Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan (CSRP)

Florida Department of Transportation

District One

State Road (S.R.) 70 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study

Jefferson Avenue to County Road (C.R.) 29

Highlands County, Florida

Financial Management Number: 414506-1-22-01

ETDM Number: 3054

Date: June 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 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 26, 2022 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate the proposed widening of approximately 7.1 miles of State Road (S.R.) 70 from west of Jefferson Avenue to east of County Road (C.R.) 29 in Highlands County, Florida

The proposed action will increase the capacity of the existing two-lane undivided roadway by widening it to a four-lane divided roadway. The purpose of the PD&E Study is to improve operational conditions for emergency evacuations, correct existing inadequate roadway cross-slope and substandard geometry, increase vehicular safety, and enhance economic competitiveness within a designated Rural Area of Opportunity. The study provides engineering and environmental analysis and documentation to establish the optimal type and location of improvements to S.R. 70. The results of the study will aid Highlands County, FDOT District One, and the FDOT Office of Environmental Management (OEM) in determining the type, preliminary design, and location of the proposed improvements.

The existing S.R. 70 facility consists of a two-lane undivided facility with 12-foot travel lanes (one in each direction) and 10-foot shoulders (5-foot paved). The existing right-of-way (ROW) varies from 45 to 200 feet. The posted speed limit on the east and west ends of the project limits is 60 miles per hour (mph), slowing to 45 mph at the US 27 intersection, in the center of the project. Throughout the limits of this study, S.R. 70 is designated as a rural principal arterial highway. The project corridor lacks pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

This Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan has been prepared to evaluate the number and type of relocations resulting from the proposed project and to identify any socioeconomic impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods that might occur as a result of implementing the Preferred Alternative. At this time, the Preferred Alternative is anticipated to result in the potential relocations of three residences and one business. There are no proposed public facility displacements.

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1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

1.1 Project Description

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study to evaluate options for widening State Road (S.R.) 70 in Highlands County. The project limits cover approximately seven miles of S.R. 70 beginning west of Jefferson Avenue/Placid Lakes Boulevard (Milepost (MP) 10.217) and ending at County Road (C.R.) 29 (MP 17.245). The project limits are shown in **Figure 1-1**.

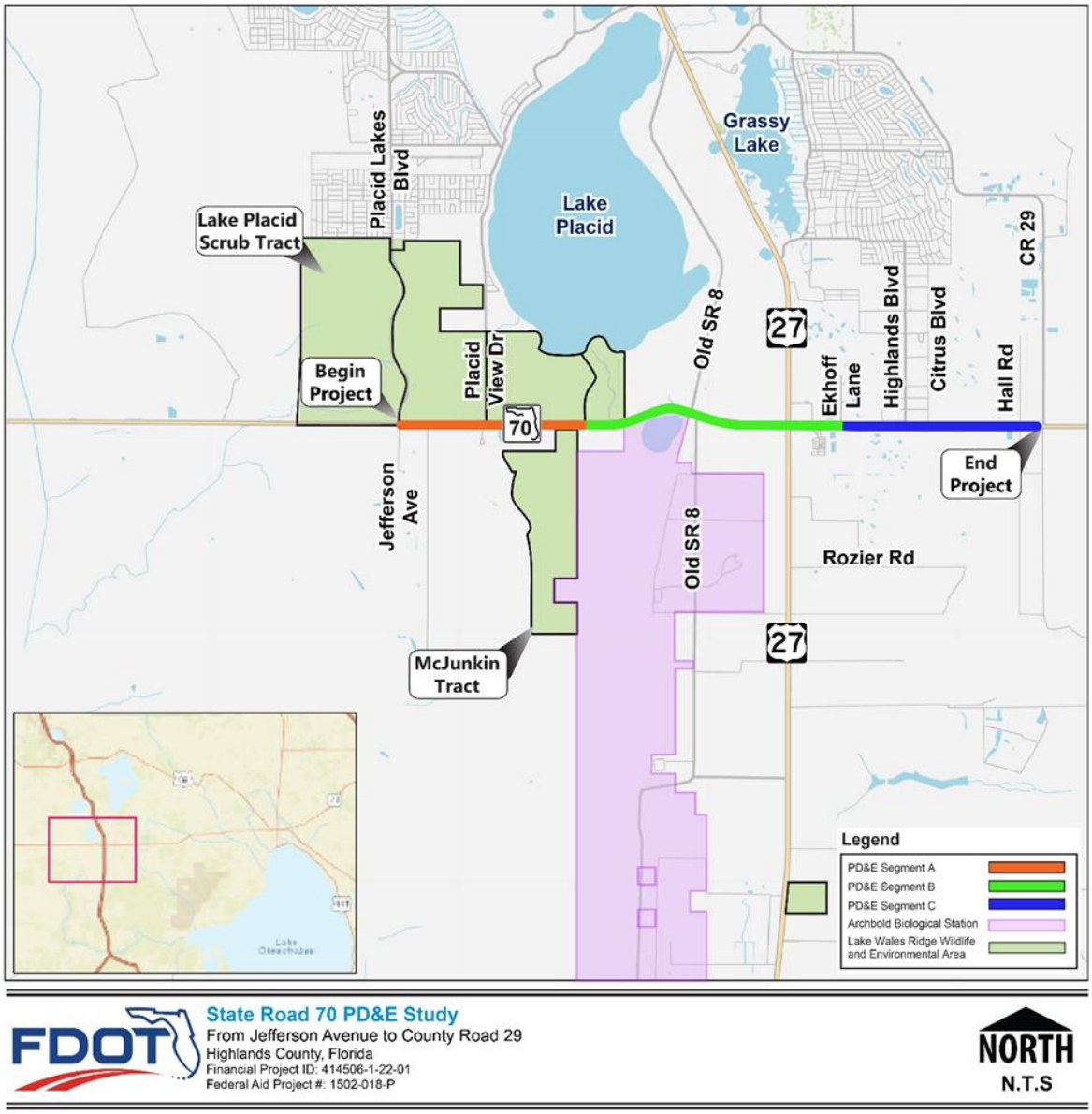
S.R. 70 is a Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) facility with daily truck percentages as high as 33% and it is a designated emergency evacuation route. The PD&E study limits have been divided into two Design segments due to concurrent PD&E and Design phases, with U.S. 27 as the breakline. 414506-3 is west of U.S. 27 and 414506-4 is east of U.S. 27.

The objective of the PD&E study is to evaluate widening the existing two-lane undivided roadway to a four-lane divided roadway. Project improvements will include wildlife crossing features, roadway signing and pavement markings, a shared use path, and the construction of stormwater management facilities, including treatment ponds and floodplain compensation sites.

The project was evaluated through FDOT's Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process as project #3054. An ETDM Programming Screen Summary Report containing comments from the Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) was published on July 7, 2016. The ETAT evaluated the project's effects on various social, cultural, natural, and physical resources.

Upon completion, the study will meet all requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) as administered for the FDOT by the FDOT Office of Environmental Management (OEM) and the requirements of other federal and state laws to qualify the proposed project for federal-aid funding.

Figure 1-1: Project Location Map



1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of this project is to improve operational conditions for emergency evacuations along the S.R. 70 corridor from Jefferson Avenue to C.R. 29. The Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program determined the segment of S.R. 70 between United States (U.S. 27) to east of the end project limits at C.R. 29 to be a critical segment with the longest vehicle queues among all roadways in the Central Florida region. The need for the project is based on the following primary and secondary criteria:

PRIMARY CRITERIA

OPERATIONAL CONDITIONS: Improve Operational Capacity for Emergency Evacuations

This widening project is anticipated to improve traffic operations along S.R. 70 where emergency evacuation traffic modeling performed by the FDEM identified the roadway to include a critical segment with highest vehicle queues. Although nearly all roadways will have extended vehicle queues during an emergency evacuation, S.R. 70 from U.S. 27 to east of the end project limit demonstrated evacuation vehicle queues lasting among the longest time periods in the region under multiple evacuation scenarios.

Delay caused by traffic congestion contributes to prolonged clearance times. According to the Florida Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program, key transportation improvement projects can impact the anticipated evacuation clearance times. The widening of S.R. 70 is anticipated to reduce evacuating vehicle queues and thereby reduce the clearance time during an evacuation by:

- Increasing the capacity of the roadway to accommodate evacuating vehicles, and
- Improving shoulders and roadside slopes to meet current criteria in order to better accommodate removal of disabled vehicles which can obstruct evacuating vehicles during an emergency.

SECONDARY CRITERIA

ROADWAY DEFICIENCIES: Correct Existing Inadequate Cross-Section and Substandard Geometrics

The entire project segment of S.R. 70 is included in Florida's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS). These facilities generally support major flows of interregional, interstate, and international travel and commerce. Facilities on the SIS are subject to special standards and criteria for number of lanes, design speed, access, level of service and other requirements. For SIS facilities, the minimum design speed is 65 miles per hour (mph) within C1 Natural or C2 Rural context classifications, and 50 mph within a C3C (Suburban Commercial) context classification. Cross sectional elements and geometrics along the existing S.R. 70 corridor are inadequate for an SIS facility with these context classifications.

The existing S.R. 70 facilities exhibit the following:

- Shoulder widths are required to be a minimum of 10 feet (ft) in width with five-ft paved. Existing S.R. 70 includes substandard eight-foot (ft) shoulders with four-ft paved.
- Front slopes are required at 1:6 or flatter for fill heights up to five-ft. For significant sections of the project limits, S.R. 70 includes existing front slopes steeper than 1:6.

- A clear zone with 36-ft of recoverable terrain free of obstructions is required from through travel lanes. Deficient existing clear zones provide recoverable areas less than 18-ft in some segments.

- An offset of 12-ft is required to guardrail. Existing guardrail offsets are less than seven-ft from the travel lanes.

The improvements to S.R. 70 will widen the existing shoulders, flatten roadside slopes, extend clear zones, and increase offsets to guardrails to meet the respective criteria.

Further, the primary function of SIS highway components is to provide for efficient interregional traffic movements. Access is highly regulated to accommodate high-speed and high-volume facilities that support these movements. FDOT criteria state that controlled access segments of the SIS highway component shall be consistent with Access Class 2 or 3 of the Florida Administrative Code (FAC) Rule 14-97. These access classifications include restrictive medians which physically prevent vehicle crossings. The widening of S.R. 70 to a four-lane divided facility will introduce a median capable of restricting these movements.

SAFETY: Increase Vehicular Safety

Historical crash data was collected and evaluated as part of this study. Crash data was acquired for the time periods spanning from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2019, and from January 1, 2020 to October 31, 2022.

For the five-year study period from 2015 through 2019, the crash data collected within the entire PD&E study limits showed a total of 82 crashes, including two (2) fatalities, 35 injury crashes (causing 92 injuries) and 45 property damage only crashes. The project portion from the western terminus near Lightsey Ranch Road to U.S. 27 had 37 crashes and the calculated crash rate of 0.755 per million vehicle miles (MVM) in this section was less than the statewide average crash rate of 0.802 MVM for comparable facilities (6% lower). The portion from U.S. 27 to C.R. 29 had 45 crashes and the calculated crash rate of 1.590 MVM in this section exceeded the statewide average crash rate of 0.802 MVM (98% higher).

For the study period spanning January 1, 2020 – October 31, 2022, the crash data collected within the entire PD&E showed a total of 71 crashes, including nine (9) fatalities, 33 injury crashes (causing 66 injuries) and 33 property damage only crashes. The project portion from the western terminus near Lightsey Ranch Road to U.S. 27 had 40 crashes and the calculated crash rate of 1.441 MVM in this section exceeded the statewide average crash rate of 0.802 MVM for comparable facilities (80% higher). The section from U.S. 27 to C.R. 29 had 31 crashes and the calculated crash rate of 1.932 MVM in this section exceeded the statewide average crash rate of 0.802 MVM (141% higher).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Rural Area of Opportunity

The Governor of the State of Florida pursuant to Florida Statute (FS) Section 228.0656(7) issued Executive Order 11-81 which included Highlands County among six counties identified as the South-Central Rural Area of Opportunity. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) established a Sebring Highlands County Catalyst industrial development project adjacent to the Sebring Airport in Highlands County. The objective of the project is to create a significant economic effect to the entire region that will result in the development of high-wage and highly skilled jobs.

The REDI Sebring Highlands County Catalyst development is consistent with the stated goals for the Florida SIS which includes strengthening the linkage between transportation and economic development, assisting rural area of opportunity and enhancing economic competitiveness. The catalyst site connects to S.R. 70 via a second SIS highway component, U.S. 27, which intersects S.R. 70 within the project limits. The S.R. 70 corridor is the nearest east-west SIS highway component providing interregional connectivity from the catalyst site directly to both coasts.

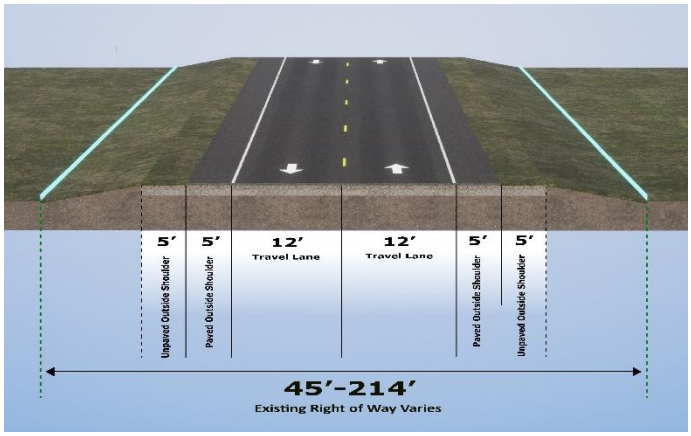
As described above, the existing project limits of the S.R. 70 are deficient for multiple criteria governing SIS highway components. Widening improvements to S.R. 70 will enhance its ability to function as a SIS highway component and accomplish SIS objectives for interregional transportation linked to economic development.

1.3 Existing Facility

1.3.1 Existing Typical Section

S.R. 70 is designated as a rural principal arterial highway, a SIS highway, and an evacuation route throughout the limits of this study. The existing S.R. 70 facility consists of a two-lane undivided roadway with 12-ft travel lanes, five-ft paved shoulders and open roadside ditches within varying existing ROW widths from 45-ft to 214-ft as shown in **Figure 1-2**.

Figure 1-2: Existing Typical Section



The MP ranges along with a description of the existing segments are as follows:

Segment A – MP 10.217 to MP 12.349

Segment A begins at the western project limit at Jefferson Avenue/Placid Lakes Boulevard (MP 10.217) and extends 2.1 miles to approximately 1.18 miles east of Placid View Drive (MP 12.349). The eastern half of Segment A is located within the Lake Placid urban area buffer beginning just west of Placid View Drive and extending 1.2 miles through the eastern limit of the segment. This segment contains a narrow, existing ROW corridor with a width ranging from 60-ft to 66-ft.

The entirety of Segment A runs parallel to the Florida Gas Transmission (FGT) gas pipeline easement, located approximately 30-ft south of the ROW, and to the north by both a Florida Power & Light (FPL) overhead transmission easement and the Lake Wales Ridge Wildlife and Environmental Area (LWRWEA). The properties bordering Segment A are a mix of agricultural, residential, and conservation parcels.

Segment B – MP 12.349 to MP 15.090

Segment B begins approximately 1.18 miles east of Placid View Drive (MP 12.349) and extends 2.7 miles to Ekhoff Lane (MP 15.090). Segment B is typically located within the Lake Placid urban area except for the section from just east of Old S.R. 8 through U.S. 27. This segment contains an existing ROW corridor with a typical width of 200-ft. There is an approximately 750-ft segment of the roadway located east of U.S. 27 where the existing ROW varies from 164 to 214-ft.

The western end of this segment is bordered to the south by an existing FGT gas pipeline easement. The FGT easement crosses underneath S.R. 70 just west of Nursery Lane and proceeds east along the northern side of S.R. 70 up until the Old S.R. 8 intersection. At Old S.R. 8, the FGT easement once again crosses underneath S.R. 70 and continues south along the southern leg of Old S.R. 8. There are also existing FPL overhead electric transmission lines located along the northern edge of the existing ROW throughout the entirety of the segment.

