South Florida Ecological Services

Enclosure

Cc: electronic only

Corps, Jacksonville, Florida (Dale Beter, Muriel Blaisdell, Ingrid Gilbert, Alisa Zarbo, Melinda Charles-Hogan, Susan Kaynor, Krista Sabin, John Fellows)

LITERATURE CITED

Ober, H. 2015. Annual report to USFWS for calendar year 2015. Permit number TE23583B-1. University of Florida, Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, North Florida Research and Education Center. Quincy, Florida.

Ober, H. 2016. Annual report to USFWS for calendar year 2016. Permit number TE23583B-1. University of Florida, Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, North Florida Research and Education Center. Quincy, Florida.

Webb, E.N. 2018a. Email to Paula Halupa *et al.* University of Florida, Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation. Gainesville, Florida. April 1, 2018.

Webb, E.N. 2018b. Presentation given at Florida bonneted bat working group meeting at The Conservancy of Southwest Florida. University of Florida, Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation. Gainesville, Florida. May 24, 2016.

Florida Bonneted Bat Consultation Key[#]

Use the following key to evaluate potential effects to the Florida bonneted bat (FBB) from the proposed project. Refer to the Glossary as needed.

- 1a. Proposed project or land use change is partially or wholly within the Consultation Area (Figure 1).....**Go to 2**
- 1b. Proposed project or land use change is wholly outside of the Consultation Area (Figure 1).....**No Effect**
- 2a. Potential FBB roosting habitat exists within the project area.....**Go to 3**
- 2b. No potential FBB roosting habitat exists within the project area.....**Go to 13**
- 3a. Project size/footprint* \leq 5 acres (2 hectares)..... **Conduct Limited Roost Survey (Appendix C)**
then **Go to 4**
- 3b. Project size/footprint* $>$ 5 acres (2 hectares).....**Conduct Full Acoustic/Roost Surveys (Appendix B)** then
Go to 6
- 4a. Results show FBB roosting is likely**Go to 5**
- 4b. Results do not show FBB roosting is likely.....**MANLAA-P if BMPs (Appendix D) used and survey reports are submitted. Programmatic concurrence.**
- 5a. Project will affect roosting habitat.....**LAA⁺ Further consultation with the Service required.**
- 5b. Project will not affect roosting habitat..... **MANLAA-C with required BMPs (Appendix D). Further consultation with the Service required.**
- 6a. Results show some FBB activity.....**Go to 7**
- 6b. Results show no FBB activity.....**No Effect**
- 7a. Results show FBB roosting is likely.....**Go to 8**
- 7b. Results do not show FBB roosting is likely.....**Go to 10**
- 8a. Project will not affect roosting habitat.....**Go to 9**
- 8b. Project will affect roosting habitat.....**LAA⁺ Further consultation with the Service required.**
- 9a. Project will affect* $>$ 50 acres (20 hectares) (wetlands and uplands) of foraging habitat.....**LAA⁺ Further consultation with the Service required.**
- 9b. Project will affect* \leq 50 acres (20 hectares) (wetlands and uplands) of foraging habitat..... **MANLAA-C with required BMPs (Appendix D). Further consultation with the Service required.**
- 10a. Results show high FBB activity/use.....**Go to 11**
- 10b. Results do not show high FBB activity/use.....**Go to 12**
- 11a. Project will affect* $>$ 50 acres (20 hectares) (wetlands and uplands) of FBB habitat (roosting and/or foraging)..... **LAA⁺ Further consultation with the Service required.**
- 11b. Project will affect* \leq 50 acres (20 hectares) (wetlands and uplands) of FBB habitat (roosting and/or foraging)..... **MANLAA-C with required BMPs (Appendix D). Further consultation with the Service required.**
- 12a. Project will affect* $>$ 50 acres (20 hectares) (wetlands and uplands) of FBB habitat..... **LAA⁺ Further consultation with the Service required.**
- 12b. Project will affect* \leq 50 acres (20 hectares) (wetlands and uplands) of FBB habitat..... **MANLAA-P if BMPs (Appendix D) used and survey reports are submitted. Programmatic concurrence.**



REGION 4

ATLANTA, GA 30303

July 10, 2024

Ms. Nikki Gilmer
Environmental Project Manager
Florida Department of Transportation, District One
801 N. Broadway Avenue
Bartow FL, 33830

