

# LPGEPS

*Environmental & Permitting Services*

**NORTH HANCOCK ROAD  
LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE PERMIT  
ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT DOCUMENT  
(LPGEPS #3632-11)**

**Submitted to:**

**St. Johns River Water Management District**  
P.O. Box 1429  
Palatka, Florida 32178-1429

**Prepared For:**

**LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**  
437 Ardice Road  
Eustis, FL 32726

**Prepared By:**

**LPG Environmental & Permitting Services, Inc.**  
1174 Camp Avenue  
Mt. Dora, Florida 32757

December 2010

50126-4  
RECEIVED

JAN 27 2011

ALTAMONTE

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **2.0 SITE CHARACTERISTICS**

- 2.1 Land Uses and Vegetative Community Characterization
- 2.2 Listed Species Survey Methodology and Results
  - 2.2.1 Listed Flora
  - 2.2.2 Listed Fauna
- 2.3 Historical and Archeological Sites

### **3.0 JURISDICTIONAL WETLAND ANALYSIS**

#### **FIGURES**

- Figure 1: Location Map
- Figure 2A: Land Use Map –North
- Figure 2B: Land Use Map – South
- Figure 3: Wetland Location Map

#### **APPENDICES**

- Appendix A: Division of Historical Resources - Opinion Letter

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The North Hancock Road Project is a proposed road realignment of the existing two (2) lane paved Hancock Road. The project is located east of US Highway 27, west of the Ronald Reagan Turnpike and north of State Road (SR) 50, in Sections 8, 9, 16 and 17, Township 22 South, Range 26 East, in Lake County, Florida (Figure 1). No jurisdictional wetlands or surface waters are located within the project boundaries. No wetland impacts are proposed in association with this project. The following provides a characterization of site characteristics of the area that encompass the road realignment project.

## **2.0 SITE CHARACTERISTICS**

LPG Environmental & Permitting Services, Inc. (LPGEPS) visited the project corridor in April, May, and June 2009 to conduct listed species surveys and land use mapping, as well as in November 2010 to conduct a wetland delineation of a wetland adjacent to the realignment.

### **2.1 Land Uses and Vegetative Community Characterization**

The project corridor encompasses portions of existing paved roadways, North Hancock Road/Turkey Farms Road and Old Highway 50 and Hancock Road, at the north and south ends of the corridor, respectively. The remaining areas of the project corridor are characterized by a combination of agricultural, silvicultural and residential land uses, disturbed land, and an abandoned rail line. No wetlands are located within the project; however, a freshwater marsh is located east of a proposed spreader swale. The vegetative communities within the project boundaries were field reviewed in March, April and May 2009. The land cover types documented on-site were mapped utilizing the Florida Land Use Cover and Forms Classification System, Level III. A total of eleven (11) land use and cover types are located within the project boundaries and the surrounding area (Figures 2A and 2B). The following provides a detailed description of the land use and cover types identified.

#### **110 Residential, Low Density**

Portions of several residential properties are located within the central region of the project, as well as adjacent to the project. One (1) of the fixed single family residences and associated yard is located to the north of Jim Hunt Road. Although the residential structure is not located within the project corridor, the yard area associated with the residence is. This area is approximately four (4) feet below grade of the adjacent properties to the

north and west. The yard area associated with this property is primarily characterized by bare ground.

Another residence is located to the south of Jim Hunt Road. The residential structure, several accessory structures and a portion of the associated yard is located within the corridor. The yard immediately surrounding the residences consists of maintained grasses with ornamental plantings. The south of the property is characterized by dense unmaintained herbaceous vegetation including dog fennel (*Eupatorium* sp.). This property is completely enclosed by fencing.

There are several residential areas along the north of Jim Hunt Road whose yard areas are partially within the corridor. The final residential area within the project corridor abuts the property of the above described residence to the south. Although the residential structure associated with this property is not within the project corridor. This area is characterized by maintained grass. This property is separated from adjoining properties by a fence.

#### **179 Institutional Under Construction**

Lake County High School "BBB" is currently being constructed on a parcel to the east of the project corridor.

#### **180 Recreational**

A sports complex including several baseball fields is located to the south of the Reserve at Minneola, adjacent to the western boundary of the project corridor.