Segment B is bordered along its northern side by the LWRWEA for approximately 2,000-ft from the beginning segment limits to just west of Nursery Lane. Segment B is also bordered to the south by the Archbold Biological Station from just west of Nursery Lane to the South Central Florida Express (SCFE) railroad crossing (Crossing No. 627642Y).

The western limits of Segment B typically contain a combination of agricultural and conservation parcels while the eastern limits are a combination of residential, agricultural, and industrial parcels. Segment B also contains a major intersection with U.S. 27, which is a SIS component and a designated evacuation route.

Segment C – MP 15.090 to MP 17.245

Segment C begins at Ekhoff Lane (MP 15.090) and extends 2.2 miles to the eastern project limit at C.R. 29 (MP 17.245). Nearly all of Segment C is located within the Lake Placid urban area buffer. The urban buffer limits continue 1.9 miles from the western boundary of the segment to just east of Hall Road. The existing ROW is typically 200-ft in width from Ekhoff Lane to approximately 1,600-ft west of Hall Road (MP 16.691). The existing ROW varies from 45 to 65-ft from MP 16.691 to the end project limit at C.R. 29.

Segment C also contains existing FPL overhead electric transmission lines along the northern edge of the existing ROW from the beginning of the segment limit to approximately 400-ft east of Citrus Boulevard.

The adjacent land use along the north side of Segment C is predominantly low density residential. There is an existing parallel local road network providing access to most of these residential parcels. The adjacent land use along the south side of Segment C is predominantly citrus groves and other agricultural uses.

1.4 Proposed Improvements

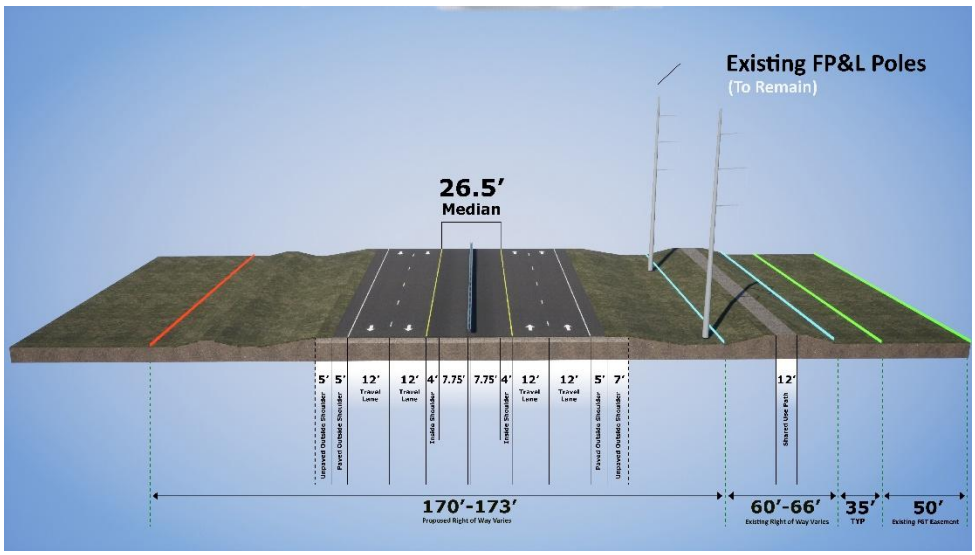
To meet the Purpose and Need, the Preferred Alternative will widen S.R. 70 from two to four lanes throughout the study limits. A description of the proposed corridor through each segment is provided within the sections below. The concept plans depicting the current Preferred Alternative are included in **Appendix A**. For more information regarding the old Preferred Alternative please see the *Preliminary Engineering Report* (PER).

1.4.1 Segment A - 10.217 to MP 12.349

Segment A is a four-lane typical section with median guardrail that maintains the existing southern S.R. 70 ROW boundary and realigns the roadway to the far north (**Figure 1-3**) to avoid impacting the existing FP&L poles. The typical section consists of a 26.5-ft paved median. The roadway features 12-ft travel lanes, a 12-ft shared use path within the existing ROW, and open roadside ditches/linear

stormwater treatment ponds. The design, target, and posted speeds are 65 mph. A median width variation has been approved for this segment. The proposed ROW for this typical section varies from 170 to 173-ft.

Figure 1-3: Segment A Preferred Alternative Typical Section

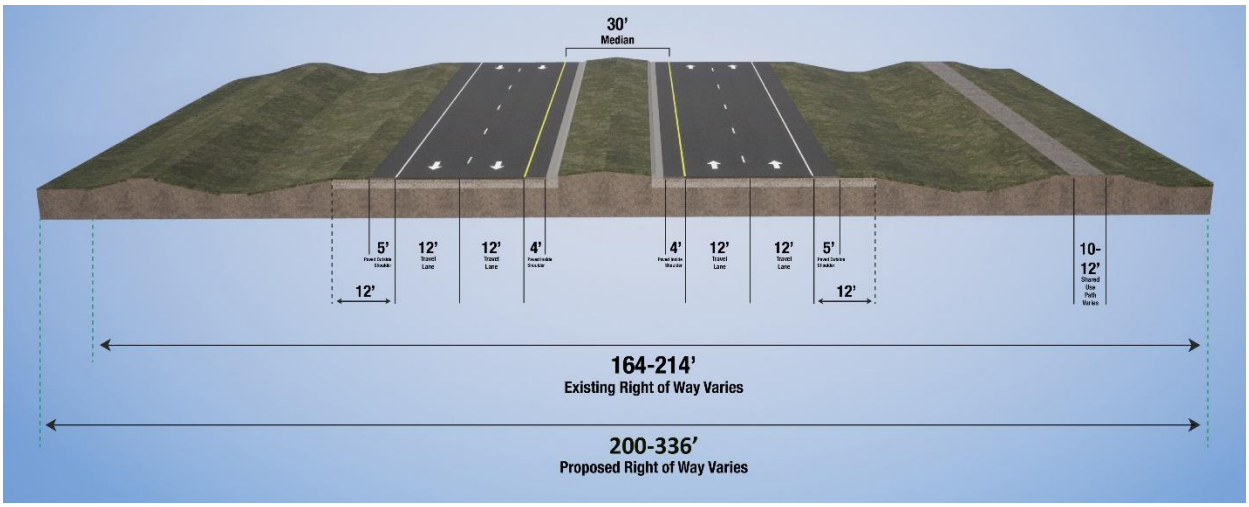


This alternative impacts the LWRWEA and existing FPL easement located on the north side of the roadway; however, this alternative avoids impacts to the FGT easement along the south side of the corridor. Based on coordination with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation (FWC), FDOT will mitigate for the loss of approximately 46.37 acres of impacts to the LWRWEA and further evaluate the wildlife crossings within this segment during the design phase of this project.

1.4.2 Segment B – 12.349 to MP 15.090

Segment B includes 12-ft travel lanes, a 30-ft median including four-ft paved median shoulders, and a Type E curb and gutter. A 10 to 12-ft shared use path is proposed on the south side of the roadway (**Figure 1-4**). The design, target, and posted speeds are 55 mph; a SIS design speed variation has been approved for this segment. The proposed ROW width is 200 to 336-ft. The existing two-lane roadway is offset to the north within the existing ROW; therefore, the roadway will be expanded to the north to avoid the gas lines on the south side.

Figure 1-4: Segment B Preferred Alternative Typical Section



1.4.3 Segment C - MP 15.090 to MP 17.245

Segment C has two typical sections, the first is from MP 15.090 to MP 16.845. This typical section consists of a 40-ft median, 12-ft travel lanes, and open roadside ditches. A 12-ft shared use path is included on the south side. The total proposed ROW width varies from 215 to 359-ft, (**Figure 1-5**) with the existing ROW being 45 to 200-ft. The widening will occur to the south. The design, target, and posted speeds are 65 mph.

From MP 16.845 to MP 17.245, there is a canal located on the south side of the existing corridor. The proposed typical section accommodates the canal in the proposed ROW. The total proposed ROW is 313 to 322-ft, widening to the south. The existing ROW is 45 to 65-ft. The typical section with the canal consists of a 40-ft median, 12-ft travel lanes, and open roadside ditches (**Figure 1-6**).

Figure 1-5: Segment C Preferred Alternative Typical Section (MP 15.090 to MP 16.845)

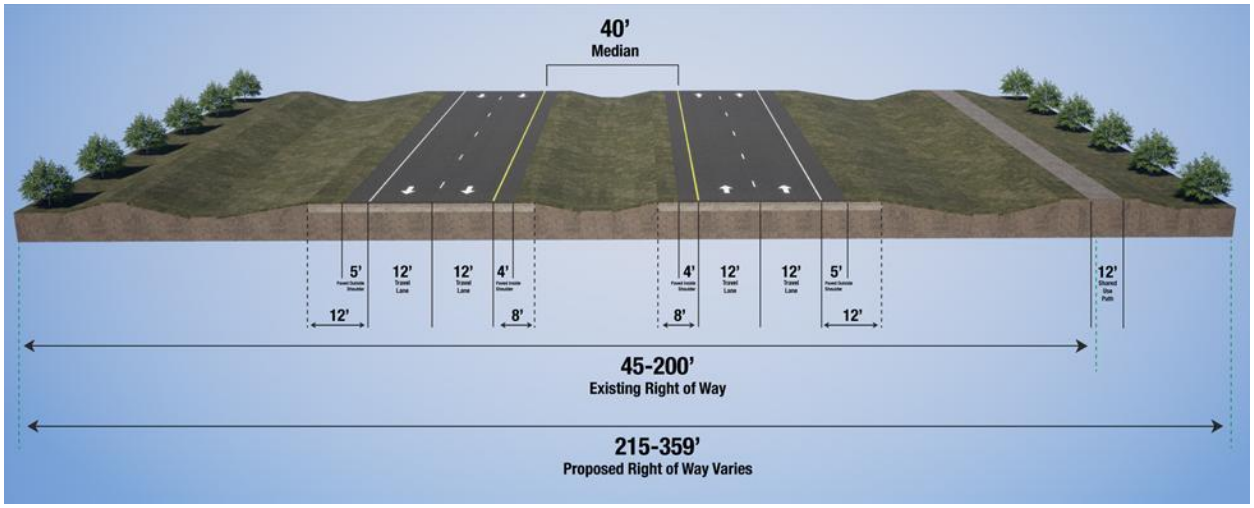
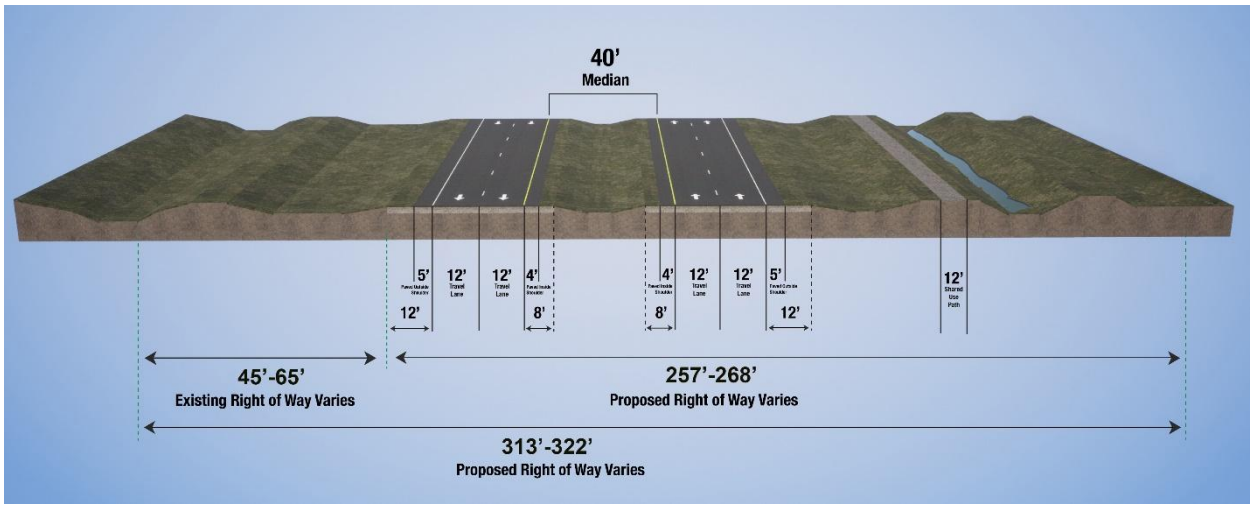


Figure 1-6: Segment C Preferred Typical Section (MP 16.845 to MP 17.245)



2 RELOCATION OVERVIEW

This Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan (CSRP) documents anticipated relocations associated with implementing the Preferred Alternative. The results of the analysis estimate four residences and one business may be relocated. A map of both partial and full impacts is included in **Appendix B**. Sufficient comparable replacement sites are available or will be made available for residences and businesses.

The number and type of relocations anticipated as a result of the Preferred Alternative are summarized in **Table 2-1**. Additional details and further discussion of potential displacements can be found in Section 4.

Table 2-1: Summary of Potential Relocations

	Residential	Business	Publicly Owned Facilities/Lands
Preferred Alternative	4	1 (3 parcels)	46.37 acres

The Preferred Alternative will impact approximately 46.37 acres of the FWC's LWRWEA. Impacts and mitigation of impacts to this resource will be finalized during the PD&E study as a part of the Section 4(f) coordination process, and during the Design phase once more detailed survey and project design are available as part of the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) upland easement coordination process.

No special needs were observed that would prevent the successful relocation of residential and business displacees. In accordance with FS 339.09 and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970 (as described in Section 11 of the Act), as amended, relocation services and payments are provided without regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

3 STUDY AREA DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

This section outlines the demographic conditions of the Census Block Groups that are directly impacted by the Preferred Alternative. Using data from both the 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census and the most recent 5-year American Community Survey (ACS 2024) retrieved from the U.S Census Bureau, geographic information system (GIS) analysis was performed on the four Census Block Groups which intersect with the project study area. ACS data was utilized if a specific demographic parameter was not available at the block group level within the 2020 census data. The impacted block groups are shown in **Figure 3-1**. Major demographic indicators such as population, housing, and income statistics were evaluated for these impacted block groups, Highlands County, and the State of Florida, to determine if the project will have a disproportionate impact on low income and/or minority populations.

