

STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
TECHNICAL REPORT COVERSHEET

650-050-38
ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT
08/22

DRAFT TYPE 2 CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

Florida Department of Transportation

District One

S.R. 70 PD&E Study

Limits of Project: From C.R. 721 S to C.R. 599/SW 128th Avenue

Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida

Financial Management Number: 450334-1-22-01

ETDM Number: 14491

Date: November 2025

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 Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 26, 2022 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
TYPE 2 CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

Florida Department of Transportation

SR 70 FROM CR 721 S TO CR 599/128 AVE

District: FDOT District 1

County:

ETDM Number: 14491

Financial Management Number: 450334-1-22-01

Federal-Aid Project Number: D123-018-B

Project Manager: Kathern Cothorn

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This action has been determined to be a Categorical Exclusion, which meets the definition contained in 23 CFR 771.115(b), and based on past experience with similar actions and supported by this analysis, does not involve significant environmental impacts.

Signature below constitutes Location and Design Concept Acceptance:

Interim Director Office of Environmental Management
Florida Department of Transportation

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Consulting Project Manager:
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This document was prepared in accordance with the FDOT PD&E Manual.

This project has been developed without regard to race, color or national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended).

On 03/01/2023 the State of Florida determined that this project is consistent with the Florida Coastal Zone Management Program.

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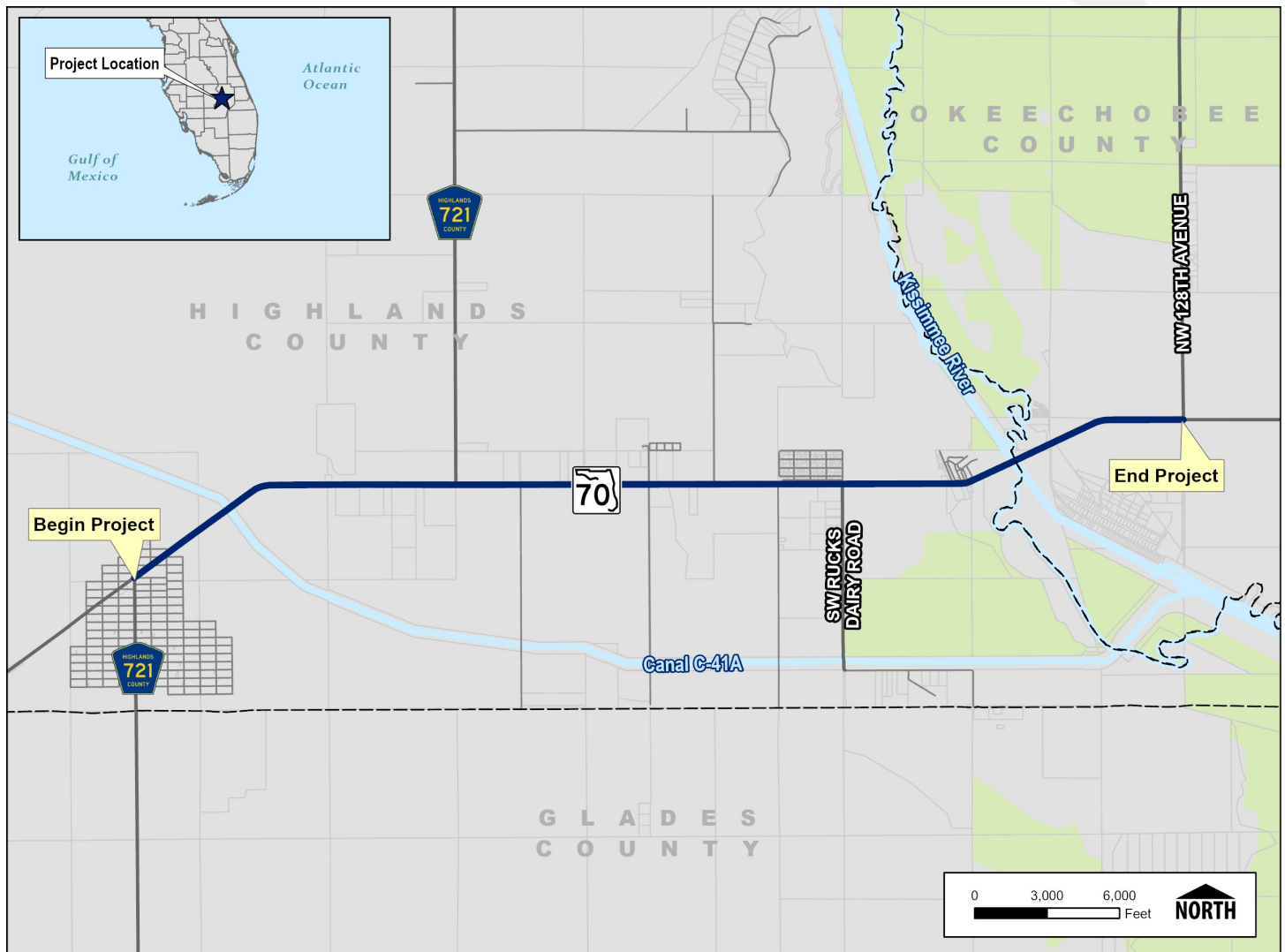
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1. Project Information

1.1 Project Description

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, has conducted a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate the proposed widening of State Road (S.R.) 70, from a two-lane, undivided roadway to a four-lane divided roadway, from County Road (C.R.) 721 South to C.R. 599/128th Avenue in Highlands and Okeechobee Counties. The total project length is approximately 8.6 miles, and the project limits are shown in **Figure 1**. This project is within unincorporated Highlands and Okeechobee Counties.

Figure 1. Project Location Map



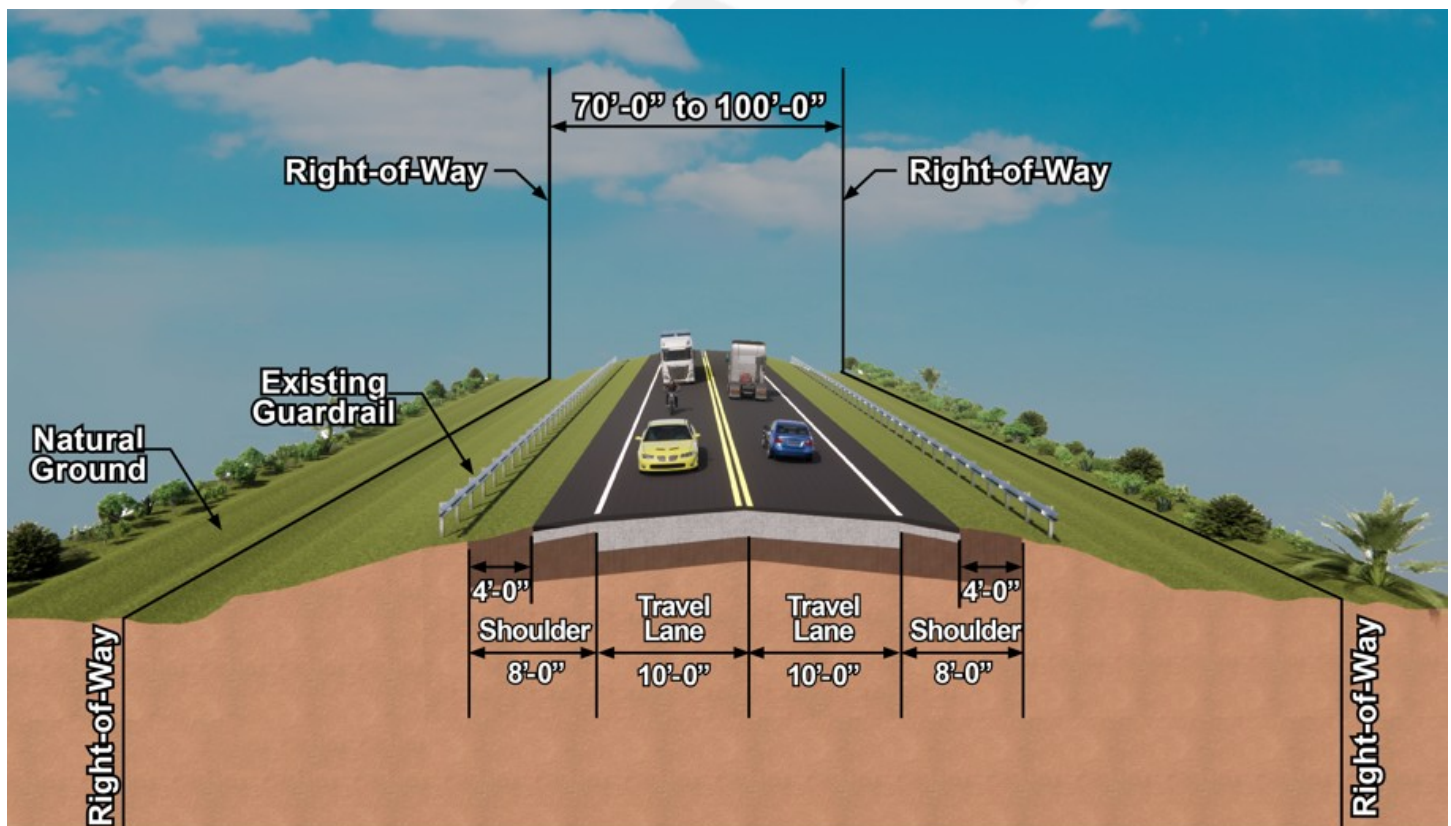
The corridor crosses both the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal and the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal). Both canals are maintained by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). Recent river restoration activities have altered the Kissimmee River north of the project limits; therefore, while the Kissimmee River is a navigable waterway in the project limits, it no longer has a navigable channel.

Existing Facility

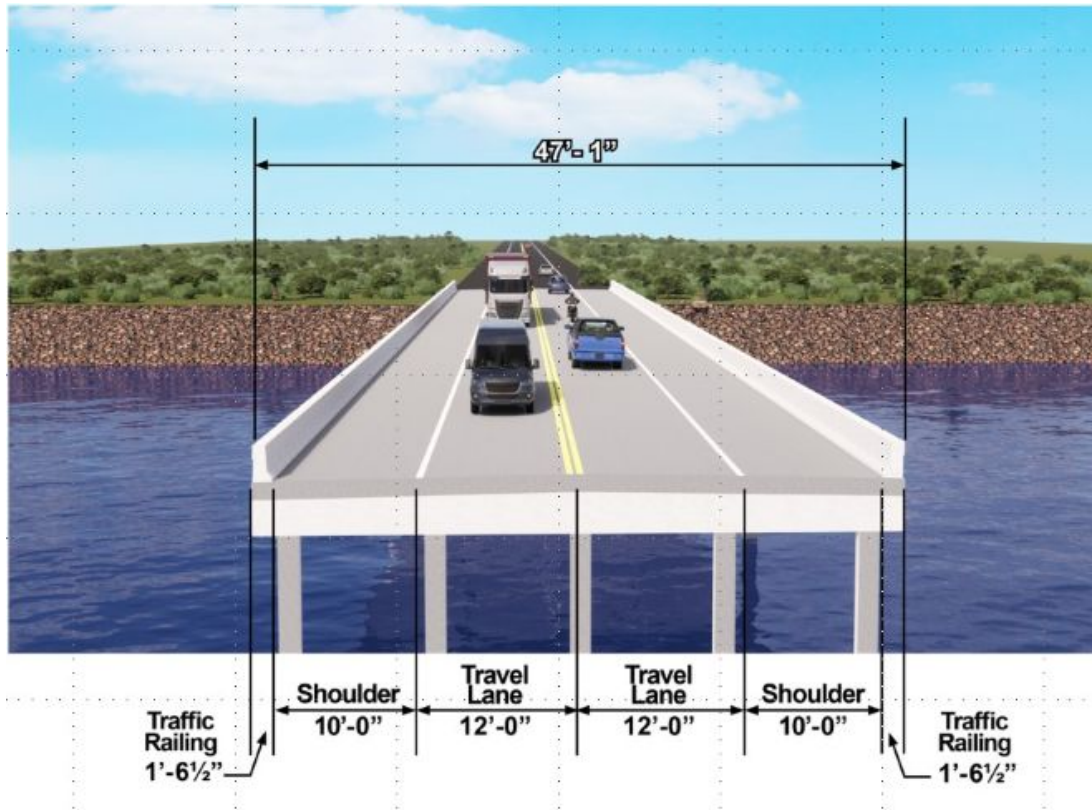
Within the project limits, S.R. 70 is a two-lane, undivided facility with 10-foot travel lanes (one in each direction), six-foot shoulders (four-foot paved), and no pedestrian or bicycle facilities. Portions of the study area have guardrail on one or both sides of the road, with some only seven (7) or eight (8) feet from edge of pavement of the travel lanes. Stormwater runoff is collected in roadside ditches and swales and ultimately conveyed to the Kissimmee River. There are no signalized intersections along the corridor. The intersection of S.R. 70 and C.R. 721 South has a flashing yellow on S.R. 70 and a flashing red with STOP-control on the C.R. 721 South approach to S.R. 70. Overhead and buried utilities vary in location along the corridor. This includes the Florida Power & Light (FPL) high voltage transmission lines along the north side of S.R. 70 and the Florida Gas Transmission (FGT) line which runs parallel to and outside the existing right-of-way (ROW) but also varies in location north and south of S.R. 70 and crosses the corridor at four (4) locations. There are agricultural lands along both sides of the project limits. Figure 2 depicts the existing typical section for the S.R. 70 roadway and bridges.

Figure 2. Existing Typical Sections

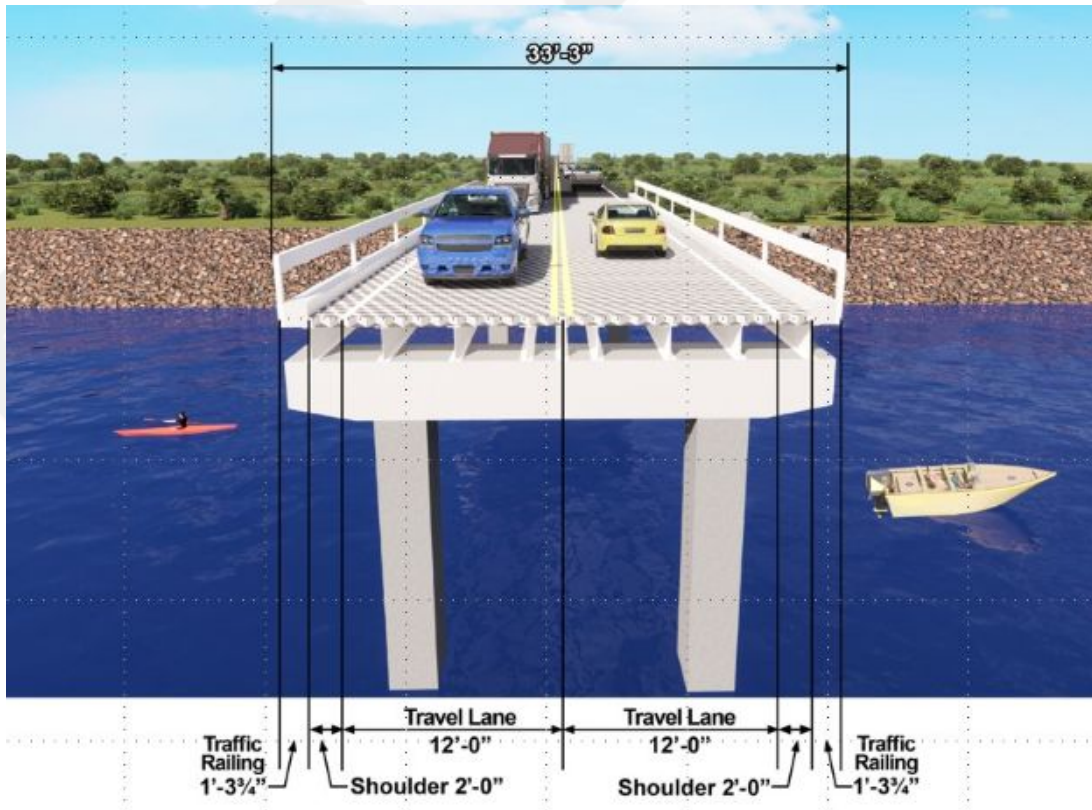
Existing S.R. 70 Roadway



Existing S.R. 70 Bridge over Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal



Existing S.R. 70 Bridge over Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal)



The roadway is classified as a "Rural Principal Arterial - Other" throughout the project study limits. The posted speed limit is 60 miles per hour (MPH). The context classification is C2 - Rural. S.R. 70 is also a designated hurricane evacuation route as per the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM). As part of Florida's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) highway network, S.R. 70 connects regionally important routes (such as I-75, US 27, Florida's Turnpike, and I-95) as well as serves as a regional through route for long-haul truck volumes and provides access to agricultural/ranching operations, industrial/commercial areas, and other intensive freight activity centers within Central Florida.

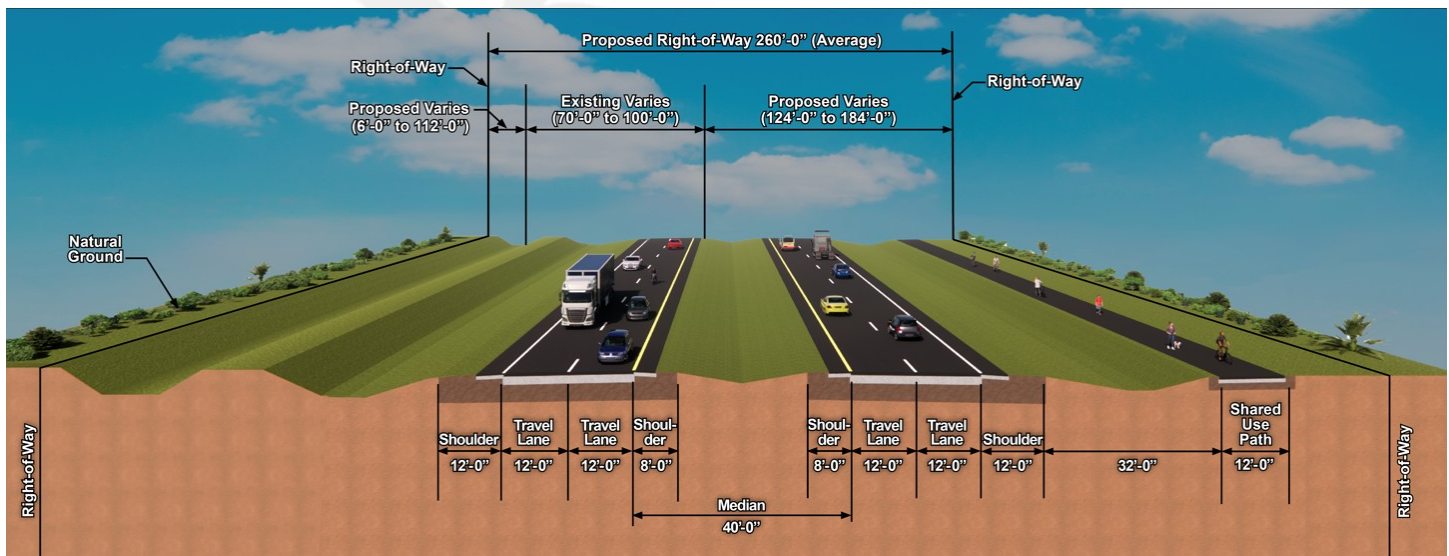
Currently, S.R. 70 to the west and east of this project segment similarly is characterized by a two-lane, undivided roadway facility. However, there are ongoing PD&E Studies to evaluate the expansion of those typical sections to a divided, four-lane roadway, similar to this project.

Proposed Improvements

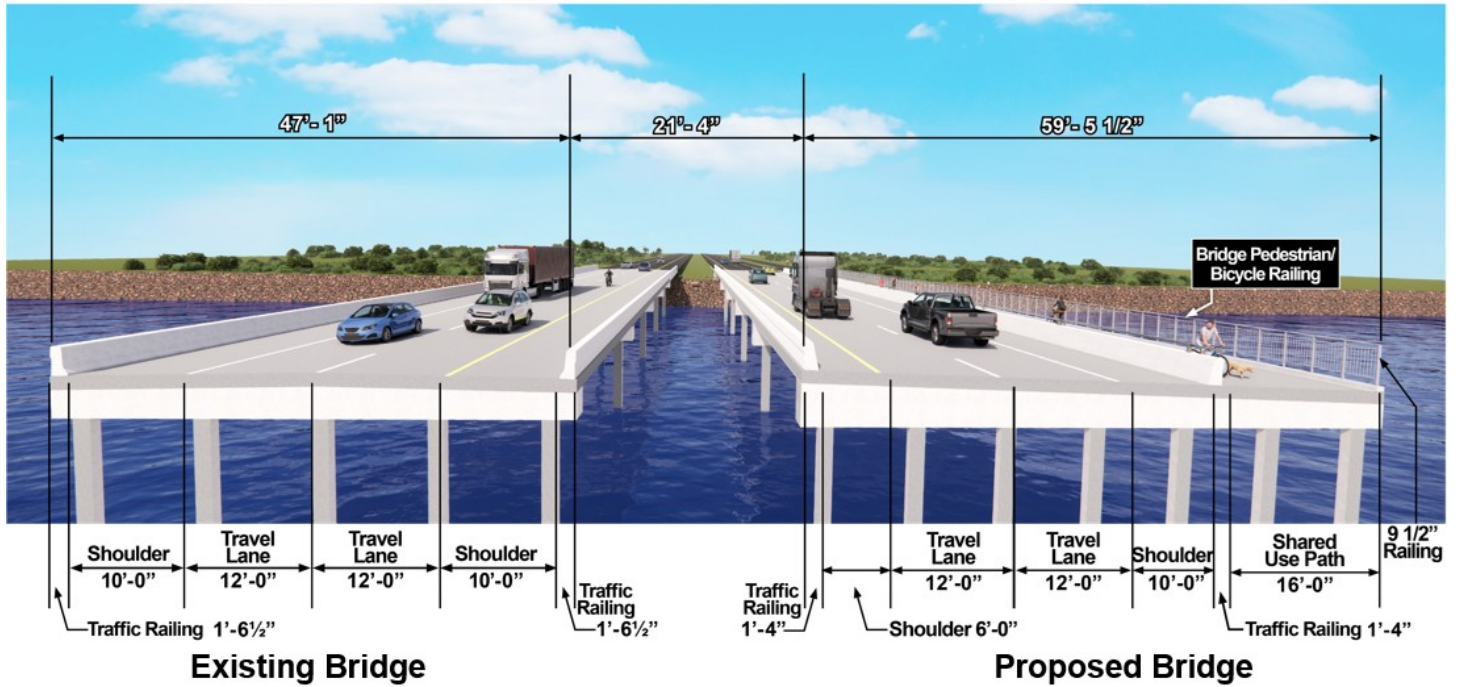
The Preferred Alternative, Alternative 1, aligns with the goals of the S.R. 70 Corridor Vision Report and meets the purpose and need for the project as it provides for improved traffic safety conditions, emergency evacuation, and response times. It also enhances transportation network connectivity along this east-west roadway and in the region, as well as enhances freight movement. The Preferred Alternative has a rural typical section with an open roadway drainage system for the four-lane construction. The typical section includes: two 12-foot travel lanes in each direction; a 40-foot median with eight-foot inside shoulders (four-feet paved); 12-foot outside shoulders (five-feet paved); and a 12-foot shared use path on the south side of S.R. 70 adjacent to the eastbound travel lanes. The average width needed for the ROW is 260 feet but varies throughout the alignment from 210 feet to 290 feet. The target, design and posted speed are 65 MPH. **Figure 3** depicts the Preferred Alternative typical sections for the roadway and bridges.

Figure 3. Proposed Typical Sections

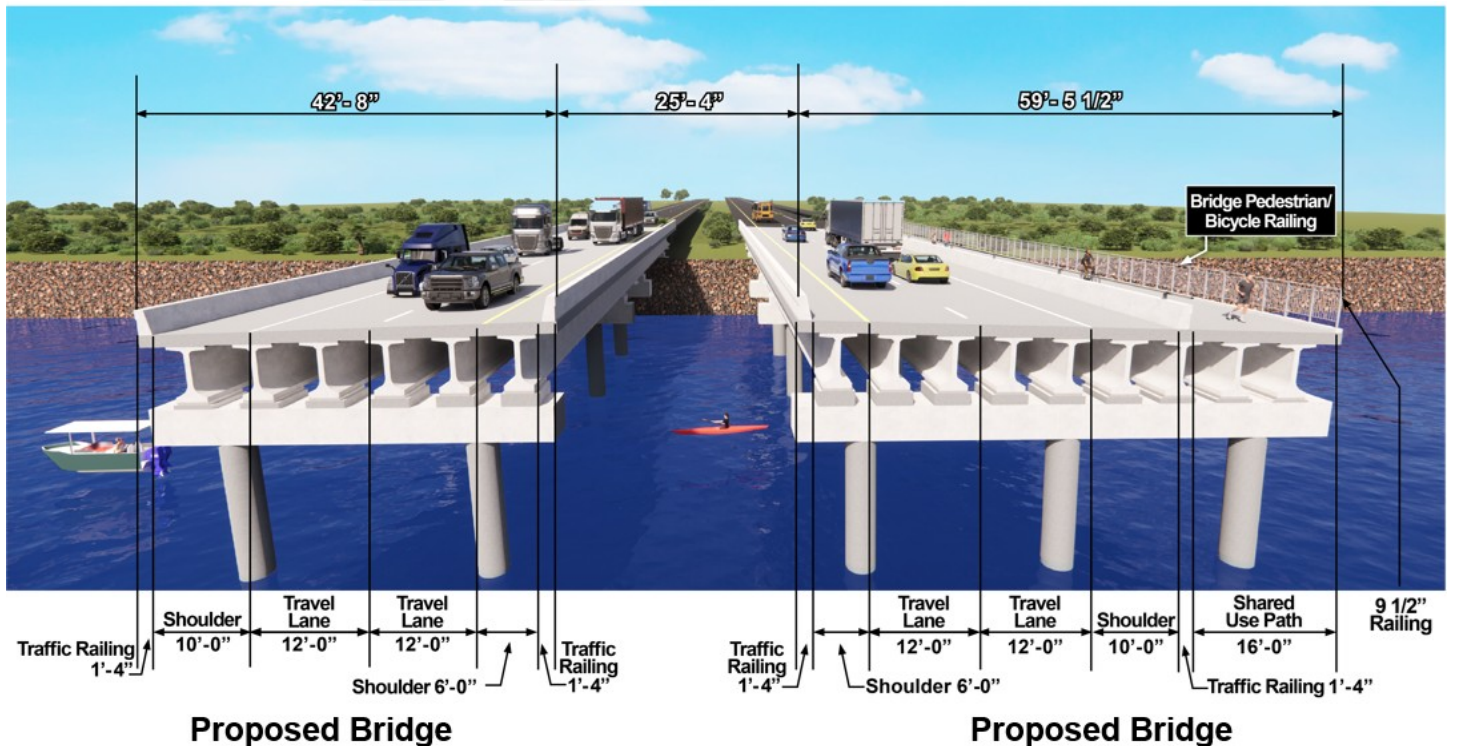
Proposed S.R. 70 Roadway



Proposed S.R. Bridges over Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal



Proposed S.R. 70 Bridge over Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal)



The roadway stormwater runoff will be collected and conveyed in roadside ditches on each side of the travel lanes to stormwater management facilities that will be constructed along the corridor. Offsite and onsite stormwater runoff will be handled separately. Therefore, the typical section includes a second ditch on the north (westbound) side of the roadway to collect and convey offsite stormwater flow.

The existing two-lane Kissimmee River bridge will be demolished and two new bridge structures, each carrying one direction of traffic, will be constructed. The existing bridge over the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal that currently carries two lanes of traffic will be retained and will carry westbound traffic in the future condition. A new two-lane bridge will be constructed on the south side of the existing bridge and will carry the eastbound traffic.

Currently, construction year is not known since funding for the subsequent project phases, final design, ROW acquisition, and construction, are not yet programmed within the FDOT Five-Year Work Program. However, the next project phase, final design, is listed in the work program as "candidate" status funding.

1.2 Purpose and Need

The S.R. 70 from I-75 to St. Lucie County Line Corridor Vision Report (September 2020) was prepared by the FDOT District One Planning Studio. The Planning Studio ensures that transportation projects and strategies align with community visions. This document identified two main themes, roadway safety and capacity, and branding and placemaking, as vision elements in the development of potential concepts. The Corridor Vision Report detailed a potential typical section for the roadway which included widening from two to four lanes, adding a median and paved shoulders, and including a shared-use path to accommodate multi-modal users.

The purpose of this project is to address traffic safety conditions on S.R. 70 from C.R. 721 S to C.R. 599/128th Avenue in Highlands and Okeechobee Counties. Other goals of the project are to maintain important east-west connectivity within the regional transportation network and accommodate freight activity within the area. The need for the project is based on the following criteria:

PRIMARY NEED:

SAFETY: Improve Traffic Safety Conditions, Emergency Evacuation, and Incident Response Times

According to the FDOT State Safety Office Geographic Information System (SSOGIS) database, a total of 110 crashes were reported along the S.R. 70 project corridor during the 2015 to 2019 five-year period. Of the 110 crashes along the project corridor, 27 (25%) were front to rear crashes, 22 (20%) were other crashes, and 16 (15%) were angle crashes. The crash rate for this section of S.R. 70 is 1.56, which is notably higher than the Highlands County crash rate of 0.898 and Okeechobee County crash rate of 0.717 for similar facilities. In addition, the project segment of S.R. 70 experienced two fatal crashes during the five-year period. Both of these fatal crashes were front to front crashes, one of which involved improper passing and the other involved driving on the wrong side of the roadway.

At the start of the PD&E Study, five (5) years of crash data (from January 2018 to December 2022) were extracted from the University of Florida's Signal 4 Analytics to examine more recent crash data. A total of 117 crashes were reported along the corridor, including five (5) fatal crashes and 73 injury crashes, and no crashes involving pedestrians/bicyclists. The estimated crash rate for each study intersection along the corridor was higher than the average districtwide crash rates of 0.223 and 0.400 crashes per million entering vehicles for three and four-leg intersections, respectively. There

were eight (8) same-direction sideswipe crashes and fifteen rear-end crashes reported at the intersections. These crashes can be caused by the absence of turning lanes along the corridor intersections.

The project section of S.R. 70 presently features ten-foot wide travel lanes and eight-foot wide shoulders, four feet of which are paved. Guardrails, roadside swales, and fence posts are also in close proximity to the roadway. With a context classification of C2-Rural, the existing typical section does not meet current FDOT Design Manual standards. The substandard lane and shoulder widths and proximity of guardrails, roadside swales, and fence posts restrict the ability of drivers to avoid hazards within each directional travel lane without veering off the roadway causing direct impacts. According to "Evaluation of the Safety Effectiveness of the Conversion of Two-Lane Roadways to Four-Lane Divided Roadways: Bayesian vs. Empirical Bayes" referenced on the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Crash Modification Factors (CMF) Clearinghouse, widening a rural two-lane roadway to a four-lane divided roadway can help decrease fatal and injury crashes by 45 percent. In addition, due to the roadway's current configuration, there is limited space for an emergency service vehicle to pass to respond to a situation during periods of congestion or to accommodate a disabled vehicle to prevent it from obstructing traffic flow. According to the Highlands County Sheriff's Office, one of the two travel lanes (if not both) is often blocked during traffic incidents within the Highlands County portion of the project corridor.

S.R. 70 is part of the emergency evacuation route network designated by the FDEM as well as the network established by Highlands and Okeechobee Counties. This roadway is critical in facilitating traffic during emergency evacuation periods as it connects to other arterials and highways of the state evacuation route network [such as U.S. 27 (to the west) and C.R. 721 (within the project limits)] and serves as one of very few major east-west facilities that traverses Highlands and Okeechobee Counties. Under various FDEM evacuation scenarios for different storm events, FDEM noted that S.R. 70 has some of the longest lasting vehicle queues in the Central Florida region, contributing to prolonged clearance times. Clearance time, comprised of time required for mobilization of the evacuating population, travel time, and the delay time caused by traffic congestion, is one input used by County emergency managers to determine when to recommend an evacuation order and is a key factor pertaining to public safety during an evacuation event.

The project is anticipated to address deficiencies of the roadway which may reduce crashes (including fatalities) and lead to enhanced emergency evacuation capabilities and incident response times.

SECONDARY NEEDS:

AREA WIDE NETWORK/SYSTEM LINKAGE: Maintain Important East-West Connectivity within the Regional Transportation Network

S.R. 70 is one of four corridors connecting Central and South Florida's west and east coasts as it spans from U.S. 41 in Manatee County (west coast) to U.S. 1 in St. Lucie County (east coast). It also connects to several major north-south transportation facilities of the state, including U.S. 41, I-75, U.S. 17, U.S. 27, U.S. 441, Florida's Turnpike, I-95, and U.S. 1. With the nearest available parallel east-west facilities being located nearly 10 miles or more to the north and south, S.R. 70 is integral to facilitating east-west travel within the regional transportation network of Florida's heartland.

The project is intended to complement other S.R. 70 corridor safety and traffic operational improvements identified in the 2029 - 2045 SIS Long Range Cost Feasible Plan from C.R. 675 in Manatee County to U.S. 98 in Okeechobee County. In turn, the improvements are anticipated to maintain the corridor's function as a designated SIS highway corridor and important east-west connection for freight and commuters across the Central Florida region and state.

TRANSPORTATION DEMAND: Accommodate Freight Activity

As part of Florida's SIS highway network, S.R. 70 connects regionally important routes (such as I-75, U.S. 27, Florida's Turnpike, and I-95) as well as serves as a regional through route for long-haul truck volumes and provides access to agricultural/ranching operations, industrial/commercial areas, and other intensive freight activity centers within Central Florida. FDOT Traffic Online 2021 data reports an Annual Average Daily Truck Traffic volume for the project corridor of 1,341 - 1,464 trucks per day; based on these volumes, truck traffic composes 24.4% - 25.3% of the Annual Average Daily Traffic volume for the project segment, which ranges between 5,300 - 6,000 vehicles per day. Truck volumes along S.R. 70 are expected to increase in the future as freight distribution and logistics activities continue to gain economic significance in Central Florida counties through the rapid growth occurring along the Interstate 4 and Interstate 75 corridors within the broader region. According to the Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Highlands County is in the process of diversifying their economy, expanding the potential for freight distribution and logistics activity development. While Okeechobee County will continue to support existing industries such as cattle, trade, transportation, and agriculture, potential growth in logistics and manufacturing could increase freight volume on a regional basis. With the major metro markets of Orlando, Tampa, and Fort Myers being located nearly equidistant to Highlands County and more than 86 percent of Florida's population being located within a 150-mile (or two-hour) radius of Highlands County, the S.R. 70 improvements are intended to accommodate increased population and employment growth as well as support the vision of the county and region to grow as a trade hub.

According to the FDOT District 1 Freight Mobility and Trade Study: Technical Memorandum 5 - Freight Improvements Prioritization, improvements to S.R. 70 are the #1 long-term priority in Highlands County and the #2 long-term priority of Okeechobee County to facilitate the future growth of freight traffic in the region. Additionally, the HRTPO, its committees, and community stakeholders have identified S.R. 70 as the highest priority transportation facility in the region in need of improvements due to concerns pertaining to safety, freight mobility, and economic growth. The project improvements are aligned with the goals of these plans and SIS objectives of promoting interregional transportation linked to economic development.

1.3 Planning Consistency

The HRTPO adopted the 2045 LRTP on March 10, 2021. Although SIS designated roadways are typically prioritized through the Florida SIS Plan, the 2045 LRTP looks to advance improvements on S.R. 70 with available Other Arterials (OA) funding. This project is listed in the 2045 LRTP as improvements funded with OA funds as "Safety Improvements and/or PD&E" but currently not for future phases. This project is also listed in the FDOT SIS Cost Feasible Plan 2035-2050, 2024 edition, as cost feasible.

The HRTPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Fiscal Years (FY) 2025/2026 - 2029/2030 was adopted on June 18, 2025, and has identified the project in the FY 2029/2030 Transportation Project Priorities list. The PD&E Study for the project is identified in the FDOT Work Program in FY 2025. Funding for the subsequent project phases, consisting of final design, ROW acquisition, and construction, are not yet programmed within the FDOT Five-Year Work Program. However, the next project phase, final design, is listed in the work program as "candidate" status funding.

Currently Adopted L RTP-CFP	COMMENTS			
No	<p>This project is listed in the 2045 LRTP as improvements funded with OA funds as "Safety Improvements and/or PD&E" but subsequent project phases are not included.</p> <p>The HRTPO TIP for FYs 2025/2026 - 2029/2030 was adopted on June 18, 2025, and has identified the project in the FY 2029/2030 Transportation Project Priorities list.</p> <p>The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) (adopted July 1, 2025) includes \$1,000,000 in PE funds, which is a portion needed for this phase.</p>			
	Currently Approved	\$	FY	COMMENTS
PE (Final Design)				
TIP	N			Currently unfunded for final design.
STIP	N	\$1,000,872	< 2026	Currently unfunded for final design.
R/W				
TIP	N			Currently unfunded for R/W.
STIP	N			Currently unfunded for R/W.
Construction				
TIP	N			Currently unfunded for construction.
STIP	N			Currently unfunded for construction.

2. Environmental Analysis Summary

Issues/Resources	Significant Impacts?*			
	Yes	No	Enhance	NoInv
3. Social and Economic				
1. Social	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Economic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Land Use Changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Mobility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Aesthetic Effects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Relocation Potential	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Farmland Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Cultural Resources				
1. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966, as amended	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Recreational Areas and Protected Lands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5. Natural Resources				
1. Protected Species and Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Wetlands and Other Surface Waters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Floodplains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Sole Source Aquifer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Water Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Aquatic Preserves	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8. Outstanding Florida Waters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9. Wild and Scenic Rivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10. Coastal Barrier Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. Physical Resources				
1. Highway Traffic Noise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Air Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Contamination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Utilities and Railroads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Construction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

USCG Permit

- ☒ A USCG Permit IS NOT required.
☐ A USCG Permit IS required.

* **Impact Determination:** Yes = Significant; No = No Significant Impact; Enhance = Enhancement; NoInv = Issue absent, no involvement. Basis of decision is documented in the following sections.

3. Social and Economic

The project will not have significant social and economic impacts. Below is a summary of the evaluation performed.

3.1 Social

The proposed roadway widening will enhance safety conditions for all roadway users. As previously mentioned, S.R. 70 serves as part of the emergency evacuation route network designated by the FDEM and plays a critical role in facilitating traffic during emergency evacuation periods as it is one of the few roadways connecting the west and east Florida coasts. It also connects to other designated state evacuation routes aligned in a north-south direction, including US 41, US 301, I-75, US 17, US 27, US 98, US 441, the Florida's Turnpike, I-95, and US 1. The project will improve emergency response times and access for the people living and working in the project region and for freight traffic. In addition, the Preferred Alternative provides pedestrian and bicycle facilities to enhance multi-modal opportunities.

The project is located within unincorporated southern Highlands County and unincorporated western Okeechobee County. The project area primarily consists of agricultural operations, including sod and cattle farms as well as field crops. The Kissimmee River Public Use Area (PUA), a large conservation and public recreational area that spans multiple counties, is located along the western side of the Kissimmee River in the project area. Other public use facilities include a boat ramp at the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal and a "roadwalk" portion of the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST), called the Okeechobee North Trail, located along SW 128th Avenue and crossing S.R. 70 at the project terminus. The Kissimmee River Fishing Resort is a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses and offers boat access to the Kissimmee River. There is one church, the Brighton Baptist Church, at the intersection of S.R. 70 and C.R. 721 South. No other community features (such as schools, community centers, healthcare facilities, etc.) are within the vicinity of the project.

The S.R. 70 Preferred Alternative utilizes existing FDOT ROW and requires 206.7 acres of additional ROW for the roadway widening and 61.7 acres for the stormwater management facilities. The total additional ROW is approximately 268.4 acres and involves 59 parcels. Of these impacts, one (1) parcel consisting of 0.78 acres, is owned by the state of Florida and designated as state roadway use. Business relocations are not required or proposed with the Preferred Alternative, however there are two (2) potential residential relocations. These are located on a single parcel and are discussed in more detail below.

Community Analysis

The demographics of the project study area were obtained through a Sociocultural Data Report (SDR) analysis. Because of the rural project area and surrounding area, the SDR evaluated demographics within one quarter-mile (1,320 feet) of the study area, using the intersecting feature which allows the compiled data to include the full census block groups that intersect with the quarter-mile buffer. **Table 1** summarizes the demographics of the study area and Highlands and Okeechobee Counties based on the 2010 Census data. This was the most current Census data available as listed in the SDR (dated August 2025). While more recent Census data (2020 as well as the American Community Survey 2019-2023) is available for Highlands and Okeechobee Counties as a whole, **Table 1** provides the 2010 Census data for the county-level as well for an equal data comparison. The study area has a lower minority population, lower Hispanic population, lower population below poverty, lower Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population, and higher median family income as compared to the counties as a whole. Additionally, there is a higher elderly population as compared to the Okeechobee County average. No disproportional impacts to distinct communities will occur.

Table 1. Project Area Demographics

Demographics	1/4-Mile Buffer	Highlands County	Okeechobee County
White (Race)	93.79%	70.68%	85.28%
African American (Race)	0.92%	9.77%	7.79%
*Other (Race)	4.29%	19.56%	6.93%
Hispanic (Ethnic Group)	7.57%	20.69%	22.91%
Minority	11.72%	35.29%	34.45%
Age 65+	27.92%	31.60%	17.29%
Under Age 18	17.17%	18.46%	23.93%
Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	2.55%	5.29%	5.86%
Persons with Disability Under Age 65	No Data	No Data	No Data
Limited English Proficiency	0.9%	7.82%	11.22%
Population Below Poverty	2.88%	16.89%	19.70%
Median Family Income	\$57,604	\$41,955	\$43,229

**Other" includes Asian, American Indian, Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander Alone, Some Other Race, and Two or More Races

Community Cohesion

The impacts to parcels resulting from the Preferred Alternative will not impact community cohesion, community characteristics, special community designations, community goals, or quality of life as surrounding agricultural activities and land uses will remain in locations surrounding the project area. In fact, the Preferred Alternative includes two segments of new S.R. 70 roadway alignment to avoid impacts to community features that would result if the roadway widening were to remain on the existing S.R. 70 alignment in these areas. These two locations include businesses and a church at the begin project limits (S.R. 70 and C.R. 721 South intersection) and at the Kissimmee River Estates residential community. Therefore, ROW impacts will not prevent community features from continuing to service the community.

3.2 Economic

S.R. 70 is part of the SIS highway network, providing regional access to employment centers, agricultural lands, and residential areas across the state as well as facilitating the movement of significant truck traffic. The project segment of S.R. 70 currently supports a number of agricultural operations. The project corridor is located within Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, which are part of the six-county South Central Rural Area of Opportunity (RAO), a program defined under State of Florida legislature to encourage and facilitate the location and expansion of economic development projects of significant scale in rural communities to spur job creation (particularly high skill and high wage jobs). According to the HRTPO 2045 LRTP, Highlands County is in the process of diversifying their economy to expand opportunities to attract sectors beyond the traditional industries such as agriculture, business services, and natural resources. Freight distribution and logistics activities continue to gain economic significance in Central Florida counties including the S.R. 70 corridor.

According to the Highlands County and Okeechobee County Future Land Use Maps, the area encompassing the project segment will remain designated for agricultural uses with some conservation land uses and rural estates. As such, the proposed project improvements will continue to support agricultural activities as well as the initiatives of the RAO by improving overall access to/from the area. While businesses adjacent to the corridor (primarily farms) may be affected temporarily during project construction, minimal economic impacts are anticipated as a result of the project. The Preferred Alternative addresses the project's purpose and need by improving transportation connectivity and economic development along this east-west SIS facility.

3.3 Land Use Changes

The 500-foot project buffer area primarily consists of agricultural uses with some public/semipublic, residential, and retail/office activities. Agricultural uses are present along the entire length of the project, and residential uses are primarily located on the eastern side of the project corridor. An existing land use map is provided in **Figure 4**. According to the Highlands County and Okeechobee County Future Land Use Maps, the project area will continue to support agricultural along with conservation land uses and rural estates. A future land use map is provided in **Figure 5**. However, as previously mentioned, Highlands County is in the process of diversifying their economy to expand opportunities to attract sectors beyond the traditional industries such as agriculture, business services, and natural resources. Freight distribution and logistics activities continue to gain economic significance in Central Florida counties including the S.R. 70 corridor. Therefore, while moderate changes to adjacent land uses will occur with the conversion of frontage areas to the expanded roadway, overall land use changes are not anticipated based on future land use maps and the HRTPO LRTP. Based on the future land use map and proposed improvements, the proposed project will not induce secondary development or change existing land use patterns.

Prime farmland is discussed in a following section. In addition to potential impacts to prime farmland, approximately 23.5 acres of current agriculture use, consisting of rangeland and citrus row crops, are proposed for impact.

Figure 4. Existing Land Use Map

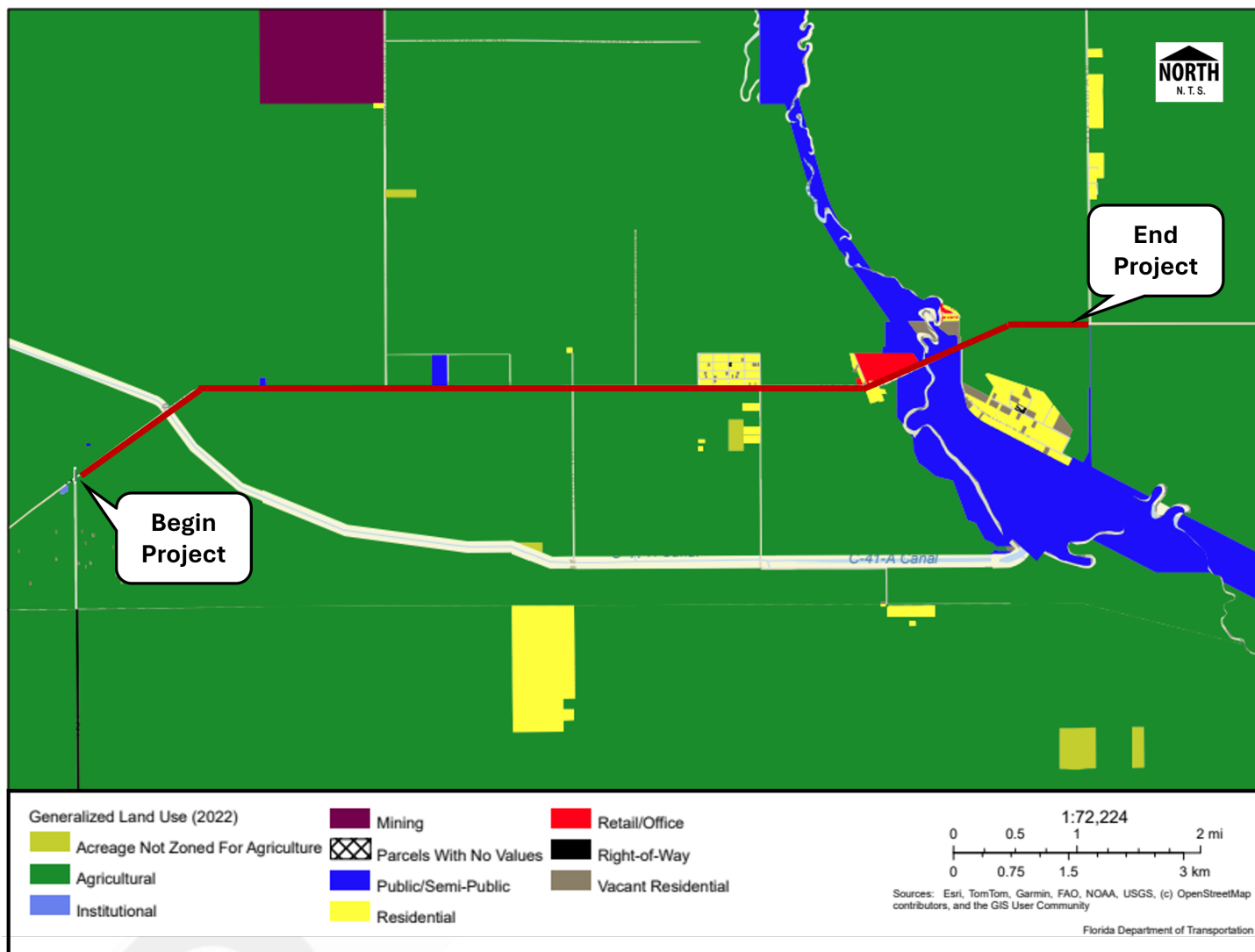
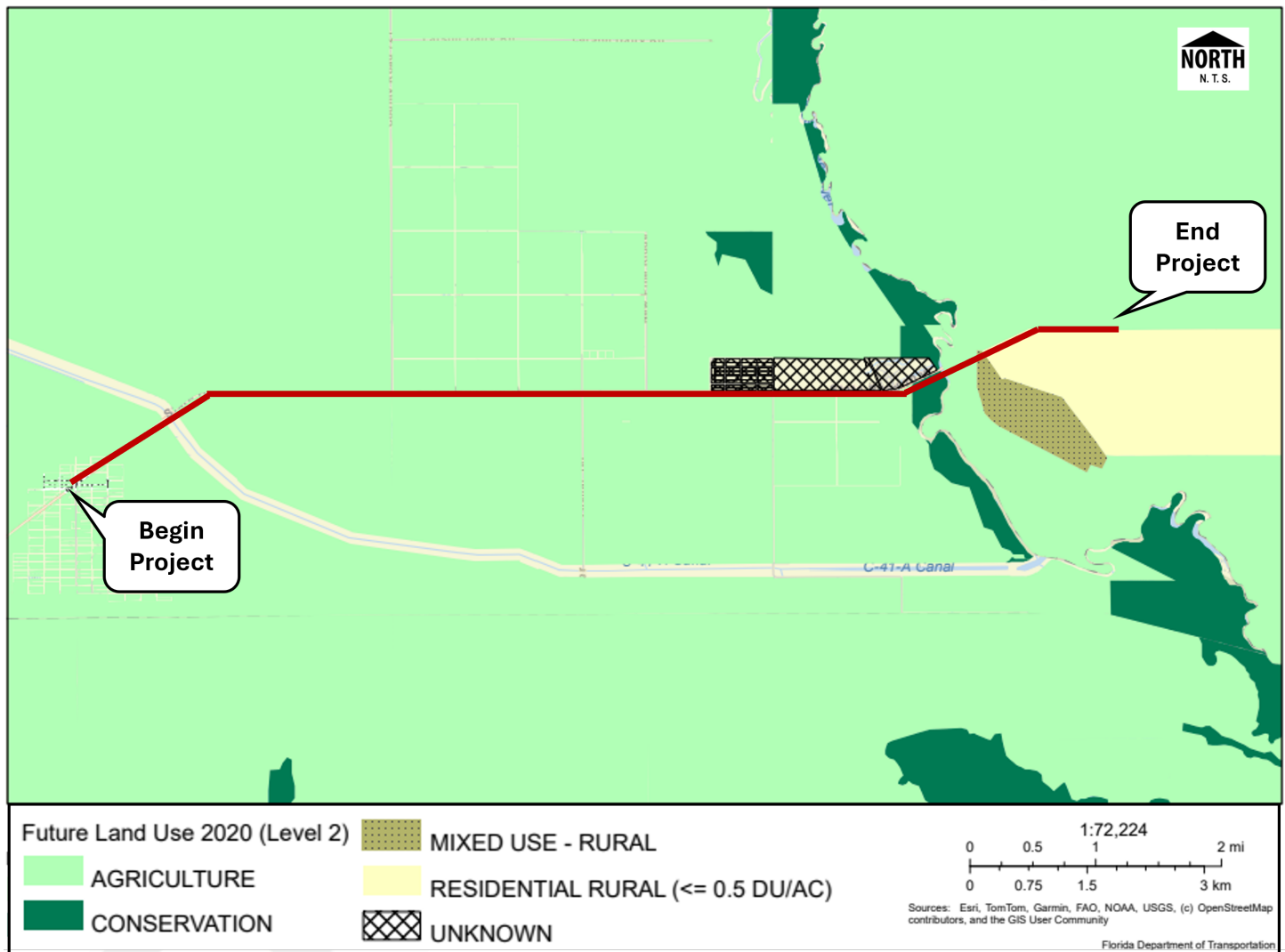


Figure 5. Future Land Use Map



3.4 Mobility

S.R. 70 is part of the SIS highway network, providing regional access to employment centers, agricultural lands, and residential areas across the state. Serving as one of two major east-west roadways within central/southern Florida (S.R. 60 serving as the second) and connecting to other regional transportation network facilities (such as I-75 and I-95), S.R. 70 is critical in facilitating the movement of local and regional traffic (including significant truck traffic). In addition, S.R. 70 is a designated state and county emergency evacuation route.

