

Public Workshop and Public Hearing

Environmental Assessment for the Extension of Runway 14-32 and Related Improvements North Palm Beach County Airport (F45)



Overview of the NEPA Process

- NEPA requires federal agencies to consider the potential environmental impacts of projects with a federal nexus (such as funding) and disclose them to the public
- NEPA is triggered when a federal agency decides to take an action
- The NEPA process:
 - Reviews a proposed project for specified environmental resource categories which are governed by special purpose laws
 - Is used to determine if a project has the potential to result in significant environmental effects
 - Must be completed before a project commences
- The FAA has determined that an Environmental Assessment (EA) is the appropriate level of review for this project

Proposed Action and Purpose
and Need

Alternatives Analysis

Affected Environment and
Environmental Consequences

Draft EA Document

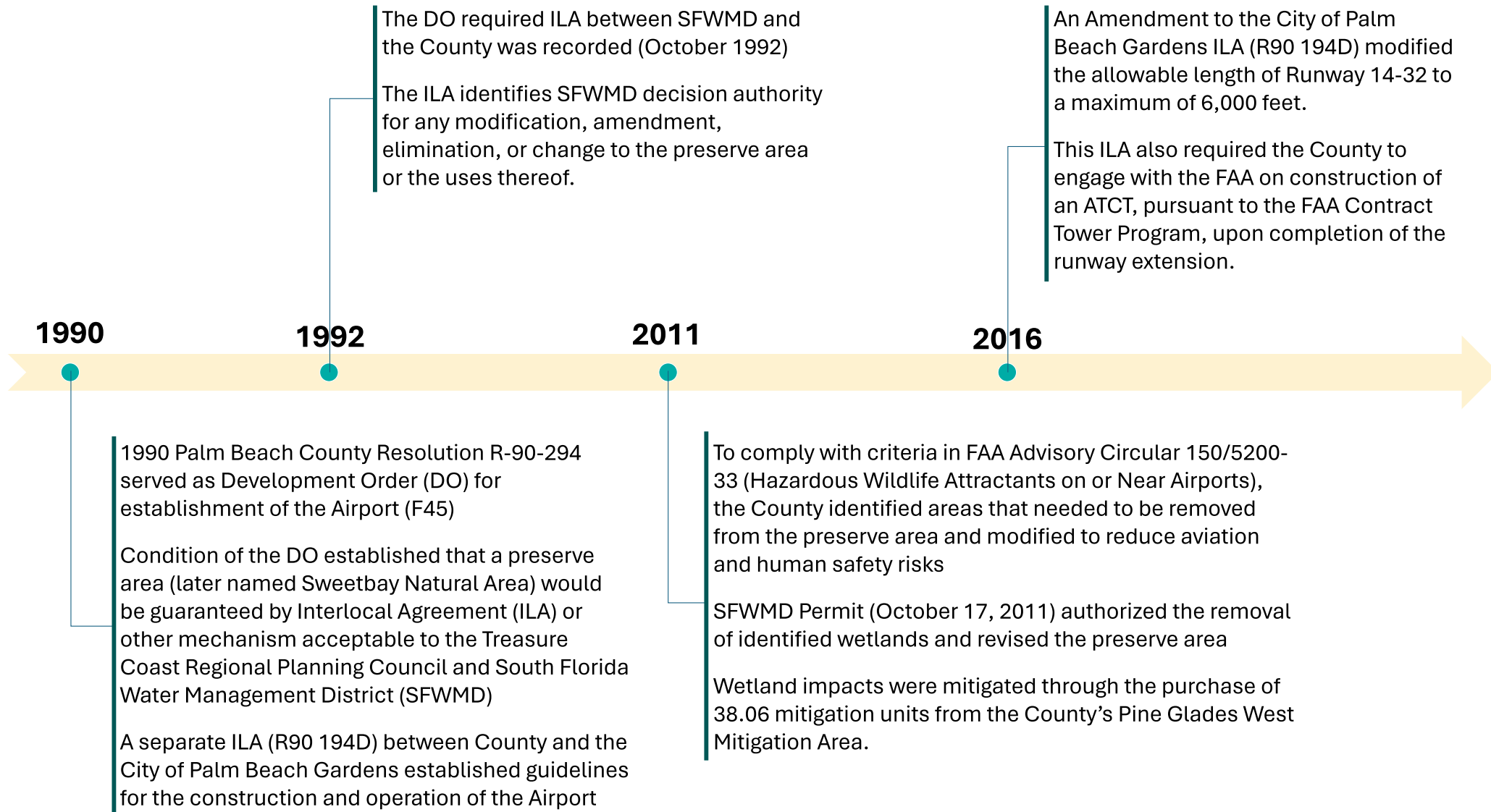
Public / Agency Review and
Comment Period

