



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS
1520 ROYAL PALM SQUARE BLVD. SUITE 310
FORT MYERS, FL 33919

REPLY TO

September 17, 2019

Regulatory Division
South Permits Branch
Fort Myers Permits Section

PUBLIC NOTICE

Permit Application No. 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 drainage ditches in the Charlotte Harbor and Peace River Drainage Basins. The project site is located at 28000 Airport Road, Punta Gorda, Sections 10, 11, 14, 15, Township 41 South, Range 23 East, Punta Gorda, Charlotte County, Florida.

Directions to the site are as follows: Take Interstate 75 south from Sarasota until Exit 161 (Jones Loop Road) and head east. Take a left and head north on Piper Road to Viking Avenue and turn right. The road name changes to Airport Road, address is 28000 Airport Road.

APPROXIMATE CENTRAL COORDINATES: Latitude 26.920015°
Longitude -81.991043°

PROJECT PURPOSE:

Basic: Airport and public safety.

Overall: The proposed Project consists of design, permitting and construction required to dredge and fill wetlands that present a wildlife hazard that could compromise airport and public safety.

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 and to the west toward Charlotte Harbor.

The nine (9) wetland systems proposed to be impacted are best described as freshwater herbaceous marshes and wet prairies with some open water components. The total area of direct impacts to these wetland features is 56.05 acres with secondary impacts equaling 0.12 acres.

The onsite wetland vegetation consists of cupscale-grass (*Sacciolepis striata*), buttonweed (*Diodia virginiana*), gulf coast spikerush (*Eleocharis cellulosa*), maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*), knotgrass (*Paspalum distichum*), horned beakrush (*Rhychospora inundata*), torpedograss (*Panicum repens*), Tracy's beakrush (*Rhynchospora tracyi*), roadgrass (*Eleocharis baldwinii*), netted nutrush (*Scleria reticularis*), musky mint (*Hyptis alata*), marsh fimbry (*Fimbristylis spadicea*) and southern watergrass (*Luziola fluitans*).

The existing area surrounding the project area consists of the maintained airfield at the airport. The vegetation consisted of bahiagrass (*Paspalum notatum*), split beard (*Andropogon ternarius*), sour paspalum (*Paspalum conjugatum*), smutgrass (*Sporobolus indicus*), broomsedge (*Andropogon virginicus*), elephant's foot (*Elephantopus elatus*), saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*), wax myrtle (*Morella cerifera*) and lopsided indiagrass (*Sorghastrum secundum*).

PROPOSED WORK: The applicant seeks authorization to discharge fill into 56.05 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:

The wetland impacts detailed within this document are associated with the construction activities for the Project, and are associated with safety requirements in accordance with FAA AC 150/5200-33B – Hazardous Wildlife Attractants On or Near Airports. All airports must comply with these airport design standards and are obligated by the federal government to maintain and operate in a safe and efficient manner. At public-use airports, the FAA recommends immediately correcting, in cooperation with local, state, and federal regulatory agencies, any wildlife hazards arising from existing wetlands located on or near airports. As such, the proposed project is in the public interest by meeting and maintaining all federal safety requirements at the airport.

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 15.10 freshwater herbaceous credits from the Little Pine Island Mitigation Bank (Charlotte Harbor Drainage Basin) and 11.53 freshwater herbaceous credits at Boran Ranch and/or the Peace River Mitigation Bank (Peace River Drainage Basin) 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 June 2019 (DHR Project File No. 2019-2517-B) indicating that the proposed project would have no potential to cause 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 October 31, 2018 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 Blvd. Suite 310, Fort Myers, FL 33919 within 30 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, Allison C. Murphy, in writing at the Fort Myers Permits Section, 1520 Royal Palm Square Blvd. Suite 310, Fort Myers, FL 33919; by electronic mail at Allison.C.Murphy@usace.army.mil; or, by telephone at (239)334-1975 ext. 0008.

