

MRMCC CHAIR'S REPORT OLD BUSINESS

- **Chair Motion Follow-up**
- **National W&S Partnership**
- **With Miri Hardy**

Jono Miller

August 8, 2025

POSSIBLE MOTION

In appreciation of Congressman Steube and his staff's efforts, I move that the council officially endorses H.R.642 - the Myakka Wild and Scenic River Act of 2025 and authorizes the Chair to assist in actions furthering the designation of the Myakka in Sarasota County as a National Partnership Wild and Scenic River, which would provide prestige and support while avoiding additional regulation.

Further, I move that the Council encourages others to support this important legislation.



Stacey Mazza-Gilkison motioned that in appreciation of Congressman Steube and his staff's efforts, I move that the council officially endorses H.R.642-the Myakka Wild and Scenic River Act of 2025 and authorizes the Chair to assist in actions furthering the designation of the Myakka in Sarasota County as a National Partnership Wild and Scenic River, which would provide prestige and support while avoiding additional regulation.

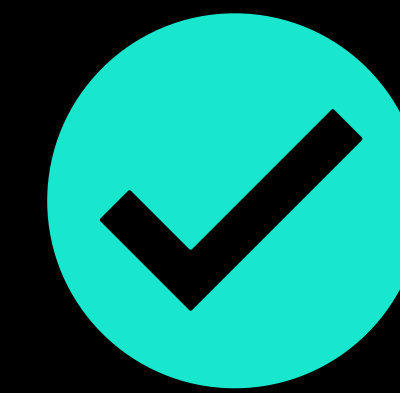
Further, I move that the Council encourages others to support this important legislation.



Barbara Lockhart motioned that the council send a formal letter with Jono's presentation to North Port to put them on notice of the Council's position on extending Price Boulevard and Toledo Blade Boulevard. The Council would ask, in the future, that they be notified so they can issue their statutory and obligated non-binding advisory opinion. Becky Ayech seconded. Nikki Gilmer, Howard Berna, Richard Larson and Stefan Kaley abstained.



June 23rd



On January 14th I spoke at your City meeting as a private citizen encouraging you to spend more time on a proposed new access to I-75 that involved extending Price Boulevard and crossing the Myakka River. I've attached the clip below.

As you'll recall, North Port went ahead and included this proposed crossing in a group of five potential projects for the MPO to consider.

I was one of several people who spoke at the MPO meeting where North Port's list was being considered. As you know, based on public testimony and the MPO member discussion, the MPO declined to move that project forward.

01/14/2025
10:04 AM



City Commission Regular Meeting

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

is way overdue thank you. And

Jono Miller's January 14th Testimony at North Port

At the May 9th meeting of the Myakka River Management Coordinating Council, of which North Port is a member, I reviewed the situation, which led to Barbara Lockhart motioniing that the Council send a formal letter with my presentation to North Port to put them on notice of the Council's position on extending Price Boulevard and Toledo Blade Boulevard.

The motion also requested that, in the future, the Council be notified of potential actions affecting the Myakka so that the Council may issue a non-binding advisory opinion. Becky Ayech seconded. Nikki Gilmer, Howard Berna, Richard Larson and Stefan Kalev abstained.

I have attached the slides that I presented.

On a personal note, I want to express my thanks to the City for the long service of Elizabeth Wong. She was a reliable, engaged member of the Counail, and served as Vice Chair at times. She will be missed.

Sincerely,

Jono Miller

2025 Chair, Myakka River Management Coordinating Council



Becky motioned that the council ask the chair to resend the letter that he had previously sent to the county commission reiterating the desire to have the wall on the north side of the bridge crossing the Myakka River and Old Miakka taken down to restore the view that was promised. Victor Dobrin seconded the motion. Nikki Gilmer, Howard Berna, Jamie Richardson and Stefan Kaley abstained.

The gist of that April 2019 letter (attached) is that the replacement bridge over the Myakka in Old Miakka was constructed in a manner that 1) inappropriately obstructed the scenic view of Tatum Sawgrass, and 2) was contrary to what the public (and Council) had been led to believe. The point of the letter was to have the county consider reducing the height of the railing to restore the view.

The motion was inspired, in part, by the timing of the current road closure that seemed to create an opportunity to make some changes without further disrupting traffic. Unfortunately, my computer seized up shortly after the meeting and I just got it back today.

The County did reply to a previous inquiry, and, as a convenience, I am attaching that as well. In that letter the County Transportation and Stormwater Construction Manager Mike Elfers argued that due to the bridge curvature and anticipated traffic, state specifications called for a higher railing.



NATIONAL WILD & SCENIC PARTNERSHIP

August 8, 2025

Jono Miller & Miri Hardy

119th CONGRESS

1st Session

H. R. 642

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

January 23, 2025

Mr. Steube (for himself and Mr. Buchanan) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate the portion of the Myakka River lying within Sarasota County, Florida as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and for other purposes.



FOR IMMEDIATE

RELEASE

July 15, 2025

CONTACT: Press@RickScott.senate.gov

(202) 228-0473

...

Sen. Rick Scott, Rep. Greg Steube Lead Bill to Designate Myakka River as National Wild and Scenic River

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Senator Rick Scott introduced the [Myakka Wild and Scenic River Act](#) to designate the Sarasota County portion of the Myakka River as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System to preserve the river's free-flowing condition and ecological value and build on Florida's decades-long efforts to protect this unique waterway.

Sen. Rick Scott, Rep. Greg Steube Lead Bill to Designate Myakka River as National Wild and Scenic River

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Senator Rick Scott introduced the [*Myakka Wild and Scenic River Act*](#) to designate the Sarasota County portion of the Myakka River as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System to preserve the river's free-flowing condition and ecological value and build on Florida's decades-long efforts to protect this unique waterway.

Senator Rick Scott said, "Florida's natural beauty is one of our greatest blessings, and the Myakka River is a shining example. This bill honors the strong local, state, and community support for protecting the river's pristine waters, rich ecosystems, and recreational values, while ensuring future generations have the opportunity to experience Myakka as it is today."

Congressman Greg Steube said, "The Myakka River is a natural treasure, formally recognized by the Florida Legislature as a Wild and Scenic since 1985. Federal designation as a Partnership Wild and Scenic River (PWSR) is the next step to enhance the free-flowing conditions that the Myakka River Management Coordinating Council (MRMCC) has diligently worked to preserve for the past four decades. My office and I are committed to adding the Sarasota segment of the river to the program, and I am urging the Natural Resources Committee to take up the bill. I am grateful for Senator Scott's companion legislation to help guarantee the Myakka River remains a pristine waterway for future generations of Floridians."