The project corridor is located within one Transportation Disadvantaged Service Provider Area and within the vicinity of one Office of Greenways and Trails multi-use trail opportunity (Manatee to Highlands Corridor). The Preferred Alternative will enhance mobility with widening of the S.R. 70 corridor to four lanes by 1) enhancing operational capacity of the corridor, thereby improving emergency evacuation/response times as well as access for standard roadway maintenance; 2) improving safety conditions by dispersing traffic; 3) providing a continuous four-lane connection and up-to-standards SIS highway corridor across the state by complementing other sections of S.R. 70 to be widened up to four lanes; and 4) supporting initiatives of the South Central RAO. Therefore, the Preferred Alternative is anticipated to enhance mobility within the project study area. There is no impact to mobility for non-driving populations as there are no transit routes along the project corridor based on review of the public transit data in the FDOT Environmental Screening Tool (EST) and review of Highlands and Okeechobee Counties websites. Also, there are no existing sidewalks or shared use paths within the project area. Therefore, the Preferred Alternative will enhance mobility for non-driving populations by providing a shared-use path for pedestrians and bicyclists to use in lieu of the S.R. 70 roadway or shoulder.

3.5 Aesthetic Effects

The project area primarily consists of agricultural activities (pasturelands, sod farms and field crops) with two residential communities near the Kissimmee River (Kissimmee River Estates and the Kissimmee River Fishing Resort). The Kissimmee River PUA is located on the south side of the project corridor adjacent to existing ROW. The Kissimmee River and the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal cross under the S.R. 70 roadway. According to the Highlands County and Okeechobee County Future Land Use Maps, the area encompassing the project segment will continue to support agricultural activities and objectives of the Conservation Partnership Areas of the Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area. The proposed improvements to S.R. 70 are intended to support the agricultural operations of the area and Rural Area of Economic Opportunity initiatives. As such, the project is consistent with the future land use vision and aesthetic character of the corridor.

3.6 Relocation Potential

The S.R. 70 Preferred Alternative utilizes existing FDOT ROW and requires 206.7 acres of additional ROW for the roadway widening and 61.7 acres for the stormwater management facilities. The total additional ROW is approximately 268.4 acres and involves 59 parcels. Of these impacts, one (1) parcel consisting of 0.78 acres, is owned by the state of Florida and designated as state roadway use.

Business relocations are not required or proposed with the Preferred Alternative, however there are two (2) potential residential relocations. These are located on a single parcel in Highlands County, west of the Kissimmee River, at approximately STA 760+00 RT. The potential relocations consist of two (2) mobile homes located at the front of the parcel adjacent to the S.R. 70 roadway. The property address is 15632 S.R. 70 W, Okeechobee, FL 34974 and the parcel is # C-26-37-33-A00-0110-0000.

Comparable replacement housing is available. Within two (2) miles of the potential relocation sites, there are seven (7) residential properties for sale and one (1) residential property for rent. There are more residential rental properties located further from the immediate project area, in the City of Okeechobee and Buckhead Ridge.

At this time, the project team is not aware of any handicapped or disabled residential occupants needing special assistance. A Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan (CSR) (November 2025), prepared under separate cover and included in the project file, was developed to assess the demographic composition of the greater project area and to determine the

availability of suitable replacement housing. The CSRП provides additional information relating to relocation assistance. Therefore, based on the implementation of this program, the Preferred Alternative will have no significant impacts.

In order to minimize the unavoidable effects of Right of Way acquisition and displacement of people, a Right of Way and Relocation Assistance Program will be carried out in accordance with Section 421.55, Florida Statutes, Relocation of displaced persons, and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646 as amended by Public Law 100-17).

3.7 Farmland Resources

A Farmlands Conversion Impact Rating Form [NRCS-CPA-106] was completed in October 2025 in coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and is attached. The points total was XXX for impacted farmlands within and adjacent to the project study area. Corridors receiving a total score of less than 160 points do not require further consideration. Therefore, the project will have no significant impacts to farmland resources.

As of the time of this draft document, a response has not been obtained from the NRCS due to the federal government shut-down. This section will be updated when a response is received.

4. Cultural Resources

The project will not have significant impacts to cultural resources. Below is a summary of the evaluation performed.

4.1 Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

The proposed project will result in unavoidable adverse effects to the resource(s) listed below, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). FDOT and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) will execute a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which outlined conditions to minimize and mitigate the adverse effects resulting from the project. Consequently, FDOT commits to the stipulations provided below as outlined in the MOA.

A Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) was performed for the portion of the project that crosses the Kissimmee River (June 2024) at the start of the project since it was known that regardless of the roadway alternative selected, the project would require removal of the bridge. This document was prepared under separate cover and is included in the project file. Historic background research, including a review of the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) and the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) databases, indicated that one historic bridge, S.R. 70 bridge over Kissimmee River (8HG01236/8OB00336), FDOT Bridge No. 910001, was previously recorded within the Area of Potential Effects (APE). Due to its location on the Okeechobee-Highlands County line, this bridge has been assigned a Highlands County FMSF number (8HG01236) and an Okeechobee County FMSF number (8OB00336). The S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge is a seven-span, concrete beam and girder bridge constructed in 1966 to carry S.R. 70 over the newly channelized Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal). The peak of the bridge is equipped with a steel, removable span which accommodates the passing of larger vessels while being more cost effective than a manned, operable span. The bridge was determined eligible for listing in the NRHP by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in 2014 under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge. The S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge has not been significantly altered since it was determined eligible for listing in the NRHP by the SHPO and appears to remain eligible for individual listing in the NRHP under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge. Based on the scope of work, the undertaking will result in the physical destruction, damage, or alteration of all or part of the S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge. Therefore, FDOT determined that the proposed undertaking will have an **adverse effect** on the S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336). The SHPO provided concurrence on July 17, 2024.

Historical/architectural field survey resulted in the identification of a second historic resource, the newly identified Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489), constructed in 1966. Although the channelization of the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) is significant within the ecological and developmental history of south and central Florida, the majority of the linear resource is located outside of the APE, and a survey of the entire 69-mile-long channelized river is beyond the scope of this project. In addition, the linear resource has not been previously recorded elsewhere in Okeechobee or Highland Counties. As such, following the guidance of the Historic Linear Resource Guide provided by the Florida Division of Historic Resources (FDHR), there is insufficient information to evaluate the 102-foot segment of the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) that is contained within the APE.

Based on the scope of work, the undertaking will include the demolition of the existing S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River bridge and the construction of a westbound and eastbound bridge with two travel lanes each. Although this will result in

the expansion of the existing bridge footprint and alteration to the earthen banking along the linear resource, these alterations are in keeping with the existing conditions of the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489) within the APE. Therefore, it is the opinion of the FDOT that the proposed undertaking will have **no adverse effect** on the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489). The SHPO provided concurrence on July 17, 2024.

A Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report (August 2025), provided under separate cover and included in the project file, was prepared to evaluate the potential effects of the proposed undertaking to the historic property located within the APE, which includes the S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge, Bridge No. 910001 (8HG01236/8OB00336). Potential effects to this historic property were evaluated to comply with the provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665, as amended), as implemented by 36 *CFR Part 800* ("Protection of Historic Properties," revised January 2004), and Chapter 267, Florida Statutes. This report includes a summary description of the project and of the significant historic property, as well as application of the Criteria of Adverse Effects, as defined in 36 *CFR Part 800.5*.

The FDOT applied the Criteria of Adverse Effect found in 36 *CFR Part 800.5* to the historic property determined eligible for listing in the NRHP located within the APE. This document provides information for consultation with the SHPO and Office of Environmental Management (OEM). Based on the proposed undertaking to replace the existing significant bridge, the findings indicate that the proposed undertaking will have an **adverse effect** to the NRHP-eligible S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge, Bridge No. 910001 (8HG01236/8OB00336).

Local historical societies, including Okeechobee County Community Services, Okeechobee Historical Society, Heritage Association of Highlands County, Inc., Highlands County Historic Preservation Commission, and Sebring Historical Society, were contacted on July 21, 2025 to inform them of the adverse effect to the bridge, the documents prepared to date (the CRAS), and documents in process (Section 106 Case Study and Memorandum of Agreement [MOA]). The entities were asked for feedback that would be considered for development of the MOA. Responses were received from the Okeechobee Historical Society and the Highlands County Historic Preservation Commission and incorporated into the draft MOA. The CRAS prepared for the bridge and the Section 106 Case Study were placed on the project website upon SHPO concurrence for public access.

Public engagement and appropriate coordination meetings will continue through the completion of the PD&E Study and the final design phase. As such, coordination among FDOT District One, OEM, the SHPO, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), as well as the public will continue to ensure that a sensitive and appropriate mitigation treatment plan is developed. Measures to resolve the adverse effect will be documented in a MOA between FDOT, SHPO, and other affected parties, as appropriate. Once the MOA is executed, the FDOT will ensure that the mitigation measures outlined in the MOA are implemented. The SHPO provided concurrence on September 22, 2025.

A Draft MOA (October 2025), prepared under separate cover and included in the project file, was provided to the SHPO on October 23, 2025 for review and comment prior to the public hearing. Prior to this document submittal, the FDOT and SHPO held a meeting to discuss the project and the proposed mitigation strategies. This MOA details mitigative measures (stipulations) including documentation prepared in accordance with Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) Level III standards, drawings, photographs, and written data. The FDOT will provide draft HAER documentation to the National Park Service (NPS) and SHPO for concurrent review, then provide revised and final copies to the NPS, SHPO, and Okeechobee Historical Society. The existing commemorative bridge plaque will be salvaged for use elsewhere following preparation of a salvage and relocation plan, and affording of the SHPO, Okeechobee Historical Society, and Highlands and Okeechobee Counties an opportunity to provide comment. Lastly, FDOT will assist with the development and funding of a single panel educational exhibit and installation in proximity to the bridge. The SHPO will be afforded the opportunity

to provide comments. An electronic copy of the exhibit will be provided to local entities for installation at their discretion. These mitigative measures are included as project commitments.

The Electronic Section 106 (e106) form was submitted to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) on October 6, 2025. Also included was the Section 106 Case Study Report. The intent of the submittal was to notify the ACHP of a finding that an undertaking will adversely affect historic properties, and/or invite the ACHP to participate in a Section 106 consultation related to the preparation of the MOA.

A second CRAS (April 2025) was prepared for the remainder of the project, focusing on the roadway alignment. This document was prepared under separate cover and is included in the project file. Historic background research indicated that a third historic resource, the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127) was previously recorded within the APE. The segment of the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal was evaluated as eligible while having insufficient information for determining NRHP eligibility for the whole resource.

Historical/architectural field survey resulted in the identification of 46 historic resources within the APE. These include 34 buildings, ten (10) linear resources including the previously discussed Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal), the previously discussed Kissimmee River bridge, and one building complex resource group. Of these, 43 appear ineligible for listing in the NRHP. The remaining three (3) sites include the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127), Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489), and Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336).

The segment of the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127) within the APE was constructed in approximately 1944 as a later component of the Central and Southern Florida (C&SF) Project to improve and modify the Lake Okeechobee and Lower Kissimmee River/Lake Istokpoga Basins. The resource is also associated with the development of the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal). The segment of the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127) within the APE appears eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Agriculture; however, there is insufficient information to determine NRHP eligibility for the linear resource as a whole. Based on the scope of work, the undertaking will include the construction of an eastbound bridge with two travel lanes south of an existing bridge (Bridge No. 090053). Although this will result in a new bridge footprint and alteration to the earthen banking along the linear resource, these alterations are in keeping with the existing conditions within the APE. Therefore, FDOT determined that the proposed undertaking will have **no adverse effect** on Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127).

Archaeological surveys also were conducted. Archaeological field methods consisted of surface reconnaissance and both systematic and judgmental shovel testing. [REDACTED]

A CRAS Addendum to address the preferred pond sites is currently in development and will be submitted to the SHPO for concurrence.

4.2 Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966, as amended

The following evaluation was conducted pursuant to Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended, and 23 CFR Part 774.

Potentially protected Section 4(f) resources for recreational use along the project corridor include the Slough Ditch (C41-A) Canal at S.R. 70 Boat Ramp, the Okeechobee North Trail Connector, and the Kissimmee River PUA. Historical sites with Section 4(f) protection include the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal, Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal), and the S.R. 70 bridge over the Kissimmee River.

Slough Ditch (C-41A) at S.R. 70 Boat Ramp

The Slough Ditch (C41-A) at S.R. 70 Boat Ramp, located approximately 400 feet north of S.R. 70, is part of the overall SFWMD-owned property along this canal that is used for canal maintenance. The Slough Ditch (C-41A) at S.R. 70 Boat Ramp is considered a significant resource under Section 4(f) because it provides an opportunity for public boat access to upstream destinations such as Lake Istokpoga, and to downstream locations such as the Kissimmee River. The existing driveway on the east side of the canal will be retained in the post-project condition; this driveway services both the boat ramp and the large privately-owned agricultural parcel to the east and north. While the S.R. 70 widening will require some ROW acquisition from the overall SFWMD property, this will not affect the boat ramp area. Since there will not be acquisition of land from the resource on a temporary or permanent basis, there will not be any proximity impacts that rise to the level of substantial impairment, and access to the resource will be maintained at all times throughout construction, there will be "no use" of this resource. A Section 4(f) No Use Determination form was completed for this resource with OEM concurrence on November 4, 2025.

Okeechobee North Trail Connector

The Okeechobee North Trail Connector is along C.R. 599/SW 128th Avenue on both the north and south sides of S.R. 70 and has several names. The trail segment from the Kissimmee River to S.R. 70 is called the Okeechobee North Trail to S.R. 70 Connector and is approximately 1.1 miles in length. North of S.R. 70, the name changes to Okeechobee North Trail to Kissimmee River Trail and is approximately 6.3 miles. As part of the FNST which begins at US 41 in Big Cypress National Preserve and terminates in Fort Pickens State Park in the Pensacola area, it is also called the S-65E Lock Access Road/C.R. 599 and FNST Connector. This is a "roadwalk" trail where pedestrians may walk on the grassy roadside shoulder and is maintained by Okeechobee County. The Okeechobee North Trail to S.R. 70 Connector/Okeechobee North Trail to Kissimmee River Trail is considered a significant resource under Section 4(f) because it provides a long segment of opportunity for walking/hiking/biking in this region. Since there will not be acquisition of land from the resource on a temporary or permanent basis, there will not be any proximity impacts that rise to the level of substantial impairment, and access to the resource will be maintained at all times throughout construction, there will be "no use" of this resource. A Section 4(f) No Use Determination form was completed for this resource with OEM concurrence on November 4, 2025.

Kissimmee River PUA

The Kissimmee River PUA consists of 30,864 acres of land in Glades, Highlands, Okeechobee, Osceola and Polk Counties. Much of the overall property was purchased with funding from the Save Our Rivers (SOR) program created by the Florida legislature in 1981 to allow for the state water management districts to acquire environmentally sensitive land to manage, protect, and conserve the state's water resources. The Kissimmee River PUA is also managed to provide the public with fish and wildlife-based public outdoor recreational opportunities, mainly hunting. The closest parcel associated with the Kissimmee River PUA is located on the south side of S.R. 70, west of the Kissimmee River. The property is immediately adjacent to the existing S.R. 70 ROW in this location. There are no upland access points from S.R. 70 or from any other upland points in the project area to the Kissimmee River PUA, either for public access or maintenance access. The only access opportunity is by boat.

The S.R. 70 widening improvements require 2.48 acres of permanent property acquisition from the boundary of the Kissimmee River PUA at S.R. 70. The impact footprint for the proposed improvements within the park comprises approximately 0.00008% of the PUA's overall total acreage. There will not be any proximity impacts that rise to the level of substantial impairment since the roadway expansion will not have any indirect/secondary impacts to the property. Recreational use of the PUA property adjacent to the proposed road ROW boundary will continue unimpeded.

The minimization of impacts to this Section 4(f)-eligible resource has been achieved by selecting Alternative 1 as the Preferred Alternative. When project alternatives were developed and presented to the public in June 2024, it was estimated that Alternative 1 would impact 2.8 acres of the Kissimmee River PUA and Alternative 2 would impact 3.4 acres of the Kissimmee River PUA. Since then, the alternatives were further refined and the 2.8 acres was reduced to 2.45 acres. Additionally, no stormwater pond alternatives were sited within the boundary of the Kissimmee River PUA. Based upon the above information and the measures to minimize harm, while the roadway widening constitutes "use" of a Section 4(f)-protected property, there will be no adverse effects to the activities, features and attributes that qualify the Kissimmee River PUA for protection under Section 4(f). A "*de minimis*" determination was preliminarily made for this impact and the Official with Jurisdiction (OWJ), the SFWMD, was notified on September 11, 2025.

The public hearing will afford an opportunity for the public to review and comment on this determination. Following the public hearing, the FDOT will coordinate again with the SFWMD and request concurrence of the "*de minimis*" finding.

Placeholder for public comments, OWJ concurrence and OEM concurrence.

Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127)

The Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127) is a SFWMD-managed canal that is approximately 20.1 miles long and ranges from 30 feet to 130 feet in width with earthen banks. The canal was constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as part of the C&SF Project as a means of alleviating flooding in farmlands south of Lake Istokpoga within the Lower Kissimmee River/Lake Istokpoga Basin. The canal is considered the main outlet for Lake Istokpoga and discharges into the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal). The existing S.R. 70 bridge (Bridge No. 090053) carries traffic over the canal. The canal is eligible for listing in the NHRP under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Agriculture.

The road widening over the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal will construct a new eastbound bridge south of the existing bridge (Bridge No. 090053), with two travel lanes and a shared-use path. The existing bridge ROW occupancy at this location is currently 11,750 square feet (250 feet in length over the canal water by 47 feet wide bridge typical section). The roadway

improvements will require additional ROW occupancy over the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal, consisting of approximately 28,830 square feet (390 feet in length [top of embankment to top of embankment] by 63 to 81 feet wide [includes the 60 foot wide bridge typical section, 21 feet of ROW occupancy between the bridges as well as approximately 63 feet for the new road and shared-use path]). The ROW occupancy, footprint of the new bridge, and alterations to the earthen banking along the site are in keeping with the existing conditions within the project limits and the undertaking will not damage the historic site in a negative way that will diminish or destroy the qualities and characteristics for which it is considered eligible for listing in the NRHP. The Section 106 effects determination for the proposed project resulted in no adverse effect and the OWJ concurred with this determination in a letter dated September 22, 2025. As such, the ROW occupancy will have no adverse effect on activities, features, and attributes of the site.

The public hearing will afford an opportunity for the public to review and comment on the "*de minimis*" determination.
Placeholder for public comments and OEM concurrence.

Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01236/8OB00336)

The Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01236/8OB00336) is a SFWMD-managed canal that is approximately 69 miles long stretching from Lake Kissimmee to the north to Lake Okeechobee to the south of the project limits. The canal was channelized in 1966 and is approximately 375 feet wide with shallow earthen banking covered in vegetation. The site was channelized as part of the C&SF Project to help with flood control. The existing S.R. 70 bridge (Bridge No. 910001) carries traffic over the canal. The canal is eligible for listing in the NHRP under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Conservation and Criterion C in the area of Engineering. The SHPO concurred with the findings on September 22, 2025.

The road widening over the Kissimmee River Canal (C-38) will remove the existing S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River bridge (Bridge No. 910001) and construct a westbound and eastbound bridge with two travel lanes each. The westbound bridge will replace the existing bridge, while the eastbound bridge will be constructed to the south of the existing bridge. The existing bridge ROW occupancy at this location is currently 13,020 square feet (420-foot length over the canal by 31-foot-wide bridge typical section). This will be replaced with approximately 18,060 square feet (420-foot length by 43-foot-wide bridge typical section) for the new westbound bridge and approximately 35,700 square feet (420-foot length by 85-foot wide [60-foot wide bridge typical section plus 25-foot ROW gap between the bridges in the post-construction condition]) for the new eastbound bridge.

Considering the canal is a state sovereign submerged land (SSL), an SSL easement is required for the new bridge that will be constructed outside of the existing ROW. While the roadway improvements will require the additional ROW occupancy/easements discussed above, the undertaking will not damage the historic site in a negative way that will diminish or destroy the qualities and characteristics for which it is considered eligible for listing in the NRHP. The SSL easement, footprint of the new bridges, and alterations to the earthen banking along the site are in keeping with the existing conditions within the project limits. The Section 106 effects determination for the proposed project resulted in **no adverse effect** and the OWJ concurred with this determination in a letter dated September 22, 2025. As such, the SSL easement and SFWMD ROW occupancy will have no adverse effect on activities, features, and attributes of the site.

The public hearing will afford an opportunity for the public to review and comment on the "*de minimis*" determination.
Placeholder for public comments and OEM concurrence.

S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001; [8HG01236/8OB00336])

The S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001; [8HG01236/8OB00336]) is a seven span, concrete beam and girder bridge constructed in 1966 in order to carry S.R. 70 over the newly channelized Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal). The peak of the bridge is equipped with a steel, removable span which accommodates the passing of larger vessels while being more cost effective than a manned, operable span. The overall dimension of the bridge measures approximately 418-feet long with four approach spans that are 33-feet wide with a roadway width of approximately 24-feet, and three main spans that are 31- feet wide with a roadway width of approximately 22-feet. The approach spans are a concrete beam and girder style superstructure with a concrete deck that has been paved with asphalt, while the main span is a removable steel span. The substructure has solid, sloped abutments comprised of concrete bags. The superstructure is supported by six bents, each comprised of squared concrete headers with two squared concrete piers and footers with a horizontal strut between the piers. The site is eligible for listing in the NHRP under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge. The SHPO concurred with the findings on July 17, 2024.

The proposed S.R. 70 improvements involves removal of the existing Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336]) and construction of a new bridge following the existing S.R. 70 alignment that will carry westbound traffic over the Kissimmee River and the construction of a second bridge to the south that will carry eastbound traffic. The proposed typical section for the bridge over the Kissimmee River consists of two 12-foot travel lanes in each direction. Adjacent to the inside travel lanes are six-foot shoulders and adjacent to the outside travel lanes are 10-foot shoulders and a shared use path across the southern length of the eastbound bridge. The existing bridge will remain operational until the new bridge is constructed.

Two build alternatives, Build Alternative 1 and Build Alternative 2, were evaluated as part of the S.R. 70 PD&E Study. Both build alternatives involve the replacement of the S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336]). Alternative 1 was identified as the Preferred Alternative since it results in better access management at Kissimmee River Estates, fewer residential relocations, fewer impacts to noise sensitive sites, and less impact to public recreational lands. The alignment for Build Alternative 1 closely follows the existing roadway alignment and widens to the south. A No-Build Alternative is considered a valid alternative throughout the life of the study. The No-Build Alternative assumes no improvements to S.R. 70 within the study limits through the Design Year of 2052, limiting work in the project area to routine maintenance. Based on the 2022 Bridge Inspection Report, the existing bridge is considered satisfactory; however, due to the age of the structure (built in 1966 [58 years]), the bridge has reached the end of its service life which is designed for the service life of 50 years. The bridge currently shows signs of deterioration of the concrete and steel span, which is in line with the age of the bridge. Routine maintenance will not correct the ongoing physical deterioration and aging of the bridge that will eventually lead to bridge failure. Furthermore, the existing bridge has substandard shoulder widths and railings, especially on the steel (movable) span. In order to meet the project purpose and need, the Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001) would need to be widened; however, considering the bridge type (steel span bridge), the bridge is not suitable for widening.

In 2024, repairs and rehabilitation to the bridge (cleaning and sealing the roadway, deck spall repairs, structural steel repairs, and repainting of the steel portions) were done to maintain the bridge. These repairs will allow the bridge to remain in use until a solution for replacement or additional repair is made. The repairs are anticipated to add another 10 to 15 years to the lifespan, far exceeding the intended service of the bridge to 68 to 70 years.

A Rehabilitation option was considered for this project; however, rehabilitation within its historic specifications does not address the substandard design and safety concerns and does not meet the purpose and need for the project.

Rehabilitation of the bridge incorporating measures to meet the purpose and need of the project would adversely affect

the characteristics that make the bridge eligible for the NRHP. Avoidance and minimization options were considered as part of the PD&E Study in order to avoid impacts to the historic bridge. However, there are constraints adjacent to the existing S.R. 70 alignment in the area of the Kissimmee River bridge with the FPL easement to the north and the FGT easement to the south. Due to the positioning of both easements, the potential to realign S.R. 70 to avoid replacing the bridge is not a feasible option.

Based on the information above, the No Build, Rehabilitation, and Avoidance alternatives are neither feasible nor prudent. As such, the project preferred alternative will demolish and replace the Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001) resulting in an **adverse effect** to the NRHP-eligible property. SHPO concurred with the adverse effect determination on September 17, 2024. FDOT and SHPO have developed a draft MOA addressing suitable measures to mitigate this adverse effect.

Local historical societies, including Okeechobee County Community Services, Okeechobee Historical Society, Heritage Association of Highlands County, Inc., Highlands County Historic Preservation Commission, and Sebring Historical Society, were contacted on July 21, 2025 to inform them of the adverse effect to the bridge, the documents prepared to date (the CRAS), and documents in process (Section 106 Case Study and MOA). The entities were asked for feedback that would be considered for development of the MOA. Responses were received from the Okeechobee Historical Society and the Highlands County Historic Preservation Commission and incorporated into the draft MOA. The CRAS prepared for the bridge and the Section 106 Case Study were placed on the project website upon SHPO concurrence for public access.

The proposed project meets all the applicable criteria set forth by the FHWA Guidance on Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation and Approval for FHWA Projects Which Necessitate the Use of Historic Bridges (23 CFR Part 774). All alternatives set forth in the subject programmatic evaluation were fully analyzed and the findings made are clearly applicable to this project. There are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the use of the historic bridge, and the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm.

The Section 4(f) Report details the alternatives evaluation for this resource, public involvement activities, MOA, and is attached. The public hearing will afford an opportunity for the public to review and comment on this determination.

Placeholder for public comments and OEM concurrence.

4.3 Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965

There are no properties in the project area that are protected pursuant to Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund of 1965.

4.4 Recreational Areas and Protected Lands

There are no other protected public lands in the project area

5. Natural Resources

The project will not have significant impacts to natural resources. Below is a summary of the evaluation performed:

5.1 Protected Species and Habitat

The following evaluation was conducted pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 as amended as well as other applicable federal and state laws protecting wildlife and habitat.

A Natural Resources Evaluation (NRE) (November 2025), included in the project file, was prepared as part of this project to analyze and document the effects of the Preferred Alternative on federal and state protected species and their habitats. Desktop review of existing data and field surveys were completed over the course of different seasons in 2023 to best identify protected plants and animals within the project limits. Species-specific surveys were completed for Audubon's crested caracara in January - April 2023 and Florida bonneted bat in May 2024. Observations of protected species and their habitats are detailed in the NRE. Several project commitments and implementation measures will help to protect species prior to and during construction.

Based on evaluation of collected data and field reviews, the federal and state listed species in **Table 2** and **Table 3** were observed or were determined to have the potential to occur within or adjacent to the project area. An effect determination was made for each of these federal and state listed species based on an analysis of the potential impacts of the proposed project on each species. The project is not within Critical Habitat for any species; therefore, no destruction or adverse modification of Critical Habitat will occur.

Table 2: Federally Listed Species Determinations of Effect

Project Effect	Federal Listed Species
No Effect	BIRDS
	Red-cockaded woodpecker (<i>Picoides borealis</i>)
	Florida grasshopper sparrow (<i>Ammodramus savannarum floridanus</i>)
	Florida scrub-jay (<i>Aphelocoma coerulescens</i>)
	Snail kite (<i>Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus</i>)
	Eastern black rail (<i>Laterallus jamaicensis</i>)
	MAMMALS
	Florida bonneted bat (<i>Eumops floridanus</i>)
	PLANTS
	Britton's beargrass (<i>Nolina brittoniana</i>)
May affect, not likely to adversely affect	REPTILES
	Eastern indigo snake (<i>Drymarchon corais couperi</i>)
	BIRDS
	Wood stork (<i>Mycteria americana</i>)
	MAMMALS

	West Indian manatee (<i>Trichechus manatus</i>)
	Florida panther (<i>Puma concolor coryi</i>)
May affect, likely to adversely affect	BIRDS
	Crested caracara (<i>Caracara plancus audubonii</i>)
*N/A	MAMMALS
	Tricolored bat (<i>Perimyotis subflavus</i>)
	INVERTEBRATES
	Monarch butterfly (<i>Danaus Plexippus</i>)

*The tricolored bat and monarch butterfly are proposed for federal listing and do not have a project effect determination at this time.

Table 3: State Listed Species Determinations of Effect

Project Effect	State Listed Species
No adverse effect anticipated	REPTILES
	Gopher tortoise (<i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>)
	Florida pine snake (<i>Pituophis melanoleucus mugitus</i>)
	BIRDS
	Florida sandhill crane (<i>Antigone canadensis pratensis</i>)
	Florida burrowing owl (<i>Athene cunicularia floridana</i>)
	Little blue heron (<i>Egretta caerulea</i>)
	Tricolored heron (<i>Egretta tricolor</i>)
	Southeastern American kestrel (<i>Falco sparverius paulus</i>)
	PLANTS
	Giant wild-pine (<i>Tillandsia utriculata</i>)
	Cardinal wild-pine (<i>Tillandsia fasciculata</i>)
	Pine lily (<i>Lilium catesbaei</i>)
	Yellow fringeless orchid (<i>Platanthera integra</i>)
	Celestial lily (<i>Nemastylis floridana</i>)
	Cutthroatgrass (<i>Coleataenia abscissa</i>)
	Piedmont jointgrass (<i>Coelorachis tuberculosa</i>)
	Many-flowered grass-pink (<i>Calopogon multiflorus</i>)
	Florida beargrass (<i>Nolina atopocarpa</i>)
	Small's flax (<i>Linum carteri</i> var. <i>smallii</i>)
No effect anticipated	BIRDS
	Least tern (<i>Sternula antillarum</i>)
	PLANTS
	Sand butterfly pea (<i>Centrosema arenicola</i>)
	Ashe's savory (<i>Calamintha ashei</i>)
	Giant orchid (<i>Pteroglossaspis ecristata</i>)
	Nodding pinweed (<i>Lechea cernua</i>)

The NRE was submitted to the USFWS, FWC, and FDACS on XXplaceholderXX. Comments were received from the XXplaceholderXX. Formal consultation with the USFWS is required for proposed impacts to the crested caracara.

Federally Listed Species- Basis of Effect Determinations

Any federal species for which a determination of "no effect" was made without the use of a species consultation key was found to not be present in the project area based on desktop and field reviews and similarly, habitat suitable to the species is also absent. This includes the red-cockaded woodpecker, Florida grasshopper sparrow, and Britton's beargrass. Species consultation keys were used for federally listed species where available. A species-specific survey was completed for the Florida bonneted bat (as per the 2024 survey guidelines) and a "no effect" determination was derived from use of the 2019 consultation key. Use of the eastern indigo snake key resulted in a "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" determination given that it uses a wide variety of habitats, but no species observations have been recorded within one mile of the project and none were observed during field reviews. The most current version of the USFWS' Standard Protection Measures for the eastern indigo snake will be implemented during construction; this is a project commitment. The project is within the core foraging areas of two (2) wood stork colonies, wood storks were observed during field reviews, and the project area provides suitable foraging habitat for the species. Use of the consultation key results in a "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" determination for the wood stork. A project commitment was added to mitigate impacts to suitable foraging habitat through the purchase of credits from a USFWS-approved mitigation bank. While no West Indian manatees were observed during field reviews, the species could potentially access the project area in the Kissimmee River. Use of the consultation key results in a "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" determination for the West Indian manatee. A project commitment is included to follow the most current version of the FWC Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work. The project is not located within the Panther Focus Area but is within the Thatcher Dispersal Pathway. There have been no recorded observations of the Florida panther within two miles or within the last two years, and no evidence of panthers was observed during field surveys. Use of the consultation key results in a "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" determination for the Florida panther. There is existing crossing opportunity for the panther and other larger animals at the Kissimmee River bridge and Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal bridge but given the presence of rip rap rubble and steep side slopes, crossing feasibility is limited. There is opportunity to add wildlife features in these areas to enhance wildlife movement. FDOT will continue to evaluate the inclusion of wildlife crossings and/or habitat connectivity enhancements during design phase. This will include the evaluation of fencing/funneling features and landscaping that could improve use of the wildlife shelves.

Determinations of "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" were made for the eastern black rail, Florida scrub-jay, and snail kite without use of a key. The determinations were based on documentation that suitable nesting and foraging habitat for these species is absent from the project footprint, but available outside the project footprint. There are two (2) species proposed for federal listing, the tricolored bat and monarch butterfly. Since these are not yet listed, no determinations of effect have been made. FDOT will commit to re-initiating consultation with the USFWS if the listing status of these species is elevated.

Two (2) caracara nests were documented during species-specific survey. A third nest was identified west of the project limits that is being addressed in the PD&E Study from Lonesome Island Road to CR 721 South. Since one nest will be directly impacted by the roadway improvements and the second nest will experience land conversion from potential habitat to roadway use within the primary protection zone, it also will experience impacts. As a result, a determination of "may affect, likely to adversely affect" was made for this species and formal consultation with the USFWS is required. Several conservation measures are proposed to protect the species including a financial contribution to the Crested Caracara Conservation fund and resurvey prior to construction.

State Listed Species- Basis of Effect Determinations

For species with a "no effect anticipated" determination, it was found based on desktop and field surveys that there is no suitable habitat for these species and no evidence of the species to potentially occur. For the species with a determination of "no adverse effect anticipated", it was found that there is some habitat in the project area that could potentially be used by the species, and the project is within the documented range of the species. Of the state-listed species in the table above, only the gopher tortoise was observed during field reviews. Implementation measures for the project include a gopher tortoise survey prior to construction to identify the need for a FWC gopher tortoise relocation permit; and additional surveys for the Florida sandhill crane and southeastern American kestrel.

Protected, non-listed species were also evaluated in the NRE. These include the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), and Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*). An implementation measure to survey for bald eagle and osprey nests will identify any nests that may be impacted by the project. At this time, no active eagle nests are documented in close proximity to the nest such that the project overlaps with primary or secondary protection zones. Several osprey nests have been documented in the project area. The Florida black bear may occasionally use the project area but its presence is infrequent.

5.2 Wetlands and Other Surface Waters

The following evaluation was conducted pursuant to Presidential Executive Order 11990 of 1977 as amended, Protection of Wetlands and the USDOT Order 5660.1A, Preservation of the Nation's Wetlands.

An NRE (November 2025), included in the project file, was prepared as part of this project to analyze anticipated impacts of the Preferred Alternative on wetland resources, to ensure their protection to the extent practicable, and to determine appropriate mitigation.

For the Preferred Alternative (mainline), 13.72 acres of direct impacts to jurisdictional wetlands, 2.60 acres to surface waters (Slough Ditch [C-41A] Canal and Kissimmee River), and 24.19 acres to other surface waters (ditches) associated with fill for new roadway and embankment are anticipated. In addition, the stormwater management facilities would directly impact 0.17-acre of wetlands and 1.03 acres of other surface waters. This results in a total of 41.70 acres of direct impact overall. As an estimate for this project, approximately 4.47 acres of secondary impacts are anticipated to wetlands. A Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM) analysis was performed and the estimated UMAM functional loss related to the Preferred Alternative impacts results 16.51 functional units for direct impacts and 0.30 functional units for secondary impacts for the mainline widening, and 0.46 functional units for direct impacts and 0.02 functional units for secondary impacts for the off-site stormwater management facilities. Details are provided in **Table 4** below and in the NRE (October 2025), prepared under separate cover and included in the project file.

Table 4: Summary of Wetland and Other Surface Water Impacts

System Type	Mainline Direct Impacts (acres)	Ponds Direct Impacts (acres)	Mainline Secondary Impacts (acres)	Ponds Secondary Impacts (acres)
Herbaceous wetlands	0.91	0.04	0.59	0.11
Shrub Wetlands	7.88	0.12	1.93	0.10
Forested wetlands	4.92	0.00	1.73	0.00
Other Surface Waters	24.19	1.03	0.00	0.00
Surface Waters	2.60	0.00	0.00	0.00
Totals	40.51	1.20	4.25	0.21
Overall Total	41.70		4.47	

The project is located within the SFWMD South Kissimmee Basin and entirely within one mitigation bank service area, Lake Istokopoga, and partially within the service areas of Twin Oaks and Bluefield Ranch mitigation banks. The project is located within the USACE-recognized Western Okeechobee Inflow (03090103) Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) Basin and Kissimmee (03090101) HUC Basin which differ from the SFWMD watershed boundaries. Mitigation credit availability from wetland mitigation banks changes over time, and use of some banks may require a "proximity factor" to be applied or a cumulative impact analysis to be prepared, in order to purchase credits from a bank that does not share the same watershed boundaries or mitigation bank service area as the project impacts. FDOT will continue to monitor wetland mitigation bank credit availability as the project proceeds to the design phase.

FDOT will address all state and federal permitting requirements and provide appropriate compensatory wetland mitigation for final determination of jurisdictional wetland boundaries in future phases of this project. Wetland impacts resulting from the construction of this project will be mitigated pursuant to Section 373.4137, Florida Statutes (F.S.), to satisfy all mitigation requirements of Part IV of Chapter 373, F.S., and 33 U.S.C. 1344. Mitigation for this project will be completed through the use of mitigation banks and any other mitigation options that satisfy state and federal requirements.

The NRE was submitted to the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), SFWMD, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), and USACE on XXXplaceholderXXX.

While no practicable alternative avoiding all wetland impacts was identified, wetland and other surface water impacts will be avoided and minimized to the greatest extent practicable in accordance with Executive Order (EO) 11990 during the project design and permitting. The proposed project will have no significant short-term or long-term adverse impacts to wetlands because any unavoidable impacts to wetlands will be mitigated to achieve no net loss of wetland function. Furthermore, all wetland impacts will be avoided and minimized to the greatest extent possible and have been limited to those areas of previous disturbance and those which are required to meet minimum safety requirements. Temporary impacts due to construction will be minimized utilizing best management practices (BMPs), maintaining a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP), and implementing FDOT design standards.

5.3 Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)

There is no Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) in the project area.

5.4 Floodplains

Floodplain impacts resulting from the project were evaluated pursuant to Executive Order 11988 of 1977, Floodplain Management.

A Location Hydraulic Report (October 2025), prepared under separate cover and included in the project file, assessed floodplain impacts associated with the project. The entire project limits are within FEMA flood zone A. These floodplains outfall to the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal and Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) which are not designated as regulated floodways. According to the FEMA Flood Zone A definition: *"The 1% annual flood (100-year flood), also known as the base flood, is the flood that has a 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. A Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) is the area subject to flooding by the 1% annual chance flood."* The only SFHA within the project corridor is Zone A. Zone A designates base flood zones with no flood elevation.

Three (3) floodplain models were developed for the following scenarios: (1) existing conditions model, to establish the 100-year 72 hour floodplain elevations for the FEMA Zone A areas, (2) a post development model, by adding the proposed corridor to the existing model and evaluating the impacts to the existing floodplain elevations, and (3) a revised post development model with the compensation of the proposed ponds to mitigate areas where the floodplain elevation increase was greater than 0.1-inch. As detailed in the Location Hydraulic Report, the proposed alignment and typical section is expected to have minimal to no impact on the existing floodplain.

Perpendicular floodplain impacts are those that result from cross drain extension in areas of the 100-year floodplain and parallel impacts occur due to the Preferred Alternative's roadway reconstruction south of the existing S.R. 70 roadway and base elevation increase. While both perpendicular and parallel impacts to the 100-year floodplain will occur due to the Preferred Alternative, these impacts will be minimal. Given the limited number of cross drains, perpendicular impacts are minimal and can be mitigated through the replacement or widening of existing bridges. The floodplain analysis indicates that floodplains in adjacent basins along the corridor will experience minimal impacts, which will be addressed in the drainage design. The proposed concepts are anticipated to provide a net improvement to the floodplain as a result of the proposed stormwater pond sites and roadside ditches.

Per the FDOT PD&E Manual, the floodplain encroachment areas are classified as minimal. Minimal encroachments on a floodplain occur when there is floodplain involvement but the impacts on human life, transportation facilities, and natural and beneficial floodplain values are not significant and can be resolved with minimal efforts. Normally, these minimal efforts to address impacts consist of applying FDOT's drainage design standards and following the SFWMD's procedures to achieve results that will not increase or significantly change the flood elevations and/or limits. As a result, there will be no significant change in flood risk, and there will not be a significant change in the potential for interruption or termination of emergency service or to emergency evacuation routes. Therefore, it has been determined that this project will have no significant impact on floodplains.

5.5 Sole Source Aquifer

Biscayne Aquifer

The proposed project is located in a recharge area for the Biscayne Aquifer, a designated sole source aquifer. Pursuant to the Safe Drinking Water Act, as amended, 40 C.F.R. 149, the proposed project requires a sole source aquifer impact review and concurrence to ensure there is no potential for contamination. The FDOT has determined that through the

implementation of stormwater treatment facilities and best management practices, the proposed project will not impact the sole source aquifer.

Coordination with the USEPA was initiated on August 27, 2025. An auto-generated letter was provided by the USEPA on August 27, 2025 and the additional USEPA concurrence is currently pending. XXXXXplaceholder for USEPA responseXXXXX. Proposed bridge piles are approximately 50 - 70 feet deep, however the exact depth is currently unknown. According to best available data from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and SFWMD, the project area is in a Biscayne Aquifer Recharge Zone and will not interfere with the Biscayne aquifer itself. The potentiometric surface (the level that ground water in the aquifer reaches) for the upper Floridan aquifer is approximately +50 feet, NGVD 29 in the project area, but the confining layer is greater than 100 feet. Standard penetration test (SPT) borings are recommended to be completed to determine if it is present and at what depth within the project corridor. During final design, detailed geotechnical surveys including SPT borings will be conducted. To avoid potential impacts to the Biscayne Sole Source Aquifer associated with construction of bridge foundation and/or construction dewatering, FDOT will implement BMPs from the Florida Design Manual (FDM) Chapter 251.

5.6 Water Resources

A Pond Siting Report (PSR) (October 2025) was prepared for the project and is included in the project file. The purpose of the report is to present potential pond site locations for meeting applicable stormwater management criteria and identify ROW needs for the project. As documented in the PSR, stormwater management for water quality treatment and attenuation will be provided in proposed wet detention ponds. Currently, there is no stormwater treatment or attenuation. Within one post-construction drainage basin, a regional pond alternative was evaluated. The existing land would not require any grading and therefore, there would be no disturbance to the existing land, habitats, or any environmental resources contain within. Therefore, this regional pond concept is viable and will be further evaluated in the subsequent design phase. A traditional, excavated stormwater pond has been selected as a preferred pond site within the basin should the regional pond concept later be found to be non-viable. The PSR provides more detail on this regional pond.

The project drains to two (2) maintained canals owned by SFWMD, the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) and the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal. The FDEP statewide comprehensive verified list of impaired waters was reviewed to identify any impaired Florida waterbody identification numbers (WBIDs). The project study limits fall within WBID 3198 (impaired for nutrients), 3202 (impaired for nutrients), 3206 (impaired for dissolved oxygen), and 3209 (un-impaired). Runoff is split along the centerline of the road and sheet flows directly into adjacent ditches that are interconnected by side drains that ultimately outfall into the SFWMD canals mentioned previously. Groundwater in the surficial aquifer is recharged primarily by precipitation, but also by irrigation from wells, seepage from lakes and streams, and the lateral groundwater inflow from adjacent areas.

The design of the drainage and stormwater facilities will comply with the standards set forth by the FDOT Drainage Manual and the SFWMD Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) Information Manual. Drainage patterns will be maintained in the project design. Water quality impacts resulting from erosion and sedimentation will be controlled through the use of BMPs. All state water quality criteria will be met. Short term construction related wetland impacts will be minimized with the use of BMPs such as the use of siltation barriers, dewatering structures, and containment devices to control turbid water discharges outside of construction limits.

An Individual ERP from the SFWMD will be required. A National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) construction permit is needed and the associated requirement to develop and implement a Stormwater Runoff Control Concept will be met during the final design phase of the project. Project construction will also follow the standard FDOT specifications for erosion and sedimentation control. Therefore, the Preferred Alternative is expected to have no significant impact on water quality and stormwater.

A Water Quality Impact Evaluation (WQIE) (October 2025) also was prepared for the project and is included in the project file. The Preferred Alternative is expected to have no significant impact on water quality and quantity.

5.7 Aquatic Preserves

There are no aquatic preserves in the project area.

5.8 Outstanding Florida Waters

There are no Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW) in the project area.

5.9 Wild and Scenic Rivers

There are no designated Wild and Scenic Rivers or other protected rivers in the project area.

5.10 Coastal Barrier Resources

It has been determined that this project is neither in the vicinity of, nor leads directly to a designated coastal barrier resource unit pursuant to the Coastal Barrier Resources Act of 1982 (CBRA) and the Coastal Barrier Improvement Act of 1990 (CBIA).

6. Physical Resources

The project will not have significant impacts to physical resources. Below is a summary of the evaluation performed for these resources.

6.1 Highway Traffic Noise

The following evaluation was conducted pursuant to 23 CFR 772 Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise, and Section 335.17, F.S., State highway construction; means of noise abatement.

A Noise Study Report (NSR) (September 2025) was prepared under separate cover and is included in the project file. Within the project limits, 105 receptors were modeled with the Traffic Noise Model (TNM) to evaluate traffic noise levels at 121 noise sensitive land uses consisting of 120 residences and one picnic table. Exterior traffic noise levels were evaluated at all locations. Under existing conditions (2024), exterior traffic noise levels are predicted to range from 42.0 to 66.4 dB(A), and from 46.4 to 70.9 dB(A) with the future no-build condition. In the design year (2052) with the Preferred Alternative, traffic noise levels are predicted to range from 47.2 to 68.7 dB(A). Traffic noise levels are predicted to approach, meet, or exceed the NAC for Activity Category B at four residential receptors. When compared to existing conditions, the largest increase in traffic noise is predicted to be 12.7 dB(A), a level that does not constitute a substantial increase. Some noise sensitive land uses are predicted to experience a decrease in traffic noise as a result of the proposed southward shift in the S.R. 70 roadway alignment between Boney Lane and NW Riverside Road. **Table 5** presents the noise impacted sites and a map depicting the impacted sites is attached.

Table 5: Summary of Noise Impacted Sites

Noise Receptor No.	Location	Activity Category
72	15601 S.R. 70 W	Residential
76	15609 S.R. 70 W	Residential
101	743 SW 128TH AVE	Residential
103	12390 HWY 70 W	Residential

Noise abatement measures including traffic management and alternative roadway alignments were determined to not be feasible and/or reasonable abatement measures for the impacted residences. Noise contours are used to establish noise buffer zones and provide appropriate setback distances for noise sensitive development. These contours have been prepared for the future improved roadway facility and are discussed in the NSR.

