

AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The FDOT is moving forward with the final design of the SR 7 Extension Project. The final design is based on extensive outreach and coordination related to the evaluation of impacts to wetlands, threatened and endangered species and their habitat during the project's Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Phase. The PD&E phase found no significant impacts and resulted in the following avoidance and minimization measures:

- Reduction in the median width from 42 feet down to 22 feet from 60 Street to Northlake Boulevard
- Reduction in the width of drainage treatment areas from 175 feet down to +/-30 feet
- Location of all storm water outfalls to the west to existing storm water systems, rather than to the wetlands located within the Pond Cypress Natural Area or Grassy Waters Preserve, to protect water quality in the natural areas
- Elimination of a proposed pond site located within the FDOT Rangeline ROW
- Removal of the wide shared use path on the east side of the roadway, replaced by a narrower sidewalk
- Reduction of design speed and corresponding reduction in the bridge footprint across the M Canal resulting in less encroachment into the Pond Cypress Natural Area
- Use of existing SR 7 County Road (between Northlake Boulevard and the entrance of the Ibis residential development) by placing the alignment as far west as possible
- Reduction of secondary impacts to wetlands in the Grassy Waters Preserve by placing alignment as far west as possible
- Incorporation of environmental mitigation through enhancement, restoration, and preservation of wetlands within the FDOT ROW north of the M Canal that will further reduce roadway-related secondary impacts on Grassy Waters Preserve
- Inclusion of wildlife fencing along the east and south sides of the corridor (north and south of the M-Canal)
- Inclusion of wildlife crossings that will allow the safe passage between Grassy Waters and the Ibis Mitigation Area

In addition, FDOT established design and construction conditions and commitments to avoid and minimize direct and indirect impact to endangered species.