



December 2020

# State Environmental Impact Report

SR 826/Palmetto Expressway  
From South of NW 36<sup>th</sup> Street (MP 8.355) to North of NW 154<sup>th</sup> Street (MP 17.950)  
Project Development & Environment Study  
Miami-Dade County, Florida

Financial Management Numbers: 447165-1-22-01, 441830-1-22-01, 441831-1-22-01  
Federal Aid Project Number: N/A  
ETDM Number: 14455

# STATE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Florida Department of Transportation

SR 826/PALMETTO EXPRESSWAY FROM SOUTH OF NW 36 ST TO NW 154 ST

District: FDOT District 6

County: Miami-Dade County

ETDM Number: 14455

Financial Management Number: 447165-1-22-01

Project Manager: Raul Quintela

This project has been developed without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status.

The final SEIR reflects consideration of the PD&E Study and the public hearing.

Date:

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District Secretary or Designee

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**SR 826 / Palmetto Expressway PD&E Study  
from South of NW 36th Street (MP 8.355)  
to North of NW 154th Street (MP 17.950)  
Miami-Dade County, Florida  
FM #447165-1-22-01, 441830-1-22-01, and 441831-1-22-01  
ETDM #14455; Federal Aid Project Number N/A**



## 1. Project Information

### 1.1 Project Description

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Six is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This roadway project involves the potential addition of general use lanes, conversion of express (managed) lanes to general use lanes, as well as traffic operational and geometrical design improvements on SR 826/Palmetto Expressway (herein referred to as SR 826) from south of NW 36th Street (Milepost (MP) 8.355) to north of NW 154th Street (MP 17.950) within Miami-Dade County. The improvements are proposed to address existing congestion and higher than expected speed differentials between the general purpose (GP) lanes and the express lanes (EL) along the project corridor, as well as provide additional access to the EL system. The project also includes potential improvements to the frontage road system parallel to and on both sides of SR 826 from US 27/SR 25/Okeechobee Road (herein referred to as US 27) to NW 122nd Street.

Connecting population and commercial centers in north-central Miami-Dade County, the project traverses the municipalities of Doral, Medley, Hialeah Gardens, Hialeah, and Miami Lakes, as well as unincorporated portions of the County. SR 826 connects to essential east-west facilities within north-central Miami-Dade County, including SR 836/Dolphin Expressway, SR 948/NW 36th Street, SR 934/NW 74th Street (herein referred to as NW 74th Street), US 27, SR 932/NW 103rd Street (herein referred to as NW 103rd Street), I-75/SR 93, and SR 924/Gratigny Expressway.

Within the project limits, SR 826 is a principal arterial and consists of six (6) to nine (9) general use lanes and zero (0) to three (3) express (managed) lanes; the typical section varies throughout the project length. In addition, SR 826 is part of the state's emergency evacuation network and is on the National Highway System (NHS), the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), and the State Highway System (SHS).

### 1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to address various roadway deficiencies causing congestion and large speed differentials between GP lanes and EL along the SR 826 corridor. Proposed improvements are anticipated to increase roadway safety, facilitate the movement of people and goods, and increase the capacity in the GP lanes. Another goal of the project is to improve access to the EL system by relocating an ingress point in northern Miami-Dade County. Additionally, the purpose of the project is to improve the geometry of the expressway frontage road system. The need for the project is based on the following criteria:

#### 1.2.1 Roadway Deficiencies: Address Congestion and Speed Differentials

Following the opening of the SR 826 ELs to traffic in September 2019, additional congestion and higher than expected speed differentials between EL (higher speeds) and GP lanes (lower speeds) were observed in both the northbound and southbound directions during peak travel times. Areas identified for improvement include the NW 103rd Street interchange and from NW 74th Street to US 27 in the southbound direction. The issues identified in these areas are caused by geometric and operational deficiencies such as the lack of auxiliary lanes, insufficient ramp lengths, and substandard shoulders.

The implementation of operational improvements to correct the identified roadway deficiencies on SR 826 would improve congestion and better align speeds between the EL and GP lanes. According to the Palmetto Express Lanes Modification Summary Report (March 2020), an earlier planning study, the proposed improvements would result in a 56% and 42% reduction in travel times for the southbound and northbound GP lanes, respectively. In addition, throughput would increase a combined 58% and 11% in the southbound and northbound directions, respectively. While speed in the EL is not projected to increase, speeds in the GP lanes are forecasted to rise by 26 miles per hour in the southbound direction and 19 miles per hour in the northbound direction. These metrics illustrate how implementation of the potential improvements would address congestion and speed differentials currently caused by roadway deficiencies.

#### **1.2.2 System Linkage: Provide Better Access to the EL System**

Currently the southbound EL lanes begin north of NW 154th Street and do not provide southbound ingress for motorists in this area of north-central Miami-Dade County (after NW 67th Avenue). To better facilitate the movement of traffic from this area of increased demand into the EL system, the potential project improvements include relocating the existing EL ingress point from north of NW 154th Street to south of NW 103rd Street. This will create access to the EL system for residents in this portion of Miami-Dade County and create an important linkage to the EL system.

#### **1.3 Planning Consistency**

Planning Consistency is not required for this SEIR.



## 2. Environmental Analysis Summary

Issues/Resources	Substantial Impacts?*			
	Yes	No	Enhance	NoInv
<b>3. Social and Economic</b>				
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Aesthetic Effects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Relocation Potential				
<b>4. Cultural Resources</b>				
1. Historic Sites/Districts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Archaeological Sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Recreational Areas and Protected Lands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>5. Natural Resources</b>				
1. Wetlands and Other Surface Waters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Aquatic Preserves and Outstanding Florida Waters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Water Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Wild and Scenic Rivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5. Floodplains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Coastal Barrier Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7. Protected Species and Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>6. Physical Resources</b>				
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"/>
6. Bicycles and Pedestrians	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Navigation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

\* **Impact Determination:** Yes = Substantial Impact; No = No Substantial Impact; Enhance = Enhancement; NoInv = Issue absent, no involvement. Basis of decision is documented in the referenced attachment(s).

### **3. Social and Economic**

#### **3.1 Social**

This section presents the potential social impacts of the project on the communities within the study area. The analysis here considers the potential for effects on community groups and resources, potential demographic shifts including the influx or departure of populations, and the effect of the project in the creation/elimination of barriers to community interaction. Consideration is also given in this section to safety and emergency response impacts.

Based on the information included in the following subsections and primarily as a result of no needed right-of-way expansion, a Summary Degree of Effect of Minimal has been assigned to the Social topic.

Please see the Sociocultural Effects Evaluation (SCE) located in the project file for additional information on social and economic resources.

##### **3.1.1 Demographics**

The project occurs in a highly developed, urbanized area of Miami-Dade County that supports little available vacant land. Much of the area in the southern half of the corridor supports light industrial use and warehousing, and the northern half supports primarily residential use.

Demographic analysis identifies the presence of historically disadvantaged and potentially vulnerable groups that include low-income and minority populations. Household income levels within the study area are slightly below the countywide average. Approximately 91 percent of the population present is Hispanic or Latino. Approximately 47 percent of the population indicates Limited English Proficiency.

Though potentially vulnerable populations are present, the proposed improvements include alterations along an existing corridor, primarily within the existing right-of-way. Some access and mobility benefits will result from the proposed action, but neither Alternative is likely to alter the existing transportation system to the extent that land use changes or population shifts occur. In or out-migration as a result of the project is not likely. Population composition and size are expected to be generally unaffected.

##### **3.1.2 Community Cohesion**

Community cohesion refers to the quantity and quality of interaction among people in a community and is exhibited by the degree to which residents know and care about their neighbors and participate in neighborhood activities. The community surrounding the corridor is developed and highly urbanized. Commercial use and Warehousing are the primary uses present along the southern half of the corridor. Residential development is prevalent north of US 27. Existing neighborhoods are oriented so that community edges and boundaries are generally defined by major roadways, including SR 826.

The proposed improvements to SR 826 occur primarily within the existing right-of-way, and would not result in the displacement of any homes or businesses. Additionally, none of the resources identified in the Community Features Inventory would be affected by the project. The proposed modification of lanes and structures within the existing corridor will not serve to divide or isolate an existing population or community. The project is anticipated to have little effect on community cohesion.

### **3.1.3 Safety/Emergency Response**

Proposed northbound safety improvements include widening the mainline within the NW 103rd Street interchange to provide the minimum 10-foot recommended shoulder width for both the inside and outside shoulders. In an effort to improve the existing weaving condition, three (3) southbound bridges [over NW 74th Street, Metrorail, and Florida East Coast (FEC) Rail] will be widened in the Build Alternative.

Regarding emergency evacuations, SR 826 is designated as an emergency evacuation route by the Florida Division of Emergency Management. Emergency evacuation will be enhanced through the added capacity. During construction the emergency evacuation route along the expressway will be maintained, except for brief occasions of overhead bridge work.

### **3.1.4 Community Goals and Quality of Life**

The Build Alternative is compatible with the Miami Dade Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP). Objective TC-1 states that the County should strive to operate its roadway network at a level of service (LOS) higher than the base level. The Build Alternative fulfills this by improving congestion through operational improvements. Objective TE-2C of the Transportation Element notes that in road construction and reconstruction projects the design shall promote pedestrian comfort where the Land Use Element seeks to provide activity along roadway frontages. Additionally, TE-2H states that comfortable and safe sidewalk conditions for pedestrians should be ensured by the County. The Build Alternative will do so by infilling sidewalk gaps along West Frontage Road/NW 77th Avenue and East Frontage Road/W 20th Avenue. Fulfilling these objectives should improve the quality of life of residents and visitors of Miami-Dade County.

### **3.1.5 Special Community Designations**

One Opportunity Zone (Census Tract 91) is located West of SR 826, north of US 41, and south of US 27 within the quarter mile study area. These zones were established by Congress in 2017 as a tax incentive for reinvestment in low income communities. Qualified Opportunity Zones retain their designation for ten (10) years. Within each zone, investors can defer taxes on financial gains, so long as the gain is reinvested in a Qualified Opportunity Fund. Opportunity Zones are expected to spur public-private partnerships in disadvantaged communities. None of Miami Dade's 11 community redevelopment areas (CRAs) are located within the study area.

The transportation investment proposed is supportive of the private sector investment targeted within the Opportunity Zone. The Build Alternative is intended to adjust access to the managed lane system to expanding the area of northern Miami-Dade County served system. In turn, supporting additional access to areas targeted for investment.

## 3.2 Economic

This section presents a summary of the potential economic impacts of the project in the study area. Potential project effects on business and employment activity in the study area. Consideration is given to potential impacts to routes and access to identified businesses, employment centers, or community facilities.

### 3.2.1 Business and Employment

Multiple Industrial and freight warehouses as well as construction companies and retailers are located between NW 25th Street and NW 103rd Street. These include Dolphin Carpet and Tile, Petro Solutions, and Forklifts Parts and Equipment (FPE). The Westland Mall is adjacent to SR 826 and NW 103rd Street with Palmetto General Hospital located at the corner of SR 826 and NW 122nd Street.

Based on figures produced by the US Census Bureau reported in the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics database, the quarter-mile area surrounding the corridor currently supports 33,826 jobs (**Table 3-1**). Health care and social assistance; retail trade; wholesale trade; and administration and support, waste management and remediation are the predominant sectors of employment along the corridor.

SCE Type	Sector	Percent
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	38	0.1%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	3	0.0%
Utilities	127	0.4%
Construction	1,537	4.5%
Manufacturing	2,532	7.5%
Wholesale Trade	4,266	12.6%
Retail Trade	4,861	14.4%
Transportation and Warehousing	1,997	5.9%
Information	679	2.0%
Finance and Insurance	2,191	6.5%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	786	2.3%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,109	3.3%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	312	0.9%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	3,502	10.4%
Educational Services	628	1.9%
Health Care and Social Assistance	5,737	17.0%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	154	0.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	2,286	6.8%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	1,038	3.1%
Public Administration	43	0.1%
Total	33,826	

Table 3-1: SCE Study Area Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector



Nearly two thirds of the jobs present earn less than \$3,333 dollars per month. 86.1 percent of daily work trips made by residents are made using an automobile. Relocating the ingress point into the EL system to south of NW 103rd Street will benefit commuters by allowing those between NW 103rd Street and NW 154th Street access to the EL system. The anticipated reduction in congestion at NW 103rd Street by providing an extra throughput lane is expected to improve drive times for commuters to and from work.

According to the Texas A&M Transportation Institute's 2019 Urban Mobility Report the average auto commuter in 2017 spent 54 hours in congestion and wasted 21 gallons of fuel at a cost \$1,080. The average auto commuter in the Miami Urban Area experienced 69 hours of delay, used 34 gallons of excess gas, at a cost of \$1,412 in wasted time and fuel. Virtually every employment sector is dependent upon the efficient operation of the transportation system to support commerce. Anticipated operations and access improvements resulting from the Build Alternative will support the continued operation of businesses in the area.

### **3.2.2 Tax Base**

Due to the project requiring no additional right-of-way, no loss in revenue by Miami-Dade County is expected. Local businesses and neighborhoods will experience improved operational conditions resulting in a reduction in travel times, which may increase property values over time.

### **3.2.3 Traffic Patterns**

To better facilitate the movement of traffic into the EL system, the proposed Build Alternative will include relocating the existing EL ingress point from north of NW 154th Street to south of NW 103rd Street. This will create access to the EL system for residents of Hialeah as well as other residents in this portion of Miami-Dade County. This is expected to change traffic patterns in this region for those who choose to utilize the EL system. GP lane throughput improvements at NW 103rd Street may cause an increase in commuters utilizing SR 826 as opposed to secondary roadways due to the reduced congestion

### **3.2.4 Business Access**

Business access is expected to be improved overall as speed differential between the general-purpose lanes and ELs equalize. Additionally, those living within Hialeah will now have access to the ELs when heading southbound. The southbound ELs currently begin north of NW 154th Street and do not provide another ingress point within the project limits. The Build Alternative includes relocating the existing ELs ingress point from north of NW 154th Street to south of NW 103rd Street. This will create better access for residents of Hialeah as well as other residents in this portion of Miami-Dade County. Pedestrian access to businesses along West Frontage Road/NW 77th Avenue and East Frontage Road/W 20th Avenue will also be enhanced through continuous sidewalk coverage within the frontage road project limits. Businesses that operate along the corridor may experience temporary impacts to travel during construction; however, in the long term, mobility is expected to be enhanced.

### **3.2.5 Special Needs Patrons**

Providing an additional throughput lane at NW 103rd Street is expected to reduce congestion not only for commuters, but for trucks moving freight as SR 826 is a part of the SIS highway network. As a designated SIS highway corridor, SR 826

provides access via NW 74th Street (also known as Hialeah Expressway) and surface streets to the Miami Hialeah FEC Railway Intermodal Terminal, a SIS Freight Rail Terminal. According to the Texas A&M Transportation Institute's 2019 Urban Mobility Report the cost of increased travel time, operating cost, and diesel for freight in the Miami Urban Area in 2017 is \$565 million.

### 3.3 Land Use Changes

The following section identifies the project's consistency with local and regional land use and transportation plans and evaluates the project's consistency with the physical character of the area. The land use analysis considers the project's compatibility with the community's existing/planned land use patterns and urban form. Additionally, the evaluation includes the identification of the potential for effects on unique community features (e.g., historic landmarks/structures), and changes in acreage devoted to public spaces including conservation lands and parks.

Based on information included in the following subsections, and general consistency of the project with local plans, a Summary Degree of Effect of Minimal has been assigned to the land use topic.

#### 3.3.1 Land Use - Urban Form

Existing and future land use was assessed through review of statewide generalized land use files. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) shapefiles were downloaded from the FGDL and compared to the SCE study area. **Table 3-2** reports generalized existing land use by zoning description found within the study area. The predominant land use present is Industrial (29.71%), followed by Residential (20.26%), and Retail Office (19.10%) (see **Attachment - Land Use Map**).

Existing Land Use	Acres	Percent
Acreage Not Zoned for Agriculture	81.59	2.93%
Agricultural	9.73	0.35%
Centrally Assessed	6.74	0.24%
Industrial	827.02	29.71%
Institutional	87.83	3.15%
Parcels with No Values	3.47	0.12%
Public/Semi-Public	149.45	5.37%
Recreation	71.32	2.56%
Residential	563.91	20.26%
Retail/Office	531.67	19.10%
Right-Of-Way	0.07	0.00%
Vacant Nonresidential	102.88	3.70%
Vacant Residential	326.13	11.71%
Water	22.22	0.80%

Table 3-2: SCE Study Area Existing Land Use

According to **Table 3-3**, which reports generalized future land use, the study area is expected to see an increase in industrial uses. Occurring well within the Miami-Dade urban growth boundary, SR 826, a limited access expressway, is consistent with the character and intensity of surrounding development. This project is not expected to affect the current or future land use of the area. No additional right-of-way will be required. Therefore, the acreage per land use type is not expected to change as a direct result of the project. Furthermore, no impacts to recreation and open space are expected by the Build Alternative.

<b>Future Land Use</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Commercial	296.11	12.17%
Industrial	1268.80	52.13%
Institutional	29.67	1.22%
Mixed Use - General	23.27	0.96%
Recreation	94.50	3.88%
Residential High (> 12 DU/AC)	403.89	16.59%
Residential Medium (5.01 - 12 DU/AC)	211.70	8.70%
Transportation/Utilities	24.39	1.00%
Water	81.72	3.36%

Table 3-3: SCE Study Area Future Land Use

### 3.3.2 Local Plan Consistency

Local planning documents including Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs), local comprehensive plans, and sub-area plans help local governments establish priorities in investment and identify specific initiatives.

SR 826 Mainline, FM# 447165-1-22-01: The project is included in the FDOT fiscal year (FY) 2020 - FY 2024 Work Program for a PD&E Study and Railroads and Utilities that continues through 2021 and Preliminary Engineering in 2022. The project is also included in the FDOT FY 2020 - FY 2024 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for a PD&E Study in 2021. The project is not included in the Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization's (TPO's) FY 2021 - FY 2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The project is not included in the Miami-Dade TPO's 2045 LRTP nor in the FDOT's SIS First Five-Year Plan.

SR 826/Frontage Roads, FM# 441831-1-22-01 and 441830-1-22-01: Both projects are included in the FDOT FY 2020 - FY 2024 Work Program for Preliminary Engineering in 2021 and Contract Incentives and Design Build in 2024. Both projects are also included in the FDOT FY 2020 - FY 2024 STIP for Preliminary Engineering in 2021 and Contract Incentives and Design Build in 2024. The projects are additionally included in the Miami-Dade TPO's FY 2021 - FY 2025 TIP for Resurfacing. The projects are not included in the Miami-Dade TPO's 2045 LRTP.

### 3.3.3 Open Space and Focal Points

Due to the project improvements taking place within existing right-of-way no impacts are expected to community open space or focal points [seven (7) parks, one (1) golf club, two (2) hospitals, etc.]. Access to and the enjoyment of the these and other community features will likely be enhanced due to reduced congestion and improved traffic flow within the

general-purpose lanes. For a full list of the community features within a quarter-mile of the project corridor please see Section 4.4 of the SCE located in the project file.

### **3.3.4 Growth Patterns and Trends**

A population and employment analysis conducted by the Miami-Dade TPO for the 2045 LRTP shows that between 2015 and 2045 population is expected to grow by approximately 920,000 (34%) and employment is expected to grow by over 500,000 (38%) within the County. Traversing two (2) of the seven (7) transportation planning areas (Central and Northwest) the greatest employment growth within the County is expected to occur within the Northwest transportation planning area. This area expects an employment increase of 44.1 percent and a modest increase in population of 27.1 percent. The Central transportation planning area expects a lower rate of population and employment growth (32.7% and 36.6% respectively) when compared to the countywide averages. The projected growth in the area will result in a significant increase in travel demand and further deteriorate the conditions on the already congested SR 826 corridor.