A noise barrier was evaluated as a potential abatement measure for two of the impacted residential receptors located in Kissimmee River Fishing Resort. The results of the analysis indicate the barrier could not meet minimum noise reduction requirements at a reasonable cost. Noise barriers were not evaluated at the remaining two impacted residential receptors as they are considered "isolated impacts" where there is only one impacted receptor to potentially benefit, and as such, would not meet minimum feasibility requirements.

Based on the noise analyses performed to date, there are no feasible and reasonable solutions available to mitigate the predicted traffic noise impacts at the residential receptors. Therefore, noise barriers are not recommended for further evaluation as part of this project at this time. Should changes be made to the Preferred Alternative, additional analysis may be warranted.

The traffic noise analysis produced noise contours for the Preferred Alternative. **Table 6** includes distances from the proposed improved roadway edge of travel to the predicted traffic noise impact area for each noise land use activity category in decibels dB(A).

Table 6: Noise Contours

SR 70 Roadway Segment	Activity Category (NAC)	Distance to Approach (within 1 dB(A)) of NAC for Activity Category (feet) ¹
CR 721 South to SW 144 th Parkway (Figure 6-1)	A (57 dB(A))	350
	B/C (67 dB(A))	105
	D ² (52 dB(A))	Inside Right-of-Way
	E (72 dB(A))	Inside Right-of-Way
SW 144 th Parkway to 128 th Avenue (Figure 6-2)	A (57 dB(A))	400
	B/C (67 dB(A))	115
	D ² (52 dB(A))	Inside Right-of-Way
	E (72 dB(A))	Inside Right-of-Way

¹ Distances are measured from the outside edge of the nearest travel lane for the improved roadway, do not account for any reduction in noise levels that may occur from shielding and/or terrain, and should be used for planning purposes only.

² The distance to the interior impact criteria for Activity Category D is based on a conservative reduction factor of 20 dB(A) due to the building envelope that is applied to the predicted exterior traffic noise level.

Residences within the project limits are identified in the FDOT listing of sites sensitive to construction noise and vibration. Construction of the proposed roadway improvements is not expected to have any significant noise or vibration impact, and it is anticipated that the application of the FDOT "Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction" will minimize or eliminate potential construction noise and vibration impacts.

6.2 Air Quality

This project is not expected to create adverse impacts on air quality because the project area is in attainment for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and because the project is expected to **improve** the Level of Service (LOS) and **reduce** delay and congestion on all facilities within the study area.

Construction activities may cause short-term air quality impacts in the form of dust from earthwork and unpaved roads. These impacts will be minimized by adherence to applicable state regulations and to applicable FDOT Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction.

The subject project is located in Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, areas currently designated by the USEPA as being an attainment area for carbon monoxide (CO), lead (Pb), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), ozone (O₃), particulate matter less than or equal to 2.5 and 10 micrometers (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀), and sulfur dioxide (SO₂). Because the project is in an attainment area and would reduce congestion, the proposed improvements will not have an impact on local or regional totals of air pollutants or pollutant precursor emissions, or on concentrations of the pollutants in the ambient air. Notably, because the S.R. 70 project is in an area that is designated attainment for all the NAAQS, the conformity requirements of the Clean Air Act (CAA) do not apply. A carbon monoxide screening model was not required or performed.

6.3 Contamination

A Level-I contamination evaluation was completed for the project and a Contamination Screening Evaluation Report (CSER) (September 2025) was prepared under separate cover and is included in the project file. It documents potential contamination concern along the project corridor. Based on the methodologies performed as part of this study, eight (8) potential contamination sites were identified as having the potential for hazardous material or petroleum impacts. Of these eight (8) sites, two (2) received an initial risk rating of "No", five (5) sites received an initial risk rating of "Low", and one (1) received an initial risk rating of "Medium". **Table 7** lists each potential contamination site and a map exhibit is attached.

Table 7. Potential Contamination Sites

Facility Location Number	Facility Name	Facility Address / Location	Distance to Nearest Pond Parcel (feet)	Distance to Location of Identified Concern (feet)	Risk Rating
1	Lykes Bros Inc - FL Ranch	Corner Hwy 721 & Hwy 70	600	350	Low
2	Glades Electric Cooperative Ing Morris	20899 FL-70	2,275*	0	No
3	Florida Gas Transmission Company	20179 State Highway 70	2,010*	N/A	Low
4	Arrow B Ranch	150 Fulmar Terrace	0	410	Low
5	Circle G Ranch	7200 SW 196th Terrace	0	0	Low
6	Kissimmee River Fishing Resort	15601 Hwy 70	300	40	Medium
7	Gloria Farms Inc	Platts Bluff Road	0	450	No
8	Rio Rancho Corp	12300 Hwy 70 W	4,780*	2,210*	Low

Note: (*) used to denote distance outside of applicable search buffer

-Distance to Nearest Pond Parcel is defined as the distance from the contaminated parcel boundary to the nearest pond parcel identified.

-Distance to Location of Identified Concern is defined as the distance from existing ROW to either the point assigned to the facility by the FDEP or the approximate location at which a potential source of contamination has been identified. If multiple facility IDs have been assigned by FDEP to a single parcel, the point nearest to the project area is used.

For sites rated "No" and "Low" for potential contamination, no further action is required at this time. These sites/facilities have potential to impact the study area but based on variables such as current site operations and distance to the project area, have been determined to have low risk to the corridor at this time. Variables that may change the risk rating include a facility's non-compliance with environmental regulations, new discharges to the soil or groundwater, and modifications to

current permits. Should any of these variables change an additional assessment of the facilities will be conducted.

For the site with a risk rating of "Medium", which consists of an underground petroleum storage tank that is undergoing cleanup activities for historic groundwater contamination due to a gasoline leak, the Project Manager (PM) and District Contamination Impact Coordinator (DCIC) will coordinate to determine if Level-II testing and/or Level-III support will be warranted. This may include determining if the FDEP/FDOT Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) applies to any sites, conducting Level II activities or recommending Level III or remedial activities, notes on the plans, design modifications and/or special provisions prior to or during construction.

Existing bridge structures were not physically evaluated or tested for hazardous materials as part of this contamination screening evaluation. However, hazardous materials including asbestos-containing materials and metal-based coatings could exist at Bridge 910001, the S.R. 70 bridge over the Kissimmee River, given the age of the original infrastructure. The current scope of work proposes the removal of Bridge 910001. A pre-construction hazardous material survey will be performed at this location during final design.

6.4 Utilities and Railroads

The project's Utility Assessment Report (September 2025) was prepared under separate cover and is located in the project file. The Utility Agency/Owners (UAOs) were determined using a variety of sources. A Sunshine 811 Design Ticket was requested and a field review was conducted. Above ground utility features were noted and verified with the utility providers and operators during the coordination process for the project. Base maps were sent to utility providers with a request to provide information on existing and planned utilities within the project area. The final source of data collection was from As-built plans along or adjacent to the study area.

Utility easements for the FPL high voltage overhead transmission line and FGT buried gas transmission are in the project limits. The FPL easement runs along the north side of S.R. 70 and the FGT line runs varies in location north and south of S.R. 70 as it crosses the corridor at four (4) locations. Utility relocation costs were estimated for the project and included in the alternatives matrix. Utility relocation is a notable cost for this project given that the FPL and FGT utilities are within easements and impacts are anticipated.

Table 8 summarizes utility type, location and name of utility company/owner.

Table 8: Existing Utility Owners

Company	Utility Type	Locations
Comcast	Fiber- Cable TV	Buried CATV under S.R. 70 near SW 144th Parkway and along north side of S.R. 70 for limited distance Overhead CATV on power poles on north side of S.R. 70 in 2 locations and crossing S.R. 70 near SW 128th Ave.
Florida Gas Transmission	Natural gas pipeline	30-inch gas pipeline within a private easement on north side of S.R. 70 outside of ROW starting at west end of project; crossing to south of S.R. 70 just west of Mose Grade Road, running on south side of S.R. 70 to just east of Rucks Dairy Road where it crosses to north side, then crosses S.R. 70 to south side west of Riverside Road, then runs along south side to east of 145st St where it crossing back to the north side

Florida Power & Light Distribution	Electric	Overhead Electric running along the north side of S.R. 70 outside the ROW on private easement with numerous S.R. 70 crossings between power poles throughout the corridor including at intersections
Florida Power & Light Transmission	Electric	Overhead Electric on north side of S.R. 70 within private easement outside the S.R. 70 ROW
Lumen/Centurylink	Fiber- Internet and Telephone	Buried Telephone/ Fiber on the south side of S.R. 70 with numerous S.R. 70 crossings throughout the corridor including at intersections

There are no railroads within the project limits.

6.5 Construction

Construction activities for the proposed project may cause minor short-term air quality, noise, water quality, traffic congestion, and visual impacts for nearby residents and the traveling public. The air quality effect will be temporary, localized, and will primarily be in the form of construction exhaust emissions and fugitive dust generated from equipment during project construction. Air pollution associated with the creation of airborne particles will be effectively controlled through the use of watering or the application of other controlled materials.

Construction of the roadway improvements, with heavy equipment movement and other construction activities, is not expected to have a significant noise or vibration effect. Should unanticipated noise or vibration issues arise during the construction process, the Project Engineer, in coordination with a noise specialist and the contractor, will investigate additional methods of controlling these impacts.

Federal regulations (40 CFR Part 122) prohibit point source discharges of stormwater to waters of the U.S. without a NPDES permit. Under the State of Florida's delegated authority to administer the NPDES program, construction sites that will result in greater than one (1) acre of disturbance must file for and obtain either coverage under an appropriate generic permit contained in Chapter 62-621, F.A.C. or an individual permit issued pursuant to Chapter 62-620, F.A.C. The FDEP issues these permits. A major component of the NPDES permit is the development of a SWPPP. The SWPPP identifies potential sources of pollution that may reasonably be expected to affect the quality of stormwater discharges from the site and discusses good engineering practices (i.e., best management practices) that will be used to reduce the pollutants. The contractor will obtain the NPDES permit and prepare the SWPPP prior to construction. Additionally, the associated requirement to develop and implement a Stormwater Runoff Control Concept (SRCC) will be addressed during design.

Water quality impacts resulting from erosion and sedimentation will be controlled through the use of BMPs. All state water quality criteria will be met. Short-term construction related wetland impacts will be minimized through the use of BMPs such as the use of siltation barriers, dewatering structures, and containment devices to control turbid water discharges outside of construction limits.

Maintenance of traffic and sequence of construction will be planned and scheduled so as to minimize traffic delays throughout the project. Signage will be used as appropriate to provide pertinent information to the traveling public. The local news media will be notified in advance of road closings and other construction related activities to allow for the planning of alternate routes. Access to local properties, businesses and residences will be maintained to the extent

practical through controlled construction scheduling and the implementation of the project's specific Traffic Control Plan(s). Aesthetic impacts will be temporary and could consist of the staging of construction equipment and materials.

Construction activities will be phased to maintain two lanes of traffic at all times, minimizing disruptions to motorists and adjacent properties. A portion of the roadway construction will occur on new alignment outside the existing travel lanes, such as at the beginning of the project at CR 721 S and in the segment between Boney Lane and NW Riverside Road. This allows construction activities in these areas to proceed without affecting current traffic operations. In areas where the new roadway will be constructed along the existing S.R. 70 alignment, traffic will remain on the existing two-lane road while the contractor builds the two future eastbound lanes. This first phase also would consist of constructing the proposed stormwater facilities and cross drain extensions outside of the existing roadway. The second phase would shift the traffic to the newly constructed asphalt to enable the reconstruction of the existing travel lanes and completion of the cross drain widening. The third phase would involve completing the median construction, the final roadway friction course, and the final pavement markings.

7. Engineering Analysis Support

The engineering analysis supporting this environmental document is contained within the [Draft Preliminary Engineering Report \(PER\)](#) .

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8. Permits

The following environmental permits are anticipated for this project:

Federal Permit(s)

USACE Section 10 or Section 404 Permit
USACE Section 408 Permit

Status

To be acquired
To be acquired

State Permit(s)

DEP or WMD Environmental Resource Permit (ERP)
DEP National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit
FWC Gopher Tortoise Relocation Permit
WMD Right of Way Permit

Status

To be acquired
To be acquired
To be acquired
To be acquired

9. Public Involvement

The following is a summary of public involvement activities conducted for this project:

Summary of Activities Other than the Public Hearing

A Public Involvement Plan (July 2023) was prepared under separate cover and is included in the project file. This plan details the public involvement approach for the project and documents public outreach methods including a project website, newsletters, a public meeting, and a public hearing. Agencies and elected and appointed officials were included in a mailing list as well as other project stakeholders. The Comments and Coordination Report (Date TBD), prepared under separate cover and included in the project file, fully documents the public and stakeholder involvement conducted for this project.

Public involvement activities include a May 2023 project kick-off newsletter sent to residents and stakeholders. The newsletter provided information on the need for the project and information about the PD&E study process. A project website, <https://www.swflroads.com/project/450334-1>, was created to provide the public with project specific information and give the public an opportunity to make comments and ask questions about the project.

An in-person Alternatives Public Workshop was held on June 11, 2024, at Indian River State College Dixon Hendry campus in Okeechobee from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. The meeting followed an open house format and provided an opportunity for the public to review the proposed project layout and speak one-on-one with project team members. A virtual Alternatives Public Workshop was held on June 18, 2024 starting at 6:00 PM which included a meeting introduction, project video, and a question and answer period. Attendees typed-in questions, the virtual meeting moderator read the questions, and the project team provided answers while using concept plan maps for display purposes.

The in-person meeting was attended by 11 citizens and three (3) elected/appointed officials. The elected/ appointed officials in attendance included representatives from the City of Okeechobee, Okeechobee County, and the Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office. All attendees were given the opportunity to provide written comments at the meeting or within the 14-day comment period following the meeting, ending June 25, 2024. The virtual meeting was attended by eight (8) citizens, one (1) elected/appointed official, and one (1) agency representative (legislative aide).

A total of 16 comments were submitted during the commenting period. The majority of the comments expressed the need for widening S.R. 70 from a capacity and safety perspective. Other comments were related to access, both for properties on the north side east of the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal bridge and along the southern portion of the project. In addition, concerns were expressed on the need for noise wall and guardrail, potential relocations, and the existing and proposed elevation at the Kissimmee River Fishing Resort due to the Kissimmee River bridge approach. Public comments were discussed with FDOT staff during the June 25, 2024 public alternatives debriefing meeting. As discussed in previous sections of this report, additional evaluations and refinements of the build alternatives were completed following the Alternatives Public Workshop which fully evaluated access to adjacent properties, elevation of the proposed roadway, noise impacts, and potential relocations.

Following the Alternatives Public Workshop, the project was presented to the HRTPO staff and committees on October 2, 2024 to explain the study process and the alternatives for the multiple ongoing S.R. 70 corridor projects in Highlands and Okeechobee Counties. During the meetings, general comments in support of the project were received. Regular project updates have been provided to the HRTPO through the FDOT liaison. Presentations are also planned to occur following the public hearing.

Date of Public Hearing: 12/16/2025

Summary of Public Hearing

To be added following the public hearing.

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10. Commitments Summary

1. The FDOT will adhere to the stipulations included in the 2026 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the FDOT and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).
2. The most recent version of the USFWS Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake will be utilized during construction.
3. The USFWS and FWC Standard Manatee Construction Conditions for In-Water Work will be utilized during construction.
4. FDOT will provide mitigation for impacts to wood stork Suitable Foraging Habitat within the Service Area of a USFWS-approved wetland mitigation bank or wood stork conservation bank.
5. FDOT commits to design and construction of wildlife shelves at the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal and Kissimmee River bridges per current wildlife crossing guidelines. The design details of the wildlife shelves, including evaluation of fencing/funneling and landscape features, will be further evaluated during the design phase
6. FDOT will provide a financial contribution to the Crested Caracara Conservation Fund for impacts consisting of \$100,000 for the take of caracara nest B and \$45,840 for impacts to suitable habitat within the primary zone of caracara nest C.
7. The Action Area will be resurveyed prior to construction to confirm the locations of active Audubon's crested caracara nests. If the nest locations have moved or additional nests are found, consultation with the USFWS will be reinitiated.
8. If the listing status of the monarch butterfly is elevated by USFWS to Threatened or Endangered and the Preferred Alternative is located within the consultation area, FDOT commits to re-initiating consultation with the USFWS during the design and permitting phase of the project to determine the appropriate survey methodology and to address USFWS regulations regarding the protection of the monarch butterfly.
9. If the tri-colored bat is listed by the USFWS as threatened or endangered prior to the completion of construction, FDOT commits to re-initiating consultation with USFWS to determine appropriate avoidance and minimization measures.

11. Technical Materials

The following technical materials have been prepared to support this Environmental Document and are included in the Project File.

Sociocultural Data Report (SDR)
Cultural Resources Assessment Survey (CRAS) Kissimmee River Bridge
Section 106 Case Study for Kissimmee River Bridge
Cultural Resources Assessment Survey (CRAS) mainline
Draft Water Quality Impact Evaluation (WQIE)
Draft Natural Resources Evaluation (NRE)
Draft Pond Siting Report (PSR)
Draft Location Hydraulics Report (LHR)
Draft Contamination Screening Evaluation Report (CSER)
Draft Noise Study Report (NSR)
Draft Utilities Assessment Package (UAP)
Draft Preliminary Engineering Report (PER)
Project Traffic Analysis Report (PTAR)
Access Management Plan Technical Memorandum
Design Traffic Technical Memorandum (DTTM)
Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

Attachments

Planning Consistency

Project Plan Consistency Documentation

Social and Economic

Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form (NRCS-CPA-106 or Form AD 1006)

Cultural Resources

SHPO Concurrence Letter on CRAS for Kissimmee River Bridge

Draft MOA S.R. 70 Kissimmee River Bridge

SHPO concurrence on Section 106 Case Study for Kissimmee River Bridge

SHPO Concurrence on CRAS for Mainline

Section 106 Resource Map

Section 4(f) Report

Natural Resources

Sole Source Aquifer EPA Concurrence Email

Floodplains Map

Species and Habitat Map

Physical Resources

Noise Impacted Sites

Potential Contamination Site Map

Planning Consistency Appendix

Contents:

Project Plan Consistency Documentation

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2045

Long Range Transportation Plan

Strategic Intermodal System

In the six county Heartland region, the Regional Roadway Network is made up of primarily US and SR routes designated as part of the Strategic Intermodal system (SIS). The State of Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) programs SIS projects and available revenue for SIS funding. Because SIS projects represent virtually all of the needed transportation capacity projects identified as over capacity for 2045 in the Heartland, the Strategic Intermodal System Funding Strategy, Long Range Cost Feasible Plan 2029-2045, 2018 Edition was used to determine the cost feasible projects shown in the following section on below. Funded improvements have identified construction funding by 2045. Partially funded improvements do not have identified construction funding with the timeframe of the plan.

Strategic Intermodal System Facilities on the Regional Roadway Network

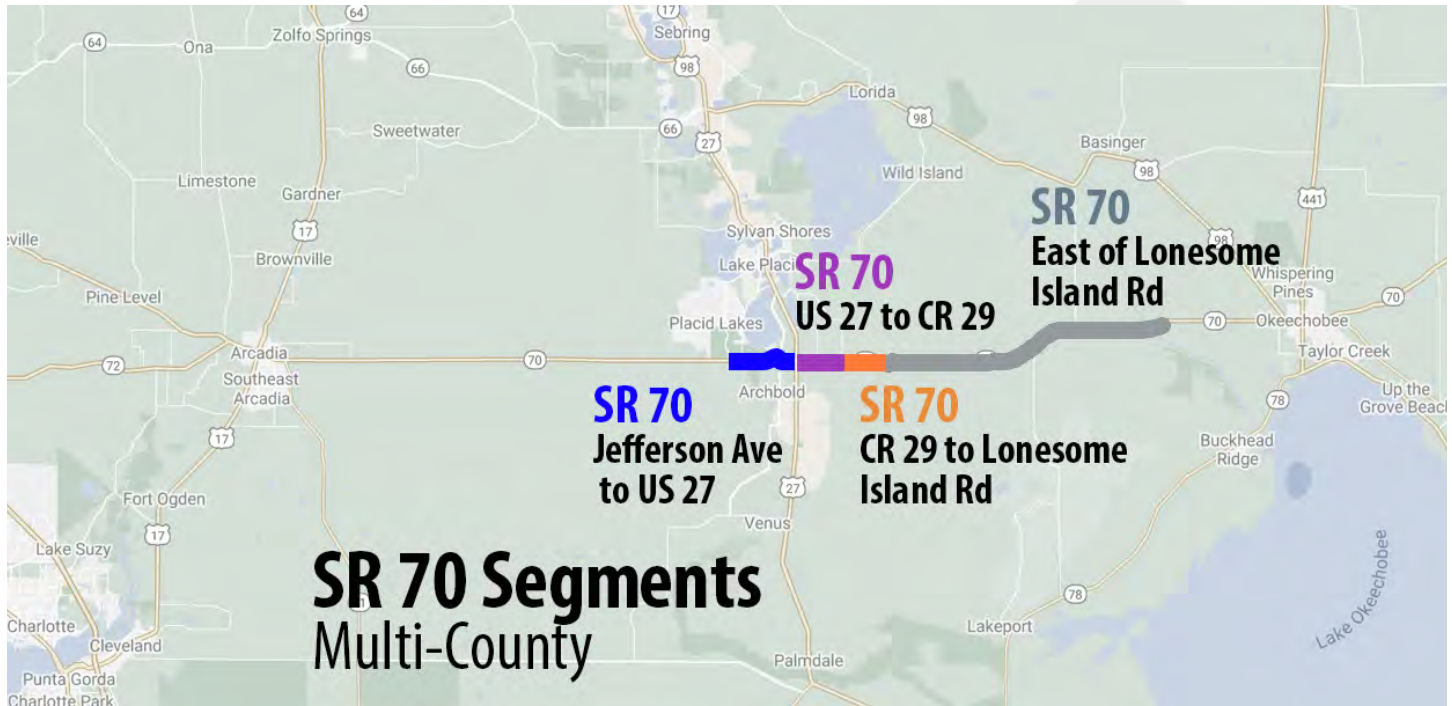
**US 17 • US 27 • SR 29 • SR 31 • SR 64 • SR 70 • SR 80 SR 82
• SR 91 (Florida's Turnpike) • US 441 • SR 710**

Funded SIS Improvements			
Facility	From	To	Description
SR 29	CR 80A (Cowboy Way)	CR 731 (Whidden Road)	Widen to 4 lanes
SR 70	Jefferson Ave	US 27	Widen to 4 lanes
SR 710	US 441	L-63 Canal	New Roadway (4 lanes)
SR 710	E. of L-63 Canal	Sherman Woods Ranches	Widen to 4 lanes
SR 710	Sherman Woods Ranches	Okeechobee / Martin County Line	Widen to 4 lanes
Partially Funded SIS Improvements Identified for PD&E and Design in the SIS Long Range Cost Feasible Plan 2029-2045			
Facility	From	To	Description
SR 70	Manatee County Line	West of Peace River (American Legion Rd)	Widen to 4 lanes
US 17	Palmetto St	SR 70/Hickory St	Highway Capacity
US 17	SR 70/Hickory St	SR 35/DeSoto Ave	Highway Capacity
SR 70	East of SR 31	Jefferson Avenue	Widen to 4 lanes
SR 64	US 17	SR 636	Widen to 4 lanes
SR 64	Old Town Creek Rd. / CR 671 / Parnell Rd.	Hardee / Highlands County Line	Widen to 4 lanes
US 27	Palm Beach / Hendry County Line	SR 80	Freight Capacity
SR 64	Hardee / Highlands County Line	US 27	Widen to 4 lanes
US 27	Glades / Highlands County Line	SR 70	Widen to 6 lanes
US 27	South of Skipper Rd.	US 98	Widen to 6 lanes
SR 70	NW 38th Terrace	US 98	Widen to 4 lanes
US 98 / US 441	18th Terrace	38th Ave.	Widen to 4 lanes
SR 91	North of SR 70 (MP 152)	North of SR 60 (MP 193)	Widen to 6 lanes

Although SIS designated roadways are typically prioritized through the Florida SIS Plan, the 2045 L RTP looks to advance improvements on SR 70 with available Other Arterials (OA) funding. The HRTPO, it's committees, and many community stakeholders have expressed that SR 70 is the highest priority in the region.

SR 70 Improvements Funded With OA Funds				
Facility	From	To	Description	Funded Phases
SR 70	US 27	CR 29	Widen to 4 lanes	PE, ROW, CST
SR 70	CR 29	Lonesome Island Rd	Widen to 4 lanes	PE, ROW, CST
SR 70	East of Lonesome Island Rd	38th Terrace	Safety Improvements and/or PD&E	Safety/PD&E

Funded SIS Improvements





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Web Application

Federal Aid Management Sabrina Aubery - Manager

STIP Project Detail and Summaries Online Report

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

Selection Criteria	
Approved STIP Financial Project:450334 As Of:7/1/2025	Detail Related Items Shown

HIGHWAYS							
Item Number: 450334 1		Project Description: SR 70 FROM CR 721 S TO CR 599/128 AVE					*SIS*
District: 01		County: DIST/ST-WIDE		Type of Work: PD&E/EMO STUDY		Project Length: 8.570MI	
		Fiscal Year					
Phase / Responsible Agency		<2026	2026	2027	2028	2029	>2029 All Years
P D & E / MANAGED BY FDOT							
Fund Code:	ACNP-ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION NHPP	951,765					951,765
	ACSA-ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION (SA)	14,969	5,983				20,952
	DS-STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAYS & PTO	17,373					17,373
	NHPP-IM, BRDG REPL, NATNL HWY-MAP21	2,047,389					2,047,389
	SA-STP, ANY AREA	1,000					1,000
Phase: P D & E Totals		3,032,496	5,983				3,038,479
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING / MANAGED BY FDOT							
Fund Code:	ACNP-ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION NHPP	1,000,872	128				1,001,000
	DDR-DISTRICT DEDICATED REVENUE	666					666
Phase: PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING Totals		1,001,538	128				1,001,666
Item: 450334 1 Totals		4,034,034	6,111				4,040,145
Project Totals		4,034,034	6,111				4,040,145

Grand Total	4,034,034	6,111					4,040,145
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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

Sabrina Aubery: Sabrina.Aubery@dot.state.fl.us Or call 850-414-4449

Or

Dawn Rudolph: Dawn.Rudolph@dot.state.fl.us Or call 850-414-4465

[Reload STIP Selection Page](#)

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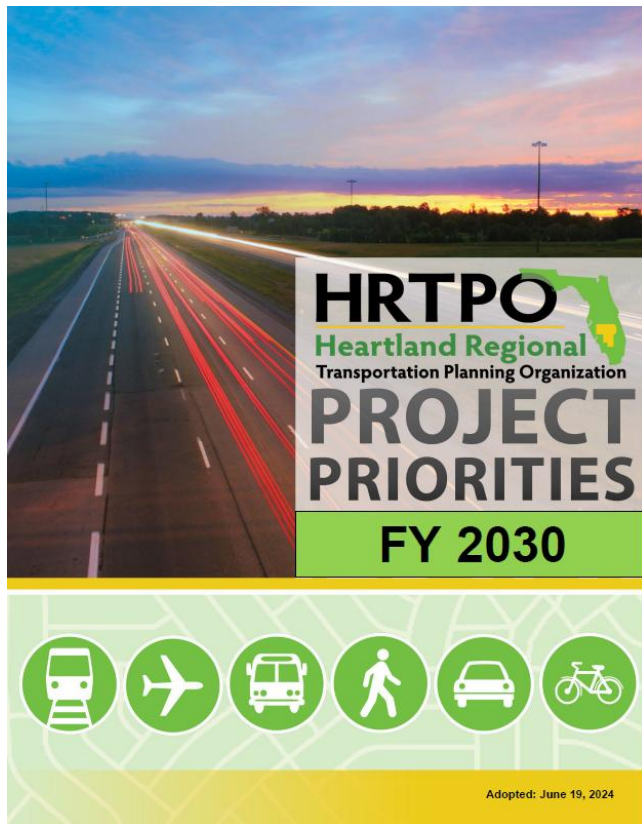
Florida Department of Transportation

Consistent, Predictable, Repeatable

Transportation Improvement Program

FISCAL YEARS 2025/26 - 2029/30

FY 2029/2030 Transportation Project Priorities



Project Selection

Each year the HRTPO is responsible for developing a list of Priority Transportation Projects and submitting the list to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for consideration during development of the Five-Year Work Program for DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties. Member governments of the HRTPO are requested to submit Transportation Project Applications and Priorities for Fiscal Year 2029/2030 to the HRTPO for transmittal to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for consideration of programming and funding by FDOT. The project applications are then scored based on criteria—found in Appendix A, developed by the Technical Advisory Committee and Citizens Advisory Committee, and adopted by the HRTPO Board—and ranked in order of priority. This process is conducted in accordance with federal requirements in the TPO planning process, and support FDOT's Safety Target of zero deaths.

Consistent with federal requirements in 23 CFR 450.332 (b),(c), and Title 23, Section 134 USC, and other applicable federal and state requirements, the projects selected for the HRTPO TIP were based on a "snapshot" of the FDOT District Five-Year Work Program for Fiscal Years 2025/26 – 2029/30 dated April 10, 2024. The TIP was developed in cooperation with the state, local governments, and other transportation partners in the region including the Florida Department of Transportation, the counties of DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands and Okeechobee including municipalities.

Project Priority Statement

A list of priority projects is presented to the TPO Board for adoption and submitted to FDOT for use in developing the new fifth year of the Five-Year Work Program. All priority projects are consistent with the TPO's adopted Long Range Transportation Plan. Adopted June 18, 2024 by the HRTPO Board, the Project Priorities for Fiscal Years 2024/25 to 2029/30 were submitted to FDOT for consideration in the FDOT Tentative Work Program. As a policy of the HRTPO, total project cost will be used as additional criteria to prioritize projects that have the same ranking. Lower cost projects will be given higher priority and higher cost projects will be given lower priority.

Projects that bring more CAPACITY						Project Development Status			
Rank	Jurisdiction	Facility	Description	From	To	Step 1 Project Development & Environment (PD&E)	Step 2 Preliminary Engineering (PE)	Step 3 Right of Way (ROW) Acquisition	Step 4 Construction (CST)
1	Highlands	US 98	2 to 4	US 27	Airport Road	✓			
			Project Segment 414511-4 US 27 to Bay Blossom Dr			✓			
2	DeSoto	Kings Highway	2 to 4	Charlotte C/L	Peace River St	✓	✓		
			Project Segment 440342-2 Charlotte C/L to SW Glenadine Ave			✓	✓	2026	2027
3	Okeechobee	SR 710 Extension	New Road	US 98	US 441				
4	Okeechobee	SR 710 Extension	New Road	SR 70	US 98				
5	DeSoto	SR 31 Extension	New Road	SR 70	US 17	✓			
As S/S facilities, these improvements are not prioritized by the HRTPO	Hendry	SR 29	2 To 4 Lanes	Cowboy Way	Whidden Rd	✓	✓	2028	
	Okeechobee	SR 710	New Road	US 441	L-63 Canal	✓	✓	2026	2029
			2 To 4 Lanes	E Of L-63 Canal	Sherman Woods Ranches	✓		>2030	
			2 To 4 Lanes	Sherman Woods Ranches	Okeechobee/ Martin CL	✓	2029-2031		
	DeSoto, Highlands & Okeechobee	SR 70	2 to 4 Lanes	DeSoto CL	Peace River	Ongoing			
				W of SR 31	Highlands C/L	Ongoing			
				Highlands C/L	Jefferson Ave	Ongoing			
				Jefferson Ave	CR 29	Ongoing	2028	2031	2031
				CR 29	Lonesome Island Rd	✓	Ongoing		
				Lonesome Island Rd	CR 721	Ongoing			
				CR 721	128 th Ave	Ongoing			
				128 th Ave	US 98	Ongoing			

Social and Economic Appendix

Contents:

Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form (NRCS-CPA-106 or Form AD 1006)

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS-CPA-106

(Rev. 1-91)

**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 _____		
		Preferred Alt 1	Alt 2	
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



Farmlands Map
FPID No. 450334-1-22-01
SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 599/128 Avenue
Highlands and Okeechobee Counties

Legend

- Project Limits
- Preferred Pond Sites - Alternative 1
- Preferred Pond Sites - Alternative 2
- FARMLAND OF UNIQUE IMPORTANCE

Data Source: NRCS
Image Source: ESRI
Image Date: 2023



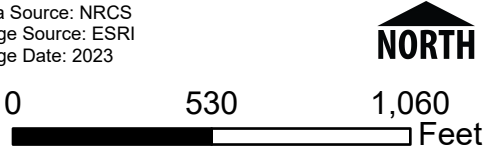
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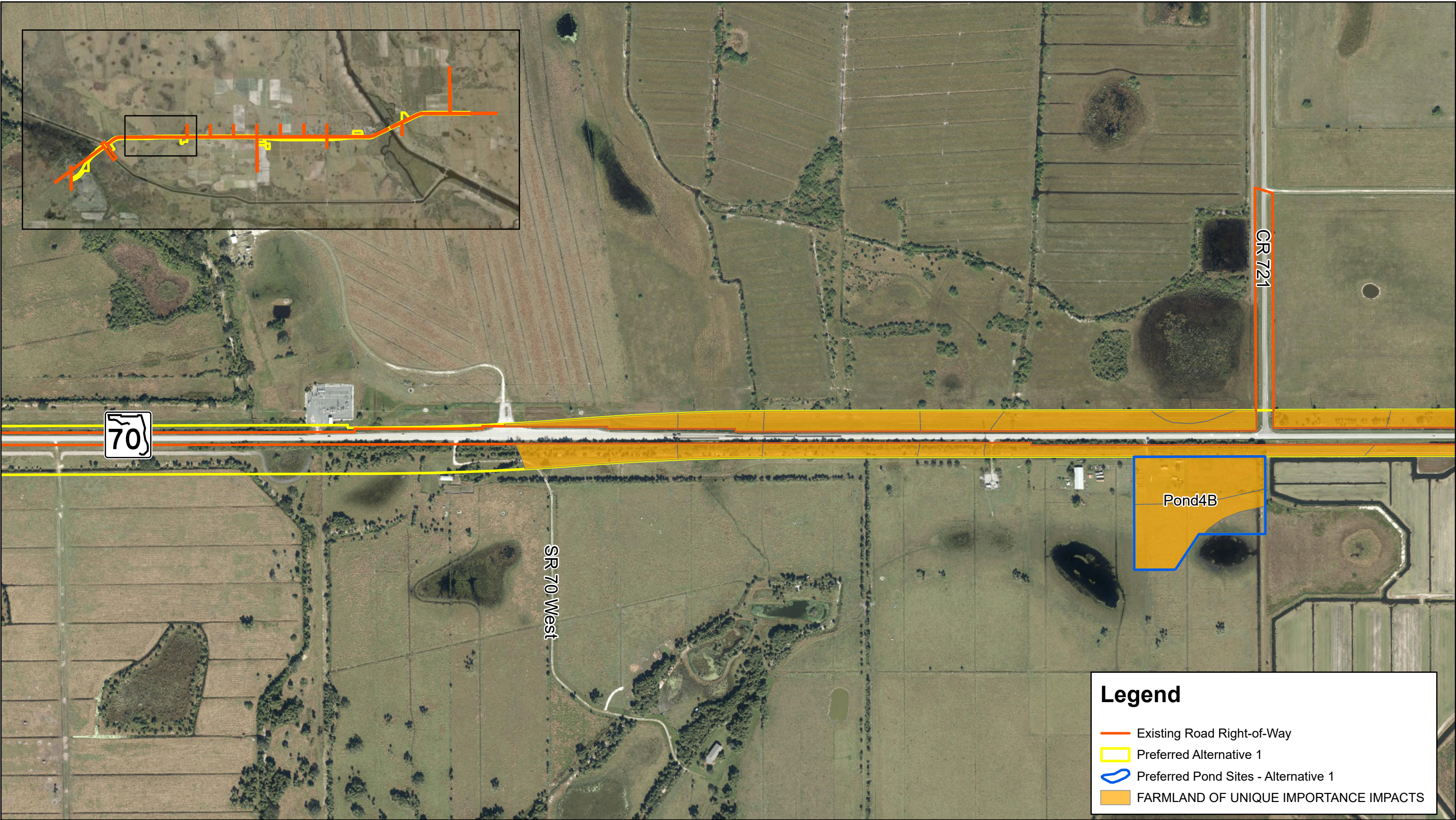


Farmlands Impact by Alternative 1 and Ponds Map
Sheet 1 of 6

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SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 559/128 Avenue
Highlands and Okeechobee Counties

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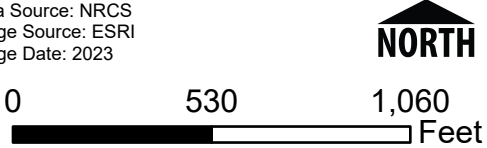


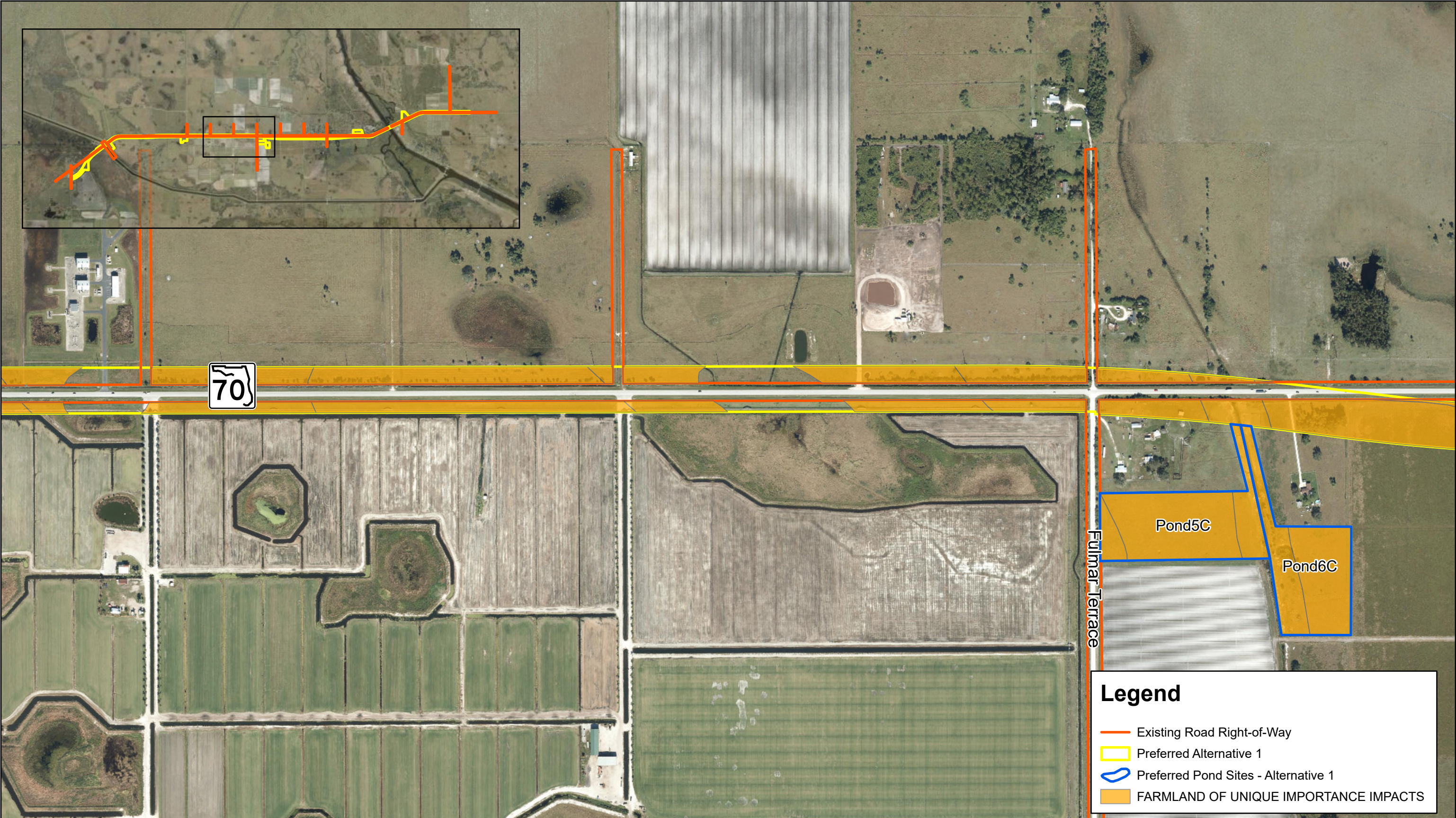


Farmlands Impact by Alternative 1 and Ponds Map
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FPID No. 450334-1-22-01
SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 559/128 Avenue
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Image Date: 2023

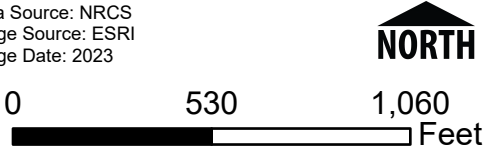


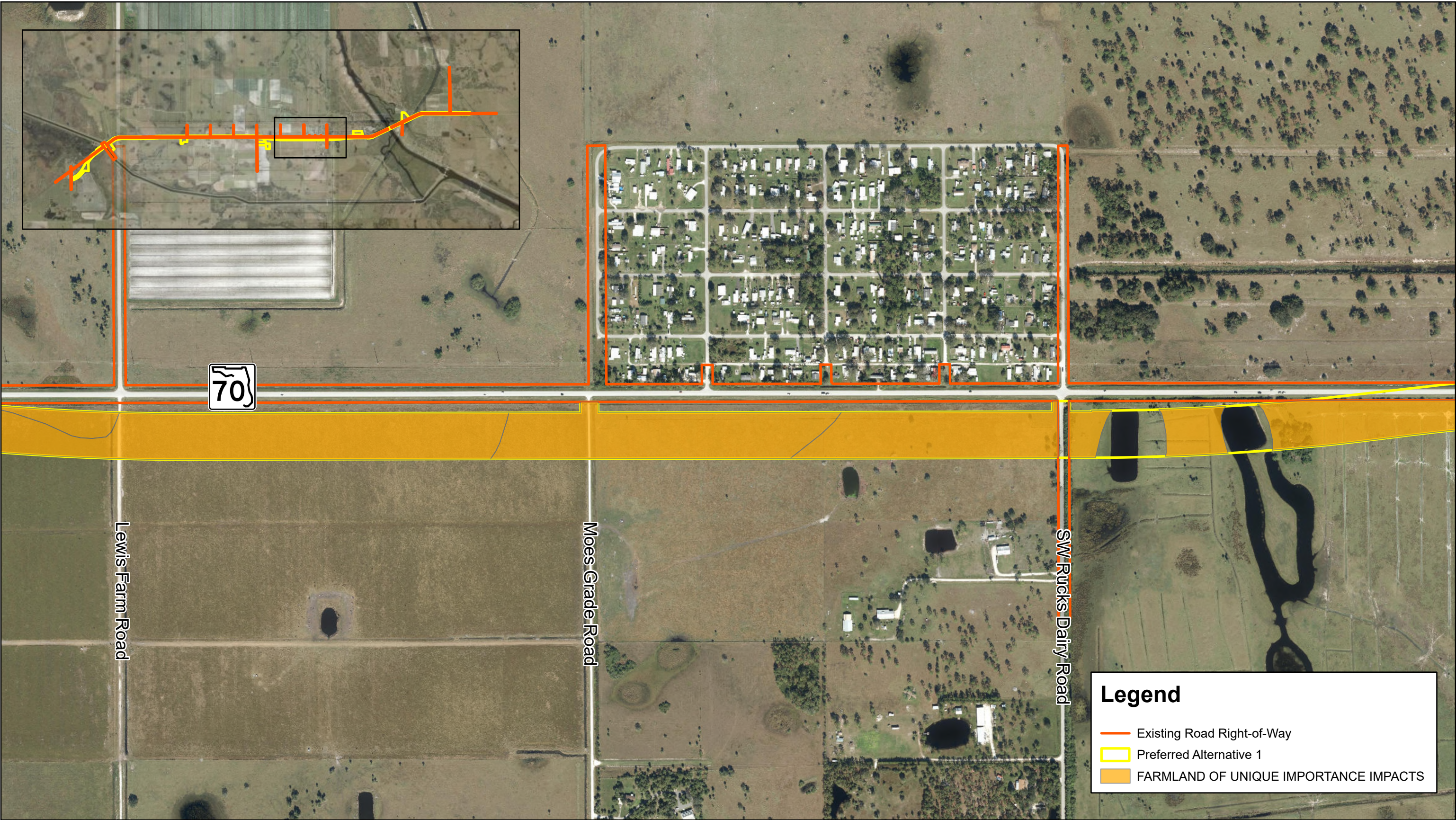


Farmlands Impact by Alternative 1 and Ponds Map
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SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 559/128 Avenue
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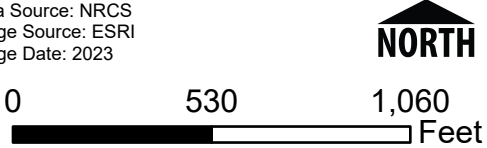


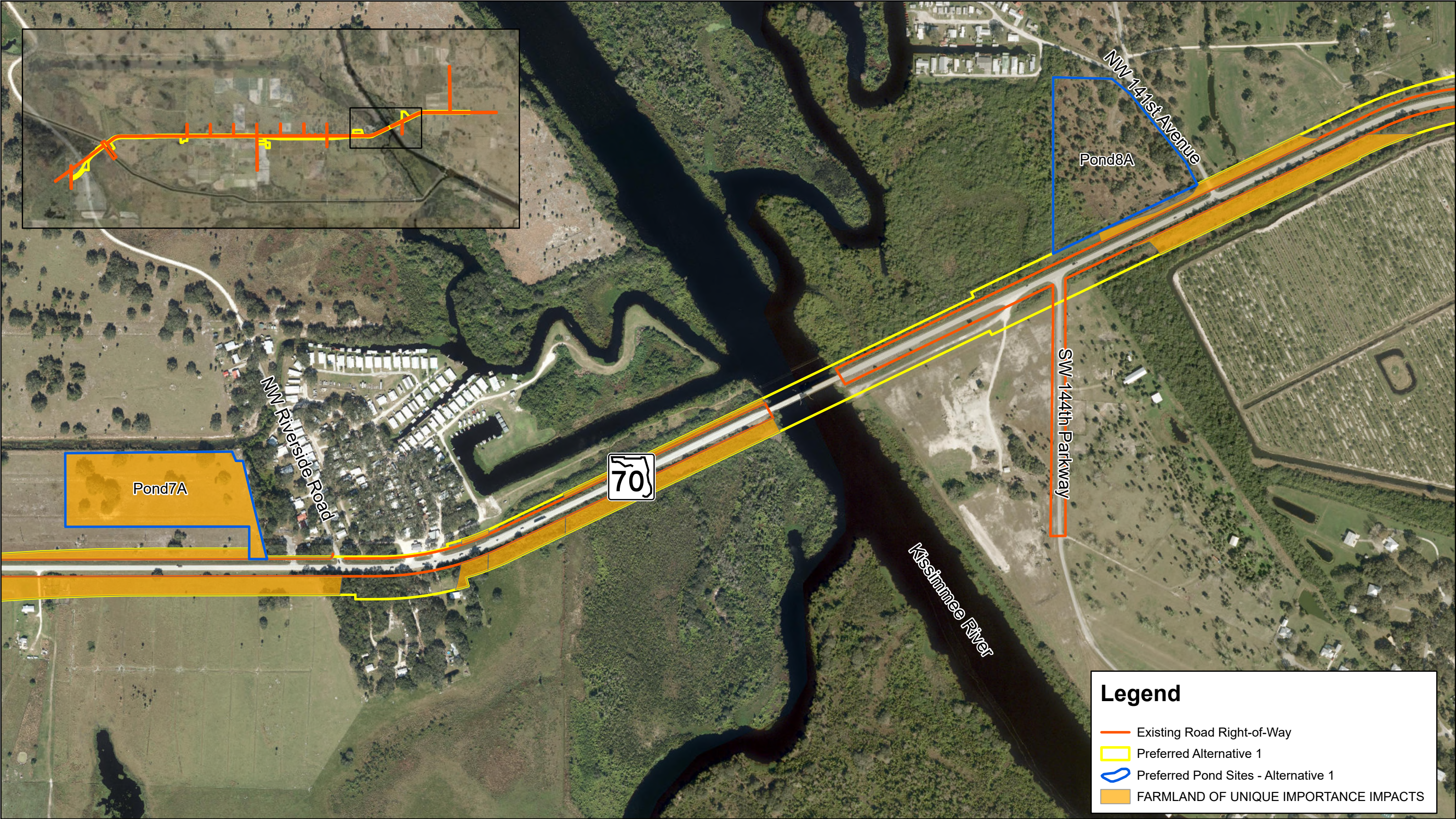


Farmlands Impact by Alternative 1 and Ponds Map
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FPID No. 450334-1-22-01
SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 559/128 Avenue
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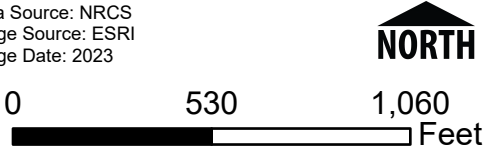


