

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BRIDGE EXPANSION
ACROSS FISH POND DRAIN, A TRIBUTARY OF LAKE SEMINOLE
SEMINOLE COUNTY, GEORGIA

1. PROPOSED ACTION: Mobile District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proposes to grant an easement to the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) for the purpose of replacing the existing bridge. GDOT will replace the narrow and structurally deficient bridge on CR 226 over Fish Pond Drain with a new reinforced concrete bridge. The proposed project will be approximately 0.25 miles in length. The project proposes to replace the existing bridge with a new 400-foot by 30-foot concrete bridge over Fish Pond Drain at the existing bridge site. The approaches will consist of two 12-foot travel lanes with 10-foot rural shoulders (6.5-foot paved). The existing bridge will be closed to traffic during construction and an off-site detour will be required

2. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: Alternatives to the proposed action which were considered include:

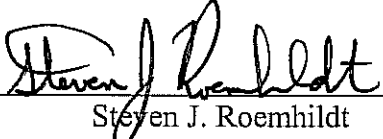
- No Action Alternative. The 'No Action' alternative is not considered feasible since the traveling public would continue to be at risk. The bridge is currently weight-limited at 3 tons. While there are alternative bypass routes in the vicinity, there is no guarantee that overweight vehicles will avoid the bridge (besides closing the road or permanently posting a law enforcement officer at the bridge). County Road 226/Burke Road is a designated school bus route. With an empty school bus weighing approximately 10 tons and a fully loaded school bus weighing approximately 15 tons, it is certain that overweight buses currently cross the bridge. Additionally, a single unit fire truck weighs 27 tons, and a tractor-apparatus fire truck weighs 36 tons, both of which significantly exceed the current weight limits. Leaving the existing bridge in place puts at risk these emergency vehicles, and closing the bridge to vehicular traffic would result in increased emergency response times.
- New Bridge Location and Alignment. Due to the massive expense associated with construction and property acquisition and wetland mitigation, construction of a new bridge would not be possible. In addition to the adverse economic impact there would be substantial environmental impacts associated with the construction of a new bridge. There would likely be significant impacts to wetlands and other waterways as a result of constructing a new bridge. Due to the immense cost and potential for environmental impacts associated with this alternative it is not a feasible alternative to the proposed plan.

27 JULY 2011

3. FACTORS CONSIDERED IN DETERMINING THAT NO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT IS REQUIRED: The recommend plan would result in no significant adverse environmental impacts to the environment. Impacts to cultural resources are addressed in the MOA between the Georgia Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and the Georgia State Historic Preservation Officer signed on 15 SEPTEMBER 2010.

4. CONCLUSIONS: An evaluation of the attached Environmental Assessment describing the recommended plan shows that the proposed action would have no significant impact on the human environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

DATE: 4 AUG 11



Steven J. Roemhildt
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Commander

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED GDOT BRIDGE EXPANSION
ACROSS FISH POND DRAIN, A TRIBUTARY OF LAKE SEMINOLE
SEMINOLE COUNTY, GEORGIA

1. INTRODUCTION:

a. Location: The proposed bridge expansion is located in Seminole County, 11.5 miles South of Iron City, Georgia. The existing bridge is on County Road 226 and crosses Fish Pond Drain on the north side of Lake Seminole.

b. Proposed Action: Mobile District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proposes to grant an easement to the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) for the purpose of replacing the existing bridge. GDOT will replace the narrow and structurally deficient bridge on CR 226 over Fish Pond Drain with a new reinforced concrete bridge. The proposed project will be approximately 0.25 miles in length. The project proposes to replace the existing bridge with a new 400-foot by 30-foot concrete bridge over Fish Pond Drain at the existing bridge site. The approaches will consist of two 12-foot travel lanes with 10-foot rural shoulders (6.5-foot paved). The existing bridge will be closed to traffic during construction and an off-site detour will be required (Figure 2).

c. Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action: The existing bridge on County Road 226 (Burke Road) over Fish Pond Drain 11.5 miles South of Iron City, Georgia carried an average of 200 vehicles per day in the year 2000, which included school bus traffic. This traffic volume represents a Level-of-Service "A," which is acceptable. This two-lane bridge was constructed in 1954 and is not on a designated bike route. For the year 2012, the traffic volume is projected to be 300 vehicles per day. By the year 2032, traffic volume is projected to grow to 500 vehicles per day. For both conditions, the Level-of-Service will be "A," which is acceptable. The sufficiency rating for the bridge is 25.26 in the 2009 Bridge Inventory Data Listing, and it is listed on the current Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program (HBRRP) Selection List maintained by GDOT's Office of Maintenance. In accordance with GDOT Policies & Procedures, a sufficiency rating less than 50 and a bridge listed on the current HBRRP Selection List meets eligibility requirements for replacement and HBRRP Funding. This bridge meets the current policy for replacement. Because the bridge is considered structurally deficient, GDOT has a proposed project CSBRG-0007-00(248) to replace the bridge with a new structure. There are no other associated projects in the area and this project has independent utility. This project does not disproportionately burden or benefit any particular community. The project is surrounded by mainly wooded / agricultural land that is undeveloped. The minority population for census tract 135239801 is 22 percent. The minority population of the State of Georgia is 38 percent and of Seminole County is 35 percent according to the 2000 Census Data. Approximately 21 percent of Seminole County residents are below the poverty level compared to 13 percent for the state. The project is considered to be a benefit to all of the communities that

use the bridge because of the improved bridge condition.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING WITHOUT THE PROJECT:

a. General Environmental Setting. The project is located on Fish Pond Drain in Seminole County, Florida. The project is located on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Property the north side of Lake Seminole on Fish Pond Drain which eventually feeds into the lake. Fish Pond Drain at the project side is a small channel that crosses under the bridge on the east side. After crossing under the bridge, the channel forks several times as it flows south towards Lake Seminole. The area around the project site is largely undeveloped or low density/rural residential with a moderate amount of agriculture beyond the undeveloped property.

b. Significant Resource Description.

(1) Water Quality. Fish Pond Drain is listed on the State of Georgia's 303d List for fecal coliform bacteria and dissolved oxygen.

(2) Fishery Resources. The channel would likely support many of the species commonly found in small streams and creeks in the southeast United States. Some of these species would include largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), pickerel (*Esox sp.*) and various species of sunfish (*Lepomis sp.*). Due to the size and location of Fish Pond Drain at the project site recreational fishing would not be a prevalent use at this location.

(3) Wildlife Resources. Given the sight location and habitat type, there would be limited terrestrial wildlife resources in and around the project. Some species that might be found in or around the project location would include raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), opossum (*Didelphus virginiana*), water snakes (*Nerodia sp.*) American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*) and crawfish (*Cambaridae camburis*).

(4) Wetlands. Wetlands were identified in the project corridor during field surveys. This wetland site displayed the characteristics required for wetland definition as given in the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual:

- 1) prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation,
- 2) hydric soils, and
- 3) permanent or periodic inundation or saturation.

Areas were considered wetlands if they exhibited evidence of all three of the above wetland parameters. The following table was provided by GDOT and describes the wetland site identified along with the area of impact anticipated by implementation of the project.

Table 1
Summary of Wetland Impacts

Wetland Site	Wetland Description and Value	Area of Temporary Impact (acres)	Area of Permanent Impact (acres)
W/L 1	Palustrine forested wetland of medium quality	1.62	0.75
Totals		1.62	0.75

The maximum acreage of potential permanent wetland impact, determined by measuring the area within the proposed construction limits, is 0.75 acre. Temporary wetland impacts are anticipated due to clearing of vegetation and would impact 1.62 acres between the construction limits and right-of-way limits. The areas of temporary impact would be restored to pre-construction conditions.

(5) Endangered Species. No endangered species are known to exist in the tributary or surrounding area.

(6) Historic and Archeological Resources. Due to the nature of the proposed action both GDOT/FHWA and the Mobile District have responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. GDOT/FHWA is responsible for assessing and effects determinations concerning GDOT Bridge 253-5018-0, since it remains under their ownership. The Mobile District is responsible for assessments and effects determinations for potential resources located on Mobile District property which are not owned by GDOT/FHWA.

