

NRCS Farmlands Coordination

Florida Department of Transportation District 1

State Road (SR) 70 PD&E

Limits of Project: Jefferson Avenue to County Road (CR) 29 Highlands, Florida

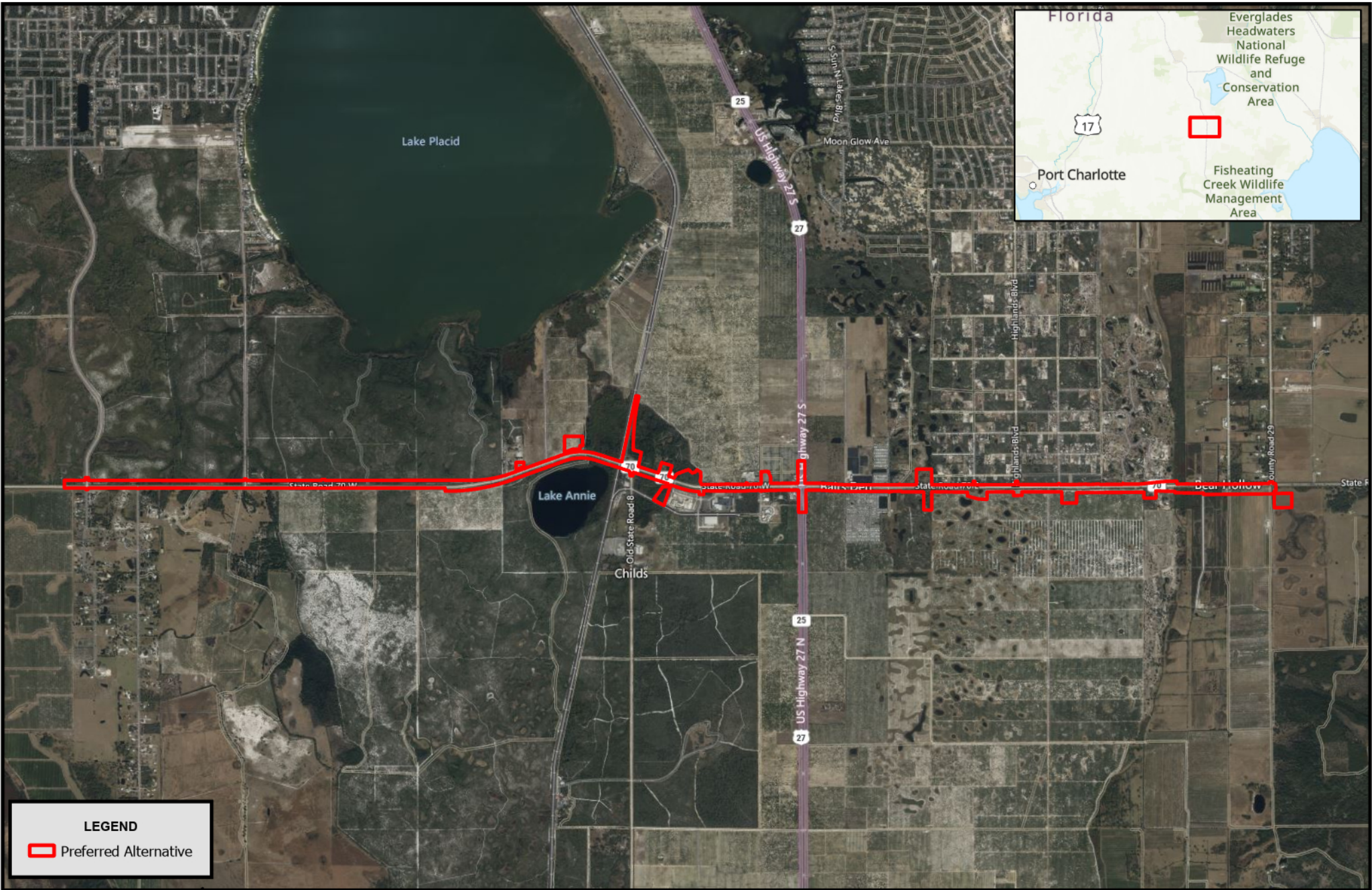
Financial Management Number: 414506-1-22-01

Federal Aid Project Number: 1502-018-P

ETDM Number: 3054

Date: April 2026

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



LEGEND

 Preferred Alternative

	0 4,000 8,000 Feet 1 inch = 4,000 feet	Project Location Map	SR 70 from Jefferson Ave to CR 29 FPID: 414506-1-22-01 Highlands County, Florida	
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FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS

PART I (To be completed by Federal Agency)		3. Date of Land Evaluation Request: 3/16/2026		4. Sheet 1 of 1	
1. Name of Project: SR 70 from E of Jefferson Ave to E of CR 29		5. Federal Agency Involved: Federal Highway Administration (FDOT)			
2. Type of Project: Highway/Transportation		6. County: Highlands		State: Florida	
PART II (To be completed by NRCS)		Date Request Received by NRCS: 4/26/2026		2. Person Completing Form: Josue AceitunoDiaz	
3. Does the corridor contain prime, unique statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form).		Yes		4. Acres Irrigated: 67987 Average Farm Size: 466 Acres	
5. Major Crop(s): Citrus; Forage		6. Farmable Land in Government Jurisdiction: Acres: 389622 % 55.06		7. Amount of Farmland as Defined in FPPA: Acres: 352883.0 % 49.87	
8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used: National Commodity Crops Productivity Index - Nonirrigated		9. Name of Local Site Assessment System		10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS: 3/16/2026	

PART III (To be completed by Federal Agency)	Alternative Corridor for Segment			
	Corridor A	Corridor B	Corridor C	Corridor D
A. Total Acres to Be Converted Directly	154.16			
B. Total Acres to Be Converted Indirectly, Or to Receive Services	0			
C. Total Acres in Corridor	269.48			

PART IV (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information				
A. Total Acres Prime and Unique Farmland	153.93			
B. Total Acres Statewide and Local Important Farmland	0			
C. Percentage of Farmland in County or Local Govt. Unit to Be Converted	0.04			
D. Percentage of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction with Same or Higher Relative Value	63.48			

PART V (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative value of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)				
	44			

PART VI (To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))	Maximum Points				
1. Area in Nonurban Use	15	14			
2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use	10	5			
3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed	20	0			
4. Protection Provided by State and Local Government	20	0			
5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared to Average	10	6			
6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	25	0			
7. Availability Of Farm Support Services	5	5			
8. On-Farm Investments	20	20			
9. Effects Of Conversion on Farm Support Services	25	0			
10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10	0			
TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS	160	50			

PART VII (To be completed by Federal Agency)					
Relative Value of Farmland (From Part V)	100	44			
Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160	50			
TOTAL POINTS (Total of above 2 lines)	260	94			

1. Corridor Selected: Preferred Alternative	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project: 154.16	3. Date Of Selection: 4/29/2026	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used? Yes ☐ No ☒
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5. Reason For Selection:
Preferred Alternative was selected due to minimal impacts and low level of significance (less than 160 points) for impacted farmlands within and adjacent to the proposed corridor.

Signature of Person Completing this Part:	DATE 4/29/2026
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NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor

CORRIDOR - TYPE SITE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

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

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

More than 90 percent - 15 points

90 to 20 percent - 14 to 1 point(s)

Less than 20 percent - 0 points

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

More than 90 percent - 10 points

90 to 20 percent - 9 to 1 point(s)

Less than 20 percent - 0 points

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

More than 90 percent - 20 points

90 to 20 percent - 19 to 1 point(s)

Less than 20 percent - 0 points

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

Site is protected - 20 points

Site is not protected - 0 points

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

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

As large or larger - 10 points

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

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

Acreage equal to more than 25 percent of acres directly converted by the project - 25 points

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

Acreage equal to less than 5 percent of the acres directly converted by the project - 0 points

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

All required services are available - 5 points

Some required services are available - 4 to 1 point(s)

No required services are available - 0 points

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

High amount of on-farm investment - 20 points

Moderate amount of on-farm investment - 19 to 1 point(s)

No on-farm investment - 0 points

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

Substantial reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted - 25 points

Some reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted - 1 to 24 point(s)

No significant reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted - 0 points

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

Proposed project is incompatible to existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland - 10 points

Proposed project is tolerable to existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland - 9 to 1 point(s)

Proposed project is fully compatible with existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland - 0 points

Brett Berube

From: AceitunoDiaz, Josue - FPAC-NRCS, FL <Josue.AceitunoDiaz@usda.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2026 9:55 AM
To: Cothorn, Kathern
Cc: Giuliani, Isabelle - FPAC-NRCS, FL; Joyner, Melody; Lauk, Joe; Feagle, Autumn "Brooke"; Brett Berube; Matthew Dockins
Subject: RE: [External Email]RE: FDOT District One – 414506-1-22-01, SR 70 from Jefferson Ave to CR 29 – Prime Farmlands Coordination Request
Attachments: 414506-1-22-0_2026ReCon_Form.pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Good afternoon,

Thank you for your message and for providing the updated project details and supporting materials. Attached to this email, you will find the CPA-106 form with the NRCS applicable portions completed based on the information you shared.

