



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
1520 ROYAL PALM SQUARE BOULEVARD, SUITE 310  
FORT MYERS, FLORIDA 33919

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

July 10, 2019

Regulatory Division  
West Permits Branch  
Fort Myers Permits Section

## ***PUBLIC NOTICE***

Permit Application Number SAJ-2015-03552 (SP-ACM)

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The Jacksonville District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §1344) as described below:

APPLICANT: Charlotte County Airport Authority  
c/o Mr. James Parrish  
28000 Airport Road, Suite A-1  
Punta Gorda, Florida 33982

WATERWAY AND LOCATION: The project would affect waters of the United States associated with freshwater wetlands and a drainage ditch within the Peace River watershed. The project site is located at 28000 Airport Road, Punta Gorda, Sections 11, 14, 15, Township 41 South, Range 23 East, Punta Gorda, Charlotte County, Florida.

Directions to the site are as follows: From I-75, take exit 161 and head east on Jones Loop Road; make a left on Piper Road and arrive at project site on right.

APPROXIMATE CENTRAL COORDINATES: Latitude: 26.920481°  
Longitude: -81.994635°

### **PROJECT PURPOSE:**

Basic: Roadway

Overall: Realignment of roadway for the extension of a runway at the Punta Gorda Airport (PGD).

EXISTING CONDITIONS: PGD is located in the southwest Florida region approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the City of Punta Gorda in the central portion of Charlotte County. The airport consists of ~1,927 acres (ac). The airport has 3 asphalt runways and began in 1943 as an army airfield for combat pilot training during World War II. The airport was given to the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners after the war was over. The airport includes a number of stormwater management ponds, swales, and ditches that direct water off the property generally northwest toward the Peace River watershed.

One wetland is located within the project area which is seasonally flooded and is characterized as a freshwater marsh (FLUCFCS 641). This

wetland measures 4.14 ac and contains a canopy of slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*), Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*), and melaleuca (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*). Midstory and groundcover species present include: wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*), maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*), pennywort, soft rush (*Juncus effuses*), spikerush (*Eleocharis cellulosa*), roadgrass (*Eleocharis baldwinii*), camphorweed (*Pluchea odorata*), (*Bacopa monnieri*), pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*), and leather fern (*Acrostichum danaeifolium*). This wetland is hydrologically connected to the ditches in the project area.

**PROPOSED WORK:** The applicant seeks authorization to discharge fill into 1.33 ac of jurisdictional freshwater wetlands for the relocation of a connection road and discharge of fill into an additional 2.82 ac of jurisdictional freshwater wetlands for public safety to remove potential wading bird habitat that could lead to bird strikes for aircraft.

**AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION INFORMATION** – The applicant has provided the following information in support of efforts to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the aquatic environment:

Due to FAA setback requirements for roadways within runway flight paths, the existing Woodlawn Drive must be relocated to the south. The location of the existing wetland within the project limits provides no ability to construct the roadway without the proposed 1.42 wetland impacts.

The remaining 2.82 acres of wetland are proposed for impact as an airport safety measure to reduce the potential for bird strikes within the runway flight path. Wetland habitats typically provide significant wading bird utilization potential. Elimination of the wetland located directly within the runway flight path is proposed as human health and safety issue. The need to remove the potential for wading bird strikes is addressed in the federal Aviation Authority (FAA) Advisory Circular.

**COMPENSATORY MITIGATION** – The applicant has offered the following compensatory mitigation plan to offset unavoidable functional loss to the aquatic environment:

The applicant is proposing the purchase of 2.68 freshwater herbaceous credits from the LPIMB to offset loss of function associated with the proposed wetland impacts.

#### **CULTURAL RESOURCES:**

The Corps has determined the permit area has been extensively modified by previous work and there is little likelihood a historic property may be affected. In addition, the Division of Historical Resources provided a letter to the applicant dated March 2015 (DHR Project File No. 2015-0401) indicating that the proposed project would have no effect on a recorded historic group as it does not appear to be eligible for listing on the *National Register of Historic Place*.

