

**PRINCIPALS**

Lawrence L. Smith, Jr.  
Wayne D. Chalifoux  
Donaldson K. Barton, Jr.  
Glenn J. Lusink  
Jon S. Meadows  
Mark D. Prochak  
Mark E. Puckett

# Memorandum

DRMP Job #: 18-0145.000

Date: July 16, 2020

To: Annemarie Hammond  
FDOT Florida's Turnpike Enterprise  
Permit Coordinator

From: George McLatchey  
DRMP, Inc.  
Ecological Division Manager

Subject: Species-specific Survey for Southeastern American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius paulus*)  
Spring/Summer 2020  
Suncoast Parkway 2 (SR 44 to CR 486) FPID # 442764-1

## Project Introduction

The proposed project is a four-lane, limited-access toll facility located in Citrus County, Florida, that would extend the existing Suncoast Parkway northward from its intersection with State Road (SR) 44 to County Road (CR) 486 (project area). A Location Map is attached as Figure 1. The expected project length is approximately 2.4 miles.

Southeastern American kestrels (kestrels) have been observed during previous field reviews of the project area; therefore, DRMP was contracted by Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (Turnpike) to conduct a species-specific survey for the southeastern American kestrel to determine if the proposed project area currently provides foraging habitat or supports nesting kestrel pairs. The methodology used for surveys, including transect locations, was approved by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) on May 13, 2020.

## Survey Methodology

The FWC "Ecology and Habitat Protection Needs of the Southeastern American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius paulus*) on Large-Scale Development Sites in Florida, Nongame Wildlife Technical Report No 13" (Stys 1993) was utilized as guidance in developing the survey methodologies, summarized below.

Surveys were conducted once each week from May 15–June 26, 2020. Surveys were conducted on calm days with high visibility from 7:00 AM to 11:00 AM by qualified biologists. A combination of vehicular and pedestrian transects were utilized to survey the project area (Figure 2), covering all potentially suitable habitat. Proposed transect length and distance between transects varied based on vegetative conditions. For vehicular transects, a driving speed of 10–25 mph was maintained, varying in response to terrain, road condition, and visibility. Pedestrian transects were walked at a steady pace. Each vehicular and pedestrian transect was traversed over the seven separate survey days.

Biologists recorded signs of kestrel activity and the habitat category (i.e., Type I, Type II or other) for each kestrel sighting. Type I habitat was defined as "upland plant communities with less than 10% canopy cover and with at least 60% herbaceous ground cover less than 25

**OFFICES**

Asheboro, North Carolina  
Boca Raton, Florida  
Cary, North Carolina  
Charlotte, North Carolina  
Chipley, Florida  
DeLand, Florida  
Fort Myers, Florida  
Gainesville, Florida  
Jacksonville, Florida  
Lakeland, Florida  
Melbourne, Florida  
Orlando, Florida  
Panama City Beach, Florida  
Pensacola, Florida  
Stockbridge, Georgia  
Tallahassee, Florida  
Tampa, Florida  
Troutman, North Carolina

**PRINCIPALS**

Lawrence L. Smith, Jr.  
Wayne D. Chalifoux  
Donaldson K. Barton, Jr.  
Glenn J. Lusink  
Jon S. Meadows  
Mark D. Prochak  
Mark E. Puckett

cm in height.” Type II habitat was defined as “open woodland communities with greater than 10% but less than 25% canopy cover and with at least 60% herbaceous ground cover less than 25 cm in height.” Biologists investigated potential nest sites on foot. All kestrel sightings were recorded using a sub-meter accuracy Trimble handheld GPS unit. Flight paths, landing locations, behavior and vocalizations of observed kestrels were also recorded.

**Results**

Kestrels were observed on four of the seven survey events within the northern portion of the project area in open canopy habitats, e.g., the sand and debris landfill and powerline easement. Kestrels were observed solitary, in pairs, and in family groups. A family group was observed perched on a pine snag but no confirmed nest sites were located within the project area. Detailed data from each survey date are included in Table 1 below.