[FULL COMMITTEE PRINT]
119TH CONGRESS } HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES { REPORT
1st Session } 119-XXX

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND
RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2026

MONTH Day, Year.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State
of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. SIMPSON of Idaho, from the Committee on Appropriations,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

The Myakka is mentioned in the Department of Interior FY26 Appropriations Bill!

Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers.—The Committee notes that Public Law 117–328 authorizes the Service to study the Kissimmee River and the Little Manatee Wild and Scenic River for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Program. The Committee directs the Service to complete the authorized studies in a timely manner. The Committee is aware of interest in evaluating other areas in Florida, such as the Myakka River and the Florida National Spring system in Northern and Central Florida, for possible inclusion in the Wild & Scenic Rivers Program, and encourages the Service to keep the Committee apprised of any planned actions related to these efforts.

And funds to the 18 existing PWSRs were allocated for FY26 with only a very minor cut.

OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM

The Committee recommends \$2,718,124,000 for Operation of the National Park System (ONPS). The recommendation provides funding for base operations, specifically for the purpose of maintaining operations and access to Service units and sites. Offsets are taken from non-base project accounts. Within the total amount provided, the table below makes recommendations for specific programs:

Program Recommendation

Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers \$5,300,000

Ad Hoc Myakka Partnership

Wild and Scenic River Steering Committee

Dr. Miri Hardy Formerly with Friends of Myakka
Jono Miller Myakka River Management Coordinating Council
Chris Oliver FDEP Myakka Wild and Scenic River Program
Jaime Doubek-Racine National Park Service
Jon Thaxton Gulf Coast Community Foundation

- Over 150 years combined experience with the Myakka
- Volunteer, nonprofit, and state & federal agency representation

Dr. Miri Hardy

Leading coordination with Representative Steube's office

Overseeing dozen's of phone calls, zoom calls, summaries for use for outreach, conversations with national W&S support, as well as document production and review including:

- a one page overview of the Myakka as a partnership river
- a 40-page evaluation of the river
- a 37-page map series showing lands protected since the original federal study
- a seven minute narrated PowerPoint
- soliciting support letters



Steve Giguere with David Halbstein,
Congressman Steube's Field Representative

H.R. 642 - Myakka Wild and Scenic River Act of 2025

Led by Rep. Steube (FL-17), with Rep. Buchanan (FL-16)

WHAT

- There are 226 federally designated Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSRs) – but only 18 of these rivers are Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers (**PWSRs**).
- This bill designates the 34 miles of the Myakka River within Sarasota County as the 19th PWSR
- PWSRs differ from standard WSRs – PWSRs flow through private, local, and state lands only.
- Designation affords river partners two primary tools to maintain and enhance the river's Outstandingly Remarkable Values (**ORVs**):
 - (1) addition to Partnership Wild and Scenic River Program programmatic line item
 - (2) technical support and conservation equipment from National Park Service staff

WHY

- **Private property rights are protected:** land ownership and existing land practices are preserved
- The designated "**partner**" – the [Myakka River Management Coordinating Council](#) (MRMCC) – is a well-established council of local government officials, private property owners, and conservationists
 - The Florida Legislature created the MRMCC in 1985 – they have a [Comprehensive River Management Plan](#) and can 'hit the ground running'
 - Other rivers may have to spend time and resources on startup administrative tasks
- The Myakka River has been **studied by the National Park Service** – twice – then deemed eligible in 1985 and again in 2025. Other river designation bills may only authorize a study to determine eligibility

SUPPORT

- Sarasota County Commission (BCC)
- Big Waters Land Trust
- Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership
- League of Women Voters of Sarasota County
- American Rivers



steube.house.gov

@RepGregSteube

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United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Interior Region 1
North Atlantic-Appalachian
1234 Market Street, 20th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107



IN REPLY REFER TO:

To: Dee Hewitt (Southeast RTCA/Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers)

Copy: Corita Waters, John Cannella (WASO Wild and Scenic Rivers)
Miri Hardy, Friends of Myakka River

From: Jamie Fosburgh, Branch Chief PWSR, Region 1
JAMES FOSBURGH

Digitally signed by JAMES
FOSBURGH
Date: 2025.05.28 14:29:11 -04'00'

Subject: Peer Review of Myakka Partnership Wild and Scenic River Evaluation

Date: May 28, 2025

Dee, Corita et al:

Over the past year, I have assisted and advised Jaime Doubek-Racine (R2 PWSR) in the consideration of potential Partnership Wild and Scenic River status for the Myakka River in Florida. In this regard, the Myakka River has a remarkably similar history and context to the recently designated Housatonic River in Connecticut. Both rivers were subject to congressionally authorized 5a Wild and Scenic River Studies decades ago. Both rivers were found to qualify for designation based on free-flowing character and documentation of “outstandingly remarkable” natural, cultural and recreational values. Yet neither river was advanced as suitable for designation based on the inability of the National Park Service at that time to embrace partnership models of designation and management. Undeterred from advancing river protection objectives, both the Housatonic and Myakka pursued non-federal methods of protection and management -- both with remarkable success. Several years ago, the Housatonic River Commission made the decision to seek federal recognition and protection under the Partnership Wild and Scenic River (PWSR) model developed by the NPS in the intervening years (precisely to embrace the partnership based management and administrative model that it lacked those decades ago). NPS conducted an “Evaluation” in the form of an update to the earlier, congressional study, which confirmed present-day eligibility and suitability. The Housatonic pursued PWSR based designation legislation (PL117-328), and is now a very successful addition to the group of 18 Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers.

As such, I am very pleased to review the southeast region's Myakka River Evaluation undertaken in the same vein as that for the Housatonic. I very much agree with the

conclusions and findings of this Evaluation regarding both eligibility and suitability. I would note in particular the following:

- It is clear that resource protection and enhancement between the mid-1980s and the present has been greatly advanced through the Myakka River Management Coordinating Council. As a state authorized, local administration entity for potential federal Partnership Wild and Scenic River designation, this Council and its history of success create an ideal, proven foundation for successful administration and management. In this regard, the federal Partnership Wild and Scenic designation (and NPS) would be able to partner directly with this existing Council, exactly as we have with the Housatonic.
- The existing River Management Plan overseen by the Myakka River Council appears entirely compatible with the federal designation. As with the Housatonic, only minor administrative amendments (post designation) would be needed to update the Plan to recognize the federal designation. This has been a smooth and easy process for the Housatonic, and should be the same for the Myakka. Jackie Dias of our R1 staff assisted the Housatonic River Commission with this process, and may be of assistance for the Myakka.
- The pending federal legislation to designate the Myakka as a Wild and Scenic River based on the NPS Partnership model appears well drafted, and recognizes the suitability of the existing Myakka River Council and Myakka River Plan as appropriate vehicles forming the foundation of the federal PWSR designation.