## ENDANGERED SPECIES:

The Federal Aviation Administration provided the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) with a Biological Assessment on December 22, 2017 in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. The FWS provided a concurrence letter dated December 22, 2017 with the following effect determinations: may affect, not likely to adversely affect for the eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*), Everglades snail kite (*Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus*), Wood stork (*Mycteria americana*), Florida bonneted bat (*Eumops floridanus*), Audubon's crested caracara (*Polyborus places audubonii*).

**ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT (EFH):** This notice initiates consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service on EFH as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act 1996.

Our determination is that the proposed action would have no adverse impact on EFH or Federally managed fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico managed fisheries since the project is located more than 2 miles inland of the closest major tributary, the Peace River.

**NOTE:** This public notice is being issued based on information furnished by the applicant. This information has not been verified or evaluated to ensure compliance with laws and regulation governing the regulatory program. The jurisdictional line has not been verified by Corps personnel.

**AUTHORIZATION FROM OTHER AGENCIES:** Water Quality Certification may be required from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and/or one of the state Water Management Districts.

**COMMENTS** regarding the potential authorization of the work proposed should be submitted in writing to the attention of the District Engineer through the Fort Myers Permits Section, 1520 Royal Palm Square Boulevard, Suite 310, Fort Myers, Florida 33919 within 21 days from the date of this notice.

The decision whether to issue or deny this permit application will be based on the information received from this public notice and the evaluation of the probable impact to the associated wetlands. This is based on an analysis of the applicant's avoidance and minimization efforts for the project, as well as the compensatory mitigation proposed.

**QUESTIONS** concerning this application should be directed to the project manager, Ms. Muriel Blaisdell, in writing at the Fort Myers Permits Section, 1520 Royal Palm Square Boulevard, Suite 310; by electronic mail at [Allison.C.Murphy@usace.army.mil](mailto:Allison.C.Murphy@usace.army.mil); by facsimile transmission at (239) 334-0797; or, by telephone at (239) 334-1975, ext. 0008.

**IMPACT ON NATURAL RESOURCES:** Coordination with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Marine Fisheries Services, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, environmental groups, and concerned citizens generally yields pertinent environmental information that is instrumental in determining the impact the proposed action will have on the natural resources of the area.

**EVALUATION:** The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including cumulative impacts thereof; among these are conservation, economics, esthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historical properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food, and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and in general, the needs and welfare of the people. Evaluation of the impact of the activity on the public interest will also include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, EPA, under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act or the criteria established under authority of Section 102(a) of the Marine Protection Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972. A permit will be granted unless its issuance is found to be contrary to the public interest.

The US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other Interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this determination, comments are used to assess impacts to endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

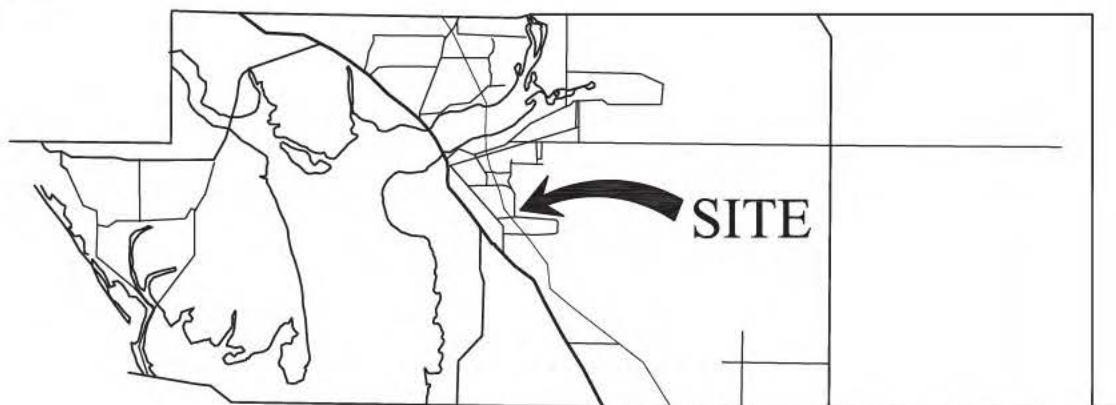
**COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT CONSISTENCY:** In Florida, the State approval constitutes compliance with the approved Coastal Zone Management Plan. In Puerto Rico, a Coastal Zone Management Consistency Concurrence is required from the Puerto Rico Planning Board. In the Virgin Islands, the Department of Planning and Natural Resources permit constitutes compliance with the Coastal Zone Management Plan.