**OFFICES**

Asheboro, North Carolina  
Boca Raton, Florida  
Cary, North Carolina  
Charlotte, North Carolina  
Chipley, Florida  
DeLand, Florida  
Fort Myers, Florida  
Gainesville, Florida  
Jacksonville, Florida  
Lakeland, Florida  
Melbourne, Florida  
Orlando, Florida  
Panama City Beach, Florida  
Pensacola, Florida  
Stockbridge, Georgia  
Tallahassee, Florida  
Tampa, Florida  
Troutman, North Carolina

**Table 1. Southeastern American Kestrel Survey Results (May 15, 2020 to June 26, 2020)**

Date	Observer	Start Time	End Time	Number of Kestrels	Habitat Type	Behavior	Flight Direction	Sex (M/F/Juv)*	Perch Type	Transect Type	Notes
5/15/2020	LS/RP	7:18	11:00	0							
5/15/2020	DS	7:18	11:00	0							
5/22/2020	LS/RP	7:00	9:52	0							
5/22/2020	DS	7:00	9:52	1	I	perched	n/a	M	wire	pedestrian	potential second call to the north
5/29/2020	LS/RP	7:35	10:40	0							
5/29/2020	DS	7:35	10:40	2	I	perched	n/a	M/F	wire	pedestrian	southwest of transect, west side of powerlines
6/5/2020	LS/RP	7:38	10:55	0							
6/5/2020	DS	7:38	10:55	0							
6/12/2020	LS/RP	7:39	10:06	0							
6/12/2020	DS	7:39	10:06	0							
6/19/2020	LS/RP	7:50	10:30	3	forested along powerline	flying and perched	south	M/F/Juv	pine snag	vehicular	one flying south and landed on power pole, 2 on adjacent snag
6/19/2020	DS	7:50	10:30	3	I	flying and perched	south	M (Juv)	shrub	pedestrian	two were very pale (white) underneath
6/26/2020	LS/RP	7:54	10:39	0							
6/26/2020	DS	7:54	10:39	1	I	flying	north	unknown	n/a	pedestrian	flying north over field
6/26/2020	DS	7:54	10:39	1	I	perched	n/a	M	pine	pedestrian	probably the same as one flying at earlier location

Abbreviations: LS = Logan Shappell, RP = Rachel Peters, DS = David Simpson; M = Male, F = Female, Juv = Juvenile

**PRINCIPALS**

Lawrence L. Smith, Jr.  
Wayne D. Chalifoux  
Donaldson K. Barton, Jr.  
Glenn J. Lusink  
Jon S. Meadows  
Mark D. Prochak  
Mark E. Puckett

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the 2020 species-specific survey and past wildlife surveys, kestrels appear to be actively using Type I habitat in the northern portion of the project area for foraging. No nest sites were confirmed within the project area. A nest site may occur west of the powerline easement outside of the 150-meter nest protection buffer; however, the location of the nest could not be verified as these areas are beyond the project study area on private property.

Survey results indicate further coordination with FWC to assess the potential impacts to kestrels will be required. A survey of potential nest sites is scheduled prior to construction and observed cavity trees/poles will be displayed on final construction plans.

