

## **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.
- The NPS has revisited the plan several times, analyzing changes presented by the 2018 and 2019 Value Analyses, and some minor design modifications after construction commencement.
- 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 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 – POSTPONED The NPS is scheduled to provide a briefing the recommended alternative to complete the TT:NS Phase 2 project, at a Miccosukee Tribal Council meeting.
- Dec 2018 – Superintendent Ramos and Bob Johnson meet with Miccosukee Tribal Chairman and tribal members to discuss the TTNS phase 2 project.
- Dec 2018 – NPS reinitiated consultation with SHPO. NPS provides description changes to the project as a result of the 2018 Value Analysis and the impacts to historic properties in the project footprint.
- Dec 2018 -- SHPO responds to NPS reinitiation of consultation with letter. Concurrence with NPS assessment of findings and determinations.
- April 2019 – NPS briefed the SFER Task Force on the MWD Combined Operational Plan, which included the flow benefits for the TTNS Phase 1 bridges and schedule for TTNS Phase 2.
- Sep 2019 – The NPS briefed the SFER Working Group and Science Coordination Group on the status of the TTNA Phase 2 project and its linkages with the COP.
- Oct 2019 – NPS hosts a Value Analysis to refine the TTNS2 design. Attendees included FDOT, FDEP, and HDR.
- Nov 2019 – FDOT presents the TTNS2 project 60% design concept at the Miccosukee Tribe Annual Meeting. Other agencies attending included State (SFWMD, FWC, FDEP), and Federal (NPS, DOI, FWS, USACE, EPA) agencies
- Dec 2019 – Coopertown Everglades Airboat Tour and Restaurant and Gator Park notified by NPS of TT: NS2 design impacts to their properties. NPS requests meeting to discuss project impacts to land assignments.
- December 2019 – NPS conference call with FWC, discussion of the possibility of manatee stranding as a result of project features. Attendees included NPS staff, FWC, and HDR.
- Jan 2020 – NPS requests a meeting with the Miccosukee Tribal Council to discuss concerns expressed by tribal members at December 2019 Annual Meeting.
- Jan 2020 – NPS reinitiates consultation with SHPO via letter. NPS provides description of the undertaking and assessment of effect for Gator Park, Osceola Camp, and Tiger Tail.
- Jan 2020 – SHPO responds to NPS reinitiation of consultation with letter. Concurrence with NPS assessment of findings and determinations.
- Jan 2020 – ACHP responds to NPS reinitiation of consultation with letter. Would like more information from NPS to help determine if the agency would like to participate in the MOA.

- Feb 2020 – NPS briefed Coopertown Airboat Rides and Restaurant on the TTNS2 60% design and the construction impacts to the businesses. NPS concessions, science, compliance staff, and representatives from HDR attended. Representatives from Coopertown, Gator Park, and Safari were invited to attend. Concessions staff provided the presentation to concessioners who were unable to attend.
- Feb 2020 – NPS presented a TTNS2 project design and construction summary to Miccosukee Tribe staff and tribal member, answered questions, and discussed tribal concerns.
- Feb 2020 – NPS superintendent Pedro Ramos met with Miccosukee Tribe staff to discuss tribal concerns.
- Feb 2020 – NPS briefed TT: NS2 project design refinements and construction schedule at South Florida Restoration Task Force Joint Science Coordination and Working Group Meeting in West Palm Beach, FL. Attendees included representatives from State (SFWMD, FDEP, FWC, FDACS, FDOT), and Federal (NPS, NOAA, FWS, USGS, USACE, EPA) agencies, tribes (Miccosukee and Seminole), counties (Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, Martin, Lee), and city governments (Sanibel).
- March 2020 – NPS responded to ACHP with record of coordination with Miccosukee and Seminole Tribe and the Airboat Concessions.
- March 2020 – NPS provides TT: NS2 geotechnical reports to representatives from Coopertown Airboats Rides and Gator Park.
- March 2020 – NPS and HDR met with Miccosukee Tribe residents at Tigertail and Osceola Camp to discuss project impacts to each community.
- March 2020 – NPS briefed the Environmental NGOs on changes to the TT: NS2 design and ongoing coordination with the Miccosukee Tribe on CEPP and TTNS2 impacts to the Osceola Camp.
- March 2020 – NPS briefed the Army Corps of Engineers and senior DOI leadership on Tribal Concerns at the Osceola Camp as a result of TT:NS and CEPP projects.
- March 2020 – ACHP responds to NPS notification and additional documentation and declined to participate in the consultation to resolve adverse effects.
- April 2020 – NPS briefs Osceola Camp members and Miccosukee Tribe staff members on the TT:NS2 project, the design of the roadway near Osceola Camp, changes in water level at the camp that are anticipated due to the Central Everglades Planning Project, current elevation of the ground surface and buildings at the Osceola Camp, and preliminary recommendations from the USACE for future elevation.
- June 2020 – Complete set of concept plans provided to Coopertown Airboat Rides
- September 2020 – NPS briefs Osceola Camp members and Miccosukee Tribe Staff on updated design to TT:NS2 design at Osceola Camp. NPS staff also reviewed changes in water level expected due to the Central Everglades Planning Project and USACE required elevation for finished floor residential buildings, finished floor outbuildings, and ground surface elevation.
- October 2020 – NPS and FDOT discussion of Miccosukee tribe billboards within the TT:NS2 project area with Miccosukee Tribal Staff.

