

ISLAND ROAD MITIGATION SITE

2019 Annual Monitoring Report

USACE Permit No.: SAJ-2014-00624 (NW-JML), issued 3/9/2015

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

Date of Inspection: 9/24/2019

Summary:

The purpose of this project (Island Road Mitigation Site) is to provide offsetting mitigation for 0.48 acres of wetland impacts caused by FDOT roadwork on SR 30E / Cape San Blas Road from SR 30A west to the Troy Deal Unit of the St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve (Buffer Preserve). Although the USACE permit authorizing the impact does not state the type of wetlands being impacted, the mitigation wetlands authorized by the permit are palustrine emergent. Mitigation was implemented at St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve (FDEP, Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas) via installation of one low-water-crossing at Island Road, which enhanced the hydrologic regime of an estimated 6.49 acres of palustrine emergent wetlands.

Island Road (29.68616° North, 85.29271° West), a raised dirt road used by the Buffer Preserve for management access, meets SR 30A approximately 1 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, Island Road 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-September, 2015.

An annual inspection by NFWFMD staff on 9/24/2019 concluded that the low-water-crossing is in excellent condition, is functioning as designed, and that natural hydrologic flows have been reestablished. Although storm surge associated with Hurricane Michael overflowed the site in 2018, the low-water-crossing suffered no apparent damage, and the adjacent marsh and pine flatwoods appear healthy. The site continues to be being managed for ecological integrity by Buffer Preserve staff in accordance with 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
- Non-failure of low-water-crossing

Monitoring Requirements:

- Inspection and photo-documentation of low-water-crossings
- Frequency
 - Semi-annual for first two years (Spring and Fall, 2016 – 2017)
 - Annual for a minimum of an additional three years (Fall, 2018 – 2020)
- 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 inspection of 9/24/2019, all performance standards were found to be met.

Conclusions:

The 2015 installation of one low-water-crossing at Island Road has enhanced the hydrology of the adjacent palustrine emergent wetlands by reestablishing natural hydrologic flows. The low-water-crossing is 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. Monitoring inspections will continue through 2020 or as directed by the USACE. In the event of failure of the low-water-crossing, remedial action will be taken.