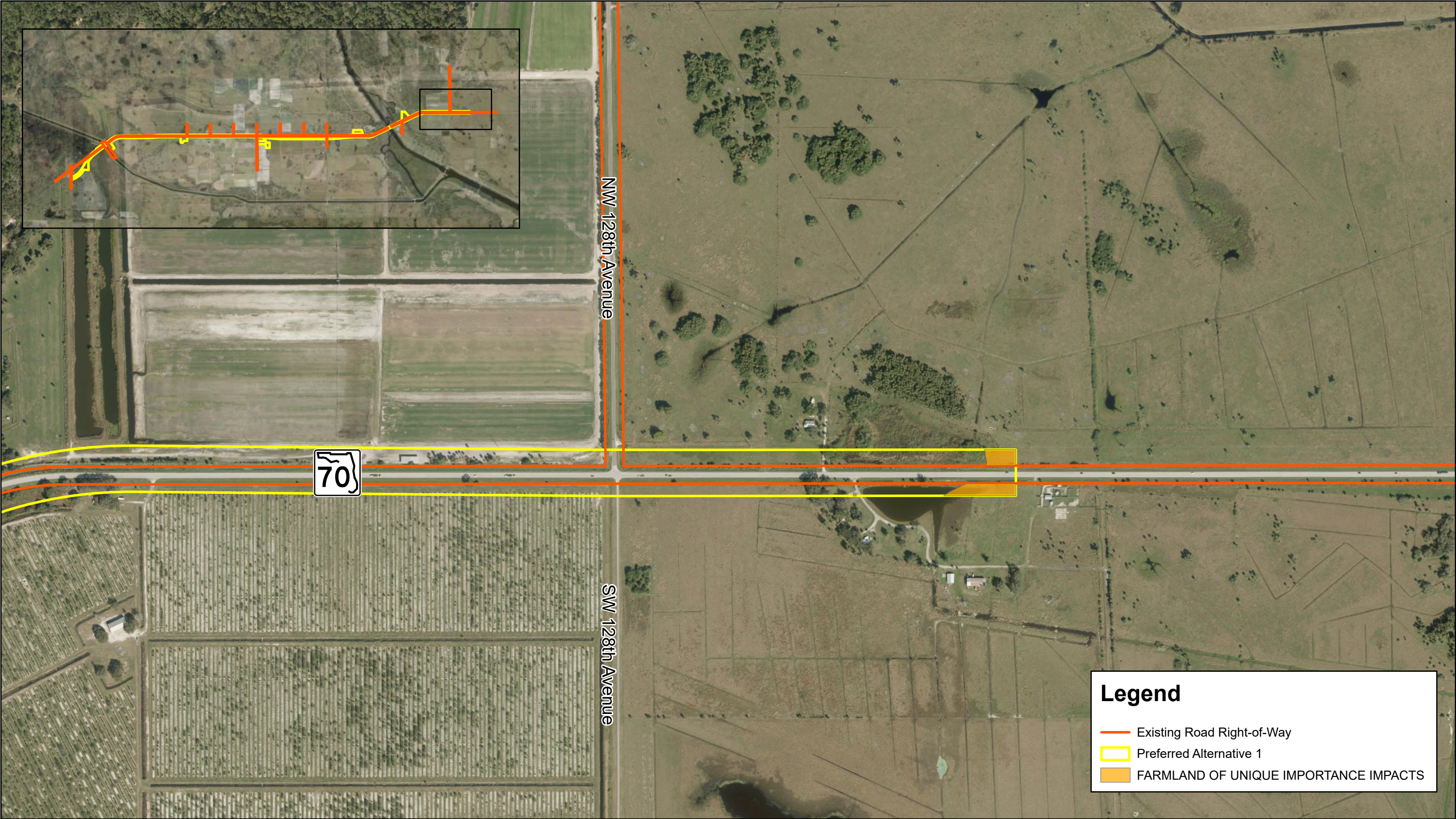


Farmlands Impact by Alternative 1 and Ponds Map
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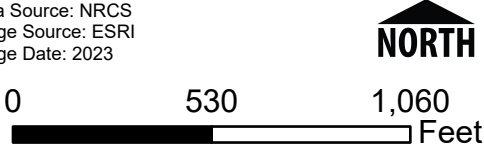


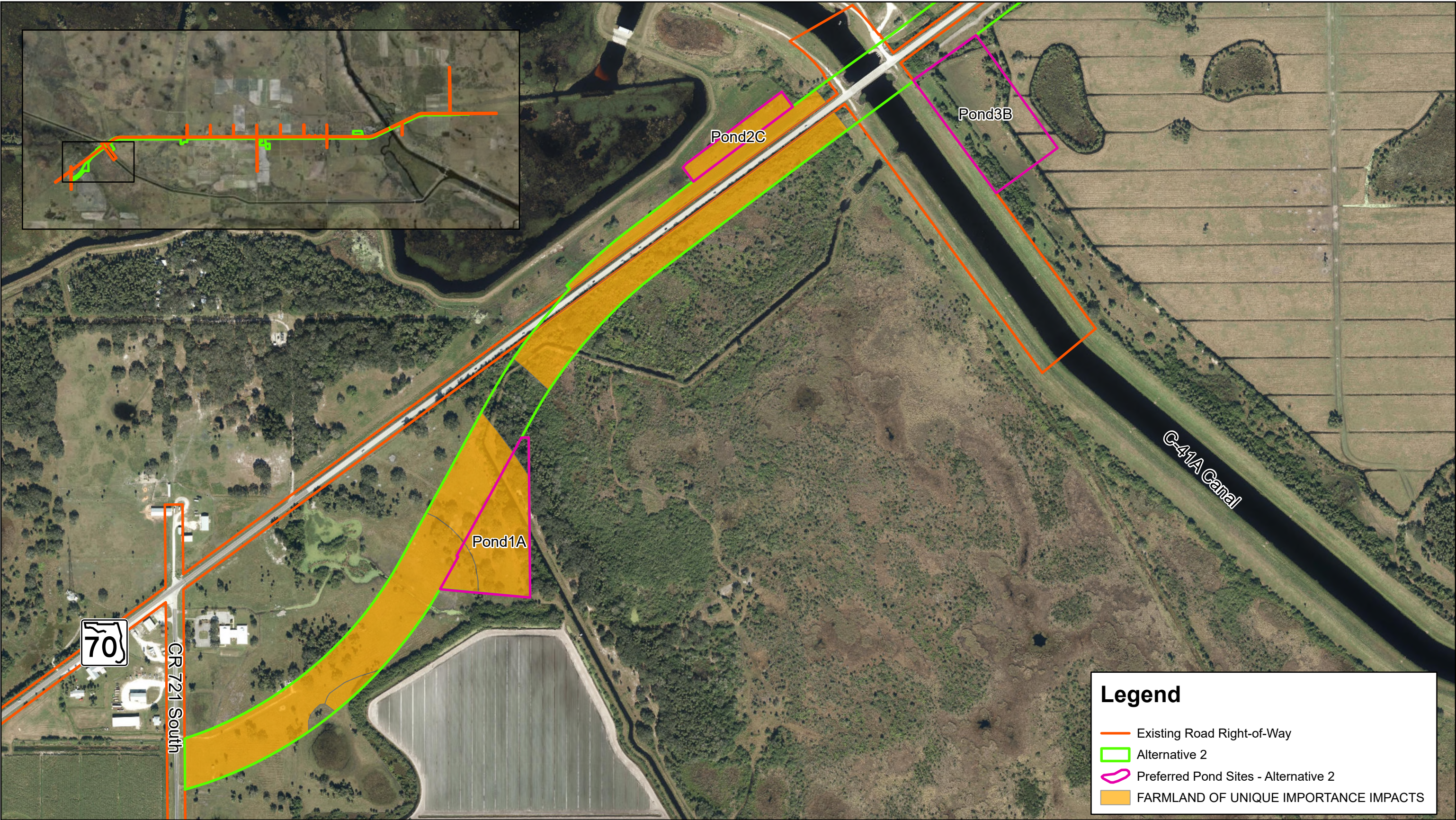


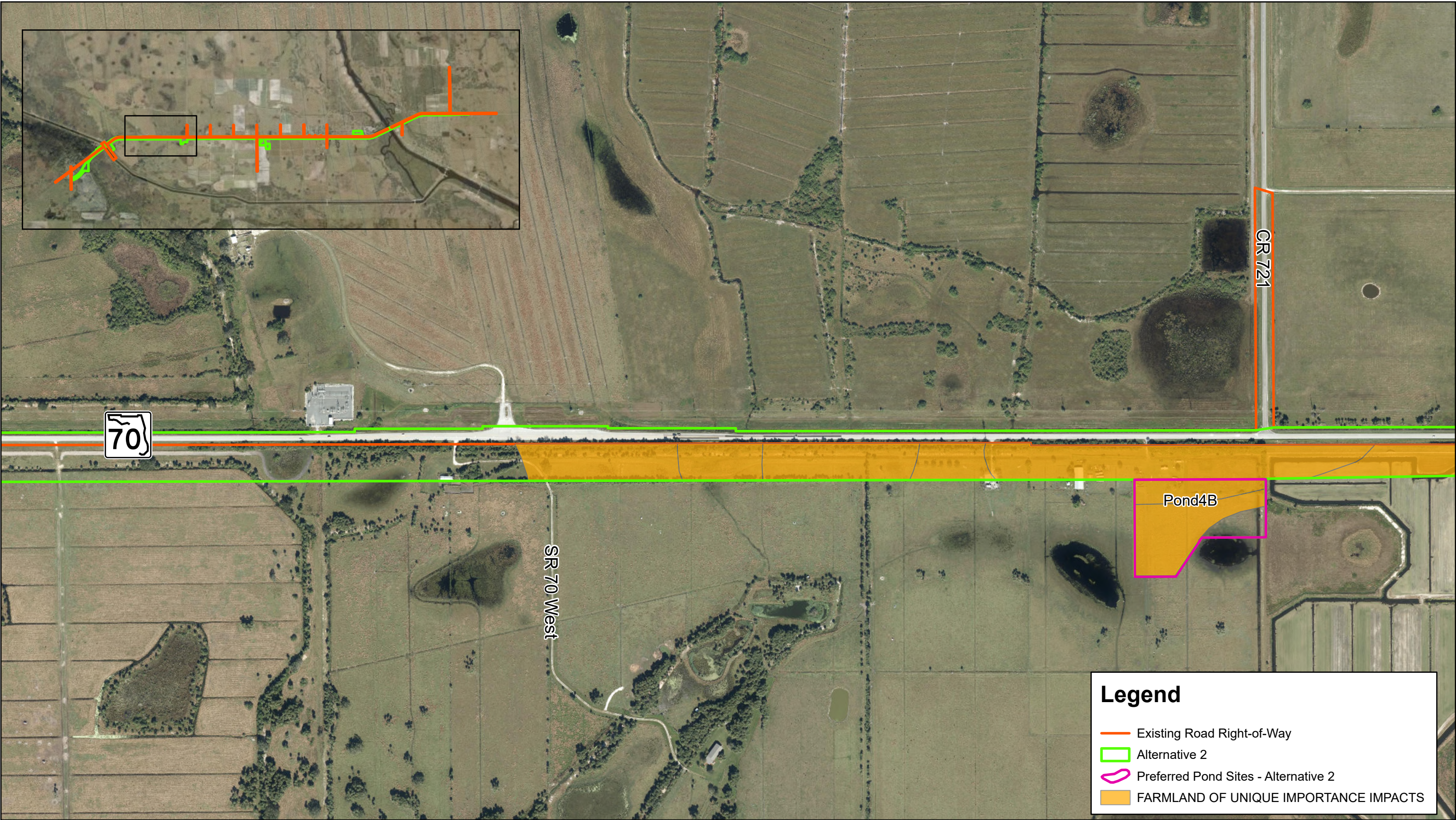
Farmlands Impact by Alternative 1 and Ponds Map
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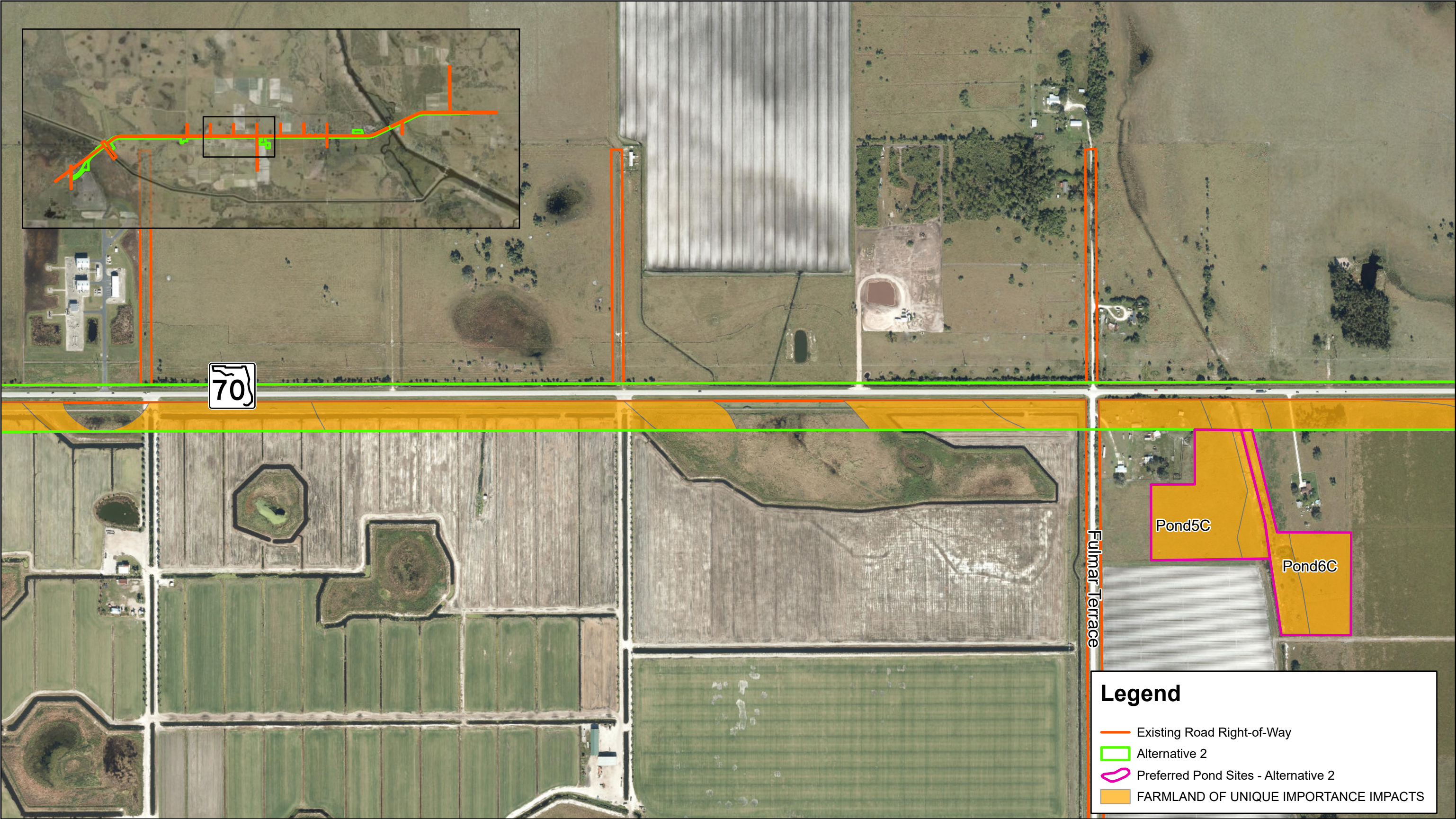






Farmlands Impact by Alternative 2 and Ponds Map
Sheet 2 of 6

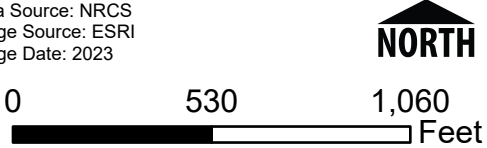
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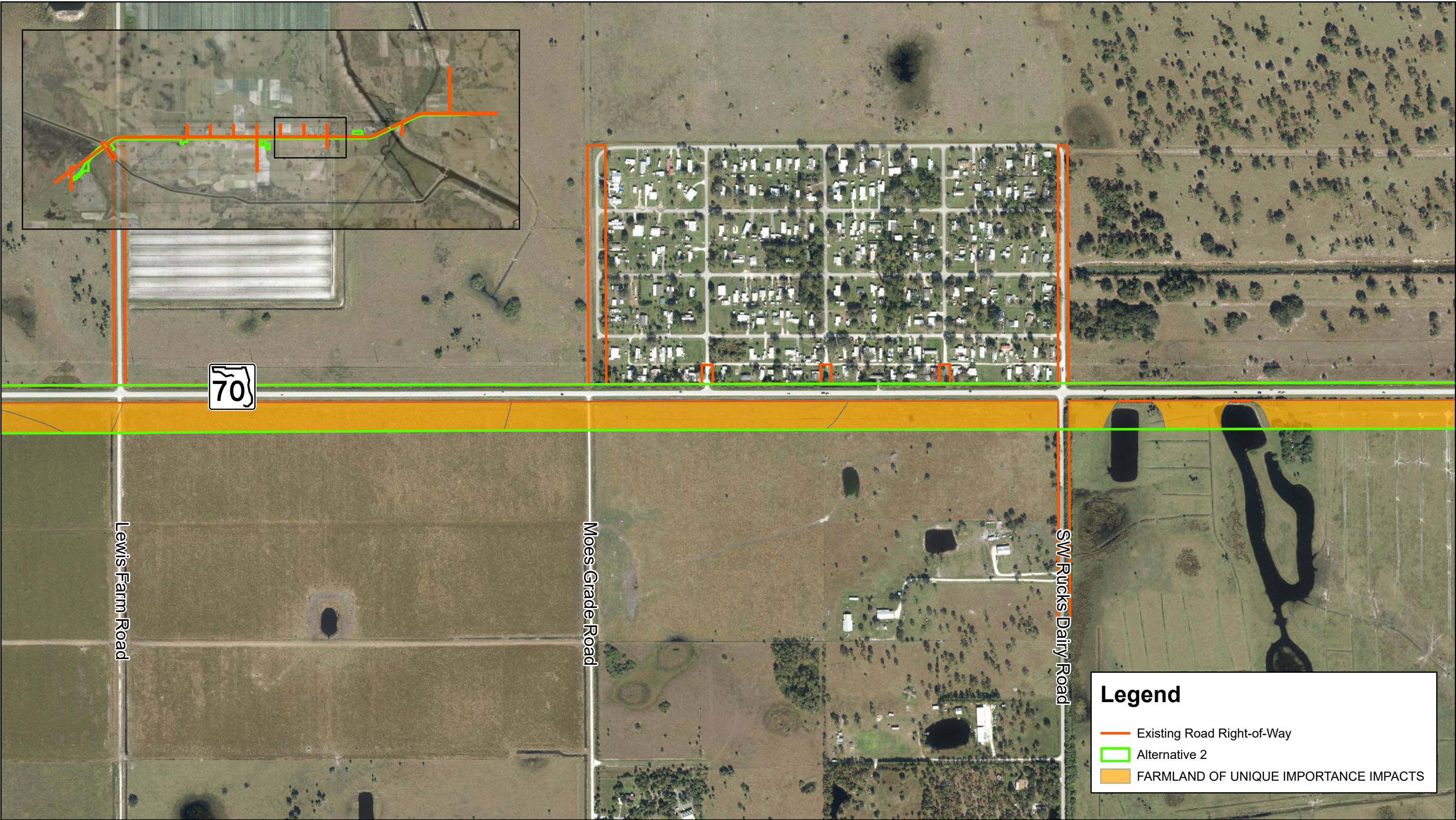


Farmlands Impact by Alternative 2 and Ponds Map
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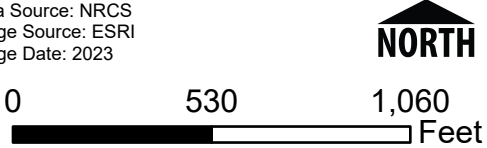


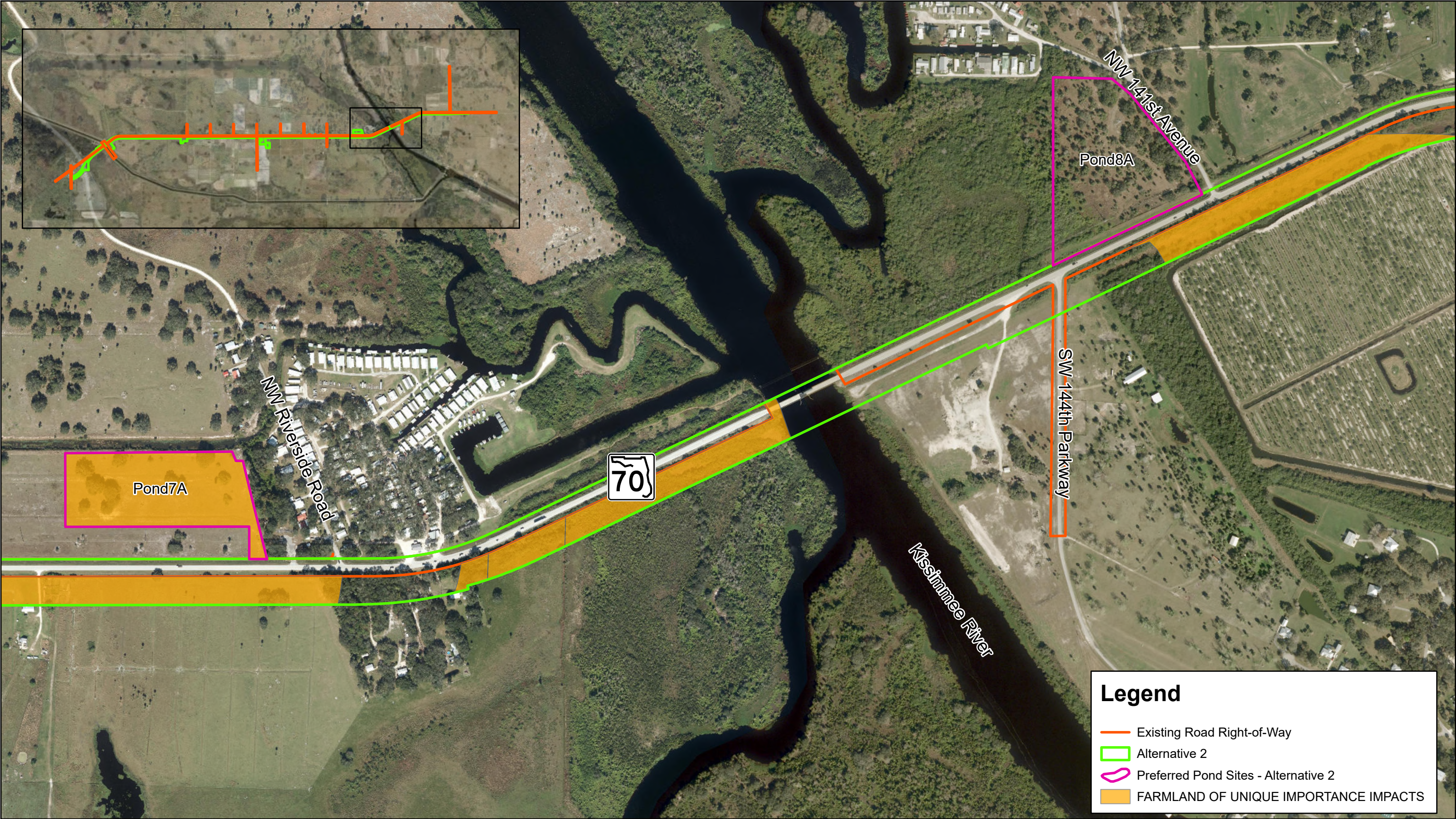


Farmlands Impact by Alternative 2 and Ponds Map
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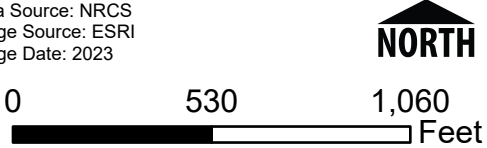


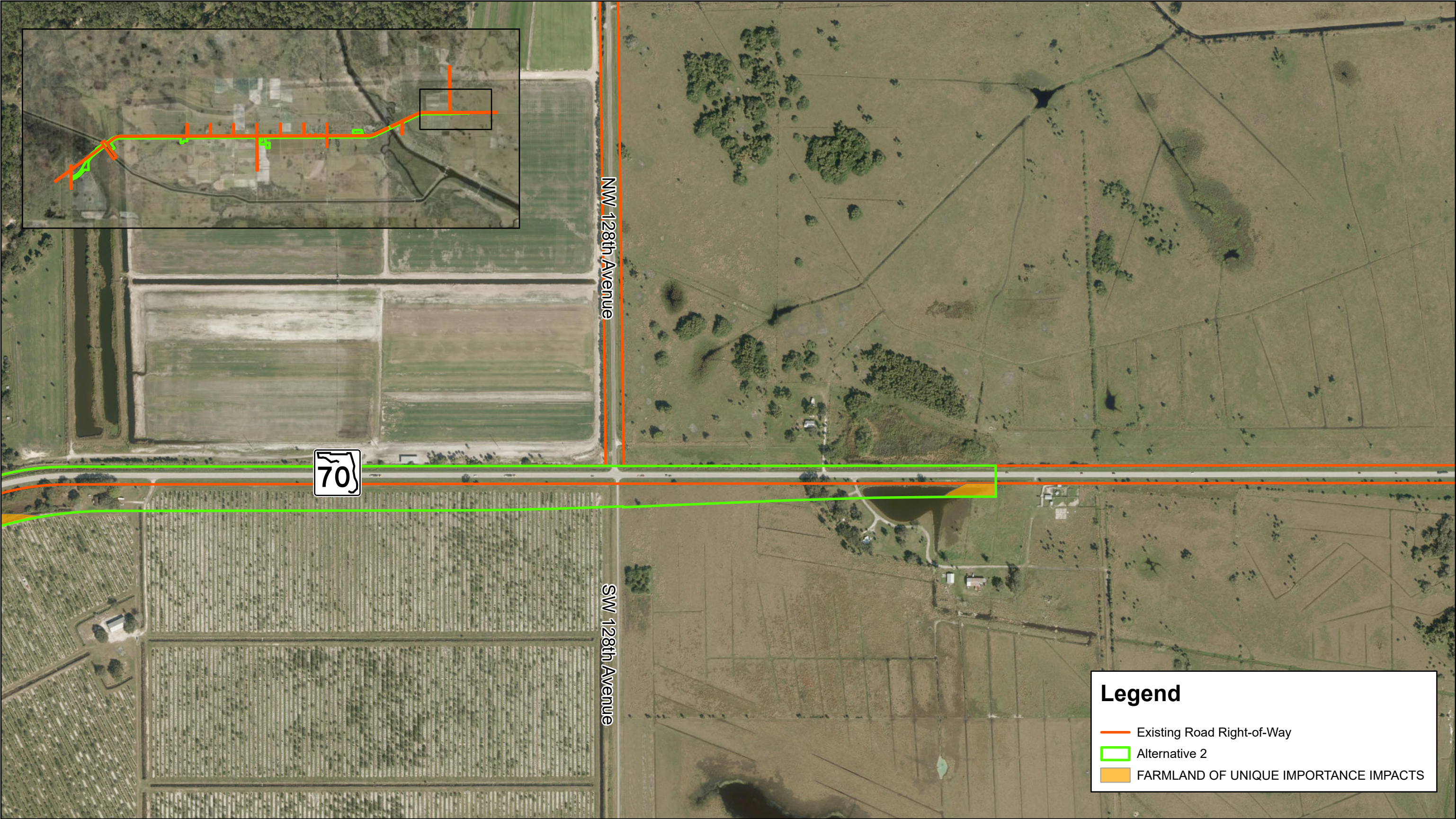


Farmlands Impact by Alternative 2 and Ponds Map
Sheet 5 of 6

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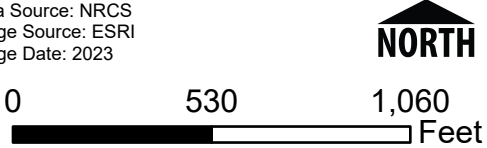




**Farmlands Impact by Alternative 2 and Ponds Map
Sheet 6 of 6**

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SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 559/128 Avenue
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Image Date: 2023



Cultural Resources Appendix

Contents:

SHPO Concurrence Letter on CRAS for Kissimmee River Bridge

Draft MOA S.R. 70 Kissimmee River Bridge

SHPO concurrence on Section 106 Case Study for Kissimmee River Bridge

SHPO Concurrence on CRAS for Mainline

Section 106 Resource Map

Section 4(f) Report

DRAFT



Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

801 N. Broadway Avenue
Bartow, FL 33830

JARED W. PERDUE, P.E.
SECRETARY

July 9, 2024

Alissa S. Lotane
Director and State Historic Preservation Officer
Florida Division of Historical Resources
Florida Department of State
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Attn: Ms. Alyssa McManus, Transportation Compliance Review Program

RE: Cultural Resource Assessment Survey
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study
State Road (SR) 70 from County Road (CR) 721
South to CR 599/128th Avenue
Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida
SR 70 Over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336)
Financial Project No.: 450334-1-22-01

Dear Ms. Lotane,

Enclosed please find one copy of the report titled *Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study State Road (SR) 70 from County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue, Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida; SR 70 Over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336)*. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District One is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to address safety conditions on SR 70 from CR 721 S to CR 599/128th Avenue. The study is approximately 8.6-miles long and proposed improvements include the widening of a two-lane facility up to a four-lane, divided facility, and/or the inclusion of operational improvements along the corridor. Travel lane widths may be widened from 10 feet (ft) to 12 ft as part of the project and multimodal facilities will also be considered along the corridor where appropriate. Additional right-of-way (ROW) is expected to accommodate the proposed improvements.

All project alternatives proposed for the SR 70 improvements will involve the replacement of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) which has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). In order to meet the established schedule for the PD&E deliverables, a discussion was held on July 25, 2023 with representatives from ACI, Scalar, and FDOT District One to develop an approach for cultural resource compliance on the SR 70 PD&E Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS). The approach would enable the Section 106 process to move forward with consultation to resolve the adverse effect on the NRHP-eligible SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) prior to completing the CRAS for the rest of the project (mainline road realignment, ponds, etc.). The intention is to get consultation to a point where a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is acceptable to all parties involved but will remain in a draft state until completion of the mainline/ponds CRAS. The draft MOA will be updated as necessary

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following the mainline CRAS. In August 2023 a Cultural Resource Coordinator for District One coordinated with the Office of Environmental Management (OEM) and subsequently, with the SHPO regarding this approach and in November 2023 all parties were in agreement. As such, this CRAS is limited to the bridge replacement portion of the PD&E and a full archaeological and historic resources survey of the corridor will be conducted following the identification of corridor alternatives and will be an addendum to this CRAS.

The purpose of this CRAS was to locate and identify any historic resources within the project area of potential effect (APE) at the bridge location and to assess their significance in terms of eligibility for listing in the NRHP. For the purpose of this survey, the historical/architectural APE was limited to the footprint of construction of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge replacement. The fieldwork was conducted in January 2024.

This CRAS was conducted to comply with the requirements set forth in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, found in 36 CFR Part 800 (Protection of Historic Properties). The study also complies with Chapter 267 of the Florida Statutes and Rule Chapter 1A-46, Florida Administrative Code and Section 267.12, Florida Statutes, Chapter 1A-32. All work was performed in accordance with Part 2, Chapter 8 of FDOT's PD&E Manual (2023 revision), FDOT's Cultural Resources Management Handbook, and the standards stipulated in the Florida Division of Historical Resources' (FDHR) *Cultural Resource Management Standards & Operations Manual, Module Three: Guidelines for Use by Historic Preservation Professionals*. The Principal Investigator for this project meets the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation* (48 FR 44716-42). This study also complies with Public Law 113-287 (Title 54 U.S.C.), which incorporates the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and the Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974, as amended.

Historic background research, including a review of the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) and the NRHP databases, indicated that one historic bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) was previously recorded within the APE. Due to its location on the Okeechobee-Highlands County line, the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910001) has been assigned a Highlands County FMSF number (8HG01236) and an Okeechobee County FMSF number (8OB00336). The SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910001) is a seven span, concrete beam and girder bridge constructed in 1966 in order to carry SR 70 over the newly channelized Kissimmee River (C-38). The peak of the bridge is equipped with a steel, removable span which accommodates the passing of larger vessels while being more cost effective than a manned, operable span. The bridge (8OB00336/8HG01236) was determined eligible for listing in the NRHP by the SHPO in 2014 under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge.

The historical/architectural field survey resulted in the identification of two historic resources (8HG01236/8OB00336 and 8HG01650/8OB00489) within the APE. These include the previously recorded concrete beam and girder SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) and the newly identified Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489), constructed in 1966. The SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) has not been significantly altered and appears to remain eligible for individual listing in the NRHP under Criterion C. Although the channelization of the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8OB00489) is significant within the ecological and developmental history of south and central Florida, the majority of the linear resource is located outside of the APE, and a survey of the entire 69-mile-long channelized river is beyond the scope of this project. In addition, the linear resource has not been previously recorded elsewhere in Okeechobee or Highland Counties. As such, following the guidance

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of the *Historic Linear Resource Guide* provided by the FDHR, there is insufficient information to evaluate the 102 ft segment of the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) that is contained within the APE (FDHR 2022). Based on the results of this study, it is the opinion of the District that the proposed undertaking will have an **adverse effect** on the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) and have **no adverse effect** on the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489).

I respectfully request your concurrence with the findings of the enclosed report.

If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact me at (863) 519-2625 or Jeffrey.James@dot.state.fl.us.

Sincerely,

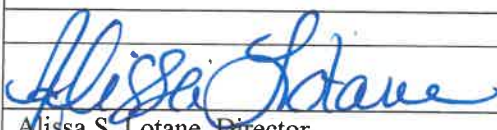
Jeffrey James
 Environmental Manager
 FDOT, District One

Enclosures: One original copy of the CRAS Report (June 2024), Four (4) FMSF forms, One Completed Survey Log, GIS Shapefiles

The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer finds the attached Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Report complete and sufficient and ☒ concurs / ☐ does not concur with the recommendations and findings provided in this cover letter for SHPO/FDHR Project File Number 202402438. Or, the SHPO finds the attached document contains insufficient information.

In accordance with the *Programmatic Agreement Among the FHWA, the FDOT, the ACHP, and the SHPO Regarding Implementation of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in Florida* (2023 PA), and appended materials, if providing concurrence with a finding of **No Historic Properties Affected** for a whole project, or to **No Adverse Effect** on a specific historic property, SHPO shall presume that FDOT may pursue a *de minimis* use of the affected historic property in accordance with Section 4(f) as set forth within 23 C.F.R. Part 774 and its implementing authorities, as amended, and that their concurrence as the official with jurisdiction (OWJ) over the historic property is granted.

SHPO Comments:


 Alissa S. Lotane, Director
 Florida Division of Historical Resources

Date 7/17/24

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND
THE FLORIDA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER
REGARDING STATE ROAD 70 FROM CR 721 SOUTH TO CR 559/128TH AVENUE
HIGHLANDS & OKEECHOBEE COUNTIES, FLORIDA**

WHEREAS, Pursuant to 23 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 327 and the implementing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) executed on May 26, 2022, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has assumed Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for highway projects on the State Highway System (SHS) and Local Agency Program (LAP) projects off the SHS; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the MOU, FDOT's assumption of FHWA's responsibilities under NEPA for highway projects includes assumption of responsibilities for compliance with 36 CFR Part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 306108); and

WHEREAS, FDOT will provide federal financial assistance for State Road (SR) 70 from County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue, Federal Aid Project Number (No.) D123-018-B and Financial Project Identification No. 450334-1-22-01, which represents an undertaking in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.3(a); and

WHEREAS, FDOT has defined the Undertaking's area of potential effects (APE) as the footprint of construction and adjacent parcels 200 feet from existing ROW and 500 feet from proposed ROW, as depicted in Attachment A; and

WHEREAS, FDOT has consulted with the Florida State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) pursuant to the requirements of 36 CFR Part 800 and has determined that the Undertaking may have an adverse effect on the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336]), which is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP); and

WHEREAS, FDOT has consulted with the Okeechobee Historical Society regarding the effects of the Undertaking on historic properties; and

WHEREAS, FDOT has provided opportunities for public review and comment regarding the effects of the Undertaking on historic properties; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.6(a)(1) FDOT has notified the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) of the adverse effect determination with specified documentation and has invited the ACHP to comment and participate in consultation, and the ACHP has chosen **not to** participate pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.6(a)(1)(iii); and

NOW, THEREFORE, FDOT and the SHPO agree that the Undertaking shall be implemented in accordance with the following stipulations to take into account the effect of the Undertaking on historic properties.

STIPULATIONS

FDOT shall ensure that the following measures are carried out:

I. DOCUMENTATION OF THE SR 70 OVER KISSIMMEE RIVER BRIDGE

- A. Prior to any alteration or demolition of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) and per guidance provided by the National Park Service (NPS), FDOT shall perform the following documentation in accordance with Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) Level III standards:
 - 1. Drawings - Select existing drawings, where available, may be photographed with large-format negatives or photographically reproduced on Mylar in accordance with the U.S. Copyright Act, as amended. Should existing plans not be available, sketch plans depicting existing conditions shall be prepared.
 - 2. Photographs - Photographs with large-format negatives of context and views from all sides of the bridge and approaches; roadway and deck views, and noteworthy features and details. All negatives and prints will be processed to meet archival standards. One photograph of a principal elevation shall include a scale.
 - 3. Written Data - Report with narrative description of the bridge, summary of significance, and historical context. FDOT shall coordinate with SHPO prior to starting in order to develop the appropriate context scope.
- B. FDOT shall provide draft HAER documentation (non-archival format, electronic version) to the NPS (lead content reviewer) and SHPO (courtesy reviewer) for concurrent review in accordance with Stipulation VIII.
- C. FDOT shall make requested edits and provide final copies of the HAER documentation, completed in accordance with Stipulation I.A, as follows:
 - 1. An archival copy to the NPS Southeast Regional Office for review and approval prior to salvage and demolition of the structure; per HAER guidelines; and
 - 2. An archival copy and an electronic copy to the Florida SHPO for inclusion in the Florida Master Site File (FMSF); and
 - 3. Non-archival copies and electronic copies to the Okeechobee Historical Society.
- D. The HAER documentation cannot be considered complete, and the bridge demolition cannot take place, until accepted by NPS.

II. SALVAGE OF EXISTING BRIDGE PLAQUE

- A. Prior to bridge demolition, FDOT shall salvage the existing commemorative bridge plaque, to the greatest extent possible, for use elsewhere, as identified in a proposed Salvage and Relocation Plan that will be prepared during project development, as described in Stipulation II.B.
- B. In coordination with the Okeechobee Historical Society and Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, FDOT shall prepare a Salvage and Relocation Plan to outline the process for salvaging and relocating the commemorative bridge plaque. The plan will include:
 - 1. measures to determine the feasibility of salvaging and relocating the plaque,
 - 2. the appropriateness of any proposed new locations (sites) for the plaque,
 - 3. methods for removing and storing the plaque, and,
 - 4. timeframes for completing the tasks.
- C. The proposed Salvage and Relocation Plan shall be developed and approved prior to advertising for construction. FDOT will afford the SHPO as well as the Okeechobee Historical Society and Highlands and Okeechobee Counties 30 days to review and comment on the proposed Salvage and Relocation Plan, as per Stipulation VIII.
- D. The existing commemorative bridge plaque cannot be salvaged until HAER documentation is accepted by NPS in writing as outlined in Stipulation I.

III. PUBLIC EDUCATION

- A. FDOT will assist with the development, funding, and installation of a single panel educational exhibit. The exhibit will provide a historic account of the bridge to educate the public. The text and graphics on the single panel will be prepared based on continued coordination with local interested parties and stakeholders during the project's design and construction phases. During continued coordination, FDOT will consider the appropriate location to install the exhibit which will be in proximity to the bridge location. The draft of the exhibit and location will be coordinated with the SHPO for review, as described in Stipulation VIII.
- B. FDOT will provide an electronic copy of the educational exhibit described above to appropriate local entities (such as the Okeechobee Historical Society and Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, and one or two other agencies/organizations), for installation at their discretion.

IV. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

All archaeological and historic preservation work carried out pursuant to this Agreement shall be conducted by, or under the direct supervision of, a person or persons meeting the Secretary of the

Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation as set forth at 62 FR 33708-33723 (June 20, 1997).

V. DURATION

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) will expire if its terms are not carried out within ten (10) years from the date of execution or upon project acceptance, whichever comes first. Prior to expiration, the parties may agree to extend the timeframe for fulfillment of the terms by letter agreement.

VI. MOA DOCUMENTATION

- A. The FDOT shall provide a summary of actions carried out pursuant to this MOA to the signatories annually. The reporting period shall be the fiscal year from July 1st to June 30th and the summary shall describe the status of mitigation activities and, as applicable, any issues that may affect the ability of the FDOT to continue to meet the terms of this MOA, any disputes and objections received, and how they were resolved.
- B. A Notice of Fulfillment will be prepared to summarize the implementation of the MOA after all stipulations have been fulfilled. This document will be submitted to the signatories for their files within six (6) months after completion of all MOA stipulations.

VII. POST-REVIEW DISCOVERIES

- A. If properties are discovered that may be historically significant, or if unanticipated effects on historic properties are found, FDOT shall implement the Post Review Discovery Plan established in Stipulation IX of the September 27, 2023, Programmatic Agreement (PA) among the ACHP, SHPO, and FDOT (2023 PA).
- B. In the unlikely event that human skeletal remains or associated burial artifacts are uncovered within the project area during construction, all work in that area must stop. The individual in charge of the activity that leads to the discovery must notify the Project Engineer and the FDOT District One Cultural Resources Coordinator per Stipulation X of the 2023 PA. The discovery must be reported to local law enforcement and the appropriate medical examiner. The medical examiner will determine whether the State Archaeologist should be contacted per the requirements of Section 872.05, Florida Statutes, and Rule 1A-44.004, Florida Administrative Code (FAC).

VIII. REVIEW STIPULATION

FDOT shall afford the SHPO and other consulting parties, a 30-day period for review and comment following the receipt of delivery of those submittals and reviews described above. If no comments are received by FDOT at the end of these 30 days, FDOT will presume there are no objections. Any objections to the findings or plans proposed in these submittals will be addressed in accordance with Stipulation IX below.

IX. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Should any signatory to this MOA object at any time to any actions proposed or the manner in which the terms of this MOA are implemented, FDOT shall consult with such party to resolve the objection. If FDOT determines that such objection cannot be resolved, FDOT will:

- A. Forward all documentation relevant to the dispute, including FDOT's proposed resolution, to the ACHP. The ACHP shall provide FDOT with its advice on the resolution of the objection within thirty (30) days of receiving adequate documentation. Prior to reaching a final decision on the dispute, FDOT shall prepare a written response that considers any timely advice or comments regarding the dispute from the ACHP, signatories, and concurring parties, and provide them with a copy of this written response. FDOT will then proceed according to its final decision.
- B. Make a final decision on the dispute and proceed accordingly if the ACHP does not provide its advice regarding the dispute within thirty (30) days. Prior to reaching such a final decision, FDOT shall prepare a written response that considers any timely comments regarding the dispute from the signatories to the MOA, and provide them and the ACHP with a copy of the written response.
- C. Fulfill its responsibility to carry out all other actions subject to the terms of this MOA that are not the subject of the dispute remain unchanged.

X. AMENDMENTS

This MOA may be amended when such an amendment is agreed to in writing by all signatories. All signatories must signify their acceptance of the proposed changes to the MOA in writing within 30 days of their receipt. The amendment will be effective on the date a copy signed by all signatories is filed with the ACHP. In accordance with 36 CFR § 800.6(b)(7), if the ACHP was not a signatory to the original agreement and the signatories execute an amended agreement, FDOT shall file the amended agreement with the ACHP.

XI. TERMINATION

If any signatory to this MOA determines that its terms will not or cannot be carried out, that party shall immediately consult with the other signatories in an effort to amend the MOA per Stipulation IX, above. If within thirty (30) days (or another time agreed to by all signatories) an amendment cannot be reached, any signatory may terminate the MOA upon written notification to the other signatories.

Once the MOA is terminated, and prior to work continuing on the Undertaking, FDOT must either (a) execute an MOA pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.6 or (b) request, take into account, and respond to the comments of the ACHP under 36 CFR § 800.7. FDOT shall notify the signatories as to the course of action it will pursue.

Execution of this MOA by FDOT and SHPO and implementation of its terms is evidence that FDOT has taken into account the effects of this undertaking on historic properties per the requirements

of Section 106 (Public Law 113-287 [Title 54 U.S.C. 306108]), and 36 CFR Part 800 (Protection of Historic Properties).

SIGNATORIES:

FLORIDA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

Alissa Slade Lotane
Director, Division of Historical Resources
State Historic Preservation Officer

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

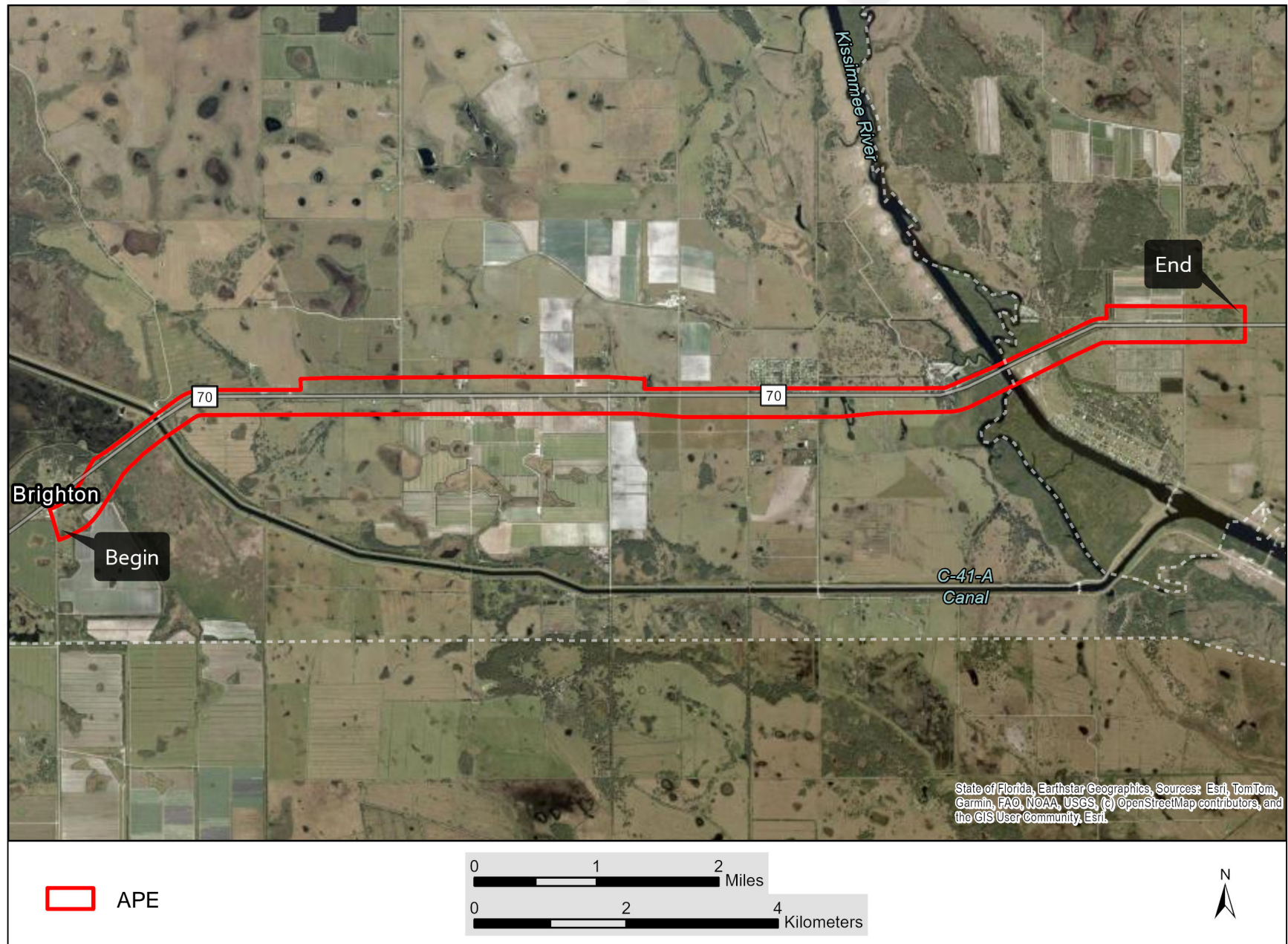
Katasha Gruver
Interim Director, Office of Environmental Management

CONCURRING PARTIES:

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, DISTRICT ONE

Nicole E. Mills, P.E.
Director, Transportation Development

Attachment A - Project Area of Potential Effects, Highlands & Okeechobee Counties





Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

JARED W. PERDUE, P.E.
SECRETARY

September 5, 2025

Alissa S. Lotane
Director and State Historic Preservation Officer
Florida Division of Historical Resources
Florida Department of State
R. A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

RE: Section 106 Case Study Report Submission
SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336)
SR 70 FROM CR 721 S TO CR 599/128 AVE
District 1
FM # 450334-1-22-01
DHR CRAT Number: 2024-2438D

Dear Ms. Lotane,

Dear Ms. Lotane:

Enclosed please find one copy of the report titled *Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study State Road (SR) 70 from County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue in Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida*. This report presents the findings in support of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, proposed improvements to SR 70. The purpose of this project is to address safety conditions on SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue. The study is approximately 8.6-miles long and proposed improvements include the widening of a two-lane facility up to a four-lane, divided facility, and/or the inclusion of operational improvements along the corridor. Additional right-of-way (ROW) is expected to accommodate the proposed improvements. This is a federally funded project.

