NORTHWEST FLORIDA UMBRELLA, WATERSHED-BASED, REGIONAL MITIGATION PLAN
CORPS/MRT QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 24 - 26, 2008

Attendees:

Individual - Employer	03/24/08	03/25/08	03/26/08
Andy Phillips – CORPS	❖	❖	
Cecelia Harper – EPA (Region 4, Atlanta)	❖	❖	
Mary Mittiga – USFWS	❖	❖	
David Rydene – NMFS (St. Petersburg)	❖	❖	
Terry Gilbert – URS for FWC			❖
Joy Giddens – FDOT			❖
Tracey Ludyjan-Ybarra – FDOT	❖	❖	❖
Duncan Cairns – NWFWMD	❖	❖	❖
Robert Lide – NWFWMD	❖	❖	❖
David Clayton – NWFWMD	❖	❖	❖
Tyler McMillan - NWFWMD			❖
Ann Redmond – BRA/ENTRIX	❖	❖	❖

Monday, 3/24/08

Field Visits – Perdido River WMA Mitigation Sites and US 90 Perdido River Bridge Impact

Met at lunchtime prior to visiting two proposed mitigation sites on the Perdido River Water Management Area (WMA) and the US 90 Perdido River Bridge impact site.

The two sites visited were a 54-acre restoration area located ~½ mile east of the impact, and a 1-acre planting site located about 1.5 miles northeast of the impact. General placement of a proposed wildlife crossing on US 90 that, if built, would be associated with replacement of the US 90 Perdido River Bridge, was also discussed. No decision on a wildlife crossing was reached.

The 1-acre site was visited and quickly shelved as a potential mitigation area. It is an artificial impoundment on a woodland stream which might benefit from having its forested edge expanded via planting of cypress trees. The mitigation would be out-of-kind, relatively small in scale, with a minimal contribution to watershed health. It was also observed that the cost to implement would outweigh the mitigation benefits. The 54-acre site is discussed below (Tuesday's minutes).

Tuesday, 3/25/08

We first met at the Pensacola CORPS Office to discuss the projects. We re-convened after lunch at the Warner Property.

Office Discussions –US 90 Perdido River Bridge Replacement & Mitigation

Impact Site. The US 90 Perdido River Bridge impacts occur on both the Florida and Alabama sides of the Perdido River and will be permitted together by the CORPS (per post-meeting discussions of 5/5/08 between FDOT and Alabama, all mitigation will occur in Florida through the NWFWMD). Although the impact wetlands had previously been identified by the FDOT permitting consultant as bottomland hardwoods, the site visit (3/24/08) revealed that the species composition was essentially the same as at the proposed 54-acre mitigation site (i.e., bays, cypress, pines, and maples). The trees at the impact site were much larger than the proposed mitigation site, and also include Atlantic white cedar and laurel oak in the floodplain.

Functional loss UMAM scores for direct impacts are 0.8 per indicator, which would equal a loss of 3.32 functional units based on 4.15acres of impact (estimated direct acreage impact per FDOT Inventory as of 5/5/08). FDOT consultants need to conduct UMAM assessment for secondary impacts, and to redo UMAMs for temporary impacts due to shading under bridge. Probably need to offset 7 acres of loss—a range of 5 to 8 acres depending on final analysis. Project start date is June, 2009. Temporary impacts along the 5-foot toe of slope and detour road added to impact total.

