

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Project Title: Okaloacoochee Slough Wildlife Management Area Road Widening 2021-2022

Project Manager: Beth Morford (561) 722-2188

1. SITE LOCATION

1.1 Okaloacoochee Slough (OKS) WMA is located in Hendry County. This project will occur along Otter Grade and Spoonbill Pass (Figure 1).

2. GENERAL SCOPE OF WORK

2.1 Contractor will be responsible for providing all labor, services, equipment, tools, materials, mobilization/demobilizations costs, permits and insurance necessary to complete the work.

2.2 Contractor shall use every precaution necessary to prevent pollution of water resources (including ground water) by fuel, oils, chemicals or other harmful materials.

2.3 Equipment shall be thoroughly cleaned of all vegetative debris before entering or re-entering the area to reduce the spread of invasive exotic vegetation. The Commission reserves the right to inspect equipment prior to its use on the area.

2.4 Contractor shall remove all extraneous materials and litter associated with the construction from the area.

2.5 Should any historical or cultural artifacts be uncovered during construction activities; the Contractor shall immediately halt construction within that area and notify the Project Manager.

2.6 Any damage to existing state or county property (i.e. roads, culverts, low water crossing, fences, gates, signs trees, or other natural resources) caused by the Contractor and not within the scope of the project work will be the responsibility of the contractor to remedy. Contractor shall be responsible for the conduct of hired personnel while within the project area.

2.7 All construction activities shall be scheduled with the Commission's Project Manager to ensure access to the site and share information about hunting, work projects, and other activities that may be taking place on the area.

2.7.1 No work allowed during quota hunts

2.7.2 Roads must remain open to public driving during quota hunts.

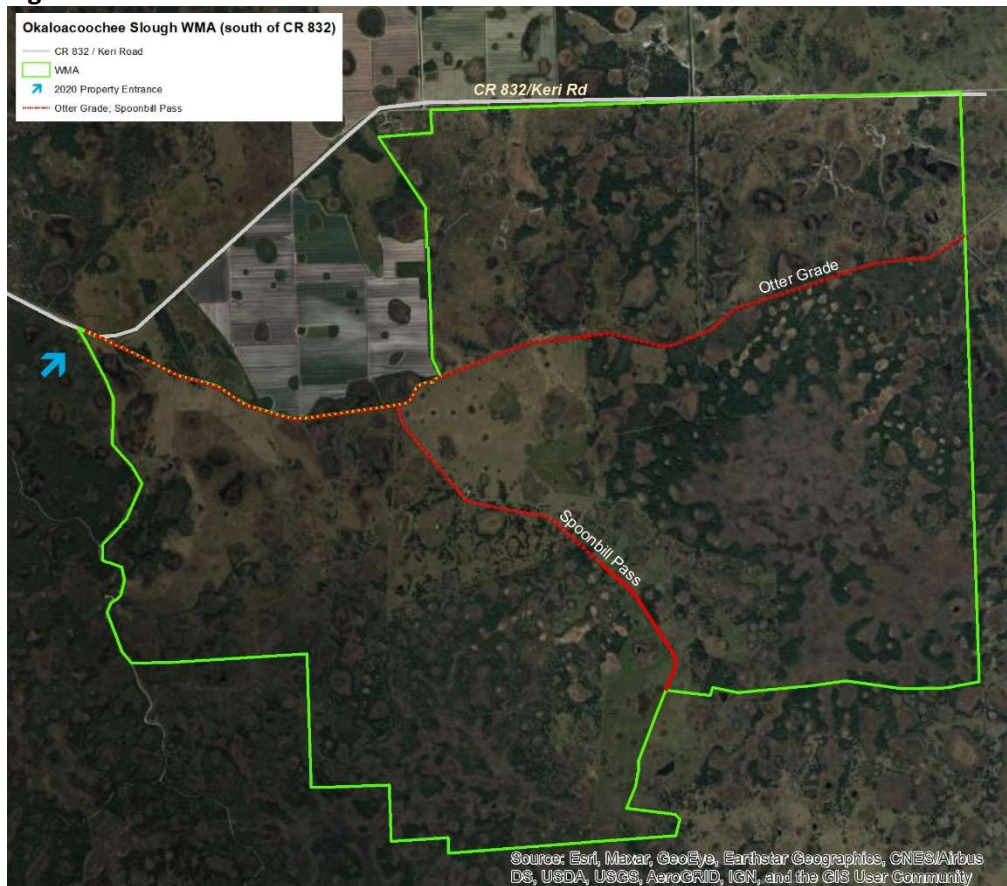
3. PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

3.1 Figure 1 provides a detailed location of roads to be repaired and widened to support safe, public access on this portion of the WMA. Otter Grade and Spoonbill Pass total approximately 12 miles of unimproved roads that average 8 feet wide. This project will widen the roads to 12 feet to bring them into safe and suitable width for public use by regular 2-wheel drive vehicles. The project includes widening roads to 12 feet, filling pot holes, scraping organics from the roadway footprint, capping (where necessary), spreading and grading road fill material leaving a 4-6% crown, and compact rolling.

