

Critical Time for Public Comments - Please Attend Sunday's Meeting or Send an Email Now

Dear Stop the Sand Mine Supporters,

We are now at a **critical stage** in the permit review process for the proposed Eastern Borrow Site connected to Suncoast Parkway Phase 3A. Please see below for a summary of NEW information as well as our website for what is happening NOW. <https://www.stopthesandmine.com/>

Recent FDOT **documents now confirm** that the proposed roadway and borrow **excavation disturbance together approach approximately 894 acres** within the small 3A section of the Suncoast Parkway which is located in a **sensitive springs recharge area** connected to the Kings Bay / Crystal River system.

FDOT's own reports also state that **stormwater from the excavation area is intended to infiltrate directly into the groundwater table** within this sensitive karst and springs-recharge area.

FDOT's own records also document approximately **342 potentially occupied gopher tortoise burrows within the project area, including approximately 258 active burrows.**

Most importantly, public comments are needed RIGHT NOW as the permit review process is rapidly moving forward.

We urgently need public comments submitted NOW.

COMMUNITY UPDATE & COMMENT WRITING EVENT

Sunday, May 17, 2026

2:00 PM

Pine Ridge Community Center

5680 W. Pine Ridge Blvd Beverly Hills, FL 34465

PLEASE INVITE YOUR FRIENDS

At this meeting we will:

- Provide updates on the permit review process
- Explain FDOT's own project documents in plain language
- Help residents understand the environmental concerns
- Assist attendees in writing respectful public comments to SWFWMD and regulatory agencies

If you cannot attend the meeting, **PLEASE** still take a few minutes to **send an email comment now**. Instructions are on the Home page of the stopthesandmine.com with more details on the How 2 Help page. You can make a difference!

KEY POINTS FROM OUR RECENT COMMENTS

On May 7, concerns were formally raised regarding FDOT's **late-stage SEIR** re-evaluation process. **FDOT's own documents** now describe the borrow site as a major land-use-change excavation project involving hundreds of acres of disturbance beyond the originally evaluated roadway corridor.

Additional comments submitted this week focused on **FDOT's own admissions regarding:**

- Direct infiltration into groundwater
- Karst and shallow limestone conditions
- Reduced protective separation between surface water and the aquifer
- Wetland and groundwater-connected systems
- Questions regarding legal control and evolving permit documentation during review

One of the most important concerns involves the **lack of protective clay layers** in portions of the site. Earlier hydrogeologic investigations for the same property stated that some borings encountered sand directly over limestone with "no intervening clay."

In simple terms, clay normally helps protect the aquifer by slowing infiltration and filtering water. Without that protective layer, directing

runoff into groundwater can function more like an open sieve into the aquifer than a protected filtration system.

FDOT's own 2026 reports further state that **runoff from the site will infiltrate directly into the groundwater table.**

This is precisely why independent review and public involvement are so important right now.

This is not about stopping the Suncoast Parkway itself.

The concern is whether this particular large-scale excavation belongs in this sensitive location.

Please attend Sunday if you can, and if not, please send a comment now. See the public comments Stop the Sand Mine sent to comment on the SWFWMD Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) on our stopthesandmine.com website.

Thank you for your continued support and involvement.

Colleen Farmer, Chair

Tony Ayo, Co-Chair

Stop the Sand Mine Committee

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