

## Final Technical Review: Port of Port St. Joe and Associated Connectors

### Background Information (attach Change Request Form or equivalent):

**Reviewer:** Terry Kraft

**District(s):** 3    **District Coordinator(s):** Jason Alderman

**Reviewer's Phone:** (850) 638-0250

**Fax:** (850) 638-6149

**E-mail:** [jason.alderman@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:jason.alderman@dot.state.fl.us)

**Date of Receipt:** 11/25/08

**Date of Completion (maximum of 10 work days):** 3/11/09

**Are Data, including Date and Source, Accurate and Acceptable (check one)?**  Yes  No    **Comments:**

Data and sources are clearly documented in the "Port St. Joe Strategic Intermodal System Designation-Justification Report". Additional information was requested and received on 1/29/09 so this technical review could be completed. Most importantly, the additional information confirms that the Port's aggregate customer, whose letter of intent was the primary basis of the SIS application, has reaffirmed his intent and has now signed a Letter of Commitment for the annual movement of a minimum of one million metric tons through Port St. Joe. In addition, the ethanol customer continues to be committed to the Port for moving 210,000 metric tons per year and is making progress with his plans. Several other customers have indicated their interest in locating at and shipping through the Port in light of the biomass supply in our region, in particular wood chips and wood pellets, including one specific entity with plans to move 240,000 metric tons per year. These commitments and plans together total 1.58 million tons per year, above the current threshold for Emerging SIS designation.

**Does the Facility Meet Appropriate Criteria and Thresholds (check one)?**  Yes  No    **Comments:**

This hub is more than 50 miles driving distance and about 62 miles by water (using shipping lanes) from the nearest SIS seaport as required, and meets all Planned Facility criteria – Emerging SIS criteria and thresholds, partner consensus and financial feasibility – as documented in the above report and additional information. The Port has requested some leeway on the three year requirement for meeting the applicable criteria and threshold to accommodate the many activities required to get the Port operational again.

**If a SIS Facility, Does It Meet Community and Environmental Screening Criteria (complete following chart)?**

Community and Environmental Screening Criteria (see the “Adopted Criteria and Thresholds”)	Meets All Criteria Y/N/DK/NA*	Comments
<i>Community Livability – Character &amp; Function</i>	NA	FDOT performed a high level screening of community and environmental features (not required for Emerging SIS facilities). The attached maps show the locations of community and environmental features near the seaport and along the proposed rail and water connectors.
<i>Community Livability – Land Use</i>	NA	
<i>Environmental Quality – Air Quality</i>	NA	
<i>Environmental Quality – Natural Resource Lands, Cultural and Historical Sites, Agricultural Areas</i>	NA	The Port Master plan has been approved by the Department of Community Affairs, and is to be adopted into Port St. Joe’s Local Comprehensive Plan. The Port Master Plan details the existing and future land uses for the Port Planning Area and adjacent properties, including documentation of sensitive features.  Most of the existing rail connector is located in Wildlife and Marine Management areas. Although no needed expansion has been identified, these areas should be taken into account when planning any future capacity expansions along this line. No issues were identified for the waterway connector.

**Is Public and Partner Review Needed (check one)?**     Yes     No

**Comments:**

The request clearly documents local and regional public and private support for SIS designation of the Port, as well as approval by the Department of Community Affairs of the Port Master Plan. Discussions at the state level with Florida Ports Council staff, Enterprise Florida staff and Rural Economic Development Initiative staff in the Executive Office of the Governor also resulted in statements of support. Review by the Seaports, Rail, Systems Planning and Environmental Management Offices identified no additional concerns.