3.2 Every effort shall be made by the contractor to avoid damage to native vegetation/wildlife.

3.3 The contractor shall be responsible for the legal disposal of all debris and materials related to this job.

Figure 1. Site location and work detail.





FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

RON DESANTIS
Governor

LAUREL M. LEE
Secretary of State

Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
620 S. Meridian Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

October 20, 2021

RE: DHR Project File No.: 2021-6033 Received by DHR: October 6, 2021
Project: *Okaloacoochee Slough WMA - Road Widening*
County: Hendry

To Whom It May Concern:

Our office reviewed the referenced project in accordance with Chapter 267, *Florida Statutes*, and implementing state regulations, for possible effects on historic properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the *National Register of Historic Places*, or otherwise of historical, architectural or archaeological value.

It is the opinion of this office that the proposed project is unlikely to affect historic properties. However, unexpected finds may occur during ground disturbing activities, therefore we request that the following special condition regarding inadvertent discoveries be followed:

- If prehistoric or historic artifacts, such as pottery or ceramics, projectile points, dugout canoes, metal implements, historic building materials, or any other physical remains that could be associated with Native American, early European, or American settlement are encountered at any time within the project site area, the permitted project shall cease all activities involving subsurface disturbance in the vicinity of the discovery. The applicant shall contact the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Compliance and Review Section at (850)-245-6333. Project activities shall not resume without verbal and/or written authorization. In the event that unmarked human remains are encountered during permitted activities, all work shall stop immediately and the proper authorities notified in accordance with Section 872.05, *Florida Statutes*.

If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Tobias, Historic Sites Specialist, by email at Jennifer.Tobias@dos.myflorida.com.

Sincerely,

For
Timothy A. Parsons, Ph.D.
Director, Division of Historical Resources
& State Historic Preservation Officer

From: Daniel Hipes <dhipes@fnai.fsu.edu>
Sent: Thursday, October 21, 2021 1:34 PM
To: Haase, Dylan
Subject: RE: Interim Management Request - OK Slough

[EXTERNAL SENDER] Use Caution opening links or attachments

Hi Dylan: Sorry for the delay in response.

We have reviewed the information provided describing the widening of Otter Grade and Spoonbill Pass roads. There are no records in the FNAI database in the footprint of the project. There are old records for wading birds in the vicinity of the roads, but the project is not expected to be detrimental to the foraging areas and rookeries that may still be present. There are no other resources of concern in the project area.

Dan Hipes, Director
Florida Natural Areas Inventory
1018 Thomasville Rd. 200-C
Tallahassee, FL 32303
850-224-8207 x213
850-509-1857 (cell)

[FNAI – Science for Conservation](#)

[Florida Resources and Environmental Analysis Center](#) at [Florida State University](#)

From: Haase, Dylan <Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 20, 2021 8:06 AM
To: Daniel Hipes <dhipes@fnai.fsu.edu>
Subject: RE: Interim Management Request - OK Slough

Good Morning Dan,

Just reaching out to follow up on the below and attached Interim Management Request. I am sure this is a busy time of year for you guys, however if I can provide any additional information to assist in the review please let me know.

I appreciate your help!

Dylan (Imlah) Haase, AICP
Senior Conservation Planner
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
620 S. Meridian Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
Phone: 850.487.9102
Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com

Please note that Florida has a broad public records law (Chapter 119, Florida Statutes). Most written communications to or from state employees are public records obtainable by the public upon request. Emails sent to me at this email address may be considered public and will only be withheld from disclosure if deemed confidential pursuant to the laws of the State of Florida.

From: Haase, Dylan
Sent: Wednesday, October 6, 2021 7:42 AM
To: Daniel Hipes <dhipes@fnai.fsu.edu>
Subject: Interim Management Request - OK Slough

Good Morning Dan,

Hope all is well! Attached for your review is an interim management request for the repair and widening of approximately 12 miles of roads on the new additions to the Okaloacoochee Slough WMA. These roads are in need of repair and improved access for visitors. Please see attached for more details on the project. Once we receive all agency approvals, this will be going to ARC for final approval. Please let me know if you need any further information for your review and approval.