As part of the PD&E Study, two build alternatives, Build Alternative 1 and Build Alternative 2, and a No Build Alternative are being evaluated. Both Build Alternatives for the SR 70 improvements involve the replacement of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/ 8OB00336]) which was previously determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). In order to meet the established schedule for the PD&E deliverables, a discussion was held on July 25, 2023, with representatives from Archaeological Consultants, Inc. (ACI), Scalar, and FDOT District One to develop an approach for cultural resource compliance on the SR 70 PD&E Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS). This approach enables the Section 106 process to move forward with consultation to resolve the adverse effect on the NRHP-eligible SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) prior to completing the CRAS for the rest of the project (mainline road realignment, ponds, etc.). A full archaeological and historic resources survey of the corridor was conducted, and the results are in the April 2025 CRAS.

In June 2024, ACI conducted a CRAS that was limited to the footprint of construction of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge replacement portion of the PD&E Study (ACI 2024). The bridge footprint was the Area of Potential Effects (APE). The purpose of the bridge CRAS was to survey and re-assess the bridge's significance in terms of eligibility for listing in the NRHP. The bridge (8OB00336/8HG01236) was determined eligible for listing in the NRHP by the SHPO in 2014 under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge. As a result of the 2024 CRAS, the bridge remains eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge. The SHPO concurred with the recommendations and findings on July 17, 2024 (Lotane 2024; Project File No. 2024-2438).

The objective of this *Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report* is to evaluate the potential effects of the proposed undertaking to the historic properties located within the APE as identified above. The FDOT has applied the Criteria of Adverse Effect found in 36 CFR Part 800.5 to the historic property determined eligible for listing in the NRHP located within the project APE. Because all project alternatives proposed for the SR 70 improvements will involve the replacement of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) the proposed undertaking will have an **adverse effect** on the bridge.

According to the Public Involvement Plan, public engagement and appropriate coordination meetings with local government, and environmental permitting agencies, work sessions, and small group meetings will continue throughout the final design phase. Following the PD&E Study, mitigation measures will be required. As such, coordination among FDOT, District One, OEM, the SHPO, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), as well as the public will continue to ensure that a sensitive and appropriate mitigation treatment plan is developed. The ACHP will be notified of the adverse effect determination, and measures to resolve the adverse effect to the Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001) will be documented in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between FDOT, SHPO, and other affected parties, as appropriate.

This information is being provided in accordance with the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), which are implemented by the procedures contained in 36 CFR, Part 800, as well as the provisions contained in the revised Chapter 267, *Florida Statutes*. 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.


The Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report is provided for your review and comment. I respectfully request your concurrence with the findings of the enclosed report.

Based on the review summarized above, FDOT has determined that this project 450334-1-22-01 will result in **Adverse Effect** on historic properties. In accordance with Stipulation III.B. of the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA), this review was conducted by or under the supervision of a person(s) meeting the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (36 C.F.R. Part 61, Appendix A and 48 FR 44716)* in the fields of History, Archaeology, and Architectural History. 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 FDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of

Understanding dated May 26, 2022, and executed by the FHWA and FDOT.

Sincerely,

Electronically signed by Emily Barnett **FOR** Jeffrey James on September 5, 2025

The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) reviewed the submission referenced above and finds the document contains sufficient information and concurs with the information provided for the above referenced project.	
SHPO/FDHR Comments	
	
Signed	September 22, 2025
Alissa S. Lotane, Director	
Florida Division of Historical Resources	

cc: Lindsay Rothrock, Cultural & Historical Resource Specialist
FDOT Office of Environmental Management

Submitted Documents

- [45033412201-CE2-D1-450334-1-22-01_August_2025_Sec_106_Kissimmee_River_Bridge-2025-0905.pdf](#) (Section 106 Case Study Report)
450334-1-22-01_August 2025_Sec 106 Kissimmee River Bridge



Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

JARED W. PERDUE, P.E.
SECRETARY

September 5, 2025

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Sincerely,

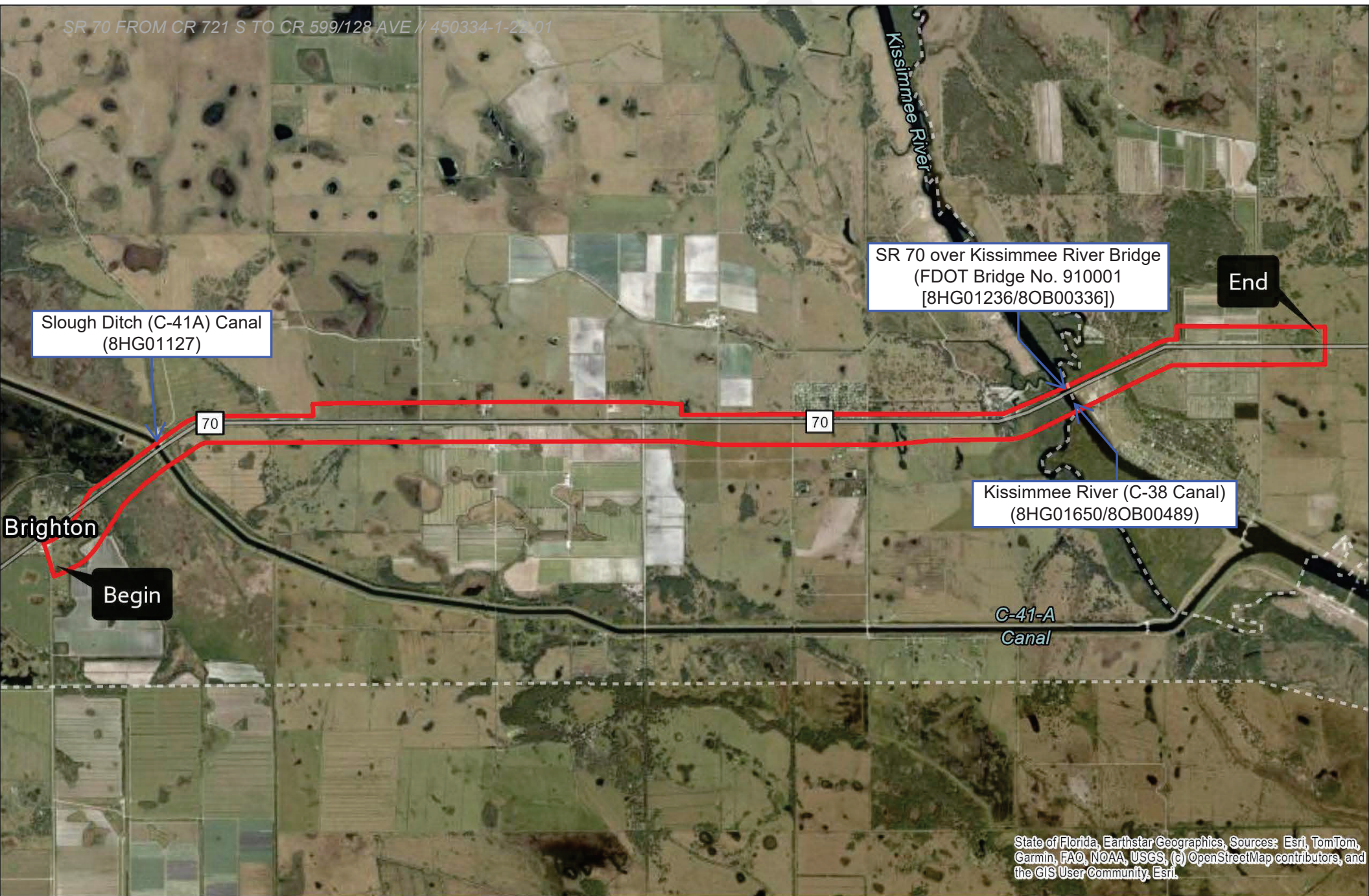
Electronically signed by Emily Barnett **FOR** Jeffrey James on September 5, 2025

The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) reviewed the submission referenced above and finds the document contains sufficient information and concurs with the information provided for the above referenced project.	
SHPO/FDHR Comments	
	
Signed	September 22, 2025
Date	
Alissa S. Lotane, Director Florida Division of Historical Resources	

cc: Lindsay Rothrock, Cultural & Historical Resource Specialist
FDOT Office of Environmental Management

Submitted Documents

- [45033412201-CE2-D1-450334-1-22-01_August_2025_Sec_106_Kissimmee_River_Bridge-2025-0905.pdf](#) (Section 106 Case Study Report)
450334-1-22-01_August 2025_Sec 106 Kissimmee River Bridge



APE

Type 2 Categorical Exclusion

0 1 2 Miles

0 2 4 Kilometers



Section 4(f) Resources

Florida Department of Transportation

SR 70 FROM CR 721 S TO CR 599/128 AVE

District: FDOT District 1

County:

ETDM Number: 14491

Financial Management Number: 450334-1-22-01

Federal-Aid Project Number: D123-018-B

Project Manager: Kathern Cothorn

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 Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 26, 2022 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT. Submitted pursuant 49 U.S.C. § 303.

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Summary and Approval

Resource Name	Facility Type	Property Classification	Owner/Official with Jurisdiction	Recommended Outcome	OEM SME Action
Slough Ditch (C-41A) at SR 70 Boat Ramp	Boat ramp	Park/Rec Area	SFWMD	No Use	Determination 11-04-2025
Kissimmee River Public Use Area	Water and wildlife management area with recreational use	Park/Rec Area	SFWMD and FWC	<i>de minimis</i>	Concurrence Pending
Okeechobee North Trail Connector	Pedestrian trail	Park/Rec Area	Okeechobee County	No Use	Determination 11-04-2025
Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127)	Historic Canal	Historic Site	State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)	<i>de minimis</i>	Concurrence Pending
Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB 00489)	Historic Canal	Historic Site	State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)	<i>de minimis</i>	Concurrence Pending
S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB 00336])	Historic Bridge	Historic Site	State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)	Programmatic	Concurrence Pending

Interim Director of the Office of Environmental Management
Florida Department of Transportation

Slough Ditch (C-41A) at SR 70 Boat Ramp

Facility Type: Boat ramp

Property Classification: Park/Rec Area

Address and Coordinates:

Address: Northeast quadrant of C-41A Canal and SR 70

Latitude: 27.234615 Longitude: -81.083318

Description of Property:

This property is located north of SR 70 on the east side of the C-41A Canal. The boat ramp, located approximately 400 feet north of SR 70, is part of the overall South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD)-owned property along the C-41A Canal that is used for canal maintenance. The overall size of the SFWMD property is difficult to quantify since it is a very large area including the C-41A Canal and the upland banks and stretches from Lake Okeechobee to Lake Istokpoga. The boat ramp consists of a stand-alone ramp with no other infrastructure. Given the existing fencing on the north and east sides of the ramp and parking area that appears to demarcate the boat ramp area and separate it from the adjacent private land, the boat ramp "property" is approximately 1.0 acre in size. Parking for vehicles and trailers is available on the grassy property adjacent to the ramp. The ramp is concrete with an unpaved/packed soil driveway. There are no known planned improvements to this facility and there are no fees for use.

Nearby boat ramps include the Kissimmee River Fishing Resort ramp which is privately-owned but available for public use for a small fee. The site is located just north of SR 70 and west of the Kissimmee River. This boat ramp provides access to a canal that runs parallel to SR 70 and connects to the Kissimmee River. The Platt's Bluff public boat ramp, owned by Okeechobee County, is located approximately 4 miles north of the project and provides access to natural oxbows associated with the Kissimmee River. The Slough Ditch (C-41A) at SR 70 Boat Ramp is considered a significant resource under Section 4(f) because it provides an opportunity for boat access to the canal and to upstream destinations such as Lake Istokpoga, and to downstream locations such as the Kissimmee River.

Owner/Official with Jurisdiction: SFWMD

Relationship Between the Property and the Project

The project will widen SR 70 from the existing undivided, 2-lane typical section to a divided 4-lane typical section. The existing driveway on the east side of the C-41A Canal will be retained in the post-project condition; this driveway services both the SFWMD property, the boat ramp, and the large privately-owned agricultural parcel to the east and north. While the SR 70 widening will require some right-of-way acquisition from the overall SFWMD property, this will not affect the boat ramp area.

There will not be acquisition of land from the resource on a temporary or permanent basis. There will not be any proximity impacts that rise to the level of substantial impairment. Access to the resource will be maintained at all times throughout construction.

Yes No

☐☒

Will the property be "used" within the meaning of Section 4(f)?

Recommended Outcome: No Use

OEM SME Determination Date: 11-04-2025

DRAFT

Kissimmee River Public Use Area

Facility Type: Water and wildlife management area with recreational use

Property Classification: Park/Rec Area

Address and Coordinates:

Address: 15468 State Road 70 W, Okeechobee, FL, 34974, USA

Latitude: 27.23662 Longitude: -80.98771

Description of Property:

The Kissimmee River Public Use Area (PUA) consists of 30,864 acres of land in Glades, Highlands, Okeechobee, Osceola and Polk Counties. The Kissimmee River PUA is a component of the Kissimmee River Restoration Project which was congressionally funded in 1992 with the task to restore more than 40 square miles of the river floodplain ecosystem, 20,000 acres of wetlands, and 44 miles of the historic river channel. Much of the overall property was purchased with funding from the Save Our Rivers (SOR) program created by the Florida legislature in 1981 to allow for the state water management districts to acquire environmentally sensitive land to manage, protect, and conserve the state's water resources. As part of the process in acquiring these lands, the water management districts consider the property's management challenges, surface and groundwater systems, and the formation of corridors for the critical interaction of wildlife populations. In managing these public lands, the water management districts ensure the maintenance of water resources, fish and wildlife populations, and native plant communities in an environmentally acceptable manner.

While its primary function is to serve an environmental restoration and water management purpose, these lands are also typically open for appropriate public use consistent with their environmental sensitivity. The Kissimmee River PUA is also managed to provide the public with fish and wildlife-based public outdoor recreational opportunities.

The SOR program is primarily directed by the Land Stewardship Division of the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) with assistance from several other SFWMD departments, service centers and field stations. Considerable assistance in managing the lands is provided by other governmental agencies, the private sector, and volunteers through cooperative agreements. Portions of the Kissimmee River PUA, including the parcel immediately adjacent to S.R. 70, are managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

The closest parcel associated with the Kissimmee River PUA is located on the south side of S.R. 70, west of the Kissimmee River. The property is immediately adjacent to the existing S.R. 70 right-of-way in this location. In relation to the other portions of the Kissimmee River PUA, this is located towards the southern terminus and is considered "Zone A". Zone A is from S.R. 70 south to S.R. 78. There are no upland access points from S.R. 70 or from any other upland points in the project area to the Kissimmee River PUA, either for public access or maintenance access. The only access opportunity is by boat, either from the privately-owned Kissimmee River Fishing Resort, located on the north side of S.R. 70, or from the Platt's Bluff public boat ramp, located approximately 4 miles to the north. The property includes a primitive camp site; the exact location is unknown given lack of detailed PUA maps but is south of the Kissimmee River oxbow that cuts through the property and is a minimum of 1,600 feet south of S.R. 70. There is no other recreational infrastructure.

The main recreational activity on this property is hunting. Game includes deer, wild hog, bobcat, otter, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria, gray squirrel, rabbit, raccoon, turkey, quail, migratory birds in season, and nonprotected birds. Fishing and frogging are also allowed. Various regulations are in effect for seasonality of hunting methods (archery, crossbow, guns) and bag limits. Camping is allowed in the designated camping area by Special Use

License up to 8 continuous days. Other recreational opportunities include bird watching and boating through the open river cuts and canals. The property is open year-round for day and night use and there is no associated fee. There are no planned improvements to this recreational property.

Owner/Official with Jurisdiction: SFWMD and FWC

Recommended Outcome: *de minimis*

Yes No

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Was there coordination with the Official(s) with Jurisdiction to identify an opportunity for a <i>de minimis</i> finding? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Was the OWJ informed by the District of FDOT's intent to pursue a <i>de minimis</i> approval option? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Was the OWJ informed in writing that their concurrence with a no adverse effect finding to the activities, features or attributes which qualify the property for protection may result in FDOT making a <i>de minimis</i> approval under Section 4(f)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Did the OWJ concur that the proposed project, including any enhancement, mitigation and minimization of harm measures, will result in no adverse effects to the activities features or attributes of the property? |

Basis on Which the Determination was Made

The S.R. 70 widening improvements require 2.48 acres of permanent property acquisition from the boundary of the Kissimmee River PUA at S.R. 70. The impact footprint for the proposed improvements within the park comprises approximately 0.00008% of the PUA's overall total acreage. The proposed improvements will require construction of roadway embankment, travel lanes, and a shared-use path on property that is currently part of the PUA but will not require any changes to existing infrastructure since none exists in this location. The nearest, and only, designated infrastructure is a camp site located at least 1,600 feet south of the proposed new right-of-way line. Therefore, the roadway will be 75 feet closer to this camp site than in current conditions. The portion of property needed for the roadway improvements consists predominantly of Brazilian pepper, cabbage palm, and upland shrubs. The FDOT understands that the features proposed for impact are not significant to the public recreational use/enjoyment of the overall property and do not include environmentally sensitive resources significant in meeting the conservation goals of the PUA.

There will not be any proximity impacts that rise to the level of substantial impairment since the roadway expansion will not have any indirect/secondary impacts to the property. Recreational use of the PUA property adjacent to the proposed road right-of-way boundary will continue unimpeded. Use of the primitive campground, approximately 1,600 feet south of S.R. 70, will not be affected by the widening project. Access to the PUA will not be affected by the proposed project since currently, there is no access from S.R. 70 or side streets to the PUA. Given the existing and proposed setting of the corridor, there are no significant impacts to the aesthetics or viewshed associated with the impacted portion of the park property.

The minimization of impacts to this Section 4(f)-eligible resource has been achieved by selecting Alternative 1 as the Preferred Alternative. When project alternatives were developed and presented to the public in the June 2024 Alternatives Public Workshop (more detail on public involvement below), it was estimated that Alternative 1 would impact 2.8 acres of the Kissimmee River PUA and Alternative 2 would impact 3.4 acres of the Kissimmee River PUA. Following the Alternatives Public Workshop, the alternatives were further refined and the 2.8 acres was reduced to 2.45 acres. Additionally, no stormwater pond alternatives were sited within the boundary of the Kissimmee River PUA.

Based upon the above information and the measures to minimize harm, there will be no adverse effects to the activities, features and attributes that qualify the Kissimmee River PUA for protection under Section 4(f).

The FDOT communicated in email with the SFWMD in July 2024 regarding potential impacts to the Kissimmee River PUA. The FDOT then emailed a letter to the identified Official with Jurisdiction (OWJ) within the SFWMD on September 11, 2025, requesting their concurrence that the Kissimmee River PUA is a significant resource under the meaning of Section 4(f). The letter also explained that the public hearing will be advertised with information that the FDOT is proposing to make a Section 4(f) *de minimis* determination per 23 Code of Federal Regulations Part 774, and that following the public hearing, the FDOT will contact the OWJ again for concurrence with the findings and determination. Since a response was not received as of the date of this draft document, the FDOT is continuing to coordinate with the OWJ.

Public Involvement Activities:

An in-person Alternatives Public Workshop was held on June 11, 2024 and a virtual Alternatives Public Workshop was held on June 18, 2024. The meetings were advertised in the local newspaper, on the project website, in the Florida Administrative Record, and through a newsletter mailed to property owners and emailed to interested parties, agency representatives and public officials. The meeting included a project video, visual displays including roll plots of alternatives, and opportunities for the public to ask questions of the project team. The proposed impacts to the Kissimmee River PUA were depicted in the meeting exhibits for each alternative. The exhibits and project video are available to the public on the project website. Following the Alternatives Public Workshop, the project was presented to the HRTPO staff and committees on October 2, 2024 to explain the study process and the alternatives for the multiple ongoing S.R. 70 corridor projects in Highlands and Okeechobee Counties. The public hearing will similarly provide exhibits and a project video depicting the proposed impacts and will afford an opportunity for the public to review and comment on the "*de minimis*" determination.

OEM SME Concurrence Date: Pending

Okeechobee North Trail Connector

Facility Type: Pedestrian trail

Property Classification: Park/Rec Area

Address and Coordinates:

Address: intersection of CR 599 and SR 70

Latitude: 27.24357 Longitude: -80.96109

Description of Property:

This trail is along CR 599/SW 128th Avenue on both the north and south sides of SR 70 and has several names. The trail segment from the Kissimmee River to SR 70 is called the Okeechobee North Trail to SR 70 Connector and is approximately 1.1 miles in length. North of SR 70, the name changes to Okeechobee North Trail to Kissimmee River Trail and is approximately 6.3 miles. As part of the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) which begins at US 41 in Big Cypress National Preserve and terminates in Fort Pickens State Park in the Pensacola area, it is also called the S-65E Lock Access Road/CR 599 and FNST Connector. It connects to the Lake Okeechobee North Trail (Paradise Run) approximately 1 mile south of the project area and to the Yates Marsh Trail/Hickory Hammock Trail approximately 5 miles to the north of the project. This is a "roadwalk" trail where pedestrians may walk on the grassy roadside shoulder. Therefore there is no definitive trail width, but there is approximately 20 feet of sodded area on each side of the roadway pavement in the vicinity of the project. The trail is not marked with signage in the vicinity of the project.

Recreational opportunities on this trail include walking, running, bicycling and hiking. There are no known planned facility enhancements to this trail. The public can access the trail at any point along SW 128th Avenue or from the SR 70 intersection at any time of day or night, however there is no designated parking for vehicles in the vicinity of the project. Aside from these trail segments previously described, there are no other existing trails within 10 miles of the project. The Okeechobee North Trail to SR 70 Connector/ Okeechobee North Trail to Kissimmee River Trail is considered a significant resource under Section 4(f) because it provides a long segment of opportunity for walking/hiking/biking in this region.

Owner/Official with Jurisdiction: Okeechobee County

Relationship Between the Property and the Project

The project will widen SR 70 from the existing undivided, 2-lane typical section to a divided 4-lane typical section. While this will result in a widening of the SR 70 crossing of the trail, it will not impede trail users from traveling north or south along the trail at the SR 70 intersection. In the post-project condition, a median opening will be constructed at this location to allow for vehicular turning movements; this median opening and sodded 40-foot wide median will be able to be used by trail users to cross SR 70. During construction, a maintenance of traffic (MOT) plan will be prepared and vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists will continue to be able to cross SR 70 in this location.

There will not be acquisition of land from the resource on a temporary or permanent basis. There will not be any proximity impacts that rise to the level of substantial impairment. Access to the resource will be maintained at all times throughout construction.

Yes No

☐
☒

Will the property be "used" within the meaning of Section 4(f)?

Recommended Outcome: No Use

OEM SME Determination Date: 11-04-2025

DRAFT

Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127)

Facility Type: Historic Canal

Property Classification: Historic Site

Address and Coordinates:

Address: S.R. 70 over Slough Ditch Canal (C-41A), Highlands County, Florida

Latitude: 27.233405 Longitude: -81.082686

Description of Property:

The resource is a canal that is managed by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). In its entirety, the canal is approximately 20.1 miles long and ranges from 30 to 130 ft in width with earthen banking covered with grass. The site was constructed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as part of the Central and South Florida Flood Control (C&SF) Project as a means of alleviating flooding in farmlands south of Lake Istokpoga within the Lower Kissimmee River/Lake Istokpoga Basin. The site is considered the main outlet for Lake Istokpoga and discharges into the Kissimmee River Canal (C-38). The existing S.R. 70 bridge over Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (Bridge No. 090053) was built in 2000. The site is eligible for listing in the NHRP under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Agriculture. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with the findings on September 22, 2025.

Owner/Official with Jurisdiction: State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)

Recommended Outcome: *de minimis*

Yes No

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Was there coordination with the Official(s) with Jurisdiction to identify an opportunity for a <i>de minimis</i> finding? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Was the OWJ informed by the District of FDOT's intent to pursue a <i>de minimis</i> approval option? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Was the OWJ informed in writing that their concurrence with a no adverse effect finding to the activities, features or attributes which qualify the property for protection may result in FDOT making a <i>de minimis</i> approval under Section 4(f)? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Did the OWJ concur that the proposed project, including any enhancement, mitigation and minimization of harm measures, will result in no adverse effects to the activities features or attributes of the property? |

Basis on Which the Determination was Made

The project will widen S.R. 70 from the existing undivided, 2-lane typical section to a divided 4-lane typical section with a shared-use path on the south side. The road widening over the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal will construct a new eastbound bridge south of the existing bridge (Bridge No. 090053), with two travel lanes and a shared-use path. The existing bridge right-of-way (ROW) occupancy at this location is currently 11,750 square feet (250 feet in length over the canal water by 47 feet wide bridge typical section). The roadway improvements will require additional ROW occupancy over the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal, consisting of approximately 28,830 square feet (390 feet in length [top of embankment to top of embankment] by 63 to 81 feet wide [includes the 60 foot wide bridge typical section, 21 feet of ROW occupancy between the bridges as well as approximately 63 feet for the new road and shared-use path]), to accommodate the construction of a shared-use path and new bridge south of the existing bridge. The ROW occupancy, footprint of the new bridge, and alterations to the earthen banking along the site are in keeping with the existing conditions within the project limits and the undertaking will not damage the historic site in a negative way that will diminish or destroy

the qualities and characteristics for which it is considered eligible for listing in the NRHP. The Section 106 effects determination for the proposed project resulted in no adverse effect and the OWJ concurred with this determination in a letter dated September 22, 2025. As such, the ROW occupancy will have no adverse effect on activities, features, and attributes of the site.

Public Involvement Activities:

Pending the public involvement opportunity, currently scheduled for December 16 and 18, 2025.

OEM SME Concurrence Date: Pending

Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489)

Facility Type: Historic Canal

Property Classification: Historic Site

Address and Coordinates:

Address: S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River (C-38), Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida

Latitude: 27.238921 Longitude: -80.982458

Description of Property:

The site is a canal that is managed by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). In its entirety, the canal spans 69 miles from Lake Kissimmee to the north to Lake Okeechobee to the south of the project limits. The canal was channelized in 1966 and is approximately 375 feet wide with shallow earthen banking covered in vegetation. The site was channelized as part of the Central and South Florida Flood Control (C&SF) Project to help with flood control. The canal flows beneath the 1966 S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge No. 910001 (8HG01236/8OB00336) which is equipped with bridge fenders and channel markers. The site is eligible for listing in the NHRP under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Conservation and Criterion C in the area of Engineering. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with the findings on September 22, 2025.

Owner/Official with Jurisdiction: State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)

Recommended Outcome: *de minimis*

Yes No

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Was there coordination with the Official(s) with Jurisdiction to identify an opportunity for a <i>de minimis</i> finding? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Was the OWJ informed by the District of FDOT's intent to pursue a <i>de minimis</i> approval option? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Was the OWJ informed in writing that their concurrence with a no adverse effect finding to the activities, features or attributes which qualify the property for protection may result in FDOT making a <i>de minimis</i> approval under Section 4(f)? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Did the OWJ concur that the proposed project, including any enhancement, mitigation and minimization of harm measures, will result in no adverse effects to the activities features or attributes of the property? |

Basis on Which the Determination was Made

The project will widen S.R. 70 from the existing undivided, 2-lane typical section to a divided 4-lane typical section with a shared-use path on the south side. The road widening over the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) will remove the existing S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River bridge (Bridge No. 910001) and construct a westbound and eastbound bridge with two travel lanes each. The westbound bridge will replace the existing bridge, while the eastbound bridge will be constructed to the south of the existing bridge. The existing bridge right-of-way (ROW) occupancy at this location is currently 13,020 square feet (420-foot length over the canal by 31-foot-wide bridge typical section). This will be replaced with approximately 18,060 square feet (420-foot length by 43-foot-wide bridge typical section) for the new westbound bridge and approximately 35,700 square feet (420-foot length by 85-foot wide [60-foot wide bridge typical section plus 25-foot ROW gap between the bridges in the post-construction condition]) for the new eastbound bridge.

Considering the canal is a state sovereign submerged land (SSL), an SSL easement is required for the new bridge that will be constructed outside of the existing ROW. While the roadway improvements will require the additional ROW

occupancy/easements discussed above, the undertaking will not damage the historic site in a negative way that will diminish or destroy the qualities and characteristics for which it is considered eligible for listing in the NRHP. The SSL easement, footprint of the new bridges, and alterations to the earthen banking along the site are in keeping with the existing conditions within the project limits. The Section 106 effects determination for the proposed project resulted in no adverse effect and the OWJ concurred with this determination in a letter dated September 22, 2025. As such, the SSL easement and SFWMD ROW occupancy will have no adverse effect on activities, features, and attributes of the site.

Public Involvement Activities:

Pending the public involvement opportunity, currently scheduled for December 16 and 18, 2025.

OEM SME Concurrence Date: Pending

S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336])

Facility Type: Historic Bridge

Property Classification: Historic Site

Address and Coordinates:

Address: S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River, Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida

Latitude: 27.238921 Longitude: -80.982458

Description of Property:

The S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001) is a seven span, concrete beam and girder bridge constructed in 1966 in order to carry S.R. 70 over the newly channelized Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal). The peak of the bridge is equipped with a steel, removable span which accommodates the passing of larger vessels while being more cost effective than a manned, operable span. The overall dimension of the bridge measures approximately 418-feet long with four approach spans that are 33-feet wide with a roadway width of approximately 24-feet, and three main spans that are 31-feet wide with a roadway width of approximately 22-feet. The approach spans are a concrete beam and girder style superstructure with a concrete deck that has been paved with asphalt, while the main span is a removable steel span. The substructure has solid, sloped abutments comprised of concrete bags. The superstructure is supported by six bents, each comprised of squared concrete headers with two squared concrete piers and footers with a horizontal strut between the piers. The site is eligible for listing in the NHRP under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with the findings on July 17, 2024.

Owner/Official with Jurisdiction: State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)

Recommended Outcome: Programmatic (Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation and Approval for FHWA Projects that Necessitate the Use of Historic Bridges)

Describe in detail how the Section 4(f) property will be used.

The proposed S.R. 70 improvements involve removal of the existing Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336]) and construction of a new bridge following the existing S.R. 70 alignment that will carry westbound traffic over the Kissimmee River and the construction of a second bridge to the south that will carry eastbound traffic. The proposed typical section for the bridge over the Kissimmee River consists of two 12-foot travel lanes in each direction. Adjacent to the inside travel lanes are six-foot shoulders and adjacent to the outside travel lanes are 10-foot shoulders and a shared use path across the southern length of the eastbound bridge. The existing bridge will remain operational until the new bridge is constructed.

Two build alternatives, Build Alternative 1 and Build Alternative 2, were evaluated. Both build alternatives involve the replacement of the S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336]). Alternative 1 was identified as the Preferred Alternative since it results in better access management at Kissimmee River Estates, fewer residential relocations, fewer impacts to noise sensitive sites, and less impact to public recreational lands. The alignment for Build Alternative 1 closely follows the existing roadway alignment and widens to the south. A No-Build Alternative is considered a valid alternative throughout the life of the study. The No-Build Alternative assumes no improvements to S.R. 70 within the study limits through the Design Year of 2052, limiting work in the project area to routine maintenance. Based on the 2022 Bridge Inspection Report, the existing bridge is considered satisfactory; however, due to the age of the

structure (built in 1966 [58 years]), the bridge has reached the end of its service life which is designed for the service life of 50 years. The bridge currently shows signs of deterioration of the concrete and steel span, which is in line with the age of the bridge. Routine maintenance will not correct the ongoing physical deterioration and aging of the bridge that will eventually lead to bridge failure. Furthermore, the existing bridge has substandard shoulder widths and railings, especially on the steel (movable) span. In order to meet the project purpose and need, the Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001) would need to be widened; however, considering the bridge type (steel span bridge), the bridge is not suitable for widening.

In 2024, repairs and rehabilitation to the bridge (cleaning and sealing the roadway, deck spall repairs, structural steel repairs, and repainting of the steel portions) were done to maintain the bridge. These repairs will allow the bridge to remain in use until a solution for replacement or additional repair is made. The repairs are anticipated to add another 10 to 15 years to the lifespan, far exceeding the intended service of the bridge to 68 to 70 years.

A Rehabilitation option was considered for this project; however, rehabilitation within its historic specifications does not address the substandard design and safety concerns and does not meet the purpose and need for the project. Rehabilitation of the bridge incorporating measures to meet the purpose and need of the project would adversely affect the characteristics that make the bridge eligible for the NRHP. Avoidance and minimization options were considered as part of the PD&E Study in order to avoid impacts to the historic bridge. However, there are constraints adjacent to the existing S.R. 70 alignment in the area of the Kissimmee River bridge with the Florida Power and Light (FPL) easement to the north and the Florida Gas Transmission (FGT) easement to the south. Due to the positioning of both easements, the potential to realign S.R. 70 to avoid replacing the bridge is not a feasible option.

Based on the information above, the No Build, Rehabilitation, and Avoidance alternatives are neither feasible nor prudent. As such, the project preferred alternative will demolish and replace the Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001) resulting in an adverse effect to the NRHP-eligible property. SHPO concurred with the adverse effect determination on July 17, 2025 (attached). FDOT and SHPO have developed an MOA addressing suitable measures to mitigate this adverse effect (draft attached).

Applicability

Yes No

☒ ☐ Does the project meet all of the following criteria?

1. The bridge is to be replaced or rehabilitated with Federal funds.
2. The project will require the use of a historic bridge structure which is on or is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
3. The bridge is not a National Historic Landmark.
4. FDOT has determined that the facts of the project match those set forth in the sections below labeled Alternatives, Findings, and Measures to Minimize Harm.
5. Agreement among FDOT, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), if participating, has been reached through procedures pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA.

Alternatives and Findings

1. No Build: The No Build Alternative has been studied and does not meet the Section 4(f) prudent and feasible standard. The No Build Alternative is not recommended based on the following:

- **Structural Deficiencies:** The No Build Alternative does not correct the situation that causes the bridge to be considered structurally deficient or significantly deteriorated. These deficiencies can lead to eventual structural failure/collapse. Normal maintenance is not considered adequate to address these deficiencies.
- **Functional/Geometric Deficiencies:** The No Build Alternative does not correct the situation that causes the bridge to be considered functionally/geometrically deficient. These deficiencies can lead to safety hazards to the traveling public or place unacceptable restrictions on transport and travel.

2. Build on New Location Without Using the Old Bridge: This alternative has been studied and does not meet the Section 4(f) prudent and feasible standard. The New Location Alternative is not recommended based on the following:

- **Structural Deficiencies:** The New Location Alternative does not correct the situation that causes the bridge to be considered structurally deficient or significantly deteriorated. These deficiencies can lead to eventual structural failure/collapse. Normal maintenance is not considered adequate to address these deficiencies.
- **Functional/Geometric Deficiencies:** The New Location Alternative does not correct the situation that causes the bridge to be considered functionally/geometrically deficient. These deficiencies can lead to safety hazards to the traveling public or place unacceptable restrictions on transport and travel.

3. Rehabilitation Without Affecting the Historic Integrity of the Bridge: This alternative has been studied and does not meet the Section 4(f) prudent and feasible standard. The Rehabilitation Alternative is not recommended based on the following:

- **Structural Deficiencies:** The Rehabilitation Alternative does not correct the situation that causes the bridge to be considered structurally deficient or significantly deteriorated. These deficiencies can lead to eventual structural failure/collapse. Normal maintenance is not considered adequate to address these deficiencies.
- **Functional/Geometric Deficiencies:** The Rehabilitation Alternative does not correct the situation that causes the bridge to be considered functionally/geometrically deficient. These deficiencies can lead to safety hazards to the traveling public or place unacceptable restrictions on transport and travel.

4. Replacement: The Replacement Alternative has been studied and is determined to meet the Section 4(f) prudent and feasible standard. The Replacement Alternative is recommended based on the following:

- **Structural Deficiencies:** The Replacement Alternative corrects the situation that causes the bridge to be considered structurally deficient or significantly deteriorated.
- **Functional/Geometric Deficiencies:** The Replacement Alternative corrects the situation that causes the bridge to be considered functionally/geometrically deficient.

Measures to Minimize Harm

- ☐ For bridges that are to be rehabilitated, the historic integrity of the bridge is preserved, to the greatest extent possible, consistent with unavoidable transportation needs, safety, and load requirements;
- ☐ For bridges that are to be rehabilitated to the point that the historic integrity is affected or that are to be moved or demolished, FDOT ensures that, in accordance with the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) standards, or other suitable means developed through consultation, fully adequate records are made of the bridge;
- ☐ For bridges that are to be replaced, the existing bridge is made available for an alternative use, provided a responsible party agrees to maintain and preserve the bridge; and
- ☒ For bridges that are adversely affected, agreement among the SHPO, FDOT, and ACHP (if participating in consultation) is reached through the Section 106 process of the NHPA on measures to minimize harm and those

measures are incorporated into the project. This programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation does not apply to projects where such an agreement cannot be reached.

The proposed project meets all the applicable criteria set forth by the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Guidance on Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation and Approval for FHWA Projects Which Necessitate the Use of Historic Bridges (23 CFR Part 774). All alternatives set forth in the subject programmatic evaluation were fully analyzed and the findings made are clearly applicable to this project. There are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the use of the historic bridge, and the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm.

Public Involvement Activities:

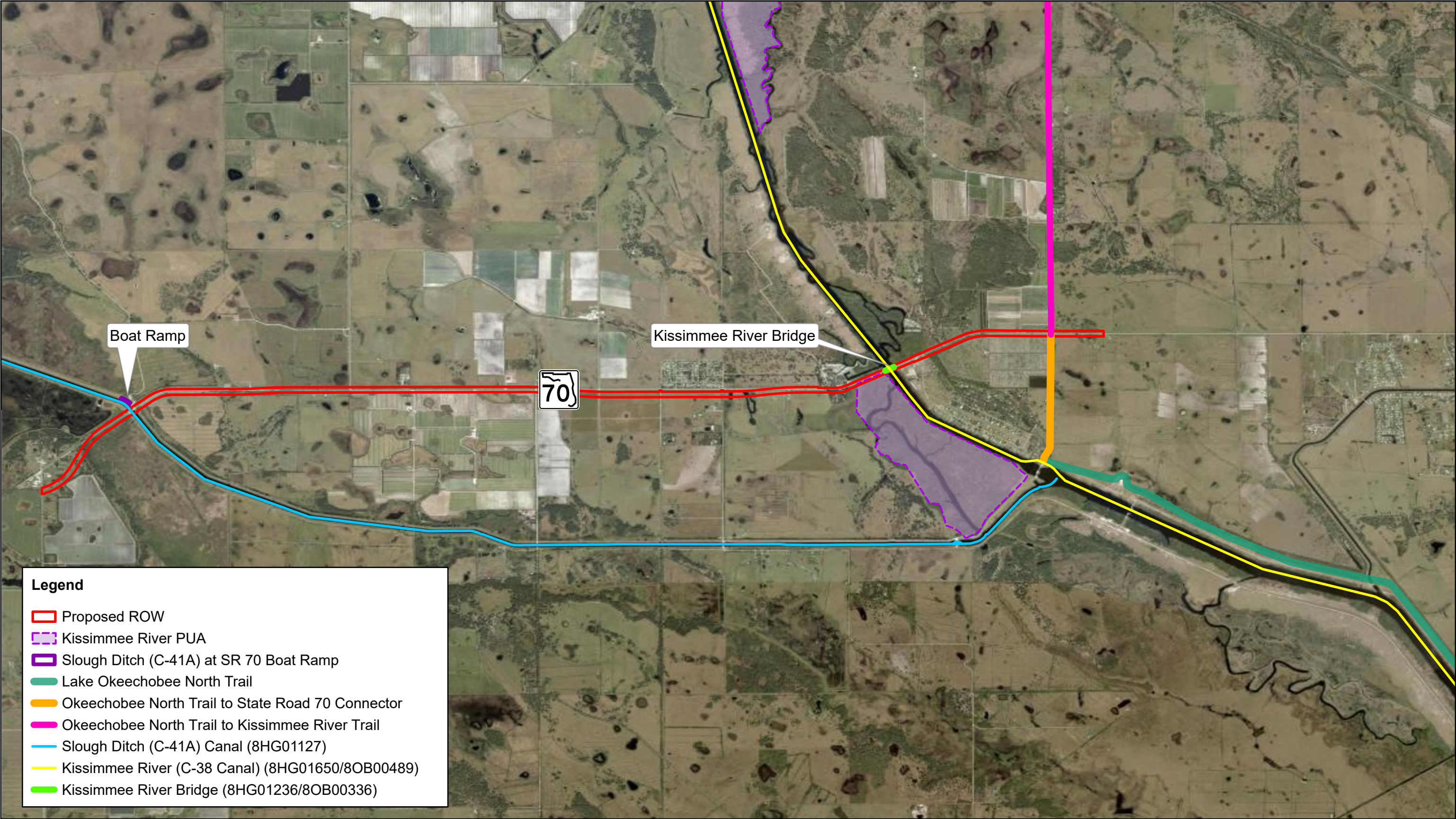
Pending the public involvement opportunity, currently scheduled for December 16 and 18, 2025.

OEM SME Concurrence Date: Pending

Project-Level Attachments

Section 4(f) Sites Overview Map

DRAFT



- Legend**
- Proposed ROW
 - Kissimmee River PUA
 - Slough Ditch (C-41A) at SR 70 Boat Ramp
 - Lake Okeechobee North Trail
 - Okeechobee North Trail to State Road 70 Connector
 - Okeechobee North Trail to Kissimmee River Trail
 - Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127)
 - Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489)
 - Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336)



Section 4(f) Overview Map
SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 559/128 Avenue
FPID No. 450334-1-22-01
Highlands and Okeechobee Counties

Image Source: ESRI
Image Date: 2023



0 1.1 2.2 Miles

Resource Attachments

Slough Ditch (C-41A) at SR 70 Boat Ramp

Slough Ditch (C-41A) at SR 70 Boat Ramp Exhibit
Slough Ditch (C-41A) at SR 70 Boat Ramp Photos
concept plan sheet_Slough Ditch boat ramp

Kissimmee River Public Use Area

Kissimmee River PUA Overview Map Exhibit
Kissimmee River PUA Map Exhibit
Kissimmee River PUA Brochure Map
Kissimmee River PUA Photos
concept plan sheets_Kissimmee River PUA

Okeechobee North Trail Connector

Okeechobee North Trail Connector Overview Map Exhibit
Okeechobee North Trail Connector Map Exhibit
Okeechobee North Trail Connector Photos
concept plan sheet_trail location

Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127)

Overall Site Map
Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127) Exhibit
CRAS SHPO Concurrence

Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489)

Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG016508OB00489) Exhibit
Overall Site Map
SHPO Concurrence on CRAS for Mainline

S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336])

S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG012368OB00336) Exhibit
Kissimmee River Bridge Photos
SHPO Concurrence Letter on CRAS for Kissimmee River Bridge
SHPO concurrence on Section 106 Case Study for Kissimmee River Bridge
Draft MOA S.R. 70 Kissimmee River Bridge

Slough Ditch (C-41A) at SR 70 Boat Ramp

Contents:

Slough Ditch (C-41A) at SR 70 Boat Ramp Exhibit

Slough Ditch (C-41A) at SR 70 Boat Ramp Photos

concept plan sheet_Slough Ditch boat ramp

DRAFT



Slough Ditch (C-41A) Boat Ramp with Project Footprint

SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 559/128 Avenue
FPID No. 450334-1-22-01
Highlands and Okeechobee Counties

Image Source: ESRI
Image Date: 2023





Photo 1: Drone view with boat ramp property in upper right corner.



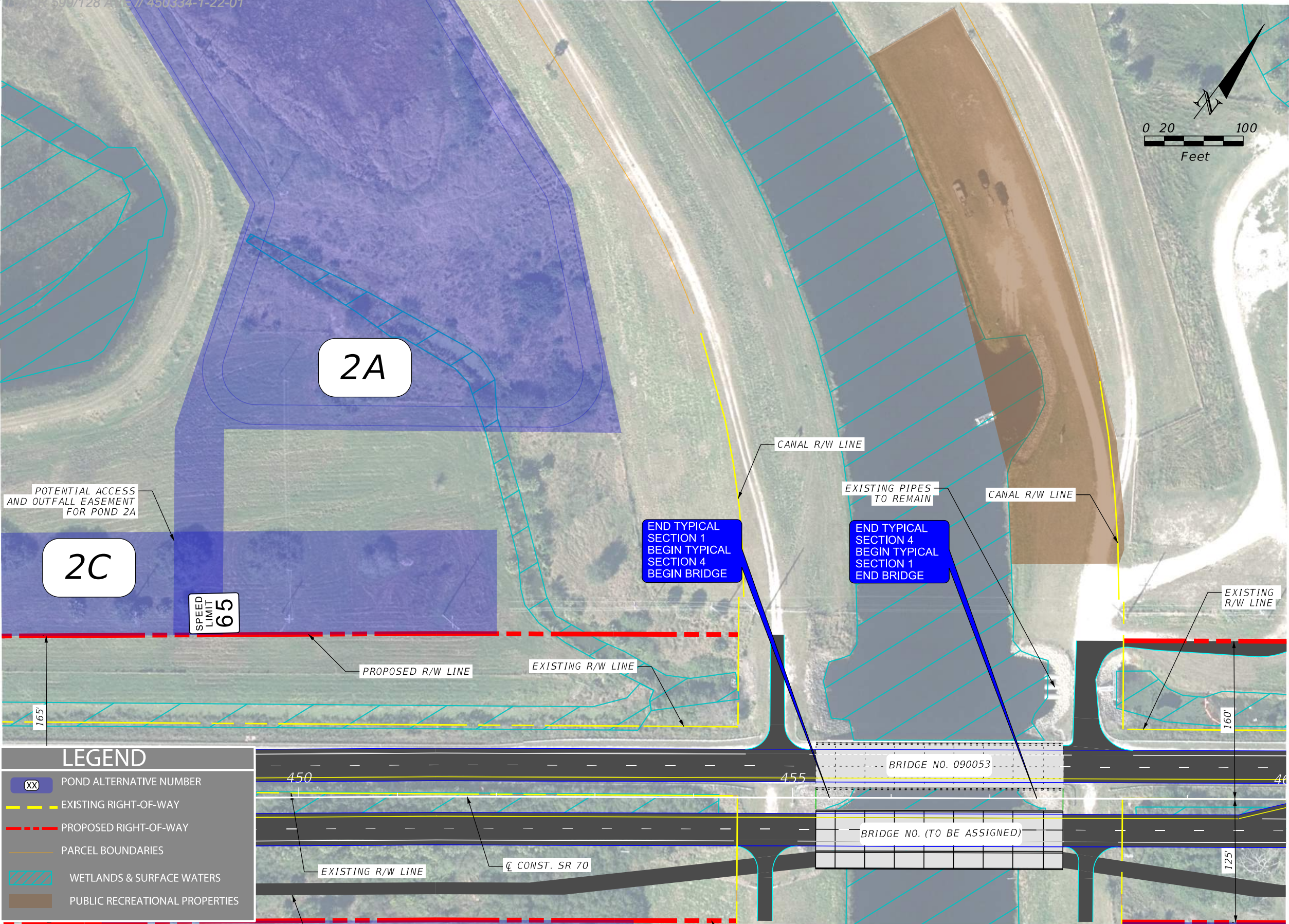
Photo 2: View facing north along driveway to boat ramp.



Photo 3: View facing north near boat ramp.

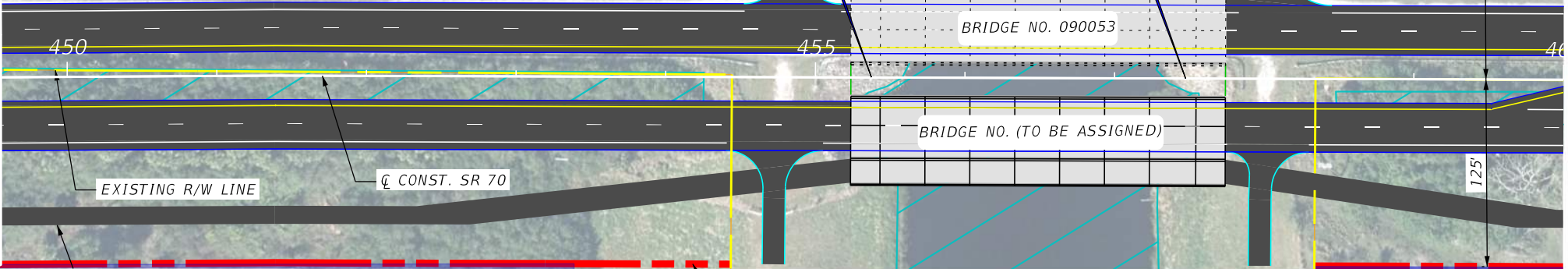


Photo 4: View facing south at boat ramp.



