



September 27, 2013

Airport Commerce Center Authority
660 Charlotte Street
Punta Gorda, FL 33950

**RE: AIRPORT COMMERCE CENTER
CHARLOTTE COUNTY, FLORIDA
DEVELOPMENT SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT**

Pursuant to your request, Ian Vincent and Associates (IVA) has conducted a preliminary review of the Airport Commerce Center parcels for biological and ecological features which may affect the future development of the subject property. The following findings and discussion are based on an on-site inspection, review of available online databases, and IVA's previous experiences with applicable permitting agencies. The preliminary site inspection was conducted by a qualified staff ecologist in September 2013.

LOCATION

The subject property is located in Sections 14 and 23, Township 41S, Range 23E within Charlotte County, Florida. More specifically, the subject property is located east of Piper Road and north of North Jones Loop Road within the previously permitted Airport Commerce Park development. Please refer to the attached LOCATION MAP.

VEGETATIVE COMMUNITIES

Field observations, in conjunction with the Charlotte County Soil Survey and aerial photographs, were used to develop a map of the vegetative communities onsite. The following table displays the nine (9) vegetative associations found on the subject parcel. The vegetative communities were identified and classified utilizing the Florida Land Use Cover and Forms Classification System (FLUCCS). A description of the communities is provided below. The limits of any on-site jurisdictional wetlands and/or surface waters are based on survey information provided by Southwest Engineering and Design and represent the limits as previously approved and verified by Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) Staff. Please refer to the attached FLUCCS MAP.

FLUCCS CODE	DESCRIPTION	APPROXIMATE ACRES
150	Industrial	9.41
211	Improved Pasture	4.78
224	Abandoned Grove	14.48
321	Palmetto Prairie	35.42
525	Stormwater Management Pond	52.76
616	Shrub Wetland	0.72
740	Disturbed Land	285.95
742	Borrow Area	0.26
814	Road	10.33
TOTAL		414.11

FLUCCS 150 – Industrial

These developed areas consist of a variety of industrial use buildings and associated parking areas. Vegetation present is comprised primarily of landscape and ornamental species.

FLUCCS 211 – Improved Pasture

This upland association is dominated by a dense groundcover of bahia grass (*Paspalum notatum*). Additional dominant groundcover species include dogfennel (*Eupatorium capillifolium*), bluestem (*Schizachyrium sp.*), flatsedges (*Cyperus spp.*), knotgrass (*Paspalum distichum*), frog-fruit (*Phyla nodiflora*), and roadgrass (*Eleocharis baldwinii*). A sparsely distributed canopy and mid-story are comprised of scattered slash pine (*Pinus elliotii*), cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*), Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*), and wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*).

FLUCCS 224 – Abandoned Grove

This upland association is characterized as abandoned citrus grove and includes the associated remnant grove agricultural ditches/swales. These abandoned groves have become overgrown with opportunistic vegetative species, and are primarily comprised of the following: citrus trees (*Citrus spp.*), slash pine, melaleuca (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*), cabbage palm, rose myrtle (*Rhodomyrtus tomentosa*), saltbush (*Baccharis halimifolia*), Caesarweed (*Urena lobata*), dogfennel, saw palmetto (*Serenoa repens*), beggartick (*Bidens alba*), camphorweed (*Pluchea odorata*), bahia grass, blackberry (*Rubus sp.*), and grapevine (*Vitis rotundifolia*).

FLUCCS 321 – Palmetto Prairie

This upland association is dominated by a dense groundcover of saw palmetto. Additional dominant understory and groundcover species include rusty lyonia (*Lyonia ferruginea*), gallberry (*Ilex glabra*), beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*), bluestem, blueberry (*Vaccinium myrsinites*), wiregrass (*Aristida stricta*), pricklypear (*Opuntia humifusa*), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), and grapevine. A sparsely distributed canopy and mid-story are comprised of scattered slash pine, sand live oak (*Quercus geminata*), and wax myrtle.

FLUCCS 525 – Stormwater Management Pond

This man-made surface water feature was previously constructed as part of the SWFWMD permitted master stormwater system for the property. This man-made surface water is comprised primarily of open water with sparse shoreline vegetation consisting of cattail (*Typha sp.*), soft rush (*Juncus effuses*), torpedo grass (*Panicum repens*), creeping seedbox (*Ludwigia repens*), pennywort (*Hydrocotyle umbellata*), and coinwort (*Centella asiatica*).