I sincerely appreciate your assistance.

Hope you have a wonderful day,

Dylan (Imlah) Haase, AICP
Senior Conservation Planner
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
620 S. Meridian Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
Phone: 850.487.9102
Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com

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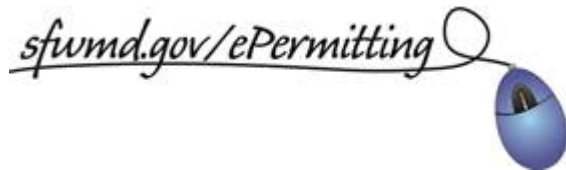
From: Layman, Laura <llyman@sfwmd.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 8:32 AM
To: Haase, Dylan; Hoffert, Angelica
Subject: RE: Interim Management Request; Okaloacoochee Slough Road Widening Project

[EXTERNAL SENDER] Use Caution opening links or attachments

Good morning Dylan- thanks for the clarification, that helps a lot. I would say that for now, if this is a needed improvement at the WMA, then you have our concurrence. However, I do believe that an ERP permit and wetland mitigation will most likely be needed, in addition to whatever the stormwater requirements may be. We can discuss that further in our call, but now I understand that the permit application would come in after ARC approval.

Will this email suffice for your needs? We don't typically send letters of approval for a project; since we are in the regulation department, we just issue permits, if that makes sense.

Thanks,
Laura Layman
Environmental Section Leader
Environmental Resource Permitting
Fort Myers Service Center
South Florida Water Management District
239-338-2929 ext. 7725



NOTE:

While the District supports that it is commonplace and convenient to collaborate via email during the pre-application/application process, Permit Applications and Responses to a Request for Additional Information (RAI) submitted via email are not an official submittal (Section 4.4 of Environmental Resource Permit Applicant's Handbook Volume I). For timely and efficient processing of permit applications and RAI responses, please submit online using ePermitting (link above).

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From: Haase, Dylan <Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 8:09 AM
To: Layman, Laura <llyman@sfwmd.gov>; Hoffert, Angelica <ahoffert@sfwmd.gov>
Subject: RE: Interim Management Request; Okaloacoochee Slough Road Widening Project

[\[Please remember, this is an external email\]](#)

Good Morning Laura,

Thank you for sending along this information. So this land is owned by the State of Florida, it was purchased from Alico just last year. The FWC is managing it as a WMA.

With other Water Management Districts, we do not normally go through the permitting process at this stage. We are at the stage of interim management guideline approval. This is an approval process set up by the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) in which we seek approval to proceed. Often this process is exempt from permitting, however if after ARC approval, if any permits are then required, at that stage is when our staff usually pursue that process. Attached are the interim management guidelines for your reference. A virtual meeting would be great to discuss further, as I know every Water Management District has their own process on how to proceed.

I sincerely appreciate your time and assistance. Please let me know if there are any day and time preferences for the virtual meeting.

Thanks!

Dylan (Imlah) Haase, AICP
Senior Conservation Planner
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
620 S. Meridian Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
Phone: 850.487.9102
Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com

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From: Layman, Laura <llayman@sfwmd.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 14, 2022 4:18 PM
To: Haase, Dylan <Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com>; Hoffert, Angelica <ahoffert@sfwmd.gov>
Subject: RE: Interim Management Request; Okaloacoochee Slough Road Widening Project
Importance: High

[EXTERNAL SENDER] Use Caution opening links or attachments

Hi Dylan- I'm SO SORRY it took so long to get back with you. I think we are going to need a meeting on this project. Do you have a consultant on contract that can assist you with any required permitting? To aid in our discussion, we need to see a sketch of the proposed road improvements (typical plan view and cross-section), proposed road profile and type of fill materials to be used, and if any wetlands or other surface waters (lakes, ditches, swales) will be impacted and where (and acreage). It's likely that this project will need an Environmental Resource Permit.