LEGEND

- XX POND ALTERNATIVE NUMBER
- EXISTING RIGHT-OF-WAY
- PROPOSED RIGHT-OF-WAY
- PARCEL BOUNDARIES
- WETLANDS & SURFACE WATERS
- PUBLIC RECREATIONAL PROPERTIES



REVISIONS				ENGINEER OF RECORD	STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION			SHEET NO. 1
DATE	DESCRIPTION	DATE	DESCRIPTION		ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID	
					SR 70	HIGHLANDS OKEECHOBEE	450334-1-22-01	

Kissimmee River Public Use Area

Contents:

Kissimmee River PUA Overview Map Exhibit

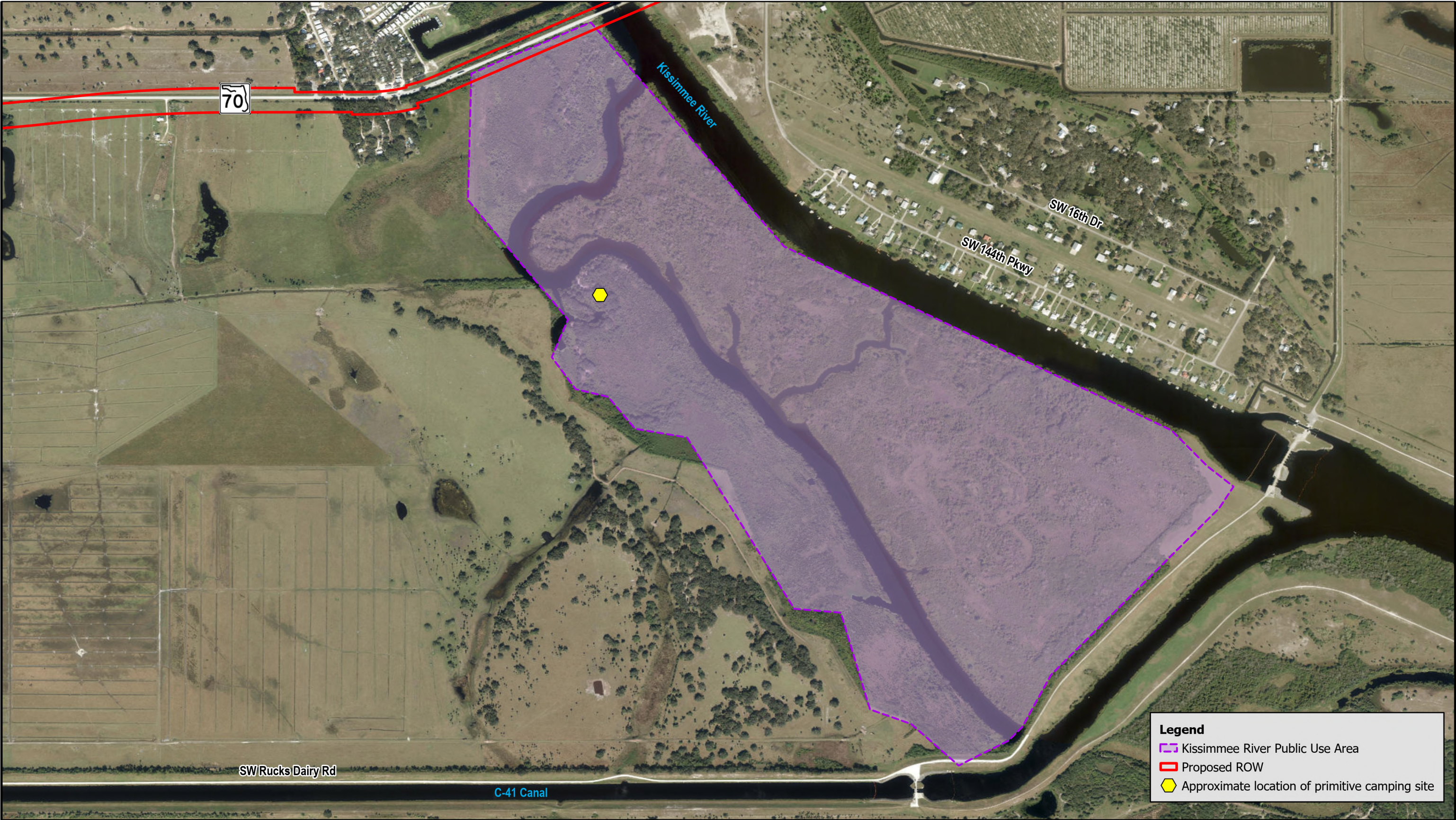
Kissimmee River PUA Map Exhibit

Kissimmee River PUA Brochure Map

Kissimmee River PUA Photos

concept plan sheets_Kissimmee River PUA

DRAFT



Legend

Kissimmee River Public Use Area

Proposed ROW

Approximate location of primitive camping site



Kissimmee River Public Use Area: Zone A (Portion)
SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 559/128 Avenue
FPID No. 450334-1-22-01
Highlands and Okeechobee Counties

Image Source: ESRI
Image Date: 2023

NORTH

0

1,350

2,700

Feet



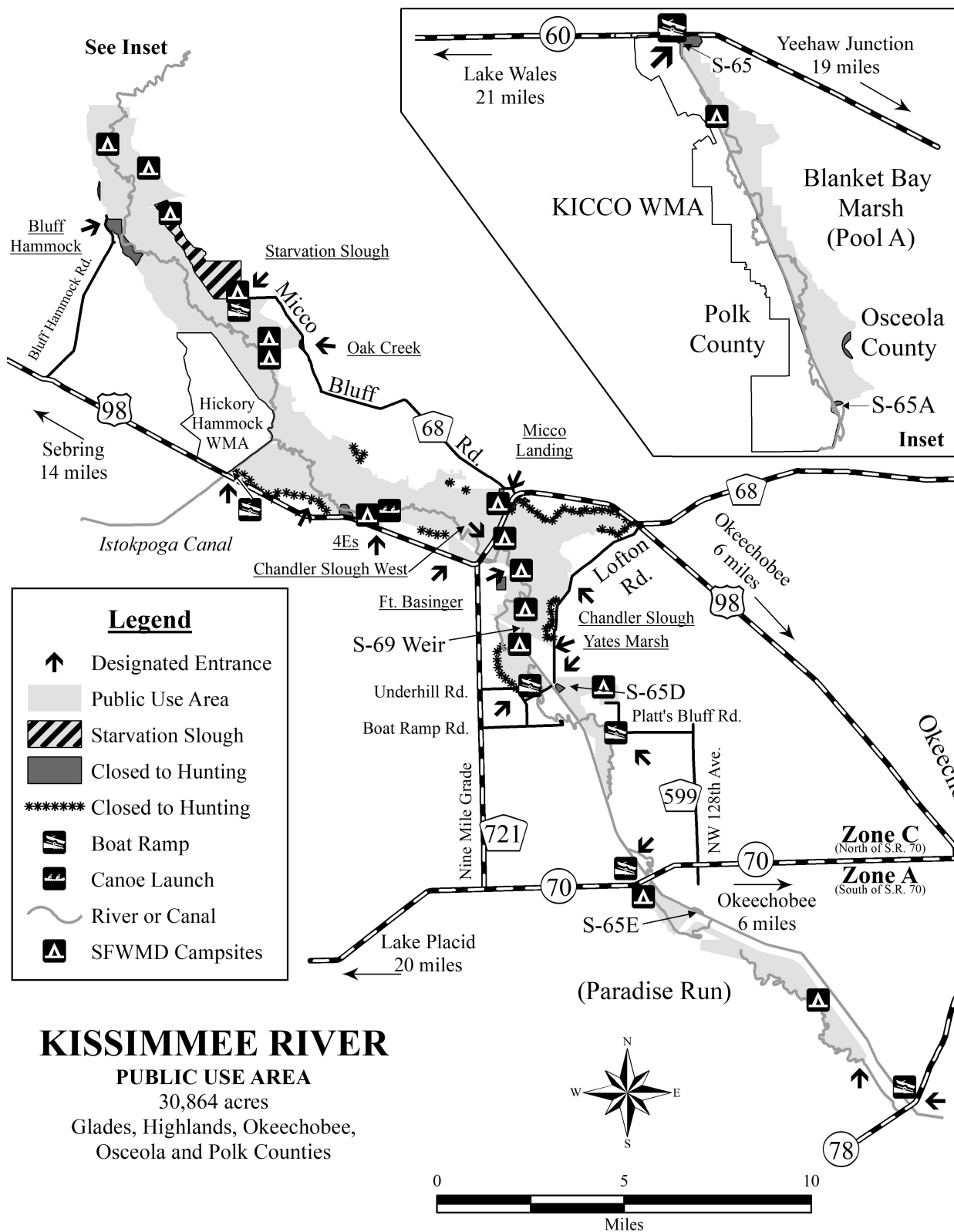
Kissimmee River Public Use Area (PUA) : Zone A (Portion) with Project Footprint

SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 559/128 Avenue
FPID No. 450334-1-22-01
Highlands and Okeechobee Counties

Image Source: ESRI
Image Date: 2023

0 225 450 Feet





DISCLAIMER: This graphical representation is provided for informational purposes and should not be considered authoritative for navigational, engineering, legal, and other uses.



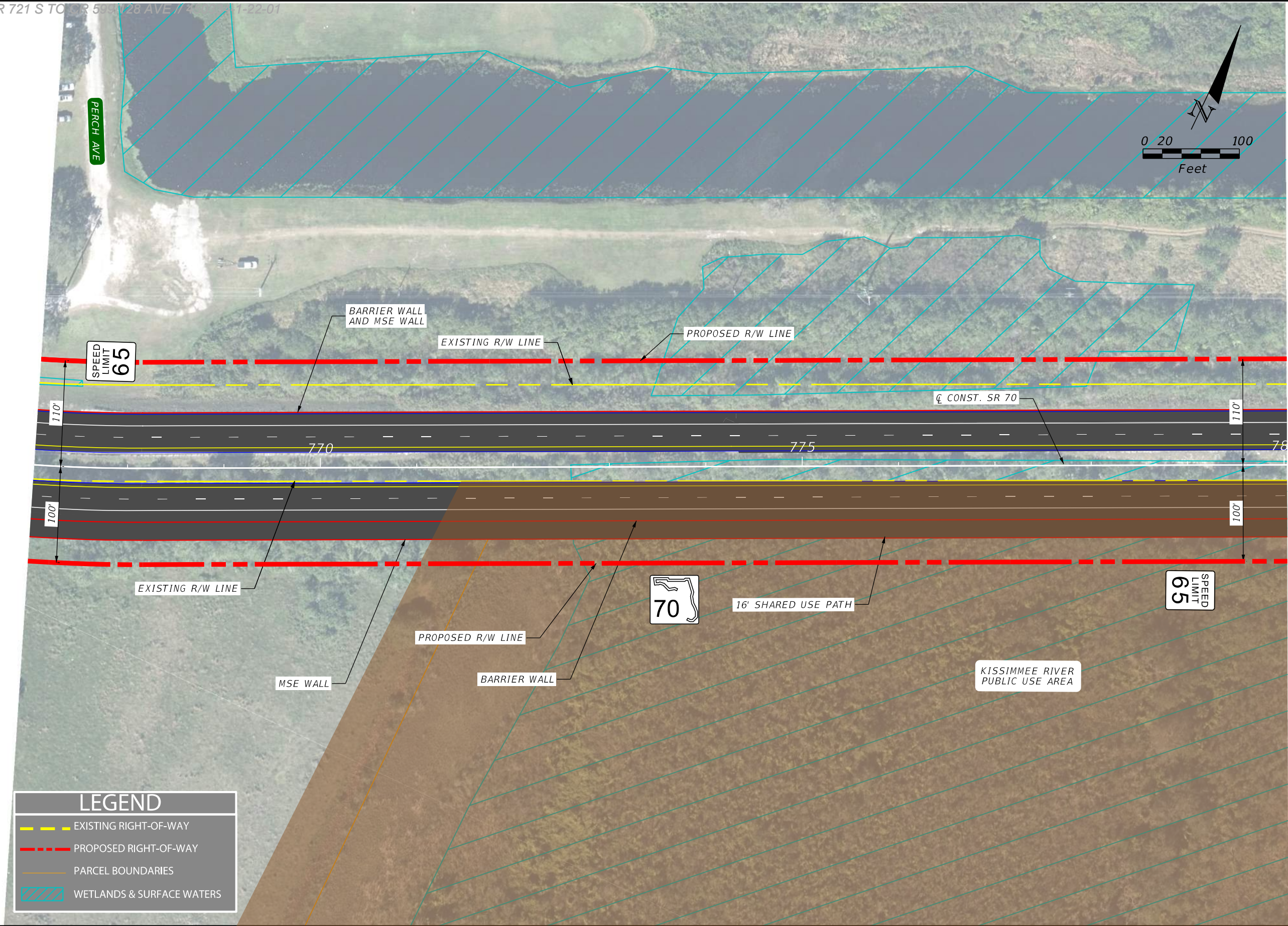
Photo 1: Drone view facing northwest with Kissimmee River PUA in upper left corner of photo, south of the ST 70 roadway



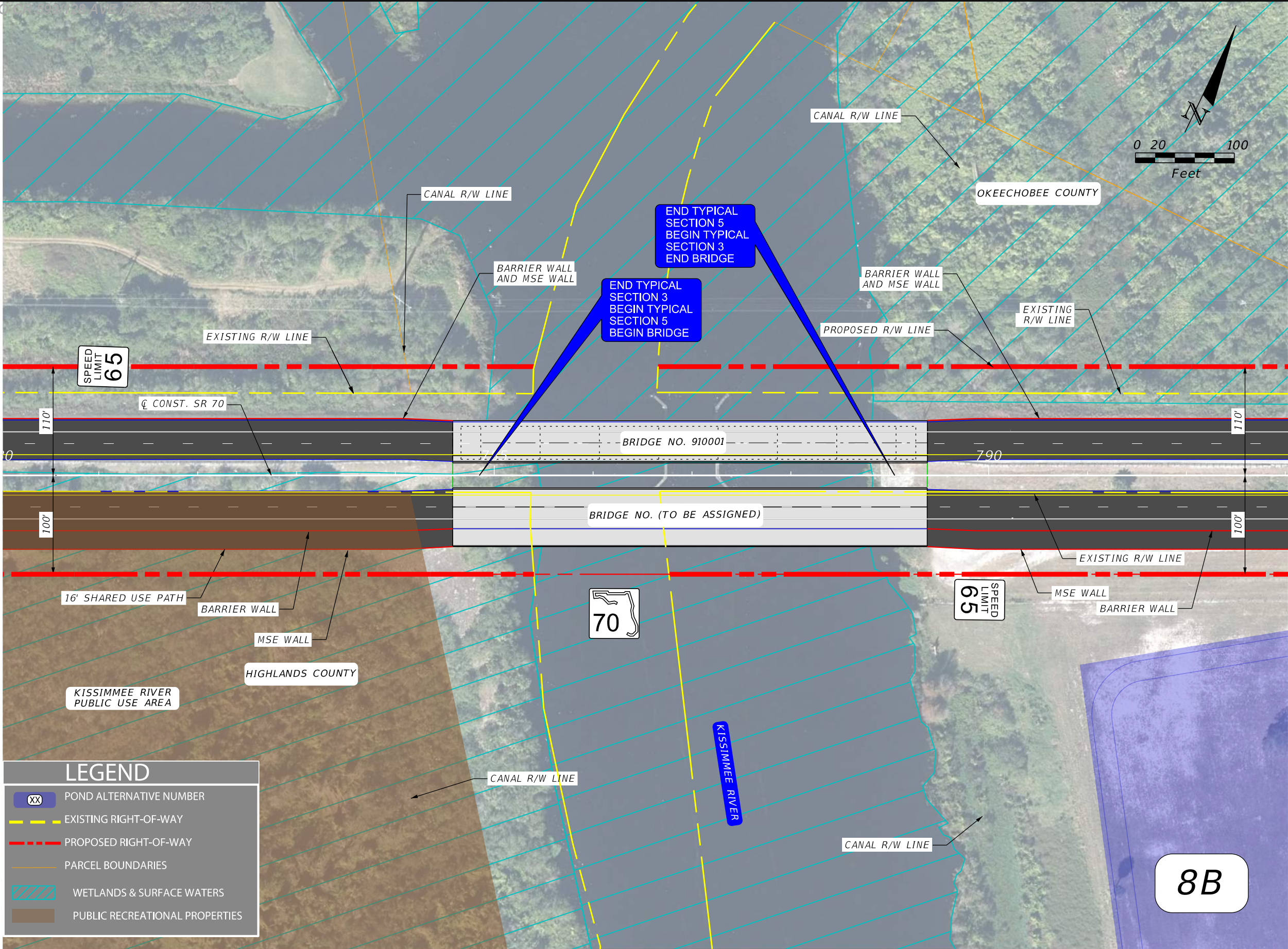
Photo 2: View facing west across river to Kissimmee River PUA.



Photo 3: View facing east along SR 70 with Kissimmee River PUA on south side of roadway.



REVISIONS				ENGINEER OF RECORD		STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION		SHEET NO.
DATE	DESCRIPTION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NICHOLAS JOHN CLAVELLO P.E. LICENSE NUMBER: 84366 SCALAR CONSULTING GROUP, LLC. 5713 CORPORATE WAY, SUITE 200 WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA 33407		ROAD NO.	COUNTY	
						SR 70	HIGHLANDS OKEECHOBEE	
							FINANCIAL PROJECT ID 450334-1-22-01	2



REVISIONS				ENGINEER OF RECORD		STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION		SHEET NO.
DATE	DESCRIPTION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NICHOLAS JOHN CLAVELO P.E. LICENSE NUMBER: 84366 SCALAR CONSULTING GROUP, LLC. 5713 CORPORATE WAY, SUITE 200 WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA 33407		ROAD NO.	COUNTY	
						SR 70	HIGHLANDS OKEECHOBEE	
							FINANCIAL PROJECT ID 450334-1-22-01	3

ALTERNATIVE 1
CONCEPT PLAN

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Okeechobee North Trail Connector

Contents:

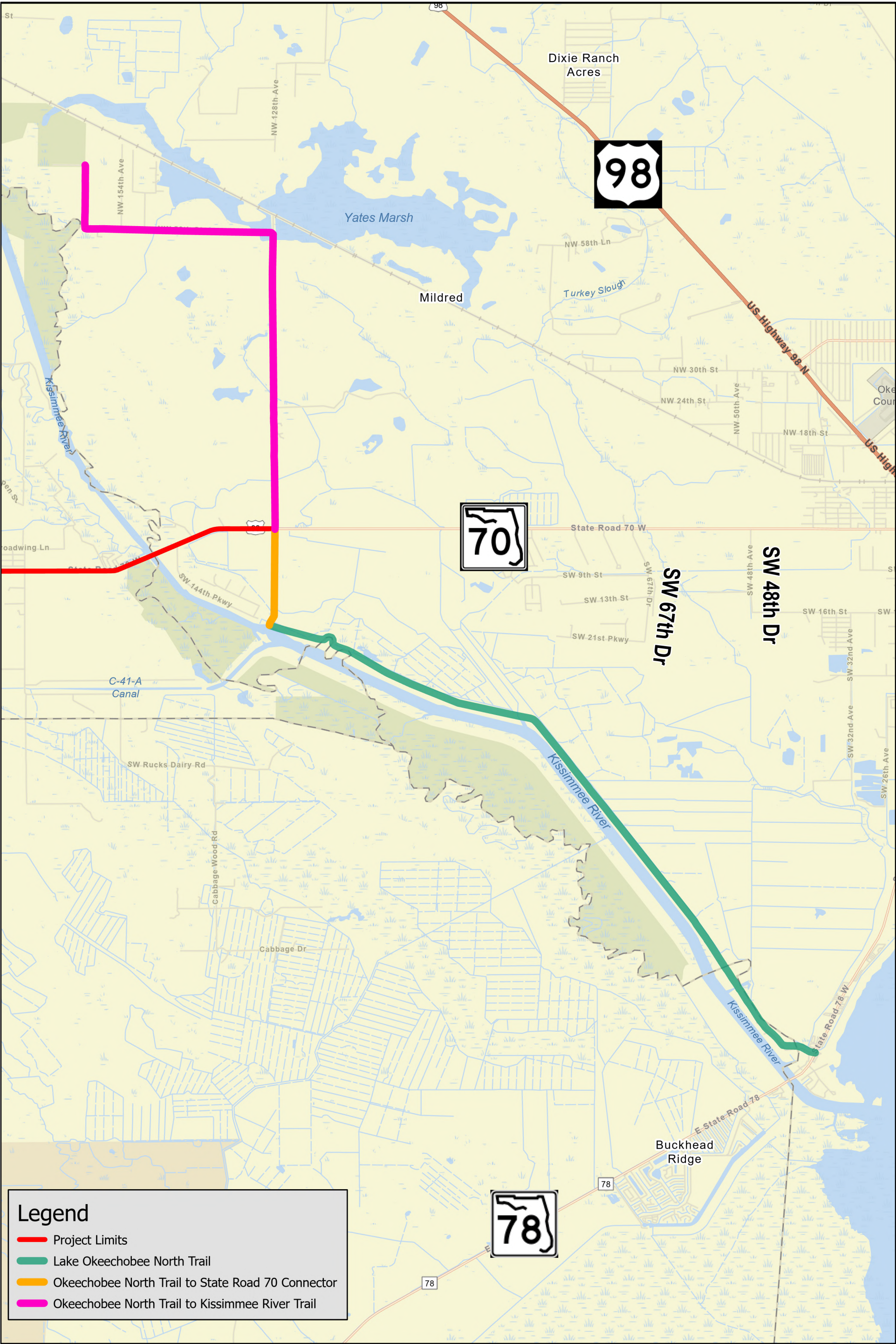
Okeechobee North Trail Connector Overview Map Exhibit

Okeechobee North Trail Connector Map Exhibit

Okeechobee North Trail Connector Photos

concept plan sheet_trail location

DRAFT



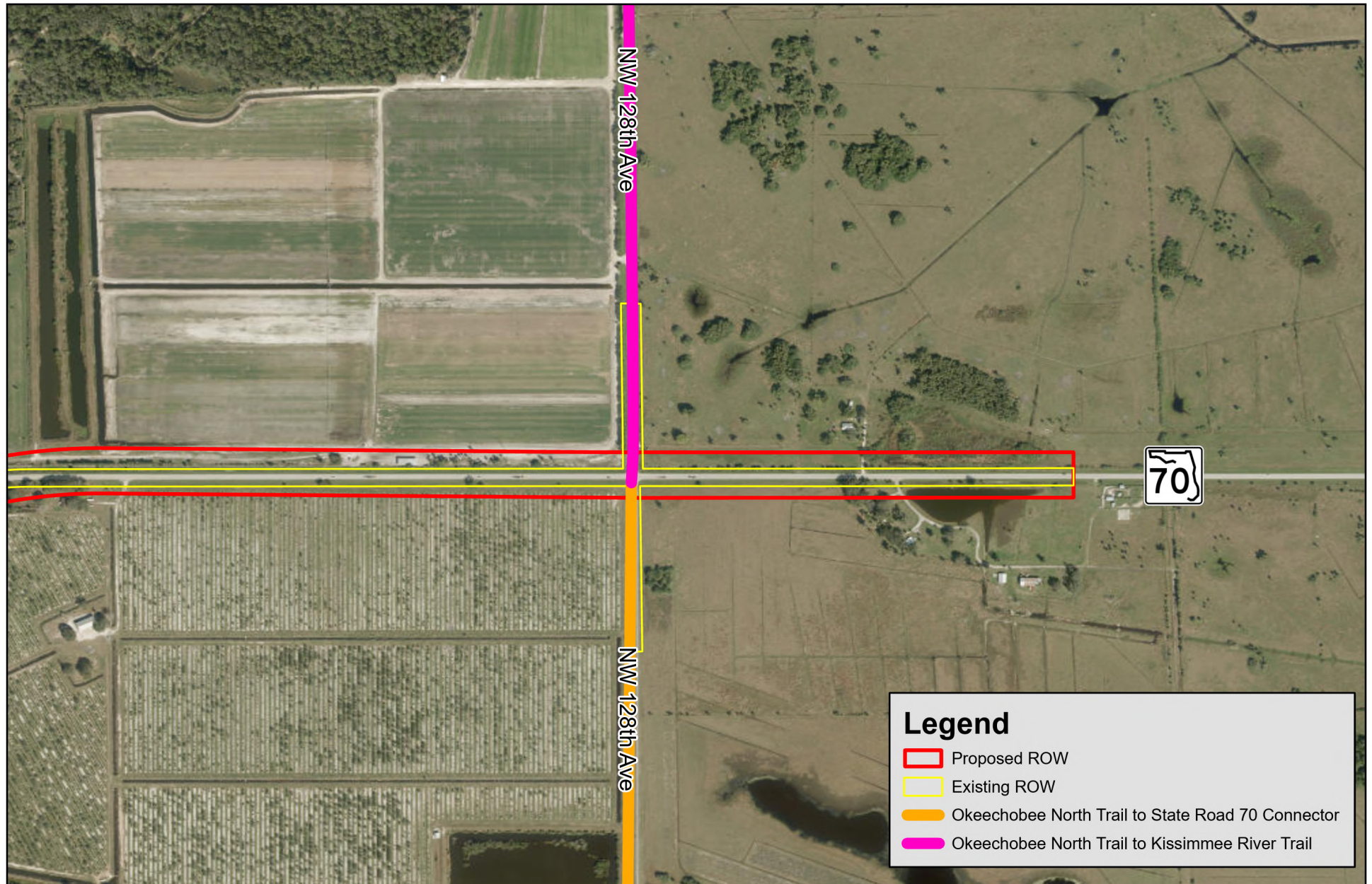
Legend

Project Limits

Lake Okeechobee North Trail

Okeechobee North Trail to State Road 70 Connector

Okeechobee North Trail to Kissimmee River Trail



Legend

- Proposed ROW
- Existing ROW
- Okeechobee North Trail to State Road 70 Connector
- Okeechobee North Trail to Kissimmee River Trail


	<p>Okeechobee North Trail to SR 70 Connector/Okeechobee North Trail to Kissimmee River with Project Footprint</p> <p>SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 559/128 Avenue FPID No. 450334-1-22-01 Highlands and Okeechobee Counties</p>	<p>Image Source: ESRI Image Date: 2023</p> <p>NORTH</p> <p>0 500 1,000 Feet</p>
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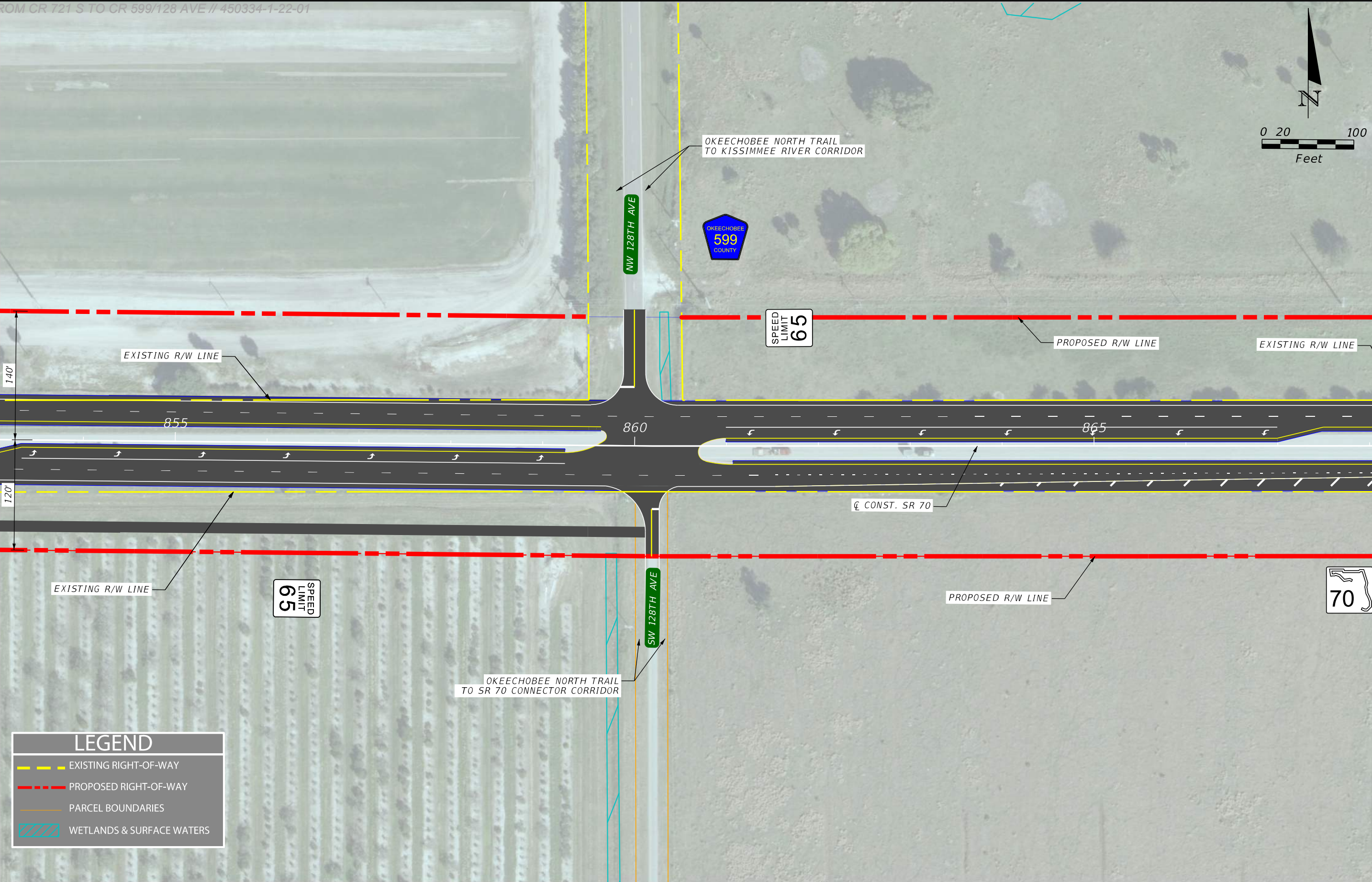
Photo 1: View facing north in center of CR 599/128th Avenue. SR 70 is up ahead.



Photo 2: View facing north along west side of CR 599/128th Avenue near SR 70 intersection.



Photo 3: View facing south from just north of SR 70.



REVISIONS				ENGINEER OF RECORD	STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION			SHEET NO. 4
DATE	DESCRIPTION	DATE	DESCRIPTION		ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID	
					SR 70	HIGHLANDS OKEECHOBEE	450334-1-22-01	

ALTERNATIVE 1
CONCEPT PLAN

Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127)

Contents:

Overall Site Map

Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal (8HG01127) Exhibit

CRAS SHPO Concurrence

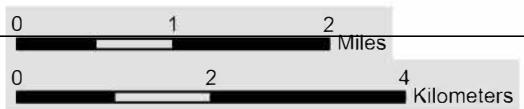
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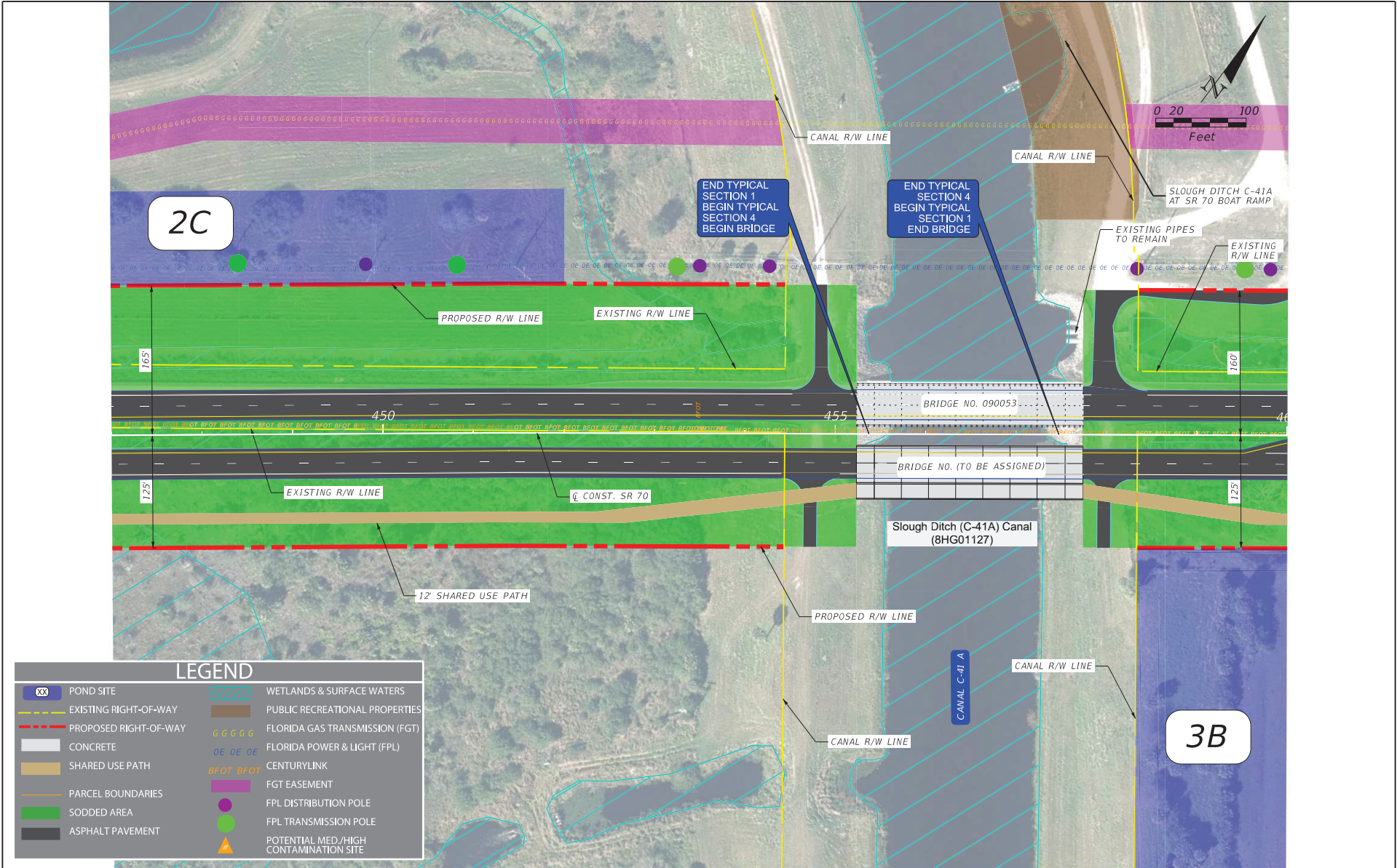
SR 70 FROM CR 721 S TO CR 599/128 AVE / 450334-1-22-01



State of Florida, Earthstar Geographics, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri.

SR 70 FROM CR 721 S TO CR 599/128 AVE / 450334-1-22-01
APE





REVISIONS				ENGINEER OF RECORD	STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION			ALTERNATIVE 1 CONCEPT PLAN	SHEET NO.
DATE	DESCRIPTION		DATE	DESCRIPTION					ROAD NO.
				NICHOLAS JOHN CLAVELLO P.E. LICENSE NUMBER: 84366 SCALAR CONSULTING GROUP, LLC, 5713 CORPORATE WAY, SUITE 200 WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA 33407		SR 70	HIGHLANDS OKEECHOBEE		

ALTERNATIVE 1
CONCEPT PLAN

P:\FL2301000 SR 70 PD&E Study\45033412201\roadway\PLANRD01.dgn : CL10 - PLAN 5 [SHEET]
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Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

JARED W. PERDUE, P.E.
SECRETARY

September 19, 2025

Alissa S. Lotane
Director and State Historic Preservation Officer
Florida Division of Historical Resources
Florida Department of State
R. A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

RE: Section 106 Stipulation VII Submission
SR 70 FROM CR 721 S TO CR 599/128 AVE
District 1
FM # 450334-1-22-01
DHR CRAT Number: 2024-2438C

Dear Ms. Lotane,

Dear Ms. Lotane:

Enclosed please find one copy of the report titled *Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study State Road (SR) 70 from County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue in Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida*. This report presents the findings in support of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, proposed improvements to SR 70. The purpose of this project is to address safety conditions on SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue. The study is approximately 8.6-miles long and proposed improvements include the widening of a two-lane facility up to a four-lane, divided facility, and/or the inclusion of operational improvements along the corridor. Additional right-of-way (ROW) is expected to accommodate the proposed improvements. This is a federally funded project.

As part of the PD&E Study, two build alternatives, Build Alternative 1 and Build Alternative 2, and a No Build Alternative are being evaluated. Of these, the proposed Build Alternative 1, as described above, is the only alternative that eliminates ROW impacts to residential areas along the mainline by meandering outside of the existing ROW to avoid impacts. The preferred alternative is still under review by the FDOT; therefore, this Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) was conducted based on the worst-case scenario of the footprint of construction. As such, based on the project type and location of the proposed work, the archaeological APE was limited to the footprint of construction which includes a 50-ft buffer to allow for any potential changes to the proposed alternative and is based on the worst-case scenario. The historic/architectural APE included the footprint of construction within the 50-ft buffer as well as resources within 200-ft from existing ROW on the side where no ROW acquisition is anticipated and 500-ft from proposed new ROW where the road widening is likely to occur. This expanded APE was based on the anticipation that the preferred alternative will go outside of the existing ROW, which will mostly occur on the south side, in order to avoid residential impacts.

All work was conducted to comply with Section 106 of the *National Historic Preservation Act* of 1966 (Public Law 89-665, as amended), as implemented by 36 *CFR* 800 (*Protection of Historic Properties*, effective August 2004), as well as Chapters 267 and 373, *Florida Statutes (FS)*, and Chapter 1A-46, *Florida Administrative Code (FAC)*. All work was carried out in conformity with the Archaeological and Historical Resources Chapter of the FDOT's *PD&E Manual* (FDOT 2024), and the standards and guidelines contained in the Florida Division of Historic Resources' (FDHR) *Cultural Resource Management Standards and Operational Manual: Module 3* (FDHR 2003). The Principal Investigators meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Historic Preservation Professional Qualification Standards* (48 Federal Register [FR] 44716) for archaeology, history, architecture, architectural history, or historic architecture.

The Archaeological background research including a review of the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) and the NRHP digital databases indicated that one previously recorded site (8HG00894) is within the APE. The Brighton Sugarcane #22 Site (8HG00894) is a pre-Contact midden with a historic refuse component that is located within the APE; it has not been evaluated for NRHP eligibility by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Historical background research indicated that three historic resources (8HG01127, 8HG01236/8OB00336, and 8HG01650/8OB00489) were previously recorded within the APE. These include two linear resources (8HG01127 and 8HG01650/8OB00489) and one bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336]). Of these, the segment of the Slough Ditch Canal (C-41A) (8HG01127) was evaluated as eligible while having insufficient information for determining NRHP eligibility for the whole resource. The Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489) and the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336]) were previously recorded in June 2024. The Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489) was evaluated as having insufficient information for determining NRHP eligibility and the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336]) was determined eligible for listing in the NRHP by the SHPO under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge; and received SHPO concurrence in 2024 (Lotane 2024).

As a result of the CRAS, the previously recorded Brighton Sugarcane #22 Site (8HG00894) was identified within the archaeological APE. The site is located outside of the proposed ROW and because only a small area of the site was found within the archaeological APE, there is insufficient information to make an evaluation of NRHP-eligibility. The historic/architectural field survey resulted in the identification of 46 historic resources within the historic/architectural APE. Of these, 42 were newly identified, recorded, and evaluated (8HG01683 - 8HG01712, 8HG01722/8OB00504, 8HG01723/8OB00505, 8HG01724, 8HG01725, 8HG01726, 8HG01727, 8HG01728, 8HG01729, 8OB00384, 8OB00385, 8OB00386, 8OB00503) and two newly identified segments of previously recorded linear resources (8HG01127 and 8HG01306/8OB00269) were identified and evaluated. In addition, the segment of the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489) within the APE was found to have insufficient information to make a determination of NRHP eligibility; as such, the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489) will be updated and evaluated. The Kissimmee River Bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336]) remains eligible for listing in the NRHP and was not re-evaluated or updated during this survey.

Of the 46 historic resources identified within the historic/architectural APE, 43 appear ineligible for listing in the NRHP (8HG01306/8OB00269, 8HG01683-8HG01712, 8HG01722/8OB00504, 8HG01723/8OB00505, 8HG01724, 8HG01725, 8HG01726, 8HG01727, 8HG01728, 8HG01729,

8OB00384, 8OB00385, 8OB00386, 8OB00503). The ineligible resources include 34 buildings (8HG01683-8HG01712, 8OB00384, 8OB00385, 8OB00386, 8OB00503) constructed between circa (ca.) 1945 and 1979, eight linear resources (8HG01306/8OB00269, 8HG01722/8OB00504, 8HG01723/8OB00505, 8HG01724, 8HG01725, 8HG01726, 8HG01727, 8HG01728), and one building complex resource group (8HG01729). Three resources that are or appear eligible for listing in the NRHP, the Slough Ditch Canal (C-41A) (8HG01127), the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336]), and a segment of the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489), are located within the historic/architectural APE

The FDOT has applied the Criteria of Adverse Effect found in 36 CFR Part 800.5 to the three historic resources (8HG01127, 8HG01236/8OB00336, and 8HG01650/8OB00489) that are eligible or appear eligible for listing in the NRHP and one site (8HG00894) that has insufficient information to make a determination of NRHP eligibility located within the project APE. Based on the proposed undertaking, the findings presented here indicate that the undertaking will have **No Adverse Effect** to the segments of the Slough Ditch Canal (C-41A) (8HG01127) and the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489) or the small portion of the previously recorded Brighton Sugarcane #22 Site (8HG00894). However, because all project alternatives proposed for the SR 70 improvements will involve the replacement of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) the proposed undertaking will have an **adverse effect** on the bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336). A Case Study Report is currently being prepared to evaluate the potential effects of the proposed undertaking to the NR-eligible SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336).

This information is being provided in accordance with the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), which are implemented by the procedures contained in 36 CFR, Part 800, as well as the provisions contained in the revised Chapter 267, *Florida Statutes*. 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.

The Cultural Resource Assessment Survey is provided for your review and comment. I respectfully request your concurrence with the findings of the enclosed report.

Based on the review summarized above, FDOT has determined that this project 450334-1-22-01 will result in **Adverse Effect** on historic properties. In accordance with Stipulation III.B. of the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA), this review was conducted by or under the supervision of a person(s) meeting the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (36 C.F.R. Part 61, Appendix A and 48 FR 44716)* in the fields of History, Archaeology, and Architectural History. 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 FDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 26, 2022, and executed by the FHWA and FDOT.

Sincerely,

Electronically signed by Emily Barnett **FOR** Jeffrey James on September 19, 2025

The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) reviewed the submission referenced above and finds the document contains sufficient information and concurs with the information provided for the above referenced project.

SHPO/FDHR Comments



September 22, 2025

Signed

Date

Alissa S. Lotane, Director

Florida Division of Historical Resources

cc: Lindsay Rothrock, Cultural & Historical Resource Specialist
FDOT Office of Environmental Management

Submitted Documents

- [45033412201-CE2-D1-SHPO_Files-2025-0919.zip](#) (Florida Master Site File Forms)
SHPO Files
- [45033412201-CE2-D1-450334-1-22-01_April_2025_Rev_CRAS_SR_70_PD_E_Study-2025-0917.pdf](#) (Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) Addendum)
450334-1-22-01_April 2025 Rev_CRAS SR 70 PD&E Study

Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489)

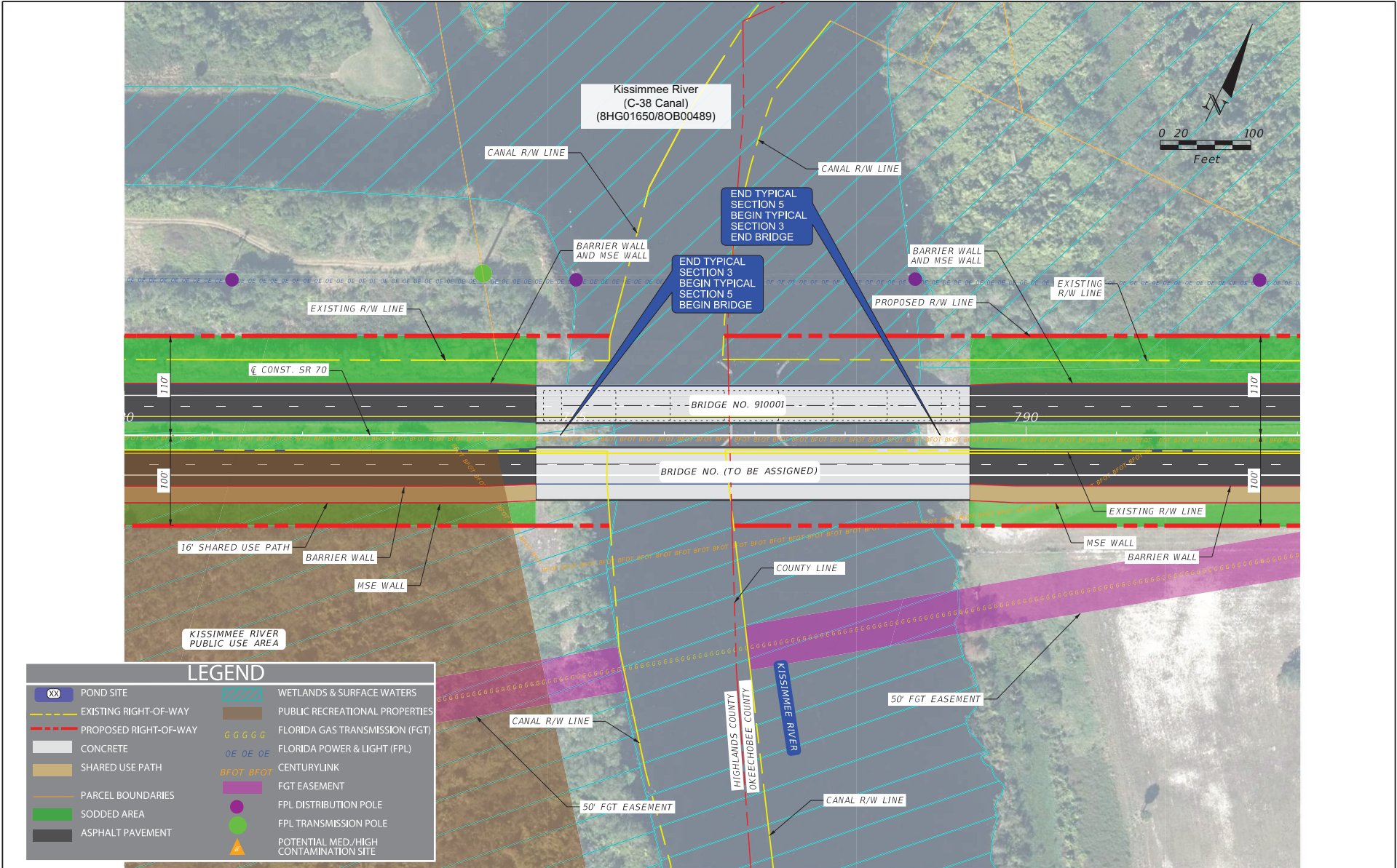
Contents:

Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489) Exhibit

Overall Site Map

SHPO Concurrence on CRAS for Mainline

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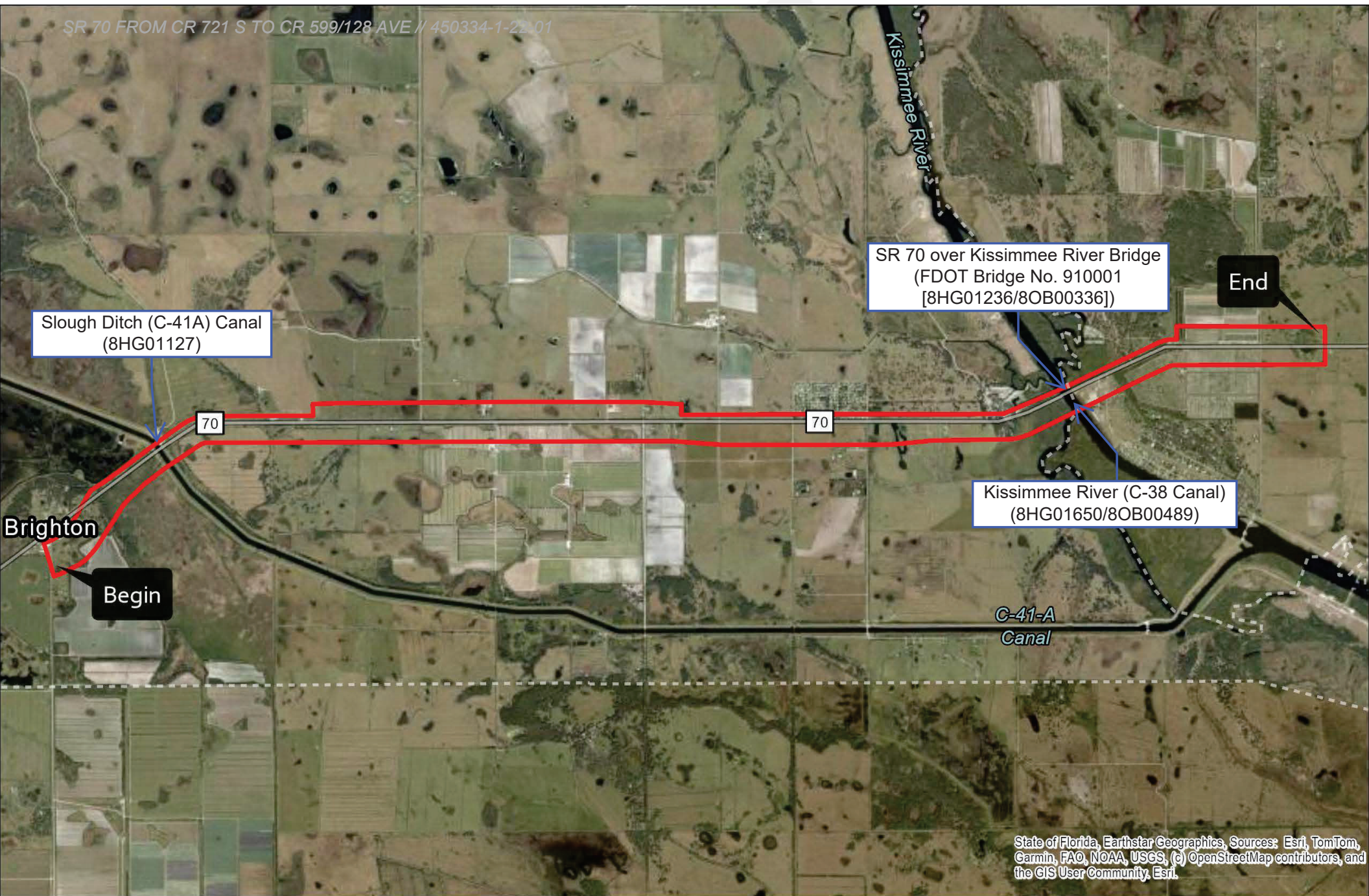
REVISIONS		ENGINEER OF RECORD		STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION			SHEET NO.
DATE	DESCRIPTION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID	
			NICHOLAS JOHN CLAVELLO P.E. LICENSE NUMBER: 84366 SCALAR CONSULTING GROUP, LLC 5713 CORPORATE WAY, SUITE 200 WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA 33407	SR 70	HIGHLANDS OKEECHOBEE	450334-1-22-01	

ALTERNATIVE 1
CONCEPT PLAN

28

P:\FL23010.00 SR 70 PD&E Study\45033412201\roadway\PLANRD01.dgn - CL12 - PLAN 28 (SHEET)
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Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

JARED W. PERDUE, P.E.
SECRETARY

September 5, 2025

Alissa S. Lotane
Director and State Historic Preservation Officer
Florida Division of Historical Resources
Florida Department of State
R. A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

RE: Section 106 Case Study Report Submission
SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336)
SR 70 FROM CR 721 S TO CR 599/128 AVE
District 1
FM # 450334-1-22-01
DHR CRAT Number: 2024-2438D

Dear Ms. Lotane,

Dear Ms. Lotane:

Enclosed please find one copy of the report titled *Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study State Road (SR) 70 from County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue in Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida*. This report presents the findings in support of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, proposed improvements to SR 70. The purpose of this project is to address safety conditions on SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue. The study is approximately 8.6-miles long and proposed improvements include the widening of a two-lane facility up to a four-lane, divided facility, and/or the inclusion of operational improvements along the corridor. Additional right-of-way (ROW) is expected to accommodate the proposed improvements. This is a federally funded project.

