



# **Appendix F**

## **Agency Coordination Meeting Minutes**

# SR 7 CORRIDOR EXTENSION PD&E STUDY MEETING MINUTES



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**SUBJECT:** U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Coordination Meeting

**DATE AND TIME:** July 10, 2006 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**LOCATION:** ACOE Palm Beach Gardens Regulatory Office

**ORIGINATED BY:** Beatriz Caicedo-Maddison, P.E.

**RECORDED BY:** Aniruddha Gotmare, P.E.

**PARTICIPANTS:** Brandon Howard (ACOE), Myrna Lopez (ACOE), Beatriz Caicedo-Maddison (FDOT), Ann Broadwell (FDOT), Aniruddha Gotmare (EK), Sandy Scheda (SEA), Lauren Linares (SEA)

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A meeting with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE) was held to provide an update of the PD&E study and obtain input on the proposed corridors with regard to permitting and mitigation requirements.

## History and Project Status

Ms. Caicedo-Maddison, FDOT Project Manager, began the meeting by providing a brief overview of the project, including history, community issues, and project need. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison also provided an overview of the public involvement effort conducted under the current study. Since the start of the study, two public meetings have been held. Most recently, a Public Corridor Workshop was held on May 24, 2006. During that meeting, the four corridors were presented to public for their review. To obtain the public's input, a corridor ranking form (see attached) was distributed which allowed each person to rank the corridors in order of preference including the No-Build option. Nearly 700 forms were received. Based on the input received, Corridor 4 has significant support from the public and Corridor 1 has the least support. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison highlighted the fact that since Corridor 4 (Rangeline) received the best ranking over the No-Build option, that the public understands that there is a need for a new roadway. Due to the lack of public support and environmental impacts for Corridors 1 and 2, the FDOT recommended eliminating these corridors from further evaluation since it is not very likely that either one of these options would ever be constructed. Therefore, Corridors 1 and 2 have been eliminated from further consideration.

Between the remaining corridors Corridor 3 and Corridor 4, one will be selected for further evaluation through the PD&E process. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison stated that in order to complete the report, the FDOT will need more information to finalize the selection.

## Permit Potential / Corridor Discussion

Ms. Caicedo-Maddison opened the discussion by asking the ACOE for assistance in identifying permitting and mitigation requirements for the remaining corridors. Mr. Brandon Howard, ACOE, stated that the most permissible option was the one that was already eliminated (referring to Corridor 1). Ms. Caicedo-Maddison reiterated the results of the public rankings, specifically the results for Corridor 1. She stated that there needs to be a consensus on the accepted corridor among the public and environmental agencies. Royal Palm Beach Boulevard and Coconut Blvd are not acceptable north-south corridors. The Acreage residents prefer the Rangeline option and the Rustic Lakes community has hired an attorney and will challenge any corridor except the Rangeline.

Ms. Ann Broadwell, FDOT Environmental Administrator, indicated that the project has been loaded into the ETDM system for review and that the ACOE will have the opportunity to input their comments. The statement of findings for the County's Acreage Reliever Road permit application would also be very helpful.

Ms. Myrna Lopez, ACOE, indicated that the ACOE may not be able to provide a definite answer as to which corridor is the one that will be permitted. Mr. Howard added that the Rangeline corridor was

eliminated while reviewing the County's project since it bifurcated the whole system.

Mr. Howard indicated that the ACOE would like to consider Corridor 3. The ACOE understands the public outcry on Corridor 1, but the concern with Corridor 3 is the resulting isolation of the Ibis mitigation parcel. Mr. Gotmare asked if ACOE has any mitigation recommendations. Mr. Howard suggested using fencing and animal crossings. A fencing detail recommended by ACOE is attached to the County's permit for Persimmon Boulevard.

