

SR 528 FROM I-4 TO FLORIDA'S TURNPIKE DESIGN-BUILD BAT EXCLUSION



Project Description

For this project, Scheda was responsible for conducting bat surveys of four bridges and, subsequently, performing bat exclusions for two of the bridges. Surveys consisted of examining each bridge during daylight to determine if they contained suitable roosting areas such as expansion joints and other crevices. Scheda biologists then surveyed expansion joints and/or crevices for other indicators of bat presence including: bat chattering, urine stains on or beneath expansion joints and other crevices, and bat guano. Night surveys consisted of spotlight surveys to visibly determine if bats were exiting from the bridges. Because bats echolocate while flying and foraging, we also used an Anabat SD2 bat detector to survey for bat echolocations at bridges. Scientists determined primary entry and exit points. Once it was determined that a bat exclusion was needed, we prepared a bat exclusion plan that outlined the methodology to be used for the exclusion and was submitted to Florida's Turnpike Enterprise.

Per Chapter 68A-9.010 F.A.C., bat exclusion is allowed only between August 15 and April 15. The exclusion required the use of an aerial lift to install Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission-approved exclusionary netting along the bridge joints so bats could exit the bridge but not re-enter. Each evening, Scheda biologists observed the bats emerging from each bridge with exclusionary netting to make sure none became entangled in the netting. The netting was also inspected prior to sunrise. Once it was determined that all the bats had exited the bridge the joints were sealed until construction was complete.