3.1 Population

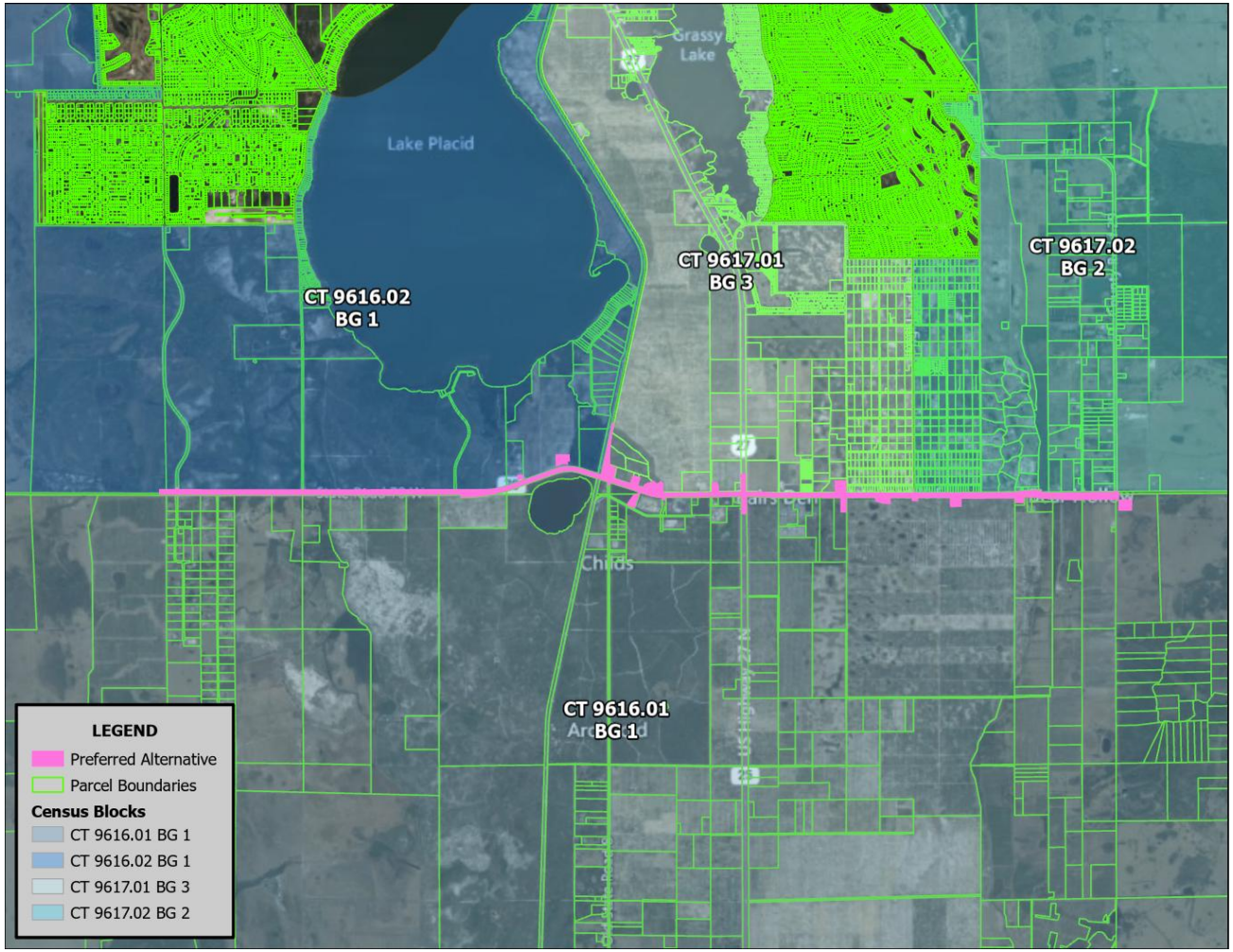
Table 3-1 summarizes the total population of the State of Florida, Highlands County, and the four block groups through which the study area passes. In comparing the 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census estimates, the population of Highlands County increased by approximately 2,449 residents (2.5%) while population growth statewide was approximately 14.6% during this same time period. The population of all the impacted block groups decreased except for Census Tract (CT) 617.01 Block Group 3, which increased by a total of 960 residents (135.6%). It should be noted that all of the potential relocations are located in CT 9616.01 Block Group 1.

Table 3-1: Total Population

Area	2010 Decennial Census	2020 Decennial Census
State of Florida	18,801,310	21,538,187
Highlands County	98,786	101,235
Impacted Block Groups (Total)	4,403	4,882
CT 9616.02 Block Group 1	1,036	1,028
CT 9617.02 Block Group 2	1,341	977
CT 9617.01 Block Group 3	708	1,668
CT 9616.01 Block Group 1	1,318	1,209

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census. Summary File 1; Table P1. (https://data.census.gov).
US Census Bureau, 2006-2010. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Summary File 1. (https://data.census.gov).
US Census Bureau, 2020 Census, Table P1. (https://data.census.gov).

Figure 3-1: Census Block Group Map



3.1.1 Population by Race, Ethnicity, Age, and Disability

The population impacted by the Preferred Alternative is predominantly white. According to the 2020 census data, the percentages of the white population ranges from 56.5% to 84.5%. **Table 3-2** summarizes the population of the impacted block groups by race and ethnicity.

Overall, the White Alone population accounts for approximately 75.26% of the impacted block groups. The African American Alone population accounts for approximately 2.66% of the total population, Two or More Races accounts for 11.10%, Some Other Race Alone accounts for approximately 10.16%, and the remainder of the population is comprised of American Indian or Native Alaskan Alone, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander Alone, or Asian Alone.

According to the 2020 census data, 24.66% of the total population identifies as having a Hispanic or Latino origin within the four impacted block groups. However, within individual block groups, the percentages range from approximately 10.70% to 49.20% of the population.

Table 3-2: Population by Race and Ethnicity

Demographic Category	Highlands County		CT 9616.02 Block Group 1		CT 9617.02 Block Group 2		CT 9617.01 Block Group 3		CT 9616.01 Block Group 1	
	No.	%	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*
RACE										
White Alone	71,549	70.70%	869	84.50%	552	56.50%	1,261	75.60%	992	82.00%
Black or African American Alone	9,891	9.80%	30	2.90%	22	2.30%	60	3.60%	18	1.50%
American Indian or Native Alaskan Alone	503	0.50%	8	0.80%	18	1.80%	1	0.10%	0	0%
Asian Alone	1,644	1.60%	5	0.50%	3	0.30%	3	0.20%	2	0.20%
Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander Alone	58	<0.01%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Some Other Race Alone	6,639	6.60%	39	3.80%	258	26.40%	154	9.20%	45	3.70%
Two or More Races	10,951	10.80%	77	7.50%	124	12.70%	189	11.30%	152	12.60%
ETHNICITY										
Hispanic	20,943	20.70%	110	10.70%	481	49.20%	388	23.30%	225	18.60%
TOTAL POPULATION	101,235		1,028		977		1,668		1,209	

* - Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 Census, Tables P1 and P9. (https://data.census.gov).

According to the 2019-2023 ACS data, approximately 8.13% of the total occupied households of the block groups impacted by the Preferred Alternative have limited English proficiency.

Table 3-3: Limited English-Speaking Households

Limited English-Speaking Households										
	Highlands County		CT 9616.02 Block Group 1		CT 9617.02 Block Group 2		CT 9617.01 Block Group 3		CT 9616.01 Block Group 1	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Limited English	1,881	4.01%	0	0.00%	13	6.95%	122	13.28%	38	7.09%
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	46,879		486		187		919		536	

Source: US Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table C16002. (https://data.census.gov).

According to the 2019-2023 ACS data, approximately 41.18% of the total population of the block groups impacted by the Preferred Alternative is over the age of 65.

Table 3-4: Elderly Population

ELDERLY POPULATION												
	Florida		Highlands County		CT 9616.02 Block Group 1		CT 9617.02 Block Group 2		CT 9617.01 Block Group 3		CT 9616.01 Block Group 1	
	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*
≥Age 65 years	4,781,978	21.33%	38,051	36.00%	432	38.57%	120	18.63%	1,007	60%	347	29.31%
TOTAL POPULATION *	22,416,077		105,702		1,120		644		1,681		1,184	

* - Total population numbers differ between data sources (2020 census data vs. 2019-2023 ACS data).
Source: US Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table B01001. (https://data.census.gov).

According to the 2019-2023 ACS data approximately 14.24% of the impacted block groups are below poverty level. This is more than the corresponding percentages of the population below poverty within Highlands County (7.75%) and the State of Florida (6.36%). Disability data is only reported at the block group level in conjunction with poverty status. According to the 2019-2023 ACS data approximately 3.15% of the population is disabled. This is less than the corresponding percentages of the disabled population within Highlands County (8.07%) and the State of Florida (5.74%).

Table 3-5: Disabled Population & Poverty Status

DISABLED POPULATION & POVERTY STATUS												
	Florida		Highlands County		CT 9616.02 Block Group 1		CT 9617.02 Block Group 2		CT 9617.01 Block Group 3		CT 9616.01 Block Group 1	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Below poverty level	1,425,687	6.36%	8,193	7.75%	155	13.84%	196	30.44%	171	10.17%	137	11.57%
With a disability	1,287,099	5.74%	8,533	8.07%	69	6.16%	8	1.24%	16	0.95%	53	4.47%

DISABLED POPULATION & POVERTY STATUS												
	Florida		Highlands County		CT 9616.02 Block Group 1		CT 9617.02 Block Group 2		CT 9617.01 Block Group 3		CT 9616.01 Block Group 1	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
TOTAL POPULATION*	22,416,077		105,702		1,120		644		1,681		1,184	

* - Total population numbers differ between data sources (2020 census data vs. 2019-2023 ACS data).
Source: US Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table B23024. (https://data.census.gov).

3.2 Housing and Income

According to the 2019-2023 ACS data, there are 3,154 total housing units available within the impacted block groups. Of these units, 2,128 are occupied and 1,026 are vacant, giving the project area a 32.53% vacancy rate, which is greater than the vacancy rate seen in Highlands County (20.05%). Some of these vacant units in the impacted block groups could potentially be utilized for the relocation of displaced residents.

Of the occupied housing units within the impacted block groups, 90.13% are owner occupied and approximately 9.87% are renter occupied units. These percentages have a slightly higher owner occupied rate than those of Highlands County (78.60%).

Of the occupied housing units in the impacted block groups, there are 93 households in which five persons or more live. This is about 4.37% of all occupied housing units in the impacted block groups. This is slightly lower than the county average of 6.06%. **Table 3-6** provides a summary of the housing characteristics.

Table 3-6: Housing Units and Occupancy Status

Housing Units	Highlands County		CT 9616.02 Block Group 1		CT 9617.02 Block Group 2		CT 9617.01 Block Group 3		CT 9616.01 Block Group 1	
	No. of Units	%	No. of Units	%	No. of Units	%	No. of Units	%	No. of Units	%
Occupied	46,879	79.95%	486	64.71%	187	63.61%	919	69.78%	536	67.68%
Vacant	11,756	20.05%	265	35.29%	107	36.39%	398	30.22%	256	32.32%
TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	58,635		751		294		1,317		792	
OCCUPANCY TYPE										
Owner-Occupied	36,845	78.60%	475	97.74%	155	82.89%	848	92.27%	440	82.09%
Renter-Occupied	10,034	21.40%	11	2.26%	32	17.11%	71	7.73%	96	17.91%
Estimated Median Gross Rent										
Rent/Month	$1,035		N/A		N/A		$1,612		$933	
OCCUPANCY STATISTICS										
One Person	15,175	32.37%	125	25.72%	53	28.34%	377	41.02%	185	34.51%
Two People	19,306	41.18%	175	36.01%	82	43.85%	380	41.35%	268	50.00%
Three People	6,182	13.19%	129	26.54%	0	0.00%	152	16.54%	36	6.72%

Housing Units	Highlands County		CT 9616.02 Block Group 1		CT 9617.02 Block Group 2		CT 9617.01 Block Group 3		CT 9616.01 Block Group 1	
	No. of Units	%	No. of Units	%	No. of Units	%	No. of Units	%	No. of Units	%
Four People	3,374	7.20%	25	5.14%	20	10.70%	10	1.09%	18	3.36%
Five or More People	2,842	6.06%	32	6.58%	32	17.11%	0	0.00%	29	5.41%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Tables B25002, B25003, B25064, B25009. (https://data.census.gov).

According to the 2019-2023 ACS data, 88.81% of the existing housing in the impacted block groups was built within the past 50 years (1970-2020). Approximately 66.46% of the existing housing stock was built between the years 1970 and 1999 with approximately 22.35% built from 2000-2020. Around 11.19% of the total housing stock was built in, or before 1969. The housing stock build dates are shown in **Table 3-7**.

Table 3-7: Housing Stock Build Dates

Housing Year Built	Highlands County		CT 9616.02 Block Group 1		CT 9617.02 Block Group 2		CT 9617.01 Block Group 3		CT 9616.01 Block Group 1	
	No. of Units	%	No. of Units	%	No. of Units	%	No. of Units	%	No. of Units	%
2020 or later	720	1.23%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	15	1.14%	37	4.67%
2010-2019	2,995	5.11%	44	5.86%	8	2.72%	0	0.00%	160	20.20%
2000-2009	9,178	15.65%	184	24.50%	39	13.27%	117	8.88%	101	12.75%
1990-1999	10,795	18.41%	149	19.84%	58	19.73%	409	31.06%	222	28.03%
1980-1989	16,685	28.46%	179	23.83%	135	45.92%	333	25.28%	186	23.48%
1970-1979	10,467	17.85%	113	15.05%	18	6.12%	259	19.67%	35	4.42%
1960-1969	3,452	5.89%	15	2.00%	25	8.50%	184	13.97%	22	2.78%
1950-1959	2,516	4.29%	46	6.13%	11	3.74%	0	0.00%	15	1.89%
1940-1949	861	1.47%	21	2.80%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
1939 or earlier	966	1.65%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	14	1.77%
TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	58,635		751		294		1,317		792	

Source: US Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table B25034. (https://data.census.gov).

As shown in **Table 3-8** the average median household income of the block groups that will be impacted by the Preferred Alternative is $60,550.75. Median household incomes of individual block groups range from as low as $50,463 to as high as $86,087 per year within the impacted area. Average median household incomes in the impacted block groups are approximately $5,653.75 greater than the average median household income in Highlands County in 2020, and approximately $14,017.25 less than the median household income of the State of Florida during that same time period.

Table 3-8: Median Household Income

	Florida	Highlands County	CT 9616.02 BG 1	CT 9617.02 BG 2	CT 9617.01 BG 3	CT 9616.01 BG 1
Median Household Income	$74,568	$54,897	$86,087	$51,367	$50,463	$54,286

Source: US Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table B19013. (https://data.census.gov).

In summary, the block group with relocations (CT 9616.01 Block Group 1) has a median household income of $54,286, 792 housing units, the median rent is $933, 82.09% of the occupied houses are owned, 34.51% of households house one person, 50% of households house two people, 6.72% of households house three people, 3.36% of households house four people, and 5.41% of households house five or more people. 14.24% of the population are below poverty level, 18.60% are Hispanic, 18% are minorities, 7.09% have limited English proficiency, 3.15% are disabled, and 29.31% are 65 years old or older.

4 RESIDENTIAL OVERVIEW

4.1 Potential Residential Impacts

All potential residential impacts are identified in **Table 4-1**. Four residences have been estimated to be relocated and two residences will have partial impacts. According to the Highlands County Property Appraiser, all are single family residences (SFR). The locations of these parcels are shown in **Appendix B**.

Table 4-1: Potential Residential Takes

Impact Type	Appendix B Map No.	Parcel ID	Address	Description	Area (square foot)	Lot Size	Built	House-hold Type	House Value	Occupation Type	Owned Since	Expected Level of Take
Pond	3	C313730A0000120000	1800 SR 70 West, Lake Placid, FL 33852	4 Bed 2 Bath	2,409	25.01 ac	1978	SFR	$457,541	Owner Occupied	2024	Partial Take (1.05 ac)
Roadway	8	C323730A0000610000	767 S.R. 70 W, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 Bed 2 Bath	1,393	1.20 ac	1985	SFR	$157,503	Owner Occupied	1984	Full (0.66 ac)
Pond	22	C023830A0000310000	1313 S.R. 70 East, Lake Placid, FL 33852	4 Bed 2 Bath	2,246	2.90 ac	1990	SFR	$244,854	Owner Occupied	2007	Full (2.25 ac)
Roadway	25	C023830A0000100000	1385 S.R. 70 E, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 Bed 3 Bath	3,058	8.25 ac	1963	SFR	$324,941	Tenant Occupied	2023	Partial Take (0.27 ac)
Roadway	28	C023830A0000600000	1469 S.R. 70 East, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 Bed 2 Bath	1,721	1.79 ac	1948	SFR	$109,000	Tenant Occupied	2023	Full (1.79 ac)
Roadway	29	C023830A0000800000	1571 S.R. 70 East, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 Bed 1 Bath	1,105	1.00 ac	2013	SFR	$91,961	Owner Occupied	2013	Full (1.00 ac)

4.2 Comparison of Available Housing

A search for residential properties for sale and for rent in the one zip code that encompasses the project area was performed on June 8, 2026, using the online real estate site Zillow. The search revealed a total of five comparable properties for sale, and another seven comparable properties available for rent at this time. The sale properties ranged in price from $105,000 to $475,000 and included comparable single-family homes with three to four bedrooms. The for sale properties are shown in **Table 4-2**. Comparable rental properties found in the search ranged in monthly rents from $1,850-$2,900 and included homes with three to four bedrooms. The rental properties are detailed in

Table 4-3 below.