## **3.4 Mobility**

This section identifies potential project effects on mobility and accessibility in the study area with emphasis on non-driving population groups (i.e., elderly, young, disabled, and low-income individuals). Changes to existing travel patterns, traffic circulation, or accessibility were assessed. The effects of tolling on low-income populations were considered based on the modification of the EL system.

Based on information included in the following subsections and improvement of accessibility and mobility overall, a Summary Degree of Effect of Enhanced has been assigned to the Mobility topic.

### **3.4.1 Modal Choices**

The Palmetto Metrorail Station is located adjacent to SR 826 and NW 77th Street. The Build Alternative will not result in any changes to the Metrorail line or the Palmetto Station. Metrorail is a dual track heavy rail system that operates throughout Miami-Dade County. Sixteen bus routes operate with the quarter-mile study area. Of these routes, Route 175 operates within SR 826 as an express service between the new park and ride lot at I-75 and Miami Gardens Drive to the Palmetto Metrorail Station via I-75 and Miami Gardens Drive. However, this route is temporarily suspended due to Covid 19. FDOT allows Miami Dade transit vehicles to use the express lanes free of charge, which improves frequency and reliability.

Additionally, the Flamingo and Marlin routes and Route 29 operates within the frontage road improvement limits. Pedestrian access to businesses along West Frontage Road/NW 77th Avenue and East Frontage Road/W 20th Avenue will also be enhanced through continuous sidewalk coverage within the frontage road project limits. This will make it easier for pedestrians to access the bus stops along the frontage road from their point of origin. Due to limited right-of-way, continuous bike lanes are not a part of this project.



### 3.4.2 Transportation Disadvantaged

SR 826 is an existing facility that is a part of Florida's turnpike system. The EL improvements proposed for the Build Alternative would involve variable tolled pricing otherwise known as congestion pricing. Congestion pricing bases the amount tolled on how congested the adjacent lanes (non-variable priced lanes) are and vice versa. Any motorists who choose to travel in the ELs could experience an economic impact.

ELs can benefit all drivers, including disadvantaged populations as congestion is reduced in the general-purpose lanes by those who chose to drive in the variable-priced lane. Regardless of income category, the County benefits from these lanes through enhanced service for public service vehicles (police, fire, and ambulances). Disadvantaged populations are historically more likely to use transit as a mode of transportation. Transit users do not pay to use the ELs due to an agreement between the transit agencies and FDOT. As stated earlier, this improves the frequency and reliability.

### 3.4.3 Connectivity and Traffic Circulation

The proposed southbound improvements include an additional general-purpose lane through the NW 103rd Street interchange and an extension of the auxiliary lane between NW 74th Street and US 27 interchanges. This will take place by modifying the NW 103rd Street westbound to southbound flyover ramp pier, thereby widening the SR 826 mainline bridge and mechanically stabilized earth (MSE) walls. By milling and resurfacing, restriping, and moving the delineators an additional general-purpose lane would exist southbound between NW 103rd Street and NW 154th Street. To improve weaving the southbound bridges over NW 74th Street, Metrorail, and FEC Rail will be widened in the Build Alternative. In addition, the existing southbound EL ingress currently located at north of NW 154th Street is expected to be relocated to NW 103rd Street in order to provide better access to residents in Hialeah, FL. In order to provide the minimum 10-foot recommended shoulder width northbound for both the inside and outside shoulders the mainline of the NW 103rd Street interchange will be widened.

### 3.4.4 Public Parking

As previously noted, no additional right-of-way will be required for this project. Therefore, no official public parking for any residence or business will be affected. It should be noted when looking at aerial imagery dated February 1, 2020 cars were parked on the East Frontage Road/W 20th Avenue north of W 44th PL in Hialeah, FL, which is within FDOT right-of-way. Based on property appraiser records the parked cars appear to be residents or visitors of the Towers of Westland Condominium Complex. Coordination with the complex has been ongoing and should continue as the PD&E Study moves forward.

## 3.5 Aesthetic Effects

This section assesses the project's compatibility with the community's aesthetic values related to noise, vibration, and physical appearance. The section examines the type and intensity of project impacts on noise sensitive sites (e.g., residential areas, hotels, nursing homes, and parks); vibration sensitive sites (e.g., residential uses, eye clinics, dentist offices, and hospitals); special viewsheds and vistas; community focal points; historic structures, districts, and landmarks; and community character.

Based on information included in the following subsections describing noise and visual impacts, a Summary Degree of Effect Minimal has been assigned to the Aesthetics topic.

### **3.5.1 Noise and Vibration**

In accordance with traffic noise study requirements set forth by both the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and FDOT, noise barriers were considered for all noise sensitive receptor sites where design year Build Alternative traffic noise levels were predicted to equal or exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC). The details of this analysis are presented in the project's Noise Study Report (NSR). Noise barriers were evaluated at nine (9) locations to mitigate noise impacts. However, it was determined that none of the noise barriers were reasonable and/or feasible and none are recommended for further consideration.

### **3.5.2 Viewsheds and Compatibility**

Impacts of views/vistas from/of SR 826 are anticipated to be limited as the roadway is an existing facility. The Build Alternative involves bridge widening at NW 103rd Street, however, the impacts are expected to be minimal. This section of the SR 826 corridor is approximately 9.5 miles and is urbanized, supporting a wide range of land uses at varying densities. Development along the corridor incorporates larger structures such as the Westland Mall, Palmetto General Hospital, and numerous hotels and office buildings. These larger buildings along with transportation infrastructure including rail lines, bridges, and roadways all contribute to the existing visual character of the area where large built elements are not uncommon. Residential parcels make up approximately 20 percent of the land use within a quarter mile of the project and occur at a smaller scale. As existing structures these residences are unlikely to experience viewshed effects. Some homeowners and businesses may see effects from the removal of trees, which often serve as a visual and sound barrier between roadways and homeowners. However, the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Port St Lucie Metropolitan Area is among the ten (10) largest metropolitan areas in the nation. Major infrastructure is common in major cities and would not be unique to SR 826. The proposed roadways would generally fit with the character of other major infrastructure elements found in Miami-Dade County.

Continued public coordination is recommended to identify context sensitive design solutions that lessen the visual impact of the Build Alternative. Based on the limited potential for contention related to project aesthetics, a Summary Degree of Effect of Minimal has been assigned to the Aesthetics topic.

## **3.6 Relocation Potential**

The proposed project, as presently conceived, will not displace any residences or businesses within the community. Should this change over the course of the project, the Florida Department of Transportation will carry out a Right of Way and Relocation Assistance Program in accordance with Florida Statute 421.55, Relocation of displaced persons.

## 4. Cultural Resources

### 4.1 Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

A Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS), conducted in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800, was performed for the project, and the resources listed below were identified within the project Area of Potential Effect (APE). FDOT found that some of these resources meet the eligibility criteria for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) has concurred with this determination. After application of the Criteria of Adverse Effect, and in consultation with SHPO, FDOT has determined that the proposed project will have No Adverse Effect on these resources.

A CRAS was developed for the PD&E Study. The purpose of the CRAS was to locate and evaluate archaeological and historic resources within the area APE and to assess their eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) according to the criteria set forth in 36 CFR Section 60.4.

This assessment complies with the revised Chapter 267, Florida Statutes (FS); and standards embodied in the Florida Division of Historical Resources (FDHR) Cultural Resource Management Standards and Operational Manual (February 2003), and Chapter 1A-46 (Archaeological and Historical Report Standards and Guidelines), Florida Administrative Code (FAC). In addition, this report was prepared in conformity with standards set forth in Part 2, Chapter 8 (Archaeological and Historical Resources) of the FDOT PD&E Manual. All work also conforms to professional guidelines set forth in the Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (48 FR 44716, as amended and annotated).

The current study area has been surveyed and evaluated during several recent studies. In 2010, Janus Research conducted a CRAS of the I-75 PD&E Study from SR 826 to North of Florida's Turnpike (HEFT), Miami-Dade County, Florida, FM No. 420669-1-22-01 [Florida Master Site File (FMSF) Manuscript No. 17998] as part of a PD&E study that included the evaluation of proposed improvements along SR 826 from NW 103rd Street to NW 154th Street. The SHPO concurred with the determinations and findings of this survey on February 15, 2011. In 2012, Janus Research conducted a CRAS of the SR 826 Managed Lanes PD&E Study, FM No. 418423-3-22-01 (FMSF Manuscript No. 19276) as part of another PD&E study that included the evaluation of proposed improvements along SR 826 from south of SR 836/Dolphin Expressway to NW 103rd Street. The SHPO concurred with the relevant determinations and findings of this survey on August 3, 2012.

In 2016, Janus Research conducted the CRAS Reevaluation for the SR 826 from Flagler Street to NW 154th Street and SR 93/I-75 from SR 826 to NW 170th Street, Miami-Dade County, Florida (FPID Nos. 432687-1-52-01 and 432687-1-52-01; FMSF Manuscript No. 23335). This survey was an update to the 2010 and 2012 CRAS reports conducted due to design changes to the Design Build project to construct improvements evaluated during both the above referenced 2010 PD&E study, as well as the 2012 PD&E study for SR 826 from NW 103rd Street to NW 154th Street (432687-3-22-01). This project converted an existing GP lane that was originally built to be operated as a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane, into an EL. The project also provided a second EL through widening and reduced lane width, shoulder width, and EL

buffer width for the majority of the project limits. The SHPO concurred with the determinations and findings of this survey on November 2, 2016.

After the Palmetto ELs were opened to traffic in August 2019 and toll collection in September 2019, additional congestion and large differential between EL higher speeds and GP lanes lower speeds were observed in both the northbound and southbound directions during peak travel times. Janus Research prepared two CRAS updates, Palmetto Express Lanes Modification - Interim Solution: CRAS Update to SR 826 PD&E Study from South of SR 836 to North of SR 93/I-75 (FPID No. 418423-3-22-01), Miami-Dade County, Florida and Palmetto Express Lanes Modification - Interim Solution: CRAS Update to SR 93/I-75 PD&E Study from SR 826 to North of Florida's Turnpike (FPID No. 420669-1-22-01), Miami-Dade County, Florida (2020a; 2020b) to coordinate an interim solution for the northbound lanes to be implemented immediately and to provide measurable improvements without the need to acquire right-of-way and to avoid impacts to adjacent Florida Gas Transmission lines. The SHPO concurred with the findings of each of these reports on April 2, 2020.

The current survey was conducted for this PD&E study to address a permanent solution for both the northbound and southbound lanes. This survey focused on identifying archaeological resources within the current APE as well as identifying historic resources which have become historic since the time of the previous studies and confirming there are no changes to the eligibility status of the previously identified National Register-eligible historic resources.

Two (2) archaeological resources (8DA40 and 8DA75) were identified within the archaeological APE during the background research. The pedestrian survey did not identify any remains of these sites and confirmed the disturbed nature of the corridor. Subsurface testing within the corridor was not possible due to the extent of hardscape, underground utilities and drainage, and land modification. Previous archaeological monitoring conducted by Archaeological and Historical Conservancy, Inc. during the construction of the improvements for the most recent PD&E in the area documented the presence of fill and extremely disturbed soils within the limits of the previously recorded archaeological sites. The desktop analysis and pedestrian survey determined that the portion of the archaeological APE that was not previously comprehensively surveyed exhibited a low potential for containing intact archaeological sites. No Miami-Dade County-designated archaeological sites or zones are located within the APE.

The historic resources survey resulted in the identification of 49 historic resources within the historic resources APE. The resources include 15 previously recorded historic resources and 34 newly recorded historic resources. The 15 previously recorded historic resources include: six (6) historic linear resources, six (6) historic structures, two (2) historic bridges, and one (1) designed historic landscape. Two (2) of these previously recorded historic resources have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register by the SHPO: the Miami Canal (8DA6525) and the FEC Railway (8DA10107). Twelve (12) previously recorded historic resources were determined ineligible for listing in the National Register by the SHPO (8DA6352, 8DA11420, 8DA11680-8DA11683, 8DA12380-8DA12382, 8DA12389, 8DA12390, and 8DA15160). The one (1) remaining previously recorded historic resource, 8DA12383, was determined to have insufficient information for an evaluation of National Register-eligibility by the SHPO.

FMSF forms were updated for two (2) previously recorded historic resources: 8DA12382 and 8DA12383. The FMSF form for 8DA12382 was updated to correct the address, which is incorrectly listed in the FMSF, but no changes to the resource since it was last recorded were observed, and it is still considered National Register-ineligible. The FMSF form for 8DA12383 was updated to correct the address, which is also incorrectly listed in the FMSF, and to update the evaluation of significance since it was first recorded since the SHPO did not provide a determination of eligibility. 8DA12383 exhibits a common architectural style found in South Florida, and limited research did not reveal any historical associations with significant people or events. Therefore, 8DA12383 is considered ineligible for listing in the National Register, either individually or as part of a historic district.



The 34 newly recorded resources within the historic resources APE include 27 historic structures (8DA19117-8DA19143), four (4) historic resource groups (8DA19147-8DA19150), and three (3) historic bridges (8DA19154-8DA19156). The four (4) newly recorded resource groups include one (1) industrial complex and three (3) condominium complexes located on parcels that are partially within the historic resources APE. All 31 newly recorded historic structures and four (4) historic resource groups exhibit common architectural styles and design types found in South Florida. Many of the structures feature alterations or modifications which diminish their historic physical integrity including replaced windows, doors, or exterior material, the addition of non-historic exterior ornament, or additions to the historic structure. Research conducted during this study did not identify known associations with significant people or historical events. The portion of Miami-Dade County surrounding the historic resources APE was subject to large scale development beginning in the 1960s which coincided with increased population growth and the need for new residential, commercial, and industrial development. Therefore, these 31 newly recorded historic resources are considered ineligible for listing in the National Register, either individually or as part of a historic district.

The three (3) bridges identified during this study (8DA19154-8DA19156) are common bridge types, reinforced concrete slab and prestressed concrete multi-beam, and meet the criteria for the 2012 Program Comment issued by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), Streamlining Section 106 Review for Actions Affecting Post-1945 Concrete and Steel Bridges (ACHP 2012). All three (3) bridges are exempt from Section 106 consideration and were not evaluated for eligibility for the National Register, however they were recorded and documented in the FMSF.

The CRAS was submitted to FDHR on November 13, 2020. The FDOT received concurrence on the findings of the CRAS on 12/10/2020 (see **Attachment - SHPO Concurrence Letter**).

Please see the CRAS located in the project file for additional information on cultural resources.

## **4.2 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.

## **4.3 Recreational Areas and Protected Lands**

There are no other protected public lands in the project area.

Nine (9) recreational areas exist within close proximity (0.25 miles) to the project corridor. These areas include the following:

- Don Quijote Plaza
- Garden of the Arts Park
- Miami Lakes Mini Park (P-28)

- Miami Lakes Mini Park (P-50)
- Miami Lakes Mini Park (P-51)
- Miami Lakes Mini Park (P-52)
- Miami Lakes Mini Park (P-55)
- Miami Lakes Mini Park (P-56)
- Miami Lakes Mini Park (P-86)

All of these facilities appear to have been established for passive recreation use for local neighborhoods. All of the sites appear to contain a mixture of landscaped hardwoods and sod, and are regularly disturbed due to pedestrian use and maintenance (mowing) offering marginal habitat for protected species. Due to the distance of these areas from the project corridor, no impacts to these recreational areas will occur as a result of the proposed project.

## 5. Natural Resources

### 5.1 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.

Please see the Natural Resources Evaluation (NRE) located in the project file for additional information on wetlands and other surface waters.

The water habitats within the Build Alternative consist primarily of stormwater drainage conveyance features, stormwater detention/retention features, wetlands, canals, and surface water features. Based on in-house reviews and field verification, eight (8) stormwater drainage conveyance features, 34 stormwater drainage detention/retention features, six (6) wetlands, three (3) South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD)-owned canals, five (5) Miami Dade County-owned canals, and three (3) surface water features, comprising a total of 83.59 acres, were identified within the limits of the project study area (see **Attachment - Wetlands/Surface Waters/Drainage Features Within Project Study Area** ). **Table 5-1** lists the individual surface water habitats present within the project study area, by Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System (FLUCFCS) code, US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) classification, and acreage. Descriptions of each surface water habitat are also provided below.

ID	Type	FLUCFCS Description	FLUCFCS Code	FWS Classification	Acres in Study Area
DC02	Stormwater Drainage Conveyance Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.14
DC03	Stormwater Drainage Conveyance Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A/C	0.14
DC04	Stormwater Drainage Conveyance Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.12
DC05	Stormwater Drainage Conveyance Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.05
DC06	Stormwater Drainage Conveyance Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.05
DC07	Stormwater Drainage Conveyance Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PSS3/EM1A/C	0.26
DC08	Stormwater Drainage Conveyance Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PSS3/EM1A/C	0.04
DC09	Stormwater Drainage Conveyance Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A/C	0.12
DD01	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.82
DD02	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.28
DD03	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	1.42

DD04	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.84
DD05	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.52
DD06	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.52
DD07	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.35
DD08	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.33
DD09	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A/C	1.20
DD10	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.14
DD11	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	1.40
DD12	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	1.98
DD13	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PSS1C	0.19
DD14	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.18
DD15	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	1.63
DD16	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.49
DD17	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.44
DD18	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.69
DD19	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.82
DD20	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.47
DD21	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.06
DD22	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.37
DD23	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	1.89
DD24	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.27
DD25	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.45
DD26	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.11
DD27	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.30

DD28	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.40
DD29	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.46
DD30	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	1.09
DD31	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.11
DD32	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.84
DD33	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Vegetated Non-forested Wetland	640	PEM1A	0.24
DD34	Stormwater Drainage Detention/Retention Feature	Freshwater Cattail Marsh	6411	PEM1A	3.10
W01	Forested Wetland	Cypress, Wetland Shrub	621,631	PFO2/SS3E	1.12
W02	Shrub Wetland	Wetland Shrub	631	PSS3E	0.17
W03	Forested Wetland	Cypress, Wetland Shrub	621,631	PFO2/SS3E	1.00
W04	Forested Wetland	Cypress	621	PFO2E	0.24
W05	Forested Wetland	Cypress	621	PFO2E	0.43
W06	Forested Wetland	Cypress	621	PFO2E	0.37
SW03	Surface Water Feature [Dressels Dairy Canal]	Streams and Waterways	510	R2UBHx	4.13
SW04	Surface Water Feature [NW 58th Street Canal]	Streams and Waterways	510	R2UBHx	1.70
SW05	Surface Water Feature [Miami Canal (C-6)]	Streams and Waterways	510	R2UBHx	4.88
SW06	Surface Water Feature [Little River Canal (C-7)]	Streams and Waterways	510	R2UBHx	1.14
SW07	Surface Water Feature [Gratigny Canal]	Streams and Waterways	510	R2UBHx	2.75
SW08	Surface Water Feature (Wet Pond)	Reservoirs Less Than 10 Acres	534	PUBHx	2.82
SW09	Surface Water Feature [Grahams Dairy Canal]	Streams and Waterways	510	R2UBHx	3.02
SW10	Surface Water Feature (Wet Pond)	Reservoirs Less Than 10 Acres	534	PUBHx	0.34
SW11	Surface Water Feature [Biscayne Canal (C-8)]	Streams and Waterways	510	R2UBHx	3.28
SW12	Surface Water Feature (Peter's Pike Canal)	Streams and Waterways	510	R2UBHx	27.81
SW13	Surface Water Feature (Wet Pond)	Reservoirs Less Than 10 Acres	534	PUBHx	3.07
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>83.59</b>

Table 5-1: Summary of Individual Water Features

**\*FWS Wetland Descriptions:**

PEM1A: Palustrine, Emergent, Persistent, Temporarily Flooded

PEM1A/C: Palustrine, Emergent, Persistent, Temporarily Flooded/Seasonally Flooded

PSS3/EM1A/C: Palustrine, Emergent, Persistent/Palustrine, Scrub-Shrub, Broad-Leaved Evergreen, Temporarily Flooded/Seasonally Flooded



PSS1C: Palustrine, Scrub-Shrub, Broad-Leaved Deciduous, Seasonally Flooded

PFO2E: Palustrine, Forested, Needle-leaved Deciduous, Seasonally Flooded/Saturated

R2UBHx: Riverine, Lower Perennial, Unconsolidated Bottom, Permanently Flooded, Excavated

PUBHx: Palustrine Unconsolidated Bottom, Permanently Flooded, Excavated

### 5.1.1 Drainage Feature, Wetland, and Surface Water Impacts

No impacts will result from the No-Build Alternative. The viable Build Alternative will result in approximately 0.005 acre (203 square feet) of impacts to permitted drainage feature 19 (DD19) (stormwater drainage detention/retention feature). The impacts are a result of the addition of a new ITS structure and parking area, which required widening of the southbound off-bound ramp to US 27. No impacts to the identified wetland features in the vicinity of the I-75 interchange will occur as part of the project. In addition, no new impacts to surface water features, including the Miami Canal (C-6), Little River Canal (C-7), and Biscayne Canal (C-8), as well as the Miami-Dade County owned canals, will occur. The existing features within the project study area all provide low quality habitat due to their location with a densely developed urban area and proximity to the existing roadway corridor.

