

UTILITY CORRIDOR HABITAT MAPPING & ASSESSMENT

SWC (Sandra Walters Consultants, Inc.) has been a key team member in assisting Florida Gas Transmission Company, LLC (FGT) with collection and analysis of environmental data, including the necessary information for preparing Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and Environmental Resource Permit applications associated with the FGT Phase VIII Expansion Project. The survey area includes 568 miles of pipeline in Alabama, Mississippi and Florida with 439 miles built parallel to existing pipelines. The segments SWC worked on were in Dade, Okeechobee, Martin and Hillsborough counties in Florida.

SWC staff is highly experienced and skilled in delineation of wetlands under State and federal guidelines. SWC utilizes sub-meter and sub-foot-accuracy GPS equipment for data collection, and then manipulates the data using state-of-the-art Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software.

SWC responsibilities for this project included:

- extensive coordination with team members, including surveyors, right-of-way agents, and Florida Power & Light;
- implementation of State and federal guidelines when delineating wetland boundaries, including identification of hydrologic indicators, and performing and analyzing soil profiles;
- detailed characterization of wetland habitats, including identification and status of wetland indicator species, survey of threatened and endangered species, and preparation of habitat characteristics descriptions associated with Florida's Uniform Mitigation Assessment Methodology (UMAM);
- collection and management of detailed datasets, using sub-foot-accuracy GPS equipment and associated software, and conveyance of data each field data to central management office;
- assistance to FGT and surveyors with identification of the least environmentally sensitive route for the proposed pipeline expansion;
- assistance to team members with preparation of an Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Assessment which meets the guidelines established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996.
- coordination with County planning and environmental officials along the proposed pipeline route.