End of Memorandum

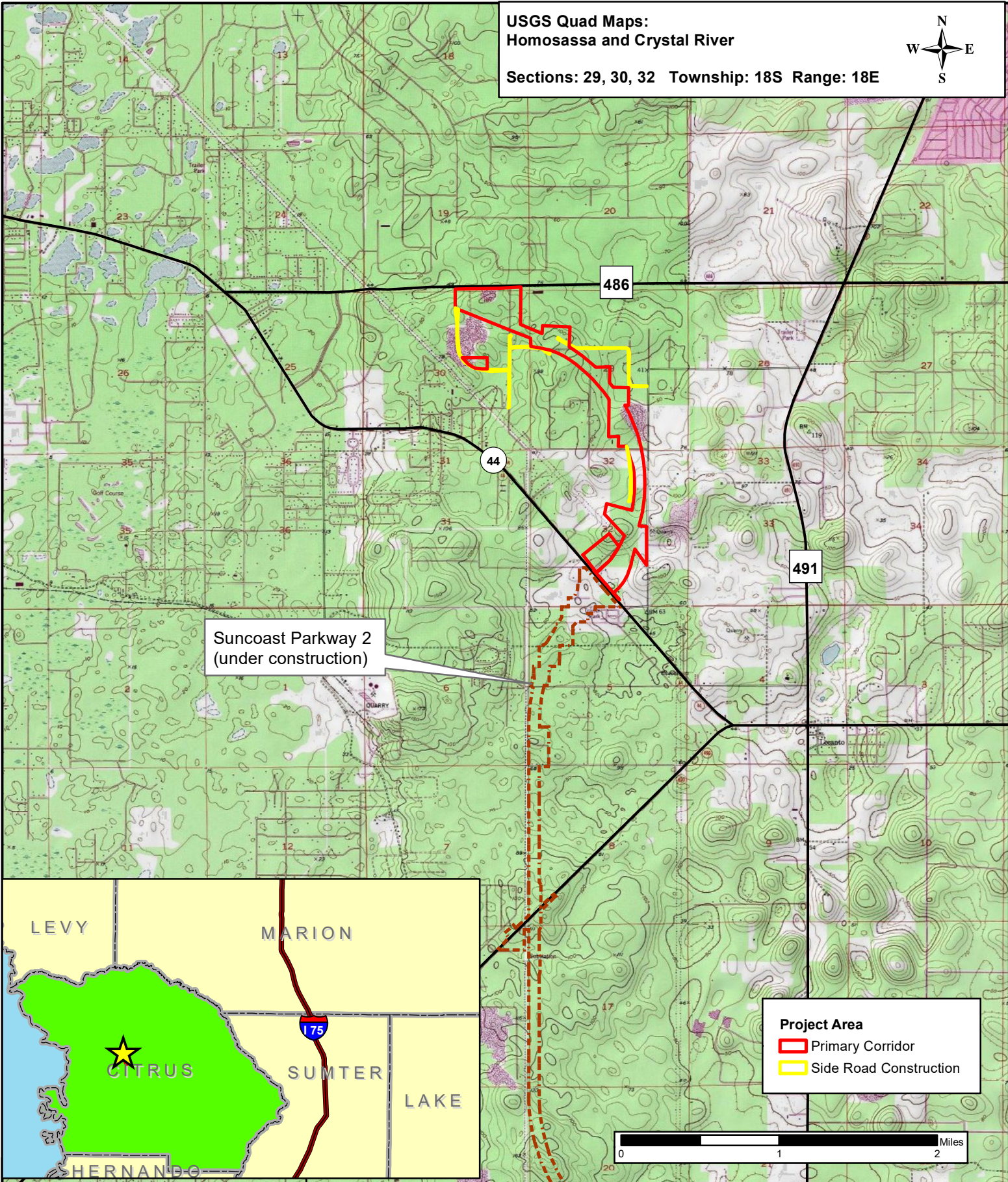
Attachments: Figure 1. Location Map  
Figure 2. Kestrel Survey Map

**OFFICES**

Asheboro, North Carolina  
Boca Raton, Florida  
Cary, North Carolina  
Charlotte, North Carolina  
Chipley, Florida  
DeLand, Florida  
Fort Myers, Florida  
Gainesville, Florida  
Jacksonville, Florida  
Lakeland, Florida  
Melbourne, Florida  
Orlando, Florida  
Panama City Beach, Florida  
Pensacola, Florida  
Stockbridge, Georgia  
Tallahassee, Florida  
Tampa, Florida  
Troutman, North Carolina

1.833.811.3767  
[www.DRMP.com](http://www.DRMP.com)





