Florida National Scenic Trail

Corridor Location Review

Twin Rivers State Forest to Aucilla River Gap

USDA, Forest Service

National Forests in Florida

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I. Introduction

The Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) was federally designated in 1983 as a part of the National Trails system. At the time of designation, the FNST was envisioned as a 1,300 mile trail across Florida's unique landscapes that would run from Big Cypress National Preserve in the South to the Gulf Islands National Seashore in the northern panhandle. Today, approximately 1,000 miles of the 1,300 envisioned are on the ground and certified through partnership agreements with land owners. To ensure the remaining 300 miles of gaps allows for the best recreational experience of the natural, scenic, historic and cultural resources of the state of Florida, several tools have been developed to examine alternative routing options.

The purpose of this Corridor Location Review is to document the process, criteria and evidence utilized to complete the trail routing recommendation for the Twin River State Forest to Aucilla River gap of the Florida National Scenic Trail (T1S R11E to S7 T4S R4E). Due to the expansive nature of the gap, methods have been modified from the Optimal Location Review Process[1], adopted by the USDA US Forest Service for use on National Scenic Trails, and will be referred to as the Corridor Location Review (CLR). The CLR process may recommend a combination of land acquisition, conservation easements, trail relocations and partnerships to close the Twin Rivers State Forest to Aucilla River gap and preserve the established intent of the FNST. This process is designed to ensure that the most optimal corridor is chosen to achieve consistency within the criteria outlined in the FNST Comprehensive Plan[2], published in the Federal Register of May 28, 1987 (Vol. 52, #102).

Historically, this 55 mile road walk followed a combination of private timber roads and public right of ways. As the route utilized active logging roads and public roads, the route was unable to be certified as it did not meet necessary non-motorized trail standards. This historic route is no longer a viable alternative and thus will not be reviewed in this document.

The National Trails System Act of 1968[3] authorizes the USDA, US Forest Service to relocate sections of the FNST in accordance with SEC. 7. [16USC1246].

> (b) After publication of notice of the availability of appropriate maps or descriptions in the Federal Register, the Secretary charged with the administration of a national scenic or national historic trail may relocate segments of a national scenic or national historic trail right-of-way with the concurrence of the head of the Federal agency having jurisdiction over the lands involved, upon a determination that: (I) Such a relocation is necessary to preserve the purposes for which the trail was established, or (ii) the relocation is necessary to promote a sound land management program in accordance with established multiple-use principles: Provided, That a substantial relocation of the rights-of-way for such trail shall be by Act of Congress.

Conclusion of this initial review suggests the most suited routing alternative for the FNST is Alternative C, the Big Bend Southern Route, due to its exceptionally scenic qualities and compliance with all location review criteria. However, significant challenges remain in regards to route implementation, including its departure from the current corridor outlined in the FNST Comprehensive Plan. Flexibility within routing options is built into the initial 1982 National Scenic Trail Study for FNST[4], recognizing that the Forest Service and collaborating partners would be an appropriate body to review major trail relocations. A final decision will require further documentation and careful consideration before proceeding with relocation. In total, these challenges do not preclude the selection of Alternative C but will necessitate additional study and justification before moving forward.

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[1] USDA Forest Service, National Forests in Florida, Florida National Scenic Trail Optimal Location Review Process, available at: http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3826770.pdf

[2] USDA Forest Service, National Forests in Florida, Florida National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan, available at: http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5356779.pdf

[3] National Trails System Act, available at: http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5316971.pdf

[4] US DOI, National Park Service, The Florida Trail: National Scenic Trail Study and Environmental Assessment, available at http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5356832.pdf

II. Methods for Corridor Location Review

To complete the Corridor Location Review, both qualitative and quantitative analyses were undergone to identify and assess the proposed alternative corridors. Three alternatives were identified from partner consultation and an assessment of feasible, on the ground routing opportunities. The final alternatives were developed after discussion at the January 2016 FNST Coalition Meeting and consultation with local land managers, the Florida Trail Association (FTA) and Greenways and Trails Foundation (GTF).

A spatial analysis of the study area was undergone to assess the land use and feasibility of each proposed alternative. Several variables were identified to examine each alternative including total public and private lands, mileage of Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) right-of-way and mileage of land acquisition for each route. In addition, a viewshed analysis was conducted to measure the scenic quality of each proposed alternative route.

Finally, a Corridor Review Team[6] composed of administering agency, land managers and partners was established to assess the proposed alternatives. The Corridor Review Team conducted site visits to each of the proposed alternatives to document each corridor and identify opportunities and challenges to permanent certification. Evaluation considered characteristics that best met the congressional intent for a National Scenic Trail including feasibility of implementation, safety, and long term corridor protection. The final decision was reached utilizing an appraisal matrix which identified the preferred alternative based on the above criteria.

The CLR process serves to identify the purpose and need to initiate a more in depth feasibility study and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis. The CLR is neither a substitute for NEPA compliance nor the legal requirements for publishing major shifts in the location of the FNST in the National Register. Upon further documentation and review, the final CLR feasibility study and NEPA documentation will set the stage for official trail relocation and publishing notice of said relocation in the National Register.

Location Criteria

The 1986 FNST Comprehensive Plan outlines a set of Trail Location Criteria[5], established by the US Congress, to meet desired qualities of the FNST. The location criteria are further broken down into two categories, 'musts' and 'wants'. The 'musts' are required criteria. If an alternative does not meet a must criterion, it is no longer considered. These are as follows:

1. Is consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and higher order plans
2. Meets the objectives of the National Trails System Act

Along with the musts there are the 'wants' which are important criteria measured in degrees as opposed to absolute yes or nos. If an alternative does not completely meet a want criteria, it can continue to be considered, unlike the must criteria. The wants criteria area as follows:

1. Maximize opportunities to view and experience the unique physical and cultural environments of Florida.
2. Provide a broad range of recreation interests and opportunities
3. Minimizes resource impacts and private land ownership impacts
4. Maximize functional relationships
5. Minimizes costs

These criteria were used as the basis of evaluation for each of the following proposed alternative routes. Further discussion on the evaluation methodology can be found in Appendix B.

Alternative Corridors

Three route alternatives were examined in the CLR process, the US 90 Multi-Use Corridor, Current Road Walk Connector, and the Big Bend Southern Route. Alternative A, the Current Road Walk Connector, follows an established rural corridor utilizing existing roads and right-of-ways. Alternative B, US 90 Multi-Use Corridor, is characterized by rural to urban development, with potential for development as a multi-use corridor to suite future urban growth. The Big Bend Southern Route, Alternative C, traverses the scenic and largely undeveloped Big Bend coastline, predominantly utilizing public lands. Each of the alternatives identified has unique challenges; however, these three options represent the most effective and feasible routing opportunities within the Twin River State Forest to Aucilla River gap corridor.

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[5] USDA Forest Service, National Forests in Florida, Florida National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan, pg. 18-20, available at: http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5356779.pdf

[6] Members of the Corridor Review Team are as follows:

Shawn Thomas, Florida National Scenic Trail Program Manager, National Forests in Florida
Alex Stigliano, Trail Program Director, Florida Trail Association
Keith Bettcher, State Recreation Coordinator, Florida Forest Service
Edwin McCook, Land Management Specialist, Suwannee River Water Management District
Tom Matthews, Recreation Planner, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

III. Alternative Corridors Considered

Alternative A – Current Road Walk Connector

Route Description- From west to east, the route follows county roads including CR 666, CR 53, CR 360, and CR 14. The route is unpaved until it crosses US 27. A number of rural paved and unpaved roads are used to pass through the communities of Ellaville, Madison, Ebb and Sirmans. The trail begins at the Aucilla River Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and ends at Twin Rivers State Forest Mill Creek Tract.

Site Characteristics- The current, and most expedient, route between Twin Rivers State Forest and the Aucilla WMA consists of a 50 mile road walk on county owned and maintained roads through Madison and Taylor Counties. The route experiences Trail Class ratings from 3-4. The viewshed is characterized by rural roadways interspersed with private residential areas and communities reminiscent of small town Florida. There are many locations throughout the corridor which provide views of working landscapes including agricultural and private forestry operations. Sites of interest such as historic cemeteries and churches can be found along the corridor. Adequate supply points exist along this corridor as well as potential for additional private and public primitive camping opportunities towards the western extent of the route.

Land Use- The land use of Alternative A is entirely composed of FDOT right-of-way following generally low-traffic, county maintained roads which are travelled by local residents and logging trucks. Very few public lands exist with the exception of two small parcels managed by the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD). The land immediately surrounding the right-of-ways is characterized by small parcel sizes and private ownership.

Route Feasibility Summary- There are several advantages and disadvantages for selection of Alternative A. The advantages include preserving existing certified FNST located in Twin Rivers State Forest and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) Aucilla WMA. The route includes opportunities for a relatively functional road walk with potential for several public and private campsite locations and resupply points. Concurrently, several challenges exist to creating permanent certified FNST on Alternative A. The most critical issue is hiker safety as the route is shared with motorized vehicles and many roadways are flanked by deep ditches which offer minimal right of way. In addition, the dominance of private ownership with only two small public holdings present concerns for designating a certifiable treadway.

Mileage Summary*

Viewshed Mileage Summary	96.5
Total Natural Viewshed	32
Total Altered Viewshed	64.7
Total Route Mileage	50
Public Land	0
Private Land	0
FDOT Right-Of-Way	50
Land Acquisition Mileage	**50**

Location Criteria Summary**

Musts	Meet Laws, Regulations & Higher Order Plans	No
Wants	Meet Objectives of P.L. 90-543 National Scenic Trails Act	No
	Experience Unique Physical and Cultural Environments	4
	Provide a broad range of recreation interests and opportunities	2
	Functionality	3
	Minimize Resource and Private Land Impacts	10
	Minimize Cost	10

**Please see Appendix A for associated maps and site pictures.*

***Musts are evaluated with a Yes or No. Wants are evaluated on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the best solution. Please see Appendix B for a detailed criteria assessment*

Alternative B– US90 Multi-Use Corridor

Route Summary- Traveling west to east, Alternative B follows US 90 to the City of Greenville, south briefly on US 221 to CR 150 to CR328/Federal Road 1. Hikers will follow CR 328 approximately 10 miles to US 19. The route begins at the intersection of the Aucilla River and US 27/19 and ends at the Twin Rivers State Park Ellaville Tract.

Site Characteristics- Alternative B is characterized by a rural road experience with adequate shoulders allowing for potential in exploring a certified foot path along segments of this corridor. Portions of US 90 approaching and exiting Madison have a narrow paved multi-use path in place. Upon exiting the Twin Rivers State Forest parking area there is an ideal berm which hikers could utilize; however, the route crosses existing railroad infrastructure and ensuring hiker safety would require appropriate coordination with FDOT. Other than roadways, the viewshed includes the historic architecture in the City of Madison, rolling hills, working farms and low to mid-level residential and business developments. Analysis of the viewshed depicts that 67% of the viewshed is located within altered communities, the majority of these being altered upland systems. Sites of interest include historic downtown Madison and the Town of Greenville, the childhood home of Ray Charles. The footpath along this route is consistent with a Trail Class 4-5 rating with the exception of a small segment for potential exploration in SRWMD Cuba Bay Tract along the Aucilla River. Existing amenities include a local hospital, county park, several resupply points, lodging, and restaurants. There are no primitive camping opportunities available at this time.

Land Use- The land use of Alternative B is characterized by FDOT right-of-way along US 90. Trail development would require utilization of the road shoulder and existing multiuse paths near the City of Madison.

Route Feasibility Summary- There are several advantages to Alternative B which include opportunities for partnership with Madison County and the potential to tie in with the existing Four Freedoms Trail in downtown Madison which extends north to the Georgia border. Additionally, there is adequate right-of-way for multi-use pedestrian and physical fitness activities such as jogging and biking. Though there are no outstanding scenic qualities, the route does present average scenic qualities throughout and could serve as a connector for the thru-hiking community or local residents.

However, there are many challenges to the route feasibility as it does not meet the two 'must' location criteria identified by the FNST Comprehensive Plan. The route would require trail development for the majority of the corridor and the scenic values do not meet the qualities outlined by the National Scenic Trails Act. Connecting the trail through public lands to the Aucilla WMA FNST segment is infeasible at this time due to high infrastructure costs and therefore would require an additional ten mile road walk.

Furthermore, selection of Alternative B would require abandoning seven miles of wooded, certified trail in Twin Rivers State Forest and provide no camping facilities.

Mileage Summary

Viewshed Mileage Summary	90.9
Total Natural Viewshed	31.2
Total Altered Viewshed	59.7
Total Route Mileage	50
Public Land	0
Private Land	0
FDOT Right-Of-Way	50
Land Acquisition Mileage	**50**

Location Criteria Summary

Musts	Meet Laws, Regulations & Higher Order Plans	No
Wants	Meet Objectives of P.L. 90-543 National Scenic Trails Act	No
	Experience Unique Physical and Cultural Environments	5
	Provide a broad range of recreation interests and opportunities	5
	Functionality	4
	Minimize Resource and Private Land Impacts	10
	Minimize Cost	9

Alternative C - Big Bend Southern Route

Route Summary- Traveling west to east Alternative C follows a network of public lands along the Big Bend coastline to the town of Steinhatchee and connecting north to existing FNST along the Suwannee River and Twin Rivers State Forest. The trail utilizes a variety of existing administrative roads and trails to travel through several of FWC's Big Bend Wildlife Management Units. Econfina River and Lafayette Blue Springs State Parks and Steinhatchee and Econfina Conservation Areas are also traversed by Alternative C. The trail begins at the intersection of the Aucilla River and US 98 and terminates at Twin Rivers State Forest Mills Creek tract.

Site Characteristics- This route is characterized by expansive views of the undeveloped coastal ecosystem providing scenic qualities surpassed by few areas along the entire length of the FNST. Scenic views include expansive marshlands of the Big Bend coastline, unique geologic features, and several scenic blackwater rivers. The route experiences Trail Classes 2-4 throughout the route. Viewshed analysis depicts that 61% of the viewshed is located in natural communities, the majority of these being protected wetland ecosystems. There is potential for development of the first paddling connections located on the FNST including the Suwannee River Wilderness Trail and Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail. Amenities along the corridor include locations to resupply, abundant camping opportunities, and numerous outfitters providing canoe and kayak rentals and shuttle services.

Land Use- Alternative C travels mainly on public lands, in total for 82 miles. These include existing public trails and remote public dirt access roads. Outside of public lands there are 17 miles of private land ownership and 32 miles of FDOT right-of-way that would be utilized to complete this route.