Consider Public and Agency Comments
and Final EA Document

FAA to Issue an Environmental
Determination



Project Background



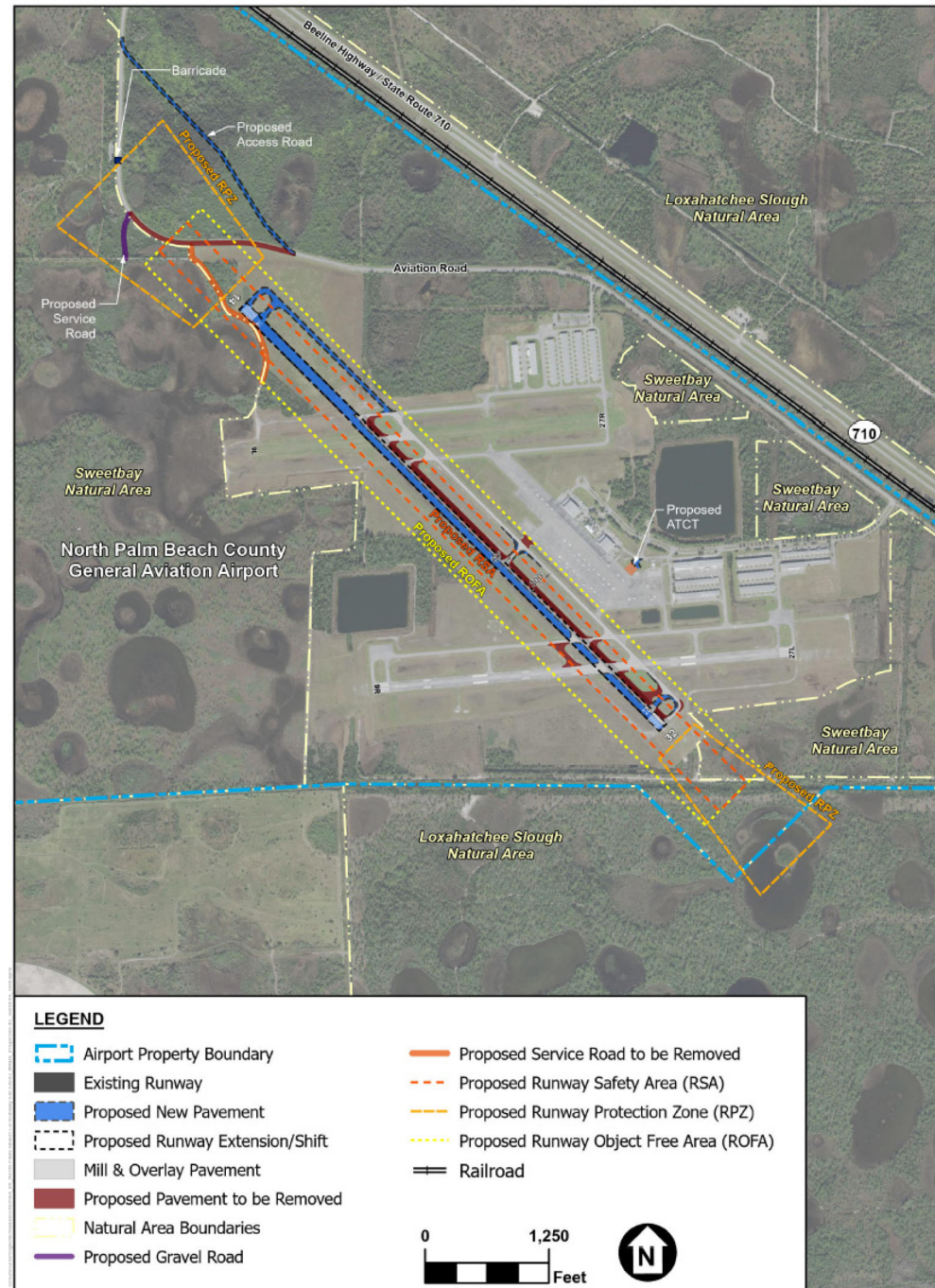
Overview of Proposed Project

The proposed project is the extension of the primary runway (Runway 14-32) at F45 by 1,700 feet

- Related improvements include
 - the extension of parallel Taxiway F
 - maintain existing area of aircraft apron parking
 - realignment of Aviation Road
 - realignment/reconstruction of service roads
 - siting of a new air traffic control tower (ATCT)
 - related modification of the stormwater management system

Purpose and Need (Draft EA Chapter 1):
The **purpose** is to allow users of the Airport to operate larger aircraft (including jets) with fewer operational restrictions than are currently imposed due to runway length.

The **need** is to allow F45 to fully serve its intended role as a reliever airport to PBI by better accommodating existing and prospective Airport users.