Subject: Sole Source Aquifer Review/Concurrence for State Road 710 from US 441 to L-63N Canal, Financial Project ID #419344-3, Okeechobee County, Florida

Dear Ms. Gilmer:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4 received the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) request on May 10, 2024, to review the above referenced project pursuant to Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), [42 U.S.C. § 300h-3](#). The objective of the EPA's review is to determine if the project lies within the boundaries, including recharge and streamflow source zones, of an EPA designated Sole Source Aquifer (SSA), and to determine if the project poses potential adverse health or environmental impacts. A SSA is the sole or principal water source for a designated area.

State Road 710 from US 441 to L-63N Canal project related to roadway improvements including construction of a four lane divided roadway, culvert, and a bridge in the county undertaken by FDOT, has been determined to lie inside the designated boundaries of the Biscayne Sole Source Aquifer and based on the information provided, may cause a significant impact to the aquifer system when the project's road construction and/or construction dewatering are undertaken. However, with proper implementation of best management practices (BMPs), these potential impacts can be adequately reduced or properly mitigated. To that effect, when constructing roads, the FDOT must adhere to the BMPs provide listed below.

1. FDOT Design Manual Chapter 320 Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP)
2. FDOT Standard Specification for Road and Bridge Construction,
 - a. Section 6 – Control of Materials
 - b. Section 104 – Prevention, Control, And Abatement of Erosion and Water Pollution
 - c. Section 455 – Structures Foundations
3. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Engineering Geology Field Manual – Chapter 20 Water Control.
<https://www.usbr.gov/tsc/techreferences/mands/geologyfieldmanual-vol2/Chapter20.pdf>

Furthermore, all debris from any demolition of the existing structures must be properly contained and removed from the site prior to construction of the new structure. If applicable, all county flood plain management plans and public notification processes must be followed. During construction, it is the EPA's understanding and expectation that those responsible for the project will strictly adhere to all Federal, State, and local government permits, ordinances, planning designs, construction codes, operation, maintenance, and engineering requirements, and any contaminant mitigation recommendations outlined by federal and state agency reviews. All best management practices for erosion and sedimentation control must also be followed and State and local environmental offices must be contacted to address proper drainage and storm water designs. Additionally, the project manager should contact State and local environmental officials to obtain a copy of any local Wellhead Protection Plans. The following website provides information regarding the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Source Water Assessment and Protection Program.

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/swapp/Default.html>.

The EPA finds that, if the conditions outlined above are adhered to, this Project should have no significant impact to the aquifer system. Please note that this "no significant impact" finding has been determined based on compliance with the requirements outlined above and, on the information provided. Further, this finding only relates to Section 1424(e) of the SDWA, [42 U.S.C. § 300h-3](#). If there are any significant changes to the project, the EPA Region 4 office should be notified for further review. Other regulatory groups within the EPA responsible for administering other programs may, at their own discretion and under separate cover, provide additional comments.

Thank you for your concern with the environmental impacts of this project. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Jayeeta Chakraborty at 404-562-8845 or Chakraborty.Jayeeta@epa.gov or Mr. Larry Cole at 404-562-9474 or Cole.Larry@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Khurram Rafi, Manager
Groundwater and GIS Section
Safe Drinking Water Branch
Water Division
U.S. EPA, Region 4

cc: Jeffrey James, Project Manager, FDOT, Jeffrey.James@dot.state.fl.us
Michelle Rutishauser, Project Manager, FDOT, Michelle.Rutishauser@dot.state.fl.us
Gordon Mullen, Senior Specialist, FDOT, Gordon.Mullen@dot.state.fl.us

Project Commitments Record

FM:	419344-3	FAP#:	
Project Name:	SR 710 FROM US 441 TO L-63 CANAL		
Environmental Document Type:	EA/FONSI - Environmental Assessment	Environmental Document Approval Date:	3/17/2017

Commitment Title: Okeechobee Utility Authority coordination

Commitment Made To:	Okeechobee Utility Authority	Environmental Commitment:	No
Status:	Commitment In Progress	Affects Any Other Environmental Commitment:	No
Implementation Discipline:	Design	Commitment Approval Date:	3/16/2017
Transmittal Date:	3/16/2017		
Commitment Description:	1. Continued coordination with the Okeechobee Utility Authority (OUA) throughout the design phase to address the backwash pond and any further issues or concerns.		
Comments/Notes: <i>(Most Recent Comment Shown)</i>	12/13/2023 10:44:29 AM - Based on coordination with the OUA and in accordance with the City of Okeechobee's Comprehensive Plan and Section 6.02 of Okeechobee County's Land Development Regulations, approximately 1 mile of the proposed SR 710 extension alignment is being relocated to occur outside of the 400-foot wellfield protection radius to the maximum possible extent. This change is being implemented to avoid and minimize potential water quality impacts.		

