



## MEETING SUMMARY

Date: January 10, 2007 - 1:00 PM

Re: SR 40 PD&E Study  
Project Advisory Group – Environmental Subcommittee Meeting No. 2

Attendees: See sign-in sheet

Alex Hull, the consultant Project Manager, began the meeting with introductions. Alex then gave a brief overview of the build alternative limits.

Steve Tonjes, FDOT Environmental Scientist for the project, returned to the discussion in the previous Design Subcommittees meeting in regards to the roadway lighting that will be included as part of the upcoming SR 19 intersection improvement project. He indicated that the lighting will be low level lighting that will be shielded from the forest and directed to the roadway. He confirmed that he will provide Keith Schue of the Nature Conservancy with more information on the proposed lighting.

Next, Alex discussed the series of meetings that were held with a working group of biologists which led up to the draft recommendations for the wildlife crossings. Alex mentioned that there is a meeting in a few weeks with the State Forest to talk about additional crossings. Moreover, he explained that EMS and FFWCC did separate analyses for ranking wildlife crossings and then collaborated on the recommendations. Alex stated that the SR 40 Task Force's recommendations were taken into consideration as well.

Alex gave an overview of the location, length and fencing associated with each wildlife crossing. There was a general discussion on fencing distances. Steve explained that they are shooting for one half a mile of fencing in each direction. Charles Lee of Audubon recommended that fencing that runs away from, instead of parallel to, the road to attempt to funnel wildlife to the crossings. Keith commented that they may want to consider a gate at the entrance to Ward Park similar to the gate at Rock Springs Run. He added that the fence needs to tie into the structure to close any gaps and expressed a concern for a lack of openings over a long distance.

There was a group discussion on environmental issues associated with the recommended wildlife crossings. Tony Miller with SJRWMD suggested that there be a list of all of the species who will be using the crossings. Ray Emmet of EMS mentioned that they are in the process of doing additional road kill studies to help in this effort. Keith commented that analysis should be done on whether the crossings will hinder or enhance wildlife movement and how the entire pattern of movement/predation will be changed. He further stated that the long, elevated sections of the Wekiva Parkway design is an innovative approach that should be considered for SR 40.

Greg Slay of the Ocala/Marion TPO asked if there are long term studies on SR 40 that will be conducted after the PD&E Study since the project will not be built for a long time. There was group discussion on the project schedule. Alex explained that a reevaluation will be done prior to the design phase of the project if the phase is a long way out from the PD&E Study. Steve mentioned that it would be worthwhile to have a formal recommendation from the PAG to support the need to conduct additional research and long term studies on the project.

Next, the E and F crossing locations were discussed by the group. Keith commented on not giving up on the crossing in location E because there is potential for a large amount of land purchase to the south. He also indicated that a significant elevated structure needs to be considered at the F location. Keith handed out a graphic that visually compared location F to a span in the Weikiva Parkway project. He commented that both locations are similar in regards to the connectivity of the forest and stated that the wildlife crossings should be similar.

Charles added that the proposed crossings in the SR 40 project fall significantly short of what is needed. He requested a written report from the group that put the SR 40 wildlife crossing recommendations together in order to understand the qualitative reasoning behind the recommendations. He questioned the process of how the decisions were made and the validity of the recommendations. Alex agreed to give Charles the documentation he requested. Charles commented that there needs to be significantly longer bridging, usage of the locations and lengths recommended by the Task Force. He also stated that due to break points in the fencing, funnel fencing and end treatments to prevent animals from going around the fence into harms way should be considered.

Steve read the formal recommendation to do additional research to the group. The recommendation is as follows; The FDOT will support research and utilize the best available information to reevaluate the locations, the designs and the effectiveness of wildlife crossing structures and other mitigation measures at each major project phase.

Tony commented that there needs to be more research to base to wildlife recommendations on. Vickie Sharpe of FDOT mentioned that the state of Florida has more wildlife crossings than any other state and that the wildlife crossing recommendations are based on the best information available.

The meeting concluded at 2:50 pm.

*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 (407) 971-8850** as soon as possible for resolution and revisions if necessary.*



# Sign-In Sheet

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David Dangel			
Alex Hull			



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