

8/31/06

DT5-011-01

SR 40 PD&E Study – Wildlife Crossings Meeting No. 2 Summary

Mtg. Date: August 31, 2006
Time: 2:00 pm
Location: Inwood Office - Oviedo
Project: SR 40 PD&E Study
From Silver Springs to US 17 in Marion, Lake and Volusia Counties

Attendees:

Bill Walsh – FDOT	Tom Roberts – EMS
Steve Tonjes – FDOT	Ray Emmett – EMS
Letitia Neal – FDOT	Carrie Sekerak – USFS
Brian Stanger – FDOT	Walt McCown – FWC
Dan Eisman - FDOT	Dennis David – FWC
Alex Hull – Inwood	Todd Mecklenborg – FWS (via phone)
David Dangel – Inwood	Terry Gilbert – URS/FWC (via phone)

A meeting was held with the attendees listed above to continue discussions on how to determine the location, type, length, etc. for potential wildlife crossing/connectivity structures along SR 40 through the project limits. Alex began the meeting with an overview of a table that was distributed which correlated the names of the potential wildlife crossing locations identified by the SR 40 Task Force, the FWC memo (14 locations) and from Walt McCown's bear study (6 locations). In addition, a graphic was on display that included the potential wildlife crossing locations identified in the second concept plan by the SR 40 Task Force.

Alex then gave an overview of the potential roadway improvements that are likely to be justified along SR 40. The potential improvements include four-laning from the end of the four laning at Silver Springs to SE 183rd Avenue (Levy Hammock Road), intersection improvements at SR 19 and US 17 and potential 3-laning in the Astor Volusia areas. Alex also indicated that, although no decisions have been made by upper management within FDOT, it appears that there will need to be mitigation for four-lane widening, as well as mitigation for secondary and cumulative impacts along other areas of SR 40. Mitigation could include wildlife crossings and/or land acquisition. Carrie pointed out that wetland mitigation credit could be gained by reconnecting historic wetlands that were divided by SR 40. Carrie also pointed out that the forest service has fisheries biologists who can assist the study team with identification of these potential sites.

Next, Tom Roberts discussed the wildlife crossings scoring matrix that EMS developed and has used on other FDOT projects. He will distribute the scoring matrix for everyone to review to ensure that all issues that need to be considered are included.

The types of wildlife crossings/eco-passages were discussed. Smaller mammals and amphibians need to be considered because the roadway really tends to isolate them. In

addition, the forest service will look for FDOT to commit to long term monitoring and new technologies for the wildlife crossings. It was pointed out that new technologies will be considered prior to construction of any improvements during the re-evaluations that will be required.

There was general discussion on how to proceed with the determination of where, type and number of wildlife crossings along SR 40. Terry Gilbert suggested that the group start with the 14 locations that were identified in the FWC memo prepared during the SR 40 Task Force Design Subcommittee work. These locations considered habitat types and field reviews.

Next, the group discussed the road kill survey. Letitia asked for clarification of what the FWC is looking for in response to their ETDM comments related to road kill surveys. Tom Roberts stated that EMS is only scoped to conduct two "snapshot" surveys for this study. After discussion on the possibility of shifting hours within the project budget, it was agreed that EMS will redistribute their outline of the studies that they are planning to do to the appropriate environmental agencies to get a better idea of the road kill surveys that will be required. There were no responses received when this study outline was originally distributed.

Fencing was then discussed. Carrie discussed how fencing will affect the ability to manage fires and hunting access. The group also discussed the need for fencing at wildlife crossing locations. Letitia pointed out that installation of fencing in the forest may constitute a Section 4(f) impact. Dennis requested that the forest service provide some guidance in regards to their view on fencing.

Alex then brought the group back in to focus and re-stated the mission of the group is to identify the number, location and type (what they look like) of wildlife crossing features that will be needed to mitigate for the four-laning of SR 40 from west of SR 326 to 183rd Avenue. There was additional input related to the type of species/habitat that each location will serve and the pre-post studies that will need to be done.

Letitia indicated that it is important to know what the specific right-of-way impacts of the proposed widening will be before mitigation for these impacts can be discussed. Alex stated that this information is available and that Inwood will provide the anticipated impacts associated with a 200-foot wide roadway footprint.

On a side note, Carrie indicated that some of the Task Force crossing locations were selected due to bear kills and that these may be justified as a safety improvement with a different funding source.

Tom Roberts indicated that EMS will put together a package of information that will include the wildlife crossing location scoring sheets, road kill data collected to date, the results of other studies that have been conducted during the SR 40 PD&E Study to date and a list of focal species and their habitat types along SR 40. Inwood will include the anticipated right-of-way impacts related to the four-laning of SR 40 from the current end of the four laning to SE 183rd

Avenue as well.

The group will meet again at 9:00 am on September 14, 2006 at the Lake George Ranger Station and will conduct a field trip to review the 14 FWC crossing locations.

Meeting Adjourned at approximately 4:00 pm.

cc: File, All Attendees (via e-mail)

Note: The above reflects the writer's understanding of the contents of the meeting. If any misinterpretations or inaccuracies are included, please contact David Dangel at (407) 971-8850 as soon as possible for resolution and revisions if necessary.