**Suncoast Parkway 2 - SR 44 to CR 486**

FDOT Florida's Turnpike Enterprise  
FPID No. 442764-1  
Citrus County, Florida

**Location Map**

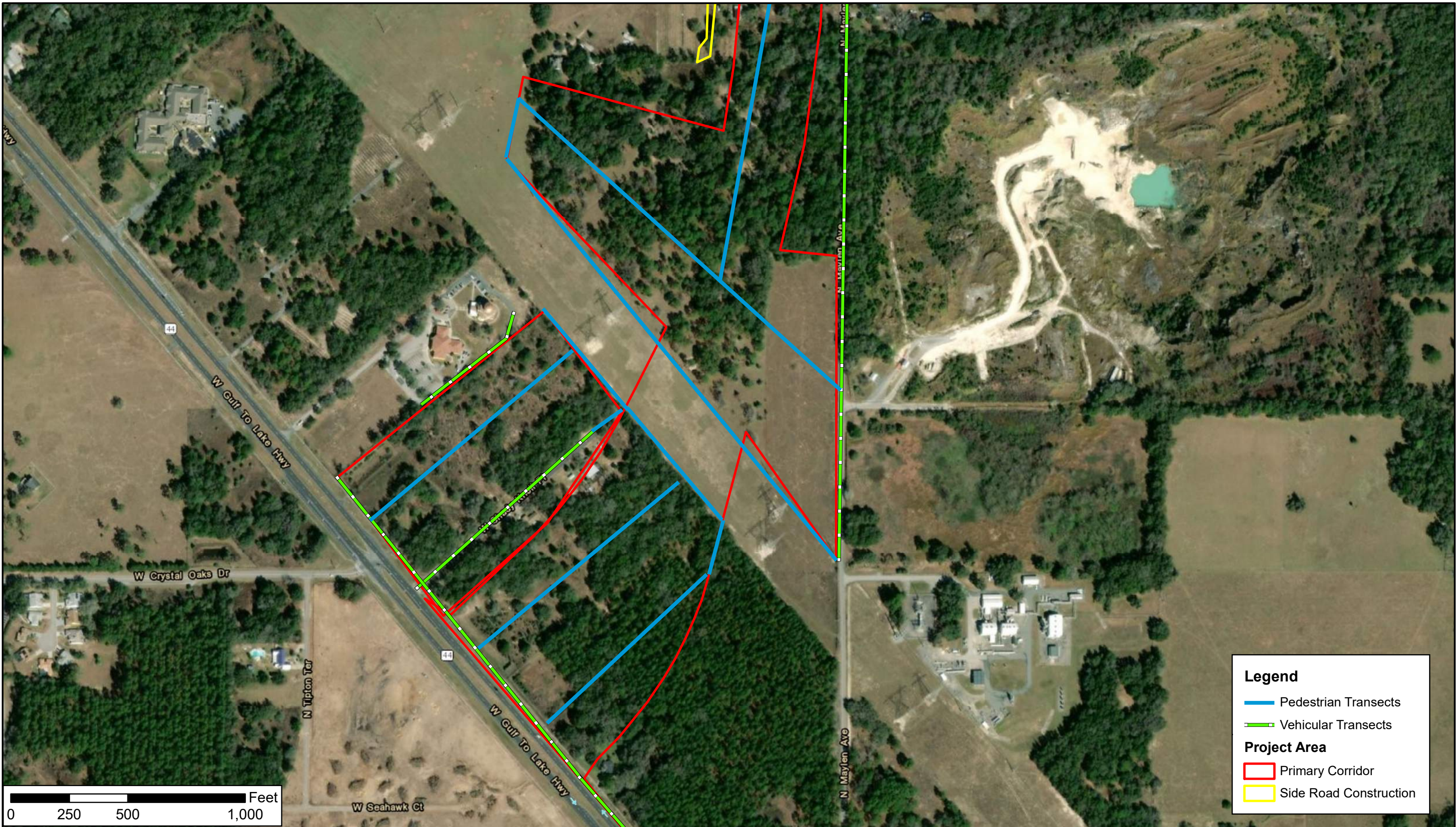
DATA SOURCE:  
Topographic Map - ESRI 2016