Route Feasibility Summary- The advantages of Alternative C are abundant. First and foremost, it is the only alternative which meets the necessary criteria for consideration outlined by the FNST Comprehensive Plan. This route takes advantage of public land opportunities from existing partnerships such as FWC and Florida State Parks, which provide excellent opportunities befitting for National Scenic Trail (NST) designation. Initial site visits garnered tremendous support from land managers, Taylor County and the town of Steinhatchee. Long term management goals of the FNST Coalition partners show a high likelihood of mutual benefit in land acquisition connecting public lands thus reducing the identified gaps. With opportunity for developing the first NST paddling connection and minimal trail development required, the benefits of this highly scenic route far outweigh any other viable alternative.

However, there are several challenges present with the Big Bend Southern route. Primarily, this route is significantly outside of the 20 mile planning corridor identified in the 1986 Florida National Scenic

Trail Comprehensive Plan and would require approval at the highest levels of the Forest Service and potentially Congress. Although the parameters defining a National Scenic Trail are met, this option is the longest at 131 miles with 49 miles of FDOT right-of-way and private land gaps. Studies regarding the amount and potential for land acquisition, additional maintenance burden and required infrastructure will need to be undergone to ensure feasibility.

Mileage Summary

Viewshed Mileage Summary	257
Total Natural Viewshed	157.3
Total Altered Viewshed	99.7
Total Route Mileage	131
Public Land	82
Private Land	17
FDOT Right-Of-Way	32
Land Acquisition Mileage	**49**

Location Criteria Summary

Musts	Meet Laws, Regulations & Higher Order Plans	Yes
Wants	Meet Objectives of P.L. 90-543 National Scenic Trails Act	Yes
	Experience Unique Physical and Cultural Environments	10
	Provide a broad range of recreation interests and opportunities	9
	Functionality	8
	Minimize Resource and Private Land Impacts	9
	Minimize Cost	3

III. Optimal Corridor Decision

Review of the three alternatives indicates the optimal corridor for the Florida National Scenic Trail in the Twin Rivers State Forest to Aucilla River Gap is the selection and adoption of Alternative C, the Big Bend Southern Route. Of the three alternatives reviewed, the southern option is the only alternative within this gap that fits the mandated criteria established in the FNST Comprehensive Plan. In addition, this alternative received the highest scores for its compatibility with NST certification criteria. Please see Appendix B for a detailed location criteria decision matrix.

The southern option is the best suited for permanent connection and protection on public lands and has the highest likelihood of land acquisitions from willing private owners. This selection encompasses the highest scenic quality index, greatest array of recreational opportunities and minimizes safety concerns within the gap.

Though the benefits of Alternative B include potential for positive economic benefit in the cities of Lee, Greenville and Madison there is no additional net-gain in scenic quality over the Current Road Walk Connector (Alternative A). Along with this, segments of Alternative B may be eligible for certification due to the wider right-of-way available along US 90, pending county, state and federal transportation authority approval. However, because this corridor does not meet either of the 'Must' criteria identified by the Comprehensive Plan, it is infeasible and cannot be considered at this time.

Alternative A, though scenic and utilitarian in quality, is also infeasible for permanent certification. This route also does not meet the location criteria and therefore is infeasible for consideration. The current road walk connector would serve as the established connector during the approval process.

III. Conclusion

It is a Federal Action to relocate a portion of a National Scenic Trail. All Federal Actions, whether located on federal or non-federal land, are subject to compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The CLR process functions as the analysis which establishes the purpose and need to begin a NEPA analysis for relocating a segment of the FNST. The review report does not substitute for NEPA compliance or legal requirements for publishing major shifts in the location of the FNST in the Federal Register. After an agency completes NEPA compliance, the final review and NEPA documents set the stage for publishing a notice for trail relocation in the Federal Register, and the ultimate implementation of activities to improve FNST settings and conditions. Upon acceptance of Alternative C, the Big Bend Southern Route, by the Forest Supervisor, the appropriate resource analysis and public notices shall be completed.

Much work and planning will need to precede the implementation of this corridor selection; however, when complete, this alternative will close one of the largest and most complex gaps present since the inception of the FNST. The 49 miles of gaps present in this selection represent a large undertaking. However, the availability of adjacent public lands, land acquisition partnerships and the opportunities for creative connections such as paddling options add to the array of possibilities the uniquely poised Florida National Scenic Trail is able to explore.

As coastal development continues in the state of Florida, unique ecosystems such as those found along the Big Bend are becoming increasingly rare. The FNST has the opportunity to incorporate some of the only remaining undeveloped coastline in the United States and offer trail users access to these protected lands. The efforts to secure partnerships within this corridor will be of terrific importance to this national treasure for generations to come.

Appendix A– Corridor Maps

Figure A.1 FNST Twin Rivers State Forest To Aucilla River Gap Proposed Alternatives, 2016

Figure A.2 Alternative A, Current Roadwalk Connector

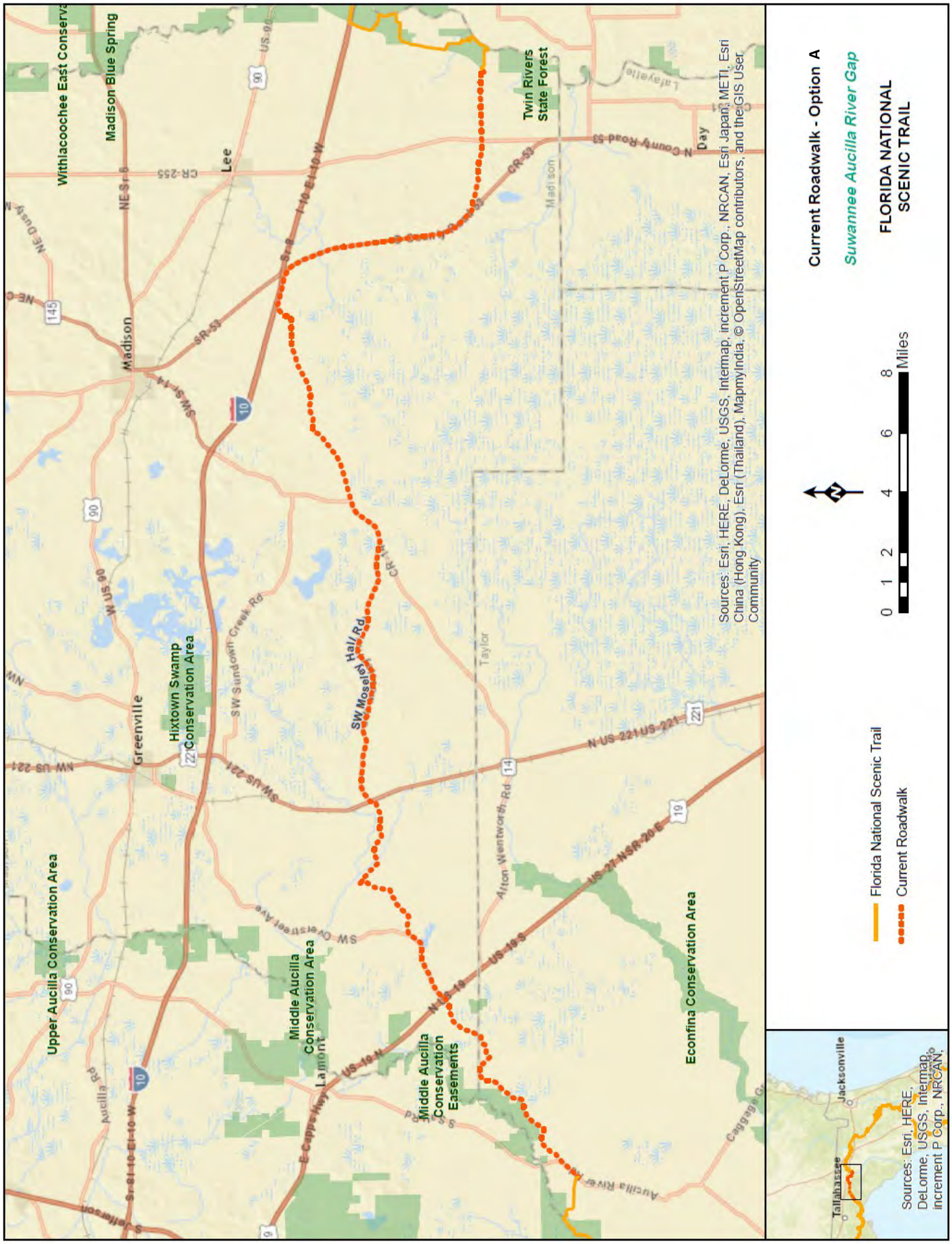


Figure A.3 Alternative B, US-90 Multi-Use Corridor

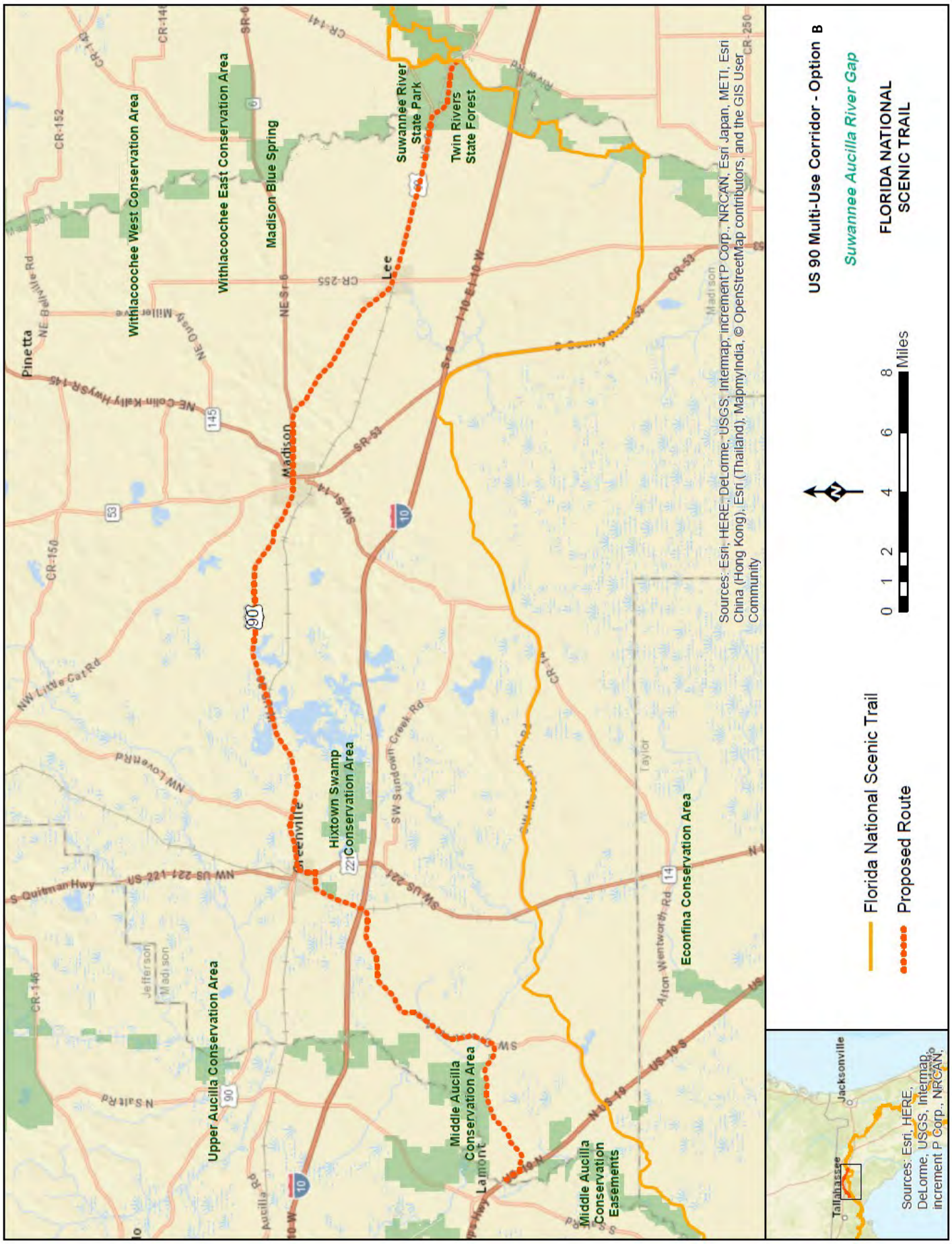


Figure A.4 Alternative C, Big Bend Southern Route

Appendix B– Natural communities Analysis

Figure B.2 Alternative A, Current Roadwalk Connector Natural Communities Analysis