Projects Linked to the Commitment

There are no other projects linked to this commitment.

Project Commitments Record

Commitment Title:	Gopher tortoise resurvey/relocation		
Commitment Made To:	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC)	Environmental Commitment:	No
Status:	Commitment In Progress	Affects Any Other Environmental Commitment:	No
Implementation Discipline:	Design	Commitment Approval Date:	3/16/2017
Transmittal Date:	3/16/2017		
Commitment Description:	2. Gopher tortoise: Due to the presence of gopher tortoise habitat within and adjacent to the existing right-of-way (ROW), a gopher tortoise survey in appropriate habitat within construction limits (including roadway footprint and stormwater management ponds) will be performed prior to construction. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will secure any relocation permits needed for this species during the project permitting and construction phases of the project.		
Comments/Notes: <i>(Most Recent Comment Shown)</i>	12/13/2023 11:55:56 AM - Twenty-six (26) potentially occupied gopher tortoise burrows were documented in the 419344-3 project vicinity during Design-phase field surveys. Due to the observation of gopher tortoise burrows within and adjacent to the project footprint, a more detailed survey will be performed prior to construction per FWC requirements. The FDOT will secure any relocation permits needed for this species and relocate the affected tortoises prior to construction commencement.		

Projects Linked to the Commitment

There are no other projects linked to this commitment.

Project Commitments Record

Commitment Title:	Eastern Indigo Snake		
Commitment Made To:	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Environmental Commitment:	No
Status:	Commitment In Progress	Affects Any Other Environmental Commitment:	No
Implementation Discipline:	Construction	Commitment Approval Date:	3/16/2017
Transmittal Date:	3/16/2017		
Commitment Description:	3. Eastern indigo snake: The USFWS' most current Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake will be adhered to during construction of the project.		
Comments/Notes: <i>(Most Recent Comment Shown)</i>	11/9/2018 1:14:30 PM - 11/6/2018: There has been no change in the status of this commitment. The most current version of the USFWS' standard protection measures will be included in the USACE permit and construction contract documents for contractor adherence.		

Projects Linked to the Commitment

There are no other projects linked to this commitment.

Project Commitments Record

Commitment Title:	Bald Eagle		
Commitment Made To:	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Environmental Commitment:	No
Status:	Commitment Fulfilled	Affects Any Other Environmental Commitment:	No
Implementation Discipline:	Design	Commitment Approval Date:	3/16/2017
Transmittal Date:	3/16/2017		
Commitment Description:	4. Bald eagle: Given the proximity of bald eagle nests to the project impact area, the uncertainty of activity status when construction may be scheduled to commence, and the possibility of new nests being identified by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) during yearly surveys, the FDOT will commit to resurveying the project area prior to construction. If any nests within the 660 foot protection zone are deemed active, the FDOT will act in accordance with the BGEPA and MBTA.		
Comments/Notes: <i>(Most Recent Comment Shown)</i>	12/13/2023 11:58:47 AM - Bald eagles were observed flying over the 419344-3 project area and perching on trees and power poles outside of but adjacent to the project during Design-phase field surveys. However, no evidence of nesting was previously documented or observed within 660 feet of the project. If nests are discovered during future project phases, coordination with the USFWS will occur as appropriate.		

Projects Linked to the Commitment

There are no other projects linked to this commitment.