Alternatives Evaluated

ALTERNATIVES SCREENING CRITERIA EVALUATION								
Alternative	Meets Purpose and Need	Estimated Impacts to Natural Areas (acres)	Constructability and Cost Effectiveness	Estimated Wetlands Impacts (acres)	Operationally Efficient	Carried Forward for Further Analysis	Section 4(f) Impacts	Comments
Alternative 1 – Use of Other Airports	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	N/A	County does not have the authority to dictate that GA operations move to another airport. Thus, this alternative does not meet the purpose and need for the Proposed Project.
Alternative 2 – Other Modes of Transportation	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	N/A	Other modes of transportation would not provide a meaningful alternative to air travel, they would not be expected to meet the demands of GA aircraft operators or impact PBI's need for a reliever airport. Thus, this does not meet the purpose and need for the Proposed Project.
Alternative 3 – Extend Runway 9R-27L to the West	Yes	106.30	Yes	25.30	Yes	No	Yes	This alternative was fully analyzed and eliminated in the 2006 Master Plan Update and was not carried forward for full analysis in this EA.
Alternative 4 – Shift Runway Centerline by 60 Feet and Extend Runway 1,700 Feet (Proposed Project)	Yes	38.93	Yes	12.56	Yes	Yes	Yes	This is the alternative identified for further evaluation in the Draft EA
Alternative 5 – Extend Runway 14-32 to NW – Maintain Runway Centerline /Shift Taxiway	Yes	36.8	Yes	17.42	No	No	Yes	This alternative would place aircraft much further away from the existing FBO, terminal, and runway/taxiway and would increase the time it takes to travel through the Airport, and the multiple turns and smaller spaces increase the complexity of maneuvering larger aircraft and aviation support services. Therefore, this alternative was not carried forward.
Alternative 6 – Shift Runway Centerline by 60 Feet, Extend Runway 1,700 feet, and Install EMAS	Yes	38.4	No	8.46	Yes	No	Yes	While this alternative is fully constructable, the alternative would be more costly while providing limited reductions in impacts to wetlands. Furthermore, EMAS is generally only supportable in instances when inadequate area is available to build fully compliant RSAs, which is not the case for the Airport. Therefore, this alternative was not carried forward.
Alternative 7 – Shift Centerline 60 feet and Extend Runway 1,700 feet with Declared Distances	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	N/A	Employing declared distances would result in operational limitations on prospective GA aircraft operations at F45. Accordingly, it does not meet the purpose and need.
No Action Alternative	No	None	N/A	None	N/A	Yes	None	

