

S.R. 70 PD&E Study
From C.R. 721 South to C.R. 599/128th Avenue in Highlands and Okeechobee Counties

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<https://www.swflroads.com/project/450334-1>

FDOT, District One, invites you to the S.R. 70 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study public hearing on **Tuesday, December 16, 2025 (in-person) or Thursday, December 18, 2025 (virtual)**. For your convenience, FDOT is providing two ways to participate. All participation options will allow you to view the materials, ask questions, and submit your comments, which will be included in the formal hearing record.



CONTACT INFORMATION

FDOT encourages the public to participate in the S.R. 70 PD&E Study public hearing. If you have questions regarding the project or hearing, please contact the FDOT Project Manager, Kathern Cothern, at:

Email: Kathern.Cothern@dot.state.fl.us
Phone: (863) 519-2331
Mail: Kathern Cothern
Florida Department of Transportation
801 N. Broadway Avenue, MS 1-41
Bartow, FL 33830

While comments about the project are accepted at any time, please send your comments emailed or postmarked by December 31, 2025, to be included in the formal hearing record.

Para Materiales del Proyecto En Español

Para ver este boletín y otros materiales del proyecto en español, visite el sitio web en <https://www.swflroads.com/project/450334-1> o contacte Sra. Karina Della Sera de la Oficina del Departamento de Transporte de Florida por teléfono al (863) 519-2750. También puede usar el correo electrónico: Karina.Dellasera@dot.state.fl.us.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by FDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 26, 2022, and executed by FHWA and FDOT.



Florida Department of Transportation
Highlands and Okeechobee Counties

State Road (S.R.) 70 Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study
From County Road (C.R.) 721 South to C.R. 599/128th Avenue
Financial Project ID No. 450334-1

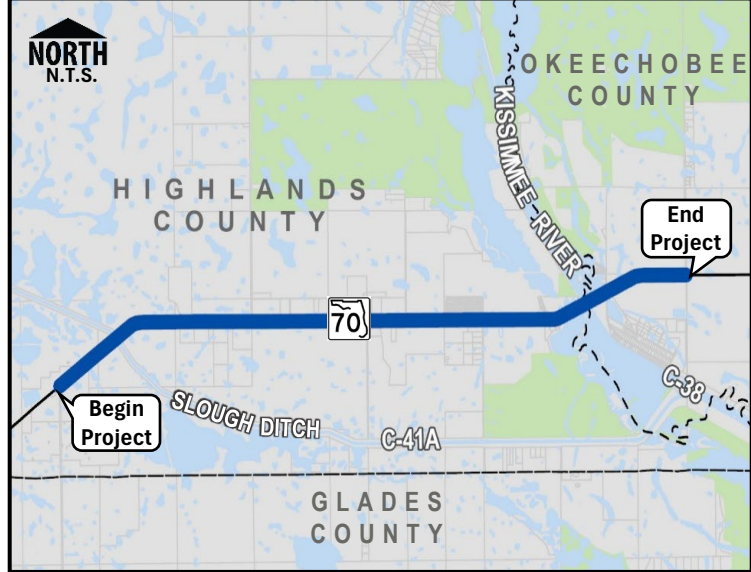
<https://www.swflroads.com/project/450334-1>

November 2025

PROJECT INFORMATION

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, is conducting a Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study on State Road (S.R.) 70 from County Road (C.R.) 721 South to C.R. 599/128th Avenue in Highlands and Okeechobee Counties. The intent of the study is to evaluate proposed improvements along this 8.6-mile segment of S.R. 70 and document the benefits, costs, and impacts of widening the existing two-lane undivided roadway to a four-lane, divided roadway. Also included is the addition of paved shoulders, turn lanes, and a shared use path. The purpose of the study is to address the need for improved traffic safety conditions, continued maintenance of the important east-west connection and to accommodate increasing freight activity along the project corridor.

