

## **Tamiami Trail Next Steps Phase 2 Project Summary of Agency, Tribal, and Public Engagement**

### **Background**

- Evaluations of the environmental benefits and impacts of raising and bridging the eastern Tamiami Trail roadway have been underway since the early 1990's: via (1) the Army Corps of Engineers, Modified Water Deliveries (MWD) to Everglades National Park Project (an NPS funded project), and (2) the National Park Service's, Tamiami Trail Next Steps Project.
- The Army Corps 2003 General Reevaluation Report and Final Environmental Impact Statement (GRR/FEIS) Tamiami Trail Modifications: Modified Water Deliveries to ENP Project, evaluated 16 alternatives, and recommended a 2-mile western and 1-mile eastern bridge, in combination with reconstructing/raising the remaining roadway to accommodate higher water levels in the adjacent L-29 Canal.
- 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act directed the Army Corps to construct a more constrained plan, described in their 2008 Limited Reevaluation Report and Environmental Assessment (LRR/EA), Tamiami Trail Modifications, Modified Water Deliveries to ENP Project, which recommended a 1-mile eastern bridge and partial raising of the remainder of the roadway.
- Congress recognized in this 2009 Act that the LRR plan would not meet our long-term requirements, and directed the NPS to evaluate bridging alternatives for the 10.7-mile eastern section of the Tamiami Trail roadway, beyond what was authorized by the Army Corps 2008 MWD/LRR: in order to "restore more natural water flow to ENP and Florida Bay and for the purpose of restoring habitat within the Park and the ecological connectivity between the Park and the Water Conservation Areas."
- The NPS's 2010 Final EIS for the Tamiami Trail Next Steps Project reevaluated all of the prior alternatives, but focused on 6 final alternatives with various bridging and roadway reconstruction options. We recommended Alt. 6e, which included 5.5-miles of additional bridging, and reconstructing/raising the remaining 10.7-mile highway corridor.
- Various Federal and State agencies, the Miccosukee and Seminole Tribes, and the public have reviewed the environmental benefits and impacts for a wide range of bridging and roadway alternatives, through a progression of eight Tamiami Trail NEPA assessments.

### **Agency, Tribal, and Public Engagement**

- May 2017 – the NPS, FWS, and AS/FWP had a briefing with Sec. Zinke on the Everglades Restoration program. The Tamiami Trail Next Steps (TT:NS) Phase 2 project was mentioned, as part of a larger federal infrastructure program.
- Nov. 2017 – the NPS sponsored a site visit and coordination meeting with staff from the Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division (EFLHD/FHWA), and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), to discuss possible options for a TT:NS Phase 2 project. In

December, the NPS provided funding to the EFLHD/FHWA for an initial engineering study.

- Jan. 2018 – NPS is asked to prepare a white paper with possible options for a TT:NS Phase 2 project for the AS/FWP, and DOI shares with State agency partners.
- Jan. 2018 – meeting between the Ass. Sec. Florida DEP and NPS/DOI to discuss options for a TT:NS Phase 2 project, and federal/state cost sharing.
- Feb. 2018 – the NPS hosted a Congressional tour of the Everglades, including a briefing on possible options for a TT:NS Phase 2 project. The group included Rep. Quigley, Rep. Shea Porter, Rep. Wasserman-Schultz, Cong. staff, the chief of staff for the House Sustainable Energy and Environment Committee, and representatives from the NPCA, National Audubon, and the Everglades Foundation.
- Mar. 2018 – Meeting with the EFLHD/FHWA, FDOT, and NPS to review the EFLHD's TT:NS Phase 2 Draft Engineering Study report, which focused on the western 1.1-miles of the roadway.
- Mar. 2018 – Discussions with Ass. Sec. FDEP to discuss the FDOT's preliminary cost estimates for a TT:NS Phase 2 project, that would reconstruct/raise the remaining roadway, with no additional water conveyance improvements.
- Apr. 2018 – The NPS prepares a briefing statement and fact sheet for the AS/FWP, on the benefits and possible costs for a TT:NS Phase 2 project, that would reconstruct/raise the remaining roadway and add improved water conveyance.
- Apr. 2018 – the NPS provides the first briefing to the FWS, and Army Corps on options to complete the TT:NS Phase 2 project, as part of our monthly coordination calls.
- May 2018 - Meeting with the EFLHD/FHWA, FDOT, and NPS to compare TT:NS Phase 2 plans, initial cost estimates, and funding options.
- May 2018 – the NPS and DOI brief the NPCA, Sierra Club, National Audubon, Tropical Audubon, the Everglades Foundation, Everglades Law Center, Bull Sugar, and Captains for Clean Water on TT:NS Phase 2 project study progress.
- Jun. 2018 – the NPS presents options to complete the TT:NS Phase 2 project, at a Federal Family meeting in DC. Which includes DOI, DOT, DOJ, EPA, DOC, and Dept. of the Army AS/CW.
- Jul. 2018 – the NPS hosts a Value Analysis workshop to examine four alternatives to complete the TT:NS Phase 2 project, which includes the FDEP, FDOT, the FHWA, and several consulting firms.
- Jul. 2018 – the NPS presents a recommended alternative to complete the TT:NS Phase 2 project, at the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force meeting in DC. Which includes the above six federal agencies plus the Dept. of Agriculture, the Miccosukee and Seminole Tribes, FDEP, FFWCC, FDACS, the SFWMD, and three south FL counties.
- Nov. 2018 – the NPS briefs numerous federal and state agencies on the recommended alternative to complete the TT:NS Phase 2 project, at the Miccosukee Tribe's Annual Coordination meeting.
- Dec. 2018 – The NPS is provided briefing on the recommended alternative to complete the TT:NS Phase 2 project, at a Miccosukee Tribal Council meeting.