FLUCCS 616 – Shrub Wetland

This wetland association is dominated by a dense mixed midstory of Carolina willow (*Salix caroliniana*), buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), Brazilian pepper, and wax myrtle. Dominant groundcover species include broomsedge (*Andropogon glomeratus*), St. John's wort (*Hypericum fasciculatum*), maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*), blue maidencane (*Amphicarpum muhlenbergianum*), pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*), torpedo grass, yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris sp.*), creeping seedbox, pennywort, coinwort, and hempvine (*Mikania scandens*).

FLUCCS 740 – Disturbed Land

This upland association consists of land which appears to have historically been utilized as citrus grove, including associated remnant agricultural ditches/swales, but has subsequently been cleared and topography significantly altered/disturbed. These areas have become overgrown with opportunistic vegetative species, and are primarily comprised of the following: citrus trees, cabbage palm, Brazilian pepper, wax myrtle, dogfennel, ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*), bluestem, beggartick, flatsedges, beakrushes (*Rhynchospora spp.*), sandspur (*Cenchrus sp.*), sensitive mimosa (*Mimosa pudica*), bahia grass, and frog-fruit.

FLUCCS 742 – Borrow Area

These man-made surface water features are characterized as upland-excavated agricultural ponds and are primarily comprised of open water. Sparse shoreline vegetation consists of Peruvian primrose willow (*Ludwigia peruviana*), flatsedges, torpedo grass, creeping seedbox, and spatterdock (*Nuphar luteum*).

FLUCCS 814 – Road

These developed areas consist of a paved roadway system, including several relatively minor bridge spans which traverse on-site drainage ditches.

WETLANDS, SURFACE WATERS, and OTHER SURFACE WATERS

On-site jurisdictional wetland, surface water, and other surface water habitats were identified according to current applicable state and federal delineation and classification criteria. One (1) wetland (FLUCCS 616) and two (2) other surface waters (FLUCCS 742) were identified onsite.* The limits of the on-site jurisdictional wetland (FLUCCS 616) is based on survey information provided by Southwest Engineering and Design and represent the limits as previously approved and verified by SWFWMD Staff. The limits of the on-site jurisdictional other surface waters (FLUCCS 742) are based on aerial interpretation and field verification. The limits of on-site jurisdictional waters should be considered preliminary and may be subject to review/approval by applicable regulatory agencies.

The on-site wetland and other surface waters possesses the qualities necessary to be claimed as jurisdictional waters (wetlands, surface waters, and/or other surface waters) by the SWFWMD, and although unlikely, could also potentially be claimed as jurisdictional waters by the and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). If any areas onsite are determined by the SWFWMD and/or USACE to be jurisdictional waters, permits relative to each agency will be required prior to any filling, dredging, clearing, or other similar land altering activities within the on-site jurisdictional waters.

**There are numerous agricultural swales and ditches, and several drainage ditches located within the subject property. Based on the likelihood that these features were previously constructed as part of a permitted drainage system, it is anticipated that these man-made surface water features will not be claimed as jurisdictional waters by the SWFWMD or USACE.*

LISTED WILDLIFE SPECIES

Search of available online resources revealed that the nearest FWC documented bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) nest, identified as CH006, is located approximately 2,000 feet east of the subject property. Nest CH006 was last documented as being surveyed in 2010 and last documented as active in 1978. Therefore, it is anticipated that CH006 has been abandoned for several decades. Further, the subject property is well outside of the 660-foot Secondary Protection Zone afforded to all bald eagle nests. Therefore, the bald eagle is not likely to affect the future development of the subject property.

Search of available online resources revealed that the subject property is located within an 18.6-mile radius designated as Core Foraging Area of several wood stork (*Mycteria americana*) nesting colonies. Each of the documented colonies appears to be greater than four (4) miles from the subject property. Under current regulations, the proximity of the off-site nesting colonies is not likely to affect the future development of the subject property. However, any impacts to suitable on-site wood stork foraging habitat (wetland or surface water habitat) may require systematic review and approval by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) prior to such impacts.

Search of available online resources revealed that the subject property is located within the Consultation Area of the red-cockaded woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*). The nearest documented red-cockaded woodpecker sighting is approximately one (1) mile east-southeast of the subject property. The site lacks habitats typically utilized for nesting by the species, and no evidence of utilization by the red-cockaded woodpecker was observed onsite during the September 2013 site inspection. However, applicable environmental regulatory agencies may require a species specific survey relative to the red-cockaded woodpecker prior to development of the property.

