

**NORTHWEST FLORIDA UMBRELLA, WATERSHED-BASED, REGIONAL MITIGATION PLAN
USACE/MRT QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES
JULY 15 & 16, 2008**

Attendees			
Individual - Employer	7/15/08 (Quincy Bypass)	7/15/08 (Ferrell)	7/16/08 (Panama City)
Andrew Phillips – USACE	❖	❖	❖
Mary Mittiga – USFWS	❖	❖	❖
Cecelia Harper – EPA (Region 4, Atlanta)	❖	❖	❖
David Rydene – NMFS (St. Petersburg)	❖	❖	❖
Ted Hoehn – FWC	❖	❖	❖
Terry Gilbert – URS for FWC	❖	❖	
Joy Giddens – FDOT	❖	❖	❖
Tracey Ludyjan-Ybarra – FDOT	❖	❖	❖
Duncan Cairns – NFWFMD	❖	❖	❖
Robert Lide – NFWFMD	❖	❖	❖
David Clayton – NFWFMD	❖	❖	❖
Tom Franklin – FDEP	❖		
Josey Walker – HDR for FDOT	❖		
Penny Rolleston – FDEP-DRP		❖	
Bob Beck – FDEP		❖	
Cal Jamison – FDEP (Springs Ambassador)		❖	
Mark Ashman – Genesis Group for FDEP		❖	
Tom Jacobs – BRA for NFWFMD		❖	

Tuesday, 7/15/08

Field Visit – Quincy Bypass

Met at 9:00 AM EDT / 8:00 AM CDT (New Bethel AME Church on US 90) adjacent to footprint of proposed Quincy Bypass. South end of project ROW (US 90 tie-in) inspected first, then north end of project ROW (SR 12 tie-in) inspected to Quincy Creek.

Extensive discussions in field concerning whether wetlands within a certain distance of US 90 should be mapped as separate polygons for functional assessment of secondary impacts, appropriateness of alignment, and extent of wetland impacts. Additional discussion is required. Impacts are not accurately described. This project will include “stream” impacts. Concerns were raised about stream replacement.

Field Visit – Ferrell Property

Met at Ferrell property entrance at 1:30 PM EDT / 12:30 PM CDT. This site was inspected for potential mitigation for impacts to 2.30 acres at US 98 Wakulla River Bridge. Cal Jamison (FDEP Springs Ambassador) presented an overview of the Ferrell property, including a discussion of cave divers establishing multiple, direct connections to Wakulla Springs. Two 12-acre sites on the Ferrell property (Alternative A and Alternative B) proposed by the NFWFMD as mitigation for the US 98 Wakulla River Bridge impacts were inspected. Appropriateness of the two sites was broached during the visit, however, detailed discussion was delayed until the office session. If the state park system was to acquire the site they may introduce boardwalks around the sinkholes.

Wednesday, 7/16/08

Met at the Panama City USACE Office (1002 West 23rd St., Suite 350) at 9:00 AM EDT / 8:00 AM CDT.

US 90 Perdido River Bridge:

FDOT reported on a recent meeting with Alabama DOT and presented a preliminary design for wildlife fencing to be installed at the US 90 Perdido River Bridge impact site. A subsequent meeting was discussed and it was suggested that input from Terry Gilbert would be necessary in establishing an appropriate design for the fencing to accomplish both wildlife enhancements and a restriction to secondary impacts such as dumping. Fencing discussion and finalization remains to be accomplished. Pending resolution of the fencing issues, the MRT accepted the existing Perdido River WMA – Phase II Mitigation Plan (UWRMP 5.1.4) approved by the USACE/MRT at the March, 2008 Quarterly Meeting with 8.58 UMAM credits as appropriate to offset the impacts.

Dutex Property:

The NFWFMD presented aerials and descriptions of the 828-acre Dutex property on the Perdido Bay as an alternative to the Warner property. It was also explained that the Warner acquisition is unlikely to move forward at this time because of a very high asking price (on the order of several times the anticipated appraisal value). After discussion, the MRT decided that the Dutex property is appropriate as mitigation for impacts (I-10 Weigh Station in Escambia Co., US 98 from Navy Blvd. to Blue Angel Pkwy., and I-10/I-110 in Pensacola for a total loss of 14.4 acres of wetlands) that were to have gone to Warner property. Two of the three impact areas are within the same drainage basin and the project outside of the drainage basin had roadside ditch impacts. The site also has benefits because it could be used as a “control site” to evaluate impacts which may result from the new water treatment plant flow-through wetland system which will be located on the north side of Eleven Mile Creek. The site could generate estuarine,

forested, and herbaceous credits. Tentatively, the MRT will conduct a site visit at the next Quarterly Meeting (~October, 2008) to assess credit potential.