As part of the PD&E Study, two build alternatives, Build Alternative 1 and Build Alternative 2, and a No Build Alternative are being evaluated. Both Build Alternatives for the SR 70 improvements involve the replacement of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/ 8OB00336]) which was previously determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). In order to meet the established schedule for the PD&E deliverables, a discussion was held on July 25, 2023, with representatives from Archaeological Consultants, Inc. (ACI), Scalar, and FDOT District One to develop an approach for cultural resource compliance on the SR 70 PD&E Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS). This approach enables the Section 106 process to move forward with consultation to resolve the adverse effect on the NRHP-eligible SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) prior to completing the CRAS for the rest of the project (mainline road realignment, ponds, etc.). A full archaeological and historic resources survey of the corridor was conducted, and the results are in the April 2025 CRAS.

In June 2024, ACI conducted a CRAS that was limited to the footprint of construction of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge replacement portion of the PD&E Study (ACI 2024). The bridge footprint was the Area of Potential Effects (APE). The purpose of the bridge CRAS was to survey and re-assess the bridge's significance in terms of eligibility for listing in the NRHP. The bridge (8OB00336/8HG01236) was determined eligible for listing in the NRHP by the SHPO in 2014 under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge. As a result of the 2024 CRAS, the bridge remains eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge. The SHPO concurred with the recommendations and findings on July 17, 2024 (Lotane 2024; Project File No. 2024-2438).

The objective of this *Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report* is to evaluate the potential effects of the proposed undertaking to the historic properties located within the APE as identified above. The FDOT has applied the Criteria of Adverse Effect found in 36 CFR Part 800.5 to the historic property determined eligible for listing in the NRHP located within the project APE. Because all project alternatives proposed for the SR 70 improvements will involve the replacement of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) the proposed undertaking will have an **adverse effect** on the bridge.

According to the Public Involvement Plan, public engagement and appropriate coordination meetings with local government, and environmental permitting agencies, work sessions, and small group meetings will continue throughout the final design phase. Following the PD&E Study, mitigation measures will be required. As such, coordination among FDOT, District One, OEM, the SHPO, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), as well as the public will continue to ensure that a sensitive and appropriate mitigation treatment plan is developed. The ACHP will be notified of the adverse effect determination, and measures to resolve the adverse effect to the Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001) will be documented in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between FDOT, SHPO, and other affected parties, as appropriate.

This information is being provided in accordance with the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), which are implemented by the procedures contained in 36 CFR, Part 800, as well as the provisions contained in the revised Chapter 267, *Florida Statutes*. 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.


The Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report is provided for your review and comment. I respectfully request your concurrence with the findings of the enclosed report.

Based on the review summarized above, FDOT has determined that this project 450334-1-22-01 will result in **Adverse Effect** on historic properties. In accordance with Stipulation III.B. of the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA), this review was conducted by or under the supervision of a person(s) meeting the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (36 C.F.R. Part 61, Appendix A and 48 FR 44716)* in the fields of History, Archaeology, and Architectural History. 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 FDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of

Understanding dated May 26, 2022, and executed by the FHWA and FDOT.

Sincerely,

Electronically signed by Emily Barnett **FOR** Jeffrey James on September 5, 2025

The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) reviewed the submission referenced above and finds the document contains sufficient information and concurs with the information provided for the above referenced project.	
SHPO/FDHR Comments	
	
Signed	September 22, 2025
Alissa S. Lotane, Director	Date
Florida Division of Historical Resources	

cc: Lindsay Rothrock, Cultural & Historical Resource Specialist
FDOT Office of Environmental Management

Submitted Documents

- [45033412201-CE2-D1-450334-1-22-01_August_2025_Sec_106_Kissimmee_River_Bridge-2025-0905.pdf](#) (Section 106 Case Study Report)
450334-1-22-01_August 2025_Sec 106 Kissimmee River Bridge

S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336])

Contents:

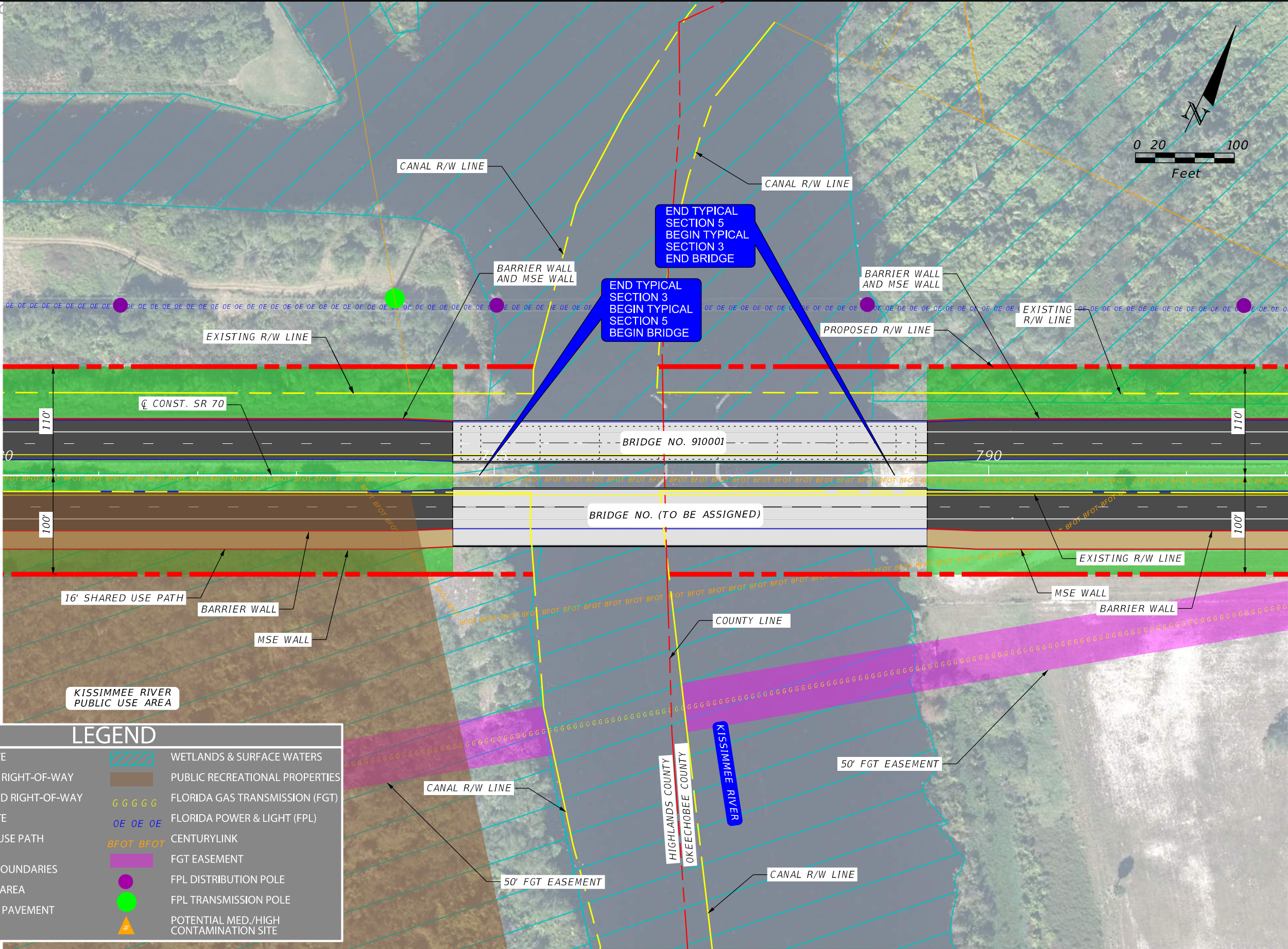
S.R. 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG012368OB00336) Exhibit

Kissimmee River Bridge Photos

SHPO Concurrence Letter on CRAS for Kissimmee River Bridge

SHPO concurrence on Section 106 Case Study for Kissimmee River Bridge

Draft MOA S.R. 70 Kissimmee River Bridge



XX

POND SITE

EXISTING RIGHT-OF-WAY

PROPOSED RIGHT-OF-WAY

CONCRETE

SHARED USE PATH

PARCEL BOUNDARIES

SODDED AREA

ASPHALT PAVEMENT

WETLANDS & SURFACE WATERS

PUBLIC RECREATIONAL PROPERTIES

FGT EASEMENT

FPL DISTRIBUTION POLE

FPL TRANSMISSION POLE

POTENTIAL MED./HIGH CONTAMINATION SITE

GGGGG

FLORIDA GAS TRANSMISSION (FGT)

OE OE OE

FLORIDA POWER & LIGHT (FPL)

BFOT BFOT

CENTURYLINK

FGT EASEMENT

FPL DISTRIBUTION POLE

FPL TRANSMISSION POLE

POTENTIAL MED./HIGH CONTAMINATION SITE

REVISIONS				ENGINEER OF RECORD	STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION			SHEET NO.
DATE	DESCRIPTION	DATE	DESCRIPTION		ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID	
				NICHOLAS JOHN CLAVELO P.E. LICENSE NUMBER: 84366 SCALAR CONSULTING GROUP, LLC. 5713 CORPORATE WAY, SUITE 200 WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA 33407	SR 70	HIGHLANDS OKEECHOBEE	450334-1-22-01	28



Photo 1. SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge, Bridge No. 910001 (8HG01236/8OB00336), looking east. Note the removable steel span.



Photo 2. SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge, Bridge No. 910001 (8HG01236/8OB00336), looking northwest.



Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

801 N. Broadway Avenue
Bartow, FL 33830

JARED W. PERDUE, P.E.
SECRETARY

July 9, 2024

Alissa S. Lotane
Director and State Historic Preservation Officer
Florida Division of Historical Resources
Florida Department of State
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Attn: Ms. Alyssa McManus, Transportation Compliance Review Program

RE: Cultural Resource Assessment Survey
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study
State Road (SR) 70 from County Road (CR) 721
South to CR 599/128th Avenue
Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida
SR 70 Over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336)
Financial Project No.: 450334-1-22-01

Dear Ms. Lotane,

Enclosed please find one copy of the report titled *Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study State Road (SR) 70 from County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue, Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida; SR 70 Over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336)*. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District One is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to address safety conditions on SR 70 from CR 721 S to CR 599/128th Avenue. The study is approximately 8.6-miles long and proposed improvements include the widening of a two-lane facility up to a four-lane, divided facility, and/or the inclusion of operational improvements along the corridor. Travel lane widths may be widened from 10 feet (ft) to 12 ft as part of the project and multimodal facilities will also be considered along the corridor where appropriate. Additional right-of-way (ROW) is expected to accommodate the proposed improvements.

All project alternatives proposed for the SR 70 improvements will involve the replacement of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) which has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). In order to meet the established schedule for the PD&E deliverables, a discussion was held on July 25, 2023 with representatives from ACI, Scalar, and FDOT District One to develop an approach for cultural resource compliance on the SR 70 PD&E Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS). The approach would enable the Section 106 process to move forward with consultation to resolve the adverse effect on the NRHP-eligible SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) prior to completing the CRAS for the rest of the project (mainline road realignment, ponds, etc.). The intention is to get consultation to a point where a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is acceptable to all parties involved but will remain in a draft state until completion of the mainline/ponds CRAS. The draft MOA will be updated as necessary

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following the mainline CRAS. In August 2023 a Cultural Resource Coordinator for District One coordinated with the Office of Environmental Management (OEM) and subsequently, with the SHPO regarding this approach and in November 2023 all parties were in agreement. As such, this CRAS is limited to the bridge replacement portion of the PD&E and a full archaeological and historic resources survey of the corridor will be conducted following the identification of corridor alternatives and will be an addendum to this CRAS.

The purpose of this CRAS was to locate and identify any historic resources within the project area of potential effect (APE) at the bridge location and to assess their significance in terms of eligibility for listing in the NRHP. For the purpose of this survey, the historical/architectural APE was limited to the footprint of construction of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge replacement. The fieldwork was conducted in January 2024.

This CRAS was conducted to comply with the requirements set forth in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, found in 36 CFR Part 800 (Protection of Historic Properties). The study also complies with Chapter 267 of the Florida Statutes and Rule Chapter 1A-46, Florida Administrative Code and Section 267.12, Florida Statutes, Chapter 1A-32. All work was performed in accordance with Part 2, Chapter 8 of FDOT's PD&E Manual (2023 revision), FDOT's Cultural Resources Management Handbook, and the standards stipulated in the Florida Division of Historical Resources' (FDHR) *Cultural Resource Management Standards & Operations Manual, Module Three: Guidelines for Use by Historic Preservation Professionals*. The Principal Investigator for this project meets the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation* (48 FR 44716-42). This study also complies with Public Law 113-287 (Title 54 U.S.C.), which incorporates the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and the Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974, as amended.

Historic background research, including a review of the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) and the NRHP databases, indicated that one historic bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) was previously recorded within the APE. Due to its location on the Okeechobee-Highlands County line, the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910001) has been assigned a Highlands County FMSF number (8HG01236) and an Okeechobee County FMSF number (8OB00336). The SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (FDOT Bridge No. 910001) is a seven span, concrete beam and girder bridge constructed in 1966 in order to carry SR 70 over the newly channelized Kissimmee River (C-38). The peak of the bridge is equipped with a steel, removable span which accommodates the passing of larger vessels while being more cost effective than a manned, operable span. The bridge (8OB00336/8HG01236) was determined eligible for listing in the NRHP by the SHPO in 2014 under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge.

The historical/architectural field survey resulted in the identification of two historic resources (8HG01236/8OB00336 and 8HG01650/8OB00489) within the APE. These include the previously recorded concrete beam and girder SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) and the newly identified Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489), constructed in 1966. The SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) has not been significantly altered and appears to remain eligible for individual listing in the NRHP under Criterion C. Although the channelization of the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8OB00489) is significant within the ecological and developmental history of south and central Florida, the majority of the linear resource is located outside of the APE, and a survey of the entire 69-mile-long channelized river is beyond the scope of this project. In addition, the linear resource has not been previously recorded elsewhere in Okeechobee or Highland Counties. As such, following the guidance

Ms. Lotane, SHPO
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of the *Historic Linear Resource Guide* provided by the FDHR, there is insufficient information to evaluate the 102 ft segment of the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) that is contained within the APE (FDHR 2022). Based on the results of this study, it is the opinion of the District that the proposed undertaking will have an **adverse effect** on the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) and have **no adverse effect** on the Kissimmee River (C-38 Canal) (8HG01650/8OB00489).

I respectfully request your concurrence with the findings of the enclosed report.

If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact me at (863) 519-2625 or Jeffrey.James@dot.state.fl.us.

Sincerely,

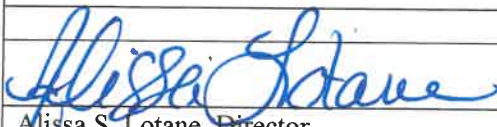
Jeffrey James
 Environmental Manager
 FDOT, District One

Enclosures: One original copy of the CRAS Report (June 2024), Four (4) FMSF forms, One Completed Survey Log, GIS Shapefiles

The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer finds the attached Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Report complete and sufficient and ☒ concurs / ☐ does not concur with the recommendations and findings provided in this cover letter for SHPO/FDHR Project File Number 202402438. Or, the SHPO finds the attached document contains insufficient information.

In accordance with the *Programmatic Agreement Among the FHWA, the FDOT, the ACHP, and the SHPO Regarding Implementation of the Federal-Aid Highway Program in Florida* (2023 PA), and appended materials, if providing concurrence with a finding of **No Historic Properties Affected** for a whole project, or to **No Adverse Effect** on a specific historic property, SHPO shall presume that FDOT may pursue a *de minimis* use of the affected historic property in accordance with Section 4(f) as set forth within 23 C.F.R. Part 774 and its implementing authorities, as amended, and that their concurrence as the official with jurisdiction (OWJ) over the historic property is granted.

SHPO Comments:


 Alissa S. Lotane, Director
 Florida Division of Historical Resources

Date

7/17/24



Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

JARED W. PERDUE, P.E.
SECRETARY

September 5, 2025

Alissa S. Lotane
Director and State Historic Preservation Officer
Florida Division of Historical Resources
Florida Department of State
R. A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

RE: Section 106 Case Study Report Submission
SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336)
SR 70 FROM CR 721 S TO CR 599/128 AVE
District 1
FM # 450334-1-22-01
DHR CRAT Number: 2024-2438D

Dear Ms. Lotane,

Dear Ms. Lotane:

Enclosed please find one copy of the report titled *Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study State Road (SR) 70 from County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue in Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida*. This report presents the findings in support of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, proposed improvements to SR 70. The purpose of this project is to address safety conditions on SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue. The study is approximately 8.6-miles long and proposed improvements include the widening of a two-lane facility up to a four-lane, divided facility, and/or the inclusion of operational improvements along the corridor. Additional right-of-way (ROW) is expected to accommodate the proposed improvements. This is a federally funded project.

As part of the PD&E Study, two build alternatives, Build Alternative 1 and Build Alternative 2, and a No Build Alternative are being evaluated. Both Build Alternatives for the SR 70 improvements involve the replacement of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/ 8OB00336]) which was previously determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). In order to meet the established schedule for the PD&E deliverables, a discussion was held on July 25, 2023, with representatives from Archaeological Consultants, Inc. (ACI), Scalar, and FDOT District One to develop an approach for cultural resource compliance on the SR 70 PD&E Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS). This approach enables the Section 106 process to move forward with consultation to resolve the adverse effect on the NRHP-eligible SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) prior to completing the CRAS for the rest of the project (mainline road realignment, ponds, etc.). A full archaeological and historic resources survey of the corridor was conducted, and the results are in the April 2025 CRAS.

In June 2024, ACI conducted a CRAS that was limited to the footprint of construction of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge replacement portion of the PD&E Study (ACI 2024). The bridge footprint was the Area of Potential Effects (APE). The purpose of the bridge CRAS was to survey and re-assess the bridge's significance in terms of eligibility for listing in the NRHP. The bridge (8OB00336/8HG01236) was determined eligible for listing in the NRHP by the SHPO in 2014 under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge. As a result of the 2024 CRAS, the bridge remains eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as an example of a removable span bridge. The SHPO concurred with the recommendations and findings on July 17, 2024 (Lotane 2024; Project File No. 2024-2438).

The objective of this *Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report* is to evaluate the potential effects of the proposed undertaking to the historic properties located within the APE as identified above. The FDOT has applied the Criteria of Adverse Effect found in 36 CFR Part 800.5 to the historic property determined eligible for listing in the NRHP located within the project APE. Because all project alternatives proposed for the SR 70 improvements will involve the replacement of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) the proposed undertaking will have an **adverse effect** on the bridge.

According to the Public Involvement Plan, public engagement and appropriate coordination meetings with local government, and environmental permitting agencies, work sessions, and small group meetings will continue throughout the final design phase. Following the PD&E Study, mitigation measures will be required. As such, coordination among FDOT, District One, OEM, the SHPO, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), as well as the public will continue to ensure that a sensitive and appropriate mitigation treatment plan is developed. The ACHP will be notified of the adverse effect determination, and measures to resolve the adverse effect to the Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001) will be documented in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between FDOT, SHPO, and other affected parties, as appropriate.

This information is being provided in accordance with the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), which are implemented by the procedures contained in 36 CFR, Part 800, as well as the provisions contained in the revised Chapter 267, *Florida Statutes*. 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.


The Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report is provided for your review and comment. I respectfully request your concurrence with the findings of the enclosed report.

Based on the review summarized above, FDOT has determined that this project 450334-1-22-01 will result in **Adverse Effect** on historic properties. In accordance with Stipulation III.B. of the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA), this review was conducted by or under the supervision of a person(s) meeting the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (36 C.F.R. Part 61, Appendix A and 48 FR 44716)* in the fields of History, Archaeology, and Architectural History. 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 FDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of

Understanding dated May 26, 2022, and executed by the FHWA and FDOT.

Sincerely,

Electronically signed by Emily Barnett **FOR** Jeffrey James on September 5, 2025

The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) reviewed the submission referenced above and finds the document contains sufficient information and concurs with the information provided for the above referenced project.	
SHPO/FDHR Comments	
	
Signed	September 22, 2025
Alissa S. Lotane, Director	Date
Florida Division of Historical Resources	

cc: Lindsay Rothrock, Cultural & Historical Resource Specialist
FDOT Office of Environmental Management

Submitted Documents

- [45033412201-CE2-D1-450334-1-22-01_August_2025_Sec_106_Kissimmee_River_Bridge-2025-0905.pdf](#) (Section 106 Case Study Report)
450334-1-22-01_August 2025_Sec 106 Kissimmee River Bridge

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND
THE FLORIDA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER
REGARDING STATE ROAD 70 FROM CR 721 SOUTH TO CR 559/128TH AVENUE
HIGHLANDS & OKEECHOBEE COUNTIES, FLORIDA**

WHEREAS, Pursuant to 23 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 327 and the implementing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) executed on May 26, 2022, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has assumed Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for highway projects on the State Highway System (SHS) and Local Agency Program (LAP) projects off the SHS; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the MOU, FDOT's assumption of FHWA's responsibilities under NEPA for highway projects includes assumption of responsibilities for compliance with 36 CFR Part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 306108); and

WHEREAS, FDOT will provide federal financial assistance for State Road (SR) 70 from County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue, Federal Aid Project Number (No.) D123-018-B and Financial Project Identification No. 450334-1-22-01, which represents an undertaking in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.3(a); and

WHEREAS, FDOT has defined the Undertaking's area of potential effects (APE) as the footprint of construction and adjacent parcels 200 feet from existing ROW and 500 feet from proposed ROW, as depicted in Attachment A; and

WHEREAS, FDOT has consulted with the Florida State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) pursuant to the requirements of 36 CFR Part 800 and has determined that the Undertaking may have an adverse effect on the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (Bridge No. 910001 [8HG01236/8OB00336]), which is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP); and

WHEREAS, FDOT has consulted with the Okeechobee Historical Society regarding the effects of the Undertaking on historic properties; and

WHEREAS, FDOT has provided opportunities for public review and comment regarding the effects of the Undertaking on historic properties; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.6(a)(1) FDOT has notified the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) of the adverse effect determination with specified documentation and has invited the ACHP to comment and participate in consultation, and the ACHP has chosen **not to** participate pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.6(a)(1)(iii); and

NOW, THEREFORE, FDOT and the SHPO agree that the Undertaking shall be implemented in accordance with the following stipulations to take into account the effect of the Undertaking on historic properties.

STIPULATIONS

FDOT shall ensure that the following measures are carried out:

I. DOCUMENTATION OF THE SR 70 OVER KISSIMMEE RIVER BRIDGE

- A. Prior to any alteration or demolition of the SR 70 over Kissimmee River Bridge (8HG01236/8OB00336) and per guidance provided by the National Park Service (NPS), FDOT shall perform the following documentation in accordance with Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) Level III standards:
 - 1. Drawings - Select existing drawings, where available, may be photographed with large-format negatives or photographically reproduced on Mylar in accordance with the U.S. Copyright Act, as amended. Should existing plans not be available, sketch plans depicting existing conditions shall be prepared.
 - 2. Photographs - Photographs with large-format negatives of context and views from all sides of the bridge and approaches; roadway and deck views, and noteworthy features and details. All negatives and prints will be processed to meet archival standards. One photograph of a principal elevation shall include a scale.
 - 3. Written Data - Report with narrative description of the bridge, summary of significance, and historical context. FDOT shall coordinate with SHPO prior to starting in order to develop the appropriate context scope.
- B. FDOT shall provide draft HAER documentation (non-archival format, electronic version) to the NPS (lead content reviewer) and SHPO (courtesy reviewer) for concurrent review in accordance with Stipulation VIII.
- C. FDOT shall make requested edits and provide final copies of the HAER documentation, completed in accordance with Stipulation I.A, as follows:
 - 1. An archival copy to the NPS Southeast Regional Office for review and approval prior to salvage and demolition of the structure; per HAER guidelines; and
 - 2. An archival copy and an electronic copy to the Florida SHPO for inclusion in the Florida Master Site File (FMSF); and
 - 3. Non-archival copies and electronic copies to the Okeechobee Historical Society.
- D. The HAER documentation cannot be considered complete, and the bridge demolition cannot take place, until accepted by NPS.

II. SALVAGE OF EXISTING BRIDGE PLAQUE

- A. Prior to bridge demolition, FDOT shall salvage the existing commemorative bridge plaque, to the greatest extent possible, for use elsewhere, as identified in a proposed Salvage and Relocation Plan that will be prepared during project development, as described in Stipulation II.B.
- B. In coordination with the Okeechobee Historical Society and Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, FDOT shall prepare a Salvage and Relocation Plan to outline the process for salvaging and relocating the commemorative bridge plaque. The plan will include:
 - 1. measures to determine the feasibility of salvaging and relocating the plaque,
 - 2. the appropriateness of any proposed new locations (sites) for the plaque,
 - 3. methods for removing and storing the plaque, and,
 - 4. timeframes for completing the tasks.
- C. The proposed Salvage and Relocation Plan shall be developed and approved prior to advertising for construction. FDOT will afford the SHPO as well as the Okeechobee Historical Society and Highlands and Okeechobee Counties 30 days to review and comment on the proposed Salvage and Relocation Plan, as per Stipulation VIII.
- D. The existing commemorative bridge plaque cannot be salvaged until HAER documentation is accepted by NPS in writing as outlined in Stipulation I.

III. PUBLIC EDUCATION

- A. FDOT will assist with the development, funding, and installation of a single panel educational exhibit. The exhibit will provide a historic account of the bridge to educate the public. The text and graphics on the single panel will be prepared based on continued coordination with local interested parties and stakeholders during the project's design and construction phases. During continued coordination, FDOT will consider the appropriate location to install the exhibit which will be in proximity to the bridge location. The draft of the exhibit and location will be coordinated with the SHPO for review, as described in Stipulation VIII.
- B. FDOT will provide an electronic copy of the educational exhibit described above to appropriate local entities (such as the Okeechobee Historical Society and Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, and one or two other agencies/organizations), for installation at their discretion.

IV. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

All archaeological and historic preservation work carried out pursuant to this Agreement shall be conducted by, or under the direct supervision of, a person or persons meeting the Secretary of the

Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation as set forth at 62 FR 33708-33723 (June 20, 1997).

V. DURATION

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) will expire if its terms are not carried out within ten (10) years from the date of execution or upon project acceptance, whichever comes first. Prior to expiration, the parties may agree to extend the timeframe for fulfillment of the terms by letter agreement.

VI. MOA DOCUMENTATION

- A. The FDOT shall provide a summary of actions carried out pursuant to this MOA to the signatories annually. The reporting period shall be the fiscal year from July 1st to June 30th and the summary shall describe the status of mitigation activities and, as applicable, any issues that may affect the ability of the FDOT to continue to meet the terms of this MOA, any disputes and objections received, and how they were resolved.
- B. A Notice of Fulfillment will be prepared to summarize the implementation of the MOA after all stipulations have been fulfilled. This document will be submitted to the signatories for their files within six (6) months after completion of all MOA stipulations.

VII. POST-REVIEW DISCOVERIES

- A. If properties are discovered that may be historically significant, or if unanticipated effects on historic properties are found, FDOT shall implement the Post Review Discovery Plan established in Stipulation IX of the September 27, 2023, Programmatic Agreement (PA) among the ACHP, SHPO, and FDOT (2023 PA).
- B. In the unlikely event that human skeletal remains or associated burial artifacts are uncovered within the project area during construction, all work in that area must stop. The individual in charge of the activity that leads to the discovery must notify the Project Engineer and the FDOT District One Cultural Resources Coordinator per Stipulation X of the 2023 PA. The discovery must be reported to local law enforcement and the appropriate medical examiner. The medical examiner will determine whether the State Archaeologist should be contacted per the requirements of Section 872.05, Florida Statutes, and Rule 1A-44.004, Florida Administrative Code (FAC).

VIII. REVIEW STIPULATION

FDOT shall afford the SHPO and other consulting parties, a 30-day period for review and comment following the receipt of delivery of those submittals and reviews described above. If no comments are received by FDOT at the end of these 30 days, FDOT will presume there are no objections. Any objections to the findings or plans proposed in these submittals will be addressed in accordance with Stipulation IX below.

IX. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Should any signatory to this MOA object at any time to any actions proposed or the manner in which the terms of this MOA are implemented, FDOT shall consult with such party to resolve the objection. If FDOT determines that such objection cannot be resolved, FDOT will:

- A. Forward all documentation relevant to the dispute, including FDOT's proposed resolution, to the ACHP. The ACHP shall provide FDOT with its advice on the resolution of the objection within thirty (30) days of receiving adequate documentation. Prior to reaching a final decision on the dispute, FDOT shall prepare a written response that considers any timely advice or comments regarding the dispute from the ACHP, signatories, and concurring parties, and provide them with a copy of this written response. FDOT will then proceed according to its final decision.
- B. Make a final decision on the dispute and proceed accordingly if the ACHP does not provide its advice regarding the dispute within thirty (30) days. Prior to reaching such a final decision, FDOT shall prepare a written response that considers any timely comments regarding the dispute from the signatories to the MOA, and provide them and the ACHP with a copy of the written response.
- C. Fulfill its responsibility to carry out all other actions subject to the terms of this MOA that are not the subject of the dispute remain unchanged.

X. AMENDMENTS

This MOA may be amended when such an amendment is agreed to in writing by all signatories. All signatories must signify their acceptance of the proposed changes to the MOA in writing within 30 days of their receipt. The amendment will be effective on the date a copy signed by all signatories is filed with the ACHP. In accordance with 36 CFR § 800.6(b)(7), if the ACHP was not a signatory to the original agreement and the signatories execute an amended agreement, FDOT shall file the amended agreement with the ACHP.

XI. TERMINATION

If any signatory to this MOA determines that its terms will not or cannot be carried out, that party shall immediately consult with the other signatories in an effort to amend the MOA per Stipulation IX, above. If within thirty (30) days (or another time agreed to by all signatories) an amendment cannot be reached, any signatory may terminate the MOA upon written notification to the other signatories.

Once the MOA is terminated, and prior to work continuing on the Undertaking, FDOT must either (a) execute an MOA pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.6 or (b) request, take into account, and respond to the comments of the ACHP under 36 CFR § 800.7. FDOT shall notify the signatories as to the course of action it will pursue.

Execution of this MOA by FDOT and SHPO and implementation of its terms is evidence that FDOT has taken into account the effects of this undertaking on historic properties per the requirements

of Section 106 (Public Law 113-287 [Title 54 U.S.C. 306108]), and 36 CFR Part 800 (Protection of Historic Properties).

SIGNATORIES:

FLORIDA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

Alissa Slade Lotane
Director, Division of Historical Resources
State Historic Preservation Officer

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

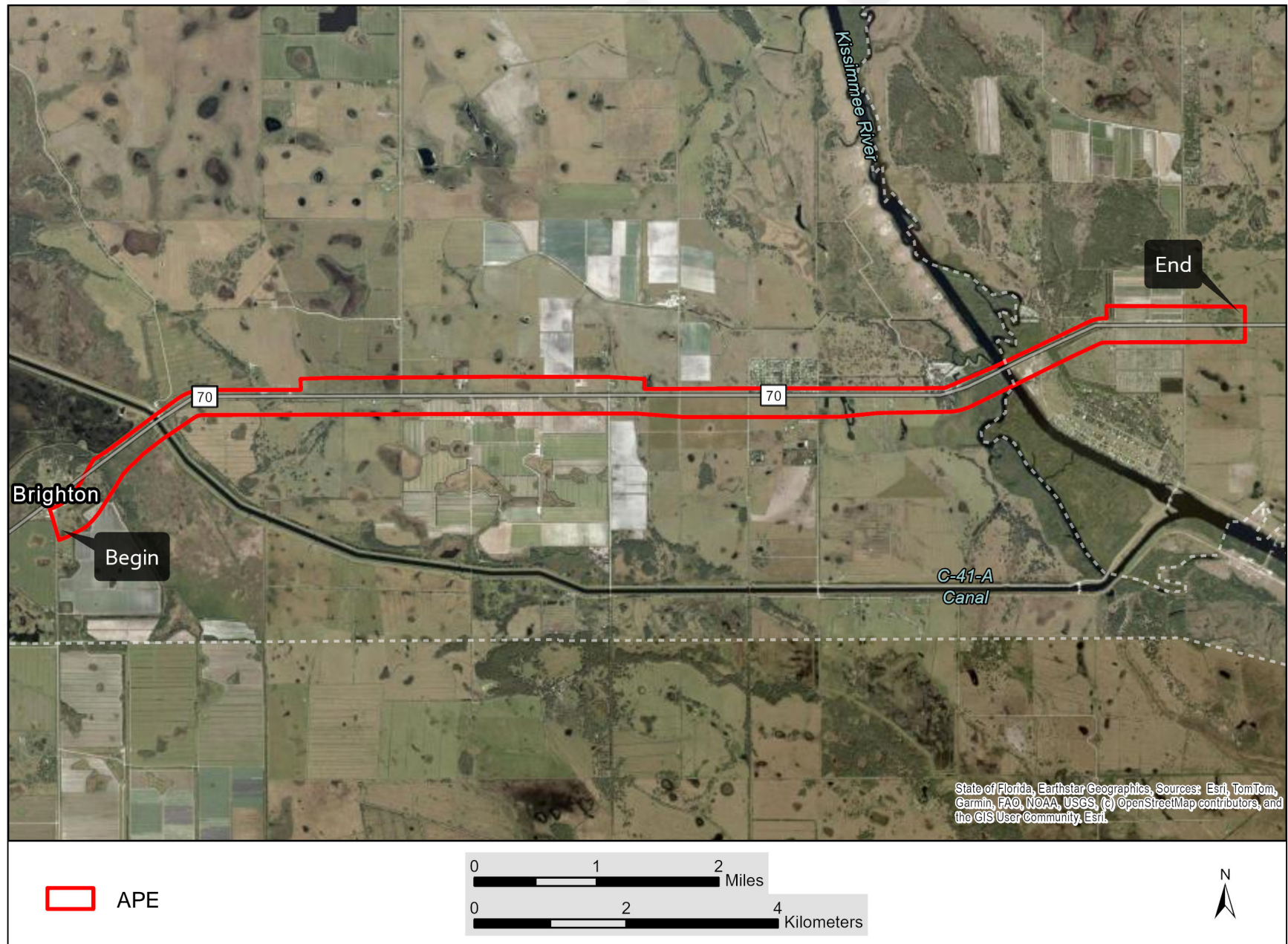
Katasha Gruver
Interim Director, Office of Environmental Management

CONCURRING PARTIES:

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, DISTRICT ONE

Nicole E. Mills, P.E.
Director, Transportation Development

Attachment A - Project Area of Potential Effects, Highlands & Okeechobee Counties



Natural Resources Appendix

Contents:

Sole Source Aquifer EPA Concurrence Email

Floodplains Map

Species and Habitat Map

DRAFT



EPA Region 4 Sole Source Aquifer Project Review Form – Section B: Determination of Potential Project Impacts to the Sole Source Aquifer

Welcome to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 4's Sole Source Aquifer (SSA) project review form. The EPA SSA Protection Program is authorized by section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 201, 300 et. Seq., and 21 U.S.C. 349). Under the SSA Protection Program, EPA reviews proposed projects that will both: 1) be located within the SSA project review area and; 2) receive federal financial assistance. The review area may include the area overlying the SSA, its recharge zone, and source areas of streams that flow into the SSA's recharge zone. The EPA's review is intended to determine any possible contamination to the SSA from submitted projects. Your accurate submission of information will help us determine any possible contamination.

Please complete this form in its entirety and as well as the two-part submission process. Keep the email received at the end of submission process for your records. This email will serve as the official record of the decision and may be required by the federal agency funding your project. Thank you.

ATTENTION

The answers to the following questions must be submitted via email to the EPA Region 4 to complete this project's review. Please submit your answers to R4-SSA@epa.gov.

Date: August 27, 2025

Project Name: State Road (SR) 70 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study
From County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue

Sole Source Aquifer Name: Biscayne Aquifer (Florida)

Dear Kristin Caruso:

Based on the information you have provided the **State Road (SR) 70 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study From County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue project requires** a Sole Source Aquifer (SSA) review under Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-523, 42 U.S.C. § 300 et. seq). Your responses to the below questions will assist the EPA's SSA Program in evaluating whether the proposed project has the potential to contaminate a SSA through a recharge zone. EPA may request additional information as necessary. Please email your answers to R4-SSA@epa.gov.

1. Provide Project Information:

- a. Contact person
- b. Contact email address
- c. Contact mailing address
- d. Contact phone number
- e. Name of the project
- f. Project address or geographical coordinates.

2. Confirm an SSA project review is needed.

- a. Is any portion of the project or the property(ies) involved located within a designated SSA project review area? A searchable interactive map of designated SSA project review areas is available at <https://www.epa.gov/dwssa>

<<https://epa.gov/dwssa>>. **If the answer to this question is no, EPA does not need to review the project under the SSA program.**

- b. If the project is located in a SSA, please provide the name of the Aquifer.

- c. What Federal funding source is being sought or proposed? **If no Federal financial assistance is sought or proposed, EPA does not need to review the project under the SSA program.**

3. Provide the location of the project, a map, and the name of the SSA(s) within which the project is located. Descriptions and/or maps with the information below would be helpful if available and applicable.

- a. What is known about local hydrogeology in the project review area (e.g., soil types, depth to groundwater, groundwater flow direction)?

- b. Are there any known wells in the project review area (including groundwater wells; shallow injection wells; and oil, geothermal, and mineral exploration wells) and how close are they to the project?

- c. Are there any wetlands within the project review area? If applicable, describe any discharge to, loss of, or creation of wetlands by the project.

4. Provide project description, including, but not limited to, answers to the applicable questions below.
 - a. Will the project result in any increase of impervious surface (e.g., concrete, asphalt)? If so, what is the area (e.g., square feet or acres)?
 - b. What is the depth of excavation?
 - c. Will any wells be installed or modified as part of the project (of any use type, including groundwater wells' shallow injection wells; and oil, geothermal, and mineral exploration wells)? For new/proposed wells, indicate depth of wells, depth of casing, casing diameter, and, for water wells, the anticipated average and maximum water demand from the wells during normal operation (gallons per minute).
 - d. Are there any deep pilings or foundations (e.g., greater than 10 feet below land surface) that will be installed, modified, or disturbed during the project? If yes include construction procedures and diagrams of these deep pilings or foundations.
5. Describe storm water management for the project area.
 - a. Will the project require the use of shallow injection wells (i.e., dry wells, French drains, sumps, and drainfields)? **If the answer to this question is yes, please provide EPA with an explanation as to why these shallow injection wells are required.**
 - b. How will storm water be managed on this site during construction and after the project is complete, including treatment if applicable?
6. Describe chemical use and storage associated with the project.
 - a. Will quantities of hazardous chemicals or petroleum above routine household quantities be used or stored in the project review area?
 - b. Are there any aboveground storage tanks or underground storage tanks present or to be installed? Fuel tanks are often involved in projects that include generators and/or pump stations. If applicable, include details of such tanks, including spill containment and spill response plans.

7. Describe waste management related to the project, including, but not limited to, answers to the applicable questions below.
 - a. Will any liquid or solid waste be generated during construction (e.g., construction/drilling fluids, excavation dewatering fluids, or demolition debris)? If so, how will it be managed?
 - b. How will liquid or solid waste be managed after project completion, other than routine quantities of household wastes to a permitted sanitary landfill or publicly-owned treatment works (e.g., describe any on-site treatment/disposal, industrial wastewater, or other waste generation)? If applicable, provide details about any individual disposal systems such as cesspools, septic tanks with leach fields or seepage areas, pit toilets, or privately-owned sewerage systems, including those owned by a homeowners' association.
 - c. Are there any known brownfield or hazardous waste sites in close proximity to the project review area (e.g., sites listed on the EPA National Priorities List [i.e., Superfund sites], state-designated brownfield or clean-up sites)? Do any such contaminated sites have underground contamination plumes, monitoring wells, or soil contamination that may be disturbed by the project? Include details such as the name(s) and location(s) of the brownfield or hazardous waste site(s).
 - d. For agricultural projects involving animals, how will animal wastes be managed?
 - e. For burial of flocks or disposal of animals, what Best Management Practices ("BMPs") are planned to protect the SSA from contamination?
8. Provide any other available information (examples below) that could be helpful in determining if this project may potentially create a significant hazard to public health through contamination of a SSA.
 - a. Are BMPs planned to address any possible risks or concerns? If so, which BMPs will be used?
 - b. Does the project include any improvements that may be beneficial to any SSA, such as improvements to the publicly-owned treatment works?
9. Are any previous environmental assessments available regarding the project or project area? If yes, please provide a copy of any/all assessments.

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Last updated on August 25, 2025

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The EPA Sole Source Aquifer Program may request additional information if impacts to the aquifer are questionable after this information is submitted for review.

If extra information is required by EPA

1. Provide Project Information:

- a. Contact person:** Kristin Caruso
- b. Contact email address:** kcaruso@scalarinc.net
- c. Contact mailing address:** 12620 Telecom Drive, Temple Terrace, FL 33637
- d. Contact phone number:** 813-205-2084
- Name of the project:** State Road (SR) 70 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study - From County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue
- e. Project address or geographical coordinates:** The project beginning point is in unincorporated Highlands County in zip code 34974, and the project end point is in unincorporated Okeechobee County in zip code 34974. Geographic Coordinates for Approximate Center of Project: Latitude 27.235575 Degrees N and Longitude -81.036616 Degrees W

2. Confirm an SSA project review is needed.

- a. Is any portion of the project or the property(ies) involved located within a designated SSA project review area? A searchable interactive map of designated SSA project review areas is available at <https://www.epa.gov/dwssa>. If the answer to this question is no, EPA does not need to review the project under the SSA program.** Yes
- b. If the project is located in a SSA, please provide the name of the Aquifer.** Biscayne Aquifer
- c. What Federal funding source is being sought or proposed? If no Federal financial assistance is sought or proposed, EPA does not need to review the project under the SSA program.** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA); the project is completing a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to meet requirements of NEPA and to qualify for and receive federal financial assistance from FHWA.

3. Provide the location of the project, a map, and the name of the SSA(s) within which the project is located. Descriptions and/or maps with the information below would be helpful if available and applicable.

- a. What is known about local hydrogeology in the project review area (e.g., soil types, depth to groundwater, groundwater flow direction)?** A project location map is provided (Figure 1). The depth to groundwater was measured at depths of 2 to 6 feet below existing grades when encountered during soil sampling. The groundwater was not encountered within some of the borings performed. Groundwater flow is believed to flow south within the Biscayne Aquifer. For soil types: The Soil Survey of Highlands County classifies soils within the project area as Felda fine sand

(13), Valkaria fine sand (16), Basinger fine sand (12), Immokalee sand (8), Tequesta muck (26), Duette sand (4), Placida fine sand (7), Myakka fine sand (10), Felda fine sand (13), Gator muck (23), Pineda sand (24), and Arents (32). Furthermore, the Soil Survey of Okeechobee County classifies soils within the project area as Basinger fine sand (2), Basinger and Placida soils (3), Immokalee fine sand (11), Udorthents (12), Manatee, Floridana, and Tequesta soils (13), Myakka fine sand (14), and Wabasso fine sand (25). Refer to the attached soils map, Figure 2.

- b. Are there any known wells in the project review area (including groundwater wells; shallow injection wells; and oil, geothermal, and mineral exploration wells) and how close are they to the project?**

Yes, see Table 1 and Figure 3.

- c. Are there any wetlands within the project review area? If applicable, describe any discharge to, loss of, or creation of wetlands by the project.** Yes, freshwater herbaceous and forested wetlands are located along the project limits. Direct wetland impacts (fill) are anticipated due to the proposed roadway improvements. Offsite wetland mitigation is anticipated to be obtained during a future project phase; no onsite wetland creation is proposed. No direct discharge of untreated stormwater will occur to wetlands. Stormwater runoff from the roadway will be treated in the project's proposed stormwater management facilities which will meet SFWMD water quality and quantity requirements.

4. Provide project description, including, but not limited to, answers to the applicable questions below.

- a. Will the project result in any increase of impervious surface (e.g., concrete, asphalt)? If so, what is the area (e.g., square feet or acres)?** Yes, the overall roadway project impervious area is 93.5 acres, with an increase of 64.6 acres of impervious area from current condition.
- b. What is the depth of excavation?** At this phase of the project, the excavation depths are unknown. For roadway and pond construction, depths of 10 feet are anticipated.
- c. Will any wells be installed or modified as part of the project (of any use type, including groundwater wells, shallow injection wells; and oil, geothermal, and mineral exploration wells)? For new/proposed wells, indicate depth of wells, depth of casing, casing diameter, and, for water wells, the anticipated average and maximum water demand from the wells during normal operation (gallons per minute).** No wells are anticipated to be installed as part of the project. However, existing wells in conflict with the project would be capped.
- d. Are there any deep pilings or foundations (e.g., greater than 10 feet below land surface) that will be installed, modified, or disturbed during the project? If yes include construction procedures and diagrams of these deep pilings or foundations.**

Proposed bridge piles are approximately 50 - 70 feet, however the exact depth is currently unknown. According to best available data from the

United States Geological Survey (USGS) and South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), the project area is in a Biscayne Aquifer Recharge Zone and will not interfere with the Biscayne aquifer itself. The potentiometric surface for the upper Floridan aquifer is approximately +50 feet, NGVD 29 in the project area, but the confining layer is greater than 100 feet. Standard penetration test (SPT) borings were recommended to be completed to determine if it is present and at what depth within the project corridor. During final design, detailed geotechnical surveys including SPT borings will be conducted. At this time, there are no engineering plans available, this will occur at a later project phase. To avoid potential impacts to the Biscayne Sole Source Aquifer associated with construction of bridge foundation and/or construction dewatering, FDOT will implement the following Best Management Practices: FDOT Design Manual Chapter 251 Stormwater Runoff Control Concept (SRCC); FDOT Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction, Section 6 - Control of Materials, Section 104 - Prevention Control, And Abatement of Erosion and Water Pollution, and Section 455 - Structures Foundations; and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Engineering Geology Field Manual - Chapter 20 Water Control.
<https://www.usbr.gov/tsc/techreferences/mands/geologyfieldmanual-vol2/Chapter20.pdf>.

5. Describe storm water management for the project area.

- a. **Will the project require the use of shallow injection wells (i.e., dry wells, French drains, sumps, and drainfields)? If the answer to this question is yes, please provide EPA with an explanation as to why these shallow injection wells are required.** No. The project does not include use of shallow injection wells.
- b. **How will storm water be managed on this site during construction and after the project is complete, including treatment if applicable?** During construction, the contractor will install silt fence, turbidity barriers and turbidity curtains along with complying with its anticipated National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction Generic Permit and NPDES permit conditions. After construction, stormwater will be managed by utilizing the project's permitted stormwater management facilities. These stormwater management facilities will comply with the FDOT Drainage Manual, FDOT Design Manual, and the SFWMD Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) Applicant's Handbook Volume II. FDOT will provide long term maintenance for the project's stormwater management facilities in compliance with the anticipated SFWMD ERP Permit Conditions.