**REQUEST FOR PUBLIC HEARING:** Any person may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer within the designated comment period of the notice and must state the specific reasons for requesting the public hearing.

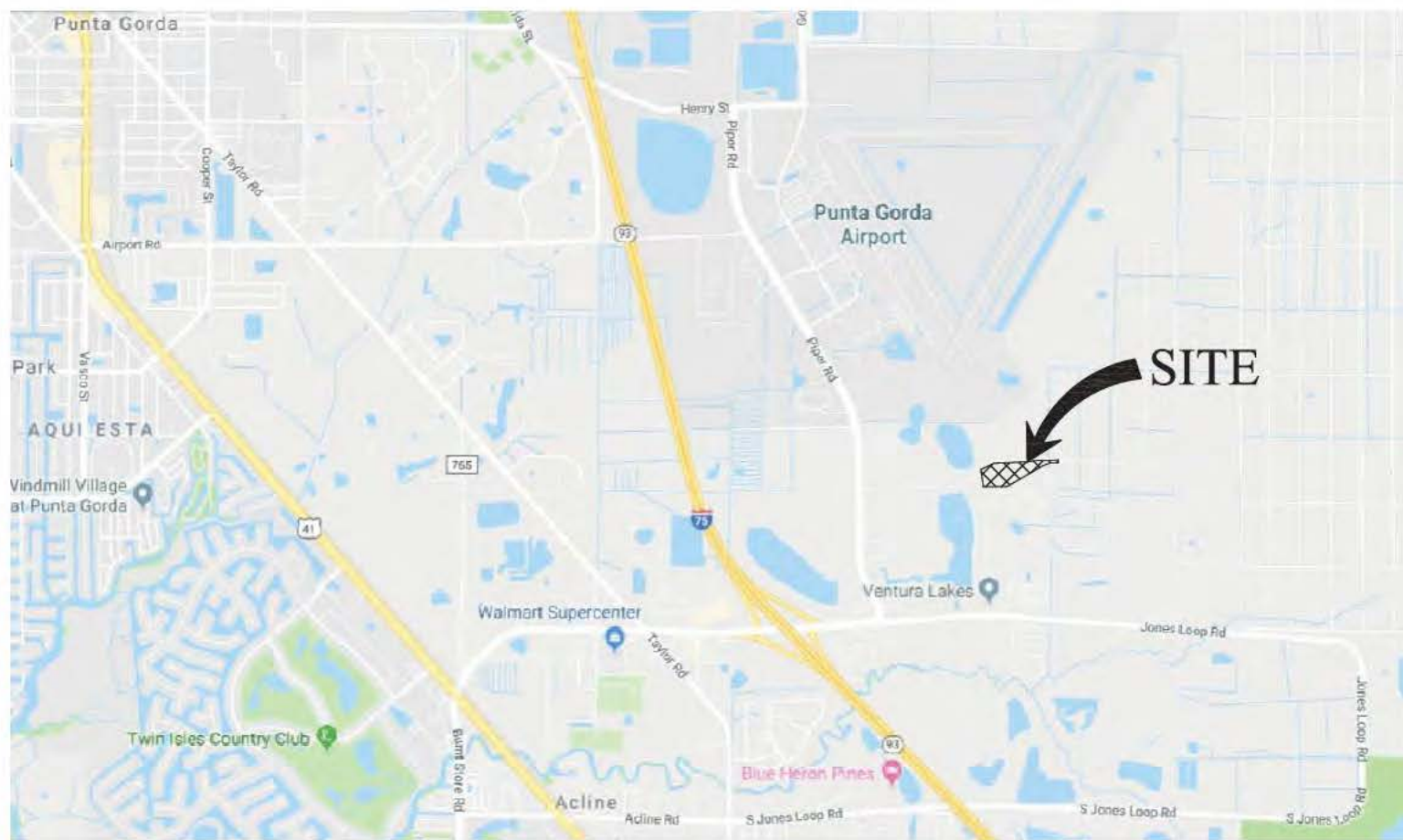


NOT TO SCALE

## SECTIONS 14-15, TOWNSHIP 41S, RANGE 23E



CHARLOTTE COUNTY, FLORIDA



LOCATION MAP

18-120 / NOVEMBER 11, 2018

# PGD AIRPORT REHAB

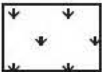
LOCATION MAP

**I V A**  
**Ian Vincent & Associates**  
Environmental Consulting Services



## An aerial photograph of a residential area with a yellow line delineating 'PROJECT LIMITS'. The line runs horizontally across the middle of the image, following a road labeled 'WOODLAWN'. To the left of the road, a lot is numbered '525'. To the right, a lot is numbered '434'. Further right, two lots are labeled '190' and '510D'. Below the road, a large area is outlined with a white dashed line and contains many small white arrows pointing downwards; this area is labeled '641'. In the bottom right corner, there is a residential development with many houses and a swimming pool. In the top left corner, there is a north arrow and a scale bar labeled '0' and '450'' with the text 'SCALE 1"=450'' below it.

FLUCCS	DESCRIPTIONS	ACREAGE