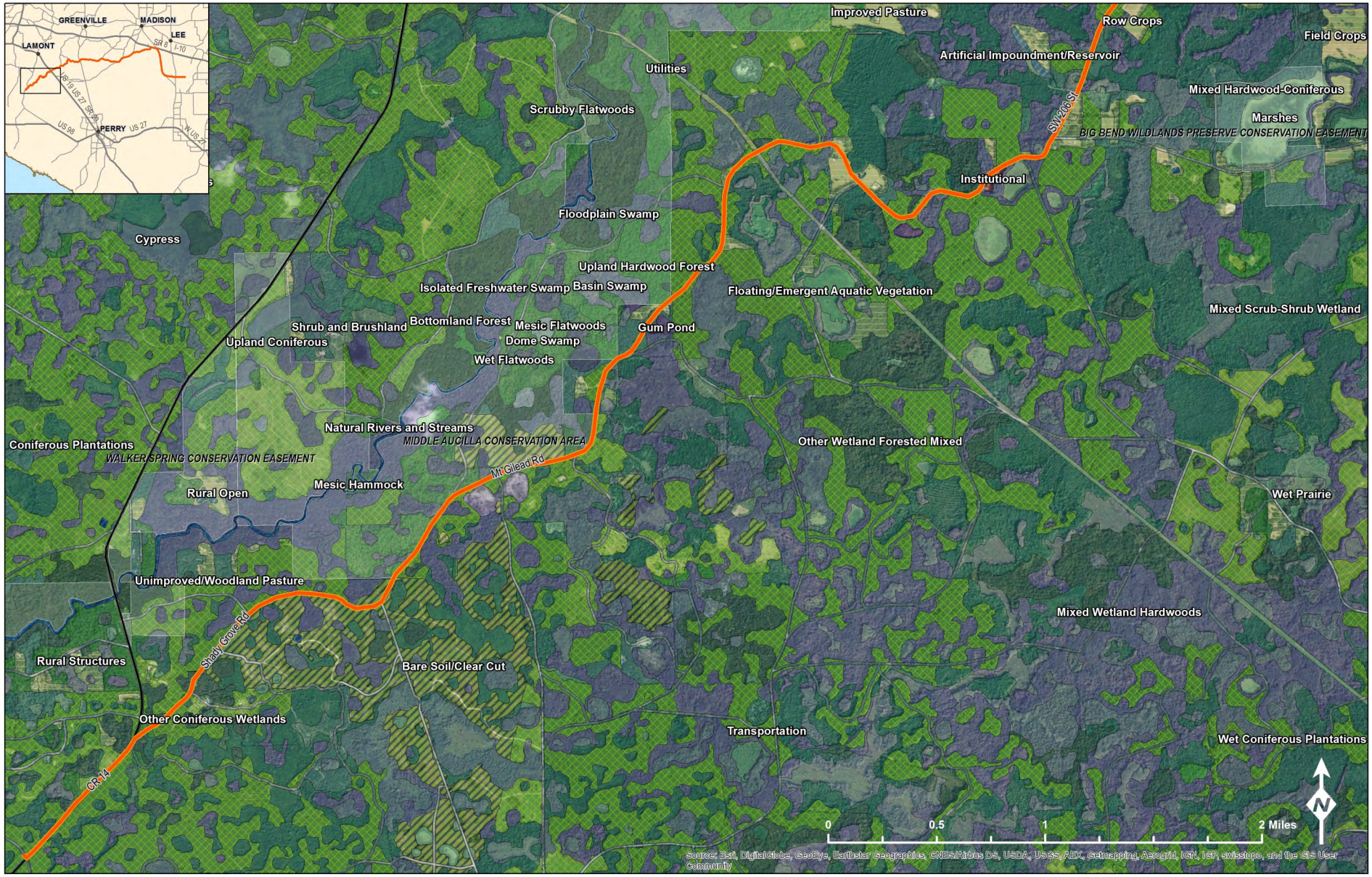


Figure B.3 Alternative A, Current Roadwalk Connector Natural Communities Analysis

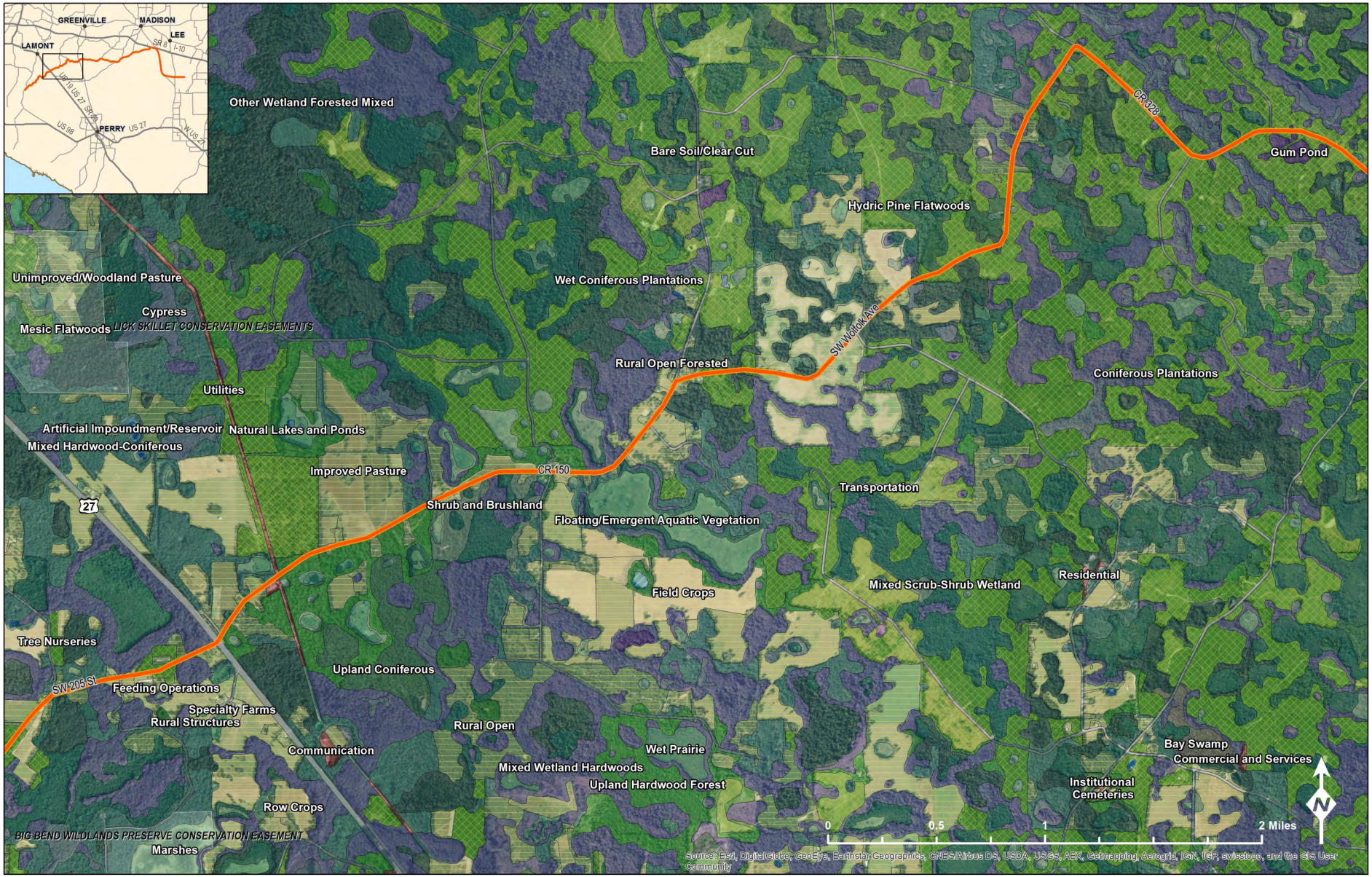


Figure B.4 Alternative A, Current Roadwalk Connector Natural Communities Analysis

Figure B.5 Alternative A, Current Roadwalk Connector Natural Communities Analysis

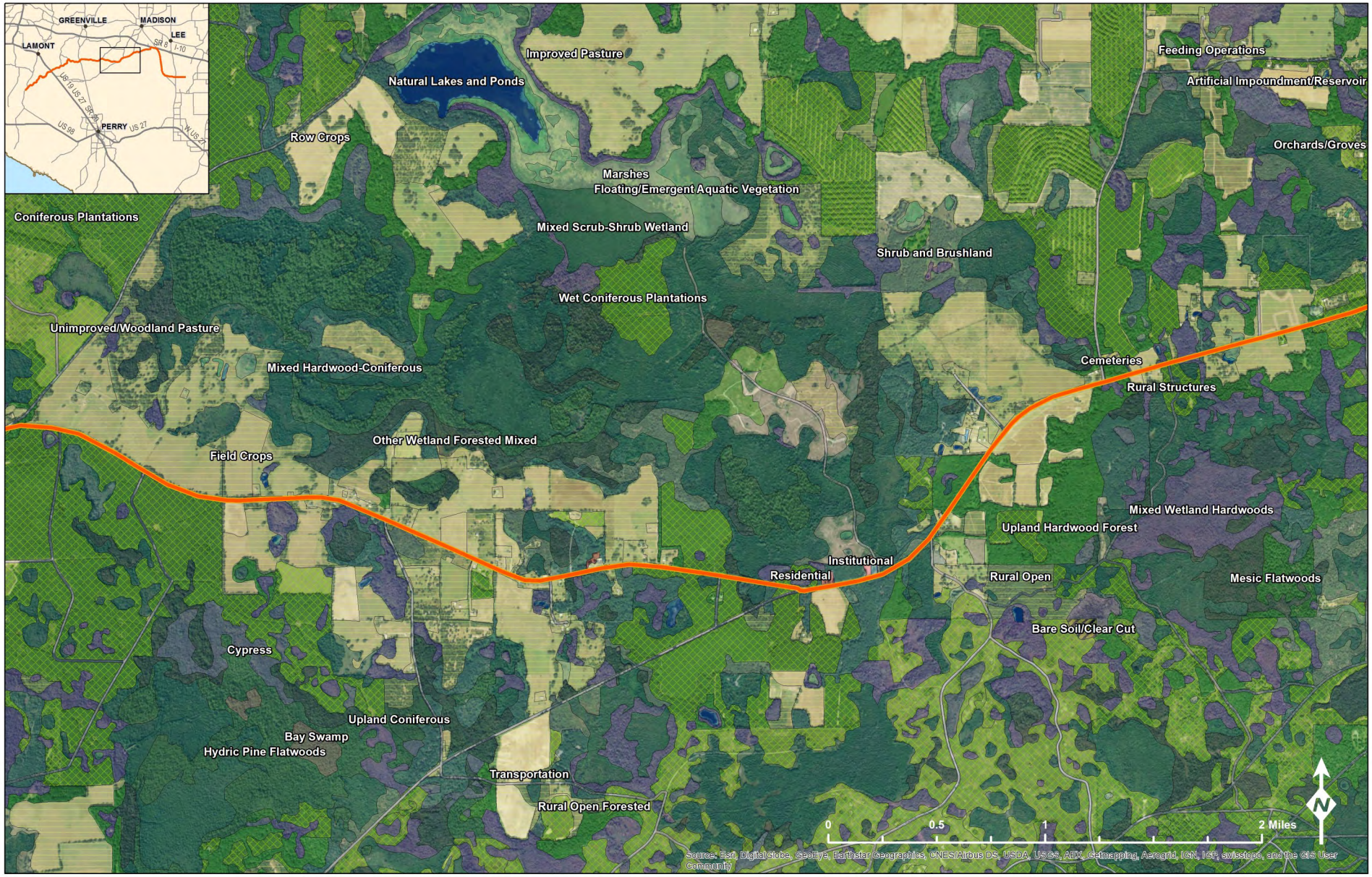


Figure B.6 Alternative A, Current Roadwalk Connector Natural Communities Analysis

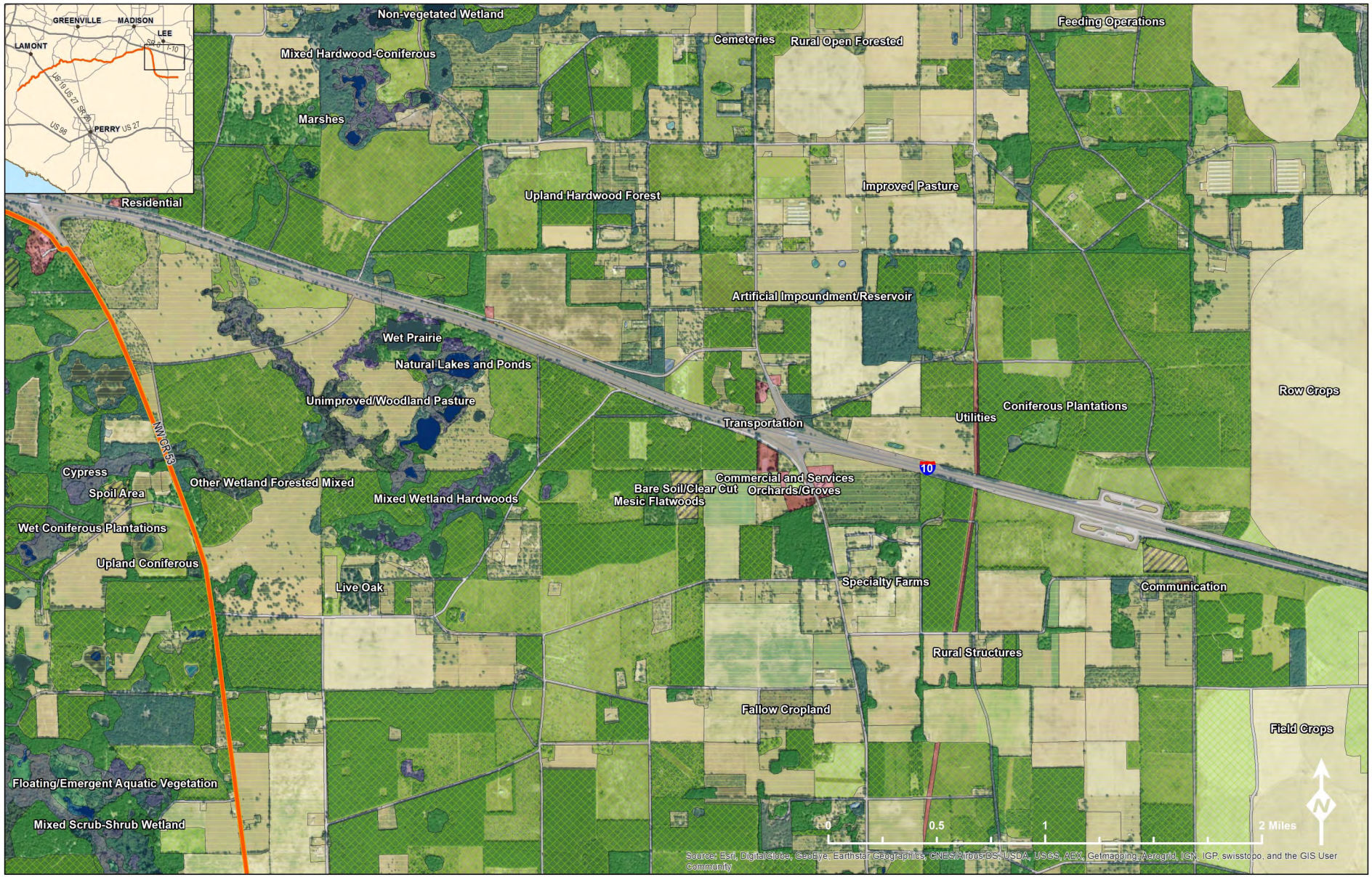


Figure B.7 Alternative A, Current Roadwalk Connector Natural Communities Analysis