\* Yes, No, Don’t Know, Not Applicable

**Additional Information** (provide any additional information relevant to the review of this request)

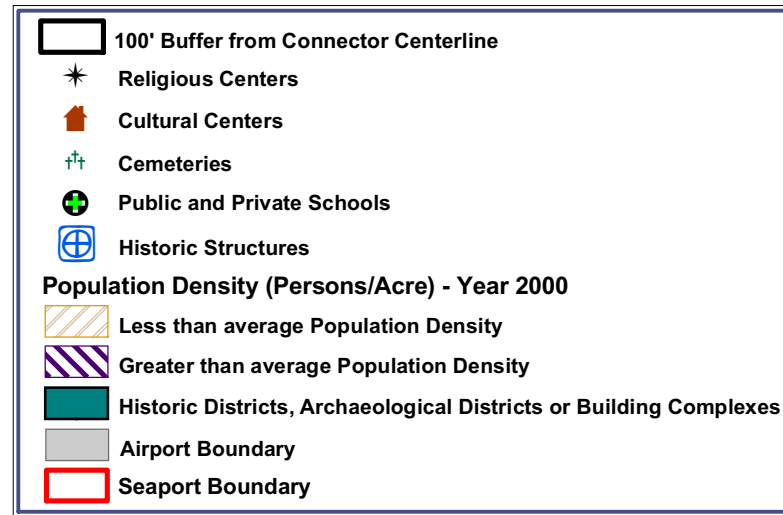
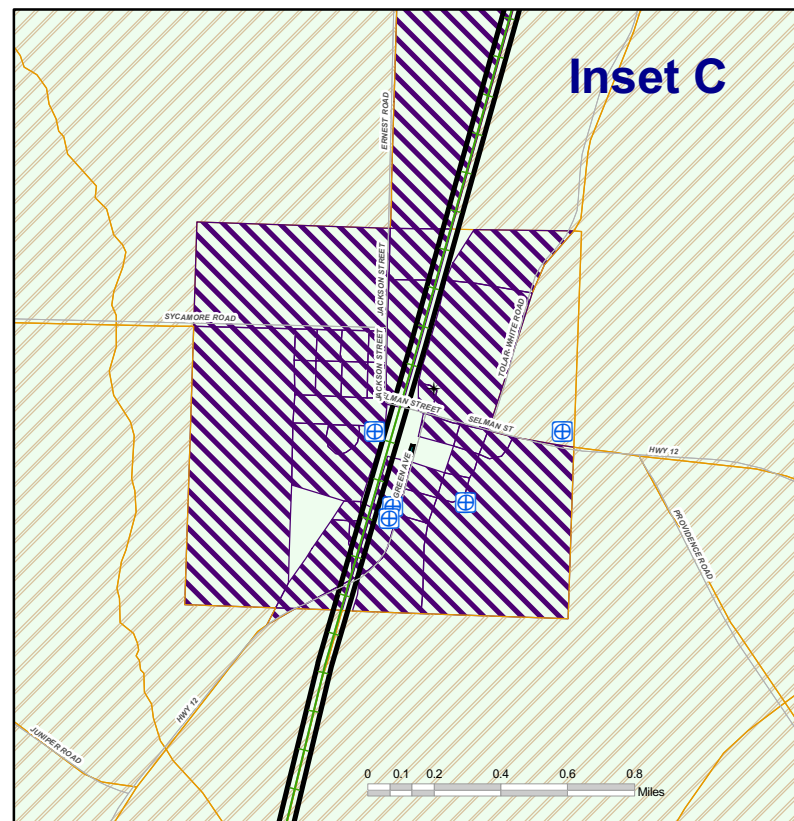
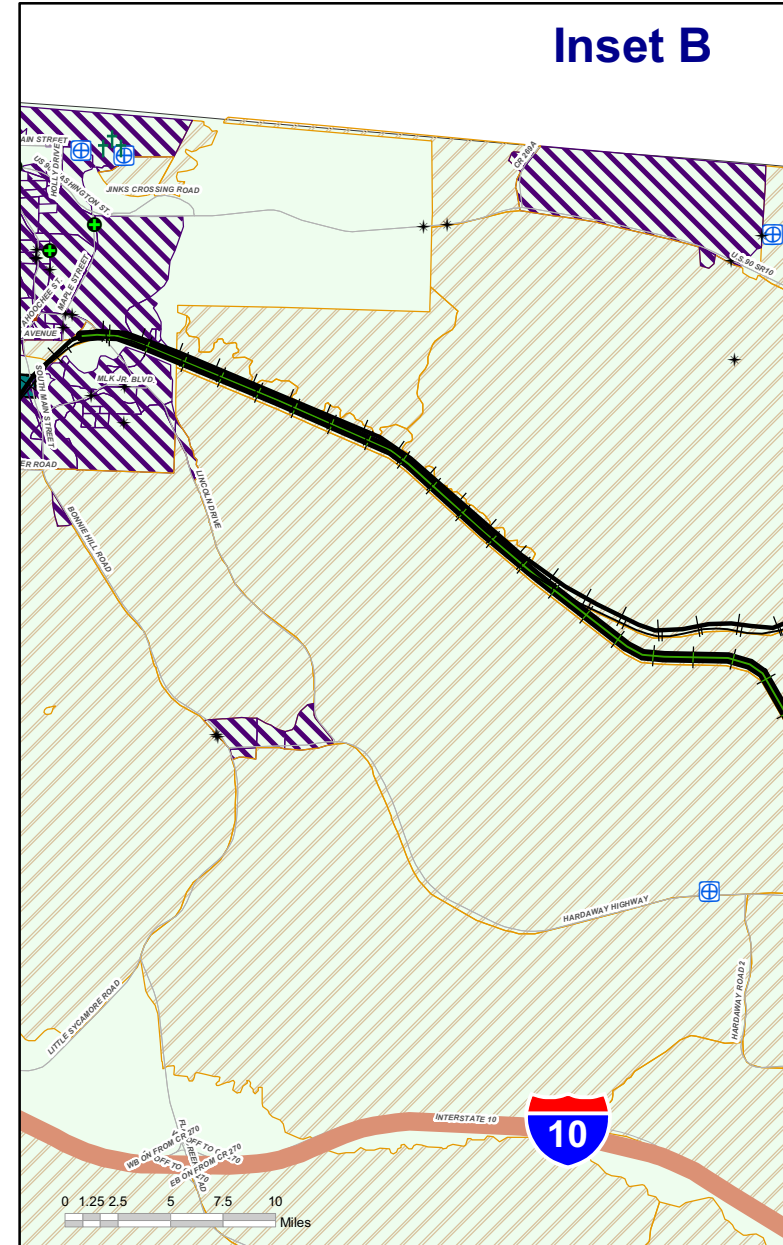
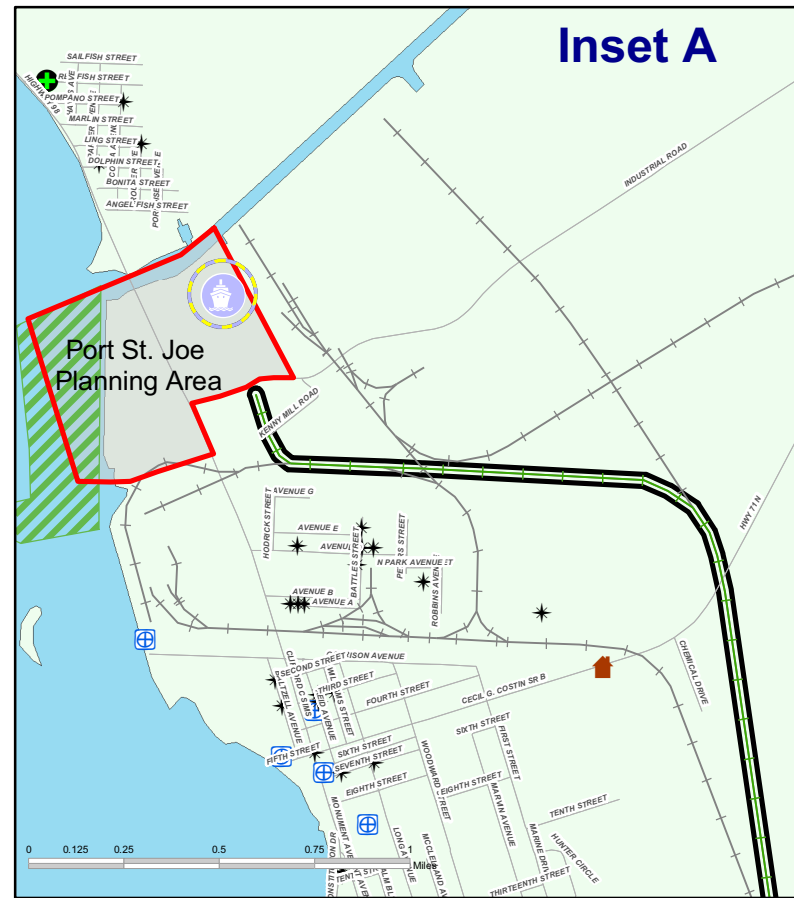