#### **190 Open Land**

Areas of open land are mapped throughout the project corridor. In the north area of the project corridor, the open land to the west of the proposed alignment is associated with vegetated roadside shoulders and a portion of a utility easement. The open land in the central region of the project corridor consists of maintained herbaceous vegetation and primarily surrounds residential lots. A retention pond is proposed in this region. Open land in the south region of the project corridor consists of vegetated roadside shoulders and an herbaceous area between the existing bicycle trail and Old Highway 50. A pond is also proposed in this region.

### **211 Improved Pasture**

The majority of the southern half of the project corridor is characterized by improved pasture consisting of bahia grass (*Paspalum notatum*) with scattered sandy patches, prickly pear (*Opuntia humifusa*) and lantana. Scattered clusters of oaks are located within the pastureland.

### **425 Temperate Hardwoods**

An area of oak forest, consisting of laurel oaks (*Quercus laurifolia*) is located south of Jim Hunt Road in the central region of the corridor. The herbaceous stratum of this area, which is located adjacent to a wetland, consists of broomsedge (*Andropogon* sp.) and meadowbeauty (*Rhexia* sp.). A spreader swale is proposed in this area.

### **432 Sand Live Oak**

A small area of sand live oak forest is located in the central region of the property adjacent to the abandoned rail line. The canopy of this area is moderately dense and the forest sub-canopy is dense with sand live oak (*Quercus geminata*) as the dominant species. Leaf litter dominates the understory and there are limited sandy patches within this area.

### **441 Coniferous Plantations**

Planted pine is located along the east and west boundaries of the corridor in the north region of the project corridor and within a portion of the western extension of the south region of the project corridor. These areas are characterized by uniform rows of pines, with a dense understory of pine needles. The canopy in these areas is moderate to dense, respectively. The understory vegetation in these areas is limited due to the canopy closure.

### **641 Freshwater Marsh**

An herbaceous marsh consisting of meadowbeauty, yelloweyed grass (*Xyris* sp.), broomsedge, maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*), blackberry (*Rubus* sp.), goldenrod (*Solidago fistulosa*), pennywort (*Hydrocotyle umbellata*), asian cornwort (*Centella asiatica*) and greenbriar (*Smilax* sp.) is located to the east of the central region of the project corridor.

### **740 Disturbed Land**

Two (2) fallow areas that were cleared and graded for development are located in the northern half of the project corridor. These areas are

separated by an abandoned rail line. Roads are evident within these areas; however, no development (construction of residences) of the lots has occurred. Both of these areas are characterized by open sand with patches of floral species typically associated with disturbed areas including camphor weed (*Heterotheca subaxillaris*), hairy indigo (*Indigofera hirsuta*) and Virginia pepperweed (*Lepidum virginicum*).

The project corridor bisects an existing retention area located within the northern area of disturbed land. Additionally, a row of pines associated with this area is located within the project corridor. A small retention pond is located within this land cover type.

#### **814 Roads and Highways**

Portions of two (2) existing improved roadways, North Hancock Road and Old Highway 50) and associated right-of ways are located in the northern region and southern region of the project corridor, respectively. Maintained roadside swales are associated with both of these roadways. Additionally, two (2) roads associated with the fallow development areas are located in the central region of the corridor. This land cover types also includes portions of the multi-use trail adjacent to the existing roads in the south region of the project corridor.

### **2.2 Listed Species Survey Methodology and Results**

Pursuant to the St. John's River Water Management Districts Environmental Resource Permit Applicant's Handbook, Section 12.2.7(b), the project corridor was qualitatively surveyed for the occurrence, and potential for occurrence of wetland and water dependant species listed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), or the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) based on known habitat preference and geographical distribution. Pedestrian and vehicular transects were utilized for a qualitative survey for any listed flora and fauna species utilizing the project corridor. The following provides the results of this survey:

#### **2.2.1 Listed Flora**

No listed plant species were observed during the field assessment on the project corridor. Based on known geographic distribution and habitat preference, due to the land cover types within and surrounding the project corridor, the potential for listed floral species is deemed low. Additionally, there are no State or federal developmental constraints are associated with floral species on

privately owned lands unless during the review of a Development of Regional Impact project.

### 2.2.2 Listed Fauna

No listed water dependent species were identified within the project corridor. As no wetlands are located within the project corridor, there is a very low likelihood of any wetland dependent species utilizing the project corridor. A freshwater marsh was identified adjacent to the central region of the project; however, no listed water dependent species were observed in this area.