In conclusion, I am very impressed by the Myakka River and its eligibility and suitability for Partnership Wild and Scenic River designation as documented in the Southeast Region's Evaluation document.

Jamie Fosburgh
PWSR Branch Chief, Region 1

Jamie Fosburgh, Branch Chief
Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers
Charlestown Navy Yard, Building I
Charlestown, MA 02129
617 314-2810 (c)
jamie_fosburgh@nps.gov
M-F 8:30-5:30

Concurrence from Jamie Fosburgh, PWSR Branch Chief:

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Concurrence from Jamie Fosburgh, PWSR Branch Chief, concurrence letter:

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The three critical elements of the Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers Program:

1. A council or committee
2. A Comprehensive River Management Plan
3. An independent nonprofit which
 - Specifically exists to protect and enhance the river's outstanding values
 - Serves as the direct partner with NPS for:
 - The Cooperative Agreement
 - Fiscal agency

Myakka River Partnership

Miri Hardy

Steve Suau

Julie K Morris

Jon Robinson

Chris King

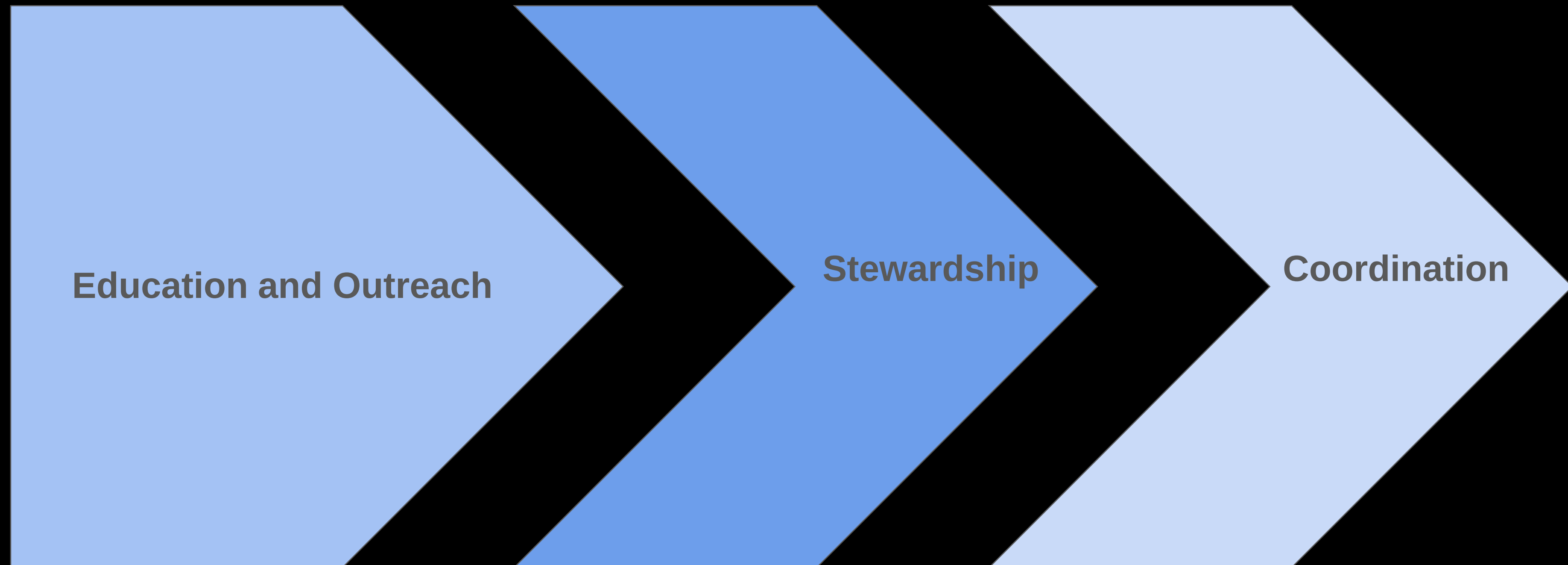
Sarah Denison Williams

Cavin Brothers

Charlie Scott

Myakka River Partnership

Protecting and enhancing the Myakka River and its watershed through:



TERRANOVA

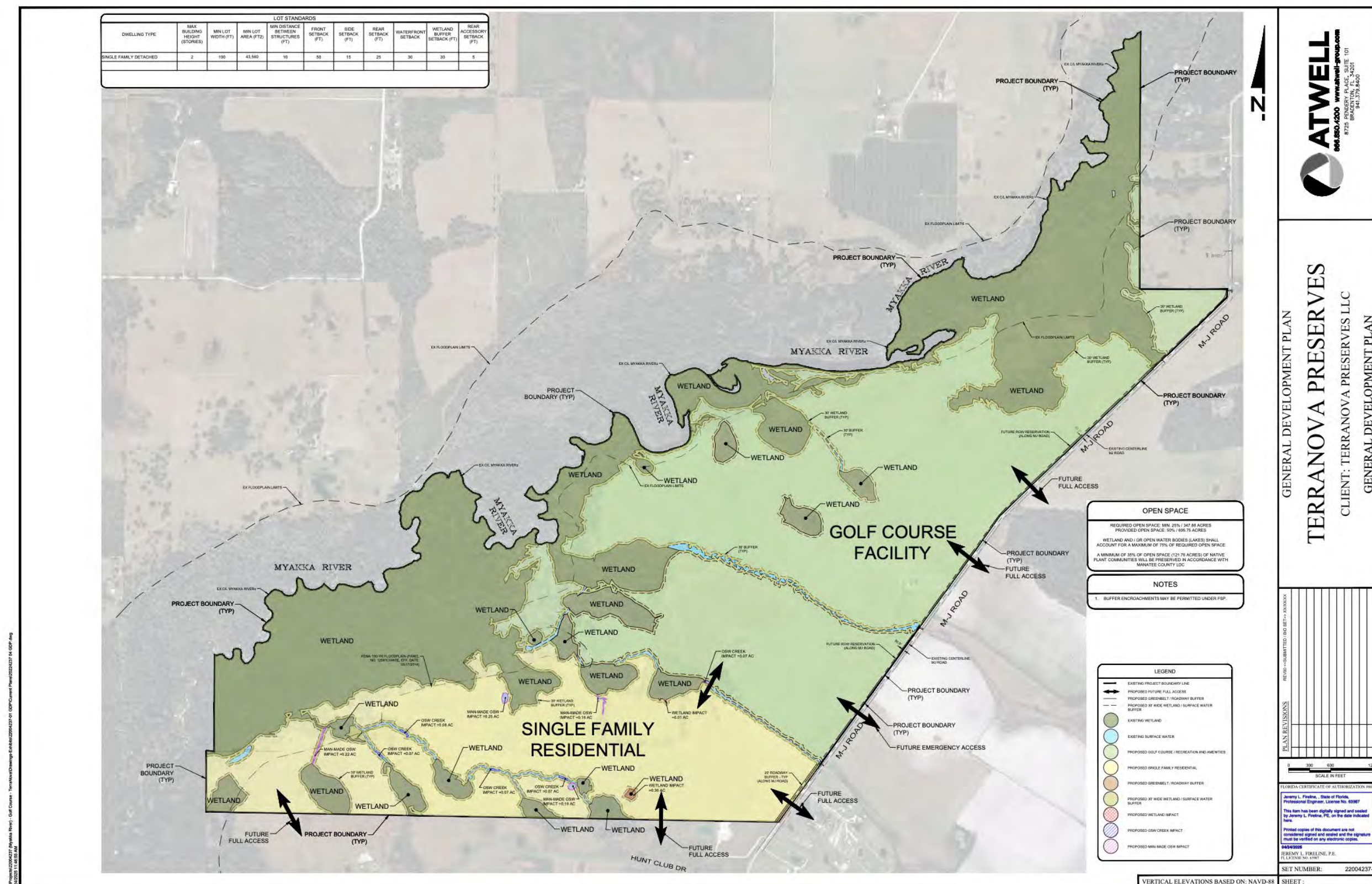
In Manatee County

Terranova Preserves

Rezone application in Manatee County on the Myakka River

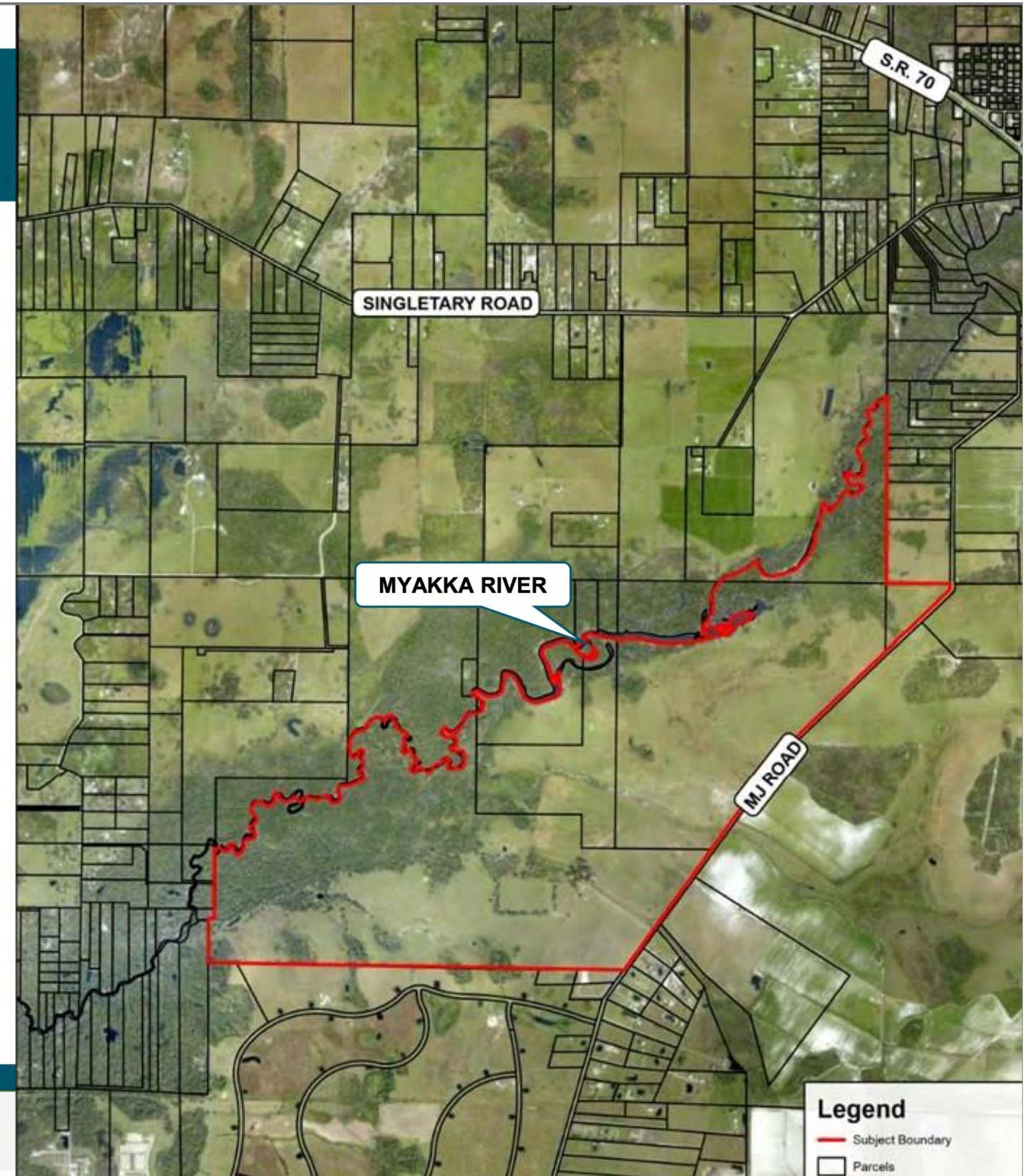
PLN2504-0180