Table 4-2: Comparable Homes for Sale

Address	Description	Lot Size	List Price	Household Type	Year Built
30 Placid Oaks Dr, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 bds | 3 ba | 2,565 sqft	1.1 ac	$300,000	SFR	1987
112 Sirena Way, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 bds | 2 ba | 1,408 sqft	1 ac	$344,900	SFR	1988
204 Orange St, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 bds | 2 ba | 1,936 sqft	2.43 ac	$375,000	SFR	1972
121 Williams Rd, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 bds | 2 ba | 1,696 sqft	4.95 ac	$459,700	SFR	1976
11200 S Jefferson Ave, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 bds | 3 ba | 1,750 sqft	1.73 ac	$475,000	SFR	1997

Source: Zillow.com, June 8, 2026.

Table 4-3: Comparable Rental Properties

Address	Description	Lot Size	List Price (per month)	Household Type	Year Built
560 Lake August Dr, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 bds | 2 ba | 1,539 sqft	0.22 ac	$1,850	SFR	1978
3055 Morning Glory Dr, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 bds | 2 ba | 1,800 sqft	0.24 ac	$1,850	SFR	2023
1093 Breckinridge Ave, Lake Placid, FL 33852	4 bds | 2 ba | 1,920 sqft	0.23 ac	$1,900	SFR	2026
253 Hallmark Ave, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 bds | 2 ba | 1,560 sqft	0.26 ac	$1,950	SFR	2025
105 Fern Ct, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 bds | 2 ba | 1,730 sqft	0.69 ac	$2,300	SFR	2000

Address	Description	Lot Size	List Price (per month)	Household Type	Year Built
263 Bimini St NE, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 bds | 2 ba | 1,816 sqft	0.24 ac	$2,500	SFR	1995
3889 Placid View Dr, Lake Placid, FL 33852	3 bds | 2 ba | 1,689 sqft	0.50 ac	$2,900	SFR	1949

Source: Zillow.com, June 8, 2026

4.3 Special Relocation Advisory Services for Unusual Conditions or Unique Problems

Relocation advisory services are central to the success of this project to effectively accomplish relocation goals. Field observation did not reveal any obvious needs for specific special relocation advisory services. However, based on demographic information from the 2018-2022 ACS data, the impacted block groups indicate approximately 5.9% of people with any type of disability.

A copy of the various Community Resources and Services for the Highlands County area has been provided in Section 9 of this document. Based on the research obtained from various sources, any special need that may arise can be addressed by the appropriate service provider.

4.4 Last Resort Housing

The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 and FDOT Procedures provide last resort housing to accommodate residential displacees whose financial means or circumstances prevent their being provided for under normal program procedures. Last resort housing allows the District ROW Manager great latitude to develop creative means to accommodate those displacees on an individual or project wide basis. Remedial plans for insufficient replacement housing should not be necessary for this project. Resources for sale and rent should be continuously available to provide sufficient replacement housing, thereby minimizing the need for new construction or other last resort solutions. Should alternate housing become necessary, such housing may be provided, either directly or through third parties, by:

a. Rehabilitation of and/or additions to existing properties
b. Construction of new dwellings
c. A replacement housing payment which exceeds the maximum payment amounts (Super Supplement Payments)
d. The relocation and, if necessary, rehabilitation of a dwelling
e. The purchase of land and/or replacement dwelling
f. The removal of barriers to the displace with a disability
g. The provision of a direct loan to the displacee.

5 BUSINESS OVERVIEW

5.1 Potential Business Impacts

All potential business impacts are identified in **Table 5-1**. One business has been estimated to be relocated and an estimated 21 businesses will have partial impacts. A map detailing anticipated impacts is shown in **Appendix B**.

5.1.1 On Premise Signs

On premise signs will be evaluated and handled during the appraisal and acquisition phase. Owners are compensated for the value of the signs through the appraisal process.

Table 5-1: Potential Business Impacts

Impact Type	Land Use	Appendix B Map No.	Parcel ID	Owner/Business Name	Address	Acreage	Occupation Type	Number of Employees (1)	Expected Level of Take (1)	Percentage of Take
Roadway	Shrub & Brushland	1	C273729A0000100000	TIITF/FWCC	9501 Placid Lakes Blvd, Lake Placid, FL 33852	1,230.45	Owner Occupied Park	2,112	Partial Take (1.12 ac)	0.09%
Roadway	Shrub & Brushland	2	C263729A0000100000	TIITF/FWCC	4000 SR 70 West, Lake Placid, FL 33852	1,930.05	Owner Occupied	2,112	Partial Take (47.48 ac)	2.46%
Pond	Residential Low Density	3	C313730A0000120000	Florida Grove Hedgers, Inc.	1800 S.R. 70 West, Lake Placid, FL 33852	25.01	Owner Occupied	< 25	Partial Take (1.05 ac)	4.20%
Pond	Citrus Groves	4	C18373001015000000	Lake Placid Ranch Corporation	25 Pump Road, Lake Placid, FL 33852	198.82	Owner Occupied	< 25	Partial Take (5.30 ac)	2.67%
Roadway	Industrial	5	C323730A0000110000	Wood Rock Design Art Inc.	3109 Old SR 8, Lake Placid, FL 33852	4.50	Owner Occupied	< 25	Partial Take (0.03 ac)	0.67%
Roadway	Residential Low Density	6	C323730A0000300000	E'Harts Nursery and Landscaping Inc.	2806 Old S.R. 8, Lake Placid, FL 33852	5.02	Owner Occupied	< 25	Full Take (5.02 ac)	100%

Impact Type	Land Use	Appendix B Map No.	Parcel ID	Owner/Business Name	Address	Acreage	Occupation Type	Number of Employees [1]	Expected Level of Take [1]	Percentage of Take
Pond	Mixed Wetland Hardwoods	7	C323730A0000600000	E'Harts Nursery and Landscaping Inc.	851 S.R. 70 West, Lake Placid, FL 33852	8.87	Owner Occupied	< 25	Full Take (1.86ac)	20.97%
Pond	Upland Hardwood	9	C323730A0000700000	E'Harts Nursery and Landscaping Inc.	713 S.R. 70 West, Lake Placid, FL 33852	7.44	Owner Occupied	< 25	Full Take (4.15 ac)	55.78%
Roadway	Wetland Hardwood Forests	10	C323730A0000900000	Nelkin Henry L +	2900 Old S.R. 8, Lake Placid, FL 33852	14.76	Tenant/ Leasee-Occupied	< 25	Partial Take (0.50 ac)	3.39%
Roadway	Wetland Hardwood Forests	11	C323730A0000400000	PAI Lake Placid Groves LLC	2860 Old S.R. 8, Lake Placid, FL 33852	10.81	Tenant/ Leasee-Occupied	< 25	Partial Take (2.18 ac)	20.17%
Pond	Upland Hardwood	12	C323730A0000100000	PAI Lake Placid Groves LLC	913 S.R. 70 West, Lake Placid, FL 33852	7.25	Tenant/ Leasee-Occupied	< 25	Partial Take (0.31 ac)	4.28%
Pond	Upland Hardwood	13	C053830A0000300000	Palm Beach Aggregates, LLC	13036 Distribruiton Boulevard, Lake Placid, FL 33852	138.86	Tenant/ Leasee-Occupied	< 25	Partial Take (3.65 ac)	2.63%
Pond	Upland Hardwood	14	C1837300100AA00000	PAI Lake Placid Groves LLC	3000 Old S.R. 8, Lake Placid, FL 33852	1,188.51	Tenant/ Leasee-Occupied	< 25	Partial Take (2.81 ac)	0.24%
Pond	Citrus Groves	15	C33373002000A00010	Smoak Citrus Development PRTSP	196 S.R. 70 West, Lake Placid, FL 33852	30.65	Owner Occupied	4	Partial Take (2.56 ac)	8.35%
Roadway	Citrus Groves	16	C043830A0000400000	Reynolds Farms Inc	101 S.R. 70 East, Lake Placid, FL 33852	73.01	Tenant/ Leasee-Occupied	N/A	Partial Take (0.46 ac)	0.63%
Roadway	Citrus Groves	17	C33373002000C00010	M & A Brothers Realty No 39 Inc	2741 US 27 South, Lake Placid, FL 33852	21.99	Tenant/ Leasee-Occupied	N/A	Partial Take (0.34 ac)	1.55%
Roadway	Citrus Groves	18	C33373002000D00020	Lindner Mark L Tr + Rapps William D Tr	N/A	14.50	Tenant/ Leasee-Occupied	N/A	Partial Take (0.20 ac)	1.38%
Pond	Citrus Groves	19	C33373003001600000	Goulab Gasford R Jr.	23 Ekhoff Lane, Lake Placid, FL 33852	10.37	Owner Occupied	N/A	Partial Take (5.35 ac)	51.59%

Impact Type	Land Use	Appendix B Map No.	Parcel ID	Owner/Business Name	Address	Acreage	Occupation Type	Number of Employees [1]	Expected Level of Take [1]	Percentage of Take
Pond	Shrub and Brushland	20	C043830A0000120000	Hal J Burke	537 S.R. 70 East, Lake Placid, FL 33852	22.95	Owner Occupied	N/A	Partial Take (3.45 ac)	15.03%
Roadway & Pond	Citrus Groves	21	C03383001000A00000	PAI Lake Placid Groves LLC	551 S.R. 70 East, Venus, FL 33960	1,549.31	Tenant/ Leasee-Occupied	< 25	Partial Take (12.05 ac)	0.78%
Roadway	Rural Residential	23	C023830A0000300000	Terry L Reynolds + Kelly A	1363 S.R. 70 East, Lake Placid, FL 33852	118.88	Owner Occupied	N/A	Partial Take (0.16 ac)	0.13%
Roadway	Rural Residential	24	C023830A0001000000	Vincent Fioramanti	1373 S.R. 70 East, Lake Placid, FL 33852	2.61	Tenant/ Leasee-Occupied	N/A	Partial Take (0.40 ac)	15.33%
Roadway	Rural Residential	26	C023830A0000700000	Keystone Bear Hollow LLC	1411 S.R. 70 East, Lake Placid, FL 33852	2.57	Owner Occupied	N/A	Partial Take (1.13 ac)	43.97%
Roadway	Wetland Scrub	27	C023830A0000400000	Keystone Bear Hollow LLC	200 Turner Road, Lake Placid, FL 33852	132.77	Owner Occupied	N/A	Partial Take (5.17 ac)	3.89%
Roadway	Citrus Groves	30	C023830A0000500000	L323 Holdings, LLC	12777 K W Farms Road, Lake Placid, FL 33852	160.34	Owner Occupied	< 25	Partial Take (7.83 ac)	4.88%
Roadway & Pond	Open Pastures	31	C013830A0000300000	Chad Rucks	1801 S.R. 70 East, Lake Placid, FL 33852	198.13	Owner Occupied	1	Partial Take (6.17 ac)	3.11%

[1] - Based on best available information at the time of report preparation. Subject to change.

5.2 Comparison of Available Commercial Property

A search for comparable commercial properties in the project zip code was conducted on June 9, 2026, using the online commercial real estate site LoopNet.com. The search revealed a total of seven commercial properties for sale (**Table 5-2**), and one for lease (**Table 5-3**). The properties listed for sale ranged in price from $499,900 to $7.1 million and the lease was $1.00 per square foot per year.

Table 5-2: Commercial Properties for Sale

Address	List Price	Size (Sq Ft/ Acreage)	Built	Status	Property Type
123 US 27 S, Lake Placid, FL 33852	$499,900	0.26 ac	N/A	Vacant	Commercial Lot
708 US 27 S, Lake Placid, FL 33852	$849,900	9,734 sf	1979	Occupied	Industrial Building
419 US 27 N, Lake Placid, FL 33852	$2,000,000	1.80 ac	N/A	Vacant	Commercial Lot
2300 US 27, Lake Placid, FL 33852	$3,100,000	81 ac	N/A	Vacant	Industrial/Agricultural
1754 US 27, Lake Placid, FL 33852	$3,890,000	189 ac	N/A	Vacant	Agricultural
110-112 W Interlake Blvd, Lake Placid, FL 33852	$4,995,000	44,309 sf	2016	Partially Occupied	Industrial
3680 Old SR 8, Lake Placid, FL 33852	$7,100,000	41,000 sf	2019	Occupied	Industrial

Source: LoopNet.com, June 9, 2026

Table 5-3: Commercial Properties for Lease

Address	Rental Rate (SF/YR)	Size (Sq Ft/ Acreage)	Built	Status	Property Type
91 Atherton Ave, Lake Placid, FL 33852	$1.00	0.99 AC	N/A	Vacant	Industrial Lot

Source: LoopNet.com, June 9, 2026

6 COMMUNITY IMPACT

Construction of this project will involve acquisition of additional ROW along the existing alignment of S.R. 70. The LWRWEA occurs adjacent to and within the proposed improvements. No public facilities, major shopping centers, hospitals, schools, or related establishments are proposed to be displaced.

The proposed improvements are consistent with the Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization's (HRTPO) Congestion Management Process (CMP), Heartland Safety Action Plan (HSAP), 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Based on a review of Highlands County Land Use Map, existing land uses in the project vicinity are shown as agricultural, business, campground, conservation/management lands, industrial, public water supply, and public/quasi-public facility and institutional lands. Future land uses in the project vicinity include agricultural, commercial, conservation/management lands, high density residential, industrial, mixed use, public water supply, and public/quasi-public facility and institutional lands. Though ROW acquisition will be needed and there will be conversion of portions of existing land uses to transportation, the proposed improvements will support both the existing and future land uses locally, as well as provide road network improvements necessary to support the future land uses projected for this part of Highlands County. Maps illustrating both the existing and future land use are available in **Appendix C**.

The proposed improvements to S.R. 70 are not expected to subdivide neighborhoods, negatively impact residential neighborhood identity, or separate residences from community facilities such as churches, schools, shopping areas, or civic or cultural facilities. The project is not expected to contribute to social isolation of any identifiable groups of elderly, handicapped, non-drivers, minorities, or transit dependent persons through this project study area as the travel patterns of the community residents are not anticipated to be significantly altered due to the scope and location of the improvements proposed.

The Preferred Alternative would result in three residential relocations and impact 22 businesses (with one relocation). At the time of this document, one of three residential relocatees is an owner.

Proceeding the March 2017 alternatives public workshop, several comments and concerns were received regarding median opening locations, access point locations; accommodating large trucks, recreation vehicles (RV's), and trailers, requesting noise walls on the north side of Alpine Village; negative environmental impacts; and other concerns. Since the proposed improvements are expected to provide for enhanced traffic flow, freight movement, and safety for all roadway users, this project is expected to have a positive influence on the regional economic climate as a long-term result.

NEPA requires the implementation of a public process to provide an opportunity for stakeholder involvement. During the course of this study, the FDOT implemented a Public Involvement Program (PIP) to allow the opportunity for public participation that exceeds NEPA requirements. Public

engagement included one elected officials/agency kick-off meeting; one alternatives public workshop; meetings with the HRTPO ahead of public participation opportunities including meeting with the HRTPO Board, Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), Community Advisory Community (CAC), and Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC). A public hearing is anticipated for Fall 2026. In addition, the FDOT had thorough coordination with local government and other agencies, as well as local property owners, and other interested parties to ensure that the public was informed of project updates. Notification of public meetings was accomplished through advertisement in local newspapers and direct mailings to all affected property owners and tenants. Returned notifications were hand-delivered wherever possible. Input received throughout the study was considered for project evaluation. No relocation conversations have been had with any owners.

7 POTENTIAL CONTAMINATION CONCERNS

A *Contamination Screening Evaluation Report* (CSER) was prepared under separate cover for the project. Locations within a 500-foot buffer of the project study area were investigated for sites that may present the potential for finding petroleum contamination or hazardous materials, and therefore, may impact the proposed improvements for this project. Acquisition of additional ROW is anticipated to accommodate the proposed project improvements.

As documented in the CSER, a total of two High, 31 Medium, 18 Low, and six No Risk sites are present within and adjacent to the project limits. For sites rated Low and No Risk for potential contamination, no further action is recommended at this time. The Preferred Alternative will require ROW acquisition from approximately eight Medium Risk sites and one High Risk sites. These are discussed further in the CSER.

Based on the agricultural nature of the land uses prevalent along S.R. 70, there is a high likelihood of encountering contamination during the course of property acquisition and subsequent conversion into ROW needed for the proposed roadway and pond improvements. Where impacted by project construction activities, FDOT will oversee additional testing and, if necessary, remediation of contaminated sites.

