

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Development

Seminole Electric Cooperative, Inc: Notice of Availability for an Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA

ACTION: Notice of Availability of a draft Environmental Assessment for the Seminole Generating Station (SGS)-JEA Transmission Line Upgrade

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), as required by the National Environmental Policy Act, is issuing a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) in connection with possible impacts related to a project proposed by Seminole Electric Cooperative, Inc (SECI), of Tampa, FL. The proposal is for the replacement of two-hundred and sixty transmission structures within the approximately 65-mile Seminole and Jacksonville Electric Authority (JEA) Seminole Plant-Keystone-JEA Firestone 230 kilovolt (kV) transmission line in Clay and Putnam Counties, Florida. SECI has submitted an application to RUS for funding the proposal.

A portion of the Project, primarily located along State Highway 21, was identified within Camp Blanding Joint Training Center. Camp Blanding, state land managed by the Florida Department of Military Affairs, was notified of the proposed Project in March 2024 by RUS. Camp Blanding will act as a cooperating agency and has agreed to accept RUS as the lead agency.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions and comments should be emailed to the Environmental and Historic Preservation Division, USDA Rural Development, Rural Utilities Service at: RUSPublicComments@usda.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: SECI proposes the replacement of 260 existing Corten steel poles with 260 new galvanized steel poles within an existing, approximately 65-mile, 230-kV transmission line Right-of-Way (ROW). The existing transmission poles, with an average height above ground of 75 foot (ft) to 90 ft and average diameter at ground of 24 inches (in), would be replaced by new transmission poles that match the height and diameter at ground of the existing pole. Each pole being replaced would have an approximately 100 ft by 100 ft temporary work area associated with it where the work activities would occur, for an approximate total work area of 102.57 acres. All structures will be replaced within 10 ft of the existing structure. There are no borrow areas associated with the proposed project and all staging of equipment and construction materials would be within the temporary work areas.

The transmission line ROW begins at the Seminole Generating Station (SGS) substation adjacent to U.S. Highway 17 north of the City of Palatka, then heads west to parallel State Road 100, then northwest through agricultural and rural residential areas to Keystone Heights. From this point the transmission line continues north/northeast along State Road 16 towards Middleburg, turns east to cross Black Creek, and continues northeast towards State Road 23. The ROW then turns north, parallel to State Road 23, to reach the interconnection with JEA at the Clay County-Duval County line.

Environmental Resources Management (ERM), an environmental consultant, prepared an EA for SECI that describes the project, assesses the proposed project's environmental impacts, and summarizes as applicable, any mitigation measures used to minimize environmental effects. RUS has conducted an independent evaluation of the EA and believes that it accurately assesses the impacts of the proposed project. No significant impacts are expected as a result of the construction of the project.

