Federal Highway Administration
Florida Division

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration and

Florida Department of Transportation

in cooperation with U.S. Department of Defense Department of the Air Force,
Eglin Air Force Base

Financial Project Number: 411102-1
Federal Project Number: xxx-xxx-x(xx)
ETDM Project Number: 8167

SR 123 (Roger J. Clary Highway)
from north of the Intersection of SR 123 and SR 85S to SR 85N
Okaloosa County,
Eglin Air Force Base, Florida

The proposed project involves widening SR 123 (Roger J. Clary Highway) from north of SR 85S to SR 85N from a two-lane rural undivided roadway to a four-lane divided facility. New bridges would be constructed over Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, and the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek. A grade-separated interchange at the intersection of SR 85N and SR 123 is also included. The project length is approximately five miles and is entirely within federal lands of Eglin Air Force Base.

Submitted pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 4332 (2)(c).

Approved For Public Availability

7/15/11
Date

FOR

Martin Knopp, P.E.
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

For additional information, contact:

Linda K. Anderson
Environmental Protection Specialist
Federal Highway Administration
545 John Knox Road, Suite 200
Tallahassee, Florida 32303
Telephone: 850-553-2226

Report Documentation Page

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1. REPORT DATE	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED
MAY 2012		**00-00-2012 to 00-00-2012**

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
Environmental Assessment SR 123 (Roger J. Clary Highway) from north of the Intersection of SR 123 and SR 85S to SR 85N Okaloosa County, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER
6. AUTHOR(S)	5d. PROJECT NUMBER
	5e. TASK NUMBER
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **Federal Highway Administration,545 John Knox Road, Suite 200,Tallahassee,FL,32303**	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for public release; distribution unlimited

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT

15. SUBJECT TERMS

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			
unclassified	**unclassified**	**unclassified**	**Same as Report (SAR)**	**322**	

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Florida Division

545 John Knox Road, Suite 200
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

Phone: (850) 553-2200
Fax: (850) 942-9691 / 942-8308

www.fhwa.dot.gov/fldiv

May 11, 2012

In Reply Refer To:
ENV-FL

Tommy Barfield
FDOT District 3 Secretary
Florida Department of Transportation
Highway 90 East
Chipley, FL 32428-0607

Attention: Secretary Barfield

Subject: Florida – Federal-Aid Project No's. 0471-032-P; 0471-033-P: 0471-034-P
Financial Project No's. 411102-2; 411102-3; 411102-4
SR 123 Intersection of SR 123 and SR 85S to SR 85 N
Okaloosa County, FL
Finding of No Significant Impact

We have reviewed the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for the subject project which you submitted in compliance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and 23 CFR 771.

Based on the EA and our familiarity with the proposed improvements and project site, we find that the construction of this project will have no significant adverse impact on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, the Finding of No Significant Impact is considered appropriate and is adopted.

Since this project has been developed consistent with 23 CFR 771 and the Florida Department of Transportation "Project Development and Environment Manual," the location and design concept of the selected alternative is also accepted, per your request.

A signed copy of the Finding of No Significant Impact is returned.

Sincerely,

Buddy Arnold

For: Martin C. Knopp
Division Administrator

Enclosure

Signed FONSI

cc: Alan Vann, Project Coordinator, FDOT District 3
Laura Haddock, Environmental Supervisor, FDOT District 3
Jorge Rivera, District 3 Transportation Engineer, FHWA

Federal Highway Administration
Florida Division

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
and
Florida Department of Transportation

In Cooperation with
U.S. Department of Defense Department of the Air Force,
Eglin Air Force Base

Financial Project Numbers: 411102-2; 411102-3; 411102-4
Federal Project Numbers: 0471-032-P; 0471-033-P; 0471-034-P
ETDM Project Number 8167

SR 123 (Roger J. Clary Highway)
from north of the Intersection of SR 123 and SR 85S to SR 85N
Okaloosa County,
Eglin Air Force Base, Florida

The proposed project involves widening SR 123 (Roger J. Clary Highway) from north of SR 85S to SR 85N from a two-lane rural undivided roadway to a four-lane divided facility. New bridges would be constructed over Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, and the un-named tributary to Turkey Creek. A grade-separated interchange at the intersection of SR 85N and SR 123 is also included. The project length is approximately five miles and is entirely within federal lands of Eglin Air Force Base.

Submitted pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 4332 (2)(c).

5/10/12
Date

for Buddy Cunill
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

Alternative 3 (West-Shift) is the Preferred Alternative that would widen SR 123 to the west and provide for a four-lane rural typical section with an additional right-of-way easement dedicated by Eglin Air Force Base. The Preferred Alternative minimizes impacts to environmental resources. Mitigation will be provided for impacts to wetlands, and biological resources including the Okaloosa Darter.

This page intentionally blank

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDIX

1.0 STATEMENT ON FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

In accordance with the Council of Environmental Quality regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), and the U.S. Air Force's Environmental Impact Analysis Process (EIAP) as effectuated by 32 CFR Part 989, an assessment of the environmental effects has been prepared for the State Road (SR) 123 (Roger J. Clary Highway) widening project.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that this project will not have any significant impact on the human environment. The Finding of No Significant Impact is based on the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) which has been independently evaluated by FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the environmental issues and impacts of the proposed project. It provides sufficient evidence and analysis to determine that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and contents of the attached Environmental Assessment.

2.0 PROJECT LOCATION

State Road (SR) 123, Roger J. Clary Highway, is located on Eglin Air Force Base (AFB) in Okaloosa County, northwest of Niceville and Valparaiso, Florida. The length of the project is approximately 5 miles. The project termini are north of SR 85S and SR 85N. The proposed action is located entirely on federal lands of Eglin Air Force Base.

3.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the project (EA Chapter 1.0, pages 1-2 to 1-13) is to provide needed capacity and safety improvements to address existing and future traffic deficiencies, congestion and crash history.

As defined in the Okaloosa County Comprehensive Plan, the adopted Level of Service (LOS) for SR 123 is LOS C. The facility currently does not meet the adopted LOS. If no improvements are made, the facility would operate at a failing LOS for the Opening Year (2013) and in the design year (2033).

Crash data for SR 123 were collected for the period from 2002 through 2008. There were a total of 83 crashes reported for the period involving 80 injuries and one fatality. The distribution of crashes indicates a disproportionate amount of rear-end crashes, which is a problem typically associated with insufficient capacity on a two-lane roadway.

4.0 PREFERREDALTERNATIVE

The proposed improvements (EA Chapter 2, pages 2-1 to 2-19) would widen SR 123 from two to four lanes by constructing two new lanes to the west of the existing road to accommodate southbound traffic. The existing road would be reconstructed along its current horizontal alignment and reconfigured to serve two northbound lanes of traffic. The resulting typical section would feature four 12-foot travel lanes and 10-foot shoulders (5-foot paved), separated by a 64-foot grassed median. New two-lane parallel bridges would be built over Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, and an un-named tributary to Turkey Creek. An interchange would be built at SR 123 and SR 85 featuring a two-lane flyover from northbound SR 123 to northbound SR 85 N. The project would include construction of stormwater ponds and drainage improvements.

Three build alternatives (EA Section 2.3, pages 2-2 to 2-5), and a No-Build alternative (EA Section 2.3.4, page 2-6) were considered. Alternative 1 follows the centerline of the existing roadway. Alternative 2 is east-shifted and locates the future southbound lanes over the existing lanes. Alternative 3 is west-shifted and locates the future northbound lanes over the existing lanes. Alternative 3 (west-shift) is the Preferred Alternative because it minimizes and avoids utility conflicts associated with Alternative 2, and would result in a reduced impact to wetlands. Potential environmental impacts are summarized below.

5.0 IMPACTS OF PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

5.1 Air Quality

No impacts to Air Quality were identified (EA Section 4.1.1, pages 4-6 to 4-8). Project commitments for Air Quality were identified (EA Section 5.3.1, page 5-3).

The project is in an area which has been designated as attainment for ozone standards under the criteria provided in the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990. This project is in conformance with the State Implementation Plan because it will not cause violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

An Air Quality Screening Test was conducted to determine if potential carbon monoxide (CO) impacts associated with the project would contribute to CO concentrations in exceedance of the NAAQS. CO concentrations were predicted to be 9.0 ppm (1-hour) and 5.4 ppm (8-hour) for the year 2007, and 8.4 ppm (1-hour) and 5.0 ppm (8-hour) for the design year 2033, which are below the NAAQS standards of 35 ppm for the one-hour concentration and 9 ppm for the eight-hour concentration.

Construction activities will cause short-term air quality impacts in the form of dust from earthwork and unpaved roads. These impacts will be minimized by adherence to all applicable State and local regulations and to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction.*

5.2 Geologic Resources

No impacts to geological resources were identified (EA Section 4.1.2, page 4-9). Project commitments for soils and erosion were identified (EA Section 5.3.2, page 5-3).

5.3 Water Resources

No significant impacts to water resources were identified (EA Section 4.1.3, pages 4-10 to 4-13). Project commitments for water resources were identified (EA Section 5.3.3, pages 5-3 to 5-4).

Water Quality

The project would result in an increase in impermeable surface area. There are currently 22 acres of pavement within the corridor with an additional 20 acres of pavement proposed. However, because the existing alignment currently does not provide any treatment for stormwater runoff, the proposed action could have beneficial long-term impacts as the project proposes construction of stormwater ponds where none currently exist.

Surface water quality would be protected with the use of best management practices (BMPs) to minimize erosion, and the construction of stormwater treatment facilities as required. Use of BMPs and construction of stormwater treatment facilities would minimize direct discharge of stormwater into an Okaloosa Darter stream. There are no rivers listed in the National Park Service Southeastern Rivers Inventory and, therefore, the coordination requirement for the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act does not apply to this project. Regarding groundwater, a small decrease in the overall recharge area would result; however, this impact would not be considered significant since Eglin AFB has approximately 405,000 acres of unimproved land.

Water resources would be affected during construction (short-term in nature). An erosion control plan following FDOT and Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) requirements would be developed in coordination with Eglin AFB 96th Civil Engineer Group / Eglin Natural Resources Section (96 CEG/CEVSN).

Floodplain Impacts

No significant impacts to floodplains were identified (EA Section 4.1.3, pages 4-11 to 4-12). No project commitments for floodplains were identified in the EA.

The project traverses Zone A (100-year floodplain with no base flood elevation determined) in two locations: at the un-named tributary to Turkey Creek and over Turkey Creek itself. There is no designated 100-year floodplain at Tom's Creek where the project traverses the creek bed. The floodplains are not designated as regulatory floodways by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Floodplain impacts are estimated at 5.39 acres under the Preferred Alternative 3 (West-Shift). All encroachments would be transverse. Floodplain encroachment associated with the proposed facility will be limited to the bridge supports and side bank stabilization on each side of Turkey Creek and the un-named tributary to Turkey Creek. The new bridge spans and cross drains will be sized during final design to perform hydraulically in a manner equal to or greater than the existing structures.

The locations that would encroach into the 100-year FEMA floodplain are categorized as minimal encroachment. The addition of bridges parallel to the existing bridges would not cause adverse backwater effects, and roadway elevations are more than twenty feet higher than the 50-year flood elevation.

As required by FEMA, Executive Order (EO) 11988, and Secretary of the Air Force Order 791.1, a Finding of No Practicable Alternative (FONPA) follows in accordance with 32 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 989.15.

Floodplain Finding of No Practicable Alternative

Taking the above information into consideration, pursuant to EO 11988, *Floodplain Management*, there is no practicable alternative to implementing the Preferred Alternative within the floodplains. All practicable measures have been taken to minimize harm to floodplains, and proposed measures to minimize impacts are documented in the EA. Although there is no practicable alternative to impacting floodplains, no compensatory mitigation is identified. This finding fulfills both the requirements of the referenced EOs and 32 CFR Part 989.14 requirements for a FONPA.

Pursuant to EO 11988, "Floodplain Management," the proposed action was determined to be within the base floodplain associated with low areas and drainage ditches. Impacts associated with the encroachment have been evaluated and determined to be minimal. Therefore, the proposed action does not constitute a significant encroachment. The project does not involve any regulatory floodways.

5.4 Biological Resources (Wildlife and Habitat)

No significant impacts to biological resources were identified (EA Section 4.1.4, pages 4-14 to 4-17). Project commitments for biological resources were identified (EA Section 5.3.4, pages 5-4 to 5-8).

A Biological Assessment (BA) was prepared (Appendix I of the EA) pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) issued a Biological Opinion (BO) on March 30, 2012 (Appendix I of the EA).

The BO determined the project would adversely affect, but would not likely jeopardize the continued existence of the federally-threatened **Okaloosa Darter**. The BO identified incidental take of 1,562 Okaloosa Darter impacted by the project and identified three Reasonable and Prudent Measures and six Terms and Conditions necessary and appropriate to minimize the incidental take.

The three Reasonable and Prudent Measures and six Terms and Conditions are incorporated into the Commitments specifically described in Section 5.3.4 of the EA (pages 5-4 to 5-5).

The BO determined the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the federally-threatened **Eastern Indigo Snake**, as incidental contact is considered unlikely. The USFWS concurred with this determination on March 12, 2009 (FWS-2009-F-0086) and in the March 30, 2012 BO. By adhering to the FDOT *Construction Precautions for the Eastern Indigo Snake*, impacts to this species are not anticipated. Commitments regarding the Eastern Indigo Snake are identified in Section 5.3.4 of the EA (page 5-5).

The project would have "no effect" on the federally-threatened **Gulf Sturgeon** or its habitat. The USFWS concurred with this determination on March 12, 2009 (FWS-2009-F-0086) and in the March 30, 2012 BO. There are no project commitments regarding the Gulf Sturgeon identified in the EA.

The project would not impact known or potential **Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander** habitat. The USFWS concurred with this determination on March 12, 2009 (FWS-2009-F-0086) and in the March 30, 2012 BO. There are no project commitments regarding the Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander identified in the EA.

The project would have "no effect" on the federally-endangered **Red-cockaded Woodpecker**. The USFWS concurred with this determination on March 12, 2009 (FWS-2009-F-0086) and in the March 30, 2012 BO. A commitment regarding the Red-cockaded Woodpecker is identified in Section 5.3.4 of the EA (page 5-7).

The project would have "no effect" on the federally-endangered **Wood Stork** or **Bald Eagle**. The USFWS concurred with this determination on March 12, 2009 (FWS-2009-F-0086) and in the March 30, 2012 BO. There are no project commitments regarding the Wood Stork identified in the EA. Commitments regarding the Bald Eagle are identified in Section 5.3.4 of the EA (page 5-7).

The project is "not likely to adversely affect" the **Florida Black Bear**. Concurrence on this determination was requested of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) on February 3, 2009. Although no written reply was received, follow-up in-person interagency coordination meetings were conducted with FWC representatives on March 5, 2009 and February 9, 2010 as documented in Appendix D of the Biological Assessment (which is Appendix I of the EA). In accordance with the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, the March 30, 2012 USFWS BO likewise identified the need for fencing and for continued coordination with FWC regarding fence design. The major crossings of Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, and the un-named tributary to Turkey Creek and their associated riparian areas where Florida Black Bear activity is known or likely to occur will be bridged along with wildlife funnel fencing in accordance with FDOT Wildlife Crossing Guidelines to accommodate terrestrial passages for wildlife movement. Previous agency comments indicate that the existing bridges meet the criteria for adequate terrestrial passage. Commitments regarding the Florida Black Bear are identified in Section 5.3.4 of the EA (page 5-8).

Although the project would traverse potential habitat of the state-threatened **Gopher Tortoise**, the project is not likely to adversely affect the Gopher Tortoise. Concurrence on this determination was requested of the FWC on February 3, 2009. Although no written reply was received, follow-up in-person interagency coordination meetings were conducted with FWC representatives on March 5, 2009 and February 9, 2010 as documented in Appendix D of the Biological Assessment (which is Appendix I of the EA). Within one month of project initiation, surveys will be conducted along SR 123, staging/storage areas, and stormwater management facilities prior to construction activity. Should a Gopher Tortoise or its burrow be identified that cannot be avoided by 25 feet, a permit from FWC would be obtained with relocation pursuant to the FWC permit requirements. Commitments regarding the Gopher Tortoise are identified in Section 5.3.4 of the EA (page 5-8).

5.5 Wetlands

No significant impacts to wetland resources were identified (EA Section 4.1.5, pages 4-18 to 4-20). Project commitments for wetland resources were identified (EA Section 5.3.3, pages 5-3 to 5-4).

The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3, West-Shift) would impact 0.61 acre of wetlands with a functional loss of 0.62. The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3, West-Shift) minimizes impacts to wetlands.

As required by EO 11990, and Secretary of the Air Force Order 791.1, a FONPA follows in accordance with 32 CFR 989.15.

Wetland Finding of No Practicable Alternative

Taking the above information into consideration, pursuant to EO 11990, *Protection of Wetlands,* there is no practicable alternative to implementing the Preferred Alternative within wetlands. All practicable measures have been taken to minimize harm to wetlands, and proposed measures to minimize impacts are documented in the EA. Because there is no practicable alternative to impacting wetlands because of the existing project alignment, federal regulations require compensatory mitigation as identified in the EA. This finding fulfills both the requirements of the referenced EOs and 32 CFR Part 989.14 requirements for a FONPA.

Based on the above considerations, it is determined that there is no practicable alternative to the proposed new construction in wetlands and the proposed action includes all practicable measures to minimize harm to wetlands which may result from such use.

5.6 Noise

No impacts from noise were identified (EA Section 4.1.6, pages 4-21 to 4-22). No project commitments for noise were identified. No noise receptors exist along the project corridor. Temporary noise and vibration impacts would occur from construction activities, but would be attenuated through standard controls specified in FDOT *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction.*

5.7 Cultural Resources

No significant impacts to cultural resources were identified (EA Section 4.1.7, page 4-23). Project commitments for cultural resources were identified (EA Section 5.3.5, page 5-9).

No archaeological or historical sites or properties were identified, nor are any expected to be encountered during subsequent project development.

FHWA, in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer, has determined the proposed action will have no effect upon any properties protected under Section 106.

5.8 Hazardous Materials and Waste Management

No significant impacts from hazardous materials or waste were identified (EA Section 4.2, pages 4-24 to 4-25). Project commitments for hazardous materials were identified (EA Section 5.3.6, page 5-9).

The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3, West-Shift) is located in an area that is considered probable for unexploded ordnance (UXO) occurrences. Therefore, FDOT3, in consultation with Eglin's safety office, will be responsible to complete the Explosives Safety Submission (ESS) process to ensure all UXO hazards are cleared prior to the commencement of construction activities.

5.9 Local Community, Relocation, and Right-of-Way

No significant impacts to the community, socioeconomic resources, Environmental Justice, or land use/aesthetics were identified (EA Section 4.3, pages 4-26 to 4-28). The project would neither result in disproportionate impact to minority or low-income communities, nor sever / fragment existing communities. The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3, West-Shift) would not displace any residences or businesses. No project commitments were identified.

5.10 Transportation

No significant impacts to transportation were identified (EA Section 4.3.4, pages 4-29 to 4-31). Project commitments for transportation were identified (EA Section 5.3.7, page 5-9).

The adopted LOS standard for SR 123 is LOS C. The roadway is currently operating at LOS D in the off-peak direction and LOS F in the peak direction. Under the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3, West-Shift), the arterial segment is expected to operate at an average LOS of C during the a.m. and p.m. peak hours of the design year 2033. The grade-separated interchange is expected to operate at LOS B in the a.m. peak hour and LOS C in the p.m. peak hour.

5.11 Utilities

No significant impacts to utilities were identified for the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3, West-Shift) (EA Section 4.3.5, page 4-32). Project commitments for utilities were identified (EA Section 5.3.7, page 5-9).

The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3, West-Shift) minimizes impacts to utilities. Approximately 3,100 linear feet of water main would require relocation at a cost of approximately $620,000. No fiber optic lines or wireless infrastructure would be affected.

5.12 Construction

No significant impacts from construction were identified (EA Section 4.3.6, page 4-33). No project commitments were identified.

Construction activities would be controlled in accordance with the FDOT *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction.*

Maintenance of traffic and sequence of construction would be planned and scheduled so as to minimize traffic delays throughout the project.

5.13 Section 4(f)

No significant issues with Section 4(f) resources were identified (EA Section 3.3.8, page 3-36). No project commitments were identified.

With respect to the proposed widening of SR 123, the project is located within undeveloped, forested land of the Choctaw Open Dog Hunting Unit, and is adjacent to the Jackson Still Hunting Unit.

The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3, West-Shift) would require 65 hectares (160 acres) from the Choctaw Open Dog Hunting Unit, which is less than 1% of the total central Choctaw Open Dog Hunting Unit, and 2 hectares (6 acres) from the Jackson Still Hunting Unit, which is less than 1% of the total southern Jackson Still Hunting Unit.

A Determination of Section 4(f) Applicability was prepared with input from the Official with Jurisdiction over the Eglin Air Force Base Reservation (September 2011). The Notice of Public Hearing included a statement on the potential for Section 4(f) impacts. The presenter at the Public Hearing explained the potential Section 4(f) impacts and specifically requested public input on the issue. No public comment was received on this issue.

FHWA has reviewed the Section 4(f) Determination of Applicability, and made the determination on October 18, 2011 that the Choctaw Open Dog Hunting Unit and the Jackson Still Hunting Unit encompassing and adjacent to the project Area of Potential Effect, respectively, are not Section 4(f) lands and thus the project will have no impact to Section 4(f) lands.

The proposed project will not use Section 4(f) property from the Eglin Air Force Base. FHWA has determined Section 4(f) does not apply.

5.14 Planning Consistency

No significant issues with planning consistency were identified (EA Section 4.4, page 4-34). No project commitments were identified. FHWA has verified Planning Consistency as of October 19, 2011. This project is consistent with existing and future plans for growth of Okaloosa County and the future transportation system, including the priorities of the Northwest Florida Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), the Okaloosa County Comprehensive Plan, and FDOT plans and work programs. This consistency is demonstrated by the project's inclusion in the following plans:

- Okaloosa-Walton 2035 *Long Range Transportation Plan* (March 2012) identifies the widening of SR 123 from two to four lanes as a cost-feasible Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) project in three segments:
    - 4111022 (from north of *S*R 85S to north of Tom's Creek): Right-of-way (ROW) funded in FY 12, Construction funded in FY 26-30 (project number 27);
    - 4111023 (from north of Tom's Creek to north of Turkey Creek): ROW funded in FY 12, Construction funding not yet identified (project number 28);
    - 4111024 (from north of Turkey Creek to SR 85N): ROW funded in FY 12, Construction funded in FY 14 (project number 29).

- Okaloosa-Walton TPO *Transportation Improvement Program* FY 2012-2016 (Amended February 16, 2012), identifies the project in three segments:
    - 4111022 (from north of SR 85S to north of Tom's Creek): $1,844,670 (PE/ROW);
    - 4111023 (from north of Tom's Creek to north of Turkey Creek): $1,927,490 (PE/ ROW);
    - 4111024 (from north of Turkey Creek to SR 85N): $1,539,501 (PE and ROW).
- Project is listed on page 928 of FY 2012 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for Preliminary Engineering (PE) and ROW for the three project segments:
    - 4111022 (from north of SR 85S to north of Tom's Creek): $1,617,539 for PE and $227,490 for ROW;
    - 4111023 (from north of Tom's Creek to north of Turkey Creek): $1,701,059 for PE and $227,490 for ROW;
    - 4111024 (from north Turkey Creek to SR 85N): $1,312,386 for PE and $227,490 for ROW.

5.15 Essential Fish Habitat

This project is not located within, and/or will not adversely affect areas identified as Essential Fish Habitat; therefore, an Essential Fish Habitat consultation is not required.

5.16 Farmlands

Through coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, it has been determined that no farmlands as defined by 7 CFR 658 are located in the project vicinity.

6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND AGENCY COORDINATION

6.1 Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

A Public Information Meeting was held on October 30, 2007 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the Niceville Council Chambers, 208 N. Partin Drive, Niceville, FL; as documented in the Public Information Summary (EA Appendix E). Full sets of plans for both alternatives were on display along with typical section boards, computer generated images and environmental boards. A handout was provided. There was no formal presentation or public testimony period. Approximately 40 people signed in. Ten comments cards were received at the meeting and one was mailed in by the response deadline. A summary of comments and responses are provided in Appendix E of the EA.

The project was reviewed through the FDOT ETDM process (ETDM Project Number 8167) as documented in the ETDM Summary Report, Finalized Programming Screen, as published by FDOT on March 26, 2008. The ETDM Summary Report is Appendix D of the EA.

A Public Hearing was held on Thursday, September 22, 2011 from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Niceville Community Center, located at 204 North Partin Drive, Niceville, FL. The hearing was an open-house format at 5 p.m. with a formal presentation at 5:30 p.m. Thirty-seven people signed in attendance (11 members of the public, 9 FDOT representatives, 9 consultant team members, 2 Eglin AFB representatives, 1 member of the press, 3 elected officials, 1 sheriff department representative, and 1 court reporter). Seven people provided written comment, and one person provided public testimony. Full sets of plans were on display along with typical section boards and the EA and BA. A handout was provided. A transcript was recorded.

Prior to the Public Hearing, a briefing was provided to the O-W TPO in a publically-noticed meeting on July 21, 2011. A briefing was also provided to the Eglin Range Configuration Change Control board on August 10, 2011.

With issuance of the March 30, 2012 Biological Opinion by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, all known environmental issues have been resolved; no remaining unresolved issues are known to exist.

6.2 Statement on Public Availability

The approved EA addresses all of the viable alternatives that were studied during project development. The environmental effects of all alternatives under consideration were evaluated when preparing the assessment. Even though the document was made available to the public before the public hearing, the FONSI was made after consideration of all comments received as a result of public availability and the public hearing. Copies of all post-hearing correspondence made by the public is included in Appendix A of this FONSI.

7.0 COMMITMENTS

The following commitments have been identified in the Environmental Assessment, Biological Assessment, and/or Biological Opinion.

7.1 Air Quality

Impacts will be minimized by adherence to all state and local regulations and to the FDOT Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction. Reasonable precautions would be taken to minimize fugitive particulate emissions during ground-disturbing/construction activities in accordance with the CAA and Rule 62-296, F.A.C.

7.2 Geologic Resources

- Where applicable, rough grade slopes or use terrace slopes to reduce erosion.
- The Air Force requires inspection and maintenance of Best Management Practices (BMPs) under the stormwater construction general permit.
- An erosion control plan following FDOT and FDEP requirements would be developed for the construction of the Proposed Action in coordination with Eglin AFB 96th Civil Engineer Group Eglin Natural Resources Section (96 CEG/CEVSN).

7.3 Water Resources

- Permits and site plan designs would include site-specific management requirements for erosion and sediment control.
- Designation of staging and storage areas for use of construction equipment.
- Entrenched silt fencing and staked bales would be installed and maintained along the perimeter during construction and staging and storage areas.
- Inspection of silt fencing on a weekly basis and after rain events. Replace fencing as needed.
- Waste receptacles, including dumpsters, would be covered to prevent rainwater and wildlife from entering.
- Inclusion of stormwater features designed to control runoff associated with the additional impervious surface, land clearing, grading, and excavating.
- For water quality protection, erosion control blankets/fabric and other applicable BMPs would be incorporated to reduce soil erosion and prevent sedimentation from entering surface waters, floodplains, and wetlands.
- Storage of chemicals, cements, solvents, paints, or other potential water pollutants in locations where they cannot cause runoff pollution into surface waters, floodplains, and wetlands.
- Stormwater treatment systems must be at least 100 feet from any public water supply well.

7.4 Biological Resources (Wildlife and Habitat)

– **Okaloosa Darter** protection and monitoring, and habitat protection, monitoring procedures to minimize impacts from construction activities shall be implemented as determined by the Biological Opinion approved and issued by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (March 30, 2012).

- New bridges at Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek shall be designed to span bankfull plus 10% as quantified in the Biological Assessment to avoid in-stream pier placement. In the event in-stream pier placement cannot be avoided with standard design and cost feasible construction, piers at a minimum shall mirror the existing bridges and the pier location shall be coordinated with USFWS to minimize stream impacts.

- The existing culvert at the un-named tributary will be replaced with a single span bridge structure to avoid stream impacts and provide potential access to upstream habitat. Construction at the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek will span bankfull plus 10% as quantified in the Biological Assessment and avoid in-stream pier placement.

- It is anticipated that bridge construction will be accomplished at-grade with ground-based construction. However, within wetland limits and along stream banks, work will be accomplished from temporary access structures. Following construction, temporary access structures will be removed and disturbed areas will be restored.

- Runoff will be conveyed to stormwater ponds where practical for treatment before discharging to Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, or the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek. Location of stormwater ponds will be coordinated with Eglin Natural Resources Section and the USFWS.

- Runoff from the bridges will be conveyed and discharged to surrounding floodplains to allow overland or swale flow before entering streams, avoiding direct discharge to the streams.

- Staging and storage areas shall be coordinated with Eglin Natural Resources Section and USFWS prior to construction to avoid environmentally sensitive areas.

- Best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented to minimize impacts to wetlands, surface waters, and soils in compliance with NPDES. During design, an erosion and sediment control plan will be coordinated with USFWS and Eglin Natural Resources Section and USFWS.

- A stream restoration will be performed along the bed of the existing culvert proposed for removal at the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek to establish and reconnect habitat. Stream restoration will be coordinated with the Eglin Natural Resources Section and USFWS.

The Biological Opinion (March 30, 2012) established the following Reasonable and Prudent Measures (RPM) necessary and appropriate to minimize the incidental take of up to 1,562 Okaloosa Darters. As established in the Biological Opinion, the following measures do not apply to segment 4111024 (from north of Turkey Creek to SR 85N). All measures and associated terms and conditions apply to both segments FDIP 4111022 and FPID 4111023 as noted.

RPM 1: Okaloosa darter protection and monitoring, as well as habitat protection, monitoring, and restoration procedures to minimize impacts from all the construction activities shall be implemented.

1.1 An erosion and sediment control plan shall be submitted and approved by the Service prior to the start of construction. This plan is to include re-vegetation of stream banks and riparian areas within the limit of construction, as needed.

1.2 Stream restoration plans for the unnamed tributary of Turkey Creek shall be approved by the Service prior to construction. The restoration plan shall include annual monitoring of the Okaloosa darter population at the unnamed tributary for two years post-construction. It should further define the methods to be used within the two-year period. This term and condition only applies to segment FPID #4111023.

1.3 Contractors for the road construction shall be informed about the presence of the Okaloosa darter and the importance of thorough implementation of protection measures, especially for erosion control.

RPM 2: It shall be ensured that the stream crossing structures are designed and constructed to protect the streams' natural channel design, thereby reducing the long-term loss of the Okaloosa darter and their habitat.

2.1 Monitoring for physical changes in stream channel stability shall be implemented at all crossings to assess the response of impacted streams to bridge construction. A separate monitoring plan shall be approved by the Service prior to construction. Monitoring should be conducted prior to construction and annually for two years post-construction and the plan should further define the methods to be used during this period.

RPM 3: It shall be ensured that the terms and conditions are accomplished and completed as detailed in this incidental take statement including completion of reporting requirements.

3.1 Upon locating a dead, injured, or sick individual of an endangered or threatened species, initial notification must be made to the Fish and Wildlife Service Law Enforcement Office, Groveland, Florid at (352) 429-1037 within 24 hours. Additional notification must be made to the Fish and Wildlife Resources Section at (850) 882-4161 within 48 hours. Care should be taken in handling sick or injured individuals and in the preservation of specimens in the best possible state for later analysis and cause of death or injury.

3.2 A report describing the actions taken to implement the terms and conditions of this incidental take statement shall be submitted to the Project Leader, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1601 Balboa Avenue, Panama City, Florida, 32405, within 60 days of the completion of construction. This report shall include the dates of work, assessment and actions taken to address impacts to the Okaloosa darter, if they occurred.

– **Eastern Indigo Snake** protection and monitoring, and habitat protection, monitoring procedures to minimize impacts from construction activities shall be implemented.

- All construction personnel will be provided a description of the Eastern Indigo Snake and its protection under federal law.
- At the pre-construction conference, FDOT3 District Environmental Management Office (DEMO) staff or their designee will advise the contractor of the potential to impact the Eastern Indigo Snake. The contractor will be required to make his personnel and those of his subcontractors aware of the possible presence of the Eastern Indigo Snake and its physical appearance.
- If such snake is sighted within the construction area, the contractor or any subcontractor is required to halt potentially harmful activities that may injure the snake as long as the snake remains in the construction area. They will also receive instructions not to harass, injure, harm, or kill this species.
- Assistance in relocating the snake may be requested through the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) at (850) 488.3831. Any relocation of Eastern Indigo Snakes must be coordinated through Eglin AFB Natural Resources Section (NRS).
- Signs will be posted in work areas to be aware for potential presence of the Eastern Indigo Snake. The signage will include instructions that if an Eastern Indigo Snake is sighted, immediately contact the Eglin AFB NRS (850) 883.1153.

- **Red-cockaded Woodpecker** protection and monitoring, and habitat protection, monitoring procedures to minimize impacts from construction activities shall be implemented.
    - Prior to construction, coordination with Eglin AFB NRS would be conducted to ensure no inactive or active RCW trees would be cut.
- **Bald Eagle** protection and monitoring, and habitat protection, monitoring procedures to minimize impacts from construction activities shall be implemented.
    - During final design, the nest database would be reevaluated to assure no involvement.
    - Should a Bald Eagle be sighted, construction personnel would be directed to cease any activities and allow the eagle sufficient time to move away from the site on its own before resuming such activities.
    - Should a Bald Eagle take up residence along the project alignment prior to or during construction activities, compliance with the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines would be required.
- **Gopher Tortoise** protection and monitoring, and habitat protection, monitoring procedures to minimize impacts from construction activities shall be implemented.
    - Surveys for Gopher Tortoises and burrows would be conducted within the proposed alignment within one month of the start of land clearing/construction.
    - Gopher Tortoise burrows would be avoided by a minimum of 25 feet if possible. If avoidance is not possible, Gopher Tortoise relocation would be required.
    - All relocations would be performed in accordance with FWC permit requirements.
    - All staging and storage areas would be sited to avoid impacts to Gopher Tortoise habitat.
    - If a Gopher Tortoise is sighted, immediately contact the Eglin AFB NRS at (850) 883.1153.

– **Black Bear** protection and monitoring, and habitat protection, monitoring procedures to minimize impacts from construction activities shall be implemented.

  - Wildlife funnel fencing will be provided in the vicinity of Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek and the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek as determined by coordination between FDOT, Eglin AFB NRS, and FWC, in accordance with FDOT Wildlife Crossing Guidelines.

  - New bridges over Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, and the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek will be constructed to the requirement of bankfull + 10% which therefore will provide for adequate wildlife movement at these locations.

  - "Bear Crossing" signage will be posted in appropriate locations to alert motorists to potential bear crossing activity to promote safety for bears and motorists alike.

  - If a black bear is sighted, immediately contact the Eglin AFB NRS at (850) 883.1153.

7.5 Wetlands

– FDOT3 will be responsible for applying and securing an Individual Permit (Section 404) from the USACE and an Environmental Resource Permit from the NWFWMD/FDEP under 62-346 F.A.C. Mitigation will be required pursuant to Chapter 373, F.S.

– Coordination with the USACE and FDEP or NWFWMD will be necessary during the design phase to establish the extent of mitigation before final permits will be issued. Wetland impacts which will result from the construction of this project will be mitigated pursuant to 373.4137 F.S. to satisfy all mitigation requirements of Part IV. Chapter 373, F.S. and 33 U.S.C.s. 1344. Under 373.4137 F.S. Mitigation cost will be based on the NWFWMD regional wetland mitigation plan approved by the Florida State Legislature which addresses the estimated mitigation needs of FDOT.

7.6 Noise

No project commitments for noise were identified.

7.7 Cultural Resources

- All cultural resource work will be conducted according to Eglin AFB and Section 106 guidelines.
- The FDOT will conduct all necessary consultations with 96th Civil Engineer Group Cultural Resources Branch (96 CEG/CEVSH) for their review of all reports and project plans.
- The FDOT will not begin work until all necessary consultations are complete.
- The FDOT will coordinate with the 96 CEG/CEVSH at (850) 882.8459 on any change in plans.
- If unexpected discoveries, such as archaeological deposits, Native American graves or lost historic cemeteries, are encountered during construction of the widening project, all construction activity will cease immediately and Eglin AFB personnel would be contacted at (850) 882.8459. They will notify the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Florida SHPO within 24 hours at (850) 245.6333 to begin procedures outlined in Chapter 872, F.S. (Florida's Unmarked Burial Law).

7.8 Hazardous Materials and Waste Management

- FDOT will contact the 96 CEG/CEVR if unusual soil coloration and/or odors are detected and if small arms debris is found in the construction corridor.
- Any hazardous wastes (e.g., waste adhesives and paint wastes) generated during construction would be handled by the contractor in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations.
- FDOT will ensure any and all unexploded ordnance (UXO) hazards will be "cleared" prior to the commencement of construction activities.

7.9 Local Community, Relocation, and Right-of-Way

No project commitments for the local community, relocation, or right-of-way were identified.

7.10 Transportation

- A traffic control plan would be developed in coordination with Eglin AFB and implemented to minimize delays and congestion during the construction. Design and sequencing techniques would be used to minimize traffic and infrastructure impacts during construction.

7.11 Utilities

- FDOT will coordinate and obtain all applicable permits, easements, and/or authorizations prior to the commencement of construction activities that may affect utility service.

7.12 Construction

No project commitments for construction were identified (other than previously identified commitments for categories such as water quality, wetlands, wildlife, hazardous materials, and cultural resources as they relate to construction).

7.13 Section 4(f)

No project commitments for Section 4(f) were identified.

7.14 Planning Consistency

No project commitments for Planning Consistency were identified.

7.15 Essential Fish Habitat

No project commitments for Essential Fish Habitat were identified.

7.16 Farmlands

No project commitments for Farmlands were identified.

Appendix A

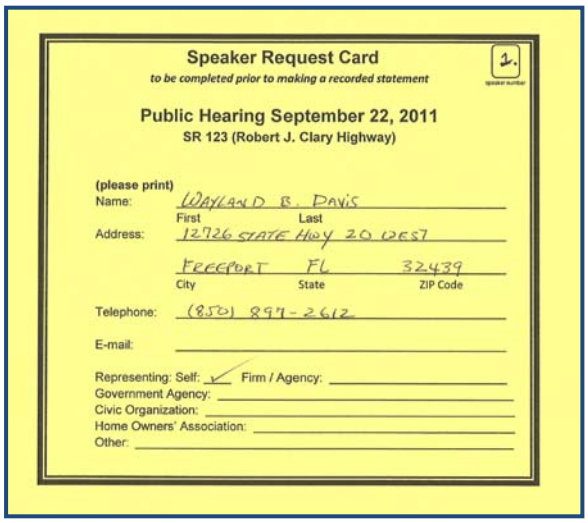
Post-Hearing Correspondence

This page intentionally blank

Public Comments

This page intentionally blank

1.



Speaker Request Card

to be completed prior to making a recorded statement

1.

Public Hearing September 22, 2011

SR 123 (Robert J. Clary Highway)

(please print)

Name: WAYLAND B. DAVIS
First Last

Address: 12726 STATE HWY 20 WEST

FREEPORT FL 32439
City State ZIP Code

Telephone: (850) 897-2612

E-mail:

Representing: Self: ✓ Firm / Agency:

Government Agency:

Civic Organization:

Home Owners' Association:

Other:

MR. DAVIS: Good evening. My name is Wayland Davis. And I came tonight, I apologize, a little bit late. There was an accident on 20. But I see prematurely that this highway, proposed highway, has already been named the Robert J. Clary Highway. And of course, being in the military, Air Force retired 30 years, served in Vietnam three tours, and I have come to believe that the appropriate name for this highway, perhaps, should be the Purple Heart Memorial Highway, because it comes from Duke and Eglin Special Forces to the Air Force Base at Eglin. So I would like the support of the public to reconsider and maybe repeal and name the new highway when it gets built as the Purple Heart Memorial Highway. Thank you all very much.

Comment: *Good evening. My name is Wayland Davis. And I came tonight, I apologize, a little bit late. There was an accident on 20. But I see prematurely that this highway, proposed highway, has already been named the Robert J. Clary Highway. And of course, being in the military, Air Force retired 30 years, served in Vietnam three tours, and I have come to believe that the appropriate name for this highway, perhaps, should be the Purple Heart Memorial Highway, because it comes from Duke and Eglin Special Forces to the Air Force Base at Eglin. So I would like the support of the public to reconsider and may repeal and name the new highway when it gets built as the Purple Heart Memorial Highway. Thank you all very much.*

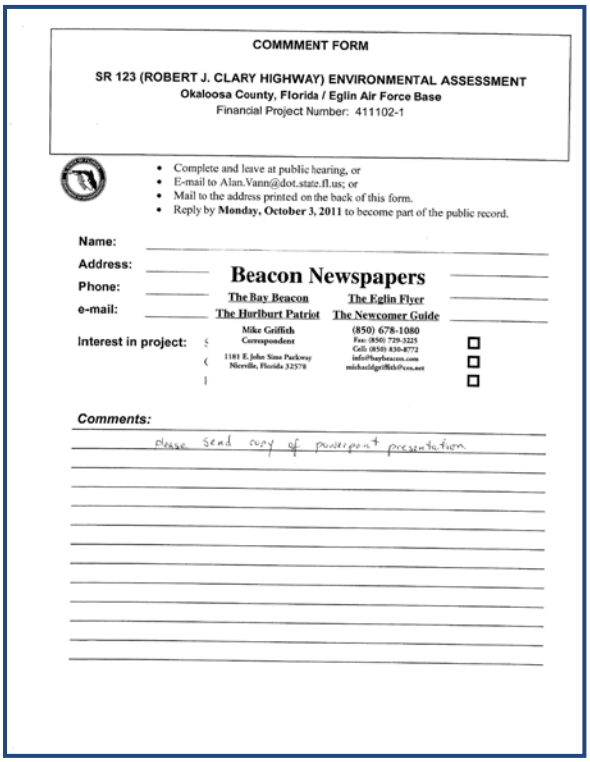
Response: The State of Florida named the highway "Roger J. Clary Highway" on June 6, 1984 (legislative action 84-378). The Legislature has authority to designate transportation facilities for honorary or memorial purposes based on recommendations from a city or county commission, individual state agencies, or civic groups.[1]

Section 334.071, F.S., explains the intent and limitations of legislative designations of transportation facilities for honorary or memorial purposes, or to otherwise, distinguish a particular facility in Florida. It is the responsibility of the legislative sponsors of the designation to obtain local resolutions in accordance with s. 334.071(3), F.S.

Legislative action to re-name a state road is accomplished by cooperation of the affected local jurisdiction, the FDOT, and other affected parties. The process requires concurrence of the U.S. Postmaster, public meetings to obtain concurrence of local stakeholders (businesses and residents who would undergo a change of address), a local ordinance, and notification by the local jurisdiction to other parties, such as law enforcement, 911 responders, and utility providers.

[1] Information from *The Florida Senate Interim Report 2012-139* (September 2011). Committee on Transportation. "Review Requirements and Costs for Road Designations."

2.



COMMMENT FORM

SR 123 (ROBERT J. CLARY HIGHWAY) ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
Okaloosa County, Florida / Eglin Air Force Base
Financial Project Number: 411102-1

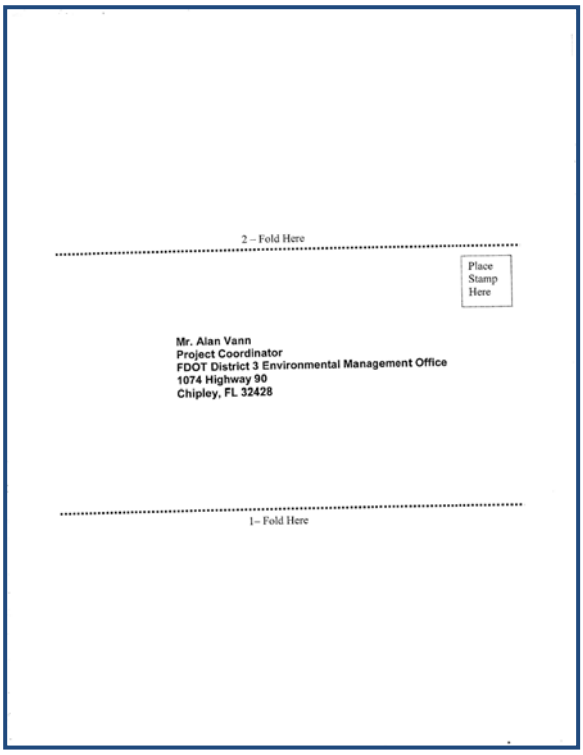
- Complete and leave at public hearing, or
- E-mail to Alan.Vann@dot.state.fl.us; or
- Mail to the address printed on the back of this form.
- Reply by **Monday, October 3, 2011** to become part of the public record.

Name:
Address:
Phone:
e-mail:

Beacon Newspapers
The Bay Beacon | The Eglin Flyer
The Hurlburt Patriot | The Newcomer Guide
Mike Griffith
Correspondent
(850) 678-1080

Interest in project:

Comments:
Please send copy of powerpoint presentation



2 – Fold Here

Place Stamp Here

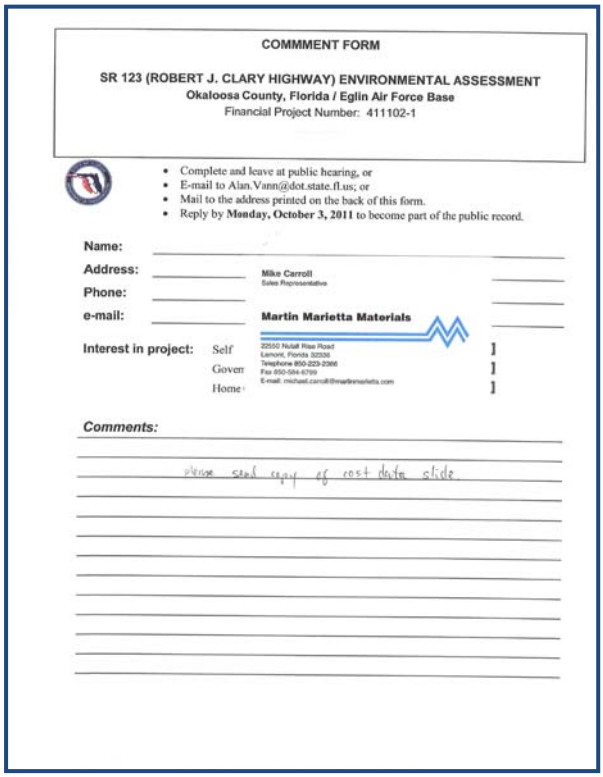
Mr. Alan Vann
Project Coordinator
FDOT District 3 Environmental Management Office
1074 Highway 90
Chipley, FL 32428

1– Fold Here

Comment: Please send copy of powerpoint presentation.

Response: A copy of the powerpoint presentation was sent to Mr. Griffith of Beacon Newspapers on Friday, September 23, 2011.

3.



COMMMENT FORM

SR 123 (ROBERT J. CLARY HIGHWAY) ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
Okaloosa County, Florida / Eglin Air Force Base
Financial Project Number: 411102-1

- Complete and leave at public hearing, or
- E-mail to Alan.Vann@dot.state.fl.us; or
- Mail to the address printed on the back of this form.
- Reply by **Monday, October 3, 2011** to become part of the public record.

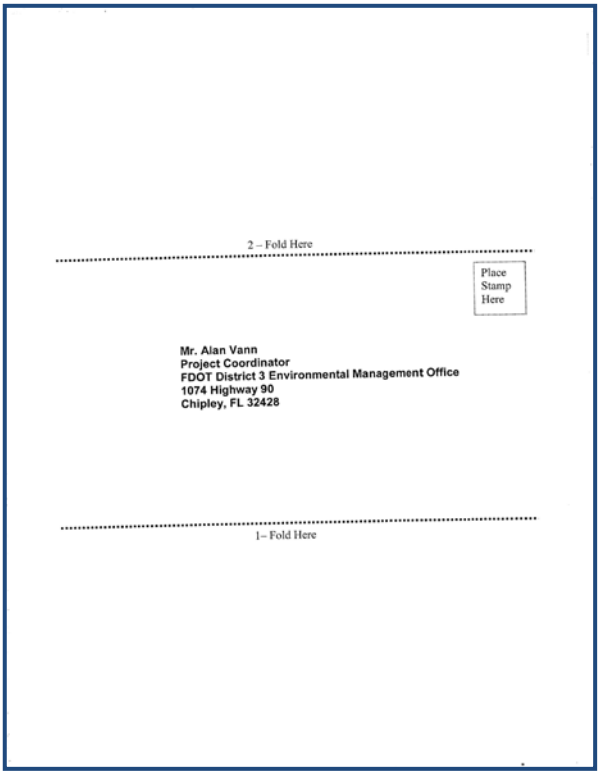
Name:
Address:
Phone:
e-mail:

Mike Carroll
Sales Representative
Martin Marietta Materials
22550 Nutall Rise Road
Lamont, Florida 32336
Telephone 850-223-2366
Fax 850-584-6799
E-mail: michael.carroll@martinmarietta.com

Interest in project: Self
Gover
Home

Comments:

please send copy of cost data slide



2 – Fold Here

Place Stamp Here

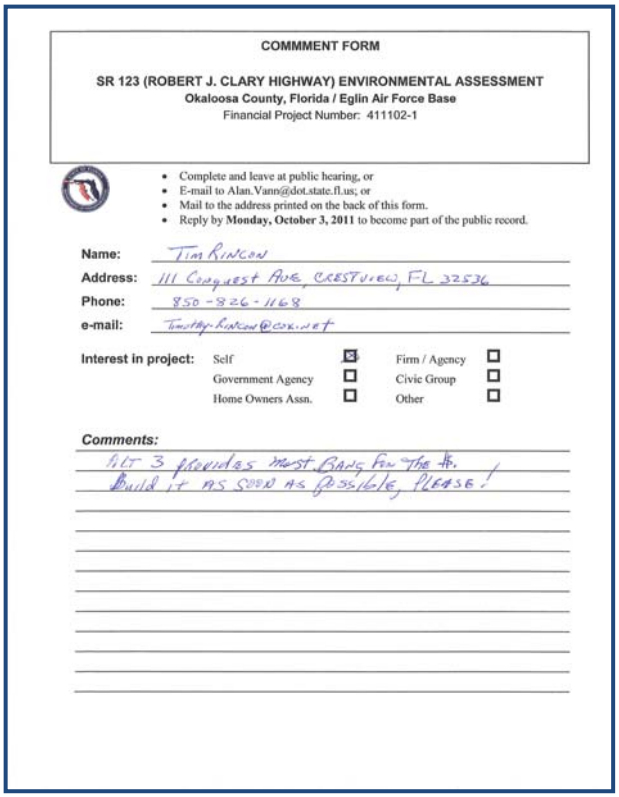
Mr. Alan Vann
Project Coordinator
FDOT District 3 Environmental Management Office
1074 Highway 90
Chipley, FL 32428

1– Fold Here

Comment: Please send copy of cost data slide.

Response: A copy of the cost data slide was sent to Mr. Carroll of Martin Marietta Materials on Friday, September 23, 2011.

4.



COMMMENT FORM

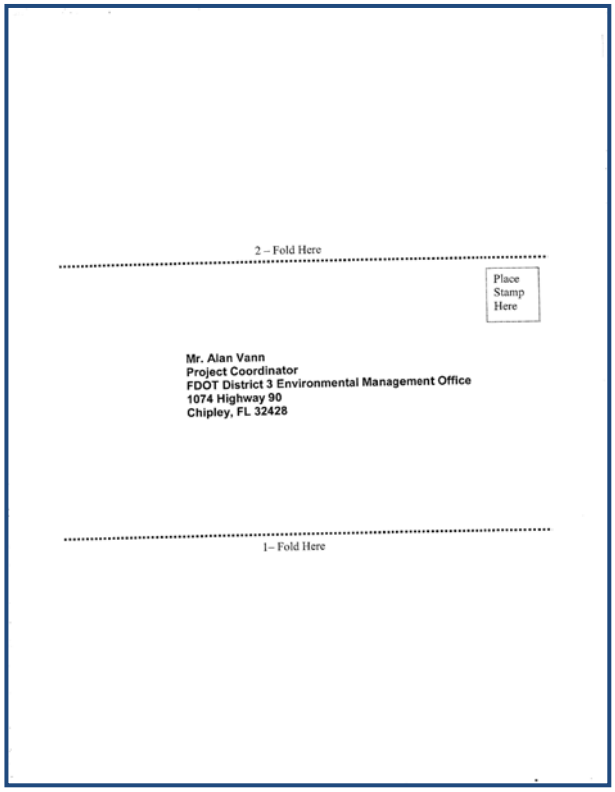
SR 123 (ROBERT J. CLARY HIGHWAY) ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
Okaloosa County, Florida / Eglin Air Force Base
Financial Project Number: 411102-1

- Complete and leave at public hearing, or
- E-mail to Alan.Vann@dot.state.fl.us; or
- Mail to the address printed on the back of this form.
- Reply by **Monday, October 3, 2011** to become part of the public record.

Name: Tim Rincon
Address: 111 Conquest Ave, Crestview, FL 32536
Phone: 850-826-1168
e-mail: Timothy.Rincon@cox.net

Interest in project: Self ☒ Firm / Agency ☐ Government Agency ☐ Civic Group ☐ Home Owners Assn. ☐ Other ☐

Comments:
Alt 3 provides most bang for the $. Build it as soon as possible, please!



2 – Fold Here

Place Stamp Here

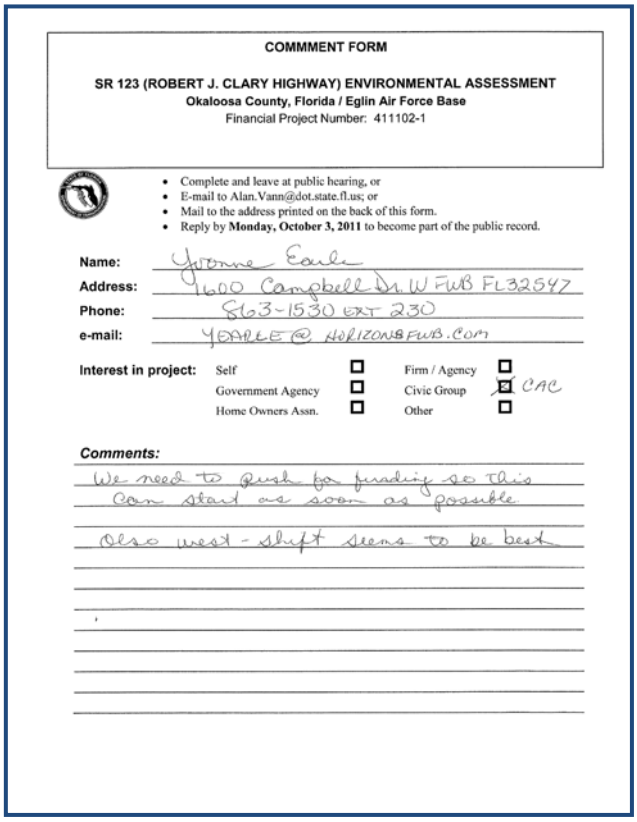
Mr. Alan Vann
Project Coordinator
FDOT District 3 Environmental Management Office
1074 Highway 90
Chipley, FL 32428

1– Fold Here

Comment: *Alt 3 provides most bang for the $. Build it as soon as possible, please!*

Response: The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will make a decision on the preferred alternative following the public hearing. However, funding for construction has not yet been allocated, and construction is not yet incorporated into the Florida Department of Transportation Five Year Work Plan.

5.



COMMMENT FORM

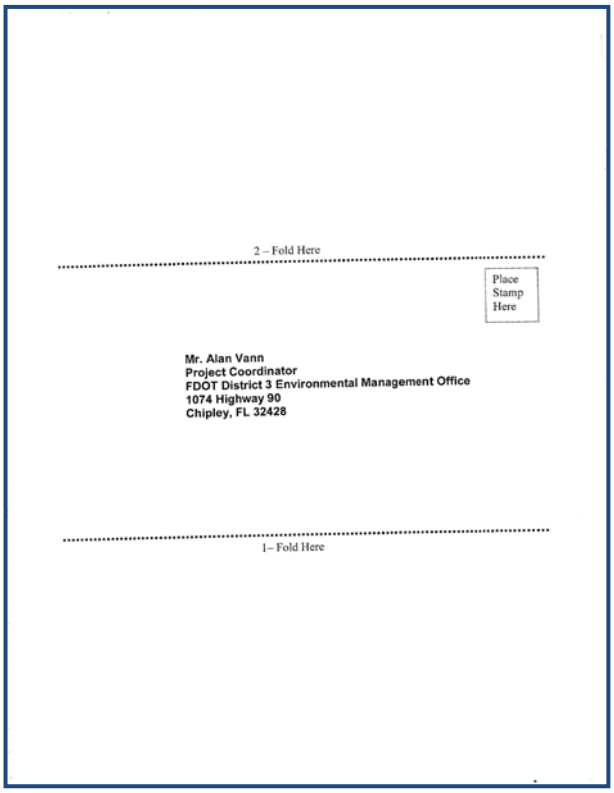
SR 123 (ROBERT J. CLARY HIGHWAY) ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
Okaloosa County, Florida / Eglin Air Force Base
Financial Project Number: 411102-1

- Complete and leave at public hearing, or
- E-mail to Alan.Vann@dot.state.fl.us; or
- Mail to the address printed on the back of this form.
- Reply by **Monday, October 3, 2011** to become part of the public record.

Name: Yvonne Earle
Address: 1600 Campbell Dr. W FWB FL 32547
Phone: 863-1530 EXT 230
e-mail: YEARLE@HORIZONSFWB.com

Interest in project: Self ☐ Firm / Agency ☐
Government Agency ☐ Civic Group ☒ CAC
Home Owners Assn. ☐ Other ☐

Comments:
We need to push for funding so this can start as soon as possible.
Also west-shift seems to be best.



2 – Fold Here

Place Stamp Here

Mr. Alan Vann
Project Coordinator
FDOT District 3 Environmental Management Office
1074 Highway 90
Chipley, FL 32428

1– Fold Here

Comment: *We need to push for funding so this can start as soon as possible. Also west-shift seems to be best.*

Response: The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will make a decision on the preferred alternative following the public hearing. However, funding for construction has not yet been allocated, and construction is not yet incorporated into the Florida Department of Transportation Five Year Work Plan.

6.

From: Vann, Alan [Alan.Vann@dot.state.fl.us]
Sent: Friday, September 30, 2011 12:51 PM
To: Johann Behnken
Subject: RE:

Johann,

Thank you for your interest in the State Road 123 project. Public participation and input is very important to our planning process.

Please let me know if I can be of service, and I will pass along the comments provided below regarding the entrance to Duke Field.

Sincerely,

Alan Vann
Project Coordinator
FDOT District Three
Environmental Management Office
Ph: (850) 415-9523
Fax: (850) 415-9486

Please note: Florida has a very broad public records law. Most written communications to or from state officials regarding state business are public records, available to the public and media upon request. Your e-mail communications may be subject to public disclosure. (Florida Statutes, Chapter 119)

From: Johann Behnken [mailto:ujbehnken@cox.net]
Sent: Friday, September 30, 2011 12:43 PM
To: Vann, Alan
Subject:

Dear Mr. Vann;
Thank you for the recent NWFD News article regarding FL 123. I am very happy to read that a proposal has finally been made to four-lane the road as well installing an overpass at the North-end. I could never understand why these additions where not included in the initial plans to build the road in the first place. It would have, in my opinion, prevented dual engineering and environmental planning cost had that been done years ago.
The same lack of vision applies to the fly-over now proposed at the entrance to Duke Field. To me it was very shortsighted to build/improve the road to Duke and Special Forces, install the traffic light and reduce the speed limit, thus impeding traffic in all directions. Funds for that overpass should have included entirely in BRAC funding for troop relocation.
Anyway, thanks for the good work you and your department are involved in. Please keep it up!

Sincerely

Johann Behnken
Shalimar

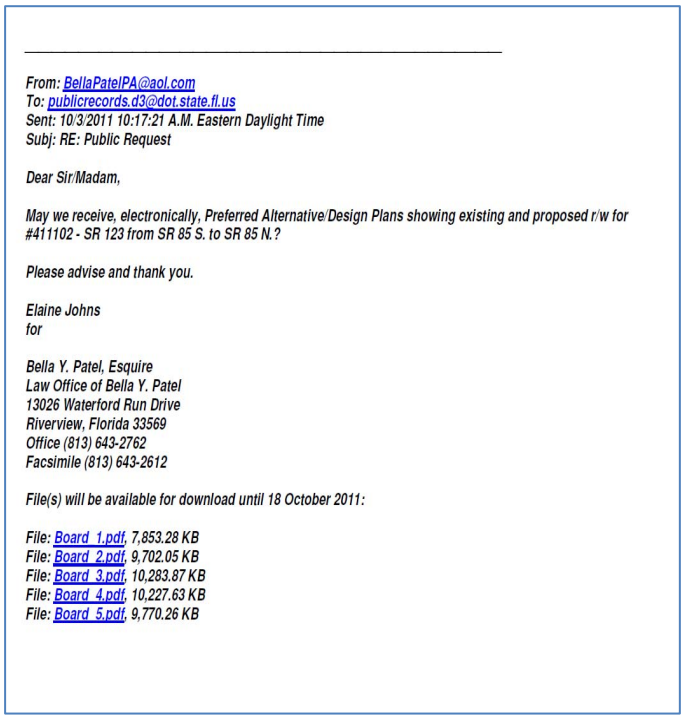
Comment: *Thank you for the recent NWFD News article regarding FL 123. I am very happy to read that a proposal has finally been made to four-lane the road as well installing an overpass at the North-end. I could never understand why these additions where not included in the initial plans to build the road in the first place. It would have, in my opinion, prevented dual engineering and environmental planning cost had that been done years ago.*

The same lack of vision applies to the fly-over now proposed at the entrance to Duke Field. To me it was very shortsighted to build/improve the road to Duke and Special Forces, install the traffic light and reduce the speed limit, thus impeding traffic in all directions. Funds for that overpass should have included entirely in BRAC funding for troop relocation.

Anyway, thanks for the good work you and your department are involved in. Please keep it up!

Response: Response from FDOT (September 30, 2011): *Thank you for your interest in the State Road 123 project. Public participation and input is very important to our planning process. Please let me know if I can be of service, and I will pass along the comments provided below regarding the entrance to Duke Field.*

7.



From: BellaPatelPA@aol.com
To: publicrecords.d3@dot.state.fl.us
Sent: 10/3/2011 10:17:21 A.M. Eastern Daylight Time
Subj: RE: Public Request

Dear Sir/Madam,

May we receive, electronically, Preferred Alternative/Design Plans showing existing and proposed r/w for #411102 - SR 123 from SR 85 S. to SR 85 N.?

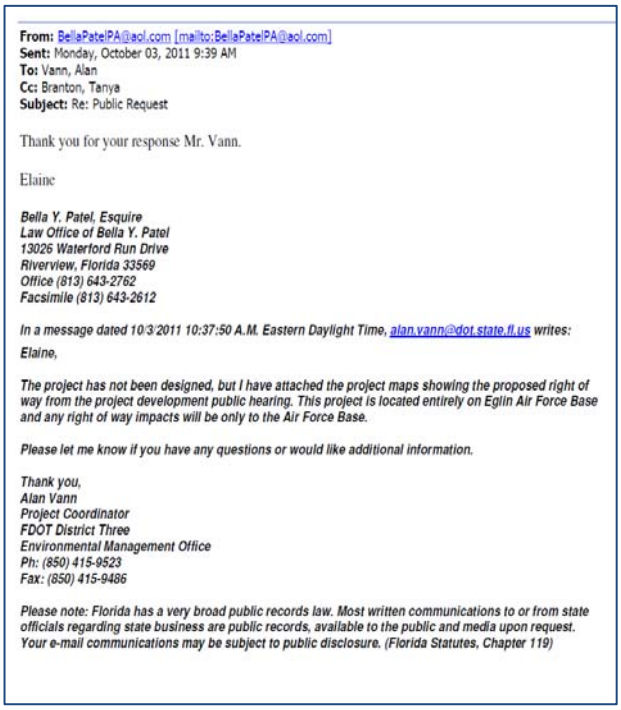
Please advise and thank you.

Elaine Johns
for

Bella Y. Patel, Esquire
Law Office of Bella Y. Patel
13026 Waterford Run Drive
Riverview, Florida 33569
Office (813) 643-2762
Facsimile (813) 643-2612

File(s) will be available for download until 18 October 2011:

File: Board_1.pdf, 7,853.28 KB
File: Board_2.pdf, 9,702.05 KB
File: Board_3.pdf, 10,283.87 KB
File: Board_4.pdf, 10,227.63 KB
File: Board_5.pdf, 9,770.26 KB



From: BellaPatelPA@aol.com [mailto:BellaPatelPA@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2011 9:39 AM
To: Vann, Alan
Cc: Branton, Tanya
Subject: Re: Public Request

Thank you for your response Mr. Vann.

Elaine

Bella Y. Patel, Esquire
Law Office of Bella Y. Patel
13026 Waterford Run Drive
Riverview, Florida 33569
Office (813) 643-2762
Facsimile (813) 643-2612

In a message dated 10/3/2011 10:37:50 A.M. Eastern Daylight Time, alan.vann@dot.state.fl.us writes:

Elaine,

The project has not been designed, but I have attached the project maps showing the proposed right of way from the project development public hearing. This project is located entirely on Eglin Air Force Base and any right of way impacts will be only to the Air Force Base.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Thank you,
Alan Vann
Project Coordinator
FDOT District Three
Environmental Management Office
Ph: (850) 415-9523
Fax: (850) 415-9486

Please note: Florida has a very broad public records law. Most written communications to or from state officials regarding state business are public records, available to the public and media upon request. Your e-mail communications may be subject to public disclosure. (Florida Statutes, Chapter 119)

Comment: *May we receive, electronically, Preferred Alternative/Design Plans showing existing and proposed r/w for #411102 - SR 123 from SR 85 S. to SR 85 N.?*

Response: [from FDOT, October 3, 2011] - *The project has not been designed, but I have attached the project maps showing the proposed right of way from the project development public hearing. This project is located entirely on Eglin Air Force Base and any right of way impacts will be only to the Air Force Base.*

8.

Vann, Alan [Alan.Vann@dot.state.fl.us]
Tuesday, October 04, 2011 7:12 AM
William N pizzolato
Wilkinson, Cory; Warren, Noelle
RE: SR 123 Environmental Assessment Comment

William,

Thank you for your interest in the State Road 123 project. Public participation and comment is an important part of our planning process.

Your comments will be taken into consideration and made a part of the record.

Sincerely,

Alan Vann
Project Coordinator
FDOT District Three
Environmental Management Office
Ph: (850) 415-9523
Fax: (850) 415-9486

Please note: Florida has a very broad public records law. Most written communications to or from state officials regarding state business are public records, available to the public and media upon request. Your e-mail communications may be subject to public disclosure. (Florida Statutes, Chapter 119)

From: William N pizzolato [mailto:pizzolato@embarqmail.com]
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2011 4:45 PM
To: Vann, Alan
Subject: SR 123 Environmental Assessment Comment

Mr. Vann

I attended the public hearing (September 22, 2011) on the proposed four-lane improvement for State Route 123 and would like to add comments to the environmental assessment. Upon review of the Environmental and Biological Assessments, I support the proposed west-shifted Alternative 3 as the preferred action because of the favorable location of underground utilities and environmental improvements. Below are comments for consideration:

Limited Access Control

* Implement barriers to vehicle access along entire length of project (east and west boundaries) except for Range Road 250 between Toms Creek and Turkey Creek tributary

* Install gated access control at Range Road 230 with appropriate egress off the highway for both east and west intersections

* Permanently close access of all posted erosion control sites, unnumbered range roads, trails, including Range Roads 628 & 649

* Construct permanent barriers using natural landscaping practices between all bridge medians and along boundaries to discourage vehicle access entering riparian zones

Grass Median Construction

* Construct 4:1 sloped earth diversions (sod covered) instead of concrete berms leading toward the riparian slopes

Detention Stormwater Basins

* Minimize use of rip rap installation for spillway outlets in stormwater retention systems

* Encourage the use of high performance turf reinforcement mat for grassed drainage channels or steep slopes, i.e., >2:1 slopes

* Provide for cleanout traps for recovery of stormwater trash/litter

Okaloosa Darter Mitigation

* Offset losses from wetland function and habitat alteration by restoration upon other Turkey Creek drainage area, i.e., the removal of fill/culverts from the old Eglin railroad crossing on Range Road 626

* Conduct beaver removal from downstream from the unnamed Turkey Creek tributary and breach existing beaver dams 1500 feet downstream of the existing SR 123 culvert

Slope Stabilization

* Implement timely BMP's for erosion control following timber removal period and during grubbing and excavation operations on steep slopes

* Install a temporary straw mulch and seasonal grass cover (coastal rye grass or browntop millet) on slopes following rough grading where slopes remain exposed during extended periods

* Coordinate with Eglin AFB Natural Resources for earthfill storage or other project utilization if earthfill exceeds requirements

* Removal and proper disposal of silt fence following construction completion

Thank you for consideration of these suggestions in the final environmental assessment.