The proposed permitted drainage feature impacts will occur to an excavated stormwater drainage detention/retention feature associated with the existing SR 826 permitted stormwater management system. The proposed impacts to this feature will be compensated for through the design and construction of the new stormwater management system. Drainage feature DD19 will be expanded by approximately 565.4 square feet just south of the area of impact. As such, compensatory mitigation is not proposed, and a wetland functional assessment was not conducted as part of the NRE.

### 5.1.2 Avoidance and Minimization

Avoidance and minimization of impacts were demonstrated through utilization of the existing, previously disturbed right-of-way for the majority of the study area. No impacts to the identified wetland features in the vicinity of the I-75 interchange will occur as part of the project. In addition, no new impacts to surface water features will occur. Additionally, all unavoidable impacts will be minimized to greatest extent practicable during the project's design and permitting phase, and Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented during construction and operation of the project in accordance with the latest edition of FDOT's *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*.

### 5.1.3 Wetlands Findings

The proposed Build Alternative was evaluated for impacts to wetlands and surface waters in accordance with EO 11990. No impacts to vegetated wetland resources will occur as a result of the viable Build Alternative. However, based on the location of the existing roadway network and the need for the proposed improvements, the FDOT has determined that there is no practicable alternative to completely avoid impacts to the surface water features identified. The proposed project will have no significant short-term or long-term adverse impacts to wetlands or surface waters. In accordance with Executive Order (EO) 11990, the FDOT has undertaken all actions to avoid and minimize the destruction, loss or degradation of wetlands and surface waters, and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands/surface waters in carrying out the agency's responsibilities.

The proposed viable Build Alternative will result in 0.005 acre of impacts to excavated stormwater conveyance features. The proposed impacts to this feature will be compensated for through the design and construction of the new stormwater

management system. Drainage feature DD19 will be expanded by approximately 565.4 square feet just south of the area of impact. The final area of surface water impact for the selected alternative is anticipated to be refined during the final design and permitting phase of the project.

It should be noted that although DD34 functions as an onsite stormwater retention area, this feature is a historical mitigation area associated with the surrounding commercial development. Its current state is highly disturbed and overrun by invasive aquatic plant species and it receives stormwater runoff via overland flow and from an existing FDOT overflow pipe in the northeast corner of the system. No impacts to feature DD34 will occur as a result of this project.

#### **5.1.4 Agency Coordination**

While mitigation is not anticipated for this project, the FDOT will coordinate with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and SFWMD to ensure that any unanticipated mitigation requirements are fully satisfied. The specific type and extent of any required mitigation will be finalized during permitting. Wetland impacts which will result from the construction of this project will be mitigated pursuant to Section 373.4137, FS, to satisfy all mitigation requirements of Part IV of Chapter 373, FS, and 33 US Code (USC) 1344.

Refer to Section 7, Permits, of this document for additional agency coordination details.

## **5.2 Aquatic Preserves and Outstanding FL Waters**

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

## **5.3 Water Resources**

This project is located in Miami-Dade County, within the City of Hialeah, the City of Hialeah Gardens, the City of Doral, the City of Miami Lakes, and the Town of Medley, and is within the jurisdictional boundary of the SFWMD, USACE, and Miami-Dade County Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources (DRER). The proposed roadway improvements along SR 826 are within the SFWMD Miami Canal (C-6), Little River Canal (C-7), Peter's Pike Canal, and NW 122nd Street Canal Basins.

The SFWMD, DRER, and the FDOT have established several criteria for water quality, depending on the proposed type of stormwater treatment facility. The existing conditions throughout the project limits generally consist of open and closed drainage systems with swales, ditch bottom inlets along both sides of the roadway, French drains, and infield retention ponds. Existing facilities are currently providing water quality treatment and attenuation of roadway runoff.

The proposed SR 826 drainage improvements will maintain the existing drainage basins and their corresponding outfalls. The general limits of the existing basins will remain the same in the post-development conditions. Additional French drains are being included where widening is proposed in the project in order to compensate for the additional 2.50 acres (SR 826 mainline - 0.91 acre, frontage roads - 1.59 acres) of new impervious surface along SR 826. The existing weirs in some of the basins will be modified in order to ensure that post-development discharge requirements are met for all receiving

surface water bodies. Water quantity and quality criteria will be met with construction of the new stormwater management system for the project. The improvements will have no negative drainage impacts to the surrounding areas and the proposed stormwater management facilities will have the capacity to adequately treat and attenuate roadway runoff within the project limits.

The proposed frontage road roadway improvements are within the SFWMD's Little River Canal (C-7) basin. The existing conditions throughout the project limits generally consist of an open drainage system with swale and ditch bottom inlets along both sides of each frontage road (West Frontage Road/NW 77th Avenue and East Frontage Road/W 20th Avenue). West Frontage Road/NW 77th Avenue has a trench drain along the west side of the roadway from north of NW 98th Street to NW 103rd Street. Existing facilities for both frontage roads are not providing adequate water quality treatment or attenuation of roadway runoff. The proposed drainage design consists of adjusting the existing ditch-bottom inlets and French drains impacted by the proposed shoulder widening and re-grading the sod at locations with existing ponding to improve the drainage pattern. All proposed stormwater management facilities will provide the necessary water quality treatment volume and limit the post-development peak discharge rate into the Little River Canal (C-7) to the pre-development peak discharge rate. Water quality treatment and discharge attenuation will be provided via the existing trench drain and proposed French drains.

Based on the drainage design evaluation for the proposed improvements, the stormwater management facilities (including swales, retention areas, and ponds) will meet FDOT drainage criteria as well as SFWMD and DRER permit criteria. The improvements will have no negative drainage impacts to the surrounding areas and the proposed stormwater management facilities will have the capacity to adequately treat and attenuate roadway runoff within the project limits. Therefore, water quality impacts to downstream receiving waters are not anticipated to occur.

The project limits lie within the boundaries of the Biscayne Sole Source Aquifer. In accordance with the Sole Source Aquifer Program, authorized by Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) that no significant impacts to the Biscayne Aquifer are anticipated as a result of the proposed project on 12/16/2020 (**Attachment - EPA Concurrence Letter**).

Please see the Water Quality Impact Evaluation (WQIE) Checklist located in the project file for additional information on water resources.

## 5.4 Wild and Scenic Rivers

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

## 5.5 Floodplains

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

Protection of floodplains and floodways is required by EO 11988, "Floodplain Management", USDOT Order 5650.2, "Floodplain Management and Protection", and Federal-Aid Policy Guide 23 CFR 650A. Per Chapter 13 (Floodplains) of

the FDOT PD&E Manual, "the intent of these regulations is to avoid or minimize highway encroachments with the 100 year (base) floodplain, where practicable, and to avoid supporting land use development which is incompatible with floodplain values. Where encroachment is unavoidable, the regulations require the FDOT to take appropriate measures to minimize impacts". Location hydraulic studies are required by the Federal-Aid Policy Guide 23 CFR 650A Sec. 650.111. The magnitude of the study reflects the level of significance for floodplain encroachment as determined in the Class of Action Determination from the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Programming Screen. For this PD&E Study, the level of significance for floodplain encroachments is "minimal encroachments", reflective of projects with 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 the impacts will consist of applying the FDOT's drainage design standards and following the SFWMD's procedures to achieve results that will not increase or significantly change the floodplain elevations and/or limits.

Based on a review of available GIS data and the Miami-Dade County Flood Zone data, the project corridor is located within Zone AH and Zone X of the 100-year floodplain. However, this project will not: 1) affect flood heights or base floodplain limits, 2) result in increased or new adverse environmental impacts, 3) increase flood risks or damage, or 4) significantly change the potential for interruption or termination of emergency service or emergency evacuation routes. Therefore, this project will not encroach upon the base floodplain, as defined in Part 2, Chapter 13 (Floodplains) of the FDOT PD&E Manual.

## 5.6 Coastal Barrier Resources

The Coastal Barrier Resources Act of 1982 (CBRA) and the Coastal Barrier Improvement Act of 1990 (CBIA) are not applicable to this project since there is no federal funding.

## 5.7 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.

The project alternative was evaluated for potential occurrences of federally listed and state listed animal and plant species in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended; the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act; the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA); Part 2, Chapter 16 (Protected Species and Habitat) of the FDOT PD&E Manual; the Florida Endangered and Threatened Species Act, Section 379.2291, FS; and Chapters 5B-40 and 68A-27 of the FAC. Based on this evaluation, a total of ten (10) federally listed animal species, seven (7) state listed animal species, and six (6) state listed plant species, were identified as potentially occurring within the limits of the viable Build Alternative. Additionally, while not state or federally listed under the ESA, the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) was included in the protected species analysis due to the regulatory protections associated with this species (see **Attachment - Species and Habitat Maps**). **Table 5-3** provides a summary of the federally listed and state listed animal and plant species with potential to occur within the limits of the viable Build Alternative, along with their corresponding effect determinations.

The project study area was also evaluated for the presence of federally-designated Critical Habitat as defined by Congress in 50 CFR 17. Based on this evaluation, no federally-designated Critical Habitat exists within the project study

area, however, it was determined that state-designated Critical Habitat exists for the West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*) within the Miami Canal (C-6), NW 25th Street Canal, and Northline Canal. Based on the availability of habitat, including designated Critical Habitat, the potential for occurrence of this species within the study area is High.

<b>Federally Listed Wildlife Species</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Federal Status</b>	<b>State Status</b>	<b>Occurrence Potential</b>	<b>Effect Determination</b>
<b>Mammals</b>						
	Florida Bonneted Bat	<i>Eumops floridanus</i>	E	FE	Low	No Effect
	West Indian Manatee	<i>Trichechus manatus latirostris</i>	T	FT	High	May affect, not likely to adversely affect
<b>Reptiles</b>						
	American Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus acutus</i>	T	FT	Low	No Effect
	Eastern Indigo Snake	<i>Drymarchon corais couperi</i>	T	FT	Low	May affect, not likely to adversely affect
<b>Birds</b>						
	Bachman's Warbler	<i>Vermivora bachmanii</i>	E	FE	Low	No Effect
	Everglade Snail Kite	<i>Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus</i>	E	FE	Low	No Effect
	Wood Stork	<i>Mycteria americana</i>	T	FT	High	No Effect
<b>Insects</b>						
	Bartram's Hairstreak Butterfly	<i>Strymon acis bartrami</i>	E	FE	None	No Effect
	Florida Leafwing Butterfly	<i>Anaea troglodyta floralis</i>	E	FE	None	No Effect
	Miami Blue Butterfly	<i>Cyclargus thomasi bethunebakeri</i>	E	FE	None	No Effect
<b>State Listed Wildlife Species</b>	<b>Reptiles</b>					
	Gopher Tortoise	<i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>	C(1)	ST	Low	No Effect Anticipated
<b>Birds</b>						
	Florida Burrowing Owl	<i>Athene cunicularia floridana</i>	NL	ST	Low	No Effect Anticipated
	Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	NL	ST	Moderate	No Adverse Effect Anticipated
	Roseate Spoonbill	<i>Platalea ajaja</i>	NL	ST	Low	No Effect Anticipated
	Southeastern American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius paulus</i>	NL	ST	Low	No Effect Anticipated
	Tricolored Heron	<i>Egretta tricolor</i>	NL	ST	High	No Adverse Effect Anticipated
	Least Tern	<i>Sternula antillarum</i>	NL	ST	Low	No Effect Anticipated



State Listed Plant Species	Plants					
	Golden Leather Fern	<i>Acrostichum aureum</i>	NL	ST	Planted within ROW for landscaping	No Effect Anticipated
	Everglades Palm	<i>Acoelorrhaphe wrightii</i>	NL	ST	Planted within ROW for landscaping	No Effect Anticipated
	Satin-Leaf	<i>Chrysophyllum oliviforme</i>	NL	ST	Planted within ROW for landscaping	No Effect Anticipated
	Simpson's Stopper	<i>Myrcianthes fragrans</i>	NL	ST	Planted within ROW for landscaping	No Effect Anticipated
	Royal Palm	<i>Roystonea elata</i>	NL	SE	Planted within ROW for landscaping	No Effect Anticipated
	West Indian Mahogany	<i>Swietenia mahagoni</i>	NL	ST	Planted within ROW for landscaping	No Effect Anticipated

Table 5-3: Summary of Listed Species and Effect Determinations

F = Federally Listed / S = State Listed / E = Endangered / T = Threatened / NL = Not Listed

(1) The gopher tortoise is currently a candidate species for federal protection under the ESA.

Coordination with the FWS for concurrence on the federal effect determinations per Section 7 of the ESA was not initiated by FDOT since the project is solely State funded. FWS coordination is expected to be initiated by the USACE as part of the Section 404 Clean Water Act (CWA) permitting process.

Please see the NRE located in the project file for additional information on protected species and habitat.

## 5.8 Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)

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

## 6. Physical 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 traffic noise analysis was conducted in accordance with Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations Part 772 (23CFR772), Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise (July 13, 2010) and Part 2, Chapter 18 (Highway Traffic Noise) of the FDOT PD&E Manual (dated July 1, 2020). Traffic noise levels were predicted for noise sensitive locations along the project corridor for the existing conditions and the design year (2045) No-Build and recommended Build Alternative. Build Alternative traffic noise levels are predicted to range from approximately 37.2 to 79.0 dB(A) during the project's design year. Worst-case design year traffic noise levels with the Build Alternative are predicted to be no more than 1.9 dB(A) greater than existing traffic noise levels.

Design year traffic noise levels with the planned improvements are predicted to approach or exceed the FHWA NAC for residential use [67 dB(A)] at 416 residences and five (5) special use/non-residential sites. Therefore, noise sensitive sites are impacted by the planned improvements. In accordance with traffic noise study requirements set forth by both the FHWA and FDOT, noise barriers were considered for all noise sensitive sites where design year Build Alternative traffic noise levels were predicted to approach, equal or exceed the NAC.

Noise barriers were evaluated at nine (9) locations to mitigate these predicted noise impacts. However, due to unreasonable cost and/or poor abatement performance, none of the noise barriers that were evaluated were found reasonable or feasible and none are recommended for design or construction. Based on the noise analyses performed to date, there are no apparent solutions available to mitigate the noise impacts at any of 416 impacted residences and five (5) impacted special land use sites. The traffic noise impacts to these noise sensitive sites are considered to be an unavoidable consequence of the project.

Please see the NSR located in the project file for additional information on highway traffic noise.

### 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.

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 December 14, 2016 and executed by FHWA and FDOT.

The proposed project is located in Miami-Dade County, an area currently designated as being in attainment for particulate matter (2.5 microns in size and 10 microns in size) and carbon monoxide (CO).

The project alternatives were not subjected to a CO screening model since the project is a State Environmental Impact Report and does not meet the following thresholds per Section 19.2.2.1, Part 2, Chapter 19 of the PD&E Manual:

1. The project is an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and/or;
2. The total vehicular delay time (veh-hours) at an intersection in the design year build condition is projected to increase when compared to the design year no-build condition and/or;
3. The project is expected to have community controversy regarding air quality. (Coordination with District specialists may be required to determine potential community controversy.)

Florida is in attainment for particulate matter; therefore, no project level analysis is needed. In addition, since the Class of Action has been determined to be a State Environmental Impact Report, the project has no potential meaningful Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSAT) effects and is exempt from a MSAT analysis.

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.

Please see the Air Quality Technical Memorandum (AQTM) located in the project file for additional information on air quality.

## 6.3 Contamination

In accordance with Part 2, Chapter 20 of the FDOT PD&E Manual, potential contamination impacts in the area surrounding the project corridor were assessed for the viable Build Alternative as well as the No-Build Alternative.

After a review of all available data, such as agency file reviews at Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), the Environmental Data Resources (EDR) database report, aerial photography, and confirmed by site reconnaissance, contamination of soil and groundwater has been documented in the vicinity of the project corridor. A total of 32 sites of potential environmental concern were identified for the project corridor; of these, five (5) sites are rated as High risk, three (3) sites are rated as Medium risk, 22 sites are rated as Low risk and two (2) sites are rated as No risk ( **Table 6-1**) (see **Attachment - Potential Contamination Site Map**). The status of the sites will be updated accordingly at each future design phase. Remaining sites identified in the above-referenced sources are not considered to pose potential contamination concerns because of the current regulatory status of the site and/or the distance from the project corridor.

