

## US 41 (State Road [SR] 45)

from SR 44 to south of Withlacoochee Trail Bridge  
Citrus County, Florida

Work Program Item Segment Number: 257165-3

Federal Aid Project Number: D722-050-B

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Seven plans to widen a section of US 41 (SR 45) from two lanes to four lanes from SR 44 to south of Withlacoochee Trail Bridge in Citrus County, Florida, see the map below. The project requires approximately 5.199 acres of perpetual easement right of way (ROW) from the Whispering Pines Park adjacent to existing US 41 ROW. The Whispering Pines Park is part of the Withlacoochee State Forest (WSF). The required Park ROW is needed to construct the additional travel lanes and a Stormwater Management Facility (SMF) site. The existing 12' perimeter trail/firebreak and fence will be relocated to the west and native vegetation will be installed in the areas disturbed by construction. The required Park ROW is presently a forested area with the existing perimeter trail/firebreak running parallel to US 41 (SR 45).

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by FDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 26, 2022 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and FDOT. In order to avoid or minimize or eliminate any possible negative impacts to the activities, features, and attributes of the Preserve, FDOT Office of Environmental Management (OEM) and FDOT District Seven have coordinated with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) as the property owner, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) as property owner lessee, and City of Inverness as staff responsible for managing the Park and identified the following measures that would incorporate mitigation for the planned acquisition of Park ROW. Due to the planned Park ROW acquisition, the FDOT is proposing the following:

- Providing to the Board of Trustees (BOT) a total of 16.511 acres (more or less) located at 15377 Samons Road in Brooksville, Hernando County.
- Replacing/relocating the existing boundary fence along the new western right-of-way line of US 41 where it is adjacent to the park.
- Relocating the existing jogging/maintenance trail alongside the new boundary fence.
- Improving WSF Whispering Pines Park recreational trail connection to the Withlacoochee State Trail.
- Replacing disturbed vegetation and planting native trees adapted to a sandhill site.
- Long leaf pine was surveyed and provided for timber harvest by FDACS within the proposed perpetual easement and temporary construction easement.
- Constructing new park entrance across from the signalized main entrance of the Inverness Regional Shopping Center, with a dedicated left turn lane.

In accordance with Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, FDOT is seeking comments from the public concerning the effects of the project on the activities, features, and attributes of the Whispering Pines Park.

Additional information regarding the US 41 project's involvement with the Park is available at City of Inverness, Parks and Recreation, 212 West Main Street, Inverness, FL 34450, Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

For further information about the project's proposed use of ROW from the Park, please contact Eyra Cash, Project Manager at: FDOT District 7, MS 7-600, 11201 North McKinley Drive, Tampa, FL 33612 or toll free at (800) 226-7220, extension 6164. Any comments concerning this announcement must be postmarked by July 27, 2022.

Additional information will be posted on the project website: 257165-3-52-01 US 41 Widening from SR 44 to Withlacoochee Trail bridge ([fdottampabay.com](http://fdottampabay.com))

Public Participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Ms. Cash by e-mail at [Eyra.Cash@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Eyra.Cash@dot.state.fl.us).