Sincerely

William Pizzolato
4257 Shadow Lane

Comment:

I attended the public hearing (September 22, 2011) on the proposed four-lane improvement for State Route 123 and would like to add comments to the environmental assessment. Upon review of the Environmental and Biological Assessments, I support the proposed west-shifted Alternative 3 as the preferred action because of the favorable location of underground utilities and environmental improvements. Below are comments for consideration:

Limited Access Control

- *Implement barriers to vehicle access along entire length of project (east and west boundaries) except for Range Road 250 between Toms Creek and Turkey Creek tributary*
- *Install gated access control at Range Road 230 with appropriate egress off the highway for both east and west intersections*
- *Permanently close access of all posted erosion control sites, unnumbered range roads, trails, including Range Roads 628 & 649*
- *Construct permanent barriers using natural landscaping practices between all bridge medians and along boundaries to discourage vehicle access entering riparian zones*

Grass Median Construction

- *Construct 4:1 sloped earth diversions (sod covered) instead of concrete berms leading toward the riparian slopes*

Detention Stormwater Basins

- *Minimize use of rip rap installation for spillway outlets in stormwater retention systems*
- *Encourage the use of high performance turf reinforcement mat for grassed drainage channels or steep slopes, i.e., >2:1 slopes*
- *Provide for cleanout traps for recovery of stormwater trash/litter Okaloosa Darter Mitigation*
- *Offset losses from wetland function and habitat alteration by restoration upon other Turkey Creek drainage area, i.e., the removal of fill/culverts from the old Eglin railroad crossing on Range Road 626*
- *Conduct beaver removal from downstream from the un-named Turkey Creek tributary and breach existing beaver dams 1500 feet downstream of the existing SR 123 culvert*

Slope Stabilization

- *Implement timely BMP's for erosion control following timber removal period and during grubbing and excavation operations on steep slopes*

- *Install a temporary straw mulch and seasonal grass cover (coastal rye grass or browntop millet) on slopes following rough grading where slopes remain exposed during extended periods*

- *Coordinate with Eglin AFB Natural Resources for earthfill storage or other project utilization if earthfill exceeds requirements*

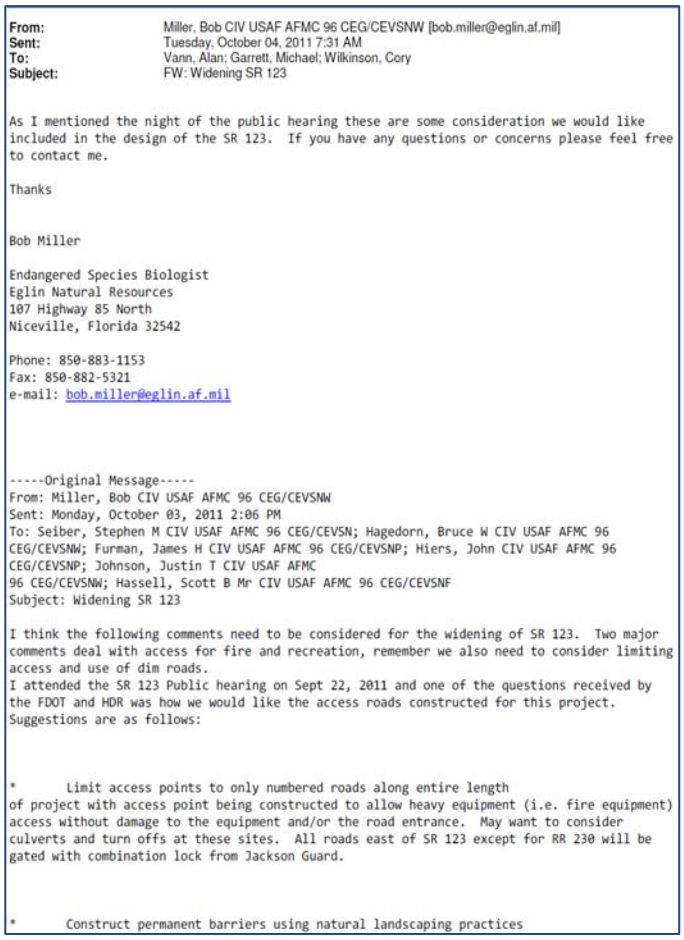
- *Removal and proper disposal of silt fence following construction completion*

Thank you for consideration of these suggestions in the final environmental assessment.

Response:

Access control restrictions will be coordinated with Eglin Natural Resources during the design phase of the project. Range roads east of SR 123 except for RR 230 will be gated with combination lock from Eglin Jackson Guard. Stormwater pond design would be in agreement with the requirements set forth in the FDOT *Stormwater Management Facility Handbook* and permitting requirements to be specified by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Northwest Florida Water Management District. Mitigation requirements for the Okaloosa Darter will be specified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the Biological Opinion.

9.



From: Miller, Bob CIV USAF AFMC 96 CEG/CEVSNW [bob.miller@eglin.af.mil]
Sent: Tuesday, October 04, 2011 7:31 AM
To: Vann, Alan; Garrett, Michael; Wilkinson, Cory
Subject: FW: Widening SR 123

As I mentioned the night of the public hearing these are some consideration we would like included in the design of the SR 123. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me.

Thanks

Bob Miller

Endangered Species Biologist
Eglin Natural Resources
107 Highway 85 North
Niceville, Florida 32542

Phone: 850-883-1153
Fax: 850-882-5321
e-mail: bob.miller@eglin.af.mil

-----Original Message-----
From: Miller, Bob CIV USAF AFMC 96 CEG/CEVSNW
Sent: Monday, October 03, 2011 2:06 PM
To: Seiber, Stephen M CIV USAF AFMC 96 CEG/CEVSN; Hagedorn, Bruce W CIV USAF AFMC 96 CEG/CEVSNW; Furman, James H CIV USAF AFMC 96 CEG/CEVSNP; Hiers, John CIV USAF AFMC 96 CEG/CEVSNP; Johnson, Justin T CIV USAF AFMC 96 CEG/CEVSNW; Hassell, Scott B Mr CIV USAF AFMC 96 CEG/CEVSNF
Subject: Widening SR 123

I think the following comments need to be considered for the widening of SR 123. Two major comments deal with access for fire and recreation, remember we also need to consider limiting access and use of dim roads.
I attended the SR 123 Public hearing on Sept 22, 2011 and one of the questions received by the FDOT and HDR was how we would like the access roads constructed for this project. Suggestions are as follows:

* Limit access points to only numbered roads along entire length of project with access point being constructed to allow heavy equipment (i.e. fire equipment) access without damage to the equipment and/or the road entrance. May want to consider culverts and turn offs at these sites. All roads east of SR 123 except for RR 230 will be gated with combination lock from Jackson Guard.

* Construct permanent barriers using natural landscaping practices between all bridge medians and along boundaries to discourage vehicle access entering riparian zones. This will prevent fisherman and others from pulling into the median and off the road shoulder to access the streams.

Comments are due today so please let me know if you have any concerns with these comments. Sorry for last minute notice. I forgot about it, oops, I forgot I know it has never happened to you.

Thanks

Bob Miller

Endangered Species Biologist

Eglin Natural Resources

107 Highway 85 North

Niceville, Florida 32542

Phone: 850-883-1153

Fax: 850-882-5321

e-mail: bob.miller@eglin.af.mil

Comment:

As I mentioned the night of the public hearing these are some consideration we would like included in the design of the SR 123. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me. I think the following comments need to be considered for the widening of SR 123. Two major comments deal with access for fire and recreation, remember we also need to consider limiting access and use of dim roads. I attended the SR 123 Public hearing on Sept 22, 2011 and one of the questions received by the FDOT and HDR was how we would like the access roads constructed for this project. Suggestions are as follows:

- *Limit access points to only numbered roads along entire length of project with access point being constructed to allow heavy equipment (i.e. fire equipment) access without damage to the equipment and/or the road entrance. May want to consider culverts and turn offs at these sites. All roads east of SR 123 except for RR 230 will be gated with combination lock from Jackson Guard.*

- *Construct permanent barriers using natural landscaping practices between all bridge medians and along boundaries to discourage vehicle access entering riparian zones. This will prevent fisherman and others from pulling into the median and off the road shoulder to access the streams.*

Response:

Design will be coordinated with Eglin Air Force Base to include discussion of these issues and the optimal methodology for implementing the objectives.

This area intentionally blank

Transcript

This page intentionally blank

PUBLIC HEARING

State Road 123 (Robert J. Clary Highway)

September 22, 2011

Financial project Number 411102-1

Speakers:

Blair Martin, Interim Director of Transportation Development, Florida Department of Transportation

Cory Wilkinson, Consultant Project Manager

Reported by: Susanna M. Duke, court reporter

PO Box 451, Shalimar, Florida 32579

(850) 368-8020

Susannaduke@aol.com

PROCEEDINGS

MS. MARTIN: This is an FDOT State Road 123 Public Hearing. My name is Blair Martin. I am the Florida Department of Transportation District 3 Environmental Engineer.

I would like to thank you for attending our public hearing. The consultant for this project is HDR, and our consultant project manager is Cory Wilkinson. He will be providing our presentation tonight. I would like for Cory to come on up here and get it started.

MR. WILKINSON: Thank you, Blair. On behalf of the Florida Department of Transportation, we welcome you to the public hearing for State Road 123, which is project number 411102-1.

We thank the city of Niceville for allowing us to use these facilities for this public hearing. My name is Cory Wilkinson with HDR Engineering, and I will present information about the proposed improvements to State Road 123, which is a project of the Florida Department of Transportation, with funding from the Federal Highway Administration, and in cooperation with the US Department of Defense at Eglin Air Force Base.

This hearing was publicly noticed in several

ways, including letters, coordination with Eglin Air Force Base, state and federal agencies, Okaloosa County, local municipalities, and a legal notice in the Northwest Florida Daily News on September 6th and 13th.

This hearing is being held to give all interested persons the right to understand the project and offer comments. This hearing has been designed to comply with federal and state laws that are identified in the handout and posted near the door.

Please let me or any of the staff present know if you did not receive a handout, or if you need any special accommodation. A transcript is being provided for the public record.

Following this presentation, you will be given an opportunity to provide a formal comment on the record. If you do not wish to speak, you can also write your comments either tonight or mail them back to us.

This study focuses on State Road 123, located on Eglin Air Force Base in Okaloosa County. At the southern end of the project, the study connects to the new interchange currently under construction, and extends north to State Road 85, a distance of

about five miles.

This study is known as a project development and environment or PD and E study, which is how the Florida Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration evaluate the potential engineering and environmental impacts of a roadway project and seek public input.

The project is needed for two basic reasons, to address capacity deficiencies, and to address safety needs. This study satisfies the National Environmental Policy Act, and seeks to obtain local and community input and participation.

The proposed action is needed to improve the level of service. Level of service is determined by parameters such as speed, travel time, and vehicle delay.

Level of service A provides the most desirable level of traffic operations, and level of service F provides the worst.

For State Road 123, the county has adopted level of service C. Without the project, the entire corridor currently operates below the adopted level of service. If we take no action by the project's design year in 2033, the roadway segments and interchange will operate at a failing level of

service. With the improvements as proposed, operations will improve to an acceptable level of service.

The project is also needed to improve safety. Between 2002 and 2009, there were over 100 vehicle crashes. The largest number of crashes were rear-end collisions and angle collisions. The number of crashes is higher than expected for this type of facility, based on a statewide comparison. The high numbers of crashes are consistent with a roadway that is too congested.

In evaluating a solution in response to the project needs to improve safety and capacity, three primary alternatives were considered: Widening along the centerline of the existing roadway, (Alternative 1), widening to the east (Alternative 2), as shown by the yellow line, or widening to the west (Alternative 3), as shown by the red line.

Alternative 3 is west-shifted and locates the future northbound lanes over the existing lanes. New southbound lanes and bridges would be constructed to the west, as shown in red. Alternative 2 is east-shifted and locates the future southbound lanes over the existing lanes. New northbound lanes and bridges would be constructed as

shown in red. Utility relocations would be required.

New bridges would be constructed over Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, and the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek. The existing bridges over Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek would remain. However, a box culvert at the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek would be removed and replaced with a bridge.

This is the proposed typical section for the project. This design provides a 64 foot median separating two 12 foot travel lanes in each direction, with ten foot shoulders, five feet of which are paved.

In addition to the proposed four-lane widening, the interchange at State Road 123 and at State Road 85 would be improved with a fly-over eliminating the current traffic signal at this location. The new fly-over would carry northbound traffic over State Road 85 North before merging on to northbound State Road 85.

This design would eliminate turning movements from State Road 123 northbound to State Road 85 southbound, and would eliminate turning movements from State Road 85 northbound to State Road 123 southbound.

7

To determine the potential effects of the proposed project, we looked at construction costs, right-of-way acquisition, how the project might affect environmental resources such as floodplains, wetlands, protected species, the potential for noise and air impacts, potential impacts on any resources of historical resources and recreational resources, and the potential for environmental contamination that might be encountered during construction.

The potential resource impacts of the project are summarized here and further analyzed in the engineering and environmental documents.

Alternative 2 (east-shift) would result in greater wetland impact and would result in the need to relocate a water main, fiber optic cable line, and phone towers.

Alternative 3 (west-shift) would result in reduced wetland impacts, would avoid the utility relocations, but would require additional right-of-way easement from Eglin Air Force Base.

The project would not result in any residential or other relocations subject to the Uniform Relocation Assistance Act. All right-of-way is in the form of an easement from Eglin Air Force Base.

The no-build alternative is also considered a

viable option. Under this alternative, no improvements would be made. Advantages of the no-build alternative include no new costs, and no traffic disruptions due to construction activities. However, the disadvantages of the no-build alternative include no reduction of traffic congestion or the corresponding safety concerns.

The potential cost impacts of the project are summarized here. The west-shift alternative 3 would be approximately 15 million less than the east-shift alternative, mostly due to costs in relocating utilities under Alternative 2.

The project could adversely affect the Okaloosa darter, a fish which is federally listed as threatened at Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, and at the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek. Eglin Air Force Base and the US Fish and Wildlife Service carefully manage this protected species. Following close coordination with these agencies through preparation of a biological assessment, the project would mitigate impacts to the darter by constructing bridges at all three stream crossings.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service will issue a biological opinion after selection of the preferred alternative and following any public comment

received as a result of this public hearing and comment period.

The widening of State Road 123 could require additional right-of-way from a portion of Eglin Air Force Base, which provides public access to hunting. State Road 123 currently occupies 115 acres of right-of-way from these hunting units. The proposed widening, including pond sites, could require an additional 166 acres from the Choctaw Open Dog Hunting Unit and from the Jackson Still Hunting Unit, which is less that 1 percent of this area which would no longer be available for use by the public.

Roadway right-of-way required for the project varies in width from 46 to 140 feet along the five mile corridor. In addition, six pond sites are anticipated. For Alternative 2, the maximum acreage of recreational land potentially impacted totals 158 acres. For Alternative 3, it is 166 acres.

As part of the request for public comment on the project, we are specifically asking for input on the potential recreational and the hunting impact, and whether there are any other recreational opportunities that could be affected. This is required by Section 4f of the Department of

Transportation Act, which states that it is illegal for a transportation project to impact significant publicly owned, publically accessible recreation areas unless there is no feasible or prudent alternative, and all measures have been taken to minimize harm to the resource.

The acreage in question may be determined to be Section 4f property based upon ongoing coordination with the officials having jurisdiction over the property. The Federal Highway Administration intends to pursue a de minimis impact finding if the property is determined to be section 4f. De minimis impacts on recreation areas are defined as those that do not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes that qualify the area as a Section 4f property.

The Environmental Assessment and the Biological Assessment evaluate and disclose the potential environmental effects. Copies of the Environmental Assessment and the Biological Assessment are available at this hearing and on-line for public review and comment.

Should you wish to review these documents in greater detail, you can make arrangements with any of our staff at this hearing or refer to your

handout for direction on where to review the reports.

This study began with a public meeting in October of 2007. Following this public hearing, the study phase will conclude with a decision by the Federal Highway Administration. If Federal Highway approves the project, the project will become eligible for federal funding.

Funding has been allocated for design and right-of-way easement, but construction is not yet funded.

We will now move into the public comment portion of tonight's hearing. Are there any elected officials present that would like to make a statement at this time?

Tonight's hearing is an opportunity for public comment on the project. There are several ways to make comments as part of the public hearing record. You can provide public testimony or you can provide written comments. If you wish to speak, your comments will be made part of the official record, but we will not be able to answer questions in this group forum. However, project staff are available following the testimony period to discuss the project one on one.

You can also make a statement directly to the court reporter at the close of this presentation. If you wish to write down your comments, you can do so on the comment cards and mail them back to us or send us an e-mail. Written comments must be received within ten days of tonight's hearing. All comments received, regardless of how they are submitted will be reviewed and considered.

The public comment period closes on Monday, October 3, 2011. To address and submit comments, the address is provided on the screen in front of you, and also in your handout. All written material must be postmarked no later than ten days following the date of this public hearing to become part of the public record. Therefore, any written comments must be mailed on or before Monday, October 3, 2011.

Anyone desiring to make a statement or present written views or exhibits regarding the project will now have the opportunity to do so. We will call upon those who have turned in speaker's cards. If you have not received a speaker's card and wish to speak, please raise your hand to receive a card to fill out. When you come forward, we ask that you please state your name and address. If you represent an organization, municipality, or other

public body, please provide that information, as well. And we will ask that you limit your input to five minutes per person.

Alicia, do we have any comment cards that have been turned in? Seeing none, is there anyone that wishes to come forward and offer written -- or spoken -- comment at this time?

Yes, sir? If you would please approach the microphone. Let me make sure it is turned on. This is on now.

MR. DAVIS: Good evening. My name is Wayland Davis. And I came tonight, I apologize, a little bit late. There was an accident on 20. But I see prematurely that this highway, proposed highway, has already been named the Robert J. Clary Highway. And of course, being in the military, Air Force retired 30 years, served in Vietnam three tours, and I have come to believe that the appropriate name for this highway, perhaps, should be the Purple Heart Memorial Highway, because it comes from Duke and Eglin Special Forces to the Air Force Base at Eglin. So I would like the support of the public to reconsider and maybe repeal and name the new highway when it gets built as the Purple Heart Memorial Highway. Thank you all very much.

MR. WILKINSON: Thank you, and if I could also have you go ahead and fill out the speaker card so we have got a record.

MR. DAVIS: I did.

MR. WILKINSON: Thank you. Does anyone else wish to make a public comment? You can either speak at this time, or after the close of the testimony you can speak directly to the court reporter if you do not wish to come up and address the entire audience, or you can just simply write down your comments.

Seeing no one else that wishes to speak, the verbatim transcript for tonight's proceedings together with all of the written material received will be made part of the project's decision making process.

It is now 5:45, and I hereby officially close the public hearing for the State Road 123 project. Our staff will remain available for a few more moments at the display boards in the back to address any questions you may have.

(WHEREUPON, the hearing was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA)
)
COUNTY OF OKALOOSA)

I, Susanna M. Duke, a Court Reporter, certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the foregoing hearing; and that the transcript is a true record of this proceeding.

I further certify that I am not a relative, employee, attorney, or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I relative or employee of any of the parties' attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

Dated this 27th day of September, 2011.

SUSANNA M. DUKE

This page intentionally blank

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This page intentionally blank

This page intentionally blank

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

List of Appendices

Table of Contents

List of Figures

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Table of Contents

ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, SYMBOLS, AND INITIALISMS

AAC	Air Armament Center
AADT	Annual Average Daily Traffic
AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
AFB	Air Force Base
AFI	Air Force Instruction
AFMC	Air Force Material Command
AICUZ	Air Installation Compatible Use Zone Program
amsl	above mean sea level
ARPA	Archaeological Resources Protection Act
BA	Biological Assessment
BMP	Best Management Practice
BO	Biological Opinion
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990
96 CEG/CEV	96th Civil Engineering Group, Environmental Division, Eglin AFB
96 CEG/CEVSH	96th Civil Engineering Group, Cultural Resources Branch, Eglin AFB
96 CEG/CEVSN	96th Civil Engineer Group, Natural Resources Section, Eglin AFB
CEI	Construction Engineering and Inspection
CEQ	U.S. Council on Environmental Quality
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CFR	*Code of Federal Regulations*
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CRAS	Cultural Resource Assessment Survey
CWA	Clean Water Act
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act
°F	degrees Fahrenheit
dB or dBA	Decibel
DHR	Division of Historical Resources (Florida Department of State)
DNL	Day-Night Average Sound Level
DoD	United States Department of Defense
DRI	Development of Regional Impact
EA	Environmental Assessment
EFH	Essential Fish Habitat
EIAP	Environmental Impact Analysis Process
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EO	Executive Order
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
ERP	Environmental Restoration Program
ERP	Environmental Resources Permit
ESA	Endangered Species Act
et al.	et alii (and others)
et seq.	et sequens (and the following one(s))
ETAT	Environmental Technical Advisory Team
ETDM	Efficient Transportation Decision Making
ESS	Explosives Safety Submission

ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, SYMBOLS, AND INITIALISMS
(continued)

FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FAAQS	Florida Ambient Air Quality Standards
F.A.C.	Florida Administrative Code
FDEP	Florida Department of Environmental Protection
FDOT	Florida Department of Transportation
FDOT3	Florida Department of Transportation, District 3
FE	Federally Endangered
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FIHS	Federal Interstate Highway System
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FL	Functional Loss (terminology in wetlands analysis)
FLUCCS	Florida Land Use Cover Classification System
FNAI	Florida Natural Areas Inventory
FONPA	Finding of No Practicable Alternative
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FR	*Federal Register*
ft	feet
FT	Federally Threatened
FWC	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
FY	Fiscal Year
>	greater than
GIS	Geographic Information System
HQ	Headquarters
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
INRMP	Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan
IWR	Impaired Water Rule
<	less than
L_{Aeq}	equivalent steady-state sound level (A-weighted)
LOS	Level of Service
LRTP	Long Range Transportation Plan
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
m	meter
mi	mile
MCL	Maximum Contaminant Level
MEC	Mission Enhancement Committee
mi^2	square mile
MMRP	Military Munitions Response Program
mph	miles per hour
MSE	mechanically stabilized earth
msl	mean sea level
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
µg/m3	microgram per cubic meter
N	north
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAC	Noise Abatement Criteria
NEI	National Emission Inventory
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act

ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, SYMBOLS, AND INITIALISMS
(continued)

NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRS	Natural Resources Section (Jackson Guard)
NSA	Noise Sensitive Area
NWFWMD	Northwest Florida Water Management District
NWI	National Wetland Inventory
NO_x	Nitrogen oxides
NO_2	Nitrogen dioxide
NOI	Notice of Intent
NOT	Notice of Termination
NVOC	Niceville, Valparaiso, Okaloosa County wastewater treatment plant
O_3	Ozone
OCEC	Okaloosa County Board of Commissioner's Environmental Council
OFW	Outstanding Florida Water
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
O-W TPO	Okaloosa – Walton Transportation Planning Organization
Pb	Lead
PCI	per capita income
PD&E	Project Development and Environmental
PER	Preliminary Engineering Report
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in size
PM_{10}	particulate matter 10 microns or less in size
ppm	parts per million
PSD	Prevention of Significant Deterioration
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
RCW	Red-cockaded Woodpecker
RDT&E	Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation
RFG	Relative Functional Gain
ROD	Record of Decision
ROI	Region of Influence
ROW	Right of Way
§	section or paragraph
S	south
SARA	Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act
SCH	State Clearinghouse (Florida)
SE	State Endangered (Florida)
SEL	Sound Exposure Level
SHFA	Special Flood Hazard Area
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SIS	Strategic Intermodal System
SO_x	Sulfur oxides
SO_2	Sulfur dioxide
spp.	species
SR	State Road
SSC	Species of Special Concern

ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS, SYMBOLS, AND INITIALISMS
(continued)

ST	State Threatened
STORET	EPA STOrage and RETrieval system for water quality data
STRAHNET	U.S. Department of Defense Strategic Highway Network
SWIM	Surface Water Improvement and Management
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TPO	Transportation Planning Organization
TSM	Transportation System Management
THPO	Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
tpy	tons per year
TSP	total suspended particulates
UMAM	Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USAF	United States Air Force
USC	United States Code
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
VPD	Vehicles per Day
WFRPC	West Florida Regional Planning Council
WQIE	Water Quality Impact Evaluation
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
VOC	Volatile Organic Compound
VPS	Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport (also Eglin AFB)

This page intentionally blank

FOREWORD

This page intentionally blank

FOREWORD

State Road 123 (Roger J. Clary Highway, hereafter referred to as "SR 123") connects SR 85 South (SR 85S) to SR 85 North (SR 85N) around the cities of Niceville and Valparaiso, Florida on the federal lands of the Eglin Air Force Base (AFB) reservation in Okaloosa County, Florida. A need has been identified to improve capacity and safety along this heavily-traveled roadway. The action proposed is to widen SR 123 to four lanes using state and federal funding.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), acting through the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District 3, is the Lead Agency within the context and meaning of the requirements of the *National Environmental Policy Act* of 1969 (NEPA) at 42 United States Code [U.S.C.] 4321 *et seq*. As the Lead Federal Agency, FWHA is responsible for the NEPA process. However, because SR 123 traverses the federal land of the Eglin AFB reservation, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), Department of Air Force, must also demonstrate compliance with NEPA for this action, and has agreed to be a Cooperating Agency within the context and meaning of NEPA.

While each agency has different implementing regulations for the procedural provisions of NEPA, both are responsible to comply with NEPA pursuant to the US Council on Environmental Quality *Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act* at 40 CFR Parts 1500 – 1508 (CEQ). The CEQ NEPA regulations define the role of a Lead Agency at § 1501.5, and the role of a Cooperating Agency at § 1501.6.

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared by FHWA as the Lead Federal Agency, and has received concurrence by DoD as the Cooperating Agency, to satisfy both FHWA and DoD NEPA Implementing Regulations and associated procedures. Because each agency has its own NEPA implementing regulations as allowed by CEQ, the format and content of this document is a blend of the requirements of both agencies. A crosswalk table is provided in **Appendix A** to assist the reader between the EA requirements of FHWA and DoD Air Force. Where requirements differ between format and/or content, the more restrictive (comprehensive) of the two has been applied to ensure complete assessment and full disclosure of the potential impacts of the proposed action. In this regard, this one document satisfies the requirements of both agencies, thereby avoiding duplication of effort and demonstrating the cooperation among the federal and state agencies.

The purpose of this EA is to evaluate and disclose the potential environmental impacts pursuant to NEPA and other Federal laws and regulations. The EA and the NEPA process are integrated with the FDOT Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study process, and the FDOT Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process to provide documentation necessary to reach a decision on the type, design, and specific location of the proposed improvements. Agencies were involved in project scoping through the ETDM and planning process. The PD&E process includes public involvement and culminates in review by the public, agencies, and the FHWA. Once approved by FHWA as the Lead Federal Agency, and DoD Air Force as the Cooperating Agency, the project would be eligible for federal funds.

This page intentionally blank

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This page intentionally blank

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed project involves widening SR 123 (Roger J. Clary Highway) from north of SR 85S to SR 85N from a two-lane rural undivided roadway to a four-lane rural divided facility. A rural typical section is proposed (64-foot median separating two twelve-foot travel lanes, with five-foot paved shoulders). The existing two-lane bridges at Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek would be retained to serve northbound traffic. New two-lane bridges would be constructed over Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek to serve southbound traffic. A box culvert at the un-named tributary to Turkey Creek would be replaced with single-span bridges for northbound and southbound traffic. A grade-separated interchange at the intersection of SR 85N and SR 123 is included. The project anticipates the construction of stormwater management facilities. The project length is approximately five miles and is entirely within federal lands of Eglin Air Force Base. The U.S. Department of Air Force is a Cooperating Agency for the project. The purpose for the project is to provide capacity and safety improvements. The facility currently operates at a level of service F (which is below the adopted standard of C).

Two build alternatives were evaluated for potential environmental impacts, identified as Alternative 2 (East Shift) and Alternative 3 (West Shift). Alternative 1 identifies the existing project corridor. Alternative 3 (West Shift) is the Preferred Alternative.

Alternative 2 (East Shift) would require approximately 110 acres right-of-way and Alternative 3 (West Shift) [Preferred Alternative] would require approximately 118 acres right-of-way. No residential relocations would be required as the right-of-way to be acquired is undeveloped federal land of the Eglin Air Force Base. Alternative 2 (East Shift) would result in relocation of an existing 30-inch water main, an existing fiber optic cable, and four wireless phone towers. Alternative 3 (West Shift) [Preferred Alternative] minimizes impacts to utility relocations.

The project alignment traverses Tom's and Turkey Creek (including an un-named tributary to Turkey Creek) which are habitat (but not Critical Habitat) for the Okaloosa darter, a small freshwater fish federally-listed as Threatened and state-listed as Endangered. A Biological Opinion was issued pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act for consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for Incidental Take of 1,562 Okaloosa Darters.

The project would provide opportunities for wildlife crossing under proposed bridges at Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, and the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek for the Florida black bear, which is state-listed as Threatened.

Alternative 2 (East Shift) would impact approximately 0.80 acres wetlands and 5.68 acres floodplain. Alternative 3 (West Shift) [Preferred Alternative] would impact approximately 0.62 acres wetlands and 5.39 acres of floodplain.

Neither alternative would result in adverse impacts to air quality, groundwater, noise, land use, cultural resources, or human populations. Either alternative would require screening to ensure removal of any unexploded ordnance. The project is consistent with the transportation priorities as established by the Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization (including the Regional Transportation Planning Organization), Okaloosa County, and the Eglin Air Force Base (including the Eglin Air Force Base Mission Enhancement Committee). The initial public meeting (October 2007) and public hearing (September 2011) did not result in any objections to the project.

This page intentionally blank

CHAPTER 1

PURPOSE AND NEED

This page intentionally blank

1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This EA examines the potential environmental impacts resulting from the proposed widening of SR 123 through Eglin AFB, in Okaloosa County, Florida. The EA defines the Purpose and Need for the widening project, describes the Proposed Action and alternatives, and evaluates the potential environmental impacts resulting from the Proposed Action and alternatives (including the No Action alternative). The EA defines management actions, mitigation measures, and best management practices (BMPs) that would avoid or minimize environmental impacts. FDOT3 prepared this EA in accordance with the procedural provisions of NEPA, the CEQ NEPA Implementing Regulations, and the Air Force Environmental Impact Analysis Process (EIAP) (32 CFR Part 989). The analysis in this EA provides the basis for a decision to determine whether there are significant impacts requiring preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), or preparation of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

The widening of SR 123 is proposed by Okaloosa County and FDOT3, with approval of the Mission Enhancement Committee (MEC) of Eglin AFB. MEC is an entity of Eglin AFB responsible for ensuring that property encroachment in and around Eglin AFB does not compromise the overall mission. The MEC granted conceptual approval on 7 April 2008, for expanded right-of-way (ROW) to accommodate the proposed action. The MEC stipulated two conditions: (1) 96th Civil Engineering Group (CEG) approval for final location of holding ponds, and (2) final selection of the proposed intersection for the northern approach of SR 123 and SR 85. Fulfillment of these conditions is reflected in Chapter 5 of this EA.

1.2 ORGANIZATION OF THIS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This EA evaluates the Proposed Action and alternatives, including the No Action alternative. Reasonable alternatives are identified and described in Chapter 2. Chapter 3, Affected Environment, describes the environment on and around Eglin AFB that could be affected by the Proposed Action or alternatives. Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences, addresses potential impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives to the physical, biological, and human environments, as well as potential cumulative impacts. Chapter 5 lists plans, permits, and management actions, Chapter 6 provides a list of agencies and individuals contacted during development and preparation of this EA. Chapter 7 is the list of preparers, and Chapter 8 lists the reference material utilized to prepare the EA.

Appendix A provides a crosswalk of NEPA requirements for both FHWA and DoD Air Force (as this document is prepared to meet both sets of agency requirements). **Appendix B** provides the conceptual plans for the project. **Appendix C** provides a record of agency consultation. **Appendix D** provides a summary of the FDOT ETDM process. **Appendix E** provides information regarding the public participation process. **Appendix F** provides documentation pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) determination. **Appendix G** provides a listing of technical reports prepared for the project. **Appendix H** provides the Water Quality Impact Evaluation checklist. **Appendix I** provides the Biological Assessment (BA) and resulting Biological Opinion (BO).

1.3 BACKGROUND AND SYSTEM LINKAGE

SR 123 is a five-mile, rural, two-lane undivided highway with alternating sections of passing lanes. The roadway has a functional classification as Minor Arterial (Rural). The lanes are 12 feet wide, with eight-foot graded shoulders, including five-foot paved shoulders. There are no sidewalks for pedestrians, and no designated bicycle lanes / bike paths along SR 123 within the study area limits. The adopted Level of Service (LOS) standard for SR 123 is LOS C. Roadway LOS is a stratification of travelers' perceptions of the quality of service provided by a facility. Much like a student's report card, LOS is represented by the letters "A" through "F" with "A" generally representing the most favorable conditions and "F" representing the least favorable.

SR 123 serves as a north-south connection along SR 85, bypassing the cities of Niceville and Valparaiso. SR 123, together with SR 85, serves as the major commuting route connecting north Okaloosa County with south Okaloosa County. It has been designated a Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) corridor and is a component of the Florida Intrastate Highway System (FIHS). SR 123 is also a Hurricane Evacuation Route for south Santa Rosa County and Okaloosa County. It is not known to be currently listed as a U.S. Department of Defense Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) roadway (DoD, 2001 and HDR, 2009a).

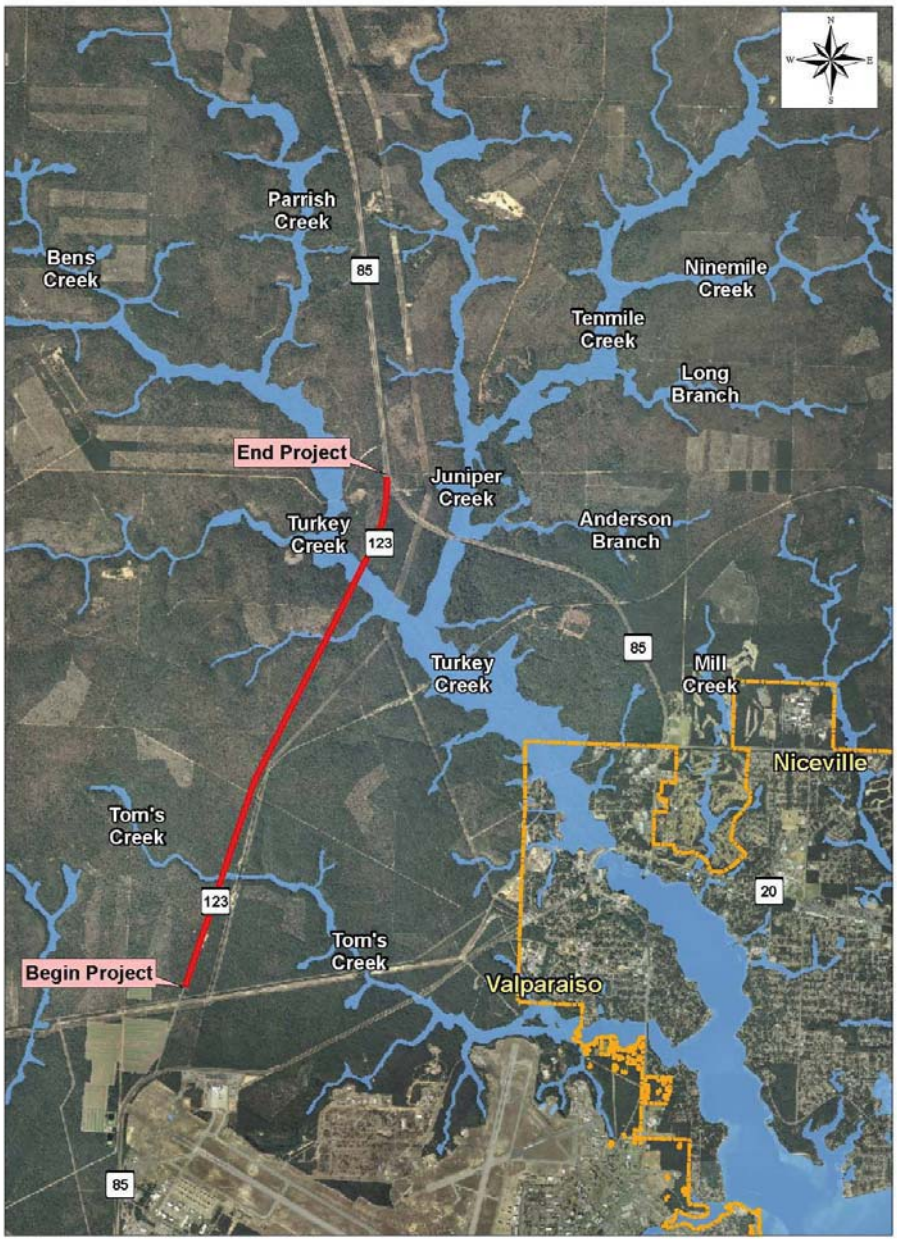
The existing roadway and bridges were constructed in the early to mid1970s as State Project 57150-3501-030 and was known as the Niceville Bypass. The road was later re-named The Roger J. Clary Highway by Florida law 84-378 (effective June 1984) for the late Roger J. Clary (1917-2000).

1.4 LOCATION OF PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is located in Northwest Florida, Okaloosa County. The regional area is shown on **Figure 1-1**, and **Figure 1-2**. The proposed action is located entirely on federal land of the Eglin AFB. Eglin AFB base comprises 724 square miles of land area and airspace overlying 142,000 square miles of land and water ranges. The Eglin AFB Main Base (also referred to as Eglin Main) is located near the cities of Shalimar, Valparaiso and Niceville, Florida, and about 10 miles east of Fort Walton Beach, Florida. Eglin Main and the Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport (VPS) are primary traffic generators for SR 123, along with operations at Hurlburt Field. SR 123 is used for regional commuting for people who live in central and northern Okaloosa County and environs to access the southern portion of the County and environs.

Figure 1-1: ***Project Study Area***

Figure 1-2: ***Location of Proposed Action on Eglin Air Force Base***



Note to Figure 1-2: At the southern limit, the project connects to an approved interchange under construction at SR 123 and SR 85S (as a separate project under FPID 220231-1). Therefore, the southern terminus does not extend fully to SR 85S. At the northern limit, the project scope includes a grade-separated interchange at the intersection of SR 85N and SR 123. The total project length is approximately five miles.

1.5 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

CEQ regulations at 1502.13 require the environmental document to specify the underlying purpose and need to which the agency is responding in proposing the alternatives and proposed action. This EA defines the purpose (objectives), followed by the statement of needs.

1.5.1 Purpose

The purpose for the SR 123 Proposed Action is to provide for capacity and safety improvements based on the following objectives.

Objectives for Corridor

- Restore capacity to the required LOS as designated by the Okaloosa County Comprehensive Plan and as required by Chapter 14-94, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) regarding minimum acceptable LOS standards on the Florida SIS;
- Improve capacity for military and civilian access, commuting, airport access, and evacuation;
- Improve safety and reduce the disproportionate share of rear-end crashes occurring along this corridor including reduction of vehicle / bear strikes;
- Invest in improvements of the SIS, FIHS, and evacuation route facilities;
- Minimize construction costs without compromising ecosystem needs.

Objectives for Interchange

- Improve safety at the SR 123 and SR 85N interchange;
- Maintain maximum design speed not lower than 10 mph below the design speed of SR 123;
- Maintain traffic capacity that equals or exceeds that of connecting roadways;
- Minimize right-of-way (ROW) requirements;
- Minimize construction cost.

The Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization (O-W TPO) identified an additional objective for the interchange in Resolution O-W 08-33:

- Make the project available for economic stimulus funding to support national security, Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) mission, and to promote and secure the economic viability of the region.

1.5.2 Need

The primary need for widening SR 123 and constructing a new interchange originates in transportation demand and operational safety.

Transportation Demand

As studied in 1972, the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) was 1,250 with a projection of 4,025 AADT by 1992 (as obtained from road and bridge plans for SR 123, State Project 57150-3501-030). Based on April 2007 counts performed for this project, the estimated AADT on SR 123 is 17,000 vehicles per day (vpd). The projected design year (2033) AADT on SR 123 is 27,000 vpd (obtained from the *Design Traffic Technical Memorandum* (FDOT3, 2007a) prepared for the project).

As an update to projections developed in the *Design Traffic Technical Memorandum* (FDOT3, 2007a), additional traffic counts collected in 2009 were reviewed for consistency with projections. Two count stations were used to develop the historic traffic volumes and trends provided in the *Design Traffic Technical Memorandum*, including one station on SR 123 (site # 0219). At this site, estimated traffic declined from 17,200 AADT in 2005 to 16,400 AADT in 2009.

Historically, traffic along SR 123 has exhibited nominal fluctuations in AADT although the trend over the observation period shows continued positive growth. The decrease in AADT from 2005 to 2009 is consistent with flat or negative growth observed statewide in Florida on many state highways. This decline in traffic is attributed to economic impacts and decline in new construction. The impact to residential home construction in the Florida panhandle has been significant and is reflected in the decline in traffic counts, particularly for 2008 and 2009. Traffic along SR 123 is also affected by military operations on the Eglin AFB reservation. As the Florida and local economy recovers, traffic volumes are expected to resume towards the overall trend of positive growth along SR 123. Future traffic projections developed using trends with 1994-2009 historic data may show slightly lower volumes for the opening (2013) and design year (2033), however, the differences would not change the need for improvement.

As defined in the Okaloosa County Comprehensive Plan (Okaloosa 2010) in Policy 1.2.2, Table 2.2.2 (page 2.2.4), the adopted LOS for SR 123 is LOS C. The facility currently operates at LOS F. If no improvements are made, the average arterial LOS is expected to be LOS F in 2013 (Opening Year) and continue to function at LOS F in 2033 (Design Year).

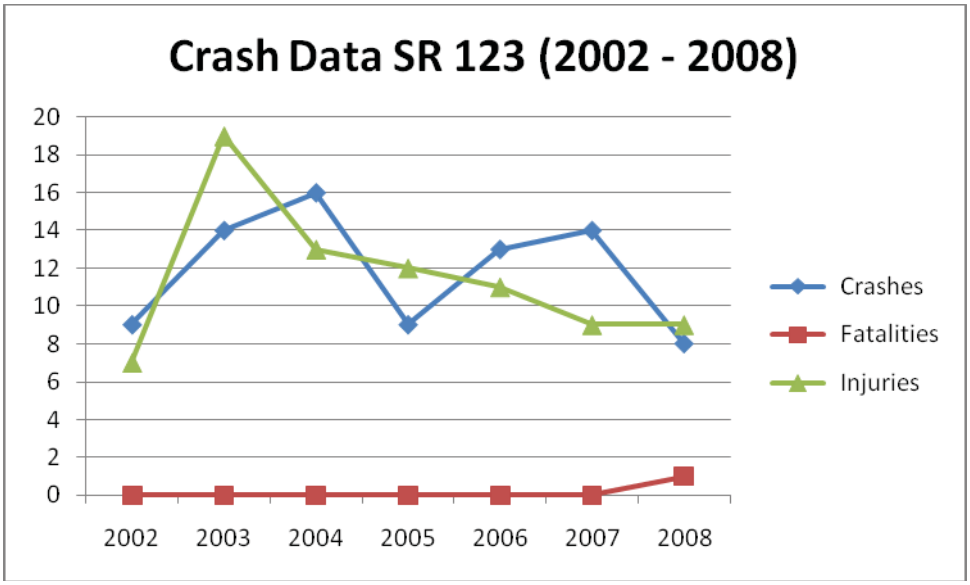
Additional transportation demands will be realized by the 2005 BRAC decision to expand the Eglin AFB mission. An EIS was prepared to assess the potential environmental impacts associated with this new growth. The EIS resulted in a Record of Decision (ROD) to relocate the Army 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) from North Carolina to Eglin AFB as analyzed in EIS Alternative 3. This decision locates a new cantonment area (facilities to support a military mission) west of Duke Field. This decision will increase population by approximately 8,500 people (approximately 6,000 direct impacts, and approximately 2,500 indirect impacts) (EIS Executive Summary, Table ES-22) (USAF, 2008). The EIS determined that this new growth will result in significant adverse effects to the regional transportation system. Transportation impacts were analyzed in the EIS (EIS Section 4.5.3) for the selected Cantonment Alternative 3. The EIS identified a number of other regional roadways as deficient, but outside the scope of the EIS (EIS Tables 4-10, and 4-11; pages 4-79 and 4-80). The EIS and ROD do not identify mitigation for these roadways because they are deficient in the existing conditions, and improvement projects are either planned or programmed to address the existing deficiencies. This EA evaluates one of the referenced deficiencies which is the need to provide capacity enhancements to SR 123.

Safety

Crash data for SR 123 were collected from the FDOT3 Safety Program Manager for the period from 2002 through 2008. The data are displayed graphically in **Figure 1-3.** There were a total of 83 crashes reported for the period involving a total of 80 injuries and one fatality. There is one FDOT memorial marker noted near the southern end of the project alignment. The majority of crashes were rear-end collisions and angle collisions. The highest crash locations are at the intersections of SR 123/SR 85S and SR 123/SR 85N. The distribution of crashes indicates a disproportionate amount of rear-end crashes which is a problem typically associated with insufficient capacity on a two-lane roadway.

In order to better compare crash data across the state, FDOT calculates a standardized safety ratio. The safety ratio is a comparison of the crash rate to the critical crash rate. Crash rates are expressed as "crashes per million vehicle miles of travel." The critical crash rate is determined by a statistical procedure where crash rates are compared on a statewide basis for similar types of roadways. A safety ratio greater than 1.0 indicates that the facility is experiencing more accidents than would be expected for this type of facility. The safety ratio is shown in **Figure 1-4.** For three years (2003, 2004, and 2006), the data indicate that safety is an ongoing concern along the facility.

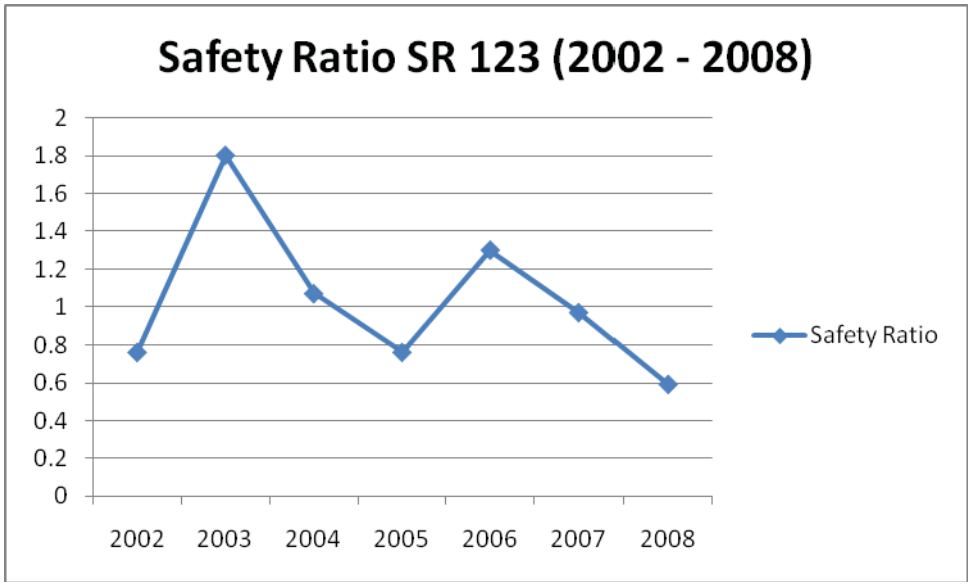
Figure 1-3: ***SR 123 Crash Data***



Data source: FDOT3 Safety Program Manager. December 2009.

Note to Figure 1-3: The fatal crash on 8/12/08 was early morning, wet weather conditions. An automobile (northbound) crossed the center line and struck a southbound automobile. The driver of the northbound vehicle was pronounced deceased at the scene.

Figure 1-4: ***SR 123 Safety Ratio***



Data source: FDOT3 Safety Program Manager. December 2009.

Note to Figure 1-4: A safety ratio greater than 1.0 indicates that the facility is experiencing more accidents than would be expected for this type of facility.

1.6 SCOPING, CONSULTATION, AND GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY

The project was reviewed through the FDOT Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process (ETDM Project Number 8167). FDOT utilizes the ETDM process to coordinate review with various agencies. Scoping letters requesting comments on possible issues of concern related to the Proposed Action were sent to the Florida State Clearinghouse (SCH) and forwarded to the agencies with pertinent environmental resource responsibilities. Responses to agency comments are presented and discussed in the relevant sections of Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, and **Appendix C** provides a record of agency consultation. A Final Programming Screen Summary Report was published on March 26, 2009 providing a discussion of agency comments and FDOT responses on the project. The report is provided as **Appendix D** of this EA.

Appendix E provides information regarding the public participation process. A public information meeting was held on October 30, 2007 in the Niceville Council Chambers, 208 N. Partin Drive, Niceville, FL. Approximately 40 people signed in. Ten comments were received at the meeting and three were mailed in by the response deadline. Issues included a preference for a high design speed (at least 65 mph), a desire to construct the project as soon as possible, a reminder to consider the high cost of relocating utilities, and the need for wildlife crossings. No attendees objected to the project.

Appendix F provides documentation pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) determination.

The results of the consultation and public input resulted in an EA that was approved for released for public availability on July 15, 2011. Section 6.0 of this EA further describes the results of the Public Hearing conducted in September 2011.

1.7 RELEVANT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

As a result of early scoping and the ETDM process, relevant environmental issues were identified to be addressed in this document including potential effects in the areas of the natural environment (air, geology, water, biology, wetlands, noise, and cultural resources), hazardous materials and wastes, and the local community (socioeconomics and environmental justice, land use and aesthetics, transportation, and utilities). In addition, the EA examines the indirect and cumulative effects of the SR 123 project when considered with other projects.

A sliding-scale approach is the basis for the analysis of potential environmental and socioeconomic effects in this EA. That is, certain aspects of the Proposed Action have a greater potential for creating environmental effects than others; therefore, they are discussed in greater detail in this EA than those aspects of the action that have little or no potential for effect.

1.8 PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS

If one or more acres of land are disturbed by construction, the construction contractor must meet Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) requirements for a stormwater general construction permit and submit a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Notice of Intent (NOI) and a Notice of Termination (NOT) to meet stormwater requirements. A *Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan* (SWPPP) would need to be developed to comply with the NPDES Permit. Two permits would be required prior to filling federal/state jurisdictional wetlands: a Section 404 Permit under the *Clean Water Act* (CWA) from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and an Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) from the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NWFWMD)/FDEP. A joint permit application form would be completed and submitted to the regulatory agencies. If required, an Archaeological Resource Protection Act (ARPA) Permit will be obtained to excavate and remove any archaeological resource from federal lands. There will likely be need for a "Take" permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for federally-listed species, and from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) for state-listed species. Coordination will occur to determine if permits are required from FDOT and all applicable utility companies as a result of construction activities in existing ROW.

1.9. LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Federal and state laws and regulations that may be applicable to the proposed action are described in the following paragraphs and in **Table 1-1**.

1.9.1 Environmental Policy

NEPA establishes a broad national environmental policy with goals for the protection, maintenance, and enhancement of the environment, and provides a process for implementing these goals within federal agencies and departments. NEPA requires federal agencies to consider, as part of planning and decision-making processes, the impact(s) of their actions on the environment. NEPA's purpose is not to generate paperwork, but to foster agency action through informed decision-making. NEPA established the CEQ, which is charged with the development of implementing regulations and ensuring federal agency compliance with NEPA. In 1978, the CEQ promulgated guidelines to implement NEPA, and in November 1979 these guidelines became regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) referred to in this document as the CEQ Regulations, which are applicable to all federal agencies and departments. The CEQ regulations mandate that all federal agencies and departments use a systematic interdisciplinary approach to environmental planning and the evaluation of actions that may affect the environment. The CEQ regulations are intended to assist federal officials in decision-making based on an understanding of the potential environmental consequences, and to take actions that protect, restore, and enhance the environment. The level of analysis required to meet NEPA requirements depends on the scope and severity of the environmental impacts threatened by the proposed action.

As the Lead Federal Agency on this action, FHWA requires FDOT to prepare the appropriate level of NEPA documentation. FDOT and FHWA, in consultation with Eglin AFB, USFWS and FWC, have agreed that an EA should be prepared to further evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the action.

As the Cooperating Agency on this action, U.S. DoD, Department of Air Force operates under Air Force Policy Directive 32-70, *Environmental Quality*, 20 July 1994, which requires the Air Force to "conduct its activities according to national environmental policy," and establishes accountability for all personnel for the environmental consequences of their actions. The Air Force, in its mission to achieve and maintain environmental quality, is committed to conserving natural and cultural resources through effective planning and integrating, into all levels of decision-making, the environmental consequences of proposed actions and alternative.

In accordance with CEQ Regulation at 40 CFR 1500 – 1508, both FHWA and DoD operate under their own NEPA implementing regulations. The FHWA regulation at 23 CFR 771 provides NEPA operating principles to be followed by the FDOT. The Air Force regulation, 32 CFR Part 989, EIAP, also incorporated by reference in Air Force Instruction (AFI) 32-7061, outlines steps for the analysis of environmental impacts on installations in the United States and abroad. This document reflects compliance with both sets of NEPA implementing regulations.

In addition to the NEPA implementing regulations, both FHWA and DoD operate in accordance with Executive Orders issued by the President. Two Executive Orders provide direction applicable to coordination and implementation of the NEPA process and have been followed in preparation of this EA:

- Executive Order (EO) 11514, *Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality*, as amended by EO 11991, sets the policy for directing the federal government in providing leadership in protecting and enhancing the quality of the nation's environment.

- EO 12372, *Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs*, provides for opportunities for consultation by state and local governments on proposed federal developments. AFI 32-7060, *Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning*, provides an outline of interagency cooperation as well as the legal requirements under the *Intergovernmental Coordination Act* of 1968.

Compliance with other executive orders is described in the environmental impacts analysis section of this EA.

1.9.2 Integration with Other Environmental Statutes and Regulations

To comply with NEPA, the planning and decision-making process for actions proposed by federal agencies involves a study of other relevant environmental statutes and regulations. The NEPA process, however, does not replace procedural or substantive requirements of other environmental statutes and regulations. NEPA enables the decision-maker to have a comprehensive view of major environmental issues and requirements associated with the proposed action. According to CEQ regulations, the requirements of NEPA must be integrated "with other planning and environmental review procedures required by law or by agency so that all such procedures run concurrently rather than consecutively." **Table 1-1** below summarizes the other statutes and regulations. FDOT provides further implementing guidance for the NEPA process and compliance with other environmental regulations in the FDOT *PD&E Manual*. Applicable sections of the *PD&E Manual* are addressed and referenced in this EA.

Table 1-1: *Federal and State Statutes and Regulations*

Regulation	Part Number
Air Quality	
Clean Air Act	42 USC 7401 *et seq.*, as amended
Florida Air and Pollution Control Act	F.S. 403.011 *et seq.*
Federal Compliance with Pollution Control Standards	EO 12088

Table 1-1: ***Federal and State Statutes and Regulations*** (Continued)

Environmental Quality	AFI 32-70
Air Quality Compliance	AFI 32-7040
Noise	
Noise Control Act of 1972	42 USC 4901 *et* seq., Public Law 92-574
Air Installation Compatible Use Zone Program	AFI 32-7063
Water Quality, Wetlands, Floodplains and Coastal Areas	
Clean Water Act	33 USC 1251 *et seq.*, as amended
Coastal Zone Management Act	42 USC 1451 *et seq.* and F.S. 380.20 *et* seq.
Florida Environmental Land and Water Management Act	F.S. 380.012 *et* seq.
Protection of Wetlands	EO 11990
Floodplain Management	EO 11988
Water Quality Compliance	AFI 32-7041
Florida Air and Water Pollution Control Act	F.S. 403.011 *et* seq.
State Surface Water Regulations	Chapter 62-346 F.A.C. and 62-621, F.A.C.
Aquatic Preserve Act of 1975, as amended	Sections 258.35 -258.46, F.S.
Outstanding Florida Waters	F.A.C. Chapter 62-302.700
Wild and Scenic Rivers Act	P.L. 90-542
Coastal Barrier Resources Act, as amended	P.L. 97-348
Biological Resources	
Endangered Species Act of 1973	16 USC 1531-1543
Integrated Natural Resource Management	AFI 32-7064
Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918	16 USC 703-712
Magnuson – Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act, as amended	50 CFR600.805-600.930
Roadside Use of Native Plants	EO 13112
Land Use and Aesthetic Resources	
NEPA	42 USC 4321 *et seq.*
Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1984, as amended	7 CFR 658
Cultural Resources	
National Historic Preservation Act of 1966	16 USC 470 *et seq.*, as amended
Archaeological Resources Protection Act	16 USC 470a-11, as amended
American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978	
The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990	Public Law 101-601; 25 USC 3001-3013
Cultural Resource Management	AFI 32-7065
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management	
Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976	42 USC 6901, as amended
Florida Solid and Hazardous Waste Management Act	F.S. 403.702 *et seq.*
Solid and Hazardous Waste Compliance	AFI 32-7042 and Chapter 337, F.S.
Environmental Restoration Program	AFI 32-7020
Defense Environmental Restoration Program	10 USC 2701 *et seq.*
Environmental Baseline Surveys in Real Estate Transactions	AFI 32-7066
Environmental Justice	
Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-income Populations	EO 12989
Transportation	
Hazardous Material Transportation Act of 1975	49 USC 1761

CHAPTER 2

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

This page intentionally blank

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As required by federal regulation, this Environmental Assessment (EA) addresses potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Action and reasonable alternatives, as well as a No Action alternative. Chapter 2 contains five parts: (1) Description of Alternatives; (2) Selection Criteria for Alternatives; (3) Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Study; (4) Selection of Alternatives to Carry Forward for Further Analysis; and (5) Reasonably Foreseeable Indirect and Cumulative Impacts. A comparison of alternatives is provided in Chapter 4 of this EA (Table 4-1).

2.2 PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed project involves widening SR 123 between SR 85S and SR 85N from a two-lane rural undivided roadway to a four-lane divided facility with paved shoulders. The project termini are north of the intersection of SR 123 and SR 85S connecting to SR 85N. The total project length is approximately five miles. At the southern limit, the project connects to the approved interchange at SR 123 and SR 85S (as a separate project under FPID 220231-1). At the northern limit, the project connects to SR 85N. Conceptual project plans are provided in **Appendix B**. Preliminary construction cost estimates range from $63.3 million to $66.7 million, plus design, right-of-way (ROW), and mitigation costs.

The widening includes the construction of new two-lane bridges at Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek, utilizing the existing bridges for the remaining two lanes of traffic. Additionally, the box culvert at the un-named tributary to Turkey Creek will be replaced with two 75-foot single span bridges as further discussed below. A grade-separated interchange at the intersection of SR 85N and SR 123 is also included. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) standard four-lane rural typical section, with a 64-foot median, is proposed.

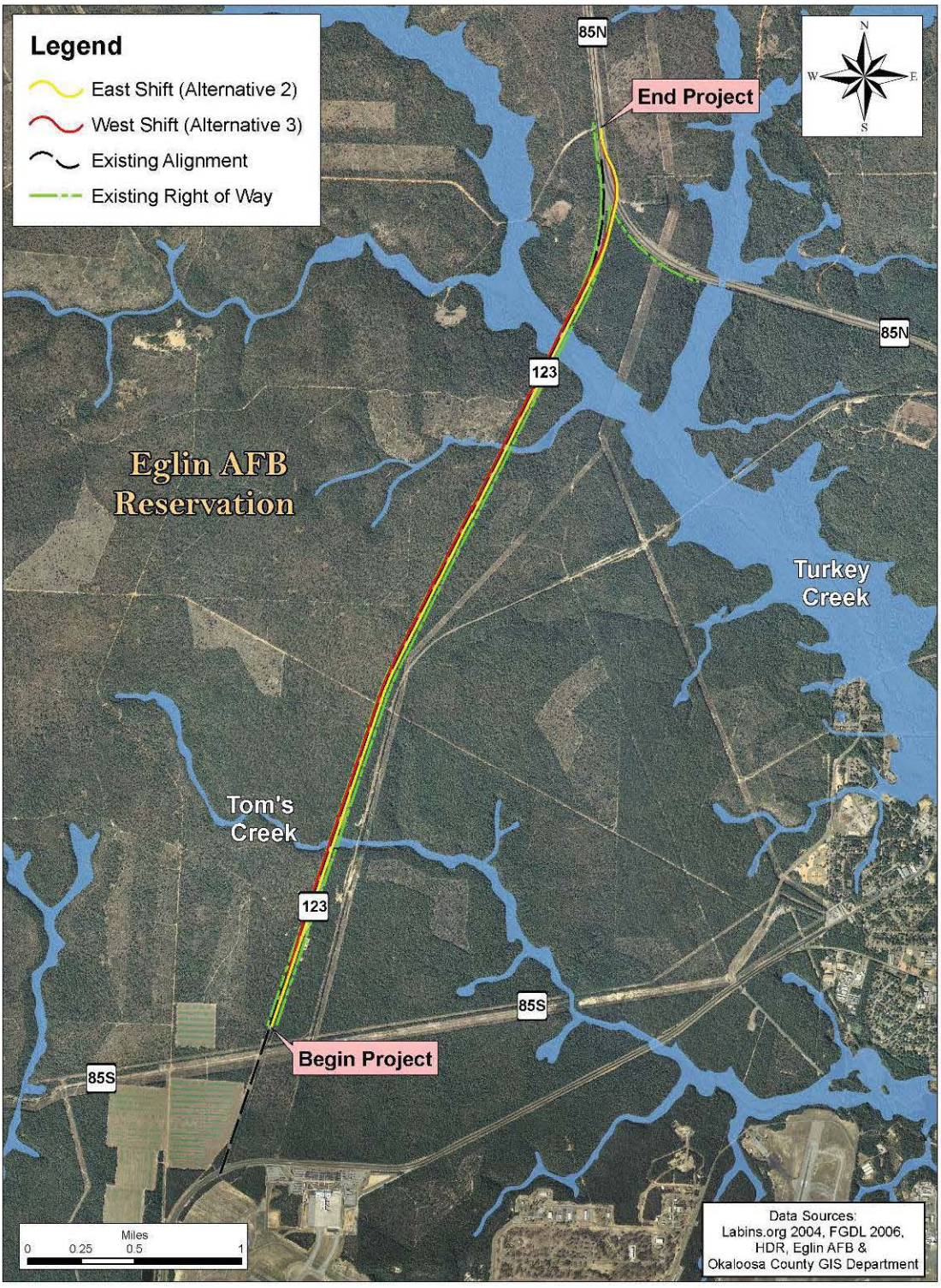
The project includes the construction of stormwater management facilities. The proposed project features open stormwater conveyance systems and stormwater ponds. A diversion ditch system will be needed on the west side of the facility over the entire length of the project to prevent overland runoff from commingling with roadway runoff. A diversion ditch is also required on the east side of the project from project start north to Tom's Creek.

After providing the opportunity for public input (**Appendix E**), Alternative 3 (West Shift) was identified as the Preferred Alternative.

2.3 DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENTS

Three alignments have been given consideration as the complete range of reasonable alternatives. **Figures 2-1** and **2-2** show the alternative alignments along the existing SR 123 corridor including an east-shift alignment (Alternative 2), and a west-shift alignment (Alternative 3). Alternative 2 (East Shift) is shown in yellow, and Alternative 3 (West Shift) is shown in red.

Figure 2-1: ***East- and West-Shift Alignment Alternatives***



The following is a description of the three potential alignments (Alternatives 1, 2, and 3), the No Action alternative, and other alternatives such as a Transportation Systems Management option, and various roadway configurations (typical sections).

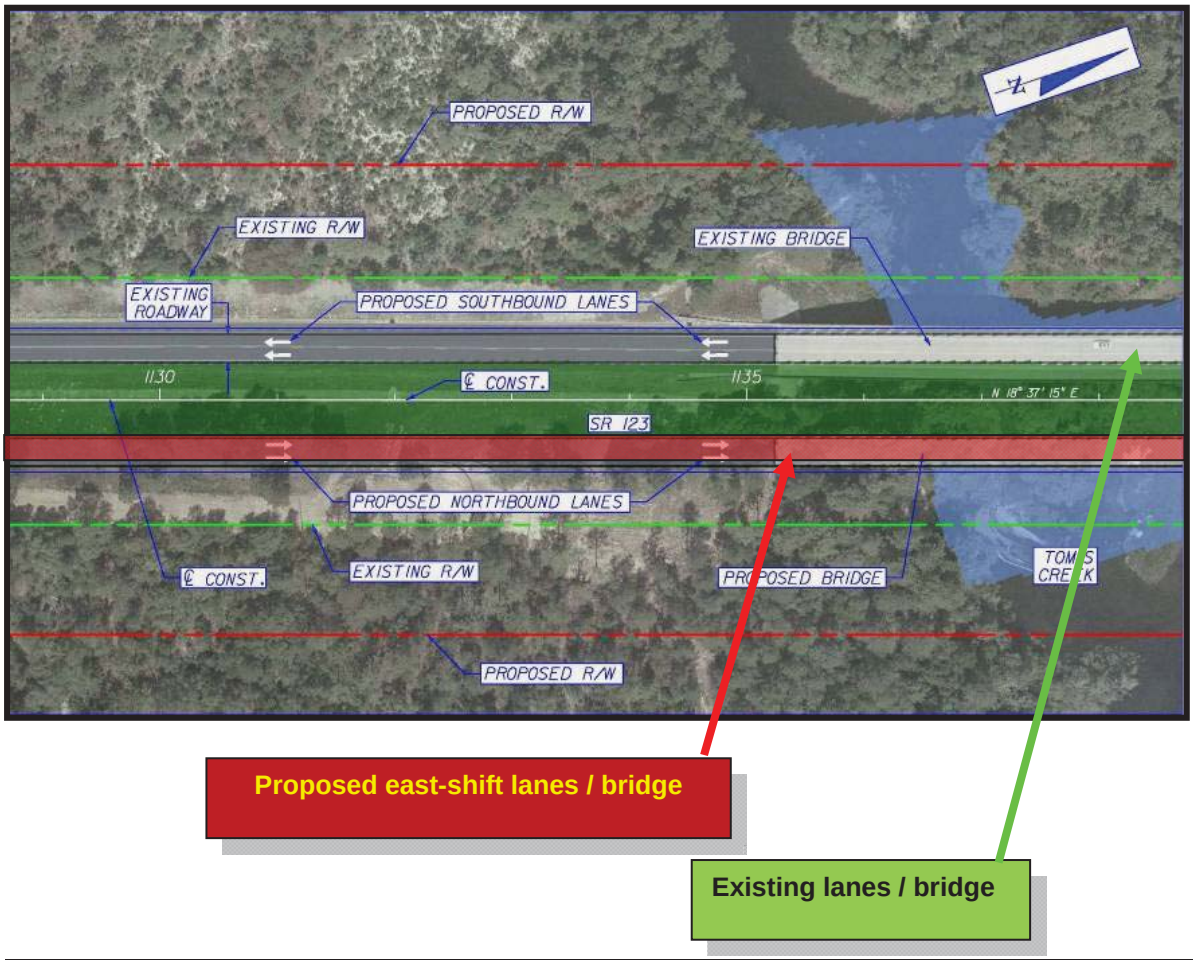
2.3.1 Alternative 1

Alternative 1 (not shown) follows the centerline of existing SR 123. This alternative identified the project corridor, and provided a basis for early coordination with regulatory agencies and the public. Further analysis has resulted in the development of Alternatives 2 and 3 along the same study corridor. As Alternatives 2 and 3 overlay and supersede Alternative 1, Alternative 1 has been eliminated from further consideration as documented in the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Summary Report (**Appendix D**).

2.3.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

Alternative 2 (**Figure 2-2**) is east-shifted and locates the future *southbound* lanes over the existing lanes, thus making use of existing pavement, road bed, bridge structures and storm drainage wherever possible. New northbound lanes and bridges would be constructed (shown in red in the figure below). Alternative 2 would require approximately 110 acres ROW (currently federal land).

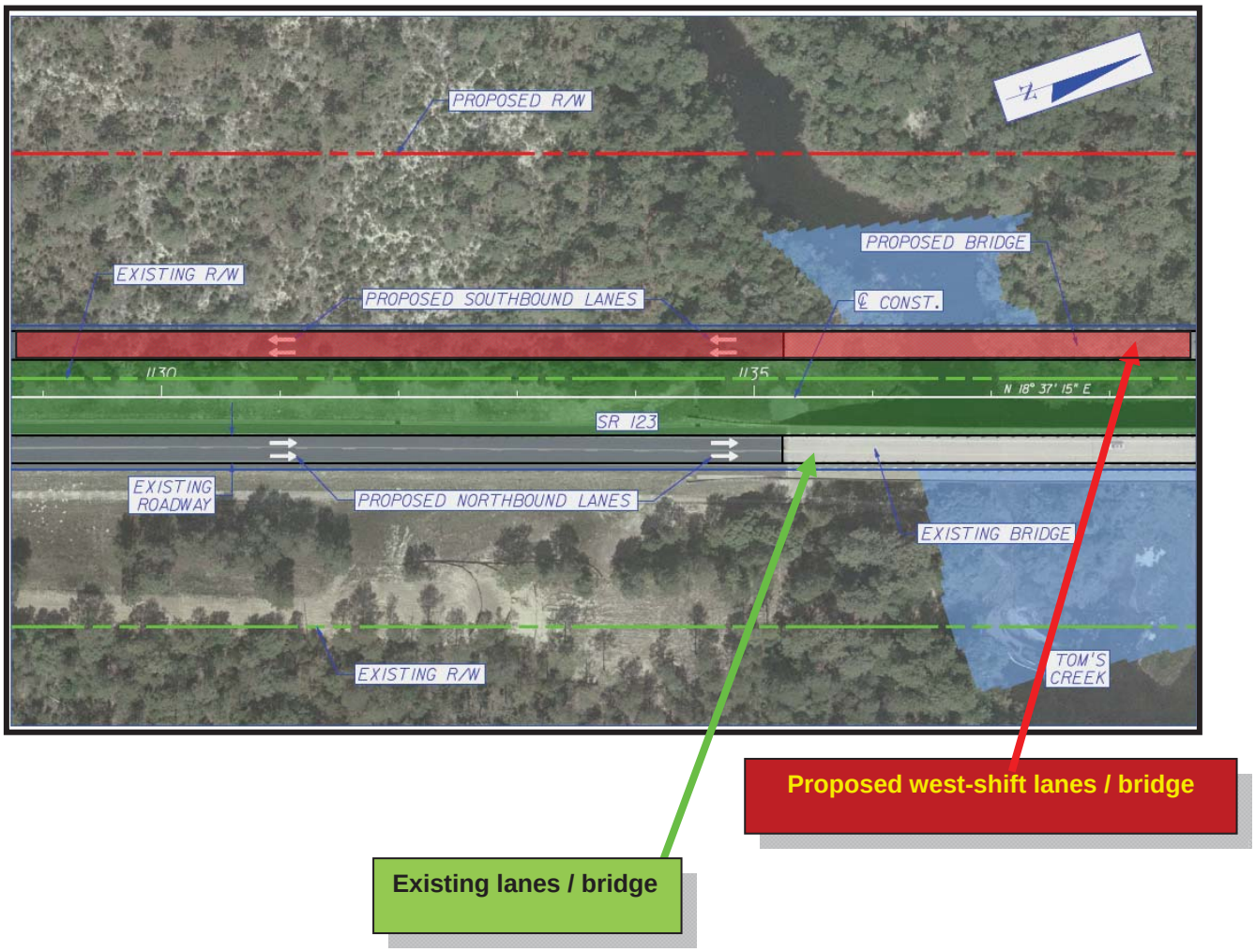
Figure 2-2: ***Alternative 2 (East-Shift)***



2.3.3 Alternative 3 (West Shift)

Alternative 3 (**Figure 2-3**) is west-shifted and locates the future *northbound* lanes over the existing lanes, with similar benefits with regard to pavement, road bed, bridges and storm drainage described above for Alternative 2. New southbound lanes and bridges would be constructed (shown in red in the figure below). Alternative 3 was introduced following utility coordination on the project to minimize impacts to an existing 30-inch water main and an existing fiber optic cable, both located inside the east ROW line. Alternative 3 would require approximately 118 acres ROW (currently federal land).