Site ID(1)	Property Description	FDEP/DERM Facility ID	Environmental Compliance Agency	Regulated Storage Tanks on Site	Distance from Project	Contamination Concern/Regulatory Status	Risk Rating
N1	Atlas Chemical Co 4801 NW 77th Avenue Miami, Florida - 33178	13-8522059	DERM	No	Adjacent	No contamination concern	NO
N2	Paul's Tires, Inc. 7601 NW 66th Street Miami, Florida	59941	DERM	No	Adjacent	Potential petroleum/ heavy metal contamination in soil and/or groundwater.	NO
L1	Tropic Air Conditioning 3000 NW 77th Court Miami, Florida - 33178	13-9103501	DERM	No	Adjacent	No contamination concern	LOW
L2	Cruise America Inc. 7740 NW 34th Street Miami, Florida	13-8944102	DERM	No	Adjacent	No Cleanup Required (NREQ)	LOW
L3	Southern Bell-Miami BSC M6103 7710-7780 NW 50th Street Medley, Florida	13-8734471	DERM	No	Adjacent	Historic petroleum contamination. No Further Action (NFA) approved in May 1997.	LOW
L4	Surreys of FL Inc. 5125 NW 77th Avenue Miami, Florida - 33166	13-9201197	DERM	No	Adjacent	Historic petroleum contamination. Provisional NFA approved in September 2020	LOW
L5	General Trading Inc. 5200 NW 77th Court Hialeah, Florida	13-9103406	FDEP	No	Adjacent	Potential petroleum contamination in soil and groundwater.	LOW
L6	H E Nason Inc. 7670 NW 55th Street Miami, FL - 33166	13-8943074	FDEP	No	150 feet east	Historic petroleum contamination. Site Rehabilitation Completion Order (SRCO) approved in 1990.	LOW
L7	ABC Transfer Spill - ROW SB SR 826 & NW 58th Street Miami, Florida	13-9809219	DERM	No	On the project corridor	Historic petroleum contamination. NFA approved in June 2010.	LOW

L8	Miami Service Express 7555 NW 63rd Street Miami, Florida	13-9063880	DERM	No	Adjacent	Historic petroleum contamination. Pending receipt of NFA status.	LOW
L9	ABF Freight System Inc. 6402 NW 74th Avenue Miami, FL - 33166	13-8504123	FDEP	Yes	500 feet east	Historic petroleum contamination. SRCO approved in September 2017.	LOW
L10	Motor Service Inc. 6600 NW 77th Court Miami, FL - 33166	13-8628923	DERM	No	Adjacent	NREQ	LOW
L11	Wollard Airport Equipment Co. 6950 NW 77th Court Miami, Florida	13-8522034	FDEP	No	50 feet west	Historic petroleum contamination. SRCO approved in October 1995.	LOW
L12	Murton Roofing 7600 NW 74th Avenue Miami, Florida	13-9804252	FDEP	No	Adjacent	Historic petroleum contamination. SRCO approved in July 1996.	LOW
L13	Jorge Yesan-Truck Accident NW South River Drive & SR 826 Medley, Florida	13-9807625	DERM	No	On the project corridor	NREQ	LOW
L14	Murphy USA #6507 9203 NW 77th Avenue Hialeah, Florida - 33016	13-8943074	DERM	Yes	80 feet west	Historic petroleum contamination. NFA approved in January 2013.	LOW
L15	Southern Winds Hospital 4225 W 20th Avenue Hialeah, Florida	13-9400196	FDEP	Yes	50 feet east	Historic petroleum contamination. SRCO approved in December 2000.	LOW
L16	Cummins Southeastern Power Inc. 9900 West 77th Avenue Hialeah, Florida - 33016	13-8733322	DERM	No	75 feet west	Historic petroleum contamination. NFA approved in April 2014	LOW
L17	Miami Tiresoles, Inc. 7800 NW 103rd Street Hialeah, Florida	13-8503533	DERM	No	300 feet west	Historic petroleum contamination. SRCO approved in April 2019.	LOW



L18	Exxon #6839-Holiday 1990 W 49th Street Hialeah, Florida	13-8628903	FDEP/ DERM	No	Adjacent	Historic petroleum contamination. SRCO approved in 1993.	LOW
L19	U-Haul Center of Hialeah 6150 W 20th Avenue Hialeah, Florida	13-9101092	DERM	No	75 feet west	Historic petroleum contamination. NFA approved in May 1995.	LOW
L20	J R Packaging Inc. 7765 W 20th Avenue Hialeah, Florida	13-8522003	FDEP	No	75 feet east	Historic petroleum contamination. SRCO approved in September 2020.	LOW
L21	Horsepower Electric Inc. 8105 W 20th Avenue Hialeah, Florida	13-8504887	FDEP	No	50 feet east	Historic petroleum contamination. SRCO approved in November 1996.	LOW
L22	Motiva enterprises LLC 1990 W 84th street Hialeah, Florida	13-9400196	FDEP	No	Adjacent	Historic petroleum contamination. SRCO approved in January 2017.	LOW
M1	Best Tile Delivery Corp SR 826 & NW 58th Street Exit Miami, Florida	13-9807077	DERM	No	Adjacent	Potential petroleum contamination in soil and groundwater	MEDIUM
M2	Wilson-Hopper Pit 7400 NW 79th Avenue Miami, Florida - 33166	99376	FDEP	No	Adjacent	Heavy metal contamination in soil and groundwater	MEDIUM
M3	Sunshine 216 7700 NW 103rd Street Hialeah, Florida	13-8506068	FDEP	Yes	Adjacent	Historic petroleum contamination. SRCO approved in July 2015.	MEDIUM
H1	Peppers Dump NW 97th Street and SR 826 Miami, Florida - 33150	99362	FDEP	No	Adjacent	Ammonia contamination in groundwater	HIGH
H2	Bugallo Service Station, Inc. 7701 NW 103rd Street Hialeah, Florida - 33016	13-8504717	FDEP	No	Adjacent	Petroleum contamination in groundwater	HIGH
H3	Orion Fuels 1998 W 60th Street Hialeah, Florida	13-8506489	FDEP	Yes	50 feet east	Petroleum contamination in groundwater	HIGH

H4	M R J Cleaners 1982 W 60th Street Hialeah, Florida	13-9800949	DERM	No	100 feet east	Chlorinated solvent contamination in groundwater	HIGH
H5	Par 3 Golf Course Vicinity of Miami Lakes Drive and NW 77th Avenue	HWR-932	DERM	No	Adjacent	Arsenic Contamination in soil and groundwater	HIGH

Table 6-1: Potential Contaminated Sites in the Vicinity of the PD&amp;E Study

(1) N# - No Risk Site, L# - Low Risk Site, M# - Medium Risk Site, H# - High Risk Site

The FDOT District VI Planning and Environmental Management Office will utilize the information contained in the Contamination Screening Evaluation Report (CSER) to determine the need for additional investigation during the design phase of the Project. The Level II Contamination Assessment investigation might be conducted if warranted prior to any right-of-way acquisition and/or design phase once enough details related to proposed improvements are determined. Based on the findings of updated future review and Level II investigation, the design engineers may be instructed to avoid the areas of concern or to include special provisions with the plans to require that the construction activities performed in the areas of concern be performed or supervised by a contamination assessment and remediation contractor specified by the FDOT.

It must be recognized that the possibility exists that some contaminated substances, petroleum products, or environmental contamination not identified during this assessment may exist on or in the immediate vicinity of the project. This is because regulatory agency records are not always complete; not all leaks, spills, and discharges are reported; not all underground storage tanks (USTs) and aboveground storage tanks (ASTs) are registered. It is unknown if any registered substances were illegally dumped or were deposited during past construction activities.

If dewatering will be necessary during construction, permits from applicable environmental regulatory agencies will be required. The dewatering plan will need to consider the radius of influence of any dewatering activity on nearby contamination plumes to avoid potential contamination plume exacerbation. The status of the sites will be updated accordingly at each future design phase. All permits will be obtained in accordance with Federal, State, and local laws and regulations.

Please see the CSER located in the project file for additional information on contamination.

## 6.4 Utilities and Railroads

### 6.4.1 Utilities

Initial utility agency contact for this project has been coordinated through the District's Utility Coordinator. Existing utility owners and their respective contact personnel are provided in **Figure 6-1**.

The viable Build Alternative will require manhole adjustments for Miami Dade Water and Sewer District water and sewer manholes as well as the relocation of Florida Power & Light (FPL) Distribution poles. No other utilities are being impacted as a result of the viable Build Alternative.

Type	Location	Utility Agency/Owner	Contact Person	Contact Information
Telephone		AT&T Florida	Carlos Moreno	O: 305-929-4597 M: 954.531.5876 cm8802@att.com
			Edwin Zambrana	(305) 861-8069 Ext. 5411 EZambrana@atlanticbb.com
CATV, Fiber		Atlantic BroadBand	Pete Freytag	(305) 861-8069 x 5208 pfreytag@atlanticbb.com
			Wayne Kramer	(786) 535-0730 wkramer@atlanticbb.com
Electric		Buckeye Development and Logistics, LLC	Daniel G. Magnum	Ph: (832) 325-1626 Cell: (832) 541-3946 DMagnum@buckeye.com
			Gary Wurster	Ph: (954) 522-8464 Cell: (954) 275-5620 gwurster@buckeye.com
CATV, Fiber		Lumen (CenturyLink)	Francisco Azuri	(786) 266-1713 francisco.azuri@lumen.com
		City of North Miami Beach	Karim Rossy	Karim.Rossy@jacobs.com O: (305)948-2980 D: (305)947-7581 ext.7962
			Whitney Padote	(305) 947-7581 Ext 7977 whitney.padote@jacobs.com
CATV, Fiber		Comcast	Mike Connell	(754) 221-1304 Michael_Connell@comcast.com
Fiber		Crown Castle Fibernet – Ancillary Network Under Crown Castle Branding	Danny Haskett	Danny.Haskett@crowncastle.com T: 786-610-7073 M: 786-246-7827
			Osmani Alfonso	Ph:(786) 701-7231 Cell:(305) 301-5353 Osmani.Alfonso@crowncastle.com
Gas		Florida City Gas	Elio A. Bustos	786-810-8159 (mobile) 305-835-3618 (office) Elio.Bustos@NextEraEnergy.com
Gas		Florida Gas Transmission	Joe Sanchez	Ph: (407) 838-7171 Cell: (407) 808-4607 joseph.e.sanchez@energytransfer.com
Electric		FPL (Distribution)	Angel A. Vargas	Ph: (305) 442-5129 Cell: (305) 495-9253 angel.vargas@fpl.com
Electric		FPL Transmission	Michael Foley	Ph: (561) 904-3640 Cell: (561) 523-9896 Michael.Foley@fpl.com
Fiber		Hotwire	Walter Sancho-Davila	Ph: (954) 699-0900 Cell: (954) 248-7396 walter.sancho-davila@hotwirecommunication.com
Water, Sewer		Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Dept.	Patrick Chong	(786) 552-4416 PCHON@miamidade.gov
			Manuel Diaz	(786) 552-4424 manuel.diaz2@miamidade.gov
Telephone		MCI/Verizon	Juan Haber	juan.haber@verizon.com M 786 224 8576
		Mastec	Ibrain A. Font	Cell: 786-267-4697 305-206-7857 Email: lbrain.font@mastec.com
Gas		Suburban Propane	Dimitry Pressman	tel (305) 635-4427 fax (305) 891-0834 DPressman@suburbanpropane.com
		Town of Miami Lakes	Carlos Acosta	305-364-6100 Ext: 1129 acostac@miamilakes-fl.gov CC: publicworks@miamilakes-fl.gov

Figure 6-1: Existing Utility Owners

### 6.4.2 Railroads

The SR 826 over FEC Railroad is proposed to be widened in the southbound direction to accommodate an additional lane. FEC required clearances will be met and no adverse impacts to railroads will result from the viable Build Alternative.

## 6.5 Construction

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.

Construction activities will be controlled in accordance with the latest edition of the *FDOT's Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction* and through the use of BMPs.

Construction noise and vibration impacts to the project corridor will be minimized by adherence to the controls listed in the latest edition of the *FDOT's Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*. According to Section 335.02 of the FS, the FDOT is exempt from compliance with local ordinances. However, it is the FDOT's policy to follow the requirements of local ordinances to the extent that is considered reasonable. Also, the contractor will be instructed to coordinate with the project engineer and the Department Noise Specialist should unanticipated noise or vibration issues arise during project construction.

Water quality effects resulting from erosion and sedimentation will be controlled in accordance with the FDOT's latest edition of *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction* and through the use of BMPs.

Maintenance of traffic and sequence of construction will be planned and scheduled to minimize traffic delays throughout the project. Signs will be used to provide notice of access to local businesses and other pertinent information to the traveling public. All provisions of the FDOT's latest edition of *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction* will be followed.

## 6.6 Bicycles and Pedestrians

SR 826 is a limited access facility and does not have pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

No existing sidewalks are present along the West Frontage Road/NW 77th Avenue (Section 87260152).

Existing sidewalk is located along the East Frontage Road/W 20th Avenue (Section 87260151) along the right side of the roadway in three discontinuous segments covering most of the limits:

- From W 35th Street (Sta. 202+01) to the second driveway at Westland Promenade (Sta. 209+89)
- From W 39th Street (Sta. 217+03) to the driveway at Citrus Health Center (Sta. 226+06)

- From the driveway at Southern Winds Hospital (Sta. 228+15) to W 44th Place (Sta. 236+82)

East Frontage Road/W 20th Avenue East (Section 87260298)

- Existing sidewalk along the right side from NW 103rd Street (Sta. 300+63) to W 64th Street (Sta. 354+36)
- Existing sidewalk along the right side from a point north of W 64th Street (Sta. 357+42) to the end of the segment at NW 122nd Street/W 68th Street (Sta. 373+34).

West Frontage Road/NW 77th Court (Section 87260506)

- Existing sidewalk along the left side from NW 103rd Street (Sta. 400+91) to the end of the segment south of the Little River Canal (Sta. 409+23).

West Frontage Road/W 20th Avenue West (Section 87260521)

- Existing sidewalk along the left side from W 52nd Street (Sta. 413+19) to W 62nd Street (Sta. 445+98).
- Existing sidewalk along the left side from a point south of W 64th Street (Sta. 450+26) to a point north of W 64th Street (Sta. 455+22).
- Existing sidewalk along the left side of W 67th Place, from a point east of W 21st Avenue (Sta. 466+98) to the end of the segment at NW 122nd Street/W 68th Street (Sta. 471+35).

On the frontage road, no existing designated bicycle facilities are present within the project limits.

As part of the viable Build Alternative, the Frontage Road design includes construction of new sidewalk along W 20th Avenue to connect the gaps between existing sidewalk segments and reconstruction of damaged or uneven sidewalks. In addition, at Bridge 870570 [over Little River Canal (C-7)], the existing shoulder widths are proposed to be reduced on left and right sides to provide a raised sidewalk (6' wide) on the right side while matching the existing bridge deck width. At Bridge 870569 [over Little River Canal (C-7)], the existing left shoulder width and lane width are proposed to be reduced to provide a raised sidewalk (4' wide) on the left side while matching the existing bridge deck width. Therefore, the viable Build Alternative is expected to enhance pedestrian use along the frontage roads.

## 6.7 Navigation



## 7. Permits

The following environmental permits are anticipated for this project:

### Federal Permit(s)

USACE Section 10 or Section 404 Permit

### Status

To be acquired

### State Permit(s)

DEP or WMD Environmental Resource Permit (ERP)

DEP National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit

### Status

To be acquired

To be acquired

### Permits Comments

Both the USACE and SFWMD regulate impacts to wetlands and surface waters within the project study area. Other resource agencies, including the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), EPA, FWS, and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), review and comment on wetland permit applications. In addition, the FDEP regulates stormwater discharges from construction sites and the DRER regulates county canal rights-of-way. The complexity of the permitting process will depend greatly on the degree of the impact to surface water rights-of-way and wetland jurisdictional areas. The stormwater drainage features/swales located along SR 826 between SR 836/Dolphin Expressway and NW 154th Street have been permitted under the above list of environmental authorizations. As a precursor to the permitting process, the project was introduced to the SFWMD and USACE on October 15, 2020 (see the Appendix of the NRE for Interagency Meeting Minutes). No comments adverse to the proposed project were received during this agency meeting. The following permits are anticipated to be required for this project:

### Permit

SFWMD Environmental Resource Permit (ERP)

SFWMD Water Use Permit (for construction dewatering)

USACE Section 404 Nationwide Dredge and Fill Permit

SFWMD ROW Memo to File (C-6 Canal)

SFWMD ROW Memo to File (C-7 Canal)

FDEP National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

The SFWMD requires an Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) when construction of any project results in the modification or creation of a water management system or results in impacts to wetlands or waters of the state. An ERP was issued for this portion of the corridor under the SR 826 and SR 93 Express Lanes Project. Per coordination with the SFWMD (Trisha Stone, Lead Environmental Analyst) on October 7, 2020, the previously issued ERP for this corridor is too old to modify and a new permit will be required for the proposed improvements. However, the previously issued permit can be referenced to show that the stormwater features being impacted were previously permitted by the SFWMD. Therefore, a new individual ERP will be required for the Build Alternative.

A SFWMD Right-of-Way Occupancy Permit is not anticipated to be required for this project since bridge widening and embankment modifications are not proposed to the C-6 (Miami), C-7 (Little River) and C-8 (Biscayne) canals which are located within the SFWMD's right-of-way. Preliminary coordination was conducted with the SFWMD's Right-of-Way

department for concurrence that a new Right-of-Way permit and/or Right-of-Way permit modification is not warranted for FDOT roadway and bridge construction activities that are conducted within previously permitted boundaries. However, Beverly Miller (SFWMD Right-of-Way) advised that an e-mail or Memo to File could be submitted to the SFWMD to explain and depict the additional improvements within each canal right-of-way.

A Water Use Permit for construction dewatering may be required from the SFWMD. A need for this permit will be determined during the final design phase of the project.

The USACE requires a Nationwide Section 404 Dredge and Fill Permit if it is determined that less than 1/2-acre of wetlands/surface waters will be impacted within FDOT right-of-way. A USACE permit will require compliance with the 404(b)(1) guidelines, including verification that all impacts have first been eliminated to the greatest extent practicable, that unavoidable impacts have been reduced to the greatest extent practicable, and lastly that unavoidable impacts have been mitigated. This project is anticipated to meet the USACE Section 404 Dredge and Fill criteria of Nationwide Permit 14, Linear Transportation Project and Nationwide Permit 41, Reshaping Existing Drainage Ditches.

Under the FDEP's delegated authority to administer the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (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 or an individual permit for point source discharges of stormwater to waters of the United States. A major component of the NPDES permit is the development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (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., BMPs) that will be used to reduce the pollutants. This permit will be required for the implementation of the viable Build Alternative.

## **8. Engineering Analysis Support**

The engineering analysis supporting this environmental document is contained within the Preliminary Engineering Report.

DRAFT

## 9. Project Commitments

To minimize the impacts of this project to the social, cultural, natural and physical environment, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has identified the following commitments:

1. Prior to commencing construction activities, the FDOT is committed to re-surveying the project corridor for features that could serve as potential roosting habitat and signs of the Florida bonneted bat. If any signs of the Florida bonneted bat are observed, the FDOT is committed to initiating consultation with the FWS to determine the appropriate course of action.
2. During the construction phase of this project, the FDOT will adhere to the most recent version of the FWS' *Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work* to minimize the potential for adverse effects.
3. During the construction phase of this project, the FDOT will adhere to the most recent version of the FWS' *Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake* to minimize the potential for adverse effects.
4. Manatee exclusion grating will be added to the following existing outfalls (if manatee exclusion devices do not currently exist/work properly) which are part of the proposed stormwater management system:
  - Miami Canal (C-6): Station 482+52.12 - 60" pipe
  - Miami Canal (C-6): Station 483+53.87 - 60" pipe
  - Miami Canal (C-6): Station 486+24.20 - two (2) 36" pipes
  - Little River Canal (C-7): Station 540+84.00 - 72" pipe
5. Construction noise and vibration impacts to the project corridor will be minimized by adherence to the controls listed in the latest edition of the FDOT's Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction.

## 10. Approved for Public Availability

---

Environmental or Project Development Manager

Date:

DRAFT



## 11. Public Involvement

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

### Summary of Activities Other than the Public Hearing

During the PD&E Study phase, a SR 826 Bus Tour was held on December 2, 2020. Attendees included:

#### FDOT:

- Daniel Iglesias
- Raul Quintela
- Javier Manso
- Tish Burgher

#### TPO Staff:

- Zainab Salim
- Aileen Boucle

#### Miami-Dade Staff:

- Alice Bravo

#### TPO Board Members:

- Board Member Bermudez
- Board Member De La Rosa
- Board Member Diaz
- Board Member Martell
- Board Member Oliver Gilbert, III
- Board Member Heyman's Commission Aide, Chris Taylor

Attendees got on the bus at the Dolphin Station at approximately 10:30 and drove north on SR 826 while Daniel Iglesias and Javier Manso provided a description of the Palmetto Express Phase 1 modifications, which have been completed. The bus got off of northbound SR 826 at NW 67 Avenue and got onto the southbound Palmetto Expressway. Daniel Iglesias and Javier Manso described the modifications that will be made in the southbound direction including the relocation of the existing entrance. The bus exited at NW 103rd Street and attendees got off the bus to see the pier which is being modified to allow for the construction of an additional southbound non-tolled lane in this area. Commissioner Diaz stated that the tour was beneficial in helping him understand the scope of work for the project. Board Member Diaz and Board Member Gilbert left the tour at this location. Following this discussion, remaining attendees got back on the bus returned to the Dolphin Station. The tour ended around noon.

A project public hearing was held on 01/12/2021. All comments received by 01/22/2021 were included in the project record and a transcript of the public hearing was included in the Comments and Coordination Report.

Please see the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) located in the project file for additional information on public involvement.

*[To be updated after the public hearing after public comments are received as needed.]*

*[To be updated after Danny/Curlene complete coordination with the TPO.]*

**Date of Public Hearing:** 01/12/2021

**Summary of Public Hearing**

*[Pending completion of Public Hearing on 1/12/2021.]*

## 12. Technical Materials

The following technical materials have been prepared to support this environmental document.