Please see Chapter 2 of the Draft EA for more information



Summary of Potential Effects – Proposed Project

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CATEGORIES		
Resource	Draft EA Section and Appendix	Proposed Project
Air Quality	3.2 and Appendix B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction has the potential to create temporary air quality impacts due to heavy-duty construction equipment and vehicle trips. After construction, emissions from the Proposed Project would result from 750 additional annual operations in 2025 and 2,500 additional annual operations in 2030. The Proposed Project would not cause or contribute to violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).
Biological Resources	3.3 and Appendix C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposed Project would impact 12.56 acres of wetlands and up to 12.95 acres of airfield drainage features with wetland vegetation and up to 38.93 acres of natural area. The Biological Assessment (BA) identifies eight federally listed threatened, endangered, or sensitive species and one candidate species with the potential to occur within the Action Area.
Climate	3.4 and Appendix B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction associated would result in approximately 5,815 metric tons of greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions. After construction, there would be approximately 229 and 730 metric tons of GHG emissions as a result of 750 and 2,500 additional annual operations in 2025 and 2030, respectively.
Coastal Resources	3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority of the Proposed Project area is located in upland areas; therefore, no land disturbing activities on the coast or in areas directly adjacent to coastal resources. The Proposed Project would convert 3.56 acres of wetland to upland area. However, wetland impacts would be mitigated per federal regulations.
Department of Transportation Section 4(f)	3.6 and Appendix G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A total of 32.3 acres of land within the Sweetbay Natural Area would be affected (~17.4 acres directly affected by construction and ~14.9 acres would be within the new Runway Protection Zones [RPZs]).
Hazardous Materials, Solid Waste, and Pollution Prevention	3.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There would be no substantial changes in the handling, use, or disposal of hazardous materials as a result of the Proposed Project in either 2025 or 2030. There would be an increase in fueling and maintenance which would increase the use of petroleum-based products for aircraft, GSE, and Airport-dedicated vehicles, as well as the use of fuel storage tanks. There are no NPL properties located within or adjacent to the Proposed Project. Soil and water contamination has been from a fuel spill that occurred over 30 years ago has been remediated per state regulations. Likely a very minor increase in solid waste due to the growth of business and public charter operations involving passenger transport.
Historic, Architectural, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources	3.8 and Appendix F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no expectation that archaeological artifacts or evidence of prior occupation would be discovered during Proposed Project construction.
Land Use	3.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposed Project would occur entirely on the Airport property and would not result in changes to local land uses or conversion of adjacent land uses to airport use.
Natural Resources and Energy Supply	3.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposed Project would require a total of approximately 6,250 cubic yards of concrete and/or asphalt, and 40,000 cubic yards of clean fill material. It is not anticipated that the demand for concrete, aggregate, or fill material associated with this project would overwhelm the selected supplier(s) or restrict regional supply. The Proposed Project is anticipated to result in an increase in demand for fuel due to construction and increased airside activity. However, the demand of fuel during and after construction activities would not exceed existing or anticipated fuel storage capacity. Further, any increase in demand for jet fuel would be in proportion to the minor increase in aircraft activity.
Noise and Noise-Compatible Land Use	3.11 and Appendix B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposed Project would result in a slight increase of the DNL 60 and higher contours and DNL 65 and higher contours in 2025 and 2030. However, most of the area within the DNL 65 contour is within the Airport property boundary in 2025 and 2030. There are no off-Airport land uses, such as residential or commercial property, within DNL 65 dB contours in 2025 or 2030. There are no noise-sensitive sites or residential land uses within DNL 65 contours in 2025 and 2030.
Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice	3.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposed Project would not produce economic hardship or place a strain on local housing stocks. The Proposed Project would not result in disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects to environmental justice communities. No increase in vehicular traffic on nearby roadways because there would not be a substantial increase in the number of aircraft operations. A change in noise exposure would be minimal and the recreational land uses would be compatible with the projected aircraft noise levels. The construction and operation emissions would not cause or contribute to violations of the NAAQS in 2025 or 2030.
Visual Effects	3.13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no open established views or viewpoints of concern surrounding the Airport. There are no anticipated changes to the type of runway end approach lighting. It is unlikely for airfield lighting to be perceived by any residential development due to vegetation and the distance of the Airport from the nearest residence. Likewise, it is unlikely that construction equipment would be visible.
Water Resources (Wetlands, Floodplains, Surface Waters, Groundwater)	3.14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction and land clearing associated with the proposed runway extension and related improvements would directly impact an estimated 12.56 acres of wetlands. Surface water resources that could be impacted by the Proposed Project primarily serve to convey stormwater runoff and are part of the surface water management system. The Proposed Project would unlikely result in a significant change to recharge characteristics of groundwater resources or result in contamination to existing groundwater.
Cumulative Impacts	Please see Section 3.5, Cumulative Impacts, in the Draft EA for more information.	



Biological Resources

- The Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (16 U.S.C. §§ 1531-1544) requires the FAA to determine if a Proposed Project under its purview would affect a federally listed species or critical habitat designated for that species
- Environmental scientists conducted field surveys and research to characterize the environmental and natural resources that may be affected by the Proposed Project
- The Action Area (areas directly and indirectly impacted by the proposed project) has eight federally listed species and one candidate species that could potentially occur
 - *This is based on the site conditions, species-specific habitat requirements, desktop review, and multiple field surveys*
- Only one species, the wood stork (*Mycteria americana*) resulted in a determination of “*May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect*”
- There is a determination of No Effect or Not Applicable for all other species

SPECIES DETERMINATION OF EFFECT			
Common Name	Scientific Name	Species Type	Determination of Effect
Florida Bonneted Bat	<i>Eumops floridanus</i> *	Mammals	No Effect
Florida Panther	<i>Puma concolor coryi</i>	Mammals	No Effect
Audubon's Crested Caracara	<i>Caracara cheriway</i> *	Birds	No Effect
Everglade Snail Kite	<i>Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus</i> *	Birds	No Effect
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	<i>Picoides borealis</i> *	Birds	No Effect
Wood Stork	<i>Mycteria americana</i>	Birds	May Affect, Not Likely to Adversely Affect
American Alligator	<i>Alligator mississippiensis</i>	Reptiles	Not Applicable
Eastern Indigo Snake	<i>Drymarchon couperi</i>	Reptiles	No Effect
Gopher Tortoise*	<i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>	Reptiles	No Effect

