

## **Action Alert – Attend the FDOT Suncoast Parkway Meeting**

**The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is holding an Open House on the Suncoast Parkway Extension in Citrus County:**

**Date: Thursday, October 9**

**Time: 5:30–7:30 PM**

**Location: Lecanto Government Building  
3600 West Sovereign Path, Lecanto, FL 34461**

The public has **not** been given clear answers about what role FDOT is playing in the **Southworth Borrow Pit (ERP #48405.000)** — and whether state and county agencies are **coordinating behind the scenes** to secure sand for the Parkway project using a **privately owned site that lacks land use approval**.

### **What's the Issue? – The ERP Is Advancing Without Oversight**

- **Mr. Southworth** continues to push forward his **private ERP application**, yet no land use change has been approved by Citrus County.
- The project was “continued” back in early August at the County level.
- Despite this, SWFWMD is processing the permit, and FDOT has been conducting survey work on the property even though they do not own it.

## Why This Matters

**Premature State activity** risks pre-judging the outcome of the ERP and land use change, undermining public hearings and environmental safeguards.

- The **Incomplete or misleading work forms shared**, may constitute a procedural defect if material facts are being withheld.
- **The appearance of a public-private coordination — without approval or disclosure — raises legal and ethical red flags.**

No public agency — including FDOT or SWFWMD — should proceed **as if this mine is a done deal**. The public has not yet had its say, and the permit is not yet lawful.

This is a **backdoor approach** to approving a controversial mining site — and the public is being cut out of the process.

## FDOT's Involvement Raises Red Flags

- FDOT has **not filed its own ERP** for this parcel.
- There's no signed acquisition of the mine site, only **adjacent lands via eminent domain**.

This raises serious legal questions. It appears the **private ERP is being advanced for the benefit of FDOT**, without transparency or agency accountability.

**Due to FDOT and the BOCC's past and current actions we find the new County Resolutions passed on September 26th, 2025 without discussion highly concerning as unelected staff can sign legally binding documents without placing the County Seal now have Broad Permitting Power**

On **September 23, 2025**, the **BOCC** passed **Resolution 2025-072**, allowing County staff to sign **FDOT, FDEP, and SWFWMD permits without the County seal and without BOCC hearings**. This resolution:

- Authorizes unelected staff to sign “**all instruments**” related to agency permits
- Removes BOCC oversight by **waiving use of the County seal**
- Appears to Apply broadly to FDOT projects — potentially including the Southworth pit

This is not “routine” when the County appears to be aware the Southworth project is highly controversial and potentially **non-compliant with floodplain, aquifer, and land use rules** and the project was ruled **noncompliant** by the Special Master on June 27, 2025, due to **non-reclaimable environmental impacts (Policy 17.13.4)**.

We've contacted **Denise Dymond-Lynch** for clarification with no response yet — but the documents speak for themselves.

**Summary of Outstanding Environmental Concerns for the Borrow Pit Location**

## Environmental Risks

- **Excavation will breach the aquifer** (TestLab borings, SWFWMD concerns)
- Dewatering is likely but **no plan has been provided** despite SWFWMD's own technical flags
- Site is in **FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)** with excavation far **below BFE**
- No compensatory flood storage is proposed, likely violating **NFIP & Citrus County LDC §4300**
- “**Wetland H**” may actually be a **spring seep**, showing cold clear water and consistent with aquifer discharge — if true, this demands **OFS/PFA-level protection**

## Procedural Failures

- Parcel includes **unresolved plat conflicts**
  - The **legal entity on the ERP is private**, yet appears aligned with FDOT
  - **No proper land use change** has occurred — ERP is moving ahead anyway
  - **FEMA Region IV** has been asked to review the floodplain issues
  - **Department of Environmental Protection** has been asked to review hydrogeological connections and the location in a Outstanding Florida Spring/Priority Focus Area
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## Our Focus

Stopping approval of the Environmental Resource Permit is necessary, as the applicant's own data exposes serious and confirmed risks to the aquifer— all while the process moves forward without meaningful public participation and amid growing public concern over the role and pressure exerted by FDOT, and despite clear laws already in place to protect our aquifer and springs that are simply not being followed.

## What You Can Do

We're organizing a community response to:

- **Attend the October 9 FDOT meeting**
- **Ask direct questions about the borrow pit, aquifer, and ERP**
- **Join a pre-meeting strategy session** (details to follow)

If you can help with outreach, question planning, or just want to attend in your **Stop the Mine** shirt (ocean blue!), please reply to this email.

We are still learning more each day, but this October 9 meeting may be the only chance to get public answers from FDOT in person. **We need a strong, informed presence.**

**Let's stay informed, stay strong, and show up.  
Our water, our voice, our future — we will not be ignored.**

**With gratitude and determination,  
Colleen Farmer Chair**

**Tony Ayo Co-Chair**

**David Bishop Vice-Chair**

On behalf of the Stop the Mine Committee

Visit [StoptheSandMine.com](http://StoptheSandMine.com)

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