If you have any questions please feel free to reach out.

Best regards,

Josué Aceituno-Díaz
Resources Soil Scientist
Soils Team|Southeast Region
Bartow Field Office



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Natural Resources Conservation Service
1700 Highway 17 South, Suite #2, Bartow, FL 33830
O: (863) 800-9082
M: (863) 464-3969

From: Cothorn, Kathern <Kathern.Cothorn@dot.state.fl.us>
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2026 12:08 PM
To: AceitunoDiaz, Josue - FPAC-NRCS, FL <Josue.AceitunoDiaz@usda.gov>
Cc: Giuliani, Isabelle - FPAC-NRCS, FL <isabelle.giuliani@usda.gov>; Joyner, Melody <Melody.Joyner@dot.state.fl.us>; Lauk, Joe <Joe.Lauk@dot.state.fl.us>; Feagle, Autumn "Brooke" <Brooke.Feagle@dot.state.fl.us>; Brett Berube <bberube@rkk.com>; Matthew Dockins <mdockins@hntb.com>
Subject: [External Email]RE: FDOT District One – 414506-1-22-01, SR 70 from Jefferson Ave to CR 29 – Prime Farmlands Coordination Request

[External Email]

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Good afternoon,

District One is currently completing the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study for SR 70 from Jefferson Avenue to CR 29 in unincorporated Highlands County, south of Lake Placid.

Based on a review of available soil information for the proposed improvements, much of the project occurs over Prime Farmland soils and there are several agricultural parcels, including groves, adjacent to the project.



The project limits were included in coordination previously reviewed by NRCS staff in August 2019 and March 2024. The current coordination reflects the updated project plans and potential impacts after roadway realignment and design considerations. Based on the time elapsed and design changes to the project footprint, FDOT District One is requesting to re-initiate coordination with NRCS to address the impacts to Prime or Unique Farmland soils, as regulated under the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) of 1981, 7 CFR 658.

Attached are the updated CPA-106 form with Parts I and III completed, a Project Location Map, and GIS shapefiles for your use. Please let us know if you have any issues accessing or using the files provided.

 [414506-1_SR 70_CPA-106](#)

Thank you for your time in reviewing this project. We appreciate the NRCS' consultation on this important transportation improvement project.

Sincerely,
Kathern Cothorn
Project Manager IV
Corridors Program Office – D1
801 North Broadway Ave., MS 1-41
Bartow, Florida 33830

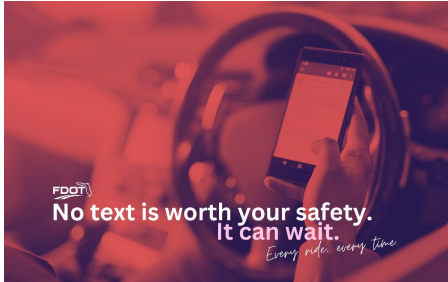
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 Kathern.cothorn@dot.state.fl.us



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Outlook

RE: [External Email]FDOT District One - 414506-1-22-01, SR 70 From Jefferson Ave. to CR 29; Highlands County- Prime Farmlands Coordination Update

From AceitunoDiaz, Josue - FPAC-NRCS, FL <Josue.AceitunoDiaz@usda.gov>**Date** Wed 2/25/2026 11:36 AM**To** Brett Berube <bberube@rkk.com>**Cc** Summer Sayre <ssayre@rkk.com>; Matthew Dockins <mdockins@hntb.com>; Giuliani, Isabelle - FPAC-NRCS, FL <isabelle.giuliani@usda.gov> 1 attachment (43 KB)

CPA-106.pdf;

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Hello Mr. Berube

As per our phone conversation, due to the changes, the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) requires a re-submission of CPA-106 form (attached) , submitted by the federal agency funding the project. Parts I and III of the Form submitted must be completed by the agency in order for us to move forward with our review.

It would also be of great assistance to us if a GIS Shapefile layer or a Google earth file, or map with the new ROW of the project. Please let us know if there is any questions or concerns.