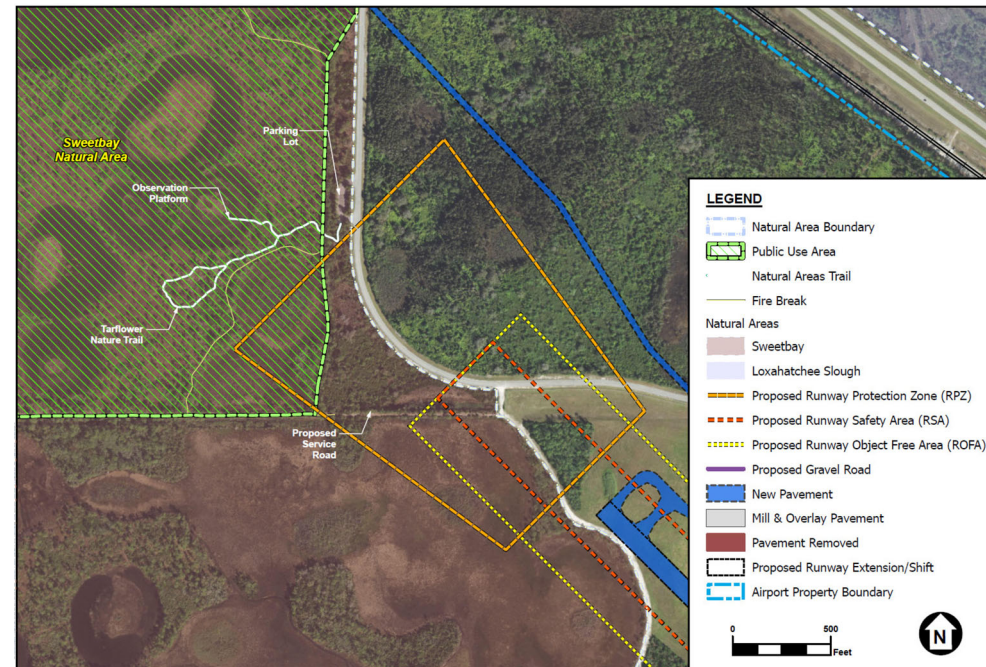
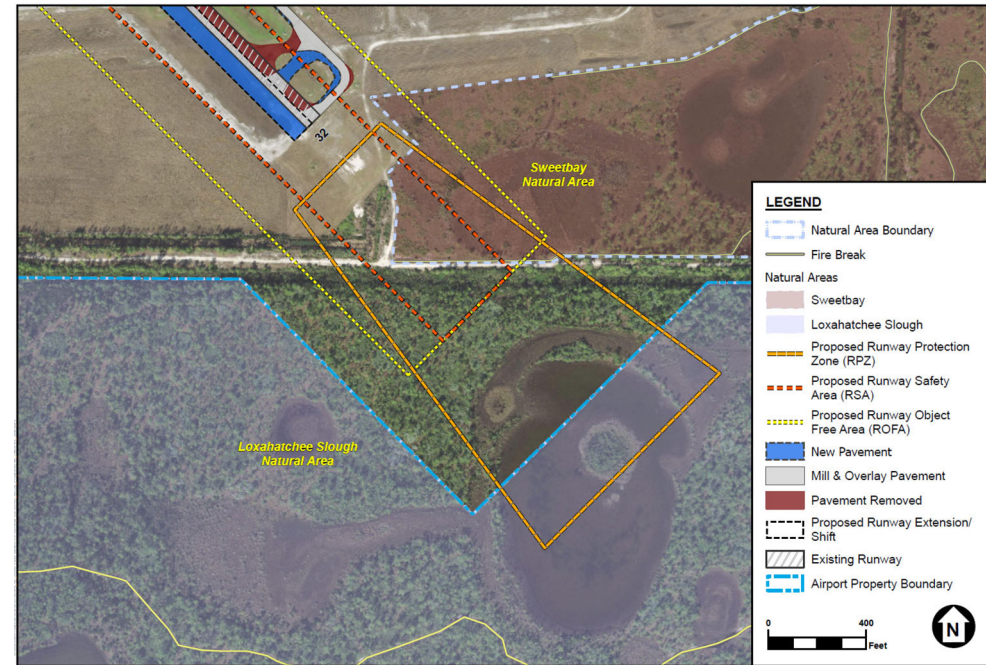
NOTES:
 Status Codes:
 E = Listed as Endangered
 T = Listed as Threatened
 S/A = Protected due to Similarity of Appearance to other protected species
 * = Candidate species for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA)
 SOURCES: FWC. June 2020. Florida's Endangered Species, Threatened Species and Species of Special Concern. Official Lists; FNAI. 2020. Biodiversity Matrix; USFWS. 2020. ECOS; USFWS. June 2020. Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) Endangered, Threatened and Commercially Exploited Plants of Florida (November 2018).

