TAB 6

LETTER FROM KEVIN O'KANE, ACEO, NOVEMBER 16, 2012

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS
10117 PRINCESS PALM AVENUE, SUITE 120
TAMPA, FLORIDA 33610

November 16, 2012

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

Tampa Permits Section
SAJ-2011-00551 (IP-TEH)

Ms. Michele Baker
Pasco County Board of County Commissioners
7530 Little Road, Suite 320
New Port Richey, Florida 34654

Mr. John Post, Jr.
Florida Department of Transportation
Florida's Turnpike Enterprise
Post Office Box 613069
Ocoee, Florida 34761

Dear Ms. Baker and Mr. Post:

This is in reference to your permit application requesting authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to impact waters of the United States in association with a project known as "Ridge Road Extension" (SAJ-2011-00551 (IP-TEH)).

At our August 20, 2012 meeting, you opted to solicit Corps input on the identification of project alternatives prior to conducting and submitting the required analysis reflected in the Corps' letter dated July 23, 2012. You recently provided an outline of alternatives and methodology in correspondence dated September 19, 2012, which was amended by that dated November 2, 2012.

The purpose of this letter is to provide clarification regarding the no-action alternative and the selection of alternatives with respect to the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), as discussed in our November 15, 2012 meeting. Although the Corps recognizes the role the LRTP plays in Pasco County's planning process, the Corps must conduct its analysis of alternatives consistent with the law. The National Environmental Policy Act requires an analysis of the no-action alternative to allow for a comparison to the potential impacts of the proposed project and other alternatives. For the proposed Ridge Road Extension project, the no-action alternative consists of the existing road network within the area bounded by SR-52 to the north, SR-54 to the south, US-41 to the east, and Moon Lake Road / DeCubellis Road / Starkey Boulevard to the west. The Corps has determined that it is also appropriate that the no-action alternative include roadway projects that have a valid Corps permit and are projected to be constructed within 5 years. Roadway projects that do not have a valid Corps permit and/or are

projected to be complete after 5 years are not appropriate to include in the no-action alternative nor can their construction be assumed in the selection of other alternatives.

During the November 15, 2012 meeting, you mentioned that some alternatives should not be given further consideration due to various matters of practicability. This was also raised at our August 20, 2012 meeting. You were advised at the August 20, 2012 meeting to provide your reasoning to the Corps to evaluate the elimination of alternatives. However, no such information was included in your September 19, 2012, and November 2, 2012 submittals.

At the November 15, 2012 meeting, you again opted for additional Corps review of your outline of project alternatives. The Corps respectfully requests that you provide any information for our alternatives analysis review no later than December 17, 2012. In addition to an outline of alternatives, this submittal should include any information you would like the Corps to consider regarding the elimination of alternatives. If no response is received, we will assume you have no further interest in obtaining a Corps permit and the application will be withdrawn.

The contents of this letter pertain solely to alternatives analysis and do not reflect our ongoing review of other aspects of your application. This letter should not be interpreted as acceptance or approval of any aspect of the proposed application.

Should you have any questions or comments regarding this letter, please contact Tracy Hurst of my staff at the letterhead address, by phone at 813-769-7063, or by electronic mail at Tracy.E.Hurst@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

Kevin D. O'Kane

Kevin D. O'Kane
Chief, Tampa Permits Section

cc:

Mr. Ron Meidema
Wetlands and Marine Regulatory Section
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
61 Forsyth St.
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960