Project Commitments Record

Commitment Title:	Wood Stork		
Commitment Made To:	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Environmental Commitment:	No
Status:	Commitment In Progress	Affects Any Other Environmental Commitment:	No
Implementation Discipline:	Design	Commitment Approval Date:	3/16/2017
Transmittal Date:	3/16/2017		
Commitment Description:	5. Wood stork: Because of the potential for effects to the species, the FDOT is committed to mitigation. The FDOT proposes to acquire credits that provide at least 23.98 kg of wood stork biomass for short-hydroperiod wetlands at the Bluefield Ranch Mitigation Bank (BRMB) to offset project impacts.		
Comments/Notes: <i>(Most Recent Comment Shown)</i>	<p>12/13/2023 12:31:05 PM - Based on refinements to project design, updated wetland delineations and changes in federal wetland jurisdiction, the proposed improvements for the 419344-3 project segment will directly impact approximately 6.68 acres of wetlands and 1.73 acres of other surface waters. Of this 8.41 total impact acreage, 6.78 acres are considered wood stork Suitable Foraging Habitat. A prey foraging habitat assessment was completed for the updated impacts, resulting in approximately 15 kilograms of prey biomass impacts. Of this loss, 3.25 kg are associated with short hydroperiod wetlands and 11.75 kg are associated with long hydroperiod wetlands. In total, 3.81 units of functional loss are estimated for jurisdictional wetland impacts.</p> <p>A portion of the Bluefield Ranch Mitigation Bank's (BRMB) service area falls within the Core Foraging Area of the wood stork colonies affected by the project. Compensatory mitigation to offset these impacts is anticipated to occur through the purchase of wetland mitigation credits from the BRMB. The purchase of 3.81 BRMB wetland mitigation credits has been calculated to provide approximately 21.46 kg of wood stork prey biomass (including 3.61 kg associated with short hydroperiod wetlands and 17.85 kg associated with long hydroperiod wetlands). Based on the surplus of biomass provided within the proposed compensatory mitigation, the proposed improvements are not anticipated to adversely affect the wood stork. These impacts and proposed mitigation will be confirmed during the upcoming environmental permitting process.</p>		

Projects Linked to the Commitment

There are no other projects linked to this commitment.

Project Commitments Record

Commitment Title:	Audubon's Crested Caracara (1)		
Commitment Made To:	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Environmental Commitment:	No
Status:	Commitment In Progress	Affects Any Other Environmental Commitment:	Yes
Implementation Discipline:	Construction	Commitment Approval Date:	3/16/2017
Transmittal Date:	3/16/2017		
Commitment Description:	6. Audubon's crested caracara: Because of the potential for effects to the species, the FDOT is committed to adhering to the requirements of the Incidental Take Statement, Reasonable and Prudent Measures, Terms and Conditions and Reporting Requirements of the USFWS' September 9, 2015 Biological Opinion.		
Comments/Notes: <i>(Most Recent Comment Shown)</i>	12/13/2023 12:36:20 PM - A crested caracara nesting survey was conducted within suitable habitat for the 419344-3 segment being advanced. Surveys were conducted in accordance with the US Fish Wildlife Service's protocol from January 4 through April 26, 2023. Multiple observations of flying and foraging caracara occurred during surveys; however, no nesting behavior was observed, and no nests were documented. Given that the project area contains foraging habitat but is not used for nesting currently, it is expected that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the crested caracara. Based on the lack of observation of active nests, no adverse impacts are anticipated for the species and mitigation is not currently proposed. This will be reviewed again prior to the Construction Advertisement Reevaluation. To the extent applicable, the requirements of the Incidental Take Statement, Reasonable and Prudent Measures, Terms and Conditions and Reporting Requirements of the USFWS' September 9, 2015 Biological Opinion (BO) will be addressed during the project's construction phase with pre-construction monitoring of caracara nesting activity prior to the commencement of construction activities.		

Projects Linked to the Commitment

There are no other projects linked to this commitment.