For more information, please see Section 3.3, Biological Resources, and Appendix C of the Draft EA



DOT Act Section 4(f) Resources Draft De Minimis Determination

- Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act established policy for a project requiring use of resources including publicly owned land of a park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, state, or local significance, or land of a historic site of national, state or local significance
- Two Section 4(f) properties reviewed for this project - Sweetbay Natural Area (SNA) and Loxahatchee Slough Natural Area (LNA)
- Both natural areas are managed by the County's Environmental Resource Management (ERM) Department
- FAA has made a draft *De Minimis* impact determination for Section 4(f) (Appendix G of the EA)



Impacts	Sweetbay Natural Area	Loxahatchee Natural Area
Total	32.3 ac	Although the Runway Protection Zone – RPZ will extend over LNA, no physical impact will occur
Direct	~17.4 ac – for Runway 14 Safety Area (RSA) and Object Free Area (OFA)	None
Indirect	~14.9 ac – select trimming and clearing (within RPZ)	~6.66 will fall within RPZ – no clearing required
Public Use Facilities	~830 feet of a maintenance access and firebreak no longer accessible	None – there is no public access or public recreation within this part of LNA
Mitigation Measures	Regulatory mitigation in accordance with SFWMD requirements in coordination with ERM Development of a new 2,167 ft section of unpaved trail within the designated recreation area at SNA Lighting, signage, security and safety enhancements	None – no physical use or alternations at LNA



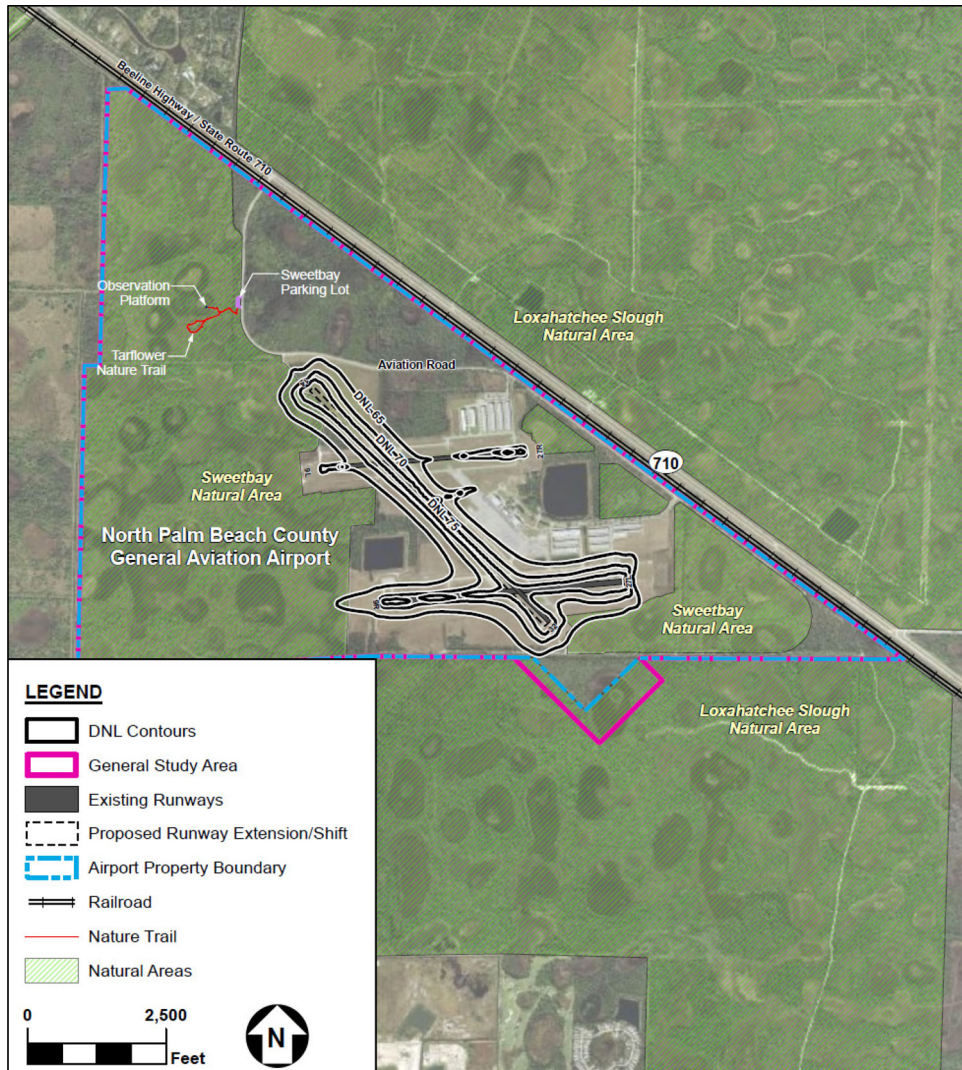
For more information, please see Section 3.6, Department of Transportation Section 4(f), and Appendix G of the Draft EA