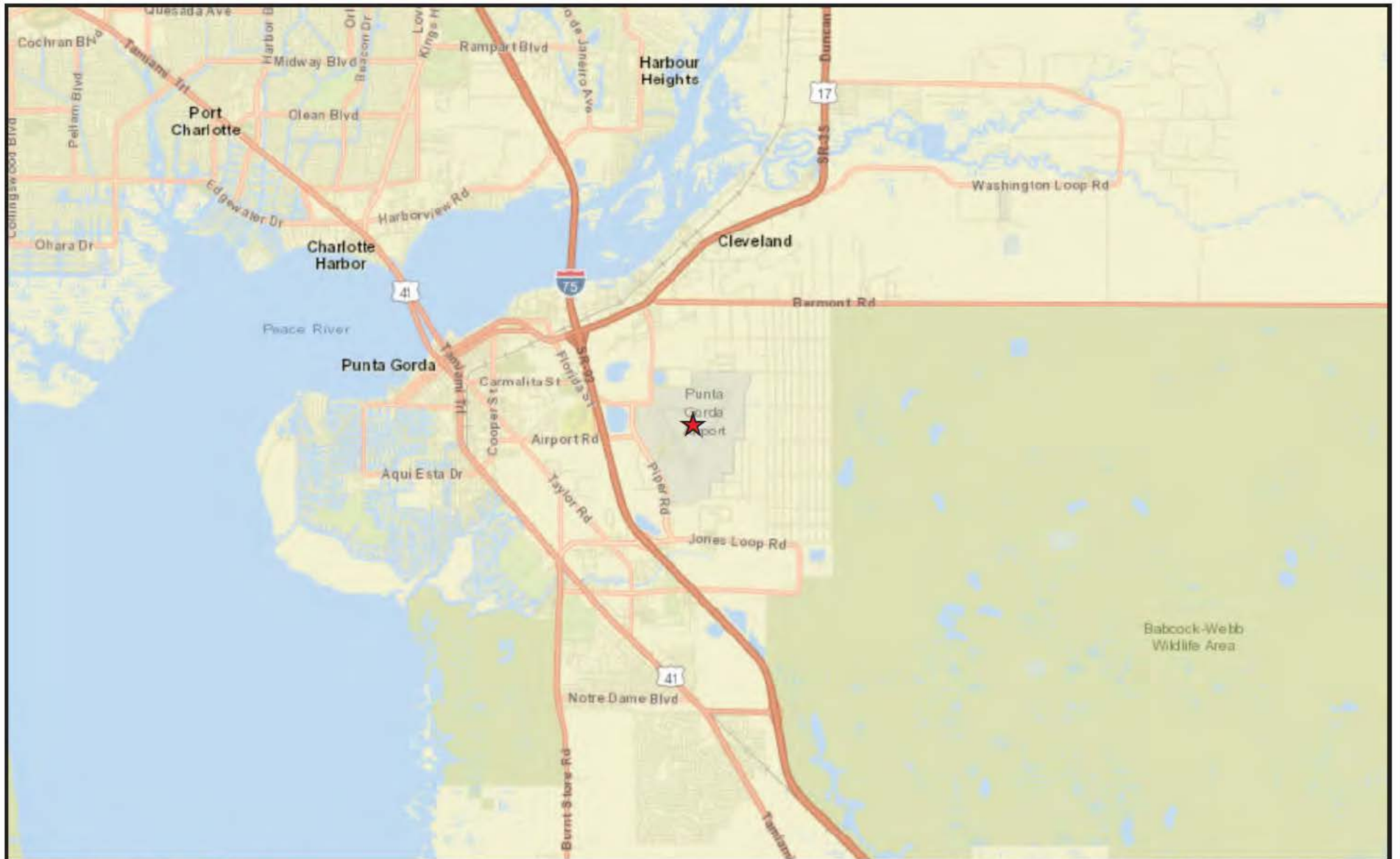
IMPACT ON NATURAL RESOURCES: Coordination with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Marine Fisheries Services, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, environmental groups, and concerned citizens generally yields pertinent environmental information 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.