Miri Hardy, PhD & Jono Miller



SITE OVERVIEW

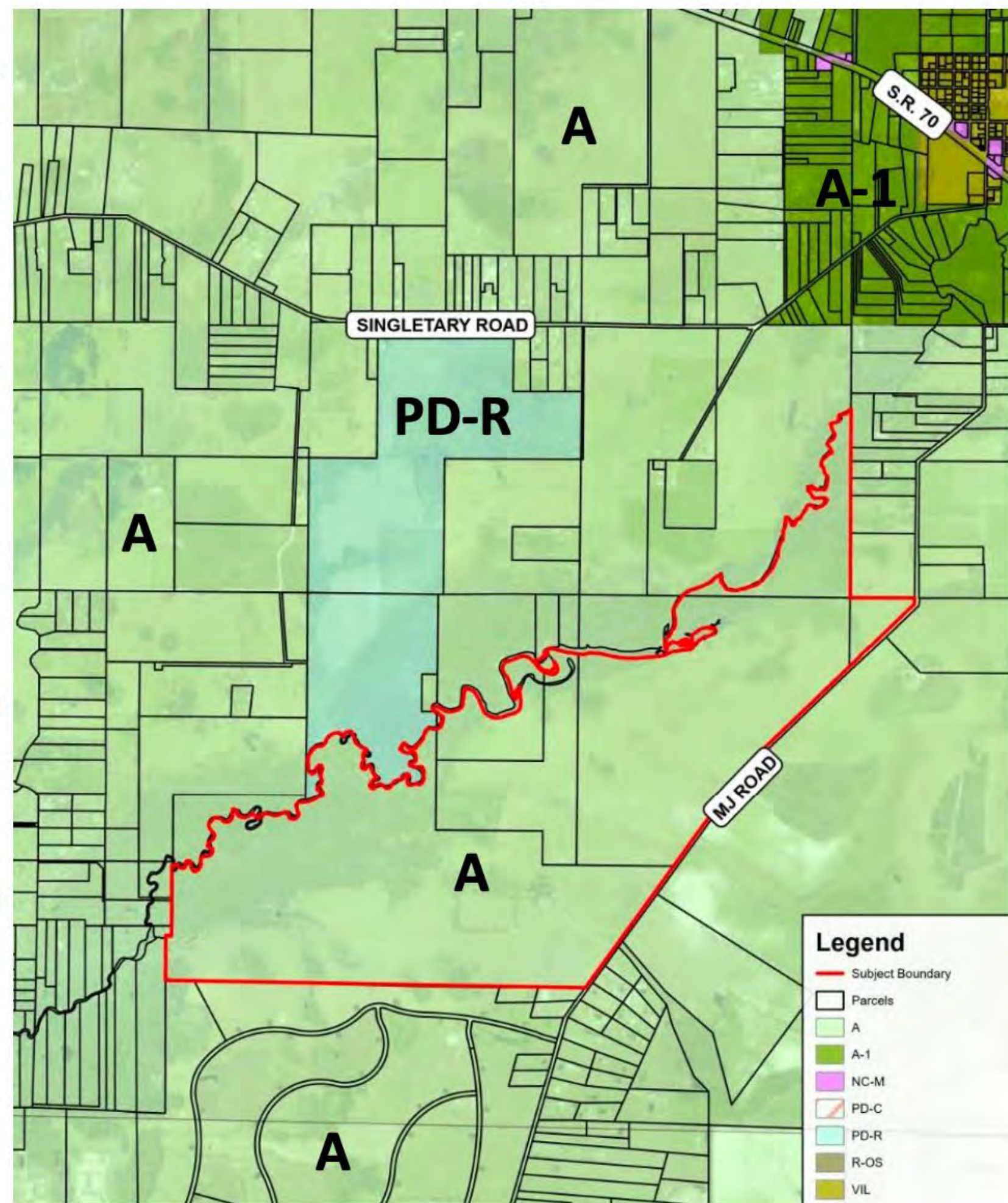
- ±1,391.50 acres
- Frontage on MJ Road
- FLU: Agriculture/Rural (AG/R)
- Existing Zoning: General Agricultural (A)