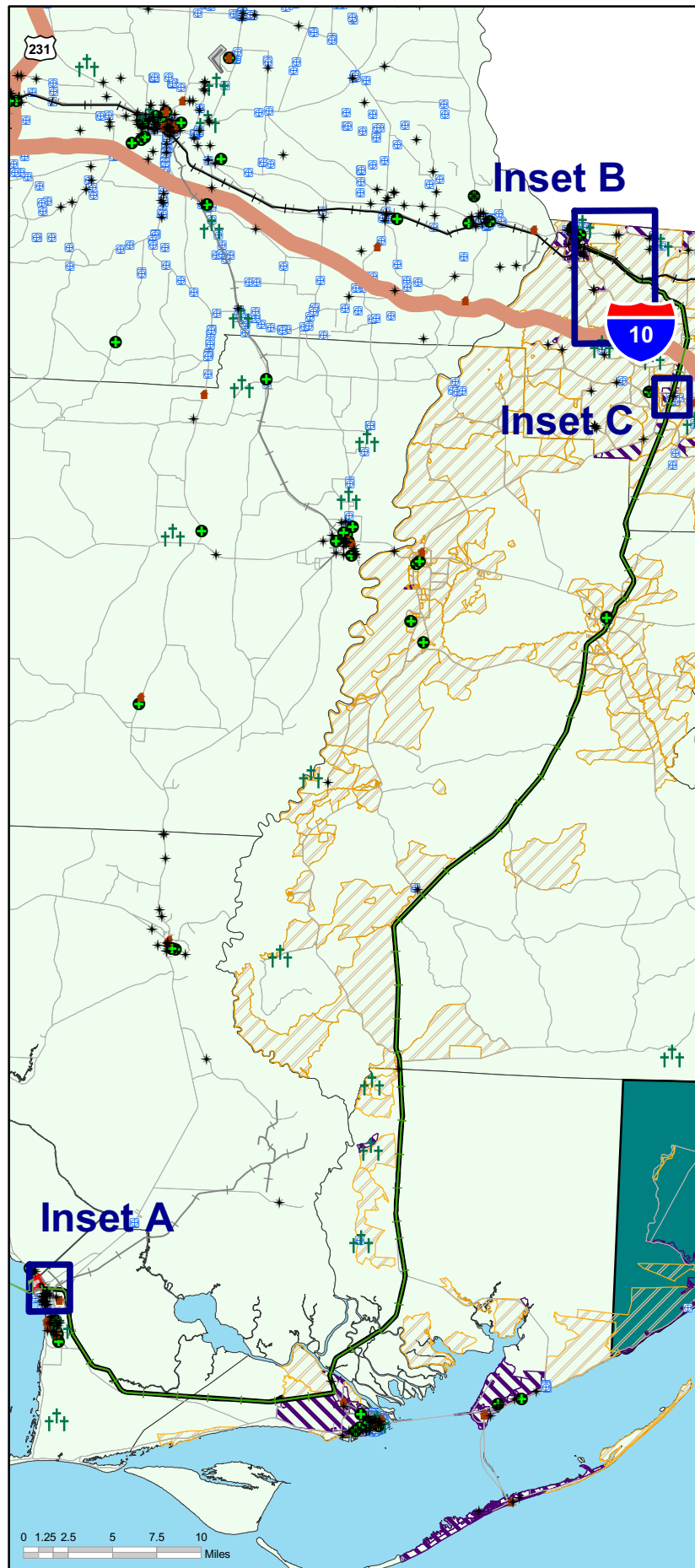
In a letter dated August 18, 2006, the Secretary of Transportation did not approve the Port of St. Joe's request to be designated as an Emerging SIS because the port currently is not active. The letter explained that if the port develops a plan for reestablishing passenger and/or freight activity that meet the adopted criteria for planned facilities the port could be designated as a Planned Add Emerging SIS seaport. The current request does provide a plan for reestablishing freight activity that meet the adopted criteria for planned facilities.