Figure 2-3: ***Alternative 3 (West-Shift)***



2.3.4 No Action Alternative

The No Action alternative provides a baseline from which to assess potential impacts if no action is taken. The SR 123 facility currently operates at arterial Level of Service (LOS) F. Without adding additional lanes, the existing facility is expected to continue operating at LOS F through the design year (2033). In addition, a constricted transportation facility could adversely affect future economic growth in Okaloosa County including regional commutes to Eglin AFB. The No-Build alternative would be inconsistent with the Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization (O-W TPO) Long Range Transportation Plan. The No-Build alternative will continue to be considered to ensure an objective evaluation.

2.3.5 Alternative Typical Sections

The FDOT offers a range of standard typical sections known as Rural, Urban and Suburban. The selection of alternative typical sections for detailed consideration was based on the stated objectives for this project. The primary objectives are to increase the traffic capacity, to accommodate existing and future volumes and to minimize the costs and environmental impacts.

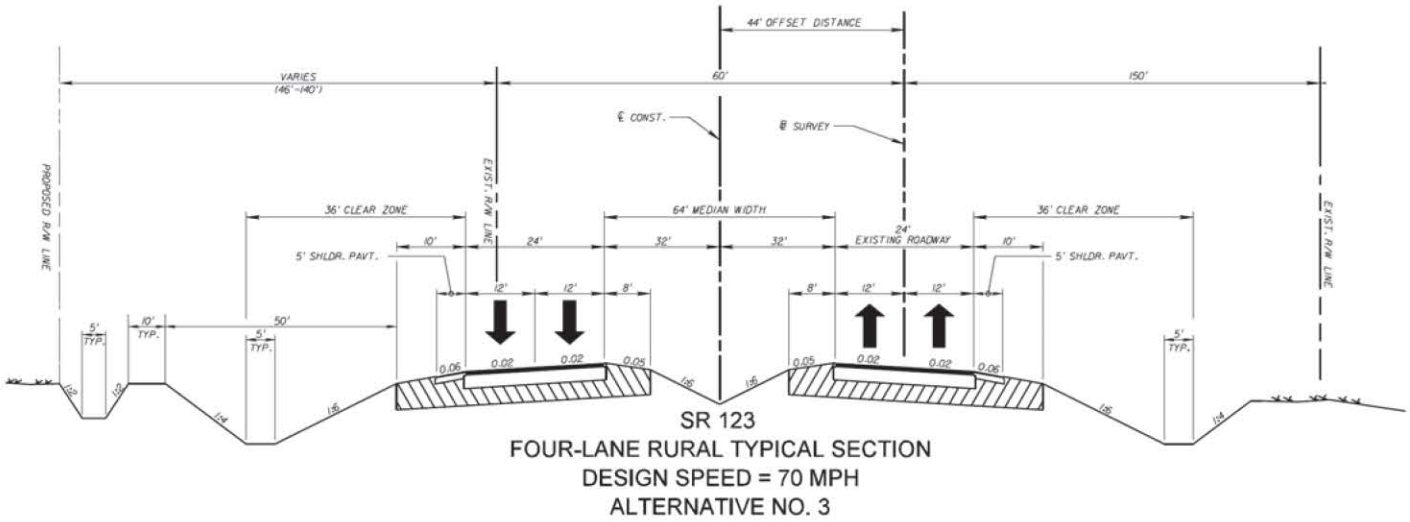
The FDOT standard, four-lane rural typical section, is proposed (**Figure 2-4**). A rural section matches the surrounding land use in the project vicinity, which is primarily rural in character. The project is located entirely within Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), therefore future land use is restricted and is expected to retain the rural character. A rural typical section is the most economical section for the project area, because storm drainage would be conveyed in open ditches, thus avoiding the expense of curb and gutter and a closed drainage system. The proposed typical section will be positioned over the existing lanes wherever possible to make use of existing bridges and roadbed.

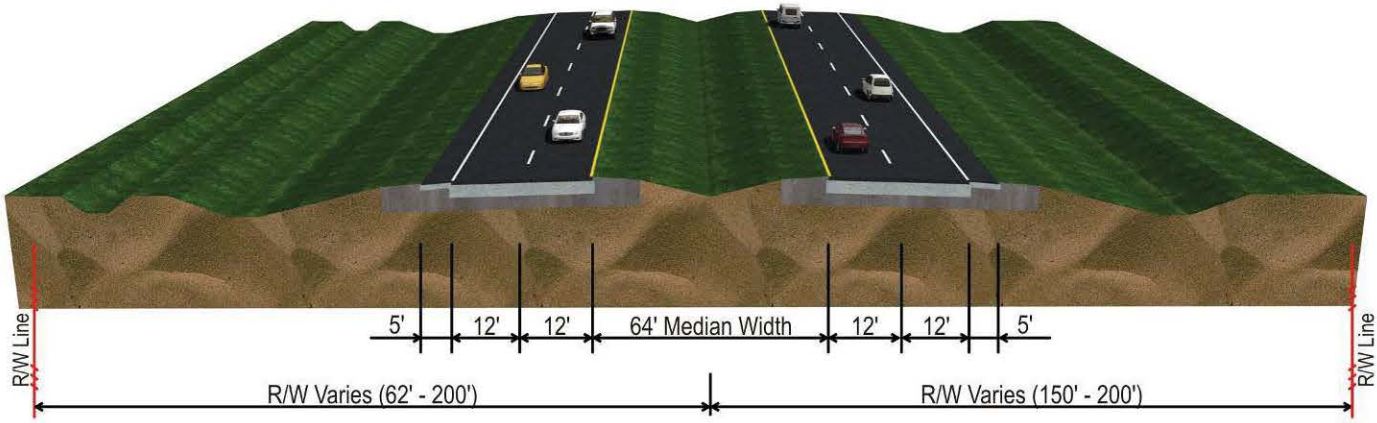
Alternative median widths of 40 feet and 64 feet were considered for the project. The 40-foot and 64-foot median alternatives are functionally similar, and both meet minimum standards for the facility. However, a 64-foot median is preferred for the following reasons:

- Would not preclude future six lane widening when (if) needed in the future;
- Matches the cross section of SR 85 north of SR 123;
- Increases safety of roadway with greater separation of opposing flows;
- Matches operational characteristics of proposed roadway (high design speed, minimal driveways, driver perception of freeway characteristics);
- Adds additional median width which increases ROW acquisition on one side of the proposed roadway, but adds minimal incremental cost since ROW for four-lane widening, drainage, stormwater management ponds and slope easements are being acquired.

Based on this analysis, conceptual plans were developed for a standard rural typical section with a 64-foot median, consistent with approval of the Eglin Mission Enhancement Committee (MEC). Key typical section elements used in the conceptual design of the project are summarized in **Figure 2-4.**

Figure 2-4: ***Proposed Typical Section (Roadway)***





SR 123
Four-Lane Rural Typical Section
Design Speed = 70 MPH

2.4 BRIDGES, CULVERTS, AND OVERCROSSINGS

Regardless of the alternative alignment and typical section selected, the project would include three water crossings at Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, and at an un-named tributary on Turkey Creek as shown in **Figure 2-5.** A grade-separated interchange is planned at SR 123 and SR 85N.

2.4.1 Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek

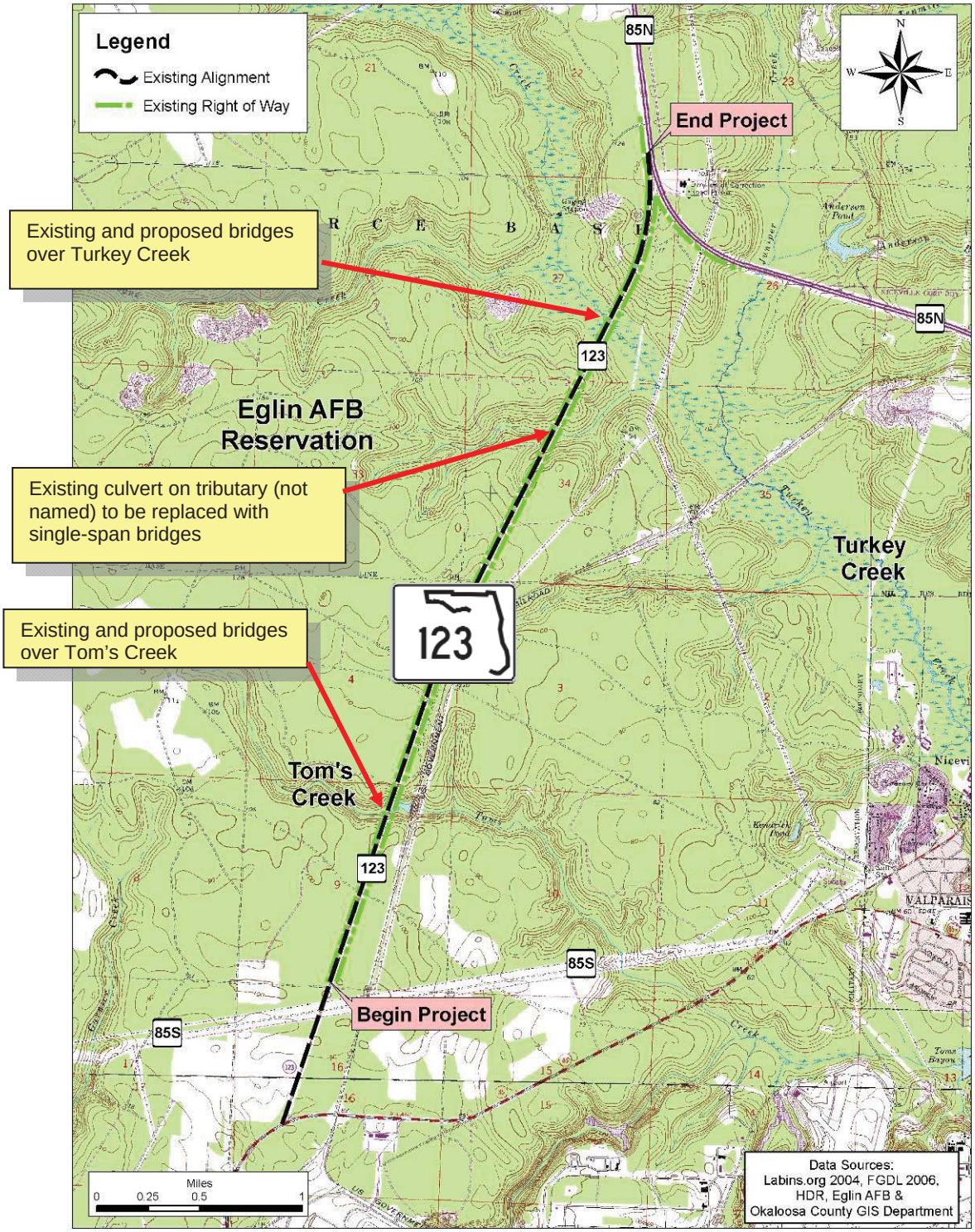
In existing conditions, there are two bridge crossings at Tom's and Turkey Creek. These bridges would remain for northbound traffic. Two new bridges would be constructed at Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek at the same crossing locations to accommodate southbound traffic with lengths that match the existing bridges.

From the historical record (road and bridge plans for SR 123, State Project 57150-3501-030), the existing bridge over Tom's Creek (Bridge Number 570075) was built in 1975 and has a 44-foot clear roadway with two 12-foot lanes, and two 10-foot shoulders. The bridge is concrete T-beams cast-in-place supported by pile bents with pre-stressed concrete piles. The minimum pile embedment is 21 feet. The bridge consists of eleven 50-foot spans for an overall bridge length of 550 feet with almost 28 feet of vertical clearance over the creek. The bridge deck covers an area of 25,300 square feet. The bridge is not known to have any structural deficiencies as of the most recent inspection in 2009 (FDOT, 2011).

The existing bridge over Turkey Creek (Bridge Number 570076) likewise was built in 1975 and has a 44-foot clear roadway with two 12-foot lanes, and two 10-foot shoulders. The superstructure consists of a reinforced concrete deck with beams supported by pile bents and concrete piles. The minimum pile embedment is 24 feet. The bridge consists of 16 spans at almost 52 feet each, for an overall bridge length of 830 feet with approximately 22 feet of vertical clearance over the creek. The bridge deck covers an area of 38,803 square feet. The bridge is not known to have any structural deficiencies as of the most recent inspection in 2005 (FDOT, 2005).

Detailed design would not be initiated on the proposed new bridge structures until completion of the NEPA process. Two 12-foot travel lanes would be provided **(Figure 2-6).** The new bridges would closely parallel the existing bridges in length and height above the creeks (**Figure 2-7** and **Figure 2-8).** As currently proposed, the new bridges would be approximately four feet more narrow than the existing by providing one six-foot interior paved shoulder, and one exterior ten-foot paved shoulder. The project's Value Engineering (VE) study (FDOT3, 2008m) recommend shorter bridge lengths for cost savings of almost $1.5 million. At Tom's Creek, the VE study proposed a bridge length of 400 feet rather than 550 feet; and a bridge length of 730 feet at Turkey Creek as opposed to 830 feet of the existing bridge. The shorter bridges would be sufficient both structurally and hydraulically. However, this recommendation was not incorporated due to concerns relating to the Okaloosa Darter as further analyzed in the Environmental Impacts section (Chapter 4) of this EA.

Figure 2-5: ***Water Crossings Along SR 123***



2.4.2 Interchange at SR 85N

At the north end of the project alignment, SR 123 merges with SR 85 at a signalized intersection. This intersection is known for recent traffic accidents, including a fatality. A new overcrossing would be provided and the existing traffic signal removed. The conceptual design proposes a northbound flyover of SR 123 to SR 85N that spans all four lanes of traffic on SR 85N. The proposal eliminates the ramp serving northbound traffic on SR 123 exiting to southbound SR 85. A conceptual cross section is provided in **Figure 2-9**.

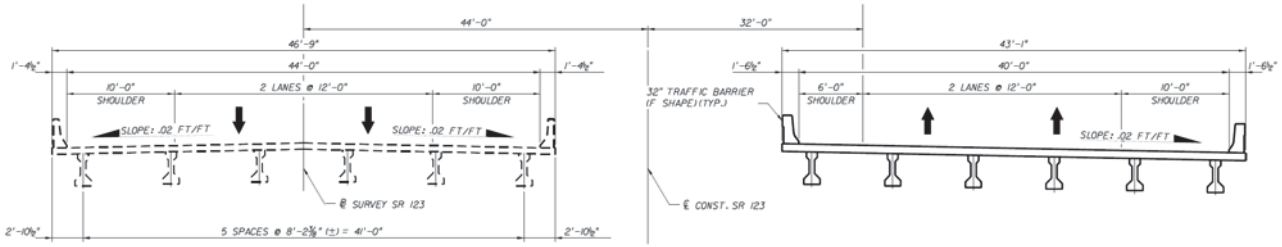
2.4.3 Unnamed Tributary to Turkey Creek

On Turkey Creek, an un-named tributary passes under SR 123 through a box culvert (10-foot wide by 6-foot high by 156-foot long). In existing conditions, the bottom of the culvert has entrapped silts and sediments that restrict the natural flow of the tributary. As a result of early consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), several alternatives were considered for the crossing to avoid and minimize impacts to the Okaloosa Darter, including the following:

- Replacing the culvert with a multi span bridge structure (Multi-Span Bridge Option)
- Replacing the culvert with a single span bridge structure (75 Foot Bridge Option)
- Replacing the culvert with a 20’ wide x 11’ tall three sided box culvert (Three Sided Culvert Replacement Option)
- Replacing the culvert with a 20’ wide x 11’ tall four sided box culvert (Four Sided Culvert Replacement Option)
- Extending the existing culvert (Four Sided Culvert Extension Option).

As more fully analyzed in the project’s Biological Assessment (**Appendix I**), two 75-foot single span bridge structures were selected as the proposed action unnamed tributary. A preliminary schematic of the new bridge crossing is provided in **Figure 2-10**.

Figure 2-6: ***Proposed Typical Section (Bridge)***



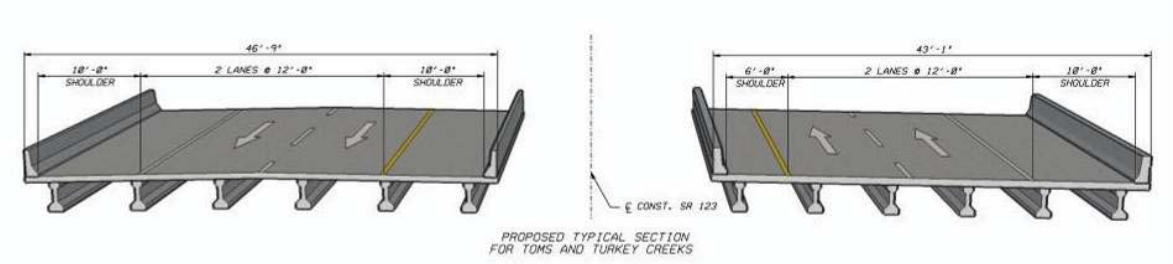


Figure 2-7: ***Existing Bridge 570076 over Turkey Creek***

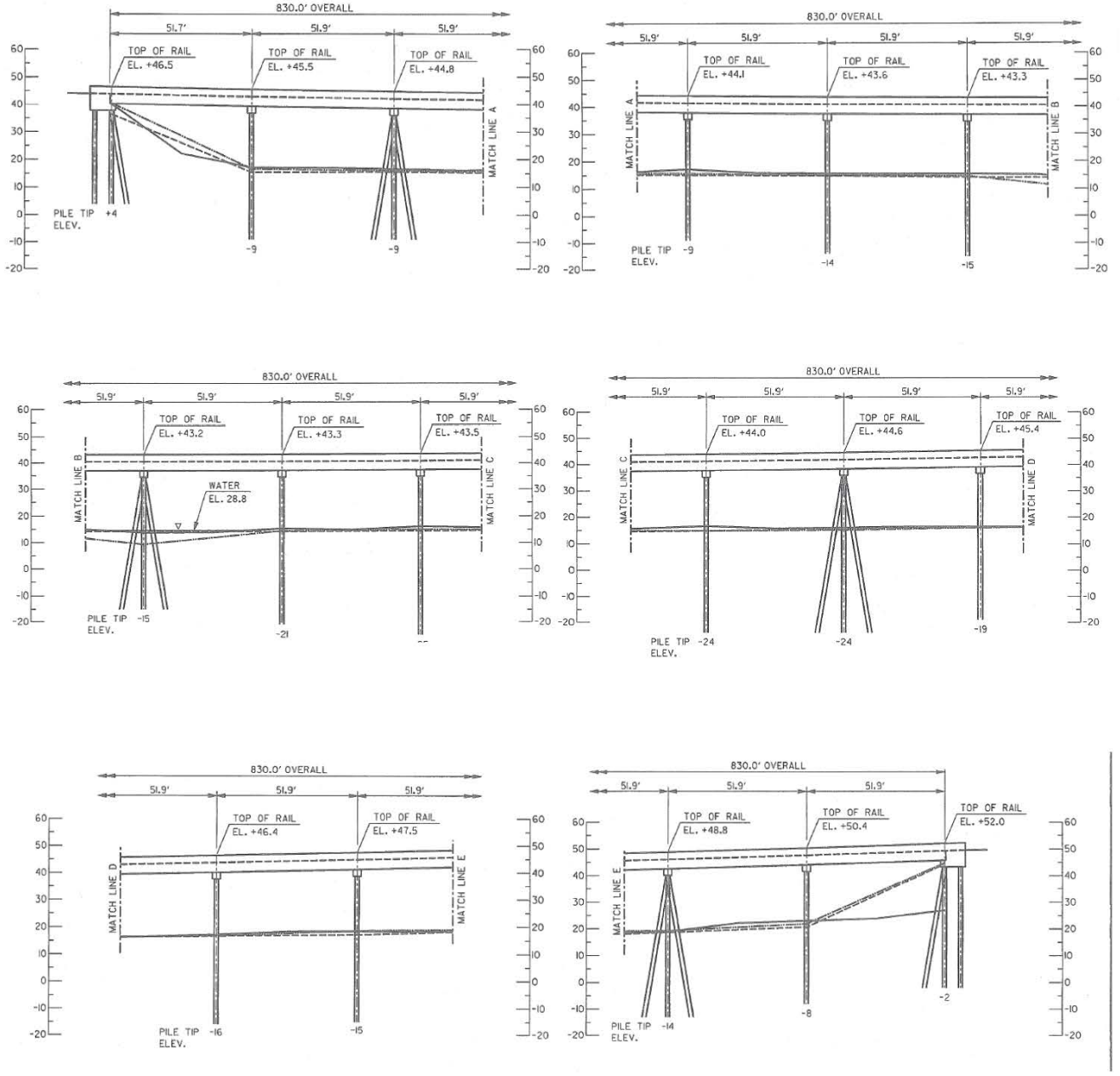


Figure 2-8: ***Existing Bridge 570075 over Tom's Creek***

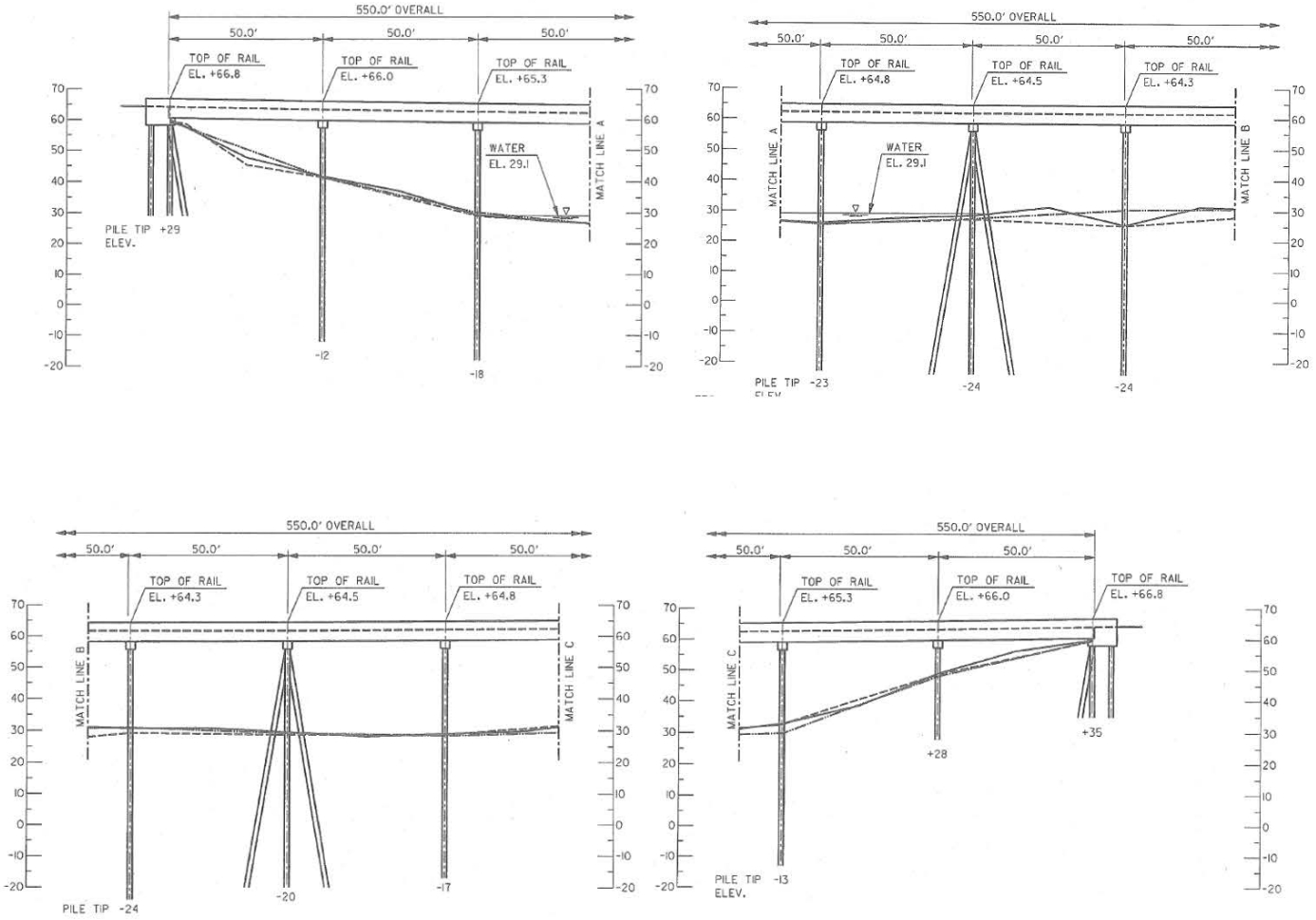
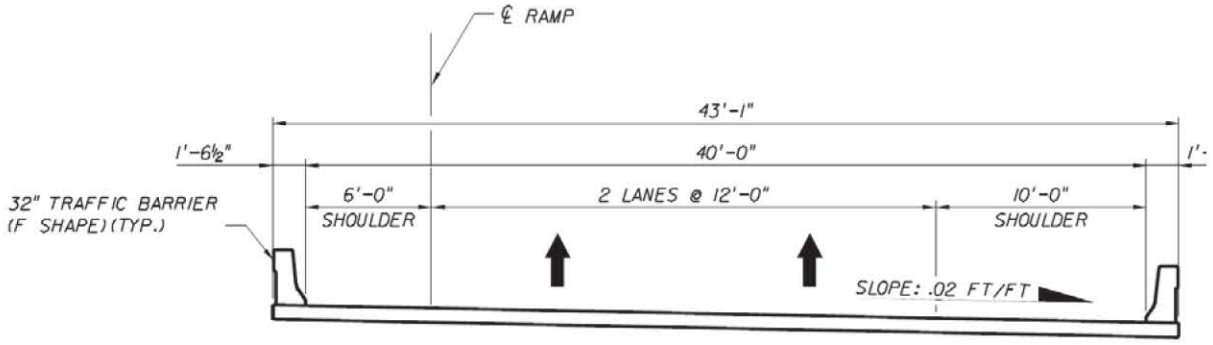
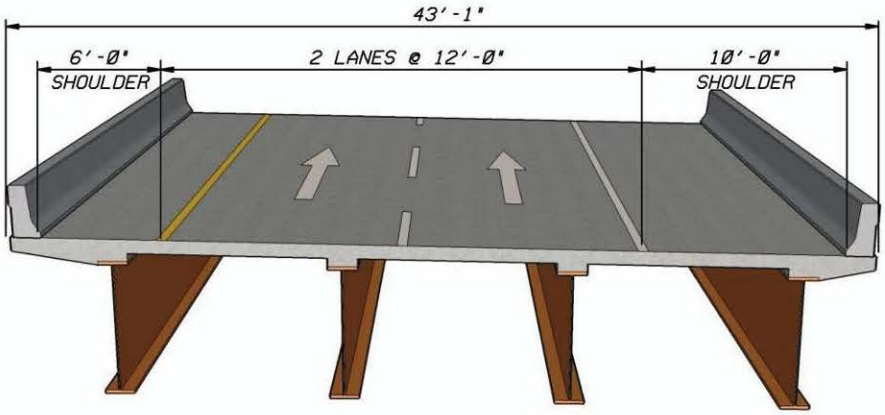


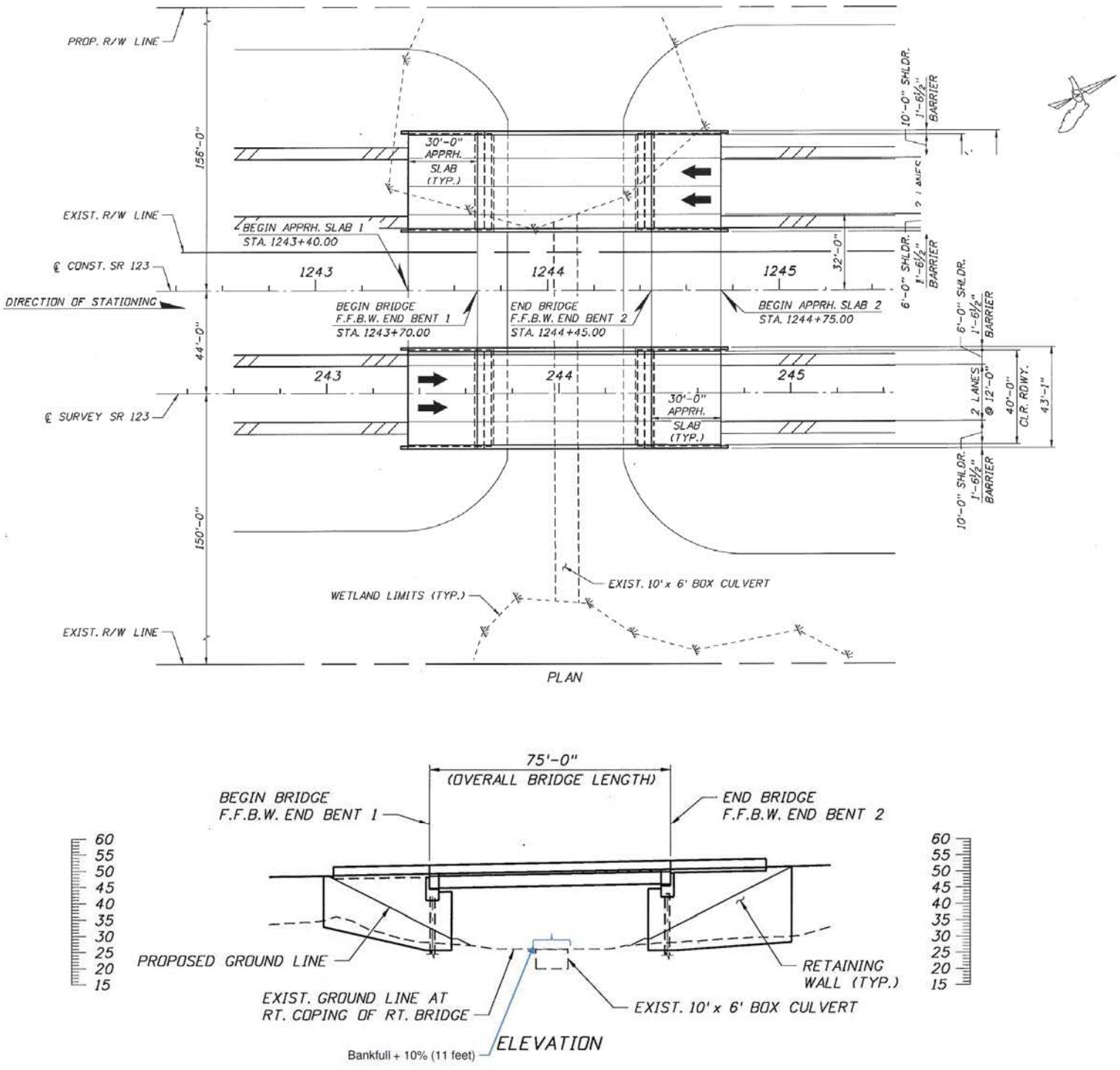
Figure 2-9: ***Proposed Typical Section (Ramp Over SR 85N)***





PROPOSED TYPICAL SECTION
AT RAMP TO SR 85 N

Figure 2-10: ***Preliminary Schematic of 75-Foot Single Span Bridge at Un-named Tributary***



2.5 SCREENING CRITERIA FOR ALTERNATIVES

A preliminary evaluation matrix is included in **Table 2-1** to compare the two build alternatives identified for detailed study. The matrix emphasizes factors that show a measurable difference between the No Action alternative and the two build alternatives. Selection criteria were established based on the project's purpose and need (objectives). The criteria are stated below.

Table 2-1 Screening Criteria for Proposed Alternatives (Summary)

ALTERNATIVE	CONSISTENT WITH EGLIN'S MISSION NEEDS	IMPROVES REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK * Includes capacity, LOS, safety	CONSISTENT WITH PUBLIC'S OVERALL COMMENTS	AVOIDS UTILITY CONFLICTS	IMPROVES SIS / FIHS
2 (East-Shift)	Yes	Yes	Yes	**No**	Yes
3 (West-Shift) [preferred alternative]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
No Action	**No**	**No**	**No**	Yes	**No**

2.6 ALTERNATIVES ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS

2.6.1 Alternative 1

Alternative 1 was initially considered, but will not be further analyzed in the EA. Alternative 1 follows the centerline of existing SR 123. Alternative 1 follows the existing road to identify the project corridor for the basis of early agency coordination. Once the project was developed and alternatives were proposed for study as part of the PD&E process, Alternative 1 was no longer needed as Alternatives 2 and 3 overlay and supersede Alternative 1. This alternative identified the project corridor, and provided a basis for early coordination with regulatory agencies and the public. Further analysis has resulted in the development of Alternatives 2 and 3 along the same study corridor. As Alternatives 2 and 3 overlay and supersede Alternative 1, it has therefore been eliminated from further analysis and consideration as documented in the ETDM Summary Report (**Appendix D**).

2.6.2 Transportation System Management (TSM)

The TSM alternative, which consists of low-cost improvements that maximize the efficiency of the present system, was also considered for this project. Such improvements typically include signal-timing optimization, construction of auxiliary lanes at intersections, improving signs and markings, and provision of high-occupancy-vehicle lanes on multilane facilities. Although TSM-type improvements could help alleviate some congestion and to some extent improve traffic safety in the project corridor for the short-term, they would not effectively address the project need, which is to increase the available highway capacity in the SR 123 corridor to meet projected future demand. Regional growth management issues, including population distribution and regional transportation needs are being addressed in a Growth Management Plan currently in preparation for Okaloosa County. Therefore, this alternative was eliminated from further analysis.

2.6.3 Travel Demand Management (TDM)

TDM pertains to the potential to reduce the number of vehicles on the existing road network by expanding vehicle occupancy rates and/or public transit service. The TSM and TDM alternatives were eliminated from further analysis because minor improvements would not fully satisfy the project need, which is to improve the capacity of the current transportation network in order to improve the LOS and reduce delays to motorists. Because the TSM and TDM alternatives are designed to maximize the utilization and efficiency of the present system, it will be utilized as a component of the Proposed Action and considered in the Growth Management Plan currently in preparation for Okaloosa County. Therefore, this alternative was eliminated from further analysis.

2.6.4 Other Alignments

Full west-shifted and full east-shifted alternatives were considered. These alternatives would hold the ROW on one side and accomplish all widening and ROW acquisition on the opposite side. These alignment options differ from Alternatives 2 and 3, which hold the location of the existing travel lanes. This approach normally has the advantage of minimizing the number of ROW parcels impacted and property owners affected. However, in the case of SR 123, there is only one property owner, Eglin AFB, which owns both sides of the road and thus there is no advantage to eliminating the ROW acquisition from one side of the project. In addition, full-shifted alignments would result in new travel lanes that would not line up with existing pavement, bridges, roadbed, and drainage features. As there have been no strong benefits or issues identified that dictate full shift to one side only, these alternatives have been eliminated from further consideration.

A Blended alternative that combines elements of west-shifted and east-shifted alignments was considered, but found not to produce any benefits for this project. There are no advantages in terms of reduced impacts but disadvantages would result such as a meandering alignment, difficult maintenance of traffic during construction and reduced usability of existing pavement and bridges. There are no developmental or environmental constraints that would suggest a blended shift alignment. Therefore, this alternative was eliminated from further analysis.

2.6.5 Alternative Interchange Configurations

An alternative interchange was considered that elevates SR 85 over SR 123 which would require a four lane fill and overpass structure. This option was eliminated due to higher associated costs, impacts, and maintenance of traffic concerns. Alternative ramp geometry was considered. However, the alternatives either required smaller radii resulting in a design speed that did not meet project objectives, or resulted in less oblique crossings, which caused the ramp to shift eastward, requiring more ROW and extending the merge further north. The conceptual design plans for the SR 123 / SR 85N interchange show the only identified configuration that meets the requirements.

2.7 SELECTION OF ALTERNATIVES TO CARRY FORWARD FOR ANALYSIS

Alternative 2 (east-shift), and Alternative 3 (west-shift) are the two alternatives carried forward for analysis. Both alternatives meet the Purpose and Need (Chapter 1). In addition, the No Action alternative will also be carried forward for analysis as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to provide a baseline for comparison.

2.7.1 Alternative 2 (East-Shift)

The SR 123 project involves widening an existing travel corridor to provide for increased capacity and safety for vehicle travel along SR 85 bypassing Niceville and Valparaiso, in Okaloosa County, Florida. The widened route would consist of four travel lanes (as opposed to the existing two travel lanes), a new grade-separated interchange where SR 123 connects with SR 85N, and stormwater management facilities.

A four-lane divided rural typical section is proposed. The roadway includes 12-foot travel lanes, five-foot paved shoulders, a 64-foot grass median, a grade-separate interchange, and stormwater management facilities. The roadway would have a design speed of 70 mph. Alternative 2 would provide an east-shifted alignment locating future southbound lanes over the existing lanes, thus making use of existing pavement, road bed, bridge structures and storm drainage wherever possible. Alternative 2 would meet the Purpose and Need, as discussed in Chapter 1.

2.7.2 Alternative 3 (West-Shift) [Preferred Alternative]

Alternative 3 would provide a west-shifted alignment locating future northbound lanes over the existing lanes, with similar benefits with regard to pavement, road bed, bridges and storm drainage described above for Alternative 2. Alternative 3 was introduced following utility coordination on the project to minimize impacts to an existing 30-inch water main and an existing fiber optic cable, both located on an easement within to the roadway right-of-way. Alternative 3 would meet the purpose and need, as discussed in Chapter 1. Alternative 3 was identified as the State-Recommended Alternative at the September 2011 Public Hearing. Following the Public Hearing and after reviewing all comments received, Alternative 3 was identified as the Preferred Alternative by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

2.7.3 No Action Alternative

The existing traffic congestion in the area under the No Action alternative would remain the status quo with exacerbated congestion in the future. The No Action alternative would not meet the Purpose and Need as discussed in Section 1.4. However, as required by NEPA it will be carried forward for analysis to provide a detailed comparison.

A comparison of Alternatives is found in Chapter 4, Table 4-1.

2.8 REASONABLY FORESEEABLE CUMULATIVE ACTIONS

Cumulative actions have impacts on the environment, which result from the incremental impacts of the actions when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time. The scoping process used to identify and address key issues for the SR 123 project generated a list of other reasonably foreseeable projects by government agencies that could occur in or near the SR 123 project area. For a project to be reasonably foreseeable, it must have advanced far enough in the planning process that its implementation is likely. The following major reasonably foreseeable federal, state, and local projects within the SR 123 project area have been identified:

- At the intersection of SR 85S and SR 123, FDOT is advancing a project to construct a new interchange. This location is at the southern terminus of the project area, but is not included in this project. The interchange is under development pursuant to FPID 220231-1-32-01. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) April 11, 2007. Construction groundbreaking commenced December 2009, as project RCS 04-886.

- The Mid-Bay Bridge Authority is advancing a project to construct a new 10-mile four-lane divided facility around the City of Niceville to the east and north (Okaloosa County, FL). A FONSI / Finding of No Practicable Alternative (FONPA) was issued by DoD December 5, 2008, as project RCS 07-523.

In 2005 the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) chose to expand the Eglin AFB mission. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was prepared to assess the potential environmental impacts associated with this new growth. The EIS resulted in a Record of Decision (ROD) to relocate the Army 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) from North Carolina to Eglin AFB as analyzed in EIS Alternative 3 with subsequent approval to beddown 59 aircraft, associated cantonment construction, and limited flight training. The impact of this decision in terms of transportation demand is discussed in Section 1.5.2 of this EA. The EIS and ROD do not identify mitigation for these roadways because they are deficient in the existing conditions, and improvement projects are either planned or programmed to address the existing deficiencies. This EA evaluates one of the referenced deficiencies.

The O-W TPO 2030 Long-Range Plan identifies the need to widen SR 85 to six lanes at some point in the future. However, that widening is not identified in the cost-feasible plan and is therefore not further evaluated as a reasonably foreseeable future action for the purposes of this NEPA analysis. However, the proposed project interchange at SR 123 and SR 85N has been designed so as not to preclude the potential for a future project.

CHAPTER 3

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This page intentionally blank

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section describes the natural and human environment that could be affected by the Proposed Action and alternatives. Environmental resources that may be potentially affected are considered in this chapter. Environmental issues are identified and addressed based on a sliding scale approach discussed earlier in this Environmental Assessment (EA) (Section 1.7). The history and mission of the installation are described to provide background information and an evaluation of mission impacts was conducted with Eglin Air Force Base (AFB) personnel through coordination with the Mission Enhancement Committee (MEC). The order of resource description is based on introducing the background and mission of the installation, the natural environment (air, geology, water, biology, wetlands, noise, and culture), hazardous materials and wastes, and the local community (socioeconomics, environmental justice, land use and aesthetics, and transportation). This order differs from the format recommendations in the *PD&E Manual* for a Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)/Federal Highway Administration (FHWA (EA), but was selected for consistency with other Eglin AFB National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents.

3.2 EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE

Eglin AFB, located in the northwest Florida panhandle is one of 19 component installations that make up the Department of Defense (DoD) Major Range Test Facility Base. Eglin AFB is situated among four counties: Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, and Gulf. Eglin's primary function is to support research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) of conventional weapons and electronic systems. It also provides support for individual and joint training of operational units. Eglin AFB is a national U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) asset because it provides a unique environment for RDT&E of conventional munitions and electronic systems. The Eglin AFB Military Complex occupies much of northwestern Florida, east of Pensacola. It comprises 724 square miles (mi^2) of land area, often referred to as the Eglin AFB Reservation, and nearly 142,000 mi^2 of airspace overlying the land and water ranges. SR 123 is located completely within Eglin AFB.

3.3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

This section describes the affected resources for the natural environment, which include air quality, geological resources, water resources, biological resources, wetlands, noise, and cultural resources.

The project area lies within portions of Sections 22, 27, and 34 of Township 1 North, Range 23 West, and portions of Sections 3, 4, and 9 of Township 1 South, Range 23 West on the Valparaiso, Fla. 1970 US Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5' topographic quadrangle map.

The project area generally consists of narrow grassy land beside the existing roadway right-of-way (ROW) and mixed pine and hardwood forest beyond this. Little development has occurred along SR 123. Developed areas include four wireless facilities (towers) and utility lines that parallel the roadway. An abandoned rail line parallels the road a short distance to the east. Overall, the visual impression of the project corridor surroundings is undeveloped forested lands.

3.3.1 Air Quality

This section describes the climatic and meteorological conditions that influence air quality, and the existing concentrations of various pollutants.

3.3.1.1 Climate

Eglin AFB experiences a mild, subtropical climate as a consequence of its latitude (30° to 31°) and the effects of the Gulf of Mexico. The climate results in warm, humid summers and mild winters, prevailing southerly winds, and often intense thunderstorm and hurricane events.

3.3.1.2 Weather

The mean daily maximum temperature at Eglin AFB is near 75 degrees Fahrenheit (°F). The mean annual precipitation is 62 inches. Thunderstorms occur on an average of 80 days, and measurable amounts of precipitation occur on an average of 106 days. Rainfall occurs primarily in the summer and late winter or early spring. The two peak rainfall periods are the primary period of June through September and the secondary period of December through April. Mean annual wind speed is 5 knots, and the prevailing surface wind directions are northerly with calm winds occurring 19 percent of the time (USAF, 1998).

Eglin AFB and the project area are vulnerable to tropical storms and hurricanes. This area experiences gale-force winds an average of once every three years and hurricane-force winds an average of once every six years. Weather associated with hurricanes includes tornadoes, high winds, and extremely heavy rain (USAF, 1998).

3.3.1.3 Regional Air Quality

Air quality in a given location is generally determined by the concentrations of various measurable substances in the atmosphere known as "criteria pollutants." The type and amount of pollutants in the atmosphere, the size and topography of the air basin, and the local and regional meteorological influences determine air quality.

Identifying the affected area for an air quality assessment requires knowledge of pollutant types, source emissions rates and release parameters, proximity relationships of project emission sources to other emissions sources, and local and regional meteorological conditions. For inert pollutants (those that do not participate in photochemical reactions), the affected area is generally limited to an area extending a few miles downwind from the source. Pollutant concentrations are compared to federal and state ambient air quality standards to determine potential effects. These standards represent the maximum allowable atmospheric concentration that may occur and still protect public health and welfare, with a reasonable margin of safety (USAF, 2003a).

In accordance with Executive Order (EO) 12088, *Federal Compliance with Pollution Control Standards*, federal agencies and departments must ensure that all necessary actions are taken for the prevention, control, and abatement of environmental pollution with respect to the Clean Air Act (CAA) and other environmental laws. In support of EO 12088, Air Force Instruction (AFI) 32-70, *Environmental Quality*, require federal agencies and departments to comply with applicable federal, state, and local environmental laws and standards.

AFI 32-7040, *Air Quality Compliance*, establishes a framework for Air Force facilities to follow in order to comply with applicable CAA requirements. Within this framework are the requirements to obtain and maintain operating permits as required and to prepare and periodically update a comprehensive emissions inventory (USAF, 2003a).

The National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) developed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets a national limit on the concentrations of "criteria pollutants" in the atmosphere of a particular area. The pollutants of highest concern to the EPA are carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), particulate matter less than or equal to 2.5 micrometers in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$), ozone (O_3), and lead (Pb). Primary standards set limits to protect public health, including the health of "sensitive" populations such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly. Secondary standards set limits to protect public welfare, including protection against decreased visibility, damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings. The CAA of 1990 requires states to achieve and maintain the NAAQS within their borders. Each state may adopt requirements stricter than those of the national standard. **Table 3-1** presents the USEPA's 2002 National Emissions Inventory (NEI) data for Okaloosa County (USAF, 2008). **Table 3-2** shows the federal NAAQS and the stricter standards adopted by Florida.

The status of an area is determined by how criteria pollutant concentrations in the atmosphere compare to the NAAQS. In accordance with the CAA, all areas within the state are designated with respect to the NAAQS as either attainment, non-attainment, or unclassifiable. Areas that meet the NAAQS are designated as attainment. Conversely, areas that violate the NAAQS are designated as non-attainment. Finally, areas where data are insufficient for classification as either attainment or non-attainment are designated as unclassifiable. In areas designated as non-attainment, a *State Implementation Plan* (SIP) is developed to bring the area into compliance with the NAAQS. Currently, Okaloosa County is designated as an attainment area for all "criteria pollutants" provided in the CAA. Therefore, the CAA conformity requirements do not apply to the project.

Okaloosa County meets current standards for ozone and for all NAAQS Criteria Pollutants (EPA, 2010b). However, the EPA proposes to lower the NAAQS for 8-hour primary ground-level ozone to a level within the range of 0.060-0.070 ppm. The proposed rule was published in the *Federal Register* on January 19, 2010. In 2013, the ozone standard will most likely be lowered and projections are that Okaloosa County will go non-attainment for ozone at that time. If designated non-attainment, there is a provision in the CAA that requires federal funded transportation investments to be consistent with the emissions targets in SIPs to avoid federal and state sanctions on transportation construction. The Long Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program would be analyzed for consistency with air quality goals. The Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization (O-W TPO) would develop a Transportation Conformity Plan to show how it will do its part in transportation planning to meet Florida's Implementation Plan goals. An air quality monitoring station (AIRS # 091-0002) was placed in Okaloosa County in December 2008 just east of Hurlburt Field in Mary Esther, Florida to collect data through the end of 2011 at which time the current status of attainment will be re-evaluated.

Table 3-1: ***USEPA 2002 National Emissions Inventory Data for Okaloosa County***

Source Type	Emissions (tons / year)				
	CO	**NOx**	**PM**	**SOx**	**VOCx**
Area Sources	1,867	281	8,387	462	4,527
Non-Road Mobile	16,150	1,099	162	109	1,897
On-Road Mobile	45,228	5,703	153	256	3,829
Point Sources	28	49	24	12	79
Totals	***63,274***	***7,132***	***8,736***	***839***	***10,333***

Data source: USAF, 2008.

Table 3-2: ***Ambient Air Quality Standards***

Air Pollutant	Averaging Time		National Ambient Air Quality Standards		Florida Ambient Air Quality Standards
			Primary	**Secondary**	
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	8-hour		9 ppm	N/A	**9 ppm**
	1-hour		35 ppm	N/A	**35 ppm**
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	Annual Arithmetic Mean		0.053 ppm	0.053 ppm	**0.05 ppm**
Sulfur Oxides (SO)	Annual Arithmetic Mean		0.03 ppm	N/A	**0.02 ppm**
	24-hour		0.14 ppm	N/A	**0.10 ppm**
	3-hour		N/A	0.50 ppm	**0.50 ppm**
Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	2.5 microns or less in size	Annual Arithmetic Mean	15 $\mu g/m^3$	15 $\mu g/m^3$	--
		24 hour	35 $\mu g/m^3$	35 $\mu g/m^3$	--
(PM_{10})	10 microns or less in size	Annual Arithmetic Mean	Revoked[2]	Revoked[2]	**50 $\mu g/m^3$**
		24 hour	150 $\mu g/m^3$	150 $\mu g/m^3$	**150 $\mu g/m^3$**
Ozone (O_3)	8-hour		0.75ppm	0.75ppm	--
	1-hour (Applies only in limited areas)		0.12ppm	0.12ppm	**0.12ppm**
Lead (Pb)	Quarterly Average		1.5 $\mu g/m^3$	1.5 $\mu g/m^3$	**1.5 $\mu g/m^3$**

3.3.2 Geological Resources

Geological resources include the physical surface and subsurface features of the earth such as physiography, geology, geologic hazards, and soils.

3.3.2.1 Physiography

Eglin AFB occupies portions of three physiographic provinces: the Coastal Barrier Island Chain, the Coastal Lowlands, and the Western Highlands. These physiographic provinces have been delineated based on geomorphic history and similarity of relief features or landforms and do not necessarily correspond to surface water drainage basin divides (USAF, 2003a).

The Proposed Action and alternatives are located in the Coastal Lowlands physiographic region. Elevations along the corridor range from a high of 140 feet (43 m) above mean sea level (amsl) to a low of 20 feet (6 m) amsl. The Coastal Lowlands are a series of coast-parallel terraces composed of clastics (consisting of rock and mineral fragments) that extend to higher inland elevations. The coast-parallel terraces are separated by an escarpment or gentle slope. The Coastal Lowlands are generally characterized by beach ridge plains, shorelines, and marine terraces formed during the Pleistocene Epoch or Ice Age between 10,000 and 1.8 million years ago. The terrace complexes are predominantly underlain by sand with local occurrences of clay, shell beds, and peat. The inland elevations of the terraces occur at about 150 feet, 100 feet, and 35 feet. Elevations in these lowlands range from 0 to 100 feet above National Geodetic Vertical Datum (USAF, 2003a).

3.3.2.2 Geology

The upland portion of the Eglin AFB range area is generally overlain with up to 250 feet of primarily non-marine quartz sands with some gravel and relatively thin clay lenses known as the Citronelle Formation. The distribution and character of sediments suggest that they are deposits of several early rivers that emptied into the Gulf of Mexico (USAF, 2007).

Two types of sandy clay units are found in the Citronelle Formation. One is clay that contains only a small amount of quartz sand. The other unit contains more sand (Clark and Schmidt, 1982). The Citronelle Formation is underlain by a series of Miocene-aged coarse clastic (Alum Bluff Group) and clay marine deposits (Pensacola clay) up to several hundred feet thick. These units are underlain by several hundred feet of early Miocene and Oligocene Marine limestones. All of these units dip gently southwestward in the Gulf Coast geosyncline (USAF, 2007).

3.3.2.3 Geologic Hazards

Geologic hazards in the area are negligible; there are no active sinkholes and no damage is likely from seismic events in Florida or Southern Alabama (USAF, 1992). There are geologic occurrences of seepage slopes and steephead ravines within the SR 123 area. Seepage slopes are wetlands on or at the base of sandhill slopes where moisture levels are maintained by the downslope seepage of water from the intersection with a semi-impermeable soil layer resulting in saturated but rarely inundated conditions. On Eglin AFB, seepage slopes are embedded within sandhills that are located on the clay-rich soils in the northeastern and eastern part of Eglin AFB and usually grade into a bay and gall plant community. They are unique habitats in the state, and their plant communities are biodiverse (Wolfe *et al.*, 1988) but are neither federally- nor state-listed, and no impacts are anticipated.

Steepheads are a type of ravine that exists in the Coastal Plain, but until the past couple of decades has been altogether unknown to biologists. Such ravines are called "steepheads" because of the peculiar geomorphology of their valley heads, which are impressive amphitheaters up to 35 m deep. Steepheads and the downstream ravines they form have a geological provenience entirely different from that of gully-eroded ravines. Steepheads are actively migrating heads of valleys that are formed in large, deep sand deposits of the lower Coastal Plain. The sand bodies appear to be ancient, (usually Plio-Pleistocene, barrier island complexes) with little clay or silt, and sands so porous that rainwater rapidly percolates downward to some confining layer, usually a silty marl or limestone, and resides there as a surficial aquifer (Means, 1985).

3.3.2.4 Soils

Based on the *Okaloosa County Soil Survey* (USDA, 1995), a listing of the types of soils identified within the study corridor is presented in **Table 3-3** and is illustrated in **Figure 3-1**.

Eglin AFB contains the following major soil associations:

- Lakeland
- St. Lucie-Paola
- Bonifay-Troup-Dothan
- Norfolk
- Chipley-Foxworth-Albany
- Rutledge-Leon
- Kingston-Bibb
- Dorovan-Pamlico.

The majority of the study corridor traverses Lakeland association. This association covers the greater part of Eglin AFB (about 78 percent) and consists of fine sands that have formed on broad ridge tops on the highest elevations. The Lakeland soils are classified as SP (poorly graded and gravelly sands), SM (silty sands), or SP-SM (poorly graded, gravelly sands) by the unified soil classification system or A-2, A-3, or A-2-4 by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The Lakeland soils are generally considered good for road bed construction. The area also contains some Dorovan muck, generally considered poor for road bed construction. Following **Table 3-3**, a brief description is provided of the soil associations expected to be encountered along the SR 123 corridor, or within the project vicinity.

Table 3-3: *Soil Descriptions*

Symbol	Soil Name	Soil Classification		Permeability (inches/ hour)	Suitability for Road Subgrade
		Unified [1]	AASHTO [2]		
6	Dorovan muck, frequently flooded	PT	-----	0.6 – 2.0	**Poor**
12/13	Lakeland	SP, SP-SM	A-3, A-2-4	6-20	**Good**

Source: USDA, 1995.

1 Based on the Unified Soil Classification System, American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) D 2487.

2 Based on the AASHTO Soil Classification System.

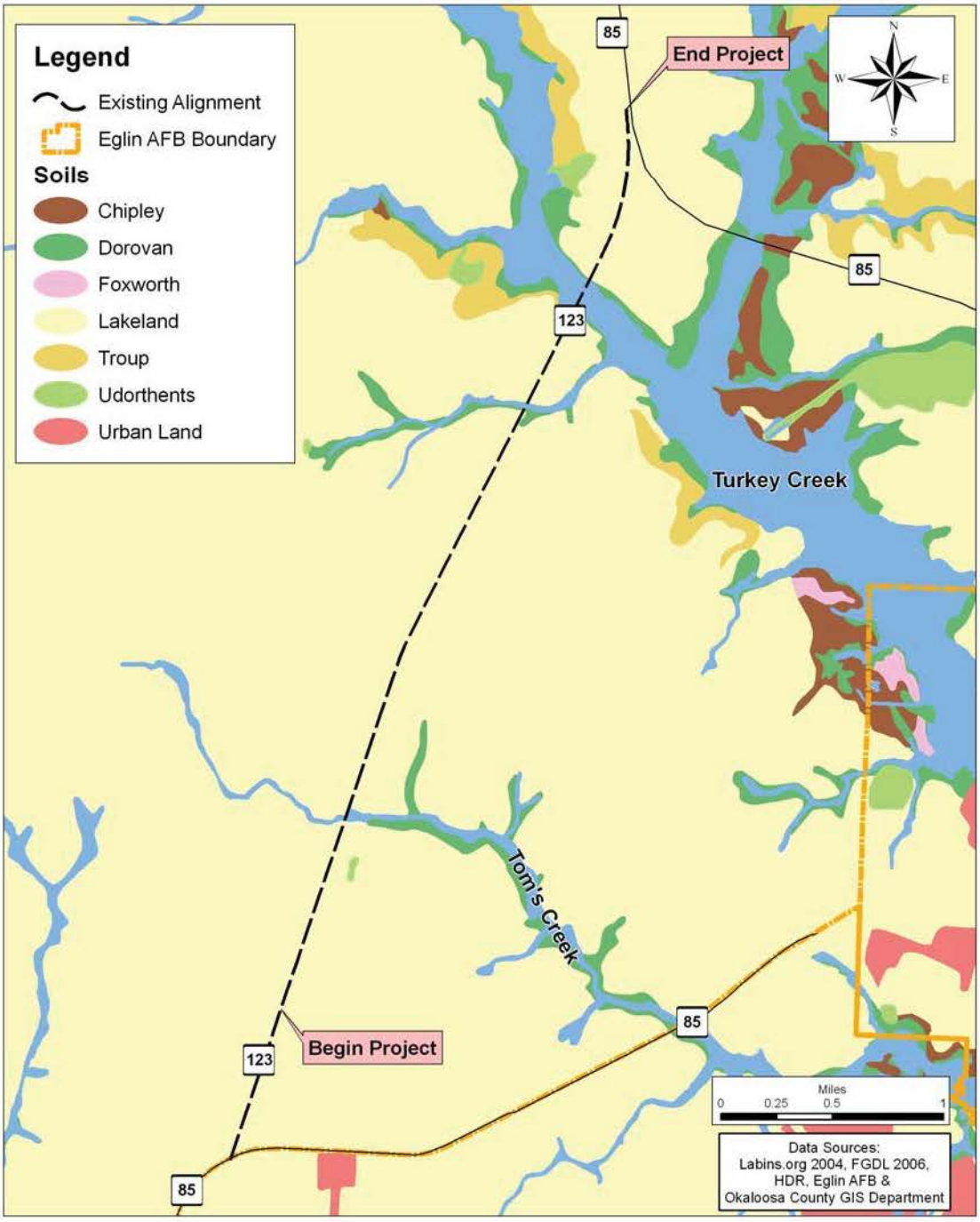
Table 3-3 key: SP: poorly graded and gravelly sands, SM: silty sands, PT: peat, muck, highly organic.

Dorovan: This soil type is a hydric soil limited to the areas adjacent to Tom's and Turkey Creeks. No proposed stormwater treatment systems would be sited in Dorovan soil. It is located throughout the project limits in the wetland areas and was confirmed during the geotechnical field investigation; the soil consists of black muck to a depth of 60 inches or more overlying very dark grayish brown sand that extends to a depth of 80 inches or more. Dorovan soils are moderate in permeability and have very high water capacity. These soil areas will be studied in more detail during design to determine the type and exact location of the structures needed to adequately address this soil's compaction limitations.

Lakeland: This soil type is not a hydric soil. All proposed stormwater treatment systems would be sited in Lakeland sands. It is found on the majority of the Eglin AFB reservation (78 percent) and appears to be the dominant soil association found within the SR 123 corridor. It is nearly level or gently sloping, excessively drained soil found on broad ridge tops in the uplands. Natural vegetation consists of long-leaf pine and turkey oak as well as sand pine, saw palmetto, wiregrass, and reindeer moss to name a few.

Other: There is one minor localized patch of Udorthents soils east of the facility, south of Tom's Creek. Troup sands are present on the western side of the project just south of Turkey Creek and north of the project adjacent to SR 85 North.

Figure 3-1: ***Soil Types in Project Area***



3.3.3 Water Resources

The water resources section contains information relevant to surface waters (streams, creeks, bays, and bayous), groundwater (aquifers), and floodplains as well as their relationship to water quality. It also discusses the water quality programs that are enforced as part of these regulations.

3.3.3.1 Surface Water

Two drainage systems cut across the corridor, essentially dividing it into segments. The southern segment, which lies south of Tom's Creek, is relatively flat upland existing between 90 and 100 ft. (27-30 m) amsl. Tom's Creek is a small, sluggish stream that originates approximately 1 mile (1.6 km) to the west-northwest. North of this stream, the topography becomes rolling with elevations ranging between about 100 and 140 ft. (30-43 m) amsl. This continues for a distance of approximately 1.7 miles (2.7 km) north of Tom's Creek to the southern part of the Turkey Creek drainage system.

The topography to the north rolls sometimes steeply across a series of ridge toes and terraces beside Turkey Creek and one of its tributaries. Turkey Creek itself is narrow and sluggish at this location, but is bordered by marshy bottom land for 393-492 ft. (120 to 150 m) to either side. This marshy bottom lies at approximately 20 ft. (6 m) amsl. The gently rolling upland area to the north of Turkey Creek is actually a wide knoll existing between Turkey Creek to the west and Juniper Creek to the east.

Section 303 of the CWA requires states to establish water quality standards for waterways, to identify those that fail to meet the standards, and to take action to clean up these waterways. Florida recently adopted the Impaired Waters Rule (IWR, Chapter 62-303, F.A.C., with amendments, as the new methodology for assessing the state's waters for CWA Section 303(d) listing. Waters that are determined to be impaired using the methodology in the IWR and adopted by Secretarial Order, are submitted to the EPA for approval as Florida's 303(d) List. The 2004 Integrated Water Quality Assessment for Florida, 2004 305(b) Report, and 303(d) List Update satisfies the listing and reporting requirements of Sections 303(d) and 305(b) of the CWA (USAF, 2006). No water bodies within the action area are listed as impaired on the 1998 303(d) List (FDEP, 2008).

The FDEP has determined that the submerged lands of Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek below the ordinary high-water mark are state-owned **(Appendix C)**, with no easements for crossing the streams. Neither Tom's Creek nor Turkey Creek are designated as Outstanding Florida Waters. Likewise, the system does not drain into any Outstanding Florida Waters.

The FDEP Watershed Management Section partners with the Okaloosa County Board of Commissioner's Environmental Council (OCEC) for a water quality report for Choctawhatchee Bay sponsored by the Okaloosa County Tourist Development Council. The nearest monitoring station to the project location is EPA Storet Station 32010087 at Turkey Creek at the City of Niceville Nature Trail on SR 20 downstream of the project alignment (EPA, 2009b). However, this location does not have readily available monitoring data. Publically available data from April 2008 at the next station downstream in Boggy Bayou indicate a dissolved oxygen content of 4 ppm, coliform count of 19, and a water temperature of 70 degrees F (OCEC, 2009). The coliform number reported represents the number of colony forming units per 100 milliliters of water. Exceeding 800#/100 milliliters for any single sample indicates that the waterbody sampled does not meet recreational water quality standards and contact should be avoided (OCEC, 2009).

Figures 3-2 and **3-3** depict streams on Eglin AFB with respect to the SR 123 corridor. The figures illustrate the streams designated as Okaloosa Darter (*Etheostoma okaloosae*) streams. This designation is given because Okaloosa Darter streams have been given higher priority for restoration (USAF, 2007). However, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has not designated these streams as critical habitat.

The project is located within the Choctawhatchee Bay Watershed (USGS Unit Number 03140102) and crosses two secondary drainage basins: Tom's Creek Basin (approximately 5,124 acres) in the southern portion, and the much larger Turkey Creek Basin (approximately 17,233 acres) in the northern portion (**Figure 3-3**). A small portion of the southern alignment extends beyond the Tom's Creek Basin. All discharge eventually reaches Choctawhatchee Bay which has been designated a Class III Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) priority waterbody by the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NWFWMD). Lands draining to this portion of Choctawhatchee Bay have historically been the focus of local and state efforts to remediate for observed sedimentation problems in receiving waters. Tom's Creek flows eastward into Tom's Bayou and Turkey Creek flows eastward into Boggy Bayou, both of which are part of the Choctawhatchee Bay system.

Runoff currently collects in roadside ditches or shoulder gutters and flows to one of three outfalls. Stormwater is conveyed to the outfalls via the existing roadside ditches and shoulder gutters. Runoff from the bridges flows directly into the creeks.

3.3.3.2 Groundwater

Two major aquifers underlie the main reservation of Eglin AFB: the surficial aquifer, also known as the sand and gravel aquifer, and the Floridan aquifer. The sand and gravel aquifer is a generally unconfined, near-surface unit separated from the underlying confined Floridan aquifer by the low-permeability Pensacola Clay confining bed. The sand and gravel aquifer is mainly composed of clean, fine-to-coarse sand and gravel, while the Floridan aquifer consists of a thick sequence of inter-bedded limestone and dolomite. Water quality of the sand and gravel aquifer is generally good, but it is vulnerable to contamination from surface pollutants due to its proximity to the ground surface (USAF, 2003c).

Water from the sand and gravel aquifer is not a primary source of domestic or public water supply on Eglin AFB because of the higher quality water available from the underlying Upper Limestone of the Floridan aquifer. The quality of water drawn from the upper limestone of the Floridan aquifer is of suitable quality for most uses, and is the primary source of water used at Eglin AFB. The top of the aquifer is about 50 ft below mean sea level (MSL) in the northeast corner of Eglin AFB and increases to about 700 ft below MSL in the southwestern area of Eglin AFB (McKinnon and Pratt, 1998). The wells on Eglin AFB tap into both the surficial and Floridan aquifers and are used for both potable and non-potable supply. Groundwater levels have dropped up to 160 ft since 1940 at some locations in south Okaloosa County. One site on Eglin AFB in central Okaloosa County has dropped 100 ft since 1940 (NWFWMD, 2005). The NWFWMD has identified excessive groundwater pumping for water supply as the reason for these drops. While the Floridan aquifer is the primary source for drinking water at Eglin AFB and the surrounding areas, due to groundwater level decreases, the sand and gravel aquifer is being examined for increased pumpage. This aquifer is already used as a water source in Santa Rosa County, but has not been used in Okaloosa County for potable supply.

Figure 3-2: ***Surface Water and Darter Habitat***

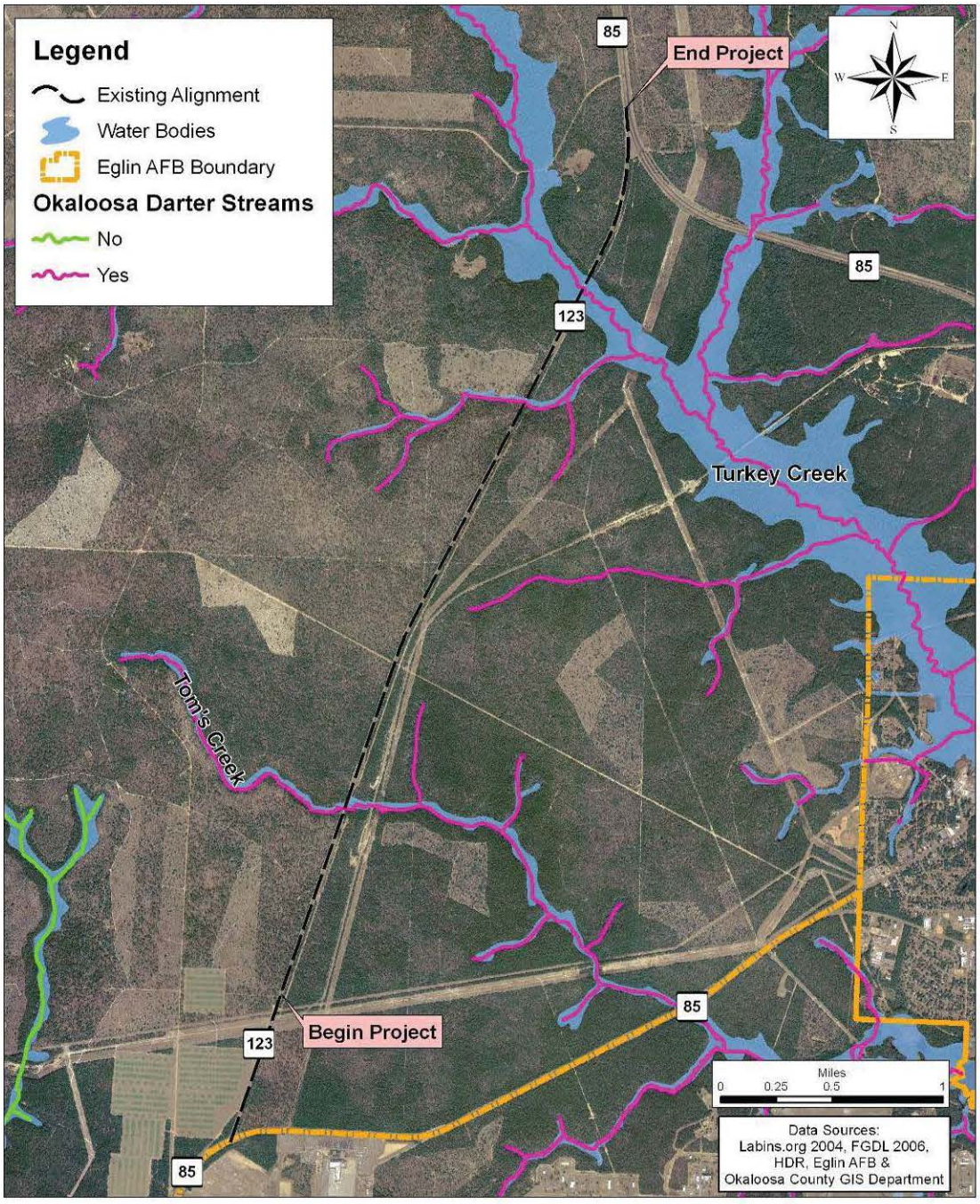
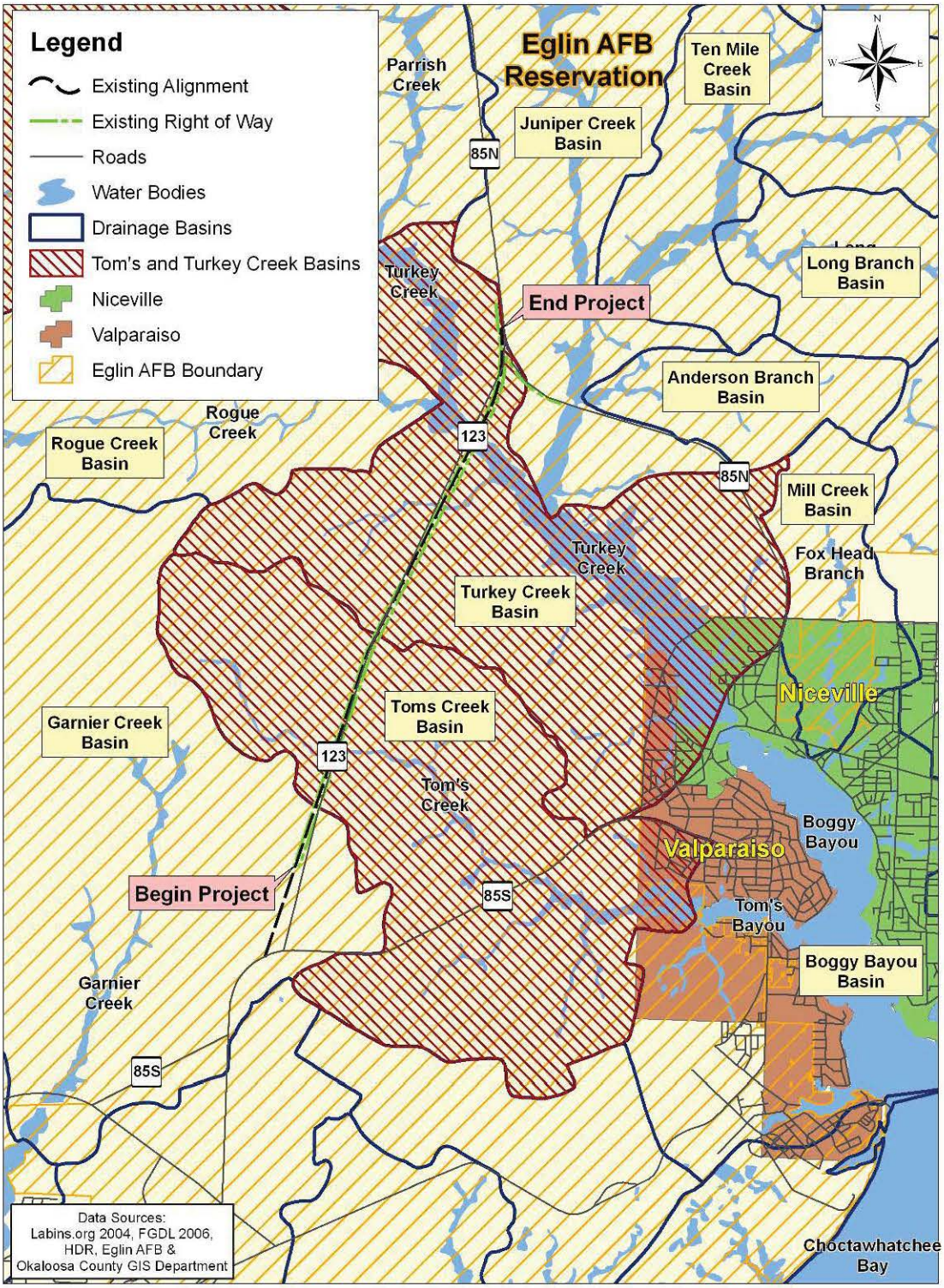


Figure 3-3: ***Watersheds***



3.3.3.3 Floodplains

Under EO 11988, *Floodplain Management* (42 *Federal Register* (FR) 26951), federal agencies and departments are prohibited from the occupancy and modification of floodplains and floodplain development unless there is no practicable alternative. The EO stipulates that agencies proposing actions in floodplains consider alternative actions to avoid adverse effects, avoid incompatible development in the floodplains, and provide opportunity for early public review of any plans or proposals. If adverse effects are unavoidable, the action agency must include mitigation measures in the action to minimize impacts.