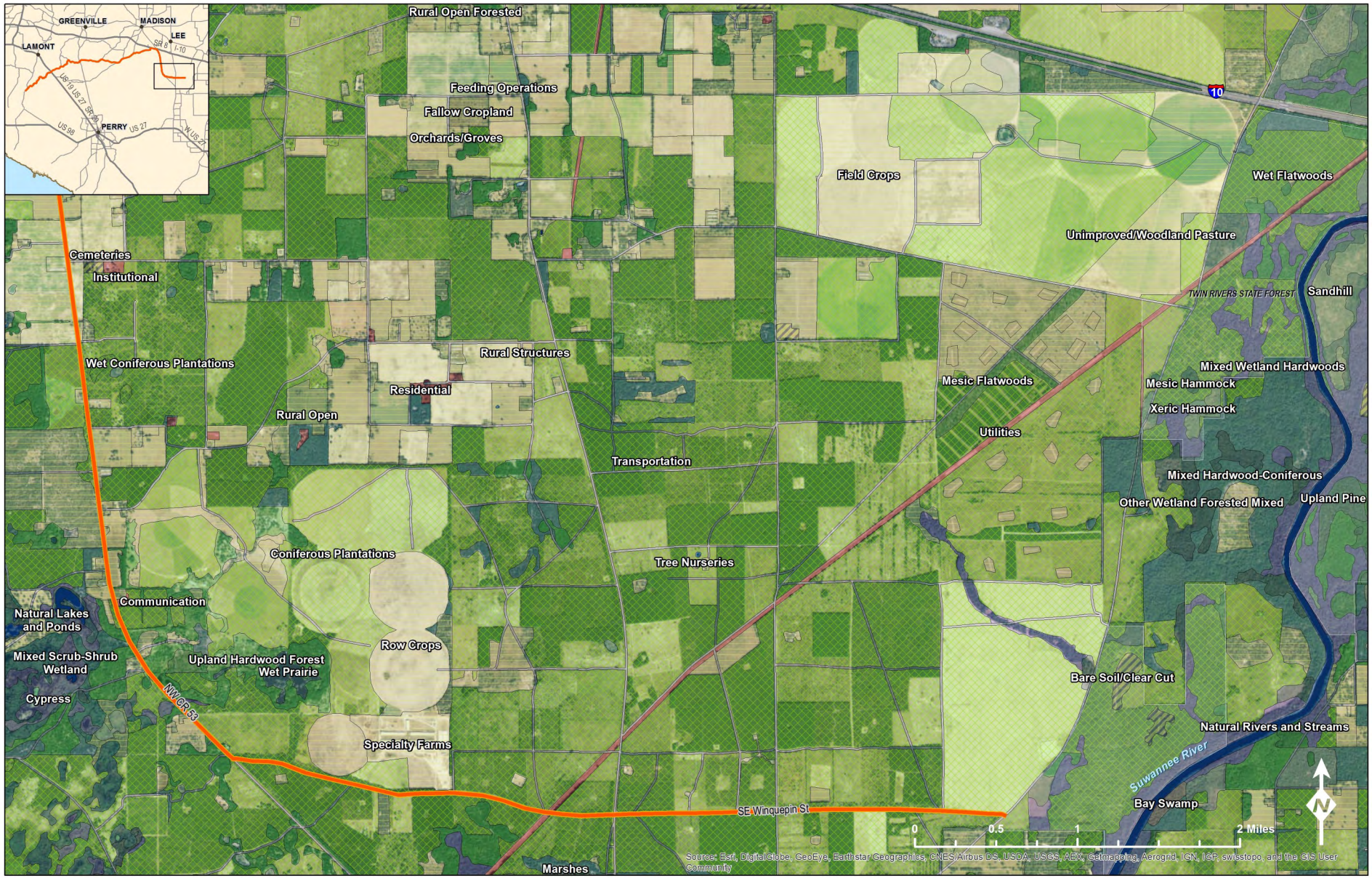


Figure B.8 Alternative B, US 90 Multi-Use Corridor Natural Communities Analysis

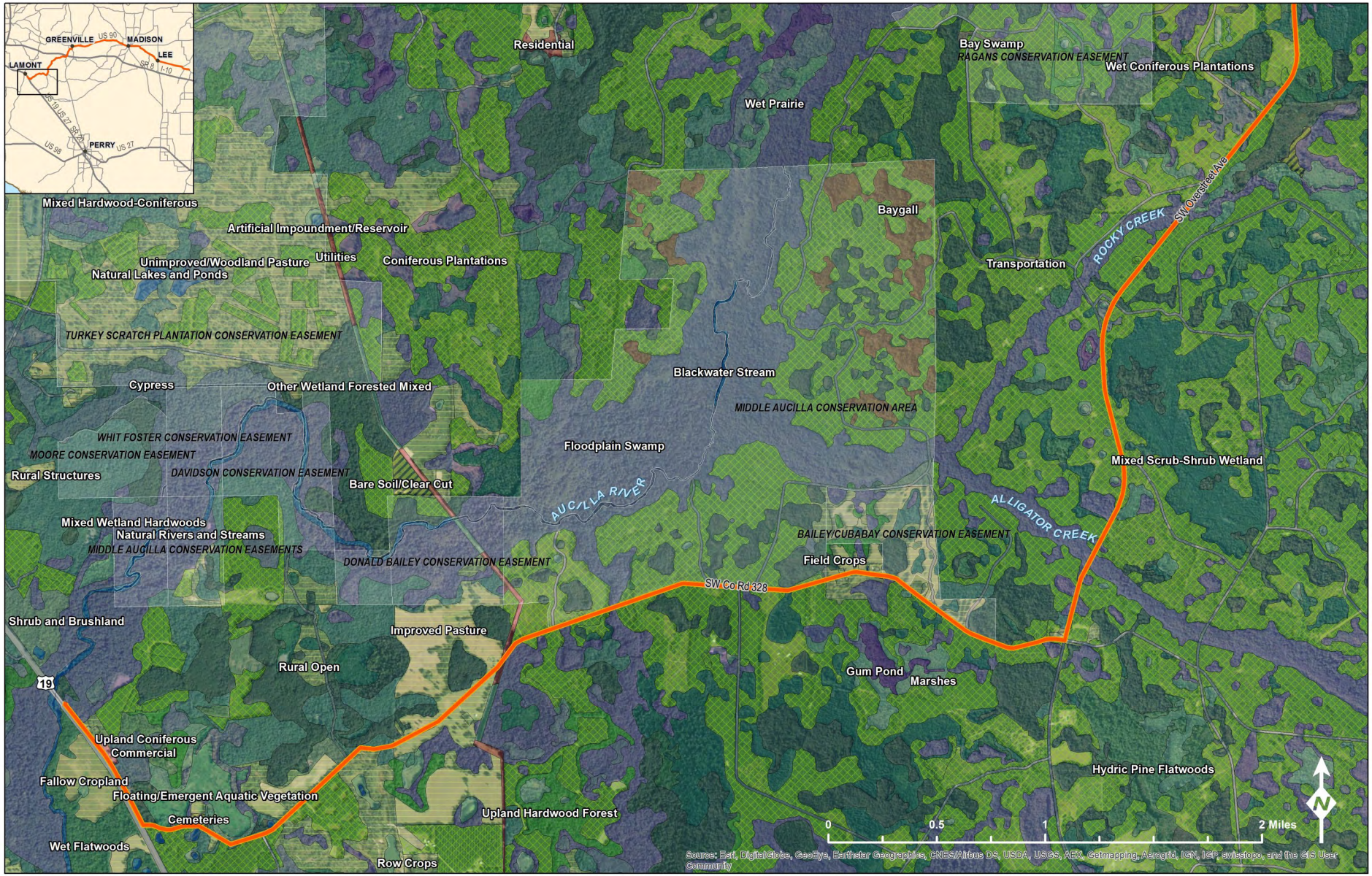


Figure B.9 Alternative B, US 90 Multi-Use Corridor Natural Communities Analysis

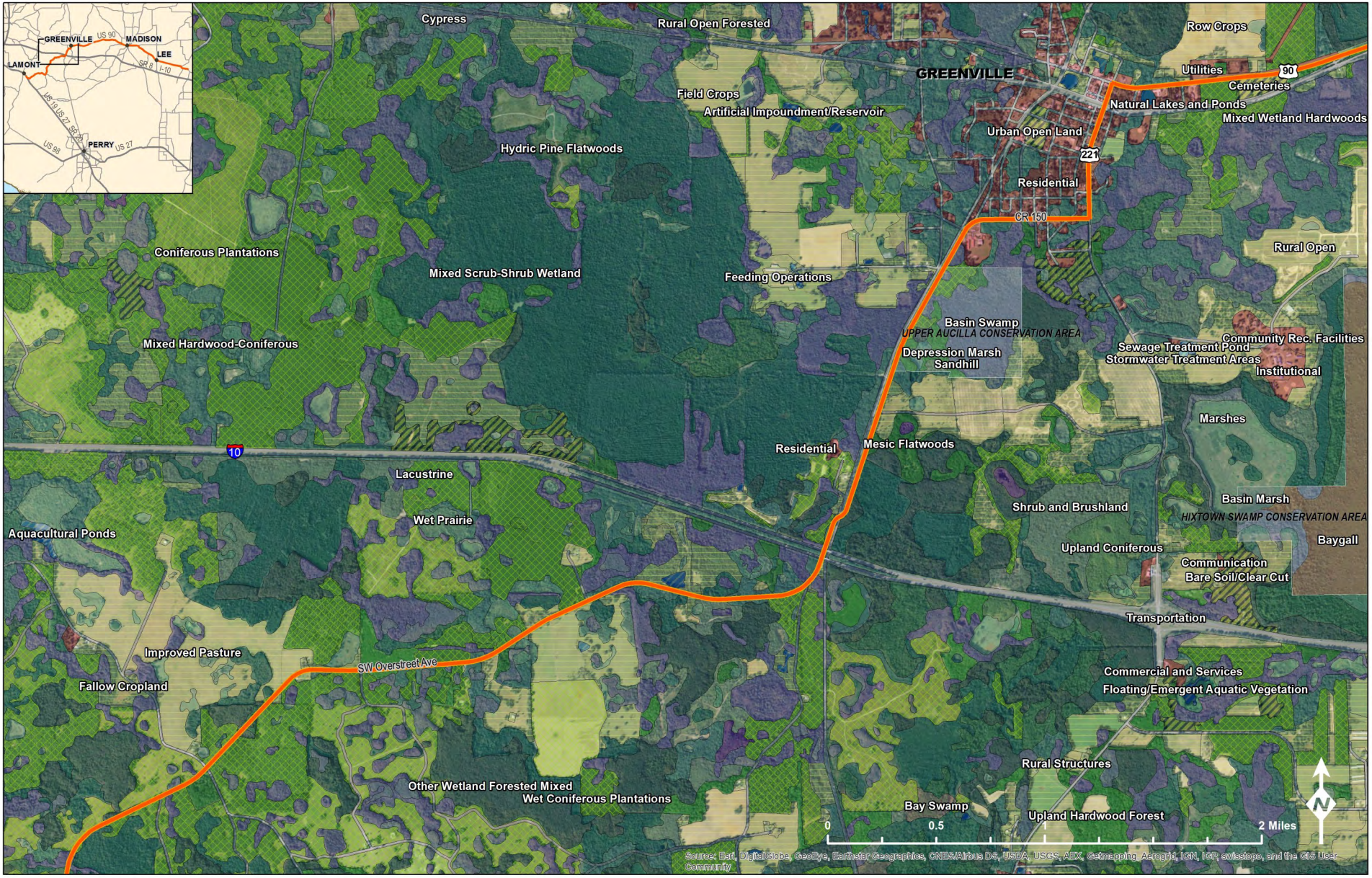


Figure B.10 Alternative B, US 90 Multi-Use Corridor Natural Communities Analysis

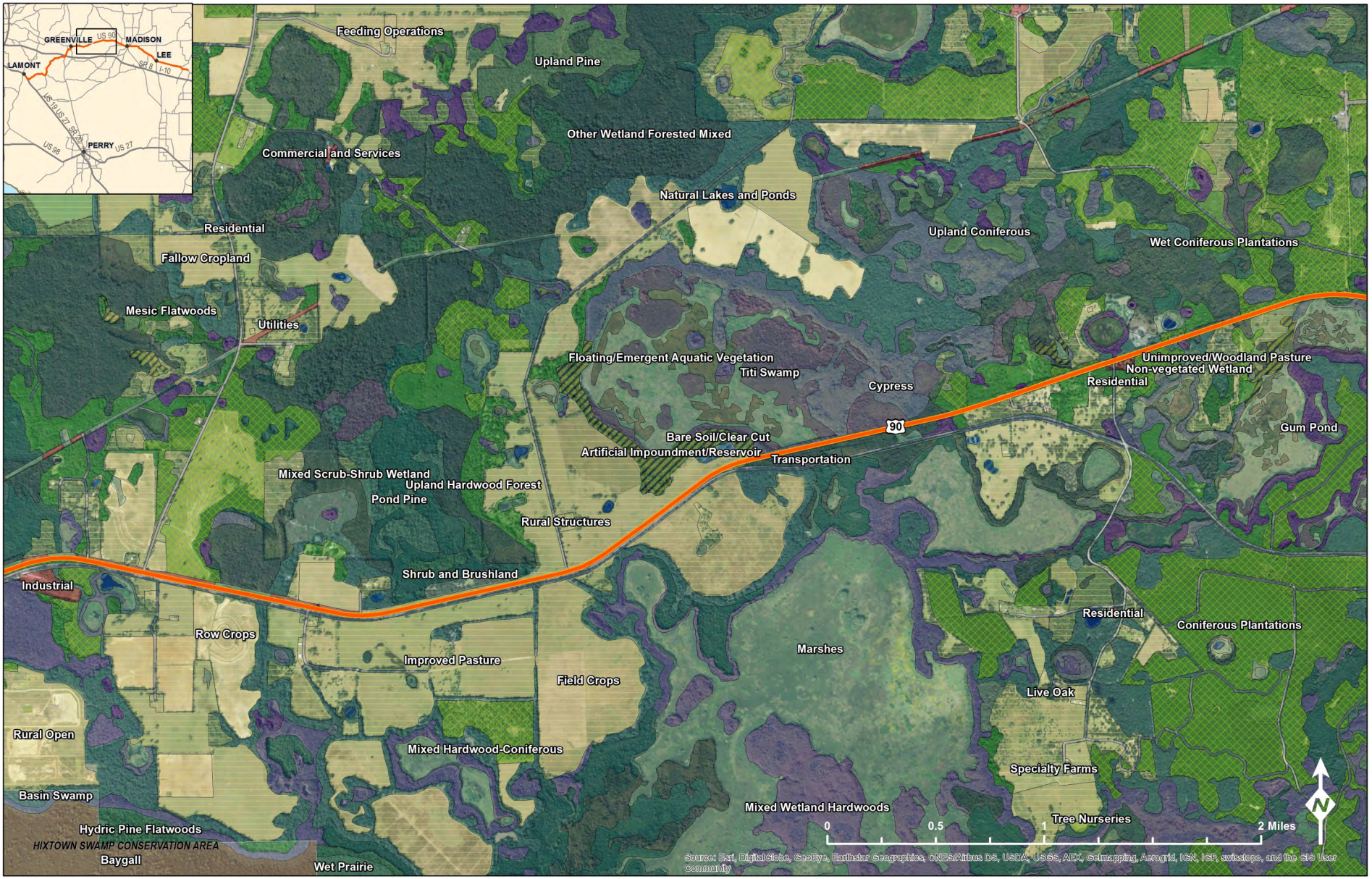


Figure B.11 Alternative B, US 90 Multi-Use Corridor Natural Communities Analysis

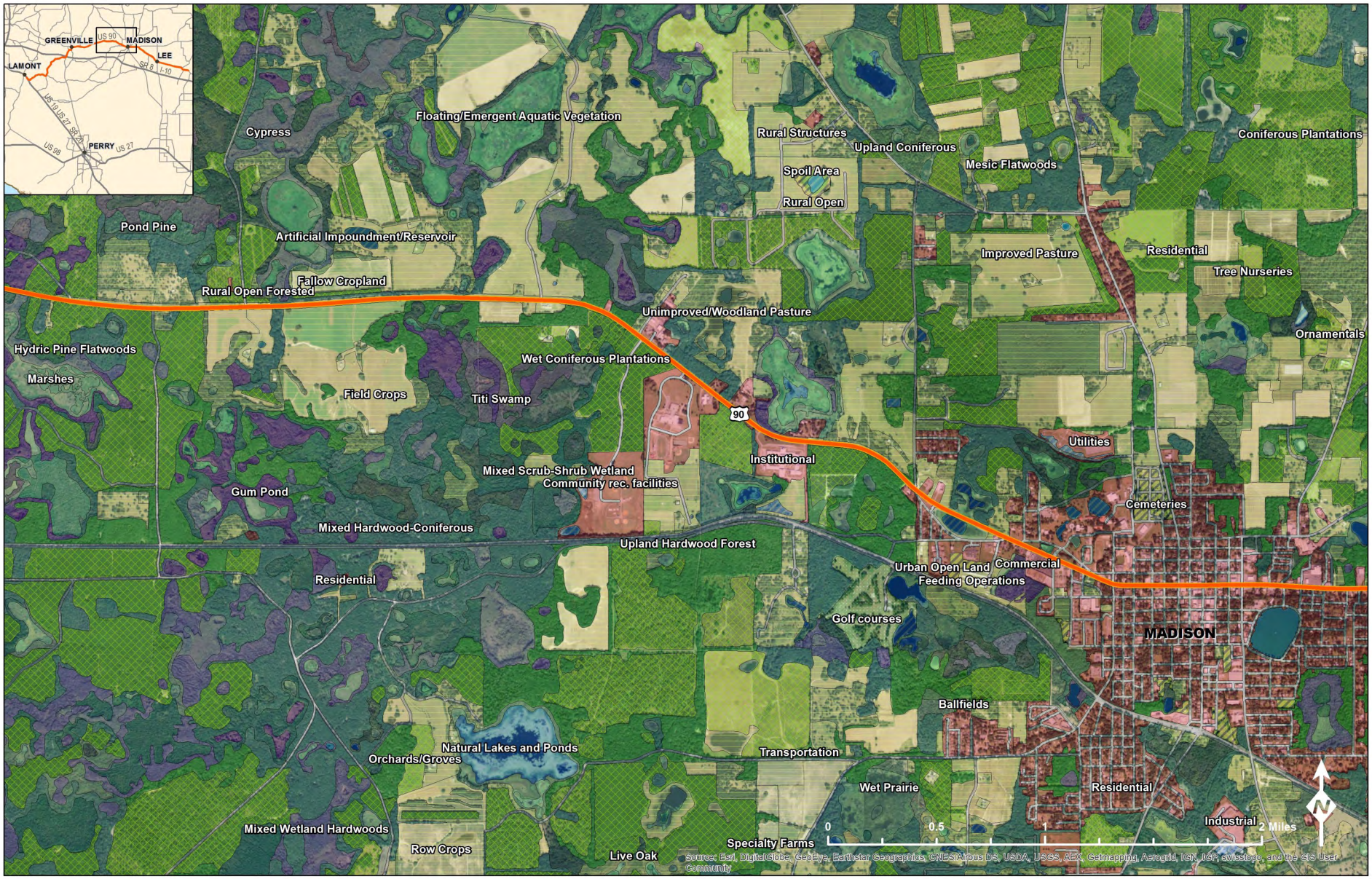


Figure B.12 Alternative B, US 90 Multi-Use Corridor Natural Communities Analysis

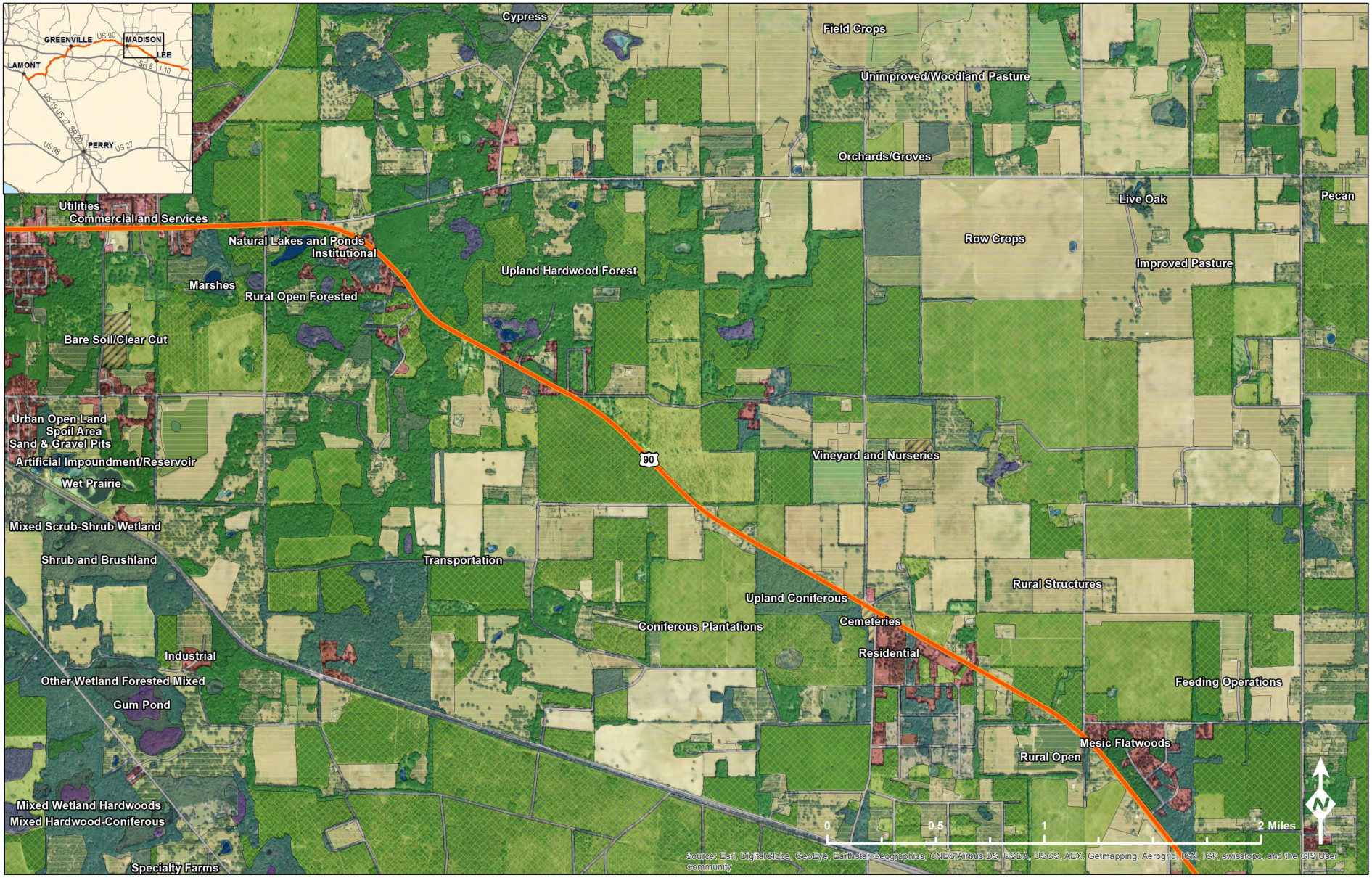


Figure B.13 Alternative B, US 90 Multi-Use Corridor Natural Communities Analysis

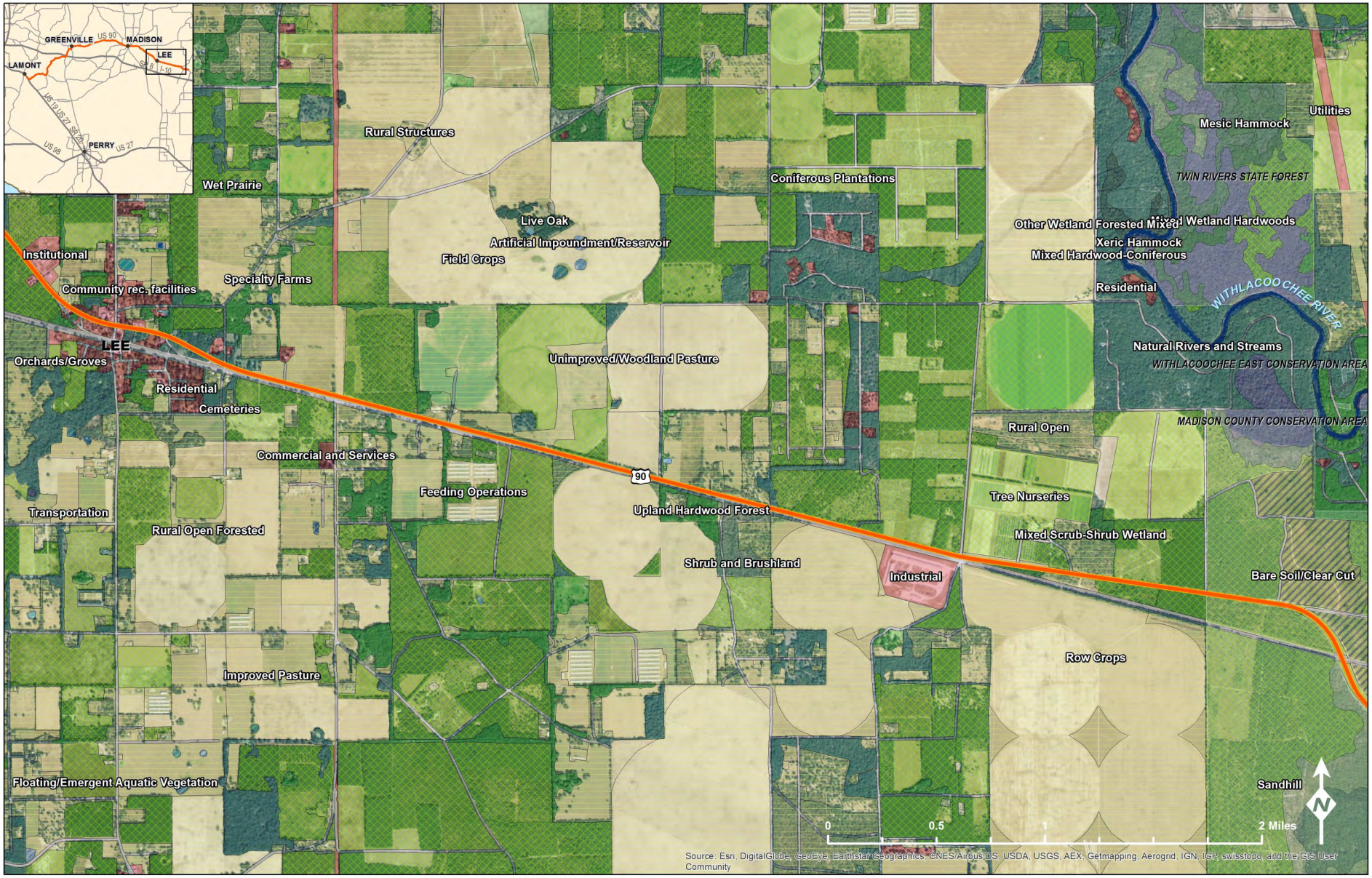


Figure B.14 Alternative B, US 90 Multi-Use Corridor Natural Communities Analysis

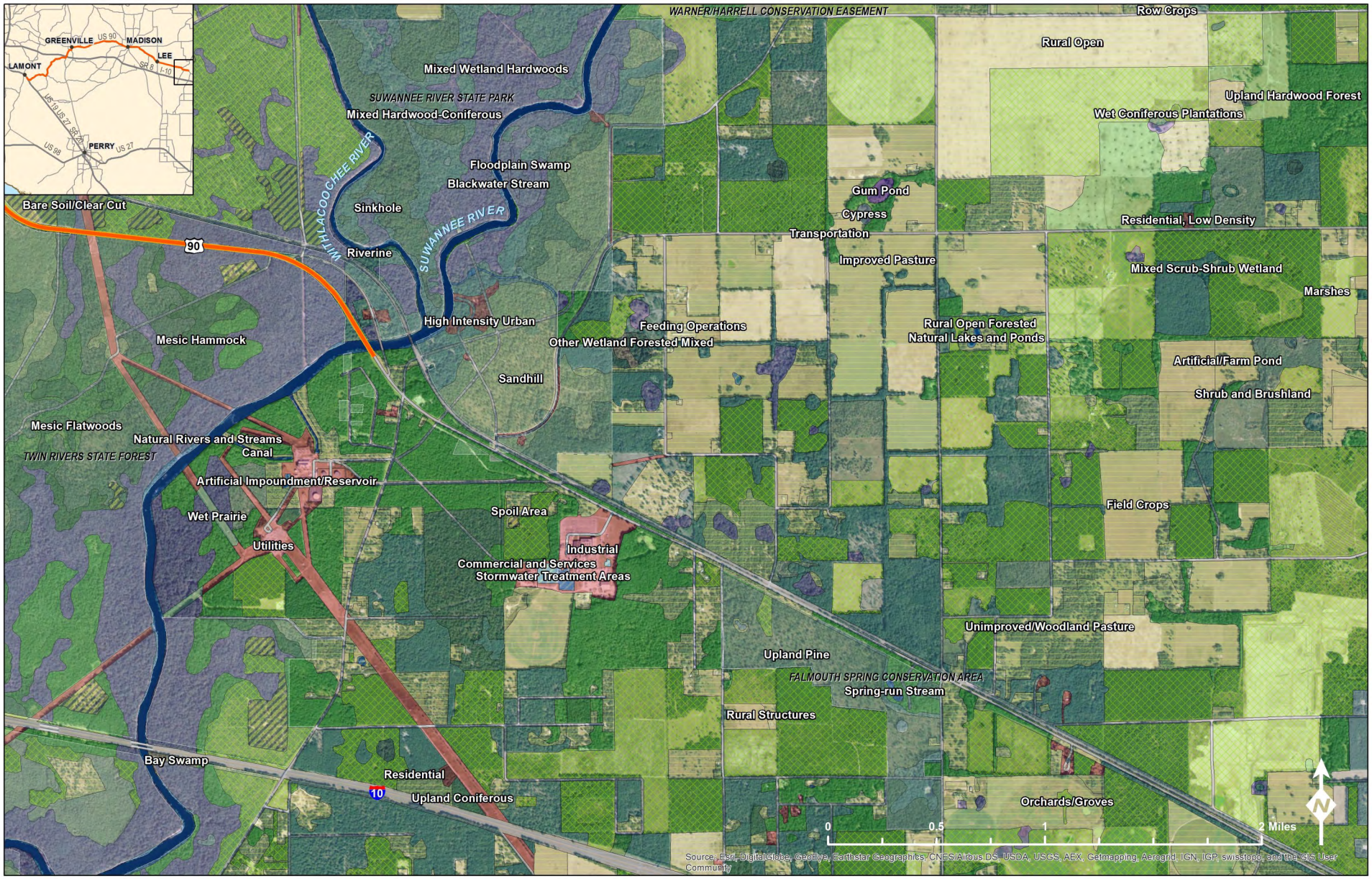


Figure B.15 Alternative C, Big Bend Southern Route Natural Communities Analysis

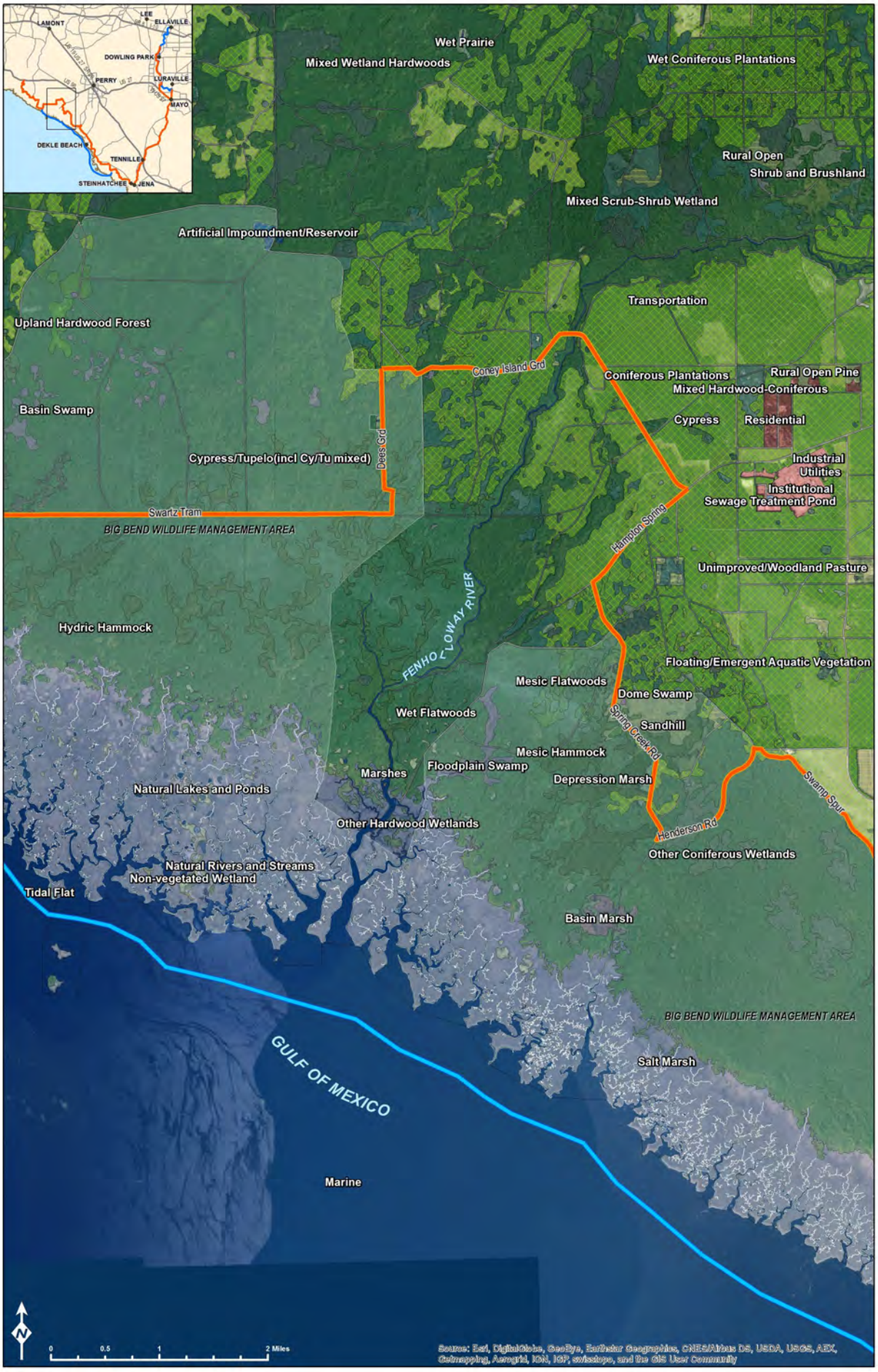


Figure B.16 Alternative C, Big Bend Southern Route Natural Communities Analysis

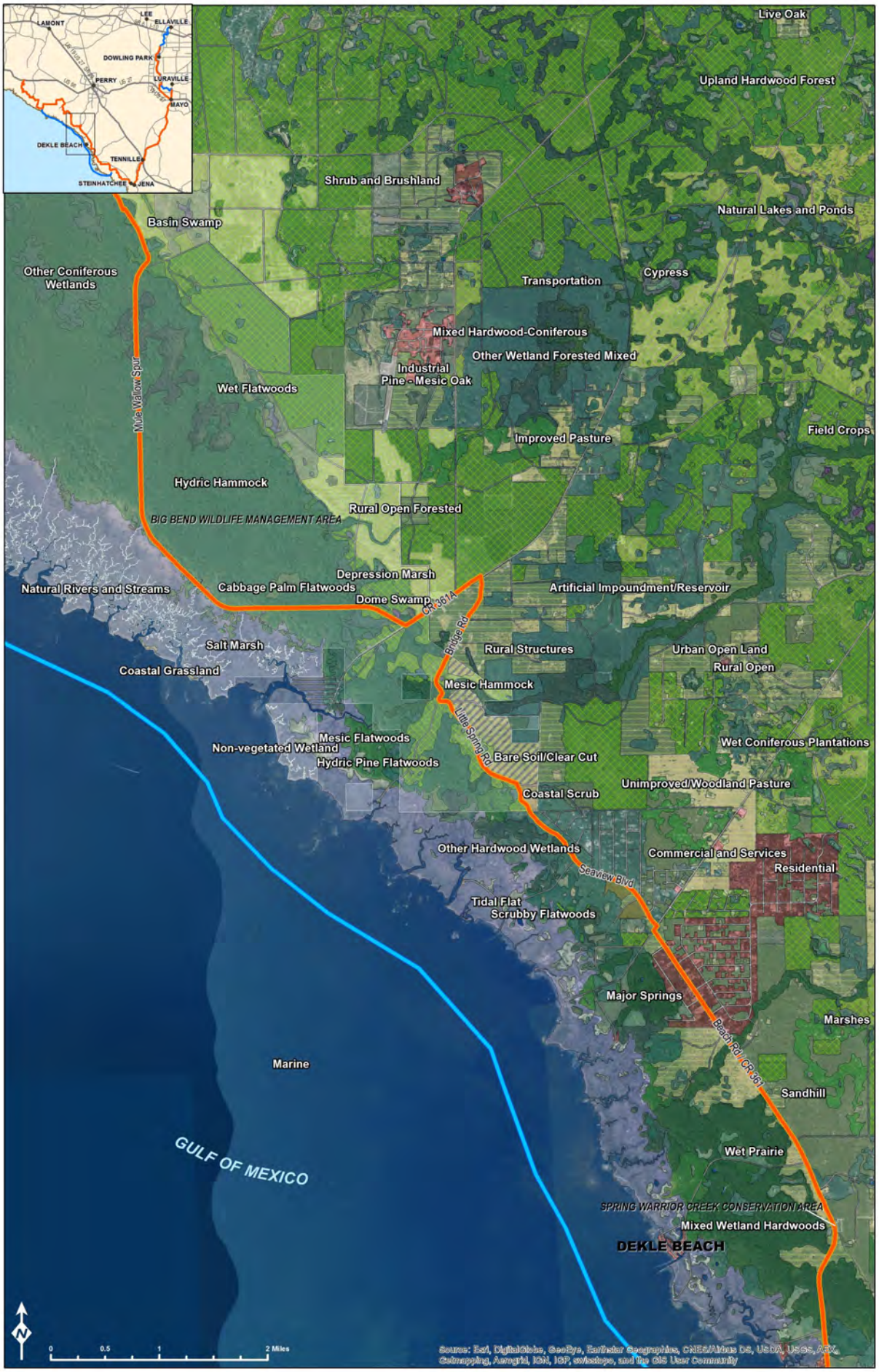


Figure B.17 Alternative C, Big Bend Southern Route Natural Communities Analysis

Figure B.18 Alternative C, Big Bend Southern Route Natural Communities Analysis

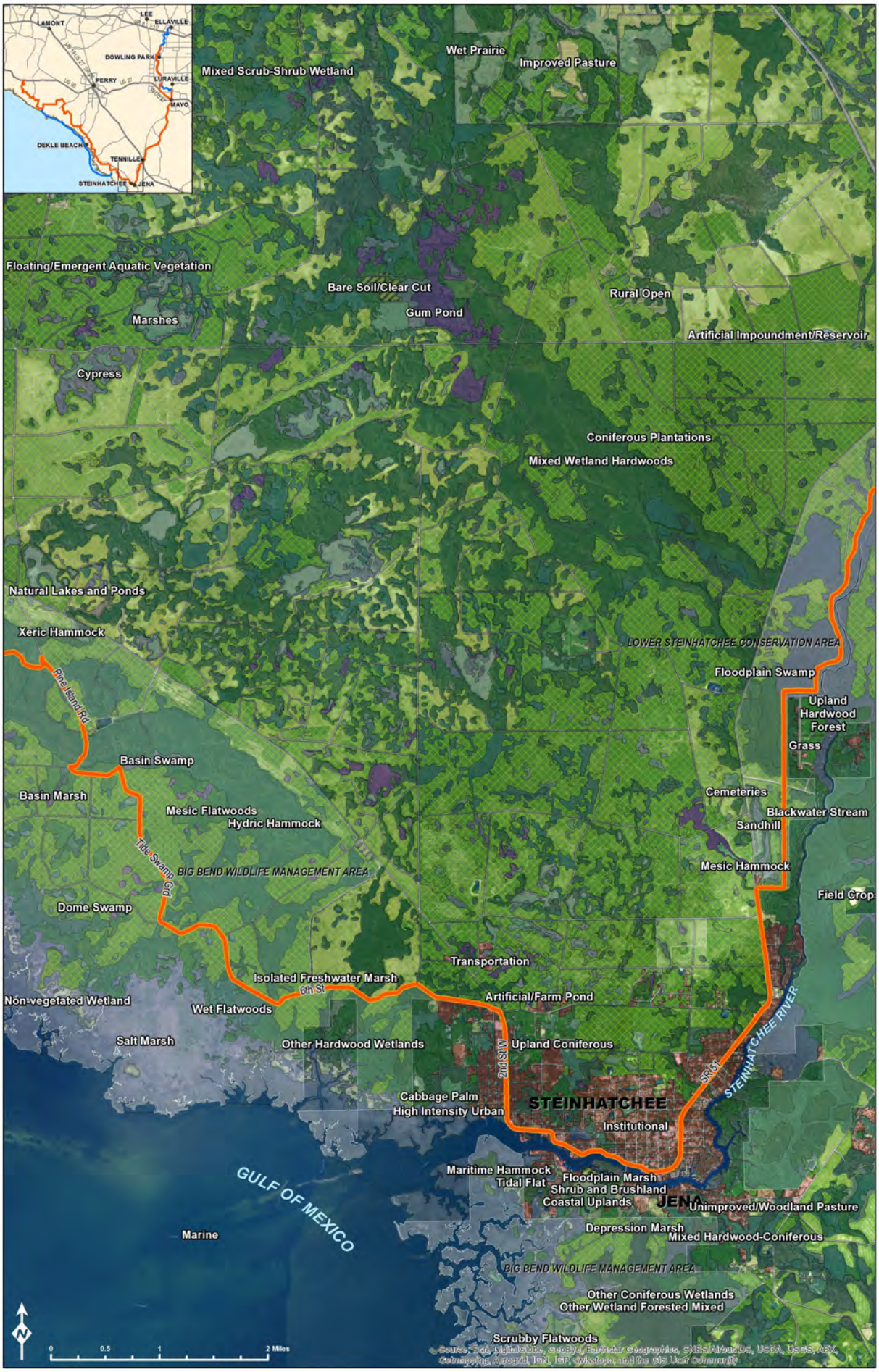


Figure B.19 Alternative C, Big Bend Southern Route Natural Communities Analysis

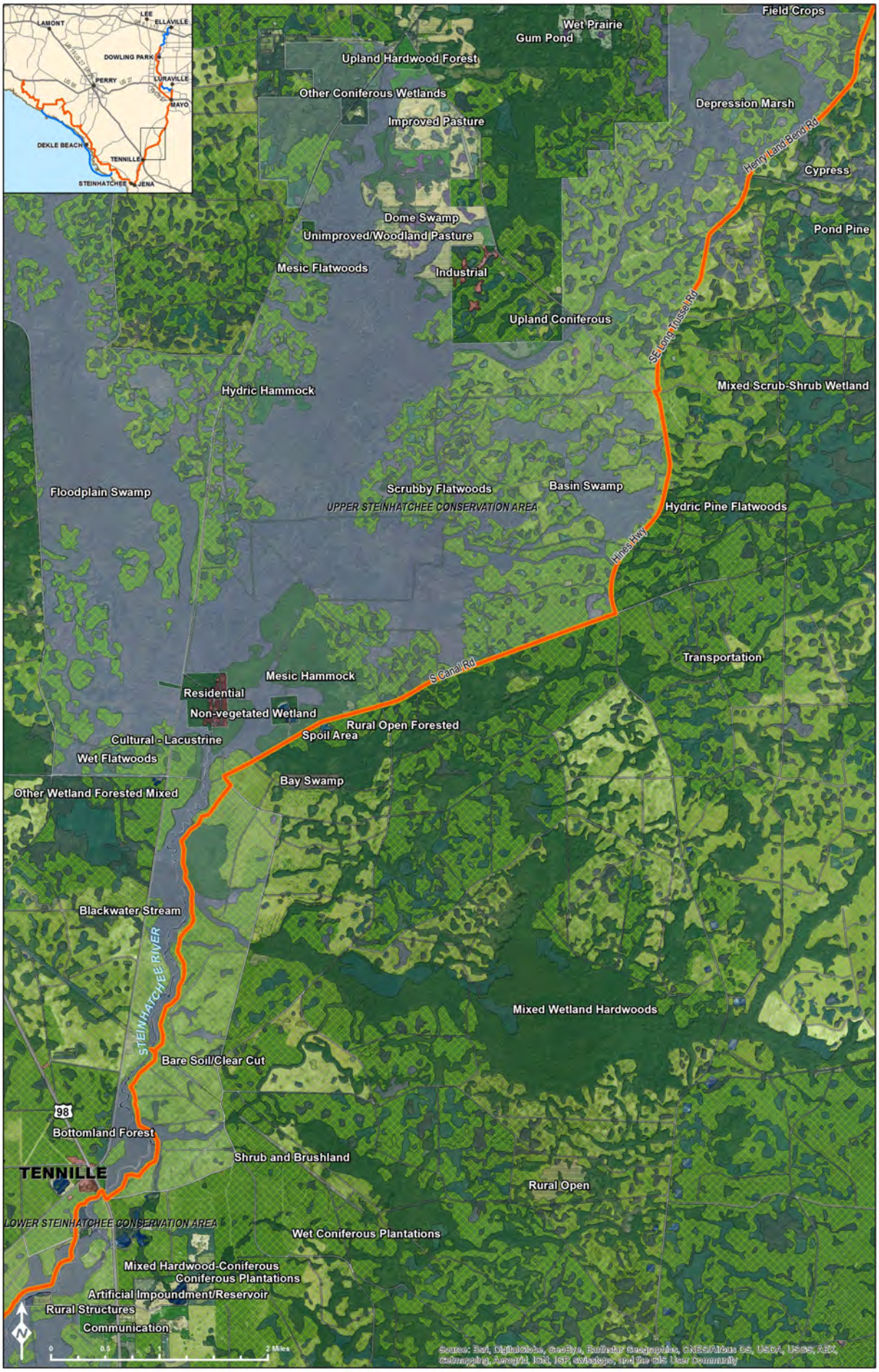


Figure B.20 Alternative C, Big Bend Southern Route Natural Communities Analysis

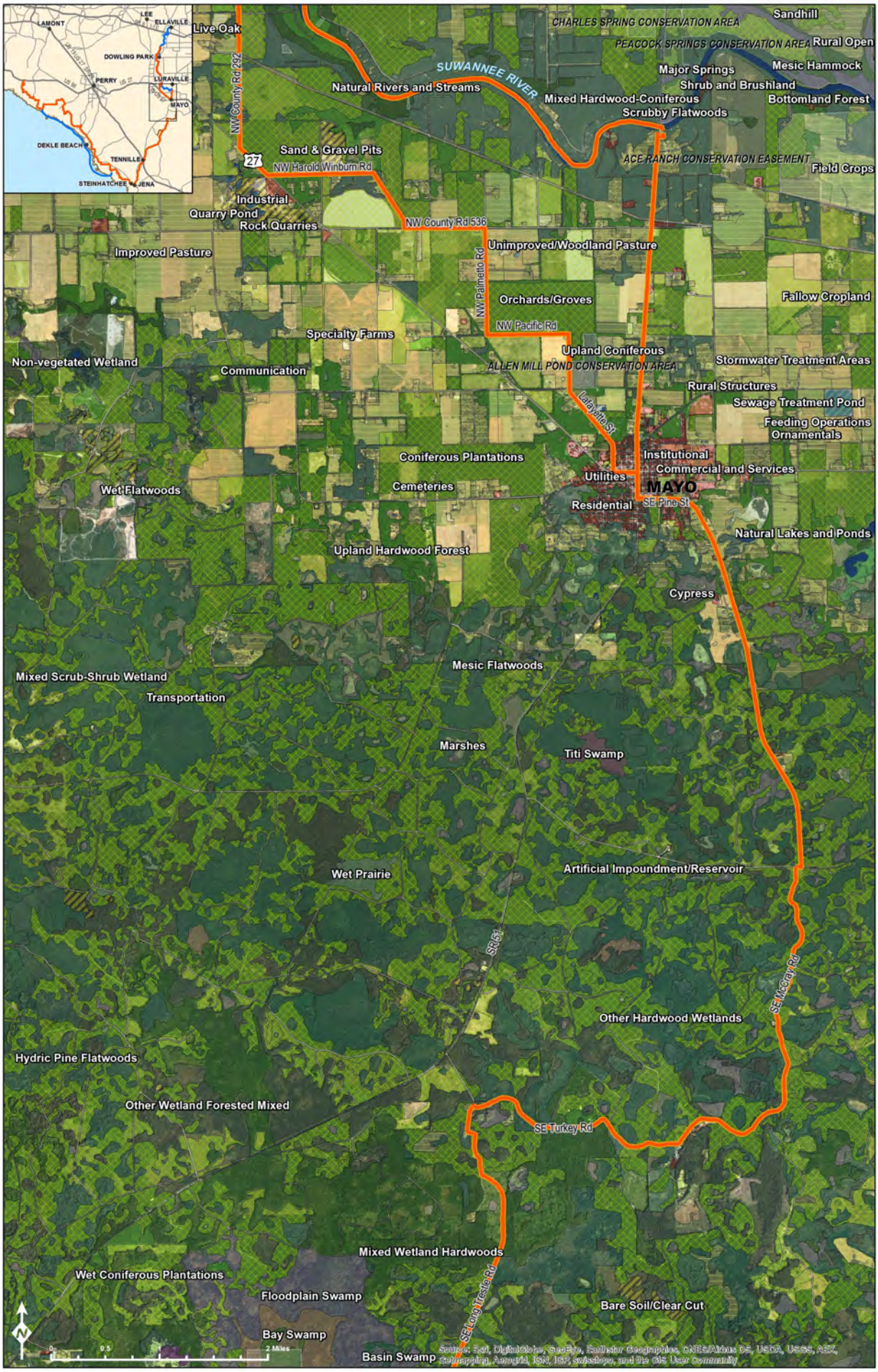


Figure B.21 Alternative C, Big Bend Southern Route Natural Communities Analysis

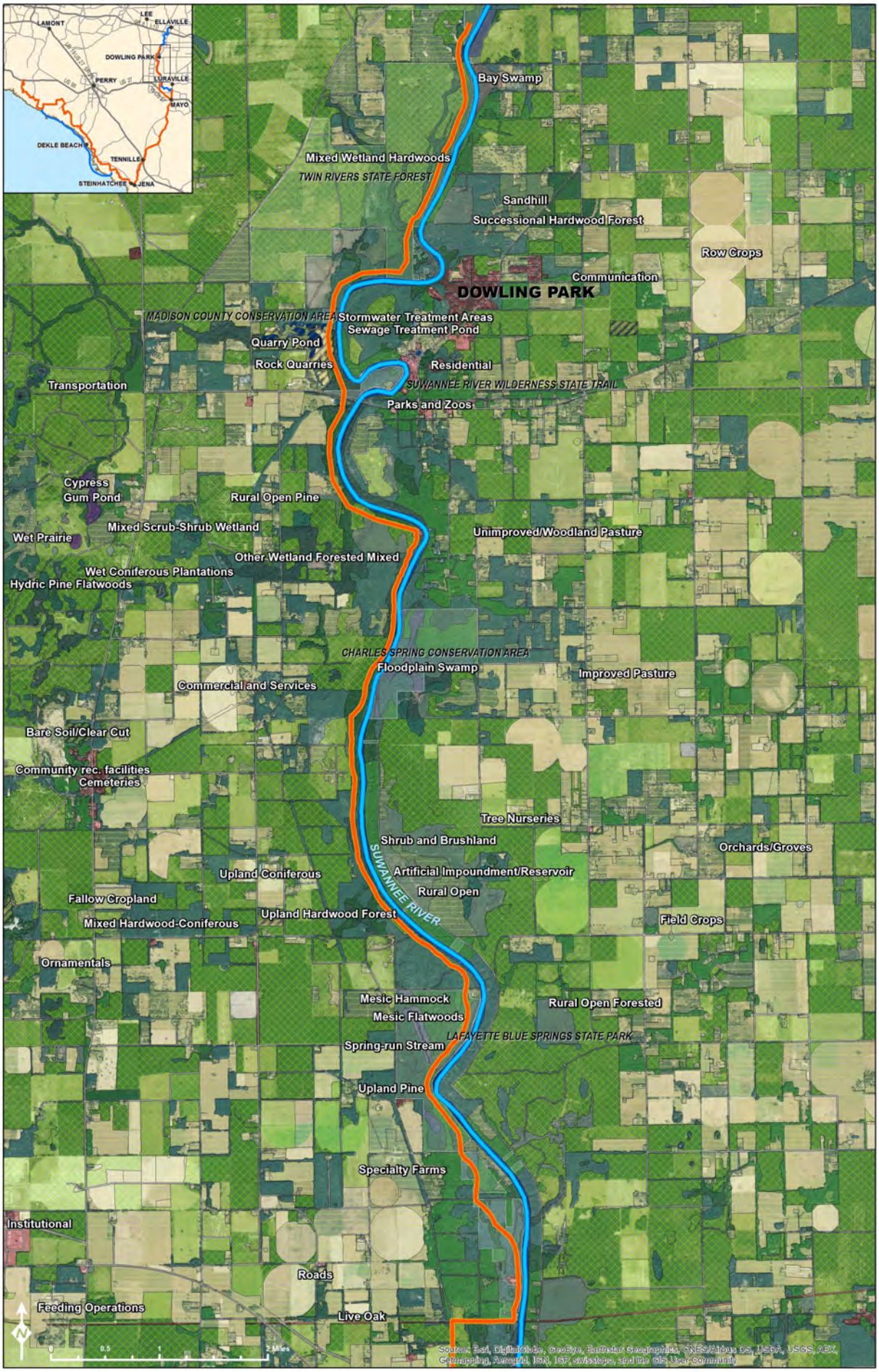


Figure B.22 Alternative C, Big Bend Southern Route Natural Communities Analysis

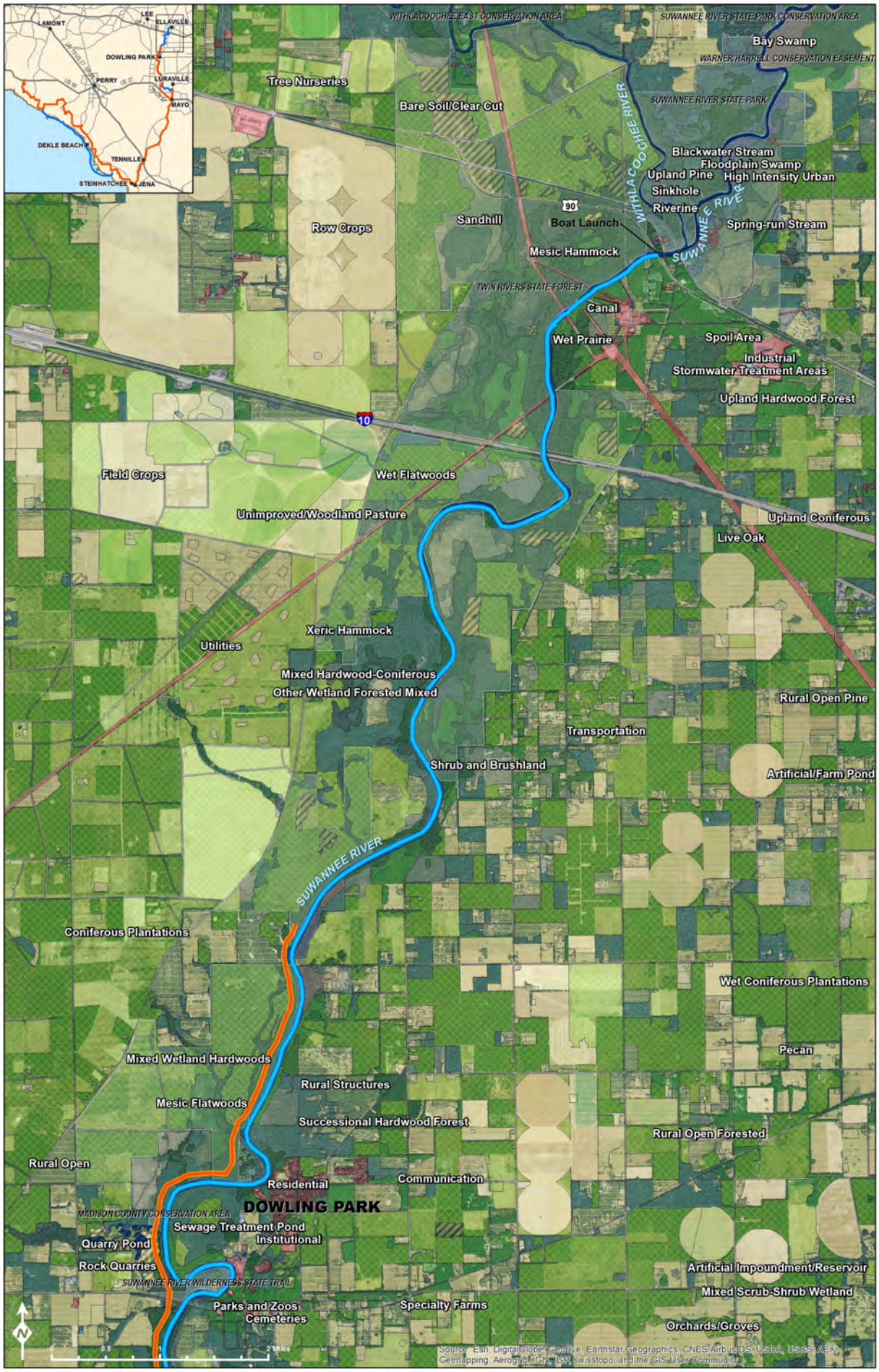


Figure B.23 Alternative C, Big Bend Southern Route Natural Communities Analysis

Appendix C– Viewshed Analysis