Although the designation request did not include designation of connectors, designation of both a water connector and a rail connector are needed. The congressionally authorized Port of Port St. Joe shipping channel already connects to the shipping lanes of the Gulf of Mexico and beyond, and there are no concerns with this designation. Although there is some preference locally to designation a road connector on the land side, the state's interests are best served by a rail connector, since it already exists, is operational, and will best handle the planned freight activity from an interregional/interstate/international (SIS) perspective.

It is also recommended that designation approval note the potential for taking a little longer (up to one year) to meet the minimum criteria threshold for seaport activity.

**Recommendation to Secretary (completed after due date for all public and partner reviews):**

Approve request  
 Deny request (reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_)



**SIS and Emerging SIS Hubs, Corridors, and Connectors**



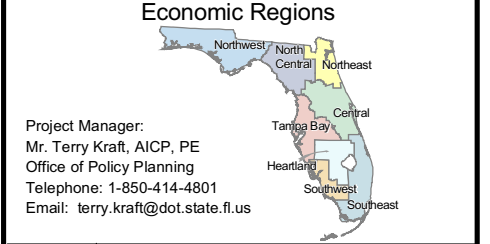
March 9 2009

Port of Port St. Joe - Railway Connector  
C&E Review - Community

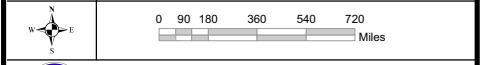
- LEGEND**
- SIS Hubs**
- Airports
  - General Aviation Reliever Airports
  - Seaports
  - Passenger Terminals
  - Spaceport
  - Intermodal Freight - Rail Terminals
- Corridors**
- Highway
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- Connectors<sup>1</sup>**
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- Planned Facilities**
- Hubs**
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Project Manager:  
Mr. Terry Kraft, AICP, PE  
Office of Policy Planning  
Telephone: 1-850-414-4801  
Email: terry.kraft@dot.state.fl.us