Figure 3-4 shows the location of floodplain areas associated with the project. Floodplains are identified using flood hazard mapping data developed through the National Flood Insurance Program. Areas identified as located within Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA), as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), are areas that would be inundated by a flood having a 1-percent chance of occurring in any given year. This occurrence was previously referred to as the 100-year floodplain. Development may take place within the SFHA as long as the development is compliant with local floodplain management ordinances (which must meet minimum federal requirements). Within the SFHA, several flood hazard zones correspond to different levels of detailed determination methods and flood insurance requirements.

The facility traverses FEMA Zone A (100-year floodplain with no base flood elevation determined) in two locations: at the un-named tributary to Turkey Creek (Outfall #2) between Stations 1242+16 and 1244+93, and over Turkey Creek itself (Outfall #3) between Stations 1269+20 and 1280+70.

There is no designated 100-year floodplain at Tom's Creek where the project traverses the creek bed. There are no regulatory floodways within the project limits. The floodplains are identified from FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Panel 370 of 494, Map Number 12091C0370H, December, 2002.

No flooding problems were identified for the project area. The vertical clearance above high water level (as determined for the 50 year storm) for Tom's and Turkey Creeks are approximately 28 and 22 feet, respectively, and there is no record of any overtopping.

Figure 3-4: *100-Year Floodplain*

3.3.4 Biological Resources

Biological resources include the plants and animals that make up natural communities. These natural communities are dependant upon the climate and landscape position (topography) of the area. The discussion of biological resources is divided into three components: ecological associations; wildlife; and rare, threatened, or endangered species.

3.3.4.1 Ecological Associations

Eglin AFB applies a classification system of ecological associations to all its lands, based on floral, faunal, and geophysical characteristics. These ecological associations are described in Eglin's *Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, 2007* (USAF, 2007) and the *Environmental Baseline Study Resource Appendices* (USAF, 2003c). Seven ecological associations occur throughout the Eglin AFB Land and Test and Training Range:

1. Sandhills ecological association
2. Flatwoods ecological association
3. Barrier Island ecological association
4. Wetlands/Riparian ecological association
5. Open Grassland/Shrubland ecological association
6. Landscaped and Urban Areas ecological association
7. Invasive Exotics/Non-native Plants ecological association.

The SR 123 corridor is primarily located within two of the seven ecological associations described above: the Sandhills ecological association, and the Wetlands/Riparian ecological association.

Sandhills Ecological Association (Sandhills)

The Sandhills ecological associations system is the most extensive natural community type on Eglin AFB, accounting for approximately 78% (approximately 362,000 acres) of the base. Longleaf Pine Sandhills are characterized by an open, savanna-like structure with a moderate to tall canopy of longleaf pine, a sparse mid-story of oaks and other hardwoods, and a diverse groundcover comprised mainly of grasses, forbs and low stature shrubs. The structure and composition was maintained by frequent fires, (every 3-5 years), which controlled hardwood, sand pine, and titi encroachment. Longleaf Pine Sandhills consist of a high diversity of species adapted to fire and the heterogeneous conditions that fires create. Variation within the Sandhills is recognized by the two associations differing in the dominance of grass species (wiregrass versus bluestem). Sandhills are often associated with and grade into Scrub, Upland Pine Forest, Xeric Hammock or slope forests. It is also known as longleaf pine-turkey oak, longleaf pine-xerophytic oak, longleaf pine-deciduous oak or high pine. The functional significance of the Sandhills is to provide maintenance of regional biodiversity. Additionally, the sandhills due to their wide coverage on Eglin AFB are the ecological associations across which fire carries into the other imbedded fire-dependent systems. Eglin AFB is the largest and least fragmented, single longleaf pine ownership in the region, and has the best remaining old growth longleaf pine (USAF, 2007).

Wetlands/Riparian Ecological Association

The Wetlands/Riparian ecological association is an important contributor to the health and diversity of the Eglin AFB landscape. This ecological association comprises approximately 60,809 acres and 1,158 miles of riverine aquatic systems (USAF, 2007). The wetland communities found within the Wetlands/Riparian ecological association consist of depression wetlands, seepage slopes and streams, and floodplain wetlands.

The Wetlands/Riparian ecological association includes the twelve large watersheds within the Eglin AFB boundaries. Great diversity of invertebrate and fish species is found within the streams associated with these watersheds. At least eleven different plant community types, defined by the State Heritage Program, are found within riparian areas on Eglin AFB. Seepage streams are perennial, originating in the sandy uplands of the installation and fed by groundwater recharge. Flood events only occur during extreme rain events (e.g., hurricanes), otherwise flows are relatively consistent. Stream temperatures fluctuate during the year, being more constant near the headwaters. These seepage streams are moderately acidic (USAF, 2007).

3.3.4.2 Wildlife

The protected habitat on Eglin AFB provides wildlife habitat due primarily to the large size of the installation, its habitat quality and diversity. Eglin AFB provides 35 distinct natural community types ranging from barrier islands to old growth longleaf pine forests. Eglin AFB manages natural resources in cooperation with Eglin AFB Natural Resource Section (NRS) at Jackson Guard , USFWS, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). **Table 3-4** summarizes the fish and wildlife species found on Eglin AFB. Many of the species are likely to occur in the SR 123 project area and are further discussed in the following sections.

Description of the Affected Environment for wildlife species is summarized below from the project's Wildlife and Habitat Report (FDOT3 2009a), Wetlands Evaluation Report (FDOT3, 2008i), and Biological Assessment (**Appendix I**). Record of communication and consultation with the FWC and USFWS is provided in these reports and in **Appendix C** and **Appendix I** of this EA.

Table 3-4: *Summary List of Fish and Wildlife Species Found on Eglin AFB*
(Source: USAF, 2007 - listing is summary only, not all inclusive)

Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	*Picoides borealis*	Wood Duck	*Aix sponsa*	Pine Barrens Tree Frog	*Hyla andersonii*
Northern Bobwhite	*Colinus virginianus*	Red-winged Blackbird	*Agelaius phoenicius*	Five-lined Skink	*Eumeces fasciatus*
Great Horned Owl	*Bubo virginianus*	Cotton Mouth	*Agkistridon piscivorus*	Green Anole	*Anolis carolinensis*
Gopher Tortoise	*Gopherus polyphemus*	Flatwoods Salamander	*Ambystoma bishopi*	Garter Snake	*Thamnophis sirtalis*
Indigo Snake	*Drymarchon corais*	River Otter	*Lutra canadensis*	American Beaver	*Castor canadensis*
Diamondback Rattlesnake	*Crotalus adamanteus*	Gray Fox	*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*	Northern Parula	*Parula Americana*
Six-lined Racerunner	*Cnemidophorus sexlineatus*	Ghost Crab	*Ocypode quadratus*	Periwinkles	*Littorina Irrorata*
Florida Black Bear	*Ursus americanus floridanus*	Least Tern	*Sterna albifrons*	Oyster	*Crassostrea virginica*
Fox Squirrel	*Sciurus niger*	Loggerhead Sea Turtle	*Caretta caretta*	Gulf Crab	*Calinectes smilis*
Least Shrew	*Cryptodus parva*	Shorebirds	*Several genera & species*	Long-nosed Killifish	*Fundulus similis*
Cottontail Rabbit	*Sylvilagus floridanus*	Fox	*Vulpes vulpes*	Sheepshead Minnow	*Cyprinodon variegatus*
Pocket Gopher	*Geomys pinetus*	Cotton Rat	*Sigmodon hispidus*	Great Blue Heron	*Ardea herodias*
White-tailed Deer	*Odocoileus virginianus*	Opossum	*Didelphis virginiana*	Belted Kingfisher	*Megaceryle alcyon*
Feral Pig	*Sus scrofa*	Eastern Mole	*Scalopus aquaticus*	Red shouldered Hawk	*Buteo lineatus*
Salt Marsh Rabbit	*Sylvilagus aquaticus*	Florida Burrowing Owl	*Athene cunicularia*	Southeastern American Kestrel	*Falco sparverius paulus*
Slender Glass Lizard	*Ophisaurus attenuatus*	Flycatchers	*Tyrannidae spp.*	American Alligator	*Alligator mississippiensis*
Raccoon	*Procyon lotor*	Cotton Mouse	*Peromyscus gossypinus*	Pygmy Rattlesnake	*Sistrurus miliarius*
Beach Mouse	*Peromyscus polionotus sbspp.*	Black Racer	*Coluber constrictor*	Okaloosa Darter	*Etheostoma okaloosae*
Largemouth Bass	*Micropterus salmoides*	Sailfin Shiner	*Pteronotropis hypselopterus*		

3.3.4.3 Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Species

There are federally-listed threatened and endangered (T&E) species managed on Eglin AFB because they occur on Eglin AFB either year-round or seasonally. The federally-listed species include: the Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW), Piping Plover, Okaloosa Darter, Gulf Sturgeon, Flatwoods Salamander, Eastern Indigo Snake, Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle, Loggerhead Sea Turtle, Green Sea Turtle, Leatherback Sea Turtle, and Florida Perforate Lichen. Other federally-listed species such as the West Indian Manatee, Peregrine Falcon, and Wood Stork have been documented on Eglin AFB during seasonal migrations. The American Alligator, which is common on Eglin AFB, is also federally-listed due to its similarity in appearance with the endangered American Crocodile. The Bald Eagle, found on Eglin AFB, is no longer federally-listed, however, it is protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Nine of the federally-listed T&E species have Recovery Plans currently in place (RCW, Okaloosa Darter, Loggerhead, Green and Leatherback Sea Turtles, Eastern Indigo Snake, Florida Perforate Lichen, and Gulf Sturgeon). A Flatwoods Salamander Recovery Plan is currently in draft stage. There are 67 state-listed T&E species found on Eglin. Most (55) of the 67 state-listed T&E species are plants. Of the 12 state-listed T&E animal species, only four (Snowy Plover, Least Tern, Southeastern American Kestrel, and Florida Black Bear) are not also federally-listed as a T&E species. Eighteen species of animals are state-listed as Species of Special Concern. An additional 17 animal species are not listed by the FWC or the USFWS, but are tracked by the Florida Natural Area Inventory (FNAI) due to their rarity and/or declining population trends (USAF, 2007).

According to Eglin AFB, GIS data sources and FNAI Element Occurrence Record Search (June, 2007 and updated May 2009), the species presented in **Table 3-5** are likely to occur within a one mile radius of the SR 123 corridor. The table shows these species, their federal and state listing status, and their habitat and potential of occurrence within the proposed area. According to database records in the FDOT Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Geographic Information System (GIS) system, there is no designated Critical Habitat in the project area.

TABLE 3-5. FEDERAL / STATE, THREATENED / ENDANGERED SPECIES THAT MAY OCCUR IN THE PROJECT ALIGNMENT

Species		Listing Status	Habitat	Potential
Fish				
Okaloosa Darter	*Etheostoma okaloosae*	FT/SE	Creeks and small freshwater tributaries	Documented * (see note on page 3-22)
Gulf Sturgeon	*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*	FT, SSC	Open water	Low
Blackmouth Shiner	*Notropis melanostomus*	SE	Blackwater streams	Likely
Bluenose Shiner	*Pteronotropis welaka*	SSC	Blackwater streams	Likely
Amphibian and Reptiles				
Eastern Indigo Snake	*Drymarchon couperi*	FT/ST	Mesic flatwoods	Likely
Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander	*Ambystoma bishopi*	FE/SS	Xeric pine flatwoods/ isolated cypress ponds	Low
Gopher Tortoise	*Gopherus polypheums*	ST	Xeric uplands/pine flatwoods	Potential
Alligator Snapping Turtle	*Macrochelys temminckii*	SSC	Swamps/marshes	Potential
Florida Pine Snake	*Pituophis melanoleucus mugitus*	SSC	Xeric pine flatwoods	Documented
Gopher Frog	*Rana capito*	SSC	Xeric upland forest/marshes	Potential
Pine Barrens Treefrog	*Hyla andersonii*	SSC	Seepage bogs	Documented
Birds				
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	*Picoides borealis*	FE, SSC	Old growth pine forests/sandhill	Potential *
Wood Stork	*Mycteria americana*	FE, SE	Flooded wetlands	Low
Bald Eagle	*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*	BGEPA	Close to bodies of water	Potential
Florida Burrowing Owl	*Athene cunicularia floridana*	SSC	Dry prairie, sandhill	Potential
Tri-colored Heron	*Egretta tricolor*	SSC	Flooded wetlands	Potential
White Ibis	*Eudocimus albus*	SSC	Flooded wetlands	Potential

* FNAI 2009 reports the potential for RCW as "Likely." However, further investigation as documented in the Biological Assessment finds not active Core Foraging Area. Therefore, "Likely" has been down-listed to "Potential."

TABLE 3-5 (CONTINUED). FEDERAL/STATE THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES THAT MAY OCCUR IN THE PROJECT ALIGNMENT

Species		Listing Status	Habitat	Potential
Mammals				
Florida Black Bear	*Ursus americanus floridanus*	ST	Variety of forested habitats	Likely **
Plants				
Alabama Spiny-pod	*Matelea alabamensis*	SE	Mixed-pine-hardwood forest	Potential
Ashe's Magnolia	*Magnolia ashei*	SE	Upland hardwood forest	Documented
Coville's Rush	*Juncus gymnocarpus*	SE	Bogs, acid swamps	Documented
Florida Flame Azalea	*Rhododendron austrinum*	SE	Upland hardwood forest	Low Potential
Green Adder's-mouth	*Malaxis unifolia*	SE	Moist hammocks, prairies	Likely
Hairy-peduncled Beakrush	*Rhynchospora crinipes*	SE	Wet stream banks	Documented
Hummingbird Flower	*Macranthera flammea*	SE	Seepage slopes, streamside, bogs	Potential
Incised Groove-bur	*Agrimonia incisa*	SE	Sandhill	Potential
Karst Pond Xyris	*Xyris longisepala*	SE	Sandhill pond margin	Potential
Panhandle Lily	*Lilium iridollae*	SE	Floodplain forest, seepage slope	Documented
Panhandle Meadowbeauty	*Rhexia salicifolia*	SE	Pond and marsh margins	Potential
Panhandle Spiderlily	*Hymenocallis henryae*	SE	Wet flatwoods, cypress edge	Potential
Pondspice	*Litsea aestivalis*	SE	Edge of ponds, baygalls	Potential
Primrose-flowered Butterwort	*Pinguicula primuliflora*	SE	Seepage slope, bog	Potential
Small-flowered Meadowbeauty	*Rhexia parviflora*	SE	Seepage slope, marsh edge	Potential
West's Flax	*Linum westii*	SE	Wet flatwoods, bog, pond edge	Potential

** Documented vehicle / bear strikes have occurred and are further discussed in the Biological Assessment.

TABLE 3-5 (CONTINUED). FEDERAL/STATE THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES THAT MAY OCCUR IN THE PROJECT ALIGNMENT

Species		Listing Status	Habitat	Potential
Yellow Fringeless Orchid	*Platanthera*	SE	Floodplain forest, stream bank	Potential
Arkansas Oak	*Quercus arkansana*	ST	Mixed mesic hammock	Documented
Baltzell's Sedge	*Carex baltzellii*	ST	Steephead slope	Documented
Bog Button	*Lachnocaulon digynum*	ST	Seepage bog	Documented
Chapman's Crownbeard	*Verbesina chapmanii*	ST	Wet flatwoods, prairie	Potential
Curtiss' Sandgrass	*Calamovilfa curtissii*	ST	Flatwoods	Potential
Gulf Coast Lupine	*Lupinus westianus*	ST	Sand pine scrub	Potential
Hairy Wild Indigo	*Baptisia calycosa var. villosa*	ST	Hammocks	Documented
Harper's Yellow-eyed Grass	*Xyris scabrifolia*	ST	Bog	Documented
Large-leaved Jointweed	*Polygonella macrophylla*	ST	Coastal scrub	Documented
Naked-stemmed Panic Grass	*Panicum nudicaule*	ST	Sandhill, flatwoods	Documented
Piedmont Jointgrass	*Coelorachis tuberculosa*	ST	Pond and marsh margins	Potential
Pineland Hoary-pea	*Tephrosia mohrii*	ST	Pinelands	Documented
Pine-woods Bluestem	*Andropogon arctatus*	ST	Flatwoods, scrub	Potential
Sweet pitcherplant	*Sarracenia rubra*	ST	Wet prairies, bogs	Documented*
Southern Milkweed	*Asclepias viridula*	ST	Wet flatwoods, prairies	Potential
Spoon-leaved Sundew	*Drosera intermedia*	ST	Pond margins	Documented*
Toothed Savory	*Calamintha dentata*	ST	Sandhill	Potential

* Observed during field investigations

Federal & State Listed Species

Federally-listed and state-listed species presented in **Table 3-5** above have the potential to occur, or have been documented within a one mile radius of the SR 123 corridor. Therefore, species surveys and a Biological Assessment were conducted to initiate the formal consultation process with the USFWS pursuant to Section 7 of the ESA to determine if adverse impacts to any listed species are likely to occur as a result of the project. Consultation with Eglin AFB and USFWS reveal the listed species likely to occur within the SR 123 corridor are the Okaloosa Darter, Eastern Indigo Snake, Flatwoods Salamander, Bald Eagle, RCW; and two state-listed species, Gopher Tortoise and Florida Black Bear. Results of the Biological Assessment (BA) are summarized in Section 4.1.4 and included in **Appendix I.** Figures related to the BA are provided in **Appendix I** and are not duplicated in this portion of the EA.

Following is a discussion of the listed species that were further evaluated in the project's Wildlife and Habitat Report, and BA. A discussion of potential impacts is found in Chapter 4 of this EA.

Okaloosa Darter

The Okaloosa Darter (*Etheostoma okaloosae*) is federally-listed as Threatened and state-listed as Endangered. The USFWS listed the Okaloosa Darter as Endangered on June 4, 1973 (38 FR 14678). USFWS reclassified the Okaloosa Darter from Endangered to Threatened, on April 1 2011 (76 FR 18087). The following discussion of Okaloosa Darter habitat and status incorporates current information from USFWS *Federal Register* publication on February 2, 2010.

The Okaloosa Darter is found in six small Choctawhatchee Bay Basin tributaries located in the sandhills ecological association of the Eglin AFB Reservation. Maintaining viable populations in all six basins is a goal of the current recovery plan (USFWS, 1998). Two of these creeks, Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek including an un-named tributary of Turkey Creek) are bridged or have culverted crossings along the project alignment and contribute 34% of the total potential Okaloosa Darter habitat.

Okaloosa Darter habitat is sensitive to a variety of disturbances. USFWS finds that Okaloosa Darters typically inhabit the margins of moderate, to fast-flowing streams where detritus, root mats, and vegetation are present. Habitat loss or degradation has occurred from several factors including siltation, several small impoundments, and possibly domestic pollution. Erosion can increase siltation and imperil the darter's habitat, and its range has also been reduced by habitat modification and encroachment by the brown darter. Data have not shown collection of Okaloosa Darters in areas where there is no stream current, or in open sandy areas in the middle of a stream channel.

Eastern Indigo Snake

The federally-threatened Eastern Indigo Snake (*Drymarchon couperi*) is the largest non-venomous snake in North America and can grow up to 125 inches in length. The USFWS listed the Eastern Indigo Snake as threatened in 1978 (*Federal Register* Vol. 43 No 52:11082-11093). It generally requires very large tracts of land to survive and Eglin AFB provides an ideal habitat with large expanses of undeveloped and undisturbed land. Indigo snakes utilize a diverse range of habitats, from flatwoods, hammocks, stream bottoms, cane brakes, riparian thickets, and high ground with deep, well-drained to excessively drained, sandy soils. Habitat preferences vary seasonally. Pine sandhill winter dens are used from December to April. Summer territories are selected from May to July. From August through November, indigo snakes are frequently located in shady creek bottoms. These seasonal changes in habitat encourage the maintenance of travel corridors that link these different habitat types (Hallam et al.,1998). They are considered commensals of the Gopher Tortoise, wintering over in their burrows in the uplands, but foraging in more mesic to hydric habitats.

The Eastern Indigo Snake is found throughout Florida, but is rare in most areas. This species has been documented within the one mile project alignment buffer. No Eastern Indigo Snakes were observed during field investigations. There is a moderate potential for the occurrence of the Eastern Indigo Snake within the proposed project area. Potential impact to the Eastern Indigo Snake and its habitat may occur during the construction activities and operation of the project.

Flatwoods Salamander

The federally-listed Flatwoods Salamander (*Ambystoma spp.*) ranges in size from 3.5 to 5 inches. This salamander is small-headed and stocky and has a distinctive silvery gray coloration with black to brown mottling in a reticulated or sometimes frosted pattern. Based on morphological analyses and mitochondrial DNA, two species of flatwoods salamanders have been recognized – the threatened Frosted Flatwoods Salamander (*Ambystoma cingulatum*) to the east of the Apalachicola drainage area, and the endangered Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander (*Ambystoma bishopi*) to the west. Therefore the Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander, A. bishopi is documented within the larger Eglin AFB property. Adult salamander habitat typically consists of mesic, fire-maintained, open-canopied Longleaf Pine (*Pinus palustris*) and Slash Pine (*P. elliotii*) flatwoods and savannas. Typical breeding sites consist of short-hydroperiod, isolated depressions. These depressions tend to have an open canopy or shrub layer that is likened to marshes.

Eglin's natural resource management for the Flatwoods Salamander focuses on habitat management. Efforts to protect the species and its habitat include the observation of buffer areas from the edge of known and potential wetland habitat. Restrictions apply to ground disturbing activities within these buffers to minimize the potential for direct impact to salamanders and alterations to hydrology and water quality (USAF, 2006).

Though potential Flatwoods Salamander habitat is documented in the eastern portions of Eglin AFB, and sites are documented well to the west and to the south, there are no documented sites within the project alignment.

A Phase I assessment was completed in accordance with the FDOT/HDR Flatwoods Salamander Habitat Evaluation Model. The evaluation indicated a low potential for salamander habitat within the secondary habitat buffer zone, extending 1,476 feet from edge of the proposed ROW to the east and west for the length of the roadway project and surrounding potential stormwater pond sites. Examination of GIS mapping including land use, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) soil mapping, and wetlands characterized the project vicinity wetlands as contiguous, non-ephemeral, floodplain wetlands associated with Turkey Creek and Tom's Creek. These floodplain/bottomwood forested wetlands in hydric soils (primarily poorly-drained Dorovan Soils), are part of a large clear-water stream system. Seepage slope streams and baygalls occurring in small steephead tributaries constitute the rare natural wetland communities in the vicinity. Common to all these wetlands are their contiguous, flowing-water nature, and the presence of predatory fish which negate the potential for the existence of flatwood salamanders.

No Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander critical habitat has been designated in the area associated with the project alignment. No known or potential Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander habitat or breeding ponds have been documented in the secondary habitat buffer zone of the project alignment, nor have any Reticulated Flatwoods Salamanders been observed within the area of the project alignment during field investigations. The SR 123 Proposed Action will likely not impact any potential breeding habitat areas as there is a low potential for the Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander or its habitat along the project alignment area. The project will not traverse known or potential Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander habitat as determined by GIS database research, project field investigations, and a Phase I Flatwoods Salamander Habitat Evaluation. These findings coincide with the statements of the Eglin AFB staff-biologist at the March 6, 2008 environmental agency coordination meeting which indicated that no flatwoods salamander habitat existed in the area associated with the project alignment.

Bald Eagle

As of August 8, 2007, the USFWS has removed (de-listed) the Bald Eagle from the federal endangered species list. However, protection continues under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines have taken the place of the 1987 Habitat Management Guidelines which operated with 750-foot and 1,500-foot buffers around active nests. The proposed guidelines require one 660-foot no-activity buffer zone for projects of any size that are visible from the nest. The Bald Eagle most commonly uses habitats close to bays, rivers, lakes or other bodies of water providing good food sources. Bald Eagles generally nest in tall pine trees and return to the same nest year after year. Most Bald Eagles in northern and central Florida migrate north out of the state in May-July after the breeding season but some birds from northern populations migrate to northern Florida in the winter. No active Bald Eagle nests are documented within 660-feet of the project alignment area. There is an active Bald Eagle nest located at Test Site A-22 on Eglin AFB which is approximately four miles from the southern boundary of the project area. This nest has been active for the past 10 years fledging young every year.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker

The federally endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) (*Picoides borealis*) is a small woodpecker inhabiting open, mature pine woodlands, generally longleaf pine flatwoods in North and Central Florida. They nest and forage in mature pine flatwoods and other pine-dominated forests that are relatively open and possess areas or pockets of relatively old pine trees (> 70 years). They are non-migratory and maintain territories year-round. Populations are small and highly fragmented and are found primarily on federally managed lands with some state-owned and private lands supporting smaller populations (USAF, 2006). Eglin AFB tracks potential breeding groups as a measure of population health. As a result of active management, RCW populations on Eglin AFB have continued to increase. In 1994, there were 184 potential breeding groups, and in 2009 there were an estimated 371 potential breeding groups allowing Eglin AFB to reach the recovery goal of 350 potential breeding groups. No active trees are known to exist in the project vicinity.

Wood Stork

The federal and state-endangered Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*) is a large wading bird nesting colonially in inundated forested wetlands and foraging in short and long hydroperiod wetlands. In north Florida, colonies form in February and March. The core foraging area (CFA) of each colony is an 18.6 mile (mi) radius zone surrounding the colony boundary. Although there is the potential for Wood Storks within the project alignment area, there is no documented CFA within the project alignment area. Other wading birds potentially foraging within the project alignment area as identified by the FWC include two species of special concern, the tri-colored heron (*Egretta tricolor)* and the white ibis (*Eudocimus albus*).

Gulf Sturgeon

Federally-listed as Threatened, and state-listed as Species of Special Concern (SSC), the Gulf Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*) spends most of its life cycle generally in the bays and portions of large rivers. Tom's Creek flows into Tom's Bayou, and Turkey Creek together with an un-named tributary of Turkey Creek flow into Boggy Bayou. Both bayous are part of the Choctawhatchee Bay system. While no Gulf Sturgeon have been documented in the project alignment and surrounding area, FNAI data indicate that the species is "likely to occur within one-mile of the project based on suitable habitat and/or known occurrences." However, the bridged crossings of Turkey Creek and Tom's Creek do not have the depth and velocity of flow to provide suitable habitat for the Gulf Sturgeon. Therefore a low potential exists for presence of the Gulf Sturgeon in the project area.

Gopher Tortoise

The state-threatened Gopher Tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*) is a terrestrial tortoise that tends to favor relatively open upland scrub habitats. They typically forage in the dawn and dusk hours and spend most of the day in their burrows. Eglin AFB provides excellent habitat and foraging areas for the Gopher Tortoise. No Gopher Tortoises or active burrows were located within the project alignment area however; the SR 123 crosses many areas that would provide suitable foraging habitat for Gopher Tortoises in the area. Since the project alignment is traversing Gopher Tortoise habitat, there is a moderate potential of impact through incidental contact. Should a Gopher Tortoise or its burrow be identified within the proposed alignment which cannot be avoided by 25 feet, a permit from FWC must be obtained and the Gopher Tortoise(s) relocated pursuant to the FWC permit requirements.

Florida Black Bear

The state-threatened Florida Black Bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*) is a large mammal that inhabits large expanses of undeveloped land for foraging. Their range is throughout north Florida and they are commonly found on Eglin AFB. The Eglin AFB bear population is one of six bear populations in the state representing the largest and most stable populations (Simek 2005). The Florida Black Bear moves through various habitats such as pine flatwood communities and floodplain areas foraging primarily on berries and insects. Most sightings on Eglin AFB occur during the dawn and dusk hours as the Florida Black Bear is mostly nocturnal and feeds during the cooler hours of the day. No Florida Black Bears were observed during field investigations. Eglin AFB has taken numerous measures to protect the Florida Black Bear from development and habitat degradation. Vehicle traffic and development are the primary threats for the Florida Black Bear. Eight historical Florida Black Bear mortalities are documented on SR 123 between 1996 and 2009. Crossing structures with appropriate fencing placed at existing bridge sites reduces the potential for vehicle-caused Florida Black Bear mortalities (McCown, J. Walter, et al., 2009). There is a likely potential for the occurrence of the black bear along the project alignment, and a moderate potential for effects to the Florida Black Bear.

Species of Special Concern and Other Species Considered

Species of Special Concern (SSC) and other listed species are documented in the wetland communities within the project alignment area include the spoonleaf sundew (*Drosera intermedia)* and sweet pitcherplant (*Sarracenia rubra*), both of which were identified within the project corridor during project field survey as documented in **Table 3-5** of this EA**.** Other SSC to consider within the corridor are the Pine Barrens Treefrog (*Hyla andersonii*), a species of the unique seepage bog habitats, the Alligator Snapping Turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*) and the non-listed Round-tailed Muskrat (*Neofiber ashei*) of the swamps and marshes. Though all of these species have the potential to occur within the project alignment area and some are actually documented within the one-mile buffered area of the project alignment, none of these species were observed during field reviews.

The Florida Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia floridana*) is a state-listed SSC. This small ground-dwelling owl inhabits the bare sandy soils of dry prairies and sandhill or ruderal pastureland. Predominantly non-migratory, a single disjointed population is documented on Eglin AFB outside the one mile buffer of the project alignment. Because suitable habitat may exist within the area of the project alignment within the range of this species, there is a potential for the species to occur. However, the species has not been documented within the area of the project alignment and there is a low potential for occurrence.

Bachman's Sparrow (*Aimophila aestivalis*) is a non-listed small ground-nesting sparrow found along the Gulf Coast and central Florida. This species has the potential to exist within the area of the project alignment as indicated by its predicted range but the Bachman's Sparrow has not been documented and there is a low potential for occurrence.

Other state-listed SSC potentially residing in the xeric habitats in the area of the project alignment include the Florida Pine Snake (*Pituophis melanoleucus mugitus*), historically documented within the one mile buffer of the project alignment in a xeric pine flatwoods area. The Gopher Frog (*Rano capito*), potentially uses the xeric upland forests as well as the associated marshes for breeding. The non-listed eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake (*Crotalus adamanteus*) and the Southern Hognose Snake (*Heterodon sinus*) are identified as "documented" and "potential" respectively. These snakes generally utilize a broad range of habitats including upland pine forests, sandhill and scrub.

Coordination with the FWC did not result in commitments/management actions for any of the reviewed SSC.

3.3.5 Wetlands

Wetlands are defined as those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal conditions do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions (Army, 1987). Wetlands are the most productive ecosystems in the world (Mitsch and Gosselink, 1993). Values associated with biological productivity of wetlands include: water quality, flood control, erosion control, community structure and wildlife support, recreation, aesthetics, and commercial benefits as well as serving to control the local climate. Many wetlands return over two-thirds of their annual water inputs to the atmosphere through evapotranspiration (Richardson and McCarthy, 1994).

3.3.5.1 Wetland Regulations

Wetlands are regulated pursuant to Section 404 of the CWA, EO 11990, *Protection of Wetlands*, and Chapter 373, F.S. The USACE, NWFWMD, and the FDEP have jurisdiction over wetlands in the SR 123 project area. For projects on federally owned property at an Air Force installation where avoidance of wetlands impacts is not feasible, a Finding of No Practicable Alternative (FONPA) is required in accordance with EO 11990.

3.3.5.2 Wetland Communities

As mentioned in Section 3.3.4.1 (Ecological Associations), Eglin AFB contains a variety of wetland communities. These wetland and riverine aquatic systems are remarkable in their uniqueness and include, but are not limited to:

- Depression Wetlands, or basin wetlands, are shallow closed basins fed through groundwater or rainwater with an outlet usually only in time of high water. They have peat or sand substrates, are inundated for most of the year, and contain woody and/or herbaceous wetland vegetation. The functional significance of Depression Wetlands is to provide maintenance of regional biodiversity, floodwater storage, and water quality through filtering (USAF, 2007).

- Seepage Slopes/Streams are wetlands on or at the base of sandhill slopes where moisture levels are maintained by the downslope seepage of water from the intersection with a semi-impermeable soil layer resulting in saturated but rarely inundated conditions. On Eglin AFB, Seepage Slopes are embedded within sandhills that are located on the clay-rich soils in the northeastern and eastern part of the base and usually grade into a Baygall community. They are relatively rare habitats throughout the state, and their plant communities are the most biodiverse (USAF, 2007).

- Floodplain Wetlands are flat, alluvial sand or peat substrates associated with riverine communities and are subject to seasonal flooding but not permanent inundations. The functional significance of floodplain wetlands is to provide maintenance of regional biodiversity, corridors for species movement, floodwater storage, and water quality through filtering. As AFI 32-7064 requires, these forested areas are monitored for changes in habitat structure and distribution over time. NRS uses annual satellite imagery and change analysis to follow the health of this target community. There is no active management that is pursued in this community, although hunting and low-impact missions do occur (USAF, 2007).

Wetland identification along the SR 123 project area was accomplished through the use of 2007 aerial photography, GIS interpretation, USGS topography maps, National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps, the Okaloosa County Soil Survey (USDA 1995), and limited on-site ground investigation. The wetlands were characterized by soil type, dominant vegetation, and hydrology; they were classified according to the USFWS manual, *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States* (Cowardin *et* al., 1979).

Wetlands along the SR 123 corridor are illustrated in **Figure 3-5** and described in **Table 3-6**. These wetlands are contiguous with freshwater drainage eventually leading to the Choctawhatchee Bay and ultimately the Gulf of Mexico. Tom's Creek flows into Tom's Bayou and Turkey Creek flows into Boggy Bayou, both of which are part of the Choctawhatchee Bay system.

The wetlands which would be impacted within the proposed ROW are classified as Streams and Waterways by Florida Land Use Cover Classification System (FLUCCS) and Riverine by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife "*Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States.*" These systems are associated with Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek and an un-named tributary of Turkey Creek.

Tom's Creek starts approximately 1.4 miles west of SR 123 and is about 4.7 miles in total length. It has a total wetland area of approximately 293 acres. The system at the location of the proposed impact has no floodplain. The upland habitat directly abuts the stream. The stream in this area has also received impacts from sedimentation, causing a short stretch of the stream to be more shallow than both upstream and downstream locations. This area has also been affected by a downstream railroad crossing that along with beavers impedes the natural flow. This more shallow area is vegetated with *Sparganium americanum*, and in the extremely shallow areas, rushes *Juncus spp*. and *Scirpus spp*. are present. In addition the fringe wetland areas around the creek are being taken over by the invasive exotic torpedo grass (*Panicum repens*). This portion of the creek has no true submerged aquatic vegetation. The center of creek has an island dominated by black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*) with sparse slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*). Water quality in the system appears to be very good.

Turkey Creek has a total length of approximately 10.6 miles for the main channel with a total wetland area of about 837 acres which includes three primary branches. The creek has a substantial floodplain wetland system dominated by gum trees (*Nyssa spp*.), with cypress (*Taxodium spp*.) and black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*). The wetland system would be considered to be high quality with very good water quality; however the creek has been altered by erosion associated with the construction of a utility easement. An effort to control erosion has been made through the use of berms in the uplands adjacent to the creek.

The un-named tributary of Turkey Creek is approximately 1.4 miles in total length with approximately 32 acres of wetland habitat. The system at the proposed impact location is very shallow with floodplain that closely resembles a wet flatwood habitat with slash pine (*Pinus elliotti*), wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*), yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris spp.)*, sweet pitcher plants (*Sarracenia rubra*), golden club (*Orontium aquaticum*) and sundew (*Drosera spp*.). This system is of very high quality with excellent water quality.

Figure 3-5: *Wetlands*

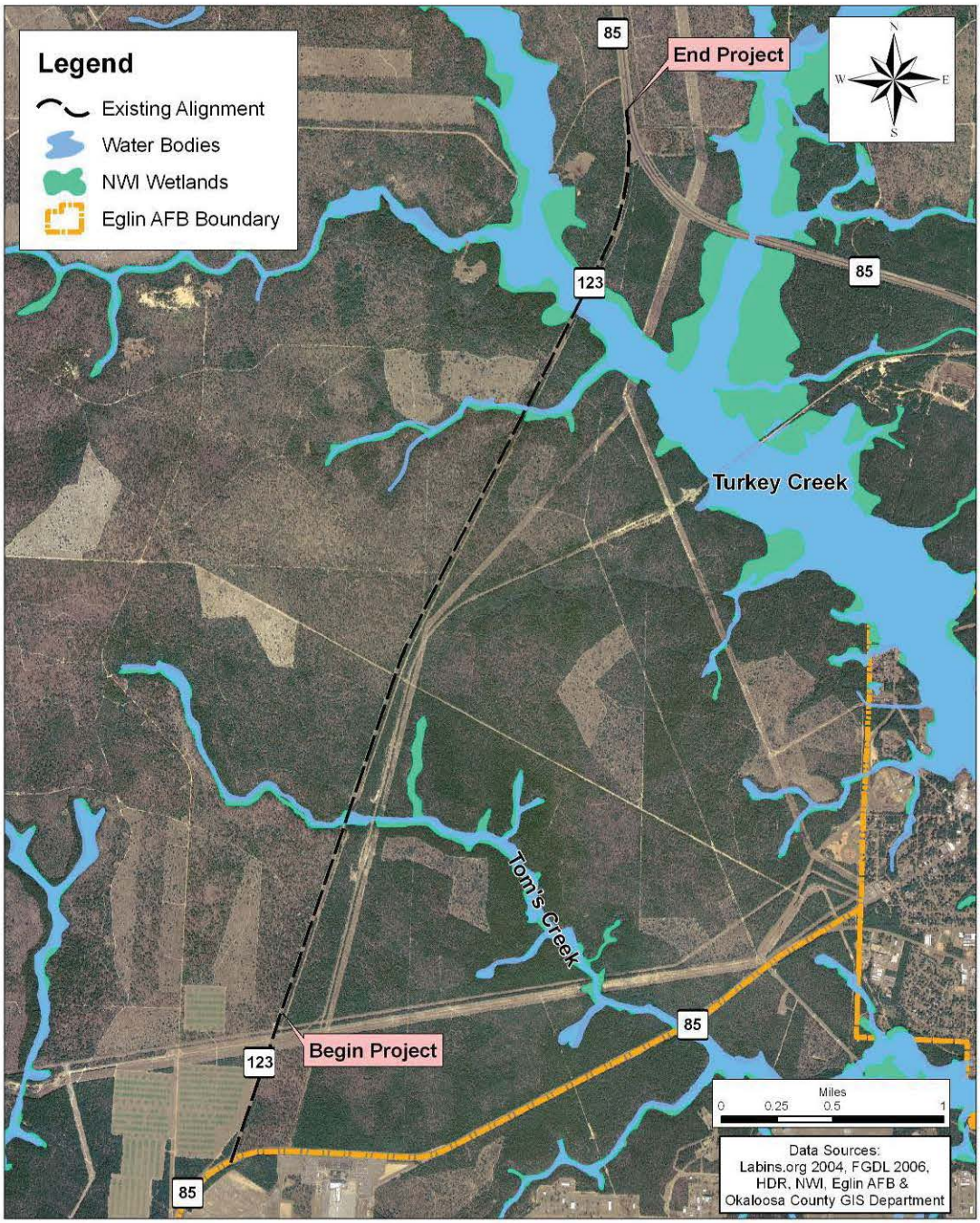


Table 3-6: *Wetland Sites*			
Wetland	**FLUCCs Classification**	**Description**	Contiguity
Tom's Creek Turkey Creek Un-named Tributary (Turkey Creek)	Streams and Waterways (510)	The wetland systems are very high quality streams that are primary drainage systems of the central part of Eglin AFB. The wetlands have been slightly impacted by erosion issues associated with the construction of an utility easement. Vegetation includes *Sparganium americanum*, *Juncus spp*. and *Scirpus spp*. Fringe wetland areas around Tom's Creek are being taken over by the invasive exotic torpedo grass (*Panicum repens*). There is no true submerged aquatic vegetation.	Connected

3.3.6 Noise

This section provides a description of noise, the region of influence, area noise receptors, and the affected environment.

3.3.6.1 Noise Description

Noise is defined as any sound that is undesirable because it interferes with communication, is intense enough to damage hearing, or is otherwise annoying. Human response to noise varies according to the type and characteristics of the noise sources, distance between source and receiver, receiver sensitivity, and time of day. Sound is measured with instruments that measure variations in air pressure, which are used to calculate instantaneous sound levels in decibels (dB). A-weighted sound level measurements (often denoted dBA) are used to characterize sound levels that the human ear responds to especially well by emphasizing mid-frequencies and de-emphasizing the low and high frequencies. The C-weighted sound level, denoted dBC, is used less frequently but is practical when measuring impulsive sounds such as blasts. Unlike A-weighting, the C-weighting does not de-emphasize the low frequencies within the audible spectrum.

According to 23 CFR Part 772 - *Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise*, FHWA uses 67 dBA as the threshold level when construction or traffic noise could be considered a significant impact to picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sports areas, parks, residences, motels, hotels, schools, churches, libraries, RV Parks, day care centers and hospitals. The FDOT and FHWA guidelines, as shown in **Table 3-7** below, use 66 dBA LAeq1h as the threshold for considering abatement measures.

Table 3-7: *Noise Abatement Criteria*

Activity Category	Hourly A-Weighted Sound Level-decibels (dBA) Abatement Level (in L_{Aeq1h})		
	FHWA	**FDOT**	**Description of Activity Category**
A	57	56 (Exterior)	Lands on which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of those qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its intended purpose.
B	67	66 (Exterior)	Picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sports areas, parks, residences, motels, hotels, schools, churches, libraries, RV Parks, day care centers and hospitals.
C	72	71 (Exterior)	Developed lands, properties, or activities not included in Categories A and B above.
D	N/A	N/A	Undeveloped lands
E	52	51 (Interior)	Residences, motels, hotels, public meeting rooms, schools, churches, libraries, hospitals, and auditoriums.

Source: FDOT PD&E Manual, Part 2, Chapter 17

L_{Aeq1h} is the hourly value of the steady-state sound level (L_{Aeq}) which is the FHWA/FDOT preferred metric for traffic noise analyses.

3.3.6.2 Region of Influence (Noise Sensitive Areas)

The Region of Influence (ROI) for noise concerns for this project is the area immediately surrounding both south and north intersections of SR 85 and SR 123, and the SR 123 corridor. Based on the roadway segment traffic volumes, proposed typical section, posted speed, and land use, the SR 123 corridor has no identified noise sensitive areas (NSAs) or receptors. A detailed noise study is not required as there are no existing noise sensitive receivers and because the area is likely to remain undeveloped. Noise levels are likely to increase, as capacity is increasing. However, with no noise sensitive sites present, and none anticipated in the foreseeable future, noise impacts are not predicted. A 67-dBA noise isopleth exists approximately 120-200 feet from the roadway edge, depending upon the direction of traffic and the elevation of the roadway.

3.3.7 Cultural Resources

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is a listing of historic properties regarded as significant on local, state, and/or national levels. The NRHP sets forth criteria for evaluating the significance of cultural resources and determining their eligibility for nomination for listing on the NRHP. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) required federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on propertied listed in or eligible for inclusion in the NRHP. At the outset of the Section 106 review process, the agency must plan for consultation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), and other interested public parties.

A determination of effect is central to the Section 106 planning process. Pertinent to the definition of adverse effect is wording contained in 36 CFR 800, the regulation that implements Section 106 of the NHPA. To summarize, the consideration of effects results in one of three determinations:

- No effect: the undertaking will not affect historic properties;
- No adverse effect: the undertaking will affect one or more historic properties, but the effect will not be harmful;
- Adverse effect: the undertaking will harm one or more historic properties.

If a determination is made that the effects of the undertaking will be adverse, Section 106 is designed to result in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which outlines measures agreed upon that the agency will take to reduce, avoid, or mitigate the adverse effect. Consultation with the SHPO, THPO, and other interested public parties continues as part of the process. Others who are consulted, under various circumstances, may include local governments, Indian tribes, property owners, other members of the public, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). In some cases, the consulting parties may agree that no such measures are available, but that the adverse effect must be accepted in the public interest. If consultation proves unproductive, the agency or SHPO, or the ACHP itself, may terminate consultation. The agency must submit appropriate documentation to the ACHP and request the ACHP's written comments. The ACHP may comment during the process by participating in consultation and signing the resulting MOA. Otherwise, the agency obtains ACHP comment by submitting the MOA to the ACHP for review and acceptance. The ACHP can accept the MOA, request changes, or opt to issue written comments. If consultation was terminated, the ACHP issues its written comments directly to the agency head, as the agency head had requested. If an MOA is executed, the agency proceeds with its undertaking under the terms of the MOA. In the absence of an MOA, the agency head must take into account the ACHP's written comments in deciding whether and how to proceed.

3.3.7.1 Local Area History

The European Exploratory Period in the study region, and the first written history, began in the early 1500’s when scouting parties explored the northern Gulf Coast making maps and initiating trade as well as skirmishing with native peoples. The European Colonial period extended from the late seventeenth century to 1821, when the Historic American period begins with Florida's birth as an American Territory. The lumber and Naval Stores industries became major subsistence activities and economic factors in the American settlement of the northern Gulf Coast. Ports along the northern Gulf Coast became cultural centers and shortly after the Civil War, railroads provided a boost to the thriving lumber and timber products industry. By the1880s, the turpentine industry was a major industry in the area. Fishing had long been a mainstay of early American life in these coastal communities. The Historic American period

"ends" during the early 20th century. The economic base of the populace was largely based on agrarian activities such as small farms, fishing communities, as well as production of timber and naval stores (Curren, 2005).

The United States military has had a prominent presence in this area throughout most of the 20th century. The land where Eglin AFB currently sits was once known as the Choctawhatchee National Forest. The history of Florida's fourth National Forest began early in the 20th century when lands found unsuitable for agriculture were withdrawn from the public domain to determine their suitability for national forest purposes. President Theodore Roosevelt established the Choctawhatchee National Forest on November 27, 1908. The supervisory headquarters was established at DeFuniak Springs and moved to Pensacola in September 1910. It remained there until 1936 when it was relocated to Tallahassee. The Choctawhatchee's two districts (Easy Bay-Camp Pinchot and Niceville) were separated by what is now SR 85. But the national defense needs of a changing world prompted Congress to transfer the national forest to the War Department just prior to World War II. Congress transferred the Choctawhatchee from the Forest Service to the War Department for military purposes on June 27, 1940. The law provided that the land may be restored to national forest status by proclamation or order of the President when it was no longer needed for military purposes.

3.3.7.2 Archaeological Surveys

Humans have occupied the study region for at least 10,000-15,000 years. The Air Force has identified more than 2,200 archaeological sites on Eglin AFB. Of those, approximately 400 sites are eligible or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register. Through early consultation in the ETDM process, the Miccosukee Tribe listed seven archaeological sites within 1,320 feet of the project as a basis for potential historic and archaeological effect.

Federal agencies must consider these historic properties during the planning and execution of any federal undertaking that has the potential to affect them. Under the NHPA Eglin AFB is required to consider the effects of its undertakings on historic properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the NRHP. NHPA obligations for a federal agency are independent from NEPA and must be complied with even when an environmental document is not required. When both are required, Eglin AFB coordinates NEPA compliance with their NHPA responsibilities to ensure that historic properties are given adequate consideration in the preparation of environmental documents such as EAs and EISs as per AFI 32-7065 Sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2, and 36 CFR 800.8.

Eglin AFB is mandated by Section 110 of the NHPA to maintain an active historic preservation program and provide stewardship of cultural resources, "consistent with the preservation of such properties and the mission of the agency (*16 U.S.C. §470 h-2(a)*)." 16 U.S.C. §470 h-2(b) also mandates that "such properties under the jurisdiction or control of the agency as are listed in or may be eligible for the National Register are managed and maintained in a way that considers the preservation of their historic, archaeological, architectural, and cultural values in compliance with Section 106 of this (NHPA) Act."

FDOT3 completed a Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) for this project to determine the presence of and potential impact to these resources (FDOT3, 2008c). The evaluation did not find that the project would affect archaeological resources. FHWA concurrence of the CRAS was received on January 14, 2009. The Section 106 review process has been completed for the SR 123 undertaking. On March 3, 2009, the SHPO concurred with the FHWA determination of no effect to cultural resources in the project's Area of Potential Effect. Supporting documentation are provided in **Appendix C**.

3.3.8 Section 4(f)

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 establishes national policy to preserve public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites. Projects shall not be approved that require the use of any publicly owned land from a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, state, or local significance, or any land from a historic site unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative and all possible planning to minimize harm has been carried out.

While the primary purpose of Eglin AFB is for national defense, Eglin AFB manages its natural resources through an Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) and natural resources management program. The primary objective of Air Force natural resources programs is to ensure continued access to land and airspace required to accomplish the Air Force mission by maintaining these resources in a healthy condition. Eglin AFB Reservation, through which the proposed project will pass (Figures 1-1 and 1-2), contains a large forested area (Figure 3-10) which provides public recreation, commercial forestry products, wetland values, and biodiversity maintenance where these uses are compatible with the military mission. Recreational activities include: hunting, canoeing, hiking, picnicking, nature study and appreciation, swimming, berry picking, and bicycling. Recreational users must obtain a permit from Eglin AFB, with the exception of individuals who possess a current hunting or fishing permit.

A Determination of Section 4(f) Applicability was prepared with input from the Official with Jurisdiction over the Eglin Air Force Base Reservation (September 2011). The Notice of Public Hearing included a statement on the potential for Section 4(f) impacts. The Public Hearing explained the potential Section 4(f) impacts and specifically requested public input on the issue.

The Sikes Act (16 USC 670 et seq.), Department of Defense Instruction 4715.3, and Air Force Instruction 32-7064 require the Air Force to make Air Force managed property available for the public use as long as such access is compatible with military mission activities, ecosystem sustainability, and other considerations such as security, safety and fiscal soundness. The Natural Resources Branch, Jackson Guard at Eglin AFB (Natural Resources Branch) manages Eglin's public recreation program pursuant to an Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) that guides the vision and direction of natural resources management on Eglin lands.

With respect to the proposed widening of SR 123, the project is located within undeveloped, forested land of the Choctaw Open Dog Hunting Unit, and is adjacent to the Jackson Still Hunting Unit.

The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3, West-Shift) would require 65 hectares (160 acres) from the Choctaw Open Dog Hunting Unit, which is less than 1% of the total central Choctaw Open Dog Hunting Unit, and 2 hectares (6 acres) from the Jackson Still Hunting Unit, which is less than 1% of the total southern Jackson Still Hunting Unit.

Alternative 2 (East-Shift) would require 62 hectares (152 acres) from the Choctaw Open Dog Hunting Unit, which is less than 1% of the total central Choctaw Open Dog Hunting Unit, and 2 hectares (6 acres) from the Jackson Still Hunting Unit, which is less than 1% of the total southern Jackson Still Hunting Unit.

For the purposes of this evaluation, Eglin Air Force Base is being treated as a Multiple-use facility as per the FHWA Section 4(f) Guidance of March 2005 (Question 6) which states:

- "Section 4(f) applies to . . . only to those portions of the lands which are designated by statute or identified in the management plans of the administering agency as being primarily for park, recreation, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge purposes, and determined to be significant for such purposes."

- "Section 4(f) does not apply to areas of multiple-use lands which function primarily for purposes other than park, recreation or refuges such as for those areas that are used for timber sales or mineral extraction in National Forests."

- "Publicly owned lands not open to the general public (e.g., military bases and any other areas with similar restricted access) and whose primary purpose is other than 4(f) are not subject to Section 4(f)."

Section 2.1 of the Eglin Air Force Base Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (September 2007) states:

- "The primary objective of the Air Force Natural Resources Program is to ensure continued access to land and airspace required to accomplish the Air Force mission while maintaining these resources in a healthy condition."

In the September 12, 2011 response to the September 7, 2011 Officials with Jurisdiction letter, Eglin further clarifies that the "[m]ilitary mission is [the] primary purpose of lands that comprise Eglin AFB, including all Management Units. Recreational opportunities are a secondary benefit."

Applying this guidance, the Choctaw Open Dog Hunting Unit, and Jackson Still Hunting Unit proximal to SR 123 on Eglin AFB were not found to be Section 4(f) property. As required by the Sikes Act, Eglin's INRMP allows public access for recreational purposes, but limits access to use compatible with the military mission. In this regard, recreational use of the Choctaw Open Dog Hunting Unit, and Jackson Still Hunting Unit proximal to SR 123 on Eglin AFB are considered incidental to the military mission, dispersed, and not one of the major purposes of Eglin AFB property.

The proposed project will not use Section 4(f) property from the Eglin Air Force Base Choctaw Open Dog Hunting Unit, or Jackson Still Hunting Unit. FHWA has determined Section 4(f) does not apply.

3.4 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTES MANAGEMENT

Hazardous materials and wastes include substances that, because of their quantity, concentration, physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may present danger to public health or welfare or to the environment when released or otherwise improperly managed.

AFI 32-7086, *Hazardous Materials Management,* primarily establishes hazardous materials management at Air Force installations. The AFI incorporates the requirements of all federal regulations, other AFIs, and DoD Directives, for the reduction of hazardous material uses and purchases (USAF, 2003b).

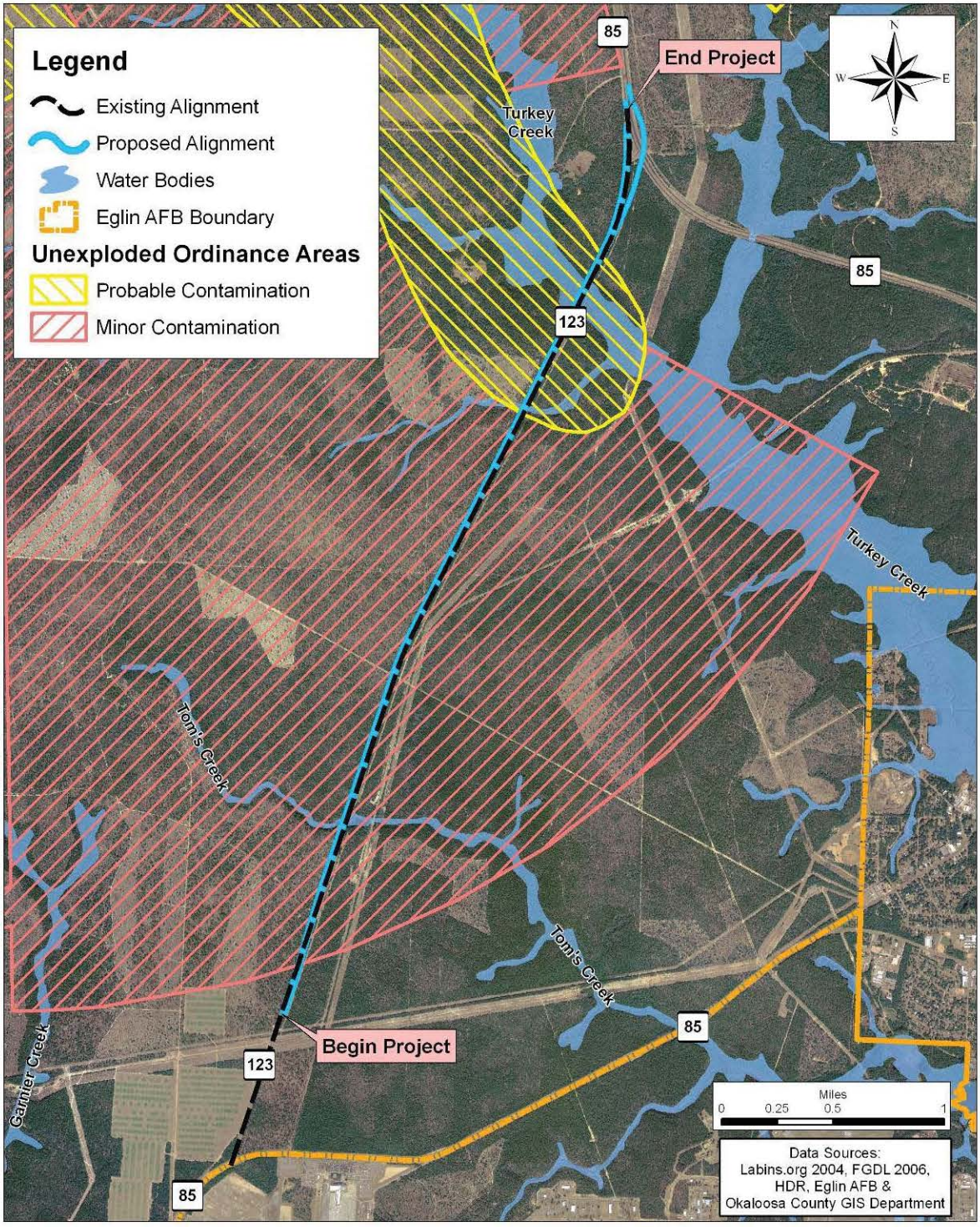
Environmental programs at Eglin AFB, specifically the Environmental Restoration Program (ERP) is used to identify, characterize, clean up, and restore sites contaminated with toxic and hazardous substances, low level radioactive materials, petroleum, oils, and other pollutants and contaminants. ERP has established a process to evaluate past disposal sites, control the migration of contaminants, identify potential hazards to human health and the environment, and remediate the sites (USAF, 2002b). All programs are managed in accordance with applicable federal, state, local, DoD, and Air Force instructions, standards, laws, and regulations that apply to the installation (USAF, 1998).

A preliminary hazardous materials evaluation was conducted to determine the potential for contamination from properties and business operations located within SR 123 corridor. Through historical and regulatory searches and inspections within Eglin AFB personnel, one site within the study area was identified for further evaluation for potential contamination according to the Eglin AFB's *Environmental Management Action Plan, 2002*.

Figure 3-6 illustrates the potential contamination sites in the area including the potential for unexploded ordnance (UXO). A portion of the area is listed as a probable contamination and the remaining area is classified as minor contamination. Based on an interview with MSgt Randall Hill, UXO/Explosive Ordnance Disposal Coordinator, Eglin AFB, it is concluded that all UXO designated areas will need to be physically surveyed and cleared prior to work commencement. FDOT will be responsible to complete an Explosive Safety Submission (ESS) for UXO to ensure conformance with DoD and Department of the Air Force Explosives Safety Standards and the Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP) in accordance with:

- DoD 6055.9-STD, DoD Ammunition and Explosives Safety Standards, Chapter 12 - Real Property Contaminated with Ammunition, Explosives or Chemical Agents
- DoD Explosives Safety Board: "Memorandum Guidance for Clearance Plans" dated January 1998 Air Force Manual 91-201, Explosives Safety Standards, Chapter 6 - Real Property Contaminated with Ammunition and Explosives
- Air Force Manual 91-201 Explosives Safety Standards
- Air Force Instruction 90-901, Operational Risk Management
- Air Force Pamphlet 90-902, Operational Risk Management Guidelines and Tools.

Figure 3-6: ***Potentially Contaminated Sites***



3.5 LOCAL COMMUNITY

This section describes socioeconomic resources, environmental justice, land use and aesthetics, transportation, and utilities.

3.5.1 Socioeconomics

The magnitude of socioeconomic factors can vary across communities and stakeholder groups based in large part to a differing view on the relativity of an issue or the interpretation of an impact. What may be viewed as a significant impact in one community can be viewed as a desired outcome in another. This creates variability in the evaluation of socioeconomic impacts that is difficult to predict. In consideration of this variability, it is generally accepted to use public meetings and other public involvement outlets to better gauge a community or stakeholder group consensus. The feedback gained from the various public involvement components should be used in conjunction with other technical data gathered to more closely define the known impacts and improvements and is not just a reflection of public sentiment.

3.5.1.1 Location and Region of Influence (ROI)

Eglin AFB is located in Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton Counties and encompasses more than 724 square miles of land in the Florida Panhandle. Okaloosa County comprises the one-county Fort Walton Beach Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The socioeconomic ROI for this type of analysis is generally defined by the residence patterns of installation personnel and by the number of incoming personnel associated with the action under consideration. No incoming personnel are associated with the action under consideration, and the construction labor force is expected to be drawn from the local area. For this reason, Okaloosa County (the Fort Walton Beach MSA) is defined as the ROI (USAF, 1998).

3.5.1.2 Population

Data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Florida Legislature Office of Economic and Demographic Research indicate the population of Okaloosa County in 2000 was approximately 170,500 and projected to be 264,260 by 2030. These data are reported in Table 3-4 of the Eglin AFB Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (October, 2008). There are nearly 11,000 active-duty military, 11,000 civilian, and 19,000 dependents associated with Eglin AFB. Of Okaloosa County's total population, there are an estimated 41,000 Air Force retirees in the area (EDC, 2006). Recent BRAC implementation decisions will increase population by approximately 8,500 people (approximately 6,000 direct impacts, and approximately 2,500 indirect impacts) (Eglin BRAC EIS 2008, EIS Executive Summary, Table ES-22).

3.5.1.3 Employment and Income

Key indices for measuring the economic strength of a given area include the number of individuals employed, employment growth, economic diversification, the rate of unemployment, and per capita income (PCI). This section discusses characteristics and growth patterns of Okaloosa County employment and income. The PCI is an income measure commonly used to compare incomes of different areas, and is calculated by dividing the total personal income of an area by the total population. In 1999, Okaloosa County PCI was $20,918, as compared with $21,557 for Florida (USBC, 2000). Okaloosa County leads the area in employment with approximately 122,430 jobs as reported in the Eglin AFB BRAC EIS (USAF, 2008).

Eglin AFB employs more than 8,500 military and approximately 4,500 civilians, with an additional 2,200 jobs due to move to Eglin AFB under the 2005 BRAC. As of the census of 2000, there were 8,082 people, 2,302 households, and 2,262 families residing on the base. The population density was 2,640.1 people per square mile (1,019.8/km²). There were 2,320 housing units at an average density of 757.9/sq mi (292.7/km²).

There were 2,302 households out of which 79.8% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 89.8% were married couples living together, 5.2% had a female householder with no husband present, and 1.7% were non-families. 1.6% of all households were made up of individuals and 0.0% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 3.50 and the average family size was 3.51. On Eglin AFB, the population was spread out with 43.5% under the age of 18, 15.2% from 18 to 24, 39.6% from 25 to 44, 1.6% from 45 to 64, and 0.1% who are 65 years of age or older. The median age was 22 years. For every 100 females there were 100.6 males.

The median income for a household on Eglin AFB was $31,951, and the median income for a family was $31,859. Males had a median income of $25,409 versus $19,176 for females. The per capita income for Eglin AFB was $10,670. About 4.5% of families and 4.5% of the population were below the poverty line, including 4.5% of those under the age of 18 and none of those 65 and older (USAF, 2008).

3.5.2 Environmental Justice

The President signed EO 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, on February 19, 1994. This EO requires that each federal agency identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. In order to evaluate these potential effects, demographic data on minority and low-income populations are provided in this section. The latest available consistent data are used.

The terms "low-income population" and "minority population" are defined according to guidance published by The Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence in its Guide for Environmental Justice Analysis with the Air Force Environmental Impact Analysis Process (EIAP), November 1997. Under this guidance, "Low-Income Population" is defined as persons below the poverty level, designated as $12,674 for a family of four in 1989 by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. For FHWA, "low-income" is defined according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) 2009 poverty guidelines designated as $22,050 for a family of four.