#### Wading Birds

A potential exists for wading birds, including the limpkin (*Aramus guarauna*), little blue heron (*Egretta caerulea*), snowy egret (*Egretta thula*), tricolored heron (*Egretta tricolor*), white ibis (*Eudocimus albus*), Florida sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis pratensis*), and wood stork (*Mycteria americana*), to utilize the adjacent offsite wetland for foraging and/or nesting. All of these species are listed by the FFWCC as SSC, with the exception of the American sandhill crane, which is listed as a “Threatened” species by the FFWCC and the wood stork, which is listed as an “Endangered” species by the FFWCC and the USFWS.

There are no wetland impacts associated with the project. Additionally, the upland buffer surrounding the wetland will not be impacted as a result of this project. The upland buffer provides sufficient herbaceous vegetation for foraging, especially for juvenile wading birds. No impacts to wading bird foraging habitat will occur, thus no direct impacts will be associated with these species. As such, no further actions are required in association to these species.

Furthermore, according to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission’s online Florida’s Waterbird Colony Locator (<http://www.myfwc.com/waders>; 2003), there is no record of wading bird colonies for the section, township and range of the project.

#### American Bald Eagle

The bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) is protected by the USFWS under authority of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. There are several areas of

planted pine located adjacent to the project and Grassy Lake is located approximately 1 mile to the west-north west of the project and Lake Minneola is located less than two (2) miles from the project. Due to the presence of large pines adjacent to the project and the proximity several lakes in the surrounding area, a search of the current FWC Eagle Nest Locator database was conducted to determine if nests have previously been recorded onsite or on adjacent properties. According to the FWC records, no bald eagle nests are known to be located within the project corridor. The closest eagle nest (LA-026) is located more than one (1) mile from the property. Additionally, no eagles or eagle nests have been observed on or adjacent to the proposed project corridor. As such, there appear to be no constraints associated with this species.

Based on habitat preference, known geographic distribution, the habitat types situated onsite, and the past disturbance to the property, the likelihood of occurrence of additional listed water dependent wildlife species is considered low.

## **2.6 Historical and Archaeological Sites**

A request for a determination as to whether a formal historical and archaeological survey will be required for this project was submitted to the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources (DHR) on June 3, 2009. The July 30, 2009 response from DHR (Appendix A) states that "A review of the Florida Master Site File and our records indicates that no significant archaeological or historical resources are recorded within the parcel. Furthermore, due to the location and/or nature of the project, it is unlikely that any such site will be affected."

## **3.0 JURISDICTIONAL WETLAND ANALYSIS**

No jurisdictional wetlands are located within the proposed project corridor. One (1) freshwater marsh is located to the east of the central region of the corridor.

For the purpose of the subject application submittal, the boundary of this adjacent wetland has been identified pursuant to Chapter 62-340 of the Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) and United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) jurisdictional criteria provided within the 1987 Corps of Engineers Manual, and is illustrated on Figure 3. This adjacent jurisdictional wetland was field delineated by LPGEPS staff scientists and field surveyed by a registered surveyor. This wetland appears to be isolated and does not appear to be jurisdictional to the ACOE.



No direct or indirect impacts to the identified wetland are proposed in association with the project. There will be no secondary or cumulative impacts as a result of the proposed project.

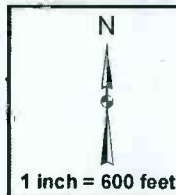
**FIGURES**

Source: One Foot Natural Color Orthophotos was obtained from Lake County GIS in the form of MrSid format. Images origin: St. Johns River Water Management District. Date of Photography: January and February 2009.  
 Back Drop to Project boundary represents the 30 x 60 Minute Quadrangle sheet as originally produced by the U.S. Geological Survey. Image was obtained from Florida Department of Environmental Protection - LABINS in the form of a Digital Raster Graphics File. Source Scale: 1 Inch equals 8,333 feet (1:100,000).



North Hancock Road  
 Lake County, Florida

Figure 1  
 Location Map



**LPGEPS**

Environmental & Permitting Services  
 1174 Camp Avenue, Mount Dora, FL 32757  
 Phone: (800) 801-LPG1, (352) 383-1444  
 Fax: (352) 383-3877  
 www.lpgenvironmental.com

Sections 8, 9, 16 & 17,  
Township 22 South, Range 26 East

Source: Land Use and Land Cover information obtained onsite visit by a LPG Environmental Biologist. The Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System Handbook, January 1999, was utilized to determine the specific land use classifications.



