

SOUTHGATE MITIGATION SITE

2017 Annual Monitoring Report

27 October 2017

USACE Permit No.: SAJ-2015-02153 (NW-RLT), issued 1/13/2016

Permittee: Florida Department of Transportation, District Three
C/o Colby Cleveland
1074 Highway 90
Chipley, FL 32428

Responsible Party for Monitoring: Northwest Florida Water Management District
81 Water Management Drive
Havana, FL 32333

Dates of Inspection: 4/25/2017 & 10/26/2017

Summary:

The purpose of this project (Southgate Mitigation Site) is to provide offsetting mitigation for 0.26 acres of impact to tidal marsh (0.16 UMAM functional loss) associated with FDOT construction of a multiuse path adjacent to SR 300 (from St. George Island Bridge to US 98). As authorized by the permit, the mitigation wetlands are palustrine emergent (sawgrass tidal marsh). Mitigation was implemented at St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve (Buffer Preserve, FDEP, Florida Coastal Office) via installation of one low-water-crossing at Southgate, which enhanced the hydrologic regime of an estimated 6.49 acres of sawgrass tidal marsh by removing an impediment to natural surface flows.

Southgate (29.6865° North, 85.3017° West), a raised dirt road used by the Buffer Preserve for management access, meets SR 30A approximately 0.5 mile east of the SR 30E / SR 30A intersection. This road is gated—access may be arranged by contacting Dylan Shoemaker, Preserve Manager (850-229-1787).

Raised above natural grade, Southgate bisected a palustrine emergent wetland marsh and disrupted natural hydrologic flows and moisture regimes. The low-water-crossing designed to enhance the hydrology of adjacent wetlands was installed mid-October 2016.

Semi-annual inspections by NFWMD staff on 4/25/2017 and 10/26/2017 concluded that the low-water-crossing was at the correct elevation, was functioning as designed, that natural hydrologic flows had been reestablished, and that all other success criteria are being met. The adjacent palustrine emergent wetlands appear to be of high quality, and are being managed for ecological integrity by an ARC-approved (Acquisitions and Restoration Council) St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve management plan (available at

www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/sites/stjoseph_buffer/). The Buffer Preserve emphasizes prescribed fire and management of exotic vegetation.

Performance Standards:

- Low-water-crossing installed at appropriate elevation to allow unimpeded flows.
- Not greater than 10 percent cover by invasive or exotic species listed on the “Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council 2015 List of Invasive Plant Species” within the 6.49-acre enhancement polygon.

Monitoring Requirements:

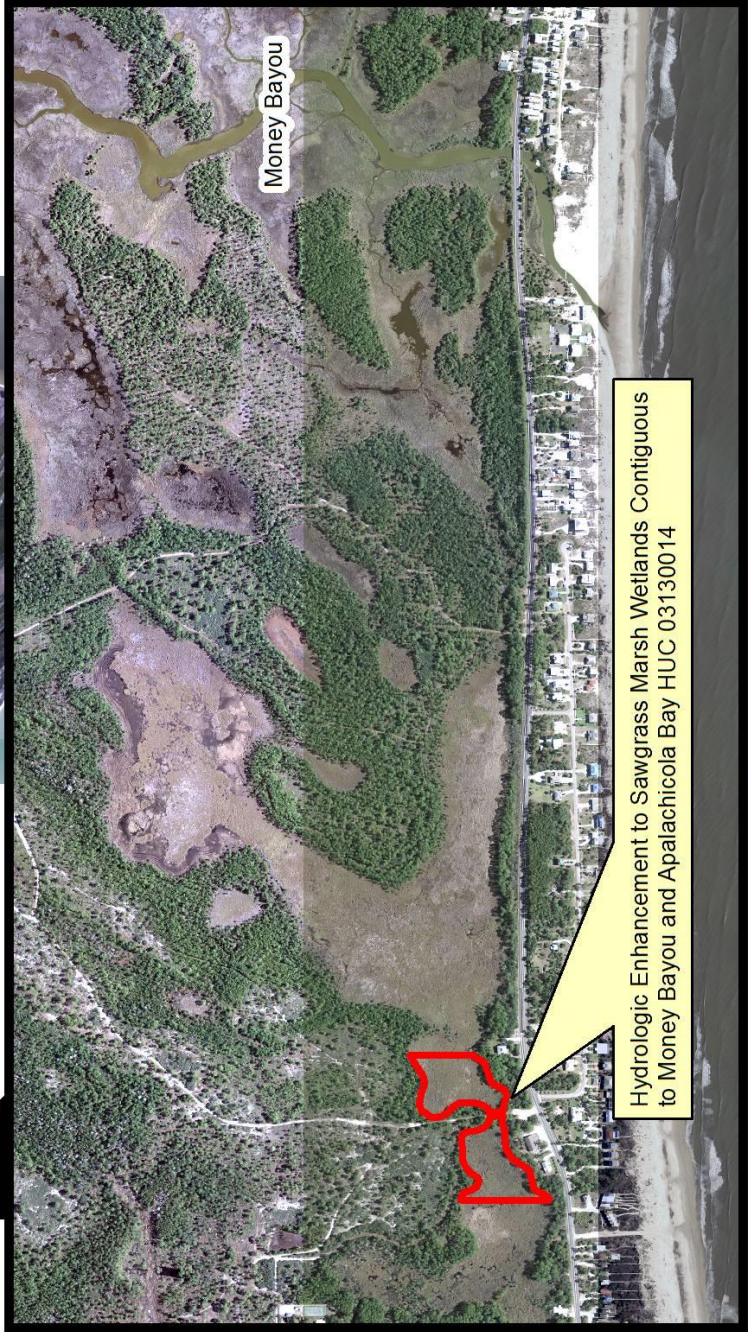
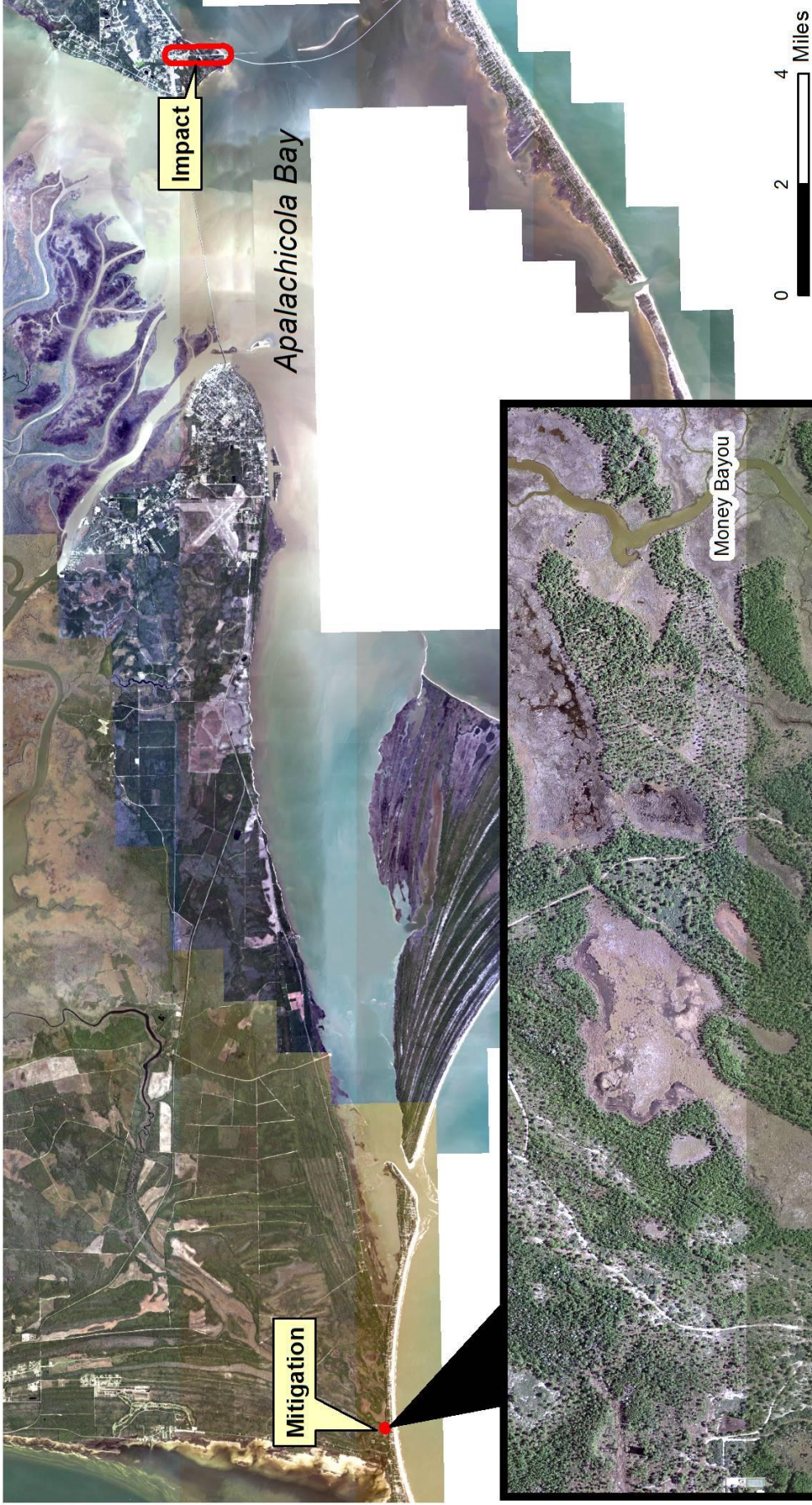
- Inspection and photo-documentation of low-water-crossing site.
- Frequency
 - “Time Zero” monitoring in Fall, 2016.
 - Semi-annual monitoring for 2017 (Spring and Fall, 2017).
 - Annual monitoring (Fall, 2018 – 2019).
- Annual reports submitted to the USACE for duration of monitoring (semi-annual reports are to be combined into one annual report for submission).

During the most recent site inspections of 4/25/2017 & 10/26/2017, all performance standards were found to be met.

Conclusions:

The 2016 installation of one low-water-crossing at Southgate has enhanced the hydrology of the adjacent palustrine emergent wetlands (sawgrass tidal marsh) by removing an impediment to natural hydrologic flows. The low-water-crossing is at an appropriate elevation and functioning as designed. Adjacent palustrine emergent wetlands are of high-quality and are being managed for ecological integrity per the St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve management plan. No invasive or exotic plant species listed on the “Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council 2015 List of Invasive Plant Species” are present within the enhancement polygons. Monitoring inspections will continue through 2019 or as directed by the USACE. In the event of failure of the low-water-crossing, or if any plant species listed on the “Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council 2015 List of Invasive Plant Species” establish greater than 10 percent cover within the enhancement polygons (current cover is zero percent), remedial actions will be taken.

Southgate Mitigation in Relation to SR 300 Multiuse Path Impact



Southgate / Sandridge Road - Wetland Hydrologic Enhancement Polygons





Southgate LWC (4/25/2017)



Southgate LWC (10/26/2017)



Enhancement Polygon, East Side (4/25/2017)



Enhancement Polygon, West Side (4/25/17)



Enhancement Polygon, East Side (10/26/2017)



Enhancement Polygon, West Side (10/26/2017)