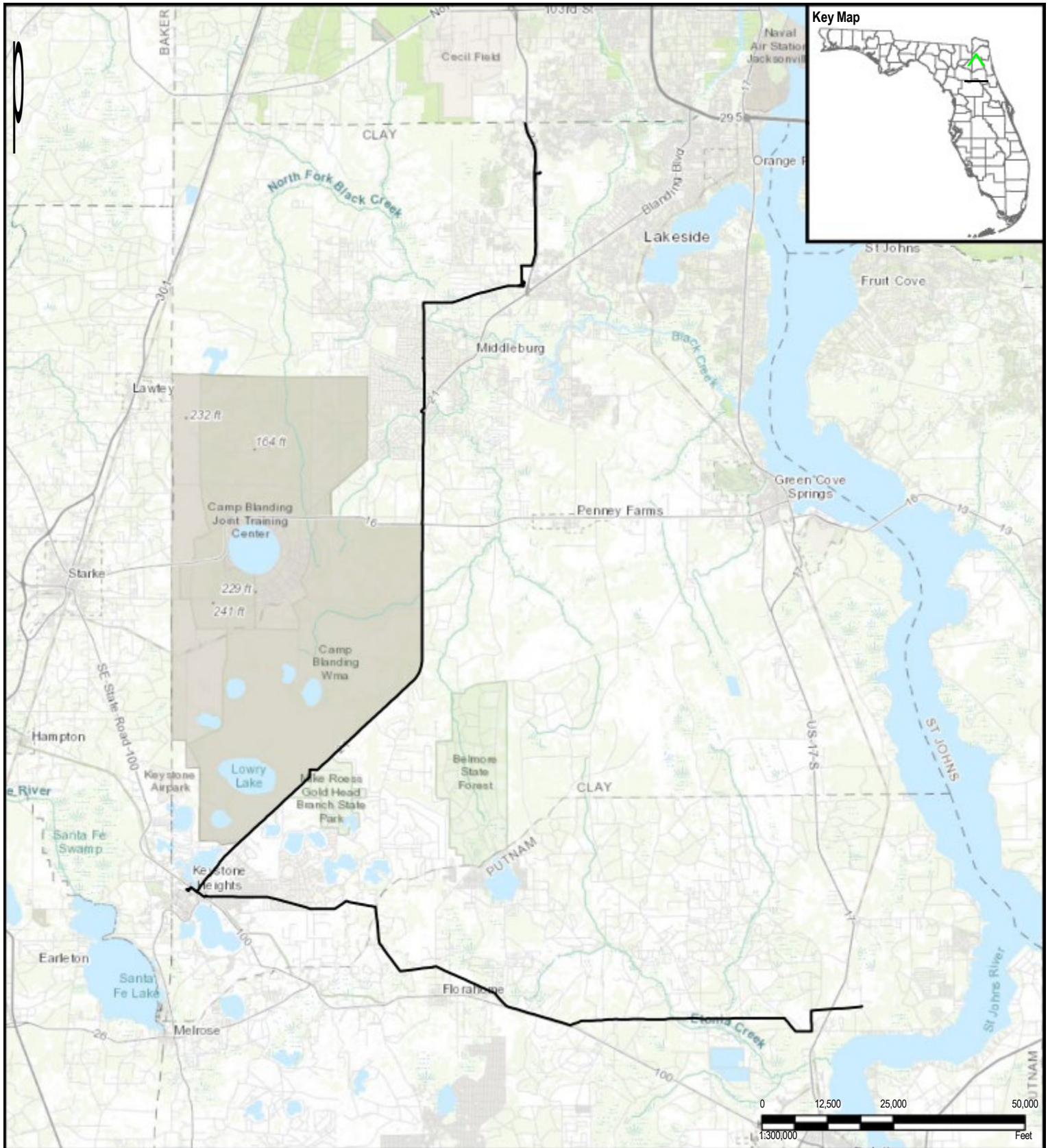
Questions and comments should be sent to the RUS email address provided above. RUS will accept questions and comments on the EA for 14 days from the date of publication of this notice. All comments must be provided electronically with no hard comments being accepted at this time.

Copies of the EA and supporting documentation will be available for public review on RUS's website at: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/resources/environmental-studies/assessment/seminole-generating-station-sgs-jea-transmission-line-upgrade>

Any final action by RUS related to the proposed project will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant Federal environmental laws and regulations and completion of environmental review procedures as prescribed by 7 CFR Part 1970, Environmental Policies and Procedures.

A general location map of the proposal is shown below.

Dated: 4/22/2025



- Legend**
- Project Location (Approximate)
 - Transmission Line (Approximate)

Client: Seminole Electric Cooperative, Inc
Clay & Putnam County, FL

Project: SGS - JEA
Transmission Line Upgrade

Figure 1: Location Map

Source(s):
- SERVICE LAYER CREDITS: SOURCES: ESRI HERE, GARMIN, INTERMAP, INCREMENT P CORP., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GEBCO, IGN, KADASTER NL, ORDINANCE SURVEY, ESRI JAPAN, METI, ESRI CHINA (HONG KONG), (C) OPENSTREETMAP CONTRIBUTORS, AND THE GIS USER COMMUNITY

Date	8/1/2023
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