14455 ETDM Summary Report  
Sociocultural Effects Evaluation  
Cultural Resource Assessment Survey  
Water Quality Impact Evaluation Checklist  
Natural Resources Evaluation  
Noise Study Report  
Air Quality Technical Memorandum  
Contamination Screening Evaluation Report  
Preliminary Engineering Report  
Public Involvement Plan

## **Attachments**

### **Social and Economic**

Land Use Map

### **Cultural Resources**

SHPO Concurrence Letter

### **Natural Resources**

Wetlands/Surface Waters/Drainage Features Within Project Study Area

EPA Concurrence Letter

Species and Habitat Maps

### **Physical Resources**

Potential Contaminated Site Map

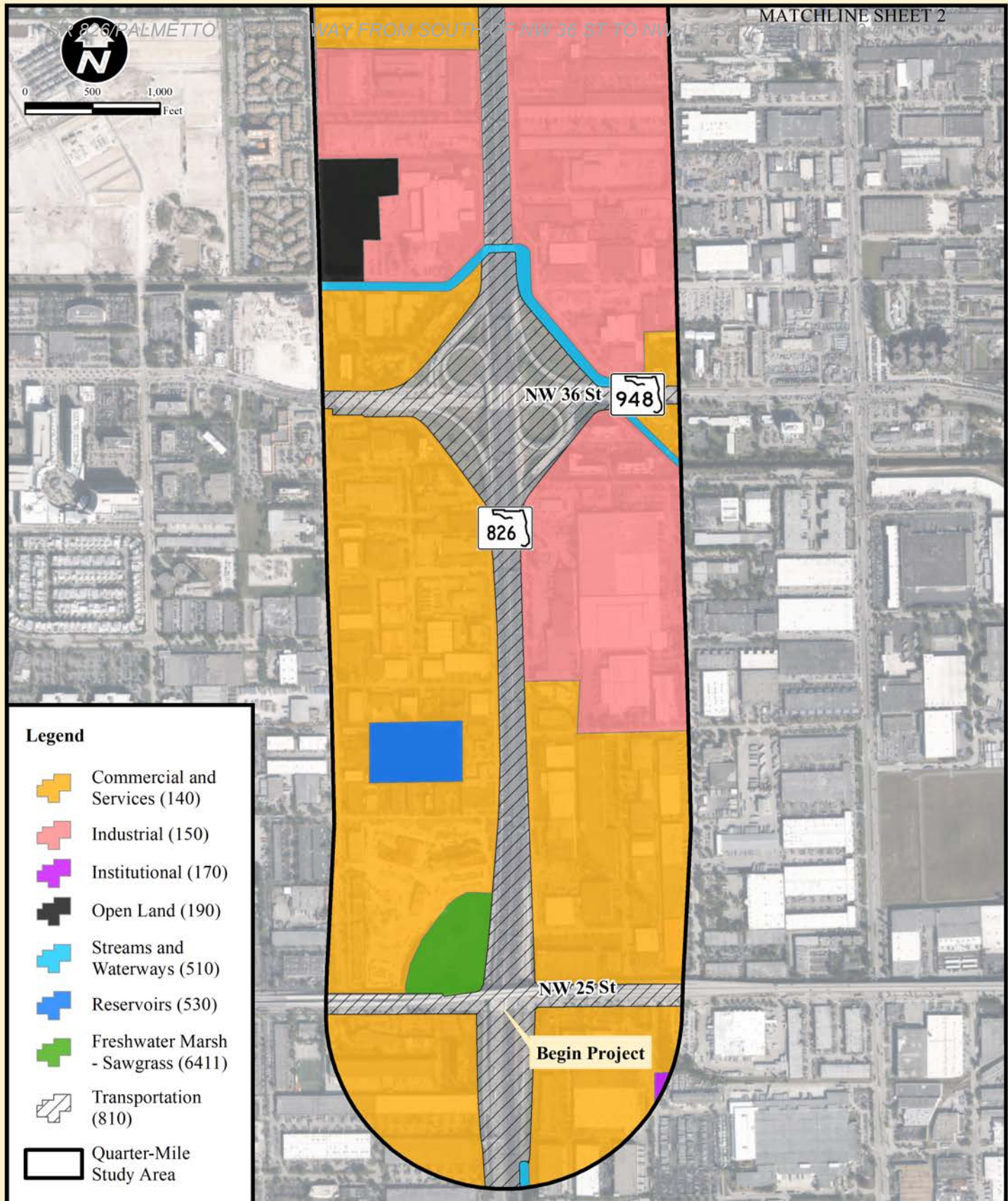
## **Social and Economic Appendix**

Contents:

Land Use Map

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**Land Use Within Project Study Area  
Sheet 1**

*State Environmental Impact Report*

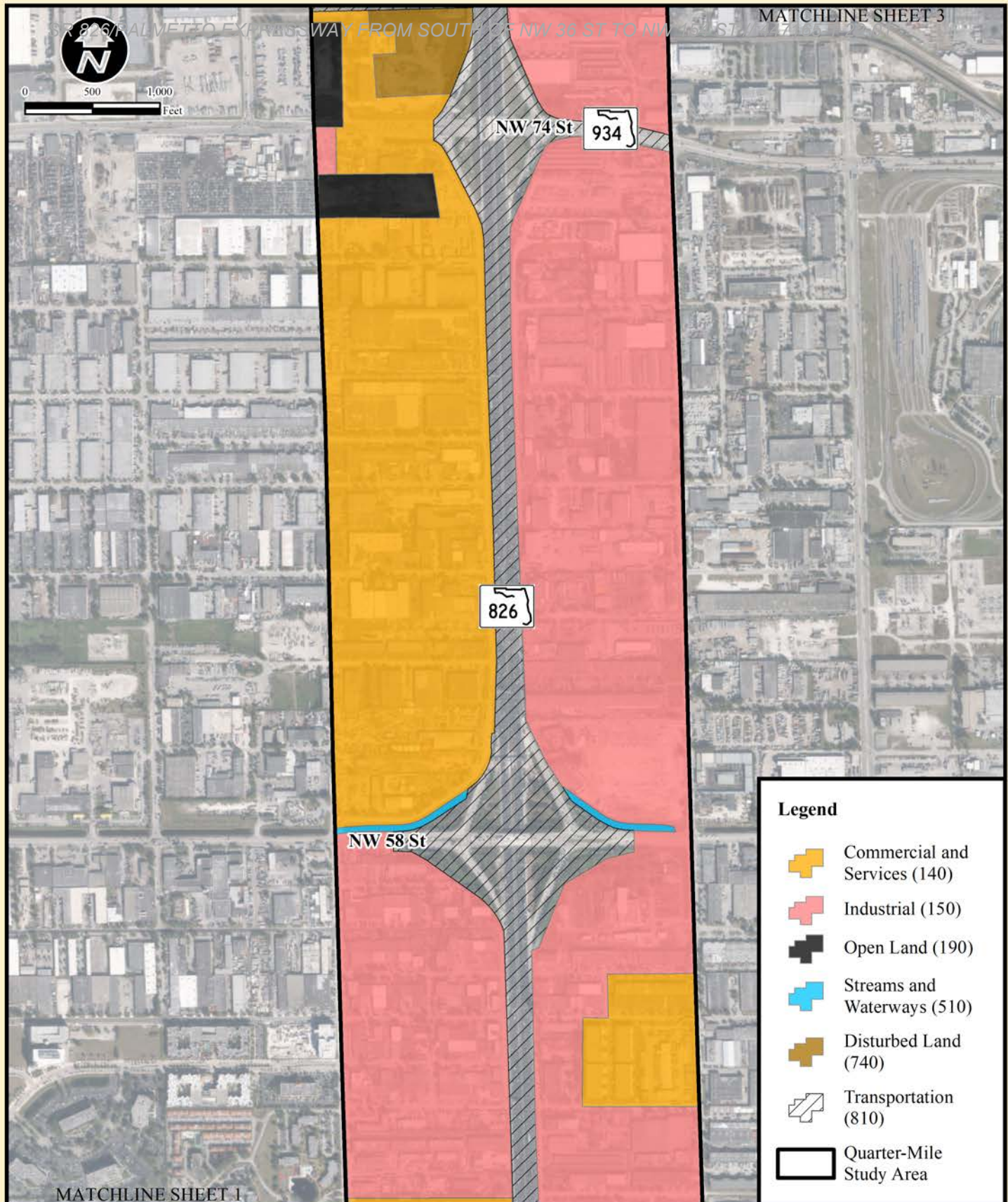
**SR 826 / Palmetto Expressway PD&E Study  
from South of NW 36th Street (MP 8.355)  
to North of NW 154th Street (MP 17.950)**

**Miami-Dade County, Florida**

**FM #447165-1-22-01, 441830-1-22-01, and 441831-1-22-01**

**ETDM #14455; Federal Aid Project Number N/A**





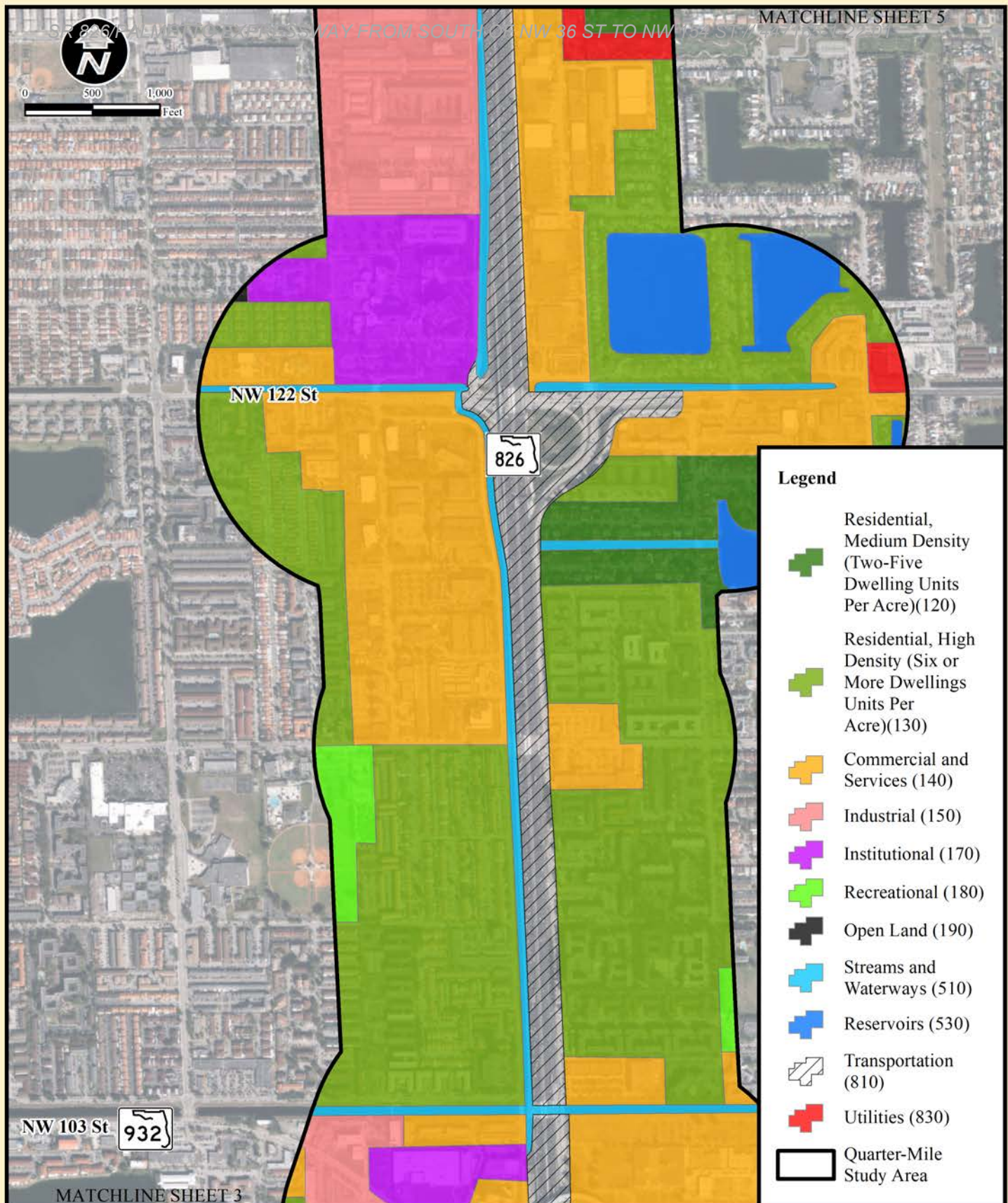
**Land Use Within Project Study Area  
Sheet 2**

SR 826 / Palmetto Expressway PD&E Study  
from South of NW 36th Street (MP 8.355)  
to North of NW 154th Street (MP 17.950)  
Miami-Dade County, Florida  
FM #447165-1-22-01, 441830-1-22-01, and 441831-1-22-01  
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**SR 826 / Palmetto Expressway PD&E Study  
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Miami-Dade County, Florida  
-1-22-01, 441830-1-22-01, and 441831-1-22-01  
DM #14455; Federal Aid Project Number N/A**

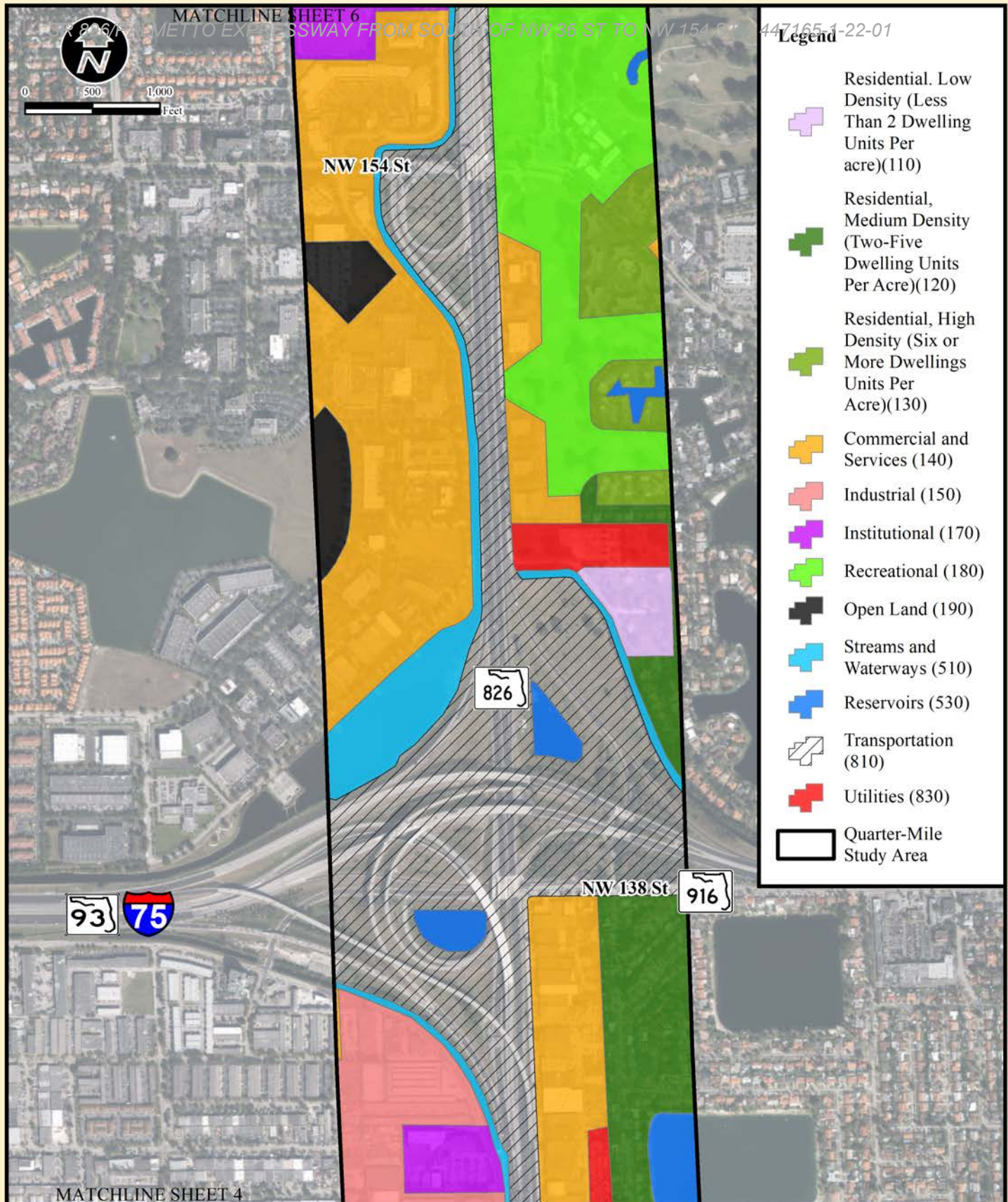




**Land Use Within Project Study Area  
Sheet 4**

**SR 826 / Palmetto Expressway PD&E Study  
from South of NW 36th Street (MP 8.355)  
to North of NW 154th Street (MP 17.950)  
Miami-Dade County, Florida  
FM #447165-1-22-01, 441830-1-22-01, and 441831-1-22-01  
ETDM #14455; Federal Aid Project Number N/A**



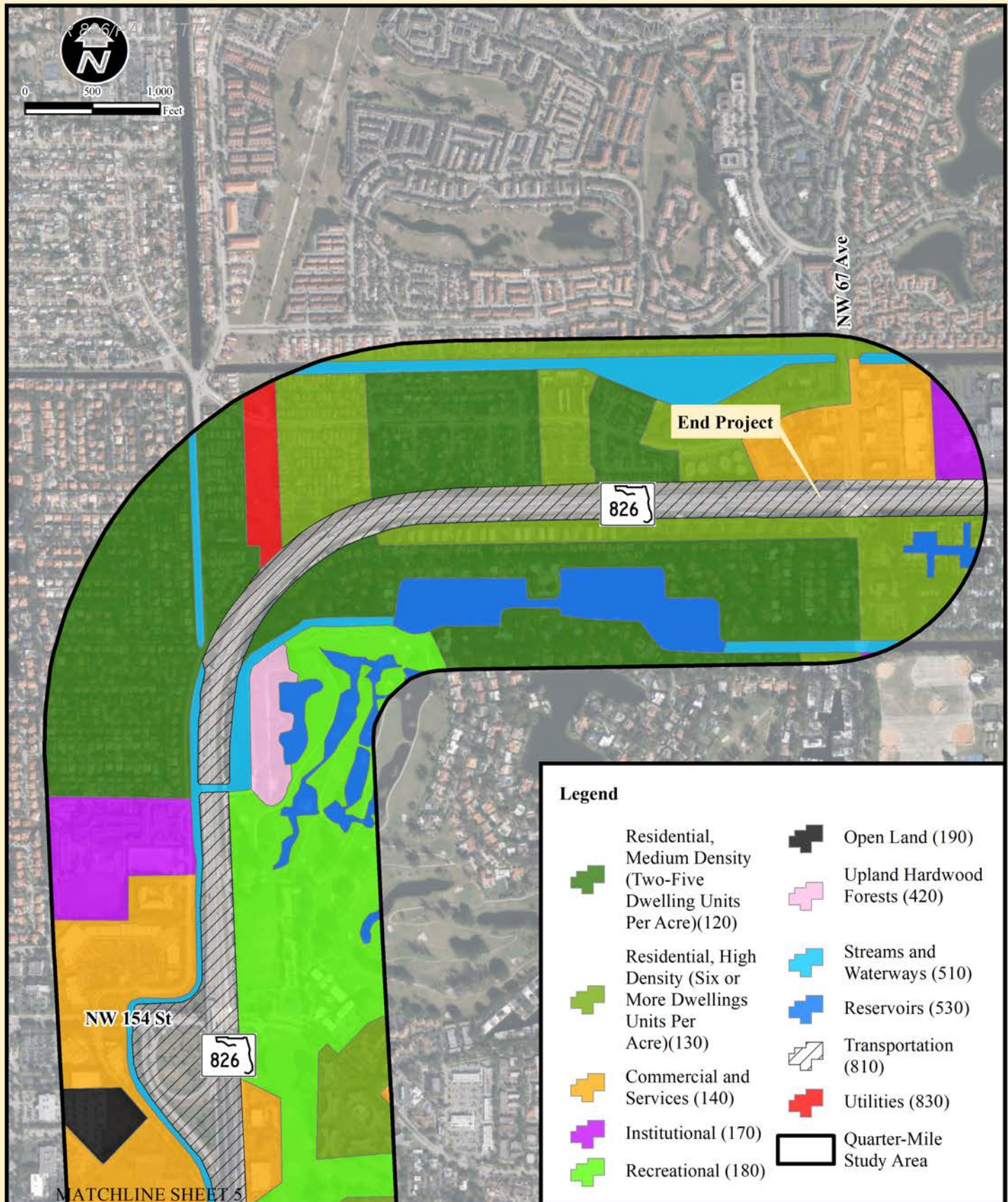


**Land Use Within Project Study Area  
Sheet 5**

State Environmental Impact Report

**SR 826 / Palmetto Expressway PD&E Study  
from South of NW 36th Street (MP 8.355)  
to North of NW 154th Street (MP 17.950)  
Miami-Dade County, Florida  
FM #447165-1-22-01, 441830-1-22-01, and 441831-1-22-01  
ETDM #14455; Federal Aid Project Number N/A**