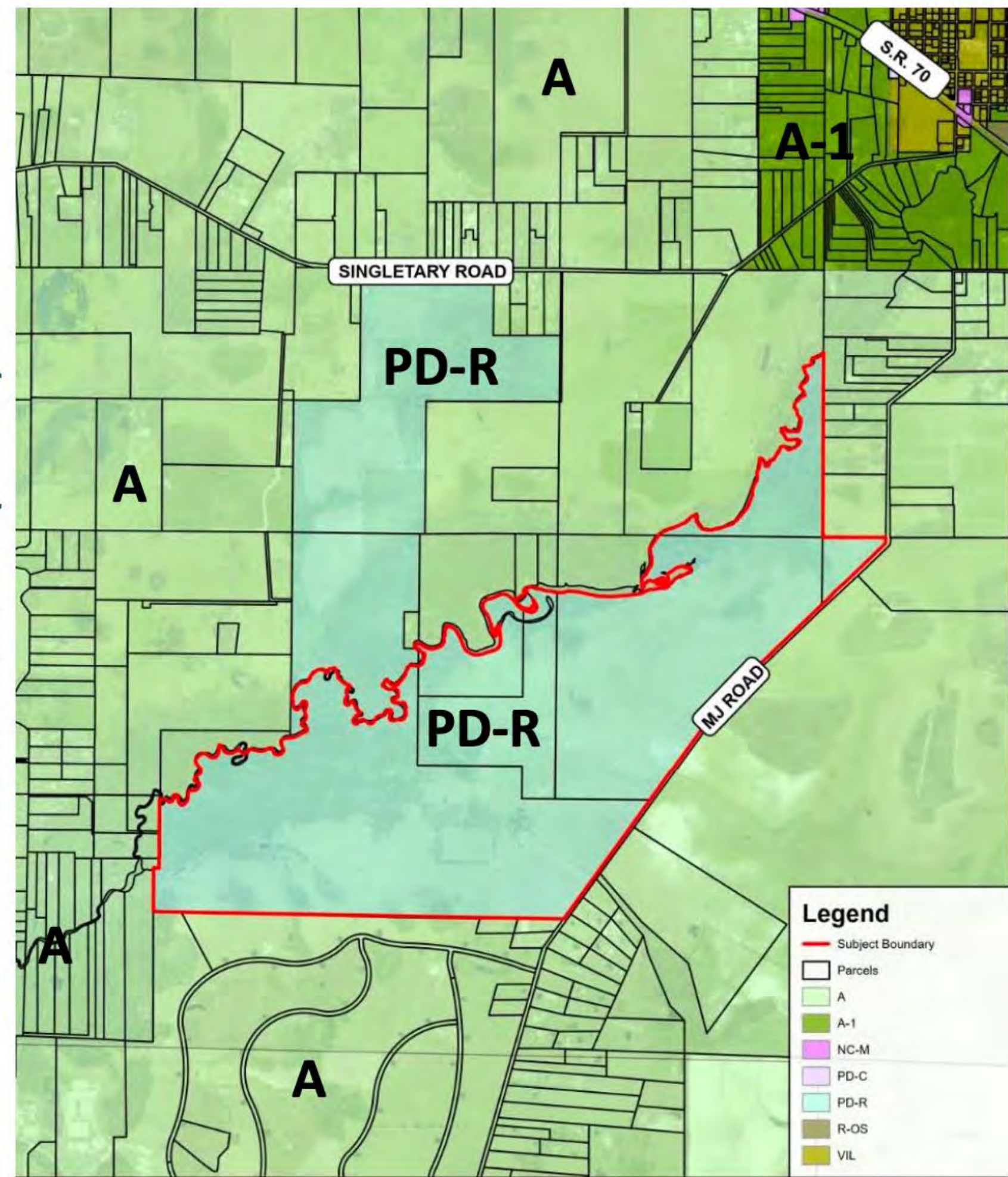
JULY 23, 2025

REZONE REQUEST

Existing Zoning: General Agriculture (A)



Proposed Zoning: Planned Development Residential (PDR)



- JULY 23, 2025
- RVi**
Open the Outdoors

SHELLING TYPE	AREA (AC)	NUMBER OF SHELLING UNITS	CRASHY INTERVAL
RESIDENTIAL	104.33	130	28 JUL
NON-RESIDENTIAL	197.07	0	PAGE 33





MIAKKA
GOLF CLUB

- A PAR 3 COURSE
- B PUTTING COURSE
- C CABINS
- D STILLHOUSE/BOATHOUSE
- E GAZEBO
- F HELIPAD
- G CLUBHOUSE
- H GOLF PERFORMANCE CENTER
- I PRACTICE RANGE
- J SHORT GAME AREA
- K PRACTICE GREEN
- L COMFORT STATION
- M MAINTENANCE FACILITY
- N CRACKER CATTLE PADDOCK

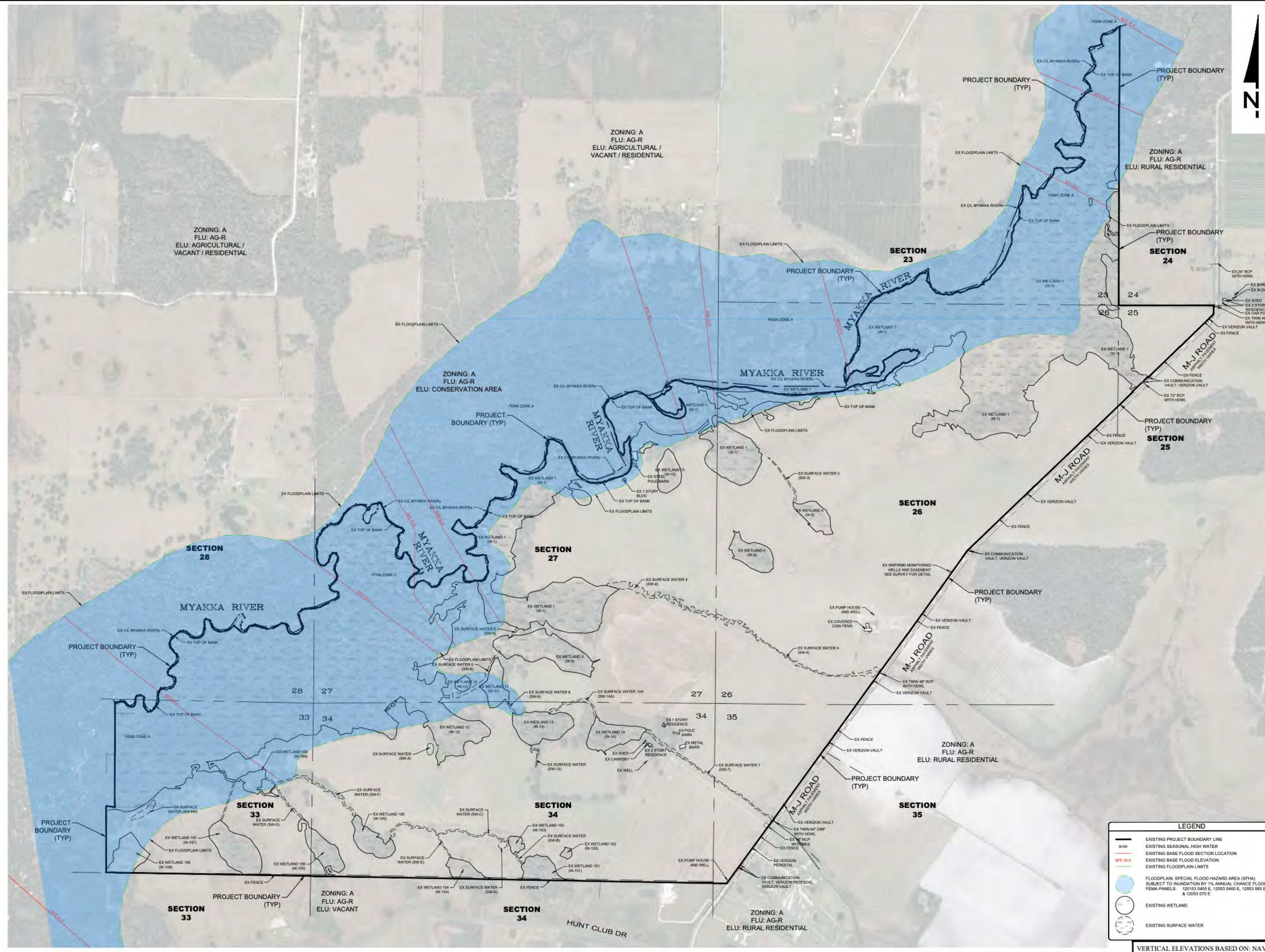
CARD OF THE PAR 3 COURSE

HOLE	YARDS
1	116
2	179
3	151
4	128
5	138
6	145
7	112
8	136
9	155
10	146
11	116
12	163
TOTAL	1685

CARD OF THE COURSE

HOLE	YARDS	PAR
1	425	4
2	371	4
3	530	4
4	611	5
5	172	3
6	509	4
7	586	5
8	211	3
9	436	4
OUT	3851	36
HOLE	YARDS	PAR
10	444	4
11	505	4
12	240	3
13	385	4
14	562	5
15	349	4
16	511	4
17	156	3
18	630	5
IN	3782	36
TOTAL	7633	72