- Legend**
- Project Corridor
  - Stormwater Retention Features
  - Land Use**
  - 110--Residential, Low Density
  - 179--Instituional Under Construction
  - 180--Recreational
  - 190--Open Land
  - 211--Improved Pastures
  - 425--Temperate Hardwoods
  - 432--Sand Live Oak
  - 441--Coniferous Plantations
  - 641--Freshwater Marshes
  - 740--Disturbed Land
  - 814--Roads and Highways

North Hancock Road  
Lake County, Florida

Figure 2A  
Land Use Map - North

N  
1 inch = 300 feet

**LPGEPS**  
Environmental & Permitting Services  
1174 Camp Avenue, Mount Dora, FL 32757  
Phone: (800) 801-LPG1, (352) 383-1444  
Fax: (352) 383-3877  
www.lpgenvironmental.com

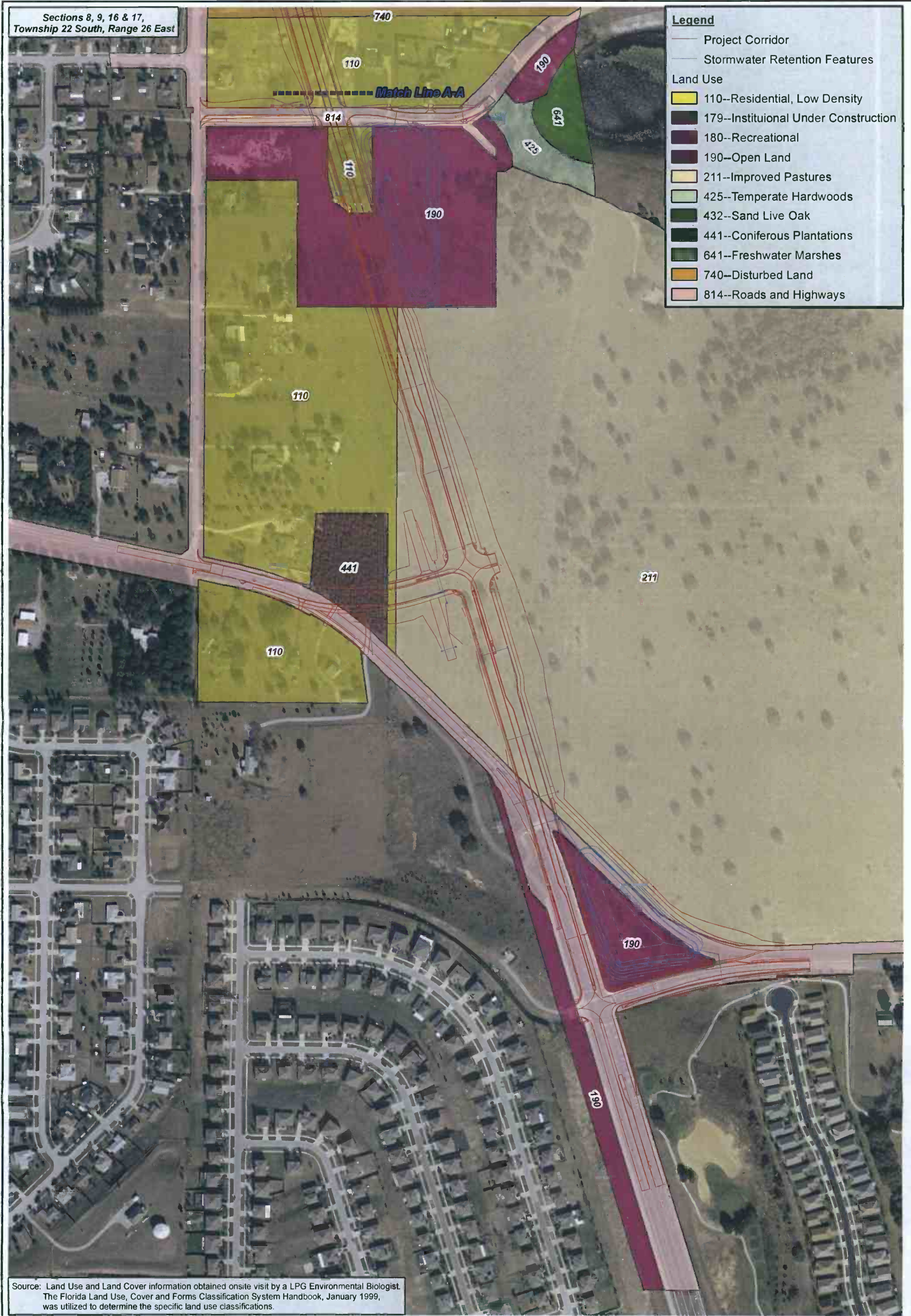
Sections 8, 9, 16 & 17,  
Township 22 South, Range 26 East