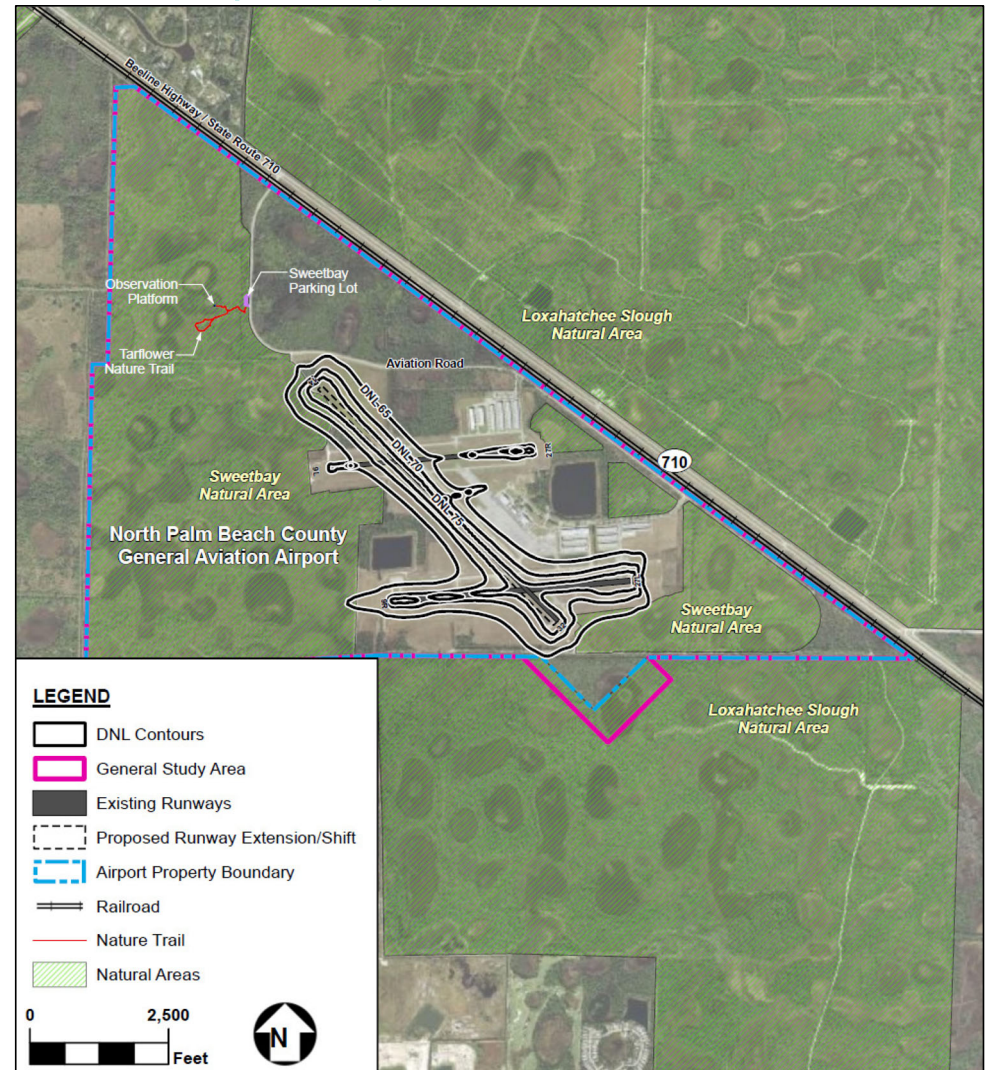
Noise and Noise-Compatible Land Use

- FAA requires an analysis of noise exposure when development actions may change the exposure of individuals to aircraft noise in areas surrounding the airport.
- Under the Proposed Project, noise contours stay primarily within the Airport property boundary in 2025 and 2030.