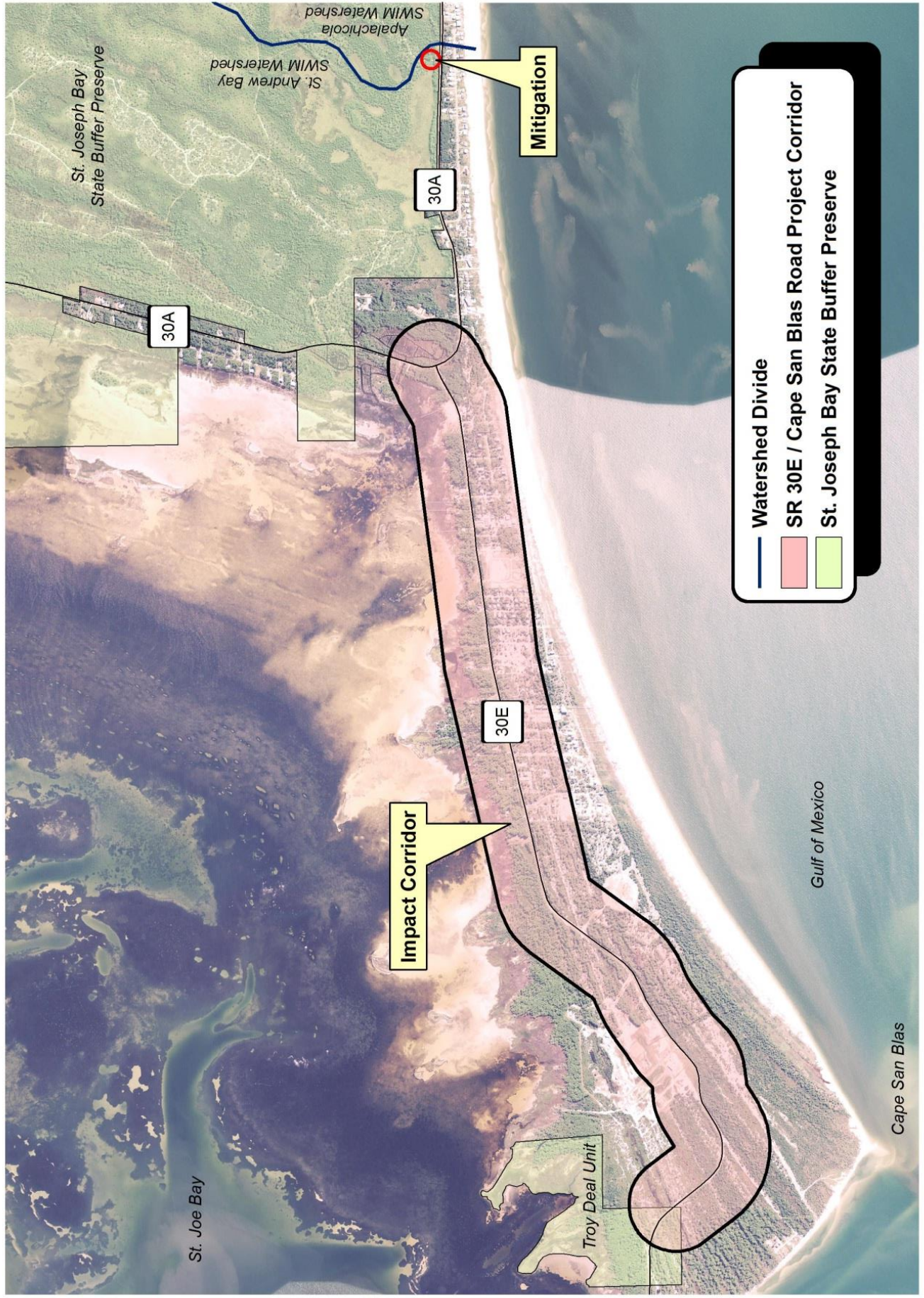


Figure 1: Island Road LWC (9/24/2019; Looking North)

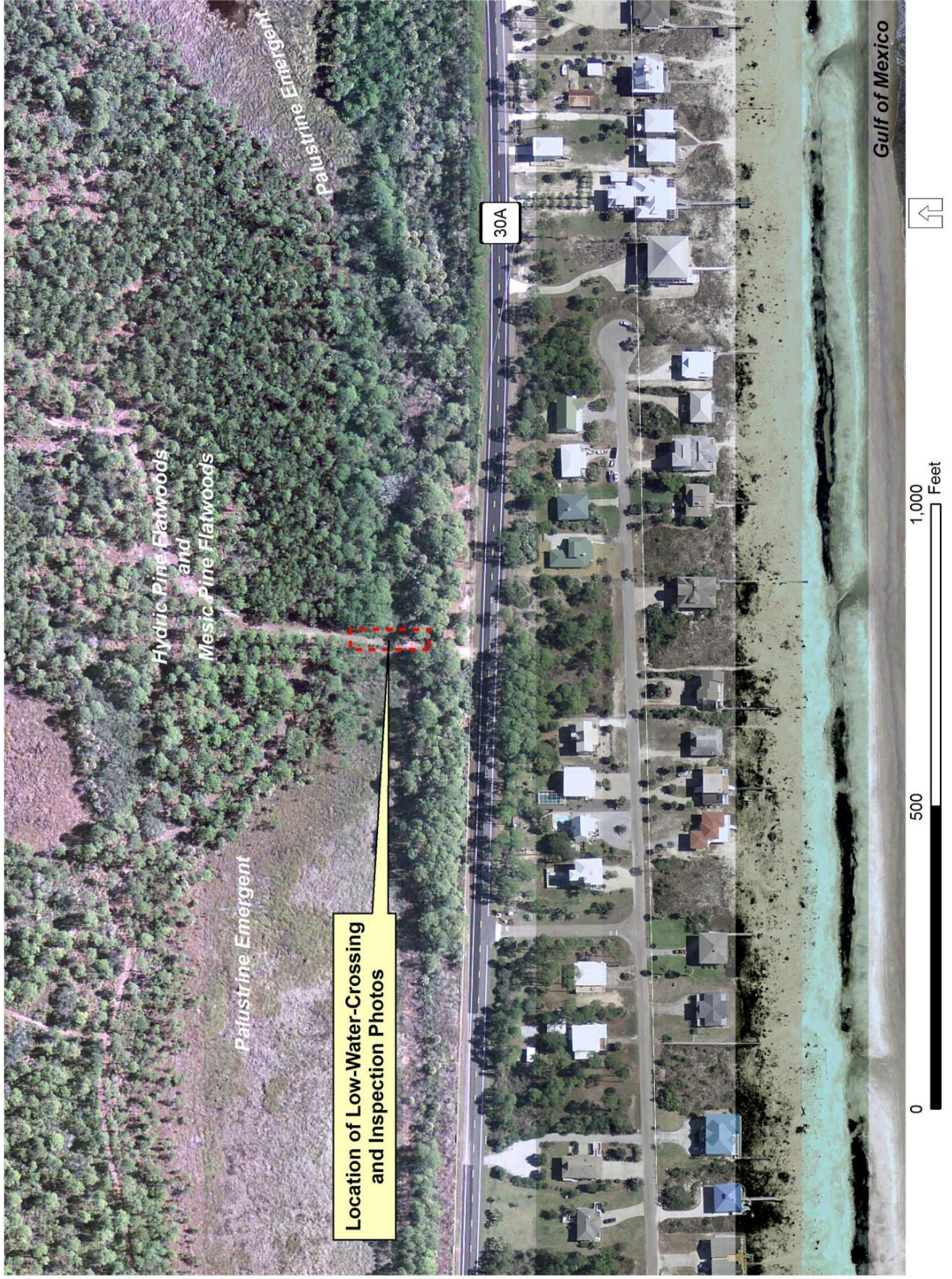


Figure 2: Island Road LWC (9/24/2019; Looking South)

SR 30E / Cape San Blas Road (from SR 30A west to Troy Deal Unit, St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve)



Island Road Hydrologic Enhancement - 2013 DOQ



Location of Low-Water-Crossing and Inspection Photos