SEC 10,11,14,15, TWP 49 S, RNG 23 E



Project Location Map Wetland Mitigation Project Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) Punta Gorda, Florida



Exhibit 1

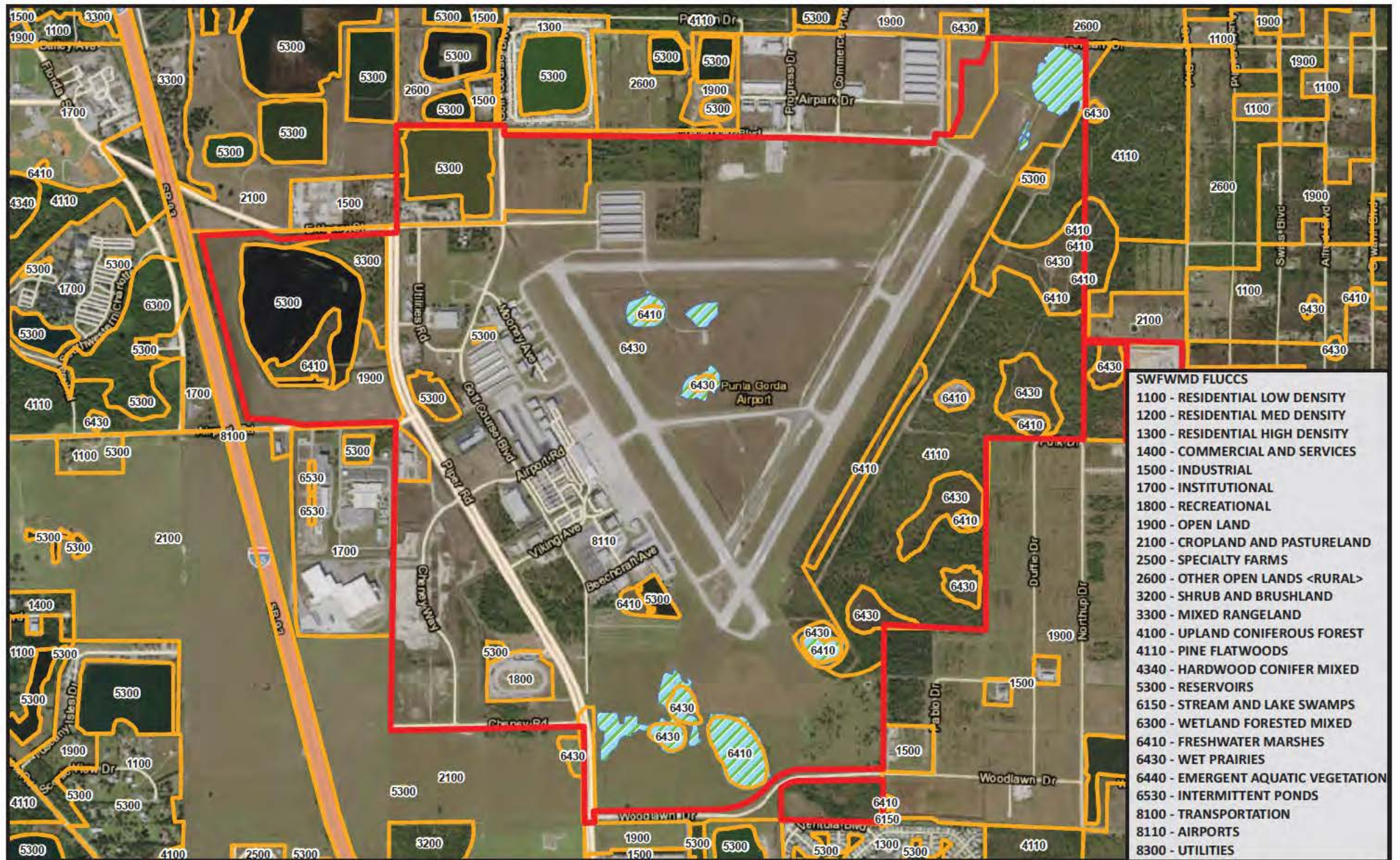


1 in = 2 miles



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Exhibit Date: 01.23.2019



SWFWMD Land Use Map Existing Conditions Wetland Mitigation Project Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) Punta Gorda, Florida

