



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P.O. Box 4970  
Jacksonville, FL 32232

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

February 6, 2014

Tampa Permits Section  
SAJ-2011-00551 (IP-TEH)

Ms. Michele Baker  
Pasco County Board of County Commissioners  
7530 Little Road, Suite 320  
New Port Richey, Florida 34654

Mr. John Post, Jr.  
Florida Department of Transportation  
Florida's Turnpike Enterprise  
Post Office Box 613069  
Ocoee, Florida 34761

Dear Ms. Baker and Mr. Post:

This is in reference to your Department of the Army permit application requesting authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to impact waters of the United States in association with a project known as the "Ridge Road Extension" (SAJ-2011-00551 (IP-TEH)).

By letter dated July 23, 2012 and in subsequent correspondence, the Corps requested information required to determine if the proposed project represents the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA). We have considered the information you have provided to date in support of eliminating alternatives due to impracticability issues. Following our review of this information, you were advised that the screening criteria you proposed did not provide sufficient information to eliminate alternatives and that the alternatives analysis could not be limited to evaluation of the centrally-located alignments of Ridge Road Extension. The Corps provided a detailed explanation of this position in correspondence dated April 24, 2013; August 8, 2013; and September 20, 2013. A list of alternatives to be fully evaluated was provided to you in this correspondence, including: 1) the no-action alternative; 2) the Ridge Road Extension alignments (6D-6G); 3) improvements to (or construction of) SR-52, SR-54, Tower Road, and Ridge Road Extension that combine to provide 4 additional/new lanes; and 4) additional elevation and full elevation of Ridge Road Extension through the Serenova Tract. The alternatives analysis contained within your December 18, 2013 submittal does not provide a full evaluation of these alternatives. As such, you have not provided sufficient information to demonstrate that the alternatives you

eliminated are impracticable nor does the Corps have enough information to determine whether the proposed project represents the LEDPA.

Based on the information provided to date, it is unlikely my staff will be recommending a favorable permit decision. I bring this to your attention to allow you the opportunity to provide a full analysis of the project alternatives identified by the Corps. In the event you provide this analysis and demonstrate that the proposed project represents the LEDPA, then the Corps will proceed with other aspects of our review regarding endangered species, cultural resources, minimization of wetland and other environmental impacts within the selected alternative, compensatory mitigation, and other public interest factors.

Further evaluation of your application will be held in abeyance for 30 days pending receipt of your response. If no response is received within this time frame, we will close our record and a final decision will be made. In addition, failure to provide an adequate response will also result in the Corps completing its application review with the information available. If you have any questions concerning this correspondence, please contact Tracy Hurst at the letterhead address, by telephone at 813-769-7063 or by e-mail at Tracy.E.Hurst@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,



Donald W. Kinard  
Chief, Regulatory Division

Copy furnished:

Mr. Ron Miedema, Wetlands and Marine Regulatory Section, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 61 Forsyth Street, Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960

Ms. Georgianne Ratliff, Ratliff Consulting Group, LLC, 11300 Suncreek Place  
Tampa, Florida 33617