Figure C.1 Alternative A, Current Road Walk Connector Viewshed Analysis

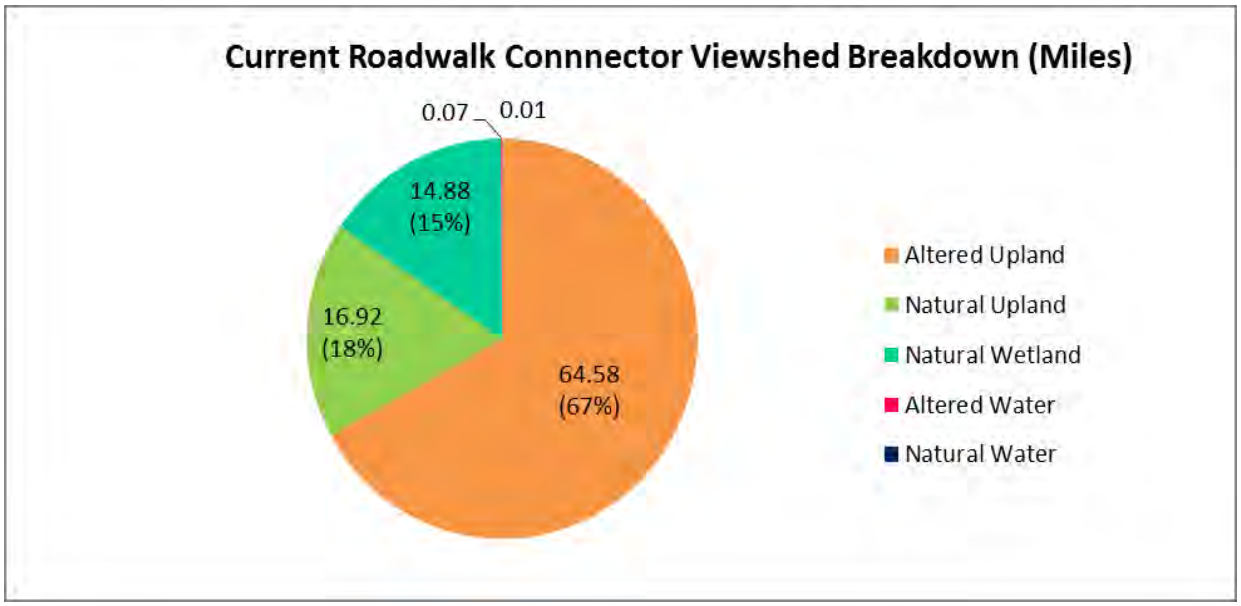


Figure C.2 Alternative B, US 90 Multi-Use Corridor Viewshed Analysis

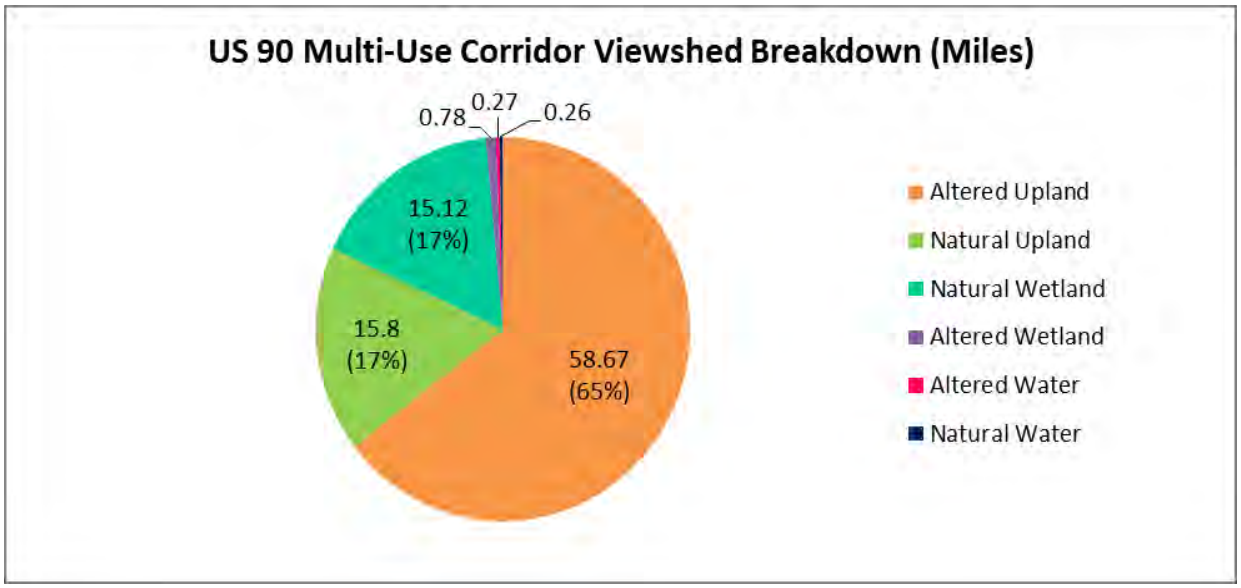
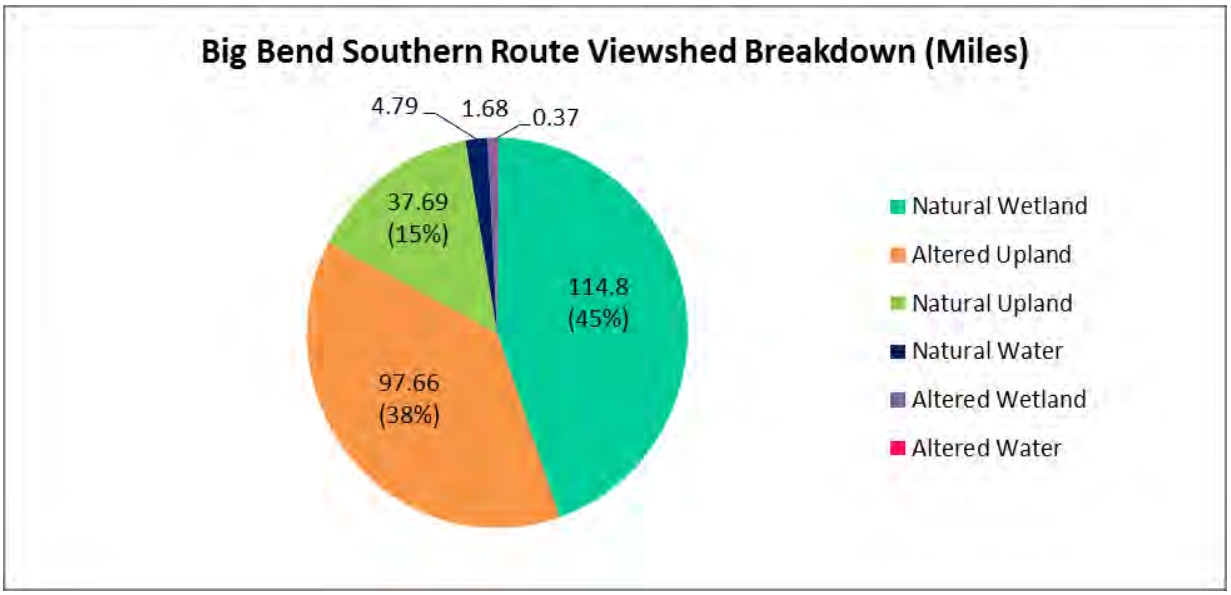


Figure C.3 Alternative C, Big Bend Southern Route Viewshed Analysis



Viewshed Calculation Methodology

The following procedure was used to calculate the viewshed statistics for each proposed alternative route. Two parallel duplicates of the alternative route polyline were created and located on either side of the route using a standard 200 foot buffer to serve as viewshed lines. Though the viewshed distance ranges by land cover type, 200 feet was determined to be the standard average distance for the purposes of this study. An identity tool was used to breakdown the total length of each parallel viewshed line by land cover type. Land cover data was classified into six broad categories including natural wetland, natural upland, natural water, altered wetland, altered upland, and altered water. The segmented lengths of the two viewshed lines were then summarized by land cover category to create the final viewshed breakdown statistics.

Appendix D– Site Photographs

Figures D.1-4 Alternative A- Current Road Walk Connector

Alternative A is characterized by a rural, largely residential corridor (*top left*). Deep ditches flank the sides of many of the unpaved trails which this corridor follows (*top right*). There are few hiker amenities located along the corridor. The most promising are a roadside Pepsi machine (*bottom left*) and private Jellystone Campground on the western end of the route (*bottom right*).

Figures D.5-8 Alternative B- US 90 Multi-Use Corridor

Alternative B follows US 90 and is characterized by a rural road experience with large right-of-ways which could potentially lead to trail certification. There are abundant public facilities located along the trail (*left*). Other than views of the road, there are areas with rolling hills that may be viewed as scenic in quality (*right).*