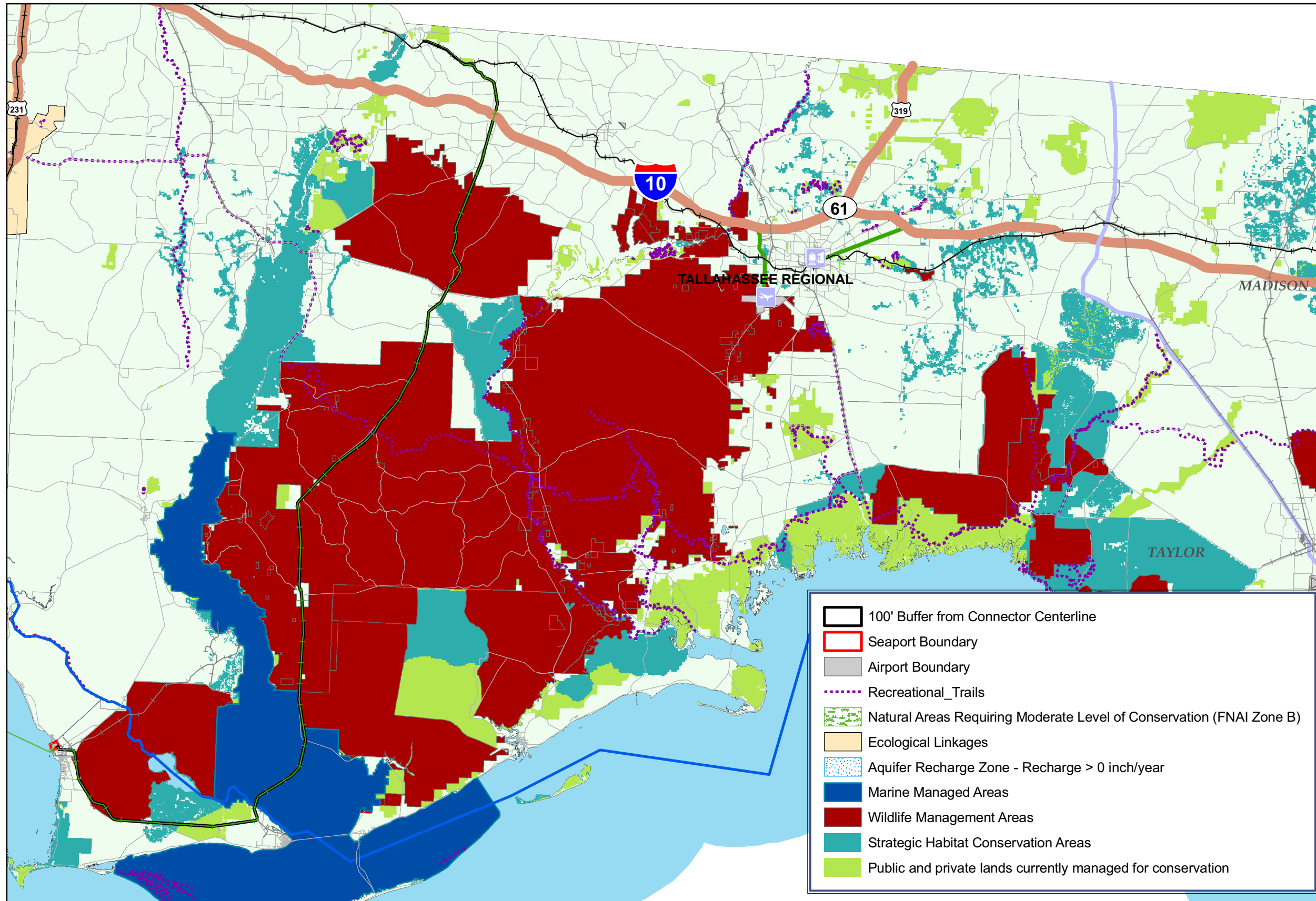


State of Florida  
Department of Transportation  
Office of Policy Planning

**Port of Port St. Joe Railway Connector**

AN Railway from seaport property to CSX line

NOTE: Connector alignments as mapped are subject to additional minor adjustments pending final verification of roadway data



- 100' Buffer from Connector Centerline
- Seaport Boundary
- Airport Boundary
- Recreational\_Trails
- Natural Areas Requiring Moderate Level of Conservation (FNAI Zone B)
- Ecological Linkages
- Aquifer Recharge Zone - Recharge > 0 inch/year
- Marine Managed Areas
- Wildlife Management Areas
- Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas
- Public and private lands currently managed for conservation

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## SIS and Emerging SIS Hubs, Corridors, and Connectors



March 9 2009

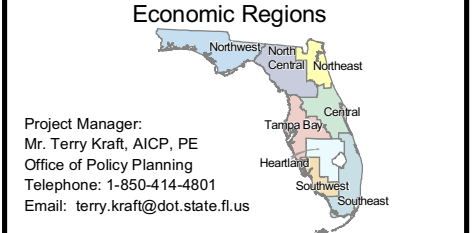
Port of Port St. Joe - Railway Connector C&E Review - Environment

