

Lee County Launches New Website for the Environmental Enhancement & Preservation Communities Overlay Study (aka Corkscrew Road Study)

March 2018

Project Website

Lee County has developed a website for the Environmental Enhancement & Preservation Communities Overlay Study so the public can review all the documentation prepared as part of this study. The project website, www.leegov.com/corkscrew includes analysis and information on traffic, surface water flow, and wildlife movement through the Environmental Enhancement and Communities Protection Overlay in southeast Lee County. Study progress is told through an interactive story map. Project documents are available on the website for download. The website and documentation will be updated as the study proceeds to completion.

There is also a comment form where the public can provide comments and recommendations to the study team. Public involvement is on-going throughout the study.

www.leegov.com/corkscrew



Status of Project Tasks

Task 1 Existing Traffic Data Collection
Complete

Task 2 Existing Conditions Level of Service Analysis
Complete

Task 3 Base Year Model Subarea Review and Modifications
Complete

Task 4 Future Year Projections
Complete

Task 5 Future Conditions Level of Service Analysis
Complete

Task 6 Transportation Improvement Cost Estimates
In progress

Task 7 Environmental Support
In progress

Task 8 Proportionate Share Analysis
In progress

Task 9 Public Involvement
Ongoing

Steering Committee Meeting No. 1
held on December 18, 2018

Overview of the Study

In 2015, the Lee County Board of County Commissioners created the Environmental Enhancement & Preservation Communities Overlay (Overlay) for a limited area within the Southeast Lee County Density Reduction/ Groundwater Recharge (DR/GR) land use category along Corkscrew Road east of the Village of Estero. The Overlay represented a new strategy to achieve the County's goals for southeast Lee County that have existed for more than 20 years. The Overlay encompassed properties that were deemed critical to providing regional benefits such as re-establishing wetlands, flowways, hydrology and wildlife corridors within Southeast Lee County. Most of the properties had agricultural operations or were previously mined.

The Overlay provided an opportunity to achieve the environmental objectives, by allowing for the possibility of higher residential density in exchange for developer commitments to provide regional benefits such as restoring and maintaining flowways and wildlife corridors across their properties, keeping at least 60% of their property in open space, reducing use of groundwater, and being responsible for contributing to infrastructure needs in the area based on their impacts. To date, four developments have been approved or are in the process of being approved within the Overlay area, requiring the restoration and preservation of 3,443 acres that provide significant flowway and wildlife corridor links between properties and surrounding preservation lands. The four developments are WildBlue, The Place/Corkscrew Farms, Pepperland Ranch, and Verdana.



The anticipated infrastructure needs from the developments within the Overlay led the County Commission to include a comprehensive plan policy calling for a cumulative traffic analysis of the proposed developments to understand the overall transportation needs and costs. This approach, known as the Corkscrew Road Study ("Study"), looks at the cumulative impacts of development within the Overlay in-lieu of an analysis on an individual case-by-case basis. The Study will also identify: opportunities for regional environmental enhancements in conjunction with the identified transportation improvements; costs and timing of needed improvements; and, the proportionate fair share obligations from each individual development within the Overlay. Lee County is working to establish the proportionate share of infrastructure-improvement costs that new development within the overlay will pay. This will be an important funding source – one of many – for the infrastructure improvements for this area.