**Legend**

- Project Corridor
- Stormwater Retention Features

**Land Use**

- 110--Residential, Low Density
- 179--Instiutional Under Construction
- 180--Recreational
- 190--Open Land
- 211--Improved Pastures
- 425--Temperate Hardwoods
- 432--Sand Live Oak
- 441--Coniferous Plantations
- 641--Freshwater Marshes
- 740--Disturbed Land
- 814--Roads and Highways



Source: Land Use and Land Cover information obtained onsite visit by a LPG Environmental Biologist. The Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System Handbook, January 1999, was utilized to determine the specific land use classifications.

**North Hancock Road**  
**Lake County, Florida**

**Figure 2B**

**Land Use Map - South**

N

1 inch = 300 feet

**LPGEPS**

Environmental & Permitting Services

1174 Camp Avenue, Mount Dora, FL 32757

Phone: (800) 801-LPG1, (352) 383-1444

Fax: (352) 383-3877

www.lpgenvironmental.com

Source: Land Use and Land Cover information obtained onsite visit by a LPG Environmental Biologist. The Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System Handbook, January 1999, was utilized to determine the specific land use classifications.



**Legend**

- Project Corridor
- Stormwater Retention Features
- Wetland Line
- - - 25' Undisturbed Buffer

North Hancock Road  
Lake County, Florida

Figure 3.

Wetland Location Map



1 inch = 100 feet

**LPGEPS**

Environmental & Permitting Services  
1174 Camp Avenue, Mount Dora, FL 32757  
Phone: (800) 801-LPG1, (352) 383-1444  
Fax: (352) 383-3877  
[www.lpgenvironmental.com](http://www.lpgenvironmental.com)

**APPENDIX A**



3632-11  
103

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
**Kurt S. Browning**  
Secretary of State  
DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Lisa Fairchild  
LPG Environmental & Permitting Services, Inc.  
1174 Camp Avenue  
Mount Dora, Florida 32757

July 30, 2009

RE: DHR Project File Number: 2009-3691/ Received by DHR: June 5, 2009  
LPGEPS No.: 3632-11  
Project Name: North Hancock Road  
Location: Sections 8, 9, 16, 17, Township 22S, Range 26E  
Lake County, Florida

Dear Ms. Fairchild:

Our office received and reviewed the referenced project in accordance with Chapters 267 and 373, *Florida Statutes*, Florida's Coastal Management Program, and implementing state regulations, for possible impact to historic properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the *National Register of Historic Places* (NRHP), or otherwise of historical, architectural or archaeological value. The State Historic Preservation Officer is to advise and assist state and federal agencies when identifying historic properties, assessing effects upon them, and considering alternatives to avoid or minimize adverse effects.

A review of the Florida Master Site File and our records indicates that no significant archaeological or historical resources are recorded within the parcel. Furthermore, due to the location and/or nature of the project, it is unlikely that any such site will be affected.

For any questions concerning our comments, please contact Stacey Cahan, Historic Sites Specialist, by electronic mail at [dscahan@dos.state.fl.us](mailto:dscahan@dos.state.fl.us), or by phone at (850) 245-6333. We appreciate your continued interest in protecting Florida's historic properties.

Sincerely,

Laura A. Kammerer  
Historic Preservationist Supervisor  
Compliance Review Section  
Bureau of Historic Preservation

RECEIVED IN  
ALTAMONTE SPRINGS  
JAN 27 2011  
50126-4  
REGULATORY  
INFORMATION MGT.

AUG 03 2009

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