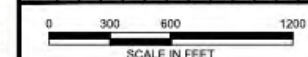
ATWELL
886.850.4200 www.atwell-group.com
8725 PENDERY PLACE, SUITE 101
BRAUDEN, FL 34201
941.373.8400

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

TERRANOVA PRESERVES

CLIENT: TERRANOVA PRESERVES LLC

EXISTING AERIAL

[illegible]

FLORIDA CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORIZATION #8636

Jeremy L. Fireline, State of Florida,
Professional Engineer, License No. 63987

This item has been digitally signed and sealed
by Jeremy L. Fireline, PE, on the date indicated
here.

04/24/2025

SET NUMBER: 22004237-01

8	SHEET	2
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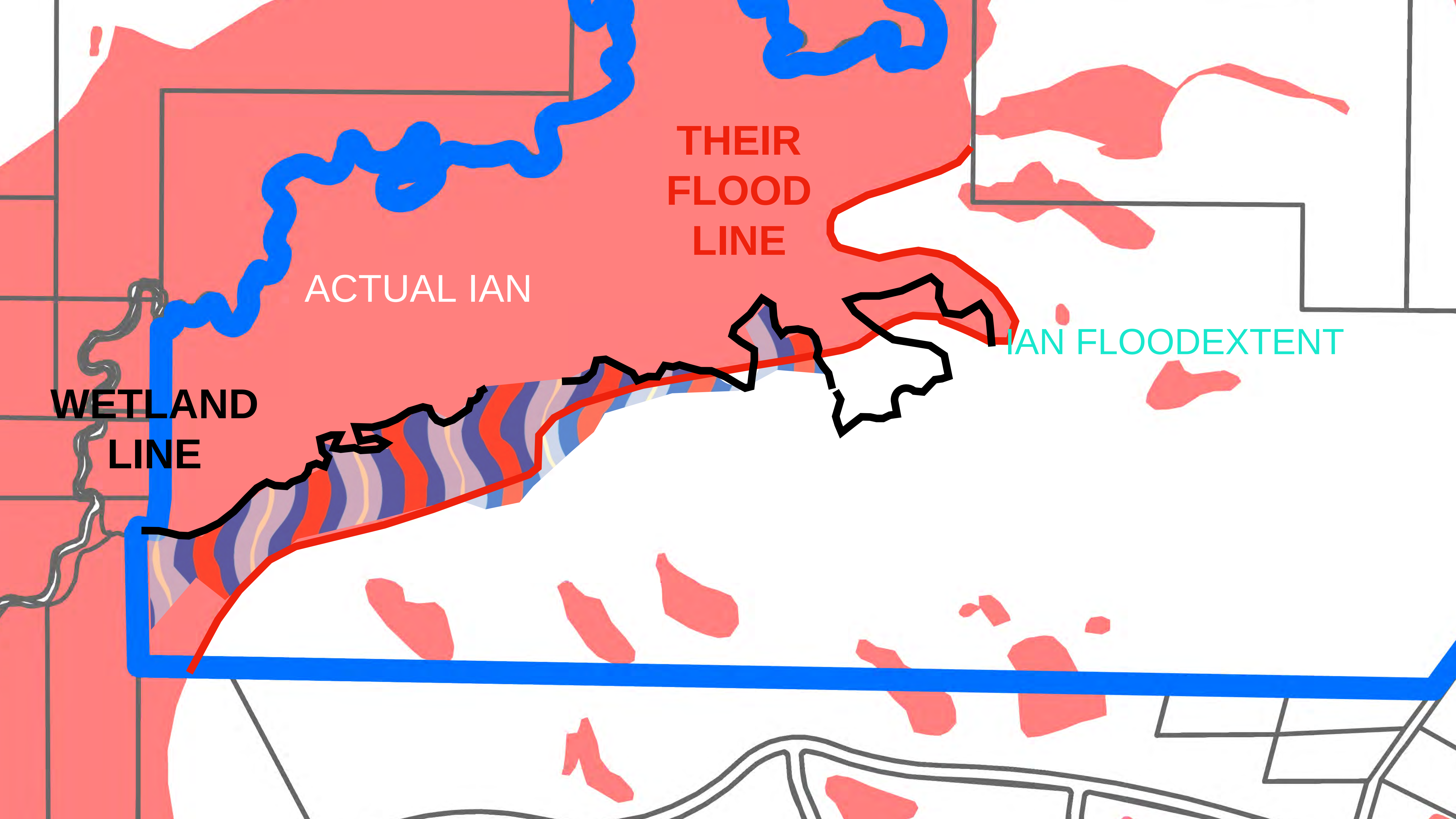


4/23/2025

Miakka GC GDG Site

Image © 2025 Airbus

3440 ft



THEIR
FLOOD
LINE

ACTUAL IAN

IAN FLOOD EXTENT

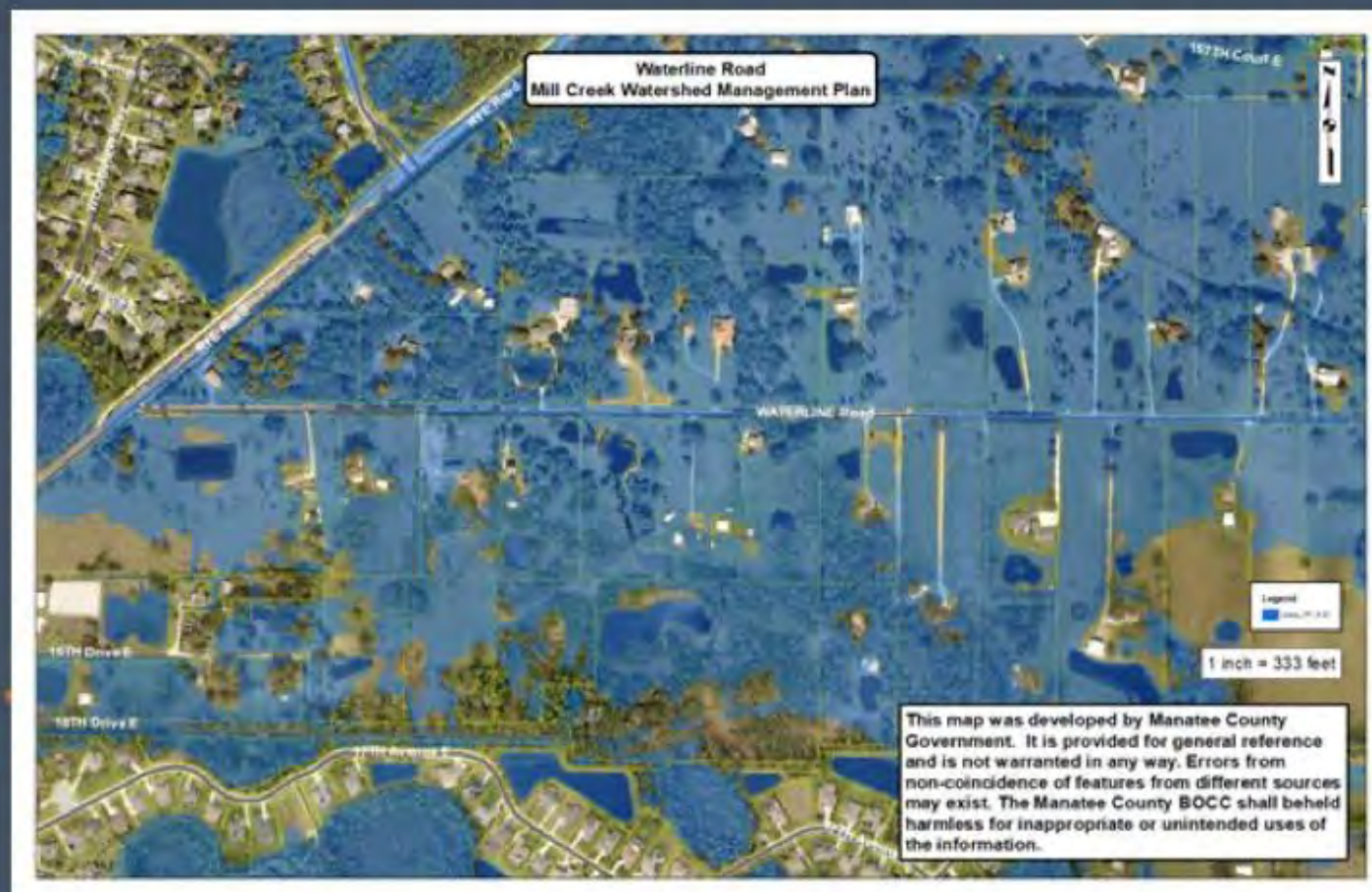
WETLAND
LINE

From Manatee County Stormwater Work Session, Feb 19, 2025
Thomas Gerstenberger, P.E.

Outdated Flood Maps



**Comparison of FEMA 2014 effective FIRM
100-year Floodplain Delineation versus Mill
Creek Watershed Management Plan (WMP)**



**The FEMA 2014 effective FIRM illustrates
minimal 100-year floodplain delineation on
Waterline Road and the adjacent properties,
whereas inundation is prevalent.**



Concerns:

- Increased density in a highly sensitive floodplain
- Use of outdated floodplain maps
- Threats to water quality and river ecosystem
- Increased noise and light pollution

Administrative Recommendations from Stephen M. Suau, P.E.

Minimize Density Increases in Designated Floodplain Areas:

“there is a nexus between flood damage and designated floodplain areas.

In this context, rezoning to increase densities within designated floodplains is a unique opportunity to apply basic planning principles to assure that such proposals avoid or minimize flood damage to existing and future residents. Consistent with applicable Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives, and policies, these assurances should be considered prior to increasing densities in designated floodplains.

Granting such density increases without sure upfront assurances and based just upon a reliance of the “models” and development “codes” to address floodplain issues should be avoided.

It is recommended that the available floodplain models and maps be used proactively to more rigorously evaluate rezoning applications that propose to increase densities in designated floodplains.

“At a recent Land Use Meeting, Manatee County Commissioners **did not approve** a proposed apartment complex in the Tara community off State Road 70. They also rejected plans for a new neighborhood called Crosswinds South in Parrish.