"Minority Population" is defined as persons designated as Black; American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut; Asian or Pacific Islander; Other; and of Hispanic origin in census data. As seen in **Figure 3-7**, the population of minorities is shown as a percentage of the community in relation to the SR 123 project. **Figure 3-8** is also included to show the percentage of the population under 18 years old. These figures provide a visual representation of the community in understanding potential impacts to environmental justice resulting from the project based on U.S. Census data for Census Tract 208 which encompasses the entire project area. **Figure 3-9** shows the percentage of low-income population (based on the FHWA definition). If the Air Force definition of "low-income" were applied, the percentages would be lower as shown in **Table 3-8.**

Table 3-8: ***Comparison of Low-Income by Definition***

Geographic Area	Percent Population based on Definition of "Low-Income"	
	Air Force	FHWA
Okaloosa County	12%	26%
Census Tract 208	9%	26%

Figure 3-7: ***Minority Population***

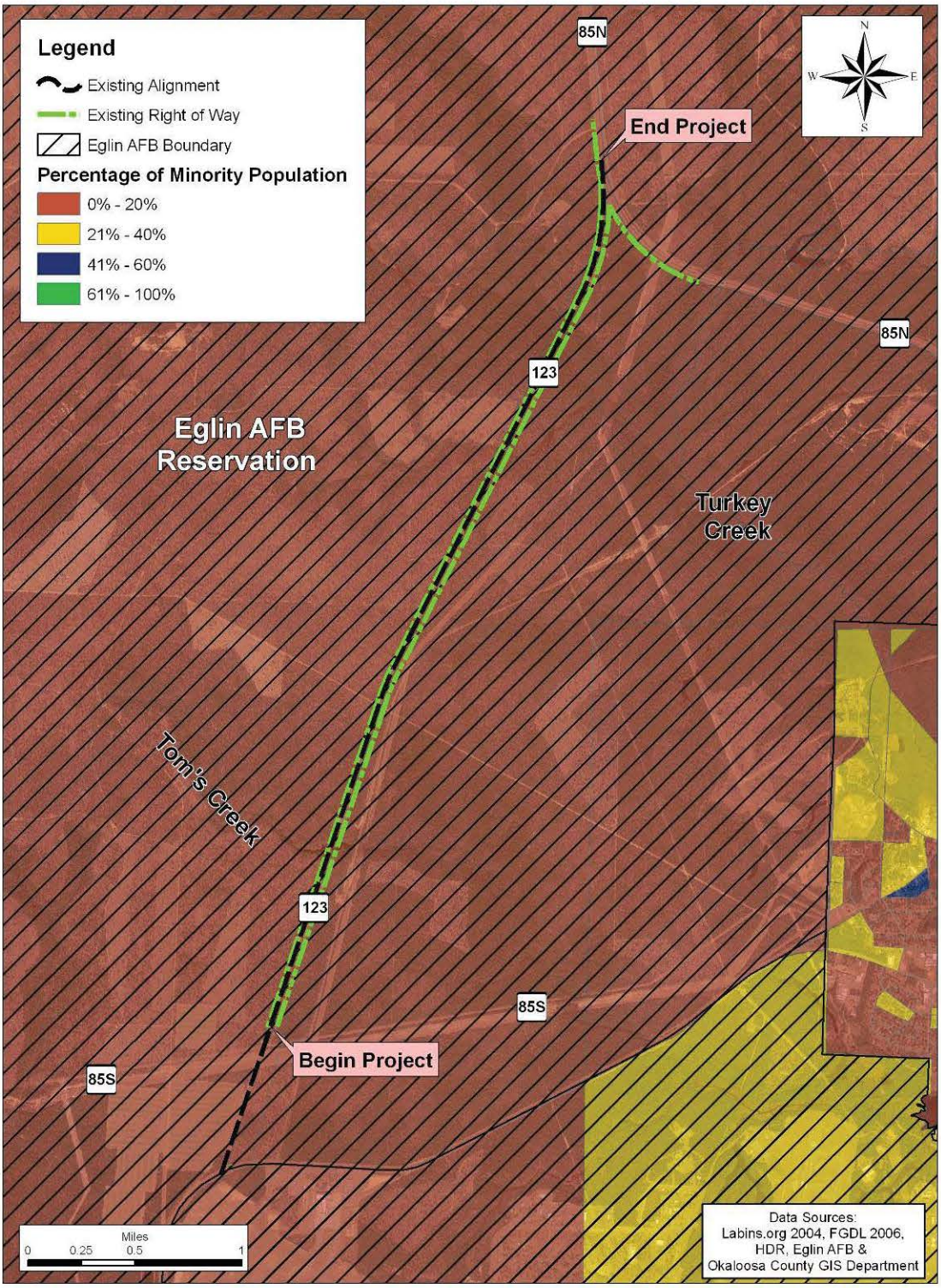
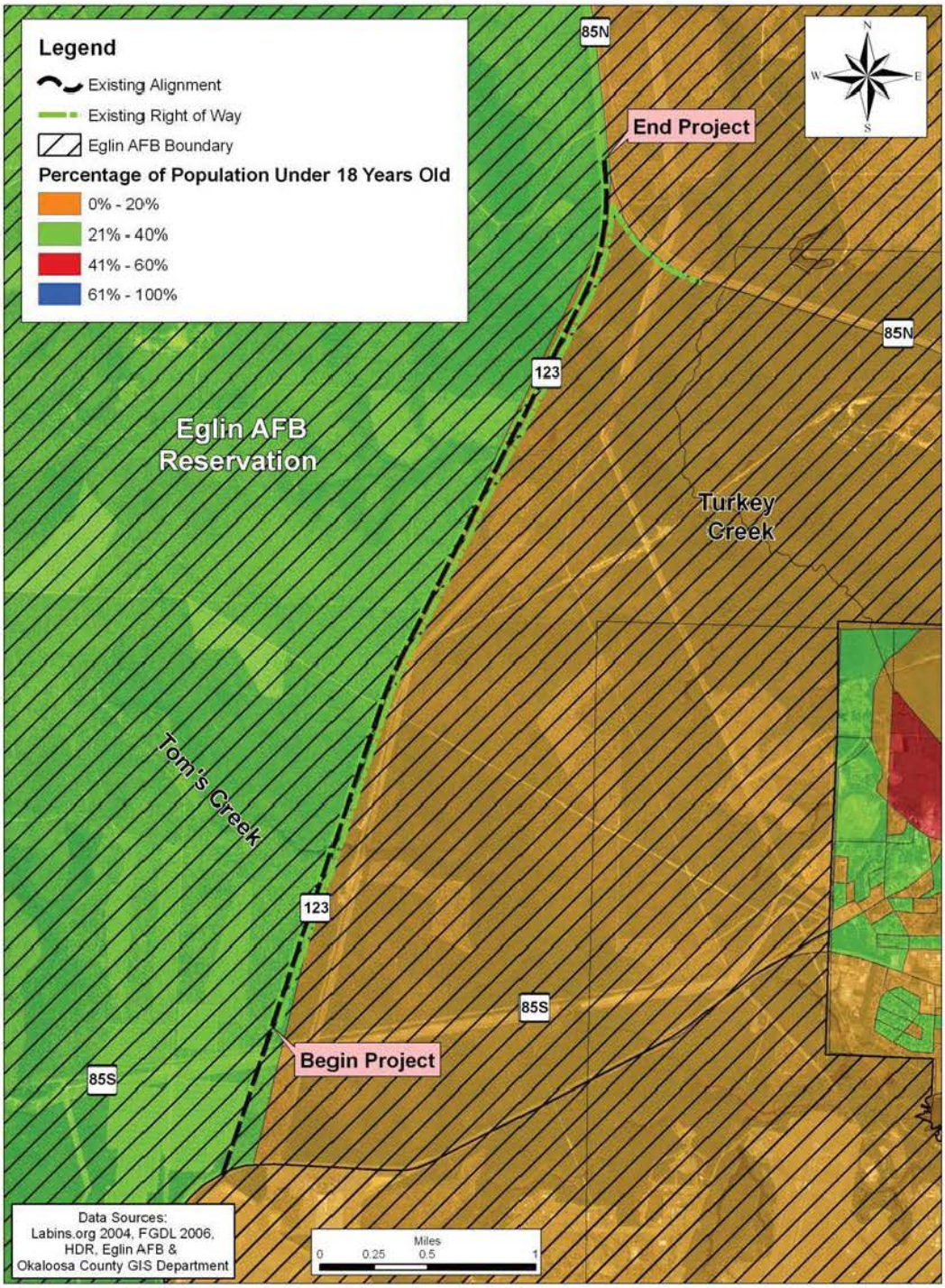


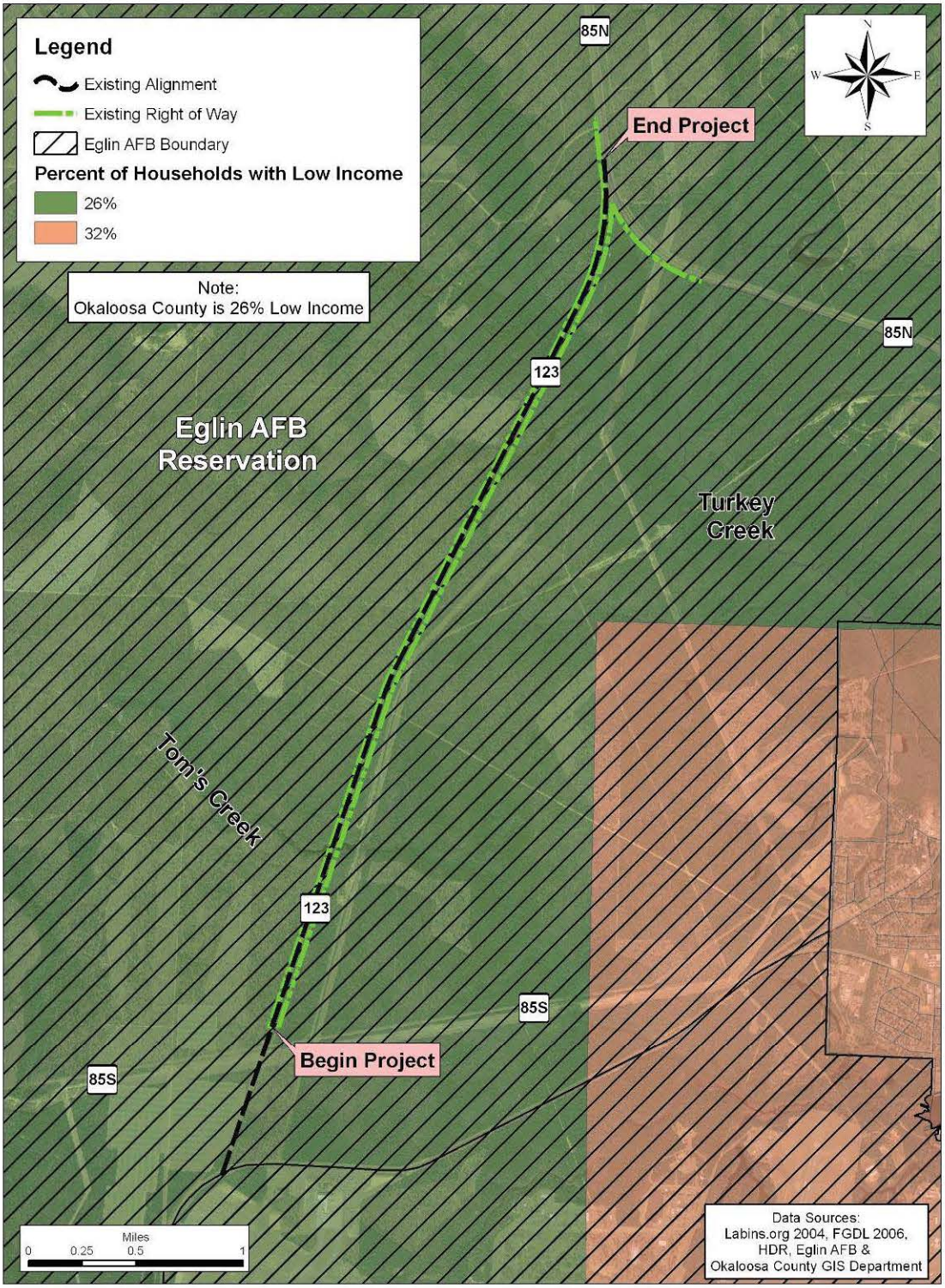
Figure 3-8: ***Population Under Age 18***



Note to Figure 3-8: Census data are from Tract 208, Block 9001, Block Group 9, which is only a portion of Eglin AFB.

1

Figure 3-9: *Low-Income Population*



3.5.2.1 Ethnic Origin

According to the 2000 Census, which provides the latest consistent data for ethnic composition and poverty status, the 2000 population of Okaloosa County was 83.4 percent Caucasian, 9.1 percent African-American, 2.5 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1.3 percent other; 4.3 percent are considered Hispanic. In Florida, 80 percent of the population is Caucasian and 12 percent is African-American, while persons of the Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American, or Other origin make up only about 3.4 percent of the total. More than 16 percent of the state's population is of Hispanic origin. The United States is approximately 75.1 percent Caucasian and 12 percent African-American, with persons of Hispanic origin making up nearly 12 percent of the U.S. total population (USBC, 2003). The racial makeup of Eglin AFB was 71.79% White, 14.82% Black or African American, 0.48% Native American, 2.96% Asian, 0.38% Pacific Islander, 4.23% from other races, and 5.33% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 11.19% of the population (USAF, 2008).

3.5.2.2 Low-Income Status

The 2000 Census found approximately 6 percent of Okaloosa County residents living below the poverty level. In comparison, approximately 9 percent of the state's population and 9.2 percent of the U.S. population are in this category (USBC, 2003).

3.5.3 Land Use and Aesthetics

Communities categorize land according to its current use, and may restrict future development based on those categories. Thus, the financial value of land is dependent on its land use classification as well as other factors. The aesthetic nature of an area is also dependent on land use and the presence or absence of man-made structures. This section describes the land use and aesthetics in the project area.

3.5.3.1 Military Land Use and Right of Way

Five types of land/water use support the current mission of Eglin AFB in the testing and evaluation of non-nuclear munitions, electronic combat systems, navigation/guidance systems, and training. The military land/water uses necessary to conduct and support the objectives of Eglin AFB are as follows (USAF, 2007): (1) Test and evaluation, (2) Space Operations Support, (3) Training, (4) Eglin AFB Gulf Test and Training Ranges, and (5) Administrative Area Land Use.

As a result of BRAC 2005, Eglin AFB has identified land use as a growth related challenge that could possibly affect Eglin's current and future military mission. Therefore, Eglin AFB has become involved in a cooperative land use planning effort (Joint Land Use Study) between military installations and the surrounding communities that promotes compatible community growth that supports military training and operational missions (EDC, 2008).

The existing SR 123 ROW is owned by United States of America through Eglin AFB. Existing ROW is typically 210 feet, offset 150 feet right (east) of the existing roadway centerline and 60 feet left (west) of the centerline. The federal government has granted an easement to FDOT for SR 123. Okaloosa County has a separate 30-foot utility easement located inside the FDOT easement along the eastern side.

3.5.3.2 Non-Military Land Uses

While the primary purpose of Eglin AFB is for national defense, Eglin AFB manages its natural resources through an Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) and natural resources management program. The primary objective of Air Force natural resources programs is to ensure continued access to land and airspace required to accomplish the Air Force mission by maintaining these resources in a healthy condition. Eglin AFB Reservation, through which the proposed project will pass (Figures 1-1 and 1-2), contains a large forested area (Figure 3-10) which provides public recreation, commercial forestry products, wetland values, and biodiversity maintenance where these uses are compatible with the military mission. Recreational activities include: hunting, canoeing, hiking, picnicking, nature study and appreciation, swimming, berry picking, and bicycling. Recreational users must obtain a permit from Eglin AFB, with the exception of individuals who possess a current hunting or fishing permit.

3.5.3.3 Regional Land Uses

The region of influence includes Eglin AFB, Okaloosa County and the local jurisdictions within Okaloosa County. The area south of Eglin AFB is primarily commercial and urban residential land. West, north, and east of Eglin AFB is more rural and less constrained. Within these areas the largest proportion of the region is devoted to the following:

– Agriculture/timber: Major tracts of forested land west, north and east of Eglin AFB are owned by timber companies or used for agriculture. According to database records in the FDOT ETDM GIS system, there are no agricultural lands or lands with prime farmland soil along the project alignment.

- Recreation/natural resource management areas: These areas include, Henderson Beach State Recreation Area, Fred Gannon Rocky Bayou State Recreation Area, Rocky Bayou State Park Aquatic Preserve, Yellow River Wildlife Management Area, and the Blackwater River State Park. The alignment does not traverse any of these resource management areas. However, according to database records in the FDOT ETDM GIS system, Eglin AFB is a designated management area of the Florida Natural Area Inventory (FNAI). The project alignment, therefore, does traverse an FNAI Managed Area or designated recreation lands or parks.

- Residential: For many cities located along Eglin's southern boundary, urban residential (as well as commercial) development is limited to vacant parcels existing within the urbanized areas (infill development). The remainder of the region is open to rural residential development (USAF, 2007). No residential areas exist along or within the area of the SR 123 Proposed Action.

Figure 3-10: ***Land Use***

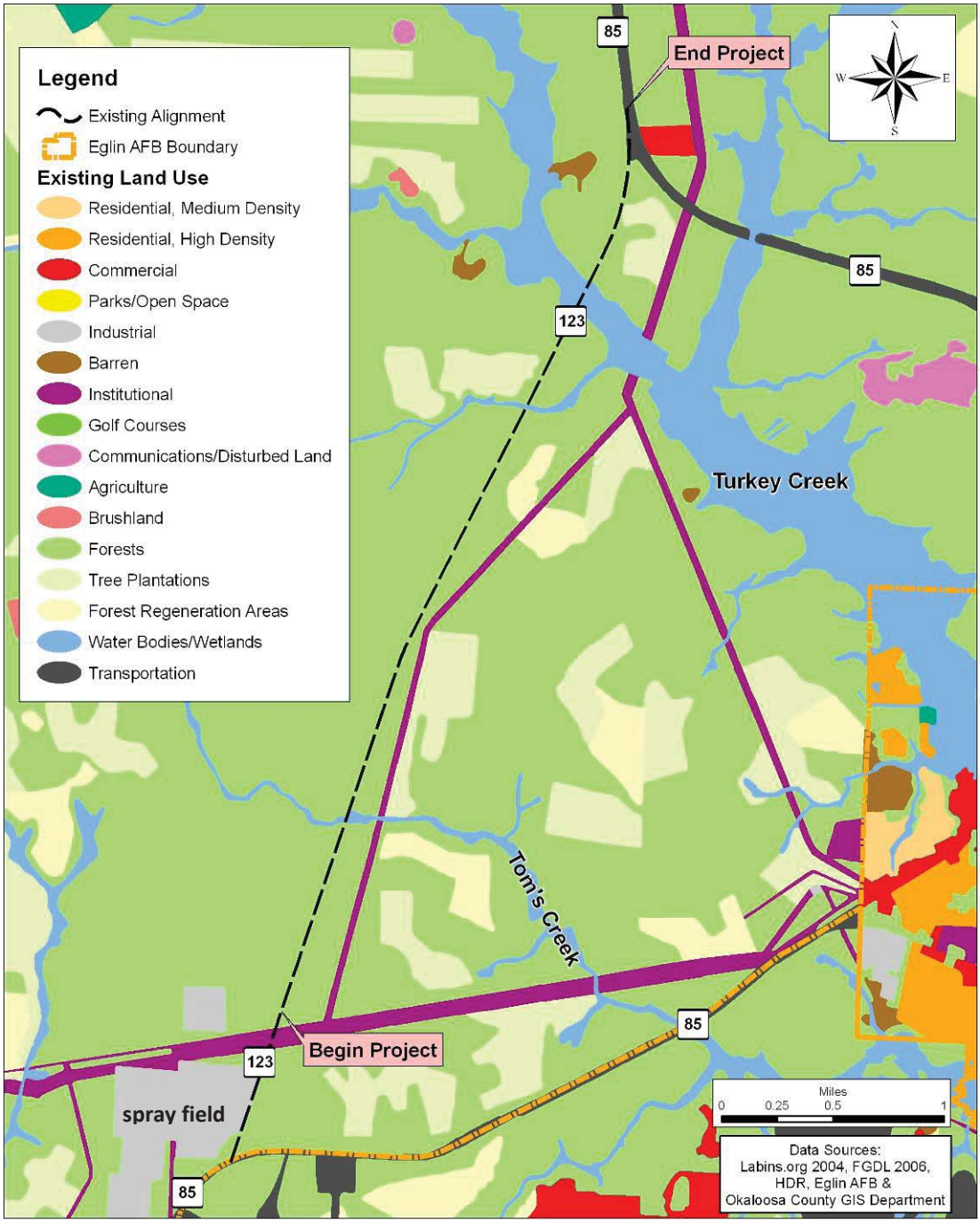
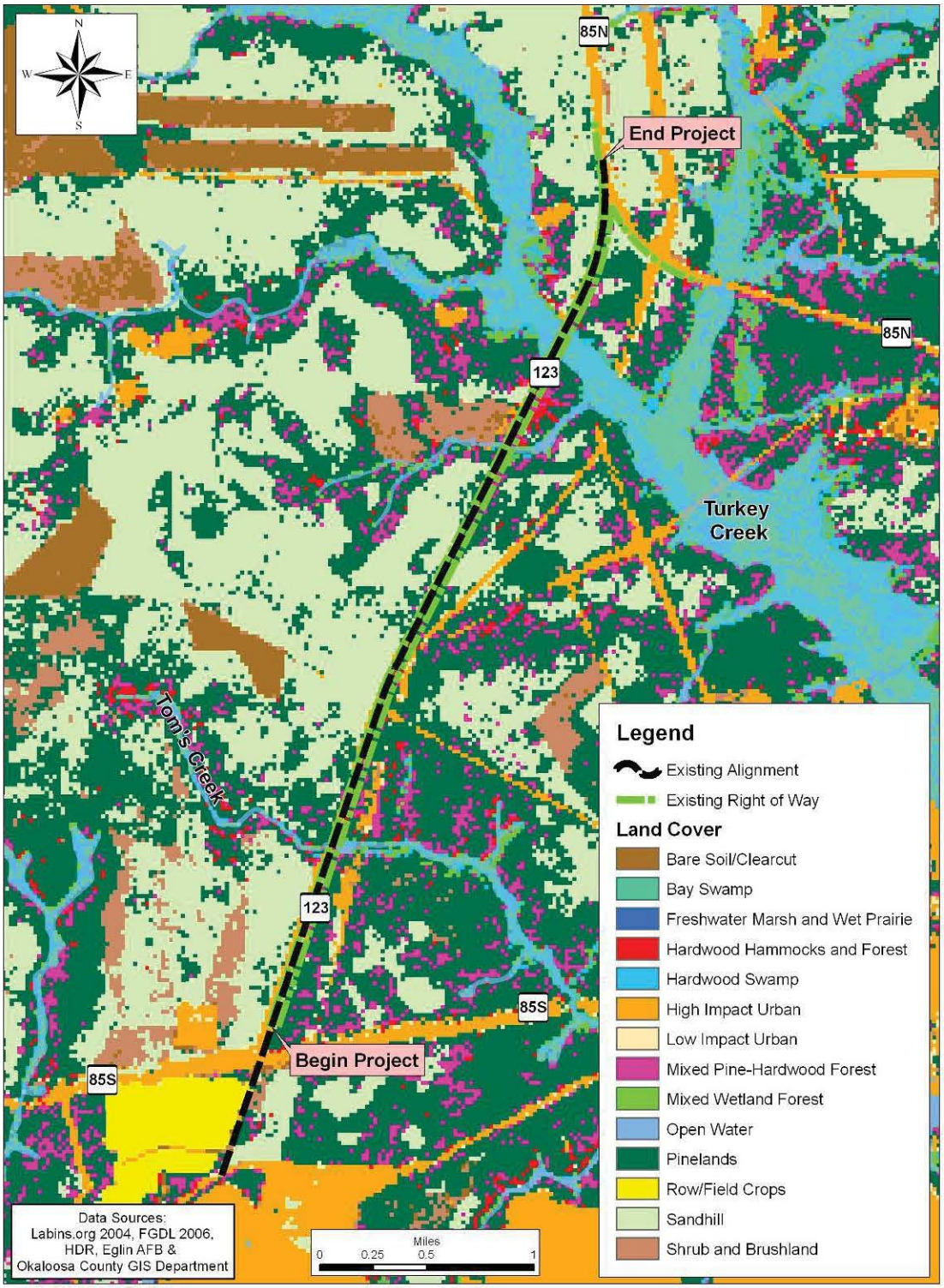


Figure 3-11: ***Land Cover***



The land use adjacent to the project corridor includes federal lands, forested natural areas, tree plantations, utilities, and industrial (waste water spray field). The largest percentage of the area consists of forested natural areas and is part of Eglin AFB. Generalized existing land use is shown in **Figure 3-10** and land cover in **Figure 3-11**. The waste water spray field complex is located on the west side of the southern terminus of SR 123. An east/west utility easement bisects SR 123 just north of the spray field and continues adjacent to and east of SR 123 for the entire length of the project. There are bridged crossings of Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek as well as a culvert crossing of an un-named Turkey Creek tributary south of the creek. Wetland and upland mixed coniferous/hardwood communities encompass the moderately incised flow-way of Turkey Creek and its tributary. Several pine plantations exist adjacent to SR 123, both to the east and the west. A government/commercial parcel exists at the northern terminus of the project to the east of SR 123. According to the Eglin AFB INRMP (USAF, 2007), the future land use planned for this area is to maintain the area as a natural forested area.

3.5.3.4 Visual

Visual resources consist of the natural and man-made landscape features that appear indigenous to the project area and that give a particular environment its aesthetic qualities. Impacts to visual sensitivity are assessed in terms of whether the visual resource is of high, medium, or low sensitivity.

High sensitivity resources include designated areas of aesthetic, recreational, cultural, or scientific significance that meet certain criteria; examples include wilderness areas, state and national parks, wildlife refuge, wild and scenic rivers, and historic areas. Medium sensitivity areas are more heavily developed and contemporary human influences are more apparent, and are generally designated for recreational, scenic, and historical use by local authorities, such as community parks, highway scenic overlooks, and hiking trails. All other areas are considered to be of low sensitivity (USAF, 1998).

The project area is considered to be of medium sensitivity because it is not a wilderness area, state or federal park, or otherwise designated scenic or historic. However, the entire alignment passes through federal Air Force reservation and is therefore largely undeveloped except for the existing SR 123, and communications facilities, and a spray field. The project setting is characterized by gently rolling wooded hills and the notable topographic relief where the alignment interacts with Tom's and Turkey Creek.

3.5.4 Transportation

Transportation systems facilitate the movement of people, goods, and materials by ground, water, or air. For transportation systems to be adequate, users must be able to reach their destinations within reasonable limits of time, cost, and convenience. The Proposed Action addressed in this EA involves roadway transportation.

SR 123 is functionally classified as a Rural Minor Arterial. The facility is a component of the Florida Intrastate Highway System (FIHS) and a Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Connector. SR 123 is also a designated Hurricane Evacuation Route for south Santa Rosa and Okaloosa County.

The roadway is currently posted for 45-55 mph. The estimated design speed of the existing roadway is at least 65 mph, based on horizontal and vertical alignments and current design standards and in accordance with the Plans Preparation Manual (Topic #625-000-007, Jan 2007), Vol. I, Table 1.9.2, which specifies the minimum design speed of 65 mph for a FIHS/SIS Rural Arterial.

Since construction of the existing bridges in the 1970s, the SR 123 alignment has served the region as part of the north-south connection between Eglin AFB to the south, and SR 85 to I-10 to the north, as part of the local transportation system serving local citizens commuting to and from work and school and traveling to and from shopping and recreational activities, and as part of the hurricane evacuation route.

Existing conditions of roads are characterized by LOS as a primary measure of operational efficiency. Performance of a roadway segment may be expressed in terms of LOS, a qualitative measure of operational factors such as speed, travel delay, freedom to maneuver, safety, and time (frequency or hours) of operation. Roadway capacity depends mainly on the street width, number of travel lanes, intersection controls, and other physical factors. The capacity and LOS of intersections along routes often determine average travel speed on these roads.

The LOS scale ranges from A (best) to F (worst), with each level defined by the criteria contained in the Highway Capacity Manual 2000, published by the Transportation Research Board, National Research Council. LOS ratings of A, B, C, and D represent good operating conditions where minor or tolerable delays are experienced by motorists. As LOS goes from A to D, there are increasing levels of congestion, longer waits at signals, and increasing reductions in speed from free-flow operations. A LOS rating of D borders on a range in which small increases in flow may cause substantial decreases in speed. A LOS rating of E represents the roadway at capacity, and LOS F represents unacceptable flow conditions. Both E and F are characterized by average travel speeds of one-third to one-quarter of the free-flow speed and highly congested operating conditions. The minimum acceptable LOS for SR 123 has been set at LOS C.

The facility currently operates at LOS F. If no improvements are made, the average arterial LOS is expected to be LOS F in 2013 (Opening Year) and will remain at LOS F in 2033 (Design Year) with increasing delay expected. With a four-lane cross-section, the arterial segment is expected to operate at LOS B in 2013 and LOS C in 2033.

There are presently no sidewalks for pedestrians, bicycle lanes, or bike paths along SR 123 within the study area limits. Five-foot paved shoulders are provided, but are not designated for bicycle traffic. The O-W TPO has requested that the paved shoulders be marked as designated bicycle lanes. However, this request cannot be incorporated in accordance with the FDOT *Plans Preparation Manual*.

The corridor does not have any current accommodation for non-motorized travel modes, and no transit service is provided along the corridor. No transit services are included in the 2006-2010 Transit Development Plan, and no special facilities are anticipated to be added to the roadway. The *Okaloosa County Greenways and Trails Plan* includes a typical section for a multi-use trail along SR 123 utilizing the fiber optic easement. However, no current plans exist to further develop this path.

3.5.5 Utilities

A decommissioned railbed, identified as Eglin AFB Railroad on paper maps of Okaloosa County and in the Okaloosa County GIS database, runs parallel to SR 123 along the east side. This railbed intercepts, but does not actually intersect, with the project approximately 2.1 miles south of the northern terminus.

Okaloosa County maintains a 30-inch water main and AT&T maintains a buried fiber optic cable located along the east side of the project. The fiber optic cable stays along the east side through the whole project limits. The water main crosses to the west side at a point approximately 1,100 feet south of the intersection of SR 123 and SR 85N and stays on the west side from the point of crossing to the intersection of SR 123 and SR 85N. Okaloosa County holds a 30-foot easement encompassing these utilities, located within and sharing an eastern boundary with the FDOT easement for SR 123.

Four wireless antenna structures (T-Mobile, Verizon, AT&T, and LA Unwired) are located adjacent to the eastern ROW limits, approximately one-half mile north of southern project terminus.

This page intentionally blank

CHAPTER 4

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This page intentionally blank

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This chapter provides a discussion of the potential for significant impacts to the human environment as a result of implementing the Proposed Action (referred to as Alternative 3 (west-shift), or the Preferred Alternative), Alternative 2 (east-shift), or the No Action alternative, and describes potential measures to mitigate adverse impacts. Initial background data were obtained from the engineering and environmental technical studies conducted during previous Project Development and Environment (PD&E) studies. These reports provide baseline information concerning environmental resources and issues, and evaluate the potential impacts resulting from alternatives identified at the time the studies were completed. A list of all PD&E reports is included in **Appendix G.**

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), significant impacts are those that have the potential to significantly affect the quality of the human environment. "Human environment" is a comprehensive phrase that includes the natural and physical environments and the relationship of people to those environments (40 CFR 1508.14). Whether or not a Proposed Action "significantly" affects the quality of the human environment is determined by considering the context in which it will occur and the intensity of the action. The context of the action is determined by studying the affected region, the affected locality, and the affected interests within both. Significance varies depending on the setting of the Proposed Action (40 CFR 1508.27). This intensity of an action refers to the severity of the impacts, both regionally and locally. The level at which an impact is considered significant varies for each environmental resource area.

For each resource area, consideration is given to whether potential environmental effects are short-term or long-term, minor or significant, and adverse or beneficial. Consideration of potential cumulative and indirect effects and any applicable mitigation measures are also presented.

COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Table 4-1 presented below summarizes the impacts for each resource area under Alternative 2 (East-Shift), Alternative 3 (West-Shift) [Preferred Alternative], and the No Action Alternatives.

Table 4-1: ***Summary of Impacts***

	Alternative 2 (East-Shift)	**Alternative 3 (West-Shift) [Preferred Alternative]**	**No Action Alternative**
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT			
Air Resources			
Air Quality	Will not exceed National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).	Will not exceed NAAQS.	Does not currently exceed NAAQS.
Geological Resources			
Physiography	Localized grading will be required to accommodate horizontal and vertical geometry		No impacts.
Geology	No impacts to geology.	No impacts to geology.	No impacts to geology.
Geologic Hazards	No impacts from seismic activity or other hazards.	No impacts from seismic activity or other hazards	No impacts from seismic activity or other hazards.
Soils	Short-term disturbance of soils during construction.	Short-term disturbance of soils during construction.	No impact to soils.
Water Resources			
Surface Water	Short-term impacts to water quality minimized through BMPs, stormwater ponds constructed.	Short-term impacts to water quality minimized through BMPs, stormwater ponds constructed.	No impacts to surface waters, no stormwater management provided.
Groundwater	No significant impacts to groundwater.	No significant impacts to groundwater	No impacts to groundwater.
Floodplains	Impacts estimated at 5.68 ac.	Impacts estimated at 5.39 ac.	No significant impacts to floodplains.
Biological Resources			
Ecological Associations	Potential impacts to 6.48 acres (less than 0.01 percent) of the total wetlands/riparian on the Eglin AFB, and 102 acres (0.03 percent) of the total sandhills on Eglin AFB.	Potential impacts to 6.0 acres (less than 0.01 percent) of the total wetlands/riparian on the Eglin AFB, and 111 acres (0.03 percent) of the total sandhills on Eglin AFB.	No impacts.
T&E Species	Adversely affect, but not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the Okaloosa Darter. Take permit of 1,562 darter. No designated Critical Habitat.	Adversely affect, but not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the Okaloosa Darter. Take permit of 1,562 darter. No designated Critical Habitat.	No impacts to T&E species; No designated Critical Habitat.
Wildlife	Funnel fencing provided for designated bear crossing at Turkey Creek.	Funnel fencing provided for designated bear crossing at Turkey Creek.	No funnel fencing provided for designated bear crossing at Turkey Creek.

Table 4-1: *Summary of Impacts*			
	Alternative 2 (East-Shift)	**Alternative 3 (West-Shift) [Preferred Alternative]**	**No Action Alternative**
Wetlands			
Wetlands	Impacts are estimated at 0.80 acres	Impacts are estimated at 0.61acres	No impacts to wetlands.
Noise			
Noise	No noise receptors.	No noise receptors.	No change in current noise levels.
Cultural Resources			
Cultural Resources	No effect to Section 106 resources.	No effect to Section 106 resources.	No impacts to cultural resources.
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT			
Hazardous Materials			
Hazardous Materials	Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) surveys required.	UXO surveys required.	No encounters with hazardous materials are expected.
Health & Safety	UXO will be surveyed and cleared prior to construction activities; No impact to health & safety.	UXO will be surveyed and cleared prior to construction activities; No impact to health & safety.	UXO will not be surveyed or cleared.
Hazardous Waste			
Hazardous Waste	No impacts from hazardous waste expected.	No impacts from hazardous waste expected.	No encounters with hazardous waste generators are expected.
Health & Safety	Public health and safety improved through road improvements.	Public health and safety improved through road improvements.	No impacts to health & safety.
Solid Waste			
Solid Waste	Short-term increase in solid waste from construction activities; No long-term impact.	Short-term increase in solid waste from construction activities; No long-term impact.	No change in solid waste generation.
LOCAL COMMUNITY			
Socioeconomics			
Population	Commute time / safety improves for local population.	Commute time / safety improves for local population.	Regional population is expected to increase as a result of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC).
Employment & Income	Short-term benefits from construction dollars; No long-term impact.	Short-term benefits from construction dollars; No long-term impact.	No change in employment or income.
Environmental Justice			
Environmental Justice	No impact to low-income or minority populations.	No impact to low-income or minority populations.	No impact to low-income or minority populations.

Table 4-1: *Summary of Impacts* (*continued*)			
	Alternative 2 (East-Shift)	**Alternative 3 (West-Shift)**	**No Action Alternative**
Land Use and Aesthetics			
Land Use	No change in land use – project totally within federal lands. No impact to Eglin AFB mission. New stormwater ponds will become state-managed.	No change in land use – project totally within federal lands. No impact to Eglin AFB mission. New stormwater ponds will become state-managed.	No changes to current land use.
Right-of-Way and relocations Aesthetics	110 ac. No relocations. Visual landscape will change as roadway is widened. However, widening would occur along existing alignment.	118 ac. No relocations. Visual landscape will change as roadway is widened. However, widening would occur along existing alignment.	No additional right-of-way (ROW) needs. No change to visual resources.
Transportation			
Transportation	Long-term benefits to regional commuters and regional transportation network; Short-term impacts to regional commuters during construction.	Long-term benefits to regional commuters and regional transportation network; Short-term impacts to regional commuters during construction.	Increased negative impacts to LOS along area roadways; Continued negative impact to regional transportation network.
Utilities			
Utilities	Relocation of an existing 30-inch water main ($3.9M) and an existing fiber optic cable ($488,400). Relocation of four wireless phone towers would be required ($8M).	Minimizes impacts to an existing 30-inch water main ($620,000) and an existing fiber optic cable, both located inside the east right-of-way (ROW) line. No wireless facilities affected.	No utility impacts.

4.1 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Potential impacts to the affected natural environment have been evaluated and are discussed in the following sections.

4.1.1 Air Quality

Significant impacts to air quality would be a violation of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards **(**NAAQS). Examples would be excessive or frequent exposure of sensitive receptors to increased pollutant concentrations (due to high emission rates or proximity to a source), or worker or public exposure to a hazardous air pollutant in excess of standard. No impact would occur if no measurable change in emissions resulted. A reduction in baseline emissions would have a beneficial impact on air quality.

4.1.1.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

In accordance with Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) guidance (FDOT 2006), an *Air Quality Screening Report* (FDOT3, 2008j) was completed for the project. Potential temporary effects of the Proposed Action on air quality would be minimal. Construction of the Proposed Action would result in temporary, localized emissions associated with vehicle and equipment exhaust as well as dust and debris from grading and paving. These impacts will be minimized by adherence to all state and local regulations and to the FDOT *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction.* Impacts due to exhaust and dust would be considered substantial without the implementation of the BMPs specified in the FDOT standard specifications. All applicable BMPs will be used to minimize the air quality impacts of the Proposed Action.

An Air Quality Screening Test was conducted to predict the impact of the proposed improvements to SR 123 on future air quality conditions in the project vicinity. The analysis examined the generation and localized transport of carbon monoxide (CO), the most prevalent air pollutant emitted from motor vehicles. The results of the analysis are used to indicate whether or not motor vehicle emissions associated with the project would contribute to CO concentrations in exceedance of the NAAQS. There are currently no Developments of Regional Impacts (DRIs) under construction or approved within the SR 123 project area. Currently, Okaloosa County is designated as an **attainment** area for all criteria pollutants.

Local concerns about Air Quality standards and the potential for future non-attainment of the NAAQS as the regulations get more stringent warranted running the CO Florida 2004 model. A "worst case" approach is typically used in the CO Screening Test Analysis, as outlined in the FDOT *PD&E Manual*. The premise of this approach is that CO concentrations elsewhere along the project corridor will be lower than the "worst case" location. A reasonable receptor site is an area where the public has routine access and could conceivably be expected to spend a significant amount of time, generally one to eight hours. As no signalized intersections would remain following completion of the project, the area near the existing intersection was selected as a pseudo receptor site, even though no person is anticipated to remain in that location as there are no proposed pedestrian facilities along the corridor. Data inputs into the model included the roadway speed limits, directional design peak-hour traffic volumes, and roadway operating conditions obtained from the Design Traffic Technical Memorandum (FDOT3, 2008a). All other data used to run the CO Florida 2004 model were default values.

The results of the modeling indicate the proposed project will not cause, or contribute to, CO concentrations above the one-hour and the eight-hour NAAQS because the predicted CO concentrations of 9.0 ppm and 5.4 ppm are below the NAAQS standards of 35 ppm for the one-hour concentration and 9 ppm for the eight-hour concentration. This project is in conformance with the State Implementation Plan (SIP) because it will not cause violations of the NAAQS.

All portions of the project are included in the fiscally-constrained metropolitan transit plan for the region which is the Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization (O-W TPO) *2030 Long Range Transportation Plan* (LRTP) (O-W TPO, 2007). This project is included in the 2007 *Cost Feasible Plan* (Table 7-2 of the LRTP).

Because the Proposed Action would not contribute to a violation of the NAAQS, would not affect conformity with the SIP, and would have inconsequential, localized project effects, no mitigation for operational effects is necessary. This project is in conformance with the State Implementation Plan because it will not cause violations of the NAAQS. The project therefore meets conformity requirements.

Based on review by the Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT), as documented in the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Programming Summary Report Project #8167 (March 26, 2008), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found the project to pose a minimal degree of concern regarding air quality.

Table 4-2: *NAAQS for the Proposed Action*

Alternative	Year	Average Speed (mph) SRS 123 / SR 85	Traffic Volumes		Receptor	Max 1-Hr CO Conc (ppm)	Max 8-Hr CO Conc (ppm)
			AADT	VPH			
Alternative 2 (East Shift) and Alternative 3 (West Shift)	2007	45 / 65	17,000	1230	Near proposed interchange of SR 123 and SR 85	9.0	5.4
	2033	45 / 65	27,000	1947		8.4	5.0

AADT: Annual Average Daily Traffic. VPH: Vehicles per Hour

4.1.1.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

Potential effects of the Alternative 2 would not differ from those described above. There are no differentiating factors that would set apart this alternative. This is because a "worst case" approach is typically used in the CO Screening Test Analysis, as outlined in the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) *PD&E Manual*. The premise of this approach is that CO concentrations elsewhere along the project corridor will be lower than the "worst case" location. Because of interrupted traffic flow, signalized intersections generally experience "worst case" air quality conditions. In review of traffic data for SR 123 the intersection of SR 123 and SR 85N was chosen. Neither this intersection nor any location along the corridor has a nearby reasonable receptor sites. A reasonable receptor site is an area where the public has routine access and could conceivably be expected to spend a significant amount of time, generally one to eight hours. This amount of time is consistent with CO limits, which are expressed in one-hour and eight-hour averages. For this Screening Test Analysis a pseudo receptor was placed at the intersection with the same predicted CO concentrations as stated previously in Alternative 3.

4.1.1.3 No Action Alternative

Potential effects of the No Action alternative would not differ from those described above. This is because the project is not increasing capacity. The air screening model uses capacity and intersection configuration as primary input parameters. The screening conducted for the two build alternatives contemplated an intersection in the configuration of a "T." This would be a "worst case" scenario, because the proposed action would be to construct a fly-over interchange removing the existing signal light and the existing "T" configuration. As traffic would not come to a stop, CO emissions would be less than modeled. Therefore, the numbers reported in **Table 4-2** would likely be more representative of the No Action alternative because the model input considered a "T" configuration because no other options were available as input parameters. For these reasons, the potential effects of the No Action Alternative would not differ from those described above.

4.1.2 Geological Resources

Significant impacts to geological resources could occur if the resources are depleted at a local or regional level, or if any mass movements or slumping (down slope movement of sediment and rock) events triggered by project activities cause irreversible damage or injuries. Significant adverse impacts to soils would result from an accelerated erosion rate (above existing erosion rates) or degradation of soil properties. Impacts would not be significant if a resource is only slightly impacted or is not important to a region. A beneficial impact could occur if potential hazards were reduced or if soil productivity is enhanced.

4.1.2.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

The Proposed Action would have no adverse impact on the geological resources of the area. Construction of the road would require clearing and grading. The topography along the Proposed Action corridor would be affected by removing some elevation in some areas and filling in lower areas. The geology would not be significantly affected during construction and not impacted after construction. Operation of the roads would not affect the local geology. No seismic impacts would occur as a result of constructing and operating the Proposed Action.

To minimize temporary impacts, an erosion control plan conforming to FDOT requirements would be followed. BMPs (such as watering, reestablishing ground cover for disturbed areas, and using silt traps or diversion structures during construction) would be implemented to reduce the potential for soil erosion and sedimentation into wetlands and streams. With the use of these and other BMPs, impacts to soils should not be significant. No further mitigation is anticipated.

4.1.2.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

Potential impacts associated with Alternative 2 (East Shift) would not differ from those described above. There are no differentiating factors that would set apart this alternative.

4.1.2.3 No Action Alternative

No significant or beneficial impacts to geological resources would occur with the No Action alternative.

4.1.3 Water Resources

An impact to water resources would be considered potentially significant if an aquifer, groundwater well, surface water body, or floodplain is adversely affected, resulting in a measurable change in a user's water supply, if a water quality criteria, such as a maximum contaminant level (MCL), is exceeded, or if a floodplain's hydraulic characteristics are significantly altered or impeded. A decrease in groundwater recharge and increase in runoff could also be significant if the stormwater system cannot adequately handle the increased volume of water, thus increasing the potential for flooding. A finding of no significant impact would result if no measurable change is predicted to occur. A beneficial impact would result from an improvement to water quality or quantity by decreasing contaminant levels, decreasing the potential for future contamination, increasing groundwater recharge, and maintaining the hydraulic integrity of the floodplain. Potential impacts to wetlands are discussed in Section 4.1.5 of this EA.

4.1.3.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

In accordance with FDOT guidance (FDOT, 2004), a *Water Quality Impact Evaluation* (WQIE) (FDOT3, 2008g) was completed for this project (**Appendix H).** There are currently 22 acres of pavement within the corridor with an additional 20 acres of pavement proposed. However, because the existing alignment currently does not provide any treatment for stormwater runoff, the proposed action could have beneficial long-term impacts as the project proposes construction of stormwater ponds where none currently exist.

Stormwater Treatment

A Location Hydraulic Report was prepared for this project (FDOT3, 2008f). Constructing adequate stormwater management facilities to meet stormwater treatment and attenuation requirements set forth in Chapters 14-86, F.A.C. and Chapter 62-346, F.A.C. within the SR 123 corridor would provide for treatment where none currently exists. The proposed drainage system would maintain the existing drainage patterns. This would minimize direct discharge of stormwater into an Okaloosa Darter stream. Therefore, the surface water quality of the Okaloosa Darter would not be negatively impacted.

The drainage design would be in agreement with the requirements set forth in 23 CFR 650A; Part 2, Chapter 24 of the FDOT *PD&E Manual* (FDOT, 2008c), and the criteria set forth in the FDOT *Drainage Manual*.

Based on the results of the Pond Siting Report (FDOT3, 2008h), dry detention ponds are proposed for the entire project. The volume required for stormwater treatment will be determined by application of Chapter 62-346, F.A.C. The volume required to be held for stormwater attenuation will be determined in accordance with the procedures established in Chapters 2 and 5 of the FDOT Stormwater Management Facility Handbook (January 2004) and the requirements outlined in Part III of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)/Northwest Florida Water Management District (NWFWMD) Environmental Resource Permit Applicant's Handbook – Volume II (October, 2007). No increase in peak flows will result from the project improvements for storms with design frequency less than or equal to the 100-year recurrent interval.

Construction Impacts

Water resources would be affected during construction (short-term in nature). Due to the potential for heavy rainfall in the region, disturbed soil in construction areas and stockpiles of dirt are susceptible to erosion during the construction process. This erosion could result in sediments entering the wetlands and streams and being ultimately conveyed to Choctawhatchee Bay. These sediments could adversely affect aquatic resources. Construction through wetland areas would affect an area of exposed water and require dredge and fill permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the NWFWMD/FDEP (impacts to wetlands are addressed in Section 4.1.5).

An erosion control plan following FDOT and FDEP requirements would be developed for the construction of the Proposed Action in coordination with Eglin AFB 96th Civil Engineer Group Eglin Natural Resources Section (96 CEG/CEVSN). Proper construction techniques using BMPs such as the use of runoff and sediment traps (i.e., silt fences) and small sediment collection ponds would minimize the potential for adverse impacts to surface waters from runoff. Ground cover would be replaced as soon as possible to reduce erosion. Spill prevention plans and cleanup plans would be followed to prevent spills or leaks of hazardous materials or wastes from impacting the environment (USAF, 1998). Therefore, siltation in the wetlands, streams, bayou, and ultimately Choctawhatchee Bay should be minimal.

It is anticipated that the following permits would be required for construction of the Proposed Action: USACE: Individual Permit (Section 404); NWFWMD/FDEP: Environmental Resource Permit; and USEPA: NPDES/MS4 (administered by FDEP).

Floodplain Impacts

A Location Hydraulic Report was prepared for this project (FDOT3, 2008f) in accordance with FDOT guidance (FDOT, 2008c). The project traverses Zone A (100-year floodplain with no base flood elevation determined) in two locations: at the un-named tributary to Turkey Creek and over Turkey Creek itself. There is no designated 100-year floodplain at Tom's Creek where the project traverses the creek bed. The floodplains are not designated as *regulatory floodways* by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Most of the floodplain traversed over Turkey Creek would be by way of the bridge, therefore the only impacts would be from the bridge supports and side bank stabilization on each side of the creek. Floodplain impacts are estimated at 5.68 acres under Alternative 2, or 5.39 acres under Alternative 3. All encroachments would be transverse. This means that the encroachment would be perpendicular to the direction of flow (for example, a bridge encroachment on the floodplain is normally considered to be transverse encroachment). Floodplain encroachments associated with the proposed facility will be limited to the bridge supports and side bank stabilization on each side of Turkey Creek and the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek for the new bridge spans, and potentially for a minimal number of on-site cross-drains. The new bridge spans and cross-drains will be sized during final design to perform hydraulically in a manner equal to or greater than the existing structures. No ponds are proposed within the 100-year floodplain. Floodplain compensation will be provided as necessary under NWFWMD, FDEP and Okaloosa County floodplain criteria.

The locations that would encroach into the 100-year FEMA floodplain are categorized as *minimal encroachment*. Minimal encroachment on a floodplain occurs when there is a floodplain involvement but the impacts on human life, transportation facilities, and natural and beneficial floodplain values are not significant and can be resolved within minimal efforts.

The addition of bridges parallel to the existing bridges would not cause adverse backwater effects, since the roadway elevations are more than twenty feet higher than the 50-year flood elevation. The 50-year flood elevations were obtained from the 1973 FDOT design plans for the two existing bridges and are 30.10 for the Tom's Creek bridge and 14.56 for the Turkey Creek bridge. Existing cross-drains will be analyzed during the design phase of the project to evaluate their hydraulic capabilities.

The un-named tributary to Turkey Creek passes under the current roadway via a 10' x 6' x 156' box culvert. A detailed study of this crossing will be conducted in the design phase of this project to evaluate floodplain requirements of Okaloosa County and Chapter 62-346, F.A.C.

Per Chapter 24 of the FDOT *PD&E Manual*, this project has been classified as a *CATEGORY 3* which is defined as: *projects involving modification to existing drainage Structures.* The *PD&E Manual* provides further clarification to support a conclusion that the floodplain encroachment is not significant:

> *The modifications to drainage structures included in this project will result in an insignificant change in their capacity to carry floodwater. This change will cause minimal increases in flood heights and flood limits. These minimal increases will not result in any significant adverse impacts on the natural and beneficial floodplain values or any significant change in flood risks or damage. There will not be a significant change in the potential for interruption or termination of emergency service or emergency evacuation routes. Therefore, it has been determined that this encroachment is not significant.*

As required by EO 11988, a Finding of No Practicable Alternative (FONPA) would be prepared and submitted for review and approval to Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC), in accordance with 32 CFR 989.15. All floodplain crossings will be transverse and designed not to increase backwater elevations. Therefore, floodplain encroachment is considered minimal and not significant.

Groundwater Impacts

Construction of the SR 123 project is not expected to significantly reduce the groundwater recharge area based on the bridging techniques and BMPs that will be incorporated. Construction occurring through jurisdictional wetlands and associated floodplains will follow Section 404 and Chapter 373, F.S. permit requirements. Excavations below grade would likely encounter groundwater during construction as groundwater can be encountered at or near the surface in some areas. The trend of shallow groundwater movement would continue in the direction of surface water flow. The introduction of additional impermeable surface to the project area could further reduce the local recharge area. Consequently, a small decrease in overall recharge area would result, however, that impact would not be considered significant considering Eglin AFB has approximately 405,000 acres of unimproved land.

All site runoff will be collected and conveyed and treated. Stormwater treatment systems must be at least 100 feet from any public water supply well (Ch 62-555 F.A.C.). The nearest water well as recorded by the NWFWMD is approximately 1,550 feet to the east of the project alignment (Permit number T198708496).

Surface Water Impacts

Surface water quality would be protected with the use of BMPs to minimize erosion, and the construction of stormwater treatment facilities as required. By following the FDEP regulations regarding stormwater discharge, no mitigation is necessary because there are no substantial impacts to water resources expected.

In accordance with FDOT guidance (FDOT, 2003c), potential impacts to Wild and Scenic Rivers have been evaluated. There are no rivers listed in the National Park Service Southeastern Rivers Inventory and, therefore, the coordination requirement for the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act does not apply to this project (BLM, 2008).

4.1.3.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

All impacts to water resources resulting from Alternative 2 would be similar to those outlined in the Proposed Action and are not considered to be significant. Alternative 2 (east shift) would impact 5.68 acres of floodplain.

4.1.3.3 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, the project would not be constructed. As a result, no disturbance from construction, operation, or maintenance of this transportation facility would result and there would no change in water quality.

4.1.4 Biological Resources

Impacts to biological resources would be significant if the viability of any threatened or endangered plant or animal species was jeopardized. Impacts to biological resources would also be significant if the viability of a protected plant or animal species was jeopardized, with little likelihood of re-establishment after the action is complete. An adverse but not significant impact could result if a disturbed population could be re-established to its original state and condition, or the population is sufficiently large or resilient to respond to the action without a measurable change. The significance of the impact depends upon the importance of the resource, and the proportion of the resource that would be affected relative to its occurrence in the vicinity. An increase in population numbers in response to an enhanced habitat, or the increased viability of a species, would be a beneficial impact.

4.1.4.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

Impacts to ecological associations, wildlife, and threatened and endangered species are discussed below.

4.1.4.1.1 Ecological Associations

The Proposed Action would impact Sandhills, and Wetland/Riparian ecological associations. The Sandhills ecological associations system is the most extensive natural community type on Eglin AFB, accounting for approximately 78% (approximately 362,000 acres) of the base. The Wetlands/Riparian ecological association, such as depression wetlands, seepage slopes and streams, and floodplain wetlands, comprises approximately 60,809 acres and 1,158 miles of riverine aquatic systems. Sandhills, due to their wide coverage on Eglin AFB are the ecological associations across which fire carries into the other imbedded fire-dependent systems. These ecological associations are an extraordinarily important contributor to the health and diversity of the Eglin AFB landscape. The Proposed Action and Alternatives follow an existing alignment through Eglin AFB and includes stream crossings. Of the 60,809 acres of wetlands/riparian on Eglin, the proposed action would impact 0.61 acres wetlands and 5.39 acres floodplain, or 6.0 acres (less than 0.01 percent). Of the 362,000 acres of sandhills on Eglin, the proposed action would impact 111 acres (0.03 percent). The Proposed Action and Alternatives are not likely to adversely impact the Eglin AFB prescribed fire management activities. Therefore, an adverse impact is expected based on the permanent nature of any large transportation project, but not significant in terms of the proportion of the resource affected relative to its occurrence in the vicinity and region.

4.1.4.1.2 Wildlife

As with any large transportation project, the Proposed Action could have temporary adverse impacts to wildlife. Small animals such as but not limited to fox, coyotes, squirrels, armadillos, opossums, mice, rabbits, frogs, lizards, salamanders, snakes, and turtles may be displaced by the roadway in the area. Because wildlife fencing would be provided, and the wetland/riparian areas bridged or spanned, wildlife impacts or displacement would be more evident during construction and less obvious during operation of the facility as wildlife passages would present a safe alternative to crossing the roadway.

A *Wildlife and Habitat Report* (FDOT3, 2009a) was prepared in accordance with FDOT guidance (FDOT, 1991). Several regulatory agencies identified concerns with wildlife and habitat impacts through their review as documented in the ETDM Summary Report. Agency review of the *Wildlife and Habitat Report* resulted in a determination that the project could adversely affect a federally-listed species, the Okaloosa Darter. As such, formal consultation under Section 7 of the ESA was required and a BA was prepared (**Appendix I**). The summary findings are further discussed in the following section of this EA.

This project is not located within, and/or will not adversely affect areas identified as Essential Fish Habitat; therefore, an Essential Fish Habitat consultation is not required.

4.1.4.1.3 Rare, Threatened or Endangered Species

A Biological Assessment (BA) has been prepared pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (**Appendix I**). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) issued a Biological Opinion (BO) (March 30, 2012). The BA and BO are provided in **Appendix I.**

USFWS determined the project would affect, but would not likely jeopardize the continued existence of the federally-threatened **Okaloosa Darter**. The BO identified incidental take of 1,562 Okaloosa Darter impacted by the project and identified three Reasonable and Prudent Measures and six Terms and Conditions necessary and appropriate to minimize the incidental take. As further analyzed in the Biological Assessment, and documented in the BO, FDOT will follow avoidance and minimization measures to reduce potential impacts including constructing bridges that span bankfull plus 10%, minimizing in-stream pier placements, restricting construction activities along stream banks, avoiding direct discharge of runoff to streams, and implementing BMPs designed to control erosion. As further mitigation, FDOT will replace the existing culvert at the unnamed tributary with single span bridges, and restore the unnamed tributary along the bed of the existing culvert to be removed. Commitments regarding the Okaloosa Darter are more specifically described in Section 5.3.4 of this document.

The project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the federally-threatened **Eastern Indigo Snake**, as incidental contact is considered unlikely. However, as with any federal or state listed species, a sighting would be reported immediately and all construction related activities would cease until the animal has moved away from the site under its own direction. By adhering to the FDOT Construction Precautions for the Eastern Indigo Snake, impacts to this species are not anticipated.

The project would have "no effect" on the federally-threatened **Gulf Sturgeon** or its habitat. There is no Critical Habitat for the Gulf Sturgeon in the project area and no Gulf Sturgeon have been documented in the project area. The bridged crossings of Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek do not have the depth and velocity of flow to provide suitable habitat for the sturgeon along the project alignment.

The project would not impact known or potential **Reticulated Flatwoods Salamander** habitat. Potential flatwoods salamander habitat is well-documented in multiple locations across Eglin AFB; however no documented habitat or critical habitat areas were identified in the project alignment area. Therefore, FDOT believes the project would have no effect on the species.

The project would have "no effect" on the federally-endangered **Red-cockaded Woodpecker** (RCW). No inactive or active RCW trees would be cut, and there are no documented active cavity trees/clusters within the project alignment area.

The project would have "no effect" on the federally-endangered **Wood Stork** or **Bald Eagle**. Although there is the potential for Wood Storks along the project alignment, there is no documented rookery or associated CFA within 18.6 miles of the project area. No active Bald Eagle nests are documented within 660-feet of the project alignment.

The project is "not likely to adversely affect" the **Florida Black Bear**. The major crossings of Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek and their associated riparian areas where Florida Black Bear activity is known or likely to occur will be bridged to accommodate terrestrial passages for wildlife movement. Previous agency comments (USFWS & Eglin AFB NRS) from the March 6, 2008 meeting indicate that the existing bridges meet the criteria for adequate terrestrial passage.

Although the project would traverse potential habitat of the state-threatened **Gopher Tortoise,** the project is not likely to adversely affect the Gopher Tortoise. Within one month of project initiation, surveys will be conducted along SR 123, staging/storage areas, and stormwater management facilities prior to construction activity. Should a Gopher Tortoise or its burrow be identified that cannot be avoided by 25 feet, a permit from FWC would be obtained with relocation pursuant to the FWC permit requirements. The project is not likely to adversely affect the **Gopher Tortoise**.

Table 4-3 summarizes the effect determination of listed species from the March 30, 2012 Biological Opinion. Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures are specified in Chapter 5 of this EA.

Table 4-3: ***Federal / State Threatened and Endangered Species Effect Determinations***

TABLE 4-3. FEDERAL/STATE THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES EFFECTS DETERMINATIONS	
Species	**Effects Determination**
Okaloosa Darter	Adversely affect, but would not likely jeopardize the continued existence
Eastern Indigo Snake	May affect, not likely to adversely affect
Gulf Sturgeon	No effect
Flatwoods Salamander	No effect
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	No effect
Wood Stork	No effect
Bald Eagle	No effect
Gopher Tortoise	Not likely to adversely affect
Florida Black Bear	Not likely to adversely affect

4.1.4.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

With respect to the Okaloosa Darter and other species discussed above, the discussion of the potential for impact associated with the project is provided without regard for alternative alignments because there is no significant difference in alternatives with respect to potential listed species impact.

Of the 60,809 acres of wetlands/riparian on Eglin, Alternative 2 would impact 5.68 acres of floodplain and 0.80 acres of wetlands, or 6.48 acres (less than 0.01 percent) of the total wetlands/riparian on the Eglin AFB. Of the 362,000 acres of sandhills on Eglin, Alternative 2 would impact 102 acres (0.03 percent) of the total sandhills on Eglin. These impacts would not be considered significant.

4.1.4.3 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, there would be no change to the wetlands/riparian or sandhills ecological associations on Eglin AFB, and no impact to wildlife and rare, threatened or endangered species.

4.1.5 Wetlands

According to EO 11990, *Protection of Wetlands*, May 24, 1977, federal departments and agencies must seek to preserve the natural values of wetlands while carrying out their missions. To the maximum extent practicable, departments and agencies must avoid actions which would either destroy or adversely modify wetlands. Prior to any construction activity in a wetland area (as defined by EO 11990), proponents must prepare a Finding of No Practicable Alternative (FONPA) prior to signature on a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or Record of Decision (ROD) document. The FONPA serves as the decision document to determine there are no practicable alternatives to the proposed action, and that the proposed action includes all practicable measures to minimize harm to wetlands. In preparing the FONPA, agencies and departments must consider the full range of practicable alternatives that will meet the proposed mission requirements. The Proposed Action must include all practicable measures to minimize harm to wetlands. The proponent of any activity that may affect known or suspected wetlands is required to conduct jurisdictional wetland delineations.

In accordance with EO 11990 and FDOT guidance (FDOT, 2009a), wetlands within the project area were evaluated relative to potential impacts and options for avoiding and minimizing such impacts. Wetland identification was accomplished with aerial photography, Geographic Information System (GIS) interpretation, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topography maps, National Wetland Inventory maps, the Okaloosa County soil survey, and on-site flagging and delineation. Delineations followed the "*Army Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual*" (Army, 1987) and Chapter 62-340 of the Florida Administrative Code. Field investigations were conducted in the summer of 2007 and again in 2009.

Significant impacts on wetlands would occur if the new construction resulted in altered hydrologic flow, drainage of sediment or contaminants into wetland areas, or actual filling or destruction of a wetland area. However, the wetland mitigation required by federal and state regulations could reduce the level of significance in order to result in a finding of no significant impact. Although an individual wetland would be adversely affected, the required mitigation would result in an equal or greater amount of wetland acreage in the region. Enhancement or protection of existing wetland areas would result in a beneficial impact (USAF, 1998).

Impact areas within the right-of-way (ROW) have been analyzed via the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM). This assessment method was developed by the Florida Water Management Districts and the FDEP to assist the regulatory evaluation of wetland sites. It provides an accurate and consistent evaluation, by establishing a numerical ranking for location, hydrology, and community structure used to evaluate the current condition of the wetland. Scores for each variable are totaled and divided by the total of the maximum score for that variable. This method scores the functionality of the wetland being impacted and determines the quality and quantity of mitigation land needed to offset the project's impacts. UMAM has been utilized for the entire segment. These numbers will need to be revisited once the exact acreage of impact has been determined through engineered design drawings. This analysis should be used as a basis for determining the areas where impacts should be avoided and minimized to the greatest extent. The scores are based upon the quality and functionality of the system as a whole.

Both Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek have been determined to be Sovereign Submerged Lands by the FDEP Division of State Lands. Easements will be obtained for both proposed bridges at the time of permitting.

4.1.5.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

A Wetland Evaluation Report (FDOT3, 2008i), Wildlife and Habitat Report (FDOT3, 2009a), and BA (FDOT3, 2009b) were prepared for this project in accordance with FDOT guidance (FDOT, 2009a; and FDOT, 1991). Wetland impacts within and immediately adjacent to the proposed alignments would not significantly affect the stability, quality, and function of wetland systems with the proposed design utilizing bridges and box culverts. The USACE and the FDEP/NWFWMD will claim jurisdiction over the identified wetlands. In this regard, future determination regarding jurisdiction will be necessary during the project design phase. It should be noted that new Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP) rules will go into effect prior to the permitting associated with this project. FDOT3 will be responsible for applying and securing an Individual Permit (Section 404) from the USACE and an ERP from the NWFWMD/FDEP under 62-346, F.A.C.

The USACE, FDEP and the NWFWMD regulate impacts to wetlands. Therefore, after avoidance and minimization are addressed and discussed, mitigation may be required pursuant to Chapter 373, Florida Statutes (F.S.). Coordination with the USACE and FDEP or NWFWMD will be necessary during the design phase to establish the extent of mitigation before final permits will be issued. Wetland impacts which will result from the construction of this project will be mitigated pursuant to S. 373.4137 F.S. to satisfy all mitigation requirements of Part IV. Chapter 373, F.S. and 33 U.S.C.s. 1344. Under S. 373.4137 F.S. Mitigation cost will be based on the NWFWMD regional wetland mitigation plan approved by the Florida State Legislature which addresses the estimated mitigation needs of FDOT.

The regulatory agencies require that impacts be calculated for all wetland and open water areas that are crossed by a structure. This is known as *shading impacts*. The impact occurs due to the loss of natural light to the system. The loss or restriction of sun light to all wetland habitat types has a detrimental affect by reducing growth potential of wetland plants. Shading impacts to open water result from the decreased potential for submerged or other aquatic vegetation to become established in the area. Although wetland species can grow under bridges, these floodplain species would not be able to reach full maturity under these shading conditions.

The proposed action [Alternative 3 (west shift)] would result in 0.08 acres of shading impact to Tom's Creek. The shading impacts in this case would be to *Sparganium americanum, Juncus spp., Scirpus spp*., and black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*).

The proposed action [Alternative 3 (west shift)] would result in 0.40 acres of shading impacts to Turkey Creek. The shading impacts are to the floodplain wetland system dominated by gum trees (*Nyssa spp*.), with cypress (*Taxodium spp*.), and black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*).

The proposed action [Alternative 3 (west shift)] would result in 0.09 acres of direct impact and 0.04 acres shading impact to the un-named tributary of Turkey Creek. At the unnamed tributary, removal of the existing culvert and replacement with a bridge would result in a net relative functional gain of 0.04. The total functional loss for the proposed action [Alternative 3 (west shift)] is 0.62 based on impacts from preliminary design.

Table 4-4: *Wetland Impacts, Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]*	
Wetland System	**Impact acreage**
Tom's Creek	0.08 acres shading impact
Turkey Creek	0.40 acres shading impact
Un-named Tributary to Turkey Creek	0.09 acres direct impact 0.04 acres shading impact
Total	**0.61 acres**
Functional Loss	**0.62**

4.1.5.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

Alternative 2 (east shift) would result in 0.17 acres of shading impacts to Tom's Creek by the proposed bridge. The shading impacts in this case would be to *Sparganium americanum, Juncus spp., Scirpus spp*. and black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*).

Alternative 2 (east shift) would result in 0.43 acres shading impacts to Turkey Creek from the proposed bridge. The shading impacts would be to the floodplain wetland system dominated by gum trees (*Nyssa spp*.), with cypress (*Taxodium spp*.), and black titi (*Cliftonia monophylla*).

Alternative 2 (east shift) would result in 0.17 acres of direct impact to the un-named tributary of Turkey Creek. The total functional loss for Alternative 2 (east shift) is 0.68 based on impacts from preliminary design.

Table 4-5: *Wetland Impacts, Alternative 2 (East Shift)*	
Wetland System	**Impact acreage**
Tom's Creek	0.17 acres shading impact
Turkey Creek	0.43 acres shading impact
Un-named Tributary to Turkey Creek	0.17 acres direct impact 0.03 acres shading impact
Total	**0.80 acres**
Functional Loss	**0.68**

4.1.5.3 No Action Alternative

The No Action alternative would maintain the status quo regarding impacts to wetlands. The culvert crossing at the un-named tributary to Turkey Creek would remain silted in. Stream flow would not be restored.

4.1.6 Noise

According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), for construction or traffic noise, increasing noise levels to 67 decibel (dBA) or higher could be considered a significant impact. If noise levels increased to a level below 67 dBA at noise-sensitive receptors, no significant impact would occur. A decrease in noise levels would be a beneficial impact. An increase of 15 or more decibels above the existing noise level as a direct result of the transportation improvement project is considered a substantial noise increase as defined by FDOT.

Construction of the proposed project would result in temporary noise and vibration increases within the project area. The noise and vibration would be generally from heavy equipment. However, there are no sensitive receptor areas close to the construction area. Construction noise would be minimized by requiring the construction contractor to adhere to controls listed in the FDOT *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction.*

4.1.6.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

A noise evaluation memorandum (FDOT3, 2008k) was prepared for the project in accordance with FDOT guidance (FDOT, 2007a) to evaluate the potential noise impacts associated with the proposed widening. The Noise Evaluation Memorandum for this project is available from the District Office, located at Highway 90 East, Chipley, Florida, 32428. The noise impact assessment for this project was conducted in accordance with 23 CFR Part 772 *Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise*. These procedures define the noise impact assessment process and allow for an initial review / screening to determine if noise levels will be likely to increase, if noise sensitive receivers are (or will be) within the project area, and if noise impacts will occur.

A review of aerial photography, a site visit, and communication with Eglin AFB indicate that there are no noise sensitive sites (no development at all) within the project area. According to the Eglin AFB Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) (USAF, 2007), the future land use planned for this area is to maintain the area as a natural forested community used for recreation and some timber production.

A detailed noise study was therefore not required as there are no existing noise sensitive receivers and because the area is likely to remain undeveloped. Noise levels are likely to increase, as capacity is increasing. However, with no noise sensitive sites present, and none anticipated in the foreseeable future, noise impacts are not predicted. As indicated in **Table 4-6**, the 67-dBA isopleth is approximately 120-200 feet from the existing roadway, depending upon the direction of traffic and the elevation of the roadway.

Updated federal noise regulations at 23 CFR 772, “Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise” became effective July 2011. The project remains consistent with the updated noise regulations. There are no noise receptors along or affected by the project.

Table 4-6: *Distance to 67-dBA Isopleth*

Roadway Segment	Distance to 67-dBA Isopleth From Roadway (feet)
SR 123 NB	125-200
SR 123 SB	120-140

4.1.6.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

There are no differentiating factors for Alternative 2 (East Shift) that would result in impacts different than described above.

4.1.6.3 No Action Alternative

The No Action alternative would maintain the status quo regarding the potential for noise impacts.

4.1.7 Cultural Resources

The criteria used to determine the significance of impact on cultural resources include the effects on National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility, future research potential, or suitability for religious or traditional uses. An impact could be significant if it resulted in the physical alteration, destruction, or loss of a resource listed or eligible for listing on the NRHP.

4.1.7.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and in accordance with FDOT guidance (FDOT, 2009b), a *Cultural Resource Assessment Survey* was prepared (October 2008). While there are known sites in the broader vicinity of the project alignment, a site-specific evaluation including archival research, and shovel testing along the project corridor, did not locate any archaeological sites, cultural materials, historic features, or historic structures. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with this determination on March 3, 2009 (**Appendix C**).

If unexpected discoveries, such as archaeological deposits, Native American graves or lost historic cemeteries, are encountered during construction of the widening project, all construction activity will cease immediately and Eglin personnel would be contacted at (850) 882-8459. They will notify the Florida SHPO within 24 hours at (850) 245-6333 to begin procedures outlined in Chapter 872, F.S. (Florida's Unmarked Burial Law).

4.1.7.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

There are no differentiating factors for Alternative 2 (East Shift) that would result in impacts different than described above.

4.1.7.3 No Action Alternative

The No Action alternative would maintain the status quo regarding the potential for impacts to cultural resources.

4.2 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTES MANAGEMENT

Construction of the proposed project would involve the use of materials which could have hazardous components (e.g., asphalt, fuels, paint, etc.) and would result in generation of solid wastes. In order to determine significance, the following were considered: the type and overall quantity of material or waste being generated; the duration of a particular activity using hazardous materials or generating solid and hazardous waste; the potential for releases during handling, transport, storage, treatment, and disposal activities; and the reduction, minimization or cleanup of hazardous materials or wastes. An impact would be significant if the quantities of any solid or hazardous waste generated by the action exceeded regulatory limits or existing transport or disposal capabilities, or if the use of additional hazardous materials or generation of hazardous wastes would have a detrimental impact on worker health and safety. Small increases would result in a finding of no significant impact. A beneficial impact would occur if the types or quantities of hazardous materials or wastes would be reduced or eliminated, or if the potential for leaks, spills, or exposure to hazardous substances would be reduced as a result of the action.

4.2.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

A *Contamination Screening Evaluation Report* (FDOT3, 2008e) was prepared in accordance with FDOT guidance (FDOT, 2008b) and within the scope and limitations of American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Practice E 1527. Hazardous materials would be used by the contractor during the construction of the roadway. Typical hazardous materials used would be asphalt, fuels for equipment, paints, and cleaning compounds for equipment and the facility. Standard materials would be used for construction and would not pose any unusual or substantial threat to human health or the environment. The contractor would be responsible for properly storing, transporting, and using the materials according to applicable regulations. Subsequent to construction, negligible amounts of hazardous materials would be used. Potential uses include paint for striping the road and cleaning compounds. The use of hazardous materials would not have a significant impact on the environment, and would not adversely affect the health and safety of workers or the public.

Any hazardous wastes (e.g., waste adhesives and paint wastes) generated during construction would be handled by the contractor in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Negligible amounts of similar types of hazardous waste produced during construction would be generated during maintenance of the road. Consequently, handling and disposal of hazardous wastes in accordance with applicable requirements would not significantly impact the environment, nor affect the health and safety of workers or the public.

The construction of the Proposed Action would temporarily increase the amount of solid waste generated in the project area. Debris would be generated from site preparation. The solid waste generated by the Proposed Action would be handled by the contractor and would not affect the Eglin AFB solid waste management programs. The contractor would be required to take the construction debris to a landfill that would accept the debris. Adequate landfill space is available in the area for construction debris. Subsequent to construction of the interchange, minimal solid waste would be generated during maintenance of the road. Consequently, no long-term impact involving solid waste would occur under the Proposed Action.