190	OPEN LAND	0.06±
434	HARDWOOD/CONIFER, MIXED	8.45±
510D	DITCH	0.04±
525	STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AREA	1.95±
641	FRESHWATER MARSH	4.20±
814	ROAD AND ROW	9.31±
	TOTAL	24.01±



WETLAND

 $4.20 \pm$ 

### OTHER SURFACE WATER

 $0.04 \pm$ 

NOTES:

1. FOR PERMIT USE ONLY, NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION.
2. PROJECT BOUNDARY IS APPROXIMATE AND WAS OBTAINED FROM SOUTHWEST ENGINEERING & DESIGN.
3. MAPPING APPROXIMATE AND BASED ON INTERPRETATION OF 2017 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY AT 1"=450' SCALE.
4. THE DELINEATION OF ANY ON-SITE WETLANDS, SURFACE WATERS, AND/OR OTHER SURFACE WATERS IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO REVIEW/APPROVAL BY APPLICABLE REGULATORY AGENCIES.

18-120 / JANUARY 15, 2019

# PGD AIRPORT REHAB

## FLUCCS MAP

**Ivan Vincent & Associates**  
Environmental Consulting Services



# SECTIONS 14-15, TOWNSHIP 41S, RANGE 23E



## LEGEND

MAP UNIT	MAP UNIT NAME	ACREAGE
14	VALKARIA FINE SAND, 0 - 2% SLOPES	3.24±
28	IMMOKALEE SAND, 0 - 2% SLOPES	16.35±
33	OLDSMAR SAND, 0 - 2% SLOPES	2.68±
36	IMMOKALEE SAND-	
	URBAN LAND COMPLEX, 0 - 2% SLOPES	1.74±
TOTAL		24.01±