This corridor passes through three small cities and gains views of historic buildings such as the Perkins Opera House in Madison, FL (*left).* The westernmost portion of the route has the potential to enter the SRWMD Cuba Bay Tract which has more scenic road walk qualities (*right).*

Figures D.9-12 Alternative C- Big Bend Southern Route

Alternative C is characterized by its high scenic qualities and use of public lands. The route passes through several conservation areas as it leaves Twin Rivers State Forest including Econfina River and Steinhatchee Conservation Areas (*left).* The corridor takes advantage of the abundant hiker amenities available along the route through public lands partnerships (*right).*

This corridor travels along the Big Bend coastline, which is largely undeveloped and has scenic qualities which surpass much of the views on the current FNST (*left).* Trail users would follow tidal marshlands and coastal ecosystems along the coastline for part of the corridor. In addition, many public administration roads which are not open to vehicles can be utilized to connect the route (*right).*

Appendix E– Evaluation of Corridor Routing Alternaitvies

Figure E.1 FNST Comprehensive Plan Location Criteria 'Musts'

Location Criteria 'Musts'	Alternative A: Current Road Walk Connector	Alternative B: US 90 Multi-Use Corridor	Alternative 3: Big Bend Southern Route
Be consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and higher order plans	No	No	Yes
Meet objectives described in the National Trails System Act	No, route does not meet NSTA standards for scenic quality, recreation resources or user safety.	No, route does not meet NSTA standards for scenic quality, recreation resources or user safety.	Yes, route provides high potential for enjoyment of natural resources and unique Florida scenery. routing moved through

Figure E.2 FNST Comprehensive Plan Location Criteria 'Wants'