As illustrated in **Figure 3-6**, it has been determined that the Proposed Action will be located in an area that is considered probable for unexploded ordnance (UXO) occurrences. Therefore, FDOT3, in consultation with Eglin's safety office, will be responsible to complete the Explosive Safety Submission (ESS) process to ensure all UXO hazards are cleared prior to the commencement of construction activities.

4.2.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

There are no differentiating factors for Alternative 2 (East Shift) that would result in impacts different than described above.

4.2.3 No Action Alternative

The No Action alternative would remain the status quo regarding the potential for impacts to hazardous materials. Search and possible removal of UXO would not occur.

4.3 LOCAL COMMUNITY

This section addresses potential impacts to the local community including socioeconomics, environmental justice, land use and aesthetics, and transportation.

4.3.1 Socioeconomic

The potential for socioeconomic impact was evaluated in accordance with FDOT guidance (FDOT, 2009b). Significance criteria for socioeconomic resources are determined for each Region of Influence (ROI) by analyzing long-term fluctuation in elements such as population and employment within that ROI. A significant impact would be based on an increase or decline of projected employment and/or an increase or decline in income. In this case, increases in employment and income would be considered beneficial.

4.3.1.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

Implementing the Proposed Action is not expected to substantially impact social or economic resources, including population, income, and employment within the Eglin AFB region of influence. No impacts to population from construction activities would be expected. Persons already living in the region would perform construction work related to the Proposed Action. Therefore, no increase in population would be expected.

Small beneficial impacts to local employment and income from construction under the Proposed Action could occur. Local contractors furnishing construction services for the Proposed Action may provide temporary increases in construction employment for local workers. Increases in construction employment and expenditures would lead to beneficial impacts to the overall income of the area.

4.3.1.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

There are no differentiating factors for Alternative 2 (East Shift) that would result in impacts different than described above.

4.3.1.3 No Action Alternative

The No Action alternative would maintain the status quo and no impacts would result. Consequently, no benefits would result in the temporary local employment opportunities from the construction related activities and local income generated from areas restaurants, hotels, and fueling facilities. Under the No Action alternative, vehicular congestion will continue to increase and traffic conditions will worsen. Avoidable impacts including unsafe traffic conditions and aggravation of environmental conditions including noise, air, and water quality will occur. Without an improvement to the current transportation system, the local community as well as Eglin AFB personnel will experience continued and increased delays in regional commuting and travel.

4.3.2 Environmental Justice

Environmental justice impacts include "ecological, cultural, human health, economic, or social impacts when interrelated to impacts on the natural or physical environment." (USAF, 1997). A significant environmental justice impact would be a serious or long-term health, environmental, cultural, or economic effect that disproportionately affected a nearby minority or low-income population, rather than all nearby residents. An environmental justice impact would be a minor or short-term health, environmental, cultural, or economic effect that disproportionately affected a nearby minority or low-income population. No environmental justice impacts would occur if no disproportionate effects on minority or low-income populations occur (USAF, 1998).

4.3.2.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

Under the Proposed Action, there would not be disproportionate impacts to any nearby low-income or minority populations, and therefore no environmental justice impacts would occur. In addition, the Proposed Action will not sever, fragment, or otherwise negatively impact the cohesion of any low-income or minority community. Since no adverse impacts to environmental justice have been identified, no mitigation measures are necessary.

4.3.2.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

There are no differentiating factors for Alternative 2 (East Shift) that would result in impacts different than described above.

4.3.2.3 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, environmental justice impacts would not change from existing conditions.

4.3.3 Land Use and Aesthetics

Land use impacts would be significant if there was a long-term effect on adjacent land uses caused by foreclosing the existing use of the land, or the adjacent land is degraded to the extent that it can no longer be used for its current or intended use. Impacts would occur if some noticeable degradation occurred or if there were minor, short-term prohibitions on the use of nearby lands. No impact would result if no noticeable change in land use occurred.

The significance criteria for aesthetic impacts were based on the perception of the degree of acceptability of changes to the physical characteristics of the landscape. A significant impact would involve strong disapproval by many individuals, whereas a finding of no significant impact could be supported with minimal disapproval.

4.3.3.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

There would not be a significant impact to land use as a result of the Proposed Action. Approximately 118 acres of ROW would be required. FDOT would conduct the Proposed Action on Eglin AFB-owned lands, which requires an easement across federal property to provide additional ROW to accommodate the proposed construction. Using this area for the Proposed Action would not be considered significant given the benefits to the community as described in the Purpose and Need section and the low impacts to Eglin AFB and its overall missions. Therefore, Eglin AFB has determined through early planning and coordination with the MEC that the land uses necessary to support the primary mission of Eglin AFB and the AAC in the testing and evaluation of non-nuclear munitions, electronic combat systems, navigation/guidance systems, and training, will not be significantly impacted.

In accordance with FDOT guidance (FDOT, 2010) and in coordination with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), it has been determined that there are no prime farmland map units or cultivated crops as defined by 7 CFR 658 within the project corridor. Therefore, the provisions of the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1984 do not apply to this project. The project would have no effect on Section 4(f) [park] lands.

In accordance with FDOT guidance, it has been determined that there are no designated scenic highways within the project study area; therefore, the evaluation of the project impacts to scenic highways does not apply (FDOT, 2008e).

4.3.3.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

There are no differentiating factors for Alternative 2 (East Shift) that would result in impacts different than described above. Approximately 110 acres of ROW would be required.

4.3.3.3 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, land use / aesthetic impacts would not change from existing conditions.

4.3.4 Transportation

Transportation impacts would be significant if the projected peak traffic volume generated by the Proposed Action exceeded the capacity of the roadway. Impacts would be less than significant if the Level of Service (LOS) stayed the same or only slightly decreased, and would be beneficial if the LOS was improved.

4.3.4.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

A *Design Traffic Technical Memorandum* (FDOT3, 2007a), *Capacity Analysis Report* (FDOT3, 2008b), *and Project Development Report* (FDOT3, 2008L) were prepared in accordance with FDOT guidance of the *PD&E Manual*.

During construction of the Proposed Action, additional vehicle trips would be generated in and around the Proposed Action by vehicles transporting workers, material, and equipment to the proposed site. This additional loading of local roadways would contribute to the area's existing traffic congestion, but would be a short-term impact.

Based on the Design Traffic Technical Memorandum, the existing traffic volume is 17,000 vehicles per day (vpd) Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) from April 2007 volume counts. The Memorandum projects a design year (2033) traffic volume of 27,000 vpd using historic trends and projected demands from the Florida Standard Urban Transportation Modeling Structure (FSUTMS) travel model. A significant increase in highway capacity will be required to meet this demand.

The adopted LOS standard for SR 123 is LOS C. The roadway is currently operating at LOS D in the off-peak direction and LOS F in the peak direction. By 2013 & 2033, the average LOS for the corridor is expected to be LOS F if no improvements are made (**Table 4-7**). The periods of LOS F will lengthen in duration as traffic volumes increase. With a four-lane cross-section, the arterial segment is expected to operate at average LOS B in 2013. In 2033, the arterial segment is expected to operate at average LOS C with a four-lane cross-section.

The existing signalized intersection at SR 85N currently operates at LOS C in the a.m. peak hour and LOS F in the p.m. peak hour. A grade-separated intersection at SR 85N will be necessary to meet the adopted LOS standards. During the design year, a grade-separated interchange at SR 85N is expected to operate at LOS B in the a.m. peak hour and LOS C in the p.m. peak hour (**Table 4-8**).

Traffic control plans would be developed in coordination with Eglin AFB and implemented to minimize delays and congestion during the construction. Nevertheless, those traveling to and from Eglin AFB and the general Niceville area would experience some inconvenience and delays during construction. The completed Proposed Action would provide a significant benefit to the area by alleviating the current congestion along the already heavily used transportation network.

A Level I corridor analysis was conducted for this study. A Level I analysis, as defined by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Project Development and Environment Manual (*PD&E Manual*) is for "projects on existing alignments for which alternative corridors are not being considered, and the development and analysis of an interconnected multimodal transportation system is not feasible."

There are three north / south transportation corridors which traverse Eglin AFB in the three-county area, and none that cross the reservation west to east. The south-north corridors are: SR 87 in Santa Rosa County; SR 85 in Okaloosa County; and SR 285 also in Okaloosa County/Walton County. SR 123 provides a bypass of SR 85, avoiding the need for traffic to route through Niceville and Valparaiso. There are no alternative roadway corridors to be studied in lieu of widening this segment of SR 123.

The Transportation System Management (TSM) alternative, which consists of low-cost improvements that maximize the efficiency of the present system, was also considered for this project. Such improvements typically include signal-timing optimization, construction of auxiliary lanes at intersections, improving signs and markings, and provision of high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lanes on multilane facilities.

Although TSM-type improvements could help alleviate some congestion and to some extent improve traffic safety in the project corridor for the short-term, they would not effectively address the project need, which is to increase the available highway capacity in the SR 123 corridor to both restore existing capacity to the required LOS and to meet projected future demand.

4.3.4.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

There are no differentiating factors for Alternative 2 (East Shift) that would result in impacts different than described above.

4.3.4.3 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, transportation impacts would continue to result in conditions where additional capacity would be needed.

Table 4-7: *Arterial Level of Service*

Segment	Existing 2007				Opening Year 2013				Design Year 2033			
	Off-Peak		Peak		Off-Peak		Peak		Off-Peak		Peak	
	VPH	LOS	VPH	LOS	VPH	LOS	VPH	LOS	VPH	LOS	VPH	LOS
No Build, Two-Lane												
SR 123	705	D	1,230	F	795	D	1,397	F	1,109	F	1,947	F
Average	VPH		LOS		VPH		LOS		VPH		LOS	
	968		**F**		**1,096**		**F**		**1,528**		**F**	
Build, Four-Lane												
SR 123	--	--	--	--	795	B	1,397	B	1,109	B	1,947	F
Average	VPH		LOS		VPH		LOS		VPH		LOS	
	--		--		**1,096**		**B**		**1,528**		**C**	

Table 4-8: *Intersection Level of Service*

INTERSECTION		ALTERNATIVE						
		NO BUILD, TWO-LANE			BUILD, FOUR-LANE, NO INTERCHANGE		BUILD, FOUR-LANE, INTERCHANGE	
		2007	2013	2033	2013	2033	2013	2033
A.M.	LOS	C	D	F	C	E	A	B
	DELAY *	28.1	50.9	195.2	30.1	68.0	7.9	12.5
P.M.	LOS	F	F	F	E	F	B	C
	DELAY *	195.6	256.7	470.7	78.6	244.3	16.8	24.9

***** Delay is measured in seconds per vehicle.

4.3.5 Utilities

Impacts to utilities would be considered significant or possibly substantial if services were disrupted for long periods of time. Additionally, impacts that would disrupt the ability of the Niceville, Valparaiso, Okaloosa County (NVOC) wastewater treatment facility to dispose of their effluent within their currently permitted spray-field area would be considered significant or possibly substantial. Through early planning and coordination with the utility companies, interruptions would be short-term and not significant. The utilities would be located or relocated along or adjacent to the existing ROW to minimize disturbance to the public and the NVOC spray-field area (as shown in **Figure 3-10**).

4.3.5.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

A decommissioned railbed, identified as Eglin AFB Railroad on paper maps of Okaloosa County and in the Okaloosa County GIS database, runs parallel to SR 123 along the east side. This railbed intercepts, but does not actually intersect, with the project approximately 2.1 miles south of the northern terminus.

Okaloosa County maintains a 30-inch water main and AT&T maintains a buried fiber optic cable located along the east side of the project. The fiber optic cable stays along the east side through the whole project limits. The water main crosses to the west side at a point approximately 1,100 feet south of the intersection of SR 123 and SR 85N and stays on the west side from the point of crossing to the intersection of SR 123 and SR 85N. Okaloosa County holds a 30-foot easement encompassing these utilities, located within and sharing an eastern boundary with the FDOT easement for SR 123.

Four wireless antenna structures (T-Mobile, Verizon, AT&T, and LA Unwired) are located adjacent to the eastern ROW limits, approximately one-half mile north of southern project terminus.

The proposed action minimizes impacts to the described utilities. Approximately 3,100 linear feet of water main would require relocation at a cost of approximately $620,000. No fiber optic lines or wireless infrastructure would be affected.

4.3.5.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

Alternative 2 would result in the need to relocate all four existing wireless antenna structures at a cost of approximately $8 million. In addition, this alternative would result in the need to relocate an existing 30-inch water main and an existing fiber optic cable, both located inside the east ROW line. Approximately 19,500 linear feet of water main and fiber optic cable would require relocation at a cost of approximately $3.9 million to relocate the water line, and $488,400 to relocate the fiber optic lines.

4.3.5.3 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, utility impacts would not change from existing conditions.

4.3.6 Construction

Impacts from construction would be considered significant or possibly substantial if services were disrupted for long periods of time.

4.3.6.1 Proposed Action [Alternative 3 (West Shift)]

In accordance with FDOT guidance (FDOT, 2000), potential construction issues have been evaluated. Construction activities would have air, noise, vibration, water quality, traffic flow, and visual impacts for those residents and travelers within the immediate vicinity of the project.

The air quality impact will be temporary and will primarily be in the form of emissions from diesel-powered construction equipment and dust from embankment and haul road areas. Air pollution associated with the creation of airborne particles will be effectively controlled through the use of watering or the application of other controlled materials in accordance with the FDOT "Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction."

Noise and vibration impacts would result from the heavy equipment movement and construction activities such as pile driving and vibratory compaction of embankments. However, there are no noise receptors along the project alignment.

Water quality impacts resulting from erosion and sedimentation would be controlled in accordance with the FDOT "Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction" and through the use of Best Management Practices.

Maintenance of traffic and sequence of construction would be planned and scheduled so as to minimize traffic delays throughout the project. Signs will be used as appropriate to provide notice of road closures and other pertinent information to the traveling public. The local news media will be notified in advance of road closings and other construction-related activities which could excessively inconvenience the community so that motorists, residents, and business persons can plan travel routes in advance.

A sign providing the name, address, and telephone of a contact person will be displayed on-site to assist the public in obtaining immediate answers to questions and logging complaints about project activity.

4.3.6.2 Alternative 2 (East Shift)

There are no differentiating factors for Alternative 2 (East Shift) that would result in impacts different than described above.

4.3.6.3 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action alternative, construction impacts would not occur.

4.4 CONSISTENCY WITH REGIONAL PLANS

Transportation priorities in the project area are established by the Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization (O-W TPO). This project is consistent with existing and future plans for growth of Okaloosa County and the future transportation system, including the priorities of the Northwest Florida Regional TPO, the Okaloosa County Comprehensive Plan, and FDOT plans and work programs. This consistency is demonstrated by the project's inclusion in the following plans:

- *Okaloosa County Comprehensive Plan*, Generalized Future Transportation Map (1), South Okaloosa County, 2010 [shows SR 123 widening from two to four lanes]

- Florida Department of Transportation *Strategic Intermodal System Highway Component 2035 Cost Feasible Plan* identifies the widening of SR 123 from two to four lanes

- Okaloosa-Walton 2035 *Long Range Transportation Plan* identifies the widening of SR 123 from two to four lanes as a cost-feasible SIS project in three segments.

    - *4111022* (from north of *S*R 85S to north of Tom's Creek): Right-of-way (ROW) funded in FY 12, Construction funded in FY 26-30 (project number 27);

    - 4111023 (from north of Tom's Creek to north of Turkey Creek): ROW funded in FY 12, Construction funding not yet identified (project number 28);

    - 4111024 (from north of Turkey Creek to SR 85N): ROW funded in FY 12, Construction funded in FY 14 (project number 29).

- Okaloosa-Walton TPO *Transportation Improvement Program* FY 2012-2016 (Amended February 16, 2012), identifies the project in three segments:

    - 4111022 (from north of SR 85S to north of Tom's Creek): $1,844,670 (PE/ROW)

    - 4111023 (from north of Tom's Creek to north of Turkey Creek): $1,927,490 (PE/ ROW)

    - 4111024 (from north of Turkey Creek to SR 85N): $1,539,501 (PE and ROW)

- Project is listed on page 928 of FY 2012 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for Preliminary Engineering and Right-of-Way for the three project segments:

    - 4111022 (from north of SR 85S to north of Tom's Creek): $1,617,539 for Preliminary Engineering and $227,490 for Right-of-Way

    - 4111023 (from north Tom's Creek to north of Turkey Creek): $1,701,059 for Preliminary Engineering and $227,490 for Right-of-Way

    - 4111024 (from north Turkey Creek to SR 85N): $1,312,386 for Preliminary Engineering and $227,490 for Right-of-Way.

The State has found the project to be consistent with the Florida Coastal Management Program (**Appendix F**) with final review and concurrence to be conducted as part of the environmental permitting process.

4.5 RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

The Proposed Action or Alternatives would involve clearing and grubbing vegetation, including trees from the ROW within the project. The use of this habitat by wildlife would be lost. Up to 0.80 acres of wetlands could be affected, although less than this amount would actually be filled. This loss would be offset with compensating wetlands as agreed upon by the USACE and the NWFWMD/FDEP. Mitigation requirements will be determined during design. Runoff will be collected in roadside ditches/swales and conveyed to their respective stormwater treatment facility. Construction of the roadside ditches/swales and stormwater treatment ponds would prevent long-term degradation of wetlands. The Proposed Action or Alternatives will not interfere with the objectives of Eglin's *Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan, 2007* and has been developed and designed to be consistent with Eglin AFB and its missions. Therefore, implementing the Proposed Action is not expected to degrade the productivity of the area.

4.6 CUMULATIVE AND INDIRECT IMPACTS

According to the U.S. Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, cumulative impact analysis in an EA should consider the potential environmental impacts resulting from "the incremental impacts of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions" (40 CFR 1508.7).

Cumulative impacts have been assessed in a qualitative manner taking into account past and present actions relevant to the proposed action and alternatives, and reasonably foreseeable future actions as further discussed below.

4.6.1 Past and Present Actions Relevant to the Proposed Action and Alternatives

Past actions relevant to the Proposed Action or Alternatives include the construction of the existing alignment and stream crossings over Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, and the un-named tributary of Turkey Creek. The location of the proposed widening and construction of new bridge infrastructure is consistent with the current alignment. Present actions relevant to the proposed project include new growth and the proposed interchange at the southern terminus of the Proposed Action or Alternatives.

As discussed in Section 4.6.2 of this EA, the following major reasonably foreseeable federal, state, and local projects within the SR 123 project area have been identified:

- At the intersection of SR 85S and SR 123, FDOT is advancing a project to construct a new interchange. This location is at the southern terminus of the project area, but is not included in this project. The interchange is under development pursuant to FPID 220231-1-32-01. A FONSI was issued by DoD April 11, 2007. Construction groundbreaking commenced December 2009 as project RCS 04-886.

- The Mid-Bay Bridge Authority is advancing a project to construct a new 10-mile four-lane divided facility around the City of Niceville to the east and north (Okaloosa County, FL). A FONSI / FONPA was issued by DoD December 5, 2008 as project RCS 07-523.

4.6.2 Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions

Reasonably foreseeable future actions are defined as other actions included in the O-W Walton TPO 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan or associated with the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) mission expansion at Eglin AFB as discussed in Section 2.8 of this EA. Reasonably foreseeable future actions will be identified by the O-W TPO in the process of preparing the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Update. A reasonably foreseeable future action is the inclusion of the SR 85/Special Forces Intersection Overpass as approved by the O-W TPO by Resolution O-W 09-33 to amend the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan Needs (OW TPO, 2009). The project would construct a new overpass at SR 85 and Duke Field that will allow more efficient movement of mission critical people and goods associated with the Special Forces Operation. The Proposed Action or Alternatives in this EA would not adversely affect this reasonably foreseeable future action. Likewise, the reasonably foreseeable future action would not have impact on the Proposed Action or Alternatives in this EA.

4.6.3 Indirect Effects

According to the U.S. Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR 1508.8), indirect effects "are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects may include growth inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air and water and other natural systems, including ecosystems." FHWA guidance, *Forecasting Indirect Land Use Effects of Transportation Projects* (December 2007) suggests that indirect effects may be evaluated based on land use planning.

The project segment provides connection between two points along SR 85. No new access points are proposed along the SR 123 corridor. There are no connections to the system other than at the termini, therefore, traffic patterns would not change.

The surrounding land use would remain under federal control of the Eglin Air Force Base for the foreseeable future as specified in the Eglin *General Plan* and *Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan*. The current land use is considered Open Space (which serves as an undeveloped safety buffer). Land use in the project vicinity would continue to be protected federal land. Therefore, traffic and land use patterns would not change and no indirect effects are identified. In the event of a mission change by Eglin AFB impacting land served by SR 123, further NEPA documentation would be required.

4.7 ANALYSIS OF CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

4.7.1 Air Quality

Okaloosa County is designated as Attainment for Criteria Air Pollutants and is in Conformance with the State Implementation Plan. The Proposed Action or Alternatives would not result in adverse affect to the air quality attainment area status. Any foreseeable cumulative impacts to air quality would be associated with increased area traffic due to the construction of additional infrastructure. The corridor is located entirely on Eglin Air Force Base, which has restricted adjacent development. As a result, no additional destinations or connections are reasonably foreseeable. Therefore, there is minimal potential for cumulate impacts to air quality.

4.7.2 Geological Resources

This project would result in no impact to geological resources and therefore would not contribute to cumulative impacts.

4.7.3 Water Resources

Cumulative effects to water resources including surface water, groundwater, and floodplains are not anticipated for the Proposed Action or Alternatives and foreseeable future actions. The corridor is located entirely on Eglin Air Force Base which has restricted adjacent development. Any additional regional development will require permits from the NWFWMD/FDEP, which would necessitate the construction of stormwater ponds to provide treatment and attenuation of runoff before discharge to the natural environment. This SR 123 widening project would construct stormwater ponds under permits from the NWFWMD/FDEP. These permits will ensure adequate stormwater controls are incorporated into the design to prevent degradation to water quality in surface and ground waters. As the currently operating two lanes discharge runoff with no treatment, the addition of stormwater ponds to the corridor could improve water quality in the receiving streams.

4.7.4 Biological Resources

The cumulative impacts to biological resources resulting from the Proposed Action or Alternatives and foreseeable future actions, together with the mitigation plan have been determined not to be significant. The corridor is located entirely on Eglin Air Force Base which has restricted future development. In this regard, there is minimal potential for cumulative impacts to isolated resources.

Two species have been considered in more detail for potential cumulative impacts due to their range and habitat. These species are the Okaloosa Darter and Black Bear. The darter habitat consists of a larger network of streams that include Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, and their tributaries. In this regard, the darter could be susceptible to regionalized cumulative impacts through various construction projects resulting in stream sedimentation within the network. The bear could be susceptible to regionalized cumulative impacts through various construction projects resulting in habitat fragmentation and increased potential for vehicle strikes. To address cumulative impacts to the darter, Eglin Air Force Base applies erosion and sediment control practices as specified in its *Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan* which has resulted in regional improvements to darter stream habitat. This SR 123 project would likewise be subject to the erosion and sediment control practices consistent with the Eglin *Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan*. To address cumulative impacts to the bear, early coordination with Eglin Air Force Base and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) led the project to incorporate provisions for fencing and wildlife crossings at the bridged crossings at Tom's and Turkey Creek. Combined with the restriction on future growth planned by Eglin Air

Force Base, these measures are anticipated to reduce the likelihood of bear strikes and maintain existing connectivity of habitat.

4.7.5 Floodplains and Wetlands

Impacts to floodplains and wetlands of cumulative actions were not found to be significant. Prior to construction, an Individual Permit will be required from the USACE and an Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) will be required by the FDEP/NWFWMD. The USACE, FDEP and the NWFWMD regulate impacts to wetlands. Coordination with the USACE and FDEP or NWFWMD will be necessary during the design phase to establish the extent of mitigation before final permits will be issued. Under 373.4137 F.S., mitigation of FDOT wetland impacts will be implemented by the NWFWMD.

4.7.6 Noise

Noise impacts from the Proposed Action or Alternatives and foreseeable future actions will not be significant. There are no sensitive noise receptors along the alignment, and no new noise receptors are reasonably foreseeable.

4.7.7 Cultural Resources

Cultural resource impacts from the Proposed Action or Alternatives and foreseeable future actions will not be significant. Cultural resource impacts of cumulative actions were not found to be significant as none are known to exist.

4.7.8 Hazardous Materials and Wastes Management

The only hazardous material potentially impacted by the project is unexploded ordnance (UXO). In compliance with standard protocol at Eglin AFB, the proponent will ensure any and all UXO hazards will be cleared prior to the commencement of construction activities. Because future development on Eglin Air Force Base is restricted and the ordnance will be cleared, the project will not contribute to cumulative impacts relating to hazardous materials.

The Proposed Action or Alternatives would produce an increase in solid waste generation due to construction activities; however, the increase would be limited to the timeframe of the construction project. Because impacts relating to hazardous materials and waste management will be limited in time to the project duration, there will be limited opportunity for the project to contribute to cumulative impacts.

4.7.9 Socioeconomic

The Proposed Action or Alternatives and foreseeable future actions would have a beneficial impact to the local construction industry as well as short-term benefits to the local economy, especially during construction. However, while the long-term effect would alleviate traffic congestion, it could have a negative short-term effect on commuters. There are no residential or business relocations anticipated as a result of the Proposed Action or Alternatives. There would be no cumulative impacts any low-income or minority populations as a result of the Proposed Action, Alternatives, or foreseeable future actions. In addition, based on EO 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, cumulative impacts are not expected from the project. Socioeconomic impacts of cumulative actions were not found to be significant. When combined with the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action or Alternatives, potential socioeconomic impacts would likewise not result in cumulatively significant adverse impacts.

4.7.10 Land Use

The proposed widening follows an existing developed alignment on the federal land of Eglin AFB. Surrounding military land use would not change except for the acquisition of military land for additional ROW. As the land around the alignment would continue to remain part of Eglin AFB, widening would not result in growth-inducing impacts such as residential development pressures, commercial services, or other potential land use changes to the human environment. Impacts to land use from cumulative actions were not found to be significant. When combined with the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action or Alternatives, potential land use impacts would likewise not result in cumulatively significant adverse impacts.

4.7.11 Transportation

The Proposed Action or Alternatives and foreseeable future actions would result in short-term traffic impacts in the vicinity of the project, but would have beneficial long-term impacts. Transportation impacts from the BRAC growth were found to have significant, adverse impacts. However, the BRAC EIS identified several transportation projects that would alleviate those significant impacts. The Proposed Action is one of those projects. Therefore, when combined with the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action or Alternatives, potential transportation impacts would not result in cumulatively significant adverse impacts.

4.7.12 Utilities

The Proposed Action or Alternatives and foreseeable future actions would result in short-term utility impacts during construction in the form of utility relocations. As required during the early planning process, utility companies would be notified and coordination regarding relocations would be scheduled to avoid and minimize disruption in service. Impacts to utilities from cumulative actions were not found to be significant. When combined with the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action or Alternatives, potential utility impacts would likewise not result in cumulatively significant adverse impacts.

4.8 IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

NEPA requires that environmental analysis include identification of any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources that would be involved in the implementation of the Proposed Action or alternatives. Irreversible and irretrievable resource commitments are related to the use of nonrenewable resources and the effects that the uses of these resources have on future generations. Irreversible effects primarily result from the use or destruction of a specific resource (e.g., energy and minerals) that cannot be replaced within a reasonable time frame. Irretrievable resource commitments involve the loss in value of an affected resource that cannot be restored as a result of the action (e.g., extinction of a threatened or endangered species or the disturbance of a cultural site).

4.8.1 Proposed Action and Alternatives

The Proposed Action and alternatives would require permanent use of ordinary construction materials, such as concrete, steel, asphalt, etc. The materials would, except for recyclable items, be irretrievably committed.

The Proposed Action and the alternatives would irretrievably consume various types of fuels and water during the construction period. A long-term commitment of resources would occur for maintenance of the interchanges. The amounts of resource consumption to maintain the roadway and interchanges are not expected to increase significantly from current amounts used in the area.

The loss of trees, vegetation, wetlands, and wildlife habitat from clearing the land for the roadway and interchanges would be an irretrievable commitment of resources. The land that would be occupied by the roadway and interchanges ultimately could be restored as vegetation, wetlands, and wildlife habitat if the roadway and interchanges were removed in the future. Therefore, the commitment of land is not necessarily irreversible.

Although data recovery, a form of mitigation related to cultural resources, would provide knowledge pertinent to the archaeological record, impacts to cultural resources would also be considered an irretrievable commitment of resources. The Proposed Action or alternatives will not irretrievably commit cultural resources.

The extinction of a threatened or endangered species would be considered an irretrievable commitment of resources; however, the Proposed Action or alternatives will not irretrievably commit biological resources as analyzed in the BA and BO found in Appendix I.

4.8.2 No Action Alternative

No irretrievable or irreversible commitment of resources would occur under the No Action alternative.

CHAPTER 5

PLANS, PERMITS, AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

This page intentionally blank

5.0 PLANS, PERMITS, AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

The following is a list of plans, permits, and management actions associated with the Proposed Action. The environmental impact analysis process for this EA identified the need for these requirements which were developed through cooperation between the proponent and interested parties involved in the Proposed Action. These requirements are, therefore, to be considered as part of the Proposed Action and implementation would be through the Proposed Action's initiation. The proponent is responsible for adherence to and coordination with the listed entities to complete the plans, permits, and management actions.

5.1 PLANS

- Site design, construction, and utility plans.
- SWPPP and stormwater, erosion, and sedimentation control plan.
- Final selection of the interchange and pond sites to be approved by 96th Civil Engineering Group (CEG).

5.2 PERMITS

- Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) (62-346, F.A.C).
- Generic Permit for Storm Water Discharge from Construction Activities that Disturb One or More Acres of Land (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit).
- A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Section 404 permit.
- Permits, easements, and authorization through Eglin AFB Real Estate, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and/or Okaloosa County prior to construction. Obtain easements for bridged crossing of sovereign submerged state lands associated with Tom's and Turkey Creeks.
- Coastal zone consistency determination in accordance with Florida's Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) (Appendix F).
- Incidental Take Permit from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) for the Okaloosa Darter.
- Gopher tortoise relocation permit, if applicable.

5.3 COMMITMENTS / MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

FDOT is responsible for the implementation of the following management actions.

5.3.1 Air Quality

Impacts will be minimized by adherence to all state and local regulations and to the FDOT *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*. Reasonable precautions would be taken to minimize fugitive particulate emissions during ground-disturbing/construction activities in accordance with the CAA and Rule 62-296, F.A.C.

5.3.2 Soils and Erosion

- Where applicable, rough grade slopes or use terrace slopes to reduce erosion.
- The Air Force requires inspection and maintenance of Best Management Practices (BMPs) under the stormwater construction general permit.
- An erosion control plan following FDOT and FDEP requirements would be developed for the construction of the Proposed Action in coordination with Eglin AFB 96th Civil Engineer Group Eglin Natural Resources Section (96 CEG/CEVSN).

5.3.3 Water Resources and Wetlands

- Permits and site plan designs would include site-specific management requirements for erosion and sediment control.
- Designation of staging and storage areas for use of construction equipment.
- Entrenched silt fencing and staked bales would be installed and maintained along the perimeter during construction and staging and storage areas.
- Inspection of silt fencing on a weekly basis and after rain events. Replace fencing as needed.
- Waste receptacles, including dumpsters, would be covered to prevent rainwater and wildlife from entering.
- Inclusion of stormwater features designed to control runoff associated with the additional impervious surface, land clearing, grading, and excavating.
- For water quality protection, erosion control blankets/fabric and other applicable BMPs would be incorporated to reduce soil erosion and prevent sedimentation from entering surface waters, floodplains, and wetlands.

- Storage of chemicals, cements, solvents, paints, or other potential water pollutants in locations where they cannot cause runoff pollution into surface waters, floodplains, and wetlands.

- Stormwater treatment systems must be at least 100 feet from any public water supply well.

- FDOT3 will be responsible for applying and securing an Individual Permit (Section 404) from the USACE and an Environmental Resource Permit from the NWFWMD/FDEP under 62-346 F.A.C. Mitigation will be required pursuant to Chapter 373, F.S.

- Coordination with the USACE and FDEP or NWFWMD will be necessary during the design phase to establish the extent of mitigation before final permits will be issued. Wetland impacts which will result from the construction of this project will be mitigated pursuant to 373.4137 F.S. to satisfy all mitigation requirements of Part IV. Chapter 373, F.S. and 33 U.S.C.s. 1344. Under 373.4137 F.S. Mitigation cost will be based on the NWFWMD regional wetland mitigation plan approved by the Florida State Legislature which addresses the estimated mitigation needs of FDOT.

5.3.4 Biological Resources

- **Okaloosa Darter** protection and monitoring, and habitat protection, monitoring procedures to minimize impacts from construction activities shall be implemented as determined by the Biological Opinion approved and issued by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (March 30, 2012).

    - New bridges at Tom's Creek and Turkey Creek shall be designed to span bankfull plus 10% as quantified in the Biological Assessment to avoid in-stream pier placement. In the event in-stream pier placement cannot be avoided with standard design and cost feasible construction, piers at a minimum shall mirror the existing bridges and the pier location shall be coordinated with USFWS to minimize stream impacts.

    - The existing culvert at the un-named tributary will be replaced with a single span bridge structure to avoid stream impacts and provide potential access to upstream habitat. Construction at the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek will span bankfull plus 10% as quantified in the Biological Assessment and avoid in-stream pier placement.

    - It is anticipated that bridge construction will be accomplished at-grade with ground-based construction. However, within wetland limits and along stream banks, work will be accomplished from temporary access structures. Following construction, temporary access structures will be removed and disturbed areas will be restored.

    - Runoff will be conveyed to stormwater ponds where practical for treatment before discharging to Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, or the

unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek. Location of stormwater ponds will be coordinated with Eglin Natural Resources Section and the USFWS.

- Runoff from the bridges will be conveyed and discharged to surrounding floodplains to allow overland or swale flow before entering streams, avoiding direct discharge to the streams.

- Staging and storage areas shall be coordinated with Eglin Natural Resources Section and USFWS prior to construction to avoid environmentally sensitive areas.

- Best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented to minimize impacts to wetlands, surface waters, and soils in compliance with NPDES. During design, an erosion and sediment control plan will be coordinated with USFWS and Eglin Natural Resources Section and USFWS.

- A stream restoration will be performed along the bed of the existing culvert proposed for removal at the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek to establish and reconnect habitat. Stream restoration will be coordinated with the Eglin Natural Resources Section and USFWS.

The Biological Opinion (March 30, 2012) established the following Reasonable and Prudent Measures (RPM) necessary and appropriate to minimize the incidental take of up to 1,562 Okaloosa Darters. As established in the Biological Opinion, the following measures do not apply to segment 4111024 (from north of Turkey Creek to SR 85N). All measures and associated terms and conditions apply to both segments FDIP 4111022 and FPID 4111023 as noted.

RPM 1: Okaloosa darter protection and monitoring, as well as habitat protection, monitoring, and restoration procedures to minimize impacts from all the construction activities shall be implemented.

1.1 An erosion and sediment control plan shall be submitted and approved by the Service prior to the start of construction. This plan is to include re-vegetation of stream banks and riparian areas within the limit of construction, as needed.

1.2 Stream restoration plans for the unnamed tributary of Turkey Creek shall be approved by the Service prior to construction. The restoration plan shall include annual monitoring of the Okaloosa darter population at the unnamed tributary for two years post-construction. It should further define the methods to be used within the two-year period. This term and condition only applies to segment FPID #4111023.

1.3 Contractors for the road construction shall be informed about the presence of the Okaloosa darter and the importance of thorough

implementation of protection measures, especially for erosion control.

RPM 2: It shall be ensured that the stream crossing structures are designed and constructed to protect the streams' natural channel design, thereby reducing the long-term loss of the Okaloosa darter and their habitat.

2.1 Monitoring for physical changes in stream channel stability shall be implemented at all crossings to assess the response of impacted streams to bridge construction. A separate monitoring plan shall be approved by the Service prior to construction. Monitoring should be conducted prior to construction and annually for two years post-construction and the plan should further define the methods to be used during this period.

RPM 3: It shall be ensured that the terms and conditions are accomplished and completed as detailed in this incidental take statement including completion of reporting requirements.

3.1 Upon locating a dead, injured, or sick individual of an endangered or threatened species, initial notification must be made to the Fish and Wildlife Service Law Enforcement Office, Groveland, Florid at (352) 429-1037 within 24 hours. Additional notification must be made to the Fish and Wildlife Resources Section at (850) 882-4161 within 48 hours. Care should be taken in handling sick or injured individuals and in the preservation of specimens in the best possible state for later analysis and cause of death or injury.

3.2 A report describing the actions taken to implement the terms and conditions of this incidental take statement shall be submitted to the Project Leader, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1601 Balboa Avenue, Panama City, Florida, 32405, within 60 days of the completion of construction. This report shall include the dates of work, assessment and actions taken to address impacts to the Okaloosa darter, if they occurred.

– **Eastern Indigo Snake** protection and monitoring, and habitat protection, monitoring procedures to minimize impacts from construction activities shall be implemented.

  - All construction personnel will be provided a description of the Eastern Indigo Snake and its protection under federal law.

  - At the pre-construction conference, FDOT3 District Environmental Management Office (DEMO) staff or their designee will advise the contractor of the potential to impact the Eastern Indigo Snake. The contractor will be required to make his personnel and those of his subcontractors aware of the possible presence of the Eastern Indigo Snake and its physical appearance.

  - If such snake is sighted within the construction area, the contractor or any subcontractor is required to halt potentially harmful activities that may injure the snake as long as the snake remains in the construction area. They will also receive instructions not to harass, injure, harm, or kill this species.

  - Assistance in relocating the snake may be requested through the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) at (850) 488.3831. Any relocation of Eastern Indigo Snakes must be coordinated through Eglin AFB Natural Resources Section (NRS).

  - Signs will be posted in work areas to be aware for potential presence of the Eastern Indigo Snake. The signage will include instructions that if an Eastern Indigo Snake is sighted, immediately contact the Eglin AFB NRS (850) 883.1153.

– **Red-cockaded Woodpecker** protection and monitoring, and habitat protection, monitoring procedures to minimize impacts from construction activities shall be implemented.

  - Prior to construction, coordination with Eglin AFB NRS would be conducted to ensure no inactive or active RCW trees would be cut.

– **Bald Eagle** protection and monitoring, and habitat protection, monitoring procedures to minimize impacts from construction activities shall be implemented.

  - During final design, the nest database would be reevaluated to assure no involvement.

  - Should a Bald Eagle be sighted, construction personnel would be directed to cease any activities and allow the eagle sufficient time to move away from the site on its own before resuming such activities.

  - Should a Bald Eagle take up residence along the project alignment prior to or during construction activities, compliance with the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines would be required.

– **Gopher Tortoise** protection and monitoring, and habitat protection, monitoring procedures to minimize impacts from construction activities shall be implemented.

  - Surveys for Gopher Tortoises and burrows would be conducted within the proposed alignment within one month of the start of land clearing/construction.
  - Gopher Tortoise burrows would be avoided by a minimum of 25 feet if possible. If avoidance is not possible, Gopher Tortoise relocation would be required.
  - All relocations would be performed in accordance with FWC permit requirements.
  - All staging and storage areas would be sited to avoid impacts to Gopher Tortoise habitat.
  - If a Gopher Tortoise is sighted, immediately contact the Eglin AFB NRS at (850) 883.1153.

– **Black Bear** protection and monitoring, and habitat protection, monitoring procedures to minimize impacts from construction activities shall be implemented.

  - Wildlife funnel fencing will be provided in the vicinity of Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek and the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek as determined by coordination between FDOT, Eglin AFB NRS, and FWC, in accordance with FDOT Wildlife Crossing Guidelines.
  - New bridges over Tom's Creek, Turkey Creek, and the unnamed tributary to Turkey Creek will be constructed to the requirement of bankfull + 10% which therefore will provide for adequate wildlife movement at these locations.
  - "Bear Crossing" signage will be posted in appropriate locations to alert motorists to potential bear crossing activity to promote safety for bears and motorists alike.
  - If a black bear is sighted, immediately contact the Eglin AFB NRS at (850) 883.1153.

5.3.5 Cultural Resources

- All cultural resource work will be conducted according to Eglin AFB and Section 106 guidelines.
- The FDOT will conduct all necessary consultations with 96th Civil Engineer Group Cultural Resources Branch (96 CEG/CEVSH) for their review of all reports and project plans.
- The FDOT will not begin work until all necessary consultations are complete.
- The FDOT will coordinate with the 96 CEG/CEVSH at (850) 882.8459 on any change in plans.
- If unexpected discoveries, such as archaeological deposits, Native American graves or lost historic cemeteries, are encountered during construction of the widening project, all construction activity will cease immediately and Eglin AFB personnel would be contacted at (850) 882.8459. They will notify the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Florida SHPO within 24 hours at (850) 245.6333 to begin procedures outlined in Chapter 872, F.S. (Florida's Unmarked Burial Law).

5.3.6 Hazardous Materials

- FDOT will contact the 96 CEG/CEVR if unusual soil coloration and/or odors are detected and if small arms debris is found in the construction corridor.
- Any hazardous wastes (e.g., waste adhesives and paint wastes) generated during construction would be handled by the contractor in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations.
- FDOT will ensure any and all unexploded ordnance (UXO) hazards will be "cleared" prior to the commencement of construction activities.

5.3.7 Utilities / Transportation

- FDOT will coordinate and obtain all applicable permits, easements, and/or authorizations prior to the commencement of construction activities that may affect utility service.
- A traffic control plan would be developed in coordination with Eglin AFB and implemented to minimize delays and congestion during the construction. Design and sequencing techniques would be used to minimize traffic and infrastructure impacts during construction.

CHAPTER 6

CONSULTATIONS AND COORDINATION

This page intentionally blank

6.0 CONSULTATIONS AND COORDINATION

A Public Involvement Program has been developed and is being carried out as an integral part of this project. The purpose of this program is to establish and maintain communication with the public at-large and individuals and agencies concerned with the project and its potential impacts. To ensure open communication and agency and public input, the Department has provided early notice of the project in an Advance Notification package to State and Federal agencies and other interested parties. In addition, the Department has carried out the scoping process as required by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Guidelines. Finally, in an effort to resolve all issues identified, the Department has conducted an extensive interagency coordination and consultation effort, and public participation process. This section of the document details the Department's program to fully identify, address, and resolve all project-related issues identified through the *Public Involvement Program* (**Appendix E**).

Public Hearing

A Public Hearing was held on Thursday, September 22, 2011 from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Niceville Community Center, located at 204 North Partin Drive, Niceville, FL. The hearing was an open-house format at 5 p.m. with a formal presentation at 5:30 p.m. Thirty-seven people signed in attendance (11 members of the public, 9 FDOT representatives, 9 consultant team members, 2 Eglin representatives, 1 member of the press, 3 elected officials, 1 sheriff department representative, and 1 court recorder). Seven people provided written comment, and one person provided public testimony. Comments are summarized below. Full sets of plans were on display along with typical section boards and the Environmental Assessment and Biological Assessment. A handout was provided. A transcript was recorded.

Prior to the Public Hearing, a briefing was provided to the Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization in a publically-noticed meeting on July 21, 2011. A briefing was also provided to the Eglin Range Configuration Change Control board on August 10, 2011. Notice of Availability and Notice of Public Hearing was sent to federal and state agencies on August 17, 2011 which included distribution through the State Clearinghouse via the ETDM system. Over 150 letters to elected officials and interested persons were mailed on August 22, 2011. Legal notices appeared in the *Florida Administrative* Weekly on August 19, 2011; and in the *Northwest Florida Daily News* on September 6, 2011 and September 13, 2011. The draft project documents and other information was made available for public review from August 22, 2011 through October 3, 2011 at Jackson Guard, Eglin Natural Resources Branch, 107 Highway 85N, Niceville, Florida 32542; and on the Internet at:

www.eglin.af.mil/environmentalassessments.asp.

The Notice of Public Hearing included a request for public input on the potential Section 4(f) impacts of the project and the potential for a *de minimis* impact finding. The public comment period closed on October 3, 2011.

The Finding of No Significant Impact includes a verbatim transcript of the public hearing and reprints all comments made during the comment period. Following is a summary of comments received as a result of the public hearing and comment period.

- No agency comments were received in response to the Notice of Availability as published on August 17, 2011.

- No comments were received on recreational impacts, however Eglin personnel did provide additional comment requesting public access restriction to only numbered range roads.

- A speaker at the public hearing requested the name of the road to be changed to the Purple Heart Memorial Highway. In response, the road was named by the State of Florida in 1984. Information was provided to the person making the comment on how to initiate a request to change the road name through local government action.

- Three comments were received requesting copies of presentation materials. All requests for information were answered.

- Three comments were received in favor of Alternative 3 (west-shift).

- One comment was received recommending best management practices to minimize erosion and runoff, and suggesting mitigation actions for the Okaloosa Darter.

Public Information Meeting and Agency Coordination

A Public Information Meeting was held on October 30, 2007 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the Niceville Council Chambers, 208 N. Partin Drive, Niceville, FL; as documented in the Public Information Workshop Summary (Appendix E) (FDOT3, 2007b). Full sets of plans for both alternatives were on display along with typical section boards, computer generated images and environmental boards. A handout was provided. There was no formal presentation or Public Testimony period. Approximately 40 people signed in. Ten comments cards were received at the meeting and one was mailed in by the response deadline. A summary of comments and responses are provided in **Appendix E** of this EA.

The project was reviewed through the FDOT Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process (ETDM Project Number 8167). The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) utilizes the ETDM process to coordinate review with various agencies. The project completed the Planning and Programming evaluation phases as documented in the ETDM Summary Report, Finalized Programming Screen, as published by FDOT on March 26, 2008. The ETDM Summary Report is appended to this EA as **Appendix D**.

All agency comments received through this process were reviewed and used as the basis for the impact evaluation. Based on agency comment received through this process, FDOT, in consultation with the FHWA, determined that an EA would be the appropriate level of NEPA documentation. The following agencies received project information through the ETDM process. On the following page, an asterisk (*) indicates those agencies that responded through the ETDM process. Summary issues by agency follow. Other agency coordination / consultation completed outside of the ETDM process is documented in **Appendix C.**

Agency consultation and coordination was also carried out with the U.S. Department of Defense (Eglin Air Force Base) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the Endangered Species Act Section 7 process as documented in the Biological Assessment and Biological Opinion (Appendix I).

FEDERAL / TRIBAL
Federal Aviation Administration
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Federal Highway Administration *
Federal Railroad Administration
Natural Resource Conservation Service *
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers *
U.S. Coast Guard – Eighth District
U.S. Department of Commerce-National Marine Fisheries Service *
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Department of Interior-Bureau of Indian Affairs
U.S. Department of the Interior-Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Department of Interior-U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service *
U.S. Department of the Interior-U.S. Geological Survey
U.S. Department of Interior-National Park Service
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-Region IV *

Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida *
Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma
Poarch Band of Creek Indians of Alabama
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma *
Seminole Tribe of Florida

STATE
Florida Department of Environmental Protection *
Florida Department of State *
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission *
Northwest Florida Water Management District *

REGIONAL
West Florida Regional Planning Council

Federal Highway Administration – FHWA indicated an understanding of the Purpose and Need.

Natural Resource Conservation Service – NRCS did not find the project to have potential adverse impacts to Prime Farmland resources.

US Army Corps of Engineers – The USACE did not find the project to have potential adverse impacts to navigation. USACE noted the project's potential impact to wetlands. In response, a Wetlands Evaluation Report was prepared.

National Marine Fisheries Service – NFMS did not find the project to have potential adverse impacts to NMFS Trust Resources, but encouraged stormwater treatment systems.

US Fish and Wildlife Service –The primary review concern of USFWS is the potential impacts to the Okaloosa Darter. In response, a Biological Assessment was prepared pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. A Biological Opinion was issued by USFWS on March 30, 2012.

US Environmental Protection Agency – USEPA noted the project's potential impact to wetlands. In response, a Wetlands Evaluation Report was prepared.

Miccosukee Tribe - The Miccosukee noted the project's potential impact to cultural resources. In response, a Cultural Resources Assessment Survey was prepared.

Seminole Nation of Oklahoma - The Seminole acknowledged receipt of the Advance Notification requesting to be notified of cultural resources for items from the 1720s – 1850s. In response, a Cultural Resources Assessment Survey was prepared.

FL Department of Environmental Protection – FDEP encouraged the project to maximize the treatment of stormwater runoff. FDEP noted the project's potential impact to wetlands. In response, a Wetlands Evaluation Report was prepared.

Florida Department of State - Division of Historical Resources (DHR) **–** DHR noted the project's potential impact to cultural resources. In response, a Cultural Resources Assessment Survey was prepared. The project was noted to be consistent with the local comprehensive plan.

FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission – FWC noted the project's potential impact to listed species. In response, a Biological Assessment was prepared that focused on the federally-listed Okaloosa Darter, but also evaluated state-listed species such as the Black Bear.

Northwest Florida Water Management District – NFWMD encouraged use of best management practices to reduce stormwater runoff and subsequent water quality impacts. NFWMD noted the project's potential impact to wetlands.

CHAPTER 7

LIST OF PREPARERS

This page intentionally blank

7.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

HDR Engineering, Inc

Name/Qualifications	Contribution	Experience
Cory H. Wilkinson, AICP B.S. Environmental Resource Management M.S., Environmental Science M.B.A., Management	Environmental evaluation / coordination	10 years environmental science
Betsy Davis Environmental Scientist B.S. Zoology; B.S. Agriculture and Extension Education; M.S. Horticulture	Biology, endangered species	23 years environmental science
Terry Ellis GIS Manager/Cadd A.S., Civil Engineering, Drafting, and Design	GIS	4 Years GIS
Mick Garrett Senior Environmental Scientist B.S., Marine Biology	Environmental evaluation / coordination	11 years environmental science
Michael Parsons, P.E. Professional Engineer B.S., Civil and Environmental Engineering	Noise	12 years environmental science; 10 years noise
Josey Walker Environmental Scientist B.S., Environmental Biology M.S., Environmental Science	Wetlands, biology	8 years environmental science
Jonathon Burchfield, P.E. Professional Engineer B.S., Civil Engineering	Transportation	6 years
John Wimberly,P.E. Professional Engineer	Transportation	20 years
Kirk Stull,P.E. Professional Engineer	Transportation	33 years
Philip Walker,P.E., Professional Engineer	Civil	20 years
Michelle Dusseau Diller, P.E., LEED-AP Professional Engineer B.S. Materials Science Engineering M.S. Environmental Science – Water Resources M.P.A. (Master's in Public Affairs)	Drainage	15 years engineering

This page intentionally blank

CHAPTER 8
REFERENCES

This page intentionally blank

8.0 REFERENCES

BLM, 2008. U.S. Bureau of Land Management. National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Accessed September 2008 from: http://www.rivers.gov/wildriverslist.html

Clark, M.W., Schmidt, W., 1982. *Shallow Stratigraphy of Okaloosa County and Vicinity, Florida*: Florida Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Geology, Report of Investigation 92. 51pp.

Cowardin et al., 1979. Cowardin, L.M., V. Carter, F.C. Golet, E.T. LaRoe. 1979. *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States*. FWS/OBS-79/31. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Washington, D.C. 1979.

DoD, 2001. U.S. Department of Defense. Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (formerly Military Traffic Management Command). Defense Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET). February 7, 2001. Accessed September 2008 from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/planning/statistics/hwydata/strahnet.pdf

EDC, 2006. Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County, Florida (EDC). 2006. *Market Distinction - Military*. www.florida-edc.org/Military.htm. Accessed July 5, 2007.

EDC, 2008. Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County, Florida (EDC). Eglin Air Force Base (EAFB). 2006. *Eglin AFB-BRAC and Non-BRAC Impacts*. http://www.eglin.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-070104-055.pdf. Accessed April 2008

EPA, 2009a. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Section 303(d) List Fact Sheet for Watershed Choctawhatchee Bay. Accessed July 7, 2009 from: http://iaspub.epa.gov/tmdl_waters10/huc_rept.control?p_huc=03140102&p_huc_desc=CHOCTAWHATCHEE%20BAY

EPA, 2009b. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, STORET water quality data for station 32010087 Accessed July 7, 2009 from: http://iaspub.epa.gov/storpubl/storet_wme_pkg.Display_Station?p_station_id=32010087&p_org_id=21FLCMP

EPA, 2010a. *National Ambient Air Quality Standards*. http://www.epa.gov/ttnnaaqs/ Accessed April 27, 2010.

EPA, 2010b. *The Green Book of Nonattainment Areas for Criteria Pollutants*. http://www.epa.gov/oar/oaqps/greenbk/. Accessed April 27, 2010.

FICON, 1992. Federal Interagency Committee on Noise (FICON). 1992. Federal Agency Review of Selected Airport Noise Analysis Issues. August 1992.

FDEP, 2008. Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Surface Water Quality Standards. Chapter 62-302. Surface Water Quality Standards. Accessed April 2010 from: http://www.dep.state.fl.us/legal/Rules/shared/62-302/62-302.pdf

FDEP, 2010a. Florida Administrative Code F.A.C. *62-204.240 Ambient Air Quality Standards.* https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ruleno.asp?id=62-204.240. April 27, 2010.

FDEP, 2010b. Florida's Air Quality System (FLAQS). Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Air Resources Management.
http://www.dep.state.fl.us/air/air_quality/county/okaloosa.htm. April 27, 2010.

FDOT, 1990. Florida Department of Transportation, *State Highway System Access Management Classification System and Standards. Rules of the Department of Transportation Chapter 14-97.* Accessed April 2010 from:
http://www.dot.state.fl.us/planning/systems/sm/accman/pdfs/1497.pdf

FDOT, 1991. *PD&E Manual* Part 2, Chapter 27, "Wildlife and Habitat Impacts" (October 1991). Accessed January 2010, from:
http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 1998a. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 13, "Section 4(f) Evaluations (May 1998). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 1998b. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 14, "Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities" (March 1998). Accessed January 2010, from:
http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 1998c. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 29, "Scenic Highways" (October 1998). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 1999a. *PD&E Manual* Part 2, Chapter 12, "Archaeological and Historical Resources" (January 1999). Accessed January 2010, from:
http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 1999b. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 15, "Visual Impacts / Aesthetics" (February 1999). Accessed January 2010, from:
http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 1999c. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 25, "Coastal Zone Consistency" (August 1999). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2000. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 30, "Construction Impacts" (January 2000). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2003a *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 10, "Utilities and Railroads" (November 2003). Accessed September 2008 , updated January 2010, from:
http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2004. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 20, "Water Quality" (February 2004). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2006. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 16, "Air Quality Analysis" (September 2006). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2007a. *PD&E Manual* Part 2, Chapter 17, "Noise" (April 2007). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2007b. *PD&E Manual* Part 2, Chapter 11, "Essential Fish Habitat" (November 2007). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2007c. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 19, "Aquatic Preserves" (November 2007). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2007d. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 21, "Outstanding Florida Waters" (November 2007). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2007e. Final Environmental Assessment for the Florida DOT Flyover (SR 85/SR 123 Interchange) at Eglin Air Force Base, FL. RCS 04-886. FDOT FP ID 220231 and 418181-1. March 2007.

FDOT, 2007f. Finding of No Significant Impact for Florida DOT Flyover (SR 85/SR 123 Interchange) at Eglin Air Force Base, FL. RCS 04-886. FDOT FP ID 220231 and 418181-1. April 2007.

FDOT, 2008a. Florida Department of Transportation, Office of the Intermodal Systems Development, Systems Planning Office. *Florida Intrastate Highway System Map.* January 1, 2008. Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/planning/systems/fihs/

FDOT, 2008b. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 22, "Contamination Impacts" (January 2008). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2008c. *PD&E Manual* Part 2, Chapter 24, "Floodplains" (January 2008). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2008d. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 23, "Wild and Scenic Rivers" (January 2008). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2008e. Florida Department of Transportation. Central Environmental Management Office. Florida Scenic Highway System. Accessed January 2010 from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/emo/scenichwy/

FDOT, 2009a. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 18, "Wetlands" (November 2009). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2009b. *PD&E Manual*. Part 2, Chapter 9, "Sociocultural Effects Evaluation" (November 2009). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT ,2010. *PD&E Manual* Part 2, Chapter 28, "Farmlands" (May 2010). Accessed January 2010, from: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/EMO/pubs/pdeman/pdeman1.shtm

FDOT, 2011. Florida Department of Transportation, District 3, Bridge Management System Reports 57005 and 570076. April 2011.

FDOT3, 2007a. Design Traffic Technical Memorandum. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. June 2007.

FDOT3, 2007b. Public Information Workshop Summary. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. October 2007.

FDOT3, 2008a. Purpose and Need Report. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. August 2008.

FDOT3, 2008b. Capacity Analysis Report. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. August 2008.

FDOT3, 2008c. Cultural Resource Assessment Survey. Prepared by Panamerican Consultants, Inc. for FDOT3. October 2008.

FDOT3, 2008d. Conceptual Design Plan. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. June 2008.

FDOT3, 2008e. Contamination Screening Evaluation Report. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. December 2008.

FDOT3, 2008f. Location Hydraulic Report. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. December 2008.

FDOT3, 2008g. Water Quality Impact Evaluation. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. April 2008.

FDOT3, 2008h. Pond Siting Report. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. December 2008.

FDOT3, 2008i. Wetland Evaluation Report. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. November 2008.

FDOT3, 2008j. Air Screening Report. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. December 2008.

FDOT3, 2008k. Noise Study Memorandum. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. August 2008.

FDOT3, 2008l. Project Development Report. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. December 2008.

FDOT3, 2008m. Value Engineering Study 090030, Memorandum to Scott Golden. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. October 2008.

FDOT3, 2008n. Typical Section Report. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. August 2008.

FDOT3, 2009a. Wildlife and Habitat Report. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. January 2009.

FDOT3, 2011. Biological Assessment. Prepared by HDR for FDOT3. March 2011.

FHWA, 2005. Section 4(f) Policy Paper. Office of Planning, Environment and Realty Project Development and Environmental Review. Federal Highway Administration. March 1, 2005. Accessed from: http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/projdev/4fpolicy.asp

Hallam et al, 1998. Hallam, C.O., K. Wheaton, and R.A. Fischer, 1998. Species Profile: Eastern Indigo Snake (Drymarchon corais couperi) on Military Installations in the Southeastern United States. Technical Report SEWDP-98-2, U.S. Army Engineer Waterways and Experiment Station, Vicksburg, MS.

HDR, 2009a. HDR Engineering. Personal communications with West Florida Regional Planning Council (Mary Robinson) and Florida Department of Transportation (Gordon Morgan) regarding STRAHNET status for SR 123. July 9, 2009.

MBBA, 2008a. Mid-Bay Bridge Authority. Mid-Bay Bridge Connector Environmental Assessment. RCS-07-523. November 2008.

MBBA, 2008b. Mid-Bay Bridge Authority. Mid-Bay Bridge Connector Finding of No Significant Impact. RCS-07-523. December 2008.

McCurdy, 2009. *Crist Breaks Ground for SR 85-123 Interchange. Northwest Florida Daily News.* Angel McCurdy. December 4, 2009. http://www.nwfdailynews.com/news/state-23270-road-airport.html

McKinnon and Pratt, 1998. McKinnon, E. C., and T. R. Pratt, 1998. A Compilation of Water Quality and Pumpage Data for Select Wells in Santa Rosa Okaloosa and Walton and Bay County Florida. Northwest Florida Water Management District.Technical File Report 98-1. November

Means, 1985. Means, D.B. 1985. *The Canyonlands of Florida*. Nature Conservancy News, September/October: 3-17. 1985.

Mitsch and Gosselink, 1993. Mitsch, W.J., J.G. Gosselink. 1993. Wetlands, 2nd Edition. John Wiley & Sons (formerly Van Nostrand Reinhold), New York. 722pp.

NWFWMD, 2001. Northwest Florida Water Management District (NWFWMD), 2001. *Regional Water Supply Plan for Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton Counties*.

NWFWMD, 2005. Groundwater Stations in Northwest Florida.
Accessed at http://www.nwfwmd.state.fl.us/hydrology/ground/levels/gwlevels.htm

OCEC, 2009. Okaloosa County Board of Commissioner's Environmental Council (OCEC). Choctawhatchee Bay Surface Water Quality Report. Accessed July 7, 2009 from
http://www.dep.state.fl.us/northwest/Ecosys/okaloosa/okwqcurr.htm

Okaloosa, 2010. *Okaloosa County 2020 Comprehensive Plan.* Accessed June 1, 2010 from http://www.co.okaloosa.fl.us/dept_growth_mgmt_comp_plans.html.

OW TPO, 2002. Okaloosa-Walton (OW) Transportation Planning Organization (TPO). *Okaloosa-Walton Urbanized Area Transportation Study, 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan Update, as amended.* August 2002.

OW TPO, 2009. Okaloosa-Walton (OW) Transportation Planning Organization (TPO). *TPO Actions Report* and **Resolution O-W 09-33.** October 19, 2009. http://70.167.229.112/owtpo/actions/okaloosa-walton%20TPO%20actions%20report%2010-15-09.pdf

TRB, 1985. Transportation Research Board. 1985. Highway Capacity. National Research Council. Washington, D.C.

USAF, 2008. U.S. Air Force (USAF). 2008. *Proposed Implementation of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 Decisions and Related Actions at Eglin AFB, FL; Final Environmental Impact Statement* and Record of Decision. October 2008.

USAF, 2007. U.S. Air Force (USAF). 2007. *Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan*, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. 2007.

USAF, 2003a. U.S. Air Force (USAF). 2003a. Air Force Materiel Command Readiness Training Center, Draft Final Environmental Assessment. March 2003.

USAF, 2003b. U.S. Air Force (USAF). 2003b. Conversion of the 820th Security Forces Group at Moody AFB, Georgia to a Contingency Response Group. June 2003.

USAF, 2003c. U.S. Air Force (USAF). 2003c. *Eglin Military Complex Environmental Baseline Study Resource Appendices, Volume I* – Eglin Land Test and Training Range. December 2003.

USAF, 2002a. U.S. Air Force (USAF). 2002a. *Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan*, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. 2002.

USAF, 2002b. U.S. Air Force (USAF). 2002b. *Eglin AFB Environmental Restoration Program Management Action Plan*, Headquarters, AAC, Eglin AFB, Florida. October 2002.

USAF, 1998. U.S. Air Force (USAF). 1998. Final Environmental Assessment, Defense Access Road: Realign/Relocate Lovejoy Road/East Gate, Hurlburt Field, Florida. December 1998.

USAF, 1992. U.S. Air Force (USAF). 1992. *Seismic Design for Building*. Air Force Manual 88-3. October 1992.

USAF, 1987. Department of the Army (Army). 1987. Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual (Technical Report Y-87-1). Department of the Army, Waterways Experiment Station, Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg, MS. January 1987.

USBC, 2000. U.S. Bureau of Census (USBC). Census Data, 2000.

USDA, 1995. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service. 1995. *Soil Survey of Okaloosa County*, Florida. June 1995.

USDOT, 1995. U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), Federal Highway Administration. 1995. *Highway Traffic Noise Analysis and Abatement Policy and Guidance*. June 1995.

USEPA, 2010. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). National Ambient Air Quality Standards. www.epa.gov/airs/criteria.html.

USFWS, 1998. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 1998. Okaloosa Darter *(Etheostoma okaloosae) Recovery Plan (Revised)*. Atlanta, Georgia. 42 pp.

USFWS, 2010. *Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Proposed Reclassification of the Okaloosa Darter From Endangered to Threatened and Proposed Special Rule*. *Federal Register*. Volume 75, No. 21, Tuesday, February 2, 2010. http://www.fws.gov/PanamaCity/species/pdf/OkaloosaDarterProposedRule%2020100202FRNotice.pdf.

USFWS, 2012. Biological Opinion. SR 12 Widening from SR 85 South to SR 85 North, Federal Highway Administration, Eglin Air Force Base, Okaloosa County, Florida. March 30, 2012. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1601 Balboa Avenue, Panama City, FL

Wolfe et al., 1998. Wolfe, S. H., J. A. Reidenauer and D. B. Means. 1988. *Ecological Characterization of the Florida Panhandle*. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Report 88(12). Minerals Management Service 88-0063. Washington, D.C. New Orleans.

This page intentionally blank

APPENDICES

This page intentionally blank

APPENDIX A

CROSSWALK BETWEEN FHWA AND DOD AIR FORCE NEPA EA REQUIREMENTS

This page intentionally blank

Crosswalk between Agency NEPA Requirements for an EA

An "x" indicates a section that is required or requested by the Agency / Department NEPA Implementing Regulations and / or Agency / Department protocol for an EA. This SR 123 EA is responsive to both sets of requirements. As such, the document format / content will differ from what is typical for an EA prepared only for one agency.

	FHWA / FDOT	*DoD / Air Force*	*notes*
Foreword		x	
Summary	x		
Introduction	x	x	
Background		x	
Location	x	x	
Purpose and Need	x	x	An Air Force EA provides administrative and background information incorporated as part of the document. The FHWA / FDOT *PD&E Manual* does not require this level of detail, but Eglin protocol asks for this explanatory information.
Scoping and Consultation		x	
Relevant Environmental Issues		x	
Organization of the EA		x	
Permitting Requirements		x	
Laws and Regulations		x	
Proposed Action	x	x	
Alternatives	x	x	
Selection Criteria	x	x	
Eliminated Alternatives	x	x	
Alternatives for Analysis	x	x	
Cumulative Actions	x	x	Eglin protocol is more formal for addressing cumulative actions and impacts.
Alternatives Comparison	x	x	
Affected Environment		x	
Natural Environment	x	x	
Hazardous Materials	x	x	
Community	x	x	
Environmental Consequences	x	x	The Air Force EA requires impact assessment for the proposed action and each alternative for each resource, whereas the FDOT EA focuses on impacts only for the
Natural Environment	x	x	
Hazardous Materials	x	x	
Community	x	x	

Crosswalk between Agency NEPA Requirements for an EA

An "x" indicates a section that is required or requested by the Agency / Department NEPA Implementing Regulations and / or Agency / Department protocol for an EA. This SR 123 EA is responsive to both sets of requirements. As such, the document format / content will differ from what is typical for an EA prepared only for one agency.

	FHWA / FDOT	*DoD / Air Force*	*notes*
Transportation Plan		x	proposed action. The format and content for this EA therefore responds to the more detailed protocol that Eglin prefers. The Air Force EA also requires discussion of issues typically reserved for an EIS for FDOT (long-term productivity, cumulative impacts, and irreversible / irretrievable commitments of resources).
Relationships Between Short-Term Uses Of The Environment And Long-Term Productivity		x	
Cumulative Impacts		x	
Irreversible And Irretrievable Commitments of Resources		x	
Plans, Permits, and Management Actions		x	The Air Force EA provides more detail on requirements identified during preparation of the EA that are to be incorporated as part of the proposed action and / or mitigation.
Plans		x	
Permits	x	x	
Management Actions	x	x	
Consultation and Coordination	x	x	This section of the EA tends to follow FDOT / FHWA protocol by addressing consultation and coordination through the ETDM process.
Appendices	x	x	

APPENDIX B

CONCEPTUAL DESIGN PLANS

This page intentionally blank

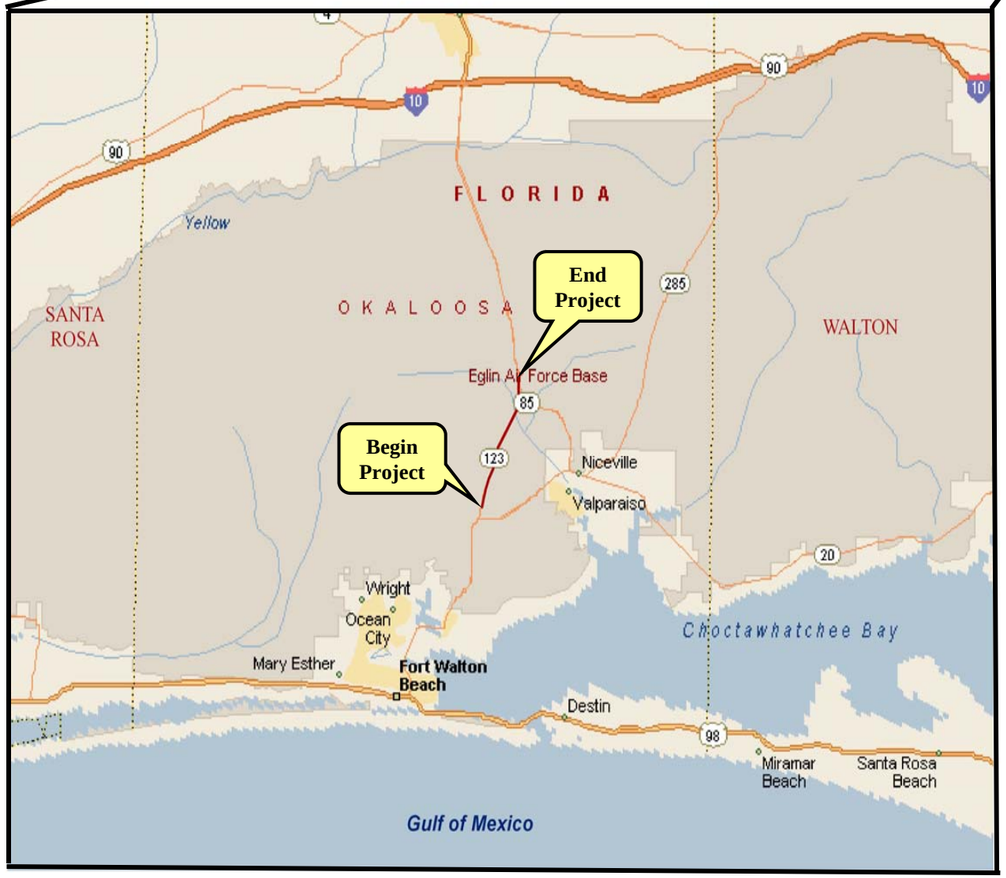
Draft
Conceptual Design Plans

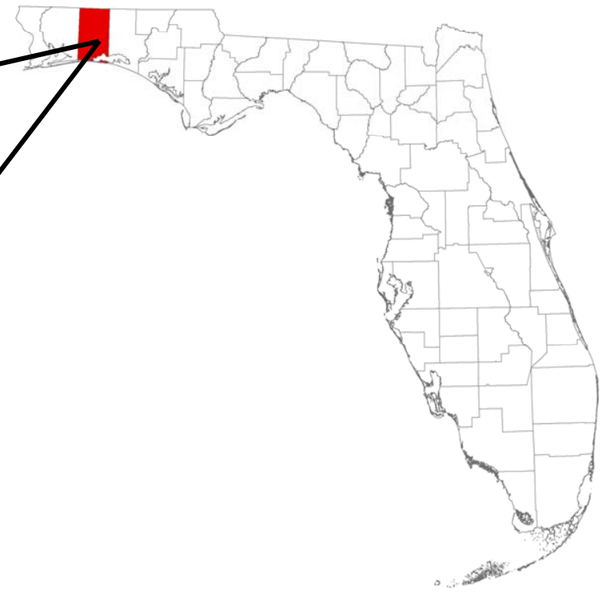
SR 123 From SR 85 (South)
to SR 85 (North)
Financial Project No. 411102-1-22-01

INDEX OF CONCEPTUAL PLANS

NOTE:

Alternative 1 (not shown) follows the centerline of existing SR 123. This alternative identifies the existing project corridor, providing a basis for coordination with regulatory agencies and the public. Further analysis has resulted in the development of Alternatives 2 and 3 along the same study corridor. As Alternative 2 and 3 overlay and supercede Alternative 1, Alternative 1 has been eliminated from further consideration.