For more information on FPPA please visit the following links:

1. <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/natural-resource-concerns/land/cropland/farmland-protection-policy-act>
2. https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/FPPA_Rule_7cfr658.pdf

Best Regards

Josué Aceituno-Díaz

Resources Soil Scientist
Soils Division|Southeast Region
Bartow Field Office



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

1700 Highway 17 South, Suite #2, Bartow, FL 33830
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M: (863) 464-3969

From: Brett Berube <bberube@rkk.com>

Sent: Friday, February 13, 2026 11:13 AM

To: AceitunoDiaz, Josue - FPAC-NRCS, FL <Josue.AceitunoDiaz@usda.gov>

Cc: Summer Sayre <ssayre@rkk.com>; Matthew Dockins <mdockins@hntb.com>

Subject: [External Email]FDOT District One - 414506-1-22-

01, SR 70 From Jefferson Ave. to CR 29; Highlands County- Prime Farmlands Coordination Update

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Good morning Josue,

I wanted to reach out because a couple of years ago, Gordon Mullen had coordinated with you on the subject project's anticipated impacts to federally-designated Prime Farmlands soils (please see attached email chain). Although the project's limits have not changed, there have been several changes in the project's ROW and expected impact footprint. As such, the FDOT is seeking to re-initiate Farmlands coordination with the NRCS. Would we be able to continue to conduct the Farmlands coordination with you, or is there someone else we should reach out to to restart the process? Also, would NRCS need to provide a new CPA-106 form, or would we be able to simply update the form that Gordon had previously provided? Please feel free to call my cell phone if you'd like to discuss.

Thank you,

Brett Berube
Environmental Scientist



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Gordon Mullen

From: AceitunoDiaz, Josue - FPAC-NRCS, FL <Josue.AceitunoDiaz@usda.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2024 9:59 AM
To: Gordon Mullen
Cc: Giuliani, Isabelle - FPAC-NRCS, FL; Leach, Darrell - FPAC-NRCS, FL
Subject: RE: [External Email]FDOT District One - 414506-1-22-01, SR 70 From Jefferson Ave. to CR 29; Highlands County- Prime farmlands coordination update request
Attachments: 414506-1 SR70 CPA-106_3_1_24 Rev.pdf; Soil_Report (SR 70 FR E of Jefferson Ave to E of CR 29).pdf

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Hello

Please see attached to the email NRCS Farmland Conversion Impact Rating with NRCS portion completed based on the shapefile provided. I have also attached the Soils Report for your records.

Best Regards,

Josué Aceituno-Díaz

Resource Soil Scientist (Area 3 & 4)

Sebring Field Office

USDA-NRCS

4505 George Blvd

Sebring, FL 33875

Office: (863) 451-3421

josue.aceitunodiaz@usda.gov

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From: Gordon Mullen <gmullen@rkk.com>
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2024 8:19 AM
To: AceitunoDiaz, Josue - FPAC-NRCS, FL <Josue.AceitunoDiaz@usda.gov>
Cc: Giuliani, Isabelle - FPAC-NRCS, FL <isabelle.giuliani@usda.gov>; Leach, Darrell - FPAC-NRCS, FL <darrell.leach@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: [External Email]FDOT District One - 414506-1-22-01, SR 70 From Jefferson Ave. to CR 29; Highlands County- Prime farmlands coordination update request

Thank you, Josue. Much appreciated!

GORDON MULLEN

Technical Leader



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From: AceitunoDiaz, Josue - FPAC-NRCS, FL <Josue.AceitunoDiaz@usda.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2024 8:14 AM
To: Gordon Mullen <gmullen@rkk.com>
Cc: Giuliani, Isabelle - FPAC-NRCS, FL <isabelle.giuliani@usda.gov>; Leach, Darrell - FPAC-NRCS, FL <darrell.leach@usda.gov>
Subject: RE: [External Email]FDOT District One - 414506-1-22-01, SR 70 From Jefferson Ave. to CR 29; Highlands County-Prime farmlands coordination update request

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Good Morning Gordon,

Files have been received I will follow up as soon as possible with the updated NRCS Farmlands scoring.

