



Florida Department of Transportation

JEB BUSH
GOVERNOR

THOMAS F. BARRY, JR.
SECRETARY

Done
CPA ✓

March 30, 2000

District Six Environmental Management Office
1000 N.W. 111th Avenue, Room 6101
Miami, Florida 33172

Mr. Richard E. Bonner, P.E.
Department of the Army
Jacksonville District Corps of Engineers
Programs and Project Management Division
Project Management Branch
P.O. Box 4970
Jacksonville, Florida 32232-0019

Dear Mr. Bonner:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is in receipt of your letter dated January 12, 2000 which recaps discussions held on November 3, 1999, between the FDOT and the Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps). As you know, on-going coordination between the Corps and the FDOT has been conducted in consideration of potential negative impacts to approximately ten miles of Tamiami Trail as surrounding surface water elevations are raised during the implementation of the Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park (MWD) project. As noted in your January 12, 2000 letter, the Corps has reviewed a number of alternatives and has determined that construction of four bridges on Tamiami Trail would meet the Corps' future flow requirements and maintain a surface water elevation that would only affect the subgrade of the roadway during low frequency events.

During a meeting held on February 17, 2000, the FDOT presented their findings of review to the Corps regarding this proposed alternative. As stated in the FDOT's letter to the Corps dated May 7, 1999, the base clearance requirement may be reduced from 2 feet to one foot for purposes of conceptual alternative analysis. The clearance reduction is predicated on the use of black base (i.e., asphalt, which is more resistant to flooding than a limerock base [a limerock base would require a greater clearance of two to three feet]). The clearance would be measured from the design high water elevation to the bottom of the base at the outside edge of shoulder.

With existing roadway conditions, and assuming the desired flow of 4,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) with implementation of the MWD project, the Corps predicts a design high water elevation of 9.5 feet. An attachment to the FDOT letter dated May 6, 1999, provides the calculations which

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result in the proposed profile grade. It shows that the outside edge of the shoulder would need to be built to 12 feet NGVD in order to provide for high water elevations of 9.5 feet and at least 1 foot of clearance from the bottom of the subgrade (black base).

The Corps has proposed to build four bridges in strategic locations, without reconstructing the remainder of Tamiami Trail, in order to decrease future surface water intrusion into the base of the roadway. However, based on the Corps' hydrology study, the bridge option would only lower the surface water to 8.87 feet, lowered only 0.63 feet when compared to the option of having no bridges (existing). These numbers apply to the desired 4,000 cfs. If lower flows are considered, for instance 2,250 cfs, the study shows a difference of only 0.18 feet between the two options. This appears to indicate that constructing bridges will have a negligible positive effect in reducing the water levels. Assuming that the Corps reduces the flow from the desirable 4,000 cfs to 1,600 cfs (with or without bridges), the highway would still need to be elevated and reconstructed with black base and there would be a gain of 1.5 feet which translates into a required crown elevation of 11.04 feet (down from 12.54 feet at 4,000 cfs). (Please note that it has been previously stated, in FDOT's May 7, 1999 letter, that the crown of Tamiami Trail would need to be at 12 feet NGVD with reconstruction. This was an incorrect statement and other citations within the same letter reflect that the elevation of the outside edge of the shoulder would need to be 12 feet NGVD if the water surface elevation were to rise to 9.5 feet. This translates into crown of 12.54 feet.) Please see the attached typical section.

The FDOT realizes the additional expense and complications, particularly on environmental grounds, that roadway reconstruction would pose. This is enhanced by the need to bring the roadway design to current standards, resulting in a wider typical section, with total reconstruction. The FDOT would entertain entering into an administrative agreement with the Corps whereby the Corps would perform maintenance on Tamiami Trail during the MWD program and the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project (CERP) implementation and for some specified time thereafter, in lieu of requiring total reconstruction. This could be accomplished through a Joint Project Agreement (JPA) between the FDOT and the Corps, which stipulates the Corps' responsibility for any necessary maintenance along this section of Tamiami Trail attributable to the elevated water levels.

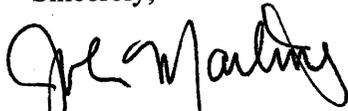
Such an agreement would also be desired by the FDOT as the Corps is currently proceeding with regulatory water releases in meeting the requirements stipulated in the Biological Opinion (BO) Reasonable and Prudent Alternative (RPA) for the Cape Sable seaside sparrow. As discussed in previous meetings, it would be prudent for the Corps to consider the monetary, environmental and safety costs of long term, continued maintenance on the Tamiami Trail versus total reconstruction.

Consideration of this issue has been coordinated with the FDOT Central Environmental Management Office in Tallahassee. The FDOT looks forward to continued coordination with the Corps in order to reach a mutually agreeable course of action in considering impacts to the integrity of Tamiami Trail as the Modified Water Deliveries program proceeds.

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Thank you for your consideration and continued communication in this regard. Should you have any questions in this matter, please feel free to contact me at (305) 470-5220.

Sincerely,



Marjorie K. Bixby
Acting Environmental Administrator

for

cc: Tom Barry
Jose Abreu
John Martinez
Gus Pego
Mike Ciscar