Project Commitments Record

Commitment Title:	Audubon's Crested Caracara (2)		
Commitment Made To:	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Environmental Commitment:	No
Status:	Commitment In Progress	Affects Any Other Environmental Commitment:	Yes
Implementation Discipline:	Design	Commitment Approval Date:	3/16/2017
Transmittal Date:	3/16/2017		
Commitment Description:	7. Audubon's crested caracara: The FDOT has committed to provide a \$100,000 donation to the Caracara Fund of the Wildlife Foundation of Florida (WFF). Construction shall not commence until the USFWS receives confirmation from the WFF indicating that the funds have been provided and the USFWS in turn informs the FDOT of their receipt of the confirmation.		
Comments/Notes: <i>(Most Recent Comment Shown)</i>	12/13/2023 11:27:55 AM - During the PD&E study, the USFWS determined that the project will adversely affect, but not result in jeopardy to the Audubon's crested caracara based on potential impacts to an active nest documented in PD&E Segment 3 (FPID# 419344-4). No active caracara nests were observed during Design-phase field surveys for PD&E Segment 1-2C (i.e., the 419344-3 Design segment being advanced). Therefore, no adverse impacts or mitigation are anticipated for the 419344-3 Design project segment at this time. This will be reviewed again prior to the Construction Advertisement Reevaluation.		

Projects Linked to the Commitment

There are no other projects linked to this commitment.

Project Commitments Record

Commitment Title:	West Indian Manatee		
Commitment Made To:	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Environmental Commitment:	No
Status:	Commitment In Progress	Affects Any Other Environmental Commitment:	No
Implementation Discipline:	Construction	Commitment Approval Date:	3/16/2017
Transmittal Date:	3/16/2017		
Commitment Description:	8. West Indian manatee: The USFWS' Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work will be implemented for the bridge construction over the Taylor Creek Canal.		
Comments/Notes: <i>(Most Recent Comment Shown)</i>	12/13/2023 11:29:14 AM - There has been no change in the status of this commitment. These standard protection measures will be included in the USACE permit and construction contract documents for contractor adherence.		

Projects Linked to the Commitment

There are no other projects linked to this commitment.

Project Commitments Record

Commitment Title:	Listed species resurvey		
Commitment Made To:	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Environmental Commitment:	No
Status:	Commitment Fulfilled	Affects Any Other Environmental Commitment:	No
Implementation Discipline:	Design	Commitment Approval Date:	3/16/2017
Transmittal Date:	3/16/2017		
Commitment Description:	9. The FDOT will resurvey for listed species (i.e. Florida bonneted bat, Florida sandhill crane, Sherman's fox squirrel, southeastern American kestrel) during the design phase and prior to permitting the project. Coordination with the USFWS and FWC will be initiated as appropriate.		
Comments/Notes: <i>(Most Recent Comment Shown)</i>	12/13/2023 12:40:23 PM - Updated field surveys for state and federally listed/protected flora and fauna were conducted within or adjacent to the 419344-3 project limits between April and May 2023. The results of those surveys are documented in the project's Natural Resources Evaluation (NRE) document, available within the project file as a support document to the current Design Change and Right-of-Way Authorization reevaluation. Based on the findings therein, all federally listed species effect determinations proposed are either "no effect" or "may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect". All state-listed species effect determinations are "no adverse effect anticipated". Based on these determinations, adverse effects are not expected for any of the federal or state protected species evaluated. This commitment will be reevaluated as needed prior to the project's Construction Advertisement reevaluation.		

Projects Linked to the Commitment

There are no other projects linked to this commitment.

Project Commitments Record

Commitment Title:	Consideration of wildlife enhancements		
Commitment Made To:	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Environmental Commitment:	No
Status:	Commitment In Progress	Affects Any Other Environmental Commitment:	No
Implementation Discipline:	Design	Commitment Approval Date:	3/16/2017
Transmittal Date:	3/16/2017		
Commitment Description:	10. Further coordination with USFWS/FWC will occur to consider enhancements to the existing/proposed bridge and box culverts for wildlife during the design phase.		
Comments/Notes: <i>(Most Recent Comment Shown)</i>	12/13/2023 12:45:52 PM - The SR 710 bridge crossing at Taylor Creek is being revised to a triple 12'x14' concrete box culvert crossing based on coordination with the South Florida Water Management District. The SR 710 bridge crossing at the L-63N Interceptor Canal is being revised slightly but will remain a bridge structure. Wildlife crossing features are not currently proposed at either Taylor Creek or the L-63N Interceptor Canal, and the USFWS and FWC have not provided comments or requests to date for wildlife crossing features for the 419344-3 project segment. However, both agencies will have the opportunity to review and comment on the project design during the upcoming federal and state environmental permitting processes. The results of this coordination will be documented in the future Construction Advertisement reevaluation.		

Projects Linked to the Commitment

There are no other projects linked to this commitment.