

What is the proposed project along S.R. 70?

The purpose of this project is to address traffic safety conditions. Other goals of the project are to maintain important east-west connectivity within the regional transportation network and accommodate freight activity within the area. The proposed improvements include widening of the roadway from two-lanes undivided to four-lanes divided, and adding paved shoulders, turn lanes, and a shared-use path for pedestrians and bicyclists. This study has identified a preferred alternative, which was presented to the public for comments in December 2025.

What safety features will be included in the design?

The reconstructed roadway will have a 40-foot wide median separating the eastbound and westbound traffic. There will be directional median openings for turning traffic. Appropriate offsets with guardrail as needed will be provided at the bridge approaches. The replaced Kissimmee River bridges will each carry two lanes of traffic, ten-foot wide outside shoulders and six-foot inside shoulders on each side, separating the travel lanes from the bridge traffic railings. The new bridge over the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal will carry eastbound traffic, allowing the current bridge to be reconfigured to carry westbound traffic. A shared-use path, separated from the roadway, are also included in the preferred alternative.

When will construction begin for this project and what will it cost?

The Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study phase is anticipated to conclude summer of 2026. Currently, there is no funding for design, right-of-way acquisition, or construction of this project. Therefore, a construction date is unknown at this time. A preliminary cost estimate for the preferred alternative is included in the public hearing materials (refer to 2025 Public Hearing Documents – **09-Evaluation Matrix Board**).

What will be the right-of-way impacts and are engineering plans available that show the proposed impacts?

The right-of-way impacts are shown on the concept plans (refer to 2025 Public Hearing Documents – **12 and 13- Concept Boards**) and are summarized in the alternatives matrix (refer to 2025 Public Hearing Documents – **09-Evaluation Matrix Board**). The preferred alternative requires approximately 206.7 acres for mainline widening. The right-of-way need for stormwater ponds is approximately 61.7 acres.

When will right-of-way map, appraisals, etc. be available?

These will not be prepared until after the final design project phase has begun. Funding for the next project phase has not yet been programmed so we do not have an estimated date at this time.

Please explain the relocations identified on the concept plans.

Due to the roadway widening at the approach to the Kissimmee River, there are identified property impacts on both sides of S.R. 70 in this location. There are two residences on a single parcel on the south side of S.R. 70 that are located at the front of the parcels. At this time, these have been identified as potential relocations, using best available data for this PD&E Study. This means that the portion of the property that is anticipated to be impacted by the project contains all, or part, of these home sites. A Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan is available (refer to Technical Reports- **Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan – Draft**).

FPID 450334-1

S.R. 70 from C.R. 721 S to C.R. 599/128th Ave. PD&E Study

FAQs from Public Hearing

Will there be roadway lighting?

While roadway lighting is not being evaluated during this PD&E Study phase, it will be evaluated in the next phase, final design, when more detailed engineering analysis will occur.

How will access to SR 70 change from residents in Kissimmee River Estates?

The existing segment of S.R. 70 in front of Kissimmee River Estates will be converted into an access road for Kissimmee River Estates. Connections to S.R. 70 from the access road will be at SW Rucks Dairy Road/Jordan Terrace and Mose Grade Road (refer to 2025 Public Hearing Documents – **13-Concept Boards**).

Will there be any new traffic signals or roundabouts?

No, all intersections will remain unsignalized and the flashing light at C.R. 721 South is proposed to remain. The project included traffic data collection and the volumes on the side streets do not warrant traffic signals as per the Design Traffic Technical Memorandum prepared for the S.R. 70 corridor.

What impacts will this project have on wildlife, and specifically wildlife crossings?

Protected species and habitat were evaluated and the FDOT is coordinating with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, among other state and federal agencies. Wildlife features are discussed in the Natural Resources Evaluation Report (refer to Technical Reports- **Natural Resources Evaluation- Draft Parts 1 and 2**). The project improvements propose inclusion of crossing accommodations (shelves) under the bridges at the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal and the Kissimmee River to provide improved walkways for wildlife.

Can the existing commemorative bridge plaque to Billie Bowlegs III at the Kissimmee River bridge be retained?

The existing Kissimmee River bridge was constructed in 1966 and formally dedicated in 1969 by the Florida Legislature. The dedication and plaque are specific to the current bridge structure. If new bridges are constructed, a similar dedication could be requested; however, this would require a new and separate dedication for the new bridge(s).

The plaque commemorating the existing bridge will be removed and preserved. This information is documented in the draft Memorandum of Agreement between FDOT and the State Historic Preservation Officer (refer to Technical Reports- **Memorandum of Agreement Between FDOT and SHPO- Draft**). Currently, the Okeechobee Historical Society has offered to place the plaque on display at the historical society property. This option is being considered as part of the salvage and relocation plan.

What is Section 106 and what are the impacts to historic properties?

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires analysis of impacts to historical and archaeological resources. The bridge over the Kissimmee River has been identified as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and therefore, an “adverse effect” has been made since the project requires that this bridge be demolished and replaced. The FDOT has prepared various reports that are available for public review (refer to the Technical Reports section) and is in coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer on an agreement for mitigative measures that will occur to address impacts to this bridge.

FPID 450334-1

S.R. 70 from C.R. 721 S to C.R. 599/128th Ave. PD&E Study
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Will there be noise walls?

The study included a noise evaluation (refer to Technical Reports- **Noise Study Report- Draft**) to identify noise sensitive sites, compare and evaluate the traffic noise levels at these sites with and without the project, and evaluate potentially feasible and cost reasonable noise abatement (sound wall) measures. The sound level measurements are obtained only to validate that the computer model can predict existing traffic noise levels within an allowable accuracy. Only predicted future traffic noise levels, which are derived using forecast worst-case noise conditions, establish whether someone is impacted by traffic noise or not. The evaluation found that there are 4 locations where there will be noise impacts. These are single family home sites along the corridor. Noise abatement (sound walls) was found to not be feasible or reasonable. To be considered reasonable, an abatement measure must provide at least a 5 dB(A) reduction in predicted traffic noise for at least 2 impacted receptors. Two (2) of the 4 impacted sites are single, isolated receptors (single homes). Therefore, these do not meet these criteria. The other 2 locations are closer together so a noise barrier was analyzed there. However, the minimum reduction of 5 dB(A) could not be achieved. Similarly, the criteria were not met.

Will there be impacts to the conservation lands?

The preferred alternative does impact 2.48 acres of the Kissimmee River Public Use Area (refer to 2025 Public Hearing Documents – **13- Concept Board**). This is a recreational property as well as a conservation area that is owned by the South Florida Water Management District and managed cooperatively by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.