



# FDOT DISTRICT FIVE

## I-4 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT STUDY

Polk, Osceola, Orange, Seminole, Volusia Counties

### PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

#### CLIENT PROFILE

The Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) primary responsibility is to coordinate the planning and development of a safe, viable, and balanced statewide transportation system. FDOT District Five focuses on transportation-related projects within Central Florida.

#### PROJECT OVERVIEW

FDOT District Five required a reevaluation of the project development and environment (PD&E) study for State Road 400 (I-4) through central Florida. This critical component of Florida's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) links seaports, rail, airports, and other intermodal facilities and provides connectivity to major junctions via I-75, Florida's Turnpike, SR 528 (Beachline Expressway), SR 417/SR 429 (Orlando Beltway), and I-95. Improvements include turning two high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes into four express lanes for I-4 as follows: US 27 to CR 532 (Osceola/Polk Line Road), CR 532 to SR 528, SR 528 to SR 435 (Kirkman Road), and SR 434 to SR 472.



*Wet prairie interior of a mixed wetland hardwood adjacent to I-4 eastbound.*

#### CHALLENGES

- Ongoing communication and coordination with project team
- Project schedule constraints

#### THE MSE GROUP APPROACH

The FDOT reevaluation and update of the Wetland Evaluation Report (WER) for the I-4 PD&E study involved field work and coordination with several local, state, and federal agencies. To ensure the project was completed on schedule and within budget, MSE assembled an experienced team of ecologists to prepare the WER in accordance with FDOT's PD&E Manual Part 2, Chapter 9. MSE conducted wetland and surface water delineation, agency coordination, and wetland quality assessment using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM). The corridor included over 200 wetlands and/or other surface water communities. The team coordinated with agencies including U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Johns River and South Florida water management districts, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as well as Reedy Creek Improvement District for the portion of the project that fell within its jurisdiction. Mitigation options for wetland and other surface water impacts were evaluated for the corridor, and included review of mitigation banks, regional offsite mitigation areas (ROMA), Senate Bill, and onsite mitigations.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Successfully completed WERs for all five segments of the project
- Project delivered on time and within budget

#### AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Wetland evaluation and assessment
- Formal documentation of findings
- FDOT PD&E study evaluation