Mr. Howard suggested for FDOT to perform a UMAM analysis to determine the functional loss instead of an acre calculation. Secondary impacts would be 25 to 50 feet away from the toe of the slope (last piece of fill material). ACOE would look at some level of functional loss in this area of secondary impacts; however, the UMAM method does not prescribe a specific buffer. Mr. Howard continued by saying that indirect affects associated with Rangeline corridor would be intuitively higher because the ACOE must consider the bigger picture of a greenway that everyone is working hard to put together.

Mr. Howard indicated that the ACOE will document their opposition to the Rangeline through ETDM. The Rangeline option would be considered as a fatal flaw. Mr. Howard will go through the statement of findings for the Acreage Reliever Road that discusses Rangeline alignment and associated issues.

For the east-west section of Corridor 3, wildlife crossings would be preferred along with fencing. One other option would be to construct a bridge for the east-west portion. Fencing would be required along the east side of the Rangeline. Secondary and cumulative impacts should include proposed development potential.

Mr. Aniruddha Gotmare, Edwards and Kelcey Project Manager, asked about the possibility of utilizing a bridge for Corridor 4. Mr. Howard responded that he did not have enough information to provide a definite answer. Also, this alternative was never proposed as an option during the Persimmon Boulevard (Acreage Reliever Rd.) permitting process. Issues such as shading would have to be considered. Ms. Scheda also pointed out the potential cost associated with environmental containment to avoid contamination issues.

Ms. Lopez stated that the FDOT will need to document all of the environmental/wetland impacts during the corridor alternatives analysis. Ms. Lopez continued by saying that she agrees that the Rangeline is not an option. Mr. Howard will provide comments through ETDM. Ms. Alisa Zarbo, ACOE, will also be given the chance to review those comments before they are posted.

Ms. Lopez asked Ms. Caicedo-Maddison if a new road would promote future development. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison answered no. The development is already there, hence, why they call it a "reliever" road.

Mr. Howard stated that abandonment of the FDOT's right-of-way would help offset impacts. He mentioned that this statement was also made in the County's permit.

Ms. Lopez stated that all these discussions will need to be documented. It will serve as very valuable information since it is 3-5 years before the permit application.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

# SR 7 CORRIDOR EXTENSION PD&E STUDY MEETING MINUTES



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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	South Florida Water Management District Coordination Meeting
<b>DATE AND TIME:</b>	July 19, 2006 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
<b>LOCATION:</b>	SFWMD Headquarters, Room 3-B
<b>ORIGINATED BY:</b>	Beatriz Caicedo-Maddison, P.E.
<b>RECORDED BY:</b>	Michael Garau, P.E.
<b>PARTICIPANTS:</b>	Damon Meiers (SFWMD), Tony Waterhouse (SFWMD), Armando Ramirez (SFWMD), Mike Voich (SFWMD), Anita Bain (SFWMD), Barbara Conmy (SFWMD), Steve Carrier (PBC), Beatriz Caicedo-Maddison (FDOT), Gregor Senger (FDOT), Garrett Lips (FDOT), Aniruddha Gotmare (EK), Michael Garau (EK), Sandy Scheda (SEA), Lauren Linares (SEA)

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A meeting with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) was held to provide an update of the PD&E study and obtain input on the proposed corridors with regard to permitting and mitigation requirements.

## History and Project Status

Ms. Caicedo-Maddison, FDOT Project Manager, began the meeting by providing a brief overview of the project history. During the 1990s, the FDOT explored the feasibility of extending SR 7 through a series of planning-level studies. At one time, 26 corridors were considered between Okeechobee Boulevard and SR 710 (Beeline Highway). These corridors were reduced down to eight through input received during several inter-agency workshops. The project was later suspended by the Palm Beach Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in 2000.

The project was re-initiated last year, at the request of the Palm Beach MPO, under new project limits from Okeechobee Boulevard to Northlake Boulevard. The current study is considering four corridors with the goal to select one for further evaluation through the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study process. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison provided a handout that illustrated the four proposed corridors along with the evaluation matrix (see attached).