**Land Use Within Project Study Area  
Sheet 6**

**SR 826 / Palmetto Expressway PD&E Study  
from South of NW 36th Street (MP 8.355)  
to North of NW 154th Street (MP 17.950)  
Miami-Dade County, Florida  
FM #447165-1-22-01, 441830-1-22-01, and 441831-1-22-01  
ETDM #14455; Federal Aid Project Number N/A**

## **Cultural Resources Appendix**

### **Contents:**

SHPO Concurrence Letter

DRAFT



*Florida Department of Transportation*

RON DESANTIS  
GOVERNOR

1000 NW 111th Avenue  
Miami, FL 33172-5800

KEVIN J. THIBAUT, P.E.  
SECRETARY

December 8, 2020

Timothy A. Parsons, Ph.D.  
Director, Division of Historical Resources, and  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
R.A. Gray Building  
500 S. Bronough Street  
Tallahassee FL 32399-0250

Attention: Dr. Adrienne Daggett, Transportation Compliance Review Section

Re: Updated Determination of Effects Associated with the Cultural Resource Assessment Survey for the SR 826/Palmetto Expressway From South of NW 36th Street (MP 8.355) to North of NW 154th Street (MP 17.950) Project Development & Environment Study, Miami-Dade County, Florida  
Financial Management Numbers: 447165-1-22-01, 441830-1-22-01, 441831-1-22-01  
Federal Aid Project Number: N/A  
ETDM Number: 14455

Dear Dr. Parsons,

Please find the Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study for the State Road (SR) 826/Palmetto Expressway from South of NW 36th Street (MP 8.355) to North of NW 154th Street (MP 17.950), in the towns of Miami Lakes and Medley and the cities of Doral, Hialeah, and Hialeah Gardens, as well as unincorporated Miami-Dade County, Florida (Financial Project ID [FPID] Nos. 447165-1-22-01, 441830-1-22-01, and 441831-1-22-01). The purpose of this CRAS was to locate and evaluate archaeological and historic resources within the area of potential effect (APE) and to assess their eligibility for inclusion in the *National Register of Historic Places* (National Register) according to the criteria set forth in 36 CFR Section 60.4.

This assessment complies with the revised Chapter 267, *Florida Statutes* (F.S.); and standards embodied in the Florida Division of Historical Resources (FDHR) *Cultural Resource Management Standards and Operational Manual* (February 2003), and Chapter 1A-46 (*Archaeological and Historical Report Standards and Guidelines*), *Florida Administrative Code*. In addition, this report was prepared in conformity with standards set forth in Part 2, Chapter 8 (*Archaeological and Historical Resources*) of the FDOT *Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Manual* (effective July 1, 2020).

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[www.fdot.gov](http://www.fdot.gov)



Timothy A. Parsons, Ph.D.

December 8, 2020

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All work also conforms to professional guidelines set forth in the *Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation* (48 FR 44716, as amended and annotated).

The current study area has been surveyed and evaluated during several recent studies. In 2010, Janus Research conducted a *CRAS of the I-75 PD&E Study from SR 826 (Palmetto Expressway) to North of Florida's Turnpike (HEFT), Miami-Dade County, Florida, FM No. 420669-1-22-01* [Florida Master Site File (FMSF) Manuscript No. 17998] as part of a PD&E study that included the evaluation of proposed improvements along SR 826/Palmetto Expressway from NW 103<sup>rd</sup> Street to NW 154<sup>th</sup> Street. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with the determinations and findings of this survey on February 15, 2011. In 2012, Janus Research conducted a *CRAS of the SR 826/Palmetto Expressway Managed Lanes PD&E Study, FM No. 418423-3-22-01* (FMSF Manuscript No. 19276) as part of another PD&E study that included the evaluation of proposed improvements along SR 826/Palmetto Expressway from south of SR 836/Dolphin Expressway to NW 103<sup>rd</sup> Street. The SHPO concurred with the relevant determinations and findings of this survey on August 3, 2012.

In 2016, Janus Research conducted the *CRAS Reevaluation for the SR 826 (Palmetto Expressway) from Flagler Street to NW 154<sup>th</sup> Street and SR 93/I-75 from SR 826 to NW 170<sup>th</sup> Street, Miami-Dade County, Florida* (FPID Nos. 432687-1-52-01 and 432687-1-52-01; FMSF Manuscript No. 23335). This survey was an update to the 2010 and 2012 CRAS reports conducted due to design changes to the Design Build project to construct improvements evaluated during both the above referenced 2010 PD&E study, as well as the 2012 PD&E study for SR 826 (Palmetto Expressway) from NW 103<sup>rd</sup> Street to NW 154<sup>th</sup> Street (432687-3-22-01). This project converted an existing general purpose (GP) lane that was originally built to be operated as a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane, into an express lane (EL). The project also provided a second EL through widening and reduced lane width, shoulder width, and EL buffer width for the majority of the project limits. The SHPO concurred with the determinations and findings of this survey on November 2, 2016.

After the Palmetto ELs were opened to traffic in August 2019 and toll collection in September 2019, additional congestion and large differential between EL higher speeds and GP lanes lower speeds were observed in both the northbound (NB) and southbound (SB) directions during peak travel times. Janus Research prepared two CRAS updates, *Palmetto Express Lanes Modification – Interim Solution: Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Update to SR 826/Palmetto Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study from South of SR 836 to North of SR 93/I-75* (FPID No. 418423-3-22-01), *Miami-Dade County, Florida* and *Palmetto Express Lanes Modification – Interim Solution: Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Update to SR 93/I-75 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study from State Road (SR) 826/Palmetto Expressway to North of Florida's Turnpike* (FPID No. 420669-1-22-01), *Miami-Dade County, Florida* (2020a; 2020b) to coordinate an interim solution for the NB lanes to be implemented immediately and to provide measurable improvements without

Timothy A. Parsons, Ph.D.

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the need to acquire right-of-way (ROW) and to avoid impacts to adjacent Florida Gas Transmission lines. The SHPO concurred with the findings of each of these reports on April 2, 2020.

The current survey is being conducted for the PD&E study to address a permanent solution for both the NB and SB lanes. This survey focused on identifying archaeological resources within the current APE as well as identifying historic resources which have become historic since the time of the previous studies and confirming there are no changes to the eligibility status of the previously identified National Register-eligible historic resources.

Two archaeological resources (8DA40 and 8DA75) were identified within the archaeological APE during the background research. The pedestrian survey did not identify any remains of these sites and confirmed the disturbed nature of the corridor. Subsurface testing within the corridor was not possible due to the extent of hardscape, underground utilities and drainage, and land modification. The desktop analysis and pedestrian survey determined that the portion of the archaeological APE that was not previously comprehensively surveyed exhibited a low potential for containing intact archaeological sites. No Miami-Dade County-designated archaeological sites or zones are located within the APE.

SHPO previously determined the unnamed site (8DA40) on the western side of SR 826 to be National Register-eligible. The area recorded as 8DA40 is currently within the limits of a paved frontage road and driveway entrance to a paved Wal-Mart parking lot. A landscaped berm is adjacent to the parking lot. Between the berm and the frontage road are a marked fiber optic cable utility line and an existing drainage system that, based on visual inspection through a grate-covered inlet, appears to extend at least six feet deep. The paved shoulder of the frontage road is separated from the paved expressway by a concrete barrier. It is unclear which National Register Criterion or Criteria SHPO considered site 8DA40 to meet based on the FMSF data, but archaeological sites are most often eligible under Criterion D for research potential. Archaeologists from the Archaeological and Historical Conservancy, Inc. who monitored the construction of the improvements for the most recent PD&E project documented the presence of fill and extremely disturbed soils within the limits of the site. They identified no archaeological materials. No remnants of site 8DA40 have been found to be expressed within the disturbed right of way containing the project improvements. The recorded portion of site 8DA40 within the FDOT ROW lacks archaeological data; it has no research potential and no integrity, and would not contribute to the National Register eligibility of any undiscovered intact portion of 8DA40 that may exist within private property beyond the FDOT ROW. The archaeological APE for this project has already been documented as disturbed and lacking archaeological remains associated with 8DA40. The proposed project will not alter, damage, destroy, or remove any intact portion of site 8DA40. If the site was once present in this area, that portion of the site has already been destroyed; the proposed project will therefore have no adverse effect on 8DA40.



Timothy A. Parsons, Ph.D.

December 8, 2020

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No remnants of the Hialeah 1 archaeological site (8DA75) have been identified within the project APE, including during archaeological monitoring of the construction of the improvements for the most recent PD&E project conducted by Archaeological and Historical Conservancy, Inc. Archaeologists who conducted the monitoring documented the presence of fill and extremely disturbed soils within the recorded limits of the site. The portion of the existing road ROW within the recorded limits of 8DA75 contains a concrete sidewalk and buried water line, a sodded strip containing a gas pipeline, a paved frontage road, and another sodded strip containing landscaping and a fiber optic cable line and ITS equipment adjacent to the barrier wall for the elevated expressway. There is no National Register-eligible portion of site 8DA75 within the project APE on which to apply the Criteria of Adverse Effects. However, if any undiscovered intact portion of 8DA75 exists beyond the FDOT ROW, which has already been documented as disturbed and lacking archaeological remains associated with 8DA75, it will not be adversely affected by the proposed project. The proposed project will not alter, damage, destroy, or remove any intact portion of site 8DA75. If the site was once present in this area, that portion of the site has already been destroyed; the proposed project will have no adverse effect on 8DA75.

The historic resources survey resulted in the identification of 49 historic resources within the historic resources APE. The resources include 15 previously recorded historic resources and 34 newly recorded historic resources. The 15 previously recorded historic resources include: six historic linear resources, six historic structures, two historic bridges, and one designed historic landscape. Two of these previously recorded historic resources have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register by the SHPO: the Miami Canal (8DA6525) and the FEC Railway (8DA10107). Twelve previously recorded historic resources were determined ineligible for listing in the National Register by the SHPO (8DA6352, 8DA11420, 8DA11680-8DA11683, 8DA12380-8DA12382, 8DA12389, 8DA12390, and 8DA15160). The one remaining previously recorded historic resource, 8DA12383, was determined to have insufficient information for an evaluation of National Register-eligibility by the SHPO.

FMSF forms were updated for two previously recorded historic resources: 8DA12382 and 8DA12383. The FMSF form for 8DA12382 was updated to correct the address, which is incorrectly listed in the FMSF, but no changes to the resource since it was last recorded were observed, and it is still considered National Register-ineligible. The FMSF form for 8DA12383 was updated to correct the address, which is also incorrectly listed in the FMSF, and to update the evaluation of significance since it was first recorded since the SHPO did not provide a determination of eligibility. 8DA12383 exhibits a common architectural style found in South Florida, and limited research did not reveal any historical associations with significant people or events. Therefore, 8DA12383 is considered ineligible for listing in the National Register, either individually or as part of a historic district.

Timothy A. Parsons, Ph.D.

December 8, 2020

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The 34 newly recorded resources within the historic resources APE include 27 historic structures (8DA19117-8DA19143), four historic resource groups (8DA19147-8DA19150), and three historic bridges (8DA19154-8DA19156). The four newly recorded resource groups include one industrial complex and three condominium complexes located on parcels that are partially within the historic resources APE. The 31 newly recorded historic resources are considered ineligible for listing in the National Register, either individually or as part of a historic district.

The three bridges identified during this study (8DA19154-8DA19156) are common bridge types, reinforced concrete slab and prestressed concrete multi-beam, and meet the criteria for the 2012 Program Comment issued by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), Streamlining Section 106 Review for Actions Affecting Post-1945 Concrete and Steel Bridges (ACHP 2012). All three bridges are exempt from Section 106 consideration and were not evaluated for eligibility for the National Register; however, they were recorded and documented in the FMSF.

As previously noted, two resources in the APE have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register by the SHPO: the Miami Canal (8DA6525) and the FEC Railway (8DA10107). At the Miami Canal location, there are no improvements to the facility's bridge structure that crosses over the Miami Canal. At the FEC Railway, the southbound SR 826 bridge will be widened by 22 feet over the railroad to provide the an additional lane of capacity. The widening will include all necessary substructure and superstructure work necessary to complete the widening and the construction of crash walls adjacent to the railroad. However, no ROW will be required from the railroad and no materials or features will be impacted. Based on the improvements proposed at these two locations, the Miami Canal and the FEC Railway will not be adversely affected by the project. Although this project is being conducted under Chapter 267, *F.S.*, this effects evaluation acknowledges the guidance provided by *Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act*.

We kindly request that this letter and document are reviewed, and concurrence is provided by your office. This information is provided with in accordance with the provisions contained in the revised Chapter 267, *F.S.* If you have any questions regarding the subject project, please contact me at [Barbara.Culhane@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Barbara.Culhane@dot.state.fl.us) or (305) 470-5231.

Sincerely,  
DocuSigned by:



5CF7242FA4DA4DB8  
Barbara B. Culhane, M.S., A.I.C.P.

District Cultural Resources Coordinator

Timothy A. Parsons, Ph.D.

December 8, 2020

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The Florida Division of Historical Resources finds the attached document complete and sufficient and ☒ concurs/ ☐ does not concur with the recommendations and findings provided in this cover letter for SHPO/FDHR Project File Number 2020-6778.

Comments:

*Jason Aldridge DSHPO*

December 10, 2020

Timothy A. Parsons, Ph.D., Director, and  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
Florida Division of Historical Resources

[DATE]

## **Natural Resources Appendix**

### **Contents:**

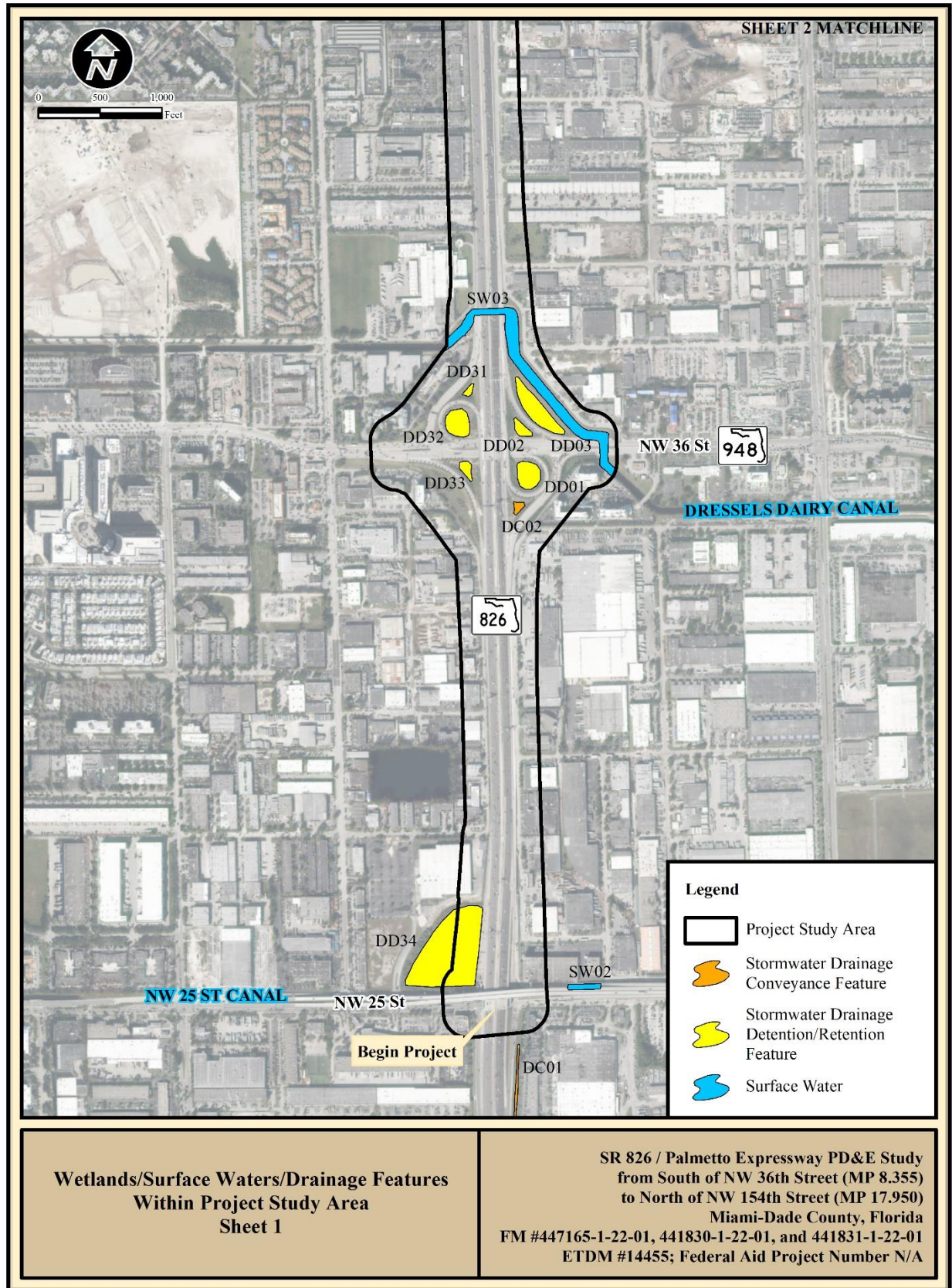
Wetlands/Surface Waters/Drainage Features Within Project Study Area