Best regards

Josué Aceituno-Díaz

Resource Soil Scientist (Area 3 & 4)

Sebring Field Office

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4505 George Blvd

Sebring, FL 33875

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josue.aceitunodiaz@usda.gov

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From: Gordon Mullen <gmullen@rkk.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 7, 2024 11:47 AM
To: Leach, Darrell - FPAC-NRCS, FL <darrell.leach@usda.gov>
Cc: Giuliani, Isabelle - FPAC-NRCS, FL <isabelle.giuliani@usda.gov>; Jeffrey W James (Jeffrey.James@dot.state.fl.us) <Jeffrey.James@dot.state.fl.us>; Gilmer, Nikki <Nikki.Gilmer@dot.state.fl.us>
Subject: RE: [External Email]FDOT District One - 414506-1-22-01, SR 70 From Jefferson Ave. to CR 29; Highlands County-Prime farmlands coordination update request

Darrell,

Good morning, I wanted to follow up with you to confirm whether you received these files, as associated with the farmlands coordination update requested below?

Could you please let me know? Thanks.

GORDON MULLEN
Technical Leader



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Lakeland, FL 33801

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From: Gordon Mullen

Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 11:51 AM

To: Leach, Darrell - FPAC-NRCS, FL <darrell.leach@usda.gov>

Subject: FW: [External Email]FDOT District One - 414506-1-22-01, SR 70 From Jefferson Ave. to CR 29; Highlands County-Prime farmlands coordination update request

Darrell,

Good morning, following up on my prior e-mail below. Here are the revised project impact/ROW files and updated CPA-106 form needed for the updated NRCS Farmlands scoring.

Again, my apologies (and thanks).

GORDON MULLEN

Technical Leader



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Lakeland, FL 33801

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From: Gordon Mullen

Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 9:06 AM

To: Leach, Darrell - FPAC-NRCS, FL <darrell.leach@usda.gov>

Subject: RE: [External Email]FDOT District One - 414506-1-22-01, SR 70 From Jefferson Ave. to CR 29; Highlands County-Prime farmlands coordination update request

Darrell,

Please hold off reviewing the information I sent you yesterday. I will resubmit revised files today, my apologies.

GORDON MULLEN

Technical Leader



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From: Gordon Mullen

Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 1:30 PM

To: Leach, Darrell - FPAC-NRCS, FL <darrell.leach@usda.gov>

Cc: Turley, David <David.Turley@dot.state.fl.us>; Jeffrey W James (Jeffrey.James@dot.state.fl.us)

<Jeffrey.James@dot.state.fl.us>; Feagle, Brooke <brooke.feagle@atkinsglobal.com>; Giuliani, Isabelle - FPAC-NRCS, FL

<isabelle.giuliani@usda.gov>

Subject: RE: [External Email]FDOT District One - 414506-1-22-01, SR 70 From Jefferson Ave. to CR 29; Highlands County-Prime farmlands coordination update request

Darrell,

Good afternoon. Late last year we had coordinated on the subject project's anticipated impacts to federally-designated Prime Farmlands soils (see e-mail below and first attached PDF). Although the project's limits have not changed, there have been several changes in the project's ROW and expected impact footprint. As such, the FDOT is seeking to re-initiate Farmlands consultation with the NRCS.

To this end, I have attached an updated form CPA-106 (with Parts I and III completed) and the updated project footprint GIS shapefile. Could you please review and provide the updated scoring calculations on the NRCS' behalf? Thanks again for your coordination on this project.

GORDON MULLEN

Technical Leader



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From: Leach, Darrell - FPAC-NRCS, FL <darrell.leach@usda.gov>

Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 1:49 PM

To: Gordon Mullen <gmullen@rkk.com>

Cc: Turley, David <David.Turley@dot.state.fl.us>; Jeffrey W James (<Jeffrey.James@dot.state.fl.us>) <Jeffrey.James@dot.state.fl.us>; Warren, Kimberly <Kimberly.Warren@dot.state.fl.us>; Feagle, Brooke <brooke.feagle@atkinglobal.com>; Giuliani, Isabelle - FPAC-NRCS, FL <isabelle.giuliani@usda.gov>

Subject: RE: [External Email]FDOT District One - 414506-1-22-01, SR 70 From Jefferson Ave. to CR 29 - Prime farmlands coordination request

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Mr. Gordon Mullen,

I completed the NRCS part of the CPA-106 as you requested.