Proposed Project – 2025 DNL Contours



Proposed Project – 2030 DNL Contours



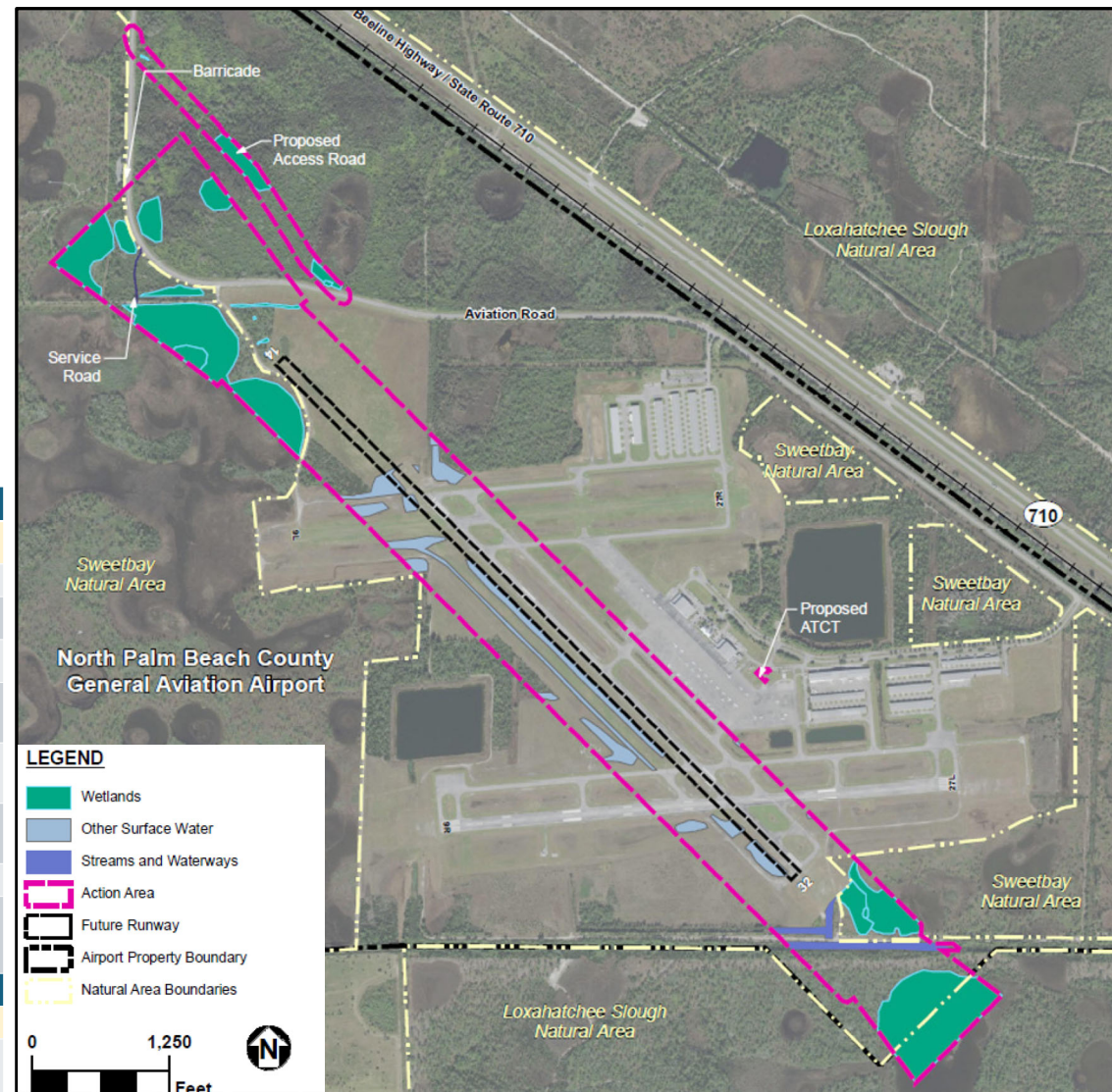
For more information, please see Section 3.11, Noise and Noise-Compatible Land Use, and Appendix B of the Draft EA



Water Resources (including Wetlands)

- Water Resources assessed in EA include wetlands, floodplains, surface waters, and groundwater
- Wetland delineation and multiple habitat surveys were conducted for the entire project area
- Impacts will be further minimized during design
- Construction BMPs will be implemented to protect water resources
- There are no significant impacts to wetlands, surface waters, groundwater, or floodplains

Wetland Impacts	Acres
Total	33.56
Direct	12.56
Runway 14-32 Safety Areas (RSAs)	2.4
Airport Access Road	1.16
Runway 14-32 Object Free Areas (OFAs)	9
Indirect	Up to 21 acres of wetlands would be subject to selective and as-needed tree trimming
Sweetbay Natural Area	11.9 acres of wetlands would be directly impacted
Loxahatchee Natural Area	None
Mitigation Measures	Regulatory mitigation in accordance with SFWMD requirements in coordination with ERM
Other Surface Water Impacts	Acres
Total Direct	36.76
Mitigation Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include swales/ditches and channelized waterways/canals around runway/taxiways • Serve to convey stormwater runoff and are part of the surface water management system



For more information, please see Section 3.14, Water Resources (Wetlands, Floodplains, Surface Waters, Groundwater) of the Draft EA



Next Steps and Public Comments

Next Steps

- FAA will review and prepare responses to comments on the Draft EA
- Prepare Final Environmental Assessment
- FAA issues its Decision Document

Submitting Public Comments

- Public comment period ends on May 21, 2024.
- Written comments may be submitted to PBCDOA at the address below.

Palm Beach County Department of Airports
846 Palm Beach International Airport
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

- Comments may also be submitted electronically to F45EAComments@esassoc.com
- All comments must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern on May 21, 2024
- **PRIVACY NOTICE:** Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