- Property Boundary
- Project Wetlands

Exhibit 2A

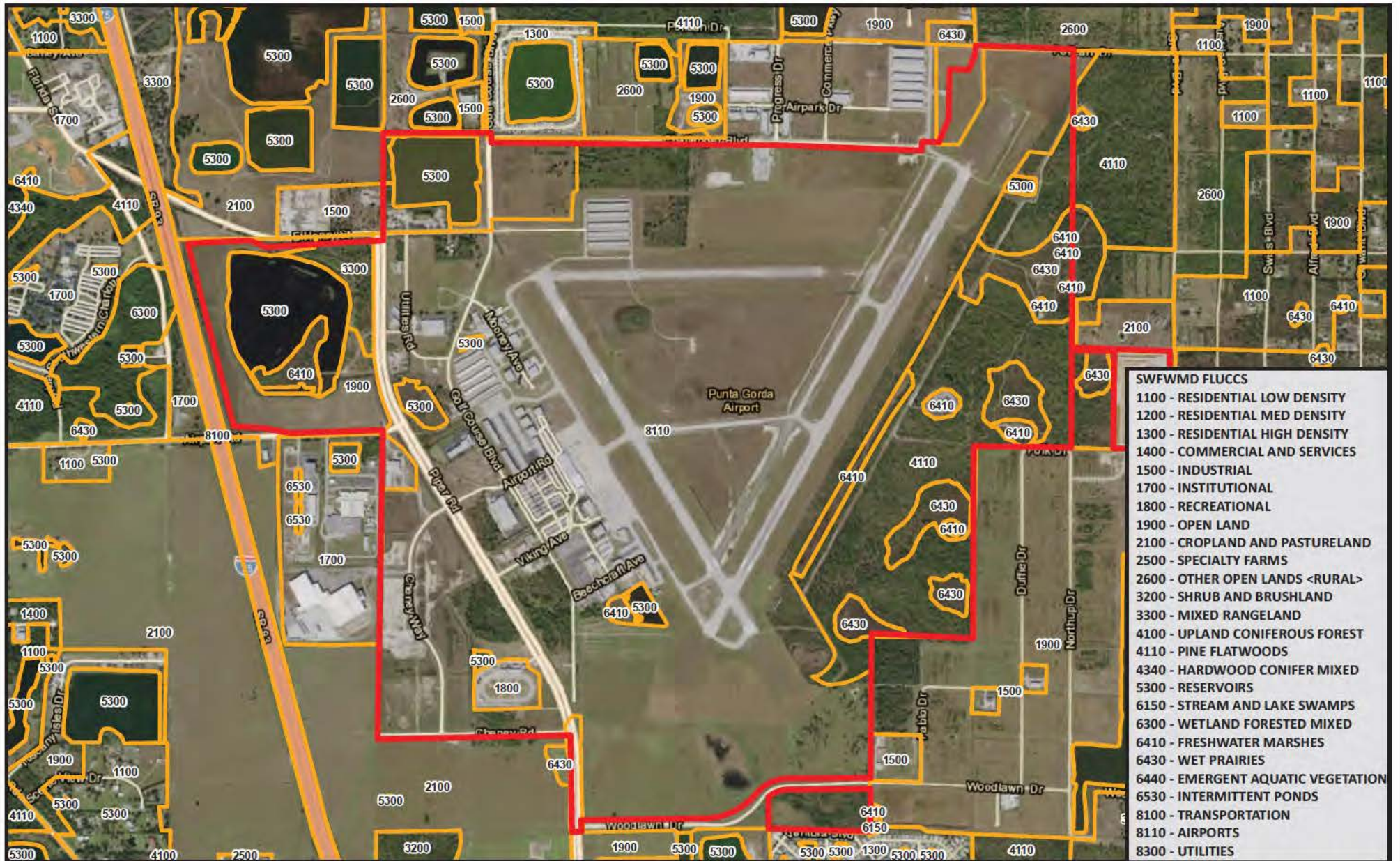


1 in = 1,800 ft



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SEC 10,11,14,15, TWP 41 S, RNG 23 E