Darrell E. Leach

Acting State Soil Scientist / State Resources Inventory Coordinator

USDA - NRCS

4500 NW 27th Avenue, Bldg A

Gainesville, FL 32606

Office: 352.338.9538

Mobile: 352.240.2841

Telework Days: Ad Hoc

From: Gordon Mullen <gmullen@rkk.com>

Sent: Monday, November 20, 2023 3:55 PM

To: Giuliani, Isabelle - FPAC-NRCS, FL <isabelle.giuliani@usda.gov>; Leach, Darrell - FPAC-NRCS, FL <darrell.leach@usda.gov>

Cc: Turley, David <David.Turley@dot.state.fl.us>; Jeffrey W James (Jeffrey.James@dot.state.fl.us) <Jeffrey.James@dot.state.fl.us>; Warren, Kimberly <Kimberly.Warren@dot.state.fl.us>; Feagle, Brooke <brooke.feagle@atkinsglobal.com>

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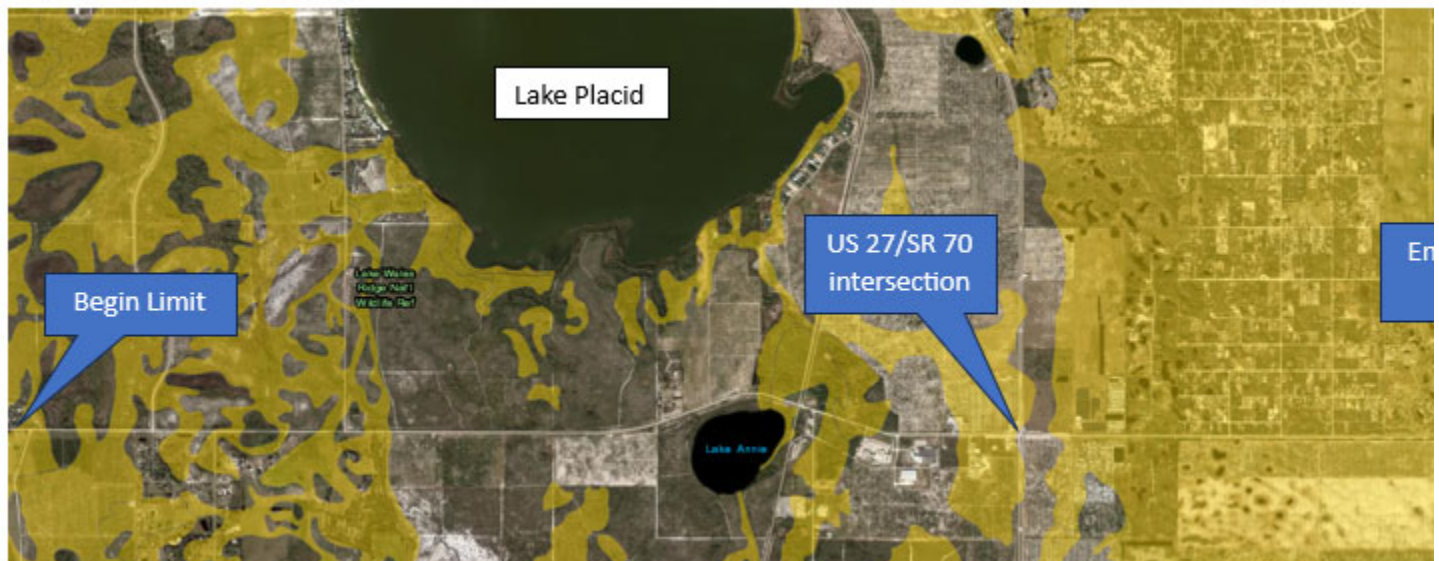
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Good afternoon Isabelle and Darrell,

FDOT District One would like to consult with the NRCS on another roadway improvement/highway widening project that may impact Prime or Unique Farmland soils.

District One is currently completing Planning, Development & Environment (PD&E) study for State Road 70 within the above-referenced project limits, south of the city of Lake Placid, in Highlands County (see below). These above-referenced limits were included within a PD&E study, previously reviewed by NRCS staff in August 2019 (see 1st attached PDF).

Based on a review of available soils information (in the ETDM Environmental Screening Tool) for the proposed improvements, much of the project segment appears to occur over Prime Farmland soils, and there are several citrus groves locally.



Based on the time elapsed since the original study/prior NRCS review, and changes in the project's design and impact footprint, the FDOT is re-initiating coordination with the NRCS to address impacts to Prime or Unique Farmland soils, as regulated under the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) of 1981, 7 CFR Part 658. To this end, I have attached the updated form CPA-106 (with Parts I and III completed), as well as the GIS shapefiles for your use.

Thanks in advance for your time in reviewing and replying to this request. We appreciate your earliest possible response in order to help FDOT District One keep this study on schedule.

GORDON MULLEN
Technical Leader



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