8 PUBLICLY OWNED FACILITIES

When lands, buildings, or other improvements are needed for transportation purposes, but are held by a governmental entity and utilized for public purposes other than transportation, the acquiring body may compensate the entity for such properties by providing functionally equivalent replacement facilities. Based on this study, there will be approximately 46.37 acres of ROW impacts to the LWRWEA, owned by the FWC, as a result of the proposed improvements. Land acquisition and replacement is proposed to accommodate the new roadway alignment, FPC sites, and SMFs on the west end of the project. All ROW impacts to the LWRWEA are anticipated to occur to the property's Lake Placid Scrub Tract north of S.R. 70. No impacts to the property's McJunkin Tract, along the south side of S.R. 70, are anticipated.

FDOT will coordinate land acquisition and replacement with FWC, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Division of State Lands, and the State of Florida's Trustees of the Internal Improvements Trust Fund (TIITF) during the PD&E study as part of the Section 4(f) coordination process. Additional coordination will occur with these agencies during the project's Design phase once more detailed survey and design are available as required by the ARC upland easement coordination process.

9 COMMUNITIY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Within the Highlands County area, there are numerous economic and social service organizations that are available to assist displaced individuals and businesses. The following list highlights available services in the area. However, this list should not be considered all-inclusive of potential assistance/service providers.

Residential Services

Highlands County Housing Office
Affordable Housing Assistance
501 S Commerce Ave
Sebring, FL 33870
Phone: 863-402-6648
Contact: lcastillo@highlandsfl.gov

Highlands County Coalition for the Homeless
Housing Assistance
155 US Highway 27 N.
Sebring, FL 33870
Phone: 863-402-0073

The Agricultural and Labor Non-Profit Agency
Housing Assistance
300 Lynchburg Rd
Lake Alfred, FL 33850
Phone: 863-956-3491

Peace River Center -Adult Residential Treatment
Housing Assistance for the Disabled
715 North Lake Ave
Lakeland, Florida 33801
Phone: 863-413-2566

Alpha-Omega Crisis-Lake Placid
Housing Assistance
218 N Main Street
Lake Placid, FL 33852
Phone: 863-465-7707

The Salvation Army
Housing Assistance
3135 Kenilworth Blvd
Sebring, FL 33870
Phone: 863-385-7548

Florida Rural Legal Services
Housing Assistance
1321 E Memorial Blvd Unit 101
Lakeland, FL 33801
Phone: 863- 688- 7376

State of Florida – Department of Children and Families Financial Assistance
Circuit 10
1055 US Highway 17 North
Bartow, FL 33830
Phone: 850-300-4323
www.myflfamilies.com/contact-us/circuit-10

Business Services

Highlands County Economic Development
501 South Commerce Ave
Sebring, FL 33870
Phone: 863-402-6924

Greater Sebring Chamber of Commerce
202 Circle Park Drive
Sebring, FL 33870
Phone: 863-385-8448

The Florida Small Business Development Center
202 Circle Park Drive
Sebring, FL 33870
Phone: 813-396-2795

US Small Business Administration (SBA)
South Florida District Office
777 S. Harbour Island Boulevard, Suite 215
Tampa, FL 33602
Phone: 813-228-2100 ext. 24

10 ACQUISITION AND RELOCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

To minimize the unavoidable effects of ROW acquisition and displacement of people, the FDOT will carry out a ROW Relocation Program in accordance with FS 339.09 and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646 as amended by Public Law 100-17).

The FDOT provides advance notification of impending ROW acquisition. Before acquiring ROW, all properties are appraised based on comparable sales and land use values in the area. Owners of property to be acquired will be offered and paid fair market value for their property rights.

No person lawfully occupying real property will be required to move without at least receiving a 90-day written letter of assurance. No occupant of a residential property will be required to move until decent, safe, and sanitary replacement housing is made available. “Made available” means that the affected person has either obtained and has the right of possession of replacement housing, or that FDOT has offered the relocatee decent, safe, and sanitary housing which is within their financial means and available for immediate occupancy.

At least one relocation specialist is assigned to each highway project to carry out the Relocation Assistance and Payments program. A relocation specialist will contact each person to be relocated to determine individual needs, and to provide information, answer questions, and give help in finding replacement property. Relocation services and payments are provided without regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

All tenants and owner-occupant displacees will receive an explanation regarding all options available to them, such as (1) varying methods of claiming reimbursement for moving expenses; (2) rental replacement housing, either private or publicly subsidized; and (3) purchase of replacement housing.

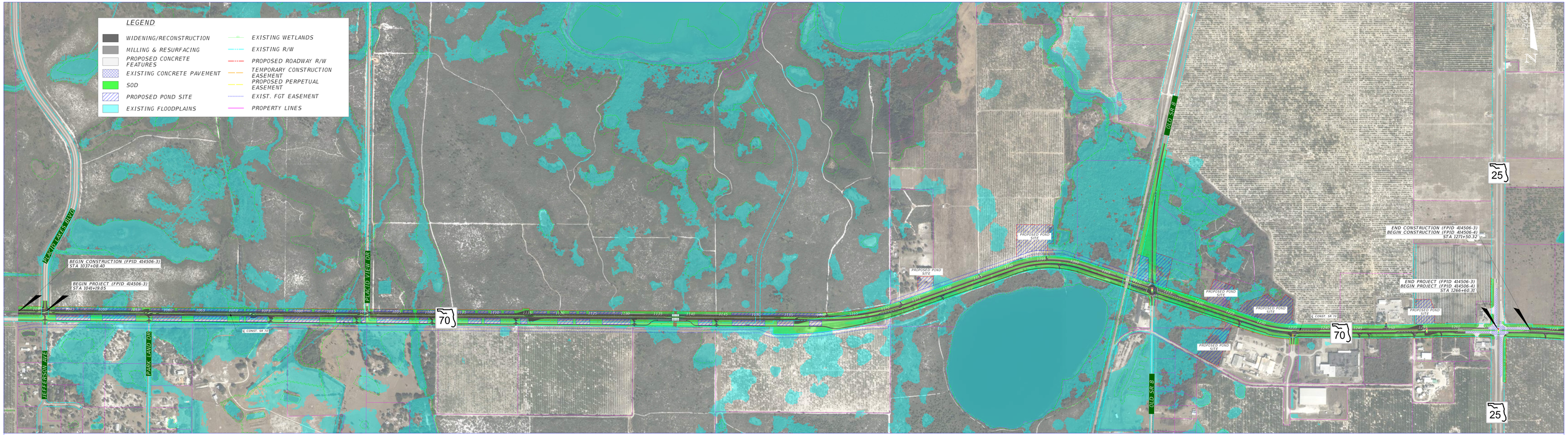
Financial assistance is available to the eligible relocatee to:

- Reimburse the relocatee for the actual reasonable costs of moving from homes, businesses, and farm operations acquired for a highway project.
- Make up the difference, if any, between the amounts paid for the acquired dwelling and the cost of a comparable decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling available on the private market, as determined by the Department.
- Provide reimbursement of expenses, incidental to the purchase of a replacement dwelling.
- Make payment for eligible increased interest cost resulting from having to get another mortgage at a higher interest rate.

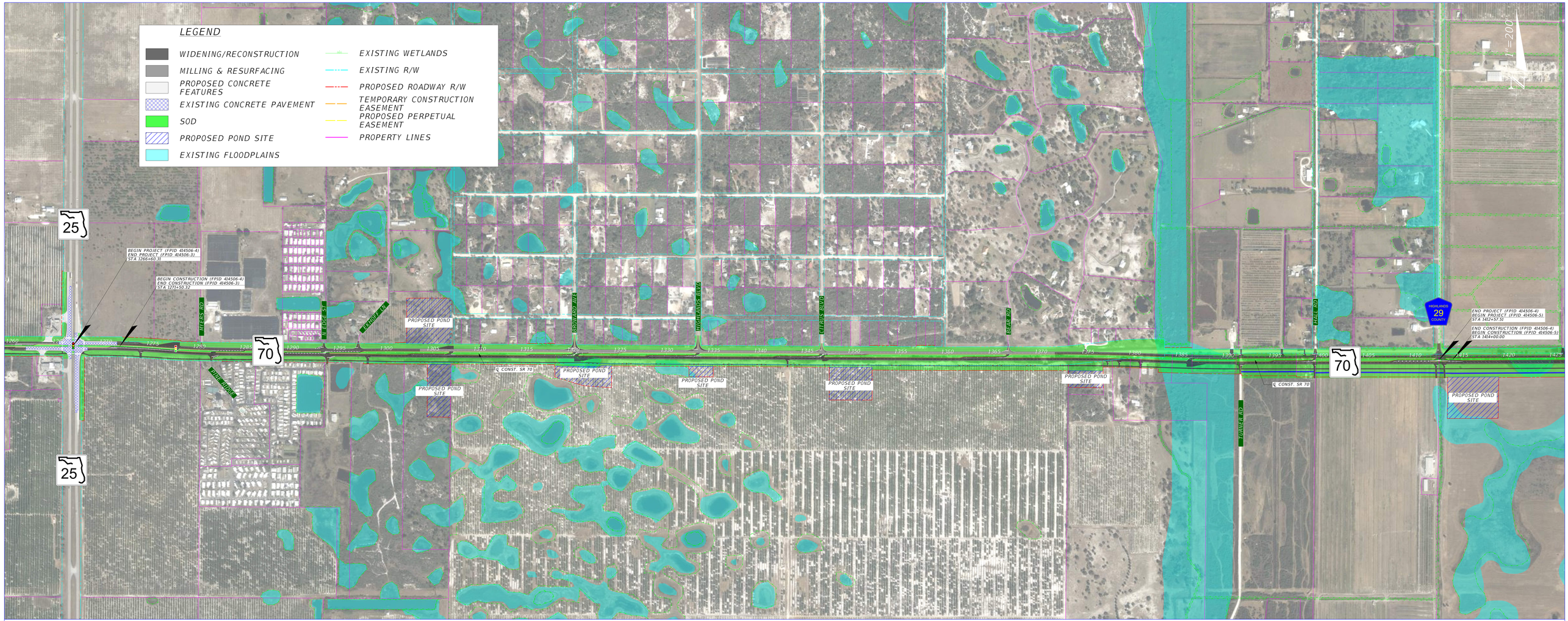
A displaced tenant may be eligible to receive a payment, not to exceed $7,200, to rent a replacement dwelling or room, or to use as a down payment, including closing costs, on the purchase of a replacement dwelling.

The brochures that describe in detail the FDOT's Relocation Assistance Program are "*Residential Relocation Under the Florida Relocation Assistance Program*", "*Relocation Assistance Business, Farms and Non-profit Organizations*", "*Mobile Home Relocation Assistance*", and "*Relocation Assistance Program Personal Property Moves*." These brochures are distributed at all public hearings and to all displacees. They are also available upon request to any interested person.