A site visit was conducted by Mobile District cultural resources staff of the Area of Potential Effect (APE) which is confined to the construction limits of the proposed action. The APE has been previously disturbed by road and bridge construction to the point that no resources eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) would exist. With the exception of GDOT Bridge 253-5018-0 the Mobile District has determined that there are No Historic Properties Effected as per 36 CFR 800.4(d)(1) by the proposed action.

As a result of the survey efforts conducted by GDOT/FHWA, one historic property and no archeological sites considered eligible NRHP resources were identified within the proposed project's APE. The historic properties Survey Report was submitted to the SHPO and FHWA on July 25, 2008. The Archeological Assessment was submitted to the SHPO and FHWA on October 9, 2008.

The existing bridge over Fish Pond Drain (GDOT Bridge 253-5018-0) is a 13-span precast reinforced concrete slab bridge constructed in 1954. It is a complete example of the GDOT standard design number 3544, which was first developed in 1951 by the State Highway Department (later GDOT) for use on secondary roads. The bridge is unaltered with timber railings clamped to blocks cast in the fascia panels and timber pile and concrete cap substructure with in kind or original materials. The bridge is considered eligible for listing in the NRPH as an especially long (195 feet) and relatively early example of its type. Significant elements of the bridge include the basic 15-foot module, the individual components, and how they are joined into a unit by grouting.

GDOT/FHWA made a determination the proposed action would have an Adverse Effect to GDOT Bridge 253-5018-0. Project implementation would consist of the replacement of the bridge with a new bridge, and physical destruction of the GDOT Bridge 253-5018-0 would occur. SHPO concurred with the adverse effect determination. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was developed to mitigate this adverse effect and signed by the Georgia SHPO on February 10, 2009. The MOA was forwarded by GDOT to the FHWA for final signature and coordination with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP).

(7) Navigation. Due to the size and nature of the channel there is no potential for navigation.

(8) Recreation. There are no recreational resources located in proximity to the project location.

(9) Socioeconomic Resources. Impacts to socioeconomic resources are not anticipated as a result of this project.

(10) Hazardous and Toxic Materials. During the site visit no hazardous or toxic materials were observed in or around the project location. No hazardous and toxic materials are known to exist on government property at this location.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE RECOMMENDED PLAN: The project is a bridge replacement project undertaken by GDOT. This GDOT construction project will replace the narrow and structurally deficient bridge on CR 226 over Fish Pond Drain with a new reinforced concrete bridge. The project is located in Seminole County, 11.5 miles South of Iron City, Georgia, in the 21st Land District, Land Lot No. 62, 99, and Ga. Militia District 635 (Figure 1). The proposed project will be approximately 0.25 miles in length. The project proposes to replace the existing bridge with a new 400-foot by 30-foot concrete bridge over Fish Pond Drain at the existing bridge site. The approaches will consist of two 12-foot travel lanes with 10-foot rural shoulders (6.5-foot paved). The existing bridge will be closed to traffic during construction and an off-site

4. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE RECOMMENDED PLAN:

a. Biological and Physical Impacts: Given that the site is currently developed as a bridge there would be a minimal amount of permanent change from current site conditions. The most notable change would be the filling of a small amount of wetlands and removal of fill underneath the existing bridge. The removal of this fill would result in the realignment of the channel of Fish Pond Drain.

b. Land Use Changes: There will not be any substantial changes in land use associated with the proposed action.

c. Historic and Archeological Resources: GDOT Bridge 253-5018-0 which has been determined to be eligible for listing on the NRHP by GDOT/FHWA with the concurrence of the Georgia SHPO will be removed to make way for the construction of a new bridge resulting in an Adverse Effect to Historic Properties as per 36 CFR 800.5(d)(2). A MOA has been signed by GDOT/FHWA and the Georgia SHPO to resolve this Adverse Effect to Historic Properties through mitigation activity including the curation of construction drawings and photographs. The resolution of an adverse effect to historic properties results in a finding of no significant impacts to cultural resources as per NEPA.