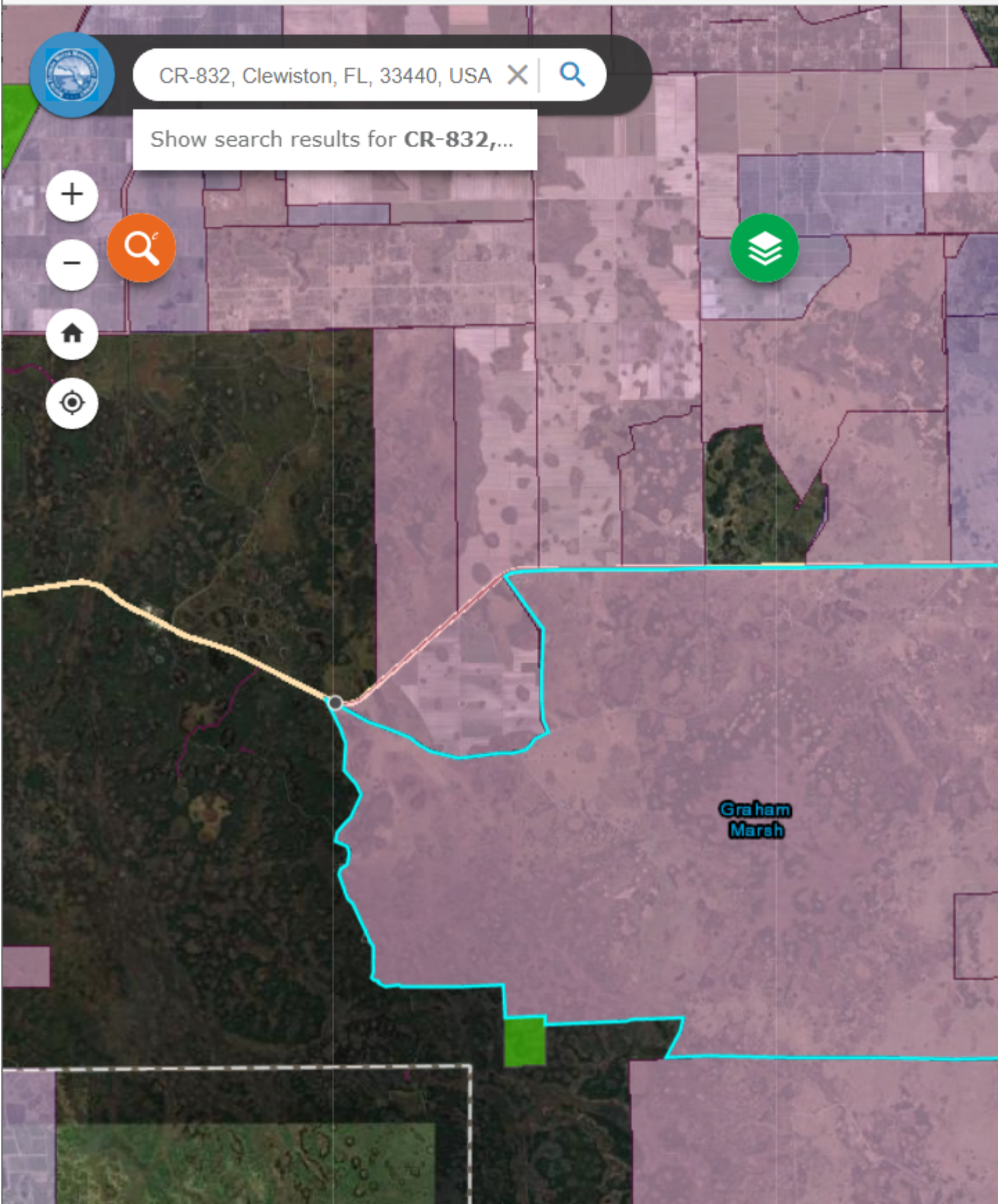
I'm assuming that all of the proposed works will be on property owned by the State of Florida, correct? It appears that this project is outside of the boundary of the Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest. I am not very familiar with this site; does FWC manage it as a Wildlife Management Area?

We at the South Florida Water Management District have an overall permit for this property called the Alico NE-PES, for water retention on the site. Are you familiar with this project? The Permit Number is 26-01213-P and can be found on our ePermitting website, at the link below my contact information. Instructions on how to look up permit information on our website are also attached. See screen shot below as well (our permit covers the area outlined in blue). Wetlands information for the overall property can be found in this permit.

I'm not sure if your project could be a modification of this existing permit, or if it needs a separate permit. I will have to consult with the staff who issued this existing permit, and also try to have them in our meeting.

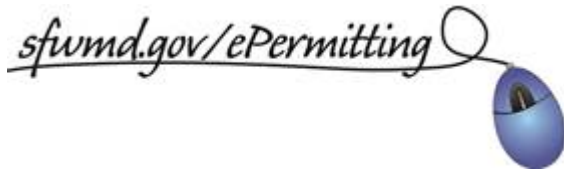
Let us know when you are available to meet, and we can set up a virtual meeting to discuss further.

I am copying Angelica in case she has any other comments or information to add.