There were concerns about flooding in the area with new homes and roads getting built higher than the surrounding neighborhoods.

“If you’re just going to raise something up, then the next person is going to raise something up and the person after that is going to raise something up,” Kruse said. “And next thing you know, we’re building a pyramid and everyone on the bottom who built first is just gonna get flooded out every single time.”

<https://www.bradenton.com/news/local/article306075276.html>

“Manatee County’s new Board of County Commissioners promised changes in how we manage our growth and our environment during the 2024 elections. We are going to honor those promises and continue moving forward with our plans - your plans - **to reinstitute our wetland buffers**, rescind Policy 2.1.2.8, update our comprehensive plan, and increase our impact fees to the maximum extend allowable.”

Commissioner George Kruse - Policy 68 Substack

<https://georgekruse.substack.com/p/burdensomely-vague-intentions>



Nationwide Rivers Inventory

A listing of free-flowing river segments in the U.S. believed to possess one or more "outstandingly remarkable" values



Myakka River



Search result



NPS Nationwide
Rivers Inventory
Official

National Wild
and Scenic River
System

Add Data to Map



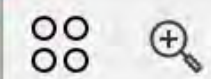
There is currently no added data.

+ Click to add data

↓ Download NRI Data



Nationwide Rivers Inventory



Myakka River

Description: Flows through largest state park; beautiful wilderness preserve.

Reach: Headwaters near Hardee County line to north of southern boundary of Myakka State Park

River Miles: 41

Outstandingly Remarkable Values:
Fish, Geologic, Recreational, Scenic,
Wildlife

Recommendations:

Direct the chair to write letters to the Manatee County Planning and County Commissioners to:

- Thank them for their commitment to protecting wetlands by reverting back to 50 foot buffers and restricting density in floodplains and reiterate the importance of Myakka's wetlands and the Myakka River to our state and nation.
- Express concern about potential lasting impact of developments recently permitted on the Myakka River within the floodplain on water quality and the river's outstanding values.
- Question the use of average buffer size, wetland mitigation banks and outdated floodplain maps in this highly sensitive ecosystem.
- Request that any future applications or policies impacting the MR floodplain directly solicit the input of the MRMCC.