d. Endangered and Threatened Species: No threatened or endangered species are known to exist in the project area or in the immediate vicinity.

e. Recreation: There will be no impacts to recreation as a result of this project.

f. Air Quality: There will be no permanent impacts to air quality as a result of this project.

g. Water Quality: Impacts to water quality will be insignificant and temporary and will return to current conditions after construction is completed. Neither fecal coliform bacteria nor dissolved oxygen will be added to the stream as a result of the proposed alternative.

h. Wetlands: There will be both temporary and permanent impacts to wetlands associated with this project. These impacts have been coordinated with Savannah District, Regulatory Division by the applicant. The temporary impacts to wetlands will be associated with the construction activities performed by GDOT. The wetlands will be returned to preconstruction conditions by GDOT after construction is complete. GDOT will be responsible

for complying with all permit conditions required by Savannah District.

- i. Floodplain Impacts: There will be no significant impacts to the floodplain.
- j. Noise Impacts: There will be no permanent noise impacts associated with this project. There will be increased amounts of noise associated with construction but will return to preconstruction conditions once construction is complete.
- k. Aesthetics. Since this will be a replacement of a bridge there will not be any adverse impacts to aesthetics.
- l. Socioeconomic Resources. No socioeconomic resources will be adversely impacted as a result of this project.
- m. Environmental Justice and Protection of Children: Executive Order (EO) 12898 of February 11, 1994 requires addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of Federal actions on minority and low-income populations. The recommended plan would not disproportionately impact minority or low-income populations. Further, the recommended plan would not result in increased risk to children.
- n. Prime and Unique Farmland. No prime and unique farmland will be affected as a result of the proposed action.
- o. Hazardous and Toxic Materials: This project will not result in the creation or deposition of hazardous and toxic materials at the project location.
- p. Cumulative Impacts: Cumulative impacts associated with the proposed action are insignificant both individually and cumulatively.

5. ANY IRREVERSIBLE OR IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS WHICH WOULD BE INVOLVED SHOULD THE RECOMMENDED PLAN BE IMPLEMENTED. Any irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources involved in the proposed action have been considered and are either unanticipated at this time, or have been considered and determined to present minor impacts.

6. ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED. Any adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided should the recommended project be implemented are expected to be minor individually and cumulatively.

7. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY. The proposed project constitutes a short-term use of man's environment and is not anticipated to affect long-term productivity.

8. ALTERNATIVES TO THE RECOMMENDED PLAN.

No Action Alternative. The 'No Action' alternative is not considered feasible since the traveling public would continue to be at risk. The bridge is currently weight-limited at 3 tons. While there are alternative bypass routes in the vicinity, there is no guarantee that overweight vehicles will avoid the bridge (besides closing the road or permanently posting a law enforcement officer at the bridge). County Road 226/Burke Road is a designated school bus route. With an empty school bus weighing approximately 10 tons and a fully loaded school bus weighing approximately 15 tons, it is certain that overweight buses currently cross the bridge. Additionally, a single unit fire truck weighs 27 tons, and a tractor-apparatus fire truck weighs 36 tons, both of which significantly exceed the current weight limits. Leaving the existing bridge in place puts at risk these emergency vehicles, and closing the bridge to vehicular traffic would result in increased emergency response times.

New Bridge Location and Alignment. Due to the massive expense associated with construction and property acquisition, wetland mitigation construction of a new bridge would not be possible. In addition to the adverse economic impact there would be substantial environmental impacts associated with the construction of a new bridge. There would likely be significant impacts to wetlands and other waterways as a result of constructing a new bridge. Due to the immense cost and potential for environmental impacts associated with this alternative it is not a feasible alternative to the proposed plan.

9. COORDINATION. The project associated with this EA was coordinated with the Georgia SHPO (December 4, 2008) and USFWS (June 29, 2011). These comments have been incorporated into the final document.

