

FDOT District 3

US 331

# Choctawhatchee Bay Bridge

**Location**

Walton County,  
Florida

**Client**

WSP

**Contract Value**

Approximately  
\$125,000



For this project, ESA Scheda was responsible for collecting all natural environmental data, establishing the wetland jurisdictional line, completing the submerged aquatic resource survey, conducting and documenting all agency coordination, compiling permit applications and addressing all agency requests for additional information. Mitigation design was completed for an on-site shoreline restoration project; this project, coupled with the purchase of credits from a bank, sufficed for the required wetland mitigation. Permits have been received from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Section 404), Florida Department of Environmental Regulation (ERP), and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) bridge permit.

ESA Scheda scientists completed the USCG Navigation Activities Evaluation to determine the nature of the waterway users, compiled the USCG bridge permit application, and led the USCG permitting process. Several project components were permitted (some separately) including: test pile program, mooring locations in the bay, fishing pier demolition, off-site stormwater management, and of course, the bridge. The project lies within U.S. Fish

and Wildlife Service (USFWS) designated critical habitat for the Gulf sturgeon. Related coordination and development of the Biological Opinion for this project was delegated to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). ESA Scheda ecologists contributed substantially to the development of the Biological Assessment, and assisted with negotiation of the protection precautions within the Biological Opinion.