Appendix A Preferred Alternative Concept Plan

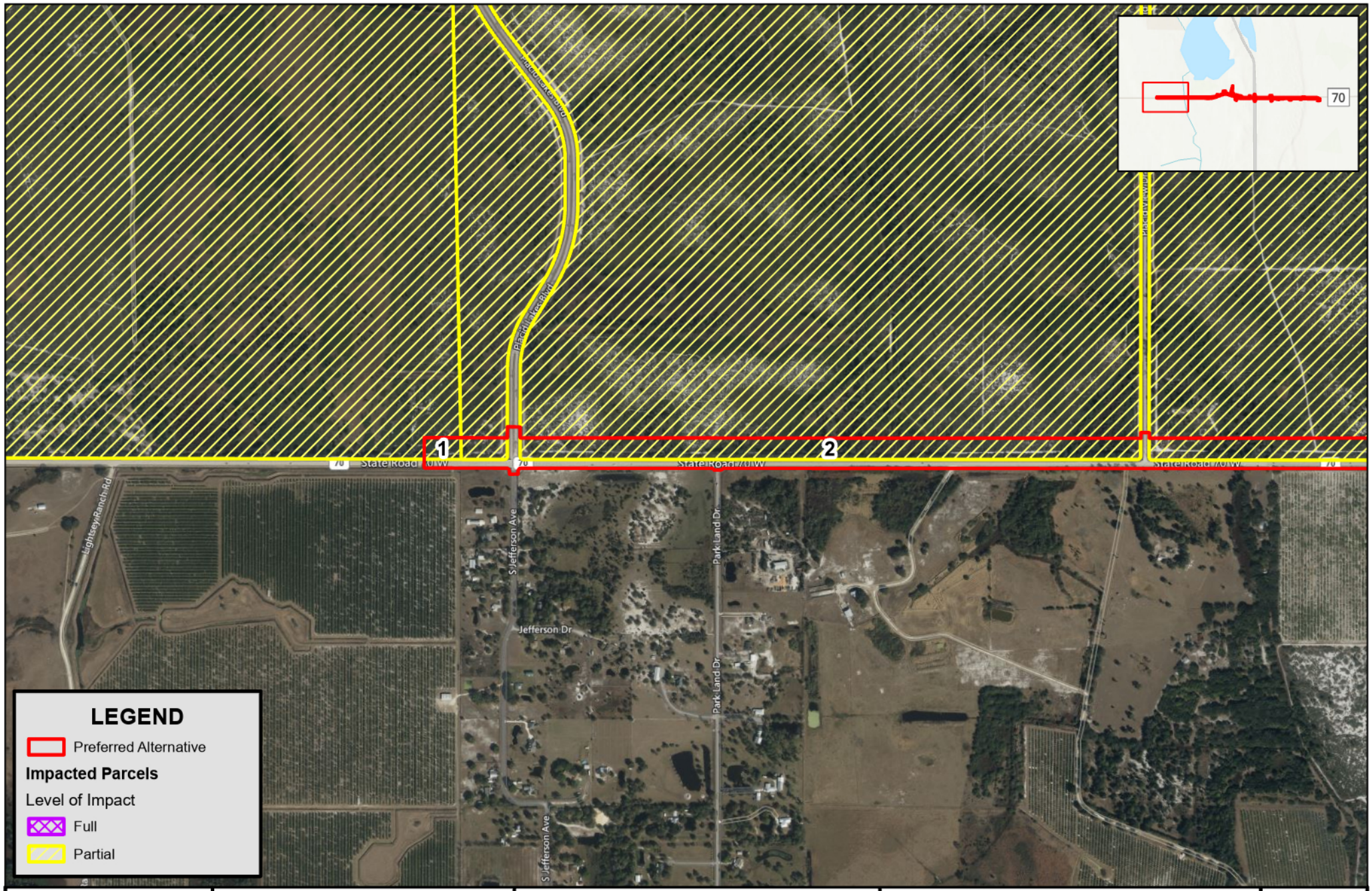


SR 70 WIDENING - FPID 414506-1-22-01



SR 70 WIDENING - FPID 414506-1-22-01

Appendix B Parcel Impacts



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Feet

1 inch = 1,000 feet

Parcel Impact Map

Page 1 of 6

SR 70 from Jefferson Ave to CR 29
FPID: 414506-1-22-01
Highlands County, Florida

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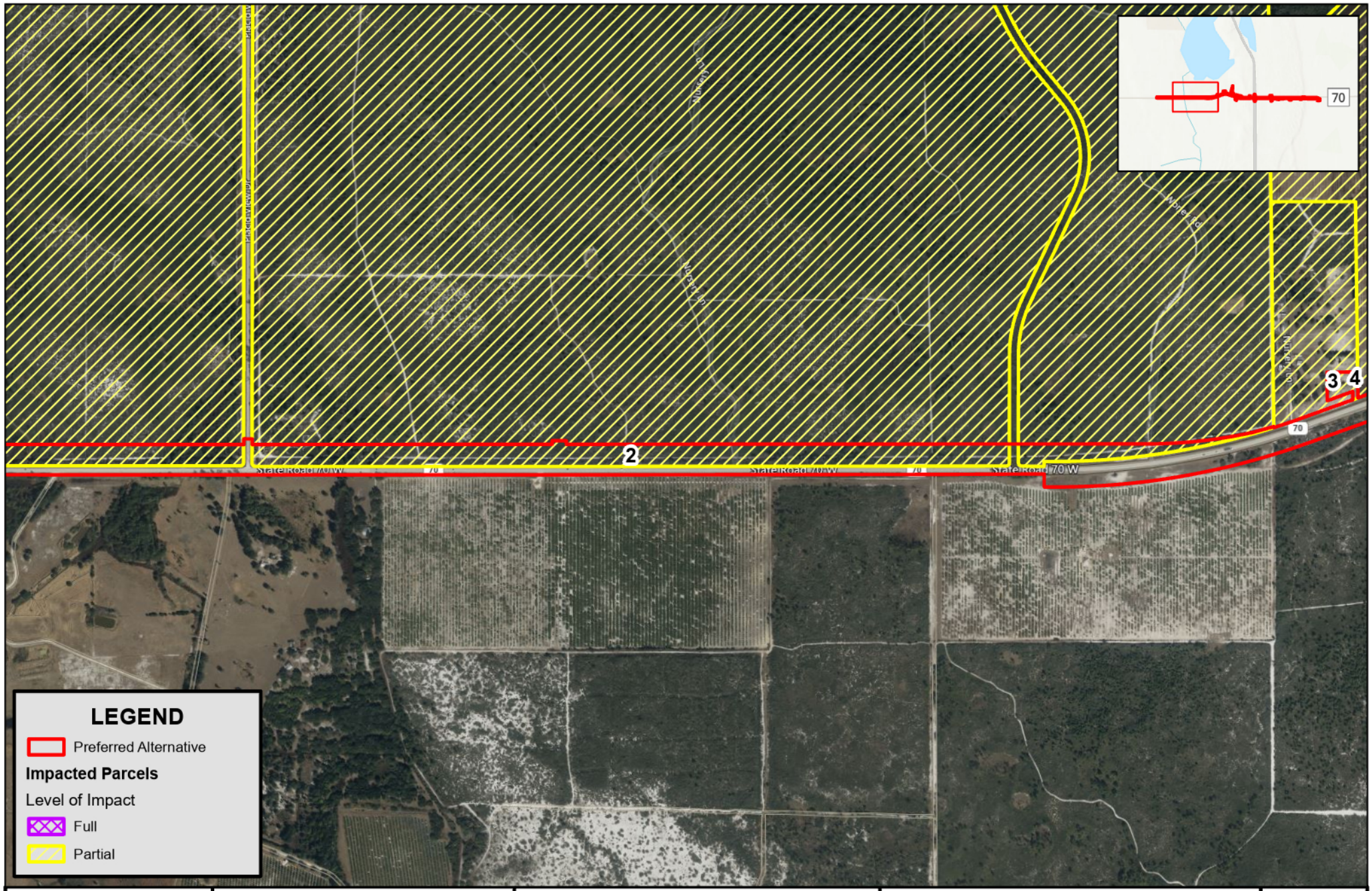

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Parcel Impact Map

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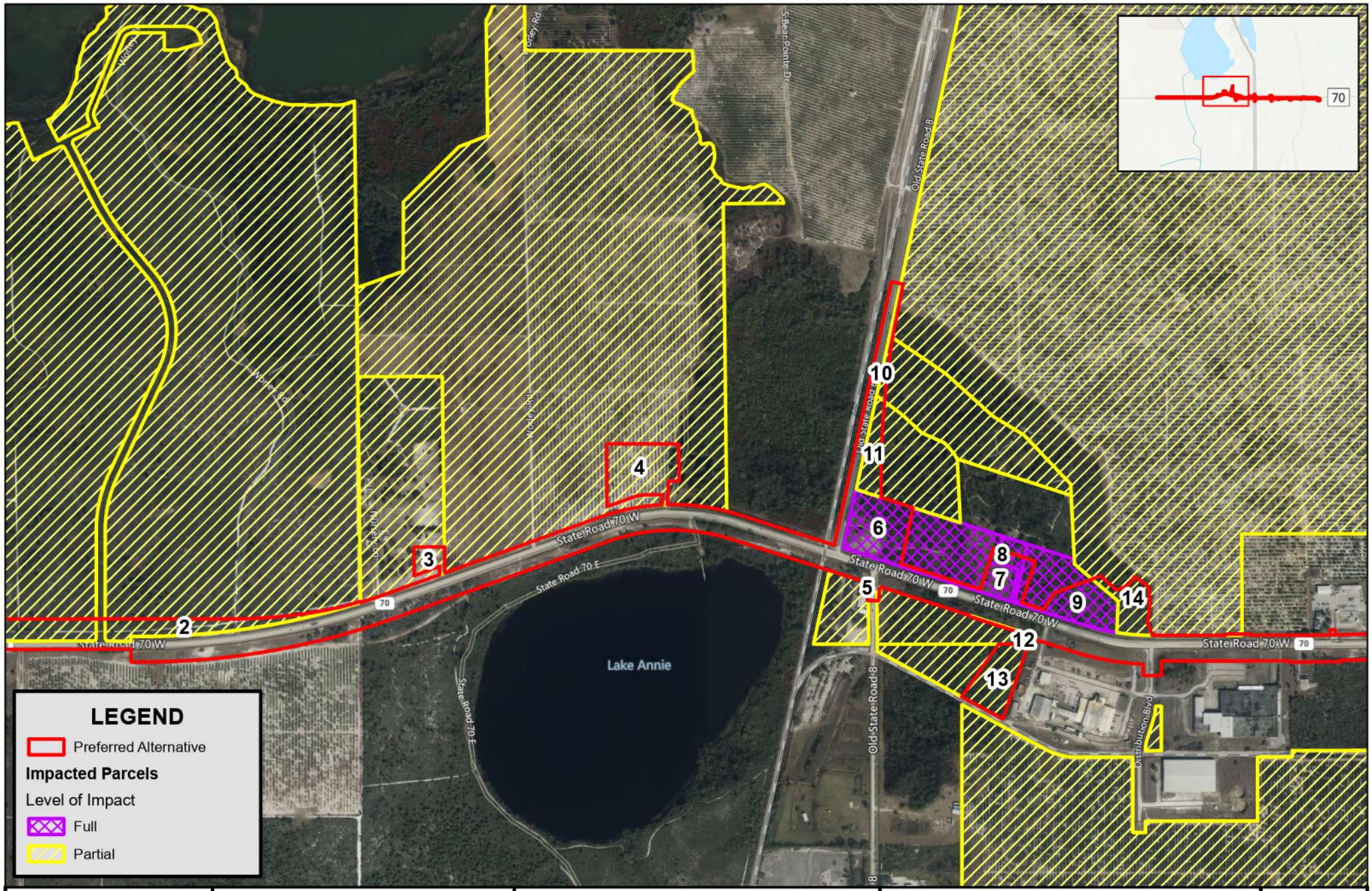

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Parcel Impact Map

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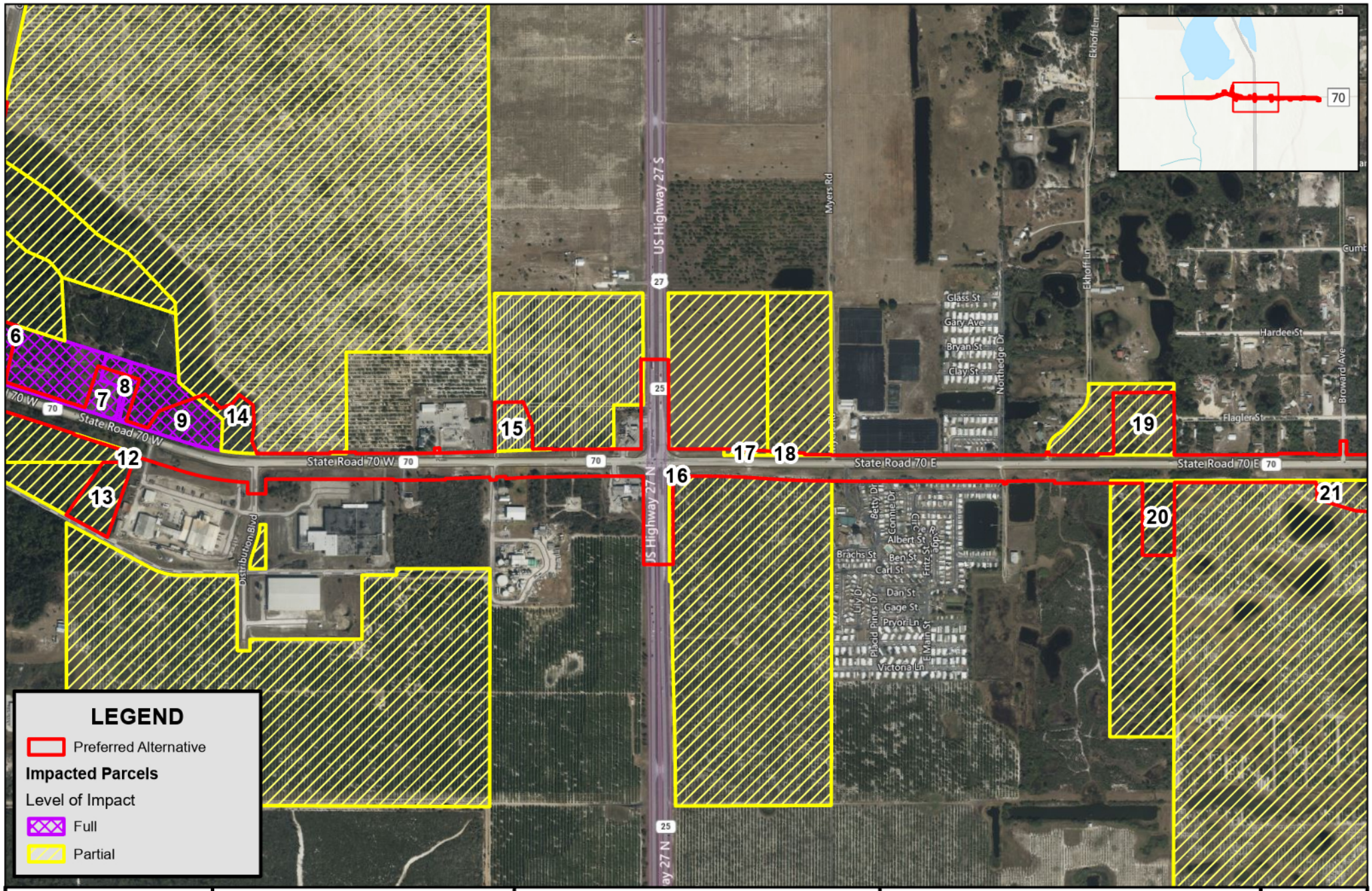

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Parcel Impact Map

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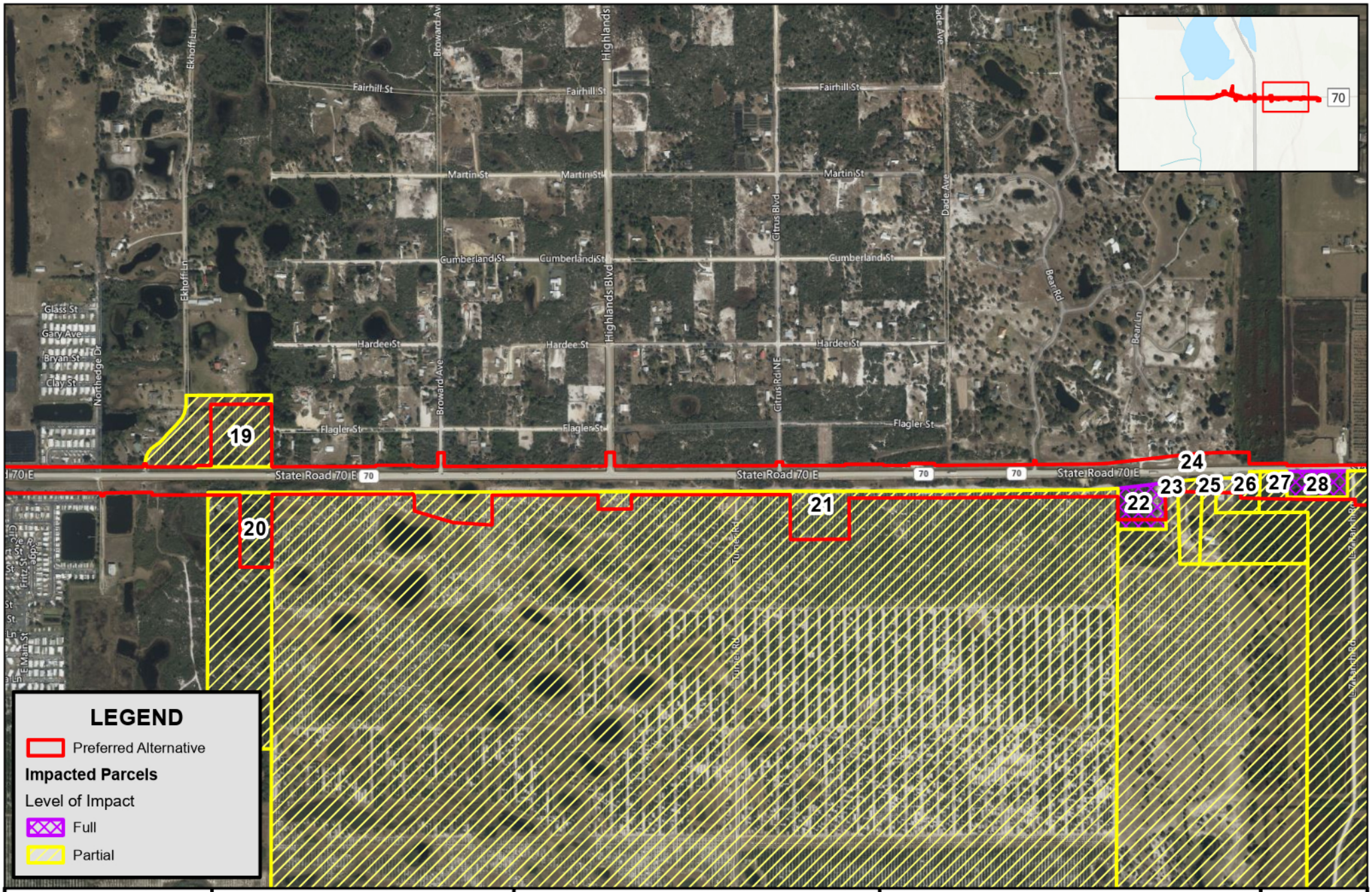