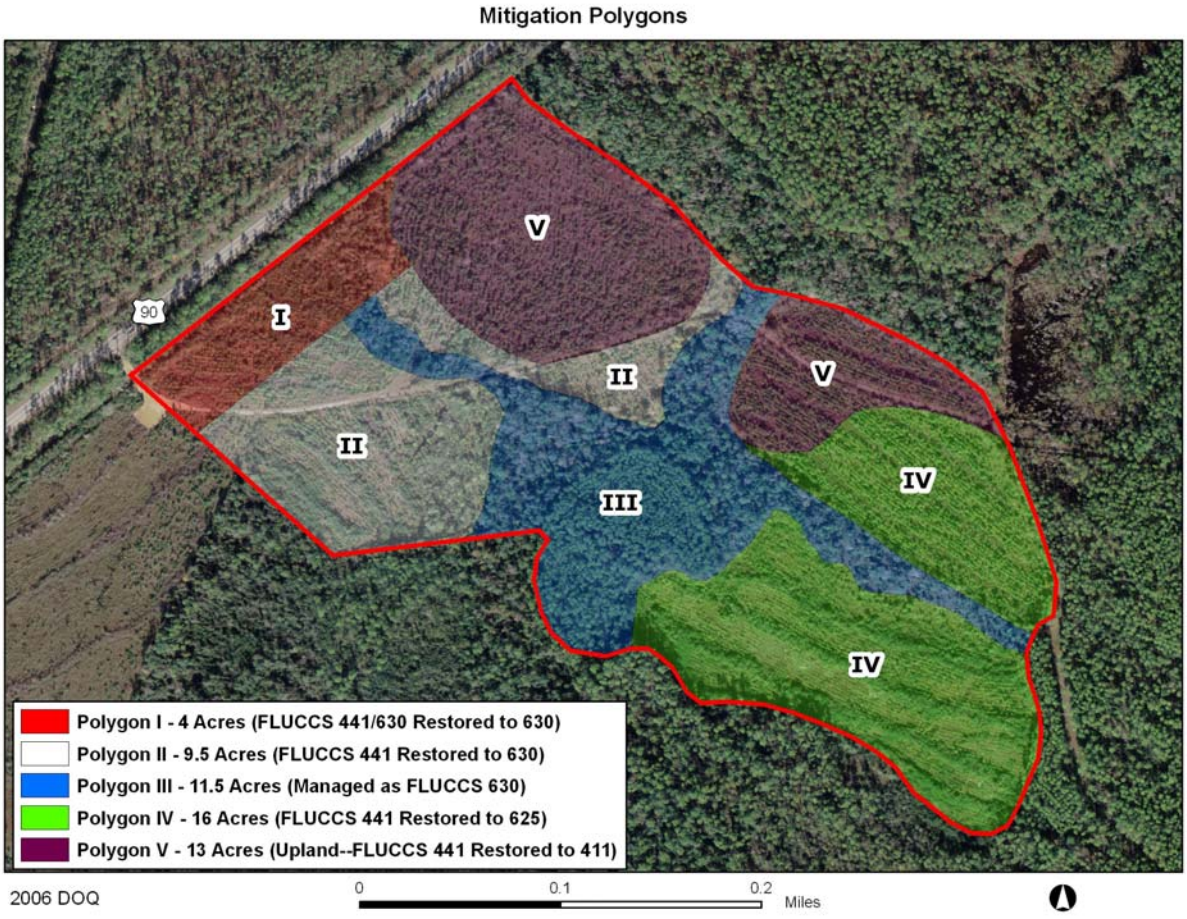
Mitigation Site. The 54-acre mitigation site is ~ ½ mile east of the impact and is part of the Perdido River Water Management Area owned by the NWFWMD. If necessary, this mitigation site could be expanded by 20 acres. Rapanos worksheets are needed for this site. Elevational data is also needed for the mitigation site to verify surface water flow directions (digital elevation model data (DEM) derived from LiDAR data may suffice). Discussed degree of effort needed to restore the site, particularly with respect to the windrows. Should the wind-rows be leveled or breached? There aren't large areas of perennial bunchgrasses, so could probably level them partly or completely and not lose them. Is it necessary to simply breach the wind-rows periodically to normalize flow?

The proposed mitigation site was determined to be appropriate based on similarity of wooded species, connection to Perdido River system, proximity to site, location with respect to existing NWFWMD and TNC conservation landholdings. UMAM polygon delineation and scoring was agreed upon (see below). Enhancement and restoration of the 54-acre site will result in a lift of 8.58 functional units.

Polygon treatments:

- Polygon I (Polygon E in original submission distributed at meeting) – 300' width from edge of US 90 pavement into the site – the secondary impact zone. Will be restored to mixed forested wetland (FLUCCS 630), which is already intermixed with the planted pines. Windrows will be breached or leveled.

- Polygon II (Polygon A on original submission distributed at meeting) – Will be restored to mixed forested wetland (FLUCCS 630), which is already intermixed with the planted pines. Windrows will be breached or leveled.
- Polygon III (Polygon B on original submission distributed at meeting) – No re-planting needed. Will allow fires to burn into this polygon, so minor lift from that. Also some lift from change in surrounding habitat from pine plantation to native communities.
- Polygon IV (Polygon D on original submission distributed at meeting) – Windrows will be breached or leveled. Unclear at the moment how much reduction in the wind-rows will occur and/or how long deterioration will take. Polygon will be replanted as slash and longleaf pine flatwoods. Assume 12 years time lag to obtain tree height of 20+ feet.
- Polygon V (Polygon C on original submission distributed at meeting) – Upland polygon that will be restored to longleaf pine and wiregrass. Since it is not a wetland, no UMAM scores assigned. Windrows will be breached or leveled.