Ms. Caicedo-Maddison stressed that the corridor evaluation phase of this project is only the beginning. In addition to the FDOT's on-going study, Ms. Caicedo-Maddison stated that Palm Beach County has completed their design of the Acreage Reliever Road and have obtained all of the necessary permits to begin construction. The Acreage Reliever Road project will extend Persimmon Boulevard from 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the intersection of SR 7 and Okeechobee Boulevard. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison made it very clear that the Acreage Reliever Road project is separate from the FDOT's study. However, due to the federal process involved and the fact that several of the proposed corridors will utilize the Acreage Reliever Road alignment, impacts associated with the County's project must also be considered.

Since the start of the study, two public meetings have been held. Most recently, a Public Corridor Workshop was held on May 24, 2006. During that meeting, the four corridors were presented to public for their review. To obtain the public's input, a corridor ranking form (see attached) was distributed which allowed each person to rank the corridors in order of preference including the No-Build option. Nearly 700 forms were received. Based on the input received, Corridor 4 has significant support from the public and Corridor 1 has the least support. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison highlighted the fact that since Corridor 4 received the best ranking over the No-Build option, that the public understands that there is a need for a new roadway. Due to the impacts and lack of support for Corridors 1 and 2, the FDOT decided that selecting Corridor 1 or Corridor 2 is essentially like selecting the No-Build option since it is not very likely that either one of these options would ever be constructed. Therefore, Corridors 1 and 2 have been eliminated from further consideration.

Between the remaining corridors, which includes Corridor 3 and Corridor 4, one will be selected for further evaluation through the PD&E process. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison stated that in order to complete the report, the FDOT will need more information to finalize the selection.

### **Permit Potential / Corridor Discussion**

Ms. Caicedo-Maddison stated that the goal of the meeting is to request the assistance of the SFWMD in selecting one corridor for the remainder of the project. The FDOT would like to know what would be required by the SFWMD if Corridor 4 is selected and what would be required for Corridor 3. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison stressed that the answer to these questions would help distinguish the remaining corridors from one another.

Mr. Steve Carrier, Palm Beach County Project Manager for the Acreage Reliever Road, stated that the County will start building the Acreage Reliever Road sometime this year. During the County's corridor study, the County was told not to build on the Rangeline (as proposed by Corridor 4) and that two roads would never be allowed by the permitting agencies (this is in reference to the possibility of constructing both the Acreage Reliever Road and SR 7 along the Rangeline). Mr. Carrier provided a letter from the SFWMD, dated December, 2003, that strongly states that the Rangeline option is not desirable.

Ms. Anita Bain, SFWMD, questioned why the letter that was drafted to the County in 2003 could not be applied to the FDOT's project if the same issues are involved. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison responded that, from the FDOT's perspective, this is a new project and will need new comments specifically addressing the issues that are encountered today.

Ms. Caicedo-Maddison stated that if Corridor 4 is selected, then the anticipated level of documentation would be an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and that the level of documentation for Corridor 3 would be an Environmental Assessment (EA). Mr. Tony Waterhouse, SFWMD, commented that he would expect an EIS to be prepared for Corridor 3. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison responded that she would expect an EA level of documentation for Corridor 3 since no residential impacts would be involved and the corridor would border already developed areas.

A discussion ensued about the possible extension of Persimmon Boulevard and 60<sup>th</sup> Street if Corridor 4 is selected as shown in the handout. Questions were asked if those extensions would be completed by the FDOT or the County. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison stated that those extensions would not be completed by the FDOT. They would be done by others, most likely the County. These extensions are classified as secondary impacts for this study.

Mr. Waterhouse asked about impacts to the mitigation area in Section 1 if Corridor 3 is selected. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison explained that Section 1 is under public ownership and that the west and north side is reserved for roadway purposes by the County. The footprint of Corridor 3 will not likely encroach into the reserved mitigation area.