CESAM-PD-EI
[HORTON]

Date Prepared:
[26 JULY 2011]

From: Christopher_Coppola@fws.gov
Sent: Thursday, July 07, 2011 9:28 AM
To: Taylor, Crystal E SAM
Subject: Re: Burke Rd GADOT Bridge Expansion

Crystal,

I did some more investigating into this project (CSBRG-0007-00(248)). I contacted GDOT and their consultant to obtain a few more of the project documents: Ecology Assessment, transmittal letter to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and FHWA's response (if you want any of them I can forward them to you). On 29 June 2010, FHWA made a determination of "no effect" to federally protected species. Since there were no stream impacts there was no need to coordinate under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA). That pretty much ends the Service's involvement.

Thank you for your concern with the project. If there is anything else that I can provide to help you wrap up your processing of it please let me know.

Chris

Christopher Coppola
Fish and Wildlife Biologist
Georgia Ecological Services

4980 Wildlife Drive, NE
Townsend, GA 31331
912-832-8739 ext 6

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION
FOR
GDOT PROJECT CSBRG-0007-00(248), P.I. 0007248,
SEMINOLE COUNTY, GEORGIA**

WHEREAS, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Project CSBRG-0007-00(248), Seminole County, Georgia, will have an effect upon one property eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and has consulted with the Georgia State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the Southwest Georgia Regional Development Center, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (Council) pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470F); [and Section 110(f) of the same Act (16 U.S.C. 470h-2(f)] and,

WHEREAS, GDOT Project CSBRG-0007-00(248) consists of the proposed replacement of the structurally deficient bridge on CR 226/Burke Road/FDR Road over Fishpond Drain in Seminole County, Georgia; and,

WHEREAS, one NRHP eligible property was identified in the project's area of potential effects; and,

WHEREAS, an Assessment of Effects was completed on November 14, 2008 for this resource with a finding of Adverse Effect for GDOT Bridge 253-5018-0; and,

WHEREAS, if GDOT Project CSBRG-0007-00(248) is not implemented within seven (7) years of this agreement's ratification, this agreement shall be considered null and void, and the FHWA, if it chooses to continue with the undertaking, shall reconsider the terms of this agreement; and,

WHEREAS, if the SHPO should object within thirty (30) days to any plans provided for review pursuant to this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), the FHWA shall consult with the SHPO to resolve the objection. If the FHWA determines that the objection cannot be resolved, the FHWA shall request further comments or recommendations of the Council concerning the dispute pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800. Any Council comment provided in response to such a request will be taken into account by the FHWA in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800 with reference only to the subject of the dispute. The FHWA's responsibility to carry out all actions under this MOA that are not the subject of the dispute will remain unchanged; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, the FHWA and the SHPO agree that the undertaking shall be implemented in accordance with the following stipulation in order to take into account the effect of the undertaking on the historic property.

STIPULATION

The FHWA will ensure the following measure is carried out:

- 1) Prior to project implementation, the FHWA will ensure that a Permanent Archival Record is completed for GDOT Bridge 253-5018-0. Included will be medium format photography per the standards previously agreed upon between GDOT and SHPO in the Permanent Archival Record manual and a copy of the original construction drawings for GDOT Bridge 253-5018-0. The photography and accompanying documentation will be submitted to the SHPO for acceptance and retention.

Execution of this MOA by the FHWA and the SHPO, its subsequent filing with the Council, and implementation of its terms, is evidence that the FHWA has afforded the Council an opportunity to comment on GDOT Project CSBRG-0007-00(248), Seminole County, Georgia, and its effects on historic properties, and that the FHWA has taken into account the effects of the undertaking on historic properties.

