



I-75/Alligator Alley Rest Area Project at Mile Marker 63 in Collier County

July 2013

New features are coming to the rest area in Collier County!

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)'s contractor, Wright Construction Group, starts work this summer to improve the rest area on I-75/Alligator Alley at mile marker 63. Crews will construct two recreational access areas adjacent to the Big Cypress National Preserve backcountry trails, replace the existing rest area, build a new public safety center and water treatment plant, and upgrade the existing wastewater treatment plant. The \$8.8 million project is expected to be completed in fall 2014.

With the project located in the Florida Everglades, the largest wild area east of the Rocky Mountains, the contractor is appropriately using "green" construction techniques for the job. The buildings will be certified by Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), an internationally recognized certification for environmentally conscious construction.

Rest area

This project increases the number of restrooms from 30 to 44 and adds four family restrooms. The contractor is expanding the capacity of

the wastewater and water treatment plants to accommodate the new public safety center, additional rest area facilities on the south side, and future facilities on the north side of I-75.

Public safety center

Construction of the public safety center adds a new base for emergency responders along Alligator Alley. The center will help reduce emergency response times for motorists on I-75 and hikers and residents in the Everglades. It will house four to six emergency services personnel. The new public safety center also incorporates a helicopter landing zone and garage for emergency equipment.

Recreational access areas

This project builds new recreational access facilities adjacent to the Big Cypress National Preserve nature trails on both the south and north sides of I-75. Each recreational access area will provide parking for up to 15 cars and 25 trucks/trailer pull-through sites.



Future rest area on I-75/Alligator Alley at mile marker 63

What to expect during construction

When the contractor closes the rest area for construction this summer, **NO PUBLIC FACILITIES WILL BE AVAILABLE** (including parking, restrooms or potable water) at the mile marker 63 rest area until the project is finished. Motorists may use the rest area at mile marker 34 during this work.

I-75 entrance and exit ramps at mile marker 63 will remain open for motorists to turn around and for Big Cypress National Preserve rangers to access to the backcountry.



I-75 entrance ramp at mile marker 63

Backcountry access

The project team and Big Cypress National Preserve have partnered to keep recreational users informed about the job. Temporary closures of the Florida National Scenic Trail may be necessary during this project and will be coordinated through the National Park Service. Recreational users can access the Florida Trail from the Oasis Visitor Center on US 41 (Tamiami

Trail) while the rest area is closed. Access will be maintained for all other users (private property owners, emergency services, etc.). Updates will be posted at the rest area, Oasis Visitor Center, and trailheads. Hikers should check the Big Cypress National Preserve website at www.nps.gov/bicy when planning hikes. For access to the backcountry, contact:

Bob DeGross, Public Information Officer
Big Cypress National Preserve
239-695-1107; Bob_DeGross@nps.gov

For more project information or to be added to the email distribution list, please contact:

Jennifer Dorning
Cella Molnar & Associates, Inc.
(toll free) 877-496-1076/JDorning@cella.cc

Debbie Tower
Florida Department of Transportation
239-461-4300/Debbie.Tower@dot.state.fl.us

Project website:
www.I75OnTheGo.com



Future public safety center on I-75/Alligator Alley at mile marker 63