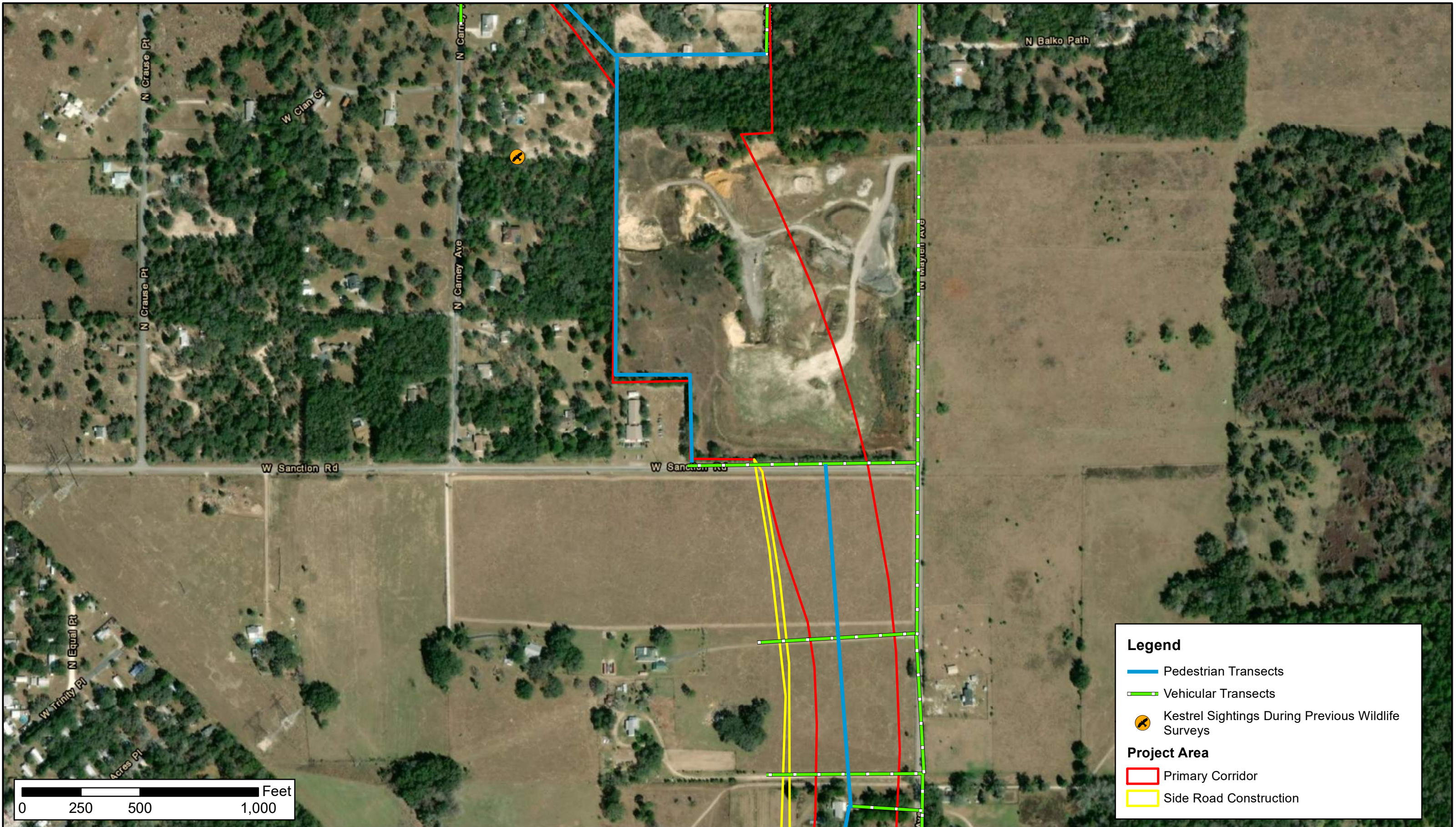
P:\Projects\1818-0145.000\_Suncoast\_Parkway\_2\_-\_SR\_44\_to\_CR\_486\Permits\24-17-Exhibits\kestrel\Suncoast\_kestrel\_survey\_map1.mxd



		<p>DRMP, Inc. 941 Lake Baldwin Ln. Orlando, FL 32814 www.drmp.com Phone: 407-896-0594 Fax: 407-896-4836</p>	
<p>DATE: July 2020</p>		<p>DRAWN BY: MEB</p>	
<p>PROJECT NUMBER: 18-0145.000</p>		<p><b>Suncoast Parkway 2 - SR 44 to CR 486</b> FDOT Florida's Turnpike Enterprise FPID No. 442764-1 Citrus County, Florida</p>	
<p>DATA SOURCE: Imagery: ESRI 2019</p>		<p><b>Kestrel Survey Map</b></p> <div></div>	
		<p><b>Figure 2</b> Sheet 1 of 3</p>	



P:\Projects\1818-0145.000\_Suncoast\_Parkway\_2\_-\_SR\_44\_to\_CR\_486\Permits\24-17-Exhibits\kestrel\Suncoast\_kestrel\_survey\_map2.mxd