### NOTES:

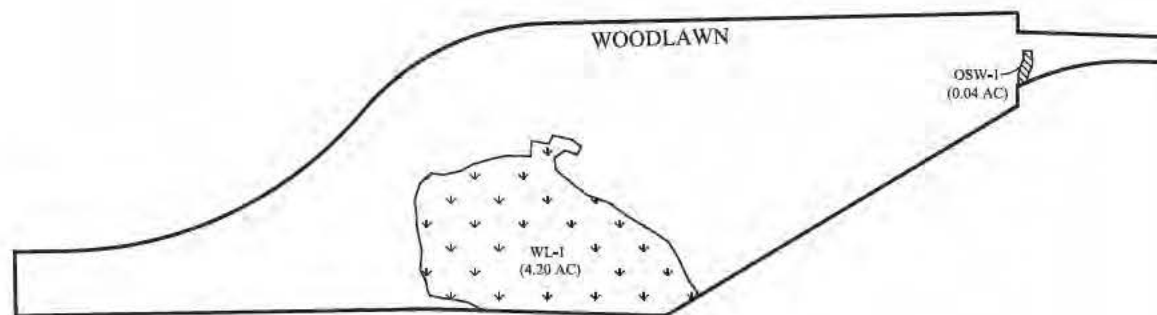
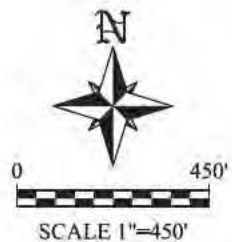
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5. SOIL MAPPING APPROXIMATE AND BASED ON INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM THE USDA NRCS WEB SOIL SURVEY.

18-120 / JANUARY 13, 2019

PGD AIRPORT REHAB  
SOILS MAP

**IWA**  
Ian Vincent & Associates  
Environmental Consulting Services

# SECTIONS 14-15, TOWNSHIP 41S, RANGE 23E



## LEGEND



WETLAND

4.20±



OTHER SURFACE WATER

0.04±

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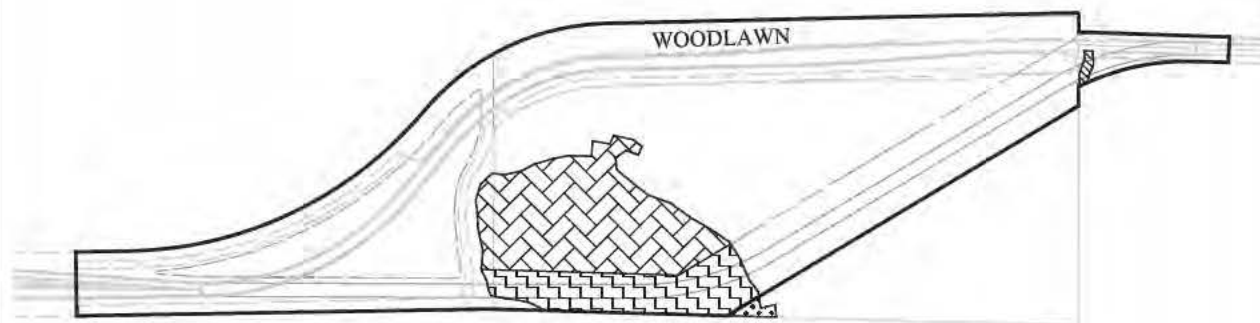
18-120 / JANUARY 15, 2019

PGD AIRPORT REHAB  
WETLAND / OSW ID MAP

**IWA**  
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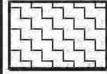



# SECTIONS 14-15, TOWNSHIP 41S, RANGE 23E



## LEGEND

### IMPACTS

	WETLAND FILL ROADWAY AND ROW IMPACTS	1.38±
	WETLAND FILL ADDITIONAL AIRPORT SAFETY IMPACT	2.82±
	OSW FILL	0.04±
	OFF-SITE SECONDARY IMPACT	0.06±

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18-120 / JANUARY 30, 2019

PGD AIRPORT REHAB  
WETLAND / OSW IMPACT MAP

**IWA**  
Ian Vincent & Associates  
Environmental Consulting Services