Perdido River WMA Phase II Mitigation
UMAM Credit Assessment - March, 2008
(IRT and NWFWMD Staff)

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ENTER SCORES ONLY ON INDIVIDUAL POLYGON PAGES

Polygon	Acres	L1	L2	W1	W1	C1	C2	W/Out Score	With Score	Raw Delta	Time Lag	P Factor	Risk	Adjusted Delta	UMAM Credits
I (E)	4	6	7	6	7	4	8	0.53	0.73	0.20	0.68	N/A	1.25	0.24	0.95
II (A)	9.5	8	9	6	7	4	8	0.60	0.80	0.20	0.68	N/A	1.25	0.24	2.25
III (B)	11.5	7	8	8	9	7	8	0.73	0.83	0.10	0.89	N/A	1	0.11	1.29
IV (D)	16	8	9	5	7	4	9	0.57	0.83	0.27	0.83	N/A	1.25	0.26	4.10
Uplands	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	54														8.58

L1 = Location and Landscape Support - Without Mitigation
L2 = Location and Landscape Support - With Mitigation
W1 = Water Environment - Without Mitigation
W2 = Water Environment - With Mitigation
C1 = Community Structure - Without Mitigation
C2 = Community Structure - With Mitigation

Raw Delta = w/mit score - without mitigation score
Adjusted Delta = Raw Delta / (Time Lag * Risk)
UMAM Credits = Acres * Adjusted Delta

Office Discussions –US 98 Wakulla River Bridge Replacement & Mitigation (St. Marks Watershed)

Robert handed out updated information about the potential mitigation sites. Impacts are to 2.30 acres from replacement of the US 98 Wakulla River Bridge.

Flint Rock. An approximately 20,000-acre preservation area adjacent to the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge; about ½ is owned by the TNC and the other ½ owned by the Sam Shine Foundation. Enhancement of a ~272-acre polygon surrounding a known or suspected flatwood salamander pond was proposed. Unknowns are how the permitting agencies can assure compliance with the mitigation plan, when or if the land would become part of the refuge, what the management of the site(s) identified for mitigation would be, and what area(s) would be most appropriate for offset of the to-be-permitted losses. Site has the "other" flatwood salamander species in sawgrass ponds. Because of the unknowns and out-of-kind wetlands, it was decided that Flint Rock would not be appropriate to offset the US 98 Wakulla River Bridge impacts.

Ferrell Property. This site is ~1,000 acres of high-quality wetlands and upland buffers. The Ferrell family is working closely with the state to sell this land to the state and/or NWFWMD. The NWFWMD has negotiated with the Ferrell family to buy 12 acres that adjoin the Wakulla Springs State Park. There is a known connection from sinkhole(s) on this site to Wakulla Springs. Appraisals have been done. When acquired, this site become part of Wakulla Springs State Park and managed under their approved management plan. The MRT favored this site because it is closer to the impacts, and has obvious long-term ecological and hydrological benefits for Wakulla Springs (a 1st order spring that is experiencing documented water quality declines from development in the area). Acquisition issue is cost, which needs to be overcome.

Field Visit – Warner Tract

This site is part of the Perdido Pitcher Plant Prairie system and acquisition area. It is adjacent to the Tarkiln Bayou State Park. While we were at the site a construction crew was upgrading a road bordering the northern boundary. The site is in very good condition. It would provide important buffering functions from surrounding development and its preservation and management would make significant contributions to the health of receiving waters. Photos are provided attached in an attachment.

Wednesday, 3/26/08

Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank Inspection

We were scheduled to meet at the FWCC check station at entrance to SHLMB for a site inspection that had been scheduled in response to a credit release request. FDEP has already visited the site and approved the release, but federal concurrence is still needed. Dale Beter was to lead the trip for the federal agencies, but was unable to attend at the last minute. It was decided to do the site inspection for those who had made it and to re-schedule as soon as possible with Dale. These minutes are intended to document the site conditions observed during the inspection. Photos are provided attached in an attachment.

Site 1 – Road fill removal and erosion stabilization. Completed. Stabilized and planted.
Site 2 – Greenhead Branch bridge and erosion stabilization. Completed. Erosion area stabilized and planted.
Site 3 – Restoration of longleaf pine from turkey oak. Oaks removed. Pines planted. Prescribed fire implemented. Good natural wiregrass coverage. Native vegetation responding well to the recent burn.
Site 4 – Dykes Mill bridge removal and erosion stabilization. Completed. Stabilized.
Site 5 – Management of oak/pine forest with prescribed fire. Recently burned.
Site 6 – Dry Pond boat ramp. Installed.
Site 7 – Black Pond dam upgrade. Dam construction completed. Channel stabilized.
Site 8 – Joiner/Dry bridge. Bridge installed and area stabilized.
Site 9 – Gyro-trac area/ restoration of hydric pine flatwoods. Area gyro-tracked and burned.
Site 10 – Joiner/Green culvert. Bridge and culvert installed. Area stabilized.
Site 11 – Gyro-trac area/restoration of hydric pine flatwoods. Area gyro-tracked and burned.

Minutes drafted by Ann Redmond and edited by other MRT members.

Attachments:
Warner Tract photos
SHLMB Photos