Thanks,

Laura Layman
Environmental Section Leader
Environmental Resource Permitting
Fort Myers Service Center
South Florida Water Management District
239-338-2929 ext. 7725



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From: Haase, Dylan <Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 5, 2022 1:14 PM
To: Hoffert, Angelica <ahoffert@sfwmd.gov>; Layman, Laura <llayman@sfwmd.gov>
Subject: RE: Interim Management Request

[Please remember, this is an external email]

Good Afternoon,

I hope you both had a lovely holiday and happy new year! I wanted to check in and follow up on the status of the attached interim management request for the Okaloacoochee Slough WMA? We are hoping to begin this project very soon but we are unable to proceed without a letter from the SFWMD approving the project. If you can please let me know if any further information or action on our part is required in order to receive approval to proceed.

I sincerely appreciate your assistance.

Dylan (Imlah) Haase, AICP
Senior Conservation Planner
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
620 S. Meridian Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
Phone: 850.487.9102
Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com

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From: Haase, Dylan
Sent: Monday, December 6, 2021 8:00 AM
To: Hoffert, Angelica <ahoffert@sfwmd.gov>; Layman, Laura <llayman@sfwmd.gov>
Subject: RE: Interim Management Request

Good Morning,

I just wanted to send a friendly follow up on the interim management request for the Okaloacoochee Slough WMA. If you need any further information for your approval please let me know.

For your reference I have attached the request to this email.

I sincerely appreciate your assistance

Dylan (Imlah) Haase, AICP
Senior Conservation Planner
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
620 S. Meridian Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
Phone: 850.487.9102
Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com

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From: Haase, Dylan
Sent: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 3:18 PM
To: Hoffert, Angelica <ahoffert@sfwmd.gov>; Layman, Laura <llayman@sfwmd.gov>
Subject: RE: Interim Management Request

Good Afternoon Angelica and Laura,

I just wanted to follow up on the interim management request for Okaloacoochee Slough WMA. If I can provide any further information to assist in your review and approval please let me know.

I sincerely appreciate your time and assistance.

Dylan (Imlah) Haase, AICP
Senior Conservation Planner
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
620 S. Meridian Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
Phone: 850.487.9102
Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com

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From: Reins, Morgan <mreins@sfwmd.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 20, 2021 8:16 AM
To: Haase, Dylan <Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com>
Cc: Hoffert, Angelica <ahoffert@sfwmd.gov>; Layman, Laura <llayman@sfwmd.gov>
Subject: RE: Interim Management Request

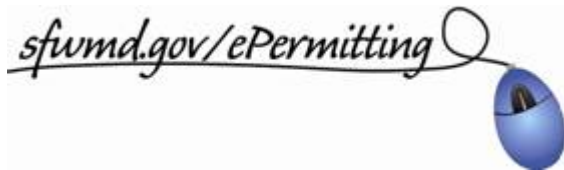
[EXTERNAL SENDER] Use Caution opening links or attachments

Good morning Dylan,

Your email was forwarded to Angelica Hoffert and Laura Layman from the Fort Myers Office. They are copied on this email.

Thanks,

Morgan Reins
Senior Environmental Analyst
Regulation Division
Environmental Resource Bureau
South Florida Water Management District
(561) 682-2149
mreins@sfwmd.gov



From: Haase, Dylan <Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 20, 2021 8:08 AM
To: Reins, Morgan <mreins@sfwmd.gov>
Subject: RE: Interim Management Request

[Please remember, this is an external email]

Good Morning,

I am following up on the below and attached interim management request. If I can provide any additional information to assist in your review or if there may be a more appropriate contact with the WMD I should reach out to please let me know.

I sincerely appreciate your help!

Dylan (Imlah) Haase, AICP
Senior Conservation Planner
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
620 S. Meridian Street

Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Phone: 850.487.9102

Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com

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From: Haase, Dylan

Sent: Wednesday, October 6, 2021 7:48 AM

To: Mreins@sfwmd.gov

Subject: Interim Management Request

Good Afternoon,

I was recently given your contact information by DEP. The FWC has a interim management request for the repair and widening of roads on a new addition to the the Okaloacoochee Slough WMA in Hendry County. These roads are in need of repair and improved access for visitors. Please see attached for more details on the project. Per interim management guidelines, we are required to have the water management district review and approve the proposed project before going to ARC for final approval. Please let me know if you need any further information for your review and approval. Additionally, please let me know if there may be a more appropriate contact within SFWMD for this type of request.

I sincerely appreciate your assistance.

Dylan (Imlah) Haase, AICP

Senior Conservation Planner

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

620 S. Meridian Street

Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Phone: 850.487.9102

Dylan.Haase@MyFWC.com

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