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

BY: Michele A. Lundberg DATE: 9-15-10
Rodney N. Barry, P.E., Division Administrator

GEORGIA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

BY: W. Ray Luce DATE: 2-11-09
for W. Ray Luce, Division Director, Deputy SHPO

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BY: Glenn Bowman DATE: 11/12/08
Glenn Bowman, P.E., State Environmental/Location Engineer

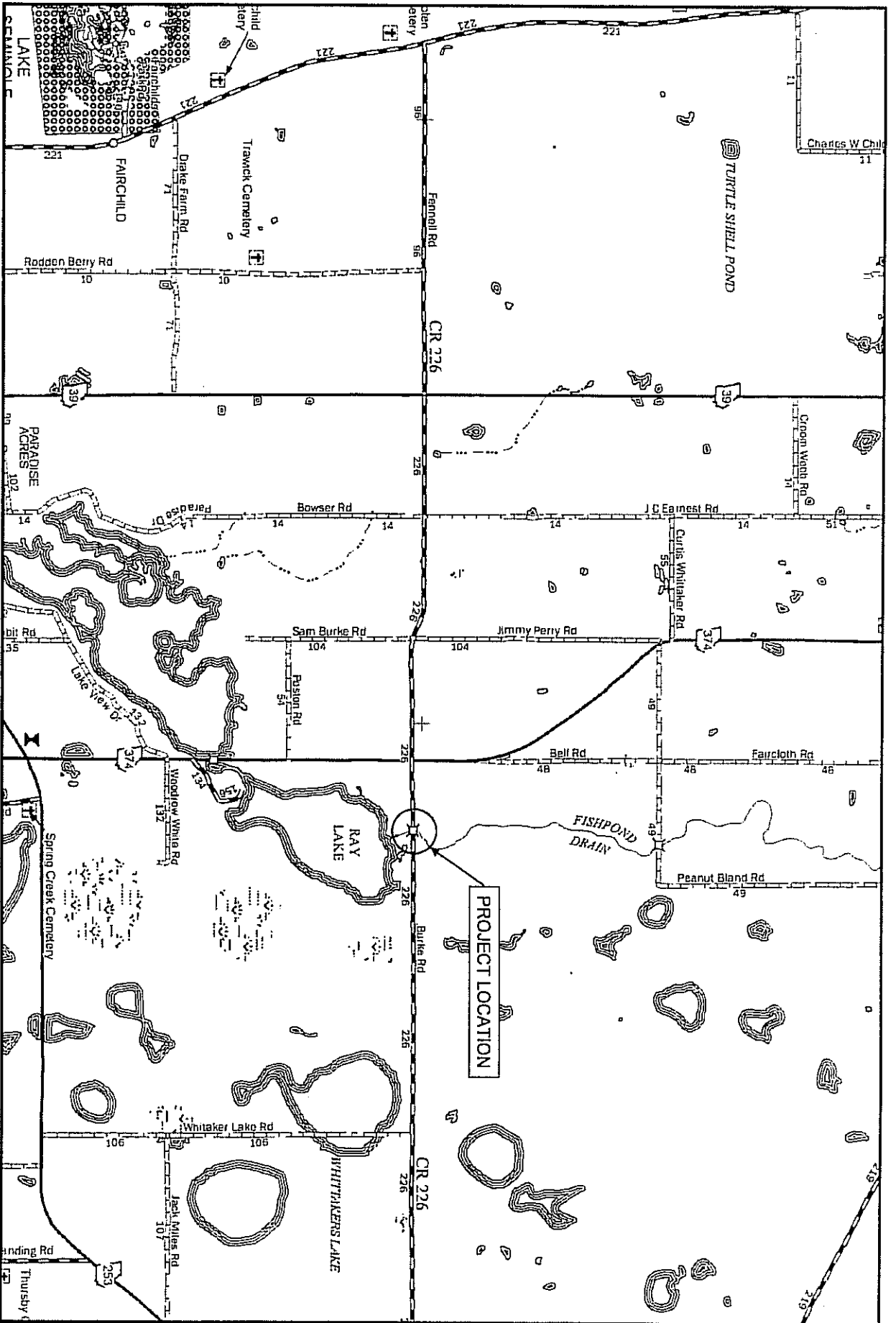
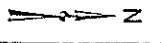


FIGURE 1: Location Map

NOT TO SCALE

CSBRG-0007-00(248); Seminole County
 P.L. No. 0007248
 Bridge Replacement: CR 226/Burke Rd.
 over Fish Pond Drain