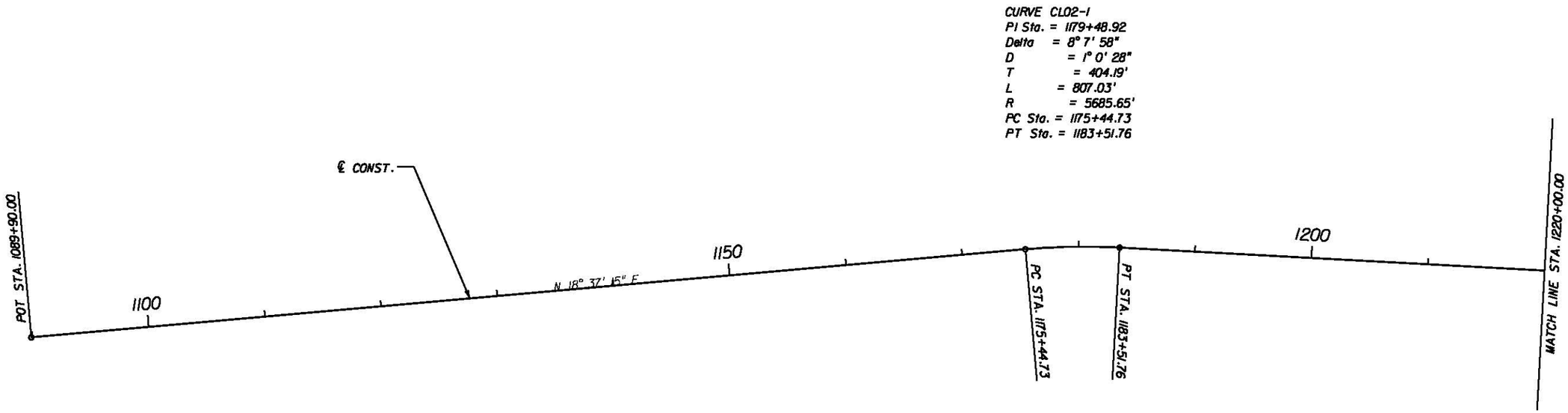


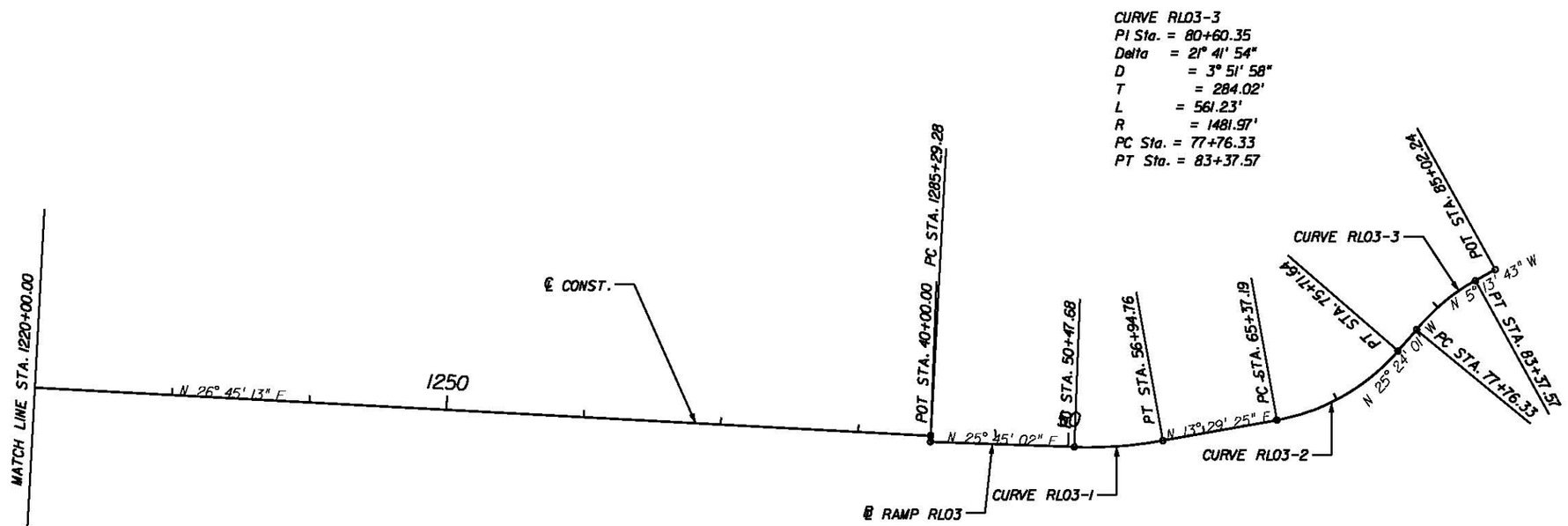
Conceptual Design Plans
Prepared for: Florida Department
Of Transportation District 3

HDR
Pensacola, Florida

FDOT Project Manager: Noelle Little, PE (PBS&J)

April 2011





CURVE RL03-1
PI Sta. = 53+72.46
Delta = 12° 15' 37"
D = 1° 53' 41"
T = 324.78'
L = 647.08'
R = 3024.00'
PC Sta. = 50+47.68
PT Sta. = 56+94.76

CURVE RL03-2
PI Sta. = 70+75.23
Delta = 38° 53' 26"
D = 3° 45' 34"
T = 538.04'
L = 1034.44'
R = 1524.00'
PC Sta. = 65+37.19
PT Sta. = 75+71.64

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-6945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

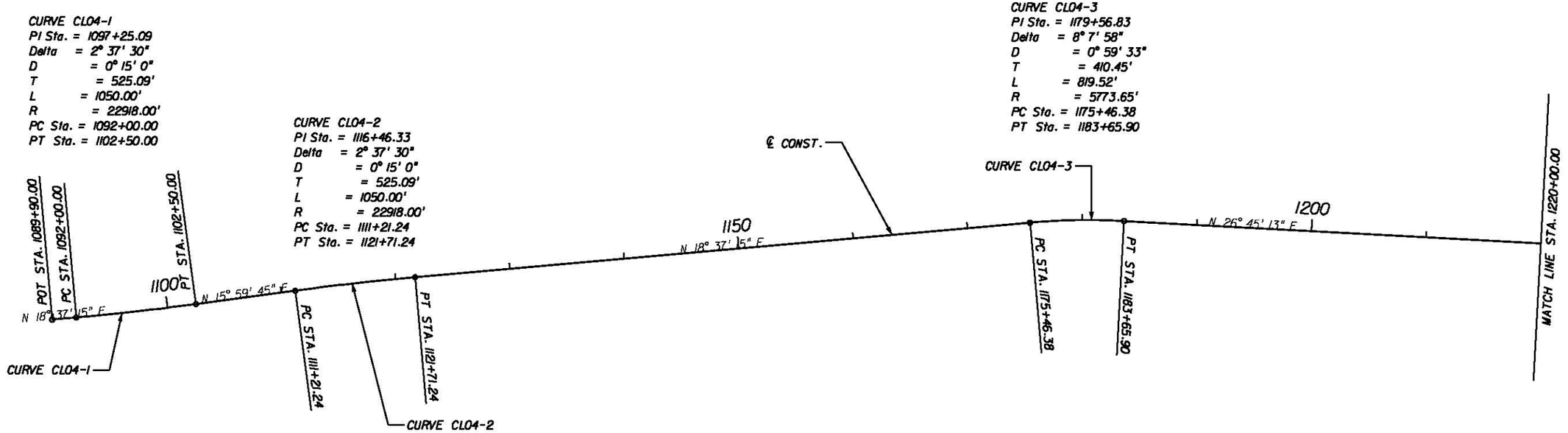
HDR Employee-owned

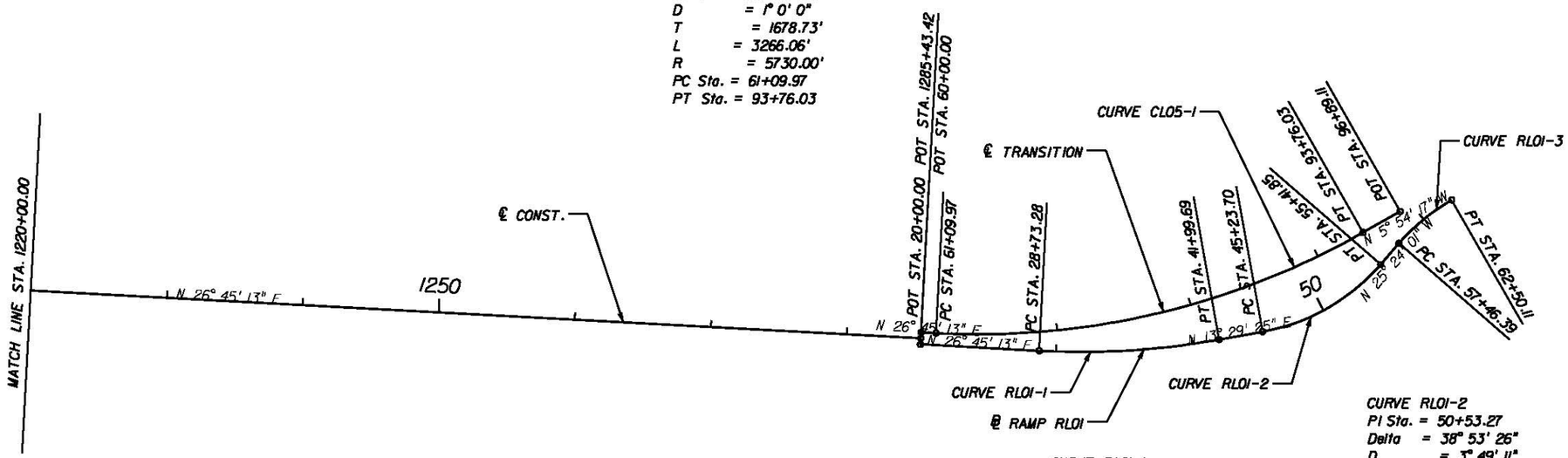
STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

LAYOUT SHEET
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 2





REVISIONS					
DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

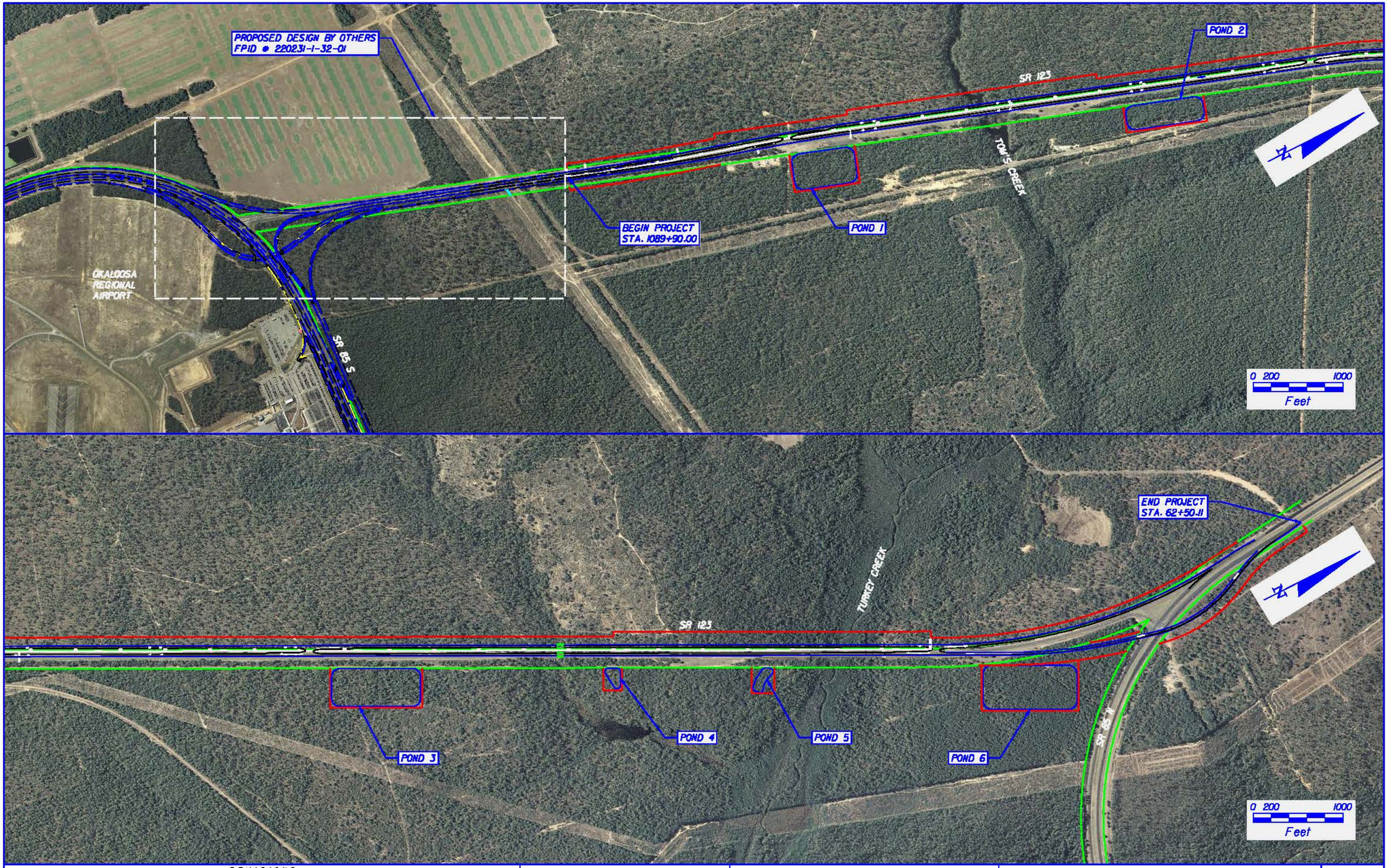
HDR Employee-owned

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

LAYOUT SHEET
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 3



REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

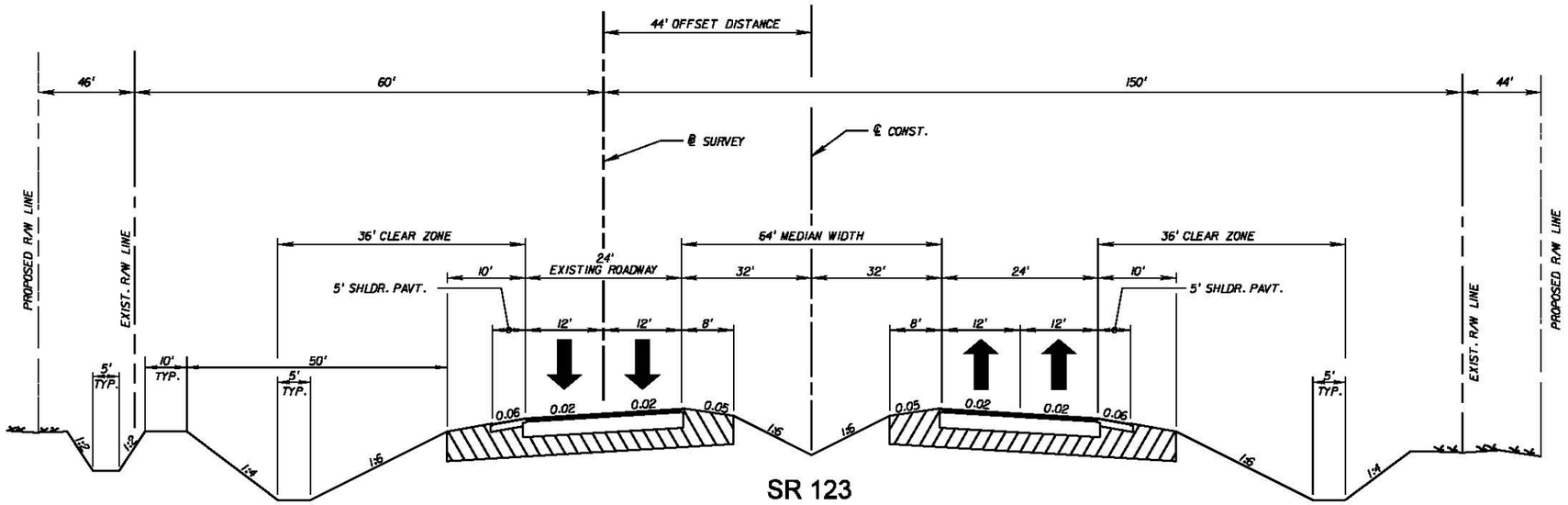
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

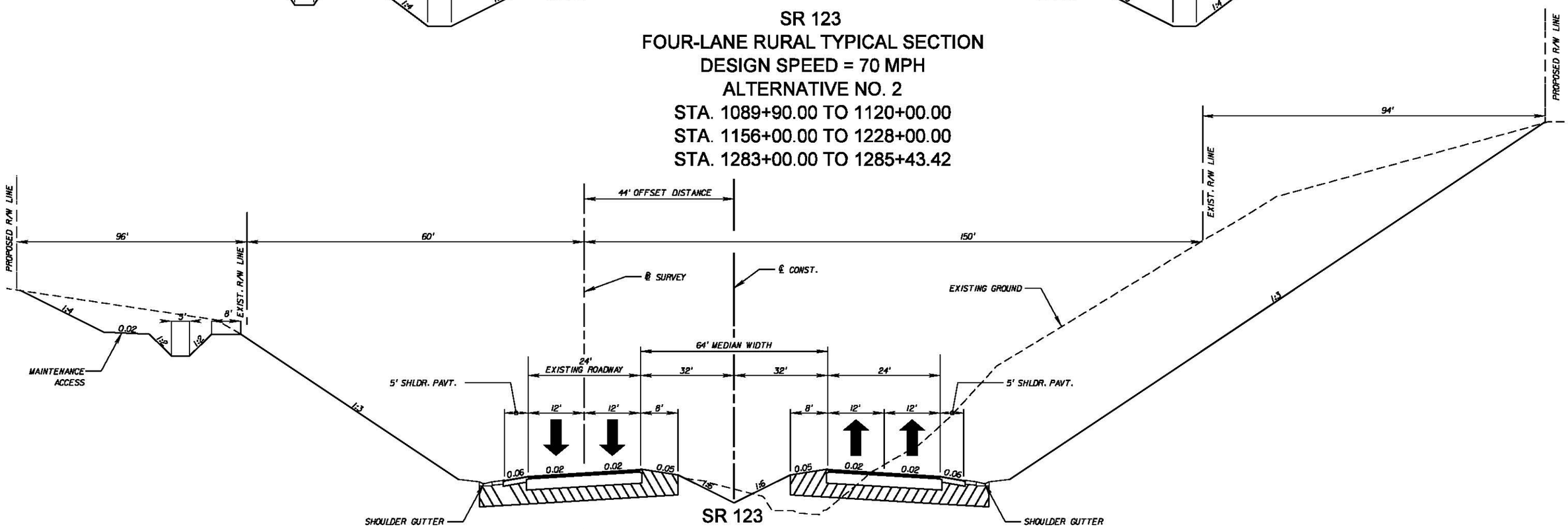
ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
PROJECT OVERVIEW

SHEET NO. 4



SR 123
FOUR-LANE RURAL TYPICAL SECTION
DESIGN SPEED = 70 MPH
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2
STA. 1089+90.00 TO 1120+00.00
STA. 1156+00.00 TO 1228+00.00
STA. 1283+00.00 TO 1285+43.42



SR 123
FOUR-LANE RURAL TYPICAL SECTION
DESIGN SPEED = 70 MPH
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2
STA. 1120+00.00 TO 1156+00.00
STA. 1228+00.00 TO 1283+00.00

REVISIONS					
DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

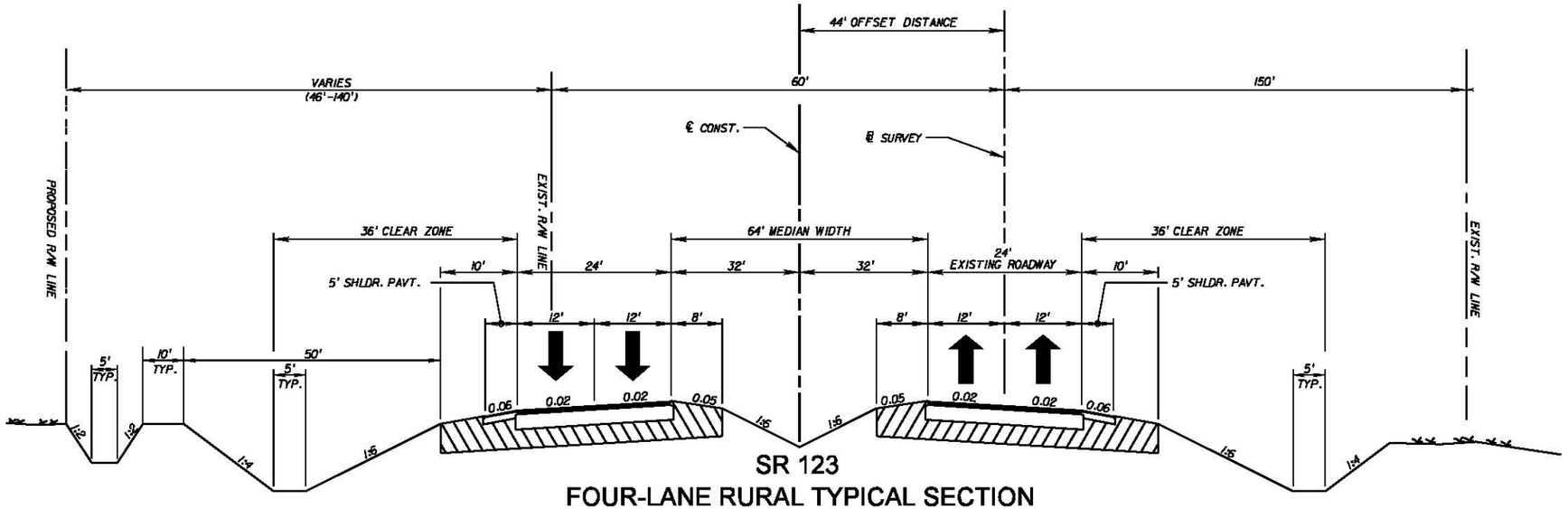
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

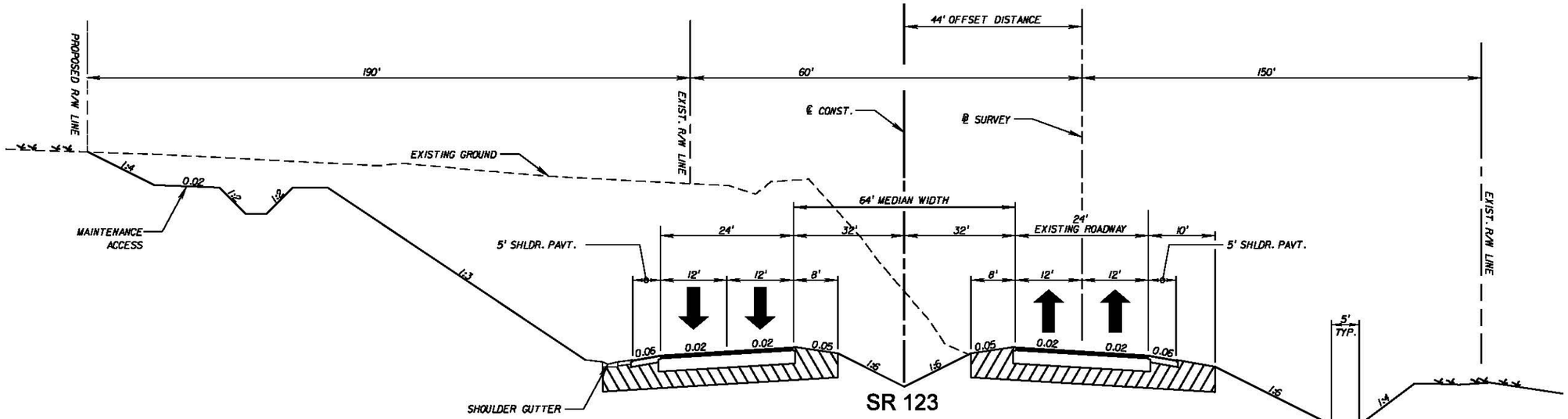
ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

TYPICAL SECTION

SHEET NO. 5



SR 123
FOUR-LANE RURAL TYPICAL SECTION
DESIGN SPEED = 70 MPH
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3
STA. 1089+90.00 TO 1122+00.00
STA. 1150+00.00 TO 1250+00.00



SR 123
FOUR-LANE RURAL TYPICAL SECTION
DESIGN SPEED = 70 MPH
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3
STA. 1122+00.00 TO 1150+00.00
STA. 1250+00.00 TO 1285+43.42

REVISIONS					
DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

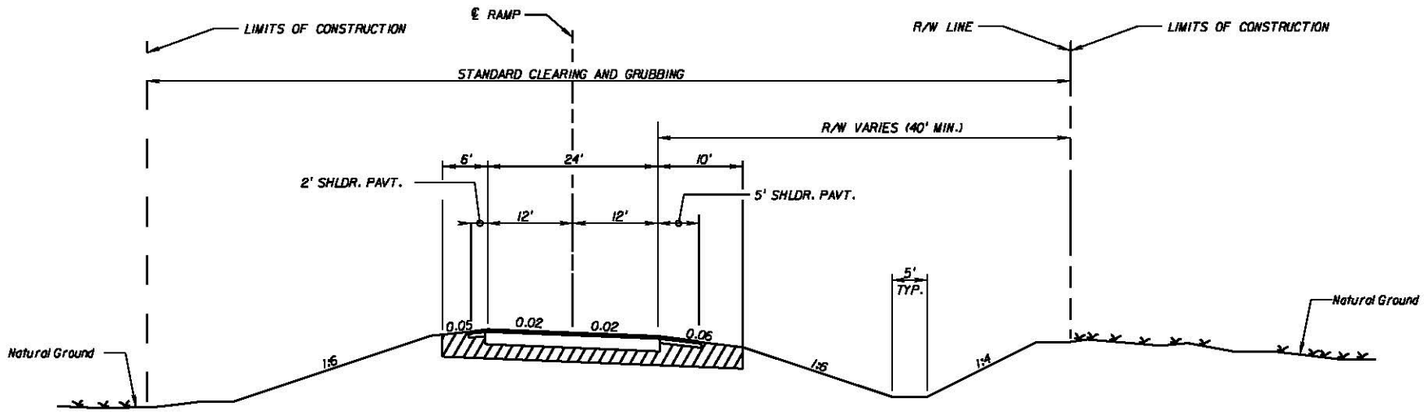
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION		
ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

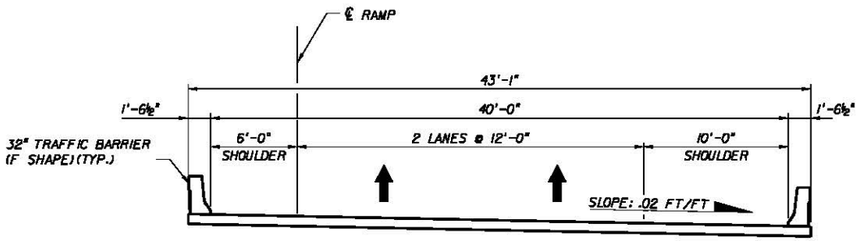
TYPICAL SECTION

SHEET NO. 6

SR 123
TWO LANE RURAL RAMP
DESIGN SPEED = 60 MPH



SR 123
RAMP OVER NORTH SR 85
DESIGN SPEED = 60 MPH



REVISIONS					
DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

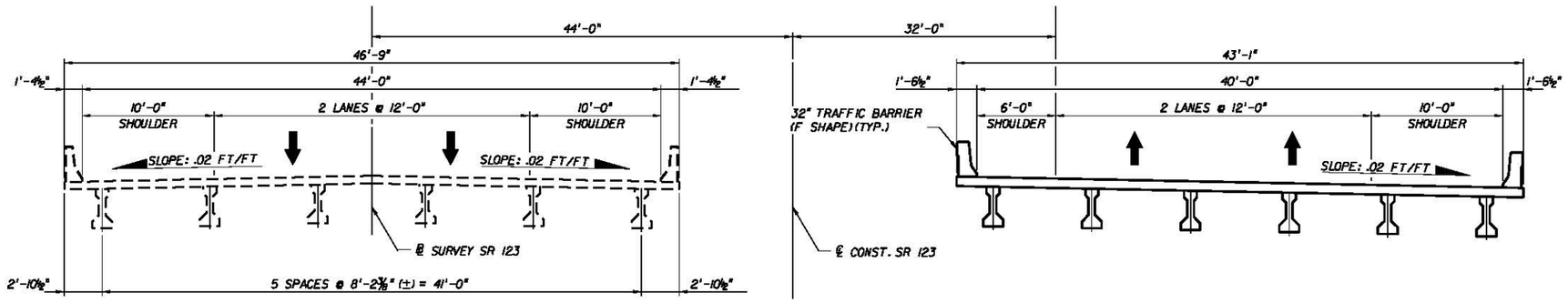
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-6945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

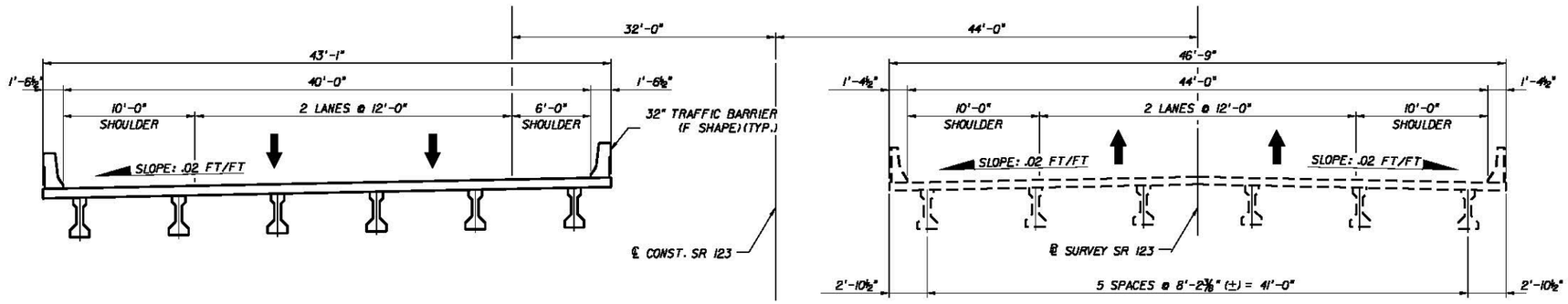
ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

TYPICAL SECTION

SHEET NO. 7



SR 123
BRIDGE OVER TOMS AND TURKEY CREEKS
DESIGN SPEED = 70 MPH
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2



SR 123
BRIDGE OVER TOMS AND TURKEY CREEKS
DESIGN SPEED = 70 MPH
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

REVISIONS					
DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

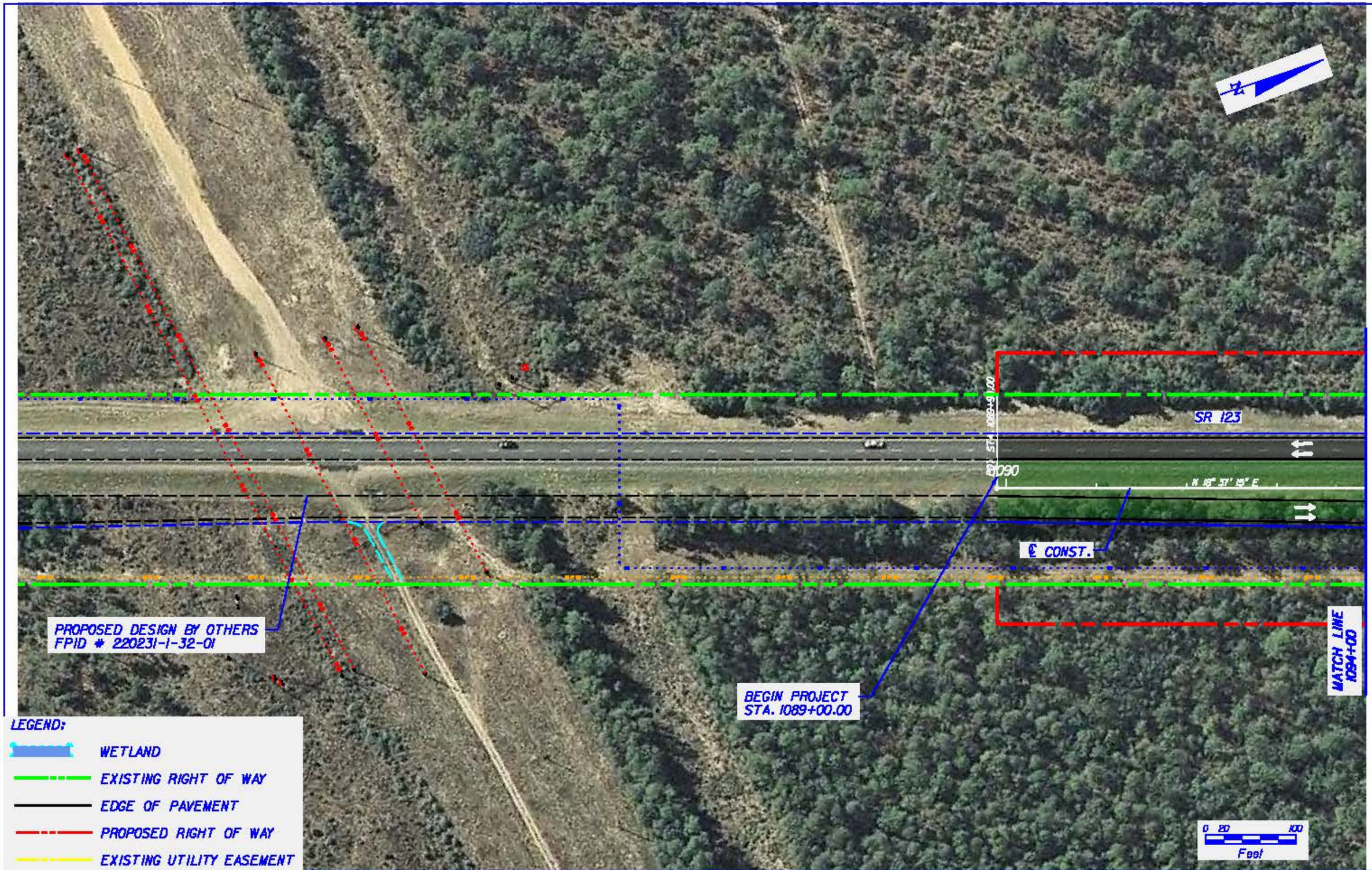
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

TYPICAL SECTION

SHEET NO. 8



LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5845
(850) 432-8800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 9

HDR, INC. 4/19/2024 4:52:24 PM c:\pwworking\tpa\d0687d0636\ALT 2-PLANROOK.DGN

SR 123

1095 1100 1105

N 18° 37' 15" E

℄ CONST.

MATCH LINE 1094+00

MATCH LINE 1109+00

CELL TOWER (T-MOBILE)

0 50 100 Feet

LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 10

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

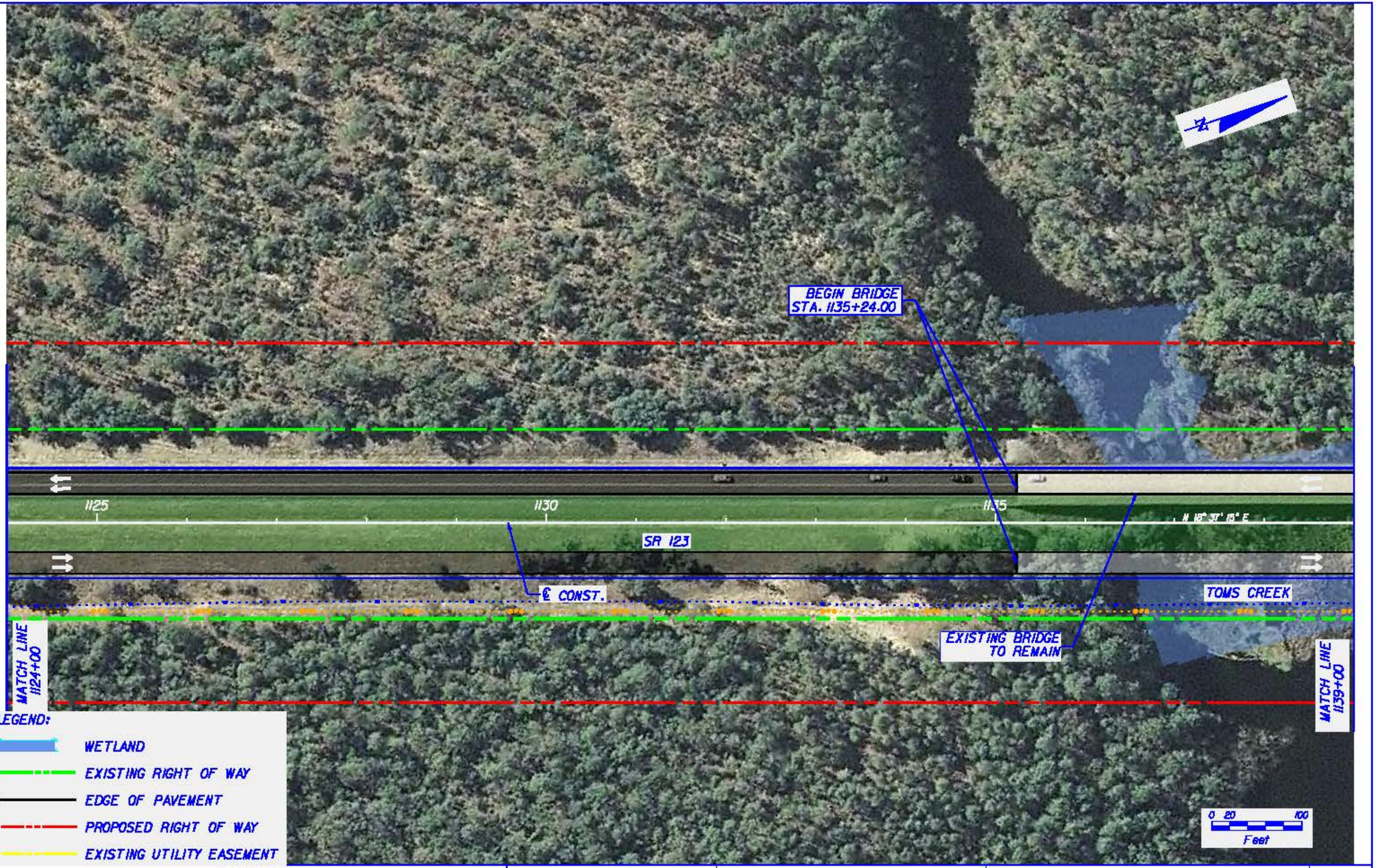
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4218

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 11



LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

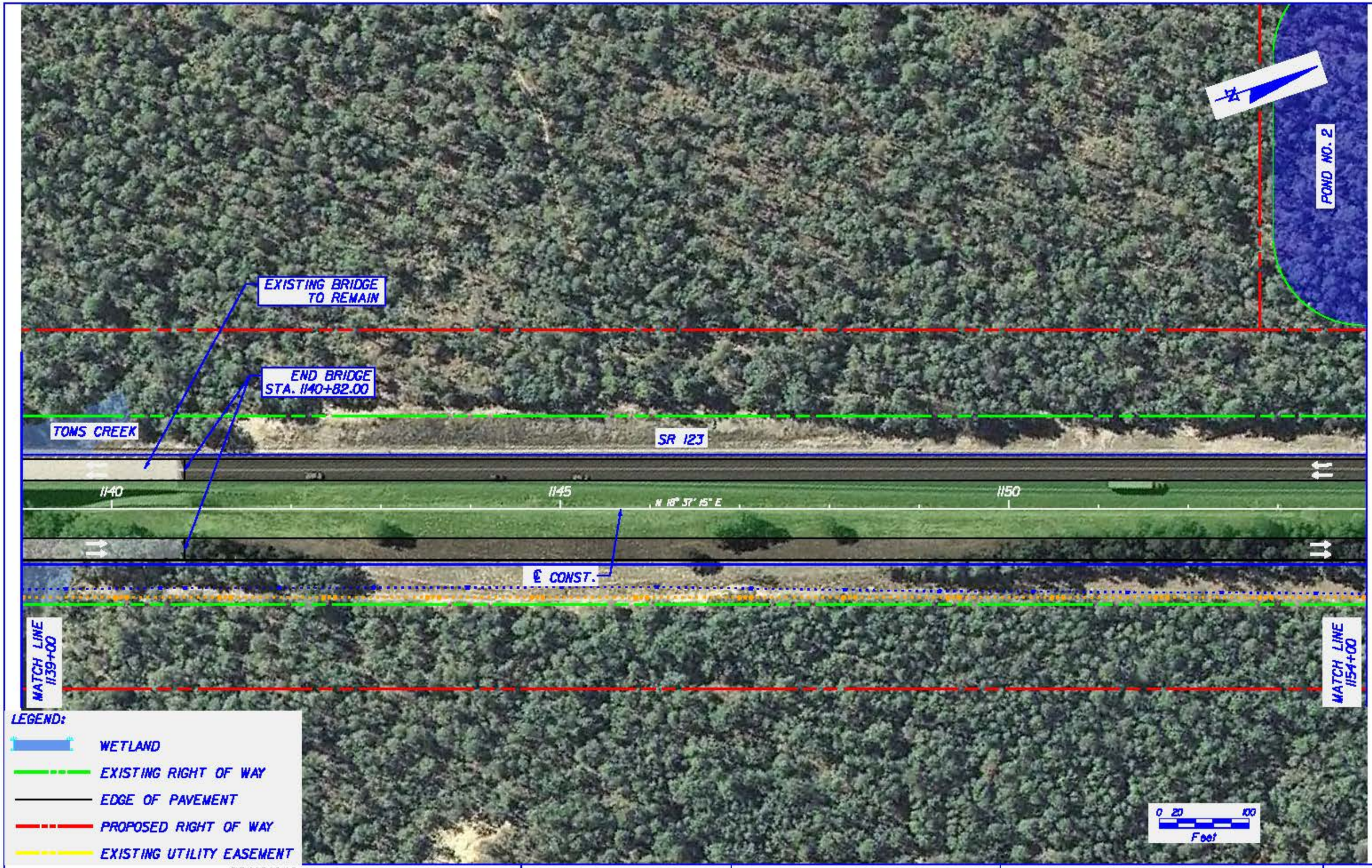
HDR Engineering, Inc.
28 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4218

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 12



LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 13

HDR, INC. 4/19/2011 4:32:46 PM c:\projects\fdot\sms\70636\ALT 2-PLAYROOS.DGN

LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
28 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4218

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 14

CURVE DATA CL02-1
PI STA. = 1179+48.92
DELTA = 8° 07' 58" (RT)
D = 1° 00' 28"
T = 404.19
L = 807.03'
R = 5,685.65
PC STA. = 1175+44.73
PT STA. = 1183+51.76

1170
S 18° 37' 15" W
1175
1180
SR 123
PC STA. 1175+44.73
℄ CONST.
CURVE CL02-1
PT STA. 1183+51.76
MATCH LINE 1169+00
MATCH LINE 1184+00
0 20 100
Feet

LEGEND:
- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

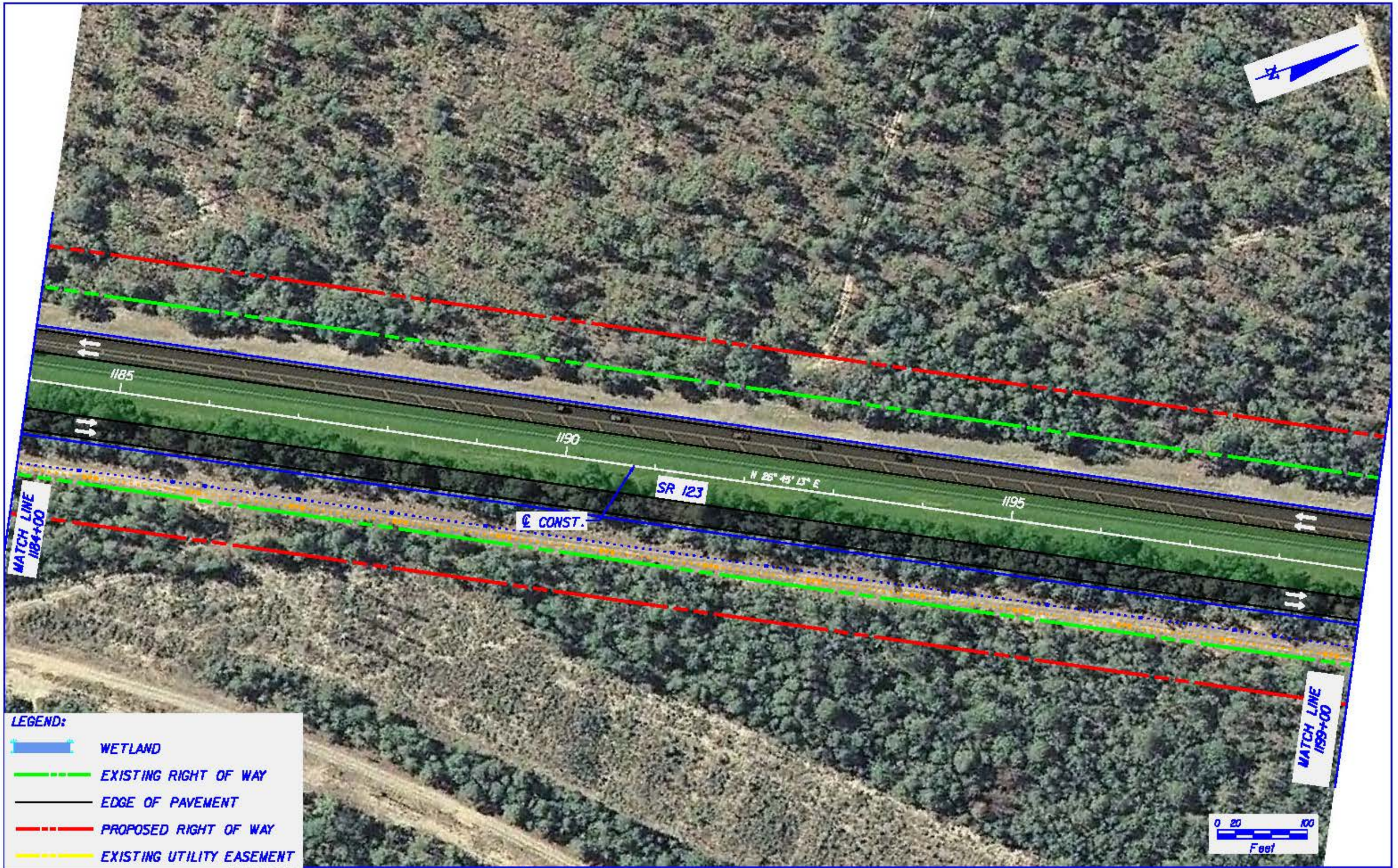
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6600
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 15



LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

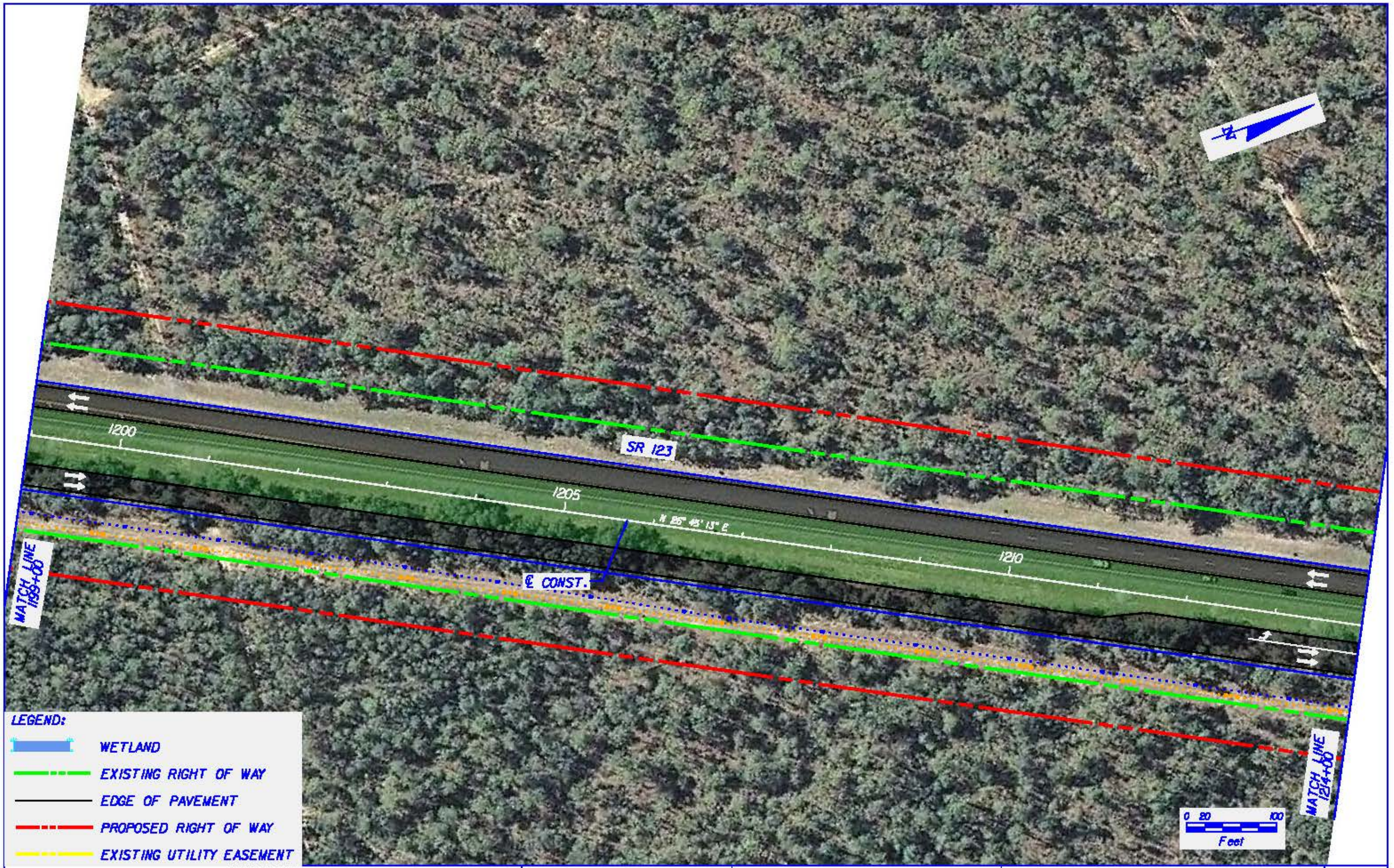
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 16



REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

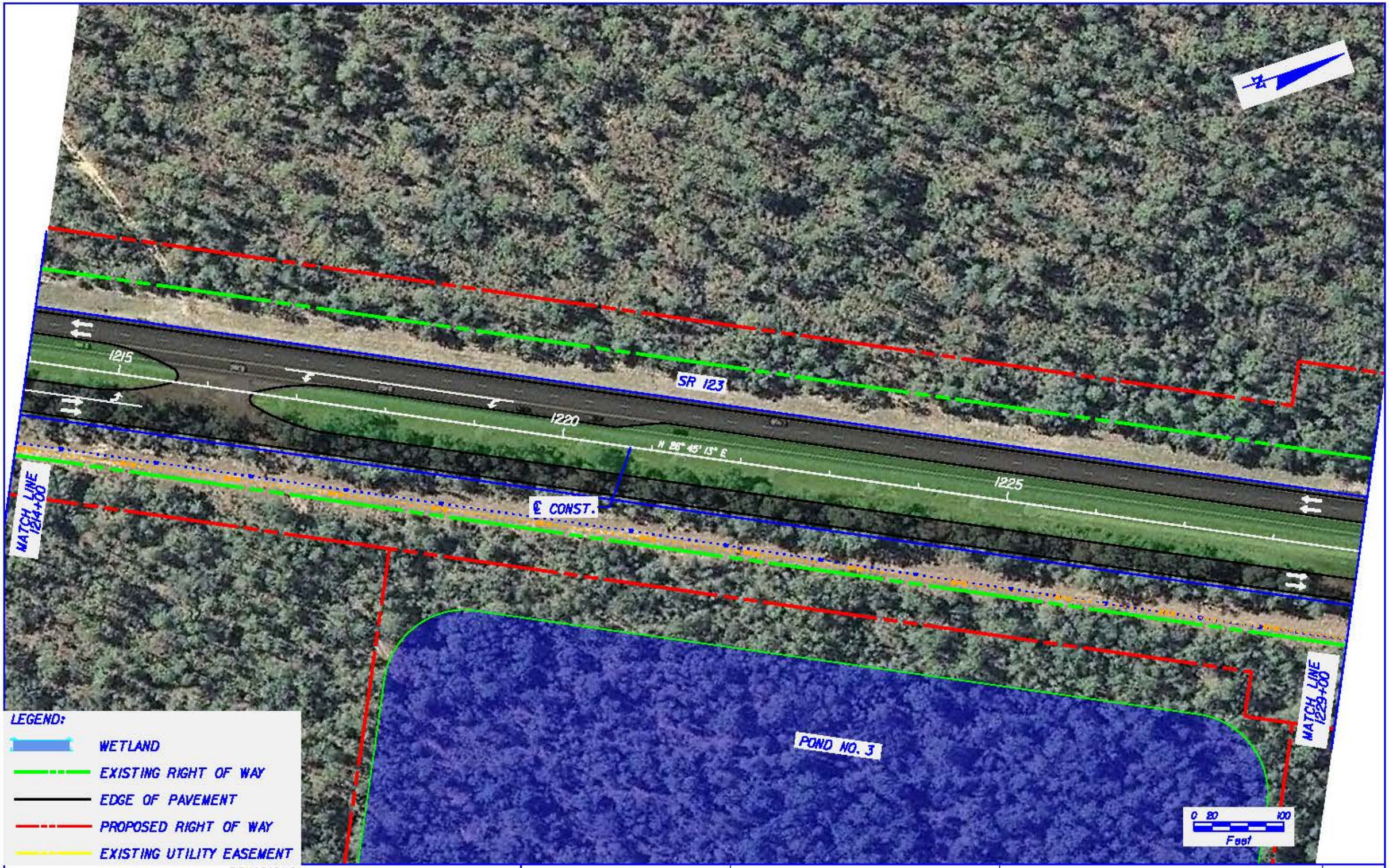
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 17



LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

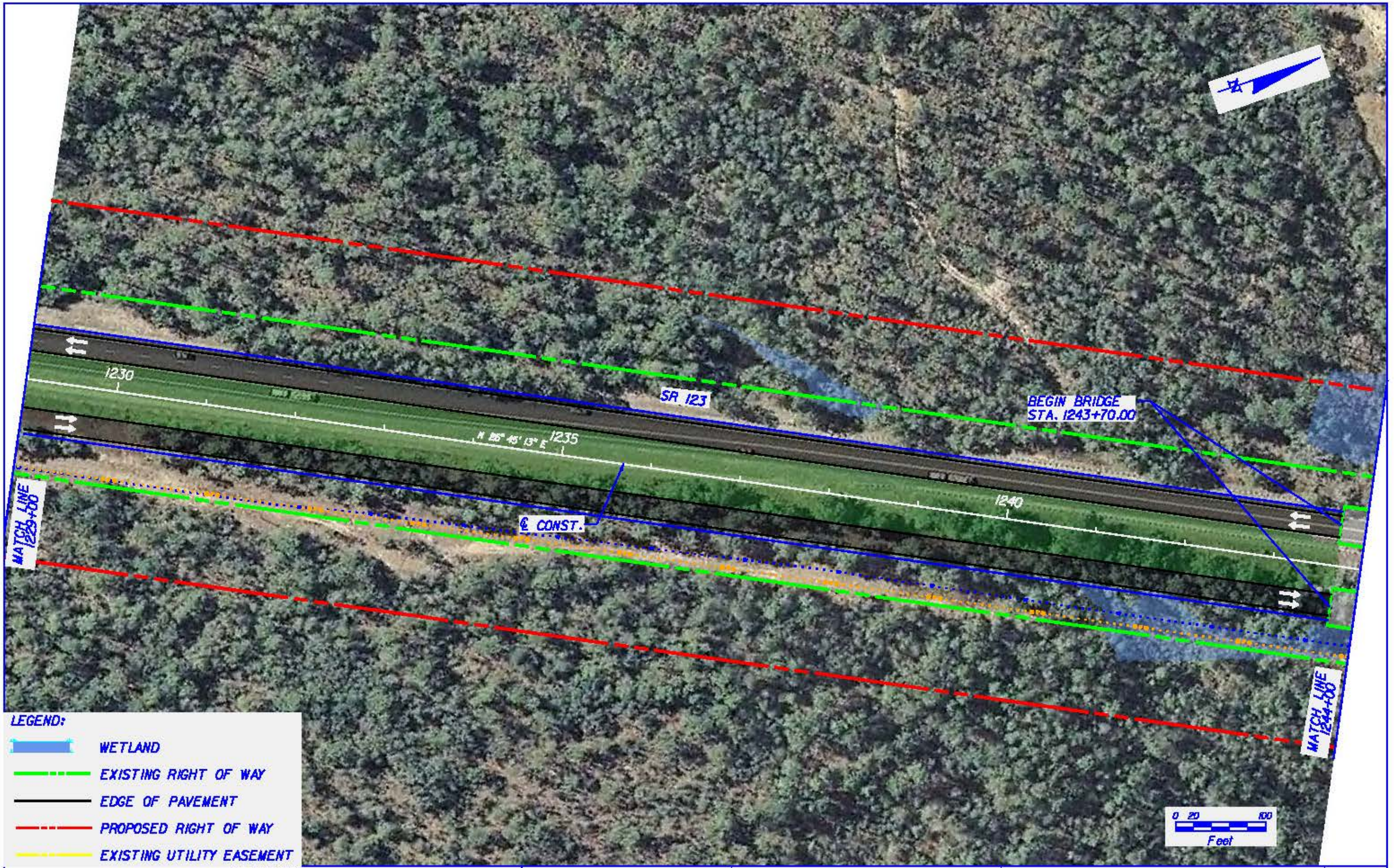
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4218

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 18



REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
28 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4218

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 19

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

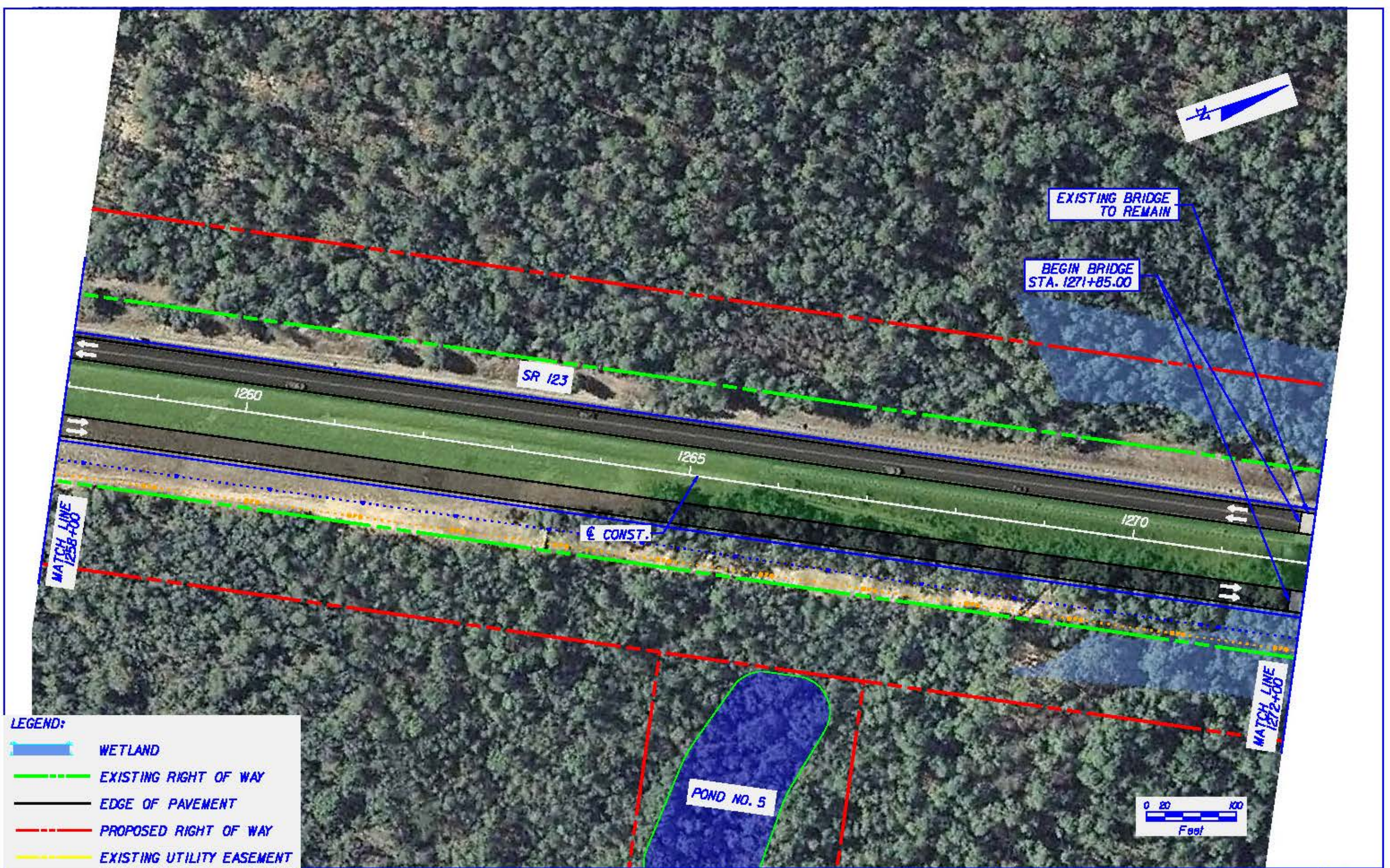
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 20



REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

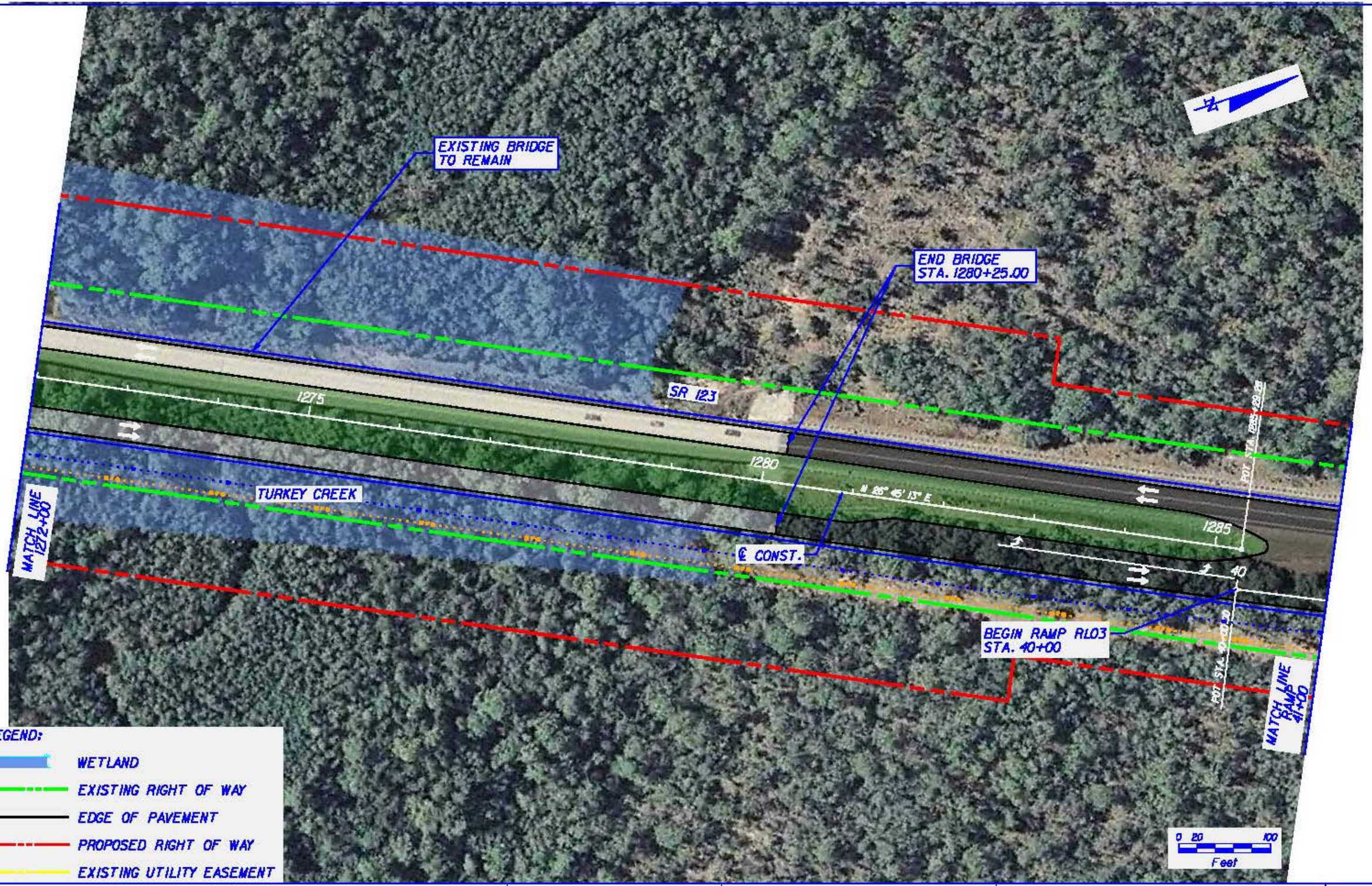
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4218

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 21



REVISIONS					
DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5845
(850) 438-8800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 22

CURVE DATA RL03-1
PI STA. = 53+72.46
DELTA = 12° 15' 37" (LT)
D = 1° 53' 41"
T = 324.78
L = 647.08
R = 3,024.00
PC STA. = 50+47.68
PT STA. = 56+94.76

SR 123

℄ RAMP RL03

CURVE RL03-1

MATCH LINE RAMP 41+00

MATCH LINE RAMP 55+00

POND NO. 6

N 25° 45' 02" E

45

50

55

0 20 100
Feet

LEGEND:
- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5845
(850) 438-8800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 23

LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

CURVE DATA RL03-2
PI STA. = 70.75.23
DELTA = 38° 53' 26" (LT)
D = 3° 45' 34"
T = 538.04
L = 1,034.44
R = 1,524.00
PC STA. = 65+37.19
PT STA. = 75+71.64

SR 123

SR 85

MATCH LINE RAMP TO+00

END BRIDGE STA. 47+24.00

BEGIN BRIDGE STA. 43+63.00

℄ RAMP RL03

PT STA. 55+94.76

PC STA. 69+37.19

CURVE RL03-2

MATCH LINE RAMP 55+00

N 17° 39' 25" E

55

60

70

0 20 100
Feet

REVISIONS					
DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

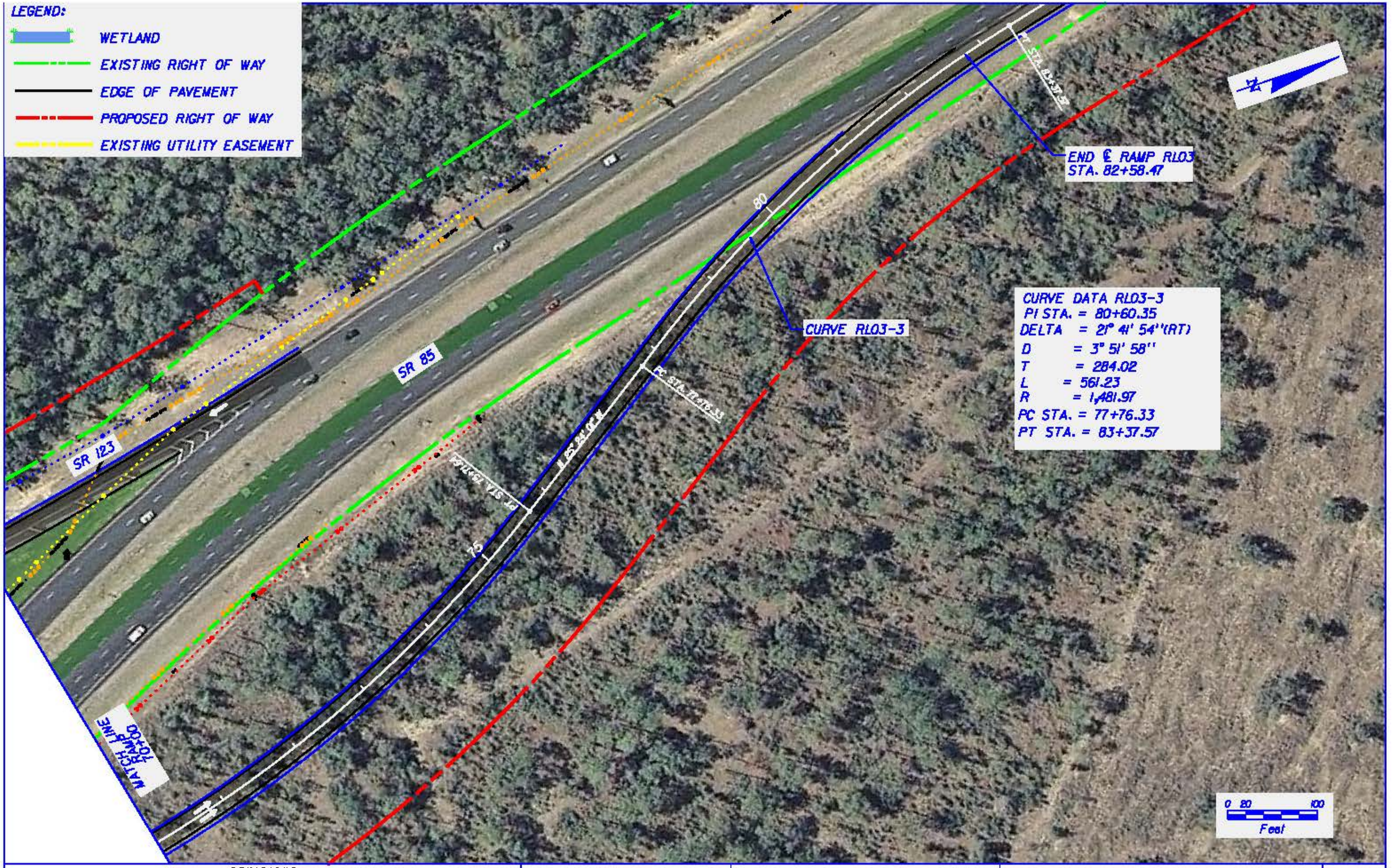
ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL PLAN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 24

LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT



REVISIONS					
DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

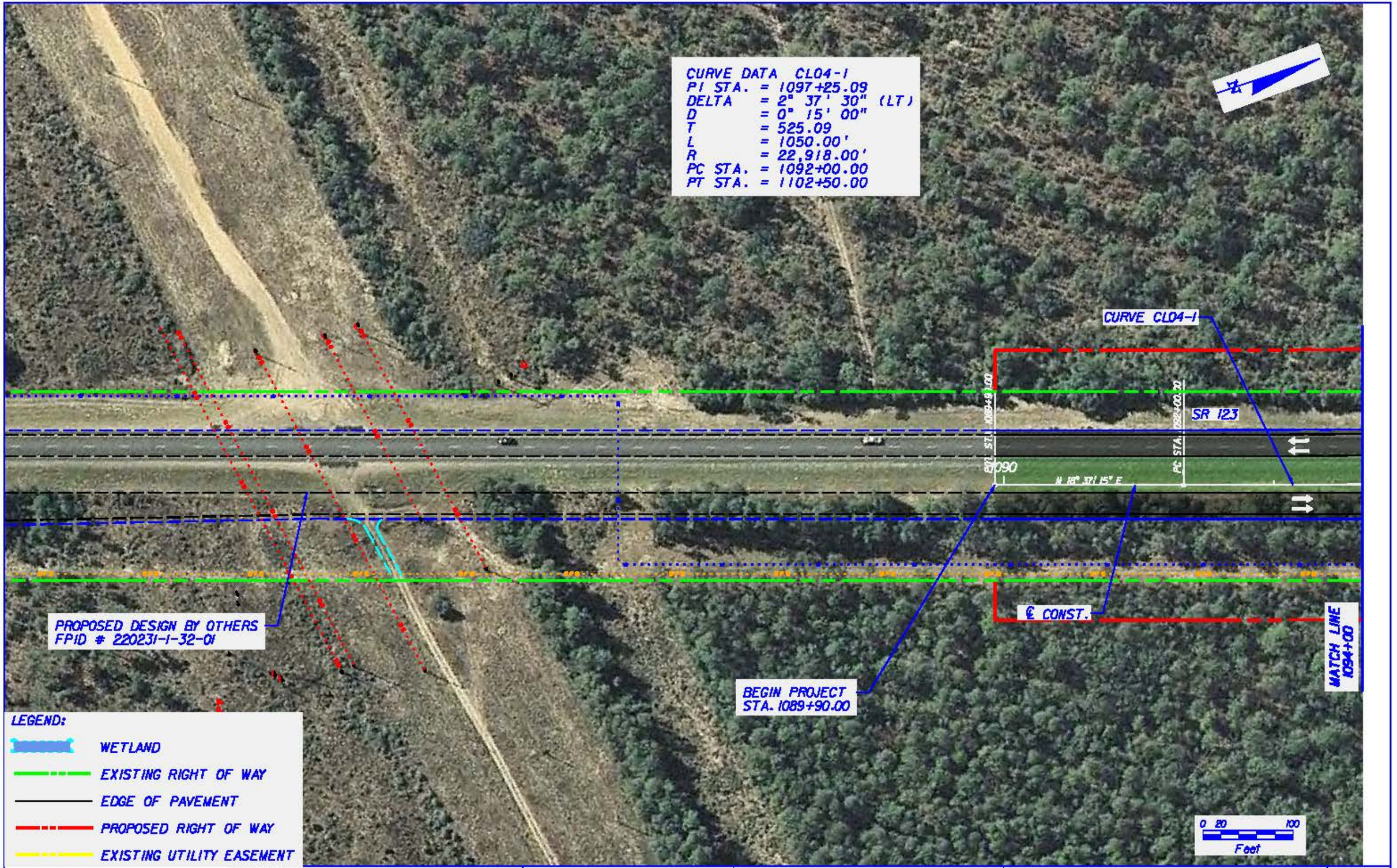
STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

SHEET NO. 25

HDR, INC. 4/19/2011 4:53:56 PM c:\pwworking\tpo\dlm870636\ALT 2-PLAN807.DGN



REVISIONS					
DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 26

HDR, INC. 4/19/2021 4:34:01 PM c:\pwworking\tpa\dms70636\ALT 3-PLANROR.DGN

CURVE DATA CL04-1
PI STA. = 1097+25.09
DELTA = 2° 37' 30" (LT)
D = 0° 15' 00"
T = 525.09
L = 1050.00'
R = 22,918.00'
PC STA. = 1092+00.00
PT STA. = 1102+50.00

CURVE CL04-1

PT STA. 1102+50.00

1095 1100 1105

N 19° 59' 45" E

SR 123

℄ CONST.