Ms. Bain commented that because the Acreage Reliever Road was going to be constructed regardless, that if Corridor 4 is selected, then essentially the area would end up with both Corridors 3 and 4 due to the possible extension of Persimmon Boulevard and 60<sup>th</sup> Street. That outcome would not be favored.

Ms. Caicedo-Maddison reiterated that these are the type of comments and concerns, in writing, that the FDOT needs from the SFWMD. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison added that the FDOT needs to know if Corridor 4 is permissible. Ms. Bain stated that the SFWMD staff cannot specifically say that Corridor 4 is not permissible. The Board can only make that kind of statement. The SFWMD can only state what issues would need to be considered and addressed, not exactly what would be needed.

Ms. Caicedo-Maddison stated that the project has been loaded into the ETDM system and that the SFWMD could provide their comments through that format.

Mr. Waterhouse asked how the design of the roadway would account for the possibility of spills, specifically for Corridor 4. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison responded that these details will be considered during the later stages of the PD&E study. Mr. Waterhouse continued by saying that north of the M Canal, there is 320 feet of right-of-way, but south of the M Canal there is only 200 feet of right-of-way. The 200 feet available, south of the M Canal, may not be enough to safe guard against hazardous spills. This scenario could potentially impact the Water Catchment Area. Additional right-of-way may be required for the Rangeline. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison commented that those issues should be considered as the SFWMD prepares their letter.

Mr. Mike Voich, SFWMD, asked about the class designation for the Pond Cypress Natural Area. A discussion ensued and concluded that the Pond Cypress area is a Class III waterway and the Water Catchment Area is classified as a Class I. Outfall from the proposed project could potentially go into the Pond Cypress Natural Area.

Mr. Waterhouse asked Ms. Caicedo-Maddison that if Corridor 3 is selected, would SR 7 fall over the Acreage Reliever Road alignment. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison responded that the answer is generally yes, but that the FDOT cannot guarantee the same footprint. The FDOT needs to ensure that the Acreage Reliever Road meets FDOT standards.

### **Secondary Impacts**

Ms. Sandy Scheda, Scheda Ecological Associates, initiated a discussion on secondary impacts and what the anticipated requirements would be. Ms. Bain stated that secondary impacts were identified for the Acreage Reliever Road and that those requirements would be a good starting point. Mr. Carrier pointed out that a UMAM analysis was performed for the Reliever Road and recommended to Ms. Scheda to contact Jim Schnelle who performed the environmental study for the Acreage Reliever Road, for further details. Mr. Carrier also offered the opportunity to look at the County's files for this information.

Mr. Damon Meiers, SFWMD, stated that the quality of wetlands along Corridor 4 is better than the quality along Corridor 3.

Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Caicedo-Maddison why the FDOT would not consider the Rangeline for mitigation if Corridor 3 is selected. Ms. Caicedo-Maddison responded that that option could not be considered until the FDOT is absolutely sure that Corridor 4 will not be built. After that decision is made, it may be used later. Mr. Meiers added that the unused portion of the Rangeline would be suitable for mitigation.

Mr. Meiers asked if the FDOT has considered other mitigation options. Ms. Scheda responded that 8 to 10 sites were identified over a year ago during a preliminary review of the project but that some of those sites are not available anymore.

### **Meeting Conclusion**

Ms. Caicedo-Maddison asked how the SFWMD would like to go on record. Mr. Meiers responded that most likely in the form of a letter which will generally describe why Corridor 4 is not the desirable option.

Mr. Aniuddha Gotmare, Edwards and Kelcey Project Manager, then asked if Corridor 4 is a feasible option. Ms. Bain stated that Corridor 4 is not practical since the Acreage Reliever road will be built anyways. Two roads in the area are not acceptable since it will result in excessive impacts on the surrounding environment and severely bifurcate the natural areas.

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Ms. Caicedo-Maddison stated the she would like to receive a letter from the SFWMD within a month.  
Ms. Caicedo-Maddison thanked everyone for their participation and input.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.