Search of available online resources revealed that the subject property is located within the Consultation Area of the crested caracara (*Caracara cheriway*). No evidence of utilization by the crested caracara was observed onsite during the September 2013 site inspection. However, applicable environmental regulatory agencies may require a species specific survey relative to the crested caracara prior to development of the property.

Search of available online resources revealed that the subject property is located within the Consultation Area of the Florida scrub jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*). However, per Memorandum of Agreement between Charlotte County and the FWS, a more applicable review of the Charlotte County Natural Resources Department Scrub Jay Territory Search Database revealed that the subject property does not contain any parcels which require review for the species. Therefore, the site does not require any additional review relative to the Florida scrub jay. Thus, the Florida scrub jay is not likely to affect the future development of the subject property.

Search of available online resources did not reveal documentation of any other listed wildlife species which may currently be utilizing the subject property.

The site contains upland habitats which could potentially be utilized by the gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*). These habitats include the on-site FLUCCS 211, 224, 321, and 740 habitats. No signs of gopher tortoise utilization, including gopher tortoise burrows, were observed during the preliminary site inspection. It is anticipated that Charlotte County will require a formal Protected Species Assessment, in accordance with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) guidelines, prior to development or clearing of the site. In the event that signs of site utilization by gopher tortoises are identified during future site inspections or formal protected species surveys, the appropriate permit relative to the gopher tortoise will be required from the FWC prior to development of the occupied portions of the property.

No protected species or evidence of protected species utilization which would require permits from the FWC or FWS were observed onsite during the September 2013 site inspection. Based on the findings of this site assessment, it is anticipated that applicable regulatory agencies will require a formal Protected Species Assessment in accordance with FWC guidelines be performed prior to development of the site.

SUMMARY

The inspection revealed the presence of approximately 0.72 acre of potentially jurisdictional wetland habitat and 0.26 acre of potentially jurisdictional other surface water habitat onsite. If any areas onsite are determined by the SWFWMD and/or USACE to be jurisdictional waters, permits will be required prior to any filling, dredging, clearing, or other similar land altering activities which may affect the on-site jurisdictional waters.

The site contains habitats which could potentially be utilized by various listed wildlife species. Based on site specific conditions, currently listed protected wildlife species are not likely to significantly affect the future development of the subject property. It is anticipated that applicable environmental regulatory agencies will require a formal Protected Species Assessment in accordance with FWC guidelines be performed prior to development of the site.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (941) 457-6200. In my absence, Ian Vincent may also be contacted at (941) 457-6272.

Sincerely,

Ian Vincent and Associates

Jason Perryman

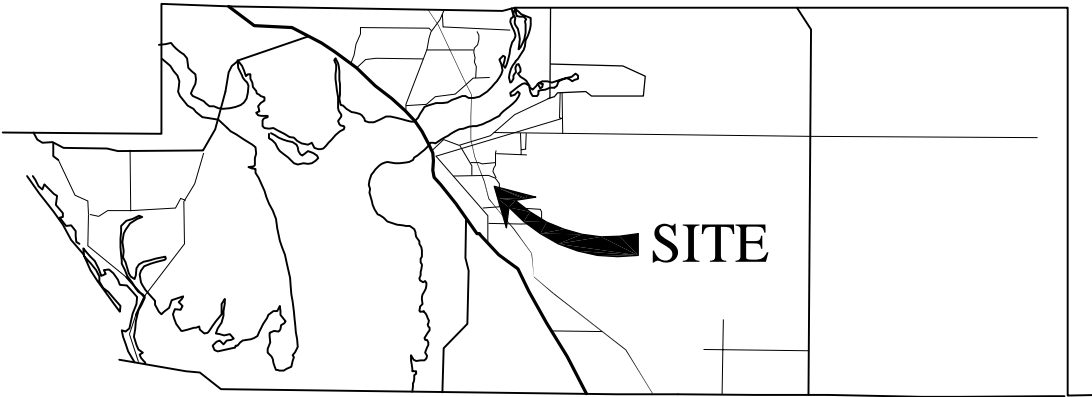
(electronically signed)