Location Criteria 'Wants'	WT	Alternative A: Current Road Walk Connector	Alternative B: US 90 Multi-Use Corridor	Alternative 3: Big Bend Southern Route
Unique Physical and Cultural Environments: *Natural communities* *Cultural environment*	**10**	Viewsheds include silviculture, agricultural and rural residential landscapes Cultural sites include historic cemetery and several churches **4/40**	Viewsheds include silviculture, agricultural. Rolling hill landscapes, and mid-level business and residential developments Historic downtown and the hometown of Ray Charles **5/50**	Viewsheds include marshlands, Big Bend coastal ecosystems, hardwood hammocks, black-water rivers, karst topography Historic downtown Steinhatchee **10/100**
Broad Range of Recreation Interests: *Potential / current allowed uses* *Potential for camping*	**8**	Roadwalk use only Two potential campsites located at the eastern end of route. **2/16**	Hiking, biking, and physical fitness uses available. No potential for camping **5/40**	Hiking and potential for multiple recreation uses available (bicycle, equestrian, and canoe/ kayaking). Abundant primitive camping options available **9/72**
Functionality: *Regional and State Considerations* *Local Considerations*	**7**	Trail location not likely to be permanent/ certifiable, does not meet future land use goals Low facility safety, low trail quality Suitable as roadwalk **3/21**	Trail location not likely to be permanent or certifiable, does not meet future land use goals Medium facility safety, functional trail quality Suitable as roadwalk **4/28**	Route utilizes existing conservation areas , meets future land use and acquisition goals of partners Low trail carrying capacity issues, high facility safety, high trail quality **8/56**