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Parcel Impact Map

Page 5 of 6

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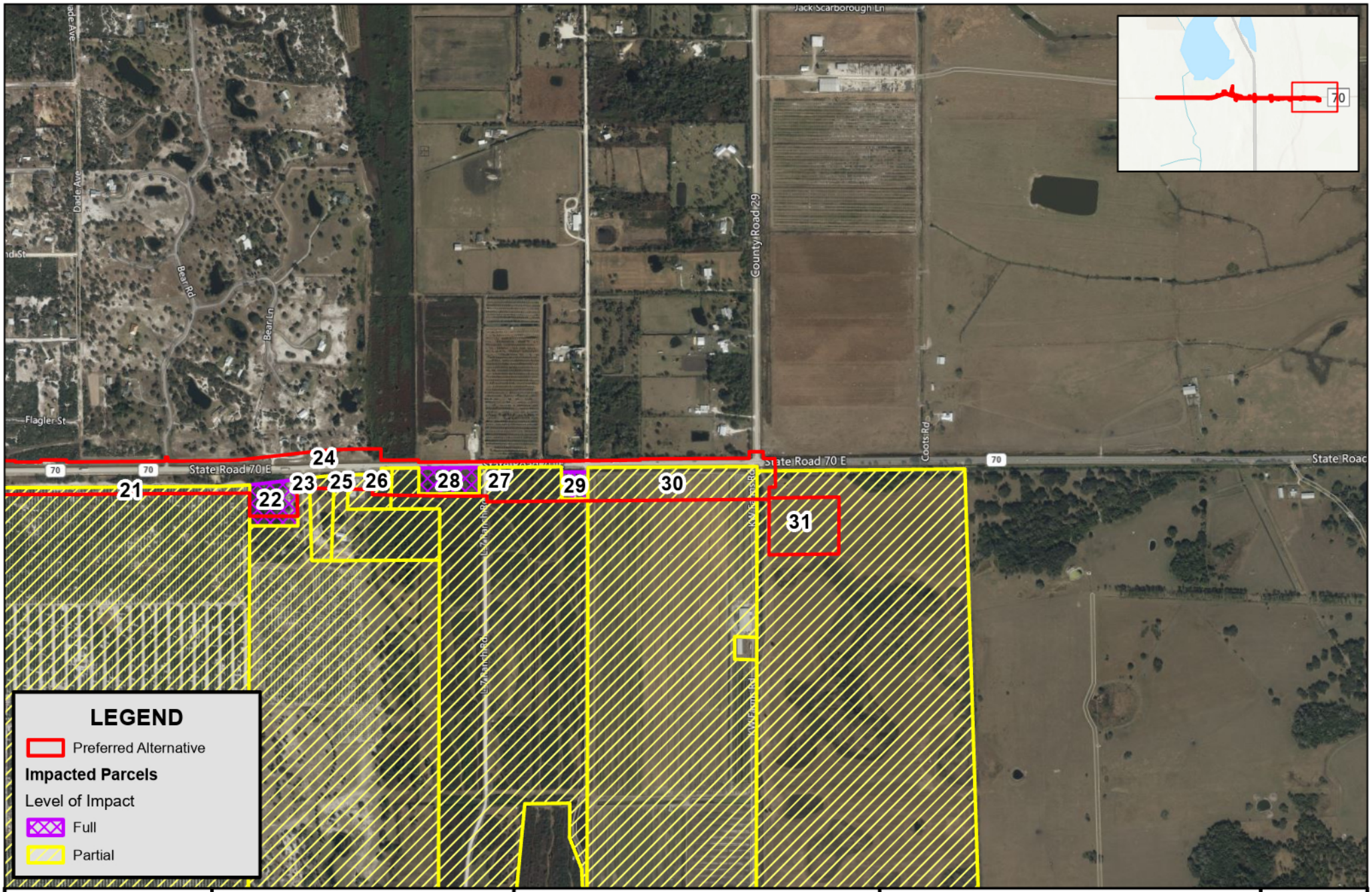

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Parcel Impact Map

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SR 70 from Jefferson Ave to CR 29
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Highlands County, Florida

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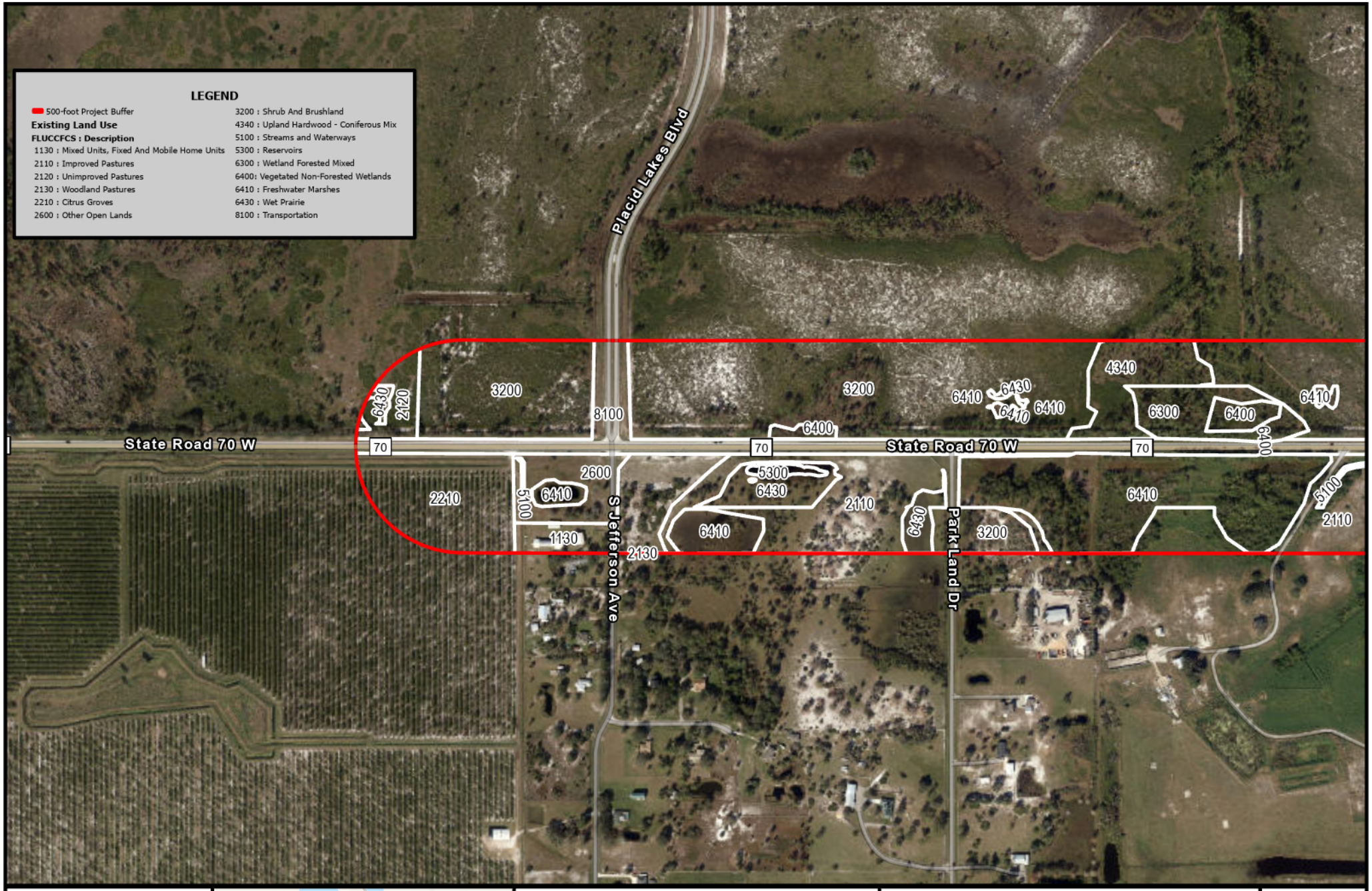
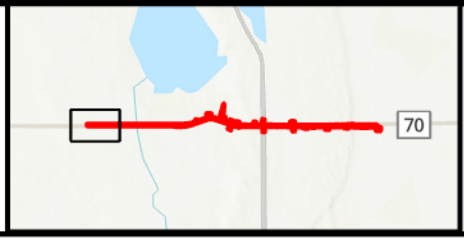
Appendix C Existing and Future Land Use Maps





FLUCFCS Land Use Map

1 inch = 600 feet

Sources: SWFWMD 2020; SFWMD 2019

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Highlands County, Florida

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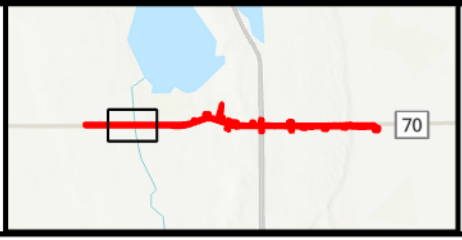

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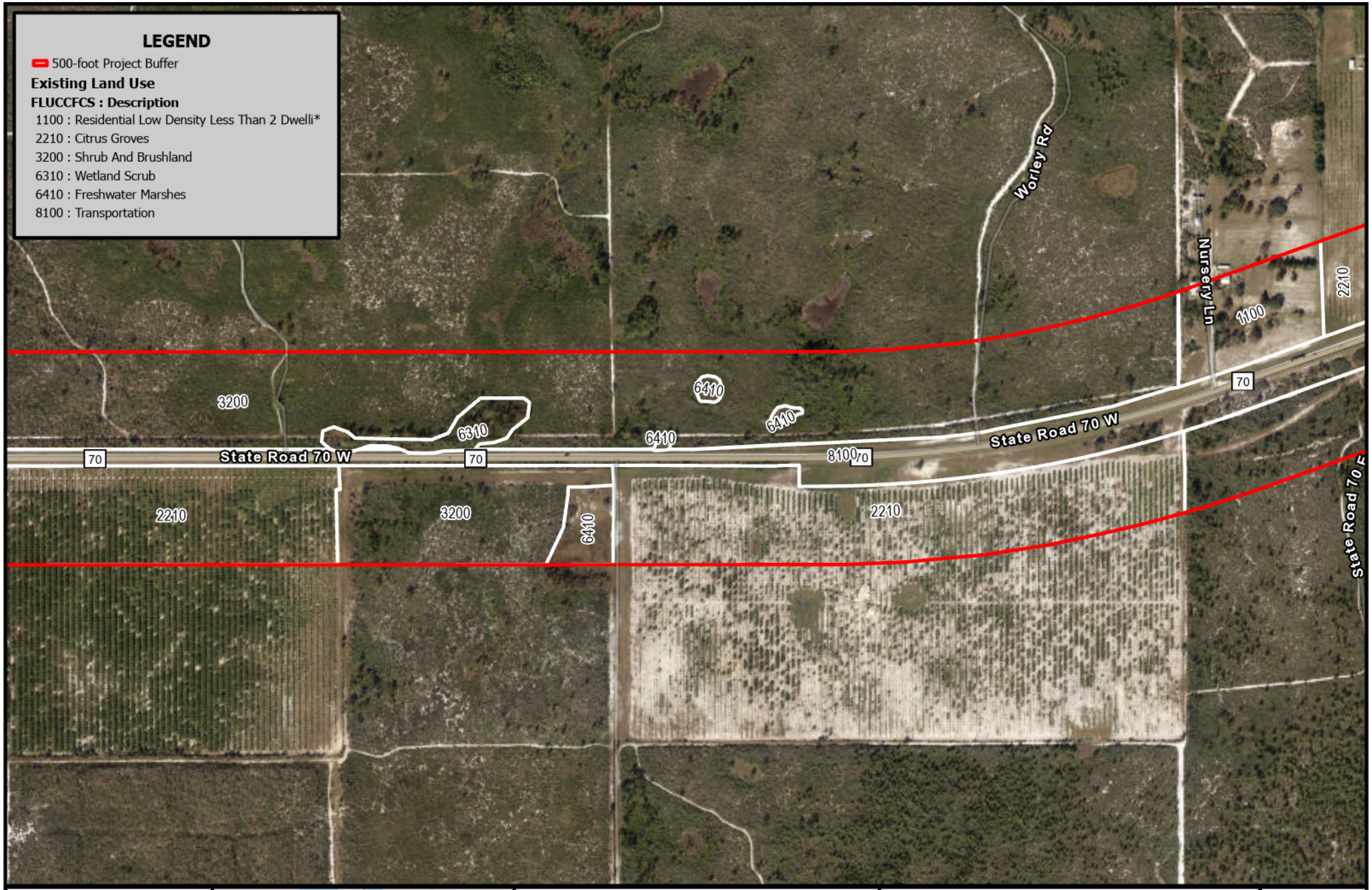

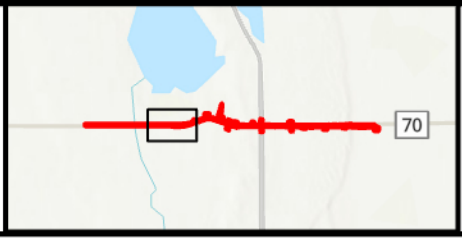

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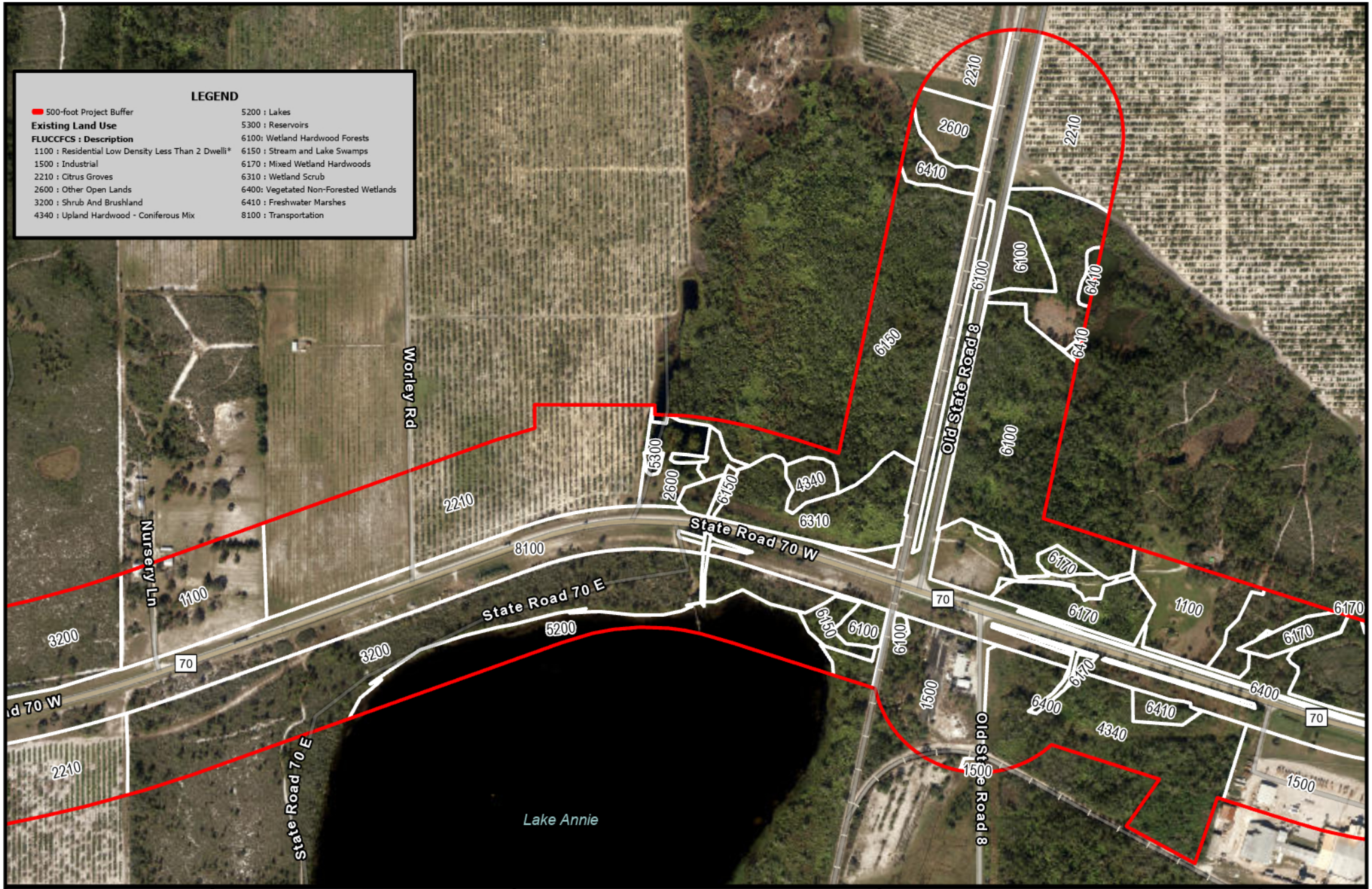