EPA Concurrence Letter

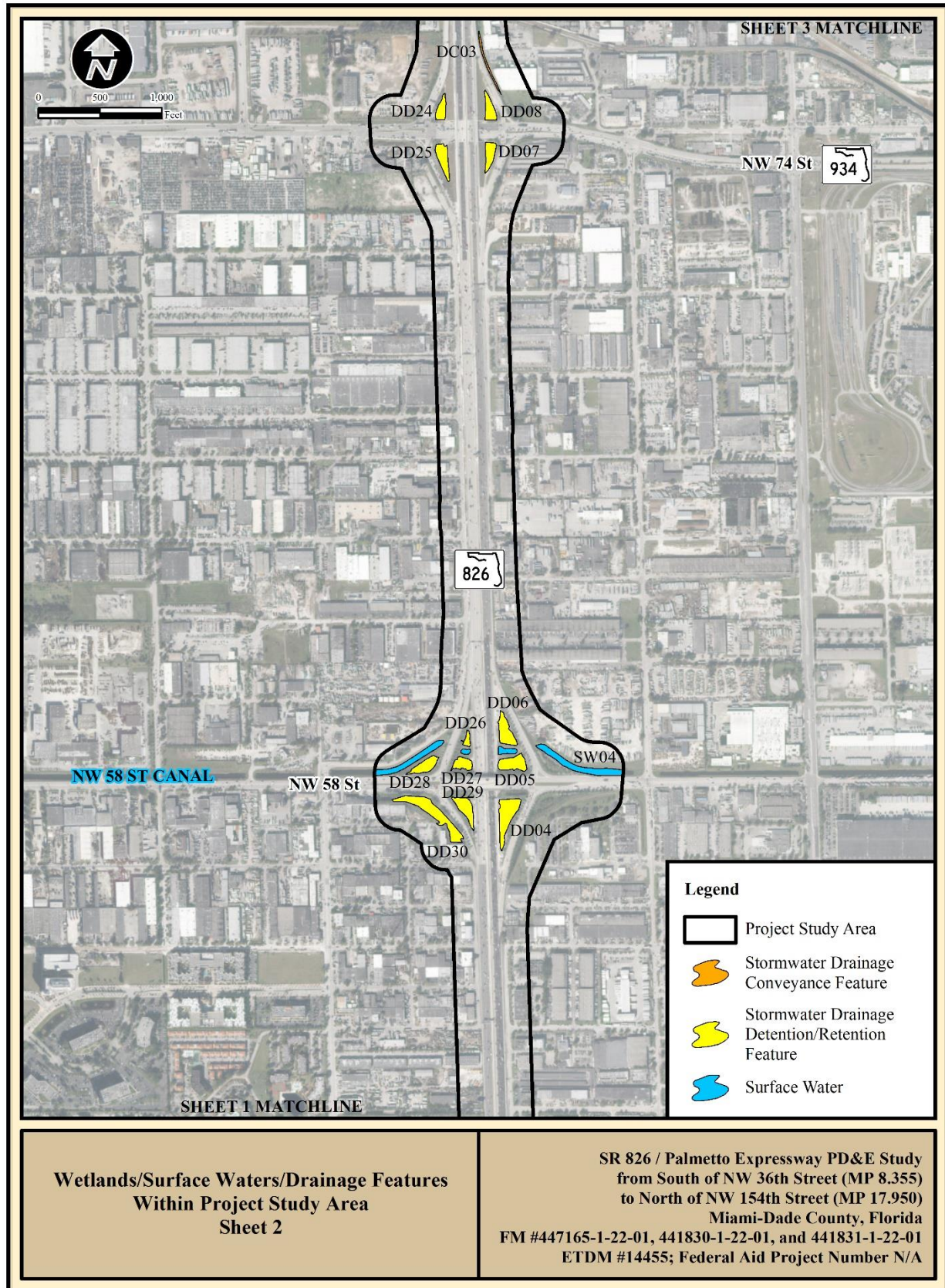
Species and Habitat Maps

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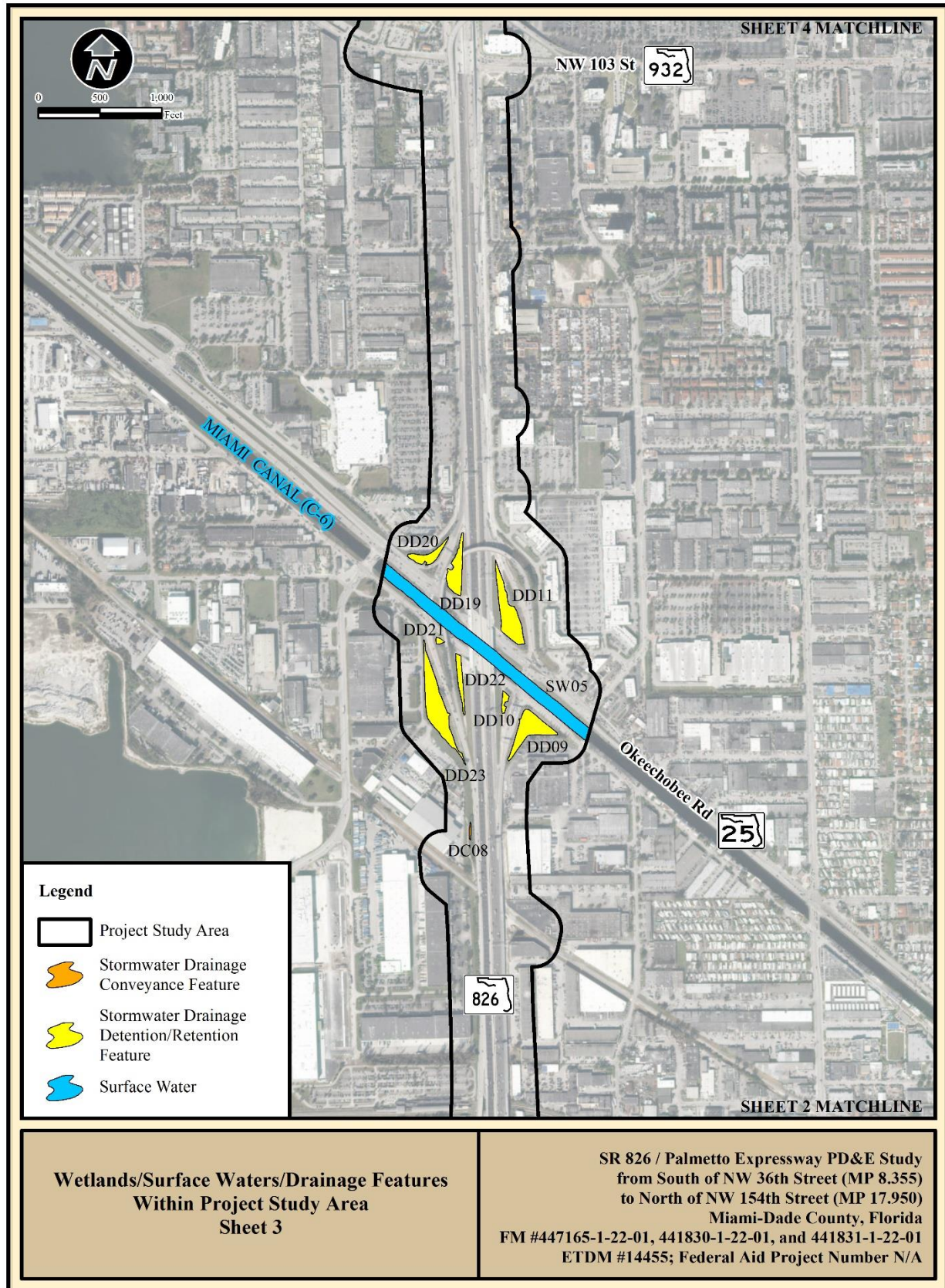




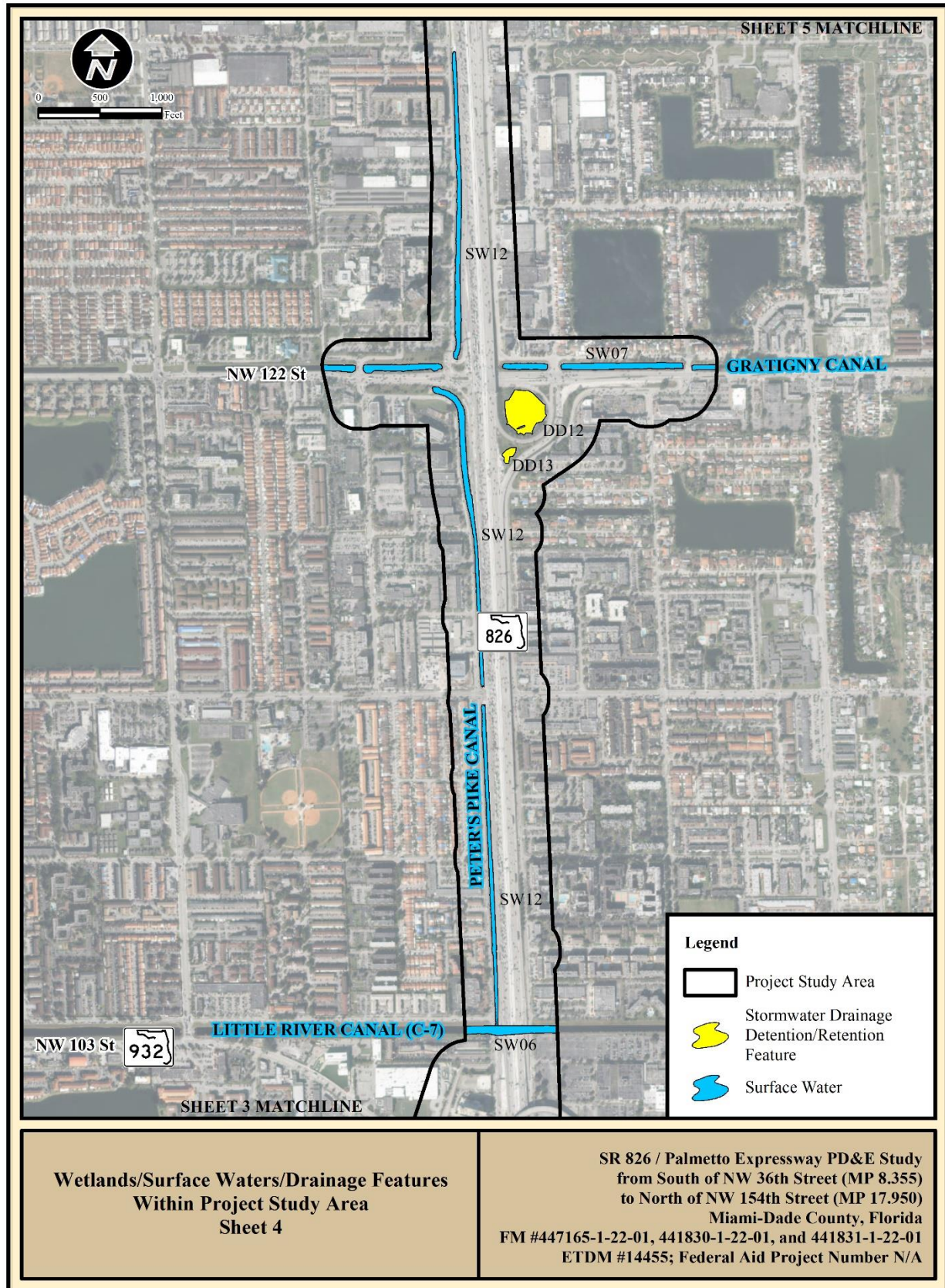




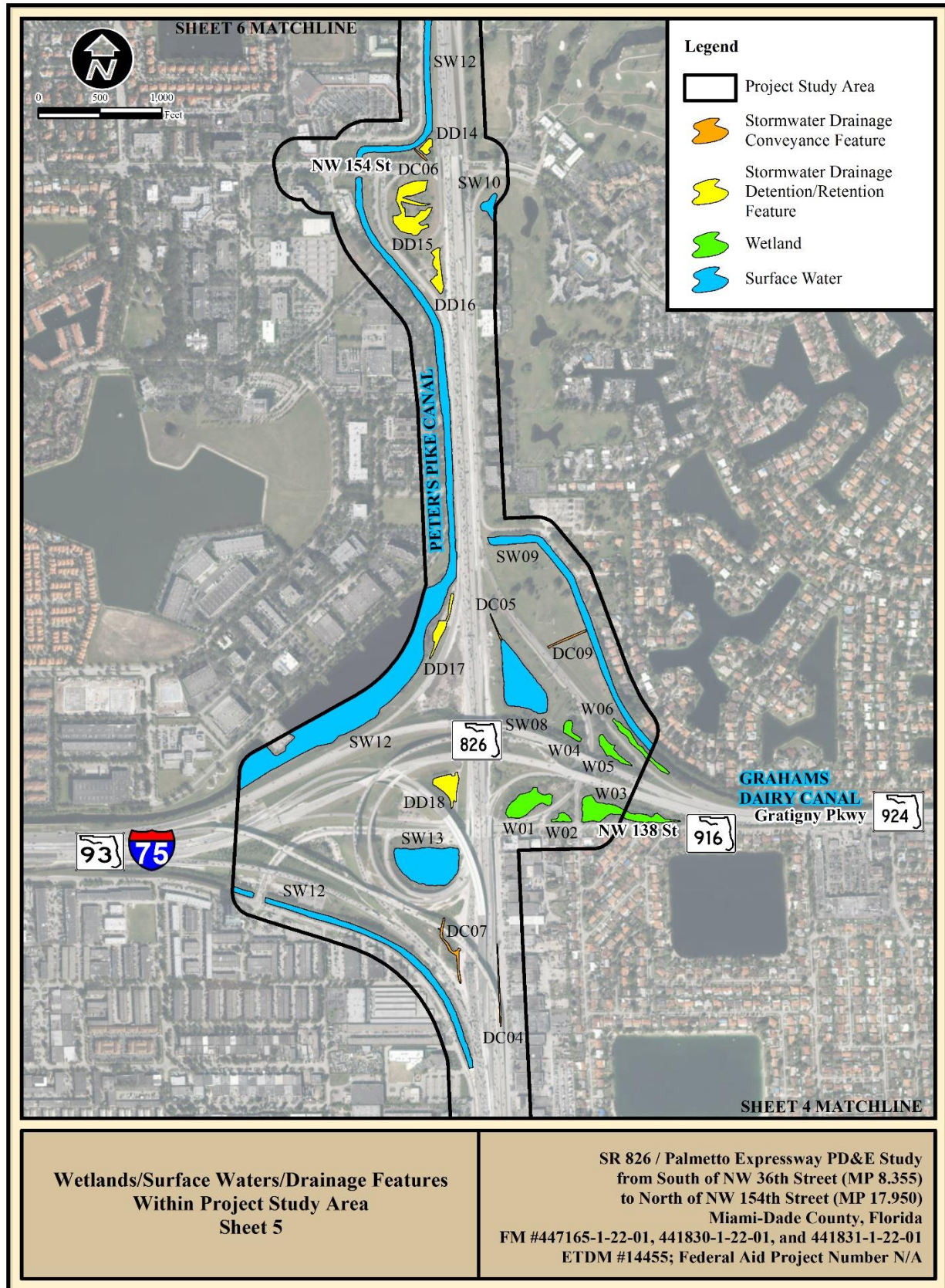




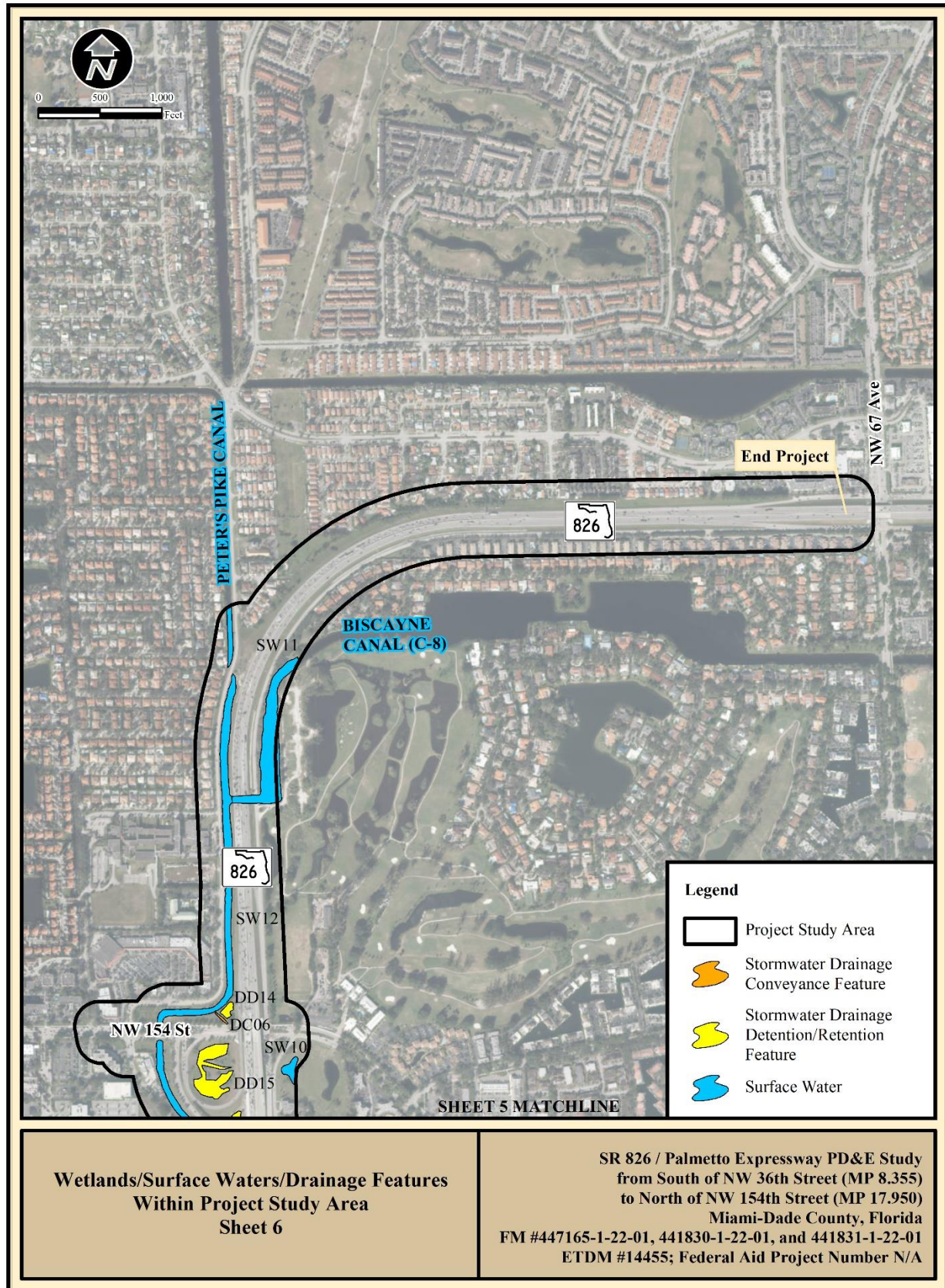














**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**  
REGION 4  
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER  
61 FORSYTH STREET, SW  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-3104

Mr. Raul Quintela  
Project Manager  
Florida Department of Transportation, District 6  
1000 North West 111th Avenue  
Miami, Florida 33172

Subject: Sole Source Aquifer Review/Concurrence for SR 826 / Palmetto Expressway from South of NW 36<sup>th</sup> Street to North of NW 154<sup>th</sup> Street, ETDM Number: 14455.

Dear Mr. Quintela:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4 received the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) request on November 20, 2020 to review the above referenced project pursuant to Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), 42 U.S.C. § 300h-3. The objective of the EPA's review is to determine if the project lies within the boundaries, including recharge and streamflow source zones, of an EPA designated Sole Source Aquifer (SSA), and to determine if the project poses potential adverse health or environmental impacts. A SSA is the sole or principal water source for a designated area.

SR 826 / Palmetto Expressway from South of NW 36<sup>th</sup> Street to North of NW 154<sup>th</sup> Street project (Project) has been determined to lie inside the designated boundaries of the Biscayne Sole Source Aquifer and based on the information provided, may cause a significant impact to the aquifer system when the Project's bridge foundations are installed and/or construction dewatering is undertaken. However, with proper implementation of best management practices (BMPs), these potential impacts can be adequately reduced or properly mitigated. To that effect, when installing bridge foundations, the FDOT must adhere to the list of BMPs provided as items 1 and 2 below. The dewatering operation BMPs are listed in item 3 below:

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

Furthermore, all debris from any demolition of the existing structures must be properly contained and removed from the site prior to construction of the new structure. If applicable, all county flood plain management plans and public notification processes must be followed. During construction, it is the

EPA's understanding and expectation that those responsible for the project will strictly adhere to all Federal, State, and local government permits, ordinances, planning designs, construction codes, operation, maintenance, and engineering requirements, and any contaminant mitigation recommendations outlined by federal and state agency reviews. All best management practices for erosion and sedimentation control must also be followed and State and local environmental offices must be contacted to address proper drainage and storm water designs. Additionally, the project manager should contact State and local environmental officials to obtain a copy of any local Wellhead Protection Plans. The following website provides information regarding the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Source Water Assessment and Protection Program.  
<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/swapp/Default.htm>

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

Thank you for your concern with the environmental impacts of this project. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Khurram Rafi at 404-562-9283 or [Rafi.Khurram@epa.gov](mailto:Rafi.Khurram@epa.gov) or Mr. Larry Cole at 404-562-9474 or [Cole.Larry@epa.gov](mailto:Cole.Larry@epa.gov).