SEC 10,11,14,15, TWP 41 S, RNG 23 E



SWFWMD Land Use Map Proposed Conditions Wetland Mitigation Project Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) Punta Gorda, Florida



Exhibit 2B



1 in = 1,800 ft



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SEC 10,11,14,15, TWP 41 S, RNG 23 E



Overall Wetland Map Wetland Mitigation Project Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) Punta Gorda, Florida

- Project Wetlands
- OSW Features
- Watershed Boundary
- Property Boundary

Exhibit 3

N

1 in = 1,800 ft

ESA

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Wetland Acreages	
Wetland I	- 11.46 acres
Wetland I1	- 0.19 acres
Wetland I2	- 0.07 acres
Wetland I3	- 0.11 acres
Wetland I4	- 0.32 acres
Wetland I (Secondary)	- 0.12 acres



SEC 10,11,14,15, TWP 41 S, RNG 23 E



Wetland Map - North Wetland Mitigation Project Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) Punta Gorda, Florida

- Wetlands
- OSW Features
- 25-Foot
Secondary
Impacts
- Property
Boundary

Exhibit 3A



1 in = 300 ft



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SEC 10,11,14,15, TWP 41 S, RNG 23 E



Wetland Map - Central Wetland Mitigation Project Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) Punta Gorda, Florida

- Project Wetlands
- OSW Features

Exhibit 3B



1 in = 250 ft



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SEC 10,11,14,15, TWP 41 S, RNG 23 E



Wetland Map - South Wetland Mitigation Project Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) Punta Gorda, Florida