MATCH LINE 1094+00

MATCH LINE 1109+00

CELL TOWER (T-MOBILE)

0 20 100 Feet

LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5845
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	41102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 27

CURVE DATA CL04-2
PI STA. = 1116+46.33
DELTA = 2° 37' 30" (RT)
D = 0° 15' 00"
T = 525.09
L = 1050.00'
R = 22,918.00'
PC STA. = 1111+21.24
PT STA. = 1121+71.24

CURVE CL04-2

1110

1115

1120

SR 123

PC STA. 1111+21.24

PT STA. 1121+71.24

℄ CONST.

MATCH LINE 1109+00

MATCH LINE 1124+00

CELL TOWERS (VERIZON, AT&T & LA UNWIRED)

POND NO. 1

0 20 100
Feet

LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
28 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4218

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 28

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
28 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6900
Certificate of Authorization No. 4218

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 29

END BRIDGE
STA. 1140+82.00

℄ CONST.

1140

1145

1150

N 18° 37' 15" E

SR 123

TOMS CREEK

EXISTING BRIDGE
TO REMAIN

MATCH LINE
1139+00

MATCH LINE
1154+00

POND NO. 2

0 20 100
Feet

LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

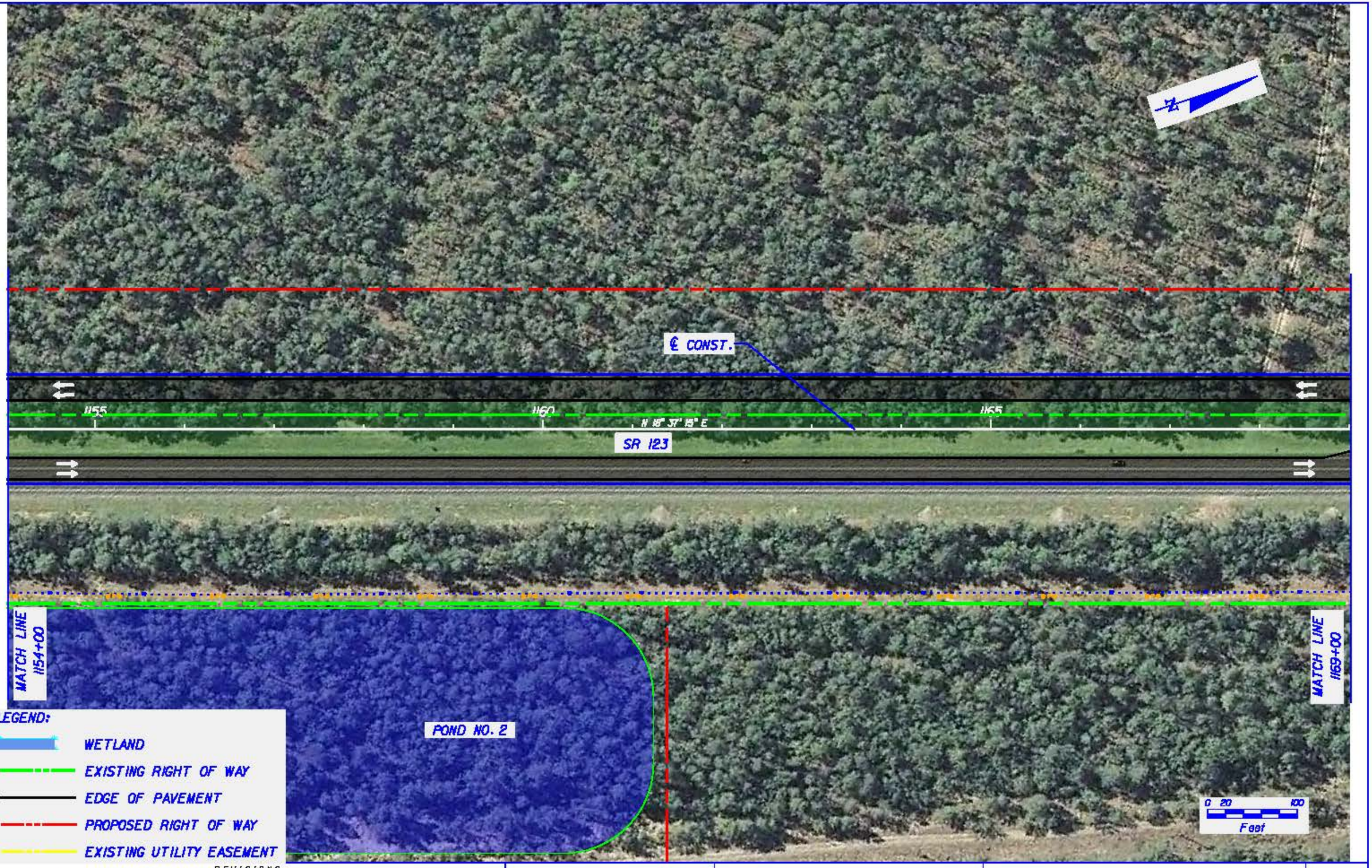
STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 30

HDR, INC. 4/19/2011 4:34:54 PM c:\pwworking\tpa\dms70636\ALT 3-PLANR005.DGN



LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

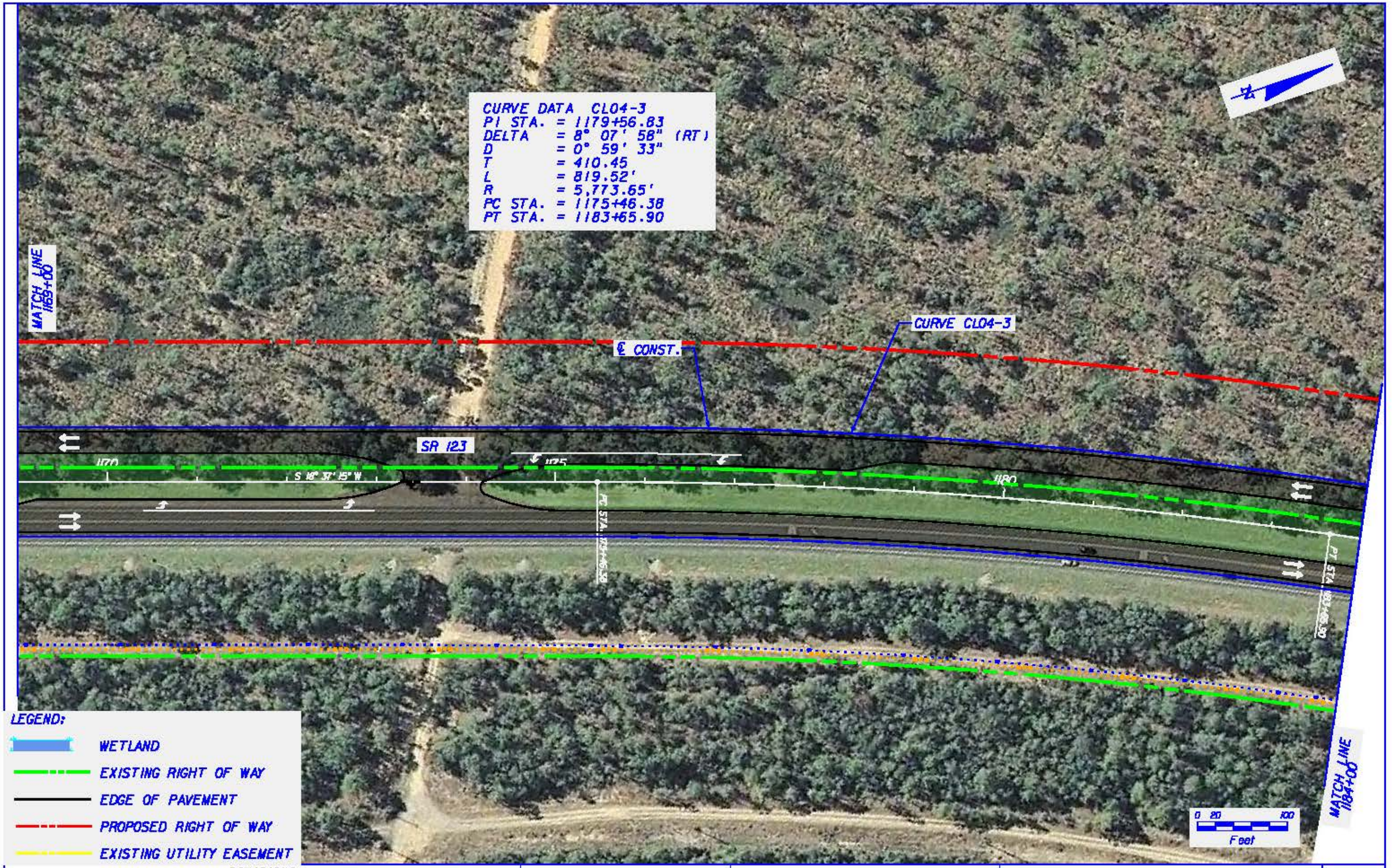
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 433-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4218

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 31



REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5845
(850) 433-5800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 32

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

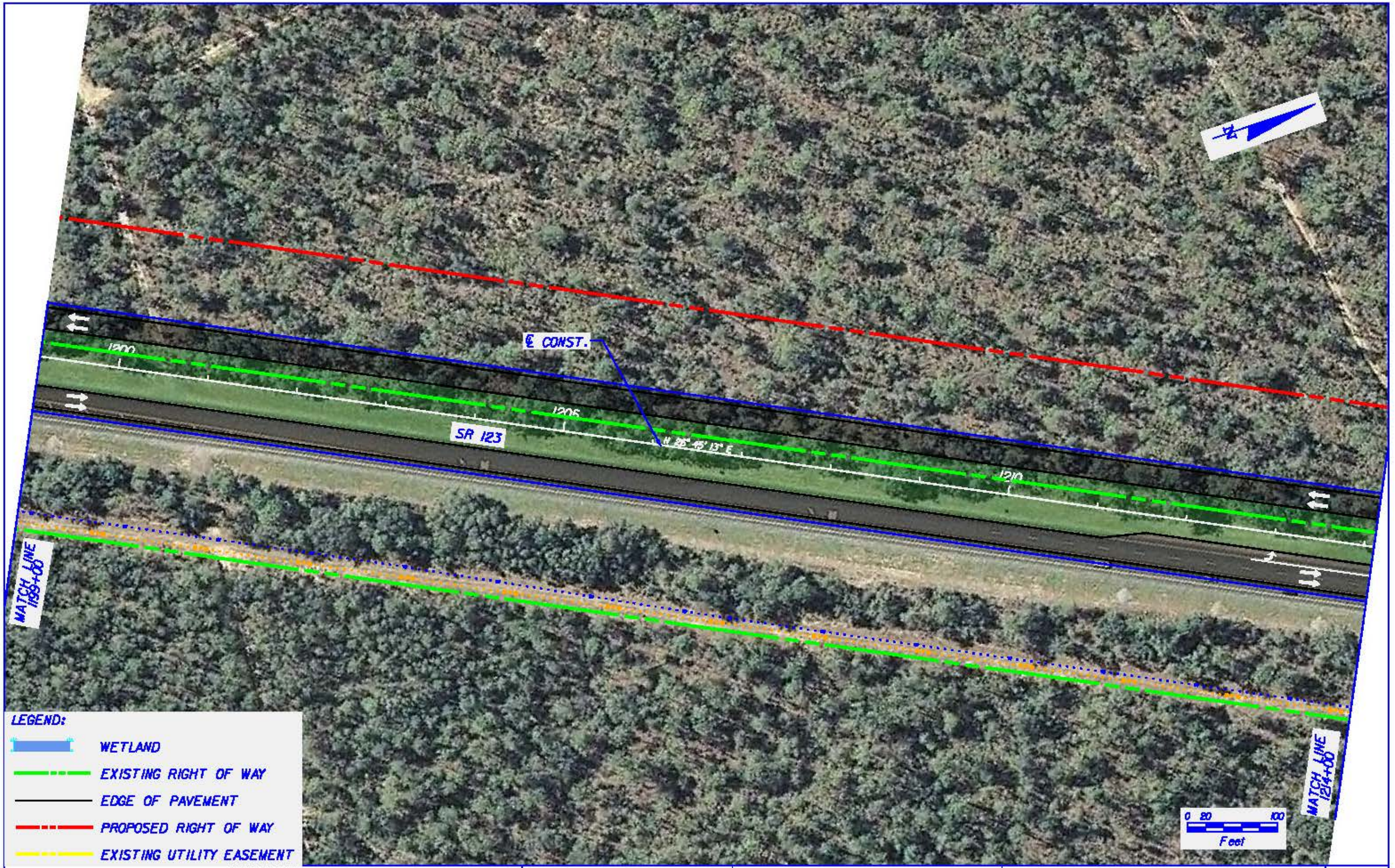
HDR Engineering, Inc.
28 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6900
Certificate of Authorization No. 4218

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 5

SHEET NO. 33



REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 34

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

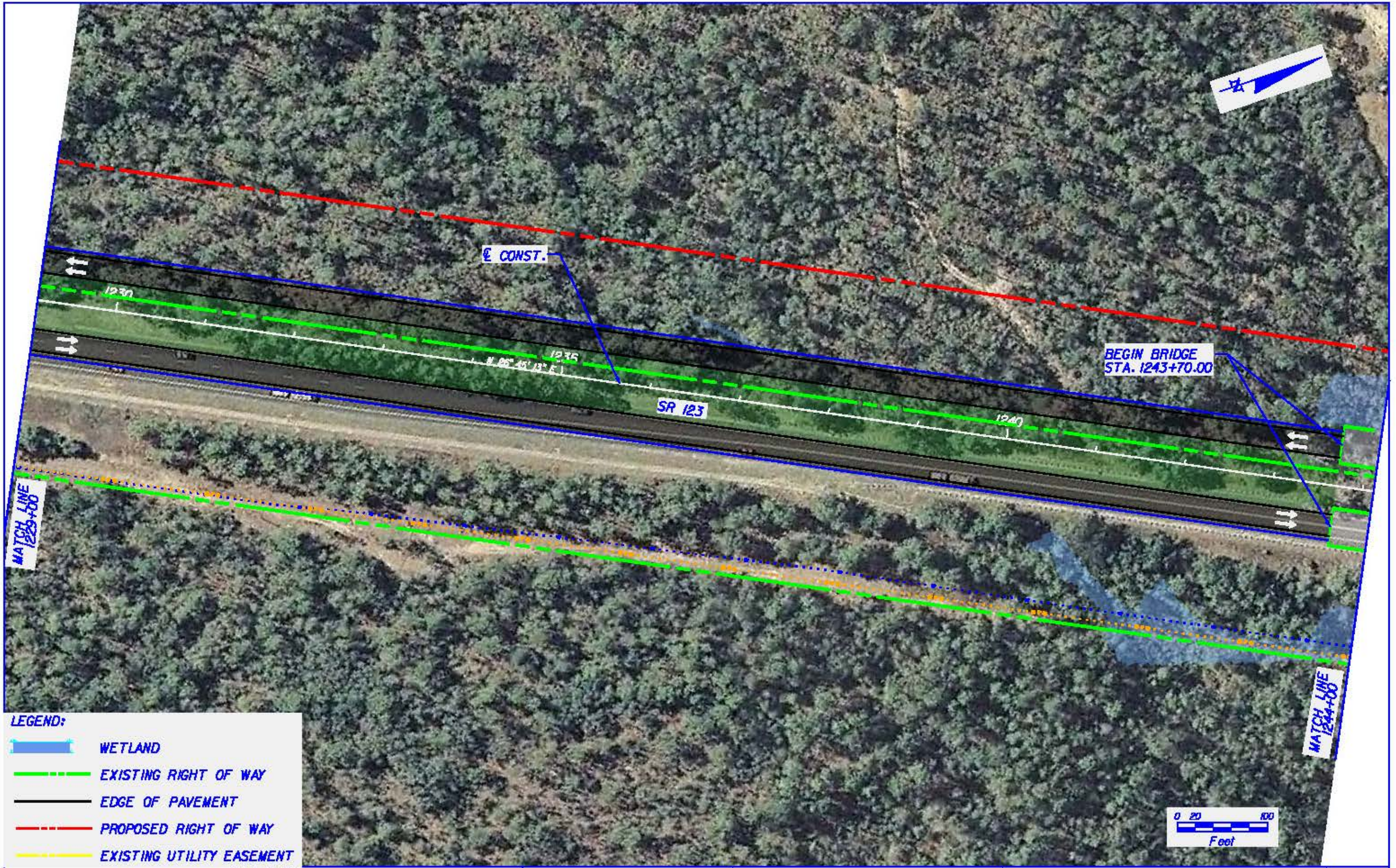
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4218

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 35



LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
28 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 433-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4218

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 36

LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 37

LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS

DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
28 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5845
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4218

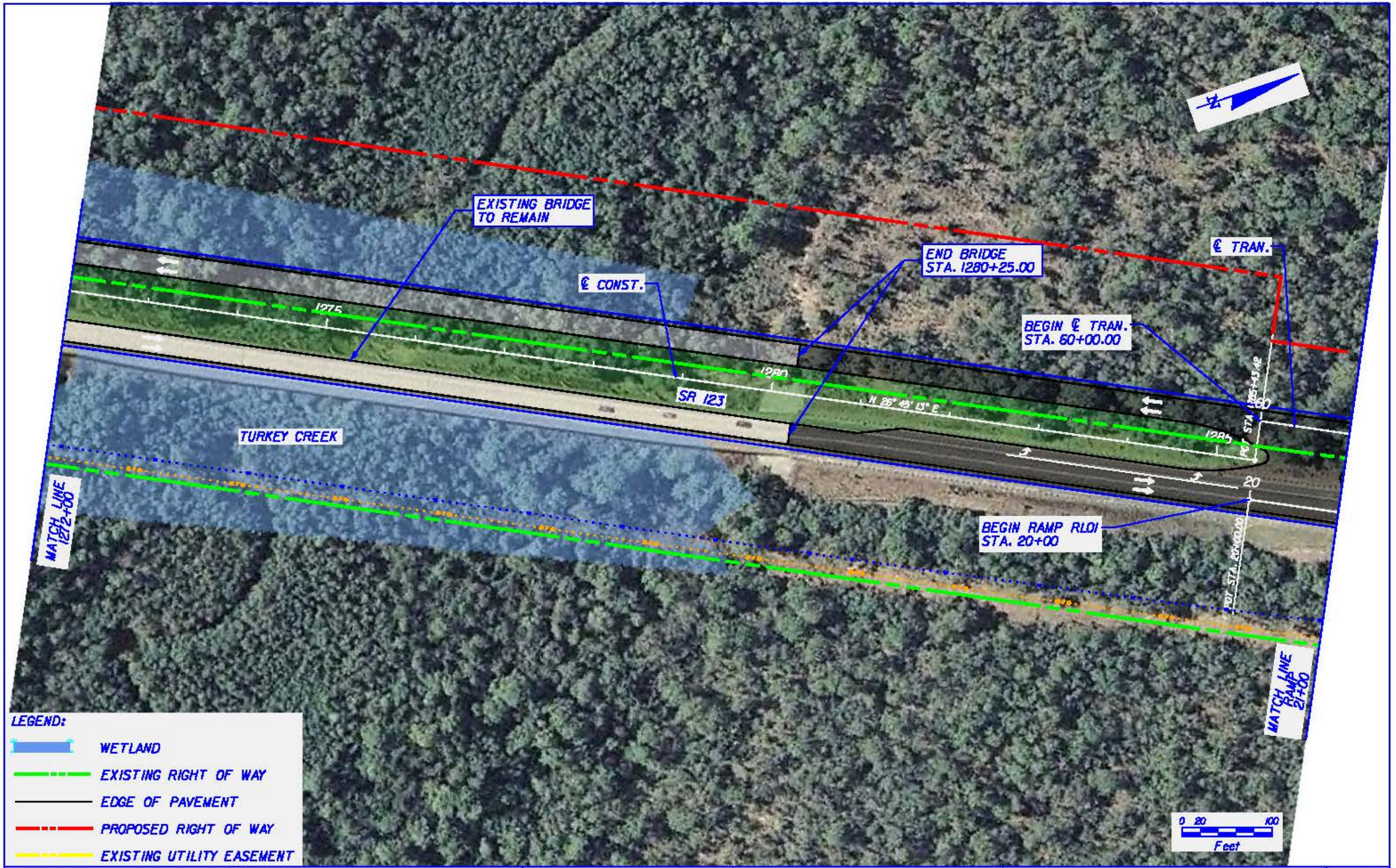
STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 38

HDR, INC. 4/18/2022 c:\35438.tif C:\projects\sr123\35438\ALT 3-PLAN01.dgn



REVISIONS					
DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 39

CURVE DATA RL01-1
PI STA. = 35+39.46
DELTA = 13° 15' 47" (LT)
D = 1° 00' 00"
T = 666.18'
L = 1,326.41'
R = 5,730.00'
PC STA. = 28+73.28
PT STA. = 41+99.69

CURVE DATA CL05-1
PI STA. = 77+88.70
DELTA = 32° 39' 30" (LT)
D = 1° 00' 00"
T = 1,678.13'
L = 3,266.06'
R = 5,730.00'
PC STA. = 61+09.97
PT STA. = 93+76.03

℄ TRAN.

CURVE CL05-1

65

70

SR 123

25

N 86° 45' 13" E

℄ STA. 28+73.28

30

℄ RAMP RL01

MATCH LINE RAMP 21+00

CURVE RL01-1

MATCH LINE RAMP 35+00

POND NO. 6

0 20 100
Feet

LEGEND:
- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

REVISIONS					
DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 40

HDR, INC. 4/19/2021 4:05:13 PM c:\pwworking\tpo\dms70636\ALT 3-PLANROS.DGN

LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

CURVE DATA RL01-1
PI STA. = 35+39.46
DELTA = 13° 15' 47" (LT)
D = 1° 00' 00"
T = 666.18
L = 1,326.41
R = 5,730.00
PC STA. = 28+73.28
PT STA. = 41+99.69

CURVE DATA RL01-2
PI STA. = 50+53.27
DELTA = 38° 53' 26" (LT)
D = 3° 49' 11"
T = 529.57
L = 1,018.15
R = 1,500.00
PC STA. = 45+23.70
PT STA. = 55+41.85

℄ TRAN.
SR 123
SR 85
MATCH LINE RAMP 49+30
END BRIDGE STA. 47+16.00
CURVE RL01-2
BEGIN BRIDGE STA. 43+54.00
℄ RAMP RL01
CURVE RL01-1
MATCH LINE RAMP 35+00
POND NO. 6A
0 20 100 Feet

REVISIONS					
DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
SR 123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL PLAN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 41

HDR, INC. 4/19/2011 4:35:25 PM c:\projects\fdot\dist3\0636\ALT 3-PLAN806.DGN

LEGEND:

- WETLAND
- EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY
- EDGE OF PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
- EXISTING UTILITY EASEMENT

℄ TRAN.

END ℄ TRAN.
STA. 96+89.11

END ℄ RAMP RLOI
STA.72+50.11

CURVE RLOI-3

CURVE DATA RLOI-3
PI STA. = 60+00.64
DELTA = 19° 14' 26"(RT)
D = 3° 49' 11"
T = 254.25
L = 503.72
R = 1,500.00
PC STA. = 57+46.39
PT STA. = 62+50.11

SR 85

SR 123

PC STA. 57+46.39

N 25° 24' 01" W

LATCH RAMP LINE
#9790

0 20 100
Feet

REVISIONS					
DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION

HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street
Suite 200
Pensacola, FL 32502-5945
(850) 432-6800
Certificate of Authorization No. 4213

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
123	OKALOOSA	411102-1-22-01

SR 123 PD&E
DRAFT CONCEPTUAL DESIGN
ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

SHEET NO. 42

HDR, INC. 4/19/2007 4:05:30 PM c:\pwworking\tpa\dms70636\ALT 3-PLANROT.DGN

APPENDIX C

AGENCY CONSULTATION

***Note: USFWS and FWC Correspondence is provided in Appendix I with the Biological Assessment / Opinion**

This page intentionally blank

JEFF MILLER
1ST DISTRICT, FLORIDA

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIR AND LAND FORCES

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH
RANKING MEMBER

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1535 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4136

DISTRICT OFFICES:
4300 BAYOU BOULEVARD
SUITE 12
PENSACOLA, FL 32503
(850) 479-1183

348 S.W. MIRACLE STRIP PARKWAY
UNIT 24
FORT WALTON BEACH, FL 32548
(850) 664-1266

http://jeffmiller.house.gov
Toll Free: 1-866-367-1614

August 08, 2007

Fred Skaer, Director
FHWA Office of PD&E Review
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

FAX: 202-366-7660

RE: SR123 Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study

Dear Director Skaer:

I am writing to request your efforts in streamlining the PD&E study process for State Road 123 in Okaloosa County, Florida. The current study is scheduled to take 18 months and cost $1.797 million to justify the widening of SR 123 from a two lane rural facility to a four lane divided rural facility. The Okaloosa-Walton TPO is aware of environmental concerns and its intentions are to complete the environmental part of the PD&E study.

Additionally, SR 123 is solely within the Eglin AFB boundary so there is no need to spend the money and take the time to study alternative corridors for the project. The road will be widened along the existing alignment because that is the easement provided by Eglin AFB. Also, there are no socio-economic impacts to be mitigated along the project alignment because the project is totally within the Eglin AFB boundary. There are no land uses adjacent to the road alignment other than woodland on the Eglin AFB reservation.

Streamlining this process will lower project costs and will reduce the growing traffic congestion associated with the recent Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) decision. I appreciate your consideration of this very important issue. If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact Anne Pizzato of my staff at 202-225-4136.

With warm regards, I am

Sincerely,

Jeff Miller
Member of Congress

CJM/amp

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Office of the Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE.
Washington, DC 20590

September 12, 2007

In Reply Refer To:
HEPE

The Honorable Jeff Miller
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Miller:

Thank you for your August 8 letter to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regarding plans to widen State Route (SR) 123 through Eglin Air Force Base. I appreciate your letting us know of your concerns about the time and cost involved in reviewing the project under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Our Florida Division Office has been working with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) on the proposed SR 123 project. The FDOT has used its streamlining process, called Efficient Transportation Decision-Making (ETDM), for the early scoping and agency coordination leading to the NEPA analysis. While the ETDM process has not been completed, the preliminary results indicate we will be able to comply with NEPA and related requirements at a time and cost that are significantly less than originally estimated.

Through our Division Office, I will provide a copy of this correspondence to FDOT officials so they will be aware of your support for the SR 123 project. I can assure you that the FHWA will continue to cooperate with FDOT officials to advance this priority project.

If I can provide further information or assistance, please feel free to call me.

Sincerely,

J. Richard Capka
Administrator

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE OHIO

MEMORANDUM FOR FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, FLORIDA DIVISION
ATTN: MR DAVID C GIBBS
545 JOHN KNOX ROAD, SUITE 200
TALLAHASSEE FL 32303

11 APR 2007

FROM: HQ AFMC/A7C
4225 Logistics Ave
Wright-Patterson AFB OH 45433-5001

SUBJECT: Cooperating Agency Request for Environmental Assessment (EA) on Proposed Widening of State Route (SR) 123, Eglin AFB FL

1. The Air Force Materiel Command agrees to participate as a formal Cooperating Agency with the Federal Highway Administration (FHA), Florida Division in preparation of an EA, as prescribed in the President's Council on Environmental Quality National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations. This EA will consider FHA's proposal to widen SR 123 located in Okaloosa County, Florida.

2. As a Cooperating Agency, we agree to participate in various portions of the EA development. Specifically, support will be provided by:

a. Participating in the scoping process,

b. Assuming responsibility, upon FHA's request, for developing information and preparing analyses on issues for which the Air Force has special expertise, and

c. Making staff support available for interdisciplinary reviews.

3. With the anticipated population increases around Eglin AFB due to 2005 Base Realignment and Closure decisions, we appreciate your proactive approach to addressing traffic concerns in this region. We welcome this opportunity to participate in this project with you as a cooperating agency and look forward to working with you and your staff. Our point of contact for NEPA is Ms. Shari Kilbourne, HQ AFMC/A7CVO, (937) 656-2926, shari.kilbourne@wpafb.af.mil.

JEFF MUNDEY, P.E.
Deputy Command Civil Engineer
Directorate of Installations and
Mission Support

cc:
HQ USAF/A7CPB
96 CEG/CEVSP

War-winning capabilities ... on time, on cost

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS AIR ARMAMENT CENTER (AFMC)
EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA

7 Apr 08

Mr. Robert J. Arnold
Eglin AFB Mission Enhancement Committee
101 West D Avenue, Suite 222
Eglin AFB FL 32542-5492

Mr. Steve Whittington
Florida Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 607
Chipley, FL 32428

Dear Mr. Whittington

We are pleased to inform you that the Air Armament Center Commander has approved granting the Florida Department of Transportation conceptual approval for expanded right of way of SR 123 to accommodate six lanes of traffic. The conceptual approval includes two conditions which include 96 CEG approvals for final location of any holding ponds and final selection of one of the two proposed intersections for the northern approach of SR 123 and SR 85.

Please be advised that this letter does not constitute final approval. There are Air Force-mandated process requirements (i.e., NEPA) that must be accomplished prior to final approval.

Your next step is to contact the Eglin AFB Real Estate Office, Mr. Steven Grimm, (850) 882-8766, to work the process requirements for the expanded right of way. The Real Estate Office will coordinate the project from this point further and will provide guidance regarding required technical documentation and costs

If you have any questions please call Mr. Brian Brown, Eglin AFB Mission Enhancement Office, (850) 882-9650.

Sincerely

Robert J. Arnold

ROBERT J. ARNOLD
Chairman

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 96TH AIR BASE WING (AFMC)
EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA

10 MAR 2011

RECEIVED
MAR 14 2011
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OFFICE

MEMORANDUM FOR FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
Ms. Linda K. Anderson
Environmental Protection Specialist
545 John Knox Road, Suite 200
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

FROM: 96 CEG/CC
Col David H. Maharrey, Jr.
Commander/Base Civil Engineer
501 DeLeon Street, Suite 101
Elgin AFB, Florida 32542

SUBJECT: Proposed Widening Project of State Road 123 In/Near Eglin Air Force Base

1. Eglin Air Force Base (AFB) is the landowner and cooperating agency in the proposed widening project of State Road (SR) 123 from SR 85S to SR 85N. As such, we want to ensure this project is conducted in the most environmentally sensitive manner possible to minimize impacts to Okaloosa darters, which are a federally endangered species. In previous meetings between Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Federal Highway Administration, Eglin AFB and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), we discussed various crossing methods for the unnamed tributary of Turkey Creek on SR 123. The ecologically preferred method, and only option fully supported by Eglin AFB and the USFWS, is a bridge span. This is the only method identified which will avoid impacts to darter habitat.

2. Use of a bridge span will also restore stream habitat and allow fish passage. The existing culvert is currently silted in, obstructing fish movement and affecting stream condition both upstream and downstream of the structure. Any culvert option will result in a loss of over 150 feet of natural stream habitat for darters. Measures to lessen impacts of the culvert on fish passage (lighting, natural bottom, etc.) are only minimization measures, not avoidance, and the potential effectiveness of these measures is uncertain. Relative to a bridge crossing, we at Eglin believe the proposed culvert crossing poses an elevated risk by restricting fish passage to upstream locales and threatening the success of downstream restoration activities.

3. Eglin AFB's military activities are an essential part of our nation's security strategy. These missions can best be achieved in a healthy natural environment wherein species are recovered and protection under the *Endangered Species Act* (ESA) is no longer warranted. The recovery of federally listed species is essential to reducing regulatory restrictions associated with the ESA, thereby providing greater flexibility in achieving future military readiness at Eglin. The Air Force and Mid-Bay Bridge Authority have invested over $20 million in restoration of Okaloosa

darter habitat on Eglin, with an ultimate goal of complete recovery and de-listing of the darter. The planned down-listing from endangered to threatened (in March 2011) is evidence that efforts to-date have been successful. Complete de-listing of the Okaloosa darter will require additional investment in restoration efforts and a commitment to avoid new threats to darter habitat. (The expense of habitat restoration can easily surpass any cost of designing projects to avoid impacts in the first place.)

4. Because 95 percent of global distribution of the Okaloosa darter is contained on Eglin AFB, all actions on Eglin property are closely scrutinized to evaluate potential impacts to this fish and its habitat. Eglin strives to balance our need for improved infrastructure with a need to recover the federally-listed darter. A recent example of this is a Section 7 Consultation for the Mid-Bay Bridge Authority Connector, which resulted in stringent requirements for any Okaloosa darter crossings involved. All Connector darter stream crossings are to be bridged using modified top-down construction methods and pipe-off requirements for storm water. Eglin AFB has similar expectations for any major road project crossing Okaloosa darter streams on Eglin property.

5. Before the environmental assessment and biological assessment for this project can move forward, there must be a mutually acceptable preferred alternative. The Air Force believes the current FDOT-preferred option of a four-sided culvert with chimney lighting is insufficient to ensure the continued recovery of Okaloosa darters. We therefore strongly recommend a bridge span as a preferred alternative for the unnamed tributary stream. Eglin staff are open to continued discussions on details of the preferred alternative and would be happy to arrange a time to meet with your organization. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

DAVID H. MAHARREY, JR., Col, USAF
Commander, 96th Civil Engineer Group

cc:
Ms. Blair Martin
District 3 Environmental Management Engineer
Florida Department of Transportation
Post Office Box 607
Chipley, Florida 32428-0607

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Florida Division

545 John Knox Road, Suite 200
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

(850) 942-9650

January 14, 2009

In Reply Refer To: ENV-FL
SR 123 CRAS & Effects
from SR 85 South to SR 85 North
FPID #: 411102-1
Okaloosa County

Mr. Frederick Gaske
State Historical Preservation Officer
Division of Historical Resources
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

Attn: Transportation Compliance

Dear Mr. Gaske:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has reviewed the Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) Report for the proposed SR 23 project from SR 85 South to SR 85 North in Okaloosa County. Our Division Office concurs with the report and Florida Department of Transportation recommended finding that no cultural resources were identified during the investigation. FHWA therefore finds that the project will have no effect on any archaeological or historic sites or properties listed, or eligible for listing in the *National Register of Historic Places*, or otherwise of historical, archaeological, or architectural value.

It is our understanding that the CRAS report will be submitted to your office by staff from the Eglin Air Force Base. In accordance with the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), which are implemented by procedures contained in 36 CFR, Part 800, as well as the provisions contained in the revised Chapter 267 F.S., we respectfully request your concurrence with these findings once you have had the opportunity to review the report.

If you have any questions, or if I may be of assistance, please contact Ms. Cathy Kendall, Environmental Specialist at (850) 942-9650, extension 3012.

Sincerely,

/s/ Cathy Kendall
For: Martin C. Knopp
Division Administrator

cc: Mr. Laura Haddock, FDOT District 3
Ms. Marjorie Bixby, CEMO

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Kurt S. Browning
Secretary of State
DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Mr. Martin Knopp
Federal Highway Administration, Florida Division
545 John Knox Road, Suite 200
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

March 3, 2009

RE: DHR Project Number: 2009-923
Received by DHR: February 12, 2009
Financial Project ID No.: 411102-1-22-01
Project: *A Cultural Resources Assessment Survey of SR 123 From SR 85 (South) to SR 85 (North) in Okaloosa County, Florida*

Dear Mr. Knopp:

Our office received and reviewed the above referenced project in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended, 36 CFR Part 800: Protection of Historic Properties, and Chapter 267, Florida Statutes. It is the responsibility of the State Historic Preservation Officer to advise and assist, as appropriate, Federal and State agencies in carrying out their historic preservation responsibilities; to cooperate with agencies to ensure that historic properties are taken into consideration at all levels of planning and development; and to consult with the appropriate agencies in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended, on undertakings that may affect historic properties and the content and sufficiency of any plans developed to protect, manage, or to reduce or mitigate harm to such properties.

Research conducted for this project indicated that there were no previously recorded historic resources (either built structures or archaeological sites) within the SR 123 project area. In addition, the current field investigations did not locate any archaeological sites, cultural material, historic features, or historic structures within the project's area of potential effect (APE). No further investigation is recommended. Given these negative findings, the survey recommended that the proposed SR 123 widening project will not affect any historic properties.

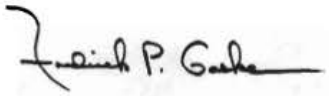
It is the determination of the Federal Highway Administration that there will *no historic properties affected* [as per 36 C.F.R. Part 800, §800.4(d)(1)] as a result of the proposed undertaking. Based on the information provided, our office concurs with this determination and finds the submitted report complete and sufficient.

500 S. Bronough Street • Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250 • http://www.flheritage.com

☐ Director's Office (850) 245-6300 • FAX: 245-6436
☐ Archaeological Research (850) 245-6444 • FAX: 245-6452
✓ Historic Preservation (850) 245-6333 • FAX: 245-6437

If you have any questions concerning our comments, please contact Jennifer Ross, Compliance Review Architectural Historian, by electronic mail *jrross@dos.state.fl.us*, or at 850-245-6333.

Sincerely,



Frederick P. Gaske, Director, and
State Historic Preservation Officer

XC: Maria D. Rodriguez, Chief, Cultural Resources Branch, Eglin AFB
Laura Haddock, Florida Department of Transportation, District Three, Chipley

Miccosukee Tribe of Indians
of Florida

Business Council Members
Billy Cypress, Chairman

Jasper Nelson, Ass't. Chairman
Max Billie, Treasurer
Andrew Bert Sr., Secretary
William M. Osceola, Lawmaker

November 28, 2007

Peggy Kelly
Florida Department of Transportation

RE: ETDM Project # 8167, SR 123, Okaloosa County, FL

Dear Ms. Kelly:

The Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida reviewed this project via the ETDM website on August 2, 2007. We noticed during our review and subsequent GIS analysis that there were seven archaeological sites located within 1,320 feet of this project. Consequently, under the three criteria for comments, the Tribe commented on these as follows:

Identified Resources and Level of Importance:
There are 7 archaeological sites located within 1,320 feet of this project. A Cultural Resources Survey needs to be done to determine if there are any other archaeological sites that may be impacted by this project and if there will be any impacts to these 7 recorded sites.
Comments on Effects to Resources:
Once a Cultural Resources Survey has been done, then effects, if any, to archaeological sites then can be ascertained.
Additional Comments (optional):
If the Cultural Resources Survey shows there are no archaeological sites that will be impacted by this project, then no further consultation is necessary. However, if the Cultural Resources Survey does show that archaeological sites will be impacted by this project, then further consultation with the Miccosukee Tribe should be done.

The Tribe affirms by this letter that these indeed were and remain our comments on this project. Thank you for consulting with the Miccosukee Tribe. Please contact me at the below number or via e-mail at Stevet@miccosukeetribe.com if you require additional information.

Sincerely,

Steve Terry
NAGPRA & Section 106 Representative

P.O. Box 440021, Tamiami Station, Miami, Florida 33144, (305) 223-8380, fax (305) 223-1011
Constitution Approved by the Secretary of the Interior, January 11, 1962

HPO
<HPO@seminolenatin.com>

To: <blair.martin@dot.state.fl.us>
08/13/2007 02:52
Cc: PM

Subject: Advanced notification for Okaloosa County, Florida.

RE: Advanced notification
SR 123 from SR 85 S to SR 85 N
Financial Project ID 411102-1-22-01
Okaloosa County, Florida

Mrs. Martin,

Please keep me posted on this matter. Our main concern is items from the 1720's to the 1850's. If anything can be dated after that era, we are not
concerned with. Also, we are not concerned with anything prior to the 1700's, since we were not yet considered as "Seminoles". This matter should
be directed to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma.

Thank you.

Pare Bowlegs

Historic Preservation Officer
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
Wewoka, Ok. 74884
1-405-257-7200
www.seminolenation.com

Federal Consistency Determination

Track Clearinghouse Projects Report

#8167 State Road 123			
District	District 3	**Phase**	Programming Screen
County	Okaloosa County	**From**	north of SR 85 S
Planning Organization	FDOT District 3	**To**	SR 85 N
Plan ID	OMP70631	**Financial Management No.**	4111021
Federal Involvement	Potential Future Federal Funding Federal Permit		
Contact Name / Phone	Peggy Kelley (850) 415-9517	**Contact Email**	peggy.kelley@dot.state.fl.us

Program Information

Category:	Potential Future Federal Funding Federal Permit
CFDA Number:	20.205
	Department: Department of Transportation Agency: Federal Highway Administration Title: Highway Planning and Construction Grant Program
Project Description:	Note: The Project Description has been updated to reflect the current configuration of Alternative alignments. ETAT previously reviewed the center alignment (Alternative 1) in September 2007. An east-shift alignment (Alternative 2) and a west-shift alignment (Alternative 3) are now being submitted for review. The project limits have been clarified to show that the southern terminus ends just north of SR 85 S to connect with a proposed interchange at SR 123 and SR 85 S (as a separate project under FPID 220231-1). At the northern limit, the project continues to SR 85 N in a new intersection that is part of ETDM project 8167. SR 123 is a north-south roadway which facilitates access between Fort Walton Beach and the Crestview area to the north. It has been designated a Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) corridor and is a component of the Florida Interstate Highway System (FIHS). SR 123 is also a Hurricane Evacuation Route for south Santa Rosa County and Okaloosa County. The existing roadway is a rural two-lane undivided highway with two alternating sections of passing lane. The existing lanes are 12 feet in width, with eight-foot graded shoulders, including five-foot paved shoulders. There are presently no sidewalks for pedestrians, designated bicycle lanes, or bike paths along SR 123 within the study area limits. The adopted Level of Service standard for SR 123 is LOS C. The roadway is currently operating at LOS D in the off-peak direction and LOS F in the peak direction with an average of LOS F for two directions. By 2013 & 2033, the average LOS for the corridor is expected to be LOS F if no improvements are made. The periods of LOS F will lengthen in duration as traffic volumes increase. Crash data indicates SR 123 is experiencing more accidents than would be expected for this type of facility. The distribution of crashes indicates a disproportionate amount of rear-end

	crashes, a problem typically associated with insufficient capacity on a two-lane roadway. The proposed project involves widening SR 123 between SR 85 S and SR 85 N from a two-lane rural undivided roadway to a four-lane divided facility with paved shoulders. At the southern end, the project limit begins at mile post (MP) 0.6 (which is just to the north of SR 85 S) and continues north to the intersection with SR 85N (to include a new interchange). The overall project length is approximately five miles. At the southern limit, the project connects to a proposed interchange at SR 123 and SR 85 S (as a separate project under FPID 220231-1). At the northern limit, the project connects to SR 85 N. The widening includes the construction of new two-lane bridges at Toms Creek and Turkey Creek, and utilizes the existing bridges for the remaining two lanes of traffic. A grade-separated interchange at the intersection of SR 85 N and SR 123 N is also included. The widening of SR 123 is included in the following long-range transportation plans: Florida Department of Transportation Strategic Intermodal System Highway Component 2035 Cost Feasible Plan 2007 identifies the widening of SR 123 from two to four lanes; Florida Department of Transportation Florida Intrastate Highway System (FIHS) Strategic Intermodal System, Capacity Improvement Projects, Adopted Work Plan FY 2007 / 2008 through 2011 / 2012 (July 23, 2007) identifies the widening of SR 123 in the current work plan; Okaloosa-Walton 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (Final Report August 2007) identifies the widening of SR 123 from two to four lanes as a cost-feasible SIS project for design and right -of-way; Okaloosa-Walton TPO Project Priorities Report (FY 2009-2013), adopted September 30, 2007, lists the widening of SR 123 from SR 85 S to SR 85 N as priority 23 by capacity, and priority five by SIS funding. Preliminary construction cost estimates range from $63.3 million to $66.7 million, plus design, CEI, right-of-way and mitigation costs. Three alignments, along with the No-Build alternative, have been given consideration, designated Alternative 1, Alternative 2 and Alternative 3. Alternative 1 follows the centerline of existing SR 123. This alternative identifies the existing project corridor, providing a basis for coordination with regulatory agencies and the public. Further analysis has resulted in the development of Alternatives 2 and 3 along the same study corridor. As Alternatives 2 and 3 overlay and supersede Alternative 1, Alternative 1 has been eliminated from further consideration. Alternative 2 is east-shifted and locates the future southbound lanes over the existing lanes, thus making use of existing pavement, bridge structures and storm drainage wherever possible. Potential right-of-way for Alternative 2 varies between 150 to 200 on the east side, and from 150 to 200 on the west side. Alternative 3 is west-shifted and locates the future northbound lanes over the existing lanes, with similar benefits with regard to pavement, bridges and storm drainage described above for Alternative 2. Alternative 3 was introduced following utility coordination on the project to minimize impacts to an existing 30 water main and an existing fiber optic cable, both located inside the east right-of-way line. Potential right-of-way for Alternative 3 varies between 150 to 194 on the east side, and from 150 to 206 on the west side. The Preferred Alternative has not yet been selected, but all Build alternatives are anticipated to feature four lanes and require additional right-of-way. A recommended preferred alternative will be presented to the public at a Public Hearing. Following the receipt of any comments, the final recommended alternative will be selected.
Review Type:	Consistency
Routing /	

Consistency	Date Received: 12/04/2008 Routed: 12/04/2008 Comment Due: 01/18/2009 Letter Due: 02/03/2009 Extension Requested: Revision Due 1: Revision Due 2: Consistency Notes: No Notes Recorded
Applicant Information:	Applicant: FDOT District 3 Name: Peggy Kelley Address: 1074 Highway 90 City: Chipley State: FL Zip: 32428 Phone: (850) 415-9517 Email: peggy.kelley@dot.state.fl.us
Type:	State Agency

Funding:

Segment	Funding Source	Amount
Alternative 2		
Segment #1	Funding source not specified	--
Segment #2	Funding source not specified	--
Alternative 3		
Segment #1	Funding source not specified	--
Segment #2	Funding source not specified	--

Federal Consistency Definitions

Finding	Definition
Consistent	Based on the information contained in the Advance Notification and comments submitted by the reviewing agencies, the state has no objections to allocation of federal funds for the subject project and, therefore, the funding award is consistent with the Florida Coastal Management Program. State agency comments should be considered in developing the preliminary project design. For projects subject to coastal management consistency review that advance to the work program, the final review of the project's consistency with the Florida Coastal Management Program will be conducted during the environmental permitting review.
Consistent, With Comments	Although the final alignment and design details have not yet been determined, at this time the State of Florida has no objections to the

	project concept described in the Advance Notification and no objections to the allocation of federal funds for the necessary planning, preliminary design and environmental evaluation activities. Therefore, the funding award is consistent with the Florida Coastal Management Program. Specific comments and recommendations concerning the project concept have been submitted to the project sponsor through the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process. Specific objections to the project, if any, that have been identified during ETDM will be resolved through the ETDM conflict resolution (Part IV, AOA) process prior to the project advancing in the FDOT Five-Year Work Program for any purpose other than technical studies and preliminary design to resolve the objections. For projects subject to coastal management consistency review that advance to final design, right-of-way acquisition or construction, the final review of the project's consistency with the Florida Coastal Management Program will be conducted during the environmental permitting review.
Inconsistent	The project has been determined to be inconsistent with the Florida Coastal Management Program. Unless the objections are addressed and the project determined to be consistent, the project shall not proceed further in the programming and PD&E phases.

Federal Consistency Determination:

Federal Consistency:
Consistent, With Comments
Comments:
Please see the state's previous and current ETDM comments and State Clearinghouse letter (SAI # FL200806054266C) for further information. The state has no objections to allocation of federal funds for the subject project and, therefore, the funding award is consistent with the Florida Coastal Management Program (FCMP). The FDOT and local sponsor must, however, address the concerns identified by the state reviewing agencies prior to project implementation. The state's final concurrence of the project's consistency with the FCMP will be determined during the environmental permitting stage.

Federal Consistency Reviews:

Agency	Finding	Review Date
FL Department of Community Affairs	Consistent, With Comments	1/15/2009
No federal consistency review comments were found.		

Agency	Finding	Review Date
FL Department of Environmental Protection	Consistent, With Comments	1/16/2009
The state has no objections to allocation of federal funds for the subject project and, therefore, the funding award is consistent with the Florida Coastal Management Program (FCMP). The FDOT and local sponsor must, however, address the concerns identified by the state reviewing agencies prior to project implementation. The state's final concurrence of the project's consistency with the FCMP will be determined during the environmental permitting stage.		

Agency	Finding	Review Date

FL Department of State	Consistent	3/17/2009
No federal consistency review comments were found.		

Agency	Finding	Review Date
FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Consistent, With Comments	1/16/2009

The following recommendations and Best Management Practices (BMPs) are offered for consideration in future planning efforts so that adequate funding can be justified to design the project in a manner to avoid, minimize, or mitigate project effects to wildlife species and their habitat:

1. A vegetative cover map and accounting by acreage for each plant community type should be made for the affected project area. Compensatory mitigation for all upland and wetland habitat loss on the Eglin military reservation public conservation lands should be accomplished. If wetlands are mitigated under the provisions of Chapter 373.4137 F.S., the proposed mitigation sites should be located within the immediate or same regional area; be functionally equivalent; equal to or of higher functional value; and as or more productive as the impacted wetlands. Land acquisition and restoration of appropriate tracts adjacent to existing public conservation lands, or tracts placed under conservation easement or located adjacent to large areas of jurisdictional wetlands that currently serve as regional core habitat areas, would be supported by our agency. An all-important focus of the selection process for mitigation lands for this project should include a strong consideration of the quality, functionality, and suitability of the replacement habitat for the birds, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles discussed above as potentially occurring in the project area.

2. Surveys for listed species should be accomplished within and adjacent to the ROW and proposed sites for DRAs. The methodology for these surveys should be coordinated with FWC early in the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study and follow appropriate survey techniques or guidelines to determine presence, absence, or probability of occurrence of various species, and to assess habitat quality. These study methods should be designed considering the potential listed species discussed above. Please note that some species are known to use atypical habitat types and transitional habitat areas; therefore, due diligence and thorough coverage during field investigations are key to adequately determining presence or absence of all species. Based on the survey results, a plan should be developed to address direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the project on wildlife and habitat resources, including listed species. Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures should also be formulated and implemented.

3. We recommend that FDOT develop and implement customized BMPs especially formulated for this project as they pertain to dredging and filling, control of siltation and turbidity, and the nutrient loading associated with discharge of roadside runoff, to reduce impacts within freshwater basin wetlands and riparian systems. These customized BMPs should particularly be applied in watersheds associated with Toms Creek, Turkey Creek, and Juniper Creek where the Okaloosa darter is known to occur. These BMPs should be implemented only after all efforts to avoid and minimize impacts are completed. For technical assistance and coordination on addressing potential offsite effects and avoidance and minimization measures for listed and imperiled fish species, please contact FWC biologist Ted Hoehn in Tallahassee at (850) 410-0656, Ext. 17336).

4. Due to the presence of important public land with excellent and unique habitat values, and the documented history of bear roadkills in the vicinity of the project area, an appropriate study of habitat connectivity and the possible need for wildlife underpass structures should be made within the project area for the black bear. This study should include the appropriate design for upland structures in addition to future bridges proposed over Toms Creek and Turkey Creek, including head clearance, bridge length and the width of a natural soil shelf for

animal movement, and design and length of exclusionary or funnel fencing. For technical assistance on the black bear, please contact FWC Biologist Walt McCown at the Florida Wildlife Research Institute Lab in Gainesville at (352) 955-2231.

Habitat connectivity should also be addressed for small and mid-size mammals, amphibians, and reptiles that occur within the upland and wetland habitat systems adjacent to the roadway. For example, adequate bridging of wetlands and small tributary streams would reduce both the loss and degradation of habitat, in addition to promoting or maintaining beneficial hydrological processes and habitat connectivity. Single and double box culverts needed at minor tributary locations could also be designed with concrete shelves and a natural soil floor constructed above mean high water level to allow the safe passage of various species of reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals, such as the grey fox, bobcat, striped skunk, and whitetail deer, which are important components of wetland habitat types in the project area. These structures can also be placed under the roadway in upland areas to allow passage of reptiles and amphibians, including the gopher tortoise and many other species. Our biologists are available to assist in consultation on the design and placement of these structures, as well as necessary fencing needs.

5. Construction equipment staging areas; storage of oils, greases, and fuel; fill and roadbed material; and equipment maintenance activities should be sited in previously disturbed areas far removed from streams, wetlands, or surface water bodies. Staging areas, along with borrow areas, should also be surveyed for listed species.

Agency	Finding	Review Date
Northwest Florida Water Management District	Consistent	1/9/2009
No federal consistency review comments were found.		

Agency	Finding	Review Date
Northwest Florida Water Management District	Consistent	1/9/2009
No federal consistency review comments were found.		

The following agencies are required to review federal consistency, but no federal consistency finding has been received for the selected screening event:
- FL Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Advance Notification / Federal Consistency Comments:

No advance notification / federal consistency comments were input for the selected screening event.

The following agencies were invited to review the AN for consistency, but no general AN comment has been received for the selected screening event:
- FL Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- FL Department of Community Affairs
- FL Department of Environmental Protection
- FL Department of State
- FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Federal Highway Administration
- Federal Transit Administration
- Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- National Park Service

	- Natural Resources Conservation Service - Northwest Florida Water Management District - Seminole Tribe of Florida - US Army Corps of Engineers - US Environmental Protection Agency - US Fish and Wildlife Service - US Forest Service - West Florida Regional Planning Council
Date Closed:	02/03/2009

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Charlie Crist
Governor

Jeff Kottkamp
Lt. Governor

Michael W. Sole
Secretary

August 1, 2008

Mrs. Blair L. Martin, P.E.
District Environmental Management Engineer
Florida Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 607
Chipley, FL 32428-0607

RE: Department of Transportation – Advance Notification – 123 PD&E Study, From SR 85 to SR 85, FPID No. 411102-1-22-01 – Okaloosa County, Florida. (Previous ETDM No. 8167)
SAI # FL200806054266C

Dear Mrs. Martin:

The Florida State Clearinghouse, pursuant to Presidential Executive Order 12372, Gubernatorial Executive Order 95-359, the Coastal Zone Management Act, 16 U.S.C. §§ 1451-1464, as amended, and the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321, 4331-4335, 4341-4347, as amended, has coordinated a review of the referenced advance notification.

The West Florida Regional Planning Council (WFRPC) indicates that the Strategic Regional Policy Plan for West Florida recommends the protection of state or federally owned ecologically sensitive lands from land uses that would impair or destroy the important habitats and plant and animal species occurring on those lands. The proposed project area appears to meet the criteria for federally owned ecologically sensitive lands and, as such, WFRPC staff recommends that alternative options be explored. If wetland impacts are planned, WFRPC staff advises that construction activities should not impair or reduce the flow of area surface waters. In addition, impacts or destruction of habitats associated with any listed species should be avoided. Please see the enclosed WFRPC memorandum for additional information.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Northwest Florida Water Management District state that they have previously commented on this project through the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process. As the project details provided in the advance notification appear to be the same as the project details provided in the Environmental Screening Tool, both agencies request the FDOT refer to the previously provided ETDM No. 8167 comments for further information and resource concerns.

Mrs. Blair L. Martin, P.E.
August 1, 2008
Page 2 of 2

Based on the information contained in the advance notification and the enclosed state agency comments, the state has no objections to allocation of federal funds for the subject project and, therefore, the funding award is consistent with the Florida Coastal Management Program (FCMP). The applicant must, however, address the concerns identified by our reviewing agencies prior to project implementation. The state's continued concurrence with the project will be based, in part, on the adequate resolution of any issues identified during this and subsequent reviews. The state's final concurrence of the project's consistency with the FCMP will be determined during the environmental permitting stage.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the proposed project. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Ms. Lori Cox at (850) 245-2168.

Yours sincerely,

Sally B. Mann, Director
Office of Intergovernmental Programs

SBM/lec
Enclosures

cc: John Gallagher, WFRPC

Categories

Florida
Department of Environmental Protection
"More Protection, Less Process"

Project Information	
Project:	FL200806054266C
Comments Due:	07/14/2008
Letter Due:	08/04/2008
Description:	DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - ADVANCE NOTIFICATION - SR 123 PD&E STUDY, FROM SR 85 TO SR 85, FPID NO. 411102-1-22-01 - OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA. (ETDM NO. 8167)
Keywords:	DOT - SR 123 PD&E STUDY, FROM SR 85 TO SR 85 - OKALOOSA CO.
CFDA #:	20.205

Agency Comments:

WEST FLORIDA RPC - WEST FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

The WFRPC indicates that the Strategic Regional Policy Plan for West Florida recommends the protection of state or federally owned ecologically sensitive lands from land uses that would impair or destroy the important habitats and plant and animal species occurring on those lands. The proposed project area appears to meet the criteria of federally owned ecologically sensitive lands. As such, staff recommends that alternative options be explored. If permanent and temporary wetland impacts are planned, construction activities should not impair or reduce the flow of area surface waters. In addition, impacts or destruction of habitats associated with any listed species should be avoided.

OKALOOSA - OKALOOSA COUNTY

No Comments

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS - FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

The Department has identified this project as consistent with the local government comprehensive plan. However, according to West Florida Regional Planning Council (WFRPC) staff, this improvement project has received some resistance from the Air Force regarding perceived detrimental impacts associated with the improvement. Additionally, WFRPC staff has indicated that discussions have taken place regarding the potential of designated SR-123 as an evacuation route.

FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION - FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

NO COMMENT BY TERRY GILBERT ON 6/18/08.

STATE - FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE

No Comment/Consistent

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION - FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

DEP states they have previously commented on this project through the ETDM process. As the project details provided in the advance notification appear to be the same as the project details provided in the Environmental Screening Tool, both agencies request the FDOT refer to the previously provided ETDM No. 8167 comments for further information and resource concerns.

NORTHWEST FLORIDA WMD - NORTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Please see the NWFWMD's comments on ETDM # 8167, dated August 27, 2007, for further information.

For more information or to submit comments, please contact the Clearinghouse Office at:

3900 COMMONWEALTH BOULEVARD, M.S. 47
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-3000
TELEPHONE: (850) 245-2161
FAX: (850) 245-2190

Visit the Clearinghouse Home Page to query other projects.

West Florida Regional Planning Council

MEMORANDUM

To: Laura P. Milligan Environmental Consultant, Florida State Clearinghouse, FDEP, 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, Mail Station 47, Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000

From: Mary F. Gutierrez, Environmental Planner, West Florida Regional Planning Council

Date: Wednesday, July 02, 2008

Subject: 8167 State Road 123, Alternative #1 from SR85 South to SR85 North. RPC# O92-6-18-08

The proposal is associated with a connection/corridor between two parts of SR85 (N and S) to bypass the city of Niceville and allow for a direct route to and from Eglin Air Force Base. This access will also be used for the I-10 traffic to Crestview. The project is approximately 4.916 miles and includes widening an existing two-lane roadway to a four-lane facility.

Based on the information provided, please review the following in regards to the proposed project.

Land Management and Use

The Strategic Regional Policy Plan recommends the protection of state or federally owned ecologically sensitive lands from land used that would impair or destroy the important habitats and plant and animal species occurring on those lands. Based on the narrative and familiarity with the area, the proposed project meets the criteria of federally owned ecologically sensitive lands. Please explore alternative options.

Protection of the Region's Surface Water Resources:

Based on the narrative, construction-related permanent and temporary wetland impacts are anticipated for this project. All construction activities should not structurally impair or reduce the flow of the any rivers, creeks, tributaries, streams and surface waters located within or adjacent to the project site.

Protection of Endangered, Threatened, and Rare Species:

Impacts to or destruction of habitats associated with any endangered, threatened, or rare species located within or adjacent to the project site should be avoided.

P.O. Box 11399 • Pensacola, FL 32524-1399 • P: 850.332.7976 • 1.800.226.8914 • F: 850.637.1923
651 West 14th Street, Suite E • Panama City, FL 32401 • P: 850.769.4854 • F: 850.784.0456
www.wfrpc.org

07/15/2008 15:41 8506371932 WFRPC PAGE 03/03

0926-18-08

FLORIDA STATE CLEARINGHOUSE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT COORDINATION
ROUTING SHEET

SAI#: FL200806054266C DATE: 6/5/2008
COMMENTS DUE TO RPC: 7/7/2008

CFDA#: 20.205 COUNTY: OKALOOSA CITY:

☑ FEDERAL ASSISTANCE ☐ DIRECT FEDERAL ACTIVITY ☐ FEDERAL LICENSE OR PERMIT ☐ OCS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - ADVANCE NOTIFICATION - SR 123 PD&E STUDY, FROM SR 85 TO SR 85, FPID NO. 411102-1-22-01 - OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA. (ETDM NO. 8167)

ROUTING:	RPC	Local Governments
	WEST FLORIDA RPC	X OKALOOSA

IF YOU HAVE NO COMMENTS, PLEASE CHECK HERE AND RETURN FORM TO RPC: ✓ Christ K Campbell

ALL CONCERNS OR COMMENTS REGARDING THE ATTACHED PROJECT SHOULD BE SENT IN WRITING BY THE DUE DATE TO THE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL SHOWN BELOW. PLEASE REFER TO THE SAI # IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE:

Mr. John Gallagher
West Florida Regional Planning Council
P. O. Box 11399
Pensacola, FL 32524-1399

IMPORTANT: PLEASE DO NOT SEND COMMENTS DIRECTLY TO THE CLEARINGHOUSE!

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS REGARDING THE ATTACHED PROJECT OR THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION PROCESS, PLEASE CONTACT THE STATE CLEARINGHOUSE. IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS REGARDING THE FEDERAL CONSISTENCY REVIEW PROCESS, PLEASE CONTACT THE FLORIDA COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM. THE TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR BOTH PROGRAMS IS (850) 245-2161.

RECEIVED
JUL 10 2008

COUNTY: OKALOOSA

DATE: 6/5/2008
COMMENTS DUE DATE: 7/14/2008
CLEARANCE DUE DATE: 8/4/2008
SAI#: FL200806054266C

MESSAGE:

STATE AGENCIES	WATER MNGMNT. DISTRICTS	OPB POLICY UNIT	RPCS & LOC GOVS
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS	NORTHWEST FLORIDA WMD		
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION			
FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION			
X STATE			

The attached document requires a Coastal Zone Management Act/Florida Coastal Management Program consistency evaluation and is categorized as one of the following:

X Federal Assistance to State or Local Government (15 CFR 930, Subpart F). Agencies are required to evaluate the consistency of the activity.

Direct Federal Activity (15 CFR 930, Subpart C). Federal Agencies are required to furnish a consistency determination for the State's concurrence or objection.

_ Outer Continental Shelf Exploration, Development or Production Activities (15 CFR 930, Subpart E). Operators are required to provide a consistency certification for state concurrence/objection.

_ Federal Licensing or Permitting Activity (15 CFR 930, Subpart D). Such projects will only be evaluated for consistency when there is not an analogous state license or permit.

Project Description:

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - ADVANCE NOTIFICATION - SR 123 PD&E STUDY, FROM SR 85 TO SR 85, FPID NO. 411102-1-22-01 - OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA. (ETDM NO. 8167)

To: Florida State Clearinghouse

AGENCY CONTACT AND COORDINATOR (SCH)
3900 COMMONWEALTH BOULEVARD MS-47
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-3000
TELEPHONE: (850) 245-2161
FAX: (850) 245-2190

EO. 12372/NEPA

☐ No Comment
☐ Comment Attached
☐ Not Applicable

Federal Consistency

☐ No Comment/Consistent
☐ Consistent/Comments Attached
☐ Inconsistent/Comments Attached
☐ Not Applicable

From:

Division/Bureau: Historical Resources/Historic Preservation

Reviewer: Sherry Anderson Laura A. Kammerer, Deputy SHPO

Date: 6/12/08 6.16.2008

RECEIVED
JUN 19 2008
OIP / OLGA

RECEIVED
2008 JUN 12 A 11:12
BUREAU OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Charlie Crist
Governor

Jeff Kottkamp
Lt. Governor

Michael W. Sole
Secretary

May 1, 2008

Ms. Josey W. Walker
HDR Engineering, Inc.
25 West Cedar Street, Suite 200
Pensacola, Florida 32502-5945

Re: Turkey Creek and Toms Creek at State Road 123 Crossings
Section 27, Township 01 North, Range 23 West
Section 09, Township 01 South, Range 23 West

Dear Ms. Walker:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding sovereignty submerged lands at the above referenced sites.

Our records indicate that the submerged lands lying below the ordinary high water lines of Turkey Creek and Toms Creek at the subject sites are state owned. The records contain no easements for either subject crossing.

For this opinion we have relied only on records in our central repository. Additional records will be reviewed if provided.

Should you have any questions regarding this determination, please contact Robin Fink, Government Operations Consultant I, mail station 108 at the above address or by telephone at (850) 245-2788.

Sincerely,

for Terry E. Wilkinson, Chief
Bureau of Survey and Mapping
Division of State Lands

TEW/rf
Attachment: Maps
cc: DEP-SLERP-Northwest District
F:/Title/robin/2ndqtr2008/Okaloosa,Walker,HDR.doc

This Page intentionally blank.

This Page intentionally blank.

This Page intentionally blank.