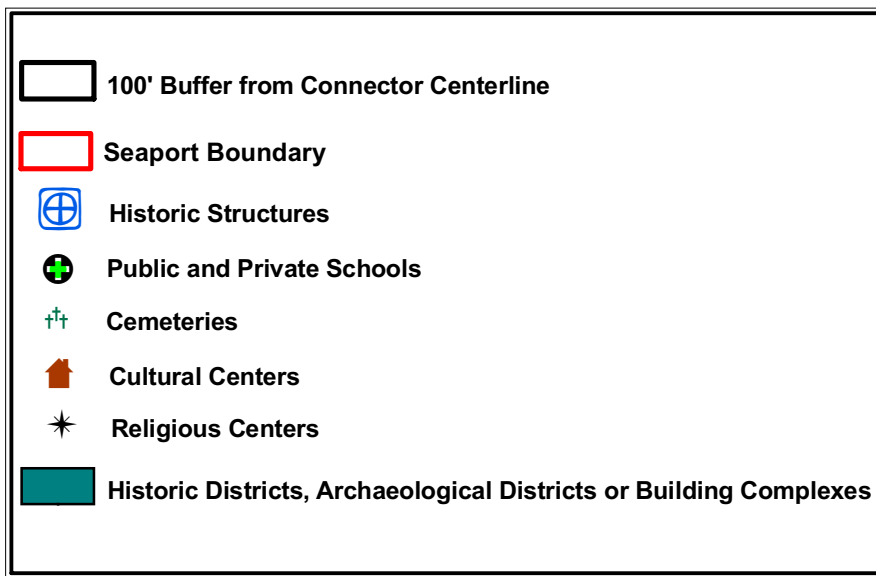
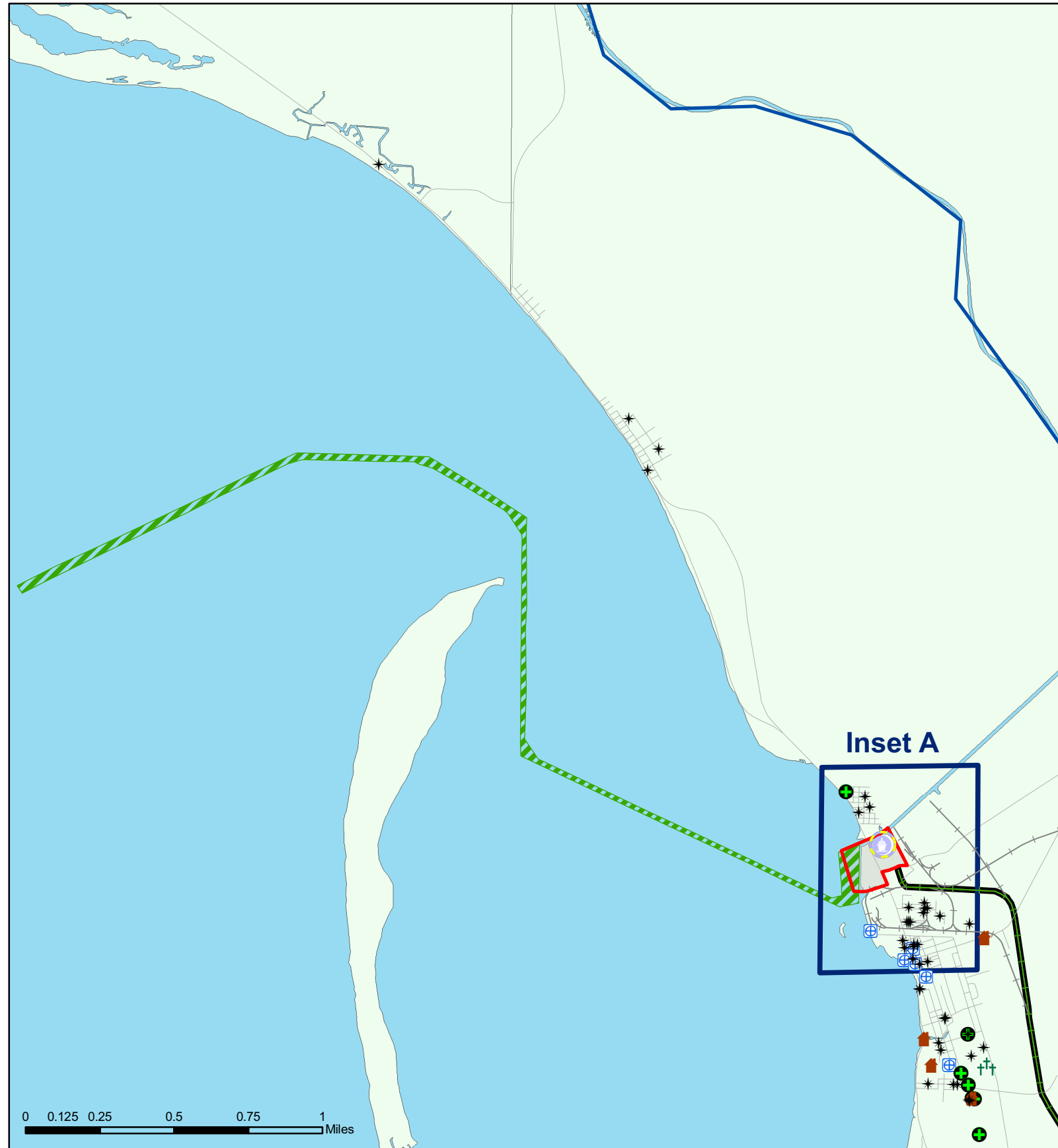
### LEGEND

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**March 9 2009**

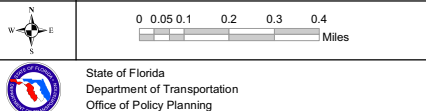
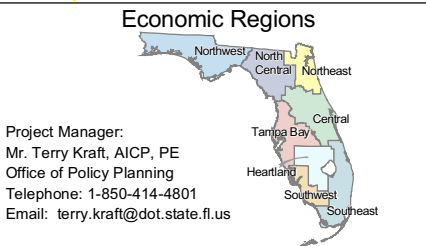
Port of Port St. Joe - Waterway Connector  
C&E Review - Community

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**Port of Port St. Joe and Waterway Connector**

Port of Port St Joe channel and turning basins connecting to coastal shipping lanes

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