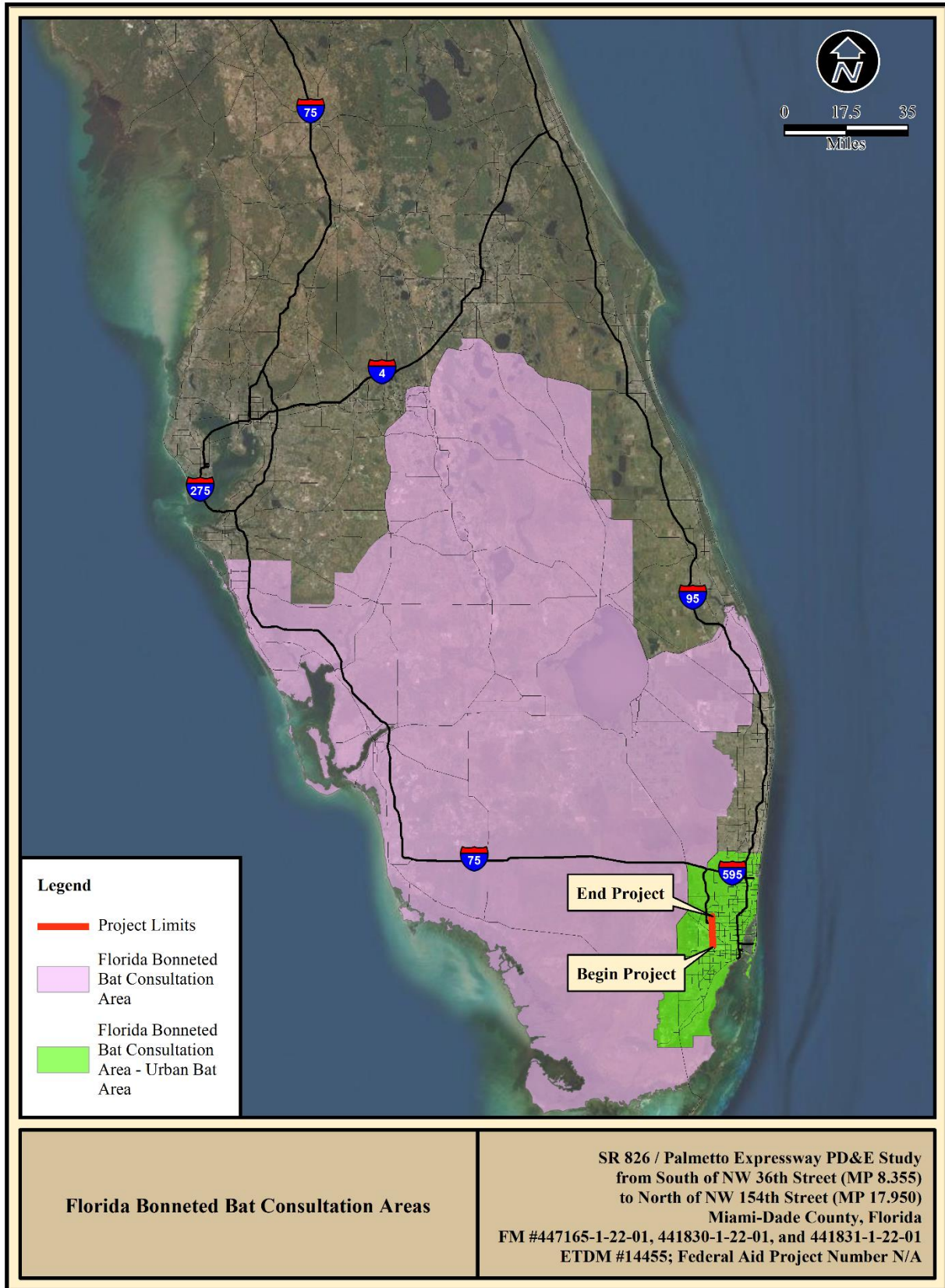
Sincerely,



December 15, 2020

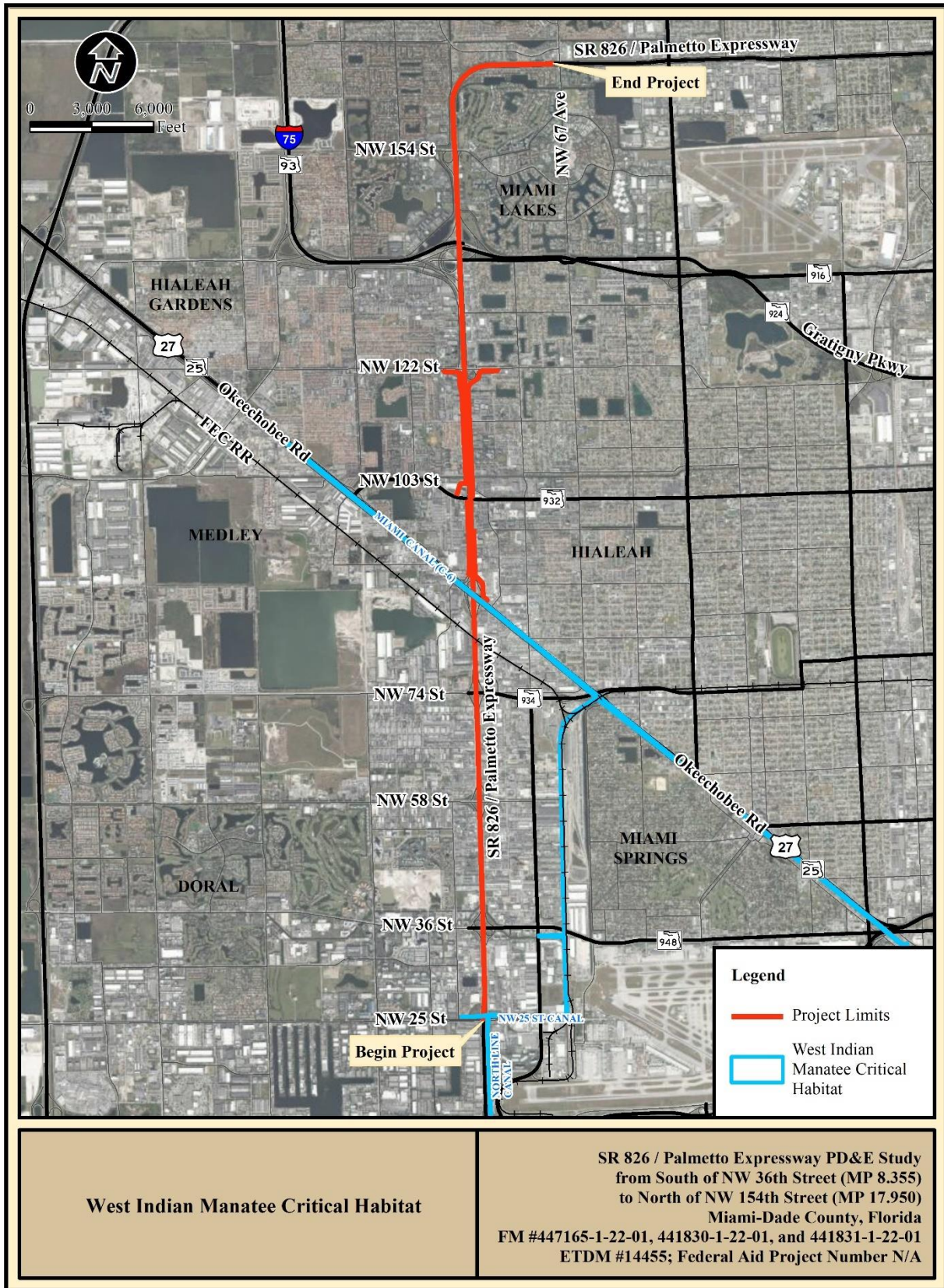
Joel Coffman, Acting Chief  
Groundwater, UIC and GIS Section  
Safe Drinking Water Branch  
EPA, Region 4, Atlanta, GA





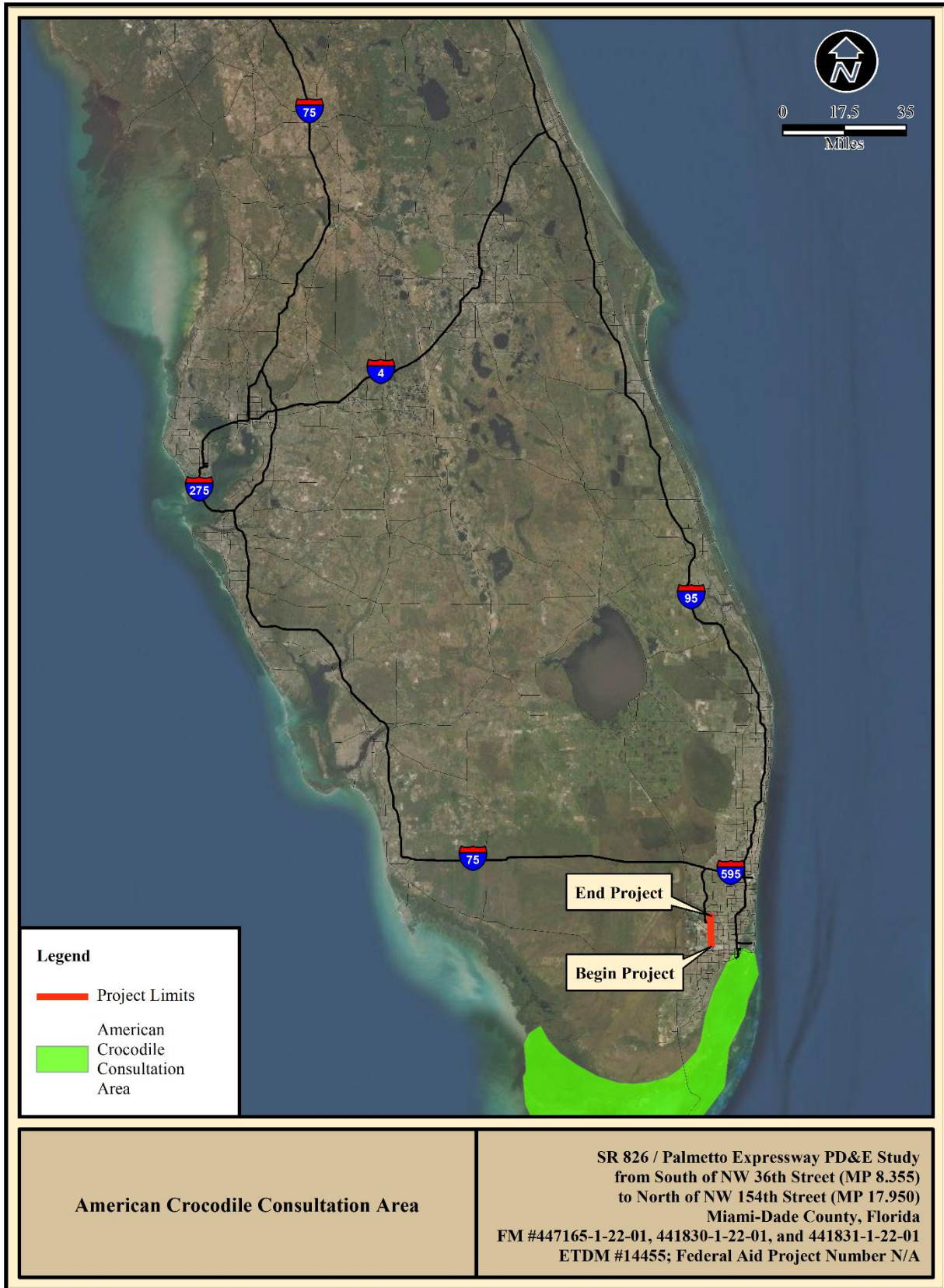
**Florida Bonneted Bat Consultation/Urban Bat Area**



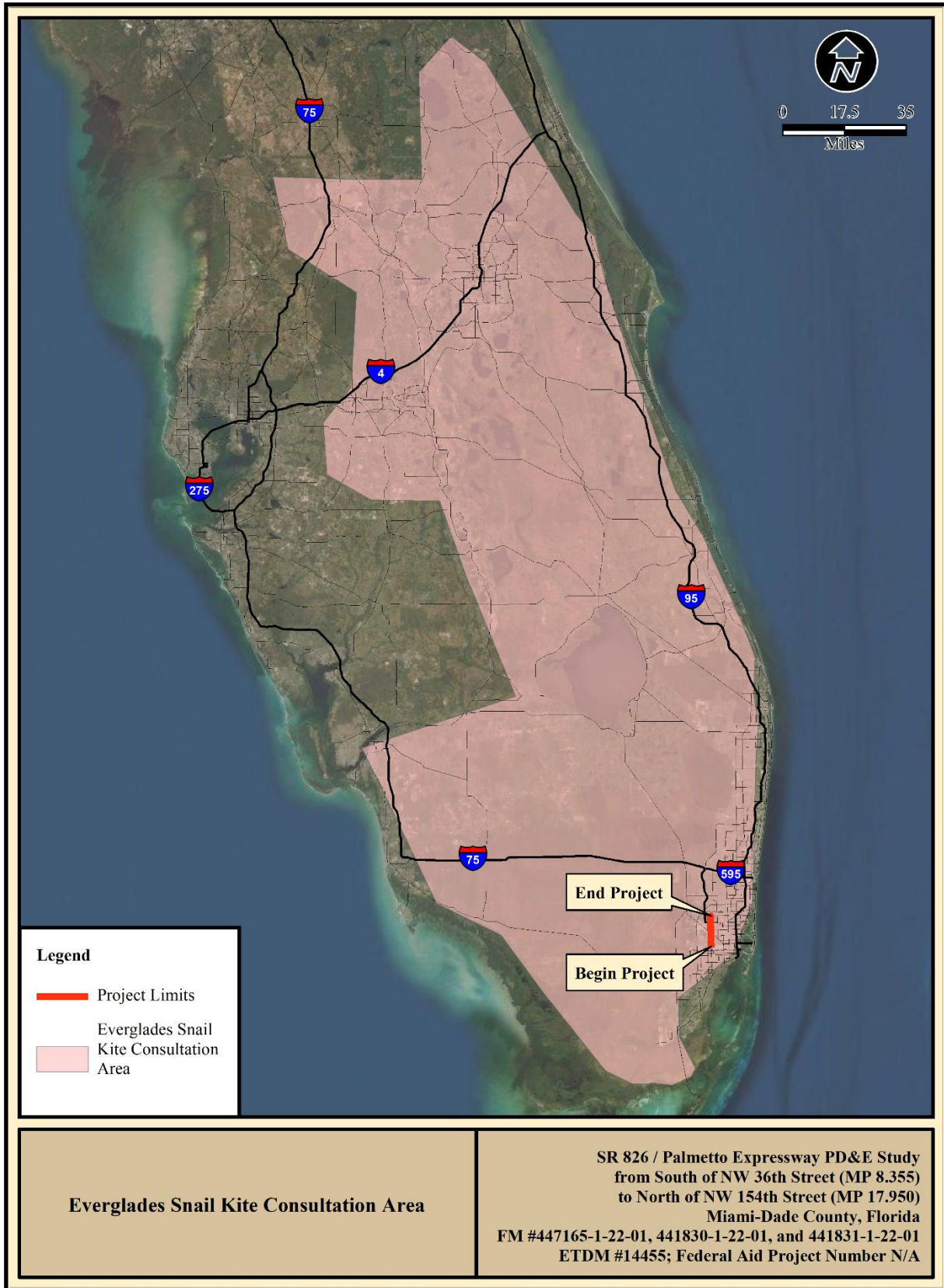


### West Indian Manatee State-Designated Critical Habitat



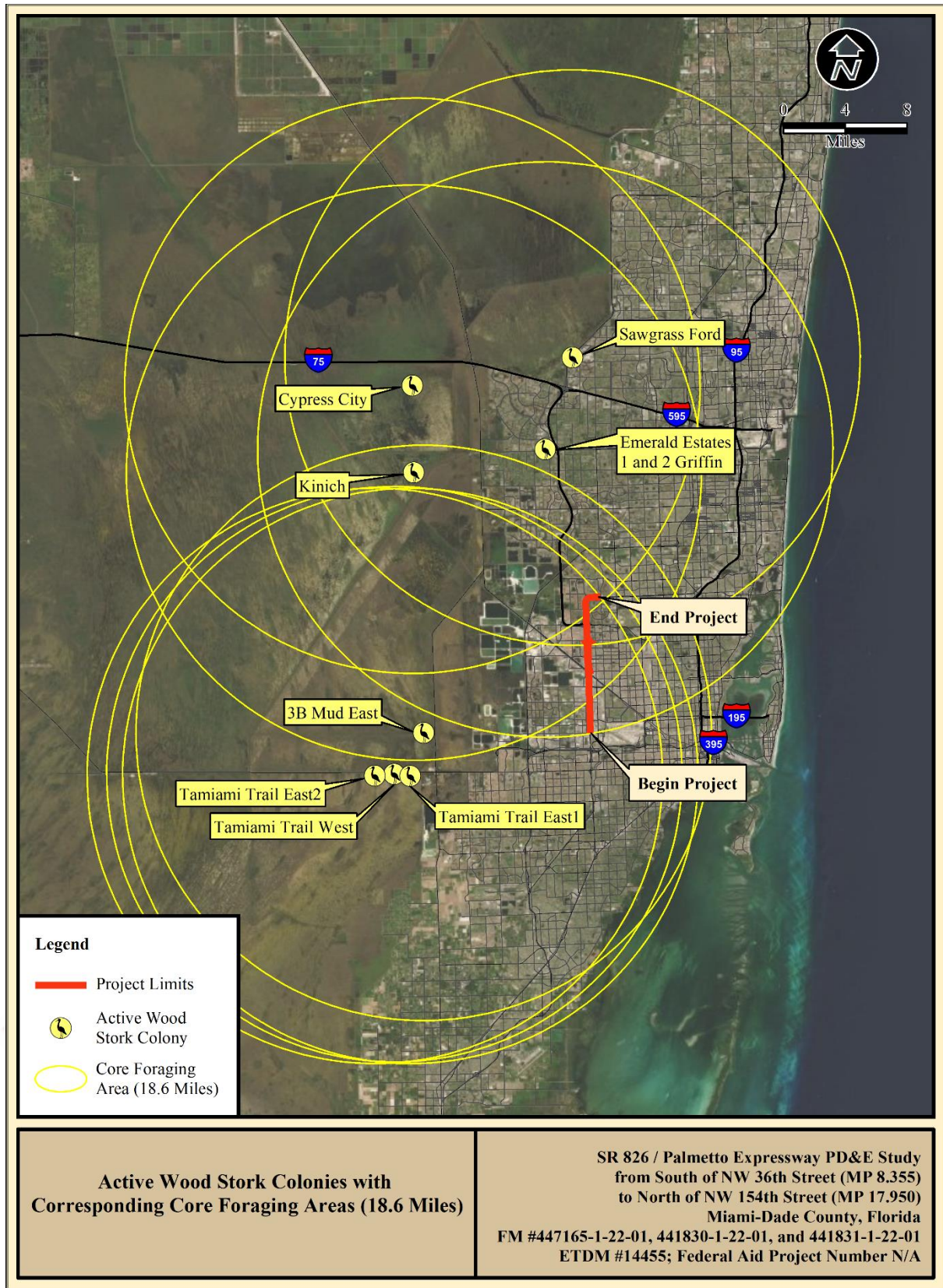


### American Crocodile Consultation Area



**Everglades Snail Kite Consultation Area**





### Active Nesting Wood Stork Colonies





### Bald Eagle Nests

## **Physical Resources Appendix**

### **Contents:**

Potential Contaminated Site Map

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