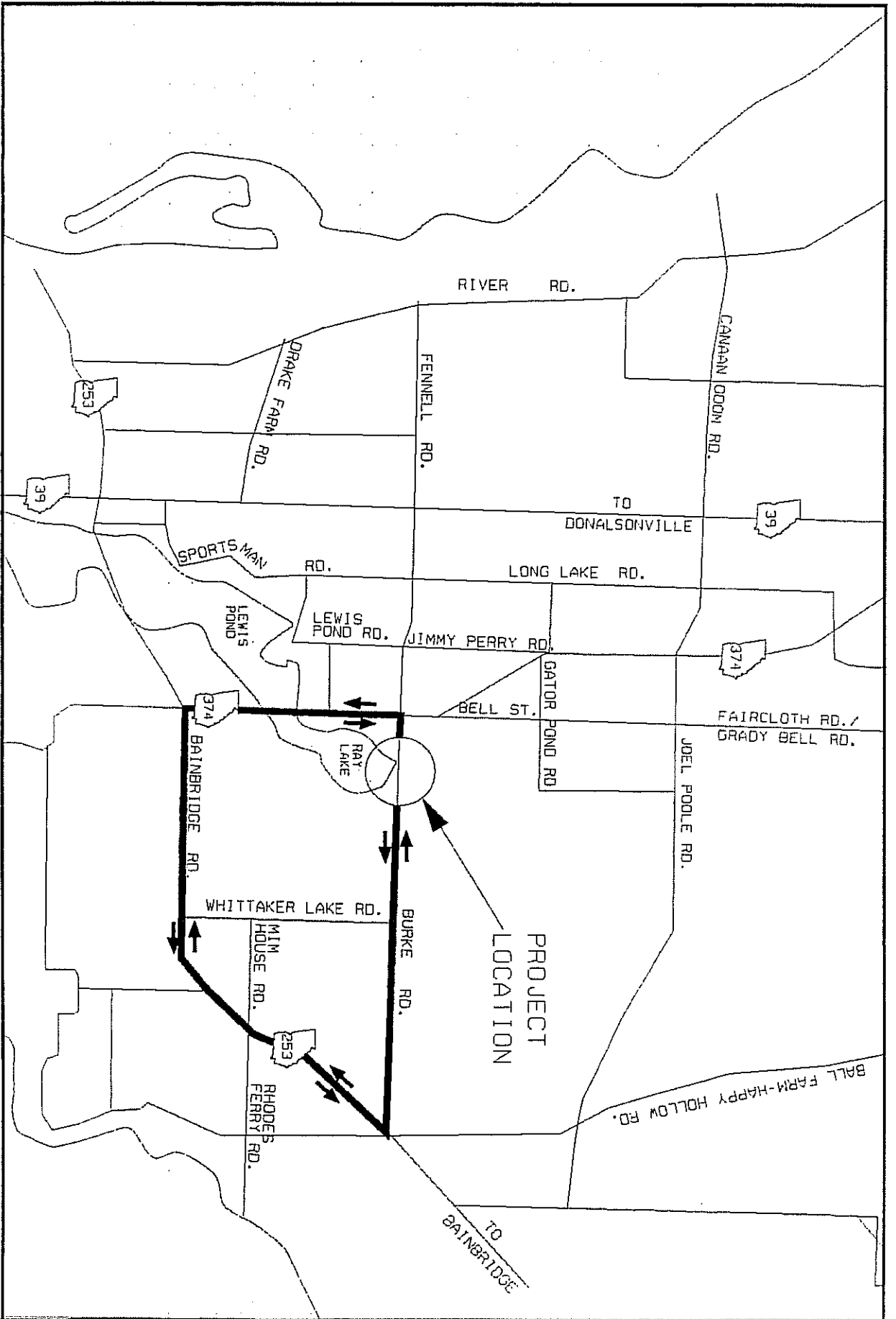


FIGURE 2: Detour Map

DETOUR LENGTH IS APPROXIMATELY 10.5 MILES

DETOUR ROUTE



CSBRG-0007-00(248); Seminole County
 P.I. No. 0007248
 Bridge Replacement: CR 226/Burke Rd.
 over Fish Pond Drain