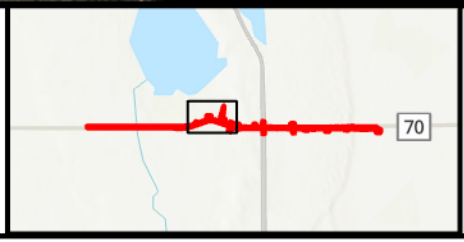

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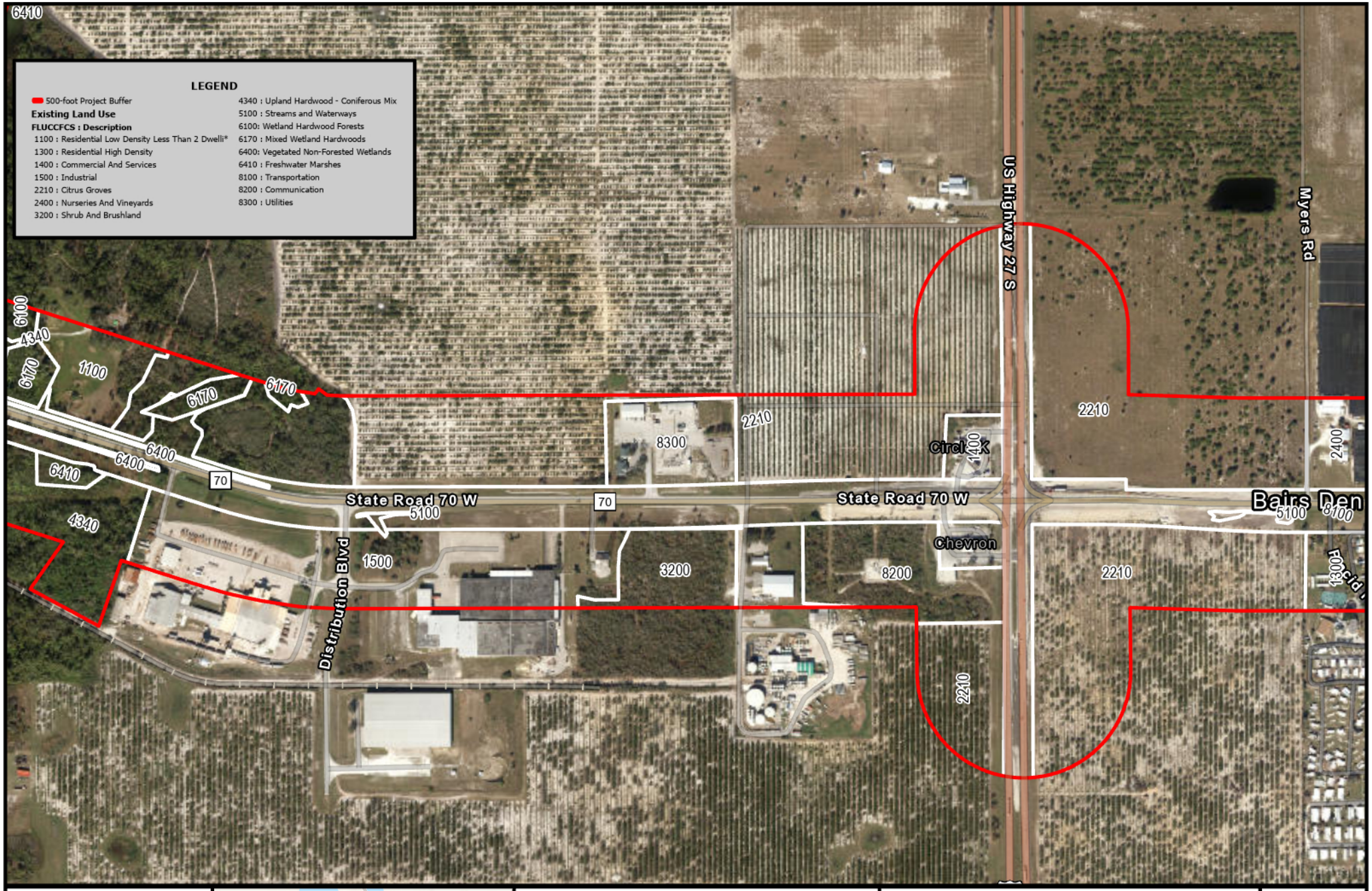

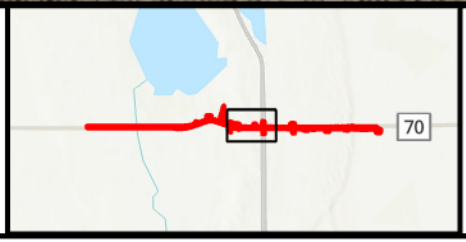

FLUCFCS Land Use Map

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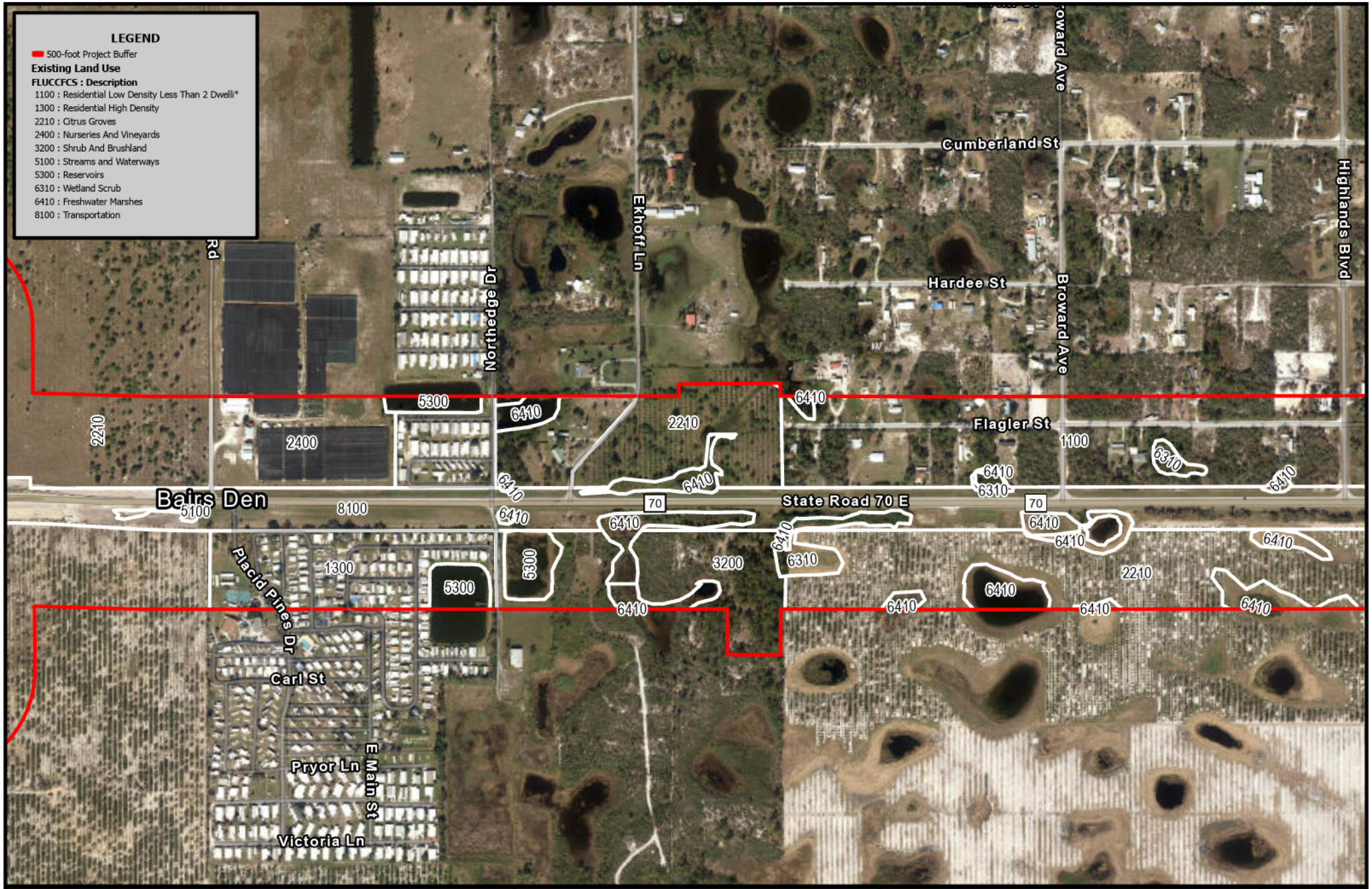

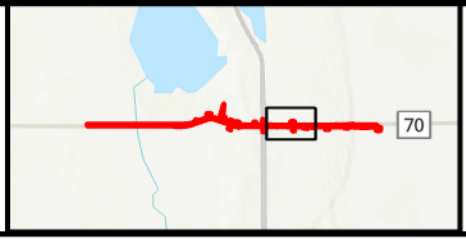

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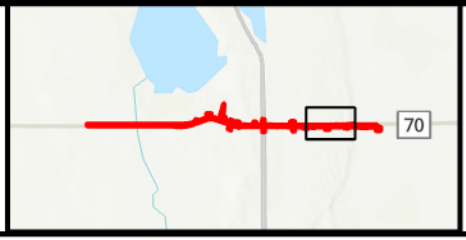

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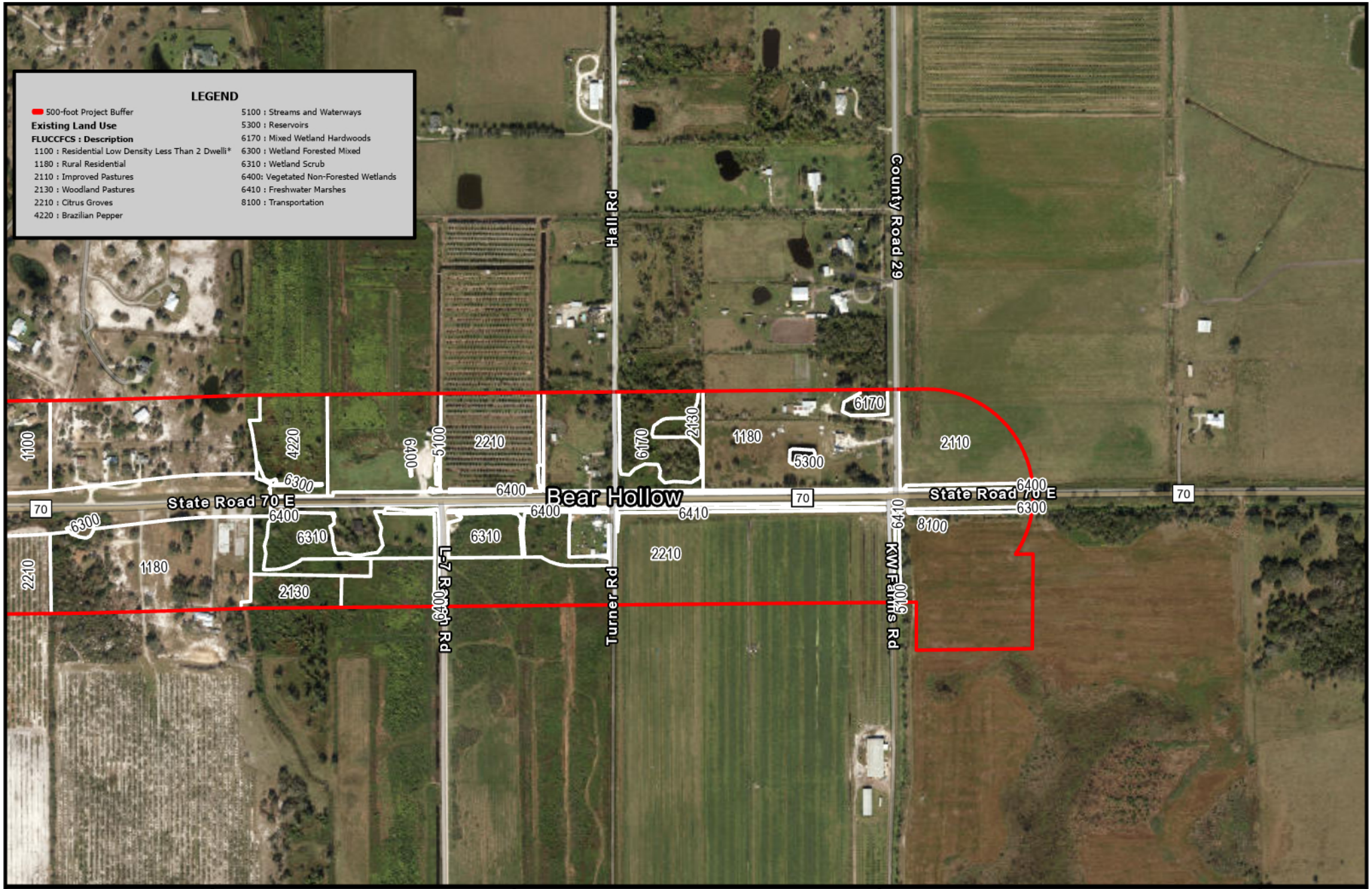

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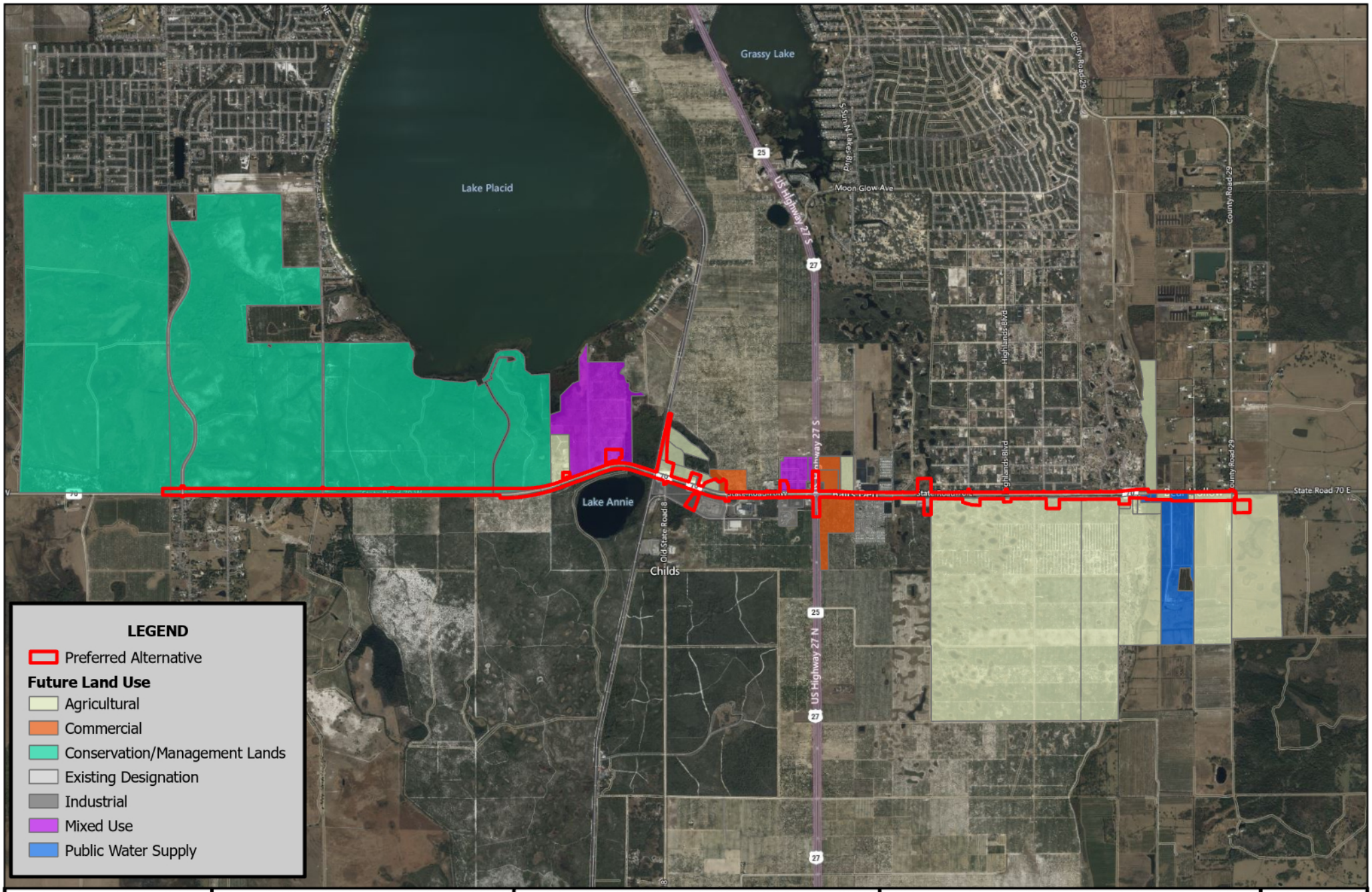

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Feet

1 inch = 4,500 feet

Future Land Use Map

Source: Highlands County GIS Department

SR 70 from Jefferson Ave to CR 29
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Highlands County, Florida

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