Jason D. Perryman
Principal Ecologist

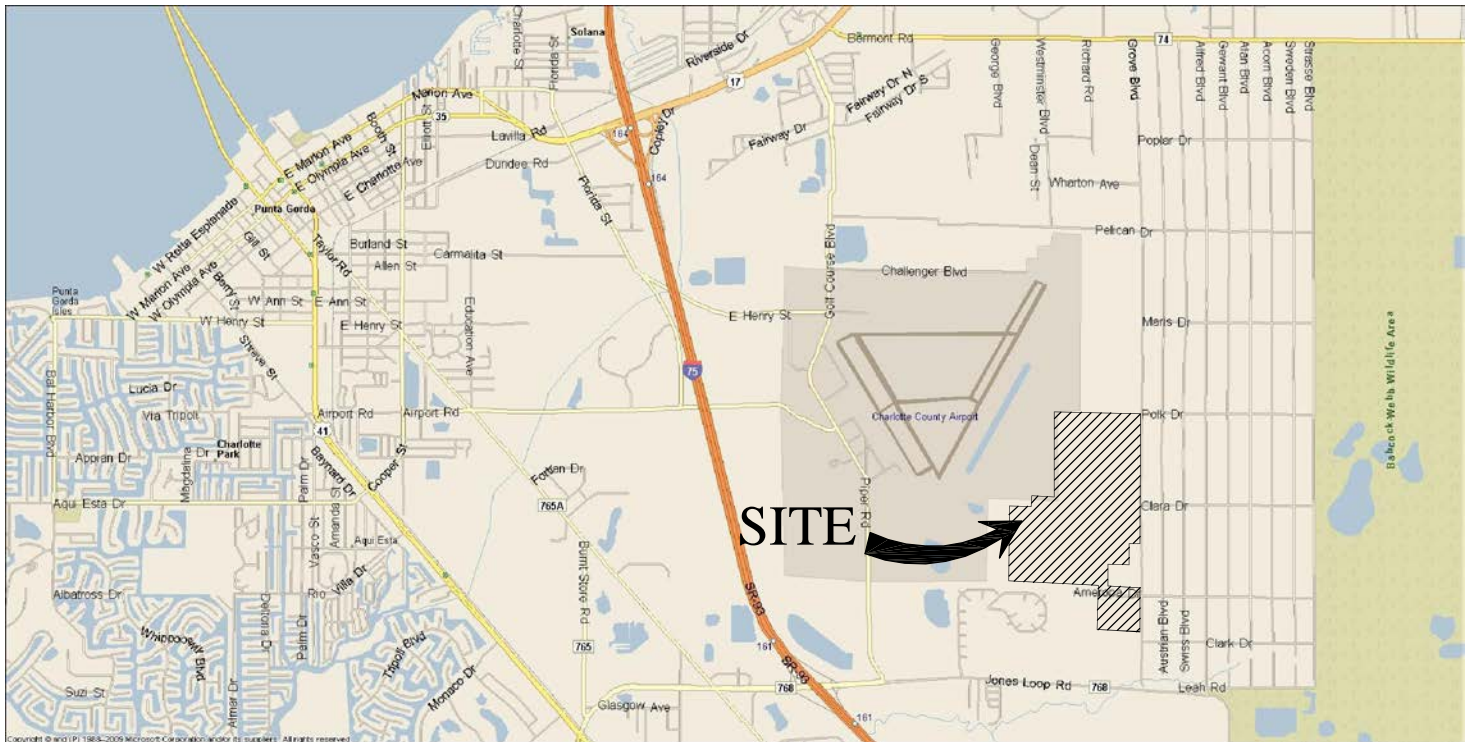


SECTIONS 14 & 23; TOWNSHIP 41S; RANGE 23E

NOT TO SCALE



CHARLOTTE COUNTY, FLORIDA



LOCATION MAP

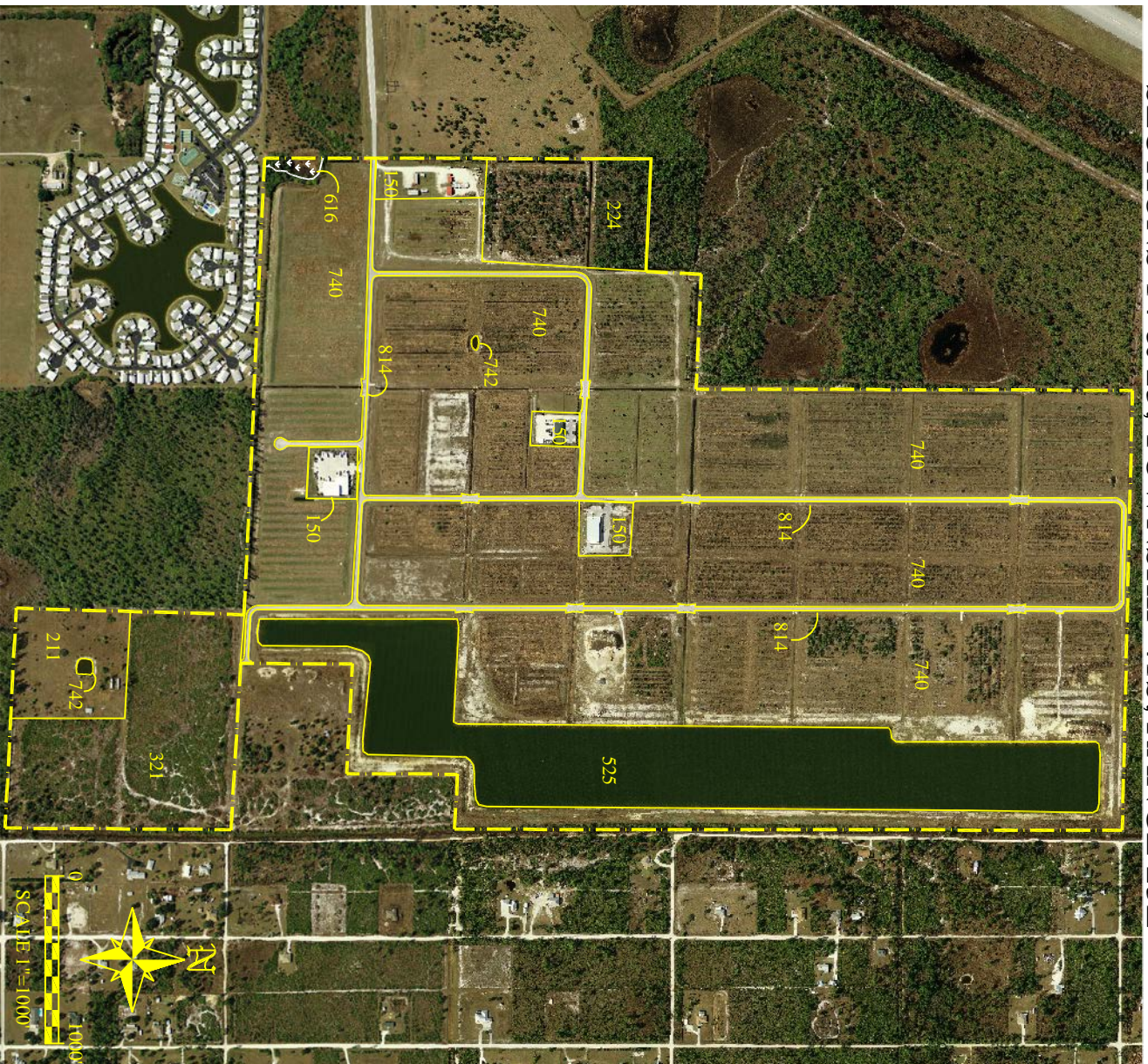
13-021 / SEPTEMBER 18, 2013

AIRPORT COMMERCE CENTER

LOCATION MAP

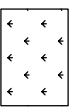


SECTIONS 14 & 23; TOWNSHIP 41S; RANGE 23E



LEGEND

FLUCCS DESCRIPTIONS	ACREAGE
150 INDUSTRIAL	9.41±
211 IMPROVED PASTURE	4.78±
224 ABANDONED GROVE	14.48±
321 PALMETTO PRAIRIE	35.42±
525 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT POND	52.76±
616 SHRUB WETLAND	0.72±
740 DISTURBED LAND	285.95±
742 BORROW AREA	0.26±
814 ROAD	10.33±
TOTAL	414.11±



WETLANDS

0.72 Ac±

- NOTES:
1. FOR PERMIT USE ONLY, NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION.
 2. PROJECT BOUNDARY WAS PROVIDED BY SOUTHWEST ENGINEERING.
 3. MAPPING APPROXIMATE AND BASED ON INTERPRETATION OF 2011 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY AT 1"=1000' SCALE.
 4. DELINEATION OF JURISDICTIONAL WATERS IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO FIELD REVIEW/APPROVAL BY APPLICABLE REGULATORY AGENCIES.

13-021 / SEPTEMBER 23, 2013

AIRPORT COMMERCE CENTER
FLUCCS MAP

Ivan Vincent & Associates
Environmental Consulting Services