- November 2020 – Concept plans provided to Gator Park. Comments and questions were solicited, but none were received.
- January 2021 – Kickoff meeting for Osceola Camp “Cures” planning with Miccosukee tribal staff and Osceola Camp members. NPS briefs Osceola Camp members and Miccosukee Tribe Staff on updated design to TT:NS2 design at Osceola Camp.
- February 2021 – Tigertail Camp provides comments to FDOT contractor 60% design including changes to the signage provided.
- March 2021 – Briefing with NPS Airboat Concessions (Gator Park, Everglades Safari, Coopertown) to review billboard site locations and sign disposition. Comments on locations were provided by Coopertown, Gator Park, and Everglades Safari.
- April 2021 – Review of Osceola Camp “Cures” plan draft document with Miccosukee tribal staff and Osceola Camp members. NPS also briefs attendees on TT:NS2 design changes.
- May 2021 – General Asphalt Joint Venture presentation to Miccosukee Tribe on roadway design including updated designs at Osceola Camp, Tigertail Camp, and Billboard coordination.
- May 2021 – 90% Design Plans submitted to Gator Park and Coopertown for review and comment.
- July 2021 – 100% Signing and Pavement Marking Plans and Roadway Plans (including changes in the pedestrian bridge) provided to Miccosukee Tribe staff for review and comment by Tigertail Camp Members. Information on the relocation of Buffalo Tiger billboards was also provided for review by tribe and business owner.
- August 2021 – Final review of Osceola Camp “Cures” plan with Miccosukee tribal staff and Osceola Camp members. NPS also briefs attendees on the final TT:NS2 design at Osceola Camp.
- September 2021 – Additional details on Signing and Pavement Marking Plans and Roadway plans (including changes in the pedestrian bridge) provided to Miccosukee Tribe staff for review and comment by Tigertail Camp members.
- September 2021 – Coordination with Gator Park and Coopertown on storage location of signs that will be removed by FDOT’s contractor.
- September 2021 -- The DOI briefed the SFER Working Group and Science Coordination Group on the status of the TTNS Phase 2 project, changes to the design, and the phasing of construction. Attendees included representatives from State (FDEP, FWC, SFWMD), and Federal (NPS, EPA, USACE, DOT, NOAA, USFWS, USGS, DOJ, USDA) agencies, tribes (Miccosukee, Seminole), counties (Palm Beach, Martin, Miami-Dade, Lee), and city governments (Sanibel).
- October 2021 – Letter from Superintendent Pedro Ramos to Chairman Billy Cypress requesting final comments from Osceola Camp members, Tigertail Camp members, and tribal staff on the Osceola Camp ‘Cure’ project and TT:NS2 design changes.
- November 2021 – FDOT presented Tamiami Trail Next Steps Phase 2 updates at the Miccosukee Tribe Annual Meeting

- November 2021 – NPS/FDOT/General Asphalt met with Gator Park to update the concessions on impacts roadway construction will have on some of the structures at Gator Park.
- December 2021 – NPS reinitiates consultation with SHPO, the Miccosukee Tribe, and the Seminole Tribe of Florida via letter. NPS provides description of the undertaking and assessment of effect for Osceola Camp.
- January 2022 – FDOT provides updated design details to the Airboat Association upon request. New details will be discussed by the Airboat Association board.
- January 2022 -- SHPO responds to NPS reinitiation of consultation with letter. Concurrence with NPS assessment of findings and determinations.
- January 2022 – Seminole Tribe of Florida responds to NPS reinitiation of consultation with email request for the final copy of the ‘Cures’ plan for the Osceola Camp. NPS provides a redacted copy of the report for STOF review.
- January 2022 -- Seminole Tribe of Florida responds to additional information from NPS and defers to the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians.
- February 2022 – Miccosukee Tribe of Florida responds to NPS reinitiation of consultation with email response. The tribe had no objections or other comments.
- February 2022-- NPS briefed the Environmental NGOs on changes to the TT: NS2 design, ongoing coordination with the Miccosukee Tribe on CEPP and TTNS2 impacts to the Osceola Camp, and the mitigation sites that will be restored as part of the project.
- February 2022 – NPS provided information to the concessions on the new underground power line that FPL is proposing to construct within the footprint of the roadway project.