6. Describe chemical use and storage associated with the project.

- a. **Will quantities of hazardous chemicals or petroleum above routine household quantities be used or stored in the project review area?** No

- b. **Are there any aboveground storage tanks or underground storage tanks present or to be installed? Fuel tanks are often involved in projects that include generators and/or pump stations. If applicable, include details of such tanks, including spill containment and spill response plans.** No storage tanks are anticipated to be installed for construction of this project. Existing underground storage tanks are present within the project area and described in the supporting documentation section.
- 7. **Describe waste management related to the project, including, but not limited to, answers to the applicable questions below.**
 - a. **Will any liquid or solid waste be generated during construction (e.g., construction/drilling fluids, excavation dewatering fluids, or demolition debris)? If so, how will it be managed?** During construction, any liquid or solid waste generated will be disposed of in accordance with FDOT's Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction. Also, during construction, disposal of liquid or solid waste will comply with federal and state regulations.
 - b. **How will liquid or solid waste be managed after project completion, other than routine quantities of household wastes to a permitted sanitary landfill or publicly-owned treatment works (e.g., describe any on-site treatment/disposal, industrial wastewater, or other waste generation)? If applicable, provide details about any individual disposal systems such as cesspools, septic tanks with leach fields or seepage areas, pit toilets, or privately-owned sewerage systems, including those owned by a homeowners' association.** No liquid or solid waste will be generated after completion of project construction activities.
 - c. **Are there any known brownfield or hazardous waste sites in close proximity to the project review area (e.g., sites listed on the EPA National Priorities List [i.e., Superfund sites], state-designated brownfield or clean-up sites)? Do any such contaminated sites have underground contamination plumes, monitoring wells, or soil contamination that may be disturbed by the project? Include details such as the name(s) and location(s) of the brownfield or hazardous waste site(s).** There are no brownfields or hazardous waste sites within or in close proximity to the project area.
 - d. **For agricultural projects involving animals, how will animal wastes be managed?** Not applicable. The project is not an agricultural project.
 - e. **For burial of flocks or disposal of animals, what Best Management Practices ("BMPs") are planned to protect the SSA from contamination?** Not applicable. The project is not an agricultural project.
- 8. **Provide any other available information (examples below) that could be helpful in determining if this project may potentially create a significant hazard to public health through contamination of a SSA.**

- a. **Are BMPs planned to address any possible risks or concerns? If so, which BMPs will be used?** Yes. During construction, the contractor will install silt fence, turbidity barriers and turbidity curtains along with complying with the project's anticipated NPDES Construction Generic Permit and NPDES permit conditions. In addition, FDOT will implement the following Best Management Practices: FDOT Design Manual Chapter 251 Stormwater Runoff Control Concept (SRCC); FDOT Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction, Section 6 - Control of Materials, Section 104 - Prevention Control, And Abatement of Erosion and Water Pollution, and Section 455 - Structures Foundations; and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Engineering Geology Field Manual - Chapter 20 Water Control.
<https://www.usbr.gov/tsc/techreferences/mands/geologyfieldmanual-vol2/Chapter20.pdf>.
- b. **Does the project include any improvements that may be beneficial to any SSA, such as improvements to the publicly-owned treatment works?** Yes, currently there is no stormwater management system for the existing SR 70 2-lane roadway. The project's roadway improvements include stormwater management facilities that will collect stormwater runoff and provide treatment pursuant to SFWMD regulations.
9. **Are any previous environmental assessments available regarding the project or project area? If yes, please provide a copy of any/all assessments.** No. We are not aware of any previous environmental assessments available regarding the project or project area.

Supporting Documentation

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Table 1. Documented Wells in Project Area

Well ID	SFWMD Permit No.	Distance from SR 70 centerline	Water Use Classification	Source
288675	22-00392-W	290 ft	Irrigation	Intermediate Aquifer System
45536	22-00019-W	250 ft	Livestock; Freeze Protection	Floridan Aquifer System
138382	28-00146-W	65 ft	Livestock	Upper Floridan Aquifer
224565	28-00557-W	390 ft	Livestock	Surficial Aquifer System
223376	28-00546-W	170 ft	Irrigation	Floridan Aquifer System
10689	28-00096-W	100 ft	Irrigation	Unspecified
229046		95 ft	Livestock	Floridan Aquifer System
105668	47-00215-W	85 ft	Irrigation	Floridan Aquifer System
16937		125 ft	Freeze Protection	Floridan Aquifer System
AAH9367	N/A	120 ft	Community Water System	Unspecified
AAD3241	N/A	80 ft	Community Water System	Unspecified
AAD3242	N/A	230 ft	Non-Community Public Water System	Unspecified
AAM0742	N/A	490 ft	Private Water Well	Unspecified
AAM0743	N/A	340 ft	Private Water Well	Unspecified
AAM0738	N/A	20 ft	Private Water Well	Unspecified
AAM0737	N/A	20 ft	Private Water Well	Unspecified

Information taken from the Contamination Screening Evaluation Report prepared for this project to support Question 6b:

Facility Name	Facility Address	Facility ID	Distance from R/W	Distance from Proposed Pond Parcel	Facility Type	Risk Rating
Arrow B Ranch	150 Fulmar Terrace	9602537	0 feet	0	UST, AST, LUST	Low

A total of four (4) storage tanks have been registered to this site. Two (2) 550-gallon USTs, one (1) containing gasoline and the other diesel, were installed at an unknown date and removed from the site in the early 1980s. Two (2) 550-gallon ASTs, one (1) containing gasoline and the other diesel, were installed and removed at unknown dates before 1996. In a 1996 Limited Contamination Assessment Report (LCAR), it is stated that excessively contaminated soil was identified at the east side of the UST farm and at the northern AST. Additionally, groundwater collected from two (2) temporary wells identified multiple dissolved volatile compounds above National Attenuation Default Concentrations (NADCs) at both tank areas, as well as exceedances of Groundwater and Surface Water Cleanup Target Levels (GCTLs) for naphthalene's and lead at the UST and AST area. Petroleum removal began at the site in 2014. In an annual Natural Attenuation Monitoring (NAM) Report submitted in April of 2021, No Further Action (NFA) was recommended for the site. This recommendation was accepted in June of 2021 by the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) on behalf of FDEP.

Current Regulatory Status: Currently, there are no petroleum storage tanks registered to this site. No further contamination or compliance issues have been reported since the completion of cleanup in May 2025. A field review of the site completed on August 15th, 2023, confirmed that the site is currently in operation as agricultural land. The field visit did not identify any potential sources or signs of possible contamination that may indicate more assessments, interviews, or investigations are needed at this time. Based on a review of all reasonably available data, an onsite inspection, and the distance to the project, this facility is rated as Low Risk.

Facility Name	Facility Address	Facility ID	Distance from R/W	Distance from Proposed Pond Parcel	Facility Type	Risk Rating
Kissimmee River Fishing Resort	15601 Hwy 70 W	5280155, 8512513, ERP_310351, FLA014390	0 feet	300	UST, LUST	Medium

This site is an active recreational vehicle (RV) park that includes a convenience store and gasoline station. It is associated with four facility IDs: 5280155, 8512513, ERP_310351, and FLA014390. Facility IDs 5280155 and FLA014390 relate to wastewater treatment for the onsite potable water system, which has documented issues with disinfectant byproducts, heavy metals, and other contaminants. Facility IDs 8512513 and ERP_310351 pertain to storage tank contamination.

Current Regulatory Status: There is currently one (1) UST registered to this site. The site is undergoing cleanup activities for groundwater contamination caused by a leak of gasoline in 2017. The current remediation schedule extends into 2026. A field review of the site completed on August 15th, 2023, confirmed that there is currently an active gas station at this site. The field visit did not identify any potential sources or signs of possible contamination that may indicate more assessments, interviews, or investigations are needed at this time. Based on a review of all reasonably available data, an onsite inspection, and the distance to the project, this facility is rated as Medium Risk.

Facility Name	Facility Address	Facility ID	Distance from R/W	Distance from Proposed Pond Parcel	Facility Type	Risk Rating
Gloria Farms Inc	Platts Bluff Road	8735273	0 feet	0	UST	No

Two (2) 4,000-gallon USTs were installed at this site in 1973: one (1) used to store vehicular diesel and the other leaded gasoline. Both tanks were removed from the site in 1991. No compliance or contamination issues have been reported for this site, and there are currently no storage tanks registered to the site.

Current Regulatory Status: Currently, there are no storage tanks registered to this site. A field review of the site completed on August 15th, 2023, confirmed the site is currently used residentially and for agriculture. The field visit did not identify any potential sources or signs of possible contamination that may indicate more assessments, interviews, or investigations are needed at this time. Based on a review of all reasonably available data, an onsite inspection, and the distance to the project, this facility is rated as No Risk.

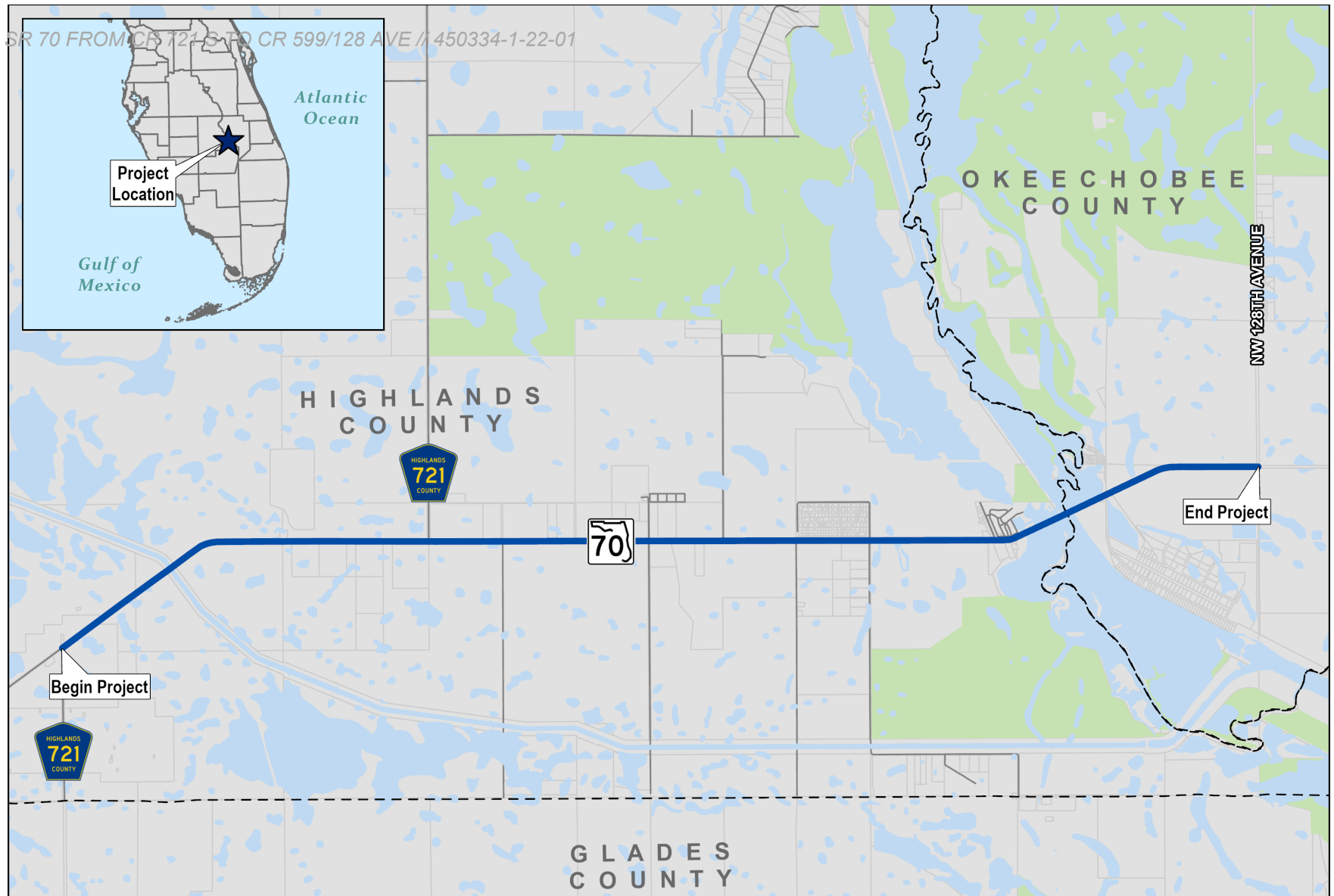
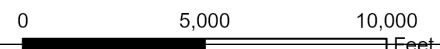


Figure 1. Project Location Map

FPID No. 450334-1
 SR 70 From CR 721 S to CR 599/18th Avenue
 Highlands and Okeechobee Counties

Data Source: ESRI
 Imagery Date: 2015



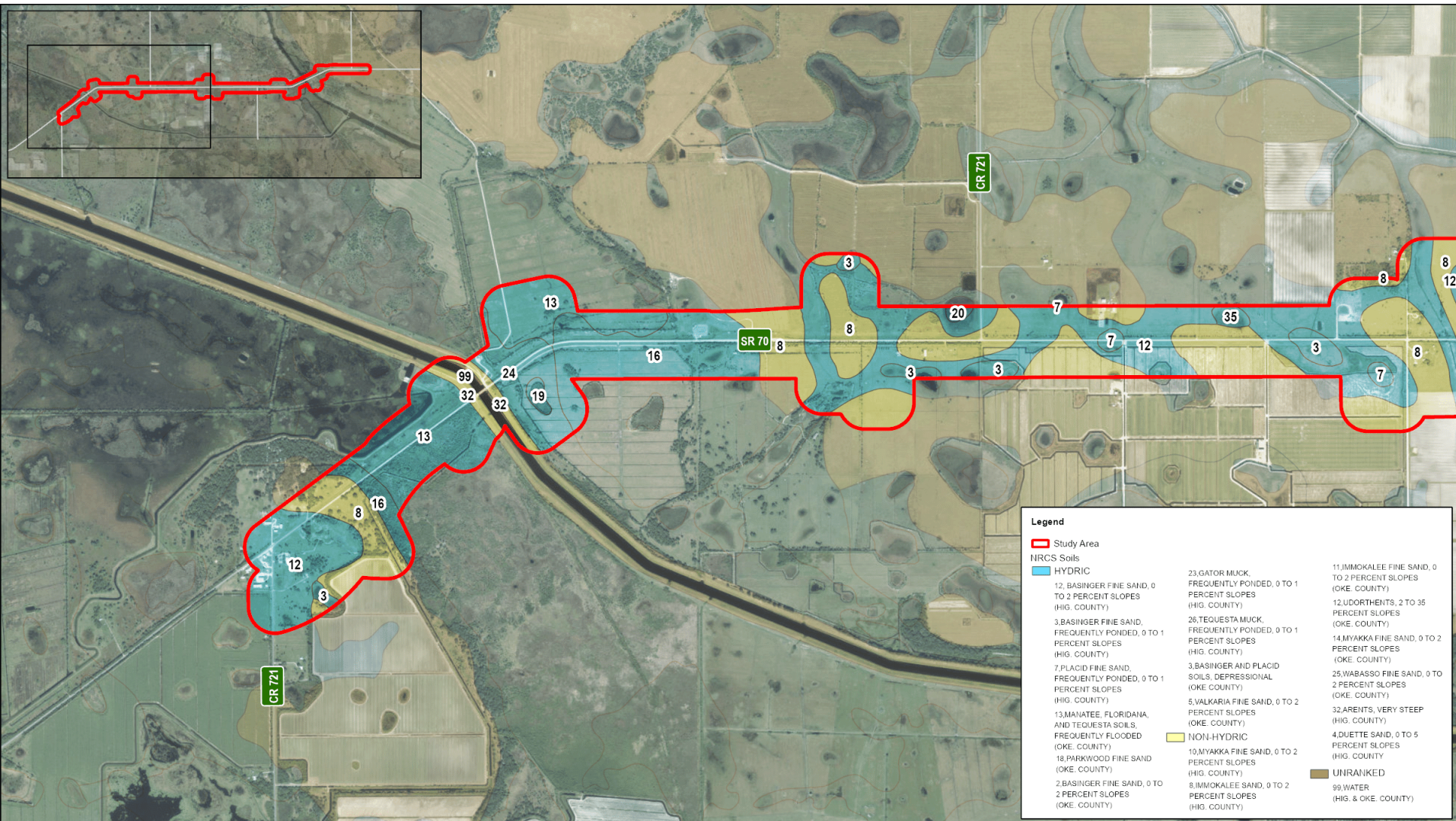


Figure 2 NRCS Soils Map
Sheet 1 of 2

FPID No. 450334-1-22-01
SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue
Highlands and Okeechobee Counties



Data Source: NRCS USDA
Image Source: ESRI
Image Date: 2023

0 2,450 4,900 Feet



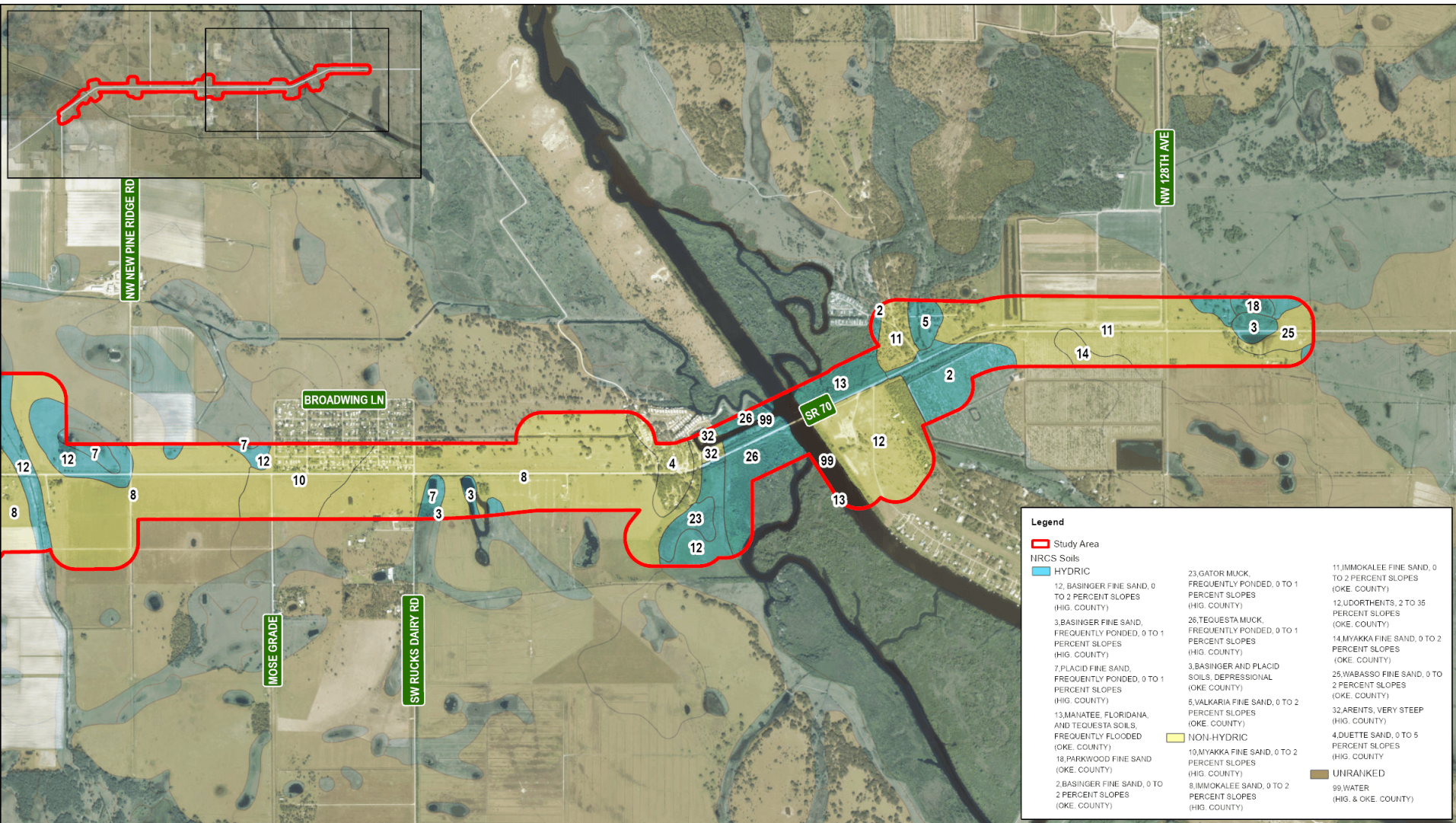


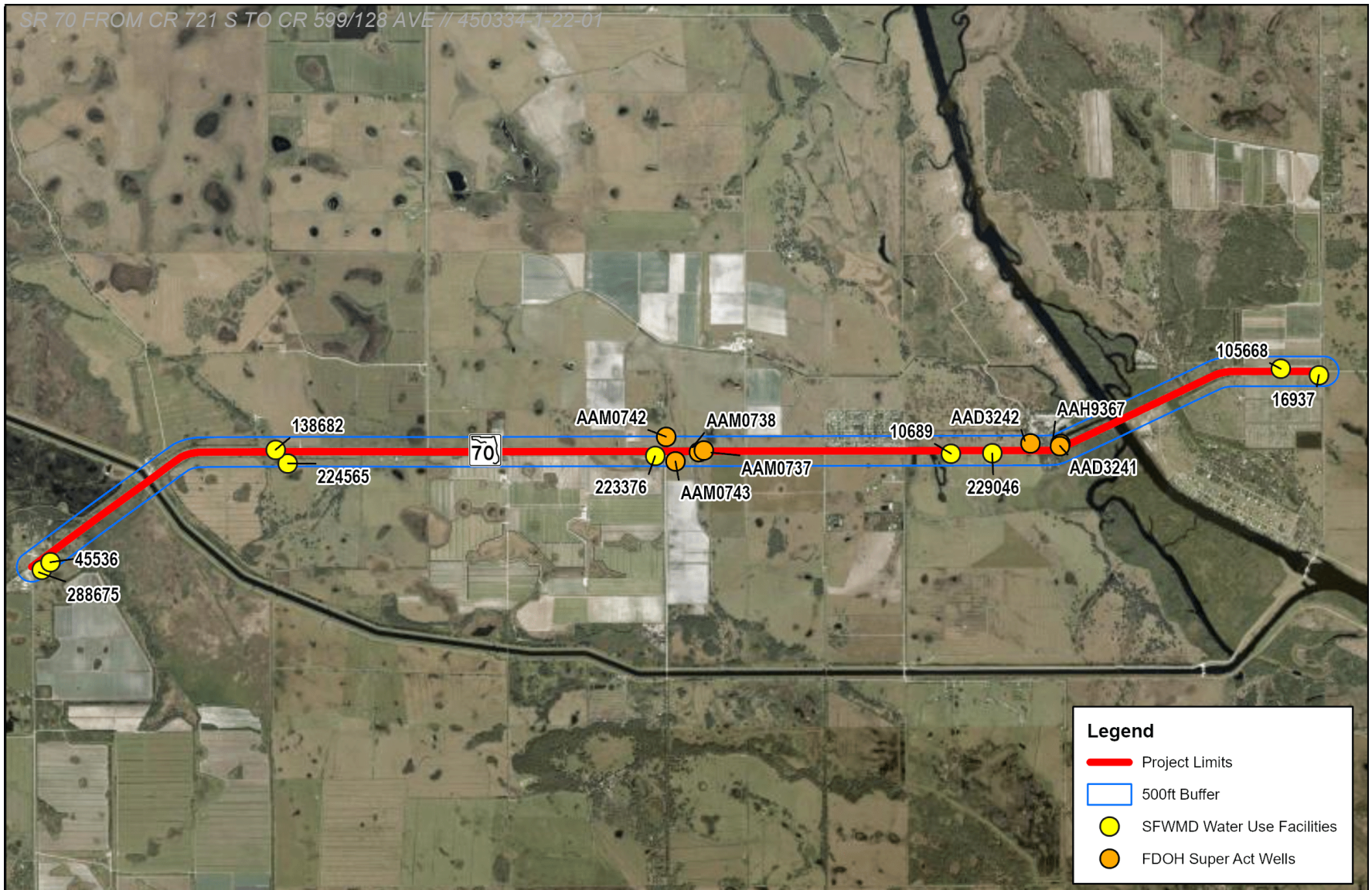
Figure 2 NRCS Soils Map
Sheet 2 of 2

FPID No. 450334-1-22-01
SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue
Highlands and Okeechobee Counties

Data Source: NRCS USDA
Image Source: ESRI
Image Date: 2023

0 2,450 4,900 Feet





Legend

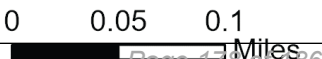
- Project Limits
- 500ft Buffer
- SFWMD Water Use Facilities
- FDOH Super Act Wells

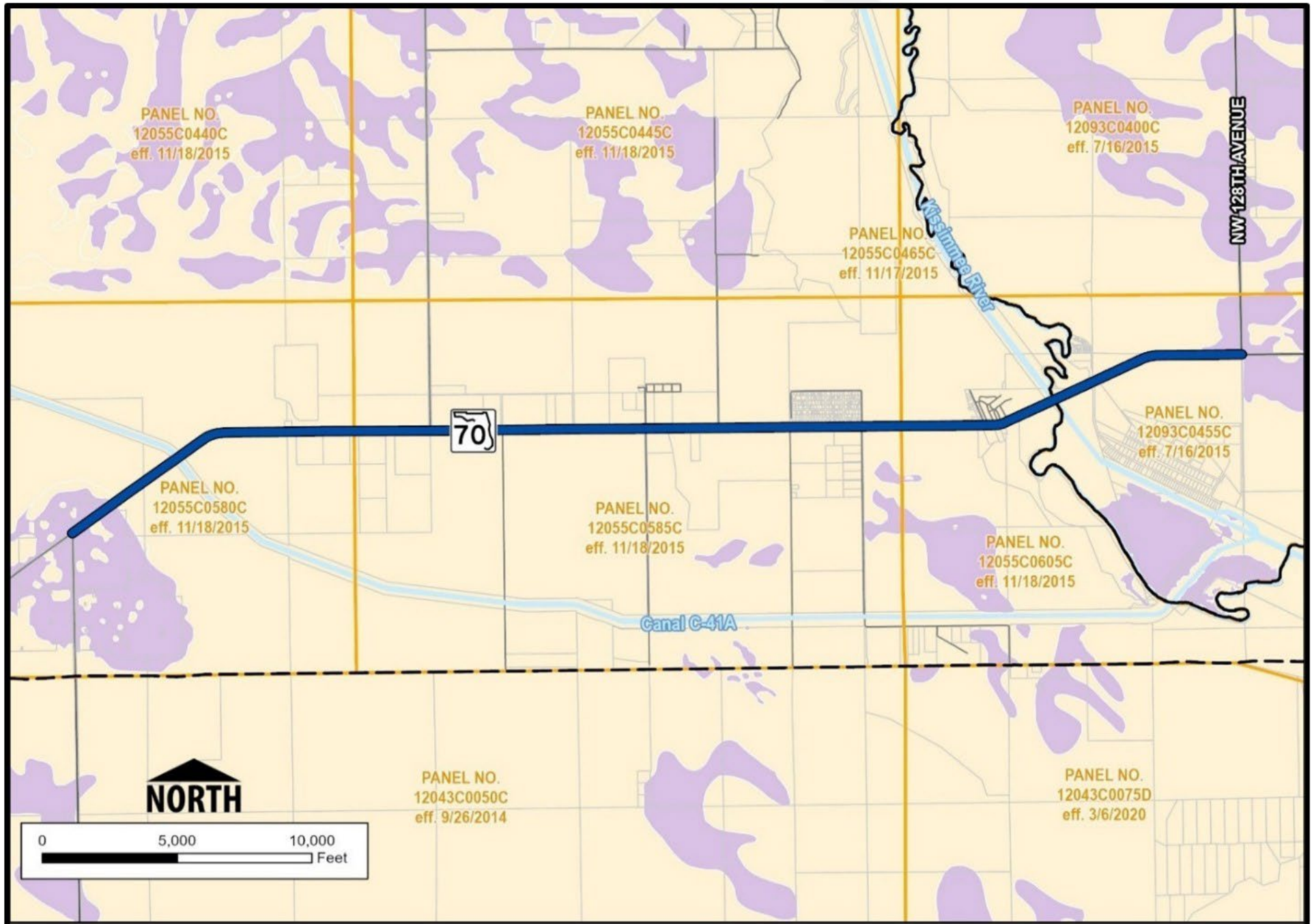


Figure 3: Well Locations

FPID No. 450334-1-22-01
 SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue
 Highlands and Okeechobee Counties

Data Source: SFWMD
 Image Source: ESRI
 Image Date: 2023





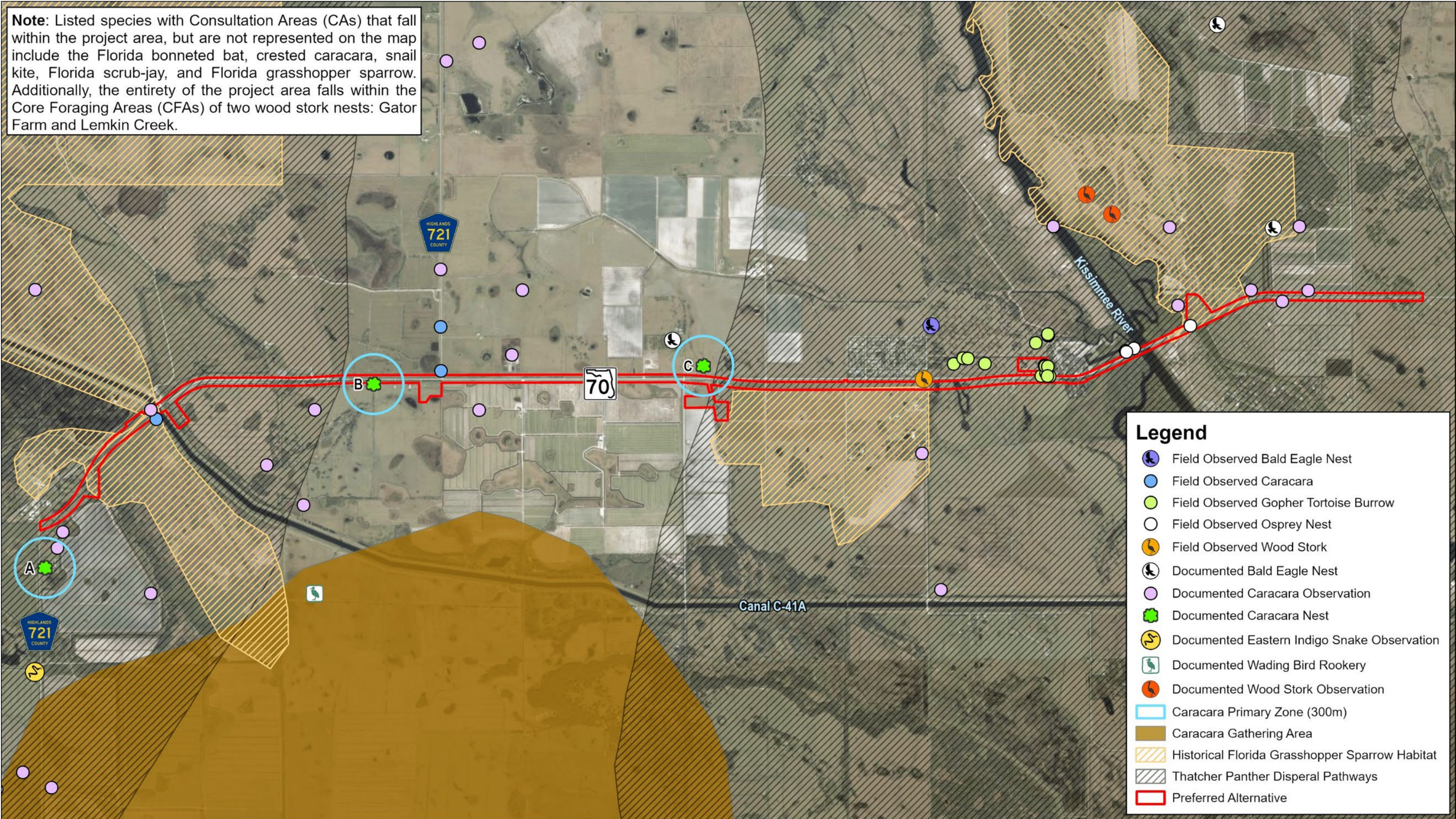


Figure 7. Listed and Protected Species Map

FPID No. 450334-1-22-01
SR 70 from CR 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue
Highlands and Okeechobee Counties

Image Source: ESRI
Image Date: 2023



0 0.75 1.5
Miles

Physical Resources Appendix

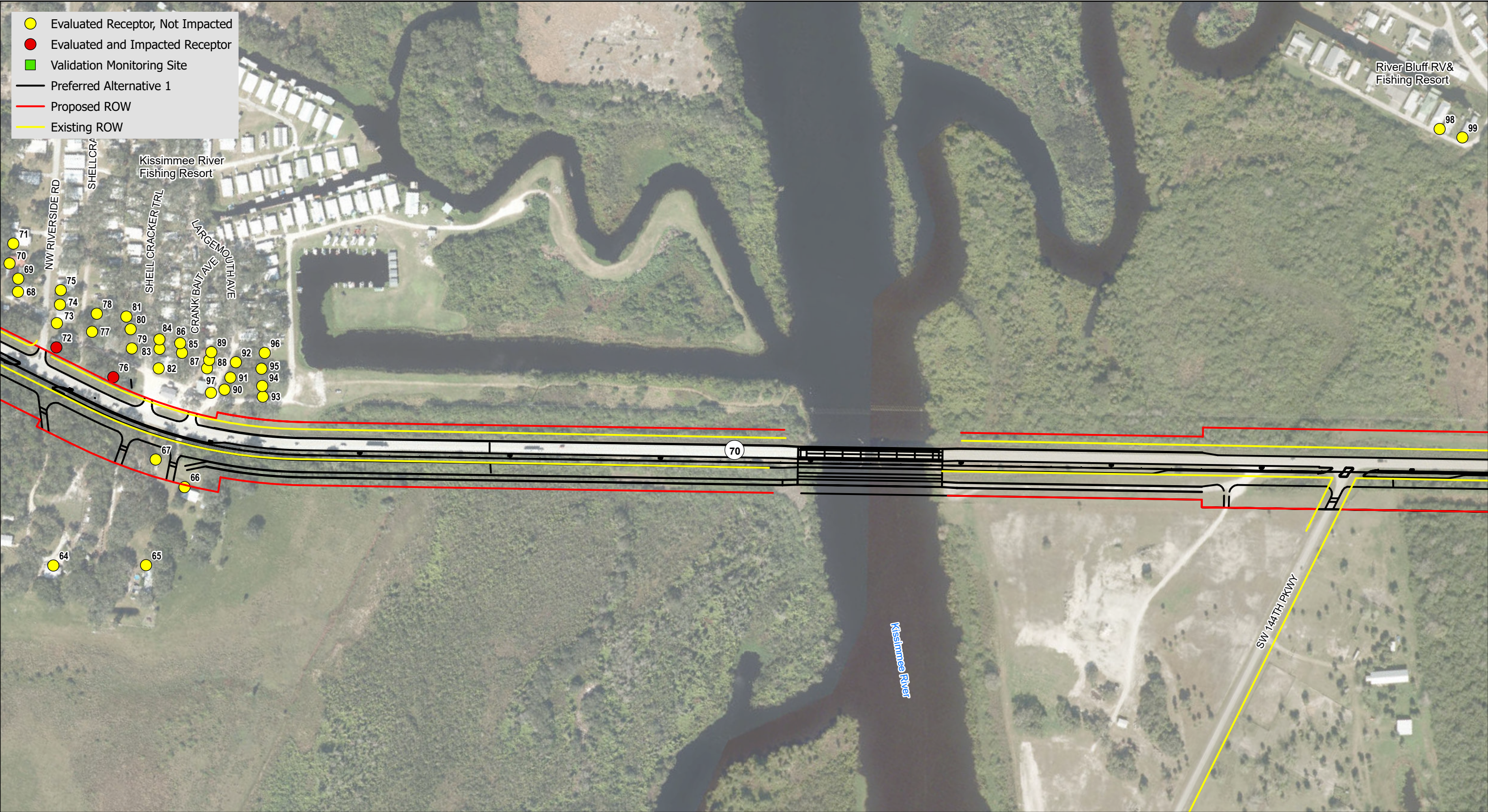
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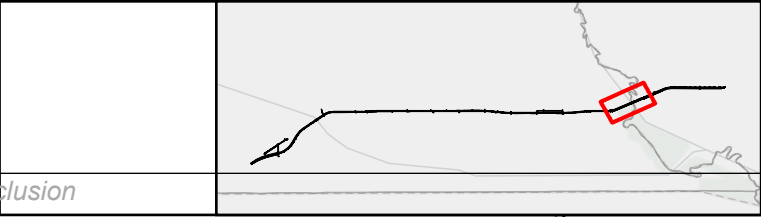

Noise Impacted Sites

Potential Contamination Site Map

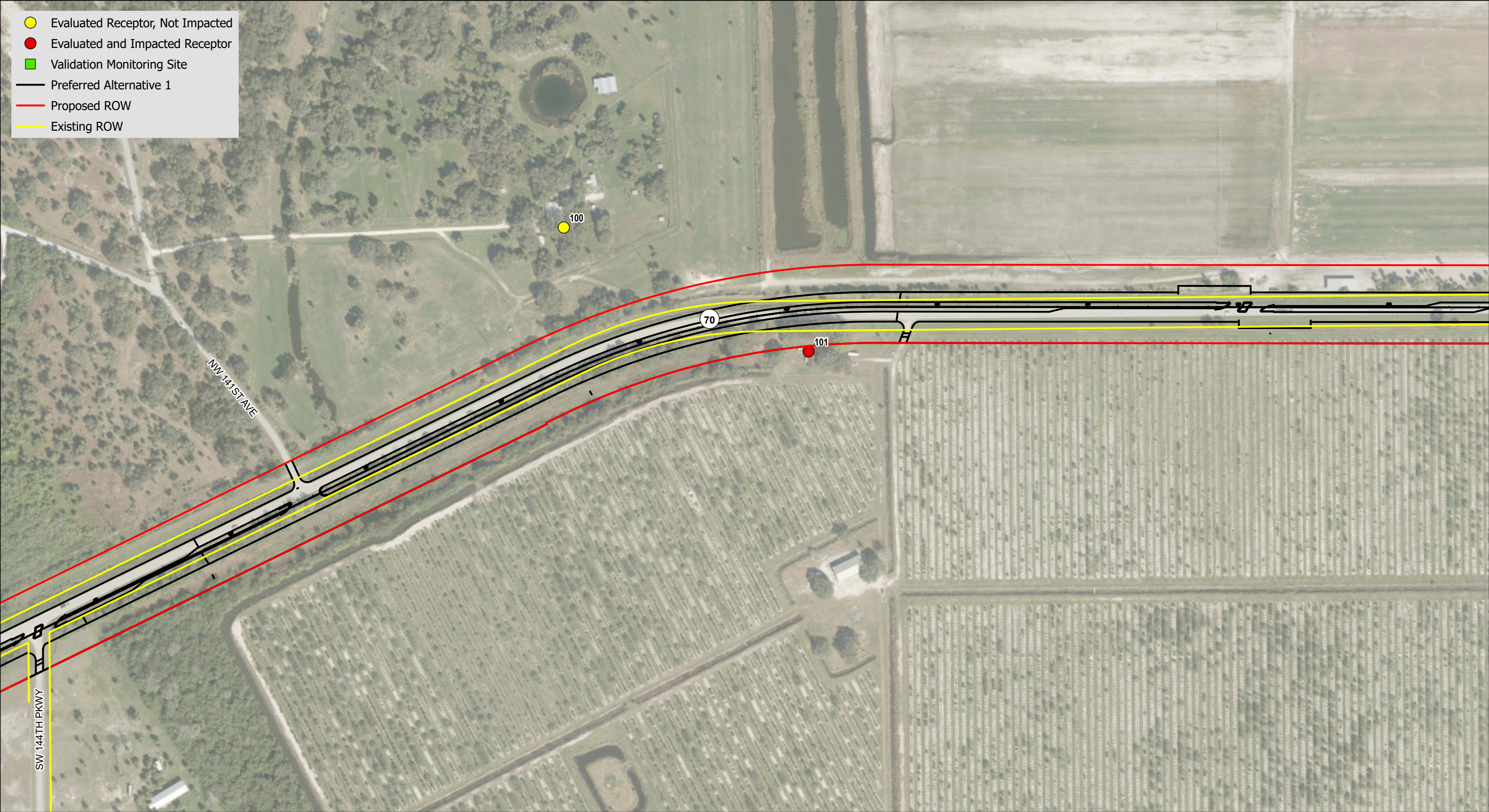
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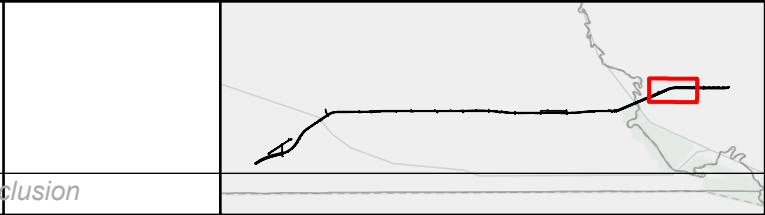





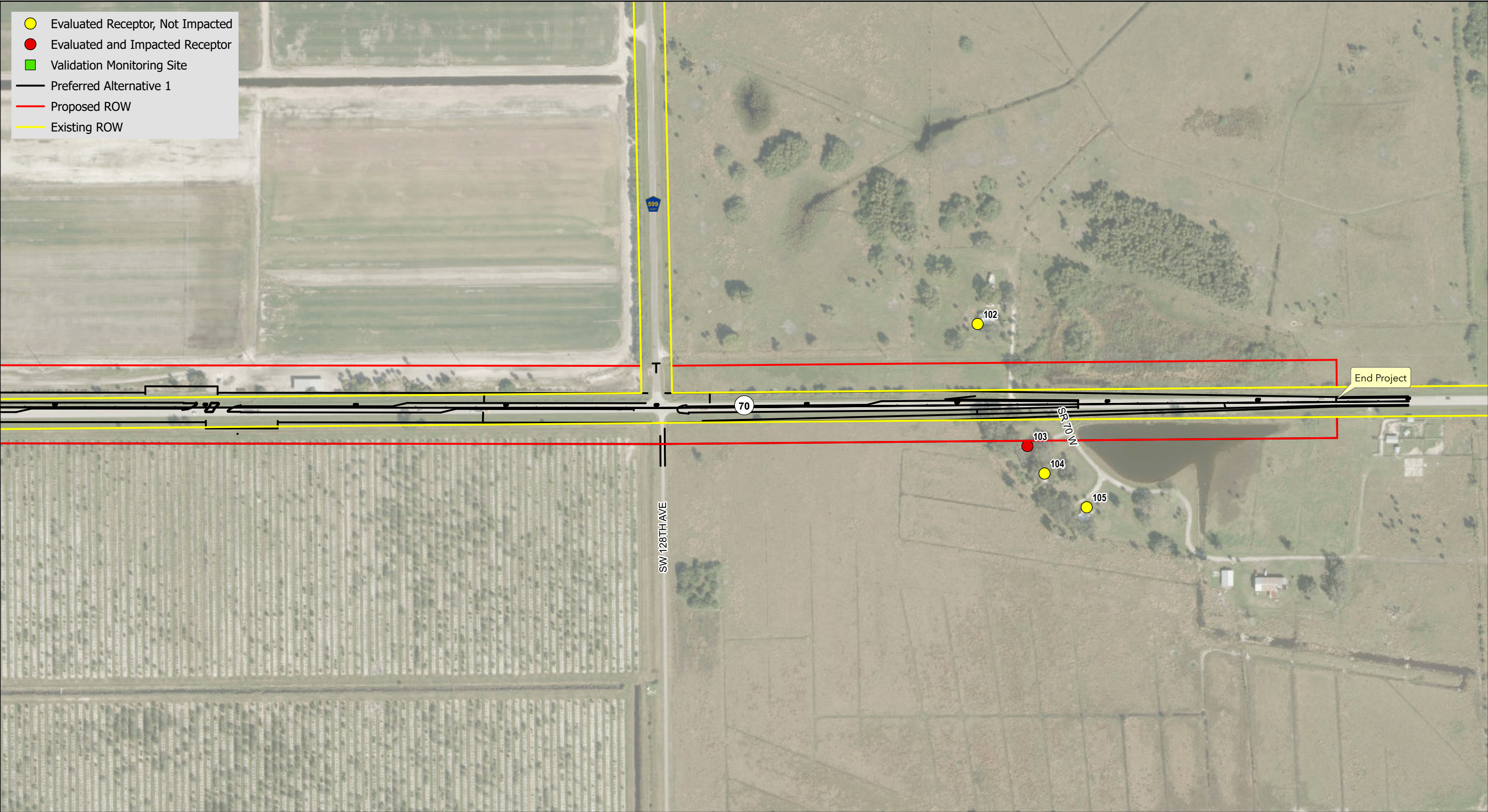
 <p><small>All data within this map are supplied as is, without warranty. This product has not been prepared for legal, engineering, or survey purposes. Users of this information should consult the appropriate data source for more information.</small></p>		<p>Noise Impacted Sites</p> <p>FPID #: 450334-1-22-01</p> <p>State Road (SR) 70 PD&E Study from County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida</p> <p>0 0.5 1 Miles</p>	<p>Data Source: ESA, ESRI</p> <p> Page 183 of 186</p>
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- Evaluated Receptor, Not Impacted
- Evaluated and Impacted Receptor
- Validation Monitoring Site
- Preferred Alternative 1
- Proposed ROW
- Existing ROW



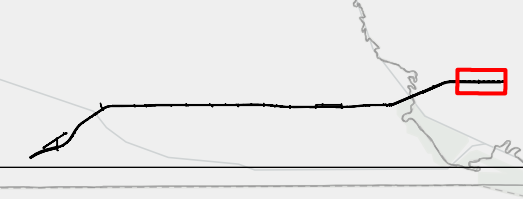
 <p>All data within this map are supplied as is, without warranty. This product has not been prepared to scale, engineering, or survey purposes. Users of this information should consult the project data source for specific information.</p>		<p>Appendix C - Project Aerials</p> <p>FPID #: 450334-1-22-01</p> <p>State Road (SR) 70 PD&E Study from County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue</p> <p>Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida</p> <p>0 0.5 1 Miles</p>	<p>Data Source: ESA, ESRI</p> <p> NORTH</p> <p>Page 184 of 186</p>
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- Evaluated Receptor, Not Impacted
- Evaluated and Impacted Receptor
- Validation Monitoring Site
- Preferred Alternative 1
- Proposed ROW
- Existing ROW



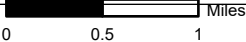


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Noise Impacted Sites

FPID #: 450334-1-22-01
State Road (SR) 70 PD&E Study from County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue
Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida

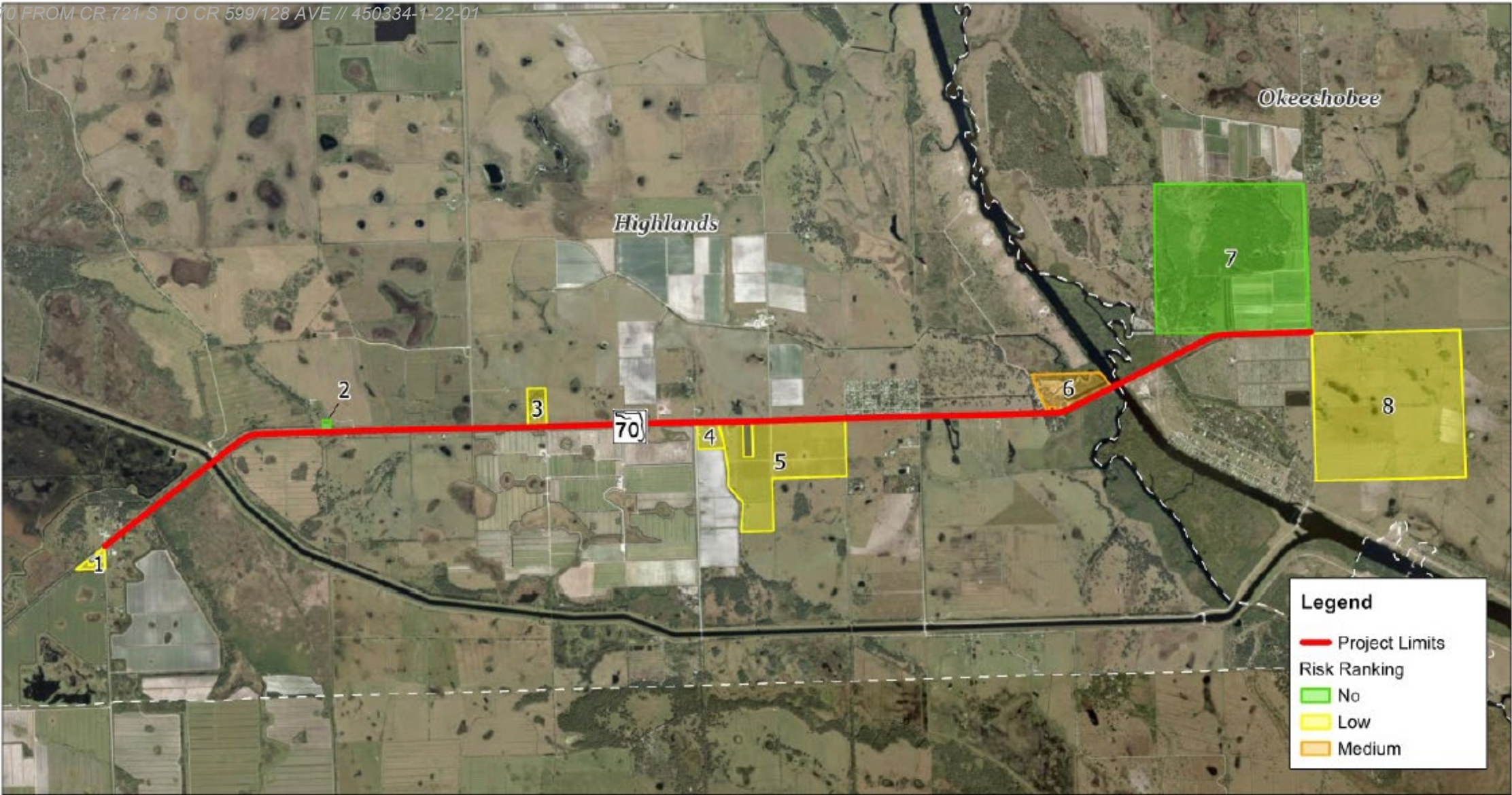


Data Source: ESA, ESRI



NORTH

Page 185 of 186



Type 2 Categorical Exclusion

Contamination Site Map

Image Source: ESRI
Image Date: 2023/2024

