

SR 7 CORRIDOR EXTENSION PD&E STUDY



Project Description

This challenging Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study involved the proposed extension of SR 7 from SR 704 (Okeechobee Boulevard) north to Northlake Boulevard in Palm Beach County. The project would extend SR 7 for approximately nine miles through a presently undeveloped corridor surrounded by several publicly owned natural areas. Proposed improvements include construction of a new six-lane divided urban highway, bicycle lanes, curb and gutter, a sidewalk, and a bridge over the M Canal - a designated Outstanding Florida Water - and stormwater collection and treatment systems. Four corridor alternatives and a no-build option were identified and evaluated for potential effects within the project vicinity.

Listed wildlife observed during preliminary field reconnaissance included the state and federally endangered snail kite (*Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus*) and wood stork (*Mycteria americana*), the state-threatened Florida sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis pratensis*), and Species of Special Concern (SSC) white ibis (*Eudocimus albus*), little blue heron (*Egretta caerulea*), tricolored heron (*Egretta tricolor*), and snowy egret (*Egretta thula*). There are four active wood stork colonies within the species' Core Foraging Area. There are numerous wading bird rookeries within 10 to 20 miles of the study area. Natural areas within the project vicinity include high-quality freshwater wetlands such as marshes, cypress strands, wet prairies, and wet pine flatwoods.

Scheda scientists identified and documented all potential wildlife, wetland, and contamination impacts associated with each corridor and alignment alternative, and coordinated with regulatory agencies and other stakeholders, including the public.