**Legend**

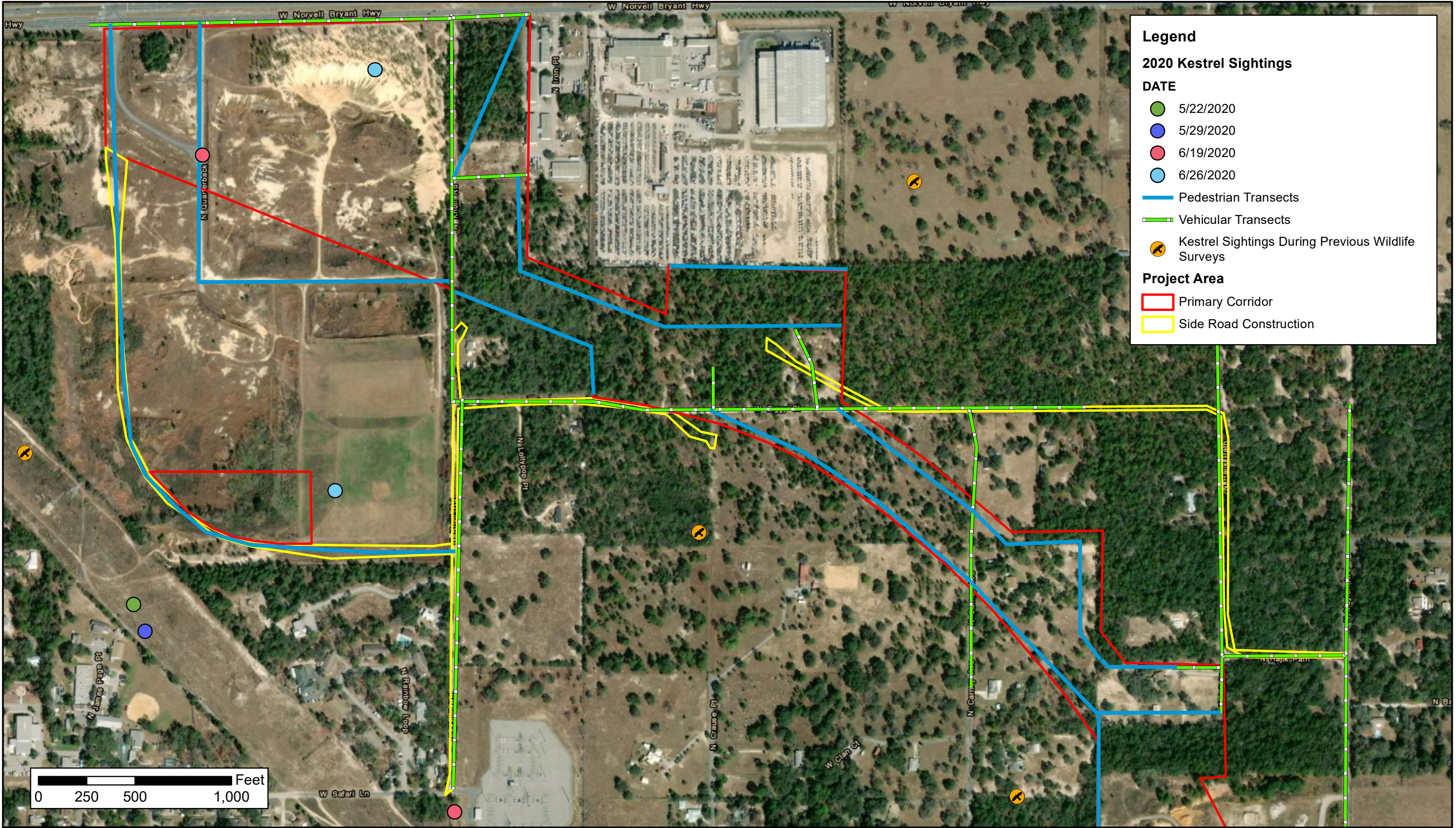
- Pedestrian Transects
- Vehicular Transects
- Kestrel Sightings During Previous Wildlife Surveys

**Project Area**

- Primary Corridor
- Side Road Construction



P:\Projects\1818-0145.000\_Suncoast\_Parkway\_2\_-\_SR\_44\_to\_CR\_486\Permits\24-17-Exhibits\kestrel\Suncoast\_kestrel\_survey\_map3.mxd



**Legend**

**2020 Kestrel Sightings**

DATE

5/22/2020

5/29/2020

6/19/2020

6/26/2020

 Pedestrian Transects Vehicular Transects Kestrel Sightings During Previous Wildlife Surveys**Project Area** Primary Corridor Side Road Construction