Resource and Private Land Impact: *Land owner impact* *Natural resources: critical habitat*	**5**	Trail utilizes public right-of-way adjacent to private property, potential for landowner impact. Trail located on road **10/50**	Trail utilizes public right-of-way, low potential for landowner impact Trail located on road shoulder/multi-use paths **10/50**	Short segments of trail may utilize private lands under agreement or easement Trail located on existing trails and administrative roads **9/45**
Minimize Cost: *Total land acquisition needs*	**5**	52 miles of FDOT Right-of-Way for uncertifiable roadwalk connector. **10/50**	45 miles of FDOT Right-of-Way for uncertifiable roadwalk connector. **9/45**	17 miles private land acquisition (potential for only 3 miles w/paddling) 32 miles of FDOT Right-of-Way **3/15**
Total Scores		**177**	**213**	**288**

Figure E.3 Decision Evaluation Methodology

Each alternative was evaluated using the following appraisal matrix. The weights of each criteria (WT) were outlined within the 1986 FNST Comprehensive Plan. Due to its high total score, ultimately Alternative C was chosen as the preferred corridor.

Location Criteria	Weight *	Alternative A **Score / Weighted Score#	Alternative B Score / Weighted Score	Alternative C Score / Weighted Score
Unique Physical and Cultural Environments	**10**	4/40	5/50	10/100
Broad Range of Recreation Interests	**8**	2/16	5/40	9/72
Resource and Private Land Impact	**7**	3/21	4/28	8/56
Functionality	**5**	10/50	10/50	9/45
Minimize Cost	**5**	10/50	9/45	3/15
Total Score ##		**177**	**213**	**288**

***Weight=** Weight rank each criteria based on its relevant importance. The weight is based on a 1-10 scale with 10 as the highest priority.
****Score=** Score is determined by how each Alternative relates to the criteria and the other alternatives. 1-10 number system is used with 10as the best solution.
Weighted Score= Weighted score is determined by multiplying the weight times the score. The higher the weighted score, the better the Alternative
Total Score= Total score is determined by adding all the weighted scores for each Alternative. The highest score is the preferred Alternative.