Website Updates:

The USACE/MRT requests that hotlinks be placed within the website (www.NWFWMDwetlands.com) to link approved mitigation with approved impacts. This will facilitate the USACE/MRT use of the website when assessing mitigation and impacts.

DuPont Bridge and St. Andrew Bay Shoreline Restoration (UWRMP 5.4.7):

No action taken regarding mitigation because no mitigation by NWFWMD is required for DuPont Bridge.

Ward Creek West (UWRMP 5.4.2):

The USACE/MRT accepted WRAP scores and calculated mitigation credit (173.76 WRAP credits) for Ward Creek West using “deltas” from the previously approved Regional General Permit (RGP) for St. Joe developments in West Bay. WRAP scores were generated in 2003 by the federal partners and were agreed to by all parties. After reviewing the scores the MRT concurred. Fencing and gating complete, surveys complete, preparation for timber cruise almost complete (timber cruise should start shortly), timber harvest scheduled for 2009, 55 acres Gyro-Trac to date out of 125 acres to be completed by fall. Burning should begin in the fall. Hog trapping initiated, though hogs have been disrupted by Gyro-Trac work.

US 98 at Thomas Drive:

The NWFWMD discussed its inability to move forward with mitigation at Robinson Bayou (exorbitant land prices, multiple land owners, etc.) and proposed use of Ward Creek West (UWRMP 5.4.2) as alternative mitigation. The USACE/MRT agreed that it is appropriate to move mitigation for US 98 at Thomas Drive (2.13-acre impact) from Robinson Bayou to Ward Creek West. A permit modification request from FDOT will be required.

Haddock and Dubose Properties:

Because the Plum Creek parcel acquisition (UWRMP 5.3.7) has been delayed until 2009, the NWFWMD presented the Haddock and Dubose properties as possible alternatives for mitigation for the SR 79 Open Creek Bridge and SR 79 Holmes Creek Bridge impacts. The USACE/MRT encourages the use of Plum Creek, but will entertain alternatives if Plum Creek does not become available. A permit modification request from FDOT is still needed to shift mitigation for the Open Creek Bridge permit from the Glover Tract to the Plum Creek parcel.

Ferrell Property / US 98 Wakulla River Bridge:

The USACE/MRT determined that Alternative A (with FDEP acquisition of additional Ferrell acreage) is appropriate as offsetting mitigation for the US 98 Wakulla River Bridge impacts. Alternative B (without FDEP acquisition of additional Ferrell acreage) will be appropriate if the wetland acreage is expanded by 2 acres. Assurances would be required that the acquired property would be managed as mitigation lands for ecological integrity under the Wakulla Springs State Park management plan. The USACE and MRT will have further discussions regarding eventual permit conditions regarding longterm management and activities that may be restricted or not allowed.

The following UMAM scores for Alternative A & Alternative B at the Ferrell property were agreed to by the USACE/MRT.

UMAM SCORES				
	Alternative A		Alternative B	
	Without Preservation Score	With Preservation Score	Without Preservation Score	With Preservation Score
Location & Landscape Support	7	9	7	9
Water Environment	7	9	7	9
Vegetation Community	7	10	6	9

Quincy Bypass:

The MRT expressed serious concerns regarding the currently proposed alignment and the extent of wetland impacts. Concerns will be officially transmitted at a later time to FDOT from the USACE.

Shuler Property (UWRMP 5.6.4):

The USACE/MRT agrees that restoration of the Shuler property may be appropriate as mitigation for future FDOT impacts. The site meets the criteria of the new mitigation rule. The site is within the watershed, it is a large site, the mitigation is restoration oriented, and has habitat for federally listed species. The NFWFMD will determine the extent of National Forest lands surrounding the site. The USACE/MRT agrees that use of the Shuler property could potentially off-set impacts associated with Quincy Bypass.

New Compensatory Mitigation Rule:

There was discussion regarding the procedural changes of the new federal mitigation rule. As it is currently implemented and presented it appears that the UWRMP is a satisfactory means of accomplishing mitigation. It was urged that the NFWFMD include mitigation banks as a

preferred alternative in the UWRMP and be prepared to justify when an available mitigation bank's credits are not utilized. Per a recent Regulatory Guidance Letter, it appears that there will be no need to submit Rapanos forms unless a formal jurisdictional is requested.

Credit Ledger:

Per the USACE/MRT, UWRMP Table 7.1 at www.NWFWMDwetlands.com should be modified to include hotlinks to project-specific credit tables. USACE will provide specific requests to NWFWMD.

To-Do List Prior to Next Meeting:

- USACE provide conservation easement language to office of council for review. Get final copy back to NWFWMD.
- FDOT will submit permit modification requests for SR-79 and US-98/Thomas Drive to utilize Ward Creek West mitigation site.
- Improve navigation through the NWFWMD-Umbrella Plan website.

Next Quarterly Meeting – Late October, 2008 (Tentative)