PROJECT AREA




UPCOMING PUBLIC HEARING

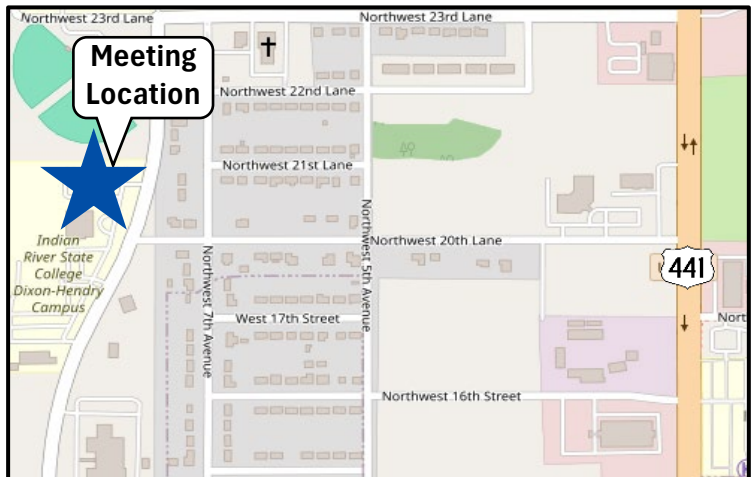
The FDOT, District One, invites you to attend the S.R. 70 PD&E Study public hearing. Attendance options include the in-person hearing on December 16, 2025, at Indian River State College in Okeechobee and the virtual hearing on December 18, 2025. The public hearing is being conducted to present information about the preferred alternative and engineering and environmental analysis completed to date and to provide the opportunity for the public to offer feedback for the official hearing record. The same material will be displayed at both the in-person and virtual hearings and will also be posted on the project website.

PARTICIPATION OPTIONS

IN-PERSON OPTION: Tuesday, December 16, 2025
Indian River State College (Dixon Hendry Campus)
2229 NW 9th Avenue
Okeechobee, FL 34972
5:30 – 6:00 p.m.: Open house
6:00 p.m.: Formal presentation and comment

VIRTUAL OPTION: Thursday, December 18, 2025
Register in advance: <https://tinyurl.com/SR70Hearing>
5:30 p.m.: Project team available for discussion
5:45 p.m.: How to submit comments
6:00 p.m.: Formal presentation and comment
Please review the materials on the project webpage before attending the virtual event (<https://www.swflroads.com/project/450334-1>).





FDOT solicits public participation without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. People who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Cynthia Sykes, District One Title VI Coordinator, at (863) 519-2287, or e-mail at Cynthia.Sykes@dot.state.fl.us at least seven days prior to the public hearing.

PROJECT DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

Project documents will be available for public viewing from November 25, 2025 through December 31, 2025, online at <https://www.swflroads.com/project/450334-1> and in-person at the locations listed below.

Okeechobee Public Library (863-763-3536)
206 SW 16th Street
Okeechobee, Florida 34974
Tuesday - Saturday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sunday - Monday: Closed

FDOT Heartland Operations Center (863-471-4848)
4722 Kenilworth Boulevard
Sebring, Florida 33870
Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

*Holidays may affect facility hours.
Documents will also be displayed at the in-person hearing.*

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966

This proposed project involves the use of properties protected under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge, Bridge No. 910001 (8HG01236/8OB00336) is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge. Based on an evaluation of all PD&E Study alternatives, it is not feasible to keep the historic bridge in place and the proposed improvements require the replacement of this bridge. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred with the findings on July 17, 2024. Subsequently, a Section 106 Case Study was prepared in which the FDOT applied the Criteria of Adverse Effect to this historical property. The SHPO concurred with these findings on September 22, 2025.

Local historical societies were contacted on July 21, 2025 to provide information on the adverse effect to the bridge and to request feedback that will be considered for the development of mitigative measures.

The proposed undertaking will result in an “adverse effect” to the NRHP-eligible S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge, Bridge No. 910001 (8HG01236/8OB00336). Proposed mitigation strategies being discussed include the salvage of the existing bridge plaque and relocation to a new location, an educational exhibit to be placed in close proximity to the bridge location, and a Historic American Engineering Record document.

Your input is sought concerning the undertaking’s adverse effect to the resource and proposed mitigation. Persons interested in this project may review the approved Section 106 Case Study on the project website (<https://www.swflroads.com/project/450334-1>), or at the FDOT District 1 Heartland Operations Center – Sebring and the Okeechobee Public Library.

In addition, in accordance with Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, FDOT is seeking comments and input from the public, interested parties, and governmental agencies concerning the effects of the project on the activities, features, and attributes of this resource and the mitigation options under consideration for the proposed impacts. FDOT intends to make a programmatic Section 4(f) impact determination for this resource.

The proposed improvements are adjacent to the Kissimmee River Public Use Area. As proposed, the project will impact approximately 2.43 acres of property from this recreation area. As part of the project development process and in accordance with Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, the FDOT is seeking comments from the public concerning the effects of the project on the activities, features and attributes of this recreation area. The FDOT intends to make a de minimis impact determination for this resource.

The proposed improvements lie over the National Register of Historic Places-eligible Slough Ditch Canal (C-41A) (8HG01127) and Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489). The project will construct one new bridge over the Slough Ditch Canal (C-41A) (8HG01127) and two new bridges over the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489). As part of the project development process and in accordance with Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, FDOT is seeking comments from the public concerning the effects of the project on the activities, features, and attributes of these resources. FDOT Office of Environmental Management intends to make de minimis impact determinations for these resources.

VISIT THE PROJECT WEBSITE



PROPOSED TYPICAL SECTIONS

