



# NO ROADS TO RUIN!

Earlier this year, the state passed legislation to fast-track three major new toll roads that will destroy large swaths of

Florida's last remaining rural lands, pollute waterways, and threaten endangered wildlife, including the iconic Florida panther. If completed, 330 miles of toll roads could be constructed by 2030. Road building alone will immediately destroy more than 52,800 acres of undeveloped areas and promote unsustainable sprawl, destroying hundreds of thousands of additional acres.

Florida's remaining natural areas are worth more than the sum of their parts. To the people who live there, these lands are home. Within the Suncoast Connector study area, agriculture and timberlands provide habitat for rare species. The Green Swamp, located within the Northern Turnpike region, forms the headwaters of four major river systems. Cattle roam alongside wildlife within the Southwest-Central corridor region, and these working ranches are some of the last remaining pieces of Old Florida. By conserving land, we conserve our way of life. When we start to pave over these places, there's no going back.

## THE ROADS TO RUIN ARE:

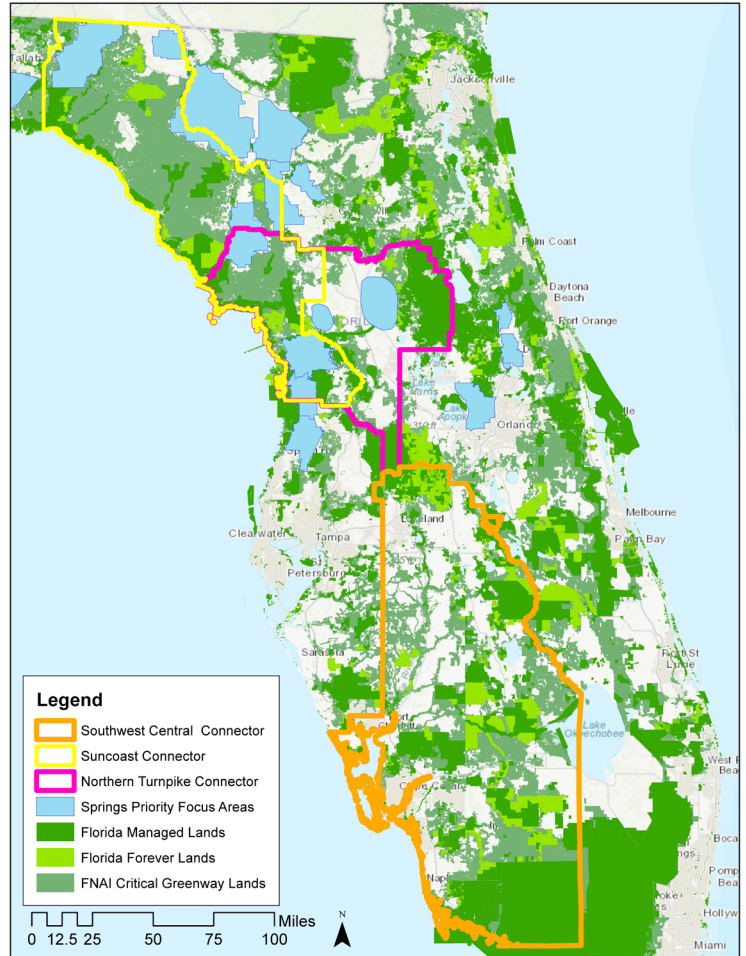
### BAD FOR OUR HEALTH

Clean water and air are essential to human life. Florida's wetlands act as a filter, cleaning pollutants from our water before it reaches the Floridan aquifer, where 90% of Floridians get their water. New roads will increase air and water pollution and destroy precious wetlands, springs, and aquifer recharge areas.

### BAD FOR OUR ECONOMY

Florida's existing infrastructure is crumbling and is ranked 40th nationwide in overall cost-effectiveness and condition. Demand for road repairs and true multi-modal transportation is highest in existing urban cores, yet the "roads to ruin" would run through some of the state's least populated counties. The legislature has already allocated \$135 million to advance the "roads to ruin," with additional dedicated funding to follow.

Estimates for toll revenues are often grossly overestimated, forcing the Florida Turnpike Enterprise to heavily subsidize underutilized roads, like the Suncoast Parkway, with funds from other toll roads.



### BAD FOR OUR WILDLIFE

Animals like the endangered Florida panther rely on connected natural areas, including farms and ranches, to breed and hunt. The three toll roads will slice through some of the best remaining natural and agricultural areas, permanently severing connectivity within the Florida Wildlife Corridor. Since federal funds are not being used, FDOT may be exempt from following the National Environmental Policy Act which provides additional protection for wildlife and the environment.



## **BAD GOVERNMENT AND BAD POLICY**

The toll roads bill (CS/SB7068) was rushed through the Florida legislature with almost no discussion or debate and quietly signed by the Governor despite the enormous public demand for a veto. While supporters claim they were “well vetted,” these tollways were never publicly discussed before spring 2019. The proposed routes were not included in FDOT’s 5-year plans, and in 2016, the FDOT Interstate 75 Relief Task Force recommended expanding the vehicle capacity of the interstate and connecting highways rather than build new roads. While the bill’s sponsors often cited hurricane evacuation as the impetus, the State’s own emergency management website urges people to “select an evacuation destination that is nearest to your home, preferably in the same county.”

## **BAD FOR OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES**

Small towns may be left behind as new toll roads bypass their communities or create an influx of new, unwanted growth. The “Old Florida” that still remains will be lost forever, replaced with strip malls and subdivisions.

## **BAD FOR OUR FUTURE**

Every day Florida faces threats from air and water pollution, an exploding population, and a changing climate. With so many immediate and pressing priorities, our state legislature should be investing in ways to ensure a healthier environment and brighter future for all, rather than in these “roads to ruin.”

# **BAD FOR FLORIDA!**



**SPEAK UP** and **SAY NO** to the  
“roads to ruin!”

- Engage with the task force by speaking up at public hearings. Your voice matters.
- Submit op-eds and letters-to-the-editors.
- Talk to your friends and family about this process.



**Want more information? Want to get involved? Contact:**

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