

Indirect and Cumulative Effects Task Group

Cultural Resources Sub-Group

May 4-5, 2006

FDOT District Five Urban Office

Orlando, Florida

Attendees:

Larry Barfield, FDOT CEMO

George Hadley, FHWA

Makayah Royal, FHWA

Alexis Thomas, GeoPlan Center

George Ballo, FDOT CEMO

Gwen Pipkin FDOT D1

Catherine Owen, FDOT D6

Duane Denfeld, SHPO

Bob Gleason, FDOT D5

Frank Kalpakis, Ruth Roaza, Erin Degutis - URS Corporation

Meeting agenda and handouts provided under separate cover.

The meeting commenced at approximately 1:30 pm.

Welcome and Introductions

Larry Barfield welcomed the Cultural Resources Sub-group and thanked members for their continued participation. He stated that the overall objective was to continue our work from the March Full Task Group meeting and April Sub-group meeting with a focus on how we will conduct cumulative effects evaluations from the perspective of cultural resources.

Process Review

Frank Kalpakis presented a sample project, Janus Road in Hardin County, to commence discussion regarding cumulative effects analysis. The example resource was an archaeological site that proposed transportation and land use actions might impact. There was discussion by the group about potential causes of indirect and cumulative effects to various cultural resources, such as providing transportation access, induced development, and looting. The group concurred that that mitigation should not be required for cumulative impacts because mitigation is accounted for as a result of direct and indirect impacts.

The group then discussed the triggers for cumulative effects evaluation. The cumulative effects evaluation should be triggered if the direct or indirect effects evaluation has an assigned degree of effect above moderate and if there are other actions in the area.

The group reviewed and discussed the *Proposed Cumulative Effects Evaluation Process* flow chart. The first three steps were understood and accepted.

Step 4: Identify Resources of Concern: The group discussed how the Potentially Affected Resource Area could be based off of existing data from the State Historic Preservation Office. The group discussed the need to have additional local cultural resource data for analyses. It was suggested that local data might be too onerous to collect and maintain within the EST, but that it might be helpful to include web links and contact information to these sources on a “reference page” for easy access to this data for reviewers.

Step 5: Determine Area of Effect and Document Rationale: The term “Potentially Affected Resource Area” (PARA) was suggested in lieu of the term “Area of Potential Effect (APE)”. A PARA would define the cultural resources in an area.

A buffer could be used around each resource in an area to determine the geographic extent of the PARA. The buffer could be based on the type of resource, the relative commonality of the resource, and the condition/integrity of the resource (Is it critically impaired?). For example, more rare resources would be assigned a larger buffer.

All properties on the National Register of Historic Places are viewed as equal. A historic resource, such as a ranch house with integrity, would be of more value than one that lacks integrity. Twenty ranch houses along a road is considered one (1) resource group. One ranch house would not have the same size buffer as a burial ground.

The group concurred that a PARA does not need to include only archaeological resources, but could include other cultural resources.

Step 6: Review Standard Analyses: The group reviewed the draft spreadsheet of historic resources developed by Brian Yates. The group discussed the types/ classes and number of historic resources would be provided on the spreadsheet with quantities to identify the common, less common, or rare historic resources. The reviewer should know about the type/kind/condition/integrity of the resource prior to cumulative effects analysis.

The group discussed if only National Register-listed properties should be considered for cumulative effects evaluation, as there are 1,500 National Register sites and 26,000 Florida Master Site File sites in Florida (Florida Master Site File is approximately six months behind with adding new listings). However, properties listed on the Florida Master Site File include National Register properties and other surveyed properties. The group suggested that the FMSF should be used. To identify additional historic resources that may be impacted, the reviewer should contact local government, local historians and historical societies as other sources of information.

Step 7: Review Previous Project Direct & Indirect Effects Evaluations: The group discussed having a new way to query information in the screening tool as well as automating results of direct/indirect effects into a summary report that could be used for cumulative effects analysis.

Step 8: Review Off-line Resources: Several offline sources that could be utilized include identifying locally designated properties, consulting with local historic societies (city, county, etc.), and speaking with local historians. Part of a pre-screening activity could include a

windshield survey to identify potential undocumented resources. These resources could be documented and located with GPS. Several keys to potential archaeological resources include topographic elevation, well-drained soils, and access to fresh water. This could indicate the location of a possible hunting camp, for example. A query could be run with the topography, soils, and fresh water data layers. The only exception to this type of query would be in South Florida, due to the lack of topography near the coast and sandy soils.

Step 9: Evaluate Cumulative Effects to Resource: The group indicated that the determining the carrying capacity of a resource is appropriate for natural resources, but not for cultural resources.

Step 10: Provide Commentary on Cumulative Effects to Resource or Concern: Commentary should include current state of resources within the PARA, trend analysis, and analysis of potential cumulative effects to the resources within the PARA. The recommendations of the reviewer should carry forward to the NEPA document.

Step 11: Assign Degree of Effect: The group concurred that the term “Requires further study” should be used instead of assigning a degree of effect.

Step 12: Produce Summary Report: The following components were identified for the Cumulative Effects Summary Report:

1. Standard Analyses (quantitative data)
2. Definition of resource and rationale – describe resources within the PARA. This information would not be available to public.
3. Analysis – Commentary on potential effects resulting from past, present, and future actions to cultural resources within the PARA.
4. Findings

Archaeological Data

The group discussed the importance of protecting archaeological sites and that the location may be shielded from the public to prevent looting/pilfering. Larry Barfield said that he would check with Bob Downey on what archaeological information is available for Sunshine (public record). Additionally, George Hadley, George Ballo, and Duane Denfeld will coordinate to determine what information can be protected or shielded. If there is a legitimate reason, the public can access this information. Alexis stated that the EST could include an attribute that allows information to be viewed by all persons or specific information restricted to certain groups. A note could be included that would state “Note: please contact agency” if the information is restricted. During the PD&E phase, the cumulative effects on cultural resources, including archeological sites, could be discussed with the public.

Environmental Screening Tool (EST) Notes

The group discussed the modifications that may be needed to the EST to produce a summary report for cumulative effects evaluation. An identifier needs to be developed: either a unique number or name for each PARA. The group concurred that the pilot project could be utilized to generate nomenclature for identifying PARAs for the cumulative effects evaluation.

Timeline for Cumulative Effects Review

The pilot project will help to determine the appropriate amount of time to review a project.

Assignments

- Duane Denfeld to coordinate with Ken Hardin and Brian Yates to update the draft chart developed by Brian Yates.
- George Ballo/George Hadley/Duane Denfeld to discuss shielding issues for archaeological sites and to coordinate with Bob Downey to research the strength of laws applying to confidentiality of archaeological sites.