- Project Wetlands
- OSW Features
- Property Boundary

Exhibit 3C



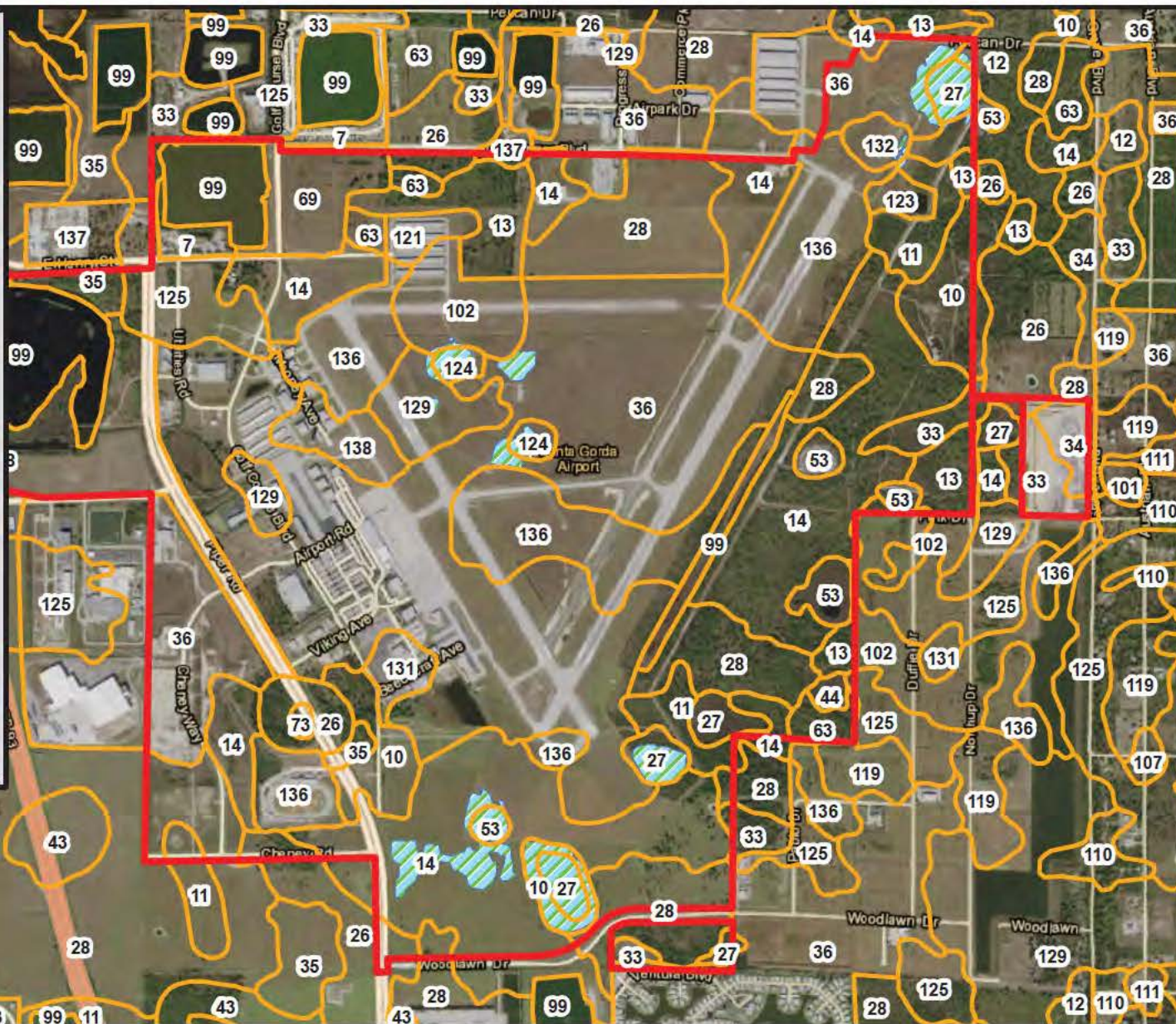
1 in = 400 ft



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Exhibit Date: 02.15.2019

- 7 - Matlacha gravelly fine sand-Urban land complex
- 9 - EauGallie sand
- 10 - Pompano fine sand
- 11 - Myakka fine sand
- 12 - Felda fine sand
- 13 - Boca fine sand
- 14 - Valkaria fine sand
- 17 - Daytona sand
- 26 - Pineda-Pineda, wet, fine sand
- 27 - Pompano fine sand, frequently ponded
- 28 - Immokalee sand
- 33 - Oldsmar sand
- 34 - Malabar fine sand
- 35 - Wabasso sand
- 36 - Immokalee sand-Urban land complex
- 39 - Isles fine sand, frequently ponded
- 43 - Smyrna fine sand
- 44 - Malabar fine sand, frequently ponded
- 49 - Felda fine sand, frequently ponded
- 53 - Myakka fine sand, frequently ponded
- 57 - Boca fine sand, tidal
- 59 - Urban land
- 63 - Malabar fine sand, high
- 64 - Hallandale fine sand, wet-Urban land complex
- 67 - Smyrna fine sand-Urban land complex
- 69 - Matlacha gravelly fine sand
- 73 - Pineda fine sand, frequently ponded
- 99 - Water
- 101 - Anclote sand, ponded-Urban land complex
- 102 - Boca fine sand-Urban land complex
- 107 - EauGallie sand-Urban land complex
- 110 - Felda fine sand-Urban land complex
- 111 - Felda fine sand, ponded-Urban land complex
- 119 - Malabar fine sand-Urban land complex
- 121 - Malabar fine sand, high-Urban land complex
- 123 - Myakka fine sand-Urban land complex
- 124 - Myakka fine sand, ponded-Urban land complex
- 125 - Oldsmar sand-Urban land
- 129 - Pineda fine sand-Urban land complex
- 131 - Pompano fine sand-Urban land complex
- 132 - Pompano fine sand, ponded-Urban land complex
- 136 - Valkaria fine sand-Urban land complex
- 137 - Wabasso sand-Urban land complex
- 138 - Wabasso sand, limestone substratum-Urban land complex



SEC 10,11,14,15, TWP 41 S, RNG 23 E



**NRCS Soils Map
Wetland Mitigation Project
Punta Gorda Airport (PGD)
Punta Gorda, Florida**

-  **Property Boundary**
-  **Project Wetlands**

Exhibit 4



1 in = 1,800 ft



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Exhibit Date: 10.29.2018